AN

EXPOSITION,

WITH

Practical Obſervations

Upon the BOOK of

JOB.

VOLUME II.

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ROM. 11. 33. & JAMES 1. 12.

O the Depth of the Riches both of the Wiſdom and Knowledge of God! *How unſearchable are his Judgments, and his Ways paſt finding out!*

Bleſſed is the Man that endureth Temptation; for when he is tried, he ſhall receive the Crown of Liſe, which the Lord *hath promiſed to them that love him.*

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UMI

TO THE
CHRISTIAN READER,

To thoſe eſpecially, who have been, and continue to be the

Movers and Promoters
OF THIS
WORK.

AS *the Apoſtle* Peter (*writing to all the Saints*) *ſaid*, This Second Epiſtle, *ſo I may ſay*, (*and have learned, I hope, to ſay it without boaſting or comparing*) This Seventh Epiſtle, Beloved, I now write unto you; in all which my deſire is to ſtir up your pure Minds by way of Remembrance, that ye may be mindful of the Words which were ſpoken, and of the Troubles which were endured before, by this (great Example of Suffering) Holy and Patient JOB. *And though* Seven, *being a Perfect Number, might hint me a fair Pretence to ſit down, and do no more; yet I am further from thinking what I have done* Perfect, *than I am from deſiſting (in reference to my own Intention) to perfect (according to that meaſure of Light, which ſhall be given in) what is yet to do. 'Tis a General Mercy, that in an Age wherein the* Sword *hath been called out to do, and hath done* ſo Much, *there hath been not only* Leiſure, *but* Encouragement *for the* Pen *to do* This Little. *And 'tis* Your ſpecial Honour, *who ſtill promote This, or any Work of this Kind, that while ye have been engaged in ſo great a Charge for the Maintaining of a* War, *and the Preſerving of* Peace, *ye have not excuſed your ſelves in this Point of Charge. And (poſſibly) it will be no Diſhonour to this Age in Future Ages, nor to This Nation in Forreign Nations, to ſee or hear, that our Spirits have neither been hurried nor ſcared by Wars, and Changes, into an Indiſpoſition or Incompoſedneſs for Works of ſuch Seriouſneſs and Retirement. What* Daniel *Propheſied of the Building of the* Wall *of* Jeruſalem, *whether Literal or Myſtical, is true of this* Paper-Wall, (*which is no Stranger to* Jeruſalem) *it hath been built in* Troublous Times. *Except the* Lord *build both Houſe and Wall, they labour in vain that build in Calmeſt Times; and where the* Lord *buildeth (though by weak and unskilful Hands) labour ſhall not be vain in Stormy Times; it ſhall neither be labour in vain, becauſe unfiniſht for uſe; nor ſhall it be labour in vain,* *becauſe unuſeful when 'tis finiſht. The Bleſſing of* God *(and without That, nothing can) delivereth all our honeſt Labours from theſe two Vanities, and his Bounty delivereth them from a Third. For while we are ſtedfaſt and unmoveable, always abounding in the Work of the* Lord, *as we may have a ſtrong Confidence, that our labour ſhall not be in vain to others; ſo a full Aſſurance, that it ſhall not be in vain to our ſelves. Plain-hearted* Jacob, *labouring in the Integrity of his Soul for* Laban, *only in keeping Sheep, though his Wages (as envying that he thrived ſo faſt) was changed ten times; yet he thrived the faſter; and he* Who came over *Jordan* with his Staff, became two Bands. To be ſure, we can never want either Pay or Reward for that Work, which is a Reward, and can pay it ſelf. *And though I know, (and cannot but thankefully acknowledge, Honoured Sirs) that this long continued Work hath been an occaſion of conſiderable expence to you; yet I much believe, that it will not prove any thing of loſs to any of you.* There is (*ſaith* Solomon) that ſcattereth, and yet increaſeth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, and it tendeth to Poverty. *They that ſcatter to do Good, ſow what they ſcatter; and that which is ſown in a right Soyl, increaſeth to a Harveſt. They that with-hold what they have, more than is meet, ſhall not hold what they have, but meet with Poverty. As that which is given in Charity for the relief of the Poor, ſo that which is given in a due tempered Liberality for the uſe of the Publick, is lent to the* Lord, *and he will ſurely repay all that he hath borrowed.* Therefore give a Portion to Seven, and alſo to Eight, (*whether Indigent Perſons, or Pious Uſes*) for ye know not what Evil ſhall be upon the Earth. *If Evil come upon the* Earth, *they will be found the beſt Husbands of their Goods, who have laid up moſt in Heaven: and if Good continue upon the* Earth, *they will not find any miſs of what is ſo laid up. I write this, not as either fearing an Abatement of my own private Intereſt, nor as hoping or looking after an Increaſe of it: But only as a grateful Teſtimony of what ye have freely done, for the carrying on of this Work; and as an Argument, that in ſo doing, ye have not done neither unwiſely or unprofitably for your ſelves.*

And for this Piece of the Work now given into your Hands, and Publiſhed to the View of others, I ſhall only ſay, That herein you have an end of the Controverſal or Diſputative Part of this Book. Job's *Friends have now finiſht their laſt* Reply *upon him; and* Job *hath finiſht his laſt* Anſwer *to them. For though he continueth ſpeaking Five whole Chapters longer, yet he ſpeaketh rather to the General State of the* Queſtion, *than to any of their Particular* Objections, *as may appear hereafter (if* God *give leave) in the* Explication *of that large and pathetical* Diſcourſe. *And it was well, that his* Opponents *would make an end ſomewhere, and leave what they had offered to the Judgment of equal and indifferent Moderators. Which may be a juſt rebuke upon many in this Age, who will diſpute, and draw the Saw of Contention everlaſtingly; as if they thought it a Diſhonour, when they have ſaid all, to ſay no more; or were reſolved never to be ſatisfied, how much or how often ſoever they have been anſwered.* Moderate and modeſt Diſputing tends to healing; but the Itch of Diſputing (*which an Honourable and Learned Knight, deceaſed, would have engraven upon his Tomb-ſtone*) leaves nothing but a ſcabby Soreneſs upon the minds of men, and doth rather widen differences than compoſe them. Abner (*either grieved or wearied with the tedious protraction of a Civil War*) called to *Joab* (*Captain General of* David's *Army*) Shall the Sword devour for ever? Knoweſt thou not, that it will be bitterneſs in the end? How long ſhall it be ere thou bid the people return from following their brethren? *We have but too much cauſe to call and cry upon ſome* Leaders in the Scholaſtical War, Shall your Tongues and Pens devour for ever? Know ye not, that it is unpleaſant to many in the way, and is like to be bitterneſs to more in the end? When will ye return from following your Brethren? Eliphaz, Bildad, *and* Zophar *followed their Brother* Job *long, but they gave it over at laſt, and returned from following him. Though, I confeſs, there is a neceſſity of* contending, *and that (as the Apoſtle* Jude *exhorts) earneſtly, both by Speech and Pen,* for the Faith once delivered to the Saints; *Yet there are many contentions, which it had been well if they had never been begun, or at leaſt quickly ended. And when men revile and blaſpheme rather than argue, It is beſt to take up that Counſel which good* Hezekiah *gave in commandment concerning* railing Rabſakeh, Anſwer them not. Solomon *hath given us the full ſtate of this duty in a ſeeming contradiction, while in one verſe he forbids us to anſwer a Fool, and in the next bids us anſwer him.* The Fool muſt be anſwered according to his folly, *but the anſwer muſt be framed and drawn up by the ſtrength of reaſon and wiſdom; that is, the Fool muſt be made to ſee his folly, leſt he grow up and be confirmed in his opinion, that what he ſaith is true, becauſe he is not ſhewed the error of it; yet,* The Fool muſt not be anſwered according to his folly, *that is, if he ſpeak or write vainly and revilingly, ſhewing rather the frothineſs of his Wit, or the overflowing of his Gall, than the ſobriety and ſoundneſs of his Judgment; he that anſwers him muſt not conform either ſpeech or ſtile to his,* leſt he be like unto him: *The anſwer which we give to another, beareth the Image and is the meaſure of our ſelves: And our ill managing of a matter renders us as bad as others, though our opinion be better.* Our Maſter Chriſt being reviled, reviled not again; *we his Diſciples and followers ought to imitate him, and* not to render evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrariwiſe to bleſs. *While we are called to contending, let us do it fairly and candidly; Chriſt would have us ſhew love and tenderneſs to our Brethren, as well as zeal for him and his Truth. They cannot but do ſo, who ſtand up for Truth purely as 'tis the Truth of Chriſt, rather than as it is their own opinion. And (though I am loth to be ſuſpicious, yet) I greatly ſuſpect, that the reaſon why many caſt ſo much dirt and diſhonour upon the perſons of their Brethren, while they appear as Champions for the Truth, proceeds from a ſecret deſire to procure honour to their own perſons rather than the advancement of Truth. Peace and Truth are a bleſſed pair, and were we more for Peace we ſhould ſooner find out the Truth: But ſo long as men contend rather for a party or an opinion than for truth, rather for victory and the Maſtery than for truth, rather for honour (I had almoſt ſaid humour) and intereſt than for truth, as we are ſure not to meet with peace, ſo we are extreamly hindred and puzzl'd in ſeeking out the truth. The moſt probable way to keep down ſome* ill-ſented opinions, *is to lay down all diſputes about them; eſpecially, now, when moſt if not all Controverſies on foot, have been* *ſifted to the bran. What therefore remains but that we wait for light and conviction from Heaven, looking how the holy Spirit of Truth and Peace, will ſtate and determine thoſe points upon the Conſciences of men; And I am fully ſatisfied, that if all would ſuffer their Conſciences to anſwer and reply, rather than their conceits and parts, moſt of our diſputers in this age would (like* Job's *friends) diſpute no more. O that we could a while leave arguing with and anſwering one another (eſpecially railing upon and ſcoffing at one another) and fall to praying for and loving one another, according to the utmoſt tender of Goſpel-love. For as Love is the complement or fulfilling the whole Law of God, the ſcope or intentional end of the Commandment, ſo it would be the concluſion or finiſhing and determining end of all the Controverſies which ariſe or are ſtarted amongſt men. And I conceive that (in moſt Points of difference)* a ſevere and Magiſterial impoſing of an Opinion upon others in way of diſpute, is as bad and as un-Goſpel-like, as to impoſe it upon any by way of Power.

Beloved and Honoured Friends, ye may perceive how far my joy, for being arrived at the end of this diſpute between Job *and his friends, hath tranſported me to preſs for at leaſt an amicable carrying on, if not an end of all our diſputes; and that (as the Apoſtle adviſeth)* ſpeaking the truth (*and for the truth, or* Truthing it) in love, we may grow up into him in all things, which is the Head even Chriſt; from whom the whole Body joyned together and compacted by that which every joynt ſupplieth, according to the effectual working of every part, maketh increaſe of the Body to the edifying of it ſelf in Love. *Love is a knitting, and therefore an increaſing grace. That which uniteth many in one, muſt needs* edifie that one, *which is the reſult of ſuch a union. As Faith is that grace by which we conveigh and divide good among our ſelves. There is not the leaſt joynt in the myſtical Body of Chriſt, but giveth ſome ſupply to the whole, becauſe Love is the ligament of it. As we can want nothing while (as the Apoſtle* Jude *exhorts) we* keep our ſelves in the love of God, (*whether we underſtand him of the love of God to us, or of our love to God, makes no difference as to this matter) ſo we can hardly want any thing, while we keep our ſelves in the love of one another. That all who love the Lord Jeſus Chriſt in ſincerity; may, by the preſence and influence of the Spirit of love, not only keep themſelves, but increaſe in the love of God, and in the love of one another, till we are fully grown up in him in all things, which is the head even Chriſt, is the wiſh and prayer, as it ought to be the endeavour of all, of him who would*

SIRS,

SERVE YOU FAITHFULLY
IN LOVE,

May 18.
1655.

JOSEPH CARYL.

AN EXPOSITION WITH Practical Obſervations UPON THE TWENTY-THIRD, TWENTY-FOURTH, TWENTY-FIFTH, AND TWENTY-SIXTH, CHAPTERS Of the Book of JOB.

CHAP. XXIII. Verſ. 1, 2.

Then Job *anſwered, and ſaid,*

Even to day is my complaint bitter, my ſtroak is heavier then my groaning.

IN the former Chapter we we had the third and laſt charge of *Eliphaz* againſt *Job*; in this and that which followeth *Job* makes his reply, and defends himſelf againſt what *Eliphaz* had objected and charged upon him. There are two opinions concerning the tendency of this reply.

Firſt, Some interpet it in favour of *Job*, as if he only ſummoned his friends to the tribunal of God, being confident of a good iſſue there.

Secondly, Others interpret it as a preſumptuous ſuggeſtion againſt God himſelf, and the ſtrictneſs of his proceedings with him, which they endeavour to prove upon (as they conceive) theſe four grounds of his complaint.

Firſt, Becauſe he *complained* that his afflictions were beyond all his *complaints*; and that what he had ſaid was but little to what he felt, or to the greatneſs of his ſorrow (*verſ.* 1, 2.) *Even to day is my complaint bitter, my ſtroak is heavier then my groaning.* Theſe words are conceived, to carry in them, at leaſt, an intimation that *Job* thought himſelf too hardly dealt with, or that there was no juſt cauſe why he ſhould be proſecuted and proceeded againſt with ſo much ſeverity by the continued and renewed ſtroaks of God upon him. And indeed it cannot be denyed, *That he* (whoſoever he is) *is juſtly judged as over-bold with God, who judgeth any of the dealings of God with himſelf or with any other man over-ſevere.* But we ſhall find, that though *Job* complained often that his ſorrows (as to him) were exceeding great, yet he never complained, that (as to God) they were unjuſt.

Secondly, (Say they) becauſe he complained, that he could not get admittance unto God, nor audience with him, which was a further aggravation of his ſorrow. This he proſecutes from *verſ.* 3. to the end of *verſ.* 9. *O that I knew where I might find him, that I might come even to his ſeat; I would order my cauſe before him, and fill my mouth with arguments; I would know the words which he would anſwer me,* &c. As if (according to the ſcope of this expoſition) he had ſaid, *I have waited long under my preſſures and burdens, with my petition in my hand; yea I have tendred up my petition, but as yet I can get no anſwer: Alas, I am greatly afflicted, yet ſo far from being relieved, that I cannot be heard; I would therefore get near to God, to ſpread and order my cauſe before him.* To be heard and to be relieved, are often in Scripture ſence the ſame thing; and alwayes not to be heard ſignifies as much as not to be relieved. Till the Lord gives us his ear, he never gives us his hand, therefore *Job* muſt needs think himſelf far from being helped, while he thought that he was not heard.

Thirdly, Becauſe he complained that the Lord did thus afflict and try him, when he already knew what he was, and what he would be after his tryal by the ſoareſt afflictions; when he knew that he was innocent, and that he would continue and hold out in his innocency to the end; that he would not be weary of well doing, though under the worſt of ſufferings (*verſ.* 10, 11, 12.) *He knoweth the way that I take*, &c. As if he had ſaid, *The Lord needs not do this to try me, for he knoweth well enough who I am, and the way that I go; he knoweth both the frame of my heart and the courſe of my life; he knoweth how it is with me now, and that I ſhall be found ſuch as I have often profeſſed my ſelf to be, when he hath kept me to the utmoſt of his purpoſe in this fiery furnace of affliction. When he hath tryed me I ſhall come forth as Gold*; that is, *when all's done, he knows that I ſhall hereafter approve my ſelf upright in heart, and that (through his grace, already beſtowed upon me) I have hitherto kept his way, and not declined nor gone back from the commandments of his lips, yea that I have eſteemed the words of his mouth more then my neceſſary food.* Thus *Job* is conceived complaining upon this account, that he ſhould be ſo extreamly afflicted, though the Lord knew his way; and that he was both a lover of his Word, and a keeper of his Commandments, and that he would perſevere with joy in keeping them to the end, though he ſhould not ſee the expected and deſired end of thoſe ſorrows.

Fourthly, Becauſe he is conceived complaining that he found the Lord altogether inexorable, ſo that no impreſſion could be made upon him by any thing he could ſay or do to take him off from his ſeverity towards him (*Verſ.* 13, 14.) *He is of one mind, who can turn him?* (there is no dealing with God) *and what his ſoul deſireth, even that he doth* (let it fall where and on whom it will, he will do it) *for he performeth the thing that is appointed for me.*

From all which *Job* inferreth, that he had cauſe enough to complain, much more that he did not complain without cauſe (*Verſ.* 15. 16, 17.) *Therefore am I troubled at his preſence: when I conſider, I am afraid of him, for God makes my heart ſoft, and the Almighty troubleth me, becauſe I was not cut off before the darkneſs, neither hath he covered the darkneſs from my face.* Thus you have the parts and ſcope of the whole Chapter, as 'tis ſuppoſed to be an over bold complaint in reference to the dealings of the Lord with him.

From all which 'tis concluded, that though the Chapter begins with, *Then* Job *anſwered, and ſaid*, yet, that *Job* doth not anſwer *Eliphaz*, nor apply himſelf to what he had ſaid; but that being wearied with his often repeating and renewing the ſame arguments againſt him, he doth, upon the matter, leave him and his friends, and all diſcourſe with them; turning himſelf to God, and pouring his ſorrow into his boſom; as if the anſwer were directed to God, and not at all to *Eliphaz*.

Sæpe antea ſtatuerat Job, *ſe amicorum exacerbantibus ſermonibus defeſſum, nolle amplius cum iis differere, ſed potius cum Deo æquiſſimo judice; Nunc hoc ſuum propoſitum ad implere tentans ad Deum ſermonem dirigit, vel ad ſeipſum*, i. e. *ſecum ipſe ratiocinatur.* Bold.

But I rather apprehend (according to the former interpretation of this reply) that *Job* doth here plainly hold forth an anſwer to what *Eliphaz* had objected or laid to his charge, and that being ſtill ſo hotly oppoſed, he doth firſt defend his own integrity in this Chapter; and that, ſecondly, in the next he overthroweth the ground or foundation upon which his friends built their general oppoſition; affirming, that there is neither any certain time nor way in which the Lord doth puniſh wicked men in this world, and that therefore no argument can be framed, or judgment given of any mans condition by his preſent ſtate, or the external diſpenſations of God towards him. Taking this ſence, we may reduce the whole Chapter to theſe two parts.

Firſt, A preface; ſecondly, The pleading it ſelf.

The preface is laid down in *verſ.* 2. *Even to day is my complaint bitter, my ſtroak is heavier then my groaning.* The pleading follows in the ſubſequent parts of the Chapter; the ſum of which may be collected into this formal Argumentation.

Ye do falſly accuſe him of wickedneſs, and hypocriſie, who is ready to plead his cauſe, and doth earneſtly deſire that he may do it before the throne of God.

But I am ready and do earneſtly deſire to plead my cauſe before the throne of God.

Therefore ye falſly accuſe me of wickedneſs and hypocriſie.

The aſſumption only of this Syllogiſme is handled in this Chapter, from the ſecond verſe to the end; in which it appears, that *Job* was ready not only to diſpute the point in controverſie with his friends, but was moſt willing that the Lord ſhould have the hearing of it; for ſo he ſaith, *O that I knew where I might find him, that I might even come to his ſeat, I would order my cauſe before him, and fill my mouth with arguments*; that is, I would produce ſuch arguments for my ſelf, and againſt my oppoſers, as would render my cauſe juſt and innocent before God, how guilty ſoever I am found and repreſented in the opinion of men.

Thus far concerning the general ſtate of this Chapter.

I ſhall next proceed to explicate the parts and particulars of it.

Verſ. 1. Then Job anſwered, and ſaid.

Theſe words have occurr'd often before, I ſhall not ſtay upon them. But what ſaid he? And how did he anſwer?

Verſ. 2. Even to day is my complaint bitter, my ſtroak is heavier then my groaning.

Thus *Job* begins. This is at once his prologue to what he had to ſay, and his Apology for what he had (paſſionately) ſaid already. *Even to day*, or *even this day*. The word *Day* is taken either more largely for the time near at hand, or ſtrictly, for the preſent time (*Pſal.* 95. 8.) *To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts*; that is, *Hear his voice this inſtant day, and harden not your hearts one day longer.* Again (*Deut.* 4. 8.) *What Nation is there ſo great that hath ſtatutes and judgments ſo righteous as all this law, that I have ſet before you this day*, or at this preſent time? *Jacob* ſaith to *Eſau* (Gen. 25. 31.) *Sell me this day thy birth-right*; that is, let me have it now, let us ſtrike up the bargain this hour, or before we part. Thus here, *To day*, &c. as if *Job* had ſaid, *O friend* Eliphaz, *I perceive that after all thoſe dayes of diſputation which have paſſed between us, this day is like to be ſpent and run out in as harſh cenſures on your part, and in as bitter complaints on my part, as any of the former.*

Even this day is my complaint bitter.

The word rendred *Complaint* is tranſlated alſo ſometimes *Prayer*, and ſometimes *Meditation* (Gen. 24. 63.) *Iſaac went out into the field to meditate*, we put in the Margin, *to pray*. *Hannah* uſeth the ſame word (1 *Sam.* 1. 16.) *Account not thy handmaid for a daughter of* Belial, *for out of the abundance of my complaint* (we put in the Margin, *Meditation*) *and grief, have I ſpoken hitherto.* Many complain, who pray not; ſome pray, who complain not; and others meditate, who do neither complain nor pray: yet uſually we meditate, that we may conſider what to pray about, and in prayer pour out our complaints both about thoſe ſins and wants and mercies, which have fallen under our meditation. *Even to day is my complaint*

Bitter.] The Original word hath a twofold derivation, moſt render it as we, *Bitter*. Bitterneſs in Scripture is often uſed by a metaphor, to denote any thing which is grievous, troubleſom, afflictive, or diſtaſtful to us, becauſe bitter things are ſo to the pallate or taſte of man. Bitter things are troubleſom to ſenſe, and troubles are bitter to the Spirit. *Affliction is a bitter pill*; *thou writeſt bitter things againſt me*, ſaid *Job* to God before (*Chap.* 13. 26.) ſo that when he ſaith, *my complaint is bitter*, it ſounds thus much, my complaint is as great as great can be, and I have the greateſt reaſon to complain. For *by complaint*, we are to underſtand not only the act of complaining, but the matter upon which he did complain, or the cauſe of his complaint: As if he had ſaid, *My afflictions (about which I complain) are exceeding bitter, no marvail then if my complaint be ſo too.*

Aliqui deducunt à מרר *quod ſignificat amaratudinē, alii à* מרה *denotans rebellionem ſeu contumaciam.*

Secondly, The word comes from a root, ſignifying to rebel, to diſobey, to be exaſperated, or (as ſome learned in the Hebrew give it) to vary or alter the frame of a mans ſpirit

מרי *Exaſperatio, propriè variatio, alienitas, ut ſic dicam; quod qui rebellat, variet & infringat verbum & mandatum alterius, aut fœdus cum eo initum.*

ſpirit, and the diſpoſition of his mind; becauſe they who diſobey and rebel, do certainly vary and change their minds from what they ingaged to be, or profeſſed they were before; they turn aſide either from the lawful command given them, or from the promiſe and faith which they had given. So the word is uſed (1 *Kings* 13. 26.) Where the ſacred Hiſtory tells us of a Prophet who was ſent out upon a Meſſage by the Lord unto *Jeroboam*, and though he faithfully performed the Meſſage, yet hearkning to the counſel of another Prophet, he was ſlain by a Lion; *Thus ſaith the Lord, for as much as thou haſt diſobeyed* (or rebelled againſt) *the mouth of the Lord* (that is, the words that proceeded out of the mouth of the Lord) *and haſt not kept the commandment which the Lord thy God commanded thee*, &c. *Thy carkaſs ſhall not come into the ſepulcher of thy fathers*. Thus the word is tranſlated by ſome in this Text, of *Job's diſobedience or rebellion*; and they render the whole ſentence with an interrogation.

Etiam hoc die, contumacia (habetur) querimonia mea? Contumax eſt queſtus meus, perſtat, q. d. *non paret non cedet ſolatiis veſtris*. Rab. Sol.

What, is my complaint this day, accounted rebellion? As if I did contumaciouſly ſet my ſelf againſt God, while I am pouring out my ſorrows before him; whereas indeed, my complaint is rather rebellious or ſtout againſt your conſolations, it yeilds not to them, nor is at all abated by them. The way or courſe which you take to comfort me, is too weak to grapple with, much more is it too weak to conquer and ſubdue my ſorrows.

Yet further, This ſence and tranſlation of the word, may be applied to that ſpeech of *Eliphaz* in the former Chapter (*verſ.* 21.) exhorting *Job* to *acquaint himſelf with God, and to be at peace*; as if he had ſaid, *Leave off thy diſtances, lay down the weapons of that moſt unholy war which thou haſt taken up againſt God*. To which cloſe rebuke *Job* anſwers here, *What? Is my complaint to God looked upon by you as a combate with God? Or do ye think that while I beg pity and favour of God, I have bid him defiance, or declared my ſelf his enemy? What elſe can be the meaning of it, that you exhort me ſo ſeriouſly to reconcile my ſelf to God? He that is called to make peace with another, is ſuppoſed to be at war with him, or at leaſt to bear him ill will*. So then, according to this rendering, and interpretation of the Text, the drift of his ſpeech is to ſhew how little ground there was, yea how unjuſt it was, that he ſhould be accuſed of rebellion and contumacy againſt God, while he was only bemoaning his own ſad condition, and putting up his complaint to God. We may form up his ſence into this argumentation,

He cannot be juſtly accuſed of rebellion againſt God, who complains much, or greatly, when his grief is more or greater.
But my grief is more and greater then my complaint.
Therefore I cannot be juſtly accuſed of rebellion againſt God, becauſe I complain.

Etiam hodiè eſt (vel ſuo loco manet) exaſperatio querelæ meæ. Merc.
Quaſi ex noxio medicamine vulnus crevit, Etiam poſt tot & tanta verba veſtra, quibus ſperabam fore ut me ſolaremini augetur mea querela quia nihil eſt in veſtris verbis conſolationis. Mer.

Again, The Text is thus rendred, *Even to day the ſharpneſs or bitterneſs of my complaint remaineth, or my ſorrow is as it was. I am no way eaſed, but rather more afflicted by what you have ſaid for the eaſing of my affliction. An improper plaiſter doth but enflame, not at all heal the wound*. So that, as according to the former interpretation, he took off their charge of impatience, contumacy, and rebellion againſt God, according to the mind of this, he ſhews the weakneſs and inſufficiency of what they had ſpoken, as to the allay of his ſorrow, and the curing or ſatisfying of his diſtempered ſpirit. So that here he ſeems to renew and confirm that opinion which he had given of his friends in their procedure with him (*Chap.* 13. 4.) *Ye are forgers of lyes, ye are all Phyſitians of no value: O that ye would altogether hold your peace, and it ſhould be your wiſdom.* And again (*Chap.* 16. 2.) *Miſerable comforters are ye all; Shall vain words have an end? Or what emboldneth thee that thou anſwereſt? So here, ye have done nothing yet effectually to remove my complaint: I am like a poor patient, who having been long under the Phyſitians hand, and ſuffered many painful applications, is yet as far from a cure as at the firſt hour of his undertaking. Even to day the bitterneſs the ſharpneſs of my diſeaſed mind remaineth. I have been in pain* (as the Church ſpeaks, *Iſa.* 26. 18.) *I have as it were brought forth wind. Ye have not wrought any deliverance, neither hath this inhabitant (my ſorrow) fallen by your hand.*

Laſtly, Some refer theſe words to the promiſe made by *Eliphaz* (Chap. 22. 21.) exhorting *Job to acquaint himſelf with God*, &c. *and ſo good ſhould come to him*. But ſaith *Job* here, *Though I am clear from what you accuſe me, and alſo have communion with God in wayes of holineſs; yet I experience no ſuch good as you promiſe. I am not brought into wayes of comfort, but rather my ſorrows encreaſe, and my complaint is as bitter this day, as ever it was.*

And (as it follows in the Text)

My ſtroak is heavier then my groaning.

Non ſatis pro gravitate plagæ conquerat; Superat plaga querimoniam. Merc.
Sic ſe excuſat ab impatientia & contumacia objecta. q. d. *Injuſtiſſimū eſt me à vobis accuſari quia querar de meis malis cum multo gravior ſit plaga. Manus pro plaga à manu Dei inflicta. Metonymicœs.*

This he addeth as a further explication, or as a proof of the former part of the verſe; as if he had ſaid, *If ye inquire why my complaint is ſo bitter, it is becauſe my ſtroak is ſo heavy, even heavier then my groaning; And why ſhould ye call my complaint rebellion, ſeeing I do not complain more, no nor ſo much as I have cauſe; my ſtroak is heavier then my groaning*. Thus he is ſtill labouring to acquit himſelf of that ſo often repeated accuſation, impatience under the hand of God, and rebellion againſt him.

My ſtroak.] The Hebrew is, *my hand*. The hand is taken for that which was done by the hand; the inſtrument for the effect, *my hand*, that is, *the ſtroak of the hand that is upon me*; whoſe hand was that? The hand of God he means. As if it had been ſaid more expreſly, *The ſtroak of the hand of God upon me is heavier then my groaning*. In the former part of the verſe, he ſpake *of the bitterneſs of his complaint*, here of the *heavineſs of his ſtroak*, or *that the ſtroak given him was exceeding heavy*. As bitter things are grievous to the pallate, ſo heavy things are burdenſom to the whole body; *We are ſoon weary of that which is very heavy*. And therefore (*Matth.* 11. 30.) when Chriſt would convince us that we have no reaſon to be weary of that burden which he layeth upon us (his holy counſels and commandments) he ſaith, *My yoke is eaſie, and my burthen light*: My burdens are not like thoſe which the Phariſees bind upon you, *heavy and grievous to be born*, (Matth. 23. 4.) So here when *Job* ſaith, *My ſtroak is heavy*, he would have his friends know that his were (in themſelves) no light afflictions (though there is a ſence in which all the afflictions of the Saints *are light*, 2 Cor. 4. 17.) but grievous to be born.

Secondly, Some read the words thus, *My ſtroak is heavier upon my groanings, or when I groan*; as if he had ſaid, *the more I groan and ſigh, the more I am wounded; I get nothing by my groanings but freſh ſmitings and additional ſorrows.*

Manus mea aggravata ſuper gemitū meum, i. e. *propter gemitus & planctus quos dolores extorquent, etiam vires meæ deficiunt, manuſq; laſſæ & remiſſæ vix præ imbecillitate attolli poſſunt.* Sculc.

Thirdly, Others tranſlate the Hebrew word properly, not *ſtroak* (by a Metonimy of the effect) but *hand*. *My hand is heavy upon* (or becauſe of) *my groaning*; that is, *my hand is weak becauſe of my groanings*; a weak hand, is a heavy hand; that is heavy, which is not lifted up without difficulty. Now when the hand is weak we can hardly lift it to our head (as we ſay) the weak hand is a heavy hand, not becauſe of the weight of it, but becauſe of the weakneſs of it, or want of ſtrength to weild any thing with it, or to hold it up. In this ſence we are to underſtand *Job* crying out, *My hand is heavy becauſe of my groaning*; as if he had ſaid, *My ſtrength fails me, my hands hang down, and through weakneſs I am not able to lift them up*. In *Chap.* 4. *Eliphaz* told *Job*, that he by his good counſel had formerly *ſtrengthened the weak, or the looſened hands*. Which form of ſpeaking anſwers that of the Apoſtle (*Heb.* 12. 12.) *Lift up the hands that hang down.* Weakneſs is as a weight faſtned to the hand, and holding it down. The hand is never ſo much faſtned, as when it is (in this ſence) made lax or looſened. The original word here uſed intimates, that much ſorrow and trouble weigh down the hand; *My hand is heavy becauſe of my groaning*, or (as we read) *My ſtroak is heavier then my groaning*.

Thus we have *Job* ſtill complaining and groaning; whence was all this? Even from the ſence of his ſore afflictions. Which may teach us,

Firſt, *That affliction doth uſually vent it ſelf in complaints and groans.*

While we are in the fleſh we are ſubject to affliction; and all affliction is grievous to the fleſh, not only to fleſh as it notes the corruption of the ſoul, but to fleſh as taken for the conſtitution of the body. *Affliction will be felt; it makes the fleſh ſmart*; and when the fleſh ſmarts, it may make him complain and groan who is ſpiritual; yea complaints and groans give ſome eaſe to our afflictions. As the pain of affliction cauſeth groaning and complaining, ſo groaning and complaining are ſome relief in our pains; and hence it hath been reported as one of the higheſt pieces of cruelty not to allow thoſe who have been under exquiſite pains to complain and groan; for groaning doth not at all abate the pain, yet it doth ſomewhat divert our thoughts from it; and while we communicate it to others in complaints, we are ſomewhat the leſs ſenſible of it our ſelves.

Secondly, Whereas *Job* checks his friends (according to the ſecond expoſition of the words) for calling or accounting his complaint rebellion.

Obſerve, *That we are apt to miſunderſtand and wrongfully interpret the complaints of others.*

Many are ready to miſinterpret that which we ſpeak deliberately, much more what we ſpeak paſſionately and complainingly; *Job* ſpake ſorrowfully, and he was preſently judged to ſpeak rebelliouſly: he was but humbling and bemoaning himſelf before God, yet he was eſteemed as a man riſing up againſt and warring with God. While *Hannah* was making a prayerful complaint to God, *Eli a good man* thought ſhe was overgone with wine (1 *Sam.* 1. 14.) *How long wilt thou be drunk, put away thy wine from thee.* When the Apoſtles were uttering the great things of God, as *ſome were amazed*, ſo *others mocked, ſaying, Theſe men are full of new wine* (Act.2.13.) There are two ſorts of words and actions moſt liable to miſ-interpretation.

Firſt, When we act or ſpeak highly in holineſs; for then the world looks upon thoſe of ſoundeſt minds, as mad, or vain, as diſtracted or drunken, *theſe men* (ſaith the world) *are full of new wine*; whereas indeed (as *Peter* makes anſwer in the *Acts*) *they are not drunken, as is ſuppoſed, but filled with the Spirit. Feſtus* told *Paul*, that he was *beſide himſelf, that much learning had made him mad*, when he heard the diſcourſe of his wonderful converſion to Chriſt, and holy converſation in Chriſt (*Acts* 26. 24.) And it ſeems that ſome among the *Corinthians* had no better nor other opinion of him, elſe he would not have made ſuch an Apology for himſelf and fellow ſervants in Goſpel work (2 *Cor.* 5. 13.) *Whether we be beſides our ſelves it is to God*, &c. that's a ſober madneſs indeed which is to God. But thus ſtill we ſee they who act or ſpeak higheſt in grace, are cenſured as acting and ſpeaking below nature. And as thoſe whoſe graces are moving aloft, are often ſuſpected of madneſs,

So, ſecondly, they who lye below complaining under the preſſures of nature by affliction, are as often ſuſpected of and charged with impatience. *A troubled ſpirit can hardly judge aright of it ſelf, and is ſeldom rightly judged by others.* I will end this point with two Cautions; the firſt, to all, concerning thoſe that are afflicted; the ſecond, to all that are afflicted.

To the former, I ſay, *judge charitably of thoſe who complain bitterly*; for as a man in a low condition knoweth not what himſelf would either be or do, were he advanced to the heights of honour and power; ſo he that is at eaſe, and well, knoweth not what himſelf would either be or do, were he in pain or overwhelmed with ſorrows. *Extreams in any ſtate are rarely born with a well or duely tempered moderation.*

Secondly, To the latter, I ſay, let them expect to hear themſelves hardly cenſured, and learn to bear it; let not ſuch think ſtrange of their ſufferings, either under the hand of God, or by the tongues of men. *Great ſufferers ſpeak often unbecomingly, and are as often ſo ſpoken of.*

Thirdly, Foraſmuch as the matter of this ſuggeſtion againſt *Job*, *tumultuous and rebellious ſpeeches*, at leaſt ſpeeches ſavouring ſtrongly of rebellion, are incident to any godly man in *Job's* condition,

Obſerve, *There may be rebellion againſt God in a good mans complainings under the afflicting hand of God.*

An unquiet ſpirit is not only a great burden to man, but a diſhonour to God. Our diſſatisfaction with the dealings of God, carrieth in it (at leaſt an implicit) accuſation of him, or that God hath not done well becauſe it is ill (to ſenſe) with us. There is a rebellion againſt the Rod as well as againſt the Word of God. For as our ſtruggling and ſtriving with the Word of God, and the unquietneſs of our hearts under any truth when it takes hold of us, is rebellion againſt God; ſo to ſtrive, and ſtruggle with the Rod of God, or with the croſs that he layes upon us, is rebellion againſt him alſo. God ſpeaks to us by his Rod as well by his Word; and we ſpurn at God in wrangling with his Rod, as well as in wrangling with his Word. Yea to have hard thoughts of God, as that he is ſevere, and rigorous, that he hath put off his bowels of compaſſion towards us, and forgotten to be gracious; ſuch thoughts as theſe of God under affliction, are rebellious thoughts. And as there is a rebellion in the thoughts againſt God in caſe of affliction, ſo alſo in the Tongue. Thus, to murmur is to rebel: I do not ſay that all complaining is rebelling, but all murmuring is; we may complain, and tell the Lord how ſad it is with us, how much our ſouls, our bodies, our eſtates, our relations bleed and ſmart. We may complain, and make great complaints without ſin, but the leaſt murmuring is ſinful, yea in the very nature of it, ſo full of ſin, that it uſually and deſervedly paſſeth under the name of Rebellion. The children of *Iſrael* were as often charged with rebellion as with murmuring; and therefore when they murmured for want of water, *Moſes* ſaid unto them, *Hear now ye rebels, muſt we fetch you water out of this Rock?* (Numb. 20. 10.) And again, *Moſes* chargeth this upon them with his laſt breath (as it were) *Deut.* 31. 27. *I know thy rebellion and thy ſtiff neck: behold, while I am yet alive with you this day, ye have been rebellious againſt the Lord, and how much more after my death?* yea the Lord himſelf chargeth rebellion upon that unparalleld pair of Brethren, *Moſes* and *Aaron* themſelves, becauſe they had not ſo fully as they ought at all times and in all things ſubmitted unto his divine diſpenſations among that people, (*Numb.* 24.) *The Lord ſpake to* Moſes, *ſaying,* Aaron *ſhall be gathered unto his people, for he ſhall not enter into the Land which I have given unto the children of* Iſrael, *becauſe ye* (the Lord puts them both together in the ſin) *rebelled againſt my word at the waters of* Meribah.

Fourthly, Whereas *Job* ſaith, *Even to day my complaint is bitter,*

Obſerve, *The afflictions and ſorrows of ſome eminently godly, ſtick by them, or continue long upon them.*

It is with afflictions as with diſeaſes, there are ſome acute diſeaſes, ſharp and fierce for a while, but they laſt not, they are over in a few dayes; for either the diſeaſe departs from the man, or the man departs out of the world by the fierceneſs of his diſeaſe. There are alſo Chronical diſeaſes, laſting, lingring diſeaſes, that hang about a man many dayes, yea months and years, and will not be gone while he lives, but lie down in the grave with him. Such a difference we find among thoſe other afflictions and troubles which are not ſeated (as diſeaſes) in the body, but reach the whole eſtate of man. Some are acute and ſharp, like the fierce fits of a Fever, but they laſt not; or like Summers ſudden ſtorms, which are ſoon followed with a ſucceſſion of fair weather. But there are alſo Chronical afflictions, tuff and unmoveable troubles, which abide by us, which dwell with us day after day, year after year, and never leave us while we live, or till we leave the world. Many a good man hath carried his affliction with him to the grave. If any ſhall object, how then is that of *David* true (*Pſal.* 30. 5.) *Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning*; I anſwer, firſt, That Scripture ſpeaks of that which is often experienced, but not alwayes; ſecondly, It is moſt true alſo that all our weeping is but for a night, yea but for *a moment* (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, 2 *Cor.* 4. 17.) compared with that morning of joy when the day of our bleſſed eternity ſhall begin. Thirdly, The *Pſalm* hath this ſcope chiefly, to ſhew, that the troubles of the Saints are not everlaſting, not that they are never laſting; or to ſhew that the night of weeping ſhall at laſt conclude in a morning of joy to the godly, not that their night of weeping ſhall preſently conclude. For as ſome have only a Summers night, or a ſhort night of ſorrow, ſo others have a Winters night, or a long night of ſorrow. And this night of ſorrow, may be as long not only as many natural dayes or as ſome years, but as long as all the natural dayes and years of this preſent life. The morning of joy is not to be underſtood of the next morrow after the ſorrow began, for how long ſoever our weeping continues, it is night with us, and whenſoever joy comes (though at midnight) 'tis morning with us. For ſure enough as thoſe ſons of pleaſure are deſcribed (*Iſa.* 56. 12.) promiſing themſelves the continuance of their joy (*To morrow ſhall be as this day, and much more abundant, therefore come fetch wine and let us drink to day, there will be wine enough for to morrow too*; thus they promiſed themſelves that their pleaſures ſhould continue in a ſucceſſion of many morrows. Now as theſe ſons of pleaſure promiſed themſelves the continuance of their delight) ſo many of the ſons and daughters of ſorrow have found and ſtill find a continuance of their troubles, and have cauſe to ſay, this day is even as bad as yeſterday was; yea our bitter cup, our wine of aſtoniſhment is much more abundant, our ſorrow is greater this day then it was yeſterday, that was a black ſad gloomy day, and this is a day more black, ſad, and gloomy then that was.

Fifthly, From theſe words, *My ſtroak is heavier then my groaning,*

> Obſerve, *That the afflictions of ſome of the precious ſervants of God, exceed, and ſurpaſs all their complaints and groans.*

The groans of ſome are heavier then their ſtroak, and the ſtroaks of not a few are heavier then their groans. Some ſhew more ſorrow then they have, and others have more ſorrows then they can ſhew. *I,* ſaith *Job, cannot tell you, no not ſo much as by the language of my groaning, how heavy my ſtroak is.* As there *is a peace of God,* a peace which he giveth to many of his people in this life, *which paſſeth all underſtanding* (Phil. 4. 6.) they have a ſence of ſuch peace ſometimes upon their ſpirits as their underſtandings know not what to make of it, they are ſo far from being able to tell you what it is, that they are not able to conceive what it is; but muſt confeſs that their peace is greater and larger then their underſtanding. Now (I ſay) as the peace which God gives his paſſeth their underſtandings, ſo the troubles and ſorrows of many who are dear to God, exceed, or ſurpaſs all their expreſſions, they cannot declare, nor can any for them, how it is with them. Again, as there is in this life a joy in believing, which is unſpeakable (1 *Pet.* 1. 8.) ſo there is a ſorrow in ſuffering which is unſpeakable. And (which is very wonderful) theſe two meet ſometimes in the ſame perſon, who at the very inſtant while his ſorrow is ſo great that he is not able to expreſs it, hath alſo ſweet and raviſhing joyes beyond expreſſion. Yet I conceive (as to *Job's* caſe) his ſpirit was dark, and his mind troubled, as well as his body was pained, and his outward eſtate torn and ruin'd.

Sixthly, From theſe words, *My ſtroak is heavier then my groaning,*

> Obſerve, That, *it is ſinful to groan and complain beyond the ſtroak that is upon us, or to complain more then we have cauſe.*

Job ſeems here to yield it, and confeſs, that if his ſtroak had not been ſo heavy, his groans had not been innocent; and if it be ſinful to groan, and complain more, or beyond our ſtroaks, how ſinful is it to complain without any ſtroak at all? Some complain without cauſe, and groan before they are ſmitten; yea, ſome are ready to complain when they are incompaſſed about with many mercies, and are not ſatisfied when they are filled; they complain, becauſe they have not what they would, or becauſe others have more then they, though themſelves have enough, if they knew what is enough. The Ox and Aſs are a rebuke to ſuch; for as *Job* ſpeaketh (Chap. 6.) *Will the Aſs bray when he hath graſs, or loweth the Ox over his fodder?* Irrational creatures will not complain when they have the conveniences of nature. Surely then thoſe men act much below grace, who complain when they have food convenient, and health convenient, yea all things convenient (poſſibly aboundant) for the ſupport of nature; who complain when they have not ſo much as an aking joynt about them, or the ſcratch of a pin, no nor the want of a pin, nor of a ſhoo-latchet. Some complain when they have meat enough, becauſe they have not ſauce; yea ſome complain when they have both meat and ſauce enough, the affluence of all things, not only for neceſſity but for delight. What ſhall we ſay of them who are never well neither full nor faſting; who are ſo far from having learned the Apoſtles leſſon to be content in all eſtates, that they are content in none. The people of *Iſrael* murmured not only when they wanted bread, but when they had it; when they had Mannah they murmured for Quailes, and at laſt they murmured at their very Mannah, their ſouls loathed that light bread. Conſider how great their ſin is, who complain upon ſuch terms as theſe, who complain before they are hurt, yea who complain when they have no cauſe but to be very thankful. We live in complaining times, many cry out of preſſures and burthens, nothing pleaſeth many among us, becauſe every thing is not as they pleaſe. *Take heed your groanings be not heavier then your ſtroak,* eſpecially take heed ye be not found groaning without a ſtroak, and complaining over your bleſſings; the Lord hath healed our ſtroaks in a great degree, but our complainings are not healed; if we be found complaining when we have no cauſe, or when we ſhould be giving thanks, we may quickly provoke God to give us cauſe enough of complaining. God hath heavier ſtroaks for them, whoſe groaning is heavier then their ſtroak; and he hath heavieſt ſtroaks for them, who groan when they are not ſtricken. When children cry for nothing, they are uſually made to feel ſomething which will make them cry to purpoſe. This humour is childiſh enough in children, it is worſe in men, but it is worſt of all in Chriſtians, who are alſo the children of God. There are two things which God will not bear in his; firſt, When they grow wanton with a mercy; ſecondly, When they complain without a croſs. To complain under a croſs, is to act below grace; to complain of a croſs, is to act againſt grace; to complain beyond a croſs, is a defect of grace; but to complain without a croſs, is a defect in nature.

The Apoſtles rule is (1 *Theſ.* 5. 18.) *in every thing give thanks,* and he gives his reaſon for it in the words which follow, *for this is the will of God in Chriſt Jeſus concerning you.* Now, if it be the will of God that we ſhould give thanks in every thing, then it muſt be againſt his will that we ſhould complain in any thing. *Complaining is contrary to thanks-giving.* A godly man may ſee two things in the heavieſt ſtroaks of his affliction, which may provoke him to thankſgiving, at leaſt, which may ſtop him from all immoderate complaining; Firſt, That God hath a reſpect to his good in his heavieſt afflictions, and that the iſſue ſhall certainly be good to him. Secondly, That how heavy ſo ever his ſtroak is, his ſin hath deſerved a heavier, even his little finger heavier upon him, then his loyns have been. That our ſtroak might have been heavier may ſtop our complaining; but that our heavieſt ſtroak ſhall turn to our benefit, ſhould ſtir us up to thankſgiving: In Heaven there will not be the leaſt ſhadow of a cauſe to complain; thankſgiving will be all our work, and the work of all in Heaven; and by how much we are the more in thankſgiving and the leſs in complaining on Earth (unleſs it be of and againſt our ſelves for ſin) the more heavenly we are. When we are ſtricken we ſhould complain as little as we can, and we ſhould alwayes be able to ſay (as *Job* here) *That our complaint is not greater then our ſtroak.*

VERS. 3, 4, 5.

Oh that I knew where I might find him! that I might come even to his ſeat:

I would order my cauſe before him, and fill my mouth with arguments.

I would know the words which he would anſwer me, and underſtand what he would ſay unto me.

JOB having ſhewed in the former verſe, how bitter and how ſad his Condition was, even far beyond his own Complaint, and that his ſtroak was heavier then his groaning; he now turns himſelf from Earth to Heaven, from the Creature to the Creator, from man to God. *Job* had been among his friends a great while, they had debated the matter long, but all in vain, and without fruit to his ſoul; he had yet received no Comfort: What will he do next? See here his addreſs to God.

Verſ. 3. **O that I knew where I might find him! that I might come even to his ſeat:**

O that I knew!] The Hebrew is, *who will give me to know*, &c. The words are a form of wiſhing, ordinary among the Jews; *Who will give, or who will grant me this or that; O that I knew!* &c. And it intimates or implies two things.

Firſt, A vehement and ſtrong deſire after ſomewhat much deſirable; who will give me this? Or where ſhall I have it?

Secondly, It implies ſelf-inability, or ſelf-inſufficiency to attain and reach the thing deſired; as if *Job* had ſaid, *I am not able of my ſelf to find him, O that I knew where I might find him! O that I either had the light of this knowledge in my ſelf, or that ſome body would enform and teach me! O that I had a friend to Chalk me out the way, to lead me by the hand, and bring me near to God.*

Quis mihi tribuat ut cognoſcam & inveniā illum. Vulg.

The Vulgar Latine Reading fixeth both thoſe acts upon God as the object; *O that ſome one or other would give me to know and find him!* As if his wiſh and longing deſire were, firſt, to know God; ſecondly, to find him, or in finding to know him. Our tranſlation determines this knowing in *Job*, and finding upon *God. O that I knew where I might find him!* Who it is that *Job* would find is not expreſt in the Text by name, nor is there any Antecedent in the verſe before, with which we can Connect this Relative *him*. Yet 'tis beyond queſtion or diſpute that he means God, *O that I might find him!* that is, *God.* But why did he not ſay, *O that I knew where to find God*, but, *O that I knew where to find him?* I anſwer, He doth it becauſe his heart being full of God, he ſuppoſed that thoſe to whom he ſpake had their hearts full of him too, and ſo would eaſily underſtand whom he meant, or that he could mean none but God.

We find ſuch kind of abrupt ſpeeches (as I may call them) in other Texts of Scripture, ſtill ariſing from fulneſs and ſtrength of affection in the ſpeaker. See how *Solomon* begins his Love-ſong, *his Song of Songs. The Song of Songs which is* Solomons, that's the Title of it; how doth it begin? *Let him kiſs me,* &c. Here is a ſtrange Exordium to a Song, none having been ſpoken of before; *Let him kiſs me with the kiſſes of his mouth!* by whom the Church would be kiſſed ſhe expreſſeth not; but her heart was ſo full of Chriſt, ſo full of love to Chriſt her Bridegroom, her Husband, that ſhe thinks it needleſs to mention him by Name, when ſhe ſpeaks of him whoſe kiſſes ſhe deſired. Her love had paſſed through the whole Creation, through men and Angels, through all things here below, and fixt it ſelf only upon Chriſt her Lord and Love. Therefore ſhe never ſtood ſpeaking perſonally of him, but only relatively, and leaves all to underſtand whom ſhe intended. Thus ſaith *Job, O that I knew where I might find him!* whenas he had not ſpoken of any diſtinct perſon before in this Chapter. And we have a like paſſage flowing from a like abundant love to Chriſt, in *John* 20. *v.* 15. where *Mary* comes to the Sepulchre (Chriſt being riſen) and the Angel ſeeing her weep asked her the reaſon of it; to whom ſhe replied, *Becauſe they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him*; having thus ſaid, *ſhe turned her ſelf back, and ſaw Jeſus ſtanding, and knew not that it was Jeſus: he ſaith unto her, Woman, why weepeſt thou? Whom ſeekeſt thou? She ſuppoſing him to be the Gardiner, ſaid, Sir, if thou have born him hence, tell me where thou haſt laid him.* She never names Chriſt, but only ſaith, *If thou have born him hence*, &c. becauſe her heart was full of Chriſt, ſhe thought his heart was full of him too, and that he underſtood her well enough whom ſhe meant, though ſhe ſaid not whom ſhe meant. Thus in the preſent Text, *Job* was to God at that time, as *Mary* to Chriſt, at a loſs for him, not knowing where to find him, God was as it were removed from him, as Chriſt was riſen from the Sepulchre; therefore he complainingly and affectionately enquires; *O that I knew where I might find him!* My ſoul is a thirſt for God, my heart pants after him, *O that I knew*

Verbum מצא *ſignificat ſæpius obviā habere quēquam vel alicui obviū fieri.*

Where I might find him!] The Hebrew word ſignifieth to *find*, by going out to meet a man, or (as we ſay) to light upon him. As *Ahab* ſaid to *Elijah* (1 *Kings* 21. 20.) *haſt thou found* (or met) *me O mine enemy? And he anſwered, I have found* (or met) *thee.* So the word is uſed (2 *Kings* 10. 13.) Jehu *met with the Brethren of* Ahaziah *King of* Judah; in the Margin we ſay, *Jehu found the Brethren of* Ahaziah, that is, he met them upon the way, for he went out to meet them. Read alſo (1 *Sam.* 10. 3.) as if the ſence were thus given, *O that I knew where I might find him!* that is, *whither I might go to meet him*; though I ſhould not find him by accident, or (as we ſay) ſtumble upon him, I would go out, I would travel, and take pains upon hopes to meet him.

Secondly, That word ſignifies ſo to find as to take hold and apprehend, to take faſt hold of a thing; and then, *O that I might find him!* is, *O that I might lay hold on him!* if I knew where I might have him, I would lay faſt hold on him, and cleave cloſe to him. So the word is uſed (*Iſa.* 10. 10.) *As my hand hath found the Kingdoms of the Idols, and whoſe graven Images did excel them of* Jeruſalem *and* Samaria. Thus ſpake the proud *Aſſyrian, my hand hath found them*; why, the Kingdoms of the Heathen were not in a corner, that he had need to ſearch after them, he did not make a new diſcovery of thoſe Kingdoms; they were not, *Terra incognita*, an unknown or a *New found Land*, that's not the meaning; but when he ſaith, *my hand hath found them*, the ſence is, *I have laid hold on them, and ſiezed them to my own uſe, I have added them to my own dominion, and brought them under my ſubjection.* So in *verſ.* 4. of that Chapter, *My hand hath found as a neſt the riches of the people*; that is, I have laid hold on their riches, and ſaid *all's mine*; I have taken the whole neſt with all the eggs, all their goods and treaſures, into my cuſtody and poſſeſſion. Thus *Job* would find God that he might lay hold on him for his own, or own him as his. Thus alſo the word is uſed (*Pſal.* 21. 8.) *Thine hand ſhall find out all thine Enemies, thy right hand ſhall find out thoſe that hate thee.* It is not meant only of a diſcovery of a perſon (though it be a truth, that the Lord will diſcover all that are his Enemies) but *thine hand ſhall find them out,* is, it ſhall take hold of them, graſp them, and arreſt them. Thy hand ſhall find out all thine Enemies, though cloſe, though covert Enemies, not only thy above-ground Enemies, but thy under-ground Enemies, as well thoſe that undermine thee, as thoſe that aſſault thee. Once more, in *Pſal.* 116. *v.* 3. we have an illuſtration of this ſence, *The ſorrows of death compaſſed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me.* The Hebrew Text is, *the pains of hell found me: the pains of hell*, that is, the greateſt, the extreameſt pains, *gat hold upon me*; *they found me*, that is, they ſiezed upon me, and held me faſt: a word of the ſame root is uſed in both parts of that Text; that which we tranſlate *to get hold*, is the ſame with that, *I found trouble and ſorrow*, they found me and I found them; thus ſaith *Job, O that I knew where I might find him*, that I might take hold of him; why how doth the hand of a Saint find God? How doth he take hold of and apprehend God? How doth he as it were arreſt him and keep him cloſe? I anſwer, *By faith*, and reliance upon him; *O that I knew where to find him!* that the Lord might not be at ſuch a diſtance from me, as he hath been, but that I finding him might fix my ſoul upon him. That's a good ſence.

Yet I conceive in this place, we may rather expound *Job* ſpeaking of God after the manner of Magiſtrates among men, who appoint certain places where to ſit in Judgment, where to hear Cauſes, whither all that are wronged and oppreſſed reſort for relief and right (1 *Sam.* 7. 17.) *Samuel* was the chief Magiſtrate, the Judge in *Iſrael.* Now the Text ſaith at *verſ.* 16. that *he went from year to year in Circuit* (as we have the Judges of the Circuit) *To* Bethel, *and* Gilgal, *and* Mizpah, *and Judged* Iſrael *in all thoſe places, and returned to* Ramah, *for there was his houſe, and there he Judged* Iſrael; as if he had ſaid, *his ſtanding houſe* was at *Ramah*, and thither all cauſes were brought, and all perſons grieved reſorted for Juſtice in their ſeveral caſes. He rid Circuit every year, that all the people might the more eaſily find him; yet he had a fixed ſeat. In alluſion to this practice *Job* appealing from his friends to God ſaith, *O that I knew where I might find him*, and go to him for Judgment; O that I might have Audience before him in this great buſineſs!

But it may be ſaid, Did not *Job* know where to find God? Or was *Job* out of the preſence of God?

I anſwer, the Lord carried himſelf to *Job* at that time as a ſtranger, and though he were with him (as he alwayes is with all his) yet he did not find him; the Lord is with many of his people when they are not with him, that is, when they do not find him, or are not ſenſible of his preſence. God is with his people, even when they walk through the valley of the ſhadow of death, yet they are not alwayes with God: yea God doth not alwayes manifeſt himſelf to them while they walk in the moſt delicious and lightſom paradiſes of this life. God ſometimes hides himſelf, ſo that they cannot make it out that God is preſent with them. God is never ſeen in regard of the inviſibility of his nature, and he is often unſeen in regard of the obſcurity of his diſpenſations: as *Job* ſhews further at *verſ.*8. *Behold I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him.* I go forward and backward, that is, I go every way, I take all courſes to find him, but I cannot perceive God, for he hides and covers himſelf with clouds, that our prayers cannot come at him; as the Church complains (*Lam.* 3.44.) Though we are alwayes preſent to God, yet God is not alwayes preſent to us, that is, to our apprehenſion; as God is not at all preſent to our ſenſe, ſo he is not alwayes preſent to our faith; that's the meaning of *Job*, when he ſaith, *I go forward, but he is not there*, &c. God is every where; whither *can I go from his preſence* (ſaith *David*, Pſal.139.) *If I go up into Heaven, he is there*, &c. yet ſaith *Job, if I go forward, he is not there*, that is, I have no enjoyment of God there; and upon this ground he ſaith in the preſent Text, *O that I knew where I might find him! Job* was well acquainted with the doctrine of Gods Omnipreſence, he was far from thinking that there was any certain place where God was fixt, and whither he muſt repair, as to the Kings and Princes of this world for help. *Job* knew better Divinity then this, he was acquainted with the nature and divine perfections of God; but he ſpeaks as to his preſent want, *O that I knew where I might find him!*

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *A godly man hath earneſt and longing deſires after God.*

Whatſoever, or whomſoever he finds, he thinks he hath found nothing, or no body, till he finds God; *O that I might find him!* How doth *David* (Pſal.42.1,2.) ſhew his unſatisfiedneſs till he found God. *As the hart panteth after the water Brooks, ſo panteth my ſoul after thee, O God; my ſoul thirſteth for God, for the living God; when ſhall I come and appear before God?* Nothing but God was in his mouth, nothing in his deſire; *David* had a Kingdom, *David* had a Throne, *David* had honour and riches as much as he could deſire, why would not theſe ſatisfie his thirſt? Could not he ſit down in theſe enjoyments? No! *David* was hungry and thirſty, and pining, and empty, and ſtarving, and dying, till he had God, till he had this ſpecial enjoyment of God; for ſo we are to expound that Text, as this. *A wicked man can take up on this ſide God*, cares not to find him, nay, is afraid to be found of him; he then ſaith (according to the Text touched before) as *Ahab* to *Elijah*, *Haſt thou found me O mine enemy?* He would be glad if God would never find him, nor he find God (*Pſal.*10.4.) *The wicked through the pride of his Countenance will not ſeek after God.* The ſeat of pride is in the heart, but the proſpect of pride is in the face; *through the pride of his Countenance*, that is, by reaſon of that pride which doth diſcover it ſelf in his Countenance, which breaks out there, he will not *ſeek after God*, his pride will not let him ſeek after God. He that is proud, ſeeth not his need of God; and he that ſeeth not his need of God will never ſeek after him. Such a one is ſo far from longing after God, or ſaying, *O that I might know where I might find him!* that he will not ſo much as look after him, when he is told where he may be found. And not only ſo, but, *God is not in all his thoughts*; or as ſome render it, *all his thoughts are, there is no God*; yea not only are all his thoughts, but all his hopes are, that there is no God; if he can but ſtrengthen himſelf in the unbelief of a God, then he is well; all the thoughts and hopes that pleaſe and delight him, are that there is no God, ſo far is he from being ſolicitous to know God. *'Tis a condition equally ſad, either when all a mans thoughts are, that there is no God, or when God is not in all his thoughts.* A wicked man may talk of God ſometimes, but God never comes near his heart, as the Prophet ſpeaks (*Jer.* 12.2.) *Thou art near in their mouth, but far from their reins*; that is, from their deſires and delights. 'Tis what our reins ſay, not what our mouths ſay, that God reſpects. A godly mans chief care is to be accepted with God, his thoughts are for God, and of God; and were it not for this thought *that God is*, or that there is a God, and he a holy God, a juſt God, a gracious God, he would not think himſelf (as we ſay) worth the ground he goes upon. And as all his thoughts are that there is a God, ſo all his hope and faith is in him, and his deſires are after him; *O that I might find him, enjoy him, graſp him, take hold on him*, who is *The All* of my deſires, and hopes, and thoughts.

Secondly obſerve, *That a godly man is ſometimes at a loſs for God, and cannot tell where to find him.*

He hath no ſenſibly-ſpiritual enjoyment of him. The children of light often walk in darkneſs; they who fear the Lord much, may be without the feelings of his love; and they who obey his holy Commandments, without the comfort of his precious promiſes. Even Chriſt himſelf was at ſuch a loſs for God, when he cryed out, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* (Pſal.22.1.) Chriſt being to ſuffer for ſinners, taſted of all thoſe ſorts of ſufferings which are due to ſin; he endured not only the puniſhment of ſenſe in the pains of his body, but the puniſhment of loſs in the hidings of his fathers comfortable preſence from his ſoul. If this were done to the green tree, much more to the dry; and if our head found an interruption of the preſence of God, much more may we, who are his members.

Thirdly obſerve, *That while Saints are at a loſs for God, their deſires are often more quicker and more ſtirring after God.*

It is a ſad thing not to find God, but it is far ſadder to have no deſires after him: Unbelievers are alwayes at a loſs for God, they live without God in the world, ſuch a life is a very death; but this is more deadly, that they have no deſires after God, that they make no enquiry, no ſearch after him. Though *Job* were at a loſs for God, yet his heart was full of deſires to find him; and God (I may ſay) is moſt deſireable to Saints while they are at a loſs for him. Thus the Spouſe ſpeaks (*Cant.* 3.1.) *By night on my bed I ſought him whom my ſoul loveth; I ſought him, but I found him not.* But becauſe ſhe found him not, when ſhe ſought him, did ſhe give over ſeeking him? No, her deſires of ſeeking and finding him were enflamed by her not finding him when ſhe ſought him; as it follows in *verſ.* 2. *I will riſe now, and go about the City, in the ſtreets, and in the broad wayes, I will ſeek him whom my ſoul loveth: I ſought him, but I found him not.* Thus her ſecond labour in ſeeking of him was loſt alſo. But doth not this quite diſcourage her, and kill her deſires after him? Will ſhe not now give over ſeeking him? No not yet (*verſ.* 3.) *The watchmen that go about the City found me, to whom I ſaid, ſaw ye him whom my ſoul loveth?* She is ſtill enquiring and ſeeking, and as laſt ſhe found (*verſ.* 4.) *It was but little that I paſſed from them, but I found him whom my ſoul loveth: I held him, and would not let him go*, &c. Many who enjoy Chriſt have not ſuch ſtrong deſires after him as they who enjoy him not; as it is with other mercies, ſo with this, which is the higheſt and chiefeſt, the ſum of all mercies, the enjoyment of God; our deſires to him grow quicker upon his abſence, and we ſeldom prize his preſence as we ought, till he is departed or withdrawn from us.

Again, we may conſider *Job* here in a very afflicted condition, what doth he now? *O that I knew where I might find him!*

Fourthly note, *God is moſt ſweet to an afflicted ſoul.*

The preſence of God is ſweet, precious, and delicious to Saints at all times; but then ſweeteſt when they find moſt bitterneſs in the world. How pleaſant is the love of God when we are ſenſible of mans hatred? Some good men have ſo much ſweetneſs and love in the world, that they cannot ſo well reliſh or taſte the ſweetneſs of the love of God; though indeed nothing argues the excellency of the ſpirit of a Saint, then this, that the ſence of the love of God to him, takes off the reliſh of all creature love, in the midſt of his higheſt enjoyments of it. That ſoul is purely ſpiritual, which having abundance of worldly enjoyments, riches, friends, relations, all that he can deſire; yet in the affluence and higheſt float of all theſe can ſay, that the ſweetneſs which he taſteth in God drowns the reliſh of all theſe, and makes them as taſtleſs as the white of an Egg in compariſon of that ſweetneſs which he hath taſted in the goodneſs of God; this is ſpiritualneſs in the very height of it; but uſually God is then ſweeteſt to us when the world is bittereſt to us. *Afflicted ſouls make moſt haſt after God*; and it is well to do ſo; it is a very ſad ſign, the worſt ſymptom that can appear upon the ſouls of any, when afflictions draw them off from God, or when they grow cold in their affections towards God, while the love of the world grows cold towards them. The Prophet (*Amos* 6. 7.) foreſheweth a very great calamity that ſhould fall upon the people of God; *Thou ſhalt go captive with the firſt that go captive,* &c. And in *verſ.* 8. *The Lord God hath ſworn by himſelf, ſaith the Lord the God of hoſts, I abhor the excellency of* Jacob, *and hate his Palaces* (As if he had ſaid, though I have inveſted him with excellent priviledges, and though he make a great profeſſion of my name, yet becauſe of his provocations and unworthy walkings) *I will deliver up the City and all that is therein,* there's Captivity: then comes Peſtilence in *verſ.* 9. *And it ſhall come to paſs, that if ten men remain in the houſe, that they ſhall dye*; and they ſhall not bury them after the ordinary way, but burn them, and the neareſt relations ſhall do it (*Verſ.* 10.) *And a mans Uncle ſhall take him up, and he that burneth him, to bring the bones out of the houſe, and ſhall ſay unto him that is by the ſides of the houſe, is there yet any with thee? and he ſhall ſay, no: then ſhall he ſay, hold thy tongue, for we may not make mention of the Name of the Lord.* As if when all theſe Evils and Plagues were come upon them, they had been ſtopt or reſtrained from prayer, and totally withdrawn from God, by ſome prohibition from men, who were ſo far from calling the people to ſolicite God by prayer to take off his hand, that they forbid them ſo much as make mention of his name; as if they were either afraid or abhorred to mention the name of God, becauſe he had been ſo terrible among them in his Judgments. And whereas we tranſlate, *We may not make mention of the names of the Lord*; Our late Annotators take notice of two other readings. *We have not, or, we will not make mention of the name of the Lord*; implying that the ſtop lay only in their own ſpirits, they being either ſo generally wicked, that they had no mind to call upon God, or ſo unbelieving that they thought their caſe deſperate, and had no hope of help if they ſhould. A Heathen hath ſaid, *That their gods were moſt worſhipped when moſt diſpleaſed*; but we have ſome Chriſtians in name who will not worſhip God at all when they are under the tokens of his diſpleaſure. Thoughts of God are never more pleaſing to a gracious heart, nor more troubleſom to a wicked, then when they are in trouble.

Extrema calamitas & abalienatio amicorum juſtum hominem ad Deũ confugere compellebat. Pined.

Diligentius dii irati coluntur. Sen. L.1. de clem. 1.

Ne illum interpelles, neq; illum tuis precibus ſollicites, illiuſve nomen aut memoriam uſurpes, qui tibi hæc mala fecit, mandavit, voluit. Pined.

Fifthly, (Which will further clear what was laſt obſerved)

Obſerve, That, *The unkindneſs and trouble which a godly man findeth among his friends or others in the world, drives him nearer to God.*

Job beſides the hardſhip he found from ſtrangers, had been hardly uſed by his friends. The uſe which he made of all this, was to make more uſe of or to get near unto God. *O that I knew where I might find him.* This was *David's* wiſdom alſo (*Pſal.* 142. 4, 5.) *I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man would know me, refuge failed me, no man cared for my ſoul.* When all ſlighted him, when none took care of him; what doth he in this caſe? The next words tells us what; *I cryed unto thee, O Lord, I ſaid thou art my refuge, and my portion in the land of the living*; as if he had ſaid, upon theſe unkindneſſes, diſreſpects and ſlightings which I found in the world, I took occaſion, yea I was ſtirred in my ſpirit to cry unto thee, O Lord, and to ſay, *thou art my refuge,* that is, then I made thee my refuge more then ever. Having made thee my choice in my beſt times, when men honoured and embraced me, I am much encouraged in theſe evil times when men regard me not, and the more becauſe they regard me not to make thee my refuge, to ſhelter my weather beaten ſelf in thy name and power. As the natural ſpirits in the body, when the Air is very ſharp, cold, and unkind to the outward parts, retire inwards, reſort to the heart, keep cloſe to the heart; whereas in warmer weather the ſpirits are drawn forth, and therefore we are more ſubject to faintings and ſwoonings in hot weather then in cold: ſo when it is cold weather in the world, when it is as it were froſt and ſnow, ſtorm and tempeſt, then our ſpiritual ſpirits reſort and come in to God, and keep cloſe to him. When we have moſt friends in the world, or when the world is moſt friendly unto us, then God is our beſt friend; his favour is the moſt beneficial and deſirable favour, when we have as much as we can deſire of favour among men. But when the world hates us and frowns upon us, eſpecially when (as the Prophet ſpeaks of ſome, *Iſa.* 66. 5.) *Our brethren hate us, and caſt us out for the name ſake of God himſelf, ſaying, let the Lord be glorified.* When 'tis thus with us (I ſay) our ſouls are even forced into the preſence of God, to renew our intereſts in his love, and to aſſure our ſouls that we are accepted with him. If under ſuch meaſure from men, we find not help in God, we muſt remain for ever miſerable. God alone is enough, all without God is nothing to a godly man. The fulneſs of the creature without God cannot ſatisfie him, and the utmoſt want of the creature cannot diſcontent him while he enjoyeth God; the more he wants in the creature, the more he ſeeketh his content in God; and when he finds nothing below, he cryeth out with greateſt earneſtneſs, *O that I knew where I might find him!* whoſe throne is above, and who is the only happineſs of man while he is below.

Sixthly, We ſee how inquiſitive *Job* was after God, as he had a deſire and mind to find God, ſo he layes about him for Information where and how to find him.

Hence obſerve, *They who truly deſire to find God, are diligent in ſearching after him.*

O that I knew (ſaith *Job*) *where I might find him!* This was not an Idle wiſh; many are much in the *Optative mood,* full of wiſhings and wouldings; but their wiſhes are altogether wiſhes, and their deſires nothing but deſires; and ſuch deſires are killing deſires, as *Solomon* hath taught us, *The deſire of the ſloathful killeth him* (Prov. 21. 25.) an idle deſire is a death to the deſirer; a godly mans deſires are active deſires, they put him upon enquiry, lead him to the means of enjoying the good deſired. And though God be unexpectedly found of ſome that ſeek him not, yet no man can expect to find God, but he that ſeeketh him. And indeed what ſhould the Creature do, but be upon an enquiry after God? There is a naturality in it, he being the ſupreme being, that we who have our being from him ſhould ſeek after him. And the Apoſtle tells us (*Acts* 17. 26, 27.) that this is the deſign of God in making of one blood all Nations of men, for to dwell on the face of the earth; and in *determining the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation* (namely) *That they ſhould ſeek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him and find him, though he be not far from every one of us, for in him we live,* &c. The Lord is near all, he hath a preſence in all places, with all perſons; but the Lord would have all ſeek, feel, grope after him, even as ſuch as have but a dim light of him, as thoſe have that do not ſeek ſo much with their eyes as with their hands, they only feel after the things which they would have. There is a light in the ſpirits of all men, that haply they may feel after God, and find him; they who have not Scripture light, Goſpel light, the higheſt light, yet have ſome kind or degree of light; they have ſome glimmering, though no clear diſcernings. And that ſhould put them on to ſeek God;

much more ſhould they ſeek after him, who have cleareſt light. And where there is any heat of affection to God, a little light will ſerve them to ſeek after him; *they that are true deſirers will be diligent ſeekers.* And they, who ſeeking God, have found him, will ſeek him yet again, yea they will ſeek him more and more, as long as there is any thing more of God to be found; and there will alwayes be more of God to be found, for here we know God but in part, and therefore have found him but in part; and hence it is that all the Saints in this life, or on this ſide glory, even they of the higheſt form and greateſt proficiency in grace and knowledge, are called *Seekers* (*this is the generation of them that ſeek him*, Pſal. 24. 6.) but not ſuch ſeekers (as we find too many in theſe dayes) who, as if all were upon uncertainties in religion, ſay, they have as yet found nothing; for as there is ſomething wherein the moſt knowing and ſtrongeſt Chriſtians may be to ſeek, ſo there are many things, yea all things neceſſary to ſalvation, or without which we cannot be ſaved, which the weakeſt may find and know ſufficiently, though not fully. And as they who deſire to find theſe things, will be diligent in ſeeking them, ſo they may know in themſelves, or be fully aſſured that they have found them; and ſo even while they ſtill continue to be ſeekers, know that they are already finders.

Laſtly obſerve, *God is every where, yet eſpecially ſome where to be found.*

As there is a finding time, ſo there is a finding place, and finding means; there is a finding time, ſaith holy *David* (Pſal. 32. 6.) *For this ſhall every one that is godly pray to thee, in a time when thou mayeſt be found.* The Hebrew is, *in a finding time*; though I would not give any one a ſtop from ſeeking God at any time, yet I muſt ſay there is a ſpecial *finding time.* And this the Apoſtle calls *the accepted time* (2 Cor. 6. 2.) that is, *the time* which we ought to lay hold upon, or accept; as alſo, *the time*, wherein we ſhall be acceptable or find acceptation. There is alſo a *finding place*, there is *a where* as well as *a when* God ſpecially is to be found; I mean it not of a meer locality, as if God were now to be found more in one place then in another; for *Paul* ſaith (1 *Tim.* 6. 8.) *I will that men every where lift up pure hands without wrath and doubting.* And Chriſt told the woman (*Joh.* 4. 21.) *The hour cometh when ye ſhall neither in this Mountain, nor yet at* Jeruſalem *worſhip the Father*; not as if Chriſt had forbid the worſhip of the Father in thoſe places for the time coming; but he enlargeth publick worſhip to all places, or abrogates all differences of place under the Goſpel as to the worſhip of the Father. Yet if any man ſhall enquire, where may I find God? or ſay as *Job* here, *O that I knew where I might find him!* I would anſwer, firſt, Seek him in his Promiſes, ſearch the Scriptures, there you will find God. Secondly, Look for him in his Ordinances, of Prayer and Preaching, *&c.* for there he hath promiſed to be preſent; *Where two or three are met together in my Name, there am I in the midſt of them* (Matth. 18. 20.) When the Church or Spouſe in the *Canticles* (Chap. 1. 7, 8.) asks the queſtion, *Tell me (O thou whom my ſoul loveth) where thou feedeſt, where thou makeſt thy flocks to reſt at Noon*; Chriſt her beloved, anſwers, *If thou know not (O thou faireſt among Women) go thy way forth by the footſteps of the flock, and feed thy kids beſides the Shepherds tents*; that is, follow the holy practices and examples of the Saints in all former ages, which the Apoſtle calls *walking in the ſteps of the faith of* Abraham (*Rom.* 4. 12.) And again, hearken to the voice of faithful Teachers, who as Shepherds feed the flock of God with knowledge and underſtanding. Wait at theſe Shepherds tents (ſaith Chriſt) and there thou ſhalt find a preſence of God with thee, and his bleſſing upon thee.

Thirdly, And above all, *Seek God in Chriſt*; the Father is only to be found in the Son; Look to Jeſus Chriſt, and in him you cannot but behold God; for he is *the brightneſs of his glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon* (Heb. 1. 3.) and therefore as he that hath the Son hath the Father alſo, ſo he that (by an eye of faith, and in the light of the Word and Spirit) beholdeth the Son, beholdeth the Father alſo. *For the light of the knowledge of the glory of God is given us in the face of Jeſus Chriſt* (2 Cor. 4. 6.) The light of the knowledge of the goodneſs of God, of his Mercy, Juſtice, Holineſs (which are his glory) ſhineth forth from Jeſus Chriſt; that is, in and by Chriſt it appears glorioully, that God is exceeding good, merciful, juſt, and holy. Therefore to every wearied ſoul complaining of the loſs of God, and crying out, *O that I knew where I might find him!* The ſum of all the Counſel that I can give, or indeed that can be given, is this; ſeek God in Chriſt, and he will be found. *O that I knew where I might find him,*

That I might come even to his ſeat.

Some conceive theſe words as the iſſue of a diſtempered ſpirit: others tax *Job* with too much boldneſs, that he being but duſt and aſhes ſhould thus preſs upon God, and that he was afterwards reproved for it in *Chap.* 38. of this Book; *verſ.* 1, 2. *Then the Lord anſwered* Job *out of the whirlwind and ſaid* (there he found him) *who is this that darkeneth Councel by words without knowledge; gird up now thy loins like a man, for I will demand of thee, and anſwer thou me.* And again in *Chap.* 40. *Verſ.* 2. 3, 4, 5. *Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty inſtruct him? he that reproveth God let him anſwer it. Then* Job *anſwered the Lord and ſaid; Behold I am vile, I will lay my hand upon my mouth. Once have I ſpoken, but I will not anſwer, yea twice, but I will proceed no further.* As if he had acknowledged his error and overboldneſs in preſſing upon God; as in other places, ſo alſo in this, *O that I might come even to his ſeat.*

Yet I conceive that *Job* in this paſſage, doth but put forth the nobler and higher actings of his faith, and that he ſpeaks this, not as forgetting the diſtance of duſt and aſhes, from the glory of God, or from the glorious God; but as remembring the promiſe, and as inſiſting upon his priviledge as a believer who is invited to come, and to come with boldneſs to the throne of Grace. For though that promiſe was not given out as to the formality of it in thoſe times, yet the vertue of it was, though in a lower degree then now. To come with boldneſs to the throne of Grace, ſounds much like this, *to come even to his ſeat*; and this *Job* did, not only as emboldned by the clearneſs of his conſcience towards men, but as by the freeneſs of the Grace of God in Chriſt towards him. In purſuance whereof it is well conceived by a learned Interpreter, that there is a metonymie in the word which ſignifies *a prepared ſeat*, that is, ſuch a ſeat as whereon God preſents himſelf to poor ſinners, prepared and ready to give them both admittance to himſelf and a gracious audience of their requeſts and ſuits. The word which we tranſlate *ſeat*, ſignifieth *a prepared place, a place fitted*, implying ſomewhat ſpecial and peculiar unto God. Heaven is called *the habitation of his holineſs and his glory* (*Iſa.* 63. 15.) yet whereſoever the Lord is, he makes it a heaven. Thus alſo he can make any place where he is a hell. *The wicked ſhall be puniſhed with everlaſting fire from the preſence of the Lord*, (2 Theſ. 1. 9.) that is, the very preſence of the Lord ſhall be a hell and torment to them. The Lord can be both terrible and gracious in his preſence any where; yet he is ſome where more graciouſly, ſome where more terribly preſent. Some cannot bear thoſe expreſſions, *The throne of God, the ſeat of God, Heaven, and Hell:* As if theſe were but the imaginations, fancies, and fictions of mens brain. But the Lord hath his ſeats and dwelling places, whence and where he declares himſelf, both in mercy and in judgment, both in his holineſs and in his glory (*Iſa.* 6. 1.) *I ſaw alſo the Lord ſitting upon his Throne, high and lifted up.* Thus the Lord manifeſted himſelf in viſion to the Prophet; and *David* confeſſeth, *Thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever* (Pſal. 45. 6.) that is, thy Power and Soveraignty. *David* ſpeaks not of a material Throne, ſuch as Kings have; the Power and Soveraignty of God are his Throne whereſoever he is, and is pleaſed to declare himſelf in his Soveraignty and Power. So that when *Job* ſaith, *O that I might come even to his ſeat or throne*, the meaning is, O that I might come as near him as poſſibly I may. I would not ſtand at a diſtance, or keep aloof off, as a guilty malefactor, but draw near to him in a holy and well grounded confidence. Thus *Job* ſpeaks in anſwer to that

תבונה *Denotat locum præparatum à radice* כון
**In voce* תבונה *Puto eſſe metonymiam q.d. uſq; ad locum in quo ipſe promptus paratuſquè eſt ad audiendum ubi ſui copiā facit.* Coc. *Repreſentat Deum tanquam ſupremum Judicem in ſolio excelſo ſedentem Juſq; ſuum unicuiq; redentem.* Boldt

Charge of Eliphaz in the former Chapter, *Is not thy wickedneſs great, and thine iniquities infinite?* Now (ſaith *Job*) you ſhall ſee what my ſins are, and what my guilt, ſeeing I dare venture even to the very throne of God, where no hypocrite dares appear. While *Job* profeſſeth, That if God after the manner of men ſhould ſit in open Judgment (there will be ſuch a Judgment at the laſt day) he would come near to him, and not be afraid; he ſeems fully aſſured of his own integrity, or of the goodneſs of his cauſe, as alſo that God would be good unto him.

Hence obſerve, *That true holineſs and uprightneſs hath abundance of confidence before God.*

Adam having ſinned, and the guilt of his ſin being upon him, durſt not come to the Seat, to the Throne of God. God came to him in the cool of the day to examine and queſtion him about his ſin, but he hid himſelf among the trees of the garden, he withdrew, not daring to abide him: and that's the ſtate of all ſinners, who have the guilt of ſin upon them, they hide, they run from God, when once their Conſciences are awakened. *As ſin in the act of it is a turning or departure from the holineſs of God, ſo ſin acted, or ſin in the guilt of it, cauſeth not only a departure but a running and a hiding from the juſtice of God.* Guilty ſinners are ſo far from coming up to his Seat, that they cannot endure to come in his ſight; a malefactor hath little mind to come before the Judge, or to the Bench where the Judge ſitteth. *Solomon* ſaith (*Prov.* 20. 8.) *A King that ſitteth in the Throne of Judgment, ſcattereth away all evil with his eyes.* We may underſtand it thus, he ſcattereth evil actions, and evil perſons, evil works, and evil workers *with his eyes*; there's not an evil man willing to appear, or that dares to appear before him. *They who are ſelf-condemned, muſt needs be afraid that others will condemn them alſo.* Magiſtrates ſitting in Judgment are terrible to guilty malefactors: Or thus, *He ſcattereth the evil with his eyes*; that is, he makes evil men reveal and ſcatter their moſt ſecret evils, by his prying into them, and induſtrious examination of them; that evil or wicked practice which they had bound up in their hearts, and ſaid, none ſhall know it, he ſcatters and diſcovers. *Solomon's* proverb carries an experienced truth in it both wayes: and we may argue from it, that if an earthly King or Magiſtrate, *ſitting on the Throne ſcattereth all evil with his eyes, how much more doth God?* Neither any evil matter, nor any evil man can ſtand before him. And ſeeing the Lord diſcovers all the evil that is in the hearts and wayes of men, what can give perfect boldneſs in coming to the Throne of God, but only an intereſt in Jeſus Chriſt, in whom the Throne of God is become a Throne of grace to ſinners? Were it only a Throne of Judgment and Juſtice, *no fleſh could ſtand before it*; but being a Throne of grace, the worſt of ſinners, who wait for grace, may come near, and the nearer they come the welcomer they are. A godly man is never better then when he is near God, and then thinks himſelf beſt when he is neareſt unto God; all his happineſs in this life, and his glory in that which is to come, doth conſiſt in his nearneſs unto God.

Secondly, Whereas *Job* ſaith, *O that I might come even to his Seat.*

Obſerve, *A godly man is willing that God ſhould Judge both his Perſon and his Cauſe.*

That's the deſign of *Job*, he had appealed from the Judgment of his friends, and begged the Judgment of God; he was reſolute in it, to ſtand or fall according to his ſentence. But why was *Job* ſo deſirous of the Judgment of God? Why would he go to his Throne, and appeal to him? When men make appeals from one Throne to another, they have their reaſons for it; when *Paul* ſaid, *I appeal to* Cæſar (*Act.* 25. 11.) doubtleſs he was fully perſwaded that he ſhould find better terms with *Cæſar* then among the *Jews*; ſo when *Job* ſaith, I appeal to God (which is the higheſt appeal, and beyond which there lyes no appeal) doubtleſs *Job* was fully perſwaded that he ſhould find better terms at Gods tribunal, then he had found among his friends. And *Job* might have many grounds of better terms from God. For

Firſt, God is wiſe, even a God of Judgment; who would not receive Judgment from a wiſe and underſtanding Judge, eſpecially from him who is wiſdom and underſtanding?

Secondly, God is Omniſcient; there are many wiſe Judges, but no Omniſcient Judges in the world. Princes are ſaid to have long hands, and very clear eyes, they can reach far, and ſee far, but they cannot ſee all; but God is able to Judge the ſecrets of all hearts, for he ſees all ſecrets, and knows what man cannot. For that reaſon a godly man loves the Judgment of God, becauſe he knows his heart; and for the ſame reaſon wicked men, hypocrites eſpecially, are afraid of the Judgment of God: they know if their outward actions ſhould come to be ſcan'd, much more if their hearts ſhould be turn'd outward, it muſt needs go ill with them. Moſt hypocrites carry it fair only for a while before the world, they at laſt diſcover themſelves, the diſeaſe breaks out at their fingers ends, or at their tongues end; their words or works diſcover the rottenneſs of their hearts, and the formality of their profeſſion. But ſome hypocrites carry it fair to the world all their dayes, and fear not the Judgment of men, yet even then a thought of the Judgment of God is dreadful to them; whereas the Saints, even all who are ſincere, deſire God to judge them; for indeed their hearts are better then their wayes, and their affections then their actions; and they know that God diſcerns with what heart and ſpirit every thing is done, as well as what is done. He doth not Judge by appearances (as we ought not, *Joh.* 7. 24.) and therefore his is a righteous Judgment. God doth not judge things as they appear, but as they are, unleſs they are as they appear; and whatſoever their appearance is, he can judge them as they are. He can judge by diſcerning what is in the deep, and follow a matter to the very ſpring of it; therefore I'le go to God (ſaith the upright heart) my deſire is that he ſhould Judge my cauſe.

Thirdly, The Lord is a gracious and a merciful Judge; he is as full of pity as he is of wiſdom, and as ready to relieve as he is quick ſighted to diſcern.

Fourthly, The Lord is very patient; firſt, Patient to hear; and ſecondly, Patient to bear. Patience to hear is a great encouragement; many Judges are weary of the work, they will not hear a poor man out, but God will; and God is patient alſo to bear with and paſs by the failings of his people, whoſe uprightneſs he knows.

Laſtly, A godly man knows that God his Judge hath received an atonement, that *he is made for him*, and upon grounds of Juſtice and Righteouſneſs is become his friend. Some who have bad Cauſes, yet come unto the Throne of man boldly, becauſe they know the Judge is *made for them* by a bribe, and ſo will give ſentence on their ſide, be it right or wrong. Saints know that the Judge is *made for them*, but made in a holy manner, not with baſe bribery to blind his eyes to pervert juſtice; but he hath received an atonement, he is appeaſ'd and ſatisfied by a Mediator at his own appointment. If God ſhould ſearch the beſt of Saints narrowly, they muſt needs fall in judgment; yet they know they ſhall ſtand in judgment, becauſe the Judge is reconciled to them by Chriſt, yea Chriſt who made the Atonement, and is the reconciler, is the Judge: this encourageth Saints to come to God; *For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled we ſhall be ſaved by his life* (Rom. 5. 10.) The caſe ſtanding thus with believers, who ſeeth not ground for their appeal from the judgment, either of open enemies, or (as *Job* did) miſtaken friends; *O that I might come even to his ſeat.*

In the two next verſes, *Job* tells us what he would do if his appeal were granted and himſelf admitted to the ſeat of God.

Verſ. 4. **I would order my Cauſe before him, and fill my mouth with arguments.**

Verſ. 5. **I would know the words which he would anſwer me, and underſtand what he would ſay unto me.**

Thus he deſcribes his intended behaviour before his Judge, in alluſion to legal proceedings, where the *Plantiff* brings in his bill, and the *Defendant* his anſwer.

I would order my Cauſe before him.

ערך *Eſt militare verbum atq; dicitur de acitbus quæ certa ratione ac ordine diſponuntur.*

The Hebrew word which we tranſlate *to Order*, is a military term, properly uſed for the ordering of an Army, or the putting of them into a poiture for a battel, we call it *Marſhalling an Army*. And hence it is applied to the ordering of any other thing (*Pſal.* 23. 5.) *Thou wilt prepare a Table for me in the midſt of mine enemies*; to order a Table is to ſet diſh by diſh, there is a kind of method in ſetting diſhes at great feaſts; *Thou wilt prepare a Table for me.* Again (*Pſal.* 50. 21.) God ſpeaks to the hypocrite about his ſinful doings; *I will ſet them in order before thee*; that is, thoſe ſins, and confuſed practices of which thou haſt ſaid in thy heart, I ſhall never hear more of them, ſhall be brought forth and ſet like a terrible Army in rank and file before thee. *Job* ſpeaks to this ſence, *I would order my cauſe before him*, or, *to his face*, as the Hebrew Text hath it, that is, in his preſence.

And fill my mouth with arguments.

Pleno ore fidenter, conſtanter pro me dicā. Bold.

I would have arguments enough or good ſtore to prove that your proceeding hath been unequal toward me; and when he ſaith, *I would fill my mouth with arguments*, it ſhews that his heart was full of arguments. Chriſt teacheth us to argue ſo (*Luke* 6. 45.) *Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth ſpeaketh*; *Job's* heart was full, therefore he would fill his mouth. *David* prayeth (*Pſal.* 71. 8.) *Let my mouth be filled with thy praiſe.* And the Church ſpeaks of her joy when God had turned their Captivity, (*Pſal.* 126. 2.) *Then was our mouth filled with laughter.* In this language God beſpeaks his people (*Pſal.* 81. 10.) *Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it.* Open it by faith, and I will fill it, with what? Fill it with mercy, and with bleſſings. So here, *I would fill my mouth with arguments*; that is, I would not want matter to ſpeak for my ſelf, or in my own cauſe. The Vulgar reads it, *I will fill my mouth with chidings, or, with reproof.* The word properly ſignifies, *Conviction*; and then we are to underſtand it in reference to his friends; I would abound with convincing, reproving, or chiding arguments againſt you, who have thus long reproached me; I would bring ſuch arguments as ſhould not only be a proof of mine own integrity, but a reproof of my friends ſeverity. Some arguments have only a proof in them; others have a reproof too. *Job* would fill his mouth with arguments, which ſhould be both proofs for himſelf, and reproofs to his oppoſers. *Job* had not a word to ſay againſt God, but he had much to ſay againſt his friends. *I would fill my mouth with arguments.* Note from it,

Os meum replebo increpationibus. Vulg.

תוכחות *Non redargutiones intelligit, quibus Deum injuſtitiæ accuſaret, ſed rationes quibus ſe tueretur. Sic* ἐλεγχειν *&* ἔλεγχος *Græcè ſumitur.* Merc.

> *Troubled ſpirits have many things to ſay, and uſually abound much in their own ſence.*

Furor arma miniſtrat.

As the paſſion of anger will adminiſter weapons to a man though he be no great fighter, ſo thoſe paſſions of grief and ſorrow will adminiſter arguments to him, though he be no great diſputer. A troubled ſoul will hardly be put to a ſtand or *non plus*, they who ſuffer much will alwayes have ſomewhat to ſay; *If nature deny* (ſaid one of old) *yet Indignation will make a man a Poet*; and if nature deny, yet ſorrow will make a man a Logician; and trouble will make a man an Advocate in his own cauſe. The tongues of many are tipt with Oratory, they have excellent words and ſtrong reaſons too from the preſſures that are upon their ſpirits: trouble of ſpirit fills the mouth with arguments two wayes.

Firſt, Againſt themſelves, how ſtrongly will ſome in that caſe diſpute againſt their own peace? What arguments will they bring againſt any comfort that is offered them; and how nimbly will they reply to any one that goes about to anſwer them? How will they find out new *mediums*, when thoſe are foiled by which they have formerly nouriſhed their unbelief, and diſcouraged themſelves from taking hold on mercy. 'Tis wonderful to hear the pleadings of a troubled ſpirit; and 'tis one of the hardeſt taſkes in the world to anſwer the doubts which ſuch a man will make againſt himſelf.

Secondly, The troubles of many fills their mouths with arguments for themſelves; that's the meaning of *Job* here in this place, *I would fill my mouth with arguments* to maintain my Cauſe; I ſhould not want either matter or words, to plead this buſineſs, were I before the Throne of God; and yet I would not be ſo free and forward to ſpeak, as to neglect or ſlight what is ſpoken to me, as it follows.

Verſ. 5. **I would know the words that he would anſwer me, and underſtand what he would ſay unto me.**

Some are ſo haſty to ſpeak, that they will not hear; they are ſo forward to plead their own Cauſe, that they will not receive the opinion of another. *Job* diſcovers an equal ſpirit to both, *As I would order my Cauſe, and fill my mouth with arguments*, ſo *I would know the words that he would anſwer me too*; I would have the good manners, or the grace rather, to heed and *underſtand what God would ſay to me.*

Cognoſcam ſanationes quas loquetur mihi. Sept. *Quam mihi laboranti curationem adhibiturus eſſet intelligerem.* Chryſoſt.

The Septuagint render it thus, *I would know the healings which he would ſpeak to me*; or as another, *What medicine or way of cure he would preſcribe and adminiſter to me*; and this might reſpect either the quieting of his Spirit, or the repairing of his credit and good name, which had been ſorely and deeply wounded by his friends, not only ſuſpecting but charging him as an hypocrite or wicked man. This is a fair ſence, only it ſtraitens the Text; for we may ſuppoſe *Job* in this addreſs and application to God ready to hear whatſoever God ſhould ſay unto him, whether his were words of approbation or reproof, whether for him or againſt him. Though *Job* had (doubtleſs) a ſtrong confidence, that God would approve of him and give ſentence on his ſide; yet conſidering his own weakneſſes and diſtempers of mind, he might well conceive that ſome things had fallen from him or been done by him which might deſerve and call for chidings and rebukes, as the iſſue indeed was. And therefore it was moſt congruous that he ſhould preſent himſelf before the Lord in a frame of heart to receive reprehenſions as well as conſolations. *I would know the words that he would anſwer me, and underſtand*, &c.

Knowing and underſtanding, may be taken here two wayes; firſt, for conſidering and weighing what God would ſay, or what Award he would make; in which he ſeems cloſely to check his friends, who thought him ſo dull and incapable, that ſurely he did not apprehend nor underſtand their anſwers. Well (ſaith *Job*) whatſoever you think of my dulneſs to underſtand your anſwers, or what you have ſaid, yet I doubt not but I ſhall underſtand the anſwers of God, or what he ſhall ſay unto me.

Secondly, They note a reverence and reſpect to the Word of God; *I would know the words that he would anſwer*; that is, ſubmit to them, I would not oppoſe the Judgment or Opinion of God concerning me. Though *Job* did not ſit down or acquieſs in the judgment of his friends, yet he would reverence and ſit down quietly in the judgment of God, and in the anſwer which he ſhould pleaſe to give. In either of theſe interpretations, the ſence is good. *I would know*, that is, I would ſtudy to find out the mind of God, and underſtand what he ſaith to me, and then reverently ſubmit thereunto.

Further, This form of ſpeaking, *I would know the words, and I would underſtand*, &c. ſeemeth to imply a vehement deſire in *Job* to know the mind of God concerning him. As a man that is accuſed longs to hear the mind of the Judge; as for others 'tis not much to him what they ſay for him or againſt him. As *Paul* ſpake in a like caſe (1 *Cor.* 4. 3.) *With me it is a very ſmall thing to be judged of you, or of mans judgement*, &c. *he that judgeth me is the Lord*; that is, to his judgment I muſt ſtand; he is above all.

> Firſt, Hence note, *That a godly man is careful to underſtand the anſwer and determinations of God concerning him.*

I would know the words that he would anſwer me.] And this not only (according to the ſuppoſition which *Job* makes here) if God ſhould ſpeak to him perſonally, or mouth to mouth; but in what way ſoever God ſhould ſpeak to him. It is the great care of a godly man to know the Word of God written and deliver'd over to us, as the rule of our life and faith; for indeed therein we have our judgment, and our anſwer: as Chriſt ſaith, *the words that I ſpeak, they ſhall judge you at the laſt day*; that is, by the Word you ſhall be judged. Likewiſe it is the care of a godly man to underſtand what God ſpeaks to him by his Works and Providences, by his Rods and Chaſtnings. In theſe the Lord ſpeaks to us, and gives us anſwers: They who are wiſe, will ſtudy to know and underſtand them. We may conceive that *Job* had reſpect to two things eſpecially, about which he deſired that he might underſtand the anſwer, and words of God to him.

Firſt, That God would ſhew him the true Cauſe of his affliction; for he did not take that to be the Cauſe which his friends had ſo often ſuggeſted, and ſo diſputed upon that *Fallacy* all along, which Logicians call, *The putting of that for a Cauſe which is not the Cauſe.* Therefore *Job* hoped to know of God what he would ſay, as to the reaſon why he did contend with him.

Secondly, What God would ſay to him by way of Direction and Councel, by way of remedy and redreſs; he was ſollicitous to underſtand the mind of God, and what God expected from him under this diſpenſation. So that *Job's* ſcope was not at all (as *Eliphaz* ſuſpected) to plead his own righteouſneſs and holy walkings before God, as if God had been beholding to him for them, and ſo muſt needs grant him (as having deſerved it) whatſoever he ſhould ask. But that he might be acquainted with the holy will and purpoſe of God concerning himſelf, and to be inſtructed by him about the grounds and ends of his long and ſharp affliction, that ſo he might bear it more chearfully, and more fruitfully. As alſo (and that principally) that he might hear from his Majeſty (which was the great point in controverſie between him and his friends) whether he did correct and chaſten him as a ſon, or puniſh and take vengeance on him, as on a rebell; and ſo ſet him among the examples of caution for ſinners in time to come.

Secondly note, *A godly man reſts in the Judgment of God.*

Si me inſontem pronunciaret, cum gaudio, ſi ſontem cum patientia ſuſciperem ſententiam ejus. Scult.

Job would not reſt in his friends judgment, but in Gods judgment he would reſt, and enquire no further; I (ſaith he) freely yield up my ſelf to that, if the Lord ſhould pronounce me innocent, I would reſt in his ſentence, and be thankful; if the Lord ſhould pronounce me faulty, yet I would reſt in his ſentence, and be patient; yea then I would ask mercy and beg his grace for the pardon of my failings. God is an Infallible Judge, and therefore no man ought to queſtion his determinations; indeed, *Every mouth ſhall be ſtopped, and all the world become guilty before God* (Rom. 3. 19.) that is, acknowledge themſelves guilty before him when he judgeth. And as there is no avoiding the judgment of God, ſo a godly man deſires to rejoyce in it. *Good is the Word of the Lord*, ſaid *Hezekiah* (2 Kings 20. 19.) when a very ſore ſentence was paſt againſt him, *and he ſaid, is it not Good? if peace and truth be in my dayes?* By *good* in the former part of the verſe, he means juſt and equal; as if he had ſaid, though this Word be full of gall and wormwood, yet it is no other then I and my people have deſerved and drawn upon our ſelves: by *good* in the latter part of the verſe, he means gracious and merciful; as if he had ſaid, God in this ſentence hath mixed the *good* of juſtice and equity, with the *good* of graciouſneſs and mercy, or in the midſt of Judgment he hath remembred mercy. Thus alſo when God gave ſentence by fire againſt the two ſons of *Aaron*; Moſes *ſaid to* Aaron, *This is that the Lord ſpake, ſaying, I will be ſanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified* (Lev. 10. 3.) Now when *Aaron* heard this, the Text ſaith, *And* Aaron *held his peace.* He murmured not, he contradicted not, but reſted patiently in the judgment of God. And thus *Job* was reſolved to give himſelf up to the judgment of God whatſoever it ſhould be. And we ſhall find him (in the next words) hoping ſtrongly to find God very ſweet and gracious to him, could he but obtain a hearing at his *Judgment ſeat.*

VERS. 6, 7.

Will he plead againſt me with his great power? No, but he would put ſtrength in me.

There the righteous might diſpute with him: ſo ſhould I be delivered for ever from my Judge.

JOB ſtill proſecutes the proof of his integrity from his willingneſs to appear before God, and plead his caſe at his throne; and as in the two former verſes he told us what he would do upon ſuppoſition that he could find God, and have acceſs unto him, even that he would ſtate his caſe, and then *fill his mouth with arguments*; he would alſo ſeriouſly attend and ſtrive to underſtand the anſwer which God ſhould give him. So in theſe two verſes, he holds out what entertainment he aſſured himſelf of, in this his addreſs to God, as alſo what confidence he had of a fair hearing and of a good iſſue; as if he had ſaid, *O* Eliphaz, *you have often deterred and over-awed me with the Majeſty of God, as if he would certainly cruſh ſuch a worm as I am, and that I could not at all ſtand or abide a trial before him in Judgment* (*Eliphaz* hath ſpoken to that ſence at *verſ.* 4. of the former Chapter) *Will he reprove thee for fear of thee? Will he enter with thee into judgment?* (Doſt thou think that God will condeſcend ſo far, as to treat with thee) *But know, O* Eliphaz, *that I am not afraid of the preſence of God; for, though I confeſs, if God ſhould put forth his power, I were not able to hold up my head before him, and that he could eaſily overthrow me with a breath, yet I am perſwaded he will take a more favourable courſe, and deal with me in mercy, not with rigor or ſeverity.*

Verſ. 6. **Will he plead againſt me with his great power.**

I know he is cloathed with Majeſty, and that the greatneſs of power is his; but will he plead with me. To plead with and to plead againſt are the ſame. To *plead* is a Law-term: He that pleadeth againſt another, diſcovers either the faultineſs of his perſon when accuſed, or the weakneſs of his Title when controverted. This word is uſed by the Prophet (*Iſa.* 57. 16.) *I will not contend* (or plead) *for ever.* I will not argue my own prerogative, nor will I argue thy ſinfulneſs alwayes, or without end; why not? If I ſhould, *the ſpirit would fail before me, and the ſouls which I have made*; where, though ſpirit and ſoul are put ſynechdochically for the whole man, that is, for fleſh and ſpirit, for ſoul and body together, yet the Lord mentions only ſpirit and ſoul, becauſe of their ſtrength to bear divine contendings beyond the body or the fleſh: As if he had ſaid, even that which is ſtrongeſt in man would fail, if God ſhould alwayes contend.

ירוב *Contendet quaſi de jure ſuo ut illud exigat.*

Will he plead againſt me with his great power? or ſtrictly to the Letter, *with the multitude of his power, with the forces of his power.* The power of God is great, yea the power of God is greateſt, all his power is Almighty power, yet God doth not alwayes put forth the greatneſs of his power; he is a moſt free agent, and ſo can reſtrain and hold in his own power, when he pleaſeth, and not uſe it to the terror of a poor creature, or plead againſt him with it.

ברב כח *Nam copia ſui roboris,* &c.

Again, The power of God may be taken two wayes; Firſt, for his ſtrength, or his power of doing and executing; ſecondly, for his Prerogative authority, or his power of commanding and ruling: we may interpret it here of the latter; will God deal with me by his Prerogative power, think you? Will he oppreſs me with his meer authority? I have another opinion of God, ſurely he will not do ſo; for he is good and gracious, and he will attemper his Prerogative with pity, and his great power with much mercy. *Will he plead againſt me with his great power? Job's* queſtion is a confident negation (ſuch negative interrogations are frequent in Scripture) *will he?* is, *he will not plead againſt me with his great power*; but *Job* is not ſatisfied that his ſpeech carrieth a negation in it, and therefore leſt any ſhould not fully enough underſtand him ſo, he expreſſeth his Negative; *will he plead with me with his great power? no, his power is not, nor ever will it be againſt me.* He will take ſome other courſe with me, he will deal with me upon the account of goodneſs and mercy, not upon the account

Per multam Dei fortitudinem potentiam ejus abſolutam (ſummum jus dici ſolet) intelligunt multi. Bold.

account of power; he will not break me a bruiſed reed, nor quench me who am but ſmoking flax, he will rather bind me up, and cheriſh the leaſt ſpark which he perceiveth alive in me; *Will he plead againſt me with his great power?* Hence obſerve,

Firſt, *God hath great power, much power, all power is his.*

The power of men and Angels is his; what power ſoever, whether for kind or degree, is in the hand of any creature, that power belongs to God. Thus *David*, a man of great power, ſtates it, *God hath ſpoken once, twice have I heard this, That power belongeth unto God.* The power that is ſcattered and divided all the world over, is centered and united in him. God hath a greatneſs of power, in commanding and diſpoſing what and how things ſhall be done; he hath alſo a greatneſs of power in doing and executing what he hath commanded. The commands of men are often unperformed, either becauſe they to whom their commands are ſent, have no power to perform them, or becauſe they want power to back their own commands. We may conſider the greatneſs of the power of God ſeveral wayes.

Firſt, As he can do all things, and is omnipotent; there is nothing too hard for him, his hand is not ſhortened in reference to the longeſt or the greateſt works and difficulties. And as he can do whatſoever he hath a will to do, ſo he will do whatſoever he pleaſeth to have done, whatſoever he purpoſeth to do, whatſoever is upon his heart to do; none of his counſels ever failed, nor have any of the thoughts of his heart been fruſtrated. Men often purpoſe to do, but they ſeldom have power to do what they have purpoſed; they are big with the conceptions of many great matters, but when the children come to the birth, they have no ſtrength to bring forth. God never failes in his power to do whatſoever he hath a purpoſe or a mind to do. God hath power enough to back his commands, and he can ſupply power to thoſe whom he calleth to execute them.

Secondly, The greatneſs of Gods power is ſeen in this, that he hath a right to do all that he doth. As he hath a fulneſs of ſtrength, ſo a fulneſs of authority; he doth not uſurp or intrench upon any other power in what he doth, nor upon any mans property in what he hath; it is his due to do what he doth, and to have what he hath. God is ſupream, giving the Law to all, receiving the Law from none; his is not a tyrannical, but a juſt and a righteous power; his is not a might without right, but a might with right. What the Prophet ſpeaks of the *Chaldeans* (Hab. 1. 7.) is true of God in every ſence, in the ſtricteſt ſence; *His Judgment and his Dignity proceedeth of himſelf*; he is a Law unto himſelf, his rule is internal, and his power intrinſecal. All derive power from him, therefore his power is altogether underived. Power underived muſt needs be great power, yea, the greatneſs of power.

Thirdly, The greatneſs of his power appeareth further in this, *That no man may preſume to queſtion him for what he doth.* He hath great power in what he doth, whom none may ſo much as ask, what doſt thou? *Nebuchadnezzar* (a Heathen, in higheſt earthly power) confeſſeth as much of the power of God, as ſoon as he regained the reaſon of a man (*Dan.* 4. 34, 35.) *At the end of the dayes* (that is, after the term of ſeven years was accompliſhed, when for the heart of a Beaſt, a mans heart was reſtored to him) *I* Nebuchadnezzar *lift up mine eyes to heaven, and mine underſtanding returned unto me, and I bleſſed the moſt high, and I praiſed and honoured him that liveth for ever, whoſe dominion is an everlaſting dominion, and his Kingdom is from generation to generation; and all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing, and he doth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can ſtay his hand, or ſay unto him, what doſt thou?* that is, none may ſo much as queſtion, much leſs reprove him for any thing that he doth. Though there are many who in the pride of their hearts, and through the forgetfulneſs of their duty, will preſume to queſtion God about what he hath done, and even controul his doings, yet of right or according to rule, none can. Hence the Apoſtle having aſſerted the Soveraignty of God, *He hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth,* brings in ſome queſtioning his proceedings; but he checks them ſoundly for their boldneſs in queſtioning, and inſtructs them by many upbraiding queſtions, that they ought not to put that or any ſuch queſtion. *Thou wilt ſay then* (verſ. 18, 19, 20.) *why doth he yet find fault, for who hath reſiſted his will? Nay, but who art thou, O man, that replieſt againſt God? ſhall the thing formed, ſay to him that formed it, why haſt thou made me thus? Hath not the Potter power over the clay, of the ſame lump to make one veſſel of honour, and another of diſhonour?* What if God were willing to ſhew his wrath in ſome, as well as his grace and mercy in others, what have you or I to do with it? Who gave you or I leave to examine God upon interrogatories about it? Thus he pleads the power or prerogative of God; this muſt ſilence all our Queries, and ſatisfie all our doubts; none may ask him a reaſon of what he doth; the reaſon is in himſelf. The will of God is his reaſon; and there is all the reaſon in the world it ſhould; for his is not only a ſoveraign will, but a juſt and a holy will. *Solomon* ſaith (Eccleſ. 8. 4.) *Where the word of a King is, there is power, and who may ſay unto him, what doſt thou?* In all lawful adminiſtrations, it is true of Kings and ſupream earthly powers, in what form ſoever, none may ſay unto them, what do ye? Their word muſt ſtand; much more is this true of him who is King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, who is the ſupream power of heaven and earth; all whoſe wayes are equal, and his diſpenſations righteous, though we ſee not the equity and righteouſneſs of them. That is not only great, but the greateſt power, which *none may queſtion.*

Fourthly, this alſo demonſtrates the greatneſs of Gods power, that none can ſtop or hinder him in what he hath a mind to do: what he appoints, he executes, and none can ſtop it; or (as *Nebuchadnezzar* ſpeaks in the place beforementioned, *Dan.* 4. 35.) *ſtay his hand.* The hand of the ſtrongeſt power upon the earth may be, and hath been ſtaid; Kings have had a check, their hands have been ſtaid; but none can ſtay the hand of God: *I will work* (ſaith he) *and none ſhall let it* (Iſa. 43. 17.) God ſhould do but little work in the world if men could let it. Wicked men would let or hinder God in all his works; and the godly (through their miſtakes) would hinder him in ſome of his works; but none can: *He ſpeaks to the Sun, and it ſhineth not; yea, he ſpeaks to the Sun, and it moveth not.* This is the greatneſs and the muchneſs of the power of God.

But, ſaith *Job*, *Will he plead againſt me with his great power?* All this power God hath (and this power he can put forth) but he will not put it forth againſt me (ſaith *Job* 1.) And what was *Job*, that he ſhould be thus confident, and riſe up to ſuch a ſtrong aſſurance that God would not uſe his ſtrength againſt him? *Job* was a godly man, a man fearing God, a man perfect and upright, a man full of faith (though he lived in dark times, and under dark diſpenſations, yet, I ſay, he was a man full of faith) in the Redeemer. Now it is no wonder if a man of this character, a man thus qualified and priviledged, had this confidence, and was much aſſured that he ſhould proſper and ſpeed in it; *That God would not plead againſt him with his great power.* Hence obſerve,

A godly man may be confident that God will deal gently and graciouſly with him: Or, *That God will deal with him according to the greatneſs of his mercy, not according to the greatneſs of his power.*

The greatneſs of the power of God is an exceeding great comfort to the ſincere, becauſe they know it is acted towards them in the greatneſs of his mercy. It is comfortable to hear that the Lord, who (as the Prophet deſcribes him, *Nah.* 1. 3.) *is great in power, is alſo ſlow to anger* (the greatneſs of mans power doth uſually quicken, not clog his paſſions) but it is more comfortable to know, that God, who is great in power, is quick and ſpeedy to ſhew mercy. And hence it is, that a true believer rejoyceth in the power of God as well as in his mercy, becauſe he knoweth that God hath declared himſelf powerful for him as well as merciful. He knoweth God will not put forth power alone, or nothing but power towards him. God doth exerciſe all his refreſhing Attributes and divine Perfections, in dealing with Saints; whereas upon the wicked he exerciſeth his power chiefly, though not only. *What if God to* *make his power known, endured with much long-ſuffering the veſſels of wrath fitted for deſtruction*, ſaith the Apoſtle (*Rom.* 9. 22.) God pleads with the wicked according to the tenour of the Covenant of works, but with Believers according to the Covenant of Grace, in which he doth, as it were uncloath himſelf of his power, and cloath himſelf with Love, Mercy, Goodneſs and Tenderneſs to his people. *The Lord* (as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks, *Pſal.* 93. 1.) *is cloathed with ſtrength, wherewith he hath girded himſelf*; he is cloathed alſo with Mercy, and with that he hath girded himſelf; he pleads with his people (I grant) in righteouſneſs, as well as in mercy (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Rom.* 3. 25, 26.) *God hath ſet forth Jeſus Chriſt to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteouſneſs, for the remiſſion* (or *paſſing over*) *of ſins that are paſt, through the forbearance of God, to declare, I ſay, at this time his righteouſneſs; and the juſtifier of him that believeth in Jeſus.* The juſtice or righteouſneſs of God was never ſo fully declared, as in Chriſt; for God did not ſpare him at all, but he having taken our debt upon him, diſcharged it to the utmoſt farthing. God pleaded againſt Chriſt with his great power, and with his perfect righteouſneſs; to which plea, Chriſt made anſwer with as great a power (his being the power of God) and with as perfect a righteouſneſs, his being alſo the righteouſneſs of God. And hence it is, that when God comes to plead with Believers, he pleads not againſt them with his power and righteouſneſs, ſeeing Chriſt with both pleads for them; he pleads for them not only as he is Jeſus Chriſt the righteous, but as he is the mighty, the all-powerful God. This is the chiefeſt ground of a Believers confidence, that God (as *Job* here ſaith) will not plead againſt him with his great power. What then did *Job* believe would God do with him? The next words inform us what his Faith was in that particular.

But he would put ſtrength in me.

Veruntamen ille ponet in me. Heb.

(So we render.) The Hebrew is only thus, *He will put in me*; what he would put is not expreſſed in the Orignal; which hath cauſed ſome variety of opinion what it ſhould be that the Lord would put into him; and I find a threefold conjecture in the point.

Poneret & afferret in me ſuas rationes. Mer. *Ipſe poneret contentionē in me, id eſt, non robore mecum ageret, ſed verborum contentione*, Ch.

Firſt, The Supplement is made thus, *He would produce arguments or reaſons againſt me*; and this is conceived moſt ſuitable to the context and ſcope of the place, as alſo to the action of pleading before ſpoken of; *Would he plead with or againſt me with his great power? no, but he would ſhew me the reaſon of his dealings with me*; he would not proceed againſt me in a martial, but in a legal way; not in a prerogative, but in a diſcourſive argumentative way; he would ſhew me the cauſe why he thus contendeth with me, and hath ſo ſorely afflicted me; God would condeſcend ſo far to my weakneſs, as to give me an account, though I dare not preſume to call him to an account; and though he hath both power and right to deal with me as he pleaſeth, yet I am much aſſured that he would be pleaſed to tell me why he deals thus with me. This interpretation is clear to the general ſcope of the context, and argues nothing unbecoming that holy confidence which the Grace of the Goſpel alloweth a Believer in; yea, encourageth him unto, when in any diſtreſs he approacheth unto God for the relief and comfort of his troubled ſpirit.

Ponet in me ſc. *cor ſuum*, i.e. *compleEleretur me favore.* Piſc.

Secondly, Another thus; *Will he plead againſt me with his great power? no, but he would put his heart upon me*; that is, he would embrace me with his favour, and lay me in his boſom. Though his hand hath been exceeding heavy upon me, yet I believe his heart is towards me; though he hath ſmitten me with the wound of an enemy, yet he will receive me as a friend, and give me ſignal teſtimonies of his love. I ſhould not feel the weight of his hand, but ſee the tenderneſs of his bowels, and his heart moving towards me. This is alſo an interpretation full of truth, and as full of comfort to a wearied ſoul.

Alii ſubaudiunt & repetunt בח *in me robur poneret ad conſiſtendum coram ſe, me infirmum fulciens & roborans.* Merc.

Thirdly, The Supplement made in our Tranſlation, reacheth both the former, and ſuits alſo to the former branch of the Text with much elegancy; *Would he plead againſt me with his great power? no, but he would put power or ſtrength into me*; he will be ſo far from putting out his ſtrength againſt me, that he will put his ſtrength into me; he knoweth my weakneſs, how unable I am to contend with or bear up againſt his power, and therefore he would put power into me. Mr. *Broughton* renders clearly to this ſence, *Would he by his great power plead againſt me? no, but he would help me*: help is power, and he that helpeth another, adminiſters power to him; he either puts new ſtrength into him, or joynes his ſtrength with him. So then, *Job* was aſſured that God would put ſtrength into him, or be his ſtrength to help and carry him through all the difficulties that lay before him. Hence obſerve,

> Firſt, *A Believer hath no opinion of his own ſtrength, or that he can do any thing in his own ſtrength.*

He truſts no more to his own ſtrength and power, then to his own righteouſneſs or worthineſs. As our Juſtification before God is purely founded in the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, ſo all the actings of our ſanctification are maintained by the ſtrength of Chriſt. Holy *Job* ſpake nothing of his own ſtrength, yea, he ſpake as having no ſtrength of his own. A godly man knows his own ſtrength is but weakneſs, and that when he prevailes with God, it is with a power which he hath from God. *Paul* uſeth a form of ſpeech which we may call *a divine Riddle* (2 Cor. 12. 10.) *When I am weak, then I am ſtrong*; he predicates or affirms one contrary of another; weakneſs is contrary to ſtrength: how a weak man ſhould be ſtrong, and then eſpecially ſtrong when he is weak, is hard to conceive by thoſe who are ſpiritual, and is unconceivable by thoſe who are carnal. This aſſertion is enough to poſe and puzzle Nature; *He that is weak is ſtrong*; or, *the readieſt way to get ſtrength is to be weak.* The truth and the Apoſtles meaning is plainly this; *When I am weak in my own ſence and opinion, when I am convinced that I have no power of my own, then I feel power coming in, then Chriſt ſtrengthens me, and I am ſtrong*, then I experience that word, *My Grace is ſufficient for thee.* When I find the waters of my own Ciſtern low and failing, then I have a ſupply from the Spirit. So the Apoſtle ſpake (Phil. 1. 19.) *I know that this alſo ſhall turn to my ſalvation through your prayers and the ſupply of the Spirit of Jeſus Chriſt.* The firſt *Adam* received all his ſtrength at once, we now receive our ſtrength by dayly freſh ſupplies from the ſecond *Adam.* The word there uſed by the Apoſtle, which we render *ſupply*, ſignifieth an *under-ſupply*, implying thus much, that as the natural body and each particular member of it, is ſupplied with ſence and motion, together with a ſuitable ſtrength and ability from the head, ſo Believers who are altogether the myſtical body of Chriſt, and each of them members in particular, are ſupplied from Chriſt their head, by the Spirit, with ſpiritual life, motion, and ſtrength of Grace for every duty to which they are called, or which is required of them. And becauſe as this is ſo in it ſelf, ſo Believers are inſtructed in it; therefore they diſclaim and go out of their own ſtrength, that *the power of Chriſt may reſt upon them.* Chriſt fills none but the hungry, nor doth he ſtrengthen any but the weak. *They who think they have any thing of their own, ſhall receive nothing from him; unleſs Chriſt be all in all to us, he will not be any thing at all to us.*

> Secondly obſerve, *God himſelf puts ſtrength into humbled ſinners, that they may ſtand before him.*

As he knows what ſtrength ſuch need, ſo he gives them the ſtrength they need; *He will put ſtrength in me*, may be the confidence of any ſoul in *Job*'s caſe. We are not able to ſtand before God under the burden of our corruptions, nor yet are we able to walk before him under the burden of our duties, unleſs himſelf be pleaſed to adminiſter ſtrength to us. And ſurely if we have cauſe even to glory in our infirmities, that the power of Chriſt may reſt upon us (2 *Cor.* 12. 9.) Then much more have we cauſe to glory in the power of Chriſt, when we find ſo many infirmities reſting in us. The Prophet ſaw this fully, while he ſaid (*Iſa.* 45. 24.) *Surely ſhall one ſay, in the Lord have I righteouſneſs and ſtrength, even to him ſhall men come, in the Lord ſhall all the ſeed of* Iſrael *be juſtified, and ſhall glory.* That we have ſtrength in and from the Lord, is to us a ground of holy glorying, as well as that we have righteouſneſs in him. For though to be juſtified be a higher favour then to be ſtrengthened, yet unleſs we were ſtrengthened, as we could not take in the comfort of our Juſtification freely, ſo neither could we give God the glory of it ſo fully as we ought. And as it is the joy of Believers, that God will put ſtrength into them when they are humbled under the greateſt weakneſſes, ſo that their ſtrength is ſtill in him: For God doth not ſo put it into us, as to put that ſtrength out of himſelf. The ſtrength which God puts into us, is a ſtrength ſtill reſiding in himſelf. The ſtrength which we have received, as well as that which we have not yet received, is ſtill in the hand of God; and from his hand we ſhall receive renewals of ſtrength for all our needs and purpoſes. Take five inſtances in ſpecial.

Firſt, A Believer ſhall receive ſtrength to do, or an acting power from Chriſt; though Chriſt hath done all for us, yet we have much to do for Chriſt; and (ſuch is the myſtery of Godlineſs) that the ſame Chriſt who hath done all for us, will alſo do all in us. Chriſt layeth a yoke upon the necks of his people, and a burden upon their ſhoulders, but he puts power and ſtrength into their ſhoulders to carry his yoke and bear his burden; and that's the reaſon why he calls his *yoke eaſie, and his burden light*; it is not ſo conſidered in it ſelf, as if we could make light work of the work of Chriſt; but his burden is light, becauſe he hath promiſed to give his, at leaſt, a ſufficient ſtrength to bear it. A heavy burden is not grievous to equal ſtrength, and it is light to a ſuperior or greater ſtrength. As all our ſins (the leaſt whereof is a burden too heavy for us to bear) are light to us through the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, ſo all the Commandments of God (the leaſt of which is too hard for us alone) are light to us through the ſtrength of Chriſt. This was the Apoſtle *Paul's* profeſſion, *I can do all things through Chriſt that ſtrengtheneth me* (Phil. 4. 13.) A little is too much for us, all is but little for Chriſt; as we have the anointing of the Spirit, whereby we know all things (1. *John* 2. 20.) So we have tho ſtrengthening of the Spirit, whereby we do all things. It is a high priviledge, that Saints who receive their work from heaven, receive their ſtrength from heaven too. And that as God puts his commands upon them, ſo he puts this power into them. The Lord is ſo far from requiring work of us without giving us wages for what we have done, that he doth not require work of us without giving us ſtrength to do it. When we look upon our reward, it might ſeem that we have done all our ſelves; but when we look upon his aſſiſtance, it is as evident that we have done nothing of our ſelves. The Lord is not like thoſe *Egyptian* Task-maſters, who called for brick, but would not give ſtraw; no, the Lord who calls for brick, doth not only give us ſtraw, but ſtrength, even hands and hearts to do our work. Goſpel-Grace or new-Covenant-Grace promiſeth us ſtrength to do what we are commanded to do.

Secondly, The Lord gives us, as ſtrength to do, ſo to ſuffer; ſtrength to bear his Croſs, as well as his Yoke: So the Apoſtle comforts the *Corinthians* (1 Cor. 10. 13.) *No temptation* (that is, no affliction; for as every temptation hath trouble in it, and is therefore juſtly called an affliction, ſo every affliction hath a trial in it, and is therefore juſtly called a temptation, in which ſence the Apoſtle there ſaith, *no temptation*) *hath taken hold of you, but that which is common to man; but God is faithful, that will not ſuffer you to be tempted above what ye are able, but with the temptation will make a way of eſcape, that ye may be able to bear it.* As if he had ſaid, be not afraid that you ſhall be oppreſſed with the burden of any affliction or temptation which ye endure in my cauſe or for my name ſake; for ye ſhall receive an ability commenſurable to your affliction, whatſo ever it is; you ſhall be ſupported in thoſe afflictions which are immediately from the hand of God, much more in thoſe which are from the hand of man, even in the extreameſt and hotteſt perſecutions. *Paul* had experience of this (2 *Tim.* 4. 17.) There he tells a ſad ſtory of the fearfulneſs, if not of the unfaithfulneſs of men, even of good men to him in an evil day; and he tells as comfortable a ſtory of the preſence and faithfulneſs of God to him in an evil day, even in the worſt and blackeſt day that this world could lowr upon him in; *At my firſt anſwer no man ſtood with me* (that is, no man appeared to ſtrengthen, to comfort me) *all men forſook me, I pray God it be not laid to their charge*: (What then? was he left of all, becauſe left of all men? no ſuch matter; all men left him, but God who is but one, One moſt God, and who alone is more then all men abode by him, as it follows in the Text) *notwithſtanding the Lord ſtood with me and ſtrengthened me, that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear; and I was delivered out of the mouth of the Lion,* that is, out of the danger of my deadly perſecutors, even out of the danger of *Nero* himſelf, by whoſe power ſo many had been deſtroyed. The Lord alwayes ſtands by his in time of affliction and trial, either to ſtrengthen them in it, or to ſtrengthen them out of it, that is, to eſcape it; either to deliver them from the danger of it, or to encourage them in the dangers of it.

Thirdly, The Lord puts ſtrength into his people to mortifie corruption; he gives us not only power againſt, but power over our luſts. Fleſhly luſts and corruptions are ſtrong, and if we have not ſtrength from Chriſt to ſubdue and conquer them, they will be too hard for us, and foil us. We are eaſily and preſently foiled, by pride, by covetouſneſs, by wrath, by envy; all theſe paſſions and luſts will trample us under their feet in the dirt of all ſinfulneſs and pollution both of fleſh and ſpirit, unleſs we receive power from on high to ſubdue and mortifie them (*Rom.* 8. 13.) *If ye through the Sirit mortifie the deeds of the Body, ye ſhall live*; that is, ye ſhall live confortably, holily and eternally. *The deeds of the body*, that is, ſinful deeds, and the root of them, ſinful luſts, count all weapons (as *Leviathan* doth ſpears and ſwords) but *ſtraw and ſtubble*, rather to be laughed at, then feared, except only the weapons or power of the Spirit. And when once we take our luſts to task with the weapons of the Spirit, they preſently fall and die before us. *The Spirit is the ſtrength of God in us for the mortification of corruption.*

Fourthly, We are ſtrengthned, or God puts ſtrength into us for the reſiſting and conquering of the temptations of Satan; we meet with many aſſaults from the Devil, and from the world, who are confederate with our Luſts. Theſe we muſt *reſiſt ſtedfaſt in the faith*, and that not only in *the faith*, as *the faith* imports ſoundneſs of doctrine or divine truth, but as *the faith* imports dependance upon Chriſt for ſtrength and aſſiſtance. *Peter*, being *a Chief, a Grandee* in the train of Chriſt, or among the Diſciples of Chriſt, was Satans eye-ſore, and the fairer mark for his fierie darts. Satans fingers itcht to be doing with him; *he* (ſaith our Saviour) *deſired to have him that he might ſift him as wheat* (Luke 22. 31.) that is, to ſift him throughly, not to fetch out his chaffe from him, but indeed to make him chaffe. How was *Peter* upheld? *I have prayed for thee* (ſaith Chriſt) *that thy faith fail not*; that is, I have prayed that God would put ſtrength into thee, that *thy faith fail not*; if once faith fail, we are overcome. But is faith our ſtrength? No, but faith goes to, and takes hold of him who is our ſtrength, or who puts ſtrength into us that we fall not in temptation. But you will ſay, *Peter* fell, and he fell grievouſly, his fall was great; he denied his Maſter. 'Tis true, *Peter* fell, but he did not fall away, *his faith did not fail*, that is, it was not totally loſt, and therefore when Chriſt lookt upon him, and by that look renewed his ſtrength, he gat up again; even when he denied Chriſt, there was a ſeed of faith remaining in him; though like a tree in the winter, his fruit was gone, yea, and his leaves too, and he looked dead and withered; yet there was ſap in the root; his faith failed not: whence was this? he had an inviſible ſupply of ſtrength from God; *I have prayed* (ſaith Chriſt) *that thy faith fail not.* The prayer of Chriſt failed not, and therefore his faith did not: Chriſt prayed that he might have ſtrength by believing, and though he had not ſo much faith as to preſerve him ſtanding, yet he had ſo much faith as to raiſe him from his fall. And what Chriſt prayed for *Peter*, he prayed for all that ſhould believe on his name, that in all their reſiſtings of, and contendings with temptation, their faith alſo may not fail. As faith is one principal piece of our ſpiritual Armour whereby we overcome temptation, ſo it fetches in that which is the whole of the whole Armour of God, even the ſtrength of God. When the Apoſtle exhorts Saints (*Eph.* 6. 11.) *To put on the whole Armour of God*, he premiſes another moſt needful exhortation, or exhorts them firſt (*v.* 10.) *To be ſtrong in the Lord, and in the power of his might*; implying that it is not any one piece, no, nor the whole armour of God abſtractly or preciſely taken, which is our ſtrength; but that the God of this Armour is our ſtrength in the ſpiritual combat. *Though our loynes were girt about with truth, and we have on the Breaſt-plate of righteouſneſs; though our feet were ſhod with the preparation of the Goſpel of peace, and we have the Shield of faith in our hand; though we ſhould take the Helmet of ſalvation, and the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God*; yet, if thus arrayed, it were poſſible for us to neglect or forget the God of the Word, it were not poſſible for us to conquer the *Footmen*, leſſer; much leſs the *Horſemen*, greater; leaſt of all, *the Chariots of iron*, the greateſt temptations of the Prince of darkneſs. As no carnal weapon hath any thing at all to do, ſo no ſpiritual weapon can do any thing at all in this war without the ſtrength of God; or rather (to conclude this Point) all theſe ſpiritual weapons and Armour are nothing elſe but the ſtrength of God, or the various puttings forth of the ſtrength of God in weak man.

Fifthly and laſtly, God gives us ſtrength to pray to & plead our cauſe before him; he will not dazle us with his glory, nor confound us with his Majeſty when we come to plead with him, but he will put ſtrength into us. In prayer we prevaile with God, but the ſtrength whereby we prevail with God, comes from God; yea he doth not only give us ſtrength in prayer to act by, but acts that ſtrength in prayer. (*Rom.* 8. 26.) *Likewiſe the Spirit helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we ſhould pray for as we ought, but the Spirit it ſelf maketh interceſſion for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.* Prayer is ſtrong work, it calls forth the whole ſtrength of the ſoul; nor doth the ſoul in any thing ſhew its ſtrength more then in Prayer: Prayer is wreſtling, and how can we wreſtle without ſtrength! Even the King of *Nineveh* gave this direction at his Faſt (*Jon.* 3. 8.) *Let them cry mightily.* And *our Lord Jeſus Chriſt in the dayes of his fleſh offered up prayers and ſupplications with ſtrong crying and tears* (Heb. 5. 7.) Now the Spirit is the ſtrength of God in us for prayer; he helpeth our infirmities, and we are only a bundle of infirmities without his help. There is a threefold ſtrength needful in prayer, and God by the Spirit puts theſe three ſtrengths into us.

Firſt, The Spirit helps us with ſtrength of argument to plead with God.

Secondly, The Spirit helps us with the ſtrength of Faith in taking hold upon God.

Thirdly, The Spirit helps us with ſtrength of patience in waiting upon God till we receive what we have prayed for. *Jacob* by this threefold ſtrength *had power with God in prayer* (Hoſ. 12. 3.) And it was the power or Spirit of God by which he had this threefold ſtrength to prevail with God. Thus *we are ſtrengthened with might by the Spirit in the inner man* (Eph. 3. 16.) We are ſtrong to do, and ſtrong to ſuffer; we are ſtrong to mortifie corruptions, and ſtrong to conquer temptations; we are ſtrong to pray, and ſtrong to plead our cauſe at the throne of Grace, when God puts ſtrength into us. *Job*, who had received great ſtrength from God in all the former caſes, was aſſured that he ſhould receive ſtrength alſo in the laſt, were he admitted to the ſeat of God. Would he (there) plead againſt me with his great power? No, but he would put ſtrength in me, to plead with him. And as he was thus aſſured that God would put ſtrength into him to plead his cauſe, ſo alſo liberty and freedom to do it, as appears more fully in the next verſe.

Verſe 7. **There the righteous might diſpute with him; ſo ſhould I be delivered for ever from my Judge.**

There, where? He means at the Seat of God; as if he had ſaid, *Could I but once come to the Throne or Seat of God,* I ſhould have free leave and liberty enough to open and argue, to ſtate and debate my caſe, my long controverted and yet unreſolved caſe with him. He would not *plead againſt me with his great power* of Authority, but he would give me the power of liberty to diſpute and reaſon out that matter with him. Several paſſages in the former part of this Book clearly hold out this ſence (*chap.* 9. 34, 35.) *Let him take his rod away from me, and let not his fear terrifie me; then would I ſpeak and not fear him; but it is not ſo with me:* as yet *God pleadeth againſt me with his great power.* Again (*chap.* 13. 21, 22.) *Withdraw thy hand far from me, and let not thy dread make me afraid* (as if he had ſaid, *Plead not againſt me with thy great power*) *then call thou, and I will anſwer; or let me ſpeak and anſwer thou me.* Thoſe Texts already opened, are of the ſame general ſcope and tendency with this under hand: *There* (that is, All things being put into ſuch a poſture) *the righteous might diſpute with him.*

Some read the Text in the firſt perſon; *There, I, being righteous, might diſpute with him.* Others thus, *I ſhould be found righteous if I did diſpute with him*; As if he had ſaid, *I make no doubt of proving my ſelf righteous or innocent in this controverſie with my friends, there I ſhould not be found a falſe-hearted hypocrite; God who knows both my thoughts and my wayes, would judge otherwiſe of me then men have done.*

We read the Text indefinitely, not reſtraining it to his perſon, but as taking in any that are righteous; *the righteous*, that is, *any righteous man might diſpute with him there*; his Court, his Tribunal is free and open for all that are upright or righteous. In what ſence the word *righteous* is uſed in this Book, hath been opened more then once. In a word, the righteous man is not he that is legally righteous, but righteous in a Redeemer, or righteous as oppoſed to an hypocrite. In both theſe ſences we may take the word here, *The righteous may diſpute with him.*

The word is properly applied to Scholaſtick exerciſes; where Queſtions being put, Arguments are brought by the Opponent, which the Reſpondent takes away, and the Moderator ſtates between them both. This is the nature and manner of a ſtrict Diſpute: But in a large or vulgar ſence every diſcourſing and reaſoning about a doubtful Point, is called diſputing. *There the righteous may diſpute with him.* Hence note,

הוכח *Eſt apud alium ita argumentari ut petas reſponſionem qua viciſſim ſi quid erraveris redarguaris.* Merc.

> *God is free and ready to hear the pleadings and reaſonings of thoſe who are upright and righteous.*

As the prayer of the upright is the delight of God, ſo their modeſt and humble diſputings are not diſpleaſing to him. A righteous man may plead with God freely, but he muſt not plead with God proudly, either crying up and boaſting in his own righteouſneſs, or laying the leaſt imputation of unrighteouſneſs upon the wayes of God in dealing with him. The righteous diſpute with God, yet they know and keep their diſtance; and while they do ſo, God is willing they ſhould, and welcomes them when they do draw nigh to him, diſputing as well as praying. In oppoſition to which, 'tis ſaid (*Pſal.* 5. 5.) *The fooliſh ſhall not ſtand in thy ſight, thou hateſt all workers of iniquity. The fooliſh*, that is, the wicked man, the hypocrite with his falſe-hearted and flattering tongue, are an abomination to God. The fooliſh man that the Pſalmiſt means, is not the man low in parts, but unſound in ſpirit; this fooliſh ſhall not ſtand in the ſight of God, nor will God hear him either diſputing or praying, but reject him with his diſputes and prayers. *Thou hateſt all the workers of iniquity; and to the wicked God ſaith, what haſt thou to do to declare my ſtatutes, or that thou ſhouldeſt take my Covenant in thy mouth?* (*Pſal.* 50. 16.) God will not endure it, that wicked men ſhould ſpeak of him, much leſs will he endure that a wicked man ſhould diſpute with him. God will have nothing to do in way of arguing and reaſoning, either with a perſon or with a people, while he or they continue in their ſins (*Iſa.* 1. 15, 16.) *When ye ſpread forth your hands, I will hide my eyes from you; yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear; your hands are full of blood*, that is, either of bloody ſins in ſpecial, as murder and oppreſſion, or of ſins in general; for every ſin is blood and bloody: every ſin may be called blood; and while the hands are full of blood in either ſence, God will not hear, that is, he will not graciouſly hear or accept ſo much as one of many prayers. But are the wicked, and their prayers, and their diſputings excluded for ever while they continue ſuch, or to do ſuch things? they are; and therefore in the next words, the Lord by his Prophet gives them this counſel, *Waſh ye, make ye clean, put away the evil of your doings from before my eyes, ceaſe to do evil, learn to do well, ſeek judgment, relieve the oppreſſed, judge the fatherleſs, plead for the widow*; here's a deſcription of a righteous perſon, righteous in his way, upright with God and men; and with ſuch God will ſpeak: ſuch may diſpute with him, as it follows (*v.* 18.) *Come now, and let us reaſon together. We know* (ſaith the blind man after he was healed) *John* 9. 31. *that God heareth not ſinners* (that is, ſuch as plead for, or pleaſe themſelves in any ſin) *but if any man be a worſhipper of God, and doth his will, him he heareth*; him he heareth praying, and him he heareth diſputing. Whereas of the preyings of the wicked he ſaith, *they are but meere bablings*, and of their diſputings, *they are but vain janglings. If* (ſaith *David*, Pſ. 66. 18.) *I regard iniquity in my heart, God will not hear me.* God will not regard his prayers, therefore not his diſputes, who regards iniquity ; but to the righteous, and to ſuch as repent of and turn from their unrighteouſneſs, the Lord ſaith, *come let us reaſon together*, let us diſpute the point ; *though your ſins be as ſcarlet, they ſhall be as white as ſnow, though they be red as crimſon, they ſhall be as wool.* Where take notice, by the way, that while God ſaith, *your ſins which were as ſcarlet ſhall be as white as ſnow*, we are not to think that ſin ſhall ever change colour, or be other then it is in the eyes of God: ſo that *your ſin ſhall be as ſnow*, is you ſinners ſhall be ſo. It is a very hard thing, and next to an impoſſibility to change the nature of a ſinner, yea or the cuſtome of a ſinner (*Jer.* 13. 23.) but it is altogether impoſſible to change the nature and conſtitution, yea or the complexion and colour of a ſin, that looks very red; but the *reddeſt ſinner* may turn *white as ſnow*. And when once the ſinner is turned white, God is ready to hear both his prayers, and diſputes. God loves to hear ſuch penitents confeſſing their ſin, unburdening their conſcience, pleading the promiſe. And he loves to hear the righteous holding out and maintaining the righteouſneſs of their wayes (againſt all the clamours and calumnies of men) before him. *There the righteous may diſpute with him.*

Secondly Note, *The righteous are willing and have priviledge to diſpute or argue their cauſe with God.*

The righteous have acceſs to God, and boldneſs with him in the blood of Chriſt ; ſo that they dare not only, firſt, tell him of their own wants ; or ſecondly, of their wrongs from others ; or thirdly, of their integrity, and the uprightneſs of their hearts with him, and that he knows it is ſo; but fourthly (which argues the greateſt height of holy boldneſs) they dare tell him of all the ſins which they have committed againſt him, and diſpute with him for mercy as their right upon the account of his own promiſe and covenant made with Chriſt in their behalf, while reſpecting and reflecting upon themſelves they can juſtifie God in condemning them for ever under wrath. Here is the right Goſpel-Logick ; theſe are the holy ſubtleties which the Spirit teacheth ; theſe are none of the *diſputers of this world, whoſe wiſdome* (as the Apoſtle ſaith, 1 *Cor.* 1. 20.) *God hath made fooliſh and will deſtroy* ; but theſe are *divine Diſputants indeed*, or diſputers for another world, whoſe wiſdome is of God, and who are *wiſe unto Salvation. Theſe righteous ones may diſpute with him.*

So ſhould I be for ever delivered from my Judge.

Job proceeds from the theſis to the hypotheſis, from the third perſon to the firſt ; the righteous man pleads with him, but he doth not ſay, *ſo ſhould the righteous be delivered for ever from his Judge* ; but *ſo ſhall I be delivered for ever from my Judge* ; thus he puts himſelf expreſly into the number of the righteous or upright, and his argument ſtands thus ;

He that is righteous, or upright, may diſpute and be acquitted or delivered when he diſputes with his Judge.

But I am righteous or upright,

Therefore I ſhall be delivered from my Judge when I diſpute with him.

The Major propoſition is laid down in the former part of this verſe ; the aſſumption in verſe 11, 12. The concluſion appears in the latter part of verſe 7, and in verſe 10.

So ſhould I be delivered for ever from my Judge ; that is, I ſhould eſcape the ſeverity of his ſentence. The Judge hath him that comes before him in hold, he hath him in his hand or power when his caſe is pleading ; but when a man is acquitted, then he is delivered from his Judge, that is, from the condemning ſentence of his Judge, then he is pronounced free, or (as we ſay) acquitted by Proclamation ; no man may then meddle with him, or charge his crime upon him. *Job* was aſſured that he ſhould come off well at his tryal, and that there could be no bringing of the matter about again. *I ſhould be delivered for ever*; that is, I ſhould never be queſtioned more, I ſhould ſee an end, or final determination of my cauſe.

Liberarer evaderē ſemper a judice meo, i. e. *abſolverer, vitarem ejus condemnationem.* Merc. *Probata cauſa impetrarem ab eo liberationem* Jun.

The word which we tranſlate *for ever*, ſignifies both *victory* and *eternity* ; *I ſhould be delivered victoriouſly and eternally, or unto victory or eternity from my Judge.* The ſame word ſignifies *victory* and *eternity* in the Original, becauſe eternity gets the victory over all. *Time is a great Conquerour* that eats up all things here below, whoſe pedigree is from below ; *but eternity will eat it out*, and conquer Time it ſelf ; eternity is the greateſt conquerour. *For ever* is the ſaddeſt and ſweeteſt word (upon different accounts) in the whole Bible. To be condemned had not ſo much ſadneſs in it, were it not *for ever* ; and to be juſtified, had not ſo much ſweetneſs in it, were it not *for ever.* This word *for ever* weighs moſt both in reference to mercy and to judgment. *Job* ſaid the utmoſt to his own comfort, when he ſaid, *I ſhall be delivered*, or (as Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates) *be quit for ever by my Judge.*

Vindicabor ad victoriã vel eternitatem; utrum enim לנצח *ſignificat. Hoc ſupremo judicem decidentes, a vobis iniquis judicibus veſtriſque ſuſpicionibus quovis alio. Ariſtarcho liberabor victor totalitèr.* Scult.

There is yet a queſtion concerning the **Judge**, or who the Judge is from whom he ſhould be delivered. Our reading ſeems to intend it of God himſelf. Others by the Judge underſtand his friends or others who charged him ſo hardly. There is yet a third opinion which ſuppoſeth the Judge to be ſome third perſon. who ſhould umpire the buſineſs between God and him. I rather conceive that by his Judge he means God himſelf, to whoſe righteous and merciful tribunal he appealed from the hard ſentence and judgment of his friends ; and who having once declared his judgment, not only the cenſures, but even the ſuſpitions of all men, whether friends or enemies, would be ſilenced for ever. And ſo laſtly, we may take the word *Judge*, which is here indefinitely propoſed, univerſally. As if he had ſaid ; when once God hath had the hearing of my cauſe, I ſhall not need to fear any, what they can ſay, or do againſt me, in the capacity of a Judge. *So ſhould I be delivered for ever from my Judge.*

Judicem intelligit apud quem ipſe ſuam cauſam ageret adverſus deum ; facitenim deum velut litigatorem ; quaſi coram tertio quodam judice cauſa diſceptetur. Merc.

Hence Obſerve, *God will for ever acquit the righteous, nor ſhall any have power to condemn thoſe whom he hath once acquitted.*

There is no condemnation to them that are in Chriſt (Rom. 8. 1.) as much as to ſay, ſuch ſhall be for ever delivered from their judge. *Who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of Gods Elect? It is God who juſtifieth* (Rom. 8. 33.) Though ſome will preſume to lay many and grievous things to the charge of Gods Elect, yet God having juſtified them, all their charges ſhall be reprobated and rejected. God who hath once juſtified a perſon, will never lay any thing to his charge; and what charge ſoever others bring againſt him, Gods juſtification will take it off. The Apoſtles challenge is univerſal, *who ſhall lay any thing ?* &c. It is univerſal two wayes. Firſt, in regard of perſons accuſing, he excepts none in Earth, Heaven, or Hell. Secondly, in regard of crimes, he excepts no ſort of ſin, let them ſeek and find what they can, be they ſins againſt God or man, be they ſins of omiſſion or commiſſion, be they ſins never ſo much aggravated, or ſadly circumſtantiated, though againſt both light and love, yet they will not do againſt a perſon Elect and Juſtified. *Who ſhall lay anything to the charge of Gods Elect* ? wipes away all charges. Accuſed they may be, though juſtified ; but condemned they cannot be, becauſe juſtified. The beſt of Saints on Earth have much in them, and much is done by them, which might be matter of charge againſt them (for he that ſaith he hath no ſin in him, hath indeed no truth in him, 1 *Joh.* 1. 8.) but juſtifying Grace is their full diſcharge.

Hac ratione liber evaderem ab iniquis vita mea judicibus & calumniatoribus, ut ultra mihi diſceptatione & contentione opus non erit.

Again, as the word *Judge* is expounded univerſally, for all thoſe that did or might accuſe *Job*.

Obſerve, *The beſt and moſt righteous on Earth, meet with many harſh accuſers and hard Judges.*

David had thoſe who laid to his charge things that he knew not (*Pſal.* 35. 11.) The *Jews* returned from *Babylon* to build their City and Temple, were charged with ſedition ; *Jeremy* was charged with treaſon ; *Paul* was called *a peſtilent fellow*, and the Primitive Chriſtians were generally loaded with ſlanders by the Heathen. Miſreport and reproach are the portion of Saints from the world. And how ſadly *Job* was charged all along by his friends, and how ſeverely cenſured, hath appeared every where in this Book, eſpecially in the former Chapter (*verſ.* 5, 6, 7.) *Is not thy wickedneſs great, and thine iniquities infinite? for thou haſt taken a pledg from thy brother for nought, and ſtripped the naked of their cloathing,* &c. Had not *Job* reaſon to look upon it as a great mercy to be delivered from ſuch a Judge? And hath not every Godly man reaſon to make *Davids* choice (2 Sam. 24. 14.) *Let me fall into the hands of the Lord (for his mercies are great) and let me not fall into the hands of men.* Now as men are for the moſt part over-ſevere executioners of Gods ſentence, ſo they are uſually over-ſevere Judges in giving their own whether ſence or ſentence concerning others. And therefore *Jobs* faith did propheſie this good to himſelf, that God having heard him and judged him, he *ſhould be delivered for ever from* (man) *his judge.* And let this be the comfort of the righteous who are oppreſſed with the hard opinions of men, that, *God will at laſt deliver them for ever from every righteous and unrighteous Judge.* In that great day (as the Apoſtle *Jude* calls it) the cauſe of every righteous man ſhall be diſputed before God, and then they ſhall be delivered for ever from their Judge. And this did exceedingly bear up the ſpirit of the Apoſtle *Paul* in the midſt of the various cenſures and judgements of men concerning him; he knew their judgment ſhould be taken off at laſt, (1 *Cor.* 4. 3, 4.) *with me it is a very ſmall thing that I ſhould be judged of you, or of mans judgment, yea I judge not my own ſelf; but he who judgeth me is the Lord: therefore judge nothing before the time till the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkneſs, and make manifeſt the councels of the hearts, and then ſhall every man have praiſe of God*; that is, every righteous man, though diſpraiſed, and deſpiſed, though judged and condemned by men, though blackt over with falſe reports and reproaches, yet then every righteous man ſhall have praiſe from the moſt righteous God. He will then do all his people right who have been wronged, and paſs a juſt ſentence upon thoſe who have ſuffered much and long under unjuſt cenſures. *And ſo ſhall they be for ever delivered from their Judge.*

VERS. 8, 9, 10.

Behold I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him.

On the left hand where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himſelf on the right hand that I cannot ſee him.

But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tryed me, I ſhall come forth as Gold.

IN the two former verſes, *Job* expreſt much confidence of a good iſſue in his cauſe, could he but find God and come to tryal. And he reneweth this again at *verſ.* 10. expreſſing the ſame confidence; *when he hath tryed me I ſhall come forth as gold.* But though he was thus confident of a fair coming off in caſe he could find God, yet he ſeems in theſe words to caſt off all confidence of finding him; foraſmuch as yet he could not, or had not. Expreſſing himſelf here as a man that had travelled into all parts and quarters of the world, Eaſt, Weſt, North, and South, to find a friend, yet could not meet with him. *Behold I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him. On the left hand where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himſelf on the right hand that I cannot ſee him.*

There is a threefold ſcope held forth about theſe words.

Firſt, As if *Job* did here deplore his fruitleſs pains, in wiſhing for his appearing before God, and in appealing to his Tribunal, for as yet he ſaw himſelf unanſwered and fruſtrated in his expectation; God did not appear to him in his troubles, nor declare his purpoſe towards him.

Secondly, His ſcope may be to aſſert the hiddenneſs of the wayes of God, or that the wayes of God are not to be found out, nor underſtood by all the pains and induſtry, by all the endeavours and diſquiſitions of man; let him turn himſelf which way he will, *Eaſt or Weſt, North or South*, yet he muſt ſay, *I cannot behold him.*

Declarat Job *ſe non poſſe ratione humana, res naturales (quas per quatuor mundi plagas ſignificat) cognoſcere certo & clarè rationes divinorum judiciorum.* Pined.

Thirdly, Some conceive that *Jobs* intent is to declare his own underſtanding or meaning in that earneſt wiſh which he lately made, about his admittance to the throne of God. *O that I knew where I might find him, that I might come even to his ſeat* (verſ. 3.) He was not ſo groſs as to think that God was confined to any place, or that he had a ſeat on which he ſate, as the Princes of the Earth have; and therefore he affirms, that God is *every where, and no where*, that he is every where indeed, though he could not find him appearing to him any where; as if he had ſaid, I do not circumſcribe God in my apprehenſions to this or that place; I enquire after him *Eaſt, Weſt, North and South*, that is, all the world over, yet I miſs of him, and have not attained my purpoſe to this hour; for he hath not yet manifeſted himſelf unto me. This ſeems to be the general ſcope of theſe three verſes, which have two things eſpecially conſiderable in them.

Hæc ſubjungit ad declarandum dei immenſitatem, ne quis putaret eum exiſtimaſſe deum corporeum eſſe aut corporali loco circumſcribi cum de illius tribunali loquutus eſt, Id.

Firſt, *Jobs* ſolicitous complaint of the Lords hiding himſelf from him after all his ſearchings.

Secondly, The comfort which *Job* took in the integrity of his own heart, and in the clearneſs of his Conſcience, that if once he came to tryal, all would be well with him.

The Eighth and Ninth verſes are all of one importance, which I ſhall briefly open, and then give ſome notes from them.

Verſ. 8. Behold!

He ſpeaks here as of ſome ſtrange thing, that God who is every where, ſhould be no where found by him; *I go forward, and backward, to the right hand, and to the left*, and find him not.

Behold, I go forward.

The word is applyed in Scripture to ſignifie both a priority in time, and a priority in place. Some interpret it here of time, I look on the times which were before, and now are paſt. In which ſence the word is uſed (2 *King.* 19.25.) *haſt thou not heard long agoe?* that is, haſt thou not heard of the times which are forward, or which have been before. So (*Pro.* 8. 23.) wiſdome thus ſpeaks, *I was ſet up from everlaſting, from the beginning, ere ever the Earth was.* So we tranſlate it; the Hebrew is, *I was ſet up from everlaſting, from the head of time, before the Earth was.* Chriſt was before the head of time, or the beginning of time; we tranſlate it here as referring to a place; *behold, I go forward*, that is, as ſome render, *I go Eaſtward*, or *toward the Eaſt.* The world conſidered in it ſelf hath neither forward nor backward, but man being conſidered as ſetting himſelf to the Sun-riſing (for that's the natural poſture of man) then *forward is Eaſtward*, the Sun riſeth in the Eaſt. And then *backward is Weſtward.* The *left hand* is the North, and the *right hand* is the South; ſuch is the poſition of every man ſtanding with his face to the Eaſt. Thus here, *Behold, I go forward*, that is, to the Eaſt, or I go Eaſtward; for a man may go forward, in a large ſence, though he go to the North, or to the South, towards Eaſt and weſt, which way ſoever he goes, he goes forward. But to go forward, according to this ſtrict notion is to go Eaſtward, not only becauſe the *Jews* and *Arabians* were wont to worſhip toward the Eaſt; but eſpecially becauſe man doth naturally turn himſelf toward the Eaſt, or the Sun-riſing. So the word is uſed (*Gen.* 2. 8.) *The Lord planted a Garden Eaſtward in* Eden, or *forward in* Eden. *Behold I go forward,*

קדם *aliquando temporis aliquando vero loci principium & prioritatem ſignificat.*

In Scriptura pars antica orientalis, poſtica occidentalis, auſtralis dextra, aquilonaris ſiniſtra.

But he is not there.

And not he, ſaith the Original, that is, he is not to be found, or he is not to be had; not that *Job* did think the Eaſtern part of the world empty of God, for he was acquainted with the doctrine of Gods Omnipreſence, he knew that God is every where; but his meaning is only this, he doth not manifeſt himſelf to me, nor appear according to my appeal to him, that I might argue my caſe, and reaſon my matters with him. I obtain no diſcovery of God, but continue ſtill in darkneſs and diſſatisfaction; *behold I go forward, but he is not there,*

Ante ibo, & non ipſe. Heb.

And backward, but I cannot perceive him.

The ſame word in Scripture (as was noted of the word *forward*) ſignifieth that which is behind both in time and in place. It is applyed to that which is behind in time (*Iſa.* 41. 23.) where the Lord challengeth the Idols to give a proof of their Deitie, or that they were gods; *ſhew the things that are to come hereafter*, or the things that are *backward*, and behind in time, things that are to be done or

אחור *nunc ad tempus nunc ad locum reſpectum habet.*

to come to paſs hereafter, and we ſhall have ſome teſtimony of your God-head, or that ye are Gods. And as it ſignifies that which is behind in time, ſo that which is behind in place. Thus we render it, *I go backward*, and then (according to the former notion, *forward* being *Eaſtward*) *backward is Weſtward.* The Weſtern parts of the world are called the *back parts of the world*; not as ſome (groſſely enough) give the reaſon, becauſe the weſt parts of the world are the worſt parts of the world, or were fit only to be caſt behind the back and be forgotten, as a more ignoble part of the world; but becanſe according to the poſition of a man looking towards the Sun-riſing which is Eaſtward, the Weſt is backward, or upon his back.

And backward, but I cannot perceive,] or (as the Original word ſtrictly bears) *underſtand him*; that is, I cannot find any mark or print of Gods ſpecial preſence with me there. God is as much hidden or ſecrets himſelf from me as much in the Weſt, as in the Eaſt, both here and there my purſuits after him are fruitleſs. *I go backward, but I cannot perceive him*; nor do I yet give over my enquiry; for as it follows;

Verſ. 9. **I go on the left hand where he doth work, but I cannot behold him.**

Theſe words are a deſcription of the *Northern part* of the world, for that is on the *left hand* (as was ſaid) according to the moſt natural poſition of mans body. And he addeth, *where he doth work*; which addition gives a peculiar character or deſcription of the place, and is variouſly tranſlated.

Quando operatur. Pag. *In faciendo ipſum.* Pag. *Dum operatur.* Vatab. *Ubi facit opus ſuum.* Iſidor.

Firſt, *On the left hand when he doth work.* Secondly, *on the left hand in his work or working.* Thirdly, *on the left hand while he worketh*; we render, *on the left hand where he doth work*, or *where he doth his work.* Here a queſtion is raiſed, why is this deſcription given of the *left hand*, or of the Northern part of the world? doth not God work on the *right hand*, or in the South, as well as on the *left hand*, or in the North.

I anſwer; though God worketh all the world over, yet God worketh in ſome parts of the world in a more eminent manner. God worketh ſo in ſome places, as if he did work no where elſe; all places are the work of God by Creation, and God worketh in all places by his providence. The works of creation would run to ruine, if God did not ſuſtaine, and as it were keep them in reparation by the works of providence. Yet as God worketh in ſome men, and by ſome men, more then in, and by others, ſome perſons are to him as his right hand, he calls them forth to be greatly inſtrumental to him: So he worketh in ſome places, and nations, and by ſome places and nations more then he doth in and by others. God is a free Agent, he worketh where he will, and he pitches upon ſome ſpecial places, and perſons, (according to the pleaſure of his own will) to work in, and by, more then many others. And ſeeing according to this interpretation, *the left hand where he is ſaid to work* ſo eminently, is the North,

We may Obſerve;

Firſt, *That God worketh more in the Northern parts of the world then he doth in the South.*

And the reaſon of this may be, becauſe the Northern parts of the world are more inhabited and peopled then the Southern are. And which may be a ſecond reaſon of it, the Inhabitants of the Northern parts of the world are more civilized and better inſtructed then the Southerne. Now the providences of God are moſt remarkable where there are moſt people, and they beſt taught and inſtructed, where the natural faculties of man are moſt raiſed and ſublimated by art and regular education, there or by them God doth his greateſt works; thoſe places are (as it were) the ſtages whereon he acts and brings to iſſue the ſecret purpoſes and counſels of his heart, both in wayes of judgment and in wayes of mercy.

Beſides, we find that the Northern Nations have in all ages been the moſt active and warlike.

The Fourth Monarchy, that of the *Romanes*, whoſe ſeat was more Northerly then any of the former three, was the moſt active and warlike of the Four, and extended its Dominion by extream and unwearied induſtry further then any had done before. And thoſe irruptions of enemies and Armies which gave the greateſt check to the *Roman* greatneſs, and often plum'd or pull'd off the Feathers of that mighty Eagle, were ſtill made by thoſe people who lived and were bred up in climates more cold and Northerly then they; as all Hiſtories do with one conſent make good. Inſomuch that it grew into a famous Proverb; *all evil comes from the North*, that is, *all troubles, invaſions, and devaſtations are brought upon the Nations by ſome hardy people or other coming out of the North.* And the holy Scriptures of the Prophets are full of this obſervation (*Jer.* 1. 14, 15.) *Then the Lord ſaid unto me, out of the North an evil ſhall break forth upon all the Inbitants of the land. For lo, I will call all the families of the Kingdome of the North, ſaith the Lord, and they ſhall come, and they ſhall ſet every one his throne at the entrance of the gates of* Jeruſalem, &c. By *the North* in this prophecy, he means *Caldea* and *Babylon*, which are ſcituate North from *Jeruſalem.* And by *all the families of the Kingdomes of the North*, he means all the Northern parts under the obedience of the King of *Babylon*, who ſhould readily follow and ſerve him in his warrs againſt *Judea.* Again in the ſame Prophet (*Ch.* 4. 6.) *I will bring evil out of the North* (Ch. 6. 1.) *evil appeareth out of the North* (verſ. 22.) *a people comes from the North* (Ch. 10. 22.) *behold a great commotion out of the North.* And when the Lord promiſed to remove far away from his people the *Northern Army*, (Joel. 2. 20.) he therein promiſed them the removal of all Armies and troubles, becauſe the North had moſt of all, if not alone troubled and harrazed them with Armies. Again, in the North, the Goſpel (which is the higheſt teaching and inſtruction) hath been more generally and more clearly publiſhed then in the Southern parts of the world; ſo that in alluſion to that of the Prophet (*Iſa.* 30. 26.) we may ſay, that the light of our *Northern moon* hath been as the *light of the Southern Sun, and that the light of our Sun hath been ſeven-fold to theirs, even as the light of ſeven dayes.* And according to the greatneſs of Goſpel light, the diſpenſations, and changes, which we have been under, have been very great; we eſpecially in this Northern Nation, with thoſe adjoyned to us and united with us under one Government, have had full experience of, and may therefore (giving glory to God) ſeal to the truth of *Jobs* poſition; that God worketh on the left hand, or in the North. Have not we found God working in the North? what changes, what variety of action have our Northern parts both ſeen and felt? what wonders of mercy and ſalvation? what terrible things in righteouſneſs hath God wrought of late among us? the Heavens and the Earth, States of all ſorts, the Heavenly and the Earthly, and of all degrees, the higher and the lower, have been terribly ſhaken in theſe Nations. Providence hath wrought to amazement in our dayes; the Nations round about have heard the report of it, and wondered. Many have had and will have cauſe to ſay of us, what hath God wrought! on the left hand, in our North, God hath been at work indeed!

Omne malum ab aquilone.

Moreover, we find that Mount *Sion* (which was not only an eminent part of the literal *Jeruſalem*, but a figure alſo of the myſtical *Jeruſalem*, or whole Church of God under the Goſpel (*Heb.* 12. 22) this Mount *Sion* (I ſay) is Geographically deſcribed in our Northerly ſcituation (*Pſal.* 48. 2, 3.) *Beautiful for the ſcituation, the joy of the whole Earth is Mount* Sion; *on the ſides of the North, the City of the great King. God is known in her pallaces for a refuge.* As if he had ſaid, in *Sion*, on the ſides of the North God worketh wonderfully, as it follows expreſly (*verſ.* 4, 5.) *for lo, the Kings were aſſembled, they paſſed by together, they ſaw it, and ſo they marveiled, they were troubled and haſted away*: That is, Kings conſpiring againſt the Church were ſo terrified with the evidences of Gods power working mightily there, that they fled away, or as another Scripture phraſeth it, *they came one way and returned ſeven.* And in this form of ſpeech is both the then *Jeruſalem*, and the Church ever ſince expreſſed, in that boaſt which the King of *Babylon* (who was a type of all the enemies of the Church cloathed with mighty power and ſoveraignty) makes againſt her, (*Iſa.* 14. 13.) *I will ſit alſo* (that is, erect my throne) *upon the Mount of the Congregation on the ſides of the North.* Mount *Sion* was called the Mount of the Congregation, becauſe there the people of God the *Jewes* were famouſly known to congregate often together; and this

(ſaith that proud boaſter) on the ſides of the North. And to compleat this notion of the workings of God in and from the North, *Chriſt himſelf is ſaid to be raiſed out of the North*, for ſo ſome expound that Scripture (*Iſa.* 41. 25.) *I have raiſed up one out of the North, and he ſhall come, from the riſing of the Sun ſhall he call upon my name*, &c. This propheſie (I ſay) ſome expound of Chriſt, who ſhall gather his diſperſed and deſpiſed ones from all Quarters of the world. The greateſt works of God that ever were done, Chriſt did them; and therefore the North, may juſtly be called the place where he worketh, ſeeing he raiſed Chriſt from thence.

Secondly, As the words are read thus; *on the left hand while he worketh*; as if *Job* had ſaid, I look after God *on the left hand*, or *in the North*, even in the time while he is working, or doing great things, and yet I cannot behold him. Obſerve,

> *That God may be, and often is, working great things, and we not able to apprehend or behold him at his work.*

The inviſible things of God, even his eternal power and Godhead are ſeen in the things that are made; and that not only in the things that he made while he created the world, but alſo in the things which he makes while he governs the world, and yet himſelf is not ſeen in making them; and that not only becauſe he is inviſible in his nature, but becauſe (which is the point in hand) the manner of his working is inviſible. In ſome things God works ſo evidently, that the natural man cannot but ſay, *the finger of God is here*. But in other things he works ſo ſecretly, that the ſpiritual man is not able to ſee where the finger of God is, unleſs upon that general acknowledgment, that the finger of God is every where. *Solomon* (Pro. 30. 18.) ſaith, *there be three things which are too wonderful for me; yea, four which I know not; the way of an Eagle in the Ayre, the way of a Serpent upon a Rock, and the way of a Ship in the midſt of the Sea*; even ſuch are the motions of God, the wayes and workings of God among the ſons of men. *A Ship in the Sea* leaves no track, no path; you cannot ſee where the Ship hath ſailed; the Ship plows the Ocean, but the furrows are unſeen as ſoon as made. *A Serpent upon a Rock*, makes no dint, leaves no footſteps behind him. The flying Eagle parts the Aire, but there's no diſcerning where ſhe hath paſt.

And thus *Job* ſeems to ſpeak here; *though I go to the North while God worketh*, yet I can ſee no more of him, then of the way of an Eagle in the Aire, or of a Serpent upon a Rock, or of a Ship in the Sea, *I cannot behold him while he worketh*, nor the way of his working. And further,

He hideth himſelf on the right hand that I cannot ſee him.

עלש *Cooperire, involvere, ſeu occultare ſignificat. Quaſi deus meridionali parte velut operimento ſeſe circumtegat.*

ים *eſt mare et*

ימן *dextra unde etiam meridies dicitur*

תימן *Theman Nomini Jamin præpoſito Thau*, Exo. 22.18. *unde Theman ſi appellativè ſumatur dextrum, Auſtrale ſive meridionale ſignificat, ſi autem propriè eſt nomen regionis Auſtralis.* Hieron.

The word which we render **Hideth**, ſignifieth to wrap up with a covering, implying that God doth cover himſelf from the eye of man, in or with the *right hand* part of the world. Some render it thus; *he hideth his right hand*, or *his working hand, that I cannot ſee him*. We render it well, *he hideth himſelf on the right hand that I cannot ſee him. The right hand*, is put in oppoſition to *the left*, mentioned in the former part of the verſe. There, in the South God doth (as it were) purpoſely and artificially hide, and caſt a vaile over himſelf (ſaith *Job*) leſt I ſhould ſee him there, he keeps himſelf yet more out of my view and reach then elſewhere. The word which we tranſlate, the *right hand*, ſignifies *the Southern parts of the world* (Cant. 4. 16.) *Awake O North-wind, and come thou South, blow upon my Garden.* (Ex. 26. 18.) *On the South* (or *right*) *ſide Southward.* The word is alſo rendered, *the right ſide*, (2 Sam. 24. 5.) *On the right ſide of the City.* Further, the word ſignifies, as the right hand, ſo alſo ſtrength, becauſe the right hand is ſtrongeſt in moſt men and readieſt for uſe. And ſo *he hides himſelf on the right hand* may import (as was toucht before) that God hideth himſelf even there, where he puts forth his ſtrength and power.

From all theſe expoſitions laid together, in that *Job* here ſaith, he *went forward and backward*, or Eaſt and Weſt, on *the right hand, and on the left*, or *North* and *South*, (from all I ſay) it appears that *Job* was a great traveller, that he travel'd all the world over; yet where was *Job* when he ſpake all this? was he not upon his Bed? was he not Gods Priſoner, ſhut up in his Chamber, when he ſaid, *I go forward and backward, Northward and Southward, and yet I find him not, perceive him not, ſee him not?*

Hence learn, Firſt, *That God is every where.*

Job knew there was a preſence of God forward and backward, Northward and Southward, he knew that God fills Heaven and Earth with his preſence. There is a preſence of God from which the worſt of men cannot go; and there is a preſence of God into which, many times, the beſt of men cannot get; there was a preſence of God out of which *Job* could not get, while (according to his deſires) he could not get into the preſence of God.

Secondly, From thoſe various negatives here uſed, *I cannot perceive him, I cannot behold him, I cannot ſee him*, Obſerve,

> *God is a Spirit, not viſible at all in himſelf; and he only appears, as and to whom himſelf pleaſeth to appear to and among men.*

The appearances of God are not natural, but voluntary; when his will is to be ſeen, he gives man the priviledge to ſee him. It is altogether impoſſible to ſee him with a bodily eye, (1 *Tim.* 6. 16.) *God only hath Immortality, dwelling in the light that no man can approach unto, whom no man hath ſeen, nor can ſee*, that is, with bodily eyes; and as it is impoſſible to ſee him at any time with an eye of ſenſe, ſo he will not always be ſeen by the eye of our underſtanding, no nor always by the eye of faith. Faith ſhall hereafter be perfected in the viſion of God, but here faith is ſometime quite deprived of the Viſion of God, *He hideth himſelf from the houſe of* Jacob. Faith is oppoſed to all bodily ſight (2 *Cor.* 5. 7.) *we walk by faith, not by ſight*; and faith hath not always a ſpiritual ſight. It is ſaid (*Heb.* 11. 27.) that *Moſes ſaw him that is inviſible*, he ſaw him with a ſpiritual eye, the eye of faith; we have reaſon to believe, that *Job* at that time, ſaw God with an eye of faith, but he ſaw him not with an eye of underſtanding to diſcern the way of his working with him. They who are moſt ſpiritual and of the largeſt underſtanding in ſpirituals, can no more comprehend God then a cockle-ſhel can contain the Ocean; and many who are ſpiritual, are ſo dark in their underſtandings, or God is ſo dark to their underſtandings, that they cannot ſo much as apprehend or diſcern him, ſee or perceive him.

Thirdly, When *Job* ſaith, *God hideth himſelf on the right hand, or in the South*, ſo that I cannot ſee him, This teacheth us,

> *That God doth ſometimes purpoſely withdraw and reſerve himſelf from his moſt precious ſervants.*

The Prophet hath a ſtrange deſcription of God (*Iſa.* 45. 15.) *Verily thou art a God that hideſt thy ſelf* (as if he had ſaid, it is thy uſe and cuſtome to do ſo) *O God of* Iſrael *the Saviour*; he was the God and Saviour of *Iſrael*, yet *Iſrael* could not ſee him, for he hid himſelf; when God will conceal himſelf, his *Iſrael* cannot ſee him. And hence we find in Scripture ſo many earneſt Deprecations, that God would not hide himſelf, and ſo many vehement Expoſtulations when he did, *Wherefore hideſt thou thy face* (ſaith the Church, Pſal. 44. 24.) *and forgetteſt our affliction and oppreſſion?* God hides himſelf five ways, or in five things from his people.

Firſt, He hides his favour and the light of his Countenance from his people. And (when this is hid God is hid) he will not let them ſee the love which he hath in his heart towards them, yea (poſſibly) he lets them ſee anger, wrath, diſpleaſure; he puts on the habit of an enemy, and deals with them as with enemies. *Job* complains more then once that God hid his favour from him, and ſhewed him nothing but his dread and terrour.

Secondly, God hides his works from his people, he will not let them be ſeen, nor be ſeen them; *O how unſearchable are thy judgments, and thy wayes paſt finding out!* God hath wayes and judgments which man cannot reach unto. Some of his works are acted (as we ſay) above-bord, they are done in a clear light, he that runs may ſee and read them, and God in them. He that runs may read love written upon ſome of them in letters of Gold, or with beams of light. And he that runs may read wrath written upon others of them in letters of blood, or with ſtreams of darkneſs and the very ſhadows of death; but ſome works of God are ſo curtained about and vailed, ſo hidden and obſcured, that we cannot perceive them. Though all the works of God are works of light, yet many of them are in the dark to man: *While judgment and righteouſneſs are the habitation of Gods Throne, clouds and darkneſs are round about him* (Pſal. 97. 2.)

Thirdly, God hideth the reaſon of his working. His works are often hid, but the reaſon of his working is oftner hid. *Jeremy* complains, *Why doth the way of the wicked proſper?* He would know a reaſon of it; he ſaw that God let the wicked proſper, but the reaſon he ſaw not.

Fourthly, The deſign or end of the work of God is a hidden thing; as God doth not let men ſee the reaſon why he doth this or that, ſo not his aim and end, what he would have, or what he drives at in doing it. When God afflicts a godly man, whether it be for the trial of his Graces, or to chaſten him for his failings, or for the purging out of his corruptions, is often his doubt: and as 'tis thus in perſonal workings, ſo alſo in publick workings; *Whether God hath to do with a Nation, or with a man only, he hath his ſecrets.*

Fifthly, As God hides what himſelf doth, ſo he hides from us what he would have us to do; he hides his own will from us in ſome things: We have indeed his Letters Patents, his proclaimed Laws before us in all things needful to ſalvation; but there are ſome things which concern particular actings in our lives, wherein a godly man may be very ignorant of the will of God, and much puzled in his ſpirit, what to do, whether this or that be the courſe which God would have him take, God hides himſelf from us in the hidings of his will from us. For as when the Apoſtle ſaith (*Eph.* 4. 20.) *Ye have not ſo learned Chriſt*, we are not to underſtand Chriſt perſonally, but Chriſt according to the revelation of himſelf in the Goſpel; Chriſt there is the will or mind of Chriſt; ſo when God hideth himſelf from, or doth not diſcover himſelf to us, the meaning may be this, he doth not diſcover his mind and will to us, what he would have us to do as to our particular caſe and condition. God keeps ſome long in ſuſpence, long in the dark about this point, ſo that they often cry out with that good King in his dangerous ſtraight, *We know not what to do, but our eyes are towards thee* (2 Chron. 20. 12.) Many a man is in as great a ſtraight what to do in regard of the darkneſs of his condition, as *Jehoſhaphat* was, in regard of the dangerouſneſs of it. Hence note,

> Fourthly, That, *A gracious ſoul uſeth all means to attain what he deſires, eſpecially to find out the mind and will of God in his workings.*

What elſe is the meaning of all this? why elſe went *Job* forward and backward? why went he on the right hand and on the left? why did he thus traverſe his ground, and repreſent himſelf in theſe buſie enquiries after God, travelling in the multitude of his thoughts upon his bed, from ſea to ſea, and from the river to the ends of the earth, leaving no ſtone unturned (as we ſay) nor path untroden, that he might get his cauſe determined, and his heart ſetled? *Obadiah* tells *Eliah* after he had met him (ſee how induſtrious the malice of *Ahab* againſt that holy man, made him, to find him out whom his ſoul hated, 1 *Kings* 18. 10.) *As the Lord thy God liveth, there is no Nation or Kingdom whither my Lord hath not ſent to ſeek thee,* &c. Not that *Ahab* had ſent Meſſengers into every quarter of the world; but the meaning is, that he had been very diligent and induſtrious to find out *Elijah*. And ſo ſaith *Job*, there is not any corner under heaven, where I have not been ſeeking to find him whom my ſoul loveth and longeth for; thereby importing his exceeding diligence to find God. They who have a deſire after God indeed, will take pains for him; they will ſeek him Eaſt, Weſt, North and South, and never complain of the length of their journey. They will not ſtay till God comes home to their doors, but out they will go to ſeek him. For though it be a truth that no man can ſeek or look after God, till God hath firſt looked after, and found him; yet they whom God hath once found, have ſuch an impreſſion left upon their hearts, that when God ſeems to leave them, and to be as loſt to them, they will more then ſeem to look after and ſeek him while he is abſent from them, that is, while he hides himſelf from them. Surely God hath never toucht the hearts of thoſe lazie profeſſors that would fain be ſaved, but will go neither forward nor backward, neither North nor South after Jeſus Chriſt; whereas if their deſires were true and genuine, they would uſe all means, go all due wayes, leave nothing unaſſayed that might probably bring them to the knowledge and enjoyment of him: O how buſie was *Job*'s ſpirit to find out God! And ſo buſie ſhould our ſpirits be to find him out, both for comfort and for counſel in all the turnings of our lives.

> Laſtly obſerve, That, *After the uſe of much means to find God, yet poſſibly God may not be found by us as to our apprehenſion.*

Job ſpared no pains to find out God, and yet he could not ſpeed at that time; after all his ſearch he found him not, he perceived him not, he did not behold him; you may pray, and ſeek, and adviſe, and wait, follow this means and that means to find out God, or to recover the ſence of his gracious preſence with your ſouls, and yet (for a long time) miſs of him. This is one of the exerciſes which God is pleaſed to put his people to; he therefore hides, that we may ſeek him; he doth not hide himſelf becauſe he will not be found; but he hides himſelf becauſe he will be ſought; and yet when he is ſought, and ſought in a right way too, he will not preſently be found; for though none that ſeek him in ſincerity, but ſhall find him at laſt (*He hath not ſaid to the ſeed of* Jacob, *ſeek ye my face in vain*, that is, ſeek me and never find me, the Scripture ſpeaks no ſuch thing) nor did *Job* alwayes ſeek and not find; yet, as he in his time, ſo we in ours, may ſeek him long, and not find him, and yet ſtill we muſt continue ſeeking, becauſe God hides himſelf that we may ſeek him more, not that he would have us give over ſeeking: And therefore in times of deſertion, in hiding and withdrawing times, do not give over ſeeking; for the reaſon why God doth withdraw, is, that we may ſeek him more, and *follow harder after him*; that we may ſeek him (as *Job* did) *Eaſt, Weſt, North* and *South*, that is, in all means, duties and ordinances, he will not alwayes hide himſelf; that's the ſum and ſcope of the eighth and ninth verſe.

Verſe 10. **But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I ſhall come forth as gold.**

Job could not find the wayes of God, well (ſaith he) though I cannot find out Gods way, yet God hath found out my wayes; though he is pleaſed to vail his own wayes, yet mine are open; he hideth himſelf from me, but I am not hid from him. *He knoweth the way that I take.*

Connecto hunc verſum cum ſeptimo, obtinerem à judice, nam is novit. Eſt igitur ætimologia ſpei, cætera autē quaſi per parentheſin interſeruntur illo loco. Coc.

Further, In this verſe *Job* ſeems to give a reaſon of his hope to ſpeed well at the Seat or Throne of God, whither he had appealed (*v.* 3. 7.) As if he had ſaid, *Seeing my heart tells me, my way is good, and my Judge knows it to be ſo; how can it be but that my judgment from him ſhould be good? He knoweth the way that I take.*

To know, may be taken here two wayes; Firſt, As an act of the Underſtanding only; *he knoweth*, that is, he fully perceiveth and apprehendeth what my way is.

Secondly, As it takes in an act of the Affection too; *He knoweth*, that is, he approveth *the way that I take*; my way is pleaſing to him. When God is ſaid to *know the way of the righteous* (Pſal. 1. 6.) The meaning of it is, he is well pleaſed with their way, and will proſper them in it, they ſhall have good ſucceſs in what they go about.

Quamvis illum non poſſit homo perſpicere, at ille perſpectas habet omnium mortalium actiones.

Again, Whereas we tranſlate, *He knows the way that I take*, that is, my courſe of life or converſation among men. The Hebrew is, *He knoweth the way that is in me*; he doth not only know my outward way, or the way that is without me, but he knows my inward way, the way that is within me. We have a way within us, and that is the way of our thoughts; and we have a way without us, and that is the way of our works. *He* (ſaith *Job*) *knows the way that is in me*; therefore much more the way without me; he knows me through and through: As if he had ſaid, what though I cannot find him, yet I will leave my cauſe with him; for he needs no information of mine, to lead him into the underſtanding of it; he himſelf knows all things by himſelf; *He knoweth the way that I take, or that is in me.*

There are three things which *Job* might aim at in this ſentence.

Firſt, An account why he was ſure of a right judgment from God, becauſe he was not only a Judge, but an eye-witneſs of all the wayes that he had ever gone.

Secondly, A confutation of his Friends opinion of him, as if he were a man that did not fear God, whereas he did acknowledge that both himſelf and all his wayes were viſible and manifeſt unto God.

Thirdly, A ſtrong aſſertion of his own innocency, ſeeing he could ſpeak thus rejoycingly, that *God knew all his wayes*. Hence obſerve,

The way of man, even his moſt ſecret way, or the way within him is known to God.

God wraps up himſelf often in the darkneſs of ſecrecy, as to man, but man is never in that darkneſs as to God; the very children of darkneſs, and the wayes of darkneſs are in the light to him. And as the wayes of evil men, and the evil of their wayes, ſo the wayes of good men, and the goodneſs of their wayes are known to God. We need not fear that the good we do or have done (though no eye of man ſee it) ſhall be loſt in the dark. We ſcarce know our own wayes, and we cannot know our own hearts, but God doth (*Jer.* 17. 9.) *The heart of man is deceitful above all things, and deſperately wicked, who can know it?* No man can know all the wayes of his heart; he cannot come to the bottom of his own heart, though he may know the bent of it; but (ſaith God) *I ſearch the heart: much of our heart is a ſecret to our ſelves; but to God nothing of it is*; he knows our inſide full. As he knows our actions, ſo the grounds upon which we act, and the ends for which we act, and the heart with which we act; thus God knows the way that every man takes: and thus none but God can know the wayes of man. We can trade no farther then upon the borders of mens wayes, their outward acts; as for the ſpirit and principle of them, whence they flow, as for the aimes and ends of them, whither they are flowing, with theſe God alone is intimate. And with theſe God is more intimate then man can be with that which is wholly outward.

And ſeeing God knows all the wayes which man takes, let no man go about to hide his wayes from God. 'Tis vain to hide any thing from him who ſees all that is hidden. He that comes before a Judge that knows what he hath done, and is able to prove it, why ſhould he deny it? The heart of a natural man is not more buſied about any thing then in making veils for his ſin; the firſt thing that man did after he had ſinned, was, to make ſuch a veil. As all men have ſinned after the ſimilitude of *Adam*'s tranſgreſſion, ſo they cover their tranſgreſſions according to the ſimilitude of his covering. The Holy Ghoſt (*Pſal.* 32. 1.) calleth them *bleſſed, whoſe ſins are covered,* but it is with a covering of Gods providing, not of their own; woe to thoſe whoſe ſins are hid by a covering of their own providing; God hath given us his Son our Lord Jeſus Chriſt in his righteouſneſs, for our covering; while our ſins are ſo covered, bleſſed are we; but if we cover them with a covering of our own, God will lay them open for ever to our ſhame. *Woe to the rebellious children, ſaith the Lord* (Iſa. 30. 1.) *that take counſel, but not of me, and that cover with a covering, but not of my Spirit, that they may add ſin unto ſin:* If we cover our ſins with any thing but the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, we cover them with a ſin; not only becauſe all our righteouſneſs (which is the beſt thing of our own that we have to cover them with) is ſinful; but becauſe the very act of covering them ſo, is a ſin; and therefore in ſo doing, what do we but *add ſin unto ſin?* And if to cover our ſins with our own righteouſneſs, be a ſin, how do we heap ſin upon ſin while we cover it (as many endeavour to do) with our denials, diſſemblings and excuſes?

Secondly, Conſider with what confidence *Job* ſpeaks; he had diſcourſed of his fruitleſs labour and travel in the uſe of all means to find God; well (ſaith he) yet it is a comfort that God knows my wayes, though I cannot find out his. Hence note,

It is the joy of the upright that God knows them and their wayes, yea, the wayes that are in them.

Thus *Jeremy* (chap. 12. 3.) Having complained of the proſperity of evil men before the Lord, concludes, *But thou O Lord, knoweſt me, thou haſt ſeen me, and tried my heart toward thee:* This was the Prophets joy, and ſo it was the Apoſtles, when he ſaid, *But we are made manifeſt unto God* (2 *Cor.* 5. 11.) That's the thing that pleaſeth us. *David* (1 *Chron.* 29. 17.) ſpeaks in the ſame frame of ſpiritual contentment; *I know alſo, O my God, that thou trieſt my heart, and haſt pleaſure in uprightneſs:* This was a pleaſure to *David*, this was his joy and Crown of rejoycing, that God knew him; and a godly man hath much cauſe of rejoycing in this, that God knows him perfectly; conſidering how much he is miſtaken and miſunderſtood by men, When our wayes are miſtaken by men, 'tis great content to remember, that God knows the way that we take, without the leaſt miſtake: For this aſſures a godly man of three things.

Firſt, That God will reckon his wayes ſuch as they are, and him ſuch a one as he is. He is much aſſured that God will never put a falſe gloſs or an unjuſt conſtruction (which men are apt to do) upon the text of his life.

Secondly, This aſſures him that his works of righteouſneſs ſhall not want a reward; for *God is not unrighteous, to forget our work and labour of love* (Heb. 6. 10.) that is, he will not let us go without a reward for ſuch works; for as then we are ſaid not to forget the Word of God, when we obey it; ſo God is ſaid not to forget our works, when he doth reward them.

Thirdly, This aſſures him that God will give teſtimony to his integrity, and bear his witneſs (when moſt ſeaſonable) to his righteous works. Though men will not give him teſtimony, yet God who knows his wayes, will; God will not do leſs for a good man, then a good Conſcience will: For as an evil Conſcience will accuſe, ſo a good Conſcience will excuſe (*Rom.* 2. 15.) *Their Conſciences in the mean time accuſing or excuſing one another.* Conſcience knows our wayes, and therefore Conſcience gives teſtimony againſt them that do evil, and Conſcience will give teſtimony with thoſe that do well; let all the world clamour againſt them, Conſcience will not; becauſe Conſcience knows the way that a man takes. Much more then will God teſtifie for that man whoſe way is good; and how ſweet is this? 'Tis ſweet and ſatisfying to a gracious ſoul to do good; but when God himſelf ſhall teſtifie for a gracious ſoul, that he hath done good, this is much more ſweet and ſatisfying (1 *John* 3. 20, 21.) *If our heart (or Conſcience) condemn us, he is greater then our heart (or Conſcience) and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God*; even this confidence, that God will not only not condemn us, but acquit us, yea, and teſtifie for us: And as it is worſe to be condemned by God, then by Conſcience; ſo it is better and ſweeter to be acquitted by God, then by our own Conſcience, when once our Conſciences are acquainted with his acquittal of us and teſtimony for us. Yea, there is this further comfort in it, that foraſmuch as our wayes are known to God, he will give teſtimony of them to others, as well as to our own Conſciences. The world ſhall know what or wayes are one time or other, as well as God knows them now: they who are moſt prejudiced againſt them, and draw the blackeſt lines over them, ſhall one day be made to know, that they did not know the beauty of them. And this God will do, either,

Firſt, In this world, by ſome extraordinary providence; as *David* ſpeaks (*Pſal.* 37. 6.) *He ſhall bring forth thy righteouſneſs as the light, and thy judgment as the noon-day.* A mans righteouſneſs may lie in obſcurity or in the dark, no man knowing it, and moſt men judging him unrighteous and wicked; but Providence ſome time or other will bring forth this mans righteouſneſs as the light, and his juſt dealing as the noon-day.

Or ſecondly, If a good mans wayes lie hid from the world all the dayes of his life in this world, yet the Apoſtle aſſures him, that in the *Great Day* God will proclaim them in the ears of all the world (1 *Cor.* 4. 5.) *Judge nothing before the time, till the Lord come, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkneſs, and will make manifeſt the counſels of the heart.* So then a day is coming which will make *through-lights* in the world, and bring to light the moſt hidden things of the darkeſt darkneſs. And by *theſe hidden things of darkneſs and counſels of the heart*, we are to underſtand not only evil things and wicked counſels (ſure enough God will bring them to light) but even

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thoſe righteous things, and good counſels of the heart, which have lain in the dark, or unrevealed: God will bring to light all the hidden things of darkneſs, the good as well as the bad, and then ſhall every man, that is, every good man, every godly man, have praiſe of God. The praiſe of man is very pleaſing unto man; but O how unſpeakably pleaſing is the praiſe of God! And this opens a vaſt difference between the hypocrite and the ſincere: Can a hypocrite rejoyce in ſecret, ſaying thus, God knoweth the way that I take? He cannot ſay thus; and I may ſay three things of the hypocrite in oppoſition to this.

Firſt, The hypocrite endeavours to hide and put his wayes out of the light of God, as much as he can. As he hath not the light of Gods countenance, or of his favour ſhining upon him, ſo he deſires not to have the light of his knowledge ſhining into him (*Iſa.*29. 15.) The Prophet deſcribes ſome *ſeeking deep to hide their counſels from the Lord, and their works are in the dark* (both in natural and moral darkneſs) *and they ſay, Who ſeeth us, and who knoweth us?* The endeavour of the hypocrite is that he may be hid. And,

Secondly, *He cries all's hid*; as it is his endeavour, that God ſhould not, ſo it is his hope that God doth not know his wayes, much leſs his heart; he is often ſure that men do neither ſee nor know, and he alwayes preſumes that God doth not; and therefore as one out of doubt he puts his doubts, *who ſeeth? and who knoweth?* Though flaſhes of fear come in upon him ſometimes, yet he flatters himſelf with preſumptuous hopes and falſe perſwaſions, that God knows him not, ſees him not, and that his dark way ſhall never be diſcovered; and as in that place of the Prophet, they ſpeak indefinitely, thereby inferring that God doth not ſee them; ſo we have them in the Pſalm ſpeaking directly that God ſhall not (*Pſal.* 94. 5, 6, 7.) *They break in pieces thy people, O Lord, and ſlay the widow and ſtranger, and murder the fatherleſs; yet they ſay, the Lord ſhall not ſee, neither ſhall the God of* Jacob *regard it*: As if they had ſaid, though God ſhould ſet himſelf to ſearch us out, and would never ſo fain ſee what we are doing, yet he ſhall not. We will carry it ſo cloſely and cunningly, that the eye of God ſhall not reach us. Their works were ſo foul and bloody, that the Sun might be aſhamed to look upon them, and they were ſo cloſe, that they believed God could not look upon them, or bring them to ſhame for them.

Thirdly, 'Tis a terror for a hypocrite to remember, that God knoweth his wayes. That which *Job* ſaith of the wicked in general, is moſt proper to hypocrites (*chap.* 24. 17.) *The morning is to them even as the ſhadow of death; if one know them, they are in the terrors of the ſhadow of death.* The Hebrew is very conciſe, *if know*; we make up the ſence thus, *if one know them*, that is, if God or man know them and their wayes, if they be apprehended and diſcovered any way, in their abominable wayes, *they are in the terrors of the ſhadow of death*, that is, they are ready to die with the fright and terror of it. Hypocrites are ſo far from rejoycing in this, that God knows the way which they take, that to be known either of God or man, is their torment.

Thirdly, Conſider why doth *Job* appeal to God in this cauſe depending between him and his friends? The reaſon was, becauſe he knew his friends miſjudged him through their ignorance; therefore he deſired to be heard by a Judge that perfectly knew his wayes, and ſo was able to make a righteous judgment of him. Hence obſerve,

God is every way fitted to be a righteous Judge.

There are two things eſpecially that fit a man to be a Judge.

Firſt, That he hath a principle of righteouſneſs in him, that he be not byaſſed and turned aſide from doing right indifferently without reſpect of perſons.

Secondly, That he hath a principle of light in him, that he be (as *Jethro* adviſeth *Moſes*) a man of knowledge. Both theſe meet perfectly in God; he is juſt and righteous in all his wayes, and he knows all our wayes. Some earthly Judges err for want of a Principle of righteouſneſs; and ſo in things which they plainly know and ſee as clear as the light, are ready to be drawn and wrought off by reſpects and intereſts. Again, there are other earthly Judges, who are right and honeſt enough in their Principles, nothing can take them off, or miſlead them to the right hand or to the left, but they want knowledge and underſtanding to diſcern between good and evil, right and wrong; they cannot ſee into the merit of the Cauſe, or integrity of the perſon before them; and thereupon ſtumble in Judgment. Indeed the beſt of earthly Judges cannot alwayes (when they have done their beſt) find out who hath the good Cauſe, and who hath the bad; and many times they that plead, blind them with their Rhetorick, ſetting a fair gloſs upon a foul Cauſe, or making a fair Cauſe look foul, and ſo the Judge is deluded: ſeeing he judgeth of things as witneſſed and repreſented, as alledged and legally proved, and ſo it may fall out that while he judgeth righteouſly, his judgment may not be right. But we (as *Job* here) have cauſe to rejoyce that we have to do with a Judge, who, as he is both righteous and knowing, ſo he knows all things and perſons in themſelves, and not from others. *He needs not that any ſhould teſtifie of man, for he knoweth what is in man* (John 2. 25.) *He knows the way that is in me*, or, *the way that I take*: and as it follows,

When he hath tried me, I ſhall come forth as Gold.

Mr. *Broughton* reads thus, *Tried he me, I ſhould come forth Gold*, that is, if God (as I deſire) would vouchſafe to try me, I ſhould appear what I am indeed, not what I now appear.

When he hath tried me.] There are divers wayes of trial, three eſpecially; God tries, Firſt, By proſperity, that's a trial: a full eſtate diſcovers a man, as well as a low and empty eſtate doth. To know how to abound is as high a point of Grace, as how to want (*Phil.* 4. 12.) To have power in our hands, diſcovers us as well as to be oppreſt by power. *Magiſtracy ſhews the man, and it ſhews many to be but men.* Great power over men, is a great temptation to man, and ſo likewiſe is the praiſe of men (2 *Cor.* 6. 4.) *But in all things approving our ſelves as the miniſters of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in neceſſities, in diſtreſſes*, &c. And by what elſe? *By the Armour of righteouſneſs on the right hand, and on the left; by honour and diſhonour, by evil report, and good report.* We approve our ſelves, and trial is taken of us as well by things on the right hand, as by thoſe upon the left; as well by honour, as by diſhonour. The good report or praiſe which a man meets with in the world, is as great a trial as the ill report or diſpraiſe which he meets with in the world; 'tis a great trial to be diſpraiſed, to have dirt thrown in our faces; and it is a great trial to be praiſed, to be commended and applauded, to be lifted up in the thoughts and upon the tongues of men. *Solomon* hath an excellent paſſage (*Prov.* 27. 21.) *As the fining pot for Silver, and the furnace for Gold, ſo is a man to his praiſe*; that is, a man is tried by his praiſe, as the Silver is tried in the fining-pot, and as the Gold is tried in the furnace. Whenever you are praiſed, you are tried; then your humility and ſelf-denial are tried; then you are tried, whether when you are praiſed by men, you can give the whole glory to God. *Herod's* praiſe was the fining-pot, and the furnace wherein he was tried; it made him to appear to be but droſs indeed: His hearers *cried the voyce of God and not of man.* When you cry up ſuch a Preacher, ſuch a Magiſtrate, ſuch a Souldier, ſuch an Orator, you put him into the fining-pot, and he that is but droſs, conſumes. *The worms eat up* Herod *becauſe he gave not glory to God* (Acts 12. 23.) As it was a moſt dreadful, ſo it was a moſt righteous judgment, that he ſhould be eaten up of *Worms*, who forgot that he was *one*, and forgot it ſo far, that he was pleaſed with their applauſes, who cried him up for a God. Worldly proſperity, power and praiſe are the *right-hand-way* by which God trieth the ſons of men.

Magiſtratus indicat virum.

Secondly, God doth uſually try by affliction, and that's the *left-hand-way* (Jam. 1 12.) *Bleſſed is the man that endureth temptation* (meaning affliction) *for when he is tried, he ſhall receive the Crown of life*, &c. That is, when thoſe temptations and afflictions have tried him, and he hath approved himſelf in the trial, then, *he ſhall receive the crown of life*, &c. (1 *Pet.* 1. 6.) *Though now for a ſeaſon (if need be) ye are in heavineſs through manifold temptations, that the trial*

of

Cos aurum probat, rectam tentamina mentē Natura vexata prodit ſeipſam.

of your faith being much more precious then of Gold that periſheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found to praiſe, &c. Affliction is the trial of our faith in God, and of our patience under the hand of God. *When Nature is vext, it ſhews it ſelf, and ſo doth Grace. Affliction diſcovereth both what our virtues are, and what our corruptions are.*

Thirdly, God trieth man by a kind of examination. *David* ſpeaks of that (*Pſal.* 17. 3.) *Thou haſt proved mine heart, thou haſt viſited me in the night, thou haſt tried me, and ſhalt find nothing.* In the night the ſoul is free from buſineſs with the world, and therefore freeſt for buſineſs with God; and then did God prove and viſit *David*, that is, examine and ſift him, by calling to his mind all his wayes and works in former paſſages; and the iſſue of this trial was, *he found nothing*; not that his ſoul was empty of good things, or that there was nothing evil in him; but God upon examination found nothing of that evil in him, which ſome men ſuſpected him of; namely, either an ill will or evil deſign againſt *Saul,* in reference to whom, he called his cauſe a righteous cauſe, or, *the right* (verſ. 1.) *Hear the right, O Lord,* &c. Thus God tried *David*; and thus earthly Judges try men; they examine them and their caſe, that's call'd a trial: In this third ſence we are chiefly to underſtand the meaning of *Job* in this place. *Job* had long before undergone a trial by proſperity and praiſe; *Job* was at that time under trial by affliction, he had paſt the former, and was under the latter; yea, he was deep in it; but as yet, he had not come to his trial of Examination, or to a judiciary trial, which he earneſtly begg'd of God. All men ſhall come to ſuch a trial in the *Great Day. We muſt all appear before the Judgment-ſeat of Chriſt, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad* (2 Cor. 5. 10.) Some expound *Job* appealing here to that Judgment: But I conceive that the whole tendency of his Diſcourſe aimes at an earlier Judgment or day of trial then that. And though (poſſibly) his expectation was not great, if any at all, that God would grant him a private Seſſion (as we may call it) for his perſonal trial, yet (to ſhew that he had not the leaſt ſuſpition of being acquitted in that day, whenſoever it ſhould be) he importunately profeſſeth he could wiſh it might be the next day, and that he would refuſe no pains nor travel for the procuring of ſuch a day, were it to be obtained; being fully ſatisfied from the light and dictates of his own Conſcience, that when the Lord had ſo tried him, he (as *David* ſpake in the place lately opened) *ſhould find nothing*; no ſuch fault or guilt as was charged upon him. Chriſt writing to the Angel of the Church of *Epheſus,* gives him this among other commendations (*Rev.* 2. 2.) *Thou haſt tried them which ſay they are Apoſtles, and are not, and haſt found them liars.* Many appear fair in holineſs, and boaſt highly of their priviledges (even as high as an infallible Spirit and immediate miſſion) who yet being tried and throughly examined by the Church, or by thoſe who are ſpiritual, and have ſenſes exerciſed to diſcern both good and evil, will be found *liars*, counterfeit ſtuff, and lighter then vanity. But *Job* was perſwaded that though God ſhould try him, not only ſhould nothing be found againſt him, nor he found a lier, but that much would be found for him, and himſelf be found in the truth, as he plainly expreſſeth in the cloſe of the verſe; *When he hath tried me,* what then?

Intelligitur de ſtricto Dei examine in ſuo judicio, ad quod Job *provocaverat.* Merc.

Egrediar ex hoc igne probationis meæ expurgatiſſimus, coruſcabit innocentia mea. Pined.

I ſhall come forth as gold.] Here's the iſſue of the trial. There are ſeven words uſed in the Original for Gold: That in the Text notes the colour or yellowneſs of it, and is applied to ſignifie any thing that is bright, or ſhining, pure and ſplendid, as Gold is (*Zech.* 4. 12.) We read of *Golden Pipes which did empty the Golden Oyl* (or according to the Letter of the Hebrew, *the Gold*) *out of themſelves.* That ſpiritual Oyl was called *Golden*, or *Gold*, becauſe, like *Gold,* ſhining, pure or precious. The gifts and graces of the Spirit are *Golden Oyl* indeed. So (*Jer.* 51. 7.) Babylon *hath been a Golden Cup in the hand of the Lord*; which ſome expound tropically, taking the Continent for the thing contained; the Cup for the Wine; called *Golden Wine*, becauſe of the ſplendidneſs and beauty of it (as *Solomon* ſpeaks, *Prov.* 23. 31.) *When it giveth its colour in the Cup.* Or, *Babylon* is called a *Golden Cup*, Firſt, Becauſe of the great glory, wealth and illuſtrious pomp of that Empire, deſcribed in *Daniel* (chap. 2. 32, 38.) by *a head of Gold*, and marked out in *Iſaiah*, by the name of the *Golden City* (Iſa. 14. 4.) And ſecondly, Becauſe God had cauſed other Nations to drink deep of his wrath, by the power of the *Babylonian* Empire: Upon which account, Myſtical *Babylon* is ſaid to have a *Golden Cup* in her hand (*Rev.* 17. 4.) *Gold* is the King, the chief of Metals; *Gold* is among Metals as the Sun is among the Stars and Planets of Heaven, the glory and Prince of them all. So that when *Job* ſaith, *I ſhall come forth as Gold*, his meaning is, I ſhall come forth pure and in much perfection. Gold is firſt, The moſt precious metal; ſecondly, the moſt honourable metal; thirdly, the moſt weighty metal; fourthly, the moſt durable metal; fifthly, the moſt deſirable metal: Every one is for Gold; So that when *Job* ſaith, *I ſhall come forth Gold*, his meaning is, as if he had ſaid, my trial will not diminiſh, but rather add unto me; I ſhall be precious, honourable, weighty, durable, deſirable, after I have been in the Furnace or Fining-pot of my moſt ſoreſt and ſevereſt trials. And he ſpeaks thus in oppoſition to his friends, who had an opinion of him, as if he were but droſs or the *off-ſcouring of all things* (as the Apoſtles were reckoned in their time) *I ſhall come forth not droſs and traſh, but gold*; as if he had ſaid, *Were I once tried, I ſhould be for ever quit of thoſe Charges brought in againſt me, and of thoſe ſcandals caſt upon me, I ſhould ſhine in reputation and honour like pure Gold coming out of the fire; I ſhould recover my good name, and be found a man loyal to God, and righteous towards men.* Hence note,

זהב

Generale vocabulum eſt à colore fulvo ſeu flavo, & transfertur ad aliarum rerum munditiem ſignificandam, ſic ab aura & aurora aurum derivat. Iſid.

Plenus vino aureo, i.e. *ſplendido velut aurū*

Aurum per ignem probatum ſymbolum eſt juſtorum, nam illos minimè lædit examen ignis, per iſta igitur verba vir ſanctus candorem ſuæ innocentiæ & conſcientiæ puritatem maximā circumloquitur. Bold.

> *Grace renders man excellent and precious.*

Every godly man is Gold, yea, he is more precious then fine Gold; *The fineſt Gold is but droſs to Grace*; the wicked of the world are *reprobate ſilver*, or *refuſe ſilver* (Jer. 6. 30.) The Saints are *finer then Gold refined in the fire*; for they are precious, they are honourable, they are uſeful, they are durable and laſting, they ſhall endure everlaſtingly, they are weighty in their worth, and their portion is an eternal weight of glory.

Secondly, Whereas *Job* ſaith, *When I am tried, I ſhall come forth as Gold,*

> Obſerve, *A godly man is no loſer by being tried; yea, he gains by it.*

He who before was reputed but as droſs, and had much droſs in him, comes out of the trial as Gold, and loſeth nothing of his weight, worth or beauty, by being tried; he only loſeth (a good loſs) his droſs and the rubbiſh of his corruptions. Grace is not only Grace ſtill, but more gracious, even glorious after trial. Some ſpeak of Grace as if it were but droſs, conſumable in the fire; as if every temptation and trial endangered it to an utter conſumption; or, as if like Lead, it would quite evaporate and ſpend to nothing in the fire. They ſtick not to affirm, that a true Believer may loſe all his Graces, and how much ſoever enricht before by the Spirit, yet prove a Bankrupt in ſpirituals. *Job* was confident that his Gold would hold the trial, both of the hotteſt afflictions and of the ſtricteſt examinations: He had been tried long in the furnace of affliction heated ſeven times more then ordinary, and yet held his integrity; and though he ſhould come to trial at the Judgment-Seat of God, which is more then ſeventy times ſeven times ſtricter then the Judgment-Seat of man (according to truth) can be, yet he nothing doubted, that nothing (as to the general bent of his heart and frame of life) ſhould be found or appear but integrity ſtill. That is but droſſie Grace, natural Grace, if not hypocritical Grace, or a counterfeit only of Grace, which abides not in the day of trial. They who loſe the Grace which they have ſhewed, had only a ſhew of Grace. Hypocrites ſhall loſe all at their tryal; their paint, their varniſh will not endure the the fire, either of a laſting affliction, or of that laſt examination: *When once a Hypocrite is tried, then he is ſhamed.* He may go currant for pure gold a great while, but at laſt he appears but as a gilded Sepulcher, or droſs of Gold (*Pſal.* 119. 119.) *Thou putteſt away all the wicked of the earth like droſs.* And the Lord ſpeaking of the degenerate houſe of *Iſrael* (Ezek. 22. 18.) ſaith, *The houſe of* Iſrael *is to me become droſs, all they are braſs, and tin, and iron, and lead, in the midſt of the furnace, they are even the droſs (or droſſes) of ſilver*; that is, though they are a profeſſing people, and hold out my Name, yet I having tryed and examined them through, find them to have nothing but a name of profeſſion.; they being tryed are come forth like droſs. The Apoſtle (1 *Cor.* 3. 13.) Allegorically ſhadowing out all ſorts of ſuperſtructive doctrine, by *Gold, ſilver, precious ſtones, wood, hay, ſtubble*; ſaith, *If any man build upon this foundation* (that is, *Chriſt*) *Gold, ſilver, precious ſtones, wood, hay, ſtubble: every mans work ſhall be made manifeſt. For the day ſhall declare it, becauſe it ſhall be revealed by fire, and the fire ſhall try every mans work of what ſort it is. If any mans work abide which he hath built thereupon, he ſhall receive a reward; if any mans work ſhall be burnt, he ſhall ſuffer loſs*, &c. The *wood, hay, ſtubble, ſhall be burnt*, but the *gold, ſilver, precious ſtones*, will abide the tryal of fire. Whether it be the fire of perſecution, tribulation, and temptation (nothing but holy Truth can abide theſe fires) or the fire of the holy Spirit (who in Scripture is often compared to fire, and) who together with the light of the Word revealeth the ſoundneſs or falſeneſs of all doctrines delivered by men, and like fire conſumes what is falſe, but gives a further brightneſs and luſtre to the Truth. Even truth untryed may be counted droſs, but being tryed it comes forth like Gold. Now, as the truth of doctrines, ſo the truth of perſons in their works and graces will abide when they come to the teſt or tryal; God who puts away all the wicked of the earth as droſs, will gather up all the godly of the earth as Gold, when he hath tryed them, and try them he will. We read (*Dan.* 7. 9, 10.) how dreadfully God comes to Judgment, *I beheld till the thrones were caſt down, and the ancient of dayes did ſit; his Throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire; a fiery ſtream iſſued and came forth from before him, the judgment was ſet, and the books were opened.* Which whether it be meant of the laſt Judgment, or of ſome ſpecial Judgment upon a particular State or oppreſſing power, comes all to one as to the point in hand; while it ſhews that God in the tryal of men will examine their perſons, and their actions, as by fire. Of every ſuch tryal it may be ſaid (as *Mal.* 3. 2, 3.) *Who may abide the day of his coming? And who ſhall ſtand when he appeareth?* (The Prophet ſpeaks of the coming of Chriſt in the fleſh, at which time he was alſo mighty in Spirit) *For he is like a Refiners fire, and like Fullers ſoap, and he ſhall ſit as a Refiner and Purifier of ſilver.* When Chriſt came in the fleſh to redeem us, he came with fire alſo to purge and ſanctifie us, and he comes with fire whenſoever he comes in the Spirit to comfort and enlighten us; and at laſt when he comes in glory, he will come with fire to try, examine, and judge us. When he comes to try us thus, all the faithful ſhall come forth as Gold, but the wicked and their works will burn and be conſumed. When Saints come to tryal at laſt they will ſtand; and when they are tryed here, they will mend: Firſt, Their Corruptions will be the more outed: And ſecondly, Their Graces will be the more acted. We may read this iſſue of their tryal (*Zach.* 13. 9.) *And it ſhall come to paſs that in all the Land, ſaith the Lord, two parts therein ſhall be cut off and dye, but the third ſhall be left therein.* Whether we take *the Land* in particular for *Iſrael* and the people of the *Jews*, or typically for all Profeſſors throughout the world, *Two parts ſhall be cut off and dye, but the third ſhall be left therein.* And what will God do with them? Or how will he deal with them? We may ſee what, at the ninth verſe, *And I will bring the third part through the fire* (of affliction and examination) *and I will refine them as ſilver is refined, and try them as gold is tryed* (And what will be the iſſue of this?) *And they ſhall call on my Name, and I will hear them.* Here faith and prayer (in which all graces are exerciſed) are put for all graces. When they are in this fire they ſhall *call on my Name, and I will hear them, and I will ſay* (when they are in the fire) *it is my people, and they ſhall ſay, the Lord is my God.* They who pray in the fire of tryal, or in the fiery tryal, declare *evidently*, that they are Gold in the fire; but they to whom God ſaith in the fire of their tryals, *Ye are my people*, and they who (being ſtill in the ſame fire) can ſay, *The Lord is our God*, are declared both by God and themſelves *eminently*, that they are Gold in the fire. They are as the choiceſt Gold, as the Gold of *Ophyr*, of whom the Lord ſaith, (by an act of diſtinguiſhing love) *Ye are my people*, and who can ſay to God (by an act of appropriating faith) *The Lord is our God.* Surely then Saints loſe nothing in the fire (but what is not worth the holding) while God finds and owns them, and they find and own God in the fire.

Dum probantur toti in fumum abeunt.

In igne deum amanter invocant & candido & germano ſunt erga illum ſtudio. Theod.

Further, Some read this latter part of the verſe as an offer; *Let him try me, and I ſhall come forth as gold:* As if *Job* had ſaid, I do not refuſe, but deſire a tryal; *God knows my way, the way that is in me, let him come and try me; yea, I am ready to come to him for my tryal.*

Probat me.

Hence Note, *A ſincere heart is willing to be tryed.*

'Tis a great part of the work of a godly man to try himſelf and his works; and it is one of his greateſt wiſhes, that God would try him and his works. They who are ſincere are much in trying themſelves; *Let us ſearch and try our wayes* (ſay they) *and turn again unto the Lord.* And they who are much in ſelf-tryal and examination, are willing to be tryed and examined both by God and man; ſure enough, *They that try themſelves much, are not afraid of the tryal of man, no nor of the tryal of God.* If we compare the firſt verſe of the hundred thirty-ninth *Pſalm* with the twenty-third we ſhall ſee what an anſwer there is in them as to this point. At the firſt verſe *David* ſaith, *O Lord, thou haſt ſearched me and known me:* At the twenty-third verſe he prayes, *Search me, O God, and know my heart:* Why did *David* pray thus to God, *Search me and know my heart*, having ſaid before, *Thou haſt ſearched me, and known me?* Seeing *David* knew that God had ſearched him, what needed he to pray that God would ſearch him? Why did he beg God to do that which he had done already? The anſwer is at hand, *David* was a diligent ſelf-ſearcher, and therefore he was ſo willing to be ſearched; yea, he delighted to be ſearched by God; and that not (as was ſaid) becauſe himſelf had done it already, but alſo becauſe he knew God could do it better. He knew by his own ſearch, that he did not live in any way of wickedneſs againſt his knowledge, and yet he knew there might be ſome way of wickedneſs in him that he knew not of. And therefore he doth not only ſay, *Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thonghts*: But he adds (*ver.* 24.) *See if there be any wicked way* (or *any way of pain and grief*) *in me.* (The ſame word ſignifies both, becauſe wicked wayes lead in the end to pain and grief) *And lead me in the way everlaſting*: As if he had ſaid, Lord, I have ſearched my ſelf, aud can ſee no wicked way in me; but Lord thy ſight is infinitely clearer then mine, and if thou wilt but ſearch me, thou mayſt ſee ſome wicked way in me which I could not ſee, and I would ſee and know the worſt of my ſelf, that I might amend it and grow better; therefore, Lord, if there be any ſuch way in me, cauſe me to know it alſo; O take that way out of me, and take me out of that way; *Lead me in the way everlaſting.* *David* had tryed himſelf, and he would again be tryed by God, that he being better tryed, might become yet better. He found himſelf Gold upon his own tryal, and yet he feared there might be ſome droſs in him that he had not found; and now he would be re-tryed that he might come forth pureſt gold. Pure Gold fears neither the furnace nor the fire, neither the teſt nor the touchſtone, nor is weighty Gold afraid of the ballance: He that is weight will be weight, how often ſoever he is weighed; and he that is gold will be gold, how often ſoever he is tryed; and the oftener he is tryed the purer Gold he will be; what he is he will be, and he would be better then he is. Every man of *Job's* metal ſaith or may ſay, *Let him try me, and I ſhall come forth as Gold.*

VERS. 11, 12.

My foot hath held his ſteps, his way have I kept, and not declined.

Neither have I gone back from the Commandment of his lips: I have eſteemed the words of his mouth more then my neceſſary food.

At the twenty-firſt and twenty-ſecond Verſes of the former Chapter, *Eliphaz* having ſharply rebuked *Job* gave him very wholeſome and holy counſel. *Acquaint thy ſelf now with him, and be at peace, receive the Law from his mouth, and lay up his words in thy heart.* In theſe two Verſes *Job* profeſſeth that he had done ſo; that he had kept cloſe to God, followed him ſtep by ſtep, that he had not declined, or turned back, and that he had done all this out of pure love to the Word. So that each member of this context ſeems to carry a direct anſwer to every member of that counſel which *Eliphaz* had there given him: As firſt, to that of *Eliphaz*, *Acquaint thy ſelf with God* (he ſaith) *I have held his ſteps.* That man takes and holds near acquaintance with another, of whom it may be affirmed, that he treads in or *holds his very ſteps.* Again, *Eliphaz* adviſed *Job* thus; *Receive the Law at his mouth: Job* anſwers, *I have not gone back from the Commandment of his lips,* &c.

Or thus;

Firſt, *He that takes hold of the ſteps of God, acquaints himſelf with God.*

Secondly, *He that keeps the way of God and declines not from it, is at peace with God.*

Thirdly, *He that goeth not back from the Commandment of his lips, receives the Law at his mouth.*

Fourthly, *He that eſteemeth the Word of God more then his neceſſary food, hath ſurely laid up the Word of God in his heart.*

Job profeſſeth in theſe two Verſes, that he had done all this, and therefore he had already done what *Eliphaz* preſſeth him to do. His whole converſation had exactly hit the counſel given him.

Verſe 11. **My foot hath held his ſteps.**

Cum dicit, pes meus, *pro eo habendum ac ſi dixiſſet, ego apprehendi greſſum ejus.* Druſ.

Verbum ſignificat aliquid violentèr detinere ne labatur, aut fugiat, aut fluat. Bold.

My foot.] We are not to take the word *foot*, ſtrictly, for that ſpecial member of the body ſo called; but by the *foot* we are to underſtand the whole man; *My foot*, that is, *I my ſelf have held his ſteps*; I have held them: And he means ſuch a holding as hath a kind of honeſt pertinaciouſneſs in it, or a reſolvedneſs not to let go what is held, a reſolute holding, a cleaving faſt to, a holding with a kind of violence, ſuch as *Jacob* expreſſed to the Angel (*Gen.* 32. 26.) *I will not let thee go except thou bleſs me.*

My foot hath held.] To lay hold is the proper action of the hand, not of the foot; and it is uſed here only as it ſignifies the keeping of a thing cloſe and faſt any way, ſo as not to part with it; or as it imports, a conſtant walking with God.

My foot hath held his ſteps, or, *upon his ſteps.*

באשרו

The word which ſignifies *to go*, ſignifies alſo *to be happy* or *bleſſed*; and the reaſon is, becauſe our way or motion ſheweth what our end and reſt ſhall be; our happineſs in the end lyeth virtually in our way.

But what were thoſe *ſteps* that his foot took hold of? Steps in the Text may be taken two wayes.

Veſtigia dei idem ſignificare poterunt quod via dei. ſc. *illius præcepta & legem, quam nobis tenendam commonſtrat* Pined.

Greſſum ejus accipe paſſivè, id eſt, ab eo definitum & monſtratum. Jun.

Veſtigia dei ſunt divinæ actiones quibus ille præit; vel ſunt ejus effectus ad extra, ſc. *charitatis, clementiæ, juſtitiæ, veritatis.* Pined.

Firſt, For thoſe ſteps which God hath appointed man to take, walking as and where God would have him; ſo theſe ſteps are the ſame with the law or way of God: Not actively, for the ſteps which God takes; but paſſively, for the ſteps which he directs and appoints us to take.

Secondly, We may expound theſe ſteps for Gods own ſteps, not for the ſteps which he ſhews us in his Word that we ſhould take, but for the ſteps which he ſhews in his practice, or in his example that himſelf hath taken. *My foot hath held his ſteps*; ſo to follow the ſteps of another is to imitate him; and to follow the ſteps of God is to imitate him; the ſteps of God are thoſe holy actings wherein he goeth before us, and ſets us an example. Some of the works of God are a rule, his actions are directions to us. Then *Job*'s meaning is, I have imitated God, and followed his example in all things that are imitable by man. I have ſo much acquainted my ſelf with God, and have been ſo familiar with him, that I have, as it were, copied out his way in my life and converſation. Thus he ſpeaks of God as leading the way, and going before us; and (ſaith he) I have not ſatisfied my ſelf to follow him at large, or in the ſame common path, but I have ſet my feet in his very ſteps, or I have followed him ſtep by ſtep.

Hence Note, *That a godly man doth example himſelf by God.*

He followeth the way of God in his works, as well as in his word; or he obeyeth God doing, as well as commanding. Many of the works of God are infinitely beyond our imitation, yet he works ſo in other things, that he hath deſcended to our imitation. And though we cannot follow God in any thing as to an equality, yet we may follow him in many things as to the ſimilitude of his workings; we may go the ſame way that he goeth, and take the ſame ſteps that he hath taken, though we cannot take them in that perfection, nor go with ſuch exactneſs as he hath gone before us. A Child may write the ſame letters, the ſame words and lines, which the moſt acurate Pen-man or Artiſt in writing hath preſcribed him for a copy, and ſo the Child may be ſaid to hold the ſteps of his Maſter, letter for letter, word for word, line for line, though there be a wide difference diſcernable between their writings. To follow God is our duty; *Godlineſs is Godlikeneſs*, or, *an imitation of God: And practical Chriſtianity is nothing elſe but our imitation of Chriſt,* and that not only in doing but in ſuffering (1. *Pet.* 2. 21.) *For even hereunto are we called; becauſe Chriſt alſo ſuffered for us, leaving us an example that we ſhould follow his ſteps.* Chriſt is not only a principle of holineſs in us, or our ſpiritual life, but he is alſo a pattern of holineſs according to which we ought to live. And the ſame Apoſtle repreſents the holineſs of God, both as a rule and as a motive of that holineſs which ſhould be acted by us (1 *Ep.* 1. 15, 16.) *As he that hath called you is holy, ſo be ye holy in all manner of converſation*; becauſe it is written (*Levit.* 11. 14.) *Be ye holy, for I am holy.* To be holy *as God is* in all manner of converſation, is ſtedfaſtly to hold the ſteps of God. And when (as Chriſt exhorts, *Matth.* 5. 55.) *We are merciful as our Father which is in Heaven is merciful.* When as the Apoſtle exhorts (*Epheſ.* 4. 32.) *We forgive as God for Chriſt ſake hath forgiven us*; when we are patient and long-ſuffering one towards another, as God is towards us all, then we take hold of his ſteps; this ſhould be our buſineſs every day, to follow God in his word, and in his works, *to follow him fully.* It is ſaid of *Caleb* (Numb. 14. 24.) *My Servant* Caleb *hath another ſpirit, he hath followed me fully.* Here ſome may object, To follow the counſel of God fully, is the duty of all; but to follow the example of God is ſurely beyond the attainment of any. This ſeems to be a height of holineſs too high for man. For if *Solomon* ſaid (*Eccleſ.* 2. 12.) *What can the man do that cometh after the King? Even that which hath been already done,* or (more cloſe to the Original) *in thoſe things which have been already done.* How much more may we ſay, What can the man do that comes after God the King of Kings? Can he do that which hath been done already? I anſwer, No man can parallel the works of God; but all men are called to imitate him in his works: though we cannot follow him with equal ſteps, yet we may follow the equity and holineſs of his ſteps. This *Job* did, and we (through grace) may do. *My foot hath held his ſteps.*

Sequere deum. Epict.

His way have I kept, and not declined.

The way of God is his Law, in that he will have us to walk, and that is called *his way*, becauſe he hath preſcribed it, and is the Author of it; as that is mans way wherein he walks; ſo that is Gods way wherein he will have man to walk; *Bleſſed is the undefiled in the way* (Pſal. 119. 1.) What the way is, he tells us in the next words, *Bleſſed are they that keep his teſtimonies, and who walk in the Law of the Lord.* His Law and Teſtimonies are his way: Now ſaith *Job, As I have held his ſteps*, or followed his example, ſo *I have kept his way*; that is, I have done that which he hath commanded. The way of God is put ſometimes in Scripture for that which himſelf hath done (*Ezek.* 18. 25.) *Hear O houſe of* Iſrael, *Is not my way equal?* That is, the way wherein I my ſelf have gone, the way of my diſpenſations to you, both in rewarding and puniſhing. And as the works of providence, ſo the work of Creation is called the way of God (*Prov.* 8. 22.) *The Lord poſſeſſed me in the beginning of his way* (that is, before he came forth in the work of Creation) *before his works of old*; his way and his works are the ſame, or, his works are his way. But in this Text (as I toucht before) we may rather take *way* for that which God would have us do, or for the way in which we ought to walk; and ſo we have the compleatneſs of *Job*'s obedience, he imitated the example, and he obeyed the command of God.

Via dei & hominis ſumitur;
1 *Pro itinere & greſſibus.*
2 *Pro ipſa via ſtrata.*

His way have I kept.] Yet further, There is a twofold keeping of the way of God:

Firſt, By practice and obedience; thus we keep the way of God by ſubmitting to it.

Secondly, There is a keeping the way of God by protection and defence; thus we keep the way of God, when we ſtand up to maintain it. We may take it here in both ſences; and in both, doubtleſs, *Job*'s Spirit was led out to *keep the way of God*.

Hence Note, *A godly man keeps cloſe to the Word of God.*

He keeps cloſe to it by obeying it; and he keeps it cloſe by defending it; and this he doth as *Job* did it univerſally (for ſo this indefinite propoſition, *His way have I kept*; is to be underſtood) it was not this or that way, but any or every way of God which he kept. And thus a godly man keeps the way of God, though it be a difficult and (to the fleſh) an uneaſie way, though it be (among men) a reproachful and ignominious way, though it be (as to his outward concernments) a diſadvantageous and dangerous way, yet he keeps it: He that is through with God, doth not only keep thoſe wayes which ſuit with his own pleaſure and credit, with the ſafety of his own intereſts and accommodations in the world, but if the way of God lye through difficulties, through dangers and diſgraces, he will yet keep it. And if we thus keep the way of God, we may be ſure, that the way of God, or rather the God of this way will keep us, and keep us in perfect peace, in ſpiritual freedom, ſafety, and honour, though we have trouble in and from the world. *His way have I kept*; and which doth heighten his obedience, care and zeal in keeping it. He adds,

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And not declined.] The word ſignifies, *to be unſteady*, or to move every way: As if he had ſaid, *I have kept his wayes ſtedfaſtly and unmovably.* *Job* ſpeaks both in the affirmative; *I have kept*, and in the negative, *I have not declined.* Some keep the wayes of God a while, but they keep not on, much leſs do they keep up in keeping them. There is a twofold declining. Firſt, A declining from the way of God to evil and ſinful wayes: And theſe are of two ſorts; Firſt, Erroneous opinions: Secondly, Wicked practices: Secondly, There is a declining in the way of God, when though we keep the good way, yet we are not ſo good in the way as we were, but ſlack our pace, and cool in our zeal to the good wayes of God. We may expound *Job*'s Negative in reference to both theſe: As if he had ſaid, I have neither gone out of the way of God, nor have I been ſloathful in it. 'Tis the higheſt commendation of man, thus to keep the way of God, *and not decline.*

Hence Note, *A godly man is, or ought to be, and 'tis his honour to be ſteady in a good way.*

Perſeverance is our Crown. The Apoſtle (1 *Cor.* 15. 58.) exhorts *to be ſteady and unmoveable, alwayes abounding in the work of the Lord.* We ſhould be alwayes moving in the work of the Lord, but never moving out of the work of the Lord: We ſhould be as a rock in regard of ſtedfaſtneſs; and as fire in regard of activeneſs. The Author the *Hebrews* (*Chap.* 10. 23.) gives this admonition to Believers, *Let us hold faſt the profeſſion of our faith without wavering*, or without declining. There are ſome of whom we may ſay, they hold nothing, they hold no profeſſion, they dare not make a profeſſion leſt they ſhould be bound to ſtand to it, or they ſtand not to that which they have made; and as they hold no profeſſion, ſo they hold no poſition, but as to the Doctrine of faith are meer Scepticks, they are alwayes querying, but never concluding. The Apoſtle ſpeaks of ſome (2 *Tim.* 3.7.) *Who are ever learning, but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth:* And there are others ever learning, but never willing to declare their knowledge of the truth; and they who hold nothing in doctrine, will not hold long in practice. Therefore ſaith the Apoſtle, *Let us hold faſt our profeſſion*; let us be ſteady in it, and that without wavering. And this is the great Argument which the Apoſtle carries through that whole Epiſtle, to eſtabliſh the Saints, that ſo they might hold faſt without wavering and declining in the profeſſion of the faith. Let us take heed of either of thoſe waverings and declinings before explained. Firſt, Let us not decline in the way, but keep up in the ſame degree of holineſs and love to Chriſt. The Church of *Epheſus* is charged with this ſort of declining; and therefore after Chriſt had given that Church a great and a deſerved commendation (*Rev.* 2 2.) *I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canſt not bear them which are evil, and haſt tryed them that ſay they are Apoſtles, and are not, and haſt found them lyars*; yet Chriſt comes with a rebuking, *Neverthleſs*(at *ver.* 4.) *I have ſomewhat againſt thee, becauſe thou haſt left thy firſt love*; that is, *thou haſt declined* from, or abated in thy firſt heat of love. *Epheſus* did not totally forſake, nor caſt off Chriſt out of her love: *Epheſus* did not chuſe other lovers, nor ſay, ſhe would have no more to do with Chriſt: The chief object of her love was the ſame, but her actings were not the ſame. The ſtreams of her affection did not run into another channel, but they were fallen and ebb'd in their former channel. 'Tis ſad, when Saints decline thus; we ſhould keep up to the ſame height, to the ſame heat, to the ſame degree of love without declining, we ſhould not only run at firſt ſetting out, but continue running, or as the Apoſtle ſpeaks (*Heb.* 12, 1.) *Run with patience*, that is, run conſtantly, or with perſeverance, *the race that is ſet before us.* They that run in a worldly race, the nearer they come to the Goal, the faſter they run, and the more they ſtrive; ſo ſhould we in our holy race; we ſhould ſtill be growing and *encreaſing with the encreaſe of God.* A Saint ſhould be thankful for the leaſt degree; but he ſhould not ſit down in the greateſt degree he hath already attained unto. And though ſome who have grace, do not actually reach after more; yet they who ſay they have enough, or need no more, give too clear an evidence againſt themſelves, that they have none at all. As the higher degrees of grace (under a temptation or deſertion) may be unthriving and unſtriving after perfection; ſo the loweſt degree of ſaving grace is (in its own nature) thriving and ſtriving after more perfection. He that believes truly, would believe more; and he that loves truly, would love more and more, till his love become a vehement flame, ſo vehement a flame, that many waters ſhall not be able to quench it, nor the floods (of trouble and perſecution from the world) drown it.

Secondly, As we ſhould thus take heed of declining in the way of grace, ſo we ſhould much more take heed, that we decline not from the way of grace; or as the Apoſtle *Peter* expreſſeth it (2 *Ep.*2.31.) *That we turn not from the holy Commandment delivered unto us.* This declining or turning from the Commandment is twofold: Firſt, To the right hand: Secondly, And to the left. The Scripture gives warning againſt both (*Joſh.*1.7.) *Be thou ſtrong and very couragious, that thou mighteſt obſerve, and do according to all the Law which* Moſes *commanded, turn not from it to the right hand, or to the left.* Again (*Prov.*4.25,26,27.) *Let thine eye look right on, and let thine eye-lids look ſtreight before thee; ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy wayes be eſtabliſhed; turn not to the right hand, nor to the left; remove thy foot from evil:* As if he had ſaid, There is evil both on the right hand, and on the left, therefore turn neither to the one, nor to the other, that thou mayſt *remove thy foot from evil.* But ſome may ſay, What is here meant by the right hand, and what by the left? And what are theſe declinings, or turnings? I anſwer, To turn *to the right hand*, notes exceſs, when we will take upon us to do more then God hath commanded; when we will needs over-do, this is to decline to the right hand; for though, when man hath done his utmoſt through grace in this life (conſidering his in-dwelling corruption) he alwayes falls ſhort of that exactneſs which the Law requires, and ſo cannot poſſibly exceed the Law in holineſs; yet all they may be ſaid to act beyond the Command, or to out-act the Law of God, as to the matter of their obedience, who do that which God never commanded, nor ever *came into his heart* (as the Prophet ſpeaks, *Jer.* 7. 31.) to command them. They who thus do what God requires not, and as if God had been too ſcant in his rules, will needs give a new rule either to themſelves or others; and as if God had not given them Laws enough, will (in this ſence) be a law to themſelves or others, either in matters of practice or worſhip. (And ſo indeed make void the Law of God by their tradition) Theſe exceeders are the men who turn to the right hand, though indeed (except they repent this raſhneſs) themſelves are likely to be ſet upon the left hand. Men never act more left-handedly, then when they thus turn to the right hand; nor do they ever wrong God more, then when they do that which is right in their own eyes: Men never ſhewing themſelves ſo fooliſh, as when they will be wiſer then God.

Again, Declining or turning to the left hand implyeth a ſin in defect, when we do leſs then God commands, when we ſhorten and ſtreighten the will of God in our obedience to it. Every natural man thinks a little much; yea, he thinks much to do a little; and may therefore be ſaid to turn to the left hand, becauſe that is the unworking hand, or the hand which doth the leaſt work. A natural man either makes the Law of God void by doing that which is againſt it, or he lets it lye void by not doing it, and would be glad that this talent committed to him might for ever be wrapt up in a napkin, or be buried in the earth. Both theſe turnings, whether to the right hand, or to the left, are evil. The way of holineſs, the good way, lyeth ſtreight forward, right on; it hath no turning either to the right hand, nor to the left. All the wayes of ſin are called *crooked wayes*, and they are our own wayes (*Pſal.* 125. 5.) *As for ſuch as turn aſide to their crooked wayes, the Lord ſhall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity.* The Pſalmiſt calls them, *Their crooked wayes*; that is, wayes of their own deviſing; whereas the way of holineſs is the Lords way. To exceed or to do more, to be deficient or to do leſs then God requires, both theſe are crooked wayes; the way of the Lord lyes ſtreight forward, right before (*Prov.* 28. 18.) *Whoſo walketh uprightly ſhall be ſaved, but he that is perverſe (or crooked) in his wayes ſhall fall at once.* The motion of a godly man is like that of the Kine that carried the Ark (1 *Sam.* 6. 12.) *Who took the ſtreight way to the way of* Bethſhemeſh, *and went along the high way, lowing as they went, and they turned not aſide to the right hand, or to the left.*

But you will ſay, Do not good men, even the beſt of good men, decline ſometimes, and go aſide? Or doth it argue every man to be wicked who declines at any time? I anſwer, *Job* ſpeaks of what he had not done, not of what it was impoſſible for him to do; he had not declined, yet he might have declined. We find many declinings among the godly; How many are there that decline in degrees, who are godly in the main: They love ſtill, but they have not the ſame warmth of love, the ſame heat of affection: They obey ſtill, but they have not the ſame ſtrength of obedience. There may be a declining alſo not only in the way, but from the way, to the right hand ſometimes, and ſometimes to the left; there may be an exceeding, and there may be a coming ſhort in thoſe, as to actions, who, as to their ſtate, are come home to God; theſe things are poſſible, yea, common, but we ſpeak of what many godly men do, and what ſhould be the aim and deſign of every godly man; that is, to keep the way of God, and not to decline; to keep himſelf up in ſpiritual ſtrength, and to keep himſelf on in a ſpiritual courſe; yea, every godly man may, and can ſay as *David* did (*Pſal.* 18. 21.) *I have kept the wayes of the Lord, and have not wickedly departed from my God.* Though every godly man cannot ſay as godly *Job* did, *I have kept his way, and not declined*; yet every godly man may ſay as *David, I have kept his wayes, and have not wickedly departed from my God*: We ſhould be afraid of declining and decaying; we ſhould ſtrive to be alwayes advancing and encreaſing. And as Saints are under a command to be ſuch, ſo they are under a promiſe to be ſuch (*Pſal.* 92. 12, 13, 14.) *The righteous ſhall flouriſh like a Palm-tree; he ſhall grow like a Cedar in* Lebanon. *Thoſe that be planted in the Houſe of the Lord, ſhall flouriſh in the Courts of our God, they ſhall ſtill bring forth fruit in old age; they ſhall be fat and flouriſhing.* Here is not only a mention of growing, but of flouriſhing; and here's flouriſhing three times mentioned; and 'tis growing and flouriſhing not only like a tree, but like a Palm-tree (which flouriſheth under oppreſſion) and like a Cedar (not growing in ordinary places, but) in *Lebanon*, where were the goodlieſt Cedars. Nor doth the Spirit promiſe here a flouriſhing in boughs and leaves only (as ſome trees do, and do no more) but in fruit: And this not only fruit for once in a year, or one year, but they *ſtill bring forth fruit*; and that not only in the years of their youth, or beginnings in grace, but *in old age*; and that not only in the entrance of that ſtate which is called *old age*, threeſcore years, but that which the Scripture calls the perfection of *old age*, threeſcore years and ten, as the learned Hebrews obſerve upon the word uſed in the Pſalm. What a *divine climax* doth the Spirit of God make in this Scripture, to ſhew that the godly man, as to his ſtate, is ſo far from declining, that he is ſtill climbing higher and higher? And if any ſhall ask how comes it to paſs then, that ſome godly men are obſerved not only by themſelves, but by others, to decline often in and ſometimes from the wayes of God?

I anſwer, Theſe declinings may be aſſigned to ſeveral Cauſes.

Firſt, To the power of ſome Corruption remaining much unmortified in them; as in a Garden, when the Weeds grow high, the good Herbs decline; and as in a Field, when the Weeds are ſtrong, the Corn is weak: So it is here, the prevailing or growing of Corruption, is the declining of Grace in degree, and by reaſon of it, ſome (for a time) decline from the way.

Secondly, Declinings are from the prevalency of temptation; while Satan plieth ſome with temptation, he turneth them out of the way, or cauſeth them to walk but ſlowly in it. As temptation is a tryal of, ſo a hinderance unto Grace; yea, though Corruption be kept much down, yet ſome through a violent guſt of temptation have been over-born.

Thirdly, Declinings are cauſed in the good by the example of thoſe that are evil; therefore the Apoſtle gives that Caution (*Rom.* 12. 2.) *Not to be conformable to the world.* A godly man is apt enough to write by a falſe copy, and to do as he ſees the world doth. What was all their way, or their only way before converſion, they after converſion (through neglect of their watch) may be found ſtepping into, or taking a ſtep or two in? Before converſion our whole courſe, ſaith the Apoſtle (*Epheſ.* 2. 2.) *is according to the courſe of this world:* And the examples of the world have drawn many aſide, after they have come out from the world. The faſhions and vanities of the world, in pride and pleaſure, are very drawing. All examples, eſpecially evil examples (like the Loadſtone) have an attractive vertue in them; and many of the godly have been drawn aſide thus, and have declined, with much ſcandal, for a while from the way of God.

Fourthly, Declinings are ſometimes from afflictions; and thoſe we may conſider of two ſorts, perſonal or publick; both or either of theſe have cauſed many to decline. The cold froſt of affliction hath nipped the graces of ſome, and made them to turn aſide from the way of God. Therefore the Church (having reported her great troubles) ſpeaks it as an argument of much ſincerity towards God, and ſtrength of Grace received from him (*Pſal.* 44. 17, 18.) *All this is come upon us* (that is, all theſe common calamities and afflictions) *yet have we not forgotten thee, nor dealt falſly in thy Covenant; our hearts are not turned back, neither are our ſteps declined from thy way:* As if ſhe had ſaid, Theſe afflictions have been ſtrong temptations upon us to cauſe us to decline from thy wayes, but through grace we have kept our ground, nnd remained conſtant in thy Covenant; *Yea, though thou haſt ſore broken us in the place of dragons, and covered us with the ſhadow of death.* As many, yea, moſt of the Saints, have improved under the croſs; ſo there have been ſome, who either through their preſent unbelief, or forgetfulneſs of *the exhortation which* (as the Apoſtle ſaith, *Heb.* 12. 5.) *ſpeaketh unto thm as unto children*, have had their faintings and declinings under it.

Fifthly, Others decline through proſperity and worldly injoyments; when they grow rich in temporals, they grow poorer in ſpirituals. As their outward man encreaſeth, ſo their inner man decayeth; and as they flouriſh in the fleſh, ſo they wither in ſpirit. Hence holy *Agur* prayed (*Prov.* 30. 8, 9.) *Give me not poverty, leſt I be poor and ſteal, and take the Name of God in vain* (that would be a ſad declining) *give me not riches, leſt I be full and deny thee, and ſay, who is the Lord?* That's a ſadder declining then the former. Poverty endangers Grace much, but riches more. To be rich or great in the world, is a great temptation; *Food convenient* is the moſt ſweet and moſt untemptationleſs condition. As Hypocrites fall quite off from God when they come on much in the world; ſo the ſincere may be much hindred in their way. And as many godly men have declined through their own proſperity; ſo ſome have declined, or at leaſt have been in great danger of declining by the proſperity of others. *David* was ready to decline from God, when he ſaw the proſperity of ungodly men

(*Pſal.* 73. 2.) *As for me, my feet were almoſt gone, my ſteps had well-nigh ſlipt, when I ſaw the proſperity of the wicked. David* was almoſt down, when he ſaw the wicked up; Their ſtanding had almoſt given him a fall; *My ſteps* (ſaith he) *had well-nigh ſlipt*; now if it put *David*, a man eminent in godlineſs ſo hard to it to keep his ſtanding (all the grace in his heart, and aſſiſtance from God could ſcarce hold him up) how much more may they who come far ſhort of *David*, decline by ſeeing the proſperity of wicked men? Are not they ready to conclude, ſurely we ſhall thrive and do well enough, though we do as others do who do not trouble themſelves in a ſtrictneſs about matters of Religion as we have done, *Verily* (as it follows at the thirteenth Verſe) *we have cleanſed our hearts in vain, and waſhed our hands in innocency.* If we have ſpared our pains of labour, we could not have endured more pain of trouble; *For all the day long have we been plagued, and chaſtened every morning.* Such arguings as theſe ſhew great declinings. Yet they who are ſincere will ſoon recover themſelves again, and ſay as *David* after he had reviewed this temptation (*ver.* 15.) *If we ſay we will ſpeak thus, we ſhould offend againſt the Generation of the righteous.*

Now ſeeing the godly are ſo many wayes endangered to declining, let us be warned of it, and beware of it. Theſe are declining times, many Profeſſors have ſhamed themſelves, and the profeſſion of the Goſpel. He is a Chriſtian indeed that can ſay in truth as *Job* did, *I have kept his words, and not declined*: They that knew me many years ago may find me in as good, yea, in a better plight then I was then. Hypocrites and true Believers may look and act very like one another; but as the nature of their eſtates have alwayes a vaſt difference to the underſtanding, ſo the event gives a vaſt difference between them to the eye. Hypocrites keep the Word of God a while, but they ever decline in the end finally from it, and ſometimes throw it off in the way totally. When they are in the way they grow weary of it, and a ſmall matter working either upon their hopes or fears, will put them quite out of it. Every difficulty, every danger is to them a Lyon in the way, cauſing them to decline from it; whereas to thoſe that are ſincere, difficulties are not ſtops, but incitements and ſpurs, they do but provoke their zeal, they cannot quench it. And hence the holy Apoſtle ſends a challenge (*Rom.* 8. 35.) to all the troubles, afflictions, and evils in the world; he bids them do their worſt, and when they have done it, they ſhall not be *able to ſeparate him from the love of God*, neither from the love wherewith God loved him, nor from that love wherewith he loved God. *I have kept his wayes and not declined.*

Secondly, Obſerve, *That ſin is a declining from the way of God.*

That's the Apoſtles definition (1 *John* 3. 4.) *Sin is the tranſgreſſion of the Law*: And tranſgreſſion is a going aſide, or a going over the line by which God hath chalked us out our way. God hath not left us at our liberty, though he hath left us (as the Apoſtle *James* calls it, *Chap.* 1. 25.) *A perfect law of liberty.* He hath not left us to travel over hedge and ditch, but hath ſhewed us our way, *a high way, and a way* (as the Prophet ſpeaks, *Iſa.* 35. 8.) *And it ſhall be called the way of holineſs: the wayfaring men, though fools, ſhall not err therein.* Yet fools are alwayes erring from it, all their walkings are wandrings, and their goings are going aſtray, who walk and go on in a ſinful way. The word which ſignifies ſin in the Hebrew, imports moſt properly the miſſing of a mark; becauſe ſinning is a miſſing of the mark, and declining from the way: *I have kept his way, and not declined.*

Verſe 12. **Neither have I gone back from the Commandment of his lips,** &c.

Job proceeds with his negative profeſſion; having ſaid before, *I have not declined*, he ſaith the ſame thing again in other words, *I have not gone back from the Commandment of his lips.* See how often he repeats and inculcates this point, both that he might be believed, and that he might ſhew how confident he was in the uprightneſs of his own heart; *I have not declined, neither have I gone back.* By theſe various expreſſions, and often repetitions, *Job* ſets forth in general the exactneſs of his care in keeping cloſe to God; *neither have I gone back.* The word ſignifies both to depart, and to touch; and ſome put both ſignifications together here, implying ſuch a departure from a thing or perſon, as not at all to touch or come near it again, which is a total apoſtacy, or deſertion from it: As if *Job* had ſaid, *I have not apoſtatiz'd from the wayes of God.* But this ſeems leſs then what he ſpake before; for having ſaid, *I did not decline*, what need he ſay, *I did not apoſtatize?* for he that doth not ſo much as decline, is far from apoſtatizing. I anſwer, that in this negative there is that ordinary figure extenuation, ſpeaking leſs then is intended, or intending more then is expreſſed; and ſo, *not to go back from*, is to go forward in, or to proceed on in the Commandments of God; and ſo the ſence riſeth higher; *I have kept his way, and have not declined, neither have I gone back from his Commandment*: I have kept cloſe to it without the leaſt willing declenſion. I have not laid the Commandment out of my hand, much leſs have I put it out of my heart. And then we are to interpret this negative, *I have not gone back*, by this affirmative, *I have ſtood to thy Commandmentt conſtantly and reſolvedly.* The Scripture is full of ſuch negatives. Thus when the Lord makes that Promiſe (*Joel* 2. 26.) *My people ſhall never be aſhamed*: It ſeems to be but a ſmall matter, that the people of God ſhall not be aſhamed; but the meaning is, they ſhall be highly honoured, they ſhall have a name and reputation in the world, they ſhall make their boaſt in and of me their God all the day long. So when the Apoſtle gives that negative counſel (1 *Theſ.* 5. 18.) *Deſpiſe not propheſie*, his purpoſe is to exhort the *Theſſalonians*, and us in them, to the readieſt embraces and higheſt eſtimations of it. Not to deſpiſe, is to *honour propheſie*; that is, the preaching of the Word in a due expoſition and application of it to *exhortation, and edification, and comfort.* So then, there is much more in theſe words, *I have not gone back from the Commandment*, then thus, I have not turned, or apoſtatized from the Commandment, I have not thrown up, nor abjured my profeſſion: *Job's* meaning is, *I have kept ſtrictly and firmly to it, I have aſſerted it, and affirmed it, and will maintain it to the end*: As I have hitherto lived, ſo I am purpoſed to dye in the obedience of it. *I have not gone back from the Commandment of his lips.* We find the word is uſed in ſuch a ſignification (*Prov.* 17. 13.) *Whoſo rewardeth evil for good, evil ſhall not depart from his houſe*, or, *evil ſhall not go back from his houſe.* As evil ſhall come, ſo evil ſhall not go back; he ſhall not be able to diſmiſs it when it cometh; evil ſhall keep cloſe to his houſe, dwell and abide in his houſe, or hang upon him like an unwelcome gueſt, he ſhall not get it out for ever. Again (*Iſa.* 54. 10.) *The mountains ſhall depart, and the hills ſhall be removed, but my kindneſs ſhall not depart from thee, neither ſhall the Covenant of my peace be removed, ſaith the Lord that hath mercy on thee.* Thus the Lord aſſures his people of the grace and good of the new Covenant; *The mountains ſhall depart*; that is, though the mountains depart, or let them depart, and *the hills remove, yet my kindneſs ſhall not depart*, or it ſhall not go back from you; that is, my kindneſs ſhall imbrace you, ſtick cloſe to you, and abide with you for ever; ſo here, *I have not gone back*; that is, I have imbraced, and ſtuck to *the Commandment of his lips.* We alſo find ſuch a ſence of the word (*Mich.* 2. 3.) *Therefore thus ſaith the Lord, Behold, againſt this family do I adviſe an evil, from which you ſhall not remove* (or withdraw) *your necks*; that is, the evil which I deviſe againſt you ſhall remain upon you, and ſtick by you, ye ſhall not get this yoak off your necks, nor your necks out of this collar; it ſhall be an abiding evil, which will not go back; as ye have not gone back from the evil of ſin, ſo ye ſhall not go back from the evil of puniſhment; it will not remove from you, nor ſhall ye remove from it. So here, *I have not gone back*, or removed my neck from the Commandment of God, I have not ſtirred a foot from it.

מיש *receſſit, deceſſit, palpavit, tetegit; Ita recedere à re aliqua, ut tangi aut contrectari nequeat.*

Non recedere à mandatis, eſt illa opere complere tenere, non dimittere de manu aut actione. Pined.

Semper familiariter in illius domo verſabitur.

Yet further, That which before he called *the way of God*, here he calls, *the Commandment of his lips*: Lips are the inſtruments of ſpeech. God is a Spirit, and hath no corporeal parts; the Scripture ſpeaks thus of God after the manner of men; becauſe men ſpeak with their lips (their lips being a principal inſtrument of ſpeech) therefore the Commandment which God hath made known, and ſpoken (in a way peculiar to himſelf) is called, *The Command-*

ment of his lips. Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates ſtrictly to the letter; *His lips Laws I caſt not off.* And when *Job* calleth the Commandments of God, *The Commandments of his lips*, it hath a great force in it, to oblige man to reverence and obey them. They are not Commandments which he hath publiſhed by others only, he hath alſo publiſhed them himſelf. They are *the Commandments of his lips*; that is, thoſe Commandments which as he made, and others ſpeak in his Name, ſo he hath ſpoken them too. He is both the Author and the Publiſher of them. (*Exod.* 20. 1.) *And God ſpake all theſe words, and ſaid.* *David* (Pſal. 66. 13, 14.) puts that emphatically upon his holy Vows, to ſhew how he was engaged to perform them; *I will go into thy houſe with burnt-offerings, and I will pay thee my Vows that my lips have uttered, and my mouth hath ſpoken when I was in trouble:* As if he had ſaid, My Vows are not only ſuch as I have conceived in my heart, and reſolved in my own thoughts, but I have ſpoken them out and declared them openly, therefore it lyes upon me not only in conſcience, but in honour to pay and perform them. If we muſt do what our lips have uttered, much more muſt we do what God hath uttered with his lips. *Lip-labour will not anſwer thoſe Commandments which are the labour of Gods lips.* Therefore ſaith *Job, I have not turned back from the Commandment of his lips.*

Præceptum labiorum, i. e. præceptum labiis ejus pronunciatum. Genitivus adjuncti vel efficientis. Piſc. *Emphaticus eſt iſte Hebraiſmus ad majorē præceptorū dei commendationem reverenciam & obſervantiā,* ſc. *quod ab ipſo dei ore prolata.* Bold.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *A godly mans way is forward, he doth not turn back.*

He doth not decline, either to the right hand or to the left, much leſs doth he go back; he doth not only ſtay where he was, but he is better then he was, his courſe is onward and forward (*Job* 17. 9.) *The righteous ſhall hold on his way.* It is bad enough not to go forward; but to go backward is far worſe; *If any draw back* (ſaith God, *Heb.* 10. 38.) *my ſoul ſhall have no pleaſure in them.* And what pleaſure can their ſouls take, in whom the ſoul of God takes no pleaſure? To draw back is perdition: as they who draw back are the moſt forward to deſtroy others (*Hoſ.* 5. 2. *The revolters are profound to make ſlaughter*) ſo they ſhall be ſure to be deſtroyed themſelves. The people of *Iſrael* in their travels through the Wilderneſs to *Canaan*, did often diſcover this ſpirit of Apoſtacy (*Pſal.* 78. 41.) *They turned back and tempted God:* We find them at a conſultation about it (*Numb.* 14. 4.) *They ſaid one to another, Let us make us a Captain, and let us return into* Egypt. Our Lord Jeſus had ſuch a ſort of men, who followed him in perſon (*John* 6. 66.) *From that time many of his Diſciples went back from him, and walked no more with him.* They were Diſciples who went back, and there were many of them, ſo many, that Chriſt (in the next verſe) *ſaid to the twelve, Will ye alſo go away? Then* Peter *anſwered, Lord, whither ſhall we go? Thou haſt the words of eternal life:* As if he had ſaid, We cannot mend our ſelves whitherſoever we go; Why then ſhould we go from thee? *As a godly man goeth on, ſo he ſeeth reaſon why he ſhould.* 'Tis as irrational as ſinful, to go back from him who hath the words of eternal life, or from the Commandment of his lips, who hath given the Promiſe of life. The Apoſtle *Paul* had a reaching ſpirit, and he was alwayes reaching forward (*Phil.* 3. 12, 13.) *Not as though I had already attained, or were already perfect, but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that, for which alſo I am apprehended of Chriſt Jeſus:* As if he had ſaid, I would to the utmoſt anſwer the deſign which Chriſt had upon me, when he firſt took hold of me effectually by his grace. *Paul* was ſo far from going back, that he forgot what was backward. Some remember what is paſt, or what they have done, ſo much, that they forget what is to be done. *But* (ſaith *Paul*) *this one thing I do, forgetting thoſe things which are behind, and reaching forth unto thoſe things which are before, I preſs towards the mark, for the price of the high calling of God in Chriſt Jeſus.* The mark and the price are alwayes before us; there is no coming at the mark, nor winning of the price by turning back (*Prov.* 4. 18.) *The path of the juſt is like the ſhining (or morning) light, which ſhineth more and more unto the perfect day.* The path of the unjuſt (if it have any light in it) is but like the evening light, which ſhines leſs and leſs, which declines and goeth downward, till the perfect night, and till himſelf be wrapt up in everlaſting darkneſs. The Sun in the Firmament went back by miracle for a ſign to *Hezekiah*, that he ſhould recover the health of his body. But if we ſee any go back who have heretofore ſhined like the Sun in a Goſpel-profeſſion, we have juſt cauſe to look upon it as a ſad ſymptom, that their ſouls are in a dangerous, if not an irrecoverable condition, *I have not gone back* (ſaith *Job*) *from the Commandment of his lips.*

Again, from all theſe expreſſions, in that *Job* ſpeaking of the ſame thing, calls it, *The way of God, the Commandment of his lips*, and (in the latter part of this verſe) *the word of his mouth*, to which he had cleaved and wholly devoted himſelf for the guiding of his whole man in the duty which he owed and had been careful to pay both to God and man.

Obſerve, *The Word of God is the only rule of life.*

And in this point the Word or Commandment of God is to be taken in a double oppoſition: Firſt, To our own deviſes and rules: Secondly, To the deviſes and rules of other men: Man muſt not preſcribe to himſelf, nor may we receive the preſcriptions of men, to order our practice by. God is the only Law-giver, and we muſt receive the Law from his mouth. He that will pleaſe God, muſt ſhut all his own imaginations out of doors, and have nothing to do with them: 'Tis not what man hath a mind to do, but what the mind of God is he ſhould do, that pleaſeth him, or is either a worſhip or a ſervice acceptable to him. We never diſhonour God more then when we take upon us to ſerve him our own way, and leaving his rule make a rule for our ſelves. Such a ſerving of God is rebellion againſt him; as was told *Saul* by the Prophet (1 *Sam.* 15. 22.) *Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings, and ſacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord.* *Saul* thought he had done very well when he ſaved the Sheep and Oxen for ſacrifice: But he was told, *That to obey is better then ſacrifice; and to hearken, then the fat of Rams.* God had commanded burnt offerings, and ſacrifice, but he had no delight in them when his own voice was not obeyed, or when they were offered, either beſide or againſt his command (*Luke* 16. 15.) *That which is highly eſteemed among men, is an abomination to the Lord:* His thoughts are not our thoughts, either in the doing of what is good, or in the pardoning of what is ſinful. As man is apt to think, that God will not pardon what he hath done ſinfully; ſo that he will accept of what he thinks he hath done holily, though he hath no rule for the doing of it, but what himſelf hath deviſed. We alwayes fail in our meaſure, while we meaſure God by our ſelves. And it is as dangerous to take the rule of our actions from men, as not to take the rule of God. In this ſence we muſt call no man Maſter, nor may we be the ſervants of the wiſeſt men. And as we muſt not be *the ſervants of men*, becauſe (which is the Apoſtles reaſon, 1 *Cor.* 7. 23.) *We are bought with a price*; that is, dearly redeemed by Chriſt; ſo neither may we be the *ſervants of men*, in following their dictates, becauſe we have received a word from God, whom alone we ought to follow, and none elſe, but in ſubordination to, or complyance with his Word and the Commandment of his lips, or as it follows in the concluſion of this verſe, *The words of his mouth.*

I have eſteemed the words of his mouth more then my neceſſary food.

Job having given us two negatives, *I have not declined, I have not turned back*, as proofs of his integrity and holineſs, now gives us an affirmative to make up the fulneſs of his proof. *Not to do evil is commendable, but to do good is a higher commendation. I have eſteemed the words of his mouth.* The Hebrew word ſignifies two things: Firſt, To hide or conceal: Secondly, To prize, value, or eſteem. Some render this Text by the former, not as we, *I have eſteemed the words of his mouth*, but, *I have hid or laid up the words of his mouth*; that's a good rendring, and ſo Maſter *Broughton* tranſlates; *More then my daily bread have I laid up the words of his mouth.* The Vulgar gives another reading, *In my boſom have I hid the words of his mouth:* In this following the Septuagint, who by the change of a letter in the Original, tranſlate the word which we render, *More then my neceſſary or ſtatute food in my boſom:* But I paſs that as a miſtake of the Text in that word, yet in the former part it conſents with Maſter *Broughton*; *I have hid or laid up the words of his mouth more then my daily bread.* And as this tranſlation holds out a truth in it ſelf, ſo the ſence meets with

צפנתי *In ſinu meo abſcondi verba oris ejus.* Vulg. *Græcos ſecutus* חקי *legit non* חקו *at vertit ac ſcriptū eſſet* בחקי *in ſinu meo abſcondi.* Merc.

with ours; for as the Original word doth as properly ſignifie to hide, or lay up, as to eſteem, ſo thoſe things are laid up or hidden by us which are of moſt eſteem. And this action of hiding or laying up the Word, is often ſpoken of in Scripture, both as the practice, and as the duty of the Saints (*Pſal.* 119. 11.) *I have hid thy Commandments in my heart.* And the rule is given by Wiſdom (*Prov.* 2. 1.) *My Son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my Commandments with thee.* Wiſdom counſelleth us not only to receive, but to hide the Commandments. And (*Prov.* 4. 20. 21.) Wiſdom goeth yet further, *My Son, attend to my words, incline thine ear to my ſayings, let them not depart from thine eyes, keep them in the midſt of thy heart.* The heart (as Naturaliſts ſay) is in the midſt or center of the body. Holy truths muſt be kept in the midſt of the heart, in the midſt of the middle; that is, in the ſafeſt place, in that moſt retired chamber, the midſt of the heart. But why ſhould theſe words be hidden in the heart, which are and ought to be proclaimed in the ear and upon the houſe top? I anſwer, We hide things, firſt, that we may know where to have them; what is thrown at our heels, we know not where to have. Secondly, We hide things for ſafety, or from danger, as well as to have them ready at hand for uſe. There are enemies who watch their opportunity to ſteal the Word away from us, and therefore it is our wiſdom as well as our duty to hide it or lay it up ſafe. So that in both notions we ought to hide the Word of God: Firſt, That we may have it hand for uſe: As it is ſaid of the good Houſholder in the Goſpel, that he layeth up, and hath in his treaſure, things both new and old. Secondly, That it may be kept out of the hand of the thief, who would rob us of that precious treaſure. Satan and the World are *Word-ſtealers*, and they ſteal away the Word, not becauſe they deſire to make any uſe of it, but leaſt we ſhould; therefore as *Gideon* (Judges 6. 11.) *threſhed wheat by the wine-preſs to hide it from the* Midianites; ſo ſeeing there are myſtical *Midianites*, who daily ſteal away the Word (that moſt neceſſary and precious Wheat) from thouſands who have heard and received it, we ſhould (in a holy jealouſie and ſuſpicion of them) hide it out of their reach. In converſion God puts the Law in our mind, and writes it in our heart: And through that grace received and daily renewed, we alſo are enabled to lay it up there. A good man (as one of the Ancients ſpeaketh) *makes his heart Gods Library, there he layeth up whole volumes of holy Precepts, and of precious Promiſes.* And look what Precepts or Promiſes he finds in the Bible, or written Book of the Word of God, the ſame he finds tranſcribed into his own heart, and ſo into his life. But I will not inſiſt upon that reading, *I have laid up the words of his mouth more then my neceſſary food.*

Pectus meū feci Bibliothecam dei. Hieron. de Nepotiano.

We render, *I have eſteemed the words of his mouth*, &c. Theſe two rendrings of the word give light to each other. That which we eſteem, we hide; and the more we eſteem a thing, the more carefully we hide it. No man will lay up that which is worth nothing; what we hide is of value, at leaſt we judge it to be ſo. Childrens pockets are often full of Bables, but to them they are no Bables; they eſteem them as men do Gold and Silver, elſe they would not take them up, much leſs lay them up.

I have eſteemed the words of his mouth.

Before it was *The Commandment of his lips*; ſome make a diſtinction between theſe, expounding *the Commandment of his lips*, for the preceptive part of the Word, and *the word of his mouth*, for the promiſſive part of the Word or for the Promiſes, which are gracious declarations and manifeſtations of the love and good will of God to ſinful man. As if *Job* in the former words had a reſpect chiefly to the Law, or rule of doing; and in this latter, to the Goſpel, or ground of believing. But though I ſee not well how theſe terms can bear that diſtinction, yet the matter doth, yea, and ſeems to require it; for though a godly man eſteems the Precepts of God as well as the Promiſes, and the Commandments are the words of Gods mouth as well as the Promiſes, yet the Promiſes are the moſt feeding, fatning, and refreſhing part of the Word; and if ſo, ſurely they were not left out, yea, poſſibly, were principally intended by *Job* in this place, that he might ſhew how his ſpirit was carried out to the full latitude and compaſs of the mind of God, both in the Law and in the Goſpel. And becauſe the Promiſes have ſo much ſoul-food in them, he doth therefore elegantly prefer them before his neceſſary food. *I have eſteemed the word of his mouth.*

Dicta oris diſtinguo à præceptis, dictum oris eſt verbum gratioſæ nunciationis & promiſſionis, q. d. *gratiam annunciatam libentèr accepi animi fide.* Coc.

But how much, or at what rate did he eſteem them? It follows in the next words.

More then my neceſſary food.] There is yet ſome variety obſervable in the reading of theſe latter words. Some give it thus, *I have eſteemed or hid the word of his mouth, according to my former manner, or as I was wont to do:* As if he had ſaid, What I now profeſs is no new thing with me, I have not taken up this eſtimation of the Word now on the ſudden, upon my ſick bed, I have done ſo long before now, and ſo I do ſtill. As it was ſaid of *Timothy*, *That from a child he had learned the Scripture.*

Again, Taking the ſame reading, the ſence may be given thus; *Upon election and deliberation, I eſteem the word of his mouth:* As if he had ſaid, *I do not eſteem the word of God for nothing, or as not having conſidered it, and judged of the excellency of it, but upon long debate, conſultation, and tryal, I have pitcht my election upon it.*

Further, Some in theſe words conceive *Job* alluding to thoſe things which men do out of long cuſtom, or according to their ancient courſe of life: As if he had ſaid, There is nothing more fixed and ſetled either in my heart, or in my practice, then the Law of God: Obedience to it is now become to me as another nature. I ſlight, in compariſon of that, all humane Laws and Conſtitutions, as alſo my own moſt practiced forms and cuſtomes.

A ſtatuto meo abſcondi eloquia oris ejus. Mont.
Ex ſtatuto meo vel more meo ut ab juvenule ætate aſſuevi prætermittere, quæ deus odio habet i.e. *plena electione & deliberatione fixa apud ſe, non externè tantum & leviter divinam legem cuſtodire apud ſe decreverit.* Cajet.
Aliqui ad actiones hominis conſuetas quas de more facit referunt; ut antiquius habuerit lege domini animortecndere & ei operam dare quam ſolita & conſtituta ſibi ac uſitata facere. Mer.

We render, *I have eſteemed the words of his mouth more then my neceſſary food.* The Original word ſignifies *a Statute*, or *a Law*, and ſo any thing which is eſtabliſhed or appointed for our uſe, as a Law, or Statute is. And becauſe our food, our neceſſary food, is that which is cut out or appointed to us, either by God or man, therefore this word is applied to ſignifie daily bread, or neceſſary food. Banquets, and great Feaſts, are without all meaſure and bounds, they know no Law, but are uſually full of exceſs, both as to what is prepared, and to what is conſumed; 'tis ſeldom that either providers or eaters keep the rule in feaſting. But a due neceſſary food, which is for the maintaining of our lives, and the renewing of our ſtrength, to go on in our callings, this food hath a bound, and we eat (as it were) by meaſure, or by ſtatute, therefore we tranſlate *neceſſary food*, others *appointed food, or a portion.* So the word is uſed (*Gen.* 47. 22.) *Only the Land of the Prieſts bought he not, for the Prieſts had a portion aſſigned them of* Pharaoh, *and they eat the portion which he gave them.* Their aſſigned portion is expreſſed by this word; a portion it was to live upon; ſuch as Scholars have in Colledges, and Almſ-men in Hoſpitals by the Statute of their Founders. And in the Book of the *Proverbs*, we have it twice uſed in ſuch a ſence (*Prov.* 30. 8.) *Remove from me vanity and lyes, give me neither poverty nor riches, feed me with food convenient for me*, or *with my ſtatute bread*; that is, give me ſo much only as the Law of nature, or the law of my neceſſity and conveniency calls for, to fit me for duty; with this ſtatute bread let me be fed, let others have their full tables, this ſhall ſerve my turn. Again (*Prov.* 31. 15.) *She ariſeth alſo while it is yet night* (ſpeaking of the good Houſe-wife) *and ſhe giveth meat to her houſhold, and a portion to her maidens*; ſhe doth not throw the houſe out at windows, or make havock of all, as not caring which end went forward: And as ſhe is no prodigal waſter, ſo ſhe is neither niggardly nor ſcraping, neither pining nor pinching, but giveth a meet portion to her Maidens. So here, *I have eſteemed the word of thy mouth more then my neceſſary food.* This ſmall proportion of food greatens the ſence of the text, and heightens *Job*'s holineſs and piety very much; for when we come to full tables, where there is exceſs, our ſtomachs loath the meat; and the more meat there is, the leſs ſome are able to eat, becauſe the ſtomach is over-charged with the ſight of it. Appetite may be dull'd with abundance; but when we find only a convenient, neceſſary ſtatute portion, as it were, ſo much as is needful to ſatisfie hunger, and give ſome moderate delight, this pleaſeth moſt, and is more eſteemed by temperate perſons then the greateſt feaſt in the world. A man doth not nautiate his neceſſary food, or loath what hunger craves; a cruſt of bread, and that which is courſe, is pleaſant then; neceſſary food is the ſweeteſt food, and we are beſt ſatiſfied with that which breeds no ſatiety. *We live moſt comfortably with that food, without which we cannot live at all comfortably.*

חק
Proprie ſtatutum & cretū ſonat, & hinc certam & decretam cibi rationem. Quicquid ad victum & vitam fovendam ac tuendam eſt neceſſarium חק *appellatur.* Merc.

fortably. So then, when *Job* ſaith here, *I eſteemed the word of his mouth more then my neceſſary food*, it is as if he had plainly ſaid, I took more care for, and had a higher eſteem of the food of my ſoul, then for that food of my body, which neceſſity forceth every man to eſteem.

Hence Note, Firſt, *That a godly man hath a high eſtimation of the Word of God.*

First, He doth not only eſteem it, but he eſteems it as food.
Secondly, He eſteems it as neceſſary as food.
Thirdly, He eſteems it more neceſſary then food.

Here are three ſteps, by which his eſtimation of the Word of God is to be taken. *David* ſaith of a godly man (*Pſal.* 1. 2.) *His delight is in the Law of the Lord.* The word there uſed ſignifies both *will, and delight.* Some render it (*voluntas*) *will,* and others (*voluptas*) *delight.* We may take in both, his will and his delight is in the Law of the Lord, or he delightfully wills it. Would you know where the delight and joy of a godly man is? It is in the Law of the Lord, there 'tis fixed, and no where elſe comparatively, but in the Lord of the Law. Theſe two are inſeparable; he that delights in the Law hath firſt delighted in the Lord, and he that delights in the Lord, cannot but delight in the Law. There are two Metaphors uſed in Scripture, which ſhew the eſtimation and delight which Saints have in the Law of God, or in the word of his mouth.

Firſt, As the Word is compared *to food:* Secondly, As the Word is compared *to treaſure:* The Word is often compared to food, and the moſt delicious food (*Pſal.* 119. 103.) *How ſweet are thy words unto my taſte, yea, ſweeter then honey to my mouth.* And (*Pſal.* 19. 10.) *They are ſweeter then the honey and the honey-comb:* He doth not mean the honey-comb barely, as the veſſel wherein the honey is kept; but by the honey-comb he means the honey that flows or drops immediately and (as I may ſay) naturally without any art, or preſſing out of the comb, which is eſteemed the pureſt honey; ſuch is the Law of God to the ſpiritual palate of a godly man. That feaſt (*Matth.* 22. 2. *Luke* 14. 16.) to which ſinners are invited, is only the declaration of the Word and Mind of God in the Goſpel. The word of Grace is the greateſt feaſt which God makes his people. Again, the Word is as often compared to treaſure: What the eſteem and deſire of man is to treaſure, I need not ſtay to tell you. *The Judgments of God* (ſaith *David,* Pſal. 19. 10.) *are more to be deſired then Gold, yea, then much fine Gold.* And again (*Pſal.* 119. 72, 127.) *The Law of thy mouth is better to me then thouſands of Gold and Silver.* And (*ver.* 127.) when he ſaw how ſome made void the Law of God, he ſaith, *Therefore I love thy Commandments above Gold, yea, above fine Gold:* As if he had ſaid, Becauſe I ſee ſome men eſteem and reckon thy Law as if it were droſs, and throw it up as void and antiquated, or taking the boldneſs, as it were, to repeal and make it void, that they may ſet up their own luſts and vain imaginations, becauſe I ſee both prophane and ſuperſtitious men thus out of love with thy Law, therefore my love is more enflamed to it, *I love it above Gold,* which leads the moſt of men away captives in the love of it; and I eſteem it more then that which is moſt eſteemed by men, and gains men moſt eſteem in this world, *Fine Gold*; yea, as he ſaid (*Pſal.* 19.) *More then much fine Gold.*

Secondly, Obſerve, *A high and reverential eſteem of the Word of God, works the heart, and keeps it cloſe to the obedience of the Word.*

Job having ſaid before, *I have kept the Commandments of his mouth*; *I have kept his wayes, and not declined, I have not gone back*; now comes to the ſpring of all this conſtancy in obedience, *I have eſteemed the words of his month,* &c. Love is the ſpring of action, and eſteem is the top of love; we love nothing which we do not eſteem; and what we love much we think we can never eſteem enough; and what we thus love and eſteem, we ſtrive to keep cloſe unto. They that receive the truth, and do not receive the love of it, quickly turn from it to believe a lye, yea, God therefore ſends them *ſtrong deluſion to believe a lye, becauſe they received not the love of the truth.* As not to love the truth is a ſin; ſo it is puniſhed with another ſin, the love of error. Though we have taken much truth into our underſtandings, yet unleſs we take it into our affections alſo, we cannot hold it long. 'Tis love which holds the heart and the word together. No man willingly obeys that Law which he doth not love. Before *David* could ſay, *The Law is my meditation all the day,* he ſaith, *O how I love thy Law* (Pſal. 119. 97.) The Hypocrite, *who hates inſtruction, and caſts the Word of God behind his back*; that is, ſlights and viliſies it to the utmoſt (for ſo much to caſt behind the back imports; the Hypocrite, I ſay, who thus caſts the Word of God behind his back) will be talking of the Word, and have it much in his mouth, yea, he will mouth it ſo, or be ſo talkative about it, that God reproves or checks him for it (*Pſal.* 50. 16.) *Unto the wicked ſaith God, What haſt thou to do to declare my Statutes, or that thou ſhouldſt take my Covenant in thy mouth?* So then, the Hypocrite was very buſie with his tongue, and he could ſpeak much of that which he loved never a whit. But was the Hypocrite a man of his hands alſo? Was he buſie in obeying the Word which he had caſt behind his back? The next words of the Pſalm (*ver.* 18, 19, 20, 21.) tells us what he was buſie about, even this, he was breaking the Law as faſt as he could; *When thou ſaweſt a thief, then thou conſentedſt with him, and haſt been partaker with Adulterers,* &c. The Indictment is large, and upon many heads, yet all true, and is therefore cloſed with, *Theſe things thou haſt done* (ver. 21.) I the Lord am witneſs, and ſo is thy own Conſcience. That Scripture is a clear glaſs, wherein we may ſee how all they will uſe the Law of God, who do not highly eſteem the words of his mouth. We may read *Job*'s Text backward for their character; *Their feet have not held his ſteps, his way have they not kept, but declined, they have gone back from the Commandment of his lips.* And why ſo? *For they have eſteemed the words of his mouth no more then their unneceſſary food, no more then the ſcraps that fall from their table; no more then* (as the Proverb ſaith) *their old ſhooes. I have eſteemed the word of his mouth more then my neceſſary food.*

When *Job* ſaith, *I have eſteemed the word of his mouth,* &c. it is, as if he had ſaid, this is enough for me that God hath ſaid it, to make me eſteem it.

Hence Obſerve, Thirdly, *Whatſoever God ſaith, is to be eſteemed for his own ſake, or becauſe he hath ſaid it.*

As God needs not borrow light from any what to ſpeak, ſo he needs not borrow teſtimony or authority from any to ratifie what he hath ſpoken. *He is to be believed for himſelf.* His words need no ſanction, but (*ipſe dixit*) *I the Lord have ſaid it, or thus ſaith the Lord*; that is enough to ſilence all queries and diſputes both about the truth of what is delivered, and the neceſſity of our obedience to it. As the word of Gods mouth is to be obeyed; ſo it is therefore to be obeyed, becauſe it is the word of his mouth. That he hath ſaid, it muſt command our faith: As he is the true God, ſo he is the God of truth. Every word of his mouth is precious. As what God hath ſpoken muſt be the rule of our faith; ſo that he hath ſpoken, muſt be the reaſon of our faith, *I have eſteemed the words of his mouth,* &c.

Laſtly, From both theſe verſes, we may take notice of the ſeveral ſteps, by which *Job*'s piety did ariſe to ſo eminent a height.

Firſt, He ſtrongly took hold of the ſteps of God.

Secondly, He diligently kept his way.

Thirdly, He declined not, either to the right hand, or to the left.

Fourthly, He went not back from the holy Commandment; both which negatives may be reſolved into this affirmative, He walked very cloſely and exactly with God, in utmoſt perſeverance.

Fifthly, He took a delightful care about all thoſe things, which the Word of God called him unto, even beyond all the care which he took for thoſe things which are moſt conducible to, and neceſſary for the comforts of his body or natural life.

VERS. 13.

But he is in one mind, and who can turn him? And what his ſoul deſireth, even that he doth.

IN this Verſe, *Job* is conceived by ſome, at once making diſcovery of his own infirmity, and of the Soveraignty of God: But though all agree that they carry a full diſcovery of the Soveraignty of God, yet many are ſo far from judging them a diſcovery of *Job*'s infirmity, that they rather diſcover the ſtrength and height of his Grace and Holineſs. To clear the whole matter, we may take notice, That there are three apprehenſions about the ſcope and ſence of theſe words.

Firſt, As if in them *Job* rendred a reaſon of what he ſpake in the Verſe immediately foregoing, here giving an account, why he had kept ſo cloſe to God, and to his wayes; *My foot hath held his ſteps, his way have I kept, and not declined, neither have I gone back from the Commandments of his lips*, &c. And why all this? *For he is of one mind.* That is, God will have his way, there's no reſiſting, his Commandments muſt be obſerved; that which he once made a law and rule for me to walk by, continueth ſo ſtill: *He is of one mind.* Therefore I muſt keep cloſe to his mind. It were a vain thing for me to turn any other way, when God holds the ſame way. It were folly for me to change my practice, when I find no change at all in his Precepts; they being ſtill one and the ſame in themſelves, and having the ſame obligation upon me.

Secondly, Theſe words may give an account, or a reaſon of his afflictions: As if he had thus expreſſed himſelf, *Though my conſcience beareth me witneſs, that I have not gone on in any ſuch ſinful way as ye tax me with, nor defiled my ſelf with ſuch groſs iniquities, as uſually draw down the viſible Judgments of God upon men: Yet I find God going on ſtill to afflict me, he keeps his rod upon my back, and his burden upon my ſhoulders, his terrors ſtill incamp about me, and his arrows drink up my ſpirit. Nor will he be moved by any entreaty of mine to withdraw his hand from me. Whatever pleaſeth him, he will do, how unpleaſant ſoever it is to me.* And what's the reaſon of all this? *He is in one mind*: God is unalterable, therefore do not think, that becauſe he continueth theſe afflictions and burdens upon me, that therefore all muſt be reſolved into my ſin. No, we may reſolve all this into the ſoveraignty and unchangeableneſs of God, he is in one mind, and he will do what his mind is, and none ſhall turn him.

Thirdly, (which ſutes the former) That *Job* here ſhews his Friends, the true way of reconciling his own innocency, with the ſharp afflictions and troubles which were upon him. *Job* felt and ſaw (and others either did or might) that he was ſorely afflicted, and *Job* knew (though others did not) that he was innocent as to the charge brought againſt him. Then how ſhall he reconcile the juſtice of Divine providence with his own innocence? His Friends knew not how to reconcile the innocency of an afflicted man, and the Juſtice of an afflicting God: This was a riddle which they could not unfold. And therefore when they ſaw God thus afflicting him, they concluded as ſtrongly as if they had ſeen it, that *Job* had greatly offended God. But *Job* knew how to unlock this ſecret, and expound this riddle: He knew how to maintain and aſſert his own integrity while he ſuffered, and yet acquit the Juſtice of God in laying thoſe ſufferings upon him, He could ſay, *God is ſupream; He is in one mind:* And what he doth he may do becauſe he hath a mind to do it; He hath deep purpoſes and deſigns, which I am not able to reach or fathom: Therefore though I complain, I do not complain as if God had done me wrong, but becauſe I ſmart, becauſe I feel ſuch pains, and ſo heavy a preſſure upon me. I am far from ſaying that he hath injured me, though he hath thus afflicted me; nor can any thing which he hath done or ſhall further do, be an injury to me, for I confeſs that he hath a right to do whatſoever he pleaſeth to do. Thus we have an excellent defence made by *Job* in theſe words to vindicate the Lords ſharp dealings with him from the leaſt ſuſpition of injuſtice, and to accord the aſſertion of his own afflicted innocence, with a believing reverence of the righteouſneſs of God; and ſo theſe words of his are the breathings of a very gracious ſpirit, teaching us far better then his Friends had done, how to anſwer for God in his ſaddeſt diſpenſations towards man. They knew no other way to do it, but by rendring *Job* a notorious Hypocrite, an hainous Offender, and theſe his ſufferings to be the puniſhments of his hypocriſie and offences. But *Job* reſolves all into the unchangeableneſs of Gods will, and the ſoveraignty of his power. Thus much for the general ſcope of theſe words.

Egregie tuetur divinā providentiā nam cum amici iſta tantum ratione pro divina providentia pugnent, quod ſcelera puniat, at Job *illam agnoſcit cum ærumnas ille immittit propter præclaros fines nobis occultos ſoli deo notos.* Pin.

Juri & libertati dei aſſignat afflictiones, quas amici peccatis. Coc.

Verſe 13. **But he is of one mind.**

והוא
באחד

Theſe words undergo variety of readings, I will name four.

Firſt, Some tranſlate thus, *For he is alone:* That is, He is the only Judge, there is none above him, to whom I might appeal from him, nor hath he any equal to ballance him. There's none to be found upon the Earth, no nor in Heaven, that can alter and controul his decrees, or ſupercede and check any of his proceedings; *He is alone.*

Ipſe enim ſolus eſt. Vulg.

Secondly, Others conceive there is a redundancy in the affix (*beth*) in. And ſo inſtead of *He is in one*, the words are thus given, *He is one*: As if *Job*'s meaning were this, There is none *One but He*, or none *One as He.* As Chriſt ſaith, *There is none good but God*, or *there is but one good*, that is, *abſolutely good*; ſo there is none one but God, that is, *abſolutely One*, God is ſuperlatively one, *the one-moſt-one.*

Ipſe unus eſt. Pagn.

Aliqui ב *redundare putant.* Merc.

Cum nemo abſolutè ſit niſi deus & nemo ſit abſolutè bonus niſi deus: Deus eſt uniſſimus.

Thirdly, Thus, *But if he act againſt one, who can turn him?* And ſo Mr. *Broughton, Yet when he is againſt me, who can ſtay him?* This hath a clear truth in it, and fully hits the ſcope of the place.

Sed ſi ipſe contra unū agit, quis revocet eū? Jun.

But I conceive a fourth reading (which leads to ours) to be yet more clear, and that is, *He is in one, and who can turn him?* In one; What one? We anſwer, *In one mind*; Noting the ſtability of the thoughts and purpoſes of God, his mind is one, his purpoſe is one, his decree is one, he is alwayes like himſelf in all theſe. He doth not change his mind, as man doth; He is conſtant and fixed to his own purpoſes, to the dictates of his own will and wiſdom; *He is one*,

Et ipſe in uno. Mont.

In uno, ſupple, fixus, ipſe perpetuo ſui ſimilis eſt. i. e. *non mutatur ut homo.*

And who can turn him?

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Or, *Who can turn him away?* Or, as another renders, *Who can make him return backwards?* That is, Who can make him go back from what he hath determined and once reſolved upon? True repentance or converſion is the change of the mind in man. Every man that is converted from his ſinful ſtate and courſe by the power of God, becomes another man (as to his morals and ſpirituals) then he was before, but man cannot turn God, and make him any other then he is. God can cauſe man to change his mind; but man cannot make God change his mind, nor turn him backward. The Prophet ſaith of God (*Iſa.* 44. 25.) *That he turneth wiſe men backward, and maketh their knowledge fooliſh.* The turning of the wiſe backwards, is the altering of their counſels. When they will not alter them, God can. He ſaith, Their counſels ſhall not ſtand, nor ſhall they reach the end to which they were appointed, And it is ſo. But can the wiſeſt of men, or all wiſe men plotting and laying their heads together, turn the moſt wiſe God backward? They cannot. So that theſe words hold forth the efficacy and ſtability of the purpoſes, counſels, and decrees of God. *Who can turn him?*

Et quis avertit eum? Mont.

Et quis redire faciet eum retrorſum. Pagn. i.e. *ab inſtituto vel à ſemel ſtatuta ſententia.*

Sed quid ego? Similis cum ſit ſibi ſemper & idem. Quis rationem ab eo facti dictive repoſcat.

And what his ſoul deſireth, even that he doth.

God is not like man, conſiſting of a ſoul and body: Man is the reſult of ſoul and body united together. A ſoul is not a man, nor is a body a man; man is a third thing riſing out of both: But *God is a Spirit.* And when *Job* ſaith, *What his ſoul deſireth*, the meaning is, what himſelf deſireth. The ſoul of a man is indeed the man, becauſe the choiceſt part of man; though man hath another part, namely, a body, yet *the ſoul is he.* The ſoul of man, being his beſt part, is often put for the whole man. But the ſoul of God is not put here for God, becauſe it is the beſt part of Him; *His ſoul is himſelf.*

Animam alicujus ſumi pro eo cujus eſt anima res eſt nota, quare anima dei, deus eſt. Sanct.

Further, This phraſe or manner of ſpeaking, *What his ſoul deſires*, notes only the intenſeneſs and ſtrength of his deſires, or what he deſireth ſtrongly. The Lord ſometimes makes offers to do that which is not in his heart or deſire to do: But whatever his ſoul goes out upon indeed, or would have done, that ſhall be done. Thus the word is uſed frequently, to ſet forth the full purpoſe of God to do a thing (*Levit.* 26. 30.) *And I will deſtroy your high places, and cut down your images, and caſt your carkaſes* *upon the carkaſes of your Idols, and my ſoul ſhall abhor you.* That is extreamly abhor you, I will abhor you with the utmoſt abhorrence. And again (*Iſa.* 1. 14.) *Your new Moons, and your appointed Feaſts, my ſoul hateth.* That is, I hate them with a perfect hatred, to ſhew how deep his hatred was of thoſe things (as done by them) he ſaith, *My ſoul hateth them*: As if he had ſaid, I hate your formality in my worſhip, from the bottom of my heart. We have the ſame ſence (*Jer.* 6. 8.) *Be thou inſtructed,* O Jeruſalem, *leſt my ſoul depart from thee:* That is, leſt I totally depart. I will depart not only by withdrawing ſome of your outward comforts, but even thoſe which are the more intimate and immediate diſcoveries of my love, *My ſoul ſhall depart from thee,* or, *be looſed and diſ-joynted from thee* (as we put in the Margin) that is, I will be of no more uſe to thee, or a help to thee, then a member of the body is to the body, when it is diſlocated or removed from its proper joynt. Once more (*Jer.* 32. 41.) *I will rejoyce over them to do them good, and will plant them in this land aſſuredly, with my whole heart, and with my whole ſoul:* That is, I will do it for them entirely and affectionately, or with entireſt affection.

Velle eſt hoc loco aliquid peculiarius expetire, concupiſcere, ſolet ad rem quampiam delectabilẽ referri. Optat tantum & protinus factum eſt. Merc.

What his ſoul deſireth.] That is, *What he deſireth,* or whatſoever pleaſeth him: We deſire only thoſe things which are very pleaſing. And thoſe things which are moſt pleaſing to us, are, to us, very deſirable. *The deſire of man is love in motion, as his joy is love at reſt.* But in God deſire and joy are not diſtinguiſhable, in him there is no motion, all is reſt. *What his ſoul deſireth,*

Even that he doth.] The Hebrew is very conciſe, *His ſoul deſireth, and doth.* That is, he no ſooner deſireth a thing, but he doth; or when he deſireth, it is done. *The will of God is execution*; though he willeth many things, which (as to man) are not preſently, no nor till a long time after executed, yet as to himſelf whatſoever God willeth is executed, and whenſoever he pleaſeth, his will is actually executed among men. *He deſireth, and it is done.*

From the words thus opened, we may obſerve according to the firſt reading of the former part of the Verſe,

That, *God is one.*

Sæpe premente deo, dat deus alter opem.

There is one God, and but one. Thus the Lord ſpeaks of himſelf by the Prophet (*Iſa.* 44. 8.) *Is there a God beſides me? Yea, there is no God. I know not any.* (Iſa. 45. 5.) *I am the Lord, and there is none elſe, there is no God beſides me.* He is one himſelf, and he hath not a ſecond. The Heathens having many Gods, when they were oppreſſed by any one God, they ſought relief from another. As Sorcerers and Witches go to a ſtronger Spirit, for help againſt what a weaker Spirit hath done. Heathen gods were Devil-gods, and they are many. The *Jews* degenerating into Idolatry, multiplied their Gods according to the number of their Cities (*Jer.* 2. 28.) But *Jehovah, The living God, The Lord, is one God.* We affirm from Scripture that there are three Hees or ſubſiſtences in the God-head (commonly called Perſons) Father, Son, and Spirit; but theſe three are *one*, not only by conſent, but by Nature and Eſſence. *Hear,* O Iſrael (ſaid *Moſes*, Deut. 6. 4,) *The Lord our God is one Lord.*

Secondly, From our reading, *He is in one,* or (as we ſupply) *He is in one mind.*

Obſerve that great truth, *God is unchangeable.*

I the Lord change not (Mal. 3. 6.) The unchangeableneſs of God may be conſidered in divers things.

Firſt, In his Eſſence or Nature: God knoweth no decay. He is a Spirit; an eternal Spirit: He hath nothing mingled or mixed in him which ſhould work or tend to alteration. God is ſimple, He is moſt ſimple, even ſimplicity it ſelf. There is no compoſition in him, no diverſity of qualities in him. Man changeth in his natural conſtitution, becauſe compounded and made up of different elements, qualities, and humours, which contending and fighting one with another, neceſſitate his change. Every day brings ſome, though inſenſible, changes upon us: And in a few years our changes are very viſible, and ſenſible. The Pſalmiſt ſpeaking of the Heavens, which of all viſible creatures are in nature moſt unchangeable, yet calls them changeable in compariſon of God (*Pſal.* 102. 26.) *The Heavens are the work of thy hands; they ſhall periſh, but thou ſhalt endure; yea, all of them ſhall wax old like a garment, as a veſture ſhalt thou change them, and they ſhall be changed.* The Heavens are the pureſt part of the creation, and freeſt from elementary mixtures, yet they ſhall wax old, they ſhall be changed. In oppoſition to which the Pſalmiſt adds (*ver.* 27.) *But thou art the ſame, and thy years ſhall have no end.* Nor are the years of God only without end, but himſelf is without change. Indeed there is no change of time to God; paſt, preſent, and to come, are all the ſame to him, and he is the ſame in all; *Thou art the ſame,* or more emphatically according to the ſtrictneſs of the Hebrew phraſe, *Thou art thy ſelf, alwayes thy ſelf.* As thou art, thou waſt; and as thou art and waſt, thou wilt be for ever. When *Moſes* deſired to know the Name of God (*Exod.* 3. 13.) we find it at the fourteenth verſe; *And God ſaid unto* Moſes, *I am That I am*; *And he ſaid, Thus ſhalt thou ſay to the children of* Iſrael, *I AM hath ſent me unto you.*

Secondly, As God is unchangeable in his Eſſence, ſo in all his divine Perfections and Attributes; all which are eſſential unto him. God is as powerful and ſtrong as ever he was (*Iſa.* 26. 4. and 59. 1. As high and ſoveraign as ever he was, *Pſal.* 92. 8. as wiſe and omniſcient as ever he was, 1 *Tim.* 1. 17.) As gracious and merciful as ever he was, *His mercy endureth for ever* (Pſal. 100. 5.) As faithful and true as ever he was (*Rom.* 3. 3, 4.) And as juſt and righteous as ever he was; he doth and will reward every man according to his works,

Thirdly, God is unchangeable in his purpoſes, decrees, and counſels. The *Medes* and *Perſians* boaſted of their Decrees, that they altered not (*Dan.* 6. 18.) But the very unalterableneſs of humane Decrees is alteration it ſelf compared with the unalterableneſs of divine Decrees. We have the Lord thus ſpeaking in the Prophet (*Iſa.* 46. 16.) *I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times, the things that are not yet done, ſaying, my counſel ſhall ſtand, and I will do all my pleaſure.* And as the Lord eſtabliſheth his own counſel, ſo he can unſettle the beſt laid counſels of the ſons of men (*Pſal.* 33. 10, 11.) *The Lord bringeth the counſel of the Heathen to nought; he maketh the devices of the people of none effect: The counſel of the Lord ſtandeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations.* And hence the Lord, by his Prophet, challengeth the deepeſt Politicians, the Oracles for counſel, the *Abithophel*'s of this world to ſtrain their wits to the utmoſt, for ſecuring of their own counſels from diſappointment (*Iſa.* 8. 10.) *Gird your ſelves, and ye ſhall be broken in pieces; take counſel together, and it ſhall come to nought; ſpeak the word, and it ſhall not ſtand, for God is with us*; He is with us as to protect us againſt your open oppoſition, ſo to blaſt your moſt ſecret conſultations againſt us. And as the Lords counſels are immutable in themſelves, ſo he hath condeſcended to aſſure us of their immutability (*Heb.* 6. 17, 18.) *Wherein God willing more abundantly to ſhew unto the heirs of promiſe the immutability of his counſel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things, in which it was impoſſible for God to lye, we might have ſtrong conſolation,* &c. Oaths are ſacred, and the ſtrongeſt confirmations between man and man, and therefore though the counſel of God be immutable without an Oath, yet that we might have the greateſt aſſurance that it is ſo, God hath confirmed it by an Oath. That ſo the heirs of ſalvation having two immutable things to reſt their ſouls and build their faith upon, might not only have conſolation, ſtrong conſolation; ſuch conſolation as might maſter and overcome all the fear and unbelief of their own hearts, and the gainſayings of Satan.

Fourthly, God is alſo unchangeable in his Promiſes; whatever he hath ſaid, he will do for his people (*He is in one mind*) it ſhall be done. A Promiſe from God is the beſt ſecurity; half a promiſe, an *it may be* (as he ſpeaks to *the meek of the earth*, Zeph. 2. 3.) *Seek righteouſneſs, ſeek meekneſs, it may be ye ſhall be hid in the day of the Lords anger*; this half promiſe (I ſay) is better ſecurity then the hand or ſeal, yea, then the oath of the faithfulleſt man on earth (2 *Cor.* 1. 20.) *All the Promiſes of God in him* (that is, in Chriſt) *are Yea and in him Amen*: That is, they ſhall certainly be performed and accompliſhed. God doth not give promiſes (as many men do) to raiſe and then diſappoint and abuſe our hopes: He doth not make

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promiſes rather for ſnares to catch others, then for bonds to tye himſelf, as ſome men do, (which is not only a great unworthineſs, and diſingenuity in them, but a great iniquity and ſin) the Lords promiſes are our richeſt inheritances; and that not only becauſe he hath promiſed greater and better things then are in the compaſs of any mans power to make good, or in the compaſs of any mans underſtanding to make; but, becauſe he will certainly be as good to us in performance as he hath been in promiſe. For *He is in one mind* concerning all that he hath promiſed. He will be merciful, as he hath promiſed, and pardon ſin, as he hath promiſed. He will deliver us from trouble, as he hath promiſed, and ſanctifie all our troubles to us, as he hath promiſed. He will give us his Spirit, as he hath promiſed, and ſave us eternally, as he hath promiſed.

Fifthly, He is alſo in one mind concerning his threatnings. He will be as good as his word in the evil which he hath ſpoken againſt ſinners, as well as in the good which he hath ſpoken concerning his ſervants (*Zech.* 1. 5.) *Your Fathers where are they? And the Prophets do they live for ever: But my words and my Statutes, which I commanded my ſervants the Prophets, did they not take hold of your Fathers? And they returned aud ſaid, Like as the Lord of hoſts thought to do unto us, according to our wayes, and according to our doings, ſo hath he dealt with us*: That is, his threatnings have arreſted us as Sergeants do a Malefactor, or a Debtor, and carried us away their priſoners. As if the Lord had ſaid, *Your Fathers are dead, and my Prophets are dead alſo*; but the words which my Prophets ſpake to your Fathers concerning the Sword, Famine, and Captivity which ſhould ſhortly come upon them, theſe dreadful Propheſies dyed not; yea, theſe are not yet dead, but alive and in force againſt you. *If we do not take hold of the preceptive part of the Law by obedience, the pœnal part of the Law will take hold of us for our diſobedeence.* Thus the Lord profeſſeth (*Mal.* 3. 5.) *And I will come near to you to judgment, and I will be a ſwift witneſs againſt the ſorcerers, and againſt the adulterers, and againſt falſe ſwearers, and againſt thoſe that oppreſs the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherleſs, and that turn aſide the ſtranger from his right, and fear not me, ſaith the Lord of hoſts, for I am the Lord, I change not.* I will certainly be not only a *Judge*, but a *Witneſs*, and that a *ſwift one*, againſt ſuch wicked ones. There is no evading my Judgment, ſeeing I am both Witneſs and Judge: As a Witneſs I know all that ye have done; and as a Judge I have power not only to condemn you, but alſo to give you up into the hand of the Executioner; for *I am the Lord of Hoſts*; I have all the Armies of Heaven and Earth at my command and bidding. Thus I will do, and be ye aſſured of it, that I will do ſo; *For I am the Lord, I change not.*

Sixthly, God is unchangeable, or of one mind in his gifts (*Rom.* 11. 29.) *The gifts and calling of God are without repentance*: That is, the gifts of his effectual calling ſhall never be repented of: As they who receive them will have no cauſe to repent (yea, they will have cauſe to rejoyce in them for ever) ſo God who gives them will not repent, *He is in one mind*, he will not alter his gifts. As *Pilate*, when he was moved to alter his writing upon the Croſs of Chriſt, anſwered, *What I have written, I have written:* That is, what I have written ſhall ſtand; ſo what motion ſoever ſhould be made to God to recal the gifts of effectual calling, he would ſurely anſwer, *What I have given, I have given, my gift ſhall ſtand.* There are gifts of a meer outward calling, which God takes away again. His gifts do not ſtand with ſuch, becauſe they ſtand ſtill with his gifts. That was the doom of the idle ſervant who had one talent given him, *Take the talent from him, and give it to him that hath ten talents* (Matth. 25. 15, 28.) But the gift of effectual calling ſhall not be taken away (*James* 1. 17.) *Every good gift, and every perfect gift* (ſuch is the gift of effectual calling) *is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableneſs, nor ſhadow of turning.* And as there is no variableneſs in God, as to the matter or general nature of the gifts which he beſtoweth (they are all good and perfect gifts in their kind, though they are not all in the ſame degree of goodneſs and perfection. God doth not give his people, ſometimes bread, and ſometime a ſtone; now an egg, and anon a ſcorpion; now, I ſay, as there is no variableneſs in God, as to the nature of the gifts which he beſtoweth) ſo there is no variableneſs in him as to the act of giving or beſtowing. As the Lord *giveth liberally, and upbraideth not* (James 1. 5.) ſo he giveth liberally and repenteth not. Thus we ſee he is not only *one, but in one mind:* He is unchangeable; and that not only in his Eſſence and glorious Attributes or Perfections, but in his Counſels and Decrees, in his Promiſes and Threatnings, in his Gifts and Bounties to all his people: He giveth and repenteth not.

Before I paſs from this point, it will be needful to anſwer ſome Objections which are raiſed againſt it from thoſe Scriptures which ſeem to ſay, that *God is not of one mind*, or that his mind doth alter and change.

Firſt, That report which *Moſes* makes of God, ſeems to ſay ſo (*Gen.* 6. 6.) *And it repented the Lord, that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart:* What is repentance, but the change of the mind? Therefore he that repents is not in one mind. Seeing then God repents, how is he unchangeably in one mind? A like appearance of contradiction we find (1 *Sam.* 15.) not only with this Text in *Job*, but between the eleventh verſe compared with the twenty-ninth of the ſame Chapter. The eleventh verſe ſpeaks thus, *Then came the word of the Lord unto* Samuel, *ſaying, It repenteth me that I have ſet up* Saul *to be King*, &c. (ver. 29.) *And alſo the ſtrength of* Iſrael *will not lye, nor repent; for he is not a man that he ſhould repent.* The ſtrength or victory of *Iſrael* is God, for it was by his ſtrength that *Iſrael* had all his victories; and of him *Samuel* ſaith, *He will not repent*, when as himſelf had ſaid a little before, *It repenteth me*, &c. To theſe Scriptures we may add, 2 *Kings* 20. which in words holds out a great change in the mind of God concerning *Hezekiah*, if we compare the firſt and the fifth verſes of that Chapter together (*ver.* 1.) *In thoſe dayes* Hezekiah *was ſick unto death, and the Prophet* Iſaiah, *the ſon of* Amos, *came to him, and ſaid unto him, thus ſaith the Lord, ſet thine houſe in order, for thou ſhalt dye and not live.* Here is a ſtrong affirmation that *Hezekiah* ſhould dye; and to the affirmative the negative is alſo added, *Thou ſhalt dye, and not live.* 'Tis the ſtrongeſt manner of aſſerting any thing, when the contrary is denyed. As it is ſaid of *John* the Baptiſt (*John* 1. 20.) *And he confeſſed, and denied not; but confeſſed, I am not the Chriſt*, &c. So here, *Thou ſhalt dye, and not live.* Yet we read (*ver.* 5.) *And it came to paſs before* Iſaiah *was gone out of the middle Court, that the word of the Lord came to him, ſaying, Turn again, and tell* Hezekiah *the Captain of my people, thus ſaith the Lord the God of* David *thy Father, I have heard thy prayers, I have ſeen thy tears; behold I will heal thee; on the third day thou ſhalt go up into the houſe of the Lord, and I will add unto thy dayes fifteen years.* Doth not this import an evident change in the mind of God? Having diſpatcht the Prophet to tell *Hezekiah*, that he ſhall dye, and not live, He preſently after, even before he was got out of the Court, ſends the ſame Prophet back to tell him, that he ſhall live, and not dye. We have the ſame difficulty in that known place in the Propheſie of *Jonah* (Chap. 3. 4.) *Jonah* is ſent to *Nineveh* with a direct meſſage, *Yet forty dayes, and* Nineveh *ſhall be overthrown*: Notwithſtanding as ſoon as the Faſt was proclaimed and kept, and the *Ninevites* had repented and turned from their evil wayes, *The Lord alſo repented of the evil denounced againſt them*; (ver. 10.) *And God ſaw their works, that they turned from their evil way, and God repented of the evil that he had ſaid that he would do unto them, and he did it not.* Here God repented of his threatning. He had ſaid *Nineveh* ſhould be overthrown, yet when they turned from what they had done, God turned from what he ſaid he would do. And did he not change his mind, in reference to his promiſe to *Zion*, as there in reference to his threatning againſt *Nineveh?* The promiſe to *Zion* runs in this tenour, *This is my reſt for ever; here will I dwell, for I have deſired it* (Pſal. 132. 14.) Yet the Lord removed out of *Zion*, he departed from *Jeruſalem*, and gave it into the enemies hands. How many miſeries and captivities did that people undergo long ago? And how are they ſcattered from *Jeruſalem* into all Lands unto this very day? How then ſhall we reconcile the Text and Point in hand, with theſe quoted Scriptures, and many others of a like Interpretation?

How is God unchangeable, or, *in one mind*, when we read of his repenting what he had done, of his ſaying what he would do, and yet not doing what he had ſaid, both in his promiſes and in his threatnings? How can theſe changes and the Lords unchangeableneſs ſtand together? Or how is he but *in one mind*, the tenour of whoſe doings doth ſo often vary, both from what he hath formerly done, and from what he hath profeſſed he would do? In a word, How is the Lord conſtant to what he ſaith he will do, when either he doth it not, or doth the quite contrary to it? He that repenteth is not in one mind, ſeeing repentance is a change of the mind.

Firſt, I anſwer, Repentance properly taken notes a change of the mind: But in an improper or alluſive ſence, there may be repentance without any the leaſt change of the mind. When God is ſaid to repent (as in thoſe Texts alledged) we are to underſtand it improperly, or only in alluſion unto man. The Scripture in many other things ſpeaks of God, either as condeſcending to mans underſtanding, or as alluding to the common actions of man. God doth not act as man doth, yet by ſuch expreſſions as hold out, what and how man acts, we may come the more eaſily to underſtand what God doth. As in the preſent inſtance, when man repents, he doth theſe two things.

Firſt, He ceaſeth to do what he began to do, he breaks the thread of his former motions.

Secondly, When man repents that he hath done, or made ſuch a thing, he is ready to deface and deſtroy that which he hath made or done: When man repents that he hath ſet up ſuch or ſuch a thing, he removes and takes it down. Thus God is ſaid to repent, not becauſe his mind is changed, but becauſe (as a man that repenteth) he ceaſeth to do what he did; or he deſtroyeth that which he had made. Thus the Lord is ſaid to repent his making of *Saul* King, becauſe he meant to remove him from being King: And to repent that he had made the World, becauſe his purpoſe was, for the ſin of man to deface and deſtroy the preſent beauty and excellency of the World which he had made. God often puts forth the effects of repentance toward man, but the repentance of a man never puts forth any effect upon God.

Aliud eſt mutare voluntatem, aliud velle mutationem. Aquin. par. 1. q. 19. art. 7.

Secondly, We may anſwer thus; *God often minds a change; but he never changes his mind.* And ſo all thoſe Scriptures before mentioned, note only that God did mind a change, or make a change; but not that he did change his mind. There is a vaſt difference between theſe two, to mind or determine a change; and to change the mind or determination. As for inſtance, A man that is reſolved to wear garments ſutable to the ſeaſon of the year, and temperature of the weather; in the heat of Summer it is his mind to wear light and thin garments that he may be cool; and in the cold of Winter, his mind is to wear heavier and thicker garments that he may be warm. Now if this man when Winter comes leaves off his light thin garments, and puts on thoſe that are heavier and thicker, he cannot be ſaid to change his mind, for his mind was alwayes to wear change of garments, according to the ſeaſon of the year, and temper of the weather. And thus the Lord, according to the changes which he finds among men for the better or for the worſe, doth both mind and make eminent changes among them, as to his providential adminiſtrations, whether in wayes of judgment or of mercy; but in theſe he never changes his own mind, for as much as his mind was everlaſtingly fixed, in caſe of ſuch emergencies, to make thoſe changes in his adminiſtrations and dealings with the ſons of men.

Thirdly, For further anſwer, We are to diſtinguiſh between the outward ſentence and declaration of God, and his ſecret purpoſe or decree. God doth often change his ſentence, or the declaration; but he never changeth his purpoſe, decree, or counſel.

Queſt. But is not that external declaration the mind of God alſo?

Anſw. I anſwer; Theſe denounced ſentences or declarations are the mind of God; yet they are not the ſame with the counſels and purpoſes of God; but ſerve for the fulfilling and bringing of them about; for by the change which the ſentence revealed worketh in man, the counſel of God not revealed is effected. The fruſtrating the one fulfils the other: And the Lords deſign in ſuch declarations of his mind, is to bring about or accompliſh his purpoſes and counſels. God did purpoſely declare or pronounce a ſentence of death againſt *Hezekiah* by the Prophet *Iſaiah*, to the intent that his counſel concerning the continuance of *Hezekiah's* life might be fulfilled. And he ſent the Prophet *Jonah*, to publiſh a ſentence of utter deſtruction againſt *Nineveh*, purpoſely that his counſel concerning the preſervation of *Nineveh* might be accompliſhed. The Lords counſel and purpoſe was, that *Hezekiah* ſhould live, and recover out of that diſeaſe. But how did he fulfil this? Even by ſending him a meſſage of death, which cauſed him to weep ſore, and pray and cry earneſtly to the Lord for life: *Thus ſaith the Lord, ſet thine houſe in order, for thou ſhalt dye, and not live. Then he turned his face to the wall, and prayed unto the Lord, ſaying,* &c. But then it may be queſtioned, Was that word of the Lord true which he ſent to *Hezekiah* by the Prophet, ſaying, *Thou ſhalt dye?* The ſentence publiſhed was true, and would certainly have come to paſs according to the order and working of ſecond cauſes; for looking to them, *Hezekiah* muſt dye, his ſickneſs was unto death; *In thoſe dayes was* Hezekiah *ſick unto death.* Doubtleſs his Phyſitians, and all that were about him gave him over for a dead man. Only God could reſtore him, and the way wherein he would reſtore him was by prayer. So for *Nineveh*, if we conſider the deſert of their ſin, the ſentence was true, *Nineveh* ſhall be deſtroyed. But the Lord ſent his Prophet to tell them of their approaching deſtruction, that they might faſt and turn from their evil wayes, and ſo his purpoſe for their preſervation might be accompliſhed. Thus the outward ſentence is changed, but the mind of God is not changed. And theſe changeable ſentences were decreed by God, to bring about his unchangeable decree.

Fourthly, I anſwer; When God is ſaid to repent, the change is not in God, but in us; God is alwayes the ſame, but we are not. God is ſo much the ſame, that he never alters; and man is ſo little the ſame, that he is alwayes altering; and, when he hath done evil, it is good for him that he is ſo. God did not change, but *Nineveh* changed by turning from ſin, and *Hezekiah* changed by improving more in prayer, and therefore he dyed not at that time, nor were they then deſtroyed. The change is in the creature, not in God, when that is changed which God ſpeaks concerning the creature. He is ſtill unmoveable in the ſame mind; all the motion is in the mind of man. It is in this caſe as with a ſhip putting out to Sea. When a ſhip ſets out from the harbour, and ſails by the ſhore, the unexperienced paſſenger thinks the ſhore moves from the ſhip, whereas indeed the ſhip only moves from or by the ſhore. So when we think God changeth, or is moved, the change or motion is only in our ſelves. In one diſpenſation we take notice of the love of God, and in another of his wrath, in a third of his juſtice, and in a fourth of his mercy. Theſe are changes upon us, but not in God. And theſe ſhew that God changeth his courſe towards us; but they are no proofs of a change in God. For the love of God, and the wrath of God, the juſtice of God, and the mercy of God are ſtill the ſame, but we changing are caſt ſometime under the effects of his love, and ſometimes of his wrath, we are ſometimes under the ſaddeſt droppings of his juſtice, and ſometimes under the ſweeteſt influences of his mercy. As when a man changeth his aſpect, and turns about his body to another point; that part of the Heaven which was before at his right hand, is now at his left; yet the Heavens are as they were, they do not change either their poſition, or their motion, but the man hath changed his. Thus the wrath, and love, the juſtice, and the mercy of God ſtand alwayes at the ſame point; but man turneth ſometimes *juſtice-ward*, and ſometimes *mercy-ward*; now he faces the wrath, and anon the love of God. And doing ſo, he meets with many changes in the diſpenſations of God toward him, but there is no change in the mind of God toward him.

And ſeeing God is unchangeable, or, *in one mind*, take this by way of deduction from it.

'Tis the duty of man to ſubmit himſelf unto, and acquieſce in the mind of God.

Seeing the mind of God reſts, we ought to reſt in the mind of God; that is, we ought to reſign up our ſelves, and to reſolve our minds into the mind, and our wills into the will of God. Whatever pleaſeth God, ſhould pleaſe us. He is in one mind, and that one mind of his hath nothing in it but juſtice, and righteouſneſs toward all, nothing but goodneſs, and mercy, nothing but loving kindneſs and faithfulneſs toward his peculiar people. As the mind of God revealed in his word, ſhould be the *rule of our actions*, ſo the mind of God revealed by his works, ſhould be the reſt or *eaſe of all our paſſions.* The mind of God is that by which we are to guide our ſelves in all we do, and to that we muſt yield in all we ſuffer. While we ſee ſome ſorely diſcompoſed in their ſpirits, yea vext beyond all reaſon at the diſpenſations of God, have we not reaſon to believe, that they have never heard, or at leaſt not well learnt and digeſted this great truth, *That God is in one mind.* When the mind of God is done, himſelf is pleaſed; and ſhould not whatſoever pleaſeth God, pleaſe us alſo, yea though it be in it ſelf, bitter and unpleaſant to us? A gracious heart taſts ſweetneſs in Gall and Wormwood, conſidered under this notion, as it is the will and mind of God he ſhould drink it, or feed upon it. It was a ſtrange power that *David* had over the people of *Iſrael*, or it ſhews that they had a very ſtrong opinion of his juſtice and integrity, when it is ſaid (2 *Sam.* 3. 36.) *Whatſoever the King did, pleaſed all the people.* What was ſaid of him, we ſhould ſay in the higheſt ſence of God, whatſoever he doth ſhould be pleaſing to all his people. It was once the ſaying of a Court-flatterer; *That which pleaſeth the King, pleaſeth me.* We cannot flatter God in ſaying ſo. It is but our duty to ſay ſo; we ſin if we ſay not, and ſay not with our hearts, *Whatſoever pleaſeth God, pleaſeth us.* He acts below both the duty and priviledge of a man, who reſolves himſelf into the will of any man, how high ſoever; and he acts above both the ſtate and proportion of a man (though much below the duty of a Chriſtian) who doth not reſolve himſelf into the will of the moſt high God, who is higher then the higheſt of the Kings of the earth. *He vainly ſuppoſeth himſelf God-High, who ſubmits not to the will of the moſt High God.* Whatſoever God doth or will have done, man ſhould ſay, *Even ſo be it, as God will have it.*

Placet mihi quod regi placet; dixit Harpulas, Apud Herod.lib.1.

But ſome may ſay, if it be ſo, then it ſeems we may not endeavour to extricate our ſelves from, or to get a removal of any of thoſe evils, troubles, or afflictions, which at any time preſs and grieve us.

For anſwer to this ſcruple, I ſay,

Firſt, It is our duty in every trouble that God layeth upon us, to ſeek unto God, and to uſe all good means for the taking of it off from us. But

Secondly, We muſt not ſeek unto God for the removing of any evil from us, as being diſpleaſed with his laying it upon us: we muſt be quiet under our troubles, and yet we may both deſire and endeavour to be quit of them. Though God be *in one mind*, yet that doth not neceſſitate man to one condition, nor hinder him from ſeeking a better then that wherein he is.

I have inſiſted the longer upon this point, becauſe *Job* gives it as a general anſwer to all his friends, queries about him, and as the beſt expedient for reconciling the difference between them and him. *He is in one mind,*

And who can turn him?

Hence Learn, *That as God is unchangeable in himſelf, ſo none can alter or change him.*

Some men are of a very ſteady ſpirit, they are not in and out, as we ſay, forward and backward: let them alone, and they are true to their own principles, and they will be true to others according to their promiſes. Yet, poſſibly, theſe men may be turned aſide, and led out of the way, by the perſwaſion of others. A ſubtle head and a ſmooth oily tongue, may work them off from their own reſolutions. It hath been a queſtion diſputed among moral Philoſophers, *Whether a wiſe man may be an uncertain or a various man*; And they reſolve it Negatively; Wiſdom is as balaſt, which keeps the mind from floating. And it hath been ſaid of a wiſe man among the Heathen, that the Sun might as ſoon be thruſt out of his line, as he from the line of Juſtice; yet let no man glory in man, no not in wiſe men. The wiſeſt, and moſt conſtant among men may do unwiſely and prove unconſtant. The moſt reſolved among the children of men, may be wrought upon, and brought over to what they purpoſed not. But this is the glory of God, that as he is in one mind, ſo none *can turn him*, or make him in two. None can turn him out of the way, either of his intended Judgments, or promiſed mercies; what he hath a mind to do, he will not be put by the doing it.

We may affirm three things concerning the works of God, or concerning God in his workings.

Firſt, The works of God are ſo full of myſtery, that none can fully comprehend them; there is much in his ordinary works beyond man, and his extraordinary works are all beyond man. We (by reaſon of our indiligence) ſee but little of any of his works; and ſome of his works are ſuch, as we can ſee but a little way into them with all our diligence.

Secondly, The works of God are ſo full of righteouſneſs, that no man can juſtly reprove, or find fault with them. They who come with the moſt curious and critical eyes to examine the works of God, ſhall not find any flaw or defect in them. There have been many, who (through their preſumptuous folly) have found fault with the works of God, but there was never any (who with his moſt refined wit) could find a fault in them. The *Jews* of old complained of, and quarrell'd at the wayes of God as unequal (*Ezek.* 18. 25.) but when it came to tryal, they could prove nothing but the inequality of their own.

Thirdly, The works of God are ſo full of power, that *none can put a ſtop to*, or hinder the accompliſhment of them. Theſe are three excellent perfections of the works of God; And the laſt is that which is here under hand. *Hezekiah*, though a great King, was not able to bring a work about which he had a mind to, the reſcue of *Jeruſalem* out of the hand of the *Aſſyrians*, and therefore he ſends this pitiful cry to the Prophet *Iſaiah* (2 *King.* 19. 3.) *The children are come to the birth* (that is, the buſineſs is ripe for execution) *and there is no ſtrength to bring forth.* The works of the ſtrongeſt men may ſtick in the birth for want of ſtrength to bring them forth: But the works of God never ſtick in the birth upon that or any other account. *He is in one mind, and who can turn him?* There are four wayes by which men are uſually turned off from or ſtopped in their works, but by none of them will God be turned, when he hath a mind to work.

Firſt, Men are often ſtopt by outward power; they do not either that good or that evil which they would, becauſe they cannot; and their *cannot*, poſſibly, doth lie in this, that they have not a power in themſelves proportionable to the work, or becauſe they have medled with a matter too great for them, and for which they are no match; but they therefore only *cannot* do what they would, becauſe they are hindred from doing it. A man may have ability to maſter the work he is about to do, yet not to maſter the impediments that ſtand in the way of it. But all the power of the creature cannot hinder God; *If he will work, none can let him* (*Iſa.*43.13.) *The power of men is weakneſs unto God.* And that which looks like weakneſs in God, is ſtronger then the united ſtrength of all men (1 *Cor.*1.25.) *The fooliſhneſs of God, is wiſer then men; and the weakneſs of God, is ſtronger then men.*

Secondly, Men are, or may be turned by counſel or advice: and ſome who could not be ſtopt by power, have yet been ſtopt by perſwaſion. An eloquent tongue hath prevailed, where a violent hand could not. We read how *Abigail* prevailed upon *David* a mighty warriour, and mightily reſolved to deſtroy *Nabal*, and all his houſe (1 *Sam.* 25. 22.) *So and more alſo do God unto the enemies of David, if I leave of all that pertain to him by the morning light, any that piſſeth againſt the wall. David* ſpake not only peremptorily, but with a kind of adjuration; And he was upon his march with four hundred armed men at his heels to put his purpoſe into Execution; Yet a diſcreet woman goes out to meet and turn him from his courſe, and turn him ſhe did; ſhe did it effectually. But what could *Abigail* a woman do, to prevail with *David* and his Souldiers? What ſhe did, ſhe did by perſwaſion, ſhe laid arguments before him, and managed them with ſo much pathetical rhetorick, and clearneſs, that he could not withſtand her (*verſ.* 32, 33.) *And David ſaid unto Abigail, Bleſſed be the Lord God of Iſrael, which ſent thee this day to meet me: and bleſſed be thy advice, and bleſſed be thou which haſt kept me this day from coming to ſhed blood,* *and to avenge my ſelf with mine own hand.* Thus men may be turned from what they have reſolved, eſpecially when they do not well deliberate before they reſolve. But God cannot be turned by any counſel or advice, ſeeing whatſoever he purpoſeth to do, he doth it upon the unerring advice and counſel of his own will. Thoſe paſſions of anger and jealouſie, in which (as he is ſet forth to us in Scripture) God is ſaid to act, are yet the iſſues of infinite deliberation. *He that doth all things by the beſt counſel, can never be turned by any.*

Thirdly, Men are often turned by petition, when they will not by argument, and you may entreat them to deſiſt from what they were about to do, though you cannot adviſe them out of it. And we know that of all things prayer is the moſt prevailing with God. Nothing hath ever turned God ſo much as prayer hath; and yet prayer it ſelf (in the ſence here intended) cannot turn God. We muſt not think that we change God by our prayers, though when we pray, God often makes a gracious change for us. Whatſoever his mind is to do, he doth it, yea though prayer ſtand in his way. We may ſay that the greateſt providential changes that were ever made in the world, God hath made them upon the prayers of his people; yet he never changed his own mind in the leaſt at the prayer of his people. The Lord calls his people earneſtly to call upon him ſo, and meeting him by prayer to ſtop him when he is preparing to do ſome great thing againſt them, or to bring ſome great evil upon them. (*Amos* 4. 12.) *Therefore thus will I do unto thee O Iſrael; and becauſe I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God O Iſrael.* We may take thoſe words *prepare to meet thy God O Iſrael,* not ſo much for a challenge as for a direction. But how ſhall *Iſrael prepare to meet God?* Not with weapons of war, not with ſword, and ſpear, theſe will make no defence againſt God. No: but with tears and prayers, theſe are the arms and ammunition of a Saints, there's no contending with God, but only by humbling our ſelves before him.

But you ſay, prayer cannot turn God.

I anſwer, prayer hath cauſed and may cauſe God to turn from his outward actings and diſpenſations, only, it cannot turn God from any of his counſels or reſolutions. And becauſe prayer hath ſo great a power upon God, to turn him from his outward diſpenſations, therefore he ſometimes hath forbidden prayer, when he was reſolved not to turn from ſuch threatned diſpenſations (*Jer.* 14. 11.) *Then ſaid the Lord unto me, pray not for this people for their good.* As if the Lord had ſaid, if any thing could prevail with me, thy prayer would; But becauſe I am fully purpoſed to viſit their iniquities, therefore I will not have thy prayers run waſt. As for them let them pray as long as they will; as their prayers come, only from their neceſſities, not from their hearts, ſo they ſhall not come near mine; nor do I care how long their prayers (which are but puddle water) run waſt; let them pray and ſpare not; but let them be ſure of this, that though they pray I will not ſpare; ſo it follows (*verſ.* 12.) *When they faſt I will not hear their cry, and when they offer burnt-offering, and an oblation, I will not accept them; but I will conſume them by the ſword, and by the famine, and by the peſtilence.* Their own prayers had no power in them to turn God; and he who had a power to ſtop God by prayer, is himſelf ſtopt from prayer, as in the place laſt quoted, ſo once before (*Jer.* 7. 16.) *Therefore pray not for this people, neither lift up cry nor prayer for them, neither make interceſſion to me, for I will not hear thee.* And as the Lord ſtopt *Jeremy* from prayer for them, ſo he profeſſeth that if they who in former ages had been moſt prevailing with him, ſhould now again mannage their ſuit before him, yet he would not be moved by it. (*Jer.* 15. 1.) *Then ſaid the Lord unto me, though Moſes and Samuel ſtood before me, yet my mind could not be toward this people.* As if the Lord had ſaid, Though they ſhould get my chief favourites, to ſolicite their cauſe, and plead on their behalf, yet they ſhould find me *in one mind, and that even they could not turn me.* Jeſus Chriſt never ſolicited any cauſe but he ſped in it, but the beſt of men may be earneſt ſolicitors and not ſpeed. For though good men will not ſolicite a bad cauſe before God, or pray againſt his revealed will, yet they do not always hit his ſecret will. And God who ſaith to his people generally (*Pſal.* 50. 15.) *Call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee:* yet in ſome particular caſes he will not deliver them, though they call upon him. Prayer is not only an allowed, but a commanded means, and ſo the moſt probable means to obtain deliverance, yet that cannot always obtain or fetch it. Yea God who often brings his people into trouble, on purpoſe to provoke them to ſeek his help, yet, ſometimes, will not help them though they ſeek him. And the reaſon is, becauſe *he is in one mind, and will not be turned from his purpoſes, no not by prayer.* If once the Lord be reſolved to deſtroy, prayer cannot ſave; Though *Moſes and Samuel ſtood before me, yet* (ſaith the Lord) *my mind could not be toward this people, caſt them out of my ſight, and let them go forth, ſuch as are for the ſword to the ſword, &c.*

But if prayer cannot turn God, then you lay a temptation before us to turn away from prayer.

I anſwer, Firſt, As was ſhewed before; prayer may turn God in reference to his outward diſpenſations, though it cannot turn him from any of his counſels and reſolutions.

But then it may be enquired; how ſhall I do to direct my prayer? For I know not what the purpoſe or reſolution of God is, I only ſee what his diſpenſations are. And if ſo, I may pray againſt the mind or purpoſe of God; I may ask for the removing or taking away of that, which he is purpoſed ſhall continue; and I may ask the gift of that, which he is reſolved not to beſtow.

To this I anſwer, Firſt, That though the mind of God to give us ſuch a mercy, or to withdraw ſuch an affliction, be a ſecret to us; yet this is revealed, that it is our duty to pray about theſe things. What God will give or do for us when we pray is a ſecret; but this is revealed, that *in all things* we ought to pray. That's the Apoſtles rule (*Phil.* 4.6.) *Be careful in nothing, but in every thing by prayer and ſupplication with thanksgiving make your requeſts known unto God.*

Secondly, Suppoſe the things we pray about, whether for the having, or removing of them, be ſuch as it is not the mind of God either to give or to remove: Yet we may pleaſe God, in praying for the attainment of thoſe things, which it is not his pleaſure to give; and in praying for the taking away of thoſe things, which it is not his pleaſure to remove. We do not offend God, by asking that which he will not give, if the thing be ſuch, as is in the general nature of it according to his will. The Lord takes it well at our hands that we pray, and is well pleaſed to hear us pray, when he is not pleaſed to hear (that is, to grant) our prayers.

Thirdly, Be not turned from prayer, becauſe prayer cannot turn God, for it is a great argument that the mind or purpoſe of God and his decree is to give ſuch a mercy, or to remove ſuch an evil, if we have an heart to pray much for or about it. For God who hath ſaid, *I will be ſought unto, that I may do it for them* (*Ezek.* 36.) *hath not ſaid unto the ſeed of Jacob, ſeek ye me in vain* (*Iſa.* 45. 19.) And when God ſtirs up his people to pray, it is an argument he is ready to hear. *Thou wilt prepare their heart, thou wilt cauſe thine ear to hear* (*Pſal.* 10. 17.) So that as God takes it well at our hands that we pray for many things which he hath no purpoſe to give us; ſo it is a good ground of faith that he hath a purpoſe to do ſuch or ſuch things for us, when he puts it into our hearts to pray for them.

Laſtly, Let not any ſtumble at the duty of prayer, becauſe of Gods unchangeableneſs; for we pray, not to change the mind of God, but to fulfil it; we pray for the fulfilling of his decrees, not for the altering of them; for the fulfilling of his counſels, not the voiding of them. And becauſe God *is in one mind, and none can turn him;* we have the more incouragement to pray. For all the good things that are in the mind, counſel, and purpoſe of God to do for us, and beſtow upon us, are born, and brought into the world uſually by the hand of prayer: Prayer is (as it were) the midwife, to bring our bleſſings to the birth. Therefore though prayer cannot turn God, yet we have no reaſon to turn from prayer.

There is yet a fourth thing which may ſtop men, but cannot ſtop God; And that is nearneſs of relation. Men are often turned out of the way when a near relation ſtands in their way. They purpoſed to do this or that, but that ſuch a friend, or ſuch a kinſman hath turned them from their purpoſe. 'Tis rare to find ſuch a ſpirit as the Lord by *Moſes* obſerved and highly commended in the Tribe of *Levi* (*Deut.*33.9.) *Who ſaid unto his father, and to his mother, I have not ſeen him, neither did he acknowledge his Brethren, nor knew his own children.* That is, he was not turned by the neareſt relations from executing that terrible ſentence of the Lord upon the children of *Iſrael* his Brethren after they had made the Golden Calf, of which you may read at large (*Exod.* 32. 26, 27, 28, 29.) It is truly ſaid, That *relations have little entity in them, but they have the greateſt efficacy in them.* And their efficacy hath never appeared more in any thing then in this, The turning of man from his purpoſe or his duty. But relations have no efficacy in them to ſtop or turn the Lord from his purpoſes. (*Iſa.*27.11.) *It is a people that have no underſtanding, therefore he that made them, will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will ſhew them no favour.* As if the Prophet had ſaid, When Lord threatens to bring evil upon you, poſſibly ye will ſay, we are the work of thy hands, he hath made us, ſurely then he will not deſtroy us. We find that argument pleaded (*Iſa.*64.8.) *But now O Lord, thou art our father, we are the clay, and thou our potter, and we all are the work of thy hand: Be not wrath very ſore, O Lord, &c.* To plead our relation to God by Chriſt, is the ſtrongeſt plea in prayer, and to plead any relation to God, hath a great ſtrength in it. Yet while ſome urge theſe, they ſignifie nothing, and have no force at all. They who are like that people in the Prophet, *a people of no underſtanding*, ſpiritual ideots, ſuch as have no knowledge to do good, or no practical underſtanding in the things of God; ſuch, I ſay, may urge their relation, and get nothing by it; *He that made them, will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them, will ſhew them no favour.* The Lord profeſſeth ſtrongly againſt any power which a relation ſhall have upon him to turn him, or take off the proceſs of his Judgment under high provocations from the higheſt of men. (*Jer.* 22.24.) *As I live, ſaith the Lord, though Coniah the ſon of Jehoiakim King of Judah were the ſignet upon my right hand, yet would I pluck thee thence, and give thee into the hand of them that ſeek thy life, &c.* To be as the ſignet upon the right hand, notes the moſt intimate nearneſs of relation; yet the Lord breaks through this, and will not be turned away by it, from the ſevereſt actings of his own purpoſes. Thus it hath appeared that as the Lord is unchangeable in himſelf, ſo nothing can change him. *He is in one mind, who can turn him?*

And what his ſoul deſireth, even that he doth.

Hence Obſerve, *That God doth whatſoever he will, or whatſoever he deſires to do.*

There is no bound to the power of God, but his own will. When the Heathen asked in ſcorn, *Where is your God?* The Pſalmiſt tells them plainly both where he was, and what he had been doing. (*Pſal.*115.3.) *But our God is in the heavens, he hath done whatſoever he pleaſed.* The doings of God know no bounds but his own pleaſure; *He hath done whatſoever he pleaſed.* He will not endure to have any articles put upon him, nor any circles or limit-lines drawn about him. The power of God is regulated and determined by nothing but his will. A great Prince once ſaid, *That he had indeed a circle about his head* (meaning his Crown) *but he would not bear it to have a circle about his feet; he muſt go which way himſelf pleaſed, and do whatſoever his ſoul deſired:* Yet there are circles drawn *about all the powers of the world, only God hath none.* His government is purely arbitrary. Nor is it fit that the government of any but his ſhould be ſo; *'Tis neither fit nor ſafe that any ſhould govern arbitrarily or purely at will, but he whoſe will is altogether pure, but he whoſe will is ſo far from needing a rule, that it is one, yea the only unerring One* (*Ezek.* 24.14.) *I the Lord have ſpoken it, it ſhall come to paſs, and I will do it, I will not go back, neither will I ſpare, neither will I repent; according to thy wayes, and according to thy doings, ſhall they judge thee, ſaith the Lord God.* As if the Lord had ſaid, It is my will to have it thus, and therefore it ſhall be thus. That which is moſt ſinful in man, is moſt holy in God, to act according to his own will. Mans will is too crooked a rule for others to guide their actions by, or for himſelf to guide his actions by. He that ſaith, I will do this or that, becauſe I will, doth nothing as he ought. There ſhould be much willingneſs, but none of our own will in what we do. But as Gods will ſhould be both the rule and reaſon of our actings, ſo it alwayes is of his own. There is (as I may ſay) an holy wilfulneſs in God. *He will have what he will, and he will do what he will.* God will not do many things which he can, but he can do whatſoever he will; and whatſoever he will do, he is juſt and righteous in doing it. And this is the glory of God, to have ſuch a power, and ſuch a will. And there being ſuch a power in God, with ſuch a will, we need not fear his power. We leave men to their will as little as we can, whom we truſt with much power. When men in power have nothing but their will to guide them, we preſently fear oppreſſion and tyranny, and that we ſhall be far from leading peaceable and quiet lives under them in all godlineſs and honeſty, which is the moſt deſireable and bleſſed fruit of Magiſtracy. Nor is this a pannick or groundleſs fear, ſeeing the will of man is corrupt and ſinful, ſelfiſh and revengeful. And who can but fear to be under that power which hath no limits but a corrupt will? But who would fear to be under the power of God, acted by his will, ſeeing he willeth nothing but what is righteous, juſt, and good? What can we expect but right from him who is righteouſneſs? what but good from him (in a good cauſe) who is goodneſs it ſelf, how great or how unlimitted ſoever his power is? If ſome men might do what they would, what evil would they not do? There's nothing ſtands between ſome men, and the wronging of all men they have to do with, but the want either of power or of opportunity to do it. The Lord can do what he will, but he will do nothing but what is good. He is able to ruine all men, but he will wrong no man, no not the worſt of men. *What his ſoul deſireth even that he doth*; but it is impoſſible his ſoul ſhould deſire to do any thing but what is right.

Laſtly, When it is ſaid, *Whatſoever his ſoul deſireth, even that he doth,* or more cloſe to the Original, *He deſireth, He doth.* We learn,

That, *It is as eaſie with God to do a thing, as to deſire to have it done.*

All men would do what their ſouls deſire, but moſt men deſire that which they cannot do; yea though men have a deſire to do a thing, and a power to do it alſo, yet it is not ſo ſoon done as deſired; there muſt be a preparation and the uſe of means before man can do what he hath a power to do; ſo that though a man hath power proportionable to his deſire, yet he is not preſently a partaker of his deſire: But God can make his power as ſpeedy as his deſire. He can make the declaration of his will, and the execution of it contiguous. For though many things lie long in the will of God before they are done, and what he willed from eternity, is done in time, and the time of doing it be yet a great way off, yet he can do any thing as ſoon as will it, and whatſoever he willeth or deſireth, is, to him, as done already. (*Pſal.* 104. 30.) *Thou ſendeſt forth thy Spirit, they are created.* The creation there ſpoken of is providence, for that is a continued creation. The firſt creation was the production of all things out of nothing to that being which they had; but there is another work of creation, which is the continuing or renewing of things in their being; and of this he ſaith, *Thou ſendeſt forth thy Spirit,* that is, thy power; *they are created, and thou reneweſt the face of the earth.* Thou makeſt a new world; And thus God makes a new world every year, ſending forth his Spirit, or quickning power in the rain, and Sun to renew the face of the earth. And as the Lord ſends forth his power in providential mercies, ſo in providential Judgments. *He looketh on the earth and it trembleth; He toucheth the hills, and they ſmoak* (*verſ.* 32.) A man can ſoon give a caſt with his eye, ſo ſoon can God ſhake the earth, that is, either the whole maſs of the earth, or the inferior ſort of men on the earth. When he *looketh,* or caſts an angry eye upon *the earth, it trembleth. He toucheth the hills* (that is, the powers and principalities of the world) *and they ſmoak*; If he do but *touch them they ſmoak*, that is, the dreadful effects of the power and Judgment of God are viſible upon them. As ſoon as the Lord calls, all creatures readily tender their ſervice. (*Pſal.* 105. 31, & 34.) *He ſpake, and there came divers ſorts of flies, and lice in all their coaſts.* (*verſ.* 34.) *He ſpake, and the Locuſts came; and Caterpillers, and that without number.* If the Lord ſpeak the word, it is done. God ſpake the world into this beauty, he did but ſay, *Let there be light, and there was light.* And he can ſpeak the world into trouble and confuſion, He doth but ſay, *Let there be darkneſs, and there is darkneſs.* It was an high ſpeech of *Cæſar*, who meeting with ſome oppoſition from that young noble Roman *Metellus*, ſaid, *Let me alone, leſt I deſtroy thee*; and preſently added, *It is eaſier for me to do this, then to ſpeak it.* Such was his power, that he could eaſier take away a mans life, then give ſentence of death againſt him. This is moſt true concerning the great God of heaven and earth, there is no more difficulty in his doing of a thing, then in his deſiring and willing it to be done.

The general truth of this verſe carrieth in it a twofold inference.

First, Of terrour to the wicked, *God is in one mind*; the ſame opinion which he had of their wayes and perſons heretofore, the ſame he hath ſtill. The ſame curſes and Judgments which he hath denounced againſt them formerly, are in force ſtill. Is it not a terrible thing to incorrigible wicked men, to remember that what the ſoul of God deſireth, he doth, when his ſoul deſireth nothing but vengeance and wrath for them? *Therefore tremble before the Lord ye wicked, and be ſore afraid at the remembrance of his unchangeableneſs.*

Secondly, Of abundant comfort to the faithful and righteous; The mind of God is mercy to them, and he is in this one mind towards them, none can turn him, His ſoul deſireth to do them good; *And whatſoever his ſoul deſireth, that he doth.* What can Saints deſire more, then that God ſhould do all that for them which he deſireth? and all that he will aſſuredly do. *Therefore rejoyce in the Lord ye righteous, and give thanks at the remembrance of his unchangeableneſs.*

VERS. 14, 15, 16, 17.

For he performeth the thing that is appointed for me: and many ſuch things are with him.

Therefore I am troubled at his preſence: when I conſider, I am afraid of him.

For God maketh my heart ſoft, and the Almighty troubleth me:

Becauſe I was not cut off before the darkneſs, neither hath he covered the darkneſs from my face.

IN the former verſe *Job* exalteth God; First, In his unchangeableneſs, *He is in one mind, who can turn him?* Secondly, In his Almightineſs, *What his ſoul deſireth even that he doth.* In *verſ.* 14. He ſpeaks of God in reference to his perſonal experience, and brings down the general propoſition to his own particular caſe. As if he had ſaid, *I indeed have found, that what his ſoul deſireth, even that he doth, mine own ſad experience proves and bears witneſs to this truth, my preſent ſtate makes the Comment of this text; for he performeth the thing that is appointed for me.*

Verſ. 14. He performeth.

ישלם *In primaria ſignificatione denotat, implere, finire, deinde in pace eſſe; etiam ſolvere, compenſare.* Pined.

The word hath various tranſlations, but all are well ſumm'd up in this, *He performeth.*

Firſt, It ſignifies to pay; payment is performance, therefore the ſame word is uſed both for performing and paying.

Secondly, The word ſignifies, *to be at peace*; and this agrees well with the former, becauſe he that performeth and payeth according to his word, hath peace, both in himſelf and with other men. An honeſt pay-maſter ſits down in peace, and prevents his own trouble. But to the matter, *He* (that is, *God*) *performeth*

The thing that is appointed for me.

כי ישלים חקי *Quia reddet ſtatutū meū.* Mont.

'Tis the ſame word which we had at *verſ.* 12. of this Chapter, *I have eſtemed the words of his mouth more then my neceſſary, or my appointed food.* Here we render it, *the thing that is appointed for me.* The word is often uſed in *Pſalm* 119. and ſignifieth any Ordinance, Law, Statute, or Decree, whether Divine or Humane; for all theſe are the appointments, either of God or man, about things to be done, or forborn. And as God makes appointments of things which he would have us do, ſo of ſuch things as himſelf will do to, or concerning us.

Maſter *Broughton* tranſlates it here, as we do at the twelfth verſe, implying *neceſſary food, or the proviſions of this life. Becauſe he furniſhed me with my daily bread.* That which we render, *the thing that is appointed for me*, he renders, *my daily bread.*

Perficit neceſſaria mea. Vatab. i.e. *perficit quicquid mihi erat opus, ipſe corporis mei artifex & omnium quæ in me ſunt.*

Another, learned in that language, agrees in the ſame ſence, and varies very little in words; *He hath performed, or accompliſhed thoſe things which were neceſſary for me, or all thoſe things which I ſtand in need of.* He who ſet up this frame of my body, and hath given me this life, hath adminiſter'd all things needful for the upholding of this body, and for the maintaining of this life. And ſo, the words carry *Job's* ſence or acknowledgment of the fatherly care and kindneſs of God towards him. *What his ſoul deſireth, even that he doth; for he furniſheth me with daily bread, and he performeth what is neceſſary for me, or ſupplieth all my wants.* According to which ſence, Mr. *Broughton* renders the ſecond part of the verſe alſo; *And many ſuch graces are with him.* Thus *Job* ſpake at Chapter 10. *verſ.* 8, 12. *Thy hands have made me and faſhioned me together round about. Thou haſt granted me life and favour, and thy viſitation hath preſerved my ſpirit.* So that the mind of theſe tranſlators ſeems to be this, That *Job* would ſet forth the unchangeableneſs of Gods decree in giving him his appointed comforts, as well as ſorrows.

Quicquid de me decrevit abſolvet ſive in bonū ſive in malum. Merc. *Non me miſſum faciet, donec impleverit, quæ inſtituit.* Merc.

Yet rather by this appointment (or the thing which God had appointed him) we are to underſtand (as I conceive) his afflictions only and his ſorrow; As if he had ſaid, *I find that God will do what he hath a mind to do, how greivous ſoever it be either to the mind or fleſh of man: for he performeth the thing that he hath appointed for me; he hath appointed me to ſorrow, and I have had ſorrow and trouble ſtore; And he will not diſmiſs me or let me go out of his hand, till he hath performed every title of what he hath appointed for my portion of ſorrow and ſuffering in this world.* And to ſhew how much he was aſſured of this, He ſpeaks in the preſent tenſe; Not, *he will perform, but he performeth*, &c. As if he had ſaid, He will as ſurely do it; as if he were now a doing it.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *That God will certainly perform all his appointments concerning man; He is able to do it, and he will do it.*

This point was largely inſiſted upon from thoſe words of the former verſe, *He is in one mind, who can turn him?* God doth what he hath a mind to do, therefore I ſhall not here ſtay to ſhew the certainty of Gods performing what he hath appointed, but to ſhew the appointment of all things which he performeth. Take the Obſervation thus formed.

Whatſoever God performeth, or doth to any man, was before appointed, or decreed for, or concerning him.

All the works of God in time, were his decrees before time, he performeth the thing that is appointed, and appointed by himſelf, and his appointments are as himſelf is, from everlaſting. Whatſoever God doth, we find it under an appointment.

Firſt, and eſpecially, as to (the buſineſs in hand) the afflictions and ſuffering of his ſervants; All their ſufferings are under an appointment. (*Micah* 6.9.) *The Lords voice cryeth unto the City, and the man of wiſdom ſhall ſee thy name, hear ye the rod, and who hath appointed it.* As if he had ſaid, your ſelves by your ſins are the procurers of it; we the Prophets are only the reporters and publiſhers of it; But God himſelf is the appointer of it. As publick and national rods, ſo private or perſonal rods are appointed; And as often as we feel their ſmart, we ſhould conſider their appointment. The Apoſtle (1 *Theſ*, 3. 3.) moves the Saints to a ſteadineſs of ſpirit under affliction, upon this ground, *that no man ſhould be moved by theſe afflictions* (he doth not mean that we ſhould be without ſenſe of our afflictions, ſtroaks and ſufferings; but his meaning is, that we ſhould neither be moved by impatience under them, to murmur at them, nor be moved by undue fears to faint in them, why?) *for your ſelves know that we are appointed thereunto.* The afflictions are appointed to us, and we are appointed to them, and *your ſelves know it.* This doctrine hath been publiſhed to you, that afflictions are under a divine appointment, that there is a decree of God about them. And that, Firſt, as to the matter, of what ſort the affliction ſhall be; Secondly, As to the meaſure or degree, how great the affliction ſhall be. Thirdly, The appointment reaches the ſeaſon, and that twofold. Firſt, When the affliction ſhall begin; And Secondly, How long it ſhall continue: every thing, in affliction, is under an appointment.

Secondly, As our afflictions, ſo alſo our comforts are under an appointment. As the Lord hath appointed the Gall, ſo the Honey of our cup; as the cold winter, ſo the warm and ſummer ſeaſons of our lives (*Iſa.* 61. 2, 3.) *The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, becauſe the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the meek, &c. To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Sion* (and this appointment, in execution, is the fulfilling of the firſt appointment by decree, *to appoint unto them that mourn in Sion*) *to give unto them beauty for aſhes, the oyl of Joy for mourning, the garment of praiſe for the ſpirit of heavineſs.* And as our ſpiritual comforts, ſo our temporal, our outward ſalvations and protections are under an appointment. (*Iſa.* 26. 1.) *Salvation ſhall God appoint for walls and bulwarks.*

Thirdly, As the wall of protection is ſet up, ſo the ſword, and all other inſtruments of deſtruction are ſent out by appointment. (*Jer.* 15. 3.) *I will appoint over them four kinds, ſaith the Lord, the ſword to ſlay, and the dogs to tear, and the fowls of heaven, and the Beaſts of the Earth to devour and deſtroy.* And as the deſtroying ſword, ſo the place whither the ſword ſhall go to deſtroy is under an appointment. When the queſtion is put (*Jer.* 47. 6.) *O thou ſword of the Lord, how long will it be ere thou be quiet? put up thy ſelf into thy ſcabbard, reſt and be ſtill;* The anſwer is made (*verſ.* 7.) *How can it be quiet ſeeing the Lord hath given it a Charge againſt Askalon, and againſt the Sea-ſhore, there he hath appointed it.* He hath appointed this place, this ground, this Country, this City, this ſhoar for the ſword; and the ſword being under an appointment, muſt do as it is appointed. If we look all the Scripture over, we ſhall find all things under an appointment. As firſt, our children are appointed. When *Adam* had another Son, his wife *Eve* ſaid (*Geneſis* 4. 25.) *God hath appointed me another ſeed inſtead of Abel, whom Cain ſlew.* Secondly, our wives are appointed. When *Abrahams* ſervant was ſent by him to *Meſopotamia* for a wife for *Iſaac*, he ſaith, *If the woman come whom thou haſt appointed to be wife to my Maſters Son, &c.* That this woman rather then any other ſhould be his Maſters ſons wife, was (he knew) by the appointment of God (*Gen.* 24. 14, 44.) Thirdly, All our Times are appointed by God (*Exod.* 9. 5.) *My times are in thy hand* (ſaith *David Pſal.* 31. 15.) Fourthly, not only things that are or exiſt, but things that as yet are not, come under an appointment. What ſhall be, is as certain to God, as what already is, (*Iſa.* 44. 7.) *And who as I, ſhall call, and ſhall declare it, and ſet it in order for me, ſince I appointed the ancient people? And the things that are coming, and ſhall come?* The ancient who have been long and ſtill are, were appointed by me, and the things which are not, but ſhall be in a continued ſucceſſion, like Links of a Chain holding one in another, are appointed by me. The things that *are coming* (or that are near the birth) and *ſhall come* (things afar off) all that is to be done, as well as all that hath been done, is under an appointment. Fifthly, as all the paſſages of our lives, ſo death it ſelf is under an appointment (*Heb.* 13. 27.) *It is appointed for all men once to die.* And as death is appointed, ſo the ſeaſon or the when of it is appointed. (*Job* 7. 1.) *Is there not an appointed time to man?* Again (*Job.* 14. 5.) *Thou haſt appointed his bounds that he cannot paſs.* Sixthly, as the dayes of man, ſo *The day of the Lord*, the day of Judgment, is under an appointment. (*Acts* 17. 31.) *Becauſe he hath appointed a day wherein he will Judge the world in righteouſneſs by that man whom he hath ordained;* the time is fixt, he hath appointed a day, a day of Judgment. When the appointed day ſhall be is a ſecret, but, that he hath appointed a day is revealed, and that he hath appointed all the motions and changes that are coming upon the world, till that day come. So then

Firſt, *We are not governed by blind fortune.* Nor

Secondly, *By a Stoical Fate.*

Thirdly, *But by a divine appointment.*

Further, The appointment of God determineth, Firſt, The end; Secondly, The means leading to and promoting the attainment of the end. Laſtly, as God appointeth Great things, ſo the leaſt. *A ſparrow falls not to the ground without him,* that is, without his appointment, or without an order from heaven, yea *the hairs of our head are all numbred* (*Matth.* 10. 29, 30.)

This truth well digeſted is enough not only to ſuperſede and ſtop all the undue fears, but to eſtabliſh the comforts of the people of God. What can be better for us, then that all things are in ſo good a hand, that they are appointed and meaſured out by God, that he cuts out our condition for us, that he forms and frames our ſtate for us. It hath been ſaid, *Every man is the faſhioner of his own condition;* there is ſome truth in that, mens conditions are much according to their actings; but God is the ſupreme faſhioner and orderer of every mans ſtate and portion. The portion of the wicked is ſet out by God. (*Job* 20. 29.) *This is the heritage of the wicked, and the portion appointed to him of God.* Theirs is indeed a ſad portion, but it is a juſt and a deſerved one. He alſo faſhions and cuts out a portion for his own people; And though theirs is often for the preſent a bitter one, and ſo deſerved by them, yet he alwayes makes it a good one to them, and hath prepared a better for them which they have not at all deſerved. *He performeth the thing that is appointed for me:*

And many ſuch things are with him.

Some expound this of the parallel dealings of God with other perſons; *He performeth the thing that is appointed for me, and many ſuch things are with him;* That is, I am not the only inſtance, or example of this; God doth the like alſo to others, my caſe is not ſingular, I am not alone in the thing, God hath not appointed a portion for me only, and performed it accordingly to me; No, he doth many ſuch like things; yea whatſoever he doth with, or concerning any elſe, it is by appointment and according to the determinate purpoſe of his own will. *Many ſuch things are with him.*

Hæc multitudo refertur ad ſimilia exempla hominū quos deus ſimiliter exercet ſive exercere poſſit ſi velit. Non unicum (inquit) ego ſum exemplū hujus divinæ dei poteſtatis

But, Secondly, I conceive that we may rather expound theſe words (**many ſuch things**) of ſuch things as *Job* had already ſuffered; As if he had ſaid, The Lord hath *performed the thing that he hath appointed for me;* hitherto (I have had my portion of trouble and ſorrow unto this day) and *I am like to have more; I do not yet perceive that God hath done with me;* for as our comforts, and the proviſions of this life, ſo our afflictions and the ſorrows of this life, are, or may be renewed or returned upon us every day. Our bread is called (in that prayer which Chriſt taught his Diſciples) *daily bread*, that is, the bread that is brought out to us every day; And when we have received our bread for one day, we may ſay, *many ſuch things are with him;* that is, he hath bread enough for us for to morrow, and for next day, for this year and for the next, for all the dayes and years of our lives, *many ſuch things are with him;* So, when we have ſuffered and been troubled this day, we may ſay, he hath other ſufferings and troubles for us againſt next day, when theſe are gone and blown over; this I ſuppoſe is the thing that *Job* aims at; ſo that he ſeems to prepare himſelf for new rods, and to ſay, in the ſweeteſt and humbleſt compoſure of a meek and quiet ſpirit, *It is the Lord, let him do with me, what ſeemeth good in his own eyes. All that God hath performed to me-wards he hath appointed for me; yet I am not of opinion that God hath ſpent all his appointments upon me; ſurely he hath not drawn his quiver dry, he hath yet more arrows to ſhoot at my poor already wounded and bleeding breſt. My heart miſgives or rather gives me, that he hath not yet ſhewed me all the troubles which he hath appointed for the trial of my graces, for the exerciſe of my patience, and for the purging out of my corruptions. For many ſuch things are with him.* And this we may take two wayes.

Cum jam me quibus voluerit tormentis afflixerit, & alta adhuc quāta voluerit mihi infligere poterit. Hieron. *Multa jam paſſus ſum, tamen ſi illud voluerit anima ejus fiet.* Phil. *Videtur ſe patientiſſimè comparare ad nova flagella.*

Firſt, In reference to the power of God; he can do many ſuch

ſuch things as theſe, he can do what he hath done, his arm is not ſhortned.

Secondly, In reference to his own deſervings; many ſins are with me; and therefore I have reaſon enough to ſuſpect, that many more ſorrows are appointed for me. I may need more humbling and refining, and therefore it is like I ſhall have it, and that another furnace is heating for me. In how holy a frame was the ſpirit of this good man! He juſtifieth God in all that he had done, and he was ready to ſubmit (though it made his fleſh fear and tremble at the thought of it, as he confeſſeth it did in the next verſe; yet I ſay, he was ready to ſubmit) to whatſoever God would yet do, knowing that he could, and being much perſwaded that he would do much and many things more then he had done yet. For (ſaith he) *Many ſuch things are with him.*

Hence Note, Firſt, *God hath variety of wayes to exerciſe and chaſten his in.*

As he hath more then one Bleſſing, ſo he hath more then one Chaſtening; as he hath many Comforts, ſo he hath many ſorrows ready at his hand; as he is *the God of all Conſolation,* ſo he is the God alſo of all tribulation; and as he can make all Conſolation to abound, ſo he can make all tribulation to abound; *many ſuch things are with him.* When you have ſuffered one affliction, do not think that you have ſuffered all, there may be a ſecond at hand. They are uſually *twin-born*, and ſometimes we may ſay (as *Leah* in another caſe, *Gen.* 30. 11.) *A troop cometh.* Troubles come by Troops. We read the Lord threatning his ancient people the *Jews* after great ſufferings, and Judgments had been upon them, with a ſucceſſion of new Judgments. The whole twenty eighth Chapter of *Deuteronomie* is but a continued deſcription of that variety both of bleſſings and curſes which God hath at hand ſtored up in his Treaſures. Read how various his Judgments are (1 *Kin.* 8. 37. 2 *Chron.* 6. 28.) *I will puniſh you yet ſeven times more for your ſins* (*Lev.*26.18,24.) And that *ſeven times more* may be underſtood; Firſt, In reference to the variety of their puniſhments, you ſhall have ſeven kinds of puniſhments more then you had; Secondly, In reference to the degrees of their puniſhment; I will make them ſeven times greater then they were. As *Nebuchadnezzar* commanded the fiery furnace to be heated ſeven times hotter; ſo the Lord can command the furnace to be heated ſeven times hotter: And as the Lord can chaſten and afflict his people ſeven times more both in kind and degree, ſo they may need ſeven ſorts of afflictions more, and a furnace heated ſeven times more then formerly, either for the purging out of their ſins, or for the exerciſe and proof of their Graces. For though the Lord hath a great variety of afflictions at his command, yet he never layeth any one of them upon us, but when there is need. The Apoſtle *Peter* gives us aſſurance of this from God (1 *Epiſt.*1.6.) For having ſaid, that Saints are *kept by the power of God through faith unto ſalvation, wherein they greatly rejoyce*, he preſently adds, *though now for a ſeaſon* (*if need be*) *ye are in heavineſs through manifold temptations.* We ſee the temptations wherewith the Lord exerciſeth the heirs of heaven here on earth, are many, yet they never feel theſe but when *need is*; And many have as much need of the rod for their ſpiritual eſtate, as they have of bread for their natural. *Many ſuch things are with him.*

Secondly, Note, *We deſerve more and ſorer afflictions then God hath yet layd upon any of us.*

They who ſin leaſt ſuffer leſs then their ſin, how much ſoever they ſuffer here. (*Pſal.*103. 10.) *He hath not dealt with us after our ſins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities, ſo great is his mercy to them that fear him.* The Text is to be underſtood of them that fear God: *He hath not dealt with us after our ſins*, that is, in proportion to our ſins, nor *rewarded us according to our iniquities*, that is, we have not had that meaſure of trouble which anſwers the meaſure of our iniquities. *Ezra* made humble confeſſion of this in the name of the Jewiſh Church (*Ezra* 9.13.) *And after all that is come upon us,* (much is come upon us) *for our evil deeds, and for our great treſpaſs, ſeeing that thou our God haſt puniſhed us leſs then our ſins deſerve, &c.* Their puniſhment was great, yet leſs then their iniquities. As all the afflictions and miſeries of this life are leſs then the glory that is promiſed (*Rom.*8.18.) *I count that the ſufferings of this preſent life are not worthy to be compared to the glory that ſhall be revealed*; So all the ſufferings of this life are not to be compared with the deſerts of the leaſt ſin committed by us, nor with the leſt comfort of the Spirit which is given to us. As the good things which God beſtows upon us are above and beyond any worthineſs of ours, ſo the evils with which he chaſtneth his children, yea or puniſheth the worſt of wicked men in this life, are below and on this ſide what they are worthy to receive.

Non ſunt condignæ paſſiones hujus vitæ. 1 ad præteritam culpam quæ remittitur. 2 ad præſentem conſolationis gratiam quæ immittitur. 3 ad futurā gloriam quæ promittitur. Punit deus intra condignum, & retribuit bona ultra condignum.

Verſ. 15. **Therefore am I troubled at his preſence, when I conſider him I am afraid of him, &c.**

This and the next verſe expreſs the ſtate of *Jobs* ſpirit upon the former diſcovery, or how he was affected with this thing, that *many ſuch things were with God.* I have often met with other paſſages in this book which have a nearneſs of ſignification with theſe words, and therefore I ſhall with the more ſpeed paſs through them, and part with them.

Therefore am I troubled at his preſence.

The words (probably) are an anſwer to an objection; for his friends had charged him with fear and trouble of ſpirit at the preſence of God upon another account, even becauſe of the guiltineſs of his conſcience, or becauſe of his great wickedneſs. So (*Chap.*22. *Verſ.* 10.) *Eliphaz* having ſhewed him his ſin, *thou haſt ſent the widow empty away, the arms of the fatherleſs have been broken*, preſently adds the ſad effects which were upon him, *therefore ſudden fear troubleth thee, and ſnares are round about thee*; As if he had ſaid, thou haſt been very wicked in thy actions, and therefore thou art ſo unquiet in thy ſpirit; Thou haſt been uncharitable and injurious to men; *therefore thou art troubled at the preſence of God.* No, ſaith *Job*, my trouble of ſpirit doth not ariſe from my guilt (though I have ſin and iniquity enough about me, to deſerve greater Chaſtenings then theſe which are upon me) but the cauſe of my trouble ariſeth from the knowledge and apprehenſions which I have of God, who *is in one mind, and who can turn him? he performeth the thing that is appointed for me; and many ſuch things are with him.* This is the ſpring and ground of my trouble: I am troubled both with the feeling of my preſent calamities, and with the fear of greater.

Quia ita potens eſt, ut abſolutè quicquid libet facit, & hac poteſtate nunc in me utitur. Merc.

בהל *Turbare ac celerare.*

The word ſignifies both *to make haſt,* and *to trouble,* the reaſon is, becauſe, as ſome ſay, trouble makes haſt, *ill news comes apace*; or, Secondly, becauſe we are very haſty to get out of trouble, and uſually over-haſty; he that is in trouble would fain be out of it; no man loves to ſtick in ſuch a condition; therefore the ſame word in the Hebrew elegantly ſignifies both to make haſt, and to trouble. And hence one of the Ancients tranſlates, *Therefore have I haſtened to his preſence.* Expounding it thus, *Becauſe he hath thus afflicted me, therefore leaving all the world, I make haſt to him, I throw my ſelf upon him, and leave my cauſe to him*; that's a good ſence, and very ſpiritual; For the Saints being afflicted, make haſt to God, becauſe he is their father, and becauſe he alone is able to be their deliverer; who would not make haſt to God upon ſuch an intereſt? A wicked man turns from God by ſinning againſt him, and he runs away from God afflicting him. He that delights in ſin, cannot delight in God, who is the avenger of ſin. But afflictions draw Saints nearer to God, *therefore have I haſtened* (ſaith that tranſlation) *into his preſence.* But we have rendred it (as I conceive) better to the Intendment of this place.

Propterea ad eum feſtinavi, quod ipſe exponit. Quia me tribulavit ideo relicti temporalibus ad eum feſtinavi. August.

Therefore am I troubled at his preſence.

The letter is, *at his face,* or *becauſe of him*, that is, for fear of him.

Therefore am I troubled.] *Job* was troubled upon a twofold account.

Firſt, With the pain and ſmart of his then preſent ſufferings.

Secondly, With fear of further or future ſufferings. *I am troubled at his preſence.*

Senſu flagellorū præſentiū, metu futurorum. Jun.

The preſence of God is moſt deſireable; what is it that

Saints wiſh and rejoyce in comparatively to the preſence of God? *My ſoul thirſteth for God; when ſhall I come and appear before God?* ſaith *David*, (*Pſal.*42,2.) How greedy was he of the preſence of God? how did he (as it were) tell the clocks, and count every hour a day, every day a year, till he was reſtored to it. And in another place, how earneſtly doth he deprecate his baniſhment from the face of God, as the foreſt puniſhment, (*Pſal.*51.11.) *Caſt me not away from thy preſence.* Yet here *Job* confeſſeth, *I am troubled at his preſence.*

Hence Note, *God can eaſily vary the appearances of himſelf to us.*

He can diſcover himſelf ſo to us, as that his preſence ſhall be better to us then life, better to us then ten thouſand of theſe lower worlds, or as the heaven of this lower world, yea as the only felicity of that heaven which is above. What is heaven, but this preſence of God? *Thou wilt ſhew me the path of life; In thy preſence is fulneſs of Joy* (*Pſal.* 16. 11.) Thus God can make himſelf known with a delightful preſence; yet he can make himſelf known, and often doth, even to his own, with a dreadful and an amazing preſence. God in whom there is no variableneſs, nor ſhadow of turning, can vary the demonſtrations of himſelf to us, as much as light varieth from darkneſs, or life from the ſhadow of death. God hath a light ſide, and a dark ſide, as to manifeſtation, though in himſelf he is light, and in him there is no darkneſs at all. Sometimes his preſence is ſweetneſs and joy, even joy unſpeakable and glorious; at other times, his preſence is bitterneſs and ſorrow, even ſorrow unſpeakably grievous. There is nothing ſo dreadful to wicked men at any time as the preſence of God. As it hath been their wretched care to hide [illegible] ſins from God as much as they could, ſo they would count it their happineſs to have their perſons hid for ever from the preſence of God. That which is both the ſin and trouble of the wicked at all times, is the trouble, if not the ſin of ſome godly men at ſometimes, namely, the preſence of God, not in it ſelf, but with reſpect to the manner of his manifeſting himſelf to them, and dealing with them. As will appear further in the next clauſe of this verſe. *I am troubled at his preſence.*

When I conſider I am afraid.

As if he had ſaid, *When I ſeriouſly weigh and have deep thoughts in my mind, when I ſet my underſtanding throughly on work to conſider the ſeverity of Gods proceedings with me, and when I remember the wormwood and the gall, thoſe bitter taſts and ſad experiences which I have had already of his dreadful power, then I am afraid.* And this fear ariſeth not from the guilt or accuſations of my own conſcience, but leſt the Lord ſhould again act and put forth that his terrible power upon me.

Cum diligentius conſidero ejus tantam potentiam, cujus nunc in me ſpecimen vides, non poſſum quin expaveſcam, non quid in me ſit iniquitas, ſed ne deinceps pergat ſua potentia me affligere. Merc.

But what fear is here meant? or how was *Job* afraid upon the taking up of this conſideration? I anſwer,

There is Firſt, A pure filial or ſon-like fear, when we are afraid to ſin againſt and diſpleaſe our father. This fear is a ſpecial grace promiſed in the new Covenant, and the beginning of wiſdom.

Secondly, There is a pure ſlaviſh-fear, when we dread God as a Judge, and revenger. This fear is the iſſue of the Covenant of works, and the beginning of ſorrow.

Thirdly, There is a mixt fear, not a pure filial, nor a pure ſlaviſh fear, but with a mixture or ingrediency of both. Such I conceive the fear of *Job* was; his was a mixt-fear; it had ſome tang of ſlavery in it, and it had ſome touch of Son-ſhip in it; there was much of the Spirit of Bondage in it, and ſomething of the Spirit of Adoption in it. With the former fear many good men have been much exerciſed in all ages, eſpecially before Chriſt came in the fleſh, and the clearer breaking and beaming out of Goſpel light, (*Rom.*8.15.) *Ye have not received the ſpirit of bondage to fear again.* And (*John* 14.27.) *Let not your hearts be troubled, nor be ye afraid*; that is, be not burdened and oppreſt with that ſervile and ſlaviſh fear which you are ſubject to. Chriſt ſpake it to his own Diſciples, for even at that time deep impreſſions of that fear were upon them, doubting much what would become of them, when he ſhould (of which he had told them) leave the world, and be gone from them. And beſides that ſpecial reaſon which the Diſciples then had to fear at that time, this fear uſually ariſeth from two reaſons, in others, at all times.

Firſt, From the Conſideration of their own weakneſs and failings.

Secondly, From the Conſideration of the Majeſty and greatneſs of God: when they conſider theſe things they are afraid. And though believers are freed from the prædominancy of ſlaviſh fear, and are indued with infuſions of true filial fear, yet they are often taken with this mixt fear, as in reference to their own weakneſs, ſo reſpecting the Majeſty of God, with whom they have to do. *When I conſider I am afraid of him.*

Obſerve, *That the Majeſty and power of God duly conſidered, are terrible even to his own people.*

Many men have ſlight thoughts of the great God, they tremble not, they fear not; what's the reaſon? they conſider not, *they are careleſs, and therefore they are fearleſs, they are ignorant, and therefore they are confident.* There are none ſo bold as they who are thus blind. *Who is the Lord* (ſaid hard-hearted *Pharaoh*) *that I ſhould obey his voice, to let Iſrael go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Iſrael go.* That's a ſad Confidence that proceeds from ignorance, and a ſad fearleſneſs that hath no ground but careleſneſs. I remember what the anſwer was of a very godly man upon his death-bed; who having much trembling upon his ſpirit at the apprehenſion of the greatneſs, Majeſty, and glory of God, it was ſaid to him by a godly friend that came to viſit him; *Sir, you have known God, and been long acquainted with him, why are you thus full of fear and trembling?* O, ſaith he, *if I knew God more, I ſhould tremble more.* If we were but more acquainted with, and did more conſider of the infinite greatneſs of God, and of our own diſtance from him as creatures, much more as ſinners, how ſhould we be ſwallowed up with Divine amazements; ſo that we muſt charge it upon the want of Conſideration, that ſo many have ſuch undue and unbecoming thoughts of God, as alſo that their thoughts fall ſo much below both their duty, and their ſins: if we did but conſider how ſinful we are, and how holy God is, we ſhould alwayes ſerve him with fear, and rejoyce with trembling; *When I conſider I am afraid of him.* *Job* was afraid of him when he conſidered him; and ſo was *Aſaph* (*Pſal.* 77.3.) *In the day of my trouble I ſought the Lord, my ſore ran in the night and ceaſed not, my ſoul refuſed to be comforted. I remembred God, and was troubled; I complained, and my ſpirit was overwhelmed.* Such a remembring of God is not a bare act of the mind, in oppoſition to forgetfulneſs, as if *Aſaph* had ſaid, *I remembred God*; that is, *I did not forget him*, but *I remembred God*, that is, I fixed my heart upon him, I minded him fully, or ſet him fully before my mind: though the remembrance of God is the ſpring of Comfort to us, and that many wayes, yet an *Aſaph*, a holy man, the holieſt among many men, may be troubled when he remembers God, when he conſiders his glory, greatneſs, power, and Majeſty, and himſelf a poor worm. When the holy Prophet *Iſaiah* ſaw the Lord (in viſion) ſitting upon a throne high and lifted up, and ſaw the Seraphims covering their faces and their feet, and heard them crying one unto another, and ſaying, *Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hoſts, the whole earth is full of his glory.* Then he ſaid, *Wo is me for I am undone, becauſe I am a man of unclean lips, &c.* What a concuſſion was there upon his ſpirit upon the meeting of theſe two viſions; Firſt, That of the holineſs of God; Secondly, That of his own uncleanneſs, (*Iſa.*6.1,2,3,4,5.) *Moſes* who had ſuch intimacy with and acceſs unto God, is yet deſcribed trembling at his giving the Law (*Heb.*12.21.) *And ſo terrible was the ſight, that Moſes ſaid, I am exceedingly afraid and tremble: Moſes* knew that God was his friend, a God in Covenant with him, yet *Moſes* ſaid, *I exceedingly fear and quake*; the ſight and voice of God is our Bleſſedneſs, yet there may be a troubleſome and a terrible both ſight and voice of God, even *Moſes* was afraid: and ſo was *Habakkuk* (*Chap.*3.16.) *When I heard* (that is, thy Speech, *verſ.* 2.) *my belly trembled, my lips quivered at the voice, rottenneſs entred into my bones, and I trembled in my ſelf, &c.* And at laſt wicked men (though now ſo unconſidering who God is) ſhall have ſuch Conſiderations of him as ſhall for ever drown and ſwallow them up in a deluge of fear; the thoughts of the preſence of God will be Eternal terrour to them, who now are unmoved with the thoughts of his preſence, or who have not God in all their thoughts. There is a preſence of God which ſhall be death to them, who have not lived in a due and awful conſideration of his preſence. Thus the Apoſtle deſcribes the puniſhment of wicked men (2 *Theſ.* 1.9.) *They ſhall be puniſhed with everlaſting deſtruction from the preſence of the Lord.* We may underſtand it two wayes.

Firſt, They ſhall be puniſhed by being put from the preſence of the Lord; That's the puniſhment of loſs, they ſhall be for ever excluded and baniſhed from his preſence: That which was their deſire here, ſhall be their miſery hereafter. They who care not for the preſence of God in this world, ſhall be everlaſtingly curſed with the want of it, in the world which is to come.

Secondly, I rather conceive the meaning of that Text to be this, there ſhall be a manifeſtation of the wrathful preſence of God to them, and that ſhall be their puniſhment; the preſence of the Lord is everlaſting life, and light, and joy to his own people; but the preſence of the Lord ſhall be terrible and dreadful, even everlaſting deſtruction to wicked men; they ſhall at laſt conſider it ſo much, that they ſhall fear to purpoſe. God will pour out ſuch a preſence upon them as they ſhall be equally unable to hide themſelves from or ſtand before, but muſt lie down and ſink under it into the bottomleſs gulf of deſpair for evermore. If the godly are ſometimes afraid, where ſhall the wicked appear when God appears. *When I conſider* (with *Job*) *I am afraid of him.*

Verſ. 16. **For God maketh my heart ſoft, and the Almighty troubleth me.**

This verſe is near in ſence with the former. *Job* herein further ſhewing both a reaſon why he was afraid of God, as alſo the effect which Gods dealing with him had upon his own heart, or how he was affected with it. For

Nihil opinor addit novi, ſed tantū verſiculum præcedentē exponit. Sanct.

God maketh my heart ſoft.] The word rendred, *to make ſoft*, ſignifies the abating of the ſtrength of the heart.

But it may be enquired, what was this ſoft heart which God made him?

I anſwer, Firſt, Negatively, by a ſoft heart here we are not to underſtand a penitent heart, or a heart broken with godly ſorrow at the ſight, either of ſin acted, or wrath threatned (2 *King*. 22. 29.) The Lord ſaith by the Prophet to *Joſiah, Becauſe thy heart was tender* (*ſoft or melted*) *and thou haſt humbled thy ſelf before the Lord, when thou heardeſt what I ſpake againſt this place, therefore, &c.* The heart of fleſh promiſed and given in the new Covenant, is a relenting and repenting heart. (*Ezek*. 36.26.) *I will take away the heart of ſtone, and give you an heart of fleſh*; that is, I will make your heart ſoft, which before was hard. *Job* had ſuch a heart, a ſoft heart, in this notion, when he ſpake thus, but that's not the heart here meant; God had given him that ſoftneſs of heart before; for he is deſcribed (*Chap*. 1. 1.) *A man that feared God*; and a man that feareth God, is a man of a ſoft heart (*Prov.* 28.14.) *Bleſſed is the man that feareth alwayes, but he that hardneth his heart ſhall fall into miſchief.* Where the hard heart and the fear of God are oppoſed; For whereſoever the true fear of God is in the heart, that is a ſoft heart.

Secondly, By a *ſoft heart*, is not here meant the patient heart; that's a ſoft heart in Scripture, a heart which is willing to ſubmit to and bear the burden that God layes upon it: in this ſence God makes the heart ſoft, when, as he accuſtoms his to ſufferings, ſo he fits them to ſuffer. Man naturally is (like *Ephraim*, *Jer*. 31. 18.) *As a Bullock unaccuſtomed to the yoke*, both of active and paſſive obedience. Only God makes man ſubmit his ſtiff-neck and hard heart to a ſuffering condition, and to anſwer the call of his ſufferings. *Pharaoh* is ſaid to have a *hard heart*, becauſe he did not yield to what God called him to by Judgments, he had not a patient but an unquiet ſpirit under the plagues ſent upon him, nor did he obey what he was ſummoned to by the Lords voice in thoſe terrible plagues. Now, though I grant that an heart made ſoft in patience is an excellent frame of heart, yet we cannot underſtand it ſo here; for *Job* had a patient heart, yea he had abundance of patience before, as he fully diſcovered at the very beginning and breaking out of his troubles; he did not flinch at the Croſs, but did embrace it. The Apoſtle exhorts all Chriſtians to *Remember the patience of Job.* And we muſt apply that Scripture to *Job* before he came to this point. Therefore the ſoftneſs of heart intended in this text is ſomewhat beſides this.

Thirdly, Much leſs are we to underſtand by *a ſoft heart*, a *fearful* or *a Cowardly heart*; that's a ſoft heart indeed, but in a bad ſence. We have it ſo expreſſed (*Deut*.20.3.) *Hear O Iſrael, you approach this day unto Battel againſt your Enemies, let not your hearts be faint, &c.* The Hebrew is, *let not your hearts be ſoft or tender*: a ſoft heart is not for a ſword, nor for a battel: How ſhall they ſtand in dangers, who are fallen below them? A penitent heart, and a patient heart are proper in dangerous undertakings, but a cowardly heart is the greateſt diſadvantage in the world; therefore the Lord commanded this to be proclaimed to his people, *Let not your hearts be tender when ye go forth againſt your Enemies*, or as it is expreſt afterward, *Fear not, neither tremble, neither be ye terrified becauſe of them.* *Job* had not ſuch a ſoft heart, he was no coward when he complained before, *that the terrours of the Almighty did encamp againſt him as a dreadful Army*, nor while he ſaid here, *God hath made my heart ſoft.*

Fourthly, A ſoft heart, is an effeminate, delicate, wanton heart. There are too many who have ſuch ſoft hearts. Men that are fit for nothing but what is worſe then nothing, to wallow in the ſinful delicacies and delights of this preſent world. The Apoſtle uſeth a word (1 *Cor*. 6. 9.) which expreſſeth this fully. We render it *effeminate*, but both the Greek and the Latine is *ſoft*; that is, perſons wantonly and vainly given. And *Moſes* applies the very word of *Job's* text to this kind of ſoftneſs (*Deut*.28. [illegible] *The tender* (*or ſoft*) *and delicate woman, that would not adventure to ſet the ſole of her foot upon the ground for delicateneſs and tenderneſs,* (*or ſoftneſs*) *her eye ſhall be evil towards, &c.* This is not only a ſinful ſoftneſs of heart, but the worſt of ſinful ſoftneſſes. *Job's* heart was far from this ſoftneſs. As he was at that time a man of ſorrows, ſo he had not been at any time a man of pleaſure. But if *Job's* ſoft heart were none of theſe, what was it then?

μαλακοι. Molles.

I conceive the ſoft heart proper to this place is, *a heart weakned and laid low through the burden of affliction.* A heart ſo worn out and ſpent that it can hardly bear any more, God had ſoftned and even conſumed his heart with ſorrow and affliction. As he abhorred a hardneſs of heart to reſiſt the hand of God, ſo now he feared that his heart was not hard enough to bear it with that chearfulneſs and conſtancy of courage which he deſired. Hard things are firm, compact, and knit together; thoſe that are ſoft, are weak and unable to bear any weight. So that *Job's* ſoftneſs of heart was his weakneſs to bear; And he gives this as an account why he was afraid of the power of God in any new-ſuffering. *O* (ſaith he) *God hath made my heart ſoft*; that is, I begin to faint, I find my ſelf drooping, I have not that ſtrength of ſpirit (and though I am not a coward, yet) I have not that courage, that hardneſs, or hardineſs of ſpirit which I have had heretofore. He queried indeed (*Chap*. 6. 12.) *Is my ſtrength the ſtrength of ſtones, or is my fleſh braſs?* He had much ſtrength, but not the ſtrength of ſtones, nor was he hard as braſs. Now he ſaith plainly, my heart is made ſoft, it melteth like wax at the fire, I am ſo little like braſs or ſtones in ſtrength or hardneſs, that I am altogether like wax or water. I am ſo far from having a mind to ſtrive with, or riſe up againſt God, that I know not how to ſtand before him, if he (which he ſeems to intend) ſhould ſtill go on to afflict me. I am grown weak and unable to bear, yet my burden remains, and will probably be made yet more heavy. This interpretation carrieth a diſtinct ſence in it, and that which is moſt genuine to the ſcope of the place. Mr. *Broughtons* tranſlation of the latter clauſe of the verſe, ſuites this expoſition of the former with much clearneſs; *For the Omnipotent hath ſoftned my heart, and the Almighty hath made me ſhrink. Whereas we ſay the Almighty troubleth me*, he ſaith, *The Almighty hath made me ſhrink*: For ſo a man commonly doth who either fears or feels that which he is not well able to bear.

Liqueſcit afflictionibus & conſumpſit. Merc.

Hæc mollitudo pertinet ad timorem vehementem quo quis corde & mente cedit divinæ majeſtati & poteſtati, cū quis facile recipit cogitationem & metū ſupernæ magnitudinis.

Temeritatē & imbecillitatē affert animo meo attendenti ad omnipotentiam ejus. Jun.

Hence Note, *The heart of a godly man, even of the moſt godly, may be ſo weakned under long continued ſufferings, that he may find himſelf utterly unable to bear them any longer.*

Wicked men labour to ſtrengthen and harden themſelves all they can, to bear in oppoſition to God, and Saints would ſtrenthen and harden themſelves all they can to bear in ſubmiſſion to God. *Pharaoh* hardned his heart to oppoſe God ſtriking him; he had ſtroak after ſtroak, and Judgement after Judgement, yet he would not yield; but at laſt God made his heart ſoft in one ſenſe, though he hardned it in another. God appeared at laſt too hard for *Pharaoh*, he could hold out no longer. And we find the Lord ſpeaking thus by *Ezekiel* to his people, who (it ſeems by the language which God uſeth concerning them) had, as it were, ſet themſelves with unholy reſolutions to ſtand, or rather ſtout it out with God, and bear the worſt that he could do unto them; *But* (ſaith the Lord, *Ezek.* 22.14.) *Can thine heart endure? or can thine hands be ſtrong in the day that I ſhall deal with thee;* When I deal with thee in wayes of Judgment, when I take thee in hand to puniſh and repay thee according to our works, can thine heart endure? no, it cannot endure, it ſhall not be able to endure. The Lord doth not mean it of an enduring with ſubmiſſion and patience; So it is the honour of Saints to endure what ever God layes upon them; but to endure with ſtoutneſs and reſiſtance: Art thou able to ſtand it out, or can thine hand be ſtrong? no, thy heart and hand will be ſoft and weak, thou wilt not be able to bear it when I come to deal with thee. It is ſaid of Chriſt by *David* his type (*Pſal.* 22.13.) When he was under thoſe terrible ſufferings for our ſins, that his heart was made ſoft (and if it were ſo with the green tree, what muſt it be with the dry?) *I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joynt: my heart is like wax, it is melted in the midſt of my bowels.* Thus the ſufferings of Chriſt our head (who was alſo the Captain of our ſalvation, and the mighty God) made his heart ſoft and melted him. His heart was not melted with ſorrow for his own ſin (for he was without ſin) but the ſorrow that was upon him for our ſins, melted his heart. Whoſe heart will not melt and grow ſoft, (that is, unable to bear it) when God layeth his hand heavy and long upon him? Therefore we read in the Prophet, how the Lord takes notice of this, and condeſcends to the weakneſs of man (*Iſa.* 57.16.) *I will not contend for ever, neither will I be alwayes wrath.* I will not go on to do, as I have done. Why? What's the reaſon of it? not but that God is able to continue his Contending, and to carry on his war whether with perſons or with Nations for ever; but he hath reſpect to the poor Creature; *for* (ſaith he) *I will not do it, leſt the ſpirit ſhould fail before me, and the ſouls which I have made.* How can ſouls fail? the ſoul is an immortal ſubſtance, and ſhall not fail for ever. The ſouls of the damned ſhall be under everlaſting Contendings, and never fail; they ſhall bear wrath for ever and not fail, yea their bodies ſhall not fail, but through the power of God (ſuſtaining them under his Juſtice) ſhall endure everlaſting torments. The meaning of that expreſſion in the Prophet, is the ſame with this in the text, *Their heart will be made ſoft*; as yet they have ſtrength, faith, and courage to bear theſe afflictions, but if I continue them longer, their ſpirit and ſtrength, their faith and patience will fail, and be ſo worn out that they will not be able to abide it. *God would not contend for ever*, leſt (as *Job* here complains) he ſhould make their hearts ſoft.

And the Almighty troubleth me.

That is, his preſence, or his diſpenſations trouble me. We ſee how much the ſpirit of *Job* was carried out in the thing; And he uſeth a word here that ſignifieth the power of God to comfort and refreſh, or God in his alſufficiency to comfort, yet (ſaith he) this *Almighty troubleth me*; that is, the thoughts or remembrance of him troubleth me. He hath caſt down and grieved my ſoul already, and I am much troubled with fearful apprehenſions of like ſeverities from him again. Theſe words, the Reader will eaſily perceive to be of the ſame mind and meaning with *verſ.* 15. of this Chapter, lately opened, and therefore I ſhall not ſtay upon them, but proceed to the laſt verſe.

Deus, in cujus potentia ſufficientiaq; divitiarū, ſolatium meum eſſe debebat, is me privavit omni ſolatio, & animam meam planè dejecit, deſerit me, terret me. Sanct.

Verſ. 17. **Becauſe I was not cut off before the darkneſs, neither hath he Covered the darkneſs from my face.**

Here *Job* gives another reaſon of his being thus troubled at the preſence of the Almighty. *It is* (ſaith he) *becauſe I was not cut off before the darkneſs*; or, *becauſe I died not by thick darkneſs* (ſo Mr. *Broughton*) we ſay, *becauſe I was not cut off*, he, *becauſe I died not*; both meet in the ſame meaning; for death is a cutting off, and death will cut off or mow down the ſtrong, yea the ſtrongeſt, as the ſythe doth either corn or graſs. Thus ſpake *Hezekiah* in his ſickneſs (*Iſa.* 38.10.) *I ſaid in the cutting off of my dayes*, that is, when I thought I lay a dying. *Job* was troubled becauſe *he was not cut off.*

Before the darkneſs, or, from the face of darkneſs.

Death it ſelf is darkneſs, and yet *Job* would fain have died before the darkneſs. There is a darkneſs of affliction and trouble ſpoken of often in this book and elſewhere, which is more bitter to man then death it ſelf. Some had rather be taken out of the world, then endure the troubles of it. This is the firſt part of the reaſon, *I am troubled*, why? *becauſe I was not cut off before the darkneſs*, or before this trouble came; As if he had ſaid, *I ſhould have been glad, or it had been good for me, if death had prevented theſe troubles; this troubles me that I died not, that I went not to the grave before theſe troubles came upon me.* Thus *Job* gives way again to his paſſion; he broke out much in this ſtrain or language at the third Chapter, where at large he openeth his wiſh for death, either that he had died before, or preſently after he was born into this world, that he might have been at reſt, and ſo out of the reach of thoſe evils and calamities that did encamp againſt or beſet him round about. The reader may conſult what hath been done upon that Chapter, of which this verſe is an Epitome, and there find the nature of this wiſh for death explained, as alſo what lively deſires *Job* had of death, or as this text ſpeaks, that, *he had been cut off before the darkneſs.* I ſhall here only take notice; That to ſome, the ſorrows of this life are much more bitter then death it ſelf; yea, that God himſelf hath ſometimes in a way of mercy and favour called ſome out of the world before he would let great troubles in. There was a promiſe made to *Joſiah* King of *Judah*, that, God being reſolved to bring trouble upon that people, yet he ſhould be *cut off before the darkneſs.* (2 *King.* 22.20.) *Becauſe thy heart was tender, &c. Behold therefore I will gather thee unto thy fathers, and thou ſhalt be gathered to thy grave in peace, and thine eyes ſhall not ſee all the evil, which I will bring upon this place.* And when *Ahab* had humbled himſelf before the Lord, even he went not without a reward for it, and his reward was this (1 *King.* 21.29.) *I will not bring the evil in his dayes*, He ſhall be *cut off before the darkneſs.* *Jerome* ſpeaking of the troubles that came upon the Church, doth as it were appland the death of *Nepotian*, upon that conſideration, *Happy he that died before theſe troubles lived.* It hath ſomewhat of mercy in it, to go out of the world before extraordinary affliction comes in; yet in theſe things we muſt take heed of being our own carvers: it is one thing to have a promiſe from God, that the cloud ſhall not break in our time; and another thing for us to wiſh and deſire to be out of the world before the cloud breaks: The former argueth the tenderneſs and care of God towards us, but the latter muſt needs argue either our unwillingneſs to ſuffer either from or for God; or our diſtruſt of his aſſiſtance and preſence with us to ſupport us in our ſufferings. If God will not cut us off by death before the darkneſs, we ſhould be willing to live in the darkeſt darkneſs of outward calamity that ever fell upon this world. *Job* adds a ſecond reaſon of his troubled ſpirit in the laſt words of this verſe and Chapter.

Quòd me nō interemerit, auferens à conſpectu nō tantam hanc caliginē & tot mala. Merc.

Fœlix Nepotianus qui hæc non videt. Hiere.

Neither hath he covered the darkneſs from my face.

I am troubled becauſe I have lived in troubleſome dayes, but though I have, yet God could have hidden me from thoſe troubles, or thoſe troubles from me; but as he hath let me live in the darkneſs of trouble, ſo he hath not at all covered the darkneſs of trouble from me. I do not only live in troubles, but I am alwayes looking troubles in the face. Mr. *Broughton* renders thus, *Nor he yet hideth* *gloomineſs from my face*; which he alſo paraphraſeth in theſe words; *Becauſe I find neither death nor eaſe of ſickneſs, that I ſhould not feel theſe afflictions.* So that as he complains becauſe he died not before the darkneſs came; ſo becauſe God did not hide the darkneſs from him when it came, but let him have ſuch ſad viſions of it. This ſtill imports that *Job* had not that fulneſs of ſubmiſſion to the diſpenſations of God, as duty called him to; and for this *Elihu* reproves him: yea God himſelf chid and rebuked him, becauſe he took upon him ſo often *to give the rule*, and did not ſit down more quietly under his appointment and portion for him. Though *Job's* patience was great, yet he had not all patience, or all of patience. And though, I doubt not, but his patience had a perfect work, yet he did not attain to the perfection of patience. This (according to our tranſlation) is the ſence and ſum of theſe words, concerning which many things have been ſpoken in the former part of the Book, whither I refer the Reader: yet before I paſs them quite out of my hands, I ſhall gather up ſome other rendrings of this verſe, and leave them to the Readers Judgment and conſideration.

Nam ubi tantum non exciſus ſum propter tenebras à facie mea ſo operit caligine. Coc.

Firſt, Thus, *when I was only not cut off by darkneſs, he hath hid himſelf in darkneſs from my face.* This tranſlation the Original may bear with ſome little ſupplement, which is uſual in like caſes, when there is no ſtrain upon the general ſcope of the place; and the meaning is clearly this, *Whereas I am only not cut off by darkneſs*, that is, whereas my troubles are ſuch as have only not extinguiſhed my life, when I am in this pitiful miſerable plight, *He* (that is, God) *hath hid himſelf from me in darkneſs.* So that here he ſpeaks of a twofold darkneſs or evil that was upon him: Firſt, Affliction upon his body; Secondly, Deſertion upon his ſpirit, and ſo the negative particle *not*, is rendred by ſome *only not*, it is only not death with me, yet the Lord is pleaſed to hide his face from me; whereas we ſay, *He hath not covered the darkneſs from my face*, this tranſlation ſaith, *He hath covered his own face with darkneſs*, or, *covered himſelf with darkneſs from my face.* Firſt, Thereby intimating that God doth often joyn ſpiritual troubles with a corporal, the hidings of his face with the troubles of our fleſh. Secondly, That outward troubles are then moſt grievous to us, when God hides or withdraws his preſence from us.

לא Non, μονον ϰ Tantum non, q.d. *hoc effecit in me abſconſio ejus ut non quidē exſcindere, ſed excisioni proximus eſſem.* Coc.

Another reading gives it as an admiration; *I am exceedingly troubled becauſe I was not cut off by the preſent darkneſs, and that he hath turned away darkneſs from my face:* As if *Job* had ſtood wondering that his life were thus prolonged, that his ſickneſs and ſorrows had not made an end of him; that ever he ſhould continue ſo long in ſuch a ſtorm as he had done, and who or what power it was that in thoſe his great preſſures, both of mind and body, did hinder or ſtay him from being covered with the ſhadows and darkneſs of death.

Quod non fuerim exciſus à præſentibus tenebris, & quod à facie mea averterit caliginem. Bez.

Calvin.

A third renders; *Becauſe he hath not cut me off through darkneſs, but hid darkneſs from my face*; and he gives the meaning of it thus, the reaſon why I am ſo much troubled and afflicted, is becauſe God hath not *cut me off through darkneſs*; that is, becauſe I have not had ſome ſecret or private affliction, but all the world hath taken notice of what hath been done to me. God hath not chaſtened me in the dark; theſe things have not been done to me in a corner. *Job* might ſpeak as the Apoſtle, *I am made a ſpectacle to the world, to Angels and men*, all beholding me in this pitiful condition. And this occaſions me much trouble of mind, becauſe, as I ſee plainly, that the hand of God is gone out againſt me, ſo all others ſee it too, and they make ſeveral Interpretations of it. Had I been loſt in the dark I ſhould have born it better, now I am made the common talk of the world, and how to anſwer their deſcants upon my condition, is more then a little trouble to me. This tranſlation hath a fair ſence as to the general truth; but the textual conſtruction (as they who are skilful in the Grammar of the Hebrew know) will not bear it. And therefore I ſhall ſtay in our own tranſlation, which is fair and clear as to the ſcope of the Chapter, ſhewing this good mans paſſion, breaking forth into ſome kind of quarrel with the diſpenſations of God, becauſe he was not carried out of the world before theſe troubles came in; or if he muſt needs ſtay, and be contemporary with them, becauſe he found no cover, no ſhelter from either the beholding or feeling of them.

Thus I have done with the firſt part of *Jobs* Anſwer to the third and laſt aſſault which *Eliphaz* made upon his Innocency. But as *Eliphaz* ſpake much againſt him, ſo he could not be ſatisfied to ſpeak but a little for himſelf; He had more to ſay, both for his own vindication, and the refutation of his opponent. What he ſaid, the twenty fourth Chapter will tell us, which comes next in order to be opened.

CHAP. XXIV. Verſ. 1.

Why ſeeing times are not hidden from the Almighty, do they that know him not, ſee his dayes?

Ad propoſitam queſtionem rectè pergit Jobus, rurſum affirmans, deum cum in aſſertandis probis, tum in puniendis ſceleratis, non palam ſemper, ſed plerumq; occulta quadā ratione, notis ipſi uni temporibus agere. Bez.

THIS Chapter containeth the ſecond part of *Job's* anſwer to *Eliphaz*: the general ſcope whereof, is to pull up the foundation of his friends ſuſpition of him, and diſpute againſt him, ſhewing that many men do much evil in this life, who ſuffer none, and that many who are innocent, ſuffer much evil, and are not relieved: from both he concludeth, that the ſuffering of evil can be no concluding argument that any man is ſo; for then it muſt be ſo with all men, which moſt mens experience contradicteth.

So that here *Job* falls down-right upon the point in debate, affirming what he had often affirmed before, that God both in aſſerting the innocency of the righteous, and in puniſhing the ſins of the wicked, uſeth much variety; and that his proceedings with the ſons of men, are ſo far from being alwayes open and plain, that uſually they are very ſecret, concealed, and ſo much in the dark, that there is no print of his ſteps to be found, This ſeems to be the deſign and tendency of the whole Chapter; and the argument of it may be formed thus;

Ye, my friends have ſaid, that God puniſheth all evil doers in this life; ſeeing then he knoweth the length and continuance of their dayes in this world, why doth he yet ſuffer them to ſlip out of this world unpuniſhed? And if they are ſo frequently puniſhed in this world (as ye affirm) why do not they who know God ſee it, and take notice of it?

But ſo it is, that many wicked men ſlip out of the world unpuniſhed, and the godly who know him do not ſee judgment executed; therefore ſurely it is not the way of God preſently in this life to puniſh every offendor; nor can ye conclude that they who are afflicted are wicked, ſeeing many of his people are not only afflicted by himſelf, but lie under the rod of the wicked a long time unrevenged and undelivered.

In the whole Chapter we may obſerve theſe three parts,

Firſt, A queſtioning propoſition in the firſt verſe, *Why ſeeing times are not hidden from the Almighty, do they that know him not, ſee his dayes?*

Seecondly, We have the confirmation of this propoſition; and that in two branches; Firſt, Of innocent perſons not relieved; Secondly, Of wicked perſons not puniſhed; Thirdly, He concludes his whole diſcourſe in the laſt verſe of the Chapter by a ſtronger affirmation of what he had ſaid before; *And if it be not ſo now, who will make me a liar, and make my ſpeech nothing worth?*

Again, More diſtinctly in this Chapter, we have the propoſition in the firſt verſe. Secondly, The confirmation of it, made by an enumeration, of many groſs ſins, which wicked men commit, and feel no ſmart, but paſs unpuniſht; and thoſe ſins are either, firſt, againſt man, or ſecondly, againſt God.

Againſt man, firſt, by removing of the Land-marks in the ſecond verſe; Secondly, violently taking away of cattel, in the third verſe. Thirdly, turning the poor out of houſe and home, in the fourth verſe; Fourthly, Lying in wait and watching their opportunities to rob and get their prey like wild beaſts, at the fifth verſe; Fifthly, reaping and carrying away other mens corn out of the fields by violence, at *verſ.*6. Sixthly, Uſing all manner of oppreſſion upon the poor, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, *verſes.*

Secondly, *Job* diſcovers their rebellion againſt God, and their ignorance of his wayes: for though both theſe be included in the former acts (whoſoever ſins againſt man, ſins againſt God too) yet there are ſins that are more peculiar and immediate againſt God. And of theſe he ſpeaks at *verſ.* 13. *They rebel againſt the light*; againſt the light of the knowledge of God ſhining with much evidence and clearneſs, both in his word and in his works; And then takes occaſion more particularly to deſcribe, Firſt, The murderer, and his dark wayes, *verſ.* 14. Secondly, The adulterer, and his dark wayes, *verſ.* 15, 16, 17.

Thirdly, *Job* ſheweth, that though the wicked do all this, and are not preſently puniſhed, yet that they are under a ſecret curſe, which ſhall ſurely overtake them (*ver.*18, 19, 20.)

Fourthly, Upon this, he again revives the mention of their ſin; Firſt, Againſt the poor, *verſ.*21. Secondly, Againſt the rich, *verſ.* 22. Together with their puniſhment, though late, yet at laſt, *verſ.* 23, 24.

Fifthly, He re-aſſerts all that he had ſaid, by challenging all men to diſprove him (if they could) in what he had ſaid, *verſ.* 25. So much of the ſtate and general ſcope of the whole Chapter.

Verſ. 1. **Why ſeeing times are not hidden from the Almighty, do they that know him, not ſee his dayes?**

Locus ſubdifficilis & ſalebroſus. Merc.

This (as a learned interpreter gives his opinion of it) is a hard Text, and there are various rendrings of it. I ſhall touch upon them, and then draw out that which may be ſutable for obſervation.

Firſt, The whole verſe may (as ſome conceive) be rather read thus, *Why are not times hidden from the Almighty, ſeeing they that know him do not ſee his dayes?* The meaning of which tranſlation is this, it might make a man that is not well inſtructed in the wayes and providences of God, to think that God takes no notice of the times that paſs, nor of the things done here below, ſeeing the beſt of his ſervants could never yet make it out, that he puniſheth ungodly men according to their deeds in this world. Surely then we may ſay, That times are hidden from God, for were it not ſo, godly men could not but ſee his dayes, his judgment-dayes upon the wicked, and things would not be in ſuch confuſion and diſorder as they are. So that *Job* either ſhews what men do ordinarily conclude from Gods indulgence and patience towards the wicked, and his ſeeming ſlackneſs and ſlowneſs in avenging the wrongs of his own people, even that as God is in heaven, ſo thick clouds are a covering to him there, and that he ſeeth not what is acted on the earth. As if either the Lords eye did not reach this inferiour world, or that he would not trouble himſelf about it. *Surely times are hidden from the Almighty,* Or

Secondly, that *Job* ſpeaks his own paſſions, and temptations about this point; As if he had ſaid, *I am tempted to think that times are hidden from the Almighty, becauſe he doth not ſend preſent relief to his people, nor preſent wrath upon his enemies.* Such temptations are diſcovered in other Scriptures, (*Pſal.*73.2.) *My feet* (ſaith *David*) *had almoſt ſlipt when I ſaw the proſperity of the wicked.* When the wicked and unholy were not puniſhed preſently according to Juſtice, he was urged and tempted to think that God did not regard Juſtice, nor declare himſelf in his holineſs as he ought. And though the Prophet *Jeremiah* durſt not queſtion the righteouſneſs of God, yet he knew not (in this caſe) how to give an account of it, as hath been noted heretofore from his queſtionings (*Jer.*12.1,2.) *Why doth the way of the wicked proſper? &c.* And with this the following parts of the Chapter ſeem to carry a fair correſpondence, wherein he enumerates many groſs practices and impieties of wicked men, notwithſtanding which they paſs out of this world in worldly peace.

Quare non ſunt abſcondita? q.d. *equiori animo ferrem ſi eſſent abſcondita.* Aben.Ezr.

Thirdly, One of the ancient Rabbins reads the word as a wiſh, or a deſire, *Why are not times hidden from the Almighty?* As if he had ſaid, I could wiſh they were hidden from the Almighty, and I could bear it better if God did take no notice of times, then that taking notice of them, he ſhould not ſet them in order, and redreſs what is amiſs; but I paſs that.

Ab omnipotente non ſunt abſcondita tempora. Vulg. *Latini videntes interrogationem blaſphemam opinionem continere; quaſi aut abſcondita eſſe dicat aut optet,* i. e. *dominum tempora & quæ hic fiunt: non curare aut non videre, ſine interrogatione verterunt.* Merc.

Fourthly, The Latine tranſlation is poſitive, and direct; *Times are not hidden from the Almighty, yet they that know him are ignorant of his dayes*; and the reaſon why they leave out the interrogation is given thus; becauſe they thought there was a kind of impiety, yea blaſphemy in it, to ſay or querie, *Why are not times hidden from the Almighty?* As if *Job* muſt in ſaying ſo either affirm that times were indeed hidden from the Almighty, or that he wiſhed they were. Therefore to avoid that inconveniency they turn it into a direct negative propoſition, *Times are not hidden from the Almighty.* And many of the Jewiſh Writers ſtumbling at the ſame ſtone, have judged *Job* as denying the providence of God, or his care of times and ſeaſons here below; but (upon divers occaſions) *Job* hath been vindicated concerning this point, therefore I ſhall not ſtay upon it.

A Fifth tranſlation gives it thus, *If times are not hid by the Almighty, how comes it to paſs that they that know him do not ſee his dayes?* as if he had ſaid, were it not for this, or were it not thus, that God doth hide times, or that times are hidden by God, that is, that Gods providences are carried in ſecret, and run a great while (as ſome rivers do) as it were under-ground, it could not be, but that they that know him, that is, wiſe and holy men (as we ſhall ſee afterward) ſhould ſee the effects and iſſues of thoſe judgments. The judgments of God (ſaith *Job*) are delayed in their execution, or executed in ſo ſecret a way, that they are moſtly and to the moſt of men undiſcerned. Wherein he fully oppoſeth what *Eliphaz* ſaid (*Chap.*20.16.) *They are cut down out of time*, that is, they are preſently cut down: no, ſayes *Job*, God hideth their times, that is, he puts ſtops and delayes upon the times of his revenge; or as he ſpeaks (*Chap.*21.19.) *He layeth up wrath for his children, but themſelves are not preſently cut down.*

מרוע *Cur quare: Cur à Shaddai non occultata ſunt tempora?*

Sixthly, Thus, *Why are not, or why ſhould not times be hidden by the Almighty?* ſo Mr. *Broughton.* As if he had ſaid, *What reaſon can be given of this, why times are not hidden by the Almighty? or why ſhould it not be thought right, and juſt, that times ſhould be hidden by the Almighty? who can queſtion God if he will hide times and judgments, or who ſhall ſay, it is unequal?* The Hebrew particle (*Min*) ſignifies as well *by* as *from*, we ſay, why *ſeeing times are not hidden from the Almighty*, they ſay, *why ſhould not times be hidden by the Almighty?* This rendring bears a clear and a profitable ſence, and therefore I ſhall give this obſervation from it.

God doth hide times from men.

The providences of God and their ſeaſons are not carried plain to every mans eye; and why ſhould not times be thus hidden by the Almighty? God doth not hide that time from us wherein we ought to do our work (he ſheweth us plainly not only what we ought to do, but when we ought to do it; to every work there is an appointed time, and the preſent time, is our time for moſt works, yea for all thoſe works which have a proper tendency to eternity) but though God doth not hide the times from us wherein we ſhould do our work, yet he doth often hide the time from us wherein he will do his own work, and why ſhould he not? he hides the time wherein he will puniſh the wicked, and break the power of his enemies, and he hides the time wherein he will revive his own people, and deliver the afflicted. There are ſome times which God keepeth, and will keep *in his own power*; as Chriſt told the Diſciples (*Acts* 1.6,7.) when they asked him, *Lord, wilt thou at this time reſtore again the Kingdom unto Iſrael? It is not for you to know the times or the ſeaſons which God hath put in his own power.* That is, which he hath not put

Inſita eſt mortalibus incredibilis quædam ea quæ futura ſunt prænoſcendi cupiditas:

forth or diſcovered to the ſons of men. All times are in Gods power, but thoſe which he reſerves from men, and keeps under lock and key, theſe he hath more eſpecially put in his power. God will not let thoſe times appear to men, wherein himſelf is purpoſed to appear. The time of thoſe works of God are wrapt up in greateſt darkneſs when they ſhall be done, which being done ſhine forth with greateſt light; and God will have it ſo,

Firſt, To reprove and ſtop the curioſity of man. There is nothing more natural to man then a deſire to know both what ſhall be hereafter, and when that hereafter ſhall be: we are very negligent and careleſs in ſeeking out the ſeaſon of that which we our ſelves ſhould do, but over-careful and curious in ſeeking out the ſeaſon of what God will do. Man is given to vain curioſity, and he is in nothing more vainly curious, then in an itch to know the times which God hath hidden from him. Moſt men are great queſtioniſts, and their queſtions moſtly are about times, and ſeaſons, when ſhall this, and that be? The diſciples of Chriſt diſcovered this ſpirit more then once. When Chriſt had told his Diſciples that of thoſe goodly buildings to which they admiringly pointed him, *There ſhould not be one ſtone left upon another, that ſhould not be caſt down* (*Mat.* 24.2.) They a while after *came unto him privately, ſaying, tell us, when ſhall theſe things be, and what ſhall be the ſign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?* It did not ſatisfie them that Chriſt had told them ſuch ſhould be, unleſs he alſo tell them the time and ſeaſon when they ſhould be. The Apoſtle found this humour ſtirring much in the Church of the *Theſſalonians*, for having ſpoken of the reſurrection of the body, and that then *the Lord himſelf ſhall deſcend from heaven with a ſhout, with the voice of the Arch-Angel, and with the trump of God* (1 *Theſ.*4.15,16.) He, to prevent their inquiſitiveneſs about the time when this ſhould be, begins the fifth Chapter thus; *But of the times and ſeaſons brethren ye have no need that I write unto you.* Which implies, that either they had intimated ſuch a query to him, deſiring to be acquainted with the time and ſeaſon of thoſe things, or that he foreſaw they would be enquiring and making it their next queſtion, *when ſhall theſe things be?* when ſhall the deceaſed Saints be raiſed, and the living caught up, when ſhall Chriſt deſcend from heaven with a ſhout? *&c.* Some have made it their ſtudy to unvail the times which God hath hid, and to uncover his ſecrets. And it is no part either of the honour or ornament of theſe times, that Aſtrologers and Mathematicians have been ſo bold in theſe ſtudies. As if the ſtars of heaven were either betruſted with the ſecrets of the God of heaven, or being ſo would be unfaithful Secretaries, bewraying his ſecrets, and putting thoſe times and ſeaſons into the power of man which God hath put into his own power. Ancient hyſtories tells us that the Princes of the world have been very greedy after this forbidden, or at leaſt unrevealed knowledge. Being more deſirous to know what ſhould come to paſs in after-times, then diligent in the duties of the preſent time; Whereas indeed, which is

Homo eſt animal curioſum.

Mathematicorum & genethliacorū viſana temeritas.

A ſecond reaſon why it is ſo, God therefore hides the iſſues and events of future times, that we might be kept to preſent duties, to the work and buſineſs of the day. He conceals from man the preciſe day of his death, that he might every day be preparing to die. If men had all times in their hands, they would quickly lay the greateſt and beſt part of their work out of their hands.

Thirdly, God hideth times to try the faith of his own people, whether they can depend upon him in the dark; whether when they know not when the time ſhall be, or what a day may bring forth, they can yet freely truſt him for all their dayes. He that lives by faith at all times, troubles not himſelf about what ſhall be next in time, nor what the next times may be.

Fourthly, God hideth times, that we may be guided by rules, not by events; That we may ſteer our courſe through this world according to his divine appointments, not according to humane ſucceſſes. Upon all theſe and many more accounts, *why ſhould not times be hidden by the Almighty?*

But I ſhall proceed with our reading, to open that, and give ſome notes from it.

Why ſeeing times, &c. As if *Job* had ſaid, ſeeing the Lord knoweth all times, ſeeing times are not hidden from him, what is the reaſon why thoſe who know him, and are neareſt to him, do not know times alſo? or thus, God knoweth times, they are not hidden from him, why do not they know times that know him?

We are not to take time here nakedly or naturally as it notes dayes, moneths, and years, meaſured out by the motion of the Sun, Moon, and Stars; but time is to be conſidered providentially as cloathed with all the varieties of action and event, which are imaginable, as incident to the affairs of mankind in this life.

Why ſeeing times are not hidden from the Almighty.

When *Job* ſaith, *Seeing times are not hidden from the Almighty*, his meaning is, that times are clearly and fully known to the Almighty.

The whole verſe taken together ſeems to be a denial of what is in it ſelf very probable; for ſeeing God knoweth times, it is moſt probable that they who know him ſhould know times too: for to whom ſhould God communicate his ſecrets, but to thoſe who are near to him, to thoſe that are his? As if he had ſaid, *Give me a reaſon, if you can, why God, to whom all things and times are known from eternity, ſhould not make known theſe times to thoſe that know him?* And ſo the argument may be formed in this manner.

Poteſt eſſe negata connexio cauſæ probabilis cum effecto. Coc.

Such as know God, ſhould know his dayes, if any know them.
But they that know God, do not know his dayes; therefore God keeps his dayes cloſe to himſelf: ſo that whereas *Eliphaz* ſuppoſed *Job* as doubting the providence of God (*Chap.* 22. *verſ.*12,13,14.) and asks the queſtion, *verſ.*15. *Haſt thou marked the old way, which wicked men have trodden? Job* anſwers here, I deny not the providence of God, but I deny that all the wayes of Gods dealing with wicked men, are obvious to the eye of Godly men; and ſhew me reaſon, if you can, ſeeing God knoweth all times, why the way of his judgments are ſo little viſible to them *which know him.*

But who are they that are deſcribed by this circumlocution, *They* (or the men) *that know God*? We may take them in a twofold notion.

Firſt, More generally for all godly men, for all who are truly ſuch know God.

Secondly, More ſpecially for thoſe godly men who know God more then others: there are ſome who have a peculiar knowledge of him, and daily intimacy with him, who live as it were in his boſome, and ſee what is in his breaſt, comparatively to others.

And further (becauſe words of knowledge comprehend the affections in Scripture) by thoſe that know him much, we are to underſtand thoſe that love him much, that delight in him much, that fear him much, and obey him much. Now though we may expound this of truly godly men at large, yet the latter ſort are chiefly meant: why ſeeing times are not hidden from the Almighty, do not they that know him, godly men, yea his favourites, who know moſt of his mind, who as they are after his heart, ſo in his heart eminently, why do not they who know him thus,

See his dayes?] Whoſe dayes, and what dayes doth *Job* here intend? The former part of the verſe anſwers the firſt queſtion, *They are the dayes of God.* And to the ſecond queſtion I anſwer, The dayes of God are thoſe dayes wherein he worketh, or brings forth ſome great work, whether it be a work of Judgment, or a work of mercy. For as Times in the former part of the verſe, ſo dayes here include the things done in thoſe dayes, and hence Mr. *Broughton* renders, *wayes, not dayes. None* (ſaith he) *that know him ſee his wayes.* Whenſoever God doth ſomewhat among men, which declares him in an eminent manner to be God, that in Scripture is called the *Day of God.* Thus the Prophet ſpeaks (*Iſa.*2.12.) *The day of the Lord of Hoſts ſhall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up, and he ſhall be brought low. And upon all the Cedars of Lebanon that are high and lifted up, &c.* Thus *the day of the Lord* is the day of his judgment among men. *I paſs not for mans day*, or for the judgment of man, ſaith *Paul* (1 *Cor.* 4.3. And when he ſaith, 1 *Cor.* 3.13.) *The day ſhall diſcover it*, He means a day of tryal will diſcover every mans work, whether it be ſilver, gold, hay, wood, or ſtubble. The day of diſcovery, will be a glorious

Diem domini appellamus cum judicium ſuum exercit in impios.

glorious day of God. The Civilians have an expreſſion which reacheth this notion of a day; they ſay of a man that hath had judgment in the higheſt Court, from whence there is no appeal, *He hath paſſed his laſt day*; that is, his higheſt and greateſt trial, becauſe then there is no more meddling with him, or bringing the Suit about again. Such are the dayes of God, of which *Job* here ſpeaketh.

Summum obiiſſe diem dicunt Juriſconſulti. vid. Bold.

Why ſeeing times are not hidden from the Almighty, do they that know him not ſee his dayes?

From the former part of the verſe, Note,

Firſt, *That times are known, perfectly known to God.*

Yea not only are times perfectly known to God, but firmly fixed and moſt wiſely diſpoſed of by him; men may know that which they have no power to diſpoſe of; but the knowledge of God and his power run parallel through all times and things. So that as when the Text ſaith, *Times are not hidden from the Almighty*, it notes that they are fully known to him, ſo alſo that that they are controuleably diſpoſed and ordered by him. And as times are known to God, ſo he makes them known when and to whom he pleaſeth. When *Joſeph* had revealed to *Pharoah* both the matter and the time concerned in his dreams, then (ſaith *Moſes*, Gen. 41. 45.) *Pharoah called Joſeph's name Zapnath paaneah*, which ſay ſome ſignifies in the Egyptian Language, *The Saviour of the world:* Which name, ſay they, *Pharoah* might give him, becauſe by his adviſe in laying up ſtores of corn in the years of plenty, ſuch a world of men, or ſo great a part of the world, was ſaved from periſhing by famine in the years of ſcarcity. But, ſay others, deriving the word from an Hebrew root, it ſignifies *a revealer of ſecrets.* Which title of honour *Joſeph* well deſerved, and was moſt proper to him, ſeeing he had revealed that great ſecret unto *Pharoah*, both that there ſhould be a famine, as alſo the time and ſeaſon of it. But where had *Joſeph* this ſecret? Was it from any Aſtrological skill of his own? He tells us plainly whence it was at *verſ.* 15, 16. of the ſame Chapter; for when *Pharoah* had ſaid to *Joſeph, I have heard ſay of thee that thou canſt underſtand a dream to interpret it*; he preſently anſwers, firſt, Negatively, *It is not in me*; and then Affirmatively, *God ſhall give* Pharoah *an anſwer of peace.* See the like in that moſt remarkable paſſage (*Dan.* 2. 17, 18, 19, 20, 21.) From all which we learn, that God knoweth times and changeth times, that is, makes great changes in times according to the counſel of his own will.

Firſt, If we take time, for the ſucceſſion of dayes, weeks, months, years, and ages, thus the Lord knoweth times. The number of the dayes of man, the preciſe number of the years and ages wherein any worldly ſtate or power ſhall continue, are not hidden from him.

Secondly, Times are not hidden from God, as times are taken for the ſeaſons and opportunities of action. The Lord knows what time will be as a wheele or as a ſocket fitted for the carrying on or eſtabliſhing of every work. We are often troubled at this, and miſs our ſeaſon; but God knoweth every ſeaſon, he knoweth the times, and therefore can time every work exactly. And the Hebrew word here uſed, properly ſignifies a fit or a convenient time, implying that time, in that notion, is not hidden from God (*Iſa.* 50. 4.) *God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I might ſpeak a word in ſeaſon to him that is weary.* Which ſome tranſlate thus, *That I might know the appointed time to the afflicted.* An afflicted ſoul muſt be watched, and a ſeaſon taken; theſe times are not hidden from the Almighty, he knoweth the opportunity, and therefore can direct him that ſpeaks to a wearyed ſoul, as to ſpeak proper and taking matter, ſo to ſpeak it in a proper and taking time, when it ſhall be as welcom to the ſoul as rain to the dry and thirſty ground. *David* ſaith to the Lord (*Pſal.* 119. 23.) *It is time Lord for thee to work for they have made void thy Law*; that is, now is thy ſeaſon, and opportunity for thee to work, if ever thou wilt ſhew thy ſelf do it now. And when *David* confeſſed (*Pſal.* 31. 15.) *My times are in thy hand.* He means that the ſeaſons of his comforts, and of his ſorrows, all the turnings and changes of his life from one condition to another, were caſt and ordered by the power and wiſdom of God. *Why ſeeing times are not hidden from the Almighty,*

עת *Denotat congruum tempus.*

Per tempora intelligit rerum viciſſitudines, divitias & pauperiem, pacem & bellum, &c. Theodor.

Do they that know him, not ſee his dayes?

Thus *Job* deſcribes the perſons that ſee not the dayes of God, they are ſuch as *know him.* Which character, as was ſhewed before, belongs to every godly man, though it be more peculiar to ſome.

Firſt, Hence note, *Every godly man knoweth God.*

And none but the godly know him indeed; many ungodly men profeſs they know God, and they may know him notionally, but no ungodly man knoweth him truly, experimentally, or practically. Many ungodly men *have a form of knowledge, and of the truth in the Law* (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks of the Jews, *Rom.* 2. 20.) but no ungodly man feeleth the power of knowledge, and of the truth in the Law. And therefore the wicked are ſpoken of in Scripture, as not knowing God (*Jer.* 10. 25.) *Pour out thy fury upon the Heathen that know thee not.* And when the Prophet deſcribes the wickedneſs of the Jewiſh State, he ſaith (*Hoſ.* 4. 1.) *There is no knowledge of God in the Land.* Which the Chaldee Paraphraſt renders thus, *Neither are there any who walk in the fear of God in the Land*; where there is no knowledge of God, there is no fear of God. We neither love nor fear him of whom we have no knowledge, nor can we believe in or truſt him, whom we know not (*Pſal.* 9. 10.) *They that know thy name, will put their truſt in thee*; that is, the truly godly will truſt in thee, for they know thy name; but they that know thee not, how can they truſt upon thee? And therefore the Prophet calls us to boaſt in the knowledge of God (*Jer.* 9. 23.) *Thus ſaith the Lord, let not the wiſe man glory in his wiſdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he underſtandeth, and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exerciſeth loving kindneſs, judgment, and righteouſneſs in the earth; for in theſe things I delight, ſaith the Lord.* There is nothing in this world worth the boaſting in, but the holy knowledge of a holy God, or ſuch a knowledge of God, the fruit whereof is a godly life here, and the end whereof is an eternal life hereafter, *Joh.* 17. 3. *This is eternal life, that they may know thee the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom thou haſt ſent.* This knowledge of God doth not float in the brain, but ſinks into the heart, and is rooted in the affections. Thus the Apoſtle *John* argues (1 *Epiſt. Chap.* 2. *v.* 3, 4, 5, 6.) *Hereby we know that we know him, if we keep his Commandments; he that ſaith he knows him, and keepeth not his Commandment is a liar, and the truth is not in him*; as if he had ſaid, the true knowledge of God is an obediential knowledge; ſo that if any man ſaith he knoweth God, while his life is not ſuitable to what he knoweth, this mans profeſſion is vain, and himſelf is a lyar; *Whoſoever keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected*; that is, he loveth God with a perfect or ſincere love, and the love of God is perfected towards him. The ſcope of his whole diſcourſe there is, to ſhew, that the true knowledge of God is the keeping of the Word of God. Many are ſo ignorant of God, that they know not the Word which they ſhould keep; and all they who knowing the Word keep it not, will at laſt be numbred among the ignorant, or among thoſe that knew not God: But their condition will be worſe, and their puniſhment greater then theirs who never knew God according to the teachings of his Word. Their eſtate will be bad enough, who periſh for want of the knowledge of God; then, what will their end be, who periſh in the neglect or abuſe of plentiful knowledge!

Pietas eſt cognitio ſcientiaq; Dei. Triſmeg.

From the ſecond notion of the words, *they that know him*, as they intimate a ſort of godly men, who have nearer acquaintance with, and freer acceſs to God then others,

Obſerve, *That as all godly men know God, which the wicked do not; ſo ſome godly men have ſuch a knowledge of God as many who are godly have not.*

Though the knowledge of all godly men be of the ſame nature and kind, yet not of the ſame degree and height. We read of ſome who in old time were called *Seers* (1 *Sam.* 9. 9.) as if they only had been endued with ſight, and all others were blind in the things of God. They were the only *Seers*, yea they *were fore-ſeers*, becauſe God did often reveal himſelf, and declare to them what he was about to do in dreams and viſions. Now as in thoſe times there were ſome men called *Seers*, ſo in theſe times ſome may be called *Knowers*, as if none knew any thing of God comparatively to them, or as if other godly men were ignorant and underſtood nothing of him. When God (1 *Sam.* 3.) appeared to *Samuel* in a viſion, and revealed the doom of *Eli's* houſe to him; the Text ſaith, at *verſ.* 7. *Now* Samuel *did not know the Lord*; ſurely *Samuel* did know the Lord as other godly did in thoſe times, though he were but young; yea it is ſaid, *The child* Samuel *miniſtred before the Lord*, and did not he know the Lord? No doubt he did. The meaning therefore is, *Samuel* did not yet know the Lord by any ſpecial intimacy with him, or particular revelation from him, as afterward he did; he became *a knower of God* at laſt, though then *he did not know God*, in this peculiar ſence. But God having revealed to him the ſecret what he would do to *Eli's* houſe, then he knew God, he knew him as a favourite, that is truſted with ſecrets. So *David* ſpeaks (*Pſal.* 25. 14.) *The ſecret of the Lord is with them that fear him.* There is a ſecret in the plaineſt truths and doctrines of godlineſs, both in Law and Goſpel; and many know the doctrine, who know not the ſecret; any common profeſſor may know the doctrine, but the ſincere only know the ſecret, that is, the power and efficacy, the ſweetneſs or comfort of the doctrine. There is alſo a ſecret of God with his in bleſſing and proſpering them in the world; of which *Job* ſpeaks (*Chap.* 29. 4.) as there is alſo a ſecret and imperceptible curſe, which the Prophet calls the Lords blowing upon what men have in their poſſeſſion, or for their uſe (*Hag.* 1. 9.) But beſides theſe there is a ſecret of favour, which is the ſealing of the Spirit, the gift of the hidden Manna, and of the white ſtone, with a new name in it, which no man knoweth ſaving he that receiveth it (*Rev.* 2. 17.) This ſecret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and there is yet another ſecret of his with them, even the ſecret of his purpoſe and intendment concerning his own providential workings. Which while many or all ſee, yet they know not the meaning of them; I mean it not only of the wicked and carnal, but even of many who are holy and ſpiritual in the main. The ſecrets of providence are known only to ſome choice ones, to ſome of an excellent ſpirit and high attainments, to ſome *Abrahams*, &c. intimate friends, who are to God as his own ſoul. There is a ſecret of the Lord, which is with all them that fear him, yet ſome of his ſecrets are not with many of them who fear him. What *Job* ſpake in *Chap.* 12. of this Book, *verſ.* 2. reproving the pride of his friends, *Ye are the men, and wiſdom ſhall dye with you*; you (I trow) have ingroſſed all wiſdom, and others muſt borrow of you; the ſame we may ſpeak ſoberly and approvingly of ſome humble godly men, *they have the knowledge of God*, and it is but little that others have, though they have a ſaving knowledge. Some conceive the Prophet upbraiding the Jews (*Iſa.* 58. 2.) as if they affected to be looked upon, not only as ſuch as know God, but as ſuch as know him intimately, and were his boſom friends. *They ſeek me dayly and delight to know my wayes, as a Nation that did righteouſneſs, and forſook not the Ordinance of their God; they ask of me the Ordinances of Juſtice, they take delight in approaching unto God.* They who do indeed, as theſe *Jews* ſeemed to do, may be numbred among thoſe of the higheſt form that know God. *Why do they that know him, not ſee his dayes.*

Here *Job* hath found out ſomewhat knowable, which they who know God, do not alwayes know; and that is, as hath been ſhewed, the ſeaſon of his judgments.

> Hence note, Firſt, *The judgments of God are often either deferred, carried ſo cloſely, and ſecretly, that the wiſeſt and holieſt men cannot alwayes diſcern or ſee them.*

The judgments of God are often deferred in this life, and they are very often concealed, though preſently executed. That is not alwayes true which *Eliphaz* aſſerted (*Chap.* 22. 19) *The righteous ſee it and are glad, the innocent laugh them to ſcorn.* The righteous ſometimes ſee the judgments of God upon wicked men, and his care watching over themſelves, but they do not alwayes ſee either; for as a wicked man may do evil an hundred times, that is, very often, and go unpuniſhed, as is intimated (*Eccleſ.* 8. 12.) So a wicked man may be puniſhed an hundred times, and yet not one of his puniſhments ſeen. Some judgments of God are great and ſore, which yet fall not under the obſervation of the beſt, of the wiſeſt, of the holieſt in the world; *They that know him, do not ſee his dayes.* God (for terror and warning to others) doth judgment upon ſome openly (*Deut.* 7. 9, 10.) *Know therefore the Lord thy God, he is God, the faithful God, who keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him, and keep his commandments, to a thouſand generations; and repayeth them that hate him, to their face, to deſtroy them; He will not be ſlack to him that hateth him, he will repay him to his face.* Here are two things in this Text concerning the judgments of God; that they ſhall come, firſt, ſuddenly; ſecondly, openly; they ſhall come ſuddenly, *God will not be ſlack*; they ſhall come openly, *God will repay them to their face*; as they ſinned openly, ſo they ſhall be puniſhed openly. Thus God repayed the *Sodomites*, he payed them to their face; ſo he repayed *Pharoah*, and ſo the rebelling *Jews*; and *he was not ſlack* (for as the Pſalmiſt ſaith) *while the meat was in their mouth, the wrath of God fell upon them.* Thus 'tis ſometimes, yet judgments are often deferred and hidden. What the Apoſtle ſpeaks (*Rom.* 9. 22.) is applicable here. *God willing to ſhew his wrath, and make his power known, indured with much long ſuffering the veſſels of wrath fitted for deſtruction.* There are veſſels of wrath fitted for deſtruction, thrown to Hell, not only to a temporal, but to an eternal deſtruction; yet God did endure them with much long-ſuffering; that is, he did not preſently pour out wrath upon them, he was ſo far from caſting them preſently to Hell, that he did not afflict them with any trouble in this life, but indured them with much long-ſuffering, and patience. *David* was much aſtoniſhed with this conſideration (*Pſal.* 36. 6.) *Thy righteouſneſs is like the great mountains, thy judgments are a great deep.* Take both together, *Thy righteouſneſs is like the great mountains, the mountains of God*; that is, thy righteouſneſs indures and remains inviolable. But though it be ſo, yet the execution and actings of thy righteouſneſs are not alwayes diſcernable, *for thy judgments are a great deep*; that is, when God doth execute, and put forth his righteouſneſs, few ſee it, his *judgments are a great deep*, many deeps, who can go to the depth of them? *How unſearchable are thy judgments?* ſaith the Apoſtle (*Rom.* 11. 33.) they are ſuch and ſo deep that none can reach the bottom of them; and therefore no wonder if *they are ſometimes hidden from thoſe that know God.*

Secondly, Whereas *Job* ſaith, *Why ſeeing times are not hidden from the Almighty, do they that know him, not ſee his dayes?*

> We may note, That, *if any thing which God doth in this world be ſeen by any, godly men are in the greateſt likelyhood to ſee it.*

And that upon a twofold ground; firſt, becauſe they have the beſt eyes, and ſenſes moſt exerciſed to diſcern what God is doing. And as this is, becauſe they have the beſt internal light, and pureſt principles to make this diſcovery with; ſo in the ſecond place, becauſe they ſtand faireſt in the eye of God, to have his providences manifeſted and expounded to them. For as God by the Spirit expounds his Word, ſo his Works to his choiceſt ſervants. *Shall I hide from* Abraham (ſaid God, *Gen.* 18. 17.) *that thing which I do?* And ſo the Lord ſaith to the ſpiritual children of *Abraham* unto this day, ſhall I hide from them either what I am about to do, or the meaning and ſcope of what I have done? If any in the world ſee the dayes of God, Saints ſhall. So that we may conclude, if they ſee them not, that either they are not yet come, or that God purpoſely concealed their coming. Both or either of which may be the mind of *Job* in this place.

Laſtly, Conſider the Text as a queſtion, *Why ſeeing times are not hidden from the Almighty, do they that know him not ſee his dayes?* What is the reaſon of this? *Job* here anſwers *Eliphaz*, who thought that the judgments of God were ever open, and obvious to all beholders; but as it is not ſo, ſo what is the reaſon of this? Why is it not ſo? I have heretofore given an account of theſe *whyes and wherefores* of theſe queſtions about the diſpenſations of God. Yet here I anſwer further, God is pleaſed to cover or defer his Judgment dayes, Firſt, Becauſe it is his pleaſure to do ſo, that's anſwer enough for man, it is his pleaſure. Times are not hidden from God, but muſt he needs make us acquainted with all times, or ſhew us the way of his judgments preſently; no, it is his pleaſure to do otherwiſe, and it is his priviledge to diſpoſe of times, ſeaſons, actions, and judgments as he pleaſeth; who may ſay to him, what doſt thou? Or why doſt thou ſo? He is ſupreme, and ſoveraign; if he will have it ſo, why ſhould any one oppoſe it, or riſe up againſt it?

Secondly, If it be demanded, Why are not the wicked preſently puniſhed, ſeeing God knoweth times, and ſeaſons, and how all things paſs among the ſons of men? I anſwer, God will leave wicked men more inexcuſable. The more patience is exerciſed towards them, the more long-ſuffering God is to them, the more evident will the juſtice of God be in their ſufferings, and they will have the leſs, or rather nothing at all to plead for themſelves. The leaſt ſin committed by man may ſtop his mouth, how much ſoever he is puniſhed by God; how much more may their mouths be ſtopped, who continued to ſin greatly, while God continued to ſpare them long in their ſin?

Thirdly, The day of the wicked mans ſuffering comes not ſuddainly, that the patience of the Saints may be tried, and exerciſed. There are three things which chiefly exerciſe the patience of the Saints; Firſt, The greatneſs of their own troubles: Secondly, The ſlowneſs of their deliverance out of trouble: Thirdly, The long proſperity of wicked men, or the long deferring of their puniſhment. Theſe delayes and ſtops in the vindicative adminiſtrations of God *towards evil men*, give the graces of his ſervants preſent work; and God often forbears purpoſely to put forth his power, that Saints may put forth their patience; or that it may be ſaid of them as in the book of the *Revelations*, *Here is the patience of the Saints*, in this the patience of the Saints is viſible. Faith and patience can never have ſo fit an opportunity to be ſeen, as when the Juſtice of God in avenging them, and in puniſhing the wicked, is leaſt ſeen. Yea therefore it is that they do not ſee thoſe his dayes with an eye of ſenſe, that they might ſee them with an eye of faith. While the Prophet ſaith (*Hab.* 2. 4.) *The juſt ſhall live by his faith*; he ſpeaks in reference to the deferring and delaying of judgments upon the enemies of the Church; as appears fully in *Chap.* 1. *verſ.* 12, 13. *O Lord, thou haſt ordained them* (namely, the Chaldean Empire) *for Judgment* (that is, to puniſh and afflict thy Church, the Jewiſh Nation) *and O mighty God, thou haſt eſtabliſhed them for correction*; as if he had ſaid, *Thou O Lord, didſt not intend the ruine and deſtruction of thy people, by arming and ſending this bitter and haſty Nation againſt them, but only their amendment and repentance: yea thou haſt no pleaſure at all in theſe Chaldeans, by whom thou haſt poured out thy diſpleaſure upon thine own people.* For, as it follows, *Thou art of purer eyes then to behold evil, and canſt not look on iniquity, to approve of it, or to be pleaſed with it; and ſeeing thou canſt not, wherefore lookeſt thou upon them that deal treacherouſly, and holdeſt thy tongue when the wicked devoureth the man, that is more righteous then he?* That is, why doſt not thou, O Lord, take vengeance ſpeedily upon theſe evil and treacherous ones? The Prophet having propoſed and urged this queſtion to the Lord, what doth he next? You may ſee at *Chap.* 2. *verſ.* 1. *I will ſtand upon the watch, and ſet me upon the Tower, and I will watch to ſee what he will ſay unto me, and what I ſhall anſwer when I am reproved*; or (as the Hebrew hath it) argued with, by carnal men, or the turbulent paſſions of my own ſpirit? The Lord giveth him his anſwer at large (*verſ.* 2, 3.) which is ſummed up (*verſ.* 4.) in this brief direction or aſſertion, *But the juſt ſhall live by his faith*; as if he had ſaid, proud men will be querying, yea quarrelling, when they ſee my providences croſs my promiſes, or my Works carrying a preſent face of unſutableneſs to my Word; when things go thus, they are preſently offended and nonplus'd, they know not what to make of it, unleſs it be to make me *a lyar*, as ſpeaking, what I meant not to do; or *impotent*, as ſpeaking more then I had ability to do: but, my people know how to ſatisfie theſe doubts with a ſaving to my honour; *The juſt ſhall live by his faith.* And they who live by faith will not have uncomely thoughts of me, whatſoever it is that appears to their ſight: or though that which they hoped would appear be ſtill kept out of their ſight. Though, *they that know him ſee not his dayes*, with an eye of ſenſe; yet they ſee them by an eye of faith, and *by that faith they live.*

So then the reaſon why they who know God, or the godly, ſee not his dayes, is not becauſe God is not able to bring a day of vengeance upon wicked men; it is not becauſe he bears any good will to them, but to exerciſe the faith and patience of his people. That's the ſcope of this firſt verſe, which layeth down the propoſition by way of queſtion; times are not unknown to God, yet they that know him do not ſee his dayes, his judgment dayes, as *Eliphaz* had before aſſerted. In the next part of the Chapter, *Job* goes on to prove by an enumeration of particulars, that many ſorts of wicked men go on in all ſorts of ſin, who yet feel not the day of God upon them.

VERS. 2, 3, 4.

Some remove the Land-marks, they violently take away the flocks, and feed thereof.

They drive away the Aſs of the fatherleſs, they take the widdows Ox for a pledge.

They turn the needy out of the way, the poor of the earth hide themſelves together.

IN the firſt verſe of this Chapter, it was ſhewed that they who know God, that is, godly men, do not in this world ſee his dayes, that is, the dayes of his judgment and vengeance upon the wicked. In the following part of this Chapter, *Job* proceeds to deſcribe wicked men, in ſeveral acts of wickedneſs, and how they carry it on, and have many fair dayes in the world, while they are doing fowl and filthy work. They do as much miſchief as they can, and they enjoy as much outward proſperity as they can deſire to have, or tell what to do with it when they have it; ſo that they ſeem equally to abound in the practice of evil, and in the poſſeſſion of good. See what havock they make in the words of this context,

Verſ. 2. **Some remove the Land-marks, they violently take away flocks, and feed thereof.**

Some remove.] Of whom *Job* ſpake in particular, or of what particular time he ſpake is uncertain. Some refer it to the dayes before the Floud, for that was a time wherein the world was filled with violence; and that was the ſpecial ſin of that age, ſet forth (*Gen.* 6. 11.) *The earth alſo was corrupt before God*; that is, men dwelling upon the earth, were corrupt, morally corrupt, corrupt in their manners. Thus, *the earth was corrupt before God*, and he ſhews wherein that corruption did conſiſt, *and the earth was filled with violence.* But as the character which *Job* gives of theſe men, may well ſuite thoſe times: ſo what times have not produced ſuch a ſort of men? And though ſome times have been more tainted with, and notorious for thoſe ſins then others, yet all times have been tainted with them; and therefore we may take the words generally as applicable to any age of the world.

Some remove the Land-marks.] That is, thoſe marks which are ſet up for the diſtinction, or diviſion of Lands, that every man may know his own, and not entrench upon his neighbours inheritance. Theſe Land-marks or bounds they remove; the Hebrew is, *they touch*, ſo 'tis tranſlated; *Some touch the Land-marks.* Land-marks were ſacred things; they ought not to be touched nor medled with. The Lord ſpeaks of his holy people (*Pſal.* 105. 15.) *Touch not mine anointed, and do my Prophets no harm.* Another word is uſed in the *Pſalm*, but we may give the ſame emphaſis here, *Some touch the Land-marks*, as if it were a fault ſo much as to handle, or meddle with them: yet the word here uſed ſignifies both to touch, and to take, and ſo to take, as violently to carry away (*Zech.* 1. 6.) *Did not my word take hold of your fathers?* that is, did it not apprehend and ſeaze upon them, yea remove them out of the land of the living? Where

נשג *Tetigit, apprehendit vis verbi ea iſt ut ita res attingatur quòd apprehendatur, pertinet ad vim potentioris manum injicientis.*

the Word of God toucheth, it taketh away, either to deſtruction or ſalvation. And that word in the Prophet hath a double alluſion, either to the hunting of beaſts, or to fighting and contending with men; the word followed your Fathers, it overtook them, it took them, it laid hold on them, as the hunter layeth hold upon his prey, or as an enemy follows, and over-takes a fleeing enemy; *did not my words take hold of your Fathers?* Yes, it did, and that to purpoſe. The word is uſed (*Pſal.* 40. 12.) *Mine iniquities* (ſaith David) *take hold of me, ſo that I am not able to look up*; they have dealt with me, as with a fugitive, that runneth away; they have taken hold of me, and they hold me faſt, my ſin hath apprehended me. So that, though this original word ſignifies *to touch*, yet it is ſo to touch as to offer violence, to take away, to remove, as is expreſſed in thoſe inſtances (1 *Sam.* 30. 8.) David *inquired of the Lord, ſaying, ſhall I purſue after this troop, ſhall I overtake them?* ſo (2 *Sam.* 15. 14.) David *ſaid to all his ſervants that were with him at* Jeruſalem, *ariſe, let us flee, for we ſhall not eſcape from* Abſolom, *make ſpeed to depart, leſt he overtake us ſuddenly.* In which places as this word is uſed, ſo the uſe of it is about violent and forcible acting, ſo that this touching is taking or removing; they *remove* or *pull* up the Land-marks, to ſet them in ſome other place for their own advantage. This was their firſt ſin, the removing of *Land-marks*; which was upon the matter to take away propriety, and to put all men out of poſſeſſion. There can be no poſſeſſion without diſtinction; natural riches conſiſt in lands and cattle, and both bear their owners mark. The care and induſtry of the Ancients was exceeding great and accurate about their land-marks, both in ſetting them up, and in obſerving them, that every man might have his own; wherefore to remove the land-marks, was indeed to take away the land.

Mira fuit in antiquis tum in conſtituendis tum in ſervandis limitibus fides atq; religio.

Hence note, That, *God hath given unto man a proper, ſpecial, and perſonal right in his lands, and goods.*

If it were not ſo, then, firſt, it were no ſin to remove land-marks, or a vain thing to ſet them up; if there be no diſtinction of inheritances by propriety, what needs there be any diſtinction, by marks, or limits, to ſhew, this is ſuch a mans land, and that anothers. No man may ſet a ſpecial mark, where he hath not a ſpecial right. Secondly, If there were no propriety, there could not be ſuch a ſin as ſtealing, and thieving: that which is every mans, any man may take, and be blameleſs. Thirdly, If there were not propriety, there would be but little induſtry; if mens lands and goods were not their own, who would be found to take care of them, or pains about them? Fourthly, to make all things common, were to run all into confuſion. There is nothing more unequal then this kind of equality. If all had a like right in the things of the world, all would think to have a like power in the government of the world. *Propriety and Magiſtracy muſt ſtand and fall together.*

But ſome may object that practice of the primitive Church (*Acts* 2. 44.) who had all things common. And if all things with them were in a community, where was propriety?

I anſwer, Firſt, This practice of theirs was purely voluntary, not at all impoſed; as appears plainly from the words of *Peter* to *Ananias* (Acts 5. 4.) *While it remained, was it not thine own?* or more cloſe to the Greek, *Remaining did it not remain to thee?* that is, it was properly thine before thou ſoldeſt it, and thou mighteſt have kept thy intereſt in it. No man compelled thee to ſell or give, and if thou hadſt not ſold it, thou mighteſt ſtill have held communion with the Church for all that; but this is thy ſin, to pretend the gift of all to God, and perform but in part.

I anſwer, Secondly, That community did not extend to the whole eſtate of all believers, but to what they did conſecrate to relieve the publick neceſſity. For if they had put themſelves quite out of all propriety by one gift, they could not have exerciſed their charity any more. Whereas the Apoſtle directs them to a conſtant uſe of their charity in making collections for the poor (1 *Cor.* 16. 1, 2.) And ſurely *Paul* had made a vain profeſſion, when he ſaid, *I have coveted no mans ſilver, or gold, or apparel* (Acts 20. 23.) if no man had any peculiar propriety in gold, ſilver, or apparel.

Thirdly, It appears from *Verſ.* 44. that even they who ſold their goods retained ſome kind of right in them; for all did not come to the common banck, and take what they pleaſed; but they who ſold their poſſeſſions parted the price to all men, allotting to every one a proportion as he had need. It was not ſhare and ſhare like, every man was not his own carver out of the publick ſtock, but diſtribution was made as neceſſity required. God doth to this day keep the eighth Commandment in full force and ſtrength, as a fence or hedge about the worldly eſtates of men; and he that goes about to break this hedge, a Serpent ſhall bite him, as *Solomon* ſpeaks (*Eccleſ.* 10. 8.) Hedges are Land-marks; and both are, not only arguments, but ſecurers of propriety.

Again, Seeing Land-marks were ſet up to diſtinguiſh mens eſtates,

We learn, *That we ſhould uſe all due means to prevent contentions about worldly poſſeſſions.*

As every man hath a title and right to his own, ſo every man ſhould have a rule whereby to know his own; peace is a ſacred and precious thing (even peace about civil things) and therefore whatſoever makes for peace ſhould be accounted ſacred and precious. Bleſſed are the peace-makers, but more bleſſed are the peace-preſervers. It is good to heal breaches among Brethren, but it is better when there are none. Preventing Phyſick is more deſireable then reſtoring.

Thirdly note, *To remove Land-marks, which are the means of preſerving the poſſeſſions of men diſtinct, and ſo of preſerving their right and peace, is very ſinful.*

This is a ſin condemned by the light of Nature, as well as by the light of Scripture. Hiſtories report how ſtrict the ancient *Romans* were againſt ſuch offenders; as they were accurate in ſetting up bounds, ſo they were ſevere to puniſh thoſe who removed, and diſturbed the bounds; it was lawful by their Law to take away the life of him who took away his neighbours Land-mark. And if any man in tilling the ground, plowed up the Land-mark, himſelf and his Ox were both ſacred, that is, both were to be ſlain or devoted to death; yea the *Romans* were ſo intent, and devout about this thing, that they had a ſpecial god *of the bounds or limits ſtones.* And as the old Heathens, judging by the rule of common Reaſon, and light of Nature, did abhor this practice; ſo the holy Scriptures in the Law of *Moſes* provides directly and by name againſt it (*Deut.* 19. 14.) *Thou ſhalt not remove thy neighbours Land-marks which they of old times ſet, in thine inheritance, which thou ſhalt inherit, in the land that the Lord thy God giveth thee to poſſeſs it.* And again (*Deut.* 27. 17.) *Curſed be he that removeth his neighbours Land-mark, and all the people ſhall ſay Amen.* A *curſe* contains all penalties, and *Amen* ſeals them all upon the perſon of the offender. *Solomon* renewed theſe Laws (*Prov.* 22. 28.) *Remove not thy neighbours Land-mark, which thy fathers have ſet.* And again (*Prov.* 23. 10.) *Remove not the old Land-marks, and enter not into the field of the fatherleſs.* Thus *Solomon* caution'd thoſe times againſt this ſin. And the Prophet (*Hoſea* 5. 10.) makes this ſin as the Standard of all other ſins, or as that by which we are to take the greatneſs and weight of any ſin; if a ſin comes near to this, or be like this, 'tis a great ſin. *The Princes of* Judah *were like them that remove the bound, therefore I will pour out my wrath upon them like water*; as if he had ſaid, the Princes of *Judah* are extreamly wicked: how wicked? Even as wicked as they which remove the bound. Now if high-grown wickedneſs be but ſuch a thing as removing the bound, how high is their wickedneſs grown, who remove the bound? But it may be demanded what bound doth the Prophet mean? I anſwer, it may be underſtood of all ſorts of bounds, of the bounds of Laws, of the bounds of Liberty, of the bounds of Religion, as alſo of the bounds of Lands. It is wickedneſs to meddle with or remove any of theſe bounds, though to remove ſome of them be a greater wickedneſs. To remove the bounds of the laws, and the liberties of a Nation, eſpecially to remove the bounds of religion, are hainous abominations; and though to remove the bound

Numa pompilius ſtatuit ut liceret eum tanquam ſacrilegum occidere qui violare jus termini auſus eſſet. Etiam qui terminum exaraſſet, ipſum & bovem ſacros eſſe. i. e. *Ferro devotos.* Feſtus. *Numa lapides ſacravit Jovi Terminati.*

of Lands, be not ſo bad as theſe, yet that alſo may be numbred among the abominations which both God and man hate; and therefore when the Prophet would in one word ſpeak all the abominable practices of the Princes of *Judah*, he choſe to ſay, they are like thoſe who remove the bound; implying, that nothing could be ſaid of them worſe then that. The ſame Prophet uſeth an expreſſion ſomewhat parallel to that (*Hoſ.* 4. 4.) where deſcribing the wickedneſs of thoſe times, he tells them, that *the Lord had a controverſie with the land, becauſe there was no truth, no mercy, no knowledge of God in the land. By ſwearing and lying, and killing, and ſtealing*, &c. then at *verſ.* 4. he concludes, *Let no man ſtrive and reprove another* ('Tis the ſoareſt judgement of God upon a people or a perſon to let them alone and be quiet in their ſin, to ſay, *Let no man ſtrive or reprove another*) but why did God give up that people to ſuch a judgment? The greatneſs of their ſin was the cauſe of it; and what was that? The next words ſhew us, *For thy people are as they that ſtrive with the Prieſt.* It was ſo great a wickedneſs to contend or *ſtrive with the Prieſt*, that the vileſt of wickedneſſes was but an exemplification of it. God forbids that they ſhould be reproved or ſtriven with for good, who were once grown ſo evil as to ſtrive with the Prieſt; and the greateſt reproof that can poſſibly be given any man, is to ſay, *let no man reprove him.* Thus we ſee that to *ſtrive with the Prieſt, and to remove the bound*, are ſins of the firſt magnitude, the one in Spirituals, the other in Civils.

Fourthly, In as much as the word here uſed ſignifies not only quite to remove, but to touch or meddle with the land-marks,

> Obſerve, *That we ought to avoid all thoſe acts, that are leading to ſin, as well as the ſin it ſelf.*

It was not abſolutely a ſin, or a ſin in it ſelf, to touch or come near the Land-marks, but becauſe this had an appearance of evil in it; and becauſe while men handled the bounds, either it might come into their minds to remove them, or they might poſſibly remove them a little againſt their minds, therefore even that act is forbidden, as having in it a tendency to that ſin. It is good for us to keep at the furtheſt diſtance we can from that which is evil. The Apoſtles rule is, *Abſtain from all appearance of evil* (1 Theſ. 5. 22.) unleſs all the appearances of all the approaches unto evil be abſtained from, we ſhall hardly abſtain from the evil it ſelf. *Solomon* gives a like caution (*Prov.* 23. 31.) *Look not upon the Wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth it ſelf aright.* It is not a ſin to look upon the wine, yet *Solomon* ſaith, *look not upon it*; why? becauſe that act may occaſion another; while you look upon the wine, you may be taken with the beauty and colour of it, and ſo drink intemperately; for he adds, *it will bite like a Serpent*; which implies that looking may enſnare a man, and cauſe him to drink more then he ought, and then the wine will bite indeed; wine will go down without chewing, but he that lets too much go down ſhall find it biting. And 'tis more dangerous and venemous to be Wine-bitten, then to be Serpent-bitten; therefore look not upon the wine. So here, touch not the Land-marks, be not buſie about them, ſtand off from them, leſt you be enticed to remove or take them away; *They that will alwayes do the utmoſt of what is lawful, may ſoon be overcome to do that which is unlawful.* It is our wiſdom as well as our duty, not to touch that, which to take away will be our ſin.

Laſtly, When *Job* ſaith, *Some remove the Land-marks*; that is not the only thing intended, though it be only here expreſſed, for this removing had a further purpoſe: as touching comes to removing, ſo removing the Land-marks goeth further, even to the taking away of the Land. And they therefore took away the Land-marks, that they might take away the Land alſo; they took away that which diſtinguiſhed their lands from other mens lands, that ſo other mens lands might be accounted theirs, and that they might enter upon the poſſeſſion of them as their own. Thus, to colour and cover their covetouſneſs and oppreſſion in invading other mens lands, they removed the marks whereby they held and claimed their lands. It were not worth the while to remove Land-marks, unleſs it were for the lands ſake. The value of a ſtone, or of a peice of timber, or of a turf of earth (any of which may be made a Land-mark) is not conſiderable, but the land marked by it is. The heart of man is cunning and full of contrivance to compaſs ſinful ends by ſuch wayes, as may keep the ſin (as much as may be) unſeen. Forceably to take away lands were groſs; but firſt to take away Land-marks, and ſo to raiſe a queſtion, or make it a controverſie to whom the land belongs, this is a piece of oppreſſion ſpun with a finer threed. This is robbing without ſeeming to do wrong. *Some remove the Land-marks*,

They violently take away flocks, and feed thereof.

Theſe words contain the ſecond act of their wickedneſs. Before we had land ſtoln, now cattel, *they violently take away.* The word notes a fierce violence; as 'tis ſaid of one of *David's* Worthies (2 *Sam.* 23. 21.) *He ſlew an* Egyptian, *a goodly man, and the* Egyptian *had a ſpear in his hand; but he went down to him with a ſtaff, and pluckt the ſpear out of the Egyptians hand.* He pluckt it from him by ſtrength of hand, or by fine force. Thus here, *They take or pluck away flocks.* There are two wayes of taking away what belongs to another; firſt, ſecretly, or by fraud; ſecondly, openly, or by violence; both are forbidden (*Lev.* 19. 13.) *Thou ſhalt not defraud thy neighbour* (that is, thou ſhalt not take away his goods ſecretly by deceit and cunning) *neither ſhalt thou rob him*; he that cozens or deceives another, robs him; but in that law of *Moſes*, by robbing is meant violent taking away. There are ſome private thieves, ſo are all they who defraud their brethren; others are bold and open thieves, theſe properly are robbers. Might overcomes right. Of ſuch *Job* ſpeaks here,

גזל *Rapuit, vehemens eſt originali illud diripiendi verbũ; denotans violenter capere & vi extorquere.*

They violently take away flocks.] A flock is a collection of cattel, leſs, or great, Sheep, or Oxen, they make prey of all, *they take away flocks.* See the greedineſs of theſe robbers. Any one flock contains many cattel, theſe took away many flocks, or many a flock; and that violently, they had no law for it, and they asked no leave for it.

עדר *Eſt collectiõ animalium, tum minorũ, ut ovium, caprarum, tum majorũ ut boum vaccarum.*

> Hence note, *Where the rule of what is done is the will of the doer, any thing is done which he hath a power to do, whether right or wrong, makes no matter.*

I will have it, ſaith he, and if he be ſtrong enough have it he will. The Prophet *Amos* gives ſuch a character of the Princes of thoſe times (*Chap.* 3. 10.) *They know not to do right, ſaith the Lord, who ſtore up violence and robbery in their Pallaces.* 'Tis ſad for a people when Princes or *they who dwell in Pallaces, know not to do right*, eſpecially when their *know not*, is not, an ignorance of the Law, but a wilful perverſion of the Law; when their *know not to do right*, is they have no mind nor will to do right; when Princes *are wiſe* (enough, too wiſe) *to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge*; ſuch were they of whom the Prophet complained in that place, *they know not to do right.* And what are ſuch like to do then? The Prophet tells us what, *They ſtore up violence and robbery in their Pallaces*; that is, all the furniture and riches of their Pallaces, are but robbery and violence, or ſuch things as they have taken away by violence and robbery. The Lord therefore threatens ſuch, that they ſhall be ſcourged with violence (*Ezek.* 7. 11.) *Violence is riſen up into a rod of wickedneſs, none of them ſhall remain, nor of their multiude, nor any of theirs, neither ſhall there be wailing for them.* Violence riſeth up to a rod of wickedneſs two wayes; Firſt, As violence ſhoots or puts forth from wickedneſs, as a branch or rod ſhoots forth from the ſtock of a tree; all the violence and oppreſſion that ever was committed in the world, is both branch and fruit growing or riſing up from a wicked heart. Secondly, Violence riſeth up into a rod of wickedneſs, when violence puniſheth wickedneſs; they who have afflicted others by violence, often find violence turned into a rod to afflict themſelves. And we may give that ſence of *Solomon's* Proverbs (*Prov.* 13. 2.) *The ſoul of the tranſgreſſor ſhall eat violence.* The words are a threat; as wicked men eat violence, that is, what they have gotten by violence; ſo they ſhall have violence to eat, that is, they ſhall be violently dealt with; either violence ſhall compel them to do their duty, or violence ſhall puniſh them for not doing it; or as they lived by violence, ſo they ſhall die by violence. *The ſouls of tranſgreſſors ſhall* *eat violence*, as a puniſhment, becauſe (as it follows in the next clauſe) they eat violence as their portion. *They violently take away flocks*,

And feed thereof.] The Original words are rendred two wayes. Firſt, as we, *They feed thereof*; that is, they feed themſelves with the flocks which they have taken away: Secondly, *They feed them*; that is, they feed the flocks which they have violently taken away. According to our tranſlation the ſence is this, when they have taken away flocks violently, they ſit down quietly and feed themſelves with theſe flocks, they and their families are maintained by the ſpoil. And I conceive *Job* adds this, not only to ſhew another or a ſecond act of their ſin, but to ſhew the reſolvedneſs and ſetledneſs of theſe men in the wayes of ſin.

> Hence note, *Then a wicked man is hardned in ſin, when he feeds, and filleth himſelf with what he hath ſinfully gotten.*

They not only act evil, but delight in evil, who *take away any thing by violence, and feed thereon. Solomon* ſpeaks of ſome (*Prov.* 4. 17.) *Who eat the bread of wickedneſs* (that is, bread (by which is meant all the neceſſaries of this life) gotten by wickedneſs) *and they drink the wine of violence*; that is, the wine which they have gained by violence: or ſuppoſe what they have violently gained be not wine, in ſpecie, or that liquor which we call wine; yet they drink it as wine, like ſweet and pleaſant wine. This is a ſign of a heart ſetled in ſin, when the ſinner eats his ſin as bread, and drinks it as wine. What ſtomachs have they who can digeſt ſuch hard-meats; and though now they ſeem to make a good digeſtion of it, yet unleſs they vomit up ſuch morſels and draughts by true repentance, they will lie heavy upon their ſtomachs, and make them heart-ſick to Eternity. The Prophet threatens (*Iſa.* 3. 14.) *That the Lord will enter into judgment with the ancients of his people, and the Princes thereof, for* (ſaith he) *ye have eaten up the vineyards, the ſpoil of the poor is in your houſes*; that is, ye maintain your houſes by that which is not yours, even by the ſpoils and vineyards of the poor. When *Jezabel* had got *Naboth* ſlain, ſhe preſently ſaid to *Ahab, Ariſe, take poſſeſſion of the vineyard of Naboth*, and *Ahab* did ſo (1 *Kings* 21. 15, 16.) But the Lord ſent *Eliah* to him with this meſſage (*verſ.* 19.) *Haſt thou killed and alſo taken poſſeſſion*? As if he had ſaid, art thou indeed ſo hardned in ſin, that thou canſt go down and pleaſe thy ſelf in the uſe and poſſeſſion of what thou haſt gotten ſinfully? How wicked art thou, who art ſo far from having thy heart to ſmite thee with ſorrow, for ſmiting a faithful ſubject of thine to death by thy Authority, that now thou canſt delight thy ſelf in eating up the vineyard of the dead man?. Sometimes a godly man ſins by inordinate deſires after the creature; but 'tis very rare, that his ſtomach doth not turn before he comes to eat his ſin. *David* (2 Sam. 23. 15.) had a longing deſire to the waters of *Bethlem*, and upon the making known of his deſire, three mighty men broke through the Hoaſt of the *Philiſtines*, and fetched him the water; but (*verſ.* 16.) when the water was brought him, his ſtomach turned, he would not drink becauſe it was gotten by the hazzard of three mens lives. For though *David* did not ſpeak thoſe words, *O that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlem*, with an intent to put any of his Souldiers upon that dangerous enterpriſe in fetching it for him; yet that he might declare how far he was from indulging himſelf in ſuch inordinate deſires, to engage any mans life for the pleaſing of his appetite, or ſatisfying of his preſent (though probably a very urgent) thirſt; therefore he would not drink it, but pour'd it out unto the Lord, ſaying, *Far be it from me, O Lord, that I ſhould do this, is not this the blood of the men that went in jeopardy of their lives?* Thus it is with tender conſciences, who though they ſometimes ſpeak and do raſhly and ſinfully, yet before they come to eat their ſin, that is, what they have ſinfully deſired or attained, they repent and cannot make either meat or drink of it. Ungodly men can drink blood, not only that which (as in *David's* caſe) others have gotten for them with the danger of their lives, but even that which themſelves have gotten with the unjuſt ſpoil (ſometimes) of other mens lives, but often of their lively-hoods. *They violently take away flocks, and feed thereof.*

Again, I ſhall touch a little upon the ſecond reading; *They violently take away flocks, and feed them*; that is, they do not only drive other mens flocks away, but keep them openly in their paſtures and feed them; ſo Mr. *Broughton, They rob away herds, and feed them.* The Original word in the Hebrew, as alſo the Latine, is ſeldom uſed to ſignifie mans feeding upon dead fleſh, but often to ſignifie mans feeding of living fleſh or cattel. A Shepherd is ſaid to feed his flock. Thus, firſt, they play the thieves, violently taking away their neighbours flocks, next they turn Shepherds and Graſiers, and feed them openly.

Vix vel Hebraum רעה *vel Latinũ paſcere pro comedere uſurpantur, ſed ſæpe pro paſtoris inſtar, paſcere.* Pined.

This implies three things concerning theſe oppreſſors, of whom *Job* ſpeaks.

Firſt, That they were great men, not petty robbers, who when they have got cattle away, hide them, or ſell them off as ſoon as they can; they dare not put them in their own paſtures, and uſually they have none to put them in. But theſe *Nimrods*, theſe mighty Hunters take them violently, and then own it broadly; they care not who ſees what they have done. Thus the Prophet *Iſaiah* reproves the Princes of *Iſrael* (Chap. 1. 23.) *Thy Princes are rebellious, and companions of thieves*; that is, they do like thieves, they oppreſs, and vex, and violently take away. They are ſo far (which is the duty of Princes) from repreſſing thieves, that they encourage and countenance them, and not only ſo, but are actually thieves themſelves. Thieves in Authority and Power are the vileſt thieves; who ſhall deliver from oppreſſion, when Princes turn oppreſſors, and Great ones thieves?

Secondly, When it is ſaid, that *they take away flocks and feed them*; it ſhews, that theſe robbers perſiſted in their ſin, and were not aſhamed of it: they could ſpoil their neighbours, and never bluſh: they declared their ſin as *Sodome*, they hid it not.

Thirdly, This imports that they had quiet poſſeſſion of their ill gotten goods; what they got unjuſtly, they held ſecurely and unmoleſted. Their ſtoln goods were neither recovered by Law, nor forceably retaken from them; they fed them, and kept them as their own; wickedneſs proſpered in their hand; no man ſaw the day of Gods reckoning with them. This their impunity *Job* ſpecially aimed at, when he ſaid, *They violently take away flocks, and feed them, or feed upon them.*

> Hence note, *That God leaves ſome wicked men in a long, and quiet poſſeſſion, of what they have unjuſtly gotten.*

To hold by injuſtice and oppreſſion is the worſt and moſt ſlippery title and tenure in the world; yet as unjuſt gain makes ſome rich, as they improve and thrive, as they trade in, and encreaſe by wayes of unrighteouſneſs, ſo they live proſperouſly, and hold ſtrongly what they have unrighteouſly gained: They both feed upon and feed the flocks which they have taken away by violence. Though ſome oppreſſors are ſo ſuddainly attached by purſuing vengeance, that they can neither feed nor feed upon their ſtoln flocks; but even before the meat is in their mouths the wrath of God and juſtice of man falls upon them, and will not ſuffer them to roſt what they have got in this kind of cruel hunting; yet others roſt and eat to the full, though indeed, they do but fat themſelves againſt a day of ſlaughter, which though it come ſlowly will ſurely come. *Job* ſtill proceeds in deſcribing their other acts of violence.

Verſ. 3. **They drive away the Aſs of the fatherleſs, they take the widows Ox for a pledge.**

There is ſomewhat conſiderable in theſe words, though they are but a continued deſcription of the ſame thing under variety of inſtances.

They drive away the Aſs of the fatherleſs.

Here is more violence ſtill. Some conceive the ſingular is here put for the plural; the *Aſs* for the *Aſſes of the fatherleſs*; that is, all the Aſſes that he had, they left not one, but ſwept all away. But if we take the word ſtrictly for one ſingle Aſs, then it aggravates the ſin, *They drive away the Aſs of the fatherleſs*: Though he hath but one, they drive that away; this heightens the oppreſſion, as (2 *Sam.* 12. 3.) in the parable which *Nathan* put to *David*

Abigeus is propriè dicitur qui pecora ex paſcuis vel ex armentis ſubtrahit, & abigendi ſtudiũ quaſi artem exercet. Ulpi.

Inſigne eſt apud Juriſconſultos Abigeatus crimen.

vid to convince him of his ſin ; *He tells him of a rich man that had exceeding many flocks and herds, but the poor man had nothing ſave one little Ew-Lamb, which he had bought, and nouriſhed up, and it grew up together with him, and with his children, it did eat of his own meat, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his boſom, and was unto him as a daughter : Now, when the traveller came to the rich man, he ſpared to take of his own flock, and of his own herd, to dreſs for the wayfairing man, but took the poor mans lamb,* &c. So here, *they drive away the Aſs of the fatherleſs* ; though he hath but one, they drive that away.

Further, when he ſaith, *They drive away the Aſs*, there are two things conſiderable in it. Firſt, The Aſs is a uſeful and ſerviceable beaſt for the bearing of burthens. Secondly, The Aſs is a mean creature , a beaſt of no great value, though of ſome uſe. They drive away the very Aſs, and that *the Aſs of the*

Fatherleſs.] In the former verſe, where it is ſaid, *They violently take away flocks, and feed thereof* ; there is no mention at all made, whoſe the flocks were, or from whom they took them. But here *Job* ſeems to lay the emphaſis of their ſin, not ſo much upon what they drove away, as upon the perſon whoſe it was, which they drove away ; they drive away not the great or the rich mans Aſs, but the Aſs of the *Fatherleſs*. The word *Fatherleſs* may be taken two wayes, either ſtrictly, for a child that is left without a father to take care of him and provide for him : or ſecondly, we may expound the word *Fatherleſs* more largely for any that are poor, and in diſtreſs ; as was ſhewed (*Chap.* 22.9.) How cruel are they, and how covetous are they, who will not ſpare the poor, no not poor Orphans ! To take from the *Fatherleſs* in either ſence, aggravates the ſin. Which aggravation of their ſin is further proſecuted in the next inſtance of their oppreſſion.

They take away the widdows Ox for a pledge.

What a pledge is hath been opened at *Chap*. 22. 6. It is not ſinful to take a pledge ; but there is a twofold ſin implied in this place, while they are charged with *taking the widows Ox for a pledge*. Firſt, In reference to the perſon of whom the pledge was taken, *the widow*. Secondly, In reference to the thing which was taken for a pledge, it was the *widdows Ox*. For the Ox being uſed for labour in tilling the ground (a moſt neceſſary uſe) ſhould not be taken or at leſt not detained as a pledge ; therefore we find that thoſe things which were for neceſſary uſe and lively-hood, were forbidden to be taken for pledge (*Exod*. 22. 26, 27.) or if they were taken, they were preſently to be reſtored before the Sun went down. But theſe cruel men took the widdows Ox for a pledge, and reſtored him not. We may alſo underſtand it (as ſome) that they took the Ox as if it were a pledge, doing it as of right, or under pretence and colour of Juſtice (as being her creditors) for a debt. And ſo the whole proceeding is expounded either of Tyrants, that lay heavy Taxes upon the poor people, and if they are not able to pay preſently take all away by diſtrein : or of common Extortioners, who lend money, or let leaſes, and upon every default of payment take the forfeiture, and carry all away as due to themſelves.

Viduæ & pupillæ aſinum & bovem certæ vitæ inſtrumenta avertunt. Nicet.

Ipſarum viduarum facultates per vim eripiunt quaſi jure quodam inſtar creditorum pignorarentur. Bez.

Quaſi ſub quodam colore juſtitiæ viduam gravantes. Aquin.

Further, we may obſerve in Scripture, that as we have theſe two uſually put together, *the fatherleſs, and the widdow*, ſo we have theſe two uſually joyned together, *the Aſs, and the Ox*. Thus they are joyned in the ten Commandments, in the fourth and tenth, and often elſewhere. But ſome may queſtion, Hath the poor widdow an Ox ? The Ox ſeems rather to belong to rich men, then to the poor widdow ; to which we may anſwer, that the Hebrew word which we tranſlate *Ox*, ſignifies as well the female, as the male, and ſo it is rendred by ſome here, *They take away the Cow of the widdow*. The poor widdow lives upon the milk of her Cow ; take that from her, and you take away all her living. But whether we underſtand it of the one or of the other, the difference is not material as to the ſcope and purpoſe of *Job*, who puts the widdows Ox or the widdows Cow, either for the whole or chiefeſt part of her ſubſtance, *They take the widows Ox for a pledge*.

שור *Pro bove fœmina ſumitur.* Bold.

Hence note, *Some care not from whom or what they take, ſo they may have it.*

They will take from the fatherleſs, they will take from the widdow. The Prophet *Amos* (Chap. 2. 7.) ſpeaking of ſuch oppreſſors, ſaith, *They pant after the duſt of the earth on the head of the poor, and turn aſide the way of the needy*. The former part of thoſe words, hath variety of reading and expoſitions, I will not ſtay upon them : but only touch that which is moſt ſutable to the point in hand, *They pant after the duſt of the earth*, that is, they exceedingly deſire, and long for it. As *David* deſcribes his holy deſires (*Pſal.* 42. 1.) *As the Hart panteth after the water brooks, ſo panteth my ſoul after thee, O God* ; that is I extreamly deſire thy preſence and communion with thee, even as the Hart, being hunted and heated deſireth the waters. Thus they *panted after the duſt of the earth*, that is, after thoſe things which are but as the duſt of the earth, or whoſe original and matter is but the duſt of the earth. *Gold and Silver*, theſe are but the refined duſt of the earth ; but whoſe duſt did they pant after ? *It was the duſt on the head of the poor* ; if they did but ſee a poor man to have gotten a little about him, though only enough to keep life and ſoul together, to preſerve himſelf and his family from ſtarving or begging , they preſently panted after it , they were paſſionately deſirous of it, they caſt about how to get it. They who are enflamed with covetouſneſs, are buſie to find out, and having found out, are greedy to purſue all advantages and occaſions to enrich themſelves, though it be with the ruine of the poor. They are glad to get ſomething even from them who (according to common ſpeech) have nothing ; they ſcrape from them, who have but ſcraps to live upon. Such was the grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, *that* (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, 2 *Cor*. 8. 9.) *though he was rich , yet for our ſakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich*. And ſuch is the covetouſneſs of ſome men, that though they are rich enough , yet they care not to make many, who are poor enough already , poorer , that they by making them poorer, might make themſelves richer.

Secondly, Conſider the matter, *they drive away the Aſs of the fatherleſs, and take the widdows Ox (or Cow) for a pledge*.

Hence note, *Some will ſin for a ſmall matter.*

They will do much evil, though they get but little *worldly good* by it, only a ſilly Aſs, or a labouring Ox from the fatherleſs or the widdow. Who as they never have many of theſe, commonly, but one of each (for both words are of the ſingular number) ſo thoſe that they have are uſually none of the beſt , fatteſt , ſtrongeſt , greateſt, and ſo higheſt prized ones : As the fatherleſs , and the widdow , are poor, ſo their Ox and Aſs are but poor ones too ; yet ſome will unjuſtly drive and take theſe poor things away, *They will play at ſmall game* (as we ſay) *rather then ſit out* ; and act baſely to get but an Aſs. The Prophet *Amos* (Chap. 2. 6.) repreſents the Lord proteſting againſt ſuch, thus, *For three tranſgreſſions of* Iſrael, *and for four, I will not turn away the puniſhment thereof , becauſe they ſold the righteous for Silver, and the poor for a pair of Shoes* ; that is , they ſold the right of the poor , when they could get but a very ſmall advantage by it , the worth of a pair of Shoes. Some in ſinning are like Eagles , they will not ſtoop at flies ; if they break the rules of righteouſneſs and faithfulneſs, it ſhall be for a Crown or a Kingdom. They who ſin for the greateſt profit, make a looſing bargain of it : What then do they who will ſin for the loweſt profit ?

Thirdly, *They drive away the Aſs from the fatherleſs, and take the Ox of the widdow* ; from the conſideration of the perſons wronged,

Note, *It is ſinful to wrong any, but much more to wrong the poor.*

Having met with this point from other paſſages in this book, I only name it, and add, that there are two things which ſhew the ſinfulneſs of taking from the poor. Firſt, Becauſe they are weak and unable either to reſiſt injuries, or to right themſelves ; they cannot help themſelves, nor can they eaſily procure help from others. *The poor and him that hath no help*, are put together (*Pſal*. 72. 12.) and uſually they are the ſame. *I returned* (ſaid *Solomon*, *Eccleſ*. 4. 1.)

Sordido lucro aſſervientes, ne calceos quidem pauperum lacrifacere recuſant, qui extremum hominibus uſum prebent. Theo

1.) *and conſidered all the oppreſſions that are done under the Sun, and behold the tears of ſuch as were oppreſſed, and they had no comforter: and on the ſide of their oppreſſors there was power, but they had no comforter.* And they who have no comforter, ſurely have no helper. Now it is moſt ſinful to hurt them who are leaſt able to help themſelves, or find help from others. And who ſo helpleſs, as the fatherleſs and the widdow? Secondly, it is therefore extreamly ſinfull to wrong the poor, and eſpecially theſe poor, becauſe God hath commended them to the care, and tuition of the rich; they are his charge, God hath taken them into his protection, and hath truſted them over to men of power, that they ſhould look to them. Magiſtrates ſhould be as a wall of defence, to the fatherleſs, and widdow, they ſhould provide for them, and nouriſh them. Therefore to ſpoil, and rob them of all, how great a wickedneſs is this? this is (as much as in them is) to make God a lyar, and unfaithful to his Word and Promiſe. As then it ſhould be a great encouragement to help the godly poor, becauſe in ſo doing we are a means to fulfil the promiſe of God to them: So we ſhould therefore be afraid to wrong them, becauſe in ſo doing we do what we can to make the promiſe of God to them void. No marveil then, if the Apoſtle *James* placeth all religion, as to practiſe, in the *viſitation of the widdow and the fatherleſs in their affliction*; and if, in that ſence, all religion be placed in it, what ſhall we judge of their religion, who afflict the widdow, and the fatherleſs? And if to viſit them in trouble, be an act not only of charity to them, but of honour and religion towards God; becauſe God (who provides for all) hath taken upon him to provide for the fatherleſs, and the widdow, by name (So that we diſcharge Gods debt of promiſe to the fatherleſs, and widdow, when we do them good. If, I ſay, it be thus) then how groſs an act is it both of uncharitableneſs to them, and irreligion towards God, to viſit with trouble, to afflict and vex the fatherleſs and the widdow.

Fourthly, From the matter about which they ſinned; *The Aſs of the fatherleſs, and the Ox, or Cow, of the widdow,*

> Obſerve, *That the leſs any thing is for or about which we ſin, the greater is that ſin.*

It ſhews that we value God little, and that we ſet light by his commands, that we regard neither his favour nor his anger, when we can do evil upon ſuch poor accounts. That, by which many excuſe their ſin, encreaſeth it. They will ſay, 'twas a ſmall matter, a little thing they ſtole, or took away; but to ſin in a ſmall matter may be found a great ſin. What? will you break through the holy commands of God, and venture his diſpleaſure for a trifle? Though no man ſhould encourage himſelf to ſin, becauſe he ſinneth for a matter of importance, yet there is not only more folly, but more ſinfulneſs in ſinning for a little. Wo to thoſe who ſin for the greateſt advantages, but more wo to thoſe who value their ſouls, and the Laws of God ſo little, as to diſobey the one, and endanger the other, when ſcarce any thing which the world calls advantage is to be had. It hath been ſaid of old, *If faith or an oath be to be broken, let it be broken for a Kingdom*; yet he will be found no gainer, who breaks his oath to get all the Kingdoms of the world; what ſhall we ſay then of thoſe poor low ſpirited perſons, who ſin (as we ſay) for ſix pence, and break the Laws of God, for ſo poor a profit, as will hardly give them a break-faſt. The ſin of theſe oppreſſors is not yet full, see more and greater abominations then theſe.

Verſ. 4. **They turn the needy out of the way, the poor of the earth hide themſelves together.**

The word which we tranſlate *needy*, ſignifies to *deſire*; they who have many wants have many deſires; and the ſenſe of our wants, is the ſpring of our deſires; and though many who have no want in outward things are full of deſires, yet the needy are properly the deſirers; and whoſoever deſires much, either hath many wants, or is not ſatisfied with his fulneſs.

They turn the needy out of the way.] The Prophet (*Amos*, Chap. 2. 7.) reproving the Princes of *Iſrael*, ſaith, *they turn aſide the way of the meek*, or (as others render) *of the poor and afflicted.* That ſpeech of the Prophet ſeems to be of near alliance, if not altogether the ſame, in ſence with this of *Job*, *They turn the needy out of the way.*

What way this ſhould be is expounded four or five wayes.

First, Some take it metaphorically, for a moral way. And that, firſt, the way of righteouſneſs and equity. And the wicked turn the needy out of that way, either, firſt, by their evil examples; or ſecondly, by their threatnings and perſecutions. The ſinful practices of men in power, lead the needy, or the inferior ſort, into the practice of the ſame ſins. And the oppreſſions of the mighty do even compel the needy to turn aſide from the right way of getting their livings, to ſtealing and living by ſpoil and rapine, as they themſelves do. When rich men oppreſs the poor, they turn the poor either to begging, or thieving. When men are vexed and moleſted in honeſt wayes, they lie under a great temptation to turn and betake themſelves to thoſe wayes which are diſhoneſt. *Paul* ſaith of himſelf being a perſecuter, that he compelled the profeſſors of the Goſpel to *blaſpheme* (*Acts* 26. 11.) and this he effected in one or both the wayes above ſpecified; either, firſt, by his example, he being a blaſphemer (as he confeſſed, 1 *Tim.* 1. 13.) they imitated him in blaſpheming or ſpeaking evil of the wayes of God, and of his people: or, ſecondly, he did it by his cruelty, vexing them ſo in the profeſſion of Chriſt, that ſome who were unſetled fell away, and blaſphemed the name of Chriſt, whom they had profeſſed. But though this be a truth, yet I ſhall not give it as the intent of this place. Therefore

Divertere fecerunt impotentes à via juſta. Sept.

Quaſi cogerentur de via recta pietatis divertere ad furta & perjuria, & quærimonias de divina providentia.

Secondly, *They turn the needy out of the way*; that is, out of the way of that juſtice or right which is due to them. And ſo it ſuits well with what he ſaid before; *they drive away the Aſs of the fatherleſs*, &c. and *they turn the needy out of the way*; that is, from what is his right, or from all means of recovering his right.

Dejecerunt impotentes de via juſta. Ambr. *Via pro jure & juſtitia.*

Thirdly, *They turn the needy out of the way*; that is, out of the way of their lively-hood; we commonly enquire, how doth ſuch a man live? And 'tis anſwered, he lives in a very good way, he hath ſuch a way of living, ſuch a trade, calling, or profeſſion; that's his way. Thus, to *turn the needy out of the way*, is to put them beſides the way of getting their bread, and maintaining their families with neceſſaries for this life. In a figurative ſence, every mans profeſſion and calling is his way, and he that moleſts him in it, turns him out of his way. As ſuppoſe a man live in the Country, where he keeps a farm, if his cattle be taken away, he is turned out of his way, he can live no longer in that way. He that takes away what is inſtrumental to a man in his calling, puts him out of his way; and he that diſturbs a man in the work of his calling, turns him out of his way. Our ordinary work is our way (*Pſal.* 1. 1.) *Bleſſed is the man that hath not ſtood in the way of ſinners*, that is, who hath not taken the courſe which (as ſuch) ſinners take. Now as a godly man turns out of, or will not ſtand in the way of ſinners; ſo oppreſſing ſinners turn many that are needy and godly out of the way of their lawful callings, and will not ſuffer them to ſtand or abide in them.

Via pauperum eſt facultus, ſibi neceſſaria parundi. Aquin. *Viam pauperum ſubvertit tyrannus, cum illa detrahit ſine quibus ars cui vacater pauper, exerceri non poteſt.*

Secondly, We may underſtand this way properly for the way or road wherein men walk or travail upon their occaſions; and then theſe words, *They turn the needy out of the way*, may be expounded, as an argument of the extream pride of theſe *Nimrods*, or *ſons of violence.* They cauſed the needy to turn aſide out of the way to give them place, or they made the poor to keep out of their ſight for fear of them, leſt as they had already ſpoiled them of their eſtates, ſo they ſhould alſo abuſe their perſons, and make them ſlaves. Thus they turned the poor out of the way; that is, they durſt not come in ſight for fear; this ſuits well with the laſt clauſe of the verſe.

Illis graſſantibus, nullis ne terr'us quidē fortis, viatoribus tuta eſt vie; adeo ut deflectere à via publica & latebras quærere paſſim cogantur. Bez.

The poor of the earth hide themſelves together.

The word *needy*, in the former part of the verſe (as was toucht before) ſignifies one full of deſires; here the word which we render *poor*, notes one that is *humble, meek, lowly*; not only one low in eſtate, but lowly in mind; not only him that is poor in purſe, but poor in ſpirit; ſo 'tis tranſlated (*Zeph.* 2. 3.) *Seek ye the Lord, ye meek of the earth*, even theſe *poor of the earth hide themſelves together.* Wicked proud men make the poor ſeek corners; the poor have often had experience of their cruelty, and rough dealing, and three-

Inviſibiles fecerunt. Author. Cat.

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therefore run together into holes and corners to hide themſelves, as deſiring rather the ſociety of wild beaſts, then of ſuch beaſtly men. Further, the word which we render *together*, may be tranſlated *alike*; *They hid themſelves alike*; that is, one poor godly man as well as another, they all fare alike; they deal no better with one then with another, none have hope to eſcape the hands of theſe unmerciful Tyrants. Thus it was in the time of that great oppreſſion which the *Iſraelites* were under by the *Philiſtines*; *The Iſraelites hid themſelves*; when *Jonathan* and his Armorbearer got up, and diſcovered themſelves to the Garriſon of the *Philiſtines*, the *Philiſtines* ſaid, *Behold the Hebrews come forth out of the holes where they had hid themſelves* (1 Sam. 14. 11.) The Author to the *Hebrews* gives us a deſcription of the poor Saints thus hiding themſelves together (*Heb.* 11. 37.) *They wandred about in Sheep-skins, and Goat-skins, being deſtitute, afflicted, and tormented; they wandred in deſerts, and mountains, in dens, and caves of the earth. The poor and meek of the earth hid themſelves together.*

Thus we had a large enumeration of thoſe violences which *Job* had obſerved among men, and men proſpering in them. Firſt, Violence upon Lands; Secondly, Upon Cattle; Thirdly, Upon Perſons. The needy, and the poor, are forced to run together into corners. *While the ſin of ſome encreaſeth, the affliction of others muſt needs encreaſe.*

Hence note, *Sinners know no bounds.*

They who at firſt wrong men in their Lands, will not ſtick to wrong them in their Cattle, and within a while, they make no bones to fall upon their Perſons.

Secondly note, *Thoſe evils which are done to men immediately in their perſons, are more ſinful then thoſe that are done to them in their goods, cattle, and eſtate.*

Job ſhews the worſt of their doings laſt. 'Tis bad enough to touch the goods of a poor man, but to trouble his perſon, or cauſeleſly to make him hide his head, is far worſe.

Thirdly note, *That the promotion and exaltation of wicked men, is the oppreſſion and vexation of poor men, more eſpecially of poor godly men.*

It is a ſad time with poor men, moſt of all with poor godly men, when the wicked are exalted. *Solomon* gives us this note in expreſs terms (*Prov.* 28. 28.) *When the wicked riſe* (that is, *when they riſe in power and authority*) *men hide themſelves*; that is, good men hide themſelves: poor men hide themſelves when the wicked riſe, but moſt of all ſuch poor men as are godly. *The reign of wicked men is the ruine of the godly.* Which is more plain by the oppoſition made in the laſt clauſe of the verſe; *When the wicked riſe, men hide themſelves; but when they periſh the righteous increaſe.* In which Proverb, *riſing* is oppoſed to *periſhing*, but *men* and *righteous* are the ſame. When the wicked periſh, thoſe righteous men, who before hid themſelves, appear and ſhew themſelves again. Some poor men are turbulent, proud, untractable, ſeditious, men of unquiet ſpirits; if ſuch be dealt with by juſtice, and made to hide themſelves, they have their deſert. But the poor who are alſo humble, meek, and of a quiet ſpirit, (as the word here imports) are the aim of the wicked. Such *David* found in his low eſtate, and againſt them he prayed (*Pſal.* 35. 19, 20.) *Let not them that are mine enemies wrongfully rejoyce over me: neither let them wink with the eye* (that is, let them not have occaſion to contemn and deſpiſe me, of which, winking with the eye was a token) *that hate me without a cauſe. For they ſpeak not peace, but they deviſe deceitful matters againſt them that are quiet in the land.*

Laſtly note, *The poor go by the worſt, and the weakeſt to the wall; the needy are turned out of the way, and the poor hide themſelves.*

And therefore ſaid God (*Pſal.* 12. 5.) *For the oppreſſion of the poor, and for the ſighing of the needy, now will I ariſe and ſet him in ſafety from him that puffeth at him.* Oppreſſion may quickly empoveriſh the rich, but uſually the poor fall under oppreſſion: they that are full ſigh, when they are made needy and empty, when all is taken from them; but uſually the needy and empty are made to ſigh; *For the oppreſſion of the poor, will I ariſe ſaith the Lord.* Rich and great men can defend themſelves from oppreſſion, but the poor have no ſhelter; rich men will purchaſe their right, but the poor who hath nothing to give, ſeldom finds a friend to deliver him, and get him his right. The ſtorm falls upon the poor, and moſt upon Gods poor, they are moſt ſubject, or lie moſt open to the evils of this world, of whom this preſent evil world is not worthy, and for whom the good of the next world is prepared. And therefore they ſhould fly to ſhelter, while they are here, get under covert, run into the name of God for ſafety and protection; they who are moſt ſubject to oppreſſion, need moſt protection. Some are ſo poor that they have nothing to looſe, and ſo needy that they need not fear oppreſſion. They have neither bread to eat, nor cloaths to put on. Theſe are no bait for covetouſneſs; but, they alſo are to be reckoned among the poor, who have no more then will ſave them from poverty; and they are among the needy, who have only ſo much as ſerves to ſupply their own needs. Theſe poor and needy ones are game for the oppreſſors, theſe the Wolves and Lions of the earth make their prey. The oppreſſion and wickedneſs of theſe hath aſcended three ſteps, in the context now opened. They are, firſt, *Land-invaders*; ſecondly, *Cattel-takers*; thirdly, *Men-troublers. Job* carrieth on the deſcription of their wickedneſs yet further, in the following parts of this Chapter.

VERS. 5, 6, 7, 8.

Behold, as wild Aſſes in the deſert, go they forth to their work, riſing betimes for a prey: the wilderneſs yieldeth food for them and for their Children.

They reap every one his Corn in the field: and they gather the vintage of the wicked.

They cauſe the naked to lodge without cloathing; that they have no covering in the cold.

They are wet with the ſhowers of the mountains, and embrace the rock for want of a ſhelter.

JOB proceeds to enumerate the wickedneſſes of thoſe men whom yet God ſpared, and bare with; he had ſet down many of their ſinful wayes before; they *removed the land-marks*, they *violently took away flocks*, they ſpared not *the Aſs of the fatherleſs, nor the widdows Ox*; they *turned the needy out of the way*, ſo that *the poor of the earth were forced to hide themſelves together.* See now the further progreſs of their wickedneſs, even to admiration, for ſo much the word, *Behold*, with which *Job* leads on his diſcovery of their vexatious practices doth import.

Verſ. 5. **Behold, as wild Aſſes in the deſert, they go forth to their work.**

There is a difference in opinion among Interpreters about the ſubject of this verſe, whom we are to underſtand under this deſcription, *As wild Aſſes in the deſert, going forth to their work.* Some of Note conceive that *the poor* are the ſubject of theſe words, or the perſons here intended. And then they hold forth the hardſhip and miſery to which they were reduced by thoſe mercileſs Tyrants; *Behold as wild Aſſes in the deſert, they go forth to their work.* Oppreſſors did ſo vex them and ſtrip them out of all, that they who heretofore had enough to live upon, were conſtrained to go forth to day-labour and work for their living, at the command, or under the cruel bondage of thoſe inhumane Task-maſters.

Exegeſis præcedentis dicti, de intoleranda improborum ſevitia in pauperes, quorum opera contra legem abutuntur. Jun.

Yet I conceive that we may more clearly expound theſe words as carrying a continued ſeries of the practices of wicked men, who are here compared to wild Aſſes; and there is a word in *verſ.* 5. which gives a ſpecial reaſon why this ſhould not be underſtood of the poor or oppreſſed, but of the oppreſſor, where it is ſaid, *they riſe betimes for a prey*; now that word which we render *a prey*, cometh from a root which ſignifies *to tear*, to rend, to pull aſunder after the manner of wild beaſts; and is of the ſame ſound as well as ſignification with our Engliſh word, *tear*, therefore it ſhould rather be underſtood of oppreſſors, then of the oppreſſed; for a man that goes forth to labour and work

טרף *Carpſit, diſcarpſit, dilaceravit dentibus, proprium ferarum eſt.*

work for his living, cannot properly be ſaid to *riſe betimes for a prey*, for he goeth forth to get his bread honeſtly; now a prey is that which is got by violence; and the word is never applied to men, but in alluſion to ravenous and devouring beaſts. *Jacob* comparing his ſon *Judah* to a Lions whelp (*Gen.* 49. 9.) ſaith, *From the prey, my Son, thou art gone up.* So *Moſes* (Deut. 33. 20.) *And of Gad, he ſaid, Bleſſed be he that enlargeth Gad; he dwelleth as a Lion, and teareth the Arm with the Crown of the head.* And *David* praying to be delivered out of the hand of his enemy, gives this reaſon (*Pſalm* 7. 2.) *Leſt he tear my ſoul like a Lion, while there is none to deliver.* So that the word noting properly the act of a ravenous beaſt who lives upon ſpoil and prey; it is very improper to apply it to the work of a labouring man, who lives and earns his bread with the ſweat of his brows. Yet I find that word ſignifying *food* in general (*Mal.* 3. 10.) *Bring ye all the tythes into the ſtorehouſe, that there may be meat in mine houſe.* Which the interlineral renders, *that there may be a prey in mine houſe*; and another thus, *that there may be that which ye ſnatch, in mine houſe.* Surely the Lord ſtrikes at ſome miſdemeanour while he expreſſeth the food of the Prieſts and Levites, by a word ſignifying that which is torn away by violence. And (I conceive) it may either reflect upon the people who parted ſo hardly with the tythes which did belong to the Temple at that time, that they were rather torn or pulled from them by a kind of violence, then freely paid or brought in according to the Law of God: or it might reflect upon the extream greedineſs of the Prieſts that did adminiſter in the temple, as if they did look upon the tythes, and their portion in them, with as earneſt deſire as wild beaſts hang over and wait for a prey. So that where this word is uſed to ſignifie food, there is ſomewhat in the circumſtance of the Text, which leaves a touch of rapine and violence upon it. And therefore it is not applicable to the earnings of honeſt labourers, but to the cruel gettings of thieves and oppreſſors. *The mountains of prey*, ſpoken of (*Pſal.* 76. 4.) were either thoſe places where conquering Armies divide the ſpoil after a victory obtained; or where robbers preyed upon paſſengers. And therefore I ſhall take the ſubject of this verſe to be the oppreſſors of the poor, not the poor oppreſſed.

Ut ſit præda in domo mea. Mont. *Ut ſit quod rapitis*, &c. Pagn.

Behold, as wild Aſſes in the deſert they go forth.

הן פראים

The particle of likeneſs *as*, is not in the Hebrew, nor yet the word *Aſſes*, expreſly. And therefore Mr. *Broughton* reads ſtrictly to the Original, *Behold the wild in the wilderneſs go forth to their work.* The word ſignifies *wild* at large, but becauſe *wild Aſſes* are extreamly wild, therefore the word is ſpecially applied to them. Thus the Angel ſaid of *Iſhmael* (Gen. 16. 12.) *And he will be a wild man.*

פרא אדם *Ferus homo.*

Behold, as wild Aſſes in the deſert.] The deſert is the dwelling place of wild Aſſes: Tame Aſſes, or Aſſes brought to hand, are about the houſe, or in the encloſed paſtures, but wild Aſſes inhabit the deſert. The word that we render *deſert*, comes from a root that ſignifies *to ſpeak*; and the deſert is ſo called by the figure of *Contrary ſpeaking*, becauſe there is little or no ſpeaking in deſerts; many words are heard only in Cities or places where many people frequent. It ſignifies alſo to lay waſt, becauſe deſerts are waſt and barren places, in compariſon of dreſt and encloſed grounds; ſuch is the place whither theſe ſpoilers go forth *as wild Aſſes*,

דבר מדבר a *Locutio eſt per antiphraſin quaſi locus à ſermone remotus.*

To their work.

But wild Aſſes work not, only tame Aſſes are labouring Aſſes; ſo that the ſimilitude runs not upon that point; yet we may ſay, wild Aſſes have a work, and 'tis much like that which wicked men do in the deſerts; they work there, but 'tis wild work, ſuch as wild Aſſes are buſied about, the getting of prey. *They go forth to their work*; and that word ſignifies not only a work, but an *Art*, or a *Craft*. Theſe ſpoilers were their *Crafts-maſters*, and could do miſchief cunningly, as having been brought up as apprentices to it, or ſtudied it like Schollers; they had well learned and were verſt in their work, and what their work was we may learn in the next words.

כפעלם; *In, i. e. opere vel artificium ſuum vel artem unde victum quærunt.* Merc.

Riſing betimes for a prey.

Like work-men, like work. To take a purſe, or ſpoil paſſengers, that's their work; and they get up and are out betimes about this work; *For a prey, they riſe betimes.* The Hebrew is, *They morning it*; that is, they riſe early in the morning; to do a thing in the morning, is in Scripture language, to do a thing diligently and with greateſt intention of ſpirit, becauſe diligent active men are up early; ſo that to riſe in the morning is not only an expreſſion of the time of their riſing, but of their ſpirit and diligence at their work when they were riſen, whenſoever they roſe. The whoriſh woman ſaith to the young man (*Prov.* 7. 15.) *Therefore came I forth to meet thee diligently, to ſeek thy face.* The Hebrew is, *To ſeek thee in the morning*, or, *to morning thee*; and yet it was *in the twilight*, in the evening, when ſhe came out to meet him, as is expreſt at *verſ.* 9. of the ſame Chapter. Here indeed in the Text, *To morning it*, notes that they took the firſt of the morning for their work; *riſing betimes for a prey.* And that not without ſucceſs, as the laſt clauſe of the verſe ſheweth.

שחר משחרי a *Manè ſtudioſè quærunt vel ſummo ſtudio.* Druſ.

Verbum Hebraicum declarat diluculare, unde ſignificat præcipuo ſtudio vel cura aliquid agere.

The wilderneſs yieldeth food for them and for their Children.

Where have they their prey? The Text anſwers, *they have it in the wilderneſs.* In the former part of the verſe he ſpake of the *deſert*, and in this latter of the *wilderneſs*, in both he means the ſame place; both import barrenneſs, wildneſs, and waſtneſs: Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates, *The vaſt ground giveth him bread for his young.* We ſay, *The wilderneſs yieldeth food for them*, &c. It may ſeem ſtrange that a wild wilderneſs, a wilderneſs untilled, unplanted, uninhabited, ſhould yield them food.

ערבה *Solitudo idem quod* מדבר *Deſertum, hinc Arabia deſerta.*

I anſwer, Firſt, The Scripture ſpeaks of many wilderneſſes that were planted and inhabited. *John* the Baptiſt preached in the wilderneſs of *Judea* (Matth. 3. 1.) and the wilderneſs had many houſes if not Towns in it, ſuch wilderneſſes yield food in plenty. Secondly, The wilderneſs may be ſaid to yield them food, not becauſe they did live upon that which grew in the wilderneſs, or in theſe waſt places; but becauſe in the wilderneſs they took occaſion to ſpoil and rob thoſe that through it travailed to other places. Many get their livings there, where none live, and where nothing is to be had of the growth of the place to live upon. Outrages and robberies are uſually committed in ſuch places; and therefore in the Propheſie of that great Peace which Chriſt ſhould give to his Church (*Pſal.* 72. 3.) It is ſaid, *The mountains ſhall bring peace to the people, and the little hills by righteouſneſs*; he names the mountains and the hills above other places, becauſe in or upon them violence is often exerciſed; and to ſay, *The mountains ſhall bring peace*, is much more then to ſay the valleys and the Cities ſhall bring peace: when there is peace and ſafety upon hills and mountains, we may preſume that there is peace every where. Therefore as when God promiſeth (*Iſa.* 60. 17.) that in the latter dayes he will make the *Officers among his people peace, and their exactors righteouſneſs*; he means that he will make all ſorts of men peaceful and righteous, becauſe he will make them ſuch who are uſually moſt troubleſom and unrighteous, *Officers and Exactors*: ſo when he ſaith *the mountains ſhall bring peace*, the meaning is, every place ſhall, or that the peace ſhall be univerſal in all places, becauſe mountains and wilderneſſes are the places where robbers and ſpoilers take their prey, and get their ſubſiſtence. And hence it may well be anſwered, why *Job* ſaith, that *the wilderneſs yielded them food*, even becauſe that place was fitteſt for them to rob and ſpoil in, who made the ſpoil of others their daily food. Thus, *The wilderneſs yields food for them*,

And for their Children.] The word ſignifies any that are young, and is taken as well for *ſervants* as *for Children* (1 Sam. 21. 5.) *The veſſels of the young men are holy*, ſaid *David* to the Prieſt concerning his followers. So (1 *Sam.* 25. 9.) Thus here it comprehends all that are about them; even all their family and retinue. They and all theirs, all that belong to them have their food in the wilderneſs, that is, there they take opportunity by violence and oppreſſion to maintain themſelves and theirs.

Here we may conſider, Firſt, That *Job* calls theſe ſpoilers *wild Aſſes*, nor doth the Scripture ſpeak this in vain.

Hence note, *Wicked men are like beaſts, or beaſtial in their diſpoſitions and actions.*

David compares the beſt of that ſort, *men in honour*, to beaſts (*Pſalm* 49. 20.) *Man* (ſaith he) *that is in honour and underſtandeth not, is like the beaſts that periſh. David's* man that *underſtandeth not*, is not a man without natural, but a man without true ſpiritual capacity and underſtanding, a man who fears not God (for *to fear God that is wiſdom*) and who departs not from evil, for *to depart from evil that is underſtanding* (Job 28. 28.) Now how great and large an underſtanding ſo ever any great and honourable man hath, yet if he hath not an underſtanding in theſe things, *he is like the beaſts that periſh.* It is not ſaid he is like this or that beaſt, but he is like *the beaſts that periſh.* Take any beaſt, or all beaſts, the worſt of beaſts, he is the picture of them all, and he daily exemplifies the vileſt of their qualities in his own. The Prophet *Micah* (Chap. 3. 1, 2, 3.) ſaith that of them, which ſpeaks them rather beaſts indeed then like beaſts; *Hear I pray you, O heads of* Jacob, *and ye Princes of the houſe of* Iſrael, *is it not for you to know Judgment?* (as if he had ſaid, who ſhould if not you) *who hate the good, and love the evil; who pluck off their skin from off them, and their fleſh from off their bones; who alſo eat the fleſh of my people, and flay off their skin, and break their bones*, &c. How could the beaſt be more lively acted then by theſe men? *Paul* fought with beaſts at *Epheſus* (1 Cor. 15. 32.) which, I grant, may be expounded properly, and poſſibly, beſt ſo; it being uſual in thoſe times of perſecution under Heatheniſh power, to caſt the Chriſtians to the wild beaſts; and for the common ſort to cry out, *Away with the Chriſtians to the Lions*; yet it is as true that *Paul* did fight or contend with beaſts in the ſhape of men. And he ſpeaks particularly concerning bloody *Nero*, a man in the higheſt honour of that age (2 *Tim*. 4. 17.) *I was delivered out of the mouth of the Lion.* The Baptiſt called the Phariſees *a generation of vipers* (Matth. 3. 7.) And *Herod* is called by Chriſt, *that Fox* (Luke 13. 32.) And 'tis ſaid of all ungodly men at once (*Rev.* 22. 15.) *Without are Dogs*, Wolves, Lions, Foxes, Vipers, Serpents. Dogs, the worſt of Creatures for rapine and ſpoil, do but expreſs the inhumanity and cruelty of wicked men. And becauſe they are compared to wild Aſſes in the Text, I will give you ſome parallels between them and the wild Aſs.

Libertatis ſymbolum eſt Onager.

Firſt, In their lawleſneſs and unſubjection to command; carnal men are lawleſs. The Apoſtle calls them ſo (1 *Tim.* 1. 9.) *Knowing this that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawleſs and diſobedient*; not that they have no law, but they live as if they had none; they who love to diſobey the law are lawleſs, and embrace libertiniſm inſtead of liberty. Thus the wicked man is as the *wild Aſs*, for his licentiouſneſs and lawleſneſs; for ſo the wild Aſs is deſcribed in *Chap.* 39. of this Book, *verſ.* 5. *Who hath ſent out the wild Aſs free? or looſed the bands of the wild Aſs?* What's the freedom of the wild *Aſs*? Not like that of men who have the priviledge of freedom in an order, but to be free without order. The wicked would be where they will, and do what they liſt; this is the freedom of the wild Aſs, to be free, and to live without bands or bounds. And if we ſhould ask the Queſtion, *Who hath ſent out the wild Aſs free?* Who hath manumitted him? Surely no man hath done it, but God hath planted it in the nature of the wild Aſs to be free, and to live without bands or bounds. And if we ſhould ask the Queſtion, *Who hath ſent out wicked men free? and who hath looſed the bands of the wicked?* The anſwer muſt be, Satan hath done it, and their own evil hearts have done it: they have broke the bands, and caſt away all cords from them; they have ſet themſelves free, in ſuch a freedom as it is, which is indeed perfect thraldom to their own luſts, and the laws of the Prince of darkneſs; they are not free by being delivered from the bondage and condemnation of the law, but by caſting off all obedience and ſubmiſſion to it.

Secondly, Wild Aſſes are extreamly violent and impetuous in their deſires or luſts. *Jeremy* expoſtulating with the *Jews* about their revolting from, and rebellion againſt God, compares them (*Chap.* 2. 24.) to *a wild Aſs uſed to the wilderneſs, that ſnuffeth up the wind at her pleaſure: in her occaſion who can turn her away? all they that ſeek her, will not weary themſelves, in her month they ſhall find her*; there's no medling, no dealing with the wild Aſs while luſt is upon her, ſhe will have the deſire of her heart if ſhe can. Thus wicked men are given up to, and tranſported with their pleaſures and inordinate affections; *in their occaſion*, that is, when the heat of their intemperate deſires or luſts, of any kind, are upon them, there is no turning of them; only, *in their month*, when ſorrows and pains are upon them, they may be ſpoken with. We may alſo read both this ſin and the reproof of that people in a like alluſion, *Hoſ.* 8. 9.

Thirdly, The wild Aſs is an Emblem of the wicked man, eſpecially as he is an Oppreſſor or Tyrant in his unſociableneſs; for as the Aſs refuſeth ſociety, ſo theſe are unfit for ſociety, and are indeed enemies of mankind; they are unfit not only for Spiritual, but alſo for Political, or Civil ſociety. God ſpeaking of the wild Aſs (in *Chap.* 39. of this book, *verſ.* 6, 7.) ſaith, *Whoſe houſe I have made the wilderneſs, and the barren land his dwellings. He ſcorneth the multitude of the City, neither regardeth he the crying of the driver; the range of the mountains is his paſture, and he ſearcheth after every green thing.* Though the oppreſſor live in the City, yet he is like the wild Aſs in this, he cares not to maintain ſociety as he ought; he cares for the ſociety of others only for himſelf, *he ſcorneth the multitude of the City*; he is for the range of the mountains, where he may take all he can get; *he ſearcheth after every green thing*, whatſoever hath pleaſure or profit in it, he purſues it for himſelf.

Velocitas timiditatis ſubſidium. Timida eſt omnis Nequitia.

This parallel might be drawn out further; wild Aſſes (as Naturaliſts have obſerved) are fearful. Thoſe Creatures that are moſt ſwift, are naturally moſt fearful; and their ſwiftneſs is a relief to their fearfulneſs. Thus, wicked men are fearful. They only have true courage who fear God; and where the fear of God is not, every other fear is, or every other thing is feared; they who find not a friend in their own conſciences, are ready to ſuſpect every one for an enemy. So that though every wicked man would have all that he can get himſelf alone, yet he dares not be alone in getting it; and upon thoſe terms only he is willing that others ſhould joyn with him in the profit, becauſe he would have them joyn with him in the ſin (*Prov.* 1. 11, 14.) *Come with us, let us lay wait for blood*, &c. *Caſt in thy lot with us, we will all have one purſe.* Wicked men are not for ſociety, unleſs it be in wickedneſs; and yet theirs is not ſo much a ſociety as a conſpiracy. A wicked man, let his ſin be what it will, is glad when he hath partners in doing it, or that others do the ſame with him; not only becauſe he hath a ſuſpicion of the lawfulneſs of what he doth, but alſo becauſe he ſuſpects ſome ſuddain danger in doing it. And hence ſome have noted that the woman, who committed the firſt ſin, did not like to be alone in it; and therefore having eaten her ſelf ſhe gave the fruit of the tree to her husband to eat alſo; ſhe deſired an aſſociate both to countenance her in the act, and to help to bear her out in the conſequents of it. And when they had both ſinned, they ſhewed themſelves like wild Aſſes indeed, running into the thickets at the approach of God, there to hide themſelves both for ſhame and fear. *Behold as wild Aſſes,*

They go forth to their work.

Hence note, *To wrong men, to ſin againſt God, is the work of wicked men.*

That's their buſineſs. Therefore in Scripture they are often called *workers of Iniqnity*; implying that to do iniquity is their trade of life, or that which they live by and daily ſet themſelves about. The work of God is none of their work, nor do they count it ſo, *being* (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Tit.* 1. 16.) *abominable, diſobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.* Good work is put into the hand of man by the hand of God, but they have their work from another hand; *the luſts of your father ye will do* (ſaith Chriſt to the Phariſees, *Joh.* 8. 44.) that is, ye will do the Devils work; that's their work, and they go forth to it. As the honeſt labouring man *goeth forth unto his work and to his labour until the Evening* (Pſal. 104. 23.) ſo the wicked man goeth forth to ſin as to his work; and that he doth ſo, is evident upon a four-fold account.

Firſt, Becauſe he doth not ſtumble upon it, but intends it; a godly man falls into ſin, but to ſin is not his intendment; a godly man may ſin when he goeth forth, but he doth not go forth to ſin, he doth not make it his buſineſs. That is properly a mans work, which he propoſeth to himſelf to do, and purpoſeth to do.

Secondly, He goeth forth to it as to his work, for he delights in it, he is pleaſed with it. It is his meat and drink, yea his mirth and muſick to do evil. That is properly a mans work, which though it be painful to him to do it, yet he is pleaſed in doing it.

Thirdly, He goes forth to it as to his work, for he ſpends his ſpirits, his ſtrength and time in it; we do many things which are not our work, they are but by-works, or beſide our work, we beſtow little of our time and ſtrength in ſuch things: that which a man beſtows his time and ſtrength upon, that whereat he labours to ſweat and wearineſs of body, that's his work. Now the time of wicked men runs out, and their ſtrength is conſumed in ſinning; and though they are not weary of committing iniquity, yet they weary themſelves (as the Prophet ſpeaks, *Jer.* 9. 5.) to commit iniquity, therefore that's their work.

Fourthly, Wicked men are skilful to ſin, they ſin with a kind of art, therefore that's their work; that which is a mans proper work, he hath knowledge about it, and is dextrous at; he doth not bungle, but makes clean work (as we ſay) of that which is *his work.* A Miniſter ſhould preach the Goſpel like a workman that *needs not be aſhamed* (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks) The wicked ſin like workmen, though the more they do ſo, the more cauſe they have to be aſhamed. The Prophet (*Jer.* 9. 5.) bewailing the extream ſinfulneſs of thoſe times, ſaith, *They have taught their tongues to ſpeak lyes.* As if they had ſtudied the art and language of lying; while they told or made groſs lies, they would not make them groſly, but with a kind of fineneſs and neatneſs. As though what a godly man doth according to the mind of God, he doth by grace, yet he uſeth a kind of artificialneſs in doing it; and is therefore exhorted to walk circumſpectly or accurately; that is, to act all his duties with exactneſs; ſo, though what an ungodly man doth againſt the mind of God, he doth it by nature, or very naturally, yet he uſeth a kind of artificialneſs in doing it; and therefore he is ſaid (*Pſal.* 50. 19, 20.) *To give his mouth to evil, and to frame deceit with his tongue, to ſit* (as an Artiſt at his work) *and ſpeak againſt his brother, and ſlander his own mothers ſon.* Thus, *they go forth to their work,*

Riſing betimes for a prey.

Whence obſerve, *A wicked man is very induſtrious and diligent in doing his work.*

To riſe betimes, and to do a thing diligently, are the ſame in Scripture; to riſe betimes is to riſe ſomewhat before the ordinary time of riſing: now, when a man breaks his ſleep to go about his work, this ſhews that he is induſtrious at it. As ſome wicked men quickly through off their ſleep, that they may do miſchief: ſo (which argues the ſame principle and ſpirit) *Others ſleep not unleſs they have done miſchief, and their ſleep is taken away, unleſs they cauſe ſome to fall* (Prov. 4. 16.) Their own ſleep is taken away, unleſs they take away ſomewhat which is not their own; they will defraud themſelves of reſt, rather then not defraud others of their right; they go not more unwillingly to priſon after they have done evil, then they go to bed before they have done it. O how are they ſet upon miſchief, whoſe ſleep departs from them unleſs they do it, and who cannot reſt unleſs they trouble others. The ſervants of God, when they are up in zeal cannot ſleep unleſs they do good; as *David* ſpeaks (*Pſal.* 132. 4, 5, 6.) *Surely I will not come into the Tabernacle of my houſe, nor clime up to my bed; I will give no ſleep to mine eyes, nor ſlumber to mine eye lids, till I have found a place for God,* &c. He was ſo zealous for God that if he could he would not ſleep, he would forbid his own reſt, though he had never ſo much mind to it, till he had finiſht that work for God. So ſaith the wicked man, I will give mine eyes no ſleep, nor ſlumber to mine eye-lids, till I have done this or that miſchief, and brought my device to paſs. When the wicked lye waking on their beds, what are they about then? Their waking thoughts in the night are to do miſchief in the morning (*Micah* 2. 1, 2.) *Wo to them that deviſe iniquity, and work evil upon their beds.* How do they work it upon their beds? They work it in their thoughts, in their inward ſhop, there they faſhion it, and *when the morning is light they practice it, becauſe it is in the power of their hand*; they hinder themſelves from ſleep, that they may forward themſelves in ſin; the night is ſpent in imagining, and plotting, and the day in accompliſhing what they have imagined and plotted. Their morning light is ſpent in the works of darkneſs, and the Text ſaith, *They practice it, becauſe it is in the power of their hand.* They never conſider what is juſt for them to do, but what they have power to do, if they have ability they want no will for the vileſt practices.

Again, as they cannot ſleep ſometimes for deviſing evil, ſo when they have ſlept, their firſt waking thoughts are about evil; and this alſo is a further proof of their extream induſtriouſneſs in doing evil. For as it is with a zealous godly man, his firſt waking thoughts are with God and Chriſt, or about his own ſoul, how God may be honoured, and how his ſoul may be ſaved (*Pſal.* 139. 18.) *O how precious are thy thoughts* (that is, thoughts of thee) *to me, O God, how great is the ſum of them! when I awake I am ſtill with thee*; that is, *my thoughts and meditations are with thee as ſoon as ever I awake*; here's the diligence of the ſoul after God: ſo the wicked man when he awakes he is ſtill with ſin; and if he cannot awake naturally ſoon enough to ſin, he will force himſelf to awake: and ſo he may be ſaid to awake to ſin, before he is awake; for as ſome nurſe up and feed their ſleep when they are a little awakned like the ſluggard, *yet a little ſlumber, a little ſleep*; ſo others offer violence to, or break their ſleep, that is, as the Text ſaith, *they riſe betimes,* even before the uſual time of riſing, that they may get a prey. It is no wonder, if they who ſtick not at breaking the laws of God, break alſo the laws of their own reſt.

Diligence is good about that which is good; it is good to be zealouſly affected alwayes in a good matter, but zeal and diligence miſplaced, how evil are they! it is better to creep in a good way, then to run in a wrong way. Even idleneſs is better then ſuch diligence; yet they who miſplace their zeal and diligence, are commonly more in both then they who place them right; and they who are in a falſe way, make more haſt then they who are in a true. The Scripture notes the extream intenſeneſs of the builders of *Babel* upon their work. And that's the ſtrain of moſt men in ſuch work as theirs was, the building of a *Babel*, or in doing that, which will be but a monument of their own pride and folly, or of their rebellion againſt and contempt of God (*Gen.* 11. 6.) *This they begin to do, and now nothing will be reſtrained from them which they have imagined to do*; if they have but a mind to it they will do it, let it coſt what it will, neither difficulty nor danger ſhall reſtrain them. See alſo how induſtrious the ten Tribes were in their Idolatrous worſhip which *Jeroboam* had ſet up (1 *Kings* 12. 30.) *And this thing became a ſin; for the people went to worſhip before the one, even unto Dan*; that is, they went a great way to worſhip; for howſoever *Jeroboam* pretended the eaſe and accommodation of the people in ſetting up thoſe Calves (*verſ.* 28.) *It is too much for you to go up to* Jeruſalem; *Behold thy gods, O* Iſrael, *which brought thee up out of the Land of* Egypt (as if he had ſaid, thy gods are at hand, or in thine eye, thou needeſt not toil thy ſelf in going ſo far to ſerve them) yet *Jeruſalem* was nearer unto moſt of the *Iſraelites*, then either *Dan* or *Bethel* were. For *Bethel* one of thoſe places of worſhip was in the utmoſt bounds of the South (*Joſh.* 18. 22.) and *Dan* the other place of worſhip was in the utmoſt bounds of the North (*Joſh.* 19. 47.) ſo that they were willing to take more pains to follow the Idolatrous inventions of man, then to keep to the Inſtitutions of God. *Jeruſalem* was nearer to moſt of the ten Tribes then either *Dan* or *Bethel*, and yet thither they would go. All the way to ſin, whether in ordinary practice or worſhip, is down-hill to nature; we have both the wind and tide of the world with us, will we ſet our faces Hell-ward; and to be ſure, Satan will never check their diligence who are doing his work, nor take them off from their pace, who are going or galloping his way. We have a clear evidence of this in the caſe of the worſhippers of thoſe two Calves in *Dan* and *Bethel*; and it is further obſerved by ſome, that the *Iſraelites* grew ſo zealous in a ſhort time in that abomination, that they who dwelt near *Bethel* did even diſdain to worſhip at *Bethel*; they diſdained to ſerve their God at their own doors; and therefore they that dwelt at or near *Bethel* would go to *Dan* and worſhip; and they that dwelt at or near *Dan* would go to *Bethel* to worſhip. The heart of man is ſo mad upon Idolatry, that he is willing to be at any coſt or pains for it: He ſcorns to ſerve a falſe God at an eaſie rate; nor is he pleaſed (which is the only thing which pleaſeth ſome who pretend to the true Religion) with a cheap Religion. You may lay what tax you will upon him either of pains or purſe, and he is willing, yea, even ambitious to pay or perform it. Thus the blind Votaries among the Papiſts at this day will needs go a Pilgrimage to remoteſt places; they will travel to *Jeruſalem* and viſit the Sepulchre, *&c.* theſe long Journeys they glory in, it is but a ſtep to them, hard penances, not only faſtings but whippings they glory in. The nature of man will carry him two miles at his own bidding, rather then one at Gods. How may it ſhame godly men for their ſloath in doing the will of God, when they hear how induſtrious evil men are in doing their own? How may it ſhame them, that they ſhould take leſs pains to keep a righteous Law, then many do to ſatisfie a filthy luſt? Who *like wild Aſſes go forth to their work, riſing betimes for a prey.* And whereas it follows, *The wilderneſs yieldeth food for them and for their Children,*

Note, *Wicked men will have it, if it be had above ground.*

They that live by rapine will live any where; every mans eſtate is theirs, if they can but get it. They find a harveſt in the wilderneſs, and riches in the deſert.

Again, Note, *Wicked men lay up for theirs, as well as for themſelves, by the ſpoil of others.*

The light of nature teacheth Parents to lay up for their Children; and they who get an eſtate by wronging others, yet think they are bound to provide for more then themſelves (*Nahum* 2. 11.) *Where is the dwelling of the Lyons, and the feeding place of the young Lyons? Where the Lyon, even the old Lyon walked, and the Lyons whelp, and none made him afraid. The Lyon did tear in pieces enough for his whelps, and ſtrugled for his Lyoneſſes.* What did the Lyon? The Lyon did tear in pieces! And how much did he tear in pieces? Not only enough to fill his own belly, but to feed his whelps, and his Lyonneſſes; *He filled his holes with prey, and his dens with ravine.* Thus the Prophet deſcribeth wicked men, providing not only for themſelves, but for theirs, their young Lyons and Lyonneſſes; *The wilderneſs yieldeth food for them and for their Children.*

Further, Some note the conſent of the whole family in wickedneſs, from theſe words; *The wilderneſs yieldeth food for them and for their Children*; that is, they all agree together, Maſter, and Servants, and Children, all agree together to do miſchief, to ſpoil and oppreſs all they can. Where Parents and Maſters are evil, Children and Servants are ſeldom good. It is rare to ſee hearts united about that which is good; but they are often and eaſily united in that which is evil. Thus the Lord ſpeaks to *Jeremiah* (Chap. 7. 18.) *Seeſt thou not what they do in the Cities of* Judah, *and in the ſtreets of* Jeruſalem? *The Children gather wood, and the Fathers kindle the fire, and the Women knead their dough to make Cakes to the Queen of Heaven,* &c. All were at work, buſie, very buſie they were about an Idolatrous ſervice; the Children, the Fathers, and the Women act their ſeveral parts. So here, either they robb'd for their Children; or their Children were robbers as well as themſelves. *The wilderneſs yieldeth food for them and their Children.* *Job* proceeds in his narrative of their ſin.

Verſe 6. **They reap every one his Corn in the field, and they gather the vintage of the wicked.**

In the former verſe *Job* ſpake of the oppreſſion of perſons; in this, he ſpeaks of the ſpoiling of lands and fields; *They*, that is, the wicked, *reap every one his own Corn*; that is, by their ſervants whom they ſet awork (*They reap every one his own Corn*) *in the field.*

But you will ſay, What hurt is there in that?

The meaning is, They reap the Corn which doth not belong to them. The Septuagint give that ſence of the Text expreſly; *They mow or reap the ground or field which is not theirs.* And ſo Mr. *Broughton*, *They reap the field that is not their own:* Or if we keep to our reading, *They reap every one his Corn in the field*; The ſence is, whereſoever they find a field of Corn for their purpoſe, they pretend ſome title or other to it, they muſt have it as if it were their own. This is their ſin, and the affliction of thoſe who are their Neighbours.

Agrum non ſuum ante tempus demeſſiverunt. Sept. *Agrum non ſuum demetunt.*

Note from it, *That it is a great ſin to reap the Corn which we have not ſown; and a great affliction when the Corn which we have ſown is reapt by others.*

Job imprecates this puniſhment upon himſelf, in caſe he had done, or were guilty, as his Friends had charged him, *Then let me ſow, and let another eat* (Chap. 31. 8.) And this is threatned (*Iſa.* 1. 7.) *Your land ſtrangers devour in your preſence*; that is, they devour the fruit of it, the Corn which ye have ſowed, and the Cattel which ye have bred (*Mic.* 6. 15.) *Thou ſhalt ſow, but not reap; thou ſhalt tread the Olives, but not anoint thy ſelf with oyl, and ſweet wine, but ſhalt not drink wine*; others ſhall come and take it from thee. That Idle ſervant charged his Maſter (*Mat.* 25. 24.) *Thou reapeſt where thou haſt not ſown.* It is the miſery of ſome, that what they have ſown is reapt by others; and 'tis a wickedneſs to reap where we have not ſown.

And they gather the vintage of the wicked.

That is, The grapes that grow in their vineyards. Mr. *Broughton* renders, *The wicked ſnap off the vineyard grapes*; they were in the Corn fields before, now they are got into the Vineyards.

But how is it ſaid, *They gather the vintage of the wicked?* It ſeems ſtrange, that they being wicked ſhould gather the vintage of the wicked? Some take it plainly thus; they oppreſs thoſe that are as bad as themſelves. And ſo we may take this Note from it.

One wicked man will oppreſs another.

Wicked men ſpare neither good nor bad, neither friend nor foe: They ſpoil thoſe that are as bad as themſelves; we ſay a Wolf doth not prey upon a Wolf, nor a Lyon upon a Lyon; but it is otherwiſe with brutiſh men, they prey upon and devour one another.

Lupus lupū non edit.

Secondly, *They gather the vintage of the wicked*; that is, of thoſe whom they count to be wicked, and ſo fit to have their goods taken from them; they accuſe them of wickedneſs, and put their names in their black book, as if they were diſhoneſt; that's a truth alſo.

Wicked men often oppreſs the Innocent, under a pretence that they are wicked.

We have a great Inſtance of this about the taking of a Vineyard (1 *King.* 21. 13, 15.) *Naboth* was innocent and honeſt; but *Jezabel* hired two men, *To make Oath that he had blaſphemed God and the King*; and he was preſently caſt out and ſtoned! His was the vineyard of the wicked, becauſe the wicked had a mind to it. Thus, under a pretence of ſome evil done, they really do evil: And having brought a falſe accuſation againſt a man, they proceed to condemn his perſon, and confiſcate his eſtate, as if all were true.

There is yet another reading (which we put in the margin of our Bibles) ſo plain in the letter, that it needs none of theſe Interpretations to make it out; *The wicked gather the vintage*; As they took away the Corn, ſo the Wine alſo. We need not wonder, that they were ſo injuriouſly buſie to take that which was not their own, for they were wicked, and they that are ſo, make no bones of doing wickedly; a wicked man is ready for any ſin; the vile perſon will ſpeak villany, and act villanouſly too.

Inter omnia ſimillimum videtur; vineam impii, ejus ſcili eſt quē illi habent pro impio, & ideo opprimendum ſibi judicant. Merc. *Vineam ejus quem oppreſſerunt.* Vulg.

Verſe 7. **They cauſe the naked to lodge without cloathing, that they have no covering in the cold.**

Their progreſs in wickedneſs is further deſcribed by their incompaſſionateneſs and cruelty; when we ſee any naked we ſhould cloath them, but *they cauſed the naked to lodge without cloathing*. And they might be ſaid to do this two wayes. Firſt, By not giving them cloathing: Secondly, By taking away their cloathing; for by *naked*, we may underſtand not only thoſe that are quite naked, but (as was ſhewed, *Chap.* 22. 6.) thoſe alſo that have but little cloathing; they took away even that little from them, and ſo *cauſed the naked to lodge without cloathing*. We ſee by what ſteps of wickedneſs they proceeded, they not only ſpoiled them of their corn and wine, but pulled their very cloaths from off their backs; 'tis bad enough not to cloath the naked; but to take away their cloathing, and make them naked, that's worſe; and (which they alſo did) to let them lodge without cloathing is worſt of all. *To lodge without cloathing*, notes their continuance in that diſtreſſed ſtate. The Prophet rebuking the *Jews* for their vain thoughts, puts them this queſtion, *How long ſhall vain thoughts lodge within thee?* Why do ye (as it were) make ready a room, and a bed for them? So while the naked lodge without cloathing, they continue in nakedneſs. It is a great injury to take away a mans *day-cloaths* from his back; but to take away his *night-cloaths* from his bed, is yet more afflictive and injurious. If a man have not cloathing for his body by day, yet if he have cloathing for his bed he may help himſelf; but to cauſe the naked to lodge without cloathing, what cruelty is this? And therefore the Law of God provided againſt it (*Deut.* 24. 12, 13.) *Thou ſhalt not ſleep with his pledge: In any caſe thou ſhalt deliver him the pledge again, when the Sun goeth down, that he may ſleep in his own rayment* (that is, in his night-cloaths, or bed-cloaths) *and bleſs thee, and it ſhall be righteouſneſs to thee before the Lord thy God:* That is, God will look upon this as a righteous act. The Lord was very tender in this point, he would not have the poor lodge without cloathing; but ſome wicked men care not what the poor ſuffer, they neither regard whether they have any lodging, nor whether they have any cloaths to lodge in. *They cauſe the naked to lodge without cloathing*; ſo That (as it ſolloweth in the Text)

They have no covering in the cold.

The word ſignifies to cover as with a vail, or with a garment. It is applyed to the pardon of our ſins (*Pſal.* 32. 1.) *Bleſſed is the man whoſe ſin is covered.* Their condition is moſt ſad, who have no covering for their ſouls, yet theirs alſo is very ſad who have no covering for their bodies in the cold. To have no covering in the cold winter nights, is not only uncomfortable, but dangerous. Death is a great cold, and it endangers life to have no covering in the cold, or in the froſt, which is the extremity of cold. The word is uſed to ſignifie froſt (*Gen.* 31. 40.) *Jacob* tells *Laban*, *Thus I was, in the day the drought conſumed me, and the froſt by night.*

קרה *Gelu.*

The Septuagint tranſlate thus, *They take away the covering of their ſoul:* What's that? you will ſay: in a ſpiritual ſence, Chriſt is the only covering of the ſoul: But no Tyrant can take away this. Therefore by the covering of the ſoul here, we are to underſtand that which is to a man as his life, take away that and you take away his life. The ſoul is often put for the body, and then the covering here meant is the covering of the body, or that covering that is neareſt the ſoul, or neareſt life; ſo that, there is a great elegancy and emphaſis in it to ſay, *They take away the covering of their very ſoul:* That is, they endanger their lives by it. Some tranſlate to that ſence, *They take away the covering which is next their very skin*, they would not leave them ſo much as a ſhirt, that's the covering (in this ſence) of the ſoul. And when we ſpeak of the utmoſt rigour and cruelty of man towards man, we ſay (proverbially) He hath not left him ſo much as a ſhirt to his back. Yet the Prophet expreſſeth the rigorous cruelty of man to man by taking away that which may much more be called the covering of their ſoul (*Mich.* 3. 3.) *They eat the fleſh of my people, and flay their skin from off them.* Skin and fleſh are indeed the covering of the ſoul. To ſtrip the poor to their skin, is to take away the covering of their ſoul: How much more to ſtrip off the skin from their fleſh, and the fleſh from off their bones. But to the words of the Text;

Ἀμφίασιν δὲ ψυχῆς αὐτῶν ἀφείλαντο. Sept.

They have no covering in the cold.

This hath in it a double Inhumanity: Firſt, To expoſe them to extream pain, and then to extream ſhame. Not to have a covering in the cold is to be expoſed to ſhame; not to have a covering in the cold is to be expoſed to pain. But what becomes of the poor when they are naked, and have no covering in the cold? The next Verſe informs us about that.

Verſe 8. **They are wet with the ſhowers of the mountains, and embrace the rock for want of a ſhelter.**

Here's the ſhift theſe poor hearts are put to, *They are wet with the ſhowers of the mountains:* That word which we render *wet*, is only found in this place in the old Teſtament; it notes not only to be daſht with rain, but to be ſoakt through with it. We uſe to ſay of thoſe who are very wet, that they are wet to the skin; but theſe being naked had nothing to wet but their skin; and their skin was (if it might be) ſoaked through with the wet; or they were through wet with the *ſhowers of the mountains*; that is, with thoſe ſhowers which they meet with upon the mountains; ſhowers gather about high mountains, there the clouds engender rain, and there the ſhowers are bred. Travellers obſerve by the eye, how clouds gather about the tops of mountains, and that the rain broods there. This is a further addition to the cruelty of oppreſſors, and the miſery of the oppreſſed; they took away their cloaths, and turned them out of their houſes naked into the open air, and left them to contend with cold and hunger, with all varieties of weather and danger among the mountains. It is ſome help to a man, if he have no cloaths to cover him, yet to have a houſe to cover him; but to have neither body-cloaths, nor bed-cloaths, nor houſe, nor harbour, how ſad is this! And being thus helpleſs, the next words ſhew us what a poor ſhift they made.

Eſt autem qualecunque nuditatis remedium ſi ille qui veſtimentorum operimentũ non habet, ſaltem operimento domus non careat. Aquin.

They embrace the rock for want of a ſhelter.

When he ſaith, *They embrace the rock*, his meaning is, they make much of it, they are glad of it, for ſo we are of thoſe things which we embrace; inſtead of ſoft warm beds, they were glad of cold hard ſtones to ſecure and ſhelter them from the rain. Again, *They embrace the rock*; that is, they go into the holes and clefts of the rock; they had houſes (poſſibly) Pallaces before, but now they are forced to dwell in the holes of the rock.

In as much as *Job* ſaith, they did not only go to the rock for ſhelter, and make a ſhift with it, but embrace and hug it, as being joyful they had it,

Note, *Great afflictions make ſmall comforts very welcome to us.*

He that is turned out naked, and hath no cloaths to cover him, would be glad to have a thatcht houſe, or the meaneſt cottage to hide himſelf in; he that hath no houſe is glad if he can have but the hole of a rock (*Lam.* 4. 5.) *They who were brought up in ſcarlet embrace a dunghil*; he doth not ſay, they are thrown upon dunghils, but they embrace them; they that were bred up in ſcarlet, are now glad of a dunghil to ſcrape in, there to find a mouldy cruſt to eat; there to pick up an old dirty rag to cover their nakedneſs with, or old ſhooes to put upon their feet. So it was in the great famine and deſolation of *Jeruſalem*. And ſo it was in the late wars in *Germany*, and the later in *Ireland*. Some have ſought and contended for a piece of Carrion, for a piece of a dead Horſe, nay for a piece of a dead Man; that which ſtunk above ground they contended for, and having won it, they embraced it, and made dainty of it, as of the moſt pleaſant meat. We that are in our fulneſs and plenty, we that have abundance, ſlight and make light of many good things; but we may ſoon be ſo ſtraitened and put to it, that we would be glad to embrace a rock, or a dunghil, that we would be glad of the crumbs that fall from our tables, and of the worſt ſcraps we leave upon our trenchers. Thus the old Saints are deſcribed (*Heb.* 11. 36.) glad they were of Caves and Dens, *They wandred in deſerts, and in mountains, and in dens, and caves of the earth, being deſtitute, afflicted, and tormented*; they were glad to live among the wild beaſts, when they could not live quietly among men. When the Wind and the Sun beat upon the head of *Jonah*, the Text ſaith, Jonah *was glad of his Gourd*; a thing of little value, very mean and fading in it ſelf; yet when the Sun ſhined hot, and the Wind beat ſtrongly upon him, then he was glad of a Gourd. In times of plenty and peace, we are ſcarce thankful for goodly houſes, for full tables, and rich cloaths; but a little, and that courſe food, will cauſe the hungry to be thankful. The naked will catch at old rags; and they who have no houſe will embrace a rock. There is a rock, a myſtical rock, whom the Saints embrace for a ſhelter, and rejoyce in above all the goodly houſes in the world, yea, above this whole world. Chriſt is a rock to be embraced in our beſt as our beſt ſhelter; and in our bad dayes he is our only ſhelter. And while we are conſtrained by outward wants to embrace natural rocks for the ſhelter of our bodies, let us remember, how our inward and ſpiritual wants, do alwayes conſtrain us to embrace that myſtical rock, for the ſhelter of our ſouls.

Laſtly, Obſerve, *The cruelty of man to man knows no bounds.*

We have ſeen in this Context ſeveral ſteps of cruelty, men ravening for their prey like wild beaſts; men invading the harveſt and the vintage of their neighbours; men robbing both the fatherleſs and the widow; men pulling cloaths from the backs of the poor, and expoſing them naked to the cold, and to the rain, to the mercy of rocks and mountains. Thus man, who ſhould be a God to man, kind, merciful, charitable, bountiful, courteous, proves himſelf a Devil to man, churliſh, cruel, mercileſs, yea, ſuch that even his tender mercies are cruel. How cruel are their cruelties, whoſe mercies, whoſe tender mercies are cruel!

VERS. 9, 10, 11, 12.

They pluck the fatherleſs from the breaſt, and take a pledge of the poor.
They cauſe him to go naked without cloathing; and they take away the ſheaf from the hungry.
Which make oyl within their walls, and tread their wine-preſſes, and ſuffer thirſt.
Which groan from out of the City, and the ſoul of the wounded cryeth out; Yet God layeth not folly to them.

JOB ſtill draws out the line of the oppreſſors wickedneſs, or diſcovers the ſeveral wayes of his oppreſſion: We have ſeen much of his bloody work before; here we have more, even higheſt oppreſſion; oppreſſion devoid not only of all juſtice, but of all humanity; ſuch is that which is next inſtanced in.

Verſe 9. **They pluck the fatherleſs from the breaſt.**

They, that is, the oppreſſors before ſpoken of, do it, either with their own hands, or 'tis done at their command by their miniſters and inſtruments.

They pluck the fatherleſs.

The word notes an act of violence, they lay violent hands upon the *fatherleſs*. Who are meant by the *fatherleſs*, hath been opened more then once already. Here the *fatherleſs* are taken, not largely for any that are deſtitute of help and means, as the word is often uſed in Scripture, but ſtrictly, for children whoſe fathers are lately dead, and they yet in their minority, yea, in their infancy, and in the firſt of their infancy, ſucking children, children hanging upon their mothers breaſts; which exceedingly heightens the cruelty of theſe oppreſſors. To uſe any violence to the fatherleſs, though grown up, is (as hath been ſhewed) a great wickedneſs; to uſe violence towards fatherleſs Infants is much more wicked; but to pull fatherleſs infants from their mothers or nurſes breaſt (which is all the livelihood a child hath) this is utmoſt wickedneſs. And this is not only an affliction to the children, but to the mother a diſconſolate widow, who having loſt her husband, is now bereaved of her child alſo. Thus they add affliction to the afflicted, and ſorrow to the ſorrowful.

'Tis here enquired, what ſhould move them *to pluck the fatherleſs from the breaſts*, or what their intent might be in this barbarous action?

Some anſwer, That it was their covetouſneſs which moved them to be cruel: They pull'd the children from their mothers breaſts, that ſo their mothers might be the fitter to do them ſervice; they would needs wean the children before they were fit, that the mother might be the more fit to labour and toil for them; or they pluckt the fatherleſs from the breaſt, to ſell them, and to make money of them; when they had murthered the father, and taken all from the widow, they made their markets of their children. So we may interpret that of the Prophet (*Iſa.* 10.2.) *Woe to them that decree unrighteous decrees, and that write grievouſneſs, which they have preſcribed, to turn aſide the needy from judgment, and to take away the right from the poor of my people, that widows may be their prey, and that they may rob the fatherleſs.* So we read, implying, that they took away the eſtate of the fatherleſs, and ſo robbed them. Others give this ſence of thoſe words, that they took away the perſons of the fatherleſs; or more plainly thus, That they ſtole away fatherleſs children, and ſold them into ſlavery. There is a generation among us, called *Spirits*, who pull children from the breaſt, or enveigle away ſuch as know not their right hand from the left, to make merchandize of them. *The ſmell of gain is ſweet to ſome from any thing, even from the ſale of poor fatherleſs children.*

Secondly, Others read the Text thus; *They pluck from the fatherleſs that which was left after the prey or deſtruction*; for the word which we tranſlate *breaſt*, is derived from a root which ſignifies to *deſtroy or lay waſte*; ſo the ſence is given thus; They take away from the fatherleſs, even that poor pittance which was left after they had made havock of all that was their fathers.

שד *Mamma, etiam vaſtitas à* שדד *vaſtavit. Rapiunt pupillo quod poſt vaſtationem relictum eſt.* Tygur.

And take a pledge of the poor.

What a pledge is hath been opened (*Chap.* 22.6.) The words may alſo bear this tranſlation, *They take that which is upon the poor for a pledg*, namely, their rayment; not only the cloaths which they have by them to ſpare (a poor man may have a little change) but the cloaths which they actually wear. How contrary this practice was to the Law, hath been ſhewed before, which forbad to take a pledge of ſuch things, as without which the poor cannot conveniently ſubſiſt.

There is a third reading which ſaith not as we, *They take a pledge of the poor*, but, *They take the poor for a pledge.* Of which cruelty we read (2 *Kings* 4. 1.) where the poor Widow complained to the Prophet, that her Husband being dead, the Creditors were come, and *had taken her two ſons to be bond-men.* Thus here, when they had gotten their cattel (as was ſhewed before) and their cloaths from their backs, then they muſt have their bodies too to be ſlaves and drudges. Here, firſt, I might note, That the ſin of oppreſſion is aggravated in reference to the perſons upon whom it is exerciſed. But becauſe it hath been obſerved from other paſſages both of this and former Chapters, how ſinful it is to oppreſs thoſe, whom we are bound to relieve; and to vex thoſe, whom we ought to comfort: I ſhall not inſiſt upon it in this place. But

Secondly, Obſerve, *That covetouſneſs knows no bounds.*

As it hath been ſaid of envy, ſo we may ſay of covetouſneſs, *Covetouſneſs whither wilt thou?* Whither wilt thou lead, or rather hurry and force worldly men? Covetouſneſs carries thoſe who are under the power of it no man knows whither: Who can tell where he ſhall ſtop or ſtay when he is once under the power of the ſpirit of covetouſneſs? Such will not ſpare either the fatherleſs, or the widow, not the cloaths upon their backs, no nor their backs nor bodies. If a covetous eye can but diſcern any advantage to be made, it will have body and all. There is no ſin ſo hainous, none ſo baſe and ſordid, but covetouſneſs may be both the mother and nurſe of it. A covetous man will not forbear either for the cruelty of the ſin, or for the ſordidneſs of it: Covetouſneſs is a ſordid luſt: Covetouſneſs is earthy, and muds our ſpirits in earthly things. When the ſpirit of a man is once embaſed by covetouſneſs, he is ready to do any baſe thing. There is nothing here below lower then that ſpirit. And hence the Apoſtle concludes (1 *Tim.* 6. 10.) That *the love of money*

money (which is covetouſneſs) *is the root of all evil*; that is, any evil of ſin may grow up from that root; and therefore the Apoſtle adds in the ſame place, *That while ſome have coveted it, they have erred from the faith.* Covetouſneſs is the root of Hereſie, which we may think far removed from it. But (ſaith he) ſuch have erred from the faith, which may be underſtood of erring from the faith, both in regard of practice, and of doctrine. They have both acted and believed againſt the rule of faith for filthy lucre; and ſo have pierced themſelves through with many ſorrows. Covetouſneſs runneth us into all evil, and provokes many to do ſuch things as pierce themſelves through with many ſorrows as well as others. Covetouſneſs peirceth the poor and needy, the widow and the fatherleſs with many ſorrows; nor doth it ſpare its own Maſter, or ſlave rather, but pierceth him likewiſe through with many more and much worſe ſorrows.

Verſe 10. **They cauſe him to go naked without cloathing.**

The ſeventh verſe ſpake the ſence of this; *They cauſe the naked to lodge without cloathing, and they have no covering in the cold.* *Job* toucheth upon their cruelty again and again: *They cauſe him to go naked without cloathing.* They will not allow him ſo much as thoſe things which are for neceſſity. The word *him*, is not expreſſively in the Hebrew, which runs only thus; *They cauſe to go naked without cloathing*; as implying, that they were ready to exerciſe this inhumanity upon any one that came next to hand, or ſtood in their way. Our Tranſlation ſeems to refer it to thoſe poor taken for a pledge, and ſo the difference between this tenth and the ſeventh verſe is this; in the ſeventh verſe he ſpake generally of the poor, whom they made to go naked; here at the tenth verſe he ſpeaks of thoſe whom they had taken to be their ſlaves and ſervants; *They take the poor for a pledge, and cauſe him to go naked without cloathing*; they take his work, but they give him no cloathing; they command his labour, but deny him relief. Which ſence is carried further, both in the next verſe, and in the next clauſe of this verſe.

And take away the ſheaf from the hungry.

עמר *Non ſolum manipulum integrum ſed pauculos ſpicas qua meſſoris manum effugere ſolent ſignificat.*

Some render, They take away *the ears of corn*; that is, the gleanings which the poor have pickt up and gathered together: They take away the very gleaning from them, and that two wayes; Either firſt, They will not ſuffer the poor to glean after their Reapers: This is to take away the ears of corn from the hungry; ſuch is the cruelty of ſome, that they will not ſuffer the poor to glean in their fields: Or ſecondly, When the hungry have gleaned a few ears of corn, they take all away from them. Againſt which cruelty to the poor the Law of *Moſes* provided, *Deut.* 24. 19, 20, 21. *When thou cutteſt down thine harveſt in thy field, and haſt forgot a ſheaf in the field, thou ſhalt not go again to fetch it, it ſhall be for the ſtranger, for the fatherleſs, and the widow, that the Lord thy God may bleſs thee in all the work of thine hands.* Now if the forgotten ſheaf muſt be left for the poor, ſurely the ſcattered ears muſt not be raked up from them. We have an eminent inſtance of the liberty of gleaning in the ſecond Chapter of *Ruth*.

Again, by *the ſheaf which is taken away,* we may underſtand that little corn which the poor man hath of his own growing in his own field. And *Job* ſpeaks in the ſingular number, *the ſheaf,* implying that the poor man hath not many ſheaves, his corn makes but a ſheaf as it were; as the poor man in the Parable (2 *Sam.* 11. 11.) had but one Lamb, he had not a flock; ſo the poor man hath but a ſheaf, he hath not many ſheaves and ſhocks of corn, he hath not many barns full, as the rich man is deſcribed, *Luke* 12. he hath but a ſheaf, yet they take that away.

Eſt autem Gomer menſuræ genus quod quotidianum dimenſum & diurnum victum hominis capere poteſt, ergo neceſſarium victū

Thirdly, The word which we tranſlate **ſheaf**, ſignifies a meaſure which did contain a convenient quantity for a dayes proviſion: This meaſure the *Jews* call an Omer (*Exod.* 16. 16.) *This is the thing which the Lord hath commanded, gather of it every man to his eating, an Omer for every man, according to the number of your perſons, take ye every man for them which are in his tents, ye ſhall have an Omer for every man:* So that an Omer contains a convenient quantity for one mans proviſion for a day, and then the ſence ariſeth thus, *They take away the Omer from the hungry*; that is, *They take away meer neceſſary food or daily bread from the hungry.* The poor man hath but an Omer, juſt enough for a day, as our Saviour teacheth us to pray, *Give us this day our daily bread*, or the bread of our neceſſity, ſo much bread as will ſuffice us for a day, our Omer; how much ſoever we have, we are to ask no more, and uſually poor men have no more. The rich have food aforehand, or food for many dayes or years, as he ſaid to *his ſoul* (Luke 12. 19.) *Soul thou haſt goods laid up for many years*; he was beforehand with the world; but the poor man hath only enough for a day, if he hath that, and that theſe oppreſſors took away; *They take away the ſheaf, or the Omer from the hungry.*

abſtulerunt famelicis quem forte & ſpicis minutatim collectis ſibi ſumo labore collegerunt. Pined.

The hungry is put for *the poore*; and to aggravate the ſin, 'tis ſaid, *They take away the ſheaf from the hungry:* That is, before the poor man hath eaten his belly full, yea, before he hath broken his faſt, they find the poor man hungry, and ſo they leave him; for they leave him nothing to appeaſe his hunger with; *They take away the ſheaf (the Omer) from the hungry.*

There is yet a fourth reading, *And thoſe that carry their ſheaves they make to go away a hungry.* The meaning is, Their labourers in harveſt, or *their harveſt men* have no proviſion made for them, they work all day, and are ſent home hungry at night. Which ſin is more expreſly noted in the next verſe, where *Job* taxeth the wickedneſs of thoſe Maſters who are forward enough to imploy poor labourers, but are backward to give them a reward, or rather keep back their reward altogether.

Verſe 11. **Which make Oyl within their walls, and tread their wine-preſſes, and ſuffer thirſt.**

The laſt reading of the tenth verſe joyns fitly with this verſe; *Thoſe that carry their ſheaves they make to go away hungry*; and *thoſe that make Oyl within their walls, and tread their wine-preſſes ſuffer thirſt*; they are both hungry and thirſty who do their work.

Which make Oyl within their walls.

Meridiati ſunt inter acervos. Vulg.

The word which we tranſlate, *to make Oyl*, ſignifies *light or noon-day* in the Noun, and in the Verb to be abroad in the light or Sun about noon-day. And hence the words are thus tranſlated by the vulgar Latine; *They noon it among the heaps*, or, *they are abroad among the heaps at noon.* And there is a double expoſition given of the words in this tranſlation: Firſt, They are expounded of the wicked themſelves who oppreſs the poor: As if he had ſaid, *They come forth to pleaſe themſelves, and take the air, or to ſun themſelves among the heaps of thoſe things which they have taken from others by oppreſſion.* But I conceive this very unſutable to that which is joyned with it in this verſe, their treading of their wine-preſſes and ſuffering thirſt; And therefore I lay it by.

Secondly, The words in this tranſlation are expounded of the poor, *They abide till noon-day, or till the heat of the day among the heaps*; that is, among the ſheaves, or among the oyl-fats, or among the wine-preſſes; poor men labour there unto the very heat of the day, and then are turned home hungry and thirſty, without meat, or drink, or any thing to procure either.

יצהירו *Meridiati ſunt, vel oleum fecerunt tam meridies quam oleum à ſplendore & puritate dicitur Hebraice. Eſt enim* צהר *ſplendere. Vel quia oleum accenſum lucem facit ut meridies.* Aben-Ezra.

We tranſlate, *which make oyl*, and the ſame word ſignifies, *noon-day, light, and oyl*, becauſe of the light and ſplendidneſs of oyl. The eye informs us, that oyl is a clear body which hath much light and purity in it; and therefore the word is applicable unto either, *Which make oyl*

Within their walls.] There is a twofold expoſition of theſe words, *within their walls*; that is, ſay ſome, *within their own walls*; the poor make oyl within their walls, and tread their own wine-preſſes, yet they ſuffer thirſt; that is, the poor are ſo oppreſt by the rich, that all the wine and oyl they can make for themſelves, will not ſatisfie their ordinary thirſt or neceſſity; or when the poor have made wine and oyl within their own walls they ſuffer thirſt; that is, the rich come and take all from them. Thus we may interpret it of the poor making wine and oyl for themſelves: For in thoſe Countries where Vines and Olive-trees abound, the poor have their quantity and portion of wine and oyl, as here they have of corn or any other commodity, which is of the growth of this Country.

But I rather expound the whole verſe of the poor making oyl for, and treading the wine-preſſes of the rich. The poor labour for the rich, making oyl within *their walls*, or *within their ranks*; that is, among their Olive-trees that grow in ranks, and tread their wine-preſſes; yet *they ſuffer thirſt*; that is, though they labour hard for them, yet they have nothing for their labour; they make oyl, but they have no oyl to anoint themſelves; they make wine, but they have no wine to quench their thirſt; thoſe cruel men neither gave them wine nor oyl (in *ſpecie*, or) in kind, but uſed them as Poets feign of *Tantalus*, who was ſet in a river of water up to his chin, but could not reach it; ſo the rich tantaliz'd the poor, calling them to work all day in their oyl-fats, and wine-preſſes, and yet ſent them home hungry and thirſty; or they ſent them home without that which is virtually or amounts to wine and oyl, that is, their wages, or reward; they gave them not that which their ſervice deſerved. This is that ſpecial oppreſſion, which, I conceive, *Job* intended in this place, both to diſcover and reprove, the unconſiderableneſs and cruelty of the rich towards the poor labouring man.

Hence Obſerve, *That to detain the wages of the labouring man is a provoking oppreſſion.*

When men carry ſheaves, and yet are hungry; when they make oyl, and tread the wine-preſs, and yet ſuffer thirſt, this is a crying ſin. The Lord forbad this expreſly (*Deut.* 24. 14, 15.) *Thou ſhalt not oppreſs an hired ſervant, that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of the ſtrangers which are in thy land, within thy gates: at his day thou ſhalt give him his hire, neither ſhall the Sun go down upon it, for he is poor, and ſetteth his heart upon it, leſt he cry againſt thee to the Lord, and it be a ſin unto thee.* The Law alſo ſaith (*Deut.* 25. 4.) *Thou ſhalt not muzzle the mouth of the Ox that treadeth out the corn.* Which though the Apoſtle applyeth in two places (1 *Cor.* 9. 9. 1 *Tim.* 5. 18.) to ſhew the equity of it, that they who labour in the word and doctrine, or preach the Goſpel (which is ſpiritual food, the food of ſouls) ſhould be comfortably ſupplyed with temporal food, the food of their bodies (though, I ſay) the Apoſtle doth peculiarly apply it to this ſort of labourers, yet it is extendible to all honeſt labourers, in what kind or way ſoever. For if the mouth of the labouring Ox ſhould not be muzzled, that reaps the corn, and treadeth the wine-preſs; that is, ſuch ſhould not be ſent away hungry and thirſty. The Prophet (*Jer.* 22. 13.) thunders out a threatning againſt thoſe who deal thus with the labourer, *Woe to him that builds his houſe by unrighteouſneſs, and his chambers by wrong; that uſeth his neighbours ſervice without wages, and giveth him not for his work.* As ſome unrighteous men build chambers and houſes with the gold and ſilver which they have wrongfully gotten from the rich; ſo ſome build their houſes by getting the labour and pains of the poor wrongfully from them; that is, by denying them the wages which is due for their work; *Wo to ſuch, ſaith the Lord.* And again (*James* 5. 4.) The Apoſtle chargeth this upon the rich, *Behold* (ſaith he) *the hire of the labourers, that have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, cryeth; and the cry of them which have reaped are entred into the ears of the Lord of Sabbath, or of the Lord of hoſts:* As if he had ſaid, The Lord who hath all the Armies of Heaven and Earth in his power, even he hath taken notice how ye wrong the labourer, and he will put forth his power to avenge their quarrel: The Lord of hoſts is the poor labourers friend, and he will be his Avenger. It is a ſin crying for vengeance, that when a poor man hath ſweat out his ſtrength to do ſervice to the rich, he ſhould not have his wages given him to renew his ſtrength, and revive his ſpirits for further labour. The Apoſtle (2 *Theſ.* 3.) gives a charge, *That they that will not labour ſhould not eat*; *we hear* (ſaith he) *that there are ſome who walk among you diſorderly, working not at all: now then, they that are ſuch we command and exhort by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that with quietneſs they work and eat their own bread*; and (*ver.* 10.) *If any will not work, neither ſhould he eat.* But as they that will not work have no right to eat; what they eat they ſteal: ſo they who work ſhould eat, elſe they are deprived of their right. Wo be to thoſe who eat and work not in ſome kind or other, and wo be to thoſe who do not give them to eat who work, who compel or but call the poor to tread their wine-preſſes, and then let them ſuffer hunger and thirſt.

This ſin is committed not only by the total denying of reward and wages; that's the groſſeſt way of it. But,

Firſt, This ſin is committed when the poor man receives not a reward proportionable to his labour, when he hath not what anſwers his work, but his wages is ſo ſcanty and ſhort, that he is not able to make a living of it for the comfortable (according to his degree) maintaining of his charge; many are apt in this caſe to oppreſs the labourer while they pay him. They will give him ſomewhat, but it ſhall be ſo ſhort, and poor, that he is not able to ſubſiſt upon it. Hence that common ſpeech among us, *That there is nothing cheap but poor mens labour*; men care not ſo their work be done, though the workman be undone. They care not though the ſweat of his brows will ſcarce (as 'tis uſually phras'd) find him water to waſh his hands.

Secondly, This ſin is committed when the labourer is defrauded of that which hath been agreed for, when cavils are raiſed, and ſo the hire detained. This the Apoſtle *James* reproves (*Chap.* 5. 4.) ſpeaking of the labourers hire, which (ſaith he) *is of you kept back by fraud*; they did not tell them plainly they ſhould have no wages, but they quarrelled with them about their work; ye have not done your work well, or not ſo ſoon as ye ſhould; and therefore they will not pay them, or they pay them to halves. Thus ſome by fraud and cavils detain the labourers hire, as others do it by open violence, or flat denial.

Thirdly, This ſin is committed by delaying to pay the labourer. We find in *Moſes*'s Law (the equity whereof remains to this day) that not only the denying, or defrauding of the labourer concerning his hire, is charged as ſinful, but the very delaying of it. Suppoſe you pay all, at laſt, yet if you cauſe the poor to wait long for what is their due, this will be reckoned an oppreſſion: Therefore ſaith the Law (*Deut.* 24. 14, 15.) *Thou ſhalt not oppreſs an hired ſervant that is poor, and needy: at his day thou ſhalt give him his hire* (Thou ſhalt not oppreſs him ſo much as by deferring it for a day) *neither ſhall the Sun go down upon it.* Conſider how ſtrict the righteous Lord, and our great Maſter is in this point, That Maſters ſhould deal well with their ſervants and day-labourers. The Sun muſt not go down upon it, Why, *For he is poor and ſets his heart upon it.* Which is not to be underſtood like that (*Pſal.* 62. 10.) *If riches increaſe ſet not thy heart upon them*; that is, do not fix your affections upon your riches; think not your ſelves happy becauſe ye are rich: But when *Moſes* ſaith, *The poor labourer ſets his heart upon it*, the meaning is this, the poor labourer having wrought hard all day, thinks of his wife, and family, for whom he is to provide, and then remembers that at the evening he ſhall have his wages. I (ſaith he) ſhall have ſomewhat at night, though I work hard all day; therefore ſaith the Lord, *Give it him at his day, let not the Sun go down upon it*; he reckons to have it when he goeth home, therefore diſappoint him not. *It may be a dangerous thing to be a labourers purſe-bearer for a night, if he deſire to have his hire, and you able to pay it*; to detain his wages upon thoſe terms is ſinful, for he hath ſet his heart upon it, and fully expects it; therefore diſappoint him not, do not make him aſhamed of his hopes. This is the ſin which *Job* deſcribes here; the wicked take, yea, exact work of the poor, and then take or detain their wages alſo: They muſt *make oyl for them, and tread their wine-preſſes, and ſuffer thirſt.* This ſin cryeth, and this oppreſſion makes the poor groan, as it follows in the next verſe.

Minus ſolvit, qui minus tempore ſolvit.

Verſe 12. **Men groan out of the City, and the ſoul of the wounded cryeth out, yet God layeth not folly to them.**

This verſe ſhews two things: Firſt, The ſad effects of oppreſſion, it makes men groan and cry: Secondly, The frequent and long impunity of oppreſſors; *Yet God layeth not folly to them.*

Men groan out of the City.

They vex not only the Countrey, but the City too; for as before he deſcribed Countrey oppreſſors, ſo now

City-oppreſſors; oppreſſion is a ſin that filleth both City and Country; and here we have, as it were, the concluſion, or a kind of acclamation upon the whole matter. Would you know what work theſe men make; they are ſo high in their cruelty, *That men groan under it.* The word which we tranſlate *to groan*, doth not ſignifie any kind of groan (for ſome cry before they are hurt) but that which is cauſed by the greateſt hurt, and comes from the very bottom of the heart, even ſuch a groan as they give forth who are about to dye. *Men groan from*

Eſt velut epiphonema ad ſuperiora. Merc.

נאק *clamare non quoquo modo ſignificat ſed cum ſingultu ut ſolent moribundi.* Mer.

Out of the City.] This ſhews the impudence of thoſe men in ſin as well as their impunity. We might reaſonably ſuppoſe, they would not dare to do thus in the open City, though they had done it in a corner of the Country, where there were but few to take notice of them. To do thus in the City, in the eyes of all men, is an argument that they had loſt their modeſty, as well as their honeſty, and were reſolved not only to do evil, but to ſtand to it, or make it good.

And the ſoul of the wounded cryeth out.

That is, The wounded cry out; the ſoul is put for the perſon, or the man; or the ſoul of the wounded is ſaid to cry out, to ſhew the greatneſs and dolefulneſs of the cry. As when *Mary* ſaid, *My ſoul doth magnifie the Lord*, it argues that ſhe magnified the Lord with ſtrong affections, as if ſhe had been all ſoul. Such alſo is the force of that paſſage in *Deborah*'s Song (*Judg.* 5. 21.) *O my ſoul, thou haſt trodden down ſtrength:* She trod down the ſtrength of the enemy with all her ſtrength. And her ſoul (which was her ſtrength in God) was in it more then her body. So here, *The ſoul of the wounded cryeth out*; that is, the wounded cry out moſt lamentably, they pour out their own ſouls, while others were pouring out their Blood. But what are theſe wounded? Or how were they wounded? We may take it either of an outward or inward wounding. There is a wounded ſpirit as well as a wounded body; many are wounded whoſe fleſh is whole, who have not ſo much as a ſcar made in their skin; yet here the wounded were ſuch whoſe fleſh or outward ſtate was wounded firſt, and then their hearts or ſpirits were wounded, becauſe of that, with grief and ſorrow.

The ſoul of the wounded.] The word which we tranſlate *wounded,* ſignifies two things. Firſt, That which is prophane and polluted, and in the verb, to pollute and prophane a thing. Idol-worſhippers are ſo called, becauſe they are polluted as wounded men with blood. And hence alſo it is uſed as a word of abomination, *The Lord forbid,* ſaid *David* (1 *Sam.* 24. 6.) And again (2 *Sam.* 20. 20.) *Far be it from me, far be it from me,* ſaid *Joab:* In both which places, the actions abominated, had the defilement or pollution of blood in them. And the *Jews* ſpeaking this word, uſually rent their garments, ſhewing the abhorrence and indignation of their minds at blaſphemy, or ſuch like abominations. Now becauſe wounded men are defiled in their blood, therefore this word ſignifieth *the wounded. The ſoul of the wounded cryeth out*; not only cryeth, but cryeth out: Which implyeth the greatneſs of their wound, and the extream painfulneſs of it.

הללים *Polluti prophani*

הלילה *abſit, vox prohibitionis & abominationis, res prophana ſit mihi.*

Hence Note, *Oppreſſion is a crying ſin, and makes the oppreſſed cry.*

The blood of *Abel*, who was the firſt man that ever was outwardly wounded, cryed when he was dead; How much more do they cry whoſe blood is pouring out, and themſelves under preſent fear of death. The ſouls under the Altar *cryed how long, Lord? How long?* (Rev. 6. 9.) Thoſe ſouls had ſuffered, and were paſt ſuffering, yet they cryed out for vengeance upon their adverſarie: How much more will their ſouls cry who are under ſufferings? The wounds of the wounded are as ſo many wide mouths crying out to God, though their own ſouls ſhould be ſilent and ſay nothing. I have upon other paſſages in this Book met with the ſin of oppreſſion, and the cry of the poor upon it, therefore I ſhall not further ſtay here, but a while inſiſt upon the laſt clauſe of this Context, which holds out the chief and moſt conſiderable matter of it. The oppreſſor doth all theſe wickedneſſes; but what doth God? Surely we might expect to hear of God in the next words, healing and helping the wounded who make this cry, and wounding the hairy ſcalp of thoſe who made them cry; Had not God a fit occaſion put in his hand to ſhew himſelf? Firſt, For the relief of the oppreſſed: And, ſecondly, for the puniſhment of the oppreſſor. He that beholds ſuch actings as theſe, the fatherleſs plucked from the breaſts, the poor made ſlaves, the labourer denyed his wages, the wounded crying, groaning (he, I ſay, that beholds all this) might ſay in his heart, ſurely now God will preſently appear; and indeed God hath often appeared, when the wicked have been in the heat of ſuch actings, and the poor in the heat of ſuch ſufferings (*Pſal.* 12. 5.) *For the oppreſſion of the poor, for the ſighing of the needy, now I will ariſe, ſaith the Lord, I will ſet him in ſafety from him that puffeth at him.* Yet here we find no ſuch thing, nothing like the Lords ariſing for the ſaving of the poor from oppreſſion, or for the breaking of oppreſſors. *Job* ſaw or had ſeen the poor oppreſſed, and the needy ſighing, but did not ſee God coming either with deliverance or revenge? For he adds, though all this be done,

Yet God layeth not folly to them.

Maſter *Broughton* reads, *And the puiſſant marketh not the unſavory dealing.* His meaning is not, that God did not know that their dealings were unſavory, or that he did not take notice of their dealings; but that he did not obſerve them, ſo as to appear preſently againſt them. *God layeth not*, or, *God putteth not*; the meaning is, God imputeth not, or God chargeth not *folly*, or (ſtrictly to the letter of the Hebrew) that which is unſavory to them, or upon them. That word which ſignifies a thing unſavory, or without ſalt, in a natural and proper ſence, may elegantly be rendred *folly* in a moral or metaphorical ſence; for fooliſhneſs or folly is that, which hath no ſalt of reaſon, righteouſneſs, juſtice, or equity in it. Hence the word is often uſed to ſignifie that which is done beſides, without, or againſt all theſe. So it is ſaid (*Chap.* 1. 22.) *In all this* Job *ſinned not, neither did he charge God fooliſhly*; or, *neither did he charge folly upon God*; it is this word. *Job* did not think that God dealt unjuſtly or unreaſonably with him, though he had taken all worldly comforts from him, and heaped all thoſe afflictions upon him. And here *Job* ſaith, *God layeth not folly to wicked men*, notwithſtanding all the unjuſt and unreaſonable things which they have done, in heaping troubles cauſeleſly upon the poor. Though abundance of folly and madneſs was committed and acted by them, with a high and heavy hand, yet *God did not lay folly to them.*

הפלה *Quod ſit præter omnē rationem & æquitatem.* Bez.

Some read the Text thus, *Notwithſtanding all this, God doth nothing that is unſavory*; we ſupply thoſe words, *to them:* The Hebrew Text is only this, *God putteth not folly*; ſo the laſt mentioned tranſlation may well ſtand; for when *Job* had reported all thoſe things, it might well be queſtioned, How is it that God permits, and ſuffers ſuch wickedneſs in the world? O, ſaith *Job*, *God puts no folly, or he doth nothing which is unjuſt, or unreaſonable, in all theſe things:* As if he had ſaid, *How unreaſonable and unrighteous ſoever men are in theſe actings, yet God is not unrighteous, God doth nothing unbecoming himſelf, nothing unſeemly or unſavory in it ſelf:* Several of the Jewiſh Doctors fall in with this tranſlation; *God doth not this* (*gratis* or) *without cauſe* (ſaith one) He hath abundant reaſon to let that be done, which men do without either rule or reaſon. A ſecond renders thus, *God doth not that which is defective or wanting in any circumſtance of Juſtice and equity.* The ſence of both which rendrings or paraphraſes of the Text, are given in fully in the Annotations of a modern Writer upon it. *God* (ſaith he) *doth nothing uncomely or blame worthy, while he ſuffers all theſe things to be done, which are not only uncomely and worthy of blame, but abominable, and worthy of the ſevereſt puniſhment.*

Non ponit inſulſum. q. d. *nihil ſine maxima ſapientia agit, vel permiſit faciendum deus.*

Deus non facit hic gratis & fruſtra, i.e. *non temerè & abſque ratione.* Rab. Abra.

Deus non ponet imminutionem. i. e. *rem deficientem aliqua vel juſtitiæ vel æquitatis circumſtantia.* Rab. Kimhi.

Hence Obſerve, *Whatſoever God doth, he doth it wiſely and juſtly.*

God who is wiſdom and juſtice it ſelf, and is to himſelf and all others the rule of Wiſdom and juſtice, can no more do any thing unwiſely, or unjuſtly, then he can ceaſe to be wiſe or juſt; and he can no more ceaſe to be wiſe or juſt, then ceaſe to be; for his Wiſdom is himſelf, and his Juſtice is himſelf, There needs no more to be ſaid, to acquit any action of weakneſs or unrighteouſneſs, then to

Deus nihil abſurdum aut reprehenſione dignum agit, dum hæc omnia permittit. Piſc.

ſay, God hath done it. *For* (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, 1 *Cor.* 1. 25.) *The fooliſhneſs of God is wiſer then men, and the weakneſs of God ſtronger then men*: We may ſay alſo (and in ſaying ſo, we ſay no more then the Apoſtle ſaid before) that, *The injuſtice of God is juſter then men*; that is, thoſe things which God ſeems to do unjuſtly and unrighteouſly: As when he ſuffers wicked men to devour the man that is more righteous then they, this ſeems to be an act of unrighteouſneſs, yet this is juſter and more righteous then the juſtice and righteouſneſs of men. And if the very unrighteouſneſs of God (that is, what appears to man as unrighteouſneſs) be righteous, then how righteous is the righteouſneſs of God? That, I mean, which appears righteouſneſs in the eyes of all men. This reading and ſence of the words is ſafe, and holds out an excellent point of truth.

That God doth nothing which is unſavory or unjuſt.

Yet our tranſlation is both profitable and clearly ſutable to the Context, and therefore I ſhall a little inſiſt upon that.

Yet God layeth not folly to them.

As if he had ſaid, *Theſe men do moſt unſavory and fooliſh things, yet God doth not charge folly upon them.* The ſence of this tranſlation riſeth by four ſteps.

Firſt, God doth not preſently call evil men to an account, or charge their ſin upon them.

Secondly, God doth not preſently puniſh evil men for their ſin. To lay folly to a man is not only to call him to anſwer for what he hath done, but to puniſh him as having done fooliſhly. He looks for a ſentence next who hath already received his charge, and is not able to acquit himſelf, and wipe it off.

Thirdly, God doth not preſently ſtop evil men in their work, or make their work like the work of a fool, which ſeldom proſpers, or proves ſucceſſful. The Prophet *Jeremy* complained of this to God (*Chap.* 12. 1.) *Why doth the way of the wicked proſper? Wherefore are all they happy that deal very treacherouſly?* As if he had ſaid, Lord, why doſt thou not ſend out a prohibition from thy Court above, and ſtop the proceedings of wicked and treacherous men? They go on ſmoothly, they meet no rubs in their way, but carry all before them; they meet with nothing that doth diſguſt or diſtaſt them. A ſtop in our way is to our ſpirits like hard and unſavory meat to our ſtomachs, that which we cannot digeſt. Thus (ſaith *Job*) *God doth not lay folly to them*; he doth not make them like fooliſh builders, that begin, but are not able to carry on their work. God laid folly (in this ſence) to the builders of *Babel*, he checkt and confounded them in their work, ſo that they left off to build the City (*Gen.* 11. 7, 8.) But many begin a *Babel*, a work of confuſion to others, but are not confounded themſelves; they not only begin to build, but finiſh: They ſet up the top ſtone of their work, while many cry, wo, wo to it, and yet *God doth not lay folly to them.*

Non poſuit Deus probibitionem. Vatab. *In Hebræo eſt inſulſum* i. e. *nihil adverſi & ingrati illis accidere patitur.* Vatab. *Quaſi inſulſum ſignificet mala naturæ palato malè gratas tribulationes quas Deus impiorum conatibus opponere poſſit.* Bold.

Fourthly, we may reſolve this Negative, *God layeth not folly to them*, into an Affirmative, God lets them go on as if they had done wiſely, diſcreetly, juſtly. And whereas it is ſaid to Chriſt in that Prophecy (*Pſal.* 45. 4.) *Ride proſperouſly, becauſe of truth, and meekneſs, and righteouſneſs.* God ſeems to ſay to them, *Ride proſperouſly, even in deceit, and wrath, and unrighteouſneſs: They hate righteouſneſs, and love wickedneſs, yet God ſeems to anoint them with the oyl of gladneſs and ſucceſs above their fellows. God layeth not folly to them.*

Hence Note, Firſt, *The wayes of unrighteouſneſs are fooliſh and unſavory wayes.*

Whatſoever hath ſin in it, wanteth ſalt in it; Chriſt ſaith to his Diſciples (*Mark* 9. 50.) *Have ſalt in your ſelves, and have peace one with another*; that is, let there be a ſavour of Chriſt, a ſavour of grace, and holineſs, and equity in your own ſpirits, and be ye ſweetly, mildly, amiably, brotherly diſpoſed one to another. They have no ſalt of wiſdom in themſelves, whoſe converſation is unſavory and troubleſome unto others. Sin and folly are more then like one another, for they are the ſame. They have no ſeaſoning in them, who have no goodneſs in them. Righteouſneſs is the wiſeſt and the moſt ſavory thing in the world, in the account both of God and good men. *The wiſdom which is from above* (ſaith the Apoſtle *James*, Chap. 3. 17.) *is firſt pure, then peaceable, gentle, and eaſie to be entreated, full of mercy, and good fruits, without partiality* (towards men) *without hypocriſie* (towards God.) But the wiſdom that is troubleſome and vexatious, rough and harſh to others, is earthly, ſenſual, deviliſh indeed, down-right madneſs, abſurdneſs, folly. *Solomon* ſaith, *Oppreſſion makes a wiſe man mad*; but it will appear at laſt, *that the wiſeſt oppreſſors have been mad*, fooliſh, ſaltleſs and brainleſs men. Such uſe to flatter themſelves, and are often much flattered by others in their projects and policies, for the only wiſe men in the world; but in the end they dye like fools.

Secondly, Obſerve, *God ſuffers oppreſſors to go on long before he puniſheth them; and he ſuffers the oppreſſed to cry long before he relieves them.*

God is often pleaſed to wink, while the wicked ſin, and he as often ſeems to be aſleep while the righteous ſuffer. Hence that ſad complaint of the Church (*Pſal.* 44. 23, 24.) *Awake, why ſleepeſt thou? O Lord, ariſe, caſt us not off for ever; Wherefore hideſt thou thy face, and forgetteſt our affliction and our oppreſſion?* This alſo cauſed *David* to cry out (*Pſal.* 13. 1.) *How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord, for ever? How long wilt thou hide thy face from me? How long ſhall mine enemies be exalted over me?* What, under the oppreſſion of an enemy for ever! While God aſſures his people (in that Parable of the importunate Widow, and the unjuſt Judge, *Luke* 18.) that he will deliver them, yet he more then intimates that it may be very long before he doth it, (*ver.* 6, 7.) *And the Lord ſaid, hear what the unjuſt Judge ſaith: And ſhall not God avenge his own elect who cry to him night and day, though he bear long with them?* That is, though he exerciſe much patience towards thoſe tyrants who oppreſs his Elect; yea, and much patience alſo towards his Elect, in regard of their doubts and deſpondencies, of their fear and unbelief, about his coming to avenge and help them againſt thoſe Tyrants.

Further, Folly imports not only ſin, but the greatneſs of ſin; ſo that when it is ſaid, *God layeth not folly to them*, the ſence (according to this notion of the word *folly*) is, that though they ſin greatly, yet God makes no great matter of it; or he doth not charge their ſin upon them, nor puniſh them for their ſin anſwerably, or in proportion to the greatneſs of it, but paſſeth it by, as if it were only ſome infirmity or ſmall offence; *He doth not lay folly to them*; nor doth he let them feel what egregious fools they have been. The word *folly* is uſed often in Scripture in this ſence, to note a notorious ſin (*Gen.* 34. 7.) when the Sons of *Jacob* came out of the field and heard how their Siſter had been dealt with, *They were exceedingly grieved, and they were very wrath, becauſe he had wrought folly in* Iſrael, *in lying with* Jacob's *daughter*; that is, becauſe he had committed a great wickedneſs in *Iſrael*. We have the ſame ſin ſo expreſt again by folly (2 *Sam.* 13. 12.) *And ſhe anſwered him, nay my Brother, do not force me, for no ſuch thing ought to be done in* Iſrael, *do not thou this folly*: As if ſhe had ſaid, This is a grievous ſin, therefore do it not. And when the Lord would ſhew *Job's* three Friends the greatneſs of their error and miſtake in their diſpute with *Job*, he calls it folly (*Job* 42. 9.) *My Servant* Job *ſhall pray for you, for him I will accept; leſt I deal with you according to your folly, in that ye have not ſpoken of me the thing that is right, like my Servant* Job. Thus we ſee that great ſins, whether in practice or opinion, come under this cenſure in Scripture; only we may note that the three Texts mentioned expreſs folly in another original word then the preſent Text doth. There is folly enough, great folly in every the leaſt ſin; but great ſins deſerve more to bear the name of folly in their foreheads.

Non ponit ſtultitiam. i.e. *non imputat hoc iis tanquã grande peccatum, hoc enim ſtultitia vocatur.*

Taking folly under this peculiar conſideration;

We may obſerve, That, *As the Lord in this life doth not puniſh any, no not the worſt of ſinners, according to the juſt demerit and dimenſion of their ſins; ſo he puniſheth ſome, whoſe ſins are very great, but very little.*

Though he layeth their ſin to them, yet he doth not lay it to them in the folly of it, or as it is their folly. He doth only touch them with his little finger, while it might be thought he would break them with his iron rod. He doth but chaſtiſe them with Whips, while their ſin calls for Scorpions. The time will come, when God will lay folly to every wicked man, and make their ſin appear, in the puniſhment of it, what now it is in the nature of it, out of meaſure ſinful. Every impenitent ſinner ſhall then find that his ſin is folly, that is, that his ſin is very great.

Non ponit ſtultitiam. i.e. *non dico ſcelera, ſed τὴν μωρίαν, quidem aut facta illepida & inſulſa illis imputat.* Coc.

Yet a late learned Expoſitor upon this Book conceives, that the ſence is abated and diminiſhed in the word *folly*, as if it were a term of extenuation, *God doth not lay folly*, that is, *the leaſt ſin* to them; he doth not ſo much as charge them to have done irrationally, vainly, childiſhly, or unhandſomely; he doth not only not deal with them as if they had ſinned hainouſly, but he doth not deal with them as if they had done fooliſhly. But whether we take the word *Folly*, as implying the greatneſs or the littleneſs of their ſin; whether we expound it as a term of diminution, or of aggravation, the ſence of the Text is not altered: In which *Job* intends only to ſhew, that though men have done very wickedly, yet God doth not preſently render to them according to what they have done. This is true in the firſt ſence of the word, if God do not lay folly to them, as it ſignifies a great ſin; and this is much more true, if God do not lay folly to them in the ſecond ſence, as it ſignifies a little ſin. And this ſence of this latter clauſe of the verſe correſponds fully with the general ſcope of the Chapter, and of the whole Book. For *Job* argues with his Friends thus; *Ye charge me with folly and wickedneſs, becauſe I ſuffer; yet God ſuffers the wicked and doth not charge them with folly.*

Et tamen inſulſitatem non deſignat Deus. Jun. i.e. *pergere & confirmari non ſinit tam pravam adminiſtrationē; quæ ideo inſulſitatis nomine perſtringitur, quia nec Deo nec hominibus bonis humanū aliquid ſapientibus probatur.* Id.

Laſtly, I ſhall only repreſent another tranſlation of theſe words, which keeps ſtrictly to the Hebrew; in which thoſe words, *to them* (as we render it) are not found, but ſupplyed. And then the Text runs only thus; *And yet God doth not lay folly*; that is, *ſuch things as are uncomely, vain, and fooliſh*: As if *Job* had ſaid, *Though I have made report to you of all thoſe oppreſſive wayes of wicked men, yet I aſſure you, God will not ſuffer theſe evil adminiſtrations to continue and be eſtabliſhed; but will at laſt bear his witneſs againſt them, and eminently ſhew his utter diſlike of them, as of that which is moſt fooliſh and unſavory, not only to himſelf, but to all men, who have any taſt or ſence of that which becometh man.* Let men do as fooliſhly and unrighteouſly as they will, the purpoſe of God is to rule the World in righteouſneſs, and in wiſdom. *The Kings ſtrength* (as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks, *Pſal.* 99.4.) that is, the ſtrength of Chriſt (who is called, *The King of Kings* (Rev. 19.16.) both becauſe he excelleth all other Kings, and ruleth all other Kings, he, I ſay) *loveth judgment* (or righteous dealings with all his ſtrength) *and* (as it followeth in the ſame verſe) *he eſtabliſheth equity*; he eſtabliſheth the rule by which others may do equity, and he eſtabliſheth the acts of equity which others do: For ſeeing Chriſt loveth judgment, and alſo (as we have it in the cloſe of the ſame verſe) *Executeth judgment and righteouſneſs in* Jacob, he cannot but eſtabliſh acts of equity, which are nothing elſe but the execution of judgment and righteouſneſs. And therefore though he bear with unjuſt and unrighteous men a while in their vain projectings and vainer actings, yet he will not eſtabliſh them in it; *He will not lay folly*, he will not lay it as a foundation for them to build and proceed upon. Weak and ſmall things have often been eſtabliſhed by God, but he will not long eſtabliſh wicked and ſinful things.

VERS. 13, 14.

They are of thoſe that rebel againſt the light, they know not the wayes thereof, nor abide in the paths thereof.

The Murtherer riſing with the light killeth the poor and néedy, and in the night is as a Thief.

JOB having given many particular Inſtances of the wicked practices of evil men, ſeems in this thirteenth verſe to give us a general Character of them; *They are of thoſe that rebel againſt the light*: As if he had ſaid, *Would you know what theſe men are who commit ſuch horrid wickedneſſes, who oppreſs the poor, the fatherleſs, the widow, who detain the hire of the labourer, and ſend them away hungry and thirſty when they have done their work? Would you know what ſort or kind of men theſe are? I will tell you, They are of thoſe that rebel againſt the light*; that's their genius, or their ſtrain. This general ſence of the words doth very well agree with and carry on the diſcourſe which *Job* was upon.

Yet others conceive, that in this thirteenth verſe, and ſo forward, *Job* is deſcribing another ſort of wicked perſons then thoſe formerly mentioned. As if he had ſaid, I have before ſpoken of thoſe open ſinners and ſons of violence, ſuch as ſinn'd and cared not who ſaw them, impudent ſinners; but now I will ſpeak of a ſort of cloſe ſinners, or ſons of deceit, who do their work no whit more honeſtly, yet more modeſtly then the former, *They are of thoſe who rebel againſt the light, they know not the wayes thereof, nor abide in the paths thereof. The murtherer riſing with the light killeth the poor and needy*, &c. In which ſence ſoever we take the Context, the difference is not much, though I rather adhere unto the former.

They are of thoſe that rebel againſt the light.

He doth not ſay, they are of thoſe who have not the light, or they are of thoſe to whom the light hath not ſhined; he ſaith not, they are of thoſe who ſit in darkneſs, and in the valley of the ſhadow of death; but *They are of thoſe that rebel againſt the light*; as implying the preſence of the light with them, and their contempt of it.

מרד *Rebellavit defecit.*

They rebel.] This word is often uſed in Scripture for rebellion againſt any lawful Authority or Power ſet over others to rule and govern them, and that's the importance of it here, *They rebel*: And from this word *Nimrod* had his name, who was the firſt noted Rebel that ever was in the World: *Nimrod* was a great Prince among men; but he became ſo by rebellion againſt God. Here *Job* diſcovers *Nimrods*, or Rebels againſt the light. But what was the light againſt which they rebelled?

Light may be conſidered two wayes: Either properly, or figuratively; we may underſtand the Text of light in a proper ſence; and ſome inſiſt chiefly upon that. *They rebel againſt the light*; that is, againſt the very light of the Sun, or the ordinary day-light: As if he had ſaid, *If it were in the power of theſe men they would even pull the Sun out of the Firmament of Heaven, that they might ſin unſeen.* I will not, as ſome Interpreters do, fix the Expoſition here, though I grant, this ſence may be taken in: wicked men love natural darkneſs, and hate even natural light, the light of the Sun, becauſe it ſeldom ſerves, but often hinders their occaſions.

Secondly, Take light figuratively for the light of knowledge; ſo it is more true, that wicked men rebel againſt it: And, that light in this notion ſhould be here meant, the words plainly imply: For though ſome wicked men would be willing to be ſhut of the day-light, yet it is hard to ſay they rebel againſt it: And thoſe other paſſages, *not to know the wayes of it, and not to abide in the paths of it*, are not ſo proper and ſignificant to ſet forth their deſire and endeavour of avoiding natural light. So that the light rebelled againſt is rather an internal light, that light which ſhines into the ſoul, then that which ſhines to the eye; and there is a twofold internal light, againſt which wicked men may be ſaid to rebel.

Firſt, The light of nature, or natural internal light: There is a light of nature, or as ſome call it, a light of the natural Conſcience, which every man carrieth about him, concerning good and evil, or what is to be done, and what is to be left undone. The Apoſtle is direct for this (*Rom.* 2. 14.) *The Gentiles having not the Law, do by nature the things contained in the Law; theſe having not the Law* (that is, the Law of God formally publiſhed to and preſſed upon them) *are a Law unto themſelves* (that is, they have the Law of nature in common principles and notions of righteouſneſs in themſelves) *and* (therefore) *ſhew the work of the Law written in their hearts.* Againſt this internal light the wicked rebel.

Secondly, There is a light of divine Revelation, which ſhines into the ſoul from the Scriptures, or written Word of God. The Word of God is ſo often called light in Scripture, that I need not give particular Inſtances. Divine truths inſpired and dictated by the Spirit of God are there written as with the beams of the Sun. Yet the wicked man rebels, as againſt the light of nature, ſo againſt the light of Scripture, againſt the cleareſt and fulleſt diſcoveries of the mind of God.

Further, Some by the light againſt which they rebelled, underſtand God himſelf, *who is light* (as the Apoſtle *John* calls him, 1 *Epiſt.* 1. 5.) *and in him is no darkneſs at all.* All that rebel againſt God, muſt needs rebel againſt light, ſeeing God is light. And the very reaſon why the light of Nature, and the light of Scripture are rebelled againſt, is, becauſe the former hath ſomewhat of God in it, and the latter much of God in it: For as God is light, ſo all light is of God. And that light which is of God muſt needs be rebelled againſt by wicked men, ſeeing they moſt of all rebel againſt God, who is light and the fountain of it; for as the Apoſtle *John* argues about love (1 *Epiſt.*5.1.) *Every one* (ſaith he) *that loveth him that begat, loveth him alſo that is begotten of him.* So we may argue about hatred, and the effect of it, rebellion: He that hateth and rebelleth againſt him that begetteth light (ſo God doth, whence alſo he is called the *Father of lights* (James 1. 17.) he, I ſay, that rebelleth againſt him that begetteth light) hateth and rebelleth againſt that light which is begotten of him. *They are of thoſe that rebel againſt the light.*

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *Divine truth is as life.*

As the Sun gives light to the eye, or outward man; ſo the Spirit of truth gives light by the word to the inner man. When God ſends his word to a people, he ſends light to a people: Chriſt is light, and the word is light; Chriſt in perſon is the light of the world; the Word in doctrine is the light of the world: The truth of Divine Revelation is many wayes anſwerable to the light.

Firſt, Light is pure and beautiful; and the light is ſo pure, that you cannot impure or defile it; ſo is truth: Though many have attempted to corrupt the truth and word of God, and ſhall at laſt be dealt with and judged, as they who have corrupted it; yet the truth remains incorruptible, and ever ſhall. The beauty of it fades not, nor is the purity of it ſtained, by all the filth of falſe doctrine which hath been caſt into the face of it, from the beginning of the world unto this day.

Secondly, Light is pleaſant and delightful; *Light is ſweet* (ſaith *Solomon*, (Eccleſ. 11. 7.) *and a pleaſant thing it is for the eyes to behold the Sun:* So truth is ſweet, and it is a pleaſant thing to behold and receive the Sun-light of Divine Revelations; where truth is taken in, it doth even raviſh the ſoul and fill it with unſpeakable delights. Truth is as ſutable and pleaſant to the underſtanding, as good is or can be to the will and affections. *David* found not only delight, this or that ſingle delight, but all ſorts and degrees of delight in the Law of God: And therefore he ſpeaks plurally (*Pſal.* 119. 92.) *Unleſs my delights had been in thy Law, I had periſhed in my trouble.* And again (*ver.* 143.) *Trouble and anguiſh have taken hold of me; yet thy Commandments are my delights.* All his troubles were over-ballanced and conquered by his delights in the Law; and all his delights and contentments were center'd in the Law. That light was ſo much his delight, that it overcame all worldly darkneſs, and did even extinguiſh all his worldly lights.

Thirdly, Light hath heat in it, and light is accompanied with influences, or conveighs them with it. All living creatures here below are cheriſhed and refreſhed; yea, and things without life, as Gems and Minerals, are concocted and refined with the warmth and vertue of it. And ſo hath truth: The light of the word carrieth heat and Influences with it, to warm the heart and comfort it, to concoct the groſsneſs of mans mind and ſublimate it into an heavenly purity. *Did not our heart burn within us while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?* ſaid the Diſciples of Chriſts diſcourſe with them, *Luke* 24. 31.

Fourthly, Light diſcovers and makes manifeſt; ſo doth truth (*John* 3. 20, 21.) *Every one that doth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, leſt his deeds ſhould be reproved*, or (as we put in the Margin) *diſcovered. Light makes manifeſt the word of God* (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Heb.* 4.12.) *is a diſcerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart*; it diſcovers that to us, not only in others, but in our ſelves, which we ſaw not before; we are much, if not altogether unknown to our ſelves, till we ſee our ſelves in the Glaſs of the Word.

Hence Obſerve, Secondly, *The light of truth is cloathed with Authority, the truths of God have a Soveraignty over man.*

We cannot be ſaid to rebel againſt any thing but that which hath power and authority over us; a man may oppoſe and contend with his equal, but he cannot be ſaid to rebel againſt his equal; we rebel only againſt thoſe that are above us. If a Child oppoſeth his Father, it is rebellion; if a Servant oppoſeth his Maſter, it is rebellion; becauſe Fathers and Maſters have authority over their Children and Servants. All rebellion is the breaking of the bands of ſubjection. And all the bands of ſubjection are broken when the light is rebelled againſt, becauſe the light of heavenly truth is inveſted with all power and authority over us; it hath a power to lift up, and a power to humble or caſt down; it hath a power to convince, and a power to comfort; it hath a power to kill, and it hath a power to make alive; all theſe powers the light of the Word hath. But it hath two powers more eſpecially and eminently.

Firſt, It hath the power of a rule, or power to rule and govern both the hearts and lives of men; the light of the Word doth not only offer advice, and give counſel, but it gives out a command; what the Word ſpeaketh we are not upon point of indifferencies whether we will receive it or no, but upon point of duty. Therefore not to receive it, eſpecially to reſiſt it is rebellion; the light of the Word is as a King; and where the light of that Word comes, there is power, and no man may ſay, *What doth it?*

Secondly, It hath the power of a Judge; It gives both Law and Judgment. *He that rejecteth me* (ſaith Chriſt, *John* 12. 48.) *and receiveth not my words* (The not receiving of the word of Chriſt, is the rejecting of Chriſt himſelf; and he that rejecteth Chriſt) *hath one that judgeth him; the word that I have ſpoken, the ſame ſhall judge him in the laſt day.* The Word is now the rule of living, and it ſhall be hereafter the rule of judging. Now it is the rule by which we muſt live to Chriſt, and then it ſhall be the rule by which Chriſt will judge us.

Thirdly, Where it is ſaid, *They are of thoſe who rebel againſt the light*;

Obſerve, *Wicked men cannot abide to be ſeen in what they do; nor do they live to ſee what they do.*

They would neither ſee their wicked practices, nor be ſeen in them. They are darkneſs, and they walk in darkneſs. As they walk in the darkneſs of ſin, ſo they would walk in the darkneſs of ſecrecy, that others ſhould not ſee what evil they do; and in the darkneſs of ignorance, that they might not ſee that what they do is evil. They are like thoſe uncouth Creatures, Bats and Owls, that come abroad only in the night, knowing that if they do but ſtir out in the day, all the Birds in the air will gather about them, and hoot at them, becauſe of their ſtrangeneſs and deformity. And doubtleſs if wicked men did but ſee the miſhapen and ugly viſage of their own wayes in the light of the Word, they would abhor and run from themſelves as the moſt abhorred Monſters in the world; and ſo would all men (who ſee the uglineſs of ſin in the glaſs of the Word) abhor them, and point at them as Monſters, did they but ſee them in their ſinful works. And hence the Apoſtle (hinting the general diſpoſition of ſinners) ſaith (1 *Theſ.* 5. 7.) *They that are drunken are drunken in the night.* And again (*Eph.* 5. 12.) *For it is a ſhame even to ſpeak of thoſe things which are done of them in ſecret*; that is, when they are out of the ſight of men; and, poſſibly had it not been that they were out of ſight, or in ſecret, themſelves would not have done thoſe things for ſhame: For though ſome wicked men, as they have caſt off their honeſty, ſo their modeſty too, and act not only wickedly, but impudently, *The ſhew of their faces teſtifying againſt them, they declaring their ſin as* Sodom; yet as the moſt of ſinners preſume God doth not ſee them when they do evil; ſo they are unwilling that men ſhould; for though their Conſcience puts no bar to their ſinning openly, yet their credit doth. So that as every wicked man would be glad he did not know that what he doth is evil, and doth what he can to hinder or extinguiſh the light of that knowledge in him; ſo moſt wicked men would be glad that no man knew of the evil which they do; and they do what they can to hinder others from knowing it. As Hypocrites love to be ſeen in all the good they do, and would do no good, were it not (as Chriſt aſſures us, *Matth.* 6. 5.) *to be ſeen of men*; They faſt, pray, and give Alms, and all to be ſeen of men; that is, that men may applaud them, and point at them with a Behold (of admiration) There go the men, The charitable men, The humble men, The devout men; and if men ſee them not, or applaud them not, they are as in the ſhadow of death, they are dead hearted to every good word and work. Now (I ſay) as all groſs Hypocrites love the light, or to be ſeen while they are doing good; ſo the moſt prophane and wicked uſually avoid the light, and love not to be ſeen when they are doing evil. For though they are not troubled at the diſhonour they do to God by ſinning; yet to be diſhonoured among men is a trouble to them. They can eaſily venture their ſouls as to the life to come; but they are affraid to do wickedly in the ſight of men, leſt they endanger their eaſe and ſafety in this preſent life. That God ſeeth them not is their hope; that men may not ſee them is their care; and that they may not ſee themſelves is their deſire. They are unwilling to know their duty, leſt their Conſciences ſhould check them for not doing, or for doing that which is not their duty. Thus in every ſence, *They are of thoſe who rebel againſt the light.*

Fourthly, As rebelling againſt the light, is an argument (as hath been ſhewed) that wicked men deſire not to know what they ought to do, ſo it teacheth us further,

That wicked men will do againſt that which they know.

Men will have fellowſhip with the works of darkneſs, while their eyes are dazled with light, if their hearts have not been changed by it. They would be glad if they might never be troubled with the light; but ſuppoſe the light do come (as many times it doth come whether they will or no) ſuppoſe the light darted upon them ſo clearly and convincingly, that they cannot but ſee and know what they ought, and what they ought not to do, yet they rebel againſt it; either they will not do what they know, or they will do contrary to their knowledge. When ſome of the Phariſees were offended at thoſe words (*John* 9. 39.) *For judgment am I come into this world, that they which ſee not might ſee; and that they which ſee might be made blind:* What, ſay they, *are we alſo blind? Jeſus ſaid unto them, if ye were blind ye ſhould have no ſin; but now ye ſay, we ſee, therefore your ſin remaineth*; that is, it remaineth in the guilt and aggravations of it. For as they confeſſed that they ſaw; ſo Chriſt would convince them that they acted againſt what they ſaw; or that though they had the light, and ſo knew their duty, yet they had done contrary to duty. Man breaks through all the light that ſtands in his way; he breaks through the light both of Nature and Conſcience, both of the Spirit and Scripture, till himſelf be made light. The Apoſtle demonſtrates the former in the example of the old Gentiles, who though they were under a conviction of the power and preſence of God by the works of Creation, and ſo were ſaid to know God, yet *They did not like to retain God in their knowledge, nor did they glorifie him as God* (ver. 21. 28.) but rebelled againſt that light which ſhone into their underſtandings from the creature. And in the ſecond Chapter of the ſame Epiſtle to the *Romans* the Apoſtle demonſtrates the latter in the example of the old *Jews*, who though they were under a conviction not only of the power and preſence of God, but of the mind and will of God alſo, by a divine Revelation, or by the light of the Word, yet they rebelled againſt that Word which they boaſted of; and while they judged themſelves only in the light, and all the reſt of the world in darkneſs, they walked in darkneſs. *Behold* (ſaith he, *ver.* 17, 18.) *thou art called a* Jew, *and reſteſt in the Law, and makeſt thy boaſt of God, and knoweſt his will*, &c. But how did the *Jew* anſwer this knowledge and this boaſt? Read that (*ver.* 21, 22, 23, 24.) *Thou therefore which teacheſt another, teacheſt thou not thy ſelf? Thou that preacheſt a man ſhould not ſteal, doſt thou ſteal: Thou who makeſt thy boaſt of the Law, through breaking the Law diſhonoureſt thou God? For the Name of God is blaſphemed among the Gentiles through you.* So that wicked men do not only rebel againſt the light to hinder the coming of it, or to keep it off as long as they can, that ſo they may not know what to do, but they rebel againſt it when it is come, and will do againſt what they know.

Fifthly, When 'tis ſaid, *They rebel againſt the light*,

Obſerve, *Wicked men are not only no friends, but profeſſed reſolved enemies of the light, they hate and oppoſe holy truths, or the diſcoveries of the mind and will of Chriſt.*

They are in open actual hoſtility, they take up Arms and maintain a war againſt it; not that all wicked men do expreſly ſend forth their defiance againſt God and his Word; but all wicked men carry this defiance in their hearts; and it is to God as an openly profeſt defiance, though it be not ſo to man; God hears the language of their hearts, and he knows that *the wiſdom* (or beſt) *of the fleſh is enmity againſt himſelf, that it is not ſubject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be* (Rom. 8. 7.) That is, while a man continues (as to his ſpiritual ſtate) under the power and teachings of the wiſdom of the fleſh, and is unregenerate, as he is not, ſo it is impoſſible he ſhould (continuing in that ſtate) be ſubject to the Law of God. The Law of God will ever continue as holy as it is; and if the heart of man continue as unholy as it is, how ſhall they agree? A wicked man ſtands not upon terms of neutrality with the Law and light of God, but he is a direct oppoſite or enemy, he rebels againſt the light.

Sixthly, Seeing *Job* when he had deſcribed all thoſe wickedneſſes which he ſaw done, adds this deſcription of the wicked who did them, *They are of thoſe that rebel againſt the light!* This may be conſidered two wayes (as I intimated before) Firſt, as the diſcovery of a new and a greater ſin then any of thoſe particular ſins already inſtanced in; or as a reaſon why they did break out into thoſe enormous ſins. The former conſideration yields this Note,

To reſiſt or rebel againſt the light of truth, the word of God, is wickedneſs in perfection, or wickedneſs wrought and boyl'd up to the very height.

As God ſometimes brings Judgments upon men in perfection; ſo men ſin againſt God ſometimes in perfection. And if any do ſo, ſurely they do ſo who rebel againſt the light. That ſpecial ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, of which Chriſt ſaith, *It ſhall never be forgiven*, what is it but rebellion againſt the light, the higheſt and cleareſt light? And the more clear and high the light is, the more danger there is of falling into that ſin. And hence ſome conceive, that before Chriſt came in the fleſh, though there were very high and preſumptuous ſins committed, that yet none of them did amount to that which the Goſpels calls, *The ſin againſt the holy Ghoſt.* There was Goſpel-light in thoſe times, but it was under types and ſhadows; there was not that clear light, that cleareſt light which was ſhed abroad at the coming of Chriſt; and therefore there was not light enough to ſin againſt, for the production of that ſin againſt the holy Ghoſt, which is not only the greateſt rebellion againſt light, but is alſo a rebellion againſt the greateſt light. And here conſider by what degrees ſinning againſt light riſeth unto its full height of rebellion.

Firſt, It is very ſinful and extreamly dangerous not to love the light. See how Chriſt thunders againſt ſuch as do not (*John* 3. 19.) *This is the condemnation that light is come into the world, and men love darkneſs rather then light*: He doth not ſay, men rebelled againſt the light, he only charges them with this crime, that they did not love it, but loved darkneſs rather. *This*, ſaith he, *is the Condemnation*; that is, this will certainly be matter of condemnation againſt ſinners, that when light came to them, their hearts did not cloſe with it, and embrace it. Now if it be ſo ſinful not to love the light, what is it to rebel againſt it? It is very poſſible for a man not to love that thing or perſon againſt which yet he doth not rebel.

Secondly, Not to obey, not to ſubmit to the light, is exceeding ſinful. *Jeſus Chriſt ſhall at laſt be revealed from Heaven* (*perſonally*) *in flaming fire, to take vengeance on them, that obey him not as revealed* (*doctrinally*) that is, *who obey not the Goſpel* (2 Theſ. 1. 7, 8.) yet it is poſſible not to obey the Goſpel, that is, to forbear an active obedience to that which is commanded in it, and not to rebel againſt it actively; theſe are diſtinct in themſelves, though ſeldom, if at all, diſtinct in thoſe that do them. Now then if there be abundance of wickedneſs in not obeying the light, in not doing every thing that the light directs us to; then it muſt needs be a more abounding wickedneſs, when the heart riſes up and rebels againſt it. For though (as was even now intimated) we can hardly divide theſe in their exiſtences, yet we may diſtinguiſh them in their natures, or at leaſt in their degrees; for barely not to obey the light in doing the will of God, is a ſin of a lower ſtature, then a profeſt rebelling againſt it. Though in every not doing according to light, there is ſomewhat of rebelling; yet in that which is properly rebelling, there is more then not doing.

Thirdly, It is a great ſin not to ſet a great price upon the light, or not to value it according to its worth; that is, not to value it highly; not to have a high eſteem of it; not to have a higher eſteem of it then of all the Enjoyments and Comforts of this world, is a high provocation. What is it then to rebel againſt it? It is ſinful not to let all go; not to ſuffer the loſs of all for the light, not to ſuffer even the loſs of life it ſelf for the light, this is extreamly ſinful. Therefore ſaith Chriſt (*Luke* 14. 26.) *He that will be my Diſciple muſt forſake father and mother*, &c. *yea, and his life too*; that is, he muſt be ready to let all theſe go if called to it, rather then let go the light or truth of the Goſpel! Now if it be ſo great a ſin not to be willing to ſuffer any loſs, or to endure any torment in ſtanding up for the light; what is it for any ſoul to riſe up againſt the light, or knowingly to withſtand it?

Fourthly, The Apoſtle ſaith, that our neglect of the light of the Goſpel ſubjects us to utter darkneſs (*Heb.* 2. 3.) *How ſhall we eſcape if we neglect ſo great ſalvation, which at the firſt began to be ſpoken by the Lord*, &c. As if he had ſaid, The wiſeſt man in the whole world cannot tell how a man ſhould eſcape eternal darkneſs or damnation (there is no poſſible way, no door of hope to eſcape by) if he neglect that great ſalvation. But what's neglect? It is a light paſſing by of a thing when offer'd; non-acceptance is a neglect. Suppoſe you do no more, when light is offered to you, but only paſs it by, becauſe you have no mind to it, you are not taken with the beauty and worth of it: If you do nothing againſt it, only you do not embrace it, you cannot eſcape. And when the Apoſtle ſaith, *You cannot eſcape*, without ſaying from what; you may ſay the worſt you can, or can imagine; and that's it which he means you cannot eſcape, even the wrath of God, and death eternal. Now if but to neglect ſalvation or the light, which is indeed, only not to elect it, or not to make it our choice, be ſo damnable a ſin, what is it to rebel againſt the light? To do which is the worſt that we can do, even the perfection of wickedneſs. Surely they who thus rebel againſt the light, *ſhall* (as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks, *Pſal.*49.19.) *go to the generation of their fathers, where they ſhall never ſee light.* They who rebel againſt the light of knowledge, ſhall not enjoy the light of comfort. As they have deſired the abſence of the former light, ſo they ſhall be puniſhed with the abſence of the latter.

Laſtly, As in theſe words *Job* ſhews who they were that acted thoſe groſs wickedneſſes, even they who rebelled againſt the light,

> We may obſerve, *They who rebel againſt the light, will cloſe with, and embrace any ſin whatſoever*; or, *They who are all for darkneſs, are for any wickedneſs.*

They who rebel againſt this beautiful thing *light*, are forward to embrace the fouleſt monſter; thoſe things which 'tis a ſhame to ſpeak of, or ſo much as to name, theſe Rebels againſt light are ready to do. The Pſalmiſt moves God in prayer to look to his Covenant by this Argument (*Pſal.*74.20.) *For the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty*; that is, of cruel men, or of men ſo full of cruelty, that they deſerve rather to be called *cruelty*, then cruel; this ſort of men inhabit and fill up all thoſe places where the light of holy truth doth not ſhine. Now if they who want the light, or have no true knowledge of God among them, are hereby (as it were) prepared for and put on to the acting of all manner of wickedneſs; how much more are they prepared for the acting of any wickedneſs, who have thruſt the light from them, and are in dark places of their own making? The Prophet *Hoſea* ſhews (*Chap.*4. 1.) that where there is no knowledge of God in a Land (for want of means) there is no truth nor mercy (that is, there is none exerciſed) in that Land, but oppreſſion, deceit, and falſhhood, bear down all: How much more muſt it be ſo where there is no knowledge of God in a Land, becauſe of the contempt of means, and rebellion againſt the light? What wickedneſs will not they do in the dark, who put out the Candle that they may not ſee what they do? *Theſe are they who rebel againſt the light*; and as it followeth,

They know not the way thereof, nor abide in the paths thereof.

Theſe latter words are an illuſtration of the former.

They know not the wayes thereof.

This not knowing may be taken either for a ſimple ignorance, when we know not, either becauſe we have not an ability to know, or becauſe we have wanted all opportunities and helps to get knowledge: Or, ſecondly, Not knowing may be expounded of a wilful affected ignorance; *They know not*; that is, they deſire not to know: And ſo I conceive the meaning of *they know not*, is not that they were ſimply ignorant, or invincibly ignorant, as they are who ſit in a land of darkneſs, and in the valley of the ſhadow of death, but that theſe rejected the land of light, and ſo were under an affected ignorance: They knew not the truth, becauſe they would not.

Again, We may be ſaid not to know that which we do not delight in, approve and practiſe. We know no more to purpoſe, then we preſently do, or have a purpoſe to do when the ſeaſon or opportunity calls us to it. How much light ſoever a wicked man hath, yet *he knows not the wayes of light*, becauſe he doth not rejoyce or delight in the wayes of light, as alſo becauſe he doth not ſo much as approve the wayes of light; and if he neither delight in nor approve of thoſe wayes, no marvel if he walk not in thoſe wayes, *nor* (as 'tis in the laſt clauſe of the verſe) *abide in the paths thereof.*

Non noſſe viam lucis eſt non agere ea quæ in luce agi ſolent. Illud neſcire dicimur quod non probamus.

As if he had ſaid, Suppoſe they come ſometimes into the wayes of light and truth, ſuppoſe they ſometimes do that which the light directs them to, yet they abide not in it. This is a further character of the diſpoſition and temper of wicked men, who though poſſibly for a fit, or for a turn or two they walk in the wayes of light, yet they *abide not in the paths thereof.* And this latter piece of their ſinfulneſs ariſeth from the former; Why do they not *abide in the paths of light?* Even becauſe they *know not the wayes thereof*; that is, becauſe they do not approve or delight in the wayes thereof.

> Whence Note, *We cannot be conſtant in that which we do not affect.*

If a man doth not know, that is, love and affect the wayes of light, he will never abide in the paths of light; What we love, with that we cloſe; what we affect, in that we ſtick. The reaſon why the wicked abide in the paths of ſin, is, becauſe they love and delight in them. All the paths of wickedneſs are paths of pleaſantneſs to the wicked, and therefore they abide in them. No man would be at all, much leſs would he be long in a way that he doth not like. And that's the reaſon why wicked men, if ever they do this or that particular act of righteouſneſs and holineſs, yet they cannot perſevere in ſuch actings. A wicked man doth good as a godly man doth evil, upon a temptation, not upon approbation; ſome carnal aim or intereſt of profit or credit tempts him to do good; but he doth not approve the good which he doth. And hence it is, that as a good man abides not in the paths of darkneſs; ſo a wicked man abides not in the paths of light. True holineſs doth not begin at action, but at affection. They begin at the wrong end with Religion, who begin with doing rather then with liking. Many do this, and they do that, whereas they ſhould ſtrive to approve, and pray for a love to the truths and wayes of God which they practiſe; for want of this they often apoſtatize and fall back, even from the practiſe of them. No bonds can hold us alwayes to the duties of obedience, but thoſe of love to God, and to the things wherein duty calls us to obey. And as want of this love is the reaſon why man is ſo apt to backſlide, and is (ſo far as a Negative may be) the very ſeed and principle of backſliding; ſo it is the reaſon why God gives ſuch up to the power and ſpirit of backſliding (2 Theſ. 2. 10, 11.) *Becauſe they received not the love of the truth, that they might be ſaved, for this cauſe God ſhall ſend them ſtrong deluſion, that they ſhould believe a lye.* What is not begun in our affections, will not abide long in our actions.

Secondly, Obſerve, *Not to abide in the paths of truth and holineſs, is the mark of an ungodly man.*

They who are not what they appear in goodneſs, will not alwayes ſo much as appear good. They that are (as *Jacob* ſpake of his eldeſt Son *Reuben* (Gen. 49. 4.) *unſtable as water,* ſhall not excel, nor are they to be numbred among *the excellent ones.* The Apoſtle exhorts Saints (1 Cor. 15. 58.) *To be ſtedfaſt and unmoveable, alwayes abounding in the work of the Lord.* Saints move in the work of the Lord; but they muſt not move out of the work of the Lord, *Be ye ſtedfaſt and unmoveable:* But in what? In the work of the Lord: That is the ſphere in which Saints move, the ſphere of their activity and uſe; and out of that they dare not move. The Sun in the Firmament is moving continually, but it is in his proper line, called by Aſtronomers, *The Ecliptick line:* So a godly man is alwayes moving in the way of godlineſs, that's his proper line, and he never moves out of it wholly: He may have (through the power of corruption and temptation) his wandrings and goings aſtray; but then he hath his repentings and returnings into the way again; he cannot abide long, much leſs alwayes in the paths of darkneſs. He comes to himſelf with the Prodigal, and then he comes to his Father; he bethinks himſelf where he is, and comes back into the path where he ought to be; if at any time he walk in the counſel of the ungodly (the gradation is made in the firſt Pſalm) which thing he ought not to do, yet ſurely he will not (as it follows) *ſtand in the way of ſinners;* or if he ſtand a while in that way, yet he will not *ſit down in the ſeat of the ſcornful;* he will not reſt nor ſtay there. Now as it is an argument and a mark of godlineſs, when a man finds, that though he hath many failings and wandrings, yet he abideth not in the paths of darkneſs; ſo it is an argument of the naughtineſs of a mans heart and ſtate, when though he now and then hits upon the doing of a good thing, yet he abides not in the paths of light. Vain thoughts (as the Prophet reproves the *Jews*) lodge in the wicked ſo long, that the Lord complains, *How long ſhall vain thoughts lodge in you?* But as good thoughts ſeldom come to an ungodly man; ſo they lodge not at all with him; they are great ſtrangers to him, and he uſeth them as the worſt of ſtrangers, yea, as enemies, he quickly turns them off, yea, he thruſts them away from him, he abideth not in the paths of light.

Job having thus ſet forth the ſpirit of a wicked man, by his rebellion againſt the light, by his unaffectedneſs with and unſtayedneſs in the wayes and paths of it; proceeds to give us a further account of his wicked courſes and works of darkneſs.

Verſe 14. **The murtherer riſing with the light, killeth the poor and needy, and in the night is as a Thief.**

The Murtherer is he that killeth a man without a warrant and authority; every ſlaying of a man is not murther; but to ſlay a man, or to take away the life of a man without warrant, that's murther: And that's the groſs ſin forbidden in the ſixth Commandment, *Thou ſhalt not kill, or thou ſhalt do no murther.* And this is uſually committed, either in malice to the perſon, or in covetouſneſs after the ſpoil. Some take away the life of a man in malice to his perſon, they hate him deliberately, as *Cain* did *Abel*, and therefore they kill him. Others have no quarrel to the man, poſſibly they never ſaw him before, but they covet his goods; and that they may rob him of his goods, they rob him of his life. They are ſuch as live upon the ſpoil, and they will ſpoil, though they cauſe the innocent to dye for it, and themſelves too in the end. In either of theſe wayes, we may underſtand the Murtherer here. The former, becauſe 'tis ſaid in the next words, *He ſlays the poor and needy, and there is little gain in their blood when they go down into the pit.* The latter, becauſe 'tis ſaid in the latter part of the verſe, *That in the night he is as a Thief.* But *Job* firſt ſhews us that this Murtherer is a diligent man.

Riſing with the light.

That is, riſing as early, or as ſoon as the light riſeth. The Murtherer is no ſluggard, the light doth not find him in bed; he takes the prime of the morning, he will looſe no time. Men who love hunting riſe early: So do theſe hunters of men; *When the morning is light they practice it,* ſaith the Prophet (*Mich.* 2. 1.) Honeſt men riſe early to go about the works of their Calling, and wicked men riſe early to fulfil the luſts of their hearts. *David* ſaith (*Pſal.* 101. 7.) *I will early deſtroy all the wicked of the earth:* As if *David* had ſaid, I will riſe with the light to deſtroy the wicked; and here you ſee how the wicked are deſcribed riſing early to deſtroy the righteous, to murther the innocent. So the next words expreſs the deſign of his early riſing; *He riſeth with the light:* What to do? No good I warrant you; 'tis

To kill the poor ond needy, That's his buſineſs: He begins his mornings work with a work of cruelty; you hear of killing preſently. The Murtherers heart is full of blood, and it will not be long ere his hand be full too; for *Their feet are ſwift to ſhed blood* (Rom. 3. 15.) and they are skilful to deſtroy. But it may ſeem that they are not very wiſe for themſelves, though they are very bloody againſt others: For *Job* doth not ſay, they ſlay the fat and full ones, but,

The poor and needy.

There are ſome who diſtinguiſh between theſe two, and tell us, that in theſe two words, two, yea, all ſorts of poor are included.

The firſt word, they ſay, intends thoſe poor who heretofore were rich, but now impoveriſhed or fallen into poverty; and that by the ſecond word are meant thoſe who have been born and alwayes bred up in a low condition; But we need not ſtand upon ſuch nicities in diſtinguiſhing between the poor and needy. But it may be enquired, why doth the Murtherer kill the poor? What doth he get by that? Where are the ſpoils which he brings home? There's nothing to be had from them who have nothing, The poor and needy. And it hath been anciently ſaid, *The empty Traveller will ſing before the Thief:* Why then ſhould the Thief or the Murtherer meddle with, eſpecially why ſhould he kill the poor and needy? *What have they? Or what have they done?*

Two things may be ſaid in anſwer to theſe Queries: Firſt, It is thus expreſt to ſhew the extream wickedneſs of the Murtherer, who doth not care ſo much for booty as for blood. 'Tis for that he thirſts, his delight is in cruelty, therefore he kills the very poor and needy, the next man he meets with, let him be what he will. 'Tis the ſin it ſelf, or to do wickedly, which ſome men delight in, they care not whether any advantage or profit come in by it; when they have their will, when they have done what they would, that's reward enough for them.

Hence Note, *Some will do wickedly though they get nothing by it.*

All the true Servants of God love the work which he ſets them, better then the reward which he gives them; and ſo do ſome ſervants of the Devil. Even the Devil hath ſervants who ſcorn to be mercenary. The act of ſin is ſweeter to them then any profit that ſin can bring in; *They are exact and perfect ſinners, who ſin out of love to the very act of ſinning:* As the higheſt acting in holineſs, is to be pleaſed with pure acts of holineſs; to do them, though we ſhould get nothing by doing them, though we make no earnings, though we ſee no preſent fruit in doing them. Thus (I ſay) to go on in wayes of holineſs when the wayes of holineſs appear barren and unprofitable to us, yea, when they are unſafe and dangerous to us, here's the perfection of holineſs. So the perfection of wickedneſs is to be wicked when nothing is got by it; it ſhews a ſincere love to ſin (as I may ſay) to love ſin for ſins ſake; as it ſhews a ſincere love to grace and goodneſs, to love them for their own or Gods ſake. Hypocrites love the wayes of God for the ſpoil which they find there, for the carnal advantages which they meet with there; were thoſe wayes poor and needy, lean and empty, they ſhould not at all be filled with their company. The prophane will riſe up in Judgment againſt theſe profeſſors, for *they kill the poor and needy*; They do evil, where they cannot have any hopes of receiving good by it.

Secondly, For anſwer, By *The poor and needy*, we may here underſtand the innocent and honeſt, not as if all who are poor and needy, were alſo innocent (for there are many wicked poor) nor as if all who are innocent, were alſo poor and needy (for there are many godly rich) but becauſe uſually they are ſo: men that are rich and great may be innocent and holy, but theſe are rare conjunctions; uſually the innocent are poor and needy. Again, we are not to take the poor and needy for them who (as we ſay) have not a penny to buy them bread, but by the poor we underſtand thoſe of the middle or rather inferiour rank, ſuch *poor and needy they kill*.

But what's their quarrel at them?

Firſt, Becauſe ſuch poor honeſt men ſtand in the light of wicked men, that is, the wicked cannot be ſo wicked as they would becauſe ſome good men are near them, and therefore they muſt be removed out of the world, that they may be out of their way. Or, Secondly, Becauſe ſuch poor honeſt men either have given, or are ready to give evidence, or be witneſſes againſt them before the Magiſtrate: now either to prevent or revenge this, they *riſe with the light and kill the poor and needy*.

Hence Obſerve, *That a wicked man will do his utmoſt to remove thoſe who ſtand in his way, or oppoſe him in his wickedneſs.*

He will kill ſome that he may vex others, that's his aim here: The poor and needy are not his utmoſt aim; but the poor and needy ſtand in his way, they hinder him in his other projects. And whatſoever interpoſeth between him and the enjoyment of his luſt, he will remove it if he can. And as he will kill ſome that he may vex others, ſo he will much rather kill thoſe who vex him. Holy *David* being left under the power of a ſtrong Temptation, ſlew *Uriah* an innocent man, only becauſe he could not perſwade him to do that which might have been ſome covering of his ſin from the eyes of men. How much more will the prophane do ſo when honeſt men do either profeſſedly oppoſe them in their ſinful works, or diſcover the ſinfulneſs of them.

Further, In that *Job* upon the freſh account which he gives of the wickedneſſes of men, brings in the murtherer in the firſt place, riſing with the light, and killing the poor and needy; we may here take notice a little, of the greatneſs of this ſin of murther, and demonſtrate how great a ſinner the murtherer is. The murtherer is a ſinner of the higheſt form, and there are two Scripture Conſiderations in general, upon which we may make this out.

Firſt, How ſinful is it for a man to murther a man, when as the Scripture tells us that if a beaſt kill a man he muſt ſuffer for it: (*Exod.*21.28.) *If an ox gore a man or a woman that they die, the ox ſhall be ſurely ſtoned, and his fleſh ſhall not be eaten.* A beaſt is not capable of ſubjection to a moral rule or law, as not being capable of reaſon, yet a beaſt who is not properly under any Law muſt die for tranſgreſſing this Law, *Thou ſhalt not kill*; And this ſurely, Firſt, to convince man of the greatneſs of this ſin; Secondly, To admoniſh him leſt he commit this ſin; Thirdly, To aſſure him, that if he do he muſt die; For if a beaſt muſt die for killing a man, then much more muſt man, ſeeing that Law, againſt the killing of a man, was given to men, not to beaſts.

Secondly, The Lord gave a rule to the *Jewes*, what to do for the removing of the guilt of blood, in caſe a man were found ſlain, and no man could tell who was the Author of that murther, read this at large (*Deut.*21.) from the beginning of the Chapter to the end of *verſ.* 9. *If one be found ſlain in the Land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, and it be not known* (after diligent enquiry, or hue and cry) *who hath ſlain him; Then the Elders of thy Judges ſhall come forth, and they ſhall meaſure* (in caſe there be a doubt which City was neareſt to the place where the ſlain was found) *unto the Cities which are round about him that is ſlain. And it ſhall come to paſs, that the City which is next unto the ſlain man* (for from thence it was moſt probable that the murtherer came, or that thither he was fled to hide and conceal himſelf, therefore) *even the Elders of that City ſhall take an heifer which hath not been wrought with, and which hath not drawn in the yoke* (therein fitly ſhadowing the murtherer, in whoſe ſtead the heifer was to be ſlain; for ſuch are ſons of *Belial*, men who will not bear the yoke of obedience) *And the Elders of the City ſhall bring down the heifer into a rough valley* (the very place was to carry a reſemblance of a murtherous ſpirit, and of the act of murther, both being rough and uncouth) *and ſhall ſtrike off the heifers neck there in the valley* (implying that if they could have got the murtherer into their hands, he muſt have died under their hand) Then the Prieſt muſt come to decide the controverſie (*verſ.* 5.) and (at *verſ.* 6.) *The Elders of the City that are next unto the ſlain man ſhall waſh their hands over the heifer that is beheaded in the valley* (waſhing of the hands, was, Firſt, an argument that blood defileth; Secondly, It was a ceremony which implyed innocence and clearneſs from blood, as appears by a like action of *Pilate* (*Matth.* 27.24.) But theſe Elders muſt not only uſe this ſpeaking ceremony, to ſhew their innocency, but they muſt explicitly profeſs it (*verſ.* 7.) *And they ſhall anſwer and ſay, our hands have not ſhed this blood, neither have our eyes ſeen it.* And then the Prieſt muſt pray (*verſ.* 8, 9.) *Be merciful O Lord, unto thy people Iſrael, whom thou haſt redeemed, and lay not innocent blood unto thy people of Iſraels charge, and the blood ſhall be forgiven; ſo ſhalt thou put away the guilt of innocent blood from among you, when thou ſhalt do that which is right in the ſight of the Lord.* This ſolemn Law, and the manner of proceeding upon it, ſhewes three things, as to the point in hand. Firſt, that the Lord is very tender of ſhedding mans blood. Secondly, that the ſhedding of mans blood in any murtherous way is extreamly diſpleaſing to him. Thirdly, That God will certainly bring vengeance one time or other, firſt or laſt, upon the murtherer, ſeeing a whole City ſhould be charged, in ſome degree, with the blood of a man ſlain near them, if they did not publickly and ſolemnly declare and teſtifie their clearneſs from it.

But beſides theſe two general Conſiderations taken from Scripture, and now inſtanced in; There are many other grounded both upon Scripture authority and common reaſon, which ſet forth the vileneſs of this ſin of murther.

Firſt, Murther offereth violence to nature in common, there being but one common nature in all men. And hence,

Secondly, He that murthers another offers violence to himſelf; for though there be a ſpecial ſin of ſelf-murther, yet the murther of another is ſelf murther too, and that not only as it is an offering of violence to common nature, but alſo as it layes the murtherers own perſon open and obnoxious unto violence, and that, both to the violence of a private revenge, and to the violence of publick Juſtice.

Thirdly, Murther deſtroyes ſociety, men will never live together where they find themſelves continually in danger of their lives: Man is a ſociable creature by nature; how ſinful then is murther, which breaks the very firſt fundamental lawes of Nature?

Fourthly, Murther doth not only defile the perſon that commits it, but the land alſo in which it is committed. (*Numb.*35.31,33.) *Ye ſhall take no ſatisfaction for the life of a murtherer, which is guilty of death, and he ſhall ſurely be put to death; ſo ye ſhall not pollute the land wherein ye are; for blood it defileth the land: and the land cannot be cleanſed of the blood that is ſhed therein, but by the blood of him that ſhed it.* Murther as acted defileth the perſon only that acts it, but murther (when known) defileth a whole land, if it go unpuniſhed. In which caſe there may be defilement upon a land by many other ſins, but this is eſpecially expreſt of murther, as if that among and above all ſins were the *land-defiling ſin*.

Fifthly, Murther is not only an injury to man, but an impiety againſt God; and that's the reaſon given in the firſt Law which God made againſt it, (*Gen.*9.6.) *Whoſo ſheddeth mans blood, by man ſhall his blood be ſhed, for in the Image of God made he man.* For though the body of a man ſlain be not in the Image of God, yet the perſon ſlain is, even the perſon of a wicked man hath ſomewhat of the Image of God remaining in him. And therefore that law is to be expounded univerſally; whoſoever the man is, whether good or bad, righteous or wicked, whoſe blood is unrighteouſly ſhed *by man* (that is, *by man* who hath a call to it as being a Magiſtrate) *ſhall his blood be ſhed,* that is, he by his authority ſhall (upon proof) condemn him to die, and ſhall give him up to execution. A contempt of the Image of God in man is a contempt of God. And he takes it as a high affront to his Majeſty, that any ſhould preſume to deface or ſpoil this image. And this doth more aggravate their ſin, who oppoſe, vex, and deſtroy godly men, becauſe they oppoſe that more excellent Image of God, the new Creature, or the Image of God renewed in righteouſneſs and true holineſs. As there is an image or likeneſs of God in every man, ſo much more in a godly man, for godlineſs is true God-likeneſs. Therefore to ſhed the blood of a godly man is a higher affront to the Majeſty of God. *As the new wine is in the cluſter, and one ſaith, deſtroy it not for a bleſſing is in it* (*Iſa.*65.8.) So we may ſay, deſtroy not a godly man, for a bleſſing is in him, (Firſt, from God; and, Secondly, for men) but we may ſay much more, *Deſtroy him not,* for the Image of God is in him.

Sixthly, Murther deprives us of that which is moſt precious in the whole compaſs of nature; And according to the value of that wherein the dammage is received, is the greatneſs of the ſin committed. Satan repreſented life better then all other things (*Job* 2.4.) *Skin for skin, and all that a man hath will he give for his life*; Gold and Silver, houſes and lands are but toyes and trifles to life. There is nothing of man except his ſoul (which cannot die) better then his life: And this the murtherer takes away. A murtherer is the greateſt thief, and the vaineſt one, he ſteals away that from another which is to him of higheſt value, yet that which himſelf cannot carry away, nor make any uſe of.

Seventhly, The ſinfulneſs of murther appears in this; That it is not only a wrong to that particular perſon who is murthered, but a wrong to all that have dependance upon him. The life of one man may have an Influence upon many, wife and children, the whole family, and kindred: all relations, and employments, whether more private, or publick, are wronged and ſuffer in his death. Though that which cuts off a mans life cannot cut off his own hope (if he have a well-grounded one) for things to come, yet it cuts off the hopes of all others depending upon him (as an inſtrument in the hand of God) for good things preſent.

Eighthly, The murtherer takes away that from a man which no man can reſtore to him, or repair him in; he takes away that which is impoſſible for him to give again. He that took away a mans goods was bound by the law of God to reſtore it fourfold, or fivefold, or ſevenfold, (according to the caſe) and poſſibly he might reſtore it an hundred-fold; but he that takes away a mans life, hath taken that (which though he would) he cannot reſtore ſo much as ſingle. The law of nature will not ſuffer the murtherer to reſtore life, for 'tis like water which being ſpilt cannot (by any humane power) be gathered up again: and the Law of God ſaith concerning the ſin of murther, that no ſatisfaction ſhall be taken for it, and indeed none can. For though ſome would commute and have (by the ſinful indulgence and cruel pity of unjuſt Magiſtrates) commuted for it, yet none could ever ſatisfie for it. And when Magiſtrates either through foul corruption, or fooliſh compaſſion, have not taken vengeance upon the murtherer in kind, but have ſuffered him to commute, or compound for that ſin, either by paying a pecuniary penalty, or by undergoing ſome puniſhment leſs then death, God hath taken vengeance upon them for it, and hath ſaid to them in his providences as he ſaid to *Ahab* by his Prophet for the ſparing of *Benhadad* (1 *King.*20.42.) *Becauſe ye have let go out of your hand a man whom I had appointed to utter deſtruction, therefore your life ſhall go for his life, and your people ſhall be cut off by the ſword, becauſe your ſword did not cut off the murtherer.* Whole Nations have been filled with blood by this kind of keeping back the hand from blood.

Si magiſtratus ceſſet ab officio deus ipſe injuſtas cædes fame peſte & bellis externis aut inteſtinis ulciſcitur. Merl.

Laſtly, The murtherer hurts others, but he chiefly hurts himſelf. Some expound *Lamech* confeſſing this with ſorrow (*Gen.* 4.23.) while he ſaid unto his wives, *Hearken unto my ſpeech, for I have ſlain a man to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt.* There are divers other Interpretations and readings of thoſe words, and we put in the Margin, *I would ſlay a man in my wound, and a young man in my hurt.* As if he had boaſted of his ſtrength to his wives, that though he were weak with wounds and hurts, yet he would venture to fight with any man, and doubted not to get victory over him and kill him: and ſo the words carry a ſence like that ſpeech of the Prophet (*Jer.* 37.10.) telling the *Jews* that theirs were vain confidences while they hoped to be delivered from the *Chaldeans* who beſieged them, *for,* ſaith he, *Though there remained but wounded men among them, yet they ſhould riſe up every man in his tent, and burn this City with fire.* But as to our reading, *I have ſlain a man to my wounding.* Some expound it only of a bodily wounding; I have got a wound my ſelf, or I have hurt my ſelf while I ſlew a man: much more is this true of a ſpiritual wounding and hurt to the ſoul and Conſcience; for though a murtherer ſlay a man, and come off with a whole skin, yet he ſlayeth a man to his wounding, and killeth him to his hurt. The Rabbins have a tradition upon that place; that *Lamech* having been a great hunter in his younger dayes, being then grown old was led forth by his young man to take his pleaſure in hunting, and ſhooting at Deer, and that while he was in this diſport or exerciſe in the field, *Cain* paſſed by, and the young man pointed him to *Cain*, *Lamech* (being dim ſighted) ſhot at *Cain*, and killed him in ſtead of a wild beaſt; but ſoon after diſcovering that he had killed *Cain*, turned to the young man his guide in a paſſionate anger, and killed him alſo. This relation they give as the reaſon why *Lamech* ſaid, *I have ſlain a man to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt*: but I ſhall not ſtay upon that tradition of the *Jewes*; and ſhall only make ſo much uſe of *Lamechs* confeſſion, as at leaſt to illuſtrate, if not to prove, the point in hand, that he who ſlayeth a man doth it to his own hurt and wounding, often to the wounding of his body, eſtate, and honour, alwayes to the wounding of his own ſoul and conſcience. Every ſin in ſome degree or other wounds the ſoul; But the wounding of others to death is the chief ſin (of all ſins againſt the body and outward concernments of man) which woundeth a mans ſoul. The murtherer at one blow ſtrikes through the body of his neighbour and his own ſoul.

Further, we might obſerve from thoſe words in the text, *riſing with the light,*

> *That murtherers, and indeed any ſort of wicked doers, are diligent and laborious to do the commands of their vileſt luſts.*

But I noted this at *verſ.* 5. upon thoſe words, *Riſing betimes for a prey*, I ſhall not ſtay upon it here, I only add this; Let us not be ſloathful in doing good, ſeeing the murtherer is ſo diligent and early up for the doing of miſchief.

And in the night is as a Thief.

Theſe words may be taken two wayes; For

Firſt, The Particle, *as*, is by ſome conceived not to be a note of ſimilitude, but to carry on a direct predication, *He is as a thief*, that is, *He is a very thief.* We find elſewhere in Scripture, that a particle of likeneſs doth not only note the likeneſs of one thing to another, but the ſameneſs of one thing with another. Taking it thus here, The meaning of the words is as if *Job* had ſaid, *He riſeth betimes in the morning to play the murtherer, and in the night he playes the thief.* I have noted the ſame ſence of the particle heretofore, Firſt, from thoſe words of the Evangeliſt concerning Chriſt (*John* 1.14.) *We ſaw his glory*

Particulā quaſi nō dicit ſimilitudinem ſed proprietatē.

glory as the glory of the only begotten Son of God; for Chriſt was not only like the only begotten Son of God, but he was really ſo: as alſo from that of the Prophet (*Hoſea* 5.10.) *The Princes of Judah were as or like them that remove the bound*, that is, they did remove the bound.

Secondly, Others keep to the ſimilitude, and ſay the meaning of *Job* is not, that the murtherer doth turn thief, or that he proceeds from killing in the day to ſtealing in the night; But ſay they, this verſe is quite through a deſcription of the murtherer, as the next is of the Adulterer. So that to ſay, *In the night he is as a Thief*, imports only this; That in the night he doth carry himſelf very cloſely and very ſecretly, or that as a thief in the night is cloſe and ſudden in ſtealing, ſo is he the murtherer in killing. We have this ſimilitude often uſed (1 *Theſ.* 5.2.) *The Coming of Chriſt ſhall be as a Thief in the night*. Read alſo (2 *Pet.*3.10. *Revel.* 16.15.) in which the ſame ſimilitude of a Thief in the night is applied to Chriſts coming, not as if we could hence conclude, that Chriſt will come in the night-time, but that, whenſoever he comes it ſhall be as in the night, that is, ſuddenly, and (as to any antecedent appearances) ſecretly upon the world, it ſhall be unexpected to them, they ſhall not know the time of it, nor ſhall they be aware of it, though when he is once come, his coming ſhall be accompanied with ſo much light and luſter, with ſo much ſplendour and power as ſhall not only awaken, but aſtoniſh all the world. Thus it may be ſaid of the murtherer, *In the night he is as a Thief*. And

Facere aliquid tanquā fur eſt proverbialis locutio, quæ importat ſecretam diligentemq; abſconſionē.

Hence, it may be noted, First, *That wicked men give themſelves wholly to watch opportunities of doing miſchief.*

The murtherer riſeth early in the morning, and in the night is as a Thief: he takes his advantages in the day, and he will not forbear them in the night. As it ſhewes the great aſſiduity of Saints in prayer when it is ſaid, *They ory to God day and night* (*Luke* 18.7.) day and night reach the whole compaſs of time. So while *Job* tells us that the wicked are doing miſchief betimes in the morning, and that they are at it again in the night, if not all the night; What can be ſaid more for their watchfulneſs and aſſiduity in doing miſchief? The Apoſtle (*Epheſ.* 5.16.) exhorteth Saints *to redeem the time becauſe the dayes are evil*; but we ſee in the preſent example, alledged by *Job*, that wicked men will redeem the time, that they may do evil. We cannot poſſibly redeem the time, by recalling or bringing back the time which is paſt, but we may redeem the time by our more diligent *actings in the time preſent*; Now, who can act more diligently in improving the time preſent, then they who are at work both day and night, which two diſtinctions of time include and carry all time. Let not the godly be found idling away the day, while the wicked are found labouring (at their work, ſuch as it is) in the very night.

Again, We may Note, *That the murtherer doth his bloody buſineſs not only diligently, but cloſely.*

He doth it as a thief in the night. The murtherer, who is at at all times fierce and cruel, will ſometimes be ſubtle and cunning; and this is the guiſe of other ſinners too, eſpecially of the Adulterer, whoſe ſecret conveyances and cloſe contrivances for the attaining of his filthy delights, are elegantly deſcribed in the words which follow.

VERS. 15, 16, 17.

The eye alſo of the adulterer waiteth for the twi-light, ſaying, no eye ſhall ſee me: and diſguiſeth his face.

In the dark they dig through houſes which they have marked for themſelves in the day time: they know not the light.

For the morning is to them even as the ſhadow of death; if one know them, they are in the terrours of the ſhadow of death.

WE have heard many wickedneſſes deſcribed in the former part of this Chapter, and in the foregoing verſe, *The murtherer riſing with the light killeth the poor and needy, and in the night is as a Thief. Job* proceeds to diſcover the practices of two other ſorts of groſs ſinners, the Adulterer and the Thief.

Verſ. 15. **The eye of the adulterer waiteth for the twilight.**

Before I come to open the particular terms of this clauſe, or to raiſe any obſervations from it, I ſhall give in ſomewhat about Adultery in general, which is the ſpecial ſubject of the whole verſe. Adultery is the breach of the ſeventh Commandment. And in that Commandment a twofold Adultery is forbidden, Firſt, Mental, or the adultery of the mind; Secondly, Corporal, or the adultery of the body. It was the former which Chriſt intended, when he corrected the falſe gloſs or expoſition of the Phariſees about the ſeventh Commandment, (*Matth.* 5.27,28.) *Ye have heard that it was ſaid by them of old time, Thou ſhalt not commit adultery; but I ſay unto you, whoſoever looketh on a woman to luſt after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.* By which it appears, that the Phariſees, who were the chief interpreters of the Law in thoſe times, limited the commandment againſt Adultery to the outward act; but Chriſt the Law-giver, who beſt knew the mind of the Law, enlarged it to the prohibition of the internal act, and told them that there is a heart adultery, an adultery in thought, occaſion'd by a vain or wanton glance and caſt of the eye, as there's an Adultery of the body or in the outward act.

The text in hand ſpeaks only of corporal Adultery, though the other be not excluded as being the root of it. And this corporal adultery is taken in Scripture ſometimes ſtrictly, when either man or woman to ſatisfie their luſt with others break their conjugal Bond; and is either that act of uncleanneſs which is committed by perſons who are both engaged by marriage covenant to mutual faithfulneſs, or when at leaſt one of them is under that engagement. This latter is properly called ſingle adultery; the former is double Adultery, or corporal Adultery in the higheſt and ſtricteſt ſence of it. Secondly, Corporal Adultery is taken more largely, or in a lower ſence, for fornication or bodily uncleanneſs of any kind between man and woman. And ſo it is intended in the Commandment given againſt it; *Thou ſhalt not commit Adultery.*

Latinæ voces adulteri & adulteræ hanc vim habent ut adulter ad alteram, adultera ad alterum ſe conferat. Feſt.

The foulneſs and greatneſs of this ſin of adultery (take it in either ſence) appears many wayes. The Apoſtle put it in the front of the works of the fleſh (*Gal.*5.19.) *Now the works of the fleſh are manifeſt, which are theſe, adultery, fornication, uncleanneſs, laſciviouſneſs*; there is adultery with all it's retinue; and (*Col.*3.5.) it is ſet as the firſt of our earthly members, which are to be mortified; *mortifie therefore your members which are upon earth, fornication, uncleanneſs, inordinate affection.* Whereas in other Scriptures fornication is included under adultery, in this adultery is included under fornication.

Adultery ſtrictly taken, hath a ſpecial ſinfulneſs in it. Firſt, as it is the breach of a Covenant; every ſin hath in it a breach of Covenant in general, but there is a ſuperadded breach of a ſpecial Covenant in this ſin. Hence *Solomon* ſaith of the Adultereſs (*Prov.*2.17.) that ſhe *forſaketh the guide of her youth.* One of the Rabbins expounds this woman myſtically for the ſenſitive appetite, and that ſhe is ſaid to *forſake the guide of her youth*, becauſe in youth appetite commonly forſakes reaſon, which is appointed to be the guide of it. But we may expound this guide either for her father, who had the government of her in her younger years, or elſe for her husband whom ſhe married in her youth, and whom by marriage ſhe received as the guide of her youth, under God, who is indeed the guide both of our youth and old age; and what guide ſoever the wife forſaketh, ſhe chiefly forſaketh God who is her chief guide, *and forgetteth the covenant of her God*, that is, the covenant which God gave her in reference to that particular eſtate of marriage. Every believer is in covenant with God, in reference to his ſpiritual eſtate; but a married perſon hath a covenant with God in reference to that civil ſtate; And Adultery is the breach of this covenant.

Secondly, This ſhews the ſinfulneſs of Adultery, that it is a ſin which cannot be committed alone; there is alwayes a double ſin, in this ſin of adultery, two are defiled with it at once. In which ſence it is worſe then murther, and theſt; For theſe may be committed, and but one defiled with the ſinfulneſs of them. He that robs is guilty of ſtealing, not he that is robbed; He that murthers is guilty of blood, not he that is murthered; But in Adultery, the Agent and Patient are both alike guilty of uncleanneſs; the defilement reacheth both.

Thirdly, The evil of this ſin appears, by the many and manifold evils which it brings with it. *Solomon* hath ſet them forth very particularly and fully (*Prov.*6.26, 27,28, 29,30.) *Luſt not after her* (that is, after the ſtrange woman) *in thine heart, neither let her take thee with her eyelids*, (why not? Firſt, thou mayeſt be undone in thy outward ſtate) *by means of a whoriſh woman a man is brought to a piece of bread*, (that is, he is ruin'd in all he hath by it, and brought to ſo low an ebbe of poverty, that he hath ſcarce the worth of a piece of bread left) *And* (which is both a ſecond and a worſe evil) *the adultereſs will hunt for the precious life*, which may either be underſtood of the natural life, (ſometimes the adulterer is murther'd by the adultereſs) or of that which is a more precious life then the natural, even the life of the ſoul, or the eternal good and happineſs of the ſoul, ſhe cares not to deſtroy body and ſoul for ever (ſo her luſt may be ſatisfied) that's the gain which the adultereſs purſues; *ſhe hunts for the precious life*, the life of the ſoul. Thirdly, *Solomon* deſcribes the evil of this ſin in *verſ.* 27,28. by the guilt which it inevitably brings with it; *Can a man take fire in his boſom, and his cloaths not be burnt? can a man go upon hot coals and his feet not be burnt? So he that goeth into his neighbours wife, whoſoever toucheth her ſhall not be innocent*, that is, he ſhall ſurely be very guilty. As if he had ſaid, You can no more retain your innocency, while you commit this folly, then you can avoid being burnt when you carry fire in your boſom, or tread upon burning coals. Fourthly, the ſinfulneſs of this ſin appears, by the compariſon which the Scripture makes between it and theft, (*Prov.*6.30,31.) *Men do not deſpiſe a thief, if he ſteal to ſatisfie his ſoul when he is hungry*; it is a ſin to ſteal, though it be to ſatisfie hunger; no neceſſity can excuſe iniquity; and we ſhould rather chuſe to ſtarve then ſteal, if at leſt that may be called ſtealing, which is done meerly to avoid ſtarving. Therefore (ſaith *Solomon*) *if he be found, he ſhall reſtore ſevenfold, he ſhall give all the ſubſtance of his houſe*; yet this ſin of ſtealing which is to ſatisfie hunger is but a ſmall ſin compared with Adultery, which is only to ſatisfie a mans luſt and beaſtial ſenſualneſs. This *Solomon* affirms to us in the next words; *But whoſo committeth adultery with a woman lacketh underſtanding, he that doth it deſtroyeth his own ſoul.* He that ſtealeth upon thoſe terms, doth it for want, but he that commits adultery upon any terms doth it for wantonneſs. He that ſtealeth doth it for lack of bread, but he that committeth adultery doth it for lack of underſtanding. He that ſtealeth when he is hungry doth it to ſatisfie his ſoul, but he that committeth adultery (though he doth it not with an intent to deſtroy his ſoul, yet in the iſſue he) deſtroyeth his own ſoul. But is not ſtealing a ſoul deſtroying ſin too? I anſwer, it is; and ſo is every ſin in its own nature, but there are ſome ſins (and among theſe adultery is a chief one) which in the event prove uſually more deſtructive to the ſoul, and have oftner deſtroyed it. And as this ſin doth very often deſtroy the ſoul as to its happineſs hereafter; ſo it deſtroyeth it as to its abiding here. Thus the ſoul may be ſaid to be deſtroyed when the life is deſtroyed; and this deſtruction of the ſoul *Solomon* ſeems directly to aim at, as the next words lead us to Judge (*verſ.* 33.) *A wound and diſhonour ſhall he get, and his reproach ſhall not be wiped away; for jealouſie is the rage of a man, therefore he will not ſpare in the day of vengeance.*

Ferenda eſt magis omnis neceſſitas quam perpetranda aliqua iniquitas.

Another Scripture to be much minded in this point is that of S. *Paul* (1 *Cor.*6. 13,14.) where writing to the Church of *Corinth* (among which people that ſin was very common before they were called to the knowledge of Chriſt by the preaching of the Goſpel) he urgeth many arguments upon their conſciences, to prevent their relapſe into it. And we may diſcover ſix arguments which the Apoſtle uſeth in that place; I ſhall only touch them, and ſo return to the Text in hand. The firſt appears at the cloſe of *verſ.* 13. *Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body*; As if he had ſaid, you put the body to a uſe for which it was never intended, *the body is not for fornication*, but, *for the Lord*, that is, for the Lords uſe and ſervice; and the Lord is for the body, that is, for the good and ſalvation of the body. Such is the wonderful goodneſs of God, that look in whatſoever we are for him, he is for us; As our bodies are for the Lords ſervice as well as our ſouls, ſo the Lord is for the good of our bodies, as well as for the good of our ſouls. And therefore our bodies ought to be imployed for his glory in every thing. The ſecond argument is taken from the reſurrection; *God hath both raiſed up the Lord, and will alſo raiſe up us by his own power* (verſ. 14.) As if he had ſaid, your bodies ſhall be raiſed again; if they were to be loſt in the duſt, then it were no great matter how you did defile, and abuſe them, but as God hath raiſed up the Lord, ſo he will raiſe you up. Seeing then God hath promiſed, and you are ſuch as profeſs faith in that promiſe, that your bodies ſhall be raiſed up out of the duſt, to put on glory as a Garment in the laſt day; therefore in the mean time (while your bodies are in your keeping) do ye keep your bodies pure. Thirdly, He argues thus with the believing *Corinthians*, (*verſ.* 15.) *Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Chriſt*; not only is the ſoul of a believer the member of Chriſt, but his body too; yet it is not properly either the body or the ſoul that is a member of Chriſt, but the perſon; for the union is made between Chriſt and the perſon of a believer, conſiſting of ſoul and body. But thus the Apoſtle argues, *Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Chriſt: ſhall I then take the members of Chriſt, and make them members of an harlot? God forbid.* What! will ye diſpoſe the members of Chriſt to ſo baſe a uſe? will ye who profeſs your ſelves joyned to Chriſt, condeſcend to ſuch a baſe conjunction? And hence he expoſtulates at *verſ.* 16,17. *What? know ye not that he which is joyned to an harlot is one body for two, ſaith he, ſhall be one fleſh*; (They who abuſe marriage, are as the married. The Adulterer and the harlot are one fleſh as well as the husband and the wife) *but he that is joyned to the Lord* (by faith and love) *is one ſpirit*: He hath a nearer and a more noble union then that of fleſh, and therefore he ought to maintain the hight of honour and purity, both in mind and body; and as he is one Spirit with the Lord, ſo to make it good that he is guided and governed by one Spirit, and that *The holy One*, We have a fourth argument at *verſ.* 18. *Flee fornication*, why ſo? The reaſon is added, *every ſin that a man doth is without the body, but he that committeth fornication, ſinneth againſt his own body.* But are all other ſins without the body? I anſwer, Firſt, other ſins have the body as an inſtrument for the committing of them; if a man ſteal, the body is an inſtrument; if a man commit murther, the body is an inſtrument: but in this ſin the body is more inſtrumental then in other ſins, the body is chiefly inſtrumental, in this ſin: ſo that comparatively to this, *every ſin that a man doth is without the body.* And therefore this ſin is more againſt the body then other ſins are. Again, Secondly, when the Apoſtle ſaith, *every ſin is without the body*, he is to be underſtood of thoſe ſins which are external, otherwiſe every ſin that a man commits is not without the body; there are a thouſand acts of ſin that are done within the body, or in the ſoul, envy, wrath, malice, are ſins within the body, being bred and acted in the Spirit. But we may ſay of every ſin which is external, (about which the diſcourſe there is) that comparatively to this ſin of adultery, and fornication, it is without the body. I anſwer, Thirdly, The body is not only the inſtrument of this ſin, but the object of it alſo; for the unclean perſon doth not only ſin with his body, but he ſins againſt his body. Adultery leaves that blot and brand of ignominy and baſeneſs upon the body, which no other ſin doth, making it the member of a harlot, as was toucht before, and degrading it from that excellent honour whereunto God advanced it, even in a natural conſideration, much more degrading it from that honour, whereunto God hath advanced it in a ſpiritual conſideration. And as that was the Apoſtles third argument, ſo, upon another relation of the bodies of believers, he makes his fifth argument, which is laid down at *verſ.* 19. *What? know you not that your body is the Temple of the Holy Ghoſt, which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own*; As if he had ſaid, *A Temple is a holy and ſacred thing, and will ye defile the Temple of the Holy Ghoſt?* The *Jews*, how angry were they? what an uproar did they make, when they thought *Paul* had brought Greeks into the Temple, who by the law were looked upon as prophane perſons, and ſo not to be admitted to come there; they cry out, *This is the man that hath polluted this holy place* (*Act.* 21. 28.) Much more may it be urged upon Goſpel-profeſſors, what I commit ſuch a ſin as this? what! pollute the Temple of God? *Know ye not* (which every believer is bound to know) *that your body is the Temple of the Holy Ghoſt as well as the ſoul.* The laſt argument concludes *verſ.* 19. and is proſecuted in *verſ.* 20. *Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price, therefore glorifie God in your body, and in your ſpirit which are Gods.* Redemption is a ſtrong engagement, *ye are bought*, and dearly paid for, *ye are bought with a price, ye are not your own.* Some (who take liberty in this ſin) would excuſe themſelves by the contrary argument. *Our bodies* (ſay they) *are our own, and we may do what we will with our own.* No, ſaith the Apoſtle, *ye are bought with a price, ye are not your own*; ye have your bodies of God, in their natural conſtitution, *It is he who hath made us* (in that capacity) *and not we our ſelves* (*Pſal.* 100. 3.) *and ye are not your own*; for ye are redeemed or bought with a price, both body and ſoul. Ye are bought out of your own hands, as well as out of the hand of divine juſtice and diſpleaſure. The Apoſtle ſpeaks eſpecially to believers. For though it be a truth concerning all, whether believers, or unbelievers, that *they are not their own*, none of the ſons of men are their own; God hath a right to them by creation, as alſo by his continual providence, proviſion, and preſervation; yet believers or the redeemed in a ſpecial manner, *are not their own*, and therefore they ought above others to *glorifie God in their body and in their ſpirit which are Gods.* Having thus opened ſeveral Scripture grounds and arguments to demonſtrate the foulneſs and filthineſs of this ſin of Adultery, which is the general ſubject of this verſe; I ſhall now proceed in the expoſition of particulars in it.

The eye alſo of the Adulterer waiteth, &c.

The word, *alſo*, refers to the murderer ſpoken of in the former verſe; implying, that the Adulterer and he, though their ſins are very different, yet agree much in taking their opportunities of ſinning. How contrary ſoever ſinners are in their particular practice, yet they have all one common principle and Spirit. The Murtherer and the Adulterer are alike deſirous of privacy. They both love darkneſs rather then light, or that which is neither, *Twilight.* *Job* ſeems to ſpeak of a man, that is no novice, but of one long verſt and practiced in this way of wickedneſs. *The eye alſo of the adulterer waiteth*, that is, *the adulterer himſelf waiteth.* *Job* doth not ſay, the *Adulterer waiteth*, but *the eye of the Adulterer waiteth*, becauſe the eye is much in adultery; The eye hath ſo great a ſhare in that ſin, that the whole ſin is here charged upon the eye. The Apoſtle *Peter* (2 *Pet.* 2. 14.) ſpeaks of a generation of evil men, *having their eyes full of adultery*, or (as the Greek Original hath it with much Emphaſis) *full of an Adultereſs.* As if he had ſaid, they are perſons ſo given up to uncleanneſs, that they have no deſire to ſee any body with their eyes but an Adultereſs, nor is any thing elſe to be ſeen in their eyes but Adultery. They are as impudent as they are unclean, letting out the Adultery which is in their hearts at their eyes, not caring who ſees it. Adultery is ſeated in the heart, there's the fountain of it (*Matth.* 15. 19.) *Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murthers, adulteries, fornications, thefts, falſe witneſs, blaſphemy*; Adultery comes out of the heart, but 'tis firſt ſeen in the eye, yea the eye often gives the firſt occaſion of it to the heart, (*Matth.* 5. 28.) *Whoſoever looketh upon a woman to luſt after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.* Wanton love uſually aſcends by theſe five ſteps: Firſt, the eye ſees; Secondly, the heart deſires; Thirdly, the thoughts are plotting and contriving how to attain what is deſired; Fourthly, there is hope to attain what is plotted; and, fifthly, there is joy and delight in the attainment of what was hoped. Thus uſually the eye gives the occaſion and leads the dance in all the meetings of vanity.

Oculus Adulteri, i.e. *ipſe Adulter.*
In re amatoria oculi ſunt lenones, prima amoris via. Lucian.
Amoris principium. Plato.
Amoris ſedes. Philoſt.
Nihil in oculis eſt quod non ſit laſcivum & petulans, nihil in oculorum pupilla in eſſe dicas, quam amicam, eum potiri non poſſunt, ſaltem conſpectu ſe ſatiunt.

The ancient Moraliſt (in his book *of the long coming revenges of God*) makes report that one *Apollidorus* being in a dream ſaw his own skin pull'd off by a barbarous Scythian, who then preſently threw him into a chaldron of boiling water, where being tormented his heart whiſpered to him, *I am the cauſe of all this.* The heart is the cauſe of puniſhment and miſery, remotely, becauſe nextly it is the cauſe of ſin, eſpecially of this ſin of adultery; yet as the heart doth ſometimes ſet the eye on work to find out objects, ſo the eye meeting with objects ſets the heart a work, yea it ſets the heart a fire, or all in a flame with vain deſires and adulterous luſtings. The eyes of ſome look out continually for the fuel of thoſe ſecret fires, and the eyes of others meet with it unlooked for. A good mans eye may meet with a vain object, but his eye doth not go out to ſeek or wait for it. Againſt ſuch active wickedneſs *Job* profeſſed while he ſaid (*Chap.* 31. 1.) *I have made a Covenant with mine eyes, &c.* A godly mans eye hath ſomewhat elſe to wait upon, then ſuch enſnaring objects. And the Pſalmiſt tells us upon what the godly mans eye waits (*Pſal.* 123. 2.) *Behold as the eyes of ſervants look unto the hand of their Maſters, &c. ſo our eyes wait upon the Lord our God until he have mercy upon us.* The eye of a godly man waiteth to receive good, and the eye of a wicked man waiteth to do evil. The Adulterer hath *a waiting eye*, and this waiting notes three things.

Plutarchus de ſera numinis vindicta.

Firſt, That the Adulterer is very diligent, and intentive to attain his purpoſe; he that waits is more then awake; He is not only awake but watchful; both theſe are put together (*Prov.* 8. 34.) where the diligence of the Saints is ſpoken of in their waiting upon Chriſt in his appointments; *Bleſſed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the poſts of my doors*; they who wait at the poſts of wiſdom, that is, of Chriſt, *watch alſo at his gates*, they watch there, and they wait there. It is poſſible for a man to watch, as watching is only oppoſed to ſleeping, and yet not to wait, that is, not to be diligent or attentive upon any buſineſs; but he that watcheth, as watching is oppoſed to idling, he is alwayes waiting as long as watching, and he cannot but be watching, who is indeed waiting. Thus the Adulterer takes much pains to obtain his forbidden pleaſures, his eye waiteth and watcheth, he is a diligent ſervant or ſlave rather to his luſt; every man that commits ſin, is a ſervant to ſin, and every ſervant muſt wait, it is the duty of a ſervant to wait for his Lord, the adulterer waits upon his luſt as as upon his Lord, every luſt would be waited upon as a Lord. Saints watch at wiſdoms gates, and wait like ſervants at her poſts to know her pleaſure. Adulterers watch at whoredoms gates, and at her poſts they wait for ſinful pleaſures.

Secondly, To wait, implieth the exerciſe of much patience: he that waiteth, expects long, he muſt expect and ſtay till the opportunity comes, *Even the wicked have patience upon hopes of injoyment*; And ſhall not the godly? It may ſhame the godly out of their impatience and loathneſs to wait for an anſwer of prayer from God, when they hear that *The husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and the latter rain* (*Jam.* 5. 7.) But it may ſhame them much more out of all their impatience in waiting for good things from God, when they hear that the Adulterer waiteth for the whoriſh woman, and hath long patience, till he receive his longing.

Thirdly, Waiting implyeth the Adulterers fixedneſs in and reſolvedneſs to ſin, *his eye waiteth*; he doth not ſin by a ſudden glance of his eye, or upon a vehement guſt of temptation, or upon an unthought of hurry of wanton paſſions, but he ſins deliberately, and (as it were) in cool blood. He waiteth for and watcheth his ſeaſon, he is ſerious and ſtudious about his wickedneſs.

Hence Note, *A wicked man ſins with reſolution.*

He that waiteth to do any thing, hath a reſolution to do it. A godly man ſins, but he doth not wait to ſin; or if at any time he do ſo, he at that time acts the wicked mans part in the godly mans ſtate, and ſo upon a ſtrong temptation godly men have done. But uſually he is a wicked man (as to his ſtate) that waits for a temptation.

Afflictions wait every where for a godly man (as *Paul* ſpake of himſelf, *Acts* 20. 23.) and ſo alſo do Temptations. But the ungodly are every where waiting for temptations. They are not ſurpriſed, or taken unawares, by a ſin, but they are reſolved to take their firſt opportunity of ſinning. What a godly man ſaith (when he is in a right frame) in reference to the wayes of holineſs (*Pſal.* 108. 1.) *O God, my heart is prepared or fixed*; A godly man doth not good upon a ſudden, or by chance (as we ſay) but he ſets himſelf to it, his heart is fixed or prepared, and his face is ſet heaven-ward, or for heavenly duties. So *Daniel* ſpake of himſelf (*Dan.* 9. 3.) *I ſet my face unto the Lord God to ſeek by prayer and ſupplications*; and as a godly man is in the wayes of God, ſo the wayes of God are in him. Thus *David* deſcribes him (*Pſal.* 84. 5.) *Bleſſed is the man whoſe ſtrength is in thee, in whoſe heart are the wayes of them*, that is, the wayes which godly men walk in, and they are the wayes of God. Now as this is the true ſtate of godlineſs when the heart is in it and prepared for it, ſo the true ſtate of wickedneſs is, when a mans heart is in it and prepared for it. This is the proper character of a wicked man. *The eye of the Adulterer waiteth*

For the twilight.

Every word hath weight in it, *the twilight* is the Adulterers ſeaſon; It is not ſaid, he waits for the night, or for the day, but he waiteth for the *twilight*, which is neither day nor night, but between both. We have ſuch a deſcription of time in reference to the mixt and uncertain ſtate of things (*Zach.* 14. 6, 7.) *And it ſhall come to paſs in that day, that the light ſhall not be clear nor dark; But it ſhall be one day which ſhall be known to the Lord, not day nor night.* Such a thing is Twilight, it is neither clear nor dark, neither day nor night, but between both. There is a twofold twilight; Firſt, The morning twilight; and, Secondly, The evening twilight; the morning twilight begins when the night ends, the evening twilight begins when the day ends. The Latines have two diſtinct words to expreſs theſe diſtinct twilights by, but our language is not ſo well ſtored; and therefore we muſt diſtinguiſh them by the matter ſpoken of, or the ſcope of the ſpeaker. Thus here, when 'tis ſaid in the Text, he *waiteth for the twilight*, we are to underſtand it of the evening twilight, not for the morning twilight, and the reaſon is, becauſe the morning twilight is not for the adulterers turn or purpoſe, for then the light prevails upon the darkneſs, but it is the evening twilight, for then darkneſs prevails upon the light. And that this is the Adulterers twilight is clear (*Prov.* 7. *verſ.* 6, 7, 8, 9.) *At the window of my houſe* (ſaith *Solomon*) *I looked through the caſement, and behold among the ſimple ones, I diſcerned among the youths a man void of underſtanding paſſing by the way to her houſe, and he went neer her corner, in the twilight in the evening* (or) *in the evening of the day, in the black and dark night. And behold there met him a woman with the attire of an harlot, &c.* His eye waited for the twilight, and in the twilight he was taken.

Diluculum.

Crepuſculū.

Nox & tenebræ adminiſtræ ſunt impiis ſuarum libidinum. Ipſa nox alioquin cæca inſandarum tamen oculatus teſtis eſt.

Hence Note, *The doing of evil hath its proper ſeaſons, as well as the doing of good.*

Though ſin be never in ſeaſon, yet it hath ſome times which are more ſeaſonable for it; to ſin is never in ſeaſon, as to the lawfulneſs of committing it, but ſin hath its ſeaſons as to the conveniency of committing it. The Adulterer takes his ſeaſon, *he waiteth for the twilight*. Whence Note, Secondly,

Evil men are very careful to hit their ſeaſons for the doing of evil.

It were deſireable that the godly were as careful to hit their ſeaſons and take their times, as the ungodly are. *To every thing* (ſaith the Preacher, *Eccl.* 3. 1.) *there is a ſeaſon and a time for every purpoſe under the Sun.* And becauſe it is ſo (ſaith the ſame Preacher, *Eccl.* 8. 6.) *The miſery of man is great upon him.* But why doth this make the miſery of man great upon him? I anſwer, The reaſon of this miſery upon man, is not becauſe there is a ſeaſon, but becauſe either of his ignorance or negligence to find it. There are a thouſand wayes to miſs a ſeaſon, and but one to hit it; and were there as many wayes to hit as to miſs, it were a thouſand to one but man would miſs rather then hit, and therefore the miſery of man is great upon him, becauſe if once he miſs his ſeaſon, it cannot be recovered, and then he muſt needs be miſerable. Good men are miſerable (as to ſome caſes) becauſe they are often ſo careleſs to hit their ſeaſon of doing good, and do ſo often miſs it, notwithſtanding all their care. Wicked men are for ever miſerable, becauſe they are ſo careful not to miſs their ſeaſon of doing evil, and do ſo often hit it. The eye of the Adulterer waiteth for the twilight, and he ſeldom (as to his own end) waits in vain. But why is he ſo greedy for the twilight? The next words ſay why, where he is brought in

Saying, no eye ſhall ſee me.

Where ſaith he this? he ſaith it in his heart, this is his diſcourſe in his own breaſt; and to whom ſaith he this? he ſaith it to himſelf, there is a dialogue between the Adulterer and his own heart, and thus he concludes, *I will wait for the twilight, and then no eye ſhall ſee me.* And when he ſaith, *no eye ſhall ſee me*, his meaning is, There is not any eye that ſhall ſee me. Thus he playes the fool at *All's hid*.

Yet further, this **no eye** may have a threefold reference,

Firſt, No eye of common men ſhall ſee me, I will do this in ſecret, I will have ſuch a cover of darkneſs over me, that my neighbours and friends ſhall not be able to take any notice of me.

Secondly, No eye, may refer to men in chief, that is, no eye of the Magiſtrate, nor of any Miniſter of Juſtice ſhall ſee me. Magiſtrates are the eyes of a Nation, they ſhould overlook all places, either by themſelves or their Officers, to obſerve what is done. As the Adulterers eye watcheth, ſo there ſhould be an eye of Juſtice watching to catch Adulterers. Some interpret this Text, eſpecially of the Adulterers hope, or ſelf-perſwaſion that he ſhall eſcape the eye or knowledge of the Magiſtrate, who is appointed to overſee the manners of that people over whom he is placed, and to be a terrour, yea a Miniſter of vengeance to them that do evil; *for he beareth not the Sword in vain* (*Rom.* 13. 3, 4.) Magiſtrates ſhould ſo much mark and eye the ſtate of a people, that they are called *eyes* in Scripture (*Iſa.* 29. 10.) *For the Lord hath poured out upon you the Spirit of deep ſleep, and hath cloſed your eyes* (what or who are thoſe eyes? the next words enform us) *the Prophets and Rulers, the ſeers hath he covered.* The Hebrew word which we render *rulers* is *heads*; Rulers are the heads of a people; and what is a head without eyes, or having its eyes covered? God did not cover the eyes which were in the peoples perſonal heads, but he covered the eyes which were in their publick heads. *He hath cloſed your eyes*, that is, thoſe that ſhould be as heads and eyes to you, your Prophets and your rulers. Thus alſo ſay ſome, Government is expreſſed by an eye (*Deut.* 33. 28.) *Iſrael then ſhall dwell in ſafety alone, the fountain of Jacob ſhall be upon a land of corn and wine, alſo his heaven ſhall drop dew.* That which we tranſlate *the fountain of Jacob*, others render as well, and as truly from the Original, *the eye of Jacob*, that is (ſay they) *the Magiſtracy, the ruling power*; as if he had ſaid, as the people of *Iſrael* in general ſhall dwell in ſafety, ſo their eye, their government or their Governours in ſpecial ſhall be bleſſed with plenty, they ſhall be upon a land of corn and wine. It hath been obſerved alſo in antiquity, that great Princes had certain men in Office *whom they called their eyes.* Princes have their eyes and ears in every place, that is, their Officers. Thus we may expound this Text, the Adulterer ſaith, *No eye ſhall ſee me.* The ruling or Magiſtratical eye ſhall not ſee me; and if what I do be not ſeen by that eye (let others ſee what they will, and ſay what they pleaſe) I ſhall not ſuffer at all for what I do; and then all's well, that's as much as I care for. And here we may note. That, As ſome Adulterers have their eyes abroad, that is, agents to eſpy out beauties for them; So moſt of them (if not all) are afraid of the eyes of others.

Verba quæ ſequuntur exigunt ut iſta de Magiſtratus juſtitiaque miniſtris intelligantur. Bold. *Quiſquis aut officio aut quovis alio modo ſuper alios inſpicit, actuſq; eorum obſervat vocatur oculus.*

Fons vel oculus Jacob ſuū imperiū habebit in terra Canaan. Bold. *Apud Perſatum reges quidā fuerunt qui dicebantur* oculi & aures. *Zenoph.*

Thirdly, *No eye ſhall ſee me*, that is, not the eye of God; God himſelf ſhall not ſee me. Thus the Adulterer hopes to hide his ſin from his eye who is indeed all eye, and whoſe eye is over all. Thus the Adulterer ſuppoſeth himſelf under ſuch a vail of darkneſs, that he is free not only from the eye of men on earth, and from the eye

Homines latere cupiens Dei oculum non timens.

eye of thoſe who are gods upon earth, but even from the eye of the God of heaven.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *A ſinner is full of vain preſumption.*

He preſumes that the ſin which he commits againſt the light of his own conſcience, ſhall never come to light; he preſumes that the ſin which he commits in his own eye, ſhall not come to the eye of others. I have elſewhere noted this ignorant confidence of carnal men, and only name it here.

Secondly, Note, *It is not the act of ſin, but the diſcovery of it which a wicked man feareth.*

He cares not what wickedneſs he doth, ſo he may go unſeen; a godly man is afraid of doing evil, though he could do it with greateſt ſecrecy, or under the darkeſt cover: he is afraid to do evil, becauſe of the evil and unrighteouſneſs of it, becauſe of the pollution, and unanſwerableneſs of it, both to his own duty, and the goodneſs of God to him; but it is the diſcovery, not the iniquity of his work, which the hypocrite feareth.

Thirdly, As the eye is taken for the eye of the Magiſtrate,

Obſerve, *That it is the puniſhment of ſin at which a wicked man is troubled, he is not troubled at the ſin it ſelf.*

'Tis the conſequence of ſin, not the nature of it, the ſmart of ſin, and not the filth of it, which the wicked would avoid.

Laſtly, As no eye is excluſive alſo to the eye of God,

Note, *Wicked men preſume that their ſins are ſecret even to God himſelf.*

They think, ſure, God can ſee no further, nor no better then man; And ſo they have hopes to hide themſelves, not only from the eyes of men, but from the eyes of God, as we may ſee plainly (*Jer.* 23.23.) *Can any hide himſelf in ſecret places, that I ſhall not ſee him, ſaith the Lord*; This queſtion, *can any?* ſhews that ſome had flattered themſelves into ſuch a concluſion, that they could ſo hide themſelves in ſecret places, that God could not ſee them. The holy Pſalmiſt ſaid (*Pſal.* 139. 12.) *The darkneſs hideth not from thee, but the night ſhineth as the day, the darkneſs and the light to thee are both alike.* But a wicked man ſaith, the darkneſs hideth from thee, the night is night to thee. O what beggerly apprehenſions have men of God! As if he whoſe eyes are ten thouſand times brighter then the Sun, could not ſee without Sun-light; or as if he could not ſee but in the light, who made the light. Naturaliſts ſay of thoſe living creatures which have fiery eyes, that they can ſee as well in the dark as in the light; the reaſon is, becauſe they ſee not by taking in the ſpecies of the object into the eye, but by ſending out a light from their own eye upon the object. God hath fiery eyes indeed, he needs no outward light to ſee by who is nothing elſe but light. Vain ſinner, what can be darkneſs to him, who is light, and in whom there is no darkneſs at all? There is nothing doth more argue the blindneſs of a ſinner, then this ſimple ſaying of his, *No eye ſeeth me*, unleſs it be that ſimple practice of his which he uſeth to the ſame purpoſe, and which is diſcovered (as his laſt ſhift) in the laſt words of this verſe,

Vanus eſt qui putat ſe in tenebris eſſe tutum, cum lucem vitare non poſſit, quæ lucet in tenebris, & tenebræ eam non comprehenderunt. Ambroſ.

And he diſguiſeth his face.] The Hebrew is, *He ſetteth his face into a ſecret*; he muffles himſelf, he changeth his habit, he puts on a vizard. Harlots were wont to diſguiſe themſelves (*Gen.* 39.14.) When *Tamar* took upon her the habit of an harlot, the Text ſaith, *She put on a diſguiſe*; ſo here the Adulterer puts on a diſguiſe, he puts a cozening face upon his face, and then thinks, that though he be ſeen, yet he cannot be diſcerned, and that though ſome may ſee where he is, yet none ſhall ſee who he is, *He diſguiſeth his face.* One would have thought that being in the twilight, and the darkneſs of the night ready to compaſs him about, that no eye could ſee him, he ſhould not need to have put on a vizard or a muffler, yet he doth ſo, he puts a diſguiſe upon his face.

Which may teach us, *That when a man doth ill, he never thinks he is ſafe, or ſecret enough.*

When a mans conſcience tells him he ſins, he would not have any other tell him ſo too. The Adulterer fears twilight is too light for him, and therefore while the natural darkneſs is ſo imperfect, he puts his face into perfect artificial darkneſs. *Job* yet proceeds to ſhew this cowardly temper of ſinners in their fear to be ſeen, either by a further diſcovery of the ſame ſort of ſinners, or of another ſort, in the ſame frame.

Verſ. 36. **In the dark they dig through houſes which they have marked for themſelves in the day time: they know not the light.**

We have all along the words and the works of darkneſs; *In the dark they dig through houſes.* The queſtion is, who are here meant by theſe diggers; ſome underſtand the verſe of the adulterer; And whereas he ſpeaks here in the plural number, and before in the ſingular; 'tis frequent in Scripture (ſay they) to vary the number while the ſame ſubject is continued. And that while he ſaith, *They*, the meaning is *One and all* of them are bent and apt enough to do thus. But is digging through houſes the work of an Adulterer? In anſwer to this, it hath been ſtoried and remembred, that Adulterers have uſed ſuch boiſterous practices to come at their unlawful pleaſures; they have digged through houſes to make private paſſages that they might not be diſcovered when they came to, or when they departed from their lovers. It hath been commonly ſaid that hunger will break through ſtone walls, and 'tis a truth that wantonneſs will do ſo too. Some have been ſo mad upon their luſts, that if they could not find a way, they would make one to meet with their paramours. Upon this conſideration we may fairly interpret this verſe (as the former) concerning the Adulterer.

Hæc domorum profeſſio, non ad latrocinia nocturna, ſed ad turpes artes penetrandi in alienos domos manifeſtè pertinet. Pined.

But I rather conceive that this *verſ.* 16. contains a deſcription of another ſort of ſinners, Thieves or Robbers. Becauſe though it be true, that Adulterers do ſometimes dig through houſes, yet this is both more frequently and more properly the buſineſs of Thieves. Another reaſon to perſwade this underſtanding of the preſent Text may be, becauſe ſo we have a fuller and more particular enumeration of ſeveral ſorts of ſin and ſinners.

Ego libentius hæc de latronibus quam de Adulteris caperē; Quia hoc latrones ſæpe faciūt, Adulteri nō niſi per quā raro. Sanct.

In the dark they dig through houſes.

To dig through houſes, is the work of a thief. And thus Chriſt ſpeaks of the thief (*Luk.* 12.39.) *And this know, that if the good man of the houſe had known what hour the thief would have come, he would have watched, and not have ſuffered his houſe to have been broken through. Jacob* ſaith of *Simeon* and *Levi* (*Gen.* 49. 6.) *In their anger they digged through a wall.* Some break through walls for want, or in covetouſneſs to rob and ſteal, others for anger and in wrath to kill and deſtroy. *They dig through houſes,*

Which they had marked for themſelves in the day time.

See the method and cunning of theſe robbers; here are three points of their ſinful skill. Firſt, *they mark houſes*; the word ſignifies, *to mark with a ſeal*; as if they did put their ſeal upon other mens houſes for their own uſe. Thieves go abroad in the day time to eſpy where they may commit a robbery with beſt advantage, and they ſet their mark upon ſuch houſes as they reſolve to rob; or, which I rather take to be the meaning, they diligently obſerve the ſtrength of the houſe, the wayes to the houſe, what company is in the houſe, where they may with moſt eaſe and advantage break into the houſe. All this they do in the day by way of preparation, and in the dark they put their purpoſes into execution; *In the dark they dig through houſes which they had marked in the day.*

Hence Note, *Sinners would make ſure work, they would not miſs.*

And therefore they either ſet their mark upon a houſe, or exactly mark it. O how witty, and how cunning men are to do miſchief!

Secondly, Whereas they went from Town to Town, and any houſe they ſaw and liked they marked it for themſelves; Learn,

An unjuſt perſon makes every thing his own, if he can come by it, if he can but get it.

He ſaith of another mans houſe, this is mine, I will fill my own houſe with the ſpoil and plunder of this.

Thirdly, The thief marked houſes.

In the day time.] He digged through them in the night, but he made uſe of the day; he would not break open a houſe in the day, but had ſomewhat to do towards the breaking open of a houſe in the day, he marked it in the day.

Hence Note, *That time which ſuits not one wicked purpoſe, may ſuit another.*

The thief makes uſe of all times, he makes uſe of the day to mark houſes, and of the night to dig them through. He is careful to take his time, to do the work of the day upon the day, and the work of the night, in the night.

They know not the light.] But why doth *Job* add this? ſaid he not before, that they marked houſes for themſelves in the day? How then doth he ſay,

They know not the light.] Knowing is not meant of a bare act of knowledge, as if they knew not when it was light, and when it was dark, or as if they knew not the nature of light, what kind of creature it is. But, *not to know*, is not to effect; *They know not the light*, that is, they care not, they love not the light. In which ſence words of knowledge are often uſed in Scripture (*Nah.* 1.7.) *The Lord knoweth the ſoul that truſteth in him.* The Lord knows thoſe that do not truſt in him, he knows thoſe that are unbelieving as well as thoſe that believe in a way of diſcerning who they are; but he knows the ſoul that truſteth in him, in a way of loving and approving him; ſo here, *They know not the light*, that is, they have no love to the light, no delight in the light, they care not for the light. But it may be objected; It ſhould ſeem theſe men cared for the light, & liked it well, for they made much uſe of it; *In the day they marked houſes.* I anſwer, When *Job* ſaith, *They know not the light*, we may reſtrain it to one part of their buſineſs, and that the main, *Their digging through houſes*; for this purpoſe (which was their principal purpoſe) *they know not the light*, that is, they neither loved nor liked the light, darkneſs was more wellcome to them. I ſhall not give any notes from theſe words here, having before (eſpecially at *verſ.*12. where it is ſaid, *They are ſuch as rebel againſt the light, they know not the wayes of it, &c.*) been ſomewhat large upon the ſame ſubject; As alſo becauſe the next verſe is but a further illuſtration and enforcement of theſe words.

Non neſce lucem eſt i. δ amare.

Verſ. 17. **For the morning is to them even as the ſhadow of death, if one know them they are in the terrours of the ſhadow of death.**

This verſe gives a reaſon, why theſe thieves took the night for their work; or it is an expoſition of what was laſt ſaid, *They know not the light.*

The Text may be read thus out of the Original, *As ſoon as it is morning the ſhadow of death comes upon them.* This Hebraiſm the *ſhadow of death*, hath been opened at *verſ.*5. of the third Chapter, whether I refer the Reader. In this place, it only imports thus much in General, That theſe wicked men did equally fear the morning as death it ſelf; they were ſurpriſed with fear, as ſoon as ſurpriſed with light. What is the reaſon of it, why doth the adulterer fear the morning, and why doth the thief fear the morning? they do ſo upon theſe three conſiderations.

Umbra mortis i.e. *tam terribilis ut aliquem enecare poteſt. Genitivus effecti.* Piſc. *Cum venit mane venit umbra, dictum acutè propter ſpeciem contradictionis.*

Firſt, Leſt they ſhould be hindred in their wicked works; Secondly, Leſt their wicked works ſhould be diſcerned; Thirdly, Leſt their wicked works ſhould be puniſhed; for theſe reaſons they hate the light, and *the morning is to them as the ſhadow of death.*

Hence Obſerve, *That good things even the beſt things are a trouble to wicked men.*

Sin makes good things evil to us, and pleaſant things troubleſome to us. What a pleaſant thing is the light? How beautiful are the eye-lids of the morning? yet light is a trouble, and the morning a burden to wicked men. And if natural light be a trouble to them, much more is moral and ſpiritual light. How do they hate the morning of truth, the dawnings of divine knowledge? Theſe lights to life, theſe enlivening lights are to them as the ſhadow of death. In how deplorable a condition are they to whom good becomes evil, and that which good men rejoyce in, is to them an occaſion of ſorrow. The whole courſe of nature is out of frame to us, till we are ſet into a right frame by grace. We put light for darkneſs and darkneſs for light, till we our ſelves are brought out of darkneſs into light. Nothing is good to us till we are made good, nor doth any thing pleaſe us, except ſin or that which we uſe ſinfully, till we pleaſe God. The very *morning* (which gives a new life to all) is to ſome *as the ſhadow of death.*

If one know them, they are in the terrours of the ſhadow of death.

Theſe words are but a further explication of the ſame thing, *if one*, that is, *if any one*, man, woman, or child, as we ſay, *know* them, that is, take notice of them, in their wickedneſs, or take notice of their wickedneſs, they are (as we ſay) *dead in the neſt.*

Others render the words thus, *if they know one another*, that is, if only ſo much of the light of the morning breaks forth, as ſerves them to ſee one anothers faces, they are afraid. So this phraſe is uſed (*Ruth* 3.14.) *And ſhe lay at his feet until the morning, and ſhe roſe up before one could know another*, that is, before there was light enough to diſcern each other. So theſe two readings, *if one know them or if they know one another*, meet in the ſame general ſence, their unwillingneſs to be diſcovered at their work; if once there be light enough for theſe evil-workers to ſee themſelves by, they then know they may alſo be ſeen by others; And if *one* (any one) *know them*,

Cum agnoſcit alius aliũ. Piſc.

They are in the terrours of the ſhadow of death.

That is, they are troubled like them, who being ready to die, are yet unwilling to die; when death ſtands at a mans bed-ſide, when death ſtands at his back ready to attach and apprehend him, ready to carry him away, while yet he is altogether unwilling and unready to die, O in what a terrour is he? Juſt thus it is (ſaith *Job*) with thoſe wicked men, they are not only afraid to die, but the terrours of the ſhadows of death are upon them, their terrour is ſuch as men have when death over-ſhadows them; That's the meaning of, *They are in the terrours of the ſhadow of death.*

A ſhadow in Scripture is taken two wayes. Firſt, Properly, for that darkneſs which is cauſed by the interpoſition of a thick body, between us and the Sun. Secondly, Improperly or metaphorically, and ſo that is a ſhadow which keeps off the heat of the Sun, or the violence of the rain and wind; and ſo by a trope any thing of defence is called a ſhadow. (*Judg.* 9.15.) *Come truſt under my ſhadow* (ſaid the bramble) that is, put your ſelves under my protection. And again (*Iſa.* 30.2,3.) *Therefore ſhall the ſtrength of Pharaoh be your ſhame, and the truſt in the ſhadow* (or protection) *of Egypt your confuſion.* So (*Iſa.*49.2.) *In the ſhadow of his hand hath he hid me.* And (*Iſa.* 51.16.) *I have covered thee in the ſhadow of my hand*; as birds cover or ſhelter their young ones with their wings and feathers. Thus the Scripture ſpeaks of a ſhadow. But what is the ſhadow of death? It is Firſt, The appearance of death; Secondly, The power of death. So the meaning is (as was touched before) they are as much terrified, as if death appeared to them, as if the image of death paſſed before them in viſion, or as if the power of it had taken hold of them to bring them priſoners to the grave.

If one know them, they are in the terrour of the ſhadow of death.

I have from the former words of this context, as alſo at *verſ.*12. taken occaſion to obſerve, how troubleſome both the light of the Sun and the light of the mind are to evil men, and therefore I ſhall not ſtay upon any Inſtructions of that kind here.

Yet foraſmuch as not only the murtherer and adulterer, ſpoken of before, but the thief ſpoken of here, are all for darkneſs and concealment.

Obſerve, Firſt, *That ſinners have a ſecret conviction upon themſelves, that what they do is not good.*

They draw up their own inditement, and condemn themſelves before God doth. They would rock conſcience aſleep, but they cannot, they would blind it but they cannot. This their delight in darkneſs, both outward and inward, is a plain demonſtration that they know their deeds are evil. Chriſt ſaith as much (*Joh.* 3.20,21.) *Every one that doth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, leſt his deeds ſhould be reproved.* No man fears his deeds will be reproved, but he that ſuſpects at leaſt, that his deeds are his faults, and his actings his tranſgreſſings; for as it follows, *He that doth truth* (that is, who acts according to the truth) *cometh to the light.* He that doth good, or truth indeed, yea he who is but perſwaded that he doth ſo, cares not who ſees him; ſome are ambitious to be ſeen while they do ſo, and though any ſhould be ſo modeſt that they do not deſire to be ſeen while they do ſo, yet no man that doth ſo is afraid to be ſeen; and uſually ſuch come to the light, to the light of other mens knowledge, and they would come further into the light of their own knowledge; ſuch are free to *come to light of all ſorts, that their deeds may be made manifeſt, that they are wrought in God*; when a man comes to the light he gives a fair evidence that his works are wrought in God, how ever it argues both that he deſires they ſhould be ſuch as are wrought in God, as alſo that he is willing they ſhou'd come to the tryal, whether they are wrought in God or no, that is, whether they be ſo wrought as if God did work in him, or whether there be any appearance in them that he hath wrought them in the light and love, in the ſtrength and help of God. Now as when a man comes willingly to the light, it ſhews that he hath an honeſt perſwaſion in his breaſt, that his works are good. So when we ſee any ſeeking corners and ſhunning the light by which others may ſee them, or that light by which they may ſee themſelves, this ſhews that they have a troubleſome conviction upon their conſciences, that their works are ſo far from being wrought in God, that they are wrought againſt God, that is, againſt his mind and will. This the Apoſtle teacheth in the example of the Old Gentiles (*Rom.* 2.15.) *They ſhew the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conſcience bearing them witneſs, and their thoughts in the mean while accuſing or excuſing one another.* Were there not an undiſtinguiſhable light in nature, by which even a natural man may have ſome glimmerings of and diſcernings between good and evil, he would no more avoid the ſight of others when he doth evil, then when he doth good. And ſeeing he thus naturally avoids the view and ſight of all men when he doth evil; This doth more then intimate that there is a Judge above nature, who, *without reſpect of perſons, will reward every man according to his works.* Conſcience is Gods Deputy in man, and what that (being rightly informed) doth in man, God will do too. We are ſo aſſured by the Apoſtle *John* (1 *John* 3.21.) *If our heart condemn us, God is greater then our heart, and knows all things*; As if he had ſaid, this is an argument that there is a God to condemn, becauſe the heart condemns; *For God is greater then the heart.* God is the ſupream Judge, the infallible Judge, the heart is but an under Officer unto him. Why ſhould the heart of man ſmite him? why ſhould he be troubled when he hath done evil? why ſhould he be ſo troubled to be ſeen in doing evil? were it not that there is a God, who judgeth both the hearts and wayes of men. While *the fool ſaith in his heart there is no God,* (*Pſal.* 14.1.) the heart of a fool ſaith there is a God: while he ſaith in his heart there is no God to ſee my ſin, his heart ſaith to him, cover thy ſin, that it may not be ſeen: and what Engliſh can we make of this ſaying of his heart, but this, there is a God. For though *Job* ſpake here of ſuch groſs ſinners as have reaſon enough to hide themſelves and their doings from the eyes of men, leſt they ſhould bring them both to ſhame and puniſhment, yet even thoſe ſinners are fearful to have their ſins diſcovered, who need not fear any puniſhment but from the hand of God.

Secondly, Obſerve, *Sin befools the ſinner, or ſinners are very fooliſh.*

They are glad if they can eſcape the eye of man, whenas their ſins are alwayes under the eye of God. What is the eye from which darkneſs can hide us, to that eye which ſeeth through darkneſs? *If one ſee them* (ſaith the Text) *they are in the terrours of the ſhadow of death,* and yet they are not terrified that *One* ſeeth them. *That one* ſeeth them alwayes who is more then all men, and yet they are ſatisfied if they are not ſeen of men. That which they would not do if a little child did ſee them, they dare do though the great God of heaven and earth ſee them. What the Prophet ſpeaks of fear in reference to ſuffering, we may ſay much more of fear in reference to ſinning, (*Iſa.* 51.12,13.) *Who art thou, that thou ſhouldſt be afraid of a man that ſhall die, and forgetteſt the Lord thy Creator? Who art thou?* ſurely thou art ſo far from being a godly man, that thou art leſs then a man, in this thing, even a fool, and a beaſt. What? doeſt thou fear to ſin in the preſence of a man, or when a man, who ſhall die, ſeeth thee, and forgetteſt that the Lord thy maker ſeeth thee? that he ſeeth thee *who hath ſtretched forth the Heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth.* Well might the Apoſtle (2 *Theſ.* 3.2.) joyn theſe two together, *unreaſonable and wicked men,* and give the reaſon of both in the words which follow, *for all men have not faith.* Where there is no faith, there is much wickedneſs, and he who is much in wickedneſs, is nothing in reaſon. Faith is above reaſon but not againſt it; wickedneſs is not only below reaſon, but quite againſt it. They who act againſt that rule which is given by God to man, act alſo againſt that reaſon which is given by God to man. No man acts ſo much againſt faith, as he who doth not believe that God ſeeth him in all his actings; nor doth any man act more againſt reaſon, then he who believeth that God ſeeth him, and yet is more afraid to be ſeen of men, then he is to be ſeen of God.

VERS. 18.

He is ſwift as the waters, his portion is curſed in the earth: he beholdeth not the way of the Vineyards.

THere are four apprehenſions concerning the general ſcope of theſe words.

Firſt, *Job* is conceived here deſcribing a fourth ſort of wicked men, or the ſame men acting a fourth ſort of wickedneſs; for having (as hath been ſhewed from the former words) firſt drawn out the doings of the murtherer; and Secondly, of the Adulterer; and Thirdly, of the thief at land digging through houſes; he in the Fourth place (as ſome interpret the Text) proceeds to diſcover the Pyrate, who is a thief upon the water, a Sea-thief; *He is ſwift as the waters,* or, *he is ſwift upon the waters:* The letter of the Hebrew, is, *He is ſwift upon the faces of the waters,* he moves in, and upon all waters. It is uſual in Scripture to call the outward part of any thing, the face of it; as the face of the heavens, is that part of the heavens which doth outwardly appear to us, or is next to our eye. *O ye hypocrites* (ſaith Chriſt, *Mat.* 16.3.) *ye can diſcern the face of the skie.* So the face of the earth is the ſuperficies, or upper part of the earth; and the face of the waters, is the upper part of the waters. The word in the Text is plural, *faces, he is ſwift upon the faces of the water*; that is, when he hath murther'd, committed Adultery, and robbed at land, when the earth is weary of him, then he betakes himſelf to the Sea, and turns Pyrate. There is a truth in this, ſome men make ſuch a progreſs in wickedneſs; they try all trades of ſin upon the earth, and then trade ſinfully upon the water, defiling both earth and water, both ſea and ſhoar, polluting all the elements with their abominations. And in purſuance of this expoſition the two other clauſes of the verſe are thus expounded, *Their portion is curſed in the earth,* that is, they who live at land curſe them when they are gone to ſea, fearing leſt they ſhould take their ſhips, and ſpoil them of their goods by Pyracy. And then, *he beholdeth not the way of the vineyards,* that is, he will come no more on ſhoar, he will not live at land: vineyards by a ſynecdoche of the part for the whole being put for any kind of home or land poſſeſſion, of which vineyards (in many places) are the chief; he who lived by dreſſing and planting the earth, now takes another courſe of life, *he beholdeth not the way of the vineyards*; he will labour no more in a Country-life, he will not get his living by the ſweat of his face, but by the face of the waters. What cares he to get wine by dreſſing of vineyards, when he can get whole ſhip-loads of wine upon the waters. And having got a ſnatch of the ſweetneſs of robbing at Sea, he will work no more aland. We have too much experience of it, that when a man hath once given himſelf up to ſteal-

Velociter mine ſe ad mare recipiunt. Vatab.
Levis eſt ad notandum ſive remigandum ſuper faciem aquæ. Targ.

ing, he cannot abide labouring. He is better pleaſed with an eaſie life that is ſinful, then with an honeſt life that is painful; and becauſe eaſe pleaſeth him more then honeſty, therefore *he will not behold the way of the Vineyards*, nor the way of the Corn-fields, nor of the paſture grounds, for all theſe are wayes of labour. But I ſhall not inſiſt upon this interpretation, it may ſuffice only to name it. And though, as to the thing it ſelf, as alſo to the practice of many, this be a truth, yet it is ſcarcely probable, that *Job* had that practice in his eye.

Ad piratas referre divinare eſt ex proprio cerebro, cum hic tantum de infeſtatoribus agrorū mentio fiat, non navium aut maris. Pined.

Secondly, We may here conceive, that *Job* is deſcribing the miſerable and unſetled condition of the murtherer, of the Adulterer, and of the Thief; *he is ſwift upon the waters*, or, *ſwift as the waters* (ſay we) Mr. *Broughton* renders, *He is lighter then the face of the waters.* The Hebrew particle ſerves either reading, *as*, or upon; *He is ſwift, or light upon the face of the waters*, that is, he is as a light thing, that ſwimmeth upon the face of the waters; light things ſwim there, things which are of no worth, of no price, as ſtraws, or chips, or feathers, or the foam (which is light and hoven) ſwim upon the face of the water. Maſter *Broughton* tranſlates thus, *He is lighter then the face of the waters.* The ſence is the ſame, for as thoſe things which ſwim upon the face of the waters are light, ſo alſo is the face of the waters. Every blaſt or puff of wind moves and toſſeth up the face of the waters.

He is ſwift, or, light upon the face of the waters.

The Hebrew word which we render, ſwift, in our tranſlation ſignifieth alſo *light*; becauſe thoſe things that are ſwift in motion, are light; we ſay of one that is ſlow paced, he is heavy-heel'd, and that he is a heavy man, or that a heavy beaſt which is ſlow of foot; all ſwift things are light. The meaning of this Interpretation is, that a wicked man is a contemptible Creature; what is he when he hath done all thoſe miſchiefs before ſpecified, and walketh to wearineſs in all thoſe ſinful wayes? The beſt account which we can give of him is this; *He is light, or as a light thing, upon the face of the water*; which is a Proverbial ſpeech to expreſs that which is nothing worth. Thus the deſtruction of the King of *Samaria* is expreſſed (*Hoſ.* 10. 7.) *As for Samaria, her King is cut off as the foam upon the water*, or (as the margine hath it) *upon the face of the water*, that is, though he be a great King, yet he ſhall periſh as a very light, and contemptible thing, even as a little foam and froth, or as a bubble upon the water.

Levitas pro velocitate ſumitur, leve enim facile movetur & quod facile movetur velox eſt.

Proverbialis loqutio ad exprimēdum aliquid quod flocci penditur & fere nihil eſt. Bold. *Leves erunt ut res quæ ſuper aquas natant, fluctuabunt, abibunt, diffluent.*

Hence Obſerve, *Wickedneſs makes men contemptible and vile, they are but as light things upon the water.*

In the 21 of this book (*verſ.* 18.) the wicked are ſaid to be *as ſtubble before the fire, and as chaff before the whirl-wind.* So (*David, Pſ.* 1. 4.) ſpeaking of the wicked in general, ſaith, *They are like chaff which the wind driveth away.* Stubble and chaff are light things, and they are alſo worthleſs things; what's the ſtubble worth, or what the chaff? What is the chaff to the wheat? ſuch are wicked men in compariſon of the godly. The Scripture doth even ſtrive for Expreſſions (as I may ſay) to ſet forth the lightneſs, the vanity, indeed, the nullity, the nonentity, the nothingneſs of men given up to their luſts. *David* (*Pſal.* 62. 9.) ſpeaking of them *who truſt in oppreſſion, and become vain in robbery*, ſaith, *they are vanity and a lie, and that to be laid in the ballance, they are altogether lighter then vanity.* And *Solomon* putting the tongue of a godly man, and the heart of a wicked man together into the ballance, gives this determination between them (*Prov.* 10. 20.) *The tongue of the juſt is as choice ſilver, but the heart of the wicked is little worth.* The heart is there taken in the higheſt ſence, for the beſt thing that the wicked man hath; for though where the heart is nought, it is the worſt thing that a man hath, yet the ſence of the proverb is to ſhew that the beſt thing that a wicked man hath is of little worth, and therefore the inſtance is made in that which he accounts his chieſeſt treaſure, his heart; for by the heart, all that man hath within him, all the powers and faculties of the ſoul, with their beſt and richeſt furniture, are underſtood; all theſe ſaith *Solomon* in a wicked man are little worth; ſo that take him at his beſt, and in his beſt, he is but traſh or as a trifle. Sin is a reproach both to perſons and nations. As honour is a mans weight in the eſteem of others, ſo reproach abates his weight, and mak him light upon the ballance. *Since thou waſt precious in mine eyes, thou waſt honourable*, ſaith God (*Iſa.* 43. 4.) holineſs adds honour and weight to our perſons; ſin makes us light, and then we are lighteſt, when we make light of ſin; ſin is a weight that preſſeth us down, yet they who ſin moſt, weigh leaſt in the eſteem of God and of all good men. Sin will quickly ſink the ſoul like lead under water, even to the bottom of the water, yet the ſinner is as a light thing that ſwims upon the top or face of the water. This is a profitable ſence of the words.

Thirdly, Others expound theſe words, as a deſcription of the wicked mans ſhifting and running from place to place for fear of purſuers; or that being conſcious to himſelf, or ſelf-condemned in his own conſcience, he is as the Lord threatned *Cain* (*Gen.* 4. 14.) *A fugitive and a vagabond upon the earth:* ſwift as the waters of a ſtream, which glide along and never ſtay in one place; or he is upon the earth as a light thing upon the waters, continually moved and toſſed up and down. But I paſs from this. And conclude.

Fourthly, That we may rather underſtand theſe words as a deſcription of the ſpirit and temper of a wicked man in reference to his ſinful actings, or the fulfilling of his luſts; *He is ſwift or light as the water*, or, *as the light things upon the water*, that is, he is a man very unſetled, he is hurried to and fro, there is no ſtability either in his wayes, or in his ſpirit; He abides not in one place, nor doth he abide in one mind. He is full of Inconſtancy, he is conſtant in nothing but in his inconſtancy: and it muſt needs be ſo if we Conſider,

Firſt, his luſt within. How can he but be ſwift as the water, who hath ſuch winds blowing and ſtriving in him. A carnal man is hurried with ſtorms and tempeſts riſing in his own mind: as the wind toſſeth and rolleth the waters of the Sea or light things upon the water, ſo the luſts of evil men toſs and tumble them up and down. Pride toſſeth ſome, and Covetouſneſs toſſeth others, Luxury and Wantonneſs toſs thouſands into a thouſand vanities, and ſinful wayes, as the winds toſs the waves of the Sea; Luſts are ſtrong and boiſterous, luſts are many and numerous, he that ſerveth any one of them is a ſlave to them all, and muſt go upon their errand whitherſoever they will ſend or rather hurry him.

Secondly, Carnal men muſt needs be ſwift as the water, or light upon the water, very unconſtant and unſetled, if we conſider the temptations that blow upon them from without. For though our own luſts are temptations, and *every man* (as the Apoſtle *James* ſaith, *Chapter* 1. 14.) *Is tempted when he is drawn away of his own luſt, and enticed:* yet our luſts alſo are tempted, or our luſts are drawn away and enticed by temptation. Man is apt enough to ſin of himſelf alone, if once God leave him; but he is ſeldom left to himſelf alone to ſin by the Devil; and moſt uſually he is tempted with a kind of violence unto ſin; his luſts (which are a fire) are blown and kindled by Satans breath, and he is driven to do evil by vehement blaſts of temptation. Temptations blow upon Saints, they blow ſtrongly upon them; Satan breaths out a mighty wind to make them ſwift as the water unto ſin; but they have received a power to reſiſt and ſtand faſt. They are founded upon the rock Jeſus Chriſt: Though the wind moves the water, yet it cannot move the rock: they that are founded upon Chriſt, are (in their proportion) firm as Chriſt himſelf is firm. 'Tis true, Saints are many times grievouſly ſhaken with temptations, but the wicked are toſſed and overwhelmed by them. They are ſwift as the water, or as the lighteſt thing upon the face of the waters, when ſtrongly moved by temptation. Dying *Jacob* called *Reuben*, his firſt-born, *unſtable as water* (*Gen.* 49. 4.) though we will not number him among the wicked, yet he did a very wicked act, and in reference to that, though he was a great man, and a Patriarch, the head of the Tribe, yet (in reference to that act) he received this Character, *unſtable as water.* And if he was ſo unſtable when hurried by paſſion and temptation, how much more are meer wicked men ſo, when they meet with ſuch temptations. For as they are not fixed in any thing that is good, as was touched at *verſ.* 13. *They know not the wayes of light, nor do they abide in the paths of it* (if at any time they ſtumble upon the doing of that which is right, yet they abide not in the doing of it; they are light as the water, unſtabled and unſetled in all good wayes) So though they are fixed (as to the ſubject) in doing that which is evil, yet they are extreamly toſſed and ſwiftly moved, both to and in and after the doing of it.

Again, As this ſimilitude implies the eaſineſs of evil men to be moved by temptation unto ſin, even as eaſily as water, or the lighteſt things upon the face of the water are moved by the wind: So it implieth alſo their ſpeedineſs and activity in ſinning. The water moves ſwiftly, ſinners are like ſwift ſhips upon the water, they make ſpeed to do evil, or to trade upon any forbidden coaſt; but they are very ſlugs to any thing that is good, or to trade upon any coaſt where they are bidden. A learned Interpreter inſiſts much upon the emphaſis of this Expreſſion, to ſhew not only the ſwiftneſs, but the fierceneſs of a wicked mans ſpirit in ſinning, he is ſwift upon the face of thoſe waters, and is carried on with full ſails in ſinning, he runs ſo ſwiftly and treads ſo lightly, that he might run even upon the ſurface of the water, and not ſink. Thoſe creatures which are very ſwift, leave little impreſſion behind them; they that go ſlowly tread heavy, and unleſs they be upon firm land, fall in. It is ſaid in the eighth of *Daniel* (*verſ.* 5.) concerning the *he-goat* (who repreſented *Alexander* the Great) That *he touched not the ground. Alexander* was extream ſwift in his Conqueſts, he Conquered the world in as little time as another could have travell'd over it. His motto was, *Without delay*; or, *I do all by making no delay*; He was ſwift upon the face of the earth. Thus wicked men are light upon the face of the water, that is, they are ſwift and fierce for the attaining of their ſinful ends; they run as nimbly at it, as if they could run upon the top of a corn field, and never preſs a ſtraw; or as if they could run upon the water, and never wet their feet. By which hyperbolies the ancient Poets uſed to expreſs the greateſt celerity of motion. We have a proverbial ſaying among us, which reacheth this ſwiftneſs of a wicked man in ſin; *He* (ſay we) *muſt needs run whom the Devil drives.* There is no doubt but evil men are Devil-driven, yea Devil-ridden, he rides them with whip and ſpur to the doing of his black-work, and therefore no wonder if they are ſo ſwift and make ſuch haſt about it. That they make haſt to do it is too viſible, and that they make more haſt then good ſpeed is as viſible. For while they make haſt to ſin, they make haſt alſo to the curſe. As it follows in the next words.

De facilitate peccandi atq; velocitate ad caſtrandū, quācumq; ſceleris occaſionē intelligi poſſe videtur. Tam leviter in terra figunt pedē, ut etiam ſuper aquas incedere poſſe videantur. Sanct.

Their portion is curſed in the earth.

Job ſpake in the ſingular number before, but here in the plural, *He is ſwift, &c. Their portion, &c.* His meaning (I conceive) may be this; That look how many ſoever they be of them that are thus ſwift to ſin, there's not one of them ſhall be able to out-run the curſe. They are ſwift as the water to do evil, but the curſe will be as the wind to make them miſerable.

Their portion is curſed.

חלק *Pars, portio, poſſeſſio.*

The word ſignifieth any thing which falls to a man of right, or is beſtowed upon him for his lot or ſhare.

Firſt, That part or portion which comes by way of Inheritance, is ſo expreſſed (*Gen.* 31. 14. *Deut.* 12. 12.) The Inheritance that a father gives his ſon is his portion.

Secondly, It ſignifies that part, ſhare, or lot of food, which is given out to any man for his daily proviſion, (*Deut.* 18. 8.)

Thirdly, It notes that which is given to the poor by way of alms (*Eccl.* 11. 2.) *Give a portion to ſeven, and alſo to eight*; (that is, give to many) *for thou knoweſt not what evil ſhall be upon the earth.* It is uſed alſo for a ſhare, or diſtribution of the ſpoil to each Souldier after a victory (*Gen.* 14. 24.) *Aner, Eſhcol, and Mamre, let them take their portion*, ſaid *Abraham* to the King of *Sodom*, after he had reſcued his brother *Lot* and the captivated Kings. In this place the word is taken in the largeſt ſence, as comprehending whatſoever they could call theirs, or was any way belonging to them. So that when *Job* ſaith, *their portion is Curſed*, his meaning is, all that they have is curſed. As they have ſinned in all they did, ſo they are curſed in all they have. The grace of God in the Goſpel is compared to leven (*Math.* 13. 33.) *which a woman took and hid in three pecks of meal, till the whole was levened.* As the grace of God both in regenerating and comforting runs through the whole man, ſo the curſe of God like leven ſowres the whole lump of man, it runs through all that a man is or hath.

Their portion is curſed.

There is an elegant *paranomaſia* in the Hebrew between theſe two words in the text, *ſwift* or *light*, and *Curſed*; They being both repreſented by one radical word, and the reaſon of it is, becauſe thoſe things that are light, or contemptible, are curſed, or in a curſed condition. *They that honour me* (ſaith the Lord, 1 *Sam.* 2. 10.) *I will honour*; *but they that deſpiſe me ſhall be lightly eſteemed*; or, *they ſhall be curſed.* There the ſame word is uſed in the Original, which in the preſent text, we tranſlate *curſed.* To curſe a man is to ſlight him to the utmoſt; and we never eſteem ſo lightly or baſely of any thing or perſon, as when we curſe either the one or the other.

Pulchra eſt in Hebræo paranomaſia vocum conjugatorum nā levis & maledictus ab eadem radice קלל *oriuntur. Levificatio eſt maledictio.* Pined.

Their portion is Curſed in the earth.

But by whom are they curſed? or who curſeth them? I may anſwer, They are curſed both by God and man. As if *Job* had ſaid, their doings have been ſuch upon the earth, that, Firſt, all men curſe them; and Secondly, God curſeth them. Some are curſed by men, and yet God bleſſeth them; others are bleſſed or highly eſteemed by men, yet God curſeth them. But theſe men are ſuch who as they pleaſe not God, ſo they are contrary to all men (as the Apoſtle ſpake of ſome, 1 *Theſ.* 2. 15.) and therefore God and man joyn in their curſe. *Their portion is curſed*

Maledicere eſt leviter de aliquo ſentire, levibus acerbiſq; ſcommatibus aliorū proſcindere.

In the earth.

That is, in all their earthly concernments, or they are curſed even here while they are upon the earth, where they think themſelves, and where, poſſibly, ſome others think them alſo, moſt bleſſed. For though they have gotten much in the earth, or of earthly things, yet all they have gotten is curſed, and therefore all that they have is curſed, for they have got nothing beyond the earth.

Again, Theſe words may be read by way of Imprecation (we read them by way of aſſertion) *let their portion be curſed in the earth*; Like that (*Pſal.* 109. 8, 9. 10, 11.) *Let his dayes be few, and let another take his office, let his children be fatherleſs, &c.* Some of the ancients make the Paraphraſe thus, *Let the roots of what they ſow or plant appear bare in the earth.* When the root of a tree, or the roots of corn appear above ground, both tree and corn muſt needs wither, for want of moiſture. For as the earth feeds the root, ſo the root feeds the ſtock and the ſtock the branches. That is a curſed tree which bears no fruit according to its kind, and that tree whoſe root is not ſuckled by the earth can bear no fruit. Every wicked man is either curſed in not bringing forth fruit, or elſe the fruit which he brings forth is curſed. And therefore *Their portion is* (every way) *curſed in the earth.*

Appareant plantæ eorū ſuper terra aridæ, i.e. cum conſueverint agros ſuos non gerimnet terra.

There is yet another Interpretation of theſe words, which I ſhall but briefly touch, and paſs on. *Their portion is Curſed in the Earth*, that is, the Region, or place where they dwell is Curſed; They dwell in deſolate places, or they ſkulk up and down in deſerts and wilderneſſes, having done ſo much miſchief among men that they dare not ſhew their faces where they are known. Now, deſerts and deſolate places may juſtly be called curſed places, becauſe of their barrenneſs, for barrenneſs is the curſe which God laid upon the earth for the ſin of man (*Gen.* 4. 17.) As a fruitful land may be called a bleſſed Land, becauſe the bleſſing of God maketh a Land fruitful (*Iſaac* ſaid to his Son *Jacob* (*Gen.* 27. 27.) *The ſmell of my Son is as the ſmell of a field which the Lord hath bleſſed*, that is, as the ſmell of a fruitful field) So it may be ſaid that the earth or land where a man lives, and his portion in it is curſed, while he lives in a barren deſolate land, which looks as if it were under the perpetual curſe of God. And according to this interpretation, the latter part of the verſe (*and he beholdeth not the way of the vineyards*) may be thus underſtood; He comes not into any fruitful fields;

Deſcribit quomodo ſeſe gerere ſoleant: ut ſuo maleficia commodius regant eligunt ſibi ſedes in vaſtis locis; unde dicit, nec ſe convertit ad vias vinearum quia vineæ in locis cultis ſuæ ſunt non procul ab urbibus. Merc.

Vineyards are planted in a fruitful ſoil, and fruitful vines are full of the bleſſing of God. Thus as the portion of the wicked in the earth is alwayes curſed, by a decree from God, ſo it may be ſaid that their portion is ſometimes curſed by their own Election, becauſe for the better ſecreting and hiding of themſelves from the eye of Juſtice, they ſpend their dayes in ſuch places as by reaſon of their waſtneſs and barrenneſs ſeem to confeſs themſelves under a curſe. *Their portion is curſed in the earth.*

Hence Note, Firſt, *Sin brings a curſe with it.*

When *Job* had deſcribed the wickedneſs of theſe men, their murthers, their adulteries, and their thefts, he concludes, *Their portion is curſed.* Sin calleth for a curſe from men, and it calleth for a curſe from God. *Solomon* ſaith (*Prov.* 11. 26.) *He that withholdeth Corn* (that is, who hoards it up and will not ſell it at a reaſonable rate, reſolving to make a dearth when God hath made none, he who thus *withholdeth Corn*) *the people will curſe him.* Now if the people curſe him that will not let them have corn for mony, then much more him that ſtealeth or taketh away their corn without mony. He that deſtroyeth other mens goods, gets a curſe inſtead of good. *Eliphaz* ſaith (*Chap.* 5. 3.) *I have ſeen the fooliſh taking root, but ſuddenly I curſed his habitation*, that is, I ſaw his habitation was curſed, or under a curſe, I knew what would become of him ſhortly. In ſome caſes it may be lawful for man to wiſh a curſe upon man, and the curſe of man may be the curſe of God too; and uſually it is ſo, when any man is generally curſed by men. *The voice of the people is the voice of God.* When a man is followed with a curſe from the moſt of men good and bad, it is an argument that there is a Curſe gone out from God againſt him, and that *his portion is Curſed in the earth.* Sin is the deſerving or procuring cauſe, and the wrath of God is the inflicting or productive cauſe of the Curſe. *Balaak* hired *Balaam* to curſe the people of God, but the curſe could not take; the train was laid, but he could not make the powder take fire, the curſe came not, why? the reaſon is given, yea *Balaam* himſelf gives it (*Numb.* 23. 21.) *He* (that is, God) *hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he ſeen perverſeneſs in Iſrael.* If there had been iniquity, that is any national iniquity or publick iniquity, perſiſted in and not repented of among them, that had brought the curſe inevitably; but though *Balaam* laboured to curſe them, though he went from hill to hill, and tried all means to get an opportunity to curſe them, yet he could not, *for* (ſaith he) *God hath bleſſed them, and I cannot reverſe it. There is no iniquity in Jacob, nor perverſneſs in Iſrael*, therefore their portion was bleſſed in the earth. Sin in whomſoever it is hath a curſe in the belly or bowels of it. Even Chriſt himſelf taking our ſin upon him, was neceſſitated to take the curſe upon him which was due to our ſin; Chriſt taking our ſin upon him, was (as the Apoſtle ſaith, 2 *Cor.* 5. 21.) *made ſin for us*, that is an offeriug or a ſacrifice for our ſin, yea as the ſame Apoſtle ſaith (*Gal.* 3. 13.) *He was therefore made a curſe for us.* And if Chriſt who (having no ſin in him) did only take our ſin upon him, could not avoid the curſe, how ſhall they avoid it, who (having no part in Chriſt) have all manner of ſin in them?

Vox populi vox dei.

But it may be objected, All men ſin, and yet many have no appearance of a curſe upon them, nor is *their portion curſed in the earth?*

I anſwer, Firſt, This aſſertion is to be limited to unbelievers or ungodly men. Secondly, unbelievers and ungodly men are under a curſe, though the curſe do not break out and appear viſibly upon them. As the portion of a godly man may be bleſſed, though there be no appearance of the bleſſing; when nothing appears upon him but affliction and the croſs, yet the godly man is bleſſed. The Croſs of a godly man is like the proſperity of a wicked man. The former hath an outward Croſs, but a Bleſſing at the bottome; the latter hath outward proſperity, but a curſe at the bottome and bitterneſs in the end. Again, the peace of the prophane, is like the grace of hypocrites, only a ſhew; hypocrites have a ſhew of grace, an appearance of holineſs, yet they are but painted Sepulchres, full of rottenneſs within; So the wicked have a ſhew of peace and proſperity, of benefits and bleſſings, but a curſe is within them, and a curſe hangs over them, ready every moment to drop down upon their heads. For

Secondly, His portion is curſed, that is, 'tis under a curſe, though the curſe be not actually inflicted. As the mercies of God are ſure to his people, yet many times very ſlow, they come not preſently, but they will come: So alſo the wrath and curſe of God will ſurely come upon the wicked, though, as to outward effects and impreſſions, they are ſlow and long in coming. Actings of mercy are for an appointed time, *Every viſion is for an appointed time* (as the Lord told his Prophet, *Hab.* 2. 3.) The viſion of Judgment and wrath is for an appointed time, as well as the viſion of love and mercy; That is, all the love, and all the wrath, the bleſſing, and the curſe, which are revealed (in any way of viſion, are for an appointed time) *but at the end the viſion will ſpeak and not lie; if it tarry, wait for it, for it will ſurely come and not tarry.* As it is (I ſay) in the viſions of mercy and bleſſing, ſo in thoſe of wrath, and of the curſe; *They are for an appointed time*, in the end they will ſpeak. Sometimes the curſe is quick, it apprehendeth the ſinner in the very act, it takes him in the manner, as *Phineas* did *Zimri* and *Cozbi*. And as (*Pſal.* 78. 30.) *While their meat was yet in their mouthes, the wrath of God came upon them.* The ſound of the curſe is ſometimes at the heels of ſin, at other times the ſound of the curſe is a great way behind the ſin, no ſight nor ſound of the curſe for a long time. As, *light is ſown for the righteous* (*Pſal.* 97. 11.) That is, They ſhall have a crop of good things, though it lie, as ſeed doth, a great while under the clods, and as dead in the furrows; So darkneſs is ſown for the wicked, they perceive it not yet, but they ſhall be wrapt up in it for ever; yea while they perceive it not, they are in it, and they are by ſo much the more in it, by how much the leſs they perceive it. For, this is ever true, *The portion of the wicked is curſed in the earth*, though they ſeem compaſſed about with bleſſings. *I will curſe your bleſſings*, ſaith the Lord, (*Mal.* 2. 2.) *yea I have curſed them already.* The wicked may be rich, and yet curſed; honourable, and yet curſed; ſucceſsful in buſineſs, and yet curſed; bleſſed, and yet curſed, God doth curſe their bleſſings. That which is a bleſſing in the kind and matter of it, is to ſome a curſe in the uſe and iſſue of it. So then, *as Godlineſs is profitable for all things, and hath the promiſe of this life as well as of that which is to come* (1 *Tim.* 4. 8.) Godlineſs is compaſſed about and cloathed with promiſes of all ſorts and ſeaſons: So ungodlineſs is unprofitable for all things, and makes him that is ſo, miſerable in all things; For *it hath the curſe of this life, and of that which is to come.* If the promiſe do not meet a godly man in this life, or in the things of this life, yet it will in the life to come, and in the things of the life to come, yea in all things ſo far as concerns the life to come, the bleſſing alwayes meets him. And if the curſe do not meet a wicked man in this life, yet it will in the life to come, and in the things of the life to come, yea in all things ſo far as concerns the life to come; The curſe alwayes meets him.

Then ſee the folly of thoſe, who fear the curſe, and are not afraid of ſin; as if a man ſhould fear drowning, and yet caſt himſelf into the water, or fear burning, and yet throw himſelf into the fire; thus do they who love ſin, and fear the curſe. If the beauty of holineſs doth not take upon the heart, yet the curſe that attends ſin may deter from medling with it. And did men know the terrour of the Lord, (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, 2 *Cor.* 5. 11.) they would eaſily be perſwaded to take heed of ſin, even of every ſin; for though uſually great ſins brings the curſe, yet the leaſt ſins may. They who know what the curſe of the Lord is, cannot but know what the terrour of the Lord is, that is, that the Lord is (to ſinners) very terrible. For the curſe of the Lord abiding upon a ſinner, makes him every way and alwayes miſerable. There needs no more to be ſaid to prove a man miſerable then this, *that his portion is curſed*, or that he is under the curſe. For as the bleſſing of God makes us happy with any portion, that's enough, the bleſſing being it ſelf the beſt and moſt abundant portion (Every good thing is vertually in the bleſſing) ſo the curſe is vertually every evil thing; therefore that muſt needs make a man miſerable. When the Lord bleſſeth, it is not an empty word, but a power goes with it to make a man bleſſed; and when the Lord curſeth, it is not an empty word, but a power goes with it, to make a mans *portion curſed on the Earth. Job* having laid down this poſition gives a proof of it in the laſt words of the verſe.

He beholdeth not the way of the vineyards.

Cohærebit cum ſuperioribus ſi hæc ſit quaſi præcedentis expoſitio imprecationis. Nullam habeat impius partem in agris locisque frugiferis, ex quibus ullū fructum percipere poſſit. Pined.

Some read theſe (as the former) words, by way of imprecation; *let his portion be curſed in the Earth, and let him not behold the way of the vineyards.* We tranſlate aſſirtively, *he beholdeth not*, &c.

But what is meant here *by not beholding*? is it only this, he cometh not within the view or ſight of them? I conceive there is more in it then ſo, and that when *Job* ſaith, *he beholdeth not*, his meaning is, he enjoyeth vineyards no more, or he dwelleth no more in a fruitful and pleaſant land, ſuch as that land is which aboundeth in vineyards, and ſo conſequently with wine, but he ſhall live miſerably in a barren ſoyle. So that we may now interrogate wicked men, whether Murtherers, Adulterers, or Thieves (as *Paul* doth every ſinner, *Rom.* 1. 24.) *what fruit have ye of thoſe things, whereof ye are* (or ought to be) *aſhamed?* have ye any fruit of the vine? ſurely no, for *ſuch behold not the way of the vineyards.* To behold is to enjoy the pleaſantneſs, to taſte the ſweetneſs of the fruit of the *vineyards.* Wine which is the fruit of the vineyard is pleaſant and delightful, it makes glad the heart of man (*Pſal.* 104. 15.) and vineyards are here named to ſignifie all ſorts of outward good things, they being the chief of outward good things; for as ſometimes bread ſignifieth all outward good things, becauſe that ſtrengthens man; heart; ſo Wine, becauſe that cheareth and comforteth the heart of man. So that when *Job* ſaith, *he ſhall not behold the way of the vineyards*; It is as if he had ſaid, *he ſhall not taſt of or enjoy any good thing*. For

Again, thoſe words, *he beholdeth not* &c. are not to be underſtood as if he did voluntarily refuſe to behold, or cared not to behold the way of the vineyards, but as implying a force or conſtraint upon him, by which he was kept or hindred from looking that way.

Hence take this brief note;

The loſs of good is a great miſery as well as the enduring of evil.

It hath been queſtioned which is greater, the puniſhment of loſs, or the puniſhment of pain; but without all queſtion, loſs is a very great puniſhment; not to behold the way of the vineyards, not to return to houſe and land, to wife and children, is a ſore affliction. What will it then be never to behold the face of God, but to be under a ſentence of eternal baniſhment from his preſence? His portion is curſed in the Earth, here in this world, who beholdeth not the way of the vineyards; how then is his portion curſed in the next world, who ſhall never behold the path or way of life?

There are yet ſeveral other readings and expoſitions of theſe words.

Abſtinebit a via regia et ſrequentia hominum ne cognoſcatur. Vatabl. *Ita feſtinat fugere, ut ne proprias quidem vineas olim tam gratas aſpiciat.* Iſidor.

Firſt, As if the meaning were to ſhew the wicked mans fear of being ſeen, becauſe of his guilt, and that therefore he would not behold or come near *the way of the vineyards*, that is, thoſe places which many people have occaſion to frequent.

Secondly, As if *Job* would here ſhew what haſt men make to eſcape who are under guilt; as if he had ſaid, the wicked man will be ſo *ſet upon the run*, that he will not ſtay ſo much as to view or behold his own vineyards, formerly ſo delightful and pleaſant to him.

Thirdly, It is conceived to be a proverbial ſpeech, according to which it was ironically ſaid of malefactors who were led forth to ſuffer death, *they behold not the way of the vineyards*; no, they behold only the way to the Gibbet or place of execution.

Non refluet, ſecundum conſuetudinem altarū. Ruet.

Fourthly, Others divide the word *Cheramim*, which we tranſlate, *vineyards*, into two; that is into *Chi*, a particle of ſimilitude or likeneſs, and *Ramim* which ſignifies, either *perſons*, or *things that are high*. Hence *Junius* tranſlates, *he ſhall not return or flow back again, he ſhall fall after the manner of things that are high.* And he expounds the ſenſe of our tranſlation; *he ſhall not return to his former ſtate, as waters do which ebb and flow; but as waters which fall from a high place cannot go back; ſo ſhall he remain caſt down for ever.* Water being a heavy body muſt have a deſcent, it cannot aſcend naturally, therefore the water that falls from a high place is gone, and cometh not again. The wicked man periſheth, as waters that flow from a high place and return no more.

Non proſpicit inceſſum ſicut excelſorum, i. e. non curabit incedere eo modo, quo ſolent incedere illi qui dignitate vel potentia alijs præſunt. Bold.

Another following that diviſion of the word, renders the clauſe thus; *he doth not look to* (or *provide for*) *his way or his going, as of the high ones*; that is, he ſhall never go into that pomp or equipage, in which they go who are above others in power and dignity. As if he had ſaid, he ſhall never live in a low, mean and miſerable condition; *he ſhall no more behold the way of the high while he lives*; nor (which the ſame Author cleaves to as the moſt genuine interpretation) ſhall he take care to provide to be buried according to the way, cuſtome, or manner of the high ones when he dyeth.

But I ſhall not inſiſt upon either of theſe rendrings, though they all fall into one common channel with the former, which is to ſet forth that the wicked man is under a curſe, or that his portion is curſed in the Earth, yea, *that a curſe is his portion.* Nor ſhall I (having often obſerved from other texts of this Book the woful end of wicked men, for this reaſon, I ſay, I ſhall not) ſtay to give any further obſervations from this clauſe, according to any of the rendrings of it: of all which I moſt embrace that of our own tranſlators, *He ſhall not behold the way of the vineyards*; not only becauſe moſt of the learned Hebricians render it ſo, but firſt, becauſe it makes no diviſion of, nor puts any ſtrain at all upon any of the Original words in the text; and ſecondly, becauſe it carries (to my thoughts) ſo fair a correſpondence with the words which follow in the two next verſes.

VERS. 19, 20.

Drought and heat conſume the ſnow waters, ſo doth the the grave thoſe which have ſinned.

The womb ſhall forget him, and the worme ſhall feed ſweetly on him; he ſhall be no more remembered, and wickedneſs ſhall be broken as a Tree.

These are two different tranſlations of *verſ.* 19. I ſhall propoſe them, and then explicate our own.

Firſt, Thus; *In the drought and heat they rob, and in the ſnow water, they ſin to the grave.*

Secondly, (to the ſame ſence by way of ſimilitude) *like as the dry Earth and heat drink up the ſnow water, ſo they ſin even to the grave.*

Both theſe renderings carry in them two things generally remarkable.

Firſt, The obſtinacy and perſeverance of wicked men in ſin while they live.

Secondly, Their impunity in ſin until death.

In the drought and heat they rob, and in the ſnow water.

גזל *rapuit vi & apertè res aut perſonas.*

That is, they rob and ſpoyle at all times, or in all the ſeaſons of the year, in hard times, in the hardeſt times, in the extreamity of drought, and in the extreamity of cold, they never give over, *they ſin to the grave.* This reading is much inſiſted upon by ſome; and as the ſenſe is uſeful, ſo the text may bear it. For the verb ſignifies to ſnatch a thing openly, and forceably, as well as to conſume ſecretly, and ſo may be rendered by *Robbing*, as well as by *conſuming*.

In drought and heat they rob, and in the ſnow waters.

Firſt, We may conſider this drought and heat with the ſnow water as expreſſing thoſe ſeaſons which are very troubleſome to the wicked man, to do his work in, to rob, to ſpoyle: extream heat, and extream cold, are great impediments to action, yet in heat and ſnow they rob.

Whence Obſerve, *A wicked man will break through all difficulties, to find a way to his beloved ſin.*

Though he be in danger of melting with heat, or of freezing with cold, yet he will rob, or do any other miſchief that his heart is ſet upon: neither heat, nor cold, neither wet, or dry, ſhall keep him in, yea though an Angel with a drawn Sword in his hand ſtand in his way (as in the way

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of *Balaam*)yet, when he hath a mind, he will go on. We may ſay of every bold and preſumptuous ſinner, that he ſins in heat and cold, he ſins in the ſight of wrath and death. The threatnings (which are the portion of ſuch) have the extreamity of heat and cold in them ; the threatnings have ſword and fire in them, wrath and death in them, yet the wicked ſin in the face of them, and (upon the matter) dare them to do their worſt. A godly man, whoſe heart is bent and ſet heaven-ward, will walk on his way, though he muſt paſs through heat, and cold, though he meets with dangers, and difficulties, though he meet many Lions in his way, yet he will not turn out of his way. *Paul* ſaith of himſelf and fellow labourers (2 *Cor.* 6. 4.) *In all things approving our ſelves as the miniſters of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in neceſſities, in diſtreſſes, in ſtripes, in impriſonments,* &c. and a little after (*v.* 8.) *by honour, and diſhonour, by evil report, and good report,* &c. Here was working in heat and cold, in fire and froſt, in all ſorts of providences from God, in all ſorts of aſpects from men. *Paul* and his colleagues, never minded what men did to them, but what the mind of God was they ſhould do. And thus every godly man works, or doth the work of God. For though every godly man attains not to ſuch a degree of zeal and holy courage as *Paul* had, yet he hath a truth of zeal and holy courage which will (according to his meaſure) carry him through a world of evils and incombrances, to the doing of that good, which duty and conſcience, or the conſcience of his duty calls him to. Now as godly men labour to approve themſelves the Miniſters or ſervants of God, ſo ungodly men will approve themſelves the ſervants of ſin in much patience, in afflictions, in neceſſities, and in diſtreſſes ; they will run all hazzards, and venture through all extreamities, rather then leave the law of a luſt unfulfiled. The Lord put the *Jews* to much ſuffering for their ſins, yet ſin they would ; *why ſhould ye be ſtricken any more,* (ſaith he, *Iſa.* 1. 5.) *ye will revolt more and more* ; while I have been ſtriking, ye have been revolting. The ſame pertinacy is complained of (*Iſa.* 57. 37.) *I ſmote him, and was wrath, yet he went on frowardly in the way of his heart* ; that is, in a ſinful way. The heart of man knows no other way, till himſelf is formed after the heart of God, and in that ſinful way he will go, though God make his heart ach as he goes, *I ſmote him, and was wroth, yet he went on,* &c.

In drought and heat they rob, and in the ſnow water.

Again, we may take drought, heat, and ſnow water, not only as importing their ſufferings while they were doing in ſuch times, but alſo as importing the ſeveral ſeaſons of time, as if he had ſaid, *they will ſin both winter and ſummer,* that is, continually ; we ſay of ſome, *they are never well neither full nor faſting* ; as full and faſting imply all the conditions of man, ſo hot and cold, ſummer and winter, imply all diviſions of time.

Hence Note, *Evil men will do evil alwayes.*

Sinning time is never out with them, they do not ſin by fits or ſtarts, in an ill mood only, or through a ſtreſs of temptation ; but they ſin from a principle within, they have a ſpring of wickedneſs within, and that will ever be ſending and flowing out. A good man may be overtaken with ſin at any time, but he doth not ſin at all times, in winter, and ſummer, in heat, and cold. Corruption will be working where Grace is, but where grace is not, nothing works but corruption. If wicked be not doing evil in every moment of time, it is not becauſe they at any time would not do evil, but becauſe at all times they cannot ; and therefore the tranſlation under hand ſpeaks of their whole life as one continued act of ſin.

They ſin to the grave.] That is, till they dye, and ſo are carryed out to the grave. So that this manner of ſpeaking, *They ſin to the grave,* ſignifies the utmoſt perſeverance of wicked men in ſinning ; as if it had not been enough to ſay, they ſin in heat, and cold, winter, and ſummer, but they ſin out the laſt inch of time, even till they come to the graves mouth.

Hence Note, *Wicked men will not ceaſe to ſin, while they continue to live.*

The Apoſtle *Peter* (2 *Pet.* 2. 14.) ſaith of that generation, *who have eyes full of adultery, and that cannot ceaſe from ſin* ; ſin is their nature, it is not what they have acquired, but what is implanted in them, and born with them. And becauſe ſin is natural to them, therefore they cannot get it off until their nature is changed. And hence it is, that *converſion* or regeneration is the change of our nature as well as of our actions. A man unregenerate ſins as naturally as he lives ; he ſins as naturally as he ſees or hears, or exerciſeth any of thoſe natural faculties, ſo naturally doth he ſin, and therefore he ſins to the grave. And this is a rational demonſtration of the Juſtice of God in awarding eternal puniſhment for ſin committed in time, or in a ſhort time (the whole time of mans life, in which ſin is committed, is but a ſhort time, a nothing to eternity wherein ſin ſhall be puniſhed. This, I ſay, is a demonſtration of the Juſtice of God in puniſhing wicked men) becauſe if they could have lived to eternity, they would have done evil to eternity, they do evil as they can, and as long as they can. Seeing then, there is a principle in man to ſin eternally, it is but juſt with God if he puniſh ſinners eternally ; did not the grave ſtop him, his heart would never ſtop him from ſin. *In heat and cold, they rob, they ſin to the grave.*

Further as theſe words are put into a ſimilitude, they intimate the eaſineſs, and naturalneſs of their ſinning, as well as the continuance of it ; *like as the hot Earth drinketh up the ſnow water, ſo wicked men ſin to the grave* ; they ſin to death, and they ſin with as much eaſe and naturalneſs as the Earth, when dry and thirſty, drinks up the ſnow water. Sinners are ſaid to *drink iniquity as water,* (Job 15. 16.) they are ſaid to *draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and ſin as it were with cart ropes* (Iſa. 5. 18.) The laſt of theſe compariſons notes their ſtrength and groſſeneſs in ſinning ; the ſecond notes their wit and cunning in ſinning ; the third (which ſuits with the preſent Text) notes their readineſs and eaſineſs to ſin ; they can do it as eaſily as drink, as eaſily as the hot Earth drinketh up the ſnow water.

So much of that tranſlation ; I come now to conſider our own.

Drought and heat conſume the ſnow waters.

Drought or drineſs ; the word notes the drineſs of the Earth, and is often put for dry Earth, as alſo for Earth undreſt, or for a deſert place, becauſe in ſuch places the Earth is uſually parcht with heat and over dry. And hence the word (*Tiſiim*) in the plural number ſignifies a people that dwell in a wilderneſs, or in a deſert. So the people of *Iſrael* were called while they marched ſlowly through it to *Canaan* (Pſal. 74. 14.) *thou breakeſt the head of the Leviathan, and gaveſt him to be meat for the people, who dwelt in the wilderneſs.* And as men, ſo thoſe wild beaſts that dwelt in deſerts, or ſolitary places are called *Tiſiim* (Iſa. 34. 14.) *the wild beaſts of the deſert ſhall alſo meet with the wild beaſts of the land, and the Satyr ſhall cry to his fellow, the Shrich-Owle ſhall alſo reſt there, and find for himſelf a place of reſt. Tiſiim* are ſuch uncouth creatures as inhabit *Tſijiah,* dry and deſert places. *Drought*

ציה *Siccitas propriè ariditatem terræ ſignificat, unde pro terra arida & inculta ſumitur.*

לציים לעם *populo ſolitudini colis, aut deſerta incolenti.*

And heat.] *Cham* the Original word ſignifies both to be hot, and to be black ; the ſecond Son of *Noah,* (who mocked his father) was named *Cham,* and it is ſuppoſed that the poſterity of *Cham* inhabited *Africa,* which is alſo called *Ammonia,* being a hot Country , and the people of it black. And from this Hebrew word (it is conceived) the Heathens alſo called the *Sun Jupiter Hammon* ; and they had Sun-Images called *Chammamin* (Levit. 26. 30.) which they worſhiped.

חמם חם *caluit Hebræis Cham calidum, et cham nigrũ ſonat, hinc Chami nomẽ à calore vel nigredine. Jupiter Hammon.*

Drought and heat conſume the ſnow water.

The word (as many other in the Hebrew) hath a nearneſs of ſound as well as in ſenſe with our Engliſh word *guſſel,* and we ſay of great drinkers, They are Guzzlers. The dry Earth *and heat* guſſel or drink in the ſnow water, as the intemperate perſon guſſels and drinks down his liquor. Thus, *drought and heat conſume the ſnow water* , that is, the ſnow when melted into water.

So doth the grave thoſe that have ſinned.

There is a wonderful conciſeneſs in the Hebrew, we find there no particle of likeneſs, nor is there any expreſſion of *thoſe*

שאול חטאו

mira brevitas quæ obſcuritatem parit, non dubiũ eſt ſimilitudinem eſſe. Merc.

thoſe that, as appears by the different letter in our tranſlation; yet there is no doubt but the words carry in them the force of a ſimilitude, therefore we may ſafely ſupply them, according to our reading;

So doth the grave thoſe that have ſinned.

The ſame word is uſed indifferently in the Original both for the Grave and Hell; both ſignifications are made uſe of by Interpreters in this place. Firſt, the grave or death; Secondly, Hell, which is the ſecond death, an everlaſting death, *conſumeth thoſe that have ſinned.*

But why doth he ſay, *the grave conſumeth thoſe that have ſinned?* Can he mean any ſpecial ſort of men by this, forasmuch as all men have ſinned and ſin dayly?

I anſwer, It is a truth, the grave conſumeth, and death reigneth over all, for that all have ſinned; whereſoever ſin hath to do, the territories of death are as large as the territories of ſin; and had it not been for ſin, death had never had any dominion in the world, nor can the grave conſume any but thoſe that have ſinned. The body of man had never come into the graves mouth, and it had been too hard a morſel for the ſtomack of the grave to digeſt, had it not been for ſin; for though the body of man in its materials and conſtitution was mortal, that is, was under a poſſibility of dying before he ſinned, yet if ſin had not brought him under the threat of death, God had never ſubjected him under that decree of dying, in purſuance of both which the grave now conſumeth (all) thoſe that have ſinned. The grave conſumeth Godly men becauſe they have ſinned, and the grave conſumes wicked men becauſe they have ſinned; yet there is a great difference among theſe ſinners who dye, and a greater difference among theſe ſinners when they are dead.

And therefore *Job* ſpeaks here diſtinctively; for though it be a truth that all whether Godly or wicked have ſinned, and that the grave conſumeth all who have ſinned, yet *Job* doth not here intend all men *by thoſe who have ſinned,* for by them *Job* means groſs preſumptuous and impenitent ſinners; he means it not of thoſe who ſin according to common frailty, but of thoſe who ſin with a high hand obſtinately. Such he means, even oppreſſours, adulterers, murtherers, of whom he ſpake by name before, theſe and ſuch as theſe are the ſinners whom he intends, while he ſaith, *ſo doth the grave thoſe that have ſinned.*

And if it be ſaid, *ſo doth the grave thoſe that* (in this ſence) *have not ſinned.*

I anſwer, The Grave is ſaid in a ſpecial manner to conſume thoſe who have thus ſinned.

Firſt, Becauſe ſuch ſinners do more ſubject and lay themſelves open to death, by their wicked courſes and intemperate living. Such ſinners ſpoile their bodies and corrupt their blood, they fill themſelves with diſeaſes, which bring them early to the Grave.

Secondly, Becauſe God doth often cut the thread of ſuch mens lives when they are ſtrong and healthy, and tumbles them into the graves mouth to be conſumed, before they have lived out half their dayes.

The words being thus opened, fall under a twofold interpretation.

Moriuntur facillimè & ſuaviſſime, ita ut nihil doloris aut cruciatus ſentiant, non lenta morte contabeſcunt ut magna ex parte probi. Merc.

Ex hebræis aliqui putant indicari leniſſimã mortem impiorum, qua lenitur et inſenſibilitèr liquifiunt, &c. Pined.

Firſt, As implying the felicity (ſuch as it is) of wicked men in dying, or the eaſineſs of their death; as they live in pleaſure, ſo they dye without pain. That's a point inſiſted upon at *Chapter* 21. *Verſ.* 13. *They ſpend their dayes in wealth, and in a moment* (or with eaſe) *they go down to the grave.* And again (*verſ.* 32, 33.) *He ſhall be brought to the grave, the clods of the valley ſhall be ſweet unto him.* Where *Job* ſhews that wicked men have as much eaſe in death as others, and many times a great deal more. *They dye in a moment,* not tyred out with the torture of chronical diſeaſes, but having a quick and ſpeedy paſſage out of the world, are diſſolved even as the ſnow is by the heat and warmth of the Sun. This ſence ſome of note inſiſt chiefly upon, as moſt ſuitable to *Jobs* ſcope in deſcribing the corporal and temporal felicity of wicked men, even in death, which carries the greateſt appearance of terror and trouble in it.

But I rather take theſe words as a deſcription of the miſerable and ſad concluſion of a wicked man. For the word which we render, *to conſume,* ſignifies a forceable ſwallowing down, a kind of devouring, which doth not conſiſt with that other explication, *Drought and heat conſume the ſnow waters, ſo doth the grave thoſe that have ſinned.*

Hence Obſerve, *Some ſin ſo as if they were the only ſinners, or as if they only had ſinned.*

All men ſin, but ſome go away with the name, as if they only were worthy to be called ſinners. In which ſence the Evangeliſt ſaith (*Luk.* 7. 37.) *And behold a woman in the City which was a ſinner, when ſhe knew that Jeſus ſat in the Phariſees houſe, brought an alablaſter box of ointments,* &c. But were not all the women in the City ſinners? They were ſo; but this woman had a common fame for a ſinner, that is, for an unclean, wanton woman; ſhe was a ſinner of ſinners, the chief of ſinners in that City. So (*Luk.* 19. 7.) when Chriſt went to the houſe of *Zacheus,* the Phariſees were vexed, and murmured, ſaying, *that he was gone to be gueſt with a man which was a ſinner;* as if he had ſaid, he is gone to the houſe of a notorious ſinner, a man ſo ſinful and guilty, that all men ſeem innocent and ſinleſs in compariſon of him. So they accounted *that Zacheus* the Publican; and doubtleſs he was as noted a man for ſin before his converſion, as he was for grace after it. As they who are *born of God do not commit ſin, yea, cannot ſin becauſe they are born of God* (1 Joh. 3. 9.) that is, their ſinning is no ſinning in Gods account, and comparatively to the ſinning of others. So they who are born of the Devil (as Chriſt ſaith thoſe contradicting *Jews* were, *Joh.* 8. 44.) do nothing but commit ſin, and ſin ſo as if they (and their like) alone did ſin; for as no Godly man ſins as a wicked man doth, ſo ſome wicked men ſin at ſuch a rate, that it may be ſaid they only ſin, even in reſpect of the generality of wicked men. Thus alſo ſome Godly men do ſo far exceed and out-ſtrip other Godly men in holineſs and the acting of their graces, as if they only were Godly, as if they only had the acting of thoſe graces. *Abraham* believed as if he only had been a believer; and *Job* was patient, as if none had patience but he; *David* was a man ſo upright, as if only he had been upright, or a man after Gods own heart. There are Saints like *Abraham* and *David,* none like them; and there are ſinners, like *Jeroboam* and *Ahab,* none like them.

So doth the grave thoſe that have ſinned.

Obſerve, *They who are extreamly ſinful, make them ſelves ſevenfold more ſubject to death then other men.*

They who ſin as if none did ſin but they, are ſo ſubject to death, as if none were ſubject to death but they. For if every ſin, the leſt ſin doth put us into the hand or under the power of death, then great ſins multiplyed and continued in, put us into the hand and under the power of death much more. The Pſalmiſt ſaith of wicked worldly men (*Pſal.* 49. 14.) *Like ſheep they are laid in the grave, death ſhall feed on them, and their beauty ſhall conſume in the grave, from their dwelling;* or (as we put in the margin) *the grave being an habitation to every one of them ſhall conſume their beauty.*

But ſome may object, Is not this true of Godly men too, are not they thus handled by death, and the grave? doth not death feed on them? and doth not the grave conſume their beauty?

I anſwer, though it doth, yet it doth not feed upon, nor conſume them, as it feeds upon and conſumes wicked men. The Pſalmiſt ſpeaks here of death as it were triumphing over the wicked, whereas the Godly triumph over death. For, firſt he ſaith, the wicked are *laid in the grave like ſheep;* they lived like *Wolves* or *Lions,* but they are laid in the grave like *ſheep.* If it be asked, why like ſheep? I anſwer, not for the innocency of their lives, but for their impotency in death; as if it had been ſaid, when once death took them in hand to lay them in the grave, they could make no more reſiſtance then a Sheep can againſt a Lion or a Wolfe; and when death hath thus laid them in the grave, then ſecondly (ſaith the Pſalmiſt) *death ſhall feed on them,* as a Lion doth upon a ſheep, or any wild beaſt upon his prey, which is a further degree of deaths triumph over the wicked; and thirdly, *their beauty ſhall conſume in the grave,* that is, all their bodily and natural beauty (that is all the beauty which they have) ſhall conſume in the Grave, whereas the Godly, have a beauty (and they count it their only beauty) which the grave cannot conſume, and that is the beauty of their graces, the beauty of holineſs, the ſpiritual beauty of the inner man; yea and the ſpiritual beauty of their outward holy actings ſhall not conſume in the Grave; for *bleſſed are the dead that dye in the Lord, for from henceforth, ſaith the Spirit, they reſt from their labours, and their works follow them* (Rev. 14. 13.) that is, their good works follow them (not to death, but into life) and will be both beauty and bleſſedneſs to them from the Lord for ever. Whereas curſed are the dead that dye in their ſins, for from henceforth, they ſhall be denyed reſt for ever, and none of their works, wherein they took pleaſure in this world, ſhall follow them into the next to give them any pleaſure. All their beauty and outward bleſſedneſs ends in the grave. *If in this life only we have hope in Chriſt,* (ſaith the Apoſtle of believers, 1 Cor. 15. 19.) *we are of all men moſt miſerable*; then how miſerable are they, who have no hope beyond this life, or if they have, both that and their preſent beauty conſume together in the grave. Thus it is plain, that though Godly men dye, yet death hath not ſuch a hand over them, as over the wicked. And as wicked men are more under the hand of death then the Godly when they dye, ſo they are continually more lyable unto death. Sin, which unfits men to dye comfortably, fits them (as it were) to dye naturally: The more ſinful any man is, the ſooner may death ſurpriſe him. Holineſs hath not only a promiſe of eternal life hereafter, but of a long life here (*Pſal.* 34. 12, 13.) And ſin is not only under a threat of eternal death hereafter, but of a ſpeedy death here, (*Pſal.* 55. 23.) *But thou O Lord ſhalt bring them* (that is, wicked men) *down into the pit of deſtruction,* (but when? it may be long firſt, the next words make anſwer) *Bloody and deceitful men ſhall not live out half their dayes*; that is, not half the dayes which as others do, ſo they naturally might live; either the Juſtice of God or of man ſhall cut ſuch men off in the midſt of their dayes. The grave gapes for thoſe who have thus ſinned. So then, though there are many ſpiritual reaſons referring to eternal life, which may move the Sons of men to take heed of ſin, yet there is a ſtrong motive from the concernments of this preſent temporal life, and that not only as to the comforts of it, but alſo as to the very continuance of it. They haſten themſelves to the grave who make haſt to ſin, and ſo at once endanger the hopes of the next life, and the enjoyment of this.

Pro ſepulchrum eſt cur malim infernus aut inferi; nam ſepulchrum rapit etiam bonos, inferi ſolos eos rapiunt, qui peccaverunt, i. e. improbos. Druſ.

Laſtly, Some, becauſe the Grave (in a general ſence) conſumes the Godly as well as the ſinner (in the ſence laſt expreſſed) do therefore reſtrain the word *Sheol* in this place to *Hell*: as it ſignifies the place or ſtate of the damned, which is proper only to thoſe who have ſinned, and dye in their ſins. So the whole verſe is thus rendered. *As dry Earth and heat conſume the ſnow waters, ſo Hell conſumeth thoſe that have ſinned.* All that ſin and turn not, ſhall be turned to Hell; but ſhall Hell conſume them? they ſhall ever be conſuming, but never conſumed. Hell ſhall conſume them as to a comfortable being, but it ſhall not conſume them as to a being; they ſhall be alwayes dying, but never dead. Hell is the portion, and all the portion, of all wicked men hereafter, whatever portion of worldly profit or pleaſure they have had here; Hell ſhall conſume them, and they ſhall be conſuming for ever.

Ut terra torrida & calor abſumunt aquas inuales, ita infernus eos qui peccaverunt. Tig.

The Twentieth Verſe may carry the ſence of this interpretation; but it complyeth more clearly with the former, deſcribing the calamitous condition of a wicked man at his departure out of this world.

Verſ. 20. **The womb ſhall forget him, the worm ſhall feed ſweetly on him, he ſhall be no more remembred, and wickedneſs ſhall be broken as a Tree.**

The number varies here again. *Job* ſpake in the plural number immediately before, yet here keeping to the ſame ſubject, he ſpeaks in the ſingular.

The womb ſhall forget him.] That is, they who loved him moſt tenderly and dearly *ſhall forget him.* The word which we render **The womb**, is of a verb which ſignifies to love with greateſt intenſeneſs and tenderneſs: It is applyed to the love of man to God (*Pſ.* 18. 1.) *I love the Lord,* I love the Lord dearly with bowels of affection; and it is often applyed to the love of God unto man. Some tranſlate it here by the Abſtract; *Love, mercy or pity ſhall forget him.* Which may be taken two wayes; firſt, that thoſe friends who before were pitiful to him, ſhould forget him; his lovers, and acquaintance, who were dear to him even as his bowels, they ſhall forget him; or ſecondly, *mercy ſhall forget him,* that is, the mercy of God, or the God of mercy ſhall forget him, God who is altogether mercy ſhall forget him; Hell ſhall conſume him, and mercy, or the merciful God ſhall forget him for ever. The vulgar reads it by way of imprecation, *let mercy forget him*; others as a direct denunciation, *mercy ſhall forget him*; but I rather apprehend that this phraſe, or manner of ſpeaking, *the womb ſhall forget him,* doth only import thus much; that when the wicked man dyeth, he ſhall be as much forgotten among men, as if ſuch a man had never come out of his mothers womb, nor been born into the world. But are not wicked men remembered to have been in the world when once they go out of the world? uſually they do ſuch in things in the world as cannot eaſily be forgotten; and are not many wicked men, who dyed ſome Thouſands of years agoe, remembered unto this day, as if they had dyed but yeſterday? I anſwer, as to forget, alwayes implyeth former knowledge, and acquaintance, ſo ſometimes it implyeth only preſent neglect: When we paſs by, or ſlight a man, then we are ſaid to forget him, though we not only remember who he is, but ſee him before our eyes: much more then may we be ſaid to forget thoſe men being dead, whom we ſlighted while they lived, and never ſpake of but with contempt and abhorrence both of their perſons and actions ſince they dyed. *The womb ſhall forget him.*

רחם *A verbo quod intenſiſſimè & tenerrimè amare ſignificat.*

Vim majorē habet per abſtractum. Oblivifcetur ejus miſeratio, ſive amor ſive dilectio, i. e. illi qui eum ſuaviter amabunt. Bold.

Yet as the former verſe is expounded by ſome, (as was there touched) to ſhew how quiet and eaſie a paſſage wicked men uſually have out of this world by death, ſo this clauſe alſo of the verſe in hand, yea the whole verſe is expounded to the ſame ſence; I will only hint it, and paſs on.

The womb ſhall forget him.] That is, his mother ſhall not be troubled or grieved at his death, becauſe he dyed without grief or trouble.

The worms ſhall feed ſweetly on him.

That is, the grave ſhall be no ſeverer to him then to others. There the worms feed upon all men, and they ſhall feed ſweetly on him; or it ſhall be a kind of ſweetneſs and pleaſure to him, to have the worms feeding on him; which is no more then what *Job* ſaid upon the ſame argument (*Ch.* 21. 23.) *The clods of the valley ſhall be ſweet to him.*

Ita ſuaviter obdormit, ut in ſepulchro ei vermis dulceſcere videatur, Druſ.

He ſhall be no more remembered.

That is, there ſhall no hard fate or evil accident befall him when he dyes to adminiſter matter of diſcourſe concerning him; for when a man is cut off by ſome remarkable ſtroak of Judgment either from the hand of God or man, his death becomes the diſcourſe and Table talk of all ſorts of men, for that generation at leaſt, if not for many more. What hath cauſed *Korah, Dathan,* and *Abiram,* to be remembered to this day, was it not the ſtrangeneſs of their death? (*Numb.* 14. 29, 30.) *And* Moſes *ſaid, if theſe men dye the common death of all men, or if they be viſited after the viſitation of all men, then the Lord hath not ſent me; but if the Lord make a new thing, and the Earth open her mouth, and ſwallow them up,* &c. This dreadful hand of God upon them in ſwallowing them up alive, hath made them to be remembered more then many Thouſands of honeſt and good men in *Iſrael,* who dyed in their Beds. Upon this account *Ananias* and *Saphira* are remembered, and ſo is that *Herod* (Acts 12. 23.) *who was eaten of worms and gave up the Ghoſt, becauſe he gave not glory unto God.* But ſaith *Job* (according to this expoſition) the wicked mans death is commonly ſo fair, and ſo much after the common death of all men, that no man remembers him any more.

And wickedneſs ſhall be broken as a Tree.

That is, the wicked man ſhall dye like an old rotten tree, he ſhall moulder away and decay by piecemeal, or gradually, as a tree doth which is never hewen down, but is ſuffered to waſte and dye alone. Thus the interpretation is carried through the whole verſe, as a proof, that bad men may (in this kind) have a good death.

But though this be a truth, and ſuits well with *Jobs* ſcope in ſome paſſages of this Chapter, as alſo in other paſſages of this Book, that wicked men dye as to outward appearance as fairly, and ſweetly, as the Godly; ſo that as no man *knoweth love or hatred by all that is before him, but all things* (in this life) *come alike to all*; *there is one event to the righteous and to the wicked* (Eccl. 9.1,2.) So all things come alike to all in death, ſo far as it meerly concerns the ſeparation of Soul and Body ; yet I rather conceive that this verſe declares wrath and judgment to wicked men dying, or their miſery and wretchedneſs in death. And therefore firſt, *the womb*, that is, his neareſt relations, and friends, even his mother, and wife, *ſhall forget him.* They expected no good from him while he lived, and ſo it was little ſorrow to them when he dyed. Some men live till their friends are weary of them, and every one thinks the world is well rid of them when they dye. Secondly, *the worm ſhall feed ſweetly on him,* that is, as he fed ſweetly upon ſin before, ſo now the worm ſhall have a ſweet morſel of him ; which ſome interpret alſo as a circumlocution of an ignominious ,or at leaſt a vulgar burial ; as if he had ſaid, he ſhall not have the burial of the Noble and Honourable, who uſually are ſecured from worms, by ſpices and imbalmings (ſpice and perfume fence the dead body againſt the worm) but though he lived honourably, death ſhall overtake him, and he ſhall be buried ignominiouſly, or he ſhall be buried among common men, he ſhall not have that priviledge which appertains to his ſtate, preſervation from the worms. And (which is a greater miſery then both the former) Thirdly, *he ſhall be no more remembered*, that is, he ſhall be no more ſpoken of with honour, but his name ſhall rot, as a man that is not worth the remembering. His name ſhall not be regiſtred with honour, nor kept upon the file, with men of credit and renown. So that as the firſt part of the verſe ſhews how his neareſt relations and lovers ſhall forget him, ſo this latter part ſhews that *he ſhall be remembered no more* of any others.

Mater, quia à vivo nihil expectabat ſolatii, neque pro mortuo amplius angitur.

The Original word which we tranſlate to **Remember**, taken in other forms, ſignifies a Hiſtory, or a monument of Record, as alſo a Recorder or Regiſter, who writes and ſets down things for memory. And hence alſo a man-child in the Hebrew is called *Zachar,* becauſe the family is reckoned by the males, they only being named in genealogies, and regiſtred in the monuments of antiquity ; ſo that theſe words, *he ſhall be no more remembered,* ſound thus much, he ſhall be a man whoſe name is quite blotted or raſed out of all memorials ; and this curſe of being *no more remembered*, may be taken, as was intimated before, either firſt abſolutely, he ſhall not be thought of, named, or remembered at all ; or ſecondly, relatively, he ſhall no more be remembered with honour, his name will ſmell worſe then his rotten carkaſs when he is dead, and whenſoever he is mentioned, it will be like rakeing in a dunghil which raiſeth up a filthy ſtench and vapour. Poſſibly while he lived he was ſpoken of with honour, he had many flatterers, who crept to him, bowed to him, adored him, and called him a gracious Lord, but when he dyeth his reputation dyeth too, he ſhall be no more remembered with honour ; *when any man ceaſeth to be remembered as he once was, he may be ſaid not to be remembered at all.* The worſt and wickedeſt men that ever were in the world may be ſtill remembered, but when they are remembered, it is with ſome mark of infamie, or with a black brand upon their name.

Meſheiim ſecretarii zichronoth, memoriæ hiſtoriæ, monumenta, zachar, Muſ.

Hence Note, *Not to be remembered at all when we are dead, or to be remembered with diſhonour, is the portion of the wicked.*

Many precious Saints have both lived in obſcurity, and being dead 'tis ſcarce remembered that they ever lived ; but none of the known Saints did ever live in diſgrace (unleſs in their opinion who had no grace) and being dead they are remembered by all (who have grace) with honour. But they who have been moſt famous for wickedneſs while they lived in this world, the moſt famous Oppreſſours, Adulterers, and Robbers, have dyed undeſired, and their *name hath rotted* being dead (*Prov.* 10.7.) *David* (*Pſal.* 69.28.) powreth out his curſe upon his enemies, *let them be blotted out of the Book of the living, and not remembered among the righteous.* The *Jews* were wont to number their families, and to take their names ; ſo they did when they came out of *Egypt.* In which ſence the book of *Numbers* may be called, *the Book of the living* ; and we may take the book of the living in a double notion, either firſt, for the book of thoſe who lived naturally ; or ſecondly, of thoſe who lived ſpiritually, and ſo were ſuch as ſhould live eternally (*Phil.* 4. 3. *Rev.* 3. 5.) *David* ſeems to intend this book of the living, becauſe he addeth, *let them not be remembered among the righteous.* As if he had ſaid, theſe men made an outward profeſſion, and ſeemed once to be in the liſt and catalogue of the righteous, they had once an eſteem and a name among the people of God (as all hypocrites have till they are unmasked) but they have diſcovered themſelves to be of another alliance, therefore let them be no more named nor remembered as having any relation to that ſociety. Thus we may interpret that imprecation of *Moſes* (*Exod.* 32. 32.) When the Lords wrath waxed hot againſt the people of *Iſrael,* and would have deſtroyed them, *Moſes* prayed, *yet now, if thou wilt, forgive their ſin* ; *and if not, blot me I pray thee out of the book which thou haſt written*, that is, out of the book which thou haſt commanded to be written as a Record of the people of *Iſrael*; as if he had ſaid, let me be reckoned no more for an *Iſraelite*, eſpecially let me not have a glorious, honourable name in *Iſrael* (ſuch a one *Moſes* had being the leader of that people) *blot me out of the book which thou haſt written*, let not my name ſtand upon that Record. The Lord had ſaid (*verſ.* 20.) *Let me alone that my wrath may wax hot againſt them, that I may conſume them* : *And I will make of thee a great Nation. And Moſes beſought the Lord,* &c. As if he had ſaid, I ſtand not upon my own name, I am ſo far from being ambitiouſly deſirous to be the head of a greater Nation then theſe, that rather then thy name ſhould ſuffer, I care not to be taken notice of as the head of this Nation, no nor as the meaneſt member of them, no nor to be accounted ſo much as a common *Iſraelite*. *Blot me out of the book which thou haſt written.* This alſo is a fair interpretation of *Pauls* meaning (*Rom.* 9.3.) when he wiſheth *himſelf accurſed from Chriſt for his Brethren, his kinſmen according to the fleſh.* We may ſuppoſe that *Moſes* and Paul were moved with the ſame Spirit of zeal for the glory of God in both their wiſhes ; and that when *Moſes* wiſhed (upon that account) to be blotted out of the Book which God had written, he wiſhed the ſame thing which *Paul* did, when he wiſhed to be accurſed or an Anathema from Chriſt ; that is, to be as a perſon ſeparated or excommunicated from the ſociety or communion of the faithful, and ſo no more to be remembered among the Saints, or to have his name blotted out of the Church Records, though he had been ſo great a planter and propagator of the Churches. There are two Scriptures that ſpeak of ſuch writings and holy Records (*Iſa.* 4. 3.) *It ſhall then come to paſs, that he that is left in* Sion, *and he that remains in* Jeruſalem *ſhall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living* (*or to life*) *in* Jeruſalem. Many might live in *Jeruſalem,* who were not written among the living, or to life in *Jeruſalem.* Thus to be written *to life,* or among the living, is to be written in the Catalogue of thoſe who are reckoned to have a life of Grace, Holineſs, and Sanctification here, as alſo to be heirs and expectants of a life of Glory hereaſter. Again, we have a like evidence of this (*Ezek.* 13.9.) *My hand ſhall be upon the Prophets that ſee vanity and that divine lies, they ſhall not be in the aſſembly of my people, neither ſhall they be written in the writing of the houſe of* Iſrael. As when the Lord brought the people of *Iſrael* out of *Egypt,* he commanded them to be muſtered or numbered (*Num.* 1.2,3.) thus alſo when they returned from the Babylonian Captivity, they were numbered again (*Ezra* 2. *Neh.* 7.) now thoſe Records in which their names were written, are conceived to be *the writings of the houſe of* Iſrael, mentioned in this 13. of *Ezekiel,* as alſo, *the Book of the living, or to life*, in the fourth of *Iſaiah,* at leaſt that both theſe Scriptures allude to thoſe Records. And it was the cuſtome of the *Jews*, that when any of them acted wickedly, his name was raſed out of thoſe Records as unworthy to be remembered among the people of God, and was looked upon as a dead man. yea as a damned man, who hath no name in the book of life, ſo often mentioned in Scripture, or whoſe name might be ſaid to be blotted out of it.

Voluit moyſes de libro legis deleri nomen ſuum ne unquam ulla in ea plus mentio fieret, nec legiſlator haberetur vel dux populi. Rab. Sol.

Expungi ſe voluit ex catalogo quaſi ſcriptorum patrum, i. e. *principium virorum populi Hebræi,* ſc. *patriarcharum,* &c. *qui vocabatur liber Juſtorum,* Bold.

Ab ipſo populi dei catalogo radi poſcebat, ut nulla deinceps inter fidelium nominis ſui mentio fieret, quamvis fidiſſimus dei ſervus eſſe perſeveret. Hæc deletio nominis a libro viventium populi dei opprobrioſa nimis erat & infamis ſceleratorum pœna. Id.

From all which it appears how great a curſe it is to be no more remembered, with reſpect and honour, which

Job affirms ſhall be the condition of wicked men. Which he further confirms in the laſt clauſe of the verſe,

And wickedneſs ſhall be broken as a Tree.

Here the abſtract (as elſewhere frequently in Scripture) is put for the concrete. That man who obſtinately perſeveres in ſin, is not only wicked, but wickedneſs it ſelf. (*Pſal.* 107.42.) *All iniquity ſhall ſtop her mouth*, that is, ſuch men as are full of iniquity ſhall have nothing to ſay or object againſt the righteous dealings of God, but ſhall be ſilent in darkneſs. So (*Job* 35. 13.) men extreamly vain are called *vanity*, and we uſually call crafty men craft, covetous men covetouſneſs, and proud men are called pride; ſo a man much given to peace, is in Scripture language called peace, (*Pſal.* 120. 7.) *I am peace*, or *I peace, but they make themſelves ready for war*. They who are much carried to or in any thing, are ſometimes called by the name of that thing, or they take the name of it upon themſelves. Thus *David* ſpake (*Pſal.* 109. 4.) *For my love they are my adverſaries, but I give my ſelf to prayer*; the Hebrew is, *I prayer*. *David* was ſo much ſet upon prayer, that he was prayer it ſelf; and a wicked man is ſo ſet upon wickedneſs, that he is wickedneſs it ſelf.

Wickedneſs ſhall be broken as a Tree.

What tree? the Text determines not, but ſpeaks indefinitely, *as a tree*. We may underſtand it firſt of a barren tree; barren trees are broken, and cut down. The word *broken*, imports violence, and ſo *a violent breaking*; wicked men ſhall be broken violently. Chriſt ſaith of the barren tree (*Luk.* 13. 8.) *Cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground?* Fruitful trees adorn and beautifie the ground, but barren trees do only burden and cumber it. *As good not to be, as to be good for nothing*. The wicked ſhall be cut down and broken as a barren tree. Secondly, (which provokes more to breaking) *they ſhall be broken as a tree that bringeth forth diſtaſtful, bitter, poyſonous fruit*; it is not good to let a tree live, which brings forth evil and deadly fruit. If they deſerve to be broken who bring forth no fruit, then much more they who bring forth none but noughty fruit. Now as the wicked are alwayes barren of good fruit, ſo they are alwayes bearing evil fruit, nor can they bear any other: *do men gather grapes of thorns?* Thirdly, they ſhall be broken as a tree that is rent and ſhivered both body and boughes with a tempeſt, or ſtorm of thunder and lightening; thus many tall and goodly trees are broken, and thus the wicked ſhall be broken; a ſtorm,, a tempeſt from Heaven ſhall break them. The downfall and deſtruction of wicked men hath been inſiſted upon from other paſſages of this book, and therefore I forbear to add any thing further here.

VERS. 21, 22, 23.

He evil intreateth the barren that beareth not, and doth not good to the widdow.

He draweth alſo the mighty with his power; he riſeth up, and no man is ſure of his life.

Though it be given him to be in ſafety, whereon he reſteth, yet his eyes are upon their wayes.

JOB having ſhewed the miſerable concluſion of wicked men, begins afreſh to deſcribe their further progreſs in wickedneſs in *verſ.* 21, 22.

Verſ. 21. **He evil intreate[illegible]he barren.**

Here's another part of his wickedneſs; having robbed and murthered the innocent, having committed Adultery, where he could have opportunity and admittance, he proceeds, *to afflict the barren*, and *vex the widdow*. The word which we render to *evil entreat*, hath ſeveral ſignifications, and I find Interpreters accordingly varying about the ſence of the whole verſe.

First, The word ſignifies to *aſſociate, or joyn together*. Thus Mr. *Broughton* (to whom others joyn) renders it, *he adjoyneth the barren which hath not born child*: whereas our tranſlation holds out the further actings of wicked men in ſin, this ſhews the further progreſs of God in puniſhing them for ſin; for the Relative *he*, in the Text, is not referr'd to the wicked man, but to God himſelf; *he*, that is, God *joyneth the barren that hath not born child (or that ſhall not bear) and he doth no good to his widdow*; that is, God ſendeth him a barren wife, and when he dyes his widdow ſhall live in miſery. This gloſs Maſter *Broughton* gives upon his own tranſlation; *God ſendeth after him a barren wife, that he ſhould have no help by Children, and ſheweth no pity to his widdow*. The next verſe is alſo tranſlated in this ſence; *He draweth the mighty after him*, that is, God draws his children though they are mighty into the ſame condition with him, and if any of them hold out a while, yet they ſhall be ſure to fall at laſt. The Original may bear this ſence, and the Context or Antecedents ſuit well with it; but yet I ſhall rather keep to our own tranſlation then fall into this channel of interpretation, which changes both the perſons and the ſtate of the Text; we rendring it of the actings of the wicked man in reference unto others, and theſe rendering it as the actings of God in reference to the wicked. The reaſon of this difference is, as the Grammarians ſpeak, becauſe the nominative caſe is not here ſet down (and according to the conciſeneſs of the Hebrew tongue it is uſual to leave it out) the verb only being expreſſed, whence ſome refer it to man, others to God.

Nos putamus explicari non quid improbus faciat, ſed quibus ſupplicijs deus ipſorū poſteros, etſi ad tempus ſtare videantur dejiciat Merl. *Conſociat* (ſc. *deus*) *ei ſterile non parituram & viduam non afficit bono.* Jun. *Neque vivo ei neque mortuo uxori benedicit*, Jun. *Tollit* (*deus* ſc.) *è medio liberos ejus, vel opibus poteſtate & honore florentiſſimos.* Jun.

Secondly, As the word ſignifies to aſſociate, or joyn together; ſo, to feed, nouriſh, and take care of, as a Shepheard feedeth his flock, or a Father his Children and houſhold: this ſuits well with the former ſignification, becauſe they that are joyned together and aſſociated, do uſually feed together. (Prov. 28. 7.) *Whoſoever keepeth the Law is a wiſe Son, but he that is a Companion of riotous men* (we put in the margin, *he that feedeth gluttons*) *ſhameth his father*. According to this ſence of the word the Interpretation is given thus; *he feedeth the barren that beareth not, and doth not good to the widdow*; that is, he runs after Harlots, and feedeth them; ſuch lewd women are expreſſed *by the barren*, becauſe ſuch ſeldome bring forth Children, nor do they deſire it, being ſo intent upon the fulfilling of their wanton or covetous luſts, that they quite forget the ends of marriage. Thus the Prodigal Son lived after he was gone from his Father, as his elder Brother gave the character of his ſinful courſe of life, which his Father (upon his return and humiliation) had covered and forgiven (*Luk.* 15. 30.) *As ſoon as this thy Son was come, which had devoured thy living with Harlots*, &c. They who feed and keep ſuch barren ones, ſhall be kept bare and feed barely enough themſelves, if they be not quite devoured.

רעה *Pavit tam ſe quam alios; etiam depaſtus fuit, perdidit, deſtruxit.*

Pavit ſterilem quæ non parit. Vul. *Alit ſterilia ſcorta, non prolis ſed obſcænæ voluptatis gratia.*

Thirdly, The word ſignifies as the care of the Shepheard in feeding his flock, or the care of a Father in feeding his houſhold, ſo it ſignifies to feed upon, to eat up and devour: and then the ſence is; *he eateth up, or he devoureth the barren*; which rendering falls in with ours, *he evil entreateth the barren*; he that devours and eats them up, *evil entreats them*. To which ſence alſo the word is tranſlated *to break or to ſpoyle*, (*Jer.* 11. 16. *Pſal.* 2. 9.) *He ſhall break them with a rod of Iron*. Thus he eateth up, or he evil entreateth, that is, he vexeth or oppreſſeth

The barren that beareth not.] *The barren*, in ſtrictneſs of ſignification, are they that have not received the bleſſing of fruitfulneſs in Child-bearing; and this phraſe, *the barren that beareth not*, implyes a woman that never bare children. Such a one was *Hannah* in a proper ſence (1 *Sam.* 1. 5, 6.) and in a ſpiritual or myſtical ſence, ſuch were the *Gentiles* for a long time, whom the Prophet thus encourageth (*Iſa.* 54. 1.) *Sing O Barren, thou that didſt not bear*; that is, rejoyce O ye *Gentiles*, who as yet have brought forth no fruit to God. The Church of the *Jews* was fruitful, ſhe brought forth, but the *Gentiles* were barren; yet at laſt the *Gentiles* were brought forth into a Church, and then they brought forth abundantly, both in reference to holy actions, and holy perſons; for as the Apoſtle applyeth that prophecy (*Gal.* 4. 27.) *The deſolate hath many more children then ſhe that hath a Husband*. Barrenneſs is an affliction, yea it was a reproach; and therefore that good woman *Hannah* when God heard her prayer, and gave her a Child, ſaid, *God hath taken away my reproach*.

Some render the Text as if it were the deſign of the wicked man to afflict the barren, though his own wife, leaſt ſhe ſhould bear him children; others, as if this were his wickedneſs, he afflicted and vexed his wife becauſe ſhe was barren, whereas ſuch women ought rather to be comforted by their Husbands. As good *Elkanah* did his wife *Hannah* when grieved

Afflixit ſterilem ne pareret. Bez. *Confregit uxorem ſterilem ne pareret.* Pag.

Hic eſt improbus ille, qui uxorem propriam quia ſterilis eſt malis afficit. Merl.

grieved becauſe of her own barrenneſs (1 *Sam.* 8.) *Why weepeſt thou? and why eateſt thou not? and why is thy heart grieved? am not I better to thee then ten Sons*? It is inhumanity in any, eſpecially in a Husband, to afflict the barren, much more to afflict them becauſe barren.

Hence Note, *To upbraid any with their afflictions, eſpecially with their natural infirmities, ſuch as barrenneſs or any bodily defect, is very ſinful.*

God giveth liberally and upbraideth not (Jam. 1. 5.) and ſhall we upbraid any becauſe God denyes them his gifts? this was *Peninahs* ſin in the preſent caſe (1 *Sam.* 1.6.) and it will be a ſin to any to do ſo in any other caſe.

Again, I conceive we may take the word *Barren* here, not only ſtrictly for one that beareth not, but largely for any one that is in a ſad or afflicted condition; as the words *widdow* and *fatherleſs*, are often uſed in Scripture, not only for ſuch as have no Father, or have loſt their Husband, but for any that are in a troubled or low eſtate. So becauſe barrenneſs was then a ſtate of affliction and of reproach, therefore by the barren any affliction may be meant; and ſo *Evilly to intreat the Barren*, is to vex or oppreſs any that are afflicted.

Sterilis per ſe ſatis afflicta eſt, ergo dum conterit eam, afflictæ afflictionem addit. Druſ.

Hence Note, *To afflict the afflicted, is the work of the wicked.*

Not to ſupport the afflicted is ſinful, how ſinful then is it to add to their affliction, and encreaſe their burden? I only mention this, having diſcovered this ſtrain of wickedneſs heretofore: and what this former part of the verſe ſaith affirmatively, is ſaid negatively in the latter.

And he doth not good to the widdow.

Eliphaz (Chap. 22. 9.) charged *Job* with this wickedneſs that he had ſent widdows away empty, that is, that he had not done good to the widdow; and *Job* at the third verſe of this Chapter numbers it among the evil deeds of the wicked man, that he had taken *the widdows Oxe for a pledge.* In this verſe he again reckons up the ſame piece of the wicked mans uncharitableneſs, *he doth not good to the widdow*; that is, he adminiſters no help to the widdow in her wants, no counſel to her in her ſtraits, nor any comfort to her in her ſorrows. And this negative, he doth not good to the widdow, hath an affirmative in it, he doth her wrong, he grieveth and vexeth the widdow. For as negative commandments alwayes contain the affirmative (while we are forbidden to do any evil, we are enjoyned to do the contrary good) ſo negative practices uſually imply the affirmative, and while we neglect to do good, we are active in doing evil. Or as the negative threatnings of God contain affirmatives (*Exod.* 20. 7.) *Thou ſhalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltleſs that takes his name in vain:* that is, he will hold him very guilty, or look upon him as very ſinful, and puniſh him accordingly, that takes his name in vain; and as Negative promiſes contain affirmative promiſes (*Pſal.* 51. 17.) *The ſacrifices of God are a broken Spirit: a broken and a contrite heart O God thou wilt not deſpiſe*, that is, thou O God wilt highly eſteem, accept of, and delight in a broken heart; and and as negative concluſions imply the affirmative (*Prov.* 17. 21.) *The father of a fool hath no joy*; that is, he hath much ſorrow and grief (*Prov.* 28. 21.) *To accept perſons in Judgment is not good*; that is, to accept perſons in Judgment is very bad: ſo negative practices of ſin contain the affirmative, as elſewhere, ſo here in the Text, *he doth not good to the widdow*, that is, he wrongeth and troubleth the widdow, the widdow who is helpleſs, is hurt by him.

אלם
אלמנה
Quod ſignificat colligare & obmuteſcere.

The word which we render **Widdow**, ſignifies in the verb both to *bind*, and to be *ſilent*; both which ſignifications are complicated in the widdows condition. For firſt the widdow is bound, though ſhe be looſe from her Husband, ſhe is bound, and that two wayes; firſt with troubles, that's her affliction; ſecondly, ſhe is bound to be or ſtay much at home, that's her duty. Secondly, as the widdow is home-bound, ſo ſhe is tongue-bound too; the widdows eloquence is ſilence, ſhe ſpeaks moſt to her own commendation when ſhe ſpeaks little. The Apoſtle *Paul* reproves widdows about two things, which diſcover two failings in them, oppoſite to both theſe latter bindings (1 *Tim.* 5. 13.) *And withal they learn to be idle, wandring from houſe to houſe*; as if he had ſaid, it is not comely for the widdow to wander abroad, ſhe ſhould ſtay at home; the widdow ſhould be a fixed Star, not a Plannet: not that the widdow is to be a priſoner in her houſe, but ſhe ſhould be ſo much there, that ſhe may deſerve the name of a houſe-keeper, not of a wanderer from houſe to houſe. The Apoſtle proceeds in his charge againſt the faulty widdow, *And not only idle, but* (which is the ſecond vice) *Tatlers alſo and buſie Bodyes, ſpeaking things which they ought not.* Tatlers are ſuch as uſe their tongues overmuch, and uſually much more then their hands; whereas the widdow ſhould be much in buſineſs, little in diſcourſe, alwayes doing, ſeldome ſpeaking. We ſee the wiſdome of God in teaching proper duties in common names; in which thing the Hebrew language is moſt exact and fruitful. But I ſhall return from this digreſſion (if it may be ſo called) about the word, when I have only added, that the ſence given from this Etymologie of the word, doth not only ſhew the widdow much of her duty, but aggravates the ſin of the wicked man in the neglect or omiſſion of his duty unto her, *He doth not good to the widdow*, no not to the widdow, who is bound down with many ſorrows; he ſpeaks not a good word for the widdow, who is as *David* ſpeaks in another caſe (*Pſal.* 39. 2.) *even dumb with ſilence.* I have already both in this Chapter, as alſo in Chap. 22. ſhewed how ſinful it is either to neglect or afflict widdows, yea that to neglect them is to afflict them; therefore I ſhall not proſecute thoſe poynts here. Only from the form of ſpeaking,

Note, *Not to do good is ſinful as well as to do evil, yea as ſinful as to do evil.*

Not to do what we are enjoyned, is as bad as to do what we are forbidden. We are not only forbidden to wrong the widdow (*Jer.* 22. 3.) but we are often enjoyned to relieve and help her, to viſit her and do her good; therefore the widdow hath wrong done her, when good is not done to her.

The Spirit of wickedneſs is not yet drawn to the full length, ſee the wicked man ſtill at work in the next verſe.

Verſ. 22. **He draweth the mighty by his power; he riſeth up, and no man is ſure of his life.**

משך
Traxit, protraxit, occulto impetu aliquem impellere quo velis, verbis atque rationibus aliquem trahere. Druſ.

In the former verſe the wicked man had to do with the weak, with the barren, with the widdow, but now he grapples with the ſtrong and mighty; *He draweth alſo the mighty.* The word may denote a twofold drawing, Firſt, drawing by a ſecret hidden and imperceptible power, a moral power; the power of perſwaſion working upon the heart and influencing the affections. There is an internal attractive vertue, which draweth the mind, as the loadſtone doth Iron, when nothing is ſeen, nor ſo much as a word heard. The word is uſed in that ſence (*Judg.* 4. 6, 8.) where (the people of *Iſrael* being ſore oppreſſed by *Jabins* Army under the conduct of *Siſera*) *Deborah* the Propheteſs, who at that time judged *Iſrael*, ſent and called *Baruch*, and ſaid unto him, *Hath not the Lord God of* Iſrael *commanded, ſaying, goe and draw toward mount* Tabor, *and take with thee ten Thouſand men of the Children of* Napthali, *and of the Children of* Zebulon. Thus God bid them draw to that place. But what hath God promiſed? *Deborah* tells him what in the next verſe; *And I will draw unto thee to the River* Kiſhon, Siſera *the Captain of* Jabins *Army with his Chariots and his multitude; and will deliver him into thine hand.* But it may be queſtioned how God would draw *Siſera* with his Army thither? It was not by any outward force, only God put a purpoſe into his heart to draw up his Army to that place, that ſo he might fall into the ſnare; *Siſera* had a ſecret motion or impulſe upon his Spirit, which he could not withſtand, though he fell by obeying it. Thus alſo God draweth Souls to himſelf, by the inviſible power of his Spirit, in their effectual vocation and converſion (*Joh.* 6. 44.) *No man can come to me except the Father which ſent me draw him*: How doth God draw? he draws by perſwaſion, not by compulſion; this perſwaſion carries a mighty commanding power with it: This drawing is not a bare moral perſwaſion, by the propoſal of an object before them, and ſo leaving the ſinner purely to his own election, but it is a perſwaſion which hath an overcoming power going along with it. God doth not draw us againſt our wills to Chriſt, but he draws the will to Chriſt, or makes us willing to come to Chriſt. And the Lord draws believers thus alſo after converſion to nearer converſe with Chriſt. The Church begged the putting forth of this powerful drawing (*Cant.* 1. 3.) *Draw me, and I will run* *after thee.* As the Soul muſt have a drawing before we can come to Chriſt at all, ſo after we are come to Chriſt, we need drawing ſtill, and that we may follow hard after him. This ſence of the word may have place in the preſent Text. Wicked men have a power of drawing others after them, though they do not act any outward power. *He draweth the mighty by his power*; that is, he allureth them to his ſide, or to a compliance with him; and he doth this ſometimes, as without any formal threatnings to exerciſe his power againſt them, ſo without any formal promiſes of uſing his power for them; as they uſually draw the mighty by the power of perſwaſion, ſo their power and example draw much without perſwaſion.

Secondly, There is a drawing by an outward violence, or a drawing by force. And this I take to be moſt proper here; he cauſeth the mighty to come in and ſtoop to his power, though they have no mind at all to it.

אביך
Eſt ingens
1 *numero,*
2 *motuo*
3 *potentia.*

He draweth the mighty.] That is, firſt, thoſe that are mighty in courage; ſecondly, thoſe that are mighty in ſtrength, whether of body or eſtate (*Pſal.* 76. 5.) *The ſtout hearted or mighty are ſpoiled, they have ſlept their ſleep*; he draws the mighty, the ſtout-hearted by his power.

There is a twofold power, firſt, of natural ſtrength or activity; ſecondly, there is a power of civil ſtrength or authority (*Rom.* 13. 1.) *The powers that be, are ordained of God*, that is, the Authoritative or Magiſtratical powers are ordained of God. We may ſuppoſe the wicked man here ſpoken of cloathed with both theſe ſorts of power; and ſo as he tramples upon the poor, the widow, the barren, and the weak, ſo he keeps down the mighty, the rich, the Great, and in concluſion he ſo tyranizeth and domineereth over all, that all are overawed, to connive at him, and ſtand as Neuters, if not to joyn with him, and be of his party. *He draweth the mighty by his power.*

Hence Obſerve, *Oppreſſors and Tyrants will reach men of all degrees and qualities.*

When wicked men have undone the poor, they will engage the mighty; when they have done with the barren, and with the widow, they will have to do with the moſt numerous and potent families. Their oppreſſion of the poor doth not ſatisfie, but whet their appetites; it doth not extinguiſh, but only encreaſe their deſires of attempting greater perſons and things. As godly men proceed from leſſer acts of holineſs to greater, from lower acts of faith to higher, they go from faith to faith, and from ſtrength to ſtrength; their path is like the morning light ſhining more and more unto the perfect day; ſo the wicked go on from leſſer acts of wickedneſs to greater, from luſt to luſt, from ſin to ſin; their path is like the evening darkneſs, which darkneth more and more unto the perfect night. As *God addeth iniquity to their iniquity* (*Pſal.* 69. 27.) by way of puniſhment, ſo they add iniquity to their own iniquity in a way of pleaſure; and care not to come into his righteouſneſs. Secondly Obſerve,

The rule by which wicked men act is their power.

They act according to their ſtrength, rather then according to righteouſneſs or reaſon, they will do what they can, not what they ought; might ſerves their turn inſtead of right, and they think any thing is done well enough, which they have power enough to do. Thus the Prophet *Micah* deſcribes the oppreſſors of that age, (*Chap.* 2. 1.) *They work evil* (in their thoughts) *upon their beds*; *when the morning is light, they practiſe it, becauſe it is in the power of their hands.* So ſaith the preſent Text, *They draw the mighty by their power.*

Fourthly, See here the powerful man working upon the mighty man (*he draws the mighty by his power.*)

Hence Note, *Mighty men may not only meet with their matches, but be overmatched.*

Mighty men think themſelves ſafe, or out of danger, and while the poor are under oppreſſion (poſſibly) they ſmile at their own indemnity, and applaud their own happineſs; yet it may ſoon come to the turn of the mighty to be overturned by might, their power may quickly be overpowered: As the might of God doth alwayes overmatch the might of man (*Luke* 1. 56.) *He hath put down the mighty from their ſeat*; ſo he often armes men, ſometimes the worſt of men, to pull down *the mighty from their ſeats.* The power of God is above all power, he is higher then the higheſt. And ſome get ſo high, that they are higher then all others who (beſides themſelves) are higheſt among the children of men. The mighty may meet with their match, and be overmatched. *He draweth the mighty by his power.*

He riſeth up, and no man is ſure of his life.

יקום
A radice
קום
ſurrexit ad ſtandum.

Theſe words are a clear deſcription of the oppreſſor, *He riſeth up*; the word ſignifieth, firſt, only to ſtand, or ſo to riſe as to ſtand, which is common to all men in nature. Secondly, *To riſe up*, is to get higher, to advance a mans ſelf to further degrees of honour and power. Thirdly, it ſignifies to riſe in a hoſtile manner, to riſe as one enemy againſt another (*Pſal.* 18. 39.) *Thou haſt girded me with ſtrength unto the battel*; *thou haſt ſubdued under me, thoſe that riſe up againſt me.* And again (*Pſal.* 34. 5.) *Through thee will we puſh down our enemies, through thy name will we tread them under that riſe up againſt us.* The wicked oppreſſor, in the Text, *riſeth up* in all theſe ſences: He riſeth up to ſtand, or to ſettle and eſtabliſh himſelf, to take good footing, and lay a good foundation for the perpetuating of his greatneſs. Secondly, he riſeth up to higher honour. Thirdly, having thus ſettled and advanced himſelf, he riſeth up as an enemy to vex all thoſe who oppoſe him or ſtand in his way. Fourthly, ſome give another ſence of this action; *He*

Riſeth up or ſtandeth.] What to do? even to make fair promiſes, and to enter engagements what good he will do, and how good he will be, whenas he intends all theſe things to be but ſnares to catch others, not at all to be as bonds to tye himſelf, which ſuits and falls in fully with the laſt words of the verſe; *and*

No man is ſure of his life.] The Hebrew is plural, *no man is ſure of his lives*; as if he had ſaid, if a man had an hundred lives he could be ſure of none of them, or he could not be ſure of one of them, when this man riſeth up. The form of ſpeaking here uſed, *no man is ſure of his life*, or, ſtrictly to the letter of the Hebrew, *no man can truſt or believe for his life*, imports a man brought into ſuch a dangerous and uncertain condition, that he hath no hold (as it were) of his own life, nor doth he ſee any reaſon to believe, that he can hold it long, every thing about him carrying the face, and denouncing threats of death. So that it may be ſaid of a man in that eſtate, as *Paul* ſaid of himſelf (2 *Cor.* 1. 9.) *I received the ſentence of death in my ſelf*; he that is not ſure of his life, hath upon the matter a ſentence of death in him. *Moſes* deſcribeth ſuch a ſtate, (*Deut.* 28. 66.) *Thy life ſhall hang in doubt before thee, and thou ſhalt fear day and night, and thou ſhalt have no aſſurance of thy life*; as if he had ſaid, thou ſhalt not be able to call thy life thine own, nor to ſay in whoſe keeping it will be an hour hence; it ſhall hang before thee as a thing which two are contending and ſtriving for, and no man can determine who is like to be maſter of it. The life of man doth or ought alwayes to hang in doubt before him, and he can have no aſſurance of it, whether we reſpect the common frailty of nature, which concerns every man, or the ſpecial purpoſe or appointment of God which concerns him. But there are ſome men whoſe lives hang in doubt before them, and they have no aſſurance of their lives, becauſe of outward real dangers, or at leaſt becauſe of their jealouſie and ſuſpition of thoſe dangers which they fancy to themſelves. *He riſeth up, and no man is ſure of his life.* Theſe two parts of the verſe being thus laid together, the whole may be expounded,

Non fidere vitæ eſt ambigere de vita, ſpe abjecta omnibus circumſtantijs mortem denunciantibus.

Firſt, Of another man riſing up, and the wicked man fearing his life, *if any man riſeth up, he is not ſure of his life*; that is, if a man oppoſe and ſet himſelf againſt this tyrannous oppreſſor, *he* (namely, the Tyrant, or the oppreſſor) will not be in any ſurety of his life. For, as Tyrants are very cruel, ſo they are very fearful; and when they ſee themſelves oppos'd, their fears are encreaſed. They fear all men, of whom all men are afraid.

Tam timidus et vecors eſt tyrannus quam ſævus & crudelis; ſi enim quiſpiam audeat reſiſtere, ſtatim de vita ſua & incolumitate deſperat.

Secondly, Others expound it as an expreſſion of the wicked mans ſecret fear, even when no man oppoſeth or purſueth him. And thus he is afraid in the ſtrength of his ſtate, or when 'tis beſt with him. When he riſeth up in greateſt power and glory, *he is not ſure of his life*; that is, he

is

Simpliciſſimus eſt ſenſus ut utraque pars de impio dicatur, et de illius commotione animi & metu quē mala conſcientia efficit. Cum ſteterit non credit vitæ ſuæ. *Merc.*

is afraid of his life; his evil Conſcience troubles him, and darts in continual fears upon his Soul: He feareth falling as ſoon as riſen up, and death when he is (as to humane proviſion and appearance) ſafeſt and furtheſt from danger. The marginal reading of our Engliſh Bibles gives this ſence of the Text; *he truſteth not his own life*; that is, he doth not truſt that his own life is ſafe; he doubts his neareſt friends will be his enemies, and that they who are of his blood ſeek his blood, and are ready to ruine him; he hath evil thoughts of others, and he thinks the thoughts of others are evil concerning him. It can never be well with him whoſe Conſcience is evil; how troubleſome is that mans life to him, who either is alwayes in danger, or ſuſpects alwayes what he is? How unſure is that mans life to him, when he ſeeth himſelf ready ro fall, who riſeth or ſtandeth up, and yet is not ſure of his life?

Qui reſtitit tyranno ſtatim de vita ſua actum putet.

Thirdly, Theſe words are expounded to ſet forth the danger of that particular man, or of thoſe men, how many ſoever they are, who oppoſe the wicked oppreſſor, *He that riſeth up is not ſure of his life*; as if he had ſaid, if any man riſe up to ſtop this Tyrant in the wayes of his oppreſſion, he ſhall but ruine and undoe himſelf by it. Many an honeſt and juſt man hath ſacrificed his life to the wrath of powerful oppreſſors, only by ſpeaking a word againſt them, how much more by acting againſt them; and ſome have not thought their lives dear, that they might do it.

Etſi porregant manus et fædera percutiant, tamen quærunt occaſiones necendi. Stare accipit pro percutere fædus ſtando. Iſid.

Fourthly, (which was toucht before) as this poſture of riſing up, implyeth Covenant-making, the ſence is this; though the oppreſſor give you aſſurance by the ſtrongeſt Covenants, *yet no man is ſure of his life*; that is, there is no truſting to him, though you have his word, though you have his Oath, yet you have not him; though he give you all the Engagements under Heaven, yet he gives you no ſecurity; for he is unfaithful, unſteady, a Covenant-breaker; he that makes a Covenant or takes an Oath meerly for his own advantage, will quickly break both Oathes and Covenants for his own advantage; and if no occaſion be offered for the making of a breach, he will make one, or at leaſt pretend one.

Si inſurrexerit in aliquem & adoriatur, is quem adortus fuerit, non ſperabit ſe ultra victurum, Vatab.

Fiſthly, According to our tranſlation, the ſence may be given two wayes; Firſt, he riſeth up, that is, he groweth very powerfull; and then *no man is ſure of his life*, that is, no good man is ſure of his life. For he is a terror not only to evil doers (as all Magiſtrates ought to be, *Rom.* 13. 3.) but he is a terror to thoſe that do well; Secondly, *he riſeth up*, that is, he groweth angry and enraged, his choller boils in him, and then no man (of them eſpecially againſt whom he is enraged) is ſure of his life. And when he ſaith (in reference to any of theſe caſes) *no man is ſure of his life*, the meaning is, every man hath great reaſon to fear, if not utterly to deſpair of his life; no man is abſolutely ſure of his life at any time; for (as the Apoſtle *James* ſaith, *Chap*..4. 14.) *What is our life, it is even a vapour, that appeareth a little time, and then vaniſheth away*; and how ſhort the time of its appearance will be no man knoweth; therefore (I ſay) no man can at any time be abſolutely ſure of his life, no not for the leaſt moment of time, but as ſome times our lives are leſs ſure to us then at others, yea at ſome times we have no aſſurance at all of our lives, and we never have leſs hope to live, or leſs hold of life, then when the wicked man *riſeth up*.

> Hence Obſerve, *The power of the wicked man is the danger of all; good men, yea all men are in danger when wicked men are in power.*

He riſeth up, and no man is ſure of his life; when the ungodly are in the height of proſperity, no man is in ſafety, (*Prov.* 11. 10, 11.) *When it goeth well with the righteous the City rejoyceth, and when the wicked periſh there is ſafety; by the bleſſing of the upright the City is exalted, but it is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked.* that is, by the mouth of thoſe wicked men who are in power; their riſing is the fall of the righteous, and with their fall, the righteous riſe. *When the wicked periſh there is ſafety.* And again (*Prsv.* 28. 12.) *When righteous men do rejoyce, there is great glory.* That is, when righteous men proſper (the effect is put for the cauſe, or the conſequent for the antecedent, joy follows proſperity, when (I ſay) it is thus with righteous men) *there is great glory*, that is, men appear in their beſt both by words and actions. The joy of the righteous is not alone, many others rejoyce with him, yea, are made joyful by him. So that when the righteous riſe up in honour and authority, all men ſet themſelves out to the utmoſt, and do as it were cloath the dignity of righteous men with glory. Then they are willing to ſhew what they have, becauſe they know, they ſhall keep what they have ſafely. And the freeneſs of their glorying when the righteous rejoyce, ſheweth the freedome which they enjoy under the power of the righteous. *But* (ſaith *Solomon* in the ſame place) *when the wicked riſe* (which is the word of the Text) *a man is hidden.* Which may be expounded firſt thus. The wicked when they riſe do ſcarce ſhew themſelves to be men, they are ſo inhumane and cruel; which ſuits well with the 15. verſe of the ſame Chapter, *as a roaring Lion and a ranging Beare, ſo is a wicked Ruler over the poor people.* So that nothing of a man appears in them when they are in power. Secondly, we may take the meaning (more near the preſent point) thus; *when the wicked riſe*, that is; to greatneſs and authority, *a man is hidden*, that is, men keep as cloſe and private as they can, as if they were afraid to be ſeen, and doubted *they ſhould be ruined by their riſing.* When the wicked appear moſt, the Godly run into holes; for they inſtead of being a ſhield of protection and defence of the Godly, are a ſnare, a ſword, and vexation to all that are about them; they uſe their power for deſtruction, and not for Edification. The Apoſtle (2 *Cor.* 13. 7.) ſpeaking of the power given him by Chriſt in the Goſpel, ſaith, *It is for Edification and deſtruction*; the deſign of that power is to build up, and not to throw down; ſo the great deſign of all power in the hand of the Magiſtrate as well as of the Miniſtry is for Edification, not for deſtruction; deſtruction is that which comes but by accident, by reaſon of the ſin and wickedneſs that men do; the great buſineſs of the Magiſtrate is to ſave, to build up, and to defend; yet ſuch is the wickedneſs of mans heart, that many times when he hath power in his hand, *no man is ſure of his life.* He is ſo far from giving aſſurance, protection, and defence to all by his power, that his power is every mans danger. And hence *Solomon* concludes (*Prov.* 29. 2.) *When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoyce; but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn.* It cannot but be ſad with them who have nothing ſure to them; they muſt needs mourn who have neither eſtate, nor liberty, nor life ſure to them; they muſt needs mourn who ſee nothing ſo ſure to them as ſorrow. As to have our ſpiritual calling and eternal election made ſure to us, is the top of all joy to us in this world; ſo to have nothing in this world ſure to us, no not ſo much as our life (in the ſence explained) ſure to us, is the bottome and loweſt of all that ſorrow which concerns this preſent world. And this ſorrow the wicked mans exaltation brings upon all men; *he riſeth up, and no man is ſure of his life.* But as it followeth,

Verſ. 23. **Though it be given him to be in ſafety, wherein he truſteth, yet his eyes are upon their wayes.**

Si quis ei daret ut tutus agere poſſit ac nitatur illi, oculi ejus ſpeculantur vias ad nocendum. Tygur. *Solent boni dare impijs munera ut confidentèr habitent inter illos: at poſtea inſidiantur illis à quibus munera acceperunt;* Vatab.

In this *verſ.* 23. *Job* further deſcribeth the ſtate of wicked men in their proſperity: We may read the Text thus; *If any one giveth to be in ſafety*, &c. and ſo the ſence of this verſe falls in with the interpretation of the words laſt opened; *if any one giveth to be in ſafety*, that is, this man is ſo wicked, that though any poor man, or any who are in fear of him would beſtow large gifts upon him to bribe him for his favour, or ſtay his hand from oppreſſion, that they might live quietly by him, and ſo ſhould truſt upon him, that having received their money, ſurely he would let them alone, and they ſhould be quiet, *yet his eyes are upon their wayes*; that is, he is looking about him, to pick holes in their Coat, and find ſome advantage againſt them to bring them into trouble. For as his own Covenants cannot hold him, ſo neither can their courteſies, but *his eyes are* (ſeverely and critically) *upon their wayes*, to diſcover ſome fault, if any be, or if none be, yet to ſuggeſt ſomewhat as matter of accuſation, and ſo of proceeding againſt him. This is a truth, though a man buy his peace at a very dear rate of wicked men, yet there is no aſſurance to be had; bribing and ſubmiſſion, and flattery will not hold long; many examples have proved that theſe things have not ſecured good men from the oppreſſion of Tyrants, but they have quickly found out a way to ruine them thave been moſt liberal in rewards to gain their favour, and purchaſe their own peace. If any one give to be in ſafety, and truſteth he ſhall be ſafe, his truſt will fail him; *The more we truſt God, the ſafer we are, but there is no ſafety to be had by truſting ungodly men.* This is a good ſence, yet, rather according to our tranſlation, the words ſhew the condition of the wicked man himſelf in his proſperity.

Though it be given him to be in ſafety, wherein he reſteth, yet his eyes are upon his wayes.

That is, though it be given him of God, or though God give him this priviledge *to be in ſafety,* that is, though he riſe up, and put down all that oppoſe him; though God give him this ſafety, *yet* &c. The word which we tranſlate, *to be in ſafety,* ſignifies the moſt ſecure ſafety, or ſafety accompanied with the higheſt Confidence, that is, when there is not ſo much as the leaſt mixture of any fear, not ſo much as the leaſt Jealouſie or ſuſpicion of a change. *Babylon* is deſcribed preſuming upon ſuch a ſafety (*Iſa.* 47. 8.) *I ſit a Queen and am no widdow, and ſhall ſee no ſorrow*; and the wicked are ſpoken of as poſſeſſing and enjoying ſuch a ſafety (*Joh.* 21. 9.) *Their houſes are free from fear, neither is the rod of God upon them*; they are free not only from the rod of God, but from the fear of the rod; though the wicked man live thus confidently, and all things are with him according to his wiſh; though God ſeems *to crown him with loving kindneſs and tender mercies,* which are the proper portion of the Saints (*Pſal.* 103. 4.) though he give him his hearts deſire (which is a promiſe peculiar to the godly man (*Pſal* 37. 4.) though it be given him to be thus in ſafety, *wherein,* or *whereon he reſteth,* that is, though as he ſeeth no danger, though he ſuſpecteth none, but reſts in his ſtate, and ſaith, all's ſure, all's well; though the Condition of a wicked man be thus ſafe and proſperous and all this by the gift, of God, *yet,* &c.

לבטח *ad fiduciā, nomen Batach inſignē importat fiduciam & confidentiā ſine ullo pavore. Dat ei ſecuritatem*; i. e. *dat ei quod ipſum reddere poteſt ſecurum.*

Before I explicate *Jobs* exception upon this great gift, take two or three notes from the conſideration of the Author and nature of this gift, as alſo from this reſt upon it.

First, *To be in ſafety is a great outward mercy.*

We find it promiſed among many other ſpecial mercies to the Church in her beſt eſtate (*Ezek.* 34. 27.) *The Tree of the field ſhall yeild her fruit, and the Earth ſhall yield her encreaſe, and they ſhall be ſafe in their land.* And ſuch was their old promiſe (*Lev.* 21. 5.) *ye ſhall eat your bread to the full, and dwell in your land ſafely.* (Deut. 33. 23.) *Iſrael ſhall dwell in ſafety alone.* Though *Iſrael* be alone he ſhall dwell in ſafety, or *Iſrael* alone ſhall dwell in ſafety. He ſhall have ſafety when others are in danger. *Thou* (ſaith *David,* Pſal. 4. 3.) *makeſt me dwell in ſafety*; and ſaith the Lord concerning the poor man (*Pſal.* 12. 5.) *I will ſet him in ſafety from him that puffeth at him* (Prov. 21. 31.) *Safety is of the Lord.* Yea.

Secondly, *The ſafety even of a wicked man is of the Lord.*

It is given to him (by way of common providence) *to be in ſafety*; as God takes care of his own ſervants in mercy, ſo he takes care of a wicked man in wiſdome; he is the *preſerver both of man and beaſt*; he is the preſerver not only of good men, but of evil men, who are as beaſts. How bad ſoever any man is, his good, whatſoever he hath, is from the Lord. They may have ſafety, who ſhall never have ſalvation. And they who are near to eternal damnation, may be far from danger.

Thirdly, Whereas it is ſaid, *Though he be in ſafety, wherein he reſteth,*

Note, *Outward proſperity is the foundation of a wicked mans peace.*

God giveth him ſafety, and he makes his ſafety his God. He reſteth in the ſafety which God giveth him, not in God who giveth him ſafety. Carnal men looſe God in the creature; and whereas they ſhould truſt in God, becauſe he ſendeth them good things, they truſt upon the good things which God ſendeth. In whatſoever (beſides God) we place our truſt, that we put in the place of God. *David* was much overſhot in this point (*Pſal.* 30. 6.) *In my proſperity I ſaid I ſhall never be moved.* God made *David* proſper, and *David* reſted in his proſperity. When *David* was right, he ſaid in his adverſity (and every godly man may ſay in his deepeſt adverſity) *I ſhall never be moved.* God is as ſtrong to us in our greateſt weakneſs as when he makes our mountain ſtrongeſt; and they who think themſelves more immoveable when their mountain is ſtrong, then when it is weak, reſt in their mountain, not in God. Now if *David* (a man after Gods own heart) ſet or reſted his heart ſo much upon his mountain (that is, his worldly proſperity) becauſe it was ſtrong, how much more may carnal men grow into an admiration of their Earthly mountains, and reſt under their ſhadow and ſhelter, as if they could never be moved? worldly men do this ſo much that this is made the deſcription of worldly men (*Pſal.* 49. 6.) *They that reſt in their wealth, and boaſt themſelves in the multitude of their riches.* Who theſe are is not expreſſed, as if every one muſt needs know what ſort of men they are who truſt in their wealth; that is, who ſee all well with them, and who ſay all ſhall be well with them, becauſe of the multitude of their riches. For that is properly to truſt in riches, when a man ſaith to himſelf (as the rich man ſaid, *Luk.* 12. 19.) *Soul, take thine eaſe; thou haſt much goods laid up for many years, Eat and Drink, and be merry.* *Job* had another ſpirit in the midſt of his proſperity (*Ch.* 3. 26.) *I was not in ſafety, neither had I reſt,* &c. He ſpake there of his Condition before he was in trouble, when he had ſome thouſands of ſheep, ſome hundreds of Oxen, with a multitude of Camels and Aſſes, when he had many Sons and Daughters, with Servants in great number; when it was thus with him, when no Cloud had in the leaſt darkned his day, nor ſo much as a grain of gall or wormwood embittered his cup, when he was thus ſafe, yet he ſaid, I was not in ſafety. When the Devil ſaid he was ſo ſafe that he could not touch him, *Thou haſt made an hedg about him,* yet he ſaid, *I was not in ſafety, neither had I reſt,* that is, he looked upon his hedg as upon that which might quickly be broken thorough, and upon his mountain, as that which might not only be quickly moved, but quite removed; he ſaw all he had ſhaking and tottering, and ſo could not have any reſt in any thing which he had; he had reſt in oppoſition to murmuring and diſcontent about the things of this world, but he was reſtleſs in oppoſition to confiding in and ſatisfaction with the things of the world. In this reſpect his very ſafety was unſafe, and his reſt, reſtleſs to him. Only the carnal man, when God giveth him to be in ſafety, reſteth in it; he ſits down and concludeth that he hath enough at preſent, and that his Enough will laſt for ever; he reſteth in his ſafety, not only as being out of danger, but above it. *Job* having thus ſet forth the outward ſtate of the wicked man, *he is in ſafety,* as alſo the ſtate of his inward man, *he reſteth in it*; ſheweth us in the laſt place and cloſe of the verſe, what God is doing towards him, while he is doing thus, or notwithſtanding he doth thus,

Yet his eyes are upon their wayes.

Some read, *though his eyes are upon their wayes,* and give the ſence thus, *though God ſeeth all their wickedneſs, yet he lets them proceed and proſper*; that's a truth; God doth not let wicked men proſper, becauſe he doth not know how wicked they are, or what wickedneſs they do; he knows well enough, how ill they are, and what evil they do, his eyes are upon their wayes, while they abuſe his mercies, and (in ſtead of reſting in him who gives them ſafety) reſt in the ſafety which he hath given them.

Secondly, Others read thus, *and his eyes are upon their wayes*; as if the words were a further deſcription of the wicked mans outward proſperity, and a deſcription of it to ſuch a height, as if the eyes of God were fixed and faſtned upon his wayes, to take care of him, and to cauſe him to proſper in them, as if the eyes of God did drop bleſſings upon him, and guide him every day ſucceſsfully in all his undertakings. The eye of God upon a place or perſon implyeth (in Scripture language) his preſence with them for good. (*Deut.* 11. 12.) *The land whither thou goeſt to poſſeſs it, is not like* Egypt, &c. *but it is a land which the Lord thy God careth for, the eyes of the Lord thy God are alwayes upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year*; as if he had ſaid, the Lord is unceſſantly watchful over it, both to prevent evil, and to beſtow good upon it. Read the ſame ſence of the phraſe (*Ezra* 5. 5. *Pſal.* 33. 18. *Pſal.* 34. 15.) And uſually in Scripture when the eye of God is ſaid to be upon any, it is not taken

Quaſi intentis in ipſos dei ipſius oculis ut eis omnia ex ipſorum animi ſententia ſuccederent. Bez. *Plus eſt quod probatur aſpectu quam quod ſermone laudatur.* Ambroſ.

taken in an evil ſenſe unleſs ſo expreſt; as (*Amos* 9.4.) *mine eyes ſhall be upon them for evil, and not for good.* So that while *Job* ſaith, *and his eyes are upon their wayes,* the words, according to this reading, continue, if not heighten the former ſence, ſhewing further the outward proſperity of evil men by the ſeeming favour of God to them.

But I rather cloſe with our reading, *yet his eyes are upon their wayes*; as if he had ſaid; *do not think that God taketh no notice of their ſinful courſes, becauſe he gives them to be in ſafety, and in ſuch ſafety, that they reſt and truſt upon it, for I tell you the eyes of God are upon their wayes.*

Hence Obſerve, *God alwayes ſeeth the wayes of wicked men, or he ſeeth wicked men in all their wayes.*

It is no argument that God neglecteth the government of the world, becauſe wicked men are in ſafety; he fully conſidereth their wayes, who either through ignorance are wandring from, or, through wilfulneſs, turning out of his wayes.

Hic apponitur conniventiæ & diſſimulationi. Coc.

And the eyes of God are upon the wayes of ſuch men, not only to ſee which way, or whither they are going (*Job* 34.21.) but to puniſh them for their going wrong. God will not connive at, nor diſſemble what he ſeeth, when he ſeeth what is unfit. (*Hab.* 3:6.) *He ſtood and meaſured the Earth, he beheld and drove aſunder the Nations*; that is, he divided and brake thoſe Nations in whom he beheld iniquity. (*Zach.* 9.8.) *And no oppreſſour ſhall paſs through them any more, for now I have ſeen with my eyes,* that is, I have exactly ſeen, I have taken perfect notice of them and their oppreſſours, and I will in juſtice ſo oppreſs their unjuſt oppreſſors, that they ſhall be rid of them for ever, *no oppreſſour ſhall paſs through them any more.* We may make a threefold difference about the eye of God upon the perſons or wayes of men.

Firſt, The eye of God is upon the wayes of men, to obſerve what they do, his eye diſtinguiſheth between good and evil, and diſcerneth, as much as beholdeth what is done; his ſeeing the wayes of men is a clear underſtanding of them.

Secondly, The eye of God is upon the wayes of men to proſper and bleſs them in what they do well. The eye of God upon the righteous implyeth, yea and conveigheth mercy to the righteous.

Thirdly, The eye of God is upon the wayes of men, to puniſh and chaſten them for what they do amiſs. God hath a vindictive or a revenging eye, as well as an intuitive or a beholding eye. This eye of God is upon all the wayes of wicked men, though for a time he giveth them to be in ſafety, wherein they reſt. And becauſe God ſeeth the wayes both of the righteous and the wicked, therefore God commanded us to *ſay to the righteous it ſhall be well with them, for they ſhall eat the fruit of their doings. Wo to the wicked, it ſhall be ill with him, for the reward of his hands ſhall be given him.* Every man ſhall receive from the hand of God, according to what God hath ſeen with his eye.

Laſtly, We may take theſe words as an admiring Concluſion, like that (*verſ.* 12.) *yet God layeth not folly to them.* They do fooliſhly, yet God doth not deal with them according to their folly: ſo here, they do wickedly, *yet his eyes are upon their wayes.* As if he had ſaid, it is a wonderful thing, even matter of aſtoniſhment, that God who ſo exactly ſeeth and knoweth the wayes of wicked men, ſhould ſuffer them to be an hour in ſafety. Is it not a wonder that God ſhould ſuffer them to live long and ſafely, ſinning, who deſerve to dye for every ſin? As all wicked men who dye impenitently dye in their ſins, ſo God ſuffers many wicked men to ſin till they dye; he ſeeth their wayes and will not ſtop them till they have run their full courſe. Here is the patience and long ſuffering of God. Men ſin to a wonder, when they go on in ſin after many ſmitings; as the Lord complains by this Prophet (*Amos.* 4.) *I ſmote them with the peſtilence, and with the ſword,* &c. *yet have they not returned unto me, ſaith the Lord.* Now as it aggravates mans ſin, to ſin under wrath and ſmitings, ſo it hightens the goodneſs and patience of God to admiration, that he doth not ſmite men in their ſin, ſeeing he beholds them in their ſin. *His eyes are upon their wayes to behold every ſin,* and every ſin is not only diſpleaſing but burdenſome and grievous to him. What a miracle of patience doth this diſcover in God? The Prophet *Habakkuk* moves the Lord to revenge, and wonders how he could hold his hand from puniſhing, while his eye beheld that done which was ſo diſpleaſing. (*Hab.* 1.12,13.) *Art not thou from everlaſting O Lord my God, mine holy One? we ſhall not dye: thou haſt ordained them for Judgment, and O God thou haſt ſtabliſhed them for Correction. Thou art of purer eyes then to behold evil, and canſt not look on iniquity. Wherefore lookeſt thou on them that deal treacherouſly; and holdeſt thy tongue, when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous then he?* As if he had ſaid, Lord, I know thou beholdeſt all the evil in the world, and art of purer eyes then to behold it with any delight or approbation. Now ſeeing it is ſo, *why then doeſt thou look on them that deal treacherouſly?* In the former part of the verſe he ſaid, *thou canſt not look on iniquity*; and in the latter he ſaith, *why doeſt thou look on them that deal treacherouſly?* There is a twofold look of God; firſt, (as was toucht before) a look of approbation; ſecondly, a look of patience. And ſo the meaning of the Prophet is, ſeeing, O Lord, thou canſt not look upon ſin approvingly, why doeſt thou look upon it patiently? *And holdeſt thy tongue when the wicked devour the righteous?* As if he had ſaid, how is it (Lord) that thou doeſt not break forth into the ſevereſt rebukes againſt them? How is it that they have not ſo much (to appearance) as a frown or an ill word from thee, who have deſerved blows and utter breakings? Indeed if God had but the patience of all Creatures, had he but the patience of men and Angels, the ſin of man would ſpend it out in one day: God could not hold his tongue nor his hand an hour, conſidering that he clearly diſcerneth all the wickedneſs that is in the wayes of men, and that every the leaſt unevenneſs as well as wickedneſs is extreamly diſpleaſing to him, were not his patience Infinite; God could not hold, but deſtroy all the wicked of the world, or all that world which lyeth in wickedneſs, were it not that he is reſolved to magnifie his patience. And though for reaſons known to himſelf, he bears with thoſe that are burdenſome to him very long, not only many dayes but years, yet the time is at hand when he will bring them to Judgment, and Judge them according to thoſe wayes upon which his eyes have been. *Then the wicked ſhall find that as the eyes of God have been upon all their wayes, ſo that he hath not at all, or not in the leaſt, been pleaſed with any of them.*

VERS. 24, 25.

They are exalted for a little while, but are gone, and brought low, they are taken out of the way as all other, and cut off as the tops of the eares of corne.

And if it be not ſo now, who will make me a lyer, and make my ſpeech nothing worth.

JOB ſtill proceedeth to deſcribe, and here concludeth his deſcription, of the ſtate of wicked men; he hath (as hath been ſhewed in the expoſition of the former part of the Chapter) drawn the blackeſt character of their wickedneſs, as alſo given the faireſt proſpect of their outward happineſs; they ſin and proſper, they ſin and are ſafe, they have much good while they do much evil.

This Text ſpeaks again of their proſperity, yet with a diminution, *they are exalted* (but it is only) *for a little while, for they are gone and brought low, they are taken out of the way, as all others, and cut off as the tops of the eares of Corn.*

There are two opinions concerning the general ſcope of theſe words.

Firſt, Some conceive that *Job's* aim is to ſhew, that both in life, and death, wicked men fare like other men; *They are exalted for a little while, as all others are; they are gone, brought low, and taken out of the way as all others are.*

Yet, Secondly, I rather incline that he here intends to ſet forth the miſerable concluſion of wicked men, not only as they are cut off from worldly enjoyments, as all men ſooner or later are, but as they are cut off from worldly enjoyments in a way which is not common to other men, or which is not the common way of man. And the reaſon why I rather incline to this as *Job's* ſcope, is, becauſe the various expreſſions of the ſame thing, *they are gone, they are brought low, they are taken out of the way, they are cut off* (theſe various expreſſions, I ſay) ſeem to carry ſomewhat more then the remove of men out of the world, by the ordinary way of dying, or then by a natural death.

Verſ. 24. **They are exalted for a little while, but are gone.**

They, that is, the wicked, the Adulterer, the Thief, the Oppreſſour (ſuch he had before deſcribed) *are exalted*; they grow great, and ſpread far, they grow high, or are advanced to high places. The original word which we render, *to be exalted*, ſignifies to be lifted up, or any thing that is lifted up in height, or greatneſs; and hereupon ſome Criticks tells us that the Great City *Rome* had her name from this Hebrew root; *Rome*, as all (who know any thing of antiquity) know, is a City that hath been exalted over the Nations, a City great in ſtrength, and mighty in power; *Rome* is as much as, *height, or exaltation*; as *Abraham* is a *high father*, an *exalted father*.

רמם *levavit, exaltavit, exaltatus fuit; latini Romã hac originatione decorare geſtiunt ob magnitudinem.*

They are exalted.] The word may be applyed to a twofold exaltation, firſt, an inward exaltation by pride; ſome riſe within, faſter then they riſe without, yea there are ſome that riſe very high within, when they are caſt very *low without*; they exalt and lift up themſelves in pride of ſpirit, though they are caſt down in ſtate. The word is often applyed to note pride or haughtineſs (*Micah* 2. 3.) *Thus ſaith the Lord, behold againſt this family do I deviſe an evil, from which ye ſhall not remove your necks, neither ſhall ye go haughtily.* The word is, *ye ſhall not go in your height*, in your altitudes, as ye have done, the caſe ſhall be altered with you, and the Tables turned; *for this is an evil time*, that is, an evil time to you, a time of calling you to an account about, and of puniſhing you for all your wickedneſs, and eſpecially for your pride. As ye have made it an evil time by your ſin, ſo ye ſhall find it to be an evil time to and by your ſmart. And this height of ſpirit often breaks forth, and is ſignified in height of action, or in haughty poſtures, *the liſting up of the head, the ſtretching out of the neck*: thus (Iſa. 7. 11.) *the lofty looks of man ſhall be humbled.* The heart looks out at the eye, the lofty heart makes a lofty look; according to the frame of the heart, is the caſt of the eye; the eye is not proud; but as it is inſtructed, and tutoured by the heart, ſo it acts proudly, and looks haughtily. And thus they alwayes act, who though they are not exalted, yet have a mind to exalt themſelves, who when others caſt no honour upon them, yet they will take it, and reach after it. Thus the word is applicable to internal ſelf-exaltation, as well as to external exaltation, or exaltation by others. For as many are outwardly humbled, who are not at all humble; and as ſome are inwardly humbled, who are not at all outwardly humbled, (they have an humble lowly frame of heart, and are active in humbling of themſelves) ſo many are inwardly exalted, who never had nor deſerved, in the leaſt, any outward exaltation. They are active to exalt themſelves, whom no man beſides themſelves, thinks worthy to be exalted. The men of whom *Job* ſpeaks were doubtleſs forward enough to exalt themſelves, yet

I underſtand him rather ſpeaking of their outward exaltation, for *Job* is here deſcribing the proſperity of wicked men, not their pride. Though we know, proſperity is the occaſion of pride, and men uſually grow high minded, when they grow high in the world. As by pride cometh contention, ſo by exaltation cometh pride.

They are exalted.] That is, they are great, and rich, they are promoted to honour, and ſet uppermoſt among men.

For a little while.] The Orignal in ſtrictneſs is only thus; *they are exalted a little.* But the word is taken two wayes in Scripture.

Firſt, For *little in degree*, or *for a little deale* (as we ſay) that is, for a thing that is little (*Pſal.* 39. 16.) *a little that a righteous man hath, is better then the riches of many wicked.* His morſel is better then the others feaſt, his penny is better then the wicked mans pound. Thus *Jonathan* ſpake (1 *Sam.* 14. 29.) when *Saul* had given that ſevere charge that no man ſhall eat till the Sun went down, *my father hath troubled the land; ſee I pray you how my eyes are inlightened, becauſe I taſted a little of this honey*; as if he had ſaid, I did not eat much, not ſo much as to delight my ſelf, much leſs ſo much as to glut my ſelf, I did eat but a drop or two, and mine eyes are wonderfully inlightened, that is, my ſpirits are much refreſhed and cheared; for naturally when a man is faint, his eye ſight fails.

Secondly, For a *little in time*, or for a ſhort ſpace of time (*Pſal.* 37. 10.) *For yet a little while and the wicked ſhall not be, yea, thou ſhalt diligently conſider his place, and he ſhall not be*, that is, he ſhall not be in power, he ſhall not flouriſh in worldly pomp many dayes. The birth of his proſperity ſhall not be far in time from the death of it, nor the grave of all his glory from the cradle of it. So (*Pſal.* 8. 5.) *Thou haſt made him a little lower then the Angels*; which propheſie of Chriſt is cited (*Heb.* 2. 7.) Now Chriſt was not made a little lower then the Angels in degree, for he was the Lord of the Angels, and when God brought him *his firſt begotten into the world, he ſaid, and let all the Angels of God worſhip him.* But Chriſt was made lower then the Angels for a little time; and ſo we put in the Margin, *thou madeſt him a little while inferiour to the Angels.* Namely, for the while or time when he was abaſed by Death and lay in the grave; yet we may ſay alſo that Chriſt was made *a little lower then the Angels* in his taking upon him our nature; the Angelical nature being higher then the humane, as conſidered in it ſelf. We may expound the word here in either ſence, *they are exalted a little*, that is, firſt, they have a little exaltation; ſecondly, how great ſoever we may conceive their exaltation to be, yet they are exalted but for a little while or time. We reſtrain the word to this laſt ſence, as referring to the ſpace of time, wherein the wicked are aloft, *they are exalted for a little while.*

Hence Obſerve, *The exaltation of wicked men ſhall not continue.*

They may be high built, but they have not a ſure foundation; they may float aloft, but they have no conſiſtence below, they are as vapours riſing from the Earth, or as Meteors hanging in the Aire, both which are lifted up only for a little while, and are gone. *Athanaſius* ſaid concerning the wrathful Reign of *Julian the Apoſtate, let us be quiet, it is a little Cloud which will ſoon paſs away.* The wicked mans civil honour is but *a vapour* (as the Apoſtle *James* ſpeaks of the natural life of every man) *that appeareth for a little time, and then vaniſheth away.* The exaltation of wicked men, is but for a little while, for, firſt, their exaltation is uſually but for a part of their lives, and that the leſſer part; and that cannot (upon any reckoning) be more then a little while. Secondly, their longeſt and utmoſt exaltation can be but for their lives, and the whole life of man is but a little while. *David* taking the exacteſt meaſure of his life, ſaith, *behold, thou haſt made my dayes as an hand breadth, and mine age is nothing before thee* (Pſal. 39. 5.) The whole life of man is very ſhort, and the preferment or exaltation of wicked men is either much ſhorter then their lives, or their lives are much ſhortned by their exaltation. They act their power beyond the bounds of Juſtice, and ſo forfeit their lives, before they come near the bounds of nature. Now if life laſt but a little, and they are exalted but a little while of their lives, or if their lives be cut off within a while after they are exalted, then they have but little exaltation. Many ſpend a great part of their life before they arrive at exaltation or preferment in this world, and there are many who out-live their own exaltation, and there are not a few who looſe their lives by the abuſe of their exaltation. The worldly enjoyments of all men are ſhort, and evil mens injoyments are ſhorteſt. Saints ſhall have enjoyments hereafter commenſurate with eternity; but the beſt of Saints here, have neither any leaſe of their lives, nor of their enjoyments. And if it be ſo with the beſt of men, then much more with the worſt of men, who as they are wrapt up in the common condition of humane frailty, with all other men, ſo they lye under ſome peculiar curſes or threatnings which other men do not. And how ſoon may a curſe caſt thoſe down who are moſt highly exalted, and blaſt and wither all their beauty and bravery, whoſe branches are greeneſt, and whoſe faces ſhine brighteſt with Earthly ſplendour.

Secondly, Foraſmuch as the word ſignifieth a little thing, as well as a little time; a little deale, as well as a little while; a thing which in regard of the ſmalneſs of it, is inconſiderable,

ſiderable as well as that which in regard of the weakneſs of it, is not durable.

Obſerve, *The greateſt exaltation that any man can have in the things of this world is but a little exaltation.*

That man is but little exalted, how much ſoever he is exalted, who is only exalted in the things of this world: That which is but little in it ſelf cannot make us very great, though we ſhould have it all as ours, or in our poſſeſſion. How little a thing is all this world, and how little part hath any one of this little? The whole world is but little, what then is a little part of it? Which yet is all that falls to the ſhare of the greateſt men in the world. Philoſophers ſay, that the whole body of the Earth and Sea together, is but as a point or prick with a pen compared to the Heavens; and yet there are very few of the great men of the earth, who poſſeſs ſo much as a mathematical point or prick with a pen in the body of the earth. We may ſay, that the day of the greateſt man in the world, is but a *day of ſmall things*. The Prophet to encourage the mean beginnings of *Sions* deliverance (*Zech.* 4. 10.) ſaid, *Who hath deſpiſed the day of ſmall things?* As if he had ſaid, I know many do it, ſome hoping and others fearing that theſe ſmall beginnings will have ſmaller endings, or end in nothing, but in the joy of the enemies, and in the ſorrow and diſappointment of the friends of *Sion*: But I ſay unto you, take heed of deſpiſing *the day of ſmall things*, that is, the leaſt appearances of deliverance and ſalvation to *Sion*. Now as we are not to deſpiſe the works of God, becauſe they are ſmall; ſo we have no reaſon to be proud of, but even to deſpiſe the things of the world, for they are ſmall. Men have great thoughts and make much ado about ſmall things, when they have to do with the greateſt things on this ſide Heaven. *The greateſt things that continue only for a little while, are but little worth; then how little worth are thoſe things, which beſides that they continue but a little while, are themſelves but little?* Though wicked men are exalted, yet no man hath cauſe to be troubled at it, or envy them: They are not bleſſed becauſe exalted, for they are exalted but a little, and that only for a little while. It ſhould not be much to us what any man is as to worldly enjoyments, no nor what our ſelves are as to thoſe enjoyments, ſeeing whatſoever others are, or whatſoever we are in that capacity, is but for a little while. The Apoſtle ſaith (2 *Cor.* 4. 18.) *We look not at the things which are ſeen, but at the things which are not ſeen*; that is, we make not the things of the world our ſcope, but the things which lye beyond this world, which are ſeen by faith only: And the reaſon why he looked not at theſe things which are ſeen, was, becauſe the things that are ſeen are temporal; *Thoſe things which are ſeen, will not be long ſeen*; they are but for a while, and therefore not to be much looked after. *The things which are not ſeen ſhall be ſeen for ever*; they are eternal, and therefore moſt worthy to be looked after. The world hath beauty and glory in it, but this ſtains the beauty of all earthly glory, that it may be ſo quickly ſtained. The evils and troubles of this world ſhould not much trouble us, nor the afflictions of this preſent world much afflict us, becauſe they are but for a while; ſuppoſe a godly man be caſt down and laid low in reference to the world, he is laid low but for a while, therefore no great matter to him, he hath no great reaſon to be troubled at it; as the Apoſtle argueth in the ſame Chapter (*ver.* 16.) *For this cauſe we faint not, for our light afflictions which are but for a moment*, &c. Therefore he calls them light, how great and how heavy ſoever in their own nature, though they were as heavy as a mountain, he calls them light, becauſe as to their duration they were but for a moment. We ſay, A light thing carried a great way or a great while becometh heavy: He that puts only a pound-ſtone in his pocket, will be very ſenſible of and much burdened with the weight of it, before he comes to the end of a long journey; whereas a great weight is not much burdenſome, if it be not much born. Now as worldly evils and troubles are light, becauſe but ſhort; ſo are worldly comforts and honours, eſpecially the worldly comforts and honours of wicked men; of whom it is expreſly ſaid, not only by way of aſſertion (in which ſence it may be ſaid of all men) but alſo by way of commination, *They are exalted for a little while.* Again, as the profeſſion of hypocrites hath a kind of appearing godlineſs and beauty, but it is little worth, or it is of no worth, becauſe they endure but for a little while, they are but Tempories, as the word is in the Parable of the Sower. Or as the Lord complaineth by his Prophet (*Hoſ.* 6. 4.) O Ephraim, *what ſhall I do unto thee?* O Judah, *what ſhall I do unto thee? for your goodneſs is as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away.* Goodneſs it ſelf is ſcarce good, goodneſs is little worth, if it be but as a morning cloud, if it be but as the dew that goeth away when the heat of the Sun cometh. The worth and glory of true grace ſtands in this, that it ſtands and endures for ever; let the world turn which way it will, true grace ſtands its ground and turns not away. Now if all the goodneſs and pretended holineſs of Hypocrites and Formaliſts be nothing worth, becauſe it is (like a cloud, or a dew) only for a little while; how little worth is the exaltation of wicked men, which goeth away, and is as quickly gone, as a cloud is ſcattered and blown away by the wind, or a dew exhaled by the riſing Sun. We may ſay of all the glory of the wicked, as the ſame Prophet *Hoſea* ſaith of *Ephraim* (Chap. 9. 11.) *As for* Ephraim, *their glory ſhall flee away like a bird from the birth, and from the womb, and from the conception*; that is, it ſhall quickly depart: By *their glory*, ſome underſtand their Children: As if he had ſaid, *Their Children ſhall flee from the birth*; that is, if born alive they ſhall dye as ſoon as born; *Their Children ſhall flee from the womb*; that is, they ſhall not be born alive, they ſhall be abortive; *Their Children ſhall flee from the conception*; that is, they ſhall not be ſo much as conceived. We may read the Prophet backward, and beginning with the laſt firſt, ſay, *Their glory*, that is, their Children, or whatſoever elſe they glory in and make their glory, *ſhall flee from conception*; that is, it ſhall not be conceived, or have any being at all; and if conceived, and ſo have a being, yet it *ſhall flee from the womb*; that is, it ſhall never come to a compleat being, but ſhall be marr'd in the making; or if it be born, and ſo have a perfect being, yet *it ſhall flee from the birth*; that is, it ſhall dye as ſoon as born; and come to its grave inſtead of, or as ſoon as to a cradle. Thus he deſcribes the evil that ſhall come upon all their glory, it ſhall ſuddenly fly away; and this ſpoils the beauty of all that earthly glory, with which the wicked ſhine, *They are exalted for a little while.* This ſudden vaniſhing of the wicked mans glory is further deſcribed in four expreſſions: Firſt, *They are gone:* Secondly, *Brought low:* Thirdly, *They are taken out of the way:* Fourthly, *They are cut off as the tops of the ears of Corn.*

Firſt, *They are gone:* The Hebrew is, *They are not*: This kind of ſpeaking is uſed to ſignifie a total or utter periſhing. They are ſo gone, as if they had loſt not only their exiſtence but their eſſence. The Original Text is ſingular, *They are exalted, and he is not*, or, *he is not*; he doth not ſay, *they not*, but *he not*: *Job* changeth the number from *They* to *He*, to ſignifie that *every one of them is not*, or *that, not any one of them is.* God will deal thus with every ſingle man of them, *he is not*; we ſay, *They are gone*; they that go out of one condition into another, are not as they were; and as to their former ſtate, they are not at all. They who go from place to place, from ſtate to ſtate, though from a ſtate of life to a ſtate of death, have a being, and therefore we tranſlate well, *not to be*, by, *to be gone.* Some read the words thus, *They are exalted, and within a little while they are not*; we ſay, *They are exalted a little while, and are gone*, or, *are not.* The meaning of both readings is the ſame. To ſay, *They are exalted for a little while, and are gone*, is as much as, and no more then to ſay, *They are exalted, and within a little while are gone.* Thus *David* ſpake from his own experience concerning the proſperity of wicked men (*Pſal.* 37. 35.) *I have ſeen the wicked in great power, and ſpreading himſelf like a green bay-tree, yet he paſſed away; and loe he was not; yea, I ſought him, but he could not be found. David's* experience falls in fully with *Job's* aſſertion, *They are exalted for a little while, and are gone, or are not.*

Et non ipſe. *Heb.* i. e. *non ullus ipſorũ hac dicendi formula ſolent Hebræi ſignificare, quod omnino deletur ut perit.* Pined. *Mutat pluralem in ſingularem ut ſignificet quemlibet eorum interire.* Druſ. *Pronomen ſingulare cum verbo plurali notat diſtributionem in ſingulo, vel collectionem ſingulorum:* Piſc.

Hence Note, *The worldly felicity or exaltation of a wicked man, or a wicked man in his worldly felicity and exaltation, ſhall be as if he had never been.*

Worldly men and worldly things are ſcarce any thing while they are ſeen, and therefore when once they diſappear and are not ſeen it all, it may well be ſaid, They are not at all. God who is altogether inviſible, is *an eternal being, from everlaſting to everlaſting he is God* (Pſal. 90. 2.) But all thoſe things which are altogether viſible, are altogether vaniſhing; they are going from us, while they are with us; and when they are gone, they are as if they had never been with us. And as it is with worldly things, ſo with worldly perſons, when they are gone, they are not, as to any enjoyment, though they ſhall ever be as to puniſhment. *They are exalted for a little while, but are gone,*

And brought low.

That is the ſecond ſtep: Some might ſay, poſſibly they are gone to a better eſtate then before; they were high before, now higher; ſome remove from greatneſs to greatneſs; from dignity to dignity; therefore *Job* explaineth his meaning, *They are gone,*

And brought low.

Or degraded from their high places; they are brought low by diſgrace, or into diſgrace; they are brought low by poverty, or into the loweſt depth of poverty. In whatſoever they were exalted, they are now made low. Some expound it of death; *They are brought low*; that is, down to the grave, and that is low indeed. The grave is called the lower part of the earth; and yet the wicked ſhall be brought lower then the grave, even as low as hell, or as the *loweſt hell*, as *Moſes* ſpeaks (*Deut.* 32.22.) The Apoſtle *James* ſaith (Chap. 1. 9, 10.) *Let the Brother of low degree rejoyce, in that he is exalted; but the rich, in that he is made low:* A poor Brother, or a Brother of low degree ſeems to be far from exaltation; yet he hath cauſe to rejoyce in that he is exalted, and he is doubly exalted: Firſt, As he is a Brother to the Saints, and a Member of Chriſt: Secondly, As he is a ſufferer, or afflicted for Chriſt. Every godly man of the loweſt degree is exalted in one of theſe wayes, and many of them in both; and any man hath cauſe to rejoyce in theſe ſpiritual honours and exaltations, how low ſoever he is in temporals. But how is the rich, or the Brother of high degree made low? And why ſhould he rejoyce in that he is made low? For though there are readings of the Text by a ſupply of other words, yet I judge that to be the beſt: But why ſhould *he rejoyce in that he is made low?* As the poor mans exaltation before ſpoken of is ſpiritual; ſo alſo is the rich mans humiliation. The rich man hath great cauſe to rejoyce when he is ſpiritually humbled, and made low in his own eyes, when he is higheſt in the eye of the world. To be made low in our own eyes, or in the ſence of our own ſinfulneſs while we are rich and outwardly exalted, is a great work of Grace; but to be brought low by the hand of God, while we are high and exalted in the eyes of men, and in our own eyes, is the puniſhment of ſin. Godly great men are made low in their own thoughts by Grace; wicked men, though never ſo great, ſhall be brought low in the ſight of others for their ſin. *They are exalted for a little while, but are gone, and brought low.*

Hence Note, Firſt, *As the worldly eſtates of all men, ſo moſt of all the eſtates of worldly men are ſubject to changes.*

Now they are exalted and lifted up, within a while they are depreſſed and caſt down. The providences of God ring the changes of mens eſtates all the world over. As the eſtates and conditions of ſeveral men differ at the ſame time; ſome men are honourable, others are baſe; ſome men are rich, others are poor; ſome are exalted, others are caſt down; ſo the eſtates and conditions of the ſame men differ as much at ſeveral times; they who were honourable are abaſed; the rich become poor, and the men of exaltation are brought low. Thus the hills are turned into valleys, and the higheſt mountains, that is, men as high and ſtrong as mountains (as we read in the Prophecy of *Zechary* (Chap 4. 7.) become plains. Our ſpiritual eſtate is like Mount *Sion*, which ſhall never be moved, 'tis founded upon a rock that can never be ſhaken: But Temporal things are like a wheel which moves continually, and that ſpoke which is now aloft (as that captive King ſaid to his Conqueror) is quickly turned to the ground, *and brought low.* The Apoſtle gives an excellent caution in reference to our ſpiritual eſtate (1 *Cor.* 10. 12.) *Let him that thinketh he ſtandeth take heed leſt he fall.* And I may ſay in reference to any mans temporal eſtate, he that is ſureſt of his ſtanding, may fail notwithſtanding all his heed. And if any one (as the Prophet once queſtioned, *By whom ſhall* Jacob *ariſe, for he is ſmall?*) ſhould queſtion, By whom ſhall wicked men be brought low, ſeeing they are ſo highly exalted? It muſt be anſwered, That as *Jacob* riſeth when he is fallen, ſo the wicked fall when they are riſen, by the hand or power of God. He bringeth them low by his appointment, and he bringeth them low by his power (*Pſal.* 75. 7.) *God is the Judge, he putteth down one and ſetteth up another:* And he it is that ſetteth up and putteth down the ſame man. *They are gone, and brought low.*

They are taken out of the way as all others.

The original word ſignifies to narrow, contract, or ſhut up; as alſo to haſten, extend, and ſhoot forth; and the reaſon is, becauſe by contracting, or drawing any thing back, we ſhoot it forward with more force and ſpeed. We ſee how Snakes and other creeping things contract, and gather themſelves up, and then caſt themſelves forward with much advantage. Both ſignifications of the word are made uſe of in this place by Interpreters. Some rendring, *They ſhall be ſhut up, they are brought low, and ſhut up*; they (like priſoners) are under reſtraint, or they are reſtrained in priſon. They are apt to abuſe their liberty and their power, to the wrong of others, and therefore they are cut ſhort and kept in; not only are their horns broken, their claws cut, and their nails pared, but themſelves are ſhut up like beaſts, which hurt him that is next whoſoever it is. It is reaſon they ſhould be in ſafe cuſtody, who being at liberty no man is in ſafety.

קפץ *Contraxit continuit, othuravit, in piet, feſtinavit ire & è contrario extendere ſe, tranſilire. Claudentur ſicut omnes.* Pagn. Reg.

Mr. *Broughton* gives a ſence of the word, which imports not their reſtraint, but their flight, *Every one are made to skip away:* They ſhall skip or leap out of their places, or if they were forced or frighted, as one of the Rabbins tranſlates it. The meaning of both rendrings meets in the ſame thing; for whether a man be ſhut up in priſon, or forced to run and hide himſelf to avoid reſtraint and impriſonment, his condition is much alike. By the former he is a priſoner, and by the latter he hath loſt his liberty. The difference is not great, whether a man be where he would not, or dares not be where he would. *They are ſhut up*, or, *they are made to run away.* Both which readings comply fairly enough with ours, *They are taken out of the way.* For whether a man be carried away by force, or flyeth for fear, *He is taken out of the way.*

Hence Note, *God doth remove, and take wicked men out of their place when they are in their higheſt exaltation.*

High eſtates have no ſecurity in them, yea, they are leſs ſecure then the loweſt eſtate; and that not only becauſe they are more ſubject to the envy of men, but becauſe they who are in high places make themſelves more lyable to the wrath of God. They uſe their power to the caſting down and taking away of the innocent; and therefore God is engaged to take them away. For, as God often takes his own people *out of harms way: ſo he takes the wicked quite away, that they may do no more harm. The righteous periſh* (that is, dye, ſaith the Prophet) *and no man layeth it to heart, and merciful men are taken away*; they are taken away upon that account which few conſider, *even from the evil to come* (Iſa. 57. 1, 2.) God takes away the righteous, leſt they ſhould ſuffer evil; and he takes away the wicked, leſt they ſhould continue to do more evil. The wicked would know no bounds if left to themſelves, and let alone; therefore God bounds them and ſaith (as the Apoſtle propheſied of ſuch evil doers, 2 *Tim.* 3. 9.) *They ſhall proceed no further, for their folly ſhall be made manifeſt to all men*; they ſhall be taken out of the way. God will give them a ſtop; 'tis a form of ſpeech like that which the Apoſtle uſeth (2 *Theſ.* 2. 7.) *The myſtery of iniquity doth already work, only he who now letteth, will let, till he be taken out of the way*; there was a rub, a Remora in the way of the man of ſin, that he could not do what he would: The power of the *Roman* Empire ſtood in his way, and till that was taken out of the way, he could do no great feats, he could not appear in his colours. Now as God took away the power of the *Roman* Empire, as to that height wherein it had formerly been exerciſed, that the man of ſin might have a liberty to do evil and fill up the meaſure of his iniquity; ſo God takes away many wicked men, leſt they ſhould do more evil, and even exceed the meaſure of their iniquity. *They are taken out of the way.*

As all others.] This may be expounded; Firſt, Of perſons: Secondly, Of things: *They ſhall be taken away*, and be ſent out of the World as the meaneſt perſons, or according to the common lot of all men. This is underſtood two wayes: Firſt, To ſhew that in death all men fare alike, ſo that we cannot diſtinguiſh a good man from a wicked man by the manner of his death: Secondly, To ſhew that they who are higheſt in the World, are as ſoon overthrown by death as the loweſt.

Transferuntur ut cæteri nec pejus illis accidit quam cæteris. Etſi ad tempus evecti tandem amplius non extant: tamen non aliter quam alii. Bez.

Hence Note, *God can as eaſily remove mountains as molehills; and as quickly triumph in his anger over the greateſt, as over the leaſt.*

They who are higheſt in this world, are no more in his hand, who is higher then the higheſt, then the loweſt of this world are. No creature-ſtrength can ſtand againſt God. When we ſee enemies high we are ready to ſay, Who ſhall pull them down? But God can pull them down, *As all others*, the high Cedars, the ſtrong Oaks ſhall be like the pooreſt Shrub: *By whom ſhall* Jacob *ariſe, for he is ſmall?* (ſaith the Prophet, *Amos* 7. 2.) O how ſhall the weakneſs of *Jacob* be ſtrengthened, and the lowneſs of *Jacob* be exalted? *By whom ſhall* Jacob *ariſe, for he is ſmall?* As we are apt to queſtion the riſing of the people of God, becauſe they are ſmall; ſo the fall of the enemies of God and of his people, becauſe they are ſtrong and great. By whom ſhall the bloody enemies be brought down, for they are high? By whom ſhall our oppreſſors be deſtroyed, for they are ſtrong? Such are the reaſonings and queſtionings of our fear and unbelief. The Text and Point make anſwer; *They ſhall be taken away as all others*, even as the weakeſt and the meaneſt in the world; it puts God to no more trouble, to pull the ſtrongeſt Princes out of their Pallaces, Forts, or Caſtles, when they ſtand in his way, and hinder his deſigns, then to turn a Beggar out of his Cottage, or houſe of Hurdles. Such a ſcorn is put upon the King of *Babylon* (Iſa. 14.10.) *All they ſhall ſpeak, and ſay unto thee, Art thou alſo become weak as we? Art thou become like unto us?* Thou thoughteſt thy ſelf impregnable in power, and thou didſt look upon us as contemptible weaklings, but now thou art become weak as we. While God himſelf ſpeaks great things of Magiſtrates, and lifts them up, as it were, beyond the ſtate of man, he yet with the ſame breath makes them in one thing but parallel with all other men; ye rule or have power over others like God, but in your ſelves ye are as weak and mortal as any other ſort of men (*Pſal.* 82. 6.) *I have ſaid ye are Gods, and all of you are Children of the moſt High, but ye ſhall dye like men,* like the common ſott of men, *and ye ſhall fall like one of the Princes:* Or rather, by much, as ſome render the Hebrew, *And the Princes ſhall dye as one*, or, *as any one*; that is, as any ordinary man: For indeed there appears no Argument in the words reaching the ſcope of the place, according to our tranſlation, to ſay, That Magiſtrates ſhall *fall like one of the Princes*, is no abatement to them; but to ſay, Princes ſhall fall like any one, is a great abatement and fall to them, and fully reacheth the ſence of the preſent Obſervation.

Secondly, Theſe words, *As all others*, are expounded of other things; that is, as all wordly things.

Hence Note, *Man in his greateſt enjoyment is in as periſhing a condition as any thing he enjoyeth.*

Worldly men are as vain and tranſitory as worldly things are; they are as ſoon gone as their riches, or their honours, or whatſoever they moſt deſired or truſted to here below. That which they have is periſhing, and ſo are they too. Chriſt calleth all the things of the world, *Meat that periſheth* (John 6. 27.) The wicked man ſhall periſh, and be taken away, as all periſhing things are, upon which he ſets his heart, or which he hath in his hand. We are alwayes dying, and ſo is all that we have; ours are dying comforts, dying riches, dying honours; ours is dying ſtrength, dying beauty (*Iſa.* 40. 6.) *All fleſh is graſs, and the godlineſs thereof is as the flower of the field:* If all things we have be but a flower, and we our ſelves but graſs, then we are taken away as all other things; for flowers and graſs are alike eaſily taken away.

Accepimus peritura perituri.

And are cut off as the tops of the ears of Corn.

The original word is often uſed to expreſs that act which was the ſign of the Covenant between God and his people from the time of *Abraham* until Chriſt, namely, Circumciſion, or the cutting off of the fore-skin of the fleſh; and it is applied not only to the corporal but ſpiritual Circumciſion, to the Circumciſion of the heart in the Spirit. Here it is applyed either to the common way of cutting off *by death*, or to a cutting off by judgment, both which may be comprehended under the following ſimilitude; *They are cut off.*

מול *Circumcidit ſecuit, præcidit, de præputio carnis vel cordis dicitur.*

As the tops of the ears of Corn.] The Hebrew is, *As the heads of the ears of Corn*; that is, *As the ears of Corn which grow upon the top of the ſtraw.* Where (by the way) the Reader may take notice, that the word which we render, *Ears of Corn*, is that hard word which coſt the lives of ſo many *Ephraimites* (Judg. 12. 6.) Every man that eſcaped *was bid ſay* Shibboleth, *and he ſaid* Sibboleth, *for he could not frame to pronounce it right; then they took him and ſlew him.* The *Gileadites* cut off all thoſe *Ephraimites* who could not rightly pronounce this word, that ſignifies *Ears of Corn:* And here *Job* ſaith, that all wicked men *are cut off as the tops of the ears of Corn.*

Summitas vel caput, ſpicatum pro ipſis ſpicis natis in ſummitate & capite calami.

The ſimilitude (as ſome expound it) ſets forth nothing elſe but the fairneſs and eaſineſs of the death of wicked men, as hath been ſhewed before; *They are cut off as the tops of the ears of Corn*; that is, they dye as Corn when it is fully ripe, at a full age. Thus *Eliphaz* ſpake to *Job* by way of promiſe in caſe of his return to God (*Chap.* 5. 26.) *Thou ſhalt come to thy grave in a full age, like as a ſhock of Corn cometh in his ſeaſon.* But *to be cut off like the tops of the ears of Corn*, ſeems rather to imply a violent death, and ſounds much more like a threatning then a promiſe. Therefore,

Firſt, To be *cut off like the tops of the ears of Corn*, ſhews how eaſily wicked men may be cut off by death or judgment, rather then the eaſineſs of their death, when they are cut off. How quickly may an ear of Corn be cut off? Wicked men, who ſeem as ſtrong as Oaks, ſhall be cut off like Strawes.

Secondly, It ſhews that wicked men are uſually cut off by a violent death; ears of Corn are cut off by the Reapers ſickle, they do not fall off alone; and though a wicked man dye a natural death, yet there is a violence in it; he is *cut off* when he dyeth in his bed, as well as when he dyeth upon the block; a natural death is a kind of violent death to every man who is unwilling to dye. Such a man doth not reſign up his ſoul into the hand of God, but his ſoul is rent and raviſhed from him. Chriſt ſaith of the rich man, though dying in his bed (for ſo the Parable is to be underſtood, *Luke* 12. 20.) *Thou fool, this night thy ſoul ſhall be required of thee; or this night do they require thy ſoul from thee.* It may be queſtioned, who ſhall require it? He doth not mean, that Murtherers ſhould kill him; but that when he dyed his ſoul ſhould rather be taken by force, then quietly ſurrendred.

Thirdly, *He ſhall be cut off as the heads or tops of the ears of Corn*, may note his deſtruction when fulleſt and higeſt. For as the ears of Corn are better then the ſtraw (what is the ſtraw to the ear?) ſo there be ſome ears of Corn that be *head or chief ears*; ſo that to ſay wicked men ſhall *be cut off as the heads of the ears of Corn*, is to ſay, they ſhall be cut off in their fulneſs, in their height and glory. When the wicked are not only ears, but heads of the ears of Corn, when they are at the higheſt, they ſhall dye; and this reſemblance holds not only becauſe ſome ears are head-ears, fuller and higher then others; but becauſe all Corn is cut when once it comes to a head; that is, to a perfect fulneſs.

Fourthly, To be *cut off as the tops of the ears of Corn*, may alſo ſignifie that there is a ſpecial time or ſeaſon, when wicked men are to be cut off. For as Corn is not alwayes ripe for the ſickle; ſo wicked men (though they alwayes deſerve, yet) are not alwayes ripe for judgment: Corn is not cut down when green, or when grown high;

but when it is ripe and fit for the flail, it is cut in its ſeaſon; wicked men ſhall be cut off in their ſeaſon. And as there is a general ſeaſon for the harveſt of the whole world, ſo for every man in particular (*Rev.* 14. 15.) *Thruſt in thy ſickle and reap, for the time is come for thee to reap, for the harveſt of the earth is ripe.* God will not command the Angel to put in his ſickle till the world be ripe for Judgment, as he ſpake alſo by the Prophet *Joel* (Chap. 3. 13, 14.) *Put in thy ſickle for the harveſt is ripe; come get you down for the preſs is full, the fats overflow, for their wickedneſs is great: multitudes, multitudes in the valley of deciſion, for the day of the Lord is near, in the valley of deciſion*; that is, in the valley of cutting down, or of cutting off; or as we put in the Margin, *In the valley of conciſion or threſhing*: When the wicked ſhall be *cut off as the tops of the ears of corn*, by the ſickle of divine wrath, and be under dreadful breakings and threſhings for evermore.

Laſtly, This cutting off *as the tops of the ears of corn*, ſhews that God doth not cut off wicked men when he hath them at an advantage, when they are weak, when they are low, but when they are as the *tops of the ears of corn*, when they are at their beſt, then he doth it; the chief of the people are called *the heads of the people* (Numb. 25. 4.) *Hang up the heads of the people before me*, ſaith God, by *Moſes*, he cut them off who were as the heads of the ears of corn. As ſome Tyrants for fear, ſo God in juſtice cuts off the heads of the people, the chief of families, Princes, and great men. This was elegantly, though cruelly, expreſſed by *Tarquin the proud*, the laſt King of the *Romans*, who when a City was taken, or ſurrendered, and application was made to him how he would have the Citizens dealt with, he anſwered, only by a ſign, calling the Meſſengers into a Garden, and having a ſtick in his hand, he ſtruck off the heads of the Poppies, intimating to them, that now the Citizens were in their power, they ſhould cut off all the chief and leading men among them: Thus the Lord cuts off the heads of the ears of corn, the chief of men, or men of greateſt power, in the greatneſs of their power; he cuts them off in love to juſtice and righteouſneſs, as Tyrants do in fear and jealouſie of their power and greatneſs. They are cut off as the tops of the ears of corn.

Summa papaverum capita decuſſit, ut ſignificaret principes civitatis paulatim eſſe tollendos. Flor. de Geſt. Rom. cap. 7.

Job having at large deſcribed the ſtate of wicked men, and exemplified many of their wickedneſſes, concludes by way of challenge.

Verſe 25. And if it be not ſo, who will make me a lyar, and make my ſpeech nothing worth?

In this verſe we have *Job* triumphing, and yet not ſo much *Job* triumphing, as Truth triumphing; for how much ſoever we ſpeak for and defend the Truth, it is not comely that our ſelves ſhould triumph, but the truth only. *Job* indeed ſhews his confidence in the equity of his cauſe, which he affirms ſo juſt and ſo fully proved to be the mind of God, that he dares venture upon the judgment of any man alive.

Non timet veritas falſitatis inſidias, ſed vel preſſa tandē triumphat. Aug. Ser. de Sanct.

If it be not ſo now, who will make me a lyar?

Some make other men lyars, by teaching them or encouraging them to tell lyes; others make men lyars by proving that they have taught or told lyes: This is *Job*'s meaning when he ſaith, *who will make me a lyar?* We may ſuppoſe *Job* at the cloſe of his ſpeech riſing up and looking about him, while he ſpake thus, *Who will make me a lyar?* Let me ſee the man ſtand forth that hath any thing to object againſt what I have ſaid. The words are elegant in the Original, *And if not*; that is, *if it be not ſo* as I have aſſerted concerning the dealings of God with wicked men, that they many times flouriſh and continue flouriſhing a long time, if it be not ſo, let any man diſprove me, *and make me a lyar*, if he can; let him convince me that I am in an error if he can. As if he had ſaid, I do not impoſe my opinion upon you, but ſubmit it to the conſideration and diſcuſſion of all men.

Breviſſime in Hebræo. Etſi non.

Hence Note, Firſt, *We ſhould freely offer our opinions and aſſertions to the tryal.*

'Tis too much for a man to look that what he hath ſaid ſhould be conſented unto and believed, becauſe *he hath ſaid it.* Only God himſelf is worthy, and may demand to be thus believed by man. That God ſaith this or that is enough to perſwade, yea, to require our faith in it, and obedience to it. When God ſpeaks, *He that hath ears to hear, let him hear* (Matth. 13. 9.) That is, let him believe and obey, at his peril be it. He that is truth cannot but ſpeak truth, and therefore is to be believed in whatſoever he ſpeaketh. Man ought not to ſay any thing as queſtioning the verity of what God hath ſaid; but we ought to conſider what men ſay, and not to believe beyond what we have tryed. And as no man ought to believe before he hath tryed; ſo every man ought to preſent what he hath ſaid to the tryal. Man hath no dominion over the faith of another: *Paul* profeſſed he had not (2 *Cor.* 1. 24.) and if *Paul* had not, who hath? Dares any man pretend to a higher priviledge then *Paul* himſelf did? We may not bind up the Conſciences of men to our dictates, any further then what we ſay is grounded upon and anſwerable to the ſayings of God. To the Law and to the Teſtimony; if we ſpeak not according to this word, ye have leave, or may take leave to ſay (as to that ſaying) there is no light in us (*Iſa.* 8. 20.) We muſt not teach magiſterially, but miniſterially; we muſt not affect *to be called Maſters, for one is our Maſter, even Chriſt* (Matth. 23. 10.) *The* Bereans *received the Word with all readineſs of mind*, yet they did not ſwallow down all whole that was ſaid to them, but *ſearched the Scriptures daily whether thoſe things were ſo* (*Acts* 17. 11.) The Apoſtles rule is ſuitable to their practice (1 *Theſ.* 5. 21.) *Prove all things, hold faſt that which is good.* Now as it is the duty of hearers and learners to hold nothing till they have proved it; ſo it is the duty of Teachers to offer every doctrine to the ballance or tryal which they deſire others ſhould hold.

Secondly, while *Job* doth thus confidently offer his Aſſertion to tryal, we learn,

That, *Truth is not affraid to be tryed.*

Truth often lyeth in a corner; but truth doth not ſeek corners; truth never hides her head, as aſhamed to be ſeen or diſcuſſed by men. Truth (as ſome have ſaid) lyeth in a deep pit, it is hard to find it out, it lyeth out of ſight, yet truth it doth not hide it ſelf, but dares ſtand forth in the face of all the world; truth no more fears the tryal, then pure gold fears the touchſtone, or then a Scholar, who hath made good progreſs in his learning, fears to be examined; *He that hath truth with him needs not care who appears againſt him.*

Thirdly, In that he ſaith, *If it be not ſo now, who will make me a lyar?*

Note, *Falſe doctrine is a lye.*

(Iſa. 9. 15.) *The antient and the honourable he is the head; the Prophet that teacheth lyes* (that is, the Prophet that teacheth falſe doctrine) *he is the tail.* (Jer. 9. 3.) *They bend their tongues like their bows for lyes, but they are not valiant for the truth on the earth.* The Prophet (as I conceive) intends not ſo much falſhood in diſcourſe, which we call *telling a lye*, as falſhood of doctrine, which we call *teaching of lyes. They bend their tongues* (*as bows*) *for lyes*; that is, they ſet themſelves to the maintaining of falſe doctrine to the utmoſt ſtretch of their wit and words. Again, ſaith the Lord (*Jer.* 14. 14.) *The Prophets that propheſie lyes in my Name, I ſent them not, neither have I commanded them, neither ſpake unto them; they propheſie unto you a falſe divination, and a thing of nought, and the deceit of their heart.* The whole doctrine of the man of ſin is called *a lye: Becauſe they received not the love of the truth, that they might be ſaved, therefore God gave them up to ſtrong deluſion that they ſhould believe a lye* (2 Theſ. 2. 11.) All the faith devouring and conſcience waſting errors that ever the man of ſin vented to the world, are wrapt up in this *one ſyllable*, or *word, a lye.* He that receiveth a lye that is told, wrongeth others by it; but he that received a lye that is taught wrongeth himſelf moſt by it. To tell a lye is very ſinful; but to teach a lye is much more ſinful. The evil of that ſin is greateſt which ſpreadeth furtheſt, and continueth longeſt. A lye that is told and received ſticketh not long in the memory, but paſſeth away for the moſt part like a tale that is told; and it is enough to many a man that telleth a lye, if he be believed but a little while: But a lye that is taught and received ſticketh long in the underſtanding, and abideth there like a nail faſtened by the Maſters of the aſſemblies; and it is not enough to him that he teacheth a lye, unleſs it be believed for ever.

Thirdly, When *Job* ſaith, *Who will make me a lyar?*

Note, *The worſt thing that can be proved againſt any man, is, that he is a lyar.*

To be a lyar is to be as bad as may be: For it is to be as bad as the Devil; he deceived the Woman both by telling and teaching a lye (*Gen.* 3.) *He abode not in the truth, becauſe there is no truth in him, when he ſpeaketh a lye he ſpeaketh of his own, for he is a lyar, and the father of it* (John 8. 44.) Every ſin is of the Devil, both by temptation and approbation; but only ſome ſins are of the Devil by way of practice; and the ſin which is chiefly of him by practice is lying. Now every ſin the more congenial it is to the Devil, the more ſinful and abominable it is. And therefore among thoſe who ſhall be without, *lye-makers* are chief (*Rev.* 22.15.) *Without are dogs, and ſorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whoſoever loveth and maketh a lye.* The univerſality of this excluſion is only expreſſed upon lyars: As if he had ſaid, *To be ſure all lyars ſhall be without.* He that maketh a lye hath nothing worſe to make; and he that maketh (that is, proveth) a man to be a lyar, hath nothing worſe to make of him.

And make my ſpeech nothing worth.

לאל *Idem quod* ללא *Græci benè interpretantur* εἰς οὐδὲν *verbum è verbo, in non.*

The Hebrew is, *And bring my ſpeech to nothing*: As if he had ſaid, I challenge all men to diſprove my reaſons, or to prove that my reaſons are not a proof of that for which I brought them. In brief, let any man refute or confute what I have ſaid, if he can, and then let all that I have ſaid go for nothing, or be counted nothing worth.

Hence Note, *Unſound doctrine is worthleſs doctrine.*

The ſpeech of a lyar is nothing worth; ſound doctrine is of great value, it is worth thouſands. *David* preferr'd the Word of God before thouſands of gold and ſilver; every holy truth is the Word of God either formally or virtually, either in terms or by conſequence. The Apoſtle compares ſound doctrine to things of greateſt worth, even to gold, ſilver, and precious ſtones; and in the ſame place (1 *Cor.* 3. 12.) he compares unſound doctrine, or doctrine unſutable to the foundation (which is Jeſus Chriſt alone) to wood, hay, ſtubble, which as they are things in their own nature unconſiderable and worthleſs in compariſon of gold, ſilver, and precious ſtones; ſo as to the buſineſs upon which he there treats (a ſutable *building upon Chriſt*) they are altogether worthleſs. And if thoſe doctrines, which (becauſe of ſome error in them) are unſutable to the foundation, are to be accounted but *wood, hay, and ſtubble,* how worthleſs are thoſe doctrines, which (being altogether erroneous) are inconſiſtent with and quite overthrow the foundation. Such doctrines are worthy of nothing but a dunghil, being themſelves nothing but droſs and dung. What is that worth to us, which is uſeleſs to us? How worthleſs then is that which is deſtructive to us? Every error is a bable, a thing of no uſe; ſome errors are as poyſon, deadly in their uſe. The Apoſtle *Peter* doth not ſpare to ſay as much of them (2 *Epiſt.* 2. 1, 2.) while he calleth them *damnable hereſies, which bring ſwift deſtruction on the bringers of them in,* or the broachers of them abroad: And if they bring deſtruction upon thoſe who bring them, they that receive them cannot be ſafe.

To conclude this Point and Chapter, if erroneous doctrine be nothing worth, what are thoſe Books worth, which are full of erroneous doctrines? To print ſuch Books is but waſt of pains and paper; and when ſuch Books are printed, the beſt improvement that can be made of them, is to make them waſt paper. To buy them is waſt of money; and to read them, is (to moſt) but waſt of time. That ſpeech is not worth the hearing, nor is that book worth the reading, which (as all erroneous books and ſpeeches are) is nothing worth. *Job* granted, that if any could make him a lyar, they, with the ſame pains, muſt needs make *his ſpeech nothing worth.* Upon this iſſue he ſhuts up his diſcourſe in anſwer to *Eliphaz*; nor durſt *Eliphaz* undertake him any more upon that iſſue, and therefore layeth down the Bucklers and quits the field; yet *Bildad* takes them up and makes a ſhort skirmiſh with *Job*; but upon another point, as will appear in the following Chapter.

CHAP. XXV. Verſ. 1, 2, 3.

Then anſwered Bildad *the* Shuhite, *and ſaid,*

Dominion and fear are with him; he maketh peace in high-places.

Is there any number of his Armies? And upon whom doth not his light ariſe?

THis ſhort Chapter contains *Bildad*'s third conteſt with *Job*, in which quite waving the point in queſtion concerning the preſent troubles of the righteous, and the felicity of the wicked, he falls, firſt, into a deſcription of the Glory, Power, and Majeſty of God: Secondly, by way of oppoſition and compariſon he ſets forth the miſery and impurity of man. For whereas in the twenty-third Chapter, verſe the third, *Job* appealed unto Heaven, wiſhing that he might have admittance to God himſelf, and plead his cauſe in his preſence; *O that I knew where I might find him! that I might come even to his ſeat! I would order my cauſe before him, and fill my mouth with Arguments. Bildad* perceiving him thus confident, labours to take him off by ſetting before him the greatneſs and dreadfulneſs of the Lord. He takes up the ſame Argument upon which he had formerly inſiſted; wonderfully exalting the Majeſty of God, and debaſing man in the ſight of his own frailty. This is the ſum and ſcope of the whole Chapter.

Bildad *iterum Dei potentiam & altitudinem expendit ut* Jobum *cōprimat, ne divinā Majeſtatem appellet, ſuāq; corā judice tanto innocentiam jactet.*

Verſe 1, 2. **Then Bildad the Shuhite anſwered and ſaid, Dominion and fear are with him.**

With whom is not expreſt, though it be the beginning of a ſpeech. God is often ſpoken of in Scripture without naming. The glorious things which are attributed unto him will fit and ſuit none but himſelf. Barely to ſay ſome things are done, is as much as to ſay, they are done by God, becauſe none but God can do ſuch things. And as ſuch things may be named as can be done only by God; ſo ſuch things may be named as can belong to none but God: As here, *Dominion and fear are with him*; that is, with God. For theſe can belong to none but God, And becauſe theſe are proper and peculiar unto God, therefore *Bildad* ſeems to ſay thus to *Job*; *Surely thou haſt not yet conſidered (as thou oughteſt) the ſoveraign Authority and Power of God, which muſt needs ſtrike thee with an awful reverence of him, and cauſe thee to know thy own diſtance better. Surely thou doſt not mind, that, Dominion and fear are with God, and that thou thy ſelf art but duſt and aſhes, yea, impure and polluted duſt and aſhes.*

Thus *Bildad* ſeems to chide and rebuke the forwardneſs of *Job* in appealing and putting his cauſe to God; as if he had been overbold with God, while he deſired right of him againſt the unrighteous accuſations of men. Or as if he had forgotten the Soveraignty of God, while he was earneſtly begging that he would do him juſtice.

Unum hoc agit ut demonſtret Jobi *deſiderium conveniendi Deum eſſe temerarium.* Coc.

Dominion and fear are with him.

המשל

Notat efficax exercitium poteſtatis.

Dominion is that ſupreme power that God exerciſeth over all things and perſons. The Hebrew is ſtrictly rendred thus, *To rule is his*; we ſay, *Dominion is with him.* There are three things which we may comprehend under the dominion of God.

Firſt, His Strength and mighty power, whereby *he is able to ſubdue all things to himſelf*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks (*Phil.* 1. 21.)

Secondly, his Authority, whereby he hath a right to do whatſoever he doth (*Dan.* 4. 35.)

Thirdly, His Efficiency, or the efficacy of his power, whereby he is able to carry every thing through to the deſired iſſue (*Iſa.* 43. 13.) Many have great power and great authority, who yet want this efficacy and efficiency; they may undertake much, but they cannot carry it through; whereas in God there is a concurrence of theſe three, Strength, Authority, and Efficacy, to bring to paſs whatever himſelf intendeth, or is pleaſed to do. The Dominion which *Bildad* here aſcribes unto God, is a dominion cloathed with theſe three excellencies. From the ſcope of *Bildad*, repreſenting God in his Dominion and Greatneſs,

> Obſerve, *The beſt way to humble man is to ſet the Power and Soveraignty of God, as alſo his Holineſs and infinite purity before him.*

Any of the perfections of God taken in by faith and well meditated upon, may lay the heart of man low. How doth all our bravery, and the high conceits which we have of our ſelves, vaniſh like ſmoak, and become a meer nothing at the appearances of God? Though (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, 2 *Cor.* 10. 12.) *We meaſuring our ſelves by our ſelves, and comparing our ſelves amongſt our ſelves, are not wiſe:* Yet while we only do ſo we ſeem very wiſe: But when once we compare our ſelves with God, O what ideots and poor ſimple things are we. What is our power when once we contemplate the power of God? What is the dominion which any Prince of the earth hath when once he conſiders the Dominion and Soveraignty of God? What is the wiſdom of man, what the holineſs of man, to the Wiſdom and Holineſs of God?

Dominion and fear are with him.

More particularly in that Dominion is here appropriated to God.

> Obſerve, *Supream power is proper unto God.*

There is a dominion put into the hands of men: Many have dominion and power, but originally all Dominion is Gods: In him is the ſeat and root of power. *David* ſaith (*Pſal.* 62. 11.) *God hath ſpoken once, twice have I heard it, that power belongeth unto God.* As my ear hath heard, ſo my heart hath heard and conſented to this truth. And this power or dominion of God may be conſidered four wayes.

Firſt, In the univerſality of it (1 *Chron.* 29. 12.) where *David* makes this confeſſion, *Both riches and honour come of thee, and thou reigneſt over all, and in thine hand is power and might, and in thine hand is to make great and to give ſtrength unto all.* He that giveth ſtrength unto all, hath ſtrength over all, and his dominion is over all Nations and perſons, not limited to this or that particular Nation or perſon; yea, he hath dominion not only over all here below, but in Heaven above; as *Bildad* ſpeaks a little after; *He maketh peace in his high places.* Chriſt is *Prince of the Kings of the earth* (Rev. 1. 5.) *He is Lord of Lords, and King of Kings* (Rev. 19. 16.) That is, not only a King or a Lord, excelling all other Kings and Lords, but alſo ruling them, or reigning over them: Kings are his Subjects.

Secondly, His is an abſolute dominion; that is, he governs by no law, but by his own will: This kind of dominion is proper unto God alone. He doth, and he only may govern by his own will. *He doth in Heaven and Earth whatever pleaſeth him.* This was ſpoken of (*Job* 23. 13.) *He is in one mind, and who can turn him? And what his ſoul deſireth, that he doth.* He doth not go out of himſelf for his rule, his own deſire is his rule; all the deſires of God are holy, juſt and righteous, and therefore his deſire and will may well be his rule. It is good that he ſhould have an abſolute dominion and rule according to his own will, who cannot will any thing but what is good. And 'tis but juſt that he ſhould rule as he pleaſeth, who cannot be pleaſed with any thing but what is juſt.

Thirdly, His is an everlaſting dominion (*Pſal.* 145. 13. *Pſal.* 66. 7.) As men are mortal, ſo are States, Kingdoms, and Empires. The ſtrongeſt and greateſt of them have had their fates and funerals. We ſee what changes there have been of dominion and power out of one hand into another; but the dominion of God is ſubject to no change, nor knoweth it any fate. *The* Babylonian, *the* Perſian, *the* Grecian, *and the* Roman *Monarchies have ſeen their day*; but the dominion of Jeſus Chriſt is an everlaſting dominion (*Dan.* 4. 34.) 'tis ſo acknowledged even by *Nebuchadnezzar*, *And at the end of the dayes I* Nebuchadnezzar *lift up mine eyes unto Heaven, and mine underſtanding returned unto me, and I bleſſed the moſt High, and I praiſed and honoured him that liveth for ever, whoſe dominion is an everlaſting dominion, and his Kingdom is from generation to generation.*

Fourthly, His is an Effectual Dominion. As he hath a right to do what he will, ſo he hath ſtrength to effect what he willeth. Such is the dominion of God; and becauſe it is ſuch, even an univerſal, abſolute, everlaſting and effectual Dominion, Therefore, let man remember his duty.

> *Dominion calleth for ſubjection.*

That's the Apoſtle rule (*Rom.* 13. 1.) *Let every ſoul be ſubject unto the higher powers:* And if every ſoul ought to be ſubject unto the higher powers among men; then every ſoul ought to be ſubject, much more to the power of God, for his is the *higheſt power*. And thus we ought to ſubmit,

Firſt, Unto his Laws; *Legiſlative power is his*, what God ſaith muſt be our rule. We may not diſpute, much leſs quarrel at any of his Commands, but obey them: Naturally the heart of man rebels againſt the Law of God (*Rom.* 8. 7.) *The carnal mind is enmity againſt God; for it is not ſubject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be*; that is, it cannot be ſubject while it remaineth carnal; only a renewed or a ſpiritual mind ſubmits to a ſpiritual law.

Secondly, Submit to his works, to what he doth, as well as to what he ſaith; and that, firſt, in the proviſion and allowances that he makes for you; that is a part of Gods dominion to cut out a portion for every man. Therefore in every eſtate be content: Secondly, Submit to the works of God in his afflictions and chaſtiſements (1 *Pet.* 5. 6.) *Humble your ſelves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time.* When old *Eli* heard that terrible meſſage concerning the deſtruction of his whole family (for Samuel *told him every whit, and hid nothing from him*) *he ſaid, It is the Lord, let him do what ſeemeth him good* (1 Sam. 3. 18.) Thus the Church ſate down in ſilence, not ſpeaking a word becauſe it was the act of God (*Lam.* 3. 28.) Thirdly, Submit to God in the whole compaſs of his Government, in ordering the affairs of the whole world, when he breaks, and when he builds; when he ſets up, and when he pulls down; when he makes peace, and when he makes war; in all theſe acts of dominion ſubmit to God. When the Prophet calls us to behold what deſolations the Lord maketh in the earth, he adds this word as from the Lord, *Be ſtill, and know that I am God* (*Pſal.* 46. 10.) As if the Lord had ſaid, Let none queſtion me for what I have done, *I am God*, and if ye know indeed, *that I am*, ye will not have a word to ſay againſt *what I do.* So (*Zech.* 2. 13.) *Be ſilent, O all fleſh, before the Lord; for he is raiſed up out of his holy habitation:* He is riſen to make great changes, therefore be ſilent, ſubmit, let there be no murmuring at, no contending with his providences; *For dominion*

Dominatus & quidem formidabilis eſt penes illum. Jun.

And fear are with him.] Some render this word **fear**, as an adjunct or Epithete of the former; *Dominion, and that a terrible fearful or formidable dominion, is with him*; but rather diſtinctly as we, *Dominion and fear are with him.* God hath no fear in him, nor upon him, for he is as infinitely above all fear, as he is above hope. But *fear is with him*; or, *fear is his*, becauſe he is ſo much to be feared. *Fear is with God* upon this threefold account.

Firſt, Becauſe many at preſent do fear the Lord: Every godly man is a man fearing God.

Secondly, Becauſe every man ought to fear, dread, and ſtand in awe of God, even the Princes, and Powers, and Dominions of the Earth ought to fear the Lord (*Pſal.* 2. 11.) *Be wiſe now therefore, O ye Kings; be inſtructed, O ye Judges of the earth, ſerve the Lord with fear, and rejoyce with trembling.* Kings and Judges muſt ſerve and fear the Lord; or ſerve the Lord with fear. Who then muſt not?

Thirdly, *Fear is with him*; becauſe all ſhall fear and dread him at laſt, whether they will or no; they whoſe hearts ſtout it againſt God, they that go on impudently in ſin, fearleſs of the Majeſty and wrath of God, yet a time will come when their ſtomachs ſhall be taken down; a time will come when all the world ſhall tremble before the Lord. As now many do it, and as all ought to do, ſo all ſhall do it (*Iſa.* 2. 19.) *They ſhall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the tops of the ragged rocks, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his Majeſty, when he ariſeth to ſhake terribly the earth.* Such a day is coming upon the lofty ones, upon the Cedars and upon the Oaks, upon the fearleſs, and they ſhall fear, and (which is the greateſt argument of fear) run into a hole for fear. It is propheſied (*Revel.* 6. 15.) That, *The Kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief Captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free-man ſhall hide themſelves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains, and ſay to the rocks and to the mountains, fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that ſitteth on the Throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.* They who having been threatned with the wrath of God, were no more affraid then the rocks, ſhall, for fear, wooe the rocks to hide them from the wrath of God. Though *Adam* had not the fear of God to keep him from ſin; yet the fear of God fell upon him as ſoon as he had ſinned (*Gen.* 3. 10.) *I heard thy voice in the Garden, and I was affraid, becauſe I was naked, and I hid my ſelf.*

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *God is in himſelf very dreadful; he is to be feared.*

God is ſo much to be feared, that not only *fear is with him*, but *he is fear.* As becauſe God is ſo full of love, therefore the Scripture predicates love directly of God, *God is love* (1 John 4. 8.) ſo becauſe God is greatly to be feared, therefore he is called *fear* (Gen. 31. 42, 53.) *Except the God of my Father, the God of* Abraham, *and the fear of* Iſaac (that is, the God whom my Father *Iſaac* feared) *had been with me, ſurely thou hadſt ſent me away empty*, ſaid Jacob in his conteſt with *Laban*. And at the fifty-third verſe of the ſame Chapter he ſaith again to *Laban, The God of* Abraham, *and the God of* Nahor, *the God of their Father, judge betwixt us*: *And* Jacob *ſware by the fear of his Father* Iſaac; that is, he ſware by God; for by him only can we ſwear in a holy manner, an Oath being a part or an act of divine worſhip. The dominion and fear of God are put together (*Mal.* 1. 14.) *I am a great King* (there is dominion) *and my Name is dreadful among the Heathen* (there is fear.) Even Heathens who know God only by the light of nature (which is ſo imperfect a way of knowing God, that the Heathen are ſaid *not to know him*, Jer. 10. 25. yet, I ſay, the Heathen who know God only thus) do fear him; they fear him in proportion to or according to the way of their knowledge of him. How much more then is the Lord to be feared, and how dreadful is he to and among his own people, who know him ſavingly, who know him by Goſpel light. *God is greatly to be feared in the Aſſembly of the Saints; and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him* (Pſal. 89. 7.) He is terribly dreadful amongſt the Heathen; he is awfully or reverentially dreadful amongſt the Saints. *Fear is with him.*

Firſt, In reference to the greatneſs of his power; conſider what God can do, and that renders him dreadful. We fear thoſe that can do great things, thoſe eſpecially that can do great things againſt us. For this reaſon Chriſt exhorts his Diſciples to fear God, when he ſaw them in danger of a ſurprizal by the fear of what men could do againſt them (*Luke* 12. 4, 5.) *I ſay unto you friends, be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye ſhall fear; fear him which after he hath killed hath power to caſt into hell; yea, I ſay unto you, fear him.* How is he to be feared, who at one ſtroke can pierce body and ſoul quite through, and throw both into Hell? The Lord is to be feared upon the conſideration of the ordinary providential puttings forth of his Power: How much more when he puts forth his Power extraordinarily and judicially? (*Jerem.* 5. 22.) *Fear ye not me, ſaith the Lord? Will ye not tremble at my preſence, which have placed the ſand for the bound of the Sea, by a perpetual decree, that it cannot paſs it; and though the waves thereof toſs themſelves, yet can they not prevail; though they roar, yet can they not paſs over it?* I have done this thing, put a ſtop to the Sea, I have put a bridle into the mouth of the Sea, I can check the waves when they roar and toſs, and will ye not fear me?

Secondly, God is to be feared for his goodneſs, as we read at the twenty-fourth verſe of the ſame Chapter, where the Lord upbraids their want of fear, while they remembred his moſt ordinary good providences at land; *Neither ſay they in their heart, let us now fear the Lord our God, that giveth rain, both the former and the latter in his ſeaſon; he reſerveth unto us the appointed weeks of the harveſt.* If God be to be feared for that witneſs of his goodneſs which is held out by rain and fruitful ſeaſons, or by filling the hearts of men in common with food and gladneſs; then how much more is God to be feared for the diſtinguiſhing acts of his goodneſs and mercy, the pardon of ſin, and the giving out of his Spirit? *There is forgiveneſs with thee, that thou mayſt be feared,* ſaid the Pſalmiſt (*Pſal.* 130. 4.) and (*Hoſea* 3. 5.) *They ſhall fear the Lord and his goodneſs in the latter dayes*; that is, they ſhall fear the Lord becauſe of his goodneſs, his ſpecial goodneſs to his Church and People, in advancing them to all their ſpiritual liberties and priviledges in the latter dayes. And thus the Lord is ſaid to be not only *glorious in holineſs*, but *fearful in praiſes*; becauſe we ſhould fear him, when we are praiſing him, both becauſe he hath wrought ſo much goodneſs and mercy for thoſe who are unworthy, as alſo leſt while we receive ſo much from the hand of his goodneſs and mercy, we ſhould walk unworthily.

Secondly, When the Text ſaith, *Fear is with him*, we learn, That,

God can ſtrike man with fear when he pleaſeth.

Power is with him, and he can put forth his power: If God ſend out his power, it goeth and prevaileth. So *fear is with him*, and he can ſend out his fear to ſtrike whom he will with fear, when and as oft as he will. The Scripture ſheweth the Lord ſending forth his fear at pleaſure, and attaching the ſtrongeſt and hardieſt of the children of men. It is ſaid (*Gen.* 35. 5.) *And they journeyed* (that is, *Jacob* and his ſmall company) *and the terror of God was upon the Cities that were round about them, and they did not purſue after the Sons of* Jacob. The terror of God was ſent out to keep them in, ſo that none of them ſtirred, elſe no doubt but all the Cities would have purſued them becauſe of that high provocation which the Sons of *Jacob* had given them by the late ſlaughter of the *Sichemites*. When God promiſed to ſend Hornets before the people of *Iſrael* to drive out the uncircumciſed Nations, this fear was the Hornet (*Exod.* 23. 28.) God ſtung their hearts with fear, or (as it were by Hornets) buzz'd a fear into their ears; as he did into the ears of the *Syrians*, who encamped before *Samaria* (2 Kings 7. 6, 7.) *The Lord made the hoſt of the* Syrians *to hear a noiſe of Chariots, and a noiſe of Horſes, even the noiſe of a great hoſt; and they ſaid one to another, lo the King of* Iſrael *hath hired againſt us the Kings of the* Hittites, *and the Kings of the* Egyptians, *to come upon us. Wherefore they aroſe and fled in the twilight, and left their tents, and their horſes, and their aſſes, even the camp as it was, and fled for their life.* As a word from God makes the heart confident and bold in the greateſt danger; ſo a word from God makes the heart fearful and cowardly, where there is no danger at all. This is the glory of God, that he can command our paſſions: *That by a word he can make them fear, who do not at all fear his word.*

Many men have fear belonging to them, yet they cannot ſend out their fear; they are in great place, and ſo both dominion over men, and fear are with them (for unto whomſoever dominion belongs, fear doth belong (*Rom.* 13.7.) *Render to every man his due, tribute to whom tribute is due, cuſtom to whom cuſtom, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour.* Yet (I ſay) many have dominion and fear belonging unto them, who cannot ſend out their fear. Their power is deſpiſed, and none regards them; they command, and are not obeyed; they promiſe, and are not believed; they threaten, and are not feared. Only God can ſend out his fear, and make every man fall and tremble before him. When many armed men came to take Chriſt, Chriſt ſent out a fear upon them, ſo that they *went backward and fell to the ground* (John 18. 16.) Chriſt gave them never an angry word, he only confeſſed himſelf to be the man they ſought for, *I am he*; and they were as men aſtoniſhed with fear; Chriſt in ſpeaking thoſe words did not only let out a little ray or beam of his Deity, and this ſtruck them down. O what fear will Chriſt ſend out when he cometh to judge the world, who could ſend forth ſuch a fear, while he yielded himſelf up to be judged and condemned by the world. *Dominion and fear are with him.* He can make all affraid; and yet as it followeth,

He maketh peace in his high places.

This latter part of the verſe is a continued deſcription of the irreſiſtible Power of God (as all agree) in making peace; yet there is ſome difference what ſhould be meant *by the high places*, where *God maketh peace: He maketh peace in high places.*

Firſt, Many underſtand theſe **high places** to be *the Heavens*, or (as the Scripture ſpeaketh) *the Hoſt of Heaven*, Sun, Moon, and Stars: There or among them peace is made through the Power of God, keeping them in or to order; that is, in their dueſt motions. The heavenly bodies are in continual ſtrong motion, and they are kept in their motion by the Power of God. The Sun, Moon, and Stars are mighty bodies, and they are in a perpetual *career*, yet they juſtle not one againſt another, nor do they fall ſoul upon one another. In this ſence it may be ſaid, that God maketh peace among them: They all, according to his appointment, keep their places, and ſtir not out of their own ſpheres. No man could ever keep his Watch or Clock in ſuch order as God keeps the Sun.

Secondly, By theſe *high places* others underſtand that which is ſomewhat lower; not Sun, Moon, and Stars, but the ſeveral Regions of the Air: God makes peace in thoſe high places, where ſtorms, and tempeſts, and all manner of fiery impreſſions are bred and wrought. Naturaliſts ſay, that the ſecond Region of the Air is both the ſhop where thoſe dreadful inſtruments of war, Thunder, Lightning, Hail, Snow, are formed, as alſo the Store-houſe where they are laid up; yet even in thoſe high places God maketh peace. If he ſpeak to the Thunder, it doth not ſtir, and to the Lightning, it doth not go forth; if he ſpeak to the Wind, it bloweth not, and to the Storm, it is huſht and quiet. *Fire and Hail, Snow and Vapour, Stormy Wind and tempeſt, fulfil his word* (Pſal. 148.8.) And they fulfil it whether in going or in ſtaying. Thus God maketh peace in the high places of the Air, and upon the high waves of the Sea. Chriſt did but rebuke the Sea, and ſay to it (when it was in its fierceſt rage) *Peace, be ſtill, and there was a great calm* (Mark 4. 39.) The Air is under the Empire of God as much as Sea or Land: And he *maketh peace in thoſe high places.*

Deum vel ſolo nutu tranquillat elementorum diſſidia tempeſtateſque ſerenat.

Thirdly, The words are expounded of thoſe high places which are the more proper ſeats of Angels. And ſo God may be ſaid to make peace in his high places, becauſe he maketh peace among the Angels; that is, he keepeth the Angels in peace: The Angels do not contend one with another; and none of them dares contend with God. Some urge this expoſition as moſt pertinent to *Bildad*'s purpoſe for the conviction of *Job*: As if he had ſaid, The Angels dare not contend with God; And doſt thou (O *Job*) contend with God? The Angels utter not a word againſt God; And dareſt thou undertake to plead with him, and engage him in a controverſie?

His verbis vellicatur Job *quaſi inſolens ſeditioſus & querulus homo.* Pin.

A fourth ſort, by Gods *making peace in his high places*, underſtand only thus much, That all is quiet in Heaven, or that God hath a moſt peaceable and quiet fruition and enjoyment of himſelf: He hath had it from eternity, and will have it unto eternity; this is the bleſſedneſs of God, he is above all trouble and diſturbment. And thus alſo *Bildad* ſeems to reprove *Job*; *Wilt thou begin a conteſt with God? Wilt thou trouble God himſelf, who maketh peace in his high places, who lives in everlaſting reſt and quiet? God doth not uſe to be ſued and pleaded with as thou ſeemeſt over-boldly to deſire.*

Laſtly, Theſe *high places* are expounded for the high places of the earth: As if he had ſaid, God makes peace amongſt the States, Princes, and Powers of the World, who are in high places, and Gods high places: For every Throne is Gods, and Thrones are high places. As the Heavens are high places in compariſon of the whole Earth; ſo ſome places of the Earth (in a civil capacity, as well as in a natural) are higher then the reſt. Now among thoſe that are in his high places of Power and Authority, the Lord maketh peace; and this is a very glorious work of God. Thus we ſee there are many high places, and they are all the high places of God: Yet I conceive that *Bildad* chiefly if not only aims at Heaven, which is more peculiarly the high place of God; as being that to which (though many lay claim to the high places of the Earth) none beſides God ever did make claim or lay title.

Further, Beſides theſe different apprehenſions about the *high places*, there is a difference in the reading of the words together: Some thus, *He worketh in peace in his high places*: That is, what troubles ſoever are here on Earth, there is peace and quietneſs in Heaven; or there God worketh in peace and quietneſs. Others thus, *The dominion and fear which are with him make peace in his high places*: As if the dominion and power of God were that to which peace-making is aſcribed as an effect. Or as if he had ſaid, *God hath authority enough to compoſe all differences; yea, he ſo orders things in Heaven, that there ariſeth no difference in thoſe high places, his dominion and fear keep all in peace.* There are no murmurings nor diſcontents, much leſs any rebellions or open wars in Heaven.

Mr. *Broughton* reports the Chaldee tranſlation in a phraſe very uncouth in our language, *Sultanſhip and fear be with him* (ſome Eaſtern Princes are called *Sultans*) *He maketh peace in his high Heavens.* To which he adds the Expoſition or gloſs of the Chaldee paraphraſe, Michael *is on his right hand, and he is of fire*; Gabriel *is on his left hand, and he is of water*; *and the heavenly Creatures be part of fire and part of water.* But Mr. *Broughton* gives a good corrective, *Such Fables St.* Paul *forbiddeth.* To conclude, though it be difficult which of the high places before named are here meant, yet it is a truth that all high places are his high places; and that in what high place ſoever peace is made, God maketh it. *He maketh peace in his high places.*

Hence Obſerve, *Peace-making is the work of God.*

And as God makes peace every where, ſo he makes every kind of peace. We find peace ſpoken of in Scripture in a five-fold oppoſition; and God the Maker of that five-fold peace.

Firſt, He maketh peace in the high places of the World, *as peace is oppoſed to any kind of trouble or affliction.* Peace is uſually accompanied with proſperity, and peace ſignifies any kind of proſperity. Peace in this extent is aſſumed by God himſelf as his proper work (*Iſa.* 45.7.) *I form the light and create darkneſs, I make peace and create evil; I the Lord do all theſe things*: That is, I do them, and none can do them without me, or but by me.

Secondly, God maketh peace as peace is (more ſtrictly) taken in oppoſition to war and tumults; *He cauſeth war to ceaſe in all the world* (Pſal. 46. 9.) *He maketh war to ceaſe unto the end of the earth; He breaketh the bow, and cutteth the ſpear in ſunder; he burneth the chariots in the fire.* He that deſtroyeth all the Inſtruments of war, doth ſurely make peace; and he that maketh war to ceaſe, doth certainly make peace begin. Peace is made two wayes: Firſt, By taking up the differences and reconciling the ſpirits of men: Secondly, By breaking the power, and taking away all proviſions of war from men. The Lord maketh peace by both theſe wayes, or by either of them.

Thirdly, God maketh peace as peace is oppoſed to perſecution: There may be no war in a Nation, and yet no peace to the people of God by reaſon of ſore and fiery perſecution; yea, a general peace is the very opportunity which perſecutors look for, to break the peace of particular men. The moſt bloody times that the Church ever had, have been the moſt peaceable times of Nations. And when Nations are moſt troubled, then Churches uſually get their liberties, and are moſt quiet. Such a peace as this the Churches had, though I cannot ſay they had it upon this occaſion (*Acts* 9. 31.) *Then had the Churches reſt* (or peace; that is, they were quiet from their cruel perſecutors) *throughout all* Judea, *and* Galilee, *and* Samaria, *and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the holy Ghoſt, were multiplied.* This peace doth God make for his Saints, his little Flock, that they may ſometimes lye down in green paſtures, and beſide the *ſtill waters*, without fear of the Wolves and Lions, who would alwayes tear and worry them. Thus the Lord promiſeth (*Iſa.* 60. 17, 18.) *I will make thy Officers peace, and thine Exactors righteouſneſs; violence ſhall no more be heard in thy land, waſting and deſtruction within thy borders.*

Fourthly, God maketh peace, as peace is oppoſed to *diſſention* among brethren. It is poſſible there may be no war in a place, yea, no perſecution, none to vex the people of God, and yet they may have great diſſentions, vexations, and diviſions among themſelves. This peace the Church of *Corinth* wanted, when none from without troubled the Church. Hence that rebuke which the Apoſtle gives them (1 *Cor.* 3.3.) *Whereas there is among you envying, and ſtriſe, and diviſions, are ye not carnal and walk as men?* Thus Saints and Churches war one with and trouble another, when the world gives them no trouble at all. To the keeping of this peace Chriſt admoniſheth his Diſciples (*Mark* 9.50.) *Have ſalt in your ſelves, and peace one with another.* But why did Chriſt ſpeak thus to his own Diſciples, *Have peace one with another?* Were they ready to make war one with another? Had they any Armies to engage and lead out into the field againſt one another? Surely none. Therefore when Chriſt ſaith, *Have peace one with another*, his meaning was only this, wrangle not with one another, fall not out with one another. The Diſciples were not like to run into any other war but that of diſſention amongſt themſelves. And this war may be in thoſe Churches that live in the moſt peaceable condition. And 'tis God only who makes peace as in his high places both of Heaven and Earth, ſo in his holy places.

Fifthly, and laſtly, God makes peace as peace is oppoſed to diſorder; for there may be conſent amongſt men, and yet much diſorder among men, yea, they may (poſſibly) agree, conſent and center together in that which is moſt diſorderly. Of this peace the Apoſtle ſpeaks (1 *Cor.* 14. 33.) *God is not the Author of confuſion, but of peace, as in all Churches of the Saints;* that is, God would have every one keep his order and his place: He would not have the Prophets ſpeak all together in the Church, for that is diſorderly; nor would he have Women ſpeak at all in the Church, for that alſo is diſorderly. That which breaks order breaks peace; for there can be no true peace without order; and God is not the Author of diſorder or confuſion in Churches, but of peace.

Thus peace-making is the work of God in this five-fold oppoſition, as peace is oppoſed to trouble, as peace is oppoſed to war, as peace is oppoſed to perſecution, as peace is oppoſed to diſſention, and laſtly, as peace is oppoſed to diſorder. To make peace in all theſe kinds, is as much the honour as it is only in the power of God. *He maketh peace in his high places.*

Secondly, Obſerve, *Where God is moſt eminently, there is moſt peace.*

He makes peace on the earth; but in his high places, where his moſt glorious appearance is, there is nothing but peace. And as there is nothing but peace in Heaven, where God declares himſelf moſt clearly; ſo they to whom God declares himſelf moſt clearly on Earth are moſt for peace: The nearer and the liker we are unto God, the nearer we are unto peace, and the more we like it. All true peace floweth out from God; and the more of a healing and peace-making ſpirit appears in any man, the more of God appears in him.

Laſtly, By way of inference: Take this,

Firſt, Seeing God makes peace in his high places, or in Heaven above, how eaſily can he (when our breaches are wideſt) make peace in theſe low places of the Earth. And becauſe, as it is his property, ſo his promiſe to do it, we ſhould wait upon him for and urge him with the fulfilling of this promiſe, that he who makes peace alwayes in the high places of Heaven, would make that five-fold peace in the low places of the Earth.

Secondly, Seeing God is able to make peace in all places, he can alſo make war in all places. The ſame power doth both; and *Bildad* ſhews the preparations of God for war, as well as his ſanctions of peace. For he hath innumerable Armies under his command, as it follows in the next verſe.

Verſe 3. **Is there any number of his Armies? And upon whom doth not his light ariſe?**

There ſeems to be ſomewhat a ſtrange conjunction between theſe two verſes, *He maketh peace*, and, *Is there any number of his Armies?* One would think we ſhould hear of nothing but war, when we hear of ſuch numberleſs Armies. God hath innumerable invincible Armies, alwayes ready for war, yet he is moſt ready to make peace; yea, he who is *The Lord of Hoſts*, is alſo ſtiled, *The Lord of peace* (2 Theſ. 3. 16.) This likewiſe ſpeaks the Dominion, Power, and Majeſty of God, in that he maketh peace, and can make war. *His Armies are at hand*, and thoſe no contemptible ones. As if *Bildad* had thus beſpoken *Job*; *It is in vain for thee who art a weak man, to think of contending with God, who hath numberleſs Armies to take his part againſt all oppoſers.*

The word which we tranſlate *Armies*, properly ſignifies *Troops*, *Is there any number of his Troops?* And this is given in name to one of the Patriarchs (*Gen.* 30. 11.) *And* Leah *ſaid, a Troop cometh; And ſhe called his name* Gad. A Troop is a little Army, and a great Army conſiſts of many Troops. We ſay, *Is there any number of his Armies?*

When the Scripture ſaith, that God hath Armies, it is not to be underſtood as if God needed them, either to protect himſelf, or to ſuppreſs his enemies: *The Lord of Hoſts* himſelf is infinitely ſtronger then all the Armies and Hoſts of which he is Lord. Earthly Princes have their Armies, and Guards, to protect their perſons and dominions from danger and invaſion. They want Armies to help their Friends abroad, and to defend their Subjects at home. Worldly Princes borrow power from others to protect themſelves, while they undertake to protect others; but God is the guard of his Guards, and the ſtrength of his own Armies. Princes are ſaved by their Armies; but God is the ſafety of his Armies. The Gods of the Earth are affraid of what man may do unto them; but the God of Heaven is not only above thoſe fears, but alſo above all want of mans doing any thing for him. So that, *As God is not worſhipped with mans hands* (as the Apoſtle tells the *Athenians* (*Acts* 17. 25.) *as though he needed any thing*; ſo neither is he aſſiſted by mens hands, or by any hand, as if he needed any thing, *ſeeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things.*

And therefore when the Lord is ſaid to have Armies, it is either to ſignifie, Firſt, That he hath all things at his command, and is full of power: Or ſecondly, That although he can do all things by himſelf, yet he will uſe the agency of the creature to effect his purpoſes.

This Queſtion, *Is there any number of his Armies?* reſolves it ſelf into this Negative, There is no number of his Armies; or there is no number of them. But what are theſe Armies of God?

Firſt, The Angels are his Armies: We read of one Angel that deſtroyed a whole Army (2 *Kings* 19. 35.) *And it came to paſs that night, that the Angel of the Lord went out, and ſmote in the camp of the* Aſſyrians, *an hundred fourſcore and five thouſand; and when they aroſe early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpſes.* If one Angel deſtroyed an Army, what cannot an Army of Angels do? The Angels of God are Armies without number. We read them expreſſed by ſuch great numbers, as render their numbers inexpreſſible. So in *Daniel's* Viſion of the Glory of God (*Chap.* 7. 10.) *A fiery ſtream iſſued, and came forth* *from before him*; *thouſand thouſands miniſtred unto him, and ten thouſand times ten thouſand ſtood before him*; that is, an innumerable company ſtood before him. Chriſt ſaid to *Peter* when he drew his ſword and ſought to reſcue him from the Officers of the High Prieſt that came to arreſt and bring him to Judgment, *Put up thy ſword again into his place, for all they that take the ſword ſhall periſh with the ſword. Thinkeſt thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he ſhall preſently give me more then twelve legions of Angels?* (Matth. 26. 53.) Here is an Army of Angels. Chriſt ſpeaketh in the Roman phraſe, who reckoned their Armies by Legions, as we do by Regiments, *Six thouſand ſix hundred ſixty ſix* was the number of a Legion as ſome affirm; and ſf ſo, then twelve Legions make *Seventy nine thouſand nine hundred ninety two*; a great Army; but (ſaith Chriſt) my Father can ſend *more then twelve Legions*. But how many more no man can ſay. Chriſt pitcheth upon a great certain number, to ſhew that he might have what number he would, if he did but call for them.

Secondly, The Sun, Moon, and Stars are the Armies of God (*Judg.* 5. 20.) *They fought from Heaven*: That is, the heavenly or aerial Meteors, Wind, Thunder, Hail, did, as it were, joyn their confederate forces for the deſtruction of *Iſrael*'s enemies (as they had done before, *Joſh.* 10. 11. and as they did afterwards, 1 *Sam.* 7. 10.) yea, as it followeth in the ſame place, *The Stars in their courſes fought againſt* Siſera. The Stars charged like an Army in battel array, raiſing ſtorms and dreadful tempeſts by their influences, and ſo might be ſaid to fight againſt and ruine the whole Army of *Siſera*. By all which Rhetorical expreſſions the Spirit would lead us to underſtand, that the Lord himſelf by inviſible powers did fight againſt *Siſera*, while *Iſrael* ſought him with a viſible power. Surely if the Stars be the Lords Armies, we may well ſay, *Is there any number of his Armies?* When the Lord would ſhew *Abraham* that his Seed ſhould be an innumerable Army, *He brought him forth and ſaid, Look now towards Heaven, and tell the Stars, if thou be able to number them. And he ſaid unto him, ſo ſhall thy ſeed be* (Gen. 15. 5.) that is, thy ſeed ſhall be numberleſs, as the Stars are numberleſs.

Thirdly, By theſe Armies we may underſtand, not only the Angels, and the Sun, Moon, and Stars, that heavenly Hoſt, but any Creature, yea, all the Creatures, from the Elephant even to the Worm that creepeth upon the ground, or to the Fly that buzzeth in the air, or to the Lice that breed out of corruption. All theſe are the Armies of God; and by theſe he can do his work as well as by the Angels in Heaven. What were the Armies of God, with which he made war upon *Pharaoh?* Were they not Flies, and Lice, and ſuch like contemptible Creatures, muſtred together at his command? Therefore the Text may well ſay, *Is there any number of his Armies?* God can levy an Army upon the Earth, not only of Men, but of Beaſts; and not only of Lyons and Elephants, the ſtouteſt and greateſt Beaſts, but of the weakeſt and meaneſt; and not only of the weakeſt and meaneſt among living Creatures, but of the very Inanimate creatures; the Stones in the Fields, the Winds in the Air, the Waters of the Sea, yea, the Sand of the Sea, and the very Duſt of the Earth, are the Armies of God, if he gives them commiſſion and ſend them forth. God and the weakeſt Creature are an overmatch for the ſtrongeſt Creatures: 'Tis no matter how mean the means is, or how inconſiderable the inſtrument, ſo it be in the hand of God, ſo it be of Gods providing, and go forth at his bidding. God can leavy an Army where he will, and out of what he will, and it ſhall do the deed. Now if all things or any thing may be his Army, no marvail if it be ſaid, *Is there any number of his Armies?*

Hence Obſerve, *All Creatures are the Hoſt, the Armies of God.*

They may be called his Armies in a threefold conſideration.

Firſt, Becauſe of their multitude, a few cannot make an Army. There are many Creatures of every kind; how many then are all of every kind put together?

Secondly, They are his Armies, becauſe of their order: The greateſt *many* out of order do not make an Army, but a throng, or heap. Armies are martiall'd and diſciplin'd, trained and taught. An Army is an ordered company; all the Creatures are in order by Nature; and when God calls they are in order as it were by Art.

Thirdly, They are his Armies, becauſe as God hath a power to command them, ſo they are ready to obey him: They (as the Centurion in the Goſpel ſaid of his Souldiers) go when God ſaith go; they come when he ſaith come; and if he bid them do this or that they do it. Souldiers muſt neither refuſe nor diſpute the Commands of their General. The moſt violent and boyſterous Creatures are obedient to the call of God: *Stormy winds and tempeſts fulfil his word* (Pſal. 148. 8.) He ſpeaks to the *Lightnings*, and they ſay, *Here are we* (Job 38. 35.) The very Thunder, which ſeems to be all voice, is all ear at the voice of God. The Angels are ſo ready to go, that they are ſaid to fly; and their readineſs to do the will of God in Heaven, is made the pattern of our doing it here on Earth. The Scripture ſpeaks often of them as of an Army employed in wars, either to deſtroy the wicked, or to be a guard to the people of God. We have an illuſtrious example of the latter in *Jocob*'s caſe (*Gen.* 32. 2.) *And when* Jacob *ſaw them, he ſaid, this is Gods Hoſt; and he called the name of that place* Mahanaim, *that is, two hoſts or companies.* And it might be ſo called, becauſe *Jacob*'s company or little hoſt, and that company of Angels who were Gods Hoſt ſent out to convoy him in ſafety, did both encamp upon the ſame ground; or rather becauſe the Angels divided themſelves into two companies, the one encamping and marching before him as his Vantguard, the other behind him, or in his Reer, that ſo he might ſee himſelf every way protected, and might be filled with a full aſſurance of ſafety. That God hath ſuch numerous Armies alwayes at hand and under command, is,

Firſt, A very comfortable hearing to all that love and fear God. The Apoſtle ſaith (*Rom.* 8. 31.) *If God be for us, who can be againſt us?* That is, none can. Though many be againſt us oppoſingly; yet none can be againſt us prevailingly. We may ſay alſo, If the Lord be for us, who will not be for us? If God be our helper, we cannot want helpers; not only becauſe the help of God is enough without any more, but becauſe if he be onr helper we ſhall have many more. When we ſee our ſelves utterly deſtitute of all helps and helpers, yet God hath an Army of helpers; he hath Auxiliary forces ready for us (*Pſal.* 34. 7.) *The Angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.* *David* ſpeaketh as if one ſingle Angel were an whole Army, *The Angel of the Lord* (ſaith he) *encampeth*; he doth not ſay the Angels of the Lord encamp about them that fear him; and indeed every Angel of the Lord is more in power then a whole Army of men; yet here, poſſibly, is meant that Angel who is the Lord, The Angel of the Covenant, who as Captain General, with his Army of created Angels, encampeth about them that fear God. And if ſo, then they need not be afraid (2 *Kings* 6. 16, 17.) When the ſervant of *Eliſha* cryed out for fear, *Eliſha* anſwered, *Fear not; they that be with us are more then they that be with them. And* Eliſha *prayed, and ſaid, Lord, I pray thee open his eyes that he may ſee: And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man, and he ſaw; and behold, the mountain was full of Horſes, and Chariots of fire round about* Eliſha. And thus it is often with us though we diſcern it not. We have many inviſible ſuccours in our viſible dangers. And as that the Angels are our helpers in eminent and extraordinary dangers is very comfortable; ſo alſo, that they are ſo againſt ordinary, common, or every-day dangers (*Pſal.* 91. 11, 12.) *He ſhall give his Angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy wayes: They ſhall bear thee up in their hands, leſt thou daſh thy foot againſt a ſtone*; that is, leſt thou take hurt in thy daily works and travels.

Secondly, Theſe Armies are a terror to all thoſe who rebel and riſe up againſt God, or are enemies to his people. He that reſiſts God hath as many enemies as there are Angels in Heaven, or Stars in the Firmament, or Stones in the Earth, or Beaſts in the Field; ſo many enemies hath he; and if God appear as Captain General, none ſhall be able to ſtand before his Armies, though he levy them of Graſshoppers, or Flies, or Worms, or Lice. How ſhould the greateſt fear to provoke God, who can make them fall by that which is leaſt? For as *David* acknowledged (*Pſal.* 33. 16, 17.) *There is no King ſaved by the multitude of* *an hoſt*; *a mighty man is not delivered by much ſtrength*; *a horſe is a vain thing for ſafety*, *neither ſhall he deliver any by his great ſtrength.* So we muſt acknowledge, That if God will, any King may be deſtroyed by the ſmalleſt Hoſt; that a mighty man may be overcome by that which hath no ſtrength; that a Fly is a ſufficient thing for ruine, and that, if God ſay the word, even that ſhall not only trouble, but ſubdue any man with its little or no ſtrength.

Secondly, Note, *The power which God can draw forth is a limitleſs power: His Armies are without number.*

When Princes have greateſt Armies, they may number them, and tell you how many hundreds, and how many thouſands, and how many hundred thouſands they have. We have read of many very numerous Armies; but we never yet read of an innumerable Army; only Gods Army is without number; and therefore only his knows no bounds. *Is there any number of his Armies?*

And upon whom doth not his light ariſe?

Here *Bildad* ſets forth the glory of the Goodneſs, Omniſcience, and Omnipreſence of God, by his ſending forth his beams of light, as he in the former part of the verſe ſets forth the Glory of the Greatneſs and Power of God, by his ſending forth the Armies of his ſtrength.

De homine propriè dicit על מי *ſuper quem, etſi omnia ſimiliter lumen & virtutem ab eo accipiunt.* Merc.

Upon whom doth not his light ariſe?

The Text may be read thus, *Upon whom doth not his light ſtand?* Or, *Upon whom ſhall not his light ſtand?* We ſay, *Upon whom doth not his light ariſe?* Both tranſlations are good. But what is this light of God?

Firſt, We may underſtand it of that common light, the light of the Sun, for that is Gods light, and the univerſal ariſing of it upon the world is a wonderful work of God. For as God made the light, and gathered it into that great veſſel the Sun; ſo he carrieth it about the world every day. The light of the Sun is the meſſenger of Gods care and love to man every morning (*Math.* 5.45.) *He maketh his Sun to riſe on the evil and on the good*; that is, upon all, good and evil, divide the whole world between them: And while the Text in *Matthew* ſaith, *God maketh his Sun to riſe*, &c. it intimates, that the Sun riſeth daily by ſpecial direction from God: The Sun is his, and the light is his; there is no Creature that enjoyes the light of the Sun, but is beholding to God for it. He that made the Sun, maketh the Sun to riſe; as if the Sun like a weary or tired Traveller were unwilling to riſe in a morning and renew his Journey, or long Stage about the World, till called up by God, and commanded out for the ſervice of mankind: Of Sun-light we may ſay, *Upon whom doth not his light ariſe?*

Secondly, This light may be taken more ſtrictly for the light of Divine goodneſs. All the good, the peace, the comfort, which we enjoy in the world, is comprehended under the name of light. When the Pſalmiſt ſaith, *Light is ſown for the righteous*, his meaning is, *Good or comfort is ſown for the righteous* (Pſal. 97. 11.) And, *upon whom doth not this light ariſe?* The goodneſs of God extends it ſelf over all. God doth good to all, though he doth more good for ſome; for as God would have us to do good to all, but ſpecially to the houſhold of faith, ſo doth he. He ſends forth ſo much light of goodneſs as will make all men eternally inexcuſable who abuſe it; but he ſends forth ſo much light of his goodneſs to ſome as will make them eternally happy. The light of his goodneſs riſeth upon good men to cauſe them to rejoyce and live comfortably: And unleſs ſome light of his goodneſs did ariſe upon evil men, even upon the worſt of men, they could not ſubſiſt, nor live at all. His light is the life of man, *And upon whom doth not this light of Divine goodneſs ariſe?*

Thirdly, We may expound this light of the light of Divine wiſdom, which diſpoſeth and ordereth all things: And doth not this light ariſe upon the whole Creation? Doth not this light ſhine upon every Creature? Doth not this light direct the wayes of Man on Earth? Yea, doth not this light ariſe upon the Angels in Heaven, to direct them in all their wayes?

Fourthly, We may underſtand this light of the light of that Knowledge by which God himſelf knoweth all things. As God is light eſſentially, or as all that he is, is light; ſo we may ſay more eſpecially of his knowledge, it is light. Knowledge is the light of man, and therefore we ſay of an ignorant or unknowing man, that he is in darkneſs; and thus alſo knowledge is the light of God: And when the Apoſtle *John* ſaith (1 *Epiſt.* 1.) *That in him is no darkneſs at all*, his meaning is, in him is no ignorance at all. God ſends forth this light of his knowledge all the world over; he takes notice of all: As nothing is hid (in a common ſence) from the heat or light of the Sun in its walk about the World; ſo nothing is hid in, any, the ſtricteſt ſence from the knowledge of God.

Upon whom doth not this light ariſe? We are alwayes in the preſence of God, his eye is upon us and ſees us, he ſees where we are, and what we do; and as this light of his ſhines upon all things; ſo it will, at laſt, bring all things to light.

Now among theſe four Interpretations given, I conceive, that the word *light* is to be taken here in the ſecond ſence, *Upon whom doth not his light ariſe?* That is, the light of the goodneſs of God: Which goodneſs is the infinite freeneſs and readineſs of his nature to do good. And this light of his goodneſs ariſing upon the creature is five-fold.

Videtur potius lucis, nomen ad vim quam omnibus infundit pertinere, per eam ſunt omnia id quod ſunt. Merc.

Firſt, There is an upholding or preſerving Goodneſs, by which all things are maintained in their ſtate and being.

Secondly, There is a quickening and refreſhing Goodneſs, whereby all things (men, and among them godly men eſpecially) are renewed and revived in their well being.

Thirdly, There is a protecting Goodneſs of God, whereby his are kept while they are in dangers.

Fourthly, There is a delivering Goodneſs, whereby his are brought out of and ſet free from danger.

Fifthly, There is a ſtrengthening and ſupporting Goodneſs, whereby his are enabled to hear all the evils with which they are exerciſed in this world. And upon whom (yea, upon what) doth not the light of the Goodneſs of God ariſe every day in ſome one or more of theſe particulars?

Hence Obſerve, *All the light of man, or the light of all men is from God.*

If any light ariſe upon man it is of God; and upon what man ſoever light ariſeth it is of God. As the light of the air is his; ſo alſo is the light of our hearts. The light of life is his; and ſo is all that light of comfort which ſhines upon us while we live. *God is the Father of lights, from whom every good gift and every perfect gift cometh* (*James* 1.17.)

Secondly, Obſerve, *God is very communicative of his Goodneſs*; *Upon whom doth not his light ariſe?*

God doth not keep his light to himſelf, *he is good, and doth good*; he hath good, and doth good, he diſtributes it; God would not have us, much leſs doth he himſelf *put his Candle or light under a buſhel, but he ſets it upon a Candleſtick*, and it giveth light to all the world; it refreſheth and warmeth all the world. As the light of the ſpecial goodneſs of God in Chriſt ariſeth upon all ſorts and conditions of men in the world; ſo there is a light of his common providential goodneſs, which ariſeth upon each man of every ſort and condition in the world.

Another reading ſaith, *Upon whom doth not his light abide?* The light of God is not only an ariſing or ſpringing light, but a continuing and an abiding light: It doth not only break out upon us, but dwell with us. The natural Sun ariſeth every day upon us, but it doth not dwell with us, but is going from us as ſoon as it appears unto us; and therefore it was miraculous when the Sun ſtood ſtill, or haſted not to go down about a whole day (*Joſh.* 10. 13.) But the myſtical light of the goodneſs of God is a light that dwelleth alwayes over our heads, and haſteth not to go down. And indeed if God ſhould withdraw this light, or let it go down, if he ſhould ſtop the influences of his kindneſs from us, and ceaſe to do us good, we were ruin'd and undone; *For in him all things ſubſiſt, and are upheld by the word of his power*; if his light did not ariſe upon the creature, the creature would ſink into darkneſs. Nor could we abide what we are, if this light did not abide upon us. And as this is true in reference to our natural ſubſiſtence, ſo much more in reference to our ſpiritual. This light ariſing

לאו יקם *Super quem non ſtabit lumen ejus ut non ſolum exorientem & ſurgentē lucem, ſed etiam conſiſtentem calore, lumine & agendi facultate præ potentē & rebus omnibus humanis imminentem intelligamus.* Bold.

and abiding upon the Saints, maintains and upholds them, both in their graces and in their comforts.

Bildad having thus ſet forth the power and greatneſs of God in his dominion, and fear in his Hoſts and Armies, as alſo his kindneſs and beneficence in his light ariſing and abiding upon man, proceeds in the latter part of the Chapter to ſhew the ſinfulneſs and unworthineſs, the impurity and impotency of man compared with God.

VERS. 4, 5, 6.

How then can man be juſtified with God? Or how can man be clean that is born of a woman?

Behold, even to the Moon, and it ſhineth not; yea, the Stars are not pure in his ſight.

How much leſs man that is a worm, and the ſon of man which is a worm?

IN this Context *Bildad* gives further check to *Job*'s preſumption (as he conceived) in appealing to Heaven, and in begging audience of God himſelf, which he did (as hath been ſhewed) with earneſtneſs at the twenty-third Chapter.

Verſe 4. How then can man be juſtified with God?

The words are an Inference from what he had inſiſted upon and diſcourſed before concerning the dominion and fear of God, concerning the number of his Armies, and the ſhinings of his light every where; from all which he concludes, *How then can man be juſtified with God?* Or as if he had ſaid, *Seeing God is ſo dreadful, ſeeing he is an all-powerful, an all-ſeeing, and an all-upholding God, how dareſt thou, or any man living, plead with him? Or how is it poſſible for any man living to ſtand out with God and live?*

How then can man be juſtified with God?

This Queſtion carrieth a ſtrong denial: To ſay, *How then can man be juſtified with God?* is more then barely to ſay, *Man cannot be juſtified with God.* How can it be? Is not only thus much, It cannot eaſily be, it cannot probably be, but it cannot poſſibly be, or it is impoſſible to be: Such Queſtions, *How a thing may be?* are uſually an anſwer that they cannot be at all. Queſtions are ſometimes put for Information, or with deſire to be directed, or to have the myſtery opened, how ſuch things may be. The holy Virgin put ſuch a Queſtion (*Luke* 1. 34. when the Angel had told her ſhe ſhould have a Son) *Then ſaid* Mary *unto the Angel, How ſhall this be, ſeeing I know not a man?* Her Queſtion did not import her denial of the thing, but her wonder at it; nor did it imply her unbelief, as if ſhe thought it impoſſible to be, but her deſire to be informed in the way and manner how it would be; and to that ſence ſhe is anſwered, *The Holy Ghoſt ſhall come upon thee, and the power of the moſt High ſhall overſhadow thee.*

But here (I ſay) the Queſtion, *How can man be juſtified with God?* is reducible to this plain Negative Propoſition, *Man cannot be juſtified with God: How can man?* That is (as the word ſignifieth) miſerable man, ſickly man, weak impotent man; and it may note not only the impotency of his body, but of his ſpirit. Man is of a weak body at beſt, and of a more weak and ſickly ſpirit. Maſter *Broughton*'s tranſlation reacheth both, *And why ſhould ſorrowful man plead Juſtice with the Omnipotent?* Man is compaſſed about with ſorrows; and every man is in himſelf, what Chriſt was more eminently for us all, *A man of ſorrows, and acquainted with grief* (*Iſa.* 53. 3.) We take the word in its general ſignification.

אנוש *Calamitoſus ægrotabilis, morbis mortique obnoxius; ſic latini mortalem pro homine dicunt.*

How then can man be juſtified?

Bildad ſeems (as ſome expound him) by this Queſtion, to ſuſpect that *Job* had aſſerted a *ſelf-juſtification*; and it muſt be confeſſed, that what he ſpake at the twenty-third Chapter, *ver*, 10. 11, 12. might give him ſome colour for that ſuſpicion; *He knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tryed me I ſhall come forth as gold. My foot hath followed his ſteps; his way have I kept and not declined, neither have I gone back from the Commandments of his lips: I have eſteemed the words of his mouth more then my neceſſary food.* While *Job* thus aſſerted his own Innocency and integrity, *Bildad* might poſſibly ſuppoſe that he was aſſerting his own righteouſneſs, and therefore, not without ſome indignation he expoſtulates the matter with him, *How can man be juſtified?* That is, pronounced clean and quit at the Throne of God. *Juſtification* (conſidered in the Goſpel notion) *is that gracious ſentence of God, wherein with reſpect to Chriſt apprehended by faith, he abſolveth the Believer from ſin and death, and doth repute him juſt and righteous unto eternal life.* Of this the Apoſtle treats at large in the third, fourth, and fifth Chapters of the Epiſtle to the *Romans*, and in that to the *Galatians*. This Doctrine of free Juſtification is the foundation and corner ſtone of all our comfort. For whereas there is a double change in the ſtate of a ſinner: Firſt, A relative change: Secondly, An abſolute and real change. The one is made in Sanctification; the other in Juſtification: Sanctification is a real change, ſubduing corruption, deſtroying the power of ſin in us; But Juſtification is not a phyſical or real change in the perſon, it doth not make him that is unrighteous righteous in himſelf, nor is man at all juſtified (in this ſence) by any ſelf-righteouſneſs: but it is only a relative change as to his ſtate. To juſtifie is a Law term, ſignifying, the pronouncing or declaring of a man righteous: So that juſtification is an act of God upon us, or towards us: Sanctification is an act of God in us. This bleſſed Grace of Sanctification alwayes followeth the Grace of Juſtification, as an effect or fruit of it; and though it may eaſily be diſtinguiſhed from it, yet it can no more be ſeparated or divided from it, then heat from fire, or motion from life.

Yet I conceive, that *Bildad* in this place doth not ſpeak of Juſtification in that ſtrict Goſpel ſence, as it imports the pronouncing of a man righteous, for the ſake of Chriſt, or as if he ſuppoſed *Job* looked to be pronounced righteous for his own ſake. But *Bildad* ſpeaks of Juſtification here, as to ſome particular act: As for inſtance, If any man will contend with God (and that *Bildad* chargeth *Job* with) as if God had done him ſome wrong, or had afflicted him more then was need, is he able to make the plea good, and give Proof of it before the Throne of God? *How can man be juſtified with God?*

There is a fourfold underſtanding of that phraſe, With God.

Firſt, Thus, *If any man ſhall preſume to refer himſelf to the Judgment of God, ſhall he be juſtified?* (all at laſt muſt appear before the Judgment of God, whether they will refer themſelves to him or no; but) ſuppoſe a man refer himſelf to God (as *Job* had done by appealing to him) *can he be juſtified?* Will God upon the tryal and examination of his cauſe give judgment or ſentence for him? But in this ſence it is poſſible for a man to be juſtified with God; and thus *Job* was juſtified by God at laſt againſt the opinion and cenſures of his three Friends.

Secondly, *To be juſtified with God*, is as much as this, *If man come near to, or ſet himſelf in the preſence of God, ſhall he be juſtified?* Man uſually looks upon himſelf at a diſtance from God, he looks upon himſelf in his own light, and ſo thinks himſelf righteous; but when he looks upon himſelf in the light of God, and as one that is near God, will not all his ſpots and blemiſhes then appear? Or rather will not he himſelf appear all ſpot and blemiſh? When he is once with God, will he be any thing with himſelf, but an impure and wretched creature? In this ſence *Bildad* might check *Job*'s boldneſs in deſiring to come ſo near God, *even to his ſeat*, which would but have made him more vile in his own eyes, and diſcovered to him his own impurities, as it did the Prophet *Iſaiah* (Chap. 6. 5.) and as it did alſo to *Job* himſelf, when he attained his wiſh, and got ſo near to God, that he called it, *A ſeeing him with his eyes* (Chap. 42. 5.) Then we have not a word more of pleading his cauſe before God: His mouth was ſtopt, *And he abhorred himſelf, repenting in duſt and aſhes.*

Thirdly, *Can man be juſtified with God?* That is, if man compare himſelf with God, can he be juſtified? One man may compare himſelf with another and be juſtified. And thus, the faithful people of God are called righteous and juſt in Scripture, comparatively, to wicked and unrighteous men. But how can any man be juſt or righteous compared with God, in compariſon of whom all our righteouſneſs is unrighteous, and our very cleanneſs filthy?

Fourthly, *To be juſtified with God*, is, *againſt God*; that is, if man ſtrive or contend with God, in any thing, as if God were too hard and ſevere towards him, either by withholding good from him, or bringing evil upon him; can man be juſtified in this contention, or will God be found to have done him any wrong? without all queſtion he will not.

From the words taken in a general ſence, Obſerve,

Man hath nothing of his own to Juſtifie him before God.

There are two things conſiderable in man; Firſt, his ſin; Secondly, his righteouſneſs; his worſt and his beſt. All grant man cannot be juſtified by or for his ſins, nor can he at all be juſtified in or for his own righteouſneſs. And that upon a twofold ground.

Firſt, Becauſe the beſt of his righteouſneſs is Imperfect; and no Imperfect thing can be a ground of juſtification and acceptance with God. For though God doth juſtifie thoſe who are imperfect, yet he never juſtified any man upon the account of that which is imperfect. God never took cockle ſhels for payment, he muſt have pure Gold, and he ſeeth well enough what poor ſtuff, what baſe coyn the beſt of our righteouſneſs is, and therefore cannot admit any of it in juſtification. For the purpoſe of God is to exalt himſelf in juſtice as well as mercy by the juſtification of ſinners. And therefore the Apoſtle ſaith (*Rom.* 25. 26.) That *God hath ſet forth Chriſt to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteouſneſs* (and he is not content to ſay it once, but ſaith it again) *To declare, I ſay, his righteouſneſs, that he might be juſt, and the juſtifier of him that believeth in Jeſus.*

Secondly, All the righteouſneſs wrought by man is a due debt; how can we acquit our ſelves from the evil we have done by any good which we do, ſeeing all the good we do, we ought to have done, though we had never done any evil? When we have done our beſt we may be aſhamed of our doings, we do ſo poorly. But ſuppoſe we had done richly and bravely; ſuppoſe our works (which indeed are full of droſs) were pure Gold and Silver, were precious Stones and Jewels, yet they are already due to God. We owe all and all manner of obedience as we are Creatures; and we can never juſtifie our ſelves from our tranſgreſſions, by ſatisfying (could we reach them) our obligations. There is enough in Chriſt to juſtifie us, but there is nothing in our ſelves; all that Chriſt did was perfect, and Chriſt was under no obligation to do any thing, but what he willingly ſubmitted to do for us. This book of *Job* beareth as great a teſtimony to this truth as any; how often doth *Job* diſclaime all *ſelf Juſtification* (Chap. 9. 20, 21.) *If I juſtifie my ſelf, mine own mouth ſhall condemn me: If I ſay I am perfect, it ſhall alſo prove me perverſe. Though I were perfect, yet would not I know my own Soul, I would deſpiſe my life.* What can be ſaid more fully (to the tenour of the Goſpel) for the abaſement of ſelf, and the advancement of free grace in juſtification? He ſaid indeed (*Chap.* 13. 18.) *Behold now I have ordered my cauſe; I know that I ſhall be juſtified.* But he never ſaid that he ſhould be juſtified for the cauſe-ſake which he had ordered. There is a twofold juſtification.

Firſt, The juſtification of a man in reference unto ſome particular act, or in his cauſe.

Secondly, The juſtification of a man in his perſon. When *Job* ſaid, *I know that I ſhall be juſtified*, his meaning was, I ſhall be juſtified, in this caſe, in this buſineſs, I ſhall not be caſt as an Hypocrite (for he alwayes ſtood upon and ſtiffly maintained his integrity) or I know I ſhall be juſtified in this opinion which I conſtantly maintain; that a righteous man may be greatly afflicted by God, while in the mean time he ſpareth the unrighteous and the ſinner. A man may have much to juſtifie himſelf by before God, as to a controverſie between him and man; but he hath nothing at all to juſtifie himſelf by as to his ſtate towards God.

Again, As theſe words are referred to *Jobs* complaint of the ſeverity of Gods dealings with him.

Obſerve, *Whoſoever complains of the diſpenſations of God towards him, cannot be juſtified in it.*

Thus the *Jews* of old complained (*Ezek.* 18. 25.) *Ye ſay the way of the Lord is not equal.* But were they juſtified in this complaint, with God? How doth the Lord expoſtulate with them, in the next words, *Hear O houſe of* Iſrael, *is not my way equal? is not your way unequal?* As if he had ſaid; all the inequality is on your part, there is none on mine. The wayes of God, how hard and grievous ſoever they may be (as they were towards *Job*) yet unequal or unrighteous they can never be. The uſual dealings of God with us are full of mercy, and his ſevereſt dealings with us have no want of Juſtice. *How then can man be juſtified with God,*

Or how then can he be clean that is born of a woman?

Here's another queſtion of the ſame tenour, and in Chap. 15. verſ. 14. *Eliphaz* ſpake almoſt in the ſame terms, *What is man that he ſhould be clean? and he that is born of a woman, that he ſhould be righteous? Jobs* friends beat often upon this point, vehemently ſuſpecting that he did over-weene his own condition, and thought too highly of himſelf. Whereas *Job* did not only freely and ingenuouſly, but with a great deal of holy Rhetorick and Elegancy confeſs againſt himſelf again and again, that he neither was nor could be clean before God; only he would not admit their plea againſt him, that he ſuffered for his uncleanneſs, or that he was unclean becauſe he ſuffered.

Maſter *Broughton* tranſlates thus; or, *The born of woman look to be cleared.* We ſay; *How can he be clean that is born of a woman?* that is, how can he have a nature at all clean, or be altogether clean in his life, who cometh into the world through a world of uncleanneſs? Can the ſtream be clean, when the fountain is unclean? or the product be better then that which is produced. Man born of a woman by natural generation (ſo *Bildad* is to be underſtood) comes from an unclean fountain, from an impure Original; and therefore, how can he be pure and clean? What the particular Emphaſis, and importance of this phraſe (*To be born of a woman*) is, hath been opened already (*Chap.* 14. 1. & 15. 14.) and therefore I refer the Reader to thoſe Texts for a further Expoſition. And ſhall here only give out this Obſervation.

All men born of a woman by natural generation are impure and unclean.

There was never but one man, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, born of a woman who was not unclean, and he was born of a woman, not in an ordinary, but miraculous way; *The holy Ghoſt ſhall come upon thee, and the power of the moſt high ſhall overſhadow thee* (Luk. 1. 35.) All theſe born of a woman have been and are unclean. It is ſaid (*Gen.* 5. 3.) Adam *lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a Son in his own likeneſs, after his Image, and called his name* Seth. Adam *begat a Son in his own likeneſs*; what likeneſs? it is not meant of his outward likeneſs, of the figure or the feature of his Body, that was the leaſt part of the likeneſs there intended, in which his Son was born; every Father begets a Son in a humane ſhape; and we ſay the Child is like his Father, not only as having the ſame ſpecifical nature, but as having the perſonal figure and proportions of his Father. But when it is ſaid, *Adam begat a Son in his own likeneſs, in his Image*, the meaning is, he begat a Son that was a ſinner as himſelf was, and corrupt as himſelf was, even *Seth*, who was given in the place of *Abel*. God in the Creation made man in his Image, after his likeneſs; man by procreation begets a Son, not in Gods Image, but in his own; and that not only like him in conſtitution as a man, but in corruption as a ſinner. *David* confeſſeth of himſelf (*Pſal.* 51. 5.) *Behold I was ſhapen in iniquity, and in ſin did my mother conceive me.* Some to avoid the ſtrength and dint of that Text, as to the proof of the corruption of nature by propagation, put a moſt corrupt and baſe gloſs upon it; as if *David* had therein only confeſſed his parents ſinfulneſs or inordinate affections in begetting and conceiving him; not his own natural ſinfulneſs as begotten and conceived. I know no better argument of the corruption of nature, then ſuch corrupt interpretations of Scripture; for doubtleſs as *Bildad* here in the Text, ſo *David* was acquainted not only with the doctrine of Original ſin, and the corruption of nature, but had found and felt the ſad effects of it in himſelf, and from that experience could ſay, *I was ſhapen in iniquity*, &c. as alſo conſent to what *Bildad* ſaith in this place, *what is man that is born of a woman, that he ſhould be clean?* do but acknowledge that any one is born ordinarily of a woman, and we may conclude him to be ſinful and unclean. That I may make this a little clearer, I ſhall touch at three things, which are diſtinctly conſiderable in the ſin of *Adam.*

Firſt, That particular act, or fact againſt the Law, which he commited in eating the forbidden fruit.

Secondly, The legal guilt that flowed from that act, both upon his perſon and upon his poſterity.

Thirdly, The natural corruption which, as a conſequent of the former, ſtained all mankind. Or there was, firſt, the tranſgreſſion of the Commandement, which was his eating the forbidden fruit; Secondly, there was the puniſhment of that tranſgreſſion, which was death inflicted for eating; Thirdly, the depravation of the whole maſs of mans nature, by which, as *Bildad* ſpeaks, *Every man born of a woman is unclean.* And theſe three fell upon the whole poſterity of *Adam,* or upon all that are born of a woman in a threefold way.

Firſt, The very act of *Adams* ſin becometh ours; for we did participate with him, and had, as it were, a hand in it, becauſe we all were ſeminally in him; ſo that when he ſinned, we all ſinned being in his loyns long before we were born, as *Levi* paid tythes in *Abraham* before he was born (*Heb.* 7. 9, 10.) Thus we all ſinned in his ſinning, and had a ſhare of that action of his, becauſe he ſtood as the root of mankind, and as having entred a covenant with God in that capacity. For he ſinned, not only as a ſingle perſon, but as he was the repreſentative of all mankind, and therefore what he did we are reckoned as doing the ſame with him.

Secondly, The guilt of that ſin is ours by particular Imputation, as the fact is ours by common participation; for as if *Adam* had ſtood in a ſtate of Innocency, that had redounded to us for good, ſo his fall or ſin redoundeth to us for evil.

Thirdly there is the pravity or corruption of nature, iſſuing from that firſt ſin, and that is chiefly aimed at in the preſent Text. And this is derived to us by propagation. The defilement of nature deſcendeth and paſſeth from generation to generation: Therefore, *how can he that is born of a woman be clean?* and that defilement hath two things in it.

Firſt, The loſs of Original purity, or the defacing and blotting out of the Image of God in which man was created.

Secondly, A ſucceſſion of horrible deformity and diſorder, which conſiſteth, firſt, in a proneneſs to all evil; ſecondly, in an impotency and weakneſs, yea in an averſeneſs from and enmity againſt all that is good. So then, we have to do with the very act of *Adams* ſin by participation, with the guilt of it by Imputation, and with the filth and deformity of it by propagation: From all which it may well be queſtioned, *How can he be clean that is born of a woman,* and concluded, *Every man born of a woman is unclean.*

Verſ. 5. **Behold, even to the Moon and it ſhineth not, and the Stars are not pure in his ſight.**

In this verſe *Bildad* proceedeth to argue down the preſumption (as he conceived) of *Job,* by calling him to conſider thoſe things which are far below God, and yet were far above him; as if he had ſaid; *Wilt thou contend with God, when thou canſt not contend with the Moon and Starrs? they have a brightneſs beyond any thing of thine, why then doeſt thou inſiſt ſo ſtiffly upon the ſhinings of thy converſation towards men, and the brightneſs of thine integrity towards God?*

Behold, even to the Moon and it ſhineth not.

There is a twofold underſtanding of theſe words; firſt, ſome expound them by deſcending, as if *Bildad* had ſpoken thus; *Behold* O Job, *and be both aſhamed of and aſtoniſhed at thy own folly, in venturing upon a tryal before God, who is of ſuch infinite purity, that while he looketh upon all theſe heavenly lights that are above the Moon, even to or as low as the Moon, which (as Aſtronomers teach) is the loweſt of all the Planets, it ſhineth not, there is no brightneſs, no beauty in any of them; they are all in compariſon of God but clouds and darkneſs, but clods of Earth and dirt. And if they ſhine not in the eye of God, ſurely much leſs doeſt thou, who art a worm, and but a clod of moving or breathing Earth?*

Secondly, Others expound it by aſcending. As if *Bildad* had ſpoken thus: *Behold,* O Job, *and tremble at thy preſumption in deſiring that God ſhould take ſo exact a ſcrutiny of thee and of thy cauſe: for look upon all the parts of the inferiour viſible world, look upon all their glories and excellencies, and look not only upon thoſe things that are creeping here upon the Earth, but lift up thine eyes as high as the Moon it ſelf, behold even to the Moon (which is, as it were the boundary between the upper and the lower world: The Moon being the loweſt of the upper world, and the higheſt of the lower world: now ſaith* Bildad, *ſurvey the world up to the Moon) and it ſhineth not.*

But doth not *the Moon ſhine*? yes! the Moon ſhineth, the Moon is *that leſſer light which was made to rule the night* (Gen. 1. 16.) Why then doth he ſay *it ſhineth not?* the meaning is only this, that Moon-light, and Sun-light, that all Creature-light, is no light, nor their ſhining to be called ſhining when we ſpeak of the light and ſhinings of God himſelf. The Moon ſhineth for the uſe and to the eye of man, but the Moon ſhineth not for any uſe to or in the eye of God. As becauſe he is light, he needeth no light, ſo becauſe there was no light till he created it, the light of the Creature is nothing unto him.

The Moon and Stars ſhine, but when the Sun is up they ſhine not, that is, not to our view; the Stars ſhine as much in the day as in the night, though we cannot ſee them, being over-power'd by that greater light, the light of the Sun; ſo when the glory of the Lord appeareth, both Sun and Moon diſappear, and are no more ſeen. The light of the world is no light where God is named; do but ſpeak of God, and all the beauty and brightneſs of the Creature fades and is extinct. The Moon is a very beautiful Creature conſidered by it ſelf, as *Job* ſpeaks to ſhew how far he was from Idolizing it, notwithſtanding all that beauty wherein it appeared to him (*Chap.* 31. 26.) *If I beheld the Sun when it ſhined, or the Moon walking in brightneſs*: that is, if I beheld either Sun or Moon ſo as to adore and worſhip them; if I reckoned any thing of Moon and Sun, in compariſon of God, if I did not judge the light of both as darkneſs and obſcurity in reference unto him, if I did not behold them ſo as if I did not behold them, not being taken up or dazzl'd at all with their ſhining brightneſs, ſcarce at all ſeeing, not at all admiring any brightneſs, but the brightneſs of God; if it were not thus with me, if I ſtood not at this diſtance, and upon theſe terms with the beſt of the Creatures, then, &c. It argues that there is much natural beauty in the Moon, when as *Job* to ſhew his ſpiritual chaſtity ſaith, that the beauty of it did not at all withdraw or ſteal away his heart from God. Indeed ſuch is the beauty of the Moon that it is uſed to ſhadow out the Church in her ſpiritual beauty (*Cant.* 6. 10.) *Who is ſhe that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the Moon.* The Moon is fair, yet ſhe hath her ſpots; but God is fair without any ſpot, and therefore the fairneſs of the Moon is no fairneſs at all to his.

Ne luna quidem lucida eſt collata cum deo. Vatabl.

There is another reading of the words (*Behold even to the Moon, and it doth not extend its tents, or doth not extend its light like a tent*; for when the light is ſpread firſt out, it is like the ſpreading of a tent upon the mountains. To which the Prophet *Joel* ſeemeth to allude (*Chap.* 2. 2.) in that phraſe; *As the morning ſpread upon the mountains. Behold to the Moon, and it doth not ſpread out its light, nor extend its tents*; our tranſlation reacheth the ſence fully; *It ſhineth not*;

ולא יאהיל *Et non expandit lumē ſuum in modum Tentorii.* Complut.

Yea the Stars are not pure in his ſight.

The Stars are ſuppoſed higher and greater then the Moon; the Stars are pure and ſplendid Bodies, as hath been ſhewed from other places of this Book. So that, when *Bildad* ſaith, *the Stars are not pure,* it is not an abſolute denyal of their purity, but as himſelf expounds it, they are not pure in the ſight of God. The Stars have neither thoſe ſpots, nor thoſe changes which the Moon hath, they are a more clear and a more certain light, yet *Even the Stars are not pure in his ſight,* and we may reckon the Sun among the Stars too, though ſometimes they are ſpoken of diſtinctly, *Sun, Moon,* and *Stars.* Thus *Bildad* pleads the excellency of God above the moſt excellent Creatures, how much more above man, who is now caſt much behind many of the Creatures, through the corruption of his nature, and is not diſparaged by being compared to the meaneſt of them. *Behold, even to the Moon, and it ſhineth not, and the Stars are not pure in his ſight.*

Hence Obſerve, *The glory or beauty of the moſt glorious and beautiful Creatures is no glory, no beauty compared with the glory and beauty of God.*

Bildad inſtancing in the moſt beautiful Creatures, takes in the beauty of all the Creatures; all which is but a ray, a beam to his infinite light, but a drop to his infinite Ocean: Their glory is but an effect of his; and though the meaneſt of them are perfect in their ſtate, yet the beſt of them are not perfect in degree. It was ſaid anciently, *Look upon the Heavens, they are beautiful; look upon the Earth, that alſo is beautiful; but he that made Heaven and Earth is infinitely more beautiful then either of them both, or then both of them.*

When God had finiſhed the work of Creation, it is ſaid (*Gen.* 1. 31.) *And God ſaw all that he had made, and behold it was very good.* How then is it ſaid, that *the Moon ſhineth not, and that the Stars are not pure in his ſight?*

I anſwer, firſt as before, all things which God made were good as Creatures, but nothing was good as the Creator.

Secondly, I anſwer, the creature is not now ſo good as it was when firſt Created, the ſin of man did not only pollute and ſtain the glory of man, but of the whole Creation; and therefore the Apoſtle ſaith (*Rom.* 8. 20, 21, 22.) *That the Creature was made ſubject to vanity, not willingly, but by reaſon of him who hath ſubjected the ſame in hope, becauſe the Creature it ſelf alſo ſhall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God: for we know that the whole Creation groaneth and travelleth in pain together until now.* From this illuſtrious context it appeares that God for mans ſin hath put the whole Creation to diſgrace and ſuffering, and that all Creatures are fallen from the firſt perfection by the fall of the firſt man; the very lights of Heaven are made dark, and the Stars impure, by mans impurity. Now if by the ſin of man, thoſe Creatures who in themſelves are ſinleſs, even the Moon and Stars, have contracted defilement, and are not without blemiſh in the ſight of God; then how much leſs is man (by whom they have taken this infection) free from blemiſh or infection himſelf, as *Bildad* infers in the next words and cloſe of the Chapter.

Verſ. 6. **How much leſs man that is a worm, and the Son of man which is a worm?**

As if he had ſaid, *If the Sun Moon and Stars are not pure in his ſight, how much leſs is man pure?* Nor is *Bildad* content to ſay how much leſs is man? but he giveth a very debaſing compariſon of man,

Cum precedit ſententia negativa particula illa אשבו *Communè redduntur quanto minus.* Piſc.

How much leſs is man that is a worm, and the Son of man which is a worm.

How much leſs.] We may ſay alſo, how much more is man impure in his ſight; ſo, the Original words are often rendred; as the Reader may ſee in thoſe places (*Pro.* 11. 31. *Pro.* 15. 11.)

Bildad layeth man as low as he can, ſhewing that he is ſo far below the Stars that he is as low as a worm; and if the Stars be impure in the ſight of God, how much more is man a worm? What's a worm? what a dark dull thing is a worm to a Star? yet that is not ſo dull a thing to a Star, as a Star is to God, therefore if the *Stars are not pure in his ſight, how much leſs man that is a worm?*

רמה *Vermis parvus in carne aut caſeo naſcens.*

A worm is one of the meaneſt Creatures, and the word that is here uſed ſignifieth the meaneſt of worms, properly and ſtrictly thoſe little worms which breed in fleſh or Cheeſe, or in any other kind of food when it is corrupted. The word is uſed (*Exod.* 16. 24.) where it is ſaid of the *Manna* that was reſerved contrary to the command of God, that *it bred worms*; ſuch a worm is man; and *Bildad* is not content to ſay this once, but he ſaith it again,

And the Son of man which is a worm.

Here is the ſame thing doubled; and 'tis doubled by *Bildad* to aſſure us of the truth and certainty of it; as if he had ſaid, *I am not afraid to aver what I have ſpoken, I have ſaid it, and I ſay it again, how much leſs man, who is a worm, and the Son of man which is a worm?*

The Son of man.] That is, any man, high or low, rich or poor, learned or unlearned, they who are at greateſt diſtance in themſelves meet all in this, they are worms. To be called the Son of man, imports the meanneſs of man, and minds man of his weakneſs and frailty. *Ezekiel* the Prophet is often ſpoken to by the Lord, in this ſtile, *Son of man*; the reaſon given by ſome is this, becauſe he was a man often rapt up in the viſions of God, or had the viſions of God ſent down to him, he was a man that lived ſo much in Heaven, that he might even forget that he was of the Earth, therefore the Lord minds him often of his Original by calling him, *Son of man, Son of man*; ſo here, *Bildad* mindeth man of the meanneſs of his birth, he is but the *Son of man*. Some proud men have drawn their pedigree from the Gods, or from the Stars, *Alexander the Great* would be called the Son of *Jupiter*, which was to ſay the Son of the Sun, he did not like to be called the Son of man, though he was ſo; but he was ſoon after convinced, and confeſſed that he was ſo.

And the Son of man which is a worm.

תולעה *vermis magnus & parvus, qui ab omnibus teritur & contunditur.*

We expreſs the latter branch by the ſame word **worm** in our Engliſh, but the Hebrew ſpeaks it in a different word; and Maſter *Broughton* renders it differently in the Engliſh, *and the Son of man a vermin.* The word ſignifieth both ſmall and great worms, all ſorts of worms or vermin; here's the ſtate of man; and how can he who is ſuch a worm ſtand before God, in his purity, when the Sun Moon and Stars are impure before him?

Again, we may take notice that *Bildad* doth not ſay, man is like a worm, but *is a worm.* 'Tis not ſpoken by way of ſimilitude, but of aſſertion.

Hence Obſerve, *Man is a very poor thing.*

So poor a thing that he is twice in this Text called a worm; the loweſt things ſerve for a Compariſon and bear the likeneſs of the higheſt and greateſt men in the world; man is but a worm, and the Son of man is no better, a worm or vermin. As it ſheweth the excellency of God, that nothing is ſo good, ſo great, ſo perfect, that is worthy to be compared with him (*Iſa.* 40. 18.) *To whom will you liken God? or what likeneſs will ye compare unto him?* Look over all the Excellencies that are in the Creature, is there any thing that looks like God, that hath not any excellency or beauty comparatively to him? And (*Iſa.* 46. 5.) *To whom will you liken me, and make me equal, and compare me, that we may be like?* that is, there is nothing that you can compare or make me like unto, I am above all compariſon. Now (I ſay) as it ſhews the excellency of God, that there is nothing worthy to be compared to him, ſo it ſhews the meanneſs of man, that there is nothing ſo unworthy but that he may be compared to it, and that without wrong or diſparagement. The Scripture doth as it were ſtrive for compariſons, to ſet forth the weakneſs, the poorneſs, the worthleſneſs of man; he is compared to, yea called duſt (*Gen.* 3. 19.) *Duſt thou art, and to duſt thou ſhalt return.* He is compared to the graſs of the field that groweth to day, but withereth or is cut down to morrow (*Iſa.* 40. 6.) He is compar'd unto a ſhadow that hath nothing of Entity or ſubſtance, and therefore continueth not, but vaniſheth away (*Job* 14. 2.) He is compar'd to that which is leſs then a ſhadow, even to that which is, as I may ſay, *the nothingneſs of all things, vanity*; and thus he is called when at his beſt or in his beſt eſtate (*Pſ.* 39. 5.) Further, man is not only nothing and leſs then nothing, but that which is worſe then nothing, *a lye*; he is naturally under ſuch diſgrace that he is the very *word of diſgrace, a lye. Surely* (ſaith *David*, Pſal. 62. 9.) *men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lye.* Nor doth the Lord ſpeak thus of ſingle perſons only, but of Nations, and not only of this or that Nation, but of all Nations: take mankind in a cluſter or as bundled up together, not only is this or that man, this or that Nation, but all men and all Nations *before him are as nothing, and are counted to him leſs then nothing and vanity* (Iſa. 40. 17.) They are not only duſt, but (which is the lighteſt and moſt inconſiderable duſt) *the duſt of the ballance*, and that the ſmalleſt duſt of the ballance (*Iſa.* 40. 15.) they are not only a drop, but *the drop of a bucket*, which is but the drop of a drop. The ſimilitude in the Text layeth man low enough, *He is a worm.* When the Lord would ſpeak of his people at the loweſt rate in reference to the opinion which they had of themſelves, or which others had of them, he calls them *a worm,* (Iſa.41.14.) *Fear not thou worm* Jacob, *and ye men of* Iſrael*:* God doth not ſpeak to the diſparagement, or the diſcouragement of *Jacob*; as if he had ſaid, though thou art a worm, though thou art thus low, thus mean, humbly in thy own thoughts, contemptuouſly in the thoughts of others, yet fear not; yea all ſhall have cauſe to be afraid of thee, for though thou art a worm, yet thou *ſhalt threſh the Nations, and beat them ſmall,* &c. As National *Jacob* then, ſo perſonal *Jacob*, or *Jacob* in perſon before was but a worm in his own eyes. (*Gen.*32.10.) *I am not worthy of the leaſt of all the mercies (or I am leſs then all the mercies) and of all the truth which thou haſt ſhewed unto thy Servant, for with my ſtaffe I paſſed over this* Jordan; that is, I came over in a very poor manner, all my ſtate was but a ſtaffe. Here *Jacob* in perſon ſpake of himſelf as a worm, *and when we ſpeak thus like worms, we ſpeak moſt like Saintt.* Our Lord Jeſus Chriſt ſpake thus of himſelf, as for our ſakes he became poor and emptyed himſelf, as for our ſakes *he took upon him the form of a Servant, and was made in the likeneſs of man,* (Pſ.22.6.) *I am a worm and no man, a reproach of men, and deſpiſed of the people.* O how low did Chriſt eſteem and ſet himſelf, as, and while he ſtood in the place of ſinners? He not only confeſſed that he was a worm, becauſe a man, but that he was a worm and no man. How then ought every ſinful man to abaſe himſelf and ſay, *I am a worm and no man*? Man is a worm in a five-fold reſpect.

Firſt, Look upon his Original and conſtitution, he is from the Earth as the worm is.

Secondly, Look upon him in his natural ſtate and condition, he liveth upon the earth and earthly things as worms do.

Thirdly, He is a worm, becauſe continually ſubject to danger, every foot may cruſh him.

Fourthly, As the worm is very ſubject to danger, ſo likewiſe unable to reſiſt, or make defence; the worm is a naked Creature, and wears no Armes, neither offenſive nor defenſive. Such a one is man, a worm, unable to defend himſelf, unleſs the Lord be his ſhield and a defence to him round about.

Fifthly, Man is a worm, for he muſt ſhortly return into the Earth where the worms are houſed; he is going to worms, as a worm, and when he comes to the grave it will be worm to worm. As the Lord ſaid, *Duſt thou art, and to duſt thou ſhalt return*; ſo we may ſay, a worm thou art, and to worms thou ſhalt return. Thus we ſee man is a poor thing, a very poor thing, and hence I ſhall make four or five brief inferences.

Firſt, Let no man be proud, or have high thoughts of himſelf; the Son of man is but a worm. O why doth man ſwell above the Clouds, or proudly make his neſt among the Stars, whenas he muſt ſhortly fall among the Clods, and as he is a worm, ſo be eaten up of worms?

Secondly, Let men take heed of adoring one another with great words and flattering Titles, let us take heed of having the perſons of men in admiration; it is as vain a thing, for any man to give great flattering Titles to others, as it is to have high thoughts of himſelf. The Titles which the Spirit of God gives to man, are humbling Titles, a flower, a ſhadow, *&c.* any thing which may keep down his Spirit and abate ſelf-valuations; we ſhould learn as to think of our ſelves, ſo to ſpeak of other men as the Holy Ghoſt ſpeaketh. As he doth not paint man out with praiſes, nor ſpeak of him as Courtiers (whoſe hearts are the ſhops of complements, and their tongues the venters of them) do of Princes; ſo neither ſhould we: There are two extreams which we ſhould labour exceedingly to avoid in our references to men; and yet moſt men walk in one of theſe extreams towards men. Firſt, we ſhould take heed of reproaching, vilifying, and deſpiſing others; for though it be a duty for every man to think meanly of himſelf, and to ſay of himſelf, I am a worm; and though we may lawfully think and ſay of all men, as to the general truth of the propoſition, yet it is ſo far from being a duty, that it is not at all lawful to call any man worm, with reproach and contempt of the meanneſs of his perſon. Secondly, we ſhould take heed of flattering and daubing others, as thoſe *Tyrians* did *Herod*, *crying out it is the voyce of God and not of man* (*Acts* 12.22.) whereas God to ſhew their miſtake, and that he was but a worm, ſmote him, and he was eaten up of worms. *Elihu* concludes and reſolves excellently to this point (*Job* 32.21, 22.) *Let me not I pray you, accept any mans perſon, neither let me give flattering Titles unto man: for I know not to give flattering Titles, in ſo doing my maker would ſoon take me away.* As God took away *Herod* for receiving flattering Titles, ſo they who give them are in danger to be taken away by God.

Thirdly, Be not envious at others; what if another have a little more glory, riches, beauty, ſtrength, power, then thou haſt, what though he have a little more knowledg, and be a little higher in gifts then others, yet he is but a worm ſtill; what's man but a worm? why ſhould a worm envy a worm, what though ſome men are *ſilk-worms*, a little better furniſhed and richer then others in mind and body, yet they are but worms in ſilk, and many who appear ſo, are but *Glow-worms*, which ſhine a little but have no conſiſtence.

Fourthly, Let the Sons of men take heed of vexing one another; why ſhould worms riſe up againſt worms, why ſhould worms deſtroy worms cruelly, bloodily? we are all weak as worms, let us therefore engage that little ſtrength we have, for the ſupporting, not for the ruining of one another. We uſually have ſo much tenderneſs towards worms in kind, that when we ſee them crawling upon the ground, we avoid treading upon them; yet how do men purpoſely tread upon worms in likeneſs. All men are worms in likeneſs, we ſhould not willingly tread upon or hurt any man. But poor men, and men of low degree, are more worms then rich men, and men of high places are; therefore take heed of oppreſſing the poor, for that is indeed, a treading upon worms. And though while you tread upon worms, the weak and needy, they cannot (as Chriſt ſpeaks of ſwine, *Mat.* 7.6.) *turn again and rent you*, yet if you do ſo, God, the ſtrong God will turn upon you and tear you while there is none to deliver.

Laſtly take this inference from it,

Man by ſin is much degraded and fallen below himſelf.

Man by ſin is become inferiour to the meaneſt Creatures, who was once above all viſible Creatures: Man in the ſtate of Creation was the chief peice of the inviſible world, but now man is fallen very low, he is level'd with the loweſt of the Creatures, a worm; not only do the Heavenly Bodyes exceed him in beauty, but even the Earthly Bodyes, the Beaſts of the field, and the worm that crawles upon the Earth, and lives in the bowels of it, is good enough to make compariſon with him. See what man hath loſt by ſin! ſee how he is degraded and fallen from his ſtate and ſtatelineſs! yea I may ſay that man by ſin is not only fallen from the ſtate and ſtatelineſs wherein he was Created, but he is fallen below the ſtate of the loweſt Creature. Man (by ſin) is not only a worm but worſe then a worm; a worm is not capable of moral polution; a toad hath natural poyſon, but man hath moral poyſon in him, which is worſe then natural poyſon; and which makes the condition of man yet more vile, his moral poyſon (ſin I mean) is to him natural. It is his miſery and his diſhonour that he hath it, and it is his greater miſery and diſhonour, that he loves it, and that it is not ſo much his diſeaſe as his deſire: And as the firſt ſin, the ſin of nature, hath debaſed all mankind at once; ſo every man that goeth on in and multiplyeth (with deſire) the acts of ſin, debaſeth himſelf yet more, and maketh himſelf not only lower then the worm, which is the loweſt of living things, but even lower then the loweſt things that have no life. Senſleſs liveleſs Creatures are better then ſinful men, ſuch I mean as live in ſin, and better it had been for any never to have had a being, or not to had lived at all, then to dye in ſin.

Seeing then ſin hath degraded us, and placed us among and below the worms, who were once next to Angels, how are we engaged to Jeſus Chriſt, who by becoming a worm for us, hath raiſed us to be Heirs of bleſſedneſs with the holy Angels for ever, and hath lifted us up to that height of honour, that even the holy Angels miniſter to us as long as we are here. And how ſhould we ſtrive to raiſe our ſelves up higher and higher in the improvement of all that grace which is freely offered to us in Chriſt, even to our daily *converſation in Heaven, and our ſitting together in Heavenly places in Chriſt Jeſus*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks (*Epheſ.* 2. 16.) It is ſad for any man who is but a worm, to be lifted up in himſelf, but it is the duty of every man to ſtrive that he may be lifted up, not only above the worms, but above the Heavens. We may quickly ſin in ſeeking our own exaltation in a worldly, but the more we ſeek our exaltation in a heavenly ſtate, the more holy, yea the more humble we are. We never act as thoſe who know they are but worms, here on Earth, till we have an ambition to be like the Angels who are in Heaven.

Thus I have opened and done with this third, and that a very ſhort diſcourſe of *Bildad* in this Chapter, wherein he hath ſpoken excellently as to the general truth, in exalting God and humbling man, yet he is upon the old miſtake, concluding *Job a ſelf-juſtifier, yea a contender with God*; whereas indeed his thoughts were as low as his ſtate or perſon, in reference to any conceit of righteouſneſs in himſelf, or of any boldneſs in charging God with the leaſt unrighteouſneſs (though there was much ſeverity) in his dealings with him.

CHAP. XXVI. Verſ. 1, 2, 3, 4.

But Job *anſwered, and ſaid,*

How haſt thou helped him that is without power? how ſaveſt thou the arme that have no ſtrength?

How haſt thou counſelled him that hath no wiſdome? and how haſt thou plentifully declared the thing as it is?

To whom haſt thou uttered words? and whoſe Spirit came from thee?

Non reſpondit ad Bildadi *dicta, ſed eum ridet quaſi ea attulerit quæ parum ad rē faciant, imo ab inſtituto aliena.* Merc.

THIS Chapter containeth *Jobs* anſwer to the third and laſt diſpute or oppoſition to his ſecond friend *Bildad*; wherein he doth two things.

Firſt, He complaineth of and in a manner derideth *Bildads* dealing with him, as if what he had urged were not only little to the purpoſe, but very wide from it. This he doth in the four firſt verſes of the Chapter.

Secondly, *Job* gives out a large narrative of the power, perfections, and excellencies of Gods, of his wonderful works, and providences, which *Bildad* had but ſlightly touched; this he doth in the remaining part of the Chapter.

Verſe 1. **But Job anſwered and ſaid,**
2. **How haſt thou helped him that is without power?**

מה *Admirantis eſt, & hæc dicit* εἰρωνικῶς *ſive* εἰρωνευόμενος. Druſ. *In qua re adjuviſti ſententiā tuam de providentia dei particulari, in qua nulla ſunt viris. Quare ex Hebræo legit, non cujus ſed quid adjuviſti,* Vatabl.

There is a queſtion among Interpreters, who is here meant, by him *that is without power*, and who by *the arm that hath no ſtrength*; who *by him that hath no wiſdome*. There are three opinions about the reſolving of this queſtion.

Firſt, Some expound it not of a perſon, but of a thing, for the Original leaves it in ſuch words as may be determined upon either, and may as well be rendred, *that which hath no power, as, him that hath no power*. And the thing without power, which this interpretation aimes at, is the opinion or tenet which *Bildad* and his friends had held forth in their diſcourſe: Which *Job* is conceived to look upon, as weak, and without power, as having neither ſtrength nor wiſdome in it. And becauſe *Bildad* made the laſt reply, *Job* (according to this expoſition) beſpeaks him thus; *Thine own former arguments, as alſo thoſe of thy friends, had no power, no ſtrength of reaſon, nor true wiſdome in them; and haſt thou mended the matter now? haſt thou by what thou ſpakeſt laſt put any ſtrength into what hath been weakly and feebly argued already? as for my ſelf, I am neither better enformed nor comforted, then I was, and therefore have reaſon to conclude, that there is no more ſtrength nor power in what is now ſaid, then in what was ſaid before.* It is uſual to apply ſtrength to a ſpeech, we ſay ſuch a man made a ſtrong ſpeech; as for ſuch a one, his ſpeech had no ſtrength, no ſinews in it. And that ſpeech which hath no ſtrength in it, can never adminiſter ſtrength to thoſe to whom it is ſpoken; ſo that to ſay, *how haſt thou helped him that hath no power*, is to ſay, the ſpeech by which thou haſt attempted or endeavoured to help him, that hath no power. Yet I conceive that *Job* doth here intend a perſon, whom his friends ſuppoſed without power, ſtrength, or wiſdome, rather then his friends ſpeech, which himſelf judged and (as his own relief) found to be ſo.

Hoc de deo accipio, O quam egregie eum adjuviſti qui imbecillis erat, & invalido es patrocinatus Quaſi tua defenſione deus indigerit. Merc. *Cujus adjutor es num imbecillis & ſuſtentas brachium ejus qui non eſt fortis.* Vulg. *Cui auxiliatus es, cui non potentia?* Mont.

Secondly, By *him that hath no power, and the arme that hath no ſtrength*, ſome underſtand *God himſelf*; who is indeed all power, all arme, who is altogether ſtrong and only wiſe. As if *Job* had ſaid, O Bildad, *thou haſt ſtood up in the defence of God, as if he had not been able to defend himſelf, thou haſt been an Advocate for him, who hath no need thou ſhouldeſt. Hath not he power? hath his arme no ſtrength in it? or is he deſtitute of councel? ſurely God hath no need of thy patronage or aſſiſtance? therefore conſider whoſe helper thou haſt been? what? the helper of him that is weak, and haſt thou ſuſtained the armes of him that hath no ſtrength? ſurely no, God hath ſtrength enough to defend his own cauſe, and wiſdome enough to maintain his own acts againſt me and all men elſe. Thou oughteſt indeed to have helped him that hath no power, but thou haſt only given help to him that hath all power.* Thus ſome carry on the whole context under that frame and form of this expoſition, as if *Job* did but rebuke *Bildad* for undertaking the matter on Gods part, whereas he ſhould have uſed his utmoſt endeavours for the ſupport and comfort of him a poor weak Creature, labouring under heavy burdens of moſt ſad afflictions, and wanting counſel how to bear and improve them, as laid upon him by the hand of God. For this *Job* had no power, and might expect help from his friend; but he beſtowed all his help in vindicating the honour of God againſt *Job*, not in helping or adviſing *Job* how to bear up under the hand of God, and therefore he thus interrogates him, *How haſt thou helped him that hath no power?* But

Thirdly, I rather expound the words of *Job* himſelf, as being now burdened and diſtreſſed with great affliction, and under ſore temptations, and therefore fitly repreſented in theſe words, *a man without power, an arm without ſtrength, and him that had no wiſdome*, at leaſt that he was ſuch in the opinion and judgment of his friends. As if he had ſaid, *O* Bildad, *Thou lookeſt upon me as a man without power, ſtrength, or wiſdome; very well, be it ſo, as indeed (though not in thy ſence) it is ſo, what haſt thou done? how haſt thou helped him that is without power? how ſaveſt thou the arm that hath no ſtrength? how haſt thou performed the part of a friend, either in comforting me, or in counſelling me?* ſo the words are a cloſe Ironical rebuke of what *Bildad* ſaid in the former Chapter. *Thou cameſt to ſtrengthen and help me, conſider how well thou haſt made good thy own intendment; how haſt thou helped him that is without power? thou haſt ſpoken words fitter to weaken, then to ſtrengthen, to caſt down then to raiſe up; and ſo haſt quite miſtaken the matter. Thou ſhouldſt not have amplified the power and majeſty of God before a man in my condition: Thou ſhouldſt rather have opened the doctrine of free grace, and of the fatherly affection of God to his poor ſervants and children, while they are under his ſharpeſt corrections: Thy words ſhould have* *been like oyle, like milk and honey, but thou haſt ſpoken very hard words, if not gall and wormwood to my wearied ſoul. Though what thou haſt ſpoken be in it ſelf true, yet it is to me improper and unſuitable, out of time and unſeaſonable, and therefore weigh with thy ſelf, How haſt thou helped him that is without power?* We may paralel this context with that of the Apoſtle, (1 *Cor.* 4. 8, 10.) where with much holy deriſion he rebukes the over-weening and high opinion which the *Corinthians* had of their preſent attainments and perfections in ſpirituals; *Now ye are full, now ye are rich, ye have reigned like Kings without us, and I would to God that ye did reign, that we might reign with you.* As if he had ſaid, I would wiſh with all my heart, it were as well with you as you think it is, that we alſo might have a part with you in thoſe glories of the Goſpel; but I fear ye are only puft up with notions, and that your portion is but ſmall in true ſolid ſpiritual knowledge: I fear ye have little except in conceat; and there ye have a great deal to much; and upon the ſame account he puts it upon them again at the 10th verſe; *We are fools for Chriſts ſake, but ye are wiſe in Chriſt; we are weak, but ye are ſtrong; ye are honourable, but we are depiſed.* Thus *Job* here, ye look upon me as a weak man, as a man of no power, but you are wiſe, and learned; ſee how ye have played your part and diſcharged your duty; you think you have a wonderful faculty in helping the weak, in ſaving thoſe who are ready to periſh, in teaching the unlearned, in counſelling the unwiſe; whereas I am neither ſo weak, nor ignorant, nor deſtitute of counſel as you think I am; and if I were, your oration is wide of the mark or reacheth not my caſe, and therefore can do me no good. *How haſt thou helped him that hath no power?* And which is the ſame in other words;

How ſaveſt thou the arm that hath no ſtrength?

The arm is an eminent member of the body, and in Scripture it often ſignifies ſtrength, becauſe the arm holdeth out and acteth the ſtrength of the whole body; *How haſt thou ſaved the arm that hath no ſtrength?* that is, the man that hath no ſtrength. There is a threefold ſtrength. Firſt, natural, which is twofold; firſt, of the mind or inward parts; Secondly, of the body or outward parts. Secondly, there is a civil ſtrength, which is the command or Authority which a man hath over others. Thirdly, there is a ſpiritual ſtrength, which is the command a man hath over himſelf, both in doing good and in avoiding evil, or both for the due enjoyment of good and induring of evil. When *Job* ſaith, *How ſaveſt thou the arm that hath no ſtrength?* We may expound it both of the firſt and third ſort of ſtrength. For *Job* had indeed loſt the ſtrength of his body, and his friends thought he had loſt the ſtrength both of his parts and graces, which is more clear in the next interrogation.

Verſ. 3. **How haſt thou counſelled him that hath no Wiſdom?**

To give counſel is the work of the wiſe, and they who are unwiſe have moſt need of counſel, though they ſeldom think ſo. And it may be a very diſputable queſtion, who is the wiſer man, he that gives good counſel, or he that readily receives it and makes good uſe of it. Good counſel directs how to judge of things, how to ſpeak, and how to act. *In the Multitude of Councellers there is ſafety* (ſaith *Solomon*) and they muſt needs be unſafe, who either have none to give them counſel, or refuſe wholeſome counſel when 'tis given. Counſel is to a man without wiſdom as bread is to a man that is hungry, or as cloaths to a man that is naked. Maſter *Broughton* tranſlates, *What doeſt thou counſel without wiſdom?* Right counſel is the very ſpirits of wiſdom; but thy counſel is flat and hath no ſpirits in it. Thus his tranſlation refers the want of wiſdom to the counſel which *Bildad* gave *Job*; but ours refers it to *Job*, to whom *Bildad* undertook to give counſel. *How haſt thou counſelled him that hath no wiſdom?* As if he had ſaid, Thou O *Bildad* lookeſt upon me, as a man without wiſdom; If I am ſo, I do not perceive that thy counſel is like to make me much wiſer. Thy counſel will even leave me where it found me, and 'tis well if it do not put me backward. What ſtrange kind of counſel is thine! *How haſt thou counſelled him that hath no wiſdom?* From all theſe cutting queſtions put together,

Obſerve, Firſt, *They who are weak, and without wiſdom ſhould be holpen, and tenderly dealt with, by grave and gracious counſel.*

The words of the wiſe conveigh ſtrength to the weak, comfort to the ſorrowful, and counſel to thoſe who know not what to do. See the tenderneſs of Chriſt to the weak, (*Matth.* 12. 18, 19.) *Behold my ſervant whom I have choſen, and my beloved in whom my ſoul is well pleaſed: I will put my ſpirit upon him, and he ſhall ſhew judgment to the Gentiles.* He meaneth not *judgment*, as *judgment* is oppoſed to mercy: Jeſus Chriſt did not come in that ſenſe to ſhew judgment to the Gentiles, he did not come to bring wrath upon them, but he came to ſhew mercy to the Gentiles, to thoſe who were ſinners of the Gentiles, who ſat in darkneſs, and in the ſhadow of death, he ſhewed merciful judgment, he ſhewed them the knowledge of God, he reformed and purged them from their ſins and ſinſul Idolatries, he brought them into a holy ſtate and order under Goſpel Government; this is the judgment which Chriſt brought to the Gentiles, and this judgment is a mercy; *he ſhall bring Judgment to the Gentiles*; How ſhall he do it? *he ſhall not ſtrive nor cry, neither ſhall any man hear his voyce in the ſtreets*; that is, he ſhall not deal boyſterouſly, and contentiouſly, he ſhall not be vexatious, and rigorous, he ſhall not act as a man chaſed and enraged, as a man full of wrath and fury, but as a man moſt tenderly affected and full of pity, for *a bruiſed reed ſhall he not break, and ſmoak-flax ſhall he not quench*; a bruiſed reed, and ſmoaking flax, are emblems of the weak, of the arm without ſtrength, of thoſe who are without wiſdom; Chriſt will not deal roughly with thoſe, *he will not break the bruiſed reed, nor quench the ſmoaking flax*, that is, ſuch as are broken with the ſence of ſin, ſuch as are weak in faith, ſuch as are ſo much over-power'd by corruption, thar they do rather ſmoak, and make an ill ſented ſmother, then burn or ſhine in a gracious profeſſion; ſuch as are thus low and mean in in ſpirituals, Chriſt will not break with his power, nor quench with his rebukes, *till he ſend forth judgment to victory*, that is, till he hath perfected their converſion, and hightned their graces to the full, and cauſed the better part in them to prevail over the worſe (as the houſe of *David* did over the houſe of *Saul*) till it arrive at a bleſſed victory. And again (*Iſa.* 61. 2.) *The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me*, (for what) *becauſe the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the meek, he hath ſent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the priſon to them that are bound.* Here is *helping thoſe that have no power, and ſaving the arm that hath no ſtrength.* Thus Chriſt handles thoſe who through temptation, affliction, or any trouble, are brought low. For the neglect of this duty, the Lord reproves the Shepheards (*Ezek.* 34. 2, 3, 4.) *Son of man, propheſie againſt the Shepheards of Iſrael, Propheſie and ſay unto them, thus ſaith the Lord God unto the Shepheards; Wo be to the Shepheards of Iſrael, that do feed themſelves; ſhould not the Shepheards feed the flockes?* That is, ſhould they not be more intent upon the feeding of their flock with ſpirituals, then upon the feeding of themſelves with temporals? ſhould they not labour more to feed the peoples ſouls then their own bellies? ſurely they ought. But what did the Shep- of *Iſrael*? The next words ſhew us both what they did, and what they did not, *Ye eat the fat, and ye cloath you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed.* Theſe things they were forward enough to do; But ſee what they did not, *ye feed not the flock*, That's a general neglect of duty; then followeth their neglect of particular duties; *The diſeaſed have ye not ſtrengthned, neither have ye healed that which is ſick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away* (by force of Satans temptation) *neither have ye ſought that which was loſt* (through ſelf-folly and corruption) Here is a large inditement againſt the Shepheards, All which may be ſummed up in *Job's* language to *Bildad*; They did not help thoſe who had no power, they did not ſave the arm without ſtrength, nor counſel thoſe who had no wiſdom. See again how the Prophet deſcribes the compaſſionateneſs of God to his people in an afflicted condition (*Iſa.* 27. 8.) *In meaſure* (that is, moderately) *when it ſhooteth forth thou will* *debate with it: he ſtayeth his rough wind, in the day of the Eaſt wind*; that is, when affliction, like an Eaſt wind blows fiercely upon his from the world, then he ſtayeth *his rough wind*, he will not bring his rough wind out of his treaſures to joyn with the Eaſt-wind. God will deal gently with his when they are hardly dealt with by man. And thus it is our duty when it is a day *of the Eaſt-wind*, a day of trouble and temptation upon any ſoul, to ſtay *the rough wind*, to breath gently, to give refreſhment and eaſe to the weary ſoul; *How haſt thou helped him that hath no power? How ſaveſt thou the arm that hath no ſtrength?*

Secondly, Obſerve, *The manner how we perform any duty is to be attended as well as the matter.*

Bildad's buſineſs was to comfort the ſorrowfull, to ſtrengthen the infirm; how did he perform this? His ſtrengthening was a weakning, his helping was a grieving of *Job* already weak and grieved; and the reaſon was, becauſe he failed in the manner, or mannaging of this work: we muſt be carefull as to do good for the matter, ſo to do it effectually, which cannot be unleſs it be done rightly. Some go with an honeſt purpoſe to help, who yet adminiſter no help at all; to every ſuch helper it may be ſaid with rebuke, *How haſt thou helped him that is without power?* How unhandſomly haſt thou done it? what work haſt thou made of it? Thou haſt but entangled the poor ſoul worſe then before. This runs through all duties, We may ſay to ſome, *How have you prayed, and called upon God?* They only ſpeake a few words, preſent a few petitions, but without a heart, without faith, without a ſence of the preſence of God, or of their own wants; how have ſuch prayed? call ye this prayer? We may ſay to others, how have you heard the word of God? is this to hear? what to receive the ſound or ſence of the word, and never to mind it more, never to digeſt nor turn what is heard into practice; is this hearing? We may ſay to others, how have you faſted and humbled your ſouls before God? *Is this a faſt that God hath choſen, a day for a man to hang down his head like a bullruſh; Is this faſting to God, even to God?* No; This is but a *mock faſt*, a *no faſt*; God hates ſuch formality, in praying, hearing, faſting, with a perfect hatred. A body exerciſed, and a ſoul ſitting ſtill, is not worſhip. God is a ſpirit, and will be worſhipped in ſpirit and in truth; In the truth, or according to the rule of his own word, as alſo in the truth, or according to the ſincerity of our own hearts: unleſs we worſhip God in this twofold truth, we worſhip him not at all, as he will be worſhipped, how much ſoever we ſeem to have a will to worſhip him. As *Job* here puts a queſtion mixt with admiration and indignation to his helper; *How haſt thou helped him that hath no power?* How ilfavourdly, how bunglingly haſt thou done it? So the Lord will put ſuch a queſtion to many of his worſhippers; *How have ye worſhipped him that hath all power?* How ſlightly, how formally, how hypocritically have ye done it? Therefore in all duties, *look to the manner, as well as to the matter, and labour to do them well, as well as to do them.* To neglect the doing of a duty, or the doing of it negligently, are alike offenſive unto God; and he will ſay to the latter with as much diſpleaſure, *How haſt thou done what I commanded?* as he will to the former, *Why haſt thou not done what I commanded?* yea

Thirdly, Obſerve, *That which is not done as it ought, is to be judged as if not done.*

That which we ſtrive not to do in a right manner, we (upon the matter) do not at all. We may reſolve theſe interrogations of the Text into negations, *How haſt thou helped him that is without power?* is as much as this, *thou haſt not helped him: how ſaveſt thou the arm that hath no ſtrength?* is indeed, *Thou haſt not ſaved him: how haſt thou counſelled him that hath no wiſdom?* carryeth this meaning, *thou haſt given him no counſel*; we uſe to ſay, *as good never a whit, as never the better*, and how good ſoever any thing is that we do, if we do it amiſs, it will be reckoned by God (what reckoning ſoever men make of it) as if we had done no ſuch thing. *Moſes* ſaid to the Lord under a temptation, when he was troubled at the complaint of the people, becauſe the deliverance promiſed did not come on, and they were not freed as was expected; *Lord, wherefore haſt thou ſo evil entreated this people? why is it that thou haſt ſent me? for ſince I came to* Pharoah *to ſpeak in thy name, he hath done evil to this people, neither haſt thou delivered thy people at all*, (Exod. 5. 23) Is this a deliverance? this is no deliverance. We are apt to think the mercies of God no mercies, unleſs he give us full and perfect mercies; unleſs we preſently receive all that we look for, we look upon it as if we had received nothing at all. But how truly may the Lord ſay to the children of men, when they perform duties ſlightly, and negligently, ye have not done them at all, ye have neither prayed, nor heard, nor faſted at all, becauſe ye have been negligent in and unprofitable under them. The works and duties of the beſt are not every way full, but the works and duties of ſome are altogether empty, and they do nothing in all they do.

Fourthly, In theſe ſeveral interrogations, are here held forth the ſeveral effects of holy advice given according to the word, and mind of God; *how haſt thou helped him that is without power? ſaved the arm that hath no ſtrength? counſelled him that hath no wiſdom?* As if he had ſaid, thou indeed haſt offered me counſel from God; if thou hadſt mannaged it right, this would have been the fruit of it; I who have no power ſhould have been helped, and I who am as an arm without ſtrength ſhould have been ſaved.

Hence obſerve, *That the word of God or divine truths are mighty in operation, when duely adminiſtred.*

The word of truth conveigheth ſtrength to the weak, wiſdom to the ſimple, comfort to the ſorrowful, light to thoſe who are in darkneſs, and life unto the dead. The word *lifts up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees. The Law of the Lord* (that is, every holy truth, ſaith *David*, Pſal. 19. 7, 8.) *is perfect* (and what can it do? the next words tells us) *converting or reſtoring the ſoul. The teſtimony of the Lord is ſure* (and what can that do? the next words tells us) *making wiſe the ſimple. The Statutes of the Lord are right* (and what can they do? even that which is moſt ſweet where it is done) *rejoycing the heart: The commandment of the Lord is pure* (in it ſelf, and it worketh gloriouſly in us) *enlightning the eyes.* I may ſay alſo, The word of the Lord is mighty, and it giveth ſtrength to thoſe who have no might. As it is mighty for the *pulling down of ſtrong holds, caſting down imaginations, and every thing that exalteth it ſelf againſt the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Chriſt*, (2 Cor. 10. 4, 5.) So it is as mighty for the raiſing up of the weak, for the lifting up of thoſe who are caſt down and fallen below the knowledge of God through unbelief; and for the bringing of poor ſouls out of captivity into that bleſſed liberty of faith in Chriſt. What Great things the word rightly applyed, and divine truths brought home with Authority, have done and ſtill can do, was ſhewed at the fourth Chapter of this Book, *verſ.* 3. and 4. As alſo at the 25. *verſe* of the ſixth Chapter, upon thoſe words, *How forcible are right words?* Though we ought to help thoſe who have no power by more then words, yet words have holpen many who had no power; as *Job* doth more then intimate while he reproves *Bildad* for his unskilful wording it with him. *How haſt thou helped*, &c.

And how haſt thou plentifully declared the thing as it is?

That which we render, *The thing as it is*, is but one word in the Original, and it hath a threefold ſignification.

תושיה an de Græcum οὐσία, Appellatio à ישׁ quod eſſe ſignificat, ſapientia enim rerum omnium exiſtentium prima & præcipua eſt Druſ.

Firſt, It is put for the eſſence, ſubſtance, or being of a thing; the Greek word for ſubſtance, is very near this in ſound, and may poſſibly be a derivative from it.

Secondly, it ſignifieth that *working* or *operation* which flows from being; things firſt are, and then they act, and they are to little or no purpoſe unleſs they act.

Thirdly, It ſignifieth *counſel, advice, wiſdom*, or ſound wiſdom (*Prov.* 3. 21.) ſo Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates, *And makeſt advice known abundantly.* Others taking up the ſame notion render, *How haſt thou declared wiſdom abundantly?* As if he had ſaid, *Thou thinkeſt thou haſt opened a treaſure, and declared ſtore of wiſdom and knowledge in this diſcourſe, or that thou haſt made a very wiſe and learned diſcourſe, whereas indeed it will be found lean and ſhort in it ſelf, as alſo impertinent to the point in hand.* Our tranſlation takes it in the firſt ſence, *How haſt thou plentifully declared*

לרב *Ad multitudinem vel multipliciter.*

declared the thing as it is, that is, how haſt thou declared the ſubſtance of the thing, or the ſolid truth in plenty, or as the Hebrew phraſe imports, in great number and with much variety.

Hence Note, Firſt, *Every thing ought to be declared as it is, that is, the naked truth ought to be declared.*

It is our duty to ſpeak of things as they are, not to put colours upon them, and ſo make them appear what they are not, or otherwiſe then they are; truth is plain, and truth ſhould be told plainly. The naked truth, or, *the thing as it is,* is moſt beautiful to the eye of the underſtanding. And though *Bildad* did not miſreport what he ſpake of God, yet he did not make a full report. *How haſt thou plentifully declared the thing as it is?*

Secondly, Hence Note, *As we ought to ſpeak the truth, ſo to ſpeak the truth out, or all the truth.*

Paul tells the Church of *Epheſus* (Act. 20. 20.) *That he had kept nothing back that was profitable for them; and* ſaith he, (*ver.* 27.) *I have not ſhunned to declare unto you all the counſel of God. Paul* plentifully declared the thing as it was. *Bildad* ſpake truth, but not all the truth, as to *Job's* caſe. He ſpake great things of the power and holineſs of God, but *Job's* caſe called him to ſpeak as much if not more and rather of the goodneſs and kindneſs of God. He ſpake enough to humble and caſt *Job* down, at the ſight of his natural uncleanneſs, but he ſhould have ſpoken more to raiſe him up and comfort him, by ſhewing him that Fountain which is opened to waſh in for ſin and for uncleanneſs. We may quickly entangle a ſoul by ſpeaking truth, unleſs we ſhew him all that truth which belongs to his condition. *The Scriptures have plenty of truth in them, and are therefore able to make us wiſe unto ſalvation; They are profitable for Doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for inſtruction in righteouſneſs.* The Scripture is like that River ſpoken of (*Gen.* 2. 10.) which went out of *Eden* to water the Garden, and from thence it was parted and became into four heads: *Paul* in that place now mentioned (2 *Tim.* 3. 16.) ſhews us the Scripture parting it ſelf into four heads; Firſt, of *Doctrine,* for eſtabliſhing the truth; Secondly, *of Reproof,* for removing of error; Thirdly, *of Correction,* for the beating down of ill manners; Fourthly, *of Inſtruction,* for building up in a holy converſation; That ſo (as it there follows) *the man of God may be perfect, throughly furniſhed unto all good works;* that is, in *Job's* language, that he may be able *plentifully to declare (the ſolid truth) the thing as it is,* and as knowingly to declare General truths, ſo to apply them diſcerningly to the ſtate of every perſon; a fayling wherein *Job* is ſuppoſed to charge *Bildad* with in the next verſe.

Verſ. 4. To whom haſt thou uttered words ?

Here *Job* taxeth *Bildad* with inconſiderateneſs, in reference to the perſon to whom he ſpake; *To whom haſt thou uttered words?* haſt thou conſidered to whom thou ſpakeſt? The vulgar tranſlation refers it to God, *whom wouldſt thou teach? wouldſt not thou teach him who made thee breath? ſurely thou takeſt upon thee to teach him, who is the teacher of us all.* Thus many carry on the ſence of this fourth verſe according to the ſecond interperation of the ſecond and third verſes. With which preſumption *Job* taxed his friends once before, and that in expreſs terms (*Chap.* 21. 22.) *ſhall any teach God knowledge, ſeeing he judgeth thoſe that are high?*

Quem docere voluiſti, nonne eum qui fecit ſpiramentum **Vul.**

But I conceive *Job's* meaning is only to ſhew *Bildad* that he had not well adviſed about his caſe and condition before he ſpake; for *Bildad* might ſay, is this a queſtion to be asked, *to whom have I uttered words?* have not I been ſpeaking to thee all this while? Art not thou the man for whoſe ſake we are here met, and about whom we have had all this diſpute? Why then doſt thou ask, *to whom haſt thou uttered words? Job* doubted not who it was to whom he ſpake; but *Job* queſtions him as fearing he was not well acquainted with or had not enough laid to heart the ſtate of the man to whom he ſpake; doſt thou know what my condition is, and haſt thou ſuited and cut out thy diſcourſe to my condition? *To whom haſt thou uttered words?*

Hence Note, *We ſhould well conſider the ſtate of every perſon to whom we ſpeak, and apply our ſpeech or Doctrine accordingly.*

Bildad in the former Chapter had been ſetting forth the power, majeſty, and dread of God, as alſo his infinite purity before whom the Angels are not clean; now ſaith *Job, To whom haſt thou uttered theſe words?* Should I be thus dealt with, thus handled, who am a man caſt down already, and under the terrors of God? Is this diſcourſe (though an undoubted truth) ſutable to my condition? Thou ſhouldeſt rather have repreſented God to my faith in his goodneſs, and mercy, in his long-ſuffering, and patience, in his tenderneſs and gentleneſs towards ſinners, thou ſhouldeſt have proclaimed that name of God to me which is his Glory (*Exod.* 34. 6.) *The Lord, The Lord gracious, and merciful, long ſuffering, and aboundant in goodneſs and truth;* this had been a deſcription of God, a proclamation of God fit for a man in my caſe. Whereas thou haſt only told me of his mighty power and dominion, of his Hoſts and Armies; doſt thou know to whom thou haſt uttered theſe words? Jeſus Chriſt, when here on earth, conſidered to whom he was uttering words, and therefore tells his Diſciples (*John* 16. 12.) *I have many things to ſay unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.* Chriſt would not put new Wine into old Bottles, but attemper'd his ſpeech to the ſtrength and capacity of his hearers. Some muſt hear that which they cannot bear (when that ſprings from their paſſion and impatience, eſpecially when from their love to and reſolvedneſs to go on in ſin. *Amos* muſt not forbear to ſpeak, though *Amaziah* cry out, *The Land is not able to bear all his words*) But we muſt take heed of forcing words upon any which they cannot bear, or are not fit to hear, either by reaſon of their afflictions and temptations, or by reaſon of their preſent infirmities and incapacities. The Apoſtle (2 *Tim.* 2. 15. bids *Timothy ſtudy to ſhew thy ſelf approved unto God,* (he doth not mean it in his private courſe of life and daily converſe, which is the duty of every beleiver) but in his publick courſe of life, or converſe as a Miniſter of the Goſpel, in that ſaith he, *ſtudy to ſhew thy ſelf as approved (unto God) a workman that needeth not to be aſhamed,* (what kind of workman was *Timothy*? his work lay in the Word, ſhew thy ſelf a workman, and a Maſter in thy work) *rightly dividing the word of truth;* how is the word to be divided? He doth not mean of a Grammatical, nor of a Logical diviſion (though there may be a uſe of theſe diviſions of the Word) but the dividing of the word intended by *Paul,* is the dividing of it ſpiritually to the ſeveral ſtates, and conditions of men, giving to ſuch a word of inſtruction, to others a word of Reproof, to a third ſort words of comfort: This is *dividing the word aright;* And in doing this, *Paul* would have *Timothy* declare himſelf *a workman that needeth not to be aſhamed.* He would have him know to whom he uttered words: to know when he ſpake to ſinners, and when to Saints, when he ſpake to the afflicted, and when to them that were in a comfortable eſtate; He would have him know when he ſpake to thoſe who were hardened in their ſin, and when to thoſe whoſe hearts were broken under the weight and ſence of ſin. And thus as every man who uttereth words, ſo Miniſters of the Goſpel eſpecially, ſhould be well adviſed to whom they utter them. For as the ſame garment will not ſerve every body to wear, nor the ſame Bed to lye upon, ſo the ſame word will not ſerve every ſoul. We muſt not do as the Tyrant, who made one Bed ſerve all his gueſts, and they that were too long for it were cut ſhorter, and they who were too ſhort were ſtretched longer. Yet thus do they who have but one word for all comers, or for all they come to. We would judge him a very unskilful Phyſitian, who, let the diſeaſe be what it will, ſhould preſcribe one and the ſame Medicine, or apply the ſame Salve (though a very ſoveraign one) to every Soar. As we ſay, *That which is one mans meat is another mans Poyſon,* ſo we may ſay alſo, *That which is one mans Medicine may be another mans Poyſon;* That which cures one diſeaſe may encreaſe another. Therefore the Phyſitian muſt conſider to whom he gives the potion, as well as what he gives; and the Chyrurgion muſt not only know what his ſalve is, but to whom he applies it. So in this caſe, *To whom haſt thou uttered words?* weigh it well

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whether they be babes or ſtrong men in Chriſt, whether they be under peaceable or troubleſome diſpenſations, whether obſtinate, or tender hearted; for theſe muſt be differently dealt with, as their ſtates do differ: We may elſe do more hurt then good. We may quickly (as the Prophet ſpeaks, *Ezek.* 13. 19.) *Slay the Souls that ſhould not dye* (that is, grieve and trouble the Godly) *and ſave the Souls alive which ſhould not live,* that is, harden and fatten the wicked in their ſins. The Apoſtle hath left us an excellent rule by his own practice (1 *Cor.* 9. 19.) *Though I be free from all men, yet have I made my ſelf Servant to all, that I might gain the more; and unto the* Jews *I became a* Jew, *that I might gain the* Jews; *to them that are under the Law, as under the Law, that I might gain them that are under the Law; to them that are without the Law, as without Law, being not without Law to God, but under the Law to Chriſt, that I might gain them that are without Law; to the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means ſave ſome, and this I do for the Goſpel ſake that I might be partaker thereof with you.* In this context we ſee what was chiefly in the Apoſtles eye (even that which is the higheſt and faireſt mark in the world) *the ſaving of Souls.* And that he might attain to this end, he critically obſerved the temper and ſtate of his hearers, ſtriving to frame and ſute himſelf and his ſpeech accordingly; he was not the ſame to all, but he would be as they were to whom he ſpake, or with whom he did converſe; yet *Paul* did not ſymbolize with, nor connive at any in their ſins, he did not take upon him all colours, he was not a man for all men, or a man for all hours, or humors. The holy Apoſtle did not turn, as flatterers do, with the times, nor faſhion himſelf to the ſeveral garbes of men in a ſinful way; *Paul* was ſo far from any ſuch baſe compliances, that he having put the queſtion, *do I yet pleaſe men?* anſwers and concludes in the next words (*Gal.* 1. 10.) *If I yet pleaſe men, I ſhould not be the Servant of Chriſt.* But weighing the ſtate of all men, he formed his words, and did accommodate his Miniſtery for their gain, or rather for the gaining of them. Some are all things to all men, that they may gain by all, that they may advantage themſelves by all (which is a Spirit not only unworthy of a Miniſter, but of a man) but *Paul* complyed with all, that he might gain them, or bring them in the greateſt gain. Or he complyed with all men that Chriſt might gain, and faith in him be propagated: *this I do for the Goſpel ſake.* I do not this for my own ſake, I do not put my ſelf into all forms towards men for my own preferment in the world, but that Chriſt may be preferred in the hearts and acceptations of all men with whom I have to do, before the world. And that this was his purpoſe, we have his ſence fully from his own pen (1 *Cor.* 10. 32, 33.) *Give none offence, neither to the* Jews, *nor to the* Gentiles, *nor to the Church of God, even as I pleaſe all men in all things, not ſeeking mine own profit, but the profit of many that they may be ſaved.*

There are five things to be taken notice of, that we may utter words to profit.

Firſt, The matter, or what we ſpeak. Thoſe words which have no worth in themſelves can never profit others. While the Prophet (*Hoſ.* 14. 2.) exhorteth the people to repentance, he ſaith, *Take with you words,* that is, choyce words, ſelect words, conſider what words you take with you, *when you turn to the Lord,* and plead with him for mercy, *ſaying, take away all iniquity, and receive us graciouſly.* And as we are to take words with us choice words to expreſs choice matter in when we ſpeak to the Lord, ſo alſo in proportion when we ſpeak to men, as from the Lord.

Secondly, We muſt conſider to whom we are to utter words, we muſt not ſhoot at randome, or without a mark; ſome doctrines are general, but there ought to be a ſpecial application of general Doctrines. Other Doctrines are peculiar to ſome: We muſt not caſt pearls before Swine, nor give Childrens bread to Dogs. And we muſt be as careful, that we ſpeak not to Children, that is, to the truely Godly, as we ſhould do to Dogs and Swine (for ſo the Scripture calls) prophane and ungodly men.

Thirdly, We muſt conſider the ſeaſon or time when we ſpeak. Thoſe words will take at one time, which will not at another. There is as much care to be had, and as much skill ſeen in due timeing of our words as of our actions.

Fourthly, We muſt conſider the *quantum*, or the meaſure of words uttered, we may over-lay and over-charge thoſe to whom we ſpeak; every one cannot bear a ſtrong ſhower of ſpeech, or words poured out like a flood upon ſuch. *Our doctrine* (as *Moſes* ſaid his did, *Deut.* 32. 2.) muſt *drop as the rain, our ſpeech muſt diſtill as the dew and the ſmall rain upon the tender hearb, and as the ſhowers upon the graſs.*

Fifthly, We muſt conſider the manner in which we utter words: Whether to ſpeak as a *Barnabas*, or as a *Boanerges*, whether as a ſon of Thunder, of wrath and judgment, or as a ſon of peace, of joy and conſolation. *Of ſome have compaſſion* (that is, deal tenderly with them, *Jude* 1. 22.) *making a difference, and others ſave with fear, pulling them out of the fire.* We do but caſt words into the air, unleſs we thus make a difference in the manner of ſpeech, as they differ to whom we ſpeak. When we have duly weighed, the matter which, the perſons to whom, the ſeaſon when, the meaſure how much, and the manner in which we ought to ſpeak, then we are like to ſpeak to purpoſe, and ſhall be above this reproof which *Job* here gives *Bildad*, *to whom haſt thou uttered words?*

And whoſe Spirit came from thee?

The word which we tranſlate **Spirit**, ſignifies alſo the *breath*; *whoſe Spirit or whoſe Breath came from thee?* The ſence is the ſame. And

Firſt, Some interpret *Job* thus; *whoſe Spirit, or whoſe breath came from thee?* That is, conſider O *Bildad*, whoſe Spirit moved thee, or who breathed theſe things into thee? whoſe breath or whoſe Spirit came from thee when thou didſt utter theſe words? ſo 'tis a rebuke of *Bildads* preſumption, as if he had conceived himſelf wrought or acted by ſome extraordinary Spirit, while he was ſpeaking, or that the things which he uttered had been dropt into him by an immediate Revelation from Heaven; *whoſe Spirit came from thee?* what breath, what gale hath filled thy ſayles, thou haſt high conceits of thy ſelf, as if God had ſpoken to thee by his Spirit, or as if thou hadſt ſpoken theſe things to me from his mouth. But is it not rather thy own Spirit, thy own heart which hath dictated theſe words unto thee? Some think the ſame Spirit comes from them when they ſpeak, which came from the holy Prophets and Apoſtles, who yet are deceived. The Diſciples of Chriſt thought the ſame Spirit came from them, which came from *Eliah*, when they ſaid (*Luk.* 9. 54.) *Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from Heaven, and conſume them as* Elias *did: But he turned and rebuked them, and ſaid, ye know not what manner of Spirit ye are of.* As if he had ſaid in the language of *Job*, *ye know not whoſe Spirit comes from you*; ye would ſpeak the words of *Elias*, but ye have not the Spirit of *Elias*; you have a zeal, but not according to knowledge, your is but a humane affection, not a divine inſpiration, as *Elias* his was, his was a pure Spirit of zeal, but yours is a raſh Spirit of revenge. And therefore your motion ſuits not with your calling; for as I am come, ſo I ſend you, *to ſave, not to deſtroy.* We may ſpeak the ſame words, and do the ſame things which others have done and ſpoken, and yet not with the ſame but with quite another Spirit. Therefore examine *whoſe Spirit comes from you?* This is a good and profitable ſence. Yet,

Secondly, Rather thus, *whoſe Spirit came from thee?* that is, whoſe Soul, or whoſe mind hath been recovered out of trouble and fear, out of ſadneſs and ſorrow by the words which thou haſt ſpoken? Thus the Spirit is taken for his to whom he ſpake, not for his Spirit who ſpake, or not for the Spirit with which he ſpake. This is a great truth, gracious and right words, rightly applyed, do as it were relieve the Spirit, and bring back the fainting, yea dead Soul, from the grave of grief and ſorrow, wherein it lay as buried. Now ſaith *Job*, *whoſe Spirit came from thee?* Haſt thou recovered or raiſed any languiſhing Soul by what thou haſt ſaid? who hath felt life and power coming from thee? I am ſure I have not, though I have heard thee out, and heard thee attentively. What the Moraliſt ſaid of Idleneſs, the ſame may we ſay of ſorrow or heavineſs, *It is the burial of a man while he liveth.* And therefore he that hath comforted a man and recovered him out of his ſorrows, may be ſaid to give him a new life, and that

Cujus anima prodiit è te? i. e. *quē conſolatus es tam efficaciter ſermone tuo, ut anima ejus ex mærore quaſi in corpore ſepulta jacebat rurſum & lateberis prodierit ſiſeque per corpus exſeruerit.* Piſc. *Cujus animam verbis tuis vivificaſti? Hebræi, apud* Merc,

that the Spirit of ſuch a man is come forth from him: yea, he that inſtructeth the ignorant, and bringeth them to the ſaving knowledge of God, may be ſaid, to breath or put a Soul into them. In which ſence ſome of the Jewiſh writers expound that place (*Gen.* 12. 5.) where it is ſaid, that *Abraham took* Sarah *his wife, and* Lot *his Brothers Son, and all their ſubſtance that they had gathered, and the Souls they had gotten in* Charan, *&c.* that is, all thoſe whom by good inſtruction and example they had gained to God, or (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, 1 *Theſ.* 1. 9.) had by their means *turned to God from Idols to ſerve the living and true God.* Theſe Souls they got in *Charan*; though *Abraham* and *Sarah* were barren of natural iſſue, yet they had much ſpiritual iſſue, many Souls or the Souls of many came from them. And therefore when *Job* would put a diſparagement upon what *Bildad* had ſpoken, he puts him this Queſtion, *Whoſe Spirit or whoſe Soul came forth from thee?* or whom haſt thou *re-ſouled*, as the Greek word which the Apoſtle uſeth for *refreſhing*, doth elegantly ſignifie (*Acts.* 3. 19.) *Repent ye therefore and be converted, that your ſins may be blotted out, when the time of refreſhing* (or re-ſouling) *ſhall come from the preſence of the Lord.* When a man faints, or is very weary, we ſay he hath loſt his Spirits, and he is even as a man without a Soul. But when in the uſe of any means he is refreſhed, then we ſay, his Spirit or Soul is come to him again. The Spirit of man comes only from God in its natural conſtitution, he is the *father of Spirits* (Eccl. 12.7. Heb. 12.9.) But the Spirit of man may come from man in its refreſhings and conſolations. And therefore ſaith *Job* to *Bildad*, *whoſe Spirit came from thee?* or whom haſt thou comforted? Thou haſt undertaken to comfort me; but I am not comforted.

καιρὸι ἀναψύξεως.

Hence Note, *Holy truths or words rightly applyed, have a relieving yea a reviving power in him.*

Such words give a man his Soul again, when he hath loſt it, and when he is (as it were) gone from himſelf, he is brought back to himſelf again. For as it is ſaid of the repenting Prodigal, *he came to himſelf*, he was gone, he was loſt from himſelf, his Soul was departed from him, his underſtanding was none of his, he was no more maſter of any ſpiritually rational faculty, then a dead man is of any mere rational faculty; and ſo his father reported him whileſt in that condition, *this our Son was dead, but is alive, he was loſt, but he is found* (Luk. 15. 32.) Now (I ſay) as it is in extream ſinnings, ſo in extream ſorrowings and dejections of Spirit, a man is loſt from himſelf, he is as a dead man: and ſo when comforts comes in again, life may be ſaid to come in again; he who before was loſt is found, and he who was dead revives. The word revives from a twofold death; it revives a natural man from the death of ſin, and it revives a Godly man from a death in ſorrow. How many Spirits have come forth at the voice of the word, out of the grave of ſin? Chriſt foretold this Reſurrection of the Soul by the preaching and publication of the Goſpel (*Joh.* 5.25.) *The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead ſhall hear the voice of the Son of God* (in the miniſtry of the word) *and they ſhall live.* And leaſt any ſhould think that this is meant of the Reſurrection of the Body, Chriſt ſpeaks of that diſtinctly (*verſ.* 28.) *Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming* (he doth not ſay as before, *and now is*) *in the which all that are in the Graves* (dead Bodies) *ſhall hear his voice, and come forth, they that have done good, unto the Reſurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the Reſurrection of damnation.* As if Chriſt had ſaid, that powerful voice (and a voice leſs powerful then that will not do it) which is able to raiſe dead Bodies, Bodies mouldered into duſt, from the Earth, and cauſe them to live again (that voice I ſay) is able to raiſe a dead Soul from a ſtate of ſin to newneſs of life. The Apoſtle ſaith as much, while he calleth the preaching of the word *a ſavour of life unto life in them that are ſaved* (2Cor. 2. 16.) They ſmell and taſte life, even eternal life, at the receiving of the Word. And as it is the means of conveighing life to thoſe who are dead in ſin, ſo of recovering and renewing life to thoſe who are dead in ſorrow. *Worldly ſorrow, or the ſorrow of the World, worketh death* (2Cor. 7. 10.) and extream ſpiritual ſorrow, or the extream ſorrow of the Soul about ſpirituals, puts us into a kind of death. Thus *Heman* ſpake of himſelf in that caſe (*Pſ.* 88. 4, 5.) *I am counted with them that go down to the pit; I am as a man that hath no ſtrength, free among the dead like the ſlain that lye in the grave, whom thou remembreſt no more; and they are cut off from thy hand.* As *Heman* was counted among the dead by others, ſo he was like a dead man in his own account too, as he ſpeaks at *verſ.* 15. *I am afflicted and ready to dye, from my youth up, whilſt I ſuffer thy terrors I am diſtracted.* He was not ready to dye for Bodily diſeaſes, but of Soul terrors, nor could any thing revive him, or fetch him back from that death, but the favour of God ſhining to him in the word of promiſe; how glorious is the word by the workings of the Spirit, which cauſeth the Spirit to come forth, and maketh them who were *free among the dead*, become free among the living. This effect and fruit of the word *Job* expected from his friends before, and now from *Bildad*, but all in vain; as their, ſo his diſcourſe with *Job* was fruitleſs and ineffectual. Much hath been ſpoken, but I have got nothing, I have got no Spirit, no refreſhing, my heart is no whit cheared, nor my Soul comforted, both you and the reſt of your Brethren, have proved *miſerable comforters to me. To whom haſt thou uttered words?* I am no better then if you had ſaid nothing. *And whoſe Spirit came from thee?* not mine, for as yet (notwithſtanding all your reaſonings) my Spirit is not returned to me, I am as deep in ſorrow as ever I was.

There is yet another reading of this laſt clauſe of the verſe given by Mr. *Broughton.* *And whoſe Soul admired thee?* The ſame word may ſignifie to admire, and to come forth; becauſe the Soul or Spirit of man comes forth (as it were) to gaze upon thoſe things and perſons which he admireth. As if *Job* had ſaid; *Poſſibly O* Bildad, *thou preſumeſt that thou haſt ſpoken like an Oracle of Wiſdome, even much beyond the rate and proportion of ordinary men, or of what is common to man, and therefore doſt expect to be applauded, yea to be admired. But whoſe Soul is come forth by reaſon of thee? who hath admired thee? not I, nor do I know, that any man hath reaſon ſo to do, unleſs it be, becauſe thou haſt ſo much miſtaken my meaning and intention in what I ſaid, and haſt ſaid things ſo improper to my condition. Some have the perſons of men in admiration, becauſe of advantage*, (Jude 1. 16.) and others deſire no other advantage, but to be cryed up and had in admiration. I dare not ſay, that *Bildad* was a man of ſuch a Spirit, though this tranſlation (*whoſe Soul admireth thee?*) ſeems to charge him with ſuch a folly.

VERS. 5,6,7.

Dead things are formed from under the waters, and the inhabitants thereof.

Hell is naked before him, and deſtruction hath no covering.

He ſtretcheth out the North over the empty place, and hangeth the Earth upon nothing.

IN the former part of this Chapter, *Job* reproved the laſt diſcourſe of *Bildad* as unprofitable, not that it was ſo in it ſelf (for that was true and a great truth which he ſpake of the greatneſs of God) but the method which he uſed, and the application of it to his caſe made it ſo, *How haſt thou helped him that is without power?* &c.

In this Context, and the ſubſequent part of the Chapter, *Job* enters upon, or reaſſumes the ſame argument or ſubject which *Bildad* had handled before; the power, ſoveraignty, and dreadfulneſs of God in his works, both of Creation and providence all the world over. *Job* would let *Bildad* underſtand, that he was not unacquainted with the doctrine which he had preſt upon him in the former Chapter. As if he had ſaid, *Doeſt thou think that I know not theſe things, ſurely I can tell thee as much, yea more of the power of God then thou haſt ſpoken, and thereby thou ſhalt ſee that I am not to learn, nor to ſeek, in this matter; yea I will point and paint out the power of God not only in the viſible Heavens, but in thoſe things which lye unſeen, I will go down to the deeps, to the bottome of the mighty waters, I can tell thee that he is not only admirable above but beneath, in ſo much as nothing is bred or brought forth whether animate or inanimate in the vaſt Ocean, but it is by his power and at his diſpoſing. Yea I will go as low as Hell, and ſearch* *the power of God there; I will alſo aſcend up to Heaven, and ſpeak of the great things that God doth in the ayre, and in the clouds, and among the Stars, whereby you may ſee that I am no ſtranger to ſuch divine Philoſophy; and therefore this was not the point you ſhould have inſiſted upon, or that I needed to be informed in.* That's the general ſcope and aime of *Job* in theſe words, I ſhall now touch upon the particulars.

Dead things are formed from under the waters.

Jobs firſt inſtance concerning the power of God, is about things under the waters; *dead, liveleſs, inanimate* things are formed there; properly that only is a *dead thing* which hath ſometime lived: we cannot ſay a ſtone is a dead thing, becauſe it never had any life, neither can we ſay that water or Earth are dead things, for they had never any life; but thoſe things that have had life, whether negative, or ſenſitive, or rational, as man, or beaſts, or plants, when once that life is withdrawn from any of them, that is properly called a dead thing. Yet in a general vulgar and improper ſence, even thoſe things that never had life may be called dead. Mr. *Broughton* renders ſtrictly, *not dead things,* but *things without life are formed under the waters.*

רפא *Dolorem mitigavit, ſanavit, transfertur per Metaphorā à corpore ad animam ut ſign remittere peccata.*

רפה *Debilis diſſolutus laxus languidus.*

The Hebrew word may come from a twofold Root, and ſo hath a twofold ſignification. Firſt, *to heal and cure*; and in Scripture it is transferred from the healing of the body to the healing of the Soul in the remiſſion of ſins; becauſe as the wound of the Body is healed by the ſalve, ſo the Souls wound, namely ſin, is healed by remiſſion or forgiveneſs. The word is uſed in this ſence (*Iſa.* 6. 10.) *Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and ſhut their eyes; leaſt they ſee with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and underſtand with their hearts, and convert, and be healed,* that is, *pardoned.* Secondly, it ſignifies to be diſſolved or looſned, to be weak and languiſhing; we tranſlate it *dead,* becauſe things that are dead are weakned and diſſolved, and therefore death is called a diſſolution; as *Paul* ſaid (*Phil.* 1. 23.) *I deſire to depart or to be diſſolved,* that is, to dye; and the ſame phraſe is uſed for death (2 *Cor.* 5. 1.) *We know that when the Earthly houſe of this Tabernacle ſhall be diſſolved,* &c. Again by the figure Antiphraſis (frequent in Scripture) this word as it ſignifies dead and weak things, ſo alſo ſtrong and lively things, yea thoſe that are ſtrongeſt or moſt lively, and therefore *Giants* who are the ſtrongeſt of men, are expreſſed by this word (*Deut.* 2. 11.) *The* Emims *dwelt therein in times paſt, a people great and many, and tall, as the* Anakims, *which alſo were accounted Giants,* &c. And the Vulgar tranſlates ſo here, *Behold, the Giants groan under the waters.* Giants are called *Rephaim* in the Hebrew, which word in the Root ſignifies to weaken, not from their nature, but from their effects, not becauſe they are weak, but becauſe they weaken others. Giants are ſo ſtrong that the very ſight of them make others weak and faint, or pulls down men of ſtrength and might. It is ſaid that *Saul* and the whole Army of *Iſrael* were diſmayed when they ſaw *Goliah,* and greatly afraid; they were weak before the Giant. There is much labouring to make out this ſence of the word here; ſome underſtand it of the Giants before the flood; *Behold, the Giants groan from under the flood.* Thoſe Giants were indeed overthrown by the waters, and ſo they conceive that *Job* alluded unto them, but I ſhall not ſtay upon that interpretation.

Ecce Gigantes gemunt ſub aquis. Vulg.

Others expound the Text of thoſe Giants whoſe proper Element is water, the mighty fiſhes of the Sea, the Whale, the Leviathan ſpoken of in this book of *Job.* Leviathan is a Sea-monſter, a Sea-Giant of huge dimenſions. Natural Hiſtorians and Travellers deſcribe the vaſtneſs of the Whale or Leviathan, to wonder and amazement. And 'tis granted, that in theſe Gods power is much ſeen; but I ſhall lay by this expoſition alſo, becauſe (I conceive) fiſhes are ſpoken of in the next words, where they are called *the inhabitants thereof,* that is, of the Sea or waters.

Again, this word *Rephaim* is often put for the *dead,* or thoſe that are departed this life. (*Pſ.* 88. 10.) *Wilt thou ſhew wonders to the dead? ſhall the dead ariſe and praiſe thee?* There are two words uſed for the dead in that verſe, one is the ordinary word, the other is that of the Text. *Solomon* (Prov. 2. 18.) ſhewing how dangerous it is to have to do with the adultereſs, ſaith, *Her houſe inclineth unto death, and her paths unto the* (*Rephaim, or the*) *dead.* The houſe of Adultery and uncleanneſs is the Gatehouſe to death; it is not a houſe raiſed up, but bowed down, *her houſe inclineth unto death,* and ſhe who is the governeſs, or rather the miſgoverneſs of the houſe, will by her ill life bring thee among the *dead,* even among thoſe who are *twice dead,* corporally dead at preſent, and ſpiritually dead for ever.

רפאום ἄψυχα

Incipit dei providentiā & potentiā deſcribere à rebus ſubterraneis initio ſumpto. Merc.

But that which I ſhall rather pitch upon according to our tranſlation, is that by theſe *dead things* are meant ſuch things as never had any life. Mr. *Broughton* expounds his tranſlation, *things without life,* of thoſe moſt precious things that are formed under the waters, *Amber, and pearl, and goodly ſtones*; theſe dead things are found under the waters, and there they are formed; *Gods providence reacheth to the furtheſt places, even to the bottome of the Sea and loweſt Earth, which ſeem to be as caſt off,* ſo he gloſſeth, and ſo do other Interpreters, concluding that *Job* is here ſetting forth the power of God in forming minerals and precious ſtones under the waters, or in the deeps, and ſo riſeth in his diſcourſe by degrees to higher things. As if he had ſaid, O Bildad, *what doeſt thou ſhewing me the power and providence of God in the high places, where he maketh peace; I can tell thee that the ſame power and providence of God are extended to thoſe things which are wrought in the bowels of the Earth, and at the bottome of the Sea, and ſo are furtheſt removed from our ſight.*

And whereas we ſay, *Dead things are formed there*; that word properly ſignifies to bring forth Children, or any living Creature (*Job* 39. 1, 2.) *Knoweſt thou the time when the wild Goats of the Rock bring forth, or canſt thou mark when the Hindes do calve? Canſt thou number the months that they fulfil, or knoweſt thou the time when they bring forth?* yea the eternal Word and Wiſdome of God ſpeaks of himſelf in the language of this word (*Pro.* 8. 25.) *Before the Mountains were ſetled, before the Hills was I brought forth.* It ſignifies alſo to be in pain, and groan for pain, becauſe child-bearing cauſeth much pain and groaning. So the word is uſed in a metaphorical ſence (*Deut.* 2. 25.) *This day will I begin* (ſaith the Lord) *to put the dread of thee, and the fear of thee upon the Nations, that are under the whole Heaven, who ſhall hear report of thee, and ſhall tremble and be in anguiſh becauſe of thee.* They ſhall be in anguiſh as a woman travelling with child and pained to bring forth. Whence that tranſlation takes its ground, *The Giants groan under the waters.* And as it ſignifies to form and faſhion the child or any living thing in the womb, and then to bring forth, ſo it is applyed to the forming of things that have no life (*Pſal.* 92. 2.) *Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadſt formed the Earth and the world: even from everlaſting to everlaſting thou art God.*

Dead things are formed.

But by whom? here is no power expreſt; *Job* ſaith only, *they are formed,* he leaves that to be underſtood, and what or whom can we underſtand but God, or the power of God, by whom or whereby *dead things are formed* as well as living things; for all things, whether animate or inanimate, receive their being and form from him; *Dead things are formed from under the waters.*

Hence Note, *That all things are produced in their beings, by the power of God.*

Dead things as well as living things, Gold and Silver, Minerals and Gemms are formed by God, as well as men or beaſts. And as they were of God in Creation at the beginning, ſo there is a continual putting forth of the power of God in continuing or renewing of them. God is dayly forming rich and rare things in the ſecret Cabinets of the Earth, and *from under the waters.*

And the inhabitants thereof.

That is, as dead things are formed under the waters, ſo are the *inhabitants thereof,* or thoſe living things that dwell in the water; we put in the Margin, *with the inhabitants:* who are they? The inhabitants of the water are the Fiſhes, they are bred and abide in the water. As if he had ſaid, *Thoſe precious ſtones and minerals, called dead things, are formed from under or in the waters, as well as the Fiſhes, who are the proper inhabitants of the water.* Mr. *Broughton* reads thus; *Dead things are formed under the waters and places near them*, that is, in the Mountains and Hills, in the Clifts and Rocks are theſe precious things formed. But I rather take our reading,, and ſo the Text gives a further illuſtration of the power of God; who as he formeth dead things under the waters, ſo living things, or the inhabitants of the water.

Hence Note, *The power of God is great in forming the Fiſhes of the Sea.*

And the greatneſs of it will appear if we conſider three things about them.

Firſt, Their number, as to us: the Fiſh of the Sea are infinite in number, there is no ſort of Creatures multiply ſo faſt as Fiſhes do, therefore when God created the Inhabitants of the water, we read (*Gen.* 1. 21.) how emphatically their increaſe is expreſt; *And God Created great Whales, and every living Creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly after their kind.* The waters did not bring them forth by any power of their own, but they were brought forth in the waters by that power which God had planted in the waters for that purpoſe. Now it is not only ſaid that the waters brought them forth, but the waters brought them forth *abundantly*, implying that fiſh do multiply and bring forth more then other Creatures; and therefore when the Spirit of God would ſhew a great increaſe of men, 'tis ſaid, *They ſhall encreaſe like Fiſh* (Gen. 48. 16.) *Jacob* bleſſing the Children of *Joſeph*, prayed thus; *The Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bleſs the Ladds, and let my name be named on them, and the name of my fathers,* Abraham *and* Iſaac, *and let them grow into a multitude in the midſt of the Earth.* The Original is, *Let them grow or multiply like Fiſhes into a multitude in the midſt of the Earth; or let them be as numerous upon the Land as Fiſhes are in the Sea.* And we find in the ſacred Hiſtory how the bleſſing and providence of God made good this Hiſtory. For of the Sons of *Joſeph, Manaſſah* and *Ephraim* were numbered eighty five Thouſand and two Hundred men meet for war (*Num.* 26. 34, 37.) which exceeded the encreaſe of any one Tribe beſide. How wonderfully doth the Lords power appear, not only in thoſe infinite ſholes of leſſer Fiſhes, but in the greater a ſo? Who is able to report the number of the Sea-Inhabitants, or of the Fiſhes who people the Sea?

Inter omnes beſtias nihil eſt fœcundius piſcibus, igitur transfertur ad multiplicationē immenſam.

Secondly, If we conſider their various kindes, that alſo ſheweth forth the great power of God. Naturaliſts obſerve that there is no Creature upon the Earth, but hath (as I may ſay) its repreſentative in the Sea, beſides thoſe that have nothing like them on the Earth; ſo various are their kinds.

Thirdly, Many of theſe inhabitants of the waters are wonderful for the vaſtneſs and greatneſs of their Bodies; the greateſt of all living Creatures are in the Sea (*Pſal.* 104. 25.) *So is this great and wide Sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable: both ſmall and great Beaſts:* The Pſalmiſt calleth the Fiſhes Beaſts, and there are ſmall Beaſts in the Sea, and great Beaſts even of a ſtupendious greatneſs. The greateſt Beaſts of the Earth are as nothing compared to them; the Elephant is little to the Leviathan. Naturaliſts have written much of this ſubject, the numerouſneſs, variouſneſs, and vaſtneſs of theſe water-Inhabitants. So that we may ſee much of the Majeſty and power of God, as in theſe things that are formed under the waters, ſo in thoſe that are formed in the waters. *Job* deſcends lower yet in the next words.

Verſ. 6. **Hell is naked before him, and deſtruction hath no covering.**

'Tis queſtioned what is here meant by *Hell.*

Some expound Hell of the loweſt parts of the Earth, ſo Maſter *Broughton*, *The loweſt Earth is naked before him, and the loſt* (that is, that which ſeems to be loſt and condemned, as himſelf gloſſeth it) *hath no covering.*

Secondly, *Hell* is often put for the grave (*Pſal.* 16.10) *Thou wilt not leave my Soul* (that is, *me*) *in Hell* (that is, *in the grave*) *nor wilt thou ſuffer thy holy One to ſee corruption.*

Thirdly, It is moſt uſually taken for that priſon or place of torment, where the Lord detains all thoſe, in hold, that have rebelled againſt him, and dyed impenitently in that rebellion. In this third ſence we may interpret it here (as I conceive) moſt ſuitably to the ſcope and purpoſe of *Job* in this place.

Hell is naked before him.] That is, it is fully diſcovered to him, he ſees who are there, and what is done there, he obſerves all paſſages there, even in that bottomleſs pit of Hell, as well as in Heaven or upon the Earth. As if *Job* had ſaid to *Bildad*; *You told me that God maketh peace in his high places, I tell you God hath to do in hell, or in the loweſt places. The loweſt Hell is naked before him.* The Apoſtle ſpeaks in this phraſe (*Heb.*4.13.) *Neither is there any Creature that is not manifeſt in his ſight: but all things are naked and open unto the eyes of him with whom we have to doe.* The words are an alluſion unto Bodies, which being ſtript, and uncloathed, all ſee what they are; there may be many deformities, blemiſhes, and ſcarrs, yea ulcers upon the Body undiſcerned while 'tis cloathed or covered, but when naked, nothing is hid. *All things are naked before God*, that is, he as plainly diſcerns what they are, as we diſcern what a Body is, that ſtands naked before us. Hell is called darkneſs, and utter darkneſs, yet it is light to God.

And deſtruction hath no covering.] Here the ſame thing is again repeated, and 'tis uſuall in Scripture to ſpeak that in negative words, which was before ſpoken in affirmative. As *to be naked*, and *to have no covering*, are the ſame; ſo *Hell* and *deſtruction* are the ſame; and theſe two are often put together (*Prov.*15.11.) *Hell and deſtruction are before the Lord: how much more the hearts of the Children of men?* Though we know not where Hell is, nor what is done there, though we know not what is become of thoſe that are deſtroyed, not what they ſuffer, yet God doth; and if the ſecrets of Hell and Devils are known to him, then much more the ſecrets of the hearts of the Children of men. And as that proverb teacheth us that nothing is hid from God, becauſe Hell and deſtruction are not, ſo another proverb delivered in the ſame form, teacheth us, that nothing in the Creature can ſatisfie the deſires and luſtings of man, even as Hell and deſtruction can never be ſatisfied (*Pro.*27.20.) *Hell and deſtruction are never full: ſo the eyes of man are never ſatisfied.* The Devil who is the great executioner of the wrath of God, is expreſt by this word; as Hell is called *deſtruction* in the abſtract, ſo the Devil is called a *deſtroyer* in the concrete (*Rev.*9.11.) *And they had a King over them which is the Angel of the bottomleſs pit* (or Hell) *whoſe name in the Hebrew tongue is* Abaddon, *but in the Greek tongue hath his name* Apollion; both the one and the other, the Hebrew end the Greek ſignifie the ſame thing, *a deſtroyer*; the Devil, who is the Jaylour of Hell, is called a *deſtroyer*, as Hell it ſelf is called *deſtruction.* From the coincidency of theſe two termes,

Note, *Hell is deſtruction.*

They that are once there, are loſt and loſt for ever. The reaſon why Hell is called *deſtruction*, is becauſe they that are caſt to Hell are undone to eternity. We read of a City (*Iſa.* 19. 18.) which was called *the City of deſtruction*, becauſe it was to be utterly deſtroyed. Hell may be called a City of deſtruction, not becauſe it ſhall ever be deſtroyed, but becauſe it ſhall ever be full of deſtruction, and nothing but deſtruction ſhall be there. There is no eſtate on Earth ſo miſerable, but a man may be delivered out of it, but out of Hell there is no deliverance. *Heman* ſaith (*Pſ.* 88. 11.) *Shall thy loving kindneſs be declared in the grave? or thy faithfulneſs in deſtruction?* There grave and deſtruction are put together; much more may Hell and deſtruction be put together, or for each other. Whatever comes into the grave is deſtroyed, it rots and periſheth; much more doth Hell deſtroy all that comes thither. And, look as the grave is to the body now, a *deſtroyer conſuming*, ſo Hell is to the Soul now, and will be to Soul and Body after the reſurrection, *a deſtroyer tormenting.* The loving kindneſs of God ſhall not be declared in Hell, nor any faithfulneſs of his in deſtruction, unleſs it be his faithfulneſs (according to what is threatned in the word) to deſtroy. The Apoſtle *Peter* ſaith, (1 *Eph.* 3. 19, 20.) that *Chriſt by the Spirit, went and preached to the Spirits in priſon, which ſometime were diſobedient, when once the long-ſuffering of God waited in the dayes of* Noah, &c. It is true, that Chriſt by the Spirit in the miniſtry of *Noah*, did approach to thoſe Spirits who were diſobedient in the time when *Noah* preached, and were in priſon (or in Hell) in the time when *Peter* wrote; but Chriſt did not preach by his Spirit in the miniſtery of *Noah*, or any other way to

Spirits who were in priſon (or in Hell) while he preached to them. There are no Sermons in Hell, nor any ſalvation there. The loving kindneſs of God is abundantly declared on Earth, but it ſhall not be declared in Hell; as there is nothing felt in Hell but deſtruction, ſo there is no ſalvation offered to thoſe who are in Hell. There's tears enow, and mourning enough in Hell, but there is not the leaſt *godly ſorrow in Hell, which only worketh repentance to ſalvation, not to be repented of* (2 Cor. 7. 10.) One of the Ancients hath reported the opinion of ſome in his time, who thought, that though there be deſtruction in Hell, yet not eternal deſtruction, but that ſinners ſhould be puniſhed, ſome a leſs, others a longer time, and that at laſt all ſhall be freed; and yet (ſaith he) *Origen* was more merciful in this point then theſe men, for he held that the Devil himſelf ſhould be ſaved at laſt. Of this opinion I ſhall ſay no more in this place, then this one thing which he there ſaid, *Theſe men will be found to err by ſo much the more ſoulely and againſt the right words of God, ſo much the more perverſely, by how much they ſeem to themſelves to judge more mercifully.* For indeed the juſtice of God in puniſhing ſinners is as much above the ſcale of mans thoughts, as his mercies in pardoning them are; let not ſinners flatter themſelves in a hope of ſalvation when they are in Hell, who have neglected ſalvation while they were on the Earth. For as the Apoſtle ſaith (*Heb.* 2. 3.) *How ſhall we eſcape* (that is, how ſhall we eſcape falling into Hell) *if we neglect ſo great ſalvation*; ſo I may ſay, how ſhall any eſcape by getting out of Hell, who neglect ſo great ſalvation. *Hell is deſtruction*, and as becauſe Heaven is a place of happineſs and ſalvation, therefore Heaven and happineſs, Heaven and ſalvation mutually or reciprocally ſignifie one another; to obtain Heaven is to obtain ſalvation; to obtain Heaven is to obtain happineſs. So becauſe Hell is a place of miſery and deſtruction, therefore Hell and miſery, Hell and deſtruction ſignifie the ſame thing, nor can they be ſeperated.

Auguſt. l. 1, 2. de Civ. Dei. c. 17.

Again, when he ſaith, *Hell is naked before him, and deſtruction hath no covering.* We learn,

There is nothing hid from the eye or knowledge of God.

Philoſophy and reaſon teach us, that the vertue and force of the Heavenly bodies, the Sun, Moon and Stars, do not only act upon thoſe parts of the Earth that are uppermoſt, but ſend their influences and powers to the loweſt parts or bowels of the Earth, for (as was ſaid before) according to the ordinance of God, *dead things are formed there.* Now (I ſay) as the power of the Heavenly bodies reacheth down into the Earth, much more doth the power and light of God reach into Hell it ſelf. I will not ſtay upon any curious enquires where this Hell is; whereſoever it is, God ſeeth it. *Hell is naked before him*, therefore ſaith *David* (Pſal. 139. 8.) *If I aſcend up into Heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in Hell, behold thou art there* (that is, there thou art by thy power and inſpection; thou ſeeſt what is in Hell) and if ſo, how much more doth God behold what is done here upon the Earth; if Hell be naked before him, then the Earth is naked before him; if deſtruction have no covering, then our actions here have no covering. Hypocrites put many coverings upon their actions, they have many policies to vail and ſcreen them from the eye of man; but the actions of men have no covering before God, yea the hearts of men have no covering before God. As *Solomon* in the *Proverbs* (which place was lately toucht upon) argues from this reaſon, becauſe *Hell and deſtruction are before him* (Prov. 15. 11.) *Hell and deſtruction are before the Lord: how much more then, the hearts of the children of men*; as if he had ſaid, God which looketh into Hell (which is not only darkneſs, but utter darkneſs, that is, darkneſs without any thing that hath the leaſt ray or ſimilitude of light in it, God (I ſay) who looketh into this Hell) can look into the hearts of men much more. There are ſome men (I grant) whoſe hearts are a very Hell, a very deep, and they hope to hide themſelves in the depth of their own hearts from the ſight of God, as the Prophet telleth us (*Iſa.* 29. 15.) *Wo unto them that ſeek deep to hide their conucel from the Lord; and their works are in the dark, and they ſay, who ſeeth us? and who knoweth us?* And what doth he mean by the deeps which they ſeek? Do they ſeek caves and dens of the Earth to take counſel or conſult together in? No, they may be in the open Air and yet ſeek deep to hide their counſels from God; ſo that the meaning is, they ſeek to keep their counſels cloſe lockt up in their hearts; but wo unto them that dig thus deep to hide their counſels from God, for they cannot be hid, for even Hell is before him, and deſtruction hath no covering; how then ſhall theſe deſtroyers cover themſelves or any of their counſels from him? As the reaſon of all things is naked and manifeſt before God, ſo are the motions and actions of all perſons.

Thirdly, When 'tis ſaid, *Hell and deſtruction are before him:* that word *before*, doth not only imply that God hath a view or ſight of what is in Hell, but alſo that he hath power in and over Hell, and can do what he will there; *Hell is naked before him*, that is, he hath Hell at his diſpoſe.

Hence note, *The power and providence of God reaches to thoſe things that are moſt remote.*

He orders all things in Hell as well as upon the Earth; his power rules there where there ſeems to be leaſt order, yea where there is no order at all; they who are caſt into Hell kept no order while they were upon the Earth, nor are they in any willing order there; when we ſee confuſions in the world we ſay, *what a Hell is there*, or we ſay, *Hell is broken looſe*; Hell is a place of confuſion, yet Hell is before God, he keeps Hell in order; and when by reaſon of troubles and confuſion among men, we are ready to ſay, *there is a Hell in the world*, yet this Hell is naked before God, he diſpoſeth and orders thoſe places, perſons, and things, which are moſt confuſed; Hell and deſtruction are before him.

Before I paſs from theſe words, I ſhall only take notice, that there are many words in Scripture by which Hell is expreſt. The Rabbins number ſeven or eight, here are two,

Firſt, *Sheol* or the grave, becauſe we lye as it were buried there in a ſecond death.

Secondly, *Abaddon* or deſtruction, becauſe all are there in a periſhing ſtate, or as given up into the hand of deſtruction.

Thirdly, Hell is called *Tiſalmaveth* or the *ſhadow of death*, and by the *ſhadow of death*, is not meant a *ſmall appearance of death*: as the word *ſhadow* is uſed (*Jam.* 1. 17.) where the Apoſtle exalts the glory of the Lord in his unchangeableneſs, that he is the *Father of light, from whom every good gift, and every perfect gift cometh down, with whom is no variableneſs, neither ſhadow of turning*; that is, he is not ſubject to any turning at all; but Hell is called *the ſhadow of death*, as ſhadow is put for ſtrength and power, and ſo to be under the ſhadow of God or man, is to be under their protection. Thus *Hell is the ſhadow of death*, that is, the ſtrength and power of it; death never triumphs ſo much in its ſtrength, as it doth in Hell.

Fourthly, Hell is called *Erets Tachith*, which ſignifies, firſt, *the Earth under*, or the loweſt and moſt inferior Earth. whence in Scripture Hell is called *the bottomleſs pit*, and the way to it is deſcribed by deſcending and going down, as Heaven is deſcribed by aſcending and height; Heaven is high, and the higheſt aſcending is our aſcending to Heaven; ſo Hell is low, and the loweſt deſcending is deſcending into Hell. Secondly, it imports, *fear, vexation, and trembling*; Hell is a Land of trembling, it is a Land of fear; it is ſaid of *Caine* that when he went out of the preſence of God, after he had murthered his brother, he went into the Land of *Nod*, that is, into a Land of trembling, which ſome expound not of any ſpecial place that he went to, but that every place where he went was to him a Land of trembling, he having much fear and dread upon his conſcience after he had embrewed his hands in his brothers blood. Hell is indeed the Land of *Nod*, a trembling Land; they who have not rejoyced with trembling in this world, ſhall ſorrow with trembling for ever in the world to come.

Fifthly, Hell is called *Berſhiachathith*, that is, *the pit of corruption*, not that the bodies of the damned ſhall corrupt in Hell (as they do in the grave, for though we cannot ſay that the bodies of the wicked ſhall *be raiſed incorruptible*, as the bodies of the Saints ſhall, yet they ſhall be raiſed immortal, and in that ſence incorruptible, that is, they ſhall never dye) but they ſhall be corruptible, that is, filthineſs and corruption ſhall be upon them: The bodies of Saints only ſhall be raiſed ſo incorruptible, that nothing of corruption ſhall be ſeen upon them, or felt by them; but the bodies of the wicked ſhall ever feel corruption, and bear the marks of it, without total corrupting, or periſhing, as corrupting and periſhing are taken for not being. The wicked would be glad that they might periſh ſo, but they ſhall not; Hell will be a pit of corruption to them, for whatſoever is painful and grievous to the fleſh, ſhall dwell in their bodies, and therefore it is called *the pit of corruption*; and it may alſo be called *a pit of corruption*, in a moral ſence, becauſe all their ſins and luſts ſhall remain upon them for ever; Hell fire cannot purge the ſoul from ſin, nor free any man from the power of that old man, who (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Epheſ.* 4. 22.) *Is corrupt according to the deceitful luſts.* Nothing but the blood of Chriſt can purge the ſoul from corruption; *Hell is for the puniſhment of corruption, but not at all for the purging of it*, and therefore it is well called, *the pit of corruption*.

Sixthly, It is called *Erets Neſciah*, that is, *the land of forgetfulneſs*; as the grave, ſo Hell is called the *land of forgetfulneſs*, where the wicked ſhall be remembred no more; God will remember them no more, to do them any good, and they are forgotten, how much ſoever they are remembred, who are not remembred for good. And as God will not remember thoſe in Hell for good, ſo they ſhall forget all the good they have had upon the Earth; or the remembrance which they have of it, ſhall only be to encreaſe their ſorrow under preſent evils. *Abraham* in the Parable (*Luke* 16. 25.) ſaid to the rich man in Hell, *Son remember that thou in thy life time receiveſt thy good things*; and that remembrance of the good things which he once enjoyed, was but an addition to all the evils and miſeries which he then endured; *It is better never to have had any good thing, then only to remember that we have had it.* How miſerable is their condition, who ſhall neither be remembred for good, nor remember any good, but to make them more miſerable!

Seventhly, Hell is called *Erets Choſcec*, that is, *a land of darkneſs, a region of darkneſs*; there is nothing but darkneſs in Hell. The wicked *go to the generation of their fathers, where they ſhall never ſee light* (Pſal. 49. 19.) They loved darkneſs here rather then light, and they ſhall be puniſhed with darkneſs hereafter, which hath no light. Darkneſs was their choice in this life, and it ſhall be their curſe in the next.

Eighthly, Hell is called *Gehinon* (whence the Greek *Gehenna*) from the valley of *Hennon*; in which the Idolatrous *Iſraelites* (imitating the abomination of the Heathens) were wont to ſacrifice their children with horrible cruelty. And hence the Scripture often makes uſe of that word to ſignifie the place of torment, or the torments of that place, where the damned muſt abide ſeparate for ever from the favourable preſence, and ſubjected under the wrath of God. *This Hell is naked before God, and this deſtruction hath no covering.*

Verſ. 7. **He ſtretcheth out the North over the empty place, and hangeth the Earth upon nothing.**

In this verſe *Job* exalts God in his Almighty power, upholding the mighty fabrick of Heaven and Earth. His diſcourſe mounts up from the Earth, from the Waters, and from Hell, as high as Heaven it ſelf; and he ſpeaks of Heaven and of the Earth in their conjunction together.

He ſtretcheth out the North over the empty place.

Bildad had ſpoken of the power of God in the Heavens, *Dominion and fear are with him, he maketh peace in his high places, is there any number of his Armies? And upon whom doth not his light ariſe? Job* alſo ſpeaks of the power of God in the creation and diſpoſition of theſe things; *He ſtretcheth out the North over the empty place.* The word is ſo rendred to ſignifie a gracious act of God to regardleſs men (*Prov.* 1. 24.) *I have ſtretched out my hand, and no man regarded.* God ſtretcheth out his hand to ſmite, and he ſtretcheth it out to ſave, but man layeth it not to heart. It is uſed alſo to ſignifie that powerful act of God, in preparing the Heavens for himſelf (*Pſal.* 104. 2.) *Who covereſt thy ſelf with light, as with a garment: who ſtretcheſt out the Heavens like a curtain.* As we draw or ſtretch out a curtain, ſo God ſtretcheth out the Heavens.

But why doth *Job* ſay, *He ſtretcheth out the North.*

I anſwer, by the North he meaneth that part of Heaven that is Northward, or the Northern Heavens. Again, the North may be taken for the whole Heavens by a Synechdoche: and *Job* might ſpeak of the *North*, becauſe the North-pole was neareſt the climate where he dwelt. *He ſtretcheth out the North, or the Northern Heavens*, that is, the whole Heavens, both the North and South, Eaſt and Weſt.

He ſtretcheth out the North over the empty place.] What is this empty place?

Firſt, By *the empty place*, ſome underſtand the moſt remote and uninhabited places of the Earth: He overſpreads them with Heavens, and diſpoſeth things there as well as here; he ſpreads the Heavens over thoſe parts where there is no man, and ſo may be called Empty places, becauſe un-inhabited, or not fill'd with men. *God cauſeth it to rain on the Earth where no man is, on the Wilderneſs where there is no man* (as he ſpeaketh of himſelf to *Job* in *Chap.* 38. of this Book, *verſ.* 26.) Now as God raineth upon thoſe (in this ſence) empty places, ſo he ſtretcheth out the Heavens over theſe empty places, that is, he takes care of them as well as of thoſe that are peopled or inhabited.

Secondly, Rather, by *the empty place*, we are to underſtand the Air, for in the natural diſpoſition or ſyſteme of the world, the Earth is loweſt, the Water next, the Air is the third, and the Fire fourth, over which God ſtretcheth out the Heavens. And becauſe nothing is viſible to us upwards on this ſide Heaven but the Air, therefore it may well be ſaid, that he ſtretcheth out the Heavens immediately over the Air, or the empty place.

But is the Air or that place which we call the Air empty? No, the Air is not empty, there is no vacuity, no empty place in nature; and nature will put it ſelf into ſtrange courſes to avoid a vacuity; Water will aſcend to avoid vacuity, and it will not deſcend to avoid vacuity; but though the Air be not empty or void, taking emptineſs ſtrictly and Philoſophically (for every place hath its filling) yet as emptineſs is taken largely and vulgarly, ſo the Air may be called an *empty place*; when we come into a room where there is no artificial furniture, we ſay it is an empty room: ſo the ſpace between us and the Heavens in a vulgar ſence is an *empty place*. The Scripture ſpeaks often of things according to the vulgar acceptation and underſtanding. Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates thus, *He ſtretcheth out the North upon the empty.* And we may conceive *Job* uſing this form of ſpeech, the more to magnifie and ſhew forth the great power of God; as if he had ſaid, *The Heavens have nothing to bear them up but an empty place, what can the Air bear? The Air will bear nothing; yet the Lord uſeth no ſupport for the whole Heavens but this empty place.*

Super inane; quod juxta communem opinionem intelligi decet. Vulgo enim totum ſpatium à terra uſque ad cœlum vacuum putatur, quum plenum aere ſit.

Thirdly, I conceive that this phraſe may be expounded barely of the Creation; for *Moſes* ſaith (*Gen.* 1. 1, 2.) *In the beginning God created the Heavens and the Earth, and the Earth was without form and void or empty.* It is the word *Tohu* uſed here in *Job*, over this *Tohu* or empty place did God at the firſt ſtretch the Heavens. And as this was the work of God at firſt in Creation, ſo it is his work ſtill in Providence; and therefore the Lord ſpeaks of it, as of a continued work (*Iſa.* 44. 24.) *Thus ſaith the Lord thy redeemer*, &c. *that ſtretcheth forth the Heavens alone, and ſpreadeth abroad the Earth by my ſelf.*

> Hence note, *As the Heavens in creation, ſo the Heavens in their daily motion are ſtretched out and ordered by God.*

(Iſaiah 40. 22.) *It is he that ſitteth upon the circle of the Earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as graſs hoppers, that ſtretcheth out the Heavens as a curtain, and ſpreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in.* The Prophet entitles God to this with a ſpecial emphaſis, *It is he* that doth it; as if he had ſaid, God doth it, and none but he, and in this he eminently declares that *He is God.* Who ever ſtretched out ſuch a curtain or canopy as the Heavens? Who ever pitched ſuch a tent to dwell in? This is a tent or a Tabernacle, which though it ſhall be changed, yet (as the Prophet ſpeaks of *Sion* in her beauty and glory, *Iſa.* 33. 20.) *ſhall not be taken down, not one of the ſtakes thereof ſhall ever be removed, neither ſhall any of the cords thereof be broken.*

Again, Conſider, the Heavens have no outward ſupport; *They are ſtretched out over the empty place*; which demonſtration of the power of God will be more cleared and heightned in the next words.

And he hangeth the Earth upon nothing.

If any ſay Heaven is a thin body, there needs no great matter to keep that up. What will they ſay to the Earth, which is a groſs and heavy body, a body of an unconceivable weight; who can count or caſt up the weight of the Earth, or how much the Earth weigheth? God not only ſtretcheth out the thin Heavens over the empty place, *but he hangeth the Earth* (that mighty maſs of the Earth) *upon nothing*, he hath not ſo much as a peg in the wall (ſo the word ſignifieth) *to hang it upon.*

תלה *Appendit Suſpendit.*

בלימה *Eſt nomen compoſitū ex* בלי *non &* מה *quid quaſi dicas nihil quicquam.* Druſ.

Philoſophi rationem reddunt, quod illa ſit in ſuo centro; in quo res naturaliter quieſcunt, ideoque terra ponderibus librata ſuis quieſcat

He hangeth the Earth.] When he ſaith, *the Earth*, we are to underſtand both Earth and Water, the whole Terreſtial globe, this *he hangeth upon nothing.* The Original word is a compound, which in its parts may be rendred, *not any thing at all*, that is, *nothing.* But how can any thing be hung upon that which is nothing? If it hang, it muſt be upon ſomewhat. Philoſophers tell us that the Earth hangeth upon its Center, and ſo is poiſed by its own weight, and cannot move, which Center or Imaginary point is nothing.

But the Scripture ſaith the Earth hath a foundation; and *David* (Pſal. 24. 2.) tells us expreſly what that foundation is; *The Earth is the Lords, and the fulneſs thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein; for he hath founded it upon the Seas, and eſtabliſhed it upon the floods.* According to this Scripture the Sea is the foundation of the Earth, and the Floods are the baſis of it. How then doth *Job* affirm, that *he hangeth the Earth upon nothing?* That indeed which *David* affirms, may ſeem very ſtrange, *that the Earth ſhould be founded upon the Sea, and eſtabliſhed upon the floods*; is the Sea a fit foundation for the Earth? And can that which is ſtable and unmoveable, be eſtabliſhed upon that which is the Embleme of inſtability, Floods and Waters? *Jacob* ſaith of *Reuben* (Gen. 42. 4.) *unſtable as Water*; and can Floods or Waters be the whole Earths eſtabliſhment? The Earth is rather the foundation of the Water: and many Philoſophers tell us that the Sea is higher then the Earth; and therein is the power of God ſeen, that he holds in the Sea as with bars, or as with a bridle, leſt it overwhelm the Earth; how is it then ſaid, *the Earth is founded upon the Sea?* I anſwer, the word that we tranſlate *upon*, ſignifieth, *by, near, together, with*; ſo, *he hath founded it upon the Sea*, is, by the Sea, or near the Sea, that is, the Sea and Land are next neighbours, they dwell ſo near each other, that the one ſeems to dwell upon, or be the foundation of the other. There are Waters within the Earth; whence it is ſaid, that at the time of the Flood (*Gen.* 7. 11.) as the *windows of Heaven were opened, ſo the fountains of the great deep were broken up*: and we read of the Waters as placed *under the Earth* (Exod. 20. 4.) yet if we ſay the Earth is upon the Waters, ſenſe contradicts it; and if we conſider the whole globe together, we cannot ſay which is uppermoſt; for in a ſphear or round figure, there is neither uppermoſt nor lowermoſt, but all the parts are equal and alike, being placed one by another, not one upon another. So that the Text, in the *Pſalm*, which ſaith the *Earth is founded upon the Seas*, doth not at all daſh againſt nor contradict this of *Job*, which ſaith, *He hangeth the Earth upon nothing.*

Super flumina eſt juxta vel ſecus flumina, quis enim terram iuiit fluminibus dixerit. Druſ.

Again, There is another Scripture that ſeems to oppoſe this, and from which we may infer, that ſurely the Earth hath ſomewhat to ſuſtain it (*Pſal.* 104. 5.) *Who laid the foundations of the Earth, that it ſhould not be removed for ever.* We put in the margin, *He founded the Earth upon her baſis*; if the Earth be founded upon a baſis or pillar, then it doth not hang upon nothing. I anſwer, the foundation or baſis, in the *Pſalm*, doth not oppoſe the Earths hanging upon nothing; for the foundation or baſis which upholdeth the Earth, is not any created power without, or extrinſical to the Earth. God did not build the Earth as we do houſes, firſt laying the foundation, and then ſetting up the walls and roof, there is no ſuch things imaginable in the work of God. But the foundation or baſis of the Earth, is the infinite and inviſible power of God who made the Earth. The will and word of the Builder is the pillar which ſuſtaineth this building. The thin Air is all the appearing foundation of the Earth. For as the Heavens hang over the Air, ſo the Earth hangs in the midſt of the Air. What then is the baſis and foundation of the Earth? I anſwer, which may be the point of obſervation from theſe words.

The Earth is upheld by the infinite and Almighty power of God.

Non fundamentis ſuis nixa ſubſiſtit terra, nec fulchris ſuis ſtabilis perſeverat, ſed dominus ſtatuit terram & fundamento voluntatis ſuæ continet. Amb. Hexam. 6.

The Earth hath no pillar, but hangs like a ball in the Air; we ſhould look upon it as a miracle did we ſee a little ball but of an ounce weight hanging in the Air without ſupport; the Air will ſcarce bear a feather: throw a feather up into the Air, and it will deſcend, unleſs kept up by a breath of wind; and yet this huge vaſt globe of Earth and Waters, hangs as a ball in the Air, and we ſcarce wonder at it. The Poets feigned an *Atlas* that bears up the Heavens with his ſhoulders; God is the *Atlas* that bears up the Heavens and the Earth too, the upper globe, and the under globe too; he made all things by himſelf out of nothing, and he ſupports them by himſelf upon nothing. We have an excellent expreſſion of the power of God in this thing (*Iſa.* 40. 12.) *Who hath meaſured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meeted out Heaven with the ſpan, and comprehended the duſt of the Earth in a meaſure: and weighed the mountains in ſcales, and the hills in a ballance.* God made all things in weight and meaſure; and he keeps the weight and meaſure of all things. As the Earth was not till his Word and Will gave it a being, ſo his Word and Will alone is allſufficient to uphold it in that being. God hath not hanged the Earth upon any thing but himſelf, who is indeed infinitely more then all things. Take two or three deductions from this grand Concluſion.

Firſt, *The ſame power which made the world ſupports and maintains it.*

Thus the Author to the *Hebrews* ſets forth the dignity of Chriſt the Son of God (*Chap.* 1. 2, 3.) *Whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom alſo he made the worlds* (both the Natural, Civil, and Spiritual worlds, with all the changes and ſucceſſions which have been in them) *who is alſo the brightneſs of the glory of God, and the expreſs image of his perſon*; *upholding all things* (the Natural frame of the world, as well as the Civil and Spiritual frame of it) *by the word of his power*, or by his powerful word, which as it once commanded all things into a being, ſo now it commands all things into that continuance of their being in which they are. Which power the Apoſtle attributes again to Chriſt (*Col.* 1. 17.) *He is before all things, and by him all things conſiſt.* Sin made the world ſhake, *And had it not been for a ſecond creation, the firſt creation had been ruin'd and loſt.* The Earth and all our concernments who live upon the face of the Earth, hang upon nothing but the will of God. If he let us go, we fall, though all the powers on Earth would underprop and uphold us; and if he hold us up we ſtand faſt, though we have no more of any earthly power to prop us up with, then the Earth hath, which is propt up with and hangeth upon nothing.

Secondly, *God can do the greateſt things without any viſible means.*

This work of God in hanging the Earth as it doth, is to be numbred among the greateſt works that ever he did; and thus it hangs without any the leaſt appearing means to hold it up. There are three arguments given in Scripture of the mighty power of God.

Firſt, That he works by ſmall, even the ſmalleſt means: we have reaſon to wonder when effects exceed all viſible cauſes: as it ſhews the great power of God when he ſtops great means from doing any thing; when he cauſeth men to labour in the very fire, that is, to toil and ſweat themſelves to the utmoſt *for very vanity*, that is, without any hoped for iſſue or advantage. Some labour in the fire for very vanity, becauſe all they get by their labours is worth nothing; but others may be ſaid to labour in the fire for very vanity, becauſe with all their labours they can get nothing. And *this is of the Lord*, this is an effect of the Lords power, to make the power of a man, in the uſe and improvement of the beſt and choyceſt means, ineffectual. So on the other ſide it is a great magnifying of the power of God, when by a little power put forth by the hand of a weak inſtrument, he produceth great effects. The Apoſtle *James* brings it in with a behold (*Chap.* 3. 5.) *Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!* When great matters are done by ſmall means, we have reaſon to extol and cry up the power of God.

Secondly, It argues the great power of God when he doth great things by means that are improbable, or that ſeem no way ſutable to ſuch an end; as Chriſt cured blindneſs with clay and ſpittle, which means had no ſutableneſs to ſuch an end, the curing of blindneſs: The means uſed to cure *Naaman* had no ſutableneſs for ſuch a cure; and *Naaman* was ſo ſenſible of it, that he was very angry with the Prophet about it, as if his leproſie could be cured by ſo ſlight a thing as that was; he thought he would have done it with ſome ceremony, not in an extraordinary way; yet this ſhewed that the cure was wrought by a divine power, becauſe it was wrought by ſo improbable an application. As the power of God appears in doing great things by ſmall means, ſo by doing great things by unlikely means.

Thirdly, It ſhews the power of God much more to do great things without the uſe of any means at all. Such actings are creatings, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks of the Creation, (*Heb.* 11. 3.) *Through faith we underſtand that the worlds were framed by the Word of God; ſo that things that are ſeen, were not made of things that do appear.* Nothing appeared out of which this world was created; there was no pre-exiſtent matter out of which the world was made; the world was made out of nothing; that goodly fabrick of Heaven and Earth which is now ſeen, was made of that which was never ſeen; no man can tell what were the materials of which God made the world. Now as God ſhewed his infinite power at firſt in making all things of that which did not appear, ſo the great power of God doth appear now in doing great things without the appearance or external concurrence of any thing. The Lord turns whole Nations ſometimes by nothing; things are done, and no man can tell how they were done, or by what. We love to have a fair appearance of means, when we attempt great matters; but God loves to act when and where nothing appears. We honour God moſt, when we are ſenſible that the greateſt means is nothing without him, and that he himſelf is enough when no means at all appears to ſenſe. *It is Gods uſual way to do things in a way which is not uſed; and either to uſe no help, or that which ſignifieth nothing.* Thus the Apoſtle deſcribes the dealing of God in bringing ſouls to himſelf by a holy calling, and in removing whatſoever ſtandeth in the way of that call (1 *Cor.* 1. 26.) *For ye ſee your calling, brethren, how that not many wiſe men after the fleſh, not many mighty, not many noble are called*, &c. (ſome wiſe and mighty men are called, leſt any thing in man ſhould ſeem too hard for the grace of God; and not many wiſe and mighty men are called, leſt any thing in man ſhould ſeem to contribute to or help out the call of God) *but God hath choſen fooliſh things to confound the wiſe: and God hath choſen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and baſe things of the world, and things which are deſpiſed, hath God choſen; yea and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are*; that is, thoſe things which are ſo fooliſh and weak, and baſe, and deſpiſed, they ſeem to have no being, or are accounted as nothing, even theſe non-entities, theſe poor tools doth God chuſe and take up to do great things by, and to nullifie or bring thoſe things to nought, which are all in all among or in the eſtimation of men. Therefore, ſo God own the work, the matter is not much (I ſpeak not in regard of lawfulneſs, but likelineſs, I ſay, the matter is not much) what the means is; God can over-wit wiſe men by fools, he can overpower mighty men by thoſe who are weak. Thus God triumphs over humane improbabilities, yea impoſſibilities, and would have no fleſh either deſpair becauſe of the ſmalneſs of means, or glory in his ſight, becauſe of the greatneſs of it. How glorious was *Abraham's* faith in the former Chapter, who was ſo far from deſpairing, that he was ſtrong in faith giving glory to God, though he ſaw nothing but death upon all the means which tended to attain the bleſſing promiſed (*Rom.* 4. 17, 18, 19.) *As it is written, I have made thee a Father of many Nations before him whom he believed, even God* (who was it that *Abraham* believed? It was God. And under what notion did his faith eye God? Even as he) *who quickneth the dead:* when God is cloſed with under this notion, as quickning the dead, what can be too hard for faith? But there is more in it, *Abraham's* faith eyed God not only as quickning the dead, but as he that *calleth thoſe things which be not, as though they were*; that is, as he who maketh ſomething of nothing: when once *Abraham* had theſe apprehenſions of God, then nothing ſtuck with him, his faith could digeſt iron, and therefore (as it followeth) *he againſt hope, believed in hope*, &c. *and being not weak in faith, he conſidered not his own body being now dead* (as to the procreation of children) *when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadneſs* (as to conception) *of* Sarahs *womb. He ſtaggered not at the promiſe of God through unbelief* (that is, he never made any ſcruples or queries how the promiſe ſhould be accompliſhed) *but was ſtrong in faith, giving glory to God*; that is glorifying God by believing that he was able to make good the promiſe, or that it was as eaſie for God to create a performance, as to make the promiſe.

Thirdly, Then *fear not when God is a working, but he will carry on his work*; deficiencies in the creature, are no ſtop to his actings: his immediate or ſole power is enough who hangeth the Earth upon nothing. Where are the pillars that ſuſtain this mighty maſs? It hangeth faſt by no faſtning, but the order of God; and his order is ſtrong enough to hang the greateſt buſineſs that ever was in the world upon. The *Jews* have a ſaying, in reverence of the written Word of God, *That upon or at every Iota or the leaſt tittle of the Law there hangeth a mountain of ſence*: and 'tis as true in reference to his doings as his ſayings, God can hang mountains upon mole-hils, and turn mountains into mole-hils for his peoples ſake and ſafety. It is rare that we are put to the actings of faith at ſo high a rate (There is uſually ſomewhat in ſight to encourage the actings of our faith and dependance upon God; they that are in the loweſt condition, have ſomewhat to look to) but if there be nothing to be ſeen, then do but remember, that *God hangeth the Earth upon nothing*, and faith will ſay, *I have all. Although the meal in the barrel, and the oyl in the cruſe ſhould fail; although the fig-tree ſhall not bloſſom, neither ſhall there be fruit in the vines; although the labour of the olive ſhall fail, and the fields ſhall yield no meat*, &c. yet the Lord faileth not, either in his power for us, or compaſſion towards us, and therefore the believer can even then rejoyce in the Lord, and joy in the God of his ſalvation. *For while there is nothing in appearance, there is not only ſome thing, but all things are, that are for our good, in the promiſe.* Faith may make all ſorts of comfortable Concluſions to and for it ſelf (and not build Caſtles in the Air) from this one Aſſertion, that, *The Earth hangeth in the Air*, or to give it in the words of the Text, *That God hangeth the Earth upon nothing. The conſtitution or ſyntax of Nature well conſidered, is no ſmall advantage to our heightning and ſtrengthning in grace.*

VERS. 8, 9, 10.

He bindeth up the waters in his thick Clouds, and the Cloud is not broken under him.
He holdeth back the face of his Throne, and ſpreadeth his Cloud upon it.
He hath compaſſed the waters with bounds untill the day and night come to an end.

JOB having ſhewed how wonderfully God upholdeth the Earth which is under us, goeth on to ſhew no leſs a wonder, in his binding up thoſe waters in Clouds which are above us. Whatſoever God hath done or doth in Heaven above or upon the Earth beneath, either as to creation and the firſt conſtitution of things, or as to providence, and the continual motion of things, is wonderful and glorious.

Verſ. 8. **He bindeth up the waters in his thick Clouds.**

צרר *Colligavit & vinxit compreſſit.*

As our Engliſh word, *Bind,* ſo the Original implieth a force upon the waters to keep them within the Cloud; water would not ſtay there, but that it muſt whether it will or no. It would ruſh down preſently and diſorderly to the ruine of all below, but God bindeth it to its good behaviour. As the mouth of a ſack is tyed or bound about, that the corn put into it fall not out; or (which alluſion comes neareſt the Text) as barrels are bound with hoops, leaſt the liquour put into them ſhould leak out. Thus

God bindeth up the waters.] What waters? There are two ſorts of waters; firſt, upper waters, or waters in the Air; of which the Pſalmiſt ſpeaketh, when he ſaith (*Pſal.* 104. 3.) *He layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters*; that is, in thoſe upper waters, which are neareſt the Heaven, called in Scripture, *The habitation of his holineſs and of his glory.* Earthly Architects muſt have ſtrong walls to lay the beams of their chambers upon, but the Lord who made Heaven and Earth, can make fluid waters bear up the beams of his chambers for ever. Secondly, There are lower waters, or waters on the Earth; which diſtinction *Moſes* gave long before *Ariſtotle* (Gen. 1.7.) *And God made the firmament, and it divided the waters which were under the firmament, from the waters which were above the firmament.* Where by the *firmament* we are to underſtand that vaſt ſpace which is extended or ſtretched out from the Earth up to the Clouds, commonly called, *The Air*; and by the waters above the firmament, thoſe *rain-waters* bound up in the *Clouds.* Theſe upper waters are the waters of which our divine Philoſopher here ſaith, that *God bindeth them up*

עבב י עב *Denſitas.*

In his thicks Clouds.] Though Clouds are much thinner then the water which they hold, as Naturaliſts teach us, yet they are thicker then the common Air, or they may be called *thickned Air,* and therefore the Hebrew word for a Cloud is derived from a root that ſignifieth *Thickneſs.* And though we have a diſtinction of Clouds into thick and thin, comparing one with another, yet all Clouds compared to the Air are thick, and compared to the waters all are thin. Beſides, the Hebrew word ſignifies Clouds indifferently as well thin as thick, or rather Clouds Generally without any determination or reſtriction either to thick or thin. And therefore the Text is beſt tranſlated without an Epithete, *In his Clouds*; or if any Epithete were given, it would advance *Job's* ſcope and purpoſe moſt to tranſlate it, *In his thick Clouds*; for, the thinner the Cloud is, the greater is the power of God, and the wonder the more wonderful in making them the Continent of ſuch mighty waters. But, we tranſlate well, *He bindeth up the waters in his thick Clouds.*

It may here be enquired, why the Clouds are appropriated unto God in ſuch a ſpecial manner, by calling them, *His Clouds.*

I anſwer, the Clouds are *His*, not only

Firſt, In that common ſence (in which all things in the world are his) becauſe he maketh and diſpoſeth of them for that uſe, to hold the waters which the heat of the Sun exhaleth or draweth up in vapors from the Earth; but they are called his Clouds,

Secondly, Becauſe God is ſaid to uſe them as Princes do Horſes of State or Charots of triumph to ride upon (*Iſa.* 19. 1.) *Behold the Lord rideth upon a ſwift Cloud*: as alſo becauſe, the Lord, to ſhew the unſearchableneſs and incomprehenſibleneſs of his wayes and counſels in governing this world, and in ordering the affairs of his choſen people, is often expreſſed in Scripture as dwelling in a cloud, or covering himſelf with Clouds (*Pſal.*18.11.) *He made darkneſs his ſecret place: his pavilion round about him, were dark waters, and thick Clouds of the skies.* And again, it is no ſooner ſaid (*Pſal.* 97. 1.) *The Lord reigneth*, but in the very next verſe it is ſaid, *Clouds and darkneſs are round about him*; *Righteouſneſs and Judgment are the habitation of his Throne*; that is, his adminiſtrations are alwayes full of righteouſneſs, though ſeldom full of clearneſs; they are alwayes cloathed with equity, though uſually cloathed with obſcurity. His way and his dwelling is in the Clouds; and therefore alſo the Clouds *are his.* *He bindeth up the waters in his thick Clouds.* Some Philoſophers hold that the Cloud doth not ſo much hold the water, as is water, and that the Cloud is diſſolved into water when it raineth; others that the Clouds hold water like a ſpunge, which being preſſed, yields it out again. But *Job's* Philoſophy lifts up the glory of God moſt, which maketh the Cloud as a veſſel or garment, in which the waters are bound; and yet ſee the wonder,

The Cloud is not rent under them.

בקע *Diſcidit, rupit, ſecuit in duas partes uſurpatur de quavis violenta ruptione aut ſegregatione rerum ante hac cohærentium.*

The waters being of a mighty bulk and weight, might eaſily break their way through the Clouds, did not God both bind and ballance them (as *Elihu* ſpeaks, Chap. 37. 16.) *Doſt thou know the ballancing of the Clouds*; to his ballancing, to his binding, we muſt aſcribe the *not renting of the Cloud.* As *binding* in the former clauſe, noted an act of power and force in God; ſo this word *renting*, noteth a power and force in water. It is ſaid (*Pſal.*78.13.) God rent *or divided the Sea*, that his people might paſs through; and this word is uſed (1 *Chron.* 11. 18.) concerning thoſe mighty men who fetched *David* water from the well of *Bethlem*; *And the three break through the hoſt of the Philiſtines.* And thus would the waters naturally break through the Clouds, but they are forbidden; the Cloud is not rent under all that weight, for God holds it together, and makes it as firm as bra[illegible].

Hence obſerve, *It is an eminent, a wonderful act of divine power, by which the waters are contained and ſtayed within the Clouds.*

The mighty power of God is ſeen in keeping the waters of the Sea in compaſs by the ſands and ſhoars; but it is a greater act of power to keep the waters of the Air in compaſs by the Clouds. There are three things very wonderful, or there are three wonders in this detention of the waters.

First, That the waters which are a fluid body, and love to be continually flowing and diffuſing themſelves, ſhould yet be ſtopt and ſtaid together by a Cloud, which is a thinner and ſo a more fluid body then the water. It is no great matter to ſee water kept in conduits of ſtone, or in veſſels of wood and braſs, becauſe theſe are firm and ſolid bodies, ſuch as the water cannot penetrate, nor force it ſelf through; but in the judgment of nature, how improbable is it that a thin Cloud ſhall bear ſuch a weight and power of waters, and yet not rent nor break under them. When *Peter* had encloſed a multitude of great fiſhes in his net, even an hundred fifty and three (*John* 21. 11.) we find this added as a wonder, *And for all there were ſo many, yet was not the net broken,* How much more may this be added as a wonder, that ſuch a multitude of waters ſhould be held in a Cloud, and yet the Cloud not broken, yea though the Cloud be toſſed and driven with fierce and raging winds. This is one of thoſe wonders in nature, which is therefore only not wondred at becauſe it is ſo common; and, which becauſe it is continually done, few enquire into or admire the power by which it is done.

Hoc ſane eſt ex illis naturæ mirabilibus, quæ aſſiduitate viluerunt.

Secondly, As it is a wonder that the Cloud is not rent with the weight of the water, ſo that the Cloud is rent at the ſpecial order and command of God. At his word it is that the Clouds are lockt up, and by his word they are opened. As in ſpirituals, ſo alſo in naturals, *He openeth, and no man ſhutteth; he ſhutteth, and no man openeth.* It is not in the power of all the world to rent or open a Cloud (though the Earth be parcht and all things that live languiſh) till God unlock it.

Nulla gutta deſcendit ex illis donec veniat verbum ejus & mittat illas per plateas. Moſes Gerund.

Thirdly, This alſo is wonderful, that when at the word of God the Cloud rents, yet the waters do not guſh out like a violent flood all at once, which would quickly drown the Earth, as it did (*Gen.* 7. 11.) *When the windows of Heaven were opened*; but the water deſcends in ſweet moderate ſhowers (as water through a Cullender, drop by drop, and ſtream by ſtream) for the moyſtning and refreſhing of the Earth. And God carrieth the Clouds up and down the world (as the keeper of a Garden doth his watering pot) and bids them diſtil upon this or that place, as himſelf directeth. The Clouds are compared to bottles in *Chap.* 38. of this Book (*verſ.* 37.) theſe God ſtops or unſtops uſually as our need requireth, and ſometime as our ſin deſerveth (*Amos* 4. 7.) *I have withholden the rain from you*; and he can withhold it, till the heavens over us ſhall be as braſs, and the earth under us as iron. *I* (ſaith the Lord of his vineyard, *Iſa.* 5. 6.) *will alſo command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it.* The Reader may find further diſcoveries about this point at *Chap.* 5. *verſ.* 10. Only here I ſhall add,

Firſt, That we depend upon God not only for grace, and pardon of ſin, but for rain and fruitful ſeaſons.

Secondly, When we have rain, let us acknowledge that God hath rent the cloud and given it us, that he hath looſed the *Garment wherein he hath bound the waters* (Prov. 30. 4.) that they may iſſue down upon us.

Thirdly, When the cloud rents not, let us go to God to do it. *Are there any among the vanities of the Heathen that can cauſe rain?* Surely there are none (*Jer.* 14. 22.) And therefore the Prophet (*Zech.* 10. 1.) ſends the people of God to him for it. *Ask ye of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain; ſo the Lord ſhall make bright clouds, and give them ſhowers of rain, to every one graſs in the field.* Only he who bindeth up the waters in his clouds, can unbind the clouds and cauſe them to ſend out their waters. *Job* having thus ſhewed the power of God among the clouds and upper waters, riſeth yet higher in his diſcourſe, and from theſe waters wherein (as was toucht before) God layeth the beams of his chambers, he aſcendeth to the chambers themſelves, even to the Throne of God there.

Verſ. 9. **He holdeth back the face of his Throne, and ſpreadeth his cloud upon it.**

There are three things to be enquired into, for the explication of the former part of this verſe.

Firſt, What is here meant by the *Throne of God.*

Secondly, What, by the *face of his Throne.*

Thirdly, What, *by holding it back.*

To the firſt Query, I anſwer, That according to Scripture, Heaven, or that place above, in oppoſition to the earth, or this ſublunary world, is called the Throne of God; and that not the inferior Heaven, or Air (which in Scripture is more then once called Heaven) but the ſupream or higheſt Heavens. Thus the Lord ſpeaketh by the Prophet (*Iſa.* 66. 1.) *The Heaven is my Throne, and the earth is my footſtool, where is the houſe that ye build unto me,* &c. Thus alſo our Saviour in his admonition againſt ſwearing (*Matth.* 5. 34.) ſaith, *Swear not at all* (that is raſhly) *either by Heaven, for it is Gods Throne, nor by the Earth, for it is his footſtool.* Again (*Matth.* 23. 22.) *He that ſweareth by Heaven, ſweareth by the Throne of God.* The reaſon why Heaven is called the *Throne of God*, is, becauſe there he manifeſts himſelf, as Princes do upon their Thrones in greateſt glory and majeſty: as alſo becauſe there he is more fully enjoyed by glorified Saints and Angels. God fills Heaven and Earth with his preſence, yet he declares his preſence more in Heaven then here upon the Earth. Heaven is the Throne of God, but

Secondly, What is the *face of his Throne?*

I anſwer, The face of a thing is taken for the whole outward appearance, or for the appearing ſtate of it. As the face of a mans body is not only that fore-part of the head, which we ſtrictly call ſo, but the form and ſtructure of the whole body is the face of it. And in that ſence the word is applied both to thoſe great and natural bodies, the Heaven and the Earth, as alſo to a Civil-body, or to the Body politick of a City and Common-wealth. Thus whereas we render (*Iſa.* 24. 1.) *Behold, the Lord maketh the Earth empty, and maketh it waſt, and turneth it upſide down,* &c. The Hebrew is (and ſo our Tranſlators put in the margin) *he perverteth the face thereof,* that is, he changeth the ſtate and outward form of things, and putteth them into a new mould or model, reſpecting order and Government. And ſo we commonly ſpeak after great publick changes, *The very face of things* is altered, *or things have a new face.* And thus the Pſalmiſt expreſſeth the gracious and favourable changes which God maketh in the things of this world (*Pſal.* 104. 30.) *Thou ſendeſt forth thy Spirit, they are created, and thou reneweſt the face of the earth*; that is, all things appear in another hiew and faſhion then before. So then, *the face of the Throne of God*, is that part of Heaven (ſay ſome) which looketh towards us, or which we look upon; all that greatneſs and beauty of Heaven which our eye reacheth unto, and which appears to us as a vaſt Canopy ſet with ſpangles or ſtuds of Gold, ſuch are the Stars to our ſight. But I rather conceive, *The face of the Throne of God to be,* the viſible and full demonſtration of that infinite light and glory wherein God dwelleth, and which appeareth or is given forth to the bleſſed Saints and Angels, who are ſaid to be about his Throne according to their meaſure and capability of receiving it. The face of his Throne, taken thus, he holdeth back from us alwayes in this life; and as the face of his Throne is taken in the other ſence, he often holds it back from us. About which it remains to be enquired,

Quidam faciem eſſe hominis putant os tantum & oculos & genas quod Græci proſopon *dicunt, quādo facies ſit forma omnis & modus & factura quædā totius corporis à faciendo dicta, ſic mentis & cœli & Maris facies probè dicitur.* Gel. lib. 13. c. 28.

Cœli vultus eſt cœli ſuperficies concava ſtellata, quæ nos reſpicit. Albert.

Thirdly, What is meant by *holding back the face of his Throne.*

To hold back, ſeems to be the ſame, as to hide, cover, or conceal the face of his Throne; for when any thing is held back, it is concealed and hidden out of ſight. Thus God doth often hold back or cover the face of his Throne (as the face of it notes the appearances of Heaven towards us) with clouds; as it is ſaid in the report made of that terrible ſtorm wherein *Paul* had almoſt ſuffered ſhipwrack (*Act.* 27. 20.) *That neither Sun nor Stars in many dayes appeared*; here was a holding back or covering of the face of the Throne of God. And thus our experiences have often found it held back, the face of Heaven being masked or vailed over with natural clouds and vapors. Again, if we take the face of the Throne of God, for that eminent manifeſtation of himſelf, as in Heaven. Thus alſo God holdeth back the face of his Throne, by covering it with a Metaphorical cloud, as it is expreſſed (*Pſal.* 97. 1, 2.) *The Lord reigneth,* &c. *clouds and darkneſs are round about him*; that is, we can ſee no more of his glory in reigning then we can ſee of a Kings Throne which is covered with a Canopy, and compaſſed about with curtains. *Job* gives this plainly for the interpretation of this former part of the verſe in the latter part of it.

Eſt tollere apparentiam cœli. Cajet.

Tenere faciē throni, eſt cœlum occultare & obducere nubibus.

And ſpreadeth his cloud upon it.

That is, *upon the face of his Throne.* We may take this cloud, firſt, properly, thus God covers the Heavens from the ſight of our eyes. Secondly, improperly, as clouds note only ſecrecy and privacy; thus God ſpreadeth a cloud upon his Throne, to hide it from the eye of our underſtanding; ſo that we can no more comprehend the glory of God in himſelf or in his wayes and workings towards man, then we can ſee the Sun, Moon, and Stars, when muffled and wrapt up in thick clouds. Thus *David* ſpeaketh of the Lord (*Pſal.* 18. 11.) *He made darkneſs his ſecret place: his pavillion round about him, were dark waters and thick clouds of the skies.* But the Apoſtle ſaith (1 *Tim.* 6. 16.) *That God dwelleth in light.* How then doth the Pſalmiſt ſay there, and elſewhere, that he made clouds and darkneſs his ſecret place and his pavilion? I anſwer, As the Lord *is light and hath no darkneſs in him* (*Joh.* 1. 5.) ſo, as to himſelf, he ever dwelleth in light, and hath no clouds nor darkneſs at all about him. And therefore when it is ſaid, that he ſpreadeth a cloud upon his Throne, and maketh darkneſs his ſecret place, or his ſecret place dark; we are to underſtand it in reference to our ſelves; for whenſoever God hideth himſelf, or the reaſon of his dealings and diſpenſations from us, then the cloud is ſpread upon his Throne. When God is ſaid to ſpread a cloud over us, or any thing we have, it noteth his care over us, and his protection of us (*Iſa.* 4. 5.) *And the Lord will create upon every dwelling place of mount Sion, and upon her aſſemblies, a cloud and ſmoak by day, and the ſhining of a flaming fire by night* (what is meant both by this cloud and flaming fire is clearly expounded in the laſt words of the verſe) *for upon all the glory ſhall be a defence (or a covering.)* Thus, I ſay, a cloud ſpread by God upon us, implieth that we are under his covert and defence. But when God ſpreadeth a cloud upon or covereth himſelf with a cloud, this implieth (all the Scripture over) the hiding and concealing of himſelf and his works from us. And in this ſence *Job* ſaith, *He holdeth*

eth back the face of his Throne, and ſpreadeth a cloud upon it.

Hence note, Firſt, *God hath a Throne.*

Kings have Thrones, much more hath God who is the *King of Kings. King* Solomon *made himſelf a great Throne of Ivory, and overlaid it with the beſt Gold* (1 Kings 10. 18.) Kings have formal Thrones, God hath a real one. He hath all power in his hand, and this he adminiſtreth according to the pleaſure of his own will both in Heaven and Earth.

Secondly note, *God manifeſteth himſelf in Heaven, as Princes upon their Thrones.*

So Heaven is the Throne of God. And where God acts moſt, our affections ſhould be moſt, and our converſation moſt. Where the Throne is, thither the great reſort is, many flock to the Court. As it will be our glory hereafter to be in Heaven, or about the Throne of God for ever in perſon, ſo it is our grace to be daily there in Spirit while we are here. The Earth is Gods footſtool, yet many make that their Throne; Heaven is Gods Throne, and many make that their footſtool; they tread and trample upon the things of Heaven, while they ſet their hearts upon the things of the Earth. 'Tis a ſad miſtake, when men ſet their feet where they ſhould ſet their hearts; and prophane the Throne of God, not only by levelling it with, but by laying it lower then the ground.

Thirdly obſerve, *God hideth his own glory from the ſight of man.*

He holdeth back the face of his Throne, he will not ſuffer the luſtre of it to appear, but ſpreadeth a cloud upon it. Indeed we are not able to bear the clear diſcoveries of divine Glory (1 *Tim.* 6. 16.) *God dwelleth in light which no man can approach unto,* though he were permitted and offered the priviledge to approach unto it. God dwelleth in and is poſſeſſed of that infinite perfection of light that no creature is capable of. When *Moſes* made that petition to God (*Exod.* 33. 18.) *I beſeech thee ſhew me thy glory.* The Lord anſwered (*verſ.* 20.) *Thou canſt not ſee my face, for no man ſhall ſee me and live.* It ſeems that while God ſpake with *Moſes* his glory was overſhadowed, or that God (to uſe *Job's* language in the Text) *held back the face of his Throne, and ſpread a cloud upon it*; and therefore *Moſes* begg'd the removal of it, or that his glory might break through it, and ſhine unto him; *Well,* ſaith God, *thou canſt not ſee my face,* as if he had ſaid, *If I ſhould grant thee that requeſt, thou art not able to enjoy it, or make uſe of it; for as my nature is altogether inviſible, ſo thou canſt not bear the ſuper-excelling brightneſs, which the clear manifeſtations of my immediate preſence would dart forth upon thee; for that glory of my preſence is too great a weight for humane frailty to ſtand under; it would aſtoniſh rather then comfort thee, and inſtead of refreſhing confound and make thee as a dead man. No man ſhall ſee my face and live.* Man muſt die before he can (in that ſence) ſee the face of God, and then he ſhall (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, 1 *Cor.* 13. 12.) *ſee face to face, and know as he is known.* So that though we are much ſhort of the happineſs of the next life, while we ſee as through a glaſs darkly, and God holdeth back the face of his Throne, yet it is a mercy to us while we are in this life that he doth ſo, becauſe we are not able to abide the ſight of him face to face, or to behold the face of his Throne. As Chriſt had many things to ſay to his Diſciples, which they were not then able to bear; ſo Chriſt hath purchaſed ſuch mercies and priviledges for his people, as they are not able to bear while they are on this ſide the grave. *Every ſtate hath enjoyments ſuitable and proper to it.* Further as God hideth his glory from man, becauſe he is not able to bear it all; ſo he hideth much of that from him which he is able to bear, both to make him hunger and thirſt the more after it, and to draw him into the greater reverence and eſtimation of it. We uſually eſteem that more which is veiled and under a cloud, then that which is very clear and openly revealed; and according to our preſent ſtate and frame, that is moſt reverenced by us, which is moſt concealed from us. When a cloud hath dwelt a while upon the Sun we deſire the more to ſee the face of it, and are the more affected with the ſight of it. God will not hold back the face of his Throne from us in glory, nor will he ever ſpread a cloud upon it, and yet we ſhall have freſh deſires after it, and high valuations of it everlaſtingly. But while we dwell in this corrupt and corruptible fleſh, we are apt to neglect that which is alwayes with us, eſpecially if it be alwayes alike with us. And therefore as the wiſe and gracious God, will not let us ſee his Throne here at all in the full glory of it, becauſe we cannot bear it; ſo he will not let us ſee that glory of it continually, which we are able to bear, leſt we ſhould grow either careleſs of it, or unthankful for it. It is even beſt for us, that we have but a dark and imperfect ſight of God in this world, both in reference to what he is, and to what he doth: or firſt, In reference to himſelf in his nature and excellencies. Secondly, In reference to his wayes or works in their ſpecial reaſons and ends. As our darkneſs cannot at all comprehend the light of God, ſo God is pleaſed to cover much of his own light with darkneſs that we ſhould not comprehend it. How many glorious truths are there, the face of which he holdeth back from many of his precious ſervants? How often doth he ſpread a cloud, as upon the truths which he ſendeth in his Word, ſo upon the graces which he hath wrought in us by his Spirit? So that the ſoul is not only hindred from beholding what is without, but what is within, and is ſo far from beholding the glorious perfection of God and his works abroad, that it cannot ſo much as diſcern any of the gracious works of God at home, *He ſpreadeth his cloud upon it.*

Verſ. 10. **He compaſſeth the waters with bounds, until the day and night come to an end.**

Job having deſcribed marvailous acts of divine power in the Heavens, deſcends again to ſhew his marvails in or about the Seas and mighty waters.

He compaſſeth the waters with bounds.

The word which we render *to compaſs,* ſignifieth properly to draw a line, or make a circle, as Mathematicians do with a pair of Compaſſes, ſo that it notes the ſhutting up or circumſcribing any thing to a certain place or meaſure, beyond which it cannot move. And thus God compaſſeth the waters. At *verſ.* 8. *Job* ſhewed how God compaſſeth the upper waters, the waters in the Air, *He bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds.* Here he ſheweth, how God by the ſame Almighty power compaſſeth about the lower waters, the waters of the Sea. The Hebrew is, *The face of the waters,* as in the former verſe, *The face of his Throne.* The face of the Earth is the upper part of the Earth (*Gen.* 1. 29.) *I have given you every hearb bearing* (*or ſeeding*) *ſeed, which is upon the face of all the Earth.* And ſo *the face of the waters*; is the upper part of the waters; becauſe the upper part of the water, as alſo of the Earth lyeth open to the eye, as the face of a man doth. And it may therefore be ſaid that he compaſſeth the face of the waters, becauſe (though the whole body and bulk of the waters ſwell and rage, yet) the face or upper part of the waters is that which at any times breaketh over and overfloweth; and therefore the face of the waters, only, as to us, *is compaſſed about with bounds.*

Proprietas peculiaris verbi חוג *eſt lineam vel circulum deſcribere quaſi circino. Forte etiam indicatur eodem circumdandi verbo unum effici globum ex terra & aqua atq; unum & idem utriuſq; elementi eſſe centrũ.* Pined.

The word noteth, a legal bound, a ſtatute or decree, and is frequently uſed in Scripture, eſpecially in *Pſalm* 119. for the Law or rule which God hath given man both for his worſhip and continual courſe of life. And hence the Prophet *Jeremiah* ſpeaking to the *Jews* about this thing, uſeth another word to ſignifie the bound of the Sea; and the word which here we render *bound,* is there rendred *decree* (Jer. 5. 22.) *Fear ye not me, ſaith the Lord, will ye not tremble at my preſence, which have placed the ſand for the bound of the Sea, by a perpetual decree, that it cannot paſs it?* And there is ſo much of a Law, or of an appointment in it, that the word is applicable to any thing which is put under a certain law or appointment. So it is put for an appointed time in *Chap.* 14. of this book (*verſ.* 13.) and for appointed food in *Chap.* 23. of this book (*verſ.* 12.) as here for an appointed ſpace or circle, within which as within a wall, or with gates and bars, the waters of the Sea are kept. *He compaſſeth the waters with bounds.*

חק *Statutum conſtitutio, decretum; ſignificat præcepti conſtantiam & durationem nam* חקק *eſt inſculpere ſeu incidere lapidi ligno vel Metallo* [illegible] *ſeu.* Sept.

Hence note, Firſt, *The Sea is bounded by the power of God.*

As God hath given Man underſtanding to provide a bit and a bridle for the mouth of the Horſe and Mule, which have no underſtanding, *leſt they come near unto him* (Pſal. 32. 9.) that is, nearer to him, then they ſhould, or near to him, not to ſerve him, or be uſed by him, but to kick or tread upon him. Thus God himſelf who is infinite in underſtanding, hath put a bit or bridle into the mouth of the Sea, which is further from underſtanding then either Horſe or Mule, leſt it come near to drown and overwhelm us. Neither ſhoars nor ſands, neither cliffs nor rocks are the bound and bridle of the Sea, but the Decree and command of God.

Secondly obſerve, *It is an unanſwerable argument of the glorious power and ſoveraignty of God, that he is able to compaſs the waters with bounds.*

Who ſhut up the Sea with doors? (was Gods humbling Queſtion to *Job* in *Chap.* 38. of this book, *verſ.* 8. 10, 11.) *and ſaid, hitherto ſhalt thou come and no further, and here ſhall thy proud waves be ſtayed.* The Pſalmiſt (*Pſal.*104.) having ſhewed how at firſt (*Gen.*1. 1.) the whole Earth was covered with the deep as with a garment, and that the waters ſtood above the mountains, and were in the progreſs of the work of creation ſent down by the valleys into the place which God had appointed for them (having I ſay, made this excellent deſcription of the waters in creation, he concludes with the point of providence now in hand (*verſ.* 9.) *Thou haſt ſet a bound, that they may not paſs over: that they turn not again to cover the earth.* In which words the Pſalmiſt gives us three things clearly concerning the waters. Firſt, that once (he means it not of the deluge, but of the Chaos) the waters did cover the whole earth, till God by a word of command ſent them into their proper channels, that the dry Land might appear. Secondly, that the waters have a natural propenſion to return back and cover the earth again. Thirdly, that the only reaſon why they do not return back and cover the whole earth, is, becauſe God hath *ſet a bound, that they cannot paſs.* They would be boundleſs and know no limits, did not God bound and limit them. Wiſdom giveth us the like Elogium of the power of God in this (*Prov.* 8. 29.) *He gave to the Sea his decree, that the waters ſhould not paſs his commandment.* What cannot he command, who ſendeth his commandment to the Sea and is obeyed? Some great Princes heated with rage and drunken with pride, have caſt ſhackles into the Sea as threatning it with impriſonment and bondage if it would not be quiet, but the Sea would not be bound by them; they have alſo awarded ſo many ſtroaks to be given the Sea as a puniſhment of its contumacy and rebellion againſt either their commands or their deſigns. How ridiculouſly ambitious have they been, who would needs pretend to ſuch a Dominion? Many Princes have had great power at and upon the Sea, but there was never any Prince had any power over the Sea; that's a flower belonging to no Crown, but the Crown of Heaven. There are two things which are more peculiarly under the command of God; firſt, the waves of the Sea; ſecondly, the heart of man. And becauſe God is able to rule the waves of the Sea, take two or three inferences from it. Thus,

Firſt, That he is able to rule and command the heart of man. *Solomon* makes the parallel in this (*Prov.*21. 1.) *The Kings heart is in the hand of Lord, as the rivers of waters: he turneth it whitherſoever he will.* And as he turneth it both whitherſoever he will, ſo he ſtayeth both whereſoever he will. Moſt men at ſome times, *ſome* (wicked) *men at all times are like the raging Sea when it cannot reſt, whoſe waters caſt up mire and dirt* (Iſa. 57.20.) who could live by theſe raging Seas, theſe raging waves of the Sea at once foaming out their own ſhame, and threatning to ſwallow up others in deſtruction, did not God compaſs them about with bounds? Did not he ſay, here ſhall your proud waves be ſtayed. If God did not bound the Sea of ſome mens Spirits, they would not know, much leſs keep any bounds; they would neither know nor keep, not only the bounds of Religion and Piety, but not the bounds of Reaſon and Civility.

Secondly, God is able to rule and put a bound to the rage of the multitude, who in Scripture are compared to waters (*Rev.* 17. 15.) *The waters which thou ſaweſt, where the whore ſitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and Nations, and Tongues.* And theſe are apt to ſwell and be enraged with vain paſſions and diſcontents, as the Sea is by winds and ſtorms (*Pſal.* 2. 1.) *Why do the heathen rage?* Rage as the Sea; and thus they will rage ſometimes though they know neither why nor wherefore. (So again, *Pſal.* 93. 3, 4.) *The floods have lifted up, O Lord, the floods have lifted up their voice: the floods lift up their waves,* which as it is true literally and properly, ſo it is as true (and ſo I conceive there intended) figuratively and improperly or myſtically and ſpiritually, that is, peoples and Nations like floods lift up their voice, they lift up their waves as if they would overwhelm all; but what followeth (*verſ.* 4.) *The Lord on high is mightier then the noiſe of many waters, yea then the mighty waves of the Sea;* that is, the Lord can quickly check and ſtop the rage of a people, when, or though they ſwell like a furious boyſterous Sea. And we find *David* putting both theſe together by way of Expoſition (*Pſal.* 65.) where exalting the power of God as he is *the confidence of all the ends of the Earth, and of them that are afar upon the Sea* (verſ. 5.) He addeth (*verſ.* 6, 7.) *Which by his ſtrength ſetteth faſt the mountains: being girded with power. Which ſtilleth the noiſe of the Seas; the noiſe of their waves, and the tumult of the people. David* joyns the noiſe and waves of the Seas, and the tumult of the people together; either implying, that he meant the tumult of the people, by the noiſe of the Sea; or that it is an act of the ſame power, to ſtill the tumult of the people, and the noiſe of the Sea.

Thirdly, God is able to ſtop thoſe Seas of error, and give a bound to thoſe floods of falſe doctrine, which are ready to overflow the face of the world. The Sea or flood of the Arrian hereſie (which denyed the Deity of Chriſt, or made him barely a man by nature, only cloathed with wonderful powers and priviledges; this hereſie, I ſay, like a Sea or flood) had almoſt overwhelm'd the whole world; yet God compaſſed thoſe *Black* waters with bounds, and gave them a commandment which they could not paſs: and though in this age they ſeem to return, and ſtrive to over-flow the Earth again; yet both the waters of that hereſie, and of all other damnable hereſies (as the Apoſtle *Peter* calls them, 2 *Epiſt.* 2. 1.) which abound in theſe dayes, and threaten us with a fearful inundation, are compaſſed with bounds which they ſhall not exceed. The Apoſtle ſpeaketh of ſome in his time (2 *Tim.* 3. 8, 9.) *Who as* Jannes *and* Jambres *withſtood* Moſes, *ſo did they alſo reſiſt the truth; men of corrupt minds, reprobate* (or as we put in the Margin, *of no Judgment*) *concerning the truth. But they ſhall proceed no further;* ſo the Apoſtle propheſied of them; as if he had ſaid, They have a mind to proceed further, their will is to oppoſe truth and propagate error (*in infinitum*) without end. But they have now gone to the utmoſt of their line, they are come to their border, to their bound; *they ſhall proceed no further, for their folly ſhall be made manifeſt unto all men, as theirs alſo was;* that is, it ſhall appear to all men that the doctrine which they ſtood up for, was nothing elſe but a bundle of folly, and that the doctrine which they withſtood was the truth and wiſdom of God.

Fourthly, Then, the Lord is able to ſtop and bound the floods, the Seas of affliction, trouble, and perſecution, which are ready to ſwallow up his Church and people. The Church bleſſeth God for her deliverance from troubles, under this Allegory of Waters (*Pſal.* 124. 2, 3, 4, 5.) *If it had not been the Lord, who was on our ſide, when men roſe up againſt us, they had ſwallowed us up quick; when their wrath was kindled againſt us, then the waters had overwhelmed us, the ſtream had gone over our ſoul, then the proud waters had gone over our ſoul.* Waters, ſtreams, proud waters are nothing elſe but the perſecuting ſpirit and proceedings of ungodly enemies. And why did not theſe lay all waſt? God would not ſuffer them. When *the Serpent* (Rev. 12. 15, 16.) *caſt out of his mouth waters as a flood over the woman* (that is, ſtirred up many troubles) *that he might cauſe her to be carry-*

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ed away (that is, utterly ruin'd) *of the flood. The Earth helped the woman* (ſaith the Text) that is (as is conceived) God made earthly men, by the uſe of earthly means, and for the attaining of earthly ends, as a bound to ſtop thoſe waters; or as a gulf to ſwallow up thoſe waters which ſhould have ſwallowed up the Church. All theſe things doth he, and we may be fully aſſured he can do all theſe things, and many more, *who hath compaſſed the waters with bounds*, yea we may be aſſured that he will continue to do them, becauſe as he hath, ſo he will *compaſs the waters with bounds.*

Untill the day and night come to an end.] Or as our Marginal reading hath it, *untill the end of light with darkneſs.*

This laſt clauſe of the verſe is a proverbial ſpeech, ſignifying perpetuity; or that ſuch a thing either ſhall not be at all, or ſhall be as long as the world laſteth.

But ſhall day and night, light and darkneſs, end when the world or this frame or conſtitution of things endeth? Will there not be day and light, or an eternal day of light in the heavenly Glory? Is not that called, *An inheritance among the Saints in light?* (Col. 1 12.) And will there not be night and darkneſs, or an eternal night of darkneſs in helliſh miſery? Is not that called utter darkneſs? How then is it ſaid here *that day and night ſhall come to an end?*

I anſwer, Though after the end of this world there ſhall be both day and night, light and darkneſs; yet there ſhall be no viciſſitude of day and night, as there is in this preſent world, and as 'tis promiſed there ſhall be to the end of this world (*Gen.* 8. 22.) *While the Earth remaineth, ſeed time and harveſt, and cold and heat, and ſummer and winter, and day and night ſhall not ceaſe.* Theſe are called the *Ordinances of the day and of the night*, and the ſtability of them is made the ſhadow of that ſtability of God to his gracious promiſe, that *the ſeed of* Iſrael *ſhould not ceaſe from being a Nation before him for ever* (Jer. 31. 35, 36.) In this world, light and darkneſs, day and night are coming and going, departing and returning continually; and in this ſence day and night ſhall come to an end, at the worlds end. *Job* ſpeaks of day and night in courſe and ſucceſſion, not of day and night in being or conſtitution, when he ſaith, *he hath compaſſed the waters with bounds, untill the day and night come to an end.* The Hebrew ſtrictly tranſlated makes this reſolution of the doubt more clear and doubtleſs; for that doth not ſay abſolutely *that day and night (light or darkneſs) ſhall come to an end*; but that there *ſhall be an end of light with darkneſs*; that is, of the intercourſe or change between day and night, between light and darkneſs; or *untill the conſummation of light with darkneſs*, that is, untill light and darkneſs have conſummated or fulfilled their courſe one with another.

Ad conſummationem lucis cum tenebris. Jun.

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *Beyond this world there are no changes of times or ſeaſons.*

In the world to come all is day and light to the godly, to thoſe who dye in the Lord; and all is night and darkneſs to the wicked, to thoſe who dye out of the Lord. Heaven and Hell, a ſtate of eternal bleſſedneſs or wretchedneſs, have no changes in them, nor any thing that is Heterogenal or of another kind. Heaven which hath light and joy in it, hath no darkneſs, no ſorrow at all in it; Hell which hath darkneſs and ſorrow in it, hath no light nor joy at all in it; the mixtures and changes of light and darkneſs, of joy and ſorrow, of pain and pleaſure, are made here on earth. The wine of the wrath of God, and the wine of the love and conſolations of God, ſhall be poured out without any the leaſt contrary tincture or mixture in the life which is to come. Light with darkneſs ſhall no more be heard of; they who go into light ſhall never ſee darkneſs, and they who go into darkneſs ſhall never ſee light. We are now (as *Job* ſpeaks in *Chap.* 14. of this Book, *verſ.* 14.) *Waiting all the dayes of our appointed time untill our change come*; and when that change is once fully come, we ſhall go beyond all changes; *Day with night will then be at an end.*

Secondly obſerve, *What God doth he can alwayes do.*

As he hath hitherto compaſſed the waters with bounds, ſo he can compaſs them with bounds untill the day and night come to an end. Men can do that to day, which they are ſo far from being able to do untill the end of dayes, that, poſſibly they cannot do it the next day. The hand of man is continually ſhortning in regard of natural ſtrength or activity, and it ſeldom keeps long at the ſame length in regard of civil ſtrength or authority. As there are many things which man cannot nor ever could do, ſo there are many things, which once a man could do, but now he cannot. He is changed or the times are changed, either he hath not the ſame power in himſelf, or the ſame powers are not continued unto him. That man may be found ſhaking and trembling, who a while before (as 'tis ſaid of the *Aſſyrian*, Iſa. 14. 16.) *made the Earth to tremble, and did ſhake Kingdoms*, inſomuch that all (as 'tis at *verſ.* 10. of the ſame Chapter) ſhall ſpeak and ſay unto him, *Art thou alſo become weak as we, art thou become like unto us?* Thus we ſee the mightieſt men cannot do what they have done; they who have compaſſed the rage and fury of men with bounds, can bound them no more; but they break in upon them like a wide breaking in of the Sea, and bear down all before them. But the power of God knows no abatings, nor his hand any ſhortnings; as he hath bounded both the natural and myſtical waters, ſo he can and will bound them, and none ſhall hinder untill the day and night come to an end. *The Lord* (ſaith *David*, Pſal. 29. 10.) *ſitteth upon the flood, yea the Lord ſitteth King for ever*; as if he had ſaid, The Lord doth not only ſit upon (that is, rule and govern) the floods for a while, but he ruleth and governeth them alwayes; *he ſitteth upon them King for ever, even untill day and night come to an end.*

Thirdly note, *The waters ſhall never totally overflow the earth.*

As God hath given them a bound, ſo ſuch a bound as ſhall keep them in compaſs for ever; and as we have an aſſurance in the power of God, that he can keep or compaſs the waters with bounds to the end of the world; ſo alſo we have his promiſe and his faithfulneſs engaged that he will maintain thoſe banks and bounds, and keep them in ſuch repair that the waters ſhall never prevail over them (*Gen.* 9 8, 9, 10, 11.) *And God ſpake unto* Noah *and to his ſons with him, ſaying, and I, behold, I eſtabliſh my Covenant with you, and with your ſeed after you,* &c. *neither ſhall all fleſh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood, neither ſhall there be any more a flood to deſtroy the earth.* And as mankind is under this promiſe of freedom from an univerſal deluge, ſo every godly man may riſe up to this aſſurance, that no waters of any ſort can wet ſo much as the ſole of his foot, or the hem of his garment, but as they have leave and commiſſion from him, *who hath compaſſed the waters with bounds, untill the day and night come to an end.*

VERS. 11, 12.

The pillars of Heaven tremble, and are aſtoniſhed at his reproof.
He divideth the Sea by his power, and by his underſtanding he ſmiteth through the proud.

JOB ſtill proceedeth in the enumeration and illuſtration of the mighty works of God. What he doth in the Clouds, and what in the Heavens, was ſhewed from the former context; here *Job* tells us what the Lord doth *with the Heavens*; he who made the Heavens and ſtretched out the North over the empty place, can make theſe Heavens totter in their place and tremble, when he pleaſeth.

The pillars of Heaven tremble, and are aſtoniſhed at his reproof.

There are three things to be enquired into for the opening of this verſe.

Firſt, What is meant by the *pillars of Heaven.*

Secondly, How *the pillars of Heaven may be ſaid to tremble, and be aſtoniſhed.*

Thirdly, What we are to underſtand by *the reproof of God*, when he ſaith, *they are aſtoniſhed at his reproof.*

The pillars of Heaven tremble.

There

Columnæ cæli, i. e. *Angeli contremiſcunt.* Aquin. *Angelos vocat columnas cœli, quia ſcilicet eorum officio adminiſtratur motus cœlorum.* Aquin.

There are various opinions about theſe pillars; Firſt, many of the Latines hold, that theſe pillars of Heaven are the Angels, by whoſe aſſiſtance (ſay ſome Philoſophers) the motions of the heavenly bodies, with their orbs or ſphears, are guided and maintained. And doubtleſs as the Angels have great employments upon and about the Earth, ſo alſo in and about the Heavens, and therefore may (not improperly) be called the *pillars of Heaven*; in which ſence alſo the Angels are called the powers of Heaven, as ſome interpret (*Matth.* 24. 29.) where Chriſt propheſieth, that *immediately after the tribulation of thoſe dayes, the Sun ſhall be darkned, and the Moon ſhall not give her light, the Stars ſhall fall from Heaven, and the powers of Heaven ſhall be ſhaken.* Many of the Antients interpret thoſe *powers of Heaven* by the Angels; as if the Lord would do ſuch things in that great day, as ſhould trouble and aſtoniſh not only men on Earth, but the Angels in Heaven, who may be called *the pillars of Heaven*, as ſome eminent men for parts and power are called the pillars of the Earth; and we may ſuppoſe them pillars of Heaven, not for the ſtrength and ſuſtainment of Heaven, but for the beauty and ornament of it. As we may ſee pillars in ſtately Pallaces, which are not placed there to bear up the weight of thoſe buildings, but only to adorn and beautifie them. Or Angels may be called the pillars of Heaven, becauſe of the firmneſs and ſtability of their own nature, not as if they were any firmneſs or eſtabliſhment unto Heaven.

Stabilitatē permanentē in natura angelorum intelligamus nomine Columnarum. Philip.

Secondly, By theſe pillars of Heaven are conceived to be meant the high mountains of the Earth, which ſeem to touch the Heavens, according to ſenſe, and ſo to ſuſtain and bear them up, as pillars; but this opinion not being grounded upon any truth in nature, but only upon a popular error (though it be a truth that even theſe ſuppoſed pillars of Heaven tremble at the reproof of God) I ſhall not inſiſt at all upon this interpretation.

Thirdly, Theſe pillars of Heaven, ſay others, are *the Air*; for as the loweſt parts of the Earth are called the foundations of the Earth, becauſe the foundation of a building is laid loweſt; ſo the lower parts of Heaven, the Air (which is ſometimes called Heaven, *yea the firmament of Heaven*, Gen. 1. 20.) may be called the pillar of Heaven. 'Tis true alſo that the Lord maketh dreadful combuſtions by ſtorms and tempeſts in the Air, inſomuch that thoſe *pillars of Heaven tremble and are aſtoniſhed at his reproof.* But I ſhall not give this neither as *Job's* meaning here.

Terra tota velut orbis totius fundamentum ac firmamentum. Merc.

Fourthly, *By the pillars of Heaven*, others underſtand (not the Air or the mountains) but the whole body or globe of the Earth. Thus *David* ſpeaks (2 *Sam.* 22. 8.) *Then the Earth ſhook, and trembled, the foundations of Heaven moved and ſhook, becauſe he was wroth*; where the foundations of Heaven in the latter part of the verſe, may be expounded by the Earth in the former part of the verſe. For if we conſider the whole fabrick of the world together, then the Earth ſeems to be the foundation or pillar of Heaven. And frequent experiences in all ages, eſpecially in ſome parts of the world, have felt and reported the trembling of the Earth. We commonly call it an *Earthquake*; and Philoſophers teach us, that the reaſon of it in nature is the ſtrength of vapors included in and ſtriving to make their way out of the bowels of the Earth. And as this trembling of the Earth hath a reaſon in nature, ſo it is often cauſed by ſpecial command from God, as a reproof of the ſinfulneſs of man, or to awaken him from his ſin. Yet,

Fifthly, I rather conceive, that this phraſe, *The pillars of Heaven*, is uſed only in a general ſence, and not particularly intended either of Angels or mountains, of the Air, or of the Earth; but that the *pillars of Heaven*, are the ſtrength of Heaven: the ſtrength of a building conſiſts in the pillars that bear it up: take away the pillars, and it falls down, *as* Sampſon *ſaid to the lad that held him by the hand, ſuffer me that I may feel the pillars whereupon the houſe ſtandeth*; and when he had once moved them, the houſe fell (*Judg.* 16. 26, 30.) ſo that when *Job* ſaith, *the pillars of Heaven tremble*, the meaning is, the greateſt ſtrength of or whatſoever is ſtrongeſt in Heaven, the Heavens themſelves with all their ſtrength, tremble at the reproofs of God. So that this is only a figurative and Rhetorical expreſſion, not that the Heaven hath any material pillars by which it is ſupported; but becauſe in thoſe mighty concuſſions which God cauſeth in the world, it is as if the pillars or powers of Heaven it ſelf were ſhaken, and did

Tremble, and were aſtoniſhed at the reproof of God.

Metaphoricè hæc dicuntur, non quod cœlum columnas habeat quibus nitatur, ſed quod in vehementiori orbis concuſſione videatur nobis perindè acſi nutent ejus columnæ. Merc.

רנפ *Contritus concuſſus fuit.*

יתמהו *Stupent denotat morā animi rei ſingularis conſideratione ad eam cognoſcendā & æſtimandam.* Coc.

But how may theſe pillars (whatſoever they are) be ſaid to tremble and be aſtoniſhed? I anſwer, 'tis thus expreſſed in alluſion to men, who being ſeverely reproved, menaced, and threatned, tremble, and are aſtoniſhed. Here are two terms uſed, Firſt, *They tremble*, which word ſignifieth (as it were) the pounding and ſhattering of the Heavens to pieces, or as if they were even ground to powder or crumbled to duſt. Secondly, *They are aſtoniſhed*; The original word imports not a light, ſudden, tranſient aſtoniſhment; but an aſtoniſhment that ſtayeth, abideth, and taketh up the mind, or which draweth the mind to a deep conſideration of the matter preſented, and thereupon to wonder and admiration (*Iſa.* 29. 9.) *Stay your ſelves and wonder*, that is, ſit down and conſider this thing, and wonder; barely to wonder is not enough, you muſt ſit down, ſtay, and reſt your ſelves to wonder, you muſt take your fill of wonder at this thing. But how can the Heavens be aſtoniſhed, which are not only without underſtanding but without life? I grant, that to be aſtoniſhed is proper only to rational creatures, yet it is attributed to beaſts metaphorically, yea and to things inanimate or without life and ſenſe, as here, and *Jer.* 2. 12. to the Heavens; for as rejoycing is attributed to the Heavens, and to the Earth, to the mountains, and to the valleys; all theſe are ſaid to rejoyce, to ſing; ſo alſo aſtoniſhment, fear and trembling are attributed to Heaven and Earth. And as liveleſs creatures are ſaid to rejoyce, ſing, and praiſe God when men do it, ſo likewiſe they are ſaid to tremble, when men tremble; when God doth ſuch things as affect men with aſtoniſhment, then alſo Heaven and Earth are ſpoken of as affected with aſtoniſhment.

גער *Increpavit objurgavit, reprehendit, duriter & cum poteſtate.*

Thirdly, What is meant by the *reproof of God*, which cauſeth the pillars of Heaven to *ſhake and be aſtoniſhed.* The word ſignifies, a ſore-chiding, the ſevereſt reprehenſion, and that not a bare reproof, but a reproof with authority and command, as a father or maſter reproveth his ſon or ſervant. Thus, when *Joſeph* told his dream, *That the Sun, Moon, and eleven Stars made obeyſance to him*, Jacob *his father rebuked him, and ſaid unto him, what is this dream that thou haſt dreamed? ſhall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down our ſelves to thee to the Earth?* And when *Joſhua the high Prieſt ſtood before the Angel of the Lord, and Satan at his right hand to reſiſt him*, (Zeph. 3. 2.) *The Lord ſaid to Satan, the Lord rebuke thee O Satan, even the Lord that hath choſen* Hieruſalem, *rebuke thee.* This rebuke had a threatning in it, and was ſpoken as with an angry countenance, in which there might be read diſpleaſure, and indignation. The Vulgar tranſlates, not *rebuke*, but *nod*; the pillars of Heaven tremble at thy *nod*: There is a reproof in a nod, as it was ſaid anciently, *He made* Olympus *tremble with a nod of his head.* A nod of the head may ſignifie a reproof as well as a word of the mouth. There is a twofold reproof, firſt, verbal, or by words; ſecondly, real, or by action and geſture. A verbal reproof may be real, but every real reproof is not verbal. Both God and man can act reproofs as well as ſpeak them. And the word here uſed is applyed in Scripture not only to verbal, and voice reproofs, but to reproofs given by geſtures and by actions; for as the holy lives of godly men who walk exactly are a reproof to the world, though they ſpeak not a word of reproof; ſo the actings of God are reproofs, though he doth not ſpeak. Thus *David* ſaith (*Pſal.* 6. 5.) *Thou haſt rebuked the heathen, thou haſt deſtroyed the wicked*; how did God rebuke the heathen? Even by deſtroying the wicked; that act of thine hath been a reproof to the heathen, and ſhewed them their folly. In the ſame ſence 'tis ſaid again (*Pſal.*98.30.) *Rebuke the company of ſpear men, the multitude of bulls, with the calves of the people, till every one ſubmit himſelf with pieces of ſilver.* The rebuke there prayed for upon that boiſterous and bloody generation, was not a *word* but a work of rebuke, that God would do ſomewhat that might be a rebuke upon them, and a ſtop to them; as if he had ſaid, *Seeing this company of ſpear men, and multitude of the bulls will not hear any of thy words, ſeeing they are not capable either of reproof, or counſel, therefore*

Pavent ad nutum ejus. Vulg. *Sic illud poetæ nutu tremefacit Olympum.*

rebuke

UMI

rebuke them by ſome extraordinary hand, and viſible tokens of thy diſpleaſure (as it follows) *ſcatter the people that delight in war.* Thus ſome underſtand it here, that God giveth a reproof to the Heavens, not by a word ſpoken, but by his providential actings and wonderful workings in the world.

Further, this reproof is expounded by that which is indeed the voice of God (and ſo called in *Pſalm* 29.) *the Thunder*; which though it hath a natural cauſe (for which reaſon Atheiſts laugh at the ſimplicity of thoſe who are led up to the thoughts of God, and to a reverential aw of his power at the hearing of it) yet that doth not at all hinder but that God doth in a ſpecial manner diſpoſe of it (as he doth of all other natural things) when he pleaſeth to ſerve his providence in the demonſtrations of his wrath among the children of men. To which end we may ſay that God doth often ſend forth his voice from the Clouds, and chides from Heaven in Thunder. *The voice* (this reproving voice) *of the Lord is upon the waters* (that is, upon the waters which are above the Firmament) *the God of glory thundereth, the Lord is upon many waters, the voice of the Lord is powerful, the voice of the Lord is full of majeſty, the voice of the Lord breaketh the Cedars, he breaketh the Cedars of* Lebanon; *the voice of the Lord divideth the flames of fire, the voice of the Lord ſhaketh the Wilderneſs, the Lord ſhaketh the Wilderneſs of* Kades, &c. Thus the pillars of Heaven, proper, and the pillars of Heaven, in a figure, tremble at or are aſtoniſhed at theſe loud reproofs.

Hence obſerve, *The greateſt ſtrength of the creature trembleth at the angry diſpenſations and appearances of God.*

As the lifting up of the light of Gods countenance, puts joy into the heart more then Corn and Wine, the beſt things of this world; ſo the darkneſs of Gods countenance puts more trouble and ſorrow into our hearts, then gall and wormwood, the worſt of the world can do. *David* deſcribes at large in what a kind of huddle and hurry the world was in ſuch a day (*Pſal.* 18. 13, 14, 15.) *Then the earth ſhook and trembled, the foundations alſo of the hils moved and were ſhaken becauſe he was wroth. The Lord alſo thundered in the Heavens, and the higheſt gave his voice, hail ſtones and coals of fire; he ſent out his arrows and ſcattered them, and he ſhot out lightnings, and diſcomfited them; then the channels of waters were ſeen, and the foundations of the world were diſcovered at thy rebuke, O Lord, at the blaſt of the breath of thy noſtrils.* What *David* there ſpake of Thunder, and Lightning, and Hail-ſtones, hath been viſibly effected for the deſtruction of the enemies of the people of God, and for the deliverance of his children. The hiſtory of *Joſhua* gives us a famous inſtance at *Chap.* 10. and though it be not recorded that *David* obtained victories by ſuch immediate helps from Heaven, yet it is not improbable (conſidering the tenor of this Pſalm) that he did. And we have a notable inſtance of a victory obtained by Thunder and Lightning in the Hiſtory of the Church, whence that Chriſtian Legion of Souldiers who had earneſtly prayed that God would appear for their help, was called *The Thundering Legion.* But whether we expound this context in the *Pſalm* literally and ſtrictly, as expreſſing what God did for *David* in this kind; or figuratively, as expreſſing only thus much, that God did wonderful things in one kind or other, in helping *David* againſt his enemies; or whether we underſtand it myſtically, of what God doth to and for the ſouls and ſpiritual eſtates of men, yet it holds forth in all the utter inability of man to bear up when the Lord ſhews himſelf in any terrible demonſtrations of his preſence. Again (*Pſal.* 104. 32.) *He looketh on the Earth, and it trembleth, he toucheth the hills, and they ſmoak.* There is a twofold look of God, Firſt, there is the look of Gods favour, and thus Saints often pray that God will look down from Heaven upon them; this look is the relieving, yea the reviving of the ſoul. Secondly, There is a look of diſpleaſure, an angry, a frowning look, when Clouds and Storms are ſeen in the brow: Thus in the *Pſalm* God is ſaid to *look on the Earth* frowningly, chidingly, and then it trembled; *he toucheth the hills, and they ſmoak*, that is, they are as all one fire; the natural hills ſmoak at Gods touch, and ſo do the metaphorical hills; when God toucheth the great men of the Earth they ſmoak, preſently they fret and fume, till they break out into a flame of rage, heating and vexing both themſelves and all that are near them (*Iſa.* 50. 2.) *Behold, at my rebuke, I dry up* (or I can dry up) *the Sea*; I am as able to do it now with a word of my mouth, as I once did for the deliverance of your forefathers (*Exod.* 14. 21. 29.) *I make* (or I can make when I will with my rebuke) *the rivers a wilderneſs* (that is, as dry as a deſart or wilderneſs uſeth to be) *their fiſh ſtinketh, becauſe there is no water, and dyeth for thirſt.* What ſtrange work doth the rebuke of God make? By that he drieth the Sea, by that he maketh the river a wilderneſs: and as he doth this by the power of his reproofs upon the Sea and Rivers natural, ſo upon the Sea and Rivers miſtical. He can dry up thoſe worldly helps which ſeem as inexhauſtible as the Sea, and as laſting and conſtant to us as a River which is fed with a continual Spring. And when any power riſeth up againſt us as deep and dangerous as the Sea, as well ſupplied and ſeconded as a Rive, yet we need not fear for God can preſently dry it up, and make us a paſſage over it, or through it. Yea they who are as well bottom'd and foundation'd as the Earth, ſhall quickly feel the effects of his power (*Pſal.* 114. 7.) *Tremble thou Earth at the preſence of the Lord, at the preſence of the God of* Jacob. But ſome may ſay, if the Earth trembleth at the preſence of God, then the Earth muſt alwayes tremble, for God is alwayes preſent; or what is the preſence of God there ſpoken of? I anſwer, as there is a preſence of God, that maketh all thoſe that enjoy it to ſing for joy; *In thy preſence is fulneſs of joy, and at thy right hand are pleaſures for ever more* (Pſal. 16. 11.) ſo there is a preſence of God that is very terrible to the creature; yea that preſence of God which is comfortable to his people, is terrible to his enemies; for when the Pſalmiſt had ſaid (*verſ.* 2.) Judah *was his Sanctuary, and* Iſrael *his Dominion*; that is, a people ſanctified to him, and governed and protected by him; preſently it followeth, *The Sea ſaw it and fled,* Jordan *was driven back; The mountains skipped like Rams, and the little hills like Lambs.* The Pſalmiſt perceiving all things in ſuch a trembling fit and confuſion, ſeems to wonder what the matter was, and therefore puts the queſtion, *What ailed thee, O thou Sea, that thou fleddeſt, yea mountains that ye skipped?* &c. And preſently maketh anſwer, *Tremble thou Earth at the preſence of the Lord*; as if he had ſaid, the cauſe of all this terror and trouble among the creatures, was nothing elſe but the preſence of God. And if the very ſence-leſs creatures were ſenſible of his wrathful preſence, how much more muſt man both be ſenſible of it, and ſtoop unto it. This the Lord inſinuates by a cutting queſtion (*Ezek.* 22. 14.) *Can thy heart indure, or can thy hands be ſtrong in the day that I ſhall deal with thee, I the Lord have ſpoken it, and will do it.* The Lord by his Prophet ſpeaks there to a people that had a double ſtrength; they were *ſtrong hearted*, and they were *ſtrong handed*; they had much force or outward power, and they had much courage or inward power; but neither hand-ſtrength, nor heart-ſtrength; neither force nor courage ſhall avail you *in that day* (ſaith the Lord) *that I ſhall deal with you* after the dealings of an enemy in wrath and Judgment. God ſtrengthens the hands of his ſervants and encourageth their hearts to endure his ſevereſt dealings with them. But when he cometh to deal ſeverely with thoſe who are rebellious and wicked, their hearts who are ſtouteſt among them ſhall not be able to endure, nor can they ſtrengthen their hands; *They who have ſtrengthned their hearts and hands moſt to commit ſin, ſhall be leaſt able to ſtrengthen them for the bearing of the puniſhment of ſin.*

And hence by way of Corollary or Inference conſider.

Firſt, If the pillars of Heaven tremble before God, if pillars (whoſe nature is to ſtand ſtill) move at the preſence of God, what ſhall become of weak man, of man who is a worm? If the pillars of Heaven tremble at the reproof of God, then certainly the pillars of the Earth cannot ſtand faſt at his reproof. The pillars of Heaven are the ſtrongeſt pillars. When *Jehu* ſent Letters to *Samaria* unto the rulers of *Jezreel*, adviſing them to ſet up one of the ſons of *Ahab* King and fight for him, the Text ſaith (2 *King.* 10. 4.) *They were exceedingly affraid, and ſaid, Behold two Kings ſtood not before him, how then can we ſtand?*

ſtand? And thus may the ſtrongeſt pillars on Earth cry out with fear at the diſpleaſure and reproofs of God. Behold the pillars of Heaven tremble and are aſtoniſhed at his reproofs, how then can we be eſtabliſhed? Some men are eſteemed to be like *James*, *Cephas*, and *John*, pillars in the Church (*Gal.* 2. 9.) and others are pillars in States and Common-wealths; ſo we may expound that of *Hannah* in her ſong (1 *Sam.* 2. 8.) *The pillars of the Earth* (that is, earthly powers or Magiſtrates) *are the Lords, and he hath ſet the world upon them*, for, indeed, the world would ſoon fall into confuſion, and ſhatter to pieces (as to its civil capacity) if the Lord had not founded it upon pillars of Government and Magiſtracy, or ſet up Magiſtrates and Governors as the pillars of it. And yet how often have theſe pillars of the Earth trembled? How many of them have fallen and been broken at the rebukes of God? There is a ſort of pillars that ſhall never be moved; how great an honour is it to be made ſuch a pillar, and Chriſt hath taught us who ſhall be made ſuch a one (*Rev.* 3. 12.) *Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the Temple of my God*; ſuch pillars ſhall not tremble, they ſhall not be aſtoniſhed, when all the pillars of the world are caſt down with trembling and aſtoniſhment. *David* hath a ſtrange expreſſion (*Pſal.* 75. 3.) *The Earth and all the inhabitants of it are diſſolved* (if ſo, whence was it that they were not utterly ruin'd and deſtroyed? He anſwers) *I bear up the pillars of it.* But how could *David* bear up the pillars of the Earth, when all was diſſolved? He means it not of a Natural but Civil diſſolution; things were out of order, the bands and ligaments of government were ſorely broken, men were divided into parties and factions. Thus the Earth, and inhabitants thereof were diſſolved, which is the ſadeſt condition a people can be in; when it was thus, when there was ſuch a rupture among the people, then *David* the chief Governor (under God) laboured to heal the breaches, and to be a pillar to thoſe ſhaking pillars. He by his great wiſdom, juſtice, moderation, and faithfulneſs, bore up the bearers of the people, and ſupported their ſupporters, whether perſons or things; as if he had ſaid, though there be much confuſion in the Earth, yet the Lord enables me to keep things together, ſo that they fall not to the ground, and are not utterly ruined. *It is a great honour to be a pillar bearing up the building, but it is a greater honour to be a pillar bearing up the pillars.* All good Magiſtrates have the former honour, and all ſupreme Magiſtrates if good, have the latter; yet both theſe honours do originally and primarily belong unto God; who as he make the pillars of Heaven tremble, ſo he can firmly ſettle (and will while they willingly ſerve his ends and intereſts) the pillars of the Earth, though but earthly pillars.

Secondly, Take this alſo by way of Corolary from the Text; *If the pillars of Heaven tremble, and are aſtoniſhed at the reproof of God*; what ſhall we ſay of thoſe men, or of the heardneſs of their hearts?

Firſt, Who, *hear the reproofs of God dayly, and yet tremble not*; What? Do the pillars of Heaven tremble at the reproof of God, and ſhall not men! Yet, thus more then brutiſh are many men; they hear reproofs, ſevere reproofs againſt ſin, yet they tremble no more then the ſtones they ſtand upon, nor are moved any more then the ſeats they ſit upon; let God thunder, and lighten, and chide, and threaten, they are not ſtirred with it; the pillars of Heaven ſhall riſe up in judgment againſt this dedolent and obdurate generation. The Prophet (*Jer.* 36.24.) reports a ſad ſtory of this, a threatning roll was ſent to *Jehoiakim* King of *Judah*, written from the mouth of *Jeremiah* by *Baruck*; the King cauſed it to be read as he ſate at the fire, and then (whereas it might have been expected that he ſhould be cut at the heart with godly ſorrow and contrition for his ſin) *he cut it with the Penknife and caſt it into the fire that was on the hearth untill all the roll was conſumed in the fire that was on the hearth; yet they were not afraid nor rent their garments, neither the King, or any of his ſervants that heard all theſe words*; as if it had been ſaid, what a wonderful hardneſs was there upon the hearts of theſe men, that they could hear ſuch words read, words ſo full of terror, words cloathed with ſuch reproofs, words which ſpake nothing but death, wrath, deſtruction, ruine, and deſolation; yet notwithſtanding all this they were not afraid, neither the King nor any of his ſervants regarded it. *The heart of man is more hard then hardneſs it ſelf, till God ſoften it, or breaketh it*; man moves not, he relents not, let God reprove and thunder, let God do what he will, and ſay what he will, let God make (as it were) a Hell upon the Earth, and in the greateſt earneſt, caſt abroad his firebrands, arrows, and death, in the dreadfulleſt repreſentations of wrath and judgment, yet man trembles not, nor is he any more aſtoniſhed then if all this was ſpoken in jeſt.

Secondly, What ſhall we ſay of thoſe who as they tremble not when they hear the reproofs of God, ſo they tremble not when they ſee his reproofs. When God makes his reproofs viſible, and writes them in blood; when he brings forth his reproofs in woful effects (for as all our mercies and comforts are nothing elſe but the promiſes made viſible; ſo all the judgments which God brings upon the world, are nothing but his reproofs and threatnings made viſible, when (I ſay) he brings forth his reproofs in woful effects) how deſperately and indeed (though it may ſeem a contradiction) how preſumptuouſly are they hardned in ſin, whoſe eye never affects their heart, who can ſee ſuch reproofs of God yet never tremble. It is ſaid in the Law of *Moſes* that puniſhment ſhould be openly executed upon the preſumptuous ſinner (*Deut.* 17. 13.) that *all the people ſhould hear and fear and do no more preſumptuouſly*; if all upon the hearing, ſhould fear, and fear ſo as to do ſo no more, how much more ſhould all that ſee fear, and do ſo no more?

Thirdly, What ſhall we ſay of thoſe who not only hear and ſee the reproofs of God, but feel them alſo, and yet tremble not: when the Rod is upon their backs, a Sword in their bowels, Judgments round about them, and Death climbing up at their windows; yet they are not aſtoniſhed, they are not only *Word proof*, but *Judgment proof*: they are not ſenſible of what they feel, they are ſmitten, yet not ſick, ſorrow and grief of heart toucheth them not, though they are ſmitten for their ſins, and peirced with many ſorrows. They are ſo far from being troubled at the remembrance of former ſins while they ſmart under preſent afflictions, that with wicked King *Ahaz* they ſin yet more againſt God in the time of their affliction. They are ſo far from turning as wiſdom counſelleth us (*Prov.* 1. 23.) at the verbal reproofs of God, or at the reproofs of his mouth, that they will not return while he reproves them with his hand. Surely, at laſt the trembling pillars of Heaven ſhall reprove them, who tremble not, nor are aſtoniſhed at the reproofs of God.

Verſ. 12. **He divideth the Sea by his power, and by his underſtanding he ſmiteth through the proud.**

The general ſcope and ſence of this verſe, is an illuſtration of the Power and Wiſdom of God by a twofold effect; Firſt, By dividing and vexing the mighty Waters of the Sea with boyſterous Winds and Storms. Secondly, By ſtopping and appeaſing them when they are in their higheſt rage and proudeſt fury, as if they were ſmitten to death.

First, **He divideth the Sea by his power.**

The word which we render **to divide**, hath a twofold ſignification, in a contrariety, as is frequent in the Hebrew; Firſt, To move and roul, to ſtir up, and trouble, as the waters and waves of the Sea are by the winds; which do ſo move and ſtir them as that they ſeem to divide and cut them aſunder, and cauſe them to daſh one againſt another, and ſo it is applicable to the Sea in a ſtorm. Secondly, It ſignifies to quiet and appeaſe, and ſo it is applicable to the Sea in a calm. The ſeventy render it, ſo here, *He hath appeaſed the Sea by his power*: and a learned Hebrician gives the ſame ſence, *By his power the Sea is quiet.* And 'tis indeed an act of the ſame power to quiet the Sea, to huſh the winds, and command a calm, as to raiſe ſtorms upon the Sea, or to put the Sea into a ſtorm; but I ſhall not proſecute that ſenſe in this firſt part of the verſe, becauſe the latter part of it ſpeaks rather of that point, as will appear in the opening of it; and ſo the whole verſe giveth us a compleat deſcription of the mighty power of God upon the mighty waters; firſt, in cauſing their rage and fury; ſecondly, in cauſing them to be ſtill, and quiet. The exerciſe

רגע *Movit commovit volvit, per Antiphraſin quievi.*

Virtute ſedavit mare, Sept. *Virtute ejus quieſcit mare.* Vatabl.

exerciſe of which two powers carry a compleat Empire and Dominion over the Seas.

He divideth the Sea.] There is a general interpretation of the verſe which I ſhall touch before I pitch upon that which I conceive moſt proper. *This diviſion of the Sea, and ſmiting through the proud,* is ſuppoſed to be a deſcription of Gods dealing with *Pharoah* and his *Egyptians*, when he brought the people of *Iſrael* out of *Egypt*, at which time (the Hiſtory telleth us that) *he divideth the ſea by his power, and by his underſtanding he ſmote through the proud, or through Rahab.* The diviſion of the ſea is unqueſtionable (*Exod.* 14. 21.) *And Moſes ſtretched out his hand over the ſea, and the Lord cauſed the ſea to go back by a ſtrong Eaſt-wind all that night, and made the ſea dry land, and the waters were divided.* The latter part of the verſe is as clear in the plain ſignification of it, to the ſame work of providence, for then, *By his underſtanding did God ſmite through the proud.* And the word *Rahab*, which we tranſlate *proud*, is often uſed in Scripture to ſignifie *Egypt*. Thus (*Pſal.* 87.4.) *I will make mention of Rahab and Babylon to them that know me*, that is, of *Egypt* and *Babylon*; as if he had ſaid, thoſe places which have been the greateſt enemies to the people of God ſhall deſire to joyn with the people of God, *Sion* ſhall have converts from *Egypt* and *Babylon*. And the reaſon why *Egypt* is expreſſed in Scripture under this word, ariſeth from both ſignifications of it; Firſt, *Strength*, for *Egypt* was a very ſtrong Nation, and therefore the *Iſraelites* were reproved for going to them for help, and relying upon their ſtrength, which though great in it ſelf, yet ſhould be to them but a broken reed. Secondly, As it ſignifieth *pride*, or the *proud*; men are uſually proud of ſtrength, and *Egypt* being a ſtrong nation, was alſo a very proud nation; yet this *Egypt*, this *Rahab*, ſtrong and proud, ſhall fall down and humble her ſelf before the Lord. And though now *Egyptians* be ſtrangers from the Common wealth of *Iſrael*, yet of them it ſhall be ſaid that they were born (by a ſecond or new ſpiritual birth) in *Sion*. We have the like ſence of the word, and almoſt the ſame phraſe of ſpeech with this in *Job* (*Pſal.* 89. 9, 10.) *Thou ruleſt the raging of the ſea, when the waves thereof ariſe thou ſtilleſt them*; then followeth in the next words, *Thou haſt broken Rahab as one that is ſlain* (that is *Egypt*) *thou haſt ſcattered thine enemies with thy ſtrong arm.* And again (*Iſa.* 51.9.) *Awake, awake O arm of the Lord, put on ſtrength.* The Pſalmiſt ſaith, *Thou haſt ſcattered thine enemies with thy ſtrong arm,* the Prophet prayeth *Awake, awake O arm of the Lord, As in the ancient dayes, in the generations of old: art thou not it, that hath cut Rahab, and wounded the Dragon? art not thou it which hath dried the ſea? &c.* Which plainly hints the deſtruction of *Pharaoh* and his hoſt in the Red-ſea. *Job* alſo ſeems to aim at that noble, and notable act of divine power, and underſtanding: And the words of the Text (as all muſt grant) without any ſtrain or trouble are applicable to it. The only difficulty lieth in this, becauſe it is not agreed upon by Chronologers, who have ſearched ſtrictly and critically into thoſe times, that *Job* lived after the departure of the people of *Iſrael* out of *Egypt*, yea ſome affirm, that *Job* died that very year when the *Iſraelites* departed out of *Egypt*, and if ſo, then he could not make inſtance ſo many years before he died (unleſs prophetically) concerning that miraculous diviſion of the Red-ſea, and the deſtruction of the *Egyptians*. Beſides this, another argument is alledged to invalidate this interpretation, becauſe all along *Job* inſtanceth in the general works of God, what he doth in the heavens, in the earth, in the air, and here in the Sea; ſo that it doth not ſeem probable that *Job* ſhould deſcend to the mention of that particular providence of God to the *Iſraelites*; though that may ſerve for a glorious proof and illuſtration of the point upon which *Job* hath ſo long inſiſted. The works of God in ordering the works of nature, bear the reſemblance of his works among the children of men; his repreſſing the raging of the Sea looketh like his repreſſing the rage of the wicked, who are like the troubled Sea.

Hæc accipere de decem plagis Egypti vix permittit ætas Jobi, quē mortuū putant & anno quam Iſraelitæ egreſſi ſunt ex Egypto. Druſ. *Non placet hæc referre ad diviſionem maris rubri in Egypto Iſraelitarū gratia, quia ante illud tēpus credimus fuiſſe Job & generalitèr potius loquitur de dei operibus.* Merc.

He divideth the Sea by his power.

We may take that act two wayes; either, Firſt, As dividing is uſed in an ordinary ſenſe, to cut out and part one thing or one piece of a thing from another. It is a great and powerful work of God, to divide the Sea, or the whole bulk of waters to ſeveral parts of the world, and for the accommodation of ſeveral Countries. At firſt the waters covered the whole earth, *all was a great deep, and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters* (*Gen.* 1. 2.) Nothing was to be ſeen, or there was no face of any thing but water. And therefore as it is ſaid (*Gen.* 1. 7.) that *the Lord ſeparated or divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament.* So (*Gen.* 1.9) *God ſaid let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear, and it was ſo, and God called the dry land earth, and the gathering together of waters he called Sea.* And as that Scripture in *Geneſis* ſheweth that the Sea is the gathering together of waters; ſo other Scriptures ſhew that the waters of the Sea are divided or run out in ſeveral Diviſions. The 104 *Pſalm* is a continued meditation of the mighty power of God put forth both in creation and providence; where the Pſalmiſt having ſaid of God (*verſ.* 5.) *Who laid the foundations of the earth that it ſhould not be removed for ever*; he addeth (*verſ.* 6, 7, 8.) *Thou covereſt it* (that is, the whole earth) *with the deep as with a garment; the waters ſtood above the mountains* (that is, the waters were higher then the higheſt mountains.) But what did God then? *at thy rebuke they fled, at the voice of thy thunder they haſted away* (that is, when thou didſt ſpeak powerfully and ſtrongly to them, as with the voice of thunder) *they go up by the mountains, they go down by the valleys, unto the place which thou haſt founded for them: thou haſt ſet them bounds that they may not paſs over, that they return not again to cover the earth.* As the waters are now put into one great veſſel, ſo they are carried out in ſeveral great channels all the world over for the conveniency of traffick, and for the more eaſie intercourſe of nation with nation. Mr. *Broughton* expounds his tranſlation fully to this purpoſe; *Of a general water, he made many*; and he tranſlates the latter part of the verſe fully to that ſence; *And by his wiſdom he parted the main water,* or *pride*, that is, the proud Sea, that threatneth to drown the land. So that though the Sea be but one body of waters, yet it is divided into many members, and receives different names, according to the differing names, whether of Iſlands or Continents, whoſe ſhoars it waſheth.

Secondly, Others expound this diviſion of the Sea, of the violent motion of the Sea. So, *He divideth the Sea,* is, he maketh the Sea rage, and waters riſe up againſt waters, as perſons or nations do when they are divided among themſelves. Sometimes the Sea is (as if it were) all of one piece, in union, and concord, all is calm and quiet; by and by, the Lord divides the Sea, ſets wave againſt wave, flood againſt flood, water againſt water, as if the Sea were broken into a thouſand factions. It is ſaid in that myſtical Scripture (*Dan.* 7. 2.) *That the Prophet ſaw in his viſion by night, and Behold the four winds of heaven ſtrove upon the great Sea*; That is, there were great troubles and commotions raiſed in all parts of the world, which vexed divided, and turmoiled the nations, even as the Sea is when boiſterous winds, eſpecially when all the winds are let out of priſon to ſtrive and contend with one another. Men make many fights at Sea, and God many times makes the Seas fight. Which fightings and dividings of the Sea, are a clear emblem of all the diviſions and fights, which ariſe among men, and are acted either at Land or Sea.

> Hence Note, *The diviſions, ſtorms, and ragings of the ſea are by the power of God.*

The Pſalmiſt is much upon this, (*Pſal.* 107. 23, 24, 25.) *They that go down to the ſea in ſhips, that do buſineſs in great waters, theſe ſee the works of the Lord in the deep; for he commandeth and raiſeth up the ſtormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof*: (where note, they are lifted up by Gods command) *they mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths, their ſoul is melted becauſe of trouble.* (Jon. 1.4.) *The Lord ſent out a great wind into the ſea, and there was a mighty tempeſt in the ſea.* (Jer. 10. 13.) God is ſaid *to bring the wind out of his treaſure*: And (*Prov.* 30.4.) *To gather the wind in his fiſt.* The wind is ſent out, and the wind is gathered in, 'tis treaſured up, and 'tis disburſed out by his own appointment to ſerve his providences and deſigns towards men, both in mercy and in Judgment.

We may hence infer, That *As the Lord divideth the ſea, ſo the earth.*

When men are all of a mind, all as one man, he can ſever and divide their ſpirits, and then cauſe them to daſh againſt one another like the waves of a tempeſtuous ſea. The old world was of one mind, but the Lord came down and divided them, when he ſaw them united in that work (*Gen.* 11.6.) *The people are one, and they have all one language, and this they begin to do, and now nothing will be reſtrained from them which they have imagined to do: ſo the Lord confounded their language, and ſcattered them abroad.* They were building a *Babel* to ſecure themſelves againſt a ſecond deluge, and to get *them a name, leſt they ſhould be ſcattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.* Therefore God brought their fears upon them, and ſcattered them. *We lay our ſelves moſt open to that judgment, which we labour moſt to prevent in a ſinful way.* As there are diviſions among men which are their ſin, ſo God ſends diviſions among men which are their puniſhment. And as God ſends diviſions among men for the puniſhment of ſome, ſo for the probation or tryal of others. Chriſt ſaith (*Mat.* 10.35.) *I am come to ſet a man at variance againſt his father, and the daughter with her mother, and the daughter in law againſt her mother in law; and a mans enemies ſhall be they of his own houſe.* Such diviſions the Lord makes on the earth, that it may appear how ſtrongly and immoveably his faithful ones are united unto him. As we are to aſcribe our union, ſo our diviſions to God; it is he that ordereth all theſe things, though they flow from the corruption, pride, and ſelfiſhneſs of men. When there are diviſions and emulations among us, we ſhew our ſelves (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, 1 *Cor.* 3.3.) and walk as men; But God ſheweth himſelf righteous, and acteth as God; *He divideth the ſea by his power,*

And by his underſtanding he ſmiteth through the proud.

מחץ *Eſt ictu deprimere, ut quum paxillus ictu corporis ſolidi imprimitur.*

The dividing of the ſea was aſcribed to the power of God in the former part of the verſe, and here his ſmiting through the proud is aſcribed to his underſtanding. The word ſignifies to ſtrike ſo, as to deſtroy, or ſtrike dead (*Iſa.* 30.26. *Numb.* 24.8.) *God ſtriketh home when he ſtriketh the proud.*

But who or what are the proud ones, whom God ſmiteth through? The word is *Rahab*, (as was toucht before in the general interpretation of the verſe) which ſignifies two things; Firſt, Strength, ſo ſome render it here; *By his underſtanding he ſmiteth through ſtrength*; that is, *thoſe things which are ſtrongeſt.* The very weakneſs of God is ſtronger then man, and therefore there is nothing ſo ſtrong, but God can quickly ſmite it through or deſtroy it. Secondly, It ſignifieth pride; becauſe men uſually are proud of their ſtrength; whence that caution (*Jer.* 9.23.) *Let not the mighty man glory in his might.* Any kind of ſtrength is apt to make man proud; the ſtrength of his eſtate, and purſe, is a great temptation to pride; ſtrength of body, ſtrength of parts, ſtrength of wit and underſtanding (which is the higheſt, and nobleſt natural ſtrength) puts on to pride; yea (ſo ſtrange are the wayes and methods of temptation) the very ſtrength of grace or ſpiritual ſtrength hath blown up ſome with pride: For though humility flow properly from the ſtrength of grace, and the more grace the more humility, yet upon a preſumption of the greatneſs and ſtrength of their graces, ſome have been proud and high minded, that is, they have not lived in ſuch dependance upon Chriſt as they ought. Our ſtrength lies much in the ſence of our weakneſs, becauſe, then we go out of our ſelves to Chriſt for ſtrength, that is the meaning of the Apoſtles confeſſion, *When I am weak, then am I ſtrong* (2 *Cor.* 12.10.) And they who are ſtrong in themſelves, muſt needs be weak, becauſe the ſtrength of God goeth out againſt them. And therefore it will not be unprofitable for us, before I come to the ſpecial explication of the proud here intended, to meditate upon and make uſe of this Scripture in the full latitude and compaſs of the word. For whoſoever he is that is proud, whether he be proud of his natural or civil or ſupernatural ſtrength, let him look to himſelf: God underſtandeth him, and by his underſtanding he will *ſmite through the proud.* The proud man is alwayes in danger of falling, though (becauſe of his pride) he leaſt of all men, either feareth or ſuſpecteth a fall. How can they be ſafe againſt whom God hath declared himſelf an enemy? There's no armour of proof againſt the ſtroaks of God; if God ſmiteth an enemy, he ſmiteth through, and ſo he alwayes ſmiteth the proud. *Saul* attempted more then once to ſmite *David* to the wall with his Javelin; yet *David* avoided his blow, and got out of his furious preſence; But when God caſteth his Javelin at the proud, they ſhall not eſcape a ſmiting through and nailing to the wall. *By his underſtanding he ſmiteth through the proud.*

But more diſtinctly, who is the proud in the Text whom God ſmiteth through?

Firſt, Some ſay the *Devil*; He indeed is the *proud one*, his pride was his fall from God, and God hath ſmitten him through for his pride.

Et ſcientia ſtratus eſt cetus. 70. i.e. *ſuo imperio ſubegit.*

Secondly, Others underſtand by the proud, *the Whale in the ſea*; thus the *ſeventy* tranſlate, *and by his knowledge he hath deſtroyed the Whale or Leviathan*, of whom the Lord ſaith (in *Chap.* 41. of this book, *verſ.* 34.) *He is a King over all the children of pride.*

Intelligentia ſua percuſſit Gigantus. Targ.

Thirdly, The Chaldee paraphraſe ſaith, *He hath ſmitten through the Giants.* Which whether it be meant of the Whales who are Giants among the fiſhes of the ſea; or of Giants who are like Whales at land, bigger and more formidable then the reſt of men, the ſence is the ſame; both agreeing in this, that God can quickly deſtroy and ſubdue thoſe who are greateſt, ſtrongeſt, and ſo proudeſt in this world. But leaving all theſe ſuppoſitions, I ſhall conclude.

Percutit, i.e. *domat & compeſcit ſuperbiam maris.* Druſ. *Sua potentia ſcindit mare & intelligentia ſua compeſcit ejus ferociã.* Tygur. *Cum deus tranquillat mare, percutere & conculcare videtur ſuperbũ.* Pined.

Fourthly, That *by the proud*, we are rather to underſtand the ſtrong and mighty waves and waters of the Sea in their greateſt height and pride. This holdeth faireſt correſpondence with the former part of the verſe, *He divideth the Sea by his power*, that is, He raiſeth ſtorms, nnd ſo divides the waters, and when the Sea is in its greateſt rage, then *by his underſtanding he ſmiteth through the proud*, the proud waves, and ſo maketh a calm. The ſea in it ſelf, eſpecially in its ſwellings and ſtormings is a proud creature, and that title or epethite of pride is often given to it: we read (*Pſal.* 124.5.) of *proud waters*, and (*Job* 38.11.) of *the proud waves*, at *verſ.* 13. of the Epiſtle of *Jude*, we read, of *raging waves of the ſea*, and (*Luke* 21.25.) of *roaring waves of the ſea.* The Prophet (*Jer.* 12.5.) ſpeaketh of *the ſwelling of Jordan.* So that when *Job* ſaith, *by his underſtanding he ſmiteth through the proud*, we may clearly interpret him of the ſea-waves, then which nothing in appearance is more proud and ſwelling; and therefore when God allayeth and guideth the high grown waves of the Sea, he may well be ſaid, *to ſmite through the proud.*

Hence Note, *God knoweth how to bring down the Sea in its greateſt rage and pride.*

God doth it by his underſtanding, as well as by his power. As God hath power enough to divide the Sea, and make it ſtormy, ſo he hath underſtanding enough to calm and quiet it. We read (*Mat.* 8.23,24,25,26,27.) *That Chriſt being entred into a ſhip with his diſciples, a great tempeſt aroſe, inſomuch that the ſhip was covered with the waves, but he was aſleep. And his diſciples came to him and awake him, ſaying, Lord ſave us, we periſh. And he ſaith unto them, why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? then he aroſe, and rebuked the winds and the Sea, and there was a great calm.* This is a plain exemplification and expoſition of *Jobs* aſſertion, *by his underſtanding he ſmiteth through the proud.* When the Sea was as furious as a mad man, who hath loſt his reaſon, and will hear none, yet then Chriſt by his divine power and wiſdom made it as obedient as they who have and act moſt reaſon are, when they hear the moſt rational and preſſing perſwaſions, or (we may ſay) that he huſht the Sea as a mother doth her crying child, and rock't it into a ſleep; yea he doth not only calm the ſea, but kill it, or ſtrike it dead (as the word of the Text imports.) There is a particular ſea which is called *The dead ſea*: But God can make all the ſeas *dead ſeas*, and then he delights moſt to do it, when they threaten to ſwallow up all living.

This may be a great ſupport to us among the ſtorms which we meet with here at land. When men and nations are divided and raging againſt one another, God can quiet them. It is an eaſie matter to make diviſions among men, but it calls for much holy skill and wiſdom, even the wiſdom of God, to heal and ſoder them. And when the ſpirits of men are proudeſt and lifted up like the high waves of the ſea, then uſually 'tis Gods time to appear and ſtrike them through; At his word (as the Prophet ſpeaks, (*Iſa.* 11. 13.) *The envy of Ephraim ſhall depart, and the adverſaries of Judah ſhall be cut off, Ephraim ſhall not envy Judah, and Judah ſhall not vex Ephraim.* Whence is it that *Ephraim* envyeth *Judah?* whence it is that *Judah* vexeth *Ephraim?* is it not from their pride? ſaith not *Solomon* (*Prov.* 13. 10.) *By pride cometh contention.* How then ſhall the contention between *Ephraim* and *Judah* ceaſe, but by *ſtriking through their pride?* When there is leſs pride among men, there will be more peace, and God will ſmite the proudeſt rather then his people ſhall not have peace. As the Jews were divided among themſelves, ſo likewiſe were the Jewes and Gentiles, *Till Chriſt reconciling both to God in one body by the Croſs, did ſlay enmity thereby* (*Epheſ.* 2. 16.) And how did he ſlay their enmity, even by ſmiting through their pride, and humbling their ſpirits under his own croſs or ſufferings, by which, and the throne of Grace, they were at once reconciled to God, and one to another.

Secondly, *That God* who can appeaſe the rage of the proud ſeas, can alſo appeaſe or deſtroy the rage of the proudeſt men who oppoſe his people. So ſome underſtand that, (*Zech.* 10. 11.) where we have a propheſie of bringing the children of *Iſrael* out of *Egypt* and *Aſſyria* into their own land; *And he ſhall paſs through the ſea with affliction, and he ſhall ſmite through the waves in the ſea; and all the deeps of the river ſhall dry up*; that is, Chriſt the deliverer of his people ſhall paſs through the nations, who are like the Red ſea, ſtanding in the way of his peoples return, and he will afflict them, or bring much affliction upon them, and he will ſmite thoſe who like proud waves ſhall threaten to ſwallow them up, ſo that *the deeps of the river*, even thoſe hindrances, which it was thought could never be removed, ſhall dry up at his command or rebuke, *and the pride of Aſſyria ſhall be brought down, and the ſcepter of Egypt ſhall depart away*, that is, they who ſhall then be to the people of God, as *Egypt* and *Aſſyria* were of old, hard Task-maſters and leaders of them into Captivity, ſhall be ſubdued and removed, when they are proudeſt and in their greateſt power. 'Tis matter of ſtrong conſolation to all the faithful, that they ſerve a God who is able to reconcile the divided ſpirits of his own people one to another, and cauſe all their envy to depart from them; who is able alſo to reconciſe their greateſt adverſaries to them, and either to ſlay their enmity, or to ſlay them as enemies.

Thirdly, 'Tis matter of comfort to the people of God. For he who can appeaſe the rage of the Sea, can alſo appeaſe the rage of Satan, and ſmite through the proud waves of his Temptations, Satan goeth about continually to raiſe ſtorms, and vex poor ſouls. O the rage of temptation that many poor ſouls are under, how do the billows of it riſe like a violent ſea, wave after wave, guſt after guſt. As God himſelf raiſeth ſtorms of temptation againſt a poor ſoul (thus *David* ſpake in his own caſe, *Pſal.* 42. 7. *Deep calleth unto deep, at the noiſe of thy water-ſpouts: all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me*) which yet in due time he will appeaſe; ſo when Satan by his leave or command, direction, or permiſſion raiſeth ſtorms of temptation, which he hath no mind to allay, but rather to encreaſe and double daily more and more, yet O wearied and weather-beaten ſoul, be of good chear, the Lord can ſmite through the proud enemy Satan, with all his floods and waves of temptation, and make a calm.

Laſtly, Let them alſo remember this and be comforted, who find proud waves, proud luſts, and corruptions, ſtirring and raging like a Sea within them. For that which is ſaid by the Prophet of the wicked, is true in part of the righteous, and ſometimes it is in a very great meaſure fulfilled in them (*The wicked are like the troubled Sea when it cannot reſt*, (*Iſa.* 57. 20.) that is, they are like the Sea in a ſtorm, which is ſo, not only becauſe of the unquietneſs of their ſpirits about the providences and dealings of God with them, but becauſe their violent luſts hurry them this way and that way, as the ſea is toiled and toſſed by the windes; this (I ſay) is true alſo in part of Saints) ſome more, ſome leſs are like a troubled Sea, yea they have a Sea of ſinful luſts within them, which the Lord is pleaſed ſometimes to divide and ſtir up; their corruptions ſtorm and bluſter, and Satan labours to make them bluſter more and more. We daily hear the complaints and cryes of ſouls thus toſſed, coming to Chriſt, as his Diſciples once did, and crying to him, *Maſter ſave us, we periſh*; we fear we ſhall be over-whelmed and drowned in this black Sea of our corruptions. To ſuch Chriſt ſaith, *O ye of little faith*, wherefore do ye thus fear, cannot I ſmite through the proud, the proud waves of your hearts. Is *unbelief* the proud wave, that ye fear will ſwallow you up? Chriſt can give you ſuch an encreaſe of faith as ſhall ſwallow up your unbelief; is *pride* it ſelf the proud wave that is like to overwhelm you? Chriſt who ſmiteth through the proud in Judgment, will alſo ſmite through thy pride in mercy. It is a great act of grace in man to deſire God to ſtrike through his pride, and it is a great act of mercy to man when God doth ſo. The more God ſmiteth our ſins, the more he declares his love to and his care of our ſouls. The remainders of pride in the Saints ſhall be ſmitten through; but ſinners who remain in their pride ſhall be ſmitten through themſelves. God whoſe power and underſtanding are made known by ſmiting through the proud waves of the Sea, will at laſt make his Juſtice and his holineſs known by ſmiting through the proud hearts of men, or rather men of proud hearts. Proud men ſtrike at God, yea kick againſt him, no wonder then if he ſtrike and kick them. All the ſufferings of Chriſt are wrapt up under that one word. *His humiliation*, implying that he was ſmitten for all our ſins, ſo moſt of all for our pride. That man whoſe pride is not ſmitten to death or mortified by the death of Chriſt, ſhall ſurely be ſmitten to death, even to eternal death for his pride. As God underſtandeth throughly who are proud, ſo *by his underſtanding he will ſmite through the proud.*

VERS. 14, 15, 16, 17.

By his Spirit he hath garniſhed the heavens: his hand hath formed the crooked Serpent.

Lo, theſe are parts of his wayes, but how little a portion is heard of him? but the thunder of his power who can underſtand?

JOB hath given us a particular of many illuſtrious works of God, what he doth in the depths below, and what in the heights above; in this verſe he gives another inſtance, and that a very choice one, upon the ſame ſubject. As if he had ſaid; *After all this large diſcourſe which I have made of the works of God, I will conclude with that which is the moſt remarkable piece of them all. This is he who hath adorn'd the heavens with that unutterable beauty wherewith they ſhine; and the ſphears which wind and turn round about the heavens like Serpents, are ſmoothed and poliſhed by his hand.*

Et ut in opere ipſius pulcherrimo deſinam hic ille eſt, qui cœlos illa enarrabili pulchritudine exornavit, & ſpheræ illæ ſuis geris undiq; cœlis ſerpētium inſtar percunientes ſunt opus manibus ipſius tornatū. Bez. q. d. *viſuæ & voluntare, ut nomē ſpiritus ſæpius in ſcriptura uſurpatur; ſed malo ipſum dei ſpiritum alinum accipere, quo omnia deus fecit.* Merc.

Verſ. 13. **By his Spirit he hath garniſhed the heavens.**

The Spirit of God is taken two wayes in Scripture. Firſt, For the power of God. Secondly, And ſo here, for God, *the power* as diſtinct from the Father and the Son, by whom God wrought all things in the creation of the world (*Gen.* 1. 2.) *The Earth was without form and void, and darkneſs was upon the face of the deep, and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.* It is a rule in Divinity, *That the external works of the Trinity are undivided*; and ſo the *Three Perſons* concurred in the making of the world. God the Father created, and is called *Father* in Scripture, not only in relation to the Eternal ineffable Generation of God the Son, but alſo in reference to the production of the creature. God the Son, or the Eternal word created, (*John* 1. 1, 2, 3.) *In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God; All things were made by him, and without him was nothing made that was made.* God the Spirit or Holy Ghoſt, he likewiſe created, and he only is mentioned by *Moſes* diſtinctly, or by name, as the Agent in the Original Conſtitution of all things. And the Hebrew word (rendred in our tranſlation *moved, the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters*) by which the Agency of the Spirit in that great work is expreſſed, carryeth in it a very accurate ſignificancie of that formative vertue or power which the Spirit put forth about it. For it is a metaphor taken from birds who ſit upon their eggs to hatch and bring forth their young ones; and ſo importeth the effectual working of the Spirit, whereby that confuſed maſs or heap was drawn out and formed up into thoſe ſeveral creatures ſpecified by *Moſes* in the Hiſtory of the Creation; Among which we find the *garniſhing of the heavens*, ſpoken of here by *Job*, is reported by *Moſes* for the work of the Fourth day. Further, we may conſider the heavens; Firſt, In their matter and being; Secondly, In their beauty and ornaments. *Job* ſpeaks of the latter.

מרהפח *Non ſimplicem motionẽ denotat, ſed qualem columba perficit cum ovis ad excludẽdum pullos incubat.* Rab. Solom. *Verbũ tranſlatum ab avibus pullitiei ſuæ incubantibus.* Jun.

By his Spirit he hath garniſhed the heavens.

God hath not only created, but polliſhed, and (as it were) painted or embroidered the heavens. The Original word implyeth the making of them beautiful, contentful, and pleaſant unto the eye; this is the Lords work. And therefore as the whole world, becauſe of the excellent order and beauty of it is expreſt in the Greek by a word that ſignifies *beautiful*, ſo ſome parts of the world have a ſpecial beauty and luſtre put upon them beyond the reſt. The heavens are not like a plain garment (as we ſay) without welt and guard, but they are laced and trimmed, they are enamel'd and ſpangled, they gliſter and ſparkle in our eyes with rayes and beams of light. *By his Spirit he hath garniſhed the heavens.*

שפרה *Adornavit, decoravit, pulchrè fecit.*

Κοσμος.

If it be asked, what *is this garniſhing of the heavens?* I anſwer, the ſetting or placing in of thoſe excellent lights, ſun, Moon and Stars in the heavens, are the garniſhing of them. Light is beautiful, and the more light any thing hath, the more beauty it hath. Precious ſtones have much light in them; thoſe lights the Stars are as ſo many ſtones of beauty and glory ſet or moving in the heavens. Light as diffuſed and ſhed abroad in the air is exceeding delightful and beautiful, but light as it is contracted and drawn together into the Sun, Moon and Stars, is far more beautiful. Light in the air pleaſeth the eye, but light in the Sun conquers and dazles the eye by the exceſſive beauty and brightneſs of it. In the firſt day of the Creation God ſaid; *Let there be light, and there was light*; but in the fourth day *he ſaid, let there be lights*, that is, let there be ſeveral veſſels, to receive, hold, and contain light, and then to iſſue it out among the inhabitants of the earth (*Gen.* 1. 14.) *And God ſaid, let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven, to divide the day from the night; and let them be for ſigns, and for ſeaſons, and for dayes, and for years, and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth; and it was ſo. And God made two great lights, the greater light to rule the day, and the leſſer light to rule the night; he made the ſtars alſo, and God ſet them in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth.* God in Creation did with the light, as he did with the waters, which being made were divided, the waters above the firmament were divided from the waters under the firmament, and *the waters under the heaven he gathered together into one place* (*Gen.* 1. 9.) God prepared a certain great veſſel into which the waters were called and gathered that they ſhould not ſpread over the earth, as they did at firſt, which gathering together of the waters God *called Seas* (*Gen.* 1. 10.) Thus the light which was ſpread and ſcattered through the air over all the earth; God gathered into ſeveral veſſels, and the gathering together of light he *called Sun, Moon,* and *Stars*, which are (as *Job* here calleth them) *the garniſhing of the heavens.*

Pulchritudo ei ornamenta cœlorũ ſtellæ ſunt, ſicut terræ animantia & plantæ.

Moſes epitomizeth or briefly ſums up his larger narrative of the Creation in theſe words (*Gen.* 2. 1.) *Thus the heavens and the earth were finiſhed, and all the hoſt of them*, that is, they were finiſhed not only as to their eſſentials, but ornamentals; not only was the foundation laid, the walls and pillars, the beams and rafters of that goodly ſtructure ſet up and perfected, but all the furniture of it was brought in, and the beauties of it compleated. Now, as gems, minerals, plants, trees, and all living creatures, are the garniſhing of the earth, and the hoſt of God there; ſo the Sun, Moon, and Stars, are the garniſhing of heaven, and the hoſt of God there. *David* ſpeaketh of theſe diſtinctly (*Pſal.* 33. 6.) *By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the hoſt of them, by the breath of his mouth.* All creatures whether placed in heaven or earth, are for their number, their ſtrength, their order, their readineſs at a call or command, the hoſt of God. Earthly Princes ſhew their power in their hoſts and armies; of what power God is, both his acts and his hoſts abundantly declare. And as theſe creatures are the armies or hoſt of God in heaven and earth, ſo they are the adornings and garniſhings of heaven and earth. *Job* in this place ſpeaketh only of the former, *By his Spirit he hath garniſhed the heavens.*

Only here take notice, that ſome expound the word *Spirit*, for the *wind* which bloweth in the air, and ſo render the Text thus; *By his wind he garniſheth the heavens*; As if this were *Job's* meaning, that God ſending forth the windes diſpelleth and ſcattereth thoſe clouds, fogs, and miſts, which often cover the face of the heavens, and hinder our beholding their glory and garniſhings. According to this interpretation *the garniſhing of the heavens* is nothing elſe but the removing of that which obſcureth the garniſhing of them. And it is true, that when the heavens are maskt over with clouds and darkneſs, God by the winds cleareth the air, and ſo reneweth the face of thoſe heavenly bodies. But I paſs by this, and ſhall only inſiſt upon the former expoſition of theſe words, as being more ſutable with *Job*'s ſcope, and more expreſſive of the power and glory of God, in the great things which he hath wrought for us.

By his Spirit he garniſheth the heavens.

Hence learn, Firſt, *We ought joyntly to acknowledge and give glory to the Father, Son, and Spirit, in the work of Creation.*

Solomon in his advice to the young man ſaith (*Eccl.* 12. 1.) *Remember thy creator in the dayes of thy youth.* We tranſlate in the ſingular number, *creator*, but the Hebrew is plural, *Creators*; intimating the myſtery of the Holy Trinity, as *Moſes* alſo is conceived to do in that plural expreſſion (*Gen.* 1. 26.) *And God ſaid, let us make man in our image after our likeneſs.* And though this be added in a way of Eminency, when the particular creation of man is ſet down, yet we are to underſtand it ſo generally of the whole work of Creation; and as of the work of Creation, ſo of all other Divine works towards the creature. Redemption is the work of the Father and of the Spirit as well as of the Son, and ſanctification is the work of the Father and of the Son as well as of the Spirit. The three perſons work together, only they have a diſtinct manner of working, according to which each work is chiefly attributed to that perſon; and ſo creation is ſpecially appropriated to the Father, Redemption to the Son, and Sanctification to the Holy Ghoſt. Seeing then all Three work together in all things towards us, all three ought to be equally and eternally honoured, worſhipped, loved and obeyed by us. *By his Spirit he hath garniſhed the heavens.*

בת
בוראיך
Creatorum tuorum Myſterium Sanctæ Trinitatis. Piſc.

Secondly, Obſerve, *The heavens are full of beauty; God hath not only made them, but adorn'd them.*

What a rich and Royal Canopy hath God hung over the heads of poor worms, duſt and aſhes. God did not think it enough to give us a houſe, unleſs he gave us alſo a pleaſant houſe; he was not ſatisfied in ſetting up a large fabrick for us, unleſs he alſo furniſhed and garniſhed it for us. God hath made the world not only uſeful but contentful to us, he hath fitted it not only for our neceſſity but delight. The earth is beautiful, but the heavens exceed in beauty. The heavens are the Ceiling of our houſe, and the Stars are like Golden Studs and ſparkling Diamonds in that Ceiling. We may infer three things from the garniſhing of theſe heavens.

Firſt, If the heavens which we ſee are ſo glorious, what are the heavens which no eye hath ſeen? If God hath thus diſcernably adorned the *firſt and ſecond heavens*, how unconceiveable are the ornaments of the *third heavens*, If nature hath ſo much beauty in it, how beautiful a thing is glory? If God hath prepared ſuch heavens, as our eyes ſee, for thoſe who hate him, then ſurely *eye hath not ſeen, ear hath not heard, nor hath it entred into the heart of man* to underſtand what thoſe heavens are which God hath prepared for them, and for them alone, *who love him.* The light of theſe viſible heavens is but darkneſs *to that inheritance of the Saints in light.* The *Moon light* (if I may ſo ſpeak) of that ſtate, ſhall be better and more illuſtrious, then the *Sun-light* of this, and the light of the Sun ſhall be ſeven fold, as the light of ſeven dayes, in that great day when the Lord ſhall perfectly bind up all the breaches of his people, and heal the ſtroak of their wound. God, who by his Spirit hath garniſhed theſe heavens, will be himſelf with his Son and Spirit, the eternal garniſhing of thoſe heavens.

Secondly, Seeing God hath been ſo bountiful and munificent, as to garniſh the heavens for us, even for us, by his Spirit; ſeeing he hath provided ſuch a houſe for the comfort of our lives here, who never deſerved the meaneſt cottage, how ſhould we pray that he would garniſh our ſouls by the Spirit, as a heaven for himſelf to dwell in? or as the Apoſtle ſpeaks (*Epheſ.* 2.22.) *That my may be builded for an habitation of God through the Spirit.* God hath two houſes, *an upper houſe, and a lower houſe*; The heaven of heavens is his upper houſe, and the heaven of an holy and humble heart is his lower. God is every where, but he dwelleth no where but in a heaven; He dwelleth not in the heart of any man, till that be made a heaven, and that a heaven garniſhed by the Spirit. As the Sun Moon and Stars are the garniſhing of the natural heaven, ſo holy knowledge and the graces, faith, hope and love, are the garniſhing of thoſe ſpiritual heavens, the hearts of the ſons of men. And until their hearts be thus garniſhed, they are not an heaven for God, but a hell or habitation for the devil; and he puts furniture and garniſhings into them ſutable to himſelf, and fitting his own entertainment. We read in the Goſpel (*Mat.* 12.43.44.) That, *when the unclean ſpirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, ſeeking reſt and findeth none; Then he ſaith, I will return into my houſe from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty ſwept and garniſhed.* Luſts and corruptions, unbelief, pride, wrath, envy, theſe are the garniſhings of Satans houſe. And as he delighteth moſt to dwell there where he findeth moſt of theſe garniſhings; ſo God delighteth moſt to dwell in that ſoul which is moſt garniſhed with grace. Then pray, and pray earneſtly that God who hath garniſhed the heavens by his Spirit for our uſe, would alſo garniſh our hearts by his Spirit, for his own uſe.

Thirdly, As this ſhould provoke us to pray that our hearts may be garniſhed as a houſe of delight, that God may dwell in us; So it ſhould provoke us to garniſh our lives, that God may be honoured by us. And as God hath not only made a good world for us, as to the matter, but made it pleaſant, and adorn'd it for us: ſo we ſhould ſtrive not only to do that which is good for the matter, but to put ornaments upon it, and make it pleaſant to our utmoſt in the eyes of God. We ſhould garniſh our works as God hath garniſhed his, God hath (as it were) poliſht and engraven his works for us by exquiſite art and skill, ſo that the workmanſhip is better then the matter; and ſhall we ſatisfie our ſelves, if we do that which is good for the matter, though we beſtow no coſt, no holy skill and workmanſhip upon it? ſhall we ſerve God only *with plain work*, when we ſee how curious and elaborate his works are? I grant, *plain work* is beſt, and moſt pleaſing to God, as *plainneſs* is oppoſed to hypocriſie; but plain work is not beſt as plainneſs is oppoſed to exactneſs. God loves to ſee ſome lace and trimming (in ſincerity) upon what we do; that is, it pleaſeth him, when he ſeeth that we do our beſt, and that we not only do good, but garniſh (to his praiſe) the good we do; he would have us not only walk in the truth, but honour the truth by our walkings. He would have us not only obey the doctrine, but (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Tit.* 2. 10.) *Adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things*; or (to uſe *Jobs* language) *Garniſh it*, as he *by his Spirit hath garniſhed the heavens.*

And his hand hath formed the crooked ſerpent.

His hand.] That is, his power; hands are aſcribed to God in a figure, or in alluſion to men, who do all their external works by their hands. The hand is a noble and moſt ſerviceable Organ or Inſtrument, and therefore the great things which God hath done, eſpecially the heavens; are called *the work of his hands, and his handy-work* (*Pſal.* 19. 1.) yea the heavens are called *the work of his fingers* (*Pſal.* 8. 3.) Which notes (I conceive) the exactneſs and curioſity of the work, for ſuch are thoſe things which are wrought by the fingers. God being a Spirit inviſible and incorporal, hath no formal hands, but he hath a vertual hand. That executive power by which he performeth and bringeth about his will in every thing is his hand. This hand

Hath formed the crooked ſerpent.

There are ſeveral opinions about this *crooked Serpent*, who or what it ſhould be that *Job* here meaneth. The Hebrew is, *The Serpent the bar.* That is, The ſerpent which is like a bar or bolt of iron. Some render *the flying or running ſerpent*, becauſe as the bolt or bar of a door runneth from ſide to ſide, ſo that from place to place. Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates, *the long ſerpent.* But what is this ſerpent? Divers interpreters connect the ſence of theſe words with the former part of the verſe, and ſo place this *crooked ſerpent* in the heavens, as belonging to the *garniſhing* of them, or as if *Job* were giving a particular inſtance of what God hath done towards the *garniſhing* of the heavens; *His hand hath formed the crooked ſerpent.* By which they underſtand the cœleſtial circles or ſphears which are wrapt and involved one within another, as a ſerpent wrappeth and twineth himſelf in ſeveral rounds.

נחש ברח *Serpentem vectem.* Pagn. *Serpentem fugacem.* Mont. *Serpentem oblongum.* Jun.

Another following the ſame ſence expoundeth it of that which Aſtronomers call the *milkey way*, which is a beauty in heaven; It being (as it were) the coalition of a number of little ſtars, which becauſe they look *white and milkiſh*, are therefore called the *milkey way*; Which alſo hath ſomewhat of the form of a Serpent, as is evident to the eye of any diligent obſerver,

Vatablus viam lacteā intelligit.

A third, keeping ſtill to that ſence, expoundeth it yet more particularly of that ſpecial conſtellation in the heavens known among Aſtronomers by the name of *the dragon or ſerpent*; Which is ſuppoſed to be ſpoken of here by *Job* ſynecdochically, putting a part for the whole, or one for all the other Conſtellations with which the heavens are garniſhed; As if it had been ſaid, *His hand hath formed the crooked ſerpent*; that is, all the Stars in their ſeveral ſhapes and configurations, among which one repreſenteth the form of a Lion, another of a Bear, another of a Ram, and among many others one appeareth in the form of a *Dragon or Crooked ſerpent*, *ſhooting himſelf forth or forward like the bolt of a door.*

I find a fourth ſort, who though they keep the *crooked ſerpent* of the Text ſtill in the heavens, yet they bring it down to a lower heaven, that is, from the ſtarry heaven, or from that heaven which is the ſubject of the Stars to the aiery heaven, which is the ſubject or ſhop in which the meteors, of all ſorts, are bred and formed, & among them there is a meteor called by Naturaliſts, *the flying ſerpent:* As if the meaning of theſe words, *His hand hath formed the crooked ſerpent*, were this, God hath wrought and formed by his power and wiſdom all thoſe fiery meteors that are often ſeen as it were flying and ſhooting in the air, to the wonder of many, and the aſtoniſhment of not a few There are the treaſures of the ſnow and of the hail, there God prepareth a way for the lightning of the thunder (*Job* 38. 22, 25.) Some learned Interpreters inſiſt much upon this Expoſition, placing the *crooked ſerpent* in the heavens, either the upper or lower, as hath been ſhewed under four diſtinct titles: nor can it be denied, but that the hand of God hath wrought all theſe things, much leſs can it be denied that the working of theſe things is a great argument and demonſtration of the power and wiſ-

Draco volans.

dom of God, which is the purpoſe of *Job* in this place; therefore I ſhall not totally lay it aſide: Neither yet will I leave it with the Reader as the ſpecial meaning of this place, for this reaſon, becauſe I much doubt, whether thoſe poetical phancies in giving ſuch fictitious names to the Stars of heaven, as, *The Lion, the Bear, the Bull, the Dragon, the Serpent, &c.* of which Philoſophers and Aſtronomers have made uſe, were at all born, or ever ſo much as heard of in thoſe elder times in which and before which *Job* lived. For though both in *Chap.* 9. of this book (*verſ.* 9.) as alſo in *Chap.* 38. (*verſ.* 21, 22.) many Names are given to the Stars, which both the Greek and Latine tranſlators, and we following them in the Engliſh, render by thoſe poetical names; yet the Original Hebrew words bear no alluſion at all to thoſe phancies. As for inſtance, The Hebrew word which we render *Arcturus* (*Chap.* 9.9.) hath nothing at all in it ſignifying, *The Tail of a Bear*. But here in this Text, the word properly ſignifyeth a *crooked ſerpent* and therefore to place it in the heavens as a Star, when as in the times when this was written, there is ſo little, if any probability at all, that any ſuch apprehenſions were taken up by any, or any ſuch alluſive names given to the Stars, ſeems to me ſomewhat improper.

There is another vein of interpretation carrying the ſence of theſe words, *His hand hath formed the crooked ſerpent*, to quit another point; for 'tis conceived by the Authors of this opinion, that as *Job* gave inſtance before in the works of God, above his higheſt works in nature, the garniſhing of the heavens; ſo he now giveth inſtance in his works below, or in his loweſt works. This general interpretation is delivered two wayes diſtinctly.

Firſt, That as God hath garniſhed the heavens, ſo he hath made and now governeth hell too, *His hand hath formed the crooked ſerpent*, that is, the Devil: That which favoureth this opinion, and hath poſſibly caſt the thoughts of many upon it, is, that in Scripture the Devil is often called *a ſerpent*, yea a *crooked ſerpent*, and that he acted a ſerpent as his inſtrument in the firſt temptation (*Gen.* 3. 1.) *Now the ſerpent was more ſubtil then any of the beaſts of the field, which the Lord God had made, and he ſaid unto the woman*; that is, The Devil in or by the Serpent ſaid unto her, &c. He hath well deſerved to be called a Serpent who acted his firſt malice againſt mankind by the help of a Serpent. And for his thus early making uſe of a Serpent, he is called not only a ſerpent but, *that old ſerpent*, (*Rev.* 12. 9.) *The great Dragon was caſt out, that old ſerpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was caſt out into the earth, and his Angels were caſt out with him.* The hand of God hath formed this crooked ſerpent. To clear which ſome interpret the former part of the verſe in compliance with this ſence, for the good Angels, thus, *By his ſpirit he hath garniſhed the heavens*; that is, he hath beſtowed excellent gifts upon the Angels, who are the great ornament of heaven and may tropically be called heaven, as men are called earth. And as holy, wiſe, juſt, and faithful men, are the ornaments, and garniſhings of the earth, ſo the holy Angels are the garniſhings of heaven, they having ſuch mighty power and excellent gifts. Now (ſaith this interpretation) as God garniſhed the heavens with good Angels, ſo he *brought forth the crooked ſerpent* the Devil, by his working power. Not as if they, who ſtand up for this expoſition, did affirm that God did make the Devil by his immediate hand, as he did the good Angels and the reſt of the creatures; for when God *ſaw every thing that he had made, behold it was very good*, and therefore the crooked ſerpent as taken under this notion for the Devil (who is *the Evil one*) could not be of his making. Therefore though the Devil according to his original or general nature, as an Angel was formed of God, yet the crookedneſs of his nature as well as of his wayes, which properly and formally denominate him a Devil was of himſelf, he having turned away from God, and defiled that ſtate, by the freedom of his own will, in which he was created pure, and had ſociety with his fellow Angels, till God for his ſin did (as it were) pull him and his adherents from the midſt of them; and as the Apoſtle *Jude* ſaith (*verſ.* 6.) *Hath reſerved them* (together) *in chains of darkneſs unto the judgement of the great day.* But I conceive that *Job* is not here ſpeaking of an Allegorical or Metaphorical ſerpent, ſuch a one as the Devil is, but of a real and proper one; And therefore I lay by this expoſition as unſutable to the Text in hand.

Spiritus ejus ornavit cœlos *Vulg.* i. e. *cœleſtes ſpiritus ornamentis, ſcilicet ſpiritualium donorum.* Aquin. Et obſtetricante manu ejus eductas *eſt coleber tortuoſus.* Vulg.

Eduxit deus diabolum è medio Angelorũ. Aquin.

And conclude, that *Job* having in the former part of the verſe ſet forth the power and wiſdom of God in garniſhing the heavens, his meditation deſcendeth in this latter part of it, though not ſo low as hell, yet as low as the waters, eſpecially the waters of the Sea, and there ſheweth us the hand of God at work both in making and deſtroying, in forming and wounding the crooked ſerpent. For the Hebrew-word which we render, *hath formed*, ſignifies alſo *to wound*, and ſo we tranſlate it (*Iſa.* 51. 9.) *Awake, awake, O arm of the Lord, &c. art not thou it which hath cut Rahab, and wounded the Dragon?* yea it is ſo tranſlated by ſome in this text of *Job*, *His hand hath wounded the crooked ſerpent*. Which cometh near that of the Prophet according to the bare literal reading (*Iſa.* 27. 1.) *In that day the Lord with his ſore and great and ſtrong ſword ſhall puniſh Leviathan, the piercing* (or as we put in the Margin, *the croſſing like a bar*) *ſerpent, even Leviathan that crooked ſerpent, and he ſhall ſlay the Dragon that is in the Sea.* Where we may note by the way that our tranſlators render thoſe very original words a *piercing ſerpent* in this Text of *Iſaiah*, which they render a *crooked ſerpent* in *Job*; and, I conceive, it is better tranſlated, *piercing* (for ſo bolts or bars are rather) then *crooked*, another word being alſo uſed in *Iſaiah*, which we tranſlate *crooked*. For *ſerpents* are both ſtrait and long like a Bar, they are alſo crooked and can wind themſelves into a circle when they pleaſe, or ſee it for their advantage. Now the *long Bar-like* (or as we ſay *crooked*) *ſerpent*, which *Job* here ſaith the hand of God hath formed, is according to this interpretation, the *Whale fiſh*, or *Leviathan*, which is the greateſt not only of all the fiſhes in the Sea, but of all living creatures; and therefore may well be brought here by *Job* as an inſtance to demonſtrate the mighty power of God, whether in forming or wounding of him, eſpecially conſidering that God himſelf when he would humble and abaſe *Job* in the ſight of his own meanneſs, as he had led him to the meditation of many of his great works in nature, throughout *Chap.* 38, 39, 40. of this, he beſtowes the whole *Chap.* 41. in a large particular and Rhetorical deſcription of the Leviathan; and though he had ſaid of the *Behemoth* and *Elephant* (*Chap.* 40. 19.) *He is the chief of the wayes of God*: yet he ſaith more of the *Leviathan* or *Whale* (*Chap.* 41. 33, 34.) *Upon earth there is none like him, who is made without fear, he beholdeth all high things, he is a king over all the children of pride.* As if he had ſaid, The Elephant is the chief of all ſenſitive living creatures upon the earth, but the Whale is greater then the Elephant, therefore he exceeds all creatures moving upon the earth. The Whale is ſo vaſt and turbulent a living creature, that he is joyned with the Sea which is the vaſteſt and moſt turbulent creature without life. Thus *Job* ſpeaks (*Chap.* 7. 12.) *Am I a Sea or a Whale that thou ſetteſt a watch over me?* implying, that the Whale is among ſenſitive creatures as the Sea is among inſenſitive the greateſt and moſt unruly of them and therefore hath as much need to be watched by a divine providence as the Sea it ſelf hath. Thus the Pſalmiſt deſcribing the great works of God, putteth the Leviathan or Whale among the chiefeſt of them (*Pſal.* 104. 24, 25, 26.) *O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wiſdom haſt thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches, ſo is the great and wide Sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both ſmall and great beaſts. There go the Ships, there is that Leviathan whom thou haſt made to play therein.* Thus we ſee how the Scripture conſents in exalting the power and wiſdom of God in this part of his work, the forming of this long and mighty, or (as we tranſlate the Subſtantive Epithete) *crooked ſerpent*. And therefore *Job* might well claſp theſe two together (while he was ſtudying to exemplifie in particulars the greatneſs of the works of God) his garniſhing or peopling the heavens with ſuch infinite variety of Stars, eſpecially with the Sun, and his forming of and ſo ſtoring the Sea with ſuch infinite variety of fiſhes, eſpecially with the Leviathan, For as the Sun is a Prince among the lights of heaven, ſo Leviathan is a Prince, a King among the fiſhes of the Sea.

Malo hic cœtũ intelligi & balanã. Merc. *A cœli ornatu ad maris ornatum tanqnam ad aliud extremum deſcendit.* Pined. *Intelligo Balænam inſigne in imis opus divinæ potentiæ & efficacitatem voluntatis atq; arbitrei ejus ſingulariter cõprobans.* Coc.

His hand hath formed the *crooked* (or rather the long) *Serpent*. And if any ſhould object againſt this interpretation, that it ſeems unſutable to call the Whale or Leviathan a Serpent. I anſwer, that the Text in *Iſaiah* (*Chap.* 27. 1.) before alledged may well bear us out in it; which (though it be to be underſtood of the Devil or of his inſtruments the enemies of the Churches peace and ſafety, yet) calleth Leviathan, the *piercing* (which word in the Original, as I hinted before, is here in *Job* rendred crooked) *ſerpent*, and in the immediately following words, *That crooked ſerpent, and the Dragon that is in the Sea.*

Wherefore reſting (chiefly, if not only) in this interpretation, that *Job* having gone up in his diſcourſe to the heavens, and the garniſhing of them, came down to the Sea, and to the furniſhing thereof, and inſtances in that creature which is chief in the Sea. The Leviathan, thereby to exalt and lift up the glory of God in his works of creation and providence.

> Obſerve, *The ſea as well as the heavens, and all the inhabitants thereof, declare the mighty works and workmanſhip of God.*

As the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament ſheweth his handy work (*Pſal.* 19. 1.) So the earth declareth the glory of God, and the Sea ſheweth his handy-work. The leaſt creatures preach the power of God, how much more the greateſt: All believers are taught of God, and every thing we ſee teacheth us ſomewhat of God, and this they teach us eſpecially that God is the former of them all. The hand of God hath formed the Eagle, and a leſs powerful hand then Gods could not form a Flie. The hand of God hath formed the Elephant, and a leſs powerful hand then his could not form a Mouſe. The hand of God hath formed Leviathan, and a hand leſs powerful then his could not form a Shrimp. As Jeſus Chriſt was declared many wayes to be the Son of God, but (as the Apoſtle ſaith, *Rom.* 1. 4.) *He was declared to be the Son of God with power* (*or powerfully declared to be the Son of God*) *by the reſurrection from the dead.* So all things that are created declare that their Creatour is God. But he is declared with power or powerfully declared to be God by many of the creatures. Who can make any thing to live, but the living God? Who can make great things, but the great God? *His hand hath formed the crooked Serpent.*

And ſeeing the Lord hath formed the crooked ſerpent, even thoſe creatures that are moſt dreadful and dangerous to man; then the moſt dreadful and dangerous creatures are under the power of God, he formed them, and therefore he can reſtrain and curb them. As it is ſaid of *Behemoth* (*Job* 40. 19.) *He that made him can make his ſword approach unto him*; that is, though he be to ſtrong for man, yet God who gave him that ſtrength, hath infinitely more, and can eaſily Maſter him, yea and give a weak man skill and power to do it: ſo though it be ſaid (*Job* 41. 26.) of Leviathan, that the ſword of him that layeth at him cannot hold the ſpear, the dart, nor the habergeon, yet God, who made him, can make his ſword approach to him, or as ſome render the words under hand, *His hand hath and can wound Leviathan the crooked Serpent*; *He can put a hook in his noſe, and bore his jaw through with a thorn.* And thus God can do alſo with thoſe, who are Leviathans, and crooked Serpents in a figure, The Devil, and all cruel-minded men who do his work, and carry on his deſign againſt the people of God, as is expreſſed in that lately alledged Scripture (*Iſa.* 27. 1.) *In that day the Lord with his ſore and great and ſtrong ſword ſhall puniſh Leviathan, the piercing Serpent*, that is, thoſe enemies and perſecuters of his people, who ſeem to be as ſtrong and invincible as Leviathan, and as ſubtle and dangerous as the moſt piercing ſtinging Serpent. Thus the Lord aſſured his faithful ones (*Iſa.* 54. 16, 17.) *That no weapon formed againſt them ſhould proſper*; *for* (ſaith he) *I have created the Smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an Inſtrument for his work, and I have created the waſter to deſtroy.* Therefore I can hinder the waſter from deſtroying, and make all his weapons edgleſs, pointleſs, no more able to wound, then a ſtraw or a ruſh. How ſoon can God blunt and abate the keeneſt ſpirits of men, and weaken their ſtrongeſt arms, when he ſeeth they will but do miſchief with them? He that cauſeth motion can ſtop it; and he that giveth power can call it in, or break it where it is. While God is on our ſide who made all, we need not fear who are made againſt us; Though they have teeth like Lyons, and ſtings like Serpents we are ſafe; The hand of God can kill and wound, for, *His hand hath formed the crooked Serpent.*

Verſ. 14. **Lo, theſe are parts of his wayes, but how little a portion is heard of him? but the thunder of his power who can underſtand?**

Thus *Job* concludes; after he had given an enumeration or Induction of many particulars, he doth as it were hold them forth in his hand to the view of all men; *Behold, or lo theſe are parts of his wayes.*

The word which we render *parts*, ſignifieth the end or extremity of a thing. There is a twofold extremity; Firſt, That which is utmoſt or furtheſt from us; Secondly, That which is hithermoſt or neareſt to us. The word takes in both, and is uſed for both in one Text (*Pſal.* 19. 6.) *His going forth* (that is, the going forth of the Sun) *is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it*: As if he had ſaid, the Sun compaſſeth the heaven round, and viſiteth both the hithermoſt and uttermoſt (as to us) extremities of it. In the preſent Text of *Job* we are to underſtand it of the hithermoſt extremity, or of that which is next us, implying that there are many and much more glorious things to be ſpoken of God, if we were able to comprehend them and reach the uttermoſt end or extremity of them. And that it is ſo to be underſtood here, is plain from the next words, *But how little a portion is heard of him?* In compliance with which ſence ſome render the Text thus, *Theſe are the edges or borders of his wayes*; as if *Job* had ſaid, I have ſhewed you only the borders, I have not led you into the heart of the Country, or into the midſt of the works and wayes of God, much leſs to the furtheſt extremity or outſide of them. I have indeed ſpoken of very great and wonderful things, yet all that I have ſaid is but little to what might be ſaid, or at leaſt to what really is. I have given you as it were the parings and chipings of Gods works, I have not gone to the bottom, nor reached the depth of them. So that *Job* ſeems to diſtinguiſh theſe effects and works of God, about which he had diſcourſed, from ſome greater works, which he was not able to attain unto, nor make any diſcovery of: There are not only Celeſtial, but ſuper-celeſtial workes of God, we cannot well apprehend, much leſs comprehend what he hath wrought under the heavens, which are only the outſide of his works, much leſs thoſe which are above the heavens: For as none of the works of God appear to us, or have been found out by us in their fulneſs and utmoſt extent, ſo God hath done ſome great works which do not at all appear to us. And thoſe things which appear are but ſmall parts or parcels in compariſon of thoſe which as yet do not appear to us. *Lo, theſe are parts of his wayes.*

The wayes of God are ſpoken of in Scripture under a twofold notion.

קצה *Finem extremitatem denotat.*

Ne me putetis omnia enarraſſe vix enim extremâ partē attegi. Coc.

Ecce hæ ſunt oræ viarum ejus. Coc.

Licet quæ dixi ſenſibus noſtris, & judicio maxima eſſe videantur & verè ſint ſtupenda reſpectu tamē divinæ potentiæ non ſunt niſi, minutiæ, peripſemata minimaque particulæ eorum quæ fecit ac facere poteſt. Bold.

Extrema viæ erunt opera minora & noſtri captus. Coc.

Firſt, As the *wayes* in which God would have us walk; ſo the commandments and ſtatutes of God, are called the wayes of God (*Pſal.* 119. 33.) *Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy ſtatutes, and I ſhall keep it unto the end.*

Secondly, The wayes of God are thoſe wherein he comes and reveals himſelf to us. As that is a mans way wherein or whereby he is known, ſo in whatſoever God manifeſteth or maketh himſelf known to us, that is the way of God (*Iſa.* 55. 8.) *My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your wayes my wayes*; *ſaith the Lord.* That is, my wayes of mercy are as far above your wayes of mercy, as your duties are below my wayes of holineſs; yea what are your wayes of ſinfulneſs in doing evil, to my wayes of graciouſneſs in pardoning the evils which ye have done? Man hath a vaſt and a large heart in ſinning, but the vaſtneſs and largeneſs of mans heart in ſinning, is but ſcantneſs and narrowneſs to the largeneſs and vaſtneſs of Gods heart in pardoning. We may underſtand the Lord ſpeaking in either of or in both theſe ſences; *My wayes*

Via dei illius opera ſunt & agēdi rationes quibus ad nos ille venire, dicitur quia in his prodit ad nos & progrediendo ſe magis magiſq; noſtris ſenſibus accommodat. Coc.

wayes are not as your wayes. And in general, *the way of God* is that wherein he acteth or revealeth himſelf towards us, whether it be in mercy or in Judgement, in love or terrour. God hath ſome wayes which we may call foul and troubleſome wayes, ſuch are his wayes of judgement: he hath other wayes, which we may call fair and delightſome wayes, ſuch are all his wayes of mercy. And as God comes to us continually in one or other of theſe wayes of providence, ſo he came forth of old in the way of creation (*Prov.* 8. 22.) *The Lord poſſeſſed me in the beginning of his way before his works of old.* When God firſt came forth, and appeared in making the world, *he poſſeſſed me* (ſaith Wiſdom) that is, from everlaſting. A way is, that wherein we go out, and ſhew our ſelves openly or abroad. And hence it is elegantly ſaid, that Creation was the beginning of Gods way, for then God did as it were go out from himſelf into his works, and in his works he ſhewed himſelf openly, who was before hidden in himſelf from eternity. God had infinite, immanent or internal acts in himſelf before, or rather God was one infinite eternal immanent Act before. But the firſt external tranſient act of God, or the firſt expreſſion of himſelf (who can never be expreſſed, to the life, as he is) was by the work of creation; and therefore that was *the beginning of his way.* And of this way, the way of creation, as alſo of thoſe of providence *Job* ſpeaketh when he ſaith, *lo, theſe are parts of his wayes.*

And hence the Scripture calleth ſtorms and tempeſts, thunder, and lightning, in which God appeareth ſo terrible, the wayes of God (*Nah.* 1. 3.) *The Lord is ſlow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked: The Lord hath his way in the whirlwind, and in the ſtorm, and the clouds are the duſt of his feet*; that is, God declareth himſelf to be God by his judgments and angry diſpenſations, which like boiſterous winds and ſtorms, which, like clouds and darkneſs afflict the children of men, *lo theſe are parts of his wayes.*

Accommodarè ad ſubjectam materiam viæ dei dici poſſunt tempeſtates, namq; in hujuſmodi mirabilibus aeris mutationibus ille vanere ad nos dicitur

Hence Note, Firſt, *All that we know of the works of God is but a part.*

As 'tis ſaid of *Solomon* (*Kings* 4. 33.) that *he ſpake of trees, from the Cedar-tree, that is in Lebanon, even unto the hyſſop that ſpringeth out of the wall: He ſpake alſo of beaſts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fiſhes*; ſo *Job* had been diſcourſing from the heights of heaven to the bottom of the Sea, yea to the bottome of hell; and yet he comes off, and ſaith, *lo theſe are parts of his wayes.* He that ſpeaketh and knoweth many things. yea he that ſpeaketh all that he knoweth, hath yet ſpoken only a part of that which is knowable. The Apoſtle ſaith (1 *Cor.* 13. 9, 10.) *We know in part, and we prophecy in part*; Many know more then they utter or prophecy, but no man can utter or prophecy more then he knoweth; We know but a part of what is to be known; and we know what we know but in part, and therefore when we have ſpoken our all, we have ſpoken but a part. Though every godly man knoweth all things needful for him to do and believe, yet the holieſt man on earth doth not know all that God hath done; God hath ſome reſerved and ſecret wayes into which he doth not lead his people. As the beſt of Saints ſee but the Back-parts of God in this life, ſo they ſee but a part of the wayes of God in this life, *lo, theſe are parts of his wayes.*

Again, Taking the original word as it ſignifies not only a part but the outſide or extream of any thing.

Note, *That which we know of the works of God, is not only no more then a part of his works, but 'tis indeed only the outſide of his works.*

'Tis but as the hem to a garment, or the borders to a Continent. When we have travelled as far we can, and as we think into the very heart of the works of God, yet we have gone no further then the borders of them; And it is, as if a man coming to diſcover this Iſland, ſhould only walk upon the ſhoar where he diſ-embarkt, and there viewing the cliffs and rocks, the ſands, and neareſt Mariſhes, ſhould take upon him to report, the ſtate of the whole Iſland: what hath this man ſeen? nothing but the extremity, the border of the Land, and can he make a compleat diſcovery of the whole? he hath not ſeen the pleaſant hills and vales, the Towns, and Cities, the Forts and Caſtles, the trade and riches, the cuſtomes and manners of the people; no man can know the chief things of a Nation or Country that ſtands only upon the ſhoar. All that we know of the works of God, is only the ſhoar, and outſide of them; we cannot reach the heart, nor fathom the bottom of them. The works of the Lord are great, (*Pſal.* 111. 2.) *Sought out of all them that have pleaſure therein*; that is, they who take pleaſure in them do their utmoſt, to find out the utmoſt of them, A godly man is as induſtrious to underſtand the wayes and works of God as he is to underſtand his word, yet he cannot reach either fully; And therefore that *Pſalm* hath an excellent concluſion, to ſatisfie us in our excluſion (as yet) from the perfect knowledge of theſe things. *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wiſdom, a good underſtanding have all they that do his commandments*; As if the Lord had ſaid, though while ye labour to ſeek out my works, yet, ye cannot find them out to perfection, be not diſcouraged, as if ye were ſhortned in wiſdom, and knowledge, for the fear of my name is wiſdom enough for you, and obedience to my commandments is the beſt underſtanding; let this ſatisfie you while ye know but a part of my wayes. And if we know but a part, and that the outſide of the wayes and works of God, then ſurely we cannot know all of God himſelf: as it followeth in the next words,

And how little a portion is heard of him?

The Original notes any thing which is little, or a little portion of any thing. Hence ſome render it *a drop*, which is a little or the leaſt portion of water. So the Vulgar and the Seventy, *We have heardly heard a little drop of his ſpeech.* Others render it a *whiſper*, which is but a little portion of a voice. *How little a whiſper have we heard of him?* The works of God are as it were a whiſper concerning him; all that we ſee, or can ſay, makes but a kind of ſilent report of God, in compariſon to what he is, or to what might be ſaid of him. And ſo the word *whiſper*, is oppoſed to thunder in the cloſe of the verſe, *But the thunder of his power who can underſtand?* As if *Job* had ſaid, *All that I have ſpoken of God is but a whiſper, there is a Thunder of his power, which I am neither able to utter, nor to underſtand.* All creatures ſpeak a God; yea they ſpeak much of God, as the Apoſtle affirmeth for the conviction of the Gentiles in their Idolatrous departures from him (*Rom.* 1. 20.) *For the inviſible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly ſeen, being underſtood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and God-head, ſo that they are without excuſe:* The creatures ſpeak loud enough to ſtop mans mouth and leave him without all excuſe, yet comparatively they do but whiſper, there is a thunder of God infinitely lowder then their voice. So that *Job* calleth thoſe works of God wherein he had inſtanced a whiſper or ſtill voice, becauſe though they ſignifie to us and declare the glory of their Author, yet they are not a full declaration of it, but only ſuch a one as is accommodated to our childiſh capacity. All that they ſpeak or can ſpeak of God, yea all that can be ſpoken of God by the wiſeſt of men, is only as a whiſper to thunder, or as a drop to the Ocean; But I ſhall not ſay more of the elegancy of this word here, it having been already opened (*Chap.* 4. 12.) where *Eliphaz* thus beſpeaks *Job. Now a thing was ſecretly* (or as we put in the Margine, *by ſtealth*) *brought to me, and mine ear received a little* (a whiſper, a drop) *thereof, in thoughts from viſions of the night, &c. All that we know, of God and his wayes is but little to what we know not, and but little to what we ſhall know hereafter*; every day we hear great things reported and preached of God both to our eyes and ears, and though we ſhould have ſermon upon ſermon, line upon line all the dayes of our lives, yet at the laſt day of our lives we muſt ſay, *How little a portion have we heard of him?* The thunder of his power, the lowdeſt and cleareſt ſpeakings of it, are reſerved to that ſtate when our ears ſhall be bored and our hearts proportionably enlarged to receive it.

שמץ *Pars particula murmur tennis ſuſurrus. Suſurrū verborum ejus.* Symmach. *ut deinceps cū ingenti tonitrus comparet, vix parvā ſtillā ſermonis ejus audierimus.* Vulg. Sept. *In Hebræo tantum eſt paulum pauxillumvè ſine ulla guttæ, ſive ſtillæ mentione* מה שמץ *Quonia exiguitas. Opera hæc nominat ſuſurrum ſermonis ab uſu & ſine. Sunt enim opera dei ſignificativa, indicant gloriam authoris, ſed non uni clarus ſermo verum ſubmiſſio ſuſurrus ſc. indices leviores & benigniores, & quaſi puerorū magiſtri non docentes omnia ſeu accōmodata captui.* Coc. *Quam pauca ſunt quæ ſcimus reſpectu eorum quæ neſcimus.*

Further, *Job* had been long ſpeaking of the works and wayes of God, yet concludeth, *how little a portion is heard of him?* why doth he not rather ſay, *how little a portion*

portion is heard of them? the reaſon is, becauſe what ever is ſaid of the wayes and works of God is to diſcover God. To ſpeak of the earth and ſeas, of the air and fire, of thunder and lightning, of the heavens and ſtars, is not an extolling of the works of God, but an extolling of God in and for his works.

Hence Note, *The works of God ſhould lead us to God himſelf.*

Our ſtudy of the creature ſhould be to gain a clearer light and knowledge of the Creator. There are many expreſſions and impreſſions of God upon the things which he hath made, and we never ſee them as we ought, till in them we ſee their maker. A critical eye looks upon a picture, not ſo much to ſee the colours or the paint, as to diſcern the ſkill and workmanſhip of the Painter or Limner, yea ſome (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks in reference *to ſpirituals*) have ſenſes ſo exerciſed about *theſe artificials*, that they will read the *Artiſts* name in the form and exquiſiteneſs of his art. An *Apelles* or a *Michael Angelo* needs not put his name to his work, his work proclaims his name to thoſe who are judicious beholders of ſuch kind of works. How much more (as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks) *that the name of God is near, do his wondrous works* (both of creation and providence) *declare* to all diſcreet beholders? that which the eye and heart of every godly man is chiefly upon, is to find out and behold *The name*, that is, the wiſdom, power and goodneſs of God in all his works, both of creation and providence. It were better for us never to enjoy the creature, then not to enjoy God in it; and it were better for us not to ſee the creature, then not to have a ſight of God in it: And yet when we have ſeen the moſt of God which the creature can ſhew us, we have reaſon to ſay, *how little a portion is ſeen of him?* and when we have heard the moſt of God that can be reported to us from the creation, we have reaſon to ſay as *Job* here doth, *how little a portion is heard of him?* and to conclude as he doth this Verſe and Chapter,

But the thunder of his power who can underſtand?

This *thunder of his power*, may be taken,

Firſt, Strictly, and in the letter, for natural thunder; for, even that is numbred in Scripture among the wonderful and moſt dreadful works of God. The Scripture calleth it alſo the voice of God (*Pſal.* 29. 3.) *The voice of the Lord is upon the waters, the God of glory thundereth.* Thus a learned paraphraſt connects theſe words with the former; As if *Job* had ſaid; *Now that I have ſaid all that I can, how little a thing is it in compariſon of him and his greatneſs; as may appear by one inſtance more, the power and majeſty which he utters in his thunder, which who can ſufficiently admire? and therefore none can fully underſtand.*

Non alitero de tonitru loquuntur ſacræ ſcripturæ quam de dei voce, magnifica atq; terribili, plenaq; minarum.

Secondly, The thunder of his power, is any extraordinary work of God, eſpecially his dreadful and terrible works of Judgement. For by them he ſpeaks out his infinite power and majeſty in the ears of men as it were by thunder. Of ſuch a voice we read (*Pſal.* 68. 32, 33.) *Sing unto God ye kingdoms of the earth, O ſing praiſes unto the Lord, Selah.* Who this Lord is, and how he manifeſt himſelf is ſet forth in the next words, *to him that rideth upon the heaven of heavens, which were of old: Lo he doth ſend out his voice, and that a mighty voice.* Thus alſo the Prophet *Iſaiah* (*Chap.* 30. 30.) deſcribes the Lord coming forth for the reſcue of his people, and the utter ruine of the *Aſſyrian* Army. *And the Lord ſhall cauſe his glorious voice to be heard, and ſhall ſhew the lightning down of his arm, with the indignation of his anger, and with the flame of a devouring fire, with ſcattering, and tempeſt, and hailſtones.* For though that deſtruction of the *Aſſyrians* was effected by the miniſtery of an Angel (*Iſa.* 37. 36.) yet, doubtleſs it was not done in ſilence, but either with an amazing tempeſt, mixt with thunder and lightning, or with ſuch confuſion and terror as appeared like one. In the book of the *Revelation* (which hath as one of the Ancients ſpeaketh, as *many myſteries as words*) the dreadful judgments propheſied to come upon the world in the ſeveral Ages of it, are expreſſed by Thunder (*Revel.* 10. 4.) *And when the ſeven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven, ſaying unto me, ſeal up thoſe things which the ſeven thunders uttered, and write them not.* And as elſewhere, ſo eſpecially in this book of *Job*, we find, thoſe things which carry the greateſt ſtrength and terror in them, expreſt by thunder (*Job* 39. 19.) *Haſt thou given the horſe ſtrength? haſt thou cloathed his neck with thunder?* that is, haſt thou made the horſe who is ſo ſtrong and terrible? And at *verſ.* 25. (treating ſtill of the horſe) *he ſaith among the trumpets, ha, ha, and he ſmelleth the battel afar off, the thunder of the Captains, and the ſhouting*, that is, the horſe is pleaſed to hear the Great Commanders ſpeak with a loud voice, either directing, threatning, or encouraging their Souldiers. Thus, *the thunder of Gods power*, is ſome wonderful act of his power, which lifts up its voice (as it were) like thunder. This, *who can underſtand?* none can. The word ſignifies alſo to weigh and conſider, ſo ſome render it here, *Who can ſufficiently conſider the thunder of his power?* who can conſider it as he ought, either, Firſt, According to the depth and myſteriouſneſs of it; Or, Secondly, According to the dignity and worthineſs of it.

Inſignibus vero illius geſtis quibus non tam ſplendet quã cum tonitru coruſcat animo percipiendis quis tandem per fuerit. Bez.

Thirdly, Theſe words, *who can underſtand the thunder of his power?* may be expounded of the higheſt and cleareſt publication of his power, The thundering of it out. As if *Job* had ſaid, *I have whiſpered a little to you, but if God ſhould thunder out himſelf, or if his works were ſpoken out (as they deſerve) in thunder*, the minds of men would be amazed, and their underſtandings confounded, *The thunder of his power who can underſtand?* 'Tis uſual among the learned to expreſs high eloquence, and ſtrong confidence of ſpeech, by thundering. It was ſaid of *Alcibiades, that he thundred Greece*; He was a man ſo mighty in Elocution, that he made his hearers tremble. And hence *Chriſt himſelf ſurnamed two of his Diſciples (James the ſon of Zebedee, and John the Brother of James) Boanerges*, which is, *the ſons of thunder*. They did not ſpeak (as we ſay) *like a mouſe in a cheeſe*, but with a great voice, and with a greater ſpirit; they ſpake the meſſages of heaven as if it thundered from heaven. There may be a great force in a low voice, while what is ſpoken comes with much clearneſs of reaſon, and ſtrength of Authority, or (as the Apoſtle gives it) *in the evidence and demonſtration of the Spirit*; but when all theſe are conveyed by a mighty voice, a voice like thunder, how forceable are they? *Baſil was ſaid to thunder in his doctrine, and lighten in his life.* Such (to the height) was that voice of words (in Mount *Horeb* at the giving of the Law) *Which voice they that heard, intreated that the Word ſhould not be ſpoken to them any more* (*Heb.* 12. 19.) that is, that it ſhould not be ſpoken to them any more in that manner, or by an immediate voice from God, as appears (*Exod.* 26. *verſ.* 18, 19.) *And all the people ſaw the thunderings and the lightnings, and the noiſe of the Trumpet, &c. And they ſaid unto Moſes, ſpeak thou with us, and we will hear; but let not God ſpeak with us, leſt we die. We cannot underſtand the thunder of his power.*

Hæc nos cogitata & leviter commemorata obſtupefaciunt, quid ſi majora quæ illius poteſtate continentur, &c. Pined.

Quis cõprehendere poteſt ingentes domini virtutes, quæ velut vocem tonitrui more attollant præ magnitudine & multitudine. Merc.

Quis ſatis conſideret? Piſc.

Tonitru fortitudinis vocat ſermonem clarum, fortitèr prolatum, quod ſit velut tonitru maximum. Coc.

Tonitru potentiæ, *i. e. Ipſum intonantem & loquentẽ corã. Argumentum eſt per comparationem majoris.* Jun.

Tonare eos dicimus qui orationis & eloquentiæ vi maximè pollent. Novar.

Hence Note, *Man is not able to receive and bear thoſe higheſt diſcoveries of God.*

God can ſpeak in ſuch a light as will blind the eyes of man, and in ſuch a language as will rather aſtoniſh then inſtruct him. As among believers, they who are carnal and babes in Chriſt, are not able to eat *ſtrong meat*, they muſt *be fed with milk* (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, 1 *Cor.* 3. 2.) So we may ſay of all believers, even of thoſe that are ſtrongeſt, God doth only whiſper and ſpeak gently to them, *the thunder of his power they cannot underſtand.* For as there is a *peace of God which paſſeth all underſtanding* (*Phil.* 4. 7.) they that have it not, underſtand nothing of it; and and they that have it, underſtand but little of it; *it paſſeth all underſtanding*, not a natural underſtanding only, but alſo a ſpiritual. And as there is *a love of Chriſt paſſing knowledge* (*Eph.* 1. 19.) which yet we ſhould labour to know; a love which hath an incomprehenſible height, and length, and breadth, and depth in it, which yet all the Saints are labouring to comprehend: So there is a manifeſtation of the will and works of God, a thunder of his power, which were it made and ſpoken out to us, our underſtanding could not graſp nor comprehend, how much ſoever we ſhould deſire and labour to comprehend it. And

therefore

thereſore God is pleaſed to put the *treaſure* of his mind and meſſages *in earthen veſſels*; not only, as the Apoſtle gives the reaſon (2 *Cor.* 4.7.) *That the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us*, but he doth it alſo condeſcending to our weakneſs, leſt if he ſhould give out this treaſure immediately from himſelf, or ſhould put it into ſome heavenly veſſel, we ſhould not be able to bear *the excellency*, or (as *Job* here ſpeaks) *The thunder of his power*.

Thus after a very long ventilation of the Queſtion between *Job* and his friends, we are arrived at the Concluſion of their diſpute. *Job* hath anſwered two of his friends thrice, the third (*Zophar* I mean) only twice. He it ſeems, gave out and ſate down, whether ſatiſfied or wearied, whether having no more to ſay, or being unwilling to ſay any more, or thinking that enough had been ſaid already, I determine not. But though *Job's* friends have done arguing againſt him, yet he hath not done arguing for himſelf; Which he doth in five entire Chapters, twice called the *continuation of his Parable*. In what ſence he calleth his enſuing ſpeech a parable, together with the ſubject matter of it, may through the gracious preſence, and *ſupply of the Spirit of Jeſus Chriſt, who hath helped hitherto, and hath not ſuffered that little oyl in the cruſe to fail*, ſhine forth with a clearer light.

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AN
EXPOSITION
WITH
Practical Obſervations
UPON THE
TWENTY-SEVENTH, TWENTY-EIGHTH,
AND
TWENTY-NINTH,
CHAPTERS
Of the Book of
JOB.

TO THE CHRISTIAN READER:

TO

Thoſe eſpecially of this CITY, who yet continue helpful to this WORK.

T*Hat Great Pattern of patient ſuffering*, Holy JOB, *having been many wayes afflicted by God, and no way comforted by man, no not by thoſe men, his Friends, who deſign'd to comfort him, found yet this happineſs, that, as God comforted him at laſt, ſo his Friends had now left off to trouble him. Being thus free from their preſſures and provocations, he took freedom and full ſcope both to defend his ancient integrity, and to deplore his then preſent miſery; Which he doth in no leſs room then five whole Chapters together. The Good mans heart was full, and muſt have vent, 'twould break elſe. The pertinacy and openneſs of his Opponents, in cenſuring and condemning him for a Hypocrite and wicked, made him more then open, almoſt pertinacious, both in aſſerting his own uprightneſs, and in defying thoſe odious imputations, as he that runs may read and underſtand at the beginning of the twenty-ſeventh Chapter. Whatever came on it, he would not juſtifie his condemners, much leſs condemn himſelf*; Let his enemy be as the wicked, and he that roſe up againſt him as the unrighteous, *not He; nor doth* JOB *only deny that he was wicked, or a Hypocrite, but he proves (unanſwerably) that he was not; For, though he had loſt all that himſelf had gained, and God (as he believed) ſtood ready to take away his ſoul too, yet his hope remained not only alive, but lively; whereas the Hypocrites hope dyes, or* What's the hope of the Hypocrite though he hath gained *(and holds what he hath gained)* when God taketh away his ſoul?

Again, though ſuch trouble came upon him as conſtrained him to cry, yet God heard his cry. Though the Almighty grieved him, yet he delighted himſelf in the Almighty, and alwayes called upon God; Whereas, when trouble cometh upon the Hypocrite, will God hear his cry? Or will the Hypocrite delight himſelf in the Almighty? Will he alwayes call upon God? *A Hypocrite will ſometimes do theſe things, but he never hath a will to do them; and in many caſes he will not, ſo much as do them. An Hypocrite may for a while perform the acts, and put on the habit of a godly man; but he cannot at all put off his own nature; nor will he perſeveringly perform thoſe acts:* Will he alwayes call upon God? *That which is only feigned, and is not, eaſily returns to what it is: No man can alwayes appear to be, what he doth but appear to be. Truth only abides in and after all tryals.* JOB *was able to argue from the conſtant tenour of his heart toward God,* *that God lay at his heart, and was not (as the Prophet ſpeaks of the Hypocrite)* far from his reins, while near in his mouth.

Indeed, the dealings of God with him were ſo intricate and full of myſtery, that to find out or aſſign a reaſon of them, was far more difficult then to find out the Silver vein and the place of Gold, *or any of the moſt precious Gems and rarities which Nature (by the order of God) hath concocted and treaſur'd up in the boſom and bowels of the Earth, as he diſcourſeth at large in the former part of* Chap. 28. *The Wiſdom whereby God manageth ſuch providential diſpenſations among the ſons of men, being* hid *(as he there ſaith)* from the eyes of all living, and kept cloſe from the Fowls of the Air, God alone underſtanding the way thereof, and knowing the place thereof. *And therefore* JOB, *preferring an humble neſcience before a bold intruſion into the ſecrets of God, calls us off from the purſuit of that hidden wiſdom to a wiſdom plainly revealed in the laſt verſe of the Chapter;* And unto man he ſaid, Behold, the fear of the Lord that is wiſdom, and to depart from evil is underſtanding.

And, That the Lord had given him wiſdom to fear him, and underſtanding to depart from evil, *he demonſtrates by giving an account or narrative of the whole courſe of his life in the dayes of his proſperity, both in his publick Capacity as a Magiſtrate, throughout Chap.* 29. *(a deſcription of his ſad change from that fills the* 30th*) as alſo in his private capacity, whether abſolute as a man, or relative to God or man, in the* 31th. *That in the diſcharge of all theſe duties, the fear of the Lord had been his wiſdom, and a departure from thoſe ſin-evils, which hang about them, his underſtanding; he not only makes a very ſolemn proteſtation, but by way of ſacred imprecation invites the moſt dreadful vengeance of God upon his own head, in caſe he had not done or not forborn to do as he there proteſted.*

And now what could JOB, *or what could any man do more then he had done, to do himſelf right, and clear his own innocency in the opinion of man? Wherefore having done thus much, he forbears to do or ſay any more, but ſits down quietly* (the words of JOB, are ended, *ſo that Chapter endeth) till the Lord ſhould ariſe to plead his cauſe, and (ſcattering the clouds which had long darken'd his Name and Honour) bring forth his righteouſneſs as the light, and his juſt dealing as the noon-day. Nor was it long before he did ſo:* The Lord is a God of Judgment, bleſſed are all they that wait for him.

Honoured Sirs, you have the general ſum of JOB's *long Parable (that's the Title of his enſuing Speech) in this ſhort Epiſtle, and the particular Expoſition of three Chapters of it, in the Book which followeth: The whole five were intended for this one piece, but it grew too bulkie, and muſt be iſſued out in two. What is now offered, take in good part: The part behind may be offered in its ſeaſon; you alſo by earneſt prayer to the God of Light and Love, in whoſe hand our breath is, and all our wayes, helping on this work in the hand of*

SIRS,

June 11. 1657.

Your moſt affectionate
Friend to ſerve you,

JOSEPH CARYL.

AN EXPOSITION WITH Practical Obſervations UPON THE TWENTY-SEVENTH, TWENTY-EIGHTH, AND TWENTY-NINTH, CHAPTERS Of the Book of JOB.

CHAP. XXVII. Verſ. 1, 2, 3, 4.

Moreover Job *continued his Parable and ſaid.*

As God liveth who hath taken away my Judgment, and the Almighty who hath vexed my ſoul;

All the while my breath is in me, and the Spirit of God is in my Noſtrils;

My lips ſhall not ſpeak wickedneſs, nor my tongue utter deceit.

JOB having given his third anſwer to *Bildad*, his ſecond Friend, and anſwered him home in the former Chapter, we may ſuppoſe him breathing, pauſing, and waiting a while, to ſee whether his third Friend *Zophar* would renew the Combate, or undertake the diſpute afreſh.

But he either being convinced by that evidence of truth which *Job* had held forth, or being hopeleſs to convince *Job*, of what he judged the truth, gives it over in the plain 70 field, ſits down, holds his peace, and forbears to engage any more in this Controverſie.

Now, *Job* perceiving that *Zophar* had done, or had no more to ſay, we may ſuppoſe him making a ſecond ſtop, or ſtand, looking whether *Eliphaz* or *Bildad* would re-inforce the battel, or had any mind to deal further with him; but they alſo (either fearing that they had done ill in ſpeaking ſo much already againſt him, or being out of hope to do any good upon him, how much more, or how much longer ſoever they ſhould ſpeak to him) drew off too, and laid down the Bucklers.

The field being thus quite clear of all Opponents, not ſo much as one appearing againſt *Job*, he proceeds confidently and paſſionately in the purſuit and proof of his own Innocency in the five following Chapters; in which throughout, he refutes the opinion which his Friends had of him, and maintained againſt him, and fully vindicates his own much ſuſpected and oppoſed Integrity.

Thus we are at laſt arrived at the end of the diſpute between *Job* and his Friends, his Friends being all worſted in that diſpute.

Whence Obſerve, Firſt, *Error cannot alwayes hold out.*

A wrong cauſe will have the worſt in the end. Error may wrangle long, but at laſt it will have nothing to ſay: Truth may be oppoſed, but it cannot be prevailed upon; Truth is a Conquerour. *Job*'s Friends had enough of it, and ſaw their own miſtake, though not in the matter, yet in their mark; though not in their Poſitions, yet in their Applications.

Hence take a ſecond Note, *It is beſt to ſay no more when we have ſaid enough, or more then we ought.*

'Tis no diſhonour to yield a weak or wrong cauſe: Contention ſhould not be a continual dropping; when all hath been ſaid as to reaſoning, what we ſay more is but wrangling. *Job*'s Friends did well to give out, though they did ill to begin. 'Tis not courage, but pertinacy to oppoſe the appearances of truth; and where truth appears, 'tis true courage to reſiſt all oppoſers.

Verſe 1. **Moreover Job continued his Parable, and ſaid.**

Job's Friends had done, but *Job* had not. He had more to ſay for himſelf, when they had nothing to ſay againſt him. He had not yet brought forth all that was in his heart, therefore, *Moreover*, or *and* (the word is a Copulative) *he continued his Parable:* We render it *Moreover*, which intimates a full period of the former diſpute, and an entrance upon the concluſion of the whole matter.

Non quidem aliam ſed præcedentis continuativam dictorumque à ſe omnium confirmativum. Bold.

Reſumpſit Job *ſermonem & diſputationem intermiſſam. Verbum addidit, animi recti & fidentis defenſionem denotat.*

The Text is, *He added to lift up, or to take up:* This phraſe of *adding to do* a thing is frequently uſed in Scripture, and it ſignifies not only, firſt, to do the ſame thing again, or to repeat what hath been done; but ſecondly, to do it with a greater intention of ſpirit then formerly; not only to add a new act about the ſame matter, but to act higher. Thus, *to add to ſin*, implyeth more then to renew the act of the ſame ſin, it implyes to ſin more grievouſly, or to be more vile and ſinful in ſinning (*Judg.* 7. 12.) *The Children of* Iſrael *did evil again in the ſight of the Lord*: The Hebrew is, *The Children of* Iſrael *added to do evil in the ſight of the Lord*; they did both add a new act of ſin, as alſo a new degree of ſinfulneſs. We have a reproof of that people in the ſame form of ſpeech (*Judg.* 10. 6.) *The Children of* Iſrael *did evil again in the ſight of the Lord, and ſerved* Baalim, *and* Aſtaroth, *and the Gods of* Syria, *and the Gods of* Zidon, *and the Gods of* Moab, *and and the Gods of the Children of* Ammon, *and the Gods of the* Philiſtims, *and forſook the Lord, and ſerved not him.* This is to add to do evil with the higheſt aggravations. The word is uſed in the ſame ſence, in reference to the Lords manifeſtation of himſelf to *Samuel* (1 Sam. 3. 21.) *The Lord appeared again in* Shiloh, *for the Lord revealed himſelf to* Samuel *in* Shiloh *by the word of the Lord*; the Lord added to appear; that is, he appeared the ſecond time, and he appeared more fully and clearly, in a more glorious diſcovery of himſelf then formerly. Thus in the Text, *Moreover*, Job *added to take up his Parable*; that is, he did not only take up another Parable, or another ſpeech, about or upon the ſame ſubject, but he ſpake more clearly, and more fully, he ſpake with more ſpirit and life then he had done before; *He added to*, or *continued to take up his Parable.*

Though the phraſe here uſed, *to take, or lift up,* be no more in the letter then to ſpeak a Parable, as to lift up the eyes is no more then to ſee; and as when a thought is ſaid to aſcend up into or upon the heart, it is no more then to think (*Jer.* 7. 31.) yet we do not reach the elegancy of the Original when we ſay barely, *He continued his Parable.* Chriſt ſaid of *Paul* (Acts 9.) *He is a choſen veſſel to bear my Name,* &c. That is, to hold it up, to hold it forth with honour and with power. Thus a wiſe man doth not barely utter a Parable, or Sentence, but he lifteth it up. This form of ſpeaking is often uſed in the book of *Numbers* (Chap. 23. 7, 18. and 24. 3, 15.) Balaam *took up his Parable*; that is, he pronounced it with a high voice, that all might hear and take notice of the purpoſe of God, both againſt the *Moabites*, and for his people *Iſrael*. The Prophet is commanded (*Iſa.* 58. 1.) *To lift up his voice as a trumpet*; he muſt not ſpeak in the throat (as we ſay) nor ſwallow his words, he muſt ſpeak out; ſo a Parable muſt be *lifted up*, becauſe 'tis a choice Sentence, and therefore ought to be ſpoken in a higher ſtile and ſtrain, with ſtronger voice and quicker ſpirit then a plain ordinary diſcourſe.

Verbum נשא *in ſenſu proferendi eſt notum, ut latinis ferre ſententiam.*

Thus *Job continued to lift up his Parable.*

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *He that in ſincerity of heart maintains a truth, will maintain it to the end.*

Job's Friends gave over, but *Job* had a *moreover*; they left off, but he continued ſpeaking. *The path of the juſt is like the morning light* (Prov. 4. 18.) We may take the path of the juſt two wayes: Firſt, In acting or doing that which is good, holy, and righteous: Secondly, In diſputing for, and maintaining that which is truth: When the righteous man is in any of theſe paths, his path is like the morning light: And what doth the morning light? The Text ſaith, *It ſhineth more and more unto the perfect day*; it continues to ſhine, and it ſhines brighter both in the defence of Truth, and practice of Holineſs. The Apoſtle gives a charge to Saints, to perſevere and grow up in holineſs (1 *Theſ.* 4. 1.) *Furthermore, then we beſeech you brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jeſus, that as you have received of us how ye ought to walk, and to pleaſe God, ſo ye would abound more and more*, to continue in the practice of holineſs, and in the defence of truth, to be ſtedfaſt and unmoveable, alwayes abounding in the works of the Lord, is both the duty and the honour of the Saints. When *Michol* mocked *David* for dancing before the Ark (2 *Sam.* 6. 22.) ſhe might have diſcouraged him, and cooled his zeal, but he waxed hotter and hotter; while he was compaſſed about with this cold, her chilling killing words warm'd his ſpirit to tell her plainly, *That he would be yet more vile*: As if he had ſaid, *If this behaviour hath rendred me vile and cheap in the eyes and eſteem of my people, I am ſo far from being aſhamed of and repenting it, that I glory in it, I will continue to do what I have done, I will add to be vile; I care not how much I am deſpiſed, ſo God may be honoured; I will be yet more vile, if this be to be vile.*

Further, there is not only continuance, but confidence expreſt in theſe words.

Hence Note, Secondly, *He that holds and maintains truth with a true heart, the longer he holds it, the more confidently he holds it.*

He lifts up his voice and ſpeaks out, he cares not who heareth. There is a twofold ground of this: Firſt, The underſtanding of a godly man gets more light, by how much the more he converſeth with light; his patronage and undertakings for truth confirm him in the truth; for as by converſing with God in Chriſt we get more of his holineſs and beauty, more of the Image of Chriſt ſtampt upon our hearts and lives; ſo by converſing with any truth (which is indeed the Image of God) we get more light into our underſtanding; and as the underſtanding gets more light, ſo the affections get more heat and confidence; and therefore the longer a ſincere heart ſtands up in the defence of truth, the ſtronger he is in it. Whereas the hypocrite, who maintains truth only for carnal ends, and worldly advantages, which he hopes to gain by it, though his underſtanding gains light, yet his affections gain no heat, and ſo the truth may cool under his hands, and he may cool in maintaining it. Upon theſe two Conſiderations, that the underſtanding gets more light, and the affections more heat and warmth, it muſt needs be that he who maintains truth ſincerely, will go on more vigorouſly and ſtrongly, he he will add *to lift up his Parable*, notwithſtanding all the oppoſitions that ſtand in his way.

Moreover Job continued his Parable.

Why doth *Job* call what he had to ſay a Parable? The Original word ſignifies *to rule, to govern*, to govern as a Prince, whoſe righteous Precepts and Commands, whoſe Laws and Councels his people ought to obey: Speeches or Sentences which are full of wiſdom and of truth are called Parables for a threefold reaſon.

משל *Dominare aut principẽ eſſe, unde parabola notat ſententiam plenam acuminis & quaſi poteſtatis.*

Firſt, Becauſe Parables and wiſe Sentences rule over the ſpirits of men, as Princes and Magiſtrates do over their bodies or outward man. Parables carry ſo convincing a light, ſo great an authority in them, that every mans Judgment and underſtanding ſubmits and falls down before them, ſuch words bear rule and ſway. And though many contradict truth, and rebel againſt it; yet truth will ſubdue, even them to its power, who would not ſubmit to its rule, nor bow to its Scepter. And *Job* might well call what he had to ſay a Parable, a collection of ruling Sentences, ſeeing in the iſſue his Friends, who were no friends to what he ſaid, were forced to yield themſelves up to it, and ſubmit to him by the final ſentence or determination of God himſelf.

Secondly, Parables are ſo called becauſe ſuch ſpeeches came uſually from the mouths of Princes and great Perſons; they were ſpeeches of Rulers, therefore ruling ſpeeches. *Solomon* ſpake Proverbs, or Parables, who was a Great King, and ruled over men, more by wiſdom then he did by power.

Thirdly, Becauſe whether men will ſubmit to ſuch ſpeeches and truths or no, yet their judgments, actions, and opinions muſt be tryed and ruled by them. Parables are touchſtones of truth; they are rules, and therefore ought to rule.

Again, Others derive the Original word which we render *a Parable*, from a root which ſignifies *to liken*, or *to make like*; this alſo ſuits well with the nature of Parables, which are uſually expreſſed by Similes, or Similitudes, comparing one thing with another, or one thing to another (*Matth.* 13.3.) *At that time Jeſus ſpake unto them many things in Parables*: We have ſeven diſtinct Parables in that Chapter: And what were thoſe parables? They were all Similitudes; *A Sower went out to ſow*: There you have a Parable, intimating all ſorts of Goſpel-hearers, by four ſorts of ground: There alſo you have the Parable of the grain of Muſtard-ſeed, &c. holding forth the growing power of Grace. It is ſaid of *Abraham*, that *By faith he offered up* Iſaac, *accounting that God was able to raiſe him from the dead, from whence alſo he received him in a figure, or Parable* (Heb. 11. 19.) There was an Image or Similitude of death upon *Abraham*, in reference to that bleſſing; his own body was dead, and *Sarah* was dead too as to child-bearing: But he conſidering thoſe deaths out of which he had his Son, was willing to offer his Son to death, when God called him to it, becauſe he knew God was able to raiſe him even from the dead, from whence he at firſt received him in a figure. And if we expound *Abraham*'s receiving of *Iſaac* from the dead, not of his firſt receiving him from his own and *Sarah*'s dead body, but of his ſecond receiving him, after he at Gods command had bound him upon the Altar ready to be ſlain and offered up in ſacrifice, it makes no difference as to the point in hand; that being alſo an illuſtrious Parable, or figure of death, and of a reſurrection from it.

משל *dicitur à* נמשל *aſſimilatus eſt. Per ſimilitudines loquebatur ad modum parabolas inducentis.* Aquin.

ἐν παραβολῇ.

Again, Parables are called Similitudes, or Similies, becauſe they reſemble and bear (as it were) the expreſs Image of their wiſdom, gravity, modeſty, and truth, who ſpake and held them forth; all words are or ſhould be the Image of the mind, and Parables are a beautiful Image of the beautiful mind. A Parable is taken four wayes in Scripture,

Firſt, For any Divine Maxim, Axiom, or Principle, which generally obtaineth and is retained among all ſorts of men (*Prov.* 26.7.) *As the feet of the lame are not equal, ſo is a Parable in the mouth of a fool*; that is, a divine holy ſentence; a grave and wiſe ſentence is an uncomely thing in the mouth of a wicked man. A Parable in his mouth is like a Pearl in a Swines ſnout.

Secondly, A Parable is a dark and a hard ſaying: They ſaid unto Chriſt, *Now ſpeakeſt thou plainly, and doſt not ſpeak a Parable*: A Parable is there oppoſed to a plain ſpeech; there is an outward darkneſs of words encompaſſing that light; and hence a Parable and a dark ſaying are put together, as expreſſing each the other (*Pſal.* 49. 4.) *I will encline mine ear to a Parable, and open my dark ſaying upon the Harp*; the dark ſaying in the latter part, is the Parable in the former part. So (*Pſal.* 78. 2.) *I will open my mouth in a Parable, I will utter dark ſayings of old.* A Parable is a kind of Riddle, or as we may well expreſs it, a Parable is a Candle in a dark Lanthorn, there's light in it, but darkneſs about it, you muſt open the Lanthorn before you can ſee the light, or ſee any thing by its light. Yet ſometimes a ſpeech or diſcourſe is a Parable, or dark, not ſo much by any intrinſecal obſcurity, as by the Hearers incapacity, The dulneſs and indiſpoſition of man, makes that a dark and hard ſaying to him, which is not ſo in it ſelf, *Matth.* 13. 13, 14, 15.

Proverbium quaſi probatum verbū. Græci vocant, ἀξίωμα γνόμη πρόβλημα. Qui publico docendi munere ex Authoritate fungebantur proprio nomine dicebantur משלים *Moſcielim. i. e. parabolizantes. Sermo figuratus Metaphoricus Allegoricus dicitur Parabola.*

Thirdly, Any Similitude or reſemblances from things in Heaven, or things on Earth, is a Parable.

Fourthly, A mans judgment or opinion, in any caſe, is his Parable; every mans opinion, whether true or falſe, is a Parable to him, and he would have it ſo to others; that is, he would have it a ruling Sentence. Thus Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates this Text, *And* Job *proceeded to continue his Oration*; and another, Job *proceeded to deliver his Opinion*; ſo that a mans opinion or ſentence (be it what it will) is his Parable, or that which rules him, and which he deſires may rule all others. Moſt men would have every Sheaf bow to theirs; and ſome have a higher ambition to make the minds and judgments of men ſtoop to them, then ever any had to make the bodies of men ſtoop to them. They would have every opinion of theirs a *Parable*, like a Prince upon the Throne, giving the law or rule to others. So much for the nature and extent of the word, by which *Job* expreſſeth all that he had to ſay, *A Parable.*

Hence Obſerve, *Truth wiſely worded and delivered hath a commanding Power in it; it is a Parable.*

As it commands the wiſe, and they ſubmit to it,; ſo it commands the wicked, and they ſhall fall before it. Error and ſin ſhall fall before it; blaſphemy and hereſie ſhall fall before it; every thing that's contrary to ſound doctrine ſhall fall before the commanding power of a holy Parable: What the Apoſtle ſaith of Rulers, or of earthly Powers (*Rom.* 13. 1.) *Let every ſoul be ſubject to the higher Powers*, that I may ſay of truth, let every ſoul be ſubject to it, for that's a Power, and that's a higher Power, that's Gods Power indeed: Truth is the Power of God; and I may ſay (as there it follows) *He that reſiſteth this Power of God, receiveth to himſelf damnation*; yea, I may ſay to every holy Parable, as 'tis ſaid (*Pſal.* 45. 4.) *Ride on in thy Majeſty, ride proſperouſly, becauſe of truth, and meekneſs, and righteouſneſs, and thy right hand ſhall teach thee terrible things.* Truth carried forth in the hand, and by the Power and Spirit of Jeſus Chriſt, will do terrible things; it will conquer, and go forth *Conquering and to conquer*; it will be more then a Conqueror. How many are the trophies that truth hath brought in! And how much the blood (as I may ſay) that truth hath ſhed of the enemies that oppoſed it! Hence *Job* ſpake triumphantly, when he ſaw his Friends fallen before it; his ſpeech was a ruling ſpeech, and his opinion obtained.

Moreover, Job continued his Parable, and ſaid.

And what ſaid he?

Verſe 2. **As God liveth, who hath taken away my judgment, and the Almighty, who hath vexed my ſoul.**

He begins, ſomewhat ſtrangely, with an Oath, *As God liveth*; *Job* continues his Parable through this and the next Chapter; and in this Parable he doth inſiſt upon theſe two particulars (which may give you a little diſcovery of the whole, before I come to the parts.)

Firſt, He inſiſts upon the vindication of his own Innocency to the eleventh verſe of this Chapter.

Secondly, He proceeds to the refutation of his Friends, or Oppoſers Arguments, whereby they would prove him wicked, and he doth it by ſhewing, that though the Judgments of God overtake wicked men very often in this life, yet that every one is not wicked that is overtaken by judgments, nor are all wicked men ſo overtaken; this he continues from the eleventh verſe excluſively to the end of the twenty-eighth Chapter.

Theſe words (from the firſt to the fourth verſe) are part of the firſt part, or the vindication of his Innocency; in which he doth two things.

Firſt, He profeſſeth that he is innocent, *verſ.* 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.

Secondly, He gives proof of it, *verſ.* 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.

He clears his Innocency by profeſſion two wayes.

Firſt, By calling God to witneſs by a ſolemn Oath that it was ſo, and this he doth in the ſecond, third, and fourth verſes.

Secondly, By ſhewing that he ſhould do an act of very great injuſtice and unrighteouſneſs to himſelf, if he ſhould ſay otherwiſe, in the fifth and ſixth verſes. And thus we have the ſum and ſubſtance of his Diſcourſe. Now to particulars.

As God liveth who hath taken away my judgment.

The Original text may be taken two wayes.

Firſt, As an Oath, ſo we, *As God liveth*, &c.

Secondly, As an Aſſertion, *The living God, or the God that liveth, hath taken away my judgment.* I ſhall touch the words under both notions. But,

Firſt, As an Oath: He ſwears by the life of God; which *Job* doth to ſhew, that as ſure as God is the living God for ever, ſo he certainly purpoſed that he would neither deſiſt while he lived from maintaining his own integrity, nor would he at all maintain it falſly.

Jurejurãdo ſolenni ſe eorum ſententiæ quãdiu vitam egerit, non ſubſcripturum, ſed in ſua innocentia præſtaturum. Merc.

We meet frequently in Scripture with this Oath, *By the life of God*, or, *As God liveth* (1 Sam. 25. 34. 2 Sam. 2. 27. Rev. 10. 6.) This *chi Eloah* was the great Oath, the greateſt Oath among the *Jews*. And as we find holy men thus ſwearing and vowing by the life of God, ſo God himſelf ſwears thus alſo, *As I live* is the Oath of God (*Ezek.* 18. 3.) and 'tis often repeated in that book, *As I live, ſaith the Lord*; *As I live, ſaith the Lord.*

Hence Note, Firſt, *Oaths are lawful.*

Yea, Oaths are not only lawful, but they are commanded (*Jer.* 4. 2.) *And thou ſhalt ſwear, the Lord liveth, in judgment, and in righteouſneſs*; where the Command lyes not only upon the (*modus*, or) manner of ſwearing, *in truth, and in righteouſneſs, and in judgment*, but upon the very act, *Thou ſhalt ſwear, the Lord liveth.* The Lord by *Moſes* laid this charge long before upon the people of *Iſrael* (Deut. 6. 13.) *Thou ſhalt fear the Lord thy God, and ſerve him, and ſhalt ſwear by his Name.*

But it may be objected, How then doth Chriſt ſay (*Matth.* 5. 34.) *Swear not at all?* And the Apoſtle *James* (Chap. 5. 12.) *Above all things, my Brethren, ſwear not?* How is it at all lawful to ſwear, when Chriſt ſaith, *Swear not at all?*

I anſwer; When Chriſt ſaith, *Swear not at all*, the Text explains it ſelf, that it is not a diſallowance of ſwearing at all in any kind, but of ſwearing at all in ſome kind; *Swear not at all*, ſaith Chriſt; that is, do not ſwear an undue Oath, *Neither by Heaven, for it is Gods Throne*; *nor by Earth, for it is his Footſtool*; *nor by* Jeruſalem, *for it is the City of the great King*; *neither ſhalt thou ſwear by thine head, for thou canſt not make one hair white or black.* To ſwear by the creature is forbidden by Chriſt, not ſwearing by the Creator. This alſo is the mind of the Spirit by the Apoſtle *James, Above all things, my Brethren, ſwear not, neither by Heaven, nor by the Earth, nor any other Oath*; that is, do not ſwear any ſuch kind of Oath; it is not an abſolute denial of an Oath, but of prophane Oaths, Oaths by the Creature. To ſwear by any Creature is Idolatry; becauſe ſwearing is a part of the worſhip of God, and ſo excellent a part of the worſhip of God, that ſometimes it is put for the whole worſhip of God. Compare that Text (*Deut.* 6. 13.) with that (*Matth.* 4. 10.) and it will appear, that ſerving of God, and ſwearing by God, are equally put for the worſhip of God.

And I ſhall touch a little further, to ſhew how much of worſhip there is in ſuch ſwearing.

Firſt, There is a Confeſſion, or an acknowledgment that the Lord *is*, and *is the living God*; for though we do not ſwear formally (as the Lord liveth) yet every Oath in the Name of God is a tacite acknowledgement that the Lord is: An Oath by God gives him the glory of his being, that he is *Jehovah*, the true, the living, the everliving God.

Secondly, Swearing is an acknowledgment of the omniſciency of God, that he knows, and takes notice of what is done, of what is ſpoken and affirmed by men here below; that he knows not only the word that is ſpoken out, but the thoughts which lye within, or what correſpondency is held between the heart and the tongue, between our thoughts and words; this is a high part of worſhip.

Thirdly, It is worſhip, in that, He who ſweareth yieldeth himſelf up to the Juſtice of God, who will take vengeance on all thoſe who ſwear falſly, or invoke his Name, in pretence to cover falſhood, who make Oaths as ſtalking-horſes to their own ends; to confeſs the Lord an Avenger of all ſuch, is a great part of his glory.

Fourthly, An Oath is an acknowledgement of the power of God, that he is able to take vengeance, that he can make the ſtouteſt ſtoop, the Cedars bow, and the Oaks fall, and the Mountains quake at his preſence; there's much holy worſhip in this acknowledgment.

Fifthly, It is an evidence of our faith that God will do what is right; and of our holy fear, that we dare not ſpeak what is falſe, nor do what is wrong. When *Jacob* ſware to *Laban* (Gen. 33. 53.) He ſware *by the fear of his Father Iſaac*; that is, by that God whom his Father *Iſaac* feared; who as he is to be feared much and alwayes; ſo then moſt when we ſwear by his great and reverend Name.

Laſtly, It is an evidence of our love to and confidence in God; why elſe do we put our cauſe to him, and caſt our ſelves upon him, but that we expect good from him, and to be righted by him? Some of the Ancients have ſaid concerning prophane Oaths, *No man ſwears by the life of the King, but he that would be thought a lover, yea, an adorer of the King*: No man ſwears by the Name of God, but he ſpeaks love to God, if he ſwear in ſincerity and holy fear. We may ſum up all into this Argument, That which carrieth the acknowledgment of the Being, of the Omniſciency, of the Juſtice, of the Power of God, that which is an evidence of our faith, of our fear, of our love to God, that which is all this is a noble act of the worſhip of God; therefore ſwearing, which is and doth all theſe things, is an eminent act of worſhip.

Again, Taking theſe words as an Oath, we may enquire why doth *Job* ſwear, *As God liveth?* I anſwer, *Job* was ſpeaking about a very ſerious matter, and ſpeaking very ſeriouſly; he was upon weighty buſineſs, and his ſpirit had the weight of it upon him; he had been in a long debate about a great Controverſie with his Friends; this occaſion'd his Oath, *As the Lord liveth.* Hence take two Obſervations in reference to Oaths:

Firſt, *Oaths are to be uſed only upon weighty and urgent occaſions.*

Light Oaths, or Oaths upon light occaſions are weighty ſins; and by how much the matter weighs leſs, by ſo much the ſin weighs more. How great then is their ſin, who ſwear about trifles, who will ſwear upon any occaſion, yea, upon no occaſion, who ſwear becauſe they uſe to ſwear, not becauſe they have any reaſon to ſwear. Oaths are are almoſt as common as words with ſome, you ſhall ſeldom hear them ſpeaking without ſwearing. Oaths are uſed by ſome as if they thought them ornaments of ſpeech, and the very grace of their diſcourſe; whereas indeed they are the very excrements of ſpeech, and an argument that the ſpeaker hath no grace. Some are ſo accuſtomed to ſwearing, that they ſwear and know it not. And moſt know not what they do when they ſwear, though they ſwear whatſoever they are doing. And as light ſwearing by the Name of God is abominable, ſo any light uſing of his Name in thoſe ſudden Out-cryes, *O Lord, O God*, is extreamly ſinful.

Secondly, *Job* ſware, becauſe his bare words were not believed; he had often profeſſed his own Integrity, but they gave no credit to him, as if he had ſpoken rather vauntingly, and vain-gloriouſly then truly; now *Job* ſwears.

Obſerve, *It is lawful for us to ſwear when we cannot otherwiſe be believed, when others are not ſatisfied with words we may come to an Oath.*

An Oath is the laſt remedy, and this indeed ſhould ſtop all contending, and be a remedy of ſtrife. The Apoſtle ſaith (*Heb.* 6. 16.) *An Oath among men is the end of all ſtrife*; that is, an Oath ought to be the end of all ſtriſe; men ſhould proceed no further in ſtrife when an Oath is paſt. The deſign of this great Ordinance, ſwearing, is, that men may ceaſe contending. If we can give ſatisfaction, or gain credit any other way, we ſhould not proceed ſo far as Oath; and when we have given an Oath, we have gone to the utmoſt to give ſatisfaction. When once a mans Oath is not credited, he hath loſt all his credit.

Thirdly, *Job* ſwears by God, by the life of God (as God liveth)

Obſerve, *An Oath is proper to God, and as we are to ſwear by God, ſo God only is to be ſworn by.*

(Jer. 12. 16.) *And it ſhall come to paſs, if they will diligently*

gently learn the wayes of my people, to ſwear by my Name (*the Lord liveth*) *as they taught my people to ſwear by* Baal, *then ſhall they be built in the midſt of my people:* As if the Lord had ſaid, You were heretofore taught to ſwear by the name of *Baal*; now if you will give this honour to me alone, to ſwear by my Name, you ſhall proſper and be ſtrong (*Iſa.*65.16.) *He who bleſſeth himſelf in the earth, ſhall bleſs himſelf in the name of the God of truth; and he that ſweareth in the earth, ſhall ſwear by the God of truth*; That is, if any man ſwear, this ſhall be his Oath, and no other, he ſhall *ſwear by the God of truth.* To ſwear by any other is a forſaking of God (*Jer.* 5. 7.) *How ſhall I pardon thee this; thy Children have forſaken me, and ſworn by them that are no gods.* Whatſoever creature any one ſwears by, he commits two great evils: Firſt, He ſwears by that which is no God: Secondly, Swearing by it, he puts it in the place and gives it the honour of God. That rebuke which Chriſt gives (*Matth.* 5. 54.) ſhews plainly, that ſome uſed to ſwear by the Heavens, ſome by the Earth, ſome by their heads. To ſwear vainly by the Name of the true God, and to ſwear at all by any creature, are alike abominable. We read what a tongue-taint or infection *Joſeph* had got in the Court of *Pharaoh*, even to ſwear by the life of *Pharaoh*; yea, he ſeems to have contracted a cuſtom of it, for he uſeth it twice in two verſes (*Gen.*42. 15,16.) The Courtiers of *Pharaoh* had (as it ſeems) taken up a flattering faſhion to ſwear by his life (as it hath ſince been the uſe in other places to ſwear by the life of the Emperour) *Joſeph* (a godly man) living a while in that Court, had ſtained his language with that curſed Courtſhip, or vain complemental ſwearing. We provoke him highly who made all things, while we ſwear by any thing which he hath made: If we muſt give an account for every idle word, what account will they make who frequently vent idolatrous Oaths? And what eſteem ſhall we make of their faith, who inſtead of placing it in God by believing, put it in the place of God by ſwearing? He that ſwears by his *Faith* breaks it, and declares at his tongue an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God. For ſwearing by falſe objects the Land mourns as well as for ſwearing falſly. Polluted lips pollute a Land. *When the Lord turns to a people a pure lip or language, then they will call upon his Name* (only) *and ſerve him with one conſent or ſhoulder,* Zeph. 3. 9.

But ſay ſome, Is it ſinful to ſwear by any thing but by God? Why then ſaith the Church (*Cant.* 3. 5. which ſome interpret as an Oath) *I charge you, O ye daughters of* Jeruſalem, *by the Roes and by the Hinds of the field, that ye ſtir not up, nor awake my Love untill he pleaſe.*

I anſwer; The words have an adjuration in them, not an Oath; the Spouſe chargeth the daughters of *Jeruſalem*, that they would not do any thing to provoke or diſquiet Chriſt, which even the Roes and the Hinds of the field would not do; or in caſe they do, ſhe threatens them, that the Roes and Hinds ſhall teſtifie againſt them, becauſe they did what the Roes would not, had they reaſon as men and women have. There is a vaſt difference between adjuring or charging others, and ſwearing our ſelves.

That of *Paul* is objected likewiſe (1 *Cor.* 15.31.) *I proteſt by your rejoycing which I have in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, I dye daily:* *Paul* ſeems to ſwear by their rejoycing.

I anſwer; Though *Paul's* ſpeech hath ſome appearance of an Oath, yet it is only an obteſtation; *Paul* doth not ſwear by their rejoycing, but makes a profeſſion, or proteſtation by it: As if he had ſaid, My troubles and afflictions which I endure for Chriſt, would teſtifie for me, if they were vocal, or could ſpeak, that as ſurely as you rejoyce in Chriſt, or I with you or for you, ſo ſurely *I dye daily*; that is, I daily expoſe my ſelf to the dangers of death, or to deadly dangers, for the Goſpel ſake, and converſion of the Gentiles. Thus the Prophets made obteſtations by the Heaven, and by the Earth, or called them ſolemnly to witneſs; but they never ſware by them.

For the cloſe of this point, I ſhall only add that there are four things which render an Oath ſinful and unlawful.

Firſt, When we ſwear falſly, though by the true God.

Secondly, When we ſwear raſhly, or without cauſe, by the true God.

Thirdly, When we ſwear lightly in the weightieſt cauſes, by the true God.

Fourthly, When we ſwear, though truly, upon the greateſt cauſe, and with the greateſt ſolemnity or reverence by any thing which is not God, or below God, as all creatures and things belonging to the creature are.

So much of thoſe words in the notion of an Oath, *As God liveth, who hath taken away my judgment.*

I ſhall touch them in the ſecond reading, as they are an aſſeveration, or a ſtrong aſſertion.

The living God, or the God who liveth, hath taken away my judgment.

This Attribute, *The living God*, is often uſed in Scripture; and God is ſo called,

Firſt, In oppoſition to *Idols*, or falſe Gods, who have no life at all in them (*Pſal.*95.) *They have eyes and ſee not, and ears but hear not*, &c. That's the ſtile which the Apoſtle *Paul* gives them (1 *Theſ.* 1. 9.) *For they themſelves ſhew of us what manner of entring we had unto you, and how ye turned from Idols to ſerve the living and true God:* The living God is oppoſed to Idols. We have the like oppoſition (*Hab.* 2. 19.) *Woe to him that ſaith to the wood awake, to the dumb ſtone ariſe, it ſhall teach*, &c. The ſtone is dumb, the wood is aſleep; woe to him that ſaith to dead things awake, *But the living Lord ſpeaketh in his holy Temple.*

Secondly, God is called *the living God*, as in oppoſition to Idols, and all falſe Gods: So

Firſt, As having life originally and primarily in himſelf, or as being life; we cannot ſo properly ſay that God hath life, as that he is life; he is *life* eſſentially; the life of God is the living God; the life of a man is another thing from man; God and his life are the ſame. Again, as God is called *the living God*, becauſe he is the principle of his own life, altogether life, and in him is no death, nothing of death at all. So

Secondly, He is called *the living God* derivatively, as conveighing and letting out life to all creatures; life of any degree it is from God, from *him we receive life and breath* (Acts 17. 28. Pſal. 36. 9.) *With thee is the well of life, or the well of lives*; that is, of all ſorts of lives. Firſt, The life of vegetation, or growth in Plants: Secondly, The life of ſenſe in Beaſts: Thirdly, The life of Reaſon in man: Fourthly, The life of Grace in Saints here on earth, and the life of Glory, which is the portion of Saints for ever in Heaven, proceed from God; He is the Well or Spring, the Well-ſpring of all theſe lives. And ſeeing he is the living God, therefore, firſt,

Honour God as the living God.

How is that? Firſt, We honour him ſo by acknowledging him the living God, as ſubjects were wont to ſay to Kings in way of gratulation, and to teſtifie hearty affection, *God ſave them, or let them live*, 1 Sam. 10. 24. 1 Kings 1. 25. 2 Kings 11. 12. So we ought to ſay in way of Adoration, *The Lord liveth*, Pſal. 18. 46. Secondly, We honour God as the living God by giving him a living ſervice, or by being *a living ſacrifice unto him* (Rom. 12. 1.) *Offer up your bodies a living Sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, which is your reaſonable ſervice.* A living ſervice is the proper honour of the living God. This living ſervice is the fruit of the death of Chriſt, as the Apoſtle concludes emphatically (*Heb.*9. 13.) *How much more ſhall the blood of Chriſt purge our Conſciences from dead works to ſerve the living God:* As if he had ſaid, Nothing is more unſuitable, more uncomely, then to ſerve a living God with dead works; if you were to ſerve an Idol, a ſtone or a ſtock, dead works were good enough for it; a ſervice without life, without heat, without ſpirit, would ſerve the turn for ſuch a Deity. But the blood of Chriſt ſprinkled upon Believers, purgeth them from dead wotks; that is, from thoſe works which are done in a ſtate of death and nature, and likewiſe from thoſe works which when we are in a ſtate of life, are yet liveleſs, powerleſs, the blood of Chriſt purgeth us from them alſo; there is a great deal of deadneſs even in thoſe who are in a ſtate of life; now the blood of Chriſt gets out this death. Remember when you come to hear, or pray, or perform any act of worſhip to God, that you are doing it to the living God; dead ſervices, dead worſhip are moſt improper for the living God.

Secondly, If the Lord be *the living God,* then acknowledge him as the Author of life; bleſs him and adore him, not only as he is original life, but as he is the Author of your life, as the Author of all the life that is in the world; the very life that is in Plants ſpeaks God the Author of it. Bleſs God that the Herbs grow, and the Trees bloſſom: Bleſs God for the life of Beaſts; that they move, and labour, and travel for us is of God: Bleſs him much more for the life of Reaſon, which we our ſelves receive from him as men: But above all, bleſs God for ſpiritual life, and for Jeſus Chriſt who is life, and *who hath brought life and immortality to light through the Goſpel:* Bleſs him for Eternal life, who is the living, who is the everliving God.

Laſtly, If God be the living God, then we ſhould be willing to offer up our lives a ſacrifice for him; as we are to offer up our ſelves to the Lord a living ſacrifice; ſo we ſhould be ready to offer up our lives as a ſacrifice, we ſhould be willing to dye for the living God: No man would dye for a dead Idol; But who would not dye for the living God when God calls him to it? God is the life giver, and if we lend him a life, he can give us our life again, and will. What is given to the poor we lend unto the Lord, becauſe he is the giver of all, and hath promiſed to give it us back again. And if we give a life for God, we put it into ſuch a hand as hath all life in his hand, and he will give us back our life in a better life. This ſhould be our encouragement at all times, even to lay down our lives for God, who is the living God, and this is our aſſurance, that he will give us back our lives again. Let us alwayes give up our ſelves a living ſacrifice to God, by doing according to his will; And let us be alwayes ready to give up our lives as a ſacrifice to God, in ſuffering according to his will, whenſoever his will is to call us out to ſuffer.

Job having taken a ſolemn Oath by the *living God*, giveth us a further deſcription of God by two things which he had done to him: Firſt, *He had taken away his judgment:* Secondly, *He had vexed his ſoul. As the Lord liveth,*

Who hath taken away my judgment; or, *Hath made my judgment to go back.*

So the Text ſtrictly in the letter: The Chaldee Paraphraſt thus, *He hath taken away the rule, or meaſure of my judgment*: But what means *Job* by this Judgment which God took away? I anſwer, Judgment may be conſidered two wayes, Firſt, For an evil inflicted or feared: When God brings trouble upon a perſon, or upon a people, he bringeth judgment upon them; and when he threateneth trouble, he threatens judgment. The Prophet encourageth *Sion* to rejoyce, becauſe *the Lord had taken away her judgments* (Zeph. 3. 14, 15.) *Sing O daughter of* Sion; *ſhout* O Iſrael; *be glad and rejoyce with all the heart, O daughter of* Jeruſalem: Why is *Sion* called to this joy? The next words tell us why, *The Lord hath taken away thy judgments*: It muſt needs be a merry day with us, a mercy to us, to have thoſe judgments taken away from us which ſtand in oppoſition to mercy; ſo the Prophet explains himſelf. *The Lord hath taken away thy judgments, he hath caſt out thine enemy the King of* Iſrael, *even the Lord is in the midſt of thee, thou ſhalt not ſee evil any more. Sion* rejoyced becauſe her judgments were taken away; but *Job* complains becauſe his judgment was taken away. *Job*'s judgment was taken away; but *Job* found his judgments ſtill upon him, or untaken away; he was ſtill poor and oppreſt, ſtill weak and reproacht: This kind of judgment was not taken away.

סור *Receſſit, trãſitus ablatus fuit, in Hiphil recedere fecit. Fecit ut recedat judicium meum.* Heb. *Abſtulit regulam judicii mei.* Chald.

Secondly, Judgment ſignifieth right, the right rule without, and the principle of righteouſneſs within. *I will praiſe thee* (ſaith *David*, Pſal. 119.7.) *with uprightneſs of heart, when I ſhall have learned thy righteous judgments*; or, *the judgments of thy righteouſneſs.* And again (*ver.* 20.) *My ſoul breaketh for the longing that it hath to thy judgments at all times:* As if he had ſaid, I deſire with great earneſtneſs, even with a kind of violence (for that is in breaking) both to know the rules of righteouſneſs exactly, and alwayes to do acts of righteouſneſs. And that's the meaning of *David*'s prayer (*Pſal.* 72.1.) *Give the King thy judgments, O God:* As if he had ſaid, O God, give the King a ſpirit of wiſdom and underſtanding to know what is right, and give him a love and delight in doing it. This is the judgment which repenting *Iſrael* is commanded to ſeek (*Iſa.* 1. 17.) And to do this judgment is to do every man right in his cauſe. Hence that complaint (*Iſa.* 59. 8, 9.) *There is no judgment in their goings*; that is, they have no mind to go right in any matter, nor to do right to any man; ſo the Text explains it ſelf in the following words, *They have made them crooked paths, whoſoever goeth therein ſhall not know peace: Therefore is judgment far from us, neither doth Juſtice overtake us; we wait for light, but behold obſcurity.* Every thing falls out croſs and contrary to our hope, becauſe we walk ſo croſs and contrary to the rule. It is a great judgment of God upon man, when judgment is not found between man and man; nor is there a clearer evidence, that wrathful juſtice hath overtaken us, then when righteous juſtice doth not. The ſame Prophet at once repreſents and rebukes the Church ſadly, yea, and ſinfully concluding (like *Job* here) that her judgment was departed (*Iſa.* 40. 27.) *Why ſayeſt thou, O* Jacob, *and ſpeakeſt, O* Iſrael (Is it comely for thee to ſay or ſpeak thus?) *my way is hidden from the Lord; and my judgment is paſſed over from my God*? The words carry a doleful ſound of diſtruſt, either of Gods good will to them, or power to relieve them. The way of *Jacob* was not the courſe which he took, but the courſe which was taken with him; or it was the way of Gods dealing towards him, not the way of his walking towards God. *My way is hid from the Lord:* As if he had ſaid, Surely the Lord looks not after me, he takes no more notice of what befals me, then if all were a ſecret to him, or to hard for him (for in Scripture thoſe things are ſaid to be hidden from us which are too hard for us (*Deut.* 17. 8.) *If a matter be too hard for thee:* The Original is, *If a matter be hidden, ſtrange, or wonderful to thee.* Thus *Jacob* ſaid (though expreſſed by another word) *My way is too hard for, or my way is hidden from the Lord; and my judgment is paſſed over from my God.* Chriſt reproves the Phariſees (*Luke* 11.42.) *Woe unto you, for ye tyth mint, and rue, and all manner of herbs, and paſs over judgment.* And thus the Church ſeems to complain of God, *My judgment is paſſed over from my God:* The Lord regards not to do me right; he takes no care of my cauſe; he doth not free me out of the hands of the enemy and oppreſſor; he hath laid me out of his thoughts. In this ſence *Job* ſpake here, *God hath taken away my judgment*; that is, he doth not give judgment or ſentence for me; he neglects me and my cauſe; I long ſince deſired that the Lord would have the hearing of it quite through, and ſo give judgment upon me and my Friends, or upon the whole matter between me and my Friends (*Chap.* 23. 3, 4.) *O that I knew where I might find him, that I might come even to his ſeat, I would order my cauſe before him, and fill my mouth with arguments:* This hath been my earneſt ſuit to God, but God hath taken away my judgment, he refuſeth my petition, he will not acquit me from my adverſary (which is my due) for he knoweth that I am righteous.

But was not this a great diſtemper in *Job*, to charge God thus, or to complain that God had taken away his judgment.

I anſwer, We are not to underſtand this ſpeech as if he charged the Lord directly with a neglect of doing him right, much leſs that he charged the Lord with doing him any wrong. His words at the beſt had much boldneſs in them and impatience, but no blaſphemy, which was the thing that Satan laboured to bring him to, even to curſe God, and charge him fooliſhly. His meaning then (taking his words with a grain of ſalt) is only this, that God did defer to clear up his innocency, or that God did, as it were, for the preſent lay his buſineſs aſide, and would not determine his cauſe, that God did not appear for him, nor vindicate him (though he had ſo often appealed to him) according to his earneſt expectation. We find *Elihu* caſting this paſſage upon *Job*, as a high ſtrain of preſumption (*Chap.* 34. 3.) *For* Job *hath ſaid, I am righteous, and God hath taken away my judgment. Elihu* expounded *Job*'s words as a complaint againſt God, refuſing to do him juſtice: As if he had ſaid, I am righteous, but God will not do me right; whereas *Job* only declar'd the matter of fact, how the caſe ſtood with him, that God to that day had not declared for him according to the righteouſneſs of his cauſe, or judgment, but left him in appearance under the cenſure

Si judiciũ ſnmatur (ut ſæpe ſolet) pro æquitate cauſæ cui debetur illa judicii pare quæ eſt abſolntio; tum auferre judicium erit non abſolvere pœna. Pined.

cenſure of his Friends, even ſuch, as they judged him to be an Hypocrite, or the worſt of wicked men.

Hence Obſerve, *God doth not alwayes give teſtimony to, or clear up the innocency of his faithful Servants.*

He lets them lye under the clouds, he ſuffers the haſty judgments and harſh opinions of men to continue upon them, without any anſwer for their integrity; they are aſperſed, and dirt is caſt in their faces, they lye among the pots, and are blackt all over as with a coal, they are accounted (as *Job* was) the vileſt of the ſons of men, and yet (though the Lord knows it is otherwiſe with them) he lets it be ſo with them.; he lets the dirt ſtick upon them, even upon the face of their reputation, and will not waſh it off. They whom God hath made clean, the world either makes or reputes unclean. As that which is highly eſteemed among men is an abomination in the ſight of God; ſo they who are highly eſteemed of God, are an abomination in the ſight of m[illegible] Theſe ſufferings of the Saints in their own credit, or [illegible]e opinion of men, ſerve the holy ends and purpoſes of G[illegible]d as much as any of their ſufferings, whether in body or eſtate, by the oppreſſions and perſecutions of men. And therefore Saints are detained under theſe tryals as well as any other, till thoſe holy ends are ſerved; and longer then that they ſhall not be detained under them. This tongue-rod either of wicked men, or of miſtaken and miſunderſtanding brethren, ſhall not reſt upon the lot of the righteous; though God take away their judgment for the preſent, yet at laſt he will give judgment for them. *David* was not only riſen up to that aſſurance, but had it in experience (*Pſal.* 9. 3, 4, 5.) *When mine enemies are turned back, they ſhall fall and periſh at thy preſence, for thou haſt maintained my right, and my cauſe; thou ſatteſt in the Throne judging right,* or, *in righteouſneſs. David* found God ſtanding up preſently for him, and aſſerting his innocency, he found God ſitting in his Throne, and giving right judgment againſt his enemy. But is not God alwayes upon his Throne? Or doth he any thing at any time upon his Throne but what is right? Wo to thoſe who think otherwiſe: God is alwayes upon his Throne, and can do nothing but right there. But he doth not alwayes give out or declare his righteous judgments, or the righteouſneſs of his judgments: All men have not the fruit or benefit of them, as *David* then had. *Thou haſt rebuked the heathen, thou haſt deſtroyed the wicked, thou haſt put out their name for ever and ever.* Thus the Lord did execute judgment for *David* even upon the place. He gives a like report of the preſent appearance of God for him (*Pſal.* 41. 12.) *As for me thou upholdeſt me in mine integrity*; that is, while I walk uprightly, ſincerely, and with a ſingle heart, thou takeſt my part, and maintaineſt me againſt all mine enemies, or notwithſtanding the oppoſition of mine enemies, thou doſt maintain in me a deſire and purpoſe to walk ſtill ſincerely, uprightly, and in the ſingleneſs of my heart. And indeed we have great reaſon to hold faſt, and to hold on in our integrity, while the Lord undertakes to uphold us in our integrity. And if he ſhould let us fall in our integrity, or our integrity fall for a while, yet we have a promiſe (*Pſal.* 37. 6.) that the Lord will do it for all his people at laſt, or in the fitteſt ſeaſon; *Wait upon the Lord, truſt alſo in him, and he ſhall bring it to paſs; he ſhall bring forth thy righteouſneſs as the light, and thy judgment as the noon day:* Though thy judgment or right be like midnight, dark, and obſcure, ſo that none can ſee it; though the Lord himſelf (as *Job* here ſpeaks) ſeemeth to have taken away thy judgment, yet wait a while, and thou ſhalt ſee a glorious turn, thou ſhalt ſee darkneſs turned to light, and midnight to noon day; thou ſhalt ſee *God bringing forth thy righteouſneſs as the light, and bringing back or reſtoring thy judgment* (which he took away) *like unto the noon day.* Thus *Paul* comforted himſelf when God had taken away his judgment, and he lay under the ſevereſt judgment of men (1 *Cor.* 3. 4, 5, 6.) *With me it is a very ſmall thing that I ſhould be judged of you, or of mans judgment* (I know men cenſure me liberally) *for I know nothing by my ſelf* (I am clear in my own conſcience) *yet am I not hereby juſtified; but he that judgeth me is the Lord.* God judgeth all men preſently, as to his own knowledge of their eſtate, and he will ere long publiſh the knowledge of their eſtate to others, even in the ears and to the open view of all: *Therefore* (the Apoſtle concludes, *ver.* 5.) *judge nothing before the time until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkneſs,, and will manifeſt the counſels of the heart, and then ſhall every man* (who hath been falſly accuſed and wrongfully diſgraced by men) *have praiſe of God.* In the great Judgment God will take away that judgment of outward approbation from all wicked men which the world had given them, and he will give that judgment of outward approbation to all godly men, which himſelf had taken away from them while they were in this world. And they ſhall ſay in that day, The Lord liveth, who hath reſtored our judgment which he was pleaſed (as *Job* ſaith here) once to take away.

And the Almighty who hath vexed my ſoul.

Here again we are to repeat or ſuppoſe the Oath, *As God liveth, who hath taken away my judgment* (*as*) *the Almighty* (*liveth*) *who hath vexed my ſoul.* This title of God, *Almighty*, notes, Firſt, the Strength; Secondly, The goodneſs of God. As the Lord is powerful, ſo he is the Spring and Fountain of goodneſs and mercy to his people; nevertheleſs though the Lord be thus *almighty*, though he be thus merciful and good in himſelf (*Yet* ſaith *Job*) *he vexeth my ſoul.* The Text is, *He maketh my ſoul bitter*; he is bitter to me; it is uſual to expreſs affliction by bitterneſs, and the inflicting of affliction upon any, by imbittering them. There is a threefold notion of bitterneſs in Scripture: Firſt, Sin is called bitterneſs (*Hoſ.* 12. 14.) Ephraim *provoked him to anger moſt bitterly.* We tranſlate in the Superlative: The Text is, Ephraim *provoked him to anger with bitterneſſes.* What provokes God to anger? It is ſin: And what is ſin? Bitterneſs, yea, bitterneſſes; there is a collection of all bitterneſſes in any ſin; How many bitterneſſes are there then in a collection of many ſins! Ephraim *provoked him to anger with bitterneſſes*; that is, with many ſins. We render well, Ephraim *provoked him to anger moſt bitterly*; either implying the degree of *Ephraim's* ſinfulneſs, which provoked God to anger, his was a high provocation; or implying the degree of that anger which the Lord expreſſed by reaſon of that provocation: The Lord was moſt bitterly angry at the ſinful provocations of *Ephraim.* And this complyes with the following notion of bitterneſs in Scripture.

Quaſi mirandum ſit; quod tam bonus Deus, tam durè diuque illū affligat: Bold.

Secondly, Anger and wrath it ſelf is called *bitterneſs, or a bitter thing*; anger is hot, and heat makes the natural humour bitter; whence by alluſion anger is expreſſed by bitterneſs, becauſe it doth imbitter the ſpirit, as much heat imbittereth the ſtomach. The word is uſed in that Propheſie of the *Ram, and the He-goat* (Dan. 8. 8.) *and I ſaw him* (that is, the He-goat) *come cloſe to the Ram, and he was moved with choller againſt him*; ſo we tranſlate: The Text is ('tis the word here uſed in *Job*) *he was imbittered againſt him,* or *vexed at him.* The Goat (or *Alexander* King of *Greece*) was imbittered againſt the *Ram* (or againſt *Darius* the King of *Perſia*) *and ſmote the Ram, and brake his two horns. Solomon* ſaith (*Prov.* 17. 11.) *An evil man ſeeketh only rebellion*; ſome read it, *He ſeeketh only anger:* The Text is, *An evil man ſeeketh only bitterneſs*, that is, to imbitter the ſpirits of others; he careth not how much anger he kindles among men, and therefore he loves to blow the coals: Whereas it is the buſineſs of a gracious man to ſweeten and quiet the ſpirits of others: He is peaceable himſelf to others, and a Peace-maker between others: But an evil man ſeeketh only anger.

Adducere animam in amaritudinem, vel juxta Hebr. amaricare animam eſt provocare ad iracundiam. Bold.

Thirdly, Bitterneſs is put for affliction. That which makes our lives bitter to us, may well be called bitterneſs. When that good Woman *Naomi* came home, afflicted, and emptied, to her friends and fellow Citizens, who had formerly known her, they being much moved between compaſſion and wonder at her ſad condition, ſaid, *Is this Naomi!* Is it poſſible: What is this *Naomi*! Then ſhe ſaid unto them (*Ruth* 1. 20.) *Call me not* Naomi (that is, beautiful) *but call me* Marah (that is, *bitter*) *for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me*; *I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home empty.* And as bitterneſs is put for worldly ſorrow, or for that ſorrow which ariſeth from troubles or wants in the things of the world; ſo alſo for ſpiritual or godly ſorrow (*Zech.* 12. 10.) *They ſhall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they ſhall mourn for him as one mourneth for his only Son, and they ſhall be in bitterneſs*

terneſs for him, as one that is in bitterneſs for his firſt-born. That which the Prophet calls *mourning* in the former part of the verſe, he calls *being in bitterneſs* in the latter: As it is an evil and a bitter thing to ſin againſt God; ſo ſinning againſt God ſhould be followed with that good, but bitter thing, mourning, or godly ſorrow. Here *Job* was vexed or imbittered, not ſo much with ſorrow for his ſins, as with the ſence of Gods afflicting hand in the tryal of his Graces. Thus the *Almighty* (ſaith he) *hath vexed my ſoul.*

He did not ſay, *The Almighty had vexed his body, or eſtate,* though the Lord did vex both, or him in both: He pitched only upon the vexation of his ſoul; his affliction went deep, it reached not only his skin and fleſh, but his ſoul and ſpirit; yet when he ſaith, *The Almighty hath vexed my ſoul*, he doth not mean it of a ſoul-affliction, either alone, or in oppoſition to the afflictions of the body, ſuch as are trouble of mind for ſin, diſquietneſs of conſcience, and ſence of divine wrath; but he means thus much only (I ſuppoſe) in this place, That his troubles were great and burdenſome, ſo great and burdenſome, that he was ſmitten all over, and felt the ſad effects of the Lords afflicting hand in the grief of his ſoul, as well as in the pains of his body, *The Almighty hath vexed my ſoul.*

Firſt, Obſerve, *The Lord hath all power in his hand.*

He were not Almighty if he had not. Some men have preſumed themſelves able to do all things, and ſo have moſt blaſphemouſly uſurped this attribute of Almightineſs; but none ever were ſo.

Amicus fui amicis, Eques & Sagittarius optimus omnia efficere potens; Inſcriptio ſepulchro Cyri. Arian. l. 6. Expedit. Alex.

Secondly, Obſerve, *It is not for want of power that God doth not preſently relieve and help his diſtreſſed Servants.*

As God never wants ſtrength to afflict, ſo not to deliver. He is alwayes furniſhed with power to execute whatſoever he hath a will to appoint. When we lye in affliction unrelieved, we are more ready to queſtion the power of God, then our own ſinfulneſs. The *Jews* had ſuch apprehenſions of God, as we may collect from that redargution in the Prophet (*Iſa.* 59.1.) *The Lords hand is not ſhortned that it cannot ſave:* As if he had ſaid, Ye think ye are in a diſtreſs ſo deep that the Lords hand is not long enough now (though it have been heretofore) to reach your ſalvation, whereas in truth the Lords hand is not ſhortened that it cannot ſave: The reaſon why ye are not delivered, is, not becauſe God hath not power to deliver you, but becauſe your ſins ſtand in the way of your deliverance: *Your iniquities have ſeparated between you and your God; and your ſins have hid his face from you that he will not hear.* Till our ſins be removed either by pardon or repentance, or both, troubles will not remove from us. While the fountain of good is ſeparated from us, evil muſt needs abide with us. Our help is alwayes in the hand of God; but he hath not alwayes a will to help us; and the moſt uſual reaſon why his will is not to ſave and deliver us from or out of trouble, is, becauſe our will is ſo big with ſin, and ſo much in the deliverance of it.

Thirdly, Obſerve, *The Lord is ſometimes ſo far from putting forth his power to relieve his precious ones, that he puts it forth to afflict and lay them low.*

To comfort the ſoul is the moſt proper work of God, and yet 'tis his work alſo to vex the ſoul. And as he ſpeaks to the wicked in his wrath, and vexeth them in his ſore diſpleaſure (*Pſal.* 2. 5.) ſo 'tis his pleaſure (ye not without infinite wiſdom and gracious intendments alſo) to ſpeak to many who are godly in his anger, and to vex their ſouls under ſevereſt diſpenſations.

Fourthly, Obſerve, *Afflictions are to the ſoul, as bitter things to the taſt.*

No chaſtening for the preſent ſeemeth to be joyous, but grievous (Heb. 12. 11.) Though affliction bring forth peaceable fruits of righteouſneſs to them that are exerciſed thereby; yet to be under that exerciſe is ſorrow and trouble: Even thoſe chaſtenings which are (as to the iſſue) only for the tryal and cleanſing of the ſoul, are alſo (in the way) a vexation to the ſoul.

Fifthly, Obſerve, *Saints acknowledge the hand of God in all their afflictions.*

The Almighty hath vexed my ſoul, ſaith *Job.* He had many other hands upon him, but he took moſt notice of the hand of God, as hath been ſhewed at the twenty-firſt verſe of the firſt Chapter, and elſewhere in this Book. Faith ſeeth him who is inviſible, vexing as well as comforting: And 'tis comfort to Saints, not only to remember God in their afflictions, but to remember that it is God who afflicts them.

Sixthly, Note, *A godly man hath good thoughts of God, while he aſcribes his penal evils or ſufferings unto God.*

Job knew and acknowledged that God was not only good in himſelf, but good to him while he vexed his ſoul; while God afflicts us and makes us poor, or ſick, while he ſtrips us naked of riches, children, friends a[illegible]elations, yet we ſhould ſay (as *David,* Pſal. 73. 1. [illegible]*ly God is good to* Iſrael, *even to all them that are upright in heart.* While the Lord vexeth our ſouls, our ſouls ſhould magnifie the Lord. While the Lord makes our ſouls bitter, our ſouls ſhould ſweeten the dealings of God. While the Lord troubles us, we ſhould not be diſpleaſed; yea, we ſhould be well pleaſed with the Lord. God doth his people no hurt, much leſs doth he intend them hurt when he makes them ſmart; therefore it is their duty, even when they ſmart, to make the faireſt reports of him to all that come about them: God is ſuch a Fountain as ſends forth both bitter waters and ſweet, as to our preſent ſence; but all the waters which he ſends forth are ſweet as to our future benefit; therefore though ſence ſay of ſome of them they are bitter, yet let faith ſay of all of them they are ſweet.

Seventhly, Obſerve, *Saints afflictions are often very deep afflictions.*

They go down to the very ſoul. Not only were *Joſeph's feet hurt in the ſtocks, but the iron entred into his ſoul,* as the old Tranſlation hath it (*Pſal.* 105. 18.) or, as we put in the Margin, *His ſoul came into iron*; that is, he was afflicted, or (as *Job* here ſpeaks) vexed to his ſoul. As the Word of God (*Heb.* 4. 2.) pierceth to the dividing; ſo the Rod of God can pierce to the grieving and paining of ſoul and ſpirit, of the joynts and marrow. Thus *Job* deciphers God in his dealing with him; *As God liveth, who hath taken away my judgment, and the Almighty, who hath vexed my ſoul:* But what was *Job's* Oath, or whether did it tend? The two next verſes ſhew us: Firſt, The continuance of this Oath upon him: Secondly, The concernment of it, or about what he took this ſolemn Oath. The former we have in the third verſe, the latter in the fourth.

Verſe 3. **All the while my breath is in me, and the Spirit of God is in my noſtrils;**

4. **My lips ſhall not ſpeak wickedneſs, nor my tongue utter deceit.**

Job takes his Oath, not for a day or a year, but for his life, *All the while my breath is in me*; that is, as long as I live: While breath continues, life continues. It is ſaid (*Gen.* 2. 7.) *The Lord breathed into man the breath of life.* The Hebrew word for *breath* hath an affinity with that by which the Heavens are expreſſed in the ſame language; implying (ſay ſome) that the breath of man came from Heaven, or was of God: The breath of man was not created with man in the forming of the body, as it was with the beaſts; but after the body was formed, God infuſed the breath, and therefore *Moſes* in that Text ſpeaks diſtinctly concerning man: Firſt, *The Lord God formed man out of the duſt of the earth, and* (then) *breathed into his noſtrils the breath of life, and man became a living ſoul.* So then, *To have breath in us,* is to have life in us, or it is a circumlocution of life; and as ſoon as breath departs, life departs, we dye. It is ſaid (1 *Kings* 17. 17.) That the Son of the Woman the Miſtreſs of the houſe fell ſick, and his ſickneſs was ſo ſore, that *there was no breath left in him*; that is, *he dyed.* When *Eutychus, falling from the third loft, was taken up dead,* Paul *went down and fell on him, and embracing him, ſaid, Trouble not your ſelves, for his life is*

בל עיד *Ad verbum omne adhuc.* i. e. *omni tempore quo adhuc halitus meus,* &c.

נשמה *Spiritus ex ore egrediens, halitus, anhelitus, flatus, anima.*

Affine eſt verbo שמים *Cœlum, eſt enim flatus cœlitus proficiſcens.*

is in him. The Greek is, *His ſoul is in him.* They who took him up concluded him dead, becauſe he did not breath, knowing that when breath goes life goes too: But *Paul* fetcht him again by prayer, and his breath returned. When *Paul* embraced him breath re-enter'd him; and therefore he ſaith peremptorily, his *life is in him,* either becauſe it was then returned, or becauſe he knew it would; according to the uſual language of faith, he ſpake of it as of a thing already done. Senſe and reaſon ſaid, he was dead becauſe his breath was gone; but faith ſaid, his life was in him, knowing that God was able to bring the breath back again. Mans life amounts only to this, *He hath his breath in his noſtrils* (Iſa. 2.22.) Or (as *Job* ſpeaks) *breath is in him. All the while my breath is in me,*

And the Spirit of God in my noſtrils.

This latter clauſe is of the ſame ſignification with the former, and is but a repetition in other words, yet there is ſome difference of opinion, what ſhould be here meant by *the Spirit of God.* There are among the Ancients who underſtand, *the holy Spirit*; not only the Spirit of God, but God the Spirit; and they tell us, that we have a deſcription or ſpecification of the whole Trinity in this Text: by *the living God,* underſtanding *the Father*; and by the *Almighty, the Son*; and by *the Spirit of God,* the *Holy Ghoſt.* But I cannot comply with this interpretation; for though I doubt not but *Job* had the Spirit of God, yet here he is deſcribing his natural life, not his ſpiritual; and it is plain that he intends nothing but his natural life by the *Spirit of God,* becauſe he calleth it, *The Spirit of God in his noſtrils.* The holy, ſanctifying, comforting Spirit, is not ſaid to be a Spirit in our noſtrils, that's no way ſuitable to Scripture-ſpeaking, which ſaith, that the holy Spirit of God dwells in our hearts, or in our *inner man,* as alſo in *our bodies,* but never in our noſtrils. So then *Spirit* is the ſame with *Breath.* As for that addition, *The Spirit of God,* it ſignifieth only thus much, that God is the Maker or Author of the Spirit here ſpoken of; not that the Spirit here ſpoken of is God our Maker, or that God is the efficient cauſe of this Spirit, as of all other creatures, not that this Spirit is God by nature. So that when *Job* ſaith, *All the while my breath is in me, and the Spirit of God is in my noſtrils,* his ſcope is, to give utmoſt aſſurance to his Friends, that he intended to hold his own to the utmoſt: His breath he granted might quickly paſs away, and the Spirit in his noſtrils ſit upon his lips, ready to take leave and be gone; but if his life ſhould continue long, and he appear rather like a home-dweller then a ſtranger or ſojourner in this world, yet he was fully purpoſed to abide and continue in the ſame opinion, and defence of himſelf unto the end.

Spiritus Dei, Genitivus efficientis.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *Life is of God.*

The Spirit whereby we live the life of Nature, as well as the Spirit whereby we live the life of Grace; the Spirit in our noſtrils, as well as the Spirit in our hearts, is the gift, the only gift of God; all the powers in Heaven and Earth (without God) cannot give breath, nor make life. Art hath imitated living things; but never was there any Artiſt which could make things live: The Painter can make the Image of a man; but he cannot put life into his Image; God only doth that.

Firſt, Then our life depends upon God, we live or dye at his pleaſure (*Pſal.* 104. 29.) *Thou hideſt thy face, they are troubled; thou takeſt away their breath, they dye and return to their duſt.* Life is breath given, death is breath taken away. *Daniel* tells *Nebuchadnezzar*, *The God in whoſe hand thy breath is, and whoſe are all thy wayes, haſt thou not honoured* (Chap. 5. 23.) He deſcribeth God in his Greatneſs, by having that Great Kings breath in his hand; that is, in his power; He gave it thee, and he can take it from thee when he will. *David* puts this power among thoſe Excellencies of God, for which he is to be magnified by mankind (*Pſal.* 66. 8, 9.) *O bleſs our God, ye people, and make the voice of his praiſe to be heard, which holdeth our ſoul in life:* The Hebrew (as our Margin hath it) is, *Which putteth our ſoul in life.* We may take in both readings, and not at all enlarge the Text beyond its due bounds, for God firſt putteth our ſoul in life; that is, he cauſeth *our ſoul*; that is, our ſelves, or our perſons, to live by bringing and uniting ſoul and body together. Secondly, *He holdeth our ſoul in life,* by preſerving or delivering us from thoſe daily dangers and evils which threaten to ſeparate or divorce our ſouls from our bodies. If God did not hold and keep our ſouls in life, our ſouls could not continue in life one minute. No ſooner doth the living God withdraw his hand of preſervation, but man is among the dead, or upon the borders of diſſolution; diſeaſes and dangers would ſoon break this union, and unty this marriage-knot between ſoul and body, if God did not hold it; when God lets go it hold, out it goes; when God calleth, out it muſt. As God ſaid to *Abraham* (Gen. 12. 1.) *Get thee out of thy Countrey, and from thy Kindred, and from thy Fathers houſe:* God called him from his own home, and he willingly obeyed: So when God calls our ſpirit out of the body, and commands it to diſlodge, it muſt diſlodge and come out whether we will or no. And ſeeing our life or breath depends upon God, and a call from him fetcheth it forth at any time, let us pray (to ſpeak in alluſion to that of Chriſt in the Goſpel about the miſeries that were to come upon *Jeruſalem,* let us (I ſay) pray) that the flight of it may not be *in the winter* of ſin, *in the night* of ignorance, or *on the Sabbath* (I mean Satans Sabbath) of carnal ſecurity and impenitency. Seeing our breath muſt depart when God calls, it is our wiſdom to make ready for our departure. It is beſt to be ready and prepared for that, which we cannot avoid, how unready and unprepared ſoever we are. Moſt live as if their life were in their own hand, or at their own diſpoſe, and not in the hand or diſpoſe of God. They who live as they liſt, ſeem to ſay, they can live as long as they liſt. Let us remember, that as we are daily dying, and that as it cannot be many dayes before we muſt dye, ſo we may dye any day. As it is appointed for all men once to dye by a general decree; ſo it is appointed by a ſpecial decree when every man muſt dye; this decree is in the breaſt of God, in whoſe hand our breath is. Therefore as the Prophet exhorts (*Zeph.* 2. 1, 2.) let us gather our ſelves together, yea, gather together (in the acting of faith and every grace) before the decree bring forth, for our gathering to our fathers in the Grave.

Secondly, Obſerve, *Our life is but breath in our noſtrils.*

Such is the frailty of mans life, that his life ſtands alwayes at the door, as if it were taking leave of him. How ſoon may that be gone, which cannot ſtay when our breath is gone? When the Holy Ghoſt would ſhew how poor a thing man is, and how little, or rather how not at all to be truſted, or reckoned upon, he ſaith, *Ceaſe ye from man, whoſe breath is in his noſtrils* (Iſa. 2. 22.) As if that were the moſt diſparaging expreſſion of mans life. Why ſhould we keep ſo much ado about any man living, ſeeing his breath, and ſo his life, may be gone before he or we can do any thing. And as the Prophet calleth us off from relyance upon man in general, becauſe his breath is in his noſtrils: So the Pſalmiſt upon the ſame reaſon calleth us off from relyance upon great men in ſpecial, knowing how apt we are to rely upon them, and to give the Gods of the earth that honour which is due only to the God of Heaven (*Pſal.* 146. 4, 5.) *Put not your truſt in Princes, nor in the ſon of man, in whom there is no help; his breath goeth forth, he returns to his duſt, in that very day his thoughts periſh.* Unleſs breath go forth we dye, and death is nothing elſe but the going forth of the breath. Life is the going forth of the breath by reſpiration; and death is the going forth of the breath by expiration. And how ſoon may reſpiring be changed into expiring? And as we dye when our breath goes out, but returns not, ſo when it cannot get out. The body hath been called the priſon of the ſoul, and ſo in ſome ſence it is; but here is a riddle, The keeping of this priſoner is quite contrary to that of other priſoners; we keep priſoners by ſhutting up the doors; but if you ſhut up the doors of your body, the mouth and noſtrils, you looſe your priſoner, the ſoul gets preſently out; unleſs the breath have liberty to paſs out, you cannot hold it. The way to keep the breath in, is to give it free paſſage out; if the outward air be kept out, and the breath kept in, life is loſt; and we know how ſmall a matter will do this; a Gnat, a Fly, the ſtone of a Raiſon, a ſingle hair have done it in great Examples. Therefore let us ceaſe from other men, but chiefly from our ſelves, ſeeing we and they are ſo ſoon ceaſing; let us not over-rate the perſons of other men, nor (which we are very apt to do) our own, for our breath is in our noſtrils. Thus *Job* deſcribes himſelf in his mortal ſtate, *All the while my breath is in me, and the Spirit of God in my noſtrils:* As if he had ſaid, This is the ſhort and the long, the all of my reſolutions, while I am in this world, that whether my life or ſtay in this world be long or ſhort, I am ſtrongly reſolved, That,

Verſe 4. **My lips ſhall not ſpeak wickedneſs, nor my tongue utter deceit.**

In this verſe *Job* removes two evils or diſeaſes, or two evil diſeaſes of the tongue from himſelf. Firſt, The ſpeaking *of wickedneſs*, which is openly evil: Secondly, The ſpeaking *of deceit*, which is cloſely evil. Theſe two are joyned as in the Text; ſo (*Pſal.* 10. 7.) *His* (that is, the wicked mans) *mouth is full of curſing, deceit, and fraud*; from both theſe inſtruments and engines of the wicked, *David* prayeth earneſtly for deliverance (*Pſal.* 120. 2.) *Deliver my ſoul, O Lord, from lying lips, and from a deceitful tongue.* And here *Job* proteſts againſt both theſe tongue-abominations.

My lips ſhall not ſpeak wickedneſs.

Juxta jusjurandi formulum Hebræis familiarem, qua imprecationem ſolent omittere conditione tantum poſita. Merc.

The Hebrew is, *If my lips ſhall ſpeak*; that is, my lips ſhall not ſpeak. The words have the force, though not the form, of an imprecation; if my lips ſhall ſpeak wickedneſs, let this or that evil fall upon me, let my own tongue fall upon me (as *David* ſaith) *The tongues of the wicked ſhall fall upon themſelves* (Pſal. 64. 8.) let men account me a lyar, and let God give me to eat the fruit of my own lips.

My lips ſhall not ſpeak wickedneſs.

What wickedneſs is it which *Job* thus diſclaims? Some underſtand it of ſin in general; others more particularly, of that ſpecial wickedneſs which Satan hoped to thruſt him upon, by heaping afflictions upon him, the ſpeaking evil of, or blaſpheming the Name of God: As if he had ſaid, *Though my afflictions and troubles ſhould be continued all the dayes of my life; yea, though I ſhould have more bitter potions given me to drink, then I have had to drink to this day, yet I will not ſpeak wickedly, I will not blaſpheme God* (as Satan promiſed himſelf *I would* (Chap. 2. 5.) *put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his fleſh, and he will curſe thee to thy face*) *I will not curſe, nor ſpeak unbecomingly of his dealings with me; the worſt of evils ſhall not make me have an ill thought, nor ſpeak an ill word of God; however it fares with me, I will acknowledge not only that God is juſt, but that he is good, as in himſelf, ſo to me, to Afflicted Me: All my calamities and ſorrows cannot ſeparate me from the love of God to me, nor ſhall they* (*through his grace*) *ſeparate me from that duty which I owe to him. God loves me ſtill, though he puts me to trouble, and I will honour God ſtill, notwithſtanding all my troubles.* Thus *Job* takes it upon him, that all the dayes of his life he will not ſpeak wickedneſs, though God ſhould continue to deal with him in outward things, as he uſually doth with the wicked. This is a holy and an heroick reſolution indeed, a reſolution well becoming that integrity which *Job* had profeſſed towards God, and which God had given teſtimony of concerning *Job*: Yet,

Secondly, I rather underſtand it of wickedneſs, reflecting upon himſelf in his preſent caſe, or the buſineſs that was in queſtion; *I will not ſpeak wickedneſs*; that is, I will not ſay or grant, either directly or by conſequence, that *I am a wicked man*, for then I ſhould miſ-judge and wrong my ſelf, as ye do. Ye have not only had and held up an ill opinion of me, but ye have held it forth; yet I will not take up an ill opinion, either of my perſon or of my cauſe; as long as I live I will not do it, my conſcience bearing me witneſs to the contrary. Taking this ſence, *wickedneſs* may be taken two wayes.

Firſt, For wickedneſs in the matter ſpoken: And ſo when he ſaith, *I will not ſpeak wickedneſs*, it is as if he had ſaid, I will not ſpeak the thing that is wicked, I will not aſſert that to be juſt which is unjuſt, or that to be righteous which is unrighteous; I will not call evil good nor good evil; I will not (to the beſt of my underſtanding) put darkneſs for light, nor light for darkneſs.

Secondly, For wickedneſs in the ſpeech, or ſpeaker: I will not ſpeak of my ſelf, or of my cauſe againſt my knowledge or conſcience; ſhould I adulterate what I know of my own condition, by mingling a lye with me, or by covering it either with excuſes or denyals, ſhould I conceal any part of my knowledge, to the detriment and diſadvantage of the truth, or to the ſaving of my own credit, *This were wickedneſs*, but my lips ſhall not ſpeak *wickedneſs*.

Nor ſhall my tongue utter deceit.

He doth not ſay, my tongue ſhall not treſpaſs, or I will not offend with my tongue; no man can ſay, much leſs ſwear that he will not ſin with his tongue; but a man may ſwear and bind himſelf with an oath, that he will not utter deceit; that is, ſin deceitfully with his tongue: He may ſwear that he will not utter a word ſtudiedly, with an intent either to deceive others, or to wrong and prejudice his own cauſe. Thus any man may engage himſelf (when he ſeeth it needful) by ſtrongeſt aſſeverations, That, His

Tongue ſhall not utter deceit.

Neque anima mea meditabitur injuſta. Sept.

The word here rendred to utter (which is a ſpeaking out) ſignifies alſo to *meditate* (Pſal. 1. 2.) which is a ſpeaking within. Thus the Seventy tranſlate; and becauſe they ſuppoſed the tongue to be an improper inſtrument of meditation, they, inſtead of *tongue*, tranſlate *ſoul*, *Neither ſhall my ſoul meditate deceit*; but it is uſual in Scripture to aſcribe meditation to the tongue, though it be properly the work of the heart or mind: That which the heart doth meditate with a purpoſe to utter with the tongue, may be ſaid to be meditated by the tongue. *David* makes a promiſe in that form (*Pſal.* 35. 28.) *My tongue ſhall ſpeak of thy righteouſneſs, and of thy praiſe all the day long:* The Hebrew is, *My tongue ſhall meditate of thy righteouſneſs.* (Pſal. 37. 30.) *The mouth of the righteous ſpeaketh* (the Hebrew is, *meditateth*) *wiſdom.* Meditation is aſcribed both to the tongue and mouth, becauſe we ought to meditate before we ſpeak; or we ſhould ſpeak that which we have meditated. It is not good to ſpeak raſhly, though that be good which we ſpeak; there ſhould be ſo much meditation before we utter any thing with the tongue, that the tongue it ſelf may be ſaid to have meditated what it uttereth. *Solomon* gives us an excellent rule for this (*Prov.* 16. 23.) *The heart of the wiſe teacheth* (or *maketh wiſe*) *his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips*; that is, a wiſe man never ſpeaks any thing till his heart hath taught it him; till he hath digeſted it by meditation, and his heart hath inſtructed his lips. Indeed every godly wiſe man hath himſelf been taught of God to be both a Teacher and a Learner, a Maſter and a Scholar to himſelf: He ſitteth as a Teacher or Maſter in the chair of his own heart, and thence giveth out leſſons to all the parts of himſelf, how to perform their ſeveral and reſpective duties. His heart teacheth his foot whither to go, and his hand it teacheth what to do: His heart teacheth his eye how to ſee and not ſin; as alſo his ear how to hear that he may be ſaved, and what not to hear leſt he be enſnared. But the chiefeſt Scholar and hardeſt to be kept in order which the heart hath, is the mouth or tongue; yet this the heart of the wiſe teacheth, and teacheth ſo effectually, that the mouth is made wiſe; that is, it is made to ſpeak wiſely, and then the mouth (if ever) ſpeaketh wiſely when it ſpeaks what it hath learned from the meditation of the heart. Thoſe are uſually the wiſeſt words when they come abroad, which have been brought out of the greateſt ſilence, and which the tongue may be as well ſaid to have meditated as to have ſpoken. What an age of truth ſhould we have, if all mens tongues did well meditate what they utter, as *Job* here profeſſeth, his tongue ſhould not utter, or meditate deceit? For we may put both together in *Job*'s text, My tongue ſhall not utter any deceit which I have meditated, or any meditated deceit. To utter deceit, though in haſte and unmeditated, is bad enough; but to utter a meditated deceit is as bad as can be. Any evil which the tongue uttereth, hath by ſo much the leſs evil in it, by how much it hath the leſs of the heart or meditation in it. As they who ſpeak raſhly, do often ſpeak falſly;

ſo it were well if they who ſpeak falſly, did alwayes ſpeak raſhly, and could ſay that their tongue hath not uttered, as *Job* ſaid his ſhould not utter a meditated deceit.

Conſidering this verſe with the former, *While my breath is in me, while the Spirit of God is in my noſtrils, my lips ſhall not ſpeak wickedneſs, or my tongue utter deceit.*

Firſt obſerve, *The purpoſes and reſolves of a godly man, to do good, or not to do evil, are not for a day, or a time, but for ever.*

As the promiſes of God in mercy, ſo the purpoſes of the godly in duty are for ever. God is alwayes doing us good, and we ſhould never be doing evil; ſin is never in ſeaſon; there may be a time wherein we may forbear to do this or that good, but there is no time in which we muſt not forbear to do that which is evil. That which is unlawful to be done, ought never to be done. Some duties may be left undone at ſome times, but nothing may be done at any time againſt duty. *Affirmative commands are alwayes binding, yet they do not bind alwayes, but Negative commands reach both.* As the duties of them are ever in force, ſo they ever force us to duty.

Secondly note, *Though a godly man be in a poſſibility to ſin every moment, and cannot but ſin while he is in this world, yet he may ſolemnly ingage himſelf by vow and oath, not only to take heed of ſin in general, but alſo that he will not, wilfully or knowingly, run into this or that particular ſin.*

Not to ſin at all is the command of God, but no man can promiſe, much leſs take an oath, or make a vow, that he will not ſin at all; we muſt vow to do or not to do more then (according to the general tenor of the Covenant of Grace) God hath promiſed us an ability to do or not to do. We may ſay that we will depart from all iniquity, and that we will not wickedly depart from God; we may ſay our lips ſhall not ſpeak wickedneſs, nor our tongue utter deceit, becauſe the grace of the new Covenant doth enable believers in all this. Grace fixeth the heart of a godly man againſt all ſin to the death, though, till he dye, he cannot be freed from all ſin. Every godly man can ſay he would never ſin, but no godly man may ſay, he will never ſin. The truth of Grace conſiſts in oppoſing every ſin, the ſtrength of Grace conſiſts in the mortifying of every ſin, but our full conqueſt and total prevalence over every ſin is our entrance into glory.

Thirdly, From the ſpecial matter about which *Job* takes up this oath and proteſtation, *My lips ſhall not ſpeak wickedneſs*, that is, this wickedneſs to betray my own cauſe.

Obſerve, *We ought to be very reſolute in keeping and maintaining our innocency againſt all the world.*

As our firſt and greateſt care ſhould be to be innocent and upright, ſo our next great care ſhould be to appear innocent and upright. He that is not innocent is loſt with God, and he that doth not appear ſo is loſt with men. Uprightneſs is ſuch a Jewel, that we cannot let go the Cabinet of it, *reputation*, without ſin; if by any ſinleſs endeavours of ours we may preſerve it. Whence by way of Corolary,

Fourthly obſerve, *To ſpeak falſly of our ſelves, or betray our own innocency, is a great wickedneſs, and the worſt kind of deceit.*

As it is an abhorred wickedneſs to ſpeak good of our ſelves beyond what is (ſo the more cloſe and refined ſort of hypocrites do, who would have all the world believe they are godly, when they have no acquaintance with God, or the power of godlineſs, and therefore make it their buſineſs and ſtudy to paint over their rottenneſs with falſe and borrowed colours) ſo for any man to make himſelf worſe then he is, by a ſleight departing from his own integrity, and uprightneſs, when men caſt dirt upon it, and darken it with falſhood, is a wickedneſs alſo. It is wickedneſs to ſpeak falſly of another, and it is little leſs to let others ſpeak falſly of us, and not labour to right our ſelves. Every mans own credit and honour ought to be dear to him, as well as the credit of another. Some will ſay of a man, whoſe faults or failings they would mitigate, *He is no mans enemy but his own*; whereas indeed to be our own enemy in any kind, or to hurt our ſelves, is more ſinful, then to be an enemy to, or hurt another man. *Self-love* is a very great as well as a very common ſin; yet not to love our ſelves, or to do any thing which ſignifieth a want of love to our ſelves, is a greater ſin. As we muſt not ſeek our ſelves, ſo we muſt not looſe our ſelves, if we can help it. I have elſe-where upon former paſſages of this book, had occaſion to note this point, yet could not well paſs it here.

Fifthly obſerve, *A godly man ſhould have a ſpecial care of his tongue, that he offend not in his words.*

A godly man is careful what he ſpeaks, and how he ſpeaks, not only leſt his lips ſhould ſpeak wickedneſs, or his tongue utter deceit; but leſt his lips ſhould ſpeak an idle word, or his tongue the leaſt offence. There are two things about which the care of a godly man is very converſant; the firſt is his *Heart*, the ſecond is his *Tongue*, theſe two hold correſpondence with each other. *Solomon* puts us (as it were) upon an equal care of keeping them (*Prov.* 4. 23, 24.) *Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the iſſues of life; put away from thee a froward mouth, and perverſe lips put away far from thee.* The original Text runs in the abſtract, *Put away from thee frowardneſs of mouth and perverſeneſs of lips.* The heart is the *Citadel*, and muſt be chiefly kept; the lips are the *out-works*, and therefore muſt not be neglected. He that would put away a froward mouth from him, muſt keep his heart; and he that keeps his heart will look to his mouth; a froward mouth is the ſign of a froward heart: And he that keepeth not frowardneſs from his heart, ſhall hardly keep frowardneſs from his mouth. There is ſuch a continual intercourſe between the heart and mouth, that if the one be out of courſe, the other will not long continue in it. As the outward ſenſes, unleſs well watcht, quickly conveigh vanity to the heart; ſo unleſs the heart be well watcht, it quickly conveigeth vanity to the tongue; and unleſs the tongue be well watcht it will quickly diſcover and vent all the vanity and traſh that is wrought in the heart. *David* (Pſal. 39. 1.) took up a ſtrong reſolution about this duty, *I ſaid I will take heed to my wayes, that I offend not with my tongue.* When our wayes are wrong, our words are ſeldom right. *I ſaid I will take heed to my wayes*, that is, to my whole courſe of life; one would think, he ſhould rather have ſaid, *I will take heed to my words that I offend not with my tongue*; but he ſaith *wayes*, becauſe the tongue is ſoon out of the way in ſpeaking, when we are out of the way in acting; he that offends with his tongue, is apt to offend in his wayes; and he that offends in his wayes is thereby made more apt to offend with his tongue. And therefore as *Solomon* put the keeping of the heart and tongue together, ſo *David* puts the keeping of the way and tongue together. O how hard is it to keep the tongue, which cannot be kept unleſs both heart and wayes be kept. Hence again that of *Solomon* (Prov. 13. 3.) *He that keepeth his mouth, keepeth his life; he that opens wide his lips, ſhall have deſtruction.* The holy proverb may carry an alluſion to a City that is beſieged; he that keepeth the gates of the City, keepeth the whole City ſafe; but if you ſet the gates open, you let in the enemy, and with him deſtruction. Thus he that keepeth his mouth, keeps his life; he keeps his life as to the purity and holineſs of it, and he keeps his life as to the peace and ſafety of it. Yet take notice, *Solomon* doth not ſay, *He that opens his lips ſhall have deſtruction*, he doth not forbid ſpeaking, and we cannot ſpeak unleſs we open our lips; but he ſaith, *He that opens wide his lips, ſhall have deſtruction*; that is, he that opens his mouth ſo wide that he lets all come out, lets in deſtruction. Such an opening of the lips, is an opening of the grave and an inlet to death; unleſs our mouth hath a guard, our life hath none. Many have loſt their lives, and more their ſouls by a careleſs opening of their mouths. While at that wide opened gate vanity hath ruſhed out, whole troops of miſchief and death it ſelf have ruſhed in upon them. The Apoſtle *James* (Chap. 1. 26.) reckons this keeping of the mouth not only as a great piece of Religion, but as that without which all Religion is nothing, or comes to nothing; *If any man among you ſeem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this mans religion is vain.* An unbridled or unruly tongue, ſhews that religion is no bridle upon, or hath no rule, bears no ſway in the heart, and when religion (which is ſo called, ſay ſome, from bridling or binding) doth not bind the heart, it doth not attain its end, nor ſerve for the uſe it is appointed to, and therefore (as all other things are, which do not attain their ends) is vain. It ſeems there were many unbridled tongues, even among the profeſſors of religion in thoſe dayes; which put the Apoſtle ſo much, and ſo often upon that point in this Epiſtle. The whole third Chapter is ſpent about the government of the tongue. The tongue unbridled is too hard and head-ſtrong for us to govern. It is an *unruly evil*, as the Apoſtle there calls it, and can no more be ruled without a bit or bridle, then the Horſe or Mule. The Word and Grace of God is that bridle, and all our care is little enough to put and keep that bridle on, yea it is too little; and therefore holy *David*, who had profeſſed his utmoſt care to keep his tongue (*Pſal.* 39.1.) ſaw yet a neceſſity of having recourſe to God in prayer, that he would be pleaſed to take the care and charge of keeping it for him. We have as much need that God ſhould be our Tongue-keeper, as our Heart-keeper (*Pſal.*141.4.) *Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, and keep the door of my lips.* And he adds in the next verſe a prayer for his heart (*v.*4.) *Encline not my heart to any evil thing*, that is, ſuffer not mine heart (to which by nature it is only and altogether inclined, and to which notwithſtanding the power of grace, I find many inclinations in my heart,ſuffer not, I ſay, mine heart) to encline to any thing that is evil, and ſo prompt my tongue to ſpeak evil. *It is better not to be able to ſpeak at all, then to ſpeak ill; better to be ſpeechleſs like a beaſt, then to ſpeak like a beaſt*; that is, to ſpeak beaſtly, falſly, laſciviouſly, wantonly, vainly, corruptly. The Apoſtle dehorts (*Eph.* 4.29.) *Let no corrupt communication come out of your mouth.* And *Solomon* gives counſel to ſtay there at leaſt (*Prov.* 30. 32.) *If thou haſt done fooliſhly in lifting up thy ſelf, or if thou haſt thought evil*; if thou haſt not kept thy ſpirit from pride, and thy heart from folly, both which thou ſhouldſt have done; yet there is another thing thou muſt look to after thoſe miſcarriages, and that will be ſome help and amends, or at leaſt it will keep matters from growing worſe; *Lay thy hand upon thy mouth*, that is, *impoſe ſilence upon thy ſelf*, let not thy mouth proclaim or tell abroad the pride and folly of thy heart, much leſs maintain and defend it. Though no man ſhould ſatisfie himſelf when he hath much wickedneſs in his heart, that he doth not utter it with his lips, or that he keeps his mouth clean, when his heart is foul, and to reſt much in Tongue-purity, is a great argument of the Hearts impurity: yet it is better to keep in the impurity and vanity of the Heart then to vent it at the Tongue. As to colour-over foul and filthy thoughts with fair words, ſo to draw out foul thoughts into filthy words, is doubled iniquity. An evil thought kept in is extreamly evil, and to be deeply repented of; yet when this evil thought goes forth and ſpreads at the mouth, it is far worſe. It is beſt when our hearts meditate no wickedneſs, and the next beſt is, when, though the heart meditate, yet the mouth is ſtopt and will not utter it to the diſhonour of God, and the ſcandal of others. *Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from ſpeaking guile*, is *David's* counſel to that man whoſoever he is, that, *deſireth life, and loveth many dayes, that he may ſee good* (Pſal. 34. 12, 13.) and in the next (or fourteenth) verſe, he ſeems to imply, that he who keeps his Tongue from being ill imployed, is in a ready way to have his hands well employed, or to the doing of good, and that both to himſelf and others. And indeed our words do give ſo great a light to, and concerning our own actions, that though no mans perſon be at all juſtified meritoriouſly, either by his words or works, yet the perſons of all juſtified men ſhall be juſtified declaratively, that is, they ſhall be declared to be juſt and good men by their words (*Mat.* 12. 37.) *By thy words thou ſhalt be juſtified, and by thy words thou ſhalt be condemned.* And as good words declare goodneſs in our ſelves, ſo they are an excellent means of doing good to others, yea of making others good, even of miniſtring grace to the hearers (*Eph.* 4. 29.)

Thus upon the occaſion of *Job's* proteſt againſt evil ſpeaking in his own caſe, I have a little inſiſted upon the care we ought to have of our ſpeech in all caſes. And as *Job* hath already proteſted that he would not ſpeak any thing, which might have a tendency to condemn himſelf wrongfully; ſo he proceeds in a like proteſt, that he will not ſpeak any thing for the juſtifying of his friends, who had ſo raſhly and wrongfully condemned him.

VERS. 5,6.

God forbid that I ſhould juſtifie you: till I die, I will not remove mine integrity from me.

My righteouſneſs I hold faſt, and will not let it go: my heart ſhall not reproach me ſo long as I live.

THE former verſe contained the matter of *Job's* oath, that in this cauſe, *his lips ſhould not ſpeak wickedneſs, nor his tongue utter deceit*; in theſe two verſes he proceeds upon the ſame point, ſhewing that as he intended not, yea was reſolved not to ſpeak deceit or deceitfully, to wrong himſelf, ſo not to flatter others. As he would not condemn himſelf, ſo neither would he juſtifie them who had condemned him. *God forbid that I ſhould juſtifie you: till I die, I will not remove mine integrity from me*; that's his ſcope in theſe words.

Verſ. 5. **God forbid that I ſhould juſtifie you,** &c.

The Original is an interjection of indignation, uttered by the Tongue, at the riſing of the heart againſt that which is offenſive. The word hath a double ſence in it, firſt, of Prohibition; ſecondly, of Abomination; *God forbid*, that is let this thing never be done, which to do were an abomination. This word was commonly uſed by the *Jews* (as the Rabbins obſerve) when they rent their garments, as their cuſtom was when they were extreamly offended. This ſpeech and that paſſionate action uſually went together in occaſions of worſt reſentment. And as they uſed to ſay, *God forbid*, when they would ſhew how far themſelves were or others ought to be from doing, what God had forbidden them to do, ſo when they would ſhew what God himſelf was furtheſt off from doing. When *Abraham* pleaded with God for *Sodome* (*Gen.* 18.25.) he telleth him of righteous men there; and adds, *Let this be far from thee, to ſlay the righteous with the wicked*, or, *that the righteous ſhould be as the wicked.* The ſame phraſe of ſpeech, which here, in *Job*, is rendred, *God forbid*, is there rendred, *Let this be far from thee*, let it be as a prophane, or execrable thing. Such a procedure in judgment with man, is infinitely below the moſt holy and juſt God. O righteous Judge, let it be far from thee to ſlay the righteous in common with the wicked. The word is uſed (*Joſh.* 22.29.) *God forbid, that we ſhould rebel againſt the Lord.* To do any thing which God hath forbidden is ſinful, but to rebel againſt God is to act to the height in things forbidden. We have need with a holy paſſionateneſs to beg of God, that what his Word forbids us to do, his grace may forbid us alſo, *God forbid that we ſhould rebel againſt the Lord.* And when *Joſhua* the Governor, according to his divine politicks, had put it to the choice of the people of *Iſrael*, and (thereby the more to reſtrain and keep them cloſe to God) ſeems to leave them to their own liberty of election (in that wherein indeed no man hath any election) *Chooſe you this day whom you will ſerve, whether the Gods which your fathers ſerved, which were on the other ſide of the flood, or the Gods of the* Amorites *in whoſe Land ye dwell; but as for me and my houſe, we will ſerve the Lord.* When *Joſhua* (I ſay) had thus left them to do what they would, that they might be withheld from doing what they ought not, and had (by a like holy skill) ſhewed them what himſelf would do, that in his example, they might ſee, what themſelves ought to do, we preſently find that the Spirits of the people were fired with indignation againſt any thoughts of Apoſtacy from the true God to Idols, of one ſort or other, and therefore *anſwered and ſaid* (Joſh. 24. 16.) *God forbid that we ſhould forſake the Lord, and ſerve other Gods.* To be bid to do that, if we will, which no wiſe or ſober man will do, is the ſtrongeſt way of forbidding it. And as this phraſe is uſed to ſhew our abhorrence to do wickedly our ſelves, ſo that wickedneſs ſhould be done by others (1 *Sam.* 20. 2.) When *David* told *Jonathan* that there was a plot for his life, *Jonathan* ſaid unto him, *God forbid, thou ſhalt not dye*; as if he had ſaid, it can hardly be imagined that ſuch an execrable murther ſhould be committed; but aſſure thy ſelf it ſhall not, if I can prevent it. So when *David* was put on by his men to take revenge upon *Saul*, he ſaid

(1 *Sam.*

חלילה לי *Abſit mihi. Mont. vox prohibitionis & abominationis. Proprie ſonat τὸ βέβηλον rem prophanam vel nefas; idem quod apud Græcos μὴ γένοιτο.* Full, *Miſc. Sacr. l.* 2. *c.* 2.

(1 *Sam.* 24.6.) *The Lord forbid that I ſhould do this thing to my Maſter the Lords anointed. David's* heart ſmote him for that little which he had done in cutting off the lap of *Saul's* garment, but his heart roſe with deteſtation againſt the deſtroying of him. Thus we render the word upon ſuch occaſions; yet I conceive, exceptin[illegible]n thoſe places where the Name of God is expreſſed in the Hebrew, as it is (1 *Chron.* 11.19.) *He ſaid, God forbid it, that I ſhould do this thing.* I ſay, in other places, where nothing is expreſſed in the Hebrew but an Interjection, I conceive it were ſafer to render the word only thus, *Far be it*; as here, *Far be it from me that I ſhould juſtifie you*, and not, *God forbid*, &c. The word, *God*, being not in this and many other texts, where our Tranſlaters render *God forbid*; For the frequency of this phraſe, may embolden ſome to take the Name of God in vain, which as it ought to be uſed only in ſerious matters, ſo with the greateſt not only ſeriouſneſs but holineſs.

And when we tranſlate *Job* ſpeaking thus, *God forbid that I ſhould juſtifie you*; he prayes that God would keep it upon his heart for ever, not to do or never to have any thing to do with a thing ſo repugnant both to his duty and conſcience; as if he had ſaid, *I ſhould defile my ſelf, if I ſhould pleaſe you, yea I ſhould condemn my ſelf, if I ſhould juſtifie you in this, and ſo betray my own innocency to your ungrounded cenſure and opinion of me.* Some expound *Job* yet higher, as implying himſelf worthy to be excommunicated and thruſt out of the company of all that were godly, as a Heathen, and prophane perſon, in caſe he ſhould render up himſelf to their judgment of him, or juſtifie them in their condemnatory ſentence paſſed upon him. Thus highly he reſents it, and turneth from it with deepeſt indignation, *God forbid*, &c. Hence Note.

Excommunicatio ſit mihi ſinq; tanquam Ethnicus & prophanus. Bold.

A gracious heart doth not only deny to do evil, but hath an abhorrence againſt the doing of evil.

As corrupt nature is not only backward and unwilling to do good, but hath an enmity againſt it; ſo Grace doth not only ſtay us from, but ſtirreth up an holy enmity againſt every unclean thing. The ſpirit of a godly man riſeth [illegible]d his ſtomach turneth at the ſight of ſin. As they who are moſt emptied of ſin by Goſpel-repentance, complain moſt that they are full of it. And as they who have leaſt ſin in them, are moſt burdened with the ſin that remains in them; ſo likewiſe, they moſt abominate both the committing of any ſin, and every ſin committed, whether by themſelves or others. The Apoſtle reckons this among the effects of true repentance (2 *Cor.* 7.11.) *In that ye ſorrowed after a godly ſort, behold what carefulneſs it wrought in you, what clearing of your ſelves, yea, what indignation*; that is, indignation againſt your ſelves, even for failings and weakneſſes; much more for any thing done by you, or among you, which may be called wickedneſs, or a provocation. Thus *David* chargeth folly upon his own ſoul (*Pſal.* 73. 22.) *So fooliſh was I and ignorant, I was as a beaſt before thee.* When he reflected upon his ſinful envy at the proſperity of the wicked, he rebuked himſelf, as a fool, as a beaſt, as an *ignoramus*, as one that knew nothing of the providential diſpenſations of God. And thus *Job* (being convinced of his over-boldneſs with God, upon the clearer diſcoveries of his holineſs and ſoveraignty) *abhorred himſelf, repenting in duſt and aſhes* (Chap. 42. 6.) He that abhors himſelf for what he hath done, cannot but abhor what he hath done, as much as he abhorreth himſelf for doing it. As a godly man repenting, abhorreth the evil which (being over-powered by a temptation) he hath done; ſo, when he is in a compoſed form, he abhorreth to do that evil to which he is tempted. *David* ſaith (*Pſal.* 119.104.) *I hate every falſe way*; I hate not only the way, when I have been miſled into it, but I hate to go in it; and he profeſſeth at *verſ.* 163. of that *Pſalm*, *I hate, and abhor lying, but thy Law do I love.* To abſtain from, and forbear lying, is a ſign of a gracious heart, much more to hate, and abhor it. A godly man not only doth that which is good, but he delights to do it, his ſoul cleaves to it, he is in his element when he is doing it; nothing comes more ſuitably to him, then the buſineſs of his duty, he loves to do it, yea he loveth it when he cannot do it (*Rom.* 7.22.) *Paul* complained much that his corruptions clogged, hindered, and ſhackled him, he was in limetwigs, as to the doing of good, yet (ſaith he) *I delight in the Law of God after the inward man*; that is, the inward man delightfully moves after the Law of God, when I am baſely moved by my corrupt heart, and ſtirred by temptation againſt it. Now (I ſay) as a godly man not only chooſeth to do the holy will of God, but delights and rejoyceth to do it, and hath ſweet content in doing it; ſo likewiſe a godly man not only refuſeth to do the will of the fleſh, or to follow the courſe of the world, but hates to do it, and is never ſo diſcontented with himſelf, as when through careleſneſs and neglect of his watch he hath been overtaken and done it. A carnal man may forbear the doing of evil, and do what is materially good, but he never abhors what is evil, nor delights in what is good. Though he abſtain from acting thoſe things, which God forbids; yet he doth no[illegible]y (with *Job*) *God forbid, I ſhould act them. David* gives that as one of the moſt diſtinguiſhing characters of a wicked man (*Pſal.* 36. 4.) *He deviſeth miſchief upon his bed, he ſetteth himſelf in a way that is not good; he abhorreth not evil.* And though he doth good, yet his heart doth not cleave to nor delight in it. To delight in good, is better then the doing of it, and to abhor evil, is better then abſtaining from it. And if we compare the nature of ſin, with the new nature of a godly man, we may ſee clear grounds, why his abſtinence from ſin, is joyned with the abhorrence of it.

Firſt, Sin is filthy and unclean in its nature, the Scripture calls it vomit; we loath and abhor what is filthy and unclean, eſpecially our vomit. And to ſhew how much ſin is to be abominated, it is called *abominable*, yea an *abomination* (Prov. 12. 22.) And that wicked Idolatrous people, the Heathen *Romans*, who were skilful to deſtroy (and after their laying deſolate many other Lands, at laſt, laid the Holy Land deſolate, to puniſh the unholineſs of them that dwelt in it, they I ſay) are called the *Abominations of deſolation* (Matth. 24. 15.) no marvail if thoſe perſons and actions are abhorred by others, which are themſelves abominable, it is marvailous that they are not more abhorred by all thoſe who (through grace) are made ſenſible of their abomination. When the river was turned to blood, and ſtunk, the *Egyptians* loathed to drink of the water of the river (*Exod.* 7. 18.) As corrupt water, ſo corrupt actions ſtink in the noſtrils of a godly man, how much more in the noſtrils of God; there is a ſameneſs of ſpirit (in God and in a godly Man) in reference to the thing it ſelf, though infinitely different in degree; ſin ſtinks in the noſtrils of a godly man, as well as in the noſtrils of God, and therefore he loaths to drink it, and cannot bear it, when he hath, but muſt vomit it up again.

Secondly, Sin and all ſinful wayes are preſented to a godly man, as extreamly hurtful, poyſonous, and deadly; Nature, much more grace, turneth away from thoſe things that are deſtructive. Shall I meddle with that which will be my death? (ſaith a godly Man) ſhall I ſuck the blood of a Toad, or eat the fleſh of a Serpent? Shall I do this? *The Lord ſaid to* Moſes (*Exod.* 4.2,3.) *what is that in thy hand? and he ſaid a rod, and he ſaid, caſt it on the ground, and he caſt it on the ground, and it became a Serpent, and* Moſes *fled from it*; there is an antipathy in the nature of a man againſt hurtful creatures. A man before converſion hath ſin in his hand, and heart too; but when once converted, he througheth his ſin out of his hand, as *Moſes* did his rod, and then he ſeeth it is a Serpent, a hurtful noxious thing, and then he fleeth from it. That ſin which an unregenerate man carrieth as a pleaſant rod in his hand, he finds to be a ſtinging Serpent when he is regenerate. The heart being changed, our opinion quickly changeth concerning thoſe wayes and practices, which before were moſt pleaſing to us. And as God hath in his Commandments forbidden us to do evil, ſo we (with holy *Job* in the Text) ſay *God forbid*, that we ſhould do it. But it may be queſtioned, what there was in this action ſo ſinful, that his ſpirit roſe up ſo againſt it, or that he ſhould ſay, *God forbid, I ſhould do it.* See what it was, *God forbid*,

That I ſhould juſtifie you.

It was the Juſtification of his friends which his ſoul did ſo abhor. To juſtifie ſome men is a duty, and there are many men (I grant) whom to juſtifie were a ſin. There is a ſinful judging of others, concerning which Chriſt ſaith (*Matth.*7.1.) *Judge not, that ye be not judged.* They who judge others unjuſtly, ſhall be juſtly judged. There is alſo a ſinful juſtifying of others, they who juſtifie others unduly, may expect condemnation as their due. But were *Job's* friends ſuch as could not be juſtified without ſin? Could he not juſtifie them, without deſerving to be condemned himſelf? Did he judge them hypocrites, as they judged him, and ſo not to be juſtified? I conceive not, ſurely he did not judge them wicked, and doubtleſs they were not, as hath been ſhewed before; how is it then that he ſaith, *God forbid that I ſhould juſtifie you?* I anſwer, we muſt reſtrain this act of juſtification to the cauſe or caſe in hand, it doth not refer to their perſons, but to their diſpute. *God forbid that I ſhould juſtifie you in this*, in your judgment of me, in the opinion you have taken up of me, or in the cenſure ye have given of me. Ye have caſt me as an evil-doer, but I cannot ſubſcribe to your ſentence; *God forbid that I ſhould juſtifie you in this.* So then, *Job* doth not ſpeak of them as of reprobates, whom God had not brought, nor would bring into a ſtate of juſtification; but he ſpeaks of them as having ſpoken and done ſuch things as ought to be reprobated, or diſapproved by all good men, which no man ought to juſtifie. *Job* medled not either with the conſtant courſe of their lives, or the ſtate of their ſouls, he went no further then what concerned the preſent diſputation, *God forbid that I ſhould juſtifie you in that.*

Abſit ut vos juſtos & veraces habeã hac in parte, ut veſtrã ſententiam probem. Mer.

But how doth man juſtifie man? Is it not God that juſtifieth? As the Apoſtle *Paul* ſpeaks (*Rom.*8.33.) How then doth *Job* ſpeak, as if he had power to juſtifie? I anſwer, as before, *Job's* words are not to be underſtood of the juſtification of their perſons before God, but of the juſtification of their actions towards him, before man; *God forbid that I ſhould juſtifie you*, that is, that I ſhould affirm that to be true of me, which ye my friends affirm to be true, or that ye have dealt friendly, according to the rule of truth with me. We juſtifie a man, when, what he affirms we ſtand to, or when we ſay that thing is well done which he hath done, or that he hath done well in doing it; this is to juſtifie him. Man juſtifieth man, when he affirms that to be true which he ſaith, and that to be good which he doth; or that he hath done and ſpoken nothing but what is good and true. No man can either juſtifie or condemn another, as to the determining of his ſtate, but we may (upon juſt grounds) either condemn or juſtifie another, as to the approving or diſapproving of his way.

Thus *Job* profeſſeth he will not juſtifie his friends, he will not ſay as they ſaid, nor think well of what they had done, he could not do it, he would not do it till he died (as he ſpeaks in the next clauſe) that is, he would never do it.

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *We may, and muſt judge of men, as they are and do.*

We muſt both juſtifie and condemn as we ſee, or according to what appears. Mans juſtification of man, muſt proceed upon other terms then Gods juſtification of man doth. God juſtifieth the ungodly (*Rom.* 4. 5.) But wo to thoſe men who juſtifie the ungodly; God would not juſtifie the ungodly, but for the righteouſneſs of another; and ſhall we juſtifie the ungodly in their own unrighteouſneſs? Whomſoever we juſtifie, muſt firſt be juſt, our juſtification cannot make him ſo. As the terms of Gods electing man are quite different from thoſe upon which man ought to elect or chooſe, ſo alſo are they in juſtification; God electeth thoſe in whom he ſeeth no good, nor doth he elect any for their goodneſs, either becauſe he ſeeth them good, or foreſeeth they will be good. He beholdeth no excellency, beauty, or worthineſs in them; he elects according to the pleaſure of his own will; mans goodneſs is not the cauſe, but the effect of Gods election. The election of God maketh men good, it doth not find them ſo. But if man elects, he muſt elect thoſe that are good, thoſe that have ſomewhat in them to commend them to him; he muſt chooſe them becauſe they are learned and skilful in reference to the imployments, and buſineſſes, to which they are called, or becauſe he ſeeth they are honeſt, ſober, gracious; man muſt not elect, as God elects, neither muſt he juſtifie as God juſtifies; therefore (ſaith *Job*) *God forbid I ſhould juſtifie you*; I muſt ſpeak plainly, according to what I find you. *Solomon* hath given us the determination of this point in full and down-right language (*Prov.* 17. 15.) *He that juſtifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the righteous, even they both are abomination to the Lord.* Of which wicked practice the Lord complains by the Prophet (*Ezek.* 13. 19.) *Will ye pollute me among my people for handfulls of barley, and for pieces of bread, to ſlay the ſouls that ſhould not die* (that is, condemn the righteous) *and to ſave the ſouls alive that ſhould not live* (that is, to juſtifie the wicked) *by your lying to my people, that hear your lyes?* God juſtifieth whom he will, man muſt juſtifie according to the will of God.

Secondly, Conſidering that *Job's* friends were (as to their ſtate) godly and righteous perſons, ſuch as God juſtified; and yet *Job* ſaid well, *God forbid that I ſhould juſtifie you.*

Note, *We muſt not juſtifie a good man, when he doth evil, or in that which he doth ill.*

A good man, a man juſtified in the ſight of God, may do amiſs in the ſight of man, and in that he ought not to be juſtified by man. We muſt not juſtifie any man in any one evil action, becauſe he hath done many that are good. As it is very ſinful for any man to juſtifie and defend any evil that he hath done, ſo it is as ſinful to juſtifie others, or to be their advocates when they have done evil, or in any evil deed. Every action muſt be weighed by it ſelf, and ſtand upon its own bottom, one cannot help or ſave another. It is our duty to forgive another, many ill carriages and uncharitable, yea injurious actings towards us; but to juſtifie them, or him in them, would be our ſin. In all ſuch caſes let us ſay, *God forbid I ſhould juſtifie you*, though you may be ſuch as God juſtifieth, and thou ye have done many things which are not only juſtifiable, but commendable in another kind. Chriſt knew that *Peter* was a holy man for the main, yet when he gave him ill counſel, *he turned, and ſaid unto him, Get thee behind me Satan, thou art an offence to me, for thou ſavoureſt not* (in this thing) *the things that be of God, but thoſe that be of men* (Matth. 16. 23.) And we read that the Apoſtle *Paul* was ſo far from juſtifying the Apoſtle *Peter* himſelf when he ſaw, that through his fault, *many walked not uprightly, according to the truth of the Goſpel*, that (ſaith he) *I withſtood him to the face, becauſe he was to be blamed* (Gal. 2. 11, 14.) We cannot do better for our beſt friends, then to let them know when they do badly. Nor ſhould we for any thing more condemn our ſelves, then for juſtifying another in any thing for which he ought to be condemned. *God forbid that I ſhould juſtifie you.*

Till I dye I will not remove mine integrity from me.

In this latter part of the verſe, *Job* gives a reaſon of what he ſaid in the former; he could not juſtifie them without removing, or parting with his own integrity, which was the beſt Jewel he had in the world, and which he was reſolved never to part with while he lived. Therefore, ſaith he,

גוע *Expiravit animam, efflavit, leniter mortuus fuit.*

Till I dye, &c.] The Original word notes an eaſie, a quiet, a natural death; though I ſhould live till my candle doth conſume away and ſpend it ſelf, not being violently blown out by others; though I ſhould live as long as I could live, I could not juſtifie you; *God forbid I ſhould juſtifie you, Till I dye*, &c. There is a double connexion of theſe words, *till I dye.* The Greek Interpreters joyn them to the antecedent words, the Latines to thoſe which follow, *Till I dye I will not remove my integrity from me*; but it is not of concernment whether we connect them to the former or latter, or divide them between both; *I will not juſtifie you till I dye; neither will I, till I dye, remove mine integrity from me.*

Till I dye.] The meaning is not, that *Job* would remove his integrity at or before his death, but this is a ſtrong affirmation that he would never remove it; *I will not do it till I dye*, is, *I will not do it at all.*

We may give a twofold interpretation of this his reſolution, *I will not do it till I dye.* Firſt thus, as if he were reſolved not to do this, though it ſhould coſt him his life; he eſteemed his integrity at ſuch a rate, that he could eaſier lay down his life then let go his integrity; life is the beſt of Naturals, but integrity is the beſt of morals and ſpirituals; and therefore though he died for it, he would not (by any act or conceſſion of his) remove, no nor blemiſh his integrity: As if he had ſaid, though I knew my life were in your hands, and ye able to take my life from me, yet I would not do this thing; I am fixed and at a point with you in this, what ever it coſt me. And becauſe this ſence is much inſiſted upon by ſome, it being a truth, and complying with other Scriptures.

Obſerve, *A godly man reſolveth he will not do evil, come of it what will.*

Fall back or fall edge, he will not do it. A godly man reſolves againſt doing that which is an evil or wrong to others, much more againſt doing that which is an evil both of wrong and ſin to himſelf. Zealous *Daniel* was thus reſolved when he ſaw he could not preſerve his integrity without endangering the life of another, which could not but be extreamly dangerous to himſelf (*Dan.* 1. 8.) Daniel *purpoſed in his heart that he would not defile himſelf with the portion of the Kings meat, nor with the wine which he drank; therefore he requeſted of the Prince of the Eunuchs that he might not defile himſelf. And the Prince of the Eunuchs ſaid unto* Daniel, *I fear my Lord the King, who hath appointed your meat and your drink; for why ſhould he ſee your faces worſe liking then the children which are of your ſort? then ſhall ye make me endanger my head to the King. Daniel* might well think, this Great Officer would not eaſily grant him a favour which in the iſſue might looſe him not only the Kings favour, but his head too. Courtiers do not uſe to be free of ſuch favours, eſpecially to poor Captives, who have no means to oblige them; yet *Daniel* put it to a venture, purpoſing in his heart to abſtain from all unclean, whether meats or drinks, what e're came on't. And as the godly are, or ſhould be alwayes reſolved not to do any evil, though they die for it; ſo they reſolve ſometimes to do this or that good, though they die for it; they will run all hazzards rather then forbear a known preſent duty in its ſeaſon. That magnanimous woman, *Heſter*, ſaid, *If I periſh I periſh*, it is my duty, at ſuch a time as this, I ſee it is my duty, I am reſolved, *I will go in to the King, which is not according to the Law, and if I periſh, I periſh* (Heſt. 4. 16.) When *Paul* ſaw it was a duty to go to *Jeruſalem*, he was reſolute againſt all ſuggeſtions of dangers, *But none of theſe things move me, neither account I my life dear to my ſelf, that I might finiſh my courſe with joy* (Acts 20. 24.) As if *Paul* had ſaid (as a great man once did) It is neceſſary for me to go, but it is not neceſſary for me to live; and therefore go I will, though I die for it. And as he was fixed againſt all the dangers which the Enemy at *Jeruſalem* threatned him with, ſo againſt all thoſe diſſwaſives with which his Friends endeavoured to take him off from the purpoſe of his intended journey to *Jeruſalem* (Acts 21. 11, 12, 13, 14.) When *Agabus* a Prophet had taken *Paul's* girdle *and bound his own hands and feet, ſaying thus ſaith the Holy Ghoſt, ſo ſhall the Jews at* Jeruſalem *bind the man that oweth this girdle*; the Diſciples hearing theſe things, added their exhortation to his prediction, and *beſought him not to go up to* Jeruſalem; *Then* Paul *anſwered, what mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? For I am ready not only to be bound but to dye at* Jeruſalem *for the Name of the Lord Jeſus.* True courage delights in the Air of that danger where duty dwels, and will neither be beaten off from doing an incumbent duty, nor beaten on to do any thing againſt a duty by the reports or appearances of the greateſt peril. To be reſolved is an *heroick, and noble reſolution indeed.* As a wicked man will ſin, ſo a godly man ſaith he will not ſin, though he die. He chooſeth the worſt of afflictions rather then iniquity.

Secondly, We may take theſe words, *till I die*, in a milder ſence, though it was in the breaſt of *Job* to die rather then to do this; yet *I will not do this till I die*, may here carry in it no more then this, *I will not do it as long as I live.*

Hence obſerve, *A godly man is everlaſtingly reſolved, and ſet againſt ſin.*

In this caſe he makes no temporary promiſes, he doth not purpoſe to forbear ſin for a time, much leſs till he hath a fit time; but for ever. Some will not ſin for a time, and they forbear only till they have a fit time to ſin. All the reaſon why ſome do no evil is becauſe they cannot, or becauſe they have not an opportunity to do it. *Falix* ſaid to *Paul, Go thy way for this time, when I have a convenient ſeaſon I will ſend for thee*; ſo ſay they of their ſin, at a convenient time I will do it. There is neither time nor ſeaſon allowed or appointed by God for ſin, and therefore we muſt not give our ſelves allowance for it at any time or ſeaſon. We ſhould (as was ſhewed before) rather chooſe to die then to ſin, how much more ſhould we reſolve, not to ſin till we die. *Till I die*

I will not remove my integrity from me.

לא אסיר סור *Ceſſit, receſſit, in hiphil removere, recedere fecit.* תמם *integer perfectus animo & corpore.*

The word ſignifies to yield or give back, to remove, or cauſe to give back; Thus ſaith *Job*, I will not yield up my integrity, or I will not cauſe my integrity to give back. The word which we render *integrity*, ſignifieth alſo perfection, and ſimplicity, that is, a religious, plain, honeſt and ſimple diſpoſition, without guile or wickedneſs, or (as we ſay) without welt or guard. In the breaſt-plate of *Aaron*, there was *the Urim, and the Thummim*, which latter is this word; *Job* had the true *Thummim* in his Breaſt, and he would not remove it.

Hence note, *A godly man is a man of integrity.*

He hath *Urim and Thummim*, as well as the High Prieſt had, he hath his light of truth, or his fire of zeal, and he hath his perfection, or integrity, both in his Breaſt, and upon his Breaſt. Theſe are ſeated as heavenly principles in his Heart, and they are held forth in the courſe and practices of his life, as a light ſhining from Heaven.

Secondly note, *Integrity is, in it ſelf, a thing of great price.*

We can eaſily part with or remove thoſe things which are not of worth. Integrity is plain and ſimple, yet the beſt ornament and decking (next Chriſt) of the whole man. *Solomon* in all his outward glory was not arraied like one of theſe Lillies. *We are never ſo fine as when we are plain.* To be plain, ſimple, to have a ſpirit without tricks and turnings, without knots and riddles, is better and more honourable, then the higheſt titles of honour. Integrity is our perfection under the Covenant of Grace, and *ſimplicity is our greateſt excellency.* 'Tis the fundamental excellency of God himſelf, and ſo it is of his people. That which is truly ſimple is truly perfect in its kind, and therefore the ſame word ſignifies both ſimple, and perfect; this is the Glory of Grace, and the Grace of Glory. How Glorious are we when this pretious ſtone of integrity, this ſpiritual *Thummim* fixed in our hearts, ſparkleth in all our wayes.

Thirdly obſerve, *A godly man is acquainted with his own integrity.*

He knows he hath this Jewel about him, though others ſee it not, he doth; poſſibly a godly man may ſometimes ſuſpect himſelf to be a hypocrite (for as there are ſome hypocrites, who think themſelves to be ſincere, all are not groſs, or ſelf-condemned hypocrites, ſo it is poſſible for ſome who are ſincere to judge themſelves hypocrites) yet take a godly man out of the Clouds, and darkneſs of temptation, or diſſertion, and then as he is what he appears to others, ſo he appears to himſelf as he is, ſincere, and full of integrity.

Fourthly obſerve, *A godly man prizeth his integrity highly.*

What a man will not remove, and part with, ſurely he reckons as his beſt. That which is worthleſs, filthy, or unclean, as dung, we take away as dung, *till it be all gone* (as 'tis ſaid, 1 *Kings* 14. 10.) take it who will; but our Treaſures, our Jewels, we will not part with. The reaſon why a carnal man will not remove his iniquity from him, is becauſe he values it and looks upon it either as his pleaſure, or as his profit. This makes him hold it faſt, as the Prophet complains (*Jer.* 8. 5.) *The hold faſt deceit.* We ſay proverbially, and we ſay it truly, *Plain dealing is a Jewel*; but with ſome, *Deceit or falſe dealing is a Jewel*, and therefore they hold it faſt, and will not let it go. Whatſoever it is, whether good or bad, which we will not remove, nor ſuffer (if we can help it) to be removed from us, that's our Jewel, that's High-prized, and much eſteemed by us. Our integrity is *our all*, next Chriſt, and Chriſt is nothing to thoſe who have no integrity. It is ſaid of a Woman, *That having loſt her modeſty, ſhe hath nothing more to looſe.* And it is moſt true both of man and woman, they have nothing more to looſe then their integrity. How highly ſhould we prize that, without which all that we have beſides is of no price at all?

Fifthly obſerve, *A godly man ſhould do nothing in prejudice to his integrity.*

Not to remove integrity, is leſs then not to throw away integrity, it is to do nothing that may ſtain, or lay the leaſt blot upon it. They who are fulleſt of integrity, are often blotted by others; the dirt of hypocriſie is thrown in their faces, while their hearts are upright with God, and their wayes towards men. How common is it to object that which doth not appear, when nothing appears to object. Thus others remove the integrity of the moſt upright. But how ſad is it for an upright man to do that which may ſtain his own integrity, and render him not only ſuſpected but blotted. That which was *Job's* great care, ſhould be ours, not to move in any thing which may remove our integrity. God *upholdeth his people in their integrity* (Pſal. 41. 12.) How ſteadily then ſhould his people hold their integrity. *Let integrity and uprightneſs preſerve me*, was *David's* prayer (*Pſal.* 25. 21.) O let us preſerve our integrity and uprightneſs; *What ſhall we preſerve, if not our preſervers!*

Sixthly note, *He that admits of any falſe accuſation or wrong judgment againſt himſelf, removes or ſtains his own integrity.*

We muſt ſtand our ground, and be ſtiff for our ſelves againſt all miſ-judgings. It is good to be zealouſly affected alwayes in a good matter, whether it reſpect the glory of God immediately and alone, or whether it reſpect the credit of our brethren, or our own. To deſire to be famous in the world, and (as thoſe Giants in the old world (*Gen.* 6. 4.) *men of renown*, or (as the original Text hath it) *men of name*, is a very great vanity, but to protect and preſerve our good name, is a great and neceſſary duty. *Job* thought it ſo neceſſary, that he was not ſatisfied with affirming this once, but doubles the ſame affirmation, though in other words.

Verſe 6. **My righteouſneſs I hold faſt, I will not let it go, my heart ſhall not reproach me ſo long as I live.**

This verſe is filled with the ſpirit of the former; *Job* here alſo ſhewing the ſtedfaſtneſs of his purpoſe to inſiſt upon his innocency, and keep it cloſe, againſt all aſſaults of enemies, or ſuſpitions of friends. Though they pull'd, yet he *would hold faſt*.

בצדקתי החזקתי

In juſtitia mea tenui, vel Juſtitiā meam fortificabo. Mer.

My righteouſneſs I hold faſt.

The Hebrew is, *Upon my righteouſneſs I hold ſtrongly*, or, *I will fortifie and ſtrengthen my righteouſneſs.* The righteouſneſs of a man may be conſidered two wayes; either in reference to Juſtification, or Sanctification; and this righteouſneſs of Sanctification may be conſidered two wayes: Firſt, As it is the righteouſneſs of a mans perſon, or that principle of righteouſneſs implanted and inherent in him: Secondly, As it is the righteouſneſs of his actions, or that practice of righteouſneſs which is held out by him. That which *Job* intends here by righteouſneſs, is not the righteouſneſs of Juſtification, but the righteouſneſs of Sanctification; and not ſo much the righteouſneſs of his perſon as of his actions or cauſe in this engagement with his friends. *My righteouſneſs I hold faſt.* A believer doth not hold faſt his righteouſneſs in reference to Juſtification, there he letteth it go, he will have nothing to do with it, he will not own it. *Paul* while a Phariſee held faſt his own righteouſneſs for Juſtification, but being converted, Chriſt taught him better Divinity (*Phil.* 3. 6, 7, 8, 9.) *Touching the righteouſneſs which is in the Law I was blameleſs. But what things were gain to me* (that is, what I then counted gain as to my acceptation with God) *thoſe I counted loſs for Chriſt*; that is, I let them go, and they were as loſt to me, that I might take faſt hold of Chriſt, and bear my ſelf, or, lay the whole weight of my Juſtification upon him alone, as he expounds himſelf in the next verſe; *Yea doubtleſs, and I count all things but dung and droſs for the excellency of the knowledge of Chriſt Jeſus my Lord; for whom I have ſuffered the loſs of all things, and do count them but dung that I may win Chriſt, and be found in him, not having my own righteouſneſs, which is of the Law.* As if he had ſaid, I would not be found to have any of my own righteouſneſs in my hand for a world; for as to the buſineſs of Juſtification, our righteouſneſs is droſs and dung, yea *all our righteouſneſſes are as filthy rags* (Iſa. 64. 6.) Not only are thoſe righteous acts filthy which are done (as the Phariſees did theirs) for ſelf-ends, or in hypocriſie, but there is a filthineſs (as they have done by us) in thoſe righteous acts which are done to a right end, or in ſincerity; and therefore the moſt righteous perſon muſt not hold his righteouſneſs, he muſt let it go. *Though I were righteous* (ſaith *Job*, Chap. 9. 15.) *yet would I not anſwer* (in a legal way for Juſtification in my ſelf) *but I would make ſupplication to my Judge*; that is, I would humble my ſelf and beg his pardon. And again (*verſ.* 21.) *Though I were perfect, yet would I not know my own ſoul.* But when it cometh to a caſe or controverſie between him and his friends, then he held faſt his righteouſneſs, the righteouſneſs of his Sanctification and converſation. There righteouſneſs is no droſs, but Gold, Silver, pretious Sones, the Souls riches; of this righteouſneſs *Job* profeſſeth in the preſent Text, *I hold it faſt.* The word ſignifies to hold ſtrongly; as if he had ſaid, *This my righteouſneſs I hold with all my ſtrength*; no man ſhall take it from me, but I'le know why. This ſteady purpoſe of *Job* here repeated may import two things.

Firſt, Perſeverance in doing righteouſly; as if he had ſaid, *I will never give over the wayes and works of righteouſneſs.* The Lord beſpeaks Satan (Chap. 2. 3.) *Haſt thou conſidered my ſervant* Job, *That there is none like him in the Earth, a perfect man, and an upright, one that feareth God, and eſcheweth evil, and ſtill he holdeth faſt his integrity, although thou movedſt me againſt him to deſtroy him without cauſe.* When the Lord ſaid, *he holdeth faſt his integrity*, the meaning is, he perſevereth, or goeth on, acting his integrity; he will not be beaten off, no not by all theſe blows: Thou haſt moved me to deſtroy him, but deſtruction it ſelf cannot remove him from his duty. So ſome expound the place here, *my righteouſneſs I hold faſt*; as if *Job* would ſhew, that as he had kept, ſo he was purpoſed to keep a perpetual courſe of holineſs, righteouſneſs, and juſtice, from the very firſt to the laſt; but I conceive this is not the proper interpretation of this place. The word which we tranſlate, *I hold faſt*, doth not ſo much imply perſeverance in doing righteouſly, as the defence and maintenance of what he had done, to be righteous, or of the right which he had done; *my righteouſneſs I hold faſt*, I maintain it, I ſtand to it; and he ſpeaks in the preſent tenſe noting a continued act through all time. He doth not ſay, *I have held it faſt*, or *will hold it faſt*, but *I hold it faſt*, as with my very teeth. *Job* is not treating of his perſeverance in righteous wayes, but affirming that his wayes had been righteous, though his ſuſpitious friends ſuggeſted otherwiſe.

My righteouſneſs I hold faſt.] The Emphaſis of the word here rendred, *Hold faſt*, reaches a little further then hath yet been ſignified, even to hold with a kind of obſtinacy, or pertinacy of ſpirit; it notes ſuch a holding as takes incouragement by oppoſition; which the more it is aſſaulted to let go, the more it is engaged to hold. That ſpeech of Chriſt (*Luke* 19. 15.) attains this ſence fully. *And it came to paſs* (ſaith the Evangeliſt) *that when the time was come that Chriſt ſhould be received up, he ſtedfaſtly ſet his face to go to* Jeruſalem; the Greek is, *he hardned or ſtrengthned his face*; the Syriack ſaith, *He prepared himſelf to go* (that which we firmly purpoſe to do, we prepare to do) Chriſt would not be diverted by any adviſe, counſell, or perſwaſion, but the time being come, that he ſhould be received up, that he ſhould ſuffer, and enter into glory, *he ſtedfaſtly ſet his face, he was irrevocably ſet to go to* Jeruſalem; He prepared himſelf, though he knew what a bitter cup was preparing for him, and that he muſt paſs through the valley of the ſhadow of death. Thus *Job* hardned his face, and was invinſibly reſolved to ſtand to his tackling, *my righteouſneſs I hold faſt*,

* ἐστήριξεν.
אתקן
Præparavit, h. e. *certus omnino fuit illuc proficiſci noluit ullo metu ab illo propoſito revocari, magno & erecto animo iter aggreſſus eſt.* Bold.

And will not let it go.

ולא ארפה רפה. *Lenis debitas remiſſit.*

That's the Negative of the former Affirmative; when a man is reſolved to hold any thing faſt, *he will not let it go*; there is an elegancy in the expreſſion. The original word ſignifies to be weak or infirm: To let a thing go, or to remit it, ſhews a weakneſs in him that doth ſo, and ſo this word is properly oppoſed to that in the former clauſe, *to holding faſt*. In this ſence we read it (*Prov.* 18.9.) *He alſo that is ſloathful in his work, is brother to him that is a great waſter.* The ſloathful man is weak at his work, he will eaſily let it go, his work drops out of his hand, or from between his fingers. What we do not ſet our hearts to, we care not to ſet our hands to, or hold it in our hands. That Scripture (*Num.* 13. 18.) will give us a little more light about the force of this word. When *Moſes* ſent out the ſpies, and gave them inſtructions what they ſhould do in the Land of *Canaan*; *See* (ſaith he) *what the people are, whether they be ſtrong or weak, few or many*; learn or enform your ſelves, whether they be a people that will eaſily part with their Land, and give up the hold of their poſſeſſions. Conſider whether they be ſtrong, and valiant men, that will diſpute and fight for every patch of ground ere they part with it, or whether they be weak, that is, ſuch as will eaſily let their Land go, and be turned out of all their labours, to ſave themſelves a labour. The word is uſed alſo in the ſtory of the Levite (*Judg.* 19. 9.) *And when the man roſe up to depart, he and his concubine, and his ſervant, his father in law, the damſels father ſaid unto him, Behold now the day draweth towards evening*; the Hebrew is, as we put in the Margin of our larger Bibles, *the day is weak*, or ready to let the light go; in the morning the light increaſeth, and waxeth ſtronger and ſtronger, but towards evening the day or the light is going away, it groweth weak when the Sun departeth. Now ſaith *Job*, *I will not let go mine integrity*, my integrity ſhall be as the aſcending or morning Sun, climbing higher and higher, my integrity ſhall not decline nor go down, I will not let it go, but it ſhall ſhine brighter and brighter, till it ſhineth forth in full ſtrength. And in this ſence *Jacob* ſpake to the Angel (*Gen.* 32. 24.) who made requeſt, *Let me go, for the day breaketh*; no, ſaith *Jacob*, *I will not let thee go, except thou bleſs me*. And thus ſaith *Job*, *I will not it go*; I will not act like a weak man, what I have undertaken I will abide by, and not give an inch of ground. As *Moſes* ſaid to *Pharaoh* about the departure of *Iſrael* (Exod. 10. 26.) *Our cattel ſhall go with us, there ſhall not an hoof be left behind*, I will not let any thing go that belongs to *Iſrael*. Thus conſtant is *Job* in this controverſie, about his righteouſneſs, he would not looſe a hair of it. *I will not let it go.*

Hence obſerve, *As a godly man reſolves to hold on in the practice of righteouſneſs againſt all temptation, ſo to maintain his righteouſneſs againſt all oppoſition.*

He that knoweth he is ſincere, cannot be perſwaded, nor beaten from holding his ſincerity: a godly man (as the Apoſtle *James* deſcribes the wiſdom from above, that is, thoſe who are made wiſe from above, *Chap.* 3. 17.) is *firſt pure, then peaceable, gentle, and eaſie to be intreated.* He may be intreated eaſily in ſome things, but in others you may as ſoon remove a rock as move him, there's no intreating, no perſwading him; a godly man is eaſily intreated to do good for others, and he is eaſily intreated to remit the wrong which others have done him; in theſe two caſes he is eaſily entreated: but if you come to take his integrity from him, and touch him in his uprightneſs, he will by no means be intreated to wrong himſelf. As it is ſinful (in many caſes) not to remit the wrong done to us by others, ſo not to maintain the right done by our ſelves; we may, ye we ought ſometimes (for peace ſake) to part with our right; but we may not, we muſt not part with our righteouſneſs: for that indeed is as, if not more ſinful then to wrong others; to bear falſe witneſs againſt our ſelves is the falſeſt witneſs-bearing; *In what we are honeſt and innocent, we cannot be too ſtout.* He buyes his peace too dear, who either quits the truth of God for it, or the truth of his own wayes. It is dangerous laying down our own will, to ſubmit to any thing which is not according to the will of God. Here and no where elſe wilfulneſs is a vertue. *I will not let it go*, ſaith *Job*, and he did well in ſaying ſo; for elſe he had fallen into the *after-claps*, indeed, the *thunder-claps* of his own conſcience, which he had no mind to do, as he profeſſeth in the next words.

My heart ſhall not reproach me ſo long as I live.

That is, my conſcience ſhall not; the heart in Scripture is put for the underſtanding, for the will, for the affections, as hath been elſewhere ſhewed, here for the conſcience; *my heart ſhall not reproach me*. *To reproach*, is to caſt a blot upon our ſelves or others. The original word is ſometimes tranſlated to blaſpheme (*Iſa.* 65. 7.) Blaſphemy is the higheſt degree of reproach. *Job* ſpeaks here to his friends dealing with him; as if he had ſaid, *Ye my friends have reproached me often, but I am reſolved my own heart ſhall not reproach me.* He tells them (*Chap.* 19. 3.) *theſe ten times have ye reproached me*; but reproach ye as long and as often as ye will, my heart ſhall not reproach me once or at all, if I can avoid it, *as long as I live*.

חרף *Eſt probris afficere exprobrare.*

There is a double rendering of theſe words; ſome give them in the time paſt, *My heart hath not reproached me all my dayes, or all the time that I have lived*; That is a very good ſence, *Job* was of ſuch integrity, that though he had many failings, yet he had not ſinned againſt the dictates of his conſcience, and ſo had not broken his peace by what he had done, though he had often done that which called him to repentance. Our Tranſlation, and ſo generally others, read the words in the future tenſe, *My heart ſhall not reproach me*, I will not give it cauſe to reproach me, which I ſhould do, if I ſhould aſſent to your reproaches. *My heart ſhall not reproach me as long as I live*; the Hebrew is, *from my dayes*; which hath a double interpretation, Firſt, *Concerning my dayes*, that is concerning my manner of living. Maſter *Broughton* ſeems to comply with this reading as beſt, *My heart ſhall take no ſhame from my dayes*, that is, from thoſe things which I have done in my dayes, or from my whole converſation; not as if he thought himſelf free from ſin, but he had not gone on knowingly in a way of ſinning, or he had not acted againſt his knowledge. We cannot but do that we know to be ſinful, and yet, poſſibly, we may not ſin againſt our knowledge. Secondly, *From my dayes*, that is, all the dayes that either I have, or ſhall live. This form of ſpeaking being uſed indifferently, both in reference to the time paſt, and to come, is a confirmation of *Job's* integrity; he had ſo lived that his conſcience did not check him, and he was reſolved ſo to go on, with ſo much clearneſs, that his conſcience ſhould have no cauſe to check him, *My heart ſhall not reproach me as long as I live.*

ביומי *A diebus meis. De vita mea & moribus meis.* Druſ.

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *Conſcience, or the heart of man hath an accuſing, or an upbraiding power in it.*

Conſcience is a very buſie faculty of the ſoul, and it hath many offices. Firſt, Conſcience is as a regiſter to take notice of and record what we do. Secondly, Conſcience is a witneſs againſt us, or an accuſer, when we do amiſs. Thirdly, Conſcience is a Judge, and gives the ſentence, (1 *Joh.* 3. 20.) *If our heart condemn us, God is greater then our heart, and knoweth all things: if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God.* Conſcience ſits upon a Throne, as Gods deputy, to award life or death. Fourthly, Conſcience hath the office of a tormenter, it is that worm which dieth not, and a fire that never goeth out. The damned ſhall feel the teeth and ſting of conſcience for ever, though here they have brib'd it, and blinded it, that it might not trouble them. The work of conſcience intended in this Text is the ſecond, the accuſing and witneſſing work of conſcience. He that accuſeth another, reproacheth him, and every accuſation is a reproach; if it be falſe 'tis a reproach till it is removed, and if it be true 'tis a reproach that cannot be removed. Of this work of conſcience the Apoſtle ſpeaks (*Rom.* 2. 15.) *Which ſhew the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conſciences alſo bearing witneſs, and their thoughts the mean while accuſing, or elſe excuſing one another.* Though the lives of carnal men oppoſe the Law, yet the conſcience of the moſt wicked man in the world doth comply and correſpond with the Law, to bind or to looſe him, to accuſe or excuſe him upon the view of what he hath done.

Secondly obſerve, *An inlightened and awakened conſcience, will vex and upbraid thoſe that do evil.*

Many have done as much and more, then *Job* ſaith here he would not do, leſt his conſcience ſhould reproach him, and yet their conſciences never reproached them for it; theſe have ſilenced their own conſciences, or through ignorance, their conſciences have not learned to ſpeak, and ſo they ſin, and conſcience ſaith nothing; They who *are alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them* (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Epheſ.* 4.18.) may and do live like Devils in a courſe of wickedneſs, and never receive ſo much as one check from conſcience; yea the reaſon why many deſire to have no light in their conſcience, is, becauſe they would not be under the rebukes of conſcience. A blind ſleepy conſcience will let a man ſin, and ſin a thouſand times, and never give him an ill word; but if a *Job*, a man of an inlightned conſcience ſin, his conſcience will be upon him preſently, and tell him his own. Therefore he ſaid, *my conſcience ſhall not reproach me*, I know it will, if I ſhould do evil; it is poſſible for an ill man to have a good conſcience in its kind, that is, a conſcience naturally good, though not morally good; for when conſcience doth its office, it is a natural good conſcience. The office of conſcience is to reproach us when we do evil; a wicked mans conſcience may do that, it may tell him, he hath done this or that ſinful evil, and ſo deſerves this or that penal evil. Again, it is poſſible for a godly man to have an ill conſcience (in this ſence) that is, a conſcience, which doth not its office, as to ſome particular, his conſcience may be aſleep, or not inlightned in ſome things; his conſcience may be much out of order, and unfit for the exerciſe and diſcharge of its proper duty. When *David* had committed thoſe horrible ſins of Adultery and Murther, his conſcience was diſcompoſed and off the hinges for a whole year, it never reproached him, he was as a ſtranger to his own boſom, till his ſin was diſcovered to him, it troubled him not. But when *Nathan* came to him and (having made him give ſentence againſt another man in a parable) told him plainly, *thou art the man*, his conſcience quickly gave ſentence againſt himſelf, and he confeſſed, *I have ſinned againſt the Lord* (2 Sam. 12. 13.) Nothing beſides the blood of Chriſt, can ſtop the voice and ſtill the cry of an awakened conſcience. But being once thus purged, we *have no more conſcience of ſins*, (Heb. 10. 2.) that is, no more rebukes and reproaches of conſcience for ſin. They who know they are pardoned in Chriſt, make conſcience of committing the leaſt ſin, but they have no conſcience of the greateſt ſins committed.

Thirdly obſerve, *A godly man is afraid of the chidings, and upbraidings of his own conſcience.*

It is better to have the reproaches of all the men in the world fall upon us, then the reproaches of conſcience; better that all the men in the world ſhould call us hypocrite, and wicked, then that conſcience ſhould tell us ſo; a godly man fears the accuſation and ſentence of his conſcience, next to the judgment and ſentence of God himſelf. Yea natural men many times are much afraid of their conſciences, and do therefore eſchew evil, leſt conſcience ſhould trouble them, and upon the ſame terms they do good. They find if they ſhould omit ſuch a duty, if they ſhould not ſometimes pray, and hear the Word, they muſt anſwer it to their conſciences. This is a true diſtinction between a godly and a carnal man; a godly man doth good, not for fear his conſcience ſhould trouble him, but becauſe his conſcience is pleaſed with, and ſuited to the doing of good. Yet conſcience is terrible to a good man when he ſins, as well as to a wicked, even he is afraid of the chidings of conſcience; therefore as *Paul* ſaith in reference to civil Magiſtrates (*Rom.* 13. 3.) ſo I ſay in reference to that natural Magiſtrate in your breaſts, conſcience, *Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power, do that which is good, and thou ſhalt have praiſe of the ſame.* The Magiſtrate is a terror, not to good works, but to evil works; conſcience is a Magiſtrate within, and that is a terror, not to good works but to evil; therefore my advice is, would ye not be afraid of the power of conſcience, do that which is good, and ye ſhall have praiſe of the ſame, that is, your conſcience will commend you, or give teſtimony for you: it is ſweet, no man knows how ſweet but he that hath it, to have the teſtimony of a good conſcience upon good grounds. A flattering teſtimony from conſcience is the ſoareſt curſe, but a true teſtimony from conſcience is an unſpeakable mercy. Do good, and ye ſhall have good words, and a good witneſs from conſcience.

Fourthly obſerve, *A godly man is very careful, not to give his conſcience any occaſion to reproach him.*

Whatſoever he doth, or what ſhift ſoever he makes, he will not do any thing which may put him into the hand of conſcience to ſchool and chide him; that is the tendency of all. When *Job* ſaid, *My conſcience ſhall not reproach me*, his meaning was, I will not do that which ſhall render me naked and liable to the reproaches of conſcience. It is impoſſible to avoid the reproaches of conſcience, unleſs we avoid and turn from that which puts a word of reproach in the mouth of conſcience. Sin puts not only a Word, but a Sword into the mouth of conſcience to wound us; therefore a godly man next to his care that he give not God an occaſion againſt him, will not give his conſcience an occaſion againſt him. Conſcience acts in ſubordination to God. A good conſcience is as a paradiſe, it makes muſick within; conſcience is a pleaſant bird, it ſings ſweetly, and when conſcience ſings ſweetly, we are fitteſt to act vigorouſly. Conſcience is a book, for the mending of the faults whereof all other books have been made; and when once conſcience is mended and ſet right, ſo that we can ſay in truth as *Paul* (Acts 23. 1.) *We have lived in all good conſcience before God*, and (as he ſpeaks in another place of that book) *have kept our conſciences void of offence both towards God and towards man*; then have we confidence both towards God, and towards man, and have good ground to ſay, *Our heart ſhall not reproach us as long as we live.*

A good or *pure conſcience* (as other Scriptures call it) will certainly be a quiet and a peaceable conſcience; a good conſcience will not only not reproach or trouble us, but it will exceedingly refreſh and comfort us. So the Apoſtle profeſſed from his own experience (2 *Cor.* 1.12.) *Our rejoycing is this, the teſtimony of our conſcience, that in ſimplicity and godly ſincerity, not with fleſhly wiſdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our converſation in the world, and more abundantly to you-wards.* When conſcience bears its teſtimony with us, and for us, how full of joy is the ſoul, even in the midſt of many outward ſorrows? And as trouble of conſcience is the greateſt trouble, ſo joy of conſcience is the greateſt joy. That man can never want muſik, whoſe conſcience ſpeaks in conſort, and is harmonious with himſelf. A good conſcience is the poor mans riches, and the rich mans Jewel; a good conſcience is the beſt pillow to ſleep upon, and the beſt diſh to feed upon. A diſh, ſaid I? *'Tis a feaſt*; *A feaſt*, ſaid I? *Solomon* ſaith more (*Prov.* 15. 15.) *'Tis a continual feaſt?* The *Geneva* tranſlation ſaith, *A good conſcience*; ours *a merry heart* (which doth not contradict the other, but explain it; a good and a merry heart or conſcience) *is a continual feaſt*; and as they who are merry are fit for a feaſt, ſo at a feaſt 'tis both proper and comly to be merry. And while conſcience continues good, the feaſt will continue, and therefore a good conſcience muſt needs be a continual feaſt. Nor is it to play the *Epicure*, to be alwayes at this feaſt; for in this feaſt every *pot and diſh is Holineſs to the Lord.* Nor ſhall any need to fear a ſurfet, by being continually at this feaſt; for as the feaſters are temperate, ſo their appetite and ſatisfaction are perpetually enterchangeable. They ſhall be alwayes feaſted by conſcience, who are careful that their conſcience ſhall not at all reproach them; this was *Job's* reſolution, *My conſcience ſhall not reproach me ſo long as I live.*

VERS. 7, 8.

Let mine Enemy be as the wicked, and he that riſeth up againſt me, as the unrighteous.

For what is the hope of the hypocrite, though he have gained, when God taketh away his ſoul?

IN the former verſe, we found *Job* holding faſt and ſtifly maintaining his own righteouſneſs, againſt all the objections and jealouſies of his friends; in this he either faſteneth unrighteouſneſs, or the reward of the unrighteous, upon his Enemy, or oppoſer.

Let mine Enemy be as the wicked, and he that riſeth up againſt me, as the unrighteous.

Vaticinium eſt non votum. Janſ. *Majorem vim & energian videtur habere imprecatio.* Merc.

Let mine Enemy.] Some render and expound the words, not as a wiſh or deſire, but as a Propheſie; in which *Job* foretelleth what would become of his Enemy, or what evil ſhould befall him; *Mine enemy ſhall be as the wicked, and he that riſeth up againſt me as the unrighteous.* But I rather take it (according to our reading) for an imprecation, or wiſh, that evil might come upon his Enemy.

Let mine Enemy be as the wicked.] What a wicked man is, and the force of the original word here uſed, hath been opened heretofore, therefore I ſhall not ſtay upon it. Both parts of this verſe are of one ſence and meaning: that which he ſaith in the beginning (*Let mine enemy be as the wicked*) he ſpeaks again in the cloſe of this verſe (*and he that riſeth up againſt me, as the unrighteous.*) This latter is but a reinforcement of the ſame thing in a different form and ſhape of words.

He that riſeth up againſt me.] This riſer is none other then his Enemy before ſpoken of; yet the Title beſtowed upon him, gives us a deſcription of an Enemy, or tells us more clearly what an Enemy is, or who is an Enemy. *He is an Enemy who riſeth up againſt us*; an Enemy riſeth up in his ſpirit againſt us, and he riſeth up in his actions againſt us. He riſeth up to make us fall, he riſeth up againſt us, that he may riſe above us.

There are two ſorts of Enemies.

Firſt, Some are ſecret Enemies, that lye, poſſibly, in our very boſoms, that ſalute us courteouſly every day, as *Judas* did Chriſt, *with a kiſs*, and *a hail Maſter*, no appearance of an Enemy, either in words or actions; and yet, *The deepeſt and moſt dangerous Enemy, is the ſecret Enemy.*

Secondly, There are open Enemies, profeſſed Enemies, ſuch as hold out a flag of defiance, and ſend challenges to us; ſuch a one is here meant by theſe words, *He that riſeth up againſt me. David* (Pſal. 41.9.) deſcribeth his Enemies by lifting up the heel; *He that did eat of my bread, lifted up his heel againſt me*; that is, he hath acted openly againſt me, he hath kicked at me like a wild Horſe, or would have trampled me under his feet. To riſe up, and to lift up the heel againſt one, are the ſame, as the Enemy, in the Text, and he that riſeth up, are the ſame; and as the wicked, and the unrighteous are the ſame; only in theſe two laſt different words, there is a different reſpect. Properly a man is ſaid to be wicked in reference to his Impieties againſt God; and unrighteous in reference to his Injuſtice and wrong dealings with man; juſtice giveth every man his own, his due: and therefore he who either by profeſſed violence, or ſecret fraud, oppoſeth another mans due is unrighteous. Yet theſe words are often uſed promiſcuouſly, the wicked for the unrighteous, and the unrighteous for ſuch another as the wicked; *Let mine Enemy be as the wicked, and he that riſeth up againſt me, as the unrighteous.* In theſe things there is no difficulty.

But though theſe words are plain in their literal ſence, yet there is ſome difficulty in gathering up the meaning and Interpretation, as alſo the ſcope and deſign of them.

Let mine Enemy be as the wicked.] May be Interpreted three wayes,

Firſt, As an argument of *Job's* charity.

Secondly, As an argument of his piety.

Thirdly, As an argument of his courage and magnanimity in maintaining his own cauſe, ſtill and ſtiffly inſiſting upon his Integrity; the ſence is good, and the Interpretation fair either wayes.

Firſt, Theſe words are expounded as an argument of *Job's* charity (*Let mine Enemy be as the wicked, and he that riſeth up againſt me, as the unrighteous*) As if *Job* had ſpoken his mind thus, *Ye my friends have adjudged me to be a wicked man, ye have ſentenced me to be unrighteous: well, let this be granted or ſuppoſe that I am ſo, ſay* (ſeeing ye have ſuch a mind to it) *that I am an unrighteous man, let me abide under this cloud of cenſure; all the hurt that I wiſh you, who are in appearance mine Enemies, and continually riſe up againſt me, is this, that ye were ſuch as I am, whom ye call wicked, or that ye were like him whom ye ſuppoſe the unrighteous man. I would you were as I am, except theſe ſorrows, except the bonds of theſe ſickneſſes and ſores, and ſore afflictions which are upon me; for my part I wiſh that you mine Enemies who diſpute with, and oppoſe me, who reſiſt and riſe up againſt me, were as my ſelf, whom ye account the wicked and unrighteous man.*

Thus *Paul* (pleading his cauſe and Integrity before King *Agrippa*, and having almoſt perſwaded him to be a Chriſtian, *Acts* 26.29.) anſwered, *I would to God that not only thou, but all that hear me this day, were both almoſt, and altogether ſuch as I am, except theſe bonds.* As if he had ſaid, *I am judged as an heretick, as a diſturber of the peace, as a wicked man, I would that mine Enemies and oppoſers were but as this heretick, as this ſeditious perſon; I would that thou, O King, and all that hear me were ſuch as I am, except theſe bonds; I would keep my troubles to my ſelf, and wiſh that that ye all were partakers of my grace and ſpiritual priviledges.* The expoſition of *Job's* wiſh now under hand, hath a parallel ſence with this of *Paul*. *There is no greater argument of ſincerity and Goſpel charity, then to be willing to bear the whole of our own troubles, and that others ſhould bear a part and ſhare with us in all our mercies.*

Secondly, The wo[illegible] may be Expounded as an argument of *Job's* piety; [illegible] that two wayes.

Firſt, *Job* doth aſſert his piety, by aſſertaining who or what kind of men they were, with whom he had uſed to converſe as friends; as if he had ſaid, *You account me wicked, and unrighteous, a man delighting in the ſociety of the ungodly, doing th[illegible] courteſies, and making them my counſellors; whereas indeed I have looked upon the wicked and unrighteous as mine Enemies, even as they that riſe up againſt me.* It is an argument of holineſs and piety, to love thoſe that are holy and righteous, to make them our friends and favourites, who are friends to God, and the favourites of Heaven. And to ſay of the wicked, he is as my Enemy, or let mine Enemy be as the wicked, is to act like a friend or ſervant of God. When *Jehoſhaphat* ſaid to wicked *Ahab*, *I am as thou art, and my people as thy people* (2 Chron. 18.3.) The Lord ſent a Prophet to him with this reproof, *Shouldſt thou help the ungodly, and love them who hate the Lord?* (2 Chron. 19.3.) Some are known to be wicked, by being companions of the wicked, and it ill becomes thoſe who are godly to have any intimacy of communion with the wicked. And therefore *Job* gives a probable character of his own piety, by diſowning (according to this interpretation) the impious, and reckoning ſuch in the number of his Enemies.

Secondly, We may expound the words as an argument of his piety; thus, as if *Job* had ſaid, *Though I have ſpoken much about the worldly proſperity of the wicked, yet I am ſo far from judging their condition to be good, or their eſtate happy, that I would not wiſh the worſt Enemy I have in the world a worſe lot then to be a wicked man; I could not deſire any thing more evil to him then this, that he were evil and unrighteous. And therefore you are much deceived in your judgment of me, as if while I have ſpoken of the proſperity of the wicked, I were of opinion, that their eſtate is good, or they happy; whereas indeed I look upon them as men to be pittied, not envied in the higheſt pitch of their worldly pomp and greatneſs. And as I have no hunger after their dainties my ſelf, ſo I would not wiſh any friend of mine to partake with them; but* (*were it lawful to wiſh evil to an Enemy*) *I would not wiſh the vileſt Enemy I have upon the face of the earth a worſe condition, then that of a wicked man, how much ſoever he flouriſheth in the eye of the world.* Thus he ſeems to be of *Moſes* his choice Spirit, yea to have made his choice like *Moſes* (Heb. 11.25.) *Rather to ſuffer affliction with the people of God, then to enjoy the pleaſures of ſin for a ſeaſon.* This is a great argument of *Job's* piety, ſhewing that he had no deſire, no ſuitableneſs at all in his ſpirit to the condition of a wicked man, how glorious or glittering ſoever among men. It is a common way of Expreſſing that which we moſt diſtaſte, to ſay, *Let this be to mine Enemy, let this be to thoſe that hate me.* And this ſuppoſeth ſuch a diſpleaſure againſt the perſon, as cannot be ſatisfied with any particular trouble. When *Abigail* came to meet *David*, and to interpoſe between him and her husbands deſtruction by his Sword, ſhe thus beſpake him (1 *Sam.* 25.26.) *Now therefore my Lord, As the Lord liveth, and as thy ſoul liveth, Seeing the Lord hath withholden thee*

Si libeat hoſtibus meis imprecari, non aliud ſim optaturus, quam ut talem Deum experiantur, qualis eſt adverſus ſceleratos. Bez.

from coming to ſhed blood, and from avenging thy ſelf with thine own hand; now let thine Enemies, and they that ſeek Evil to my Lord be as Nabal. *Nabal* was a proſperous man in the world, yet a wicked and wretched man; and the hand of God was upon him, and he died preſently after; *now let the Enemies of my Lord* (ſaith *Abigail*) *be as* Nabal; that is, let them be as vile and low in the eſteem of men, as *Nabal* is, upon whom, one of his own ſervants could beſtow no better language, then *Son of Belial,* ſuch a ſon of *Belial,* that a man could not ſpeak to (*v.* 17.) yea let thine Enemy be as unable to hurt thee, as *Nabal* is; and let him as ſurely fall under the revenging hand of God as *Nabal* ſhall, upon whom not to revenge thy ſelf with thine own hand, thou haſt been ſo eaſily perſwaded. We have a like wiſh formed up in the ſame terms (2 *Sam.* 18. 32.) *The King ſaid to* Cuſhai, *Is the young man* Abſolom *ſafe; And* Cuſhai *ſaid, Let the Enemies of my Lord the King, and all that riſe up againſt thee be as that young man.* When he would ſet forth the miſerable end and fall of *Abſolom* (who was hung on a tree and ſlain) he ſaith, *Let all that wiſh my Lord the King hurt, be as that young man is.* Once more we read this way of imprecation (*Dan.* 4. 19.) *Then Daniel* (whoſe name was *Belteſhazzar*) *was aſtonied for one hour, and his thoughts troubled* [illegible] *: the King ſpake and ſaid,* Belteſhazzar, *let not the D*[illegible]*, or the Interpretation thereof trouble thee;* Belteſhazzar *anſwered and ſaid, My Lord, the Dream be to them that hate thee, and the Interpretation thereof to thine Enemies;* as if *Daniel* had ſaid, I have cauſe enough to be troubled, it is a black Dream, and the viſion is a viſion of darkneſs and aſtoniſhment. I could wiſh that thy Dream were to thine Enemies, and the accompliſhment of it to them that hate thee. In this language ſpeaks *Job* here, you think that I am a man much taken with the proſperity of the wicked; for my part, *Let mine Enemies be as the wicked, and they that riſe up againſt me as the unrighteous.* That's the beſt eſteem and higheſt value that I have of all them that are wicked and unrighteous. Hence Obſerve,

> *To be wicked, or an unrighteous man, is to be in the worſt eſtate, incident unto, or imaginable by man.*

To be poor and deſpiſed, to be weak and ſickly, all theſe evils of ſtate, name, and body, are not evil at all, in compariſon of ſin. Moral evils are the worſt of evils. And in the opinion of godly men, none are in ſo bad a condition as ungodly men; if it were lawful to wiſh the worſt that could be to an enemy, the worſt we could wiſh him (putting all evil wiſhes in one) is, *that he ſhould be as the wicked, and unrighteous.* Indeed they who are like them in wickedneſs, think none like them in happineſs, and ſo they think themſelves. We have both theſe tempers, or diſtempers rather, laid down in one verſe (*Pſal.* 10. 3.) *The wicked boaſteth of his hearts deſire* (that is, when he hath gotten, which is not worth the getting, what his heart deſireth) *and bleſſeth the covetous* (that is, counts them bleſſed) *whom the Lord abhorreth.* They who are of the world, bleſs the worldly, and bleſs themſelves in their worldly bleſſedneſs, and would not turn tables with any in the world unleſs ſuch as have more of the world then they (*Pſal.* 36. 2.) *The wicked flattereth himſelf in his own eyes, till his Iniquities be found abominable.* He thinks all is well with him, and ſo do many beſides himſelf. Yea ſo ignorant, or impudent are ſome, that they think God himſelf approves, and hath a good opinion of the ungodly. Such bold blaſphemers are at once diſcovered, and reproved by the Prophet (*Mal.* 2. 17.) *Ye have wearied the Lord with your words, yet ye ſay wherein have we wearied him? When ye ſay every one that doth evil is good* (that is, approved, accepted, and well eſteemed) *in the ſight of the Lord, and he delighteth in them, or where is the God of Judgment?* Which latter words are either a new accuſation, or the proof of their former accuſation, as if they had ſaid, if he did not delight in, and approve them, he would puniſh them. This is (as the Septuagint render) a provoking word, or (as the Chaldee hath it) a moleſting troubling word; we render it fully, *a wearying word.* What? when God ſuffers wicked men to proſper and receive good, doth he account them good? The Prophet *Iſaiah* (Chap. 43. 24.) preſents the Lord thus complaining, *Thou haſt wearied me with thine iniquities.* But that which wearieth the Lord moſt, is, when man ſaith he is pleaſed with, or approves either iniquity wrought, or the workers of iniquity. To ſpeak or think thus of God, is not only iniquity, but higheſt blaſphemy. It is a moſt groſs error, when man thinks ſo of man, as the ſame Prophet ſhews (*Mal.* 3. 15.) *And now ye call the proud happy;* ſuch as are men of aſpiring minds, and work their own ends confidently, daringly, ye call the only men. A proud man is the worſt of wicked men; every wicked man hath abundance of unmortified pride in him, but pride is a predominant luſt in ſome wicked men; how unhappy and blind in judgment are they who call theſe happy? The preſent point ſaith, that all wicked men are in a bad condition, but among them all, none is in ſo bad a one as the proud, for him God reſiſteth (*Jam.* 4. 6.) and if it muſt needs go ill with them, whom God doth only leave to themſelves, not giving them aſſiſtance; then who can ſay how ill it muſt needs go with them) though never ſo high and great in the world) whom God reſiſts, and ſets himſelf againſt? There are two conſiderations, which ſhew how far all wicked (much more proud) men are removed from happineſs.

Firſt, They are out of the favour of God, they have no room in his heart. How miſerable is their life, who ſhare not in the loving kindneſs of God, which is better then life? We enjoy nothing that is truly good, without God, who is the chiefeſt good. The light of his Countenance is better then all the comforts of this life; what have they that enjoy not the light of his Countenance, but ſorrow and darkneſs? As it is the ſin of a wicked man, ſo it is his puniſhment, that he is *without God in the world.* He is without God in the world, as to the fear of, or faith in his Name, this is his ſin; and he is without God in the world, as to any favour or good will which he hath from God, and this is his puniſhment. As whatſoever good a carnal man doth, what ever ſervice he performes to God, or for God, his heart, his good will is not in it; ſo whatſoever the wicked have from God, they have none of his heart, nothing from his good will.

Secondly, Such are not only out of the favour of God, but (for there is no middle ſtate) they are the ſubjects of his diſpleaſure, and ſtand naked to his wrath; they have no ſhelter, nothing to keep off the daily droppings, or moſt dreadful ſtorms and threatnings that are written in the Book of God. And indeed there can be no ſhelter from divine wrath, but in divine love. Therefore (ſaith *Job*) I would have no Friend of mine, no Child of mine, no Neighbour of mine in ſuch a condition as they are in; *Let mine Enemy be as the wicked, and let him that riſeth up againſt me as the unrighteous.* That's a ſecond Interpretation, repreſenting theſe words as an argument of *Job's* piety, who, how much ſoever he had ſpoken of the proſperity of wicked men, yet was far from believing that any true happineſs belonged to them; the choyceſt of their comforts their moſt perfect proſperity, doth not put them one ſtep beyond miſery.

Thirdly, We may Interpret theſe words as an argument of *Job's* courage in his Cauſe. And then, *Let mine Enemy be as the wicked,* either a Propheſie (mine Enemy ſhall be as the wicked) or an Imprecation, I wiſh they were ſo. Many read it only as a Propheſie (as was toucht before) foretelling what ſhould become of his Enemy. But what Enemy doth he mean? He means not an Enemy in reference to his perſon, but to his cauſe; his Enemy was his oppoſite in Judgment and opinion; and when he ſaith (*Let mine Enemy be as the wicked, or mine Enemy ſhall be as the wicked,* he ſpeaks of their deſert, not of his own deſire, or he ſpeaks of what might juſtly befall them, not of what he would have them fall into, as if he had ſaid, mine Enemy, or he that oppoſeth me in this Cauſe, deſerves to be as the wicked, and to be handled as the wicked, or in the carriage and handling of this Cauſe mine enemy will be found as the wicked, and he that riſeth up againſt me as the unrighteous. It is puſſible for a good man to engage in a bad matter, and in the uprightneſs of his own heart to do and ſay that which is not right. Holy *Paul* could ſay of himſelf before his converſion, *I verily thought with my ſelf, that I ought to do many things contrary to the Name of Jeſus of* Nazarath (Acts 26. 9.) And ſome after converſion have done things contrary to the name and truth of Chriſt, how much more of their brethren.

Adverſariū deſignat cujus inimicitia verſetur, non inter perſonas, ſed compugnantes ſententias, ſit ergo de merito, non autem de eventu ut impius inimicus meus. Janſ.

But *no good man can oppoſe a good Cauſe, or a good Man, but he gets a ſtain upon his goodneſs by it.* It is iniquity, or unrighteouſneſs to vex any man in his righteous Cauſe, or in the righteouſneſs of his Cauſe. *Job* ſpeaks home and ſomewhat harſhly, when he called his Friends Enemies, but they had conſtrained him. Yet two things give ſome allay to the ſharpneſs of his language.

Firſt, That he did it only in reference to the ſtate of the buſineſs, not of their perſons.

Quiſquis mihi in hac cauſa adverſitur, tandem aliquando injuriæ condemnabitur. Jun.

Secondly, That he did it to awaken and ſtir them up to conſider what they had done. He ſpeaks roughly to them, that they might deſiſt from ſpeaking and dealing ſo roughly with him, and forbear to faſten the Cenſure of hypocriſie upon him. And we find that the Lord himſelf in the cloſe of this diſpute, doth verifie this Propheſie of *Job* (*Mine Enemy ſhall be as the wicked*) for the Lord tells them (*Chap.* 42. 7.) when the buſineſs came before him) *My wrath is kindled againſt thee* (*namely Eliphaz*) *and againſt thy two friends, for ye have not ſpoken of me the thing that is right, as my ſervant* Job. There God verified it, that *Job's* enemies, or they that ſtood in this Cauſe againſt him, were as the unrighteous and wicked.

Secondly, We may take notice of the qualifications of this ſpeech (*Let mine enemy be as the wicked, and he that riſeth up againſt me as the unrighteous*) he doth not poſitively affirm that they who were Enemies to him in that Cauſe or buſineſs, were wicked, or were unrighteous, but let them be as the wicked. While they take part and joyn with the wicked and unrighteous in their cenſures upon me, they make themſelves ſuch; ſuch was *Job's* confidence in the goodneſs of his Cauſe, that he feared not to affirm his oppoſers would be found as the unrighteous and the wicked.

Hence Obſerve, *He that oppoſeth a righteous Cauſe, acts the part of an unrighteous man.*

I do not ſay (nor did *Job*) that every one who oppoſeth a righteous Cauſe, is unrighteous; but he that oppoſeth a godly or righteous Man, in a righteous Cauſe, acts like an ungodly Man, or he takes up the work of the unrighteous. Thus *Job* ſaid to his Wife (*Chap.* 2. 10.) *Thou ſpeakeſt as one of the fooliſh women uſe to ſpeak*; he doth not ſay, thou art a fool, or a wicked woman, but in this thou acteſt like one of them. Thus a good man may act as a wicked man, both in oppoſing that which is good, and in complying with that which is evil, and ſo he may be numbred with the wicked, yea deſerve to be dealt with as the wicked, to be wrapped up under the ſame reproofs, and in the ſame common calamities. We may quickly bring the rod of God upon our ſelves, by being a rod upon the backs of others; and may ſooner or later, feel hard blows of correction from God, for the hard words of Cenſure which our brethren have felt from us.

So then, when *Job* ſaith, *Let mine Enemy be as the wicked*, he doth not imprecate Evil upon his friends, becauſe they oppoſed him to have done ſo, had been ſinful and diſſonant to the rules of Charity; and it were as uncharitable for any to conceive he did ſo, as for himſelf to have done it. And for proof that nothing of revenge was upon his Spirit, he makes an open proteſtation to the contrary, accompanied with a ſecret and ſevere imprecation upon himſelf, in caſe it were ſo (*Chap.* 31. 29.) *If I rejoyced at the deſtruction of him that hated me, or lift up my ſelf when Evil found him? Then,* &c. He that really wiſheth Evil to his Enemy, cannot but rejoyce when evil finds him. Joy ariſeth from the accompliſhment of deſire. But though *Job* did not wiſh Evil to his Friends, yet he would not ſpare them in what they did ill, their ill dealing with him.

Hence note, *It is no breach of Charity to ſpeak home, and tell them who oppoſe the truth, that they do wickedly, though otherwiſe they be good men.*

Truth is a friend to be preferred before all friends. We muſt take heed of ſowing pillows under their arms, who maintain a bad Cauſe; they who flatter and ſpeak them fair, do ſo. Such lenitives encourage Error, and ſuch gentleneſs is deadly to thoſe who Err. There is a ſinful provocation in ſpeaking, eſpecially in diſputing; yet we may ſpeak plain, and tell men their own, without any juſt provocation. To maintain love and unity is good, but to maintain purity is better. We muſt rather be againſt all men, then do any thing againſt the truth. Thus *Paul* dealt with *Peter* (Gal. 2. 11.) *I withſtood him to the face, becauſe he was to be blamed.* His holy zeal for God was not ſtopt by the reſpect and reverence which he bare to man. Such was *Job's* courage according to this interpretation, while he ſaid, *Let mine Enemy be as the wicked.* I can give no better Judgment of him in this Caſe.

Verſe 8. **For what is the hope of the hypocrite, though he have gained, when God taketh away his ſoul?**

Some conceive *Job* in theſe words giving a reaſon of what was ſaid before, that he had nothing to do, in a way of complyance with wicked men; for *what is their hope when God taketh away their ſoul?* Who would be in their coat, who though they flouriſh, and are gay while they live, yet will be moſt miſerable when they die. Our reading ſeems to carry this ſence.

Further, We may expound this Text as an argument by which *Job* would prove that he was no hypocrite; as if he had ſaid, *Ye my friends have long ſince given your opinion of me, that I am an hypocrite, and were I indeed ſuch a one, my condition, I confeſs, were moſt miſerable: although I might flatter my ſelf with the gain of outward comforts and advantages in this world, yet when I die* (*it may be to day before to morrow*) *I ſhould have no true comfort in poſſeſſion, nor any ſolid ground to hope for it; For what is the hope of the hypocrite, what comfort, or hope of comfort can he take up, when God taketh away his ſoul? But if God take away my ſoul, I have hope; I am fully perſwaded my hope ſhall not dye when my body dieth, therefore I am no hypocrite, no wicked man.* *Job* hath given proof in divers parts of this Book, that he had hope, and another ſpirit in affliction then the wicked have, therefore his affliction did not prove him wicked. Firſt, he acknowledged all his afflictions to come from God, yea from God as a Father, while he wounded him as an Enemy. Secondly, In his deepeſt afflictions he begged help of God. Thirdly, He had hope of help, or would hope upon God, though he ſhould not help him; this no hypocrite ever did. Yea *Job* profeſſeth, that though God ſhould take away his ſoul, yet he had hope (*Chap.* 13. 15.) *Though he ſlay me, yet will I truſt in him; I will maintain mine own wayes before him; he alſo is my ſalvation, and an hypocrite ſhall not come before him.* *Job* could truſt God ſlaying him, or taking away his ſoul, and therefore he could not but have hope, if God ſhould take away his ſoul. We read (*Chap.* 6. 8, 9, 10.) that when he ſpake of dying, and of his deſire to dye, yea, was begging that he might dye, he declared a lively hope; *O that I might have my requeſt, and that God would grant me the thing that I long for; Even that it would pleaſe God to deſtroy me, that he would let looſe his hand, and cut me off, Then ſhould I yet have comfort*; that is, that would be the moſt comfortable news to me, that I might but die. This is my profeſſion, and this is my perſwaſion, I have hope in death, and therefore I am no hypocrite, as you take me to be; *For what is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God taketh away his ſoul?*

Confirmatio innocentiæ ſuæ à fide in Deum etiam in ipſis afflictionibus Jun.

What is the hope of the hypocrite?

The meaning is, the hypocrite hath no hope at all; he neither hath, nor can have any hope when God taketh away his ſoul. Hope is taken in Scripture divers wayes,

Firſt, For the habit or grace of hope, implanted in the ſoul; as there is a habit of faith, and a habit of love, ſo there is a habit of hope, that is, an abiding principle of it.

Secondly, Hope is put for the putting forth, or for the acting of this grace in our dependance upon God in greateſt ſtraits.

Thirdly, Hope is often put for the object of hope, and that two wayes.

Firſt, For the perſon in whom we hope. Thus God in Scripture is often called hope (*Jer.* 14. 8.) *O the hope of* Iſrael, &c. that is, O thou, in whom thy people hope.

Secondly, Hope is put not only for the perſon in whom we hope, but for the thing or mattter which we hope to attain; the good, the bleſſedneſs which we look or hope for, is in Scripture called hope (*Tit.* 2. 14.) *Looking for that* *bleſſed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.* That bleſſed hope is, that ſtate of bleſſedneſs which believers hope and wait for, at the appearing of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. Here in this place we may take in all, or any of theſe ſences; Hypocrites pretend to the habit of hope, they ſeem to act hope, and to act it both upon God himſelf, and that bleſſedneſs which floweth out from him. But *what is the hope of the hypocrite?* It is nothing; he hath no hope in him, nor is any act of hope put out by him, either upon God, or upon the good things which God hath promiſed in the world to come, how much ſoever he hath *gained in this world. What is the hope of the hypocrite?*

Though he have gained.

There is a difference about the reading of this clauſe. Some thus, *That he ſhould bring it about*, ſo Mr. *Broughton*; *What can be the hope of the hypocrite, that he ſhould bring it about?* that is, that he ſhould perfect or make it good. The hypocrite may have a great hope (which really is only a great preſumption) but he cannot bring his hope about, he cannot compaſs or obtain that which he looks and longs for?

Nam quæ eſt expectatio hypocricæ quam expleverit. Jun.

Secondly, (reads another) *What is the hope of the hypocrite, which he hath fulfilled, or brought about?* As if he had ſaid, *The hypocrite looks but for worldly gain, if he can fill his purſe, and get preferment, if he can fill his belly, and take his pleaſure, he ſits down ſatisfied and ſaith, I have enough. Now what is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath fulfilled this hope? Though he hath gained? Though he hath gotten as much as ever he expected? Though he be as rich, or richer then ever he expected? Though he be as great, and greater in this world, then ever he expected? Though he have as much pleaſure and more then ever he expected? What is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath fulfilled and reached the utmoſt line of all theſe hopes?* May we not write emptineſs and inſufficiency, may we not write weakneſs and uncertainty, may we not write vanity, yea vexation of ſpirit upon the forehead of all theſe things? Then, *What is the hope of the hypocrite, though he have gained?*

Becauſe the particular gain of the hypocrite is not expreſt in the Text, therefore we may affix any thing to it, that is gain in the eſteem of the world, or worldly men; as thus,

Firſt, Though he have gained wife and children, that's one gain.

Secondly, Though he have gained credit, and a good name among men, that's another gain.

Thirdly, Though he hath gained honour and authority above men, though he be become a great man, one of the greateſt men in the world, yea, though he hath gained the command of the whole world, what is his hope?

Eho, pecuniæ accipiter, avidè & invidè, procax rapax, trahax trecentis verſibus tuas impuritates loqui nemo poteſt. Plaut. 1 Perſa.

Fourthly, Though he hath been a *Money-catcher* (as a Heathen deſcribes greedy gripers) like a Kite, or a Hawk, ſnatching at all gain as his game, avaritiouſly heaping up his prey, and glutting himſelf with, and glorying in his abundance, what is his hope?

Fifthly, Though he hath gained (which is a more precious gain then all theſe) all Knowledge and Learning in all Arts and Sciences, and be able to ſpeak with the tongue of Men and Angels, both to God in Praying, and to men in Diſcourſing and Preaching; yet *What is his hope?*

When God taketh away his ſoul.] There are two readings of this laſt Clauſe.

שלה à כשל *Tranquillum eſſe, quieſcere. Si requieſcere feceret Deus animam ejus.*

Firſt, Some derive the word, which we tranſlate **taketh away**, from a root, which ſignifieth to be quiet, and to reſt. Chriſt is called *Shiloh* from this root (*Gen.* 49. 10.) *The Scepter ſhall not depart from* Judah, *nor a law-giver from between his feet, untill* Shiloh *come*; that is, till Chriſt come, who giveth true-reſt, ſoul-reſt, eternal-reſt to his people. And then the Text is rendred thus, *What is the hope of the hypocrite, though he have gained, and God cauſeth his ſoul to reſt, or to be quiet, and ſit at eaſe in the uſe and enjoyment of his gain.* This puts the beſt of the hypocrites caſe; ſuppoſe that he hath gained much, ſuppoſe alſo that God gives him a quiet poſſeſſion of his gain, which is not the lot of many. Some get much, but their ſouls never reſt, they are tumbled up and down with reſtleſs turmoils in the world; they get much trouble to themſelves, by what themſelves have gotten. Thus *Solomon* deſcribes the condition of worldly gainers (*Eccleſ.* 2. 22, 23.) *What hath man of all his labour, and of the vexation of his heart, wherein he hath laboured under the Sun? For all his dayes are ſorrows* (that is, he hath ſorrow all his dayes) *yea his heart taketh not reſt in the night.* And again (*Chap.* 5. 12.) *The aboundance of the rich will not ſuffer him to ſleep.* Uſually the things of the world, either reſt not with us, or make us reſt-leſs; yet it muſt be granted that ſome men gain, and that greatly, and God cauſeth their ſouls to reſt, they are at eaſe in their poſſeſſions. Now though this be the hypocrites preſent caſe, that after he hath gained, God giveth his ſoul reſt. As the rich man adviſed his ſoul (*Luke* 12. 19.) *Thou haſt much goods laid up for many years, take thine eaſe, eat, drink, and be merry.* Suppoſe all this, and let the hypocrites ſoul take eaſe, lye down and tumble in his greatneſs, honour, and riches; let him rock himſelf aſleep in carnal delights and delicacies, yet what is the hope of the hypocrite, when he hath not only gained riches, but gained (which is better then riches) reſt. Though reſt be good, yet the hypocrites reſt is not good; his is a reſt in ſin, as well as in riches, and that is not good; his is a falſe reſt, and that is not good; his is a ſhort reſt, a reſt only fitting and fatting him for the ſlaughter, and ſuch a reſt is not good; though he hath a reſt, yet he hath no hope of reſt, and what is reſt in poſſeſſion, where there is none in expectation?

כשל *extraxerit, à* נשל *quod eſt extrahere educere.*

Secondly, Others derive the Original word from a root, which ſignifies *to pull away, to draw off, to draw out*; ſo we, *What is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God draws out, or takes away his ſoul*; the ſoul is taken away by death, and that by a natural death as well as by a violent. But the word here uſed doth properly imply a violent death, and that ſenee is moſt agreeable to the preſent Text, becauſe the ſoul of a wicked man (as will further appear in the notes) is (as it were) forced out of his body, though he dye (as we ſay) fairly upon his bed. The word ſignifies properly, the drawing of a Sword out of the ſheath or ſcabbard, which notion doth elegantly comply with that expreſſion of the Prophet *Daniel*, who calleth or compareth the body of man to a ſheath; we tranſlate him ſpeaking thus of himſelf, *My ſpirit was grieved within me* (Chap. 7. 15.) The Chaldee is (as we put in the Margin) *in my ſheath*, that is, in my body; the body being as the ſheath, and the ſoul as the ſword. When God calleth the ſoul of *any man* out of his body, he unſheath's it. But he pulls the ſoul of *a wicked man* out of his body, like a ruſty ſword out of the ſheath, which comes not out without much ſtrength and tugging. The word is alſo applied to the pulling of the the ſhoo from the foot; our ſhooes do not drop or fall off, but are untied and pulled off. Thus the word is uſed (*Exod.* 3. 5.) *Put off thy ſhooes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou ſtandeſt is holy ground,* ſaith the Lord to *Moſes* when he appeared in the burning Buſh. The ſoul of a wicked man parts with his body like a ſtrait ſhoo, or a ſhoo faſt tied from the foot, very uneaſily. So that under both alluſions, the word implies ſuch a kind of violence in the departure of the hypocrite out of this life, as if, *loath to depart*, were alwayes his parting, his dying ſong. God putteth off, or pulleth out the ſoul of the hypocrite, he doth not freely reſign or yield it up when called to come forth. So much for the opening of theſe words, *What is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God taketh away his ſoul?* The Obſervations from them are many.

> Firſt, *A wicked man while he liveth may be full of hope, and his hope may live with him as long as he liveth.*

The hypocrites hope is nouriſhed both with temporal and ſpiritual things. He hopeth that he hath the love and favour of God, becauſe he enjoyeth many outward (as he thinks) favours from God. His eſtate is good here, and therefore he hopes it will be ſo hereafter. Poſſibly he is rich and great, and proſperous in the world, and thence concludeth, ſurely God loves me. Yea, and in reference to ſpirituals, the hypocrite may have hope, he may be planted into Church-priviledges, he may be reckoned among Saints, or true believers; he may enjoy all the Ordinances of the Goſpel; he may eat bread at the Table of the Lord, and ſit among the Lords people; All which may breed in him a great deal of hope.

Further, He may have many and great ſpiritual gifts, yea he may have a fair appearance of grace; As he often hath great gifts of knowledge, of utterance, of prayer, ſo he may have that which looks like grace, like faith, like repentance and godly ſorrow, he may have that which looks like love, and humility, and patience, he may have the appearances of all theſe graces, and theſe may wind up his hope very high, and fill his ſails with ſuch ſtrong confidences, that he may reckon himſelf among the darlings of heaven, and the delight of Chriſt. He may look upon himſelf not only as in favour with God, but as one of Gods ſavourites, and ſay in his heart, ſurely I ſhall be ſaved if any are to be ſaved; he may come and lean upon the Lord, as the Prophet tells us that ſinful people did (*Mich.* 3. 11.) *The heads thereof Judge for reward, and the Prieſts thereof teach for hire, and the Prophets thereof divine for money; yet will they lean upon the Lord, and ſay, is not the Lord among us, none evil can come upon us?* But indeed the Lord will do to him as another Prophet (*Ezek.* 29. 7.) ſaith, *Egypt* did to the houſe of *Iſrael*, *When they took hold of thee by the hand, thou didſt break and rent all their ſhoulder; and when they leaned upon thee thou breakeſt and madeſt all their loins to be at a ſtand.* Thus will the Lord do to all thoſe who lean upon, and make their boaſts of him, while their hearts are not perfect with him. And therefore,

Secondly, Obſerve, *Death puts an hypocrite quite off from all his hope; when God taketh away his ſoul, his hope is alſo taken away.*

When he dies, then all his hopes die; as when the Princes of the world die, their thoughts periſh, ſo when they who are meer worldlings periſh, their hopes periſh too. How can an hypocrite hope for good in death, when his hope never entered, nor anchored within the vail, for life? his hope is not faſtened upon the word of eternal life, and therefore his hope cannot be a ſtay to his ſoul when he departs this life. The hope that holds out is entred into that within the vail (*Heb.* 6. 19.) that is, it cloſeth with God himſelf in Jeſus Chriſt, it hath ſweet Communion with God by Jeſus Chriſt our high Prieſt, who as our forerunner is for us entred into heaven. A believer is ſubject to be toſſed with troubles of mind and manifold temptations, as a Ship upon the Sea, while he is in this world; yet that hope which is entered within the vail, ſtayes him as an Anchor ſure and ſtedfaſt in all ſtorms, and in all times. But the Anchor of the hypocrites hope enters not within the vail, but is caſt upon falſe and looſe ground, and therefore when the ſtorm comes his Anchor drives, and is unſtedfaſt, and ſo his hope and heart fail together. The ſtouteſt hypocrite in the world will droop at laſt, when God comes to take away his ſoul; then his Creſt falls, and his Plumes flag. When *the rain deſcendeth, and the floods come, and the winds blow and beat upon the houſe that is built upon the ſand, it falls, and the fall thereof is great* (*Mat.* 7. 27.) A falſe heart cannot hold out in real hardſhips; when rain and floods and winds (by which are meant all the troubles of this life) aſſault him, he runs to ruine, and cannot ſtand his ground: much leſs will he be able to ſtand in the hour of death, when the rain and floods and winds of temptations fall moſt furiouſly upon the ſoul. Thus *Solomon* concludes (*Prov.* 11. 7.) *When a wicked man dieth, his expectation ſhall periſh, and the hope of unjuſt men periſheth.* Poſſibly that may be everlaſting which they hope for, yet their hopes are not laſting; the hopes of ſome periſh, becauſe they hope only for periſhing things; others have hopes of unperiſhing things, whoſe hope yet ſhall periſh. The voluptuous rich man is ſaid *to have had his good things* (*Luke* 16. 15.) He had no more to hope for, no more to look for, his hope periſhed when God took away his ſoul. When a godly man dieth, his hope is perfected by the fruition of that which he hoped for, he enjoyeth all and more then ever he expected. But when an ungodly man dieth, his hope periſheth in a diſappointment of fruition, he enjoyeth nothing at all of all that, which he (though with little reaſon) ſo much expected.

Again, *What is the hope of the hypocrite, though he have gained?* The Spirit of God joyns *gain* with the *hypocrite.*

Hence Obſerve, Thirdly, *Covetouſneſs and hypocriſie uſually dwell together.*

The true love of worldly gain, and the falſe love of ſpiritual gain, hunt in couples, and are ſeldom ſevered. Hypocriſie aims at gain, and often hits it, but it alwayes miſſeth true gain; falſeneſs in the things of God, waits for fulneſs in the things of men, but real fulneſs it gets none. When a falſe heart ſeeth that Religion is in credit, that godlineſs is the way to worldly greatneſs, and that (as ſometimes it doth, though rarely) the profeſſion of it leadeth to advancement; preſently he takes upon him the profeſſion of Religion, and puts on the garb or faſhion of godlineſs. Chriſt ſaith of hypocrites, *They devour widows houſes, and for a pretence make long prayers.* A falſe heart prayeth, and will be much in duty, that he may devour the houſes and eſtates of others, or that he may ſmooth his way to his own ends; but he cares not to be, nor is he at all in duty to draw near to God, or improve his own ſpiritual eſtate to the end. This is a dangerous temptation in theſe times, becauſe now Religion is looked upon with a good eye, and Religious godly men are in place; a falſe heart works upon this, and will be in any form of Religion, that hath a fair acceptance in the world, through the favourable eye of Princes and earthly Powers, caſt upon it. The Apoſtle ſpeaks of ſome (1 *Tim.* 6. 5.) who *ſuppoſed that gain was godlineſs*; and ſurely the end which ſuch had in profeſſing godlineſs, was that they might be gainers, or have outward preferment by it. As for godlineſs in it ſelf, or abſtractly conſidered, they deſpiſed it, they cared no more for it then for their old ſhooes; but the hope of gain was ſo ſweet to them, or they were ſo hungry and ſharp ſet after it, that they counted godlineſs, which to their natural appetite was bitter, or at beſt had no better taſte in their palates, then the white of an egg, to be a pleaſant morſel. Covetouſneſs being predominant in the hypocrite, he will be ſo far a ſervant to any thing as it brings in gain, which is the diet and food of covetouſneſs.

Fourthly, *Job* ſuppoſeth the hypocrite gaining,

Hence Note, *Hypocrites may, and uſually do, gain much in this world.*

As they have a great deſire of worldly gain, ſo they get it; they would fain have the world, and God ſaith, *take it.* The Lord gives them (as he gave the *Iſraelites* in the Wilderneſs, (*Pſal.* 78. 29, 30.) *Their own deſire, and they are not eſtranged from their luſts*, that is, they have what they will or luſt to have. God gives them their requeſt (*Pſal.* 106. 15.) but *ſends leanneſs into their ſoul*, yea, while the meat is in their mouthes the wrath of God comes upon them. The hypocrite brings his hope about, he fulfils his deſire, and obtains what he projects; hypocriſie is to ſome a very thriving trade. The hearts of Saints only are filled with the *hidden Manna*, but the bellies of the wicked are often filled with *hidden Treaſure* (*Pſal.* 17. 14.) that is, with thoſe dainties and good things, which are vertually hidden in, and formally ſpring out of the belly and bowels of the earth. The Lord eaſily grants them their wiſh in ſuch things, and gives them their portion (which is all their portion) in this life. For as they are but common profeſſors, ſo theſe are but common mercies, ſuch as many of his Enemies receive, who are but fatted as Oxen for the ſlaughter, and fitted for deſtruction. True happineſs is not to be judged by lands or houſes, by gold or ſilver. The world is a narrow bound, unleſs we get beyond the creature, and ſet our hopes above this world, we cannot be happy. As hypocrites deſire, ſo they attain much of the world, but they ſhall attain no more, how much ſoever they ſeem to deſire it.

Obſerve, Fifthly, *Riches or worldly gains avail nothing in the approaches of death.*

The hypocrite (which *Job* Chap. 31. 24.) profeſſed he had not done) *maketh gold his hope, and ſaith to the fine gold, thou art my Confidence.* But when pale death appears, when the King of terrours ſhews his face, neither gold nor fine gold can give any comfort. The Apoſtle *Paul* could ſay upon a well grounded aſſurance (*Phil.* 1. 21.) *To me to die is gain.* Happy are they who gain when they die, but all the gains of this life cannot make us die happily. *Solomon* hath told us ſo, (*Prov.* 11. 4.) *Riches profit not in the day of wrath, but righteouſneſs delivereth from death.* Riches and profits are (in common ſpeech) the ſame things, yet there's a time when riches are unprofitable. Many have been delivered unto death for their righteouſneſs (*Mat.* 5. 10.) yet righteouſneſs will deliver all, that have it, from death, that is, from the ſting and wrath that is in death. But ſaith the Prophet (*Ezek.* 7. 19.) *Their ſilver and their gold ſhall not be able to deliver them in the day of the wrath of the Lord*; whether that be a day of common publick deſtruction upon a Nation, or a day of particular perſonal death. And ſeeing worldly things give us no relief in death, let not us linger after, much leſs live upon wordly things; let us not live upon worldly things while we live here, much leſs expect any thing from them when we go hence. Godlineſs will ſtand by us when we die, the riches of faith, the gain of ſpiritual knowledge and experience, the encreaſes of grace which we have made, will ſtand by us, and ſtand us in ſtead when we are dropping to the ground, and our frail bodies falling into the grave. When God takes away the ſoul of a believer, all his ſoul gains ſhall abide with him; But, *what doth all that avail a rich man which he hath, if he hath not God, who gave him all that he hath?* They who (as Chriſt ſpeaketh, *Luk.* 12. 20.) *Lay up treaſure for themſelves, and are not rich towards God,* that is, rich in the graces which they have received from God, and rich in the duties and acts of grace which they have returned unto God. They (I ſay) who are not thus rich towards God, ſhall find no benefit in all the treaſures which they have laid up for themſelves, in the day of their greateſt need, the day of death.

Quid prodeſt diviti quod habet, ſi deū, qui omnia dedit, non habet. Aug. Epiſt. 7c.

Sixthly, *Job* ſpeaks here ſlightingly of all the hypocrites gain upon this account, becauſe his ſoul continues in a loſt condition. *What is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained, &c.*

Hence Note, *They are miſerable who loſe their ſouls, though they get much of, or all this world.*

He makes an ill market that puts off his ſoul at any price; Chriſt who knew the worth of a ſoul, and laid down a price to the utmoſt worth of ſouls, puts theſe queſtions (*Mat.* 16. 26.) *What is a man profited, if he ſhall gain the whole world, and looſe his own ſoul? or what ſhall a man give in exchange for his ſoul*; that is, he is not at all profited by all the profits of the world, if he looſe his ſoul; nor is there any thing in this world, which a man giving, may receive his loſt ſoul back again, as it were by way of Barter and Exchange.

Seventhly, From thoſe words, *When God taketh away his ſoul.*

Obſerve, *The ſoul is at Gods diſpoſe, he may ſend for it when he will.*

The Lord can command away the Soul of the ſtrongeſt, of the richeſt, of the wiſeſt; life and death are in the hand of God. He can either cut the thred of life, or ſpin it out at pleaſure. *Moſes* tells the *Jews* as one man (*Deut.* 30. 20.) *He is thy life, and the length of thy dayes.* He alſo *diſpenceth death, and ſhortneſs of dayes.* The marriage of the ſoul and body together is life; the breaking of this marriage bond, or the parting of ſoul and body is death. God can part the ſoul from the body, he can break that marriage bond when, and how he pleaſeth. He can uncloath the ſoul, and leave it naked, he can quickly ſtrip it of this garment of fleſh. The ſoul ſeparate from the body is naked and uncloathed. So the Apoſtle ſpeaks about his own death (2 *Cor.* 5. 2, 3, 4.) *Not that he would be uncloathed, but cloathed upon, that mortality might be ſwallowed up of life.* When we are uncloathed or die, mortality ſwalloweth us up, but when we ſhall be cloathed upon with, or live in glory, mortality ſhall be ſwallowed up. Now, as the time when the body ſhall be cloathed with glory, and mortality ſhall be for ever ſwallowed up; ſo the time when the ſoul ſhall be uncloathed of this body, and this life ſwallowed up of mortality, is at the appointment, and under the decree of God. When God will take away the ſoul no man knows, only this we know, that he both can and may take it away when he will.

Laſtly, As theſe words, (*God taketh away his ſoul*) imply a force.

Obſerve, *Though hypocrites and moſt wicked men dye a natural death, yet to them their death is violent.*

Their ſouls are, as it were, ſnatcht, and taken, yea rent and torn from them; a wicked man doth not Commend his ſoul into the hands of God, but the hand of God taketh and pulleth his ſoul from him. Old *Simeon* could ſay, *Lord, now letteſt thou thy ſervant depart in peace* (*Luk.* 2. 29.) And *Paul* could ſay, *I deſire to depart* (*Phil.* 1. 23.) No hypocrite could ever make any of theſe prayers, for if his tongue hath ſpoken them, his heart hath not. An hypocrite may ſometimes deſire to die, but he is never willing to die. We read in the book of the *Revelation* (*Chap.* 9. 6.) that *many men ſhall ſeek death and ſhall not find it, and ſhall deſire to die, and death ſhall flee from them.* But was this becauſe they were willing to die? No, but becauſe they were weary of their lives, or afraid to live: they did not ſee any other good in death, but to get out of the penal evils of this life. Thus a wicked man may deſire to die, that he may be quit of the troubles miſeries and dangers that threaten his life, but he is never willing to die when he quietly enjoys the good things of this life; much leſs doth he ſee that the beſt things of this life are better'd in the next. He doth not ſee that there is more good to come then any that he leaves; yea, he will not leave his ſin, his beloved luſt, for any good that is to come. And therefore though the Lord ſuffer him to live till he be as fruitfully ripe, yea almoſt rotten, and ready to drop off the tree, though he be ſo old that he can live a natural life no longer; yet his death is violent to him. As the ſecond or eternal death rejoyns and reunites his ſoul to his body ſore againſt his will, ſo the firſt or temporal death ſeparates and pulls his ſoul from his body ſore againſt his will. There are two ſpecial Conſiderations, upon which it doth appear, that a hypocrite can never die (in this ſence) but a violent death.

Firſt, He cannot freely ſubmit to the decree of death; he cannot die in obedience as a true believer doth. *He that doth not live in obedience, can never die in obedience.* As *Chriſt was obedient unto death, even the death of the Croſs*; So Saints (in their degree) are obedient, not only all their lives, but they are obedient unto death, that is, their dying is an act of obedience. But it is impoſſible that the hypocrite, who never lived in obedience to the commandment of God, ſhould die in obedience to the decree of God.

Secondly, He hath no footing in, or Aſſurance of a better life; he never took hold of Eternal life, therefore he can never willingly let go his hold of a temporal life. No man willingly parts with what he hath, until he hath ſome evidence and aſſurance, at leaſt ſome good hope of that which is better, or which he (at leaſt) conceives to be better then what he hath. A man will not readily give up his poſſeſſion of a ſmoaky Cottage, when he ſees, if he leave it, he muſt be expoſed to all the injuries of wind and weather, of froſt and ſnow, in the open air. So then, He that hath not in him a principle of Obedience, while he lives, nor a well-grounded hope of happineſs when he dieth, cannot die willingly. And therefore, That is verified upon every wicked man in the world when he dieth, which is ſaid to the worldly rich man, (*Luke* 12. 20.) *This night ſhall thy ſoul be required of thee*; His ſoul is required, not reſigned, 'tis taken away, not given up; And though he ſay, he deſireth to be diſſolved, is none of his deſire; He may chuſe death (according to his corrupt Judgment) as the leſſer evil, but he never chuſeth it as that which leadeth to the greateſt good.

Thus we have ſeen ſome what of *Job's* mind in aſſerting the ſincerity of his ſoul towards God, by his hope in God when his ſoul ſhould leave his body, while he in a way of diminution puts the queſtion, *What is the hope of the hypocrite, though he have gained, when God taketh away his ſoul?*

VERS. 9, 15.

Will God hear his cry, when trouble cometh upon him? Will he delight himſelf in the Almighty? will he alwayes call upon God?

IN theſe two verſes *Job* proſecutes and proves what he had aſſerted in the former verſe, that, *The hypocrite hath* *no hope; What is the hope of the hypocrite, when God taketh away his ſoul?* He that hath hope ſhall be anſwered when he prayeth, God will hear his cry. He that hath hope delighteth in God, when he ſeeth nothing but cauſes of ſorrow in the world. Hope encourageth the ſoul to ſeek unto God without ceaſing in the loweſt ebb, and darkeſt night of outward trouble. But all theſe run croſs to the hypocrite, He ſhall cry and not be heard, He hath no delight in God, nor can he hold out long in calling upon God; Therefore he hath no hope. *Job's* proof ariſeth two wayes; He argues, Firſt, From what God would not do; *God will not hear his cry, when trouble cometh upon him,* therefore he hath no hope, that's his firſt argument; Secondly, He argues from what the hypocrite would not do; and that in two particulars. Firſt, his not delighting in God; *Will he delight himſelf in the Almighty?* The ſence of the queſtion is Negative; He will not, and therefore he hath no hope. Secondly, He argues from his not perſevering in prayer to God; *Will he alwayes call upon God?* He will not, and therefore he hath no hope.

Verſ. 9. **Will God hear his cry?**

No, He will not. The Lord hears the leaſt whiſper of a gracious ſoul, the language of his heart, his thoughts, have a ſound in the ears of God; But the cry, the loudeſt cry of an hypocrite, *God will not hear!* That is, he will not ſhew him favour by granting him that which he cryed for. God hears what is ſaid in prayer, whoſoever prayeth, but there are many prayers made which he doth not grant; it is no good to us to be heard, unleſs we be thus heard; in Scripture language, not to be helped is not to be heard.

Clamare eſt ardentius aut contentius implorare opem.

Will God hear his cry?] By a cry, we are to underſtand more then ordinary prayer, crying is vehement praying; crying notes earneſtneſs, or fervency in prayer. *This poor man cryed,* ſaith the Prophet (*Pſal.* 34. 6.) that is, he prayed mightily) *and the Lord heard him, and ſaved him out of all his troubles.* (Exod. 14. 15.) *And the Lord ſaid unto Moſes, Wherefore cryeſt thou unto me?* that is, why doſt thou call ſo earneſtly upon me? *Moſes* cryed though he ſpake nothing, it was the intention of his ſpirit, not the loudneſs of his voice; it was the clamor of his heart, not of his mouth that made the cry. As in Scripture the multiplying of prayer, notes the intention of the ſpirit in it (*Iſa.* 1. 15.) *When you ſpread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when you make many prayers, I will not hear; your hands are full of blood.* So crying out in any one prayer, ſhews utmoſt intention of the Spirit in it. *Will God hear his cry?* That is, will he hear when he is moſt urgent and importunate in prayer? when his ſpirit is, as it were, all on fire, or inflamed in prayer? No, he will not; God will, not only, not hear his ſloathful prayers, and his ſleepy prayers, his cold-hearted, and dead-hearted prayers, but when he ſeemeth to be moſt warm and lively in prayer, when he ſeems to be moſt hearty and preſſing in prayer, God will not hear him. This aggravates the miſery of the hypocrite exceedingly; And yet that which followeth, aggravates it much more, *Will God hear his cry*

When trouble comes upon him?

An hypocrite would not much care if he were not heard in times of peace, and in the affluence of outward injoyments; but this pincheth him to purpoſe, that God will not hear his cry when trouble cometh upon him; ſuch trouble as is a ſtreight, and puts him between two walls, yea that puts him (as it were) in the ſtocks, or in priſon, that puts him in little caſe; ſuch a kind of trouble, a ſtrieghtning trouble is here meant, yea and a vexing trouble. Many troubles may come upon us, and yet not put us to ſtreights, we may be in trouble, and yet ſee our way out of trouble; but that man is in a ſad condition, who being in trouble knows not which way to turn for help in the world, and while he turns himſelf to God, God will not hear him.

Verbo veniandi, *videtur indicare liberam quandã poteſtatem caſtrametantis, aut adventantis exercitus ex jure Juſtiſſimi belli.* Pined.

When trouble cometh.] The action or motion of a living creature is here aſcribed to trouble, *trouble cometh;* 'tis uſual in Scripture to ſpeak ſo; and it is an alluſion unto an adverſary or an enemy, whether a ſingle perſon, or an army. Thus it is expreſſed by *Solomon* (*Prov.* 6. 11.) *So ſhall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man.* The ſloathful man or ſluggard (for of him that Text ſpeaks) ſits ſtill, but poverty is upon its ſpeed, and travelleth hard to over-take him; and as his poverty is ſaid to come like a *traveller*, becauſe it comes ſpeedily, ſo it is ſaid to come like an *armed man*, becauſe it comes violently, and as to him irreſiſtably. Thus trouble cometh upon the hypocrite, it cometh like an armed man, yea it cometh like a whole army of men, it incamps round about him, and beſieges him on every ſide. As Chriſt ſpeaks of *Jeruſalem* (*Luke* 19. 43.) *The dayes ſhall come upon thee, that thine enemies ſhall caſt a trench about thee, and compaſs thee round, and keep thee in on every ſide;* they ſhall put thee, as it were, into a pound; That's the Emphaſis of the word here, trouble ſhall come like an army of enemies upon the hypocrite, and then he will cry aloud to the Lord for help, but the Lord will not hear his cry. His troubles ſhall prevail upon him, and be remedileſs, becauſe his prayer doth not prevail with God, but is returned or ſent back anſwerleſs.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *Trouble ſhall come upon and overcome the hypocrite.*

Many are the troubles of the righteous, or upright; and the hypocrite doth not ſcape without his troubles; he meets them many times in his way, and he meets them alwayes at his end. A godly man may often meet with trouble in his way, but he never meets it at his end (*Pſal.* 37. 37, 38.) *Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace. But the tranſgreſſors ſhall be deſtroyed together, the end of the wicked ſhall be cut off;* that is, either the thing which he propoſed to himſelf as his deſign or end ſhall be cut off, or himſelf ſhall be cut off in the end. An hypocrite muſt needs meet with trouble, becauſe he is ſo ſinful, and when he meets with trouble, that muſt needs deſtroy him, becauſe he lies open, or naked to it, and hath no ſhelter againſt it; he is not under the protection of God, he hath not any one promiſe in the whole book of God to friend, when enemies and troubles come. He is not fenced and fortified as the upright are, God is a wall, even a wall of fire about his people, he is their defence and bulwark, their ſtrong tower and deliverer. They have many fortifications againſt troubles; though they are much aſſaulted, yet they are well-defended, God himſelf is their fortification, their ſtrong-hold, they are not a naked people; but an hypocrite is expoſed naked to the ſhock and ſhot of every trouble. Sin doth not only bereave us of our innocency, but of our ſafety. It doth not only cloath us with impurity, but uncloath us of power. When *Aaron* had made the Golden Calf, *Moſes* coming down from the Mount, both rebukes and queſtions him about it; *And he ſaw that the people were naked, for Aaron had made them naked to their ſhame amongſt their enemies* (*Exod.* 32. 25.) How had *Aaron* made them naked? not by taking their cloaths of from their bodies; for he took nothing of them towards the making of the Golden Calf, but their Golden-earings (*verſ.* 2, 3.) which they might well enough ſpare, and not be corporally naked: But *Moſes* ſaw them ſtript of the protection and favourable preſence of God, which was not only as a garment to defend them from cold and ſhame, but as an armour of proof, or as a ſtrong tower, to defend them from danger. A godly man ſinning, renders himſelf ſometimes thus naked; but a wicked man is always thus naked, he hath not a rag of a promiſe to put about him, and is therefore obnoxious to the incurſions of every evil. His ſin haſtens the coming of trouble, and his ſin leaves him unguarded when trouble comes. *He that dwelleth in the ſecret place of the moſt High, ſhall abide under the ſhadow of the Almighty* (Pſal. 91. 1.) and to ſhew that a man reſting in God is ſecure, be his dangers never ſo great, and his caſe never ſo deſperate; the Pſalmiſt gives aſſurance to ſuch a one (*verſ.* 4, 5.) *He ſhall cover thee with his feathers* (as which is *Moſes* his alluſion, *Deut.* 32. 11.) *the Eagle fluttereth over her young,* or as (which is Chriſts alluſion) *the hen gathereth her chickens under her wings,* ſo) *under his wings ſhalt thou truſt: his truth ſhall be thy Shield and Buckler, thou ſhalt not be afraid, for the terrour by night, nor for the arrow that flieth by day.* But the hypocrites breaſt ſtands open like a Butt to all the terrours and arrows of the Almighty.

Now the troubles that come upon the hypocrite, are of two ſorts; Firſt, They are troubles from without; Secondly, Troubles from within, troubles of body, and troubles of mind; his conſcience, which knows what he hath done, and hath accuſed him for what he hath done, is ready to vex and trouble him for what he hath done. Conſcience having judged and condemned him, wounds and torments him, and he hath nothing either to keep off the ſtroak of it, or to heal it. Thus all ſorts of trouble invade and aſſault him, while he hath no real remedy or relief againſt any of them. For *God will not hear his cry when trouble cometh upon him.*

Secondly, When *Job* querieth, *Will God hear his cry*, &c. he ſuppoſeth and takes it for granted, that he will cry, when trouble comes upon him.

Hence Obſerve, *Even hypocrites will pray in times of trouble.*

They have the form of prayer, who neither have any power with God in prayer, nor have ever felt the power of it upon their own hearts. Heathens who know not the true God, have been known to pray, and will pray in trouble; then much more will hypocrites, who both know and profeſs his name. It is natural to pray in trouble, and therefore no marvel if they who have no grace fall on their knees, and cry out for mercy, when miſery falls upon them. *God is near in the mouths of many* (as the Prophet expreſſeth them, *Jer.*12.2.) *yet far from their reins.* They greatly deſire help from him, though they do not at all deſire him. The Prophet (*Iſa.*16.12.) ſaith of Idolatrous *Moab, It ſhall come to paſs, that when it is ſeen, that Moab is weary on the high place, that he ſhall come to his Sanctuary to pray*; that is, when he hath laboured in vain, by offering Sacrifices in the high place to other Idols for protection, then he ſhall apply himſelf by prayer to *Chemoſh* his chief Idol God, in that prophane Sanctuary built and dedicated to that dunghil deity, as his laſt refuge, yet ſtill in vain. And we read that when the ſtorm was up, thoſe Marriners being afraid, *Cryed every man unto his God,* (*Jonah* 1.5.) Theſe Marriners were heathens and lived without God in the world, yet every one of them had his god. *It is natural to own a God, but to own the one God is a work of Grace.* And natural men who ſeldom call upon God, are therefore by the Prophet (*Jer.* 10.25.) called *the families, that call not upon his Name*, and by the Pſalmiſt, ſuch as have not God in *all their thoughts,* (*Pſal.* 10.4.) that is, God is not at all in their thoughts; yet theſe will go to God and call upon him, when they are ſo urged with ſtorms, that they know not whither elſe to go, nor any beſide to call upon. Yea they who know God and profeſs his name, are ſometimes negligent and remiſs in prayer, till they are quickned by their own ſmart, (*Iſa.* 26.16.) *Lord, in trouble have they viſited thee, they poured out a prayer when thy chaſtening was upon them.* Grace acted little in that people till ſenſe was touched; afflictions quickned them to duty; and the rod of God upon their backs, was a means to ſtir their hearts to God. Before they prayed as if they did not pray, then they prayed as if they did nothing but pray, or had nothing to do but to pray. *Lord, in trouble they have viſited thee:* God had little of their company, few of their viſits, till he viſited them; he had ſcarce drops of prayer, when they had ſhowers of mercy: But when the Lords chaſtning hand was upon them, they poured out ſhowers of prayer. Now as trouble occaſions a godly man to pray much, and the ſtraits which God ſendeth him, ſend him to God with a more enlarged heart; ſo trouble will compel them to pray who ſeldom uſe to pray at all, and never delight at all to pray. When nature ſuffers, meer natural men will cry to God, the groſs hypocrite will then call upon God, much more the refined, or fine-ſpun hypocrite; *They who never made God their choice, will ſometimes make him their refuge.*

Thirdly, Obſerve, *A wicked man will not only pray in trouble, but he will pray earneſtly.*

His prayer may amount to a cry. When *Moſes* was in that great ſtreight, he did no more as to the outward act, he did but *cry to the Lord.* Hypocrites will do ſo too (1 *Kings* 18.28.) It is ſaid of *Baals* Prieſts that they cryed; *They cryed loud, and cut themſelves after their manner with knives, and lancers, till the blood guſhed out upon them*; ſee how vehement they were in their ſuperſtitious devotion, they *cryed, O Baal, hear us, they cryed from morning until noon*; an hypocrite will do all that a godly man doth, as to the outſide of it, he will pray and pray aloud, he will cry and cry aloud; ſo far as prayer is a bodily exerciſe he will go; yea ſo far as prayer is an exerciſe of the ſoul, with reſpect to bodily or ſelfiſh ends, he will go too, and that with earneſtneſs. Want of outward good, and fear of evil, will make the worſt of men beſtir themſelves. The Prophet brings in the Lord at once diſcovering and diſowning ſuch importunate ſuiters for their bellies (*Hoſ.*7.14.) They cryed and they howled, but (ſaith the Lord) *they have not cryed unto me with their heart, when they howled upon their beds*; with what then did they cry and howl, if not with their hearts? the ſame verſe reſolves us, that they cryed with *their bodies*, for it follows, *they aſſemble themſelves for corn and for wine, and they rebel againſt me.* Here's the true Character of a hypocrite; Firſt, He ſeeks God for the loaves; Secondly, He prayeth, and ſinneth; he ſeeketh the favour of God, but rebels againſt the will of God; thus he runs his round of praying and ſeeking, of ſinning and rebelling; he may be very earneſt in the two former, but is moſt earneſt in the latter.

Fourthly, Note, *It is tronble chiefly, if not only, which moves a hypocrite to pray.*

A day of trouble is not only the ſpecial time when an hypocrite prayeth, but it is, upon the matter, the only time. Trouble is that ſpecial time wherein a godly man prayeth; *Is any one afflicted? let him pray* (*Jam.* 5.13.) yet he prays at all times; he prays not only becauſe he hath need to pray, but becauſe he loves to pray, and finds ſweetneſs in the act as well as in the anſwer or iſſue. But a carnal heart hath no mind to the duty, but when he is goaded on by trouble, or driven by neceſſity; and then his mind is more upon the ſupply of his neceſſity, then upon the right and holy performance of the duty. *A good heart prayeth in trouble: but when trouble only makes us pray, that is an argument of an evil heart* (*Pſal.*32.6.) *For this ſhall every one that is godly pray unto thee, in a time when thou mayeſt be found*; or, *in a finding time.* But what means the Pſalmiſt when he ſaith, *For this ſhall every one that is godly pray unto thee*; What is this, *For this?* I anſwer, It may refer either to the mercy already ſhewed him in the forgiveneſs of his ſin, mentioned in the former verſe, or to his protection in, and deliverance from danger, promiſed in the latter end of this; *For this, ſhall every one that is godly pray unto thee, in a time when thou mayeſt be found: Surely in the floods of great waters they ſhall not come nigh unto him*; that is, theſe floods ſhall not, theſe floods of great waters are great afflictions and tribulations, which is a frequent alluſion in Scripture (*Pſal.* 69.2.) *I am come into deep waters* (of trouble) *where the floods* (of ſorrow and tribulation) *overflow me*; and again (*verſ.* 15.) *Let not the water-flood* (that is, violent afflictions) *over-flow me.* When theſe floods of great waters are up and threaten to ſweep us away, then is a time, wherein the godly man pours out floods of prayers and tears to God for help; But the ſprings and ſtreams of prayer are not dried up in him in the faireſt day and warmeſt Sun-ſhine of outward peace and proſperity. He prayeth in ſickneſs, and ſo he doth in health; he prayeth in poverty, and ſo he doth in riches; He prayeth in a time of darkneſs, and ſo he doth when the candle of God ſhineth upon his head, and he waſheth his footſteps with butter. He ſeeks relief by prayer in bad times, and prayer is a refreſhing to him in the beſt times. As for the hypocrite, till trouble is upon him, God heareth not of him, he doth not pray that he may do an honour to God, and ſhew his love to God, or becauſe he rejoyceth in communion with God, but becauſe he would get off his burthen, and be at eaſe; *for this* he prayeth, and prayeth hard. *Pharaoh* prayed, and he begged others to pray for him when he was in trouble, (*Exod.*8.8.) *Then Pharaoh called for Moſes and Aaron, and ſaid, Intreat the Lord, that he may take away the frogs from me, and from my people, and I will let the people go, that they may do ſacrifice unto the Lord.* O take away the frogs from me; they troubled him, but he ſaid not, O take away my hard heart from me; that troubled him not. And again, we have him in the ſame tune, (*Chap.* 10.17.) *Now therefore forgive, I pray thee, my ſin only this once, and intreat the Lord your God that he may take away from me this death only.* O this death; Himſelf prayed, and beſought *Moſes* to pray alſo; but, what was it

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for? what moved him to pray? It was, that death might be removed, not ſin, or if he prayed that ſin might be removed, it was only as to the puniſhment of it, not as to the pollution of it. When *Peter* ſpake thoſe bitter words to *Simon Magus*, telling him *he was in the Gall of bitterneſs*, (*Act.* 8. 24.) *Tnen Simon anſwered and ſaid, pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of theſe things which ye have ſpoken, come upon me.* He did not beg their prayers that he might be delivered from his ſinful ſtate, *from the gall of bitterneſs, and the bond of iniquity*, in which *Peter* told him he then was, but that he might be delivered from that miſerable ſtate in which he feared ſhortly to be; *pray that none of theſe things which ye have ſpoken come upon me.* The heart of the hypocrite is chiefly drawn out to prayer in two caſes: Firſt, To prevent trouble threatned, as *Simon Magus*, O pray that none of theſe things may come upon me; Secondly, To get off, or out of trouble inflicted, as *Pharoah*, O pray, that theſe frogs, this death may be taken away. We muſt pray, and that earneſtly, when trouble cometh, but we muſt not defer prayer, no nor earneſt prayer till trouble cometh. A godly man looks upon trouble as the occaſion of prayer, but the hypocrite, as the cauſe of it.

Fifthly, Obſerve, *God doth not regard nor anſwer the prayer of an hypocrite, no not in trouble.*

As wicked men do every thing againſt the godly, ſo every thing with God, but prevail. They may pray as *Jacob* did in his troubles, but they ſhall not be *Iſraels*, Princes and prevailers with God in prayer as *Jacob* was; God will not hear their cry when trouble cometh, though they come to him in trouble. But ſome may ſay, how then doth the Lord anſwer his own promiſe? (*Pſal.* 50. 15.) *Call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee, and thou ſhalt glorifie me.* And again (*Iſa.* 65. 24.) *Before they call I will anſwer, and while they are yet ſpeaking I will hear.* If the Lord hath promiſed to hear before we call, will he not hear when we call? I anſwer, God is true to his own promiſe of hearing prayer, but he never promiſed to hear the prayer of the hypocrite. He hath promiſed to hear prayer; but firſt, it is the prayer of the upright, (*Prov.* 15. 8.) *The ſacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord, but the prayer of the upright is his delight.* The blind man could ſay, *Now we know that God heareth not ſinners; but if any man be a worſhipper of God, and doth his will, him he heareth*, (*Joh.* 9. 31.) But ſome may ſay, doth not God hear ſinners? why, whom doth he hear then? if he hear not ſinners, he muſt hear none; for all are ſinners. I anſwer, God heareth not ſinners, that is, ſuch as delight in ſin, and live in a ſtate of ſin, eſpecially when ſuch pretend highly to holineſs and the wayes of God as moſt hypocrites do. All perſons unregenerate are ſinners in the ſence of that Scripture, and ſo God may be ſaid, not to hear any of them; but hypocrites are the worſt of ſinners, for they not only have ſin in them, and are in ſin, but live in ſin, and love their ſin, while they pretend love unto God; While they pray, they regard iniquity in their heart; and of ſuch *David* ſaith, God will not hear their prayer, yea he puts the caſe, not in a ſecond or third, but in his own perſon. (*Pſal.* 66. 18.) *If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.* It is poſſible for a godly man, a *David*, under temptation, to ſhew ſo much countenance to this or that iniquity, as may juſtly be interpreted a regarding of it in his heart; and when he doth ſo, even he may have his prayer return'd with a preſent ſlight inſtead of a grant; yet I conceive that ſuppoſition is rather put to ſhew the certainty of the thing, that God will not hear the prayer of ſuch as regard iniquity in their hearts, then to ſhew that *David* or any godly man may regard iniquity in his heart. As when he ſaith (*Pſal.* 46. 2.) *We will not fear, though the earth be removed*; It doth not ſuppoſe, the removing of the earth, but is a ſtrong proof, they ſhould not fear; So when *David* ſaith, *If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.* The ſuppoſition doth only give a ſtronger proof, that God will not hear their prayers, who regard iniquity in their hearts: And to do ſo is the very ſpirit of hypocriſie. The hypocrite ever regards iniquity in his heart, what profeſſious ſoever he may make, or how bitterly ſoever he may ſpeak againſt it with his mouth; though he complain againſt ſin, yet he complieth with it; though he diſclaim it in words, yet his ſoul cleaveth to and cloſeth with it, therefore God will not hear his prayer. The Lord hath not promiſed to be nigh unto them in the things they call upon him for, whoſe hearts are far from him, and falſe to him in the things which he commands and requireth of them. The promiſe runs in this tenour; *The Lord is nigh to all that call npou him, to all that call upon him in truth*, (*Pſal.* 145. 18.) And that a twofold truth; Firſt, According to the truth of his rule; Secondly, In the truth of their own hearts. The latter part of the verſe is a correction of, or gives direction about the former; As if the Pſalmiſt had ſaid, when I ſay, the Lord is nigh to all that call upon him, my meaning is, he is nigh, not to all that call upon him any how, or in any manner, but to all that call upon him in truth; and indeed others do not, truly, call upon God at all. Secondly, The Lord hath promiſed to hear prayer, but whoſe prayer? the prayer of a believer; now an hypocrite hath no faith, he hath much preſumption, but no faith; it is an eaſie matter to believe, beſide the promiſe, or without a promiſe, (as every hypocrite doth) but it is a hard matter to believe upon, or in the promiſe. And the Apoſtle concludes, (*Heb.* 11. 6.) that *without faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe God*, for *he that cometh to God* (in prayer) *muſt believe, that God is, and that he is a rewarder of all them that diligently ſeek him. Whatſoever ye ſhall ask in prayer believing* (ſaith Chriſt, *Mat.* 21. 22.) *ye ſhall receive*; and his meaning is, that without believing, we ſhall receive nothing. They who pray believing, ask according to the will of God, both for matter and manner, and are therefore heard: But they who pray preſuming, ask contrary to the will of God, either for the matter or the manner, and therefore are not heard. Thirdly, God hath promiſed to hear prayer, but whoſe prayer? the prayer of the *humble*, of the *broken-hearted, and contrite*, (*Pſal.* 51. 17.) He that hath not faith, hath nothing to get a mercy with, and he that hath not a broken heart, hath nothing to put a mercy in. Now the hypocrites heart is a proud and an unbroken heart, therefore his prayer is not under a promiſe to be heard. Fourthly, The Lord promiſeth to hear prayer, but whoſe prayer? it is the prayer of a willing people, or of ſuch whoſe prayer is a free-will-offering. *David* prayeth (*Pſal.* 119. 108.) *Accept I beſeech thee, the free-will-offerings of my mouth*; that is, thoſe ſupplications which my mouth freely offers. But the hypocrites prayer is not a free-will-offering, he prayes not becauſe he is free to the duty of prayer, but becauſe he would be freed from trouble by prayer. He prayeth only to have his turn ſerved, or to get an alms. Now that prayer which is not a free-will-offering, is not accepted of the Lord. From the induction of theſe particulars (and many more might be added) it appears, that the hypocrites prayer is unheard, and unanſwered, not becauſe God doth in the leaſt forget or fail in his promiſe of hearing prayer, but becauſe the hypocrites prayer comes not into the account and qualification of thoſe prayers which God hath promiſed to hear and anſwer. God only hears the prayer of the upright, of the believing, of the broken hearted, of the willing; the hypocrites prayer is none of theſe, and therefore is not under a promiſe to be heard. Yea the Scripture thunders againſt him, when he ſeems to thunder to heaven in prayer: *David* ſpeaks thus (*Pſal.* 18. 40, 41.) *Thou haſt given me the necks of mine enemies, that I might deſtroy them that hate me; They cryed, but there was none to ſave them*; and leſt we ſhould think they cryed to falſe gods, or knockt at a wrong door for help, he adds, *They cryed, even to the Lord, but he anſwered them not*; and what follows? *Then did I beat them ſmall as the duſt before the wind: I did caſt them out as the dirt in the ſtreets*, that is, notwithſtanding all their crying and praying for favour, the Lord declared his higheſt diſpleaſure againſt them, and gave them no anſwer but by giving them over to deſtruction. Further the Lord is ſo far from accepting ſuch prayers, that he hath caſt them not only as ſinful but a ſin; *When he ſhall be judged, let him be condemned: and let his prayer become ſin*, (*Pſal.* 109. 7.) The prayer of the hypocrite is ſin formally, and it is ſin in the effect; that is, in ſtead of getting any good by it, he gets hurt, and the Lord in ſtead of helping him becauſe he prayeth, puniſheth him becauſe of the ſinfu'neſs of his prayers. Thus his prayer becomes ſin to him, becauſe he receives no more reſpect from God, when he prayes, then when he ſins. And ſin doth not only mingle with his prayer (as it doth with the prayers of the holieſt) but his prayer is nothing elſe but a mixture or *mingle-mangle* (as we ſpeak) of many ſins. The Spirit in wonderful ſtrains of holy Eloquence proſecutes this point againſt hypocrites (*Prov.* 1. 27,28.) *When your fear cometh as deſolation, and your deſtruction cometh as a whirl-wind; when diſtreſs and anguiſh cometh upon you: then ſhall they call upon me, but I will not anſwer; they ſhall ſeek me early, but they ſhall not find me; for that they hated knowledge, and did not chuſe the fear of the Lord.* Here is calling without anſwering, and early ſeeking without finding. And hath not the Lord reaſon to take no knowledge of them calling, who hated the knowledge of him commanding; and not to deliver them from their fears, who did not chuſe his fear? Is it not juſt that when God calls to duty, and man will not anſwer by obeying him, that man ſhould call in miſery, and God not anſwer by relieving him? Again (*Iſai.* 1. 15.) *When you ſpread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood.* (Jer. 14.12.) *When they faſt, I will not hear their cry.* (Ezek. 8. 18.) *Though they cry in mine ears with a loud voyce, yet will I not hear them.* Once more, (*Mic.* 2. 4.) *Then ſhall they cry unto the Lord, and he will not anſwer them, he will even hide his face from them at that time, as they have behaved themſelves ill in their doings.* Thus in Scripture all along we find nothing but Negatives and denials upon the prayers of the wicked. They who behave themſelves ill in their doings, do in vain ask or expect good from God in the time of their ſufferings. *The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much* (*James* 5. 16.) But how fervent ſoever the prayer of a wicked man is, it is neither effectual nor availing. *A hypocrite may work hard in prayer, but his prayer works not.*

Sixthly, The deſign of the whole verſe, being to ſhew the miſerable condition of an hypocrite upon this ſingle account, becauſe God will not hear him in his miſery, *Will God hear his cry, when trouble comes upon him?*

Obſerve, *Not to have prayers heard in trouble, is the worſt of all troubles.*

It is worſe then all the evils that take hold of us, that our prayers for the removing of evil are rejected. This is the worſt of a wicked mans bad eſtate, the Lord will not hear him when he cryes. And this is the beſt of the Saints good eſtate, that the Lord is ready to hear their cry. That which *Moſes* ſpake, as the priviledge and happineſs of the Jewiſh Nation in general, is true of every true *Iſraelite* in particular, (*Deut.* 4. 7.) *What Nation is there ſo great, who hath God ſo nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is, in all things that we call upon him for?* this was a peculiar mercy to them above all Nations, that God was nigh unto them in all things that they called unto him for; and this is the happineſs of every true *Iſraelite*, of every Jew in the Spirit, God is nigh unto him in all the things that he cryeth unto him for; and God is then neareſt to him when trouble is nigh at hand. It ſets the heart above all dangers, yea it makes our very danger a ſafety to us, to have an aſſurance that God will be with us, in danger, for the asking. So the Apoſtle (1 *John* 5. 14.) *This is our confidence that we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us.* This is the confidence of Saints in a double notion. Firſt, It is their confidence, or they are as confident as confidence it ſelf, that God will hear them in trouble; Secondly, That God will hear them, makes them as confident as confidence it ſelf in the midſt of troubles. 'Tis reckoned a happineſs among men (and the confidence of man ariſeth high upon it) to have the ear of Princes, that whatever we ask we ſhall be heard in it by thoſe in power. To have audience and acceptance with great men, is a great priviledge among men; no man can tell what he hath got, when he hath gotten a great Kings ear; how much more is this true, when we have got the ear of God, who is the King of Kings? *Davids* great deſire was (*Pſal.* 19. 14.) *Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy ſight, O Lord my ſtrength and my redeemer.* When thoſe words of our mouthes which flow from the meditation of our hearts are acceptable in the ſight of God, what can we want, while we have a heart to meditate upon the fulneſs of God, or a mouth to expreſs our own wants? If a man had all that in his hand which this world could afford him, and God ſhould ſay, I will not hear thee, his all were nothing; if he had riches and honour and pleaſure, if he were a petty god upon the earth, yet if he cannot be heard in heaven, he may ſay as *Haman* (after the boaſt of all his greatneſs at Court, and riches at home) becauſe *Mordecai* the Jew ſate in the kings gate, and would not bow to him, what doth all this avail him? The meaneſt and moſt afflicted believer is better then he, becauſe God heareth him. We may quickly ſee the outſide, the end of all *perfection*, (*Pſal.* 119. 96.) that is, of all worldly perfections. But who knows what this may produce and bring forth, that God doth hear us and accept us, and is ready when we come with petitions to give an anſwer? As the Spirit of prayer is the moſt excellent gift, ſo the hearing of prayer is the moſt comfortable gift. Though *we lie among the pots*, yet if God hear us, all's well; *then ſhall we be as the wings of a Dove covered with ſilver, and her feathers with yellow gold*, (*Pſal.* 68. 13.) Holy deſires and prayers are the wings of the ſoul, by which we mount (as doves) and aſcend in Spirit unto God; and if the Lord hear and grant thoſe deſires and prayers, then our wings, are indeed ſilver'd and gilded over, richly laden with bleſſings and with mercies. *Will God hear our cry in trouble? is at beſt a heart-troubling word. God will hear our cry in trouble, is a heart-reviving and quickning word. God will not hear our cry in trouble, is a heart-breaking, a killing word; and that's the hypocrites word. Will God hear his cry, when trouble cometh upon him?* He will not.

We have ſeen in *verſ.* 9. what God will not do for the hypocrite; now we ſhall ſee what the hypocrite will not do in reference to God.

Verſ. 10. Will he delight himſelf in the Almighty? Will he alwayes call upon God?

He will cry unto God, but will he delight himſelf in God: he will cry unto God ſometimes, but will he alwayes call upon God? He may be violent in duty, but he is not conſtant. Thus the hypocrite fails and falls ſhort.

Will he delight himſelf in the Almighty?

The word here tranſlated *to delight*, as alſo what it is *to delight* our ſelves in any perſon or thing, was opened at *verſ.* 26. of *Chap.* 22. of this Book, and therefore I paſs it here. Mr. *Broughton* reads the Text thus, and ſo do ſome others, not *Will he*, But *can he delight himſelf in the Almighty*? As if the ſence were, it is a thing impoſſible that he ſhould. To delight in God is one of the higheſt exerciſes of grace; and how can he do that, who hath no grace at all. The hypocrite cannot find comfort in God, when the world affords him none, as a godly man can.

Num poterit in omnipotente delectari? Vulg.

We render well, *Will he delight himſelf in the Almighty?* As if he had ſaid, As the Almighty will not grant his requeſt, nor give him in his delight, that is, the thing which he deſired, ſo he hath no will, no mind at all to delight in the Almighty. The proper matter of delight is to have what we deſire, and to enjoy what we have. The hypocrite hath no pure deſire to have or enjoy God, but his deſire is to have and enjoy ſomewhat from God; and when once he perceives that he cannot obtain that from God which he delights in, he hath no delight at all in God. Deſire is love in motion, and delight is love at reſt. The hypocrites will doth not reſt in God, but runs out many wayes after creatures; after them he will go, and therefore he hath no will to delight in God, which is to reſt in God, when God denies him the creature, which he ſo much deſired to reſt in, as will appear further, in the Obſervations. Only, before I come at them, we may take notice of the Title by which God is here expreſſed, as not delighted in by the hypocrite. *Will he delight himſelf*

Præſtat ut hujuſmodi delectatio ad rē ipſam referatur & preces obtentas votaque conſequuta: nam hæc eſt propria delectationis materia, ſi cum habeas, quæ deſideraveris deſideratis perfruaris. Pined.

In the Almighty; or, upon the Almighty?

This Name of God *Shaddai*, imports both his power and his goodneſs. God is a full ſtore-houſe, or a moſt plentiful Spring of all good to his people, ready to conveigh and give out himſelf for the ſupply of all their needs. He is, and hath every thing which may draw out deſire,

and

Deliciæ humani generis.

and render him (as was ſaid of *Titus Veſpatian*, but is infinitely more true of God) *The delights of Mankind*; yet there are but few among the ſons of men, whoſe deſires and delights meet and center in God. And ſuch is the falſeneſs of the hypocrites heart, that though he ſeem to make much love to God, yet this Negative interrogation is true of him; *Will he delight himſelf in the Almighty?*

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *They who are godly indeed, delight in God.*

Yea they delight in nothing but God, or that which carrieth the appearance, or bears the image and impreſſion of God upon it. Thus they delight in the word of God, in the works of God, whether of creation or providence, in the wayes and ordinances of God, in the ſervants and people of God, *in whom David* (as a type of Chriſt) ſaid (*Pſal.* 16.2.) *is all my delight*; and all becauſe in theſe perſons and in theſe things the inviſible things of God, his power and wiſdom, his holineſs and goodneſs are ſeen, and as it were, made viſible. While *Moſes* calls the people of *Iſrael* to delight in the good things of God, he teacheth them to terminate all their delight in the Lord himſelf, (*Deut.*12.7. and 18.*verſes* compared) *And there ye ſhall eat before the Lord your God, and ye ſhall rejoyce in all that you put your hands unto, ye and your houſholds, wherein the Lord thy God hath bleſſed thee. But thou muſt eat them before the Lord thy God, in the place which the Lord thy God ſhall chuſe, thou, and thy ſon, and thy daughter, and thy man-ſervant, and thy maid-ſervant, and the Levite that is within thy gates: and thou ſhalt rejoyce before the Lord thy God in all that thou putteſt thy hand unto.* As if he had ſaid, *When thou ſhalt rejoyce in all that thou putteſt thy hands unto*, be ſure that thy rejoycing be before the Lord, that is, in a ſence of the preſence of the Lord with thee, who hath bleſſed thee, and cauſed thee to proſper in all that thou haſt put thy hand unto. Thus *Paul* enjoyns the *Philippians* (Phil. 3.1.) *Finally my brethren, rejoyce in the Lord*: and (Chap. 4.4.) *rejoyce in the Lord alway; and again, I ſay, rejoyce.* This joy or delight in the Lord belongs to the firſt Commandment; and therefore it is called natural worſhip, (not natural, as natural is oppoſed to ſpiritual, but as natural is oppoſed to formal or inſtituted worſhip) becauſe this delight is a worſhip which we were to give unto God, conſidered in himſelf, though he had not given any direction about it, as he hath done about his external worſhip. We know not in what particular form God will be worſhipped, till he declares his own will about it; and though we ought alwayes to be willing to worſhip God, yet we muſt not give him a will-worſhip. But if we know no more of God, then that he is, we may know that we ought to worſhip him by delighting in him, for that is a natural ſequel from the knowledge of him. And ſo to fear God, to truſt upon him, to believe in him, are acts of worſhip, which the very diſcoveries of God call us unto, though God had never publiſhed a law requiring any ſuch worſhip. But how little of this pure ſpiritual worſhip hath God in the world? how few are there that delight in God? Some cannot take any delight at all, if there be but a mention of God; to diſcourſe of God, puts them into a fit of Melancholy; they muſt put God out of the company, before they can be merry or rejoyce. *They like not to retain God in their knowledge*, (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks of the old Gentiles, *Rom.* 1.28.) and therefore the knowledge of God cannot at all be delightful to them. Yea how little of this internal and moſt ſpiritual worſhip hath God from his own people? how little are they in thinking and ſpeaking of him with delight? How ſeldom are they longing to enjoy him? how ſeldom rejoycing in the enjoyment of him? though every one, who is truly godly doth truly delight in God, yet it is to be charged upon moſt godly men, that they are not filled with thoſe delights. 'Tis rare to find *Davids* ſpirit, who could ſay, (*Pſal.* 63.1.) *O God, thou art my God, early will I ſeek thee, my ſoul thirſteth for thee, my fleſh longeth for thee, to ſee thy power and thy glory, ſo as I have ſeen it in the Sanctuary.* They who have ſeen and taſted how gracious the Lord is, will be calling for more ſuch ſights and taſts; and the more they have had of thoſe ſights and taſts, the more they will deſire them. What *David* had ſeen of God in the Sanctuary, he could not but deſire to ſee again. And how doth he promiſe himſelf all delightful ſatisfaction in God, could he but feed upon him in his thoughts, (*verſ.* 4, 5. of the ſame Pſalm) *My ſoul ſhall be ſatisfied with marrow and fatneſs, and my mouth ſhall praiſe thee with joyful lips; when I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night Watches.* As it is the property of a godly man to delight in God, ſo he doth promiſe, yea aſſure himſelf of more delights in God, could he but get and keep his heart more to the meditation of God.

Secondly, Obſerve, *A hypocrite doth not, will not, cannot truly delight in God.*

He doth not, becauſe he is carnal, and filled with the wiſdom of the fleſh, and ſo with deſires after and delights in fleſhly things. And until this fleſhly mind, with which he is vainly puft up, and which (in the very wiſdom of it) is enmity againſt God, he neither will nor can delight in God. The Lord ſaith of the hypocritical Jewes (*Iſa.*58.2.) *They ſeek me daily, and delight to know my wayes, as a Nation that did righteouſneſs, &c.* A hypocrite may imitate thoſe who delight in God and his wayes, but he hath no real delight in either. The delight which he hath in worldly things, is ſeldom, if at all, hearty; for (as *Solomon* ſpeaks, *Prov.* 14.13.) *In laughter his heart is ſorrowful, and the end of ſuch mirth is heavineſs.* As there is a worm at the root of his pleaſant gourd, which kills it, and cauſeth it to wither: ſo there is a worm, a gnawing worm at his heart oftentimes, which makes his pleaſures wither, while his gourd is green and flouriſhing. And ſurely if the hypocrites delight in the beſt of his temporal enjoyments be ſcarcely hearty, how heartleſs is his delight in ſpirituals? Till the affections are made ſpiritual, there is no affection to things that are ſpiritual. So then at beſt, the hypocrite who takes but a poor delight in any thing, takes only a hypocritical delight in the beſt things of God, and in God who is beſt of all.

Hypocrita neq; deum neq; divina habet in deliciis.

For, Firſt, he hath no hope in God, therefore no delight in God. He that is without hope, is without God; and how can he have delight in God, who is without God? The hypocrite is without any true hope at any time, and many times he is without ſo much as a ſhew or ſhadow of hope. His hope (like his goodneſs) is as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away. And if the hope deferred maketh the heart ſick, ſurely when hope in God is quite departed and gone, the heart cannot delight in God. There is no condition doth ſo much eſtrange the heart from God, as a hopeleſs condition, (*Jer.*18.12.) *And they ſaid there is no hope*, (what will they do then? even run as far from God as they can; ſo it follows in the ſame place) *But we will walk after our own devices, and we will every one do the imagination of his evil heart.*

Secondly, The hypocrite hath no ſutableneſs in his heart to God, therefore no delight in God. There muſt be ſome likeneſs between the faculty and the object, elſe there can be no delight in any kind whatſoever. Now what likeneſs is there between light and darkneſs, between good and evil, between a holy God and an unholy heart, between the true, the faithful God, and a falſe-hearted hypocrite?

Thirdly, The hypocrites delight is ſo carried out to other things, the ſtreams of it are divided into ſo many channels, that he hath none to ſpare for God; his delight runs to riches, to gold and ſilver; his delight runs to pleaſure, to the fat and ſweet of the creature; his delight runs to honour, to dignities and preferments among men; he delights in friends, yea he delights in ſin and wickedneſs. All theſe ſteal away his delight from God; and put his mouth out of taſt as to taſting that the Lord is gracious, or how gracious the Lord is. As Chriſt expoſtulates the matter ſharply and chidingly with the hypocritical *Jews*, (*John* 5.44.) *How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and ſeek not the honour that cometh from God only?* So we may expoſtulate with the whole kind of hypocrites: How can ye delight in the Almighty, who take up your delights in the creature, and ſeek not, nor are at all ſatisfied with thoſe delights that are in and come from God only? *If we delight not in God only, we delight not in God at all.* As we cannot ſerve, ſo we cannot delight in God and in Mammon; for if we love the one, we will hate the other, and if we delight in the one, we ſhall deſpiſe the other. As God deſpiſeth thoſe who delight in the creature, ſo they who delight in the creature, will deſpiſe God; And if ſuch ſay they do not, yet God knows they do deſpiſe him, and doth enterpret all ſuch pleaſure taken in the creature, a contempt of himſelf. And hence Chriſt denounceth, *Wo unto them that laugh now* (Luke 6. 25.) That is, who laugh and rejoyce in worldly enjoyments, becauſe ſuch joy and laughter is inconſiſtent with joy in God. The creature may be the (medium or)means of our delight,but God only muſt be the object of it, or our delight may paſs through the creature, but it muſt determine in God alone.

Again, Compare the former verſe, (*Will God hear his cry, when trouble cometh upon him,*) with this, *Will he alwayes delight himſelf in the Almighty?*

Obſerve, *Unleſs the hypocrite get what he asks of God he takes no delight in God.*

The Pſalmiſt calls all the prayers of hypocritical perſons, *flatteries* (*Pſal.* 78. 36.) *When he ſlew them they ſought him, and they returned and enquired early after God, and they remembred that God was their rock, and the high God their redeemer,* (that is, they told God in prayer that he was their rock, &c.) *Nevertheleſs, they did but flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongue, for their heart was not right with him.* That is, they had no true love to, nor delight in God, only they would fain have got help from him, and deliverance from their troubles. A flatterer doth not delight in the perſon flattered, but in that which he hopes to obtain of him by flattery.And as their hypocriſie did break out in their departures and backſlidings from God, as ſoon as they were eaſed of their fears, ſo the hypocriſie of others breaks out in their departure from God, when they cannot get their deſires.The heart of a ſincere man is of another frame and temper; for though God delay, yea deny him an anſwer in that he prayeth for, yet he delighteth in him. He cryeth to the Lord in ſickneſs, in poverty, in ſtraits, and the Lord ſometimes lets him lie ſick, and poor, and ſtraitned, and gives him no relief; yet he delights and comforts himſelf in God, yea, God is better to him then that he asks at the hand of God, and therefore he takes pleaſure in communion with God, though God be not pleaſed to mend his condition. We may well ſuppoſe that the Prophet *Habakkuk* prayed hard for the keeping off that ſore judgment of famine; yet in caſe famine ſhould devour all, and ſo his prayer not granted, yet his heart towards God was the ſame, and his aſſurance ſtrong, that his enjoyment of God alone, would be as ſweet to him, as in the greateſt plenty of creature-enjoyments. (*Habak.* 3. 17.) *Although the fig-tree ſhall not bloſſom, neither ſhall fruit be in the Vines: the labour of the Olive ſhall fail, and the fields ſhall yield no meat: the flock ſhall be cut off from the fold, and there ſhall be no herd in the ſtalls; yet will I rejoyce in the Lord: I will joy in the God of my ſalvation.* A ſincere heart can feaſt in God, while he is ſtarving in the creature; God is as good to him without the world as with it; And whatſoever good he asks of God, God is better to him then what he asks, except when he asks God himſelf. None pray purely to God, but they who can reſt ſatisfied with God, though God doth not ſatisfie their deſires in granting what they pray for.

Laſtly, We may take theſe words, *Will he delight himſelf in the Almighty?* as a reaſon why the hypocrites cry is not heard; God doth not hear his prayer, becauſe he hath no delight in God; he would have the mercies of God, but he cares not for the God of his mercies, and ſo he hath neither.

Hence Obſerve, *He that doth not delight in God, is not heard of God.*

The Lord can eaſily diſtinguiſh between a flatterer and an humble petitioner, He knows who come to him for his, or becauſe they know not what to do without him; and who come to him for himſelf, and becauſe they love to be with him. (*Pſal.* 37. 4.) *Delight thy ſelf alſo in the Lord, and he ſhall give thee the deſires of thine heart*; As if *David* had ſaid, Would you have the deſires of your heart given in, and your prayer granted? when you ask of God, delight your ſelves in God, *and you have your deſires.* This the Pſalmiſt affirms, not only becauſe God in whom the ſoul delights, is more then all that we can deſire beſide, but becauſe they who truly delight in God, are in the readieſt way to receive all that they deſire beſides. Every man delights in the things he heartily asks for; how glad would they be of riches, who being poor, ask for riches? How glad would they be of health, who being ſick, pray for health? &c. But every godly man delights more in God of whom he asks, then in that which he asks of God; And therefore as God gives himſelf, ſo that which he deſires too. *It is the delight of God to hear thoſe that delight in him*; And though Gods delighting in us, is indeed the cauſe of his granting our deſires, yet it is our duty as well as our intereſt to delight in God, that we may have our deſires granted. When God ſees that we rejoyce more in this, that he is our God, then in all things elſe that can be given us, then is he ready to give us all things elſe. The Lord was ſo well-pleaſed with *Solomons* asking, when he asked a wiſe and an underſtanding heart to govern that great people, the Lord gave him not only what he asked, but what he asked not, riches and honour, (1 *King.* 3. 11, 12, 13.) Surely then the Lord is ſo well-pleaſed with thoſe who ask and earneſtly deſire the enjoyment of himſelf, that he cannot withhold from them any lawful enjoyment, which is good for them, and deſired by them.

Now as the hypocrite, not delighting in God, is not heard when he calls, ſo becauſe he delighteth not in God, he will not be long heard calling, as is ſhewed in the cloſe of this verſe.

Will he alwayes call upon God?

The hypocrite prayeth, but he doth not hold out or perſevere in prayer. The Original words, which we tranſlate *alwayes*, are, *in all time*, that is, in all the due times and ſeaſons of prayer; as if *Job* had ſaid, Will the hypocrite call upon God as often as the providences of God and his own duty call him to pray? They pray *alwayes*, who pray when they ought,or as often and as long as they ought. Thus the hypocrite *will not alwayes call upon God*; He will not take his times and ſeaſons to begin, nor will he continue in it as he ought when he hath begun. We may he ſaid to do that always, which we do as often as we are called, and which we are always ready and willing to do, though not called.

בכל־עת *in omni tempore* עת *ſignificat tempus opportunū ſeu Idoneum ut Græcis* χαιρὸς.

Hence Note, Firſt, From the Connection.

Unleſs we are in a frame to pray always, God will not hear us at all.

That is, unleſs we would always be in ſuch a frame, The holieſt man living may have his heart out of order, but he loves to have it always in order and ready for every good word and work; He would always be in a praying frame, and he actually prayeth in time of proſperity, as well as in time of adverſity, in time of peace, as well as in time of trouble, when all is well with him, as well as when he is at the worſt. Unleſs our ſpirit be for prayer at all times, we make God our refuge only, not our choice, and are as they who would make uſe of a friend, but care not at all to enjoy him. And will God hear ſuch, when he ſees he ſhould never hear of them, unleſs compelled to ask by neceſſity. It is true, That God hears his people in many caſes before they cry, he prevents prayer, yet 'tis as true, God hears not any, unleſs they pray always, unleſs they pray continually. And he that did ever pray (I do not ſay, he that ever ſaid a prayer, or made a prayer, but he that did ever pray indeed, and hath cryed *Abba Father*, though but once, through the Spirit of Adoption, that man cannot but (in the ſence explained) be always praying.

Secondly, From the words conſidered in themſelves,

Note, *It is our duty to call upon God always.*

The Text implies this clearly, other Texts ſpeak it plainly. The Lord gives a Parable (*Luk.* 18.) and this is the ſcope of it, (*verſ.* 1.) *He ſpake a parable unto them, to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint.* The Apoſtolical rules are, *Pray always, with all prayer and ſupplication in the Spirit* (*Epheſ.* 6. 18.) *Pray without ceaſing* (1 *Theſ.* 5. 17.) There are many urgent grounds why prayer muſt be continued,

Firſt, We cannot ſubſiſt a minute without the aſſiſtance of God; *for in him we live and move, and have our being,*

being, (*Act.* 17. 28.) And as we have our life, motion, and being, ſo the comforts of our life, the guidance of our motions, and our well-being from him. Therefore we muſt alwayes pray, both to acknowledge our dependance, and to receive aſſiſtance from him.

Secondly, We are continually beſieged with evils and temptations, we have enemies about us, either viſible or inviſible, ſeen or unſeen, therefore we have need to pray continually. If we had enemies alwayes in ſight we would pray alwayes: we have unſeen enemies alwayes about us, and theſe are the moſt dangerous enemies, therefore we have more need alwayes to pray, and call in the aid of God againſt them.

Thirdly, We have work to do continually; if we know our duty, we can never be out of work; and what ever we do we are to pray for help in it, and a bleſſing upon it. We riſe early in vain, and labour in vain, unleſs the Lord be with us in all our labours.

Fourthly, We are continually uſing the creature, we uſe food and raiment for the ſupply and ſupport of our earthly tabernacle; therefore we muſt pray continually. What good can the creature do us without God? our bread cannot nouriſh us, nor our cloaths keep us warm, but by a command from him. As *every creature of God is good* (in it ſelf) ſo *it is ſanctified* (unto us) *by the word of God and prayer* (1 *Tim.* 4. 4, 5.)

Fiſthly, We are often in troubles and afflictions. Now the rule is, *Is any one afflicted, let him pray* (*Jam.* 5. 13.) and if we muſt pray as often as we are afflicted, we ſhall have cauſe to be very often praying.

Sixthly, When we are at eaſe and quiet, in health and peace, when the rock pours us out rivers of oyl, and we waſh our footſteps (as *Job* once did) with butter, even then we have need to pray that our proſperity hurt us not, that we looſe not God in the crowd of creature-comforts, that we kick not againſt him (as *Jeſurun* once did) while he makes us fat and flouriſhing.

Seventhly, We ſin continually, we ſin (as I may ſay) without ceaſing, often doing that which is ſinful, and ſin alwayes mingling it ſelf with that we do; and therefore we had need to pray continually, to mingle prayer with all we do, both for the pardon of ſin, or of what we do ſinfully, as alſo for power and grace that we may do ſo no more.

Eighthly, We ought continually to gloriſie God, therefore to pray continually; for though God may have glory by any of our actions or duties, yet the duty of prayer is that which gives him the greateſt glory, while we therein acknowledge his Allſufficiency to do what we ask, and his goodneſs in being alwayes ready to do it.

Yet this point is not ſo to be underſtood, as if we ſhould do nothing elſe but pray, as ſome have ignorantly and erroneouſly inferr'd from this, or ſuch like Scriptures; for every man hath or ought to have a calling in this world, wherein as the Apoſtle ſpeaks (1 *Cor.* 7. 24.) *He may abide with God*; That is, both with the good leave and favour of God, as alſo in a conſtant communion with God, while he walks according to the rule, and in the duty of it. We muſt do nothing without prayer, but we may do many things beſides praying.

Thirdly, Obſerve, (which is implied in the Queſtion, *Will he alwayes call upon God?*)

A hypocrite will not alwayes call upon God.

You may ſee him ſet out very full of mettle; he ſets out about good duties, as ſome horſes that will ſtand no ground in a morning when they go out, but they tire after an hours riding, they will not travel all the day; ſo a hypocrite may ſet out with a great deal of mettle, but will he pray alwayes? no he will be weary of duty, and throw it up at laſt. And he throws it up upon theſe, upon either of theſe two occaſions; both which we may take notice of, from the Text.

Firſt, When he ſpeeds not in prayer, then he will throw up prayer; when he ſeeth nothing come, he cannot go on; will he continue when there is no anſwer? no appearance of an anſwer? or when God ſeems in his providence to ſpeak contrary to his prayer? will he now perſevere in calling upon God? no, he hath no deſire to duty, when he cannot get what he deſires by duty. It is with him as with ſome draft Horſes, they will draw when the load is coming, but if they feel it not coming, they trample, and will not draw: But take a horſe of a right breed, and put his traces to a tree, to a poſt, he will ſtrain and ſtrain, and die upon the place, though nothing come, before he will give it over. Thus 'tis in this caſe; a godly man though he feel not the petition come for which he asks, whether in ſpirituals or temporals (it may be he hath prayed many a year for ſuch or ſuch a mercy, and cannot get it) yet he will pray ſtill. He knows it is his duty to wait as well as to pray; And though the Lord let him wait long, yet he will pray ſtill, without limiting the Holy One of *Iſrael*. It ſhews a very gracious heart to be encouraged by the experience we have of the Lords anſwering prayer, to pray ſtill. But it is an argument of a more gracious heart, not to be diſcouraged from continuing in prayer, when we can get no anſwer. This ſpirit of holy courage never lodg'd in the heart of a hypocrite; if God will not do what he prayeth for, he hath done praying.

Secondly, Take the contrary, If the hypocrite ſpeed in prayer, and get what he asks, then alſo he throws up prayer, and will ask no more. If from a ſick-bed he be raiſed to health, he leaves prayer behind him (as it were) ſick a bed; He grows weak in calling upon God, when at his call, God hath given him ſtrength. And thus 'tis in any other inſtance. When he hath got what he had a mind to in prayer, he hath no more mind to pray: whereas a godly man prays after he hath ſped, as he did before; and though he fall not into thoſe troubles again, and ſo is not occaſioned to urge thoſe petitions again, which he did in troubles, yet he cannot live without prayer; becauſe he cannot live out of communion with God. The creature is as the white of an egge taſtleſs to him, unleſs he enjoy God. *David* ſaith (*Pſal.* 116. 1, 2.) *I love the Lord, becauſe he hath heard my voice and my ſupplication*; that is, becauſe he hath granted me that which I ſupplicated to him for: But did this grant of what he had asked, take him off from asking more? The next words ſhew us, what his reſolution was upon that grant, *Becauſe he hath enclined his ear unto me, therefore I will call upon him as long as I live.* As if he had ſaid, I will never give over praying, foraſmuch as I have been heard in prayer. It is reported of one who alwayes laid a net upon his table when he went to meat, to mind him of his duty, to fiſh for ſouls in his paſtoral care and office (as was pretended, of him, I ſay, it is reported) that when he had attained to high preferment, he laid aſide the uſe of his net at table, and being asked why, anſwered, that he had now got that which he had been fiſhing for. He had catcht his Fiſh, and therefore cared no more for his net. Thus the hypocrite puts away his net of prayer, when once he hath taken the fiſh, the benefit which he deſired and laboured for. In both theſe caſes we may put *Jobs* Queſtion, *Will the hypocrite pray alwayes?* If he can get nothing, he ſaith, why ſhould I wait upon God any longer? What profit is it to pray unto him? And if once he get his profit, he ſaith, what need I pray any longer, I have what I would have; and then he either grows remiſs and ſlack in duty, or layes it quite aſide. He never ſought God for himſelf, but himſelf in ſeeking God, and ſo having found what he deſired for himſelf in ſeeking God, he hath no deſire, or but a very cold one, to ſeek God any more. Therefore

Si ſuper omnipotente deliciabitur invocabit deum omni tempore. Druſ. Tranſlatio.

Laſtly, Comparing the two parts of the Text (*Will he delight himſelf in the Almighty, will he alwayes call upon God?* I ſay, comparing theſe) together, we may for concluſion of this verſe,

Obſerve, *They that delight in God* (*and they only*) *will alwayes call upon God, or perſevere to the end in prayer.*

The reaſon is, becauſe God is the ſame alwayes without any variableneſs or ſhadow of turning. A ſincere believer ſees he hath as much need of God, when he hath ſupplied all his preſent needs, as he had before. And he knows God is as good, as gracious, as deſireable as ever he was, though he delay or deny the grant of that which he hath deſired; ſo that whatſoever God diſpenſeth or giveth out to him, whether good or evil, bitter or ſweet, dark or light, grief or ſorrow, he ſtill keeps cloſe to God, and will alwayes be making his addreſſes and applications at the throne of Grace. God is ſweeter to him then all the mercies and bleſſings, then all the graces and comforts which he hath given him; And God is exceeding ſweet to him, though he doth not preſently give him the mercies, and the bleſſings, the exerciſe of thoſe graces, and the feeling of thoſe comforts which he hath prayed for.

To cloſe all, We have three things remarkable in theſe two verſes concerning the hypocrite. Firſt, The Hypocrite *delights not in God*; There's his ſin. Secondly, *God hears not the cry of the Hypocrite*; That's his miſery. Thirdly, *The Hypocrite will not alwayes call upon God*; That's both his ſin, and his miſery; It is a great ſin not to call upon God, and none are more miſerable then they who do not call upon him; for their miſery is irremoveable. From all, *Job* infers, that he was no hypocrite; for though God did not preſently hear him ſo as to deliver him, yet he delighted in the Almighty; and would continue praying to him, and truſting upon him, though he ſhould ſlay him.

VERS. 11, 12, 13.

I will teach you by the hand of God: that which is with the Almighty, will I not conceal.

Behold, all ye your ſelves have ſeen it, why then are ye thus altogether vain?

This is the portion of a wicked man with God, and the heritage of oppreſſors, which they ſhall receive of the Almighty.

THe two former verſes of the Context are a Preface, wherein *Job* perſwadeth his friends to hearken to what he ſhould further propoſe, both in this Chapter and in the next: and it referreth chiefly to two things, which are the matter of his diſcourſe in both.

Firſt, That though he had all along denied himſelf to be a wicked man becauſe afflicted, yet he did not at all deny that God doth very much afflict wicked men, and often breaks them with temporal judgments.

Secondly, That though Gods proceedings with wicked men are in many things plain and viſible, yet take them altogether, and they are above the reach of any humane underſtanding, this he chiefly inſiſts upon *Chap.* 28.

Verſ. 11. **I will teach you by the hand of God.**

ירה *Jecit projecit, jaculatus fuit, per metaphoram rigavit etiã & indicavit, docuit, quod doctrina quaſi inſtillatur animis diſcentium & minutatim indatur.*

The word which we render to *teach*, hath a threefold ſignification in Scripture.

Firſt, Properly it ſignifies to *caſt*, or throw a thing out of the hand, to *throw* a dart, or a ſtone, and to caſt a lot.

Secondly, It ſignifies to *rain*; and the reaſon of it is, becauſe rain is caſt out of the clouds, and (as it were) ſhot down from heaven upon the earth, to moiſten and to make it fruitful.

Thirdly, By a metaphor, and in alluſion to both the former, the word ſignifies (as we tranſlate it here) *to teach: Right teaching, is a caſting or darting of leſſons and wholeſome truths into the mind.* It is alſo *a raining, a diſtilling, a dropping of inſtructions into the underſtanding, from whence they ſoak into the will and affections; and ſo thoſe who receive them are made fruitful in practice.* When *Moſes* was about to make his laſt or dying Sermon to *Iſrael*, he inſiſts much upon this metaphor, *My doctrine ſhall drop as the rain, and my ſpeech ſhall diſtil as the dew, as the ſmall rain upon the tender herbs, and as the ſhowers upon the graſs,* (*Deut.* 32. 2.) And in *Chap.* 36. of this book, *Elihu* preferring the teachings of God above all teachings, ſaith, *Who teacheth like him?* namely, like God; none teacheth ſo powerfully, ſo effectually as God; yea, there's no efficacy or power in any teaching but in the teaching of God. The Hebrew is, *who raineth like him?* No man ever poured out ſuch rains or diſtilled ſuch dews of holy doctrine as God doth; He with a word can make that heart and the life which before was as a dry heath or barren wilderneſs, to bud or bloſſom like *Eden*, to ſpring like a watered garden. But though it be true which *Elihu* ſaid, that no man can teach or rain down like God, yet man muſt venture and do his part; He may ſay to his brother or friend, as *Job* here did, *I will teach* (or drop doctrine upon) *you by the hand of God.*

Hence Note, *It is a duty to teach thoſe who are ignorant and out of the way.*

It is a duty to learn, but it is a higher duty to teach; it is good to receive Inſtruction, but it is better to give it. *David* having prayed earneſtly that God would give him a new experience of his free-grace in the pardon of his ſin, promiſeth (*Pſal.* 51. 13.) *Then will I teach tranſgreſſors thy wayes, and ſinners ſhall be converted unto thee*; That is, I will do my utmoſt and take all opportunities for the converſion of ſinners. Chriſt ſaith to *Peter* (*Luk.* 22. 32) *When thou art converted ſtrengthen thy brethren*; ſtrengthen them by inſtruction, and ſtrengthen them with conſolation, even with thoſe comforts wherewith thou waſt comforted in thy converſion. He ſpeaks not of his firſt Converſion, *Peter* was converted long before from a ſtate of ſin, but he ſpeaks of his renewed converſion from a ſpecial act of ſin. When thou art converted from that ſin, from that foul ſin of denying me, then ſtrengthen thy brethren by telling them what God hath done for thy ſoul. *It is the duty of all who are able and called, to teach others, but none are ſo fit for it, nor have any ſo much reaſon to do it, as they who have experienced the grace of God to themſelves in the pardon of ſin, and the grace of God in themſelves to heal their ſinfulneſs.*

I will teach you by the hand of God.

Doceo vos in plaga dei fortis verſans. Jun.

There are conſiderable differences in the reading of this clauſe.

Firſt, Some thus, *I teach you being under the hand of God*; As if he had ſaid, *I being now ſorely corrected, and chaſtned by the hand of God, am ready to reach out to you a hand of direction and inſtruction; I, in my ſorrows, and in my ſickneſſes; I, being troubled with the darkneſs of my own ſpirit, and with the hidings of the face of God, will ſhew you what light I have concerning God and his wayes.* There is a great truth in this, and the Text may bear it; for indeed, as afflictions teach us, ſo they prepare us to be teachers; afflictions are inſtructions; and they who have been long afflicted, are beſt able to give inſtruction, eſpecially in the dealings of God with the afflicted: none have ſpoken ſuch leſſons, preached ſuch Sermons, as they who have been under the hand of God. Chaſtiſings make men wiſe, and ſpiritually learned, able to teach indeed. *I* (ſaith *Job*) *being under the hand of God will teach you*, and becauſe you ſee me under the hand of God, you may be ſure that I will teach you nothing but the truth, and in the truth or ſincerity of my heart. 'Tis no time to ſpeak flatteries and falſhoods, I am ready to die, and I will ſpeak my mind (and I hope) the mind of God, as if I were to die preſently. A dying man ſhould ſpeak none but words of weight, and his words ſhould have weight with all the living.

Prapoſitio ב *notat objectum, ſc. plagam divina manu illatã.* Cajet.

Secondly, The Text is rendred thus, *I will teach you of the hand of God*; So the prepoſition in this place notes the matter treated upon, *the hand of God*; That's the object about which he would teach, or concerning which he would inſtruct them. Thus Mr. *Broughton* reads, *I will teach you of God his hand*, or, *of the hand of God*; As if he had ſaid, the point which I will deal with you about, ſhall be *the hand of God*. And then the meaning is this, I will teach you of the wayes and adminiſtrations of God, how God doth order the things of this world, both toward the wicked, and toward the righteous; I will teach you, what courſe, what method God uſually keeps in theſe his diſpenſations; what we may expect he will do, what he now doth, and what he hath done. Your opinion is, that God beſtows outward good things upon thoſe he loves, and that he ſtill afflicts thoſe whom he hates. But the truth is, outward good or evil, fall indifferently from the hand of God upon the good and upon the evil, as to himſelf ſeemeth good. One of the Ancients doth not at all expreſs the word *hand*, but renders the Text in general terms, *I will teach you what, or how God diſpoſeth of things:* The hand of God is put for thoſe acts and adminiſtrations of God which are done by his hand or power. And to teach others of the hand of God, is to teach them what is in the hand or power of God, as all the afflictions and comforts of the children of men are. This reading contains alſo a clear truth, and a very uſeful one; How can our tongues be better employed then in teaching what the hand of God hath done, or

Quid diſponet Deus. Auguſt. *Annunciabo vobis quid ſit in manu domini, quæ ſint apud omnipotentem.*

what the works of God are both in creation and providence. God ſpeaks much to us by his hand, and we ought to be continually ſpeaking of the hand of God, yet I conceive this Text doth not clearly lead us to that doctrine, and therefore I ſhall not ſtay upon it.

Thirdly, We tranſlate,

I will teach you by the hand of God.

In manu dei Heb. i.e. *deo juvante & adminiſtrante facultatem ad dicendum.* Vatabl.

And ſo the meaning of it is, Firſt, I will teach you by the help of God, or the Lord helping and aſſiſting me, the Lord giving me wiſdom to adminiſter Councel and inſtruction, *I will teach you.* As the hand of a man, both in Scripture and common ſpeech ſignifies the help of a man, ſo doth the hand of God (*Hag.* 1.1.) *In the firſt day of the month came the word of the Lord by Haggai the Prophet,* &c. The Text is, by the hand of *Haggai* the Prophet, that is, by the miniſtery, or ſervice of *Haggai* the Prophet, the Lord ſpake. Again (*Hag.*2.1.) *In the ſeventh month, in the one and twentieth day of the month, came the word of the Lord by the Prophet Haggai,* or, *by the hand of the Prophet Haggai.* Now as when God doth a thing by the hand of man, it notes that God doth it by man as his Inſtrument, or that he uſeth (not that he needeth) the help of man; ſo, when man is ſaid to do any thing by the hand of God it implieth, that he doth it by the help and ſtrength, by the aid and aſſiſtance of God. The hand of God is the power of God ſtrengthning man in any duty (*Iſa.* 8.11.) *The Lord ſpake thus to me with a ſtrong hand,* (*or in ſtrength of hand*) that is, the Lord ſpake to me with an evidence of his power; the Lord gave me effectual ſtrength, and *Inſtructed me that I ſhould not walk in the way of this People.* So in the Propheſie of *Ezekiel* often (*Chap.*1.3. & 3.14,23. & 23.22.) The hand of the Lord was there upon him; *The hand of the Lord was upon me in the Evening.* The Lord laid his hand upon the Prophet to confirm and comfort him in his hard ſervice, or he laid his hand upon him, as men uſe to do upon thoſe, to whom they are about to impart ſome ſecret, or with whom they would have conference; or the hand of the Lord was upon him to carry him through the work, the hand upon him, was as much as the hand with him. The hand of the Lord is upon men ſometimes to puniſh and afflict them, and ſometimes the hand of God is upon men to aſſiſt and ſtrengthen them; ſo we are to underſtand the Prophet when he ſaid, *The hand of the Lord was upon me.* The ſame Prophet ſpeaks more fully (*Ezek.* 37.1.) *The hand of the Lord was upon me, and carried me out in the ſpirit of the Lord;* That is, there was a mighty impreſſion upon my ſpirit, and a power from the Lord, that did help and carry me out in that ſervice. Thus here, *I will teach you by the hand* (or help) *of God.*

Hence Note, *We need the help and hand of God to be with us in the teaching of others.*

All our work will be in vain, all our labour loſt in teaching, unleſs we teach by the help and hand of God. That's a ſignificant ſentence, with which ſome alwayes begin their divine teachings or Sermons; *Our help ſtandeth in the Name of the Lord, who hath made heaven and earth;* He helpeth Miniſters to give Inſtruction, and he helpeth the people to receive Inſtruction. It is the hand of the Lord which removes all thoſe impediments and carnal reaſonings, which hinder his Miniſters from a faithful delivery of his Meſſage. And it is the hand of the Lord which caſts down all thoſe ſtrong holds and prejudices, which hinder his people from receiving and obeying his Meſſages. We do not ſo much teach by our own tongue, as by the hand of God; it is not our words, but his power that doth all; unleſs the Spirit reach at the heart, it is in vain for us to teach at the ear. The tongue cannot reach the heart. The hand of man can do nothing in common works, without the hand of God. *Except the Lord build the houſe, they labour in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the City, the Watchman waketh but in vain.* It is much more ſo in ſpiritual work and watchings: ſouls are neither brought to, nor built up in their holy faith, nor effectually perſwaded to walk in holy wayes, but as the Lord perſwades them. It was a good prayer of *Auſtin* when he was about to ſpeak to the people in the Name of the Lord, *Give me, O Lord, what I ſhall ſpeak unto thy ſervants, my fellow-ſervants.* Before we adventure to teach, we ſhould pray for the hand of God: no power can take upon the ſpirit of man, but the power of the Spirit of God: it is not the power of Rhetorick, or Eloquence; it is not the power of humane reaſon and authority; none of theſe powers will do it without the power of the Spirit. Except, when the word goes out from man, a divine vertue go out from God, it works not; 'tis but an empty ſound. *The weapons of our warfare, are not carnal,* (that is, weak) *but mighty through God* (2 *Cor.*10.4.) but through man they have no might. The Spirit of God is the hand of God with us to do good; and therefore, that which is ſaid in one place (*Luke* 11.20.) To be done by the finger or hand of God, is ſaid in another place (*Mat.*12.28.) To be done by the Spirit of God, namely, *The caſting out of Devils.* And when-ever by the Miniſtery of the Word any devils, or luſts, which are the ſeed of the devil in us, are caſt out, or any grace and holy principles planted in us, we muſt ſay, the hand, the finger of God hath done it.

Niſi intus ſit qui doceat, in vanum lingua docentis laborat. Greg. *Domine, da quod dicam ſervis tuis conſervis meis.* Auguſt. l.4. de doctr. Chriſti. cap. 15.

I will teach you by the hand of God.

Manus dei quandoque prophetiam notat, quæ venit cum robore & potentia. Druſ. *Prophetiam dei.* Chald.

Further, The hand of God ſignifies, not only that general aſſiſtance and ſtrength given in by God in the Miniſtery of his Prophets, but it ſignifies the Spirit of Propheſie it ſelf, or an immediate extraordinary inſpiration, whereby the holy Prophets without ſtudy or premeditation were enabled to deliver the mind of God unto the people. And ſuch kind of Prophecying may well be called, *The hand of God,* becauſe it came with an irreſiſtble power upon them, as the Prophet ſhews (*Jer.* 20.9.) *Then I ſaid I will not make mention of him, nor ſpeak any more in his Name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire ſhut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not ſtay.* Thus ſome expound this phraſe in *Job* (*I will teach you by the hand of God*) that is, I will teach you by Propheſie; But we need not take it ſo ſtrictly; For as the hand of God is often put for Propheſie in Scripture, and all Propheſie came by a ſpecial power and Inſpiration of God; ſo they who teach effectually, are ſaid to teach by the hand and help of God; And therefore, when *Job* ſaith, *I will teach you by the hand of God,* his meaning may be no more, then as if he had ſaid, I will teach you by the Lords help, thoſe more ſecret doctrines and myſteries of his providence which I have learned by my own experience, or which God hath made known to me by any of his teachings. The Apoſtle *Peter* ſpeaking of Propheſie in a ſtrict ſence (2 *Epiſt.*1.21.) ſaith, *The propheſie came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God ſpake as they were moved by the holy Ghoſt;* that is, as the hand of God was with them. And take Propheſie in a large ſence, as the Apoſtle *Paul* deſcribes it (1 *Cor.*14.3.) for any *ſpeaking unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort,* that alſo is done by the good hand of God upon us and with us. So that, if we take the hand of God, of which *Job* ſpeaks, either for that aſſiſtance, which all that teach with effect have from him towards the inſtruction and ſalvation of thoſe they deal with; or for that word which God gives in ſpecial by a ſpirit of Propheſie, and immediate revelation (as the ſame Apoſtle ſpeaks in his own caſe (*Gal.*1.12.) *I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it but by the Revelation of Jeſus Chriſt,* Which way ſoever, I ſay, we take the hand of God, by which *Job* promiſeth to teach his friends) the general ſence will be the ſame, namely, that he would teach them, according to the beſt of his light received, faithfully, and according to the beſt of his received ſtrength, powerfully.

Dicit ſe hæc accepiſſe à deo ſpeciali aliqua inſpiratione & lumine prophetico, id enim indicat per manum dei. Qui loquendi modus afflatũ vim & impetum ſignificat divinum, unde ſæpe audimus factum eſſe dei manum ſuper aliquē. Sanct.

I will teach you by the hand of God:

That which is with the Almigty, will I not Conceal.

What *Job* ſpake affirmatively in the former part, he holds forth negatively in this latter part of the verſe. There he ſaid, *I will teach you;* here he ſaith, *I will not Conceal,* it is in effect the ſame thing, not to Conceal a thing, or to teach it.

I will not Conceal that which is with the Almighty.

This expreſſion (*with the Almighty*) Imports the moſt ſecret and reſerved doctrines and truths of God. There are two Prepoſitions in the Hebrew, which are of the ſame ſignification, noting Vicinity and Intrincity, when matters are ſo inward that they live as it were within the breſt of a man, or dwell in his heart, as in their home and habitation, then they are ſaid, *to be with him*; So here (that which *is with the Almighty*) is that, which is neareſt to the Almighty, that which he hath in his heart, that which is laid up, as it were, in his very Cabinet: that *which is with the Almighty*, is any ſecret of the Almighty, and that *Job* ſeems to promiſe to unlock and declare unto them; yet we are not to conceive *Job* an intruder into the Ark of Gods ſecret counſels. There are ſecrets in the providence of God, as well as in the decrees of God. The mind and purpoſe of God in what he doth openly, and before the eyes of men, is often hidden from them; they underſtand not what they ſee, nor do they perceive that, which they cannot but behold. Now (ſaith *Job*) *that which is with the Almighty, I will not conceal*; that is, I will not only ſhew you the face and out-ſide of the works of God, but I hope by the hand of God working with me, to ſhew you the myſtery, the ſecret of his works, what the Lord meaneth and purpoſeth, what he aims at and intends when he afflicts the godly, and lets the wicked proſper. *That which is with the Almighty* is oppoſed to the hand of God in the ſecond interpretation of it, before given, as it notes things outwardly done, or the acts of providence abroad in the world. As if *Job* had ſaid, I will not only teach you what God doth with his hand, but I will ſhew you alſo what is in the heart of God, or thoſe things which are hidden from the world, and are only revealed (and that but rarely) to his *hidden ones*. *Job* was far from preſuming that he could reveal all that was with God, but there are many things with God, which though they are reſerves from the generality of the ſons of men, yet he reveals them to his own ſervants. *The ſecret of the Lord is with them that fear him*, (*Pſal.* 25. 14.)

Duæ ſunt apud Hebræos præpoſitionis על *apud*, עם, *cum quæ vicinitatem intrinſecam, adhæſionem conjunctionem & coævitatē denotant.* Bold.

Again, *That which is with the Almighty*, may be expounded of the future rewards of good men, and puniſhments of wicked men; in oppoſition to the troubles, which the one is at preſent under, and the proſperity which the other at preſent enjoys. As if *Job* had ſaid, I will only ſhew you what God now doth with good and bad men, but (which will ſet all right at laſt) I will declare what God hath with him in ſtore for them both; What mercy for afflicted godly men, and what wrath for wicked men, who now are in their flouriſh. *That which is with the Almighty I will not conceal.*

Hence Obſerve, *All things are with and before God.*

They are alwayes in his Councels, he hath an Idea of what is paſt, and of what is to come; Things paſt, or to come, are as much with God as that which is preſent. A skilful Artificer in any kind hath his work with him at all times; it is with him not only when he is at work, but when he is not at work; His skill is with him, his Art is with him, and he carries the form of all in his phanſie whitherſoever he goeth, or whereſoever he is. Now, if a mortal man that is experienced in any Art, hath the ſhape of all things which concern it before him; much more hath the Infinite only wiſe All-knowing God the Idea of all adminiſtrations before him, whether good or bad.

Imago vivit in mente artificis.

Secondly, Obſerve, *There is a ſecret in all the works of God.*

As there is ſomewhat outward and viſibly acted, of which we may ſay, it is with man, ſo there is ſomewhat inward and intended, which is *with the Almighty*. There is a purpoſe, an end, a deſign in the heart of God, for which he doth any thing with his hand.

Thirdly, Obſerve, *We ſhould labour to underſtand the purpoſe and mind of God in every thing which he doth either to our ſelves and others.*

Every one ſees the external part of a work, whether a work of mercy, or of Judgment, but few underſtand the inſide and ſcope of it. They feel their own ſmart, or their own comfort, but that which is with God, what he means by it, or what the iſſues of it may be, they mind not. Few have learned, and therefore few can ſay with *Job* here, *That which is with the Almighty*

I will not Conceal.] I will not hide, nor wrap it up in a napkin, I will not vail it over in ſilence; and when he ſaith (*I will not Conceal*) he intends more then he ſpeaks; even thus much, I will openly declare it to the utmoſt of my power, ability, and opportunity, I will even proclaim that which is with God.

Non celabo, i.e. omnibus modis patefaciam, Druſ. Meioſis.

Hence Note, *What we know of the mind of God we ſhould not Conceal*; or, *it is our duty by all means to make the mind of God known to others.*

What we know of God is a Talent, and we muſt not hide our Talents; He was an evil ſervant that did ſo. Their ſin who refuſe to make known to others what themſelves know of God, is next in ſinfulneſs to theirs, who themſelves refuſe to receive the knowledge of God. And as this duty is incumbent upon all, ſo eſpecially upon the Miniſters of the Goſpel. *Paul* labours much to acquit himſelf in this (*Acts* 20. 20, 27.) *Ye know how I kept back nothing that was profitable for you, but have ſhewed you and taught you publickly and from houſe to houſe.* As if he had ſaid, If I had kept back any thing that was profitable unto you, I had been like him that hid his talent, an unprofitable ſervant. There are ſome things knowable, which 'tis no profit to know, to conceal theſe is our wiſdom, as not to conceal things profitable is our duty. And hence the ſame Apoſtle inſiſts further in juſtifying the faithful diſcharge of his duty in this point. (*Verſ.* 27.) *I have not ſhunned to declare unto you the whole Councel of God.* But was *Paul* of the Cabinet Councel? knew he the whole councel of God? Is there not a height and a depth of his Councels that none can reach? How then ſaith he, *I have not ſhunned, to declare unto you all the Councel of God?* The meaning is, all that of his Councel which he hath made known to me, I have made known to you: not that *Paul* knew all the Councels of God, no nor any Angel in heaven; And when we make others know what we our ſelves know of the Councel of God, this is the diſcharge of our duty: and ſuch a man may ſay with *Paul*, *I have declared unto you the whole Councel of God*, as to matters of faith and repentance, as to what concerneth you to believe and do. The Councels of God are of two ſorts; Firſt, What he himſelf will do; Secondly, What his will is we ſhould do; The former Councels he hath but ſparingly made known to us, but when and as far as he doth we muſt not conceal them. As he charged the Prophet in that caſe (*Jer.* 26. 2.) *Diminiſh not a word.* The latter fully. We are not to conceal the former ſo far as they are revealed in the Word, as for the latter, they being fully revealed in the Word, we muſt reveal them fully. They who fail in revealing the things of God, are of three ſorts; Firſt, Some through ignorance cannot; Secondly, There are others who through Idleneſs do not make known the things of God. A third ſort through craft and ſubtilty will not make known all that they know of God, but keep back part of it, and corrupt that which they make known, they purpoſely and induſtriouſly obſcure, yea and deprave the truths of God. We find the Apoſtle induſtriouſly acquitting himſelf of this wicked practice, (2 *Cor.* 2. 17.) *For we are not as many who corrupt the word of God; but as of ſincerity, but as of God, in the ſight of God ſpeak we in Chriſt.* Some deal with the word of God as unworthy Merchants do with wines and precious ointments, which they embaſe in their nature, that they may advance in the price, and ſo encreaſe their own profit. This have not I done ſaith *Paul*, I have given out the word in ſincerity, not in ſubtilty; as I have not concealed the word of God, ſo neither have I embaſed it by any falſe gloſs of mine. Take heed of all theſe concealments; it is bad enough that any through Ignorance cannot, worſe that any through Idleneſs do not, worſt that any through craft will not reveal, but obſcure and darken the truth of God; let us neither conceal what is of God, nor ſpoil it in the revealing. The Leapers coming into the Aſſyrian Camp found a great ſtore of good things, even enough to relieve the City, but having tarried ſomewhat long there, they were troubled and ſaid, (2 *King.* 7. 8, 9.) *We do not do well; this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace; if we tarry till the morning ſome miſchief will come upon us; now therefore come that we may go and tell it to the Kings houſhold.* They that have good tidings, that are acquainted with the ſtore, bounty, and fulneſs of Jeſus

Chriſt, as they do well to take hold for themſelves, ſo they do not well if they withhold from others. *Goodneſs is communicative, and ſo are they who are good. That which is with the Almighty I will not conceal.*

Verſ. 12. **Behold, all ye your ſelves have ſeen, why then are ye thus altogether vaine?**

Behold! He had ſaid before, he would ſhew them what was with God: now he ſaith, *ye have all ſeen.*

Some expound theſe words as a Correction of what he ſpake before; as if he had ſaid, I told you I would teach you the ſecrets of God, nay truely the things I teach you, though they are the Councels of God, yet they are ſuch as you and others obſerve for truths, as well as I. And ſo *Job* ſeems to appeal to their own experiences; your ſelves have ſeen examples of Gods various proceedings in the World: or to their conſciences; *Behold, all ye your ſelves do ſee it*, that is, your conſciences bear witneſs to the truths which I am about to report unto you, your ſelves cannot but underſtand and know theſe things as well as I my ſelf. *Seeing* is applyed in Scripture both to the Experimental and rational part of knowledge. The heart ſeeth as well as the eye. The eye ſeeth what is open to ſenſe, the heart ſeeth what we underſtand.

Per correctionem ſuperioris ſententiæ videtur hæc adjungere. Pined.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *It is a ſtrong Conviction, to appeal to the Experiences and Conſciences of thoſe we have to do with.*

When we can put it home upon our opponents, that themſelves know what we ſay, this cannot be put off. *Paul* ſpeakes thus (*Rom.* 7. 1.) *Know ye not brethren (for I ſpeak to them that know the Law) that the Law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth?* As if he had ſaid, the point that I am about to inſtruct you in, you your ſelves know; the Principle, that I am upon is a common Principle, *Know ye not Brethren?* you know 'tis a truth, that *the Law hath Dominion over a man as long as he leivth.* The like expreſſion the Apoſtle uſeth (1 *Cor.* 6. 2.) *Dare any of you go to Law before the unjuſt,* &c. *Know ye not that the Saints ſhall judge the World?* I appeal to your own Conſciences, are you not clear in this thing? Do not ye know what I am about to ſay before I ſay it? To appeal either to former Experiences, or to the preſent dictates of Conſcience, and light of underſtanding, is enough to ſtop the mouth of any Gainſayer. How can they object againſt what others ſay, who cannot anſwer what themſelves (if they will but hear themſelves) ſay?

Secondly, Obſerve, *The truth of the Word of God is viſible in his works.*

The works of God are nothing elſe but the fulfilling, the making good of his word: therefore (ſaith *Job*) *all ye have ſeen it.* The works of men ſhould be a fulfilling of the word, of the Commands of God; all that we do, we ſhould ſee a Command or rule for it. And ſo all that God doth, or the works of God, are a fulfilling of his own word.

Firſt, The works of God in judgment are the fulfilling of his threatnings.

Secondly, The works of God in mercy, are the fulfilling of his promiſes; and ſo the word of God is viſible both in his Judgments and in his mercies.

Thirdly, (which takes in both theſe) the word of God is viſible, when his Propheſies are fulfilled, whether of Judgment or of mercy. There are ſome Propheſies that ſpeak wrath to the World, to the wicked World; and ſome Propheſies ſpeak good favour and mercy to the Church and People of God. The works of God are the fulfilling of theſe Propheſies; and ſo the truths of God are viſible in thoſe works, and dealings of God, with his foes and with his friends. We may ſee the word of God bud and bloſſom, and bring forth in all that he doth among the children of men.

Why then are you thus altogether vaine?

The words carry in them a kind of admiration; one would wonder you ſhould be thus vain, ſeeing you have obſerved theſe things with your own eyes? As if he had ſaid, *Seeing what I ſay doth appear to your own Conſciences, how comes it to paſs that you heap up words and Arguments to darken it? Why do ye croſs your own obſervation? Ye have ſeen what I ſay, yet you deny what I ſay. What? are you indeed ſtrangers to your own Reaſon?* If this be not a vanity, what is?

Vana vanis adjicitis. Sept. *Vanè vana loquimini.* Auguſt.

Why are ye thus altogether vian?] The Hebrew word is very Emphatical; *why are ye vain in vanity*, or, *why do you vainly vanity it?* Why do ye *add vain things to vain?* ſay the Greek Tranſlaters. *Why do ye ſpeak vain things vainly*, ſaith one of the Antients? Theſe are the ſeveral readings of the Text. To be vain in vanity is to be altogether vain; and to ſpeak vain things vainly, is to add one vain thing to another. Thus *Job* chargeth his friends with heaps of vanity, the matter was vain, and their mannaging of it was vain too; all meeting in this, that they ſhewed themſelves moſt vain. Maſter *Broughtons* tranſlation comes up fully to this ſence; *why do ye then vaniſh in vanity?* That is, (as we ſay) *why are ye thus altogether vain?* Double words ſhew much force of ſpeech, and a ſtrong intention in the ſpeaker. (*Deut.* 16. 20.) *That which is altogether juſt thou ſhalt do*; the Hebrew is, *Juſtice, Juſtice, ſhalt thou do*: we read well, *thou ſhalt do that which is altogether juſt.* This phraſe in *Job*, though it be not altogether in the ſame form, yet is full of the ſame ſence, and is therefore ſignificantly enough rendred, *Why are ye thus altogether vain?* Or, *why do ye add vanity to vanity?*

Hence Note, Firſt, *To maintain an Error is altogether a vain thing.*

There is nothing more vain in it ſelf then an Error or falſe opinion, either concerning God, or the wayes and dealings of God; an Error is *very vanity*, for it is a Doctrine of lyes, and therefore they are very vain, who maintain an Error: *why are ye then thus altogether vain?*

Secondly, In that he doth charge this upon them in reference to their own knowledge and experience (*ye have all ſeen it* to be ſo) Obſerve,

It is extreamly vain to maintain any opinion againſt the light of our own Experience or Conſcience.

They are vain enough who maintain an Error for want of light, but they are much more vain, who maintain an Error againſt light. It is very bad to oppoſe a truth when we do not ſee it, but to ſee it and oppoſe it is infinitely worſe: Yet here, I conceive, *Job* did not charge his friends with reſiſting that light, which they did indeed ſee, but with reſiſting that which, had they been diligent obſervers and ſtudents in Gods School of providence, they might have ſeen.

Hence Obſerve, Thirdly, *We are juſtly chargeable with ſinning againſt all that knowledge and light which we might have had, as well as with ſinning againſt that knowledge which we have.*

To be ignorant of what we have had means to know and ſo to act or ſpeak againſt it, is not a ſin of ignorance but of knowledge. All they will be judged in the laſt day as having been altogether vain againſt what they have ſeen, who have been vain either in opinion or practice about thoſe things which they have had light to ſee, but have neglected it.

Obſerve, Fourthly, *They are vain who either depend upon that which is not, or oppoſe that which is.*

The Scripure ſpeaks often of vanity, and of being vaine, in both theſe reſpects. It is ſaid of the *Iſraelites* who were carried into Captivity in the Reign of *Hoſhea*, (2 Kings 17. 15.) *That they followed vanity, and became vain*; that is, they truſted to that which was not, which had no being, no ſubſiſtence: they gave a Deity to that which had not ſo much as an Entity. (*Jer.* 2. 5.) *Thus ſaith the Lord, what Iniquity have your Fathers found in me, that they have gone far from me, and walked after vanity, and are become vain?*; that is, they have truſted upon Idols, or Dunghill gods, which are not. What iniquity have your fathers found in me? have I ever deceived you or wronged you that ye ſhould go far from me after vanity; from me, that am the only Being, the Fountain of all Beings, and follow after vanity, that is after things which have no Being. This is vanity and madneſs. From all ſinful dependencies, or dependencies upon ſin, we are called off (*Pſal.* 62. 10.) *Truſt not in oppreſſion, and become not vain in Robbery*: What? would he have them ſerious in Robbery? No; the meaning is this, do not truſt in a thing of nought; if you rob, oppreſs, deceive, or wrong others, you truſt to a vain thing, in a thing that is not, in a thing that will never do you good; there will be no tack, no hold in any thing got in ſuch a manner. When you think to get riches by wrong-dealing, or cloſely Circumventing others, you become vain in in Robbery. Now as the Scripture ſheweth the vanity of man in ſetting up a creature in the room of God, or an Idol in the place of Jehovah, that is, in truſting and laying hold upon that which hath no hold in it, or which is not; ſo it ſhews their vanity, who oppoſe that which is, that which hath truth and ſubſtantiality in it. Thus *David* (*Pſal.* 4. 2.) Rebukes that generation for becoming vain; *O ye ſons of men, how long will ye turn my Glory into ſhame? how long will ye love vanity*? What was this vanity? I conceive it was not ſo much the vain poor things of the World (though that be a truth) *But how long will ye love vanity*? is, how long will ye oppoſe me in my Reign and Government? how long will ye reſiſt that honour and dignity which God hath beſtowed upon me? you ſet your ſelves againſt that which God hath ſet up: this is to love vanity; you reproach and ſcorn me, you make me your Song, upon whom God hath faſtned honour and glory. *David* doth not ſpeak this vauntingly and boaſtingly, as *Nebuchadnezzar* did, *Is not this great Babel that I have built for the Glory of my Majeſty?* &c. But he ſpeaks it according to the truth of God in his dealings with him; *How long will ye turn my Glory into ſhame, and love vanity?* That is, oppoſe me and my State: and *ſeek after leaſing*; that is, raiſe ſlanders and falſe reports concerning me. This I underſtand to be the meaning of *vanity* in that place. And as *David* calls it a vanity to oppoſe him in his reign and power over the bodies of Men, ſo *to oppoſe the power and reign of any truth over the Spirits and Conſciences of men, whether our own or others, it is a moſt vain thing, and they are become moſt vain who do it.* This is vain, as to the ſinfulneſs of the act, and it is vain as to the fruitleſneſs and ineſſicacy of the act, for truth will prevail and get the upper hand, that which God hath ſet up ſhall ſtand. And as he ſaid in the Acts, *If this thing be of God, take heed ye be not fighters againſt God*; if it be not of God it will down, but if it be of God, be not ſo vain to fight againſt it, if you do, you will have the worſt end of the ſtaff quickly; your Arguments will be vain, and your Reaſons will be vain, yea without repentance, you will draw vanity, that is, trouble upon your own perſons. Your attempt will be vain, not only becauſe you cannot attain your end, and have that ſucceſs which you look for, but your attempt will be vain as drawing that trouble, yea and vexation upon your ſelves, which ye looked not for. And to do ſo is indeed *to be altogether vain.*

Fruſtra tempus conſumitis et inane obtunditis. Jun.

Verſ. 13. **This is the portion of a wicked man with God, and the Heritage of oppreſſors, which they ſhall receive of the Almighty.**

Now *Job* comes to ſpeak to the point it ſelf, having ſaid down his caution by way of Preface in theſe to verſes.

There are two general opinions concerning the ſcope of this verſe, and of the latter part of this Chapter.

Firſt, Some underſtand it as a repetition of what his friends had ſaid before, you ſay this is the Portion of the wicked, they are always afflicted, *&c.*

Secondly, Theſe words may be taken by way of Conceſſion; as if he had ſaid, I grant what you have aſſerted, that God puniſhes and afflicts wicked men; I ſay ſo too; there's no Controverſie between us in this point: but, this is not the whole matter, this is not the hinge of the buſineſs; this is not as one calleth it, the depth of divine Wiſdom; there is a ſecret beyond all this: God doth alſo aflict the Godly and the Righteous, he lays heavy ſtrokes upon them alſo, yea there is an appearance of wrath upon them in many divine Diſpenſations. And here's the difficulty how to unfold, how to unriddle this, that, God ſhould love a man, and yet expreſs nothing but wrath in his dealings with him; that God ſhould embrace a man in the arms of mercy, and yet daily wound him; that God ſhould ſmile upon a Soul, and yet ſhew nothing but frowns in his face toward him; how can theſe things be? I grant what you ſay, God doth afflict and vex the wicked of the World, but there is more in it; He alſo afflicts the Godly, and how to reconcile theſe two, is the knot of the Controverſie between us.

But ſome may ſay, *Job* ſeems to ſay and unſay; for at Chap. 21. he enlarged himſelf concerning the proſperity of the wicked, and here he ſpeaks as much concerning the miſery of the wicked, as if he were agreed with his Adverſaries.

I anſwer, *Job* doth not croſs what before he aſſerted, he acknowledgeth that wicked men are afflicted, yet that no man can conclude that any one is wicked becauſe afflicted, which he had often denyed, and ſtill did concerning himſelf, notwithſtanding all his afflictions; for as much as he ſtill depended upon God in the midſt and worſt of them, which the wicked cannot do. *This is the Portion of the wicked.*

I ſhall not ſtay upon this verſe becauſe it hath been handled in the ſubſtance of it already at large (*Chap.* 20. 29.) Where *Zophar* thus concludes his diſcourſe; *This is the Portion of a wicked man from God, and the Heritage appointed to him by God* *Job* makes up the ſame concluſion; *This is the Portion of the wicked man with God, and the Heritage of Oppreſſors which they ſhall receive from the Almighty.*

Yet there is a difference betwen *Job* and *Zophar* in expreſſing one and the ſame thing. *Zophar* ſaith, *This is the Portion of a wicked man from God*; that is, which God hath in ſtore, which God hath laid up by him to inflict upon him when ever he ſeeth the fitteſt ſeaſon and opportunity. *Zophar* ſpeaks of the Portion as given out: *Job* ſpeaks of it as laid up: it is *with God*, ſaith *Job*: it is *from God*, ſaith *Zophar*. This way of *Job* in ſpeaking his mind to this point, anſwers what he ſaid in the laſt clauſe of the former verſe; *That which is with the Almighty I will not conceal.* Now here he ſaith, *This is the Portion of a wicked man with God.* Though he ſeem to receive at preſent a fair and comfortable Portion from God, yet there is another Portion, even a Portion of Wrath, which he hath a purpoſe to give out unto him.

In the latter clauſe the ſame difference is obſervable; There *Zophar* ſaid, *and the Heritage appointed to him by God*: here *Job* ſaith, *and the Heritage of Oppreſſors which they ſhall receive from the Almighty*: the Portion is ſpoken of as given out by *Zophar*, and as laid up by *Job*: And ſo the Heritage is given out as ſpoken of by *Zophar*, but as to be given out by *Job*: *This is the Heritage of Oppreſſors*, which (though they have not, yet) they ſhall receive of the Almighty. The word which we render *Oppreſſors*, and Mr. *Broughton*, *Tyrants*, ſignifies ſuch perſons as are *ſtrong, violent, terrible, powerfull*, ſuch as will not bend, men that are inflexible, inexorable, ſuch as are Oppreſſors; but *the Lord hath an Heritage for them*, which they muſt bend to, and bow their Necks and their Backs to, *this is the Heritage which they ſhall receive of the Almighty*, of the Omnipotent. He uſeth that attribute in reference to Oppreſſors; they are mighty, but *God is Almighty*: he oppoſeth the *Omnipotency* of God to their *potency*, the ſtrength of God to their fortitude, the dread of God to their terror; they are terrible and dreadful men, there is no humane ſtrength can deal with them; yet God can deal well enough with them: There is one higher then the higheſt, and ſtronger then the ſtrongeſt of the children of men. Thus *Solomon* ſpeaks (*Eccl.* 5. 8.) *If thou ſeeſt Oppreſſion of the Poor, and violent perverting of Judgment and Juſtice in a Province, marvel not at the matter, for he that is higher then the higheſt regardeth, and there be higher then they.* It is a marvail that any ſhould oppreſs thoſe who are already preſſed with poverty, and that they who have power to do juſtice, ſhould uſe their power only, or at all, to do injuſtice. But ſeeing the unrighteous heart of a Judge is alwayes oppoſite to righteouſneſs in judgment, marvail not *at the matter*, or, as we put in the Margin, at *the will and purpoſe of* ſuch Oppreſſors; ſuch do but according to their kind. And there is one higher then the higheſt, more mighty then the mightieſt of them, who in ſilence and patience takes notice of the wrong, and will ſet all right at laſt. Oppreſſors are high and keep all under them, none can ſtand before them; yet there is one above, infinitely above them; as they have enlarged their inheritances, by oppreſſing others with their might, ſo they ſhall receive the Heritage due to them from *the Almighty*.

עריץ *ἀκαμπὴς, qui flecti nequit.* Theod.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *God hath a ſtore and Portion by him for all ſorts of men.*

He hath a ſtore for the good, and a ſtore for the bad; a ſtore for the humble, and a ſtore for the proud; a ſtore for the Holy, and a ſtore for the prophane; God hath his ſtores by him, and with him: with him is the Fountain of life, with him alſo is the Fountain of death; life flows naturally from him, and death Judicially; God hath a treaſury of Wrath by him, and he hath a treaſury of Mercy. *There is mercy with thee that thou mayeſt be feared,* ſaith the Pſalmiſt; much more is there Wrath with God for thoſe that fear him not. *This is this Portion of a wicked man with God.*

Secondly, Note, *The only Portion, or all the Portion of a wicked or evil man is Evil.*

The Portion of a ſinner is ſorrow, and nothing but ſorrow. This is the Portion; this, and none other; this, and no Portion beſide; this is all that he ſhall have, and he ſhall not avoid or put by the having of this. For

Thirdly, He ſaith, *Which he ſhall receive from the Almighty.*

Obſerve, *The Almighty God will be too hard for the mightieſt of evil men.*

He ſhall receive his Portion whether he will or no; he would not receive it, but he muſt; here is a Heritage that he hath no mind to. Moſt are forward enough to receive an Heritage, and think every year Seaven till they come to their Inheritance; but a wicked man is very loath to come to take poſſeſſion of his proper Heritage, oh he would faine have God defer it, he hath no mind to it. In the 25 of *Jeremy,* when the Cup is carryed about to the Nations, (it was a ſad Cup) they had no deſire to drink of it. There are Cups carried about in Nations, which the wicked are very greedy to drink at, yea and drink up. The Drunkard deſireth his Cup, and is ſorry 'tis no further to the bottom. But ſaith God, there, I will ſend a Cup that they have no thirſt to: carry a Cup of Blood to this Nation, and that Nation, and *ſay unto them, drink ye and be drunk, and ſpue and fall, and never riſe more, becauſe of the Sword, which I will ſend among you,* (Jer. 25.27.) But what if they refuſe to drink it? Then ſaith God (*ver.* 28.) I will make them drink it whether they will or no, *and it ſhall be, if they refuſe to take the Cup at thy hand to drink, then ſhalt thou ſay unto them, thus ſaith the Lord of Hoaſts, ye ſhall certainly drink;* As if the Lord had ſaid, I will even ſerve you in your own kind, I will powr it down your throats, as Drunkards ſometimes deal with thoſe that have no mind to drink their Cups: drink it, ſay they, or we will powr it down your throat. Certainly if the wicked refuſe the Cup of God's wrath he will powr it down their throats. Thus the Pſalmiſt deſcribes the unavoidableneſs of this Cup (*Pſal.* 75.8) *In the hand of the Lord there is a Cup; and the Wine is Red* (it is a Cup of wrath and fury) *it is full of mixture, and he powreth out of the ſame: but the dregs thereof all the wicked of the Earth ſhall wring them out and drink them.* God gives the wicked many commands to do his will, but they refuſe and will not; at laſt he will give out a command for their ſuffering, and they ſhall not be able to refuſe it. He will come with an irreſiſtible word of his wrath upon all thoſe who have reſiſted the word of his grace.

Again, Whereas *Job* ſaith, *This is the Portion of a wicked man with God, and the Heritage which he ſhall receive.*

Obſerve, *The wrath and miſery that falls upon wicked men, both in time, and to eternity, is with God.*

It is in his decrees and appointments. As all the Mercies and good things which godly men receive are with God, ſo likewiſe are all the puniſhments of the ungodly. He brings all his Adminiſtrations out of the Treaſury of his own Counſels. And that's the reaſon why they ſhall certainly receive accordingly, *For the counſel of the Lord ſhall ſtand, and the thoughts of his heart to all Generations,* (Pſal. 33.11.) Jeſus Chriſt himſelf did therefore undergo all thoſe ſorrows, becauſe they were with God; he received at his Fathers hand the bitter Cup, becauſe it was his determinate counſel he ſhould do ſo (*Acts* 2.23.) and therefore he ſaid (*Heb.* 10.7.) *Lo I come* (*in the volume of thy Book it is written of me*) *to do thy will;* to do it in this, to drink the bitter Cup. Now if Jeſus Chriſt could not avoid that Cup (though he urged to rhe utmoſt that he might be ſpared) becauſe it was with his Father, his purpoſe was that he ſhould drink it for our ſakes. Thus ſurely wicked men ſhall receive that Portion which is with God for them, and the Heritage which he hath appointed.

Laſtly, *Job* ſeems to ſpeak it Emphatically, *Which they ſhall receive from the Almighty,* ſetting the Almighty handling the oppreſſors, in oppoſition to man. As if he had ſaid, *The oppreſſor was ſo mighty that he received no ſuch Heritage from men, no man could touch him, nor meddle with him, nor bring him to a reckoning.* But the Almighty will reckon with him, *This is the Heritage which he ſhall receive of the Almighty.*

Hence Note, *Though wicked men may eſcape a reckoning among men, yet they cannot eſcape a reckoning with God, the Almighty God.*

Let none think themſelves diſcharged, becauſe they are freed from the hands of men, let none think themſelves ſafe, becauſe they are out of the danger of the Creature, becauſe they are ſo ſheltered and ſtrengthened, that none can approach to them to give them their Portion; for from the hand of the Almighty they ſhall receive it. The might of the mightieſt, the ſtrength of the ſtrongeſt, the wit of the wiſeſt, the highneſs of the higheſt, all theſe are nothing to the power, wiſdom, ſtrength, and highneſs of God. Wicked men often reſiſt the will of God in that which he commands them to do, they reſiſt and do it not; wicked men reſiſt the will of God much more in that which he appointeth them to ſuffer, but though they reſiſt, they muſt ſuffer it. There is pride and ſtubbornneſs enough in the heart of man, to throw off the præceptive part of the Law, but there is not power enough in the hand of any man to throw of the pœnal part of the Law; the Laws of God are not (as ſome have compared the Laws of men) like Spiders webs, which catch and hold flyes only, or ſuch like weaker creatures; but the Laws of God are like Chains of Iron, able to hold the Eagles, and the Lions, yea the Leviathans of this World, who King it over all the Children of pride. *Wo to him that ſtriveth with his Maker* (ſaith the Prophet, *Iſa.* 45.9.) either reſiſting his word, or his works, his directions or diſpenſations, whether towards others or himſelf; *Let the potſheard* (as it there follows, and the beſt of men are no better) *ſtrive with the Potſheards of the Earth,* that is, with men like themſelves; let them meddle with their match, and not with the Almighty; let them take heed how they enter the liſts and undertake the combate with him, with whom they cannot in the leaſt make their party good, but ſhall be broken as the Potters Veſſel with an Iron Rod. How much ſoever the oppreſſor ſtriveth, he ſhall be oppreſſed; and as he hath taken away the Heritages of others, ſo he ſhall receive his heritage of the Almighty.

Thus far *Job* hath ſet it down only in general, that the oppreſſor hath an Heritage to receive, but in the following part of the Chapter, he tells us, what this Heritage is which he ſhall receive. And it is a very ſad and miſerable one; *If his Children be multiplyed, it is for the Sword,* &c.

VERS. 14, 15, 16, 17.

If his Children be multiplied, it is for the Sword: and his Off-ſpring ſhall not be ſatisfied with bread.
Thoſe that remain of him ſhall be buried in death: and his Widdowes ſhall not weep.
Though he heap up Silver as the duſt, and prepare rayment as the clay:
He may prepare it, but the juſt ſhall put it on, and the Innocent ſhall divide the Silver.

IN the former Verſe *Job* ſpake only in general, *This is the Portion of a wicked man with God, and the Heritage of oppreſſors, which they ſhall receive of the Almighty.* In this context, and ſo forward to the end of the Chapter, he gives us a particular of the Portion of a wicked man, and telleth us diſtinctly what he hath reaſon to expect, as the lot of his inheritance. We may reduce his whole diſcourſe about it unto theſe two heads.

Firſt, What puniſhments ſhall be the Portion of his poſterity.

Secondly, What ſhall be his own.

The puniſhment that ſhall be the Portion of his poſterity, is deſcribed from this 14 to the 19 Verſe. And that upon his own perſon, beginning at the 19 verſe, concludes the Chapter.

The words in hand ſhew the judgments of God upon a wicked mans poſterity.

Verſ. 14. **If his Children be multiplied, it is for the Sword: and his Off-ſpring ſhall not be ſatisfied with bread.**

We have Four or Five ſeveral puniſhments aſſigned his Children in theſe words, and thoſe which follow.

Firſt, The Sword. *If his Children be multiplied, it is for the Sword.*

Secondly, Famin. *And his Off-ſpring ſhall not be ſatisfied with bread.* Both in the 14 Verſe.

Thirdly, The Plague; *Thoſe that remain of him ſhall be buried in death,* in the former part of the 15 Verſe.

Fourthly, An Ignominious Burial; his Children ſhall dye undeſired; *His widdowes ſhall not weep*, in the latter part of the 15th Verſe.

Fifthly, The loſs or ſpoil of all the Riches which he had prepared and heaped up for his Children. As firſt, the loſs or ſpoil of Money. (Ver.16,17.) *Though he heap up Silver as the duſt*; Secondly, the loſs or ſpoil of goodly Apparel, though he *prepare Raiment as the Clay, he may prepare it, but the juſt ſhall put it on, and the innocent ſhall divide the Silver.* Thirdly, the loſs or ſpoil of Houſes, Ver. 18. *He buildeth his Houſe as a Moth.* Thus Sword and Famine, and Plague, ſweep his poſterity from the face of the Earth to an inglorious Burial; and all his ſubſtance, with the goodly furniture of his Houſes, yea Houſes and all ſhall either periſh in their own hands, or fall into the hands of ſtrangers.

If his Children be multiplied, it is for the Sword.

That's the firſt judgment; as if he had ſaid, though it be granted, that he hath *many Children,* yet they ſhall ſoon be cut off. Further, the word which we render *multiplied,* ſignifies both to *multiply and magnifie*; which latter ſence gives us another aggravation of that miſery which deſcends upon the Off-ſpring of the wicked man. Though his Children be *many,* yea though they be come very *great* and *mighty,* though as their number encreaſeth, ſo their Riches or Honors encreaſe too, yet down they ſhall. Again, ſome by his Children, underſtand not only ſuch as are Born of him, but all his confederates and aſſociates, all the friends and Allies of his Family, by whom he hoped to ſtrengthen and ſecure himſelf while he lived and his eſtate when he dyed, even all theſe ſhall be but food for the Sword, and fewel for the devouring vengeance of God. The *Sword* here threatned, may be taken either ſtrictly for that known famous weapon of War, and ſo by a trope (frequent in Scripture) for War it ſelf; or it may be taken for Magiſtratical power, by which offenders are puniſhed, of which the Sword is both the Inſtrument and the Emblem. Whence the Apoſtle ſaith of Rulers (*Rom.* 13. 3.) *They bear not the Sword in vain.* Or it may be underſtood of the ſharp juſtice and vengeance of God, in what kind ſoever, hewing down ſinners, (*Deut.* 32. 41.) *If I whet my glittring Sword, and my hand take hold of Judgment, I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and reward them that hate me.* Any deſtroying evil is God's Sword, and evil men are called God's Sword, becauſe they are ſo apt to deſtroy and afflict his people, *Pſal.* 17. 13.) *Deliver my Soul from the wicked, thy Sword* (or as we tranſlate) *which is thy Sword.* Yea and drought cauſed by the extraordinary and long continued heat of the Sun, is called the Sword (the ſame word ſignifying both *Drought* and the *Sword*; as we may ſay in the Margin of our larger Bibles (*Deut.* 28. 22.) So that when *Job* ſaith, the wicked mans Children are *multiplied for the Sword*; the meaning is extendible to ſhew their liableneſs to any judgment whatſoever. Yet I conceive the Sword intended by *Job* is ſome one or all theſe three.

רבה *Multiplicatus, magnificatus,*

Firſt, The Sword of the *Souldier,* the Martial or Military Sword, his Children ſhall dye in Battel or in open War.

Secondly, The Sword of a *Murtherer*; his Children ſhall dye by Bloody-minded men in ſecret.

Thirdly, The Sword of a Magiſtrate; his Children ſhall commit ſuch crimes as ſhall make them obnoxious to the Sword of ordinary Juſtice. They ſhall be ſlain by the Law. *If his Children be multiplied, it is for the Sword,* or, as the Seventy render it, *for the ſlaughter.* The Original is very conciſe. The Text in terms is only thus, *if his Children be multiplied, for the Sword*; We ſupply thoſe words (which more plainly make the Sword, the deſign of their Multiplication) *it is for the Sword*; as if it had been ſaid, his Children are deſtinated or appointed for the Sword; they are born and brought up for ſlaughter, they are (as the Prophet ſpeaks in another caſe, (*Zech.* 11.4.) *The flock of ſlaughter.* The Sword is their Portion, not to conquer with it, but to fall by it.

Notanda eſt conciſa loquutio Hebraica, in (vel ad) gladium *ſupplendo* ſunt, *vel* deſtinantur; *quaſi ad gladium nati et educati.*

Hence Note, *Children are a bleſſing, and the more Children the more bleſſing.*

(As hath been ſhewed from other paſſages of this Book) yet this ſhall not be a bleſſing to the wicked man; For, as it followeth, *it is for the Sword,* that his Children are multiplied or magnified, that they are many or great.

Hence Note, Secondly, *The very bleſſings of a wicked man are a curſe to him.*

Children are a bleſſing, a ſweet bleſſing, but Children for the Sword are a Sword upon the Father. The Prophet threatens, (*Mal.* 2.1, 2.) *If ye will not hear, and if ye will not lay it to heart, to give glory unto my name, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts, I will even ſend a curſe upon you, and will curſe your bleſſings: yea, I have curſed them already, becauſe you do not lay it to heart.* To lay a thing to the heart, is to think of it with greateſt earneſtneſs and ſeriouſneſs. Now ſaith the Lord by the Prophet, Though ye hear my word, or take it in at the ear, yet if ye do not ponder my word, and lay it to heart, both as to your eſteem, and for your practice, I will even curſe your bleſſings; that is, I will make thoſe things a curſe to you which in themſelves are bleſſings. It is not ſo bad not to have a bleſſing, as to have it curſed; not to have Children is an affliction, but when we have them, that the Sword or Plague ſhould take them, eſpecially the *Sin-plague,* or corruptions of the World, this goes deep, and is a dreadful affliction. As Chriſt ſaith, *If Salt have loſt its ſavour, wherewith ſhall it be ſeaſoned?* So we may ſay, if our bleſſings make us miſerable, what ſhall make us happy? How miſerable are wicked men when they ſeem to be moſt happy? Seeing there is a curſe in their bleſſings. When we ſee the faireſt cluſter of their Grapes, we cannot ſay as it is in the Prophet (*Iſa.* 65. 8.) *Hurt it not, for there is a bleſſing in it.* There is a bleſſing in ſome cluſters of Children, not only as they are bleſſed of God, but as they are bleſſed unto us; yet when wicked men have Children like cluſters of Grapes, their Wives being like a Vine upon the walls of their Houſe, yet you cannot ſay, there is a bleſſing in it, hurt it not. I know the cluſters of good men, even their Children many times prove a croſs to them; ſeveral of *Davids* Children were ſo to him; yet this is a ſpecial threat againſt wicked men; their cluſters have no bleſſing in them. Though a wicked man have Children and Riches, yet a curſe hangs over his head; whereas the afflictions of a godly man are ſanctified, and his evils made good unto him; when he is in want of all outward bleſſings, yet he wants not a bleſſing, becauſe he enjoyes the favourable preſence of God. Thus the Prophet triumphed in believing (*Hab.* 3. 17.) *Although the Fig-tree ſhall not Bloſſom, neither ſhall fruit be in the vines, the labour of the Olive ſhall fail, and the Feild ſhall yeild no meat, the flock ſhall be cut off from the Fold, and there ſhall be no Herd in the ſtalls.* Theſe are hard caſes, but is the godly man miſerable in any of theſe caſes? No; he hath a bleſſing in all, and he may notwithſtanding all, as it follows in the ſame place, *rejoyce in the Lord, and joy in the God of his Salvation.* When clouds and darkneſs compaſs him about here below, yet precious promiſes hang over his head, ready to drop and diſtil upon him; what different *ifs and thoughs* doth the Scripture put in reference to the wicked and the godly; here is and *if,* or a *though, his Children be multiplied, and though he heap up Silver as the duſt, and Raiment as the Clay,* yet he is miſerable; he is unhappy, *though* he have all that which he calls happineſs. A godly man hath a better ſort of *ifs and thoughs*; *though he walk through the valley of the ſhaddow of death, yet ſhall he fear no evil,* (*Pſal.* 23.4.) And again, (*Pſal.* 46.2,3.)

Therefore will not we fear, though the Earth be moved, and though the Mountains be carried into the midſt of the Sea, though the Waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the Mountains ſhake with the ſwelling thereof, &c. Here are four *thoughs*, each one importing trouble enough to diſquiet and fright a well ſettled man, yet the godly man is not ſtirr'd; for when theſe ſtorms are up, and theſe Seas rage, even then, as it follows at the fourth verſe of the ſame Pſalm, *There is a River, the ſtreams whereof make glad the City of God*; that is, the Citizens of God. Who though they may be poor, ſick, diſgraced, childleſs, yet unbleſſed or unhappy they cannot be. This firſt Obſervation runs through the whole context, and is a truth in all as well as this particular, *If his Children be multiplied, it is to the Sword.*

Whence Obſerve, Thirdly, *When the Children of wicked men ſuffer, their parents ſuffer.*

We read (2 *Sam.* 21. 1.) of a Famin continuing three Years together, and *David* enquiring of the Lord about the cauſe of that ſad diſpenſation, was anſwered, *It is for* Saul *and for his bloody houſe, becauſe he ſlew the* Gibeonites Hereupon *David* called the *Gibeonites, and ſaid unto them, What ſhall I do for you, and wherewithal ſhall I make the Attonement, that ye may bleſs the inheritance of the Lord? And the* Gibeonites *ſaid unto him, we will have no Silver nor Gold of* Saul, &c. *And he ſaid, what you ſhall ſay, that will I do for you. And they anſwered the King, the man that conſumed us*, &c. *Let ſeven men of his Sons be delivered unto us, and we will hang them up unto the Lord in* Gibeath *of* Saul: *And the King ſaid I will give them. But the King ſpared* Mephiboſheth *the Son of* Jonathan, *the Son of* Saul, *becauſe of the Lords Oath*, &c. *and delivered ſeven others to be hanged.* Here we ſee *Jonathan* a good man ſpared in the ſparing of his Son: And *Saul*, a man from whom God was departed, ſmitten and puniſhed in his ſeven Sons or Grandchildren deliver'd up to death. How dreadful a Tragedy is that which is ſtoried of *Ahabs* Sons (2 *Kings* 10.7.) *Ahab* was a wicked man, and he had many Sons who were all brought forth to the Sword, upon the receit of *Jehu's* Letter to the Rulers of *Samaria*, ſo ſaith the Holy ſtory; *They took the Kings Sons, and ſlew Seventy perſons, and put their Heads in Baskets, and ſent him them to* Jezreel. I ſuppoſe ſuch a Preſent in all points was never ſent to any Prince, either before or ſince unto this day. It is wonderful to hear of a mans Sons multiplying to Seventy: But to ſee them all multiplied to the Sword, and ſlain as one man in one day, is a ſtupendious Judgment of God. Take one Inſtance more, *Haman* multiplied Sons, He had Ten, but they were multiplied to the Sword, (*Heſt.* 9. 10.) *The Ten Sons of* Haman *the Son of* Hammedatha, *the Enemy of the* Jews, *they ſlew*, &c. The Prophet denounceth a dreadful threatning (*Hoſ.* 9. 13.) Ephraim, *as I ſaw* Tyrus, *is planted in a pleaſant place: but* Ephraim *ſhall bring forth his Children to the Murderer*; that is, his Children ſhall be Murdered. And hence ſome conceive, that the Prophet foreſeeing this heavy Judgment coming upon *Ephraim*, prayeth in the next verſe (after he had been a while at a pauſe in his own Spirit, what to ask of God for them; (*v.* 14.) *Give them, O Lord, what wilt thou give? Give them a miſcarrying Womb that never bare, and dry Breaſts*; as if he had ſaid, O Lord, let them be Barren and bring forth no Children, rather then that their Children ſhould be multiplied to the Sword, and brought forth to ſlaughter. In which ſence Chriſt himſelf ſaith, (*Luk.* 23. 29.) *Behold the dayes are coming, in the which they ſhall ſay, Bleſſed are the Barren, and the Womb that never bare, and the Paps which never gave ſuck.* This is a ſad caſe, when that which is in it ſelf a curſe, is to be reckoned among our bleſſings. Better it is to have no Children, then to have them brought forth to the Murderer, or as *Job* here ſpeaks, to have them *multiplied to the Sword.*

And his Off-ſpring ſhall not be ſatisfied with bread.

Such as the Sword ſhall ſpare, Famin ſhall eat up and devour; when the Text ſaith, *They ſhall not be ſatisfied with bread*, it may be underſtood two wayes.

Firſt, That they ſhall not have plenty; though they have bread to keep (as we ſay) Life and Soul together, yet they ſhall not have enough to live comfortably; they ſhall be pinched or pined with hunger, and though not ſtarved, yet in a ſtarving condition, or hunger-bitten; *Not to have enough is a degree of Famin.*

Secondly, When he ſaith, *They ſhall not be ſatisfied with bread*, more is intended then expreſſed; and ſo not to be ſatisfied with bread, is, to famiſh for want of bread; *not to be ſatisfied with bread*, is, they ſhall periſh becauſe they have no bread. Such forms of ſpeech are frequent in Scripture, (*Matth.* 12. 33.) *Whoſoever ſpeaketh a word againſt the Son of man, it ſhall be forgiven him: but whoſoever ſpeaketh againſt the Holy Ghoſt, it ſhall not be forgiven him, neither in this World, neither in the World to come*; the meaning is, he ſhall be puniſhed in this World and in the World to come. The words are milder then the ſence; not to be forgiven in this World, nor in the World to come, is to be puniſhed everlaſtingly, or to be puniſhed both in this World, and in that which is to come. So, here, *His Off-ſpring ſhall not be ſatisfied with bread*, is, they ſhall be famiſhed and dye for want of bread.

In Scripture, *Bread* ſignifieth, firſt, any kind of good thing belonging to this life. When Chriſt directeth us to pray, (*Matth.* 6. 11.) *Give us this day our dayly bread*, we are to underſtand that all the needfull comforts of this life are asked in that one Petition.

Secondly, Bread is put, more particularly, for any kind of food, even the beſt; all things eatable come under the name of bread. Thus fleſh is bread, and greateſt dainties are bread, (2 *Sam.* 9. 7.) *David* ſaid unto *Mephiboſheth, Fear not, for I will ſurely ſhew thee kindneſs for* Jonathan *thy Fathers ſake, and will reſtore thee all the Land of* Saul *thy Father, and thou ſhalt eat bread at my Table continually*; that is, thou ſhalt ſit with me, and have ſuch as I have, a kingly fare, and that was more then bread, it was all manner of dainties: a Kings Table is a full Table.

Thirdly, Bread is taken properly and in kind, for the loweſt and meaneſt ſort of food only, becauſe though bread be the moſt neceſſary food, yet it is the moſt common food, which is proper for man; and a man that is kept only with bread, he is kept with the loweſt and moſt ſparing dyet. In this latter ſence we are to expound this Scripture; *His Off-ſpring ſhall not be ſatisfied with bread*, that is, they ſhall not have ſo much as the meaneſt food, they ſhall not have that which is neceſſary, they ſhall want even bread it ſelf. The Septuagint Tranſlate fully to this ſence, if eſcaping the Sword his Children come to be men, *they ſhall beg*, they ſhall go about the Streets from door to door begging for a cruſt: in this ſence *David* uſeth the word (*Pſal.* 37. 25.) *I have been young, and now am old, yet have I not ſeen the Righteous forſaken, nor his ſeed begging bread*; that is, I have not ſeen them deſtitute of that which is needful and neceſſary for a livelihood: though they have not dainties or abundance, yet they have food convenient, or bread enough for the ſupport of life. *Job* propheſieth the quite contrary of the wicked mans *Off-ſpring, They ſhall not be ſatisfied with bread.*

Neceſſarius, et quotidianus illis victus deficiet. Pined. προσαιτήσουσιν. *Mendicabunt.*

Hence Obſerve, *The greateſt plenty which the wicked provide for their Children, is no bar to their Childrens poverty, nor ſhall it prevent their want.*

How much ſoever a man leaves behind for his Children, if he leave not a bleſſing behind, he leaves poverty behind, his plenty will come to poverty. A little, with a bleſſing from God, is enough both for our ſelves and ours: But aboundance without a bleſſing is not enough for either. This is the meaning of *Davids* aſſertion (*Pſal.* 37. 16.) *A little that a Righteous man hath, is better then the Riches of many wicked.* The Righteous mans Penny is better Silver then the wicked mans is, not in it ſelf, not either as to quanity or quality; but becauſe the Righteous mans Penny, though a little one, hath a bleſſing in it to him and his, which the wicked mans hath not.

Secondly, Obſerve, *Not to have that which ſatisfieth, is, if not as bad as to have nothing at all, yet next door to it.*

Suppoſe a man periſh not by Famine, yet it is a very great evil not to be ſatisfied. There are two Conſiderations, wherein to have bread, and not to be ſatisfied, is a great affliction.

Firſt, To have ſo little that it will not ſatisfie nature, (which I conceive is the thing intended in this place) this is a ſore evil. We commonly ſay Nature is ſatisfied with a little, and Grace with leſs. And though we can never have ſo little, but that Grace is ſatisfied with it (for Grace is ſatisfied even when the Lord lets Nature periſh) yet many have too little to ſatisfie, that is, to ſuſtaine Nature. Some would have bread to ſatisfie their luſts, and they, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, (*Rom.* 13. *ult.*) *Make proviſion for the fleſh to fulfill the luſts of it.* To be cut ſhort of the creature, as to the exceſs, is a mercy, but not to have bread for the neceſſity of Nature, is in it ſelf a curſe. (*Levit.* 26. 26.) *When I have broken the ſtaffe of your bread* (ſaith the Lord) *Ten Women ſhall bake your bread in one Oven, and they ſhall deliver you your bread again by weight: and ye ſhall eat and not be ſatisfied.* As if he had ſaid, you ſhall have Ten times leſs bread then you uſed to have; that Oven which ſerved but one womans batch before ſhall ſerve Ten; and then you ſhall eat bread, and not be ſatisfied, that is, you ſhall have leſs bread then will ſatisfie. It was the Lords charge or command to his ancient People, the *Jews*, concerning the Levites, as alſo the ſtranger, and the Fatherleſs, that they ſhould have bread to ſatisfaction provided for them, (*Deut.* 14. 29.) *And the Levite, becauſe he hath no part nor inheritance with thee, and the ſtranger, and the fatherleſs, and the widdow, which are within thy gates, ſhall come, and ſhall eat, and be ſatisfied, that the Lord thy God may bleſs thee in all the work of thine hand which thou doeſt.* Such was the Lords care of thoſe who could leaſt care for themſelves, that they ſhould have not only enough to keep them from ſtarving, but that they ſhould have a competency, or comfortable ſubſiſtence, they ſhall eat and be ſatisfied. To eat leſs then will ſatisfie Nature, is a burden to Nature, as well as to eat more. And hence that promiſe (*Pſal.* 22. 26.) *The meek ſhall eat and be ſatisfied.* And again (*Pſal.* 37. 19.) *They ſhall not be aſhamed in the evil time, and in the dayes of Famine they ſhall be ſatisfied.*

Secondly, As to eat and not be ſatisfied, becauſe we have too little, is a great evil, ſo to have much and not be ſatisfied, is a far greater evil. This curſe is viſible upon many; they have much to eat, and yet are not ſatisfied. (*Eccl.* 5. 10.) *He that loveth Silver, ſhall not be ſatisfied with Silver*; that is, how much ſoever he hath of it, he ſhall not be ſatisfied; his inward appetite, his deſire ſhall increaſe, he ſhall have a hunger upon his Spirit worſe then the hunger of the Stomack. *Solomon* gives us the character of ſuch a perſon, (*Eccleſ.* 4. 8.) *There is one alone, and there is not a ſecond, yea, he hath neither Child nor Brother, yet is there no end of all his labour, neither is his eye ſatisfied with Riches, neither ſaith he, for whom do I labour, and bereave my Soul of good? This is alſo vanity, yea, it is a ſore travel. He eates, and is never ſatisfied, who thinks he hath not enough, how much ſoever he hath more then he can eat*; an unſatisfied body is a great affliction, but an unſatisfied mind is a far greater, and is at once an affliction and a ſin. Not to be ſatisfied with a little, with the leaſt Portion which God alloweth us is ſinful; and ſuch is the ſinfulneſs of many, that they are never ſatisfied, how much ſoever their Portion is. The preſent Text and point may reach this diſſatisfaction, both as it is the ſin and the puniſhment of the wicked mans poſterity: but I rather conceive that other unſatisfiedneſs here intended and threatned only as an affliction or puniſhment of the wicked mans poſterity, a want of ſufficient bread to ſatisfie them, *His Off-ſpring ſhall not be ſatisfied with bread.*

Verſ. 15. **Thoſe that remain of him ſhall be Buried in death: and his widdowes ſhall not weep.**

In the former verſe his poſterity were expreſſed by two words; Firſt, *His Children*; Secondly, *His Off-ſpring.* In this verſe we have a Third word for the ſame purpoſe; *His Remains*, or as we render, *Thoſe that remain of him*; yet this title may be underſtood two wayes,

Firſt, More generally for all his Children left behind him, when he goeth out of the World, or departs this life

Secondly, More eſpecially for thoſe of his Children that eſcape the two former evils, Sword and Famin.

The former verſe ſpeaks as if the Sword and Famin had ſwept them all away, and made a clear riddance of his whole family. But ſuppoſe any ſhould be left remaining after that common deſtruction and miſerable devaſtation, yet they ſhould not long eſcape the hands of death. The Scripture ſpeaks ſometimes as if all were deſtroyed when when only many are. *That which moſt ſuffer, all are ſaid to ſuffer.* (Jer. 44. 27, 28.) *Behold, I will watch over them for evil, and not for good; and all the men of* Judah *that are in the Land of* Egypt *ſhall be conſumed, by the Sword, and by the Famin, untill there be an end of them.* Here are the two conſuming evils, ſpoken of by *Job*, Sword and Famin; all the men of *Judah* ſhall be conſumed, by the Sword, and by the Famin, untill there be an end of them. Yet (it follows) *A ſmall number that eſcape the Sword, ſhall return out of the Land of* Egypt *into the Land of* Judah, &c. Where only a few eſcape a miſchief, all are ſaid to fall under it. Thus here, becauſe the moſt of the wicked mans Children ſhall fall, by the Sword, and the Famin, the Text ſpeaks as if all had fallen. But, if any be left, *They*

Shall be buried in death.] What elſe? Should not a man be buried when he is dead? Or what doth *Job* mean, when he ſaith, *They ſhall be buried in death?* As ſoon as *Sarah* was dead, *Abraham*, though he loved her intirely, yet provided for her Burial, and thus beſpake the men of that Countrey (*Gen.* 23. 4.) *I am a ſtranger and a ſojourner with you, give me a poſſeſſion of a Burying place with you, that I may Bury my dead out of my ſight.* Why then is it ſaid here, *That thoſe that remain ſhall be buried in death?* There are divers Interpretations of it, which I ſhall touch upon when I have only noted, That the Septuagint read, *They ſhall dye in death*, which is of like force, *They ſhall dye the death.* That repetition of the word either way adds force to the matter ſpoken, and ſignifies not only the certainty of death, but the ſharpneſs and grievouſneſs of it. But to keep our rendering, *they ſhall be buried in death.*

First, Some underſtand it only thus, *They ſhall be buried in the Grave*, which is called, *The Chamber of death*, (Pro. 7. 27.) The Sepulcher is the houſe of the dead, and as it were of death it ſelf, there death keeps houſe. But I ſhall paſs this as too low and flat an Interpretation.

ἐν θανάτῳ τελευτήσει. Sept.

Secondly, Thus; *They ſhall be buried in death*; that is, they ſhall be forgotten as ſoon as they dye; to be ſo, is a judgment; then a man is properly and indeed buried in death, when he is forgotten as ſoon as he is dead, and no ſooner out of the World, but out of all mens mindes, unleſs to think and ſpeak of him with abhorrence. Thus to ſay a man is buried in death, is as much as to ſay, he ſhall not be remembered with credit when he is dead. Some are thus buried in life or alive, and many are thus buried in death. This is a fair Interpretation.

Thirdly, *They ſhall be buried in death*; that is, they ſhall be buried preſently as ſoon as they dye. They that take care of their Funeral, ſhall ſcarce tarry till the breath is out of their bodies, or the breath ſhall no ſooner be out of their bodies, but their bodies ſhall be thruſt into the Grave. Men who dye in honour, are buried with deliberation; but all men, even neareſt friends and relations ſhall be ſo weary of theſe, that they ſhall haſten, yea hurry their carkaſſes to the Earth. So to be buried in death is to be buried even while dying or before death hath made a perfect conqueſt over them; implying that all are glad to be rid of them. So Mr. *Broughton* ſeems to underſtand *Job's* Text, Tranſlating it thus; *His remnant ſhall be buried as ſoon as they are dead.* Which he gloſſeth thus; *As contemned ſlaves preſently.* According to this Interpretation, the ſence is, they ſhall be brought to the Grave without any comely attendance, and ſhall have an ignoble Burial. The dead bodies of great men are kept ſometimes a Week, ſometimes a Month, yea ſomtimes ſeveral Months above ground, that they may be buried at laſt with greater Solemnity. But theſe no ſooner dead but buried, *away with them.* The Particle *Beth*, uſed here in the Text, ſhews ſuch a ſuddenneſs of one thing done after another, as if there came no time between, much leſs any conſiderable time. So 'tis rendered in that famous Propheſie of the Kingdom of Chriſt in and with the Saints (*Dan.* 2. 44.) *And in the dayes of thoſe*

Semivivi ſepelientur moribundi. Vatabl.

thoſe Kings ſhall the God of Heaven ſet up a Kingdom, which ſhall never be deſtroyed. When he ſaith, *in the dayes,* we are not to underſtand it, that that Kingdom ſhall be contemporary with thoſe other Kingdoms; for though Chriſt hath a Kingdom in all Kingdoms, and a Throne among all Thrones, and a People among all People, yet the Prophet is not ſo much ſpeaking of that Kingdom of Chriſt which ſhall grow up in the dayes of thoſe Kings, as of that which ſhall be built upon their ruines. And accordingly Mr. *Broughton* Tranſlates that place, *not in the dayes,* but, *preſently after the dayes of thoſe Kings ſhall the God of Heaven ſet up another Kingdom.* Thus here, *They ſhall be buried in death*; that is, preſently after they are dead, or they ſhall be buried in obſcurity without pomp, no man regarding, ſcarce any man accompanying their carkaſſes to the Grave.

Fourthly, Others underſtand this *burying in death,* of the Second death, or of eternal death; ſuch are buried in death indeed, who lye under the bond of eternal death. The Godly are buried in life, and the wicked in death. But I ſhall not ſtay upon that notion; for I conceive *Job* is not deſcribing the wicked under eternal, but temporal evils and puniſhments.

Fifthly, We may take death here by way of ſpecialty for ſome extraordinary death, and ſo to be *buried in death,* is to dye of the Plague; and then we have the three Great Judgments of God met together in afflicting the poſterity of the wicked man, Sword, Famine, and the Peſtilence. The Plague or Peſtilence may juſtly be called *Death,* by way of Eminency, becauſe it is a diſeaſe ſo deadly. Among the *Chaldeans* the Peſtilence is not numbred among diſeaſes, but 'tis called *Death.* And ſo we find it expreſt (*Revel.* 6. 8.) *And I looked, and behold a pale Horſe, and his name that ſate on him was death,* that is, the Peſtilence, *and Hell followed him, and power was given unto him, over the fourth part of the Earth, to kill with Sword, and with hunger, and with death*; that is, with the Plague or Peſtilence. And they who dye of the Plague may well be ſaid to be buried in death, as to the firſt ſence given, becauſe they, as ſoon as dead, are ſuddainly carried out to Burial, leſt they ſhould infect the Air, and ſo taint the bodies of the living. And ſo ſome render *Davids* choice of the peſtilence (1 *Sam.* 24. 13.) by this General word, he choſe three *dayes Death.* In our language we commonly called the *Peſtilence,* not only *The Sickneſs,* as if no diſeaſe were a ſickneſs except that, but we call it alſo The *Mortality,* as if no ſickneſs brought death with it but that; and experience teacheth, that no diſeaſe bringeth ſuch certain death as that. How doth death ride as it were in triumph, where the Peſtilence reigneth. Other diſeaſes ſlay their Thouſands, but the Plague of Peſtilence its Ten thouſands, and therefore this may be received for the cleareſt and moſt proper expoſition of this Text, *They that remain of him ſhall be buried in death,* that is, the Plague (which is ſay ſome an immediate ſtroak from God) ſhall ſweep them away, after they have ſurvived and ſcrambled out of the hands of Sword, and Famin.

Peſte interempti ſepeliuntur. Pined Coc.

In caſtigationibus morborum. i.e. *per diros morbos.* Rab. Sol.

Chaldæis peſtilentia מותנא *dicitur.* Druſ.

Mortem Tridui Elegit. Sulpit. Sever. Sacr. Hiſtor. lib. 1

Obſerve, Firſt, *God hath variety of judgments at his call; when he commands, Sword, and Famin, and Peſtilence, ſay, here are we.*

If one miſs, the other ſhall hitt; as it is ſaid (1 *Kings* 19. 17.) *Him that eſcapeth the Sword of Hazael, ſhall* Jehu *ſlay; and he that eſcapeth the Sword of* Jehu, *ſhall* Eliſha *ſlay.* He that eſcapes one judgment may fall by the hand of another; let not the wicked man pleaſe himſelf, in the hopes of impunity, becauſe this or that evil, Sword, or Famin, have not diſpatcht him, for the Peſtilence quickly may. And if he eſcape all theſe, and a thouſand deaths beſides, yet the ſecond Death or Hell will take him at the laſt, unleſs he repent, return, and make his peace with God. How ſhall they eſcape, what can ſave them, who neglect *the great Salvation?*

Secondly, Note, *The Peſtilence is a very grievous and ſore judgment, 'tis death.*

This is one of the *three evils,* ſo often mentioned and threatned in the Prophets againſt a rebellious People; Famin, Sword, Peſtilence, are the firſt three, and in ſome ſence, Peſtilence is the firſt or worſt of the three. Is it not then a great mercy that God hath delivered us from it, that we have had ſo long a freedom from *the arrow that flyeth by day, and from the Peſtilence that walketh in darkneſs?* (Pſal. 91. 6.) It walketh not ſo much in natural darkneſs, or in the darkneſs of the Night, as in a Figurative darkneſs, no man knowing where it walkes, or whither it will walk, in the cleareſt light, whether to the poor mans Houſe, or to the Rich mans Houſe, whether to the dwelling of the *Plebeian,* or of the Prince, till it hath left its own mark, and given a deadly ſtroak. The Prophet *Eliſha* (2 *Kings* 8. 10.) ſaid to the Meſſenger that came to him from *Benhadad,* to know whether his Maſter ſhould recover or no, *Go, ſay unto him, thou mayeſt certainly recover: howbeit, the Lord hath ſhewed me, that he ſhall ſurely dye.* His meaning was, that his diſeaſe was ſuch as he might recover of, yet God had ſhewed him that he ſhould not. God can bring death in any diſeaſe, but ſome diſeaſes carry death in the very face of them. *Hezekiah* being ſick of the Plague (as ſome conceive, becauſe mention is made of a Malignant Ulcer or Boil, *Iſa.* 38. 21.) it is ſaid that *Iſaiah* came to him and told him, (*v.* 1.) *Thus ſaith the Lord, ſet thine Houſe in order, for thou ſhalt ſurely dye, and not live*; As if he had ſaid, thou art mark'd for death; thou art a dead man; thou art as ſure to dye of this diſeaſe, as if thou wert already dead. Thy diſeaſe is not only deadly, but death; though the Prophet knew the Lord was able to correct the Malignity of that diſeaſe, yet looking upon it in its own nature, he might ſay, *thou ſhalt dye, and not live,* as well as he ſaid ſo by direct order from the Lord; and he put this warning peece for death, both in the Affirmative, and in the Negative, to ſhew the undeniable ſequel of death in ſuch a caſe, unleſs the Lord (at whoſe command life and death, health and ſickneſſes are) would pleaſe to give a countermand. As the worſt of our ſpiritual diſeaſes is the *Plague of the Heart,* (1 *Kings* 8. 38.) So the worſt of outward diſeaſes is the *plague of the body.*

And his Widdows ſhall not weep.

The words ſeem to ſpeak only of one Husband, but of many Widdows. Which ſome ſay *Job* doth, becauſe the Ancients in thoſe parts had many Wives; yet we may expound it diſtributively, not collectively, *His Widdows,* that is, The Widdows of every one of them. And that makes the ſence more full and Emphatical; as if he ſaid, This ſhall be the temper of every one of their Widdows, one ſhall not be more tender-hearted or affectionate then another: when their Husbands dye, they ſhall all be like ſo many ſtocks or ſtones in that doleful day.

Viduas pluralitèr dicit, quod ſæpe plures uxores haberent veteres illi. Merc.

His Widdows ſhall not weep] It may be Queſtioned, why they ſhould not?

Say ſome, his Widdows ſhall not weep, for they ſhall be cut off too: his Children and Wives ſhall be ſlain together, and ſo none left to weep. But this is rather to take away the ſubject of the Queſtion, then to anſwer it. And therefore we muſt ſuppoſe his Widdows living, and enquire, why they are not weeping, there being nothing more proper for a Widdow, then tears at the remembrance of her lately deceaſed Husband.

Viduæ non plorabunt quia ſimul morientur. Coc.

We may anſwer,

Firſt, They weep not, being overcome with the greatneſs of their trouble, and terror of the judgment; to looſe a Husband any way is a great affliction, but to have a Husband ſnatcht away by ſome extraordinary death is greater. Now great afflictions ſtop the natural courſe of tears, they, as it were, dry up the Springs of ſorrow, or at leaſt hinder them from flowing forth. *Light ſorrows ſpeak out, and make a noiſe in Lamentations, but vaſt ſorrows ſpend themſelves in an amazed ſilence and aſtoniſhment.* Thus the Lord forbad *Ezekiels* mourning for the death of his Wife, the deſire of his eyes, for a ſign to the *Jews* that he would bring ſuch a calamity upon their moſt deſireable things, their Sons and their Daughters, as ſhould exceed mourning (*Ezek.* 24. 21, 22, 23.) *Behold, I will prophane my Sanctuary, the excellency of your ſtrength, the deſire of your eyes, and that which your Soul pitieth; and your Sons and your Daughters whom ye have left ſhall fall by the Sword: and ye ſhall do as I have done, you ſhall not cover your lips, nor eat the bread of men, and your tires ſhall be upon your Heads, and your Shooes upon your feet* (that is, ye ſhall not uſe any geſtures, nor make any ſignes of ſorrow, as it follows) *ye ſhall not mourn nor weep, but ye ſhall pine away in your iniquities, and mourn one towards*

Curæ leves loquuntur ingentes ſtupent. Fletu acerbo funera et queſtu carent. Sen. in Oedip. Act. 1.

wards another; as if he had ſaid, your miſeries and ſufferings ſhall be ſuch as open mourning cannot expreſs, but ye ſhall conſume away in a ſtupid and deſperate ſenſleſneſs under them.

Secondly, When he ſaith, *His Widdows ſhall not weep*, it may note the worthleſneſs and wickedneſs of their Huſbands. Their baſeneſs was ſuch while they lived, that their neereſt relations would not beſtow a tear upon them when they were dead. It is ſaid of wicked *Jehoram* King of *Judah* (2 *Chron.* 21. 20.) *That he dyed without being deſired*; that is, none deſired that he ſhould live any longer, all were weary of him. Now they who dye undeſired, dye alſo unlamented. No man grieves for the loſs of that either perſon or thing, which he did not deſire. And when 'tis ſaid here, *His Widdows ſhall not weep*, the meaning is, that none ſhall; when they who are neareſt related (being one fleſh with the deceaſed) mourn not, it cannot be ſuppoſed that others ſhould.

Thirdly, Theſe words, *His Widdows ſhall not weep*, may ſignifie that he ſhall not have any Solemn Burial, as was touched before. Weeping and Lamentation are the moſt proper funeral Muſick; then nothing ſounds ſo well as a ſigh, nor is any thing then ſo much in ſeaſon as a tear. *In* Rama *was there a voyce heard* (Matth. 2. 18. What voyce?) *Lamentation and weeping and great mourning*, Rachel *weeping for her Children, and would not be comforted*, (and why ſo? the reaſon is added) *becauſe they were not*; that is, they were not alive, but dead. But here ſaith *Job*, Husbands are not, and their Widdows weep not; as Wives, they had no comfort in them, and as Widdows they had no ſorrow for them.

Hence Obſerve, *To dye unlamented, is a lamentable death.*

It is reported among thoſe Judgments which fell upon the People of *Iſrael* for their ſins, eſpecially for their great ſin of unbeleif, That *their Prieſts fell by the ſword, and their Widdows made no lamentation*, (Pſal. 78. 64.) Which ſome expound according to the ſecond ſence given of theſe words in *Job*, *Their Widdows were ſlain with them.* Others, that they were ſo overwhelmed with grief for the fall of their Husbands, that they dyed themſelves preſently, and ſo could make no lamentation for them. Such was the caſe of *Phinehas* his Wife, who hearing that her Husband was ſlain, and the Ark of God taken, travel'd preſently, and having ſaid, *The Glory is departed from Iſrael*, ſhe her ſelf departed, (1 *Sam.* 4. 19, 20.) Whether upon theſe, or any other grounds, theſe Widdows made no lamentation: the ſcope of the Pſalm is the ſame, ſhewing that it is a judgment either upon ſuch perſons in ſpecial, or upon the times in general, when men dye, and lamentation is not made for them. Uſually in all places and times (*Solomon* ſpeaks, *Eccl.* 12. 5.) When man *goeth to his long home, the mourners go about the ſtreets.* And therefore to dye and none mourn, is to fall below the common condition of man. We read ſometimes that the Lord to ſhew his diſpleaſure, both againſt the dead, and the living, hath by ſpecial order interdicted the living from mourning for the dead. (*Jer.* 16. 5.) *Thus ſaith the Lord, enter not into the Houſe of mourning, neither go to lament, nor bemoan them; for I have taken away my peace from this people, ſaith the Lord, even loving kindneſs and mercies: both the great and the ſmall ſhall dye in this Land; they ſhall not be buried, neither ſhall men lament for them.* And again (*Chap.* 22. 10.) *Weep ye not for the dead, neither bemoan him*, &c. There is a prohibition againſt weeping for the dead, becauſe their ſtate was better then theirs, who lived to be carried away captives. And therefore it is added (*v.* 11.) *Weep for him that goeth away* (into captivity to *Babylon*,) *for he ſhall return no more, nor ſee his native Countrey.* And at the 18 verſe, *Thus ſaith the Lord concerning* Jehojakim *the Son of* Joſiah *King of* Judah, *they ſhall not lament for him, ſaying, ah my Brother, or ah Siſter: they ſhall not lament for him, ſaying, ah Lord, or ah his glory.* Such were the expreſſions, ſuch the language of ſorrow at the Burial of great Princes; their kindred uſe then to groan out, *Ah my Brother, or ah Siſter*; and their Subjects in General, *Ah Lord, or ah his Glory*, or Magnificence, how is that ſtained! How is all his pomp, all his ſplendour laid and obſcured in the duſt? And whether we take thoſe words in that place, *they ſhall not lament*, as a command not to lament, or (as I conceive they are to be taken) only as declaring the event, that they ſhould not, they are of equal ſtrength as to the confirmation of the point in hand. I grant there is no reaſon at all to lament the death of good men, in reſpect of themſelves, for they gain by it, (*Phil.* 1. 21.) And hence our Lord Chriſt when being led away to be Crucified, *a great company of People and of Women followed him, which alſo bewayled and lamented him*; he turning to them ſaid, *Daughters of* Jeruſalem, *weep not for me, but weep for your ſelves, and for your children; for behold the dayes are coming, in which they ſhall ſay, Bleſſed are the barren*, &c. But though good men dying do not at all need the tears of the living, becauſe they are entred into greater good then any they had while they lived; yet it is a great argument, both of the goodneſs, uſefulneſs, and holineſs of thoſe who dye, while they lived, as alſo of the favour and reſpect of God himſelf to them, when going out of this World, they are greatly lamented, and the mourners go about the Streets while they are going to the Grave. *They deſerve to be moſt lamented who need it leaſt. And they have moſt need to be lamented, who deſerve it leaſt.* When widdows (unleſs ſuch as have loſt all natural affection) weep not, Husbands deſerve not. *His widdows ſhall not weep.*

Verſ. 16. **Though he heap up Silver as the duſt, and prepare raiment as the clay.**
17. **He may prepare it, but the juſt ſhall put it on, and the innocent ſhall divide the Silver.**

Job proceeds further to ſhew the miſery of the wicked man in theſe two verſes.

Though he heap up Silver as the duſt.

Here are two words that expreſs aboundance of Silver in the poſſeſſion of the wicked man.

Firſt, *It is heaped up.* When Chriſt would ſhew what full returns charitable gifs ſhall have; he ſaith, *Give, and it ſhall be given you, good meaſure, preſſed down, and ſhaken together, and running over, ſhall men give into your boſomes.* (Luk. 6. 38.) The wicked mans meaſure is full of Silver; though men do not give into his boſom, yet he will get it (if he can) rather then not get it, out of the bowels of other men; and he will never leave getting and griping, vexing and oppreſſing, till he hath gotten a *heap of Silver.* That *he heaps up Silver*, is the firſt ſignification of his aboundance.

There is a ſecond word, yet more ſignificant, or which ſignifies more, Though he heap up Silver *as the duſt*; that is, though he heap up ſo much, that it is as common and plentiful as the duſt with him and his, of which enough and too much for the moſt part is every where to be had. The aboundance of Riches in *Solomon's* time is thus expreſſed, (1 *Kings* 10. 27.) *And the King made Silver to be in* Jeruſalem *as Stones, and Cedars made he to be as the Sycamore Trees, that are in the Valley for aboundance.* *Joſeph* is ſaid to gather Corn in *Egypt* in the ſeven Years of plenty, *as the Sand of the Sea.* (Gen. 41 49.) Noting the vaſt ſtore which he gathered and laid up againſt the years of Famin. To gather Corn as the Sand, to make Silver as the Stones, to heap it up as duſt, are all high ſtrains of Rhetorick, implying the ſame thing. The next words are ſpoken in a like ſtrain, and with a like intent.

And prepare raiment as the clay; or as the word is read, *as a heap.*

By **Raiment**, he means all that furniture which ſerves either barely for the neceſſity, or for the ornament of the body. As if he had ſaid, Though he hath piles of Apparel, whole Wardrobes filled with ſeveral ſorts of Raiment, yet, as it follows in the next verſe; but before I open that, I ſhall a little, conſider the oppreſſors way and ſtudy, the courſe and ſcope for his life, and of all his actions, which ſeem to be here ſet forth under theſe high and ſtrong Hyperbolies; *Though he heap up Silver as the duſt, and prepare Raiment as the clay.*

בחמר *Sicut acervum, aliqui legunt* בחמר *in acervum, ſimplicior prorſus et lenior ſenſus.* Bold.

Hence Note, Firſt, *The work and buſineſs of a Worldly man is to gather Riches.*

Such as their nature is, ſuch are their motions and deſignes, (1 Joh. 4. 5.) *They are of the World: therefore ſpeak they of the World*; and as their language is of the World, ſo their labour is for the World.

Secondly, Note, *A little of the World will not ſerve the Worldly mans turn, he muſt have heap upon heap, if it be poſſible till it be heaped up as the duſt.*

Job's ſuppoſitions may be reſolved into poſitions; they heap up wealth as duſt or clay; or as the Prophet *Iſaiah* ſpeaks, (*Chap.* 5. 8.) *They join Houſe to Houſe, they lay Feild to Feild, till there be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midſt of the Earth.* They would have all to themſelves; their Spirit is full of envy at the little which others have, and it is never filled, how much ſoever themſelves have. A little doth not pleaſe, a competency is ſcarcity, they are inſatiable, they would get more when they have got moſt, and they would be richer when they are at richeſt. It is not ſinfull to have abundance, but to covet after abundance, and to project abundance, that is ſinful. The Prophet *Habakkuk* ſpeaks of ſuch (*Chap.* 2. 6.) *Shall not all theſe take up a Parable againſt him, and a taunting Proverb againſt him, and ſay; wo to him that increaſeth that which is not his: how long? And to him that ladeth himſelf with thick Clay*; that is, with the things of this World. The covetous are deſcribed labouring, and that in the very fire, to load themſelves with thick Clay. And the nearer they come to their Journeys end, the more would they load themſelves with it. The leſs way remains for them to go, the more proviſion they make. This diſeaſe of heaping up Riches, encreaſeth moſt when men are neareſt death. They are never ſo craving for the World, as when they are going out of the World; and when they have no appearance of need, they have the ſtrongeſt workings of deſire. They would be getting aboundance, even when they are dying, though (as Chriſt hath aſſured us (*Luk.* 12. 15.) *The life of man doth not conſiſt in the abundance of that which he poſſeſſeth.* How ſad is it that man ſhould live in the purſuit of that wherein his life doth not at all conſiſt? As all our care cannot add one Cubit to our ſtature, nor (of it ſelf) one duſt to the duſt-heap of our Riches; ſo how many heaps ſoever of this duſt we have heaped up, they cannot add one moment of time nor minute of content to our lives. And as theſe heaps of Silver and Apparrel cannot keep the Rich mans life, ſo the Rich man ſeldom keeps them while he lives. For, *Though he heap up Silver as the duſt, and prepare Raiment as the Clay*, yet (as it follows)

Quo minus reſtat viæ eo plus quærant viatici. Cic. de Senect.

Verſ. 17. **He may prepare it, but the juſt ſhall put it on, and the innocent ſhall divide the Silver.**

In this verſe *Job* ſheweth us how the wicked man is diſappointed, he is not contented with what he hath, and he ſhall be diſappointed of what he hath; *he may prepare* the Silver and the Raiment, with an opinion that they ſhall be his for ever. As the Rich man in the Goſpel ſaid, *Soul take thine eaſe, eat drink and be merry, for thou haſt goods laid up for many years.*

He may prepare it, &c.] As if *Job* had ſaid, I grant he may proſper ſo far as to get great heaps of Silver, but he ſhall not long enjoy what he hath gotten; or thus, let him toil and vex himſelf in preparing it as much as he will; So Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates, *Well may he prepare it*, God will ſuffer him to do it. And ſo 'tis of like ſence with that of the Prophet, (*Mal.* 1. 4.) *Whereas* Edom *ſaith, we are impoveriſhed, but we will return, and build the deſolate places; Thus ſaith the Lord of Hoſts; they ſhall build, but I will throw down, and they ſhall call them the border of wickedneſs, and the people againſt whom the Lord hath indignation for ever.* The wicked man ſaith, I will heap up Silver, and prepare Rayment, I, do (ſaith God,) *prepare it*, and ſpare not, *but the juſt ſhall put it on, and the innocent ſhall divide the Silver,*

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *The ſinful cares and endeavours of a Worldly man may have much ſucceſs.*

Whether that ſinfulneſs of his cares and endeavours do ariſe, either from the inordinacy of them, or from the unrighteouſneſs of them, he may prove a great getter, a great gainer in this World. Thus 'tis ſaid (*Hoſ.* 12. 7, 8.) *He is a Merchant, the ballances of deceit are in his hand, he loveth to oppreſs; and* Ephraim *ſaid, yet I am become Rich, I have found me out ſubſtance.* As if he had thus ſaid, and pleaſed himſelf in ſaying ſo; though I have oppreſſed others, yet I have proſpered; though I have been unjuſt, yet I have been ſucceſsful. He indeed carried it cloſely in all his labours, they could find none iniquity in him, yet it was the gain of iniquity by which he ſo proſpered.

Secondly, Obſerve, *The ſucceſs of the cares and labours of Worldly men, doth not reach the end intended by them.*

He may prepare it, yet not for any good to him; no, it ſhall be for anothers uſe, or rather for anothers uſe then he appointed it. What, or whoſe is that? The next words anſwer, *The juſt ſhall put it on. What ſhall the juſt put on?* The Raiment which the wicked man hath prepared: the juſt ſhall have the benefit, uſe, and comfort of what he hath prepared, *And the innocent ſhall divide the Silver.*

The former verſe ſpake of the Silver firſt, and of the Raiment laſt, this verſe ſpeaks of the Raiment firſt and of the Silver laſt. When two things are mentioned in Scripture, it is uſual in the repetition of them to begin with the laſt and ſo proceed to the firſt. *The juſt ſhall put it on*, &c. The Scripture ſpeaks only againſt the unjuſt man; and here the Rich man ſtands in oppoſition to the juſt; the juſt ſhall put on his Raiment, and the innocent ſhall divide the Silver. That man ſhall poſſeſs his treaſure, for whom he never intended it. *The innocent ſhall divide the Silver.* But ſhall they invade the mans eſtate, and pull away his goods becauſe he is a wicked man? No, but the providence of God ſhall give them a right to it. We may not without juſt cauſe given, take away the Raiment, or divide the Silver of the wickedeſt man in the World. We muſt not take it, becauſe he came unworthily by it, or is unworthy of it. We muſt not divide any mans, the worſt mans eſtate, till we can make out a good title to it.

Secondly, When it is ſaid, *The innocent ſhall divide the Silver*, we are to underſtand it not only of a diviſion among themſelves, but to and among the poor, they ſhall lay it out better then he laid it up. Thus *Solomon* concludes of ſuch a man (*Pro.* 28. 8.) *He that by Uſury and unjuſt gain increaſeth his ſubſtance, he ſhall gather it for him that will pity the poor*; that is, his Silver ſhall come into ſuch a mans hand and power, as will divide it to thoſe who have moſt need. So (*Eccl.* 2. 26.) *God giveth to a man that is good in his ſight, wiſdom and knowledge and joy: But to the ſinner he giveth travel to gather, and to heap up, that he may give to him that is good before God.* He doth not mean that the ſinner will give it to him that is good before God; for as the ſinner giveth little, if any thing of what he hath gotten, ſo he giveth leaſt of all, indeed nothing at all with his good will, or intentionally, to him that is good before God; but the meaning of the Preacher is, that God by his providence diſpoſeth the ſinners Riches into ſuch hands, as will diſtribute them to him that is *good before God*; that is, to the truly godly. As *Job* here deſcribes the right heirs of the oppreſſor, *The juſt and the innocent.*

Hence Note, Firſt, *A wicked mans labours are often inherited by the Righteous.*

He labours for himſelf, and his, no man more, no man ſo much, but neither himſelf nor his reap the benefit of his labours. Thus *David* ſpeaks (*Pſal.* 49. 10.) *He ſhall leave his Riches to others*; it is true of all when they dye, (for no man can carry his Riches with him out of the World) they leave their Riches to others; but it is true in a further ſence of many, they ſhall leave their Riches to others; men whom they never put in their Will, ſhall ſhare their Eſtate when they dye. (*Pſa.* 39. 7.) *Surely every man walketh in a vain ſhaddow, he heapeth up Riches and knoweth not who ſhall gather them.* He labours and gathers for one or more whom he knowes, for Wiſe and Children, ye he knowes not whether they ſhall ever enjoy what he hath gathered. The Lord by *Moſes* tells us what he did with the Eſtates of the Idolatrous Uncircumciſed Nations, (*Pſal.* 105 44.) *He gave them* (that is, the *Jewes*) *the Lands of the Heathen: and they inherited the labour of the People.* The Lands and Labours of thoſe wicked Nations were not for themſelves, but for them who were good before God.

Secondly, Note, *It is a ſore judgment not to enjoy the fruit of our own labours.*

When a man ſhall heap up Silver, and another divide it, when he ſhall gather Raiment, and another put it on, this is a cutting judgment. It is ſaid of the ſloathful man, *that he Roaſts not what he took in Hunting* (Pro. 12. 27.) Indeed the ſloathful man will not take the paines to hunt for it, if he have any Roaſt-meat it muſt be of other mens Hunting and Catching. But ſome are induſtrious enough, they Hunt, yet cannot eat what they have got by Hunting, but another eates it. The Lord doth make a diſtribution of their Eſtates and Portions to ſuch as they dreamt not of, and leaſt intended them to. As the Lord divides the powers of the World, and puts them out of one hand into another, (*Pſal.* 75. 6, 7.) *Promotion cometh neither from the Eaſt, nor from the Weſt, nor from the South, but God is the Judge, he putteth down one, and ſetteth up another.* And again (*Job* 34. 24.) *He ſhall break in peices mighty men without number, and ſet others in their ſtead.* Now as God diſpoſeth of the powers of the World, and breaks them as he pleaſeth; ſo he breaks the Riches of men, and diſpoſeth them into what hands he pleaſeth. Thus 'tis ſaid in the concluſion of the Parable (*Matth.* 21. 41.) *He will let out his Vineyard to other Husbandmen.* Which is true, as of that great truſt of the Goſpel, ſo of any particular truſt; they that have had the Vineyard, ſhall not alwayes have it, if they are wicked; God will let it out to others. The juſt ſhall put on the Rayment, and the innocent ſhall divide the Silver.

Thirdly, This Scripture doth not only ſay, *He may prepare it, and others, in general, may divide the Silver*, but we have a ſpecial character of the perſons that ſhall divide it, They are the Innocent.

Hence Obſerve, *The labours of the wicked ſhall be to the good of the Righteous.*

The ſweat of the unjuſt ſhall be ſweet to the juſt, and their travel ſhall be his benefit. (*Pro.* 13. 22.) *A good man leaveth an inheritance to his Childrens Children: and the wealth of the ſinner is laid up for the juſt.* The ſinner doth not lay up his wealth with a purpoſe that the juſt ſhall have it; but the providence of God over-rules his purpoſes, and in the iſſue the ſinners wealth becomes the Portion of the juſt. This text of *Solomon*, as alſo thoſe toucht before in the opening of the Text, are a clear Comment upon and an expoſition of this in *Job*, *The Innocent ſhall divide the Silver*; the Silver of diſhoneſt men ſhall come into honeſt mens hands at laſt, and they ſhall make a better diſtribution and improvement of it, then ever the firſt owners or heapers of it up had a heart to do. They who having juſtly gotten, duely divide their Eſtates, ſhall hold them; but they who get them unjuſtly, or hold them baſely; ſhall have others to ſhare and divide them. He that gets honeſtly, yet keeps covetouſly, endangers his wealth to the diviſion of ſtrangers. *Solomon* ſpeaks this expreſly (*Pro.* 11. 24.) *There is that ſcattereth* (he doth not mean it of a prodigal ſcattering upon our luſts, but of a prudent ſcattering to good and pious uſes; a man may give ſo much to theſe that it may be ſaid he ſcattereth) *and yet encreaſeth*; *and there is that withholdeth more then is meet, but it tendeth to poverty*, that is, it tendeth to his own poverty, and may poſſibly, be a relief to the poverty of others. Now, I ſay, if he that keeps covetouſly, what he hath got honeſtly, endangers it to a diviſion among ſtrangers, how much more he that keeps covetouſly, what he hath gotten diſhoneſtly? The carnal man in gathering the Riches of this World is but like the beaſt, he hath the leaſt of it himſelf, he workes for others; he is like the Aſs or Camel that carries a great burthen of excellent things, of precious Jewels and Rich Commodities, yet never ſhares of them, but is put off with a little Hay or Provender. So in this caſe, while covetous Worldly men burthen and tire themſelves out in gathering and heaping up the things of this World, the beſt of them, the ſweet of them is enjoyed by ſuch as they ſuſpected not, much leſs wiſhed ſhould enjoy them. God provides heirs for them, and puts their wealth into hands that will make better uſe of it then ever themſelves would. *This is the Portion of a wicked man: the Portion which he hath prepared, neither he nor his ſhall inherit. The juſt ſhall put on his rayment, and the innocent ſhall divide his Silver.*

Patrimoniū noſtrum retentum perditur manū erogatum.
Greg. l. 18. Moral. c. 9.

VERS. 18, 19, 20.

He buildeth his Houſe as a Moth, and as a Booth that the Keeper maketh.

The Rich man ſhall lye down, but he ſhall not be gathered, he openeth his eyes, and he is not.

Terrors take hold on him as waters, a Tempeſt ſtealeth him away in the night.

JOB proceedeth in a further Exemplification of the miſeries falling upon and oppreſſing the wicked man. His great Riches in heaps of Money and Wardrobes of Apparel being exhauſted waſted and gone, his Houſe follows and goes too. Judgment paſſeth from his moveables to his immoveables, and they alſo prove but Moveables. *Upon what family ſoever the wrath of God abideth, nothing can long abide.*

Verſ. 18. **He buildeth his Houſe as a Moth.**

The Moth is a little inconſiderable creature, yet a harmful creature, and therefore hath its name ſutable to its nature and work, from *biting or fretting*.

This ſimilitude of a Moth is two wayes applyed by Interpreters.

First, To ſhew the ſinful and injurious wayes, by which the wicked man builds his Houſe. The Moth defaceth and ſpoileth the faireſt Garment to make it ſelf a Houſe or lodging. Whereſoever the Moth dwels, it is to the coſt and detriment of others.

כעש *pro* העש כבית
Sicut tineæ pro ſicut domum tineæ. Tineæ animalculum à mordendo et corrodendo nomen habet.

Hence Note, *Wicked and ungodly men care not whom thy dammage or wrong, ſo they may Houſe and help themſelves.*

They build their own Houſes with the ruine of their neighbours. They eat their Brethren (as we ſay) out of Houſe and home, out of Trade and Eſtate, that they may encreaſe their own. The Prophet deſcribes ſuch Moths, and denounceth a wo againſt them (*Iſa.* 5. 8.) *who join Houſe to Houſe* (by thruſting others out of their Houſes) *that lay Feild to Feild* (taking away their neighbours Feilds) *till there be no place* (for any honeſt man to live by them, that they may be placed alone, as Lords and Proprietaries, all others being but their Servants, Tenants, or underlings) *in the midſt of the Earth.* Thus another Prophet expounds it (*Mic.* 2. 2.) *They covet Feilds, and take them by violence: and Houſes, and take them away, ſo they oppreſs a man and his Houſe, even a man and his Heritage.* To buy Feilds, or to build Houſes, is not unlawful, but to invade Fields, and to build Houſes for our ſelves by pulling down other mens Houſes, or by putting them out of their Houſes: This is to build like a Moth.

Secondly, This ſimilitude of a Moth is applied to ſet forth the uncertainty and ſhort continuance of the wicked mans Houſe. The Moth makes himſelf a Houſe or Neſt in ſome goodly garment, as if it were to be his manſion for ever. And yet the Moth is ſoon diſpoſſeſſed either of theſe two wayes.

First, As the Moth by eating and fretting the Garment makes his dwelling, ſo he conſumes it, and ſpoiles his own habitation.

Corrodendo ædificat, corrodendo diruit.

Whence Note, *While wicked men make themſelves Houſes by wronging others, they indeed ruine them and bring them to nought.*

As he is a Moth to other mens Houſes, ſo alſo to his own; yea God himſelf will be as a Moth (that is, a ſecret and ſilent conſumption) to his Houſe, as he threatned, (*Hoſ.* 5. 12.) *Therefore will I be unto Ephraim as a Moth; and to the Houſe of* Judah *as rottenneſs*, I will make them rot and moulder away inſenſibly. *Wo unto him that buildeth his Houſe by unrighteouſneſs, and his Chambers by wrong; that ſaith I will build me a wide Houſe, and large Chambers, and cutteth him out windows, and it is ceiled with Cedar, and painted with Vermilion; ſhalt thou reign becauſe thou cloſeſt thy ſelf with Cedar?* The Interrogation denies ſtrongly, Thou ſhalt not reign, thou ſhalt not continue long in thy Houſe which thou haſt built (like a Moth) by unrighteouſneſs: thy Cedar ſhall be Moth-eaten, and thy Vermilion diſcoloured as with Worms. Sin hath raiſed many Houſes, and it will ruin all that it hath raiſed.

Secondly, If the Moth doth not ſpoil his Houſe by fretting the Garment, yet when the Garment is taken up to be aired and bruſht, the Moth is preſently bruſht off or cruſht to pieces.

Hence Note, *If wicked men do not quickly waſt their own houſes, yet they are in danger to be quickly thruſt out of them.*

They have no more aſſurance of holding their Houſes, then a Moth hath to dwell long in a Garment. The wicked mans houſe is of ſhort continuance; God can demoliſh the ſtrongeſt ſtones and timber as ſoon as we can cruſh a Moth. *When thou* (ſaith *David*, Pſal. 39.11.) *with rebukes doeſt chaſten man for iniquity, thou makeſt his beauty to conſume away like a Moth.* The beauty of the mind, gifts and comforts, the beauty of the body, health and ſtrength, the beauty of the houſe and ſtate, Riches and Honour, conſume at the rebukes of God; and they conſume as the Moth, they are caſt out of their dwelling as the Moth, and they are cruſht out of their life as the Moth. All men (as *Eliphaz* told *Job*, Chap. 19) *dwell in houſes of clay; whoſe foundation is in the duſt, and they are cruſhed before* (that is, as eaſily and as ſpeedily as) *the Moth.* But as ſin hath brought the weakneſs of a Moth, and of a Moths houſe upon all mens lives, perſons and eſtates, ſo much more upon the wicked who live in ſin, and both live and love to ſin. *He buildeth his houſe as the Moth.*

There is yet another rendering and reading of theſe words, which I ſhall but touch and paſs on.

He ſhall build his houſe as Arcturus.

The ſame word ſignifieth both a *Moth*, (which is one of the meaneſt Creatures on earth) and *Arcturus*, which is one of the moſt remarkable Stars (or Conſtellations rather, that is, knots or combinations of Stars) in Heaven; and ſo the word is rendered in the 9 Chapter of this Book, at the 9 Verſ. And then the meaning and ſence of the words is this; he (the wicked man) ſhall build a goodly Houſe, as if it were a Heavenly Pallace or Paradiſe; as if (as it is ſaid the proud *Aſſyrian* ſaid in his heart, *Iſa.* 14. 13.) *He had exalted his Throne above the Sars of God*, as if (as it is ſaid of *Edom*, Obad. 4.) *He had exalted himſelf as the Eagle, and ſet his Neſt among the Stars.* The ſum of all is this; He ſhall build a beautiful Houſe, like the Houſes of Heaven, a ſtrong Houſe like the Houſes of Heaven, a large Houſe, like the Houſes of Heaven, a Houſe quite out of Gun-ſhot, and the reach of danger from man, as the Houſes of Heaven are. And yet this beautiful, ſtrong, large, ſafe Houſe and State of his, ſhall ſoon decay, rot, fall, and in the iſſue, be but as a common cottage, or as it followeth in the Text,

As the Booth that the Keeper maketh.

We have here another compariſon or lively image of the ſhort and fading felicity of a wicked man For a Booth is either made only of green Boughs and Branches of Trees ſet and wrought together, to keep off the extream heat of the Sun; or it is a little ſlight Houſe of Boards ſuddenly and rudely clapt together in ſome Orchard, Garden, or open Feild, where Fruit or Cattle are in danger to be ſpoiled and taken away, in which the keeper ſhelters and ſhrouds himſelf from wind and weather, till the Fruit be gathered, or the Cattel removed, and then the Booth is removed too, and taken down, or if left ſtanding, it is not long ere it falls and drops down. When the Prophet would ſhew the deſolate condition of *Zion*, He ſaith (*Iſa.* 1. 8.) *The Daughter of Sion is left as a Cottage in a Vineyard* (when the Grapes are gathered) *or as a Lodge in a Garden of Cucumbers*, when the Fruit is taken out. And again(*Iſa.* 24.20.) *The Earth* (that is, the Glory and moſt eſtabliſhed proſſperity of the inhabitants of the earth) *ſhall reel to and fro like a Drunkard, and ſhall be removed like a Cottage*, or a Shepherds or Souldiers Tent. Thus *Hezekiah* bemoaned himſelf in his ſickneſs, as he thought, with a dying Son, (*Iſa.* 38. 12.) *Mine age is departed and is removed from me as a Shepherds Tent.* Once more, the Prophet *Jeremiah* lamenting the miſeries of *Jeruſalem*, expreſſeth it in this Language, (*Lam.* 2.6.) *He hath violently taken away his Tabernacle, as were of a Garden*, that is, as a Booth or ſorry hovel in a Garden, which the keeper ſetteth up to repoſe and ſhade himſelf in from the heat of the day and the cold of the night, while he watcheth the fruits thereof. All Tents or Booths are moveable; but the Gardeners, the Shepherds, and the Souldiers moſt of all. Thus *Job* derides the moſt magnificent and ſtately ſtructures, the ſtrongeſt and moſt fortified Towers of the wicked mans Worldly greatneſs and pomp; calling them or comparing them to Booths, Tents, and Countrey Cottages, made up not of Ceder-beams and Marble-pillars, but patcht and clapt up with Hurdles, Sticks, and Dirt. And in theſe contemptible terms the Lord ſpeaks, (as it is ſaid of proud *Tyre the Crowning City, whoſe Merchants were Princes, whoſe Traffickers were the honourable of the Earth*, Iſa. 23. 8, 9. Thus I ſay he ſpeaks) *to ſtain the pride of all* (ſinfull) *glory, and to bring into contempt all the* (wickedly) *honourable of the Earth. Theſe build their Houſes as a Moth, and as a Booth that the Keeper maketh.* This tranſitory and faſhion-changing ſtate of the wicked man (both as to his poſſeſſions and his perſon) is further proſecuted in the Verſe following.

סכה *Umbraculū tabernaculū ex frondibus et ramis arborum non-diu durans. Tabernaculum hujuſmodi proverbiali ſpecie ſumitur pro re momentanea.* Sanct.

Verſ. 19. **The Rich man ſhall lye down, but he ſhall not be gathered: He openeth his eyes, and he is not.**

There are three Interpretations of this Verſe, which though they have much variety conſidered apart, yet no contrariety to the ſcope of that point which *Job* had in hand, yea they all center in his purpoſe, to ſhew the ſuddain changes and calamities which fall upon the wicked

The Rich man ſhall lye down.

The word which we render to *lye down*, is applyed, Firſt, to note, living, ſettling, and inhabiting in a place, (*Levit.* 26. 6.) *I* (ſaith the Lord) *will give peace in the Land, and ye ſhall lye down. and none ſhall make you afraid*; that is, ye ſhall live peaceably and quietly in the Land. Secondly, it is applyed to lying down to ſleep(*Ge.* 19.4.) *But before they lay down, the men of the City, even the men of* Sodom, *compaſſed the Houſe round*, &c. Thirdly, to a lying down ſick or diſeaſed. Thus *David* deſcribes his malicious enemies pleaſing themſelves in the incurableneſs of his ſickneſs (*Pſal.* 41. 8.) *An evil diſeaſe, ſay they, cleaveth faſt unto him, and now that he lyeth* (ſick a bed, or as we ſay, upon his ſick Bed) *he ſhall riſe up no more*; that is, he ſhall never recover his health again. Fouthly, it is applyed to a lying down in death (2 *Sam.* 7. 12.) *When thy dayes be fulfilled* (ſaith the Lord to *David* by his Prophet *Nathan*) *and thou ſhalt ſleep* (or lye down, it is this word) *with thy Fathers, I will ſet up thy ſeed after thee*, that is, when thou dyeſt I will bring thy children to the Throne.

שכב *Cubit procubuit, jacuit.*

Here in this place, the rich mans *lying down* is expounded.

Firſt, Of lying down to ſleep. And then the whole Verſe is rendered in a ſuitable ſence, thus; *When the Rich man lyeth down, it is not taken away, when he openeth his eyes it is not.* And if he ſaid, When the Rich man goeth to Bed, to take his reſt, he ſees his Houſe and Goods ſafe, all is well about him, but when he awaketh in the Morning, or through ſome terror of the Night, he finds all is gone and himſelf left helpleſs, friendleſs. As *Naomi* ſaid, (*Ruth.* 1. 21.) *I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home again empty.* So the rich man may ſay ſometimes, I lay down, I went to Bed full, my Houſe and Goods being untouched and quiet, but I roſe empty, my Riches having made themſelves wings like Eagles, are fled away. For the clearing of this ſence, is to be conſidered, that the Original Text may be rendered either, *He*, of a perſon, or *It* of a thing; ſo, *it is not taken, and it is not*, that is, his wealth a little before was not taken away, yet by and by, it is not; All is gone, and he is ſtript of all in a night: His Riches are ſtoln by Theeves, or conſumed by Fire before the Morning. Further, for the making out of this Tranſlation, we muſt take notice, that the ſame Hebrew word ſignifies both to *Add*, or *Gather*, as alſo to *remove*, or *take away*, becauſe that which is added or gathered to one, is commonly taken away from another. From this expoſition of the words.

Dives cubat cum nihil dum interverſum eſt: ubi oculos ſuos aperit, nihil adeſt. Jun.

אסף *Collegit, congregavit, per metalepſin abſtulit, removit.*

Note, *There is no aſſurance in any earthly inheritance.*

As the life, ſo the Worldly eſtate of man (eſpecially of a wicked man (ſtands upon terms of greateſt uncertainty. The rich man(*Luke* 12. 19.) told his Soul that he had goods laid up for many years; but God told him he had not life enough laid up for one; *Thou fool, this night thy Soul ſhall be required of thee*; and as that rich fools Soul laſted not in his body one night, ſo the riches of many ſuch fools laſt not one night in their hands or houſes. God ſends out his writ of ſequeſtration, and ſaith to him, This night ſhall thy Goods, thy Gold and Silver, thy lands and Revenews be required of thee. *It is beſt to make little reckoning of that, as to eſteem, of which we cannot truly make any long reckoning as to continuance.*

Secondly, Others interpret theſe words, not of a ſuddain ſuprizal of his Riches by ſome unexpected yea unſuſpected judgment when he lyeth down to reſt; but of his fall into poverty in general. *He ſhall lye down*; that is, he ſhall fall or come down from his hight of Riches and greatneſs, and ſhall become ſo poor that he ſhall even lye in the Streets, or by the High-way ſide, no man affording him either ſo much reſpect or pity as to gather him up, that is, to receive him into his houſe, or give him lodging. He ſhall be not only poor, but forſaken and forlorn; in purſuance of which ſence the latter clauſe of the Verſe is thus rendered; *He openeth his eyes, and there is none*, that is, He being in this extremity, ſhall look round about him for help, but ſhall find none to relieve him. *Greateſt States have greateſt Turns.* They who caſt down others, ſhall fall down themſelves, and have none to help them up. How often are oppreſſors cruſhed, and they who have unjuſtly ſpoyled others of their comforts, juſtly denyed the ſmalleſt courteſie?

Thirdly, Our Tranſlators (and ſo do moſt) underſtand the words *lying down*, of dying, or of a lying down in death; and thoſe negative words, *He ſhall not be Gathered*, of his want of Burial. We find the word *Gathered*, applyed expreſly to the Grave (2 *Kings* 22. 20.) Where the Lord promiſeth that young good King *Joſiah*, that he ſhall not ſee the evils Propheſied againſt *Jeruſalem*. *Behold I will gather thee unto thy fathers, and thou ſhalt be gathered into thy Grave in peace*, &c. As to be gathered to our Fathers, or to our People, is to dye (*Num.* 20. 26. *Num.* 31. 2.) So to be gathered to the Grave is to be Buried; and we read of Gathering and Burying put together, *Jer.* 8. 2. *Jer.* 25. 33. *They ſhall not be gathered nor be Buried, but ſhall be for Dung upon the face of the Earth.* So that *not to be gathered*, implyeth not only (as ſome interpret) the want of an honourable Burial, but the want of any Burial at all. And *Job*, in ſpeaking thus, ſeems Prophetically to threaten the wicked Rich man, who abounded in all things while he lived, with the denial of a Grave or honeſt interment when he ſhould dye: which (as the abhorrence of nature) hath been adjudged for the puniſhment of publick Enemies and Tranſgreſſors of the Laws of Nature. And (in the Judgment of *Solomon*, Eccl. 6. 3.) this want of Burial is accounted and caſt up for a greater evil then Abortion or an untimely Birth. *If* (ſaith he) *a man beget an hundred Children, and live many years, ſo that the days of his years be many, and his Soul be not filled with good, and alſo that he have no Burial, I ſay, that a untimely Birth* (that is, one that is Born before his time, and dyeth before or as ſoon as born) *is better then he.* Maſter *Broughton* Tranſlateth and gloſſeth *Job's* text fully to this ſence. *The Rich* (in death) *lyeth and is not taken up*, that is, *To be honeſtly buried, for his children ſhall be killed* (ver. 14.) *Amongſt the wild* Arabians (ſaith he) *this remaineth unto this day: and in our wild Countries. It is an Hebrew Phraſe, for one dead taken friendly to burial, or of an ſtranger into lodging*; thus far He. When men are Buried, they are gathered as into a Store-houſe, and there laid up ſafe till the Great day of the Reſurrection; then the Graves ſhall be unlockt, and commanded to give up their Treaſure. Now ſeeing *Job* threatens this as a Plague after death upon wicked men, that they ſhall not be gathered or Buried,

Obſerve, *It is a mercy to have a decent Burial, and to be laid up fairly in the Grave.*

As it is a very great Judgment when the bones of the dead are diſquieted and pull'd out of their Graves, (*Jer.* 8. 1, 2.) *At that time, ſaith the Lord, they ſhall bring out the bones of the Kings of* Judah, *and the bones of the Princes, and the bones of the Prieſts*, &c. *out of their Graves, and they ſhall ſpread them before the Sun and the Moon*, &c. As this (I ſay) is a very great Judgment to have Buried bones pull'd out of their Graves; ſo it is no ſmall judgment, when dead bones have not the favour of a Grave or Burial. It ſhews that a price is put upon a thing when 'tis carefully laid up. Good Garments are put into Cheſts or Wardrobes, not thrown about the Houſe. The Body is the Garment of the Soul, and therefore Death is called an uncloathing, (2 *Cor.* 5. 4.) And we lay up theſe Garments, our bodies, in the Wardrobe of the Grave, in aſſurance that we ſhall put them on again, and wear them (when made ſpiritual and incorruptible) for ever. As when we go to ſleep every night we put off our Garments, when we awake in the Morning we put them on again; So it is when we ſleep in death, we put off our Bodies, and when we awake in that glorious Morning at the ſound of the Arch-angels Trumpet we ſhall put them on gain.

But though Burial, or to be gathered to the Grave, be a mercy, yet it is only a common mercy; A mercy as common as the Sun which ſhineth, or the Rain which falleth indifferently upon all, whether good or bad. Yea for the moſt part, as bad men take moſt care for their worſt part, their Bodies, to feed and cloath and preſerve and pamper them, while they live; ſo when they dye, what ever becomes of their Souls, they uſually give ſtrict commands and directions about the Burial of their Bodies. When we read of the Rich mans death, it preſently followeth, and *was buried* (*Luk.* 16. 22.) But as for *Lazarus* the Begger, his death is mentioned, and the Burial of his Body buried in ſilence; only we find that Heaven was his Tomb, for *he* (that is, his Soul or Spirit) *was carried by Angels into Abrahams boſome.* And wicked mens bodies often have the better of the Saints as to an outward Burial; their Bodies being houſed in ſtately Monuments, while the Bodies of theſe are entombed only in the bowels of ravenous Birds and Beaſts, (*Pſal.* 79. 2.) *The dead Bodies of thy ſervants have they given to be meat unto the Fowles of the Heaven, the fleſh of thy Saints unto the Beaſts of the Earth.* That's all the Burial which many a good man hath had, how good ſoever it is to have a Burial. And the Bodies of Saints, do a great ſervice to God, when they are dead, and thus Buried. For as in giving themſelves up to a violent death, they bear a Teſtimony to all the truths of God, ſo in having their Bodies thus Buried, they increaſe the Wonder, and the Miracle of that great truth of God, *The Reſurrection of the Body.* For as there is a mercy to a man in being gathered to the Grave by Burial, ſo an infinite Glory will ariſe to the power and wiſdom of God, in gathering up the Bodies of his Saints out of ſuch uncouth Graves and Burials. They who lye down and are not gathered to the Grave by any, much leſs any ſolemn Burial, ſhall yet be ſolemnly gathered at the Reſurrection. But they who lying down are gathered to the Grave by Burial, are laid up for a Reſurrection. A good Reſurrection is beſt, yet to be laid up for it is good. *The rich man ſhall lye down.* There is no avoiding nor bribing of death by his Riches; *But he ſhall not be gathered*; all the Riches which he hath gathered cannot purchaſe him a Grave to be gathered to, when God hath a mind to ſcatter him. *Riches avail not in a day of Wrath, either to deliver from death, or to obtain the favour of a Burial.* He that hath the leaſt true grace may be aſſured that when he lyeth down in death, his Soul ſhall be gathered unto Chriſt. But he that hath the greateſt portion of Worldly riches, can have no aſſurance that when he dyeth his Body ſhall be gathered to the Grave. *The rich man ſhall lye down*, There is his neceſſity of dying. *But he ſhall not be gathered*, there is the uncertainty, at leaſt, of his Burial.

There is yet another reading of theſe words; *When the Rich man ſleepeth, or lyeth down in the ſleep of death, he ſhall take nothing away with him, he ſhall open his eyes and find nothing.* The Apoſtle gives us this expreſly (1 *Tim.* 6. 7.) Where perſwading to contentment in our preſent portion, whatſoever it is, he gives this Reaſon of it; *For we brought nothing into this World, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.* There is a great Emphaſis in that word, *certainly*, which the Apoſtle adds in the latter clauſe, implying, that while all agree and are ſufficiently convinced that we bring nothing with us into the World, yet ſome have a kind of opinion, and ſome hankering hopes grounded thereupon, that they ſhall carry ſomewhat away with them out of the World, or at leaſt, that their Riches will be ſome benefit and advantage to them in another World. And therefore (according to this Tranſlation) *Job* brings in the Rich man after death (it is uſual in Scripture to attribute acts of life to the dead, as *Iſaiah* 14. 9, 10. *Hell* (or the Grave)

Dives cum dormierit, nihil ſecum auferet, aperit oculos ſuos et nihil inveniet.

is removed for thee to meet thee at thy coming: It ſtirreth up the dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the Earth; it hath raiſed up from their thrones (that is, their ſtately Tombes or Monuments where they are as it were enthroned) *all the Kings of the Nations. All they ſhall ſpeak and ſay unto thee,* &c. Thus he brings in the dead King ſpeaking and ſaying, *&c.* And thus, I ſay *Job* brings in the rich man here after death, opening his eyes, and looking about him, whether any of that huge maſs of riches which he once had while he lived in this world, did accompany him, or would be of any uſe to him among the dead. When man dyeth nothing goeth away with him to abide by him for ever, but what he hath got either by his faith or by his unbelief, by his holineſs or by his wickedneſs. He that believeth carrieth all the good things of Chriſt away with him as his portion for ever; and he that believeth not carrieth away the wages of ſin with him as his portion for ever. Except in this ſence, 'tis moſt certain that as we brought nothing with us into the world, ſo we ſhall carry nothing away with us when we dye and depart the world. All theſe things which are ſeen are temporal, and ſhortly will not be ſeen at all. Could the rich man being dead open his eyes, he ſhould find nothing. We read

Quaſi circumſpectu num quippiam eorum quæ hic reliquit ibi præſto ſit. Janſon.

He openeth his eyes, and he is not.

Which words are interpreted by ſome, as a deſcription of the rich mans ſuddain death. As if *Job* had ſaid; he dyeth in the opening of an eye. And thus 'tis paralleld with that ſpeech of the Apoſtle (1 *Cor.* 15. 52.) *In the twinkling of an eye.* As ſoon as his eye can open or twinkle, he is gone, and as it followeth, *He is not*; that is, he is not alive, or among the living. They who live not are ſpoken of as if they were not, or had no being, yea, as if they had never been.

Tam cito perit quam oculos ſuos aperit. Druſ.

There is yet another rendring of theſe words, which makes the perſon opening his eyes diſtinct or another from him that dyeth. So Mr. *Broughton, One openeth his eyes, and he is gone*; as if he had ſaid, when any neighbour, friend, or brother, looks for him, and would converſe with him, he is dead and gone. And thus *Job* ſpake at Chap. 7. concerning his own mortality and fleeting condition in this life (*v.* 7, 8.) *O remember that my life is wind: mine eye ſhall no more ſee good: the eye of him that hath ſeen me ſhall ſee me no more.* And *Zophar* ſpeaks the ſame of the wicked (*Ch.* 20. 9.) *The eye alſo which ſaw him ſhall ſee him no more.* So *David* (Pſal. 37. 36.) *I have ſeen the wicked in great power, and ſpreading himſelf like a green bay tree; yet he paſſed away, and loe, he was not, yea I ſought him, but he could not be found.* All which paſſages fully expreſs the ſence of this tranſlation. *One openeth his eyes* (to ſeek and find him out) *and he is gone*; there is no more to be ſeen, or had of him, only much evil is to be heard of him.

All theſe readings and ſenſings of theſe words, and of the whole verſe, though ſomewhat varying and diſſenting from one another, do yet center in this general truth (which is *Jobs* ſcope) that wicked men, how rich ſoever, are as ſubject to death, and the conſequents of it, as any other; and that many times, when they dye, they want thoſe common reſpects which others have: And that their riches are ſo far from being any help to them after this life, that they cannot help them to a grave or funeral when they dye. *Job* hath not yet done with his ſad narrative of the wicked man, but proceeds to ſhew either the dreadful manner of his departure, or rapture rather, out of this world, or ſome ſtrange violent and unexpected evils, both inward and outward, befalling or rather falling upon him in this life.

Verſ. 20. **Terrors take hold on him as waters, a tempeſt ſtealeth him away in the night.**

This verſe aggravates the miſery of a wicked man, whether living or dying, by a double ſimilitude.

The one taken from a deluge or inundation of Waters; the other a Tempeſt or Storm of wind.

Terrors take hold on him as waters.

Three things are to be enquired for the opening of this former part of the verſe.

Firſt, What we are to underſtand by *Terrors*.

Secondly, How theſe *Terrors* may be ſaid to take hold, or what this taking hold implyeth.

Thirdly, How they are ſaid to take hold, *as waters*.

For the firſt. The Original word notes the extreameſt diſturbance and hurry of the whole man, as was ſhewed at Chap. 18. verſe 11. Terror is fear to aſtoniſhment. Thus it is ſaid (*Gen.* 35. 5.) that, when *Jacob* and his family journied towards *Bethel, the terrour of God* (that is, a great terror, or a terror cauſed by the immediate hand of God) *was upon the Cities round about them, and they did not* (for they durſt not) *purſue after the Sons of* Jacob. And with this the Lord threatned his own people, in caſe his fear were not before their eyes to keep them from ſin (*Lev.* 26. 16.) *I alſo will do this unto you, I will even appoint terror over you,* &c. As if the Lord had ſaid, if ye will not obey me as your King in love, Terror ſhall be your King. Death, the King of terrors, is very dreadful, but it is far more dreadful to have terror for our King.

בלהות *Terrores à* בהל *Turbari, conturbari, terreri.*

Terror is taken two wayes in Scripture.

Firſt, For thoſe things which cauſe terror, or makes us greatly afraid. Thus the judgments of God are called terrors (*Pſal.* 73. 19.) *How are they brought to deſolation, as in a moment, they are utterly conſumed with terrors,* that is, with terrible Judgments. And as Judgments, ſo the laſt Judgment is called terror, becauſe it ſhall ſtrike the unbelieving and impenitent world, of men with ſo much terror (2 *Cor.* 5. 10.) Any great danger, any unuſual or unheard of troubles cauſe terror, and are therefore called *terrors*.

Secondly, Terror is taken for the effect it ſelf cauſed in the mind of man, by things either in their own nature, or in their appearances terrible. Thus *Jeremy* begs of the Lord (*Chap.* 17. 17.) *Be not a terror to me in the evil day*; that is, do not thou O Lord, terrifie my Spirit within, when troubles are without. It is ſaid of the Magiſtrate (*Rom.* 13. 3.) *That he is not a terror to good works, but to the evil,* that is, he doth not terrifie (if he act according to his truſt and duty) thoſe that do good works, but evil-workers.

The terrors ſpoken of and intended by *Job* in this Text, may be taken (as I conceive) in either ſence. Terrible judgments without and terrible fears within *take hold of him.*

The ſecond thing to be enquired, is, how theſe terrors take hold of the wicked man. The Hebrew word here uſed, ſignifies not barely to take, but to take by over-taking, or to take hold by a violent or forceable laying hold either upon perſons or things. It is a metaphor alluding either to an enemy purſuing his fleeing enemy, who when he hath overtaken him, taketh hold of him, and either kills him or takes him priſoner; or the metaphor refers us to the notion of Hunts-men, who follow the game to make prey of it; or laſtly, to Sergeants or Officers of Juſtice, who follow debtors and malefactors, to arreſt, attach, and apprehend them. Thus the word is uſed (*Zech.* 1. 6.) *Did not my words take hold on your Fathers?* Surely they did; if the word do not take hold of us in the rule, cauſing us to obey, it will take hold of us in the threatning, and cauſe us to ſmart for not obeying. And *David* complains (*Pſal.* 40. 12.) *Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, ſo that I am not able to look up.* Iniquity takes hold of the Soul three wayes. Firſt, in the power of it, overcoming man to do it; ſecondly, in the guilt of it, making man lyable, and accordingly binding him over to bear the puniſhment of what he hath done. Thirdly, in all the puniſhments which man actually beareth.

נשג *In Hiphil attigit, apprehendit, aſſecutus eſt.*

Thus do theſe terrors threatened in the Text, take hold of a wicked man; they take hold of him, as an enemy doth his enemy in the battel, as the Hunter doth the wild Beaſt, or as the Officer taketh hold on him that is fallen under the penalty of ſome Law. They take, firſt, a violent hold of him; ſecondly, they take a ſtrong hold of him, ſo that he cannot get looſe; thirdly, they take a reſolved hold of him, they will not looſe him, nor let him go. We ſee how they take hold of him, from the force of the word, which hath many ſimilitudes implyed in it; and that may be yet further ſeen by opening the ſimilitude which is expreſſed in the Text; and that was the

Third thing propoſed for explication; how terrors are ſaid to *take hold on him as waters.*

Afflictions and troubles are often compared to waters in Scripture (*Pſal.* 32. 6. &c.) and as they are like waters in their nature, ſo (which is here meant) they are like waters in the manner of their coming. For terrors and troubles come many times, firſt, ſuddainly; ſecondly, violently; thirdly, abundantly; fourthly, ſucceſſively, one upon the neck of another. As *David* ſaid (*1 Chron.* 14. 11.) *God hath broken in upon mine enemies by mine hand, like the breaking forth of waters*; that is, he hath ſuddainly and violently deſtroyed them by mine hand. *Heman* uſeth this ſimilitude to ſet forth the way of the Lords ſending terrors upon him for his tryal, and the exerciſe of his faith and patience (*Pſal.* 16. 17.) *Thy fierce anger goeth over me* (as waves of the Sea, or mighty waters) *thy terrors have cut me off; they came round about me dayly like water, they compaſſed me about together.* When the Lord would ſhew how abundantly freely and continually the Rulers of the Earth ought to do Juſtice, he ſaith (*Amos* 5. 24.) *Let Judgment run down as waters, and righteouſneſs as a mighty ſtreame.*

Waters eaſily take hold becauſe they may come ſuddainly, unexpectedly, and 'tis very hard to get out of their hold, becauſe they come ſo violently, ſo abundantly, ſo continually, or ſucceſſively; and thus terrors take hold of the wicked *man as waters.*

Having noted many things about terrors (*Chap.* 18. 11.) I ſhall not ſtay upon them here, only, Note,

> Firſt, *They who will not ſuffer their hearts to be taken hold of by the word of God, ſhall one time or other, be laid faſt hold on, and held faſt enough by the terrors of God.*

They who will not be kept in compaſs by good counſel, ſhall be compaſſed about with ſorrow. Men do but procure and haſten on miſery, while they caſt off duty.

> Secondly, Note, *All the outward favours which we receive in this world, and of this world, cannot maintain our comforts, nor ſecure our inward peace.*

Apprehendet eum, quaſi aqua inopia. Vulg. Sept.

How great ſoever any mans portion is in the things of this life, terror may be his portion too. Abundance of riches cannot free from poverty, much leſs from the fear of it. The moſt ſetled ſtate of bodily health cannot free from ſickneſs, nor from death, much leſs from the dread of either, leaſt of all can any one, or all theſe put together, free an evil doer from thoſe terrors and tortures which his awakened Conſcience will inflict upon him for his evil deeds. All the good things which we poſſeſs without God are not ſo much as a half-good to us; and when terrors are upon us, they can do us no good at all. When the Lord ſends his terrors into the Soul of a Godly man like waters, they overwhelme (while they continue) all his ſpiritual comforts, they bear down, and lay proſtrate all his intereſts, evidences, and experiences, about his eternal ſtate and happineſs, as we ſee exampled in the caſe of *Heman* in the 88. *Pſalme* throughout. Surely then the carnal comforts of rich men muſt needs be ſwallowed up or waſht off, when terrors from *the Almighty* overtake them, and take hold of them like an impetuous torrent of waters. And if this torrent of terrors be not enough to ſweep away and brown the worldly rich mans proſperity, behold a Tempeſt is at hand to take away not only *His* but *Him*, as it follows in the laſt clauſe of the verſe.

A tempeſt ſtealeth him away in the Night.

As a deluge of waters, ſo a Tempeſt ſignifieth thoſe troubles and evils which proceed from the angry diſpenſations of God. Thus the Pſalmiſt prayeth down vengeance upon the enemies of the Church (*Pſal.* 83. 14, 15.) *As the fire burneth the wood; and as the flame ſetteth the mountains on fire; ſo perſecute them with thy Tempeſt, and make them afraid with thy Storm.* All great riſing waters move violently, but the motion of ſtorms and tempeſts is nothing but violence. *As whirlwinds in the South paſs through, ſo it cometh* (that is, trouble and deſolation cometh) *from the deſert, from a terrible Land* (Iſa. 21. 1.) The Lord hath ſpecial Coaſts where Storms and Tempeſts are bred, and from thence ſent out either for the tryal of the Godly, or the puniſhment of the wicked. *A Tempeſt*

Stealeth him away.] It might ſeem more proper, to a Tempeſt, to ſay, *It hurrieth him away*; but the Lord can order things ſo, that thoſe judgments which as to their force and irreſiſtible violence are like Tempeſts, yet in regard of their ſilent and unexpected coming, ſhall be like Thieves, who as they come to ſteal, ſo they ſteal in privately and unſeen if they can, where they come. It is ſaid of *Abſolom*, that he *ſtole the peoples hearts* from *David* his Father by his flattering [illegible]nuations (2 *Sam.* 15. 1.) He did it cunningly and cloſely. The Apoſtle implyeth that the great day of Judgment ſhall ſteal upon the World very unexpectedly, while he ſaith (1 *Theſ.* 5. 2.) *That the day of the Lord ſo cometh as a Thief* (and that not as a Thief in the day, but as a Thief) *in the night.* This circumſtance of the time or ſeaſon is inſtanced by *Job* alſo in this place. *A Tempeſt ſtealeth him away*

In the night.] The circumſtances of an affliction do greatly encreaſe the affliction; and among circumſtances, the time of it is as conſiderable as any other. And therefore Chriſt having propheſied the ſad calamities which ſhould fall upon *Jeruſalem* within a few years after his aſcenſion to Heaven, counſels them to pray, that *their flight might not be in the Winter, neither on the Sabboth day* (Mat. 24. 20.) for either of them would be an hightning addition to all their other calamities. To thoſe two circumſtances of time, the *Winter*, and the *Sabboth-day*, we may well reckon that of the Text, as a third, *The night.* For the night being it ſelf (comparatively to the day) an uncomfortable time, muſt needs augment the diſcomfort of any affliction which comes upon us in it. The night or darkneſs is terrible in it ſelf, and therefore when a Tempeſt comes in the night, it muſt needs be more then ordinarily terrible. The ninth plague which God brought upon *Egypt* to puniſh the hardneſs of *Pharoahs* heart in not letting *Iſrael* go, was darkneſs (*Exod.* 10. 21.) *And the Lord ſaid unto* Moſes, *ſtretch out thine hand toward Heaven, that there may be darkneſs over the Land of* Egypt, *even darkneſs which may be felt.* To feel darkneſs was a dreadful ſtroak, though they ſhould have felt nothing elſe; yet this was not the utmoſt of *Egypts* miſery; as they had felt the plague of darkneſs, ſo to wind up their calamity to the higheſt, they muſt feel their tenth and laſt plague in darkneſs (*Exod.* 12. 29.) *And it came to paſs, that at midnight the Lord ſmote all the firſt-born in the Land of* Egypt, *from the firſt-born of* Pharoah *that ſat on his Throne*, &c. And then we read in the next verſe, *There was a great cry in* Egypt. To have had any of their Children ſmitten had been a great plague, but to have their firſt-born ſmitten was a greater, and to have all their firſt-born ſmitten was a greater then that, and yet we are not at the greateſt greatneſs of their plague, till we come to the time of it, in the night, yea at midnight, which is the deadeſt and darkeſt time of the night. And to put a terror upon that ſlaughter of the *Aſſyrians* encamping againſt *Jeruſalem*, it is ſaid (2 *Kings* 19. 35.) *And it came to paſs that night, that the Angel of the Lord went out and ſmote in the Camp of the* Aſſyrians *an hundred fourſcore and five thouſand*, &c. The Prophet *Iſaiah* puts the Emphaſis of vengeance upon this circumſtance twice in one verſe (*Iſa.* 15. 1.) *The burden of* Moab, *becauſe in the night* Ar *of* Moab *is laid waſte and brought to ſilence, becauſe in the night* Kir *of* Moab *is laid waſte and brought to ſilence.* And again (*Dan.* 5. 30.) *In that night was* Belſhazzar *the King of the* Caldeans *ſlain.* All theſe (like the wicked man in the Text) were ſtoln away by a Tempeſt of divine wrath *in the night.* By how much the time is darker, by ſo much is the Tempeſt ſorer that falls upon diſtreſſed man.

Thus if we take the word **Night** ſtrictly and properly, it may note a threefold aggravation of this miſerably deſtroying Tempeſt upon the wicked man.

Firſt, That it came when himſelf was aſleep, and dreamt not of any, much leſs of ſo great a miſchief.

Secondly, That it came when he could not ſee a way, nor readily find any means to help himſelf, as, poſſibly, in the day he might.

Thirdly, That it came, when, it may be well ſuppoſed, that his friends and neighbours were aſleep too, and could not come to help him.

Again, If we take **the night**, improperly for any time of trouble or diſtreſs, which doth as it were benight a man, and leaves him without any light of knowledge or counſel what to do, or which way to turn himſelf, this alſo is a great if not a greater hightning of his affliction then the former. *Of all nights day-night is the worſt; what's the* *light of the air to us, when the eye of the mind, the underſtanding is darkned, yea darkneſs it ſelf? A Tempeſt ſtealeth him away in the night.*

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *The providential works of God in puniſhing ſinners, bear the image of his moſt dreadful works in nature.*

The flames of a devouring fire, a deluge of overflowing waters, Thunder and Lightning, Storms and Tempeſts, which carry all before them, are but glaſſes in which we ſee what God will do with and upon the wicked in the fierceneſs of his anger. The beſt things in nature are but ſhadows of the favourable, and the worſt, of the wrathful preſence of God.

Obſerve, Secondly, *Wicked men are alwayes ſurprized or taken unawares by the judgments of God.*

That evil which comes upon them as fiercely as a Tempeſt, doth yet ſteal them away unexpectedly, like a Thief. Chriſt ſaith in the Goſpel (*Mat.* 24.43.) *Know this, that if the good man of the houſe had known in what watch the Thief would come, he would have watched, and not ſuffered his houſe to be broken up.* Thieves alwayes come before they are ſent for, and uſually before they are looked for. The Judgments of God never come till they are ſent for (by the ſins of men) nor till they are ſent by the juſtice of God, but they alwayes come upon carnal men before they are looked for. Though they are often forewarned, yet they are never fore-armed, and how near ſoever the evil day is brought to them by the threatnings of the word of truth, they put it far from themſelves, by the promiſes and flatteries of their own falſe hearts. The old world was told of a flood a hundred and twenty years before it came, and yet that Tempeſt ſtole the old world away like a Thief in the night; they made no Arkes for themſelves, but thoſe of their own vain confidences, nor did they repair to the Ark which *Noah* made. And as it was in the days of *Noah*, and both was and will be in thoſe ſpecial dayes of the Son of man (*Luk.* 17.26.) ſo it hath been, and ſtill is, in the dayes of the vengeance of God; men are ſecure, they eat, they drink, they marry, they are given in marriage, till the flood cometh and deſtroyeth, till the Tempeſt cometh and ſcattereth them all. They who have a mind to continue in ſin, cannot mind enſuing troubles; and chooſe rather to leave themſelves to utmoſt hazzard when they come, then trouble themſelves with the thought and uſe of thoſe means, which might prevent their coming. Though they have ſome fear, yet they have an over-ballancing hope, or preſumption rather, that the Tempeſt will not come, or if it doth, that it will quickly blow over; and it muſt needs be, that all thoſe evils ſhould ſteal upon us, or ſteal us away when they come, which we preſume will never come.

Thirdly, Obſerve, *God knoweth how to, and will ſo time and circumſtantiate the judgments which come upon wicked men, as ſhall make them moſt troubleſome and grievous to be born.*

Every thing (ſaith *Solomon*) *is beautiful in its ſeaſon*, and there are many ſeaſons which make things very dreadful; ſo doth the night (in either of the notions opened) a Storm or Tempeſt. Let us take heed, leaſt while we add provoking aggravations to our ſins from the times and ſeaſons wherein we commit them, that we do not provoke the Lord to add preſſing aggravations to our troubles from the time and ſeaſon in which he ſends them. If we ſin in the day time, that is, in natural or moral, but eſpecially in ſpiritual or Goſpel light, no marvail if the Lord command a Tempeſt to go forth and ſteal us away in the night. Is it not equal that the judgments of God ſhould ſteal thoſe away as in the night, who ſteal away from the will and wayes of God in the day? in the cleareſt dayes of Goſpel light, or when Goſpel light hath made the cleareſt day? If men turn day into night morally, the Lord can ſoon turn their day into night judicially, commanding their Sun to ſet at Noon. And then either night ſhall ſteal upon them, or a Tempeſt ſhall ſteal them away in the night; yea, as as it follows in the next verſe, *Hurl them out of their place.*

VERS. 21, 22, 23.

The Eaſt-wind carrieth him away, and he departeth: and as a ſtorm hurleth him out of his place.

For God ſhall caſt upon him, and not ſpare: he would fain flee out of his hand.

Men ſhall clap their hands at him, and ſhall hiſs him out of his place.

JOB is ſtill deſcribing the ſad concluſion of the wicked man. In the former verſe we read of a *Tempeſt ſtealing him away in the night*; and here, *of an Eaſt-wind that carrieth him away.* Some ſuppoſe that by the former is meant a Tempeſt at Sea, and by this a Storm at Land; ſo that he is diſtreſt, both by Sea and by Land. But we need not ſtand upon ſuch niceties.

The Eaſt-wind carrieth him away.

The Eaſt-wind, or a wind out of the Eaſt; the Scriptures ſpeaks often of this Eaſt-wind, and there are two things which are moſt conſiderable in it; firſt, that it is a very fierce and violent wind; ſecondly, that it is a parching, drying, withering wind. This wind is famous in Scripture, and great things have been done by it. (*Exod.* 10.13.) *Moſes ſtretched forth his Rod over the Land of* Egypt, *and the Lord brought an Eaſt-wind upon the Land, all the day and all the night; and when it was morning the Eaſt-wind brought the Locuſts.* And in Chap. 14. verſe 21. *Moſes ſtretcht out his hand over the Sea, and the Lord cauſed the Sea to go back by a ſtrong Eaſt-wind all the night, and made the Sea dry, and the waters were divided.* An Eaſt-wind brought that plague of the Locuſts upon *Egypt*, and a ſtrong Eaſt-wind divided the Sea for the *Iſraelites*, in mercy to them, and in judgment to the *Egyptians*. We read of the ſtrength of this wind (*Acts* 27.14.) where that dreadful Sea-ſtorm is thus deſcribed, *But not long after there aroſe againſt it a tempeſtuous wind, called Euroclydon*; ſo called of the Eaſt from whence it bloweth. Yet Naturaliſts tell us that *Euroclydon* doth not ſignifie any particular wind, but any tempeſtuous wind, or guſt, becauſe ſuch windes uſually come out of the Eaſt. In the fourth of *Jon.* (*v.* 6,7,8.) we read of the troubleſome vehemency of the Eaſtwind; *Jonah* had a very pleaſant gourd, which the Lord gave him as a ſhelter and ſhadow againſt the heat. *But the Lord prepared a worm when the morning roſe the next day, and it ſmote the gourd that it withered, and it came to paſs when the Sun did ariſe, that God prepared a vehement Eaſt-wind, which beat upon the head of* Jonah *that he fainted, and wiſhed in himſelf to dye.* As God prepared the Gourd to comfort *Jonah*, ſo he prepared a vehement Eaſt-wind to vex *Jonah*; and the Eaſtwind vexed him more then the Gourd comforted him. It is ſaid of *Ephraim* (Hoſ. 13.15.) *Though he be fruitful among his brethren, an Eaſt-wind ſhall come, the wind of the Lord ſhall come up from the Wilderneſs, and his Spring ſhall become dry.* We are not to take the Eaſt-wind in the Prophet properly, but metaphorically, and ſo the Eaſt-wind notes any evil or affliction, which as a vehement and fierce wind beats upon us, and diſturbs us. Afflictions are compared to water, and afflictions are compared to wind; any thing which hath any trouble and annoyance, any thing which hath force and violence in it, may bear a ſimilitude to affliction; and ſo the Eaſt-wind, wherein all theſe concur, doth fully bear a proportion of likeneſs with affliction, or any judgment ſent out by God againſt ſinful man.

קדים *Per illipſin pro* רוח תרים *quaſi anterior et prior, utpote qui à priori et anteriori mundi parte ſpiret.* Piſc.

The Eaſt-wind carrieth him away.

The word here uſed ſignifieth to lift or take up aloft in the air; ſtrong winds have a mighty force, they ſometimes overthrow lofty Towers to the ground, and ſometimes pull up high grown Trees by the Roots, and make heavy Bodyes move, yea mount into the air. The wicked man, of whom *Job* diſcourſeth, ſeemed to be well rooted like a Tree, and foundation'd like a Tower in the Earth, yet here is a wind that pulls him up, that blows him down, and carrieth him away.

נשא *Tollet efferet ſublimem, ſublatum expellet.*

But whither doth it carry him? I anſwer, it carries him into a miſerable condition, that is the general; and we may ſpecificate or put it into what particulars we will. As, firſt, it carrieth him (poſſibly) into a land of captivity and bodily bondage ; ſecondly, it carrieth him into a land of ſcarcity and bodily want; thirdly, it carrieth him into diſgrace and infamy, his name ſhall be remembered no more with honour; fourthly, it carrieth him to his chamber, and there to his ſick-bed; fifthly, it carrieth him to his death-bed, and to his grave, yea without repentance and faith in Chriſt, it carrieth him to hell, and leaves him under chains of everlaſting darkneſs. Theſe are all lamentable removes, and the laſt is the moſt lamentable of all. The Eaſt wind of affliction and trouble, carrieth the wicked man away into ſome of theſe ſad coaſts and lands of darkneſs. Thus it is ſaid of *Iſrael* in the firſt of *Hoſea* (*verſ.* 6.) *I will not have mercy upon the houſe of* Iſrael, *but I will utterly carry or take him away*; that is, I will take him from all his comforts and injoyments, I will ſtrip and divorce him from all his poſſeſſions and relations. *The Eaſt-wind carrieth him away.*

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *The Judgments of God are irreſiſtible.*

Afflictions prevail like an Eaſt-wind, man cannot withſtand them, either by any power of his own, nor by any power of his friends and confederates; no power can ſtay or hold him in his place, whom the anger of God, or an angry God bloweth upon. When once the diſpleaſure of God goeth out againſt him, there is no abiding for him. How well ſoever any man is founded, though founded as a Rock; how well ſoever any man is rooted, though rooted like the Oake, yet up he muſt, he muſt be gone when this Eaſt-wind comes. How much more is this true of wicked men, of whom *David* ſaith, that *they are chaff, and as the duſt before the wind*, which the leaſt puff carrieth away and ſcattereth. The Prophet (*Iſa.* 41. 16.) tells us, that the greateſt powers of the world, even mountains ſhall be threſhed and fanned in the day of the Lords anger, *Behold I will make thee a new ſharp threſhing inſtrument, having teeth, and thou ſhalt threſh the mountains, and beat them ſmall, and make the hills as chaff.* The great men of the world, are like mountains and hills, yet they ſhall be beaten and threſhed, they ſhall become as chaff, they ſhall be fann'd, *and the wind ſhall carry them away, and the whirlwind ſhall ſcatter them.* Becauſe whole mountains ſeem too big to be carried away by the wind, therefore God threſheth and beats them to pieces, he makes them like chaff, which the wind eaſily diſperſeth and bloweth away. The next words ſhew the effect and energie of the judgment, it ſhall *carry him away.*

And he departeth] The word is, *he goeth*; the wind comes, and he goeth or departeth ; how doth he depart ? We commonly ſay, a man (in that caſe) *playes loath to depart*; he departs, but not willingly, or he departs whether he will or no. Thus he departs; and whence doth he depart ? he departs out of his beloved ſtate and warm ſeat, out of his riches, pleaſures and honours, which he hath adored, and upon which he hath ſo much doated ; he departs from all his pleaſant things, even from the deſire of his eyes, and from the joy of his heart ; he thought himſelf in a paradiſe, but it was a fools paradiſe ; he departs from his delight, from his goodly *Eden*, from all theſe he muſt depart, and from his life too. There is nothing in this world but may quickly depart from us, and if it doth not, we may quickly depart from all that we have in this world. And as for the wicked man, an Eaſt-wind is prepared *to carry him away, and he departeth.* Old *Simeon* ſaid (*Luke* 2. 26.) *Lord, now letteſt thou thy ſervant depart in peace*; the death of Saints is a departing, and we uſually ſay of any man when he dyeth, *he is departed*; they who dye, depart from their Earthly All, what or how great ſoever it is ; yet I take this departure in the Text, with which the wicked man is threatned, for his departure from all the good things of this life, rather then for his departure from life it ſelf. Suppoſe, his life is continued, yet his life ſhall be a kind of death to him, and he ſhall be as a dead man while he lives.

Hence Obſerve, *Wicked men often depart from the comforts of this life, before they depart this life.*

They live to ſee themſelves miſerable, and that is a miſerable life, a life more miſerable then death in the nature of it, though not in the conſequents of it. How unhappy are they who outlive all that which they account and call their happineſs. The next words clear this further.

And as a ſtorm hurleth him out of his place.

וישעהר
Ventilabit eum de loco ſuo, vel turbinabit, i. e. *turbinis in morem abripiat et abducet.* Merc.

Or, as others render more ſtrictly to the letter, and elegancy of the Original, *And ſtormeth him out of his place* ; that is, the Eaſt wind of trouble, like an impetuous ſtorm, *hurleth him out of his place.* The word *Hurleth*, notes violence ; he is driven out by force ; he that is hurled or ſtormed out of his place, would willingly have ſtayed there.

It may be queſtioned, what the place is, out of which he is hurled ?

I anſwer ; we may take it firſt properly for the place of his dwelling, the ſtorm hurleth him out of houſe and home ; ſecondly, for the place of his trading dealing and gaining, from his place of profit, from his ſhop or office ; thirdly, from the place of his authority, he is hurled out of his ruling and governing place, out of the bounds of his dominion and juriſdiction ; ſuch ſtorms and tempeſts doth God raiſe againſt and rain upon wicked men, whether in a private or publick capacity, that whether their place, be a place of pleaſure, or a place of profit, or a place of honour, they are (to their grief) removed out of it.

Hence Obſerve, *The Lord breaks out upon ſome wicked men, with great violence and with fury.*

He hurleth, he ſtormeth them out of their place. A City, or a Fort, that is ſtrongly beſieged, and will not yield, is at laſt ſtormed ; thus the Lord ſtorms the Forts, the ſtrong places of the mighty of the world with fury, and ſuch are ſaid to *be full of the fury of the Lord* (Iſa. 51. 20.) *Moſes* treating of the mortality of man (*Pſal.* 90. 5.) ſhews that beſides the general neceſſity of dying, under which all men are, God ſends ſome violent judgments which riſe like a mighty inundation, and bear down all before them, or take all away with them ; *Thou carrieſt them away as with a flood*; and as death comes upon many as a flood, ſo do the calamities of this life. But among all the Texts that I meet with in the book of God which ſhews the violence which the Lord in Judgment uſeth againſt evil men, read (*Iſa.* 22. 18.) *Behold the Lord will carry thee away with a mighty captivity, or captivating he will captivate thee* (as if he had ſaid, *they ſhall carry thee away at pleaſure*) and (as it follows) *will ſurely cover thee, he will ſurely violently turn and toſs thee like a Ball, into a large Country, there ſhalt thou dye, and there the Chariot of thy glory ſhall be the ſhame of thy Lords houſe.* What a (congeries or) heap of words are here ? *He will ſurely violently turn and toſs thee like a Ball into a large Country.* The ſtrictneſs of the Hebrew is hardly to be expreſſed with any good congruity in our language , *in toſſing he will toſs thee with a toſſing* , ſo we may read it word for word ; as if the Spirit of God did even ſtrive for Rhetorick to ſhew how this great man ſhould be toſſed; he ſaith not barely *he ſhall be toſſed*, but *ſurely, violently, in toſſing he ſhall be toſſed*, and that *with a toſſing.* God would hurl him out of his place, as a man hurls a Ball, which is eaſily done, and yet violently done. Men who are like great mountains in the opinion and eſtimation of men, are but like Stool-balls or Tennis-balls in the hand of God. And he hurleth them like a Ball in a large Country; not only like a Ball in a narrow Room, but like a Ball that hath ſcope enough; he toſſeth them far and near, through all kind of evils and calamities ; *A ſtorm hurleth him out of his place.*

Convolvendo convolvet te convolutione ſicut pilam, i. e. *per omnia malorum et calamitatum genera rotabitur.*

Secondly, As the place out of which he is hurled may be conceived to be a place of ſtrength, wherein the wicked man thought himſelf ſafe and ſure, out of the danger of Storms and Gunſhot,

Obſerve, *There is no place ſo ſtrongly fortified, which can ſecure ſinners againſt the wrath of the Lord.*

He will ſtorm them out of all their Refuges, yea pull them by the ears out of their Sanctuary. The *Aſſyrian* thought himſelf ſafe in his place, but God fetcht him out, (*Iſa.* 14. 13, 14, 15.) *Thou haſt ſaid in thy heart, I will aſcend to Heaven, I will exalt my Throne above the Stars of God, I will ſit alſo upon the mount of the Congregation in the ſides of the North; I will aſcend above the heights of the Clouds, I will be like the moſt High.* What is the meaning of all this boaſt? We cannot imagine the *Aſſyrian* ſo mad, as to think that he could build himſelf a houſe in the Heavens, or keep his Court among the Stars. His meaning is only this; he hoped to ſettle himſelf here upon Earth ſo ſtrongly, that he ſhould be as ſafe and free from the reach of danger, as if he had a place among the Stars. *Many who oppoſe Heaven, believe themſelves as much above oppoſition, as if they were planted in the Heavens.* But what follows (*v.* 15.) *Yet thou ſhalt be brought down to Hell, to the ſides of the Pit*; there is Hell oppoſed to Heaven, Hell ſignifies the loweſt and worſt condition, as Heaven the higheſt and the beſt. The *Aſſyrians* Heaven could not ſecure him againſt this Hell; the Heaven that God will give the Saints ſhall ſecure them for ever againſt Hell; but the Heaven which wicked men make to themſelves, cannot ſecure them againſt this or that Hell; a worldly Heaven cannot ſecure us againſt a worldly Hell (*Jer.* 22.15.) *Shalt thou reign becauſe thou cloſeſt thy ſelf in* Cedar? *did not thy father eat and drink, and do judgment, and juſtice, and then it was well with him*? Hear how the Lord ſpeaks to him in the 13. verſe, *Woe unto him that buildeth his houſe by unrighteouſneſs, and his Chambers by wrong, that uſeth his neighbours wiſe without wages, and giveth him not for his work; that ſaith, I will build me a wide houſe, and large Chambers, and cutteth him out windows, and it is ceiled with Cedar, and painted with Vermilion.* Doſt thou think thy ſelf ſafe, becauſe thou haſt a great houſe? No, ſaith the Lord, I will put thee out of thy place, though thou cloſeſt thy ſelf with Cedar. Now, *Babylon* (Rev. 18.7,8.) *ſaith in her heart, I ſit as a Queen, and am no widdow, and ſhall ſee no ſorrow.* But what ſaith God in his Word? it follows; *Therefore her plagues ſhall come upon her in one day.* I remember the Story of *Alexander*, who marcht with his Army to the *Sogdian Rock*, in which ſome were ſo confident of ſafety againſt his victorious forces, that when *Alexander* ſate down before the Rock, thoſe within ſcorned him, and asked him whether his Souldiers had wings, or could fly? if not, they thought it impoſſible that they ſhould come there; but *Alexander* made them underſtand that his Souldiers had wings, for they ſtorm'd and took the place ſoon after. Much more may the Lord ſay to thoſe who have greateſt ſtrength and power, to thoſe who are ſo high that none but the fowls of the air can come at them, I have winged Meſſengers that can ſoon ſcale and advance to the top of your Rock, and hurl you out of your place; as there is no ſtrength without the Lord, ſo there is no ſtrength againſt the Lord, as appears yet more fully in the next verſe.

Verſ. 22. **For God ſhall caſt upon him, and not ſpare: he would fain flee out of his hand.**

The word **God** is not expreſt in the Hebrew, therefore we put it in a different character, the Text is only, *He ſhall caſt upon him*, &c. But we may eaſily ſuppoſe who is the Author or efficient cauſe of theſe evils following and falling upon the evil man; the Eaſt-wind is in the hand of the Lord, he holdeth that metaphorical *wind in his firſt*, as well as the natural, both are alike in his power. Even things not only without reaſon but without ſenſe obey him, and are at his call; *God ſhall caſt upon him*, yet

Others underſtand the *Eaſt-wind* ſpoken of before; that, having carried him away, *ſhall caſt upon him, and not ſpare*, the Storm ſhall pour ſorrow enough upon him; but rather as we, *God ſhall caſt upon him.* The word which we render, *to caſt*, hath a ſpecial reference to the caſting of Darts from an high place upon thoſe which are below. The word is uſed (*Pſ.* 147.17.) *He caſteth forth his Ice like morſels, who can ſtand before his cold?* and again (*Lam.* 2.1.) *How hath the Lord covered the daughters of* Sion *with a Cloud in his anger, and caſt down from Heaven unto the Earth, the beauty of* Sion. The Lord ſometimes caſteth down the beauty of *Sion* to the Earth, and he will for ever caſt down the beauty of *Babylon*, and the ſupporters of *Babylon* to the ground. *If judgment begin at the houſe of God* (ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 *Pet.* 4.17,18.) *what will the end of them be that obey not the Goſpel of God? and if the righteous ſcarcely be ſaved, where ſhall the ungodly and ſinner appear?* certainly

God ſhall caſt upon him, and not ſpare.

But what ſhall be caſt upon him?

Firſt, In general (as was ſhewed from the former words) any thing which may afflict or trouble, vex, or moleſt him, conceive what you will, ſit down and imagine what evil you can, God ſhall caſt that upon him, as a Dart, as a ſhower of Darts and Stones from on high upon him.

Secondly, Thus, *God ſhall caſt* that upon him which he hath deſerved, and that is bad enough.

Thirdly, God ſhall caſt the Storm before ſpoken of upon him.

Fourthly, God ſhall caſt himſelf upon him, he ſhall ruſh upon him, and ſo cruſh him to pieces; God himſelf falls upon wicked men in all ſuch troubles as are beyond the power of men; as God offers himſelf into the arms and boſomes of his people in mercy to comfort them, ſo he throws himſelf upon the backs of his enemies in wrath, like a mighty milſtone, or as a mountain of milſtones, to cruſh and break them; God himſelf, like a terrible Tempeſt overwhelming them: *As it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God*, ſo it is a fearful thing when the hand of the living God falleth upon us, or rather both theſe are one and the ſame fearful thing. God doth eminently appear in ſome revenges upon men, and they are forced to confeſs, *the finger, the hand of God is upon them.* God himſelf in wrath is the portion of the wicked, as himſelf is the portion of his people in love. And as of all mercies and priviledges, this is the greateſt, that the merciful God himſelf is the portion of his people, ſo this is the greateſt miſery, that the wrathful and angry God will be the portion of the wicked. God himſelf appears againſt them, and will (as it were) do them miſchief in perſon. For as God expreſſes himſelf not only doing favours by the hand of Meſſengers and inſtruments, but as doing offices of love in perſon to his people; ſo he will execute wrath and vengeance in perſon upon his enemies. It is ſaid (*Gen.* 19.24.) *Then the Lord rained upon* Sodome *and upon* Gomorrah, *brimſtone and fire from the Lord out of Heaven. And he overthrew thoſe Cities*, &c. Thus as Chriſt ſpeaks of himſelf in the Goſpel (*Mat.* 21.44.) *Whoſoever ſhall fall upon this Stone ſhall be broken: but upon whom this Stone falls, it will grind him to powder.* Chriſt himſelf falls upon unbelievers and deſpiſers of the Goſpel, as a moſt burdenſome Stone. He doth not only ſend deſtruction upon them, but is deſtruction to them; or (as the Apoſtle gives it, 2 *Theſ.* 1.9.) *They ſhall be puniſhed with everlaſting deſtruction from the preſence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power*; that is, deſtruction ſhall come forth immediately from the preſence and glorious power of God upon them, and that without any meaſure or mitigation, as it follows, in *Jobs* Text, *He ſhall caſt upon him*,

Ruet in eũ deus ultor. Bez.

And not ſpare.] Sparing may be conſidered in two things; firſt, as to the degree; ſecondly, as to the continuance of an affliction. So that to ſay, *He ſhall caſt upon him, and not ſpare*, imports thus much, he ſhall be puniſhed to the utmoſt, and alwayes. There is a ſparing mercy of God (of which read the notes upon *Chap.* 16. 13.) but the wicked ſhall not partake of this ſparing mercy in the day of the Lords fierce anger.

Hence Note, *Wicked men ſhall have Judgment without mercy.*

It is an argument of greater anger, when then the Lord ſaith, I will not ſpare, then when he ſaith, I will ſmite; when he ſmites he may ſpare, but where he doth not ſpare, he doth nothing but ſmite. And thus he will deal at laſt with ungodly men; he ſpares them long, but he will not ever ſpare. *His Spirit will not alwayes ſtrive* (as he ſaith of the old world, *Gen.* 6. 3.) nor be kept (as ſome expound that Text) like a Sword in the ſheath. A time is coming when God will know no pity nor compaſſion toward them, he will forget to be gracious. This is a temptation ſometimes upon the Godly themſelves, and it is a truth towards the wicked. *God will forget to be gracious, and ſhut up his loving kindneſs in everlaſting diſpleaſure. He that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them, will ſhew them no favour* (Iſa. 27.11.) The wicked are they who have not ſpared to ſin, they have not ſpared to do evil, but have done it as they could, with all their might; they have ſinned greedily, they have drunk iniquity as water, as the fiſh, or as a Behemoth drinks water, pleaſantly, aboundantly. Now when God comes to deal with them in a way of Judgment, he will caſt upon them *and not ſpare.*

Hence Obſerve, Secondly, *God will deal with wicked men, by way of retaliation; as they have done themſelves, and dealt with others, ſo he will do to and deal with them.*

Cruel men have not ſpared to oppreſs others, now God will not ſpare them; they have been bloody, and would ſhew no mercy, therefore they ſhall have judgment without mercy (*Jam.*2.13.) and blood to drink, till they are drunken and fall, and never riſe any more. They have been wanton and luſtful, they would not forbear any forbidden pleaſure; ſtoln waters were ſweet to them, and (ſinful) bread (or bread gotten by ſin,) eaten in ſecret was pleaſant to them. Now the Lord will feed them with gall and wormwood, and give them the wine of aſtoniſhment (in great plenty) to drink; he will prepare for them the bread of adverſity and the waters of affliction to the full. It is not only an act of righteouſneſs to others, but of reſpect to our ſelves, to do to others as we our ſelves would have done to us; for one time or other, God will do to all men who do evil to others, and continue to do it, as they have done to others. *He will caſt upon them, and not ſpare.*

He would fain flee out of his hand.

The Hebrew Elegancy is, *in fleeing he fleeth*, that is, he fleeth apace; he needs neither whip nor ſpur to avoid danger, who would not be provoked by both and more to come on in duty. The wicked man being under theſe preſſures, or in this ſtorm, would get out of it with all his heart, *He would fain flee out of his hand.* Whoſe hand? out of the hand of God, or from his ſevere and deſtroying Judgments. Such Judgments are frequently in Scripture expreſt by the hand of God (*Exod.* 9. 3.) *Behold the hand of the Lord is upon thy Cattel, which is in the field, upon the Horſes, upon the Aſſes, upon the Camels, upon the Oxen, and upon the Sheep, there ſhall be a very grievous murrain.* And in the 24. Chapter of the ſame Book (*v.* 11.) it is ſaid, *And upon the Nobles of the Children of* Iſrael, *he laid not his hand* (that is, he did not hurt nor ſmite them) *alſo they ſaw God, and did eat and drink.* When the Text ſaith, the wicked man *would fain flee out of his hand*, it implyeth two things; firſt, that the hand of God is very terrible to him; ſecondly, that he hath ſtrong deſires, and uſeth his utmoſt endeavours (though both in vain) to get out of his hand.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hand of God.*

That is the Apoſtles expreſs doctrine (*Heb.*10 31.) It is the joy of Godly men that they are in the hand of God, but it is the lot of wicked men to fall into the hand of an angry God. Godly men deſire rather to fall into the hand of God when he is angry (becauſe even then towards them there is mercy with him) then into the hand of angry men, with whom there is no mercy, or their very mercies are cruel. Holy *David* made it his election to fall into the hands of God, when to chaſten his vain-glorious pride, and carnal confidence, he was offered that ſad choice of Sword, Famine, or Peſtilence (2 *Sam.*24.) He choſe rather to be under an immediate then mediate Judgment (for though they are alſo in the hand of God, that are under his mediate Judgments, yet they ſeem more in the hand of God who are under his immediate Judgments) but when men have abuſed mercy, when they have gone on in their ſins, till God cometh to execute vengeance, then it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of God. Saints commend themſelves into the hand of God in times of danger, and at the hour of death; *Into thy hand, O Lord, I commit my Spirit*, is the voice of a believer (*Pſal.* 31. 5.) but how dreadful is it for them to fall into the hand of God, who never committed themſelves into his hand! How dreadful is it for them to fall into the hand of God, who have lifted up the heel againſt God, and have gone on ſinning with a high hand! Some are ſo wilfully blind, that *they will not ſee the hand of God when it is lifted up* in his moſt marvellous providential diſpenſations in the world; the Prophet complains of ſuch (*Iſa.* 26.11.) *Lord, when thy hand is lifted up, they will not ſee*; but they who will not ſee the hand of God lifted up, that they may give him the glory of what he hath done, ſhall feel themſelves falling into the hand of God, by the greatneſs of their own ſufferings.

Secondly, Obſerve, *Wicked men perceiving themſelves fallen into the hand of God, will do their utmoſt to get out of it.*

There is a natural inſtinct in every living thing to get out of *harms way*; when a Storm is up, all the Beaſts of the field look for ſhelter, and haſten to their covert, if they have any. And thus wicked men uſe all means, all endeavours, they plot and contrive to diſintangle and diſingage themſelves from thoſe miſeries by which the hand of God hath laid hold on them. They would fain flee, yea fly out of his hand. They give all diligence to avoid the evils of puniſhment, though they gave no diligence at all to avoid the evil of ſin. They are leaden-heel'd and ſlow-paced in doing what God enjoyns them, but they would be light-footed, yea even winged to eſcape what he inflicts upon them. They make no haſt to keep the Commandment, there they will not ſo much as go, but they make all haſt to free themſelves from the penalty, then they run. Poſſibly they will not ſtir while judgments are only threatned, but when once they ſee them executed, then they beſtir themſelves (as we ſay) to purpoſe, though indeed to little purpoſe. For

Thirdly, Note, *The wicked labour in vain to eſcape the hand of God.*

They would eſcape, but they cannot; as many ſhall ſeek to enter in at the ſtrait gate which leads Heaven-ward, ſo all will ſeek at laſt to eſcape the wide gate which leads to deſtruction, whether temporal or eternal, yet they ſhall not be able.

Some render this latter part of the verſe, thus; *He fleeth clean away from his place*; whereas, we ſay, *out of his hand*, they ſay, *out of his place*; and ſo the Hebrew word is tranſlated (*Deut.* 23. 12. *Iſa.*56.5.) according to which reading the meaning is this, *he runneth clean away*; there is a Storm upon him, he cannot abide to be where he was, he runs for it, he fleeth his Country, you need not baniſh him, he baniſheth himſelf, and becomes (though againſt his will) a willing exile. But I paſs this.

Verſ. 23. **Men ſhall clap their hands at him, and ſhall hiſs him out of his place.**

Theſe are the concluding words or *Epiphonema* of the whole Chapter and ſad Story of the wicked man; *Men ſhall clap their hands at him*; he doth not ſay what ſort of men, or how many men, but *men*, that is, men univerſally, or men generally ſhall do it, or they that uſe to clap hands upon any occaſion ſhall readily clap their hands at him. As it is ſaid (*Job* 3. 8.) *Let them curſe it, that curſe the day, who are ready to raiſe up their mourning*, that is, let them that uſe to curſe the day, curſe it. So here. *Men ſhall clap their hands at him*, that is, all they who uſe to clap hands at ſuch events, ſhall clap their hands at this mans fall. But what is the meaning of this, what doth the clapping of hands ſpeak? I anſwer, it ſpeaks diſgrace to the perſons, and Inſultation at the fall of wicked men. The enemies of *Jeruſalem* are deſcribed doing thus, when ſhe lay in the duſt (*Lam.*2.15.) *All that paſſed by clapt their hands at her.* And in the Propheſie of *Ezekiel* (Chap.25.6.) *Thus ſaith the Lord God, becauſe thou haſt clapped thine hands, and ſtamped with the feet, and rejoyced in heart, with all thy deſpight againſt the Land of* Iſrael; *behold therefore I will ſtretch out my hand upon thee*, &c. Clapping of hands is joyned with joy and rejoycing at the ruine of others. Again, to clap the hand doth often ſignifie applauſe, which is not only a conſent to or contentation with what is acted or ſpoken, but an high approbation of it, and ſo it may be expounded here; as if when men ſhould ſee thoſe Tyrants caſt down, they ſhould ſay, *It is very well done, they have but their due*, and ſo give their plaudity to it; clapping of hands is uſed chiefly at Interludes or Stage-plays, where men the Actors do their parts with a Grace, and hit the humors of thoſe they perſonate to the life, both in ſpeech and geſture, then the ſpectators give their plaudite by clapping hands. Such a plaudite or applauſe is often given at the real downfall and moſt tragical concluſion of wicked men, eſpecially of thoſe whoſe power hath been uſed for the oppreſſion of other men.

Further, as the clapping of hands is a ſign of rejoycing and applauſe, ſo alſo of ſcorn and contempt, and this I conceive moſt proper to this Text, if we conſider the next and laſt words of this verſe and Chapter. *Men ſhall clap their hands, and ſhall hiſs him out of his place.* Hiſſing in Scripture is uſed two wayes; firſt, there is an *hiſſing to*, which is to call another to us; ſecondly, there is *an hiſſing at*, which is the deriding of another. We read of the former in the Propheſie of *Iſaiah* (Chap. 5. 26) *And he will lift up an Enſign to the Nations from far, and he will hiſs even from the end of the Earth.* And again in Chap. 7. of the ſame Propheſie (*v.* 18.) *And it ſhall come to paſs, that in that day, the Lord ſhall hiſs for the flie that is in the uttermoſt part of the River of* Egypt, *and for the Bee that is in the Land of* Aſſyria. God ſhall hiſs for the Flie and Bee, he ſhall call to them, and they ſhall come. We many times give a hiſs to a friend or a ſervant to come to us, when we would ſpeak with them or employ them. Of that ſecond ſort of hiſſing, that of deriſion or deteſtation, we read (1 *King.* 9. 8.) where after *Solomons* prayer at the dedication of the Temple, the Lord tells him, what bleſſings ſhould be upon him and the whole people of *Iſrael*, if he walked in integrity, and uprightneſs, as *David* his father had done before him; *But* (ſaith the Lord) *if you ſhall at all turn from following me, you or your Children, to ſerve other Gods, then will I cut off* Iſrael *out of the Land which I have given them, and at this houſe which is high, every one that paſſeth by it, ſhall be aſtoniſhed, and ſhall hiſs, and they ſhall ſay, why hath the Lord done thus unto this Land, and unto this houſe?* Great Judgments upon the Church cauſe aſtoniſhment in all beholders, and they cauſe hiſſing with ſcorn, in malignant enemies. We find this threatning propheſie in part fulfilled, as good King *Hezekiah* reports it in his ſpeech to the *Levites* at the beginning of his reformation (2 *Chron.* 29. 8.) *Our fathers have treſpaſſed,* &c. *Wherefore the wrath of the Lord was upon* Judah *and* Jeruſalem; *and he hath delivered them to trouble, to aſtoniſhment, and to hiſſing, as you ſee with your eyes.* And as we find the renuing of the threatning, under this term (*Jer.* 25. 9.) ſo the fulfilling of it to the utmoſt, is dolefully acknowledged by the ſame Prophet (*Lam.* 2. 15.) *All they that paſs by thee, clap their hands at thee, they hiſs and wag their head at the daughter of* Jeruſalem, *ſaying, is this the City that men call the perfection of beauty, the joy of the whole Earth?* And as this was the fate of *Jeruſalem* for walking contrary to the knowledge which they had of God; ſo of *Nineveh* which knew not God. (*Zeph.* 2. 15.) *This is the rejoycing City that dwelt carleſly, that ſaid in her heart, I am, and there is none beſide me? How is ſhe become a deſolation, a place for Beaſts to lye down in? every one that paſſeth by ſhall hiſs and wag his hand.*

They ſhall hiſs him out of his place.

What place? his place was ſpoken of before; there it was ſaid, *God ſhall hurl him out of his place*; here it is ſaid, *they ſhall hiſs him out of his place*; in both verſes *his place* is the ſame; *Men ſhall hiſs him out of his place*, that is, out of his dwelling, out of his office, out of his dignity and authority, yea (as ſome underſtand and extend the ſence) they ſhall hiſs him out of the world; when he dyes, inſtead of *mourners he ſhall have hiſſers; let him go, who cares for him*; he never did good while he lived, and he hath not a good word when he dyeth.

Some refer *the place*, not to the man that is hiſſed, but to the *hiſſers*; *Men ſhall hiſs him out of his place*; that is, every man out of the place where he lives ſhall hiſs at him; every man at his own door ſhall ſtand rejoycing, deriding, and pointing at him, and ſay as it is in the Pſalmiſt (*Pſal.* 52. 7.) *Loe this is the man that made not God his ſtrength, but truſted in the aboundance of his Riches, and ſtrengthned himſelf in his wickedneſs!* He ſhall be wondered at, and hooted as an Owle among the Birds. As he was once a wonder of proſperity, ſo he ſhall be a wonder of miſery: All ſhall wonder at him, but none ſhall pity him; every man in his place ſhall hiſs at him, or, *Men ſhall hiſs him out of his place.*

Hence Obſerve, *The fall of wicked men is the rejoycing of all men.*

It is the rejoycing both of good and bad, yet with a difference; for as the proſperity of good men is matter of joy both to good and bad men upon ſeveral accounts, ſo likewiſe is the fall and affliction of the wicked (*Prov.* 11. 10) *When it goeth well with the righteous, the City rejoyceth*; that is, all the inhabitants of the City, though not every man of all ſorts, yet ſome men of all ſorts, degrees, and qualities, whether civil or moral, are glad of it. All ſorts of men are the better for a good man, much more for a good Magiſtrate, therefore all ſorts rejoyce when it goeth well with *the righteous, but when the wicked periſheth there is ſhouting.* He doth not ſay by whom or who ſhall ſhout when the wicked periſh, but as the nature of the thing, ſo experience teacheth us, that men of all ſorts, even ſome bad as well as all good men ſhout for joy when the wicked periſh, eſpecially ſuch wicked men as having been in publick place and power, have exerciſed their power to the oppreſſion and vexation of the people. *Their ruine is a publick joy, whoſe riſing hath cauſed a publick ſorrow.*

But may we clap hands, and hiſs at the downfall of the wicked? may we rejoyce at their ruine? I anſwer, this Text ſpeaks only as to the matter of fact, what is uſually done, not what ought to be done. Yet in anſwer, the Caſe we may ſay, it is lawful to rejoyce at the downfal of ſuch, ſo we do not rejoyce unlawfully at it, as moſt do. All men rejoyce at ſuch times; wicked and prophane men rejoyce prophanely and wickedly; but when Saints rejoyce, and hiſs, they do it holily or ſpiritually. To rejoyce ſo at the calamity of the wicked, is not only permitted but commanded. When the fall of *Babylon* is propheſied (*Rev.* 18.) we find indeed (*v.* 11.) that, *The Merchants of the Earth ſhall weep and mourn over her, for no man buyeth their Merchandiſe any more.* And again (*v.* 15.) *The Merchants of theſe things which were made rich by her, ſhall ſtand afar off, for fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, and ſaying, Alas, Alas, that great City,* &c. But (*v.* 20.) order is given, *Rejoyce over her thou Heaven, and the holy Apoſtles and Prophets, for God hath avenged you on her.* We muſt not, we may not rejoyce at the downfal of *Babylon*, or of any *Babyloniſh* Spirits in the pride of our hearts, nor with carnal affections, for ſelfiſh ends and intereſts: Nor are we to do it with cruel and revengful affections, as being glad at the deſtruction of men, and glutting our ſelves with their blood. Thus *to waſh our feet in the blood of the wicked* (which yet, the Pſalmiſt ſaith, *the righteous ſhall do when they ſee the vengeance*, Pſal. 58. 10.) were indeed to defile and pollute our own Souls. But there is a rejoycing at the ſight of the vengeance, which is a waſhing of our feet (ſpiritually) in the blood of the ungodly; for if thereby we are made more wary of our own goings, and are careful to walk more holily; if when we ſee the wrath of God breaking out againſt the ungodly, we take heed to our wayes, and keep in paths of righteouſneſs, then we *waſh our feet in the blood of the ungodly.* And doubtleſs we may receive much good by obſerving the dealings of God with them that are evil. When the Apoſtle had ſhewed, that *with many of the* Iſraelites *God was not well pleaſed* (that is, he was highly diſpleaſed with them) *for they were overthrown in the wilderneſs* (1 Cor. 10. 6.) He adds (*v.* 6.) *Now theſe things were our examples* (they were our examples not for imitation but for caution, as it follows in the ſame verſe) *to the intent we ſhould not luſt after evil things, as they alſo luſted; neither be Idolaters, as were ſome of them; neither commit fornication, as ſome of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thouſand; neither tempt Chriſt, as ſome of them alſo tempted, and were deſtroyed of Serpents,* &c. He cloſeth the report of their ſinning and ſuffering, with a repetition of the former uſe (*v.* 11.) *Now all theſe things haped unto them for examples, and are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.* To receive warning, not to walk in thoſe Soul defiling wayes, in which we ſee, hear, or read, that any have fallen and periſhed, is a bleſſed way of waſhing our feet in the blood of the ungodly. And unleſs our rejoycing at the fall of any wicked men, be improved as a means to preſerve us in our ſtanding, our rejoycing is not good. Further,

We may ſtate the caſe of rejoycing at the downfal of the wicked in theſe particulars.

Firſt, We may rejoyce, as there is a mercy in it to the people of God, or as a block and Impediment in the way of their peace and proſperity is removed; for in every judgment upon wicked men, there is mercy to good men, either to the Church of God in general, or to this and that good

good man in ſpecial. That the *Babyloniſh* great Mountains which oppoſe Mount *Sion*, and darken the glory of it, are level'd and become plaines, or quite removed, is matter of rejoycing to *Sion*, and ſhould make the daughters of *Jeruſalem* glad.

Secondly, We may rejoyce, becauſe the ruine of ſuch contrary-minded men declares the righteouſneſs of God, or becauſe ſuch Judgments of God evidently ſhew forth the Juſtice of God; for as the laſt Judgment will be the great day of the declaration of the righteous Judgment of God, ſo theſe leſſer and nearer Judgments declare it alſo. And as it well becomes all men to rejoyce in the mercy of God to themſelves, ſo it is not at all uncomely for them to rejoyce in the manifeſtations of his Juſtice upon others.

Thirdly, We may rejoyce and clap our hands for joy, when the wicked are hurled and hiſſed out of their places, as this diſpenſation ſets a ſeal to the truth of God; and that two wayes.

Firſt, In reference to his threatnings of deſtruction to the wicked, which are fulfilled and made good by ſuch judgments. There is nothing doth more honour God then his truth, and as he is to be honoured in believing the truth of his threatnings even while wicked men are in their greateſt hight and flouriſh, ſo he is to be honoured for the truth of his threatnings by our rejoycing when we ſee wicked men laid low and wither; for then his truth is not only ſure, but clear and viſible.

Secondly, In reference to his promiſe of anſwering the prayer of his own people, to which even thoſe judgments are oftentimes, if not alwayes a return. Some or other of the Saints are digging continually by prayer at the root of thoſe ungodly men who are publick enemies, either for their converſion, that they may no more have a mind to do miſchief, or for their confuſion, that they may no more be able to do it. Now every anſwer and return of prayer, as it calls us to bleſs and praiſe God, ſo to rejoyce and take comfort our ſelves in the truth of God. See more of this point in the obſervations upon the Nineteenth verſe of the Twenty-ſecond Chapter.

Secondly, Obſerve, *When wicked men fall, they are every way miſerable.*

Good men meet with many troubles in this life; but as when they fall they have no aſſurance to riſe again, upon which ground the enemy is wiſht not to rejoyce at their fall (*Eic.* 7.8.) ſo they find many that mourn with them, and none rejoycing at their troubles, but they whoſe compaſſions and tears are not worth the owning. But the miſery of the wicked when they fall is double; firſt, becauſe they ſhall riſe up to proſperity no more; ſecondly, becauſe there is ſo univerſal a rejoycing at their adverſity. None grieve their griefs, nor are any truly affected with their ſorrow; it is ſome eaſe to thoſe that are afflicted, that they are pitied, but to be juſtly hiſſed and laughed at when afflicted, is more painful and afflictive, then the affliction it ſelf. How ſad is their condition, whoſe ſadneſs makes others merry, and who inſtead of being lamented are derided. It is ſaid of ſome bad Kings, that they dyed *not being deſired*; what is it then to dye ſcorned? what is it to go jeared out of the world, whether by a natural or a violent death? we ſay truly, none are more miſerable then they who do not commiſerate their own miſeries (and that's a common caſe in reſpect of ſpiritually miſeries, which alſo have a tendency to eternal) we may ſay alſo that none are more miſerable then they who have none to commiſerate their miſeries. And ſurely none are ſo uſed by all ſorts of men, but they, who have been grievous, and are odious to all. None but they who are lookt at as wolves to the flock, unfit to converſe with men, or as enemies to mankind, are ſo uſed; ſuch are the wicked, and that's the caſe of the wicked man in the Text in reſpect of temporal miſeries, *Men ſhall clap their hands at him, and hiſs him out of his place.*

Laſtly, The actions of this whole verſe, are by ſome referred to God himſelf, we ſay, *Men ſhall clap their hands at him*, &c. The word *men*, is not expreſt in the Original Text, only we ſupply it ſo; but others ſupply it thus; *God ſhall clap his hand at him, and hiſs him out of his place*; As if he had ſaid, *God himſelf is glad to be rid of him.* Thus the Scripture ſpeaks of God, after the manner of men; becauſe men ſignifie their contentment and their joy when they are eaſed of burdenſome Tyrants and Oppreſſors, by hiſſing and clapping their hands at them, therefore God is ſaid to do ſo too. So that according to this reading, we have here *the juſtice of God* (as it were) *riding in triumph, and crying victory over the wicked.* Julian *the Apoſtate* was forced to cry the victory of Chriſt againſt himſelf, in the indignation of his Spirit, when he was wounded and ready to dye, throwing up his blood in the air, and ſaying, *O Galilean, thou haſt overcome*, thus he did as it were ſing Chriſts victory over him. And at laſt God himſelf will ſing victory over all his enemies, he will laugh at them, and clap his hands, while his juſtice makes them the ſpectacles of his wrathful diſpleaſure both to Angels and men.

Explodet eũ manibus ſ is deus, ſc. humanitus dictum. Jun.

Hence Note, *As men, ſo God himſelf doth rejoyce at the downfal of evil men.*

We read (*Deut.* 28.60, 61, 62.) How the Lord by *Moſes* tells his own people, that if they would not obey his voice, he would cauſe the diſeaſes of *Egypt* to cleave unto them, alſo every ſickneſs and every plague which is not written in the book of the Law, them would the Lord bring upon them till they ſhould be deſtroyed. But how would the Lord be affected towards them in theſe calamities? would he pity them? would his bowels be moved, and his compaſſions kindled towards them? nothing leſs; for it follows (*v.* 63.) *And it ſhall come to paſs, that as the Lord rejoyced over you, to do you good, and to multiply you: ſo the Lord will rejoyce over you, to deſtroy you, and to bring you to nought: and ye ſhall be plucked off the Land whither thou goeſt to poſſeſs it.* Thus the Lord ſpeaks to his own people, that he will rejoyce to deſtroy them, and as it were triumph over them in their ruines, when they ſhall rebel againſt him. And again (*Ezek.* 5. 13.) *Thus will thine anger be accompliſhed, and I will cauſe my fury to reſt upon you*; that is, my fury ſhall not come upon you, once only, or for a while, but it ſhall remain or abide upon you. What follows? *And I will be comforted*; as if he had ſaid, it is to me a pleaſant thing, the very joy of my heart, to make my fury to reſt upon you, for in doing it I will be comforted. Now when we ſee the Lord threatning the wicked among his own people, not only with deſtruction, but with his own rejoycing at it; How much more will he do this at the deſtruction of profeſſed enemies? *Solomon* repreſents wiſdome doing this (*Pro.* 1.25.) *Ye have ſet at nought all my counſel, and would none of my reproof: I alſo will laugh at your calamitie, and mock when your fear cometh, when your fear cometh as a deſolation, and your deſtruction cometh as a whirlwind: When diſtreſs and anguiſh cometh upon you.* They who ſet the Lords counſel at nought, ſhall themſelves be dealt with as a thing of nought, they ſhall be deſpiſed and laughed at. How light are they in the eſteem of God, who do not weigh his counſel? Nothing ſhews man to be of leſs worth, then his judging the word of God to be little worth. Their miſery is moſt miſerable whom God doth not pity; how much more when God ſeems to rejoyce at it: when God laughs at the calamity of a perſon or people, then, as the meaſure of their ſin, ſo the meaſure of their calamity is full. Then man hath greateſt cauſe to mourn, when God laughs at him. For when God rejoyceth to do us good, then our good ſhould moſt rejoyce and pleaſe us; ſo when God rejoyceth at the evils which he brings upon us, when he at once wounds and laughs, then we have the greateſt cauſe to mourn. O how hath he reaſon to weep for ever, at whoſe weeping God laughs! what cauſe of mourning have they at whoſe mourning God is ſaid to mock? This is the portion of evil men from the Lord, He will clap his hands at them, and hiſs them out of their place.

Ridere dei eſt nolle humana afflictioni miſereri. Greg. Moral. l. 9: c. 15.

Thus *Job* hath laid down the firſt part of his anſwer, concerning the dealing of God with wicked men; whom he ſometimes openly proſecutes and afflicts to the eye and view of all men. He proceeds in the 28. Chapter to ſpeak of thoſe hidden and ſecret wayes of Gods dealing with them, that lye under the ordinary road, and are almoſt to all men, and altogether to the moſt of men inviſible.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXVIII. Verſ. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.

Surely there is a vein for the Silver, and a place for the Gold, where they fine it.
Iron is taken out of the Earth, and Braſs is molten out of the Stone.
He ſetteth an end to darkneſs, and ſearcheth out all perfection: The Stones of darkneſs, and the ſhadow of death.
The Flood breaketh out from the inhabitant; even the waters forgotten of the foot: they are dryed up, they are gone away from men.
As for the Earth, out of it cometh bread: and under it is turned up as it were fire.
The Stones of it are the place of Saphirs: and it hath duſt of Gold.
There is a path which no fool knoweth, and which the Vultures eye hath not ſeen.
The Lions whelps have not trodden it, nor the fierce Lion paſſed by it.
He putteth forth his hand upon the Rock, he overturneth the Mountains by the Roots.
He cutteth out Rivers among the Rocks, and his eye ſeeth every pretious thing.
He bindeth up the floods from overflowing, and the thing that is hid, bringeth he forth to light.

THIS is a long Text, but I purpoſe only a brief diſcuſſion of it; the whole being of one tenour and tendency, of one concernment and matter. To clear which I ſhall firſt ſet out the ſtate of the Chapter in general, and then give an explication of the parts.

The general ſcope which *Job* drives at in this Chapter, is to convince his friends that they had ſpoken raſhly, and that their opinion about the dealings of God with him was unwarrantable. The argument by which he proves it is carried quite through the Chapter; and 'tis this.

The wiſdome of God is unſearchable, and therefore unknown to man; but ye ſpeak of the wiſdome of God, as if ye were at the bottome of it, or had ſearched and ſifted it to the bran: And therefore this is enough to prove that ye are raſh in Judgment, ſeeing you judge and conclude concerning the adminiſtrations of God, as if the line of a humane underſtanding, could fully reach and ſearch them out. *It is impoſſible to find out the wiſdome of God in his works to perfection; though we may find it out ſufficiently for our inſtruction.* As to neglect the works of God is very ſinful, ſo alſo to be curious in our enquiries, or confident in our determinations about them. Man indeed is able to ſee much of, and do much within the ſphear of nature, he can find out the *Silver-vein*, &c. But there is a vein of wiſdome which lyeth too deep for his finding, nor is he with his beſt abilities able to meet with it. Thus *Job* concludes (*v.* 12.) *Where is the place of wiſdome?* As if he had ſaid, no man knows where it is. This is the true band of connexion between this and the fore-going Chapters; the right Axletree upon which this large diſpute between *Job* and his friends is turned, and in which thoſe many ſpoakes or rayes of argumentation on both ſides are terminated and do center.

For *Job* having in his former diſcourſe poſitively aſſerted, that God ſometimes, in this world, puniſheth the ungodly ſeverely; firſt, to declare his hatred of and juſtice againſt ſin. Secondly, to deter others from ſin, eſpecially from injuſtice; he now foreſtals or labours to prevent an objection, and to anſwer it.

For ſome might ſay; *You grant indeed that God doth ſometimes puniſh wicked men in this world: but why doth not God alwayes puniſh them? Why do they proſper at any time? And why doth the Lord ſo often afflict the godly? Why are they not alwayes in a peaceable condition? Why are they ſo ſorely ſmitten, and left in darkneſs? As if God would either give the world occaſion to believe that they are wicked, or diſcourage and diſhearten them in the way of Godlineſs: why doth the Lord deal thus?*

Job in anſwer to this Quere or Objection, enters upon a diſcourſe of the ſecret and wonderful wiſdome of God, which is ſuch as lyeth beyond the apprehenſion and reach of the wiſeſt of the Children of men. For the clearer demonſtration whereof, firſt, he tells us, what admirable things God hath given man wiſdome to ſearch for, and attain unto; And this from the beginning of the Chapter to the end of the eleventh verſe: in which diſcourſe he ſetteth forth the extream labour and curious skill of man in finding out and fetching up the precious minerals of the Earth. And he inſtanceth in Silver, and in Gold, in Braſs and Iron, all which are laid up in the ſecret cloſets and bowels of the Earth; yet mans induſtrious ingenuity digs unto them and brings them forth. And by his art works them up to that perfection, wherein we ſee and uſe them. Theſe four minerals or ſorts of metal we have in the two former verſes; Silver and Gold, are *the King and Queen of metals*; Braſs and Iron are as Servants to the manifold occaſions of this life. *Job* having ſpecifyed theſe, proſecuteth the difficulty and laboriouſneſs of ſeeking for and attaining them, as alſo the skill of man in working and perfecting them, quite thorow this whole context. And he inſtanceth in theſe metals, as alſo in the art and skill that is exerciſed about them, becauſe theſe are as great a tryal and exerciſe of the wiſdome of man as any that is known. The wiſdome of man in diſcovering the Heavens by obſervation, and the Seas by navigation, is great, yet inferior to and below, at beſt (ſay ſome very learned men) but equal unto this. There being nothing in this viſible world wherein man gives an higher evidence of his skill and activity, then in drawing out and working theſe things, which according to the method of nature, or rather the appointment of the God of nature, are placed loweſt.

Therefore *Job* doth properly fix upon this particular, to demonſtrate that the wiſdome of man may go very far, or how far it may go in naturals, and that yet he is a very dullard at, or very far from finding out the ſecrets of providence; as appears in the ſecond part of the Chapter, where he treats of the deep and unſearchable wiſdome of God in his various dealings with men, whether good or bad, whether in afflicting or in proſpering them; which he affirms to be ſuch, that man can neither conceive nor reveal it. *Where is the place of wiſdome?* Men can find out Gold and Silver, and Iron and Braſs, men will venture through all difficulties and dangers, but they will get theſe for their uſe and enrichment, *but where is the place of wiſdome?* where ſhall man find that wiſdome which is the ſecret of God, or wiſdome to diſcover the ſecrets of God? which point he purſues from the Eleventh verſe excluſively to the end of

the

Job hoc capite probat cauſam ærūnarum ſuarum non referendam eſſe in ſcelus aliquod, ſed in providentiam humano judicio occultam. Propterea quæ in terræ viſceribus latent penetrari tandē poſſe ab homine, ſed quæ in divinæ mentis altitudine continentur imperſcrutabilia eſſe. Bold.

Toto hoc capite docet Job *profundam dei ſapientiam et abditum crucis myſterium non eſſe ad rationis humanæ regulas exigenda; omnia enim alia in rerum natura quātumcunque abſcondita humano labore perveſtigari poſſunt: ſola vero dei ſapientia humano ſtudio et conatu nec perveſtigabilis nec eſtimabilis eſt.* Brent.

De rebus apertis et dei tum in puniendis ſceleratis, tum in protegendis piis providentia hactenus dictū eſto. Nunc ad illa occulta et pœnitus ab hominum captu remota veniamus. Bez.

Eſt quidem homini a deo attributa, mirabilis ars et ſapientia, quæ ſi alibi uſquā elucet in metallorum effoſſionibus. Jun.

Sane homo invenit venas argenti quantumvis abditas, at non poteſt invenire ſapientiam illam quæ abdita eſt in judiciis illis dei, quū impios felicitat, pios è contrà affligit. Piſc.

the Twenty-ſeventh Chapter. And upon this he ſeems to infer (as the moſt natural inference that can be made from it) that, foraſmuch as the wiſdome of God in his providences toward man, is ſuch a ſecret, therefore no man ought to conclude either concerning the ſpiritual or eternal eſtate of any man, from the changes which he hath in his temporal eſtate ; or that the outward diſpenſations of God declare no man to be either holy or prophane, a Believer or an Infidel. We muſt judge of men according to their own works and wayes, or manner of life, not according to their preſent rewards, or the awards of God towards them in the things of this life.

The ſumm of all may be gathered into this concluſion ; *The wiſdome by which God diſpenſeth the things of this world, and dealeth out portions to ſeveral men of good or evil, of proſperity or adverſity, is a greater ſecret, then the moſt ſecret veins of Silver, or the moſt hidden places of Gold.* Mr. *Broughton* gives his gloſs upon the Text fully to this ſence; *God* (ſaith he) *is marveilous in his works made known : but unſearchable for mans lot.* And again in his Dialogue he ſpeaks thus ; *God openeth exceeding ſecrets of his work in the Earth, but none of them hath any reſemblance of his dealing in his ſecret counſels for men, caſt off, or ſpared: But each one ſhould fear him, and labour to eſchew evil.* And hence when *Job* had diſcourſed of this wiſdome of God, which none can reach ; leaſt any ſhould ſay, what ! cannot the wiſdome of God be found ? are all men ſtrangers to it, and ignorant of it ? He anſwers, no ; what if in this point we are not able to make any determination about his wiſdome ; yet there is no need to ſay, that we are therefore to be numbered among the unwiſe or ignorant : For (ſaith he) I will tell you wherein and how we may ſhew our ſelves wiſe enough, and attain true wiſdome enough, though we are never able to dive into theſe ſecrets of wiſdome. As God often reproves the Sons of men for want of wiſdome, ſo he as often teacheth them how they may be wiſe, or in what their wiſdome doth conſiſt. But, how or what is that ? we have both the *how and what* expreſly ſet down at the 28. or laſt verſe of this Chapter. *And unto man he ſaid, behold the fear of the Lord that is wiſdome, and to depart from evil is underſtanding.* As if he had ſaid, *Do not think that ye are to be caſt among Fools or Idiots, becauſe I diſcourſe of a wiſdome that ye are not able to fathome ; I will inform you, how ye may be wiſe, and what is wiſdome in the account of God, and of all good men, even to fear the Lord, and to depart from evil. Behold, the fear of the Lord that is wiſdome, and to depart from evil is underſtanding.* They that ſeek and find this wiſdome, are not only wiſer then they that find out the veins of Gold and Silver, but wiſer then they (if there were any ſuch) that have all the ſecrets of Gods dealings with the Children of men revealed to them. So then, in this Chapter, *Job* gives us the knowledg of a threefold wiſdome.

Firſt, He ſpeaks of that wiſdome which is converſant in finding out the hidden things of nature ; and this is given to all ſorts of men, good and bad, holy and prophane ; the worſt of men have had wiſdome enough to lead them to the veins of Silver, and the place of Gold, to the mines of Iron and of Braſs, *&c.* This is a common wiſdome, or a wiſdome beſtowed upon mankind in common.

Secondly, From the 12. to the laſt verſe of the Chapter, *Job* treats of wiſdome which conſiſts in the ſecret adminiſtrations of divine providence. And though the Lord be pleaſed ſometimes to diſcover part of it, to this or that particular man, in this or that time ; yet no man is maſter of it: This lodgeth only in the breaſt of God, and is lockt up among his cabinet counſels. Man knows it not, till he reveals it, and he reveals it to the knowledg of very few. When *David* was ſore ſtumbled about Gods adminiſtrations towards wicked men in proſperity, he confeſſeth (*Pſ.* 73. 16.) *When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me,* or (as the Hebrew Text hath it in ſtrictneſs) *it was labour in mine eyes,* that is, I found it a matter of ſuch hard labour, that all my labour in attempting it, was loſt labour, or labour in vain ; *Until* (verſ. 17.) *I went into the Sanctuary of God, then underſtood I their end* ; as if he had ſaid, I could never profit in this learning while I ſtaid in the School of nature, and was under the Tutorage of humane Reaſon ; only the Sanctuary, that is, the word and Spirit in waiting upon God, taught me this ſecret, that conſidering the end of wicked men, all their preſent proſperity is rather to be pitied then envyed. This ſecond ſort of wiſdome is laid up with God, and made known by him alone, according to his own good pleaſure.

Thirdly, *Job* concludes the Chapter with a diſcovery of ſaving wiſdome, which conſiſts in the true knowledg and holy fear of God, or in departing from and avoiding all manner of ſinful evil. This wiſdome is peculiar to Saints. And as it is peculiar to the Saints only, ſo it is common to all the Saints. *To fear the Lord, and to depart from evil,* is that Spirit and life of holineſs which runs through the veins of every true believer. Thus far concerning the ſcope and method of the Chapter ; I ſhall now proceed to particulars.

Verſ. 1. **Surely there is a vein for the Silver, and a place for the Gold, where they fine it.**

The Hebrew word which we render **Surely**, is properly a cauſal particle, and ſo ſome take it in this Text, giving the ſence of the whole thus ; *Becauſe Silver hath its veins, and Gold a certain known place, where it may be had,* therefore many enquire after theſe things, and find them : But becauſe the place of wiſdome is uncertain, therefore few or none ſet themſelves to the ſearch of it. Yet becauſe the words following do not carry in them a reaſon of what is ſpoken before, but contain a new matter ; therefore we tranſlate not (by way of inference) *for,* but (by way of affirmation) *Surely there is a vein for the Silver.* A mine of Silver is called a *vein,* by an elegant alluſion to the Body of a man, where the blood runs in ſeveral veins, as in ſo many channels. Thus in the great Body of the Earth, there are, as it were, certain veins in which the Silver and other precious minerals run as the blood doth in the veins of the Body. The Hebrew word properly ſignifies *a coming forth,* and ſo Mr. *Broughton* renders it, *Now there is an iſſue for Silver.* This others conceive to be an alluſion to plants, eſpecially to vines, which iſſue and ſhoot forth their branches and boughs. For as a Tree grows from its Root, and is divided into ſeveral branches ; ſo Silver is generated of ſutable vapours, as the ſeed of it, and ſo diſperſeth it ſelf, as it were, into many ſprigs and boughs, through the ſecret pores and paſſages of the Earth. And hence (as if Silver were to be numbered among Vegetatives or plants) ſome learned Naturaliſts affirm, that minerals grow and ſhoot forth their branches as a Tree, or rather as a Tree ſhooteth out its Roots in the Earth. In what manner minerals may be ſaid to be generated, and ſo (improperly) to grow, is matter of diſcourſe among natural Philoſophers, to whom I refer the Reader that delights in ſuch kind of ſpeculations.

Metalla dicuntur quaſi ramificare. Bold.

מוצא *Exitum egreſſum ſignificat ; hoc vocabulum ſolet uſurpari de naſcentibus terræ. De generatione metallorum legẽdus eſt.* Plinius lib. 33. et. 34.

Again, Man by his wiſdome in ſearching for Silver, goes not only to the veins or ſtreams, but to the well-head ; for as a fountain is the head from which the water bubbles up and flows into ſtreams and channels for the uſe of man and Beaſt, ſo Silver hath its fountain, and thoſe ſeveral veins are as rivulets or cuts into which it is divided. And this may be underſtood two wayes.

Firſt, In reference to thoſe natural ſubterranean pores or cavities, in which the Silver is bred and nouriſhed.

Secondly, In reference to thoſe artificial ſubterranean paſſages, by which, when once the vein is found, the Silver is extracted and fetched up out of the Earth. For as there is a way in nature whereby the Ore of Silver ſpreadeth it ſelf under the Earth, ſo there is a way made by Art, through which Silver is brought out of the Earth. But I ſhall not ſtay upon theſe things, which belong properly to Naturaliſts and Mineraliſts ; it is enough for my purpoſe to know that *There is a vein for the Silver,* though we labour not to know all the curioſities and myſteries of art and nature about it. Only take notice that the word in the Hebrew which we render **Silver**, leads us into a moral (and that a very uſeful) conſideration about it. As *Adam* gave names to the Beaſts, or living Creatures, ſutable to their conditions and qualifications, ſo that we may read and learn much of their nature in their names : So the Spirit of God hath put a name upon Silver, which as it notes the excellency and uſefulneſs of it, ſo the aptneſs of man to be enſnared by it. The deſires of man commonly lead him into ſnares. And to ſhew how much man would deſire, long and luſt after Silver, it is expreſſed by a word which ſignifies to deſire, or to have the heart and affections vehemently carried out to or upon any ſubject. As if God would inform man that Silver hath in it a very attractive power to ſtir up and draw out our affections after it. Many things in nature cannot ſpeak, which yet have a mighty perſwaſion in their nature. Silver is ſilent, and ſpeechleſs; yet what an Orator is Silver? How doth it move paſſions in the mind of men? And as where one vein of Silver is found in the Earth, another is not far off; ſo where one deſire of Silver riſeth in the earthly mind of man, another and another, a third, yea a thouſand deſires of Silver are ready to ariſe. This God (I ſuppoſe) would have us underſtand from the word with which himſelf hath cloathed it.

כסף *A concupiſcendo et deſiderando dictum. Ubicumque una vena argenti inventa eſt; non procul invenitur alia.* Plin.

Again, as this informs us, ſo it warns us to take heed leſt our hearts be melted and run out in deſires after Silver. We have but need to check and moderate our deſires after that which is ſo great and ſo dangerous an incentive of deſire; eſpecially while we remember, that as it is ſtrong to ſtir deſires, ſo it is very weak, yea altogether unable to ſatisfie them. Hence *Solomon* hath concluded (*Eccl.* 5. 10.) *He that loveth Silver* (and what is deſire but love in motion?) *ſhall not be ſatisfied with it.* Covetous men are compared to a Lion attending upon the poor to oppreſs them (*Pſal.* 17. 11, 12.) *They have now compaſſed us in our ſteps, they have ſet their eyes bowing down to the Earth, like as a Lion that is greedy* (or deſirous) *of his prey,* or as we put in the margin of our Bibles, *The likeneſs of him, that is, of every one of them, is as a Lion that deſireth to ravin.* It is this word, as a Lion watcheth for a *fleſh prey,* ſo a covetous cruel man watcheth for a *Silver prey,* though he tear it out of the bowels of the poor. Mans natural affection unto Silver is a perturbation; He diſquiets and puts himſelf to trouble to get it, and ſo he may get it he cares not whom he troubles and diſquiets, no nor whom he deſtroys and ruins. As men are more eaſily overcome by Silver, then by Iron weapons (as it was adviſed of old, *Fight with Silver weapons, and you win the day of all.* Silver hath made more Conqueſts then Iron, that's the *Victor,* which hath led even Conquerors in triumph; now, I ſay, as men are ſooner overcome by Silver then Iron weapons) ſo they who are once overcome with the deſire of Silver, will make bloody work with Iron weapons, rather then not attain their deſire. *There is a vein for the Silver,*

Argenteis haſtis pugna et omnia vinces.

And a place for the Gold where they fine it.

Theſe two ſorts of mettal are ſet down ſo ſtrictly, as alſo the other two which follow, that they ſhew themſelves not only vain but ridiculous, who tell us that Silver may become Gold, Iron Braſs, or that the more imperfect of theſe mettals may be wrought up to that which is more perfect by Art or Chymiſtry; Iron to Braſs, and Braſs to Silver, and Silver to Gold. Againſt which aſſertion ſome of the learned have concluded ſo peremptorily, that they have not doubted to ſay, that it may as well or with as good reaſon be maintained, that any inferior Creature may be perfected into a ſuperior, or that a meerly animal or ſenſitive Creature, may be perfected into a rational, as that an inferior mettal may be hightned into its ſuperior.

And as theſe metals are diſtinguiſhed by their matter and form, ſo alſo by their place; *There is a place for the Gold;* every body hath its place, Gold hath a proper and diſtinct place from Silver. 'Tis rare to find them together, or neighbouring one with another. The place of Gold, may be conſidered, firſt more generally, for the Gold Country, or the Gold Coaſt. Thus *Moſes* deſcribing the River of Paradiſe, which from thence was parted and became into four heads, *The name of the firſt is Piſon: That is it, which compaſſeth the whole Land of Havilah, where there is Gold, and the Gold of the Land is good* (Gen. 2. 10, 11.) It is not my purpoſe at all to debate that Geographical Queſtion, where the Land of *Havilah* is? or which is the Land of *Havilah*; all that I note about it is, that it was a Land Famous for Gold; ſo alſo was *Ophir,* whereſoever it was, as is clear in the Hiſtory of *Solomons* Reign, as alſo from many other Texts of Scripture, mentioning, yea commending the Gold of *Ophir.* Thus at this day *Barbarie* in *Africa,* and *Peru* in *America* (beſides many other) are famous places, or Countryes for Gold. Secondly, *The place of Gold* may be conſidered more ſtrictly for ſome ſpecial part of thoſe Countryes; for as all Countryes are not the place of Gold, ſo neither is every place of any Country; the Gold is found in this or that Rock, in this or that Mountain, upon theſe or thoſe Sands. Sometimes a Rock, ſometimes a River is the place of Gold, which is therefore ſaid to have golden Sands, becauſe graines of Gold are found among its Sands. Thus Gold hath its general and ſpecial place.

There is a place for the Gold.

The Hebrew word here uſed for Gold, implyeth its ſhining beauty ſplendor and flavour. And hence it is applyed alſo to the pureſt Oyl, which caſteth a colour like Gold. The beauty of Gold is a very great attractive; Silver (as was toucht before) calls out deſire; and ſo doth the beauty of Gold much more. And therefore while the Apoſtle reduceth all that is in the world to a threefo'd luſt (1 *Joh.* 2. 16.) *The luſt of the fleſh, the luſt of the eyes, and the pride of life;* he by the *luſt of the eyes* meaneth Riches, becauſe, they conſiſting chiefly in Gold or Silver, the eye is ſo eaſily taken with their beauty, and the luſt of covetouſneſs ſo quickly enflamed by them. This was *Achans* ſnare and confeſſion (*Joſh.* 7. 21.) *When I ſaw among the ſpoils a goodly Babyloniſh Garment, and two hundred ſhekels of Silver, and a wedg of Gold of fifty ſhekles weight;* what then? *Then I coveted them, and took them,* &c. His eye affected, or rather infected his heart, he no ſooner ſaw the Silver and the Gold, but he was intangled with their beauty. Though (as we ſay) *all is not Gold that gliſters,* yet all Gold is gliſtering; and the gliſtering of it is not only pleaſing, but bewitching.

זהב *A quibuſdã ſumitur pro auro infecto et rudi,* i.e. *nondum elaborato ſed defæcatiſſimo, et nomẽ habet à ſplendore. et flavore.*

Again, The Original word by which Gold is here expreſſed ſignifies properly that Gold which is yet undefecated, or not refined by the art and labour of man. And therefore *Job* ſpeaks here exactly, *There is a place for the Gold*

Where they fine it.] Mr. *Broughton* renders, *A place for Golds refining,* our tranſlation ſeems to ſpeak of the Gold-finers work-houſe and furnace, which is the *place where they refine it.* Yet others conceive that *Job* is not here ſpeaking of the artificial place where the Gold is refined, but of the natural place from which the Gold is taken, that it may be refined; and therefore, thoſe Authors do not render the Text, as we, *There is a place for the Gold, where they fine it.* But, *There is a place for the Gold whence they fine it.* That is, there is a place from whence they take it to *fine* or *refine it.* The word notes the melting, and ſo the purging of metals. Gold is fined when the droſs and impure parts of it are ſeperated by fire. *The fining pot* (ſaith *Solomon,* Prov. 17. 3.) *is for Silver, and the furnace for Gold, but the Lord tryeth the hearts.* The art of refining metals is ſeveral times alluded to in Scripture, to ſhew the power of the Spirit immediately, or the word and rod through the power of the Spirit, to purifie both heart and life from the droſs of ſinful corruptions.

יזקו *Fudit, fundendo purgavit.*

The Hebrew Text is very conciſe, being ſtrictly read thus; *A place for the Gold they fine.* And hence, as we ſupply the word, *where,* and others the word, *whence,* ſo a third ſupply the relative word, *which,* rendring the clauſe thus; *There is a place for the Gold which they fine;* implying that the Gold is not taken out of the Earth, or found upon the Earth pure, but droſs; ſo that when 'tis got out of its place, there's more work to be done with it: God having given man wiſdome and skill not only to find Gold, but to fine and purifie it. Gold hath little beauty as it is taken immediately from the Earth, 'tis then beautiful when the Earth or droſs is taken out of it. And how much or how often ſoever Gold is fined in the fire, it looſeth nothing but its *droſs. There is a place for the Gold, where they fine it.*

Job having ſpoken of Silver and Gold, proceeds to ſpeak of Iron and Braſs.

Verſ. 2. Iron is taken out of the Earth, and Braſs is molten out of the Stone.

Theſe are baſer metals, yet God hath laid up theſe in the ſame great ſtore houſe of nature, *the Earth. Iron is taken out of the Earth,* or, *out of the duſt.* Though Iron be a metal inferior to Gold and Silver, yet Iron is a very uſeful metal, and, in regard of its uſefulneſs, no way inferior to Gold or Silver. And herein we ſee the good providence of God, that Iron which is a metal of ſuch common uſe, is to be found ſo commonly. As every Country needs Iron for their

Aſſumitur de pulvere. Heb.

their uſe, ſo every Country hath or may get Iron, though ſome know not the uſe of it. Thoſe metals which are moſt neceſſary, and are moſt imployed in the ſervice of man, are moſt eaſily attained by man. Whereas mines of Silver and the place of Gold, are found rarely, and attained hardly. The Naturaliſt alſo takes notice of the Earths univerſal production of Iron, in anſwer to that univerſal uſe of it, in Tillage and Architecture, and even in all the affairs both of Peace and War. Iron (as ſome have called it) is the beſt and worſt inſtrument of life. For by this we till the ground, cut Timber, hew Stones, and raiſe Fabricks, we can ſcarce do any thing with out Iron. 'Tis alſo put to many other, though neceſſary, yet ſad uſes. Thoſe killing inſtruments, Swords and Spears are made of Iron, which are often imbrued in the blood of the ſlain, and devour the fleſh of whole Nations. Iron is inſtrumental to the cruelty, wrath, and rage of man, as well as to the induſtry and labours of man. *Iron is taken out of the Earth*, ſo are Silver and Gold too; yet it is not ſaid of Silver or Gold, that they are taken out of the Earth; 'tis only ſaid, *There a is vein for the Silver, and a place for the Gold.* But when he comes to Iron he ſaith, *Iron is taken out of the Earth.* The reaſon may be, becauſe Iron is not ſo much refined in nature, but looks more like Earth then Silver and Gold. Again, when he ſaith, *Iron is taken out of the Earth*, it may imply that Iron is found nearer the ſurface of the Earth then Silver is.

Plinius l. 34 c. 14. *Ferrum licet Metallorum pretio ultimum, neceſſitate tamen primum.*

Lapis fuſus æs. Heb. i.e. *nihil aliud eſt æs quam lapis igne liquatus. Æs fit ex lapide æroſo, quem vocant Cadmiam.* Plin. l. 24. c. 1. *Æs eſt velati lapidi incorporatū Hebræi etiā ſub hoc cōplectantur Chalibem.* Merc.

And Braſs is molten out of the Stone.

Or according to the Hebrew, *Braſs is a molten Stone.* There is a Stone which is the Ore of Braſs, or the Ore of Braſs is a Stone, which being melted or molten becomes Braſs; *Braſs is molten out of the Stone*; that is, the Stone being molten, then it appears to be Braſs, or then the Braſs appears. Braſs is incorporated or concorporated with the Stone, and is therefore ſaid to molten out of the Stone. There are other metals beſides theſe four mentioned by *Job*, Tin, and Steel, and Copper, but theſe three or any other are a kin to or may be reckoned under ſome of thoſe four, or thoſe four are ſet down ſynechochically to comprehend all other metals.

From theſe two verſes in general Obſerve,

The art of finding out, melting, fining, and refining metals, hath been very ancient.

When *Moſes* had ſaid (*Gen.* 2. 21.) there is *Gold in the Land of* Havilah, it ſhews, that then they ſought for Gold. And when he adds (*verſ.* 12.) *The Gold of that Land is good*; it argues that then they had the skill of trying, and ſo of diſtinguiſhing which Gold was beſt. We read of *Tubal-Cain* (Gen. 4. 22.) *Who was an inſtructer of every Artificer in Braſs and Iron.* The word which we render in that Text, an *Inſtructer*, ſignifies properly a *whetter*, which doth imply either the dulneſs of mens capacity about thoſe inventions, till they were whetted by a Maſter in thoſe Arts; or that *Tubal-Cain*, did whet and ſtir up their affections to the practice of thoſe hard and laborious Arts. And ſome of the learned conceive that the Heathens alluded to this name *Tubal-Caen*, in the name *Vulcan*, whom they ſet up as their *God of Smiths, and Metal-men*, or as *their Maſter Smith.*

Again, From *Jobs* ſcope in mentioning theſe Minerals, namely, to ſhew that God hath beſtowed wiſdome upon many men to find them out, how ſecretly ſoever laid up in the Earth, as alſo all the ſecrets about them; and that yet he hath not beſtowed ſuch wiſdome upon any man, as doth enable him to find out all the ſecrets of his providence, or to ſee to the bottome of all his dealings with the Children of men,

Obſerve, Firſt, *The wiſdome by which man finds out the hidden things of nature, is a gift beſtowed upon him by God.*

Though natural men, that is, men unregenerate and unrenewed by grace, may have abilities for that work; yet they have it not by nature. Gold and Silver, Iron and Braſs, had lain in the bowels and boſome of the Earth undrawn out to this day, if God had not taught man how to ſearch and fetcht them out. And therefore when it is ſaid of *Tubal-Cain*, that he was *the inſtructer of thoſe that wrought in Iron and Braſs*, we muſt underſtand him to be Gods Scholler, though a Maſter or Inſtructer to men. Arts and Sciences are not meer humane inventions; they are alſo (in their degree) gifts of God. *Moſes* ſpeaks expreſly, that they who were fitted to work in Gold and Purple, *&c.* for the Tabernacle, received their wiſdome from the Lord, (*Exod.* 36. 1.) *Then wrought* Bezaleel *and* Aholiah, *and every wiſe-hearted man in whom the Lord put wiſdome and underſtanding to know how to work all manner of work for the ſervice of the Sanctuary.* As every ſpiritual, ſo every artificial and civil good gift comes from above. It is God who inſtructeth the Warrier how to fight; *He teacheth my hands to War, and my fingers to fight*, ſaid *David* (Pſal. 144. 1.) yea, it is God who teacheth the Husbandman to mannage the Earth, to ſow his ſeed, and threſh it out. And if the wiſdome by which man doth thoſe works of nature, which lye above ground, is of God, much more the wiſdome by which he doth works of nature which lye under ground is of God. We have a remarkable place for the former (*Iſa.* 28.) which Scripture though it reach further, and hath a very ſpiritual meaning and application in the Prophets ſence; yet there is a truth, in the outſide and plain letter of it, as to the preſent point (*verſ.* 24.) *Doth the plow-man plow all day to ſow? doth he open and break the clods of the ground? when he hath made plain the face thereof, doth he not caſt abroad the fitches, and ſcatter the cummin, and caſt in the principal wheat, and the appointed barly and the rie in their place? for his God doth inſtruct him to diſcretion, and doth teach him*, &c. We might think man able of himſelf to plow and till the Earth; yet the Prophet telleth us, that man cannot plow the Earth, but by a divine teaching: Yea the Prophet proceeds to ſhew that the skill of man in threſhing out the corn, is alſo from the Lord (*verſ.* 27, 28, 29,) *For the fitches are not threſhed with a threſhing inſtrument, neither is a cart-wheel turned about upon the cummin: But the fitches are beaten out with a Staff, and the cummin with a Rod. Bread-corn is bruiſed; becauſe he will not alwayes be threſhing it, nor break it with the wheel of his cart, nor bruiſe it with his horſemen. This alſo cometh forth from the Lord of Hoſts, which is wonderful in counſel, and excellent in working.* As if he had ſaid, not only is that wiſdome by which man tilleth his Land, and caſteth in his ſeed, ſutably to the nature of it, from the Lord; but even that wiſdome by which man is directed to threſh out his corn with proper inſtruments, *cometh alſo from the Lord, who is wonderful in counſel, and excellent in working.* Though threſhing corn, be not a wonderful work, yet the Lord who works wonders, hath his hand in this work. Now if this inferior act of wiſdome be the gift of God, if man muſt be inſtructed from on high to bring about theſe lower works, how much more doth man need a divine teaching in ſpiritual and ſupernatural works? How ſhall man break and plow up his own heart, how ſhall he ſow to himſelf in righteouſneſs without the teaching of God? How ſhall he find out that Gold and Silver that lies in the bowels of the Scriptures? how ſhall he dig thoſe Mines, unleſs God teach him? Though the word of God be all Silver and Gold, without any droſs, yet there is a vein for the Silver there, which requires holy wiſdome to find it out. And though the word of God be all Silver and Gold in it ſelf, yet by our miſunderſtandings we may make it but droſs to us, or build hay and ſtubble, light and unprofitable doctrines upon it, unleſs we are taught of God (who is wonderful in counſel, and excellent in working) how to work up our underſtandings in the truth of it, and our lives to the obedience of it,

Note, Secondly, *The natural wiſdome which God gives to mankind in common, is ſufficient to find out the moſt ſecret things in nature.*

Natural things are level to natural wiſdome, and the proper ſphere of its activity. He that is reprobate to every good work, or is a very bungler at it, may yet be ready-hearted, and ready-handed to, and go *through ſtitch* with all theſe works. He may maſter all the myſteries of them by the ſtrength of his underſtanding, and all the difficulties of them by the ſtrength of his arm.

Thirdly, *Job* having aſſerted mans ability to find out the *veins of Silver*, and *the place of Gold*, yet denieth his ability to reach the depth of divine Adminiſtrations.

Hence Note, *They who have the greateſt natural parts and accompliſhments, cannot diſcern the ſecret wiſdom of God, or the ſecrets of his wiſdom.*

This is the principal theam or ſubject of the whole Chapter. God hath ſome riddles in his works of providence which the beſt-ſighted among the ſons of men cannot ſee into nor reſolve. They cannot give the whole reaſon why active and able men for publick good, are taken away by death in their prime and flouriſhing age, while many dull-heads and droans live to old age and wither upon the ſtalk. They cannot give a reaſon, why God makes ſuch changes in the viſible face of things. Why he afflicts the godly, and lets the wicked proſper, is more then a *David* or a *Jeremy* can give an account of, till ſpecially taught and inſtructed by God himſelf. And hence it is, that the hearts of moſt are ſo unquiet and uncompoſed, and their ſpirits ſo full of boilings and tumblings up and down. They who can neither ſee the reaſon of Gods dealings, nor ſubmit purely to his will in them, muſt needs be full of troubled and tempeſtuous thoughts about them. As there are ſome who ſhut their own eyes, and will not ſee the meaning of thoſe providential works of God, which are written as with a beam of the Sun; ſo there are ſome providential works of God written in ſuch dark and illegible characters, that they who are good and do their beſt to ſee and ſpell out the meaning of them, cannot: much leſs can they who are not only men of an evil mind, but men who have no mind to ſeek and find out the mind of God, leaſt of all to honour him, in his works. And as the providences and diſpenſations of God in civil things are full of parables, which the Natural man hath neither eyes to ſee, nor a heart to underſtand, ſo he is much more eyeleſs to ſee and heartleſs to underſtand the dealings of God in ſpiritual things, the myſteries of faith, the ſecrets of grace, and the workings of the Spirit. Theſe are riddles and parables which he underſtands no more, then the beaſts of the field, or the ſtones of the ſtreet (1 *Cor.* 2. 14.) *The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are fooliſhneſs unto him: neither can he know them, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned.* He neither *doth nor can diſcern them*; That is, as he at preſent doth not diſcern them by his natural underſtanding; ſo, while his underſtanding remains natural, (how much ſoever otherwiſe improved by ſtudy or experience) he cannot; yea, they who are moſt wiſe and *Eagle-eyed* in the things of nature, are uſually moſt dim-ſighted as to the things of God. And we may give a fourfold account why they are ſo.

Firſt, God judicially hides the myſteries of heavenly wiſdom from worldly wiſe men (*Mat.* 11. 25.) *I thank thee* (ſaith *Chriſt*) *O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, becauſe thou haſt hid theſe things from the wiſe and prudent, and haſt revealed them unto babes. Even ſo Father for it ſeemed good in thy ſight.* The Father doth not hide theſe things by putting darkneſs into the wiſe and prudent, but by leaving them to their own darkneſs, or by denying them his own light. And Chriſt reſolves this into his Fathers will and pleaſure. There needs no other reaſon but his will, who that he may do what he will, is the greateſt reaſon, becauſe he can will nothing but what is juſt. From this righteous and ſovereign will of God it is, that the prudent, both in natural things, ſuch as gold and ſilver, and in civil things, ſuch as are commerce or government, ſee nothing at all of Chriſt. How many are there who think they can turn the world about by the engine of their brain or wit, who have not wit nor brains enough to turn one ſtone, or to diſcern the firſt principles and rudiments of Goſpel truths. *Ye ſee your calling, Brethren,* (ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 1. 26.) *How that not many wiſe men after the fleſh* (that is, in morals and politicks) *not many mighty, not many noble are called*; (that is, they are not effectually and ſavingly called (though perhaps often called upon to the knowledge and acknowledgment of the truth) *But God hath choſen the fooliſh things of the world* (that is, he hath both choſen and called them) *to confound the wiſe, and God hath choſen the weak things of the world, to confound the things which are mighty, &c.* Here is one reaſon, It is Gods way and will it ſhould be ſo, and what is man that he ſhould reply to God! Yet

Secondly, There is a reaſon alſo in themſelves; for theſe wiſe men are ſo taken, and taken up with natural things, ſo drunken, yea beſotted with the profits and concernments of this world, that they do not mind the things of the Spirit. He that inquireth much into the veins of ſilver, is ſlow to make enquiries after the veins of truth. And he that ſets his eye upon the place of Gold, is ſo bedazl'd with the ſplendour of it, that he cannot behold thoſe things which are of a purer and higher nature. Yea he who is much in and hath got much of theſe earthly treaſures, thinks he hath enough, and therefore purſues no further. His ſilver veins have filled him, and the place of gold hath taken up all the room of his heart: He hath now no place left for God, or the things of God, The full ſoul loatheth the Honey-comb, and as God fills the hungry, but ſends the rich (that is, the ſpiritually rich in their own conceit) empty away; So they who are full of temporal riches, are uſually inſenſible of any ſpiritual emptineſs, and ſo neglect thoſe wayes and means, by which alone they may be filled. They who are poor in ſpirit, deſire nothing more then ſpiritual riches; but they who are pooreſt in ſpirituals, care leaſt for the riches of the Spirit.

Thirdly, They who are wiſeſt and buſieſt about natural things, have not only ſlow and dull deſires after, but deſpiſing and contemptuous thoughts of the things of grace. The *Grecians* were great Philoſophers, lovers of, and ſtudious to find out all the rarities of nature. Now theſe (as the Apoſtle chargeth them, 1 *Cor.* 1. 23.) counted and called the Goſpel, or the preaching of Chriſt crucified, *fooliſhneſs*, and ſo became the chief of fools. They could pierce into the darkeſt reſerves and cloſets of Nature, but could not ſee the cleareſt manifeſtations and ſhinings of Grace. It was pride in their own wiſdom, which would not ſuffer them to ſee the excellency of the wiſdom of God, and it was their puniſhment that they ſhould not. It was the anſwer of a wiſe man in the Law, who hearing another oppoſing the ſentence of the Court, told him, *It was Law*; to which the perſon diſſatisfied replyed, *If it were Law I could underſtand it, For Law is reaſon, and I underſtand reaſon. But* (ſaid he) *The Law is the quinteſſence of reaſon, and that doth not come under every mans cap.* So ſay *I*, the Goſpel is reaſon, but it is the higheſt reaſon, and as the underſtanding of it comes uuder but a few mens caps, in compariſon of the huge multitudes and many millions of mankind, ſo they uſually are furtheſt from the underſtanding of it, who priding themſelves in the underſtanding of thoſe things which lie furtheſt off and deepeſt in Nature, deſpiſe the ſimplicity, and (as they apprehend it) the ſhallowneſs of the wayes of Grace.

Fourthly, They that ſee moſt in worldly things, are uſually *blinded by the god of this world* (2 Cor. 4. 4.) *But if our Goſpel be hid, it is hid to them that are loſt, in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, leſt the light of the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt, who is the Image of God, ſhould ſhine unto them.* The god of *this world* is no other (in the Apoſtles ſence there intended) but the Devil. He doth not call him, *the god of the world*, but the god of *this world*, namely, of that world, which as the Apoſtle *John* deſcribes it, *lyeth in wickedneſs*, or in *that wicked one* (1 *John* 5. 19.) For as he uſurpeth the ſovereignty of God in commanding the wicked; ſo they give him the honour of God in worſhipping him, either directly or indirectly, and in obeying his commands. Now, I ſay, *The god of this world*, that is, the Devil, will hold men a candle, or clear their eye-ſight, while they are poring after and working for the treaſures of this world, gold and ſilver, whether under ground by digging and mining, or above ground in trading, buying, and ſelling; To theſe, I ſay, the Devil will hold a candle, and help them on all he can: But when he ſees any looking after Chriſt, the true treaſure hid in the field, when he hears any counſelled and invited by Chriſt, as the Church of *Laodicea* was, *To buy of him gold tried in the fire, that they may be rich,* (*Rev.* 3. 18.) then he beſtirs himſelf all he can to throw the white and yellow duſt of the earth in their eyes, and utterly blind them, leſt *the light of the glorious Goſpel ſhould ſhine unto them*, or (neerer the Greek text) *leſt the light of the Goſpel of the glory of Chriſt ſhould irradiate them.* The Sun caſteth his beams upon the blind, but they receive not the light of it; nor do they the light of the Goſpel, (though ſhining upon them) whom the god of this world hath blinded with the hopes and deſires, with the poſſeſſions and enjoyments of this world. So much from the general ſcope of this context.

I ſhall now give ſome more particular Obſervations from theſe two verſes; *Surely there is a vein for the ſilver, and a place for the Gold,* &c.

Hence Note, Firſt, *God hath given every creature a ſpecial place, and methodiz'd them all in a ſingular order.*

No one place hath all, or all are not to be had in every place. Silver hath a vein by it ſelf, and gold hath a place for it ſelf. That earth which yields iron, yields not braſs, and the ſtone out of which braſs is molten, makes no iron. The wiſdom of God hath ſetled the courſe of nature ſo, as may beſt advance a mutual intercourſe among men. *Deborah* ſaid in her ſong (*Judg.* 5.20.) *The ſtars in their courſes fought againſt Siſera.* The ſtars are in order. And as the ſtars of heaven are in order, ſo there is an order among the ſtones and minerals of the earth, yea among all things upon and under the earth.

There is a vein for the ſilver.

What is a vein? 'tis but a ſmall particle to the whole body of the earth.

Hence Note, Secondly, *God hath given us the creature in a due proportion to our need and uſe.*

We have vaſt quantities of graſs and corn, of trees and ſtones, of beaſts feeding on the earth, of fowls flying in the air, of fiſhes ſwimming in the Sea, becauſe theſe are neceſſary for the ſupport of life. But gold and ſilver being only acceſſaries and ornaments of life, are rarely found, and where they are, 'tis but here a little and there a little. There is but a vein for the ſilver, and a place for the gold.

Where they fine it.

Hence Note, Thirdly, *Art perfects Nature.*

Trees and plants are much advanced in their vertues and fruitfulneſs by the art of man, and ſo are beaſts and birds, and ſo are the natural parts of man by culture and education. Gold and ſilver have an attractive beauty when purified; But while they lie in the earth, they are dark and dusky; we can ſcarce diſtinguiſh them from the earth where they lie, till the skill of man hath wrought them up to their proper perfections. The wiſdom of God hath made all things for man's uſe, and he hath given man wiſdom to fit them for uſe. If all things were fit for uſe as they come immediately out of the hand of God, man would looſe, as a great part of his honour, ſo of his imployment. All thoſe callings, crafts and trades, which are the exerciſe of man's natural ſtrength and gifts, and the prevention of that peſt of his morals, Idleneſs, are but ſo many wayes found out for the melioration, or bettering of the works of nature. The earth with the influences of heaven brings forth gold by Gods appointment; and God hath appointed and inſtructed man to fine or refine and purifie it. Where nature ends, art begins, and when nature hath done her beſt, art can do better.

Fourthly, Note, *Thoſe things which have only a natnral worth and excellency in them, cannot be attained without much labour.*

We muſt dig for the veins of ſilver, and ſearch for the place of gold; yea, what toiling is there for the Iron and for the Braſs, though much below the former two in worth and excellency. There is nothing in nature that hath any uſefulneſs, or preciousneſs in it, but coſts a great deal of pains before we can enjoy it. How much more doth Goſpel-grace (which is infinitely better then gold and ſilver) require labour and pains! *If thou* (ſaith *Solomon, Prov.* 2. 4, 5. ſpeaking of ſpiritual wiſdom) *ſeekeſt her as ſilver, and ſearcheſt for her as for hid treaſures, then ſhalt thou underſtand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God.* Silver is ſought with ſo much diligence, that *to ſeek a thing as ſilver*, is a proverbial ſpeech for diligent ſeeking. We are eaſily perſwaded to labour hard for ſilver, but how hardly are we perſwaded to labour, beyond our eaſe, for wiſdom.

Hence, Obſerve, Fifthly, *Man is willing and ready to undertake any labour, to run through any difficulties to attain the precious things of the earth.*

If the men of the world do but hear where the rich veins of ſilver, or the place for gold is to be found, in any part, the furtheſt part of the world, they will ſail through a thouſand deaths and dangers to come to it. Whether will not the deſire of gold and ſilver carry the ſons of men? What undertaking is there ſo hazzardous (that I ſay not wicked and unrighteous) which man's hunger after gold, will not put, yea, force him upon? What ſtone-walls, yea, what laws and promiſes, oaths and covenants hath not this hunger broken through? O when ſhall we ſee the ſpirits of men drawn out to undertake ſuch voyages, ſuch long voyages, to find out that which is better then ſilver! And to ſeek that, unto which gold is but droſs! When ſhall we ſee ſuch travels undertaken for the precious things of heaven! What a ſin and ſhame is it, that the moſt of men are ſo far from undertaking far travels to find them, that they will ſcarce ſtep over the threſhold to receive them when they are offered at their own doors. But as Chriſt ſaid of *that generation*, ſo we may ſay of this. *The Queen of the South ſhall riſe up in Judgment with the men of this generation, and condemn them, for ſhe came from the uttermoſt parts of the earth, to hear the wiſdom of Solomon, and behold a greater then Solomon is here* (*Luk.* 11.31.) That Queen made a long journey to *Solomon's* Court, becauſe it was the place of wiſdom; But many men of this generation are loah to take the ſhorteſt journey to the *poſts of wiſdom*, or to the place where his wiſdom may be heard and had, who is greater then *Solomon*. *God who at ſundry times, and in divers manners, ſpake in times paſt unto the fathers by the Prophets, hath in theſe laſt dayes ſpoken unto us by his Son,* (*Heb.* 1.1, 2.) The Son of God ſpake to us in perſon when he was on earth, and he ſtill ſpeaks to us from heaven, by his Word and Spirit in the Goſpel; and he ſpeaks to us of that which is infinitely more deſireable then gold and ſilver, after which there is ſo much ſearching, even the unſearchable riches of grace, and yet how few regard or look after him, or what he makes report to them of

Quid non mortalia pectora cogit Auri ſacra fames. Hor.

Sixthly, Obſerve, *Thoſe things are moſt valuable by men, which are rare and hard to come by.*

Iron and braſs, but eſpecially gold and ſilver are ſo, and for that reaſon have a higher eſtimation among men, then their native excellency and uſefulneſs (though that be very great) would raiſe them to. It is ſaid that in the dayes of *Solomon, Silver was nothing accounted of* (1 *King.* 10. 21.) Not that the ſilver of thoſe dayes had loſt any of its native vertue or value, but the exceeding plenty and commonneſs of it, not only brought down the account of it, but made it (as that text ſpeaks) *of no account.* It is ſaid (1 *Sam.* 3. 1.) *The word of the Lord was precious in thoſe dayes.* But is the word of the Lord leſs precious at one time then at another? It is not in regard of its intrinſecal worth, yet at ſometimes it is of a higher rate, and comes to a better market among men. When is that? even when it is rarely had and heard; For ſo it follows in that place of *Samuel, There was no open viſion. The beſt things are more valued by the want and ſcarſity of them, then by the vertue and enjoyment of them.* Gold is the king of metals; as the Sun in the heavens, ſo is gold upon the earth. There are many conſiderations (to touch that only by the way) which raiſe and heighten the excellency of it; Firſt, *It looſeth not by the fire how long ſoever boiled there.* Secondly, *Gold is medicinal*, 'tis a great cordial, Phyſicians commend and appoint the uſe of it, as a reſtorative to nature. Thirdly, (which advanceth the value of it beyond all this) The gifts and graces of the Spirit are ſhadowed out by it. The golden oyl (which was emptied through the two golden pipes (*Zech.* 4.12.) what was it, but the wiſdom and grace of God, flowing from Chriſt into all his members? Grace wrought in us, eſpecially as working in us, is at once compared, to and preferr'd before gold (1 *Pet.* 1.7.) *That the trial of your faith, being much more precious then of gold that periſheth,* &c. Gold is pure, ſo, is grace; gold is reſplendent and beautiful, ſo is grace; gold is laſting and durable, ſo is grace. For though the Apoſtle *Peter* reckons gold among corruptible things, compared with the blood of Chriſt, yet

Gold in it ſelf is freeſt from corruption, and is reckoned among thoſe things which corrupt not. Fourthly, Chriſt himſelf was typed by Gold. The *Mercy-ſeat* or *propitiatory* of Gold, was an illuſtrious type of Chriſt. (*Exod.* 25.17.) *And thou ſhalt make a mercy ſeat of pure Gold*, &c. And thus Chriſt is deſcribed by the Spouſe (*Cant.* 5.11.) *His head is as the moſt fine Gold*, &c. *Solomons* Temple was lined with Gold, figuring the purity of Chriſt; and the new *Jeruſalem* is of *pure Gold*, (Rev. 21. 18.) All theſe Scripture alluſions are high commendations of Gold. That is the beſt of things to which the beſt things are compared; yet that which makes Gold of ſuch eſteem among men, is the rareneſs and difficulty of obtaining it, as well as the goodneſs and excellency of it. Yea in ſome places glaſs-beads and childiſh bables are valued more then Gold, becauſe they are more rare, and harder to come by then Gold.

Seventhly, By way of caution from the uſual event of what is ſpoken of in this Text,

> Obſerve, *Thoſe things which are excellent in themſelves, prove often hurtful to man.*

Gold and Silver are the moſt pure and precious things in Natures treaſury, yet they often prove the greateſt debaſers and defilers of man. I can tell you of Gold and Silver, (the word and ordinances of God) which as they are pure in their own Nature, ſo they purifie us, in the uſe of them; and the more we uſe them, the more they purifie us. And though *to thoſe who are pure* (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Tit.* 1. 15.) *all things* (even Gold and Silver) *are pure*, while they receive and uſe them purely; yet they who are pure are in danger of defilement by the uſe of theſe things, becauſe through remaining impurity, their affections are apt to run out inordinately after them, or to be taken with them, (that is, to take them into their hearts, where Chriſt alone ſhould be) while they take them into their hands. Gold hath a kind of incorruptibility in it, yet how doth it corrupt the mind of man! To deſire Gold is ſinful, though to have it be not; unleſs we deſire Spiritual good things as well as have them, the having of them doth us no good; but worldly things are good only to thoſe who have them without deſiring them. The old Poet called the deſire of Gold *Sacred*, by the figure of *contrary ſpeaking*. His meaning was that the deſire of God is a moſt wicked deſire; and experience hath taught us, that it hath cauſed many to do wickedly. *While Gold ſpeaks, all other things are ſpeechleſs.* The unjuſt Judge hears not the cry of the poor, nor the voyce of the Law, if once Gold and Silver ſound in his ears. The Natural Hiſtorian diſcourſeth elegantly to this point, *Silver is bright, but it makes black lines upon the body*; and Silver preſſed upon the heart by the love of it, draws blacker lines upon the Soul, and renders it foul and filthy. Yea Gold and Silver, which will purchaſe mans corporal liberty, do yet enthral and make him a ſpiritual Slave. Some of the Ancients were wont to make Chains of Gold to bind their Malefactors, as we make them of Iron. And now golden Chains hold more in bondage then Iron ones do. How many are Priſoners to Gold, and are led Captive by Silver! The luxury, pride, and vanity of men, ſhew that they are bound in theſe chains. *Tertullian* tells the Women of his time, who prided themſelves in golden Chains, that they had been uſed in ſome places for bonds, not for ornament. And another, of thoſe elder times, reproving the vanity of that Sex, in putting ſo many ornaments of Gold upon their apparel, ſaith, *They darken their native beauty by over-ſhadowing it with Gold; nor do they underſtand how great a fault they admit themſelves guilty of, while they bind themſelves (like evil doers) with innumerable Chains.* And as Chains of Gold are to moſt that wear them, their bondage rather then their ornament, ſo many who wear no Gold Chains, are yet held in Chains by Gold.

Non ſine cauſa lineas ex argento nigras produci pluriq; mirantur. Plin. *Qui argenti candorem amant nigreſcunt animo. Iſtæ veram pulchritudinem obſcurant, nec intelligunt quantum inſe delictum admittunt, ſe innumerabilibus vinculis aligantes.* Clem: Alex: lib. 2. Pœdag. c. 12.

Thus pure Gold makes all its poſſeſſors both ſlaves and droſs, whoſe heares are enſnared with the love of it, or a delight in it. Gold put in the place of God, turns men to droſs, and ſets them below the beaſts that periſh. For as our righteouſneſs (which is more pure then Gold and Silver) if we over-value it, or look to be accepted for it, then it becomes meer droſs and filthy in the ſight of God; ſo do we, ſo do our perſons, when Gold and Silver ſteal away our hearts from God. And though I am not of opinion with that Philoſopher, that *the life of man muſt needs have been innocent, happy, and contentfull, if he had deſired nothing but what grows above ground*: yet I am fully of opinion, that the deſire of thoſe things which God and Nature have hidden underground, hath rendered the life of man much ſtained with guilt, unhappy, and troubleſome.

Quam innocens, quam beata, imo vero et delicata eſſet vita ſi nihil aliud quam ſupra terras concupiſceret. Plin. in proœm. l. 33.

Further, take notice, that theſe four Metals, *Gold, Silver, Braſs, and Iron*, are made uſe of by the Spirit of God, to ſignifie the four great Monarchyes of the World (*Dan.* 2. 32, 33.) *Nebuchadnezzar* ſaw in his dream an Image, *whoſe head was of pure Gold*, (repreſenting the *Babyloniſh* Monarchy) *The breaſt and arms of Silver*, (ſhadowing the *Percian*) *The belly and thighs of Braſs*, (noting the *Grecian*) *And the legs of Iron, and the feet part Iron and part Clay*, implying the *Roman Monarchy* in the ſeveral diviſions of it. 'Tis an honour to theſe Metals that God in them hath ſhaddow out the beginning and progreſs of all worldly Governments, till himſelf ſhall ſet up a Kingdom or a Government which ſhall never have an end.

Laſtly, As theſe four Metals are made uſe of in that Scripture, to ſet forth the ſtate and changes of the Kingdoms of this World; ſo other Scriptures make uſe of theſe four Metals, to ſhew the pureſt renovations and reformations of the Church of God. (*Iſa.* 60. 17.) *For braſs I will bring Gold, and for Iron I will bring Silver, and for Wood Braſs, and for Stones Iron.* At laſt we ſhall have Gold for Braſs, and Silver for Iron, and Braſs for Wood, and Iron for Stones. This will be an happy change; for thoſe adminiſtrations which were but as *Stones*, we ſhall have *Iron*, which is better then *Stones*; and for thoſe which were but as *Wood*, we ſhall have *Braſs*, which is better then *Wood*; and for thoſe which were but as *Iron*, we ſhall have *Silver*, which is better then *Iron*; and for thoſe which were as *Braſs*, we ſhall have *Gold*, which is better then *Braſs*, even the beſt of all Metals. And when this ſhall be fulfilled, *I* (ſaith the Lord) *will make thine Officers peace, and thine exactors righteouſneſs.* Nor is it to be forgotten, That, the old Poets have diſtributed the whole life of the World into four Ages, and deſcribed them by theſe four Metals. The *Golden Age* was with them the firſt, and the *Silver Age* was ſecond, the *Brazen Age* third, and the *Iron Age* they make the laſt and worſt Age of the World. But the Scripture ſaith there ſhall be a Golden Age in the laſt Age, or towards the latter end of the laſt Age of this World (*Iſa.* 1.25.) *I will purely purge away thy droſs, and take away thy Tin, and I will reſtore thy Judges as at the firſt, and thy Counſellers as at the beginning*, &c. Thus the Golden Age ſhall come about again; things ſhall be reſtored as at the firſt, as at the beginning, when the World was in its Virginity, and had not received the leaſt defilement from the luſts and paſſions, from the wrath and unrighteouſneſs of men. After we have been under Braſs and Iron, after we have been under hard bondage, we ſhall come to a bleſſed, to a Silver, and Golden liberty, peace and purity. The Lord, at laſt, will furniſh the Nations of the Earth with ſuch Rulers and Officers, with Rulers and Officers annointed with ſuch a Spirit of juſtice and judgment, of wiſdom and underſtanding, with ſuch a Spirit of faithfulneſs, and of the fear of the Lord, that they ſhall be to us, as Chriſt himſelf, equally and impartially diſpencing both rewards and puniſhments, maintaining the right and ſeeking the peace and proſperity of all that are ſubject to them. And when we ſee this come to paſs, *The ſeventh Angel* (as 'tis propheſied *Rev.* 11. 15.) *will ſound his Trumpet, and we ſhall hear great voices in Heaven* (the Church of God) *ſaying, The Kingdoms of this World are become the Kingdoms of the Lord, and of his Chriſt, and he ſhall reign for ever and ever.* This *Golden Age* is the Faith and patience of the Saints, or that, which they *through faith*, are perſwaded will come, and *through patience* will waite for, keeping the way of God till it cometh.

Job having aſſerted that there is a vein for the Silver, and a place for Gold, that the Earth yeelds Iron, and that there is a Stone out of which Braſs is molten; proceeds to ſhew the induſtrious ingenuity of man in ſearching out and getting theſe and ſeveral other hidden treaſures.

Verſ. 3. **He ſetteth an end to darkneſs.**

It is here queſtioned who is the antecedent of this, *He*

Malo ad Dominum et hoc et verba omnia referre, qui hom̄ inventionem homini concedat, etſi alioqui difficillimam. Merc:

ſetteth, who is that? Some underſtand it of God; He, that is, God ſetteth an end to darkneſs. Others, of man, or of the Miner who deals with Minerals; we may reconcile both opinions, and conclude, that God through the wiſdom and power which he hath given unto man, ſets an end to that darkneſs which covered theſe Subterranean riches from the open light.

He ſetteth an end to darkneſs.

What! that there ſhould be no darkneſs at all? Is there not a perpetual and reciprocal intercourſe of darkneſs and light, night and day? How is it ſaid then that *he ſets an end to darkneſs?* The meaning is, either,

Firſt, That the Miner digging down into the bowels of the Earth for Metal, meets with darkneſs, and nothing but darkneſs, yet by bringing in light, either the natural light of the Sun and Air, or the artificial light of Lamps and Candles, he ſets an end to darkneſs, where there was nothing but darkneſs, till he let in the light.

Secondly, *He may be ſaid to ſet an end to darkneſs*, by bringing thoſe Metals and precious things up into the light, which till then lay hidden in the bowels of the Earth. The Artiſt delivers theſe Priſoners of darkneſs, and ſhews them in the open Sun. Thus he puts an end to darkneſs. It is the honour of man, that he by his wiſdom and diligence ſets an end to much darkneſs, to the darkneſs of many things, that no eye ſaw before. And it is the glory of God that he will at laſt ſet an end to all darkneſs, to all the darkneſs of trouble and ſorrow, in which his own people are often wrapped, as alſo to all the darkneſs of the counſels and wayes and wickedneſſes of the moſt reſerved and cloſeſt Politicians, of whom the Prophet ſaith (*Iſa.* 29. 15.) *They ſeek deep to hide their counſel from the Lord, and their works is in the dark, and they ſay, who ſeeth us? And who knoweth us?* That is, ſurely none doth. Of all theſe dark works and workers in the dark, the Apoſtle hath warned us (1 *Cor.* 4. 5.) *To judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkneſs, and will make manifeſt the councels of the heart: and then ſhall every man have praiſe of God.* There is nothing hid but it ſhall be ſeen, God will make *thorough lights* in the World: he will make *thorough lights* in the councels and actions of men. Man puts an end to the darkneſs of many things, both natural, civil, and ſpiritual; but God will put an end to the darkneſs of all things. 'Tis his glory and his alone to do it, to ſet an end to all darkneſs.

In tenebris latentia Metalla lucem aſpicere facit, in lucem ea producit. Druſ.

And ſearcheth out all perfection.

Mr. *Broughton* renders, *He ſearcheth out the uſe of all things:* The perfection of a thing is the uſe or uſefulneſs of it; and ſo to ſearch out the true and proper uſe of a thing, is to *ſearch out the perfection of it.* We may expound the words two wayes.

Firſt, He ſearcheth out the moſt *perfect Metals and precious Gemms.*

Secondly, He ſearcheth out the perfection of Metals and precious Gemms. This is the natural mans purpoſe and deſign in all his ſearches, He would ſearch out all perfection, or the perfection of all, nor is he ſatisfied till he find it.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *There is a perfection in every creature according to its ſtate and kind.*

There is a perfection in Gold and Silver, in Braſs and Iron, in Stones and Trees; there is a perfection in all Natural things: as man, ſo every thing elſe was created in a Natural perfection. And though that Original perfection of the Creature be much ſtained and abated by the ſin of man; yet there is ſomewhat of perfection remaining in every thing; the beſt of every thing according to its kind, is the perfection of it.

Secondly, Note, *Man may attain to and comprehend the perfection of the creature.*

He may compaſs that perfection. *David* ſaith (*Pſal.* 119. 69.) *I have ſeen an end of all perfection, but thy commandment is exceeding broad.* The end of a thing may be taken two wayes; either firſt for the beſt and utmoſt worth of it; or Secondly, for the laſt, or period of it. *David* had not ſeen the end of all perfections in the latter ſence, he did not ſee the laſt man born (as we ſay) nor the period of the World; that hath continued many Ages ſince; but he ſaw the end of all perfection in the formerſence, he ſaw the beſt and utmoſt worth of every thing. As if he had ſaid; *I have ſeen or known both by Faith and experience the beſt of the creature, and have gone to the outſide of it; I know the beſt of riches, and the beſt of honour, and the beſt of pleaſure; I have ſeen the utmoſt that the perfection of theſe things can yield or give out; I have had them in their hight and prime: the ſweet and great things of the World, the pleaſures and honours of it, have made ſute to me that I would entertain them, and I have ſeen what they are, and what they are able to do for me, or any elſe, that hath a mind to make a trial of them.* As a gracious heart in the enjoyment of temporal things, ſpiritually ſeeth their utmoſt perfection, what they can make and amount to: So an Artiſt may find out the natural perfection of things, and improve them to the utmoſt ſtretch and extenſion of their vertue and value. It is far more difficult to find the perfection of civil things in a ſpiritual way, then of natural things in an Artificial way. Reaſon and ſtudy may reach the latter, but Grace only and a principle of divine light can reach and diſcern the former. *Zophar* ſaith (*Chap.* 11. 7.) *Canſt thou by ſearching find out God? Canſt thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?* Man by ſearching may find out many of the perfections of God, but no man can find out God to perfection; yea though man may find out the perfections of many creatures, yet no man (ſince *Adam* in his created perfection) could ever find out the creature to perfection.

Thirdly, Note, *The perfection even of Natural things, is not to be found without pains and ſearching.*

When a man hath got the rich Metals, and the precious ſtones by ſearching, he muſt make another ſearch, before he can find out their perfection; when he hath ſearched for them, he muſt alſo ſearch into them. Philoſophers have been called *the Secretaries of Nature*, becauſe they were ſo intimately acquainted with the ſecrets of Nature. But they attained this honour with a great deal of ſtudy and pains. Now if Natural things cannot be found out in their perfections without much pains, much more muſt we ſearch painfully for ſpiritual things, before we attain any of their perfections. O with what ſtudy and pains, with what prayers and tears ſhould we ſearch the Mines of Scripture, to find out Chriſt there, who is the perfection of all things, together with the precious things of divine wiſdom and knowledge laid up in them, or, rather in him! That, God gives the knowledge of Goſpel myſteries, and leads us by his Spirit into all truth, muſt not abate, much leſs take off our ſtudy, for the finding of them out. If the perfection of Natural things cannot be attained without travel, then much leſs can the perfection of ſpiritual things.

Fourthly, Obſerve, *We are never ſatisfied till we find out the beſt of Natural things.*

Man doth not reſt in this or that degree of attainment, he would be at the top of all. He never ſtops his inquiry, till he is advanced as far as he can go. This again reproves many in their eaſineſs to be ſatisfied about Spirituals. A little ſerves the turn with moſt, many are at the end of their ſearch, before they come to the beginning, much leſs to the perfection of holy knowledge; they can ſtay in the ſhell and outſide of Soul-ſaving truths, whom nothing contents but an arrival at the kernel and marrow, at the hight and perfection of naturals.

Job proceeds,

The ſtones of darkneſs, and the ſhadow of death.

That is, as man ſearcheth out all perfection, ſo he alſo ſearcheth out, *The ſtones of darkneſs, and the ſhadow of death.* This ſeems to be a very prodigious ſearch. To ſearch ſtones of light, and the wayes of life, is a noble ſearch, may ſome ſay; but how uncouth a work is this, to ſearch *ſtones of darkneſs, and the ſhadow of death?* To clear this, I ſhall inquire what he means by *the ſtones of darkneſs.*

First, By theſe ſtones, ſome underſtand precious ſtones or Gemms, which though they are in their nature and quality *ſtones of light*, (All Gems or precious ſtones have light in them, and the more light they have, the more precious they are) yet he calls them ſtones of darkneſs becauſe

Quidem per lapidem gēmam intelligunt, ſic interdum אבן *ſumitur, lapis pro lapis pretioſus* Druſ.

becauſe they lye naturally bedded in the dark and unſeen, either in the bowels of the earth, or in the bottom of the Sea. Thoſe ſtones which ſparkle with the moſt reſplendent rayes of light, were once in this darkneſs, and may therefore, not improperly, be called *ſtones of darkneſs*.

Secondly, By ſtones of darkneſs, we may rather underſtand common ſtones which he findes out or meets with in digging for Silver, and ſearching for Gold. The Miner muſt follow the veins of precious Metal through Rocks and Mountains, theſe alſo are *ſtones of darkneſs*, obſcure ſtones, or ſtones lying in obſcurity; whereas others lye in the light, or upon the ſurface of the earth.

But what is meant by *ſtones of the ſhadow of death*? That's a ſecond Query.

I anſwer, Thoſe Miners for Silver and Searchers for Gold, that they may be ſure to come to the perfection of all things, will not only venture to make way through the ſtones that lye in the dark, but that lye in the ſhadow of death, and he calls them ſtones of the *ſhadow of death*.

Firſt, becauſe under the earth there is not only darkneſs, but a kind of deadly ſhade: a man, as it were, in a Tomb, or Grave, when he is under the ground.

Secondly, Becauſe darkneſs under ground is ſo terrible, that it is enough even to affright a man to death.

Thirdly, Becauſe in thoſe dark places, dampes often prove deadly; many have been ſuffocated or choaked in under-ground workings, and therefore the darkneſs there is a ſhadow of death. All theſe expreſſions laid together, ſhew what difficult and dangerous work muſt be undergone to come at thoſe treaſures which are lockt up in the bowels of the earth. *He ſearcheth out all perfection, the ſtones of darkneſs, and the ſhadow of death.*

Hence Note, *Man will venture through all hardſhips and dangers, to obtain the riches and precious things of the earth.*

Heu, quis primus fuit ille, Auri qui pondera tecti, Gemmaſq; latere volent eſpretioſa pericula fodit? Boet. lib.2. de conſol.

See how he workes and toyls through darkneſs, and the ſhadow of death; and he will have it, though he dye for it. One of the Ancients ſpeaking of thoſe ſtrange adventures for Gold and Silver, breakes out into a vehement paſſion; *O who was it that firſt taught man to dig out the Gold and Silver, which was willing to lye hid, theſe are very precious things indeed, but perillous, or they are precious perills.* Many have not only ventured, but loſt their lives to gain them. Men are ſo ſet upon the having of riches, that they refuſe no labour nor danger, but do even offer violence both to Nature and themſelves at once. They are not deterred with the depth and darkneſs of the place where theſe things lye, nor will they give over to ſearch thoſe treaſures which are kept not only in the boſome of the earth, but in the very boſome of death it ſelf.

Job ſtill purſues with admirable elegancy and propriety of language, his deſcription of the unwearied pains and bold adventures of men to enrich themſelves with the ſpoils of the innocent earth. I ſhall give but brief touches for the explication of each particular.

Verſ. 4. **The flood breaketh out from the inhabitant, even the waters forgotten of the foot, they are dryed up, they are gone away from men.**

In this Verſe we have an accident very uſual to thoſe who are engaged in works under ground, *The flood breaketh out from the inhabitant.* The word notes a violent breaking, like the breaking forth of great waters, which are ready to overwhelm and ſwallow up all. There are various conceptions, and accordingly various tranſlations of this Text.

Firſt, Mr. *Broughton* renders it thus; *A ſtream breaketh from his ſpring*; As if he had ſaid, while theſe men are digging in the earth after Silver they meet with a ſpring, which is no ſooner opened, but the water guſheth out like a flood upon the workmen. Springs are the Original of ſtreams, and upon the opening of the earth the ſtream flowes out from its ſpring.

Dimiſſo accola, i.e. *alveo ſuo ordinario, qui accolebatur præceps in cuniculos metallicos exundat.* Jun.

Secondly, Others expound and read the words, as making the flood it ſelf to be the inhabitant, forced out of its ancient dwelling by theſe new gueſts greedily coveting Silver and Gold. *The flood breaks out from that place where it did formerly inhabit or dwell, or from that Subterranean channel in which it abode, and through which it was conveighed.* Water may be ſaid to dwell in or inhabit the place of its abode; and thus the words are to be underſtood by a Synechdoche of the thing containing, for that which doth contain it, or of the inhabitant for the place inhabited; The flood breaketh out from the inhabitant, that is, from the ſpring, or under-ground channel, which it did inhabit. And ſo the meaning is this, while the Miner is at work, and labours in the earth to make his paſſage to his precious treaſure and rich Gemms, by and by he comes neer to ſome ſpring of water (for there are under-ground waters as well as above-ground waters, he comes neer a ſpring) and touching upon it, the water guſheth out immediately and forcibly. This experiment is very frequent among thoſe that work in Mines, whether of Silver, or Braſs, or Iron, &c.

Cum diſcedit ab eo loco ubi accolebatur, deferens nimirum alveum ſuum perrupturam fundi illius per quam dilabitur ſubterram. Piſcat.

Dum ſcindit ſaxa, ecce protinus gurges ex proximo ei loco exundat. Bold.

Ab accola q.d. *ex eo loco ubi erant accolæ; et qui eum locum habitarant, ita erumpit torrens ut non ſit accola, ut inde pellantur et eſſe deſinent accolæ.* Merc.

Thirdly, The Text is well rendred, *The flood breaketh out, that there is no inhabitant*, or, *that there is no abiding.* The meaning is, that when they are at work in the Mines, the flood breaking out they can abide there no longer, the labourers are put from their place and work, every man ſhifts for himſelf and gets away as faſt as he can, when he ſeeth the danger. The Silver and precious things they would faine have, but the water riſing up againſt them, as it were to defend the treaſure againſt theſe invaders, they ſee there's no preſent contending, and ſo give it over for that time. They who continue long working under-ground, may be reckoned as dwellers there. And when they are forced to remove and quit their habitation, becauſe of the breaking forth of theſe waters, we may ſay, *there is no inhabitant.* But what waters are theſe?

Even the waters forgotten of the foot.

Thoſe words, (*even the waters*) are not in the Hebrew, as you may ſee in your Bibles, they being put in a different character, but waters are compriſed in the flood. We read, *even the waters forgotten of the foot*; the Hebrew is only thus; *The flood breaketh out from the inhabitant, forgotten of the foot.* Why doth he ſay, *forgotten of the foot?* Hath the foot a memory, or how can the foot be ſaid to forget? I anſwer, this is ſpoken improperly, or metaphorically. And thus forgetfulneſs is aſcribed both to the foot and hand. *David* ſaith (*Pſal.* 137. 5.) *Bet my right hand forget her cunning.* Here *Job* ſaith, *Even the waters forgotten of the foot*, the meaning is only this, they are ſuch waters as the foot of man or beaſt hath no acquaintance with, or ſuch as the foot had never any experience of. This forgetfulneſs of the foot, is nothing elſe but the ignorance or in experience of men, who walk upon their feet. Mr. *Broughton* renders, *Unkenned of any foot*; that is, of any man moving on his feet. Some waters are made by the foot; and many are paſſable by men on foot. Of the former *Moſes* ſpeaks, (*Deut.* 11. 10.) *The Land whither thou goeſt in to poſſeſs it, is not as the Land of* Egypt, *from from whence ye came out, where thou ſowedſt thy ſeed, and wateredſt it with thy foot, as a Garden of Herbs*; that is, thou diſt but dig channels from the River *Nilus* with thy foot, when thou waſt in *Egypt*, and ſo (that being a flat Countrey) the Land was watered. With ſuch waters the foot is well acquainted, or they are waters remembred by the foot. Thus alſo a River that a man may eaſily paſs over, may be called a River remembred by the foot, by the feet of cattle, and by the feet of men which have often paſſed through it. But Subterranean waters are ſuch as the foot never paſſed through, and are therefore as far from the knowledge of man as thoſe things which are utterly forgotten. So that this is a deſcription of under-ground waters, breaking forth, and driving thoſe away who were at work for the precious Mines. For as thoſe Rivers which, running in ſight upon the face of the earth, are yet ſo deep that no man can or ever could wade over them, (ſuch was that River made by the waters of the Sanctuary, through which the Prophet at firſt was brought in viſion, and *the waters were to the Angles*, and at the ſecond time, they were to the *Knees*, at the third to the *Loyns*, but afterward it was a River that he *could not paſs over, for the waters were riſen, waters to ſwim in, a River that could not be paſſed over*

Torrentes non ex eorũ numero qui regiones alluant, ſed ſubterranei et pedibus hominũ prorſus ignoti. Bez.

Torrens tam profundus ut nullus pes eũ novit ſeu expertus ſit, i.e. *tranſiverit aut tranſire poſſit*: Piſc.

(Ezek.47.3,4,5.) Now, I ſay, as any ſuch waters above ground, ſo all waters under-ground, may be called *waters forgotten of the foot*, being ſuch as the foot of man never trod in, or ſuch as men did not think their feet ſhould have met with in thoſe places. But what do they in this caſe? Is the work utterly loſt for ever? No; they may be hindred for a time, but the latter part of the Verſe ſhews us what they do to remove and remedy this obſtruction.

They are dryed up, they are gone away from men.

דלו *Attenuantur ſunt autem cognatæ radices* דלל *attenuari et* דלה *haurire.*

The Hebrew word which we tranſlate **dryed up**, may bear relation to two roots; whereof the one ſignifies, to leſſen, attenuate, or diminiſh; Thus, the waters are *diminiſhed*: The other, to draw or dry up. Now, waters are drawn and dryed up two wayes; Firſt, In a natural way, by the heat of the Sun (the Sun is the great water-drawer or water-dryer) Secondly, In an Artificial way, by Pumpes and Buckets. So the word is uſed (*Exod.* 2. 19.) *An* Egyptian *drew water enough for us*, &c. The drawing or drying up of water here intended is Artificial; for the Sun beams have no ſuch attractive power upon the waters under-ground. But they who labour in Mines have Engines to draw away theſe waters, and then (as we render) *they are gone away from men.* Yet ſome tranſlate, more clearly to the fence already given, *they are gone away by men*, or, *they are drawn out by the the labour of man, they are gone.* Workmen by their pains and skill deliver themſelves from theſe waters, and ſo enter their Mines again; this is a very common accident among theſe undertakers: waters break in upon them, and they by many hands, or by the main ſtrength of a multitude of men draw them clean away. So that theſe words are a deſcription of the Miners labour to recover their work, when the waters have overflowed it, or flowed in upon it; for though the waters flow in ſo faſt, that the workmen are forced to leave or quit the place; yet God doth furniſh them with wiſdom to conveigh away thoſe waters, by Pumpes, Buckets, and ſuch like Engines, prepared for the purpoſe.

Exhauriuntur mortalis opera abſcedunt. *Jun. Tranſl. Erumpit torrens ab incola, et (aquæ) oblivioni traditæ a pede exhauriuntur, et præ hominibus* (i. e. *multitudine hominum*) *ſummoventur.* Bold.

Hence Note, *Great works and undertakings often meet with many difficulties and unexpected impediments.*

The Miners are overflowed with waters. What important buſineſſes of this World is there, but a flood may break in upon it? And the more important any buſineſs is, the more will floods break in upon it. And this appears moſt when our buſineſs is Heaven-ward, and our work in Spirituals, then if ever the great waters ariſe and threaten to ſwallow us up: Satan will caſt forth a flood to hinder us when we are digging in the Spiritual Mines. When the woman (*Rev.* 12. 13.) had brought forth the Man-child, and was fled into the Wilderneſs for ſafety, Then *the Serpent* (Ver. 15.) *caſt out of his mouth waters as a flood, after the woman, that he might cauſe her to be carried away of the flood*; that is, he ſtirred up People and Nations like a flood to perſecute and afflict the Church, even in her Wilderneſs condition. And when ever any particular Believer hath brought forth, or is about to bring forth a Man-child, ſome notable things for Chriſt, or according to the mind of Chriſt, then preſently Satan caſts out, or cauſeth ſome flood or other to break out upon him. When *Joſhua* ſtood before the Lord to move in the behalf of the people, *Sathan was at his right hand to hinder him*, (Zech. 2. 1.) And he cauſed the flood of that peoples ſins to break forth upon him. When we are about any Spiritual work, the fleſh hinders, a flood of corruption breaks out. *Paul* found it ſo (*Rom.* 7.) *When I would do good, evil is preſent with me.* And if the flood of corruption within be ſtopt, then a flood of temptations from the World comes in and hinders us. The wiſdom of the World layeth blocks in our way, telling us that the Cuſtomes and examples of men lead another way: and why ſhould we be ſingular, or ſet our ſelves up as a mark for envy and malice to ſhoot at? When we attempt what is good and honourable, it is beſt for us to expect, and accordingly to prepare for oppoſition. The Apoſtle *Peter* (1 Ep. 3. 13.) had no ſooner ſaid, *And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?* But, he adds (*Ver.* 14.) by way of correction, *And if ye be perſecuted for righteouſneſs ſake, happy are ye.* As if he had ſaid, do good, keep cloſe to duty, and none can really hurt you; and you may hope that God will either ſo mollifie the hearts of evil men, that they ſhall have no mind, or ſo abate their power, that they ſhall have no opportunity to harm you; yet do not build upon this, but I will tell you what you may build upon, that let men oppoſe and perſecute you as much as they will while ye do good, *ye are happy.*

Secondly, Obſerve, *The men of the World will not give over their work, though they meet with impediments, but endeavour ſtrongly to remove them.*

And why ſhould not we do ſo in Spirituals? The Children of the World are wiſer in their generation then the Children of light. We are ready to let go our work, if we meet with trouble in it. Shall Miners recover their work out of the hands of the flood, and ſhall not we recover our work out of the hand of temptation? Let us remove it, and to work again. It is ſaid of *that man of ſin* (2 Theſ. 2. 7.) *The myſtery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.* So while we are at work in the myſtery of godlineſs, we often meet with ſomwhat that *lets*, and that will *let* till it be taken out of the way. Our work then muſt be to remove the hinderances of our work. Learn wiſdom of the Miners, if the floods break in upon you, out with them again.

Verſ. 5. **As for the Earth, out of it cometh bread: and under it is turned up as it were fire.**

In the former Verſes *Job* ſhewed what man gets below out of the bowels of the Earth, and what ado he makes to get it. Here at the beginning of this Verſe, *Job* tells us what man gets above, or what grows for mans uſe upon the ſurface of the Earth.

As for the Earth, out of it comes bread.

By bread, he means Corn or Grain of all ſorts, of which bread is made; bread is an Artificial thing; Corn is natural; the Earth gives forth only that which is natural, the Art of man fits it for his uſe. Man knowes how to till the Earth that it may yield him Corn, and when he hath gotten Corn, he is inſtructed how to make it up in bread. Thus we ſee, that as man hath skill to work below in the bowels of the Earth, ſo upon the ſurface of the Earth; out of the bowels of the Earth he gets Gold and Silver, with other precious things: and upon the face of the Earth he gets his bread. As the Earth is the common parent of all mankind (all men having their Original from it) ſo the Earth is the common parent of all thoſe good things, both ornamental and neceſſary, which concern the natural both being and wel-being of man.

Out of the Earth comes bread.

And by bread we are to underſtand not only that part of our food, which is oppoſed to drink and fleſh, but our whole food; and not our food only, but our cloathing comes under the Notion of bread in Scripture-language; eſpecially, we muſt take it ſo in our Saviours directory for prayer about temporal things (*Mat.* 6. 11.) *Give us this day our dayly bread.* And in this latitude, we may interpret *Job* while he ſaith, *As for the earth, out of it comes bread.*

And under it is turned up as it were fire.

Or as others read, *It takes fire underneath.* We may expound this two wayes.

Firſt, That the Earth which hath Corn growing upon the ſourd of it, hath fire underneath, that is, Mines of Coals and Brimſtone; which are called fire, becauſe they are fewel o fire, or materials for fire; though they are not fire formally, yet they are vertually; they quickly take fire, and make fires. That which is uſed continually to make fire, as Coals are, and that which is ſo apt to conceive or take fire, as Brimſtone is, may not unfitly be called fire.

Secondly, By the fire we may underſtand thoſe Metals before ſpoken of, Gold, Silver, Braſs, and Iron, as alſo precious Stones. All or any of theſe may be called fire; Firſt, Becauſe of their brightneſs; they all, being burniſhed, caſt a flame like fire. Secondly, Becauſe they are refined by the fire; they have a kind of fire in them, being ſo pure and ſplendid, and they are caſt into the fire, that they may be purified. But I rather take it in the former ſence, that *Job* here deſcribes a further uſe of the Earth, that there is not only Gold and Silver in the bowels of it, but Coals and ſuch things as are for firing; they alſo being of great uſe for the life and comfort of man. Thus Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates, *A ground out of which groweth food, is underneath changed as fire.*

Terra quondam fertilis tritici, ſucceſſu temporis ſterilis redditur ut ſubter eam ignis et ſeminaria quædā ſulphuris eſſe videantur. Merc.

Further, Some interpret theſe words, as if here were intimated a wonderful work of providence in changing the Nature of the ground, ſo as that which before brought forth bread, becomes barren, and is turned, as it were into Fire and Brimſtone. Hiſtorians make ſome ſuch reports of the Country where *Sodome* and *Gomorrah* once ſtood, which though it was in thoſe times (as *Moſes* calls it, *Gen.* 13. 10.) like *Eden*, or the Garden of God, yet now the ſoyl is not only unfruitful, but ſulphurous. And thus the Lord threatned preſumptuous ſinners (*Deut.*29.23.) *Their whole Land is Brimſtone and Salt, it is not ſowen, nor beareth, nor any Graſs groweth therein; like the overthrow of* Sodome, *and* Gomorrah, Admah *and* Zeboim, *which the Lord overthrew in his anger and in his wrath.* But I ſhall not ſtay upon that. The ſixth Verſe is of the ſame tendency.

Verſ. 6. **The Stones are the place of Saphirs: and it hath duſt of Gold.**

Thus Job deſcribes the furniture of the Earth, Corn growes above, Cole-ſtones and fewel for the fire, underneath, yea not only thoſe with other common, but many precious ſtones.

The Stones of it are the place of Saphirs.

The Saphir being one of the choiceſt ſtones, is here named for the reſt. We have the Saphir mentioned again (*Ver.* 16.) *It* (that is, *wiſdom*) *cannot be valued with the Gold of Ophir, with the precious Onix, or the Saphir.* The excellency of this ſtone may be collected from the deſcription of that viſion (*Exod.* 24. 10.) *Then went up* Moſes *and* Aaron, Nadab *and* Abihu, *and Seventy of the Elders of* Iſrael, *and they ſaw the God of* Iſrael, (not that God was viſible in himſelf, but only in thoſe viſional appearances and manifeſtations of his glory) *and there was under his feet, as it were a paved work of a Saphir Stone, and as it were the body of Heaven in his clearneſs.* How appoſitely doth *Moſes* joyn the Saphire ſtone, and the body of Heaven in his clearneſs? As implying (which is its natural beauty) that the Saphire ſtone is diaphanous and clear, or in colour like the body of Heaven. Again, that myſtical viſion of the *Cherubims* and *Wheels*, is concluded with the appearance of Chriſt upon a glorious Throne (*Ezek.*1.26.) *Above the Firmament that was over their heads, was the likeneſs of a Throne, as the appearance of a Saphir ſtone,* &c. *Solomon* had a Throne of *Ivory overlaid with Gold*, (2 *Chron.*9.17.) But there was never any Prince had a Throne of Saphir to ſit upon, much leſs, as it were a paved work of a Saphir ſtone under his feet to tread upon: This is peculiar to the *King of Kings* alone. The Saphir is applyed by the Spouſe to ſet forth the gracious, ſweet, pure and tender affections and compaſſions of Chriſt toward her ſelf, the Church. (*Cant.* 5.14.) *His hands are as Gold-rings ſet with Berril: his Belly is as bright Ivory overlaid with Saphirs.* When the Prophet *Jeremy* would deſcribe the exceeding beauty and comelineſs of the Nazarites in *Jeruſalem*, before the Famin had withered and ſtained them, He ſaith (*Lam.*4.7.) as ſome read it, *Their Faces were Saphirine*, or as we, *They were more ruddy in body then Rubies, their polliſhing was of Saphir.* The Saphir is a ſtone ſo full of a Heaven-like beauty, that it doth not only pleaſe, but delight and recreate the beholder. Nor doth any thing, as Naturaliſts affirm, ſo much refreſh the eye as the Smarage and the Saphir. There is a tradition among the Jewiſh Rabbins, to which ſome Chriſtians Writers conſent, that when the Lord wrote the Law, he Wrote it in *Saphir ſtone*, or that the two Tables were two great Saphirs. Lapidaries ſay, the Saphir is a tranſparent ſtone of a cerulean or sky colour, precious and pleaſant to the eye; and they place it in the fifth order and and degree, among the moſt noble Gems. Neither is it pleaſant only, but Medicinal: ſome report it, a great reſiſter of Poyſon; yea that it hath a great influence upon the mind, and removeth ſadneſs and melancholly, that it is a preſervative of chaſtity, beſides many other vertues, by ſome ſuperſtitiouſly, by others ſomewhat hyperbolically aſcribed to it, which I willingly omit and paſs by; it may ſuffice for my purpoſe to have ſhewed what the *Saphir* is, of which *Job* ſpeaks in this Text, *The ſtones of it are the place of Saphirs*; that is, the place of *Saphirs*, thoſe moſt precious ſtones, is among common and ordinary ſtones.

Cardan. de lapid. lib. 7. *Epiphan. tract. de duodecim Gemmis.*

And it hath the duſt of Gold.

Saphirus non niſi in terra quæ ſit Auri-ferax invenitur.

That is, Gold is found among the duſt and mould of the Earth. The Saphir is congenial to the Gold, and is only found in thoſe Countreys where Gold is found. And therefore when *Job* had named the Saphir, he adds, *the duſt of Gold*, or that there is Gold in that duſt. Hence ſome allegorizing this Text to a myſtical ſence, have ſaid that the heart filled with Heavenly deſires, is fitly ſhadowed by the Earth, in which Saphirs are formed and found; and that the mind which is enriched with ſuch deſires, is full of Spiritual Gold. As for the proper and natural Gold, that hath been ſpoken of at the firſt Verſe of this Chapter. And therefore I ſhall here only make one general reference, by way of Obſervation from this Verſe.

That, *We ought to admire the wiſdom of God, who hath made the ſame Earth to yield ſuch varieties*, to yield ſupplies; Firſt, For neceſſity, *bread and fire*; Secondly, For Ornament, *Saphirs and Gold.* Though no one Earth yields all things, yet one Earth may yield many things, and the whole Earth yields all things required to the ſervice, or for the comfort of man.

Job having ſhewed that the Earth is ſtored and even burdened with theſe rich commodities; proſecutes the ſame matter, yet upon another conſideration in the following context.

Verſ. 7. **There is a path which no Fowl knoweth, and which the Vultures eye hath not ſeen.**

8. **The Lions whelps have not trodden it, nor the fierce Lion paſt by it.**

In theſe two Verſes *Job* deſcribes the ſecreſie of thoſe places, where the Gold and Gems, with all precious Minerals, are to be found. And he doth it by affirming that the wayes leading to them are far removed out of the ſight and tread of thoſe Creatures which have the moſt piercing eyes, and the moſt ſearching Spirits, commonly frequenting the darkeſt Caves and deepeſt Valleys of the Earth for prey.

There is a path.] That is, a path by which men ſeek for Gold, and are led down to the veins of Silver.

Vox עיט *propriè denotat avem voracem.*

Which no Fowl knoweth.] That is, no Fowl ever was there. The word tranſlated *Fowl*, ſignifieth, *a ravening Fowl.* Such fowls fly ſwiftly, and watch every place narrowly where their food is to be had; yet (ſaith *Job*) the paths which led to theſe treaſures are ſuch as the moſt ravening Fowls in all their flights were never acquainted with. *There is a path which no Fowl knoweth,*

And which the Vultures eye hath not ſeen.

Putant Hebræi איה *eam eſſe avē quia in lege* דאה *dicitur a viſus perſpicuitate* (Deut. 14.13.) *cæterum in eo loco utrāq; conjungitur ergo diverſæ ſunt: ut ſit conſtat avē* איה *eſſe viſus perſpicaciſſimi.* Merc.

The Vulture is ſo *ſharp-ſighted*, that her eye is, proverbially, put for *ſharp-ſight*; and the Vulture hath a ſharp ſtomack too as well as a ſharp eye, and therefore will ſearch into the moſt ſecret paths for prey: yet the Vulture never came into nor ſaw this path. And as the Fowls of Heaven have not ſeen it, ſo neither have the Beaſts of the Earth; as it follows.

Verſ. 8. **The Lions whelps,** (or, *the Sons of the Lion.*)

Non calcant eam filij ſuperbiæ. i. e. *feræ animoſiores et truculentiores.* Merc.

Uno verbo, ſemita rebus omnibus creatis avia: Jun.

The Hebrew is, *Sons of pride.* The Lion is proud and ſtately, as a King among beaſts. The Sons of the proudeſt and ſtatelieſt Lions, *have not trodden* this path, *nor the fierce Lion paſſed by it*; that is, the Lion that is moſt greedy, and will take moſt pains for prey, even he never came into theſe places, into which the Mineraliſt goes for Gold and Silver. Then, by this enumeration of Fowls and Beaſts, *Job* would intimate unto us, that the paths which lead to the precious Minerals, are ſuch as no Creature ever came into; and that, the thirſt or deſire which men have after them carrieth them further then the appetite and pinching hunger of the moſt fierce and greedy, whether Fowls of the Heaven, or Beaſts of the Earth, have ever carried them. The hunger of a Vulture or of a Lion forceth them far, yet not ſo far, as the hunger of man hath forced him in ſeeking and purſuing food for his covetouſneſs; and when he hath gotten more then he needs, his hunger is not ſatisfied, but encreaſed, for ſtill he thinks he hath need of more: ſuch is the eagerneſs and fierceneſs of mans appetite after earthly treaſure, that he will venture an periſhing things. His bowels are pained till he hath torn out the very bowels of nature, that he may fill his own. And though his belly be full, though his hand and houſe are full, yet his heart is empty. He is reſtleſs in labouring for that which neither will nor can give him any reſt. Theſe his reſtleſs labours in the purſuit of riches, are clearly and fully deſcribed in the three enſuing Verſes.

Verſ. 9. **He putteth forth his hand upon the Rock; he overturneth the Mountains by the roots.**

See what work he makes to get Gold and Silver.

He putteth forth his hand upon the Rock.

Theſe words may be taken two wayes; Firſt, Proverbially; Secondly, Properly. In the former acception, they imply thus much; that theſe men are willing to undertake the hardeſt work for Gold, *&c.* What is harder then a Rock; yet though the work be as difficult as digging through a Rock, they will put their hands to it. Secondly, Take the words properly, and the meaning is; though while theſe men work in Mines of the earth, they meet a Rock, yet they put their hands to it, and hew a way through it. And at the fourth Verſe, floods of water broke out upon them, and in this they meet with a Rock which they muſt break, or elſe their deſign is broken, and both their hopes and labour loſt. The word ſignifieth the *hardeſt Rock,* ſo that if they will have the treaſure, they muſt batter a Rock which ſtands as a Bulwark of Braſs to defend it againſt them. And yet this is not all. The next words ſhew us another *Herculean labour*; *he overturneth the Mountains by the roots*; or rather, *he turneth up the roots of the Mountains*; The meaning is, if Mountains ſtand in his way to hinder his work, or if his work be to undermine and remove Mountains, he will attempt and do it, that he may attain what he ſeeks for. A Mountain is ſpoken of in Scripture emblematically, to denote the greateſt difficulties and oppoſitions of men to croſs any deſign; and the overturning or levelling of theſe Mountains expreſſeth the higheſt actings of the power of God, in ſubduing all difficulties and oppoſitions for the good of his people, (*Zech.* 4.7.) And when Chriſt ſhould ſhew the utmoſt that a faith of Miracles can do. He ſaith, *It will remove a Mountain.* And therefore to overturn Mountains properly ſo called, is a ſtupendious undertaking; yet the Gold and Silver-ſearchers are not diſcouraged at it.

Verſ. 10. **He cutteth out Rivers among the Rocks, and his eye ſeeth every precious thing.**

The former part of this tenth Verſe gives light to the former part of the ninth. There 'tis ſaid, *He putteth forth his hand upon the Rock*; and here we ſee what his hand doth there; *He cutteth out Rivers among the Rocks*; that is, when the Miner meets with water, as was ſhewed Verſe fourth. Then he makes channels to conveigh it away, and give it paſſage. Some expound it of bringing waters from Springs, through Rock to move his Engins, or waſh his Metal, but 'tis more proper to expound it of waters ariſing upon, or about his works; theſe he rids himſelf of, by making *Water-courſes* under-ground, even among the hardeſt Rocks.

And his eye ſeeth every precious thing.

That is, having thus dealt with the Rocks, and Mountains, and having made Rivers among the Rocks, to carry away the water which annoyed and drowned his work, having (I ſay) thus ordered his matters; *His eye ſeeth every precious thing*; he ſeeth the Gold, the Silver, and the Gemms, which his Soul deſired. The Hebrew word, which we render *precious,* ſignifieth firſt, that which is honourable (*Pſal.* 45.9.) and the Greek word which ſignifieth, *honourable,* or *honor,* is by us tranſlated *precious,* (1 *Pet.* 2.7.) Secondly, That which is dear or beloved, (*Jer.* 31.20.) *Is* Ephraim *a dear Son*? Thirdly, That which is moſt acceptable, or much ſet by and pleaſing, (1 *Sam.* 18.30.) Fourthly, That which is rare and hard to come by, (1 *Sam.* 3.1.) When *David* ſaith, (*Pſal.* 116.5.) *Precious in the ſight of the Lord is the death of his Saints.* And (*Pſal.* 72.14.) *He ſhall redeem their Soul from deceit and violence, and precious ſhall their blood be in his ſight*; his meaning is, that the death and blood of the Saints is dear, much accounted of, and highly prized in the ſight of God, though poured out by men as a vile thing. Laſtly, And beyond all this, it ſignifieth, that which is light, or hath a ſhining light in it; for ſo moſt precious things, eſpecially Gemms have. (*Zech.* 14.6.) *And it ſhall come to paſs that the light ſhall not be clear*; ſo we tranſlate, and put in the Margin, *The light ſhall not be precious*; that is, the light ſhall not ſhine in that day as a precious, ſparkling Stone, but it ſhall be a kind of dim dusky light, it ſhall neither be dark nor clear, but between both. Divine knowledge is precious, and it is light, every Soul ſits in darkneſs till that light ſhines into it. And as this light is precious, ſo their eyes, who have it, may be ſaid to ſee, indeed, every precious thing.

יקר
Honorabilis pretioſus charius et varus fuit.

Non erit lux pretioſitatū, i. e. non ſplendida et refulgens, qualiter gēma pretioſæ oculis ſcintillare ſolunt. Bold.

Again, when 'tis ſaid, *His eyes ſees every precious thing,* the word rendered to ſee, notes not only ſimple to ſee, or to ſee naturally, but to ſee exactly, or an Artificial ſeeing. A skilfull man faſtneth his eye upon this or that object, to diſcern and find out which is beſt; he ſeeth like an Artiſt. Some have, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, (*Heb.* 5.14.) *Senſes exerciſed to diſcern both good and evil,* and to reſolve which is beſt or worſt, among Naturals, Morals and Spirituals. *His eye ſeeth,* that is, diſtinguiſheth every precious thing that he findes in the earth. And as the word imports, ſeeing diſtinctly and diſtinguiſhingly, ſo ſeeing delightfully. And thus precious things are ſeen, by thoſe who ſeek for them. They are no ſooner eſpyed, but their ſeekers are ready to leap and ſing for joy. Thus the *Mineraliſt ſeeketh every precious thing*; He knows it when he ſees it, and it pleaſeth him to ſee it.

ראה
Curioſe inſpicere.

Hence Note, Firſt, *Precious things are mingled among the vile.*

How many heapes of ſtones and duſt muſt be removed, before the Silver, the Gold, and the goodly Stones are found, as the Wheat lyes in the ſame heap with the chaff, till it be winnowed, ſo do the precious Ores, with the baſeſt Earth, till they are ſeparated.

Note, Secondly, *The wiſe mans eye diſtinguiſheth between the precious and the vile, and knowes which is which.*

He will not take traſh for Gold and Silver, nor Pebbles for Saphires; he will not take Chaff for Wheat, nor Cockle for Barly. Thus ſhould we do in Spirituals, our eye ſhould be upon the precious things. Grace is a precious thing, Faith and Love are precious things; and though Grace be mingled with corruption, as the Ore with Droſs, yet he that is Spiritually wiſe can diſtinguiſh between them. The Apoſtle prayes for the *Phillippians,* that, *their love abounding in knowledge and in all judgment, they might approve* (*or try*) *things that are excellent,* or (as the Greek hath it) *things that differ,* (Phil. 1.9, 10.) that is, things that differ in excellency. Thus not only doth grace differ from corruption, and truth from error, but one grace differs from another in excellency, and one truth from another, though all are excellent. As in naturals, not only doth Wheat differ from Chaff, and Gold from Droſs, but ſome Wheat differs from other, and ſome Gold from other in excellency. And thus it is both in Morals and Spirituals; and the eye of a godly man ſeeth both diſcerningly, he ſeeth what is good from bad, and among good things he ſeeth which is beſt. And as it an argument of a Spiritual eye to ſee things, ſo perſons that are precious. As the Lord tells the Prophet (*Jer.* 15.19.) *If thou take away the precious from the vile, then ſhalt thou be as my mouth*; that is, if in thy teaching thou put a difference between the godly, and doeſt not promiſcuouſly give the portions and priviledges of the former to the latter; then thou wilt approve thy ſelf and the wicked man ſpeaking as I my ſelf have ſpoken, or have taught thee to ſpeak. The carnal man takes them up altogether, his eye diſtinguiſheth not either precious things or perſons, yea as the Prophet ſpeaks, (*Iſa.* 5.20.) *He puts darkneſs for light, and light for darkneſs; he puts ſweet for bitter, and bitter for ſweet*; he puts good for evil, and evil for good. And as Chriſt chargeth ſuch (*John* 3.19.) *They love darkneſs*

darkneſs rather then light, they are ſo far from ſeeing, that is, delighting in precious things, that they chooſe the vileſt things. But when the laborious Miner goeth down into the path which he hath made in the Earth, he *ſeeth only precious things*, he takes no other notice of worthleſs Stones, but only to put them by, that ſo he may come at what is precious. (As *Eliſha* in another caſe profeſſed, 2 Kings 3. 14.) *As the Lord of Hoſts liveth, before them I ſtand, ſurely, were it not but that I regard the preſence of* Jehoſhaphat *the King of* Judah, *I would not look toward thee nor ſee thee*. So would theſe men do, in the preſent caſe, they would not ſee the things that are vile, nor look towards them, were it not that they regard the preſence of Gold and Silver, and precious ſtones, which lye in their company, and are mingled with them. *Job* hath not yet finiſhed his diſcourſe concerning theſe Adventures, he gives one inſtance more.

Verſ. 11. **He bindeth the floods from overflowing, and the thing that is hid bringeth he forth to light.**

The floods mentioned in this Verſe may be of two ſorts. Firſt, The ſame which we ſpake of at the fourth Verſe, as alſo, in the Verſe immediately foregoing, where *Job* told us, that the Mineraliſt *cut out Rivers among the Rocks*, which having done poſſibly they might annoy him; therefore his next skill is to handle them ſo, that they ſhall not. For this end, *He bindeth the flood from overflowing*; As he makes it flow to the advantage, ſo he bindes it to its good behaviour, that it overflow not to the hindrance of his work. As the Lord by his infinite wiſdom and power bindeth the Ocean, and ſaith to the Sea, *Hitherto ſhalt thou come; and no further, and here ſhall thy proud waves be ſtay'd*; So the Miner would have theſe waters come as far as is neceſſary for his uſe and benefit, but no further, and therefore he bindes them leſt they ſhould. The word, that is here tranſlated, *to bind*, is applyed to the binding up of a child in ſwathing bands; or to the binding up of a wound. And whereas we render, *He bindeth up the flood from overflowing*, the Text is, *from weeping*; we ſay ſome grounds, they are *weeping grounds*, and of bankes, where the water ouzeth through, they are *weeping banks*. Theſe Artiſts would bind up the floods with ſuch ſure banks or bounds, that they ſhould not weep through, nor ſhed a tear to their annoyance. Thus Mr. *Broughton* renders; *He bindeth up the floods from weeping*. Only take notice, that, this learned man conceives, that, the Antecedent to the relative *He*, is God himſelf; for thus he gloſſeth the Text; *God dryeth the ſprings, from whence Rivers ran, that they fail, and have not ſo much as a tear of Water*. Secondly, Theſe floods may be ſuch as are made from above, not ſuch as he found below. Exceſs of rain falling from the Clouds, doth often make great floods, which naturally making their way downwards may fall into thoſe capacious vaults which he hath made under the Earth, and overflowing them, ſpoil his work. Therefore he provides againſt theſe water-floods alſo, and binds them from overflowing. Having thus ſecured his Mine, he carrieth on his buſineſs with ſuch ſucceſs, that if any thing of worth be to be had he lights upon it, and will have it, as *Job* concludes this Verſe and his whole diſcourſe upon this ſubject in the next words,

בכי *Fletum propriè ſignificat, hic pro ſtillatione ſumitur, ut cap. 28. 16.* Merc.

And the thing that is hid bringeth he to light.

That is, he diſcovers thoſe riches which, till then, never ſaw the Sun, though wrought by the powerful influences of the Sun, as Gemms and Minerals are. The words are neer of the ſame ſence and import with what he ſaid in the former Verſe, *His eye ſeeth every precious thing*; yet there is an obſervable difference between them; that ſpeaking of the ſight which himſelf hath of thoſe precious things, but this, of his bringing them out to the ſight and for the uſe of others. The ſum of all is; that whereas vaſt treaſures lay buried and concealed from all former generations, he brings them to open view, and preſents them to the eye of the World. He having let or brought in the light to them, lets or brings them out to light.

From this large deſcription of the way and means of getting treaſure out of the Earth,

Obſerve, Firſt, *Strong and conſtant labour compaſſeth great things, even the greateſt things of this World.*

What may not men do, if they have a heart, and will put their hands to the doing of it? *The Soul of the ſluggard* (ſaith *Solomon, Pro.* 13.4.) *deſireth and hath nothing*; we may ſay, The Soul of a laborious man may have any thing that he deſires; he that is nothing but deſires, ſhall have nothing that he deſires; but he that addeth good endeavours to his deſires, can deſire nothing that is good, and good for him, but he may have it. So *Solomon* concludes in the Verſe before-mentioned, in oppoſition to the ſluggard; *But the Soul of the diligent ſhall be made fat.*

Secondly, Obſerve, *True and hearty deſires, are alwayes followed with ſtrong and hard endeavours.*

They who indeed deſire Gold and Silver, will ſeek to the ends and dig to the bottom of the earth for them. *Through deſire* (ſaith *Solomon*, Pro. 18. 1.) *a man having ſeparated himſelf* (from all things that may hinder him) *ſeeketh and intermedleth with all wiſdom*; that is, with all thoſe things, wherein he may either exerciſe the wiſdom which he hath attained to, or attain to more wiſdom. The true deſire of the mind is like the hungry appetite of the ſtomack, it provokes to any pains which may give it ſatisfaction. And becauſe nothing can ſatisfie deſire but enjoyment, therefore the deſirer needs no *Task-maſter*: Man will enjoyn himſelf the hardeſt taſkes, upon a hope of enjoying what is deſired.

Thirdly, Obſerve, *That, for the things of this World, Worldly men are willing to beſtow ſtrong and conſtant labour.*

The explication of the whole context makes good the truth of this Obſervation. Neither darkneſs, nor the ſhadow of death, neither ſtifling dampes, nor over-flowing floods, neither Rocks nor Mountains have been able to diſcourage the hearts, or weaken the hands of men greedy of gain. Some of the Ancient Heathens have at once ſtood admiring and bemoaning man in this; they have wondered what ſo great neceſſity that is, which hath compelled man, who is made of an erect countenance, with his face Heaven-ward, thus to bow down and dig himſelf into the Earth, to get thoſe things which are not got with more danger then they are poſſeſſed, when gotten. But though we can never bewail this too much, no, nor enough, yet we need not much wonder at it. There being many conſiderations which may ſatisfie us, why man, though theſe things cannot ſatisfie him, is yet ſo unſatisfied without them.

Quæ tanta neceſſitas hominem ad ſidera erectum incurvavit et defodit, ut erueret aurum non minore periculo quærendum quam poſſidendum. Sen. l.6. Natur. Quæſt.c.25.

Firſt, becauſe theſe things are connatural unto man; man is a kin unto the Earth, and the things of the Earth; he was made out of the duſt of the Earth; and what is Gold but yellow duſt? Or Silver, but Earth purified by the fire? man and earthly things being ſo nearly related, no marvail if man muddle in the earth after them; till his nature is renewed, this motion cannot be diverted. (*John.* 3. 31.) *He that is of the earth* (in his Original) *is earthly* (in his converſation) *and ſpeaketh of the earth.* All his ſpeeches and all his actions ſavor of the earth. Philoſophers ſay, *The temper of mans mind followeth the temperament of his body*; and if ſo, how can the mind of man be but earthly, ſeeing the general temperament of his body is earth. And therefore the Apoſtle ſpeaking of ſome profeſſors who were ſo only in profeſſion, ſaith of them, *Their god is their belly, they mind earthly things*. (Phil. 3.19.) And 'tis true of godly men too, who have much earth ſtill about them, that though they are not earthly minded, yet earthly things are much in their minds; Firſt, To think of them; Secondly, to deſire them; Thirdly, To compaſs and poſſeſs them.

Terrenus terrena. Sapit.

Secondly, Earthly things have a glorious glitter and appearance in them; they are the moſt taking objects of the eye. The Apoſtle *John* (1 Ep. 2. 16.) calls covetouſneſs which chiefly reſpects God and precious things) *The luſt of the eye*; that is, that which the eye luſteth after. And man is naturally led by ſenſe. The Apoſtle ſaith, *We* (that is, Saints) *walk by faith, and not by ſight*; implying, that all one the other ſide of the line of Grace walk by ſenſe, and not by faith (2 *Cor.* 5. 7.) And again (*Chap.* 4. 18.) *We look not at things that are ſeen*; we, that is we Believers do not, but the unbeliever or unregenerate man looks only at the things that are ſeen; and becauſe men are ſo greedy of this ſight, therefore they will dig, and cut through Rocks and Mountains, and make themſelves paths to theſe treaſures, which the Vultures eye hath not ſeen.

Thirdly, Man hath continual uſe of theſe things, they accommodate all his affairs in this World. *Solomon* ſaith (*Eccl.* 7. 12.) *Wiſdom is a defence, and money is a defence*;

that is, a wiſe man will procure himſelf defence by his money. He ſaith again, (*Eccl.* 10. 19.) *Money anſwers all things* ; that is, any thing may be had, and almoſt any thing may be done by money. Money anſwers beauty and Nobility. It makes the deformed comely, and the baſe-born honourable; It ſerves all turns and buſineſſes, and therefore we ſhould not wonder, if there be ſuch an appetite or inſtinct in man, to ſearch into the bowels of the earth for the materials of it.

Et Genus & formam regina pecunia donat. Horat.

Fourthly, Man riſeth up in repute and eſtimation in the world, as he gets more of theſe things ; worldly honour and credit flow in with riches ; men are diſtinguiſhed by their poſſeſſions ; few value men by grace, by faith, *&c.* A man may be rich in faith, and abound in holineſs, and yet find little reſpect with men : but if a man be wealthy, if he have ſtore of ſilver and gold, he is reſpected by moſt, and adored, or made (as it were) an Idol by ſome. They that are ſpiritual, know how to eſteem men for ſpirituals, but commonly men are valued by their value and worth in temporals. This gives us another account, why the treaſures of the earth are ſought and purſued with ſo much eagerneſs. And indeed they are purſued with ſo much eagerneſs, that the Prophet *David* knew not which way in the world, to ſhew a higher eſteem of and ſtronger affections unto God and his wayes, the wayes of holineſs, then by ſaying, that he eſteemed or affected them more then all the treaſures of the world (*Pſal.* 119. 14.) *I have rejoyced in the way of thy teſtimonies, as much as in all riches* ; The Hebrew is, *as in all riches* ; we ſupply, *as much as in all riches* ; not that *David's* ſpirit ſtood upon equal terms between God and the world. For he that rejoyceth in God, no more then in riches, rejoyceth much leſs in him then his duty is. And therefore *David* explains himſelf fully to this in the ſeventy ſecond of the ſame Pſalm, *The law of thy mouth is better unto me then thouſands of gold and ſilver.* Both Texts ſhew how much gold and ſilver are eſteemed, when this is made the commendation of our love to God, that we love him more then gold and ſilver.

But though we have no cauſe to wonder, yet we have much cauſe to lament, while we ſee the ſons of men thus buſied in the earth, and in love with earthly things. How ſad is it to ſee ſo many venture the periſhing of their mortal bodies, much more of their immortal ſouls, in ſeeking things which periſh ? How ſad is it to ſee their hunger after this prey, carrying them into paths which the Lyons whelp never trod, nor the fierce Lyon ever paſſed ? How ſad is it to ſee ſuch digging and ſearching for ſilver and gold, while that is neglected which is better then gold, even *durable ſubſtance ?* How ſad is it to ſee men overcoming all difficulties, and laughing at all dangers, to get gold, when as every difficulty ſtops their ſearch after heavenly treaſures. If a *flood* (ſhall I ſay) *break out upon them*, nay, if but a few drops of trouble fall upon them, they have done preſently ; and, if *a rock, or a mountain* (ſhall I ſay) be in the way, nay, if but a *pebble ſtone or mole-hill* of oppoſition be in their way, they will go no further ; O how far are they from cutting rocks, or labouring to remove mountains ! How ſad is it to ſee men ſlighting the ſhadow of death in their ſearch for gold, and yet afraid of deaths ſhadow, even the remoteſt appearance of death in their ſearches after God? what a ſhame is it to ſee men paſs not only through the ſhadow of death, but through death indeed, for dying or rather liveleſs things, and yet to be afraid of *deaths ſhadow*, in following the things of eternal life ! When the ſluggard ſhould go on in his way, he will not, for (ſaith he, *Prov.* 26. 13.) *There is a Lyon in the way*, every ſhew of danger is to him a Lyon, though poſſibly it can endanger him no more then a mouſe. What a ſhame and reproach is it to mankind, that whereas in ſeeking gold and ſilver, men have exceeded all the fabulous labours of the old giants, by their real labours, that yet men in ſeeking grace and glory, act ſo much below even dwarfs and pigmies ?

Auri effodiendi ratio opera vicerit gigantũ. Plin. l. 33. c. 4.

Be exhorted therefore, not to think any pains too much, or perils too great for the things of heaven, ſeeing men think no pains too much, nor perils perilous for the things of the earth. The very labour in ſeeking heavenly treaſures is very ſweet, but the enjoyment of them is infinitely ſweeter : whereas the labour of ſeeking for earthly treaſures, is very tireſome, and the very enjoyment, to many, is much more tireſome. Some one luſt is engaged and works in getting, but all the luſts of a mans heart may be at work in the enjoyment of the world. And if to obey the commands of one luſt hath tired many a man, how will that man be tired who is at the command of many, of every luſt ? So then, we may conclude, *There is leſs trouble in ſeeking earthly treaſures, then there is in uſing and poſſeſſing them*, though that trouble is far enough from being little. The ſumme of all is, Vain man troubles himſelf very much to get himſelf more trouble. The Apoſtle *Paul* ſeems much affected with it, that the care of thoſe who run races for honour and temporal rewards, ſhould not be equalled, if not exceeded, by the Saints in running their race for glory and immortality ; *Every man that ſtriveth for the maſtery, is temperate in all things* (1 Cor. 9. 25.) *Now* (ſaith he) *they do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible.* When men are to run a race how do they diet and order themſelves before ? and when they come to the race, how do they ſtrain themſelves, and all for a corruptible crown ; we are ſtriving for an incorruptible crown, ſhall we not be temperate in all things ? ſhall we not uſe much ſobriety, and be much in mortification and ſelf-denial, that we may ſo run as to obtain ? The temperance and pains of *race-runners*, the labour of *earth-miners*, will riſe up in judgement againſt all thoſe that are ſluggiſh and ſloathful in *ſoul-matters* ; yea the wiſdom of theſe men, will riſe up in judgment againſt thouſands, who pretend to be very wiſe. The miners go directly to the place where gold is, they ſeek not gold upon a green-tree, nor precious gems upon a vine ; but they dig down into the earth when they would have theſe things. 'Tis folly to ſeek things out of their proper place. But we may ſay to many as the Angel to *Mary*, *Why ſeek ye the living among the dead ?* Why ſeek ye heaven in the bowels of the earth, and glory in the wayes of ſin ? They labour in the earth, as if heaven it ſelf were to be had there ; and they labour for heaven, as if not ſo much as this earth were to be had there. But when with grievous toil they have gotten that which hath only a ſhew of good, they will know (too late for recovery) that which is really ſo. I will cloſe this admonition to earthly minded, and earth-minding men, with *David's* chiding queſtion (*Pſal.* 4. 2.) *O ye ſons of men, how long will ye love vanity, and ſeek after leaſing ?* When will ye pray, as he doth (*verſ.* 6.) *Lord lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us ?* when will ye be able to ſay (as he did, *verſ.* 7.) from your experience of the anſwer of ſuch a prayer ; *Lord, thou haſt put gladneſs in our hearts, more then in the time*, that (either other mens or our own) *corn and wine, gold and ſilver did encreaſe.*

Sed quonam lateat, quod cupiunt bonum neſcire caeci ſuſtinent. Et quod ſtelliferum tranſabiit polum, Tellure demerſi petunt. Boet. lib. de Conſol. Phi.

There is nothing can divert the thoughts of man and his deſires from the world, but to direct them upon God. And thoughts of God are more then a diverſion of our thoughts from the world, they are the death and mortification of them. Earthly deſires cannot live in the air of heaven, no more then any creature can, when taken out of or off from its proper element. The gladneſs which the light of Gods countenance puts into the heart, conquers and kills the gladneſs which the glitter of gold and ſilver puts into the heart. As God alone will be All in all to Saints in heaven, ſo they who are much with him here in the actings of faith and love, cannot but delight in him above all, and riſe up to *David's* concluſion, from *David's* Queſtion (*Pſal.* 73. 25.) *Whom have we in heaven but thee ? and there is none* (either thing or perſon) *upon earth, that we deſire beſides thee.*

Thus far *Job* hath deſcribed the labour of man, in ſeeking worldly treaſure, the vein for Silver, and the place for Gold, either where they find or fine it; and having finiſhed this diſcourſe he comes to ſhew that there is a vein of wiſdom, which few men in the world have a deſire to ſeek, and which none of the men of the world have an ability to find.

VERS. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19.

But where ſhall wiſdom be found ? And where is the place of underſtanding ?
Man knoweth not the price thereof, neither is it found in the Land of the living.
The depth ſaith, It is not in me : and the Sea ſaith, It is not with me.

It cannot be gotten for gold, neither ſhall ſilver be weighed for the price thereof.
It cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir, with the precious onix, or the ſaphir.
The gold and the chryſtal cannot equal it: and the exchange of it ſhall not be for jewels of fine gold.
No mention ſhall be made of coral, or of pearls: for the price of wiſdom is above rubies.
The Topaz of Ethiopia ſhall not equal it, neither ſhall it be valued with pure gold.

IN the former part of this Chapter, we found *Job* diſcourſing of that natural wiſdom which is implanted in man by God. And there he ſhewed by an induction of many inſtances, what that wiſdom can do, how far it can work; that can ſearch the boſom and bowels of the earth, and diſcern what's there; that can fetch or draw out gold and ſilver and precious ſtones from thence; that can maſter and overcome all the difficulties and impediments, and out-dare all the dangers that ſtand in the way of thoſe attainments; that wiſdom can purifie and refine, perfect and poliſh all ſorts of metals and gems, into a fitneſs for the uſe and ornament of man: all this the wiſdom of man can do. Moſt men can ſee far into nature; ſome men can ſee her quite through, they are (as it were) of councel with nature, and know her whole heart, all her ſecrets: all this man doth and hath by natural wiſdom, which yet is the gift of God to man, a gift common to man as man. So that there is nothing in this lower world, nothing in the loweſt parts of this world, which hath not been diſcovered and drawn out, either by the diligence of man, or by the ſucceſſion of times. All things have their original and period, their beginning and ending, their entrances and their iſſues in certain times and places.

But now (in the following part of this Chapter, as was toucht in the diviſion of the whole) *Job* makes report of a wiſdom which hath neither beginning nor end, neither vein nor iſſue ſearchable by man: yea, that wiſdom of man which is ſo pregnant and piercing, ſo active and ſucceſsful in diſcovering the works of God in nature, which are done below, even within the bowels of the earth, is not only puzzled often and at a ſtand, not only non-pluſs'd often and gravell'd, but is ſometimes ſtark blind to ſee, and utterly unable to unty the knot and diſcover the myſtery of thoſe works of God in providence which are done aloft upon the face of the earth.

Verſ. 12. **But where ſhall wiſdom be found?**

Man, who hath digg'd and found out many ſecrets, knows not where to dig for or find out this ſecret? And *Job* gives four reaſons, in the proceſs of this Chapter, why he cannot.

Firſt, Becauſe there is no place particularly deſigned for it; He knows not where to break ground, with any hope or probability of finding this treaſure. He treats of and enlarges this reaſon with much excellent variety. (*Verſ.* 12, 13, 14.) *Where ſhall wiſdom be found? and where is the place of underſtanding? It is not found in the land of the living. The depth ſaith, it is not in me, &c.*

Secondly, Becauſe man hath no price in his hand to obtain it; As there is no place in nature where it can be found, ſo all the treaſures of nature cannot reach the purchaſe of it. And this *Job* proſecutes from *verſ.* 15. incluſively to the end of *verſ.* 19. *It cannot be gotten for gold, neither ſhall ſilver be weighed for the price of it, &c.*

Thirdly, He ſhews, that as there is no place where, nor price whereby, ſo no power in the creature to attain it. This wiſdom is not compaſſable by (that price for which the old heathens ſaid their gods ſold all things) ſtudy, labour, and induſtry; Which *Job* intimates (*verſ.* 21, 22.) which he ſaith, *It is hid from the eyes of all living, and kept cloſe from the fowls of the air, &c.* There are ſome things which no man can buy with gold or ſilver, which yet may be got by ſtudy and labour. But no beating of the brain, no biting of the nails can find out theſe ſecrets, 'tis kept cloſe from the fowls of the air; even from thoſe men who ſoar higheſt after it in ſtudy and contemplation. Theſe fowls of the air cannot come at it, for God purpoſely hides it as a reſerve to himſelf; It is kept cloſe; and where? even in the breaſt of God, that's the cabinet. As the Kings and Princes of this world have many ſecrets and *myſteries of State*, which every man muſt not know, and ſome ſecrets which no man muſt know, in the whole compaſs of it, but only here a little, and there a little; ſo hath God infinitely more.

Arcana Imperii.

Fourthly, He concludes; that God, and God only hath this wiſdom, becauſe He, and He alone, hath at once a full proſpect of all things all the world over, in all times, even in one and the ſame time. He that hath not ſuch a view of things as this, or he that ſees things only by parts, or in this or that part of the world, or in this and that part of time, can never underſtand the full mind of God in what he doth, ſeeing whatſoever he doth is done with an infallible ſight and foreſight of all things in all places and through all times, paſt, preſent, and to come. And this *Job* proves from the twenty-third to the twenty-ſeventh verſe; *God underſtandeth the way thereof, and he knoweth the place thereof, for he looketh to the ends of the earth, and ſeeth under the whole heaven, to make the weight for the windes, and he weigheth the waters by meaſure, when he made a decree for the rain, and a way for the lightning of the thunder; then did he ſee it, and declare it, he prepared and ſearched it out.* As if he had ſaid, God ſet all things in order, and ſaw the order wherein they were ſet from everlaſting, and therefore God and none but God, underſtandeth the way of wiſdom, and knoweth the place thereof.

Upon all theſe grounds, *Job* concludes, that this ſecond ſort of wiſdom, (for I formerly diſtinguiſhed of three ſorts of wiſdom treated on in this Chapter; Firſt, Wiſdom about naturals; Secondly, Wiſdom about providentials; Thirdly, Wiſdom about ſpirituals; upon theſe grounds I ſay, *Job* concludes that this ſecond ſort of wiſdom) referring to the providences of God in adminiſtring the things of this world, whether to the one ſort of mankind or the other, hath ſuch knots in it as no man can unty; ſuch riddles in it as no man living is able, unerringly, to reſolve, but many thouſands have erred exceedingly, foully, groſly, while they have been aſſaying to reſolve them; and ſo have at once fallen by their preſumption under the ſore rebukes of God, and a deſerved cenſure from man. This was the caſe of *Job's* friends, they preſumed they had found out the key of the whole matter, even the hidden reaſon of all God's providences toward *Job*. But God tells them at laſt (*Chap.* 42. 8.) *Ye have not ſpoken of me* (that is of my dealings with men) *the thing that is right*; indeed they had ſpoken as to the man before them, ſuch things as were very wrong, and had ſhot wide from their mark: And as God told them at laſt, that they were defective in wiſdom; ſo *Job* puts the Queſtion to them, here, reprovingly.

Where ſhall wiſdom be found?

Job proſecutes his point in ſeveral forms of ſpeech; In this verſe he argues by way of interrogation; in the next (or thirteenth) by a plain negation; and in the fourteenth, by a proſopopeia or an imitation of a perſon, bringing in the deep diſclaiming this wiſdom, and the ſea, ſaying, *it is not in me.*

Where ſhall wiſdom be found?

There is a vein for the ſilver, and a place for the gold where they fine it: But where is the vein for wiſdom? for wiſdom to ſee to the bottom of all Gods providential dealings with the children of men; the bowels of the earth and the bottom of the ſea, are eaſier found, then the place of this wiſdom.

Some read the Text with a ſpecial accent upon the word *wiſdom: Where ſhall that wiſdom*, or (as others) *Wiſdom it ſelf be found?* That wiſdom, which ye have been pretending, to, all this while, as enabling and furniſhing you to aſſign the reaſon, why God is pleaſed thus to exerciſe, thus ſeverely to rebuke and tread me a poor worm under his feet, yet the work of his hands, *where ſhall this wiſdom be found?* As if he had ſaid, *I have ſpoken of wiſdom, of that wiſdom which men put forth in the purſuit of gold and ſilver, with all other precious treaſures of the earth,* but I am now ſpeaking of a higher wiſdom, *Where ſhall that wiſdom be found?* that wiſdom whereby God doth order and diſpoſe all the motions of this world; in ſearching this wiſdom all the wiſdom which men have ever given proof of in ſearching for mines or digging metals is meer

At illa ſapientia unde invenitur. Jun.

meer folly. This wiſdom is nothing elſe but, and it is no leſs then the righteouſneſs and the reaſon of all Gods proceedings both with the righteous and the wicked; ſometimes concluding both under the ſame ſtate of outward ſuffering, and ſometimes under the ſame ſtate of outward proſperity; ſometimes running the diſpenſation quite croſs, ſo that godly men are ſorely afflicted, and wicked men greatly advanced; And then again the godly advanced greatly, and the wicked are ſorely afflicted. *Job* puts the queſtion (*Chap.* 21.22.) *Shall any teach God knowledge, ſeeing he judgeth thoſe that are high?* Now as no man can teach God this knowledge, ſo God teacheth but few men any of this knowledge, and he teacheth no man all of it. *Where is that wiſdom to be found?*

And where is the place of underſtanding?

Some diſtinguiſh between *wiſdom* and *underſtanding*, as between a habit and an act. Underſtanding (ſay they) is the habit, and wiſdom the act by which all things are ordered and diſpoſed of according to that light which ſhineth in the underſtanding. The Jewiſh Doctors call *underſtanding, the daughter of wiſdom.* But we need not be thus curious, it being frequent in Scripture to repeat the ſame thing in another expreſſion. Whereſoever wiſdom is, there is underſtanding; And whereſoever a right underſtanding is, there is wiſdom; and as theſe two are inſeparable companions ſo they are often put the one for the other; For though many have *an underſtanding*, who have no wiſdom, or who are very unwiſe; yet whoſoever is an underſtanding man, is a wiſe man alſo; or rather his underſtanding is his wiſdom: and though ſome critical diſtinction may be given between them, yet both may bear the ſame ſence and ſignification, as elſewhere ſo in this place alſo, without any hurt or ſtrain to *Job's* intention. When God gave young *Solomon* his choice what to ask (1 *King.*3.9.) *Lord* (ſaid he) *give thy ſervant an underſtanding heart to judge thy people, that I may diſcern between good and bad.* An underſtanding for government is a choice mercy; And as it is a choice mercy to underſtand how to govern our ſelves or others; ſo to underſtand how our ſelves or others, whether perſons or nations are governed by the hand of God, is a choice mercy alſo. We may well ſay with *Job, Where is the place of this underſtanding?* And as the place of it is not known, ſo neither hath man a price in his hand to purchaſe it.

Verſ. 13. Man knoweth not the price thereof, neither is it found in the land of the living.

When *Job* ſaith, *Man knoweth not*, we are not to expound it of this or that man, or ſort of men diſtinguiſhed from the reſt; as of weak men, or of ignorant men, or of unlearned men, or of men of an inferior and common rank; Nor are we to interpret *Job* ſpeaking only of wicked or prophane men. But take the wiſeſt, the moſt learned, the greateſt, yea the holieſt men on earth, and even of them all it may be ſaid, *Man knoweth not*, (that is, no one man of all theſe men knoweth) *the price thereof.* For not only they who have wiſdom from God, but even they who have the wiſdom of God, know not the wiſdom which is here treated of. They who know much of the mind of God, yea (as *Paul* ſpeaks to the Church of *Epheſus*, *Act.*20.27.) they who know, (as to what God would have man do) *all the counſel of God*, may yet know little or nothing of his mind or counſel, as to what himſelf hath done or is doing. This was the Prophets confeſſion (*Jer.*12.1.) *Righteous art thou, O Lord, when I plead with thee, yet let me talk with thee of thy Judgments, wherefore doth the way of the wicked proſper? Wherefore are all they happy* (in the eye and account of the world he means, or in their own, for other happineſs ſuch have none) *that deal very treacherouſly.* That holy man did not know how to clear up the Lords righteouſneſs (though he knew he was righteous) when he ſaw the unholy and unrighteous flouriſhing; This looked like a matter quite out of order, and he could not ſee the order of it. And ſo ſome render this Text, *Man knoweth not the order of it.* I ſhall touch that reading as ſoon as I have given a brief account of ours.

Hic tantum agitur de ſapientiâ divinæ adminiſtrationis, quæ ne piis quidem hominibus patefacta eſt ut merito hic dici queat nuſquā inveniri. Merc.

Man knoweth not the price thereof.

The price of a thing is that which either Firſt, the eſteem of men, or Secondly, the rarity of it, or Thirdly, the danger and difficulty of attaining it, or Fourthly, the intrinſecal worth of it hath put upon it. One of the ancients gives an excellent account about the price of things; *As any one is delighted with or phancieth a thing, ſo is the price of it. Every mans luſt, eſpecially the luſts of great men or Princes, makes the price great.* And again the ſame Author, *It is a ſmall matter to us, unleſs we are cloathed and fed with dangers, ſo that what we uſe all the body over pleaſeth us moſt, when 'tis got by the hazard of the ſoul or life.* But the word which we render *price*, and well enough as to the ſignification of it, is yet by many of the learned (and I think better as to the ſence of this place) tranſlated *order*; *Man knoweth not the order* (nor the ſtate) *of it.* Thus we render it in the verb often (*Pſal.* 50.21.) *I will reprove thee and ſet them*, (that is, thy ſins) *in order before thee.* And again (*Exod.*40.23.) *He ſet the bread in order upon it, &c.* The Greek verſion conſents fully to this reading. And becauſe *Job* ſpeaks of the price or worth of wiſdom afterwards, telling us that it cannot be had for gold or ſilver, *&c.* (*verſ.*16.) therefore (though our tranſlation is not to be refuſed, becauſe it anſwers both a known ſignification of the word and the general ſcope of the Chapter, yet) I judge that reading more ſutable; *No man knoweth the order thereof.* As if he had ſaid, God doth ſo vary his dealing, that no man knoweth his method, or where to have him at all times. God doth not keep a road, but takes what liberty he pleaſeth in his adminiſtrations toward men. And therefore, *Man knoweth not the order thereof.*

Prout quiſque re aliqua delectatur, ita precii modus eſt; ſingulorum libido ſingulis precium facit maximè regum. Plin.

Parum eſt niſi qui veſcimur periculis, etiam veſtiamur; adeo per totum corpus anima quæſita maximè placent. Plin

ערך *propriè eſt ordinare aut diſponere bene tamen vertitur pretiū quia ſecundū gradum & Ordinem in quo res aliqua conſtituitur illius pretium cognoſcimus & æſtimamus.* Τάξις. *Aquila.*

Neither is it found in the land of the living.

That is, *It is not any where to be found.* That which is not to be found among the living, is much leſs to be found among the dead. Beaſts live, yet the life of ſenſe is no life in compariſon to the life of reaſon, and therefore it is ſaid, *Eve was the mother of all living*; as if beaſts who have a ſenſitive, and plants which have only a vegetative life, or a life of growth were not to be reckoned among the living. This form of ſpeaking, *The land of the living*, is a common Hebraiſm in Scripture, ſignifying our abode and ſtate in this world. (*Pſal.* 27.13.) *I had fainted unleſs I had believed to ſee the goodneſs of God in the living.* And thus ſpake thoſe wicked conſpirators againſt the Prophet (*Jer.*11.19.) *Let us cut him off from the land of the living, that his name may be no more remembred.* So that when *Job* ſaith, *It is not found in the land of the living*, it is as if he had ſaid, This wiſdom is not to be found among any ſort of men in the world. Yet there are ſome (to note that by the way) who reſtrain this expreſſion to the land of *Canaan*, as if that, by way of eminency were called *The land of the living.* Thus they expound (*Iſa.*38.11. *Ezek.*26.20.) as alſo thoſe other Texts already mentioned. As if to walk in or to be cut off from *the land of the living*, were to live in or die off from the land of *Canaan* or *Judea*, in a more peculiar ſence then to live in or die off from any other land upon the face of the earth. And there is a double reaſon given for it. Firſt, Becauſe the *land of Canaan* was furniſhed with all things neceſſary for natural life, beyond other lands; It was a land *flowing with milk and honey*; In the word *flowing* we have abundance, and in thoſe words *milk and honey*, we have the fatneſs and ſweetneſs, the ſtrength and deliciousneſs of thoſe food proviſions which *Canaan* yielded. Secondly, In a ſpiritual ſence, *Canaan* was called, *The land of the living*, Becauſe, there was the worſhip of the living God, and there the living God did in a ſpecial manner maniſeſt himſelf. There alſo were living men, or men living a life of grace: in compariſon of whom all other men may be numbred among the dead, and are often in Scripture language called dead men, dead in ſins and treſpaſſes. So that foraſmuch as to that land, the land of *Canaan*, the grace of God was confined, upon the matter, (For though there were here and there ſome picked out and called to a life of grace (as the firſt-fruits of the Gentiles) from other nations, yet that was the land of thoſe who lived a life of grace, holineſs, and faith, while the reſt of the world ſate in darkneſs and in the ſhadow of death.

Viventes peculiariter vocantur homines, ut cū Hova vocatur mater omnium viventium. Druſ.

Terra Canaan dicebatur terra viventium, quia ibi habitabant cultores dei vivi: ſed præcipuè propter multitudinem ſanctorum Hivæorum, i. e. vivicatorum, ſc. prophetarū. Bold.

Now I ſay, foraſmuch as the grace of God was almoſt ſhut up within the borders of *Canaan.*) That may well, in way of difference from all other Lands, be called *the Land of the living.* Yea not only did all the *living* (in this ſenſe) *dwell* in the Land of *Canaan*, but (as I may ſay) *the enliveners* dwelt only there. The Prophets of God dwelt there more then in all Lands, this was *Canaans* glory and priviledge, it was the Land of the Prophets, who enlivened the People with the knowledge of the living God, and ſo was the Land of the *enliveners.* The Holy Prophets were the living Oracles of God, and carryed the meſſage of eternal life and Salvation from God to the inhabitants of that Land. But though *Canaan* (I grant) was the *Land of the living* in a peculiar ſenſe, and had priviledges above all Lands; yet in this Text I would not ſo reſtrain it, nor is there any reaſon why any others ſhould, ſeeing *Job* is here ſpeaking at the greateſt Latitude that is imaginable, aſſuring us that the wiſdom which he treats of, is not to be found in any Land whatſoever; and all Lands are Lands of the living, as to the life of Nature; and there are ſcarce any now, where ſome do not live the life of grace.

Nec invenitur in terra ſuaviter viventium. Vul.

The vulgar Tranſlation renders the Text with another kind of reſtriction; *Wiſdom is not to be found in the Land of thoſe that live diliciouſly*; as if the meaning of *Job* were; it is not to be found among Epicures and Senſualiſts, among the Sons and Daughters of pleaſure, whoſe greateſt care and ſtudy is, to make proviſion for the fleſh, that they may fulfill the luſts thereof: but though there be a general truth in this Tranſlation, and uſefulneſs in the ſenſe that ariſeth out of it; though it be eaſily granted, that wiſdom is not found among the voluptuous, who (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks of the wanton widow, (1 *Tim.* 5. 9.) *Live in pleaſure*, and are therefore (as he there concludes of ſuch a widdow) *dead while they live*, and ſo may well be excluded from *the Land of the living*; and though we may argue from it, that if the holieſt men that live cannot reach the depth of this wiſdom, then much leſs can they who live in ſinful pleaſures; though (I ſay) this be a true aſſertion, yet as to the Original Text it is an unſound and corrupt Tranſlation; and therefore I paſs it by,

Nec invenitur in terra ſuperborum peccantium in vita ſua. Chal.

The Chaldee Paraphraſt tranſlates as wide from the Hebrew, and much to the ſame ſenſe. *Neither is it found in the Land of the proud livers*, or of thoſe, who in their lives, are proud ſinners. For *as God knows the proud afar off*, (Pſal. 138. 8. that is, he takes no more reſpectful notice of them, then we do of things or perſons which are afar off, or out of diſtance) ſo the proud know not God, and the works of God (whether they be works of judgment or works of mercy) are afar off from them; that is, they have little or no acquaintance at all with the purpoſes of God in them; proud men are even declared enemies to God; now if, *The ſervant* (as Chriſt ſaith, *John* 15. 15.) *knoweth not what his Lord doth*; that is, his Lord doth not communicate to him the ſecrets of what he is doing, then much leſs do enemies know what their Lord doth. And ſurely if the wiſdom here ſpoken of be to found any where in the Land of the living, it *is to be found among the humble, The meek will he guide in judgment, and the meek will he teach his way* (Pſal. 25. 9.) And again (*v.* 14.) *The ſecret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will ſhew them his Covenant*; or (as our Margin hath it) *and his Covenant to make them to know it*. Yet he doth not reveal all his ſecrets to thoſe that fear him, He will reveal to them all the neceſſary ſecrets of Spiritual wiſdom, but not all the ſecrets of providential wiſdom. Therefore, I conceive, both theſe renderings are as wide from the ſcope of this Text, as they are (I am ſure) from the letter of it. And therefore I ſhall carry it more generally. Concluding that when *Job* ſaith, wiſdom is not to be found in the Land of the living, his meaning is only this, that it is not to be found any where upon the Earth, or among the living. In purſuance of which ſenſe, he brings in the depth, and the Sea diſclaiming the poſſeſſion of it in the next verſe.

Verſ. 14. **The Depth ſaith, It is not in me: and the Sea ſaith, It is not in me.**

Here is a double diſclaimer. The negation is repeated to ſhew the certainty of it.

The Depth ſaith.] It is uſual in Scripture to aſcribe ſpeech to things ſpeechleſs, or that cannot ſpeak; the Vallies and the Mountains, the Fields and Forreſts are brought in ſpeaking there; yea paſſions and affections are aſcribed to them, and they are there repreſented ſometimes mourning and lamenting, ſometimes laughing and rejoycing. This figure of Rhetorick is frequent alſo in prophane Authors, both Poets and Orators.

The Depth ſaith.] What ſaith it? We may conceive it ſaying thus; *I am deep, but wiſdom is too deep for me.* No created depth can hold that depth. There are two ſorts of deeps; Firſt, deeps at Land; Secondly, deeps at Sea. The word in the Text may ſignifie either, any great gulf of Earth or Water, whoſe bottom cannot at all or very hardly be found, *Moſes* uſeth this word in his deſcription of that firſt maſs of Earth or Water, before the creating power of God had determin'd or drawn it out into any particular order. (*Gen.* 1. 2.) *And the Earth was without form and void, and darkneſs was upon the face of the deep.* It is applyed ſpecially to Sea-deeps (*Pſal.* 107. 24, 26.) *They that go down to the Sea in Ships, that do buſineſs in great Waters, they ſee the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep. They mount up to Heaven; They go down again to the depths*, &c. A Ship in a ſtorm ſinks down ſometimes (as it were) into a low Valley, and then again is mounted as upon a Hill. It is applied ſpecially to Earth deeps in that bleſſing which *Jacob* pronounced as the Portion of his Son *Joſeph* (Gen. 49. 25.) *And by the Almighty, who ſhall bleſs thee with bleſſings of Heaven above, bleſſings of the deep that lyeth under.* Which ſome expound of Springs of Water, which ariſe out of the bowels of the Earth. Others of precious Mines which are found and digged there. And here, I conceive, the word is rather to be reſtrained ro a depth of the Earth, becauſe the Sea is expreſſed in the next part of the Verſe.

תהום *Voraginem denotat.*

The Sea ſaith, It is not in me.

The Sea is that body of Waters, diſtinct from Rivers, of which *Moſes* ſpeaks (*Gen.* 1: 10.) *The gathering together of Waters called the Seas.* All theſe lower Waters are collected into that huge Veſſel or Receptacle called Sea.

Some interpret the Text of *Sea-men*; *the Sea ſaith*, that is, Sea-men whoſe buſineſs is upon the Sea, whoſe buſineſs and art it is to paſs and repaſs thoſe mighty Waters; each one of this Sea tribe *ſaith, It is not in me.* As if *Job* had ſaid, Inquire of *Sea-men* who increaſe their skill by much experience, and are daily acquainted with the Water-works and Wind-works of God, and they will anſwer, *Wiſdom is not in us.*

Per mare intelligit eos qui in mari Navigant et mercaturas ſtudent. Rab. Solom.

Others expound it of thoſe native inhabitants of the Sea, the mute Fiſhes; theſe can as much inform us in this point as men on Earth. They ſay no leſs, and they can ſay thus much, though they never yet ſaid any thing, Rather then we will take it upon us, that wiſdom is to be found in our watery Element, we will all ſay with one vote, as if we were but one, *Wiſdom is not in me.* Thus the creatures are brought in, as it were, anſwering the ſearchers for wiſdom, you will loſe your labour and ſearch in vain, if you think to find this wiſdom in us, which God hath ſecreted in his own breaſt and boſome.

Theſe three Verſes being all of this one ſtrain, or a continued proof, that wiſdom is no where to be had or found in the whole compaſs of Nature, I ſhall only give ſome brief Notes from them as conſidered together.

Obſerve, Firſt, *There is no creature can give us any unerring intelligence of the wayes of God's providence, or the reaſon of his dealings with the Sons of men.*

Though every creature Proclaims that there is a God (we cannot ſet a ſtep, but we tread upon that which ſpeaks a God; which way ſoever ye look, ye have a repreſentation *of his Eternal power and Godhead* (Rom. 1. 20.) The creatures being as ſo many Glaſſes which reflect his divine perfections) yet none of the creatures can make a perfect report to us of this wiſdom of God; they ſhew us that God is wiſe, and we may find great ſtore of undenyable demonſtrations of his wiſdom every where, or any where, in the *Land of the living*, in the Depth, and in the Sea:

But we cannot find this wiſdom among them all. The creatures have it not, Nature is not acquainted with it, and therefore *Job* goes higher, affirming that it is not only not to be found in the deep Sea, or in the depths of the earth, *but man knoweth not the price thereof.*

Hence Obſerve, Secondly, *The wiſeſt and holyeſt of men cannot enter into or underſtand the ſecrets of God.*

There is not only a difficulty in the thing, but, as to man, the beſt of men, an utter impoſſibility. We know nothing, but as God is pleaſed to make us know it. And there are ſome things which he hath not at all promiſed to make known to us. *Secret things* (ſaith *Moſes*, Deut. 29. 29.) *belong unto the Lord our God*; that is, they are his *peculiars*, or his peculiarly. And he there ſpeaks of thoſe ſecrets of providence which are in the manifeſt judgments and curſes of God powred out upon wicked men. For even in thoſe things which are ſeen, there is much unſeen; and of viſible actings, there are inviſible reaſons and purpoſes: the key of theſe ſecrets is kept in Gods hand, not in ours. God hath three ſorts of ſecrets; Firſt, the ſecrets of his counſel and decrees; Secondly, the ſecrets of his providence and outward adminiſtrations; Thirdly, the ſecrets of his Spirit and of his grace. From the two former, God hath locked out the holieſt of men; God hath locked man not only out of the ſecrets of his counſel, as the Apoſtles challenge proves (*Rom.* 11. 34.) *Who hath known the mind of the Lord, and who hath been his counſeller?* But he hath alſo locked out man from the ſecrets of his providence. Though many providences of God are plain, and it is our duty to ſearch them with a holy and modeſt diligence, as *David* intimates (*Pſal* 111. 2.) *The* (providential) *works of God are great, ſought out of them that take pleaſure therein*; yet man by ſearching cannot find them out fully, or to the bottom. *Thy righteouſneſs* (ſaith the ſame *David*, Pſal. 36. 6.) *is like the great Mountains, thy Judgment are a great deep.* Some of the Judgments of God are a ſhallow, or a Foord over which a Lamb may wade; every Child may read the meaning of them; and *a man* (any ordinary man) *may ſay, verily there is a reward for the righteous, verily there is a God that judgeth in the Earth,* (Pſal. 58. 11.) The Lord many times acts ſo legibly and intelligibly, that a man, a common man, who hath but natural reaſon, ſhall be forced to acknowledge the Lords hand, and ſay, there is a God in Heaven that judgeth in the Earth. *The Lord is known by the judgment which he executeth* (Pſal. 9. 16.) That is, every one who ſeeth ſuch a judgment, may know that God hath executed it; ſuch power, ſuch holineſs, ſuch juſtice, ſuch hatred of ſin appears in it, as none can ſo much as pretend to, but God himſelf. But there are unpaſſable depths in ſome of the judgments of God, depths in which the Elephant may ſwim, and which the moſt judicious and reaching heads have not line of underſtanding enough to fathom. The Apoſtle ſpeaking not only of the counſels of God from eternity, but of the dealings of God in time, and in particular of his dealings with Jewes and Gentiles, in caſting off the one people, and taking in the other, (He, I ſay, ſpeaking of theſe) is forced to cry out (*Rom.* 11. 32, 33.) as a man amazed, and at his wits end, as a man whoſe reaſon is over-maſter'd, and himſelf at a loſs in his underſtanding, as a man who had ſaid all he knew, and he knew no more what to ſay, *O the depth of the riches both of the wiſdom and knowledge of God! How unſearchable are his Judgments, and his wayes paſt finding out!* Though he could not ſee the reaſon of what God had done, yet he ſaw he had reaſon to be amazed at what he had done. Oh how was *Paul* aſtoniſhed to ſee thoſe who were not a people, that is, who were a people of no account or reckoning, to become the people of God. And that God had indeed, as the Baptiſt ſaid he could, (*Matth.* 3. 9.) *Raiſed up Children to Abraham out of Stones.* What ſhall we ſay then (we ſcarce know what to ſay ſaith the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 9. 30, 31.) *That the Gentiles which followed not after righteouſneſs* (yea, *which were filled with all unrighteouſneſs,* Rom. 1. 29.) *have attained unto righteouſneſs, even the righteouſneſs which is of Faith: But Iſrael, which followed after the Law of righteouſneſs, hath not attained to the Law of righteouſneſs.* And though he gives a clear reaſon of it, in regard of their groſs miſtake, *in ſeeking it not by Faith, but as it were by the workes of the Law*; yet ſtill there is a dreadful ſecret in it, that they ſhould be left to miſtake ſo groſly. In theſe things the wayes of God are deep; and as they are a deep, ſo they are upon the deep: there is no tracing of his footſteps. *Thy way* (ſaith *David*, Pſal. 77. 19.) *is in the Sea, and thy path is in great waters, thy footſteps are not known*; that is, they are not alwayes known, or they are not known in all things, yea they are not altogether known in any thing. The Lord, in many of his providences, walkes as if a man ſhould walk upon the Sea, who as ſoon as he is paſt, there's no print nor tract diſcernable. A Ship (we ſay) plougheth the Ocean, and makes deep furrows there; yet there is no appearance where the Ship paſſed, when once 'tis paſt: he that comes after, cannot find where the Keel had made impreſſion and cut the waters. Such are many of the wayes and pathes of God; where he doth moſt, he appears leaſt. *The Lord reigneth* (ſaith *David*, Pſal. 92. 2.) And one would think, that where the Lord reigneth, yet there he ſhould be moſt viſible in his workings, (as it follows) even then, *clouds and darkneſs are round about him,* that is, he acts as in the clouds, and his works are full of darkneſs, though fuller *of righteouſneſs and Judgment*, (as it is there alſo ſaid,) towards the Children of men. The Lord dwells *in light inacceſſible, or which no man can approach unto,* (1 *Tim.* 6. 16.) and yet man cannot approach unto him for darkneſs. *He hath made his wonderful works to be remembred* (Pſal. 111. 4.) that is, he hath made them ſo, that they ought to be remembred, or he hath made them ſo, that they cannot chooſe but be remembred; if man would ſet himſelf or ſtudy to forget them, he cannot; and as he hath made his wonderful workes, in all theſe ſenſes, to be remembred, ſo he hath made many of them ſo full of wonders that they cannot be underſtood.

There are workes of God in Nature, which the greateſt Philoſophers have been at their wits end to find a reaſon of, and (as 'tis ſaid) one of them ended his life becauſe he could not find the reaſon of one of them. Some Authors tell us, that *Ariſtole* not being able to give an account to himſelf or others why the Euboean Sea or Euripus ebb'd and flowed ſeven times a day, caſt himſelf into it, ſaying, *Seeing I cannot apprehend thee, do thou take me.* Yea ſome of the commoneſt things in Nature are beyond mans diſcovery; and *Solomon* uſeth that as an argument to prove that man knoweth not the providential works of God (*Eccl.* 11. 5.) *As thou knoweſt not what is the way of the Spirit,* that is, of the *wind*, as ſome interpret, which riſeth and abateth, cometh and goeth no man knoweth how; as Chriſt tells *Nicodemus* (John. 3. 8.) *The wind bloweth where it liſteth, and thou heareſt the ſound thereof, but knoweſt not whence it cometh, or whither it goeth.* Others by the *Spirit*, underſtand the Soul of man, which enters the body and quickneth it no man knows how, though it be done every day; and this doth well comply with the latter part of the verſe, *Nor how the bones grow in the Womb of her that is with Child.* So that here is an aſſertion of mans ignorance about the work of God in the whole frame and formation of man, Soul and Body; we neither know, how the Soul is conveighed into the body, nor how the body is formed in the Womb by the joynting and growth of the bones. Whence *Solomon* infers the point in hand, *Even ſo thou knoweſt not the works of God who maketh all*; as if he had ſaid, as thou knoweſt not the Natural works of God; ſo neither doeſt thou know his providential works; and as this is true of the times or ſeaſons of God's working in providence, ſo alſo of the manner, intent or purpoſe of God in it.

Quia Ego non capio te, tu capias me.

Let this reprove and repreſs their bold curioſity, who have an itch to pry into the ſecrets of God, and are not ſo much induſtrious as immodeſt, in ſearching into thoſe things which cannot be found (as if they could carry the wiſdom of God (as ſome ſpeak) in their ſleeve, or put it into their pockets) while in the mean time, they are cold and careleſs in ſearching into thoſe things which 'tis their duty to ſeek, and would be their happineſs to find. Our wiſdom is but as the drop of the bucket, yea but as a drop to the Ocean, compared with Gods. And can our drop comprehend his Ocean? A Bucket ſhall as ſoon take in the Ocean, as man the wiſdom of God. The Apoſtle *Paul* ſpeaking of the Gentiles (*Rom.* 1. 22.) ſaith, that *profeſſing themſelves wiſe, they became fools.* They who take it upon them to have that wiſdom which they have not, deſerve to have the wiſdom taken from them which they have; and they who neglecting to know God, or what they know of God, have an ambition to be knowing as God, are juſtly left to be leſs knowing then man, that is, to become fools. He that would be wiſe ſpiritually muſt *become a fool*, (1 *Cor.* 3. 18.) He muſt lay aſide his own wiſdom before he can exalt or receive the wiſdom of God. *Happy are they who become fools that they may be wiſe; but wo unto thoſe who are ſo wiſe, that they become fools.*

And if the wiſeſt and holyeſt of men cannot reach the ſecrets of God in the workings of his providence, ſurely then, no natural man can reach the ſecrets of God in the workings of his grace and Spirit. The natural underſtanding of man is more in the dark about the leaſt and loweſt things of grace, then about the greateſt and higheſt things of nature. *The natural man* (as the Apoſtle concludes, 1 *Cor.* 2. 14.) *receiveth* (or apprehendeth) *not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are fooliſhneſs unto him; neither can he know them, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned.* He that ſeeth ſpiritual objects muſt have a ſpiritual eye. *Meer ſenſe in Beaſts is not further from reaſon, then meer reaſon in man is from grace.*

And here let us take notice of the goodneſs of God, who hath not hid the knowledge of any of thoſe things from us, which are neceſſary for us to know; nor hath the Lord hid other things from us which he doth hide, as if he did envy our knowledge of them (as the Devil falſly ſuggeſted to our firſt parents) but becauſe it is not good, much leſs neceſſary for us to know them; he hath given us the knowledge of all that is neceſſary and good for us to know. And whereas, that other wiſdom or knowledge is not to be found any where in the Land of the living; this is (upon the matter) every where to be found. To be ſure Wiſdoms houſe, and the poſts of wiſdom, are to be found in all places where Chriſt is known, and the ſound of the Goſpel comes. And if other parts of the World are ſtraitned, for the means of holy ſaving knowledge, we are not. Wiſdom keeps open houſe with us continually: And the two principal points of divine knowledge are clearly and fully revealed to us.

Firſt, The way of duty, *how we ought to walk and to pleaſe God*, as the Apoſtle ſums up all his Sermons of duty to the *Theſſalonians* (1 *Ep.* 4. 1.) God doth not command us to obey him blindfold, or not revealing in what he would be obeyed. We read (*Mic.* 6. 6.) of a great enquiry made of old what to do, *Wherewith ſhall I come before the Lord, and bow my ſelf before the high God? Will the Lord be pleaſed with thouſands of Rams?* &c. Shall I do this? or ſhall I do that? The anſwer is given to theſe Queriſts (*v.* 8.) *He hath ſhewed thee, O man, what is good; And what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do juſtly, and love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?* Let none ſay, where is this *wiſdom to be found? And where is the place of this underſtanding?* It is plain before thee, O man, God hath ſhewed thee where thy duty lyeth; thou needeſt not ſtand groaping after or gueſſing at it.

Secondly, As God hath revealed to us the way of duty, how we ought to live and order our converſation; ſo the way of life, and how we may attain Salvation. He hath revealed Chriſt plentifully; and all Believers have *received an unction, whereby they know all things* (1 *John* 2. 20.) That is, all thoſe things, which either not to know, were their ſin, or the not knowing of which would leave them in their ſins. They have the anointing or teaching of the Spirit, to lead them into all theſe truths. Therefore do not ſay, God hath ſtraitned you, in any neceſſary peice of knowledge and ſpiritual wiſdom, ſeeing the knowledge of all that wiſdom is ſet before your eyes, which concerns either the duty, or the comfort, the preſent converſation, or future Salvation of man. The way by which we ſhould go to Heaven (Jeſus Chriſt) is plain; though many of thoſe wayes wherein God goeth among us on Earth are hidden and ſhut up. Wherefore as *Paul* at once adviſed and dehorteth (*Rom.* 10. 6, 7.) *Say not in thy heart, Who ſhall aſcend into Heaven? (that is, to bring Chriſt down from above) or who ſhall deſcend into the deep? That is to bring up Chriſt again from the dead)* As if you were at a ſtand where to find Chriſt, or how to make uſe of him. But (*v.* 8.) *What ſaith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart; that is, the word of Faith which we preach.* We need not make ſo many difficulties in this matter, when God hath made it plain and eaſie; as the ſame Apoſtle ſhuts up this diſcourſe, (*v.* 17, 18.) *So then, Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. But, I ſay, have they not heard? Yes verily their ſound went into all the Earth, and their words unto the ends of the World.* The Goſpel of Chriſt, or Chriſt in the Goſpel, like the Sun (ſpoken of by *David*, *Pſal.* 19. 5.) hath caſt his beautiful and glorious beams all the World over. What the Pſalmiſt ſpake of the creatures, that the Apoſtle attributes to the Evangeliſts or Preachers of the Goſpel; becauſe by them the name of Chriſt, and Salvation in his Name, was publiſhed all the World over, according to that command of Chriſt left with them at his departure (*Matth.* 28. 19.) *Go teach all Nations.* And (*Mark* 16. 15.) *Go ye into all the World, and preach the Goſpel unto every creature.* This command the Apoſtles faithfully performed, dividing themſelves into the ſeveral quarters of the World for the ſpeedy performing of this ſervice, the carrying of the light of the Goſpel, as the Sun doth his light, unto all the Nations of the earth. For indeed the Apoſtle (to note that by the way) doth not properly cite that of the Pſalmiſt, but only allude to it. And therefore, he doth not ſay, *As it is written*, which he uſeth to do, when he alledgeth a proof out of the Old Teſtament, but only takes up the words of the Pſalm, and accommodates them to the point he was upon. As if he had ſaid; if the voice of the Heavens be gone through the World, why not the voice of Chriſt in the Goſpel, or how much more the voice of Chriſt, and the light of Chriſt, the Sun of righteouſneſs in the Goſpel, which doth much more declare the glory of God, then the Sun and Moon in the Heavens. But to come off from this, and return, It cannot but be granted that God hath not denied us the knowledge of thoſe things which make us wiſe to Salvation, and hath ſhewed us where that knowledge is to be found; though there is a wiſdom, of which *Job* ſaith, *Where ſhall wiſdom be found?*

And as *Job* hath already ſhewed, that there is no place among men where that wiſdom of God is to be found; ſo, he ſheweth in the words following, that there is no price in the hand of a man by which that wiſdom can be purchaſed.

Verſ. 15. It cannot be gotten for Gold, neither ſhall Silver be weighed for the price thereof.

Gold and Silver are the moſt valuable things in this World. What cannot Gold and Silver buy? Yea, what cannot Gold and Silver do? It is ſaid, proverbially, *We may buy Gold too dear*; but there is nothing ſo dear among men which Gold will not buy; yet Gold can do nothing in this caſe; wiſdom *cannot be gotten for Gold*, &c. When *Simon Magus* (Act. 8. 18.) *ſaw that through laying on of the Apoſtles hands the Holy Ghoſt was given, he offered them Money, ſaying, Give me alſo this power*, &c. *But* Peter *ſaid unto him*, (v. 20.) *Thy Money periſh with thee, becauſe thou haſt thought the gift of God may be purchaſed with Money.* What *Peter* there ſpake concerning that ſpecial gift of God, is true of this alſo. Money cannot by it out of the hand of God. It hath been ſaid, *All things are to be ſold or ſaleable at* Rome. Gold may get any thing of them who are covetous of Gold. Not only Dignities and Offices, but Indulgences and Pardons, Altars and Croſſes, the power of the Keys, and Chriſt himſelf, with Heaven and all, are ſet to ſale in opening Market by thoſe Romiſh Merchants. But the things which are highly eſteemed among men, are an abomination to the Lord.

Omnia Romæ Venalia.

Further, The word here rendered *Gold*, ſignifies, *ſhut up* or *encloſed*; Gold is ſo called upon a double conſideration:

Firſt, With reſpect to the natural locality of Gold; for as ſome Gold is mingled with the ſand, and lyes open to the eye upon the face of the earth; ſo other Gold is ſhut up in the bowels of the earth, or ſhut in among Stones and Rocks. This encloſed Gold is the beſt and richeſt Gold; and yet for this wiſdom cannot be gotten.

Secondly, It is called ſo, becauſe they who have gotten Gold ſhut it up and keep it ſafe and cloſe under lock and key, within bolts and bars; Nature locks it up, it is hard to come by at firſt, and when men have once unlockt Natures cloſet, and got it out, they lock it up in ſafer cloſets. What we eſteem highly, we lay up carefully. And our

סגור *Denotat aurum inter ſaxa concluſum et compreſſum, et vocatur apud Hebræos* Aurum clauſuræ: *Bold.*

care in keeping it, is proportionable to our pains in getting it. This word is rendered *pure Gold*, and we put in the Margin, *ſhut up* (1 Kings 6. 20.) and here the *pureſt Gold* is meant; *It cannot be gotten for Gold*, the fineſt Gold.

Neither ſhall Silver be weighed for the price thereof.

There is an alluſion in the word *weighed* to the cuſtom of thoſe times; then they made their payments by *weighing* (Gen. 23. 16.) as we do now by *telling*.

שקל *Unde ſiclus quod eſt genus ponderis.*

Verſ. 16. **It cannot be valued with the Gold of Ophir.**

From the word *Chetem*, here tranſlated *Gold*, that word *Mictam* is derived, which is the title of ſeveral of *Davids* Pſalms, (*Pſal.* 15. 56, 57, 58, 60.) as if it had been ſaid, theſe are *golden Pſalms, or moſt precious Pſalms*. And 'tis ſaid here, that wiſdom cannot be valued with this Gold; the meaning is, though there be ſome Gold more precious and valuable then other, and you bring that which is moſt valuable, yet even that is no valuable price for wiſdom. This verſe is of the ſame ſenſe with the former; only note, that whereas we render, *It cannot be valued*; the Hebrew elegancy is, *it cannot be laid on the ground with the Gold of Ophir*. Which manner of ſpeaking is a further alluſion to the cuſtom of many Nations, in trading by exchange or barter, among whom the buyer layeth an heap of his commodity, and the ſeller an heap of ſome other commodity upon the ground, that each may judge whether it be proportionable in value. God will not lay the leaſt ray of this wiſdom to the greateſt mount of Gold, and go to a barter with you, there is no getting wiſdom by ſuch exchange. Concerning *Ophir*, the reader may ſee more (*Chap.* 22. *v.* 24.) where *Ophir* alone is put (as we tranſlate) for the Gold found there. *It cannot be valued with the Gold of Ophir*;

סלה *Calcavit, humi proſtravit per Metonymiam, comparavit, æſtimavit, quia merces venales et æſtimandæ ante oculos humi ſternuntur.*

With the precious Onyx and the Saphir.

Having ſpoken of precious Metals, he now ſpeaks of precious Stones, Gems and Jewels; concerning which it is not neceſſary to make any large diſcourſe, either as to the reaſon of their names, or of their Nature. And if a Modern Author hath ſaid in his Comment upon this Scripture, it may well enough become a good Grammarian to be ignorant about them; much more may I ſay, it will be no diſparagement to a good Chriſtian to be ſo. We find this Stone mentioned as the ſecond in the fourth or laſt row of precious Stones appointed by God to be ſet in the Breaſtplate of Judgment, to be worn by the High-prieſt (*Exod.* 28.20.) *And the fourth row, a Beryl and an Onyx and a Jaſper; they ſhall be ſet in Gold in their incloſings.* The *Onyx* is a whitiſh Stone, like the white of a mans nail; from whence alſo it hath its name; ſome of them are of divers colours, *white-ſpeckled*. The *Saphir* was ſpoken of at the ſixth verſe of this Chapter. But I would not have the reader either here or there to expect any exact diſcovery of the figure, of the nature, of the vertue or value of theſe precious Stones, I leave that work to its own profeſſors. But how excellent ſoever they are, they cannot be valued with wiſdom.

Quod attinet varia nomina auri gemmarumq; meminerit lector, boni eſſe Grammatici quædam ignorare. Coc.

Verſ. 17. **The Gold and the Criſtal cannot equal it, and the exchange of it ſhall not be for jewels of fine Gold.**

Before it was *Gold with the precious Onyx*; here *The Gold and the Criſtal*. The word which we render **Chriſtal**, is tranſlated by ſome not as a diſtinct kind of *Stone*, but as noting the quality of the beſt Stone of any kind, the root importing purity and clearneſs. The *Criſtal* is a well-known Gemm like unto moſt pure water congealed into a tranſparent, perfectly perſpicuous body; and as its excellency ariſeth from its own native beauty, ſo from its uſe in Scripture, to emblem or ſet forth the moſt beautiful things (*Ezek.* 1. 22. & 4. 6. *Rev.* 22. 1.) To be clear as Criſtal, is a proverbial ſpeech nothing the greateſt clearneſs. And if this Stone were as hard as it is clear and pure, no Gemm would be comparable to the beſt ſort of Chriſtal for beauty and glory. And becauſe it is hard to determin what Stone is diſtinctly intended by the Hebrew word, therefore as we tranſlate it *the Criſtal*, ſo others *the Diamond*. Doubtleſs *Job* meant a Stone of a great eſteem; for ſeeing ſenſe the riſeth higher and higher; therefore it ſeems to be a Stone in value beyond the *Onyx* and the *Saphire*. The Naturaliſt *Pliny* puts the preciouſneſs of it in the brittleneſs of it, men boaſting moſt in thoſe things which are ſooneſt loſt.

זכוכית *Gemma nitidiſſima, Rabbinis vitrum a puritate.*

Chriſtallus gemma eſt candida et pellucida pretioſior auro. Druſ. *Myrrhina et Chriſtallina ex eadem terra effodimus, quibus pretium faceret ipſa fragilitas. Hoc argumentum opum, hæc vera luxuriæ gloria, et exiſtimatio eſt habere quod poſſit ſtatim totum perire.* Plin. l. 33. Proæm.

And the exchange of it ſhall not be for jewels of fine Gold.

Some read *Veſſels of fine Gold*. Now as he had ſpoken of Gold in the matter and nature of it, ſo here he ſpeaks of Gold in the uſe of it, when wrought into ſome exquiſite form by Art. Some things are more prized for the Art uſed and ſhewed in making them, then for the matter of them; the workmanſhip is more worth and coſtly then the ſtuff. And though Gold be exceeding precious, yet the skill of the Artiſt may be more precious and valuable then the Gold. Therefore *Job's* diſcourſe is ſtill aſcending, exalting wiſdom not only above the beſt of Naturals, but artificials, not only above Gold as taken from the Earth, but above Gold when the Artificer hath put his greateſt skill upon it: Gold faſhioned and wrought with the greateſt skill, and moſt ingenuous curioſity, cannot equal wiſdom. *The exchange of it ſhall not be for Jewels of fine Gold.* As if he ſaid; if any man ſhould offer ſuch Jewels in exchange for it, the offer would not be accepted.

The word (*phaz*) which we render *fine Gold*, (ſo called from its ſtrength, faſtneſs or ſolidity) others expound as the name of a place from whence ſuch Gold came; and ſome learned conceive that *phaz* is the ſame with *Uphaz* ſpoken of (*Jer.* 10. 9. *Dan.* 10. 5.) Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates it *Phez-Gold*, and concludes that it is the ſame which is at this day known by the name of *Phez in Barbary*, from whence excellent Gold is brought.

Aurum optimum et purificatum quod eſt ſolidius. Interpretes reddunt aurum primũ, purum, purgatiſſimum.

Verſ. 18. **No mention ſhall be made of Coral, or of Pearls,** &c.

Job ſeems to bring in Coral and Pearl as lower in value then thoſe precious Stones before inſtanced in; and therefore ſpeaks of them Elegantly, as inferior things, not worth the remembring in this buſineſs, they are ſo ſhort of it; as if he had ſaid, *Theſe are ſo far below wiſdom, that they are not worthy to be named the ſame day.*

The Text is, **There ſhall be no mention of Coral or of Pearls.**

The Hebrew Doctors are at much uncertainty how to underſtand or render the Original words. Firſt, ſome take and tranſlate them Appellatively; *high and eminent things ſhall not be remembered*; for the Hebrew word ſignifieth any thing that is high. Secondly, Others tranſlate the former word (*Ramoth*) *the Unicorns Horn*, which is a moſt ſoveraign Antidote againſt Poyſon, and in price or worth, almoſt, invaluable. Again, a third tranſlates, *precious Skins or Furrs*, which we know are of high eſteem. Fourthly, Moſt, as we, tranſlate the word *Coral*, becauſe *Coral* doth uſually grow on high upon the Rocks. *Coral* is called by the learned Lapidaries, a bud of Maritim beauty, and the delight of Children, the beſt of Natures buds. 'Tis a Plant of Natures ſetting in the Sea, which though while it continues in its proper place, it be green and ſoft, yet taken out and abiding in the Air, quickly changeth its colour into a beautiful red, and its ſoftneſs into the compacted ſolidneſs of a Stone. It is very delightful and pleaſing to the eye, reſembling a Plant adorned with many ſpreading branches. The word (*Gabis*) which we tranſlate *Pearls*, is no where elſe uſed in Scripture. But the word by which we render it is well known and of frequent uſe both for Medicin and for Ornament. The Pearl or Union (ſo called becauſe the greater of them are alwayes found ſingle in a Shel, whereas the leſſer, commonly called *Margarites*, are found many together; the Pearl I ſay, (is nothing elſe but the excellent Geniture of a Shel-Fiſh congealed into a fair Diaphanous Stone, and it is the birth of that Fiſh or Scallop. The value of theſe Stones is according to their beauty, and bigneſs, and roundneſs, greater or leſſer. Some (as that famous Pearl which *Cleopatra* Queen of *Egypt* diſſolved and drunk) are worth many Thouſands. It is ſaid (*Rev.* 21. 21.) That the *Twelve Gates of the New Jeruſalem* (which *John* ſaw in viſion) *were Twelve Pearls, every ſeveral Gate was one Pearl.* That the greateſt glory of our Spiritual ſtate is ſhadowed by them, is proof enough of their beauty and glory, and yet how exceeding glorious and beautiful ſoever they are, they have neither beauty nor glory, by reaſon of that beauty and glory of wiſdom which excelleth, and there is no *mention ſhall be made*, either of Coral or of Pearl in compariſon of, or in competition with this holy and heavenly

Ramoth et Gabis; excelſa et Eminentia non memorabuntur. Vulg.

wiſdom. Of all which *Job* gives a further reaſon.

For the price of wiſdom is above Rubies.

Mr. *Broughton* renders, *Wiſdoms price doth paſs Carbuncles.* If a thing that is better be not of value ſufficient to make the purchaſe, then that which is leſs worth is not worthy to be mentioned; Rubies are (it ſeems) of a higher value then Coral or Pearl, yet their price is nothing to wiſdom. The word which we render *price*, comes from a root, which ſignifies to draw out; becauſe the price of a thing is that which draweth it out. He that layeth down a due price for a commodity, draweth it out of any mans hand, Houſe or Shop, where it is laid up. Some read, *A little wiſdom is above Rubies*; which ſtill heightens the value and excellency of wiſdom. *Rubies* are precious ſtones, of a Read colour, as we may read (*Lam.* 4. 7.) *They were more ruddy in body then Rubies.* The *Ruby* or *Carbuncle*, for ſo the great *Ruby* is called, hath a glory in it which reſembles a flame of fire; 'tis of the colour of pure Vermilion or Crimſon. And by how much the more fiery it doth appear, by ſo much the better it is. It is reported by a learned Author, that one of the Indian Kings had a Carbuncle of ſo great a magnitude and ſplendour, that he might be ſeen by it in a dark place, as if the Sun-beams had darted into the Room. And it hath a name in the Hebrew (not that here expreſſed by *Job*, which is *Panimim* but *Barakath*) derived from a Verb ſignifying to lighten, becauſe this ſtone caſteth forth a ſparkling glory like lightning. In compliance wherewith it is called *Pyropus* in Greek, from a word ſignifying *Fire*, as alſo *Anthrax*, becauſe it is ſo like a Fire-coal. This ſtone alſo was the laſt of the firſt row of thoſe precious ſtones which adorned the Breaſt-plate of Judgment, (*Exod.* 28. 17.) A ſtone of ſuch value it is, that it bears the ſame price with the moſt excellent Diamond of its own weight; yet ſaith *Job*, and *Solomon* ſaith it too, (*Pro.* 8. 11.) *The price of wiſdom is above Rubies*; *Job* hath ſaid much, but he thinks he hath not ſaid enough in the praiſe of Wiſdom, and therefore goes two ſteps further in the next Verſe.

Verſ. 19. **The Topaz of Ethiopia ſhall not equal it, neither ſhall it be valued with pure Gold.**

The Topaz alſo had the honour to have the ſecond place in the Breaſt-plate of Judgment, (*Exod.* 28. 17.) and is one of the twelve Foundations of the glorious City deſcribed, (*Rev.* 21.) This ſtone, The Topaz, is ſuppoſed to be the ſame, with the Emerauld or Smaradge; all which names are applied to one precious ſtone, of ſo admirable a Viridity or Spring-colour, that it exceeds the beauty of the faireſt Meadow, and feaſts the eye with freſher delights, then the greeneſt ſuit that ever the Spring wore. And as this ſtone pleaſeth the eye much, ſo it much clears or ſharpens the dulneſs of it. There are ſeveral ſorts (ſome ſay twelve) of this ſtone reported by Lapidaries; but I ſhall ſay no more of it, when I have ſaid, that they tell us, The Topaz of the Ancients was that, which is now called the *Chryſolite.* And that though the Topaz was found in many Countries, yet the rareſt and moſt eſteemed was

The Topaz of Ethiopia **or** Cuſh.

Geographers diſtinguiſh of two *Ethiopia's*, one in *Africa*, which is divided into the upper and the lower. The other in *Aſia*, which extended from the red Sea unto the Perſian gulf, and is that *Ethiopia* which is ſo often mentioned in the old Teſtament. Of this it is ſaid (2 *Chron. Chap.* 14.) That *Zerath* King of the *Ethiopians* came againſt *Aſa* King of *Judah*, with an Hoſt of a Million and three hundred Chariots. And that this *Ethiopia* is intended by *Job*, is as the moſt received, ſo the moſt probable opinion. Yet it is not much material for us to enquire which of theſe is here intended, only we muſt take the general ſcope of the place, which is to ſhew, that the beſt ſort of Topazes ſhall not equal wiſdom; and therefore if any place called *Ethiopia*, yeeld better then other, that may be underſtood.

Neither ſhall it be valued with pure Gold.

He ſpake of Gold before, more then once in this buſineſs; here he returns to it again, yet with an Excelling difference. We had *Gold, and the Gold of Ophir, and fine Gold* before, but here it is *pure Gold.* As if he had ſaid, Wiſdom is not to be valued with Gold, no not with Gold it ſelf; as *Job* ſpake of *darkneſs* like *darkneſs it ſelf*, pure darkneſs, (*Chap.* 10. 22.) So there is Gold that is like Gold it ſelf, pureſt Gold, or Gold which is nothing but Gold, *Golden Gold. It ſhall not be valued with pure Gold, the pureſt Gold.*

Having opened theſe words, I ſhall give ſome Obſervations from them in general, as laid and conſidered together.

Firſt, Conſider how many of the good things of nature are here heaped up, *Gold*, *Silver*, *Jewels*, *Pearl*, *Coral*, the *Ruby*, the *Onyx*, and the *Topaz*, here are pretious things of all ſorts, and of all names. And why all all theſe? Why doth the Holy Ghoſt give us a view of all theſe treaſures, and, as it were, open the whole Magazin of the Earths riches, by the pen of *Job* in this place? The reaſon of this ſhall be the firſt Obſervation.

Natural men have an high eſteem of viſible Glories of Gold and Gems.

They who live by ſight, and not by faith, cannot believe there is any glory like to that which appears in what is ſeen. *Believers look not at the things which are ſeen, but at the things which are not ſeen*, (2 Cor. 4. 18.) Unbelievers look not at the things which are not ſeen, but at the things which are ſeen. *Faith is the evidence of things which are not ſeen*; ſenſe hath no evidence of any thing beyond what it ſees. And therefore the beſt things ſeen, (ſuch are Silver, and Gold, and glittering Gems) are the beſt delights of the moſt of the Children of men, the deſire of their eyes and the joy of their hearts; after theſe their Souls run, and to them they cleave: nor had it been to *Job's* purpoſe, if theſe rarities, Gold and Silver, *&c.* had not been of high eſteem with men, to have ſpoken of them here. And though it cannot be denied, but that the luſts and pride of men have ſet the greateſt price upon theſe things; (the covetous man is all for Gold and Silver; proud men and women are all for pretious Stones and Jewels) yet it muſt be granted, that they have alſo a great intrinſecal worth in them; they are ſerviceable as well as delightful, and yeeld an excellency to the eye of reaſon as well as to the eye of ſenſe. Indeed moſt men exceedingly over-rate them, and earthly minded men not only eſteem them highly, but adore them ſuperſtitiouſly as a God, or as their cheifeſt good. When the *Iſraelites* would make themſelves a god, they made it of Gold, *a Golden Calf*; ſo *Moſes* at once complained againſt and prayed for them (*Exod.* 32. 31.) *Oh this people have ſinned a great ſin, and have made them gods of Gold.* And as they (in this groſs way of Idolatry) made them gods of Gold, ſo nothing is more common then (in a cloſe way of Idolatry) to make Gold a god. All they do ſo, who give it thoſe valuations and affections which are due and proper to God only. Thus the covetous mans Gold is his god; and every man whoſe mind is either delighted vainly, or lifted up inordinately, either in the poſſeſſing or wearing of Gold and Silver, puts them in the place of God. Now, what higher eſteem can man beſtow upon any thing, then to eſteem it as God, who is higher then all things, and the maker of all things. A godly man uſeth theſe things, but he doth not admire, much leſs adore them. He takes and interprets them as they are, the ſports of nature, the delights of ſenſe, the trials of humane folly, and at beſt, the helps of humane frailty; but that which he properly and truely ſeeks, and loves, and embraceth, and rejoyceth in, is infinitely better then all theſe. But becauſe moſt men over-value them, therefore the Spirit of God puts a ſlight upon them, in compariſon of wiſdom, thereby to convince all men that wiſdom deſerves our utmoſt reſpect, ſeeing theſe things, which men ſo much reſpect, and which bear ſo great a weight at the common beam, are yet lighter then vanity in this ballance of the Sanctuary.

Secondly, Obſerve, *Man is ſo weak and dark in his underſtanding, that he cannot diſcern the worth of wiſdom, nor of any thing that is ſpiritual, but as compared with and ſet off by thoſe things which are natural, and obvious to our ſenſes, yea but toyes and trifles for our ſenſes to play withall.*

Ludibria ſenſuum.

The reaſon why the Spirit of God gives ſo many inſtances in the beſt treaſures to be found in Natures ſtorehouſe, is becauſe our dulneſs knows not how to apprehend the excellency of that which is divine, nor how to value it abſtractly, or in it ſelf, but by conſidering how much it excels thoſe things which are moſt valued by our ſelves. A little, the leaſt grain of grace and Holy wiſdom is better in it ſelf, then a Mountain of Gold, yet few ſee the goodneſs of it, but in its preferrence before Gold. And therefore, though there are many uſes, for which, and ends why God made Silver and Gold, yet this may be reckoned a ſpecial one, that their worth and natural excellency might be as a foyl to ſet off the beauty and luſter of that which is ſpiritual.

For, As when the Lord had finiſhed the Work of Creation, he brought and ſet all the creatures in their Original beauty before *Adam*, that having viewed them well, and given them names according to their natures, he might ſee there was not one among them all worthy of himſelf, or meet for his ſociety, and that then his deſires might be drawn out to embrace *a help meet for him*, (Gen. 2. 20.) So the Lord ſets before the poſterity of *Adam*, all the good things of this World, that finding their deſires ſtill hungry and unſatisfied, they may be led further, and convinced, that if things of greateſt worth here below, cannot ſatisfie them, then they muſt look out for ſomewhat that is above, and better. That's alſo one reaſon why Chriſt is ſo often ſhadowed in the Goſpel by ſenſible objects, by *bread*, and *cloathing*, by *light*, and the *light-bearer*, the Sun in the Firmament; that ſo we in them perceiving how uſeful and neceſſary Chriſt is for the ſupply of all our wants, might be excited to a following after, and a cloſing with him. And indeed we ſhould either not at all, or not ſo fully perceive either his excellency or our own neceſſity, were we not inſtructed in both by ſuch reſemblances. That's alſo the ſervice, which all thoſe Goſpel-Parables do unto our faith. Now as we ſee our need of Chriſt more clearly, by comparing him with thoſe things, which we moſt need; ſo we come to a better underſtanding of the tranſcendency of that wiſdom by which God doth adminiſter the affairs of this world, by preferring it before the beſt things which we behold and enjoy in this World.

Thirdly, Foraſmuch as *Job* doth ſo often repeat the ſame negation in ſuch variety of words and expreſſions, telling us;

Maximan habet Epitaſni tot verbium et phraſεων accumulatio.

First, That *Wiſdom cannot be gotten for Gold.*
Secondly, That *Silver ſhall not be weighed for the price of it.*
Thirdly, That *It cannot be valued with the Gold of Ophir.*
Fourthly, That *Gold and Chriſtal cannot equal it.*
Fiſthly, That *The Exchange of it ſhall not be for Jewels of fine Gold.*
Sixthly, That *Coral and Pearl ſhall not be mentioned with it.*
Seventhly, That *the price of it is above Rubies.*
Eighthly, That *the Topaz of* Ethiopia *ſhall not equal it.*
Ninthly, That *it ſhall not be valued with pure Gold.*

Hence Obſerve, *Man is not eaſily perſwaded, or convinced of the excellency of the wiſdom of God.*

Job had never multiplied ſo many words, but that he knew man would not take up this truth in a word. *If the Iron* (we work with) *be blunt, and we do not whet the edg, then muſt we put to more ſtrength*, ſaith *Solomon*, (Eccl. 10. 10.) And ſo, if that which we work upon, be hard we muſt put to the more ſtrength, and give the harder ſtrokes before we can make an impreſſion upon it. They are ſlow to receive a truth who muſt have (as the Prophet ſpeaks, *Iſa.* 28. 10.) *Precept upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line.* And doth it not argue that man is very ſlow to receive this truth, when ſo many ſtrokes are given, ſo many ſpecialties inſtanced in, and made uſe of to perſawde him of it? *Man is as backward to take up high thoughts of the wiſdom of God, as he is forward to have high thoughts of his own. Our little is much in our own eyes, and Gods great, yea infinite, is but little in our eyes.*

Fourthly, From the large and gradual Catalogue or Inventory of theſe precious things here given in.

Note, *God hath made ſome things in Nature more excellent then others.*

Gold and Gems have not only a reputed worth, from the fancies of men, but an inherent one beyond Iron and common ſtones. The creatures are diſpoſed into ſeveral forms, and have as their ſpecial differences grounded in their nature and kinds, ſo their gradual differences, grounded in their better qualities and properties, though they be of the ſame kind. *Job* ſpeaks of Gold four times in this context; and every time with ſome addition of Excellency. We have here, First, *Gold* alone (*v.* 15.) Secondly, the *Gold of Ophir*, (*v.* 16.) Thirdly, *Feſs* or *fine Gold* (*v.* 17.) Fourthly, *pure Gold* (*v.* 16.) which though they differ not in Nature, yet in degree they do. So among Grain or Corn, not only doth Wheat differ from Rie or Barley, but Wheat differs from Wheat in goodneſs. Not only doth one ſtone differ from another, as a Pebble from a Pearl or a Topaz, but one Pearl or Topaz differs from another. Not only as the Apoſtle ſaith (1 *Cor.* 15. 40.) *Are there Celeſtial bodies and bodies Terreſtrial, and the glory of the Celeſtial is one, and the glory of the Terreſtrial is another*: But among the Celeſtial bodies, there are ſeveral glories. As the Apoſtle exemplifies in the following verſe (*v.* 41.) *There is one glory of the Sun, another glory of the Moon, and another glory of the Stars, for one Star differeth from another Star in glory.* And the learned Aſtronomers have obſerved ſix differences in the glory of the Starrs. This is an experienced truth in the higheſt ſpecies or ſort of viſible creatures, *Man*; for not only do all men differ from beaſts, as all have the ſame endowment of reaſon; but one man differs from another in a better improvement of reaſon. God hath made one man to differ from another in wiſdom, in parts, in power, in riches; man differs from man in internals, and in externals; yea, not only is there a difference among men, as natural and civil, but as ſpiritual and holy. Not only do all Saints or perſons regenerate differ from the moſt accompliſhed meer rational men in the World; but one Saint differs from another in goodneſs, and in grace, that is, in the degrees and eminency of grace and goodneſs. Among Saints, ſome are Stars of the firſt magnitude, others are Stars of an inferior magnitude, they ſhine not with the ſame beams and brightneſs of holineſs in the Firmament of the Church.

Fifthly, Note, *God gives a power to ſome one Country, or Climate, to produce the ſame things in greater perfection then others do.*

Not only is ſome Gold more excellent then other in the ſame place; and ſome precious ſtones more precious then others of that kind in the ſame Countrey. But the Gold and Stones of this or that place or Countrey, are better then are found in any other; *The Gold of Ophir* is better then any other Gold; and the *Topaz of Ethiopia*, then the Topazes in other Countreys; The Oriental or *Eaſt-Indian* Pearls, are more beautiful then the Occidental or *Weſt-Indian* are. This is a further argument of the wiſdom of God, who hath ſo ordered it, that every part of the World hath ſomewhat in it of a peculiar excellency beyond other parts of the World. One Countrey excels in this, another in that, that ſo every Nation might have ſomewhat to endear it to other Nations, and to envite traffick thither.

Sixthly, Obſerve, *God hath given us not only ſuch things as ſerve for the neceſſary uſes of this life, but for honour and ornament.*

Gold and Jewels are more then neceſſaries; we might have lived with bread for our food, and with Wool and Flax for our cloathing. But God hath provided for us with a liberal hand; He hath given us not only that which is good, but ſtore of it; And he hath not only given us great ſtore of that which is good, but he hath given ſomewhat which is excellent and beautiful; he hath made all his creatures for our comfort, and not a few for our content; he hath made all the Creatures for our uſe, and not a few for our delight; Only he hath made none of them for our luſts; It is our own ſin which makes them ſo. And we have much cauſe to lament, that what God hath given at moſt for our honour and ornament, for our content and delight, is ſo often employed in the ſervice of luſt, and hung out as a flag of Pride and vain Oſtentation. How often is our Table our ſnare? How often do thoſe things which (in their Original conſtitution) were for our good, become to us an occaſion of falling. How ſad is it that man ſhould diſhonour God with that, which there was no reaſon (as to us) why God made it, but for the honour of man? How ſad is it, that we ſhould greive and burden God with that, which there was no reaſon (as to us) why God made it, but for our delight and ornament? O ungrateful man, who thus requites the bounty and munificence of God!

Seventhly, Obſerve, *The beſt and moſt precious things in this World, Gold and Silver, Pearls and precious Stones, are not comparable to divine wiſdom.*

That wiſdom in and by which all things were made, muſt needs be better then all things that are made. That wiſdom which orders and governs the whole World, muſt needs be better then the beſt things of the World under its order and government. The very name of wiſdom ſounds high; nor doth any thing ſet man ſo high in the eſteem of thoſe who are wiſe, as true wiſdom doth. The wiſdom of man, in a right adminiſtration of juſtice and humane affairs, is more excellent then Gold. Yea, *Solomon* prefers the wiſdom of a vertuous Woman in ordering her family beyond the rareſt Jewels, (*Pro.* 31. 10.) *Who can finde a vertuous Woman, for her price is far above Rubies?* And why? He tell us (*v.* 11, 12.) *The heart of her Husband doth ſafely truſt in her, ſo that he ſhall have no need of ſpoil, ſhe will do him good and not evil all the dayes of her life; ſhe ſeeketh Wool and Flax, and worketh willingly with her hands.* And if the Wiſdom of a Woman diſcovered and exerciſed in the diſcreet and induſtrious government of her Houſhold, is to be valued above Rubies, How glorious is the wiſdom of God in Governing his great Houſe and Houſhold, The whole World? And if the wiſdom by which God orders the motions of this World, excelleth Gold, and Silver, and precious ſtones, then how excellent is that wiſdom of God which he infuſes into man for the due ordering of his heart and life in holineſs and righteouſneſs, of which *Job* ſpeaks at the laſt verſe of this Chapter? How much is the grace of God, the riches of his grace in Chriſt to ſinners to be valued above Rubies? That's the treaſure of which Chriſt ſpeaks (*Matth.* 13. 44.) *The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto treaſure hid in the Field, the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth, and ſelleth all that he hath, and buyeth that Field.* That man makes a good bargain, who parts with all his treaſure to purchaſe the Field of treaſure; who parts with all that he hath, to buy that which is better then all that he hath. *Again* (verſ. 45.) *the Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a Merchant man ſeeking goodly Pearls; Who when he had found one Pearl of great price, he went and ſold all that he had and bought it.* This Pearl of great price is *a Portion or an intereſt in Chriſt, and Goſpel-grace.* They are wiſe and happy Merchants who get this Pearl, whatſoever it coſt them. This was the judgment of *Solomon* the wiſe, or rather of a wiſer then *Solomon*, the Spirit of God by his pen, (*Pro.* 3. 13, 14.) *Happy is the man that findeth wiſdom, and the man that getteth underſtanding, for the Merchandiſe of it is better then the Merchandiſe of Silver, and the gain thereof then fine Gold; ſhe is more precious then Rubies.* The aim of our whole lives ſhould be at the gain of this wiſdom, that is, Spiritual wiſdom, at the gain of Jeſus Chriſt, which is infinitely better then the knowledge of all ſecrets, and in whom are hidden all the treaſures of wiſdom and knowledg. And in this the pooreſt Saint may be comforted. They that have Chriſt, have that which is better then Gold or Silver, then Saphirs or Rubies. What's the man with *a Golden Ring*, to the man with *a gracious Heart*? What's a man rich in Gold, to a man rich in Faith? There is nothihg worth the mentioning or remembring, when once the grace of God in Chriſt is mentioned and remembred. And as the riches of this World are but dung and droſs to Wiſdom and Holineſs; ſo they make no man either Wiſe or Holy. If a man were inveſted with the riches of both the *Indies*, he could not purchaſe Wiſdom to find out the bottom reaſon of the Works of God. We are apt to think rich men wiſe men, as if riches had an aptneſs to make men wiſe, or as if they who have riches enough muſt needs be wiſe enough. Such was their ſence who ſaid, *Have any of the Rulers believed on him?* But as Chriſt himſelf, ſo our dayly ſad experience hath taught us, that riches are no advantage to, but a hindrance rather of our Spiritual enjoyments; they put clogs upon us, rather then give us wings, either in ſeeking or finding eternal happineſs.

Earthly things never befriended any man for Heaven. We may, I grant, as Chriſt adviſeth rich men, (*Luk.* 16. 9.) *make to our ſelves friends of the Mammon of unrighteouſneſs,* if we our ſelves are ſpiritually wiſe; but the Mammon of unrighteouſneſs never made any man Spiritually wiſe; yea, as moſt men get riches by their folly, that is, by ſinning againſt the rules of Righteouſneſs towards man; ſo their riches makes them more fooliſh in neglecting the duties of holineſs towards God. And that's the reaſon why Chriſt ſaith, (*Matth.* 19. 24.) *It is eaſier for a Camel to go through the eye of a needle, then for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God.* The more we have of this World, the leſs we mind the World to come, unleſs we have learned that Wiſdom (which the World never taught any man) to caſt it out of our minds. That earth which we tread under our feet, gets up into our hearts, and makes them more earthly then the earth it ſelf is, till God fill our hearts with grace, and ſo makes them heavenly. No man could ever keep the Moon (that is, things temporal and changeable) under his feet (as that *Woman* the Church, called *a great wonder in Heaven*, is deſcribed in the *Revelation*, Chap. 12. 1.) till (as that Woman was) *he is cloathed with the Sun*; and that's a cloathing which as all the riches in the World cannot purchaſe; ſo the rich men of the World ſeldom prize. Some are ſo poor, that they are undone temporally; and many are ſo rich, that their riches, both as to the getting of them, and as to the uſing of them, have undone them (as an occaſion) eternally. And therefore Chriſt to ſhew how litle any are beholding to their riches for their Wiſdom (if they have any) ſaith to the rich man (*Luk.* 12. 20.) *Thou fool, this night ſhall thy Soul be required of thee: Then, whoſe ſhall thoſe things be which thou haſt provided?* That's one great point of folly, to provide many things for we know not whom; and yet there is a greater point of folly, which that rich man was, and many Thouſands more have been and are guilty of, That while they provide many things for they know not whom, they have no knowledge to make proviſion for themſelves; but as they came naked into this World when they were born, ſo they go naked out of this World when they dye, dying hopleſs, becauſe Chriſtleſs and Graceleſs.

Wherefore to cloſe this whole diſcourſe about the precious things of the earth, I ſhall give in theſe brief Coralaries.

Firſt, Do not ſeek wiſdom where wiſdom is not to be found. The depth ſaith plainly, *It is not in me*, and the Sea ſaith plainly, *It is not in me*; therefore do not ſeek it either in the deep places of the earth, or in the boſom of the Sea; that is, ſeek it not in any worldly attainment, or enjoyment.

Secondly, Seeing the beſt things of the earth are not to be compared with wiſdom, then ſeek and pray for wiſdom above all earthly things; for true wiſdom to underſtand and know (ſo far as God revealed his ſecrets to the creature) the ſecret of God in his dealings with others, eſpecially what leſſons and inſtructions he gives us in his providential diſpenſations to our ſelves. To be quick-ſighted and quick-ſented about the works of God, to have an underſtanding in them, is a high price of Spiritual wiſdom. *This wiſdom* (as *Solomon* ſpeaks, *Pro.* 4. 7.) *is a principal thing, therefore get this wiſdom, and with all thy gettings, get this underſtanding.*

Thirdly, Seeing the beſt of earthly things bear no weight, and are of no price in compariſon of Heavenly, let not earthly things draw us off from the purſuite of Heavenly. Let not Silver out weigh wiſdom in our ballance, nor the Gold of *Ophir* be valued above it; *Let things ſtand in our Rate-book as they ſtand in Gods.* The moſt of men are of *a reprobate mind*, highly valuing what God ſlights, and ſlighting that which God moſt highly values. They are of a prophane Spirit like *Eſau*, *who* (as the Apoſtle rebukes his folly, *Heb.* 12. 16.) *for one morſel of meat ſold his Birthright.* Such bargains and exchanges are dayly made by the wiſeſt of meer Worldly men. They know not how to *approve of things that are excellent* (as we are adviſed to do, *Phil.* 1. 10.) or (as we put in the Margin) *of things that differ*; that is, of things that differ in excellency; how often do ſuch read *Job's* text backward in their Books; as if Gold were to be valued before wiſdom, and the price of Rubies were above it; as if that were no match for the Topaz of *Ethiopia*, or were leſs precious then the Onyx or the Saphir. *As they are wiſe men indeed and happy who know the true cauſes, ſo alſo are they who know the true prizes and value of things.*

VERS. 20, 21, 22, 23, 24.

Whence then cometh wiſdom? And where is the place of underſtanding?
Seeing it is hid from the eyes of all living, and kept cloſe from the Fowls of the Air.
Deſtruction and death ſay, We have heard the fame thereof with our ears.
God underſtandeth the way thereof, and he knoweth the place thereof:
For he looketh to the ends of the earth, and ſeeth under the whole Heaven.

HEre is a repetition, yet no tautology; a repetition, yet no vain repetition (which Chriſt forbids in prayer, *Math.* 6. 7.) but an excellency of ſpeech. *When in Scripture the ſame things are often ſaid, they are ſuch as cannot be ſaid too often.* The Apoſtle tells the *Philippians* (Chap. 3. 1.) *To write the ſame things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is ſafe.* And this he did, not for any ſcarcity of words or matter, with which himſelf was preſſed, but that the matter might take deeper impreſſion upon others.

Verſ. 20. Whence then cometh wiſdom? And where is the place of underſtanding?

Job having once before paſſed an enquiry all the World over, for the place of wiſdom, and not finding it, reneweth his enquiry the ſecond time in this place, and at laſt findeth it. We have the Queſtion laid down in Verſe 20; *Whence then cometh wiſdom? And where is the place of underſtanding?* This queſtion is reſolved two wayes: Firſt, Negatively (*v.* 21. 22.) *Seeing it is hid from the eyes of all living*, &c. Secondly, Affirmatively (*v.* 23.) *God underſtandeth the way thereof, and he knoweth the place thereof.* The reaſon of which affirmation is given (*v.* 24.) *For he looketh to the ends of the Earth, and ſeeth under the whole Heaven.* The explication and illuſtration of it follow (*v.* 25, 26, 27.) *To make the weight for the winds*, &c. *Then did he ſee it, and declared it, he prepared it, ye and ſearched it out.* Thus we have the parts and method of *Job's* profound diſcourſe upon this great point; I ſhall now touch upon them in their order. *Whence then cometh wiſdom? And where is the place of underſtanding?* This verſe is the ſame with the twelfth already opened, and therefore I ſhall not ſtay upon it; And the next is almoſt the ſame with the thirteenth, and therefore I ſhall make but little ſtay upon that alſo.

Verſ. 21. Seeing it is hid from the eyes of all living, &c.

'Tis hid, firſt, from the eye of the body; and thus all wiſdom is hid from the eyes of all men: Wiſdom is not a corporeal object, and therefore falls not under the eye of ſenſe, men may look long enough with that eye, and never get a ſight of it. Secondly, 'tis hidden from the eye of a created underſtanding, the eye of mans mind, even his intellectual eye ſeeth not this wiſdom of God. The natural underſtanding of the moſt underſtanding man could never reach it. There are ſome things that we know not, becauſe they cannot be known by us; they are in themſelves too myſterious for mans apprehenſion: other things are not known by us, becauſe they are concealed and hidden from us. (*Col.* 3 3.) *Our life is hid with Chriſt in God.* Our Spiritual life is an hidden life. It is hidden from the ſenſitive eye of all men, and from the underſtanding of all Worldly men; only it is not hidden from the eye of a Believer, he is able by Faith to ſee that life, which is a ſecret to all men living in the World beſides. And as this life is hidden from the ſight of Worldly men, ſo from the malice of the Prince of this World; he would devour our Spiritual life, as he did the natural life of *Adam*, were it not hidden (which his was not) in a Mediator. And as our Spiritual life is thus hidden from the Devil, and from moſt men alive; ſo the wiſdom here ſpoken of by *Job* is *hid from the eye of all living*, even from the eye of the Saints, and holieſt men alive. The word of the Spirit in man, and the works of providence for man, are a great myſtery. The Original word here rendered *Hid*, implies an intentional hiding, or the keeping of a thing ſecret, on purpoſe that it may not be ſeen; wiſdom like a chaſt and modeſt Virgin (the ſame word ſignifies a Virgin and to be hid) is either ſhut up cloſe at home, or goes vailed abroad, from the eyes of all beholders. The old *Egyptians*, who wrapt up their Religion in darkeſt ſhadows, were wont to place the Picture or Statue of a *Sphinx*, before or at the entrance of their Idotrous Temples, thereby intimating that the learning or wiſdom of their ſacred or rather ſuperſtitious worſhip was a ſecret or a Riddle to the Vulgar. And the Temple of *Minerva* among the Heathens (who was their Goddeſs of wiſdom) had this inſcription upon it; *I am all that exiſteth, is and ſhall be, and no mortal did ever yet open or look within my Veſt or Hood.* If Heathens did eſteem the wiſdom of Idols and dunghil Deities ſo unſeen a ſecret, may we not think that the wiſdom of Jehovah, the true and living God, *is hid from the eyes of all living? And* (as it follows in the next clauſe)

עלם *Abſconditus, occultatus fuit.*

Is kept cloſe from the Fowls of the Air.

This, may ſeem to diminiſh or leſſen the ſenſe (though it is indeed an heightening of it.) For who would wonder that wiſdom ſhould be hid from *the Fowls of the Air*, who have not ſo much as the uſe of reaſon? Who would expect, that what is hid from men, ſhould be known to Birds? This ſcruple will ſoon be removed in the explication of the Text. The word which we tranſlate, *is kept cloſe*, ſignifieth to *keep a thing cloſe*, upon a twofold account; Firſt, that *it be not diſcovered*; Secondly, that *it be not hurt or moleſted.* Here 'tis uſed in the former ſenſe, Wiſdom is *kept ſo cloſe*, that the Fowls of the Air cannot diſcover it.

But, what or whom are we to underſtand by *the Fowls of the Air*? There is a fourfold interpretation of theſe words.

First, Some by *the Fowls of the Air*, underſtand the Devils, or wicked Spirits: As if *Job* had ſaid. This Wiſdom of God is hid not only from the eyes of all men living upon the earth, but even from all the Devils in Hell. And we find in Scripture alluſion, that evil Spirits are called *Fowls of the Air*. It is ſaid in that Parable (*Luke* 8. 5.) *A Sower went out to ſow his ſeed: and as he ſowed ſome fell by the wayes ſide, and it was trodden down, and the Fowls of the Air devoured it.* Theſe Fowls of the Air are expounded (*v.* 12.) to be the Devils; *Thoſe by the way-ſide, are they that hear; then cometh the Devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts*, &c. Wiſdom is hid from theſe Fowls of the Air, from the Devils; who though they are ſo full of knowledge, that they are called *knowers* or *cunning Ones*; yet if you would go for counſel to, or conſult with the Devil (as *Saul* did when he went to the Witch at *Endor*, 1 *Sam.* 28.) to find out the providential Wiſdom or ſecrets of the works of God, they may (as they have dealt with many) befool and cozen you, but they cannot inform you.

δαίμων, *quaſi* δαήμων *gnarus peritus.*

Secondly, Others by the Fowls of the Air underſtand, the *good Angels*, who may not unaptly be called *Fowls of the Air*, by reaſon of their ſwiftneſs, they being alſo in that reſpect often, in Scripture, deſcribed with wings. Theſe good Angels are wonderful ſtored with wiſdom and with knowledge, and are as it were anxiouſly prying into the myſteries of divine Wiſdom, (1 *Pet.* 1 12.) *Which things the Angels deſire to look into.* The Angels ſtooped down to look into the ſecrets of the Goſpel. The word there uſed ſignifieth a prying into that which is veiled over and hidden out of ſight, a looking (as we ſay) wiſhly at it, wiſhing to ſee the rarities of it; and 'tis well conceived that the Apoſtle *Peter* in that place alludeth to the Cherubims, which were formed with their eyes caſt down towards the Mercy-ſeat in the Holy of Holyes, (*Exod.* 25, 18, 19, 20.) as it is ſaid (for there alſo this word is uſed, *John.* 20. 5.) The Diſciples who came to the Sepulchre, *ſtooped down to ſee the place where Jeſus was laid.* Or (which reaches the Emphaſis of the word as well (it refers to their geſture and poſture, who when either *ſhews* or *perſons of note* paſs through the ſtreet, put their heads out at window to obſerve what and who goes there. The Angels being thus ſtudious, and as it were curious to inſpect the manifold wiſdom of God reyealed

παρακύπτω *propenſo collo et acuratè introſpicio.*

revealed in the Goſpel, and receiving alſo much light and information about it intentionally by that light which ſhines forth in the Church (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Eph.* 3. 10.) *Now to the intent that unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places* (that is, the holy Angels) *might be known by the Church the manifold wiſdom of God.* I ſay, conſidering that the Angels both by their own ſtudy, as alſo by that revelation, know ſo much of the myſtery of the Goſpel; they ſurely know much of the myſtery of providence; and yet there is a ſecret in that wiſdom of God, which is kept cloſe from *theſe Fowls of the Air*, the Angels. When Chriſt would ſhew how uncommunicable a ſecret the time of the end of the world is, he ſaith (*Mat.* 24. 36.) Of that *day and hour knoweth no man, no not the Angels of Heaven, but my Father only.*

Thirdly, That is not to be paſſed by with ſilence, That in *the Fowls of the Air* here ſpoken of, reſpect may be had to the ſuperſtitious practice of the Heathen; who as they were wont to conſult with their Aruſpices or cunning men, who gave them anſwers concerning things to come, both publick and private, of Good or bad ſucceſs in their wars, of the ſtate and changes of Kingdoms and Nations, of Cities and Families, as alſo of particular perſons, by certain ſigns appearing to them in the intrals of beaſts offered in Sacrifice to their Idol gods. Of which abominable divination we find mention in the Prophet (*Ezek.* 21. 21.) when *Nebuchadnezzar*, intending a War both with the *Jews* and the *Ammonites*, was reſolved which to attempt firſt by opening the belly of the Sacrifice, and looking into the liver; ſo they ſought reſolution in doubtful caſes of importance from their Augurs, by the chattering and flying of Birds, whether on the right hand or on the left, whether high or low, whether croſs and overthwart them, or directly againſt them, as is notoriouſly known to all who have any acquaintance with the *Roman* Hiſtories and cuſtomes. Theſe Heatheniſh Augurs had a great opinion that theſe Birds had a kind of a foreſight of events by ſome natural inſtinct, beyond all men, ſo that by them they looked for informations and predictions by certain tokens, which through their vain credulity and curioſity they had fancied to themſelves. And poſſibly the Spirit of God might at once point at and rebuke that wickedneſs, in ſaying, *Wiſdom is kept cloſe from the Fowls of the Air.* They (how much ſoever men did Idolize them) do neither know what ſhall be hereafter, nor the reaſon of any thing that is. Theſe three Interpretations have each of them a fair probability in them; and are not diſſonant either from the ſcope of *Job* in this place, or from any other Scripture truth. Yet

Simplicius eſt quod neq; in imo neq; in ſummo animali natura videatur ſapientia. Nam quid volucrum oculis cum ſapientia quærimus ea vox ſignificat cognitionem rerum ſive divinorum ſive humanarum. Coc.

Fourthly, I rather pitch upon that which as it hath more plainneſs in it, ſo it comes up every way as fully to the general ſenſe of this context. That when *Job* ſaith, Wiſdom *is kept cloſe from the Fowls of the Air*, His meaning is only this, That as it is hid from the eyes of all men living and converſing on the face of the Earth, ſo if it were poſſible for a man to live in the Air, and converſe as near Heaven as the Birds and Fowls do; yet he ſhould not be able to find out the ſecrets of providence. Not only they who live at as great a diſtance from the Throne of God, as earth is from Heaven, but if any of the Sons of men were admitted as neer to him, as the higheſt flighted Fowls of the Air, yet even they would remain ſtrangers to this ſort of Wiſdom.

Theſe two verſes already opened, being of the ſame mind (as was toucht before) with the twelfth and thirteenth verſes of this Chapter: I ſhall only give this one Obſervation from them.

God hath purpoſely hid ſome things from the knowledge of all men.

We read (*Deut.* 34. 5, 6.) that *when Moſes dyed, the Lord buryed him in a Valley in the Land of* Moab, *over againſt Bethpeor, but no man knoweth of his Sepulcher unto this day.* For though the Valley where he was buried be expreſſed by undoubted or well known circumſtances, yet conſidering the largeneſs of the Valley where he was buried, and that the Lord without the help or privity of any man laid him up there, the particular place of his Sepulcher could not be known. Now, as the Lord hid the body of *Moſes*, and would not let his burying place be known, leſt (as ſome conceive) the Children of *Iſrael* (among whom his name was ſo renowned, both for his conduct of them out of *Egypt*, and for the many Miracles which the Lord wrought by his hand) ſhould take an occaſion to commit Idolatry there, as they did afterwards with the Brazen Serpent. So likewiſe the Lord is pleaſed to hide and bury the knowledge of ſome things quite out of our ſight, leſt it ſhould prove an occaſion of drawing out of ſome of our corruptions, or hinder the exerciſe of ſome of our graces. It is ſaid (*Math.* 13. 44.) *The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto Treaſure hid in a Field,* &c. But the knowledge of that treaſure (which is Jeſus Chriſt and Salvation by him) is not hid from the eye of all living, nor is it at all hid with an intention that it ſhould not be ſought for or found. But 'tis hid, that, ſeeking we may find it; for ſo it followeth in the ſame Parable; *Which when a man hath found he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and ſelleth all that he hath and buyeth that Field.* God hath hid the treaſures of Spiritual wiſdom that they might be found; but he hath hid the treaſures of his providential wiſdom that may not be found. The Prophet ſaith of God himſelf (*Iſa.* 45. 15.) *Verily thou art a God that hideſt thy ſelf, O God of Iſrael the Saviour.* God (being a Spirit) is inviſible in his own nature, He cannot be ſeen, and therefore in that reſpect needs not hide himſelf from the ſight of man; which is a great conviction of the ſinfulneſs of Idol-Makers, and Idol-worſhippers, as *Moſes* warned the *Jews* (Deut. 4. 15, 16.) *Ye ſaw no manner of ſimilitude on the day that the Lord ſpake to you in* Horeb, *out of the midſt of the fire. Take ye therefore good heed unto your ſelves, that ye corrupt not your ſelves, and make you a graven Image, the ſimilitude of any Figure,* &c. And that the Prophet may have ſome aim at this, in the words now cited, *Thou art a God that hideſt thy ſelf* (even in the Spirituality of thy nature) may have a probable ground from the oppoſition which he makes in the next (or ſixteenth) verſe. *Verily they ſhall be aſhamed and confounded all of them: they ſhall go to confuſion together that are makers of Idols.* Now as God hideth himſelf in the inviſibility of his nature, ſo in the ſecrecy of his works; God doth, as it were, artificially hide his works, though not in the matter of them, yet in the cauſes and reaſons, in the deſigns and purpoſes of them. For thus the Prophet ſpeaks, in a holy aſtoniſhment at the depths of God's diſpenſations towards that people. Or again, God doth hid himſelf from his people two wayes; Firſt, by withdrawing his comfortable preſence and powerful aſſiſtance, as if he would take no more care of, nor do any more for them. Secondly, the Lord hideth himſelf from his people by drawing a curtain of ſecrecy and concealment over that which he hath already done or is in doing, ſo that his judgments and intentions in them are unſearchable and paſt finding out. Therefore as the vain curioſity of man appears in prying into theſe ſecrets which God hath kept cloſe, ſo his raſhneſs and madneſs in cenſuring of or murmuring at (which is alſo a cenſuring of) thoſe wayes and works of God, which his dull eyes cannot ſee, nor his ſhallow brain apprehend in the divine reaſons and reaches of them.

There are two great vanities in men in reference to knowledge.

Firſt, A neglect to know what we ought, and what is our duty. There are many things which God hath revealed and ſet open to all living, which few care to look into. There is a wiſdom which God hath not only given us leave to ſearch after, but cryeth to us from day to day to ſearch after it. (*Pro.* 1. 20, 21.) *Wiſdom cryeth without, ſhe uttereth her voyce in the Streets, ſhe cryeth in the chief place of concourſe, in the openings of the Gates, in the City ſhe uttereth her words, ſaying, How long ye ſimple ones will ye love ſimplicity? And ye ſcorners delight in ſcorning, and fools hate knowledge?* And (*v.* 23.) *I will make known my words unto you.* Thus wiſdom cryeth, and cryeth her moſt precious wares in the open Streets and greateſt throngs of men, there ſhe cryeth her wares more precious then the Gold of *Ophir*, yet none, that is, few or none, regard them more then traſh, or brayded ware. She uttereth her voyce, ſhe uttereth her words in the opening of the Gates, at which all paſs, there ſhe is known and utters words more excellent then Jewels of fine Gold, yet ſhe can get no utterance, meets with no conſiderable Market for them, as appears but too plainly, in that moſt wrathful and threatning account which ſhe gives of the reception and entertainment which both her ſelf and her counſels found among the children of men, (*v.* 24.) *Becauſe I have called, and ye refuſed, I have* *ſtretched out my hand, and no man regarded, but ye have ſet at nought all my counſel, and would none of my reproof; I alſo will laugh at your calamity*, &c. As if ſhe had ſaid, you have even laught at, or made a ſcorn of the counſel which I brought and offered you, and therefore I ſhall but ſerve you in your kind, to laugh at the calamities which ſhall be brought and laid upon you. How ſad is it to ſee, that men will not receive wiſdom revealed; and *this* (as Chriſt hath aſſerted, *John* 3. 19.) *is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love darkneſs rather then light*:

Secondly, The vanity of man appears, as in a dull neglect of what is revealed, ſo in an eager purſuit of what is lockt up and hidden; as in refuſing the light for the love of that moral darkneſs, ſin, ſo in preſſing after that light which God hath compaſſed about with the myſtical darkneſs of ſecrecy, intruding (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks ſignificantly to this point, *Col.* 3. 18.) *into things which they have not ſeen*, yea into thoſe things which cannot be ſeen, becauſe God hath not revealed them; and whence comes this intruſion? The next words of the Apoſtle ſhew us whence, even from pride of Spirit, or from being *vainly puſt up by their fleſhly mind*. There's *fleſh* in the underſtanding, as well as in the will and affections of man, and in the *fleſh* there is *pride*, and 'tis pride which makes men ſo buſie and bold, ſo boldly buſie, as (unasked, ye forbidden) to intrude themſelves into the things they have not ſeen. This was the diſtemper of Chriſts own Diſciples, who, when they had admiringly ſhewed him the buildings of the Temple, told them, that beautiful fabrick ſhould be utterly deſtroyed (*Matth.* 24. 2.) *Verily, I ſaid unto you, there ſhall not be left here one ſtone upon another that ſhall not be thrown down*. They were not ſatisfied with knowing what Chriſt told them, but enquire further (*v.* 3.) *Tell us when ſhall theſe things be? And what ſhall be the ſign of thy coming, and of the end of the World?* It did not content them to know what ſhould be, unleſs they might alſo know when it ſhould be, with the immediate ſymptomes and preſages of thoſe great revolutions. They thought when the Temple ended, the World muſt end too, and their Maſter muſt appear in glory: And therefore they urge him to inform them of the very *nick of time*, when theſe things ſhould come to paſs. And we find, that Chriſt did condeſcend far to their importunity in giving them many ſigns both of the deſtruction of the Temple, and of the end of the World, yet would not tell them the ſpecial time of thoſe things, but concludes his diſcourſe with a lock upon that ſecret (*v.* 36.) *Of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the Angels of Heaven, but my Father only*. As if he had ſaid, *I perceive ye have a mind to know what the Angels know not, yea* (as he adds, *Mark* 13. 32.) *what the Son, or my ſelf know not at this time, or according to my preſent ſtate of humiliation*. Even good men have ſometimes a ſtronger deſire to know the times, then to redeem the time; as alſo to know what concerns others, then what concerns themſelves. The Apoſtle *Peter* was not ſatisfied, that Chriſt had told him how himſelf ſhould be dealt with in his Old age, but puts the curious Queſtion (*John* 21. 21.) *And what ſhall this man do?* (meaning if *John* the beloved Diſciple, who leaned on his Maſters breaſt) *Jeſus ſaith, if I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?* As if Chriſt had ſaid, *That's none of thy buſineſs, to inquire what this man ſhall do, thou ſhouldeſt rather be preparing for what I now told thee, thou muſt hereafter ſuffer*. Uſually they (I do not ſay *Peter* did ſo) neglect what is revealed, who are moſt inquiſitive into thoſe things which God hath kept ſecret. And though God corrects this humour in man, by putting a bar in his way, and ſhutting the door upon him, yet man will be forcing it open. As our firſt parents, ſo all their poſterity are apt to be tempted with *the forbidden fruit of the Tree of knowledge*. The Lawyers were charged by Chriſt for taking away the Key of knowledge (*Luk.* 11. 52.) But there is a knowledge, the Key whereof God himſelf hath taken away; and yet, though the Key be gone, what working is there at the door to get it open. I would only ſay to ſuch, remember, it is a great point of ignorance, to attempt the the knowledge of thoſe things, which God would not have us know: but not to know them is no point of ignorance. It is ignorance, not to know that which is our duty; but not to know that which is not our duty, is neſcience only, not ignorance; And quietly to reſt in this *neſcience*, is not our fault, but our Wiſdom.

But ſome may ask, why doth God hide ſo many things from the Sons of men, and reſerve them to himſelf alone? why are not all the locks open'd and veils taken away, which hold us in ſo much darkneſs? Is it not mans honour to know much, and the more any man knows, is he not the more fit to honour God?

I anſwer, Firſt, God keeps many things veiled from us, that he might keep us humble; he knows there is much pride in our hearts, and that our pride is apt to encreaſe with our knowledge, yea, that if we knew ſome things, our pride would be intollerable. *Eliab Davids* elder Brother charged him falſly, when he ſaid (1 *Sam.* 17. 28.) *I know thy pride, and the noughtineſs of thy heart*. But the Lord chargeth us moſt truly, when he ſaith, I know your pride, and that your hearts are ſo noughty, that a little more knowledge may make you a great deal more proud. (1 *Cor.* 8. 1.) *Knowledge puffeth up*, that is, knowledge in the head alone, or knowledge without a due ballance of grace and holineſs in the heart, puffeth up; and is not only a temptation to pride, but the very matter of it: yea, we have ſeen ſome ſo puffed up that they have been quite blown away with knowledge. *Paul* himſelf was endangered by it; though he was ſo holy a man, yet his knowledge, as himſelf confeſſeth, had almoſt over-ſet him, (2 *Cor.* 12. 7.) *Leſt I ſhould be exalted above meaſure, through the aboundance of revelation, there was given to me a thorn in the fleſh, the meſſenger of Satan to buffet me, leſt I ſhould be exalted above meaſure*. He ſpeaks it twice, *leſt I ſhould be exalted above meaſure*; a godly man, yea the higheſt of godly men, a *Paul*, when he is led into the ſecret of God, is in danger of being liſted up in himſelf: All his other graces ruu a hazard by his knowledge. And if *Paul* had need of a corrective, of a meſſenger of Satan to keep him humble, what need may others have? Many are exalted above meaſure by what they know, but few keep to the meaſure of what they know; many are puffed up by what they know, but few are edified or govern'd by what they know. And if the knowledge of thoſe things which are uſeful and profitable for us, doth often run out more to our pride then to our profit, what would the knowledge of ſuch things do as are not for our uſe or profit? The knowledge of the beſt and holyeſt things doth not make us better, or more holy by it ſelf, but the knowledge of ſome things is very apt to make us worſer and more unholy. The Lord will hide none of that knowledge from us, which hath a natural tendency to make us more holy, or more humble; but when he ſees, that we would only wound and hurt our ſelves by the knowledge of ſuch and ſuch things, then he hides them from us. As a Father hides a Knife from his Child, not becauſe he loves the Knife better then his Child, or would deny his Child any thing that is good for him; but becauſe the Child may ſoon do himſelf a miſchief with the Knife; ſo the Lord hides ſome things out of our ſight, that we might not do our ſelves a miſchief.

Secondly, He doth it, becauſe though he is exceeding ready to ſatisfie our neceſſities, yet he will never feed our curioſity; there and there only he cuts us ſhort. His heart is enlarged to us in giving, and he would have our hearts enlarged in deſiring and asking a ſupply of our wants; but as he forbids us to ask, ſo himſelf will not give (unleſs in wrath and ſore diſpleaſure, as he gave the *Iſraelites* Quails, I ſay, unleſs in wrath, he will not give) us any thing to feed our wantonneſs, or meat for our luſts. *Paul* writing to the *Theſſalonians*, tells them of a knowledge which they had no need of, (1 *Theſ.* 5. 1.) *But of the times and the ſeaſons, Brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you*. As if he had ſaid, I know ye are looking, yea longing that I who have written to you, *that the Lord himſelf ſhall deſcend from Heaven with a ſhout, with the voyce of the Archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Chriſt ſhall riſe firſt* (having I ſay) written to you of theſe things, I know ye will be expecting that I ſhould write ſomewhat to you about the time when theſe things ſhall be; but all that I ſhall write to you about the times and ſeaſons is only this, That of the times and ſeaſons ye have no need at all, that I ſhould write unto you; and as it is beſides my duty, ſo I am not at leaſure to write of needleſs matters. *Paul* ſhunned not to declare *all the counſel of God* to the Church of *Epheſus* (*Acts* 20. 27.) But times and ſeaſons are no part of that counſel which he declared. He declared the whole counſel of God both concerning Faith and repentance, concerning eternal life, and the way to it, even the whole myſtery of Chriſt crucified. But he had no commiſſion to declare the counſel of God concerning the time or ſeaſon when Chriſt ſhould come to be glorified on earth, nor doth he take upon him to have any acquaintance with that ſecret.

Thirdly, Our knowing the ſecrets of the wiſdom of God in ſome things, occaſions us more fully to give him the glory of his wiſdom in all things. For, if when we cannot ſee a reaſon of what he doth, we can yet ſit down quietly and conclude, *The Lord is holy and juſt in all he doth*, this is the greateſt acknowledgment of his holineſs, wiſdom, and juſtice; and if, when we know not the time when he will come to do his great works on Earth, we are yet alwayes preparing for his coming, and waiting for him from Heaven (which is the true poſture of a Believer, 1 *Theſ.* 1. 10.) then we honour him ten thouſand times more then we could do by knowning the year or day or hour of his coming. *Our Faith honours God more then our knowledge.*

Verſ. 22. Deſtruction and death ſay, we have heard the fame thereof with our ears.

Vſitatum eſt ſcriptura ut abſtracta ponantur pro concretis, ut perditio pro perditis, mors pro mortuis. Sanct.

Here's ſome kind of a report brought in concerning wiſdom by a pair of ſtrange intelligencers, **Deſtruſtion and Death**: But how doth *Deſtruction* hear, or *Death* receive a fame? and how do either of them, or both of them ſay, *we have heard it*?

I anſwer, Firſt, it is uſual in Scripture to put the *abſtract for the concrete*; and then by *deſtruction and death*, we are to underſtand thoſe who are deſtroyed and dead. So the meaning is, the *deſtroyed and the dead ſay, we have heard the fame of it*. But how can the dead ſay it? I anſwer, Hearing and ſpeaking are attributed in Scripture, not only to thoſe perſons who once lived and are dead, but to thoſe things which are meerly liveleſs or never lived, either a life of ſenſe or reaſon, to the Heavens and to the Earth (*Iſa.* 1. 2.) To the Trees of the Wood, (*Iſa.* 14. 7, 8.) and the Corn in the Valleys, or Valleyes of Corn (*Pſal.* 65. 13.) This is a high yet an uſual ſtrein of Rhetorick, both in the holy Scriptures, and humane Authors. Much more is it uſual to attribute acts of life and reaſon to them, who once lived in the ſphear of reaſon, though now among the dead. And ſo when *Job* brings in *deſtruction and death, ſaying, We have heard the fame thereof*; It is, as if he had ſaid; *If you go and inquire of the dead, even of all that have heretofore lived upon the face of the Earth, but now are dead and gone*, all that they can give in anſwer to this great enquiry, amounts only to thus much, which indeed is very little, *we have heard the fame thereof with our ears.*

Perditio et mors, i. e. *perditi homines et deo mortui.* Janſan.

Secondly, Some by *deſtruction and death*, underſtand the wicked, that are not only dead but damned, men caſt into the loweſt Pit, and buried in utter in everlaſting deſtruction. Theſe while they converſed in the World, met ſometimes with diſcourſes and reports of the unſearchable Judgments and wiſdom of God, the impreſſions whereof, are not quite worn out, no not in Hell. And therefore, enquire of and examine them, and they will bear witneſs, that they have heard of ſuch a thing, but further they cannot ſay.

Aquinas in locum.

Thirdly, Others, by the word **Deſtruction**, underſtand all that are in Hell; and by *death*, all the Saints departed and in Heaven. And ſo we have the dead of both ſtates in the Text, good and bad, bleſſed and miſerable. Inquire of either, and what will they anſwer; *We have heard the fame thereof.*

Fourthly, The three ſorts of rational creatures are ſuppoſed to be ſpoken of by *Job* in this context, and the worſt of them in the laſt. As when he ſaith, *Wiſdom is hid from the eyes of all living*, he intends it of mankind; when he ſaith, *It is kept cloſe from the Fowls of the Air*, he intends it of the good Angels; and when he adds, *deſtruction and death ſay, We have heard the fame thereof*, he intends it of the Devils, or evil Angels, who being furtheſt removed from God, by reaſon of their deſperate wickedneſs, have only heard a bruit or a rumour of wiſdoms excellency, but have no knowledge at all of it.

Laſtly, I rather cloſe with that interpretation which aſſerteth, that by *deſtruction and death* we are to underſtand, all things created and paſt; as if he had ſaid; *As this wiſdom is not now known in the preſent age, ſo neither was it by any heretofore.* So that if neither they who now live, nor they who lived in former times, but are dead and gone, knew it, then it is altogether unknown, or none at all know it. And the utmoſt report that any could make of it (though ſome could make that report more perfectly then others) was this, *We have heard the fame thereof.*

The Text is, *We have heard the hearing of it*; the Act of hearing is by a figure put for the word or matter heard. As (*Rom.* 10. 16.) *Faith comes by hearing* (that is, the grace of Faith is wrought by the Spirit in the Act of hearing) and, *hearing by the word of God*, that is, the matter heard, both by which and in which this Faith is wrought, is the word of God. We have the like manner of ſpeaking (*Ob.* 1. 1.) *We have heard a hearing*, or (as we render) *a rumour from the Lord*, &c.

Again, When we ſay, *deſtruction and death have heard the fame thereof*. The word **Fame**, may be taken two wayes. Firſt, for an honourable report; ſo *Fame*, commonly ſignifies, and famous men are honourable men. Secondly, *Fame* implies no more then a dubious or uncertain report. Thus when a man heareth only ſome piece of news, or an imperfect account of a matter, he may be ſaid *to hear a fame of it*. In this latter ſenſe (I conceive) we are cheifly to underſtand it in this place. Go to the dead, go to the damned, or deſtroyed, and all that they can ſay, is no more then this poor little or nothing, that they have heard a fame, a rumor of a ſtrange power of God in turning things upſide down, and of as ſtrange a wiſdom of God in diſpoſing the affairs of this World, which way himſelf pleaſeth, and yet in wayes which to mans reaſon are paſt finding out. In the firſt ſence there is a great truth; the workings of God with the Children of men are very famous, there is an honourable report made of them in the World, and ſhall be to the end of the World. (*Pſal.* 44. 1.) *We have heard with our ears, our Fathers have told us, what works thou didſt in their dayes, in the times of Old*; That is, as we have heard a moſt certain, ſo a moſt honourable report of the mighty workes and glorious deliverances, which God brought about and commanded in the former Ages. We have heard how he hath deſtroyed the enemies of his People, and ſtretched out his hand for their Salvation.

Audivimus famam ejus, ſc: *tantum famam*; q. d. *nunquam potuimus cognoſcere aut aſſequi eam.* Jun.

But conſidering the works of God in the ſeveral circumſtances, wherein they are done, and in the reaſons why they are done; eſpecially why done in ſuch a time, why in ſuch a manner, why by ſuch means, why by ſuch perſons, why upon or againſt ſuch perſons, as here in *Job's* caſe (who though he were a righteous perſon, yet he had much done upon him, and againſt him, by the wicked and unrighteous, conſider (I ſay) and lay all theſe things together) and then, 'tis little that we know of the wiſdom of God in his works, *We only hear a fame thereof*, but attain not to a full underſtanding and comprehenſion of it. This being taken for the interpretation of this verſe, it holds forth the ſame truth, with the former two, and thereof I ſhall paſs it by, without raiſing any diſtinct Obſervations from it; the whole being but a proof and confirmation by another ſort of witneſſes, Namely, all ſuch as are gone out of this World, of one ſort or other, that they know nothing certainly of this wiſdom of God, but this, that certainly, there is in him ſuch an all-diſpoſing and over-ruling wiſdom.

Thus far *Job* anſwers his own Queſtion Negatively; *Whence then cometh wiſdom? And where is the place of underſtanding; Seeing it is hid from the eyes of all living, and kept cloſe from the Fowls of the Air; deſtruction and death ſay, We have heard the fame thereof with our ears.* But in the next verſe he ſpeaks in the Affirmative.

Verſ. 23. **God underſtandeth the way thereof, and he knoweth the place thereof.**

After he had found nothing but ignorance and inſufficiency all the world over, as to this thing, and had taken the Crown of this glory from off the head of men and Angels, of the living and the dead, he informs where and with whom this Glory reſteth.

God underſtands the way thereof, and he knoweth the place thereof.

Some expound this, as the anſwer of *deſtruction and death*, which having ſaid, *we have heard the fame thereof*; ſeem to ſay further, If ye would know more of us, this is all we can ſay; *God knows.* But rather take the words as ſpoken by *Job.* As if he had ſaid; *After all our inquiries and Interrogations, the reſult of all is this, God hath reſerved to himſelf the reaſon of all; He underſtandeth the way thereof*; that is, whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; God underſtandeth that wiſdom cometh out from himſelf, and goeth into man according to the meaſure of his appointment and the pleaſure of his will. God's underſtanding of the way of wiſdom is his Nature. All the underſtanding which man hath of it, is from the free gift and grace of God.

Again, When he ſaith, *God underſtandeth the way thereof*, we are to take it excluſively, God alone underſtandeth it; for *Job's* purpoſe is not to teach or inſtruct his friends how to find out this myſtery; but blames them for taking upon them the knowledge of that, which God had kept to himſelf, the ſecrets of his providence, whether towards him or any other. This wiſdom fills all things, yet is not comprehended of any; It is with God, It is in God, It is God. And therefore none but God can ſo much as pretend any thing to it.

Once more, When *Job* ſaith, *He*, that is, *God underſtandeth the way thereof*, we muſt take it of a perfect and exact underſtanding; others may have ſome gueſſes and glimmering light about it, but he only underſtands it perfectly. And whereas it followeth,

He knoweth the place thereof.

We are not to conceive, that there is any place properly taken, where wiſdom is laid up. But the meaning is, he knoweth the place of it, that it is in *himſelf*, yea that, *it is himſelf. Gods knowing himſelf is his knowledge of the place of wiſdom*, or, *He knoweth that the place of this wiſdom is no where elſe but in himſelf, and nothing elſe but himſelf. The wiſdom of God, is the wiſe God; the underſtanding of God, is the underſtanding God.* The reaſon and wiſdom by which the whole World is governed, is the wiſdom of God, or rather God himſelf is that reaſon and wiſdom. God is the exemplar, he is the Fountain of wiſdom; our wiſdom is but a ray, but a beam, but a ſpark, but a drop. There will be further occaſion to ſpeak of this divine wiſdom at the twenty-ſeventh Verſe, where *Job* ſpeaks thus of God in reference to wiſdom; *Then did he ſee it, and declare it, he prepared it, yea and ſearched it out.*

Deus eſt origo ſapientiæ et locus intelligentiæ, et quia ipſe ſeipſum perfectè novit, ſubdit, et ipſe novit locum illius. ſc. ſeipſum. Aquin.

Diſtingue inter ſapientiam quæ eſt exemplar et finis, et eam quæ eſt umbra ac medium. Illa eſt apud deum et deus. Hæc eſt à deo in nobis radius illius ſapientiæ. Coc.

Here in the next Verſe, *Job* ſubjoins the firſt part of the demonſtration or reaſon, why God knoweth the way thereof.

Verſ. 24. **For he looketh to the ends of the Earth, and ſeeth under the whole Heaven.**

As if he had ſaid; God muſt needs underſtand the wayes of wiſdom, *For he looketh to the ends of the Earth*; not as if God did look out of himſelf to behold this wiſdom; for himſelf is every where, even to the ends of the Earth. And ſo the argument is taken from the infinite extenſion of the wiſdom of God; *He ſurely hath the comprehenſion of all wiſdom, He knoweth the place and way of it, that ſeeth under the whole Heaven, and looks to the ends of the Earth.* But thus the Lord doth, therefore *he underſtandeth the way thereof, and knoweth the place thereof.* And whilſt *Job* aſſerteth this glory of God, he vindicates himſelf from that inglorious charge of *Eliphaz* (Chap. 22. 14.) *Thou ſayeſt, how doth God know? Can he judge through the dark Cloud? Thick Cloudes are a covering to him, that he ſeeth not, and he walketh in the Circuit of Heaven.* Here *Job* anſwers for himſelf; I ſay, *God looketh to the ends of the Earth, and ſeeth under the whole Heaven*; and if this be an Article of my Faith, then ſurely I never made any ſuch ſimple or ſinful doubts and Queries, *How doth God know? Can he judge thorough the dark Cloud?* Nor did I ever make any ſuch Atheological concluſion, as this; *Thick Clouds are a covering to him, that he ſeeth not*; For I ſay, *He looketh to the ends of the Earth*, and therefore he *looketh* quite over it, thorough it, into the wayes and motions of every man.

Explicatio ſapientiæ dei ab infinitate ejus in omnia loca. Jun.

Looking, which is an act of ſenſe, is metaphorically aſcribed to the mind, to the underſtanding of God; whoſelooking is nothing elſe but his underſtanding. And the word ſignifieth, not a bare looking, but a looking with conſideration and care. The Lord doth not give a glance (as we ſay) ſlightly

נבט *Per metaphoram ab oculis ad intellectum transfertur, ſignificat, curare conſiderare.*

ſlightly looking over the world, but he looks with a careful eye upon each thing, *to the ends of the Earth*, as if he had but one thing to look to, or look upon in the whole Earth. The word is uſed (*Iſa.* 66. 2.) *To this man will I look* (ſaith God) *even to him that is poor and of a contrite Spirit*, &c. As if the Lord had ſaid, though I am ſo high and great, that *Heaven is my Throne, and Earth my footſtool*; yet I will have regard to and take notice of a poor humble hearted ſinner, I will look to him and tend him (ſuch is the emphaſis of the word) as a Nurce-keeper looks to, and tends a ſick or weak perſon lying pained and diſtempered upon his bed. Thus *the Lord looketh to the ends of the Earth,*

And ſeeth under the whole Heaven.

ראה *Videre etiā curioſe inſpicere.*

He doth not only ſee in Heaven, but under the whole Heaven, and he ſeeth every thing every where, with an exactneſs, yea with a kind of curioſitie, as the Hebrew word imports. We have that ſpecial ſignification of it upon record (*Gen.* 16. 13.) when *Hagar* being hardly dealt with by *Sarah, fled from her face* (v. 6.) *an Angel found her, and bid her return and ſubmit her ſelf to her Miſtreſs. And he called the name of the Lord that ſpake unto her, thou God ſeeſt me; for ſhe ſaid, have I alſo here looked after him that ſeeth me? Wherefore the Well was called Beer-lahai-roi*, that is, *the well of him that liveth and ſeeth.* She repeats that act of *God ſeeing her* three times. Firſt, ſhe called him, *Thou God ſeeſt me*; Secondly, *him that ſeeth me*; and thirdly, ſhe called the Well, *The well of him that liveth and ſeeth me.* God *ever-liveth, and he ever-ſeeth*, and he ſeeth every perſon, *Hagar* a ſervant as well as *Sarah* her Miſtreſs, and he ſaw her in her flight from her Miſtreſs, as well as in her abode with her miſtreſs. *A Sparrow falls not to the ground without him* (that is, without his obſervance and ſufferance) *and the very hairs of our head are all numbered* (Mat. 29. 30.) Birds flie freely, yet fall by a divine diſpoſe, not as the fowler pleaſeth. This providential ſight of God is punctual and to a hair, he ſeeth the whole univerſe as preciſely as any individual, and he ſeeth every individual as preciſely as if he had but one individual to ſee to. When *Abraham* had paſſed that hard exerciſe and tryal of his faith, the offering of his Son *Iſaac* (Gen. 22. 14.) *He calleth the name of the place* Jehovah-Jireh, *as it is ſaid to this day, in the mount of the Lord it ſhall be ſeen.* The Lord will ſee, or the Lord will provide, the Lord ſeeth ſo as to provide: His is not a bare ſight, his ſeeing is the providing for, and the right diſpoſing of all things in his ſight. The Lord ſeeth and provideth ſecretly for thoſe that fear him, as *Abraham* did, and he will be ſeen evidently in bringing them ſuccour and ſupply in their greateſt ſtraits and wants, as he did to *Abraham.* This name of God either in the active or paſſive ſignification of it, *Jehovah-Jireh, the Lord ſeeth*, or, *the Lord is ſeen*, was ſo famous in the old Church that it grew into a ſacred proverb (ſaith *Moſes* there) *As it is ſaid to this day, in the mount of the Lord it ſhall be ſeen. He ſeeth under the whole Heaven.*

Hence Note, Firſt, *What ever is done in the world, falls under the notice and cognizance of God.*

He that *looketh to the ends of the Earth, and ſeeth under the whole Heaven*, in the ſence explained, cannot but take notice of all that is done, or comes to paſs all the World over. (2 *Chron.* 16. 9.) *The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole Earth*; not that he needs to move from place to place, to run up and down from Country to Country to ſee what is done, for by one infinite, inviſible, indiviſible act, he beholdeth all things in all places; but the Scripture ſpeaks thus, to teach us the infallibility and particularity of his knowledge; even as we are ſaid to know thoſe things infallibly, which we have viewed upon the place: for otherwiſe there is neither high nor low, far or neer, firſt nor laſt to God, all things being at once before him for ever. (*Jer.* 23. 23.) *Am I a God at hand, ſaith the Lord, and not a God afar off?* Some render the words as an explicit affirmation, I am a God at hand, and not afar off; that is, I am alwayes at hand, or ready at hand upon every call and occaſion to do my people good, I am never as a man afar off, when there is need of me: This is a truth; yet our reading and interrogation carrieth more quickneſs in it, *Am I a God at hand*, &c. That is, am I God in Heaven only, which is the place of my glorious reſidence, and which in common apprehenſion is accounted neerer to me; *And am not I a God afar off?* That is, am not I able to act my power, and declare my ſelf God upon the Earth, which ſeems further off from me, or upon thoſe parts of the Earth which to you are moſt remote and furtheſt off? as it follows (*v.* 24.) *Can any hide himſelf in ſecret places, that I ſhall not ſee him, ſaith the Lord?*

And if the Lord ſeeth every where, let us every where ſee the Lord. *Moſes ſaw him that was inviſible.* This thought, *the Lord ſeeth*, will compoſe and keep us from doing what the Lord cannot endure to ſee. Did we but keep this common principle warm upon our Spirits, *The Lord ſeeth under the whole Heaven*, how heavenly would our lives be! And ſeeing *the Lord ſeeth*, as, *under the whole Heaven*, ſo into the hearts of all men, how ſhould it deter us, even from heart-ſins, and the cloſeſt hypocriſie!

Again, The Lord in ſeeing all things, diſpoſeth all things. As his hand ſet up all in order at firſt, ſo his eye hath kept all in order ever ſince, and will do for ever. That which ſome expound of *Davids* promiſed care over others (*Pſal.* 32. 8.) as it is alſo expounded, ſo it is moſt true of Gods providential care over *David* and all others his faithful ſervants; *I will inſtruct thee, and teach thee in the way that thou ſhalt go; I will guide thee with mine eye*; or (as we put in the Margin) *I will counſel thee, mine eye ſhall be upon thee*, that is, to guide thee in all thy undertakings. And as Gods eye is the guide of perſons, ſo of things; his ſight is influential, and turns the whole world. Further, take theſe concluſions concerning the ſight of God.

Firſt, The Lord beholds all things diſtinctly; not in groſs only, or in a lump; he beholds the leaſt as well as the greateſt. He looks upon every parcel, and opens the whole pack and bundle of humane affairs.

Secondly, He beholds every thing and perſon perfectly, fully, quite through; his is an intentive and moſt attentive view.

Thirdly, In ſeeing he governs every thing effectually, and works it to his own ends; he over-rules the purpoſes of men to his own purpoſe; he guideth the whole Creation with his eye; which way he looks, he makes that look too; which way he is pleaſed to move, that ſhall move too; *His is a ruling eye.*

Fourthly, He ſeeth all things together, not ſucceſſively, or one thing after another; he that is all eye ſeeth all at once, all as one (*Acts* 15. 18.) *Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.* He knew his works before they were wrought, and ſo he knows ours. He knows them in their cauſes; he doth not only know what is, but what hath been, yea what ſhall be at one view, and that in himſelf. *He declareth the end from the beginning* (Iſa. 46. 10.) that is, he ſeeth what the end or iſſue of every thing will be, not only when we begin or undertake it; but from the beginning of all things, yea before any thing had a beginning. *Is and was, and is to come, are alike to God, who* (*ſtrictly*) *neither was, nor is to come, but ever is.* Man ſeeth all that he ſeeth, ſucceſſively, and by ſucceſſion. Man cannot ſee all that is together, neither can he ſee any thing at all that is not, or hath not been. Man may ſee backward by Hiſtory, and he may ſee forward by propheſie; but of himſelf he cannot ſee a day before him, no nor what ſhall be on the ſame day (*Pro.* 27. 1.) *Boaſt not thy ſelf of to morrow, for thou knoweſt not what a day may bring forth. Every day is in travel, and bringeth forth ſome birth; but we know not how or what to name the child, whether good or evil, whether* Benjamin *or* Benoni, *joy or ſorrow, till we ſee it brought forth.* As God only looketh to the ends of the Earth, ſo he only ſeeth the end of all things which ſhall be done upon the Earth, and he ſeeth all theſe things and their ends together, and that from the beginning.

Hence take two Inferences; the firſt ſerving for the inſtruction and conſolation of all who know and fear God; and the ſecond for conviction and terror to the wicked.

Firſt, Seeing all things are under the eye, care and ſuper-intendency of God, let the people of God be quiet and at reſt in all the motions of this world. Thus *David* catechiſeth his own Soul (*Pſ.* 42. 5.) *Why art thou caſt down O my Soul? and why art thou diſquieted in me? hope thou in God, for I ſhall yet praiſe him for the help of his countenance.* As if he had ſaid, God who looketh to the ends of the

Earth, will ſurely look to me, and he who ſeeth under the whole Heaven, will ſee to and take care of me. His countenance will help me, or he will ſo far countenance me and my cauſe, as to give me help. One beam from his pleaſant countenance, one gracious caſt of his eye who ſeeth all my diſquietments and the cauſes of them, will work my eſtabliſhment; the eſtabliſhment of my heart againſt inward trouble, and the eſtabliſhment of my eſtate againſt that which is outward. And again he ſpeaks as to the general ſtate of the Church (*Pſal.* 46. 1,2.) *God is our refuge and ſtrength, a very preſent help in trouble, therefore will not we fear though the Earth be moved,* &c. And ſee how God repreſſes all tumultuatings of Spirit in the greateſt worldly tumults and viciſſitudes (*v.* 10.) *Be ſtill, and know that I am God.* Men are not God, they cannot ſee what to do, nor do what they ſee. But I who am God can ſee under the whole Heaven what is doing, and what to do, and I can do whatſoever I ſee needful to be done. Therefore be ſtill, be not ye hurried either with diſcontents at what is doing, nor with fear of what may be done, for, *know I am God, I look to the ends of the Earth,* and what I ſay muſt be done; and what is juſt for all men, and beſt for you who are my people, ſhall be done. Here's the true ground of courage, and of quietneſs: They that fear God, have no reaſon either to be afraid, or to be diſcontented. He that *looks to the ends of the Earth,* is their friend and their father; therefore he will look to them, and ſee that all ſhall go well with them, or end well for them. When nothing appeareth to us but confuſion, we may reſt aſſured that All is in the moſt proper and righteſt method for us, becauſe he ſeeth under the whole Heaven, who ſitteth in Heaven and judgeth rightly of all things, and righteouſly of all perſons.

Secondly, This truth may cauſe the wicked and unjuſt to tremble; the Lord ſeeth what they are doing, and that their end is coming. (*Pſal.* 10. 13, 14.) *Wherefore doth the wicked contemn God?* (he can give no more reaſon for doing ſo, then for ſaying what follows) *He hath ſaid in his heart, thou wilt not require it. Thou haſt ſeen it, for thou beholdeſt miſchief and ſpite, to requite it with thy hand.* The wicked ſlight the Lord, as if he either did not ſee what they do, or would do nothing to them whatſoever he ſeeth; but the Pſalmiſt was of another opinion, or faith, rather, in both particulars; he knew, God ſaw them, *Thou haſt ſeen it* (ſaith he) and he knew God would not take what he ſaw at their hands, but would reckon with them for it; therefore he adds, *Thou beholdeſt miſchief and ſpite* (that is, how miſchievouſly and ſpitefully they act) with a purpoſe to requite it with thy hand. As the Lord ſeeth what they do, ſo he ſeeth it for this very end, to requite them according to their deeds. And becauſe the Lord ſeeth theſe things to requite them (as he once ſaid, *I have ſeen, I have ſeen, or I have ſurely ſeen the affliction of my people that are in* Egypt (*Exod.* 3. 7.) And, as he ſaid (2 *Kings* 9. 26.) *I have ſeen, I have ſeen, or ſurely I have ſeen yeſterday* ('tis as freſh in mine eye as if it had been ſhed but a day agoe) *the blood of* Naboth *the* Jezreelite, *and of his Sons*; becauſe, I ſay, the Lord ſeeth theſe things, miſchief and ſpite to requite them with his hand) therefore as it followeth in the ſame verſe of the tenth *Pſalm, The poor committeth himſelf to him, He is the helper of the fatherleſs.* He ſees how helpleſs the fatherleſs are, and ſo he becomes their Helper. This principle, *The Lord looketh to the ends of the Earth,* ſhould remove wickedneſs out of the Earth, and 'tis an aſſurance that he will rebuke all the wicked of the Earth. For *he beholdeth miſchief and ſpite, that he may requite it with his hand,* what heart or hand ſo ever is filled and defiled with it.

VERS. 25, 26, 27.

To make the weight for the windes, and he weigheth the waters by meaſure.
When he made a decree for the rain, and a way for the lightning of the thunder.
Then did he ſee it, and declare it, he prepared and ſearched it out.

JOB having purſued his ſearch for wiſdome, and propoſed the queſtion (*Where ſhall wiſdome be found?*) throughout the whole Creation found no anſwer, but a diſclaimer from men and Angels, from the depth and from the Sea, from the living and from the dead, till his thoughts arrived at and ſate down in God himſelf; as was ſhewed from the former verſe; *God underſtandeth the way thereof, and he knoweth the place thereof; for he looketh to the ends of the Earth,* &c.

In this context *Job* proceeds to give proof, that, *wiſdome is with God*; and he gives a great and noble one for it, from that compoſure and wonderful order in which God ſet the world at firſt by his creating power, and hath ever ſince diſpoſed of and preſerved it in by his providential or governing power. In confirmation whereof, he gives an Induction of ſome ſpecial eminent inſtances of the works and workings of God in nature (which are to be underſtood, by a *Synechdoche,* as including the reſt) all joyntly and lowdly ſounding out the praiſes of his unſearchable wiſdome.

Tota creatura per partē ſignificatur. August.

And *Job* makes inſtance in thoſe works of nature which ſeem to lie moſt out of the diſpoſure of God, and about which his wiſdome (in vulgar opinion) is little engaged, or doth leaſt, the motion of the *winds, and waters, the fall of rain, and the furious going forth of lightning and of thunder.* He begins with the winds.

Verſ. 25. To make the weight for the winds, &c.

There is a twofold making of the things of this world; firſt, original, by creation; ſecondly, occaſional, by providence: We may underſtand both here, though the current of the Text ſeems rather to carry it to the latter.

The word which we render **a weight,** is uſed in the verb Metaphorically, to ſignifie the moſt ſerious and intentive conſideration of any matter or buſineſs before us. We commonly ſay when any thing of difficulty or importance is propoſed to us, we will *weigh,* that is, conſider it. That ſpecial coin among the *Jews,* ſo often mentioned in the old Teſtament, *The Shekel,* is ſo called from this word, which ſignifies to *weigh,* becauſe that being ſuch a known weight, was the rule of reckoning the weight of all things ponderous and commonly weighable among them.

מִשְׁקָל שׁקל *Libravit, ponderavit, hinc ſiclus moneta certi ponderis & omnium ponderum regula.*

To make *a weight,* notes art and induſtry; and to make a weight for the winds is ſuch a piece of art as never entred into the head, nor was acted by the hand of man. We properly weigh only heavy bodies; winds move very heavy bodies, but themſelves are a very light body, light to a proverb; and where ſhall the ſkale and ballance be found into which that vaſt ſubtile and diffuſive body may be gathered and therein poyſed. This only is the Lords doing, and (as many other things which he doth) 'tis marvellous in our eyes, and a miſtery to our underſtanding. *He makes a weight for the winds*; that is, he orders and delivers them out as by weight.

There is a threefold reading of this clauſe.

Firſt, Some tranſlate, *To make a weight for the Air.*

Secondly, Others, *To make a weight for the ſpirit or breath.*

Thirdly, As we, *To make a weight for the wind.*

רוח *Aer ſpiritus ventus, ipſa anima dicitur, quaſi ἄνεμος ſive ventus.*

The Hebrew word is indifferently applyed to all three. And theſe three may concur in one ſentence; the wind is that breath or ſpirit which moves in the air. Or, the wind moves the air, and is the breath or ſpirit of it. And the Lord makes a weight as much for the air, as for the wind in the air. So ſome render the ſence of the place, *He maketh the air to keep its due proportion, and likewiſe the water.* This Element, the air, is of it ſelf ſo thin and fluid a body, that it paſſeth into all places, penetrateth or gets into all bodies, and will not ſuffer any (*vacuum* or) emptineſs in nature, yet, even this the Lord weigheth. But I rather take it for that impetuous meteor which moves in the air, *The wind.* And when 'tis ſaid, *God makes a weight for the winds*; the meaning is, he orders them as exactly as if he weighed them. And that may be called the weight of the winds, which turns and ſets them this or that way, to this or that, or t'other coaſt of the Earth, or point of the Heavens. As that which inclines or turns mans mind this or that way, to this or that thing, is rightly called the weight of it (whence both Moraliſts and Divines ſay, that *Love is the weight of the Soul,* becauſe love is that which inclines us to this or that thing; which way ſo ever our affections go, the mind goes, and action follows) ſo that which

Fecit aerem ſervare ſuam proportionē & aquam ſimiliter. Vatab.

Uſitatum eſt ut rerum omnium ſive levium ſive gravium inclinatio ad naturalem ſitum pondus vocetur. Sanct.

which carrieth the wind any way is the weight of the wind. And uſually the inclination of all things, whether they be light or heavy, to their natural or proper place, is called the weight of them. Thus when *Job* ſpeaks of the weight of the wind, we are not to underſtand it literally, as if the winds were formally weighed, but the weight of the winds is that bent which through the power and appointment of God the winds have to blow from or to any corner of the world, ſometimes with greater, ſometimes with leſſer force and violence. The Scripture ſpeaks but of four winds, Eaſt, Weſt, North and South. Theſe the ancients called Cardinal winds; after Ages diſtinguiſhed them into eight, others into twelve. But our modern Navigator's have diſtinguiſhed them into thirty-two, according to ſo many points in the Sea-card or Compaſs; every one of which hath its weight, that is, a ſecret propenſion or impulſion, carrying it forth its own way. The Latine Etymologiſts, derive the word which ſignifies *wind* from a word ſignifying *force* (or which being joyned with the former doth more fully declare the nature of it) from a word which ſignifies to *come*; becauſe the wind cometh forcibly or with an impetuous vehemence. The material cauſe of the winds (as Philoſophers teach) is a hot and dry exhalation ariſing not only out of the Earth, but out of the Waters, out of the Seas and Snows, which being ſo thin that it cannot be condenſed into a Cloud, quickly becometh wind. This light wandring and unconſtant Creature the Lord doth ſo regulate, as if all its motions were not only bounded, but counterpoyſed and weighed. To this Text in *Job* ſome conceive that paſſage hath relation mentioned in the Book of *Wiſdome* (which though it be Apocryphal, yet is ſtored with many excellent truths) *God hath ordered all things in number, weight, and meaſure* (Wiſd. 11. 17.) The Lord maketh a weight for that which hath no weight. *He maketh the weight for the winds.*

Corpus pondere ſicut animus amore certur quocunq; fertur. Aug. lib. 11. de civit dei cap. 18. *Pondus ventorum eſt naturalis propenſio ut ferantur quo dei ſapientia decrevit.* Fecit ventis pondus *i. e. dedit eis inclinationem motus, ut* ſc. *moveantur quandoq; ad hanc partē, quandoq; ad illam.* Aquin. *Ventus à* vehementia, *quod ſit agitatio vehemens; vel rectius à* veniendo, *quod hinc inde veniat omnia perflans.* Garcæ. Meteorolog.

Hence Obſerve, *The motion or inclination of the winds this or that way, is from the ſpecial deſignation or diſpoſe of God.*

Naturaliſts aſcribe the efficient cauſe of the winds to the Sun and other heavenly bodyes, or to the cold of the middle Region of the Air, which repelling or thruſting back that aſcending exhalation, cauſeth it to glance ſlantingly and violently through the air. Again, Aſtrologers aſcribe the motion of the winds to ſpecial Planets; the Eaſt-wind they aſcribe to the Sun, the Weſt-wind to the Moon, the South-wind to *Mars*, the North-wind to *Jupiter*; but the truth is, Jehovah, the living God is the ſupream cauſe and director of them all; he made the weight for the winds in Creation, and he hangs on the weight for the winds in providence every day. The Scripture deſcribeth the Lord *flying upon the wings of the wind* (Pſal. 18. 10.) *and walking upon the wings of the wind.* (Pſ. 104. 3.) He who made all Creatures may make what uſe he pleaſeth of any Creature. The winds are elegantly ſaid to have wings, becauſe of their ſwiftneſs; and the Lord is ſaid to fly or walk upon the wings of the winds, to ſhew that as he declares his power by them, ſo they are continually acted and governed by his power. In the ſtronger and more violent motions of the wind he may be ſaid moſt properly to fly, and in thoſe more gentle and temperate motions of the wind to walk upon their wings. There are many diſtinct acts of God ſpoken of in Scripture concerning the wind. Firſt, he is ſaid to create it, that is, to give it a Being (*Amos* 4. 13.) *Loe he that formeth the mountains and createth the wind.* Secondly, he is ſaid to *prepare the wind*, that is, to make it ready for any particular ſervice (*Jon.* 4. 8.) *And it came to paſs when the Sun did ariſe that God prepared a vehement Eaſt-wind.* Thirdly, he is ſaid to command the wind, that is, to give it actual commiſſion to ſerve his purpoſes. And this command is twofold; firſt, for the raiſing; ſecondly, for the ſtopping or allaying of the winds. The former (*Pſal.* 78. 26.) *He cauſed an Eaſtwind to blow in the Heavens, and by his power he brought in the South-wind.* And in the moſt Rhetorical deſcription of a Storm at Sea (*Pſal.* 107. 23, 24, 25, 26.) *They that go down into the Ships, that do buſineſs in great waters: Theſe ſee the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep; for he commandeth, and raiſeth the ſtormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof; they mount up to the Heaven: They go down again to the depths, their Soul is melted becauſe of trouble. They reel to and fro, and ſtagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits end. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their diſtreſſes.* Then follows the ſecond part of the Lords commanding power over the winds (*verſ.* 29.) *He maketh a calm, ſo that the waves thereof are ſtill. Then are they glad, becauſe they be quiet: So he bringeth them to their deſired Haven.* The fierceſt and wildeſt Meteors, as well as the tameſt and gentleſt Creatures, muſt acknowledg and ſhall feel the Lords ſoveraignty over them. (*Pſal.* 148. 8.) *Fire and hail, ſnow and vapours, ſtormy wind fulfilling his word.* When we ſee the winds go forth in rageing ſtorms, they go upon Gods errand. When *Jonah roſe up to flee unto* Tarſhiſh *from the preſence of the Lord*, the Lord ſends a Meſſenger, a Purſevant to arreſt and attach him, and what was it? Read (*Chap.* 1. *v.* 4.) *But the Lord ſent a great wind into the Sea, and there was a mighty Tempeſt in the Sea.* The wind is ſent as a Servant to do his Maſters will; the Lord (as that Centurion in the Goſpel) ſaith to one wind go and it goeth, to another come, and it cometh, to a third, do this, and it doth it. He commands the wind to cleanſe and fan the air, and it cleanſeth it (*Jer.* 4. 11.) He that *ſaith to his people and to* Jeruſalem, *a dry wind of the high places in the wilderneſs toward the daughter of my people, not to fan, nor to cleanſe*, can command the wind to fan and cleanſe. He commands the wind to bring rain, and it bringeth it (2 *Kings* 18. 45.) or to drive rain away, and it driveth it (*Pro.* 25. 23.) He can command the wind to dry up the waters, and they are dryed up (*Gen.* 8. 1.) The Lord can command the wind to divide the waters of the Sea, and they are divided (*Exod.* 14. 21.) He can command the wind ſafely to waft whole Navies of Ships over the Sea, and they do it, as frequent experience teacheth; and if he command, the winds will quickly wrack and ſink the mightieſt Navies. (*Pſ.* 48. 7.) *Thou breakeſt the ſhips of* Tarſhiſh *with an Eaſt-wind.* For all theſe and many other ſervices, the winds are at Gods command, and as 'tis ſaid (*Pſ.* 135. 7.) *He cauſeth the vapours to aſcend from the ends of the Earth, he maketh rain, he bringeth the wind out of his treaſures.* The Lord hath a Magazine of winds, which he can lock or open, ſhut up or let out in favour or in wrath, in mercy or in judgment, as he pleaſeth. *Agur* puts this queſtion among many others (*Pro.* 30. 4.) *Who hath aſcended up into Heaven, or deſcended? Who hath gathered the winds in his fiſts?* Tell me who? *What is his name, or what is his ſons name, if thou canſt tell me?* God hath the wind in his own keeping, as a man hath that which he holdeth in his fiſt; when he openeth his fiſt the winds iſſue forth, and return not, till he call them in again. When Chriſt ſaith to *Nicodemus* (John 3. 8.) *The wind bloweth where it liſteth*, his meaning is, that the wind is not at all under the power of man, either to ſend it out or to reſtrain it, all the power in the world cannot bridle the wind, it bloweth where it liſteth for all us; but it doth not blow where it liſteth in regard of God, but where and when, as he liſteth. Chriſt indeed intends that ſpeech of the ſpiritual wind, or of the holy Spirit, who is as wind both in the freeneſs of his motion, and in the force of it; as 'tis ſaid of that wonderful gift of the holy Ghoſt (*Acts* 2. 2.) *Suddenly there came a ſound from Heaven, as a mighty ruſhing wind, and it filled all the houſe where they were ſitting.* This wind can blow with ſuch force that none can reſiſt it, and it alwayes blows with ſuch freedome, that it bloweth only where it liſteth; which is true alſo, in the ſence explained, of the natural wind. And that which followeth, hath a truth in it alſo in reference to the natural wind, *Thou heareſt the ſound thereof, but knoweſt not whence it cometh, or whither it goeth.* For though we know the general place from whence the wind cometh, Eaſt, Weſt, North or South; yet no man knoweth the ſpecial or determinate place, either whence it taketh its riſe and beginneth its motion, or where it ſitteth down or concludes it.

Yet more diſtinctly, take the exactneſs of the Lords care and the fulneſs of his power in diſpoſing of the winds in theſe three particulars.

Firſt, God appointeth where or in what coaſt the wind ſhall blow. There are ſome places of the world where the wind blows conſtantly one way (as Navigators have long

Statos ſive aniverſarios vocant ventos quæ ſingulis annis certo tempore redeunt, et ſtato tempore ſpirare ſolent. Tales ſunt Etheſiæ. Garcæ. Meteorolog.

obſerved) and ſome are called *ſtated or ſetled aniverſary winds*, which riſe and blow alwayes at ſuch a time or ſeaſon of the year. Such is the *Eteſian* wind, and ſuch the *Cheledonian*, ariſing at the firſt coming of ſwallows. Yet theſe are ſtated by a law of God upon nature. He hath bound them by a decree to hold their way and keep their times without variation for the ſervice of his own providence towards the ſons of men. But as to moſt parts of the world the wind receives new laws for the change of its motion, almoſt, every day, and, not ſeldome, for many changes of its motion in one day; yea ſo diſcriminating are the Lords appointments to the wind, that there is oftentimes a ſtorm in one Country, and a calm in another, a Tempeſt in one Sea, and a proſperous Gale in another at the ſame inſtant. In one Country and Sea there's a larg wind, and in another at the ſame time not a breath to move a leaf, or in the leaſt to ſtrain a ſail. Some have more wind then they know what to do with, while others muſt lye at Hull, and can do nothing for want of wind. What the Lord ſpake by the Prophet *Amos* concerning the rain (*Chap.* 4.7. *I cauſed it to rain upon one City, and cauſed it not to rain upon another City*) is as true concerning the Lords ſoveraignty in diſpoſing of the wind, he cauſeth it to go forth and blow in one Country, and he cauſeth it not to go forth nor blow in another Country; as not a drop of rain falls, ſo not a breath of wind blows any where but by the leave of God firſt obtained, or but by his rule and direction.

Secondly, As the place and the coaſt, ſo the quantity and degree is at his diſpoſe; how much ſhall go out, and with what ſtrength, how large or how ſcant the wind ſhall be is from his word. It is ſaid (*Exod.* 14.24.) *The Lord cauſed the Sea to go back by a ſtrong Eaſt-wind*; the Lord did not only order from what part of Heaven that wind ſhould blow, or that it ſhould be an Eaſt-wind, but he ordered the ſtrength and force of it, in a due proportion to that miraculous diſpenſation. The Lord did not only ſend out a wind, but *a great wind* into the Sea after *Jonah*, which made a *mighty Tempeſt* (Chap. 1.4.) and he prepared not only an Eaſt-wind, but *a vehement Eaſt-wind* to afflict him (*Chap.* 4.8.) He indeed made a weight for that wind which preſſed him ſore; and he makes the weight of every wind more or leſs, according to the work which it is ſent about.

Thus as he directs from what point of the Heavens the wind ſhall blow, ſo in what degree, whether it ſhall be much or little, whether a Storm or a Calm. And he can with one word turn the Calm into a Storm, and the Storm into a Calm. We read that there *aroſe a great Tempeſt in the Sea, inſomuch that the Ship* (wherein Chriſt and his Diſciples were embarqued) *was covered with the waves*; and the Diſciples were ſo affrighted, that they came to Chriſt (being aſleep) and awoke him, ſaying, *Lord ſave us, we periſh. Then* (ſaith the Text, *Mat.* 8.26.) *he aroſe, and rebuked the wind and Sea, and there was a great calm.* He ſpake to the winds as a Nurce to a froward Child, *peace, be ſtill*; and ſo it was; ſo that, *The men marvelled, ſaying, what manner of man is this, that even the winds and the Sea obey him?* The moſt enraged winds cannot ſtand before the rebukes of God; and if once he rebuke them, their rage is down; God layes his Law upon the moſt lawleſs Creatures, even then when they ſeem to act moſt lawleſsly, and to have broken all bounds of moderation.

Thirdly, The Lord orders when the wind ſhall riſe, and how long it ſhall continue in any corner. He appoints how long the Eaſt-wind ſhall blow, and how long the Weſt, how long it ſhall lodg in the North, or in the South, is limited by a divine command. Now, as the winds acknowledg the ſoveraignty of God by obeying him, ſo man ſhould much more acknowledg the ſoveraignty of God over the winds, when he ſees them obedient. They eſpecially who have great buſineſs upon the waters and with the winds (Merchants and Mariners) ſhould take notice of this power of God, and honour him in the reverential acknowledgment of it. The heathens who parted the World to their Idol Gods, had a God for the winds; for even they had this notion, that the winds were under the dominion of ſome ſupreme power. This honour they gave to *Æolus*, who as they blindly believed bound and ſhut up the winds at his pleaſure. And ſhall not we honour the true and living God, by depending upon him and praying to him, for the binding and upbinding of the winds, for the withholding or allaying of ſtorms? When the Merchant hath his Ship broken and wrackt, let him ſay, the Lord hath done it; *for he breaks the Ships of* Tarſhiſh *with an Eaſt-wind* (*Pſal.* 48.7.) And when his Ship comes ſafe home to Harbour, let him ſay the Lord hath done it; *for he bringeth them to their deſired Haven* (*Pſal.* 107.30.) Some go to Witches for winds, and others when a Storm is up, ſay, *there's conjuring abroad.* I know the Devil hath great power in the air, and he can do great things in that Territory; *he is the Prince of the power of the air* (Eph. 2.2.) He can raiſe Storms or do miſchief at Sea or Land; he overthrew the houſe where *Jobs* Children were feaſting by *a great wind that came from the wilderneſs* (Chap. 1. 19.) yet his is only a derivative and permiſſive power; God hath the ſupream power there; and we ſhould own him in it. The Sorcerers in *Moſes* time could do miracles; but it was a limited power, the Lord checkt it when he pleaſed. And therefore (as one of the ancients ſpeaks) *The power of the* Magicians *failed in lice*, God ſtopped them there to ſhew that he could have ſtopped them in the firſt. And though they did not confeſs the finger of God till then, yet the hand of God was in all. And what ever Storms and Tempeſts are raiſed by the Devil, he therein acts the counſel of God (though not at all intentionally) more then his own malice. As the Devil, together with the Magicians and Sorcerers, his Servants, were confounded, and could not make a lowſe, when God took away their commiſſion and reſtrained their power; ſo neither can all the Devils in Hell, nor Witches upon Earth, make a breath of wind to move a feather, if the Lord do but hold up his finger and ſupercede their power. There is *no greater argument of ſpiritualneſs, then to honour God in naturals.* He is an holy man indeed that is holy in dealing about civil things; and he is a ſpiritual man indeed that ſees God in natural things; *He maketh a weight for the winds,*

Luctantes ventos tempeſtateſque ſonoras, Imperio premit ac vinculis ac carcere frænat. Virg. Ænid. l. 1.

Magorum potentia defecit in muſcis.

And he weigheth the waters by meaſure.

The word ſignifieth to Weigh in a ballance. The Prophet (*Iſa.* 40.12.) ſetting forth the glorious power and greatneſs of God, ſaith, *He weigheth the Mountains in ſcales, and the Hills in a ballance.* Here we have a like argument of his power, *He weigheth the waters*; and (as was touched before, upon the former clauſe, a weight for the winds) the word here alſo uſed, to weigh, ſignifies not only to take the weight of a thing in a ballance, but by any way or means to attain the due knowledg of it. Weighing, in a metaphorical or alluſive ſence, is an act of the underſtanding, 'tis the higheſt and nobleſt act of the underſtanding, even our internal diſcourſe concerning the worth and truth of any propoſition or action, upon which we make up a judgment either *pro* or *con*, affirmatively or negatively. So the word is uſed and applyed by *Hannah* in her ſong of praiſe for that ſon who was as much the fruit of prayer as of her womb (1 Sam. 2.3.) *Talk no more ſo exceeding proudly, let not arrogance come out of your mouth: For the Lord is a God of knowledg, and by him actions are weighed.* God hath a weight and a ballance for all the works of man; and he weigheth them to a grain; yea he weigheth not only our works, but our words and thoughts; ſo ſome render that place, with a change alſo of the verb. To him thoughts are prepared, that is, he ſees what they are before they are, to him they are prepared before they are prepared by us. But rather as we render, *by him actions* (the iſſues of thoughts) *are weighed*; that is, he ſees what they are, and what they are worth, whether they be vain light and fooliſh thoughts, or holy ſerious and reverential thoughts. He weigheth them, and as their weight is, he accordingly rewards them. The Lord brings in the *Jews* charging him, as if he had not weighed his own actions; ſo he beſpeaks the Prophet (*Ezek.* 33.17.) *The Children of thy people ſay, the way of the Lord is not equal: But as for them their way is not equal.* Thus he retorts it upon them. The word is the ſame uſed here by *Job*; *Ye ſay the way of the Lord is not weighed*; as if the Lord had acted at random or at a venture as men often do. The wayes of thoſe who do ſo, are unweighed wayes, they are not equal

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תכן *Appendit; ſunt ex Hebræis qui exponunt pro* תקן *aptavit, cõcinnavit, direxit; ſed malo ut ſonat pro appendere.* Merc.

Ipſi præparantur cogitationes. Vulg.

(as we tranſlate the Metaphor elegantly and clearly to the ſcope of the Text) that is, they are not juſt or right. And though he that doth not weigh his actions, may poſſibly do that which is right, yet he doth not chooſe that which is right. *There is no election without conſideration.* But to the point in hand, we ſee, both in common and Scripture-language, that to weigh a thing is to take an exact account of it, whether we ſpeak of weighing in a proper or in a tropical acceptation. As therefore when in other places the Lord is ſaid to weigh Actions, whether his own or the actions of others, it informs us, that he hath a very diſtinct and perfect knowledge of them ; ſo here, when he is ſaid *to weigh the waters*, the meaning is, that he keepeth that fluid and boyſterous Element to as ſtrict terms of order, and to as due a decorum with his own will and command, as if he weighed it out by the Ounce, or drop by drop.

He weigheth the waters.

What waters? We may extend this work of providence to all ſorts of waters. *Moſes* makes a diſtribution of waters into thoſe below and above (*Gen*.1.7.) *And God made the Firmament, and divided the waters which were un-the Firmament from the waters which were above the Firmament : and it was ſo.* The word rendered *Firmament*, in the Hebrew ſignifies an expanſion, or a thing ſpread out and extended like a Tent or Curtain ; and ſo thoſe higher Heavens where the Stars are fixed or move, are called the Firmament (at leaſt in vulgar ſence) above which, there is no water ; but the Firmament there ſpoken of by *Moſes*, is the out-ſpread Air from the Earth to the Clouds, in which as in great Heavenly Veſſels upper waters, or the waters above the Firmament, are contained ; as the lower waters, or as waters under the Firmament, are contained and kept in earthly Veſſels, or channels of the Earth.

He weigheth the waters by meaſure.

A meaſure is moſt proper for water ; but to weigh waters by meaſure, may ſeem improper. Numbers are told or reckoned ; heavy things are poyzed or weighed ; and liquids are commonly meaſured. But *Job* aſcribes both weight and meaſure to the waters. *He weigheth the waters by meaſure.* We meaſure things of two ſorts ; Firſt, Such as are of a continued quantity ; thus we meaſure Lands and Houſes, and Cloath of all ſorts. Secondly, Such things as are of a diſcrete quantity and bodyes aggregated; thus we meaſure Grain and Seeds of all ſorts, and thus we meaſure water and all ſorts of liquids. Time alſo hath a kind of meaſure ; and ſo it is expreſſed in the ſeventh Chapter of this Book at the fourth Verſe ; where *Job* bemoaning his reſtleſs condition, ſpeaks thus ; *When I lye down, I ſay, When ſhall I ariſe, and the Night be gone ?* The Hebrew is (as we put in the Margin) *When will the Evening be meaſured ? To weigh* any thing, implies an exact Obſervation of it ; and to meaſure any thing, implies an exact Obſervation of it; but when both theſe are joyned, as here God is ſaid both to weigh and meaſure the waters, or to weigh them by meaſure, this implies the utmoſt imaginable exactneſs, yea in this thing an unimaginable and unconceiveable exactneſs of Obſervation.

Hence Note, *The waters are in the hand and power of God.*

He keeps as ſtrict a hand and watch over them in all their motions, as if he weighed them to a grain, and meaſured them to a drop. The windes and the waters are very unruly Creatures ; yet they are under rule ; the Lord orders and commands them both. *Agur* (which Text was toucht upon in the former part of this Verſe) puts the Queſtion about them both, while he was making an humble confeſſion of his Faith (*Pro*. 30.4.) *Who hath gathered the wind in his fiſts ? Who hath bound the waters in a garment ?* Here are winds and waters, the former gathered, the latter bound to obedience. The word and power of the Lord, or his powerful word and decree, are the fiſts into which the wind is gathered, and the garment in which the waters are bound. The Prophet puts a parallel Queſtion, and to the ſame purpoſe, (*Iſa*. 40. 12.) *Who hath meaſured the waters in the hollow of his hand ?* When he enquired, who ? He did not at all doubt, who : His very Queſtion is a determination, that no Creature, but God alone hath done it. And to ſhew the Lords ſoveraignty over the waters, *David* ſaith in a direct affirmation (*Pſal*. 29. 10.) *The Lord ſitteth upon a flood : yea the Lord ſitteth King for ever. This flood* upon which the Lord ſitteth may be underſtood two wayes ; and ſo alſo may his ſitting upon it; the flood upon which the Lord ſitteth, may be underſtood,

Firſt, Plainly and properly for the inundation and confluence of many waters which make a flood. The Lord ſits upon this flood, not only when 'tis calm and quiet, but when it ſwells and rageth, when 'tis moſt turbulent and unruly.

Secondly, *The flood* may be taken figuratively or myſtically (ſo I conceive the Pſalm is chiefly to be expounded throughout, though there be a cleare and a glorious truth in the outſide and proper terms of it, but I ſay, the flood upon which the Lord ſitteth, may be taken figuratively,) for the People and Nations of the World, when they gather together as a flood : upon this flood or confluence of many waters the Lord ſitteth, and his ſitting there implyeth two things. Firſt, His fixedneſs and ſtability ; He is as ſure upon the flood as upon a rock, he ſits faſt, he is immoveable upon that which is moveable ; and ſits upon that which cannot ſtand, a flood of people. Secondly, His ſitting notes his State and Soveraignty ; he ſits upon the flood as a Lord and Governour upon his Throne, or in a Chair of State, and gives out the Rule according to the pleaſure of his own will. This Expoſition of the waters, and of ſitting upon the waters too, was given to *John* in viſion (though in far different caſe) by the holy Angel (*Rev*. 17. 15.) *And he ſaid unto me, The waters which thou ſaweſt, where the Whore ſitteth, are Peoples, and Multitudes, and Nations, and Tongues. And* (Verſ. 18.) *the Woman which thou ſaweſt is that great City, which reigneth over the Kings of the Earth.* The Woman, the Whore of *Babylon*, ſat upon the waters, that is, ſhe ruled Kingdoms and People and Nations. And as ſhe had a Soveraignty over them, ſo ſhe was confident of her ſtability, for (*Chap*. 18.7.) *She ſaid in her heart, I ſit a Queen, and am no Widdow, and ſhall ſee no ſorrow.* Thus the Lord ſitteth indeed upon the floods ; he ſitteth upon the proper floods, his power and Soveraignty is over and upon all Seas and waters throughout the whole compaſs of the World : and he ſits upon the figurative floods, upon Nations and People, to Rule and Govern them. There (as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks) he ſitteth a King for ever.

That, God ſits upon the natural waters, is a comfortable conſideration to us all, to thoſe eſpecially that have to do upon the waters, and whoſe buſineſs is upon the Seas. And as 'tis good for good men, that floods and waters are at the command of God, ſo it may be a terror to the wicked. *Eliphaz* aſſures *Job* (Chap. 5.23.) that if he were godly he *ſhould be in League with the Stones of the Field, and the Beaſts of the Field ſhould be at peace with him.* The godly alſo are in League with the winds, and the waters of the Sea are at peace with them. But wo to the wicked and all ungodly men, for they having no league nor peace with God, yea being at enmity againſt him, cannot be at peace with winds and waters, but have reaſon to fear leſt the Lord give them commiſſion every moment (as executioners of his wrath) to deſtroy and ſwallow them up. They who have not God to friend, have no aſſurance to have the Creatures (which are God's hoſt) to friend.

Secondly, It is a great comfort alſo to Saints and godly men, that the Lord ſitteth upon the myſtical or figurative waters, Multitudes, and People, and Nations. *David* putteth both theſe together, or rather expounds the one by the other. (*Pſal*.65.7.) *Which ſtilleth the noiſe of the Seas, the noiſe of their waves, and the tumult of the People* ; that is, the Lord ſtilleth the People when they fluctuate and tumultuate like the waves of the Sea, roaring and making a noiſe in a mighty Tempeſt. The ſtorms which ariſe in the Spirits of the multitude, are often more terrible and have more dreadful effects then any ſtorm at Sea ; and is not this ſweet to remember that the Lord can ſtill thoſe tempeſts with a caſt of his eye, or a word ſpeaking ? *He can rebuke the company of Spear-men, the multitude of the Bulls, with the Calves of the People*, as *David* elegantly expreſſed the roaring rage and brutiſh folly of *the many* (Pſal. 68. 30.) and deliver his, as *David* confeſſed God had delivered him, (*Pſal*.18.43.) *from the ſtrivings of the People.*

Further, There are three things not only conſiderable, but wonderful in the Natural waters.

Firſt, Their greatneſs and vaſtneſs, the Sea is called *the great Deep*; and as it is deep, ſo 'tis large, that the bounds of it have not been fully meaſured nor diſcovered to this day. When *Job* expoſtulates about God's ſevere dealing with him, he makes two Queries (Chap. 7. 12.) *Am I a Sea, or a Whale, that thou ſetteſt a watch over me?* The Sea is the hugeſt part, except the Earth, of the inanimate lower Creation; and the Whale, without exception of any, is the greateſt of the animate; and as theſe are greateſt, ſo moſt forceable and dangerous, which is the ſpecial reaſon why *Job* adds, *that thou ſetteſt a watch over me.*

Secondly, The ſcituation of the waters is alſo wonderful, the ſuperficies or ſurface of the Sea ſwelling ſpherically (as ſome Naturaliſts both diſpute and aſſert) higher then the ſurface of the Earth, at leaſt in ſome places. So that as there are waters above our heads, a Sea, a vaſt Ocean in the Air, wrapt up in Clouds which hang and move over us; ſo many of thoſe waters which are below, do (as it were) hold up their head above the Land, or are higher then the ſuperficies of the Earth: yet the mighty power of God, more then banks and cliſts, keeps them within bounds, which they cannot paſs to overflow and cover us.

Thirdly, The diſtribution or diviſion of the waters hath wonders in it, God hath cut out channels for the water through and about the whole Earth. He hath diſtributed it into Springs under the earth, and by Rivers and Rivu'ets upon the face of the Earth. (Pſal. 104. 10.) *He ſendeth the Springs into the Valleyes, which run among the Hills.* And he hath every where made the Sea full of Ports and Creeks and Bayes and Havens, fit for reception and ſafety of Shipping.

Laſtly, Take one inſtance more of a divine Government over the Natural waters. They are not encreaſed or diminiſhed in any ſpecial place, without the meaſuring power and wiſdom of God, *He cauſeth his wind to blow, and the waters flow* (Pſal. 147. 18.) that is, They flow beyond their ordinary courſe and marks; and again he cauſeth his wind to blow, and they return to their wonted courſe and channel. We find this moſt clearly expreſſed, in that meditation upon and deſcription of the mighty powerful providence of God (Pſal. 104. 6, 7, 8, 9.) *Thou coveredſt it* (that is, the Earth) *with the deep as with a garment; the waters ſtood above the Mountains. At thy rebuke they fled; at the voice of thy Thunder they haſted away; they go up by the Mountains, they go down by the Valleyes to the place which thou haſt appointed for them: Thou haſt ſet a bound, that they cannot paſs over: that they turn not again to cover the Earth.* Unleſs the Lord did reſtrain thoſe mighty waters, and keep them as it were under Lock and Key, under his own power and command, they would quickly turn again like an enemy over the Earth. All theſe Acts of providence about the waters are but the expoſition of *Job's* Text, *He weigheth the waters by meaſure.*

Verſ. 26. When he made a decree for the Rain, and a way for the Lightning of the Thunder.

חקק a חק *Pingere ſcribere, cum authoritate decernere ſtatuere; proprie ſculpere ſtilo ferreo; hinc ſumitur pro ſtatuere vel legem dicere, quod ſtatuta et decreta ſculperentur ad futuram rei memoriam.*

Job having ſpoken of the wiſdom of God in winds and Earthly waters, proceeds to ſpeak of the wiſdom of God in ſending the waters of Heaven, or Rain-waters upon the Earth.

As before 'twas ſaid he made *a weight for the wind*, ſo here 'tis ſaid, *He made a decree for the Rain.* The word which we render, *decree*, ſignifies, in the root, to write or engrave, and thence to make Statutes and Decrees, becauſe they uſe to be written or engraven, and ſo to remain upon record for future Ages. So that, it imports two things; Firſt, The Authority of a Law; Secondly, The permanency of a record. Such an Authoritative and permanent decree hath God made for the Rain.

I will not ſtay here upon Philoſophical diſcourſe about Rain, either how that Meteor is generated and formed, how iſſued and ſent forth, either about the conception or birth of it. There will be a more fit occaſion offered in this Book to open thoſe works of Nature, or rather of God in Nature, if he ſhall pleaſe to lengthen out this work ſo far.

He made a decree for the Rain.

As the Lord according to his abſolute and uncontroleable ſoveraignty, hath made Decrees and Statutes concerning man, the chief of all Earthly Creatures, both as to his end and all thoſe means which lead thereunto; ſo he hath made a decree concerning all other Creatures, even the meaneſt Creatures, by which they are regulated in all their motions toward man; and among the reſt, *He hath made a decree for the Rain* by name.

Hence Note, *Natural Rain is under a divine Law.*

The Rain is formed and falls from Heaven upon the Earth by Statute, even by the Statute of the great God of Heaven and Earth. The Rain is under a decree in a fourfold reſpect. Firſt, For the time when it ſhall begin to Rain, (*Gen.* 7. 1.) Secondly, For the continuance, how long it ſhall Rain, (*Gen.* 7. 12.) Thirdly, For the quantity, in what meaſure and degree it ſhall Rain, (1 *Kings* 18. 45.) Fourthly, For the places and perſons, where and upon whom ſhall it Rain, (Amos 4. 7.) *I cauſed it to Rain upon one City, and cauſed it not to Rain upon another City.* The Scripture is exceeding plentiful and frequent in giving God the Glory of this decree. *Eliah* ſpeaks as if the Rain had been in his power (1 *Kings* 17. 1.) *As the Lord God of* Iſrael *liveth, before whom I ſtand, there ſhall be neither dew nor rain theſe years, but according to my word.* But that word was not his own, but the word of God. As if he had ſaid; there ſhall be no Rain but as I have declared, or as God ſhall declare by his word in my Miniſtery. Thus *David* ſings the praiſes of God (*Pſal.* 65. 9, 10.) *Thou viſiteſt the Earth* (*ſc.* with Rain, when it is as it were ſick (of a Feaver through abundance of heat) and thirſty, ſo it follows) *and watereſt it: thou greatly inricheſt it with the River of God, which is full of water.* But Rain water is not River water, why then doth he ſpeak here of a River? I anſwer, Rain is a River above, as a River is Rain below. Rain from the Clouds ſtreams, like a River, and doth the ſervice of a River to the Earth. And 'tis called not barely a River, but the *River of God*: Which may be expounded either by that common Hebraiſm, a great and wonderful River. Or Rain is called the River of God, becauſe it comes more immediately (at leaſt to appearance) from God, and is of a different riſe and Original from common Rivers; with this River, ſaith *David, Thou enricheſt the Earth.* And (as it follows in the ſame Pſalm) *Thou prepareſt them Corn, when thou haſt ſo provided for it; thou watereſt the ridges thereof abundantly: Thou ſettleſt the furrows thereof, thou makeſt it ſoft with ſhowers; thou bleſſeſt the Spring thereof.* All this is true of Gods diſpencing Rain in a proper ſence; though, the Pſalmiſt doubtleſs intends it chiefly of that ſpiritual and myſtical Rain or River of God, the Word and Spirit, by which the Church or People of God have their Souls watered refreſhed and made fruitful, according to thoſe Propheſies, *Joel* 2. 28. *Chap.* 3. 18. *Ezek.* 47. 1, 9. But, to return to the Natural Rain. The Apoſtle makes it one of Gods witneſſes in the darkeſt times and places of the World. (*Acts* 14. 17.) where having granted, that *in times paſt God ſuffered all Nations to walk in their own wayes* (*v.* 16.) that is, he did not ſend them the powerful means and light of the Goſpel to convert them from wicked wayes; he adds, God did enough to leave them without excuſe; Nevertheleſs (ſaith the Apoſtle) *He left not himſelf without witneſs, in that he did good, and gave us Rain from Heaven, and fruitful Seaſons.* Again (*Matth.* 5. 45.) *He maketh his Sun to riſe on the evil and on the good, and ſendeth Rain on the unjuſt and on the juſt.* Thus the Rain is Gods bounty, *He gives it,* 'tis a token of his care for his great Family; he ſends it, that they may have bread and be ſatisfied. The Prophet *Jeremiah* is much upon this point of providence (*Chap.* 5. 24.) *Neither ſay they in their heart, let us now fear the Lord our God, that giveth Rain, both the former and the latter in his Seaſon.* He would have them know that as Rain is the gift of God, ſo 'tis a gift which men ought not lightly to paſs by, and therefore he wonders that they did not fear the Lord, at the firſt coming and ſight of it. *Neither have they ſaid in their hearts, let us fear the Lord that giveth Rain.* The ſame Prophet deſcribes the Rain aſſembling like an Army at the call of God, at the ſound of his Trumpet, (*Jer.* 10. 13.) *When he uttereth his voice, there is a multitude of waters in the Heavens, and he cauſeth the vapours to aſcend from the ends of the Earth: he maketh lightnings with*

with Rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of his treaſures. Here we have (all which this Text in *Job* takes in) the Lords power over and upon *Waters, Vapours, Lightnings, Rain and Wind.* The Waters gather like troops, the Vapours aſcend like ſmoak, the Lightnings iſſue forth, the Rain falleth, and the Wind riſeth at his All-commanding word and decree.

And if the Lord make a decree for the Natural Rain, doth he not much more make a decree for the Spiritual, for the Rain of the Goſpel? Holy Doctrine is often called Rain in Scripture. And the ſame word in the Hebrew ſignifies to Rain and to inſtruct; *Moſes* puts both together (*Deut.* 23. 2.) *My Doctrine ſhall drop as the Rain, my ſpeech ſhall diſtil as the dew, as the ſmall Rain upon the tender Herb, and as the ſhowers upon the Graſs.* Rain makes the Earth fruitful through the bleſſing of God, and ſo doth the Word our Souls. He that waters the Earth and makes it fruitful, that it may miniſter ſeed to the Sower, and bread to the Eater, doth much more water the Soul, that it may bring forth fruit meet for his own uſe, or that himſelf may come into the garden of the Church, and eat his pleaſant fruits. When the Apoſtle had quoted that good old Law of *Moſes* (1 Cor. 9. 9.) *Thou ſhalt not muzzel the mouth of the Ox that treadeth out the Corn,* preſently inferſ this Queſtion, or rather a reproof from it, *doth God take care for the Ox?* The Lord doth take care for labouring Oxen; but he takes care much more, that thoſe labouring Oxen, the faithful and painful Miniſters of his Word, ſhould have food convenient for them. So here, doth the Lord take care to ſend the ſhowers of Heaven in ſeaſon upon the Earth? Surely he doth much more take care to ſend ſhowers of Heavenly truth in ſeaſon and out of ſeaſon (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks) upon the Souls of his precious ſervants. He gives order when, and where, and how to diſtil Word-rain upon us: and as we ſhould take heed of being unthankful for, ſo of being unfruitful under it. (*Heb.* 6. 7, 8.) *The Earth which drinketh in the Rain, that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth Herbs meet for them by whom it is dreſſed, receiveth bleſſing from God: But that which beareth Thorns and Briars, is rejected, and is nigh unto curſing, whoſe end is to be burned.* 'Tis ſad when God makes a decree againſt this Rain, and ſaith to a People as *David* to the Mountains of *Gilboa*, (2 *Sam.* 1. 21.) *Let there be no dew, neither let there be Rain upon you.* But 'tis more ſad when after we have had many ſweet Goſpel dews, and Soaking-doctrine-rains, we either bring forth no uſeful fruit, or that which is hurtful, *Briars and Thorns. He made a decree for the rain,*

And a way for the Lightning of the Thunder.

Here *Job* gives another inſtance of the mighty power of God in the works of Nature; Lightning and Thunder.

He maketh a way for the Lightning.

The word which we render **Lightning**, comes either from, or comes near to a Verb which ſignifies *to ſee*; becauſe Lightning is either ſo eaſily and quickly ſeen, or becauſe it is uſually ſeen before the Thunder is heard. Lightning is of ſo piercing and penetrating a Nature, that if it find not, it will makes its own way. Yet becauſe this penetrating power of Lightning is from God, he is ſaid to make *a way*, as it were a trodden path-way, for the Lightning; even the Lightning had never found its way, if the Lord had not made it: or the Lord is ſaid to make a way for every flaſh of Lightning, becauſe though it be a moſt ſubtile and violent impreſſion, and ſtrikes through the whole Air in a moment, yet it ſtirs not, it moves not a foot this or that way without his order and direction.

חזה *inde* חזיז *fulgur ſic dictum quod videtur antequā tonitru audiatur, ut conveniat cum* חזה *vidit* דרך *iter ſemita via quæ calcatur pedibus via trita!*

He maketh a way for the Lightning of the Thunder.

That is, for the Lightning which is accompanied with Thunder; For when it Lightens, it uſually Thunders too, though ſometimes we do not hear it; or 'tis called the Lightning of the Thunder, becauſe Lightning is not only a concomitant, but a cauſe of the Thunder. The word here rendered *Thunder*, in the Hebrew is *voices*. And Thunder is therefore ſo called, becauſe though we cannot ſay of it, as we ſay of ſome Creatures, *That, it is a voice, and more then that, nothing*; (for it hath ſome very uſeful and very terrible effects) yet ſuch a mighty voice, ſuch a dreadful ſound goes out with Thunder, that it is both elegantly and moſt ſignificantly called *a voice*, yea not only by Heathen Authors, but by the Scripture, *The voice of God* (*Pſal.* 29. 3.) *The voice of the Lord is upon the waters, The God of glory Thundreth, The Lord is upon many waters, the voice of the Lord is powerful* (or, *in power*) *the voice of the Lord is full of Majeſty* (or, *in Majeſty*) *the voice of the Lord breaketh the Cedars,* &c. *John* the Baptiſt was called in the Propheſie (*Iſa.* 40. 3.) and he calleth himſelf in the Goſpel (*John* 1. 23.) *A voice*: Being asked, *Who art thou?* He anſwered, *I am the voice of one crying in the Wilderneſs.* And he was called *a voice*, becauſe his office and errand was to bore the ears of the *Jews* with Preaching repentance and preparing the way of the Lord, as it were with Thunder. And beſides, thoſe rouzing and awakening Preachers of the Goſpel, *James*, and *John* the Brother of *James*, were ſurnamed by Chriſt himſelf (*Mark* 3. 17.) *Boanerges, which is the Sons of Thunder.* Now if theſe men of voice, were called Sons of Thunder, and the Thundering Baptiſt, a voice well may Thunder it ſelf be called a voice. And it is here put Plurally, *the Lightning of the Thunders or voices,* becauſe God doth (as it were) diſcharge many of theſe great Cannons near together from the Clouds, and the Artillery of Heaven goeth off clap after clap. When it Lightens we may ſay, God gives fire; and when it Thunders we hear the report of it. For though the Thunder be in order of Nature before, or at leaſt contemporary with the Lightning, yet in order of time we ſee the coruſcation or flaſhes of Lightning, before we hear the ſound or voice of Thunder, or the Thunder which is a voice. And the reaſon is, becauſe the eye is nimbler at its work then the ear; the eye taking in its object by a direct line, but the ear by a gyration from ſeveral angles. Daily experience teacheth us, that when any Gun great or ſmall is diſcharged, we ſee the light of the fire a diſtinct ſpace before we hear the ſound of the report; eſpecially if we are at any conſiderable diſtance; and ſo at every ſtroak of an Ax or Hammer, we ſee the fall of the ſtroak, before we hear the ſound of it. And therefore *Job* doth rightly put the Lightning before the Thunder, becauſe though that Colliſion of the Clouds, which we call *Thunder*, be firſt, yet that brightneſs in the Clouds, which we call *Lightning*, is ſeen firſt. Naturaliſts diſcourſe largely of theſe two Meteors, *Lightning* and *Thunder*; the former, *is an exhalation which by frequent motion takes fire like Tow or Stubble, and breaking the ſides of the Cloud flaſheth with a ſudden brightneſs thorough the Air.* The latter is, *That ſound or voice in the Air which that hot and dry exhalation makes by a violent renting of the Cloud, whoſe thickneſs and coldneſs ſtops its paſſage and hinders it from aſcending higher.* Hence it hath its name in Latine either from *terrifying*, or from *ſounding* and *ruſhing*; we may joyn both derivations together, becauſe ruſhing with an amazing ſound through the Cloud, it terrifieth thoſe that hear it. This is a work in Nature: but *Job* who was a divine Philoſopher, calls it better, The work of God. *He makes a way for the lightning of the Thunder.*

Fulguri vocum i.e. *fulguri vel fulgetro, quod tonitrua comitari ſolet et quod tonitrua producit* Merc. קול *ſonus ſtrepitus, et via eminentis, tonitru, quod Græcis eſt* φωνὴ Διὸς, *Jovis.*

Tonitru a terendo quod ſonus ejus terreat, vel a tono et ruendo quod cum magno ſonitu, nubis percuſſio fiat et irruat. Garcæ. Meteorolog.

Hence Obſerve, *Lightning and Thunder call us to acknowledge the power and preſence of God.*

The Heathen gave this as a Title of Honour to *Jupiter, The Thunderer. David* conſidering this work of God invites us to adore and worſhip God, (*Pſal.* 29. 1, 2, 3.) *Give unto the Lord,* (*O ye mighty*) *give unto the Lord glory and ſtrength; give unto the Lord glory due unto his Name; worſhip the Lord in the beauty of Holineſs. The voice of the Lord is upon the waters, the God of glory Thundreth,* &c. As if he had ſaid, When we hear the God of Glory thundering, or becauſe the God of Glory thundereth, we ought to give him glory, and to worſhip him in the holyeſt manner, even in the *beauty of Holineſs*, or (as the Margin hath it) *in his glorious Sanctuary. Epicurus* of old (as Atheiſts of a later date) argued that to fear God, or to have the awe and impreſſion of a divine power upon our Spirits when we ſee the Lightning and hear the Thunder, or feel the Thunderbolts, was childiſh, vain and groundleſs, becauſe Thunder and Lightning proceeded from Natural cauſes. But beſides the wickedneſs and irreligion which always lies at the bottom, and is ſometimes held out uppermoſt in theſe kind of arguings, it is eaſie to convince it of ſenſleſneſs and irrationality; for may not the ſame effect be aſcribed to God, as the ſupream or firſt, and yet confeſſed to

Apud poetas appellatur Jupiter *Tonans Altitondus,* &c

to have ſubordinate and ſecond cauſes in nature, according to the Law and Rule of its production by God Originally ſet and aſſigned? And ſeeing God is the Author of Nature(as ſome have ſeen by the common light of Nature) is not God as much to be feared and honoured in thoſe things which he doth mediately by natural cauſes, as in thoſe which he wrought by his immediate hand and power? And therefore though Lightning and Thunder be a work of Nature, yet it is not only in part, but chiefly to be aſcribed to God. Yea doubtleſs, as God ordered nature to produce theſe aſtoniſhing effects for natural ends; Namely, Firſt (as learned Meteorologiſts tell us) to purge the Air and ſpend thoſe noxious vapours which are apt to taint the blood and bodyes of men with peſtilential diſeaſes; and Secondly, To ſqueeze thoſe ſponges the Cloudes, and provoke them to give Rain for the refreſhing of the Earth, as we ſee in experience Rain following the Thunder. Now I ſay, as God hath ordered Nature this work, for theſe and the like natural ends, ſo alſo for ends Sacred and Spiritual; as firſt, to ſtrike men with an aw of his Majeſty; Secondly, To ſtir them up to repentance; Thirdly, To abate their pride and humble them; Fourthly, to puniſh the proud and unhumbled, who Warring againſt Heaven, he Proclaims War againſt them from Heaven, and ſometimes actually ſhoots them dead with his Thunderbolts, or blaſts them with his Lightning.

But ſome object; if God *makes a way for the Lightening of the Thunder*; how comes it to paſs that the Lightning and Thunder *ſeem ſo often to miſs or miſtake their way?* Whence is it that they ſometimes ſtrike good men either in their perſons or goods; and that the wicked moſt times eſcape the ſtroak and danger of them? I anſwer; God hath not appointed any of his outward diſpenſations, whether of good or evil, to be the mark of a diſtinction between good and evil men. *Solomon* thus determin'd this Queſtion (*Eccl.* 9. 1.) *No man knoweth either love or hatred by all that is before them:* and (though all men are not alike, yet) *all things come alike to all*; *there is the ſame event to the righteous and to the wicked.* God would have us learn to make a difference of men, by what we ſee of God in them, and by their walking according to the mind of God, not by what himſelf is pleaſed to do upon them, or with them. And therefore he makes the way of the Thunder lye ſometimes to the Houſe and Perſon of the righteous, that men may not find his way, but fear and honour him both for his word and works. Lightning and Thunderbolts do not fly at random (as Bullets in a Battle do not) nor ſtrike without direction at hap-hazzard him that is next, (as ſome Heathens thought) but are guided by an unerring hand to their mark, when we are ready to ſay they have miſſed their mark. And thus much ſome Heathens have acknowledged, *Thunderbolts* (ſaith one of them) *go not by chance, but by a certain guidance, order and decree*; *the works or workings of the Thunder are wonderfull, if thou wilt but ſeriouſly conſider them, and leave not the leaſt ſcruple in the mind, concerning this aſſertion, that there is a divine power in them.* The lowdneſs, the ſwiftneſs, the forceableneſs, the marvellous effects of Lightning and Thunder, do all Proclaim the glorious Name of God. And therefore as Thunder is a great work of God in Nature, ſo the greateſt works of God in providence have been done in Thunder, or expreſſed by it. The Law was given in *Thunder and Lightning, ſo that all the People that were in the Camp trembled* (Exod. 19. 16.) God ſhewing at the publication of the Law, how terrible he would be to the tranſgreſſors of it. Yea when God gave teſtimony to his Son from Heaven (*Luke* 9. 35.) *There came a voice out of the Cloud, ſaying, This is my beloved Son, hear him.* This ſpeaking from the Cloud, the *Jews* call (בת קול) *The daughter of a voice*, it being as it were a mild or whiſpring Thunder. And when a like voice came from Heaven (in anſwer to Chriſt's prayer, *Father glorifie thy Name*) *ſaying, I have both glorified it, and will glorifie it again; the People that ſtood by and heard it, ſaid that it thundered.* (John 12. 28, 29.) Thus alſo the great things which God will do in the World are given out by Thunder. (*Rev.* 10. 3.) *The Seven Thunders uttered their voices*; and (Chap. 11. 19.) *When the Temple of God was opened in Heaven, there were Lightnings and voices and Thunderings.* Signifying, what dreadfull things God would do, what terrible things in righteouſneſs againſt the World, as alſo for the vindication of his own Name and People.

Fortuitos iſtus, bruta fulmina, quæ nulla veniant naturæ ratione, cenſet. Plinius. *Fato non ire fulmina, ſed ferri. Mira fulminis ſi intueri velis opera ſunt, nec quicquam dubij relinquentia quin divina inſit illis et ſubtilis potentia.* Seneca.

Take two or three Notes more general from theſe two Verſes, as they hold out the works of God in Nature.

First, *We ſhould acquaint our ſelves with the appearances of God in his works all the Creation over.*

(Pſal. 92. 5.) *O Lord, how great are thy works! And thy thoughts are very deep. A brutiſh man knoweth not: neither doth a fool underſtand this.* They are brutiſh indeed who underſtand not, that thoſe things are done and diſpoſed by more then a humane wiſdom, which the wiſdom of man cannot reach nor underſtand. Yet ſome cannot get out of the circle of Nature. And becauſe they can give ſome account from reaſon, why and how the windes blow, the waters flow, the ſhowers fall, the Thunder and Lightning are generated and brought forth, therefore they ceaſe to wonder, and will not take notice of God in them. But though theſe things have an order in Nature, yet who but God could put Nature in ſuch an order? Who could make ſuch a weight for the Windes, ſuch a meaſure for the Waters, ſuch a way for the Lightning of the Thunder but God himſelf? Who appointed the windes to cool and attemper the Air, but God? Who appointed the Rain to moyſten and refreſh the Earth but God? Who laid thoſe Pipes under ground which conveigh water to ſerve all the World? And who made thoſe channels and ciſterns in which it is conveighed and kept above ground for the uſe of man, but God? Who commanded the Thunder to rent and tear the Clouds, and the fiery Lightning to fill the Air, but God? When any of theſe come forth for Judgment, may they not ſay *Rabſhakeh*, (Iſa. 36. 10.) *Are we come up without the Lord againſt this Land to deſtroy it? The Lord ſaid unto us, go againſt this Land and deſtroy it.*

Nemo tam rudis eſt ut non intelligat quin id quod mirabili ratione conſtat, conſilio aliquo majori ſit inſtructum. Lact. lib. 1. Inſtit. cap. 2

Secondly, *The leaſt motions of the Creature are under the hand of God as well as the greateſt.*

When *Job* ſaith, *God made a weight for the windes*, we may underſtand it of the lighteſt windes, of the leaſt puff or breath of wind, as well as of the weightieſt ſtorms which preſs all down before them. And when he ſaith, The *Lord weigheth the waters by meaſure*, this care extendeth to the ſmalleſt rivulet, as well as to the main or mighty Ocean; and *makes a decree* for the dewing drops, as well as for the drowning ſhowers. He makes way for the weakeſt as well as the ſtrongeſt claps of Thunder; the craſhing, hiſſing, whiſpering, puffing Thunder, (ſo Naturaliſts diſtinguiſh) is of God, as well as the roaring, rouzing, tearing, aſtoniſhing, killing claps of Thunder. As God is able to do the greateſt things, ſo the leaſt are not done without him. And it is his honour as much that he will and doth order ſmall things, as that he can order and diſpoſe the greateſt.

Thirdly, *Thoſe things which are moſt boyſterous, violent and furious, are yet at the ordering and under the hand of God.*

If Winds are under order, if the Waters are under order, if Thunder and Lightning are under order, then the moſt diſorderly things are under order, and the moſt untruly muſt obſerve the Rule of God. (Pſal. 32. 9.) *Be not as the Horſe and Mule which have no underſtanding, whoſe mouth muſt be held in with Bit and Bridle, leſt they come near unto thee.* As thoſe living Creatures which are moſt head-ſtrong and dangerous, are yet mannaged by men; we have a Bit and Bridle, a Whip and Spur for the Horſe and Mule, and can bind them to their good behaviour. So thoſe inanimate Creatures, which moſt endanger the life of man, are guided and curbed as a Horſe with Bit and Bridle by the all-powerfull hand of God. The Winds and Thunders which exceed Lions and Bears in wildneſs and fierceneſs, the Lord can tame and make as gentle as a Lamb. Winds and Thunder which are able to overthrow the talleſt Cedars in *Lebanon*, and root up the ſtrongeſt Oakes of *Baſhan*, which ſhake, yea ſhiver the beſt founded Towers, and make the Mountains tremble, theſe the Lord can confine and impriſon in their proper places, ſo that a leaf of a Tree ſhall not ſhake, nor a feather, nor the lighteſt Thiſtle-down be lifted up into or move in the Air. *As the wrath of man ſhall praiſe God, and the remainder of wrath* (that is, ſo much of it, how much ſo ever it is, as is not likely to turn or be ſerviceable unto his praiſe) *he will reſtrain* (Pſal. 76. 10.) ſo the wrath and rage and violence of winds and waters, of lightning and of thunder ſhall praiſe God, as for the remainder of it, or whatſoever is not ſubſervient to that great end, he will and can reſtrain it at his pleaſure ; for, *he hath made a weight for the wind*, &c.

Fourthly, *Thoſe things which are moſt uſeful and comfortable for us, are in the power and diſpoſe of God.*

What's more univerſally comfortable and uſeful then water, rain and wind? We cannot live long without the two former, nor at all without the latter. A man may live without any manner of food many dayes, but no man can live an hour altogether without air or wind ; and when we are but ſtraiten'd either for wind or water, our lives are rendred very unpleaſant to us. Is it not then a priviledg to the Children of God, that the weight and meaſure and decree of all theſe things is made by their Father? And that they may have them for the asking?

Laſtly, Here being many words to ſet out the wiſdome and power of God in diſpoſing theſe Creatures, *weighing, meaſuring, decreeing, making a way*;

Note, *The care and providence of God concerning man is perfect and diſtinct.*

What elſe or what leſs can this heap of words import? When we ſee a man making or providing himſelf with weights and meaſures, we cannot but conclude him a wary man in his buſineſs, and that he means not to deal or do things raſhly or by gueſs. That which a man weighs and meaſures, that which he doth by a decree, and not upon a guſt of paſſion, how punctually is it done? When the Lord ſhewed *Ezekiel* in viſion (*Chap.* 4. 10, 11.) *That the Children of* Iſrael *ſhould eat their meat by weight, and drink their water by meaſure*, it notes the ſtrickneſs of their dyet, not as from temperance (ſo 'tis alwayes to eat and drink as it were by meaſure) but as from famine ; not from ſobriety, as to the uſe, but from ſcarcity, as to the enjoyment of thoſe outward comforts (and ſo 'tis a puniſhment to eat by weight, and drink by meaſure) which, I ſay, implyes ſuch ſtrictneſs in dyet, that they might not exceed (in the leaſt, not in an ounce, not in a ſpoonful) their appointed proportion of meat and drink ; they muſt in the one keep to the allotted weight, and in the other to the allotted meaſure. So then, as to *do a thing in print*, ſo *to do it by weight or meaſure*, may be a proverbial ſpeech for doing it skilfully and exactly. As he that walks by rule walks ſafely, ſo he that works by rule, works unerringly ; now if men are exact in thoſe things which they weigh, meaſure, and decree, how exact are the works of God when he is ſaid to do them by weight, meaſure, and decree? Yet theſe are not attributed to God, as if he ſtood weighing and meaſuring ; no, he hath the compaſs and proſpect of all things alwayes before, or rather in himſelf. He hath no need of deliberation, nor doth he ever deliberate about any work. But acts of deliberation attributed to God ſhew an exactneſs beyond all imaginable deliberation in all his works.

And if the Lord be thus punctual and exact in diſpenſing winds and waters, thunder and lightning, much more is he ſo in ordering the Nations and Governments, the States and Affairs of the world. If he weigh the winds and meaſure the waters, will he not weigh the works and meaſure the wayes of the Sons of men! Did not he *weigh* Belſhazzar *in the ballance, and found him wanting*? (Dan. 5. 27.) *Did not the Lord ſtand and meaſure the Earth*? (Hab. 3. 6.) *Did he not meaſure the holy City, and all that appertained to it?* (Ezek. 40. 2, 3, 4, 5. & 42. 16.) *Did he not meaſure the Temple and the Altar, and them that worſhip therein, but left the outward Court unmeaſured?* (Rev. 11. 1, 2.) And was not all this to ſhew his utmoſt exactneſs about the matters of his worſhip, and the concernments of his people? And hath he not made a decree which cannot be broken for the good of his inheritance?

How ſhould all this quiet our hearts and reſt our ſpirits in the infinite wiſdome of God, whatſoever we ſee him doing in this world or in the Churches ; for ſeeing, he orders the courſe of the world in its natural capacity by weight and meaſure, ſurely he will order the courſe of the world in its civil capacity, much more the courſe of the Church in its ſpiritual capacity, by weight and meaſure, that is, in higheſt prudence, and by unerring providence ; the Lord will not fail a grain as to weight, nor a hairs breadth as to meaſure, in all the changes and turnings here below. Be aſſured the Lord is weighing, and the Lord is meaſuring at this day among us, ſay then, it is the Lord, let him do whatſoever is good in his own eyes, and that's alwayes the beſt for all thoſe that can ſpiritually ſay ſo.

Job having ſhewed how God manifeſted his wiſdome in the diſpoſe of theſe naturals, draws up all in the Twenty-ſeventh verſe.

Then did he ſee it, &c.

What did he ſee? He ſaw that wiſdome, which lay out of the ſight of all Creatures, *Which the Vultures eye never ſaw, and which was hid from the eyes of all living, and kept cloſe from the fowls of the air.*

Verſ. 27. **Then did he ſee it, and declare it, and prepared it, yea and ſearched it out.**

So then this verſe 27. cloſeth the former point, upon which *Job* had long inſiſted ; for having made an inquiry after wiſdome all the Creation over, and not finding it, he told us where wiſdome is to be had (*v.* 23.) *God underſtandeth the way thereof, and knoweth the place thereof* ; he gave alſo a reaſon or demonſtration, that *God knoweth the place thereof* (v. 24.) *for he looketh to the ends of the Earth, and ſeeth under the whole Heavens, to make the weight for the winds, and he weigheth the waters by meaſure* ; *when he made a decree for the rain, and a way for the lightning of the thunder.*

Then did he ſee it.] This whole verſe hath a twofold reading.

Firſt, As of a Thing.

Secondly, As of a Perſon.

Our tranſlation runs in the former ſence, *Then did he ſee It.* Which *It* is four times repeated, together with four diſtinct acts of God about it. Whereof the firſt in order of the Text, is, his ſight of it.

Then did he ſee it.] There are three Queries to be anſwered concerning this ſight of God.

Firſt, It may be enquired about the time, *when did he ſee it?*

Secondly, About the place, *where did he ſee it?*

Thirdly, About the manner, *how did he ſee it?*

To the firſt Querie, the anſwer (aa I touched before) is plain in verſe 26 ; *When he made a decree for the rain, and a way for the lightning of the thunder, then did he ſee it* ; then, that is, from the beginning of the world ; yet we muſt not reſtrain it to that beginning ſtrictly taken, as if the firſt ſight that God had of wiſdome was when he began to make the world ; for he had the ſight of it from everlaſting, we can put no other *date* upon that act *but eternity*. The particle of time, *Then*, doth not denote a time wherein God began to ſee, or to take notice of wiſdome, but it implyes and imports thus much, that God had alwayes acquaintance with it, only he did not explain or hold it forth, he did not give it out, as it were, to the view of the world, till the beginning of time, when he Created the world, then he made a *weight for the wind, and a decree for the rain*, then was the time when God ſaw it ſo, as (which follows in the Text) *to declare it* ; *then did he ſee it, and declare it* ; that is, then did he ſee it to declare it, or give teſtimony and demonſtration of it. The wiſdome of God is eternal, and therefore his ſight of it muſt needs be eternal.

Illud jam tum *non principium temporis que cæperit eſſe in deo ſapientia ſignificat, ſed cum ab æterno eam habuerit tum demum explicuiſſe, cum res quas ſapientiſſimè effecit cæpit condere.* Merc.

Secondly, *Where did he ſee it?* Or where was wiſdome ſeen? At verſe 23. it is ſaid, *God underſtandeth the way thereof, and he knoweth the place thereof* ; but where is the place in which God ſaw it? I anſwer, God ſaw it in himſelf : This wiſdome is in God, yea this wiſdome is God, we are to throw off the leaſt imagination that God ſaw this excellent and glorious wiſdome, or underſtood it in any place or way extrinſecal or diſtant from himſelf. By this wiſdome he made all things that were made. The actual contemplation of it in himſelf was the production of the world, as to its being in Creation, and as to its order and well-being under the government of his providence.

Tunc, ſc. *quando ſaticebat Creaturas vidit illam* i. e. *ſapientiam in ſeipſo in quantum per actualem ſuæ ſapientiæ co'ſi'lerationem res in eſſe producit.* Aquin.

Thirdly, It may be queſtioned ; *How ſaw he it?* To ſee, in a proper ſence, is a ſenſitive act of the bodily eye ; but as God is a Spirit, whom no eye hath ſeen nor can ſee, ſo being

ing a Spirit he doth not ſee with the eye. His *ſight* of wiſdome is his knowledg, fruition, and enjoyment of it; 'tis his moſt intimate acquaintance with, and poſſeſſion of it. Thus wiſdome expounds the ſight of God by poſſeſſion, in the place before cited (*Pro.*8.22.) *The Lord poſſeſſed me in the beginning of his way before his works of old.*

Further, Some expound this wiſdome, not of the object ſeen, but of the medium or light by which God ſaw all things. And thus the Text is carried in all the four parts of it; *Then did he ſee* (all things) *by it*, and *then he did declare* (all things) *by it, then did he prepare* (all things) *by it, and then did he ſearch* (all things) *by it*; that is, what ever God did, he did by his infinite hidden unſearchable wiſdome. Thus much for the clearing of *Jobs* firſt ſſertion, *then did he ſee it.*

Hence Obſerve, *God ſaw all things, all the works of wiſdome, and all the wiſdome of his works from eternity in himſelf.*

He ſaw wiſdome, and he ſaw all things by that wiſdome: As *God ſaw every thing that he had made, and behold, it was very good* (*Gen.* 1. 31.) ſo God ſaw every thing before he made it: He had, as it were, the platform, the mould, the Idea of all his works of Creation, and of all his works of Providence alwayes before him. Not that God needed to draw a platform of things to work after. When men have a great building to ſet up, they draw the pattern or plot of it, and keep it by them, that the whole work may go up ſutably, the Lord is infinitely above ſuch poor helps as theſe, he doth all things infinitely more exactly then men, who work by models and forms without them; God had the form of all that himſelf purpoſed to do, and of all things that were or are to be done in the world in himſelf before they were. Thus he ſpake by the Holy Prophet (*Iſa.*46. 10.) *Remember the former things of old, for I am God, and there is none elſe, I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from antient times the things that are not yet done.* If the Lord had not a clear ſight of all things, from the end to the beginning, he could not make them known, nor *declare the end*, that is, what the concluſion or iſſues of all things ſhall be from the beginning; and when 'tis ſaid *he declareth the end*, we muſt take in all the intermediate acts and ſecond cauſes which concur to the making up of that concluſion. It is the priviledg of God alone to be able to declare the end from the beginning. 'Tis commonly ſaid when any great buſineſs is undertaken; *We have ſeen the beginning of it, but who can tell the end of it?* We have ſeen the beginning of Wars and Troubles in this Nation, and we have ſeen a great Progreſs, but we know not what the furtheſt end may be; and who could believe they would have come to ſuch an end as now they are at? But God ſaw the end that is now, and what the end will be to the end from the beginning; this is his glory, and it is his peculiar glory. Man cannot ſee what ſhall be done to morrow, nor can he ſee the end or iſſue of what is doing this day. Man cannot ſee a day before him, but God can ſee thouſands and thouſands of years before him; *Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world* (Acts 15.18.) Where ſtill remember that, thoſe words, *from the beginning of the world*, are not to be underſtood as if the Lord began to know all things at the beginning of the world, and did not know them before the world began: But the Scripture ſpeaks ſo, becauſe, the beginning of the world, was the firſt or beginning of time, and ſo to know from the beginning of the world leads us to this conſideration, that the knowledg of God, as himſelf, is eternal or from eternity.

Auguſtinus lib. 5. de Geneſi ad literam.

One of the Ancients brings this place of *Job*, to prove that all things, before they were or had any being themſelves, had a being in the fore-knowledg of God, and that they were infinitely more perfect in the foreknowledg of God, then in their created exiſtencies, becauſe there they are in their fountain and original. What *David* ſpake (*Pſal.*139. 15,16.) concerning this Body, we may take up in reference to all man, Soul and Body, yea in reference to all things with their iſſues and operations; *Their ſubſtance was not hid from him when they were made in ſecret, and curiouſly wrought in the loweſt parts of the Earth. His eye did ſee their ſubſtance, yet being unperfect, and in his Book all their members were written, which in continuance were faſhioned; when as yet there was none of them.* God had (as it were) a ſcheme of all the limbs and lineaments of mans Body, before his Body was; before there was any one bone joynt or member, the whole was in the knowledg of God. And may we not we ſpeak thus alſo concerning the whole Body of humane affaires, and divine providences? The ſubſtance of all theſe great things is not hid from God, when men are forming them in ſecret. There is a cloſe contriving and faſhioning of matters in the brain of man; there is as a contriving, ſo a ſhaping up of this Body of actions, and the other Body of actions, the ſubſtance of all which is not hid from God, when as yet there is nothing of them appearing above-board unto men. The Prophet (*Iſa.* 29. 15.) denounceth *a woe unto them that dig deep to hide their counſel from God, and their works are in the dark, and they ſay, who ſeeth us? who knoweth us?* But the Lord ſeeth both the ſubſtance and the circumſtances of their works, even while they are imperfect; he ſeeth them not only when they come forth faſhioned and made up, but when they are rude and unpoliſht, yea God ſeeth them not only when they are imperfect in the heads and hearts of men, but even before they come into their heads or hearts: when as yet there was no ſuch thing in the remoteſt imagination of man, he ſaw them in all their ſhapes and colours and compleateſt conſtitutions.

For the cloſe of this point, we may note five properties of this ſight of God.

Firſt, It is intellectual; as God cannot be ſeen, ſo he ſeeth not with bodily eyes.

Secondly, This ſight is full and perfect, he hath not a glimps or glimmering repreſentation of things, he ſeeth not *darkly as in a glaſs, but face to face*, the face of every thing comes before his face; as we can ſee only the Back-parts of God, ſo we uſually ſee no more but the back-parts of thoſe things which are done by men, yea our ſight is often deceived, and we think we ſee that which indeed we ſee not: but the ſight of God is infallible, he ſeeth every thing (without error) as it is.

Thirdly, This ſight is univerſal, Gods ſight is not bounded by any object, it reacheth all things, not only great but ſmall, even the ſmalleſt, not only the fall of a Prince, but of a Sparrow on the ground (*Mat.*10.29.) not only things neere at hand, but things afar off, things fartheſt off are within the ſight of God. And indeed whereſoever any thing is, it cannot be far from God, who himſelf *is not far from every one of us* (Acts 17. 27.)

Fourthly, The ſight of God is from everlaſting; God did not begin to ſee, as he did not begin to be. And as this ſight is from everlaſting, ſo it is to everlaſting; as he did not begin to ſee, ſo he doth not ceaſe to ſee that which he ſeeth. As himſelf is, ſo he beholdeth all things by one pure Act.

Fifthly, The ſight of God is operative; God is not a bare ſpectator, his ſight of things gives them their effect, as will appear further in that which followeth. So much of the firſt Act, *Then did he ſee it*; The ſecond is.

מפר *Enarravit, numeravit.*

And declare it.] The word which we tranſlate to **declare**, ſignifies alſo to *number*, I ſhall touch upon it in both ſignifications, both being made uſe of by interpreters upon the place; firſt as we.

Angelis. Aquin. *Primo homini.* Cajet. *Hanc deus ipſe narravit tunc cum admirabilis rerum ſpecias humanis oculis propoſuit, quæ deum ſapientem eſſe prædicarunt, qui ſciret & potentem qui poſſit egregium illud opus è nihilo producere.* Sanct.

Then did he declare it.] To declare a thing notes the manifeſtation of it to others; and here the queſtion is, to whom did God declare it? Some anſwer, he declared it to *Angels.* Others he declared it to the *firſt man*, and ſo in him as a common perſon, and the repreſentative of mankind, to all men who ſhould follow.

But it may be queſtioned again, how did God declare it?

I anſwer, There is a two-fold declaration of a thing; firſt, formal; ſecondly, vertual. God declareth formally when he ſpeaks out any matter in ſo many words; and there is no doubt but God did thus declare his wiſdome both to Angels and to men at the beginning of the world. He made alſo a vertual declaration of it by ſuch ſignes and ſignal teſtimonies as made it known and plain beyond words, or as plain as words could make it. Thus the Lord declared his wiſdome, in ſetting up the frame of the world, and in making ſo many wonderful and excellent ſorts of Creatures, to adorne and inhabit it. All theſe declared, as the power of God, that he was able, ſo the wiſdome of God, that

he

UMI

Figuratè narravit quia materiam præbuit enarrandi eam, quum ipſæ res a deo creatæ, dei ſapientiam abunde eloquantur, teſtentur & deprædicent. Merc.

he knew how to contrive and bring forth ſuch a vaſt and ſtupendious fabrick, with the furniture of it. The Lord made a real declaration of his wiſdome, when he made that which muſt needs declare, yea proclaime and trumpet out the Author of them *infinitely wiſe*. That wiſdome which lay in the mind of God from Eternity, he did expreſs, ſtamp and print upon viſible things, in the work of Creation, yea and he gives as it were a new and freſh edition of that infinite wiſdome in the works of his providence every day. *Then did he declare it.*

Hence Note, *God hath made known his wiſdome from the beginning of the world.*

God declares himſelf three-wayes.
Firſt, By his Word, to the ear.
Secondly, By his Spirit, to the heart.
Thirdly, By his works, to the eye : and theſe are either works of Creation, or Providence. *David* wonders at the declaration, which is made by the works of God (*Pſ.*19.1.) *The Heavens declare the glory of God* (it is this word) we cannot want a preacher of the wiſdome of God, while we behold the Heavens) *and the firmament ſheweth his handy-work* (ſuch work as no hand but his could do) *day unto day uttereth ſpeech, night unto night ſheweth knowledg*; that is, night and day ſhew the wiſdome and knowledg of God in creating and ordering the motions and ſtations of the Creature.

Learn the wiſdome of God from his works, from what he once did, and from what he hath done ever ſince, and is dayly doing. For even the works of God are ſuch a diſcovery of the wiſdome of God, as will leave all men without excuſe; as the Apoſtle concludes in his firſt Chapter to the *Romans*. Though the Creatures cannot make ſuch a diſcovery of God to us as will ſave us; yet they make ſuch a diſcovery of God as will convince us, and ſtop our mouths for ever, if by their teaching alone we *glorifie him not as God, nor are thankful, but become vain in our imaginations, and our fooliſh hearts are darkned*. The Apoſtle there enforms us how ſorely and ſeverely God revenged the neglect of the declaration of his wiſdome by his works; and if ſo, how ſeverely will he revenge the neglect of the declaration of his wiſdome by his word, that word which he hath declared by his ſubſtantial word, his Son Jeſus Chriſt? (*Heb.* 1.1.) *God who at ſundry times, and in divers manners, ſpake in time paſt unto the fathers by the Prophets, hath in theſe laſt dayes ſpoken to us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom alſo he made the world*; *who being the brightneſs of his glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himſelf purged our ſins, ſate down at the right hand of the Majeſtie on high*. And as this Chriſt the Son of God, is the brightneſs of his Fathers glory, ſo *the light of the knowledg of the glory of God ſhineth to us in the face of Jeſus Chriſt* (2 Cor. 4.6.) That is, the wiſdome, goodneſs, and mercy of God, which are his glory, are made known to us in the perſon and offices of Jeſus Chriſt. Now, I ſay, if God proceeded ſo ſeverely with thoſe who did not make uſe of that vertual declaration of his wiſdome in the Creature, what will he do to thoſe who ſlight or do not improve what he hath formally declared in the perſon of his Son, and what he declareth daily in the preaching of the Goſpel? *Then did he declare it.*

Secondly, The word which we render *to declare*, ſignifies alſo *to number*, or account, and ſo 'tis uſed in this conjugation (*Pſ.*22. 17.) *I may tell* (or *number*) *all my bones*; the bones of a man may be numbered at any time; but the bones of a man in health and full of fleſh cannot be ſeen diſtinctly, and ſo cannot be told; therefore *David*, as a type of Chriſt, ſpake thus, to ſhew how he was worn and conſumed with ſorrow, even ſo conſumed, that (as we ſay of a macerated lean man) he might tell or number all his bones, they (as it follows in the ſame verſe) *even looked and ſtared upon him*. Thus alſo did God tell or number wiſdome, that is the ſeveral wayes and acts of wiſdome. He declared them Arithmetically, or had an exact account of them, how many they were, or how many he purpoſed to put forth among the children of men. God took the number of all things that he would make, and of all that he would do; not that God needs to keep accounts, as men do; but he is ſaid to do ſo, that we may know aſſuredly he knows the number of them as particularly as if he kept a Book of Accounts, and ſet down the number of them.

Hence Note, *God had a perfect account in himſelf from the beginning what he would do, and what ever ſhould be done or come to paſs in the world.*

He reckoned how many Creatures he would make, and of what ſorts, he alſo reckoned what ſhould be acted in the ſeveral ages of the world, and how every thing ſhould be diſpoſed of; this is beyond our comprehenſion, but the Lord is able to comprehend all things, himſelf being the comprehenſion of all things, *All and One is* (as we ſay) *all one to him, who is himſelf more then all, yea to whom all things are as nothing*. The Scripture tells us more then once how the divine Arithmetick numbers thoſe things that are to us innumerable. The Lord ſaith to *Abraham*, *Lift up now thine eyes, and look now towards Heaven, and tell the Stars if thou be able to number them; and he ſaid unto him, ſo ſhall thy ſeed be*; that is, they ſhall (as to man) be innumerable or without number : but the Lord knows the number of the Stars (*Pſ.* 147.4.) *He telleth the number of the Stars, he calleth them all by their names*. The old Aſtronomers could hardly tell them to eleven hundred, and the Moderns with their moſt artificial glaſſes are as far from numbring, as they are from governing them; but the Lord telleth them, as a Shepheard doth his Flock, or a Maſter his Family, and calleth them all by their names; which implyes, as a diſtinct knowledg of them, ſo a putting of them into their ſeveral imployments. We think the hairs of our head cannot be numbered, yet Chriſt ſaith (*Mat.* 10. 30.) *The hairs of your head are all numbred*. Which he ſpake, to aſſure his Diſciples that nothing ſhould befall them but what he had reckoned upon before. *Thou numbreſt my ſteps* (ſaith *Job* Ch. 14. 16.) And again (*Ch.* 31. 4.) *Doth not he count all my ſteps?* Yea ſaith *David* (Pſ. 56. 8.) *Thou telleſt my wandrings*. God hath the number of all our actions, which *Job* calls *his ſteps*; and of all our afflictions and perſecutions, which *David* calls his *wandrings*, becauſe they gave him many troubleſome and uncertain removes. As the Lord knows the particular account of all that himſelf will do, ſo of all that we do or ſuffer. He is (as we put in the Margin, *Dan.* 8.13.) *The number of ſecrets; or the wonderful numberer*. The word *Palmoni* there uſed by the Prophet, being compounded of *Pala*, which ſignifies wonderful, and *Manah* to number, is moſt properly applicable to Chriſt the word and wiſdome of the Father, to whoſe truſt all the ſecrets of providence are committed, and from him tranſlated by ſuch inſtruments as he raiſeth up and ſendeth forth to execute all the Fathers appointments. The Father hath numbered them to him as Mediator and King of Saints, and he fulfils them according to their number, not one of them ſhall be miſſing or ſhall fail. *Then did he declare or number it.*

כונ
Aptavit, diſpoſuit, ſtabilivit

And prepared it.] That's the third Act.

This word alſo hath a twofold ſignification in Scripture, and both very appliable to this place.

Firſt, As we tranſlate, *to prepare, to fit, to diſpoſe* a thing for ſuch and ſuch a buſineſs, or uſe, to ſuch and ſuch an end or deſign.

Secondly, *To eſtabliſh, to confirm, or ſettle*; and it is uſeful for us to conſider the Text under both theſe readings.

Firſt, He *prepared it*, He diſpoſed or directed it; God doth not provide before-hand, for any buſineſs, as men do, that he may have things in readineſs when he hath occaſion to uſe them: As it is ſaid of *David*, that he made a preparation for the building of the Temple, and laid up vaſt Stores and Treaſures towards the finiſhing of that work by *Solomon*. But when 'tis ſaid the Lord *prepared it*, the meaning is, that the wiſdome of God was in a readineſs for all his works both of Creation and Providence, even as if he had been a long time providing and preparing materials for them. The Lord who hath all things alwayes in his hand, doth not (as men) prepare things afore-hand for what himſelf means to do. The ſignification of his pleaſure is ſufficient to put thoſe things into act, which as to us and all ſecond cauſes have not the leaſt appearance of the remoteſt poſſibility.

Hence Note, *God from everlaſting did moſt wiſely order and diſpoſe all things to and for their ſeveral ends and iſſues.*

All things were ready to be from everlaſting, though they began to be in time. They were prepared to appear, though we can hardly ſay there was any preparation for them, when they did appear. The Temple of *Solomon* was the more ſpeedily ſet up, becauſe as the Gold and Silver was provided by *David*, ſo the Timber and Stones were prepared before in the Mountains and Forreſts of *Lebanon*. All being ready the Fabrick was quickly put together and raiſed. God ſet up this Gate-houſe, the World, in ſix dayes, he could have done it in ſix houres, yea in one moment; there was but a *Fiat* given, a Word ſpoken, and every thing came forth according to its kind. 'Tis ſo alſo in providentials; the Lord is alwayes ready. We read of *a great Prince*, who was called *The unready*, becauſe he was ever unprepared for action; 'tis often ſo with men, they have not things at hand or at a call, but are unprepared and to ſeek when they ſhould do their work; their Inſtrument is out of tune when muſick is look'd for, and they are ſo long a making ready for their buſineſs, that they loſe it, and their expectants are tired inſtead of being relieved. But all things are fit to ſerve Gods deſign, even when nothing ſeems to fit it. When we ſee means in their rudeſt heaps, a very Chaos of confuſion, then are they in a fitneſs and preparedneſs to ſerve Gods appointment and command. What one of the antients ſpake, both truly and comfortably, concerning the grace of God, *It knows no tedious preparations* (the grace of God is alwayes ready, he is ready to pardon the guilty, and ready to comfort ſorrowful Souls; he is ſo ready and prepared to ſhew mercy, that he prepares us (when unready.) to receive mercy; now as the grace and ſpiritual mercies of God) ſo alſo the external works or providences of God, are alwayes ready, they know no ſluggiſh nor lazy delayes; God can be as quick as he will in all his diſpatches. And as the things of this World are prepared, ſo alſo are thoſe of the World to come. The Kingdome, which is the portion of Saints, is a Kingdome prepared. *Then ſhall the King ſay unto them on his right hand, come ye bleſſed of my Father inherit the Kingdome prepared for you from the foundation of the world* (Mat. 25. 34.) That form of ſpeaking *from the foundation of the World*, doth not import as if then it was prepared; for it was prepared from everlaſting, it was ever ready. But as 'tis called *a Kingdome prepared*, to ſhew the excellency of it; and as 'tis called a Kingdome *prepared for them*, to ſhew the ſutableneſs of it to all their deſires and needs; ſo 'tis ſaid to be *prepared for them before the foundation of the World*, to ſhew the freeneſs of Gods grace in beſtowing it upon them. That was prepared for them, before they had any preparation in themſelves for it; only the ſame free grace which prepared it for them before time, did in due time prepare them for it. And thus likewiſe *the unquenchable fire*, which ſhall be the portion of the wicked, is ſaid to be a *fire prepared*; *go ye curſed into everlaſting fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels.* God hath his puniſhments for ſinners, and his reward for Saints in a readineſs. *David* profeſſeth (*Pſ.* 108. 1.) *O God, my heart is fixed: I will ſing and give praiſe, even with my glory*: It is the ſame word uſed in the Text, we tranſlate, *my heart is fixed*, others render, *prepared.* A godly man would be alwayes ready to ſerve God; and it is moſt certain God is alwayes ready to ſave and do him good. Comforts and Croſſes, Mercies and Judgments, are determined; and God hath them all in ſtore by him. The Pſalmiſt cryes out in a holy pang or paſſion of joy and thankfulneſs at the remembrance of this; *O how great is thy goodneſs, that thou haſt laid up for thoſe that fear thee, which thou haſt wrought for thoſe that truſt in thee before the Sons of men!* (Pſal. 31. 19.) God hath treaſures of mercies for his people, as of *Snares, Fire and Brimſtone, to rain upon the wicked, as the portion of their cup* (Pſal. 11. 6.)

Neſcit tarda molimina ſpiritus ſancti gratia.

Secondly, As the word ſignifies, *to confirm, and eſtabliſh*, Learn,

God hath ſurely ſettled and eſtabliſhed all the wayes and iſſues of his divine wiſdome from the beginning to the end of the World.

And according to this eſtabliſhment, he ſettles or unſettles all the purpoſes and projects of the ſons of men. The Prophet reports the work of God in both (*Iſa.* 44. 25, 26.) *He fruſtrates the token of the lyars, and maketh diviners mad; he turneth wiſe men backward, and maketh their knowledg fooliſh.* And why ſo? becauſe they divine or propheſie of things to come beſides the purpoſe of God; lyars would fruſtrate the truth of God, and therefore he will fruſtrate their tokens, and make them mad with rage to ſee their dreams and predictions croſt. *But he confirmeth the word of his Servant*, why? becauſe he hath put a word into his Servants mouth, to ſhew what is in his own heart to do; he therefore confirmeth the word of his Servant, becauſe it is a confirmation of his own word; *and he performeth the counſel of his Meſſengers*, becauſe that is the performance of his own counſel; for ſaith the Lord by the ſame Prophet in purſuance of this great and comfortable truth (*Iſa.* 64. 10.) *My counſel ſhall ſtand, and I will do all my pleaſure.* Let men thruſt and ſhove as hard as they will, they cannot put my counſel a hairs breadth out of its place, no nor make it move in its place, it ſhall ſtand (with a *non obſtante*) notwithſtanding all their ſtirrings and ſtrugglings with it or againſt it; and let men, the greateſt, the wiſeſt of men, be as much diſpleaſed as they will at what I do, I will (and ask them no leave) *do all my pleaſure.* And thus *David* ſhews at once the ſtability of Gods counſel, and the inſtability of theirs who either give or take counſel contrary to his (*Pſal.* 33. 10, 11.) *The Lord bringeth the counſel of the Heathen to nought* (or, as the Margin hath it, *maketh it fruſtrate*) *he maketh the devices of the people* (their fineſt and moſt artificial contrivances) *of none effect. The counſel of the Lord ſtandeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all Generations*; that is, whatſoever he hath thought, ſhall be done in its proper time and generation. As man periſheth, ſo his thoughts periſh too; that which he hath been ſpinning out and weaving together into a plot many years together may periſh in a moment; but as God himſelf is infinitely removed from the leaſt ſhadow of turning, ſo much more of periſhing, and ſo are his thoughts. The thoughts of God, as God himſelf, abide for ever. The thoughts of God are the proceed of his infinite and eternal wiſdome, of which *Job* affirms, *Then did he prepare or eſtabliſh it*, yea this preparation was its eſtabliſhment. That's his Third act concerning wiſdome.

The Fourth and laſt act is thus expreſſed.

And hath ſearched it out.

חקר *Scrutatus perſcrutatus eſt, remota aut abſtruſa exploravit, inquiſivit.*

The word notes a very diligent inquiry after or ſcrutiny about thoſe things that are ſecret and remote. But is any thing remote from or a ſecret unto God? I anſwer; there is a twofold ſearching; firſt, proper, or in kind; ſecondly, improper, or in figure. God doth not ſearch properly as men do for that which they have not; God ſearcheth wiſdome, but he doth not ſearch for it, he alwayes hath it, yea he alwayes is it. Men ſearch upon three grounds; firſt, to get what they never had; ſecondly, to find what they once had, but have loſt; thirdly, to be informed of that they know not. *David* ſaith (*Pſal.* 139. 1.) *O Lord, thou haſt ſearched and known me.* God knows without ſearching, but he is ſaid to ſearch and know becauſe he knoweth as perfectly, yea unconceivably more perfectly then we do by our exacteſt ſearchings. This expreſſion, *and ſearched it out*, imports not any antecedent imperfection, but the preſent perfection of the knowledg of God. The things that we have ſearched and laboured to be fully acquainted with, of thoſe we have a perfect knowledg; the Lord hath as clear a knowledg of all things as if he had ſearched and ſifted them to the Bran. *Zophar* ſaith, *Canſt thou by ſearching find out God?* No, but God can find out all things without ſearching; He that hath all the depths and hights, all the ſecrets and myſteries of wiſdome in his own breaſt, needs not ſearch after it. God often poſes and puzzles us with the things that we hear and ſee, they are as riddles to us; but as the hardeſt things are eaſie to the power of God, ſo

Perviſtigatio perfectionem ſcientiæ ſignificat. Merc.

ſo the darkeſt things are light, and the moſt intricate plain to the knowledge of God. There are ſome things, that when we do our beſt in ſearching, yet we cannot find. *David* was upon the croſs point of providence to this which ſtumbled *Job*; He was troubled to ſee God diſtribute good to evil men, as here *Job* was to ſee evil diſtributed to good men. And there being (according to the ancient rule) the ſame reaſon of contraries, it muſt needs be, that a man ſhould be alike ſtumbled, to ſee evil befal good men, as to ſee good befal wicked men (*Pſal.* 73. 16, 17.) *When I thought to know this it was too painful for me*; I thought to know it, but I was not able to reach it, *Until I went into the Sanctuary of God, then underſtood I their end*; that is, how matters would end or conclude with them; I uſed holy means to ſee this, I plowed with Gods Heifer to find out Gods Riddle (as *Sampſon* ſaid to the *Philiſtines*) and ſo I learned the meaning of it. *David* had never been able to find out the Riddle, had he not gone into the Sanctuary of God; that is, enquired of God; our knowledge of the ſecrets of God is the gift of God, and that gift comes out of the Sanctuary. And yet there are ſome ſecrets, ſome private boxes in the Providence of God, which though you go to the Sanctuary you ſhall never be able to find out, nor get opened to you. God will keep us in the dark about ſome things, but there is nothing dark to God. The darkneſs is no darkneſs unto him; hidden and plain, dark and light, make no difference with him, *Who is light, and in whom there is no darkneſs at all.* I ſhall not inſiſt further upon this point, having been led to it upon other paſſages of this Book.

Only take notice that here are many words, a heap of words, not a rude heap, but a moſt divinely rhetorical heap, *He ſaw, he declared, he prepared, and he ſearched it out*; and all theſe to one and the ſame purpoſe, to ſhew that the diſpenſations of God, though a ſecret to us, are as clearly, fully, and certainly known to him, as thoſe things which are moſt familiar to us, even as the things which we ſee and ſpeak of continually, or as the things which we have long prepared, yea, and ſearched to the bottom. The Apoſtle *John*, to ſhew the certainty of Chriſts manifeſtation in the fleſh in the fulneſs of time, uſeth a very parallel form of ſpeaking with this in the Text (1 *Epiſt. Chap.* 1. *v.* 1, 3.) *That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have ſeen with our eyes* (that is, undoubtedly ſeen) *which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the Word of life, that which we have ſeen and heard declare we unto you, that ye alſo may have fellowſhip with us*, namely, in the ſame faith of the Goſpel: Here are three of the five Senſes called to bear their teſtimony to the truth of Chriſts Incarnation, Hearing, Seeing, Feeling, each of the latter carrying a ſtronger teſtimony then the former, to ſee is more then to hear, and to feel is more then to ſee: And to make the truth yet more ſure, both the comparatively weaker teſtimonies are twice repeated, and the ſtronger of the two though not four times yet more then thrice. Hearing is twice repeated, *That which we have heard* (ver. 1.) *That which we have heard* (ver. 3.) and ſeeing (I ſay) is more then thrice repeated; for we have, *That which we have ſeen* (ver. 1.) and *That which we have ſeen* (ver. 3.) and a third time we have an act of the ſame ſenſe repeated, by a word which (I ſay) ſignifies more then to ſee (ver. 1.) *That which we have looked upon*; to ſee may be but a tranſient ſudden act, but *to look upon* is a very fixed and deliberate act; a very pleaſing and delightful act; we looked upon him as the rareſt object, as the very deſire of our eyes; yet this was not all; as we have heard and ſeen, yea, looked upon him; ſo which is yet a ſurer ſenſe, *Our hands have handled the Word of life.* They handled or touched him, before his reſurrection and after it. Now as the Apoſtle *John* gathers theſe four words together, hearing, ſeeing, looking, handling, to ſhew the certainty of Chriſts being (who is the Wiſdom of the Father) among them; ſo *Job* here gathers four words together, to ſhew the certainty of Wiſdoms being with God (which Wiſdom, as I ſhall touch by and by, being perſonally conſidered, is the ſame Chriſt in his Godhead ſpoken of by *John*) *He ſaw it, he declared it, he prepared it, and ſearched it out.*

Laſtly, From the complication, and chaining together of all theſe acts of God about that Wiſdom which at firſt made the World, and now diſpoſeth and orders all things in the World, take theſe Corolaries or Deductions.

Firſt, Then, *Nothing comes by chance, or fortune.*

God hath ſeen and declared, he hath prepared and ſearched that Wiſdom which orders and determines all the motions of the creature; therefore he hath a hand, an over-ruling hand in all, and he will leave nothing to hazzard.

Secondly, *Own the Wiſdom of God in all that is done in the world.*

Though we ſee much of the folly of men in many things which are done in the world, yet the Wiſdom of God is in them too. While men ſhew forth their luſts, their pride, covetouſneſs, ſelf-ſeeking, yet the Holineſs and Juſtice, the Righteouſneſs and Goodneſs of God are at work too, and will appear in perfect beauty at laſt, through all the deformities and miſ-ſhapeneſs of the works of men.

Thirdly, *Do not murmur at, be not impatient under any of the diſpenſations of God.*

There is as much preſumption in our diſſatisfactions at the works of providence in governing the World, as there would be in our diſſatisfactions at the work of creation in making the World: And to pick quarrels at what God doth, is not only as unchriſtian like, but as uncreature-like, as to pick quarrels at what God hath made. God hath ſeen and declared his Wiſdom alike in both works, and therefore woe to thoſe who diſlike or would mend his workmanſhip in either.

Fourthly, *Then all things ſhall work for good to them that are good and love God.*

For nothing works but what God hath ſeen and prepared, and ſearched out in Wiſdom: If a man be once aſſured that nothing ſhall paſs concerning him, but what a wiſe and cordial friend hath ſeen and prepared, ſurely he will never fear that any hurt ſhall befal him; 'tis ſo in this caſe, all that is done in the world God hath ſeen, and ſearched, and prepared it; all paſſeth through his hand and heart, therefore fear not O ye that are upright in heart; for though ye know not what your outward portion may be, or whether your lot will fall in a fair or foul place, as to the eye of ſenſe; yet you may certainly know, and ſee by an eye of faith, that your portion ſhall be good, and your line fall in the faireſt and fitteſt place that the Wiſdom of God could chuſe and pick out for you.

Fifthly, *Pray much.*

All is in the diſpoſe of God; his Will muſt be done, and his Wiſdom will ſee it done; therefore in all the petitions which you make, let your aim be more at the fulfilling of the Will of God, then at the fulfilling of your own. All is already prepared and in his eye, which he will do for you; and God will not be put out of his own purpoſes, no not by the prayers of his own people; therefore pray that your deſires and the will of God may meet together in prayer. A godly man may pray (as *Luther* did) *O God let my will be done*, becauſe his will is reſolved into the will of God. And though he may ſometimes ask that (ſo Chriſt himſelf did, *Matth.* 20.) which is not the will of God to give him, yet all his askings are according to the will of God; and he would have nothing at any time but what the wiſdom of God hath ſeen, and declared, and prepared, and ſearched out for him before all time; even that wiſdom of which *Job* teſtifieth, *Then did he ſee it, and declare it, he prepared it, and ſearched it out.* I have done with this verſe in the firſt reading.

I ſhall now briefly paſs through it again in the ſecond, as this Wiſdom is expounded perſonally; *Then he ſaw her, and ſhewed her, and ſettled her, and ſearched her*; ſo Maſter *Broughton* tranſlates. I might ſpeak much about *This perſonal Wiſdom*, which is no other then Jeſus Chriſt the eternal Son of God; ſo many Interpreters expound this place: For as *Job* is not at all ſpeaking of that ray or ſhadow of Wiſdom which is in man; ſo neither doth he treat only of that Wiſdom which is an Attribute of God, but he treats of God, *The Wiſdom*, that is, of that Perſon who is ſpecially called Wiſdom, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. The Wiſdom here treated of by *Job* is, *The Word* treated of by the Evangeliſt *John* (Chap. 1. 1, 2, 3.) *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God, the ſame was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him, and without him was nothing made that was made.*

Hence Note, That, *The Son of God is the eternal Wiſdom of God.*

This fundamental Article of Faith is diſcourſed of and aſſerted by *Solomon* at large, in the eighth Chapter of the *Proverbs*, from the twenty-ſecond to the thirty-ſecond verſe. There he declares, Firſt, The eternity of his Being to the thirtieth verſe: Secondly, The happineſs of his being (*v.* 31, 32.) and he doth it very near in the language of *Job*; *Solomon* brings in wiſdom, perſonal wiſdom ſpeaking thus; *The Lord poſſeſſed me in the beginning of his way*: A way is that whereby we go forth, and in which we appear openly to the view of others. And ſo the beginning of Gods way, was the Creation; for in and by that God did (as it were) ſhew himſelf openly, or made himſelf viſible, who is in himſelf altogether inviſible. This is the Apoſtles expreſs Doctrine (*Rom.* 1. 20.) *The inviſible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly ſeen, being underſtood by the things that are made, even his eternal Power and Godhead.* Thus the Creation was the firſt diſcovery of God; and then, in the beginning, God poſſeſſed that Wiſdom which is without beginning; and which was (as the Text in the *Proverbs* ſaith further) *before his works of old*; that is, before his oldeſt works, or before ever he had ſet any impreſſion or ſtamp of his Power and Godhead upon any of his works. Wiſdom was at home with God, or (as the Goſpel ſpeaks) *in his boſom*, before God went abroad, as being one with him. This eternal being of Wiſdom is aſſerted further (*ver.* 23.) *I was ſet up from everlaſting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was*; that is, before that lump or chaos was, of which *Moſes* ſaith, *It was without form and void* (Gen. 1. 1.) It was in the laſt times that the Son of God, the eternal Wiſdom, was ſent out to us, but he was ſet up from everlaſting. Chriſt hath now ſet up an everlaſting Kingdom; but he was ſet up as King from everlaſting. Hear Wiſdom affirming this eternity. *Solomon* to prove the eternity of Wiſdom, or of the Son of God, having ſaid that he was before the earth, as at firſt a rude heap, proceeds to prove the ſame point by an induction of thoſe ſeveral parts into which the earth was divided, and the forms into which it was ſhapen, to all which Wiſdom challenges precedency in time. And thoſe particulars are very worthy to be touched upon for the illuſtration as well as confirmation of this great point of faith. And firſt he begins with depths and fountains (*ver.* 24.) *When there were no depths I was brought forth, when there were no fountains abounding with water*: *Depths* are thoſe channels, thoſe vaſt veſſels or ciſterns, wherein the waters are conveyed or contained, which otherwiſe would overflow the earth, and make it unuſeful both for man and beaſt. Fountains (as the Hebrew word elegantly implyes) are thoſe eyes by which the Seas look out here and there among the hills. And ſuch is the fathomleſs depth of many waters, ſuch the continual flowing of ſome Fountains, that they may ſeem to have flowed continually, even from everlaſting; yet there was a time when there was no depths, all things being wrapt up in that unconceiveable deep of Gods infinity. There was a time when there were no Fountains, the will of God having ſealed up himſelf to himſelf who is the Fountain of all things; yet even before the birth either of Depths or Fountains, by the Wiſdom of God, was the Wiſdom, the eternal Wiſdom of God brought forth. From Depths and Fountains he proceeds to the Hills and Mountains (*ver.* 25.) *Before the Mountains were ſetled, before the Hills, was I brought forth.* Of which he ſaith, that they were *ſetled*, or (as the Hebrew elegancy hath it) *drowned*, becauſe the roots and bottoms of them are laid ſo deep out of ſight that they cannot be diſcovered, as a drowned Land cannot. Having ſpoken of the Earth in its rude unformed maſs (*ver.* 23.) he mentions the Earth again as ſeparated and formed (*ver.* 26.) *While as yet he had not made the Earth, nor the Fields, nor the higheſt part of the duſt of the World*; that is, the open Fields, Plains, and Champions, which are fitted for Corn and Graſs, for tillage or for travel; theſe he calleth, *The higheſt part* (or head) of the duſt of the World, where indeed all the duſt is raiſed, and moſt of the buſineſſes which concern mans life are tranſacted and done. Now as in theſe former paſſages, Wiſdom, or the Son of God, ſhewed the exiſtence of his Perſon eternally before the Creation, ſo in the twenty-ſevenrh, twenty-eighth, and twenty-ninth verſes following, he declares his preſence at, yea, and efficiency in the whole work of creation, and he in them makes mention of four parts of that mighty work: Firſt, Of the Heavens: Secondly, Of the Air: Thirdly, Of the Waters: Fourthly, Of the Earth. *When he prepared the Heavens, I was there*; *when he ſet a compaſs upon the face of the Depth* (the Heavens compaſs about all the inferiour bodies both of water and earth) *when he eſtabliſhed the Clouds above* (that they ſhould not break nor diſſolve into Rain, but by his order) *when he ſtrengthened the Fountains of the deep* (that is, when he gave a law to the waters under ground, not to iſſue themſelves immoderately, but only for the uſe and benefit of man) *when he gave to the Sea his decree, that the waters ſhould not paſs his commandment.* Here he ſpecifies the waters upon the earth, to which (they being ſo vaſt and unruly a body) he by an unalterable Decree ſets liſts and limits, leſt they ſhould overwhelm the dry Land, and all the Inhabitants of it. Laſtly, He ſpeaks of the eſtabliſhment of the Earth, *when he appointed the foundations of the earth* (that is, made it ſo firm that it ſhould remain perpetually unmoveable, as it were, upon its baſis) *then I was by him, as one brought up with him*: As if he had ſaid, *I the eternal Son was ever with the eternal Father, and I was daily* (or *day day*, that is, continually) *his delight*, or delights, for the Hebrew word is plural without a ſingular, as the Latine word *deliciæ* is. Nothing can make up a fit delight for God, but the contemplation of his own Wiſdom, Power, Goodneſs, Eſſence, and Perfection, and that is the perfection or a plurality of delights. *Rejoycing* (or, as the word imports, ſporting) *alwayes before him. The Son is the joy of the Father, and the Father is the joy of the Son*; and yet the Son hath another joy, as it follows in the Text, *rejoycing in the habitable part of his earth, and my delights were with the ſons of men*; that is, taking pleaſure in the whole work of creation, but eſpecially in the ſons of men, both as they were all at firſt formed and faſhioned in *Adam*, and in him bearing the ſtamp of Gods Image in their original righteouſneſs and integrity, as alſo foreſeeing that bleſſed eſtate to which they ſhould be reſtored after the fall, by his own manifeſtation in the fleſh, in which, both by doing and ſuffering he was fore-ordained to accompliſh the work of mans redemption, and to conform by a new creation all his redeemed ones to himſelf; yea, to make them one with himſelf through the mighty operation of his Spirit. Thus we ſee a large proof of the priority of Wiſdom, or of the Son of God, before all Creatures, and of his joynt work with the Father and the Spirit in the framing, making, and eſtabliſhing of all things. And this is the ſame truth which is often aſſerted in the new Teſtament and writings of the holy Apoſtles, eſpecially in that (*Col.* 1. 16, 17.) *For by him were all things created, that are in heaven and that are in earth, viſible and inviſible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities or powers, all things were created by him and for him*; *and he is before all things, and in him all things conſiſt.* He is alſo called, *The beginning of the creation of God* (Rev. 3. 14.) Not the paſſive beginning, or he that was firſt created, but the active beginning, or he by whom the creation was begun. This perſonal Wiſdom is truly and properly the only begotten Son of God, as himſelf teſtified (*John* 5. 18.) *Therefore the Jews ſought the more to kill him, not only becauſe he had broken the Sabbath, but ſaid alſo that God was his Father, making himſelf equal with God.*

Πατέρα ἴδιον ἔλεγε τὸν Θεὸν.

Firſt, He is Gods own Son (*Rom.* 8. 32.) His Son not only as *Socinians* ſay, becauſe his conception was by the holy Ghoſt; but he is the Son of God by an eternal, unſpeakable generation: Nor is he,

Secondly, The Son of God only, as they teach, becauſe he was ſet apart in a ſpecial manner for the work of mediation (*John* 10. 36.) *Say ye of him whom the Father hath ſanctified, and ſent into the world, thou blaſphemeſt, becauſe I ſaid, I am the Son of God.*

Nor is he called the Son of God only in the third place, becauſe of that ſpecial love that God bare unto him (*Matth.* 3. 17.) *And lo a voice from Heaven, ſaying, that is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed.*

Nor is he the Son of God only in the fourth place, becauſe of his reſurrection, in which *he was mightily declared to be the Son of God* (Rom. 1. 4.)

Neither fifthly is he the Son of God only, becauſe of his high exaltation (*Heb.* 5. 5.) as *Socinians* grant. But Chriſt is the Son of God, becauſe begotten of God from everlaſting. He is the Son of God by nature, as Believers are his Sons by adoption and grace, or by the grace of adoption. *Him God ſaw, and by him God did declare, and prepare, and ſearch out all things.*

This Doctrine of the eternity of perſonal Wiſdom, or that Jeſus Chriſt is the eternal Son of God, is the pillar of our Chriſtian faith. And Chriſt himſelf intending to inſtruct his Diſciples in this fundamental truth, propoſeth two Queſtions to them: Firſt, What opinion others had of him (*Matth.* 16. 13.) *Whom do men ſay, that I, the Son of man am?* The Diſciples anſwer (*ver.* 14.) *Some ſay, thou art* John *the Baptiſt, ſome* Elias, *and others* Jeremiah, *or one of the Prophets.* When Chriſt heard of theſe various apprehenſions which were abroad concerning him, he preſently asks his Diſciples a ſecond queſtion (*ver.* 15.) *But whom ſay ye that I am? Peter* in the name and as the mouth of the reſt gives anſwer (*ver.* 16.) *Thou art Chriſt the Son of the living God.* Chriſt was ſo highly ſatisfied with this anſwer, that firſt he pronounceth him bleſſed (*ver.* 17.) and ſecondly declares, That this confeſſion is *the rock upon which the Church is built*; and aſſures him, that, *Againſt this rock the gates of Hell ſhall never prevail* (*ver.* 18.) The underſtanding muſt be ſet right as well as the affections about the things of God, and not only to know that there is a Chriſt, but alſo to know who Chriſt is, is of abſolute neceſſity to ſalvation.

Job having ſhewed that there is an unſearchable Wiſdom in the works of God, and that they were wrought by this unſearchable Wiſdom, leaſt it ſhould be thought that man is ſhortened in point of wiſdom, and kept in the dark, therefore he proceeds to ſhew, that as firſt there is a natural wiſdom common to all men; and ſecondly, a divine wiſdom proper unto God; ſo thirdly, there is a ſpiritual and heavenly wiſdom, that is common to all godly men. *And unto man he ſaid, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wiſdom,* &c.

VERS. 28.

And unto man he ſaid, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wiſdom, and to depart from evil that is underſtanding.

IT hath been ſhewed in the opening of this Chapter, that *Job* diſcourſeth of a threefold Wiſdom.

Firſt, That which is converſant in the finding out the ſecrets of Nature, the Gold and Silver, the Iron and the precious Stones, which are ſtowed and ſtored in the bowels of the Earth.

Secondly, That Wiſdom which ſecretly, yet efficaciouſly orders and diſpoſeth all the affairs and changes of this world.

Thirdly, That Wiſdom which conſiſts in the worſhip and ſervice of God, whether internal or external.

The firſt ſort of Wiſdom is common to and attainable by all men, whether good or bad, holy or prophane, who have but the light of Nature and the uſe of Reaſon.

The ſecond ſort of Wiſdom is God, or reſerved to God himſelf alone.

The third ſort of Wiſdom is peculiar to the Saints, to thoſe who are holy and believing, and that's the Wiſdom diſcovered in this verſe.

Verſe 28. **And unto man he ſaid, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wiſdom,** &c.

As if he had ſaid, *O man, though thou art ſhut out of the ſecrets of God, though thou art not able to dive into the depth of thoſe myſteries of providence, or give an account of thoſe various diſpenſations which thou ſeeſt here in the world, yet thou needeſt not complain that thou art at a loſs for wiſdom; do not think, becauſe thou haſt not this piece of wiſdom, that therefore there's no wiſdom left for thee; thou mayeſt be wiſe enough, even wiſe to ſalvation, though thou haſt not the compaſs of this ſort of wiſdom. Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wiſdom,* &c. That's the general ſcope and tendency of theſe words.

And unto man he ſaid.

Some read, *But unto man he ſaid*; it is an indefinite ſpeech, and is therefore in this place (being in a neceſſary matter) rightly underſtood univerſally; *unto man*, that is, *unto all men*; and ſo it ſtands in oppoſition to a threefold reſtriction.

Firſt, Not to the firſt man only, as ſome expound, reſtraining the words to the perſon of *Adam*, who was firſt created; as if this were the firſt leſſon that ever God taught man in the perſon of the firſt man *Adam* (That word which was the *proper* name of the firſt man, is become *appellative* to his poſterity) 'Tis, doubtleſs, a truth that God ſaid unto *Adam*, as ſoon as created, if not expreſly yet equivalently, *The fear of the Lord, that is wiſdom*: And 'tis as true, that the Devil by his Agent the Serpent preached other doctrine to *Adam*, he taught *Adam* to get wiſdom by caſting off the fear of the Lord; or aſſured him that he ſhould be wiſe, if he would not fear to tranſgreſs the Commandment of the Lord: *The Lord hath ſaid indeed, thou muſt not eat of this tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and he hath ſcared thee with a threatening, that in the day that thou eateſt thereof thou ſhalt dye the death; but ſaith Satan, Eat, and thou ſhalt be as God, knowing good and evil.* Yet I conceive this interpretation too narrow for the Text, if taken preciſely or excluſively: This leſſon, *That the fear of God is wiſdom*, is extendible to all mankind; and therefore,

Secondly, Theſe words, *To man*, are oppoſed alſo to this or that particular man of *Adam*'s poſterity; God did not ſay this unto one, or two, to a third, or a fourth, as if it were a doctrine for ſome men, but he ſaid it to man, to men univerſally, *The fear of God, this is wiſdom.*

Thirdly, He ſaid it *unto man*; that is, not to this or that ſort of men, but to men of all ſorts: He hath not ſaid this to the rich, or to the poor alone, nor to the great, or to the ſmall alone, he hath not ſaid this to Maſters alone, or to Servants alone, he hath not ſaid this to Parents alone, or to Children alone, but he hath ſaid it to man, even to all the ſons of *Adam*, of what ſort or condition, of what quality or degree ſoever. Sometimes this phraſe, *The children or ſons of* Adam, is put by way of difference or ſpecialty for men of low degree, or for inferiours (*Pſal.* 49. 2.) *Give ear all ye Inhabitants of the earth, both low and high.* The Hebrew is, *Sons of Iſh*; that is, thoſe that are high and mighty, and *Sons of Adam*, that is, thoſe that are low and mean. Yet ſome doctrines which ſerve properly for one man, or for ſome one ſort of men, will not ſerve for, nor ſuit another man, or ſort of men; there are ſome Commands peculiar to the rich, and ſome to the poor; ſome to Magiſtrates, and ſome to Subjects; what God enjoyns one of theſe, he doth not enjoyn the other; but when God ſaith, *The fear of the Lord is wiſdom*, this leſſon is given (*Le-Adam*) 'tis for man. 'Tis a catholick doctrine, not only in regard of the truth of it, but of the uſefulneſs and extent of it. He ſaith it to Parents as well as to Children, to Maſters as well as to Servants, to the Rich as well as to the Poor, to the Magiſtrate as well as to the Subject.

But though it be a doctrine fitted to the capacity of all ſorts of men, yet we find it more emphatically applyed to great men, or more eſpecially *Calculated for the Meridian of Magiſtracy*: To Magiſtrates, to men in power, who ſhould be the beſt men, and Chiefs in wiſdom, as well as in authority, God ſaith, This is your wiſdom to fear me, and ſtand in aw of my dreadful Majeſty. When *Jethro*, perceiving the burden of government too heavy for the ſhoulders of *Moſes* alone, adviſed *Moſes* to divide it, he gave this among other characters of men fit for that office (*Exod.* 18. 21.) *Thou ſhalt provide out of all the people, able men, ſuch as fear God, men of truth, and hating covetouſneſs, and place ſuch over them, to be Rulers of thouſands,* &c. By how much Magiſtrates are lifted up above the fear of men, and by how much all other men ought to fear them, by ſo much ſhould they be carried out more then other men in the fear of God. *David* who was the chief Magiſtrate in *Iſrael*, layes this down as the rule of Magiſtracy (2 *Sam.* 23. 1, 2.) *He that ruleth among men muſt be juſt, ruling in the fear of God.* That man was a ſtrange piece of Magiſtracy, of whom it is ſaid (*Luke* 18. 4.) that *He neither feared God, nor regarded man*: That Scripture is a Parable of the unjuſt Judge, and of the diſtreſſed Widow, begging for redreſs of her wrongs, and deliverance from the oppreſſion of her Adverſary, but he had no regard to her trouble, only her clamour and importunity troubled him. *They who are in power and fear not God, will have very little regard of men*: Therefore this is a doctrine for the higheſt in authority. *They who have the greateſt name among men, have the greateſt reaſon to fear the Name of God.* That Name which is to be feared by all men, ought eſpecially to be feared by them whom all men fear: So then though this be not a Doctrine for ſome men, or for ſome ſorts of men only, yet it chiefly belongs to thoſe who are above other men.

And unto man he ſaid.

Who ſaid it? The Lord himſelf ſaid it; he is the Author and principal Teacher of this Doctrine; all holy Doctrine cometh from God as the Author, and he is the Teacher of it; if not by his own mouth, yet by the mouths of his Meſſengers and Miniſters. *Job* doth not ſay unto man, *I ſay, fear the Lord, this is my counſel unto man*, but (unto man he, that is, *the Lord ſaid*) *the fear of the Lord, that is wiſdom*: The Lord himſelf is the Publiſher of this truth.

But how did the Lord ſay it? We may expound it three wayes.

Firſt, He ſaid it in the beginning of time to the ear of the firſt Man, who ſoon after hoped and attempted to get wiſdom by diſobeying him, which is to caſt off this fear.

Secondly, The Lord hath ſaid it to the eye of Man, in proceſs of time, cauſing it to be written in his Book, and kept upon everlaſting record: This golden ſentence is a Scripture treaſure, *The fear of the Lord, that is wiſdom.*

Thirdly, The Lord hath ſaid it to the heart and conſcience of Men; he hath ſaid it, and ſaid it often by his Spirit; he hath made many to own this doctrine, to ſee and walk in the power of this truth, to do all under the command of this truth; the fear of the Lord is upon them in all they do or ſay; *And unto man he ſaid,*

Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wiſdom.

The word **Behold**, is ſet before this divine ſentence, to awaken attention, and rouſe up the ſleepy ſpirit of man: When this Doctrine was preached by God, he, as it were, ſounded a Trumpet before it, and called mankind to ſee as well as to hear this truth.

Behold, the fear of the Lord.

But what is this fear of the Lord? We are not to underſtand it of that fear which the Lord feareth, for in a ſtrict ſence the Lord, whom all muſt fear, feareth nothing; he is infinitely above all fear. We read indeed, the Lord ſometimes expreſſing himſelf, as having a fear for us, but he is never afraid of us. Thus *Moſes* repreſents the Lord almoſt reſolving, and yet fearing the iſſue of what he had reſolved upon concerning his people (*Deut.* 32. 26, 27.) *I ſaid I would ſcatter them into corners, I would make the remembrance of them to ceaſe from among men, were it not that I feared the wrath of the enemy.* How did the Lord fear the wrath of the Enemy? Was he afraid of the Enemies of the people of *Iſrael*, leſt they ſhould enter upon his Dominions, or hurt him in his Eſtate? Did the Lord thus fear the wrath of the Enemies of his people? Not at all! He never feared any Enemy, he never feared any ſuch fear; but when he ſaith, *Were it not that I feared the wrath of the Enemy*, he feared it for his peoples ſake, or he feared it, not as if the wrath of the Enemy could hurt him, or impede his happineſs; but leſt they ſhould have an occaſion to darken the glory of what he ſhould do righteouſly in afflicting his people, as if not his juſtice but their power had done it, or leſt they ſhould over-do it; and as he ſpeaks (*Zach.* 1. 15.) *When he was a little diſpleaſed, they ſhould help forward the affliction.* As his meaning is clearly explained in the words which follow in *Deuteronomy*; *Leſt their Adverſaries ſhould behave themſelves ſtrangely, and leſt they ſhould ſay our hand is high, and the Lord hath not done all this.* As if he had ſaid, *If I give my people up to their Enemies, they will inſult and trample on them without mercy or meaſure, and ſay, Where is now their God?* Or, *'Tis not God but we who have brought them down: Of this blaſphemy againſt himſelf, and tyranny over his people, the Lord himſelf was afraid; he is ſometimes afraid for man, but he is never afraid of man.* He is ſometimes afraid (to ſpeak after the manner of men) to put an occaſion into the hands of wicked men to vent their malice and their luſts; but he is never afraid of any detriment which the higheſt actings of their malice and of their luſts can do to him. And as for this Text in *Job*, it ſpeaketh not of any fear at all which the Lord (in any ſence) feareth, but of a fear wherewith the Lord is to be feared. And thus in a twofold ſence it is called, the *fear of the Lord.*

First, Becauſe he is the object of it, or the perſon to be feared.

Genitivus objecti & efficientis.

Secondly, Becauſe he is the giver of it; it is he alone that works this fear, and puts it into the hearts of his people. For as true ſaving faith is *a faith of the operation of God* (Col. 2. 12.) ſo alſo is true-Goſpel fear. And as there is a kind of faith which is but a humane faith, a faith received by rradition, or wrought by the example and perſwaſion of man; ſo there is a fear which is not the fear of the operation of God; it is a fear wrought either by humane compulſion, by the laws and commands of men, or at beſt by the appearances and revelation of the wrath of God againſt ſinners; not by the operation of the Spirit of God in turning the heart from ſin. But this holy fear is called the fear of the Lord, becauſe the Lord works it, as he promiſeth to do in the Covenant of grace; *I will put my fear into their hearts, and they ſhall never depart from me* (*Jer.* 32. 40.) Slaviſh fear makes us run from God; holy fear keeps us cloſe to God: That fear which comes from God will not ſuffer us to depart from God: Holy fear is the fear of the Lord, both as he is the Object of it, and as he is the Author of it.

The fear of the Lord, that is wiſdom.

The fear of the Lord is not wiſdom formally, for ſo wiſdom is one thing, and fear is another; but the fear of the Lord is wiſdom vertually; or as ſome ſpeak, it is the way to wiſdom, or a means leading to it.

But what kind of wiſdom is this fear? He doth not mean, firſt, the wiſdom of Philoſophers; nor ſecondly, the wiſdom of the Politicians and Princes of this world; for uſually the fear of the Lord is a ſtranger to, or very ſeldom found among them. Their great deſign is to be feared as if they were Gods, who are leaſt acquainted with the fear of God.

So then ſpiritual wiſdom, holy wiſdom, the wiſdom of Saints, wiſdom to ſalvation, only that wiſdom which looks to and provides for an eternal Intereſt, is the fear of the Lord. *And unto man he ſaid, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wiſdom.*

Again, Fear is not to be taken here excluſively, as if it were ſolitary and alone, without the ſociety of other graces: This fear cannot go alone, where any one grace is, there are all graces in the ſeed, and matter of them; for though all graces do not act alike in every Saint, yet all graces are in every Saint; there is a formation of every grace, though not an equal operation of every grace, at leaſt not an apparent operation of every grace alike in every regenerate perſon. Some one grace operates ſo ſtrongly in this or that perſon, that it carrieth the name of all; in ſome faith operates ſo eminently, that they are renowned only for their faith; in others fear operates ſo powerfully, that they are taken notice of only for their fear; in a third ſort, patience hath ſuch a perfect work, that they are recorded only for their patience. In *Abraham* faith was chief, and therefore he is called *faithful Abraham* (*Gal.* 3. 9.) He is not there called *faithful*, becauſe true to the truſt committed him by God, as *Moſes* is ſaid *to be faithful in all his houſe* (Heb. 3. 2.) but becauſe he truſted ſo ſtrongly to receive that which God had promiſed him. *Job's* patience was wonderful, that, as if he had no other grace to be remembred or reported, it is only ſaid, *Te have heard of the patience of* Job (*James* 5. 11.) *Obadiah* was ſo much in the exerciſe of holy fear, that all his graces are expreſſed by that one (1 *Kings* 18. 3.) *Now* Obadiah *feared the Lord greatly*, and all that he profeſſed of himſelf as to godlineſs was no more but this (*ver.* 12.) *I thy ſervant* (ſaid he to *Eliah*) *feared the Lord from my youth*. Now as *Abraham* had all graces as well as faith, and *Job* all graces as well as patience, and *Obadiah* all graces as well as fear; ſo all graces concur to the making up of true wiſdom: Yet becauſe holy fear is ſo ſpecial an ingredient in true wiſdom, and the opinion which the Wiſe men of this world have of it, is, that 'tis a very ſimple thing, and almoſt inconſiſtent with wiſdom, therefore the Spirit of God, not to exclude or diſparage other graces, as faith, love, ſelf-denial, *&c.* But to give a reputation to this which is ſo ſubject to diſreſpect, or (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks in another caſe, 1 *Cor.* 12. 23.) that what we think *leſs honourable, upon that he might beſtow more abundant honour:* He hath put this crown of honour upon the head of holy fear; *The fear of the Lord, that is wiſdom*; he doth not ſay, *Fear is wiſdom, but the fear of the Lord, that is wiſdom.* And therefore that we may diſtinguiſh the Point and Doctrine a little more clearly,

πιστοὶ *dicuntur non tam qui fidem datam ſervant, quam qui credant Dei promiſſis.* Bez. in Matth. 6. 31.

Note, Firſt, *There is a fear which is not our wiſdom.*

Job ſpeaks of a particular and ſignal fear (*Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wiſdom*) He doth beſtow this elogium or high commendation upon fear in general; but reſtrains it to the fear of the Lord, or to holy fear. Some fear is baſe and ignoble, 'tis folly, madneſs, 'tis torment and vexation; but *the fear of the Lord, that is wiſdom*; and it will not be unprofitable a little to open that, and to ſhew that there is a fear, yea, ſeveral ſorts of fear which are unworthy of a wiſe man, much more of this excellent ſtile or title, *To be called wiſdom*.

Firſt, There is a meer natural fear, which at beſt is but a paſſion, and moſtly it proves a perturbation; if good things be preſent they cauſe joy, and if abſent ſorrow: Evil, as preſent, cauſeth ſorrow, as abſent, fear; this is not the wiſdom here ſpoken of; *Natural fear is nothing elſe but a trouble of mind ariſing from the apprehenſion of ſome approaching evil, or impendent danger:* This is an unſeparable companion of mans nature ever ſince man ſinned, man cannot ſhake it off; and I may ſay of it, though it be not alwayes ſinful, yet, as things ſtand now with us, it is alwayes an effect of ſin, as ſickneſs is; to be ſick is not a ſin, but it is an effect of ſin; to be aſham'd of doing evil is not a ſin, but it is an effect of ſin; to be ſorrowful is not a ſin, but ſorrow is an effect of ſin; ſo there is a natural fear which is not a ſin, but yet it is an effect of ſin; and therefore Chriſt himſelf, when he took upon him our nature, and was cloathed with our fleſh, he was not exempted from natural fear, but as it degenerates into, and is mingled with ſinful fear. Man, who is himſelf degenerate, ſeldom fears naturally without fearing ſinfully (ſin mingles with our holy actions, much more and more eaſily with our natural paſſions) but *Chriſt knew no ſin*, though he knew fear; when he was retired in the Garden at prayer, the Text ſaith (*Mark* 14. 33, 34.) *He began to be ſore amazed, and to be very heavy, and ſaith unto them* (that is, to his three Diſciples) *My ſoul is exceeding ſorrowful unto death.* This natural fear, with ſuch like unpleaſant affections, Chriſt ſubmitted to take up, when he took fleſh, being made like unto us in all things, yet without ſin. And if Chriſt who was ſo holy that he knew no ſin, then much more may we and the holieſt of Saints, who are yet ſinful, fall under the ſurpriſals of this fear. When *Jacob*'s Meſſengers returned with a report of his Brother *Eſau*'s march towards him with four hundred men, the Text ſaith (*Gen.* 32. 7.) *Then* Jacob *was greatly afraid and diſtreſſed.* And again at the eleventh verſe, he prayeth, *Deliver me from the hand of my Brother, from the hand of* Eſau, *for I fear him, leſt he will come and ſmite me, and the Mother with the Children.* We find *Moſes* in a fit of fear upon a like account (*Exod.* 2. 14.) he having ſought to reconcile the two *Iſraelites* that were fallen out, ſaying, *Why do ye wrong one another, ſeeing ye are Brethren?* One of them ſaid unto him, *Who made thee a Prince and a Judge over us? Intendeſt thou to kill me as thou didſt the* Egyptian? *And* Moſes *feared and ſaid, Surely the thing is known.* And preſently he fled upon it, not daring to abide the danger of that diſcovery. *Samuel* was a man eminent for godlineſs and integrity, yet we read that he was in fear (1 *Sam.* 16. 2.) when God bid him go and anoint *David* King in the room of *Saul*, he ſtartled at the employment and ſaid, *If* Saul *hear it he will kill me:* As if he had ſaid, Should I adventure upon this ſervice and anoint *David* openly, I ſhall endanger my life to the wrath of *Saul*. All theſe holy men were afraid at the appearance of danger, and, I ſuppoſe, ſinned not in fearing. Seeing we may charitably conclude, that they feared not ſo much (if at all) becauſe they were afraid to dye, as becauſe they deſired to do yet more ſervice for God and his people with their lives.

Secondly, There is a fear which is not only a fruit of ſin, but ſinful fruit. Such is all fear (how great ſoever the danger is) when 'tis immoderate and diſtruſtful. 'Tis not ſinful to fear danger ſo, as to uſe lawful means to avoid it; but 'tis alwayes ſinful to fear danger, either ſo much as ſinks our ſpirits under it, or makes us utterly deſpair of avoiding it. Such was the fear of the *Iſraelites* (Exod. 14. 11, 12, 13.) who though they had been newly delivered out of *Egypt* by the mighty hand of God, yet when they ſaw *Pharaoh* behind them, and the red Sea before them, they preſently gave themſelves for loſt and dead, and could neither think nor ſpeak of any thing but their graves, not preparingly (as all, at all times, eſpecially at ſuch times ought) but deſpairingly, which none, in their ſence, at any time ſhould (*ver.* 11.) *And they ſaid unto* Moſes, *becauſe there were no graves in* Egypt, *haſt thou taken us away to dye in the Wilderneſs. Wherefore haſt thou dealt thus with us, to carry us forth out of* Egypt, *it had been better for us to ſerve the* Egyptians, *then to dye in the Wilderneſs.* Words ſo full of unmanly fear, and ungodly infidelity, that nothing can be ſaid worſe of them then they are. Therefore *Moſes* rebukes their cowardiſe and diſtruſt (*ver.* 13.) *Fear ye not, ſtand ſtill, behold the ſalvation of the Lord:* As if he had ſaid, For ſhame be not thus afraid, did God but the other day deliver you out of the hand of *Pharaoh* and his *Egyptians*, by working ten wonders, yea, miracles, and can ye not believe that he will (if need be) work one more to keep you out of their hands? Such alſo was the fear which King *Ahaz* was arreſted with, upon the report of an hoſtile Invaſion intended againſt him (*Iſai.* 7. 2.) *It was told the houſe of* David, *ſaying,* Syria *is confederate with* Ephraim, *and his heart was moved, and the heart of his people were ſhaken as the trees of the wood are moved with the wind:* Therefore the Lord diſpatched the Prophet to him with this meſſage; *Go, meet* Ahaz, *and ſay unto him, be ſtill and be quiet, fear not*; away with this fear, it is ſinful. Such alſo was the fear of the Diſciples (*Math.* 8. 26.) as ſoon as the ſtorm was up, their fears were up, and they were in as much hazzard of being overſet with their own boyſterous paſſions, as the veſſel was with the winds: They forgot that the Lord High Admiral of all the Ocean, and Commander of thoſe Winds was aboard the Ship: For though they applyed to Chriſt to keep them from ſinking, yet their faith was much ſunk, as his anſwer imports; Firſt, rebuking their fears, and then the winds, *Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?* Thus he rebuked the tempeſt within, and then the tempeſt without; firſt he calm'd their hearts, and then the Sea. The leſs acquaintance any have with God, the more acquaintance they have with this fear, and the bondage of it. And the Heathen, who were altogether ignorant of God in Chriſt, were ſo deeply affected, yea, tormented with it, that, as ſome of the Ancients inform us, they worſhipped it as a God. This fear is ſo far from being our wiſdom, that it is our folly, our ſhame and ſin. Yet

Thirdly, There is a fear more fooliſh and ſinful then this, called ſuperſtitious fear. If a Hare croſs their way, if a Mouſe gnaw their clothes, if the Salt at table fall towards them, if they bleed three drops at the Noſe, they account theſe ominous preſages of ſome ſad diſaſter, and ſo are miſerably diſcompoſed with fears of it. Yea, there is a very vain and wicked humour in ſome to know their own (as they term it) fortunes; and therefore not reſting in the will of God concerning themſelves in his providences and proviſions for them, they will needs be prying into ſecrets, and attempt to know what God hath no where revealed. To ſatisfie this ungodly curioſity, ſome venture to conſult with Witches and Wizards, with Sooth-ſayers (as they call them, though *indeed Falſe-ſayers*, or *Lye-ſayers*) and Aſtrologers (which kind of Artiſans (and I look upon it as a ſad ſign of Apoſtacy from the power of Godlineſs) are much traded with in theſe dayes.) And from theſe their Clients hear ſometimes very unpleaſing predictions, and are told that they ſhall have many croſſes, that the Heavens do not favour them, that they were born under the Aſpect of ſome malignant Planet. Theſe uncomfortable bodements fill their heads with many diſtracting cares, and their hearts with perplexing fears, which afflict them alwayes with a ſenſe of that (which if truly foreſpoken) they can but once or at laſt feel. We have a clear inſtance of this in *Saul*, who having heard his own fatal overthrow foretold by that counterfeit *Samuel*, the Devil in *Samuel*'s appearance and mantle, the Text ſaith (1 *Sam.* 28. 20,) Saul *fell ſtraightway all along on the earth, and was ſore afraid, becauſe of the words of* Samuel. We read the like reports in *Suetonius Herodian*, and other Hiſtorians, of the diſmal diſtractions of ſome of the *Roman* Emperours, *Severus*, *Adrian*, *Domitian*, who conſulting with men skilful in thoſe curious, but helliſh Arts, were told either when they ſhould dye, or what calamities they ſhould meet with in their lives. Thus alſo were many of the Heathens diſtempered and drunk with fears, when they had applyed to their cozening Oracles, which were indeed the Devil's Prophets. Some of our modern Writers teſtifie, that in their travels into the Eaſtern Countreys, they found the Inhabitants miſerably tortured upon the rack of theſe ſuperſtitious fears; yea, giving ſo much credit to their fooliſh Diviners, that whatſoever they foretold was taken for granted, and that the iſſue would aſſuredly anſwer their predictions; ſo that if they were foretold of ſickneſs, they would be ſick with conceit, and dye, as they were foretold: Their opinion was ſo fixed, and their ſinful faith ſo ſtrong, that it often pull'd upon them the evil apprehended, and verified the uncertain judgings of their Wizards with their own deſtruction.

All of all theſe ſorts (as the Pſalmiſt ſaith, *Pſ.* 53. 5.) *Feared where no fear was*; and ſo (as *Solomon* tells us, *Prov.* 10. 4.) *That which they feared came upon them:* And God the living and true God, concluded concerning theſe Adorers of Idols, or dunghil Gods, as he did in ſomewhat a like caſe againſt his ancient People turning to Idolatry (*Iſa.* 66. 4.) *I alſo have choſen their deluſions, and have brought their fears upon them.*

Now as the beſt of theſe fears, hitherto toucht upon, is but natural, ſome ſinful, and others diabolical, and ſo at furtheſt diſtance from that fear of that Lord, in the Text, which is *our wiſdom*: So

Fourthly, We may go one ſtep further in the negative, to ſhew, that there is a fear of the Lord, which is not our wiſdom, the wiſdom intended here by *Job*. For though God be the object of it, though it may be called a fear of God, yet 'tis not ſuch a fear as God calls his People to, or a fear purely according to the mind of God.

But what is this fear, or how may we diſtinguiſh it from that fear of the Lord which is our wiſdom?

I anſwer, 'Tis that fear of the Lord, I mean, which is commonly called *ſlaviſh fear*; when we fear God only as a Judge, and as a Revenger, ſuch a fear of the Lord is not ſtrictly our wiſdom, though poſſibly it may be a means, or at leaſt an occaſion to lead us to that which is. Of this fear the Apoſtle ſpeaks (*Rom.* 8. 15.) *Ye have not received the ſpirit of bondage again to fear*; that is, to fear like Slaves or Malefactors, as formerly ye did. And again (1 *John* 4. 18.) *There is no fear in love, but perfect love caſteth out fear.* What fear doth perfect love caſt out? The next words reſolve us, *Becauſe fear hath torment.* He that fears God ſlaviſhly, is tormented in every duty he performs to God. When he prayes he is tormented; when he hears he is tormented; when he doth but think of God he is tormented. And that firſt, In the very act of the duty, he hath no ſutableneſs to it, no comfort in it. Secondly, As to the iſſue of the duty, he doubts whether ever he ſhall have an anſwer, or any benefit by it. But the fear of the Text (which is our wiſdom) is in love; love mingles with it, and is co-natural to it. The more we love the Lord as his Children, the more we fear him; and the more we fear him, the more we love him; there is not only a reciprocation, but an increaſe between theſe two. Love hath much holy fear with it; but it hath no ſervile or tormenting fear in it: None find more love from God then they that fear him moſt. And where the pure love of God moves and acts the ſoul in duty, there's no lodging left for baſe and ſlaviſh fear, or if the principle of it lodge there, yet the prevalency of it doth not, nor can it either overpower the ſoul, or deſtroy its peace.

We find frequent inſtance and reproof of that tormenting fear in Scripture. We read, how, *That terrible ſtate*, in which the Law was publiſhed upon Mount *Sinai*, did much amaze the *Iſraelites* (Exod. 20. 18, 19.) *And all the people ſaw the thunderings, and the lightenings, and the noiſe of the trumpet, and the mountain ſmoaking, and when the people ſaw it, they removed and ſtood afar off; and they ſaid unto* Moſes, *Speak thou with us, and we will hear; but let not God ſpeak to us leaſt we dye.* *Moſes* (at the twentieth verſe) returns this anſwer; *Fear not:* As if he had ſaid, I ſee you are ſurpriſed with a wonderful fear at this appearance of God, ſpeaking to you with ſuch dreadful Majeſty in thunderings and lightenings; but lay down this fear, and I will tell you of another fear, which you ought to take up; *For God is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before your eyes that you ſin not.* This may ſeem a ſtrange way of comforting them; to remove the fear which was upon them by telling them of another fear, which they were to take in. This looks like the curing of a diſeaſe by increaſing it. But though *Moſes* his words have the ſame ſound in the ear, yet they are very diſſonant and diſtinct to the underſtanding. We ſay one heat drives out another; and 'tis moſt true, that one fear will drive out another. When *Moſes* ſaith, *Fear not*, he would remove that fear of God meerly as a revenger of ſin. And when he ſaith, *He is come that his fear may be before your eyes*, he means it of that fear only, which would keep them from ſinning; as is expreſs in the Text; God is come to prove you (as his Sons, not to deſtroy you as Slaves) *and that his fear may be before your eyes, that ye ſin not.* His aim is not to put you in a continual fear of ſufferings, but that you may alwayes fear to ſin. So that as the Apoſtle ſpeaks about the *bringing in of a better hope* (Heb. 7. 19.) ſo *Moſes* here about the bringing in of a better fear; of which we may ſay as the Apoſtle there of that *better hope* (or Covenant of Grace, or Chriſt in the Covenant, who is the ground of our hope) *that by it we draw nigh unto God.* Slaviſh fear drives us from God; but of Son-like fear we may ſay, that by it we draw nigh to God, and delight to live alwayes nigh to God. *Samuel* goes the ſame way, and uſeth the ſame method in dealing with the Conſciences of the *Iſraelites* (1 *Sam.* 12. 20.) where having reproved that people, laying their ſins home to their hearts, and terrifying them with, almoſt, a miraculous ſtorm of rain and thunder (when they ſo importunately deſired a change of the ancient government, or to have a King) he ſteps in (at the twentieth verſe) and revives their fainting and fearful ſpirits, with this dehortation, *Fear not, ye have done all this wickedneſs, yet turn not aſide from following the Lord.* They were afraid of the Lords Judgments, and yet it was ſuch a fear as he ſaw would not ſerve to keep them from turning aſide from following the Lord: It would cauſe them to run from God, not to keep cloſe to him; therefore ſaith he, *Fear not*; yet he adds (at the twenty-fourth verſe) *Only fear the Lord, and ſerve him in truth with all your heart*, &c. He even with the ſame breath forbids their fear, and bids them fear; *Fear not, only fear the Lord:* Now you fear the Lord, becauſe you ſee how terribly he declares himſelf againſt your folly and ſin; but this fear will not keep your hearts cloſe in obedience, while you fear him only in regard of his Greatneſs and Sovereignty: Therefore fear the Lord with a better fear, then that which was blown up by a ſtorm, and thoſe angry diſpenſations of God towards you.

There may be (I grant) a profitable uſe of a ſlaviſh fear; for as perfect love caſteth out tormenting fear; ſo tormenting fear may be preparatory to the bringing in of perfect love; even as the Needle (ſo the alluſion hath been made, and not unfitly) makes way for the Thred to follow it. Our trembling at the thunder of divine wrath, may render us (through the working of the Spirit in it) more ready to receive the Sun-ſhine of Divine love; yet this is not that fear of the Lord which we are to chuſe, much leſs to reſt in, nor indeed can we take reſt in it. Nor is this that fear of the Lord which *Job* here calls our wiſdom; nor can it alone ever make us wiſe, either to obedience, or to bleſſedneſs and ſalvation. And therefore having ſhewed what that fear is, which is only a fruit of ſin, and what that fear is, which is in it ſelf ſinful; as alſo what that fear of the Lord is which is not our wiſdom; I ſhall now more directly ſhew what *that fear of the Lord is, which is the wiſdom of man, the wiſdom of all men.* And I ſhall take liberty to do it a little more largely then is ſutable to the ſtrictneſs of an expoſition; for ſeeing this fear hath received ſo high a Teſtimony from *Job*, in ſaying, it is *our wiſdom*; and becauſe what the Woman ſaid upon a falſe ſuggeſtion concerning the forbidden Tree of Knowledge (*Gen.* 3. 6.) may moſt truly be ſuggeſted concerning this Tree of Wiſdom, holy fear, *It is a Tree to be deſired to make one wiſe.* (True wiſdom is moſt deſirable, and therefore every thing is to be deſired which makes us truly wiſe.) Foraſmuch (I ſay) as this fear is ſo uſeful and influential upon the right ordering of our whole courſe through this world in wiſdom, it will neither be improper, nor unprofitable, to inſiſt a while upon the diſcovery of it.

Spititual and holy fear; That fear of God which is the wiſdom of man, is taken two wayes in Scripture.

Firſt, For the pure worſhip of God, as was ſhewed in opening the firſt verſe of this whole Book; all that I ſhall ſay of it here, is, that to fear God thus, or to worſhip him purely, is a high point and part of wiſdom. They who mingle their own inventions with the inſtitutions of God in worſhip, and make to themſelves a graven Image, theſe think themſelves wiſe, the only men of knowledge as well as of zeal about the things of God: But as the Apoſtle concludes of the old Gentiles, who never received the pattern of any inſtituted worſhip from God; yet when through their natural blindneſs they were led to a falſe worſhip, *They* (ſaith he, *Rom.* 1. 22.) *profeſſing themſelves wiſe, became fools*: So we may much more conclude, that how wiſe ſoever thoſe falſe worſhippers (who have received a pattern from God, and yet ſet up their own) do either profeſs themſelves to be, or how wiſe ſoever they may be in the opinion and reputation of others, yet in deed, and in Gods account they are become very fools. None are ſo fooliſh as they who will needs be wiſe above that which is written; yea, to be wiſe beſide what is written, as to matters of faith and worſhip, is very fooliſhneſs. And therefore as fear comes under this firſt notion, the *pure worſhip of God*, ſo 'tis the wiſdom of man. Not only are we to worſhip the Lord with fear. (*Heb.* 12. 28.) But the worſhip of the Lord is fear, while we keep cloſe to the rule; and I conceive one chief reaſon why the worſhip of God is called fear, is, becauſe we ſhould be continually afraid of ſwerving and departing from that rule of worſhip which himſelf hath appointed. No man is wiſe enough to know what will pleaſe God further then God reveals it. And if ſo, then to worſhip God only as he hath revealed is our wiſdom, for to pleaſe him is ſo. And hence *David* puts both theſe together (*Pſal.* 2. 10, 11.) *Be wiſe, O ye Kings, ſerve the Lord with fear.*

Secondly, The fear of the Lord, which is our wiſdom, is taken more generally; for, *That holy awe which dwells upon our ſpirits, and regulates them under all the ſpeakings and diſpenſations of God towards us, as alſo in all our actings both toward God and toward one another.* To worſhip God aright, and to walk before God in uprightneſs, are the two Poles upon which the whole body of a heavenly life is turned. And our wiſdom is complicated and made up of theſe two fears, which though we may diſtinguiſh in notion, yet we muſt not ſever in practice. *Solomon* reproves the neglect of this fear (*Prov.* 1. 29.) *They hated knowledge, and did not chuſe the fear of the Lord.* Holineſs ſhould be our choice, not our refuge. We ſhould pitch our election upon that before all things in the world, not ſerve our turns by it when we are forſaken and rejected of all worldly things and hopes. *David* opens a School, as a Profeſſor of this Science (*Pſal.* 34. 11.) *Come ye Children, hearken unto me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord.* This is the great Leſſon of divine Philoſophy, learn this, and you are wiſe and knowing enough. The Apoſtle (*Phil.* 2. 12.) preſſeth the perpetual uſe of it upon the beſt of Saints. As a Saint ought to do all his works in love, ſo in this fear; *Work out your ſalvation with fear and trembling*; that is, work on in the wayes of ſalvation, till you come to the laſt ſtroke and ſtitch. Chriſt hath wrought our ſalvation, *By delivering us out of the hand of all our enemies, that we ſhould ſerve him without fear* (of Men or Devils, as alſo without fear of refuſal, or non-acceptance at the hand of God) *in holineſs and righteouſneſs all our dayes* (Luke 1. 71, 72.) But though he hath wrought our ſalvation ſo, that we need not fear the iſſue, yet he would have us work out our ſalvation with much fear, leſt we ſhould fail in duty as to the way and means of aſſuring it, and entring into it. The chief grace expreſly promiſed in the new Covenant, the Covenant of grace, is this bleſſed fear (*Jer.* 32. 39, 40.) *I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me for ever for their good, and for the good of their children after them, and I will make an everlaſting Covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good, but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they ſhall not depart from me.* Here is fear twice mentioned; Firſt, As the deſign of the Covenant, or that which the Covenant expects from us. Secondly, As the Promiſe of the Covenant, or that which God in the Covenant will beſtow upon us. The Covenant puts it upon fear, not upon faith, *I will put my fear into their hearts*; which is not at all excluſive of faith; for we can do nothing of duty which the Covenant requires, nor can we receive any thing of mercy which the Covenant promiſeth, without faith; but becauſe fear might ſeem to be a grace leſs concern'd in the Covenant then faith, therefore 'tis named rather then faith. All are ready to grant that faith will keep the heart cloſe to God (for as *an evil heart of unbelief is that by which we depart from the living God* (Heb. 3. 12.) So faith in the heart will not ſuffer us to depart from God, all, I ſay, are ready to grant this) but few think that fear hath ſuch an effect in it: And therefore the Lord as he often honours faith in this, ſo here he honours fear, and doth not ſay, I will put faith, but *I will put my fear into their hearts, and they ſhall not depart from me.* And we find in Scripture, that thoſe Saints which have been moſt eminently noted for cloſe walking with God, are cryed up for their fear as much as for their faith. When *Abraham* had ſpent many years as a Probationer in the School of Faith, and had given notable proofs of his proficiency in that Grace, and in his laſt tryal, the ſacrificing of his Son *Iſaac*, had given the higheſt and ſtrongeſt proof of it, that ever any man before him did; yet when God himſelf comes to give teſtimony concerning that act, he doth not ſay, now I know that thou believeſt on me; but, *Now I know that thou feareſt me, ſeeing thou haſt not withheld thy Son, thine only Son from me* (Gen. 22. 12.) *Abraham* received ſo many marks of ſpecial favour from God, and returned ſo many offices of real affection unto God, that the Scripture doubts not to call him, *The Friend of God* (a moſt familiar title, *James* 2. 23.) yet when he was ready to offer God that token of his love (a greater then which he had not among all his Jewels) *His only Son, his Son* Iſaac *whom he loved*, the Lord doth not ſay, *Abraham*, now I know thou loveſt me, but, *Now I know thou feareſt me.* So that holy fear (we ſee) carried the day both againſt faith and love, in a buſineſs, wherein both the one and the other, even both together, did put forth their ſtrength even to the utmoſt. How glorious was fear that day, when it bare away the Garland from thoſe two renowned Graces, and was not only one of the three, but the firſt of the three, and the only one of the three which God was pleaſed to take notice of by name; *Now I know that thou feareſt me.* And though the All ſufficiency and Faithfulneſs of God call for our faith, and his Goodneſs condiſcendeth to our love; yet the Greatneſs, Majeſty, and Holineſs of God do rather invite our fear, as being that affection which is moſt ſutable in a creature toward the Creator. *O God* (ſaith *David*, Pſal. 68. 35.) *thou art terrible* (or much to be *feared*) *out of thy holy places.* And again (*Pſal.* 89. 7.) *God is greatly to be feared in the aſſembly of his Saints*: And why? *Becauſe there his holineſs doth greatly appear.* And as we have moſt reaſon to fear God where moſt of his holineſs appears; ſo they who are moſt holy, cannot but fear him moſt.

More diſtinctly, This fear of the Lord may be conſidered three wayes.

Firſt, In reference unto the Word of God (*Iſa.* 66. 2.) *To him will I look, that is of an humble and contrite ſpirit, and that trembles at my Word.* When the heart is once in a trembling frame at the Word of God, it will quickly come to a ſettled frame at the Work of God; and becauſe there is ſo little trembling at the Word of God, there is but little ſetling to the Work of God. Moſt Hearers tremble and move no more at the Word, then the ſeats they ſit on, or the ſtones they ſtand upon; and ſo inſtead of being (as the Apoſtle exhorts, 1 *Cor.* 15. 58.) *Unmoveable in the work of the Lord,* they are not at all moved to it. Holy fear hath a reſpect to the Word, as it falls under a threefold conſideration.

Firſt, As it is a Word of threatening; and ſo the Word carries (as it were) a command of fear; when God like a Lyon roars in his threatenings againſt ſinners, they who among men are as the beaſts of the field, have alwayes cauſe to, and often cannot chuſe but tremble: When the Lord ſpeaks blood, and wrath, and hell, and flames of fire, how can ſinners but be over-awed? Yea, as they are admoniſhed (*Pſal.* 4. 4.) *Stand in aw and not ſin.* Yet this fear is ſtirred not only at the voice of threatenings, but

Secondly, Of Commands, which are ſo holy and pure, that the report of them may ſoon make thoſe who are holieſt and moſt pure tremble before the Lord. Yea, every Law and Command of God bears not only an impreſſion of his Holineſs and Purity, but of his Authority and Soveraignty: Who would not fear that word which comes out from the King of Kings, the King of Nations?

Thirdly, This holy fear works alſo in the heart of Believers at the word of promiſe, which though it be full of, and drop down ſweetneſs like the honey-comb, which faith is continually ſucking for the refreſhing of the ſoul, yet fear is not a ſtranger to it, nor idle about it. Hence the Apoſtle grounds his exhortation (2 *Cor.* 7. 1.) *Having theſe promiſes, let us cleanſe our ſelves from all filthineſs of fleſh and ſpirit, perfecting holineſs in the fear of God.* He doth not ſay, having theſe promiſes let us perfect holineſs in the faith or love of the Lord (though that be true) but *in the fear of the Lord.* As the Lord is *fearful in praiſes* (*Exod.* 15. 11.) that is, he ought to be praiſed with a reverential fear when he hath performed the promiſes; ſo he is to be believed with a reverential fear as he gives us promiſes. Thus fear acts in reference to the word in this threefold conſideration. The threatenings are ſo terrible, the commands are ſo holy, the promiſes are ſo ſweet, that each of them alone, much more all of them together, may juſtly expect and ſutably draw out this divine fear. And thus to fear the Lord and his Word, or the Lord in his Word is our wiſdom.

Now that fear of the Lord which works kindly at the voice of his Word, eſpecially of his threatenings, doth theſe three things in us.

Firſt, It rouzeth and wakens careleſs and ſecure ſinners; it opens their eyes, and makes them look about them, to view that black Cloud of Judgment, whether perſonal or national, that hangs over their heads, and lowres dreadfully upon them. When the Lord acquainted *Noah* with his purpoſe of ſending a deluge of water upon the World; it is ſaid (*Heb.* 11. 7.) *He was moved with fear:* That holy man had a deep ſenſe of that threatening, and was exceedingly affected with it.

Secondly, This fear which is our wiſdom, puts us upon enquiry, what to do that we may eſcape the wrath threatened. *Carnal fear never made any man a good counſellor, but ſpiritual fear may, and it cauſeth every man, who hath it, to ask good counſel, and ſeek means to avoid an impendent danger.* When the *Jews* at the hearing of *Peter's* Sermon *were prickt at the heart,* and ſtrucken with ſome beginnings of this fear, as ſeeing themſelves in the ſuburbs of Hell, they preſently went to counſel in the caſe, *Saying to* Peter *and the reſt of the Apoſtles, Men and Brethren what ſhall we do* (Acts 2. 37.) O give us your advice, tell us how we may prevent our eternal miſery. And when *Saul* was ſmitten down (*Acts* 9. 6.) *He trembling and aſtoniſhed ſaid, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* There's nothing more inquiſitive then fear is.

Thirdly, This fear puts us upon an Application to all thoſe means, which we are adviſed to, for our anſwering the duty commanded for our obtaining the mercy promiſed, or for our avoiding the evil threatened. Holy fear makes the head ſerious and the hand induſtrious: 'Tis a great ſervant to faith, a ſharp ſpur to prayer; when once faith ſees our dangers, fear haſtens remedies. Deſpair of the end makes careleſs of the means; but fear of an evil which is coming, makes us careful either to keep it from coming, or to get above the reach of it when it is come. As *Noah* was moved with fear when he heard of the flood; ſo being moved with fear *he prepared an Ark,* in which himſelf and family were ſaved from the flood.

Secondly, 'Tis wiſdom to fear the Lord in reference to his works; and theſe, firſt, his common ordinary works of providence; and it argues by ſo much a more ſingular holineſs wrought in us, by how much we the more fear the Lord upon the obſervation of what he commonly works. (*Jer.* 5. 22, 23, 24.) We find the Lord not only expecting that his people ſhould, but even wondering that they did not fear him in that reſpect, *Fear ye not me* (ſaith the Lord) *will you not tremble at my preſence, which have placed the ſand for the bound of the Sea, by a perpetual decree, that it cannot paſs it, and though the waves thereof toſs themſelves, yet they cannot prevail; though they roar, yet can they not paſs over it? But this people hath a revolting and a rebellious heart; they are revolted and gone: Neither ſay they in their heart, let us now fear the Lord our God that giveth rain, both the former and the latter rain in its ſeaſon.* Here are two things inſtanced in; Firſt, The bounding the Sea; which was ſo from the beginning, and is therefore a work of an old date, and as ordinary as the Sea-ſhore. Secondly, The giving of rain; which is alſo a common work of providence, it hath continued from the Creation, and will to the diſſolution of the World; yet we ought to fear and tremble before the Lord, while we conſider theſe every dayes experiences of his Power and Greatneſs. And the more ſpiritual our hearts are, the more will they be affected with the fear of the Lord by the ſight and contemplation of theſe common providences. God is the more to be admired and feared in his doing that often or alwayes, which to do but once calls both for our fear and admiration. And thus we ſhould reaſon with our ſelves; what cannot God do for us in a time of ſpecial need, who at all times doth greater things for us then any which we can need? Every good thing is the better by how much the more common it is, whether as to times or perſons; and therefore the commonneſs of them ſhould not at all (though it often doth) abate our eſtimation of them, or our thankfulneſs to God for them. Yet

Secondly, we ſhould fear the Lord more then ordinarily for and in his extraordinary providences, whether they bear the face of Judgments, or of Mercies. *When thy Judgments are in the earth* (ſaith the Prophet, *Iſa.* 26. 9.) *the Inhabitants of the world will learn righteouſneſs;* that is, they ought to do ſo; and if ever they will do it, they will do it then; and I (ſaith the Prophet) do even prophecy to others, and promiſe to my ſelf, that then they will do it. Now no man can learn righteouſneſs, or do right indeed, but he that hath learned this fear of the Lord. 'Tis ſaid of *Job* (Chap. 1. 1.) *That man was perfect and upright (or righteous) fearing God.* Judgments work fear, and fear works righteouſneſs. We muſt not ſport with the Judgments of God, nor play with his thunder-bolts, but tremble before him (*Pſal.* 55. 19.) *Becauſe they have no changes, therefore they fear not God;* that is, there's no new thing among them, no extraordinary providential turns, no judiciary changes, their proſperity keeps a ſettled courſe; and becauſe they find all things going on in the old courſe of providence, therefore they go on in their old courſe of ſinfulneſs, *they fear not God;* intimating that as ſuch changes alwayes ſhould, ſo uſually they do awaken fear: And that, if the Lord would but change, and toſs, and tuumble them about, by various troubleſome diſpenſations (as we have been toſſed in this Nation) ſurely they would fear him. The Saints in the *Revelation* (*Chap.* 15. 4.) ſinging the Song of *Moſes* for their victory over the Beaſt, make a very emphatical inference of this fear from the then appearance of the judgments of God upon *Babylon, Who would not fear thee, O Lord, and glorifie thy Name, for thy judgments are made manifeſt:*

As if they had ſaid, Thou, O Lord, haſt given all men cauſe or ground ſufficient to fear thee, ſeeing thou haſt made the juſtice of thy proceedings againſt thine enemies ſo plain to all men; thy Judgments are great, yet no greater then they have deſerved. Who, or where's the man that hears or ſees theſe things, and doth not fear thee?

Secondly, As works of judgments ſo of mercy ſhould actuate this holy fear in us. Some read that (*Pſal.* 55. 19.) to this ſence fully, rendring the words thus, *With whom* (although there be) *no changes, yet they fear not God.* And ſo their want of the fear of God is made (not as the place was expounded even now, an effect of their having no troubles, but) an aggravation of their wickedneſs in the midſt of ſuch long continued and (without any interruption) enjoyed mercies. The Apoſtle (*Rom.* 12. 1.) beſeeches the Saints at *Rome by the mercies of God to preſent their bodies* (which we are to underſtand ſynechdochically for their whole man) *a living ſacrifice, holy acceptable unto God, which* (ſaith he) *is your reaſonable ſervice*; and which ſervice (I may ſay) is the pureſt acting of our filial fear. This is propheſied as the character of the beſt men in the beſt of times (*Hoſ.* 3. 5.) *The children of* Iſrael *ſhall return and ſeek the Lord their God, and* David (that is, Chriſt) *their King, and ſhall fear the Lord and his goodneſs in the latter dayes.* Thoſe latter dayes will be all *holy dayes*, for then there will be the moſt plentiful pouring out of the holy Spirit that ever the people of God were under; then the goodneſs of God will moſt appear, and then men ſhall not only fear the Lord, who is good, but the Lord and his goodneſs, or the Lord for his goodneſs; and that, not only for the goodneſs of his nature, but for his goodneſs declared and communicated to them in his works. The good and great things that God doth for his people, beſpeak a kind of aw in their hearts; and the more they taſt his goodneſs to them, the more and the more ſpiritual is their fear. When *Peter* had been toyling all night and could take nothing, yet at Chriſts command letting down the Net, he encloſed a great multitude of Fiſhes; 'tis a word from Chriſt makes our work ſucceſsful. Now (ſaith the Text, *Luke* 5. 8, 9.) *When* Simon Peter *ſaw it, he fell down at Chriſts feet, ſaying, Depart from me, for I am a ſinful man, O Lord; for he was aſtoniſhed, and all that were with him, at the draught of the Fiſhes which they had taken.* And at the twenty-ſixth verſe of the ſame Chapter, when Chriſt wrought another miracle in healing one that was ſick of the Palſie, the Text ſaith, *They were all amazed and glorified God, and were filled with fear, ſaying, We have ſeen ſtrange things to day.* What ſtrange things? The killing of men? No, the healing of a man; when Chriſt had declared as much good and mercy as power in healing that diſeaſed perſon, they were all filled with fear. 'Tis a great diſcovery of our holineſs and ſpiritualneſs to fear God greatly, when God doth great things in mercy. That's very remarkable in the holy Chronicle concerning the Churches (*Acts* 9. 31.) when God had wrought a ſtrange thing, given peace to his people; How did this work in them? The Text tells us, *Then had the Churches reſt throughout all* Judea, *and* Galilee, *and* Samaria, *and were edified, and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comforts of the holy Ghoſt were multiplied:* This was a wonder[illegible] as well as a merciful providence. 'Tis rare that the Churches have reſt: And thoſe Churches had been lately worried by Wolves and Lyons; they had been diſperſt and ſcattered by grievous perſecutions. But when the Churches had reſt, what was the fruit of this goodneſs of God to them? Even this, *They walked in the fear of the Lord*, as well as in *the joyes of the holy Ghoſt.* As ſoon as they were freed and delivered from the fear of men, they walked more then ever in the fear of the Lord. *As all the Nations of the earth ſhall fear and tremble* (ſaith the Prophet, *Jer.* 33. 9.) *For all the goodneſs and all the proſperity that the Lord procureth unto his people.* So likewiſe ſhall his people themſelves; though, firſt, upon other grounds; and ſecondly, in another manner then the Nations of the earth ſhall fear him. The Nations ſhall fear that it will go ill with them, when God doth ſo much good for his people. *The proſperity of the Church is formidable to the world.* And as to the manner, The Nations fear tremblingly, but the People of God fear rejoycingly; the former fear and deſpair, but the latter fear and believe.

We have ſeen much of this goodneſs of God, but little of this fruit, holy fear, hath as yet been ſeen among us. For firſt, Some ſlight or make little reckoning of the goodneſs of God, where then is their fear? Secondly, Others grow wanton with the goodneſs of God; firſt, with the doctrine of his goodneſs; ſecondly, with the acts of it; Where then is their fear? Thirdly, Not a few harden themſelves in doing evil becauſe God is good (*Rom.* 2. 4.) and whereas ſome ſaid, *Let us do evil that good may come of it* (Rom. 3. 8.) theſe ſay, *Let us do evil becauſe good is come:* O how far are theſe from the fear of the Lord! I ſhall leave but two words with this ſort of men, Firſt, 'Tis very ſinful not to fear the Lord and his judgments, the Lord and his wrath; much more not to fear the Lord and his goodneſs, the Lord and his mercy; 'tis very ſinful not to be bettered by the goodneſs of God, what is it then to grow worſe by it? Secondly, They who will not fear the Lord and his goodneſs, ſhall be forced at laſt, whether they will or no, to fear the Lord and his judgments, the Lord and his wrath, in all the dreadful tokens and manifeſtations of it.

Thirdly, As this fear of the Lord acts in reference to his word and works, both ordinary and extraordinary, of mercy and of judgment; ſo it is exerciſed about all that we our ſelves are doing or ſpeaking, about our words and works. *Hanani* is thus deſcribed (*Nehem.* 7. 2.) *He was a faithful man, and feared God above many:* He was a faithful man in all his dealings; faithful in his word, and faithful in his works above many; for *he feared God above many. Solomon* (Eccleſ. 9. 2.) ſpeaks of different ſorts of men, to whom yet there is the ſame courſe or likeneſs of diſpenſations from God, *All things come alike to all, there is one eve*[illegible] *the righteous and to the wicked, as is the good, ſo is the* [illegible]; *and he that ſweareth as he that feareth an oath.* There is a twofold fearing of an Oath; Firſt, A fearing to ſwear; And ſecondly, A fearing when we ſwear; the firſt reſpects raſh Oaths, and falſe Oaths: A godly man feareth an Oath; that is, all ſuch kind of Oaths; but that's not all his fearing of an Oath; As he feareth, yea, abhorreth at all to ſwear ſome Oaths: ſo ſecondly, He feareth, when he doth ſwear that Oath which he is not at all afraid to ſwear; that is, when he ſweareth a right and true Oath, or when he ſweareth in truth and righteouſneſs. He feareth ſuch an Oath; that is, takes it religiouſly, as knowing that it is an appeal to God, who is the ſearcher of hearts, and that it is a great part of divine worſhip; he conſidereth well what he ſweareth, and keeps himſelf cloſe to what he hath ſworn. Holy fear examines every work, every word, yea, every thought, every ſingle thought (if that be poſſible) much more thoſe thoughts which are brought and wrought up together into counſels, purpoſes, and reſolutions. Holy fear examines firſt, Of what ſort they are, and whence they are; it examines ſecondly, Whether they are going, and what they tend to: Holy fear is the ſouls keeper, and it hath a very quick and jealous eye upon all our wayes, it obſerves what goes in and comes out, it is full of enquiries, about what we have done, and about what we are doing, yea, about what we purpoſe to do. He that feareth God cannot think what he liſts, nor ſpeak what he liſts, nor do what he liſts; he finds himſelf under a Law, and is freely ſubject to it. This is that fear of the Lord of which the Lord ſaith unto man, *The fear of the Lord, that is wiſdom.*

Hence we may infer, *That moral honeſty without the fear of the Lord, is not our wiſdom.*

A meer Heathen, yea, an Atheiſt, may do honeſt and vertuous things, even with a love to vertue; For there is a beauty and an amability in juſt and righteous actions to the eye of natural reaſon; But no Heathen can, much leſs can any Atheiſt do that which is good and honeſt in the fear of the Lord: And until a man doth good and avoids evil in this fear of the Lord, all the good he doth, and the evil he avoids, will not prove him a truly wiſe man: Some vertues may be acted without this fear, but no grace can; and the beſt of thoſe actions which are done without this grace, will at laſt be found but ſhining ſins, and beautiful iniquities. And therefore *Solomon* concludes (*Eccleſ.* 12. 13.) *Fear God, and keep his Commandments, for this is the whole duty of man:* As if he had ſaid, If any man ſhould keep the Commandments, and not in the fear of the Lord, he hath done but half (at moſt) of the duty of man, and nothing at all as a gracious man.

And becauſe this holy fear is ſo precious in it ſelf, and ſo rarely found among the children of men; I ſhall firſt diſcover, where it is; and ſecondly, whence it comes to paſs, that 'tis ſo rarely found among them.

The tree (ſaith Chriſt) *is known by its fruits*; and where this tree of a holy life grows, will be known by the fruits or effects of it; ſuch as theſe.

Firſt, *The fear of the Lord is clean* (Pſal. 19.9.) 'Tis clean, Firſt, Subjectively, or in it ſelf: Fear is a pure chryſtal orient Grace, there's no ſpot in it. Secondly, 'Tis clean effectively, 'tis a cleanſer: Fear is a ſcouring purifying Grace. *Let us cleanſe our ſelves* (ſaith the Apoſtle, 2 Cor. 7.1.) *from all filthineſs of fleſh and ſpirit, perfecting holineſs in the fear of the Lord.* Theſe two go ſtill together, *Fear the Lord and depart from evil* (Prov. 3.7.) Yea, *The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life to depart from the ſnares of death* (Prov. 14.27.) He means it either of ſin, which is a ſpiritual death, or of damnation, which is an everlaſting death. Again, (*Prov.* 8.13.) *The fear of the Lord is to depart from evil.* The very (*formalis ratio*, or) definition of holy fear, conſiſts in our averſation from that which is unholy. Once more (*Prov.* 16.6.) *By the fear of the Lord men depart from evil.* They depart from evil by the help of this good fear: Firſt, So, as not to do what is forbidden: Secondly, So, as not to feel what is threatened. When *Joſeph* perceived his Brethren ſuſpitious that he would deal rigorouſly with them, he uſes no other argument to quiet their minds, and aſſure their hearts againſt that fear, but only this, *I fear God* ([illegible].42.18.) As if he had ſaid, Ye need not fear that I wi[illegible] you any wrong, or give you any hard meaſure, whi[illegible] fear of God forbids me. *Abraham* reaſons on the other hand (*Gen.* 20.11.) *Surely the fear of the Lord is not in this place, and they will ſlay me for my Wives ſake.* Nothing can ſtop their hands from any wickedneſs which they have a mind to (but the want of power and opportunity) who have not the fear of God before their eyes. The Prophet reſolves all the Apoſtacy of the *Jews* from God and his Law into the abſence of this fear (*Jer.* 5.24.) *This people hath a revolting and a rebellious heart, they are revolted and gone:* Why ſo? *Neither ſay they in their heart* (poſſibly they ſaid and profeſſed it with their lips) *let us fear the Lord our God.* Fear is the bank which keeps *the black and dead ſea of ſin* from overflowing: 'Tis the golden bridle which checks our headſtrong luſts, when they would either run us out of the ſtrait way of life, or run us into the broad way of death and deſtruction. We may ſhut up this with *David's* Concluſion (*Pſal.* 36.1.) *The tranſgreſſion of the wicked ſaith in my heart* (that is, I beholding their tranſgreſſion am as fully perſwaded of it, as if they ſpake it out and told me ſo in ſo many words) *there is no fear of God before their eyes.* Durſt any mock God with flouriſhes and formalities in Religion, if they feared him? Durſt any provoke God to his face by real and open wickedneſſes, if they feared him? Durſt any ſin with the judgments of God freſh bleeding before their eyes, if they feared the Lord and his wrath? Durſt they ſin with heaps of precious mercy before their eyes, if they feared the Lord and his goodneſs? Durſt any flatter either others or themſelves with hopes of impunity in their ſin, if they feared the Lord and his truth? Durſt any ſlight their own promiſes, profeſſions, proteſtations, oaths, or deſign the entangling of others by them, rather then the binding of themſelves, did they fear the Lord and his faithfulneſs, even the Lord who keepeth covenant and promiſe for ever? All theſe and many more tranſgreſſions of the wicked (all theſe wayes of tranſgreſſion are found among the wicked, it were well if none of them were found among thoſe who have a name of godlineſs (I ſay) all theſe tranſgreſſions of the wicked) ſay, there is no fear of God before their eyes. Yea, do not theſe ſay with the fool in their hearts (*Pſal.* 14.1.) *There is no God to be feared*; or no God but whom fooliſh fear hath made.

Secondly, This fear of the Lord which is our wiſdom, doth arm and antidote the ſoul againſt the power and poyſon of all other fears. Firſt, Againſt the fear of ſuffering evil: Secondly, Againſt fear in doing good. Theſe two fears fall often into one, ſeeing one reaſon why many forbear to do the good which God commands, is for fear of ſuffering thoſe evils which either men threaten, or they ſuſpect will enſue. But as he that fears the Lord, feareth to do evil; ſo he that feareth to do ſinful evils, doth not fear the ſuffering of any penal evil: He neither troubleth himſelf aforehand with the fearful thoughts of that evil which he may ſuffer; nor is he much troubled (if at all) with the ſenſe of thoſe which he doth ſuffer. *The wicked flee* (ſaith *Solomon*, Prov. 28.1.) *when no man purſueth* (they are afraid of conceited dangers) *but the righteous are bold as a Lyon*, they are not afraid of real dangers. They are bold as a Lyon; not firſt, with a natural boldneſs as a Lyon; not ſecondly, with a proud boldneſs as a Lyon, preſuming and going forth upon their own ſtrength; nor thirdly, with an ignorant beaſtial boldneſs, as a Lyon, who knows not his own danger, nor is apprehenſive of it; but they are bold with a ſpiritual, humble, well-grounded boldneſs as a Lyon: Firſt, In the ſtrength of Chriſt for God: Secondly, In the righteouſneſs of Chriſt with God. The troubles of the righteous are many, but their fears are few. The Prophet preſcribes this fear of the Lord as the beſt medicine againſt all other fears (*Iſa.* 8.12,13.) And ſo doth Chriſt himſelf (*Luke* 12.4,5.) *I ſay unto you my friends, be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom you ſhall fear; fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to caſt into hell; yea, I ſay unto you, fear him:* As if he had ſaid, As you ought not, ſo if you fear God, you will not much fear man. *He fears nothing elſe, who fears that one thing, to ſin*: And *he fears none elſe, who fears that One, who is more then All, God.* That which we tranſlate, *Able men* (*Exod.* 8.21.) the *Geneva* renders, *Men of courage fearing God.* Thus fear dwells with courage, and is the ſpring of it. A Magiſtrate fearing God will do right and juſtice, let who will be diſpleaſed with it, or concerned in it. Moſt Magiſtrates know what is right, and ſome have a good mind to do it, but there are not a few who dare not, a Lyon is in the way: Some are as eaſily brib'd with fear, as others are with hopes, or as any are with gifts in hand. If there be any thing in the world that deſerves to be called cowardiſe, this is it: All that I ſhall ſay to ſuch cowards (whether they be ſuch as for fear forbear to do good in wayes of righteouſneſs towards men, or in wayes of holineſs and pure Religion towards God; all that I ſhall ſay to them) is this, read and tremble at that which is written (*Rev.* 21.8.) *Without are the fearful*; none ſhall come into Heaven but they who fear God; nor ſhall any, who throw up their known duty for fear of man.

Thirdly, Holy fear keeps the heart tender and humble; and hence we find this fear oppoſed both to hardneſs and pride of heart. *Bleſſed is the man that feareth alwayes* (Prov. 28.14. that is, who feareth alwayes to ſin, and who feareth that all times he may be overtaken with ſin, and is therefore watchful over himſelf) *but*, as it follows, *he that hardeneth his heart ſhall fall into miſchief.* The Church complaineth ſadly to the Lord (*Iſa.* 63.17.) *Why haſt thou hardened our heart from thy fear.* As there is a natural hardneſs which every man brings into the world with him, and an additional voluntary, yea, affected hardneſs (ſuch was that ſpoken of in the *Proverbs*) which wicked men bring upon themſelves; ſo there is a judiciary or inflicted hardneſs, which God by withdrawing his mollifying ſoftning Spirit, leaves his own people ſometimes to, and which God by leaving wicked men (as he did *Pharoah*) to the natural hardneſs of their own ſpirits, gives them up to. And as they who are hardened in the firſt and ſecond, and in the laſt branch of the third ſence, do caſt off the fear of God; ſo they who are but hardened according to the former branch of it, as the Church ſpoken of in the Prophet did, find a ſenſible abſence of that holy awe and fear of God from their hearts. Where fear is, it ſoftens the hard heart, and when the heart is hardened, it either puts away divine fear, or finds the failing of it. We may ſay the ſame of pride as the Apoſtles counſel imports (*Rom.* 11:20.) *Be not high minded, but fear.* 'Tis our duty to mind thoſe things which are above, or on high, but to be high minded is our ſin: And holy fear will either keep the mind lowly and humble; or pride and high-mindedneſs will keep out holy fear; *A proud man, and a man fearing God, are a contradiction.* There is pride in the heart of a man fearing God; but he that feareth God is daily bewailing and mortifying the pride of his own heart; and therefore he cannot be a proud man.

Fourthly, Holy fear enlargeth the heart (*Iſa.* 60. 5.) *Thy heart ſhall fear and be enlarged.* Fear enlargeth the heart: Firſt, Unto duty. *Eliphaz* ſaid rightly (though amiſs to *Job*, Chap. 14. 4.) *Thou caſteſt off fear, and reſtraineſt prayer before God.* As if he had ſaid, Thou doſt not care for prayer, or haſt no heart to it, having caſt the fear of God out of thine heart. To fear God is internal worſhip, yea, the external worſhip of God is called fear; and therefore they can have no mind to worſhip God, who have none of this fear; and they who have much of this fear, cannot but be much in worſhip: For as fear enlargeth the heart to duty; ſo, Secondly, It enlargeth the heart in duty. Natural fear ſhrivels and ſhrinks up the heart; ſpiritual fear opens and widens it; and the reaſon is, becauſe this fear is alwayes accompanied and eſpouſed with faith, and faith cauſes joy, and joy is the dilatation of the heart: So that though fear doth not immediately or from its own proper act enlarge the heart, yet as conſidered with its train and concomitants it doth. A man ſurpriſed with carnal fear, is made leſs then he was in all his abilities, and he ſeldom, in that fit, hath the uſe of any, but of thoſe which diſcover his weakneſs. *The fear of man* (that is, either a meer humane fear, or the fear of meer humane things, ſaith *Solomon*, Prov. 29. 25.) *bringeth a ſnare*; and a ſnare bringeth a man into ſtraits. What can a man do that is in a ſnare? In that caſe he is not maſter of himſelf, and therefore muſt act at a lower and leſſer rate then himſelf: But godly fear bringeth a man out of all creature-ſnares, and therefore maketh him more then he was for God, and for all good purpoſes.

Thus I have given a taſt of ſome of the effects of this noble fear, by which we may diſcover where it is: And if any ſhould enquire, which was

The ſecond point propoſed, Whence it is that this fear is ſo little; and works ſo little in the heart and hand of man, I ſhall anſwer it in three things.

Firſt, The fear of the Lord is caſt off upon a preſumption of the mercy of the Lord. As the want of faith is alwayes followed with carnal and diſtruſtful fear; ſo the abounding of preſumption will not admit nor receive holy fear. As Believers plead mercy to ſtrengthen their hearts in this bleſſed aſſurance, that their ſins committed ſhall be pardoned; ſo preſumers plead mercy to harden their hearts in this curſed aſſurance, that though they commit ſin they ſhall not be puniſhed. Thus the preſumptuous perſon is deſcribed, even while he is *hearing the word of the curſe* (Deut. 29. 19.) *Bleſſing himſelf in his heart, and ſaying, I ſhall have peace though I walk in the imagination of mine heart, to add drunkenneſs to thirſt.* Which may be underſtood either ſpecially for immoderate or exceſſive drinking; ſome when they are thirſty, never think they have drunk enough, till they have drunk too much, nor are they ever ſatisfied (nor then neither) till they are overwhelmed and drowned in drink; or we may expound that ſpeech of *adding drunkenneſs to thirſt* generally, as ſignifying the eager purſuit of any ſin. Deſire is the thirſt of the ſoul; and as a godly man is ſaid to *hunger and thirſt after righteouſneſs* (Matth. 5. 6.) becauſe that's the deſire of his ſoul; ſo the ungodly thirſt after wickedneſs, and when they have done it abundantly, may well be ſaid to *add drunkenneſs to thirſt.*

Secondly, As theſe ſhew no fear of God, becauſe they have a ſtrong confidence (though a very vain one) that God will ſhew mercy to ſinners hereafter; ſo others do it becauſe they have a clear experience that God exerciſeth much patience towards ſinners at preſent. Becauſe the Lord is ſlow to bring evil, therefore they are ſwift to do it. The Preacher is expreſs in this (*Eccleſ.* 8. 11.) *Becauſe ſentence againſt an evil work is not executed ſpeedily, therefore the heart of the ſons of men is fully ſet in them to do evil.* When once the heart is full, not only bent and inclined, but ſet and reſolved to do a thing, then 'tis far enough from any fear in doing it. And when ſome men have ventured to ſin once, and come off (as to any ſenſible hurt) ſafe, they will venture again and again, and ſo often, till at laſt they are perſwaded, there is no venture in ſinning; and that there's no more (poſſibly not ſo much) of hazzard in tranſgreſſing as in obeying.

A third ſort have no true fear of the Lord, becauſe they have no true knowledge of the Lord; they ſee not the danger of ſin, and therefore conclude there is none. We read of theſe two put together (*Prov.* 1. 29.) *They hated knowledge, and did not chuſe the fear of the Lord.* Nor can they who have not the knowledge of the Lord, chuſe his fear; for ſeeing knowledge is the guide of election, there cannot be a good choice in the will, where there wants a true light in the underſtanding.

I have thus far diſcovered what and where, or in whom that fear of the Lord is, which is our wiſdom; I ſhall now briefly ſhew that it is *our wiſdom to fear the Lord.* In the former diſcourſe the emphaſis lay upon *fear*; in this the emphaſis lyeth upon *wiſdom.*

That it is our wiſdom to fear the Lord, *David* aſſerts with *Job* in ſo many words (*Pſal.* 111. 10.) *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wiſdom. A good underſtanding have all they that do his Commandments.* He calleth it the beginning of wiſdom, not as if it were only the *A*, *B*, *C*, the firſt rudiment, element, or principle of Wiſdom; for indeed it is the perfection, the head, the higheſt principle of Wiſdom. And the word, in the Pſalm, which we tranſlate *beginning*, ſignifyeth alſo the *head*, the chief, or uppermoſt part of a thing; and ſo here, the head, the ſum, the *top of Wiſdom*: As there are degrees of Wiſdom, ſo of the fear of the Lord: But there is no degree of this fear ſo inferiour or low, but it is a beginning (at leaſt) of Wiſdom; and there is no degree of Wiſdom ſo high or perfect, but it hath its root in or beginning from this fear. *Solomon* affirms the ſame thing (*Prov.* 1. 7.) *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools deſpiſe wiſdom and inſtruction.* Natural fools are defective in the principles of Reaſon; ſpiritual fools are defective in the principles of Religion, in this grand principle eſpecially, the fear of the Lord. Fools deſpiſe Wiſdom in every notion of it, but moſt of all in this: But how much ſoever they deſpiſe all Wiſdom, and are unſatisfied that the fear of the Lord is any part of it, yet 'tis ſo in it ſelf, and to the wiſe it appears ſo, upon theſe following Demonſtrations.

ראש *Caput per metaphorā, ſummitas cujuſlibet rei. Hinc* ראשית *principium temporis, ordinis & dignitatis.*

Firſt, To fear the Lord is an argument that we know the Lord, and that knowledge is pureſt wiſdom. *Pharoah* ſaid, *Who is the Lord? I know not the Lord.* And therefore he hardened his heart againſt the fear of the Lord. He never feared what God threatened, till he felt what God inflicted; and though he felt that often, yet as ſoon as it was off, he ceaſed to fear, and ſo brought it on again, till at laſt he was utterly overthrown. *Pharaoh* ſaid to his grave and great Councellers, concerning the *Iſraelites* (Exod. 1. 11.) *Come let us deal wiſely with them, leſt they multiply.* But not knowing the Lord who dealt with him by *Moſes* for their deliverance, he neither feared what he had ſaid, nor what he had done, till himſelf and his *Egyptians* were paſt deliverance. They who fear the Lord know him; and they who know him will not provoke him at all, but to their utmoſt keep peace with him, which is our wiſdom.

Secondly, To fear the Lord is an argument that we know our duty (*Eccleſ.* 12. 13.) *Let us hear the concluſion of the whole matter, Fear God, and keep his Commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.* And is it not our wiſdom to know our duty? *Solomon* ſaith (*Prov.* 14. 8.) *The wiſdom of the prudent is to underſtand his way.* What way? The way of his duty, what he ought to do, and how he ought to walk, as in every thing, ſo in every relation; the fear of the Lord is the grand and great duty, the moſt comprehenſive duty, the duty into which all other duties empty themſelves, therefore to fear the Lord is our wiſdom.

Thirdly, To fear the Lord is an argument that we know our own intereſt, what is good, yea, what is beſt for us: To know that is our wiſdom; and none but the wiſe, the ſpiritually wiſe, have ever attained to this knowledge, that their greateſt intereſt lyes in the fear of the Lord. That is our beſt intereſt to which all good is aſſured and annexed by promiſe; and ſo 'tis to the fear of the Lord (*Pſal.* 34. 9.) *O fear the Lord ye his Saints, for there is no want to them that fear him.* Who can deſire to be in a better condition, then to be above or beyond the fear of want? And that's their condition who fear the Lord. He doth not ſay, they that fear the Lord have all things; but there is no want of any good thing to them that fear the Lord: It's poſſible for a man not to have many things, and yet to want nothing; and not to want is a great deal better then barely to have; and yet the fear of the Lord hath not only a promiſe of freedom from want, but of the beſt enjoyments (*Pſal.* 128. 1, 2, 3.) *Bleſſed is every one that feareth the Lord, that walketh in his way; for thou ſhalt eat the labour of thy hands, happy ſhalt thou be, and it ſhall be well with thee; thy Wife ſhall be as a fruitful Vine by the ſide of thy houſe, thy Children like Olive plants round about thy table: Behold that thus ſhall the man be bleſſed that feareth the Lord.* As *Haman* cauſed it to be proclaimed (*Heſt.* 6.9.) *Thus ſhall it be done to the man that the King delighteth to honour.* So here, *Behold, thus ſhall the man be bleſſed that feareth the Lord:* He ſhall be bleſſed in his Wife, and bleſſed in his Children, ſo bleſſed in both, that the Pſalmiſt calls all to behold it, as a rare, beautiful, yea, wonderful ſight, *Behold, thus ſhall the man be bleſſed.* And yet the man fearing God ſhall be bleſſed more then *thus*; his bleſſing ſhall come in the beſt way (*ver.* 5.) *The Lord ſhall bleſs thee out of* Sion: His temporal mercies ſhall come in a ſpiritual way, yea, he ſhall have ſpiritual bleſſings, *He ſhall bleſs thee out of* Sion: And he ſhall have bleſſings beyond his own walls: *Thou ſhalt ſee the good of* Jeruſalem *all the dayes of thy life; thou ſhalt ſee thy Childrens Children, and peace upon* Iſrael. Sometimes a good man can take no content in his family-mercies, becauſe of the Churches afflictions; he prefers *Jeruſalem* before his chief joy (*Pſal.* 137. 6.) and while that is mourning he cannot but be ſorrowing, though his own houſe be full of joy: And ſometimes a mans own family is ſo afflicted, and his houſe ſo full of ſorrow, that he cannot but mourn, even when *Jeruſalem* rejoyceth, and *Sion* is glad. But when a good man looks home to his own houſe and ſees good there, when alſo he looks abroad to *Jeruſalem* and ſees good there too, How full is his joy? How compleat is his bleſſedneſs? And behold, thus the man is bleſſed that feareth the Lord. We have ſtore of ſuch Promiſes in the *Proverbs* (Chap. 22. 4.) *By humility and the fear of the Lord are riches, and honour, and life*; that is, they who truly fear the Lord, have a promiſe of riches, and a promiſe of honour, and a promiſe of life. What an intereſt is here! Riches are a great intereſt; ſome think if they can get riches enough they have enough; others are hungry after honour, power, and dignity; a third ſort, who have both the former, have yet hungers after life, they are afraid death will remove them from their riches and honour, and to live in that fear is a continual death; But they who have riches, and honour, and life, what can they deſire more? Yea, the Text is plural, riches, honour, and lives: He that feareth the Lord hath a promiſe of many lives, of all ſorts of life, natural life, ſpiritual life, and eternal life are his; he is bound up in the bundle of lives (*Prov.* 19. 23.) *The fear of the Lord tendeth to life, and he that hath it ſhall abide ſatisfied.* Fear tends to life: To what life? It is ſpiritual life, and it hath as a tendency to the prolonging and ſweetning of natural life, ſo an aſſurance of or tye upon the enjoyment of eternal life; and he that hath it *ſhall abide ſatisfied*: Satiſfaction is the higheſt intereſt of all; it is poſſible for a man to have honour, riches, and life, yet not to be ſatisfied. Some who have all theſe at preſent, have yet many empty corners in their ſouls; they have as much riches, as much honour, as much health as they can tell what to do with, yet they are not ſatisfied; yea, they know not what to do with all theſe. But they that fear the Lord *ſhall abide ſatisfied*: though they have but little in the world, though they have nothing that can be accounted honour, nothing that can be called riches, though they ſcarce live while they are in the world, yet they are ſatisfied in the loving kindneſs of the Lord whom they fear, and that is better not only then riches and honour, but better then life (*Pſal.* 63.3.) To all theſe add that precious ſpiritual promiſe (*Mal.* 4. 2.) *But unto you that fear my Name, ſhall the Sun of Righteouſneſs ariſe with healing in his wings, and ye ſhall go forth and grow up as Calves of the ſtall.* Is not then the fear of the Lord our intereſt, and our profit? Is it not the all that we can poſſibly have in this world, and for the next? And is it not then our wiſdom? He is a wiſe man that knoweth his intereſt; and he is wiſeſt that knoweth this for his intereſt. This was the counſel of *Moſes* to *Iſrael* concerning the Statutes of the Lord which he had taught them (*Deut.* 4.6.) *Keep therefore and do them* (that is, the Statutes of the Lord, to keep which is the fear of the Lord) *for this is your wiſdom and underſtanding in the ſight of the Nations, which ſhall hear all theſe Statutes and ſay, Surely this is a wiſe and underſtanding people.* There is nothing to be feared more then this, that we ſhould fear any thing more then God; and there is nothing to be deſired more then this, that we we ſhould fear God above all things. For, that doth not only make us wiſe, but is our wiſdom, above all things: *The fear of the Lord, that is wiſdom*;

And to depart from evil is underſtanding.

For the clearing of theſe words, I ſhall ſhew three things.

Firſt, What is meant by *evil*.

Secondly, What it is to *depart from evil*.

Thirdly, How our *departing from evil is our underſtanding*.

To the firſt Query I anſwer, There are two ſorts of evil.

Firſt, Evil done.

Secondly, Evil ſuffered; or according to the moſt uſual terms of diſtinction, there is the evil of ſin, and the evil of puniſhment. Here in the Text when *Job* ſaith, *To depart from evil is underſtanding*, we are to underſtand it of the evil of ſin, of that evil either done, or which we are tempted to do. And as by *evil* we are to underſtand ſin in general, ſo that we may take the full compaſs of what we are to depart from; we may conſider ſin under a five-fold notion. The word being indefinite, implyeth a departure from evil univerſally. As

Firſt, A departure from all kinds or ſorts of ſinful evil; under what title or diſtinction ſoever ſin appears, we muſt depart from it, whether it be a ſinful evil of the heart, or a ſinful evil of the hand, or a ſinful evil of the tongue; whether it be a ſinful evil in the omiſſion of that good which is commanded, or in the commiſſion of that evil which is forbidden. When the Text ſaith, *To depart from evil is underſtanding*, we muſt underſtand *evil* in this latitude, not this or that, but every ſinful evil.

Secondly, We are to underſtand it of ſinful evils of all degrees and meaſures. We muſt depart not only from groſs and palpable evils, but from thoſe which are ſpun with ſo fine a thred that they are almoſt indiſcernable, not only from open prophaneneſs, but cloſeſt hypocriſie; not only from thoſe ſins which lay waſt our hope, which devour our faith, and make ſhipwrack of a good conſcience, not only from monſtrous ſins, from ſins of the firſt magnitude, but we are to depart from the leaſt and loweſt, the meaneſt and ſmalleſt ſins. The leaſt ſinful evil, and the leaſt of it is too big and too bad for our company, we muſt depart from it. Indeed he makes conſcience of no ſin, who makes not conſcience of all; and he is in danger of the greateſt, who departs not from the leaſt.

Thirdly, We muſt depart not only from the tract or trade, from the courſe and cuſtom of evil, but from any one act, or attempt of evil. No man can excuſe himſelf when he doth evil, by ſaying, I will not do it often, I will not do it alwayes, I intend not to live in it, nor to make a buſineſs of it, I will do it but this once, for (beſides that, he who ſins once runs a hazzard of ſinning often) he that ſins but once, ſins too often by once. The beſt of men cannot chuſe but ſin often; but no man ſhould chuſe to ſin no not once.

Fourthly, We muſt depart from, or as the Apoſtle expreſſeth it (1 *Theſ.* 5.22.) *Abſtain from all appearance of evil*; that is, from whatſoever hath ſo much as a ſhew of ſin, or wherein ſin makes any the leaſt ſhew. Suppoſe ſin appear not in a full body, yet if it put out but a little finger we muſt not have to do with it. Some ſhews and appearances of ſin are real, ſome are only conceited and imaginary; and theſe imaginary appearances of ſin are of two ſorts: Firſt, Such as appear to us through our ignorance or want of information; or, Secondly, Such as appear ſo to others, either upon the ſame grounds, or upon theſe ſuperadded ones, their jealouſies of us, or prejudices againſt us.

Firſt, As for the real appearances of evil, we muſt alwayes abſtain or depart from them, upon the utmoſt peril of our own conſciences. Secondly, As for thoſe imaginary evils, which appear to us through our ignorance as evils, though in themſelves they are not, we muſt abſtain from them while they appear ſo; an erring conſcience binds us to do nothing againſt it; *Whatſoever is not of faith is ſin* to us (*Rom.* 14. 23.) though the fact or thing done be not ſinful. A ſcrupulous conſcience is a troubleſome one, but 'tis better then a preſumptuous one. As we muſt not nouriſh ſcruples or needleſs doubts, ſo we muſt not act againſt our ſcruples or doubtings, ſo that though the evil be but a meer ſhew or imagination of ours, yet we muſt abſtain from it. Thirdly, As for thoſe appearances of evil which are ſo only in the imagination of others, we muſt often abſtain from them, and rather forbear our own liberty, then offend the weak, or bring diſcredit upon profeſſion. *Paul* would eat no fleſh for ever, rather then he would offend his brother; much more would he abſtain from fleſh offered to Idols, though that was ſinful only in the imagination of others (1 *Cor.* 8. 13.) nor would he take maintenance of the *Corinthians*, though he pleaded the lawfulneſs of it ſtrongly (1 *Cor.* 9. 15.) becauſe he would avoid all appearance of covetouſneſs in preaching the Goſpel. It is not alwayes ground enough for us to do a thing becauſe it is lawful, we muſt conſider in many caſes whether it be ſeemly and expedient as to time and place.

Fifthly, As we are to depart from the appearances, ſo from the occaſions of evil. When *Solomon* had given that ſtrict charge (*Prov.* 4. 14.) *Enter not into the paths of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men*; he preſently adds (*ver.* 15.) *Avoid it, paſs not by it, turn from it, and paſs away:* As if he had ſaid, I adviſe thee, my Son, not only not to enter the path of the wicked, but not ſo much as to look upon it; not only to withdraw thy foot from it, but thine eye, for that may be a provocation leading thee into it; yea, I adviſe thee not only to avoid it when thou comeſt near it; but do not ſo much as come near it; *Paſs thou not by it*, keep aloof off (as we ſay) keep thy diſtance, *Turn from it*, and make not the leaſt ſtay when thou turneſt, *Paſs away:* The leaſt ſtand may be an occaſion of thy fall, therefore keep thy ſelf alwayes in motion, yea, upon thy full ſpeed when thou art near an evil path, *Paſs away*; that is, paſs it by, when thou paſſeſt by it. As we muſt depart from the evil it ſelf, ſo from every thing which hath any tendency thereunto. 'Tis dangerous to go alwayes to the furtheſt bound of things lawful: They that will do the utmoſt of what they may, are eaſily engaged to do what they may not. But 'tis much more dangerous to dally with the firſt overtures and occaſions of things unlawful. They who keep not off from the verges of ſin, may quickly be carried to the center of it. *Solomon* ſpeaking of the ſtrange Woman, whoſe lips drop like a Honey-comb, preſently ſubjoyns (*Prov.* 5. 8.) *Remove thy way far from her, and come not nigh the door of her houſe*: As if he had ſaid, Do not only forbear diſcourſe with her, but forbear the remoteſt ſight of her. In oppoſition to this counſel *Solomon* ſheweth us the folly of ſinners (*Prov.* 7. 6, 7, 8.) *At the window of my houſe I looked through the caſement, and behold among the ſimple ones, I diſcerned among the youths, a young man void of underſtanding, paſſing through the ſtreets near her corner, and he went the way to her houſe:* That is, He did, as it were, caſt himſelf into the mouth of danger, and invite his own ruine. And whenever we put our ſelves upon the occaſion of ſin, then we paſs near the corner, and go the way to the Harlots houſe. When *Joſeph*'s chaſtity was ſollicited by his wanton Miſtreſs, the Text ſaith (*Gen.* 39. 10.) *It came to paſs as ſhe ſpake to him day by day, that he hearkened not unto her, to lye with her, or to be with her*; that he might avoid the ſin, he avoided all private ſociety with her.

Secondly, What is it to *depart from evil*? 'Tis not barely ſaid, do no evil, but depart from it; and there is a great deal more in departing from evil, then a forbearance to do evil. As there is a wide difference between our doing of good, and our delighting to do good (many a man doth that good which he doth not love, in which he hath no delight) ſo there is a wide difference between our departure from, or abhorrence of evil, and our not doing or forbearing to do it. Not to do evil ſheweth indeed that the hand and tongue, yea, all the parts of the outward man turn from it; but to depart from evil is an argument that the heart and ſpirit, that the deſires and affections, even all the powers of the inward man turn from it. So then, this departure is firſt external, from the acts; ſecondly, internal, from the love and liking of it, from any pleaſedneſs or complyance with ſinful evil. Yea, the Hebrew word implyeth a departing with indignation and abhorrence, and not only a departing with abhorrence, but with a purpoſe of revenge; as when a man departeth from an utter enemy, he doth not only leave his company, but hath a purpoſe to be revenged on him with the firſt opportunity. (I ſpeak not this to juſtifie ſuch a ſpirit or purpoſe of revenge, but only to declare the thing as it is moſt commonly, and as in ſome caſes it may lawfully be.) Thus, the departure from evil ſpoken of in this Text, is not like a departing from a friends houſe or company whom we love and like very well, and from whom though we depart, yet it is but for a ſeaſon, and with a hope ſhortly to ſee and enjoy him again. But 'tis a departing with a deſire never to have to do with it again; yea, with a purpoſe of holy revenge, to mortifie, kill, and deſtroy it to the very uttermoſt of our power. For as the wiſdom of the fleſh (*Rom.* 8. 7.) is not only a declining from that which is good, or from the Law of God, but enmity againſt God, joyned with a total and reſolved unſubjection to, and oppoſition againſt his righteous Law; ſo the wiſdom of the Spirit, and ſpiritual underſtanding, is not only an avoiding of, and abſtaining from that which is evil, but a deteſtation of it, joyned with a firm reſolution to ſubdue and break the ſtrength of it for ever. They underſtand not what it is to depart from evil, who bear any the leaſt good affection to it, how much ſoever they lay down or leave off evil actions. This is that holy enmity which God planted in the Womans ſeed; that is, in the holy ſeed (*Gen.* 3. 15.) *I will put enmity between thee and the Woman, and between her ſeed and thy ſeed:* That is, between thee and all the wicked; yea, between thee and all wickedneſs. This enmity is not only an effect and fruit, but the ſecurity and preſervation of our holineſs. As our love to that which is good, ſo our abhorrence of that which is evil, is the higheſt of our holineſs, and moſt fundamental (I mean of any thing wrought in us) to it. Suppoſe corruption doth ſo dog and cumber us, that we cannot depart from many evils in our outward actings; yet if we do maintain and keep up this hatred of the law of ſin in the inner man, we are well, yet muſt ſtrive to do and act better. *David* gives this character among others of a wicked man (*Pſal.* 36. 4.) *He ſetteth himſelf in a way that is not good, he abhorreth not evil.* Poſſibly there are ſome, yea many evils, which the wicked man doth not act; but as he never ſets himſelf in a good way, ſo neither doth he abhor, that is, inwardly depart from that which is evil.

Further, When *Job* ſaith, *To depart from evil is underſtanding*; in that negative, we are to underſtand the affirmative, our doing good. 'Tis not the fulneſs of ſpiritual underſtanding, barely to abſtain from doing evil, or not to bring forth evil fruit. He that hath a ſpiritual underſtanding labours to bring forth good fruit, and ſo to be compleat in all the will of God. All the negative Commandments of God include their affirmatives. When God ſaith (*Exod.* 20. 2.) *Thou ſhalt have no other Gods before me:* He ſaith, Thou ſhalt have me for thy God, thou ſhalt love me, and fear me, and truſt upon me. And when God ſaith, *Thou ſhalt not make to thy ſelf any graven Image:* That is, Thou ſhalt not uſe any deviſed worſhip: He ſaith, Thou ſhalt worſhip me according to my own appointments. As we muſt depart from all will-worſhip; ſo we muſt apply our ſelves to God in that worſhip, which is according to his will. When God ſaith, *Thou ſhalt not kill*; *Thou ſhalt not commit adultery*; *Thou ſhalt not ſteal*; *Thou ſhalt not bear falſe witneſs*; *Thou ſhalt not covet.* A departure from all theſe evils is not the keeping of theſe Laws, unleſs we perform the contrary acts of love and duty to our Neighbours, with reſpect to the ſafety of their lives, the purity of their perſons, the proſperity of their eſtate, and the preſervation of their credit. For though not to do evil is to do good, becauſe we are forbidden to do it; yet there is a good which we are commanded to do, beſides the not doing of evil forbidden; and that departure from evil works, which is our underſtanding, is alwayes attended and fruited with thoſe good works.

Thirdly, It may be queſtioned, *How it is our underſtanding to depart from evil?*

I anſwer; Firſt, It is ſo formally: That is, the thing it ſelf is an act of underſtanding. Every rational act is an act of the underſtanding; much more every ſpiritual act: Though Grace be above Nature, yet it is an act in Nature, and exerts or puts forth it ſelf, ſometimes in the will, ſometimes in the affections, ſometimes in the memory, ſometimes in the conſcience, and alwayes in the underſtanding. *The peace of God paſſeth all underſtanding* (Phil. 4. 7.) that is, our underſtanding is too narrow to compaſs it, or to conceive what it is; and the Grace of God paſſeth through our underſtanding; that is, whatſoever we do graciouſly, we do it underſtandingly, or in the light of our underſtanding.

Secondly, To depart from evil is underſtanding, *evidentially*, or *declaratively*; that is, He declareth himſelf to be an underſtanding man who departeth from evil. Nor know I how a man can give a fairer proof of his underſtanding then this; and that the beſt underſtanding of ſpiritual underſtanding. For as it was ſhewed before, that the fear of the Lord is not only wiſdom, but the beſt wiſdom, not the wiſdom of this world which God will deſtroy, not the wiſdom of Politicians, nor the wiſdom of Philoſophers, which ſhall periſh, but ſpiritual wiſdom; ſo to depart from evil, is not the natural or common underſtanding of man as man, but the ſpecial and ſpiritual underſtanding of Saints as Saints. And when the Lord ſaith, *To depart from evil is underſtanding*, it is as if he had ſaid, let men boaſt of the pregnancy of their parts, and wit, and underſtanding as much as they will, yet there is no man truly witty or underſtanding; there's no man hath a true pregnancy of parts, but he, who in the honeſty and integrity of his ſoul, departeth from evil.

From the words thus opened obſerve,

Firſt, *Sin is evil*; *ſin is the evil.*

Sin is evil, and the worſt of evils; he that departs from ſin departs from evil; before there was ſin in the world, there was no evil in the world; *God ſaw all that he had made, and behold it was very good.* But as ſoon as ſin, which was the firſt, and is the greateſt evil, came in, all other evils thronged in with it.

We may demonſtrate the evil of ſin, or how great an evil ſin is, many wayes.

Firſt, Sin is ſo bad, that nothing can be ſaid of it worſe then it is; therefore the Apoſtle (*Rom.* 7. 13.) ſpeaking of *the evil of ſin*, goeth not out of its ſelf for a title of diſhonour and diſcommendation (*Rom.* 7. 13.) where acquitting the Law, of doing him any hurt, he chargeth all upon ſin; *Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But ſin, that it might appear ſin, working death in me by that which is good; that ſin by the commandment might become exceeding ſinful.* Here are two expreſſions ſetting out the evil of ſin, and both tell us, that it ſelf is the worſt word it can be expreſſed by: Firſt (ſaith he) *Sin that it might appear ſin:* As if he had ſaid, When ſin appears like it ſelf, that's the blackeſt and moſt horrid appearance of it, or there can no repreſentation be made of it by any other thing to reach the evil of it. When ſin appears ſin, then (as we ſay) it appeareth in its proper colours. Sin puts on ſometimes ſuch borrowed ſhapes and colours, as makes it look ſomewhat handſome; but whenever it is ſeen in its own ſhape, 'tis an ugly miſ-ſhapen Monſter. Secondly, ſaith the Apoſtle, *That ſin might become exceeding ſinful:* Some render, *Out of meaſure ſinful*; not that there is any due meaſure in any ſin, the leaſt ſin exceeds that meaſure of our actions which the Law requires and keeps us to. And yet as to the event or puniſhment of ſin, we may ſay ſin hath a meaſure, which when it once exceeds or goes beyond, God will no longer ſpare nor forbear to puniſh it. As we may ſee in the *Canaanites* and other wicked Nations, whom God ſpared a great while, but when their ſins had ſurpaſſed ſuch a meaſure or degree, and their *iniquities were full* (Gen. 15. 16.) then the Lord would bear no longer, but utterly deſtroyed them. But I rather take that phraſe of the Apoſtle (καθ' ὑπερβολὴν) as it is uſed in many other Texts of the New Teſtament (1 *Cor.* 12. 31. 2 *Cor.* 1. 8. 2 *Cor.* 4. 7. and 7. 17. *Gal.* 1. 13.) to note only the exceſſive ſinfulneſs of every ſin; ſin becomes hyperbolically, or (as we) exceeding ſinful; that is, it puts forth all its ſtrength, when it finds a check or ſtop put to its courſe by the Commandment. The Greek is a ſubſtantive (ἁμαρτωλὸς) *That ſin might become an exceeding ſinner*; which imports a perſon that hath the very art and knack of ſinning. So the Apoſtle elegantly calls *ſin a ſinner, and wickedneſs a wicked one:* As on the other hand, the Scripture ſometimes calls a wicked man wickedneſs, and a ſinner ſin (*Pſal.* 107. 42.) *The righteous ſhall ſee it and rejoyce, and all iniquity ſhall ſtop her mouth*; that is, all unrighteous or wicked men ſhall ſtop their mouths. Wicked men are nothing but a very maſs of wickedneſs. Every agent puts on the nature of, and takes up the likeneſs of that which he is commonly and conſtantly at. And ſo the ſinner is, as it were, changed into ſin, and is not ſo much vicious, as vice. As through the obedience of faith Saints are made partakers of the Divine nature, and may be called (in a correct ſence) not only godly, but godlineſs, not only holy, but holineſs; ſo through diſobedience and unbelief ſinners have not only a ſinful nature, but are transformed into the nature of ſin, and may juſtly be called, not only ſinners, but ſin. Thus we ſee that as the ſinner is ſin, ſo according to the ſtrictneſs of the Text in the *Romans*, *Sin is a ſinner, an exceeding ſinner.* But our reading is abundantly full to ſhew the evil of ſin, which ſaith, *Sin through the Commandment becomes exceeding ſinful*, and that the diſeaſe of it doth encreaſe by that which at firſt was preſcribed for its prevention, though never for its cure, *The Law.*

Secondly, The greatneſs of the evil of ſin may be ſeen in the Author of it; *Sin is the work of the evil one, the work of the Devil:* And what but evil, and the worſt of evils, can proceed from *The evil one*? *He that committeth ſin* (ſaith the Apoſtle *John*, Epiſt. 3. 8.) *is of the Devil, for the Devil ſinneth from the beginning: For this purpoſe the Son of God was manifeſted, that he might deſtroy the works of the Devil.* But what are the works of the Devil, which the Son of God came to deſtroy? I anſwer; The Devils works are of two ſorts: Firſt, He works againſt us: Secondly, He works in us; His work againſt us is a deſign to deſtroy us: He hath ſtratagems, wiles, and devices to undo us for ever; as he plotted and hoped to ruine all mankind at once in our firſt Parents; ſo he is every day trying to do it from man to man. Now Chriſt the Son of God was manifeſted to deſtroy thoſe works of the Devil, and to fruſtrate or overthrow all his deſigns againſt us. Secondly, The works of the Devil in us, are all thoſe luſts and corruptions which the Devil ſtirs up, and then draws out to the acting of any wickedneſs. And all thoſe ſins which are done by man may be called the Devils works, not only becauſe he provokes us to work them; but becauſe they are ſuch as himſelf works. Sin is the Devils proper work, and therefore this Text in *John* ſaith, *The Devil ſinneth from the beginning:* He not only ſinned at the beginning, but he *ſinneth from the beginning:* He from that day to this, hath been in a continued act of ſin: As he promotes ſin in all others; ſo he is an unceſſant practicer of it himſelf. He cannot turn his hand to any other work; he can do nothing but ſin, and advance ſin, or be the executioner of the Lords righteous vengeance upon ſinners. There is ſome evil that God doth; the evil of puniſhment. *Is there any evil in the City that I have not done?* ſaith the Lord (*Amos* 3. 6.) That is, Is there any trouble or affliction in the City that I have not ſent? The Lord taketh theſe evils upon himſelf, and freely owneth them; I have done them (ſaith the Lord) they are my works, they are the works of my holineſs and righteouſneſs as well as of my wrath and indignation. Theſe evils are Gods creatures as he ſpeaks (*Iſa.* 45. 7.) *I form the light, and create darkneſs; I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all theſe things.* But as for the evil of ſin, though God hath a hand in ordering and bounding it, yet he hath no hand in doing it; that's the Devils work; 'tis his work upon a twofold account (as was toucht before:) Firſt, As that which he is alwayes doing: Secondly, As that which he deſires and endeavours all ſhould do; he is turning every ſtone, and oyling all the wheels of mans corruption, that this work may be carried on. How evil is that which is the work of the Devil, that evil one!

Thirdly, The evil of ſin appears as it is the cauſe of all penal evils; how evil is that, as done, which is productive of all evils endured. Sin hath ſword, and famine, and peſtilence, and death, yea, and hell in the belly of it (*James* 1. 15.) *When luſt hath conceived, it bringeth forth ſin; and ſin, when it is finiſhed, bringeth forth death.* Luſt is firſt a mover unto ſin (*ver.* 14.) *Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own luſt and enticed:* Secondly, Luſt is the Mother of Sin, we have it firſt teeming, *Luſt conceives:* Secondly, we have it in travel, *It bringeth forth ſin*; Sin the Daughter is as fruitful as Luſt the Mother; for when that is grown to maturity, or (as the Apoſtles word is) *when 'tis finiſhed*, it conceives alſo, and beareth a ſtrange abortive, a pure privative, its iſſue is *ſtill born*; yet not ſo much dead, as *death. Sin when it is finiſhed bringeth forth death.* The firſt motions of ſin, or ſin unfiniſhed, deſerve death, though ſin fully acted and finiſhed be that to which death is chiefly aſcribed, with reſpect to the event, as alſo to the evidence and conſpicuouſneſs of it. And as this Scripture, by an elegant ſimilitude of a pregnant woman, makes death the child of ſin; ſo that of the Apoſtle by another elegant ſimilitude of a juſt Maſter, makes death *the wages of ſin* (Rom. 6. 23.) *He that commits ſin is the ſervant of ſin*, and ſin will pay all its ſervants (it hath no better coin among all its treaſures) in this *black money* called *Death*; which is ſo great a penal evil, that it includes and is put for all other penal evils. When the Prophet had foretold the *Jews* what diſmal clouds of wrath and judgment were ready to break and ſhowre down upon them, he alſo tells them from what vapours thoſe clouds had been collected and embodied (*Jer.* 4. 18.) *Thy wayes and thy doings have procured thoſe things to thee.* What wayes? Thy ſinful wayes. Thy doings: What doings? Thy evil doings, as appeareth plainly by the next words, *This is thy wickedneſs, becauſe it is bitter, becauſe it reacheth to thine heart*; that is, all the evils, troubles, and ſorrows that are ready to fall upon thee, are nothing elſe but thy ſins; ſin procureth the greateſt evils, therefore ſin is the greateſt evil.

Fourthly, The evil of it appeareth yet more; becauſe as it doth procure and is the meritorious cauſe of all puniſhments or penal evils, ſo it ſelf is the greateſt puniſhment. We commonly diſtinguiſh between the evil of ſin and the evil of puniſhment; yet the truth is, ſin it ſelf is not only a puniſhment, but the worſt of puniſhments (*Hoſea* 4. 17.) Ephraim *is joyned to Idols*; there is his ſin; But how will God puniſh him? He doth not ſay, I will bring a Sword upon him to cut him off, or divide him from his Idols; but, *let him alone*: This ſhall be his puniſhment, he ſhall go on in his ſin: He loves Idols, let him take his fill of them. So the Lord concludes againſt *Jeruſalem* (Ezek. 24. 13.) *Becauſe I have purged thee* (that is, I have uſed much means to purge thee, I have given thee many ſtrong purging Medicines) and thou waſt not purged (that is, thou didſt not repent nor turn from thy ſin) *thou ſhalt not be purged from thy filthineſs any more*; that is, I will uſe no more means to purge thee, but leave thee in thy luſts and groſſeſt humours; but know, that while I leave thee to reſt in thy ſin, *my fury reſteth upon thee*, as it followeth in the cloſe of the ſame verſe. The old *Gentiles* having abuſed the light of Nature, what was their puniſhment? It was no outward evil, nor ſtroke of vengeance upon their bodies or eſtates, for the *Gentiles* lived in much worldly proſperity: What was it then? The Text anſwers (*Rom.* 1. 26.) *For this cauſe God gave them up to vile affections*; and (*ver.* 28.) *As they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do things that are not convenient:* He did not give them up to endure things which were grievous, but to do things that were not convenient. What thoſe things were is clear in the twenty-ninth verſe; *Being filled with all unrighteouſneſs, fornication, wickedneſs, covetouſneſs, maliciouſneſs, full of envy*, &c. The Lord let their luſts looſe upon them, and laid the reins of their brutiſh affections in their necks, without the leaſt check; this was their puniſhment. They are in a bad condition whoſe affections are not renewed; what then is their condition whoſe affections are not ſo much as reſtrained? When any man is given up to be as wicked as he will be, he is within one ſtep (and that's to Hell) as miſerable as he can be. Some may think, this ſurely is a fine world, when God leaves a man to do what he liſt, and to run his own courſe without controul whither he liſt; or as *Solomon* ſpeaks to the young man (*Eccleſ.* 11. 9.) to *walk in the wayes of his own heart, and in the ſight of his own eyes*; that is, to act whatſoever ſeems good in his own eyes. But as *Solomon* there gives the young man a cooler, *Know thou, that for all theſe things God will bring thee to judgment*; ſo I may ſay, Know thou, O man, that to be ſuffered thus to take thy wayes, is a judgment. As thou ſhalt be judged for theſe things hereafter to eternal ſufferings; ſo thy preſent ſufferance in theſe things is a ſpiritual judgment. The hot diſpleaſure of God againſt all thoſe who *received not the love of the truth that they might be ſaved*, is thus ſignified by the Apoſtle (2 *Theſ.* 2. 11.) *For this cauſe God ſhall ſend them ſtrong deluſions, that they ſhould believe a lye.* And that this is the very next door to Hell, the next words aſſure us (*ver.* 12.) *That all they might be damned, who believed not the truth, but had pleaſure in unrighteouſneſs.* Many thouſands of men ſin, who ſhall not be damned; but all they who for a preſent puniſhment of former ſins are finally given up to the power of ſin, ſhall ſurely find and feel damnation for their puniſhment. They are altogether left under the guilt of ſin, who are wholly left to the power of ſin. How great an evil is ſin, which God often makes the laſt puniſhment of men here; and when he doth ſo, alwayes deſigns them to everlaſting puniſhment hereafter?

Fifthly, That ſin is the greateſt evil may be evinced and learned from the means and manner of its cure. How was this evil remedied? How was the cure of it wrought? Not by the power, not by the vertue of any creature in Heaven or Earth; all mankind was tainted with this infection; and though the good Angels were free, yet they could not free us from it; nor were they, though mighty in power, able to undertake it. There was no balm in any *Gilead* of this world, no Phyſician there, that could heal the hurt of *Adam*'s poſterity: Sin was ſuch a *Goliah*, ſuch a Giantly monſter, as made all the whole Creation ſtand trembling at his challenge: None but a *David*, none but Jeſus Chriſt the eternal Son of God, none but he who *thought it no robbery to be equal with God*, had power and goodneſs enough in him to match and maſter, to combate with and conquer ſin, and to heal the deadly wounds which it had given us. How great is that evil which nothing can take away but the greateſt good? Unleſs the vertue of the Medicine exceed the malignity of the Diſeaſe, no cure can be wrought; ſuch was the malignity of ſin, that no blood but the blood of God, the blood of that perſon who is God bleſſed for evermore, could cure it, becauſe no other blood could match, much leſs overmatch the evil of it; ſin hath ſo deeply indebted us, that none but Chriſt could ſatisfie or make payment for us; and ſin hath ſo deeply infected us, that none but Chriſt could cleanſe us, or provide a remedy for us.

Laſtly, We may collect, how great an evil ſin is, by what it doth both to God and to our ſelves. Conſider ſin in reference to God; and then, Firſt, It diſhonours him; ſin is a breach of the Law, and through breaking the Law we diſhonour God (*Rom.* 2. 23, 24.) Secondly, Sin is a deſpiſing and ſlighting of God (1 *Sam.* 2. 30.) we make light of his commands, and ſet at nought all his counſels (*Prov.* 1. 25.) And hence thirdly, It is a provocation to God (*Jer.* 32. 31. *Pſal.* 95. 8.) What can provoke God to anger, who is infinitely patient and good, but that which is extreamly evil? Fourthly, It is a burden, and a wearineſs to God (*Amos* 2. 13. *Iſa.* 43. 24.) yea, a very breaking to God, *I am broken* (ſaith the Lord, *Ezek.* 6. 9.) *with their whoriſh heart*, even as a loving Husband is at the diſloyal carriage of an adulterous Wife. All theſe things are ſpoken of God after the manner of men, or of God as he became man in the perſon of the Son, to ſhew how great an evil the ſin of man is in the ſight of God. To all which add, how ill the holy and good Spirit is treated by ſin, which is ſaid, Firſt, To *grieve the Spirit* (Eph. 4. 30.) Secondly, To *quench the Spirit* (1 Theſ. 5. 19.) Thirdly, To *reſiſt the Spirit* (Acts 7. 51.) Fourthly, To *vex the Spirit* (Iſa. 63. 10.) Yea, fifthly, when acted to the height, it is *a doing deſpight to the Spirit of Grace* (Heb. 10. 29.) And whereas the evil of ſin is ſo great (as was ſhewed before) that nothing but the blood of Chriſt crucified could relieve us againſt it; ſo ſome ſorts of ſin, their ſins I mean, who having made ſome profeſſion of Chriſt, Apoſtatize from him and fall away, are called *a crucifying of Chriſt afreſh, and a putting him to open ſhame* (Heb. 6. 6.) that is, ſuch ſinners do it as much as in them lyes now that Chriſt is in Heaven; and were Chriſt here upon the Earth again, they would do their utmoſt to crucifie him again. That malicious Spirit poſſeſſeth them, which poſſeſſed thoſe *Jews*, who were the very betrayers and murderers of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. And therefore ſuch by their ſinning are ſaid to *have trodden under foot the Son of God, and to have counted the blood of the Covenant, wherewith they were ſanctified* (externally, or as to the opinion of men) *an unholy thing* (Heb. 10. 29.) How unſpeakable an evil is ſin, which riſeth up thus againſt Chriſt, who only ſaveth us from our ſins? Sin abounds in evil, as it breaks the Law; but as it oppoſes and rejects the light and love of the Goſpel, it becomes exceſſively evil.

Secondly, As the evil of ſin appears in its references to God, againſt whom we ſin, ſo as it reſpects our ſelves who are *The ſinners*. Firſt, It deceives and befools us, and and therefore ſin is called *folly*, and ſinners *fools*, often and often in the Scripture. We read of the *deceitfulneſs of ſin* (*Heb.* 3. 12.) and of *deceitful luſts* (Epheſ. 4. 22.) And what other buſineſs can deceivers have with us, but to deceive us? Secondly, Sin pollutes and defiles us; it defiles not our garments, or our faces, but our minds and conſciences (*Tit.* 1. 15.) it is an internal ſpot, and will be an eternal one, unleſs Chriſt fetch it out. Thirdly, Sin keeps us low and debaſeth us; it is a reproach to a perſon and to a people. As *Reuben* loſt his dignity by it, though the firſtborn he could *not excel* (Gen. 49. 4.) ſo every man in Gods eſteem is degraded and made lower by it; yea, they who are higheſt among men are in his eſteem ſet, not only in degree, but in kind, below the loweſt of men, and are like unto, and numbred among *the beaſts which periſh* (Pſal. 49. 20.) Fourthly, It breaks our peace, and weakens our comforts, it troubles our conſcience, and at the beſt, doth but make work for ſorrow and repentance (*Pſal.* 38. 3, 4, 5.) Fifthly, Sin ſeparates between God and us (*Iſa.* 59. 2.) and endangers his departure from (*Jer.* 6. 8.) Sixthly, It makes preſent good things leſs good to us, and preſent evils much worſe to us; And laſtly, Layes us open to endleſs evils. If in all theſe Glaſſes we ſee not the evil of ſin, 'tis either becauſe we cannot (or which is worſe) will not ſee.

Secondly, Obſerve, *It is our duty to depart from every ſinful evil.*

Sin is *The evil*, and what good can we get or expect by it? 'Tis dangerous to have to do with it: Sin will be to us in its effects as it is in its nature, evil and only evil, and that continually. *Moſes* warned the people of *Iſrael* (Numb. 16. 26.) in the hiſtory of *Corah*'s Rebellion, in the language of this Text, *Depart I pray you, from the tents of theſe wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, leſt ye be conſumed in all their ſins.* It may prove ſad to us, to aſſociate with ſinful men, much more to aſſociate with ſin; and therefore, I ſay, depart from the tents of the wicked; but much more from wickedneſs it ſelf; we may fall into miſchief if we keep company with ſinners; but it is impoſſible to avoid it if we keep company with ſin.

But if ſin be ſo evil in its own nature, as hath been ſhewed, and ſo hurtful unto us, ſurely a few words may prevail with us to depart from it, yea, it may be thought that no words can prevail with us to hold or retain it. Needs any man much admonition not to run into a devouring fire? Or many diſſwaſives to withhold him from drinking down a deadly poyſon?

I anſwer; Firſt, A ſober man may ſoon be diſſwaded from theſe deſtructives, but a mad man will not. A man may eaſily be entreated not to wallow and tumble in filthy mire, but a ſwine cannot. A meer natural man is not only fooliſh, but frantick and mad; he is [illegible] Beaſt among men, and as a ſwine among beaſts. He hath (*læſa principia*) a wound in his principles, and therefore no wonder if he wound himſelf by his practices. Some will ſin whatever comes of it; they will buy repentance at any rate. So they may have their luſt, let them have wrath, and death, and hell into the bargain. As *Nero*'s Mother, when it was told her, he would be her death if ever he came to the Empire, ſaid, *Let him kill me ſo he may reign*; ſo ſay they, let ſin reign, though we dye and be damned for it; let us but have our will, and then let come on it what will. *Some deſires, whether of good or evil, conquer and overtop all fears:* The deſire of that which a man intimately loveth, is often ſtronger and more prevalent then the fear of that which he extreamly abhorreth; and 'tis ſo theneſpecially, when (as in this caſe) the thing feared is (at leaſt to their apprehenſion) afar off, and the thing deſired preſent or near at hand.

Secondly, I anſwer, Though the fruit of ſin be thus bitter, and the conſequents of it thus deadly, yet ſinners have other apprehenſions of it; they look upon the danger as that which is indeed poſſible, but not unavoidable, as a contingency, not as a certainty; they have at leaſt a peradventure for their indempnity and eſcape, as *Eve* (the Mother of us all) had, who reported Gods abſolute threatening *Gen.* 2. 17.) *In the day that thou eateſt thereof thou ſhalt ſurely dye*, with this mitigation of his ſeverity (*Gen.* 3. 3.) *Ye ſhall not eat of it, neither touch it, leſt ye dye.* Yea, ſometimes ſinners are ſo bewitched, that they conclude ſin their friend, and their thoughts are, that they ſhall rather get good then hurt by it, or gain rather then loſs by it; as they ſaid (*Prov.* 1. 13.) *We ſhall find all precious ſubſtance, and fill our houſes with ſpoil.* And therefore ſeeing many have thus *made a Covenant with death, and are at an agreement with hell*, promiſing to themſelves, *that when the overflowing ſcourge ſhall paſs through, it ſhall not come unto them* (Iſa. 28. 15.) We have need to lift up our voices like a trumpet againſt ſin, and to cry aloud to all in the language of *Job*; *Depart from evil.*

But ſay others, This evil of ſin is within us, 'tis riveted and ſeated in our nature, yea, 'tis our nature, how then can we depart from it? Sin dwells in us (*Rom.* 7. 20.) How can we go from that which we carry about us, whitherſoever we go?

I anſwer; We are ſaid, in a Scripture ſence, to depart from ſin: Firſt, When we caſt off and clear our whole courſe from the viſible and groſs acts of it (*Epheſ.* 5. 3.) *But fornication and all uncleanneſs*, &c. *let it not be once named among you*, that is, with approbation; or keep your ſelves ſo far from thoſe ſins, that there may never be any need of having them named among you by way of reproof, as 'tis expreſſed (*Phil.* 2. 15.) *That ye may be blameleſs and harmleſs the Sons of God without rebuke*; that is, walk ſo, that ye may not fall under any open rebuke.

Secondly, Then we depart from evil, when, as we eſcape the acts of groſs ſins, ſo we make conſcience of the leaſt ſins, and of thoſe which are moſt ſecret. When for every vain thought and idle word obſerved by us, when for the omiſſion of a good duty, or our deadneſs, and diſtractions, and unſpiritualneſs in it our hearts ſmite us; here is a gracious departure from evil.

Thirdly, He departs from evil, who in uprightneſs reſolves againſt it. He that with ſuch a frame as *David* (*Pſal.* 39. 1.) ſaith, *He will take heed to his wayes that he offend not with his tongue*, is departed from tongue-offences; and he that with ſuch an honeſty of ſoul as *Daniel* (Chap. 1. 8.) purpoſeth in his heart that he will not *defile himſelf*, is departed from all defilements. When we *with purpoſe of heart* cleave to the Lord, then we keep near to him indeed; and when we with purpoſe of heart ſeparate from ſin, then we depart from it indeed.

Fourthly, He who can ſay as *Paul* ſaid it (*Rom.* 7. 15, 19.) *That* (evil) *which I do I allow not*; *The evil which I would not that do I*; ſuch a perſon is departed from evil. The Virgin that cryed, and ſo ſhewed her utter aborrence of all impure embraces, was not defiled, though deflowred; her rape or raviſhment was not her ſin, but her affliction, becauſe it was done meerly by an outward force. And though our inward incompleat motions to ſin, are our ſins, though reſiſted; yet becauſe reſiſted we may be ſaid to depart from them, while they riſe up in us.

Fifthly, He departeth from the evil that is in him, or is done by him, who bears it continually as his burden, and mourns over it ſincerely before the Lord. When the regenerate part is vext with the irregular movings and actings of the unregenerate part, as the righteous ſoul of *Lot* was vext with the filthy converſation of the *Sodomites* (2 Pet. 2. 7, 8.)

7,8.) when corruption remaining in us is to us (as the wicked are among whom the godly remain) as a thorn in our eye, and as a goad in our ſide; when as *David* bemoaned himſelf (*Pſal.* 120. 5.) *Woe is me that I ſojourn in* Meſec, *that I dwell in the tents of* Kedar: So we bemoan our ſelves, becauſe *Meſec* and *Kedar*, this luſt and that luſt dwells in us; Then are we departed from evil.

Sixthly, He departs from evil, that heartily ſtrives againſt it, and labours to mortifie it, by prayer and faſting, and in both by a believing application of the croſs or death of Chriſt, that it may dye. He who repreſents his ſin to God as his enemy, and is glad when any word ſmites it, yea, when any affliction weakens it, or when God *hedgeth up his way with thorns that he may not find the paths of it*; ſuch a man is departed from evil.

Seventhly, So doth he who is ſo far from ſtanding upon his guard, by denying, extenuating, or excuſing his ſin, when others charge him with it, that he is forwardeſt and firſt, in charging, accuſing, and judging himſelf for it. As *David* (Pſal. 73. 22.) *So fooliſh have I been and ignorant, I have been, O Lord, as a beaſt before thee.*

Thirdly, Obſerve, *To depart from all ſinful evil, is an infallible argument of a wiſe and underſtanding man.*

To ſin is to do fooliſhly, therefore he that departs from it doth wiſely. Sin is a deceiver, an impoſtor, he is a prudent man that frees himſelf from ſuch company; we may match, yea, and out-wit ſome deceivers; but there is no avoiding the deceit of ſin, but by avoiding ſin, which is the deceiver; ſin will put tricks and cheats upon all that trade with it. Sin made fools of our firſt Parents, while the Devil aſſured them they ſhould attain the Wiſdom of God; or that they ſhould be as God knowing good and evil, if they would but ſin. Sin deceived *Solomon* the wiſeſt of men: They are (in this thing) wiſer then *Solomon*, who turn away from it. Sin hath the ſubtilty of the Devil in it. Surely then they are wiſe with the Wiſdom of God, who depart from it. *Zophar* ſaith (*Chap.* 11. 12.) *Vain man would be wiſe*; that is, he would be reputed ſo: But ſurely a wiſe man ſhould not be vain; he ſhould not cloſe, nor have to do with vanity. Sin of every ſort, of every degree, is a vain thing, and therefore his underſtanding is ſadly departed from him, who departs not from it. *Wiſdom cryeth in the ſtreets, How long ye ſimple ones will ye love ſimplicity?* What ſimplicity were they in love with? There is a twofold ſimplicity: Firſt, Oppoſed to hypocriſie; Secondly, To holineſs: Or there is firſt, An innocent ſimplicity; Secondly, An ignorant ſimplicity. It was either the hypocritical, or the ignorant ſimplicity which they loved, as the next words of wiſdom expound it, *And ye ſcorners delight in ſcorning, and fools hate knowledge.* Now then (ſeeing there is the ſame reaſon of contraries) if it be folly and ignorant ſimplicity to do evil, it cannot but be our wiſdom and underſtanding to depart from it. We may demonſtrate this yet more diſtinctly.

Firſt, Thus; He that departs from evil, muſt be able to ſee through all the pleas and carnal reaſonings, all the unſound poſitions and flattering promiſes, which ſin-evil makes to hinder our departure from it. Sin is ſo perſwaſive an Orator, ſo ſtrong an Arguer, that unleſs the Word of God dwell richly in us, in all wiſdom and ſpiritual underſtanding, we ſhall quickly diſcover a loathneſs to depart from it. I ſhall inſtance only in three pleas which ſin uſually makes why we ſhould not depart from it.

Firſt, Saith Sin, I will bring you in profit and worldly advantages; I will exalt you and bring you to honour. This is a prevailing argument with the moſt. Gain is ſweet to Nature; and as any natural man will be very buſie in the out-works of holineſs, ſo he will hardly lay aſide any work of unholineſs, when he ſees and feels gain coming in at that door. We read of ſome (*Acts* 16. 16.) who were troubled that the Devil was caſt out of the Damſel, who brought her Maſters much gain by ſooth-ſaying, when they ſaw that the hope of their gain was gone.

Is not he a man of underſtanding, who can ſee that though much may be gotten by ſin, that yet nothing can be gained by it? Who perceives that all the profits of it are unprofitable, like that of *Achan*, who got ſtones about his ears, or like that of *Gehezai*, who got a leproſie in his forehead by looking after ſinful gain? Is not he a wiſe man that can ſee, though a man may exalt himſelf, that yet he cannot be *eſtabliſhed by unrighteouſneſs* (Prov. 12. 3.) *Jeroboam* a wicked man was far from this piece of underſtanding. He thought that the two Idol-calves which he had erected in *Dan* and *Bethel*, would prove as two mighty Pillars and ſupporters of his new gotten Kingdom; but they were indeed not only the ſhame, but the ruine of it. He alſo thought, that his unparallel'd impiety would be an unparallel'd point of policy for the aſſuring of his eſtate; when he made *the loweſt of the people Prieſts of the high places* (1 Kings 13. 33.) But it follows (*ver.* 34.) *This thing became ſin to the houſe of* Jeroboam. How became it ſin? Was it not ſin (*ipſo facto*) in its own nature? Doubtleſs it was ſo: But 'tis ſaid, it became ſin to him in regard of the event or iſſue, which was wrath or judgment, as the next words tell us, *Even to cut it off* (that is, to cut the houſe of *Jeroboam* off) *and to deſtroy it from the face of the earth.* Fools ſee it thus in the event, but a wiſe man foreſeeth the event will be thus, and ſo departs from evil. The penitent man ſaith, *What fruit have I of thoſe things whereof I am now aſhamed? For the end of thoſe things is death* (Rom. 6. 21.) The prudent man ſaith, I will forbear to do thoſe things which I know can have no better fruit then ſhame or death. The penitent man doth well; but the prudent man doth better. They are wiſe who depart from ſin committed by repentance; but they are wiſer who depart from ſin by refuſing to commit it, and ſo prevent their own repentance.

Secondly, Sin pleads ſweetneſs for our continuance in it. Who would depart from his pleaſure (ſaith ſin) and not roll a ſweet morſel under his tongue? Even *Solomon* while his wiſdom remained in him (*Eccleſ.* 2. 9.) tells us notwithſtanding (*ver.* 10.) *Whatſoever mine eyes deſired, I kept not from them, I withheld not my heart from any joy.*

Then, Hath not he an underſtanding who is Maſter of his ſenſes, and can keep his affections under? Hath not he an underſtanding, who can deny himſelf not only in ſenſual, but in all ſenſitive delights, that he may depart from evil? Is not he wiſe, who knows, that though *wickedneſs be ſweet in the mouth, yet the meat thereof will turn to the gall of Aſps within him?* (Job 20. 12, 14.) Who, *though ſtolen waters are ſweet, and bread eaten in ſecret is pleaſant*, yet knoweth, *that the dead are there, and that her gueſts are in the depths of Hell?* (Prov. 9. 17, 18.) Is not he wiſe who knows, that as the beſt pleaſures of ſin are a bitter ſweet, ſo all the pleaſures and ſweetneſſes of ſin *are but for a ſeaſon* (*Heb.* 11. 25.) and that the longeſt life led in ſuch pleaſure, *is a death while we live?* (1 Tim. 5. 6.) Is not he wiſe, who knoweth, that to depart from evil, is not to looſe our pleaſures, but to exchange them for the better? to exchange fading worm-eaten fly-blown pleaſures, for laſting, everlaſting pleaſures, for joy unſpeakable, and for peace which paſſeth all underſtanding.

Thirdly, If ſin cannot prevail by promiſes of profit and pleaſure, but that you will needs be gone and depart from it, then it falls to threatenings, or at leaſt to ſuggeſting ſtrange troubles which you are like to draw upon your ſelves by withdrawing from it. This parting will coſt you many a ſigh, many a tear, it will be like parting with an old friend, yea, like parting with the right eye, the right hand.

Is not he a man of underſtanding that can turn off this Objection firſt, and next his ſin? Who can tell ſin to its teeth, are we not willing to endure pain, that we may get quit of a Diſeaſe, or of an aking Tooth, or to ſettle a diſlocated Bone? Are we not willing to endure preſent ſmart upon hope of future eaſe? And ſhall we be afraid either of bearing pain, or of taking pains to get quit of ſin, which (though it be in moſt their nature, yet) is to all their worſt diſeaſe? Hath not he a good underſtanding, who ſees there is more pain in keeping ſin, then in parting with it? Doth it not make many a mans heart ake to tend and humour his luſts? And ſaith not the Spirit of God in this Book (*Chap.* 15. 20.) *The wicked man travelleth with pain all his dayes.* And that not only firſt, In regard of thoſe gripes of conſcience which often trouble him: And ſecondly, In regard of outward troubles which often afflict him: But thirdly, In regard of the trouble which he finds in the very actings of it. To ſerve and purſue the unceſſant motions and commands of luſt, of pride, of ambition, of covetouſneſs, of malice and revenge, makes many a man toil and ſweat, yea, tire and wear himſelf quite out? Laſtly, Hath not he a good underſtanding that can ſay, what tell ye me of pains in parting with, or departing from ſin? Do not I believe and know, or know I not by believing, that eternal pains will be the portion of all thoſe who do not depart from this ſort of evil? Are the pains of repentance or of godly ſorrow which works repentance, not to be repented of here on Earth, comparable to the pains of that fruitleſs repentance which ſinners ſhall for ever torment themſelves with in Hell? Are there no pains in *Tophet?* Or is it eaſie to dwell in the fiery indignation and everlaſting burnings of an angry God? Thus he that departs from evil puts ſin to ſilence; And is it not an act of underſtanding to do ſo?

I might give many further evidences of this great Truth: As

Firſt, It is our underſtanding to ſubmit to the Will of God; but this is his expreſs Will (2 *Tim.* 2. 19.) *Let every one that nameth the Name of Chriſt depart from iniquity.* Secondly, It is our underſtanding *to keep our ſelves in the love of God* (Jude *ver.* 21.) both in the love of God to us, and in our love to God; but this we cannot do, unleſs we depart from evil. While the Pſalmiſt adviſeth (*Pſal.* 97. 10.) *Ye that love the Lord hate evil*, he doth more then intimate that the leaſt compliance with evil is inconſiſtent with the love of God. Thirdly, It is our underſtanding to preſerve our own peace, even our outward peace, but eſpecially our inward peace; but this we cannot do unleſs we depart from evil; *For as there is no peace to the wicked*, who give themſelves up to do evil; ſo if a godly man, inſtead of a reſolute departure from, be found dallying with evil, God (as many have found by ſad experiences) will ſooner or later break his peace. Fourthly, It is our underſtanding to maintain our own liberty, or to recover it; but we can do neither of theſe, unleſs we depart from evil, *For whoſoever committeth ſin is the ſervant of ſin* (John 8. 34.) and while ſin promiſeth us liberty, it doth but make us bond-ſlaves to corruption. Fifthly, It is our underſtanding to keep our ſelves free for righteouſneſs, or ready for every good word and work; but we cannot ſtand in ſuch a bleſſed frame and poſture, unleſs we depart from evil; for, when we *are the ſervants of ſin, we are free from righteouſneſs* (Rom. 6. 20.) that is, righteouſneſs hath us not actually and readily at its command, though it alwayes had, and ſtill hath a right to command us, and will at laſt find power enough to chaſten us for taking up ſuch an unwarrantable freedom. Sixthly, It is our underſtanding to keep our ſelves, as free and ready to do, ſo to ſuffer the will of God, or to bear the croſs: But this we cannot do unleſs we depart from evil; for as no croſs is heavy to him who thinks no ſin light; ſo they who make light of ſin, think every croſs heavy. They who are forwardeſt to do evil, are in their own ſpirits furtheſt from ſuffering. Guilt is impatient; a ſhoulder out of joynt cannot carry a burden. Why was Chriſt ſo patient? It was becauſe he was ſo innocent (1 *Pet.* 2. 22, 23.) Seventhly, It is our underſtanding to keep the way to Heaven alwayes open for prayer, But unleſs we depart from evil, either we ſhall have no mind to pray, or if we do, *The Lord will not mind or regard our prayer* (Pſal. 66. 18.) The love of any ſin either ſhuts our hearts ſo that we cannot put out a prayer, or it ſtops the ear of God ſo that he will not take in our prayers.

To conclude this Verſe and Chapter, as *John* doth the thirteenth of the *Revelation*; *Here is wiſdom, let him that hath underſtanding* count, if he can, the number of thoſe bleſſings which are wrapt up in the fear of the Lord, and the number of thoſe trouble-evils which we eſcape while we depart from the evil of ſin. Or ſhall I conclude this Verſe and Chapter as *David* doth the hundred and ſeventh Pſalm? *Who ſo is wiſe and will obſerve theſe things, even they ſhall underſtand the loving kindneſs of the Lord.* They who are ſo wiſe as to obſerve theſe two things, *To fear the Lord, and to depart frem evil*, they certainly ſhall at laſt underſtand (by their own enjoyment and experience) *the loving kindneſs of the Lord*, or how kind the Lord is to them that fear him; and then they will abundantly bear their teſtimony to this truth; That, *The fear of the Lord, that is wiſdom, and to depart from evil is underſtanding.*

CHAP. XXIX. Verſ. 1, 2, 3.

Moreover, Job *continued his Parable, and ſaid,*

O that I were as in months paſt, as in the dayes when God preſerved me:

When his Candle ſhined upon my head, and when by his light I walked through darkneſs.

THis Chapter contains *Job*'s ſecond Parable, for ſo he began the twenty-ſeventh, *Moreover,* Job *continued his Parable and ſaid:* This (I ſay) is his ſecond Parable or Speech which he made beyond what he was urged to in defence of his own innocency, after he had given particular Anſwers to all the Objections which his Friends made againſt him.

This Parable hath three general parts in it.

Firſt, The propoſal of his wiſh, for the reſtitution of his former plentiful ſtock and proſperous ſtate; or 'tis, at leaſt, a wiſh about it, which he purſues quite through this twenty-ninth Chapter.

Secondly, He gives us a deſcription of his preſent calamitous eſtate, and of the contempt which was poured upon him under it: This he proſecutes all along the thirtieth Chapter to the twenty-fourth verſe.

Thirdly, He preſents us with an Aſſertion of his own integrity, joyned with the soreſt imprecations upon himſelf, in caſe of his faultineſs, or of the truth of thoſe accuſations that his Friends had brought againſt him. And this he inſiſts upon from the twenty-fourth verſe of the thirtieth to the end of the thirty-firſt Chapter. And he thus ſtands up and aſſerts his own innocency or integrity, not becauſe he was hungry after the applauſe of men, or deſired in a vain glorious way to blow a Trumpet, and cry up his own name and fame, but he doth it to do himſelf right, or to wipe off thoſe foul aſpertions which his Friends had caſt upon him; that ſo he might be acquitted before men, even before the whole world, as his heart did acquit him before God.

More particularly, *Job*'s ſcope in this Parable or Apologetical Narration, which he makes for himſelf, may be threefold, or it bears a threefold reſpect.

Firſt, To convince his Friends further of the wrong which they had done him, and of the wrong courſe which they took with him, in judging him the greateſt of ſinners, becauſe he was ſo great a ſufferer.

Secondly, To purge and clear himſelf of that imputation of impatience under his change, by ſhewing how ſad a change God had made in his condition. To fall from ſuch a height of outward happineſs, as he deſcribeth in this Chapter, into ſuch a depth of outward affliction, as he deſcribeth in the next, would put the patience of any man to it, and therefore they might in charity and compaſſion bear with him, if ſometimes his ſpirit were a little unquiet, and his ſpeeches tinctur'd with impatience.

Thirdly, His ſcope might be to ſhew that he had retained his integrity, and conſtantly walked in that fear of the Lord, of which he ſpake in the cloſe of the former Chapter, *And unto man he ſaid, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wiſdom, and to depart from evil is underſtanding. Job,* I ſay, to give a teſtimony of his integrity that he had walked in this fear of the Lord, and departed from evil, even in thoſe times of his greateſt fulneſs and worldly felicity, makes this large profeſſion: Though God had afflicted him, yet his conſcience told him he did not afflict him for the ill management of his power and proſperity (as his Friends ſuggeſted againſt him) by tyrannizing over and oppreſſing the poor, by vexing the widow and the fatherleſs, or by denying or delaying right to any, for he had all along kept cloſe to the rule of righteouſneſs, juſtice, and judgment; and when he might have done what he would, had no will to do any thing but what he ought; and therefore ſaith he, I am not afraid to look back upon what I have been, nor to take an account of what I have done, as many in ſuch caſes are, whoſe practiſes teſtifie unto others, and whoſe conſciences teſtifie againſt themſelves, that they have perverted juſtice, and cauſed judgment to ſpring up as Hemlock in the furrows of the field. But (ſaith *Job*) as for me, I am ready to tell you the ſtory of my whole life, in the exerciſe of my place and power. And as I have reaſon to be acquitted, your ſelves being Judges; ſo I am ſure to be acquitted before God, the Righteous, the Supream, and Impartial Judge. Thus we may conceive *Job's* ſcope and aim in theſe three Chapters.

More particularly, in this twenty-ninth, conſider:

Firſt, The title of the whole diſcourſe; *A Parable, Moreover,* Job *continued his Parable, and ſaid.*

Secondly, In this Parable *Job* makes a large deſcription of his once flouriſhing condition, from the ſecond verſe incluſively to the end of the eleventh; concerning which we may note.

Firſt, His earneſt wiſh or deſire of being re-eſtated in what he once enjoyed; for ſo moſt interpret the firſt words of the ſecond verſe, *O that I were as in months paſt.*

Secondly, He leads us to the fountain of his proſperity; which did ariſe (according to his preſent diſcourſe) three wayes.

Firſt, From that divine care or eye of providence that watched over him, and all his wayes; this is plainly intimated in the latter part of the ſecond verſe; *O that it were with me,* &c. *as in the dayes when God preſerved me:* As if he had ſaid, *I proſpered while God preſerved me.*

Secondly, (which is near the ſame) from that divine Favour and Grace, Goodneſs and Kindneſs, Light and Love of God towards him, at the third verſe, *When his Candle ſhined upon my head, and by his light I walked through darkneſs.*

Thirdly, He aſcribes his proſperity to the free and familiar preſence of God with him; of which he ſpeaks at the fourth and part of the fifth verſe; *As I was in the dayes of my youth, when the ſecret of God was upon my tabernacle; when the Almighty was yet with me,* or when I had ſweeteſt converſe with God. Thus *Job* attributes all his proſperity to the care of God watching over him, to the Candle of God ſhining upon his head, and to the *Secret of God abiding upon his tabernacle.*

Fourthly, He deſcribes his proſperous ſtate, by the ſubject of it, or by that wherein it did conſiſt. The proſperity of one man conſiſts in riches, of another in honour, of a third in children and relations. In *Job* there was a confluence of all three.

Firſt, He had many Children, at the cloſe of the fifth verſe; *When my Children were about me.*

Secondly, He had abundance of riches, at the ſixth verſe; *When I waſhed my ſteps with Butter, and the Rock poured me out rivers of Oyl.*

Thirdly, He was full of honour, and crowned with dignity; he was raiſed high and lifted up above his Brethren. And he gives proof that he was ſo three wayes.

Firſt, Becauſe he ſate chief Magiſtrate or Judge; at the ſeventh verſe; *When I went out to the gate through the City, when I prepared my ſeat in the ſtreet;* that is, when I ſate to give judgment between man and man, between cauſe and cauſe in open Court.

Secondly, His honour did appear by the obſervance and reverence which all ſorts gave him in his place. Some ſit upon the Throne as earthly Gods, yet have no real reverence nor reſpect from men on earth; but *Job* had not only great power, and ſate in the gate as a Prince over the people, but he had reverence and due reſpect from the people, even from people of all ranks and ages (*ver.* 8, 9, 10.) *The young men ſaw me, and hid themſelves; and the aged aroſe and ſtood up. The Princes refrained talking, and laid their hand on their mouth. The Nobles held their peace, and their tongue cleaved to the roof of their mouth.* All theſe acts of young and old, of the Princes and of the Nobles, carried in them the higheſt and freeſt ſignifications of reſpect both to his Perſon and Authority.

Thirdly, He ſhews the greatneſs of his honour, by the general content which all took in him, and by the teſtimony which they gave him; all readily ſubſcribing to what he ſaid or did, as juſt and good (*ver.* 11.) *When the ear heard me, then it bleſſed me; and when the eye ſaw me, it gave witneſs to me.* Here was a Magiſtrate honoured indeed. What can be ſaid more of, or done more to the man, whom either God or men delight to honour, then was ſaid of this man, and done unto him?

Job having ſhewed the proſperity of his ſtate from the multitude of his Children, the abundance of his Riches, and the greatneſs of his Honour, proceeds in the third place, to clear the righteouſneſs of his actions while he continued in that high eſtate of honour; and this he doth two wayes.

Firſt, By the ready help and redreſs of wrongs, which they who were oppreſſed and helpleſs found at his hand; *Job* received not this honour for nought; the people did not worſhip an Idol, nor flatter him with forged commendations, they ſaw reaſon for all they did (*ver.* 12. 13, 14, 15, 16.) *Becauſe I delivered the poor that cryed, and the fatherleſs, and him that had none to help him, the bleſſing of him that was ready to periſh came upon me; and I cauſed the widows heart to ſing for joy. I put on righteouſneſs, and it cloathed me; my judgment was as a robe and a diadem. I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame. I was a father to the poor; and the cauſe which I knew not, I ſearched out.* When a Magiſtrate exerciſeth his power, and beſtirs himſelf in his place, it is no wonder if all reverence him, if every eye and ear witneſs to him. And as *Job* carried it thus in his office towards thoſe who were wronged and oppreſſed; ſo he was not behind in another piece of juſtice, and that was in puniſhing wrong-doers and oppreſſours. Theſe are the two parts of Juſtice, and the ornaments of Magiſtracy; *Reward and protection to the good, wrath and puniſhment to them that are evil.* Thus he ſpeaks at the ſeventeenth verſe; *I brake the jaws of the wicked, and pluckt the ſpoil out of his teeth;* that's the third part of the Chapter.

In the fourth he tells us, that being in this proſperity and honour, he had conceived great hopes that he ſhould ſo continue to the end of his dayes. Thus he ſeems to conclude at the eighteenth verſe, *Then I ſaid, I ſhall dye in my neſt, and I ſhall multiply my dayes as the ſand:* That is, As I was in a good eſtate, ſo I had a fair probability to hold it. And that it might appear, he did not ſpeak without book, but had ground for this confidence, he ſubjoyns what reaſon he had to be ſo confident.

Firſt, He had a good bottom, or foundation (*ver.* 19.) *My root was ſpread out by the waters, and the dew lay all night upon my branch.* He had a good root, and he had dew and moiſture to maintain the beauty and greenneſs of his branches.

Secondly, He never found any decay, but rather a daily encreaſe of theſe. Some mens honour and riches are in a kind of conſumption, and they pine away by degrees; but his abode in full ſtrength and luſter (*ver.* 20.) *My glory was freſh in me, and my bow was renewed in my hand.*

Thirdly, Theſe hopes were confirmed, becauſe he carried all before him, as with a juſt, ſo with a high hand of authority. And this he amplifieth five wayes.

Firſt, By the willing attentiveneſs of all men to what he ſpake (*ver.* 21.) *Unto me men gave ear, and waited, and kept ſilence at my counſel.*

Secondly, By the prevailing power that his ſpeech had with all men; his opinion was not rejected, his judgment was received as an Oracle (*ver.* 22.) *After my words they ſpake not again, and my ſpeech dropped upon them.* No man had any thing to reply, when I had once ſpoken.

Thirdly, His ſpeech was not only powerful but delightful, his counſel gave great content, and was a refreſhing unto all (*ver.* 23.) *They waited for me as for the rain; and they opened their mouth wide as for the latter rain.*

Fourthly, His very mirth and laughter had an aw and ſeriouſneſs in it (*ver.* 24.) *If I laughed on them, they believed it not, and the light of my countenance they caſt not down.*

Laſtly, As all gave him *the hand*, and his perſon had precedency among all, ſo they earneſtly ſued to him for, and gladly ſubmitted to his counſel (*ver.* 25.) *I choſe out their way, and dwelt as a King in the Army, as one that comforteth mourners.* Laying all theſe conſiderations together, might he not ſay without ſelf-flattery, *I ſhall dye in my neſt, and multiply my dayes as the ſand.* Theſe are the parts and reſolution of the whole Chapter. I ſhall now proceed to a diſtinct explication of the words as they lye in order.

Verſe 1. **Moreover Job continued his Parable, and said.**

I purpoſe not to inſiſt upon theſe words, having already opened them ſomewhat largely at the firſt verſe of the twenty-ſeventh Chapter. I ſhall only add, and ſo paſs, that here we may conceive *Job* a ſecond time taking breath a while, and making ſome pauſe, poſſibly, to try whether his Friends had any thing more to ſay, or whether they would renew their conference: But perceiving that they all ſtood mute or ſilent, and anſwered no more, he was reſolved to pour out his mind, and vent himſelf more fully, in the vindication of his name and honour from all thoſe accuſations which had been brought againſt him: Being right in his own thoughts, he will do what he can to ſet himſelf right in the thoughts of others.

Verſe 2. **O that I were as in months paſt, as in the dayes when God preſerved me:** Or, *Who will give me to be as in the months paſt?* So the Hebrew.

'Tis a form of wiſhing frequent in that language, and we have met with it more then once in this Book. Thus *Job* ſpake (*Chap.* 6. 8.) *O that I might have my requeſt! and that God would grant me the thing that I long for.* Thus alſo *Zophar* (Chap. 11. 5.) *O that God would ſpeak, and open his lips againſt thee!* Thus here, *O that I were as in the months paſt!* The Septuagint render it in the ſingular number, *month; O that I were for a month as in the dayes that the Lord preſerved me:* As if he had ſaid, *O that I had my former proſperity for a little while, though but for a month.* They who are compaſſed with ſorrow, would highly prize even a ſhort injoyment of their former comforts; *O that we were for a month, for a day, for an hour, as in the dayes when God preſerved me.* The rich-man ſpoken of in the Parable (*Luke* 16.) being in torment, begg'd for a drop of water to cool his tongue, which if it had been granted him could have given him but a little eaſe, and that for the leaſt of time, a moment; How welcome then would ſuch a month have been to him as he once had, when he was cloathed gorgeouſly and fared deliciouſly every day!

But we render more clear to the Text; *O that I were as in months paſt*; that is, in the former part of my life, when I had as much of this world as this world had; when all creature-contentments courted me, and rendred themſelves up to my acceptance. *O that I were*

As in the months paſt.

The life of man hath a threefold meaſure in Scripture: Firſt, 'Tis meaſured uſually by years; *The dayes of our years are threeſcore years and ten* (Pſal. 90. 10.) Secondly, By dayes; *Man that is born of a Woman is of few dayes, and full of trouble* (Chap. 14. 1.) Thirdly, By Months, or by Moons, as here. The Hebrew word rendred *Months*, comes from a root ſignifying *the Moon*, as our Engliſh word alſo doth, becauſe *Months* are meaſured by the courſe of the Moon; *O that it were with me as in the Months or Moons paſt.* *Job*'s Moon was changed; it was full Moon with him once, but now he was in the wane, his light was almoſt gone. *All things under the Moon (like the Moon) appear daily in a new ſhape, and are only certain in their uncertainties.*

O that I were as in the months of old: Or, *As in the months of antiquity*; ſo the Original.

The word ſignifieth any thing before us, whether in time or place; and therefore the Eaſtern part of the world is expreſſed by it: but here 'tis taken for a precedency of time, *O that I were as in the month's that are paſt*, or have been before.

קדם *Dicitur quicquid ante nos, & tam ad locū quam ad tempus refertur; unde Oriens* קדם *vocatur.*

But it may be demanded, Was *Job* ſo eager, was his ſtomack ſo ſharp ſet after earthly delights and delicacies, that he deſired their return as in former times? Or is it becoming a godly man, to hunger after his former fulneſs, and to declare a diſcontent or diſſatisfaction with his preſent emptineſs? *O that I were as in the months before.* The Apoſtles rule is (*Heb.* 13. 5.) *Let your converſation be without covetouſneſs, and be content with ſuch things as ye have:* or (as the Greek text hath it) *with things preſent*, yea, we ought to be content though at preſent we have nothing. So the Apoſtle ſpeakes of himſelf (*Phil.* 4. 11, 12.) *I have learned in whatſoever ſtate I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abaſed, and I know how to abound, every where and in all things I am inſtructed, both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to ſuffer need.* Doth not *Job*'s ſpirit ſeem very different from *Paul*'s, while he is thus importunately calling for his former fulneſs and abounding ſtate?

Ἀρκούμενοι τοῖς παροῦσιν *contenti præſentibus.* Bez.

I anſwer; Firſt, All godly men are not alike eminent, in the actings of the ſame grace, though all have the ſame grace. Secondly, 'Tis natural to man (I mean it not in reference to ſinful, but common nature) to deſire that which is good, and to avoid that which is hurtful, grievous, and troubleſome to himſelf, ſo that *Job* (ſubmitting his deſire to the will of God) might (without any impeachment either of his piety or of his patience) expreſs ſuch a deſire as this, *O that God would reſtore me to my former proſperity! O that he would make up thoſe breaches which he hath made in my comforts!* It is as lawful for a man to deſire the reſtoring of that good which he had, as the continuance of that which he hath. We may pray for the return of our comforts, as well as for the eſtabliſhment of them; eſpecially when we have and propoſe right ends in ſuch petitionings. Indeed to deſire the reſtoring of a worldly good, becauſe we are in love with, or do but love the world, argues a worldly mind; but we may deſire the reſtoring of a worldly good,

Firſt, That God may be glorified in his goodneſs to us, or that from our own experiences, as well as from the promiſes, we may magnifie the compaſſions and loving kindneſs of the Lord. This is lawful, and this was *Job's* ſcope.

Secondly, We may deſire the reſtoring of a worldly good, that others may be delivered from or convinced of their miſtakes who upon our loſs of it think evil of us, or ſay, ſurely we have done much evil becauſe we endure ſo much. That others may be freed from this errour, we may wiſh that God would free us from our trouble; and this may be probably ſuppoſed one of *Job*'s ends in this wiſh.

Thirdly, We may deſire it, that we may with the more ſweetneſs and quietneſs of ſpirit ſerve the Lord, and that our impatience may no more find an advantage by our pains. Some afflictions (I grant) fit us (through grace) yea and quicken us to duty; but thoſe afflictions which are accompanied with great pains upon the body, and trouble upon the mind (which was *Job*'s caſe) thoſe (I ſay) unfit the heart for, and diſtract it much in duty; and to deſire to be freed from affliction, that we may ſerve God more freely, is not only a blameleſs but a commendable and gracious deſire. Our ſins and corruptions do alwayes hinder and clog us in duty, and ſo do our ſorrowes and afflictions often. A man under great ſufferings, is under a great burden; And he that hath a heavy burden upon his back, is very unable to put his hand or move his foot about any work. And therefore as it is our duty (according to that counſel given, *Heb.* 12. 1.) *To lay aſide every weight* (of worldly cares, pleaſures, or encumbrances) *and the ſin* (the boſome corruption, or moſt taking luſt) *which doth ſo eaſily beſet us, that we may run with patience the race* (of obedience in ſuffering, for of that the text ſpeakes) *which is ſet before us:* So it is not at all inconſiſtent with our duty, to intreat the Lord, that he would take off from us thoſe greivous weights of trouble, and thoſe ſufferings which do ſo hardly beſet us, that ſo we may run with cheerfulneſs the race of obedience (in doing that) which himſelf ſets before us. This alſo may be conceived *Job*'s mind and gracious deſign in breathing out this wiſh, *O that it were with me as in the months paſt.* And therefore

Thirdly, Though it be a very generally received opinion, that *Job* deſired a change of his ſtate, yet ſome think otherwiſe, and I am apt to joyn with them in opinion, that *Job* did not ſo much, if at all, deſire the reſtauration of his outward flouriſhing ſtate, as that God would reſtore him to the beauty and joy of his ſpiritual ſtate in which once he flouriſhed, but was now ſadly decayed. As if he had ſaid, *O that my ſpirit were in as holy a frame as it was in the time of my proſpertiy! O that I were as free for good, and had a heart as inlarged toward God as when God preſerved me! O that my mind were as ſpiritual, and the light of my ſoul as clear as when his candle ſhined upon my head, and when by his light I walked through darkneſs.* And *Job* had reaſon to make ſuch a wiſh, becauſe his friends charged him that in his proſperous ſtate his mind was vainly lifted up, that he abuſed his power, and oppreſſed all that were neer him; O (ſaith *Job*) *that I were as in the former months, I wiſh I had no worſe a frame of heart now, then when it was beſt with me in the world, I could wiſh my heart were now as humble and as heavenly, as it was when I was at my higheſt in earthly enjoyments, and that I had given no more occaſion of offence ſince my affliction then I did before.* Though every godly man gains in grace, at the long run, or as to the iſſue of his afflictions; yet his affliction may for a time much obſcure the beauty, and hinder the preſent actings of grace. *The Lord chaſtneth his children for their profit that they may be partakers of his holineß* (Heb. 12. 10.) yet while they are under chaſtnings their participations of and profitings in holineſs may not appear either to themſelves or others; and therefore the Apoſtle adds (*v.* 11.) *Now, no chaſtning for the preſent ſeemeth to be joyous but grievous: Neverthelesß afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteouſneſs to them that are exerciſed thereby.* As if he had ſaid, This is one thing that makes chaſtnings ſo greivous to good ſouls, that they have ſo much ado to keep their ſouls quiet and peaceable while they feel the ſmart of the rod upon their backs. O how little of the peaceable fruits of righteouſneſs do they then bring forth! This fruit grows and ſhews it ſelf *afterwards*, or after they have been exerciſed thereby; but while they are in the exerciſe, O how ſmall and ſometimes not at all diſcernable is it? This was (as'tis conceived) greivous to *Job* in his chaſtnings; and provoked him to make this wiſh, That it were with him, as to the fruitfulneſs of his ſoul in holineſs and righteouſneſs, as it was when he abounded in the fruits of his worldly felicity. This is an excellent ſence, and carries the text cleerly to a moſt divine deſire and holy wiſh: 'Tis lawful (as was ſhewed before) to wiſh, and pray for our reſtoring in temporals; but to wiſh and pray for our reſtoring in ſpirituals, the reflouriſhing of our graces, and the renewings of our inner man to former ſtrength and activity in the wayes of God and works of holineſs, this is the beſt deſire, the moſt gracious prayer of an afflicted ſoul, *O that I were as in months paſt.*

I ſhall joyn both the interpretations of *Job*'s wiſh in the following Obſervation.

> *We are more apt to prize and to be taken with good things paſt, then with good things preſent, whether ſpiritual or temporal.*

I doubt not but *Job* had a due valuation of his outward comforts, and alſo of his inward graces when he enjoyed both in their beſt perfection, yet the want of the one, and the decay of the other, did increaſe his value of them, and raiſe their price in his ſoul; *O that it were with me as in times paſt.* He that is ſick and languiſhing ſaith, O that it were with me as in the months paſt of health; and he that is fallen into poverty ſaith, O that it were with me as in the time when I was rich; and he that is in bondage, or a priſoner, ſaith, O that it were with me as in the dayes of my liberty, when I could go and ſtay where I liſt. Queſtionleſs *David* highly prized the powerful and ſavourable preſence of God with him in his Ordinances when he had them to the ſull, and lived (as we ſay) at the wells mouth; but when he was deprived of them, O how eager was his ſpirit after them? (*Pſal.* 63. 1, 2.) *O God thou art my God, early will I ſeek thee, my ſoul thirſteth for thee, my fleſh longeth for thee, in a dry and thirſty land where no water is, to ſee thy power and thy glory ſo as I have ſeen thee in the Sanctuary.* What dry and thirſty land was this, and what was this land where there was no water? He doth not mean it of the natural barrenneſs of the ſoyl, or of the providential drought or dryneſs of the land for want of rain from the clouds; but in a metaphorical ſence it was a dry and thirſty land to his ſoul, that place yielded no means of grace, no food nor refreſhing for his inner man. Now when *David* was in this land, this dry and thirſty land, what ſaith he? *My ſoul thirſty for thee*; What to do? *To ſee thy power and glory, as I have ſeen thee in the Sanctuary:* As if he had ſaid, *I remember how I have ſeen thee in the Sanctuary, I remember what full and large draughts of the wine of thy conſolations I have had, while I had liberty to enjoy, and waited for enioyments in thine Ordinances; I remember how abundantly I have been ſatisſied with the fatneſs of thy houſe, and how, O Lord, thou haſt made me drink of the rivers of thy pleaſures. But now alas, I am in a dry and thirſty land, where none of thoſe heavenly waters are.* Thus Chriſt told his Diſciples, who then had the priviledg to be filled daily with his perſonal preſence; *The dayes will come, when ye ſhall deſire to ſee one of the dayes of the Son of man, and ye ſhall not ſee it* (Luke 17.22.) Theſe dayes of the Son of man, were the dayes of his bodily converſe with them, in preaching, admoniſhing, inſtructing and comforting them. As if he had ſaid, Now ye have many of thoſe dayes, and are not much affected with them, nor improve them to your utmoſt advantage, but the time ſhall come when *one of thoſe dayes* would be a welcome day, and you blaming your former neglect and unbeleif will cry out earneſtly, *O that it were with us as in the months paſt*, when we enjoyed the preſence of our dear Lord and Maſter Jeſus Chriſt! The children of *Iſrael* being in the wilderneſs, ſaid, we remember the fleſh-pots of *Egypt*, the Garlick and the Onions; yet when they were in *Egypt* they cryed out of their hard bondage. Thus 'tis alſo in the actings of grace, when faith and love are up in free communion with Chriſt, we are not ſo ſenſible of our mercies, but when faith and love are down, when the heart is ſtreightned, and the Spirit clouded in prayer and duty, then we are preſt to wiſh, *O that it were with us as in the months paſt*; So then, whether we conſider ſoul-mercies or body-mercies, our want of them quickeneth our deſires after them, and cauſeth us to prize that, which being preſent, we either made light of, or did not ſo dearly prize.

Secondly, Obſerve, *There is nothing in this world but is ſubject to change.*

It may ſoon not be with you, as it was with you a few months paſt, whether for ſpirituals, or for temporals; poſſibly to morrow you may have cauſe enough to ſay, *O that it were with us, as it was but yeſterday. Boaſt not of to morrow* (ſaith *Solomon, Pro.* 27. 1.) *for thou knoweſt not what a day may bring forth.* This Proverb is their reproof who contemn providence, promiſing to themſelves not only many dayes in the world, but the attaining of their own ends and projects, as if they had the world in a ſtring, and living without any ſenſe either of their own frailty or of the creatures uncertainty. This to morrow, may be taken either ſtrictly for the next day coming, or largely for all time to come; every day hath its birth, it brings forth ſomewhat or other; time is not barren, it travelleth to bring forth the Lords decrees; As time eats up and devoures all things, ſo time puts out or brings forth all things. *But no man knoweth what to morrow will bring forth, whether good or evil, though moſt pleaſe themſelves with the hopes, yea and make boaſt of many good morrows.*

Men know what themſelves plot and purpoſe to bring forth, but what to morrow will bring forth, the wiſeſt man alive knoweth not. The next day is not ſo neer this in time, as it may be remote and far from it, in its products and iſſues. God may quickly ſend ſuch a change both in reſpect of our publick, and perſonal comforts, as ſhall make us ſay, *O that it were with us as in the months paſt!* The things of the world ebb and flow, move and turn from one condition to another, they go forward and backward, up and down, now we have them, and anon they are ſlipt out of our hands. Spiritual things are ſubject to changes alſo, though grace cannot be loſt, yet it may be abated, and you may come to ſay, O that I could find my faith acting as in time paſt. And as changes are incident to our graces, ſo much more to the means of grace; Many a good ſoul hath ſaid, O that I had ſuch a Miniſtry, ſuch food for my ſoul as in the months paſt. Ordinances and Churches are changeable, Chriſt can remove our candleſtick, and when we are in the dark we wiſh for light; O what ſhall we do, the light is gone, the word is gone, the Miniſtry is gone, truth (as to the publication and protection of it) is gone, all's gone, when ſhall we ſee a return? It is good to be ſenſible of the want of mercies, but 'tis better to make a good uſe of preſent mercies: therefore improve the price which is in your hand, and be thankful. The beſt of men may ſoon have cauſe to ſay (as *Job*) about all theſe things; *O that it were with me as in the months paſt*;

As in the dayes when God preſerved me.

The ſame thing is here intended by **dayes** as before by *months*. The *months paſt* were a time of proſperity, and ſo were the dayes of his preſervation. And as here he expreſly repeats a deſcription of his former ſtate, ſo here is an implicit repetition of his wiſh, which ſhews his earneſtneſs for the thing, *O that it were with me, as in the dayes when God preſerved me*; that is, when God kept me and all mine from invading evils. The ſame word is uſed in the ſeventh Chapter of this Book at the twentieth verſe, as alſo *Chap.* 10. *v.* 14. in all which it ſhewes the providential care of God for and over his people and ſervants, both in refereuce to their perſonal ſafety, and the ſafety of their families, of their dwellings, goods, cattel and affairs. Satan took envious notice of Gods preſerving mercy towards *Job*, yea, he could not but complain of it (*Chap.* 1. 10.) *Haſt not thou made an hedge about him, and about his houſe, and about all that he hath on every ſide?* Thou haſt bleſſed the work of his hands, and his ſubſtance is increaſed in the land; thou haſt ſecured, ſheltered, and fenced him from danger as if he were thy darling, thy delight. Now as Satan was very envious at, ſo *Job* himſelf was very ſenſible of this former kindneſs of God, and therefore he ſaith, *O that it were with me as in the dayes when God preſerved me*, as in the dayes when the Devil could not touch me without leave obtained.

But it may be asked, Did not God preſerve *Job* at that time, and all along in the dayes of his affliction? Had God taken away or laid aſide his care of him, and left him to the wide world to ſhift for himſelf, to ſink or ſwim? Or if God did then preſerve him, how can *Job* be blameleſs, in this intimation that he did not?

I anſwer, Firſt, *Job* ſpeakes according to the common opinion of men, who eaſily grant that God preſerves a man when he is free from trouble, and no evil comes neer him to grieve him; but when once they ſee him fall into the hand, and under the preſſure of an evil, then they are ready to ſay, yea conclude, God doth not preſerve him; ſuch is the vulgar underſtanding and judgment of man concerning the providences of God. They ſcarce believe there is a preſervation in trouble as well as from trouble; or that God is graciouſly preſent with thoſe who ſuffer greivous things. As *Mary* ſaid to Chriſt concerning *Lazarus* (John 11. 32.) *Lord, if thou hadſt been here, my brother had not dyed.* Or as *Gideon* to the Angel (*Judges* 6. 13.) *O my Lord, if the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us?* Thus the moſt of men argue upon every croſs accident (as they call it) As if the ſorrows which preſs us, were inconſiſtent with the care of God over us. Whereas indeed, his preſervations in trouble are greater then thoſe by which we are kept from trouble.

Secondly, I anſwer, that, not only common, but even godly men are apt to think that God hath withdrawn his preſence, and preſervation from them, when trouble is upon them. Hence thoſe bitter complaihts and vehement expoſtulations (*Pſal.* 22. 1.) *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me? Why art thou ſo far from helping me, and from the words of my roarings?* Again (*Pſal.* 77. 7.) *Will the Lord caſt off for ever? and will he be favourable no more?* (As if he had ſaid, *ſurely the Lord hath caſt off for the preſent, he takes no care of me now*) *is his mercy clean gone for ever? doth his promiſe fail for evermore? hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger ſhut up his tender mercies?* What tumultuating thoughts were theſe? yet theſe were the thoughts of *Aſaph* a Godly man, or rather of *David*, a man after Gods own heart, in the day of his diſtreſs. And thus (poſſibly) *Job* thought himſelf out of covert, when his enemies laid his eſtate, and his friends his credit, waſte, *The beſt of men can hardly believe that God takes care of them, when they are hardly dealt with by men.* Faith acts glorioully, when though we ſee our ſelves deſtroyed, yet we can believe our ſelves preſerved. *Job's* faith was ſometimes at this pitch, yet now, it ſeems, it was not, when he cryed out, *O that it were with me as in the dayes when God preſerved me.*

Thirdly, I anſwer; The work of preſervation may be conſidered either abſolutely, or comparatively. When a man is fallen into great troubles, he may look upon himſelf as unpreſerved in compariſon of that preſervation which he had in thoſe dayes when God ſuffered no evil to befal him, or come near his dwelling. He that is not ſo compleatly preſerved as formerly he was, or found himſelf to be, may be ſaid to want divine preſervation. *O that it were with me as when God preſerved me.*

Fourthly, I anſwer; There is a twofold preſervation: Firſt, Viſible; Secondly, Inviſible. That's viſible preſervation when God keepeth us from outward evils: Inviſible preſervation is when God keeps our ſpirits up under the preſſure of all thoſe evils; God doth not withdraw from his people at any time his inviſible preſervation, but his viſible he often doth. That word of promiſe ſtands faſt for ever, how much ſoever the world ſhakes, or we are ſhaken in the world. (*Heb.* 13. 5, 6.) *I will never leave thee nor forſake thee; ſo that we may boldly ſay* (even when to appearance we are moſt helpleſs) *the Lord is my helper*. God once preſerved *Job* ſo viſibly that he had not ſo much as a ſcratch with a pin from any enemy or danger; but when all was torn from him to his skin, when his very skin and fleſh, and which is yet more, his ſoul and ſpirit were all betorn, when he was ſores, and boyls, and wounds all over, in that caſe all his diſcernable preſervation was gone, he had no arm of fleſh to defend him; yet then his inviſible preſervation was not gone, *The everlaſting arms were under him*; but thoſe arms not being ſeen, he looked upon himſelf as if out of the arms of God, as if not at all preſerved; and therefore deſired the return of ſuch comforts as he had in thoſe dayes when *God* (viſibly) *preſerved him.*

Hence note, Firſt, *Mans preſervation is of God.*

He condeſcends to the daily care and over-ſight of his people. As he is our Creator, ſo our Preſerver. He gave us our being, and he maintains us in it. He is not like the Architect that builds a houſe, and leaves it, never looking after it more, let it rot or ruine if it will; nor like the Ship-wright who builds a ſtately veſſel, and then lets it go to the wide Sea and daſh againſt rocks, or be ſwallowed with ſands for all him. God deals not thus with us, either in regard of our bodies, or of our ſouls; when he hath built us up a ſpiritual houſe, he leaves us not to the winds, and ſands, and rocks, but he looks to us, and repairs us, and protects us in our graces, and in our comforts. As we owe our effectual vocation into a ſtate of grace, ſo our abiding and continuance in it unto him. *He confirms us to the end* (1 Cor. 1. 8.) As he calls us out of ſin to holineſs, ſo he keeps us from ſin in holineſs. He is *the Author of our faith*, by vocation; and *the finiſher of it*, by preſervation (*Heb.* 12. 1.) *We are kept*, (as with a Garriſon, or as in a Garriſon'd City) *by the power of God, through faith unto ſalvation* (1 *Pet.* 1. 5.) He preſerves us, firſt, from temptation; ſecondly, in temptation. Again, He preſerves ſome, Firſt, By affliction, *A hedge of thorns* keeps them from wandring in forbidden paths (*Hoſ.* 2. 6.) Many are preſerved in Brine from corrupting. Secondly, He preſerves others, as we do ripe fruits, in Sugar from corrupting, *The peace of God which paſſeth all underſtanding, keeps their hearts and minds through Chriſt Jeſus* (Phil. 4. 7.) Thirdly, He preſerves us as beſieged Cities are, by fortifying us, and putting in freſh ſupplyes of his Spirit. Fourthly, He preſerves us by ſtopping the ſupplyes of our inward enemies, our luſts, ſo that they ſtarve, and cannot aſſault us. Fifthly, He preſerves ſome from greater ſins by letting them fall into leſſer ſins, which both awaken their own conſciences and the jealouſie of others concerning them. Chriſt can make our dangers preſervatives, our ſnare a table, and cauſe that which hath been an occaſion of our falling, turn to our good. Thus as the natural, ſo the ſpiritual creation is followed with a watchful eye of providence. He that made all things upholds them (*Heb.* 1. 3.) This priviledge we have by the ſecond *Adam* above what we had by the firſt; we were made upright in the firſt, we are kept in our righteouſneſs by the ſecond *Adam*. In the firſt we had a power to ſtand if we would; in the ſecond we have a power to keep us from falling. That's a comfortable promiſe (*Jer.* 31. 10.) *Hear the Word of the Lord, O ye Nations, and declare it in the Iſles afar off, and ſay, He that ſcattered* Iſrael, *will gather him, and keep him as a Shepherd doth his flock. Keeper of Iſrael,* is one of Gods Names and glorious Titles (*Pſal.* 121. 4.) *Behold, he that keepeth* Iſrael *ſhall never ſlumber nor ſleep.* As we want a Keeper, ſo we have one; and he is a ſure one, his care is not only without end, but without intermiſſion, *He never ſlumbers nor ſleeps.* And thus the Prophet expreſſeth at once the vengeance of God upon the enemies of his people, and his watchfulneſs for their preſervation (*Iſa.* 27. 1, 2, 3.) *In that day the Lord with his ſore, and great, and ſtrong ſword ſhall puniſh Leviathan the piercing Serpent, even Leviathan that crooked Serpent, and he ſhall ſlay the Dragon that is in the Sea. In that day ſing ye unto her: A vineyard of red wine. I the Lord do keep it, I will water it every moment leſt any hurt it; I will keep it night and day:* That is, mine eye ſhall alwayes be upon it. As the Lord plants his Vineyard, ſo he fenceth it, and makes a Tower in the midſt of it (*Iſa.* 1. 2.) to ſhew that he watches over it. This care of God towards his people, exceeds the care of a nurſing Mother towards her tender Infant (*Iſa.* 49. 15, 16.) *Can a Woman forget her ſucking Child, that ſhe ſhould not have compaſſion on the Son of her womb?* It were a kind of prodigy in nature if ſhe ſhould; yet this unnaturalneſs is poſſible to nature (as it follows in the ſame verſe) *Yea, they may forget*; but this is impoſſible (becauſe it implyes an impotency and deficiency) to the God of Nature, who is alſo the God of all Grace and mercy, as himſelf there profeſſeth, *Yet will I not forget thee:* And to aſſure us that he will not, he adds in the ſixteenth verſe, *Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me.*

Secondly, Obſerve, *They are ſafe whom God preſerves.*

In the dayes when God preſerved *Job*, nothing moleſted or troubled him: We may be unſafe notwithſtanding all the promiſes and performances of men to preſerve us: But if God will undertake our preſervation, who can touch us? (*Pſal.* 127. 1.) *Except the Lord build the houſe, they labour in vain that build it: Except the Lord keep the City, the Watchman waketh but in vain. It is in vain for you to riſe up early, and to ſit up late, to eat the bread of ſorrows; for ſo he giveth his beloved ſleep.* As if he had ſaid, if the Lord be with us, all's well with us; and without him nothing is well with us: They are ſafe indeed whom God keeps, and without his keeping (whoſoever elſe keeps us) we are unſafe. That ninety-firſt Pſalm is full of this aſſurance to the Saints; thus it begins, *He that dwelleth in the ſecret place* (that is, in the love and power) *of the moſt High, ſhall abide* (or lodge) *under the ſhadow of the Almighty:* (His ſhadow is our ſubſtance, or our ſubſtantial defence, both againſt heat and force, as it follows in the ſecond verſe) *I will ſay of the Lord, he is my refuge and my fortreſs, ſurely he ſhall deliver thee from the ſnare of the Fowler* (the Devil) *and from the noyſome peſtilence*; both that which would infect, poyſon, and kill thy body, as alſo thy ſoul, which *Solomon* in his prayer at the dedication of the Temple (1 *Kings* 8. 38.) calls *the plague of every mans own heart*, yea, and from the peſtilential wounds and ſtings of other mens tongues (as one of the Ancients expounds that Pſalm) that is, both from ſuch words as would diſcourage and draw thee off from doing good, or from the good wayes of God; as alſo from thoſe peſtilential words, which would infect thee with ſin, and boyl up thy luſts like a Plague-ſore: From the noyſom peſtilence of all or any of theſe kinds the Lord will deliver thee: And (*ver.* 4.) *He ſhall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings ſhalt thou truſt; his truth ſhall be thy ſhield and buckler:* Inſomuch that *thou ſhalt not be afraid* (that is, thou needeſt not to fear) *for the terror by night, nor for the arrow that flyeth by day.* Yea (*ver.* 11.) *He ſhall give his Angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy wayes; they ſhall bear thee up in their hands, leſt thou daſh thy foot againſt a ſtone.* The Lord keeps his people himſelf, and he chargeth his Angels with their keeping and guardianſhip. None of the Princes of the earth (who are not Saints) have ſuch a guard as Saints have. We read alſo of another keeper which the godly carry about them, they have a guard within as well as without (*Prov.* 2. 11, 12.) *Diſcretion ſhall preſerve thee, underſtanding ſhall keep thee, to deliver thee from the way of the evil man, from the man that ſpeaketh froward things.* It is good to have a rule of holineſs without to keep us, but 'tis far better to have a principle of holineſs within to keep us; which that Scripture promiſeth. But what's this diſcretion? What's this underſtanding that they ſhould keep us? Diſcretion and underſtanding are the gift, or grace rather of God planted in man for his preſervation and keeping. Man, by common natural diſcretion, may keep himſelf much out of harms way; but that ſpecial and ſpiritual diſcretion, which is the gift and grace of God, keeps him much more and much better out of wayes which are harmful, whether to himſelf or others. Yet the ſame *Solomon* tells us, that we are not truſted alone in the hand of that diſcretion which is the gift of God to us; for God himſelf is the diſcretion and underſtanding that preſerves his; this he makes the ground of our encouragement (*Prov.* 3. 25, 26.) *Be not afraid of ſudden fear, nor of the deſolation of the wicked when it cometh* (that is, fear not that deſolation which cometh upon the wicked) *For the Lord ſhall be thy confidence, and ſhall keep thy foot from being taken:* That is, thou ſhalt confide fully in him, and confiding in him thou ſhalt be ſafe; for he ſhall keep thy foot from being taken; that is, from being taken with any ſnare of evil, or with the ſnare of any evil, either of ſin or trouble. The Hebrew word in this text of the *Proverbs* which we render *confidence*, ſignifies alſo inconſtancy and folly. One of the Jewiſh Expoſitors takes that ſence here, and tranſlates the Text thus; The Lord ſhall be with thee in thy folly: That is, In thoſe things which thou doſt fooliſhly, or wherein thou diſcovereſt much folly, the Lord ſhall be with thee, and preſerve thee from thoſe ſnares with which, through thy own folly thou waſt ready to be taken. For as the Lord is above wicked men in the things wherein *they deal proudly* (*Exod.* 18. 11.) thinking by their parts and policy to carry all before them. So the Lord is with his own people, even in the things which they do weakly and fooliſhly (while honeſtly and with righteouſneſs) to keep them from miſcarrying; he will ſo guide the feet of his Saints, that they ſhall not be taken in their own folly, while the feet of the wicked ſhall be taken in their own wiſdom. This is a very ſpiritual and comfortable expoſition of that Scripture, and doth wonderfully magnifie the kindneſs of God in the preſervation of his people.

In quibus deſipere videberis, dominus tibi præſto erit. Aben Ezra.

בכסלך

Inconſtantia, ſtultitia, per antiphraſin, conſtantia, ſeu confidentia.

Laſtly, *As* Job, *ſo we ought to aſcribe our ſafety and peace to the Lords preſervation.*

As no man hath made, ſo no man hath preſerved himſelf. Let no man cover himſelf with his own feathers, or think himſelf ſafe under his own ſhadow, or under the ſhadow of any creature; God is and muſt be acknowledged, The *Great Lord Protector and Preſerver of men.* Wo to thoſe who ſit down in their own help; and wo to thoſe who go down to *Egypt* for help. *Why gaddeſt thou about ſo much* (ſaith the Prophet, *Jer.* 2. 36, 37.) *to change thy way? Or changing thy way* (that is, looking after, and reſorting to new wayes of ſupport and ſuccour) *thou ſhalt be aſhamed of* Egypt *as thou waſt aſhamed of* Aſſyria: That is, *Egypt* ſhall no more be able to protect thee, then *Aſſyria* did, who indeed diſtreſſed thee, but ſtrengthened thee not (2 *Chron.* 28. 20.) *Yea, thou ſhalt go forth from him, with thy hands upon thy head* (that is, lamenting and bewayling thy diſappointments) *for the Lord hath rejected thy confidences* (though thou hadſt a thouſand of them, and the more thou hadſt, the more the Lord will reject them) *and thou ſhalt not proſper in them.* The Lord ſometimes ſeems as if he did not preſerve us, but the creature at beſt doth but ſeem to do it. *Job* ſcarce thought himſelf preſerved by God when he was ſo ſorely troubled, but when he was preſerved he knew no Preſerver but God. *O that it were with me as in the months paſt, as in the dayes when God preſerved me.*

Verſe 3. **When his candle ſhined upon mine head, and when by his light I walked through darkneſs.**

In the former verſe *Job* confeſſed that God kept him from evil; in this he confeſſeth that God directed him to and in that which was good. There he had the power of God to preſerve him; here the light of God to lead him.

His candle ſhined upon my head.

Some take theſe words as an alluſion to the cloud and pillar of fire that guided the children of *Iſrael* in the wilderneſs; but I ſhall not inſiſt upon that, becauſe it is a query, and a query undetermin'd, whether *Job* lived before the journey of *Iſrael* through the wilderneſs, or after it: If after, there is no neceſſity of inferring that alluſion here, and if before, there is no conſiſtency for it.

The candle of God is taken three wayes in Scripture.

Firſt, For the word or counſel of God, by which as by a candle we are directed and ſee our way, through the darkneſs and doubtful paſſages of this world. *David* found and acknowledged this uſe and benefit of the word, (*Pſal.* 119. 105.) *Thy word is a lamp* (or candle) *unto my feet, and a light unto my paths.* By his *feet* he means both his inward motions and his outward, his affections and his actions; and by *his path,* the courſe which he took by both. In all, the word of God was his light or candle, to ſhew him where his way lay.

Secondly, As the word of God, ſo the ſpirit of a man is called a candle, (*Prov.* 20. 27.) *The ſpirit of man is the candle of the Lord, ſearching all the inward parts of the belly.* By the *ſpirit of man Solomon* means the intellectual powers, which in the ſtate of mans created integrity, were as the Sun ſhining with pure beams of light in that *little world man:* But by the fall of man into ſin, that light is ſo decayed and leſſened, that now it is but like a candle, to give man ſome help in this night and darkneſs of his condition. And it is called not barely *a candle,* but the *Candle of the Lord*; not as that, which the Lord ſees by, but either firſt, as that which the Lord hath mercifully left or ſet up in us to ſee by; and ſo thoſe words, *Of the Lord,* teach us that the Lord is the Author or efficient cauſe of it. Or ſecondly, thoſe words, *Of the Lord,* are as an Epithete to the word *candle,* and ſo, to call the ſpirit of man *the Candle of the Lord,* is as much as to ſay, the ſpirit of man is an excellent and a moſt neceſſary Candle; for it ſearcheth, or by it, we *ſearch all the inward parts of the belly*; That is, whatſoever is moſt ſecret in our ſelves: As the Apoſtle ſpeakes (2 *Cor.* 2. 11.) *What man knoweth the things of a man, ſave the ſpirit of man which is in him?* That is, no other man knows what his own thoughts are, or what they are working, but himſelf by his own underſtanding. But this candle of a mans underſtanding ſearcheth all the ſecret good and ſecret evil that is in the moſt inward parts of his belly, that is, of his mind; for as in the belly natural conceptions are wrought and ſhaped; ſo in the mind moral conceptions of good or evil are wrought and ſhaped. And man with his ſpirit or underſtanding, as with a candle, may ſearch himſelf quite through. The candle of this candle is the Word of God, and the candle of that candle is the Spirit of God. Mans ſpirit hath no ſpiritual light, but as the Word and Spirit of the Lord gives light to it. The ſpirit of a man would be but a very dim candle, or a dark lanthorn, if it had not the light of the Word and Spirit of God to guide it by. Thus ſome underſtand *Job*'s text, *When his candle ſhined upon my head*; that is, when the Lord gave me clear direction from his Word by his Spirit, how to frame and faſhion the whole courſe of my life in conformity to his will. But

Thirdly, Conſidering the context of the Chapter, I conceive we may expound *the candle of God* in another uſual Scripture ſence, for the favour and good will of God, and ſo for that which is the iſſue of it, proſperity and good ſucceſs. Thus *David* ſpake in his ſong of praiſe to God, by whom he had triumphed over all his enemies (2 *Sam.* 22. 29.) *Thou art my lamp, O Lord: and the Lord will lighten my darkneſs.* He ſpeaks declaratively, what God was to him, *Thou art my lamp, O Lord*; that is, from thee I have preſent favour; and he ſpeaks prophetically, what God would be to him, *The Lord will lighten my darkneſs*; That is, if fears and doubts (which are inward darkneſs) if troubles and afflictions (which are outward darkneſs) come upon me, the Lord will ſhew me what I ought to do, or he will give me comfort while I ſuffer. Thus again (*Pſal.* 132. 17.) *There will I make the horn of* David *to bud: I have ordained a lamp for mine anoynted*; That is, I have ordained proſperity and bleſſings for him; bleſſings upon his perſon, and eſpecially the bleſſing of poſterity. Children are as a lamp or candle in their Fathers houſe, making the name of their Anceſtors conſpicuous; hence in Scripture a Child given to ſucceed his Father is called a lamp. When God by *Abijah* the prophet told *Jeroboam,* that God would take the Kingdom out of the hand of *Solomon*'s ſon, and give it unto him, even ten Tribes; he yet adds (1 *Kings* 11. 36.) *And unto his Son will I give one tribe, that* David *my ſervant may have a light* (*lamp or candle,* as we put in the Margin) *alwayes before me in* Jeruſalem, *the City which I have choſen me to put my Name there.* And again (1 *Kings* 15. 4.) when *Abijam* the ſon of *Rehoboam* proved wicked, the text ſaith, *Nevertheleſs for* David'*s ſake did the Lord his God give him a lamp* (or *candle*) *in* Jeruſalem, *to ſet up his Son after him.* *Job* once had a candle ſhining upon his head, both in perſonal proſperity, and in a hopeful poſterity, but he lived to ſee both extinct, and therefore ſpeaks as of what was paſt,

Lucernam Dei appellat ejus favorē, quo velut lucerna ei in omnibus quæ ſuſcipiebat aut agebat ipſi prælucebat, ut omnia adverſa et rerum difficultates ſuperaret. Merc.

His candle ſhined upon my head.

The Sun Moon and Stars, being above us, are as candles ſhining upon our heads: And ſome conceive that here is an alluſion to a lamp or candle hung up in a room, which being aloft ſhines upon the heads of thoſe that ſtand about it. In Scripture the head notes the whole man, that being his cheif part, and the ſeat of all the ſenſes. So that this ſpeech of *Job, His candle ſhined upon my head,* is of the ſame ſence (excepting the duration) with that of the Prophet (*Iſa.* 35. 16.) *The ranſomed of the Lord ſhall return and come to Sion with ſongs, and everlaſting joy ſhall be upon their heads*: and with that (*Pro.* 10. 6.) *Bleſſings are upon the head of the juſt.* His bleſſing is from above, though it be in things of the earth, and ſo coming down upon the head, like the ointment upon *Aaron*'s head, runs down to the skirts of his garment; that is, he is bleſſed all over, or quite through; he is bleſſed from the beginning to the ending. Thus when *Job* reports concerning his former dayes, that then, the candle of God ſhined upon his *head,* his meaning is, that the favour of God was extended over all he had, over ſoul and body, over his wayes and counſels.

Me ſalutaribus conſiliis inſtruebat ut viderem quid in rebus dubiis agendum eſſet. Piſc.

Further; A candle ſhining upon the head, implyeth the cleareſt, as alſo the moſt uſeful and profitable light, for the more the light comes from above, the leſs is the ſhadow; while the Sun is aſcending or deſcending it caſts a ſhadow, and according to the degrees of its aſcent or declenſion, the ſhadow is more or leſs, longer or ſhorter; when ſhadows are very long, we know 'tis towards evening, and that the Sun is ſetting; But when the Sun is in his Zenith, (as at high-noon) and ſo caſts his beams directly upon our head, then it makes no ſhadow at all. This Conſideration of *Job*'s, from nature, gives us ſome advantage for the better and fuller underſtanding of his mind and ſcope in them. *Job* had not a light ſhining from below, but from aloft, not a light to his ſide, but upon his head; He had a clear and good light, as the light at noon day, which is grown into a Proverb, ſuch a thing, *is as clear as the light at noon-day.* And becauſe the head is the ſeat of the underſtanding as well as of the ſenſes, the candle upon the head may fitly import, a clear light of knowledge in adviſing others or our ſelves what to do, or how to order our affairs. From all which notions, it appears that *Job* had much of God, many ſignal teſtimonies of reſpect from him, he had comforts without, and counſels within, and mercy every way. *His candle* (ſaith he) *ſhined upon my head.*

Hence Note, *A godly man owns God as the Author, and his favour as the ſpring of his proſperity and good ſucceſs.*

Job doth not ſay, *O that it were with me as in former times, when I got and gained*; but, *O that it were with me as in months paſt, when the Candle of God ſhined upon my head.* As the Candle of God, or his favour ſhining upon us, is the beſt portion, and portion enough, though we had nothing elſe; ſo what portion ſoever we have in other things is to be aſcribed to that. Carnal men *ſacrifice to their own net, and burn incenſe to their own drag* (that is, they thank their wit or their induſtry, their policy or their ſtrength, their own forecaſt or the kindneſs of their friends, *becauſe by them* (they conceive as the Prophet ſaith, *Hab.* 1. 16.) *their portion is fat, and their meat plenteous.* And as many have no mind to offer the ſacrifice of praiſe to God for their plenty, ſo they have no reaſon to do ſo. And becauſe they have no reaſon to do ſo, it would be their ſin to do ſo. For ſeeing their plenty comes in by their ſin, and is at once provided by and for their luſts; they in praiſing God for their plenty, ſhould entitle God to all thoſe ſins by which they have provided it. They have not got their riches by the Candle of God ſhining upon their heads, but by putting out the Candle of God which ſhined into their hearts. There is a natural Candle or Light which God hath put into the hearts of all men, by which they may ſee (Heathens have ſeen it) what is juſt and right in their dealings with men. This Candle or Light they put out, that they may heap up the gain of deceit and fraud, of unrighteouſneſs and oppreſſion in the darkneſs of their own luſts. He only gets riches by Gods Candle, who gets them in wayes of righteouſneſs: And if he become poor (as *Job*) he may wiſh or pray with confidence (as *Job* did) *O that it were with me, as when the Candle of God ſhined upon my head.*

And when by his light I walked through darkneſs.

The Light of God is oppoſed, Firſt, To our own light, or (as the Prophet ſpeaks, *Iſa.* 50. 11.) *To the light of our fire.* Secondly, To the light of any creature-comfort. All light is of God; for *God is light* (1 John 1. 4.) and the fountain of light. Firſt, To his own Son the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who is *that true light* (John 1. 8.) The light of the world (*John* 3. 18.) Secondly, To the Saints, who are therefore ſaid not only to receive light from him, but to be light (*Eph.* 5. 8.) *Ye were ſometimes darkneſs, but now ye are light in the Lord.* All light is Gods light, yet ſome light is more peculiarly called *his light.* Light was the firſt diſtinct part of the whole Creation. And as external light is Gods creature, ſo alſo is internal light, intellectual light, ſpiritual light.

But it may be queſtioned, What is that light which *Job* ſo eminently entitles God to? *His light.*

I anſwer, Firſt, Negatively, Not light in a proper ſence, the light of the Sun, which fills the Air.

Secondly, Affirmatively, We may underſtand it two ways.

Firſt, For the light of counſel and direction, given either immediately or mediately from God. The word of God is the light of God (as was ſhewed from the former words) Thus in the Prophet (*Iſa.* 2. 5.) *O houſe of* Jacob, *come ye and let us walk in the light of the Lord.* The word, like light diſcovers and layes open the hidden things of God, and the hidden things of man. 'Tis as light, the firſt thing to be ſeen, and that by which we ſee all other things. 'Tis the means by which we ſee, and 'tis the object of our ſight. 'Tis like the lights or lamps ſpoken of (*Lev.* 24. 2, 3, 4. *Num.* 8. 2.) which God hath appointed to hang up and burn continually in the Tabernacle of the Church. By this light of God, the light of his holy Word, *Job walked through darkneſs.*

Secondly, By *his light*, or the light of God, may be meant the favour, grace, and good will of God. When *David* begg'd of God, *To lift up the light of his countenance upon him* (Pſal. 4. 6.) his meaning is, O let me enjoy thy favour, or be thou favourable unto me. And from this light of God ſhining upon us, another, a third light of God, the light of joy ſhines in us; as it follows in the Pſalm, where *David* had no ſooner prayed, *Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon me*, but he ſeems to have received an anſwer preſently (*ver.* 7.) *Thou haſt put gladneſs in my heart. This light of God is ſown for the righteous* (Pſal. 97. 11.) and it ſprings up in them like the joy of harveſt, even when the labour of the Olive faileth, and the Fields yield no meat (*Hab.* 3. 17, 18.) By all theſe, or any of theſe lights of God, *Job walked through darkneſs.* The light of the counſel of God, *his word*, and the light of the countenance of God, *his favour*, and the light of the joy of God, *his conſolations*, are enough to carry us through all the darkneſs of this world.

But it may be queſtioned, What the darkneſs was through which *Job* walked in the light of God. As before we had nothing to do with natural light; ſo neither here with that natural darkneſs which followeth the departure of the Sun from, or its going down below our Horizon. But in an improper ſence; Darkneſs in Scripture-language is put,

Firſt, For ſin; And *to walk in darkneſs*, is to lead a ſinful life (1 *John* 1. 6.) This is not the darkneſs here meant; *Job* did not walk in a ſtate of ſin, though he had ſin in him; nor do we walk through this darkneſs by the light of God, but from it. The light of God teacheth us to avoid it, yea, to abhor it, to have no fellowſhip with the unfruitful works of it; but it doth not help or aſſiſt us to walk through it.

Secondly, Darkneſs is often put for affliction. *Job* (I grant) had walked long in this darkneſs, and was then walking in it when he ſpake theſe words; yet we cannot underſtand theſe words of that darkneſs, becauſe *Job* in ſpeaking them, refers or looks back to his proſperous ſtate, in which as he had all manner, ſo the fulleſt meaſure of outward mercies, and knew not what ſorrow meant, nor what it was to walk through the darkneſs of it, as to his own experience; *Job* in theſe times ſcarce ever had a cloud come over his day, much leſs was his day turned to night, or his light to darkneſs.

Thirdly, By darkneſs is ſignified ſome eminent *danger*: He that is in a good condition, doth ſometimes fall into ſuch a danger, and is compaſſed about with ſuch ſudden extremities, as may cover him for the time with very great darkneſs, and yet by the light of divine favour he paſſeth ſafely through it. *Though I walk* (ſaith *David*, Pſal. 23. 4.) *through the valley of the ſhadow of death* (that's a dark valley indeed) *I will fear no evil, for thou art with me, thy rod and thy ſtaffe they comfort me*; that is, *In thy light I walk through darkneſs.* Poſſibly *Job* had met with ſome ſuch ſudden exigents in the former paſſages of his life, through which he walked or made his eſcape by the light of God.

Fourthly, Darkneſs may import any difficult caſe or doubtful condition, through which a mans own reaſon cannot guide him, and he wants light to ſee his way out. Now if in ſuch caſes the Lord ſhew us our way, we have cauſe to ſay, that in the light of God we walked through darkneſs. And this, I conceive, is *Job's* meaning here, when he ſaith, *In his light I walked through darkneſs.* As if he had thus expreſſed himſelf, *Not only did the Candle of God, ſhining upon my head in former times, keep me out of a ſtate of miſery and affliction, but if at any time I did but ſtep into or was ſurprized with a ſudden danger, if at any time I were hard put to it, not well knowing how to reſolve or what to do; preſently, even in ſuch dangers, doubts, and ſtraits I had light from God, by which I walked through the darkneſs of thoſe diſpenſations, and all iſſued well for me.*

In rebus dubiis luce ejus directas. Merc.

Hence Note, Firſt, *The light of God is enough to lead us through all doubts and difficulties.*

We cannot walk in the light by our own light, but in the light of God we may walk through any darkneſs. Eaſie things are hard to our own power, and plain things are obſcure to our own light; but as nothing is hard to the power, ſo nothing is obſcure to the Light of God. The Grace of God is ſufficient for us in our weakneſs, and the Light of God is ſufficient for us in our darkneſs. And as 'tis comfortable to remember that his Light is ſufficient for us; ſo tis much more comfortable to remember that he will not fail to give us light. As *David* prayed (*Pſal.* 43. 3.) *O ſend out thy Light, and thy Truth, let them lead me.* So the Lord made a Promiſe unto *David* (Pſal. 32. 8.) *I will inſtruct thee, and teach thee in the way that thou ſhalt go; I will guide thee with mine eye:* That is, I will look upon thee, and as mine eye turns ſo ſhalt thou; or not only doth mine eye ſee thy way, but mine eye ſhall ſhew thee thy way; mine eye ſhall be thy directory, or as a hand pointing thee which way thou ſhalt go, what courſe thou ſhalt take in every difficulty, and exigency of affairs. The Lord makes ſuch a promiſe in ſpecial to him that keeps a true faſt (*Iſa.* 58. 10. 11.) *Then ſhall thy light riſe in obſcurity, and thy darkneſs be as the noon day:* That is (though I grant the Text may alſo be well expounded of a turn from adverſity to proſperity) obſcure things ſhall be light or clear to thee, and thou ſhalt ſee through thoſe buſineſſes as if it were noon day, which are as dark as darkneſs it ſelf, even where the light was as darkneſs, the darkneſs ſhall be as light. The next words favour this interpretation much, where this promiſe runs in proper terms, *And the Lord ſhall guide thee continually, and ſatisfie thy ſoul in drought, and make fat thy bones,* &c. The Lord will guide his, not only for a day, but all their dayes, *continually.* And he that is alwayes guided, is guided in all his wayes, even in his darkeſt wayes. The Faith of *Hannah* was raiſed to this aſſurance (1 *Sam.* 2. 9.) *He will keep the feet of his* Saints (from going out of their way) *and the wicked ſhall be ſilent in darkneſs:* Not ſilent as Saints are in in their darkneſs by patience and quiet ſubmiſſion to the hand of God; not ſilent as Saints are in their darkneſs, by abſtaining from all murmurings and complainings againſt God; but ſilent under a conviction of the righteous judgment of God, or ſilent in an utter deſperation of freeing themſelves from his judgments. They ſhall neither have a word to ſay for themſelves, nor ſhall they know what to do for themſelves. They ſhall be comfortleſs, and they ſhall be counſelleſs; they ſhall neither be able to give themſelves counſel, nor to ask it of God; *They ſhall be ſilent in darkneſs;* this is a wretched ſilence. And that's it which the Lord threatened in very doleful language by the Prophet (*Jer.* 13. 16.) *Give glory to the Lord your God, before he cauſe darkneſs, and before your feet ſtumble upon the dark mountains, and while ye look for light, he turn it into the ſhadow of death, and make it groſs darkneſs.* The Lord who forms the light, doth alſo create or cauſe darkneſs, and he can add darkneſs to darkneſs; the darkneſs of ignorance to the darkneſs of trouble; and he can add one degree of darkneſs to another, one degree of the darkneſs of trouble to another, and one degree of the darkneſs of ignorance to another; they who are in darkneſs, may ſoon be in greater darkneſs, even in groſs darkneſs. *The dark mountains* ſpoken of by the Prophet, are not only properly ſuch, but figuratively ſuch: As when men are in great troubles, they either run or are driven to the dark mountains to ſhelter and hide themſelves; ſo great troubles are dark mountains; and to *ſtumble* upon theſe dark mountains of trouble, is to be deſtitute of the light of counſel what to do, or which way to betake our ſelves for deliverance. *Saul* was upon ſuch a dark mountain when the *Philiſtines* invaded him, and there his feet ſtumbled (1 *Sam.* 28. 15.) *I am ſore diſtreſſed* (ſaith he) *for the* Philiſtines *make war againſt me, and God is departed from me, and anſwereth me no more, neither by Prophets nor by dreams.* He was in darkneſs, and God gave him no light to walk through that darkneſs: His darkneſs was indeed turned into the ſhadow of death, when he turned to the Devil to raiſe the dead, that he might have light. He was left in the groſs darkneſs of ignorance as well as of trouble when he went to the Prince of darkneſs for advice, how to get out of that darkneſs which compaſſed him round about. Good men are brought many times to the dark mountains, but their feet do not ſtumble there: The Lord *will keep the feet of his Saints, and they* (*like Job*) *by the light of God ſhall walk through darkneſs.*

And that you may have the light of God to walk by through all the darkneſs you meet with, be ſure to avoid theſe two things.

Firſt, Take heed of walking in or leaning to the light of your own underſtanding. *None ſtand ſo much* (as we ſay) *in their own light, as they who walk in it.* To walk in our own light, is to be (as *Solomon* ſpeaks, *Prov.* 3. 7.) *wiſe in our own eyes.* And as ſuch are oppoſed to thoſe (*ver.* 6.) *who acknowledged God in all their wayes,* ſo they cannot expect (which is there promiſed to them that do ſo) *that he ſhould direct their paths.*

Secondly, Take heed ye be not found walking in the light of your own comforts, as not in the light of your own counſels. Some make comforts for themſelves, or they kindle their own fire, as the Prophet elegantly expreſſeth it (*Iſa.* 50. 11.) *Behold all ye that kindle a fire, that compaſs your ſelves about with ſparks, walk in the light of your fire, and in the ſparks that ye have kindled, this ſhall ye have of my hand, ye ſhall lye down in ſorrow.* In the foregoing verſe he ſpake of thoſe, *who though they feared the Lord, and obeyed the voice of his ſervants, yet walked in darkneſs and ſaw no light;* and ſuch he adviſeth *to truſt in the Name of the Lord, and to ſtay upon their God:* As if he had ſaid, If you, who now walk in darkneſs and ſee no light, deſire to walk at laſt through this darkneſs in the light of God; then beware that ye do not, as many, kindle a fire for your ſelves in creature-comforts and contentments; do not compaſs your ſelves about with theſe ſparks, hoping to get warmth or light by them. You may try if you have ſuch a mind to it, what the light of your own fire, and what your ſparks can do for you: But I aſſure you, there's no walking through darkneſs by your own light, make it as clear as you can, *Your lying down or end will be in ſorrow, and that is but a cold and a dark lodging. There is no walking through any darkneſs, but by the light of God.*

VERS. 4, 5, 6.

As I was in the dayes of my youth, when the ſecret of God was upon my Tabernacle.

When the Almighty was yet with me, when my Children were about me.

When I waſhed my ſteps with Butter, and the Rock poured out Rivers of Oyl.

THis Context continues *Job*'s wiſh; and to make the ſence compleat, we muſt have recourſe to, or reaſſume the words of the ſecond verſe; *O that I were as in the month paſt, O that I were,* &c.

Verſe 4. **As I was in the dayes of my youth.**

There is much variety in the rendring of theſe words.

Firſt, Mr. *Broughton* renders, *As I was in my laſt years:* That is (as I ſuppoſe his meaning to be) as I was in thoſe years which immediately preceded theſe my ſorrows: Or, O that I were in as good a condition as theſe troubles found me in.

Secondly, Others render thus, *As I was in the dayes of my winterings;* or when I lay in my winter quarters. This tranſlation is an alluſion to Souldiers, who uſually all the Summer are drawn out into ſervice, and lye abroad in the field, but in the Winter (that being incommodious for action) come home to their quarters, where after long marches, and hard, yea, hazardous duty, they reſt in ſafety. And thus *Job* ſeems to ſay, *O that it were with me as in thoſe dayes when I lay like a Souldier in my winter quarters, not drawn out to combate with afflictions and temptations, not at all engaged with thoſe Armies of ſorrow which have lately charged me on every hand, both in front and rear.* But this is a little too critical and curious, nor could *Job* well expreſs the comfort of a flouriſhing ſtate, by a Souldiers life, though in his winter quarters, where though he hath all things neceſſary, provided by his General, or next Officer, yet that's no pleaſant life, nor much deſirable condition.

In diebus hibernorum meorum. Jun.

Metaphora Caſtrenſis de proſperitate Jobi *ſecurè in domo ſua agentis quaſi miles in hibernis.* Mer.

Thirdly, Some give it in theſe terms; *As I was in the dayes of my reproach:* That is, In thoſe dayes which have been caſt upon me as my reproach; or with which I have often been reproached. Satan reproached *Job* with his good or proſperous dayes, as if in them he had played the hypocrite, and

In diebus opprobrii mei. Mont.

and ſerved God only becauſe God filled his belly, and ſecured all his fulneſs to him. Such was his malicious ſence, when he anſwered Gods Queſtion (*Chap.* 1. 8, 9.) *Haſt thou conſidered my Servant* Job*? &c.* With, *Doth* Job *fear God for nought? Haſt thou not made a hedge about him?* &c. *Job*'s Friends reproached him ſo often with ſuggeſtions of ſinful carriages in thoſe dayes of his proſperity, that he at laſt ſaid (*Chap.* 19. 3.) *Theſe ten times have ye reproached me.* So that *Job* having been ſo much and ſo often reproached with thoſe dayes, might well call them, *The dayes of his reproach*; and when he wiſheth here (according to this reading) *O that it were with me as in the dayes of my reproach*! His meaning is, O that I were in as good a ſtate both for ſoul and body, as I was in thoſe dayes, with which you have ſo frequently and falſly reproached me.

In hieme terra non oſtendit germen, ſed ſ veſti nudua anni opprobrium agit.

We tranſlate, *O that it were with me as in the dayes of my youth.* The word which we render **youth**, doth properly ſignifie *reproach*, or that which brings any kind of diſgrace upon a perſon. And thus the Winter is expreſſed, becauſe 'tis, as it were, the diſgrace of the year; it uncloaths both Fields and Forreſts, it ſoyls that beauty which the Spring gave, and the Summer maintained all things in, and ſtrips them naked and bare. In the ſame ſence, that the Spring is the glory, Winter is the ſhame of the year. And as the cold of Winter doth ſhame the Fields, and blaſt their bravery; ſo the heat of youth is apt to thruſt us upon the doing of ſuch things as turn to our ſhame, and often bring not only reproofs, but reproaches upon us: Youth is ſubject to many temptations and corruptions, 'tis hurried in the purſuit of divers luſts and pleaſures, which unleſs timely left, leave us under the clouds of diſgrace. So the word is rendred (*Job* 27. 6.) For whereas we ſay, *My heart ſhall not reproach me*; others render it, *My heart ſhall not youth or bechild me*; that is, it ſhall not make me do things like a child or a youth tending to my reproach. The Prophet (*Jer.* 31. 19.) repreſents *Ephraim*, bemoaning himſelf, thus, *Surely after that I was turned I repented, and after that I was inſtructed, I ſmote upon my thigh, I was aſhamed, yea even confounded, becauſe I did bear the reproach of my youth.* Reproach falleth ſo often indeed upon youth, that youth and reproach go alwayes in word together, or are linked in one word; *O that I were as in the dayes of my youth.* We may take youth in a twofold ſence.

Non expueraſcet cor meum. Bold.

Firſt, As youth ſignifies a diſtinct ſtate or age of man; the life of man is caſt into many diviſions, into childhood, youth, manhood, and old age. Which referring to the four ſeaſons of the year; youth is the ſpring, the prime and glory of it.

Secondly, We may expound it not of the perſon but ſtate of *Job*, and then. *In the dayes of my youth*, is, when I was in the flouriſh of riches, and greatneſs, and power, and honour. There is a youth in every mans ſtate, and ſome mens eſtates grow old and decrepid, before their perſons do. *O that it were with me as in the dayes of my youth.* The general ſence is the ſame with the former; yet from the form of expreſſion

Obſerve, *Youth is a flouriſhing condition; but it is a paſſing condition.*

Whether youth reſpect the perſon, or the ſtate of man, the youthfulneſs of both paſſeth away. The Graces of ſome Believers are in a perpetual youth (*Iſa.* 40. 30, 31.) *Even the youths* (that is, ſuch as truſt to, or boaſt in their own ſtrength) *ſhall faint and be weary, and the young men ſhall utterly fall, but they that wait on the Lord ſhall renew their ſtrength, they ſhall mount up with Eagles wings.* Now the *Eagle reneweth her youth* (Pſal. 103. 5.) And as ſome Believers have a perpetual youth in grace; ſo all Believers ſhall have a perpetual youth in glory. But the youth of mans moſt flouriſhing eſtate in riches and honour, and the youth of his perſon, when 'tis moſt flouriſhing in ſtrength and beauty, is ready to decline every day. There was ſomewhat of miracle in that of *Moſes* (Deut. 34. 7.) *Who being an hundred and twenty years old when he died, his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated.* Moſt men are ſenſible enough of the decayes of their natural youth, and many of their civil; yet the Prophet by an elegant alluſion complains that *Ephraim* was not (*Hoſea* 7. 9.) *Strangers have devoured his ſtrength, and he knoweth it not; yea, gray hairs are here and there upon him* (*or ſprinkled upon him*) *yet he knoweth not*: He doth not mean it of the *gray hairs* upon his head, but upon his ſtate or outward condition. He whoſe affairs were ſtrong and proſperous a while ago, even like a young man in his prime, have now the ſymptoms of old age appearing upon them, here a loſs and there a loſs, here a breach and there a breach, like gray hairs, ſignifying weakneſs and old age appearing upon them. Youth in every notion of it, reſpecting naturals and civils, is paſſing and fading.

Again, *O that I were as in the dayes of my youth.* I ſhewed before that *Job* doth not only, nor ſo much deſire the ſame ſtate of outward proſperity which he formerly had, as the ſame frame of holineſs that he formerly had in that ſtate. *Job*'s ſpirit was much out of order and diſcompoſed under his afflictions. And therefore he prayeth, *O that I were as ſpiritual, or as well ſettled in my ſpirit, as in the fore-part of my natural life.*

Hence Note, *To be holy in youth, is a great commendation of holineſs.*

Holineſs is alwayes a beauty, yet moſt then, when we are moſt ſubject to folly. Many looking back to their youth, have no reaſon to ſay, *O that it were with us as in the dayes of our youth*: Dayes of youth are uſually dayes of ſin and vanity. There are but few who can reflect upon and review that part of their life, without much cauſe of bluſhing, yea of loathing. Yet in old age a temptation may come which puts a man more out of order and beſides the rule, then he was in the moſt unruly and diſorderly dayes of youth: Childhood and youth are vanity, and ſo may old age be too. How comely is it to ſee gravity and ſanctity in youth, to ſee youth ſpotleſs and unblameable, not only taking example by thoſe who are good, but being an example. As *Paul* exhorts *Timothy* (1 Tim. 4. 12.) *Let no man deſpiſe thy youth* (He ſpeaks not ſo much to others as to **Timothy**, O Timothy, *ſee thou walk ſo exactly that no man may have occaſion to deſpiſe thy youth, let not thy youth lay thee open to contempt, but*) *be thou an enſample of the Believers, in word, in converſation, in charity, in ſpirit, in faith, in purity.* Hold forth theſe graces in thy youth, and no man will deſpiſe thy youth, but an enemy to all grace; live ſo undiſtemper'd in youth, that when any little diſtemper is upon thee in old age, thou mayeſt have cauſe to wiſh with *Job*, *O that it were with me as in the dayes of my youth.*

When the ſecret of God was upon my Tabernacle.

Quando ſecretè Deus erat in Tabernaculo meo. Vulg.

בסוד אלוה

Quando Deo familiaris eram, & in domo mea, tanquam in ſodalitio ipſius, verſabatur. Lavat.

With Gods favour upon my Tent, ſaith Mr. *Broughton. When God was ſecretly in my Tabernacle* (ſaith the Vulgar tranſlation) *When there was* (*as it were*) *a league between God and my Tabernacle*, ſaith a third. *When God kept me company, and aſſociated himſelf with me in my Tabernacle*, ſaith a fourth. The word ſignifieth an Aſſembly or Meeting of choice perſons (*Pſal.* 111. 1.) *I will praiſe the Lord with my whole heart in the Aſſembly of the upright*, or, *In the ſecret of the upright.* The upright are ſecret ones, and the ſecret of God is with them. Our Tranſlation gives this ſence fully, *When the ſecret of God was upon my Tabernacle*; As if he had ſaid, *O that it were with me as when God gave me ſecret counſel, or opened his heart to me upon all occaſions.*

There is a twofold ſecret of God. Firſt, The ſecret of his Word: Secondly, The ſecret of his Works: or the ſecret of his Counſel, and the ſecret of his Providence. Both theſe were upon the Tabernacle or Tent of *Job*. There was the ſecret of the Word, or of the revealed Will of God. We may have the Word which contains the Will of God, yet not know the ſecret of God in it. The Word of God is the Covenant of God, and the Covenant is called *a myſtery*, that is, *a ſecret.* This ſecret of God was upon *Job*'s Tabernacle; that is, God made known his mind to him, and ſhewed him as what himſelf would do for him in mercy; ſo what *Job* ought to do for him in duty.

Again (which I rather conceive to be *Job*'s meaning) The ſecret of Divine providence was upon his Tabernacle: Firſt, To prevent evil from annoying him: Secondly, To preſerve the good which he enjoyed: Thirdly, To bleſs his labours, and to make what he took in hand thrive and proſper. Thus (ſaith he) it was with me, and O that it might be ſo again. This intimacy and ſweet fellowſhip with God, *Job* recounts with thankfulneſs, and begs the renewing of it as his happineſs; he doth not wiſh to be happier then when the ſecret of God was with him.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *Saints are acquainted with the ſecrets of God.*

(*Pſal.* 25. 14.) *The ſecret of the Lord is with them that fear him,* &c. Saints are (as I may ſay) *The Lords Secretaries, they are of his Privy Council*; He ſheweth them all that is needful and good for them to know. *What he hideth from the wiſe and prudent, he revealeth to his babes* (*Matth.* 11. 25.) The wiſe men of the world cannot underſtand the ſecrets of the Spirit, but ſpiritual babes do. In the new birth God *puts his Law into the mind* (that is, he gives his people a right underſtanding of it) and *he writes it in their heart* (Heb. 8. 10.) that is, he gives them a ſutableneſs to it, both in their wills to chuſe it, and in their affections to love and to embrace it. Regeneration is a ſecret work, and the regenerate are admitted into the ſecrets of the Word of God. *The ſervant knoweth not what his Lord doth, but* (ſaith Chriſt, *John* 15. 15.) *I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you.* Chriſt came out of the boſom of the Father, and he opens the Fathers boſom to all his Children.

Secondly, Obſerve, *A ſecret unſeen bleſſing from God makes the houſe and eſtate of a godly man proſperous.*

As a ſecret curſe goes out from God upon the wicked mans houſe or tabernacle, which blaſts his faireſt fruit, and makes all to wither. Some are unthriving, and find all going to nought, they know not how nor which way, ſurely by no way of their own intending (*Haggai* 1. 6.) *Ye have ſown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye cloath you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages, earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes.* Nothing comes of it, there is no tack in your ſtate, or any thing you have, it melts as Butter before the Sun. And what cauſed all this? A ſecret curſe (*ver.* 9.) *And when ye brought it home I did blow upon it?* That is, I made all your labours and endeavours fruitleſs. Now, I ſay, as a ſecret curſe upon a wicked or ſinful mans Tabernacle conſumes and waſtes all (no man knowing how) ſo by a ſecret bleſſing upon the Tabernacle of the righteous, all their undertakings thrive, they ſcarce know how or which way, ſurely by no way of their own projecting or deviſing; ſo that while their proſperity is viſible to all, and envied by many, the way of it is almoſt utterly unknown to themſelves, and they even wonder to ſee how wealth comes in. This is the ſecret of God upon the Tabernacle of the righteous. A little that we have, by the ſecret influence of a bleſſing from above, is better then abundance without it: And a little that we do, by the ſecret influence of a bleſſing upon it, will bring in abundance: So that a godly man ſaith ſometimes in regard of his temporal encreaſe, as it is propheſied, the Church ſhall in regard of her ſpiritual (*Iſ.* 49. 20, 21.) *The place is too ſtrait for me, give place to me that I may dwell:* and he is ready to ſay admiringly, as it follows there, *Who hath begotten me theſe? Or who hath gotten me all this?*

Thirdly, Obſerve, *Secret communion and converſe with God is very deſirable to a gracious ſoul, and the ſweeteſt priviledge of this preſent life.*

O that it were with me as in the dayes of my youth, when the ſecret of God was upon my Tabernacle: That is, When God and I were often in ſecret converſe, and even walked together as familiar friends. What *David* ſaid of his falſe friend, who at laſt ſhewed himſelf an open enemy (*Pſal.* 55. 14.) A godly man can ſay of his real and cordial friendſhip with God, *We took ſweet counſel together, and walked* (both) *unto the Houſe of God* (and in my own houſe God owning me there) *in company.* God viſited me, and I rejoyced in his viſits. The Septuagint render the Text ſo out of the Hebrew; *When God made his viſitation of my houſe or family.* God viſits ſome in wrath, or in fatherly diſpleaſure at the beſt, to chaſten them for their uneven and diſorderly walkings, to reprove and check them for what they have done amiſs: He viſits other in love or in a friendly pleaſure, to encourage them in their holy and upright walkings, to approve and commend them for what they have done well. I know not whether they are more highly honoured, or more ſweetly refreſhed who are thus viſited. A gracious Soul hath many Soliloquies about God, he hath alſo many Colloquies, Conferences, or Diſcourſes with God. He tells God his mind in Prayer and Meditation; and God tells him what his mind is, by the Spirit in his Word, and all other Goſpel-diſpenſations. He ſpeaks to God, and he is hearkening what the Lord God will ſpeak (*Pſal.* 8. 5.) And what he ſpeaks is well worth the hearkening after, for (as it follows there) *He will ſpeak peace to his People, and to his Saints.* It is ſaid of *Iſaac*, that, *He went out into the fields to meditate at eventide* (Gen. 24. 63.) God and he kept ſecret correſpondence or intelligence one with another. And, indeed, then doth God communicate himſelf moſt to us when we retire moſt from the world, from worldly delights, and from worldly cares, from our buſineſſes and affairs, that we may be private with him. (*Hoſea* 2. 14.) *Behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderneſs, and ſpeak comfortably to her*; or, I will ſpeak to her heart. When I have brought her out of the huddle of the World into the Wilderneſs (which ſome underſtand to be a troubleſome condition, others, only a ſolitary condition) then I will ſpeak kindly to her. God brings many gracious Souls into the Wilderneſs of a troubleſome condition, and he loves to allure all into the wilderneſs of a ſolitary condition, that he may then and there ſpeak comfortably to them. They who live in a populous City, may live as in a Wilderneſs, private and alone with God. And when God hath got us thus alone, then he ſpeaks to our hearts, and pours his heart into ours. It is the promiſe of Chriſt (*John* 14. 23.) *If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.* Thus we have, as a deſcription of the proſperity of *Job* in the encreaſe of outward things, through the ſecret of God upon his Tabernacle (as we render the Text) ſo likewiſe a deſcription of his piety and encreaſe in ſpiritual things, through that ſweet intimacy, and ſecret converſe which he had with God in his Tabernacle, or conſtant courſe of his life, as others render it. Both wayes he was a happy man, though in the laſt moſt. 'Tis a great bleſſing to have the ſecret of God upon our Tabernacle; but 'tis a greater to keep cloſe to God by ſecret communion in our Tabernacle. This latter differs but a little more from heavenly happineſs then this, that we are in a Tabernacle. *Job* ſtill proceeds in the Hiſtory of Gods ancient kindneſſes to him. He cannot get his thoughts off from the pleaſant remembrance of thoſe times.

Ὅτι ὁ θεὸς ἐπισκοπὴν ἐποιεῖτο τοῦ οἴκου μου. Sept.

Verſe 5. **When the Almighty was yet with me, when my Children were about me.**

In the former verſe *Job* ſpake of God, by his Title or Name *Eloah*, or, *The ſtrong God*, in this by his Name *Saddai*, The *Almighty*, or *God All-ſufficient*, The bountiful Diſtributer and Giver out of all good things. *It was the Almighty who was with him* in the time of his proſperity, and made him proſperous.

But was not the Lord with him in his afflicted condition? Or is he not alwayes with all men? Was the Lord quite departed from *Job*? Or are any out of his preſence? How then ſaith he, *When he was yet with me?*

I anſwer, God is ſaid to be with us, or abſent from us, as he is pleaſed to give out himſelf to us, or withdraw from us in his providences and diſpenſations. When God acts graciouſly towards us, then he is ſaid to be with us; and when he leaves us in the hand of any trouble, then he is ſaid to be far from us (*Pſal.* 10. 1.) *Why ſtandeſt thou afar off, O Lord? Why hideſt thou thy ſelf in time of trouble?* God is alwayes near to his people, and uſually then neareſt in his care for and watchfulneſs over them, when they are in trouble; yet then they are apt to think he is afar off from them, and then they cry out as men forſaken, *Why ſtandeſt thou afar off, O Lord?* Thus the Scripture ſpeaks according to our ſenſe, or as the fleſh apprehends, which, when we ſmart under any trouble, is ready to conclude God is not with us.

There is not any form of words (that I remember) in the whole Book of God which is made uſe of with ſo much variety as this, *The Lords being with us.*

Firſt, 'Tis uſed by way of promiſe, and 'tis indeed the ſum of all the Promiſes. If God ſhould bid us ask what we would have at once, or wrap up all our deſires in one word, what could we ask ſo comprehenſive as this, Lord give us thy promiſe to be *with us*. Thus the Lord expreſſed all that good which he intended to do by the hand of *Joſhua* for the conduct of his people into *Canaan* (Joſhua 1. 5.) *There ſhall not any man be able to ſtand before thee all the dayes of thy life; as I was with* Moſes, *ſo will I be with thee; I will not fail thee nor forſake thee.* God aſſures *Joſhua* againſt all oppoſition, by giving him aſſurance of his preſence. And thus the Apoſtle reaſons for the comfort of all Believers (*Rom.* 8. 31.) *If God be with us, who can be againſt us?* Many (poſſibly, yea certainly) will be againſt us to oppoſe us; but none can be againſt us to prevail over us.

Secondly, Godly men ſpeak thus in a way of faith (*Pſal.* 46. 11.) *The Lord of Hoſts is with us, the God of* Jacob *is our refuge.* Their faith was poſitive and peremptory in the thing; they do not ſay, we have ſome glimmering hopes that the Lord will be with us; but they conclude upon it, *The Lord is with us*, to uphold and maintain both our ſpirits and our cauſe. Thus ſpake *Caleb* and *Joſhua* to quiet the murmurings of the people (*Numb.* 14. 9.) *Only rebel not ye againſt the Lord, neither fear ye the people of the Land, for they are bread for us; their defence is departed from them, and the Lord is with us; fear them not.* The men that accompanied *Caleb* and *Joſhua* in the ſearch of the Land, gave a very diſcouraging report of it (*Num.* 13. 32.) *The Land through which we have gone to ſearch, is a Land that eateth up the Inhabitants thereof.* Not ſo (replyed *Caleb*) you are quite miſtaken; we ſhall quickly eat up that Land; *They are bread for us*; their high walls cannot defend them, for God, who is the defence of a Land, hath withdrawn his preſence from them, *and is with us.*

Thirdly, It is uſed by way of requeſt and petition, by that holy man *Jacob* (Gen. 28. 20.) *If God will be with me, and will keep me in the way that I go*, &c. As if he had ſaid, Lord, I deſire no more of thee but that thou wilt be with me; thy preſence will be my protection from evil, and that will alſo procure me all good.

Fourthly, 'Tis uſed by way of good wiſh to, or prayer for others (*Ruth* 2. 4.) *And behold* Boaz *came from* Bethlehem, *and ſaid unto the Reapers, the Lord be with you.* The ſame is uſed by us in common ſpeech, but with too common and unſerious a ſpirit by the moſt, when we take leave of friends, *God be with you.*

Fifthly, It is uſed by way of Propheſie (*Gen.* 40. 23:) *And* Iſrael *ſaid unto* Joſeph, *behold I dye, but God ſhall be with you, and bring you again unto the Land of your Fathers:* I am going the way of all fleſh, but God will abide with you, and becauſe he will, I know you ſhall not alwayes abide here, but return to your own Land.

Sixthly, We find it uſed by way of Hiſtory (*Gen.* 39. 21.) *But the Lord was with* Joſeph, *and ſhewed him mercy, and gave him favour in the ſight of the Keeper of the Priſon.* Lay all theſe forms of ſpeaking together, and it appears that the beſt thing which God can promiſe, is to be with us: The beſt thing which man can pray for, or believe he ſhall receive at the hand of God, is that he would be with him: The beſt thing that can be foretold of, or wiſht for another, is that God will be, or would be with him; and the beſt report that can be made of any mans proſperity is this, The Lord hath been with him, or was with him.

Further, We may conſider the Lords being with us two wayes.

First, More generally.
Secondly, More ſpecially.

More generally: The Lord is with all men, but not with all men alike: Firſt, The Lord is with all men by a common providence and preſence, to ſupport and preſerve them; Man could neither live nor move, unleſs the Lord were with him. Secondly, The Lord is with all men to provide for them (*Matth.* 5. 45.) *He cauſeth his Sun to ſhine upon the good and the bad, and his rain to fall on the juſt and on the unjuſt.* The whole world is his family, and he feeds them every day. Thirdly, The Lord is with all men, to obſerve what they do: *He looketh from Heaven* (ſaith David, Pſal. 33. 13, 14.) *He beholdeth all the ſons of men, from the place of his habitation he looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth.* He looketh upon their perſons, and he looketh upon their actions; he ſeeth who they are, and how they are employed. Fourthly, The Lord is with all men, to order and over-rule them in their doings, to move or ſtop them in all their wayes: Whither would the hearts of men carry them, and what would their hands do, if God were not with them to reſtrain them? Wicked men would be boundleſs in their workings and uneven walkings, if God did not check and bridle them: Did not he ſay to the pride, wrath, and rage of men (as he doth to the proud and raging waves of the Sea) hitherto ſhall ye come and no further, who knows how far they would go, or where they would ſit down? In all theſe ſences God is with all men, even with the worſt of men. And they are ſometimes ſo ſenſible of the Lords being with them, that they are burdened with it, and would fain be rid of him, as was ſhewed (*Chap.* 21 14.) *They ſay to the Almighty depart from us.*

But when *Job* ſaith, there was a time when *The Almighty was with me*, we are to underſtand it of his favourable and ſpecial preſence. God is with his people in a peculiar diſtinguiſhing way; he is ſo with them, that he is alſo for them. The Apoſtle gives us the ground of this diſtinction (1 *Tim.* 4. 10.) *We truſt in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, eſpecially of thoſe that believe.* As there is a ſpecial ſalvation, ſo there is a ſpecial preſence of God, which is the ſole priviledge of the Saints; and in which they only can call him *Immanuel, God with us. I will be to them a God, and they ſhall be to me a people*, is the Great Charter or New Covenant, by which Believers receive and hold all their mercies (*Heb.* 18. 10.) Now, as God is the God of his People in ſuch a manner, as he is not the God of the reſt of the world; ſo he is with his people in ſuch a manner, as he is not with the reſt of the world:

Firſt, The Lord is with his people, to aſſiſt them in doing good; *I will be with thy mouth* (ſaith the Lord to *Moſes*, Exod. 4. 12.) *and teach thee what thou ſhalt ſay:* He is alſo with the ear of his people, and teacheth them how to hear; He is alſo with the heart of his people, and teacheth them how to pray; He is with their hand, and teacheth them, as how to work in peace, ſo how to fight in war (*Pſal.* 144. 1.) *Ye can do nothing* (ſaith Chriſt, *John* 15. 5.) *without me.* And while he ſaith ſo, he aſſures them that he will be with them in the doing of all things, which he calleth them unto. Secondly, As God is with his people to aſſiſt them in doing good, ſo in oppoſing and reſiſting evil, I mean, both that ſinful evil, which themſelves are tempted to do, whether by Satan, or by the world, or by their own hearts; as alſo in oppoſing that evil which is done, or attempted to be done by others. Thirdly, God is with his people to aſſiſt them in bearing or ſuffering evil, both that which his own fatherly hand, and that which the malice of the world layeth upon them (*Gen.* 39. 20, 21. *Iſa.* 43. 2.) *When thou paſſeſt through the waters, I will be with thee.* Yea, then he is with them, not only to ſtrengthen them in bearing (*Iſa.* 41. 10.) but to bear a part with them (*Iſa.* 63. 9.) and in due ſeaſon to deliver them (2 *Tim.* 4. 16, 17.)

Secondly, The Lord is with his people, not only to aſſiſt them, but to direct and lead them. What he did viſibly, or by a viſible token to the people of *Iſrael*, the ſame he doth inviſibly, or by an inviſible light to his people continually (*Exod.* 13. 21, 22.) *The Lord goes before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and in the night by a pillar of fire, to give them light, to go by day and by night; he takes not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night from before his people.* They who are lead both by day and night, are never without a Leader. If the old Church had Pillars to point their way, much more hath the new. *Moſes* in his laſt Sermon and Song, gives an elegant deſcription of this conducting preſence of God with *Iſrael* (Deut. 32. 10.) *He found him in the Deſart, and in the waſte howling Wilderneſs; he led him about, he inſtructed him.* God found *Iſrael* in the Wilderneſs, not by chance, but by reſolved and gracious choice; he manifeſted himſelf a Leader, there, where was moſt need of leading; we are alwayes led of God, but then chiefly and moſt diſcernably when we are in a wilderneſs condition. As he cauſeth the wicked to wander in a Wilderneſs where there is no way (*Job* 12. 24.) ſo he ſheweth his people a way in the Wilderneſs.

Thirdly, The Lord is with them to proſper and to give them ſucceſs in all their undertakings, that are according to his will. Thus 'tis ſaid concerning *Joſeph* (Gen. 39. 23.) *The Lord was with him; and that which he did, the Lord made it to proſper.* God puts work into our hands, but keeps the ſucceſs in his own; and we may do much but to little purpoſe, unleſs the Lord be with us in what we do. The reaſon why they who pray much do moſt, is, becauſe God is moſt with thoſe who pray moſt; while God is with us helping us to pray, he is alſo with us to give us an anſwer of ſucceſs in the things we pray for. Here's the happineſs of the Saints, in this life the Lord is ever with them, and in the next life they ſhall ever be with the Lord (1 *Theſ.* 4. 7.) To be with the Lord but for a moment is a Heaven upon Earth; and to be with the Lord for ever is the Heaven of Heaven. And as it will be the height of glory hereafter to be ever with the Lord; ſo 'tis now the height of duty to be with the Lord, in our actions obeying him, in our affections loving him, and in all our deſigns aiming at the lifting up of his Name and Glory.

But ſome, who are preſſed either with perſonal, or publick troubles, may ſay as *Gideon*, when the Angel ſaluted him in the language of *Job* (Judges 6. 12, 13.) *The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour: Oh my Lord, if the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us?* Why am I ſo weak, ſaith one, both in doing good, and oppoſing evil, if the Lord be with his people to aſſiſt them? Why am I ſo much miſled and carried out of the way, ſaith another; why am I ſo much in the dark, what to do; if the Lord be with his people to lead and to inſtruct them? Why am I ſo unſucceſsful in all I take in hand, or go about, ſaith a third, if the Lord be with his people to proſper them? Why are we, ſay others, ſo clouded and covered with ſorrows, if the Lord be with his people to comfort them? Why are our hearts ſo hard, ſo ſtraitened, ſo dead, if God be with his people to ſoften, to enlarge, and quicken them?

I anſwer; Firſt, Theſe queryings ſavour more of fleſh then ſpirit, more of unbelief then of faith; were we more in believing, we ſhould be leſs in queſtioning and complaining. They who have faith do not alwayes ſpeak, no nor act according to it. The fleſh will ſpeak ſometimes without the Spirit, even in thoſe who have the Spirit. Nor may it ſeem ſtrange that the fleſh ſpeaks ſometimes alone in thoſe who have the Spirit; Seeing Satan himſelf ſpeaks ſometimes alone in thoſe who have the Spirit; or, they ſpeak ſo like Satan that they are called ſo (*Matth.* 16. 22, 23.) And therefore, when *Gideon* had made that query, 'tis ſaid (*ver.* 14.) *The Lord looked on him* (we may conceive) chidingly and rebukingly, though efficaciouſly (as Chriſt did upon *Peter*, Luke 22. 61.) *And ſaid, Go in this thy might*; that is, the might which I have now given thee by my promiſe to be with thee.

Secondly, I anſwer; It is the Lords will it ſhould be thus with thee while he is with thee. What if the Lord anſwer, I am with thee, and yet 'tis my pleaſure to leave thee in weakneſs, and darkneſs, and wants, *&c.* Is not the Lords will reaſon enough for any man, and ought it not to be the moſt ſatisfying reaſon? For though in man will and reaſon are often oppoſed, yet never in God. His will is the higheſt reaſon, the perfection of reaſon, though we perceive it not. And it were the moſt irrational thing in the world, as well as the moſt impoſſible, that things ſhould go otherwiſe in the world then God would have them. But though the prerogative will of God be enough to ſtop every mouth, and to make all fleſh ſilent before God, yet I anſwer;

Thirdly, The reaſon why God, who is alwayes with his people, doth yet let them lye under great troubles, both inward and outward, is ſometimes to correct and chaſten them for their neglects and undervaluings of his former preſence with, and appearings for them For this cauſe he is *as a man aſtonied, as a mighty man that cannot ſave, though he be in the midſt of them*; as the Prophet ſaith (*Jer.* 14. 9.) We often *depart from the living God through that evil heart of unbelief that is in us* (Heb. 3. 12.) No wonder then if God be as one departed from us. We often leave God by our uneven walkings and ſinnings againſt him; no wonder then if God be now and then as one that hath left us. We are ready to ſay, if God be with us, why is it thus? Or why hath this, and that, and t'other croſs befallen us? But may not the Lord ſay, Seeing I have promiſed to be with you, and have ſo often ſtood by you, why is it thus and thus with you? Why have you thus requited my preſence with you, and the puttings forth of my power for you? Are your paſſions, and your pride, and your earthlineſs, and your envy, and your carnality, due returns for my being with you ſo long, and my ſtanding by you ſo often?

I anſwer, Fourthly, As Hypocrites ſeem to be with the Lord when they are not, yea, when they are far from, they ſeem to cleave unto him and hang about him; ſo the Lord is with the ſincere when he ſeems to be far from them, yea, to have laid them quite aſide, and to have caſt them off. And as the Lord is indeed departed from many who perceive it not, ſo he is with many who perceive it not.

Fifthly, God hath promiſed to be with his people, eſpecially when they are in trouble, and therefore they have no reaſon to make their troubles an occaſion of queſtioning his preſence with them, much leſs an argument that he is withdrawn from them; yea, he often ſuffers evil to befal them, that he may have a clearer opportunity to ſhew how much he is with them. For the Lords being with us, is as much and as glorioully ſeen in upholding his people under tryals and temptations, as it is, either firſt, in preventing them; or ſecondly, in delivering us out of them. How glorious is the work of God upon the heart, when we can live by faith, when ſenſe hath nothing to live upon? When we can live upon the Word and Promiſe of God, even then, when his Works and Providences ſpeak nothing but death to us?

Laſtly, I anſwer, Though the Lord hath promiſed to be ſo with his people, that evil ſhall not hurt them, nor prevail over them; yet he never promiſed to be ſo with them, that troubles ſhould not aſſault and vex them. *Job* knew the Lord was with him in the former ſence, while his ſad experience taught him, that he was not with him in the latter. And therefore he wiſhes, O that it were with me as in the dayes when the Almighty was ſo with me, that he ſuffered no trouble to aſſault me. *Job*, when it was worſt with him, could ſay, he would truſt God though it ſhould be worſe with him (*Chap.* 13. 15.) *Though he ſlay me I will truſt in him; he alſo is my ſalvation.* But 'tis impoſſible for any one to ſay this in faith and truth, who thinks God hath totally left him. Upon which ground we may confidently conclude, that *Job* meant only that God was not every way and in every degree ſo near unto him as formerly, when he ſaid, *O that it were with me as it was in the dayes of my youth, when the Almighty was yet with me.*

When my Children were about me.

The Hebrew word here rendred **children**, ſignifies alſo *Young men*, or *Servants*. And hence ſome tranſlate, *When my Servants were about me*. We, *When my children were about me*. The words are a deſcription of a Family-bleſſing, whether we render Children or Servants. And the ſame word ſignifieth both, as implying that Children ought to be ſerviceable and obedient to their Parents; and that faithful Servants ſhould be dear and acceptable to their Maſters, even as ſo many Children. When Children obey their Parents like Servants, and Servants love their Maſters like Children, as if their Maſters were their Fathers, then things go right in a Family.

נערי
Filii aut famuli mei. Puer pro ſervo, ſic παῖς *gracè.* Druſ.

So then the meaning of the Text is extendible to either relation, to Children or to Servants, or indifferently to both. We tranſlate well, though reſtrainedly to one relation, *When my Children were about me.*

Thoſe words **about me**, may note two things: Firſt, Their preſence with him: Time was when *Job*'s Children filled his houſe and his eye, which way ſoever he turned: Time was when they were not ſcattered nor divided from him by death, as then they were when he ſpake theſe words. 'Tis a mercy when they who are near unto us in nature, are not ſeparated from us by providence; when all are about us, who are of us.

Secondly, Thoſe words, *about me*, may note the readineſs of his Children to attend and ſerve him. Good Children, like Servants, are about their Parents, waiting for their orders and directions what they would have them do. The very poſture, of being *about* refers to duty. How comely is it for Children to ſtand about their Parents as ſo many Servants about their Maſters, to hearken to their counſel, or receive their commands? Children or Servants are not about Parents or Maſters for ſociety or company, as friends are, much leſs for complement, as flatterers are, but for uſe and help: *As Arrows in the hand of a mighty man, ſo are Children of the youth, happy is the man that hath his Quiver full of them; They ſhall not be aſhamed, but they ſhall ſpeak with the enemies in the gate* (Pſal. 127. 5.) As if he had ſaid, Their Children will be ready both to plead and act for them, if occaſion be; they will not ſee their Parents wronged either in perſon, ſtate, or credit, to the beſt of their power. Parents are as the Center, Children are as a Circumference drawn about them, or they are as ſo many lines meeting in them. This was a further addition of *Job*'s happineſs, *His Children were about him.*

Hence Note, *'Tis one of the greateſt outward bleſſings to have a Family full of dutiful Children.*

To have many Children is the next bleſſing to have much Grace: To have many Children about us, is better then to have much wealth about us. To have ſtore of theſe Olive plants (as the Pſalmiſt calls them) round about our Table, is better then to have ſtore of Oyl and Wine upon our Table. We know the worth of dead, or rather liveleſs treaſures, but who knows the worth of living treaſures? Every man who hath Children, hath not a bleſſing in them; yet Children are a bleſſing, and ſome have many bleſſings in one Child. Children are chiefly a bleſſing to the Children of God. *Lo* (ſaith *David*, Pſal. 127. 3.) *Children are an heritage of the Lord, and the fruit of the womb is his reward.* But are not houſes and land, gold and ſilver, an heritage of the Lord alſo, that is, an heritage beſtowed by the Lord upon his people? Doubtleſs they are, *For the earth is his, and the fulneſs of it, and he gives it to the Children of men.* But though all things are of God, yet all things are not alike of him; Children are more of God then houſes and lands. And ſo the Scripture ſpeaks of a Wife (*Prov.* 19. 14.) *Houſe and riches are the inheritance of Fathers, and a prudent Wife is of the Lord:* As if he had ſaid, A prudent Wife is a more ſpecial and immediate gift of God then houſes and lands; yea, the care and favour of God in providing a prudent Wife is ſo great, that in compariſon thereof the Lord ſeems to put off the whole care of providing houſes and lands to Parents themſelves, or did look upon them as ſcarce worthy his looking after. Wife and Children are the beſt viſible heritage which God beſtows upon his people in this world, *Abraham* was rich, he had received a good Wife from God, but ſhe was barren, and therefore, even after God had ſaid to him, (*Gen.* 15. 1.) *Fear not* Abram, *I am thy Shield, and thy exceeding great reward.* *Abram* ſeems to reply ſomewhat paſſionately, in the next verſe (*ver.* 2.) *And* Abram *ſaid, Lord God, what wilt thou give me, ſeeing I go childleſs?* There is no queſtion but *Abram* was infinitely pleaſed with Gods promiſe to be his Shield, and his exceeding great reward. And indeed what is it to be childleſs, when we are not godleſs? What is it to be without Children, when we are not without God in the world? But *Abram* ſpake thus to ſhew that he preferr'd a Child above all worldly bleſſings: As if he had ſaid, What are all theſe riches, if I go childleſs? What are all theſe ſervants, if I go childleſs? Yea, what is my life to me, is not half the mercy of that relation taken away, if I go childleſs? I know *Abram*'s fear was not only this, leſt he ſhould have no Children, but leſt the promiſe of the bleſſed and bleſſed-making Seed ſhould fail, and not be accompliſhed in him, according to what God had ſaid (*Gen.* 12. 3.) *And in thee ſhall all Families of the earth be bleſſed*; yet the want of a Son in his own family was grievous to him, as appears by that (*Gen.* 15. 3.) *Behold to me thou haſt given no ſeed; and lo one born in my houſe is mine heir.* And therefore the Lord renews the promiſe not only of a Child, but of innumerable Children to him (*v.* 5.) *And he brought him abroad and ſaid, Look now toward Heaven, and tell the Stars if thou be able to number them; and he ſaid unto him, ſo ſhall thy ſeed be.* When the Lord ſaid, *I will fan them with a fan in the gates of the Land* (*Jer.* 15. 7.) his purpoſe was not to fan out the chaff or the rubbiſh, as commonly we do, but to fan out the beſt of the Corn, or their very Jewels, which in the next words of the ſame verſe is thus expreſſed, *I will bereave them of Children*; we put in the Margin, *Whatſoever is dear.* The Original is but one word (I will bereave, or I have bereaved) and becauſe Children are moſt dear and precious to their Parents, therefore we ſay, I will bereave them of Children, or of whatſoever is dear. How dear Children are appears in the ſorrow of Parents for them (*Jer.* 31. 15.) *Thus ſaith the Lord, A voice was heard in* Ramah; *lamentation and bitter weeping*; Rachel *weeping for her Children, refuſed to be comforted for her Children, becauſe they were not*; that is, becauſe ſhe was bereaven of them by death. *Babylons* vain confidence was in her Children (*Iſai.* 47. 8, 9.) *Hear thou this thou that art given to pleaſures, that dwelleſt careleſly, that ſayeſt in thine heart, I am, and none elſe beſides me, I ſhall not ſit as a widow, neither ſhall I know the loſs of children. But theſe two things ſhall come upon thee in a moment, in one day, the loſs of children and widowhood.* The laſt and worſt plague upon *Egypt* was the death of the firſt-born, this made the great cry (*Exod.* 12. 29, 30.) The great ſorrow of the *Jews* in their converſion is thus ſet forth (*Zech.* 12. 10.) *They ſhall be in bitterneſs for him, as one that is in bitterneſs for his firſt-born.*

Verſe 6. **When I waſhed my ſteps with Butter, and the Rock poured me out Rivers of Oyl.**

This verſe is an hyperbolical deſcription of the affluence and abundance of *Job*'s formerly flouriſhing eſtate.

I waſhed my ſteps with Butter.

Some expound theſe words as an alluſion to Banquets in old time, at which they uſed annointings, and in hot Countreys to waſh and annoint their feet: But we never read of annointing with Butter, nor can that be a commodious interpretation here. Butter is properly a part of our food; and though Butter is often uſed in medicinal annointings, yet not at all in meer convivial or pleaſurable annointings. And therefore, I conceive, this form of ſpeech ſignifies no more then hath been intimated, that *Job* was a man flowing, even overflowing with an encreaſe of the bleſſings and good things of this life. *Job* was rich in Cattel (and in them the riches of thoſe times did chiefly conſiſt) he had ſuch ſtore of Butter that he could waſh his ſteps with it. The ſteps of God (as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks) dropt him ſo much fatneſs, that his ſteps dropt it too. He had ſuch plenty of Oyl, as if the Rocks had poured it out to him. Here are two great and rich Commodities, and both in great quantities. Butter is the moſt precious encreaſe of Cattel; Milk yields Cream, that's the beſt of the Milk; and Cream yields Butter, that's the beſt of Cream. The Olive-tree is numbred among the beſt of Trees; and Oyl is the beſt, the fatneſs of the Olive-tree. In language like this, dying *Jacob* bleſſed the Kingly Tribe of *Judah* (which though ſome departing from the plain import of the words, expound them Allegorically, as a Propheſie of the Power of Chriſt, binding both *Jews* and *Gentiles* by the power of his Grace and Spirit to the Church, *The Vine*, and to himſelf the *choice Vine*; yet doubtleſs, the proper reading is intended to hold forth the outward bleſſing of that Royal Tribe, *Gen.* 49. 11.) *Binding his Foal unto the Vine, and his Aſſes-colt unto the choice Vine: he waſhed his garments in wine, and his clothes in blood of Grapes*: That is, He ſhall have ſo much Wine that he may ſpare it for common uſe, even for the waſhing of his clothes. He ſhall have Wine (which by a Synechdoche is put for all good things) as plentiful as water. Alſo *Canaan* is deſcribed (*Exod.* 13. 15.) *A Land flowing with Milk and Honey:* As if the very Springs and Rivers did run Milk and Honey, or as if theſe did flow like a River. So (*Deut.* 32. 13.) *He made him ride on the high places of the earth, that he might eat the increaſe of the field; and he made him to ſuck Honey out of the Rock, and Oyl out of the flinty Rock; Butter of Kine, and Milk of Sheep, with fat of Lambs, and Rams of the breed of* Baſhan, *&c.* (Deut. 33. 24.) *And of* Aſher *he ſaid, Let* Aſher *be bleſſed with Children; let him be acceptable to his Brethren, and let him dip his foot in Oyl:* That is, let him have ſtore of Oyl. In the twentieth of *Job* (*ver.* 11.)

In hac ſententia indicatur priſtina ungendi pedes in convivio conſuetudo. Pined.

11.) we read ſuch Hyperbolies; *He ſhall not ſee the Rivers, the Floods, the Brooks of Honey and Butter.* As the abundance of ſpiritual and evangelical bleſſings, are ſhadowed (*Joel* 3. 18.) *By the Mountains dropping down new Wine, and the Hills flowing with Milk:* So by a like ſtrain of Rhetorick all ſorts of temporal abundance are ſignified. *Job* knew the time when he waſhed his ſteps with Butter. Not that he uſed Butter for that purpoſe, he was neither ſo proud, nor ſo prodigal, to do that, nor was the thing in it ſelf convenient to be done; but the meaning is, He had ſuch plenty of Butter, that if he had been minded, he might have done it.

And the Rock poured me out Rivers of Oyl, or *Fat*.

The ſame word ſignifieth both, becauſe Oyl is the fat of vegetative, as Fat is the oyl of ſenſitive Creatures. *Job's* Olive-grounds yielded him a Fountain of Oyl; he had not only Oyl in a Cruſe, not only Veſſels or Pipes, but *Rivers of Oyl*.

The Rock poured me out Rivers of Oyl.

Some conceive him ſpeaking thus, becauſe the place where Olive-trees uſe to grow is *ſtony*, ſuch as *Arabia Petrea*, and there it is ſuppoſed *Job* dwelt: As if he had ſaid, The Olive-trees that grew among the Rocks yielded me ſuch ſtreams of Oyl, that the Rock it ſelf might be thought to have generated a Fountain of it. The words may be rendred to that ſence; *There was with me a Rock melted into Rivers of Oyl.* As we read (*Pſal.* 81. 16.) *Of Honey out of the Rock*; Becauſe ſwarms of Bees did many times hive themſelves in a Rock. So here we have *Oyl out of the Rock*; becauſe Olive-trees did grow among the Rocks.

Solent Olivæ optimũ Oleum habentes in locis lapidoſis & arenoſis eſſe. Aquin.

Hence Note, *Plenty, the greateſt plenty of outward good things, falls, ſometimes to the lot of good men.*

Job had enough and to ſpare; a good man may have abundance, but he doth not deſire it, or ſet his heart upon it; he doth not abuſe it, and grow wanton or proud with it. It is ſinful to ſet our hearts upon, or abuſe the leaſt portion of the creature (they who have but little may ſoon become guilty of abuſing it, and of ſetting their hearts upon it) but to have and hold for good uſes the largeſt portion of the creature, even Rivers of Wine and Oyl, is not ſinful. While we make not worldly things as fuel for the fleſh to fulfil the luſts of it, we may poſſeſs not only ſo much of them as will barely ſerve the neceſſity of our fleſh (as fleſh is put for the outward man) but the regular and moderate contentments of it. *Paul* ſaid (*Phil.* 4. 12.) *I know both how to be abaſed, and I know how to abound.* It is a great piece of ſpiritual wiſdom *to know how to want*, and a greater *to know how to abound.* 'Tis harder to uſe abundance well, then to be well in want; and the reaſon is, becauſe abundance puts, as it were, a ſtaffe into the hand of every luſt. Rivers of Oyl do but oyl the wheels of our corruption, and cauſe us to move faſter in forbidden paths. Fulneſs offers an opportunity to every luſt to act its part in it: It offers much to pride and malice to act their parts; it offers much to intemperance and luxury to act their parts. Want ſtops the ſupplyes of luſt, and puts out the fire by drawing away the fewel of it. They have attained true learning, who have learned to abound, and yet to be temperate; to abound, and yet to be ſober; to abound, and yet to be meek and ready to forgive thoſe that have wronged them; to abound, and yet to be humble. *There is a great ſtrength of grace ſeen, in the due ordering of the things of nature.* It is the abuſe of the creature, not the having of it, that is evil. If we uſe it well, all's well. If we uſe it ill, the more we have of it, the worſe it is.

Thus *Job* hath ſhewed us, what he once was in wealth, riches and plenty: He will tell us next, what he once was in honour, power, and authority; he was not only a rich man, but a Ruler; not only full of wealth, but full of honour; as will appear in the proceſs of this Narrative concerning his former condition.

VERS. 7, 8.

When I went out to the gate through the City, when I prepared my ſeat in the ſtreet.

The young men ſaw me and hid themſelves, and the aged aroſe and ſtood up.

IN theſe two verſes, and thoſe which follow to the eighteenth verſe, *Job* ſets forth how it had been with him in his publick capacity as a Magiſtrate, having before ſhewed how it had been with him in his private capacity as a Man and Maſter of a family. And in this diſcourſe he tells us; Firſt, That he was a man of Power: Secondly, That he had much reſpect with all ſorts of men when he was in Power: Thirdly, He gives the true cauſe of it, The Juſtice and Righteouſneſs of his proceedings in the mannagement of that Power which he received and was committed to him. From all we may conclude, that *Job* was a man compoſed of outward happineſs, and compaſſed about with worldly bleſſings on every ſide. He was happy as a Father of a Family; and he was happy as a Father of his Countrey. And what can be added or deſired beyond this to make up an outward happineſs?

Verſe 7. **When I went out to the gate through the City.**

Job ſtill purſueth his wiſh at the ſecond verſe; *O that I were as in the months paſt, as in the dayes when God preſerved me, when his Candle ſhined upon mine head*, &c. And O that it were with me now, as it was when I moved in that publick and higheſt ſphere of Magiſtracy, *When I went out to the gate through the City.*

When I went out.] That is, when I went out of mine own houſe: A Magiſtrate, or Prince, who is faithful to his truſt, goeth out morning by morning like the Sun (*Pſal.* 19. 5.) *Which as a Bridegroom comes out of his chamber, and rejoyceth as a ſtrong man to run his race; his going forth is from the end of the Heaven, and his circuit to the ends of it.* *Job* went out of his houſe in the morning as the Sun to run his race; the race of Juſtice and Righteouſneſs. An unjuſt and oppreſſing Magiſtrate goeth out of his houſe like ſome Monſter whom men abhor; his riſing is like that of ſome malignant Star, which drops barrenneſs and diſeaſes upon the Earth, or provokes ſtorms and tempeſts in the Air: But a juſt and righteous Magiſtrate riſeth, in his capacity, as Jeſus Chriſt the Sun of Righteouſneſs doth in his, with healing in his wings, with light and warmth, with beauty and brightneſs in his face, ſo that the people under his government go forth and grow up (as to all things which they may duly expect from him) as the Calves of the ſtall.

When I went out (ſaith he) That form of ſpeech is uſed in Scripture as a Periphraſis of diligence. All the buſineſs of mans life is deſcribed *by going out*, and *coming in. Bleſſed ſhalt thou be when thou comeſt in, and bleſſed ſhalt thou be when thou goeſt out*, that is, thou ſhalt be bleſſed in all thy undertakings (*Deut.* 26. 6.) When *Moſes* was about (by Gods appointment) to lay down his leading Staffe and dye, he ſpeaks thus of himſelf to the people of *Iſrael* (*Deut.* 31. 2.) *I am an hundred and twenty years old this day, I can no more go out nor come in* (and though notwithſtanding this great age he might have done it, for 'tis ſaid (*Deut.* 34. 7.) *Moſes was an hundred and twenty years old when he dyed; his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated*; therefore he ſuggeſts (a further and a fuller reaſon why he could not) *alſo the Lord hath ſaid unto me, thou ſhalt not go over this* Jordan. For that reaſon chiefly, if not only, he ſaith, *I can no more go out nor come in*; that is, I can no longe[illegible] hold the place of your Captain in war, nor of your judge in peace. And thus the Prieſts and People both prayed for and propheſied the proſperity of *David* in his Government (*Pſal.* 121. 8.) *The Lord ſhall preſerve thy going out, and thy coming in, from this time forth, and even for evermore*; that is, the Lord ſhall bleſs thee in all the buſineſſes, affairs, and adminiſtrations of thy Kingdom. Thus here, *Job* went out, not as an idle perſon, who knows not whither he goeth, or what he hath to do, but he went out about the honourable employments of his calling, as chief Magiſtrate among that people. It is well for us, when we can ſay, *we go out*, not to ſatisfie our luſts, or to take our pleaſure, but to finiſh the work which God hath given us to do. *Job went out to the gate through the City.*

There is ſome variety in reading theſe words, *To the gate through the City.*

Firſt, Some underſtand them of a going quite out of the City through the Gate, and ſo paſſing into the Countrey to travel, to take a journey, to take the air: But this is incongruous to the tenour of his whole diſcourſe.

Secondly, Others interpret it, not of his going to the gate through the City, but of his going out of his own gate; that is, out of his own houſe to the City about his buſineſs. Some take that to be the ſence of Mr. *Broughton's* tranſlation, *When I went out adoor to the City.* But though we ſhould take this tranſlation, yet there is no neceſſity to make that interpretation of it.

Thirdly, Others render thus, *When I went out of the gate,* or *from the gate,* that is, to go home: As if he had ſaid, When I had been doing my office, or adminiſtring Juſtice, much people followed me all the way home. But I paſs that alſo; it being improper for him to ſpeak of his returning to, before he had ſpoken of his going from his houſe.

Our tranſlation is moſt pertinent to his ſcope; and the word which we render, *a gate,* ſignifies rather the *great gate* of a City then the gate or door of a houſe. And though Princes and Chief Magiſtrates have great gates to their houſes, like the gates of a City, yet it is much more convenient to expound it here of a publick gate, where gate of a City, rather then of the gate of any particular houſe, though the gate of a great Prince (*When I went to the gate through the City*)

To the gate.] Gates are of a four-fold uſe.

Firſt, Gates are for entrance into a City.

Secondly, Gates are for the defence and ſtrength of a City.

Thirdly, Gates are for ornament; Gates are the moſt beautiful parts of a City: We read of *the Beautiful Gate of the Temple* (Acts 3. 10.) And uſually all Gates are made beautiful.

Fourthly, Gates were appointed for the adminiſtration of Juſtice, or ſome known place near the gate: So that his going to the gate was his going to the exerciſe of his Civil Power. As the Powers of darkneſs, thoſe evil ſpiritual Powers, are called gates, *The gates of Hell* (that is, all the Dominions, Principalities, and Powers of Hell, ſaith Chriſt, *Matth.* 16. 18.) *ſhall not prevail againſt the Church.* So gates are put for outward Civil Power; and to this gate it was, or in this ſence it was that *Job* went out to the gate; that is, to the place where Juſtice was done, both in relieving the oppreſſed, and in puniſhing evil doers. So the word is taken (*Chap.* 5. 4.) And that it was uſual to exerciſe Judgment in the gate, the Scripture is very full (*Ruth* 4. 1.) *Then went* Boaz *up to the gate, and ſate him down there*; and there he ſpake to the Elders of the City concerning his own caſe. (*Pſal.* 127. 5.) The righteous mans Children *ſhall not be aſhamed to ſpeak with the enemy in the gate*; that is, they ſhall not be afraid of any matter which their enemy can charge them with, they ſhall not be afraid to appear in any Court of Juſtice, or to be called to the open bar (*Zech.* 8. 16.) *Theſe are the things that ye ſhall do, ſpeak ye every man the truth to his neighbour, execute the Judgment of truth and peace in your gates*; which ſhould be as Sanctuaries of Juſtice, and Cities of refuge for all that are wronged and oppreſſed (*Amos* 5. 10.) *They hate them that reprove in the gate:* Which may be underſtood of a twofold reproving: Firſt, of ſpiritual reproving, or of a reproof by the Prophets, for they gave reproof in the gate; that is, openly, in the publick Aſſembly; And therefore Wiſdom is ſaid (*Prov.* 8. 3.) *To cry in the gate, in the place of publick aſſembly.* Secondly, Of civil reproving, or of a reproof given by the Magiſtrate. His righteous ſentence is a reproof upon the wicked. And that Magiſtrate who reproves impartially, ſhall be hated alſo. Again, at the twelfth verſe of the ſame Chapter, corrupt Magiſtrates are thus reproved, *They take a bribe, and they turn aſide the poor in the gate from their right:* That is, receiving a bribe from the rich, they turn off the poor, and will not do them right, though their cauſe be righteous. It is ſaid of the vertuous Woman (*Prov.* 31. 23.) *Her Husband is known in the gate*; ſhe ſends him out ſo well furniſhed, that he is known to be her Husband when he ſits among the Elders of the people; that is, among the Magiſtrates. Once more (*Lam.* 5. 14.) *The Elders have ceaſed from the gate,* &c. And ſo ſome who expound that of God to *Cain* (Gen. 4. 7.) *If thou doſt well, ſhalt thou not be accepted? And if thou doſt not well, ſin lyeth at the door, or at the gate:* That is, puniſhment or a dreadful ſentence lyeth at the gate; thou ſhalt be condemned as an evil doer, thou ſhalt have Judgment as in open Court. But I will not give that as the meaning of thoſe words; for the ſentence of the Judge doth not lye at the gate, but is declared or pronounced in the gate. To lye at the gate notes only a readineſs to come in, or the nearneſs of Judgment; like that (*James* 5. 9.) *Grudge not one againſt another, brethren, leſt ye be condemned; behold, the Judge ſtandeth before the door:* That is, as he ſpake in the former verſes; *The coming of the Lord draweth nigh.* The Judge ſtandeth a while before the door; but at laſt he ſitteth down in the gate. *When I went out to the gate through the City:*

When I prepared my ſeat in the ſtreet.

That is, when I gave order to have my ſeat prepared and ſet up in the ſtreet; he did not ſet it up with his own hands, that's no buſineſs for Magiſtrates. they are not for ſervile works. As 'tis not the buſineſs of the Commander of an Army to hew out his way with his own hands, he only gives order and directions: If he doth but appear in perſon where danger is, that's enough for him, though he never ſtrike ſtroke himſelf: So here, *I prepared my ſeat,* that is, I commanded to have it prepared: what was this ſeat?

There are two opinions about it; The Greeks underſtand it of that ſeat ſpoken of by Chriſt (*Math.* 23. 2.) *The Scribes and Phariſees ſit in Moſes ſeat*; that is, in the ſeat of Inſtruction and doctrine; They teach the things and wayes of God. They were the great Doctors and Maſters in *Iſrael*; they were (at leaſt in their own opinion) as the Apoſtle ſpeaks (*Rom.* 2. 19, 20.) *Guides of the blind, a light to them which were in darkneſs, inſtructers of the fooliſh, teachers of babes.* I grant, that as *Job* was a Magiſtrate, ſo he was alſo an Inſtructer of the people in the myſtery of Godlineſs, both which duties were often complicated in the ſame perſon, yet the ſcope of the place carrieth it rather to be underſtood of the ſeat of Judicature, or Throne where he and others ſate, to hear cauſes and determine controverſies among the people. Sitting is the poſture of Judges and Princes, as to ſtand is the poſture of thoſe who are judged. The Judge ſits upon the Bench, The Priſoner, the Complainant and Defendant ſtand at or about the Bar. Such was the ſeat, which *Job* prepared for himſelf *in the ſtreet.*

Rectè ſumitur pro judiciaria ſella aut pro regali ſolio: nam judicū principumvè ſedere eſt, ſicut eorum qui judicantur & audiant ſtare. Pined.

The word which we tranſlate *ſtreet,* ſignifyeth *a broad place*; for the Judgment ſeat was not in the very paſſage of the gate, but in ſome place near the gate, ſometimes in the open ſtreet, as the Cuſtom in many Cities is at this day. (*Neh.* 8. 2, 3.) *And Ezra the Prieſt brought the Law before the Congregation, both of men and women, and all that could hear with underſtanding, upon the firſt day of the ſeventh month. And he read therein before the ſtreet that was before the water-gate.* Again (2 *Chron.* 36. 6.) *Then he ſet Captains of war over the people, and gathered them together in the ſtreet of the gate of the City,* that being an Eminent broad ſtreet, fit to receive an Army. (*Pro.* 1. 20, 21.) *Wiſdom cryeth without, and uttereth her voice in the ſtreets; ſhe cryeth in the chief places of concourſe, in the opening of the gates.* In ſuch a ſtreet was *Job's* ſeat prepared. The ſum of the whole verſe is this; O that it were with me, as in former times, when I went honourably attended to the place of Judgment.

Whence Note, *Courts of Juſtice or places of Judicature ſhould be publick and open for all Comers; Juſtice muſt not be adminiſtred in a corner or in private.*

The Gate of a City, is an open publick place. Laws and Courts are of publick Concernment, and every one is to have his liberty of ſeeing, hearing, and knowing what's done there; that's the reaſon why anciently the Law was adminiſtred in or near the gate, becauſe it was a place of eaſie acceſs, and greateſt conveniency for the people.

Secondly, Becauſe Magiſtracy is the general ſubject, not only of this verſe, but of all that follow to the end of this Chapter; I ſhall take leave to inſiſt upon it a little beyond the ordinary method of this Expoſition.

The Obſervation may be thus formed,

Magiſtracy, or the Exerciſe of Magiſtratical power, hath been held up and ſubmitted to in all ages.

Magiſtracy is the appointment *and Ordinance of God. There is no power but of God; The powers that be are ordained of God* (Rom. 13. 1.) And thence the Apoſtle makes this univerſal inference (*v.* 2.) *Whoſoever therefore reſiſteth the power, reſiſteth the Ordinance of God.* For though Magiſtracy may be called an Ordinance of Man; Firſt, As to the end, it being imployed for the good of men; As alſo ſecondly, In reference to the kind of it, every Nation having a liberty to chuſe what form of Government they pleaſe, or is moſt ſutable and commodious for them. In which ſence the Apoſtle *Peter* calls it *a humane ordinance or creation* (1 Pet. 2. 13.) yet in regard of the original appointment and inſtitution of it, we muſt affirm it to be an *Ordinance of God.* And though many have not only acquired it by wicked and deviliſh means, but adminiſtred it in a wicked and deviliſh manner; yet this doth not at all hinder but that the Magiſtrates Authority, not only abſtractly conſidered in it ſelf, but concretely in the perſon adminiſtring it, is of God. For as the Apoſtle ſaith, *That all power is of God,* while he ſaith, *There is no power but of God;* ſo he ſaith likewiſe, *The powers that be* (let them be what they will, and veſted in whomſoever they will) *are of God.*

The light of Nature leads to this, as well as the light of Scripture. Some diſpute whether ever there ſhould have been any Power of man over man, if man had continued, in his created integrity, with God: but it is beyond diſpute that ever ſince man fell from that integrity, there hath been an appointment of God concerning Magiſtracy, and the power of man over man. The light of Nature ſheweth it, and carries it out in three things.

Firſt, Even Heathen Law-givers have often, if not alwayes, pretended to receive the rules of that government which they propoſed to the people from ſome divine hand. There is a kind of Religion in that ſuperſtition, and a truth in thoſe fabulous narrations. All intimating, that Magiſtracy is of a divine pedigree, and hath a ſtamp of God upon it. And while they ſaid, they had their lawes from the gods, it was to make an Impreſſion of reverence to them upon the ſpirits of men.

Secondly, It appears by the very light of Nature, becauſe there is an univerſal hatred and abhorrence of Anarchy imprinted in the hearts of all men. *That there ſhould be poſitive laws, is a law natural.* Though Nature being proud loves not the ſuperiority of others, and being licencious loves not to be reſtrained by others, yet it teacheth ſubordination, and chuſeth Tyranny rather then Anarchy; As ſeeing, *'Tis better to be where nothing is lawful, then where all things are lawful.* No man hath a will to live where every man may do what he will. They ſay vagabond Beggars have a King of their own ſetting up; the worſt of men, even the *ſons of Belial,* who cannot abide the yoak of government, either that of God, or that of man (that is, of this or that man) yet even they will not be altogether without a Ruler, and therefore

Thirdly, We find that in the greateſt rebellions and oppoſitions that ever were made againſt Government or Magiſtracy, the thing endeavoured hath been the change, not the extinguiſhment of it; The putting of it into other hands, not the putting of it out of all hands. Thoſe turbulent and fanatick ſpirits, who roſe up at *Munſter,* and decryed the then preſent Magiſtrates, quickly ſet up (ſuch a one as he was) a King of their own. The moſt unruly know not how to ſubſiſt without a Ruler.

Yea the very Devils have a government. We read of *Beelzebub, The Prince of the Devils* (Matth. 12. 24.) The Devils who are the authors of all diſorders among men, have an order among themſelves. There is a principal Devil; And there are Princes and cheif wicked ſpirits in Provinces and Nations under *The Prince of the power of the air, the Spirit that now worketh in the children of diſobedience* (Eph. 2. 2.) Some expound *The Prince of the Kingdome of Perſia, who withſtood* the affairs of the Church, to have been an evil Angel (*Dan.* 10. 13.) And the Apoſtle expreſly calls them *Principalities and Powers* (Eph. 6. 12.) Both which titles are given to Civil Magiſtrates (*Titus* 3. 1.) Now as the light of nature leads to Government,

So the light of Scripture and the principles of Chriſtianity do not weaken, much leſs oppoſe and contradict Government, but mightily confirm and ſtrengthen it. The Crown of Chriſt doth not pull the Crown of Princes from their heads, neither doth his Scepter ſtrike their Scepter out of their hand, unleſs they ſtrike at him with it. *By me* (ſaith he, *Prov.* 8. 15.) *Kings reign, and Princes decree Juſtice.* Some read, *For me Kings reign,* and that's true of all good Kings, *deſignedly* by themſelves they aim at the honour of Chriſt; and 'tis true of all evil Kings, *deſignedly by Chriſt,* he over-rules their power to ſerve his honour. For what the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks of the wrath of man (*Pſal.* 76. 10.) we may ſay much more of the power of man; *Surely the power of man ſhall praiſe thee, the remainder of power* (that is, what power ſoever there is over and above or beyond that which doth turn to thy praiſe) *thou wilt reſtrain.* One Ordinance of God doth not eat up another. The order of Chriſt in the Church, doth not thruſt out the orders of men in Commonwealths, much leſs doth it bring in confuſion. Theſe are ſo far from violencing or violating one another, that they embrace and kiſs, yea, maintain and ſupport one another.

I grant, firſt, Chriſt makes all his ſubjects Free; but 'tis with a freedome from ſpiritual bondage, not from civil ſubjection.

I grant, ſecondly; The Juſt are a law to themſelves, yea Chriſt hath made them Kings. Yet firſt, they need both Laws and Kings for them, that is, to defend and protect them; for ſuppoſe they do no evil, yet they may quickly ſuffer evil, if they have not protection from Laws and Princes. And therefore it hath been ſaid anciently and truly; *Magiſtrates are made for men, not men for Magiſtrates.* Secondly, Though the juſt are a law to themſelves, yet they have ſtill luſts in themſelves too, which many times call for Coercion from outward Laws; even good men may be byaſſed and ſway'd by evil affections, and turn'd aſide by ſelf-ends and Intereſts, and therefore have need enough of Laws and Magiſtrates to keep them right; yea to puniſh them when they do wrong.

'Tis granted, Thirdly, That Believers are under the ſpecial Governance and protection of God by promiſe; yet the good that is in ſuch Promiſes is conveyed to us in wayes of providence. And God hath provided and ſet up Magiſtracy for the guard and ſecurity of his people from annoyance, as alſo for their comfort and encouragement (*Iſa.* 49. 2, 3.) *Kings ſhall be thy nurſing Fathers, and their Queens thy nurſing Mothers.* God made ſeveral of the Perſian Kings Nurſing Fathers and Sheilds of defence to his ancient people the *Jews,* at the time of their return from the Babyloniſh Captivity, as we read in the Book of *Ezra* and *Nehemiah.* And ſo were ſome of the Roman Emperours, *Conſtantine, Theodoſius,* &c. To his people profeſſing Chriſtianity within their Dominions.

Fourthly, It muſt not be denyed (whence ſome have argued that Chriſtians need no Magiſtrates) That Chriſtians ought not *to reſiſt evil* (Math. 5. 39.) That they ought not *to avenge themſelves* (Rom. 12. 19.) That they *ought not to go to law one with another, but rather take wrong* (1 Cor. 6. 7.) But though a Chriſtian ought not to return evil for evil, but take two blows rather then give one, and endure a double injury rather then do one, though he may not offend others, yet he may and ought to defend himſelf, which he cannot do without the Magiſtrates help; though he may not wrong others, yet he may right himſelf in meekneſs and righteouſneſs, and this he cannot do without the Magiſtrates help. Though he may not avenge himſelf upon thoſe who wrong him, yet he may quietly put his cauſe into his hand, who is the Miniſter of God, *a revenger* (by office) *to execute wrath upon them that do evil* (Rom. 13. 4.) And who is that but the Magiſtrate? And where there is no Magiſtrate who ſhall do that?

God indeed is the Governour of all men, and of all things; power belongs to him; yet he will not adminiſter juſtice to men immediately. For as, although he is able, if he pleaſe, to convert ſinners, and build them up in grace without the miniſtry of man, yet he will not, but hath ordained a miniſtry for that end; ſo, though he is able to govern the world, and keep all in order by an Immediate Power, yet he will not do it but by means, he ſets up ſome to rule, and others to inſtruct the ſons of men. The Loadſtone hath a mighty attractive vertue, yet it doth not put forth that vertue in ſtrength, till 'tis arm'd with Iron, which is connatural to it, and then by the Iron it transfuſeth its vertue, and is much more operative then alone: ſo God hath all Power of governing and teaching in his own hand; he hath thoſe two great Ordinances of Magiſtracy and Miniſtry vertually and originally in himſelf; yet he uſeth Inſtruments and puts forth his Power in and by the creature as himſelf pleaſeth and hath appointed. The Lord hath not ſet up Magiſtracy upon any neceſſity which lyes upon him; as Princes of the world ſet up inferiour Magiſtrates; there is a neceſſity for it, they cannot do all alone; though they are the ſeat of all executive power, yet they muſt execute by other hands; but it is not ſo with God, he is able to ſupply all, but he will not.

And beſides his will (in which we ſhould acquieſs) to have it ſo; There is reaſon why it is ſo. For indeed, if the Lord ſhould judge and rule the world immediately, we were not able to bear the glory and terror of his appearance. In the day of Judgement God will appear as Judge in perſon, and then the world will ſtand trembling before him; if God ſhould appear as ſupream Judge now, who could abide it? *Job* deſired, and yet was afraid of a perſonal treaty with God (*Chap.* 9. 32.) *He is not a man as I am, that I ſhould anſwer him, and we ſhould come together in Judgment:* ſo *Chap.* 23. 15. *Chap.* 33. 6, 7. And therefore God appointeth men who are ſubject to the like paſſions and infirmities with our ſelves to be our Governours. What the Apoſtle ſpeaks in reference to Miniſters, is true in reference to Magiſtrates, *The Power is put into an Earthen veſſel:* And why ſo? Firſt, That the *excellency of the power may be of God and not of man:* Secondly, That we might have the more eaſie and free acceſs to them. (*Exod.* 19. 16.) when the Lord himſelf Promulgated the Law in an Immediate way, O ſay the People, *Let not God ſpeak to us leaſt we dye*; let him ſpeak to us by *Moſes*; ſo it is in this caſe; if God ſhould execute either the Miniſterial or the Magiſtratical office himſelf Immediately, even the beſt of men would cry out, O let us have a *Moſes*, a *Paul*, an *Apollos*, to ſpeak to us, we are not able to bare the preſence of God. God hath made them that rule and them that are ruled all of a kind, as the greater and leſſer wheels of an Engine are all of one matter: Firſt, That there might be a greater tryal of obedience in thoſe who are ſubject: Secondly, A greater ground of tenderneſs and mildneſs in thoſe who rule.

To ſhut up this Obſervation, I ſhall briefly ſhew wherein Magiſtracy doth conſiſt, and lay down ſome Conſiderations, which may evince both the uſefulneſs and neceſſity of it.

Magiſtracy, Conſiſts in two things.

Firſt, In Superiority; hence Magiſtrates are called not only Powers but *Principalities* (Tit. 3. 1.) They are the Head of the Body politick (*Numb.* 14. 4 *Judg.* 11. 8.) They are mountains, which ſtand above and over look the earth, (*Mic.* 6. 7.) They have ſo much ſuperiority over men, that they are ſtiled, by God himſelf, *Gods and Children of the moſt High* (Pſal. 82. 6.)

Secondly, In Authority. And that, firſt, In an Authority to make Laws, both affirmative, commanding what is good; and negative, forbidding the contrary, or that which is evil. Laws are the ſecurity of a people, the ſecurity of their perſons, of their eſtates, of their credit, and of their liberties. Some have well compared Laws to Phyſick, which doth both prevent and remove thoſe diſeaſes which are incident to the whole Body of a Nation. Secondly, As Magiſtracy conſiſts in an Authority to make and conſtitute Laws; ſo in an Authority to apply, actuate, or execute them in all particular caſes and emergencies. A Law unexecuted is like a ſealed Book, or like a Sword lockt up in the ſcabbard. This execution of Laws is threefold: Firſt, In determining controverſies about right between party and party (*Exod.* 22. 9. *Deut.* 1. 16. *Deut.* 19. 17.) Secondly, In diſtributing rewards and puniſhments according to the righteouſneſs or unrighteouſneſs, the good or evil of mens actions. (*Rom.* 13. 3, 4.) *Rulers are not a terror* (that is, in their inſtitution they are not, or they were never ſet up to ſuch an end, to be a terror) *to good works, but to the evil: Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and thou ſhalt have praiſe of the ſame; for he is the Miniſter of God to thee for good; but if thou do that which is evil, be afraid, for he beareth not the ſword in vain; for he is the Miniſter of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doth evil.* How large and diſtinct is the Apoſtle in ſetting forth this part of the Magiſtrates office, as he is a rewarder and a puniſher. And though the latter be a ſad work, yet it muſt be done. The Magiſtrates duty is Juſtice not pity (*Deut.* 19. 21.) For though he may attemper the rigour of the Law, yet he muſt not abate the vigour of it. Such pity to one, may prove a cruelty to many. He may puniſh ſparingly, but he muſt not ſpare to puniſh. Though his Sword ſtrike not all who offend, yet it muſt cauſe all Offenders to fear, and all to fear offending. He muſt not be bloody, yet he muſt ſhed blood; *That all* (as 'tis ſaid in the Law of *Moſes*) *may hear, and fear, and do no more preſumptuouſly.* Thus we ſee what Magiſtracy both is and doth; and from thence we may quickly ſee both the uſefulneſs and neceſſity of it; which I ſhall give forth more diſtinctly in a few particulars.

Firſt, It is the Cement of humane ſociety, it knits mankind together as a firm building, or well compacted body.

Secondly, It is the Pillar that props up humane ſociety, without Magiſtracy all would fall to ruine, and become a heap of confuſion.

Thirdly, 'Tis the Defence and ſafety of the Innocent; Magiſtrates are *the Sheilds of the earth.*

Fourthly, It is the terrour of Evil doers: What would become of us if every man might do evil, without fear of ſuffering the preſent evils of puniſhment? How could we live among thoſe who fear not the inviſible God, if there were not viſible Gods to fear? It hath been truly obſerved, That if ſome men were not Gods among men, the moſt of men would be beaſts, yea Devils among men.

Fifthly, 'Tis the preſervative of publick peace and order among men. *The mountains bring forth peace to the people, and the little hills by righteouſneſs* (Pſal. 72. 3.) but without it, the mountains are mountains of prey, and the hills filled with robbers. All are out of place, where none are chief in place. The ſtrongeſt Nations prove weak, where *Powers* are not maintained and obeyed.

Sixthly, Magiſtracy is the Fence of our liberty, and property, if none were ſubject, none could be free. Anarchy brings in the worſt ſlavery: No man ſhould long call any thing his *own*, if Government were not owned. Were there not Laws to limit men, and Magiſtrates to enliven thoſe Laws, many would think that lawfully enough theirs, which they have power enough to make theirs.

Seventhly, Magiſtrates are the very vital ſpirits and breath by which millions of men ſubſiſt comfortably in one body politick. *Jeremiah* in his *Lamentations* (Chap. 4. 20.) calls their King (though none of the beſt) *the breath of their noſtrils.*

And therefore as in duty, ſo for neceſſity, as for conſcience, ſo for our own comfort and commodity, we ſhould (as Chriſt commanded his Diſciples in his own caſe (*Math.* 22. 21.) *Render to* Ceſar *the things that are* Ceſars. The Apoſtle not only exhorts but enjoyns (*Rom.* 13. 1.) *Let every ſoul be ſubject to the higher Powers.* With this ſubjection to them he commands ſupplycation for them (1 *Tim.* 2. 1, 2.) *I exhort that firſt of all Prayers and Supplications be made for all men, for Kings, and for all that are in Authority, that under them we may lead quiet and peaceable lives,* &c. And as he commands that Magiſtrates ſhould be much the ſubject of prayer, ſo alſo of preaching (*Tit.* 3. 1.) *Put them in mind to be ſubject to Principalities and Powers, and to obey Magiſtrates.* Which ſhews, Firſt, That this is no new doctrine, but an old duty, which they were to be put in mind of. Subjection to Magiſtrates is the old Commandment, and it doth not wax old, 'tis as ſtrong as at firſt. Secondly, That they were often to have this Inculcated upon them; men have a very untoward ſpirit, as for ſubjection to God, ſo to man; we are naturally ſo high minded, that we cannot ſtoop to thoſe who are higheſt, therefore ſaith he, *Put them in mind to be ſubject to Principalities aud Powers.* Many will be ready to ſay in the pride of their hearts, are we not all one mans children? Are we not fellow-members, fellow-creatures? Such kind of language hath been heard among many; theſe need to be *put in mind to be ſubject.* And (as St. *Peter* directs, 1 *Ep.* 2. 13.) *To ſubmit themſelves to every ordinance of man for the Lords ſake, whether it be to the King as ſupream, or unto Governours as unto them that are ſent by him,* &c. The Apoſtle *Jude* diſcovering anti-Magiſtratical Spirits, calls them *filthy dreamers* (*v.* 8.) Likewiſe alſo *theſe filthy dreamers defile the fleſh, deſpiſe Dominions, and ſpeak evil of Dignities.* We muſt have liberty and freedom (ſay they) why ſhould we be under and others above? Theſe are filthy dreamers, they ſpeak for liberty, but indeed it is for licentiouſneſs; They would do what themſelves pleaſe, not what is pleaſing to God. Behold in the glaſs of one Scripture, the woful and deformed face of things where either there are no Magiſtrates, or none that know how to adminiſter juſtice according to the duty of their place (*Iſa.* 3. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.) where the Prophet threatens that the Lord will take away from *Jeruſalem* and from *Judah, the ſtay and the ſtaffe:* What ſtay, and what ſtaffe? He ſpeaks of a twofold ſtay and ſtaffe: Firſt, The natural ſtay and ſtaffe; Secondly, The civil ſtay and ſtaffe; yea there is alſo a third mentioned, even the ſpiritual ſtay and ſtaffe. Firſt, He will take away bread and water, which are the ſtay and ſtaffe of natural life. Secondly, He will take away Magiſtrates and other Miniſters of ſtate, who are the ſtay and ſtaffe of a civil life. *The mighty man, and the man of war, the Judge and the Prophet, and the Prudent and the Ancient,* &c. I will break theſe (ſaith God) I will take away all orders of men from them; I will leave them none to go into the field to fight for them, none to go to the gate to judge for them. What then? *I will give Children to be their Princes, and Babes ſhall rule over them;* that is, they that are in places of power, whether for peace or war, ſhall be as fit for it, as Babes are to lead an Army, and martial a battel, or as Children are to ſit in Judgment, and give ſentence in weightieſt matters. And what will become of a Nation in this caſe? the fifth verſe tells us; *And the people ſhall be oppreſſed, every one by another, and every man by his neighbour.* The people complain many times, and ſometimes they have cauſe to complain that the Magiſtrate oppreſſeth them; but if there be no ruling, every one will be an oppreſſour. The people are ready to ſay, if oppreſſing Magiſtrates were but outed, we ſhould have liberty and freedom. But they will find a thouſand oppreſſors for one, when they have no Magiſtrate. Therefore the Lord in abundant goodneſs as well as wiſdom hath appointed Magiſtrates to go, as *Job* did, *out to the gate through the City.*

As in this verſe *Job* hath ſaid enough to ſhew that he was a Magiſtrate, ſo in the next and ſeveral verſes following, he ſaith as much to ſhew what reſpect he had being a Magiſtrate. Some who are in Power, have much fear, but little love and affectionate reſpect among the people: but as *Job* was a man in power, ſo he had abundance of love, and was reſpected as well as feared, both by young and old.

Verſe, 8. **The young men ſaw me and hid themſelves, and the aged aroſe and ſtood up.**

Young men and old men include all men, though it be true that ſome men are neither young nor old, but as we ſay, middle-aged. And as young and old carry all men, ſo thoſe actions of the one ſort hiding themſelves, and of the other riſing up at *Job's* appearance, or coming in place, ſignifie all kind of reſpect both to his perſon and office.

The young men ſaw me and hid themſelves, &c.

The word notes the younger of any ſort, theſe ſaw me paſs through the ſtreet going to the ſeat of Judgment; and ſee how they were affected? Preſently they hid themſelves. But what was the matter? Was *Job* ſuch a terrible man, a man of ſo much ſeverity, that the young men durſt not look upon him, but hid themſelves as ſoon as they ſaw him? Is any man truly honoured when he is thus feared?

I anſwer, This action of hiding of our ſelves is noted in Scripture to ariſe three wayes.

Firſt, From ſhame, mixed with fear (*Gen.* 3. 8.) when God came in the cool of the day to queſtion *Adam* after he had ſinned in eating the forbidden fruit; He and his Wife hearing the voice of the Lord walking in the Garden, *hid themſelves from the preſence of the Lord among the trees of the garden.* Whence was this hiding? His own anſwer tells us, it was from a mixture of fear and ſhame; *And he ſaid, I heard thy voice in the garden, and was afraid, becauſe I was naked,* &c.

Secondly, There is a hiding which proceeds from pure or meer fear. Thus the Prophet deſcribes wicked Idolaters terrified with the dreadfulneſs of Gods Judgments againſt them, betaking themſelves to any hole for ſhelter (*Iſa.* 2. 19.) *They ſhall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for the fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his Majeſty, when he ariſeth to ſhake terribly the Eerth;* That is, to make great commotions and changes in the affairs of Nations, which like an earthquake ſhall vehemently ſhake, if not utterly overthrow all. In ſuch a day the ſtouteſt ſinners ſhall fear and hide themſelves. Thus *Michaiah* told *Zedekiah* the Bold-faced falſe Prophet (1 *Kings* 22. 25.) *Behold, thou ſhalt ſee in that day, when thou ſhalt go into an inner chamber to hide thy ſelf.*

Thirdly, There is alſo a hiding of our ſelves for joy, mixt with modeſty. So 'tis ſaid in the Goſpel concerning *Zacharias* his Wife *Elizabeth* (Luk. 1. 24.) *After thoſe dayes his wife Elizabeth conceived, ſhe hid her ſelf five months, ſaying, thus hath the Lord dealt with me in thoſe dayes where in he looked on me, to take away my reproach among men.* *Elizabeth* had received ſo great a mercy, both as it was the taking away of her reproach, and the return of her prayer, that ſhe was even over-joyed at her own conception, yet ſhe will a while modeſtly cover this joy, and hide both her ſelf and her bleſſing for a time, that ſhe and it might appear together in more aſſurance to the eye of the world. 'Tis wiſdom to make no great ſhew, much leſs boaſt of things, till we are ſure of them. *Elizabeth* hid her ſelf (five months) till ſhe was quick with child, and then ſhe could confidently avouch it to all her friends.

Here, the young men hid themſelves: either

Firſt, As being ſtruck with ſuch a reverence of *Job's* perſon, that they durſt not appear openly before him; or

Secondly, They hid themſelves, fearing leſt (he being a man of ſo much Authority and eſteem) they ſhould fail in their behaviour before him.

Thirdly, It might be from a fear that they had done ſomewhat amiſs, or that he had heard of their youthful vanities, and would ſurely reprove them for it. Young men are apt to offend (that's a ſlippery age) and are therefore loath to appear before their Superiours, eſpecially when eminently ſuch (as *Job* was) in holineſs, wiſdom, and a Spirit of diſcerning concerning men and manners, things and perſons. *Job's* juſt ſeverity ſtruck the young men with a kind of amazement.

Note hence; Firſt, *Eminent vertues and graces draw reverence and reſpect upon the perſons of men, even from thoſe who are apt to take too much liberty to themſelves.*

The ſpirits of young men are uſually vain and light, and often deboyſt and oppoſite to ſobriety and goodneſs, yet theſe were overcome by *Job's* preſence. It is not greatneſs, or riches, outward pomp, or ſplendour that can over-awe the vain ſpirits of youth: But a vertuous gravity and the ſplendour of Juſtice will. 'Tis very memorable which is reported of *Cato* in the Roman Hiſtory, He was a man of ſuch veneration in the City of *Rome*, that though they uſed much immodeſty, both in ſpeech and geſture at their publick playes and ſhews, eſpecially in the Floral Games; yet when once *Cato* appeared upon the Theater, there was not a man durſt ſpeak any immodeſt word, or uſe any wanton behaviour, till he was withdrawn. If heathen *Cato*, becauſe he was a man of a compoſed ſpirit, of much Juſtice and Integrity, a man of an unſpotted converſation and reputation (if he, I ſay) had ſuch a reverence; much more will the grace of Chriſt, ſhining forth with beams of light in a converſation becoming the Goſpel, command reſpect. It is ſaid of King *Herod* (*Mark*

Valer. Max. lib. 2. *cap.* 5.

(*Mark* 6.20.) That *He feared* John (the Baptiſt) *knowing that he was a Juſt man and an holy, and obſerved him.* As the *Name of God is holy and reverend* (Pſal. 111. 9.) ſo there is a reverence in that holineſs which is imprinted upon man. Grace is ſometimes, at leaſt ſeemingly, honoured even in their Conſciences who have no grace.

Secondly, Looking upon *Job* as a Magiſtrate;

Note, *There is a Majeſty in Magiſtrates.*

God puts their dread upon men; all are in awe of them. As *David* often acknowledged that God ſubdued his enemies to him: So that it was God who ſubdued the ſpirits of his own Subjects to him (*Pſal.* 144. 1, 2.) For having ſaid (*ver.* 1.) *Bleſſed be the Lord my ſtrength, who teacheth my hands to war, and my fingers to fight*; he preſently adds in the cloſe of the ſecond verſe, *Who ſubdueth my people under me.* It is as great a work of God, that millions of men quietly ſubmit to the Magiſtratical ſword of a ſingle Perſon, as that a potent Army of enemies are conquered by his Military ſword (*Prov.* 20. 8, 26.) *A King that ſitteth in the Throne of Judgment, ſcattereth away all evil with his eyes.* The wicked dare not come before a juſt and righteous Prince, they are caſt down with a caſt of his eye. As they cannot bear the preſence of God; ſo not theirs who ſtand among men in the place and power of God. Princes are not deſpiſed of men till themſelves prove deſpiſers of God. *Them that honour me* (ſaith the Lord, 1 *Sam.* 2.30.) *I will honour* (that is, I will honour them, and cauſe others to honour them) *and they that deſpiſe me ſhall be lightly eſteemed*, both by my ſelf and others.

Thirdly, From this action of young men hiding themſelves at the appearance of a Magiſtrate paſſing to the Place and Seat of Judicature, we may conceive what hiding there will be when Chriſt ſhall appear in the Glory of his Father, with all his holy Angels, to Judge the World. O what hiding will there be when Chriſt ſhall come to the Gate through the City, and prepare his Seat in the Street? Then how will young men full of vanity and voluptuouſneſs, how will old men full of earthlineſs and covetouſneſs, how will thoſe mighty men who are full of ambition and oppreſſion, even laden with the ſpoils of the helpleſs and innocent, *hide themſelves* (as 'tis ſaid, *Rev.* 6. 15, 16, 17.) *in the dens, and in the rocks of the mountains? How will they ſay to the mountains and to the rocks, fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that ſitteth on the Throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, for the Great day of his wrath is come, and who ſhall be able to ſtand?* How can they ſtand before the Judge of Heaven and Earth, who hide themſelves from the face of an earthly Judge? This is a profitable and an awakening Meditation upon the Text: Yet, I conceive, it was not ſo much the guiltineſs of theſe young men, as their ſhamefac'dneſs, meeting with the gravity and integrity of this Reverend Judge, which cauſed them to hide themſelves; and ſo their hiding was not their fault, but their commendation.

Whence Note, Fourthly, *Modeſty and baſhfulneſs is a vertue in thoſe who are young, when their Ancients and Superiours are in preſence.*

It was both the honour of *Job*, and the praiſe of theſe young men, that *they hid themſelves.* The word which the Hebrews uſe for a *young man* ſignifieth *hiding*, becauſe young men and maidens ſhould rather hide then put themſelves forward at all times, eſpecially when great and grave men appear. Shamefac'dneſs is a piece of their comelineſs alwayes, but moſt of all when they have done amiſs; how deformed are they who do evil and are not aſham'd, but ſuffer the very ſhew of their countenance (as the Prophet ſpeaks) to teſtifie againſt them, declaring their ſin as *Sodom*, and neither hiding themſelves nor it (*Iſa.* 3. 9.) 'Tis a ſhame to commit a fault; therefore not to be aſhamed of it when committed, but to appear with a brazen face, and with an iron front, not caring who ſees or knows it, is a doubling of the fault. As it is a great ſin to hide our ſins by excuſes; ſo it is a greater ſin to ſhew our ſins with impudence: Hypocritically to hide our ſins, and audaciouſly to declare them, are high aggravations of ſin; and of the two the latter is the higheſt, both as it carries a contempt of God in it, and an avouchment of it to man. The former hath a hope to deceive God and man; but the latter is not afraid to ſend them a defiance, and having done it, bids them both do their worſt.

עלם *Dicit. παρὰ τὸ* העלם *ab, occultando quia verecundiæ ipſorum eſt ſeſe occultare.*

Fifthly, Note, *'Tis the duty of young men to reverence the aged, eſpecially thoſe aged who are in Power.*

The Law of *Moſes* gave this in charge (*Levit.* 19. 32.) *Thou ſhalt riſe up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man.* When young men know not their diſtance, but are bold with and irreverent towards the aged, 'tis one of the worſt ſigns of an evil government, and of the evils which follow upon it in Families, Cities, and Nations. It was threatened as a great Judgment in it ſelf, and as the preſage of a greater (*Iſa.* 35. 5.) *Children ſhall behave themſelves proudly againſt the Ancient, and the baſe againſt the honourable.* The diſcipline of the *Lacedemonians* was ſo exact towards their youth, and they were bound to give ſuch reverence to the aged, that it grew into a Proverb, *Only in* Sparta *it is good to be old.* *Job's* government and perſon were ſo much reverenced among the younger (who are commonly in all Commonwealths the ruder) ſort, that when they ſaw him they would not be ſeen. *The young men hid themſelves,*

In ſola Sparta *expidire fieri ſenem.*

And the aged aroſe and ſtood up.

The young mens withdrawing was an argument of great reſpect; but the riſing and ſtanding up of the aged when *Job* paſſed by, was an argument of ſo much the more reſpect, by how much the aged are of more reſpect then the young. We ſay, *Honour is in the perſon honouring*: Therefore the more honourable the perſon is that gives the reſpect, the more honour is given by it. The honour of Jeſus Chriſt is highly advanced in that prophecy of him (*Pſal.* 72. 9, 10, 11.) where it is not only ſaid (*ver.* 9.) *They that dwell in the wilderneſs* (by whom we may underſtand perſons of a ruder breeding and meaner quality) *ſhall bow before him*; but, as it follows (*ver.* 9, 10.) *The Kings of* Tarſhiſh, *and of the Iſles, ſhall bring preſents: The Kings of* Sheba *and* Seba *ſhall bring gifts; yea, all Kings ſhall fall down before him.* How honourable is Jeſus Chriſt! whom not only the Cottagers of the Wilderneſs, but the mighty Kings of the Earth adore and worſhip. We may thus alſo in proportion take the elevation or height of *Job's* honour upon the ſame account, who was not only reverenced by young men, but by the aged. And (which heightens it ſomewhat more) the Hebrew word here uſed for *aged*, ſignifies the oldeſt, even decrepit old age. Thoſe old men, whoſe laſt glaſs was running, and who were taking their laſt ſtep (as it were) even they *did ariſe, and ſtood up.*

Aliqui vertunt decrepiti: ſenes ultimæ ſenectutis qui à Græcis Ἐσχατογȣρȣντες *vocantur. Comprehendit etiam ſenectutem mediam & primam.*

Some read, *They aroſe and ſtood*; that is, when once they aroſe from their ſeats, they would not, or did not ſit down in his preſence. To ariſe and ſtand up are poſtures referring to a double relation: Firſt, To that of a ſervant or waiter, who preſents himſelf ready for buſineſs at a call or beck. Secondly, To that of a hearer or learner; in this latter ſence ſome conceive the aged aroſe and ſtood up: As if when *Job* came into the Court they aroſe and ſtood up ready to hear and receive the Law from his mouth, or to take inſtructions what to do in caſes that came before him. But this geſture of the aged here refers only to the uſual cuſtom of riſing and ſtanding up when the Judge, eſpecially if he be a chief Magiſtrate, paſſeth by with his Attendants to the place of Judicature.

Hence Note, *'Tis the duty of all to honour Magiſtrates.*

This duty is required in the fourth Commandment; we muſt honour our civil Father, the Father of our Countrey, as well as our natural Father, the Father of the Family. The Scripture doth not only command ſubjection *to the higher Powers*, but reverence and reſpect (*Rom.* 13. 7.) *Render therefore to all their dues, Tribute to whom tribute is due, cuſtom to whom cuſtom, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour.* Our Obligation to this duty is grounded upon three Conſiderations.

Firſt, Magiſtrates are to be honour'd as they are Gods Deputies and Vicegerents: For as they are ordained by God, ſo they are in the place of God, and exerciſe his Power by deputation.

Secondly, Magiſtrates are ſet up for the common good of mankind. *Daniel* expounding *Nebuchadnezzar's*

Dream, who was the greateſt Prince of the whole world, tells him, He was *the tree whoſe leaves were fair, and whoſe fruit much, and in it was meat for all, under which the beaſts of the field dwelt, and upon whoſe branches the fowls of the heaven had their habitation* (Dan. 4. 22.) And as he, ſo all Magiſtrates (in their capacity) are ſuch a tree, to all their Subjects, yielding them refreſhing food and defence. Therefore they are to be reverenced, and to have reſpect from all.

Thirdly, God hath put (as was toucht before) his own Name upon them, *I have ſaid ye are Gods* (Pſal. 82. 6.) As Paraſites in baſe flattery and complyance with their pride, have vainly called ſome of them ſo; and as ſome Princes have moſt wickedly and blaſphemouſly affected to be called, yea, to be adored as Gods (God will take higheſt vengeance upon all thoſe who take his Name upon them; or ſubmit to it when given them) ſo God himſelf hath put his own Name upon Magiſtrates, to mind them of their duty, or for a twofold end, Firſt, That being *called Gods*, they ſhould judge and rule as God doth, or with a mind like God, free from the mixture of a private or paſſionate ſpirit, and filled with a love to and a delight in impartial Judgment and Righteouſneſs. Secondly, That being called Gods, all men might learn their duty, freely to ſubmit to them, and duly to honour them; ſeeing any diſhonour done to them, reflects upon God whoſe Name they bear. Next to the honour which we owe to God himſelf, we owe and ought to pay honour to Magiſtrates who are called Gods. And though there be ſome difficulty in clearing *Paul*'s ſence, when being reproved for calling *Ananias* the High Prieſt, *A whited wall*, he ſaid, *I wiſt not, Brethren, that he was the High Prieſt* (which to me ſignifies his opinion, or judgment, that he was not a lawful rightly conſtituted nor duly qualified High Prieſt, rather then either his neſcience or inadvertency who he was; I ſay, though there be a difficulty in the ſence of that ſaying) yet the Scripture alledged by him leaves it as clear as noon day, that Magiſtrates are not to receive any courſe or unbecoming language. It is written, *Thou ſhalt not ſpeak evil of the Ruler of thy people* (Acts 23. 5.)

> Secondly, Obſerve, *Godly and Juſt Magiſtrates are willingly honoured by their good people of all ſorts and on all hands.*

Subjection, yea, ſome kind of honour is due to a Magiſtrate as a Magiſtrate, though an evil man, yea though an evil Magiſtrate. 'Tis hard to bring the heart to it; yet ſuch a one was *Tiberius Cæſar*, of whom Chriſt ſaid, *Give unto* Cæſar *the things which are* Cæſars; and ſuch a one was *Nero* (a monſter of men) when *Paul* writ to the Church at *Rome*, *Let every ſoul be ſubject to the higher powers.* But godly and juſt Magiſtrates deſerve all ſorts of honour as well as ſubjection from all ſorts of men: If a wicked man be in Power, he is to be honour'd for his place ſake; but if a godly man be in Power, he is to be honour'd for his perſons ſake.

For firſt, Good Magiſtrates make it their aim to honour God, therefore we ſhould honour them.

Secondly, Good Magiſtrates are honour'd by God, therefore we ſhould honour them: *They that honour me* (ſaith God) *I will honour.* Honour alwayes goes with power, as the ſhadow with the body: Evil men in Power receive honour mith a mixture either of fear or flattery; but ſuch as are good and do good, have it caſt upon them in love and in ſincerity. When evil men govern, young men hide themſelves, and old men riſe up and honour them, as the poor *Indians* worſhip the Devils, for fear they ſhould do them a miſchief; or at beſt only in a bare obedience and ſubmiſſion to the Will and Ordinance of God, or as the Apoſtle *Peter* directs (1 *Epiſt.* 2. 13.) *To the Ordinance of man for the Lords ſake.* Which though it be the beſt as to the perſon honouring, yet 'tis the worſt as to the perſon honoured. The more we honour Magiſtrates in ſubmiſſion to the will of God, or for the Lords ſake, our act is the better; but when we honour them only ſo, and not at all for their own ſakes, it ſhews that they are not good. For good and righteous Magiſtrates are reverenced and honoured (as Saints reverence and honour God) becauſe they are good, and do good; they are honoured for the goodneſs that is in them, and for the good that is done by them. When power and piety, dominion and deſert meet together and center (as they did in *Job*) in the perſon of a Prince, then the young men, ſtruck with the awe of him, modeſtly hide themſelves, and the aged, filled with love to him, and thankfulneſs to God for him, ariſe and ſtand up. *Happy are the people that be in ſuch a caſe*; and how fair an evidence is it that a people (which is the top of all happineſs) *have the Lord for their God,* when they have ſuch a God for their Lord.

VERS: 9, 10, 11.

The Princes refrained talking, and laid their hand upon their mouth.

The Nobles held their peace, and their tongue cleaved to the roof of their mouth.

When the ear heard me, then it bleſſed me; and when the eye ſaw me, it gave witneſs to me.

THis Context contains a further proof of that great reſpect and honour which *Job* received as a Magiſtrate. In the former verſe, we ſaw how he was obſerved and reverenced as he paſſed through the ſtreets to the place of Judicature. *When I went out to the gate through the City, when I prepared my ſeat in the ſtreet. The young men ſaw me and hid themſelves; and the aged aroſe and ſtood up.* In theſe three verſes we ſee the obſervance and reverence which this worthy man received, when he ſate in judgment. And this not only from a few, nor only from perſons of inferiour rank; but from perſons of all ranks, it was an univerſal reſpect. Firſt, He had reſpect from the chiefeſt and higheſt in dignity, called here, *Princes* (*ver.* 9.) Secondly, He had reſpect from the middle ſort of Magiſtrates or Governours, called here *Nobles* (*ver.* 10.) Thirdly, He had reſpect from the whole body of the people collectively as one man, even from every ſingle ear and eye, *When the ear heard me, it bleſſed me; and when the eye ſaw me, it gave witneſs to me:* That is, every eye and every ear bleſſed, and gave witneſs to me.

Verſe 9. **The Princes refrained talking.**

The word notes men in *eminent authority:* And ſometimes thoſe of the moſt eminent authority, ſuch as rule in chief. Chriſt himſelf is adorned with this title (*Iſa.* 9. 6.) *The Prince of peace.* Chriſt is a Prince, who hath peace not only in his nature or diſpoſition, but he hath peace in his power, or at his diſpoſe: Chriſt is not an inferiour, but the chief Prince, higher then the higheſt: Yet the word is applyed to any that are in power, and bear rule over others. (1 *Chron.* 15. 22.) The chief of the Levites, is called the Prince of the Levites. And we read (1 *Chron.* 29. 6.) of *The Princes of the Tribes.* As there was a Prince or Head over all the Tribes, ſo every Tribe had a Prince or Head. This ſtile is beſtowed alſo upon Eminent Officers in the Court or Family of a King (*Gen.* 40. 2.) *And* Pharoah *was wroth againſt two of his Officers, againſt the chief* (or Prince) *of the Butlers, and againſt the chief* (or Prince) *of the Bakers.* It is ſaid of *Seraiah* (Jer. 51. 59.) *And this* Seraiah *was a quiet Prince*; we put in the Margin, *Prince of* Menucha, *or chief Chamberlain*, who took care of the Kings reſt, or of the King when he went to reſt. And whereas we render (*Exod.* 1. 11.) *They did ſet over them* (that is, over the people of *Iſrael*) *Taskmaſters to afflict them with burdens:* The Hebrew is, *They ſet over them Princes of the Treaſury.* We may ſuppoſe the Princes here ſpoken of to be any Great men whether by birth or office. Now what ſaith he of theſe Princes?

שר *Eſt nomen primatus poteſtatis & officii potius quam nobilitatis & ſanguinis.* Bold. *Civitatum rectoris.* Aquin.

They refrained talking.] That is, They would not ſpeak on, but brake off their conference, or they would not ſpeak at all while *Job* was preſent. They were ſo deſirous to hear him ſpeak, that they would not ſpeak a word, but let him have all the diſcourſe where-ever he came. His words were welcome to them, they were as Laws and Oracles among them; therefore they refrained talking; or as the word imports, they impoſed ſilence upon themſelves. Theſe Princes (we may ſuppoſe) were very able to ſpeak to any buſineſs, and could readily give their opinion, but, *They willingly refrained.*

Further, the word which we tranſlate, **refrained**, is taken three wayes in Scripture. Firſt, To ſtop or reſtrain by outward

עצר *Clauſit, coercuit, continuit.*

outward force. Secondly, To reſtrain or ſtop by command, as a King or Magiſtrate doth coerce his Subjects by his Authority and his Laws. Thirdly, It is to reſtrain by prayer or entreaty. We read it twice applyed to the ſtopping of the plague, which is done both by a word of authority or command from God, and upon a word of prayer or entreaty from man (*Numb.* 16.48.) *And* Aaron *took as* Moſes *had commanded, and ran into the midſt of the Congregation, and behold the Plague was begun among the people, and he put on Incenſe, and made an atonement for the people: And he ſtood between the dead and the living, and the Plague was ſtayed.* The Plague, that devourer, was ready to ſlay the whole Congregation, but the Lord ſtopt and reſtrained it upon the interceſſion and ſupplication of *Aaron* for the people. So (1 *Chron.* 21. 22.) *David* coming to the threſhing-floor of *Ornon, He offered ſacrifice, and the Plague was ſtayed.* There went a Command out from God, and a Prayer from *David* to ſtay it, and it was ſtayed. Here the *Princes refrained talking,* not by a reſtraint from *Job,* but by their own diſcretion. They ſaw it beſt to ſay nothing, when their Prince (who was every way ſo much their better) was in preſence.

Hence Note, *It is both our wiſdom and our duty ſometimes to forbear ſpeaking.*

There is a time to keep ſilence, and a time to ſpeak (Eccleſ. 3.7.) The Prophet (*Amos* 5. 13.) ſets down one ſeaſon of ſilence, *Therefore the prudent ſhall keep ſilence in that time, for it is an evil time.* When times are ſo evil that they will not bear evil to be ſpoken againſt, nor good to be ſpoken, 'tis time for the prudent to keep ſilence; for though in ſome caſes we muſt bear our teſtimony openly for truth and holineſs, whether men will bear it or no, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, we muſt ſpeak, yet we are not urged with that neceſſity at all times, but may (in this ſence) ſave our ſelves from an untoward generation, even by refraining to ſpeak; and ever when men more prudent then our ſelves are in place, and ready to ſpeak, 'tis a fitting time for us to keep ſilence. Uſually they are moſt forward to ſpeak, who have leaſt reaſon to ſpeak, and ſpeak leaſt reaſon: Some will be ſpeaking, though they diſcover nothing but their own inability to ſpeak. 'Tis much better to refrain talking, then to talk to little purpoſe, or to hinder thoſe who can talk to better purpoſe then our ſelves. *David* prayeth (*Pſal.* 141. 3.) *Set a watch* (*O Lord*) *before my mouth; keep the door of my lips.* It is more then man can do, to govern his tongue, and to hit the due ſeaſon of ſpeaking. And in another Pſalm, *David* intimates, that he had as much to do, to keep his tongue, as to rule an headſtrong Horſe (*Pſal.* 39. 1.) *I ſaid I will take heed to my wayes, that I ſin not with my tongue; I will keep my mouth with a bridle while the wicked is before me.* As hot mettl'd Horſes, ſo the tongue is apt to run out, unleſs well bridled. Nor is any bridle ſtrong enough to hold it, but the bridle of Grace. Grace is both ſpur and bridle to the tongue; Grace like a ſpur provokes us to ſpeak for God, and for the good of others, to ſpeak ſavoury words which may miniſter Grace to the hearers; and Grace, like a bridle, ſtops us from ſpeaking what may grieve the Spirit of God, or be either infectious or offenſive unto others. None rule their tongues well without Grace; and ſome who have Grace cannot rule them well. And hence the Apoſtle *James* (Chap. 3. 2.) concludes, not only that, *He who offends not in word,* is a gracious man (ſeeing it is poſſible, yea, very uſual for a man to be ſo who yet offends in word) but he ſaith ſuch a one is a perfect man; that is, he hath attained to a very great, if not the greateſt degree of Grace. And becauſe by our readineſs to ſpeak, we are continually ready to ſin; there the ſame Apoſtle commends ſlowneſs to ſpeak (*James* 1. 19.) *Let every man be ſwift to hear, ſlow to ſpeak:* When the tongue hath got looſe, it is not eaſie to ſtay it. They in the Pſalm thought their tongues in their own power, and proudly put the queſtion (*Pſal.* 12. 4.) *With our tongue we will prevail, our lips are our own, who is Lord over us?* We may anſwer; Their tongues were Lords over them; and having gotten the bridle would on whether they would or no. Many a mans tongue is too hard for his whole man. He hath a great command over himſelf, that can command it. We take it ill, if others ſilence us: But it were well (in many caſes) if we could (like theſe Princes) refrain talking, and ſilence our ſelves. I find this word applyed to the ſhutting up of the Rain in the Clouds, which is no eaſie thing, the Clouds being ſo quickly moved and cruſhed like Sponges with the Wind; as alſo to the reſtraining and ſtopping of fire beginning to kindle, that it break not out into a flame. To reſtrain ſpeaking is often as hard and as beneficial as to reſtrain a fire from burning, or to lock up the Clouds from immoderate or unſeaſonable raining. *The Princes refrained talking,*

And laid their hand upon their mouth.

Theſe words ſpeak the ſame thing, the not ſpeaking of the Princes in *Job*'s preſence, or their utmoſt ſilence. We have the ſame expreſſion as well as ſence (*Chap.* 21. 5.) *Mark me and be aſtoniſhed, and lay your hand upon your mouth.* That is, ſpeak no more. There the riſe and meaning of this geſture was opened, and thither I refer the Reader. I ſhall only add two things.

יד כפ

Firſt, That whereas there are two words in the Hebrew which ſignifie the hand; the word here uſed ſignifieth the hand open, the hand in plain, or the palm of the hand, which, ſay ſome (though I think it to be but a critical nicity) implyeth ſuch a ſtopping of the mouth, that not a word can get out, as when a man cloſeth his mouth with the palm of his hand.

Secondly, Some of the Hebrew Writers expound this clauſe, *They laid their hand upon their mouth,* as a geſture teſtifying honour. And it is in uſe (as in many Nations, ſo) among us, when we come before honourable perſons, to put the hand to the mouth in token of reverence.

In quibuſdā regionibus manus oſculo teſtantur homines ſe alicui honorem exhibere; ſed ego ad ſilentium refero. Merc.

But I rather adhere to the former Interpretation, that this action or geſture denoteth a total ſilence, which beſt ſuits with what went before, *They refrained ſpeaking;* and as they did ſo when he came in, ſo they would not venture to ſpeak when he had ſpoken, nor offer their opinion after him, but reſting in his Judgment about, and determination of every caſe brought and pleaded before him, *Laid their hand upon their mouth.*

Hence Note, *Some have ſuch power in ſpeaking, that they ſilence all ſpeakers.*

They ſpeak ſo much reaſon, and with ſo much authority, that, as none can contradict what hath been ſaid, ſo, to ſay more were but to hold a Candle to the Sun. As the light of the Sun when it riſeth, puts out all other lights; out goes the light of the Moon and of the Stars, we ſee no more that day by their ſhining: So ſome have ſuch a power of language, ſuch a conquering Logick, and perſwading Oratory, ſuch weight and excellency of ſpeech, that no man hath any mind to ſpeak after them. Thus Chriſt ſpake with authority, and often put all to ſilence. He ſo anſwered all their queſtions, that, *After that they durſt not ask any queſtion at all* (Luke 20. 40.) Such a Maſter of words and reaſon, ſuch a *Maſter of the Aſſemblies* (as *Solomon* expreſſeth it, *Ecclеſ.* 12. 11.) was *Job;* his words were ſuch goads, that every hearer was ſtirr'd and prickt at heart, they were nails ſo faſtened, home driven, and riveted, that there was no drawing of them out, and therefore, *The Princes laid their hand upon their mouth.*

Again, Whereas 'tis ſaid, the Princes refrained talking, when *Job* came into the Court, it may be underſtood of all impertinent talking, with which Courts of Juſtice and Aſſemblies for counſel are often interrupted while publick matters are in hand.

Hence Note, *Private talking is very uncomely, in a time of publick hearing and debating.*

Many Courts have a Cryer to command all who are near or about them to be ſilent; and it is but need ſometimes that they who are within and of the Court ſhould be called upon to be attentive, and, as theſe Princes in the Text, to *refrain talking,* to erect their ears, and lay their hands upon their mouth. How improper is it to ſee a private Junto in an open Court or Council? And ſome whiſpering (poſſibly about by-matters) where all are called to hear and determine publick matters?

Thirdly, Note, *Wiſe and diſcreet men are willing to be hearers as well as ſpeakers.*

The Princes in the Text were able ſpeakers,elſe it needed not be ſaid, that they refrained ſpeaking; yet it pleaſed them to be hearers only while *Job* was there to ſpeak. They who are conceited of their own abilities, are ready to complain, as he did, *Shall we alwayes be hearers only*; they muſt up, they cannot hold. *To hear is to receive*; *to ſpeak is to give*: And I grant that which the Apoſtle *Paul* reports as a ſaying of Chriſt (*Acts* 20. 35.) *It is more bleſſed to give then to receive*, holds true in this, 'tis a more bleſſed thing to be a ſpeaker then a hearer: Yet it may be more a duty upon ſome to receive then to give, to be hearers then ſpeakers; and that not only in ſpiritual things which concern our eternal intereſt (for ſo the greateſt advantage comes in by hearing) but in things temporal and of leſſer concernment. Bablers will be ſowing their words, though nothing ſpring up worth the reaping. Thoſe Philoſophers ſpake ſcorningly of *Paul* (Acts 17. 18.) *What will this babler*, or as the Greek text ſtrictly hath it, *This ſower of words ſay?* It is good to be a reaper of ſound words ſown by others, but to be a ſower of vain words is greateſt vanity: They do well who ſpeak well, and ſo do they who are willing to hear thoſe that can ſpeak better then themſelves. Some Criticks conceive that the word of diſgrace caſt upon *Paul* by the *Athenian* Philoſophers, doth rather note a picker up of words then a ſower of words, and they give the original of the Metaphor two wayes. Firſt, As alluding to poor fellows in the Market-place, who pick up the ſcattered corns which fall out of the full ſacks ſtanding there. And ſo it is as if they had ſaid, what will this ſimple fellow ſay? Secondly, As alluding to thoſe little Birds, Sparrows, or the like, picking up the looſe corn in the furrows of the field at ſeed-time, which becauſe they are given much to chirping and ſinging undelightful notes, may well ſerve to expreſs bablers and vain talkers, who love much to hear themſelves ſpeak, though none elſe do. The readieſt way for ſuch to make themſelves profitable ſpeakers, were a while to refrain ſpeaking, and be patient hearers. *Words ſpoken in ſeaſon are like apples of gold in pictures of ſilver* (*Prov.* 25. 11.) and ſo is a ſeaſonable ſilence for the gathering up and feeding upon thoſe Apples. *The Princes refrained talking.*

Semper ego auditor tantum.

σπερμολόγος, ſeminator verborum, vel ſemini lega.

Job proceeds upon the ſame matter ſtill.

Verſe 10. **The Nobles held their peace, and their tongue cleaved to the roof of their mouth.**

These **Nobles** may be taken for the inferiour ſort of Magiſtrates or City-Officers, as by *the Princes*, the higheſt, or thoſe next the Supream. Some by *Nobles* underſtand Captains, or thoſe who had the command in military affairs, who as they are bold and forward in acting, ſo uſually in ſpeaking; yet even theſe were down in the mouth when *Job* appeared. Another renders, *The moſt eloquent Leaders hid themſelves*; which ſuits well with Maſter *Broughton*'s tranſlation, *The beſt in voice would not be ſeen.* As if *Job* had ſtruck the very Orators dumb, and made eloquence it ſelf ſpeechleſs. The Hebrew word which we expreſs by *Nobles* comes from a root, which, taken adverbially, ſignifies any thing before us, directly oppoſite to us, or in our eye; ſuch are *Nobles*, they ſtand in open view, and are eyed by all men: Men in high place (ſuch are Nobles) fall under a very general obſervation. Again, the Original word in the Verb ſignifies, to declare, to publiſh, to teach; and that three wayes; Firſt, By word: Secondly, By geſture: Thirdly, By example. Jeſus Chriſt is ſet forth by the Prophet under this Title (*Iſa.* 55. 4.) *Behold, I have given him for a Witneſs to the people, a Leader and a Commander to the people.* Here are three Titles beſtowed upon Chriſt by the Father, the ſecond is that in the Text, *A Noble, or a Leader.* Chriſt is firſt a witneſs of all the truths of God, he is the Amen, the faithful and the true Witneſs (*Rev.* 3. 14.) *In him all the Promiſes of God are Yea and Amen* (2 Cor. 1. 20.) Secondly, He is *a Leader, the Captain of our ſalvation*; He goes before his people to ſhew them the way, and to fight all the enemies that ſtand in their way. Thirdly, He is a *Commander to the people*; His Commands are to be received and obeyed without diſpute, and at our utmoſt peril. It is the happineſs of a people, when their Nobles are not only Commanders, but Witneſſes of, and Leaders to that which is good in it ſelf, and beſt for them.

Duces bellorum qui ſolent audaciores & promptiores eſſe ad loquendum. Aquin.

Eloquentes anteceſſores occultabant ſe. Jun.

נגידים *Sic dicti eo quod in conſpectu populi & quaſi è regione verſantur.*

This notation of the word teacheth us two things concerning the Magiſtrate: Firſt, That he is before others in place and power, and there he is placed by the Laws both of God and man. Secondly, That he ought to go before others in the practice of and conformity to the Laws. He ſhould declare them not only by word, but by action. He ſhould teach them with his feet, and ſpeak them with his fingers. He that holds the power ſhould hold out the pattern; and as he gives others the rule, ſo he ſhould be the example of what they ought to be and do. Common people think they cannot go amiſs, while they follow their Superiours.

The actions of Rulers are rules of action.

If then the actions of Rulers are erroneous, they prove to many rules of error: And if the Rulers actions be right, they prove to many as rules of righteouſneſs. A Magiſtrate is a Leader by his example, as well as by his authority. We ſee, there is much matter in ſome words beſides the matter expreſſed by words.

The Nobles held their peace.

The Hebrew in ſtrictneſs is, *Their voice was hid*, or, *They hid their voice*; they did, as it were, put their words in their pockets, as men aſhamed to ſpeak where *Job* ſate Judge. As they who are aſhamed of their doings uſe to hide their heads; ſo they who are aſhamed to ſpeak, hide their words.

And their tongue cleaved to the roof of their mouth.

That is, They ſpake no more then as if they had not a tongue to ſpeak. The tongue is the organ of ſpeech; yet 'tis not the having, but the uſing of a tongue which is ſpeaking. If a man be but tongue-tyed, he cannot ſpeak well; but if his tongue cleave to the roof of his mouth, he cannot ſpeak at all. This proverbial ſpeech, *The tongue cleaveth to the roof of the mouth*, is uſed two wayes in Scripture.

Firſt, To note the extremity of thirſt (*Lam.* 4. 4.) *The tongue of the ſucking Child cleaveth to the roof of his mouth for thirſt.* When an Infant hath not a Mothers breaſt to ſuck, he ſucks his own while native moiſture laſts, and then cryes out for more till he can cry no more, his tongue cleaveth to the roof of his mouth. Thus *David* ſpeaks typically of Chriſt in his ſufferings (*Pſal.* 22. 15.) *My ſtrength is dryed like a potſheard; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws, and thou haſt brought me into the duſt of death.* As this Pſalm is a Propheſie of the ſufferings of Chriſt, ſo we find the fulfilling of this Propheſie (*John* 19. 28, 29.) *Jeſus knowing that all things were accompliſhed, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, ſaith, I thirſt. Now there was a veſſel full of vinegar; and they filled a ſpunge with vinegar, and put it upon hyſſop, and put it to his mouth.*

Secondly, This form of ſpeaking is uſed to note deepeſt ſilence. The captive Church of the *Jews* breathed out her ſorrows in this ſad imprecation (*Pſal.* 137. 5, 6.) *If I forget thee, O* Jeruſalem, *let my right hand forget her cunning; if I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I prefer not* Jeruſalem *above my chief joy.* The people of *Jeruſalem* had skill to play, and were much delighted in playing upon an Inſtrument, and to make muſick with their voice; yet in their captivity they would rather forbear the uſe of both, then forbear to expreſs their ſorrow for the deſolations of *Jeruſalem.* The Lord tells the Prophet (*Ezek.* 3. 26.) *I will make thy tongue cleave to the roof of thy mouth, that thou ſhalt be dumb, and ſhalt not be to them a reprover.* The words are a ſevere threatening: But to whom? Not to *Ezekiel*, but to the people, who having ſo long and ſo often ſtopt their ears, like the deaf Adder, at the voice of that holy and heavenly Charmer, are at laſt told they ſhould be troubled with his voice no more, *I will make thy tongue cleave to the roof of thy mouth.* As if the Lord had ſaid, This rebellious people love not to be reproved, and they ſhall not. The greateſt reproof that can be given a people, is, to tell them they ſhall be reproved no more. That tongue of thine which was a ſharp ſword ſhall be lockt up in its ſcabboard, *the of thy mouth*; this is their deadly wound, they ſhall be wounded with it no more. So then, to ſay their tongue cleaved to the roof of their mouth, is an emblematical expreſſion either of a commanded or reſolved forbearance to ſpeak. The contrary whereof we find (*Pſal.* 140. 3.) *They have ſharpened their tongues like a Serpent; Adders poyſon is under their lips.* To ſharpen or whet the tongue, imports the keeneſt and extreameſt kind of dicacity or talkativeneſs, much more to ſharpen the tongue as a Serpent. Naturaliſts tell us, that no living creature ſtirs his tongue ſo ſwiftly as a Serpent, and Serpents are therefore ſaid to have a treble tongue, becauſe moving their tongues ſo faſt, they ſeem to have three tongues. *They ſharpen their tongues as Serpents;* that is, they ſpeak thick and threefold, they ſting and poyſon me with their tongues. That in the Pſalm, *They have ſharpened their tongues like a Serpent*, and this in the Text, *Their tongue cleaved to the roof of their mouth*, are the utmoſt contrarieties about the tongue. 'Tis ſaid in one of the ancient comical Poets, That in a great Aſſembly one called to the Cryer, Make this people *All Ear*, that is, *Make them ſilent, let them do nothing but hear:* Let not the leaſt murmur or motion of a tongue be heard among them. Thus the Nobles were ſilent when *Job* was preſent, they were all ear; *Their tongue cleaved to the roof of their mouth.*

Fast jam nunc præco omnem auritum populum. Plaut.

In this verſe we have three orders or ranks of men: Here are, Firſt, *Princes:* Secondly, *Nobles:* Thirdly, The chief Governour, *Job*, above them both, honoured and attended by both. How high was *Job* who had Princes and Nobles below him?

Hence Note, *God hath ranked men in ſeveral degrees and orders.*

He hath not only ſet all Magiſtrates above the people, but he hath ſet ſome Magiſtrates above others. As the Earth is not caſt into a level, but into Mountains and Plains, into Hills and Valleys; ſo the Men or Inhabitants of the Earth are not placed in a level, ſome are high and ſome are low, ſome are Mountains and Hills, others are Plains and Valleys. *David* praying againſt mighty enemies ſaith (*Pſal.* 144. 5.) *Touch the Mountains, O Lord* (that is, the Great men of the earth) *and they ſhall ſmoak:* That is, they ſhall vaniſh into ſmoak. And among Hills and Mountains there is a difference, ſome Hills are but Hillocks to others, though high compared with the Valleys. Some great men are like great Hills or Mountains, others are ſmaller Mountains or little Hills. *Job* was not only a Mountain, but a great Mountain, he was a Chief among the ſons of men; Princes and Nobles, who were much above the common people, were much his underlings. As the Apoſtle ſpeaks of the diſtribution of the heavenly bodies (1 *Cor.* 15. 39, 40.) *There are celeſtial bodies, and bodies terreſtrial: But the glory of the celeſtial is one, and the glory of the terreſtrial is another.* So it is among men in civil reſpects; there are among men celeſtial bodies, and bodies terreſtrial; the vulgar are in this account, but bodies terreſtrial; the Magiſtrates are, as it were, bodies celeſtial; and the glory of the one differs from the glory of the other. The people have their glory, but they have not the glory of Princes or Sovereigns. Nor have theſe, metaphorically, celeſtial bodies one glory, as the natural celeſtial bodies have not: *As there is one glory of the Sun, another of the Stars; for one Star differeth from another in glory:* So there is one glory of the Sovereign Prince, who is as the Sun in the ſphere of Magiſtracy, and another glory of ſubordinate Governours, who are as Stars in the ſphere of Magiſtracy; yea among theſe Stars, or ſubordinate Governours, ſome are bigger, and ſome are leſſer, one Governour differeth from another Governour in power and glory. All theſe diſtinctions and ſubordinations of men concern and ſerve for not only the beauty and ornament, but the ſafety and well-being of mankind. And as it contributes much to the good of all, that ſome ſhould govern, and others be ſubject, ſo that ſome ſhould be ſupream, and others inferiour in government.

Hence, Secondly, Obſerve, *As it is the duty of all the people in common to obey and be ſubject to their Magiſtrates; ſo it is the duty of inferiour Magiſtrates to obey, reſpect, and be ſubject to the ſupream Magiſtrate.*

Job the chief Magiſtrate was ſubmitted to by the Princes and Nobles, as well as by the common people. There may be ſeveral co-ordinate States in Government, but there is not a co-ordination of perſons. Soveraign Princes are leſs then all their people conſidered together; but they are greater then any one of them, yea, then all of them taken ſingly, or one by one.

Thus we ſee the obſervance which *Job* had from the uppermoſt of his people, *the Princes and Nobles.* The next ſhews us what reſpect he had from the lower ſort or whole body of the people.

Verſe 11. **When the ear heard me, then it bleſſed me; and when the eye ſaw me, it gave witneſs to me.**

I might give you the full ſence of this atteſtation of the people to *Job*, in that of the people to *David* (2 Sam. 3. 36.) where 'tis ſaid, all the people *took notice* of his mourning for the death of *Abner, and it pleaſed them.* Upon which acquieſcence and ſatisfaction of the people with that particular act, the Divine Hiſtorian takes occaſion to report the peoples ſatisfaction with all his actions, *As whatſoever the King did pleaſed all the people.* Not that the people ſwallowed all the Kings actions by an implicit faith, or cryed up (as the flatterers of great Princes often do) his vices for vertues, or his evil deeds for good; but the meaning is, that *David* was ſo prudent in his carriage, and righteous in all his adminiſtrations to the people, that they took high content in him, and were pleaſed with him to the full. *As* David *was Gods Darling and Favourite, a man after his own heart, ſo he was a King after the heart of the people, their darling and delight;* and therefore as he did all well, ſo they took all well that he did; whatſoever the King did pleaſed all the people. This (I ſay) is the clear ſence and interpretation of *Job*'s Text, *When the ear heard me, then it bleſſed me,* &c. Yet I ſhall touch upon it in the parts a little more diſtinctly.

When the ear heard me, &c.] The ear is the proper organ of hearing; nor hath it any other buſineſs to do, or office to perform, but to hear. The ear, a part, a little part of man, is here put ſynecdochically for the whole man; *When the ear heard me,* is, when any man heard me, *he bleſſed me;*

Auris pro audiente, oculus pro vidente.

And when the eye ſaw me, it gave witneſs to me.

The **eye** is put for the man, or for the perſon ſeeing, as the ear for the perſon hearing.

Again, When he ſaith indefinitely, *When the ear heard, and the eye ſaw me,* we are to expound it univerſally, *for all ears that heard, and all eyes that ſaw him:* As if he had ſaid, Every one that *heard me, bleſſed me,* and every one that ſaw me, *gave witneſs to me.* There was not any hearer but did bleſs me; not any beholder but gave witneſs to me.

Thoſe words, **heard me,** may be taken two wayes.

Firſt, Thus, *Which heard me* perſonally ſpeaking.

Secondly, Thus, *Which heard me* ſpoken of, or my proceedings reported by others.

But what did the ear which heard *Job?* Himſelf anſwers in the Text, *It bleſſed me:* Or (as Mr. *Broughton* renders it) *They held me happy.* We read in Scripture this act of bleſſing three wayes ſpoken of. Firſt, Of God bleſſing man. Secondly, Of man bleſſing God. Thirdly, Of man bleſſing man. Here's bleſſing on all hands, but with a difference.

First, When God bleſſeth, He effectually and irreſiſtibly conveighs a bleſſing. He whom God bleſſeth is ſurely bleſſed. *He hath bleſſed* (ſaid *Balaam*, Numb. 23. 20.) *and I cannot reverſe it.* The creature cannot repeal the acts of God: What he will work for good or evil none can let. Our bleſſings are at the command of God (*Pſal.* 133. 3.) *There* (that is, in and upon *Sion*) *the Lord commanded the bleſſing.* And again (*Pſal.* 42. 8.) *The Lord will command his loving kindneſs*, that is, the effects and fruits of his love to fall upon me. The Lord doth not ſtand treating about, or entreating for a bleſſing upon us; He can lay his charge or command upon it, and it obeyeth. As he is able to curſe our bleſſings (*Mal.* 2. 2.) ſo to bleſs the very curſes which men caſt upon us.

Dei benedicere eſt benefacere.

Secondly, Man bleſſeth God by acknowledging his bleſſedneſs, and that all our bleſſings come from him; or we are then ſaid to bleſs God, when we confeſs and declare that he hath bleſſed us. *Bleſs the Lord* (ſaith *David*, Pſal. 103. 1, 2.) *O my ſoul, and all that is within me bleſs his holy Name; bleſs the Lord, O my ſoul and forget not all his benefits*; that is, forget none at all of them. As often as we thankfully remember the benefits of God, we bleſs God. We cannot benefit God by bleſſing him; but we ſhould alwayes bleſs him for his benefits.

Thirdly, Man bleſſeth man, two wayes: Either firſt, When he doth conceive and repute him bleſſed, and ſo it may be underſtood here, *They bleſſed me*; that is, they eſteemed and reputed me bleſſed. Or ſecondly, When one man wiſheth another bleſſed, or prayeth for a bleſſing upon him, either as to his perſon, or his undertakings. In the former ſence, That woman bleſſed the Mother of Chriſt (*Luke.* 11. 27.) *Bleſſed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which gave thee ſuck.* As if ſhe had ſaid, that Woman is to be accounted bleſſed; that bare and brought thee up. In which ſence alſo *Mary* propheſied of her ſelf (*Luke* 1. 48) *Henceforth all generations ſhall call me bleſſed.* The Lord having beſtowed this great priviledge upon me to conceive and bring forth the Greateſt bleſſing that ever the world had, the world ſhall confeſs and eſteem me bleſſed. And thus it was propheſied of Chriſt, who is the bleſſing of all Nations (*Pſal.* 72. 17.) *All Nations ſhall call him bleſſed*; That is, they ſhall declare him bleſſed, and bleſs God for him. And thus *Solomon* ſpeaks of the vertuous Woman (*Prov.* 31. 28.) *Her children ariſe up and call her bleſſed, her Husband alſo, and he praiſeth her.* So here, *The ear that heard me, bleſſed me*; that is, all that heard me, or heard of me, judged and called me bleſſed.

But that of the Apoſtle may be objected (*Heb.* 7. 7.) *Without all contradiction the leſs is bleſſed of the greater*, &c. Where ſpeaking of *Melchiſedec*, who bleſſed *Abraham*, he ſaith, *See how great a man this* Melchiſedec *was to whom* Abraham *gave tithes*, &c. *Abraham* was a great man, yet *Melchiſedec* was greater, becauſe he bleſſed *Abraham.*

Then how can the common people be ſaid to bleſs their Soveraign Prince? How can the leſſer bleſs the greater?

I anſwer; There is a twofold giving of a bleſſing: Firſt, An authoritive giving of a bleſſing, of which that Axiome of the Apoſtle, *Without all contradiction the leſs is bleſſed of the greater*, is to be underſtood. *Melchiſedec* bleſſed *Abraham*, and *Iſaac* bleſſed *Jacob*, and *Jacob* the twelve Patriarchs, with a prophetick ſpirit, and with authority or warrant from God to aſſure them of a bleſſing.

Secondly, There is a bleſſing by way of devotion or well wiſhing; And thus without contradiction, *the greater may be bleſſed of the leſs.* The meaneſt ſubject may wiſh well to his Lord, and pray for his ſucceſs and proſperity. So here, *They bleſſed me*; that is, they wiſhed me well, or did pray for a bleſſing upon me.

The latter clauſe is of the ſame ſence, *When the eye ſaw me it gave witneſs to me*; That is, it gave a good report. There is a twofold witneſs-giving: Firſt, Againſt a man: Secondly, For him. *Job* had no witneſſes againſt him, but he had ſtore of witneſſes for him; All gave him their good word, their teſtimony. So that it is as much as to ſay, *I was by the publick conſent and general vote of all reputed a juſt Governour*; all agree that I had decreed and acted righteouſly towards all men. The witneſs which Chriſt received from the people was but ſuch another, though Chriſt deſerved infinitely better (*Mark* 7. 37.) *He hath done all things well, He maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to ſpeak.* Indeed *Job* did all things ſo well, that though he did no miracles in natural things, yet he did that which was very like the miracles of Chriſt in civils; as he ſaith (*v.* 13. 15.) *I made the widows heart* (who was even dumb with ſorrow) *ſing for Joy*; *I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame.* Theſe were marvellous, if not miraculous works of Juſtice: and no wonder, when he was eyes to them that could not ſee, to hear him ſay, *When the eye ſaw me, it gave witneſs to me.* And therefore,

If we conſider this verſe with the cauſal Particle, which begins the next (I ſhall meddle no further with that verſe at preſent) *The ear which heard me, bleſſed me, and the eye which ſaw me, gave witneſs to me*; *Becauſe I delivered the poor that cryed, and the fatherleſs, and him that had none to help him*; If I ſay, we conſider this verſe with that cauſal Particſe, we may be ſufficiently enformed, that it was not for nothing, or without cauſe, that *Job* was thus bleſſed and witneſſed to by all that heard and ſaw him.

Hence Note, *They that do well, eſpecially Magiſtrates that do well, ſhall probably hear well, and be reported well among their people.*

Regium eſt male audire cum benè feceris.

For though it be true, *To do well and hear it is kingly*; and *filthy Dreamers* (as *Jude* calls them) *will deſpiſe Dominion, and ſpeak evil of Dignities*, let them do never ſo well. Unquiet ſpirits will quarrel and contradict whoever is uppermoſt; though, I ſay, all this be true, and (the beſt of Princes when they have done their beſt have found it ſo) yet they who do well, are in the faireſt way to hear well; and God, who hath the hearts of all men in his hand, doth uſually give righteous Magiſtrates a place in the hearts, and honour from the mouthes of all men. *When the righteous are in Authority, the people rejoyce* (Pro. 29. 2.) That is, they have cauſe to rejoyce, and commonly they do ſo. The Scepter of good Magiſtrates is the peoples ſtaff: while they wear the Robes of honour, the people are cloathed with garments of gladneſs. Now Garments of Gladneſs are alſo *Garments of praiſe* (*Iſa.* 61. 3.) As when mourners are comforted of God, they praiſe him; ſo they who are comforted by man, praiſe man. Magiſtrates are ſet up *for the praiſe of them that do good* (Rom. 13. 3.) That is, they ſhould praiſe, commend, and encourage thoſe among their ſubjects that do good, and doing ſo they give their ſubjects much cauſe of praiſing them, and of praying for a bleſſing upon them. *They who are a bleſſing to the people, ſhall be bleſſed by the people.* (Jer. 31. 23.) *Thus ſaith the Lord of Hoſts the God of* Iſrael, *as yet, they ſhall uſe this ſpeech in the land of* Judah, *and in the Cities thereof, when I ſhall bring again their Captivity. The Lord bleſs thee O habitation of juſtice and mountain of holineſs.* Whether this Prophecy was fulfilled at the return of the *Jews* from *Babylon*, or when Chriſt the Meſſias came in the fleſh, or whether it be yet to be fulfilled at that great and glorious call of the *Jews* to faith in Chriſt, is queſtioned among Interpreters; but 'tis out of all queſtion, that whenſoever they or any other people ſhall become, through the care and good government of their Magiſtrates, *an habitation of righteouſneſs*; When Courts of Juſtice are habitations of Juſtice; When Juſtice is done there as well as declared and ſpoken of there; When they who have Juſtice in their power, put it forth in their actings; Then the common cry of the people ſhall be, *The Lord bleſs thee O habitation of Juſtice*, &c. And it is a ſad argument, that there is a failure of Juſtice in the Magiſtrate, when inſtead of a bleſſing from the people, we hear of much complaining among the people. All the particular bleſſings which *David* deſired might meet in his government are gathered into this one (*Pſal.* 144. 14.) *That there may be no complaining in our ſtreets.* Some (I know) will alwayes be complaining, nothing will pleaſe them; yet when a people inſtead of bleſſing are generally complaining of and murmuring againſt their Magiſtrates, when inſtead of bleſſing and wiſhing them good, they are reviling and ſpeaking evil of them, eſpecially when inſtead of bleſſing them, they are curſing and wiſhing evil to them, theſe are ſad ſymptomes of many preſent evils, and preſages of worſe. In *Job's* Commonwealth, there was nothing heard but bleſſing; he bleſſed the people, and the people bleſſed him. Thus it hath been between Prince and People; And thus it ſhall be at the fulfilling of that promiſe (*Iſa.* 1. 26.) *I will reſtore thy Judges as at the firſt, and thy Counſellors as at the beginning; afterward thou ſhalt be called the City of righteouſneſs, the faithful City.*

Secondly, Obſerve, *That reverence and praiſe which Magiſtrates gain by righteous and vertuous actions is honourable indeed.*

The worſt of men, the worſt of Magiſtrates, have had high Encomions and Praiſes; But good Magiſtrates deſerve them. To be commended for piety and equity; To be commended becauſe we have done commendable things, is the only true commendation. Some do but borrow a bleſſing from others, and others baſely beg it. Some Magiſtrates are bleſſed only for fear, and others for hope. Of theſe latter *Solomon* ſpeaks (*Pro.* 27. 14.) *He that bleſſeth his friend with a loud voyce, riſing early in the morning, it ſhall be counted a curſe to him.* To bleſs our friends is ſo much our duty, that 'tis our duty to bleſs our enemies; yet there is a bleſſing of our friends which is our ſin, and may prove a curſe both to them and us. He that bleſſeth his friend *with a loud voyce,* when his heart is ſilent, or meaneth him no good, or ſecretly wiſheth ill to him, this hypocritical bleſſing of a friend, will be an enemy, or a curſe to him that uſeth it. Again, he that *bleſſeth his friend with a loud voyce,* as if he had a mind that all ſhould know it, when himſelf knows he deſerves no ſuch matter, this man doth but call aloud for a deſerved curſe upon himſelf. *To bleſs thoſe who deſerve it not, deſerves a curſe.* The undue honour which we give to others, is our own ſhame and diſgrace; and as it turns to the ſhame and diſgrace of the giver, ſo of thoſe to whom 'tis given; not only becauſe it hardens and fattens them in their ſin, but becauſe others know 'tis falſe, and ſee their ſhame and nakedneſs, their filth and deformity, through all the painted coverings which paraſites and flatterers put upon them. *They can never receive honour from others, who have not the root of it in themſelves.*

Again, *Job* ſetting forth his proſperity in the capacity of a Magiſtrate, brings in the peoples high eſteem of him, as the proof of it.

Whence note, Thirdly, *It is a great happineſs to a Magiſtrate, when he hath the hearts and affections, the good will and the good wiſhes of his people.*

When the ear that hears bleſſeth, and the eye that ſees gives witneſs to a Prince, then he is an happy Prince indeed. What is it for a Prince to command the bodies of his Subjects, while he hath no room in their affections, nor is at all intereſted in their prayers and well-wiſhes. The love of a people is the beſt treaſure and ſecurity of Princes. He cannot want their purſes while he hath their prayers; yea well-wiſhes and prayers from a good heart upon good grounds, are better then the fulleſt purſes and largeſt revenues. Who knows what the comings in of prayer may amount unto? Prayer can build and pull down; Prayer can both plant and root up. What is it that prayer cannot do, that is, prevail with God to do, when ſent up to Heaven by thoſe that are the Favourites of Heaven, and have through grace the ear of God? Whatſoever a Prince looſeth, he may comfort himſelf ſo long as he doth not looſe the prayers of the Godly; and whatſoever a Prince enjoyes, he hath no reaſon to rejoyce in it, while he looſeth their well-wiſhes and prayers. Better looſe Armies then looſe prayers; prayers may ſoon recover Armies, but Armies can never (as ſuch) recover prayer. When the Pſalmiſt would deſcribe the miſerable and deſperate condition of the enemies of the Church, in all their attempts and plots, He doth it firſt, by ſetting the prayers of the Church againſt them (*Pſal.* 129. 5.) *Let them all be confounded and turned back that hate* Sion; *let them be as the graſs upon the houſe-tops, which withereth afore it groweth up,* &c. Secondly, He doth it by ſhewing that they had not the leaſt breath of prayer for them (*v.* 8.) *Neither do they which go by ſay, The bleſſing of the Lord be upon you, we bleſs you in the name of the Lord.* They were ſo far from having any ſolemn dayes of prayer, or any dayes ſet apart to pray for a bleſſing upon them, that they had not ſo much as a tranſient prayer, or a good wiſh from any man that paſſed by. Not to pray our ſelves, or to be caſt out of the prayers of others, is the worſt of any mans caſe.

Laſtly, We are not to look upon theſe words as a bare narrative only of what was done. *Job* deſcribes matter of duty as well as matter of fact, what ſhould be, as well as what was.

Hence Note, Fourthly, *It is the duty of people to pray for, and wiſh a bleſſing upon their Magiſtrates.*

This the Apoſtle gives in charge (1 *Tim.* 2. 1, 2.) *I exhort therefore, that firſt of all ſupplications, prayers, interceſſions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for Kings, and for all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godlineſs and honeſty,* &c. This he would have firſt in prayer, which ſome expound, as if the firſt prayer when the Church aſſembled together ſhould be for their Magiſtrates. But, I rather conceive the Apoſtle doth exhort to this as a thing of prime conſideration, or as that which ſhould have a principal place in all Church-Aſſemblies. As we ſhould ſeek to God for a bleſſing upon all holy and ſpiritual, ſo alſo upon Civil adminiſtrations, and upon thoſe by whom they are adminiſtred. For as his bleſſing only makes the Ordinances of his own worſhip ſweet and profitable to us, ſo alſo the Ordinances of Government. *The heart of the King* (ſaith *Solomon,* Prov. 21. 1.) *is in the hand of the Lord;* and the heart of the Lord is very much in the hand of his people, praying and calling upon him in faith and with uprightneſs.

Laſtly, Whereas *Job* ſaith, *The eye which ſaw me, gave witneſs to me.*

Note, *It is our duty to give a good Teſtimony to all, eſpecially to Princes that are good and do good.*

While the Law of God (in the ninth Commandment) forbids the bearing of falſe witneſs, it commands the bearing of a true witneſs. As to defame and caſt aſperſions upon them that deſerve well, is a great wickedneſs; ſo it is our ſin to conceal our teſtimony, or not to ſpeak well of them at all times, when called thereunto. To deny or withhold juſt praiſe, is next door to the giving of undue praiſes. To do the latter is flattery; and not to do the firſt is at leaſt a defect of charity, if not an effect of envie. It may be much beſides our duty to ſpeak evil of our Rulers when they have done evil; but not to ſpeak well of them, when they do well, is alwayes a neglect of duty. *He that juſtifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the juſt, even they both are an abomination to the Lord* (Pro. 17. 15.) And they who do not juſtifie the Godly, in all that they have done juſtly, cannot (as to ſuch forbearance) be accepted of the Lord. Chriſt himſelf ſaith to *Pilate* (John 18. 37.) *To this end was I born, and for this cauſe came I into the world, that I ſhould bear witneſs unto the truth.* To bear witneſs to the truths of God, is the Great end of our coming into the world; and 'tis no little one to bear witneſs to the truth of man, whether it be the truth of his opinion, or the truth of his practice. 'Tis beſt to be found doing good our ſelves; and 'tis very good to be found giving witneſs to thoſe who do ſo. Yet we muſt uſe much caution in doing it. There are few that are able to hear of the good they have done, without taking hurt. A true teſtimony may have a temptation in it. And therefore we muſt not be at this work too much, nor too openly; indeed, not at all, but in theſe two caſes. Firſt, To vindicate them when wronged. Secondly, To incite them when diſcouraged, otherwiſe, as it hath been long ſince noted, *The ſafeſt and moſt friendly way is, to tell men of their faults and failings to their faces, and to report their vertues and good deeds behind their backs.*

Thus we ſee what reverence and reſpect this good man had of all his people, as alſo the reaſon and ground of it, even *Becauſe he delivered the poor that cryed,* &c. If we conſider this whole context from the ſeventh verſe incluſively to the end of the eleventh, we have a compleat deſcription of a Magiſtrate, in all the circumſtances of his ſtate and honour in publick adminiſtrations.

Firſt, We have the ſeat of Judgment prepared for him.

Secondly, We have him paſſing through the ſtreets to it, with due equipage and attendance.

Thirdly, We have all men giving reverence to his perſon and authority. The young men modeſtly withdrawing, the aged riſing and ſtanding up.

Fourthly, We have the Princes and Nobles keeping ſilence while he ſpake and gave out his ſentence.

Fifthly, We have the people highly contented with and applauding his ſentence as juſt and righteous to all, as benign and favourable to the oppreſſed and the poor. A Magiſtrate cannot expect more honour then was given *Job*; nor a people more juſtice then was done by *Job.* Happy, thrice happy is that Prince, and as happy are that people, where there is ſuch a reciprocation of reſpect and righteouſneſs.

And indeed ſo great was this reciprocation of reſpect and righteouſneſs between *Job* and his people, that, I ſuppoſe, a parallel of it hath ſcarce been made or heard of in any Commonwealth. This aſſertive memorial of what was really acted by *Job*, and anſwered by his people, ſeems to equal, if not to exceed any ſpeculative model of government drawn out by the ſtudies of the moſt curious Profeſſors in politicks. Here's as much, if not more practiſed, then *Plato's* Commonwealth had in *Idæa* or propoſal. And that which ſome have ſaid of *Zenophon's Cyrus*, that ſurely it was written, rather to ſet forth the ſhape and picture of a good Prince, then as the hiſtory of a Prince, may be ſaid alſo of this narrative made by *Job* of his government, did not the Scripture aſſure us, that this book doth contain a certain hiſtory, and is a divine report of what was done, not a parable or ſpeculation about what ought to be done, by a juſt Prince towards his people, and by a dutiful people towards their Prince.

VERS. 12, 13, 14.

Becauſe I delivered the poor that cryed, and the fatherleſs, and him that had none to help him.

The bleſſing of him that was ready to periſh came upon me, and I cauſed the widows heart to ſing for joy.

I put on righteouſneſs, and it cloathed me; my Judgment was as a Robe and a Diadem.

IN the context of theſe three verſes, and in the three that follow, *Job* gives the reaſon, or ſhews cauſe why all ſorts of men gave him ſuch reverence, and had him in ſuch high eſteem, as hath been ſhewed from the precedent paſſages of this Chapter. *When the ear heard me, then it bleſſed me; and when the eye ſaw me, it gave witneſs to me.* Whence was all this? The reaſon was not barely, becauſe he was a great and a wealthy man, becauſe he had thouſands of Sheep, and hundreds of Oxen; Nor ſecondly, Did he by any diſſembling courteſie or courtſhip, ſteal the hearts of the people, as *Abſalon* by his faining and flattering ſtories, trayterouſly ſtole away the hearts of the people from *David* his father to himſelf; Nor thirdly, Was *Job* thus reverenced and eſteemed, becauſe of any undue compliance with all ſorts of people, bearing with their exorbitances, and forbearing to draw his ſword againſt Offenders; it was not becauſe he let every man do what he pleaſed, or what was good in his own eyes, that all were ſo well pleaſed with him, and wiſhed well to him. Such ſleepy Magiſtrates are ſometimes cryed up, and had in great eſteem, by thoſe who are of no eſteem.

Neither theſe, nor any like theſe were the Reaſons why *Job* was witneſſed to by every eye that ſaw him; but the true reaſon is laid down in the Text, it was his faithfulneſs to his truſt, or his impartial adminiſtration of Juſtice to all, in the two main parts or branches of it. Firſt, His readineſs to help the poor, and the oppreſſed; this is laid down at large from the Twelfth to the Seventeenth verſe. Secondly, His undaunted courage in oppoſing and ſuppreſſing the wicked, eſpecially ſuch as were alſo proud oppreſſors (*ver.* 17.) *I brake the jaws of the wicked, and pulled the ſpoil out of his teeth*; Here was the true reaſon why *Job* was honoured, he miniſtred Juſtice, and he miniſtred it impartially to the poor, in helping them; to the proud and wicked, in puniſhing them.

But it may be queſtioned whether or no *Job* did well, thus to cry up his Juſtice, and to proclaim his own righteouſneſs? Doth he well to ſay, this I have done, and that I have done? *I have delivered the poor that cryed, and the fatherleſs, and him that hath no helper; I have put on Righteouſneſs, and cloathed me*, &c. Was this comely for *Job*? Doth not this commendation of himſelf diſcommend him? And is it not a mans diſpraiſe to praiſe himſelf?

I anſwer, For a man to ſpread his plumes, to ſet forth his own works, to deck himſelf with what he hath done, that thereby he may appear glorious in the eyes of the world, and go away with the applauſe of men, this is not only vanity and weakneſs, but a kind of madneſs, yea this is to play the fool in earneſt; and hence in the Hebrew the ſame word ſignifies to praiſe our ſelves, and to be fooliſh; nor is there any greater argument of fooliſhneſs then ſelf-praiſe: ſurely *Job* had another deſign then this, he reported his good deeds, not to boaſt of them, or to blaze them abroad, and tell the world what a rare man, what a miracle of Magiſtracy, he had been. No, he was conſtrained to it in a way of ſelf-vindication, he had no itch to do it in a way of ſelf-commendation. And thus it is not only lawful but a duty for any man to ſet forth the goodneſs of his actions, when charged with evil, and to aſſert the righteouſneſs of his wayes, when he is challenged wrongfully. Scandals caſt upon a good man reach further then himſelf, they reflect upon the whole kind, even upon all good men, they reflect upon the very profeſſion of Godlineſs, yea upon God himſelf; and if ſo, then every good man is bound to the utmoſt line of truth to wipe them off, and quit himſelf from them.

And therefore, Firſt, *Job* ſpake what he had done, becauſe his Friends had accuſed him for doing otherwiſe. Secondly, He ſpake what he had done for truths ſake, and that God might be glorified, not for his own ſake, or that he might be applauded. Thirdly, He ſpake what he had done, that he might not be prejudiced in what he was further both to do and ſpeak. Fourthly, He ſpake of his righteous acts, not as reſting upon his own righteouſneſs, but to ſhew forth the fruits of a true faith, or that his faith had more in it then a verbal profeſſion.

So much of the general ſtate and ſcope of theſe words; now to the particulars.

Verſe 12. **Becauſe I have delivered the poor that cryed.**

Here we have the poor in their worſt condition, the poor crying; And here we have the Magiſtrate in his beſt condition, The Magiſtrate delivering. 'Tis a ſad hearing, though very uſual, to hear the poor cry; and 'tis a bleſſed ſight, but not very uſual, to ſee the Magiſtrate delivering; and though this text ſhews us that bleſſed ſight, the Magiſtrate delivering the poor, yet it doth not ſhew us either from whom or from what the poor were delivered. And ſo the queſtion is, Firſt, From what, Secondly, From whom *Job* delivered the poor? I anſwer both, firſt in general; He delivered them from evil men, and from evils of any kind. Secondly, More eſpecially he delivered them from oppreſſors, and their oppreſſions of every kind. The Septuagint render it, *Becauſe I delivered the poor out of the hand of the mighty*, or out of the hand of the ſtrong who did overpower, and ſo oppreſs them.

I delivered the poor that cryed.

The word ſignifieth the cry of one extreamly afflicted, earneſtly imploring aid, help, or aſſiſtance. *David* ſpeaking of his enemies (*Pſal.* 18. 41.) ſaith, *They cryed, but there was none to ſave them; they cryed even to the Lord, but he anſwered them not; then did I beat them as ſmall as duſt before the wind; I did caſt them out as the dirt in the ſtreets.* Such was the cry of the poor to *Job*, they were cruelly dealt with; The proud were ready to beat them to duſt, and to tread them under-foot as dirt. As when a fierce and greedy Lyon hath faſtned on his prey, the poor creature cryes out being ready to be torn in pieces; ſo the poor cry out for the help of Juſtice, when theſe cruel Lyons have got them into their claws. Thus *David* deſcribes the Oppreſſor (*Pſal.* 10. 8, 9, 10.) *He ſitteth in the lurking places of the villages, in the ſecret places doth he murder the innocent; his eyes are privily ſet againſt the innocent: He lyeth in wait, ſecretly as a Lyon in his den: he lieth in wait to catch the poor; he doth catch the poor when he draweth him into his net: He croucheth and humbleth himſelf, that the poor may fall by his ſtrong ones*, or, *into his ſtrong parts.* What for the power, and what for the policy of theſe Lyons, the poor can hardly eſcape their clutches; and when the poor are caught, what can they do but cry, either to God in Heaven, or to the Gods on earth for help. To be ſure, when they cry to the God of Heaven, he both can and will help them in his own time and way; as is ſaid (*Pſal.* 34. 6.) *This poor man cryed, and the Lord heard him, and ſaved him out of all his troubles.* And when they cry to the Gods on earth, Magiſtrates and Judges, they ſhould hear them and ſave them out of all their troubles; and they who (as *Job*) are faithful, will do it with all their might and power. *I delivered the poor that cryed.*

Vociferatio pauperis non tam vocis eſt, quam calamitatis.

This cry of the poor is twofold, either formal or vertual; ſometime it is formal, or an explicit cry; ſometime it is only vertual, that is, The poor mans caſe cryeth, his condition cryeth, though he ſay nothing; as it is ſaid of the blood of *Abel*, it cryed (*Gen.* 4. 10.) His blood did not cry with a formal or formed voyce, but equivalently and vertually his blood did cry and cry aloud to God. The poor mans caſe cryeth alwayes, and he often cryes out for the ſadneſs of his caſe. It is ill when the poor cry, but worſe when they are not delivered; *I delivered the poor that cryed.* The Lord warns his ancient people (*Deut.* 15. 9.) *Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart, ſaying, the ſeventh year, the year of releaſe is at hand, and thy eye be evil againſt thy poor Brother, and thou giveſt him nought, and he cry unto the Lord againſt thee, and it be ſin* (that is, Judgment) *unto thee.* When the poor cry, becauſe they are not releived in charity, the rich may ſmart for it; how much more when they cry becauſe they are not releived in Juſtice. There are three degrees of danger from the cry of the poor: Firſt, To thoſe who do not relieve them: Secondly, To thoſe who do oppreſs them; Thirdly, To thoſe who do not deliver them, when they cry, from their Oppreſſors. *I delivered the poor that cryed,*

And the fatherleſs.

The condition of the fatherleſs was opened (*Chap.* 22. 9.) therefore I will not ſtay upon it here.

And him that hath none to help him.

We have a threefold object of *Job*'s compaſſion, and of his Juſtice; for though juſtice belongs properly to the Magiſtrate, yet a temperament of diſcreet pity is uſeful for him in his place, eſpecially for the ſpeeding of delivering Juſtice (which is exerciſed towards this threefold object in the text) Firſt, *The poor*: Secondly, *The fatherleſs*; Thirdly, *Him that hath none to help him.* And this laſt is the ſaddeſt caſe of the three. It is ſaid of that Great Prince, whoſoever he was, after he had made many ſpoils in the Nations (*Dan.* 11. 45.) *yet he ſhall come to his end, and none ſhall help him*; that is, though he hath many helpers, yet none ſhall be able to help him. Now as that man is in a miſerable ſtate, whom none ſhall help, though they endeavour it; ſo alſo is he who hath none, who will ſo much as try or endeavour to help him. Some are poor, who yet have many to help them; ſome are fatherleſs, yet not helpleſs. The latter of the three is both, and more then both, the former two; yet as in Scripture the poor and fatherleſs are the ſame, ſo either or both are the ſame with the helpleſs (*Pſal.* 10. 14.) *The poor committeth himſelf to thee, thou art the helper of the fatherleſs.* As *Job* in his Magiſtratical capacity ſtood in the place of God, ſo he acted like God towards the people. *I* (ſaith he) *delivered the poor that cryed, the fatherleſs, and him that had none to help him.* As if he had ſaid, *If any complained to me of wrong, who was poor, or fatherleſs, or helpleſs, I was a friend, and father, and helper to him, I was at hand to do him right; I did not reſpect the perſons of men, but their cauſe; whoſoever wanted, deſired, and deſerved my help had it, and they moſt, who* (*as to the making of any return to me*) *could deſerve it leaſt.* *Job* exerciſed his power eminently towards thoſe three, who were objects of his pity as well as of his Juſtice, *the poor, the fatherleſs, and him that had none to help him.*

But did not *Job* exerciſe Juſtice towards all? Did he not help the rich as well as the poor, the fatherleſs, and him that had no helper? Doubtleſs he did; but becauſe that's the ſpecial work of a Magiſtrate, and Magiſtrates are uſually backward to help the helpleſs, therefore he names them. *The rich hath many friends* (Pro. 14. 20.) or as the Margin reads it, *Many are the lovers of the rich.* Yea the rich man hath a kind of command upon Magiſtrates and Judges; *But the poor* (as *Solomon* ſaith there) *is hated of his own neighbour.* Therefore to be a friend to, and help *the poor, the fatherleſs, and him that hath none to help him,* is an unanſwerable argument of pure delight (which is alſo the delight and exerciſe of God himſelf, *Jer.* 9. 24.) in the exerciſe of loving kindneſs, righteouſneſs, and judgment, and that Juſtice is done for Juſtice ſake, or in love to Juſtice.

Hence Obſerve, *Magiſtrates ſhould cheifly take care of the poor, fatherleſs, and helpleſs.*

We read (*Pſal.* 82. which is the Magiſtrates Pſalm) what a charge is given to Magiſtrates, that theſe be taken care of and provided for. *God ſtands in the Congregation of the mighty, he judgeth among the gods; how long will ye judge unjuſtly, and accept of the perſons of the wicked?* (there's the reproof; then follows the direction) *Defend the poor, and fatherleſs; do Juſtice to the afflicted and needy; deliver the poor and needy, rid them out of the hand of the wicked.* As if the Lord had ſaid, this is your main buſineſs; when ye have a rich mans cauſe before you, ye are to do him right; but ye muſt be ſure to defend the poor; ye ought to do the former, but take heed ye leave not the latter undone. This ſhould be your great care. The poor are low in their condition, and they are often laid lower by oppreſſion; the Magiſtrate is ſet up on purpoſe, both to protect them in their low condition, and to lift them up when they are laid lower by oppreſſion. Thus the Lord Jeſus is deſcribed in the adminiſtration of his Kingly government (*Pſal.* 72. 12.) *All Kings ſhall fall down before him, and all Nations ſhall ſerve him; for he ſhall deliver the needy when he cryeth, the poor alſo, and him that hath no helper.* As the higheſt muſt ſtoop to him and obey him, ſo the loweſt are raiſed up and ſaved by him. Jeſus Chriſt, who hath all power committed to him in Heaven and Earth, lays out his power moſt of all for their help, who have neither power nor helper. When Rulers do ſo, they not only follow the rule of Chriſt, but his example, they rule as Chriſt himſelf ruleth. As it ſhall be the honour of all Believers to reign with Chriſt hereafter; ſo 'tis the duty of all who reign now to reign like Chriſt.

Again, Taking *the helpleſs* as diſtinct from *the poor and fatherleſs,*

Obſerve, *To help thoſe that have none to help them, is the nobleſt way of helping.*

This is to help as Chriſt helpeth, and deliver as Chriſt delivereth; Chriſt Jeſus helped us when there was none to help us; He delivered us when none could deliver us; if all the Angels in Heaven had offered themſelves to help us, they could not; much leſs could any among the inferiour creatures give us help. *I have laid help* (ſaith God, *Pſal.* 89. 19.) *upon one that is mighty; I have exalted one choſen out of the people.* *David* was a mighty man, and he is there ſpoken of in the Pſalm as a type of the *mighty God* our Helper Jeſus Chriſt. He only had might enough to help us, when we had none to help us. And the depth of his humiliation, when he came to help us, is ſet forth by this, that he had none to help him; ſo he bemoaneth himſelf in that other Prophetical Pſalm (69. 20.) *Reproach hath broken my heart, and I am full of heavineſs: and I looked for ſome to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none.* Though Chriſt needed none to help him through his ſufferings for us; yet this was a great part of his ſuffering, that he was ſo far from finding any to help him, that he found none to comfort him, yea, none to pity him, which is the leaſt degree (if it may at all be called a degree) of help. As when Chriſt helped us, himſelf had no helper, ſo neither had we any: And as to help us then was an act worthy of God; ſo to help ſuch is one of the worthieſt acts of man. There are two Scriptures which (whether they be underſtood of ſpiritual and eternal deliverance by Chriſt, or of corporal and temporal deliverance) do both fully prove and clearly illuſtrate this truth. (*Iſa.* 59. 16.) *And he ſaw that there was no man, and wondered that there was none Interceſſour* (or interpoſer, that is, none who would ſtand up for truth and righteouſneſs, which were miſerably fallen in the ſtreet; none that had a heart or would put forth a hand to reform what was amiſs and ſet things right) *therefore his arm brought ſalvation to him, and his righteouſneſs it ſuſtained him*; that is, his own ſtrength or power, with that principle of infinite and unwearied righteouſneſs which was in him, carried him out in doing that for his people, and upon their oppreſſours, which none elſe either would or could. Again (*Iſa.* 63. 5.) *I looked* (ſaith the Lord) *and there was none to help, and I wondered, that there was none to uphold; therefore mine own arm brought ſalvation unto me* (but for my people) *and my fury it upheld me.* Thus the Lord works ſalvation when man neither can nor will, he helps when man neither can nor will. And when Magiſtrates work thus, when they deliver thoſe that have none to help them, none that either can nor will help them, then they work glorioufly, then they work like God himſelf. To help thoſe that are able to help themſelves, or have many helpers, is to act like men; but to help thoſe that have none to help, this, this is to act like God. Corrupt Magiſtrates love to have to do with the fat cattel, with thoſe that yield profit and preſent reward. *Felix* the Governour *hoped that money ſhould have been given him of* Paul *that he might looſe him; wherefore he ſent for him the oftner and communed with him* (Acts 24. 26.) *Felix* treated *Paul* fairly, but he had a foul hand, and a fouler heart; for when he ſaw nothing coming he left *Paul* bound; he had no mind to help him, becauſe he was helpleſs, only he ſhewed him ſome favour, which he looked ſhould return to him in a bribe. There are three ſorts of men, whom unrighteous Magiſtrates are very ſlow to help, how helpleſs ſoever they are. Firſt, Thoſe who deſerve nothing of them, nor have ever oblig'd them. They care not to benefit them, who have not been beneficial to them. Secondly, Thoſe who by reaſon of poverty cannot reward them, nor be beneficial to them. They have no freedom of ſpirit to do juſtice freely. Thirdly, Thoſe who cannot call them to account if they deny them juſtice. They need not fear them, therefore they care not to right them. They do juſtice only becauſe they dare not do otherwiſe; not becauſe they either love to do it, or becauſe 'tis their duty to do it. What *Solomon* obſerved in his time hath been experienced in all times (*Eccleſ.* 4. 1.) *So I returned, and conſidered the oppreſſions that are done under the Sun, and behold the tears of ſuch as are oppreſſed, and there was no comforter; and on the ſide of their oppreſſours, there was power, but they had no comforter*; Not a Magiſtrate that would comfort them, not a man in power would take their part; oppreſſors were ſtrong, and they were ſtrengthned; the oppreſſed were weak, and they were deſerted or left to ſhift for themſelves, to ſink or ſwim in their weakneſs. How ſad is it when they who have no power of their own, have no comfort from others? To deny comfort to thoſe who are in miſery, is more then inhumanity. When the *Jews* boaſted much of their ſacrifices, the Lord ſaith, *To what purpoſe is the multitude of your ſacrifices unto me* (Iſa. 1. 11.) while I find ſo little juſtice, ſo few acts of love and righteouſneſs one to another? and therefore he would not have them inſiſt ſo much upon their ſacrifices, but (*ver.* 17.) *Seek Judgment, relieve the oppreſſed, judge the fatherleſs, plead for the widow.* And when they cryed up their faſtings, he tells them (*Iſa.* 58. 6.) *Is not this the faſt which I have choſen, to looſe the bands of wickedneſs,* (that is, thoſe bands with which you have wickedly tyed your brethren to hard bargains or contracts) *to undo the heavy burdens* (by which your brethren are like to be undone) *to let the oppreſſed go free, and that ye brake every yoak.* This kind of mercy is better then either ſacrifices or faſts. This is at once every Magiſtrates duty and Glory, as here it was *Job's*; *I delivered the poor that cryed,* &c.

Frequenter fit ut nemini curæ ſint qui nec commodo nec incommodo eſſe poſſe videntur, gratis pœnitet eſſe probum.

Verſe 13. **The bleſſing of him that was ready to periſh came upon me.**

We have here a further deſcription of the perſons whom *Job* delivered, even ſuch as were *ready to periſh.* They who have none to help them, are within a ſtep of periſhing. Firſt, *To periſh,* ſtrictly taken, is to be annihilated, ſo beaſts periſh. Secondly, *To periſh,* more largely taken, is to dye, ſo the righteous periſh (*Iſa.* 57. 1.) Thirdly, *To periſh,* moſt largely taken, is to be in any extreamly bad and low condition of life. Fourthly, *To periſh,* taken in the worſt ſence, is to be eternally miſerable, or to be rapt up in the pains of Eternal death, (*John* 2. 16.) The periſhing here may be taken in either of the two middle ſences; *The bleſſing of him that was ready to periſh came upon me*; that is, he who was in preſent danger to looſe his life, or to be ruin'd utterly in his eſtate and cauſe, had cauſe to bleſs me. Men are ready to periſh four wayes; Firſt, Some by their own wants and neceſſities; Secondly, Many by the unmercifulneſs of others, who hate them, and watch an opportunity to deſtroy them. Thus the *Jews* were ordered to make confeſſion (*Deut.* 26. 5.) *And thou ſhalt ſpeak and ſay before thy Lord thy God,* a Syrian *ready to periſh was my father, and he went down into* Egypt, *and ſojourned there with a few, and became there a Nation great, mighty, and populous. Jacob* is called a *Syrian* becauſe he lived twenty years as a ſervant and ſon in *Syria* with *Laban,* who was alſo the ſon of *Bethuel* a *Syrian*; and he was ready to periſh, becauſe he feared the unmercifulneſs of his brother *Eſau,* who had threatned to kill him (*Gen.* 27. 41.) and marched againſt him with four hundred men in his return from *Laban.* Thirdly, Not a few are ready to periſh under falſe accuſations which bring them into hazzard of life or liberty. Thus *Joſeph* was ready to periſh upon the unjuſt ſuggeſtions of his wanton Miſtreſs againſt him. And thus the Apoſtle *Paul* was often ready to periſh by the wicked inſtigations of the *Jews,* and he was *delivered out of the mouth of the Lion* (2 Tim. 4. 17.) Fourthly, Others are ready to periſh by the juſt ſentence of the Judge, being condemned for their faults and offences; of ſuch ('tis conceived) *Solomon* ſpeaks (*Prov.* 31. 6.) *Give ſtrong drink to them that are ready to periſh, and wine to thoſe of a heavy heart*; that is to condemned perſons, give them ſomewhat to refreſh their ſpirits, leſt they ſink under their ſorrows and ſound away. 'Tis ſome comfort to thoſe who are ready to periſh to have their hearts a little cheared before they dye; but 'tis a comfort indeed to ſave them from death, as merciful Princes ſometimes do. It is ſaid of the Emperour *Theodoſius,* That he once in a great ſolemnity gave pardon to all that were priſoners, adding this merciful wiſh to his work of mercy; *I would I had the liberty even to raiſe the dead, and reſtore them unto life who are already periſhed.* We may ſuppoſe, that *Job* had *the bleſſing of him that was ready thus to periſh*; he was ſo merciful, that he ſometimes ſpared and pardoned thoſe who were juſtly condemned for, yet repented and promiſed amendment of their faults. When Offenders are deeply humbled and engage to become new men, it may not be amiſs to mix clemency with juſtice, in ſome caſes, and give them a new life. Magiſtrates muſt not encourage any to offend, but they may ſhew mercy to ſome that have offended. And *the bleſſing of thoſe that are ready to periſh,* not only by their own wants, or by the unmercifulneſs and falſe accuſations of others, but even by the juſt ſentence of the Law, may *come upon them,* as *Job* found it came upon him.

אֹבד *Notat ita deſtitutum neceſſariis ut vitam & incolumitatem tueri non poſſit.* Coc.

Non levis mihi ſuſpicio eſt, Jobū *nunc commendare illam optimi principis virtutem, miſericordiam, quâ mærentibus pœnas extremum capitis ſupplicium remittit.* Pined. Chryſoſt. *Hom.* 20. *ad Pop.* Antiochenum.

At the eleventh verſe of this Chapter, *Job* ſaid, *When the ear heard me, then it bleſſed me:* Here he ſaith, *The bleſſing of him that was ready to periſh came upon me.* There we had the act of bleſſing, here the fruit and effect of it: There we ſaw how and in what manner man bleſſeth man, here we ſee it is no vain thing for man to bleſs man. *Job* had, Firſt, The good word of the people, they all ſpake well of him, and of his government. He had ſecondly, The good wiſhes of the people, they all prayed for him: And he was ſenſible of the benefit of both, a bleſſing came upon him.

Hence obſerve, *They who for good cauſes are bleſſed by men, receive alſo a bleſſing from God.*

As, *the curſe cauſleſs ſhall not come* (Prov. 26. 2.) ſo where there is cauſe for a bleſſing it ſhall come. When men curſe maliciouſly (as *Shimei* curſed *David,* 2 Sam. 16. 5.) the Lord *requites good for their curſing,* as *David* hoped that day (*ver.* 12.) *Shimei* (ſaith the text) *came curſing,* but the Lord was ſo far from ſaying to the curſe, *come,* that he commanded a bleſſing *to come.* How much more will the Lord ſay to the bleſſing *come,* when men are deſervedly bleſſed by men. A good word from a good man, upon good grounds, may prove no ſmall good to us. The Law of *Moſes* (Deut. 4. 13.) gave command to the lender, concerning the borrower, *Thou ſhalt in any caſe deliver him the pledg again when the Sun is down, that he may ſleep in his own rayment, and bleſs thee.* As if it had been ſaid, The bleſſing of the poor man may prove a greater gain to thee then his pledge could. If thou wilt but give him cauſe to bleſs thee, thou ſhalt find the effect of his bleſſing.

Secondly, Obſerve, *It is a bleſſed and a bleſſing-procuring work, to help thoſe that are in a periſhing condition.*

By how much the worſer and more miſerable any mans condition is, by ſo much the better and more merciful is their work who give him relief; and by ſo much the more ſinful it is not to give him relief (*Prov.* 24. 11, 12.) *If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and thoſe that are ready to be ſlain; if thou ſayeſt, behold, we knew it not: doth not he that pondereth the heart, conſider it? and he that keepeth thy ſoul, doth not he know it? and ſhall not he render to every man according to his works?* The Proverb is at once a reproof of and a threatning againſt all thoſe that ſlightly paſs over, the ſad condition of others; who ſay, *They knew it not.* When the poor and diſtreſſed apply themſelves for help, it is the uſual excuſe of many to ſay; We know you not, we know not your condition, whether it be thus with you or no, nor do we know how you came into this condition; nor do we know how or by what means to help you out of it; and ſo they forbear to deliver thoſe that are drawn to death, and thoſe that are ready to be ſlain, either by hunger and cold, or by cruelty and perſecution, when 'tis in the power of their hand to do it. It is not a duty to deliver every own that is drawn to death, or ready to be ſlain; but thoſe that are drawn to death wrongfully, thoſe that are ready to be ſlain unjuſtly, thoſe that are ready to periſh under oppreſſing Burthens, we ſhould be ready to deliver. And let all take heed of ſaying to ſuch, *We knew it not*, or we know you not; That's the anſwer of a *Naball*; He, when *David* ſent his ſervants to him for proviſion, ſent them back with this cold comfort (1 *Sam.* 25. 10, 11.) *Who is* David, *and who is the Son of* Jeſſe? *There be many ſervants now adayes that break away every man from his Maſter; Shall I take my bread, and my water, and my fleſh, that I have killed for my ſhearers, and give it to men whom I know not whence they be?* This is the churles charity, *I know you not*: He knows how to ſave his purſe, by pretending he doth not know. But (as it follows in *Solomon*'s Proverb) *Doth not he that pondereth the heart conſider it? And he that keepeth thy ſoul, doth not he know it?* That is, Doth not God (who is the heart-ponderer, or weigher, and who hath a ballance for every thought, who is alſo the ſouls-keeper, doth not he) conſider and know the wants of ſuch a man? Doth not he know the ſorrows of his heart, and the weight of grief that preſſeth his ſoul? Doth not God alſo conſider and know, what thou haſt ſaid to put off this periſhing ſoul without affording any help? Doth not he know that this is a meer excuſe to colour thy not doing for him with thy ignorance, while the true reaſon is thy unwillingneſs to do it, and the hardneſs of thy heart? And ſeeing he knoweth whether our pretended ignorance and inability be real or no; he will (as *Solomon* concludes) *render to every one* (not according to his words, but) *according to his works. It is a vain thing to plead ignorance, or not knowing before the All-knowing God*, whether it be to excuſe our doing of evil, or our not doing that which is good, eſpecially our not doing this good, this bleſſed work, The deliverance of thoſe who are ready to periſh. This Magiſtrates ſhould do by their power, breaking the Jaws of the wicked (as we ſhall ſee *Job* did) who vex and overpower the innocent. And this inferiours ſhould do either by teſtifying or petitioning for them to the Magiſtrate. How noble and famous a work was that of *Eſther*, who ventured her own periſhing, to petition the King, when the *Jews* were ready to periſh through the malicious ſuggeſtions of *Haman*, (*Eſt.* 7. 3, 4.) *If I have found favour in thy ſight, O King, and if it pleaſe the King, let my life be given me at my petition, and my people at my requeſt; for we are ſold, I and my people, to be deſtroyed, to be ſlain, and to periſh*, &c. Such alſo was that act of *Ebed Melech*, the *Ethiopian*, in petitioning for the deliverance of *Jeremiah* the Prophet, who upon falſe accuſations was caſt into the Dungeon, and there *ready to periſh*; or as that good Eunuch told the King, *like to dye for hunger* (Jer. 38. 7, 8, 9.) How were the Children of *Iſrael* become (as the Lord calls them for their degenerate walkings, *Amos* 9. 7.) *As children of the Ethiopians?* How black and ſwarthy did they look, with wrath and choler, while they cauſed the holy Prophet to be caſt into the dungeon? And how like *a true* Iſraelite *indeed in whom there is no guile*, did this *Ethiopian* look, while in pity and compaſſion to the periſhing Prophet he obtained his releaſe from that ſtinking miery dungeon? But above all bleſſed, for ever bleſſed ſhall that work of the Lords free grace and mercy be called, who by one act ſaved millions of ſouls from an everlaſting periſhing, (*John* 3. 16.) *God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth on him might not periſh, but have everlaſting life:* Nor is the Lord forgetful to ſave poor ones from temporal periſhing (*Pſal.* 79. 11.) *The ſighing of the priſoner comes before him, and according to the greatneſs of his power, he preſerveth thoſe that are appointed to dye.*

Hæc divina potentia eſt gregatim & publicè ſervare multos autem occidere incendii at ruinæ potentia eſt. Sen. de ira.

Thirdly, Obſerve, *It is the duty of thoſe that have been delivered out of a periſhing condition, to bleſs their deliverers.*

It is their duty to bleſs their deliverers, both as to bleſs implyes thankfulneſs to them, and prayer for them. Deliverance from periſhing is the ſtrongeſt obligation to thankſgiving; if ever we have cauſe to bleſs any, we ſhould bleſs thoſe that keep us from periſhing. And here again we may turn to that more ſpiritual conſideration of our deliverance by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; How ſhould the bleſſing of thoſe many thouſand thouſands that were ready to periſh, come upon him every day? How ought we for ever to cry up the name of this our great Deliverer? We need not pray for a bleſſing upon him, but we ought to praiſe and magnifie him, who is above all bleſſings and praiſes. It is a high point of ingratitude not to bleſs men when we receive any good from them; much more when they either keep or pluck us out of the jaws of the greateſt evils. But 'tis a high point of impiety, not to bleſs Jeſus Chriſt, who hath at once procured us the greateſt good, and freed us from the greateſt evils. He that periſheth, looſeth all the bleſſings which belong to him in that capacity wherein he periſheth. What can he do leſs that is delivered from periſhing, then bleſs his Deliverer? *The bleſſing of him that was ready to periſh came upon me.*

And I cauſed the widows heart to ſing for joy.

Here's a farther evidence of *Job*'s righteous and merciful adminiſtrations. *He cauſed the widows heart to ſing for joy.* But doth the heart ſing? He ſhould have ſaid, and ſo the Septuagint ſay, *I cauſed the widows tongue to ſing for joy*; but he ſaith the heart; becauſe as true joy ſprings from the heart, ſo that's true joy which is hearty; poſſibly there may be a ſong in the mouth, when ſorrow and ſighs are at the heart; but when the heart ſings within, there's cauſe of joy without, though there be no outward rejoycing.

Cor canere dicitur impropriè; at quando cantus oris ex corde proficiſcitur, ea eſt vera lætitia. Druſ.

When *Job* ſaith, *I cauſed the widows heart to ſing for joy*; This notes a wonderful change in the widows ſtate; The widows heart is a ſorrowful heart, ſhe ſuppreſſeth words, unleſs to expreſs her ſorrow. Now to ſee her who could ſcarce ſpeak, ſing; her who could not contain her eyes from weeping, now not able to contain her heart from rejoycing, and her tongue from ſhouting, how great a change is this! But how did he cauſe the widows heart to ſing? Firſt, He delivered her from her enemies: Secondly, He relieved her in her neceſſities; either of theſe two wayes the widows heart is cauſed to ſing for joy.

Hence Note, *The widows ſtate in it ſelf is a ſorrowful ſtate.*

To make the widow ſing, is to make her ſing that is furtheſt from ſinging, 'tis to make her ſing who is moſt acquainted with ſorrow; the widow is in a deſolate condition, ſhe wants her husband to comfort her. There muſt needs be great cauſe of joy when they who are in ſo much heavineſs cannot chuſe but break out in ſinging. The Apoſtle ſaith (*James* 5. 17.) *Is any man merry, let him ſing.* And the captivated *Jews* being urged to ſing in *Babylon* could only ſigh out this doleful lamentation, *How ſhall we ſing the Lords ſong in a ſtrange land?* The widow is brought into a ſtrange ſtate; and therefore if ſhe ſing, we may be ſure her caſe is altered though her ſtate be the ſame. Much hath been offered about the widows ſad ſtate, at the twenty-ſecond Chapter, verſe nine, and elſe where in this book, whither I refer the Reader, and proceed to the next verſe, which ſhews us *Job* in ſuch a habit, as might well cauſe the widows heart, yea the moſt ſilent tongue to ſing for joy.

Verſ. 14. **I put on righteouſneſs, and it clothed me: my Judgment was as a Robe and a Diadem.**

Leſt any ſhould ſay that *Job* in helping the poor, the fatherleſs, and him that had no helper, and in cauſing the widows heart to ſing, was byaſs'd with pity, or blown up with popularity; And that to get the applauſe of ſuch kind of people, he had more reſpect to their perſons, then to the rule; and laboured more to do good turns or acts of charity to the poor, then to do juſtice to all; he to prevent, or remove ſuch ſuſpicions, affirms confidently that he was guided by his judgment, not by his affections; by rules of equity, not by bowels of pity in all he did. He indeed helped the poor and helpleſs, but not meerly becauſe poor and helpleſs; he, indeed, delivered thoſe who were ready to periſh, and cauſed the widows heart to ſing; but the reaſon why he did either the one or the other, was not becauſe the one was ready to periſh, and the other a widow, but becauſe all of them had right on their ſide, and he found himſelf as much engaged in duty as in deſire to ſtand up and improve his power for them. For all the while he was about this work, *He put on righteouſneſs, and it cloathed him, and his judgment was as a Robe and a Diadem.*

From the connexion of this verſe with the former

Obſerve, *A good Magiſtrate will not relieve ſome by wrong to any.*

Though he ought to ſhew compaſſion to the poor, yet he muſt not do the leaſt injuſtice for the poor. The Law of *Moſes* was expreſs in this (*Exod.* 23. 3.) *Thou ſhalt not countenance a poor man in his cauſe.* What? not ſhew favour to a poor man; no, not to a poor man, with wrong to Juſtice; not only is it ſinful to countenance or reſpect the perſon of a rich man, to a poor mans wrong, but to wrong the rich with reſpect to the poor is alſo exceeding ſinful: and the act is by ſo much the worſe, as the end is the better. It is a bleſſed end of our actions to help the poor, but that end muſt be compaſſed by good means; we ought not to lye for God, much leſs for man: *Officious lyes are as much againſt truth and righteouſneſs, as malicious ones are.* If we help a poor man becauſe poor, we muſt help him out of our own, not out of other mens purſes; we muſt not relieve any one againſt the right of another. We muſt judge according to the equity of the cauſe, not according to the poverty of the perſon. Be ſure, when you put on (as the Apoſtle exhorts the elect of God to do (*Col.* 5. 12.) *Bowels of mercies and kindneſs*, that ye put on righteouſneſs too, and then the more of them you put on, the more nobly you act, and you look the more like the elect of God, yea, the more like God himſelf, who (as the Prophet deſcribeth him, *Jer.* 9. 24.) when he *exerciſeth loving kindneſs*, doth alſo, in conjunction with it, *exerciſe judgment and righteouſneſs in the earth.*

I put on Righteouſneſs] What Righteouſneſs? there is a twofold Righteouſneſs: Firſt, Of our perſons: Secondly, Of our actions; we put on Chriſt by faith in juſtification as the former righteouſneſs; *For he is made unto us of God wiſdom and Righteouſneſs. As many as have been baptized into Chriſt, they have* (thus) *put on Chriſt* (Gal. 3. 37.) This is our beſt cloathing, even our wedding Garment (*Iſa.* 61. 10.) *I will greatly rejoyce in the Lord, my ſoul ſhall be joyful in my God, for he hath cloathed me with the garment of ſalvation; he hath covered me with the robes of Righteouſneſs; as a Bridegroom decketh himſelf with ornaments, and as a Bride arrayeth her ſelf with her Jewels.* Bleſſed are they who are thus cloathed, for they ſhall never be found naked. *Job* had put on this righteouſneſs, the righteouſneſs of his perſon by believing; but this is not the righteouſneſs here intended. Secondly, There is the Righteouſneſs of our Actions, and that, Firſt, Reſpecting God. Secondly, Reſpecting man. Piety is the former righteouſneſs, and equity is the latter. This latter is the righteouſneſs which *Job* in this place profeſſeth he had put on. Yet further, this righteouſneſs of our actions, conſiſting in equity towards man, may fall under a twofold conſideration. Firſt, As we are conſidered in our private ſtation, and thus every honeſt man puts on righteouſneſs in all his dealings and tranſactions with man. *Let no man defraud or go beyond his brother in any matter, becauſe that the Lord is the avenger of all ſuch*, ſaith the Apoſtle, (1 *Theſ.* 4. 6.) Secondly, There is a righteouſneſs of our actions towards men, as we are conſidered in our publick ſtation, and this is it which *Job* moſt diſtinctly and ſpecially means in this text. He in all his actings, as a Magiſtrate or a man in authority, ſought to do all men right. For, righteouſneſs (in the ſence now under hand) is nothing elſe *but the giving of every man his right, and the protecting of every man in his right.* And if any ſhould ask, when hath every man his right given and done to him? I anſwer, When, that is given and done to him, which is according to the Law. That King put the queſtion right, as to matters of righteouſneſs, who askt his wiſe men or Judges, *What ſhall we do unto the Queen* Vaſthi *according to Law?* For as the Apoſtle argues in reference to God, ſo may we much more in reference to man, *Where there is no Law, there is no tranſgreſſion* (Rom. 4. 15.) I may ſay alſo, where there is no Law, there is no poſſeſſion. Law and righteouſneſs are ſo neerly related, that the Latine word for righteouſneſs fetcheth its pedigree from a word in that language ſignifying Law. Such a legal procedure and ſentence *Job* here intendeth, when he ſaith, *I put on righteouſneſs*; And what did righteouſneſs for him? The next words tell us what.

Eſt. 1.15.

Juſtitia nomen habet à Jure.

And it cloathed me.] The ſame word is rendred in the former clauſe, *I put on*, and, *It cloathed me*, in the latter. As if he had ſaid, *I put on Righteouſneſs, and it put me on*; we may expreſs it reciprocally, *I put that on, and, that put me on*; that is, Righteouſneſs and I were no ſtrangers, nor were we at a diſtance from one another; Righteouſneſs covered all my proceedings; no man could ſee any nakedneſs or defect of Juſtice (which is the Magiſtrates nakedneſs) in what I did.

Hence note, Firſt, *A good Magiſtrate doth not only uſe but put on Righteouſneſs.*

It is not enough to exerciſe it ſometimes, it muſt be kept on.

You will ſay, what doth it import more *to put on, and be cloathed with Righteouſneſs*, then to uſe or exerciſe it. I ſhall give it you in three things from the metaphor of putting on, as it refers to cloathing.

Firſt, It notes a very frequent exerciſe of Juſtice: There muſt be many acts to the making up of this habit. He that is cloathed with righteouſneſs is conſtant in doing righteous things. Every man puts on his cloaths every day; and ſo ſhould a Magiſtrate act righteouſly every day, he muſt put it on as much and as often as he doth his clothes. A Magiſtrate ſhould be as much aſhamed to be ſeen at any time without righteouſneſs, as any man would be to be ſeen naked to his skin, or without cloathing.

Secondly, It notes a liking of, a pleaſedneſs with, yea, a delighting in Righteouſneſs; A man is pleaſed with his cloaths, as with his meat. As cloathing is one of the neceſſaries, ſo a chief contentment of this life.

Thirdly, Cloathing is put or worn not upon one limb, or part of the body only, but all the body over. To be cloathed with righteouſneſs, notes a man throughout righteous; head, and heart, and hand, all are righteous; he hath the rule of righteouſneſs in his head, he hath the love of righteouſneſs in his heart, he hath the work of righteouſneſs in his hand, who is cloathed with righteouſneſs.

Hence Note, *Righteouſneſs is the Magiſtrates cloathing.*

It is his cloathing as to all the uſes of cloathing.

Firſt, It covers his nakedneſs, and hides his ſhame, which without this will quickly appear to all the world

Secondly, It puts a comelineſs upon him, and makes him graceful (as goodly and ſutable apparel doth any man) in the eyes of all beholders.

Thirdly, It keepes him warm and chearful, 'tis his defence (as good garments are to the body) againſt the cold and ſtorms of trouble, which he may meet with in doing his duty. This is rich cloathing, and clean cloathing, and beautiful cloathing, and durable cloathing. The benefit and comfort of it will abide and laſt for ever. How happy are thoſe Magiſtrates who are not only cloathed with this garment, but keep it from ſpotting! *I* (ſaith *Job*) *put on righteouſneſs, and it cloathed me,*

And my Judgement was as a Robe and a Diadem.

Juſtitia generatim verſatur in officio cuivis præſtando rectè & condignè; judicium vero eſt juſtitia verſans in diſcrimine boni & mali, juſti ac injuſti. Coc.

Some diſtinguiſh between *Righteouſneſs and Judgement*, and ſay, that Righteouſneſs is that by which the innocent are delivered; and Judgement is that by which the wicked are puniſhed; which two divide and comprehend the whole work of a Magiſtrate. Again, others diſtinguiſh thus; righteouſneſs is that by which the Magiſtrate gives his award or ſentence according as he finds the merit of every mans caſe. Judgment is that whereby he finds out what the merit of every mans caſe is. But we may take them for ſynonamaes, or words of the ſame ſignification.

My Judgment was as a Robe.

מעיל *Pallium, genus veſtimenti reliquis ſuper indui ſolitum; à* מעל *prævaricatus, mentitus eſt.*

The word is tranſlated *a Mantle* (*Chap.* 1. 20.) which as it is taken ſometimes for a vulgar Garment, ſo alſo for a veſt of honour, A Judges Mantle or Robe. The Root of that word ſignifieth to deal treacherouſly and falſly; and by this ſome tell us that God puts us in mind, even while we are putting on our cloaths, of the treachery and falſneſs of our hearts. Before man ſinned he was naked, yet not aſhamed; and now God hath given the beſt of garments, the Magiſtrates Robe, ſuch a name in the original tongue, as may at once lead to the root of his ſin, and mind him to be watchful againſt it. The Judges Robe which in name hath ſo neer a cognation with falſhood and prevarication, ſhould both admoniſh him of the corruption of his own heart, and arm him againſt all temptations (of which his high and great place is full) leading to or bordering upon the corrupting of Juſtice; and that, while his Robe ſpeaks prevarication from judgment, the rightneſs of his Judgment may be (as *Job's* was) *a Robe*, and which is yet more,

צנף *circumvolvit circumdedit.*

A Diadem] A Robe covers the body, a Diadem the head: A Diadem or Crown is the chief ornament of Princes. It was alſo the ornament of the high Prieſt (*Exod.* 23. 35.) The word ſignifyeth a compaſſing about, becauſe the Diadem is round, and ſits circling the Temples of the head.

Hence note, Firſt, *Magiſtrates in all Ages have had their ſpecial Garments and Emblems of Honour.*

צניף *Cidaris, tiara, à circumvolvendo.*

Robes and Diadems are not for ordinary wearing. As God hath made a difference among men, ſo he allowes a difference in mens apparel and habit. Some ſay, why ſhould Magiſtrates be in pomp? Why ſhould they wear Skarlet Robes, and Gold Chains? Is it not enough that they have Righteouſneſs for their Robe, and Judgment for their ornament? I anſwer, Robes and Diadems are but extrinſecal and circumſtantial to a Magiſtrate; yet 'tis argument enough to prove both their uſe and uſefulneſs, in that Righteouſneſs is compared to a Robe, and Judgment to a Diadem. If Magiſtrates had not uſed theſe ornaments of old, thoſe better ornaments had never been expreſſed by theſe. And as theſe are honourable additions to their office, ſo they draw reverential thoughts upon their perſons in the execution of their office. If Magiſtrates ſhould go in a vulgat garb, they would be ſlighted and neglected by the vulgar, though the wiſe would know their duty. As God hath ſet up Magiſtrates for the neceſſity of, ſo he hath ſet them out in a ſutableneſs to mankind; they are not only to govern godly men, but mankind, the world, which is mixed of good and bad, and is for the moſt part bad; and therefore they muſt have ſomewhat to take the eye, ſome outward ſplendor and Grandeur, to ſtrike aſtoniſhment. Hiſtory makes report of a very famous King, who coming to *Egypt*, a mighty concourſe of people flocked from all parts to ſee him, but when they found him without any ſtate, an old man in a mean habit, they went away laughing, none regarding him. 'Tis ſo with the generality of people, let a man have never ſo much true honour and power, yet if he hath not ſomewhat extraordinary to the eye and outward appearance, the common people will not regard him. Robes and Diadems, Gold Chaines and Ornaments, rule and ſubdue a great part of mankind, to a due reverence of and obedience to the Civil power.

Cum Ageſilaus *in* Egyptum *Appulit omnes quaſi ad ſpectaculum concurrebant propter opinionē gloriæ ipſius: Sed ubi nihil ſplendoris, tantū in herba ad littus ſenem decumbere viderunt, vili habitu & parvo corpore, ridere & jocari cœperunt.* Pezel. Mellif. Hiſtor. par. 1.

Secondly, Obſerve, *The chief Robe and Diadem of a Magiſtrate is Juſtice and Righteouſneſs.*

A Magiſtrate is a naked man till thus cloathed, and being thus cloathed, he is cloathed like God, of whom the Prophet ſaith (*Iſa.* 59. 17.) *He put on righteouſneſs as a Breaſt-plate, and an Helmet of ſalvation upon his head; and he put on the garments of vengeance for cloathing, and was clad with zeal as a cloak.* If a Magiſtrate being Roabed and Crowned thinks that's enough, he is no wiſer then a child, that plays with a rattle, or is proud of a Baby. His Robe and Diadem are no better, if he neglect righteouſneſs and Judgment. Wo be to thoſe who ſatisfie themſelves with getting on and wearing the Robe and Diadem of Magiſtracy, while they wholly caſt off the duty of it. It was ſaid of the old Monks, *If they once gat on a Cowle, they thought they had enough*; but as it was then ſayd among the wiſe, *The Cowle doth not make a Monk*; ſo, *It is not a Robe or a Crown that makes a Magiſtrate.* If he have theſe without Righteouſneſs, Juſtice, and Judgment, *he is but a meer vanity*, he is but a painted ſhadow, or a pageant of Juſtice. There are two things which make Juſtice done, the Crown and Diadem of a Judge. Firſt, when 'tis done ſpeedily. Tedious delayes in doing Juſtice are within one ſtep of doing injuſtice. How ſad is it to ſee Juſtice come as if ſhe had been ſhut up in a Priſon, and fettered in Irons, when her attendants look ſhe ſhould come to them as from a Throne (where indeed Juſtice ſits) with eaſe and freedom. It is ill to do right raſhly, and 'tis a wrong to do it delayingly. As they do a double courteſie, who do it ſpeedily; ſo they do a man double right, who do it (though deliberately, yet) quickly.

Cucullus non facit monachum.

A ſecond thing which makes Juſtice the Magiſtrates Diadem, is, when he doth it impartially. *David* (2 Sam. 8. 15.) *reigned over all* Iſrael, *and executed Judgment and Juſtice to all his people*; not to ſome only, not to this or that man only, His Juſtice was as large as his Dominion. See the exactneſs of *Moſes* Law (*Deut.* 19. 15.) and *Solomons* judgment, or rather the judgment of God (*Pro.* 24. 25.) *To accept perſons in Judgment is not good*; that is, 'tis extreamly bad, as bad as bad may be; nor do I well know which is the worſe, To deny Juſtice to all, or to give it but to ſome. Laws are made without reſpect of perſons; and then Magiſtrates do at once render a people happy, and themſelves honourable, when they are executed ſo. It is a miſerable thing when a man ſees his right in Parchment or Paper, and yet cannot come at it. It is well when a man can ſay, *There's a good Law for me*; but 'tis far better, when a man can ſay, *There's a good Judge for me.* Good Laws never made a people happy: only good Magiſtrates can. When Magiſtrates are Crowned with Juſtice, then a people are Crowned with bleſſings.

Laſtly, Conſidering that *Job* was not only a Magiſtrate, but the cheif Magiſtrate.

Obſerve, *Cheif and ſoveraign Magiſtrates ſhould think themſelves cheifly concerned in matters of Juſtice.*

Job did not put the buſineſs wholly into other hands, and take his eaſe himſelf; nor did he only ſee that others did it, or puniſh them for not doing it, but he did it, in many caſes, himſelf: And which is yet a higher commendation, he did it not only authoritatively, but conſcientiouſly. No inferiour Judge could be more careful to do right, then he who was the ſupreame Judge, and from whoſe judgment there lay no Appeal. He took no advantage to be unjuſt, becauſe none could call him to account for injuſtice. And indeed there is nothing more noble then to ſee them fear to do the meaneſt man wrong, who have no man to fear though they do it. When *Abraham* pleaded with God for *Sodom*, he was bold to ſay to him (*Gen.* 18. 25.) *Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?* Though the Lord be abſolutely the Judge of all, and can be judged of none; yet he judgeth not one unrighteouſly; and when ſoveraign Judges or Magiſtrates (who may be called alſo Judges of all the earth in their dominion) judge all as righteouſly, as if every man might implead them in caſe of any error or unrighteouſneſs in judgment, then they are Judges after the heart and way of God; And their judgment is glorioſly *their Robe and their Diadem.*

And as righteouſneſs and Judgment are the cloathing and Crown of the Magiſtrate, ſo of every man in his rank and place. All the Graces are the cloathing of the Saints; *Put on* (ſaith the Apoſtle, *Col.* 3. 12.) *bowels of mercies, kindneſs,*

kindneſs, humbleneſs of mind, meekneſs, long-ſuffering. And as the Apoſtle *Peter* (1 Eph. 3. 3,4.) admoniſheth profeſſing women, we may admoniſh men and all; *Let not your adorning be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of Gold, and of putting on of Apparel; But let it be in the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet ſpirit, which in the ſight of God is of great price.* And again (*Chap.* 5. 5.) *Be ye cloathed with humility.* Gold and ſilver are but droſs to the leaſt graine of grace. O let grace ſparkle in your lives, that's better then to have gold and ſilver ſparkle on your garments. The Apoſtle doth not deny the uſe of theſe, but he denyes that theſe are or can be our adorning. Many are proud of their cloathing, the wicked are cloathed with pride; They have not only *their* beſt cloaths on, but *the* beſt cloaths on (however elſe cloathed) who are cloathed with righteouſneſs and humility. And all they who have put on Chriſt as their Robe and Diadem, are certainly cloathed with both theſe Graces, and with whatſoever beſides theſe is truly Graceful.

VERS. 15, 16, 17.

I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame.
I was a father to the poor, and the cauſe that I knew not I ſearched out.
And I brake the jaws of the wicked, and plucked the ſpoyl out of his teeth.

JOB ſtill proceeds to ſhew cauſe, why, as a Magiſtrate, he had ſo much reſpect from, and ſo great a place in the hearts of all the people. He hath already given ſundry inſtances, how he acted and put out that power which was put into his hand. In the former verſe we found him clearing himſelf from all by-reſpects in doing the duty of his place; it was pure love to Juſtice that moved him to do Juſtice; it was not a vain-glorious deſire to be accounted, called, or pointed at as a juſt man. He did juſtice for thoſe who could have nothing but the juſtice of their cauſe and the miſerableneſs of their condition to move him to it; *The poor, the fatherleſs, the helpleſs, and ſuch as were ready to periſh.*

In theſe three verſes, the fifteen, ſixteen, and ſeventeen, *Job* gives yet a further Exemplification, both of the perſons to whom, and of the manner how he Exerciſed Juſtice. Firſt, in ſupporting them and their cauſe who were diſtreſſed (*ver.* 15, 16.) *I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame,* &c. Secondly, in puniſhing them whoſe cauſe deſerved it (*ver.* 17.) *I brake the jaws of the wicked,* &c. Thirdly, in a careful and diligent diſcovery of all doubtful matters, as he ſpeaks at the latter end of the ſixteenth verſe, *And the cauſe that I knew not, I ſearched out.* What he did for the diſtreſſed, falls firſt under diſcuſſion.

Verſ. 15. **I was eyes to the blind.**

Non dixit, per ſervos faciebam, &c. Chryſoſt.

I, that is, I in perſon; not I, by my officers, but I my ſelf; ſo ſome of the Ancients give the Emphaſis of the text; *He doth not ſay I was eyes to the blind by my overſeers and ſervants, but I looked to them my ſelf; I did not put the doing of it off to others, but I ſaw it done.* And though it be a truth, that the beſt of Magiſtrates cannot do all themſelves, they muſt ſee many things by other mens eyes, and do moſt things by other mens hands: Yet a faithful Magiſtrate will not diſdain to do offices of righteouſneſs, in perſon, for his people, yea, ſo far as he is able, he delights to do it. *I was eyes to the blind,* that is, I was to the blind inſtead of eyes, or I gave them direction, as the eye directs the body, which way to go, and what to do, when they knew not. *The light of the body is the eye* (ſaith Chriſt, *Matth.* 6. 22.) and he that is a mans eye, is his light in darkneſs.

Further, 'tis conſiderable that the word is plural, *Job* doth not ſay, *I was an eye, but eyes to the blind, and ſo not a foot, but feet to the lame.* Which may intimate both the frequency and the fulneſs of that aſſiſtance which he gave them.

I was feet to the lame.] That is, inſtead of feet, or in the place of feet, performing that office for them in effect which feet perform for the body. The feet are, Firſt, the pillars and ſupporters of the body; upon them the body ſtands, as a houſe upon its foundation. Secondly, As the feet are the ſupporters, ſo the porters of the body, they carry the whole body, they move and remove it from place to place. The locomotive power of the body is acted by the feet. Thus *Job* was both a ſupporter and a porter to the lame and feeble, he bore them up and carryed them on in all their needs.

I (ſaith he) *was feet to the lame.* Here a queſtion muſt be anſwered (for the clearing of the whole verſe) who are meant by the blind and the lame, to whom *Job* was eyes and feet?

The blind and the lame may be conſidered either properly, or metaphorically. The blind and the lame in proper ſence are ſuch as want ſight, and the uſe of their legs and limbs. Some of the Ancients underſtand this Text properly, in this ſtrictneſs of the letter; and 'tis granted by all that a great part of the Magiſtrates care is to provide for the lame and the blind; to ſee that there be hoſpitals and houſes of receit for the poor, who are either blind or lame, and impotent. Fot though not ſo much the natural as the political body is the ſubject of the Magiſtrates care; yet the care of the natural bodies of men, doth redound to and reach the good of the body-politick, or whole Commonwealth, under any Princes Government and protection.

Secondly, The blind and lame in a metaphorical ſence, may be taken two wayes: Firſt, More generally for all ſuch as are deſtitute of help; a blind man wants one to guide him, and a lame man wants one to ſupport him; So the blind and the lame may ſignifie any that are in a wanting or helpleſs condition (*Mic.* 4. 6.) *In that day, ſaith the Lord, will I aſſemble her that halteth, and her that is driven out,* &c. To halt is to be lame; Now who were theſe halters? We are not to underſtand the Prophet barely of ſuch as had an Imperfection (like *Mephiboſheth*) in their feet, but generally all thoſe of the people of God were under that comfortable Propheſie, who were in a ſad condition, eſpecially as to their ſpirituals (for of them that Propheſie is intended, as alſo that other which runs in the ſame terms, *Zeph.* 3. 19.) *Behold at that time I will undo all that afflict thee, aud I will ſave her that halteth, and her that is driven out;* that is, her that is in a weak, troubled, ſcattered ſtate. Idol-Gods (of whom I conceive that Scripture, 2 *Sam.* 5. 6, 8. is beſt interpreted) are called, *The blind and the lame,* becauſe they are utterly unable to help and deliver either themſelves, or thoſe that truſt and call upon them with greateſt affiance and devotion. Though a man have legs good and ſtrong enough both to go and run his way (like another *Aſahel*) though he hath eyes as peircing and ſharp-ſighted as an Eagle, to ſee and diſcern his way, yet (in this notion) we may number him among the blind and lame. And 'tis the duty of Magiſtrates to be eyes to theſe blind, and feet to theſe lame; that is, to take care of thoſe that are diſabled by affliction to ſubſiſt and maintain their own right againſt oppoſers.

Secondly, by the *blind,* and the *lame,* we may underſtand, as the afflicted in general, ſo thoſe eſpecially who are deſtitute of help and counſel, as to ſome particular caſe brought before the Magiſtrate, though otherwiſe in a proſperous condition. They are blind who know not how to order their buſineſs; and they are lame, who are not able to carry it through. To ſuch blind ones, ſaith *Job, I was eyes.* As if he had ſaid, when any through ignorance of and unacquaintance with the method of legal proceedings, could not ſee their way, I adviſed and directed them. Many a man hath a juſt and a good cauſe, who yet knows not how to help himſelf, he wants an internal eye, an eye of underſtanding both to ſee what his right is, and how to get it. 'Tis the goodneſs of a Magiſtrate to ſhew ſuch the righteouſneſs of their cauſe, as 'tis his Juſtice to do them right.

Again, To ſuch lame ones ſaith *Job, I was feet;* As if he had ſaid, when the right of any, through poverty and want of friends to ſtand by them, was like to fall to the ground, I aſſiſted and upheld them. Many a man hath a good cauſe, but he is lame, he hath not means to ſupport and proſecute it; 'Tis the honour of a Magiſtrate to bare up ſuch, in the righteouſneſs of their cauſe, as 'tis his duty to give them their right. 'Tis the ſhame of Magiſtracy when any are foyled in a juſt cauſe, either for want of counſel or encouragement. In which reſpects, moſt eminently *Job* makes this profeſſion, *I was eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame.* For though it be not proper for a cheif Magiſtrate or a Judge to be a Solicitor or an Advocate, yet he both may and ought, in the caſe of the blind and lame in the text, to aſſign means for the ſupply of thoſe defects. *I was eyes to the blind.*

Hence Note, *It is the duty of a Magiſtrate to appear openly for the poor and the oppreſſed, for the weak and ſimple.*

He ſhould not turn them over to others, but take care of them himſelf. 'Tis the ſin of ſupream Magiſtrates to take their pleaſure, and leave buſineſs to their Officers and Miniſters: Unleſs themſelves look to the adminiſtration of Juſtice, there may ſoon be a very ill adminiſtration of it. As in common houſhold affairs, *the eye of the Maſter doth the work:* when the Maſter of the family ſaith only to his ſervants, *do you this, and do you that*, but, ſaith not come, *let us do it*, all will be done to halves. We have a proverb, *The Maſters eye fats the horſe.* And 'tis as true, The Magiſtrates eye orders the City. Unleſs Magiſtrates ſee to the doing of things, and take account of thoſe that are under them, unleſs they condeſcend to be eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame, matters of Juſtice and righteouſneſs will be but lamely tranſacted.

Again, As he doth not ſay (which was noted in opening the words) I was an eye to the blind, or I was a foot to the lame, but *I was eyes and feet* in the Plural number; thereby implying his preſent, conſtant, and compleat helpfulneſs to thoſe that were deſtitute of help; So he doth not ſay, I was eyes to this blind man, and feet to that lame man, but indefinitely, *To the blind, and to the lame*, which Indefiniteneſs of the object, ſheweth the univerſality and extenſiveneſs of his care to ſee right done.

Hence note, *Magiſtrates ſhould have an equal and univerſal reſpect unto and care for all that need and implore their help.*

He muſt not do for one or two only, nor for all thus or thus related, but the blind, and the lame, be they who they will, muſt have his help. When Juſtice is duly adminiſtred, 'tis ſaid in Scripture, *To run down as waters, and as a mighty ſtream* (Amos 5. 24.) Now waters and ſtreams run not to one mans houſe, or door, but the ſtream offers it ſelf to every man, it runs down to the poor mans door as well as to the rich mans door, it runs by the meaneſt Cottage as well as by the Princely Pallace. Righteouſneſs muſt run like a ſtream; it muſt be a common, an univerſal good. And as the Magiſtrates care muſt be univerſal as to ſorts and kinds of men, he muſt be as ready to do Juſtice for the poor as for the rich; ſo his care muſt be univerſal as to individuals, or the particular perſons of any ſort of men; He muſt be eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame, to all, not to this or that blind or lame man only. Juſtice it ſelf is blind, if it help not one blind man as well as another; and that s but lame Juſtice which is not feet to all the lame.

Thirdly, Obſerve, *They who are in power ſhould mercifully ſupply the defects of thoſe who apply to them.*

To the blind man, the Magiſtrate muſt be eyes, and to the lame man feet. One of the Ancients ſaid; *Under a good Prince, or Governour, there's no ſubject lame, no ſubject blind.* The Magiſtrate is an univerſal eye, and an univerſal foot. He makes up natural, and he makes up or provides a remedy for civil imperfections. His prudence, power, and authority, mingled with pity, and compaſſion, will eaſily do all theſe good things. A Magiſtrate is the head of the people, yea, he is not only the head, but he is every member to the people, he is eyes and feet to all the people, and he is a tongue to all the people. It is ſaid (*Prov.* 31. 8.) *Open thy mouth for the dumb in the cauſe of all ſuch as are appointed to deſtruction.* As others ſhould be tongues to plead, ſo he ſhould be a tongue to judge and determine righteouſly for the dumb, that is, for them who cannot ſpeak for themſelves. To do all this, and to be all theſe helps to the people, is not only the duty and the burden, but the dignity and honour of the Magiſtrate. What ſhall we ſay, when we ſee Magiſtrates inſtead of being eyes to the blind, pulling out the eyes of thoſe that ſee; inſtead of being feet to the lame, lameing thoſe that have feet; and inſtead of being tongues to the dumb who cannot ſpeak, making thoſe who would ſpeak dumb and tongueleſs. As there are merciful and releiving, ſo there are cruel and oppreſſing Magiſtrates.

Fourthly, Obſerve, *Every man is that good which he doth to and procureth for another.*

He that feeds the hungry is their bread, and he that cloaths the naked is their garment; he that guides the blind is their eye, and he that ſpeaks for the dumb is their tongue. The Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who procureth ſalvation, is called *ſalvation to the ends of the earth* (Iſa. 49. 6.) And indeed Jeſus Chriſt is all this and more then this in the text. Chriſt was eminently all this, both literally and myſtically (*Math.* 11. 5.) *Go* (ſaith he to the Meſſengers of *John*) *and tell him, The blind receive their ſight, the lame walk, the leapers are cleanſed, the deaf hear* (thus he was healing to the diſeaſed) *and* (which is more, he was life to the dead) *the dead are raiſed up*: He was all this to them in a proper ſence: And he was all this in a myſtical ſence. It had been but a ſmall matter, comparatively, to have been eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame, to have cured bodily blindneſs, and lameneſs; if he had not done more; if he had not been an eye of underſtanding to the ignorant; and a foot of power to the weak; if he had not cleanſed leprous ſouls, and opened an ear in deaf hearts, as he did in the heart of *Lydia*, to receive the word of life. Theſe ſpiritual cures are the nobleſt cures: And theſe were long before propheſied (*Iſa.* 35. 5, 6.) *Then the eyes of the blind ſhall be opened* (that is, they ſhall perceive and underſtand the myſtery of Godlineſs, and the mercy of God revealed in the Goſpel) *and the ears of the deaf unſtopped* (that is, they ſhall obedientially hearken to the mind of God delivered by his Meſſengers) *Then ſhall the lame man leap as an hart* (that is, he ſhall walk ſtrongly, conſtantly, chearfully in the wayes of God) *and the tongue of the dumb ſing* (that is, they who could not ſpeak a good word, ſhall joyfully utter the prayſes of God, who hath done ſuch great things for them; the reaſon of all which miraculous ſpiritual changes is given in the next words) *for in the wilderneſs ſhall waters break out, and ſtreams in the deſert.* That is, the ſpirit ſhall be powred out abundantly, and thoſe waters, thoſe ſtreams ſhall have a healing vertue in them, they ſhall reſtore ſight to the blind, and hearing to the deaf, and ſtrength to the lame, and ſpeech to the dumb. By the powring out of the Spirit of Chriſt, all theſe ſoul-infirmities and deficiencies ſhall be removed. Thus Chriſt is truly in a ſpiritual ſence, all that which *Job* was in a Civil ſence, eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame: Chriſt is that good to us which he doth for us; he is our eyes, and he is our feet, he is our ears, he is our life, and our ſalvation.

Verſe 16. **I was a father to the poor, and the cauſe that I knew not I ſearched out.**

This relative word **father**, may be taken either properly or improperly; here 'tis to be underſtood improperly. *Job* was once a rich man himſelf, and the children to whom he was properly a father were rich too; but as he was a father in a figurative ſence, ſo he was a father of the poor. Whoſoever doth that to another which is the office of a natural father, either inſtructing and directing him, either watching over him, or protecting him, either aſſiſting him in his buſineſs, or ſupplying him with neceſſaries, in a word, whoſoever ſtands by another in a time of need, and is ready at any time (in righteouſneſs) to do him a good turn, may juſtly be called his father. Thus *Joſeph*, though a ſubject and a ſervant to *Pharoah*, yet ſaith (*Gen.* 45. 8.) *God hath made me a Father to Pharoah*; that is, God hath uſed me as an inſtrument of good to him and his Kingdom, in giving him advice to lay up corn againſt the years of famine, God he hath made me able to give him counſel, and him willing to receive my counſel, even as a ſon doth the counſel of a father. And when we would moſt emphatically expreſs and moſt thankfully acknowledge the good which we have received from any man, we ſay, *He hath been to me as a very Father. Job was a father to the poor:* In what? Take it in two things, which eminently ſet forth the relation of a father.

Firſt, He was a father to the poor in affection, he loved them, and was tender over them as a father is over his children; *Job* looked upon all the people that were under his government as his own children; and he had the bowels of a father to them.

Secondly, *Job* was a father to the poor, not only as to affection, but as to the care which he had of them, and the proviſion which he made for them. He did not only ſay to the hungry, be ye fed; and to the naked, be ye cloathed; but he helped them to thoſe things which were *needful for the body* (as the Apoſtle *James* ſpeaks, *Chap.* 2. 16.) either in a way of charity ſupplying their wants, or in a way of Juſtice ſetling and maintaining them in their rights. The Apoſtle gives it as a Common principle in Nature (2 *Cor.* 12. 14.) *The children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children.* And as our natural Fathers act moſt like themſelves when they lay up for their children, ſo alſo do our civil Fathers; Not that the Magiſtrate is bound to provide portions for particular perſons or families: but when they take care both by making General Laws, and by looking to the execution of them, that all under their Government may be protected in what they have, or reſtored to what is unduly taken away, or with-held from them, as alſo in all caſes of inevitable poverty, relieved and kept from ſtarving, then they may well be be ſaid, like careful parents, to lay up for their children; or to be (as *Job* here profeſſeth himſelf to have been in that capacity) *Fathers to the poor.*

Both the original words here tranſlated *father*, and *poor*, come from one and the ſame root, though upon ſeveral and diſtinct grounds. For whereas that root-word ſignifies to wiſh, or deſire; we know there are two ſorts of wiſhes or deſires; Firſt, We wiſh well to, or deſire the good and proſperity of others. So the word rendred **Father**, ſprings from it, becauſe fathers cannot but wiſh well to their Childred, they cannot unleſs altogether unnatural, but deſire and pray for their well-doing, and well-being. Secondly, We wiſh well to and deſire ſomewhat that is good for our ſelves; and thus the word rendred *poor* comes from it, becauſe the poor are much in want, and uſually much in deſiring; they have little or nothing, and therefore they deſire ſomewhat; ſome deſire more, how much ſoever they have; and they who have very little are uſually much in deſires for more. The poor are ſenſible of, and often pincht with their own wants, and, being ſo, they cannot but wiſh for enlargements. He that's hungry wiſhes heartily for good fare; and he that's naked for cloathing: They have many deſires who have but few Enjoyments; ſuch are the poor. And to ſuch poor *Job was a father*; that is, he wiſhed well to them, and provided well for them. The poor ſaid, O that we could be heard! O that our petition might be read and anſwered! O that our Governour would deliver us out of the hand of our Oppreſſours, who are too ſtrong for us! O that we might have right done us! and O that it might be done ſpeedily! Of ſuch wiſhes as theſe the poor are made up: You ſhall have a poor ſuitor ſtand ſighing and wiſhing all the day long at a Great mans door, *O what ſhall I do? I am undone if he doth not help me; O that he would call for me; O that he would diſpatch me; I would fain be at home with my wife and children. The little buſineſs which I have to do, there ſpoils in my abſence: O that I might return, and bring good news home with me, that my cauſe hath been fully heard, that my greivances are redreſſed according to Juſtice.* With ſuch joyful hearts *Job* ſent away the poor, elſe he could not have ſaid in truth, *I was a father to the poor.*

Elegans paranomaſia in voce אב *pater &* אביון *pauper eſt utriuſque vocis radix eadem etſi diverſa ratione;* אב *enim pater, à voluntate & affectu paterno in liberos dictus eſt* אביון *inopes vel egens, quod qui multis egeat, multa velit.* Merc.

Again, Conſider here, as before, the Indefiniteneſs of the language; it was not to this or that poor man that *Job* was a father to, but the poor in general.

Hence note, Firſt, *A righteous Magiſtrate knows no difference of perſons as to his doing them right.*

If there be any difference in cauſes, 'tis his wiſdome to find it out, and his Juſtice to let them know he knows it. As 'tis a groſs peice of partiality to do for the rich and not for the poor; ſo 'tis as groſs partiality not to do alike in Judgment for all the poor, whoſe caſes are alike. *Job* did not pick and chooſe out poor men to beſtow his help upon; He helpt them as they came, and as he ſaw the matter did require. *I was a father to the poor.*

Secondly, Note, *Magiſtrates ſhould carry the affection of a father to all their faithful ſubjects, cheifly to the poor and afflicted.*

They ſhould love and pity them, they ſhould take care and provide for their good, as if they were their children. In a well-govern'd Common-wealth there's no want of Fathers: Where there are good Magiſtrates, there are no Orphans. As God himſelf is, ſo are they, in their place, Fathers to the fatherleſs. And of right, all that want fathers, ſhould have free acceſs to the Magiſtrate, as to their common father. His watchfulneſs ſhould be as a guard upon every houſe, and his care ſhould be every mans ſecurity. Heathen Magiſtrates have owned this as their duty; 'Tis the ſhame of thoſe who profeſs themſelves Chriſtians, if they do not. And wo to thoſe Princes who look upon their ſubjects rather as their ſlaves then their Children, who are rather devourers then Fathers of their Countrey. As if their ſubjects were made only to toyl for them, and not they to provide for their ſubjects. Such Magiſtrates are the mountains and the hills, the high towers and fenced walls, with whom the Lord will contend in the day *when he ariſeth to ſhake terribly the earth* (Iſa. 2. 19.) What will become of thoſe Magiſtrates who deſign more to oppreſs and fleece the rich, then to help and protect the poor! *I* (ſaith *Job*) *was a Father to the poor.*

Omnium domos illius vigilia defendit, omnium otium illius labor. Sen. de Brev. vitæ.

And the cauſe which I knew not I ſearched out.

Magiſtrates are called Gods, yet they are not omniſcient; They ſhould know much, but they cannot know all things. Many cauſes come before them which they know not to the bottom, and 'tis their duty to ſearch that they may know the bottom of every cauſe; *The cauſe which I knew not* (ſaith *Job*) *I ſearched out.* As if he had ſaid, *When any difficult caſe was brought before me in Judgment, I was careful to inquire into it, to enform my ſelf about it, and to attain a right underſtanding of it, I ſought it out.* The word ſignifies not only to ſeek, but to ſeek out, to make an exact ſearch of and ſcrutiny about thoſe things which are moſt abſtruce and remote, which lye wrapt up in the dark, or are furtheſt from our ſight. *Job* did not caſt an overly look upon hard cauſes, but he laboured to look through them, and to ſift them to the very bran; he took pains to find the truth; he digged for that ſpecial wiſdom, and ſearched for it as for hidden treaſures. The Great work of a Miniſter is to ſearch out the truth of Doctrines and Opinions which he knows not, and the Great buſineſs of a Magiſtrate is to ſearch out the truth of Cauſes and Actions which he knoweth not. This was *Job*'s conſtant courſe, *The cauſe which I knew not I ſearched out.*

חקר *Scrutatus, perſcrutatus eſt remota & abſtruſa.*

Hence note, Firſt, *Magiſtrates muſt know a cauſe before they give ſentence or Judgment about it.*

That the ſoul be without knowledge is not good (Prov. 19. 2.) That holy Proverb is applicable to all perſons and caſes, but eſpecially to Judges, and difficult caſes under Judgment. How ſhall they judge of that which they do not know? Ignorance is bad enough in all, but worſt in Magiſtrates and Minſtiers. We can neither teach nor determine aright further then we know. Many act wrong againſt their knowledge, but none can act rightly without it, or if they do, 'tis not in judgment, but by accident; though they hit the right, yet they do not chuſe the right. Magiſtrates muſt be blind as to perſons; but woe be to thoſe Magiſtrates that are blind as to cauſes: Blind Magiſtrates are the peſt of the Common-wealth, and blind Miniſters are the peſt of Churches. *The Magiſtrate muſt be a Seer as well as the Miniſter*; he muſt do nothing blindfold, nor blindly. The common picture or Embleme of Juſtice is made with covered eyes; which intimates that Juſtice muſt take no notice of perſons, let the men be who they will, Juſtice makes no matter: but Juſtice hath an Eagle-eye upon the matter. Three things are great enemies to Juſtice. Firſt, Paſſion; Secondly, Precipitancy; Thirdly, Ignorance; He that is paſſionates hath not the uſe of his knowledge; and he that is precipitant will no ſtay to make uſe of his knowledge: But he that is ignorant hath no knowledge to make uſe of, and therefore of what uſe can he be?

Secondly, Note, *A Magiſtrate muſt be very diligent to get the knowledge of every cauſe which he is to give ſentence upon.*

As he muſt not judge till he knows, ſo he muſt make diligent ſearch that he may know; *Job* doth not ſay, the cauſe that I knew not I would not judge, but I ſearched it out that I might judge it. (*Deut.* 13. 12, 13, 14.) *If thou ſhalt hear ſay in one of thy Cities which the Lord thy God hath given thee to dwell there, ſaying, Certain men, the children of Belial are gone out from among you, and have withdrawn the Inhabitants of their City, ſaying, let us go and ſerve other gods (which we have not known)* What then? *Then ſhalt thou enquire, and make ſearch, and ask diligently.* Here are three words: Firſt, They muſt enquire, and if upon enquiry they got not information, then they were *to make ſearch*; and if upon ſearch they did not find, then they were *to ask diligently*; that is, to renew the enquiry, that by interrogating all perſons who probably knew any thing of the cauſe, they might ſearch out the cauſe which they knew not. *Solomon* ſaith (*Prov.* 25. 2.) *It is the glory of God to conceal a thing* (that is, it is his glory to do many things, ſo that none can ſee fully what he is doing, much leſs how or to what end he doth them; ſuch works are ſecrets to and concealments from man; and as it is his glory to conceal ſome of his own not only good but glorious works; ſo it is his glory to conceal our evil works gratiouſly and favourably; to cover and hide the ſin of man, that is, to pardon it, is the *glory of God. But the honour of a King is to ſearch out a matter*; to ſearch out the myſteries of true policy to govern by them; and to ſearch out the myſteries of iniquity to redreſs them; as alſo the myſteries of every mans caſe an d cauſe depending before him, that what he knows not he may be fitted to give Judgment upon; and that as others are cunning and crafty to colour over and cloak their evil actions or deſignments, ſo he may approve himſelf wiſe to diſcover and lay them open. And as it is the honour of Kings to ſearch out the cloſe unrighteouſneſs of ſome mens matters, ſo to ſearch out the obſcured righteouſneſs of other mens matters; according to that of wiſe King *Solomon* (Prov. 29. 7.) *The righteous conſidereth the cauſe of the poor; but the wicked regardeth not to know it.* By the righteous (I ſuppoſe) *Solomon* chiefly meaneth, either the righteous Advocate, or the righteous Judge, both theſe *conſider the cauſe of the poor*; that is, as *Job* here ſaith, they ſearch it out. The unrighteous Advocate conſiders the poor mans Fee firſt, and then his Cauſe, and accordingly pleads it. The unrighteous Judge conſiders the poor mans Perſon firſt, and then his Cauſe, and accordingly determines it. The righteous Advocate remembers that God is his Client in the poor man, and ſo he ſearcheth his cauſe to the utmoſt, that he may plead it right; and the righteous Judge conſidereth that he judgeth for God, and therefore he ſearcheth the poor mans cauſe to the utmoſt, that he may determine it right: Whereas *the wicked*, whether Advocate or Judge, *regardeth not to know it*; yea, he is willing enough to be ignorant of it, that ſo his ignorance may be ſome excuſe to him in not doing him right, or leaſt his knowledge ſhould conſtrain him to do what is right for him. That which is ſaid of the ſinfulneſs of ſome men in general, *They are willing to be ignorant that they may ſin the more freely*, may be ſaid of ſome Magiſtrates, as to a particular caſe, *They are willing to be ignorant of the right, that they may do wrong more freely*, or be leſs ſtirred by their own conſciences to do right. Evil men will not ſearch to know that which they care not to do; but good men, eſpecially good Magiſtrates, will ſearch out the cauſe which they know not, becauſe they would be the more moved and enabled to do juſtice accordingly.

To cloſe this point, we may take notice, that cauſes are unknown and obſcure two wayes: Firſt, By reaſon of the very intrinſecal knottineſs and difficulty of them. Some mens cauſes are ſo dark a text, that they put all the wiſdom the Magiſtrate hath hard to it, to give a right interpretation of them.

Secondly, Other cauſes are obſcure, not in the nature or matter of them, but by the ſubtilty or malice of the parties intereſted and engaged in them, ſetting their wits or rather their luſts awork, to put blinds upon the buſineſs, and to make good look like evil, and evil like good: For as ſome clear Texts of Scripture are rendred cloudy and hard to be underſtood by the vanity and perverſeneſs of their ſpirits, who labour more to bring the Scripture to their ſence and opinions, then to ſubmit their opinions to the ſence of Scripture; ſo in civil matters, ſome clear caſes are rendred very cloudy and hard to be underſtood, by the tricks and jugglings either of the parties, or of their pleaders. Now whether a cauſe lye in the dark upon either of theſe conſiderations, the Judge muſt ſhew his wiſdom in ſearching it out. As the Magiſtrate muſt not judge before he knows; ſo he ſhould (according to *Job*'s example) ſearch that he may know. *The cauſe which I knew not I ſearched it out.*

Eas etiam cauſas inquiſivi, quæ ad me non deferebantur. Lazat

There is a ſecond way of expounding theſe words. As implying, that *Job* did not only ſearch out thoſe cauſes which were brought before him; but alſo enquired abroad, to get intelligence how things went. He enquired after thoſe cauſes which were not preſented to him, nor laid before him: He ſearched out greivances, though not complained of.

Hence Note, *It is the Magiſtrates duty not only to do right in thoſe cauſes which are brought before him, but he muſt inquire and inform himſelf of things that are amiſs, though not before him.*

He muſt enquire who ſuffers wrong that he may right them, what's out of order that he may redreſs and reform it, as well as do right and reform diſorders when complaints are made to him. That was a very princely ſpeech which is reported of *Theodorick* King of the *Gothes*; *We abhor that the poor ſhould be oppreſſed; we are informed of their ſufferings, who do not complain to us; and the knowledge of theſe grievances comes the ſooner to us, by how much the patient diſſimulation of the ſufferer labours the longer to conceal them.* There is a twofold ground why a Magiſtrate ſhould thus by his ſearching out cauſes prevent complainers by the ſpeedineſs of his remedies.

Deteſtamur miſeros premi, commonemur & non querentium malis velociùſque ad nos pervenit, quòd diſſimulatio patientis abſcondit. Theodoricus apud Caſſiod.

Firſt, Some are unwilling to complain of abuſes.

Secondly, Others who are willing enough to complain, but they dare not, they are low and poor, and they ſuſpect that either they ſhall not be heard, or that they ſhall be over-powered, and poſſibly checkt for their boldneſs in appearing. There are abuſes and grievances which moſt are afraid to touch upon or meddle with when the Intereſt, whether of profit, pleaſure, or the meer will of ſome great man is concerned; O they are afraid to anger him, and make him their enemy, he may ſoon ſit on their skirts, and undo them. Hence 'tis that ſeveral evils are not made known to the Magiſtrate; and therefore he ought to ſearch out the cauſe which is not brought to him; and which all are either unwilling or afraid to complain of.

There is yet another reading of theſe words, which carrieth a very profitable ſence in it, whereas we refer it to the matter, *The cauſe that I knew not I ſearched out*, that refers to the man; *The cauſe of him whom I knew not I ſearched out.* And this leads us to another excellent vertue and ornament of thoſe who are in authority. Many Judges and Magiſtrates will take pains to do Juſtice for them whom they know, and are acquainted with, They will beſtir themſelves for friends, and ſuch as are related to them; but for a man whom they know not, they'le do but little, or they will do it very ſlowly. *Job* was certainly a Magiſtrate of another frame and temper, and according to this tranſlation of the Text, we have him here fully and directly expreſſing it, *I was a father to the poor, and the cauſe of him that I knew not I ſearched out.*

Et litem ejus quem non cognoveram ipſam perveſtigabam. Jun.

Hence Obſerve, *Magiſtrates ſhould be as ready to do right to him they know not, or who is a meer ſtranger to them, as to him who is their moſt confident familiar and neareſt acquaintance.*

It is the ſin and ſhame of Magiſtrates to be led by relations; a Brother, or a Couſin, or a Neighbour, or an Acquaintance ſhould be no more in a cauſe then *the man whoſe face they never ſaw before, and probably ſhall never ſee again.* All perſons ſhould be known alike in judgment; that is, they ſhould not be known at all (as was toucht before) only cauſes and matters, not perſons and faces ſhould be known there. Every Judge (as *Levi* once did, *Deut.* 33. 9.) *ſhould ſay to his father and to his mother, I have* *not known him, neither ſhould he acknowledge his brethren, nor know his own children*; he that is faithful will ſearch his cauſe whoſe perſon he doth not ſo much as know, as much as his whoſe perſon he doth more then know.

Verſe 17. **And I brake the jaws of the wicked, and pulled the ſpoil out of his teeth.**

Here's the ſecond part of the Magiſtrates duty, he encourageth the good, and ſubdues the bad. He delivers the poor, and he breaks the oppreſſour. The whole work and buſineſs of Magiſtracy lyes between theſe two, *reward and puniſhment*; or between being *a terror to evil works*, that is, to evil workers, *and a praiſe to them that do good*, and thoſe whoſe cauſe is good.

In the two former verſes, beſides many more before, we have conſidered *Job* performing the firſt part of his Magiſtratical Office, here we have him at work upon the ſecond.

I brake the jaws of the wicked.

That is, I put forth my helpful power to abate their hurtful power. *I brake their Jaw-teeth, or their Grinders*, thoſe teeth wherewith they were wont to grind the faces of the poor, or of any over whom they were able to prevail. By their Jaw-teeth or Grinders of the wicked, we are to underſtand whatſoever is the Inſtrument of their cruelty, or a means by which they do miſchief. We ſay (proverbially) *'Tis well, the curſt Cow hath ſhort horns*; and when any puſh with their horns, and tear with their teeth, 'tis fit they ſhould be ſawn off or knockt out. *Job* as a Magiſtrate took order that they who had a mind to do hurt, and whoſe hearts were ſet upon miſchief, ſhould have no power in their hand to do it. Broken Jaws cannot bite; *I* (ſaith *Job*) *brake the jaws of the wicked.*

Molares dentes denotant omnia inſtrumenta nocendi.

And I plucked the ſpoil out of his teeth.

The Magiſtrate deals two wayes with wicked men; ſometimes he breaks their Jaws that they cannot take the ſpoil; and ſometimes he plucks the ſpoil which they have taken out of their teeth. If they are not diſabled from ſpoiling by the former act, they muſt be ſpoiled of their ſpoil by the latter. When upon *David's* offer to accept the challenge of *Goliah*, Saul *ſaid to him* (1 Sam. 17.33.) *Thou art not able to go againſt this* Philiſtine *to fight with him, for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth.* David replyed (*ver.* 34, 35.) *Thy ſervant kept his Fathers Sheep, and there came a Lion and a Bear and took a Lamb out of the flock. And I went out after him and ſmote him, and delivered it out of his mouth: and when he aroſe againſt me, I caught him by his beard, and ſmote him, and ſlew him.* Thus when Lion-like men, even beaſts in the ſhape of men prey upon men, and make ſpoil of them, then comes the good Magiſtrate, like *David*, and takes the ſpoil out of their teeth. Tyrannical Magiſtrates devour and ſwallow the innocent as a Lion doth a Lamb. *Paul* was in the mouth of, and almoſt ſwallowed by that Lion *Nero*, but he was delivered out of his mouth by the Power of Chriſt the true *David*. Juſt and merciful Magiſtrates will pluck the innocent Lambs out of the mouth of the Lion, and pluck the ſpoil from their teeth. In one of theſe two wayes the wicked muſt be dealt with, either their teeth muſt be broken, or the ſpoil muſt be pulled out of their teeth; elſe they make havock of all, and there's no living by them without danger either of life or livelihood.

Hence Note, Firſt, *Wicked men are like wild beaſts ravening for their prey.*

There had been no need to pluck the prey out of their teeth, if they, like Wolves or Lions, had not got the prey between their teeth. The wicked are often deſcribed in Scripture acting like beaſts, and the aid of God prayed againſt them in that notion (*Pſal.* 3.7.) *Ariſe, O Lord, and ſave me; for thou haſt ſmitten all mine Enemies upon the cheek-bone; thou haſt broken the teeth of the ungodly.* Again (*Pſal.* 58.6.) *Break their teeth, O God, in their mouth; break out the great teeth of the young Lions, O Lord*; that is, take away, O Lord, all their deſtroying ſtrengths, whoſe ſtrength is to deſtroy. The Lord by his Prophet awakens the drunkards with this ſad Alarm (*Joel* 1.6.) *For* (ſaith he) *a Nation is come up upon my Land, ſtrong and without number, whoſe teeth are the teeth of the Lion, and he hath the cheek-teeth of a great Lion*; that is, the enemies are fierce and cruel in their nature, and they have dreadful means and wayes of exerciſing their cruelty. The fourth Beaſt in *Daniel's* Viſion, *which was dreadful and terrible, and ſtrong exceedingly, had great iron teeth* (Dan. 7.7.) This Beaſt is deſcribed, firſt, having teeth; ſecondly, great teeth; thirdly, iron teeth; and all to ſhew what ſpoil that Beaſt ſhould make, both among the Nations and in the Church of God. The greateſt Powers and Princes of the World have acted like Beaſts; and the beſt Princes of the World have had many Beaſts in their Dominions againſt and upon whom to act their power.

Hence Obſerve, Secondly, *It is the Magiſtrates duty to break and puniſh the wicked, as well as to protect and relieve the good.*

Wounding work is a duty as well as healing work. They who have teeth like beaſts, muſt be dealt with like *bruit beaſts, who are made to be taken and deſtroyed* (2 Pet. 2.12.) The Apoſtle *Paul* deſcibing the power of Magiſtrates ſaith (*Rom.* 13. 3,4.) *Rulers are a terror to evil works* (that is, they ought to be ſo by vertue of their office) and thereupon he infers, *If thou doſt that which is evil be afraid, for he beareth not the Sword in vain.* The Rulers Sword is no ſcare-crow, nor is his a wooden Dagger. He ſheweth the Sword which he beareth; and a viſible Sword as the Emblem of his Office is uſually born before him; but 'tis not born for a ſhew. He muſt ſtrike with it as well as ſhew it, and make thoſe feel it, who are not awed with the ſight of it.

Thirdly, As *Job* ſaid at the fifteenth verſe, *I was eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame*; that is, I was alike helpful to all who needed my help; ſo here he ſaith, *I brake the jaws of the wicked*; that is, of all the wicked.

Whence Note, *Juſtice is impartial in puniſhing as well as in relieving.*

If men be wicked, be they who they will, rich or poor, high or low, be they near in relation, or be they far off, a Magiſtrate ſhould ſay in that caſe (as the Lord did concerning *Coniah*, Jer. 22.24.) *Though ye were as the Signet on my right hand, yet will I pluck you thence*: Or as *Saul* (1 Sam. 14.39.) *Though it be in* Jonathan *my Son, he ſhall ſurely dye.* As the day of the Lord is againſt the high hills, and againſt the mountains; that is, againſt the greateſt of the wicked; ſo ſhould the day of man be too. Juſtice muſt puniſh a ſin in ſcarlet, as well as a ſin in ruſſet; a ſin in robes, as well as a ſin in rags. As death goes with an equal foot, and knocks at the door of Princes, as well as at the Cottages of the poor; ſo muſt Juſtice, it muſt break the teeth of the wicked, whether they dwell in a Cottage, or in a Pallace, that's all one to Juſtice. When *Job* found any who were wicked and had done wickedly, he never demurr'd upon the matter, nor conferr'd with fleſh and blood, but did his duty, *He brake their jaws, and plucked the ſpoil out of his teeth.*

But what did *Job* with the ſpoil when he had plucked it out of the teeth of the wicked? Did he put it in his own pocket? Surely no, but he reſtored it to the grieved and oppreſſed party. What is wrongfully taken away, Juſtice returns to the perſons wronged. As Juſtice will not ſuffer the wicked to go away with the ſpoil of the innocent; ſo Juſtice will not go away with the ſpoil, but cauſeth the ſpoiler to refund it to the uſe of the ſpoiled. Magiſtrates muſt be careful of the ſpoil; when they pluck it out of the teeth of the wicked, they muſt not put it into their own coffers. They that do ſo, deſerve rather to be called *wicked Broakers*, then *Breakers of the wicked.* Such as theſe take vengeance for their own advantage, not for theirs who are wronged, and ſerve their own bellyes rather then the Commonwealth, whoſe ſervants they are.

From the whole verſe take theſe three Notes.

Firſt, *Wicked men will never give back the ſpoil, or ſatisfie thoſe whom they have wronged till they are forced to it.*

They do not reſtore in a way of repentance, but as beaſts do in a way of compulſion; they are made to reſtore, they have no mind to it. They *hold faſt deceit* (as the Prophet ſpeaks of the oppreſſing *Jews*, (Jer 8. 5.) that is, the things which they have deceitfully gotten and plucked away from others, till it be pluckt out of their teeth: They never chuſe to reſtore, but only reſtore when they cannot chuſe: 'Tis an act of violence upon them, though an act of Juſtice in the Magiſtrate.

Secondly, See how hard a task the Magiſtrate hath, who as he hath to deal with men, ſo alſo with beaſts in men, with Lions and with Bears in men, who having taken the prey, would make him a prey too if they could. *I have fought with beaſts at* Epheſus (ſaith *Paul*, 1 Cor. 15. 32.) that is, with men made up of inhumanity; and ſo muſt the Magiſtrate too, he muſt fight with beaſts, ſuch as would tear and rend him when he comes to take the prey out of their teeth, even as a hungry Lion would tear the man that comes to recover the prey out of his teeth. *David* at once ſhews of what ſpirit the wicked are, and how dangerous it is to deal with them (2 Sam. 23. 6.) *The ſons of* Belial *ſhall be all of them as thorns thruſt away, becauſe they cannot be taken with hands*; no man can meddle with thorns with his bare hand, they'le prick and ſcratch him; *But the man that ſhall touch them muſt be fenced with iron, and the ſtaffe of a ſpear.* Theſe ſons of *Belial*, who cannot abide to bear the yoak of Gods government, no nor the yoak of mans, are to their very Governours, as well as to their fellow-Citizens, like grieving thorns; and were they not fenced *with iron, and the ſtaffe of a ſpear*, that is, had they not an outward force and ſtrength as well as an authority, they could not handle them as they deſerve, and as in Juſtice they ought. When the Lord would ſhew *Ezekiel* what a hard and hot ſervice he was like to have of it, he thus encourageth him (*Chap.* 2. 6.) *Thou ſon of man be not afraid of them, neither be afraid of their words, though briers and thorns be with thee, and thou doſt dwell among Scorpions.* Both Miniſters and Magiſtrates muſt expect to meet not only with *thorns* that will ſcratch them, and with beaſts that will tear them with their teeth, or puſh and gore them with their horns, but even with Scorpions, who would ſting and poyſon them to death. It was the ſaying of the Emperour *Tiberius* (who was himſelf a beaſtly Governour) to ſome who applauded his happineſs in having attained the Government of ſo great an Empire; *O* (ſaid he) *you do not know what a beaſt the Empire is*, how unruly and untoward, how head-ſtrong and hard to be governed. As Magiſtrates need much wiſdom, ſkill, and juſtice, ſo likewiſe much patience to bear the burden, and much courage to encounter the difficulties of their place. *David* who had ſo much valour in the field, that he did not think *Goliah* (who made a whole Army of *Iſraelites* tremble) too hard for him alone; yet was once heard to ſay (when Juſtice call'd aloud to him for revenge) *Theſe men the ſons of* Zerviah *be too hard for me* (2 Sam. 3. 39.) *Job* was a man of ſpirit as well as a man of Integrity, elſe theſe Lions had been too hard for him, nor had he ever pluckt the ſpoil out of their teeth.

Neſcitis quanta bellua ſit imperium; Dictum Tiberii. *Apud* Suet.

Laſtly, We ſee what a man *Job* was while he was in Power, with what a ſweet mixture of juſtice and meekneſs, of moderation and magnanimity, of compaſſion towards the poor, and reſolution againſt the moſt potent Oppreſſours, he ſteered the whole courſe of his Government.

Hence Obſerve, *He that being raiſed to honour and high place, uſeth his power well, and perſeveres in his integrity, is a man of men, he is indeed a man taught of God.*

Job was lifted up in the world, but his heart was not lifted up; *He held the height of the Hill* (as the Prophet ſpeaks of *Edom*, Jer. 49. 16.) but he was neither highminded, nor earthly minded. His power was great, and he uſed it for the beſt: Men uſually change to the worſe in manners, when to the better in honours. Among all the *Roman* Emperours, there was but one of whom it was ſaid, that when he got the Throne he was a better man. Among all the Kings of *Iſrael* there was not one good: And among the Kings of *Judah* there were many, yea, the moſt of them very bad. There is a great temptation in worldly greatneſs. And how weak do many grow in morals and ſpirituals, when they are ſtrong in civils and temporals! It is ſaid of *Uzziah* King of *Judah* (2 Chron. 26. 15, 16.) *That he was marvellouſly helped till he was ſtrong.* But by whom was he helped? The ſeventh verſe of that Chapter tells us, that he was *helped by God* himſelf, and he helped him marvellouſly, till he was marvellous ſtrong; and then ſee his marvellous weakneſs (for as it follows) *When he was ſtrong his heart was lifted up to his deſtruction, for he tranſgreſſed againſt the Lord his God, and went into the Temple of the Lord to burn incenſe upon the Altar of incenſe.* O what a weakneſs, yea, what a wickedneſs was that! And as that Prince ſhewed his weakneſs when he was ſtrong in medling with that which did not at all belong to his Office, or by uſurping the Prieſts Office; ſo have many others, either by neglecting of, or acting contrary to that which belongeth to their office. And whether the Powers and Princes of the World fail by doing what they ſhould not, or by not doing what they ſhould, their weakneſs is much alike. And we may ſay to any ſuch Prince (as the Lord God ſaid to the whole body of his people as one man, *Ezek.* 16. 30.) *How weak is thine heart, ſeeing thou doſt all theſe things* (not the work of a Princely man, or of a juſt and righteous Prince over men) *but of an imperious whoriſh woman.* 'Tis a very hard thing to mannage power well, to have power and not be overpowered with it.

Honores mutant mores.
De uno Tuo legitur, quod adepto imperio melior evaſerit.

How rarely do Princes pattern *Job* in delivering the oppreſſed, in being Eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame, in being a father to the poor, and in breaking the jaws of the wicked. When men are once mounted high, and have aſcended to the Throne, they quickly diſcover either their luſts and vices, or their graces and vertues; they quickly tell the world either how good or how bad they are. *None can appear either ſo good or ſo bad as they would be, while they want an opportunity*; and of all opportunities to appear either way, Greatneſs is the greateſt. Magiſtracy ſhould alwayes be a ſhadow to others; yet 'tis never a ſhadow (in this ſence) to the Magiſtrate, but ſets him in the open Sun, and makes him ſhew himſelf of what make and ſpirit he is.

VERS. 18, 19, 20.

Then I ſaid, I ſhall dye in my neſt, and I ſhall multiply my dayes as the ſand.
My root was ſpread out by the waters, and the dew lay all night upon my branch.
My glory was freſh in me, and my bow was renewed in mine hand.

JOB being veſted with much Power and Authority and being ſo much affected by and applauded of all ſorts of men, even by men of Power and Authority (as hath been ſhewed in the former context, from the ſeventh to the ſeventeenth verſe incluſively, matters ſtanding, I ſay, thus fairly with him) he began to perſwade, or aſſure himſelf, that this mountain of his outward proſperity ſhould not be removed, or that he ſhould live long happily, and at laſt dye peaceably: This was ſtrongly ſet upon his ſpirit; and that's the ſum of the words now under diſcuſſion. That ſuch was his perſwaſion is clear and expreſs.

Verſe 18. **Then I ſaid, I ſhall dye in my neſt, and I ſhall multiply my dayes as the ſand.**

And to ſhew that this was no fancy nor irrational perſwaſion, he gives us the grounds and reaſons of it; which he both propoſeth and illuſtrateth by a twofold ſimilitude.

Firſt, By the ſimilitude of a Tree (in the nineteenth and part of the twentieth verſe, *My root was ſpread out by the waters, and the dew lay all night upon my branch. My glory was freſh in me.*

Secondly, By the ſimilitude of a bow, in the cloſe of the twentieth verſe; *My bow was renewed in mine hand.* As if he had ſaid, *I had good grounds to hope that my good eſtate would continue, becauſe it was ſo well ſet, it had a root; and becauſe it did flouriſh ſo well, it had goodly branches, and theſe ſo far from withering that they were alwayes ſpringing, or I had a perpetual ſpring; my glory was freſh in me, and as my glory was freſh, ſo it was firm; my ſtrength was as a Bow in the hand of a mighty man which is renewed in his hand.*

UMI

Then, I ſaid.

The word, **then**, is a word of relation, and it refers not only to the time or ſeaſon when *Job* ſpake this, which was the day of his fulneſs and flouriſhing condition, when all was green and beautiful about him; but, *Then*, refers alſo to the grounds and reaſons of his confidence laid down as was ſhewed in the two following verſes; *Then, I ſaid,*

It was not a ſlight *ſay-ſo*, but when he ſaith (**I ſaid**) his meaning is, I was perſwaded, or fully ſetled in my thoughts about this point, I did not take up a ſudden tranſcient opinion, but my judgment was convinced that it would be ſo; I believed, and I had reaſon to believe, that my eſtate ſhould not have ſuffered ſuch a change as now it hath.

Then, I ſaid.] To ſay, in Scripture ſence, is to be reſolved; ſo was *David* (if ever any man was) when he ſaid (*Pſal.* 39. 1.) *I will take heed to my wayes*; that is, I ſet this down with my ſelf, it was as a decree upon my heart, *that my tongue ſhould not offend.* And as he reſolved to keep his tongue from offending, ſo to employ his tongue in the bewailing of his offences (*Pſal.* 32. 5.) *I ſaid I will confeſs my ſin*; that is, I took up a full purpoſe to make a repentant confeſſion, and then *thou forgaveſt the iniquity of my ſin. David* did not ſay it in a fit of extremity, or in a good mood, he did not ſay, as many ſay, from the teeth outward, we will repent and turn from our evil wayes, but he ſaid it from his heart, and was haſtning to the performance of it. The word is uſed (in the ſame ſence) by the Lord himſelf (*Deut.* 32. 26.) *I ſaid I would ſcatter them into corners, and make the remembrance of them to ceaſe from among men, were it not that I feared the wrath of the Enemy. I ſaid*; that is, I reſolved to ſcatter this ſinful and rebellious people, but that I was afraid of the wrath of the Enemy; not of the power of the Enemy againſt me, but of their wrath againſt my people, that they would ſhew them no mercy, and that they would blaſpheme my Name, and attribute all to themſelves. *I ſaid I would ſcatter them*, and they gave me too much cauſe to do it; but for this cauſe I forbear to do it. Once more, *David* ſpake thus (in *Job's* caſe, *Pſal.* 30. 6.) *And in my proſperity I ſaid, I ſhall never be moved*; my confidence was ſtrong that my condition was paſt danger of removal. In this ſtrength of confidence *Job* ſaid,

I ſhall dye in my neſt.

Moriar naturali morte, ex defectu virium ob ſenectutem. Piſc.

גוע *Leniter expirare vel facile mori.*

To dye is at once to depart out of the body and out of this world; death is the ſeparation of the ſoul from the body, and of both from worldly relations and enjoyments. Here the word tranſlated *to dye*, notes a ſweet death, an eaſie death: I ſhall breath out my laſt, and give up the ghoſt freely, I ſhall go out as a lamp whoſe oyl is ſpent and waſted by degrees, I ſhall not be blown out, nor tortured to death with painful and pining ſickneſſes: I ſhall not dye of any diſeaſe but old age; and when old age is the diſeaſe, there's no cure for it but death. As all this is intimated in the Hebrew word rendred *to dye*, ſo 'tis expreſſed in the next words, *I ſhall dye*

קן *Nidus domicilium avis à radice* קנן *nidificavit, nidum paravit.*

In my neſt.] Where's that? The birds neſt is her whole houſe; and a mans whole houſe is his neſt; yet mans neſt, in ſtrictneſs, is only that one piece of his houſe-furniture, his bed. And ſo, *I ſhall dye in my neſt*, is, I ſhall dye quietly at home in my bed, not in battel, nor in a ſtrange land: I ſhall not dye as a tyrant or oppreſſor of my people by a violent hand, but (as good old *Jacob* with his twelve Sons about his bed, ſo ſhall I) with my Wife and Children about me, to mourn over me and cloſe mine eyes. Or more largely, I ſhall dye in my neſt, is, I ſhall dye in a good condition. A neſt imports two things: Firſt, Warmth, or a fence againſt the cold. Secondly, ſafety, or a fence againſt danger. Neſts are builded cloſe, and ſo they are warm; and they are built, either on high, or out of the way in ſome ſecret place, and ſo they are ſafe (*Hab.* 2. 9.) *Woe unto him that coveteth an evil covetouſneſs to his houſe, that he may ſet his neſt on high, that he may be delivered from the power of evil.* Great perſons (ſuch as *Job* was) build high Palaces, and they build in high places. But how low ſoever their Palaces are, either as to the ſituation or ſtructure of them, yet their ſtate is high built, and they ſet their neſt on high, ſo high above other men, that they often preſume no power of man can reach them; yet then they are alike in the reach of God, and he can quickly bring them and their neſt not only into the hand, but under the foot of man. Thus the Lord rebukes the preſumptuous ſecurity of *Edom* in the third and fourth verſes of the Propheſie of *Obadiah*; *The pride of thy heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwelleſt in the clefts of the rock, whoſe habitation is high, that ſaith in his heart, Who ſhall bring me down to the ground? Though thou exalt thy ſelf as the Eagle, and ſet thy neſt among the Stars*; that is, though thou putteſt thy ſelf into the ſafeſt place, and thinkeſt thy neſt to be as much above any earthly annoyance as the Stars of heaven; *yet thence will I bring thee down.* So then, when *Job* hoped to dye in his neſt, he hoped to dye in a high and ſafe condition, in alluſion to birds, who dye in their neſts. Some Birds are ſhot, and ſome are taken and enſnared by the Fowler; others are devoured by Birds of prey; the Kite, the Hawk, or the Vulture catches them: But many Birds dye in their neſt, and *Job* hoped, yea was much perſwaded he ſhould dye like one of them. *Then I ſaid I ſhall dye in my neſt.*

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *A godly man thinks of dying while he is in the greateſt proſperity of living.*

Job had great hope to dye in his neſt, but he had no hope nor thought but to dye; That's a great truth though Apocryphal Scripture (*Eccl.* 41. 1.) *O death, How bitter is the remembrance of thee to a man that is at reſt in his poſſeſſions, unto the man that hath nothing to vex him, and that hath proſperity in all things; yea unto him that yet is able to receive meat.* 'Tis a kind of death to a worldly man at reſt in his poſſeſſions to think of dying; he hath no content but to think of building, and taking pleaſure in his neſt, he is a ſtranger to thoughts of dying in his neſt. But to a godly man the remembrance of death is ſweet, even while he is at reſt in his poſſeſſions; He is willing to meditate of death, or actually to dye, not only when he ſcarce knows how to live, but when he hath abundance of the things of this life about him. Some who have had as much for this life as they could, have, even then, deſired (if God ſaw it good) to depart out of this life. And every godly man (out of the caſe of temptation) can chearefully think and ſpeak of death, yea and obediently ſubmit to the call of God to dye, when he hath the fulleſt and freeſt enjoyments of this life.

Secondly, *Job* deſcribing his preſent bleſſings reckons this as a bleſſing in expectation, *I ſhall dye in my neſt.*

Hence Note, *to dye in peace is a deſirable mercy.*

To dye in ſpiritual peace, or in the aſſurance of eternal ſalvation is beſt (as old *Simeon* ſaid, *Luke* 2. 29.) *Lord now letteſt thou thy ſervant depart in peace according to thy word; for mine eyes have ſeen thy ſalvation*; this, I ſay, is beſt) but to dye in temporal peace is very good. Such was the promiſe made to *Joſiah* (2 King. 22. 20.) *Behold therefore I will gather thee unto thy fathers, and thou ſhalt be gathered unto thy grave in peace, and thine eyes ſhall not ſee all the evil, which I will bring upon this place.* And though, as the ſacred hiſtory relates (2 *Kings* 23. 29.) *Joſiah* dyed in War, yet that promiſe was performed to him; for, Firſt, It was a war of his own ſeeking, God did not ſend a war upon him. Secondly, It was in a war abroad, not in his own Countrey, he having without any provocation interpoſed in a quarrel, that concern'd him not. So that, as he went to the grave with peace in his own conſcience (notwithſtanding that raſh attempt) ſo the Lord gave him no trouble in his own borders, which was his promiſe. *David* gave two very dreadful (though juſt advices) upon his death bed to *Solomon* his Son and ſucceſſour: The one concerning *Joab* (1 Kings 2. 6.) *Let not his hoar-head go down to the grave in peace*; the other concerning *Shimei*, at the ninth verſe of the ſame Chapter, *His hoar-head bring thou down to the grave with blood.* Neither of theſe obtained the mercy which *Job* expected and at laſt attained, to dye in their neſt.

Thirdly, Obſerve, *Good men ſometimes grow up to a great hight of Confidence about their earthly felicity.*

Job ſaid, *I ſhall dye in my neſt*; he preſumed his worldly proſperity would continue long, even as long as he continued in this world. As he had no deſire to live alwayes in the comforts of this world; ſo he did believe, that his worldly comforts would out-live him, and that he ſhould dye in a warm neſt, whenſoever he dyed.

But was not this a ſinful confidence?

I anſwer, there is a ſence wherein ſuch a confidence is not ſinful; and there is a ſence wherein 'tis very ſinful; it is not ſinful in it ſelf for a godly man to be confident that his proſperity ſhall continue. For if he may ariſe to a Confidence that he ſhall be ſafe in the midſt of dangers, that he ſhall dye in his neſt, even when he is in the Jaws or ſnares of death, mnch more may he have this confidence when all's peace with him, and no appearance of danger near him. *David* was confident of his own ſafety, though in the midſt and mouth of danger (*Pſal.* 3. 5, 6.) *I laid me down and ſlept, I awaked, for the Lord ſuſtained mee; I will not be afraid of ten thouſand that ſet themſelves againſt me round about: Ariſe, O Lord, ſave me, O my God. David's* faith ſpake this, not his preſumption. That man knows he is alwayes ſafe who hath God near him. One is a match not only for two, but ten thouſand enemies, if God be his friend. *David* ſpake at the ſame rate of confidence again (*Pſal.* 27. 1.) *The Lord is my light and my ſalvation, whom ſhall I fear? The Lord is the ſtrength of my life, of whom ſhall I be afraid?* He puts the Queſtion twice to put the matter out of Queſtion; *Whom ſhall I fear? Of whom ſhall I be afraid?* Let me ſee the man, let me ſee the Devil that can make me afraid; I fear no power, no not the powers of darkneſs, while the Lord is my light; I fear not deſtruction it ſelf, while the Lord is my ſalvation. And he holds out not only his own ſingle aſſurance, but the aſſurance of all the people of God (*Pſal.* 46. 1, 2.) *God is our refuge and ſtrength, a very preſent help in trouble; therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed; and though the mountains be carried into the midſt of tht Sea.* Now if a godly man may arrive at a confidence to out-live all the dangers and deaths that are about him, why may not he alſo have confidence that his proſperity and comforts ſhall out-live him, or that he ſhall dye in the midſt of his proſperity and comforts? It is a great part of the happineſs of our lives to have a confidence, or quietneſs of ſpirit, about the things of this life: Nor is any thing more uncomely for, or more uncomfortable to a Saint, then diſtruſtful thoughts and fears. To carry a troubled mind and a trembling frame of ſpirit about us, leſt ſome evil ſhould befal us, is more grievous then the preſent ſuffering of evil. Diſtruſt is one of the worſt diſeaſes or ſickneſſes of the mind. Philoſophers have highly commended chearfulneſs of ſpirit, or (as we ſpeak) *to be of good chear.* It is all one to him whether it be well or ill with him, who is alwayes in fear of, or ſuſpecting evil. To be afraid when we are ſafe, is as bad as to be in danger. To hang in doubt about temporals, is moſt unſutable to them (to Believers I mean) who may be aſſured of eternals. What can a Believer ſay more unlike himſelf then this; *I have enough now, but I may have nothing to morrow; this year it is well with me, but the next I fear will be diſaſtrous to me and mine.* It is a duty as well as a priviledge and a mercy to have the heart fixed about things that are ſubject to change every day: And to be anxious about our earthly enjoyments, is as bad as to truſt upon them. As our hopes ſhould be above the creature, ſo likewiſe ſhould our fears be. Only they live upon good terms in the world, who have neither troubleſome cares about what they ſhall get, nor troubleſome fears about what they may looſe to morrow: Let to morrow care for it ſelf, and let to morrow fear for it ſelf, ſufficient unto the day is the evil of it when it comes, we need not take it up aforehand or before it comes. And therefore *Job* might ſpeak as a good and ſpiritually wiſe man may and ought, when he ſaid, *I ſhall dye in my neſt.* And we may conſider a three-fold ground (as of *Job's*, ſo) of any godly mans Confidence, that he ſhall dye in his neſt, or live and dye comfortably.

Firſt, The Experience which he hath had of the former goodneſs of God to him in outward things, may aſſure him much that he ſhall yet praiſe God for the continuance of the ſame goodneſs. *Experience worketh hope* (Rom. 5. 4.) and as hope is not aſhamed, ſo it will not let us be troubled about any thing, *becauſe the love of God is ſhed abroad in our hearts by the holy Ghoſt.*

Secondly, The Teſtimony which a Godly man hath in his own Conſcience, that he hath not lifted himſelf up by unrighteouſneſs, nor built his own neſt by pulling down the neſts of other men, may be a ground of confidence that he ſhall dye in his neſt. *Job's* Conſcience told him that he had not raiſed his eſtate upon his neighbours ruines; that he had not torn his portion out of the bellyes of the poor; that he had not emptyed any man to fill himſelf, nor did he feaſt upon their ſtarvings. He that hath ſuch a Conſcience may have much confidence, that he ſhall dye in his neſt.

Thirdly, A Godly man may have this confidence with reſpect to the expreſs promiſes made to ſuch of outward proſperity. The Scripture is ſtored with ſuch promiſes, and they are the beſt tenure and free-hold in the world, even for worldly things. Promiſes are the Saints Great Charter. The twenty-eighth of *Deuteronomy* contains the Charter of outward bleſſings to the *Jews*, and they are particularly named, in caſe of obedience. For *Moſes* having given one promiſe in general (*ver.* 1.) *It ſhall come to paſs, if thou ſhalt hearken diligently to the voyce of the Lord thy God,* &c. *that the Lord thy God will ſet thee on high above all nations.* God (as he did for *Job*) would build them a neſt on high. And as they ſhould have the bleſſing of a high neſt, ſo their neſt ſhould be full of bleſſings (*ver.* 2, 3, &c.) *And all theſe bleſſings ſhall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou ſhalt hearken to the voyce of the Lord thy God; Bleſſed ſhalt thou be in the City, and bleſſed ſhalt thou be in the field, bleſſed ſhalt thou be in the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy cattel,* &c. The hundred, and twelfth Pſalm, beſides many other carries out the ſame promiſe eminently (*ver.* 1, 2, 3.) *Bleſſed is the man that feareth the Lord, that delighteth greatly in his commandments; his ſeed ſhall be mighty upon earth; the generation of the upright ſhall be bleſſed; wealth and riches ſhall be in his houſe, and his righteouſneſs endureth for ever*; that is, the fruit of his righteous dealings ſhall be upon his poſterity from generation to generation, or, as the Law ſpeaks, to a thouſand generations; and hence that in the ſixth verſe of the ſame Pſalm, *Surely he ſhall not be moved for ever*; and therefore we have him (*ver.* 7, 8.) even laughing dangers in the face; *He ſhall not be afraid of evil tidings, his heart is fixed truſting in the Lord.* Thus the promiſes of the old Teſtament ran much upon temporals, though ſpirituals were alwayes included, and ſometimes expreſſed; and though the promiſes of the new Teſtament run moſt upon ſpirituals, yet temporals are alwayes included, and ſometimes expreſſed (1 *Tim.* 4. 8.) *Godlineſs is profitable for all things, and hath the promiſe of this life,* &c. Now if the Lord make a promiſe, we ought to take him upon his word for earthly things as well as for heavenly; and if faith have taken hold on a promiſe, though it be but for earthly things, it will work the heart into a quietneſs about them, it will deliver us from troubleſome fears that they will alter, while in our judgments we are convinced of their ſubjection to alteration, both in reſpect of their own nature (which is exceeding mutable) as alſo with reſpect to the will and ſoveraignty of God. And therefore we muſt be caution'd, not to take ſuch promiſes without exception of the Croſs, as if they did oblige God to beſtow and continue outward comforts without any interruption. There's no word that gives us any ſuch aſſurance. The Lord hath not tyed up his own hands from afflicting us, by any promiſe whatſoever; yea, afflictions are a part of the promiſe, or of the thing promiſed, they being many wayes needful and expedient for the people of God, as hath been ſhewed from ſeveral paſſages of this book. And if *Job's* confidence was faulty in any thing, it was in this, that he did not well conſider that Exception of the croſs in the promiſes about outward things. Thus far it hath been ſhewed that a godly man may have a well-grounded Confidence of the continuance of his worldly proſperity, or that he ſhall dye in his neſt.

Yet it cannot be denyed, but there is a great deal of ſinful Confidence, yea the confidences which moſt men have about worldly things, are like thoſe of *Iſrael* (Jer. 2. 37.) *Such as the Lord hath rejected, and in which they ſhall never proſper. David* (*Pſal.* 10. 5, 6.) deſcribing the wicked man, ſaith thus of him, *His wayes are alwayes grievous. Thy Judgments* (meaning the Lords Judgments, both as commanding and puniſhing) *are far above out of his ſight. As for all his enemies, he puffs at them, he hath ſaid in his heart, I ſhall never be moved, I ſhall never be in adverſity. Job's* words were ſomewhat like theſe, and *David* (as I ſhall touch by and by) ſpake the ſame almoſt in ſound, but neither of them ſpake with this Spirit, though both ſpake too much. For

Firſt, The man of whom *David* there ſpeaks, as alſo many other wicked men, are confident, and ſay in their heart, they ſhall never be moved, relying upon their own ſtrength, wit and policy, preſuming upon theſe to eſtabliſh their greatneſs, and maintain their neſt againſt all hazzards and oppoſitions. Look what opinion men have of their getting, the ſame they have of their holding worldly things. They think they get them by their own power and policy, as that *Aſſyrian* Prince did (*Iſa.* 10. 13.) *He ſaith by the ſtrength of my hand I have done it, and by my wiſdom, for I am prudent :* And as that other Prophet hath it (*Hab.* 1. 16.) *They ſacrifice unto their net, and burn incenſe to their drags, becauſe by them their portion is fat* (that is, they think it is ſo) *and their meat plenteous.* Now (I ſay) they who look no further nor higher then their own net (that is, then the means which they invent or uſe by their own wit and induſtry) for the getting of their portion, can look no higher for the holding of it. All ſuch confidence is rejected of God, and will prove (in the iſſue) unproſperous, yea fatal to man. *We are never in ſo much danger of looſing what we have, either in temporals or ſpirituals, as when we truſt our ſelves with the keeping of them.*

Secondly, Others look upon worldly things as if they had a certainty in themſelves ; They judge their Eſtates too big to be broken, and too well ſetled to be ſhaken. Thus the Spirit of God repreſents the vanity of their imaginations (*Pſal.* 49. 11.) *Their inward thought is that their houſes ſhall continue for ever, and their dwelling places to all generations.* I have purchaſed (ſaith one) ſuch lands, and I have got ſo good a title to them, that certainly they will continue mine and my heirs for ever ; never conſidering how all things here below are ſubject to ebbings and flowings, to turns and viciſſitudes every day.

Thirdly, Others ſay ſo, truſting upon the favour and power of men, they live in the love, in the embraces and aſſiſtances of the creatures ; They have great kindred and alliances, great friends , and confederates, ſuch and ſuch have profeſſed themſelves their ſervants, and therefore they ſay they ſhall never be removed, nor can their neſt be pulled down. But what ſaith the Lord, (*Jer.* 17. 5.) *Curſed be the man that truſteth in man, and maketh fleſh* (the Greateſt fleſh) *his arm*, that is, his ſtrength and defence, *and whoſe heart departeth from the Lord.* And therefore we are dehorted from all ſuch confidences (*Pſal.* 146. 3.) *Put not your truſt in Princes, nor in the ſon of man, in whom there is no help.* Which is not to be underſtood, as if there are ſome of the ſons of men in whom there is help, and, that in ſuch we may truſt ; for their is no help in any of them, and leaſt of all in thoſe whom we truſt moſt, either for the building or maintaining our worldly neſt.

Fourthly, Saith another, *I ſhall dye in my neſt*, meerly pleaſing himſelf with outward proſperity, rejoycing in, and being drunken with earthly enjoyments (there is a drunkenneſs in our exceſſive delight, in having as well as in exceſſive uſing the things of this world) ſuch a man is eaſie to believe he ſhall ever have, what he ſo much delights to have. Such a man beſpeaks his ſoul in the language of that rich man (*Luke* 12. 19.) *Soul, thou haſt much goods laid up for many years, take thine eaſe, eat, drink, and be merry.* A godly man makes uſe of the good things of this life which God gives him, but he doth not give himſelf up to them, nor live in them. He ſaith with *David*, *Lord, lift thou up the light of thy Countenance upon me, thou haſt put gladneſs into my heart, more then in the time that their Corn and their Wine encreaſed.* When Corn and Wine encreaſe, then worldly mens gladneſs is encreaſed ; and when (as we ſay) they have well feather'd their neſt, then they ſay, ſurely we ſhall dye in our neſt.

Yea, not only wicked and meer carnal men, but even the godly do ſometimes over-reckon themſelves in worldly things, and over-act their confidences about them. He that hath grace doth not alwayes act graciouſly ; and they whoſe hope is laid up in Heaven, may have too much hope about earthly things. *Job* little thought to have ſeen ſuch dayes as were upon him, having once ſuch abundance without, and alwayes ſuch integrity within, with the favour of God ſhining upon him. *David* in his proſperity ſaid, *I ſhall never be moved* (Pſal. 30. 6.) *Lord, by thy favour thou haſt made my mountain to ſtand ſtrong.* Though his was not a meer carnal confidence, yet it was more then a holy confidence ; he ſpake indeed of the favour of God ſtrengthning him, but he ſpake of more ſtrength then the favour of God aſſures any man of about moveable things, even that he ſhould never be moved. *Hezekiah* was a good man, yet his heart over-acted too (2 *Chron.* 32. 25.) when the Lord recovered him of his ſickneſs, it is ſaid, *Hezekiah rendred not again according to the benefit done unto him, for his heart was lifted up.* What was his heart lifted up in ? In his worldly greatneſs ; he boaſted himſelf of his riches and treaſure, when he ſhould only have boaſted of the Lord his God. He would needs ſhew his treaſures to the Ambaſſadours of the King of *Babylon*, as if he had been more deſirous to have it reported there how rich he was, then how good the Lord had been to him. And he ſhewed this diſeaſe of his ſoul, in ſhewing his riches, when he ſhould have been wholly taken up in ſhewing his thankfulneſs to God for recovering him out of his bodily ſickneſs. When *Hezekiah* ſhewed the Ambaſſadours of *Babylon* his goodly neſt, with all his treaſures and precious things, he little thought, that the King of *Babylon* (as afterwards he did) ſhould find the neſt, and gather up and carry away all the eggs, as himſelf proudly ſaid he had done (*Iſa.* 10. 14.) and as the Prophet threatned he ſhould do (2 *Kings* 20. 17.) Thus the heart of good *Hezekiah* was tumor'd with pride, while it ſhould have been lifted up in praiſe. There is a great danger in worldly things ; they ſometimes impoſe upon the beſt of men. Though (through grace) they are not altogether overcome, and ſtupified with worldly enjoyments, nor alienated from the love and life of God, as worldlings are ; yet, neglecting their watch and forgetting themſelves, they may grow over-confident. So *David* did, and ſo did *Hezekiah*, who yet (as the Scripture ſaith, 2 *Chron.* 32. 26.) *humbled himſelf for the pride of his heart* (*both he and the Inhabitants of* Jeruſalem) *ſo that the wrath of the Lord came not upon them in the dayes of* Hezekiah. He dyed peaceably in his neſt. And though we may judge that there was ſomewhat of a carnal confidence in *Job* too, when he ſaid, *I ſhall dye in my neſt* ; yet he alſo humbled himſelf for that and all his undue paſſions in the time of his tryal, as appears in the forty-ſecond Chapter of this Book. So that, though there might be a failing in him, when he ſaid, *I ſhall dye in my neſt*, yet the breach was made up ; and though once he had no hope to do ſo, as before he had too much, yet in the cloſe he did ſo : He alſo dyed peaceably in his neſt. And notwithſtanding all that hath been ſaid as a probable proof of *Job's* error in this ſpeech, There is one paſſage in this Book very pregnant to prove that *Job's* Confidence was ſomewhat mixt and allayed with thoughts of a change, and that as he had hope of a proſperous courſe while he was in this world, and of a proſperous concluſion when he went out of it : So he was not altogether without fears, or at leaſt without due and often conſideration that it might be otherwiſe with him then it was before he dyed. We hear him making this profeſſion expreſly (*Chap.* 3. 26.) *I was not in ſafety, neither had I reſt, nor had I quiet, yet trouble came.* Theſe words being ſpoken at the beginning of his troubles, ſeem to intimate, that *Job* in the height of his proſperity (for to that time he points) was not ſafe in his own apprehenſion ; that is, he did not think himſelf ſo ſafe, that trouble could not come at him, nor reach him. He was not in the reſt of ſecurity, though he was in the reſt of peace ; nor did he judge himſelf ſo ſetled that he ſhould never be removed : He had ſome bodements or miſgivings upon his ſpirit, that his reſt and quiet condition might be diſturbed before he dyed, even while he was ſaying, *I ſhall dye in my neſt*,

And multiply my dayes as the ſand.

That's the ſecond point of his hope. As *Job* thought when ever he dyed, he ſhould dye in a proſperous condition ; ſo he thought it would be long before he ſhould dye, *I ſhall multiply my dayes as the ſand.* There are two other readings

Et ſicut Palma multiplicabo dies. Vulg. i. e. *vivam diutiſſimè. Sicut truncus Palmæ, multo vivā tempore.* Sept.

readings of this part of the verſe; I ſhall but name them, and pitch upon our own. Firſt, Some render the words thus; *I ſhall multiply my dayes as the Palm tree*; and the reaſon is, becauſe the Palm tree endures very long: So that to multiply our dayes as the Palm tree, is to have very many dayes. And ſo the Septuagint explains it; *As the body of the Palm tree, I ſhall live a long time.* It is ſaid (*Pſal.* 92. 12.) *The righteous ſhall flouriſh like the Palmtree*; his flouriſhing in ſpirituals, is there aimed at, he doth ſo alſo in temporals.

Sicut Phænix multiplicabo dies meus. Tygur. Cajet. *Eſt genus quoddam Palmæ quod cum emortuū fuerit ex ſeipſo renaſcitur; unde putat datū nomen Phænici avi* Plinius, *lib.* 13. *c.* 4. *Apud Græcos Palmæ & Phænicis nomen commune eſt.* Pined. *Phænix eſt ſymbolum vitæ longiſſimæ. Vivere 660 annos aſſerit* Plinius *lib.* 7. *c.* 47. *Vivere* 500 *Annos ſcribit* Ambroſius *lib. de fide reſur. Et quater egreditur cornicis ſæcula cervus. Alipedem cervum ter vincit corvus & illum. Multiplicat novies Phænix reparabilis ales.* Auſon.

Secondly, Others read, *I ſaid I ſhall multiply my dayes as the Phenix. Tertullian* in his Book of the reſurrection, tranſlates that (*Pſal.* 92. 11.) of the *Phenix*, *The righteous ſhall grow up as the Phenix.* In the Greek tongue, one word ſignifies both a *Phenix* and a *Palm tree.* And as the Palm tree, ſo the *Phenix* is put ſymbolically to note a long life. Some aſcribing five hundred, ſome ſix hundred, ſome a thouſand, yea, ſome fourteen hundred years to the life of the *Phenix.* And as the *Phenix* lives very long; ſo the *Phenix* (as ſome report) dying in her neſt, another riſeth up out of her aſhes, which is conceived to be the reaſon why ſome of the Ancients (as I ſhall touch further in the cloſe of this context) tranſlate here, *I ſhall multiply my dayes as the Phenix*; as if *Job* had ſaid, *I ſhall dye in my neſt, and riſing from thence as the Phenix I ſhall multiply my dayes.* But I ſhall not ſtay upon either of theſe readings; For though the *Palm tree* among the trees of the earth, and the *Phenix* among the birds of the air are long-lived, and ſo both tranſlations accommodate and illuſtrate the general ſence and ſcope of the Text, yet neither of them have any alliance, that I can find, with the Original word of the Text, by us properly tranſlated *ſand.* And therefore I ſhall inſiſt only upon our own reading.

I ſhall multiply my dayes as the ſand.

Which as it clearly expreſſeth the Hebrew word, ſo the matter of it is more expreſſive of *Job's* meaning then either of the two former; For what's the number of the years of a Palm tree, or of the *Phenix*, to the number of the ſands of the Sea, which are (as to man) ſtupendiouſly innumerable. So that, this is the higheſt proverbial of the three.

To multiply as the ſand, is not only to multiply exceedingly much, but 'tis to multiply beyond all poſſibility of mans arithmetick or account. When the Lord would make a promiſe of the greateſt multiplication imaginable to *Abraham* concerning his ſeed, he ſaid (*Gen.* 22. 17.) *In bleſſing I will bleſs thee, and multiply thy ſeed as the ſtars, and as the ſand which is on the Sea-ſhore.* This promiſe was renewed to *Jacob* in terms equivalent (*Gen.* 28. 14.) *Thy ſeed ſhall be as the duſt of the earth*; and when he feared that *Eſau* would come and ſmite him, and the Mother with the Children, he urged God in prayer with that promiſe in terms (*Gen.* 32. 12.) *And thou ſaidſt, I will ſurely do thee good, and make thy ſeed as the ſand of the Sea that cannot be numbred for multitude.* When *Joſeph*, before the time of the great dearth in *Egypt*, ſtored up abundance of Corn, it is ſaid (*Gen.* 41. 49.) *He gathered Corn as the ſand of the Sea, very much, till he left numbring, for it was without number.* The Prophet having denounced that ſad threatning of the Lords diſpeopling the ten Tribes, *Call his name* Loammi, *for ye are not my people, and I will not be your God*; he preſently comforts them with a promiſe of their reſtoring (*Hoſ.* 1. 10.) *Yet the number of the people of* Iſrael *ſhall be as the ſand of the Sea.* When *David* would ſhew that he was much in the meditation of God, or that he had a multitude of delightful thoughts in God, he alludes to the innumerableneſs of the ſand (*Pſal.* 139. 17, 18.) *How precious are thy thoughts unto me O God? How great is the ſum of them? If I ſhould count them, they are more in number then the ſand.* I need not multiply Scriptures to prove that this phraſe of Scripture implyeth the greateſt imaginable multiplication. *I ſhall multiply my dayes as the ſand.*

Hence note, *Long life is a great bleſſing.*

While *Job* reckoned up many outward bleſſings, he reckoned upon this as the moſt neceſſary of them all; For what are riches and honours to us if once life be gone? Life is a bleſſing without which we cannot enjoy any bleſſing. Some live long, who have no outward bleſſings, but none can enjoy outward bleſſings without life. As *the hoary head is a Crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteouſneſs* (Prov. 16. 31.) ſo the hoary head, or long life, is the Crown of all our other Glories. What would the Glory of heaven be to us, if we had not long life, even a life eternity-long to enjoy it in? And what are any of the glories of the earth to us, ſeeing our dayes are few upon the earth? And therefore when *Job* had ſpoken of all the glory and honour of his preſent ſtate, he adds this as the glory of it all, that he hoped to have a long time for the enjoyment of it, or that he ſhould multiply his dayes (in that felicity) as the ſand. Long life muſt needs be a bleſſing, becauſe it is under a promiſe (*Exod.* 20. 12.) *Honour thy Father and thy Mother, that thy dayes may be long in the land,* &c. And the Apoſtle (*Epheſ.* 6. 2.) calls that *the firſt Commandment with promiſe*; that is, with a promiſe expreſs'd. And the ſhortning of life is threatned as a Curſe (*Pſal.* 55. 23.) *The wicked ſhall not live out half his dayes*; that is, not half thoſe dayes which he might have lived by the courſe of nature.

Secondly, In that *Job* ſpeaks thus largely of his life, *Then I ſaid I ſhall multiply my dayes as the ſand.*

Note, *Even a good man while he ſpeaks and thinks of death, is apt to put death a great way from him.*

Worldly men look upon death alwayes as afar off; and when in all probability they have but a few ſands in their glaſs to run, they are ready to ſay, that they ſhall multiply their dayes as the ſand. They who think it beſt to live would never dye; and they who either know not of or have no ground to hope for a better life, muſt needs think this the beſt. And though Believers are perſwaded through grace, that there is a life not only better, but ſo much better then this, that the beſt of this compared to it is a kind of death; yea, though they have ſome comfortable evidence of their intereſt in that life; yet there are but few Godly men living, who enjoy, as *Job* did, the comforts of this life, but have, at leaſt, ſecret hopes of, and fair inclinations not only to the continuance of it, but to the contiance of it long; and uſually the longer they live, and the more of their dayes are ſtoln away, the more doth the deſire of long life, or of multiplying their dayes ſteal upon them. A good man once profeſſed, that when he was but twenty-five years old, he had no thought nor hope of living till thirty; and yet when he was ſeventy-four he had great hopes of living to fourſcore. It is not ſinful to think that we may live long; but we may quickly think and ſpeak too much of long life; it becomes a godly man to be ſpeaking and thinking rather how ſhort this life is, then how long it may be. That was *David's* prayer (*Pſal.* 39. 4.) *Lord make me to know mine end, and the meaſure of my dayes, what it is, that I may know how frail I am.* He did not deſire to know that he ſhould live long, much leſs to know (preciſely) how long he ſhould live (that's a ſecret which God reſerves to himſelf, and which man ſhould not curiouſly enquire after, nor pry into) but he would know or be made ſenſible of it, that he had not long to live. *O let me know how frail I am.* And that is indeed a gracious and a ſpiritual enquiry. 'Tis good to enquire and conſider how our dayes are diminiſhed and dayly ſubſtracted, and how ſoon they will be all gone. He that reckons his life a day beyond what he is in, reckons of more then he hath of his own, and may come ſhort of his reckoning. He anſwered well, that being invited by his friend *to morrow*, ſaid, he had not had a *to morrow* for a long time before. There are two very profitable meditations for us at all times: Firſt, The everlaſtingneſs of the next life: Secondly, the ſhortneſs and tranſitorineſs of this. The Apoſtle *Peter* ſaid (2 *Epiſt.* 1. 14.) *I know that I muſt ſhortly lay down this Earthly Tabernacle, even as our Lord Jeſus Chriſt hath ſhewed me.* And though the Lord Jeſus Chriſt hath not ſhewed every man by a word ſpoken to him in perſon (as he did to *Peter*) yet he hath ſhewed every one of us by a word written in common to us with all other perſons, that we muſt ſhortly lay down this Earthly Tabernacle; and therefore we ſhould rather be preparing for our laſt day, then be hoping for many dayes. Our age ſhould be but little in our own eyes; for as *David* ſaid (*Pſal.* 39. 5.) before God it is nothing; our life is as a vapour, a ſmoak, 'tis gone preſently, when it ſtayeth longeſt in this world. Though long life be a bleſſing, and we may look for long life (walking with God) according to the promiſe, yet we ſhould rather think how ſoon the ſand of our glaſs may be run out, then of multiplying *our dayes as the ſand.*

Verſe 19. **My root was ſpread out by the water, and the dew lay all night upon my branch.**

In this verſe, and in the next (as was ſhewed) *Job* gives the reaſon why he was ſo confident (though poſſibly (as hath alſo been ſhewed) more confident then he had reaſon to be) that he ſhould dye in his neſt, and multiply his dayes as the ſand. And that was the conſtant kindneſſes with which God had encompaſſed and followed him all his dayes. As if he had ſaid, *I perceive my ſelf riſing up and encreaſing wonderfully in all manner of felicity, the bleſſing of God abiding continually upon me; he hath bleſſed me in my family, he hath bleſſed my fields and flocks, my basket and my ſtore, he bleſſeth me in what I do, and in all that I enjoy; therefore I am as fair as any man living for a long life, and for a life as comfortable as long.*

My root was ſpread out by the water, and the dew lay all night upon my branch.

Job had as good ground to think that his Eſtate would not only abide but flouriſh, as we have to believe that a tree will do ſo, which is rooted neer a pleaſant river, and whoſe branches are filled with dew every night.

My root was ſpread out by the water.

A Root properly is the lower part of a tree, by which it is faſtened in the Earth, and receives moiſture or nouriſhment from it. The root of a thing is ſo much the faſtneſs or ſtedfaſtneſs of it, that to ſay a thing hath no root, or is unſtedfaſt, and will endure but a little while, is the ſame (*Math.* 13. 6.)

Secondly, A root is taken for the foundation, baſis, or lower part of any thing which ſuſtains it. Thus in the former Chapter of this Book (*ver.* 9.) we read *of the roots of mountains.*

Thirdly, The root is put for the beginning of any thing. Thus the Apoſtle calls the love of money, *the root of all evil* (1 Tim. 6. 10.)

Fourthly, A mans root is his ſtock or parents, from whom he ſprings, as the body or boughs of a tree do from the root. (*Iſa.* 14. 30.)

Fifthly, The root is put for the iſſues or branches that come from the root. So Chriſt *is called the root of David* (Revel. 5. 5.) whereas we know *David*; did not ſpring from him, but he from *David*, according to the fleſh. In a ſpiritual ſence Chriſt was the root of *David*, but in a natural ſence *David* was the root of Chriſt; for according to the fleſh Chriſt came of *David*; yet Chriſt is called the root of *David*, that is, he was a branch that did iſſue forth of his root. So we are to expound thoſe Scriptures (*Iſa.* 11. 19. *Rom.* 15. 12.) where the root is metonymically put for the branch which iſſueth from it. Here when *Job* ſaith,

My root was ſpread out by the waters,

We may expound his root to be whatſoever was the ſtrength and eſtabliſhment of his Eſtate, or whatſoever was the means of its encreaſe or continuance: All theſe the root are to the tree. Some have a great preſent eſtate, but their eſtate hath no root, nothing for encreaſe or continuance. It is reported that when an Ambaſſador of *Spain*, was brought into the Treaſury of *Venice*, and there ſhewed huge heaps of Gold, he turned up ſome of the Gold at the bottom; and being asked, why he did ſo, anſwered, I do it to ſee whether this goodly Golden Treaſure hath any root: Implying that his Maſters Treaſure had a root, his Mines in the *Indies*, which cauſed it to grow and renew every year. *Job*'s riches had a root, and a root by the water, nor was his root only planted by the water, but as the original word ſignifies, *opened* to the water: It is poſſible for a tree to be planted by the water, and the water not come at it, therefore *Job* ſaith, *My root was opened or was ſpread by the water.* A tree planted by the water is often put in Scripture as the Emblem of a flouriſhing Eſtate both in temporals and ſpirituals. And that's the ſcope of *Job* here; I did once flouriſh, and it was moſt probable my Eſtate ſhould flouriſh; Why? Becauſe my root was ſpread out by the water. It is a *Maxim, That where ſufficient cauſes are in act, there of neceſſity the effect muſt follow.* A good root with proper and plentiful moiſture coming to it, are ſufficient cauſes of a trees growth and fruitfulneſs, and therefore where theſe are we may conclude (according to the courſe of Nature) the tree will flouriſh. It is ſaid of the Godly man (*Pſal.* 1. 3.) *He ſhall be like a tree planted by the rivers ſide, that bringeth forth his fruit in his ſeaſon; his leaf alſo ſhall not wither,* that is (as the next words expound it) *whatſoever he doth ſhall proſper.* Here was *Job*'s reaſon why he ſhould not wither, *&c.* He was as a tree planted by the rivers ſide. The Prophet inſiſts upon the ſame ſimilitude (*Jer.* 17. 8.) *Bleſſed is the man that truſteth in the Lord*; Why? *He ſhall be as a tree planted by the waters, that ſpreadeth out her root by the rivers, and ſhall not ſee when heat cometh*; that is, ſhall not feel any annoyance by the heat; when it is very hot and dry weather, if a tree have a river by it, it is not dammaged, his leaf is green, and fruit plentiful, ſuch a tree is not afraid in the year of drought, or of a dry ſummer. Though the heavens be as braſs over it, yet while the earth under it is not as iron, there's no fear but it will hold its own, and yield its fruit. The Prophet *Ezekiel* (Chap. 47. 12.) ſpeaking of the ſpiritual flouriſhing of the Church, ſaith, *And by the river upon the bank thereof, on this ſide, and on that ſide, ſhall grow all trees for meat, whoſe leaf ſhall not fade, neither ſhall the fruit thereof be conſumed; it ſhall bring forth new fruit according to its months, becauſe their waters they iſſued out of the Sanctuary, and the fruit thereof ſhall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine.* The Prophet aſſerts the fruitfulneſs of theſe myſtical trees, becauſe they were planted upon the bank of the river, and had the waters of the Spirit iſſuing out of the Sanctuary, to nouriſh and refreſh them. *My root* (ſaith *Job*) *was ſpread out by the waters,*

And the dew lay all night upon my branch.

As trees are watered below at the root by raines or rivers, ſo they are watered above and from above, *by dewes.* The dew is a moyſture drawn up by the Sun in the day, and gently falling in the night. *My ſpeech* (ſaith *Moſes*, Deut. 32. 2.) *ſhall diſtill as the dew.* The Grace of regeneration is compared to the dew (*Pſal.* 110. 3.) *In the beauties of holineſs, from the womb of the morning thou haſt the dew of thy youth.* Paralel to which is that of the Prophet (*Micah* 5. 7.) *And the remnant of Jacob ſhall be among many people; as a dew from the Lord, as ſhowers upon the graſs, that tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the ſons of men.* God will encreaſe his people as the dew, which is wonderfully mutiplied; and as that falls down in innumerable drops for the refreſhing of the earth, ſo ſhall the Church (called *the remnant of Jacob*) refreſh the Nations with the truths and promiſes of the Goſpel. *Job* had theſe ſweet heavenly diſtillations lying all night upon his branch; and he rightly ſaith *all night*, becauſe the dew falls in the night, and is exhaled in the morning. Whence the Prophet compares the vaniſhing goodneſs of the *Jews*, *to the early dew which paſſeth away* (Hoſ. 6. 4.) And becauſe their good actions were in that ſence but as the dew, therefore the ſame Prophet threatens them that their perſons ſhould be ſo too (*Hoſ.* 13. 3.) *They ſin more and more,* &c. *Therefore they ſhall be as the morning cloud, and as the early dew that paſſeth away. The dew* (ſaith *Job*) *lay all night upon my branch.*

Ros eſt humidum quid è ſerenitate concretum minutatim labens.

As the root ſignifies whatſoever doth eſtabliſh and nouriſh us or our eſtate, ſo the branch is that which groweth out from us. A mans branches are his riches and poſſeſſions, his branches are his children, and his ſervants, his branches are his actions and undertakings, his branches are his thoughts and meditations; theſe laſt eſpecially in Scripture are called branches, becauſe they ſhoot out from the mind of man as branches from the tree.

Again, The word which we render *branch,* ſignifies the Harveſt or Gathering in of Corn and Fruits. And ſo ſome render here; *The dew lay all night upon my Harveſt.* And in the land of *Canaan*, where there was (as ſome affirm) no rain uſually from the month by us commonly called *May*, till *October* (the rain of this month being called the former, and of that the latter rain; I ſay, the rain coming but at thoſe times) the dew falling every night was a great refreſhing to the branch, and a cauſe of fruitfulneſs. *Job* had water for his root, and he had dew for his branches.

But what was this water? What this dew? They are both

Terra Canaã rore facundabatur majore parte anni, cum bis tantum in ea pluat, ſc. in Marcheſvan, quæ pluvia propriè dicitur יורה *& in Sivan quæ appellatur* מלקש Druſ.

קצר *Quæ vox communitèr meſſem denotat pro ramis arborum accipitur.*

both to be underſtood in a ſpiritual ſence; the water by his root, and the dew that lay all night upon his branch, were the favour and good will of God to him: As he had Grace in his heart, ſo a bleſſing upon all he took in hand. *Job* was in a proſperous condition, and he had good reaſon to hope his proſperity would continue, becauſe he had this water nigh his root, and this dew upon his branch.

Hence Obſerve, *It is the bleſſing and favour of God that makes us and all we have to proſper.*

He that hath the bleſſing of God, hath a river by his root, and the dew upon his branch. When the Angel ſaid to *Jacob* (*Gen.* 32. 2.) *Let me go for the day breaketh: Jacob* anſwered, *I will not let thee go except thou bleſs mee.* Bleſs me and I am well enough, I and my root and branch. The bleſſing of God is the river running by our root, and the dew lying upon our branch; our temporal and ſpiritual comforts can no more continue without a daily ſupply from the bleſſing and favour of the Lord, then a tree can live and flouriſh, that hath neither water at the root, nor dew upon the branches. As God is to his people *a place of broad rivers and ſtreams* to keep them ſafe (*Iſa.* 33.21.) ſo he is to his people a river and a ſtream to make them fruitful. *David* puts this as a diſtinguiſhing mark of favour between the Godly and the wicked; For when he had ſaid (*Pſal.* 1. 4.) *The godly man is like a tree planted by the rivers of waters, that bringeth forth his fruit in his ſeaſon; his leaf alſo ſhall not wither, and whatſoever he doth ſhall proſper*; Preſently he adds, *But the ungodly are not ſo:* Though an ungodly man doth ſometimes flouriſh in outward things as a green tree, having goodly branches, yet it is not from this water and dew of divine love; it is but by common providence whereby God bleſſeth all the trees of the forreſt, not by that ſpecial providence with which the Lord bleſſeth the trees of his encloſed garden. The roots of wicked men are ſpread by the filthy and ſtinking puddles of this lower, of this corrupt and corrupting world, they know not the fountain of living waters, yea, they (as the Lord by his Prophet reproved *Iſrael*, *Jer.* 2. 13.) *have forſaken the fountain of living waters, and have hewed them out ciſterns, broken ciſterns that can hold no water.* They have either no water by their root, or 'tis but a ciſtern a broken ciſtern of water. What's the water of a ciſtern, to the water of a fountain? What is it to have a Garden watered with a pot; in compariſon of a watering from the clouds, or by the ſhowers of Heaven? Yea the wicked are ſo far from having this river water at their root, or this dew upon their branches, that they ſhall have a fire at laſt upon both. So the Prophet threatens them, (*Mal.* 4. 1.) *Behold the day cometh that ſhall burn as an Oven, and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly ſhall be ſtubble, and ſhall burn them up, ſaith the Lord of hoſts, and ſhall leave them neither root nor branch*; that is, nothing at all. The extremity of the curſe of the wicked is thus expreſt (*Iſa.* 5. 24.) *Their root ſhall be rottenneſs, and their bloſſom ſhall go up as duſt.* When the root hath no moyſture from the earth, it rots in the earth; and when the bloſſom inſtead of diſtilling dews, hath blaſts of mildews, then it goes up as duſt, you may grind or rub it to powder between your fingers. Now as the whole ſtate of the wicked, root and branch, ſhall be utterly conſumed, both being under the curſe of God; ſo a godly mans root and branch are under the bleſſing and favour of God, which keep him alwayes green and flouriſhing in ſoul and body, both in ſpirituals and temporals, as *Job* ſpeaks in the next verſe..

Verſe 20. My glory was freſh in me, and my bow was renewed in my hand.

Gloria mea ſemper innovabitur. Vulg.

This verſe ſhews the effect of the former. The water at his root, and the dew upon his branch, kept him freſh and ſtrong. Some read it in the future tenſe, *My glory ſhall be freſh*; as if it were a confident perſwaſion of his ſucceeding proſperity, as in the former verſe; *I ſaid that I ſhall dye in my neſt, and multiply my dayes as the ſand; I ſaid my glory ſhall be freſh in me, and my bow ſhall be renewed in my hand.* Others read it in the preſent tenſe, *My glory is freſh in me, and my bow is renewed in my hand*; but I rather follow our reading, which gives it both as an effect of the continued favour of God to him, and as a further reaſon of his former confidence; *My glory was freſh in me, and my bow was renewed in my hand.* As if he had ſaid, The Lord by his conſtant kindneſs to me, kept me up in ſuch a freſhneſs of honour, power, and proſperity, that I had no cauſe to doubt any witherings or decay.

My glory was freſh.

Glory is the crying up of a mans name with Commendation, that's glory ſtrictly taken. But further, glory is that which doth magnifie and render either things or perſons great and illuſtrious in the eyes of others. The goodneſs and mercy of God is his glory, becauſe he is and ought to be alwayes glorified for his goodneſs and mercy. (2 *Cor.* 4. 6.) *God who commanded light to ſhine out of darkneſs, hath ſhined in our hearts, to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jeſus Chriſt.* As the light of the power and greatneſs of God ſhines through and irradiates the whole work of creation; ſo the light of the goodneſs and mercy of God ſhines cheifly in the face of Jeſus Chriſt, and that's his glory. When *Moſes* deſired to ſee the glory of God, *God ſaid I will make all my goodneſs paſs before thee* (Exod. 33. 19.) The goodneſs of God is called his glory, becauſe that renders him glorious, to a wonder, in the eyes of all believers. God is glorious in nothing ſo much as in his goodneſs and pardoning mercy to poor ſinners. *Who is a God like unto thee* (ſaith the Prophet, *Mic.* 7. 18.) *That pardoneth iniquity, and paſſeth by the tranſgreſſion of the remnant of his heritage?* Some have (vainly enough) imagined themſelves *like the moſt high* (Iſa. 14. 14.) in power and greatneſs, but who, among ſuch Gods, hath ever had ſo much as a liking, much leſs an holy ambition or emulation to be like unto God in pardoning goodneſs and mercy, which is the proper glory of God? Now as that which makes God glorious is his glory; ſo whatſoever makes man glorious, giving him a name and lifting him up in the eſtimation of others, that's his glory too: In which latitude we are to underſtand *Job*'s affirmation in this text,

My glory was freſh in me.

Job's glory did not fade nor wax old, it did not decay, much leſs dye, but was as freſh every morning as if that had been the firſt morning of its birth and blooming.

And my bow was renewed in my hand.

As if he had ſaid, *The Lord encreaſed mine honour dayly, and ſupplyed me with ſeaſonable aſſiſtances upon every occaſion, he both confirmed and encreaſed my power, to bring my counſels to paſs and to execute thoſe righteous ſentences which I had given.* *Job*'s *bow* was his ſtrength, or executive power. Whence *Hannah* ſaith (1 *Sam.* 2. 4.) *The bows of the mighty men are broken, and they that ſtumble are girt with ſtrength.* The word *bowes* in the former part of the verſe, is the ſame with *ſtrength* in the latter, and her meaning in both is, that while worldly men, who think themſelves mighty in power, and who aim at great matters, endeavour to bring them to paſs, or to hit the mark they aim at, preſently their bow breaks, the means by which they hoped to effect it utterly fails them; whereas Godly men who were ſo weak and feeble, that they were ready to ſtumble at every ſtraw that lay in their way, have their ſtrength ſo renewed that they can even leap over a wall, or remove the greateſt difficulties out of their way. *Jacob* ſpake thus of *Joſeph* (Gen. 49. 24.) *His bow abode in ſtrength*, that is, he continued in power. The bow being a warlike Inſtrument, and the chief Inſtrument of war in thoſe times, yea that (with the ſword) being, in a manner, all the Inſtruments of war in thoſe times, therefore the *bow* might rightly ſignifie ſtrength, and that a three-fold ſtrength.

Mea potentia quotidiè inter meas manus incrementum recipiebat. Bez.

Firſt, Natural ſtrength, the ſtrength of the body.

Secondly, Civil ſtrength. The Magiſtrates Authority or Civil ſtrength, is that whereby he ſhoots at the wicked, and is as terrible as a bow with a quiver full of arrowes to all that fall under the revenging power of his Juſtice.

Thirdly, By the *bow*, we may underſtand ſpiritual ſtrength too, that's our beſt bow. *Job*'s bow (that is, his three-fold ſtrength, his natural, his Civil, and his ſpiritual ſtrength)

Was renewed, or reſtored in his hand.

The word ſignifies, *to paſs by or to paſs through*; So 'tis

חלף *Propriè eſt tranſire vel pertranſire, aut mutari pertranſeundo.* Pined.

elegantly aſcribed unto the bow, which being renewed and ſtrengthned in the hand, makes the arrow to paſs through, or to paſs away with a mighty force, like the bow of *Jonathan* which turned not back, without effectual execution, from the blood of the ſlain, and from the fat of the mighty. *Job*'s bow was renewed or changed in his hand: How changed? Not from ſtrong to weak, or from good to bad, or from better to worſe; but from good to better, and from ſtrong to ſtronger. So the word is uſed (*Iſa.* 40. 30.) *They that truſt in the Lord ſhall renew* or change *their ſtrength*; that is, their ſtrength ſhall encreaſe, by changing to a greater degree of ſtrength. Their ſtrength ſhall change as a young mans doth, by receiving more ſtrength then they had, not as an old mans ſtrength changeth, by looſing the ſtrength which they had.

> Hence note, *It is from the Lord, and 'tis a high favour from the Lord, when the eſtimation, power, and Authority of Magiſtrates, are renewed and dayly confirmed to them.*

That of the Prophet reaches both the perſons and conditions of all men (*Iſa.* 40. 6, 7.) *All fleſh is graſs, and the goodlineſs thereof is as the flower of the field, the graſs withereth, the flower fadeth.* How often have we ſeen the glory of thoſe that have been in Power fading as the graſs, and their Goodlineſs, their honour and ſplendour withering like the flower of the field. Their bow hath been weakened in their hand, and at laſt fallen quite out of their hand. And whence is all this? Surely as the Prophet ſpeaks in the ſame place concerning the withering of the flower, 'tis becauſe *the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon them.* When the Spirit of the Lord bloweth a cold chilling wind, every thing decayes and dyes, as it is ſaid (*Hag.* 1. 9.) *Ye looked for much, and lo it came to little; and when ye brought it home I did blow upon it*; that is, I ſent an unkind and rough wind upon it. And when the Spirit of the Lord bloweth a favourable gale, or breathes a bleſſing, then every thing flouriſheth, and not only retains, but renews its ſtrength and beauty. 'Tis this breath of the Lord upon the Magiſtrate, which keeps his glory freſh, and reneweth the impreſſions of his power upon the hearts of his people every day. *Moſes* ſpeaking of the Idolatry of the Children of *Iſrael*, ſaith (*Deut.* 32. 17, 18.) *They ſacrificed to new Gods that came newly up, whom their Fathers feared not; but of that Rock that begat them they were unmindful, and forgot the God that formed them.* Even the glory of the ever-living and all-Glorious God is not alwayes freſh in the heart of man. They muſt have new Gods, elſe their devotion groweth old. And if there be ſuch a principle of wickedneſs in the heart of man to be weary of the immortal God, how much more of any mortal God. The reſpect and honour of Magiſtrates is more ſubject to decaying and dying, then their perſons are. It is the Lord, who preſerves both his own Glory and the Magiſtrates glory freſh among the people. And 'tis he alſo that reneweth the Magiſtrates bow in his hand, that maketh his authority terrible as a bow with arrows in the hand of a mighty man. The Pſalmiſt ſaith (*Pſal.* 127. 4.) *As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man, ſo are children of the youth.* And while the Magiſtrates bow or Authority (for that's it out of which he ſends forth or ſhoots his arrows) remains, like children in their youth, freſh and ſtrong, and is dayly renewed in ſtrength, all ſubmit to his government, and the wicked tremble at it. And, *though the Archers*, as 'tis ſaid of *Joſeph* (Gen. 49. 23, 24.) *ſorely grieve him, and ſhoot at him, and hate him*; that is, ſpeak bitter words againſt him, and wound him with their tongues in ſecret; yet as it is alſo ſaid there of *Joſeph*) *His bow ſhall abide in ſtrength, and the arms of his hands ſhall be made ſtrong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob; from thence is the Shepheard and ſtone of* Iſrael. In alluſion to which I may conclude, that 'tis only by the hands of the mighty God, that Magiſtrates are upheld as Shepheards to feed the people, and are made firm in their power, as a Rock or ſtone, to uphold or bear up the whole body of a Common-wealth. And if ever there be a cheapneſs, or an undervaluing of their perſons, if ever there be a withering and a ſtain upon their glory, or a weakneſs upon their bow, 'tis becauſe the dew of bleſſing from above, and the hands of the mighty God are withdrawn from them.

Thus we have ſeen *Job*'s confidence, with ſome grounds of it opened, He hoped *to dye in his neſt*, and he therefore hoped it, becauſe *his root was ſpread by the waters, and the dew lay all night upon his branch, which made his glory freſh in him, and his bow to renew in his hand.*

Before I paſs from theſe words, I ſhall only mind the Reader that theſe three verſes are expounded with reference to the Reſurrection of the body, and of eternal life, by ſome of the Ancients. As if *Job* had ſaid; *I ſhall dye in my neſt* comfortably, and after a while I ſhall riſe again Glorioully, and then I ſhall *multiply my dayes as the ſand,* I ſhall live Eternally (The dayes of Eternity are more innumerable then the ſand of the Sea) Then ſhall I ſpread out my roots by the Everlaſting Springs of divine love, and the dew of Heavenly tranquility ſhall lye continually upon my branch, my Glory ſhall be alwayes freſh, and my ſtrength ſhall be for ever new; I ſhall renew my ſtrength, and mount up with wings as the Eagle, I ſhall run and not be weary, walk and not faint. This is a truth in it ſelf, and theſe words may be piouſly expounded as an alluſion to that bleſſed ſtate; yet I do not at all apprehend that *Job* aimed at more here then the continuance of his preſent felicity to the utmoſt line of this life; he having given ſufficient proof of his faith in the Reſurrection to Eternal life, at the nineteenth Chapter of this Book, *ver.* 25, 26, 27.

VERS. 21, 22, 23.

Unto me men gave ear and waited, and kept ſilence at my counſel.

After my words they ſpake not again, and my ſpeech dropped upon them.

And they waited for me as for the rain, and they opened their mouth wide, as for the latter rain.

These three verſes contain yet more grounds, or at leaſt a further illuſtration of the former, why *Job* was ſo confident (in younger times) that his flouriſhing ſtate ſhould not wither, nor his outward proſperity fail. That *Job* was honoured by all the people, hath been ſhewed particularly and at large before; and yet here he enlargeth the ſame point, in other particulars.

Firſt, From the great attention which all gave while he was ſpeaking; *ver.* 21. *Unto me men gave ear.*

Secondly, From the great weight which his words bare when he had ſpoken; He prevailed where ever he came, and carried all before him; *ver.* 22. *After my words they ſpake not again,* &c.

Thirdly, From that great and paſſionate deſire which they had to hear him ſtill, they were as greedy and thirſty for his counſel as the dry ground for rain, they gaped as if they would have catched his words before they came out of his mouth; *ver.* 23. *And they waited for me as for the rain,* &c.

From theſe three Conſiderations *Job* ſeems to argue thus.

He that is reſpected as an Oracle by all men for his wiſdom and counſel, hath reaſon to believe that he ſhall live and dye in honour, or that he ſhall multiply his dayes exceedingly, and then dye in his neſt or houſe comfortably.

But thus it was with me, all men admired my wiſdom, and were greedy of my counſel. Therefore I had reaſon to believe, that I ſhould dye in honour.

This appears to be the mind and general ſcope of *Job* in theſe three verſes, which are now to be opened and diſtinctly inſiſted upon.

Verſe 21. **Unto me men gave ear.**

The word, *men*, is not in the Original, there 'tis only *unto me gave ear,* that is, all ſorts, all ages, and degrees of men, none excepted, were attentive, or lifted up their ears, when once I began to lift up my voyce. And when he ſaith, *Unto me men gave ear*, he implyeth ſuch an attentiveneſs unto himſelf, as if none elſe had been attended to or regarded when they ſpake, beſides himſelf.

Unto me men gave ear.] *To give ear*, is but one word in the Text, yet it contains variety of matter. *To give ear* carrieth a much fuller ſence, then barely to hear. When we ſpeak to God, who is infinitely above us, earneſtly deſiring that he would hear us, we pray that he would *bow down his ear* (2 Kings 19. 16.) His hearing is a great condeſcending.

deſcending. And when we ſpeak to men who are earneſtly deſirous to hear us, they are ſaid *to give ear to us. To give a man the hearing*, when he ſpeaks; is, in our language, to ſlight or little to regard what he ſpeaks; but *to give ear* to a man when he ſpeaks, is ſeriouſly to attend to what he ſpeaks.

More diſtinctly when *Job* ſaith, *To me men gave ear*, it may note theſe five things.

Firſt, That all hearkned to him with great attention and diligence; they made a buſineſs of hearing.

Secondly, That all hearkned to him with great reverence and obſervance. They highly eſteemed him, while they heard him.

Thirdly, That all hearkned to him with great chearfulneſs and delight. It was a pleaſure to them, and their high content to hear him.

Fourthly, That all hearkned to him *believingly*, they gave credit to what he ſpake; faith was working in their hearts, while his words were ſounding in their ears. As faith comes or is wrought by hearing (*Rom.* 10. 17.) ſo to hear is an act or work of faith. And in Scripture-language to hear and to believe are the ſame, or hearing is believing. (*John.* 9. 27.) *The Blind man* (when the Phariſees urgingly enquired the manner of his cure) ſaith, *I have told you already, and ye did not hear*; his meaning is, ye did not believe, or ye gave no credit to what I ſaid. When the Apoſtle had inſtructed *Timothy*, how to behave himſelf in the Houſe or Church of God; He concludes in caſe of his ſubmiſſion to thoſe inſtructions (1 *Tim.* 4. 16.) *In ſo doing thou ſhalt both ſave thy ſelf, and them that hear thee*; that is, them that believe what they hear. Many thouſands hear the Word, (in common notion) who are not ſaved, but periſh in their ſins. Only they are ſaved, who hearing, believe, and reſt upon the Grace of God in Chriſt, revealed by the Word which they hear.

Fifthly, That all heard him *obedientially*, they ſubmitted to what he ſpake; to give ear, *is to obey*: So ſome read it here expreſly, Not as we, truly, according to the letter of the Text, *To me men gave ear*; but, fully, according to the ſence of the Text, *Men obeyed me*; they yielded themſelves up to the words of advice and counſel given them. And, indeed, they that hear and do not obey, do not ſo much as hear; we never rightly hear the Word, till we reſign up our ſelves to the obedience of the Word: So then, *to give ear*, notes all theſe, diligence, reverence, delight, faith and obedience in hearing. He that hears any word ſpoken, or *the Word* preached, thus, *gives ear* to it; but he that hears it, and not thus, doth only *give it the hearing*.

Mihi obediebant. Mont.

Now, in as much as *to give ear*, ſignifieth all this, and *Job* reckons up this among thoſe honours and reſpects which he had in the world; *To me men gave ear*.

> Obſerve, *As it is an honour to be rightly heard; ſo he that is heard careleſly and irreverently, he that is heard without delight, without faith, without obedience, hath a ſlight put upon him as often as he is heard; or rather he is not heard at all.*

It is no eaſie matter to ſpeak well, and 'tis as hard to hear well. To be a good ſpeaker is a very good gift of God; but to be a good hearer is a far better gift, yea, it is a precious Grace of God. *Till God gives us a heart, we never give an ear to his Word, how much or how often ſoever we hear it.* And how much or how often ſoever we hear the Word, we ſlight it till we give ear to it. And hence it is that God himſelf doth often complain by his Prophets, that he was not heard in his Prophets. But did not the people hear the Prophets? Yes, they heard them many times, but they ſeldom gave ear to them, they ſeldom either believed or obeyed them. *Hear O my people* (ſaith the Lord, *Pſal.* 81.8.) *and I will teſtifie unto thee, O* Iſrael, *if thou wilt hearken unto me.* Thus the Lord did even entreat *Iſrael* for audience. But what did *Iſrael*? We have their carriage towards God (*ver.* 11.) *My people would not hearken to my voyce, Iſrael would none of me.* They could not but hear the voyce of God (whether he ſpake immediately from himſelf, or mediately by his Prophets) but they would not hearken or give ear to it. And not to give ear to or obey the Word of God is to reject it; and to reject the Word of God, is to reject God himſelf, as appears in the next words; For as ſoon as ever the Lord had ſaid, Iſrael *would not hearken to my voyce*, he adds, Iſrael *would none of me.* Thus he complained (*Jer.* 44. 4, 5.) *I ſent unto you all my ſervants the Prophets, riſing early and ſending them, ſaying, O do not this abominable thing that I hate: But they hearkned not nor enclined their ear.* They heard the meſſages which God ſent by his Prophets, but *they did not encline their ear to them*, nor ſubmit to them. And how ill the Lord reſented it, even as an affront or contempt put upon him, that they ſhould hear but not give ear to him, was not only to be heard but ſeen ſoon after among them, and their ſight told them what ill hearers they had been, as it follows in the next verſe, *Wherefore my fury and mine anger was poured forth, and was kindled in the Cities of* Judah, *and in the ſtreetes of* Jeruſalem, *and they are waſted and deſolate as at this day.* When God cannot be heard, he will be felt. And when men will not give ear to his counſels, their eyes ſhall ſee and their hearts tremble when they ſee his Judgments. It will turn to a ſad account, at laſt, with the world, when the Lord ſhall ſay, I ſpake and men did not give ear; whereas if luſt ſpake, yea if the Devil ſpake they did give ear. And how will men anſwer it, when if a wiſe man or a Magiſtrate ſpeak about civil or worldly things, they will give ear; but if God ſpeak by his Meſſengers about ſpiritual and heavenly things, they have never an ear to give him. *To me men gave ear*, ſaith *Job*,

And waited, and kept ſilence for my counſel.

Waiting is an act; Firſt, Of patience; Secondly, Of obſervance; Thirdly, Of hope and earneſt expectation; He that waiteth truly, looks with his eye, and liſtens with his ear, and puts himſelf body and ſoul into ſuch a poſture, as if he were made up of theſe three; you may read, patience, obſervance, expectation, written upon every member of him. He that waiteth, muſt have patience to ſtay the time and leiſure, yea, perhaps the pleaſure of others; and he that doth ſo, gives them much reſpect and obſervance; and 'tis rare that any do ſo but upon ſome hope or expectation of advantage to themſelves. No wiſe man will wait for nothing, nor will he wait about trifles; what we wait for, we account to be of worth, at leaſt it is ſo in their account that wait for it. When *Job* ſaith, *To me men gave ear, and waited.* It ſhould ſeem all men eſteemed his anſwers and reſolves as Oracles, or that they reſorted to him as to an Oracle.

יחל *Dicit* ὑπομένειν *ſignificat anxiè et enixè expectare.*

They waited at my counſel.

They did not think it long nor loſs of time, though tarried ſomewhat long, before I gave them my counſel I if they had it not at the firſt call or hour, they would ſtay my leiſure. The Pſalmiſt deſcribes the *Iſraelites* very forward, even upon the ſpurt to give God glory for the mercy they had received in their deliverance at the red Sea (*Pſal.* 106. 12.) *Then believed they his words, they ſang his praiſe:* Yet it follows immediately (*ver.* 13.) *They ſoon forgate his works, they waited not for his counſel.* Which neglect of theirs may be underſtood two wayes. Firſt, That they waited nor for his open or declared counſel, to direct them what to do, but without asking his advice would needs venture and run on upon their own heads, to do what ſeemed good in their own eyes. Secondly, That they waited not for the accompliſhment of his hidden and ſecret Counſel concerning them; they would not tarry Gods time for the bringing forth and bringing about his counſels. Not to wait upon God either way is very ſinful. Not to wait for his counſel to direct us what to do, and not to wait for his doing or fulfilling of his own counſel, argues at once a proud and an impatient ſpirit; in the one men do even ſlight the wiſdom of God, and in the other vainly preſume and attempt to prevent his providence. And therefore *Job* notes this both as an honour to himſelf, and as a duty in them that he had to do with, *They ſtaid, they waited at my counſel.*

Again, When he ſaith, *they waited, Job* ſeems to imply, that although he was long in giving them counſel, yet he was not tedious to them: Though he ſpake much, *they waited*, and were not tired with waiting. As ſome are raſh and haſty in giving counſel, ſo others are in as much haſte to receive it; if they may be diſpatcht preſently, or in a word or two, they will receive your counſel; but a long diſcourſe, though no longer then needs, is troubleſom and tedious; they are weary and will not wait. As they who are weary of doing good, will not wait to do more; ſo they who are weary of hearing good, will not wait to hear more, though by neglecting to hear all, they looſe the fruit of all that they have heard. *Wiſdom hath her gates, and Wiſdom hath her poſts*, and Wiſdom ſaith (*Prov.* 8. 34.) *Bleſſed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the poſts of my doors.* This Wiſdom is Chriſt, revealing the myſtery of his will in the Goſpel. Chriſt pronounceth him bleſſed that heareth him, yet not barely ſo, but that waiteth at his gates to hear him. They that have a deſire to hear, muſt have the patience to wait, yea, and to watch at the gates of wiſdom. If counſel come not preſently, we muſt ſtay till it comes; and 'tis worth while to ſtay till it cometh, though it be long in coming; nor is it enough for us to wait at Wiſdoms poſts for a day, we muſt wait (as that text ſaith) daily. He that thinks he hath heard or learned enough, hath as yet learned nothing, how much ſoever he hath heard. We need daily grace and daily counſel as well as daily bread; and therefore we muſt daily wait for both. As the habits of Grace and Knowledge muſt be acted and exerciſed continually; ſo we muſt act and exerciſe our ſelves continually in all thoſe wayes, by which the habits of Grace and Knowledge are encreaſed.

And they (ſaith *Job*) waited and kept ſilence at my counſel.

דמה ר
Siluit, tacuit, quievit.

We may take this their ſilence two wayes: Either, firſt, They were all huſht and ſilent when I ſpake; or, Secondly, They were quiet and ſilent till I ſpake. The word which we tranſlate *to keep ſilence*, is ſometimes tranſlated, as the former, *to wait.* Thus *David* profeſſeth the quietneſs of his heart, either under the ſaddeſt diſpenſations of God, or amidſt the ſtrongeſt oppoſitions of his enemies (*Pſal.* 62. 1.) *Truly my ſoul waiteth upon God, from him cometh my ſalvation.* As if he had ſaid, As my affliction cometh from God, ſo alſo doth my ſalvation; or as my dangers are of men, ſo my ſafety is of God; and therefore let men do what they can, and let God do what he will, *My ſoul waiteth upon God.* We put in the Margin, *My ſoul is ſilent upon God.* They that keep ſilence wait, and they that wait ſhould keep ſilence; and that ſoul which waits in faith upon God for the receiving of any good, or for the removing of any evil, will keep ſilence, and not either murmur at or diſpute the matter.

They kept ſilence at my counſel.

Conticuere omnes, intentique ora tenebrant. Virg.

When a man of Authority, of excellent parts, ſpeech, and wiſdom, comes into a meeting or publick place, all are ſilent, and hold their peace, expecting what he will ſay or do. *Job* was a man of ſuch eſtimation for the gravity of his Perſon, for the righteouſneſs of his Government, as alſo for his ability of Speech, that as ſoon as he appeared openly, and once began to ſpeak, all kept ſilence.

There is a twofold ſilence: Firſt, Of neceſſity: Secondly, Of choice. Some are ſilent, or ſay nothing, becauſe they have nothing to ſay, they have no matter in them: many (I know) who are but empty veſſels ſound moſt; and many who are but ſhallow rivers run with greateſt noiſe; yet others, who are conſcious of their own inability to ſpeak, have the modeſty not to ſpeak; and ſome who have not only a mind to ſpeak, but ſomewhat in their minds to ſpeak, yet cannot ſpeak their mind. To keep ſilence upon this account is ſilence of neceſſity; and though a man who holds his peace, becauſe he cannot ſpeak, is defective in a great part of wiſdom; yet to hold our peace, becauſe we know we are ill ſpeakers, or cannot ſpeak much to purpoſe, is a good point of wiſdom: For as *Solomon* tells us (*Prov.* 17. 28.) *Even a fool when he holdeth his peace is counted wiſe, and he that ſhutteth his lips, is eſteemed a man of underſtanding.* A Heathen, ſeeing one ſit mute or ſilent at a feaſt, not offering a word while much matter of diſcourſe was offered, ſaid to him, *Sir, if you are a fool you have done wiſely; but if you are a wiſe man you have done like a fool.* That's no commendable but a ſullen or affected ſilence, when having both ability and opportunity to ſpeak we ſit ſilent. 'Tis better to be ſilent for want of power, then for want of will to ſpeak. The former is our affliction; but the latter (when duty calls) is our ſin. To have a will fully to ſpeak what we ought not, or not to ſpeak when, and where, and what we ought, is an argument of an evil heart, or at leaſt, that the heart is in a very evil frame. Some offend by not uſing, though moſt by abuſing their tongue. *Job*'s Auditors did not keep ſilence in either of theſe ſences.

Simonides, ſilentium perpetuum in convivio ſervanti dixit; Si es ſtultus ſapientèr agis; ſin ſapiens inſipientèr.

In corde ſapientum es illorum, in ore fatuorum cor illorum.

Theirs was a laudable ſilence, a ſilence by choice or election; and when any are ſilent upon ſuch grounds as theſe which follow, theirs alſo is a laudable ſilence.

Firſt, When any are ſilent, becauſe it is not ſeaſonable to ſpeak: For as *Solomon* hath taught us (*Eccleſ.* 3. 5.) *There is a time to keep ſilence, and a time to ſpeak.* He that hits the ſeaſon of ſilence, is as wiſe as he that hits the ſeaſon of ſpeaking. Some are given much to ſilence, and they ſeldom hit the time of ſpeaking; others are given much to ſpeaking, and they ſeldom hit the time of ſilence. They are men of choice wiſdom who hit theſe times, both ſpeaking and holding their peace in ſeaſon.

Secondly, 'Tis good to keep ſilence our ſelves, when others that are better able to ſpeak are in company, as hath been ſhewed from other paſſages of this Book.

Thirdly, 'Tis good to be ſilent and ſay no more, when enough hath been ſaid to any point already. As ſome over do, ſo others over ſay their matters. We ought to be ſilent, when ſo much hath been ſaid as will ſerve turn. Why ſhould words run waſt? And why ſhould time be waſted in ſpeaking waſte words? It is ill to ſpend our breath, and worſe our time in vain. 'Tis a great point of wiſdom to ſpeak in proportion. A large diſcourſe to a little matter, is like a large garment to a little body, very unhandſome.

Fourthly, It is good to keep ſilence, that we may learn or be better fitted to ſpeak. One of the old Philoſophers enjoyned his Scholars five years ſilence, before he ſuffered them to ſpeak as Scholars; that is, to deliver any opinion in Philoſophy. We muſt learn to be ſilent before we can learn to ſpeak; much more before we can ſpeak learnedly. The direction which the Apoſtle gives about all women (1 *Tim.* 2. 11.) is not unuſeful; for ſome men, let them learn in ſilence.

Fifthly, It is good to keep ſilence, when we perceive we ſhould offend by ſpeaking. As there are ſome caſes in which we muſt ſpeak, how much ſoever men are offended; ſo it is a high point of prudence to avoid all unneceſſary offences.

Sixthly, 'Tis good to be ſilent, to ſhew our conſent and ſubmiſſion to what hath been rightly ſpoken; as alſo

Subjectionis ſignum eſt ſilere coram alio.

Seventhly, That we may further meditate upon and conſider of it. When *Job* ſaith, *They kept ſilence at my counſel*, we are to underſtand it of a ſilence ariſing from their conſent to and reverence of what, after their waiting, he had ſpoken; as if he had ſaid, they did not only wait to receive my counſel; but they ſubmitted to it. Silence is a ſign of ſubmiſſion both to the word and works of another. And thus the Prophet calls all fleſh to teſtifie their ſubmiſſion to the works of God (*Hab.* 2. 20.) *The Lord is in his holy Temple, let all the earth keep ſilence before him:* That is, let all ſubmit to his diſpenſations, both to what he is doing, and to what he will do. Another Prophet gives the ſame admonition upon the ſame ground (*Zech.* 2. 13.) *Be ſilent, O all fleſh, before the Lord, for he is raiſed up out of his holy habitation:* As if he had ſaid, 'Tis beſt for *all fleſh*, good and bad, to be quiet, and now to get their hearts into an humble ſubmitting frame to the will and pleaſure of God, for he is about to do ſome great work, he is not aſleep, but raiſed up out of his holy habitation; he is (as it were) come out of his houſe, and is upon his way and advancing towards you in ſome eminent manifeſtations of his power and wiſdom, of his righteouſneſs and juſtice, therefore let no murmurings nor diſcontented words be heard from any of your lips. To *keep ſilence* (in this ſence) ſpeaks a quiet and gracious reſignation of our ſelves, either to the Counſels and Commands of the Lord, or to his dealings and adminiſtrations.

Thus *Job*'s Subjects, or thoſe over and among whom he govern'd, *kept ſilence at his counſel:* And this ſilence ſtands in a ſix-fold oppoſition,

First, To the denyal of what is ſaid.
Secondly, To murmuring at what is ſaid.
Thirdly, To reſiſting or oppoſing what is ſaid.
Fourthly, To neglecting what is ſaid.

Fifthly, To diſobeying or doing the contrary to what is ſaid.

Sixthly, This ſilence is oppoſed to the very deferring of our acceptance of or obedience to what is ſaid or given in Counſel. 'Tis alwayes our duty to keep ſilence in oppoſition to all theſe ſpeakings and actings, whenſoever or whatſoever God ſpeaks to us; and this ſilence is our duty alſo, when men (as *Job* did) ſpeak right and righteous things, according to the mind and will of God.

They kept ſilence at my Counſel.

But what's Counſel? When any thing is ſpoken in truth and faithfulneſs, whether it be by way of direction, or exhortation, or conſolation, we may call it Counſel in a large ſence. All the words of wiſdome are comprehended under two titles, Counſel and Reproof (*Pro.* 1.26.) *Ye have ſet at nought all my Counſel, and would none of my Reproof*; that is, ye have refuſed with indignation all that which I have ſpoken, either to direct you what to do, or to correct what you have done amiſs. Counſel ſtrictly taken is direction what to do in hard matters, in difficult caſes, it is the very Spirit and quinteſſence of our reaſon and underſtanding. Counſel is the iſſue and reſult of mans moſt ſerious meditations. Counſel is the thoughts of man made up; we may have many looſe ſcattered tranſient thoughts about matters; but when our thoughts are made up and fixed and faſhioned, when they are put into a due frame and order, adviſing proper means to honeſt ends, then they are Counſel.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *Good Counſel is precious.*

Be it in civil and political affaires, or be it in ſpiritual, good Counſel is a Jewel. They are wiſe who can give Counſel, and ſo are they who are willing to receive it. And ſome can give Counſel better then take it, and others can take Counſel better then give it. They are perect men who do both give and take it well; and they who are willing to take it, will riſe apace above their imperfecti-ons. *Jobs* people ſaid much for themſelves, while (in the manner already opened) they kept ſilence at his Counſel.

Obſerve, Secondly, *It is the duty and ornament of Maſtrates, or men in power, to be able to give Counſel.*

Eloquentia eſt copioſè loquens ſapientia. Cic. lib. 3. de Orat.

A Magiſtrate ſhould be a man of underſtanding, and a Maſter of reaſon. He ſhould be as much above the people in wiſdome as he is in power; he ſhould be as able to rule their judgments as their perſons. 'Tis fit Magiſtrates ſhould have their Counſel; *for in the multitude of Counſellers there is ſafety* (Prov. 11. 14.) But when Magiſtrates can give good Counſel, and ſee with their own eyes, that's their honour. Some weak Princes have been very happy and ſucceſsful in their Government, when, as they have had a wiſe Councel, ſo they have been willing to be adviſed by them; but this is rather to be governed then to be a Governour. And uſually thoſe Princes who have been weakeſt to give good Counſel, have been (for inſtance *Rehoboam*, 1 Kings 12. 8.) moſt wilful in refuſing it. And therefore the Lord threatens it as a ſore Judgment upon the Jewiſh Nation (*Iſa.* 3. 4.) *I will give Children to be their Princes, and Babes ſhall rule over them.* Which may be underſtood either of Children in age, who as yet have not attained to any maturity of years, much leſs of wiſdome and underſtanding to lead the people under them; or of Children in diſpoſition, who the older they are, the worſer they are, becauſe the more averſe to receive impreſſions from the counſel of thoſe who are truly wiſe and experienced in publick affaires. Of both or either of theſe ſorts of Children, we may expound that of the kingly Preacher (*Eccleſ.* 10.16.) *Woe unto thee* O *Land, when thy King is a Child*, being either unfit to give or unwilling to receive good Counſel when 'tis given. Jeſus Chriſt who is a King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and who hath *the government upon his ſhoulders* (Iſa. 9. 6.) hath this put by the Prophet among his other Royal titles, *The Counſeller.* As Jeſus Chriſt is *the Prince of peace*, ſo *the Counſeller*; as he hath all power, ſo he is able to mannage it, he can give Counſel as well as Commands to all his people. And doubtleſs, 'tis a great bleſſing to Nations when men of power are alſo men of Counſel and able to direct; when they who ſit at the helm know which way to ſteer, and how to make both their own courſe and the courſe of their people under them.

Thirdly, Obſerve, *It is the duty of the people quietly to wait for and receive the counſel of thoſe that are in power over them.*

Jobs people came to him for counſel, yea they waited for it, and kept ſilence when they had it. Here's the picture of a good Prince, and the picture of a good people; the Prince is giving counſel, and the people are attending him to receive it. And I may add, here's alſo the picture of a good Paſtour, of a gracious Miniſter, and a Godly people. The Paſtor is to give counſel from the Lord, in the great affairs of eternal life, according to the Soul-ſtate of every man, which is indeed of greater concernment then States and Kingdoms. And the people of God ought with all readineſs to give ear, to wait and keep ſilence at his counſel. When *Cornelius* had ſent for a Soul-Counſeller, the Apoſtle *Peter*, he tells him (*Acts* 10. 33.) *Now therefore we are all here preſent before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God*; we have waited for thee, we are ready to hear thee, and we will keep ſilence at thy word. It is ſaid in the Goſpel, that when Chriſt was preaching, *the people were attentive to hear him* (*Luke* 19. 48.) or (as we put in the Margin) *hanged on him.* They hung upon him hearing, as Bees (ſo ſome expound it) upon a flower, to ſuck out all the ſweetneſs and the honey of his holy and heavenly Counſels. *Grace was powred into his lips* (Pſal. 45. 2.) and he powred it out at his lips. Chriſt ſaith of his Spouſe, that her *lips dropped like a honey-combe* (Cant. 4. 11.) how much more did and do the lips of Chriſt?

Verſ. 22. **After my words they ſpake not again, and my ſpeech dropped upon them.**

In the former verſe we ſaw the great attendance and readineſs of the people to receive *Jobs* counſel; in this, we ſee they were fully ſatisfied with the counſel which he gave them.

After my words they ſpake not again.

They forbare to ſpeak, not only becauſe he being chief or Preſident of the Councel, ſpake laſt, and ſo gave the concluding opinion; but they forbare to ſpeak after him, as I apprehend, upon this threefold conſideration.

Firſt, Becauſe he ſpake ſo *fully*, that nothing could be added.

Secondly, Becauſe he ſpake ſo *truly*, that nothing could be objected.

Thirdly, Becauſe he ſpake ſo *clearly*, that nothing could be doubted. There's no reaſon, when a man hath ſpoken ſuch words as theſe, why any man ſhould ſpeak a word after them, unleſs it be to approve and thank the ſpeaker.

שנה *Iterum ſecundo vel denuo agere.*

The Hebrew (ſtrictly rendred) is, *After my words they did not iterate, duplicate, or reply, they did not turn upon me again, to draw the matter into further debate; when I had done, there was no repeating.* The word is ſo tranſlated (*Pro.* 17. 9.) *He that repeateth a matter, ſeparateth very friends*; if he that hath heard a matter, will needs be a tale-bearer, he will alſo be a peace-breaker; or, he that looketh again and again; that is, over-curiouſly and critically into every word ſpoken or thing done (the Text is indifferent to either reading) by another, to eſpy and cenſure every ſlip and failing in it, this man will ſoon forfeit his beſt friend. Love doth not like theſe kind of repetitions or ſpeakings again. A friend doth not love to hear either the courteſies repeated that have been received by him, or the infirmities that have paſſed from him. *Solomon* uſeth the ſame word in that advice (*Pro.* 24. 21.) *My Son, fear God and the King, and meddle not with them that are given to change*; that love to turn from every thing, and fix in nothing: that are alwayes repeating matters, but never ſtating them. They turn and change as often as the year, yea often in a year. This word in the Original ſignifies a year, becauſe of its continual changes, both by reaſon of its alteration and iteration. Yet further (which comes near *Jobs* ſcope and purpoſe) the word here uſed ſignifies any oppoſing of or differing from what is done or ſpoken; ſo Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates, *After my words they differed not*; they were ſo far from reſiſting or riſing up againſt my power, that they did not ſo much as diſſent from my opinion or judgment; nor did I leave any breach or diſſent among them;

ישנה *Inobedientiam & diſceſſionem ab imperio notat.*

my words reconciled and healed all their differences,I made them all of one mind, and agreed them in my determination of their matters.

More diſtinctly, when *Job* ſaith, *After my words they ſpake not again*; we may underſtand it theſe four wayes.

Firſt, They ſpake not again by way of addition, as if I had not ſpoken enough to the point, but needed a ſupplement from them.

Secondly, *They ſpake not again*, by way of diſſatisfaction. or as not being pleaſed with what I had ſpoken. When *Eliſha* gave *Naaman* counſel (2 *Kings* 10. 11.) *Go waſh in Jordan*; Naaman was diſſatisfied, and *ſpake again, I thought the Prophet would have come out, and have laid his hands upon me*; he expected more; he did not reſt in the word of the Prophet, as that blind man did in the word of Chriſt (*John* 9. 7.) *Go waſh in the Pool of* Siloam : *he went his way therefore, and waſhed, and came ſeeing.* When *Job* gave the word of direction, no man ſpake again in a way of diſſatisfaction, all were ready to do as he directed. Many good men have ſpoken again when God hath ſpoken; and though they have not reſiſted his word, yet they have had many fears and ſcruples about it. See how *Moſes*, a holy man, was diſſatisfied when God bid him go to *Pharoah* (Exod. 4 10, 11.) ſaith he, *I am not eloquent* (*or a man of words*) *I cannot ſpeak, I am ſlow of ſpeech, and of a ſlow tongue, I am heavy mouth'd* (as the Original Text ſpeaks) or *meal mouth'd, I am unfit to ſpeak at* Pharoahs *Court*; *Courtiers have nimble tongues, and oyled mouths, I am none of thoſe.* Therefore the Lord doth at once reprove and encourage him; *Who hath made mans mouth? Or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the ſeeing, or the blind? Have not I the Lord?* As if the Lord had ſaid, fear not *Moſes*, I who have given thee a command to go and ſpeak to *Pharaoh*, can give thee an ability, yea a facility and fluency of ſpeech. Thus alſo *Jeremie* ſpake again (*Chap.* 1. 6.) and ſo did *Ezekiel* (Chap. 4. 14.) as diſſatisfied with the Lords Commiſſion, till he gave incouragement to the one, and ſome diſpenſation as to the ſtrictneſs of his command, to the other. Yea *Peter* himſelf having heard the Lords voice in a viſion, ſaying, *Ariſe* Peter, *kill and eat*; ſpake again (*Acts* 10. 14, 16.) *not ſo Lord* (he was not ſatisfied) *I have never eaten any thing common or unclean. Jobs* happineſs was very great in this; his Auditors ſpake not again as ſcrupled at or diſſatisfied with what he had ſpoken.

Thirdly, Much leſs did they ſpeak again by way of open and profeſſed contradiction, as *Paul's* Jewiſh hearers did at *Antioch*, when he had preacht the whole body of Goſpel-Divinity to them, both from the holy Propheſies and Hiſtories of Chriſt; a Sermon it was ſo full of light and life, that the *Gentiles*, that is, the greater part of the *Gentiles* who heard it, were ſo far from *ſpeaking again*, that is, from *gain ſaying*, or contradicting it, that they deſired *Paul* to ſpeak the ſame things again (*Acts* 13. 42.) *The* Gentiles *beſought that theſe words might be preached to them the next Sabbath. But* (verſ. 45.) *when the* Jews *ſaw the multitude, they were filled with envie, and ſpake againſt thoſe things which were ſpoken by* Paul, *contradicting and blaſpheming.* The Prophet *Jeremie* met with ſuch *a ſpeaking again*, after he had ſpoken (*Jer.* 43. 1, 2.) *And it came to paſs, that when* Jeremiah *had made an end of ſpeaking to all the people, all the words of the Lord their God, for which the Lord their God had ſent him to them, even all theſe words : Then ſpake* Azariah *the Son of* Hoſhaiah, *and* Johanan *the Son of* Kareah, *and all the proud men, ſaying unto* Jeremiah, *thou ſpeakeſt falſly : The Lord our God hath not ſent thee to ſay, go not into* Egypt *to ſojourne there.* Theſe men were grown as impudent as they were diſobedient; they did not go behind the door, but gave the Prophet the lye to his face. Yea Jeſus Chriſt himſelf who ſpake as never man ſpake, had them that ſpake thus after him (*Heb.* 12. 3.) *He endured the contradicting of ſinners againſt himſelf* : Many oppoſed both his words, and works. In this ſence the Apoſtle (*Titus* 2. 9.) forbids Servants to *ſpeak again*, after the Word of their Maſters. Servants muſt not diſpute their Maſters orders, but do them; they muſt not queſtion, much leſs contradict, but readily obey in whatſoever they are bound to obey. Thoſe Servants quite forget or miſtake their duty, who will be ſpeaking again, and again, after their Maſters word, rather then do it once.

Fourthly, When *Job* ſaith, *After my words they ſpake not again*, his meaning may be this, they did not go to any other Oracle for counſel or better reſolution in that matter. It is uſual with Clients in weighty and difficult caſes, to take advice, firſt of one Counceller, and then of another, hoping to have ſomewhat more light in their cauſe from the ſecond then they have had from the firſt; and when dark and doubting Souls have been with one Miniſter, to hear what he can ſay, they will yet go to another, and another, for ſatisfaction. But ſaith *Job*, *After my words they ſpake not again*, but did acquieſs in my opinion.

I ſhall only add by way of Caution, that we owe no ſuch blind obedience to any man living, as to take up all he ſaith by an implicit faith, and not to *ſpeak after him*, not to examine the reaſonableneſs or ask a reaſon of what he ſaith. The Apoſtles rule is (1 *Theſ.* 5. 20.) *Prove all things, hold faſt that which is good*; we muſt conſider and argue about the opinions and poſitions of the wiſeſt and holieſt men in all things, in holy and ſpiritual things eſpecially, whether they be ſuitable to the mind of God or no. The Apoſtle *John* gives both a negative and a poſitive command about this (1 *Eph.* 4. 1.) *Beloved* (ſaith he) *believe not every Spirit : Try the Spirits whether they are of God:* Try them by the touchſtone of truth, whether they ſpeak according to truth. Thus when the Apoſtle preached (*Acts* 17. 11.) *The* Bereans *ſpeak again*, though not by way of oppoſition and contradiction, yet by way of examination, whether the things which he ſpake were ſo or no, and they were accounted honourable for doing ſo. The affirmation and authority of man, is no ſufficient ground for our faith; nor may we ſwear unto the words of the greateſt Maſters, whether of words or reaſon. This is due to none but God, and to him 'tis highly due. After his words we muſt not ſpeak, no not by way of examination; the word of God muſt be received for its own Authority, the Scripture hath its perfection and proof in it ſelf, it doth not receive confirmation or addition from man, nor may any man ſpeak after it, to make the leaſt addition. The word of God concludes with a dreadful ſentence againſt thoſe who adventure to add one word or tittle to the matter of it (*Rev.* 22. 18.) *If any man ſhall add unto theſe things, God ſhall add unto him the plagues that are written in this Book.* Who would add words to the words of God, when God tells him that he will add plagues to them that add words. Man muſt not dare to add a word to the word of Gods precept or promiſe, to the word of Gods command or threatning, to the word of any divine doctrine or propheſie. This honour belongs abſolutely to God beyond all men, that no man muſt ſpeak after him. And *Job* had this honour beyond many men, yea beyond moſt men that ever lived, all were content to ſit down ſilent when he had ſpoken. *After my words they ſpake not again.*

And my ſpeech dropped upon them.

Theſe words carry an alluſion to rain. The old Prophets were called *droppers*, and their propheſying was called *dropping* (Ezek. 20. 46.) *Son of man, ſet thy face toward the South, and drop toward the South, and propheſie againſt the Forreſt of the South Feild.* In this language the Prophet *Amos* reproves *Amaziah* the Prieſt of *Bethel* (Amos 7. 16.) *Thou ſayeſt propheſie not againſt* Iſrael, *and drop not thy word againſt the houſe of* Iſaac. The Sermons of the Prophets were called *droppings*, eſpecially when (as theſe inſtanced in) they denounced threatnings and terrours from the Lord, which were to fall upon Nations like fierce and ſtormy ſhowers, with much force and violence; but I rather conceive that their propheſies were generally ſo expreſſed, becauſe their buſineſs was to ſoften the hearts of the people, and make them fruitful, as the Clouds of Heaven do the Earth with drops of rain. This it ſeems was a well known metaphor in *Jobs* time.

מטפים *Sallatores, quod illorũ officiũ erat populum verbo dei tanquam pluvia irrigare.*

My ſpeech (ſaith he) dropped upon them.

It did not drop beſide them, nor did it drop out of them; againſt which the Apoſtle cautions the *Hebrews* (Chap. 2. 1.) *To give the moſt earneſt heed to the things which they had heard, leaſt at any time they ſhould let them ſlip or drop out of them,* as water doth out of a leakie Veſſel. Some hearers are like Stones or ſtopt Bottels, into which the word cannot drop, though it drop upon them : And others are like

Sieves or crackt Bottels, out of which the word quickly drops, and they become dry and empty.

Secondly, When *Job* ſaith, *My ſpeech dropped upon them*, it implyeth that he ſpake gently and ſweetly to them; he did not fall upon them like a Storm, his words were not like hailſtones or thunder-bolts, but like drops of rain. I grant, that ſome men muſt be ſtorm'd, elſe they will not be taken. The word muſt come down ſometimes like Hail-ſtones or Thunder-bolts, but uſually like a ſoft and refreſhing ſhower. *Jobs* word dropt ſweetly: His hearers did not ſay as ſome ſaid in the Goſpel when Chriſt himſelf ſpake, *This is a hard ſaying, who can bear it?* Drops of rain are ſoft, and eaſily born, they break no bones. Droppings in the houſe upon our beds and ſtools (to which the contentions of a Wife are elegantly compared, *Prov.* 19. 13.) are very troubleſome and afflicting, but droppings in the Feild upon our Graſs and Corn is very welcome and refreſhing.

Thirdly, When *Job* ſaith, his words *dropped upon them*, there is (at leaſt) an intimation of his care and prudence, in accommodating himſelf to his hearers, or that he ſpake (which Chriſt is ſaid to do) *as they were able to receive it.* A Veſſel with a narrow mouth or neck, cannot receive the water by whole Bucket-fulls, but you muſt poure it in by degrees, or let it drop in, as from a *ſtill.* The latine word, *to drop*, is the ſame with our *Engliſh*, to *diſtil* or *Limbeck*. And then properly the ſpeaker droppeth his words, when he ſpeaks according to the capacity of thoſe who hear it. He that ſpeaks hard points and high flown notions, or who ſpeaks in a high language about any point to them that are low in parts, ſpeaks more to ſet forth himſelf then to profit them. The Apoſtle adviſeth thoſe that teach others, *to divide the word aright*, that is, to adminiſter to every man his proper portion, as he is fit and able to receive it. For as in regard of the matter, that which is accommodate to the condition of one man, is not to another; *One muſt have milk, and another muſt have meat*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks of his own Miniſtry to the *Corinthians* (1 Cor. 3.2.) And again (*Heb.* 5. 13, 14.) *Every one that uſeth milk is unskilful in the word of righteouſneſs, for he is a babe; but ſtrong meat belongeth to them that be of full age*, &c. Now as we muſt diſtinguiſh the matter of our Miniſtration, ſo the manner of it; ſome can receive much at once, others can take but a bit, a ſpoonful, or a drop or two at a time; or how much ſoever they receive, they muſt receive it but by drops. And ſo when the Prophets denounced Judgments, they may be ſaid to drop them, becauſe they did not declare the whole diſpleaſure of God, nor open all the treaſures of his wrath at once, but gradually, or by drops. As we call ſome leſſer ſhowers, *heat drops*, which are an argument of a greater rain behind; ſo the Prophets are ſaid to drop ſome angry words among or upon the people, when the Lord was purpoſed to ſend down mighty ſhowers, and a ſweeping rain afterwards to carry them away as with a flood.

Qui parvis ſublimia loquitur ſe magis curat oſtendere quam aliis prodeſſe. Greg.

Stillare prophetas idioma ſcripturarum eſt; quod non totam ſimul dei inferant iram, ſed parvas ſtillas comminatione denuncient. Hier. in Amos cap. 7.

Fourthly, This dropping of the word may reſemble the dropping of rain from the houſe-eves; we ſay the *eves of the houſes drop.* And as ſuch droppings wear the ſtones, and make them hollow by continual falling; ſo the ſtony heart of man is wrought by the frequent hearing of the word. And hence

Laſtly, I conceive this dropping denotes, generally, in Scripture, the efficacy of divine or heavenly doctrine, which falling upon, and gently ſoaking or ſinking into the Soul, doth not only moiſten and ſoften it, but nouriſh and refreſh it, and cauſeth it to bring forth fruit, according to the nature of the ſoile, of the ſeed ſown, or trees planted upon it. As will appear more fully in the opening of the next verſe.

Verſ. 23. **And they waited for me as for the rain, &c.**

They waited for me, that is, for my Counſel, as he ſpake at verſe 21. *They waited for me as for the rain*, that is, that I ſhould drop upon them like rain, as he ſpake in the former part of this verſe. It was propheſied of Chriſt (*Pſ.* 72. 6.) *He ſhall come down like rain upon the mowen graſs*; which many of the ancients following the Septuagint and the Vulgar Latine tranſlations render, *He ſhall come down like rain upon a fleece of wool*, alluding to the wetting of *Gideons* fleece (*Judg.* 6. 37.) And 'tis true, the Original word ſignifieth a *fleece of wool* as well as the *mowen graſs*, yet the words following in the ſame verſe (*as ſhowers that water the Earth*) ſeem rather to juſtifie our reading, *He ſhall come down like rain upon the mowen graſs.* So indeed Jeſus Chriſt came down, not only to the comforting but ſaving of millions of Souls, who elſe had not only been parched, but muſt have periſhed (though not conſumed) with the ſcotching fiery beams and everlaſting burnings of the wrath of God. And as *Jobs* hearers waited for him as for the rain, ſo much more did the old believers before he came in the fleſh, and many now under the legal terror, or the hidings of his favour, wait for his coming in the Spirit, as the Earth in a time of drought waiteth for the rain. *They waited for me* (ſaith *Job*) *as for the rain.*

And they opened their mouth wide, as for the latter rain.

To open the mouth, is a preparatory to ſpeaking; 'tis often ſo expreſſed in the Goſpel, *Then Jeſus opened his mouth and taught or ſpake*; but here opening the mouth refers not to ſpeaking, but to ſilent hearing, or it notes a Soul-deſiring, hungring, thirſting, greedily looking for holy and wholeſome Counſel. As the Earth when it wants rain, opens its mouth, and by its clefts and chaps, doth (as it were) cry to the Lord for a draught of rain to quench its thirſt. Thus the people came to *Job* with open mouthes, that is, enlarged deſires to receive his Counſel; they opened their mouthes as a hungry man for wholeſome food, or as a man opens his mouth for the freſh air, when he is almoſt ſtifled, or over-heated. *David* ſaith (*Pſal.* 119. 131.) *I opened my mouth and panted, for I longed after thy Commandements*; his heart did work for life after the word of life.

Sermo meus tam erat gratus, quā pluvia ſtillans ſuper herbam. Druſ.

Cum ſiti et aviditate audiebant. Olymp.

Gaviſi ſunt cum loqueretur eis. Sep.

Pulcher erat iis ſermo meus. Chald.

Further, This phraſe *of opening the mouth*, in Scripture notes a readineſs to give out as well as to take in. *Paul* ſaith to the *Corinthians* (2 Cor. 6. 11.) *Our mouth is open to you, our heart is enlarged*: why was his mouth open? Not to receive any thing from the *Corinthians*, but to beſtow ſome thing upon them, he was deſirous to beſtow ſome ſpiritual gift, that they might be edified and comforted. *Pauls* mouth was open to fill them with the treaſures of Goſpel knowledg, not to be filled by them. But moſt uſually, a man is ſaid to open his mouth for receiving; *They opened their mouth wide*,

As for the latter rain.

We find this diſtinction of rain into the former and latter in many places of Scripture (*Deut.* 11. 13, 14.) *It ſhall come to paſs, if you ſhall hearken diligently to my Commandments*, &c. *that I will give you the rain of your land in his due ſeaſon, the firſt rain and the latter rain, that thou mayeſt gather in thy Corn, and thy Wine, and thine Oyle.* Read the ſame diſtinction (*Jer.* 5. 24. *James* 5. 7.)

But why doth *Job* mention the latter rain, and put an Emphaſis upon that, rather then the former rain? Why doth he not ſay, they waited for me as for the former rain?

I anſwer, Firſt, more generally; *Job* uſeth thoſe expreſſions in this place, which might moſt properly ſet forth the great longing of the people to hear him ſpeak, and their delight when they heard him ſpeak; and therefore that the latter rain carrieth ſomewhat in it more then ordinary cannot be doubted.

Utitur omnibus vocabulis quibus & ſuam dicendi facundiam & ubertatem necnon ſubditorum, qui etiam differentem audiebant voluptatem exprimat. Bald.

Imber ſerotinus eſt qui fructus producit ad maturitatē.

I anſwer, Secondly, Both the former and the latter rain were exceedingly deſired and prized. The former rain falling in the ſeventh moneth, which was ſeed time, prepared the Earth both for the receiving and bringing forth of the ſeed, and was therefore much deſired; but the latter rain was much more deſired, as may appear (*Jer.* 3. 3.) *Therefore the ſhowers have been withholden, and there hath been no latter rain*; that is, none of that rain which is ſo much deſired, as falling in the firſt moneth called according to the Syriac *Nyſan*, but according to the Hebrew *Abib*, which ſignifies an ear of Corn, becauſe in that moneth their Corn was eared, and then rain was exceeding welcome, for the filling of the ear, and ripening of the Corn; and upon this ground the Prophet (*Zech.* 10. 1.) bids them ask even that rain of the Lord, and he would give it, *Ask ye of the Lord rain, in the time of the latter rain*, as if that were the ſpecial ſeaſon for rain to be looked after and prayed for. And when *Solomon* would ſhew how deſirable a

Forte habitus ille aperiendi os eſt habitus precantis; quod ille imber ſerotinus ſoleret multis precibus a deo obtineri.

thing the favour of a King is, he puts it into that compariſon (*Prov.* 16. 15.) *In the light of the Kings countenance is life, and his favour is as a cloud of the latter rain.* So that, when he ſaith, *They opened their mouth wide, as for the latter rain,* the meaning is, they did wait for my Counſel as a thing moſt deſirable, and profitable, as that which was ſweet and pleaſant to them, even as the latter rain. And poſſibly when he ſaith, *They opened their mouthes wide, as for the latter rain,* it may intimate, that they did importunately beg of him that he would comfort and refreſh their minds with ſome wholeſome and ſeaſonable Counſel, even as men uſe by earneſt prayer to beg of God that he would ſend the latter rain in the ſeaſon of it.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *Good Counſel and inſtruction are to the mind of man as rain is to the Earth.*

Moſes being to ſpeak his laſt to *Iſrael,* ſaith (*Deut.* 32. 1, 2.) *My doctrine ſhall drop as the rain; my ſpeech ſhall diſtill as the dew, as the ſmall rain upon the tender herb, and as the ſhowers upon the graſs.* If a Preachers ſpeech be not ſuch, he is but a Cloud without rain. Good Counſel or holy doctrine, may be compared to rain in two reſpects.

Firſt, 'Tis like rain in regard of its Original, good Counſel comes, as the rain, from Heaven, 'tis water from above; ſavory doctrine is not of an Earthly extraction, God is the ſpring and Author of it. *All Scripture is of divine inſpiration; holy men ſpake as they were moved by the holy Ghoſt.* The Apoſtle *Paul* gave thanks without ceaſing, becauſe when the *Theſſalonians* received the word of God, which they heard of him, and of his fellow-labourers in the Goſpel, *they received it not as the word of man, but, as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh in them that believe* (1 *Theſ.* 2. 13.) Though the moſt faithful Miniſters of the Goſpel cannot now ſpeak with the ſame authority and infallibility as the Apoſtles then did, yet they ſhould ſpeak nothing in the name of God, but what is the word of God, and, unleſs upon ſome examination it prove otherwiſe, what they ſpeak ſhould be received as the word of God. No man ought to vent his private ſence in the name of God, and woe be to thoſe who judg what is ſo ſpoken to be but of man, becauſe 'tis ſpoken but by a man. As God is the Father of the natural rain (he hath the key of the Clouds in his hand) ſo he is the Father of the ſpiritual rain. Divine truth is nothing elſe but the diſcovery of the heart and mind of God. All that wiſdome which is firſt pure and then peaceable, comes from above, and calls for our conformity to the mind of God.

Secondly, Holy Counſel is as the rain, if we conſider the effects of it.

For firſt, as the rain ſoftens the Earth; ſo doth that the heart. The Earth is like Iron, *till the Lord watereth the ridges of it, and makes it ſoft with ſhowers* (Pſal. 65. 10.) Such is the heart of man, hard as Iron, even harder then the nether milſtone, till the Lord by his word and Spirit is pleaſed to moiſten and mollifie it.

Secondly, As the rain ſoftens the Earth, ſo it refreſheth and reneweth the face of it; the Trees, and all Plants, the Flowers, the Corn, the Graſs, even all Vegetatives, or whatſoever groweth or moveth upon the face of the Earth, are renewed by the rain. Thus the word and holy Counſels of God, make a new face of things in the Soul. That which was dead gets life, that which was weak gets ſtrength, that which was withering looks freſh and green, Yea this rain doth not only renew the face or actings of the Soul, but (as a means in the hand of God) it reneweth the heart, or makes the heart new, ſo that as they who are decayed in ſpirituals are bettered and made more ſpiritual, ſo they who were altogether carnal are made ſpiritual by this rain.

Thirdly, The rain doth not only refreſh the Earth, but makes it fruitful. That Earth is curſed upon which it raineth not (2 *Sam.* 1. 21.) much more that which is not fruitful, though it be rained upon. Under this ſimilitude the Apoſtle earneſtly and rightly provokes the *Hebrews* to fruitfulneſs under the teachings of the Goſpel (*Heb.* 6. 7, 8.) *For the Earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dreſſed, receiveth bleſſing from God. But that which beareth Thorns and Bryers, is rejected and is nigh unto curſing, whoſe end is to burned.* But (as he ſweetly inſinuates in the next words) *Beloved, we are perſwaded better things of you;* that is, you (I hope) having had ſo much of the heavenly rain ſhowered down upon you, will not only not be barren, nor bring forth Bryers, but abundance of good fruit. This the Apoſtle affirms of the *Coloſſians,* to their comfort and high commendation (*Col.* 1. 6.) *The word of the truth of the Goſpel is come unto you, as it is in all the World, and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth alſo in you ſince the day you heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth.* We may know many, yea, I ſuppoſe all the truths of the grace of God, and yet not at all know the grace of God in truth. But if where the word of the truth of the Goſpel comes, it cometh alſo in truth, they who receive it cannot but be fruitful. The rain of the word falls by direction; ſome have it not at all (when their Neighbours, like *Gideons* fleece, are wet with it, they like the Earth round about are dry) theſe muſt needs be unfruitful; others receive this word-rain (how much or how long ſoever it falls among them) only at the ears, it wets only the outſide of them, but ſoaks not in, theſe alſo remain unfruitful. But whenſoever the rain of the word, like (as we call it) a good ground-ſhower, goes to the root, the heart and conſcience of man, which is the ſame with that expreſſion of the Apoſtle to the *Coloſſians,* if it be known in truth, the Soul can no more withhold its fruit, then good ground can when ſeaſonably and ſufficiently rained upon. The Apoſtle *Peter* (2 *Eph.* 1. 5, 6, 7.) exhorts the Saints to much diligence in adding grace to grace, and concludes (*verſ.* 8.) *For if theſe things be in you, and abound, they make you that you ſhall neither be barren, nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.* But why doth the Apoſtle ſay, if theſe things be in you, they make you that you ſhall not be unfruitful in the knowledg of Chriſt, ſeeing theſe are our fruitfulneſs? I conceive the Apoſtle ſpeaks of the manifeſtation of their fruitfulneſs, not of the manner of the cauſation of it; as if he had ſaid, by theſe things being and abounding in you, it will appear that you are not barren nor unfruitful in the knowledg of Chriſt. For indeed the knowledg of Chriſt, which comes to us in the rain of the Goſpel, is that, which gives all thoſe graces both their being and abounding in us, and makes us that we cannot be barren nor unfruitful.

Further, This ſpiritual rain hath ſome effects, for which there is no paralel in the natural rain; as firſt (which was intimated before) it changeth the very nature of the ſoil. Natural rain doth only draw out that vertue and fatneſs which is in the Earth; whereas this ſpiritual rain falling upon hearts as barren as the Wilderneſs, makes them fruitful, like a Paradiſe or the Garden of God; yea falling upon a Rock, a flinty Rock, it hath (through the preſence of the holy Spirit going with it) a power to transform it into good ground fit to be ploughed or planted for ſpiritual uſes. And again, ſecondly, whereas natural rain draws forth the weeds and makes them proſper, this rain kills and withers them, even all thoſe luſts which dayly grow out of our hearts, and often ſhew themſelves in our lives. The rain of the word nouriſhes nothing but our graces, and our holineſs. And therefore the Apoſtle treating of this ſpiritual rain (*Heb.* 6. 8.) concludes that ground under rejection which being rained upon brings forth Bryars and Thorns, yea that it is nigh unto curſing, and the end of it is burning. If they who are thus watered bring forth weeds, they have nothing to expect next but fire, they and their weeds ſhall ſurely be bundled up together and caſt into everlaſting burnings.

Secondly, *Job* being able and ready to give good Counſel, *they waited for it as for rain, and opened their mouth wide, as for the latter rain.*

Hence Obſerve, *All good Counſel, eſpecially the ſaving doctrine of the Goſpel, ſhould be as welcome to us as the rain, as the latter rain.*

The word of truth and grace is the moſt deſirable thing in the world; and they that know either the worth of it, or their own want of it, cannot but deſire it, as the Earth deſireth rain; O what longings, what thirſtings are there in poor humbled parched Souls, for the word of God! they eſteem it more then the expected rain, more *then their appointed food,* as was ſhewed at the Twelfth verſe of the Thirty-ſecond Chapter of this Book. If a man be hungry, a little a little bidding will ſerve the turn to perſwade him to eat; Nature teaches men to eat when they are hungry, to drink when thirſty, and to look for rain when the earth is dry; and doth not grace teach and provoke us to pray and wait for ſpiritual food and rain, that our ſouls may live and fructifie! How forward are we to pray for natural rain, in its ſeaſon, and the Lord looks that we ſhould; he loves to be entreated for it: And ſhall we be backward to receive ſpiritual rain, which (though it be ſometimes more, yet) is at all times ſeaſonable! When once we are ſenſible of our ſpiritual dryneſs and barrenneſs, of our wants and weakneſſes, we ſhall as earneſtly deſire and prize the good counſels, the feeding raines of the Word, as ever we did rain in the extreameſt heat of the dryeſt Summer. 'Tis much to be lamented, 'tis to be lamented with ſhowers of teares, that thoſe ſhowers of holy inſtruction are ſo little valued and deſired; how much more is it to be lamented, that many wiſh there might be no more of this rain, that theſe drops might drop no more, that theſe Heavens over them might be as braſs, and the bottles of theſe clouds ſtop for ever. And as many think we have too much of this rain, ſo others are afraid of it; and therefore they get to ſhelter, as men do in a rainy day, leſt they ſhould wet their fine cloaths, or take cold by it. And whereas, they are moſt unwilling to be in the common rain who have their beſt clothes on, they only are unwilling to come into this rain who have their worſt; O how loth are ſinners (who have nothing on them but the filthy garments and rotten rags of old *Adam*) to come into this rain! And 'tis rare to find or hear of *Job*'s hearers any where, ſuch, I mean, as open their mouths wide for holy counſel as for the latter rain. The men of the world are like the land of *Egypt*, from whence the *Iſraelites* came, of which *Moſes* ſaith (*Deut.* 11. 10.) *Thou watered'ſt it with thy foot*; that is, by digging channels in the earth, thou didſt conveigh water to it; But the people of God are like the land of *Canaan* (to which the *Iſraelites* were going) of which *Moſes* ſaith at the eleventh verſe of the ſame Chapter, *It drinketh water of the rain of heaven.* Earthly water will ſerve their turn who are earthly; but they who are heavenly, or are to be made heavenly, muſt have water from heaven.

I ſhall conclude with that word, that notable word of the Lord concerning his own word, under this continued Metaphor or Allegory of rain (*Iſa.* 55. 10, 11.) *As the rain cometh down and the ſnow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give ſeed to the ſower, and bread to the eater; ſo ſhall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: It ſhall not return unto me void, but it ſhall accompliſh that which I pleaſe, and it ſhall proſper in the thing whereto I ſent it.* What the Prophet diſcourſeth and affirmeth here concerning that ſpecial word of God, his word of promiſe for pardon and reconciliation, is true concerning the whole counſel of God revealed to us in his word, it returneth not (as the rain and ſnow do not) till it hath watered every ſoul it is ſent to. Some ſlight the word preacht (as they do an ordinary ſhower) not conſidering that God ſends it, who never ſent, nor did, any thing in vain. And whatſoever the thoughts of vain men are, it will appear at laſt, that not only no whole ſhower, but not any one drop of it was either ſent or returned in vain. Though men make no preſent account of it, yet God will have an account of it hereafter; He will enquire whether we have been bettered, and made fruitful by it; He will enquire what we have brought forth, and how much. As the rain and the ſnow do not return back without accompliſhing that which God pleaſeth, ſo neither ſhall his word; an effect it ſhall have either to convert or to condemn, it will be a ſavour of life or of death to every ſoul that hears it. And if Sermons be not as ſhowers to refreſh, they will make a deluge to overflow. As once the world was overwhelmed with a deluge of water, ſo it will (in this ſence) again; and they who are not made fruitful by ſhowers of Goſpel-doctrine, ſhall be ſunk, choaked, and drowned in them. It is ſad to periſh for want of this word-rain, or rain of the word; but it is much more ſad to periſh in it and by it.

VERS. 24, 25.

If I laughed on them, they believed it not, and the light of my countenance they caſt not down.

I choſe out their way, and ſat as chief, and dwelt as a King in the Army, as one that comforteth the mourners.

JOB ſtill proceeds to ſhew what reaſon he once had to be very confident, that as he then was, ſo he ſhould continue in a flouriſhing condition, that neither his root nor fruit ſhould fail, but *he dying in his neſt, ſhould multiply his dayes as the ſand.* This he argueth, as more then probable, from the ſame Topicks as before, for the general matter of them, though here otherwiſe moulded and expreſſed; that is, from the reverence which all men ſhewed him, as alſo from the good offices which he was ready at all times to do for all deſerving men.

Verſe. 24. **If I laughed on them, they believed it not.**

Laughter is proper to man as the effect and iſſue of his reaſon. For though many laugh when they have no reaſon to laugh, yet none can laugh who have no reaſon. And therefore though laughter be attributed to thoſe things which not only are without reaſon, but without ſenſe, yet 'tis ſo only improperly or metaphorically in alluſion to man.

The word here uſed is applyed to a threefold laughter in Scripture.

Firſt, To a ſcorning or a deriding laughter, ſo in the thirty ninth of this Book at the ſeventh verſe; God, deſcribing *The wild aſſe*, ſaith, *He ſcorneth the multitude of the City, his houſe is the wilderneſs, and the barren land his dwelling*, what cares he for crowded Cities? We have the ſame notion of laughter (*Pſal.* 2. 4.) The Lord beholding what work the world was at, the *people raging, and the Princes taking counſel together*, and all againſt the Lord and againſt his annoynted, the Spirit of God there tells us what work, or rather (if I may ſo ſpeak with reverence) what ſport God was at, *He that ſitteth in the heavens ſhall laugh, the Lord ſhall have them in deriſion*: the Lord ſcornes all the rage of the people, all the plots and counſels of the Princes, as knowing that they ſhall never be able to hinder his deſign, nor give check to his bleſſed plot and counſel, in *ſetting his King upon the holy hill of Zion.*

Secondly, *Laughter* ſignifies a pleaſant ſpirit and cheerful countenance, or ſmiling in good will (*Eccl.* 10. 19.) *A feaſt is made for laughter*; that is, a feaſt is not only for the repair of nature, or for ſtrengthning of the body, which is the ordinary end of eating, but we make feaſts for honeſt mirth, and to ſhew good will one to another, by loving and friendly entertainment.

Thirdly, *Laughter* imports any freedom and affability of behaviour towards others, and ſo 'tis oppoſed not only to ſorrow and melancholy, but to ſeverity and auſteerneſs. (*Prov.* 29. 9.) *If a wiſe man contendeth with a fooliſh man, whether he rage or laugh, there is no reſt.* Some make the Antecedent to the Relative *He* to be the *fooliſh man*, and then the ſence is, whether a fool or wicked man be in a good temper or a bad, a wiſe man ſhall never make a good end with him. But I rather conceive, *that He*, in the latter part of the verſe, referrs to the *wiſe man* in the former; and then the meaning is clearly this, if a wiſe or godly man, hath to do with a fool, with any perverſe or obſtinate ſinner, either to convince him of the evil which he hath done, or to perſwade him to do better; whether the wiſe man *be angry* (as the text ſhould rather be rendred then by the word *rage*) that is, whether the wiſe man deal ſharply with the fool (as he deſerves) *or laugh*, that is, deal mildly and ſweetly with him, *there is no reſt*; that is, the fool will not be ſatisfied, nor ſit down quietly under any way of conviction. Thus it is with wicked men, not only while wiſe men, but while the moſt wiſe God hath to do with them, either immediately by himſelf (alluring them by his favours, or ſcourging them with his rods) or mediately by his Miniſters, either offering them promiſes of mercy, or threatning them with judgments; let God have to do with them in all or any of theſe wayes, there's no reſt; they will not ceaſe to provoke him by their folly. This is the ſpirit of folly (to touch that only by the way) which

Chriſt at once diſcovered and reproved in the *Jews* (Matth. 11. 16, 17.) *Whereunto ſhall I liken this generation? It is like little children ſitting in the market place, and crying to their fellows, and ſaying, we have piped unto you, and ye have not danced, we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented*; that is, ye have not been won to a conformity by any form of diſpenſation, or way of Miniſtry, neither by the ſtrictneſs of *John*, nor by my ſociableneſs and openneſs in dealing with you: But you have put a croſs and crooked interpretation, not only upon our anger and ſorrow, but alſo upon our cheerſulneſs and laughter.

When *Job* ſaith, *If I laughed on them*, we are not to underſtand it of the laughter of ſcorn and deriſion; but of the laughter of courteſie and affability, ſuch as we commonly ſhew towards our friends at feaſts; as if he had ſaid, If I uſed an open, free, and familiar courteous carriage towards them, what then?

They believed it not. Why not? Did they think that *Job*'s face was (not the diſcovery, but) the diſguiſe of his heart, or that he put on a cuzzening countenance when he came ſmiling among them? Did they think that when he appearingly laughed, he was really angry, or covered his ſecret diſpleaſure with a ſeeming pleaſantneſs. It is (I grant) a too frequent practice with many, both to fain that love which is not in them, and to diſſemble that wrath which is; their words and looks are ſmoother then Oyl, when drawn ſwords are in their hearts. As when ſome mourn and weep, we have no reaſon to believe they pity us, their tears are falſe: So when others rejoyce and ſmile, we have no reaſon to believe they love us, or delight in us, for their laughter is falſe and flattering. Surely *Job* was not guilty of, much leſs given to, leaſt of all given up (as ſome have been) to this piece of unmanly policy: That was no Maxime or principle of his King-craft (which ſome have boaſted in) *He that knows not how to diſſemble, knows not how to live.* *Job* was a plain-hearted man, a man perfect and upright both towards God and towards man. And as he had ſo much courage that he durſt appear what he was; So he had too much honeſty and integrity not to be what he appeared. But if he was a man of this ingenuous ſpirit and temper, why did not the people, who addreſſed to him, or attended upon him, *believe it when he laughed?*

I anſwer, Firſt, Theſe words repreſent *Job* a man of that eſteem and reverence among the people, for wiſdom and ſincerity, that if at any time he was pleaſant in his deportment towards them, if at any time he did attemper his gravity with mirth, and ſhew his affability as well as his Authority, yet they would not believe that it proceeded from any lightneſs of ſpirit, or vanity of mind, but interpreted his very mirth ſeriouſneſs, and his laughter grave. His jeſt had a kind of earneſt in it, and his ſmiles did not at all leſſen his repute. He maintained or kept up his reverence in the midſt of his recreations, and gave no man occaſion to think he was loſt in his pleaſure, while he took it.

Jocus non redoleat levitatem, & hilaritas authoritatis non minuat gratiā. Bern. Ep. 227.

In tanta opinione eram apud illos, ut etiam jocabundi ſermonem ſerio acciperent. Jun.

Secondly, *If I laughed on them they believed it not*; that is, they did not grow familiar with me preſently: To this ſence Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates fully; *When I laughed on them they would not be bold.* Though I did let my ſelf down to them ſometimes, yet they never came up to me, nor bore themſelves as if I had been their equal, or their fellow.

Thirdly, We may expound theſe words as an argument of the peoples high content to ſee him merry and pleaſed: As if he had ſaid, All were ſo over-joyed when they ſaw me chearſully ſhewing any kindneſs to them, or acceptation of them, that they would not believe it, as if it were too much, or too great a favour for them, So it is ſaid of the Diſciples of Chriſt, *After he had ſpoken to them, and ſhewed them his hands and his feet* (which gives light to this paſſage) (*Luke* 24. 41.) *They yet believed not for joy, and wondered*, &c. Chriſts appearing to his Diſciples, as returned from death and the grave, was ſo great a mercy, that for joy they could not believe it; they thought it (for a while) too good to be true, a bleſſing too big for them. We find a like uſe of the word (*Job* 39. 24.) where among other deſcriptions of the Horſe, this is given as one, *He ſwalloweth the ground with fierceneſs and rage: Neither believeth he that is the ſound of the Trumpet*; he is ſo glad of the battel that he can ſcarce believe it for joy; or he doubteth whether it be the battel or no, becauſe he is ſo deſirous of it. Thus here, *If I laughed on them they believed it not*; they were ſo over-joyed to ſee me well pleaſed and pleaſant with them, that they could not believe it ſor joy.

Fourthly, The words are taken by ſome as a ſignification of that great reſpect which the people gave to *Job*'s Judgment, or how much they were taken with his opinion in any buſineſs brought before him; ſo that *if he laughed on them*, that is (according to this interpretation) if he did but by a ſmile give any intimation of his diſlike, *they believed it not*; that is, they began to ſuſpect that the matter was not right, which themſelves had preſented or reported to him, or that he had eſpyed ſome hole, ſome error, or weakneſs in it. This Expoſition ſtill heightens the honour of *Job*, and that eſtimation which all had of his wiſdom and ſagacity. As if men could ſcarce believe their own ſenſes, about what they had heard and ſeen; or that they could hardly believe that to be ſo, which they knew to be ſo, when he did but by a geſture or the change of his countenance hint the contrary. In the ſence before given the relative particle *it* (*they believed it not*) referred to *Job*'s laughter: But in this *it* refers to the matter whatſoever it was, reported to *Job* by themſelves for his Judgment and determination; at the hearing of which if he did but ſmile a little (as Judges ſometimes do) they were ready to doubt their own cauſe, and lay down their former good thoughts of it, as thinking that he ſaw what they did not ſee. And then the latter part of the verſe, *The light of my countenance they caſt not down*, may be interpreted, in a proportion to that; as if he had ſaid, When I gave countenance to, or ſhewed my approbation of a buſineſs by the caſt of my eyes, they did not caſt down *the light of my countenance*; that is, they did not refuſe or oppoſe me, but they lookt upon that ſign as a rule to go by.

But (to open that a little further) we may more diſtinctly enquire; Firſt, What *Job* meant *by the light of his countenance?* Secondly, What by their *not caſting it down?* To the former Queſtion, I anſwer, that as *The light of the countenance* of God, ſignifieth his favour and ſpecial kindneſs to man (*Pſal.* 4. 6.) *Lord lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us*, that is, ſhew thy ſelf favourable and gracious to us. So there is ſuch a light ſhining from the countenance of man upon man, eſpecially from the countenance of Princes and Magiſtrates; as *Solomon* ſpeaks expreſly (*Pro.* 16. 15.) *In the light of the Kings countenance is life.*

Secondly, The light of the countenance, is the chearfulneſs of the countenance; joy is light in the mind, and it puts a beauty upon the face, and makes it ſhine. Hence alſo in Scripture, ſorrow is called blackneſs and darkneſs (*Joel* 2. 6.) *Before their face the people ſhall be much pained: All faces ſhall gather blackneſs*: The Hebrew is *a pot*; that is, a *pot-like* colour or blackneſs, ſuch as ſcullions contract by lying among the pots: To which the Pſalmiſt alludes (*Pſal.* 68. 13.) *Though ye have lien among the pots, yet ſhall ye be as the wings of a dove covered with ſilver*, &c. that is, though through ſorrow and affliction ye have ſtained your beauty, yet ye ſhall recover it again. Thus ſaith the Prophet, *All faces ſhall gather blackneſs*, they ſhall be ſo full of ſorrow that the characters and marks of it ſhall be ſtamped and impreſt upon their faces. Again (*Nahum* 2. 10.) *She is empty, and void, and waſte, and the heart melteth, and the knees ſmite together, and much pain is in all loyns, and the faces of them all gather blackneſs.* Lamenting *Jeremy* bewails the ſad effects of famine in the ſame ſtile (*Lam.* 4. 8.) *Her Nazarites were purer then ſnow, they were whiter then milk; But now their viſage is blacker then a coal*, or (as we put in the Margin of our tranſlation) *darker then blackneſs.* There's no light, no day in their faces, no morning there: The light of the countenance is joy and chearfulneſs.

Lumen eſt hilaritas vultus; q. d. non contriſtabant me viciſſim jocando tanquam cum æquali. Piſc.

Nullo mærore afficiebant me, in omnibus placebant et gratificabantur mihi. Jun.

Thirdly, The light of a Magiſtrates countenance, is his gravity; that renders him very illuſtrious and beautiful in the eyes of his people. A light look, much more lightneſs of ſpirit, obſcures the honour of Princes, and makes them little leſs then contemptible, almoſt ridiculous. When *David danced before the Lord* (at the bringing home of the Ark) *with all his might, girded with a linnen Ephod* (2 Sam. 6. 14.) *Micol* (the Queen) *Sauls daughter looked through a window, and ſaw King David leaping and dancing*

Ego lucem vultus gravitatem intelligo, quæ velut hominem illuſtrem et conſpicuum reddit. Merc.

dancing before the Lord, and ſhe deſpiſed him in her heart; and when ſhe came out to meet him (*v.* 20.) ſhe ſaid (in ſcorn) *How glorious was the King of* Iſrael *to day, who uncovered himſelf to day in the eyes of the handmaids of his Servants as one of the vain fellows ſhameleſly uncovered himſelf.* Though *Michol* beheld this action of *David* in a falſe light, and weighed it in a wrong ballance, not conſidering the ſeriouſneſs, yea and ſpiritualneſs of *Davids* heart in communion with God, while he appeared thus in the eyes of men. Yet taking the action abſtractly from thoſe religious circumſtances of it, and his gracious intentions in it, there is no doubt but his carriage was much below the dignity of his condition, and much unbeſeeming the State, Majeſty, and gravity of a King, eſpecially of the King of *Iſrael*, God's ſpecial People. And had *Michol* ſeen him do ſo upon any ordinary occaſion, ſhe might have had reaſon enough, if not ironically, to deride and jeer him, *with how glorious was the King of* Iſrael *to day!* Yet faithfully and plainly to have reproved and admoniſhed him, with, *My Lord O King, you have this day forgot who you are, you have gone out of your place, you have acted like one of the common People, not like a Prince, and ſo have darken'd your own glory.* A well temper'd gravity in ſpeech and geſture, is the beſt beauty and light of a Kings countenance. And this ſome conceive to be principally intended here by *Job*, and I ſhall readily ſubſcribe to it, if withal we give this gravity a tincture of that chearfulneſs before ſpoken of, which doth exceedingly quicken it, and is both the life and grace of it. Gravity alone is ſomewhat too dark a colour to be called the light of a mans countenance, but put a little chearfulneſs to it, and there's nothing more beautiful and taking in the eye of the wiſe. *What can better become a Magiſtrate, then a grave chearfulneſs, or a chearful gravity.*

Fourthly, The light of a mans countenance is that boldneſs and confidence of Spirit which appears and ſhines much in the face, when the conſcience is clear and all's well within. A guilty perſon hath a dark countenance, nor dares he ſhew his head: But light breaks out as from the eye lids of the morning, from his eyes who is full of innocency and integrity. Thus 'tis ſaid of *Stephen* the Protomartyr (*Acts* 6. 15.) *All that ſate in the Councel, looking ſtedfaſtly on him, ſaw his face as it had been the face of an Angel*; Not that an Angel hath a viſible face, but 'tis phraſed ſo to note excellent beauty; *Stephen* had not the dark or gaſtly appearance of a guilty conſcience in his face, but the ſweetneſs and light of his countenance preſented the innocency of his cauſe, and printed (as it were) a legible *not guilty* in his very lookes. And as innocency caſt a light upon the countenance of that bleſſed Priſoner at the Bar; ſo integrity cauſeth a light to ſhine from the countenance of any Judge upon the Bench, or Prince upon the Throne. This, yea, all theſe ingredients, favour, chearfulneſs, gravity, integrity, made up the light of *Job's* countenance; of which he ſaith, (which is the ſecond thing to be opened in this ſentence) that *they* (meaning the People) *did not caſt it down*; that is, they did not abuſe my favour, nor diſapprove my chearfulneſs, they did nothing either to grieve me or to ſhame me. The countenance of a man is caſt down two wayes. Firſt, with ſorrow; Secondly, With ſhame: and both two wayes. Firſt, With ſhame and ſorrow for what others have done amiſs; Secondly, For what we our ſelves have done amiſs, eſpecially when having done amiſs, we are either reproved by others for our faults, or diſappointed of our hopes. Thus when *God had no reſpect to* Cain *and his offering*, the Text ſaith (*Gen.* 4. 5.) Cain *was very wroth, and his countenance fell*; and (*v.* 6.) *The Lord ſaid unto* Cain, *why art thou wroth? And why is thy countenance fallen? Cains* countenance fell, becauſe indeed God had caſt it down. The Lord juſtly put a ſlight upon his perſon, and upon his performances, and then he could not hold up his head. Now as God can quickly caſt down the countenance of the moſt lofty and high lookt men; ſo one man may caſt down the countenance of man, and he doth it, that puts another either to ſhame or ſorrow. So then we may gather up the ſence of the whole Verſe into this briefer paraphraſe. As if *Job* had ſaid; *I alwayes lived in ſuch good repute with my People, and maintained my honour in ſuch an evenneſs with them, that they did never think me vain becauſe I ſometimes laughed or was free with them, nor did they ever caſt down the light of my countenance, As if my chearfulneſs had proceeded from lightneſs, or was unſutable to my place and dignity, for they knew well enough that it was only to ſhew the content which I took in them, and the favour which I bare them; yea they knew that my mirth was duely allayed with gravity, and that I had integrity enough to bear me out confidently in it; and therefore they took no ombrage or offence, nor ſhewed they any diſlike at it, much leſs did they contemn and ſlight me for it; or give me any cauſe after ſuch entertainments of my ſelf among them to hold down my head, as if I had forgotten who and with whom I was.* All this (and 'tis very like ſomewhat, if not much more then this ſence hath reacht) we may conceive as *Job's* intendment in this cloſe and darkſome paſſage; *If I laughed on them they did not believe it, and the light of my countenance they caſt not down.*

Hence Note, Firſt, *Laughter or mirth is not ſinful in it ſelf; nor unſuitable to a Godly Magiſtrate.*

Job had his laughing time, his times of refreſhing and unbending himſelf from buſineſs. *Solomon* tells us (*Eccl.* 3. 4.) *There is a time to weep, and a time to laugh*, theſe have their interchangeable ſeaſons; yea the Goſpel tells us, that our whole time is for laughter, *Rejoyce evermore* (1 Theſ. 5. 16.) Grace doth not deny but qualifie and correct our mirth (*Phil.* 4. 4.) *Rejoyce in the Lord alway, and again I ſay rejoyce.* But ſaith not Chriſt (*Luke* 6. 25.) *Wo unto them that laugh now?* And ſaid not *Solomon* (long before, (*Eccl.* 2. 2.) *of laughter, it is mad, and of mirth what doth it?* I anſwer, there is indeed a ſinful mirth, and a mad laughter; mirth and laughter are ſo, when they ariſe any of theſe four wayes.

Firſt, From unbeleif; when *Sarah* heard the Angel Prophecying to *Abraham* from the Lord that ſhe ſhould have a Son (*Gen.* 18. 11, 12.) *Therefore* Sarah *laughed within her ſelf, ſaying, After I am waxed old, ſhall I have pleaſure, my Lord being old alſo?* She did not believe the promiſe, and ſo ſmiled at it. Her laughter was ſinful, and ſhe was reproved for it. When *Abraham* heard that good news before from God (*Gen.* 17. 17.) *He fell upon his face and laughed, and ſaid in his heart, Shall a Child be born to him that is an Hundred Years old? And ſhall* Sarah *that is Ninety Years old bear? Abraham* laughed, not doubting or ſtaggering at the performance of that promiſe through unbeleif (*Rom.* 4. 20.) but admiring the goodneſs of God to him in it. Whereas *Sarah*, though ſhe did not laugh in deriſion as the wicked do, yet ſhe laughed with ſome mixture of diffidence; elſe the Lord had not rebuked her for it, nor ſhould ſhe have had any reaſon to deny it, had ſhe laughed only in faith, rejoycing at the mercy, as *Abraham* did.

Secondly, There is a laughter proceeding from carnal ſecurity. When that good King *Hezekiah* ſent his Meſſengers throughout all *Iſrael*, ſaying, *Turn again unto the Lord God of* Abraham, Iſaac, *and* Iſrael, *and he will return to the remnant of you that are eſcaped out of the hand of the Kings of* Aſſyria, *&c. And ſerve the Lord your God, that the feirceneſs of his wrath may turn away from you: they laughed them to ſcorn, and mocked them* (2 Chron. 30. 10.) They thought there was no danger, all was well with them, and they preſumed things would ſo continue, why ſhould they trouble themſelves with ſuch fooliſh fears, or go about ſo needleſs a work as they ſuppoſed themſelves invited to.

Thirdly, There is a laughter that proceeds meerly from levity. Some (as we ſay) will laugh at the wagging of a feather, or the ſtirring of a ſtraw, this alſo is vanity and madneſs.

Fourthly, There is a laughter, that proceeds from Epicurean ſenſuality, or carnal delight in the creature. Theſe ſay, *Lets laugh and be fat*; theſe (as the Prophet deſcribes them, *Amos* 6. 4, 5, 6.) *Lie upon Beds of Ivory, and ſtretch themſelves upon their Couches, and eat the Lambs out of the Flock, and the Calves out of the midſt of the Stall, and chaunt to the ſound of the Viol*, &c. To theſe Chriſt ſpeaks (*Luke* 6. 25.) *Wo to you that laugh now, for ye ſhall weep and mourn*; they who live ſenſually, are near, not only the ſorrows of death, but a ſorrowful life. *Their pleaſures dye ſooneſt, who live in pleaſure.* And therefore *Solomon* had great cauſe to ſay of this *laughter it is mad, and* *of all ſuch mirth what doth it ?* Even this it doth, it leaves men not only melancholy but miſerable. As all creatures in their beſt uſe are vain as to that great end, the attainment of eternal happineſs, ſo when they are abuſed, that is, exceſſively uſed, they will ſoon *be a vexation of ſpirit.*

Now, as there is a vain and ſinful, ſo a holy and commendable laughter, and that flows from theſe three Fountains; Firſt, From faith in or aſſurance of the promiſe, that we ſhall in due ſeaſon eate the fruit and enjoy the comforts of it. Such was *Abrahams* joy or laughter when a Son was promiſed him, as was toucht before. As God laughs at the wicked in ſcorn, knowing that himſelf both can and will do what he hath threatned againſt them, (*Pſal.* 2. 4.) So godly men laugh in faith, knowing that God both can and will do all that for them which he hath promiſed. And (to be ſure) there's enough promiſed to make any man laugh that believes it. Worldly men laugh at the ſimplicity of Saints in believing the promiſe; and Saints laugh becauſe of the rich treaſure of good things contained in the promiſes, as alſo becauſe of the faithfulneſs and All-ſufficiency of God in making them good. *We rejoyce* (ſaith the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 5. 2.) *in hope of the glory of God*, yea, *believing* (ſtrongly, and by faith ſeeing things hoped for clearly) *we rejoyce with joy unſpeakable and full of glory* (1 Pet. 1. 8.) That joy which we cannot ſpeak we may laugh; and then the Soul is full of joy indeed when we cannot utter it by words, but by laughter.

Secondly, There's a gracious laughter ariſing from confidence of deliverance in times of danger. Thus *Eliphaz* aſſures a godly man (Chap. 5. 22.) *At Deſtruction and Famin thou ſhalt laugh.* But are Deſtruction and Famin laughing matters? Doth not God then call us to mourning, and to faſting? I anſwer, Nothing is more unbecoming a godly man then to laugh at the Judgments of God, as ſlighting them. Nor is any thing more comely and honourable for a godly man, then to laugh at them in a confidence upon the promiſe of God to be delivered from or protected and provided for in them. He that can laugh in a well grounded aſſurance that God will take care of him and do him good in the midſt of ſuch evils, is a believer indeed. To know and be ſenſible of the dreadfulneſs of Gods hand in ſuch terrible diſpenſations, in ſuch an evil day, and yet to know that God will not be a dread nor a terror to us in that evil day (as *Jeremy* prayed the Lord would not be to him (*Jerem.* 17. 17.) is to live by faith to purpoſe.

Thirdly, There is a gracious laughter, of thankfulneſs after deliverance received, or upon the receiving of any mercy. And they who have laughed in a confidence that they ſhould be delivered or receive any ſpecial mercy before it came, will certainly laugh in thankfulneſs when any deliverance or mercy is come. The Church bethinking her ſelf how the Lord had even ſurprized them with a wonderful return out of bondage, could not contain from laughing (*Pſal.* 126. 1, 2.) *When the Lord turned again the Captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream; then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with ſinging.* They who can laugh upon any of theſe terms, may laugh as much as they will; while faith in the promiſe that we ſhall receive good, and truſt that we ſhall be delivered from evil, or thankſulneſs to God when we are delivered, ſet us a laughing, our laughter is as much our duty, as it is our refreſhing. The wicked mans *heart is ſorrowful in laughter* (Pro. 14. 13.) A godly mans heart ſhould laugh in ſorrow, how much more up all true occaſions of Joy. Godly *ſorrow is better then carnal laughter, for by the ſadneſs* (ſuch ſadneſs) *of the countenance the heart is made better,* (Eccl. 7. 3.) But ſpiritual laughter is better then Godly ſorrow, for by that chearfulneſs of the countenance the heart is made not only better but beſt of all. *The laughter of fools is like the crackling of Thorns under a Pot* (Eccl. 7. 6.) It makes a noiſe, but is apter to burn then to warm thoſe that are near it, and 'tis ſoon extinct. But the laughter of the wiſe is like well-tun'd muſick at the Table, which doth at once glad and compoſe the minds of thoſe that hear it. Some have put a diſgrace upon the Spirit and wayes of God, as if that Spirit whoſe name is *The Comforter*, did make the heart ſad, or as if thoſe wayes which are pleaſantneſs, did make men melancholy, then which nothing is more contrary either to the Spirit or wayes of God. The Goſpel doth not only diſpence with, but diſpenceth a Holy laughter, a regulated joy. As for that joy which doth either diſ-ſpirit or unfit us for duty, the Gopel knows nothing of it, but to reprove it.

Further, conſider the words as ſpoken by way of ſuppoſition, *if I laughed on them*, which intimates that it was a rare, not a common thing, for *Job* to laugh, and to be familiar with his People.

Hence Note, *Gravity ought to be the uſual poſture of Magiſtracy.*

If Rulers laugh, it muſt be very ſparingly. It being once ſaid to a Judge, Sir, *You are not merry*; he anſwered well and wiſely, and like himſelf, *I am merry enough for a Judge. Job* ſpeaks of it, as a matter ſomewhat beſides his cuſtome, and below his ſtate, to do ſo, he condeſcended when he laughed.

Thirdly, Whereas he ſaith, *If I laughed on them they believed it not.* The Interpretation before given of thoſe words, *They did not believe it*, may give us this further Obſervation.

Men of known ſeriouſneſs, will be ſo accounted, even while they appear leſs then ſerious.

The laughter of a wiſe man is more ſtayed then the gravity of a fool. Men are not reckoned what they are by this or that action, but their conſtant temper and diſpoſition. As a common lyar is ſuſpected to ſpeak falſly, even when he tells the truth; ſo a man of known compoſedneſs and ſobriety, is not ſuſpected of wantonneſs or levity, when he takes his greateſt liberty. What we uſe to be, that we ſhall be thought to be, though we ſeem to be otherwiſe. 'Tis not an act, but the habit which doth denominate.

Fourthly, Whereas *Job* reckons up this, and puts it into the Inventory of the favours of God to him as a Governour, that, *if he laughed, they* (as hath been ſhewed) *believed it not, and the light of his countenance they caſt not down.*

Obſerve, *As 'tis an honour among men, ſo a mercy from God to Governours, when due reverence towards them is kept up in the hearts of the People under them, or when their ſubjects both know and keep their diſtance.*

There is much of God ſeen in maintaining the value of Princes, that they grow not cheap in vulgar opinion. When a Magiſtrate hath loſt his eſtimation, he hath little elſe to looſe; and while he keeps that unblemiſhed and untoucht, he cannot be at any great loſs for any thing elſe. The honour of Magiſtrates is as uſeful to them, as credit is to Merchants. As theſe can neither Buy nor Sell, neither Trade nor Traffick without the one, ſo neither can they either reward or puniſh, nor are they either loved or feared without the other. When the Lord was purpoſed to bring utter confuſion upon the Jewiſh State, he threatens by the Prophet (*Iſa.* 3. 5.) *The Child ſhall behave himſelf proudly againſt the ancient, and the baſer*, or man *of light eſteem* (as the Original word ſignifies) *againſt the honcurable*, or men of weight and worth. 'Tis as bad as can be with a People, when they will not know their betters. There's but little difference between the levelling and the ruining of a Nation. And therefore as it is the command and appointment of God, that men ſhould be ranked into and live in a comely ſubordination, ſo it is an act of his mighty power, yea of his gracious favour to keep them to it. When once men break their bounds, they will quickly break their peace; and they who do not acknowledge and honour a Head in their own, muſt unavoidably be made the taile of all other Nations. Not to reſpect thoſe who are above, is to bring all under; and they who will not ſubmit to Government, muſt, whether they will or no, ſubmit to deſtruction. Naturaliſts ſay, The Elements are not burdenſom in their proper place; nor are men (in civil reſpects) while they keep theirs; we never burden nor trouble one another while we keep our own place, and act towards our ſuperiors as conſidering their place. Let all take heed how they caſt down the light of the countenance of Magiſtrates, leſt thereby they put out their own; or (as it was ſaid to *David* the cheif Magiſtrate in another caſe, 2 *Sam.* 21. 17.) *Leſt they quench the light of Iſrael.* For if the light of a Nation may be quencht, when a Prince falls by an over-valorous venturing of himſelf againſt an Enemy, much more is the light of a Nation in danger to be quencht, when a Prince falls by the undervaluings of his own People.

Fifthly, Whereas *Job* intimates that becauſe the People did not *believe it*, or did not make too bold with him, when he laught on them, that therefore they did not caſt down the light of his countenance, or, they did not make him aſhamed or ſad.

> Obſerve, *'Tis both ſhame and ſorrow to ſuperiors, when they who are under them, take advantage by their freedom to be bold with them, and grow upon them.*

Natural Parents are often put to ſhame by their Children upon this account, cockerings and indulgence make Children forget their duty and reverence. And many experiences have taught us, that thoſe parents who have laughed much on their Children, have had cauſe enough from them to mourn, and even mingle their drink with weeping. Familiarity with inferiors, doth commonly breed contempt; and if ſuperiors are not very wary and diſcreet in laughing either on them or with them, they hazzard their own honour, and are in danger of being laughed at by them. Doubtleſs *Job* was as wiſe as merry whenſoever he gave himſelf leave to be merry with, or in the ſight of his Subjects and Servants; and therefore they never put him to ſhame, nor was the light of his countenance caſt down after thoſe relaxations wherein he had been moſt *lightſome* or (as we ſay) *game-ſome* with them.

> Laſtly, Note, *'Tis not for the People to take all that Princes give, nor to take notice of the familiarity which they uſe towards them, much leſs thereupon to be familiar with them.*

Princes may ſometimes for their recreation lay by their State a little, and deſcend to their Subjects and Servants; but Subjects and Servants muſt not take ſtate upon them, and aſcend to their Princes and Maſters. *If they laugh on them they ſhould not believe it.*

Job gives yet a further proof of his great authority and reſpect among the People, and ſo ſhuts up.

Verſ. 25. **I choſe out their way, and ſat as cheif, and dwelt as a King in the Army, as one that comforteth the Mourners.**

In this Verſe *Job* concludes his whole diſcourſe about the grounds of his confidence, that his worldly proſperity ſhould continue, as was ſhewed at the eighteenth Verſe of this Chapter. He was a man of ſuch approved wiſdom and integrity, that all gave up themſelves to his counſel, and were ruled at his diſcretion. *Job* was as the Oracle of his Age.

I choſe out their way.

That is, they made application to me for advice what to do, and how to ſteer their courſe in every doubtful buſineſs, or knotty caſe, and what I ſaid, that they ſubmitted to, not only with good content, but with good ſucceſs.

Eligebam quod illos facere oportueret, et qua ſe ratione ac via debuerunt gerere. Merc.

I choſe out their way.] The holy Prophet profeſſeth both his own inſufficiency, and the inſufficiency of all men to chuſe their own way. (*Jer.* 10. 23.) *O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himſelf: It is not in man that walketh to direct his ſteps.* And as this is above the ability of man, ſo 'tis beſides his duty. No man can, and no godly man would be the chuſer of his own way; 'tis his deſire and daily prayer that the Lord would chuſe it for him. Now, as God chuſeth out the way of his People, ſo Magiſtrates (who are Gods on earth) ſhould be able (in their way) to chuſe out the way of their People. A wiſe and faithful Ruler may be that (in a qualified ſence) to a multitude of men, yea to a whole Nation, which God is to all men, even to all Nations, the chuſer and directer of their wayes. When men know not which way to go, nor where to tread their next ſtep, ſome wiſe man, much more a wiſe Magiſtrate may ſhew them. Thus did *Job, I choſe out their way.* And what then?

I ſat cheif, *or a cheif.*

That is, I had the ſupream power, and authority, and was advanced above all. *Job* ſat cheif; Firſt, In the hearts and affections of the People; Secondly, He ſat cheif in power and authority over all the People. Whence, Thirdly, whereſoever he came he had the uppermoſt room or cheif place in all meetings with the People. Thus he *ſat cheif*, and (as it followeth)

Si mihi viſum eſſet me illos dimittere atq; accomodare, illi tamen, ſolitum mihi honorem deferentes, ſemper me ſummo ponebant loco. Merc.

Dwelt as a King in the Army.

Mr. *Broughton* reads, *I dwelt as a King in a Garriſon*, the meaning is, *I was in as much honour amongſt my People, as a King is among or with his Army*; or thus, *Though I did not terrifie nor keep them under by any Military force, or by the power of an Army, yet I was as much obeyed and honoured as if I had dwelt in an Army, and had made my Court a Garriſon. My Magiſtratical Sword was as much feared and ſubmitted to, as if I had alwayes kept it up and made it good by the Military Sword. I dwelt as a King in the Army.*

That word of ſimilitude *as a King*, doth not deny that *Job* was a King, nor doth it affirm that he was but the ſhadow of or ſomewhat like a King; for either *Job* was formally ſo, or at leaſt, equivalently he had Kingly power. He was a King in effect, if not in title. For as when 'tis ſaid of Chriſt (*Phil.* 2. 8.) *He was found in faſhion as a man*, it doth not imply, that he had only the ſhape or faſhion of a man, but was not a true man; ſo here when *Job* ſaith, *I ſat as a King*, it doth not imply that he was not indeed a King, he might have both name and thing, both truth and title for all that.

Again, the note of ſimilitude is not to be reſtrained to that ſingle term *King*, but to the whole clauſe or ſentence, *A King in the Army*. *Job* was truly a King, but he was but as *a King in the Army*; he had not an Army alwayes about him, only he was feared and honoured as if he had. And

As one that comforteth the Mourners.

The vulgar Tranſlation reads, *I was notwithſtanding the comforter of the Mourners*; as if he had ſaid, *Though I was cheif in Authority, and had either the power of a formed Army, or power like that of an Army to back me; yet I did not ſlight the afflicted, nor forget the ſorrowful; I did not think it below me to adminiſter comfort, as well as counſel, to give Goſpel as well as Law to the People.* Or thus; *Notwithſtanding I had the command of an Army, or an Army, upon any occaſion, at my command, yet I was not harſh and rough to poor ſuiters* (as Souldiers often are) *nor did I uſe any violence* (as Souldiers often do) *I was meek and tender, as one whoſe buſineſs it was to comfort Mourners, and refreſh ſad hearts.*

Eram tamen Mærentiũ conſolator. Vulg.

At the eleventh Verſe of the ſecond Chapter of this Book we read, that *when* Job'*s Friends heard of all the evil that was come upon him, they came every one from his own place:* Eliphaz *the* Temanite, *and* Bildad *the* Shuhite, *and* Zophar *the* Naamathite; *for they had made an appointment together to come to mourn with him, and to comfort him.* It was (probably) very uſual in thoſe times and places, when they heard of any friend in affliction, to make a journey to comfort him. Now as *Job*'s three friends did to him, ſo he had done to others; *I* (ſaith he) *was as one that comforteth the Mourners.*

Some reſtrain theſe words to thoſe immediately foregoing, *I dwelt as a King in the Army, as one that comforteth his mourning Army, after they have been worſted in Battel, or after ſome great defeat.* As *Joab* adviſed *David* to do (2 *Sam.* 19. 7.) when upon his extream paſſionateneſs for the death of *Abſalom*, his Conquering Army was ſo diſcontented and dejected, that they were like a beaten and Conquered Army; the Text is expreſs at the ſecond and third Verſes of that Chapter; *and the Victory that day was turned into mourning unto the People, for the People heard ſay that day how the King was grieved for his Son. And the People gat them that day by ſtealth into the City, as people being aſhamed ſteal away when they flee in battel.* Hereupon

Cum conſolatur milites qui in luctu ſunt propter cladem acceptam aut alia de cauſa. Druſ.

Ut rex inter turmarios ſuos quando lugentes conſolatur. Jun.

upon Joab (ver. 5.) *came into the houſe to the King, and ſaid, thou haſt ſhamed this day the faces of all thy ſervants,* &c. *Now therefore ariſe* (ſaith he, *ver. 7.*) *go forth, and ſpeak comfortably unto thy ſervants*; (that is, to the Army) *for I ſwear by the Lord, if thou go not forth, there will not tarry one with thee this night, and that will be worſe unto thee, then all the evil that befel thee from thy youth until now.* The Army of *Iſrael* was grieved to ſee the King ſo much grieved with the death of his Son, that would have been his death, if he could. Therefore *Joab* gave good Counſel, *Go forth and comfort them.* 'Tis a great part of a Generals wiſdom to bear up the courage of his Army in hope of a better day, or of better ſucceſs, when ſome hardſhip or diſaſter is befallen them. Thus *Job* is conceived to have been among his people, as a King comforting his mourning Army.

But which way ſoever we take it, we have here an excellent example, of a wiſe and gracious Prince, who doth not deſert, but is ready to take part with and uphold the Spirits of his people in their worſt condition.

From the words thus opened,

> Obſerve, Firſt, *It is an honour to be able to direct others, and to chuſe out their way for them.*

He is a wiſe man that underſtands his own way, or is able to guide himſelf. *The wiſdom of the prudent is to underſtand his way* (*Prov.* 14. 8.) But to be able to underſtand the way of others, and to be a publick guide, is an argument of greater wiſdom.

Secondly, *Job* who *choſe out their way*, had the character of Magiſtracy upon him.

> Whence Obſerve, *It is the duty of the Magiſtrate, to be a leader and directer of the people, to chuſe out their way for them.*

It is the duty of the Miniſters of Chriſt, to chuſe out or direct the way of man in Spiritual things: As the Apoſtles did (*Acts* 2. 37, 38.) when many of the *Jews* who had pierced Chriſt were prickt at the heart upon the hearing of *Peters* Sermon, and *ſaid unto him, and to the reſt of the Apoſtles, Men and Brethren, what ſhall we do? Then* Peter *ſaid, Repent and be Baptized,* &c. A Miniſter ſhould be able to chuſe or chalk out the way of ſalvation to and for thoſe who are either quite out of the way, or are, as it were, in a wilderneſs, where they ſee no way to be ſaved. Thus alſo it is the duty of Magiſtrates to chuſe out the way for the people in all civil things. *Jethro* giving advice to *Moſes* whom to ſet over the people, ſaith (*Exod.* 18. 21.) *Thou ſhalt provide out of all the people able men, ſuch as fear God, men of truth, hating covetouſneſs.* He doth not only ſay, provide ſuch as fear God, and are honeſt men; but they muſt alſo *be able men.* But who are they? He doth not mean *able men* of body, that is, ſtrong men; nor *able men* only of purſe, that is, rich men; but *able men* of parts, and of gifts, men of underſtanding. It is not enough to make a man a Magiſtrate, no nor a Miniſter, that he is godly; every one that hath grace is not fit to teach others; nor is every one that hath grace fit to rule others; they muſt be able men, men able to chuſe out the way of the people (as *Job* was) who act in the ſphere either of Magiſtracy or Miniſtry. They that rule muſt know the Law, elſe how ſhall they direct others according to the Law? And therefore it is denounced as a curſe upon a people (*Iſa.* 3. 4.) *I will give children to be their Princes, and babes ſhall rule over them.* And what work they are like to make in the Government, we may read at the Twelfth verſe of the ſame Chapter, *As for my people children are their oppreſſours, and women rule over them: O my people, they which lead thee* (namely, theſe thy childiſh and womaniſh Governours) *cauſe thee to err, and deſtroy the way of thy paths.* The Scripture doth not ſpeak thus in contempt of women and children, as to Government; for *Deborah* a woman governed magnanimouſly; as we have had a Famous experience even of maſculine vertue in the reign of our *Elizabeth*; yea, children have governed well, witneſs young *Joſiah* in *Judah*, and *Edward* the Sixth in *England.* So that when the Lord threatned his people with *women and children* to rule over them, there is no neceſſity of underſtanding it at all properly of women in ſtrict notion, who are the weaker veſſel according to their ſex, or of children (in ſtrict notion) who are but weak of underſtanding, according to their age, ſeeing God can furniſh theſe when he pleaſeth, beyond both ſex and age, with a Spirit of Government; But the meaning is, that even thoſe men, though ancient men, who ruled over them, ſhould be as the weakeſt of women and children, that is, as it follows in the Prophet, they ſhould *cauſe them to err* (or lead them into errors) *and deſtroy the way of their path.* They ſhould be ſo far from *Job*'s noble uſefulneſs *to chuſe out their way*, that they ſhould lead them quite out of the way. Thus falſe Prophets and unſound Teachers, are leaders of the people, cauſing them to err; and ſo are unskilful Magiſtrates.

When *Job* ſaith again, *I choſe out their way, and ſat cheif,*

> Obſerve, *Magiſtracy is an Eminency. The exerciſe of that power doth unavoydably ſet ſome above others, or one above all. There's no governing upon even ground. To ſit chief is the Circumlocution of Government.*

Fourthly, *Job* who ſate chief, was a good man, a godly man, a man fearing God.

> Hence Note, *Sometimes good men are great men; and they who are uppermoſt with God, get uppermoſt in the world. A Job ſits cheif.*

Fifthly, See what a happineſs the people lived in while *Job ſate cheif; the eye that ſaw him bleſſed him, and when the ear heard him it gave witneſs to him, becauſe he delivered the poor that cryed, and the fatherleſs, and him that had none to help him, the bleſſing of him that was ready to periſh came upon him, and he cauſed the widows heart to ſing for joy. 'Tis well with a people* (as to their rights) *when they have godly and righteous Governours. Good men make good times.*

Sixthly, He ſaith, *I ſate cheif, as a King in the Army. Job* ſeems to intimate the readineſs of all to obey him, by alluding to the readineſs of Souldiers to obey their Officers, eſpecially their chief Officer.

> *Military diſcipline is the ſevereſt and ſtricteſt diſcipline.*

A Souldier muſt obey every look of his Officer, much more his orders; if he doth not (in many caſes) he dyes for it.

> Hence Note, *Magiſtrates ought to have ready obedience.*

The obedience of Subjects is only limited, as that of Servants is, it muſt be in the Lord; that is, in all things honeſt and lawful, and ſo far Subjects ought to obey their Governours, as Souldiers do their Generals with all readineſs. The Centurion (*Mat.* 8. 9.) ſaid, *I am alſo a man under authority, having Souldiers under me* (that is, I am under the command of ſuperior Officers in the Army, and I being an Officer have Souldiers under my command) *and I ſay to this man go, and he goeth; and unto another come, and he cometh; and to my Servant do this, and he doth it.* So it was with *Job*, he was among his people as a King in his Army, and his ſtrength was the good will and free ſubmiſſion of his Subjects; that's the beſt Army.

> Seventhly, Obſerve; *It is both the honour and duty of Magiſtrates, how great ſoever in power, to be a comfort and ſuccour to their people.*

Job was as a King in the Army, yet he was alſo as one that comforteth the mourners; He ſaid of his friends, miſerable comforters are ye all, but Himſelf was to all, a comfortable comforter. Princes muſt condeſcend to the poor, and mingle the exerciſe of pity with the exerciſe of their power. 'Tis well, when Rulers, who are a terrour to evil doers, are alſo a comfort to mourners. How ſweet is it to ſee Princes deſign the love of their people, as well as their obedience. He ſpake more like a Monſter among men, then a Ruler over men, who ſaid of his Subjects, *Let them hate me if they will, ſeeing they muſt fear me; I can overpower them, I care not for their love.* The Lord promiſeth his people (*Iſa.* 49. 23.) That *Kings ſhall be their nurſing Fathers, and Queenes their nurſing Mothers*; that is, they ſhall provide for them, protect them from harms, and deal tenderly with them, as Nurces do with their children. Woe to thoſe Princes who are ſo far from ſuccouring their people (as Nurces do their Children) when

Oderint dum metuant.

they cry, that they make them cry, and force them who lived comfortably to mourn; inſtead of comforting the mourners. How unlike are they to *Job* in the text, and how like to *Pharoah* (Exod. 1. 10, 11.) who think they never *deal ſo wiſely* with their Subjects, as *in ſetting Task-Maſters over them to afflict them with burdens*, till they break not only their backs, but, their very hearts, and cauſe them (as *Pharoah* did the *Iſraelites*, Exod. 23. 24.) *to ſigh by reaſon of the bondage, and to cry, till their cry come up unto God, by reaſon of the bondage.* There is a neceſſity upon Magiſtrates ſometimes to uſe ſeverity; but it ſhould be their choice and delight to uſe clemency; 'tis their work to puniſh the contumacious, but to *comfort the mourners is the beſt and moſt honourable part of their work*; God himſelf beareth this ſtile and title (*Rom.* 15. 5.) *The God of conſolation:* And (2 *Cor.* 1. 3.) *The God of all comfort.* Then Princes act like God, when their Government is ſo juſt and righteous, that they make no mourners; and when their perſons are ſo merciful and compaſſionate, that they comfort mourners. He Governs well, that makes no mourners, but he is the beſt Governour who comforts mourners.

From *Job*'s whole diſcourſe upon this point we may take the draft or picture of an excellent Prince, and of a happy people, of a Prince ruling well, of a people obeying well, and of both pleaſed well. What can a people deſire more in a Magiſtrate then, that he ſhould be a man ſo wiſe as to chuſe out their way, and ſo tender as to eaſe them of their ſorrow; that he ſhould have a knowing head, and a ſympathizing heart; that he ſhould be a man of underſtanding, and a man of Bowels; that he ſhould have power like an Army to defend them, and compaſſion like a Friend to comfort them?

Principem venerabilem potius eſſe deberet quam terribilem, dixit Socrates.

I have now finiſhed this Chapter, and *Job*'s deſcription of his former light and proſperous eſtate. In the next he turns the Table, and ſhews us his preſent dark and diſconſolate eſtate. This Chapter concludes with, *If I laughed on them they believed it not*, &c. That begins with, *Now they that are younger then I, have me in deriſion*, He himſelf was laughed at. The caſe was alter'd.

they cry, that they make them cry, and [illegible] lived continually to mourn [illegible] instead of [illegible] mourners. How unlike the [illegible] how like to [illegible] (Exod. [illegible] 10, 11.) [illegible] were so [illegible] with their [illegible] not only the [illegible] but their [illegible] did the [illegible] [illegible] and [illegible] is [illegible] to [illegible] the choice and delight to [illegible] the contradictions [illegible] and the [illegible] ; [illegible] 3.) [illegible] when the Governors [illegible] that they made no mourners ; [illegible] that makes [illegible]

AN
EXPOSITION
WITH
Practical Obſervations
UPON THE
THIRTIETH AND THIRTY-FIRST
CHAPTERS
Of the Book of
JOB.

TO THE CHRISTIAN READER,

TO

Thoſe eſpecially of this CITY, who yet continue helpful to this WORK.

I *Have ended my work upon* JOB's *words; ſo his diſcourſe in the two Chapters now expounded and publiſhed concludes,* The words of, JOB are ended. *But I have ſtill a great way, a Fourth part, at leaſt, of the whole way to travel, before I can arrive at the end of this Book, my intended Journey (which, whether I ſhall have time or ſtrength to reach, is alone in his breaſt who is our ſtrength, and in whoſe hand our times, with all the changes of them unchangeably are) yet 'tis matter of ſome ſatisfaction to my ſelf, and may, I hope, be ſo to others, that I am come to this* Signal end, *though not to the* Total end *of my work, or that I am come to the end of that part which* JOB *acted, though not to the end of all the parts acted in this Book.*

What's done in nine ſeveral pieces upon one and thirty Chapters, makes up a compleat piece, or a full Narrative (the Text is ſo) of that great and ſolemn tranſaction between JOB *and his three Friends,* Eliphaz, Bildad, *and* Zophar: *The two former having charged him thrice, and the third twice, and* JOB *having charged him thrice, and the third twice, and* JOB *having as often anſwered each of them ſeverally, and all of them joyntly in a long* defenſative, *containing five Chapters throughout, they all ſat down in ſilence.* JOB's *three Friends ſpake not a word more, though ſomewhat more be ſpoken of them. And though* JOB *ſpake once or twice more, yet not one word more in oppoſition againſt his Friends, no nor ſo much as of Apology for himſelf; what he ſpake more was only in way of humble ſubmiſſion to God, and of ſelf-abhorrence.*

I have much cauſe to acknowledge the great goodneſs of God, as alſo his very gracious aſſiſtance and patience, in holding that weak and ſinful hand, which hath held the Pen thus long. And as I ought to give no other reaſon (in chief) why I have done it, but to pleaſe Him; *ſo I can give no other account how I have done it, but* his good pleaſure, *becauſe it ſeemed good in his ſight as to put the Pen into my hand, ſo to keep both heart and hand upon it* unto This Day.

I may well give it with an Emphaſis unto This Day; *ſeeing the day in which I am come to this End of my work, is ſo very like the day wherein I began it; full of motion, ſomewhat dark and ſtormy.*

Indeed (as notice was taken in the præfatory Epiſtle to the firſt part of theſe Expoſitions) the ſtate of JOB *in them ſet forth, bears (though much of death be in the image) the lively image and repreſentation of theſe times. He, as the Holy Scripture reports, had a troubleſome time of it; and I would there were not too much Evidence that our times have been, and in a degree are ſo to this day. And how ſhould I (with all that fear God and love the Appearing of Chriſt Jeſus our Lord) rejoyce to ſee, at laſt, as happy a change in the face of theſe times, as the latter part of this ſacred Hiſtory aſſures us* JOB *found in his.*

My hearts deſire and prayer for England, *with the united Dominions, is that it may be ſo; That after all our breakings we may be bound up, that after all our dividings we may be united, that after all our ſhakings we may be ſettled upon ſure Foundations; and that thoſe three fair Daughters (for whoſe full birth and growth among us the ſouls of many thouſands have been in travail with groans, and prayers, and tears theſe many years, that I ſay thoſe three fair Daughters of holy* JOB, *who were the faireſt in all the Land)* Jemima, The light of Truth, *more clear then the day;* Kezia, The Perfume of Godlineſs and Righteouſneſs, *more pleaſant then* Caſſia; *together with* Peace and Plenty *more beautiful then* Keren-happuch, *the* Horn of Beauty, *may be the* Trine-iſſue *of theſe three Nations, after all the dolorous throes and pangs which hitherto they have endured; or which is the ſum and Crown of all, That* Jeſus Chriſt, The Man-child *long ſince born miraculouſly into the World, may now be brought forth in our World Glorioſly, in all adminiſtrations both Spiritual and Civil, every knee bowing to him, every heart triumphing in him, every tongue ſpeaking, every hand working for him in the advancement of his Name both here at home and abroad to the ends of the Earth: This (I ſay again) is the prayer and hearts deſire of,*

HONOURED FRIENDS,

Your Servant in this

work of the Lord

May 25. 1659.

JOSEPH CARYL.

AN EXPOSITION WITH Practical Obſervations UPON THE THIRTIETH AND THIRTY-FIRST CHAPTERS Of the Book of JOB.

CHAP. XXX. Verſ. 1.

But now they that are younger then I, have me in deriſion, whoſe Fathers I would have diſdained to have ſet with the Dogs of my flock.

IN the former Chapter, we have heard *Job* diſcourſing of, and diſcovering his former felicity, a felicity of the higheſt pitch and firſt magnitude, as to the having and enjoyment of a numerous progeny, with riches, honour, and peace. A felicity, as he ſuppoſed, not higher built then well bottom'd and ſure, ſo ſure that he concluded, *I ſhall dye in my neſt, and multiply my dayes as the ſand.*

In this Chapter we ſee, how much he was miſtaken, and had over-reckon'd himſelf, in that point, or perſwaſion. He that runs may read; and he that reads cannot but cry out with wonder, Alas, alas, how unlike is *Job* (in temporals) to what he once was? O how is the caſe now altered with him! He that ſaw him before and ſees him now, will ſcarce believe his own eyes, that he ſees the man now whom he ſaw before.

And (no doubt) *Job* ſets theſe oppoſite ſtates one over againſt the other, that he might the more illuſtrate, or aggravate the one by the other, and give us a proſpect of his old and new, of his flouriſhing and withering condition in one view. Here are repreſented as in the ſame Landskip, a pleaſant Paradiſe and a deſolate Wilderneſs, a goodly building and a ruinous heap. Nor indeed can there be two Chapters of a more different title and tenour then theſe; in which we may read and conſider ſuch a variety, or contrariety rather, of affairs and iſſues in the ſame perſon, as can hardly be parallel'd in any Hiſtory ſacred or prophane.

Oppoſita juxta ſe poſita magis eluceſcunt;

In this Chapter the ſorrowful man gives us a deſcription of his poor, deſolate, ruin'd condition, in as rich and rhetorical a ſtrain, as he did before of his paradiſical or proſperous one: Sorrow is as eloquent as joy can be. Nor did ever any draw the picture of a riſing or raiſed man to the beſt of an earthly happineſs, with a happier fancy then others have done a falling or a fallen man to the worſt of an earthly unhappineſs: Nor could ever any do either the one or the other, ſo well for others, as *Job* (by the breathings of the Spirit with his pen) hath done both for himſelf. His fallen ſtate is expreſſed in this Chapter four wayes.

Firſt, He makes report of that extream contempt which was poured upon him even by men of contempt. In his proſperous eſtate all ſorts of men, even the beſt of men, reſpected and reverenced him, many admired and only not adored him, both young and old beheld him, as if he had been a man dropt out of the Clouds, or of a divine extraction; But in his calamitous eſtate all deſpiſed and ſleighted him, as if he had crept out of a Dunghil, or had derived his pedigree from the very dregs of baſeneſs. He begins this ſad relation at the firſt verſe of this Chapter, and purſues it to the end of the tenth.

Secondly, He aſſigns a reaſon, or gives an account about the ſpring of this contempt that was poured upon him, which he proſecutes from the Eleventh to the Eighteenth verſe; *Becauſe he hath looſed my cord and afflicted me, they have alſo let looſe the bridle before me:* As if he had ſaid; *If you inquire of me, how it comes to paſs, that I who was honour'd by all, and above the moſt of men, am now trodden upon as the meaneſt worm, yea as the mire in the ſtreets, I muſt confeſs 'tis the hand of God upon me. I do not much look upon, much leſs ſtay in theſe poor creatures that deſpiſe me, but know and acknowledge, that 'tis God which hath looſed my cord and afflicted me, 'is he that hath broken the band of that authority by which all were held in ſubjection to me.*

'Tis God who hath untyed the knot of duty, which once firmly faſtned reverence and reſpect to my perſon; and now I am deſpiſed and become the very ſcorne of men, and a reproach among the people.

Thirdly, He ſets forth, as the contempt of his perſon, ſo the ſickneſs and diſeaſes of his body, together with their ſad Symptoms and effects, towards the making of him yet more compleatly miſerable. This he doth at the eighteenth and nineteenth verſes; *By the great force of my diſeaſe, is my Garment changed, it bindeth me about as the coller of my coat, he hath caſt me into the mire; and I am become like duſt and aſhes.*

Fourthly, He urgeth his preſent miſery by (which is worſe then all this) the hidings of Gods face and favour from him, as alſo by the ſtops and denyals which the Lord put upon his prayers and groans, at the Twentieth verſe; *I cryed unto thee, and thou doſt not hear me; I ſtand up, and thou regardeſt me not.* When *Job* was brought to this paſs, that man did not regard him at all, and (as to ſenſe) God regarded him as little; what could be added, in this life, to make him either more unhappy, or more ſenſible of his unhappineſs? Therefore after ſeveral re-inforcements of his ſorrow, by other additional arguments and conſiderations, he concludes this doleful ſtory in a proverbial lamentation (*ver.* 28, 29, 30, 31.) *I went mourning without the Sun, I ſtood up and I cryed in the Congregation. I am a brother to Dragons, and a companion to Owls. My skin is black upon me, and my bones are burnt with heat. My Harp alſo is turned to mourning, and my Organ into the voyce of them that weep.*

Again we may analiſe the whole Chapter thus;.

Firſt, *Job* ſhews his preſent miſery, by the injurious and reproachful ſpeeches and revilings, which he received from the worſt of men, in the firſt ten verſes.

Secondly, he ſhews it, by their injurious actings and affronts put upon him, to the Sixteenth verſe; *Upon my right hand riſe the youth, they puſh away my feet*, &c.

Thirdly, By the extream grief and pain which he ſuffered, through the ſores and ſickneſſes which afflicted his body, from the ſixteenth to the nineteenth verſe.

Fourthly, By the ſevere and enemy-like carriage of God towards him, from the Twentieth to the Twenty-fifth verſe.

Fifthly, By that little compaſſion and leſs relief which he found from others in his affliction, though himſelf had been full of compaſſion to the afflicted, *ver.* 25, 26, 27. all which he ſhuts up with a ſad complaint from the twenty-eighth verſe to the end of the Chapter.

Verſ. 1. **But now they that are younger then I, have me in deriſion.**

In theſe words we have two things conſiderable.

Firſt, The contempt caſt upon *Job*. Secondly, The perſons, who contemned him. *Job* aggravates the afflictiveneſs of this contempt, very much by the character and condition of his contemners; They were mean, yea vile, and he deſcribes their meanneſs and vileneſs ſeveral wayes.

Firſt, By their youth (*ver.* 1.) *They that are younger then I*, (men below me in years, yea very Boyes or Children) *have me in deriſion.*

Secondly, He deſcribes them, by the baſeneſs of their pedigree or parentage; *Whoſe Fathers I would have diſdained to have ſet with the Dogs of my flock.*

Thirdly, He deſcribes them further, by their uſeleſneſs, at the ſecond verſe; *Yea, whereto might the ſtrength of their hands profit me?* They were ſuch a generation of men, as were unſerviceable and unprofitable, not worth the taking up in the ſtreetes for any honeſt imployment.

Fourthly, He deſcribes them by their poverty and want of all things: none are more neceſſitated then they *who* (as he ſpeaks *ver.* 3, 4.) *cut up Mallows by the buſhes, and Junipers root for their meat*; they were ſurely men of a low condition, who had no better fare, or could make no better proviſion for their Tables.

Fifthly, They were not only poor, but juſtly deſpiſed for their ill qualities, and as bad behaviour, at the fifth verſe, *They were driven forth from among men* (*they cryed after them as after a Thief*) Honeſt men deſerve eſteem with all, and have it with ſome men, though never ſo poor; but theſe like theeves were caſhier'd from the ſociety of all honeſt men, yea of all men who were not as bad as themſelves, and joyned hands with them in doing miſchief.

Sixthly, By their miſerable habitation or place of abode (*ver.* 6, and 7.) *To dwell in the clefts of the valleyes, in caves of the earth, and in the Rocks. Among the buſhes they brayed, under the nettles they were gathered together.* 'Tis like to prove a good brood, that was thus neſted. We read indeed of many holy ones (*of whom* (as the Apoſtle ſaith, *Heb.* 11. 38.) *the World was not worthy*) *who wandered in deſarts, and in mountains, and in Dens, and Caves of the Earth*; But, Theſe men were turn'd out and purſued, like men unworthy to live in the World, much more unworthy to be admitted into any civil ſociety.

Laſtly, *Job* argues their vileneſs by the fooliſhneſs of their Fathers, an evil Bird hath an evil egg; Thus he ſpeaks at the eighth verſe, *they were Children of fools*, which ſome underſtand of the young men, others of their Fathers, their Fathers were wicked and ſtark nought, *they were children of fooles, yea Children of baſe men, they were viler then the earth*; This was the beſt character which *Job* could give the men that deſpiſed him, they were baſe and of a baſe extraction, they were ſprung from an ill root, and themſelves were evil branches, Though we cannot alwayes conclude of the branch (in a moral ſence) by the root, yet moſt branches are fruited in morals according to their root.

As *Job* hath thus aggravated the ſcorne and contempt put upon him, by the inconſiderableneſs of the perſons who did contemn him.

So Secondly, He doth it by a particular innumeration of thoſe actions or wayes, by which they expreſſed their contempt; they did not only contemn him in their hearts, as *Michal* deſpiſed *David* dancing before the Ark, but they acted their contempt outwardly. And we have five particular acts of their contempt inſtanced in.

Firſt, *They made him their ſong*, at the nineteenth verſe.

Secondly, *They made him their by-word*, at the latter end of the ſame verſe.

Thirdly, *They abhorred him*, at the tenth verſe.

Fourthly, *They fled from him*, they ſo *abhorred him* that they avoided him, as if he had been (as *Turtullus* the Orator ſaid of *Paul*) the *Plague*, or as we tranſlate, *A Peſtilent fellow.*

Fifthly, They did even *ſpirt in his face*; then which nothing can be done more reproachfully.

Thus you have, the reſolution; Firſt, of the whole Chapter; and, Secondly, A more diſtinct diſcovery of the firſt ten verſes, which hold forth, the contempt and diſhonour which *Job* ſuffered from men, while he was ſorely ſuffering and ſmarting under the hand of God. The greatneſs of which ſufferings appears; Firſt, By the conſideration of the perſons from whom he ſuffered. Secondly, by the actions under which he ſuffered. So much of the General ſence of this context.

I ſhall in the next place open the words diſtinctly.

Verſ. 1. **But now they that are younger then I, have me in deriſion.**

But now,] This *now* points at the ſorrowful turn of his ſtate, as if he had ſaid; It is not with me *now*, as it hath been; he ſpeaks in the grief of a ſad heart, commemorating what he had been, and comparing it with what he was; It is a great miſery, *to have been happy*; *None are ſo low, as they who now can only ſay, they have been high*; none ſo poor as they, who now can only ſay, they have been rich; none are ſo cut and pincht with diſgrace as they who having been in honour are forced to ſay, *Now they have me in deriſion*; ſuch was *Job*'s caſe.

Miſerum iſtuc verbū & peſſimum eſt, habuiſſe & nihil habere. Plaut. in Rud. Acts 5. ſc. 3.

Now they that are younger then I, have me in deriſion. The Hebrew is, *They that are ſmaller of dayes then I*, that is, they that have not lived ſo many dayes as I; The word rendred **young**, ſignifies *ſmall or little*, two wayes.

צעיר *Exiguus quantitate & qualitate; Opponitur* רב (Gen. 25. 23.) *quod amplitudinem, authoritatem eminentiam denotat; Apoſtolus per* μεῖζων *&* ἐλάσσων *reddit,* Rom. 9. Merc.

Firſt, In degree whether of quantity or quality. In the fourteenth Chapter of this Book, at the twenty-firſt verſe, *Job* ſaith of a deceaſed Father, *His Sons come to honour, and he knoweth it not, and they are brought low*, (or *made little*, it is this word) *but he perceiveth it not of them.* Thus it imports a declined or deſpicable condition among men. As *Gideon* ſaid (*Judg.* 6. 15.) *Oh my Lord, wherewith ſhall I ſave Iſrael? Behold my Family is poor* (or as the Margin hath it, *My Thouſand is the meaneſt*) *in Manaſſeh, and I am the leaſt in my Fathers houſe.* So (Mic. 5. 2.) *But thou Bethlehem Ephrata, though thou be little among the Thouſands of Judah*, yet, &c.

Secondly, It notes ſmall in number, or a few; and ſo the word put alone without the addition of the word *dayes*, or *years*, ſignifies one that is young, or younger then ſome others to whom the relation is made. When *Lot went up out of Zoar and dwelt in a Cave, he and his two Daughters, the firſt born ſaid unto the younger, our Father is old*, &c. (*Gen.* 19. 30, 31.) And ſo the word is uſed again in *Joſeph*'s addreſs to his aged Father, with his two Sons for a bleſſing, (*Gen.* 48. 14.) *And Iſrael ſtretched out his right hand, and laid it upon Ephraims head, who was the younger*, or the leſſer. In both theſe Scriptures, the word of the Text is put alone to ſignifie the younger, without any expreſs mention of time of dayes.

Minim. Sept. Infimi. Auguſt. *Breves præ me diebus*; Aquil. *Parvi præ me ſecundum dies.* Piſc. *Dubium an amicos notet ut juniores.* Bold. *Certe quæ ſequuntur viris illis honoratis non competant.* Scult.

From theſe ſeveral renderings of the word, ariſe ſeveral readings of the Text. One ſaith, *The leaſt*; another, *The loweſt*; A third, *They that are ſhort of me in dayes*; A fourth, *They that are ſmall to me in dayes, have me in deriſion.* It is queſtioned by ſome, whether *Job* by thoſe that were, or whom he calls *younger then himſelf*, meant not his oppoſing friends, eſpecially *Zophar* and *Bildad*, who are conceived to have been younger then *Job*, and whom he had often charged with mocking him. But, ſurely, *Job* had better thoughts of his friends (though much offended with them) then the word of this Text will bear; Their Fathers doubtleſs, were not ſuch as *Job would have diſdained to have ſet with the Dogs of his flock*; *They were not men forced by want and famine, To cut up Mallowes by the buſhes, and Juniper roots for their meat*; *They did not flee into the Wilderneſs, much leſs were they driven from among men*; *They were no fooles, nor were they Children of fooles*: *Job*'s friends were wiſe and godly men, though quite out and miſtaken in their judgment about him: They were men of credit and honour in their Countrey, and therefore the deſcription of the men who derided *Job* will no way fit them.

So then, by the *younger* here ſpoken of, we are to underſtand ſome others that had to do, or dealt with *Job* thus deſpightfully, as he ſpake in his complaint (*Chap.* 19. 18.) *Yea, young Children deſpiſed me*; *I aroſe, and they ſpake againſt me*: So here, *They that are younger then I* (though poſſibly men in years)

Have me in deriſion.] The word was rendred *laughed*, at the twenty-fourth verſe of the former Chapter; *If I laughed on them they believed it not*: There the Reader may find, the ſeveral ſignifications of it. The General ſence of that verſe and this, ſtand directly oppoſite; That ſhewed *Job* a man of ſuch honour among the people, that though he laughed or was merry with them, yet they maintained the ſame reſpect to him, and would not laugh out with him, or in his preſence. But this verſe ſhews, that the vileſt of men did not only take the boldneſs to be familiar or laugh with him, but had the impudence to laugh at him, as the word in this conſtruction ſignifies. He doth not ſay, they were merry with me, but, *They have made themſelves merry with me*; they did not ſport with me, but made me their ſport. To be derided, is more grievous then to be reproached; ſorrow never gets ſo cloſe, nor ſtrikes ſo deep, as when we ſee and hear others *rejoycing and jeering* (both thoſe acts enter into the compoſition of deriſion) at our ſorrowes; This was *Job*'s burden above and beſides all that he bear before; *They* (ſaith he) *that are younger then I, have me in deriſion.*

Non jocantur aut ludunt mecū, ſed irridant ſanniſque & excipiunt me, hoc שחק *ſignificat, quando cum* על *conſtruitur, ridere autē & jocari quando conſtruitur cum* אל Merc. Druſ.

Nunc monent me minores tempore. Sept. Auguſt. *Grave eſt ſenem qui multos antea commonefecit, à junioribus admoneri.* Nicet.

The Septuagint render, *young ones reproved or admoniſhed me*; as if he had ſaid, *Now they that are younger then I, take upon them to teach, yea to check, and admoniſh me.* And well might *Job* put this among his afflictions; Seeing it cannot but be burdenſome to ancient men, who have long and often counſelled and directed others, to ſee young upſtarts, and green heads preſuming to teach and direct them. This is a truth, but the Original Text will not bear that Tranſlation, our own is full and clear. *But now they that are younger then I, have me in deriſion.*

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *The beſt eſtabliſhed eſtate of man in this world is ſubject to changes up and down, forward and backward is our lot in this life.*

What a vaſt difference is there (as was toucht before) in the face and complexion of this and the former Chapter? 'Tis not eaſie to believe they ſhould both concern the ſame man. Princes are chiefs among men; all men are ready to powre honours upon them, and ſome, flatteries; yet as the Pſalmiſt hath it (*Pſal.* 107. 40.) *He* (that is God) *powreth contempt upon Princes*; And that may be the lot of good Princes, as well as of bad ones; So it was with *Job*, and he acknowledgeth it was God who ſuffered, yea, ordered that contempt to fall upon him, and ſo abaſed him in the eyes of that people, by whom he had been ſo highly honoured. The Apoſtle (1 *Cor.* 7. 31.) gives the reaſon why Saints ſhould live at a diſtance, and keep their diſtance from worldly things, *Mourning about them, as if they mourned not, rejoycing about them, as if they rejoyced not, and uſing them, as not abuſing them*, becauſe *the faſhion of the World paſſeth away*; the World cannot keep faſhion with any man long; Nor need we wonder that it doth not: For ſeeing Heaven and Earth, which are as (I may ſay) the foundation and the roof of that great houſe which God hath built (the World is but a great houſe for man to dwell in: ſeeing (I ſay) theſe two, the Heaven and the Earth) *paſs away, and are changed*, how ſhould we imagine that any ſtate or thing under Heaven is free from changes: (*Pſal.* 102. 25, 26.) *Of old haſt thou laid the foundation of the Earth, and the Heavens are the work of thine hands; they ſhall periſh, but thou ſhalt endure, yea, all of them ſhall wax old like a Garment, as a veſture ſhalt thou change them, and they ſhall be changed: but thou art the ſame, and thine yeares ſhall have no end.* The Heaven and the Earth contain and uphold all things; Now, if theſe are changed as a Garment, much more are all things between theſe, ſubject to continual viciſſitudes and changes (*Iſa.* 40. 6.) *All fleſh is graſs, and all the goodlineſs thereof, as the flower of the field; the graſs withereth, the flower fadeth, but the Word of our God ſhall ſtand for ever*; nothing abides but God and his word: Is there any ſtability or continuance in graſs and flowers? There's no more in man. We ſaw *Job* a flouriſhing flower in the former Chapter, but we ſee him a withered flower in this.

Secondly, as *Job*'s outward ſtate changed, ſo did the opinion of men about his perſon.

Hence Obſerve, *Men are very unconſtant to their eſteem and opinions of men.*

Variety of opinions often ariſe concerning the ſame men, even while the men are the ſame, much more when their condition alters; They that were elder then *Job*, had him in honour formerly. But, *Now they that were younger then he, had him in deriſion.* And if we look upon the young men in the Twenty-ninth Chapter, they were all in awe of him, and hid themſelves, they durſt not appeare where he was preſent; He was a man of ſuch authority, and carried it with ſuch a Majeſtick gravity, that he was above reproach; yet now, even youths, grew not only bold with him, but abuſive. We read (*Acts.* 14. 11.) how highly *Paul* and *Barnabas*, were eſteemed by the

Heathen *Lyſtrians*; thoſe holy men, had much a do to ſtave off the people from adoring, and ſacrificing to them; They cryed them up for more then men, ſaying, The *Gods are come down to us in the likeneſs of men.* So that *Paul* was forced to uſe his beſt oratory to perſwade them out of that laviſh opinion, and idolatrous devotion; (*ver.* 15.) *Sirs, why do ye theſe things, we alſo are men of like paſſions with you, and preach unto you that you ſhould turn from theſe vanities unto the living God:* yet at the eighteenth verſe, they drew them out of the City, and ſtoned them as men not worthy to live. And as *Paul* had here a change from the better to the worſe, ſo from the worſe to the better (*Acts* 28. 4, 5, 6.) *When the Barbarians ſaw the venomous beaſt hang on his hand, they ſaid among themſelves, no doubt this man is a murderer,* &c. And though *he ſhook off the beaſt into the fire, and felt no harm, yet they looked when he ſhould have ſwollen, or fallen down dead ſuddenly; but after they had looked a great while, and ſaw no harme come to him, they changed their mindes, and ſaid that he was a God.* Thus upon events or changes of providence, many change their apprehenſions of men, ſometimes for the better, but uſually for the worſe. Though there is nothing more certain then what the ſtate of a good man is, and ſhall be in the thoughts of God; yet there is nothing more uncertain, then what he ſhall be in the thoughts of men.

Hence take theſe two inferences of advice.

Firſt, Be not lifted up, by the applauſe and approbation of man, be not much taken with their good word, and eſteem. Saints muſt learn to eſteem themſelves, by the eſteem they have with God. The Apoſtles approved themſelves as the Miniſters of God, not only, *in much patience, in afflictions, in neceſſities,* &c. But, *By the armour of righteouſneſs, on the right hand; and on the left, by honour, and diſhonour, by evil report, and good report.* Honour among men, is one of the greateſt tryals of man. An ill report is very burdenſome; and 'tis no eaſie matter rightly to bear a good report. *As the fining pot is to the ſilver, ſo is a man to his praiſe* (*Prov.* 27. 21.) that is, (as the ſcope of the proverb carries it) *ſo is praiſe to a man.* He that is praiſed, is not only much approved, but much proved; This fining pot, will indeed try what metal he is made of. As praiſe is due to worth, ſo it makes a diſcovery of worth; And look what worthleſsneſs, what droſs, or lightneſs is in any mans ſpirit, praiſe will diſcover that alſo.

Secondly, Seeing there is ſuch a changableneſs in the judgements, and opinions of men; Then, as we ſhould not be lifted up with their applauſe, ſo not caſt down by their deſpiſings; (*Iſa.* 2. 22.) *Ceaſe ye from man, whoſe breath is in his noſtrills, for wherein is he to be accounted of?* his praiſe is not to be accounted of, nor is his reproach, his good will is not much to be accounted of, nor is his diſpleaſure. We are not to rejoyce much in what man can do, or ſay for us, nor are we to be troubled much at what he doth, or can do, at what he ſaith, or can ſay againſt us, while we are innocent.

Againe, Conſider, *Job* was in an afflicted condition, when *they that were younger then he, had him in deriſion.*

Hence Note, *A change in our outward condition, cauſeth many to change their opinions concerning us.*

While *Job* did ſwim in the full ſtreames of riches and honour, all reſpected him; but no ſooner were the waters fallen, and his worldly greatneſs ebb'd or abated, but all ſorts of men, eſpecially the worſt of men abated their reſpects to him. No ſooner was he afflicted, but ſlighted and derided. *Job* was as perfect, and upright, he *feared God and eſchewed evil* as much as ever, his inward ſtate changed not, only his outward did; he was not ſo rich and pompous as before, he made not ſo faire a ſhew in the fleſh as before, that beauty was darkened, ſtained, and gone, and then they ſaw no form, no comelineſs in him, that they ſhould deſire him. They who judge according to appearance, cannot judge righteous judgment, either concerning things or perſons. How ſuddenly did *Shimei* take an advantage, to revile and rail upon *David*, when he ſaw him in a troubled ſtate. *David* was as gracious a man as before, he was as much after Gods heart as before, but becauſe he was in diſtreſs, how doth the tongue of *Shimei* rage and rant againſt him! 'Tis the happineſs and comfort of Believers, that God alters not his apprehenſions of them, upon any outward alterations which befal them: Let their eſtate vary ten times a day, as to worldly things, yet the judgment of God varieth not concerning them; They are as much honoured and loved of God upon a dunghil, as upon a Throne. And that men alter their opinion of us upon theſe alterations, is argument enough that they are but men, that are blind, and ignorant, that they judg by appearance, and not in righteouſneſs; *We ſhould walk by faith, and not by ſight,* ſometimes towards others as well as our ſelves. And when we judge of men, we ſhould not look at what they ſuffer, but at what they are, elſe we may ſoon paſs a wrong ſentence upon them. What the Apoſtle ſaith to another purpoſe, is true of this (2 *Cor.* 4. 18.) *Look not at the things that are ſeen, but at the things that are not ſeen;* If you look at the things which are ſeen, you will ſay ſuch a man is happy and good, becauſe he enjoyeth good, and proſpers; and you will conclude ſuch a man is miſerable, and ſtark nought, becauſe poor, and laid low in the World. Therefore learn to judge of men, by the things that are not ſeen in their nature, but in their fruits and effects, by their grace, and ſpiritual Glory, by their faith, and righteouſneſs, by their patience, and meekneſs, by their holineſs, and uprightneſs. Judge others by their beſt part, and right ſide, elſe you will make a wrong, a crooked judgment of them, and deride thoſe whom you ought to reverence.

Fourthly, From the thing it ſelf of which *Job* complaines,

Obſerve, *To be ſcorned and derided amongſt men is a great affliction.*

Chriſt numbers it with perſecution (*Math.* 5. 11.) *Bleſſed are ye when men ſhall revile you, and perſecute you, and ſhall ſay all manner of evil againſt you falſly for my ſake.* And among all ſufferings, this to ſome is the ſoreſt, and the greateſt. The Apoſtle exhorts the Saints (*Heb.* 10. 32.) *To call to remembrance the former dayes, in which after they were illuminated, they endured a great fight of afflictions:* he calls it *a great fight*, the word is tranſlated a *manifold fight*; now what was this great *fight of afflictions?* The next words anſwer, *partly, whilſt you were made a gazing ſtock both by reproaches and afflictions*; (They are made a gazing ſtock, whom men deride and ſcorn.) And, ſaith he, *In this you endured a great, a manifold fight of affliction,* as if they had contended with many enemies, yea, with many Armies of enemies, while they ſtoutly received the charge of their deriders. And to ſhew that deriſion or ſcorn is a great affliction, the Prophet foretold, that a very great part of Chriſts ſufferings, ſhould be paid him in deriſions. (*Iſa.* 53. 3.) *He is deſpiſed and rejected of men, a man of ſorrows, and acquainted with grief* (it was no ſmall grief and ſorrow to him, to be deſpiſed) ſo it was propheſied of him, and the hiſtory of Chriſts ſufferings proves the fulfilling of it to the full.

Neſcio quomodo omnibus penè rebus amarius ſolent mordere maledicta, cum certè multi ad laqueum convolarint famæ opprobria non ferentes. Chryſoſt. Hom. 15. in Matth. *Quaſi cum multis hoſtibus confligit qui cum una contumelia depugnat.*

Fifthly, *Job* complains much that he was derided; what was *Job*? He was a man that had formerly been in great honour and eſteem, and now to be derided, went near, and ſtuck cloſe to him.

Hence Note, *When a man who hath been much reſpected comes to be derided, his affliction is double.*

If a mean man, who never knew what honour meanes, be deſpiſed, it is ſomewhat to him, but it touches a man to the quick that hath been high in honour, to ſee and hear himſelf diſhonoured. Some out of a true nobleneſs, others out of a ſullenneſs, or cinicalneſs of ſpirit, ſlight the reſpects and applauſe of the World; it is a ſmall matter to ſuch, though all deſpiſe them: but for thoſe, who either have, or would have reſpect with men, for thoſe who have a deſire, and an appetite after honour, or a care of, and reſpect to their honour, (ſo a good man may have: Ambitiouſly to deſire honour, and aim at it, is not good, but to take care of our honour and credit is good, and a duty) now for ſuch a man to be diſhonoured or ſlighted by men, is a great tryal: And this aggravated that contempt and reproach which was poured upon Chriſt, becauſe he was a perſon ſo infinitely honourable, he was honoured of the Father, he was honoured and adored by the Angels, he thought it *no robbery to be equal with God*, and yet when he came down into the World, he was reputed a Devil, and called *This fellow*. O how heavy is the burden of reproach to them who have been loaded with honour! Indeed our Lord Jeſus Chriſt was above the reproaches of men. He (as 'tis ſaid *Heb.* 12.2.) *deſpiſed the ſhame*; that is, he ſleighted it as that which could not reach him; but in it ſelf, reproach is a morſel of very hard digeſtion; only grace, and a ſence of acceptance with God, can get it off the ſtomack of man. He only that truly honours God, can comfortably entertain diſhonour among men; and when men refuſe to give us the honour due to us, it is good for us to conſider, whether we have not fayled in giving honour to God, to whom all honour is due.

Sixthly, *Job* argues his affliction, not only becauſe having been in honour, he was now derided, but becauſe he was derided *by young men*.

Hence Note, *When aged and grave men, are depiſed by thoſe that are young, this hightens the affliction.*

Job put that in, as a ſpecial ingredient, young men did it: There are three conſiderations about perſons reproaching us, which increaſe the ſence of our reproach; Firſt, When we are reproached by friends, *Theſe ten times have ye reproached me*, ſaid *Job* to his friends (Chap. 19.3.) To be reproached by thoſe that are intimates, familiars, and companion friends, is moſt unfriendly and cuts deeply. Secondly, To be derided by wiſe men (ſuch were *Job's* friends) that's more cutting. Thirdly, (as herein the Text) to be derided by young men, by perſons much below us, is another cutting circumſtance of our reproach. When *Eliſha* went up unto *Bethel*, *as he was going up by the way* (ſaith that Scripture) *there came forth little Children out of the City, and mocked him, and ſaid unto him, Go up thou bald head*. This provoked the holy Prophet to the quick, ſo that (not in a paſſion, but ſerious deliberation) he curſed *them in the Name of the Lord*, (2 *King*. 2.23,24.) Young men, not only by the Law of God, but of Nature, and of Nations, ought to give reſpect to the ancient; to ſee all theſe Laws broken at once upon us, cannot but be a heart-affecting, if not a heart-breaking affliction.

Seventhly, *Job* complains of this uncomely carriage, not only as it was an affliction to him, but as it was a wickedneſs in them.

Hence Note; *A deriding Spirit, is a wicked Spirit.*

A dull ſpirit is far better, then a deriding ſpirit. *'Tis better to be a fool, then a flouter*. They in the firſt *Pſalm*, who ſat down in the Chair of the ſcorner, were aſcended to the higheſt ſtep or top of wickedneſs. *Men are bad to the utmoſt, when once they deride the good, or their betters*; and yet I can ſcarce determine which is worſt, to deride the bad, or the good, ſeeing the condition of the one calls for pity and compaſſion at our hands, as faſt and as loudly as the condition of the other calls for reſpect and honour. The Apoſtle propheſieth of a Generation of ſcorners, as the dregs of mankind, in the dregs of time. (2 *Pet*. 3.3,7.) *Knowing this, that there ſhall come in the laſt days ſcoffers, walking after their own luſts*. They throw off the Law, and walk by their luſts, who ſcoff either at the word of God, at the wayes of good men, or at the wickedneſs of thoſe who are bad.

Eighthly, Note, *As it is ſinful to deride any, ſo it is more ſinful to deride the aged, and moſt ſinful to deride the aged, when they are in miſery.*

Both theſe were complicated in *Job*, he was an ancient man, and an afflicted man; to deride a young man in his proſperity is a ſin, but to deride an old man in miſery, is (who can tell how) many ſins; it is woful to be in miſery, but wo to them who deride the miſerable.

Ninthly, *Job* was not only an aged, and an afflicted man, but he was a good and a godly man, and that made the ſin yet worſe, and the more exceeding ſinful.

Laſtly, From the perſons deriding, they were *young men*,

Note, *Youth is very apt to evil, young men are ready to abuſe themſelves and others.*

As young mens counſels are dangerous, (*Jeroboam* loſt ten Tribes by following them) ſo young mens affections are boyſterous and unruly. *Paul* exhorts *Timothy* to *fly youthful luſts*. Old age hath its luſts; no age, but there is a luſt that belongs to it; but youth hath more luſts haunting it, then any age of man. It is a great argument of the power of grace, when grace ſubdues luſt in young men; to ſee young men converted to God, and godly in converſation; to ſee young men ſubject to the Scepter of Chriſt, and mortifying their corruptions; to ſee young men ſerving the Lord, and honouring his ſervants in their afflictions, this ſhews the mighty power of grace ſubduing luſt, which is ready to get into the Throne, and at once to rule and ruine all. *Paul* gives this counſel to his Son *Timothy*, *Let no man deſpiſe thy youth*. Young men had need take care to keep themſelves from being deſpiſed; and young men have as much need to be counſelled, yea admoniſht not to deſpiſe others, eſpecially the ancient. By how much men of any age, are more obnoxious to any luſt, by ſo much the more ſhould they be both awakened, and watchful againſt it. *They that are younger then I, have me in deriſion: Whoſe Fathers I would have diſdained to have ſet with the Dogs of my Flock.*

As *Job's* deriders were young men, or men inferiour to him in age, ſo they were mean men in degree, ſuch they were (ſaith he)

Whoſe Fathers I would have diſdained to have ſet with the Dogs of my Flock.

We may take theſe Fathers, either for their immediate Fathers, or for thoſe at a further remove, any from whom they were deſcended may be comprehended under their Fathers. This relative term *Father*, is a name, Firſt, Of Age; Secondly, Of honour; Thirdly, Of vertue, it imports graciouſneſs, wiſdom and gravity. We may ſuppoſe Ancients or Fathers fully ſtored with treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge, of grace and goodneſs. And hence, ſome by *Fathers* here underſtand, ſuch of them as were wiſeſt and of greateſt underſtanding, or ſuch of them as were beſt and of greateſt experience. But I rather take the word properly for natural Fathers.

Whoſe fathers I would have diſdained.] The word imports loathing, or nauſeating, which is properly a troubleſome affection of the ſtomack at unpleaſing meat; as if *Job* had ſaid, I was ready to ſpew or vomit at the ſight or thought of them, they were a burden to my Soul. I looked upon them as loathſome creatures, and therefore unworthy of the meaneſt place or office; even *to have ſet them with the Dogs of my Flock*; that is, to have appointed or diſpoſed them with the Dogs of my Flock. Dogs are accounted the meaneſt of creatures, though ſome Dogs have many very good qualities in them, and are very uſeful, which hath given occaſion to very grave writers to ſpeak much in their commendation: Yet in Scripture ſpeech and ſence, a *Dog* is a term, not only of ſome diminution, but of utmoſt diſgrace. When *Eliſha* Propheſied what ſad and black work *Hazael* would make in the World, he anſwered with higheſt indignation, (2 *Kings* 8.13.) *What is thy ſervant a Dog that he ſhould do this great thing?* He ſuppoſed the Prophet had the loweſt opinion of him when he foretold that he ſhould act ſuch cruelties; and himſelf knew no lower expreſſion of that low opinion which the Prophet might have of him, then to ſuppoſe himſelf a Dog. We have a Parallel place, (2 *Sam*. 16.9.) *Then ſaid Abiſhai the Son of Zerviah unto the King, Why ſhould this dead Dog* (meaning *Shimei*) *curſe my Lord the King? Let me go over, I pray thee, and take off his head.* Chriſt ſpeaks at the ſame rate (*Mat*. 15.26.) *It is not meet to take the Childrens bread, and to caſt it to Dogs*; that is, to vile perſons, or to the Gentiles, who were then a deſpiſed People, yea not a People. (*Mat*. 7.6.) *Give not that which is Holy unto Dogs*; that is, to prophane men, who are the vileſt of men. At this day, the Jews and Turks call any that are not of their Religion, *Dogs*. And it is the cuſtome of many Nations, to call thoſe whom they deſpiſe or hate, *Dogs*. The Jews called the Gentiles *Dogs*, becauſe as the Dog was an unclean creature, ſo the Jews accounted the Gentiles common and unclean: And that was the Apoſtle *Peters* opinion of them, till God taught him another leſſon (*Acts* 10.) The Apoſtle

מאס *Reprobabā, propriè abjiciebam, nauſeabundè projiciebam cum faſtidio.*

Cane quis famulus amantior domino? Quis fidelior comes? Quis cuſtos incorruptior? Quis excubitor inveniri poteſt vigilantior? Quis deniq; ultor aut vindex conſtantior? Columel.

Nec tibi cura canum fuerit poſtrema —— Virg.

Paul (*Phil.* 3.2.) exhorts the Church *to beware of Dogs*; that is, of falſe Teachers, who are like Dogs, becauſe baſe and unworthy; they are filthy Dogs, and fawning Dogs, they are alſo ſnarling and biting Dogs; and they are fitly called Dogs, for they will take a great deal of pains, they will compaſs a great deal of ground, as Spaniels do, yea as Chriſt ſpake of the Phariſees, they will compaſs *Sea and Land*, to get their game, or make a Proſelyte. Dogs are under many diſparagements all the Bible over, and it, almoſt, ends with this dreadful ſentence (*Rev.* 22.15.) *Without are Dogs*: Therefore when *Job* ſaith, *I would not have ſet them with the Dogs of my Flock*, he implyeth a very low, the loweſt eſteem of them; and 'tis probable this was a vulgar or proverbial ſpeech in thoſe Countreys, to figure out an unworthy man, *He is not worthy to ſit with the Dogs*; we may give *Job*'s ſence more particularly thus; either

Non dignabar patres ponere, *i. e. componere comparare cum canibus gregis mei. Vivit ſiliquis & pane ſecundo.* Hor. lib. 2. Epiſt. 1.

Firſt, That the Fathers of thoſe young men lived a worſe life then the very Dogs that kept his flocks. And then *to ſet them*, is to compare them with his Dogs; as if *Job* had ſaid, I made as good account of the Dogs of my Flock, as of ſuch men, or my Dogs did lead as good a life as they, and feed as well as they; you may read their Bill of fare, or how they were dieted, *verſ.* 3, 4.

Or Secondly, Seeing *Job* would *not ſet them with the Dogs of his Flock*, it ſhews they were as vile, as vile could be, not only ſuch as were of the loweſt rank and courſeſt ſort of men; but ſuch as were below the loweſt, and courſer then the courſeſt of men; not fit for any good mans company, no nor for any mans company, yea ſuch as were ſcarce fit for the company of beaſts, or ſuch as were not fit for their company who are placed and reckon'd amongſt the loweſt of beaſts, or of thoſe who are lower then beaſts, *Dogs*; And thoſe Dogs too, the lower ſort of Dogs; not ſuch Dogs, as the Lord or Maſter of the family delights in for Hauking and Hunting, nor ſuch as the Miſtreſs of the Family ſometimes lays in her lap, where the Children ſhould be, and where ſhe would poſſibly diſdain to lay a poor mans Child, but they were more deſpicable then (as we ſay) an ordinary Shepheards Cur.

Thirdly, We may expound theſe words as expreſſing the unfitneſs of thoſe perſons, for any buſineſs or office; as if *Job* had ſaid, I would not truſt them with the keeping of my Sheep, or I would rather truſt my Flock of Sheep with my Dogs, then with them; my Dogs would be more careful and ſerviceable then they.

Indigni quibus canum Cuſtodia committeretur, vel qui canes curarent. Chryſoſt. *Num me præfectum canibus exiſtimas?*

Fourthly, When *Job* ſaith, *Whoſe Fathers I would have diſdained to have ſet with the Dogs of my Flock*: We may give the ſence thus; *I would not make them my Dog-keepers, or I would not ſet them over my Dogs.* So ſome expound that of *Abner* (2 *Sam.* 3.8.) *Am I a Dogs-head*, &c. That is, am I a Dog-keeper, am I General or Commander of Dogs, rather then General of an Army? Am I ſo mean! This expoſition ſuits well with the words following. *For wherein could the ſtrength of their hands profit me?*

Here it may be queſtioned, whether it did become *Job* to ſpeak thus contemptibly of men, though his contemners? May any man ſpeak thus of men? Or think them not fit to ſit with his Dogs, or to be ſet over his Dogs? May a man prefer his Dogs before men? What though they were poor, and nought, yet as men they were above all beaſts; yea as good as any man, in their general ſtate or nature, as men. The meaneſt Beggar, hath as much of manhood, or of humanity ſtrictly taken, as the greateſt Prince: why then doth *Job* ſpeak thus diſdainfully of them here? In the former Chapter he ſpake in another tone of the poor, he was a helper to the Fatherleſs, he deſpiſed none for their low eſtate.

I anſwer, *Job* did not diſdain them becauſe poor, he only ſhews what kind of poor they were who derided him, even ſuch as no man would imploy, no not to keep Sheep; he diſdained them not becauſe poor in ſtate, but becauſe wicked in life. 'Tis ſinful to revile any that bear the Image of God, to call them Dogs, or to ſet them with their Dogs; yet in many, ſo little of the Image of God appears, and ſo much of the Image of the Devil, that to call them Dogs, yea to call them Devils, is to give them their due. *Man that is in honour and underſtandeth not, is like the beaſts that periſh*, (Pſal. 49. 20.) What then are they like, who have neither honour nor underſtanding?

Hence Note, Firſt, *Men of a low and vile conditions, are often lower and viler in their conditions.*

Some poor in this World, are rich in faith, as the Apoſtle *James* ſpeaks, (*Chap.* 2. 5.) Theſe are bleſſed poor. Chriſt ſaith to the Church of *Smyrna* (Rev. 2.9.) *I know thine affliction, and thy poverty, but thou art rich*; thou art in a poor ſtate, as to the World, thou haſt ſcarce bread to put into thy belly, or cloaths to put on thy back, but thou art rich in grace, and cloathed with the righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt. Others are poor in faith, as well as poor in purſe; they are poor in Purſe, and poorer in grace; theſe are miſerable and wretched poor.

Note, Secondly, *Some are ſo vile and baſe in their qualities and conditions, that they are not fit for the meaneſt office, not ſo much as to keep Sheep, no nor to keep Dogs.*

O conſider how ſin hath degraded man! O how low are we fallen by ſin! Every man hath ſomething of a divine light by nature (reaſon is a divine light) yet by ſin man acts not only below grace, but reaſon, and renders himſelf unfit to be truſted with the keeping of beaſts. God hath furniſhed ſome men with light and grace, with gifts and parts, with wiſdom and underſtanding, to adminiſter and manage all ſorts of affairs, both in Civils and Spirituals; but ſin hath rendered others unfit for any, the meaneſt ſervice, even to keep Sheep; what are beaſtly, ſwiniſh, and Dog-like conditions good for? And how ſad is it when ſuch as a good man would diſdain to ſet with the Dogs of his Flock, are ſet in the higheſt imployments and offices among, yea over men. The Prophet *Iſaiah* ſpeaks of Shepheards, myſtical, Spiritual Shepheards, that were not fit to keep Dogs; and theſe he compares to Dogs, (*Iſa.* 56. 10, 11.) *His watchmen are blind, they are all ignorant, they are all dumb Dogs, they cannot bark, ſleeping, lying down, loving to ſlumber; yea they are greedy Dogs, which can never have enough; and they are Shepheards that cannot underſtand.* And when men ſhewed themſelves thus brutiſh, no marvail, if the Prophet cryed, (*verſ.* 9.) *All ye beaſts of the Field come to devour, yea all ye beaſts in the Forreſt.* Some men are ſet to rule men, who keep no rules; and ſome men are ſet to teach men, who cannot teach themſelves; many take upon them to guide others to Heaven, who are themſelves going to Hell; this is a lamentation, and ſhould be for a lamentation. Yet ſuch are ſometimes offended that they get not great Imployments, whoſe wickedneſs unfits them for any Imployment, a wiſe man would not ſet them over his Dogs. When *Pharaoh* had heard of *Joſeph's* brethren, he *ſaid to him* (Gen. 47.6.) *if thou knoweſt any men of activity amongſt them, then make them Rulers over my Cattel. Pharaoh* would not have men rule his Cattel, unleſs they were men of activity; that is, men both diſcrete and induſtrious. He would not truſt droans nor ſlugs with looking to his Sheep or Oxen; how then ſhould we look out men of parts and honeſty for civil offices over the outward man, and how much more for Spiritual offices over the Souls of men?

Laſtly, Note, *Though no man is to be upbraided meerly for his poverty; yet they that are poor and wicked too, may juſtly be upbraided with it.*

The Apoſtle having ſaid (1 *Pet.* 2. 17.) *Honour all men*, preſently adds, *Love the brotherhood, Fear God, Honour the King.* As there is a ſpecial love due to the brethren, that is, to Saints, or godly men, and a peculiar honour due to Magiſtrates, or mighty men; ſo there is a common honour due to all men, which yet they forfeit who act and walk below the duties of man. That dreadful ſentence of God upon proud *Nebuchadnezzar* (Dan. 4. 16.) falls upon many a man, though not ſo ſenſibly as upon him; *Let his heart be changed from mans, and let a beaſts heart be given unto him.* He that hath a beaſts heart will ſoon after act the beaſts part; and when once men act like beaſts, they forfeit their honour as men; and what can they expect then, but to be turn'd out and reckon'd among beaſts? How diſhonourable are thoſe poor men, who thus diſhonour

honour their very poverty. Saints *muſt prefer one another in honour* (Rom. 12. 10.) And again, the Holy Apoſtle adviſeth them (*Phil.* 2. 3.) *Let nothing be done through ſtrife or vain-glory, but in lowlineſs of mind, let each eſteem other better then themſelves.* Saints ſhould walk humbly, and think themſelves leſs then the leaſt of Saints, giving the hand of honour to any other Saint: But as for the wicked, we muſt take heed of preferring them in honour; *David* gives this as the mark of a godly man, (*Pſal.* 15.4.) He is one, *in whoſe eyes a vile perſon is contemned, but he honoureth them that fear the Lord*; a vile perſon is contemptible, though great; bare greatneſs, is no guard againſt contempt. The Silver and Gold of a wicked man, cannot hide him from diſgrace; the fine Linnen and Purple of a wicked man, cannot cover his nakedneſs; and the rags of a godly man cannot obſcure his worth, nor hinder him from true honour in the hearts, and from the tongues of thoſe that truly fear and honour God. But where any are poor and wicked too, they draw double contempt upon themſelves. *Job* ſets theſe poor ones below his Dogs; poverty ſubjects men to diſgrace, but impiety is a diſgrace; *poverty had made theſe men low, but ſin made them lower.*

VERS. 2, 3.

Yea, whereto might the ſtrength of their hands profit me, in whom old age was periſhed?
For want and Famin they were ſolitary, fleeing into the Wilderneſs, in former time deſolate and waſte.

JOB proceeds to give a further Character of his deriders, about whom 'tis queſtioned (and that queſtion reaches the whole context) whether that which is ſpoken at this ſecond Verſe, and ſo on to the end of the tenth Verſe, be applicable to the *young men*, or to their *Fathers*. Interpreters vary in their opinions concerning this query; ſome referring this whole diſcourſe to the Fathers of thoſe young men; others applying it to the young men themſelves, and that *Job* ſaith no more of their Fathers, but what he had ſaid at the firſt Verſe, *Whoſe Fathers I would have diſdained to ſet with the Dogs of my Flock.*

I conceive that the matter here ſpoken of, may be referred to either; for as we ſay, *like will to like*, ſo, *like is of like*, the Children uſually bear the Image and ſuperſcription of their Fathers, not only as to their Naturals in feature and conſtitution, but as to their morals alſo in qualities and conditions. And as to *Job's* ſcope, it is very indifferent whether we underſtand this deſcription of the Fathers, or of their Sons, or whether we make application of it to them both. His purpoſe in the whole being only to ſhew, that his deriders were a very courſe and an unworthy ſort of People.

Verſ. 2. **And whereto might the ſtrength of their hands profit me?**

In theſe words *Job* ſeemes to give a reaſon, why he did not judge thoſe Fathers of the young men, who derided him, worthy of the meaneſt Employment; we may reſolve it into their utter inability to do him any conſiderable ſervice: And if we refer the words to *the young men*, they carry the ſame force of a reaſon too.

Whereto might the ſtrength of their hands profit me?] The Hebrew word rendred **ſtrength**, ſignifies either the faculty and power of acting and doing, or the act done. We may render the words ſtrictly thus; *Whereto is the ſtrength of their hands to me?* For what, or to what is their ſtrength uſeful? What doth the ſtrength of their hands ſerve for? What's the benefit of it? Which if we underſtand as ſpoken of the young men, then the words ſeem to carry this ſence; they who derided me were ſtrong enough, able enough for buſineſs, as to the Bulk of their bodies, but they were ſo idle, ſo vain, that I could have no benefit by them: *Whereto did the ſtrength of their hands profit me?* Theſe men had ſtrength of hands, and yet were unprofitable drones, good for nothing; like the *Cretians*, who as the Apoſtle deſcribes out of their own Poet (*Tit.* 1.12.) were *Evil beaſts, ſlow bellies.*

כחידיהם *Virtus manuum*, i. e. *agendi facultas, actiones ipſæ vires & robur. Quorum virtus manuum mihi erat pro nihilo.* Vulg.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *The ſtrength of mans hand, or the Power of working, is given to profit withal.*

Our Natural ſtrength ſhould be improved for advantage, Firſt, To our ſelves, Secondly, to others, whether thoſe others are private relations within our own Walls, or more publique, Nations or perſons: Every power or ability of the mind, as alſo bodily ſtrength, is a Talent received from God, and muſt be accounted for. The ſtrength of the hand is not to be hid in a Napkin, nor to be put under ground, but to be traded with, to ſome good encreaſe. Some have ſtrength enough, yet no good comes in by it either to themſelves or others. The Apoſtle ſpeaking of the various gifs of God in the Church, ſaith (1 *Cor.* 4. 5, 6, 7.) *There are diverſities of gifs, but the ſame Spirit; and there are differences of adminiſtrations, but the ſame Lord; and there are diverſities of Operations, but it is the ſame God, which worketh all in all*; and then adds, *But the manifeſtation of the Spirit is given to every one to profit withal.* Now as every man who hath received the manifeſtation of the Spirit, hath received it to this end, for profit to the Church of God; ſo our portion of bodily gifts is beſtowed on us to profit withal. Therefore let us not be *ſloathful in buſineſs*, as the Apoſtle counſels us (*Rom.* 12. 11.) Strength is a Truſt, and if ſo, Firſt, take heed, ye be not found making no uſe of it; the diligence of the hand is under a promiſe, *The diligent hand makes rich* (*Pro.* 10.4.) Many have ſtrength enough, but they do no good with it, they are Idle, they are ſluggards, their hands are in their pockets, or warm in their Gloves, not warm at work. They have hand-ſtrength enough, but they have no heart-ſtrength; *Wherefore is there a price in the hand of a fool to get wiſdom, ſeeing he hath no heart to it?* That which the Prophet adviſeth in a good ſence (*Iſa.* 30. 7.) they follow in a bad, *Their ſtrength is to ſit ſtill.* They ſit ſtill, though they are ſtrong. *Ephraim* is called *a ſilly Dove without a heart* (*Hoſ.* 7. 11.) *Ephraim* was not without a hand, but he had not a heart to act and do, either for God or for himſelf to purpoſe, he had no courage, no activity of ſpirit to the ſtrength of his hand. Secondly, above all take heed *that you be not found making an ill uſe of it*; do not employ your ſtrength to your own diſſervice and deſtruction; ſo all they do who ſerve the will of the fleſh, and the will of Satan, or who walk according to the courſe of the World which lies in wickedneſs; the ſtrength of moſt men runs out all theſe wayes, and only in theſe. They are ſtrong to do miſchief, *they do evil with both hands* (that is, with all their working abilities) *earneſtly* (as the Prophet ſpeaks, *Mic.* 3. 7.) yea if they had (as the Heathen Poets feigned their *Briareus*) an Hundred hands, they ſhould all be employed and buſied in doing evil. 'Tis bad enough to let the ſtrength of your Bodies run to waſte, but 'tis worſe when it runs to evil uſes and purpoſes. Naturaliſts call the Hand, the *Organ of Organs*, or the chief inſtrument of action. Great things are done by it, when duely ſet awork. The Apoſtle ſaith of evil men (*Tit.* 1.16.) *They are abominable, diſobedient, and to every good work Reprobate.* If a good work be not choſen it cannot be done; where the heart elects not, the hand acts not. *Whereto ſhould the ſtrength of their hands profit?* What this unprofitable ſtrength was will appear yet further in the next Clauſe.

In whom old age was periſhed?] This form of ſpeaking is often uſed in Scripture. That which failes in a man, or wherein a man hath failed, is ſaid to periſh in or from him; and that which continues or abides in him, is ſaid not to periſh. (*Jer.* 18. 18.) *Then ſaid they, Come let us deviſe deviſes againſt* Jeremy, *for the Law ſhall not periſh from the Prieſt, nor counſel from the wiſe.* (And *Ezek.* 7.26.) we have the Affirmative of this Negative, *The Law is periſhed, or the Law ſhall periſh from the Prieſt*: As if they had ſaid, This *Jeremy*, who differs in opinion from all the Prieſts and wiſe men, while he skares us with clouds of blood hanging over our heads, and ready to diſſolve upon us, muſt needs be in the wrong, ſeeing the Law cannot periſh from the Prieſts, or they cannot be ſo miſtaken, who yet with one conſent Propheſie better things and more propitious times unto us. So did *Zedekiah* and the reſt, when *Michaiah* foretold the ruin of *Ahab*, 2 *Kings* 22. Again (*Amos* 2. 14.) *Flight ſhall periſh from the ſwift*; that is, they ſhall not be able to eſcape by flying; though they are ſwift as the Roe, and wing'd as the Bird, in regard of bodily ſtrength and activity, yet *flight ſhall periſh from them*; that is, they ſhall have no place to flee to, at leaſt, no opportunity to fly, or make an eſcape. Thus the old age of the men here ſpoken of was periſhed, they had no uſe of it, no advantage by it. Maſter *Broughton* reades to this ſence fully, *Whoſe aged time came to nothing.*

סלח *Notant Hebrai hoc nomine, propria ſinificari ſenectutē viridem, quæ ad gerenda negotia idonea eſt, deducunt a* לח *humido & virenti.* Merc. *Vox* זקנה *ſenium, connotat imbecillitatem ſi creditur, Talmudicis.*

The word which we Tranſlate, **old age**, doth not properly ſignifie old age in general, or as common to all men, *but a flouriſhing old age*, which we alſo call *a good old age.* Some men break little, though they live long, they have not a drooping and withering old age, but do even bud and bloſſom in their old age. There is a weak decrepit old age ſignified by another word in the Prophet (*Iſa.* 65. 20.) *There ſhall be no more thence an infant of dayes, nor an old man that hath not filled his dayes*; Which may be underſtood either thus, that old men ſhould live to be very old, and ſo be full of dayes when they dyed, or (as I conceive) that they ſhould fill their dayes both with good done by them, and with good beſtowed upon them. In all which reſpects that phraſe in the Prophet ſeems to ſtand in direct oppoſition to this of *Job* in the Text, when he ſaith theſe men were men in whom *old age was periſhed.* As if he had expreſſed himſelf thus; they either dyed before they attained a full old age, or they had but a miſerable old age, they had only the dregs, the worſt of old age when they were old. Old age is periſhed in thoſe who either dye before they are old, or living to old age, are lame, blind, weak, or unfit for any ſervice: In ſome, old age flouriſheth, in others old age periſheth, they not having that vigor which appears and acts in many old men.

Pro Tempore ſimpliciter exponis Rabbi Levi, q. d. *peribat in illis tempus* i. e. *miſerè tempus perdebant ignavia & inertia.*

Secondly, The word rendred **old age**, may be taken for time in general, and the Text rendred thus, *in whom time is periſhed*; that is, who have miſerably ſpent and outworn their time; they were ſuch a generation of wretches, that they waſted and laviſht out all their dayes, partly in idleneſs, doing nothing, partly in wickedneſs, doing that which is worſe then nothing; they might well be ſaid not to have lived at all, becauſe not to any purpoſe. This Interpretation hits or ſutes the Character of vile perſons very fitly, they do not redeem time, as the Apoſtle exhorteth Saints to do, but utterly looſe and laviſh it quite away. They are prodigals who waſte their ſtate, but they more, who waſte their time.

Ἐπ' αὐτοὺς ἀπώλετο συντέλεια; *ſuper eos peribat conſummatio, quaſi ſit* כלה *nam id valet* συντέλεια. Ἀπώλετο αὐτοῖς πᾶν τὸ πρὸς ζωήν. *Perierat illis, quicquid ad vitam facit.* Symmach.

Thirdly, The Septuagint render the Text, (as they often-elſe where do) with too great a liberty of variation from the Original; *Whereto* (ſay they) *could the ſtrength of their hands profit me, in whom perfection was periſhed?* Which may imply, either the perfection of their perſons, or the perfection of their ſtate. To which latter ſence, ſome incline; as if he had ſaid, *They were men ſo poor and low, that all the beauty of their outward ſtate was gone, they were deſtitute of all things needful and neceſſary for mans life, or for a comfortable ſubſiſtence.* So the words are a deſcription of their poverty, as noting them a company of beggarly varlets, who had nothing left to maintain life, or to live upon: But I paſs this.

Fourthly, We may alſo take *old age* here, ſtrictly and preciſely for the later part or end of their or any mans life; and then the ſence of the words (*in whom old age was periſhed*) is plainly this; *They were ſuch as never arrived at old age*, or they never came to be old men, their luſts conſumed them, and they were cut off either by, or for their wickedneſs (*Pſal.* 55. *ult.*) *Bloody and deceitful men ſhall not live out half their dayes.* Old age muſt needs periſh in them, who dye in the midſt of their dayes, and ſo never live unto it. As the debauchery of ſome young men, makes their old age nothing elſe but an unweildy burden of bodily infirmities, ſo others by their debauchery in youth, are quite unburden'd and diveſted of their bodies before they reach old age: whereto could the ſtrength of thoſe young mens hands profit *Job*, in whom old age periſhed, by dying in their youth?

Senectus pro ſenili prudentia. Metaphora ſubjecti. Piſc. *Simpliciter intelligo, in ſenili ætate eos ſenes non fuiſſe ſed adhuc pueros.* Merc.

Fifthly, Old age may be taken in this place, for the adjuncts of old age, or for thoſe excellencies of wiſdom and gravity, of prudence and experience, or of ability and fitneſs to give counſel about, and aſſiſtance in bunſieſs, which often both accompany and honour old men. This, poſſibly might be the meaning of the Septuagint, rendring *in whom perfection was periſhed*; that is, the perfections of old age. Thus both in Scripture and in common ſpeaking, there is an old age which is not meaſured by the length of dayes, but by the improvement of them. When young men are wiſe and ſober, old age appears in them. And old age is periſh'd in the aged, when wiſdom is not with them. Thus the words are expounded by a metaphor of the ſubject for the adjunct. The prudent (though young) are to be numbred with the Ancient; and vain imprudent old men deſerve to be numbered among Children. Hence all great Councels of Senates (as among the *Lacedæmonians* and *Romans*, &c.) are called Senates, and their Councellors, Senators or Ancients, not that all who were taken into thoſe Counſels, were old in Years, but in wiſdom and gravity. Some bear the fruits of old age, in the greenneſs and ſpring of their life, being well ballanced and ballaſted by a ſerious judgment, well ſetled and grounded by ſtudy and experience; others are light-headed and frothy, light-ſpirited and fooliſh, though gray-hair'd; Theſe want old age, even in their old age; or in them *old age is periſhed.* So then, when *Job* ſaith, old age was periſhed in theſe men, we may underſtand him thus; they were ſo far from being fit for any employment in their youth, that in old age, when mens luſts and vanities uſe to decline, even then in that little remainder, or fag end of their dayes, they did not incline to any honeſt buſineſs, nor dedicate themſelves to what was good, they did not live ſoberly and temperately, much leſs holily in their old age. Though they did not periſh in their youth, yet both their youth and their old age periſhed. There is a truth in any of theſe Interpretations. Only for the clearer grounding of Obſervations, we may apply the words:

Inepti erant ad quidvis agendum, & in ipſa ſenectute, ſenectute carentes.

Firſt, To the young men; *Whereto could the ſtrength of their hands* (that is, of theſe young mens hands) *profit me, in whom old age was periſhed*; they loſt their old age before they came at it; ſome preſerve their youth in old age, others looſe their old age in their very youth. Thus *Job* ſeems to ſpeak concerning theſe young men; what though they were ſtrong, or had ſtrength of hand, yet their old age was periſhed in them.

Hence Note, *Old age flouriſhed ſometimes in youth.*

We may ſee that which is the honour of an old man in ſome who are young. *Solomon* was young, but old age, that is, wiſdom flouriſhed in him; *Joſiah* was young, but old age, that is, piety flouriſhed in him; he flouriſht in godlineſs, tenderneſs of heart, and zeal for reformation, when he was very young and tender; *Timothy* was a very young man, yet old age was not periſhed, but flouriſhed in him; *Paul* exhorted him, and he doubtleſs carried it ſo, that no man deſpiſed his youth; he was *an example of the believers, in word, in converſation, in charity, in ſpirit, in faith, in purity.* Wiſdom, gravity, prudence, temperance, are not alwayes confined to thoſe who have wrinckled faces and furrow'd brows, dim eyes and palſie hands, leaning upon a ſtaff: All the vertues of the ancient have ſhined in young men; grace makes all the glory of old age viſible in youth. But as in *Job*'s young men, ſo in many more, old age is periſhed; there's nothing to be ſeen in them but youthful vanity.

Secondly, Comparing the former and the later part of the Verſe together, Obſerve,

The ſtrength of a young man profits little, if he have not the vertues and good qualities of an old man.

Though a man have the ſtrength of a Giant, yet unleſs he have judgment and prudence, what is he good for? Surely for nothing that's good. Strength without grace and holineſs ſerves for little, and without prudence it ſerves for nothing. Moral wiſdom is better then ſtrength, ſpiritual wiſdom is better then weapons of War, the underſtanding of a man will do more then his hands can. Whereto can the ſtrength of young mens hands profit us, in whom old age is periſhed, or in whom nothing of the old mans wiſdom and vertue is to be found?

Further, As theſe words may be applyed to old men; *Whereto might the ſtrength of their hands profit me, in whom old age was periſhed?*

Note Firſt, *Some old men have nothing of old age in them, but the Infirmities of it.*

They have no wiſdom nor underſtanding, they are neither grave nor prudent; theſe beauties of old age are faded and extinct in them. (*Jer.* 49. 7.) *Concerning* Edom, *thus ſaith the Lord of Hoſts, Is wiſdom no more in* Teman?

Is Counſel periſhed from the prudent? If a man be prudent, how can Counſel be periſhed from him? The meaning is, they who ſhould be prudent in regard of their age, from them wiſdom is periſhed. This is diſcernable in many at this day, *Who when* (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Heb.* 5. 12.) *for the time they ought to be teachers, have need that one teach them again which be the firſt principles of the Oracles of God, and are become ſuch as have need of Milk* (ſuch are babes) *and not of ſtrong meat, which belongeth to them that are of full age.* That's a dreadful threatning (*Iſa.* 29. 14.) *The wiſdom of their wiſe men ſhall periſh, and the underſtanding of their prudent men ſhall be hid*: As all our outward good things, riches and honours, are in the power of God, (he can take away the ſtrength of the body, and turn it into weakneſs) ſo all the inward Endowments of wiſdom and prudence, are in the hand of God, and if he withdraw they quickly periſh; thus, wiſdom often periſheth from the prudent, and from the ancient, in a judiciary way, or in judgment either to themſelves or others. Now as the wiſdom of ſome ancient men is taken away by the juſt judgment of God, ſo others of them never attain to wiſdom through their own neglect and ſloath.

Again, conſider *Job*'s ſcope, he lays it as a blot upon them, that *their old age was periſhed.*

Hence Note, *It is the ſhame of old men to be without the wiſdom of old men, or without thoſe accompliſhments which uſually accompany old age.*

Solomon ſaith (*Prov.* 16. 31.) *The hoary head is a Crown of Glory, if it be found in the way of righteouſneſs.* Old age hath no glory, without wiſdom to do righteous things; and when an old man is without righteouſneſs, his old age is not his Crown, but his reproach. He may be aſhamed of his gray hairs, of his hoary head, he may be aſhamed to ſhew his head, while he hath ſo little wit in it to do good. Of ſuch we may ſay, The more years they have, the leſs honour they deſerve to have. And therefore *Solomon* concludes (*Eccl.* 9. 13.) *Better is a poor and a wiſe child, then an old and fooliſh King, who will no more be admoniſhed.* The precedency of age is great before childhood; and greater is the preheminence of a King above a poor man; yet (ſaith *Solomon*) *better is a poor and wiſe child*, that is, a child which is ready to hear and follow good counſel and inſtruction (that's the proper wiſdom of a child) *then an old fooliſh King.* To be a King is an addition of higheſt honour to old age. To be old is an addition of honour to a King: But to be a fooliſh old King, is not only a diminution but a deprivation of all honour, both from the King and the old man. To be old is a bleſſing of Nature, to be a King is a prerogative of State; to be fooliſh is to be unworthy of both; eſpecially to be ſo fooliſh, as not to endure admonition, ſo fooliſh, as neither to be able to counſel himſelf, nor ſo tractable as to receive counſel from others. At once, to grow old in years, and ſo old in wilfulneſs and ſelf-conceitedneſs, as to out-grow all admonition, is the worſt of childiſhneſs in old men, and makes a poor wiſe child better then the oldeſt of ſuch fooliſh Kings. Thus as ſome through their Natural weakneſs, or the decays of Nature, are twice children; ſo others, through their moral and ſpiritual weakneſs, are alwayes worſe then children. And though they once had the corporal ſtrength of young men, yet they have not, nor had the intellectual ſtrength or wiſdom of many children. Theſe fall juſtly under *Job*'s reproof, *Their old age is periſhed.* It is far better to dye young, then not to live when we are old, or not to have old age live in us when we are old. Indeed their old age doth not live in them (but as the Text ſaith *'tis periſhed*) nor do they live in old age, who wear not the ornaments of old age. The widdow which lives in pleaſure is dead (that's the Apoſtles cenſure of her) whilſt ſhe liveth; much more may we ſay of old men who live in folly and vanity, they are dead while they live. And he that is dead while he liveth, O how dead will he be when he dyeth! He will then be not only *twice dead* (as the Apoſtle *Jude* ſpeaks of Apoſtates from a life of holy profeſſion and converſation, even while they live) but *thrice dead*, being utterly pulled up by the roots by death,

Verſ. 3. **For want and famin they were ſolitary.**

As in the former Verſe *Job* ſhewed the vileneſs and baſeneſs of that rable which derided him, by their ſloath and uſeleſneſs; ſo here he ſhews it further, by their poverty and baggerlineſs. And he doth this only as making report what ſort of men they were, not as laying their poverty (conſidered in it ſelf) as a reproach upon them; no man is to be upbraided with his want, unleſs he hath brought it upon himſelf by the abundance of his idleneſs and ill living. Such were theſe wretches, whom *Job* deſcribes ſolitary for want and famin, no man looking after them, or regarding them. They who have any thing of good in them, any thing of God, or but any thing of man (upon the matter) in them, though they are in want and ready to periſh with hunger, yet ſome or other will look after them, and pity them; how wicked and ungodly then, how deſtitute of all goodneſs then were theſe poor Souls, whom no man looked after?

Homines erant uſq; adeo deteſtabiles, ut ne in ſumma quidem egeſtate et fame quiſquã eos ferret. Beza.

For want and famin they were ſolitary.] The word rendered **want**, ſignifies a defect of all outward conveniencies; theirs was not only want, but extream want, or want of neceſſaries. Which is fully expreſt in the next word, *want and famin*, or want even to famin and ſtarving. The word rendred here, **famin**, is Syriac, and is not found elſe-where in all the Bible; for though in the Old Teſtament Famin is often ſpoken of, yet alwayes by another term. Famin is want in triumph, want in the height; there may be much want, and yet no Famin, but wheresoever there is Famin, there is a want of all things, or want to the uttermoſt; life cannot ſtay long where Famin enters.

כסר *Defectum denotat rerum omnium* Druſ.

Fames hic כפן *dicitur vocabulo ſyriaco, quæ alias Hebraicè* רעם *appellatur.* Druſ.

Famin is cauſed three ways.

Firſt, By the common ſcarcity and dearth of vital ſupports in the places where we live, when God makes the Heavens as Braſs, and the Earth as Iron; when he withers the Graſs, and burns up the fruits of the Earth, Famin follows: And this the Lord often threatens among his foreſt Judgments, which are three, Plague, Sword, and Famin; and we may well call Famin, though the ſecond or third named, yet the *Firſt of the three.*

Secondly, As there is a common Judgment of Famin upon Nations, ſo there is a private Famin upon ſome perſons or Families: When there is publique plenty enough, ſome are not only in a wanting but in a ſtarving condition; and that ſometimes becauſe they are either unable to labour, or have loſt the fruit of their labours.

Thirdly, Famin comes upon others through their own idleneſs and default; as *Solomon* ſpeaks (*Prov.* 23. 21.) *Sloathfulneſs, or idleneſs, cloaths a man with rags.* And as idleneſs cloaths a man with rags, ſo it feeds him with ſcraps, and they are better far then any man can earn or deſerve, by doing nothing or ſtanding idle. The Apoſtle gives the rule to the Church (2 *Theſ.* 3. 11.) *He that will not labour, neither let him eat.* And as he hath no right to eat, ſo we ſee by frequent experience, that they who labour not, have little or nothing to eat; I grant that which was the ſin of *Sodom*, is at this day the ſin of many. But what was the ſin of *Sodom*? The Prophet tells us (*Ezek.* 16. 49.) *Fulneſs of bread, and abundance of idleneſs.* We at this day have fulneſs of bread, great plenty, let us take heed that abundance of idleneſs be not found among us too. Sometimes there is in this Conjunction, fulneſs of bread and abundance of idleneſs; yea many are abundantly idle, becauſe they abound with bread. But uſually and very often, abundance of idleneſs brings ſcarcity and want of bread, both upon Nations, Families, and Perſons; moſtly, they who abound moſt in idleneſs, abound only in wants.

The Famin of theſe vile perſons in the Text, aroſe from, or was cauſed by their idleneſs. They did not live in a Land where bread was not to be had, yet they had no bread to uphold their lives. The Famin was not national, but perſonal, and they brought it upon themſelves by their neglect of duty, and ſloathfulneſs, either in or unto buſineſs.

For want and famin **They were ſolitary.**] *Job* curſing the time of his birth, ſaith, (*Chap.* 3. 7.) *Let that night be ſolitary.* We may conſider this word, Firſt, In general; Secondly, More particularly; in general it notes any ſad or ſorrowful condition;

tion; as if it were ſaid, *For want and famine they were very ſad and melancholy*; we put in the Margin of our Bibles, *They were dark as the night*, that is, their ſpirits were dark; when they had brought this miſery upon themſelves by their ſin and wickedneſs, then their minds were mopiſh and wofully benighted with black fears and fancies.

Hence Note, *When graceleſs men have brought want upon themſelves, as to the things of the World, they are in want of all other comforts and contentments.*

When they want bread, they want all; when they want the light, or good things of this life, they are as dark as the darkneſs of death. He that hath not, nor deſires to have the light of God's countenance, muſt needs be in darkneſs, when he hath not, or cannot have Corn and Wine. Thus ſuch are deſcribed (*Iſa.* 8. 21.) *And they ſhall paſs thorow it, hardly beſtead and hungry*, (and what ſhall they do?) *and it ſhall come to paſs, that when they ſhall be hungry, they ſhall fret themſelves, and curſe their King, and their God, and look upward.* They ſhall look upward with their eyes, while their hearts hang downwards, deeply downwards, even to deſpair. They ſhall even eat themſelves with fretting, becauſe they have nothing to eat. Now though a godly man be pincht with want and famine, and finds it a very great affliction upon him, yet he is not (in this ſence) ſolitary, he is not dark as the night, much leſs deſperate. For as the Apoſtle ſpeaks of himſelf, ſo grace teaches every godly man to ſay (*Phil.* 4. 11, 12.) *I have learned in whatſoever ſtate I am, therewith to be content*, &c. Though he be in want, though he be pincht with Famine, yea in whatſoever ſtate (that's a large word) he can be, he hath learned to be content; and as *Paul* there exemplifies it, he can ſay (in a meaſure) *I know how to be abaſed, and how to abound: Every where, and in all things I am inſtructed, both how to be full, and to be hungry; both how to abound, and how to ſuffer need.* A godly man knows how to be hungry, and how to abound, a carnal man knows neither; a godly man knows how to have a feaſt in Famin; ſo *Habakkuk* had (*Hab.* 3. 17.) *Though the Fig-tree ſhould not bloſſom*, &c. Though he hath nothing to eat, though want and famine compaſs him about, yet he is not ſolitary; no! He hath that which is better then bread, ſweeter then the ſweeteſt. *He rejoyceth in the Lord, and joyeth in the God of his Salvation. They who have God, who is unchangeable, for their Portion, ſhall not, cannot want a portion of joy and comfort in the worſt of changes.*

More diſtinctly. **They were ſolitary.**] To be ſolitary, is firſt to be without Children, they are ſweet company, the beſt goods, the richeſt filling and furniture in any mans Houſe: So that, to want Children, is ſome part of poverty, and a great part of ſolitarineſs, what company ſoever we have beſides. So this word is uſed by *Iſaiah* in that Propheſie of *Sions* joy at the return from the Babylonian Captivity (*Iſa.* 49. 21.) *Then ſhalt thou ſay in thy heart, who hath begotten me theſe, ſeeing I have loſt my Children and am deſolate, ſolitary, a Captive, and removing to and fro?* What the Church ſpake of her Spiritual Children, is true alſo of natural Children, to be without them, or bereaved of them, is to be ſolitary; So ſome underſtand the Text in hand; *They were ſolitary* for want and famine, that is, they were ſuch baſe beggarly Companions, that no honeſt Women would marry them, and ſo wandering up and down alone without Wife or Child, they were utterly forlorn and ſolitary.

Secondly, To be ſolitary, is to be forſaken and abandon'd of men, all avoyding our company; as it was ſaid of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt (who endur'd all ſorts of afflictions) (*Matth.* 26. 46.) *Then all left him and fled*, his Diſciples and all left him. And *Paul* ſpeaks thus of himſelf (2 *Tim.* 4. 16.) *At my firſt anſwer* (before *Nero* he meant) *no man ſtood by me: But all men forſook me.* That man is ſolitary whom all friends forſake, though he have Troops of ſtrangers, multitudes of enemies about him.

Thirdly, Others are ſolitary by flying and abandoning the company of men; and of this ſort we are to underſtand theſe ſolitary ones, they themſelves left the company of men, *flying into the Wilderneſs*, as the Text ſpeaks in the words following. But why did theſe make themſelves ſolitary, and leave the company of men? I anſwer, there are ſeveral grounds upon which men leave all company and chuſe to be alone. Sometimes (which is a bleſſed way of ſolitarineſs) a godly man out of a deſire to have more intimacy and communion with God, leaves the company of all men; he goes alone, that God and he may be alone (if I may ſo ſpeak) together. It is ſaid, (*Gen.* 32. 42.) *Then* Jacob *was left alone*; not that his company left him, but he left his company, he withdrew that he might ſpread his caſe and condition before the Lord. We read what a Heavenly meeting and wreſtling there was that night between God and *Jacob*; *We are never leſs ſolitary then when we are thus ſolitary.*

Secondly, Others are ſolitary, fleeing and abandoning the company of men, as being grieved with the ſins and evil manners of men; upon this conſideration *Jeremy* wiſhes (*Chap.* 9. 2.) *Oh that I had in the Wilderneſs a lodging place of wayfaring men, that I might leave my People and go from them; for they be all Adulterers, an aſſembly of treacherous men.* The manners of that People were ſuch as burdened the holy Prophet, he could not bear them, and would therefore retire that he might get ſome eaſe from thoſe heavy preſſures.

Thirdly, Others are ſolitary, abandoning the company of men for fear of their cruelty; a man may as well converſe with ſo many Bears, Lions, and Tigers, as with ſome men. And thus many of the beſt of Saints have been ſolitary (*Heb.* 11. 36, 37.) *They wandered about in Sheepskins*, &c. *in Deſerts and Mountains, in Dens and Caves of the Earth*: They were ſolitary, to avoyd the cruelty breathed againſt them by merciles Perſecutors.

Fourthly, There are many ſolitary, abandoning the company of men for fear of their Juſtice: And theſe are of two ſorts; Firſt, Malefactors that run from the Magiſtrate to avoid the dint and ſtroak of his Sword, or leſt he ſhould puniſh them for their evil deeds. The Theif, the Murderer flees for it and hides himſelf; if one know or ſee this ſort of men, they are (as *Job* ſpeaks, *Chap.* 24. 17.) *in the terrours of the ſhadow of death.* Secondly, Debtors, when they know not which way to anſwer their Creditors, or pay what they owe, flee and live ſolitary, leſt the Law ſhould take hold of them.

Fifthly, Not a few are ſolitary and abandon the company of men, being aſham'd to be ſeen among men; ſome are ſo nought and have run ſuch lewd courſes, that they cannot but bluſh to be ſeen of any to whom they are known. Others, whoſe vanity and prodigality hath cloathed them with rags, *will needs live ſolitary*, and out of ſight, becauſe they cannot make a fairer ſhew in the fleſh, nor anſwer the equipage of their old acquaintance. Thus ſome being aſhamed of their wickedneſs and villany, others being aſhamed of their want and poverty, will needs retire out of the view of the World, and live ſolitary. They are poor and proud too, they have high ſpirits in their low ſtate, and ſo are at once ready to ſtarve for want, and aſhamed to make their wants known, or to ask relief; they had rather dye in a Corner then go for an Alms. Poſſibly the men in the Text withdrew from men, becauſe their ſpirits were too high for their eſtates. *For want and famine they were ſoſolitary.*

Hence Note, *A wicked man is aſhamed of his affliction, or of his croſs.*

A godly man made poor by the hand of God, is not aſhamed of his poverty, nor doth he hide himſelf from men (how much ſoever he is afflicted) as aſhamed of his afflictions. But they who deſire to make a fair ſhew in the Fleſh, had rather not be ſeen of men, then not be ſeen in ſome kind of pomp and fair ſhew. This is a truth, yet I conceive, that the fourth cauſe of ſolitarineſs here ſpecified, was rather the cauſe why theſe men were ſolitary, eſpecially conſidering that at the fifth Verſe of this Chapter, 'tis ſaid, *They were driven forth from among men, and cryed after as a Thief.* The offences of theſe men made them obnoxious to the Sword of Juſtice, and therefore they ran into ſolitary places to ſhelter themſelves.

Hence Note, *As there is a terror of God, ſo a terror of the Magiſtrate upon evil doers.*

When they have done evil, they do think good to ſtand to what they have done. But you ſhall have them (as it follows in the latter part of the Verſe) leaving their Houſes, taking their heels, and

Fleeing into the Wilderneſs in former time deſolate and waſt.

ציה *Siccitas, ſiccum, ſiccus aridus locus. Huic* ציים *ſolitudinicolæ.*

The word tranſlated **Wilderneſs**, ſignifies dry, or a dry place; and the very People dwelling in ſuch places are expreſſed by it. (*Pſal.* 72. 9. *Pſal.* 74. 14.) *The People that inhabit the Wilderneſs* are called *Tſiim.* Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates here, *They flee into the unwatered Land*, or into the Land where there is no water; ſo *David* explains it (*Pſal.* 63. 1.) *In a dry and thirſty Land, where no water is.* A Wilderneſs is uſually a dry Land, an unwatered Land. The *Iſraelites* ſuffered much thirſt in the Wilderneſs. So that to flee into the Wilderneſs, is to flee into any barren or fruitleſs place. The Church (*Revel.* 12. 14.) *had two wings of a great Eagle given her that ſhe might flee into the Wilderneſs.* The People of God flie into the Wilderneſs, and the wicked flie into the Wilderneſs; here's a flying on both ſides, and both into a Wilderneſs.

Hence Note, *In regard of outward diſpenſations, it falls alike to all.*

Wicked men flie, and the Church flies into the Wilderneſs: And have we not ſeen thouſands of them flee out of this Nation into the waſt howling Wilderneſs? The Church or People of God flee into the Wilderneſs, becauſe the World is unworthy of them, (*Heb.* 11. 38.) Wicked men, or evil doers, flee into the Wilderneſs, becauſe they are unworthy of the World. The profeſſion of truth or the practice of holineſs, ſends the People of God into the Wilderneſs, becauſe the World is not ſo good as to bear them in either; prophaneneſs and ſinful practices drive the wicked into the Wilderneſs, becauſe the World is not ſo bad as to bear them altogether in either. *Fleeing into the Wilderneſs*

In former time] (We put in the Margin (*yeſter-night*) *deſolate and waſt.*) The word rendred **former time**, ſignifieth *either yeſter-night or yeſter-day*, (*Gen.* 31. 29.) *The God of your Fathers ſpake unto me yeſter-night.* (2 Kings. 9. 29.) *Surely I have ſeen yeſter-day the blood of* Naboth: We tranſlate by *former time*, indefinitely, yet

אמש *communitèr ſignificat & noctem & diem præteritam.*

Some take **former time** more ſtrictly, for lately, very lately; *yeſter-day*, or the *former time*, takes in all time paſt; as *to morrow* takes in all time to come; yet we are here to take it more narrowly, *yeſter-day*, for *lately*; and then the ſence runs thus, If theſe men have got any thing now about them, or are better houſed, yet 'tis not long ſince 'twas bad enough with them. They were lately in a very low, obſcure, and ſolitary condition, it was but lately, as it were but yeſterday, that they were forced to hide their heads in a doleful deſolate Wilderneſs; they were deſolate in their condition, and ſo was the place to which they fled, for a habitation. *Fleeing into the Wilderneſs.*

In former time deſolate and waſt.] That is, having no Inhabitant, or where no man dwelt: We read in Scripture of deſolate perſons, as well as deſolate places. It is ſaid of the widow (1 *Tim.* 5. 5.) *She is deſolate*, that is, in a deſolate condition; though a Widow ſhould have many friends and Children about her, yet ſhe is deſolate becauſe ſhe wants that company which was moſt ſutable to her, her Husband. And ſo thoſe places are deſolate which want their ſpecial company, though they are filled and crowded with other company. Thus Chriſt tells the Jews (*Mat.* 23. 38.) *Behold your Houſe is left unto you deſolate*; becauſe God (who is the filling of the Houſe) was departing thence. When neither the gracious preſence, nor the Spirit of God would ſtay there, the Houſe was deſolate. The greateſt throngs and Congregations are deſolate places, unleſs God by his Spirit be with them in their adminiſtrations. Churches are deſolate, when God is not in them; a Wilderneſs is deſolate, becauſe men are not in it; the Wilderneſs is a deſolate place in the largeſt ſence, having none but beaſts in it, who are unfit for the ſociety of men. *In former time deſolate*

And waſt.] The word **waſt**, is of the ſame root with the word **deſolate**, and yet it ſeems to intimate ſomewhat more: A Wilderneſs may be called waſt, not only as having little in it, but as having all taken from it. And ſo the Scripture ſpeaking of the Judgment of God upon a Nation, ſaith, *The Land is before them as the Garden of* Eden, *and behind them a deſolate Wilderneſs, yea and nothing ſhall eſcape them* (Joel 2. 3.) The moſt pleaſant Land becomes a Wilderneſs when all is laid waſt, how waſt then is a Wilderneſs when 'tis ſpoyled and laid waſt. In oppoſition to which, we read of that gracious promiſe (*Ezek.* 36. 34, 35.) *And the deſolate Land ſhall be tilled, whereas it lay deſolate in the ſight of all that paſſed by, and they ſhall ſay, This Land that was deſolate is become like the Garden of* Eden. The Wilderneſs which is waſt by Nature, is ſometimes made waſt by providence; ſuch a Wilderneſs might that be, here intended by *Job*, both waſt, and waſted.

Hence Note, *Sin drives men into a Wilderneſs.*

Sin drives all men into a Wilderneſs, though not in a proper, yet in a figurative ſence; Sin drives all that live and continue in it into a Wilderneſs, or deſolate condition, into a bewilder'd troubleſom condition, wherein (as in a Wilderneſs) there is no way, no plain way to walk in, and no clear way to get out. Sin leads into trouble, but ſhews us no way out of our trouble: It brings us into a bad condition, and there it leaves us, till Chriſt, who is the way, the truth, and the life, directs us the true way to life. Sin promiſeth men a Paradiſe, and that it will lead them into a pleaſant Land, into an *Eden*, into a Garden of God, but indeed ſin leads them into a Wilderneſs, into a perplexed ſtate, where they meet with nothing but Bryars and Thorns, with nothing but Serpents and Scorpions, with nothing but that which is grievous and vexatious. *What fruit have ye then in thoſe things whereof ye are now aſhamed* (ſaith the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 6. 21.) even then ye had no fruit but ſuch as grows in a Wilderneſs, wild and unſavoury, yea poyſonous and deadly, as it follows in that place, *for the end of theſe things is death.* Sin is a Spiritual death, and the end of it is eternal death; that's a howling wilderneſs indeed, out of which there is no way.

Again, From this deſcription of a Wilderneſs, (what's a Wilderneſs? 'Tis waſt and deſolate) we ſee reaſon to be thankful that we are not in one, and remember thoſe that are; that either are in a Wilderneſs, or in a Wilderneſs condition; either as having nothing at all, or as having loſt what they had. We live in a Paradiſe, while many better then we live in a Wildeneſs: let us bleſs God that we have a pleaſant and a comfortable Land to dwell in, and that we enjoy ſo many mercies and comforts (as we do at this day) in our Land.

In this Verſe we ſee wicked men fleeing into the Wilderneſs, in the next we ſhall ſee what proviſion the Wilderneſs affords them; and then we ſhall more fully ſee the goodneſs of God in keeping us out of it.

VERS. 4, 5, 6, 7.

Who cut up Mallows by the Buſhes, and Juniper roots
for their meat.
They were driven forth from among men (they cryed after them as after a Theif)
To dwell in the clifts of the Valleys, in Caves of the
Earth, and in the Rocks;
Among the Buſhes they brayed, under the Nettles they
were gathered together.

JOB proceeds to deſcribe the miſerable, and baſe condition of his deriders; as in the third Verſe he did it by ſhewing their flight into ſolitary places, ſo in this fourth by the meanneſs of their fare, and the pitiful ſhifts they were put to, to preſerve themſelves from ſtarving.

מלוח *Quidam aticam alii malvam eſſe volunt a* מלח *ſale, quod ſit herba amara & falſa.*

Verſe 4. **They cut up Mallows by the Buſhes.**

The Hebrew word rendred **Mallows**, is near in ſound, both to the Latine and Engliſh verſion; it cometh from a root which ſignifieth *ſalt*; thoſe Herbs are ſo called, becauſe they grow in ſalt and barren places, and are of a ſaltiſh taſt. Mr. *Broughton* reads it, *Which pluck up ſalt Herbs among Trees.* Some Mariſhes or ſalt places are altogether barren; and what any of them bear ſavours like themſelves. Uſually in Scripture, *a ſalt Land*, *and a barren Land*, are the ſame; the Lord deſcribing the wild Aſs, ſaith, (*Job* 39. 6.) *Whoſe houſe I have made the Wilderneſs, and the barren Land his dwellings*; the Hebrew is, *ſalt places*, as we put in the Margin; ſo (*Jer.* 17. 6.) The man who makes fleſh his arm, *ſhall be like the Heath in the Deſert, and ſhall not ſee when good cometh, but ſhall inhabit the parched places, in the Wilderneſs, in a ſalt Land, and not inhabited*; a barren Land is unfit for habitation, becauſe it yields but little or no ſuſtenance to the Inhabitants. Theſe inhabitants of the wilderneſs found but ſorry ſuſtenance there.

Malva cibus eſt viliſſimorum hominum. Plut. in Sympoſ. *Septem ſapient.* *Alima vel Alimus ab a privitiva particula & λιμὸς fames, eo quod famem ſedat.* Druſ. *Apud Mauritanos appelatur* Mollochia *atque per Babyloniam circumferentes in manuales faciculos componentes clamitabant Mollochia, Mollochia.* Serap. *Eſt a vox (mea ſententia) generale nomen eſt complectes herbas agreſtes.* Bold.

They cut up Mallows for their meat.] Naturaliſts ſay, Mallows are medicinal, and of much uſe in Phyſick; and as they are for medicine to the beſt, ſo for meat to the meaner and lower ſort of People. And ſome tell us, that the notation of the word in the Greek tongue implies that it is a proper food for poor and hungry bellies, becauſe it hath a peculiar vertue in it to appeaſe the rage of hunger, and cloy the ſharpneſs of a craving ſtomack, ſo that, the poor feeding upon it, were quickly filled, and found a kind of ſatiety or glut upon their appetite. Some of the Ancients affirm, that among the *Moors* this was a very common food for the poorer ſort, and that being tyed up in handfuls or little bundles, it was wont to be cryed up and down in the Streets (as many other Herbes are in great Towns and Cities) *Mallows, Mallows*; however we need not ſtay to find out, or critically to deſcribe the Nature of this Herb; it is enough for the opening of this Scripture, to know in general, that it was a vulgar, hard and homely kind of feeding; *They cut up Mallows.*

Nor need we here take this word **Mallows** ſtrictly, for that particular Herb, but, proverbially, to note any courſe diet or fare. So that when *Job* ſaid, *they cut up Mallows by the Buſhes*, it is as if he had plainly told us, they were very poor, and mean, even men of that ſame rate and rank in the World, with them that uſe to feed upon Mallows: As the Prophet ſaith (*Amos* 7. 14.) *I was no Prophet, neither was I a Prophets Son, but I was a Herdſ-man, and a gatherer of Sycomore fruit*; that is, I was a poor man, a man of a low condition. The Sycomore fruit, which ſome Interpreters upon that place ſay, was a kind of wild *Egyptian* Fig, was a food in uſe among the poorer ſort of thoſe times; As if *Amos* had ſaid, I did not turn Prophet for my belly, I had learned to fare hardly, which you (O *Amaziah* and your fellow-Court-Prieſts) can hardly do, and therefore you ſmooth up the King in his Idolatrous worſhip that you may ſerve your own turns, but Sycomore fruit will ſerve my turn. Now as to eat Sycomore fruit, ſo here, to *eat Mallows*, or to be a Mallows-eater, is a Circumlocution, denoting a poor man: That which follows is the ſame ſtrein of Rhetorick; *They cut up Mallows by the Buſhes*,

And Juniper roots for their meat.] The roots of many Trees are eatable, as ſeveral Authors, with experience teſtifie; but Juniper roots are thought very hard meat, if at all *Mans-meat*. We read of a City (*Num.* 33. 18.) called *Rithmah* from *Retham* (the word here uſed) becauſe 'tis ſuppoſed many Juniper Trees grew about it, or near to it. When it is ſaid here, *They cut up Juniper roots for their meat*, we are not to underſtand that they did it of choice, but for need, or of neceſſity; they were forced to it, becauſe they had no choicer food; ſome out of a meer wanton humour, chuſe to eat uncouth meats, but theſe did eat Juniper roots for want of better. The Septuagint, poſſibly, being unſatisfied that Juniper roots could be eaten and digeſted into nouriſhment, tranſlate the Text not particularly of the root of this Tree, but generally, *They did eat the roots of Trees through the extremity of their penury and preſſing hunger*. But 'tis a greater liberty then becomes a Tranſlator, to render that of any kind, which the text reſtrains by an expreſs ſpecification to one, eſpecially ſeeing both the experience of ſome, and the reaſon of others, have made it out, that even ſuch roots being well prepared and dreſſed may be eaten.

Radices lignorum manducabant propter magnam famem. Sep. *Dubium non eſt quam plurima radicum genera hominum uſui deſervire: At ex illis fuiſſe radices Juniperi non reperio, nec mihi facil perſuadeo; ſed mediate & arte aliqua in cibū vel in panem præparatas inficiari noluerim.* Bold.

There is yet another reading of this clauſe, which quite eſcapes this difficulty. *They cut up Mallows by the Buſhes, and Juniper roots to warm themſelves by.* The word which we render *for their meat*, or bread, they derive from a root which ſignifieth, *to heat*, *or to warm*. And I find it ſo uſed (*Iſaiah* 47. 14.) *Behold they* (that is, the Aſtrologers, Star-gazers, and Monthly Prognoſticators ſpoken of in the former Verſe) *ſhall be as ſtubble, the fire ſhall burn them, they ſhall not deliver themſelves from the power of the flame: There ſhall not be a coal to warm at, nor fire to ſit before it.* As if *Job's* meaning were, they had Mallows for meat, and Juniper roots for fire to burn and warm themſelves by. Some report ſtrange things of Juniper fire, both as to the extream heat of it, and the long continuance of it. The Scripture ſeems to intimate much that way, (*Pſal.* 120. 4.) where *David* ſpeaking of his angry enemies, ſaith, *What ſhall be given unto thee? Or what ſhall be done unto thee, thou falſe tongue? Sharp Arrows of the mighty, with coals of Juniper* (*theſe ſhall be given thee.*) As if he had ſaid, thou ſhalt have the hotteſt coals, ſuch coals as will maintain heat longeſt, implying that the hotteſt and laſting wrath of God ſhould be their portion. Some Naturaliſts ſay, the coals of Juniper rak'd up in the aſhes, will keep fire a whole Year; but I ſtay not upon this.

Sunt qui legunt, radices Juniperorum ad calandū: Ut לחמם *ſit Gerundium a* חמם *& lamed ſit ſervile.* Merc. *Aiunt ex Junipero factos carbones tanta eſſe vi, ut per annum integrum ignem ſervent incorruptum.* Scal. *contra* Card. Exercit. 328. *Prunæ Juniperi cinere opertæ uſq; ad annum perveniant.* Hieron. de 42. Manſ.

For though this Tranſlation, *They cut up Juniper roots to burn*, carries a fair ſence in it, yet *Job* here deſcribing the miſery and afflicted condition of thoſe men, could not have this meaning; for what miſery is there in this to have ſweet Juniper roots to burn? Again, had it been only to burn, what needed they to get the roots, ſeeing they might eaſier cut down not only the bows, but the whole body of the Tree for fire. Therefore ſpeaking of the roots, it is more proper for feeding then burning. And ſo I conceive rather, that theſe *Juniper roots* were cut up for food, at leaſt, that ſence is intended; and we may take it, as the former, for a proverbial ſpeech, not ſtrictly for the thing it ſelf, as if they did feed upon thoſe roots, but that they fed very hardly; as we ſay, *I will make you to eat ſtones*, that is, ſuch things as ſeem to have no more nouriſhment then ſtones; thus they did eat *Juniper roots*, that is, thoſe things which had no more ſavour in them, then a ſtick, or the root of a Tree, or a rotten poſt.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *Hunger will make meat of any thing.*

Mallows and Juniper roots will go down when hunger hath throughly whet the Appetite. *Darius* the *Perſian* Emperour being in extream heat and thirſt after his overthrow by *Alexander*, was glad of a cup of puddle water, and ſaid, It was the moſt pleaſant draught that ever he had in all his life. It is good for us to remember this in the plenty and abundance of all things which we enjoy; we who have the fat, and the ſweet, Corn and Wine, Fiſh and Fowl, ſhould think of thoſe that are glad to eat Mallows, and Juniper roots; that is, who live upon ſuch things, as we can ſcarcely count or call Mans-meat. The rich uſually ſin with their plenty, and ſo ſin away their plenty; God may juſtly bring thoſe to Mallows and Juniper roots, who are wanton in the uſe of their pleaſant meats and full Tables. We read in the Hiſtory of the late *German* Wars, and of that in *Ireland*, how, Famin prevailing, many did eat thoſe things which are the abomination of Nature; and that ſome were found dead with Graſs in their mouths, and worſe then Mallows and Juniper roots in their bellyes; as for Dogs, Rats, Cats and Mice, they were reckoned rich fare, and happy was he that could get them. Yea Famin forced many to boyl and eat old leather, as a very choice diſh. O how ſevere hath this hand of God been upon many Cities and Nations! The Scripture aſſures us how it was with *Samaria* (2 *Kings* 6. 25.) *There an Aſſes head was ſold for Fourſcore pieces of Silver*; The fleſh of an Aſs (beſides that among the Jews it was unclean) was very ſorry food., and the head of an Aſs could yield but little food yet Famin made it ſweet though courſe, and much though little, and cheap though dear; Ten Pounds (ſo the price is caſt up in our Money) was readily payed as the price of a poor Aſſes head. *And* (which ſeems more) *the fourth part of a kab of Doves-dung was ſould for Five pieces of Silver*; They who before did feaſt it, even to ſurfet, upon Doves fleſh, upon the rareſt fiſh and fowl that could be gotten for love or money, did then ravin after the dung of Doves, giving Ten or

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twelve Shillings (ſo 'tis computed) for a pint of it. There are ſeveral opinions about it, ſome (to allay the matter) conceive it was the dung of the Doves which was taken out of their crawes, before it had paſſed through the body by digeſtion; others, (and I think more truely) ſay it was their digeſted dung, and that this was uſed as meat, or at leaſt as Sauce becauſe of the ſaltneſs of it. *Rabſhakeh* threatned *Jeruſalem* with a Siege, that ſhould make them eat not only Doves-dung, but their *own dung, and drink their own piſs*, (2 *Kings* 18.27.) Oh what hard ſhifts Famin puts man to! And at the twenty-ninth Verſe of that Chapter before cited, we read of a woman pitifully complaining to the King, who ſaid to her, *What ayleth thee? And ſhe anſwered, this Woman ſaid unto me, give thy Son, that we may eat him to day, and we will eat my Son to morrow; ſo we boyled my Son and did eat him; and I ſaid unto her on the next day, give thy Son that we may eat him, and ſhe hath hid her Son.* This was a ſad ſuite. Yet not only Idolatrous *Samaria*, but Idolatrizing *Jeruſalem* was reduced to this woful exigence, as lamenting *Jeremy* reports it (*Chap.* 4. 10.) *The hands of the pitiful women have ſodden their own Children, they were their meat in the deſtruction of the daughter of my People.* Thus hunger hath compell'd Parents to fill their bowels with their own bowels, and of Mothers to become Murderers; Nature pincht, forgets to be Natural. To the hungry Soul (ſaith *Solomon*) *every bitter thing is ſweet*, (Pro. 27.7.) And what ſhould be ſo bitter to a Mother, as the fleſh of her own Child? Yet hunger makes that ſweet: even Mallows, and Juniper roots, ſcraps and crums are welcome to the hungry Soul, while *the full Soul loatheth the Honey-comb.*

'Tis ſo in Spirituals; the hungry Soul is glad of any Spiritual good thing, a little comfort, a little truth, though homely dreſt, and brought, not in a Lordly, but, in a homely diſh, O how acceptable is it to a hungry Soul! And how heartily fed on! While the dainties of the Goſpel are taſtleſs, if not bitter to a full Soul. The moſt delicious promiſes, have no ſavour in them to an impenitent unbeliever. He prefers his meſs of Pottage (any ſenſible, yea ſenſual contentment) before the Birth-right, and all the bleſſings which are tendered in the name of Chriſt.

Secondly, Obſerve, *Hunger cauſeth man to take any pains for the ſupply of Nature.*

They will dig up Trees by the roots, rather then not have ſomewhat to eat; as although their fare was courſe, yet they contented themſelves with it, ſo though 'twas hard to come by, yet they were content to take any pains for it; they would not only cut up Mallows, but ſtub up roots for it; we ſay, *Hunger breaks through ſtone walls*, that is, a hungry man oppoſeth all impediments, and uſeth utmoſt endeavour to be ſatisfied; hunger doth not only compel to eat Mallows, and Juniper roots, when ſet before us, but it compels, both to labour and ſuffer, to work and fight for them, rather then go without them, or dye for want. A hungry man is paſt modeſty and complements, he will eat unbidden, yea you cannot beat him off from eating, where bread is to be had. He will not only give his mony, but venture his life for bread, rather then dye or live only a pining life in the want of bread. When *Eſau* came hungry and faint out of the Field, he ſpar'd no coſt for his relief (*Gen.* 25. 32.) *Behold I am at the point to dye, and what profit ſhall this Birth-right do me?* Doubtleſs *Eſau* was in no great danger of death. It was the greedineſs of his appetite, the greatneſs of his paſſion, or rather the impotency of his Spirit, that made him ſpeak and give at ſuch a rate for a meſs of pottage, indeed the moſt coſtly meſs that ever was eaten in this World; the higheſt of the *Roman* luxury, never went to *Eſau's* price for a meſs of meat. Now if *Eſau* was thus forced by an inordinate, if not a wanton appetite, to ſuch a condeſcention, what will not a ſtarvingly hungry ſtomach force the hand unto. And thus 'tis alſo in ſpirituals; they who hunger and thirſt indeed for Chriſt and his Righteouſneſs, will dig for it, they will toyl and labour to ſweat for it, as Chriſt commands (*John* 6. 22.) *Labour for the meat that endureth to everlaſting life.* Who would not endure labour, as long as life laſteth, for meat that endureth to everlaſting life? Some pretenders to Chriſt will ſcarce pull their hands out of their pockets, or put their foot over the threſhold for Spiritual food, but if their Souls were hungry indeed, they would overcome all difficulties for it. The hunger of the Soul will carry us through more difficulties, then that of the body; the hunger of the body bids us dig through Stone Walls, but Soul-hunger will make us venture through the fire for food. The lazineſs and cowardize of many Profeſſors, are an argument that they have no hunger, no holy appetite after Spiritual food; they that feel it, will both labour and venture, they will take any pains, and endure any pain that they may be filled.

Thirdly, Note, *Nature will live with a little, and with that which is mean and courſe.*

Nature is content with a little, and grace with leſs. See the goodneſs of God in this; had he given us nothing but Mallows and Juniper roots, that diet might have ſufficed to keep us alive; and he might have required all kind of duty and ſervice from us, though he had given us no more, nor no better food then would have ſerved the turn barely to keep us alive, or (as we ſay) to keep life and Soul together. But as the Lord hath not dealt with us according to our iniquities, ſo not meerly according to our neceſſities; yea he hath given us full Tables, variety of meats, Fleſh and Fiſh, Corn and Wine, all the good things of the earth, and Air, and waters are proviſion for us, and ſerved up at our Tables. Such is the open handedneſs, the bounty and liberality of God, that he doth not only hold our Souls in life, but ſweetens our lives to us. Surely, if (as the Lord threatned his ancient People (*Deut.* 28. 47,48.) *We ſhould not ſerve the Lord our God with joyfulneſs and gladneſs of heart, for the abundance of all things*, he might juſtly cauſe us to *ſerve enemies in hunger and in thirſt, and in nakedneſs, and in want of all things*; even (as the prodigal Son was reduced) in the want of the huskes which the Swine leave after eating, or (as this Text ſpeaks) *in the want of Mallows and Juniper roots for our meat.*

Verſ. 5. **They were driven forth from among men, (they cryed after them as after a Theif.)**

This Verſe diſcovers the true cauſe why the men before ſpoken of, lived ſolitary in the Wilderneſs, and deſert places; their retirement was not elective, but compulſive.

They were driven forth from among men.] The word ſignifieth, to be *ejected* or caſt out as a baniſhed man, and that not ſimply, but with ſhame and diſgrace, yea to repudiate, as a Husband puts away a diſloyal Wiſe. When *Pharoah* ſought to ſlay *Moſes* becauſe he had ſlain the *Egyptian*, *Moſes* fled from the face of *Pharoah*, and dwelt in the Land of *Midian* (*Exod.* 2. 15.) where a Son being born to him, *he called his name* Gerſhom, *for he ſaid, I have been a ſtranger in a ſtrange Land* (*verſ.* 22.) *Moſes* was driven out of *Egypt* by a juſt fear, leaſt an unjuſt ſentence might be executed upon him. Many men are driven out of their own Land, or from their home, by the execution of a juſt ſentence upon them, either by man or God himſelf. Thus the word in the Text is uſed (*Exod.* 34. 11.) to expreſs Gods dealing with the Heathen Nations, in whoſe room he planted his own People *Iſrael*; They did not go out, till they were thruſt or driven out, *And he ſaid, Behold I drive out before thee the* Amorite, *and the* Canaanite, *and the* Hittite, *and the* Perizite, *and the* Hivite, *and the* Jebuſite. The Lord in his own counſel made an Act of baniſhment, or ſent a Writ of Ejection againſt all thoſe Nations, He drove them out. The title of the thirty-fourth Pſalm is, *A Pſalm of* David, *when he changed his behaviour before* Abimileck, *who drove him away, and he departed*, ſo we Tranſlate; as if *Abimileck* or *Achiſh* had expelled him the Court: Others render it as a friendly requeſt, to withdraw becauſe his Court-Lords either envied or ſuſpected him, which *Achiſh* profeſſed he did not, and therefore treated him fairly (1 *Sam.* 29. 7.) *Wherefore now return and go in peace, that thou diſpleaſe not the Lords of the* Philiſtines; yet the word in the *Pſalm* commonly ſignifieth to thruſt out by force. *Caſt out this bond Woman, and her Son*, ſaid *Sarah* to *Abraham* (*Gen.* 21. 10.) When God had examined, convicted, and ſentenced

גרש *Ejecit expulit. Non ſimplicem ejectionem & expulſionem ſignificat ſed ignominioſam. Propriè repudiare, ut maritus uxorem rejicit.* Fagius in *Gen.* 3. 24.

tenced *Adam*, and after all had graciouſly given him a promiſe of help by Chriſt, yet he would not truſt him any longer in Paradiſe, but *drove out the man, and he placed at the Eaſt of the Garden of* Eden, *Cherubims*, (*Gen.* 3. 24.) It was ſuch an expulſion or baniſhment, of which *Cain* complained (*Gen.* 4. 14.) *Behold thou haſt driven me out this day from the face of the Earth.* By all we ſee that when *Job* ſaith, *They were driven forth from among men*; his meaning is, they were baniſhed, or ignominiouſly thruſt out. As they were aſhamed to abide in Cities or Towns, becauſe of their wickedneſs, ſo the cry and clamour of the People, or the force of Law, with the power and Authority of the Magiſtrate, drove them forth from among men. The Hebrew is, *They were driven from among men*, or, *from the Body*, that is, (as I conceive) from Towns and Cities, where the bodyes of men, or men in bodyes, that is, in civil Corporations and Societies, do inhabit and reſide, or they were as perſons excommunicate from the body of the Church. Thus a learned Tranſlator renders the Text, *They were driven out of the body*; What body? There is, Firſt, A Natural body; Secondly, A civil body; and Thirdly, an Eccleſiaſtical body; he doth not mean it of the Natural body, they were not preſently put to death, but they were driven out of the civil body of the Common-wealth, out of Cities and Corporations, out of Colledges and Univerſities; yea out of the Spiritual body, or Church-ſocieties of the faithful People of God. They were ſuch a generation of men, as were admitted no where, or no where permitted. They were *driven forth from among men*. The Original doth not determine from whence, or from what body they were driven; but ſaith only they were *driven from the body*; to ſhew, that they were not fit to be in any body or ſociety of men whatſoever; but were looked upon as polluted, and abominable, as unſutable to the manners, and burdenſome to the Spirits of all honeſt and well-meaning men.

גו *Syriacum pro Hebræo* תוך *alias* גו *Hebreum eſt corpus dorſum aut tergum.* Merc. מן־גוא *ex corpore* Rab. Sol. מן קרב עיר *e medio civitatis.* Coc. *E corpore expellebantur; puta civitatis, univerſitatis, collegiorum, φρατριων.* Jun.

Hence Note, *Sin makes men unfit for the company of men.*

A wicked generation are not worthy to live, how much more are ſuch unworthy to live in the company of good men. And if good men, if juſt and honeſt men, think the wicked unfit for their preſence, will God (think you) admit them into his? Therefore *David* ſaith (*Pſal.* 5. 4, 5.) *Thou art not a God that hath pleaſure in wickedneſs* (his meaning is, thou art highly diſpleaſed with it) *neither ſhall evil* (that is, any evil perſons) *dwell with thee; the fooliſh ſhall not ſtand in thy ſight*, or, *before thine eyes.* And hence the Apoſtles concluſion is peremptory (*Heb.* 12. 14.) *Without holineſs no man ſhall ſee God*, that is, no man ſhall enjoy the preſence of God, or have communion with him. God will drive and baniſh all the wicked, the prophane and unholy from his preſence for evermore. *David*'s reſolve is as peremptory againſt ſuch (*Pſal.* 101. 3.) *They ſhall not abide in my ſight.* As if he had ſaid, I will drive them out of my doors, yea I will ſhut my doors upon them. And if they are unfit to abide in the Houſes of godly men, how unfit are they to be entertained in the Church of God? And therefore the Apoſtles advice, or command rather, to the Church, is, *Put away from among your ſelves that wicked perſon* (1 Cor. 5. 13.) As baniſhment is a civil Excommunication, ſo Excommunication is a ſpiritual baniſhment; Magiſtrates muſt drive Malefactors out of civil Societies, and the Churches muſt drive them out of their Spiritual Societies. The godly muſt come out from the World, they muſt *be ſeparated and touch no unclean thing*, when they will gather into a Church, the Houſe of God; and when they are gathered, if they find the World, that is, evil men among them, they muſt drive them out. They who are unfit for civil converſe, are much more unfit for Spiritual communion.

Secondly, Note, *To be driven forth from the company of men, is one of the greateſt puniſhments that can be inflicted upon man.*

Job deſcribes the miſery of thoſe men, as well as their wickedneſs; *Cain* complaines of this, as his greateſt burden, (*Gen.* 4. 14.) *Behold thou haſt driven me out this day from the face of the Earth, and from thy face ſhall I be hid, and I ſhall be a fugitive, and a vagabond in the Earth.* This was his cut, *Thou haſt driven me from the face of the Earth*, that is, from the face of men dwelling upon the Earth; this was a great cut, yet a worſer follows, *Thou haſt driven me from thy face*, that is, from Church ſociety, and ordinances, which the Scripture calls the face of God. How heavily did *David* take it, that he was thus driven out, (1 *Sam.* 26. 19.) *Now therefore, I pray thee*, (ſaid he to *Saul*) *let my Lord the King hear the words of his ſervant: If the Lord hath ſtirred thee up againſt me, let him accept an offering: But if they be the Children of men, Curſed be they before the Lord: For they have driven me out this day from abiding in the inheritance of the Lord, ſaying, Go ſerve other gods.* *David* was as a baniſhed man at that time, and having got *Saul* at an advantage, he tells him of his condition, Curſed be theſe wicked men before the Lord, *for they have driven me out*, ('tis the word of the Text, *they have driven me out*) *from abiding in the inheritance of the Lord*, that is, in *Judea*, the Land which the Lord owns for his, above all Lands, as his peculiar inheritance. They have driven me out from the Lords land, this was his great affliction; for in ſo doing they bid him *go and ſerve other gods*.

But did any bid *David, go and ſerve other gods?* I anſwer, None ſpake thus to him formally and directly in ſo many words, *Go and ſerve other gods*; But all his enemies ſpake thus to him equivalently or vertually, they ſpake it in a Parable, though not in plain terms; they that drove him out from the inheritance of the Lord, or from the ſociety of God's People, they did as much as ſay, *Go and ſerve other gods*, for they thruſt him among Idolaters, where he was in danger to be infected, and inſnared, either with the falſe worſhip of the true God, or in the worſhip of ſtrange and falſe gods. This *David* lookt upon and felt as his foreſt burden and greateſt danger, in being driven out from his own Countrey, the inheritance of the Lord. To be driven out only from the common ſociety of men, is ſo great an evil that nothing can bear up the Soul in it, but the preſence of God; that indeed will anſwer, and more then anſwer, or make up the want of the company and ſociety of men, yea of the holieſt men. (*Iſa.* 66. 5.) *Hear the word of the Lord, ye that tremble at his word; your Brethren that hated you, that caſt you out for my Name ſake* (they were their Brethren, of one Nation, of one Profeſſion and Religion, yet upon ſome point of difference, they hated them, and caſt them out, and that at leaſt in a pretence of zeal for God, for they did it (ſaith the Lord) *for my Names ſake*) *yea they ſaid, Let the Lord be glorified.* Now what relief had they in this caſe? Surely none, but in their own innocency, and in the preſence of God with them; which is expreſly promiſed them in the cloſe of the ſame Verſe, *But he ſhall appear to our joy, and they ſhall be aſhamed.* Thus Chriſt at once forewarns his Diſciples of, and fore-arms them againſt this kind of expulſion, (*John* 16. 1, 2.) *Theſe things have I ſpoken unto you, that you ſhould not be offended, They ſhall put you out of the Synagogues; yea* (as it follows, out of the World) *The time cometh, that whoſoever killeth you, will think he doth God ſervice.* Our only comfort in either caſe is, they who are thruſt out of the Church, or out of the World for God's ſake, ſhall find more then a ſupply of man's preſence by the preſence of God with them, in whoſe preſence there is fullneſs of joy, and at whoſe right hand there are pleaſures for evermore.

Thirdly, In that it is ſaid, *They were driven out from among men*;

Note, *Man doth not eaſily part from among men.*

He muſt be driven out, he would not go out. Man is a ſociable creature, and naturally loveth to cohabit with men. When God created man in the perfection of Nature, as a ſingle perſon, he ſaith (*Gen.* 2. 18.) *It is not good that the man ſhould be alone, I will make him an help* (that is, a helper) *meet for him.* God made all other creatures for the help of man, yet not one of them was a meet help for man. The Angels were too high, and more then man's match, the beaſts of the earth were too low, and wanting both ſpeech and reaſon, could not match man; therefore the Lord created the woman, and gave man a wife for his companion, that mankind might be multiplied and,

and live in ſuch company as was meet and fit for communion. Monchury, Anchoriſm, or a lonely life, which ſome chuſe and boaſt in as a ſtate of the higheſt attainment and greateſt perfection in this life, is not of God's inſtitution. God made man for ſociety; Therefore they overthrow the inſtitution of God, who withdraw themſelves from the ſociety of men. For though we may withdraw for a ſeaſon, upon good occaſions, yet no man ought to make a profeſſion of ſuch ſeperation. And 'tis againſt the grain of Nature in its pure primitive and unſtained integrity to do ſo. Theſe in the Text were evil-doers, yet in this they did well, that they did not leave the company of men, till *they were driven out from among men.*

They cryed after them, as after a Thief.

Theſe words are brought in by way of Parentheſis, and they carry a reaſon why thoſe men were driven forth from among men; they were as *out-lawed perſons,* they were expulſed the ſociety of men, becauſe they were falſe and unfaithful, at beſt ſuch as no man would truſt, all cryed out upon them, yea *cryed after them,*

As after a Thief.] That is, either they were Theeves, or they were under as much diſtaſt and diſgrace with all people as Theeves are.

Hence Note, *Sleathful perſons are to be numbred among Theeves; they who will get nothing for themſelves by labour, ſteal all they have from others.*

Vagrants may well be liſted among Robbers, and therefore to nouriſh idle perſons is to nouriſh theft; to ſuccour lazy poor, is not ſo much a relieving of their wants, as a ſtrengthning of their Vices. And as idle perſons are to be ranked with Theeves (though poſſibly they do not ſteal, either by outward force, or by ſecret fraud) ſo idleneſs makes many Theeves; They who will keep their hands from labouring and working, ſhall hardly keep them from picking and ſtealing. 'Tis ſaid of theſe men in the Text (*ver.* 1.) that they were not fit to be ſet with the Dogs of a Flock, and (*ver.*2.) that the *ſtrength of their hands turn'd to no profit*; and here, *They cryed after them as after a Thief.*

Secondly, Note, *Theeves in all Ages have been a hateful Generation among men.*

Thus it was in *Job*'s dayes, they purſued Theeves (as we ſay) with *Hue and cry* through Town and Countrey. Theeves are enemies to mankind, like droans in the Bee hive, that ſuck out the Honey, but make none; they ſteal away what others labour for. I intend not to inſiſt upon the iniquity of that ſin, there is a plain command againſt it, (*Exod.* 20. 15.) *Thou ſhalt not ſteal.* And the Apoſtles counſel is (*Eph.* 4. 28.) *Let him that ſtole ſteal no more, but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good.* Stealing is hateful both to God, and man; the light of Nature is againſt it, and reproves it, while the corruption of Nature is for it, and proſecutes it. In all Ages propriety hath been maintained, and therefore Theeves excluded. *If there were no owners there could be no Theeves.* God orders all things for the good of mankind, that we might live in peace, and doing our own buſineſs, might eat our own bread, *They cryed after them as after a Thief.*

Verſ. 6. **To dwell in the cliſts of the Valleys, in Caves of the Earth, and in the Rocks.**

This ſixth Verſe is to be connected with the former part of the fifth Verſe, *They were driven from among men, to dwell in the cliſts of the Valleys.* The words are a deſcription of thoſe vile perſons, by the vile dwellings and lodgings which they found in the Wilderneſs, whither they were driven; as he before ſhewed their courſe diet, ſo here their pittiful Houſes, or what a poor ſhift they made for Houſing. Some have goodly dwellings in wilderneſſes, we read of Towns in the Wilderneſs, and we have at this day many Towns in our Forreſts. But as theſe men in the Text were driven into the Wilderneſs, ſo they abode there, without any other Houſe then ſuch as the wild Beaſts have.

To dwell in the cliſts of the Valleys, &c.

The word **Cliſt** cometh from a root, that ſignifieth *to break,* becauſe a cliſt is a broken ground or earth; the earth is ſometimes broken by the Wind, ſometimes by the Water, ſometimes by the labour of man; a cliſt is any broken or hollow ground. Theſe are called *cliſts of the Valleys,* becauſe they are uſually in Valleys, or they make a Valley where they are; we may alſo render it, *Cliſts of the Rivers.* As if *Job* had ſaid, *When they could no longer be endured, in Towns and Cities, they ſought ſome hole to hide themſelves in.* The Natural Hiſtorian, ſpeaks of a ſort of men, that conſtantly lived in ſuch kind of Houſes, the cliſts of the Valleys, or, as it follows here,

Specus excavant, hæ illis domus. Plin. 5.c.9. de Troglodytis.

In Caves of the Earth.] The word which we Tranſlated **Caves**, is ſometimes rendred *Holes,* (*Iſa.* 42. 22.) As alſo, *Net-work,* which are full of holes or meſhes, (*Iſa.* 19. 9.) The word is likewiſe Tranſlated *Baskets,* (*Gen.* 40. 16.) And we put in the Margin *Full of holes.* The ſence is the ſame whether we Tranſlate *Caves or Holes of the Earth.* The Hebrew in ſtrictneſs is, *Caves or Holes of Duſt.* The beſt Houſes and dwellings of men, are indeed little better then holes of duſt: But duſt may be conſidered two wayes: Firſt, There is natural, Secondly, Artificial duſt; the beſt Houſes which are made, are Artificial duſt concocted by fire, and formed up into a beautiful Fabrick: But the Caves or Holes where theſe lived, were only Natural duſt. Their abode was in or under the Earth, *In Holes or Caves of the Earth,*

And in the Rocks.] The word here uſed for a **Rock**, is properly a Syriack word, and bears the ſame ſignification as *Peter* in Greek; that ſame Apoſtle being called both *Cephas* and *Peter.* Chriſt alluding to his name, ſaith (*Mat.* 16. 18.) *Thou art* Peter, *and upon this Rock will I build my Church.* This being ſpoken as a further aggravation of their miſerable condition,

כפא *Syriacum magis quā græcum vocabulum; idem quod Petrus qui & Cephas dictus.* Druſ.

Note, *An ill habitation, or the want of a good one, is a great affliction.*

To have no other Houſe then the cliſts of the Valleys, or a Rock, is an uncomfortable dwelling: And therefore Jeſus Chriſt, who was to ſuffer all thoſe evils which are common to man in this life, ſpake much of his ſuffering in reference to his Houſing or lodging. When he came into the World, his Houſe was an Inn, and his Chamber the worſt part of the Inne, a Stable among the Beaſts, and his Cradle was a Manger, there he was laid as ſoon as he was born, and wrapt in his ſwadling cloaths. Thus ungloriouſly was Chriſt the Lord of Glory entertained at his firſt ſtep upon the Stage of this World: He had no ſtately Palace prepared for him, but an Inn, a Stable, and a Manger. Nor was he better provided afterward (*Math.* 28. 20.) *The Foxes have holes, and the Birds of the Air have neſts, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.* Chriſt had no certain dwelling place, while he was purchaſing a Houſe for us not made with hands, but eternal in the Heavens. *God* (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Acts* 17. 26.) *hath made of one blood, all Nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the Earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation.* Let them ſee the goodneſs of God, the bounds of whoſe Habitation are determined in Cities, in goodly Manſions and Pallaces, not in the *cliſts of the Valleys, nor in Caves of the Earth, and in Rocks,* where wild beaſts inhabit.

Secondly, Where did theſe men who were driven out from among men, find ſhelter? Even *in the cliſts of the Valleys,* &c.

Hence Note, *Men of barbarous and beaſtly Spirits, ſhall be driven into barbarous places, and live among beaſts.*

I grant many men of Angelical ſpirits have been driven to live amongſt beaſts, to dwell in the Valleys, and holes of the Earth; *No man knoweth love or hatred by all that is before him:* But this is a Judgment which God often powreth upon the wicked; their habitation is poor and mean, they dwell in the cliſts of the Valleys, and in the holes of the Earth; and though this be enough to make them miſerable in this life, who know not the happineſs of a better life; yet *Job* hath ſomewhat more to ſay, of theſe mens miſery.

Verſ. 7. **Among the Buſhes they brayed, under the Nettles they were gathered together.**

שיח *Generale eſt ad arbores & frutices atq; adeo ad omnia virgulta nomen.* נהק *Aſinorum vocis proprium.* Druſ.

The word rendered **Buſhes**, ſignifies generally any kind of Trees or plants; yet here the ſence carries it more reſtrainedly to Thorns, ſcratching Shrubs or Buſhes; among theſe

They brayed.] The Aſs among beaſts is properly ſaid to bray. *Doth the wild Aſs bray when he hath Graſs?* Saith *Job* (Chap. 6. 5.) Theſe beaſtly men are elegantly ſaid to bray, or make a harſh horrid noiſe like wild Aſſes. As wicked men in great power, roar like Lions in the Forreſt, ſo being brought into great diſtreſs, they bray like Aſſes among the Buſhes.

Noſter interpres clamare in bonam partem intellexit; quod lætaretur, quum poterant loca inter arbores invenire, ubi latitarent; ſed verbum נהק *Non reperio niſi in malum.* Merc. נהק *In genere ſignificat, meſte inclamare; Affine eſt verbo* נאק Piſc. *Exclamabant læſi.* Jun. *Qui inter plantas agreſtes ſonabant famelicum quiddam.* Symmach.

Some Interpret this *braying* as a ſound of Joy, and content, or as a merry Song among the Buſhes; as if they were glad of any place of refuge and retirement from the out-cry made againſt them. But we find not that word either in Scripture, or in any good Author, importing joy in what is good, but ſorrow at the feeling of what is evil, eſpecially hunger and cold. That Text named before (*Chap.* 6. 5.) is a clear proof of it, *Doth the wild Aſs bray when he hath Graſs?* Implying fully that the wild Aſs brayeth not, but when he is pinched with hunger, or when ſomewhat troubles him. A late Tranſlater expreſſeth it fully to that ſence, *Under the Buſhes they cryed out as being hurt:* And one of the Ancient Greeks renders thus; *among the Buſhes they whin'd a hungry or mournful ditty.* So that *Job*'s meaning is plainly this, They brayed among the Buſhes as men half ſtarved with their Mallows and Juniper roots. They were hard put to it, being grievouſly afflicted, either with hunger and want of food, or with bad and unſavoury food.

Hence Note, *They who do like beaſts, ſhall ſuffer like beaſts.*

Some men in their proſperity behave themſelves more like beaſts then men; they are boyſterous, cruel, wanton; and in their adverſity they vex and rage like beaſts, and bray like Aſſes. The Church ſaid in her great affliction, *We roar like Bears, we mourn ſore like Doves.* (Iſa. 59. 11.) They could do nothing but lament and bemoan their miſery; yet as they did *roar like Bears*, to ſhew the extreamity of their ſufferings, ſo they did *mourn like Doves*, to ſhew the meekneſs and ſimplicity of their Spirits under ſufferings. The godly and the wicked fall often into the ſame ſufferings, but they are never the ſame in their ſufferings. They who refuſe to bear the yoak of Chriſt holily, cannot bear the Croſs of Chriſt quietly; *They who want patience, muſt needs be impatient under their wants.* They being among the Buſhes of a perplexed ſtate, are ſo far from patience and quietneſs, that they are in a continual toſs and trouble of Spirit; they bray like Aſſes, and roar like Bears, but they know not how to mourn like Doves. The Prophet deſcribes ſuch ſufferers, (*Iſa.* 51. 20.) *Thy Sons have fainted, they lie at the head of all the Streets; as a wild Bull in a Net, they are full of the fury of the Lord, the rebuke of thy God. Paul* had learned in every eſtate to be content, he knew how to be full and to be hungry, how to abound and ſuffer want; that's the learning and leſſon of Saints in Chriſt's School of affliction. They are often driven into a Wilderneſs, they are thruſt out among the Buſhes, yet they do not bray, but rejoyce there for Chriſt's ſake, in a good cauſe, and for a good conſcience; *Paul* and *Silas* ſang, they did not rage, and rail in the Stocks; Saints are often brought into a Brake, or among the Buſhes, and they can ſing there, while the witneſs of the Spirit with their Spirit makes them muſick; but as often as the wicked are among the Buſhes, they bray there both becauſe the trouble pinches them much, and their conſciences more.

חרול *Sunt qui carduum interpretantur & recenſent inter decem genera ſpinarum.* Druſ.

Under the Nettles they were gathered together.] I need not tell you what the Nettle is; the word ſo Tranſlated ſignifieth any thing that is ſtinging or pricking. *Under the Nettles they were gathered* (*or joyned*) *together:* Mr. *Broughton* renders, *Under the Nettles they ſmarted*, or, *were ſtung*, as another reads, which is proper to a Nettle: We may put both together, they gathered themſelves under the Nettles, and there they were ſtung, ſo ſtung that (as ſome expreſs it) they became ſcabbed. The ſtinging of a Nettle makes pimples, and a kind of ſcab upon the fleſh. All this ſets forth their miſerable condition, they brayed under the Buſhes, and under the Nettles they were ſtung. Why went they among the Buſhes, and Nettles? They hoped none would ſeek them there, or if they did, that they ſhould not find them; a man that is driven out, fears that every man he meets is an Enemy to ſlay him, or an Officer to attach him, and therefore he runs to covert like a ſavage beaſt, and hides himſelf among the Buſhes and Nettles.

Sub urtica pungebantur. i. e. *urebantur, adeo ut puſtulæ & abſceſſus ex urticarum contactu exorirentur.* Jun. vid. Piſcat. in locum.

Hence Note, *They that have an evil conſcience, are all for hiding, they love and hope to be hidden.*

They who are driven from among men, would be hidden from men. Buſhes and Nettles are their beſt ſhelter, who want the ſhelter of a good conſcience. *Adam* having ſinned, ran preſently among the Buſhes, there was the beginning of this pitiful ſhift; when God ſummoned him, he was afraid and hid himſelf; even *Adam* was braying among the Buſhes (as I may ſay) after he had ſinned; ſin putteth us upon poor helpes to hide our ſelves from God, and from man too.

Secondly, Note, *Sinful man becomes fooliſh.*

He hides himſelf with that which cannot conceal him, and ſhelters himſelf with that which cannot defend him. Theſe made hard ſhift for their food, and no better for their ſhelter; and as this is true in reference to bodily hiding and ſheltring, ſo much more in reference to ſpiritual: *Sinners will hide themſelves with that which cannot hide them.* (Iſa. 30. 1.) *Wo to the rebellious Children----that cover with a covering, but not of my Spirit, that they may add ſin to ſin.* This is to hide our ſelves among Nettles. What pitiful work do men make to cover their guilt from men, and far worſe to hide it from God. All the denials, pleas, or excuſes which ſinners make, are but a gathering of themſelves under Buſhes and Nettles. And what are Buſhes and Nettles? Buſhes are but ſcratching Shrubs, and Nettles are but ſtinging Weeds, yet under theſe they gather themſelves for ſuccour.

Thirdly, Hence Note, *How ſilly are ſinners, who hide themſelves not only under that which cannot hide them, but will hurt them, or be no better then a Nettle to ſting them, and a Buſh to ſcratch them.*

All the Curtains and Coverings that men make to ſhadow and conceal their ſins, without Chriſt, are but as ſo many Nettles, which will not cover but ſting them, yea ſting them worſe then Nettles. Nettles ſting the fleſh only, but theſe will ſting the heart and conſcience; ſinners will find all that they hide ſin with, even their gifts, and parts, (while out of Chriſt) much more falſe, though fair pretences and carnal reaſonings, but a Buſh of thorns and bryars to tear and rend them, or a bank of Nettles to vex and ſmart them.

Lay all theſe things together; Firſt, The food of theſe men, which was Mallows, and Juniper roots; Secondly, Their lodging, which was in Clifts, and Caves, and Rocks; Thirdly, Their ſhelter, which was among the Nettles, and the Buſhes.

Hence Obſerve, *The effects of ſin, are ſad and miſerable, even in this preſent life.*

Sinners receive but ill fare from the hand of ſin; and that lodges and protects them as ill, as it feeds them. Here's a wicked Generation, how are they fed? Have they a Table ſpread? Are they ſerved with the beſt? They are fed with Mallows, and Juniper roots, that is the chear ſin makes for them; yea wickedneſs will be as Gravel in their teeth, and as poyſon in their bowels. I grant many ſinners are full fed, they have liberal, large, and plentiful Tables, but in the iſſue ſin will feed them all with far worſe then Mallows, and Juniper roots, and moſt of the ſervants of ſin are no better provided for now: Sin uſually keeps but a very poor houſe; and while men make (from which the Apoſtle dehorts, *Rom.* 13. 14.) proviſion for the fleſh, to fulfil the luſts thereof, their luſts are making very lamentable proviſion for them. The Lord ſpeaks in a Holy paſſion (*Pſal.* 81. 16.) *Oh that my People would have harkened unto me*, &c.---- *I ſhould have fed them* *with the fineſt of the wheat, and with honey out of the Rock ſhould I have ſatisfied them.* But ſin fed them with gall and wormwood, with husks and bran. If we look upon the greateſt Number of men in the World, that live miſerably, we ſhall find they are ſuch as live wickedly.

Again, how did theſe men lodge? What Chambers and Beds did ſin prepare for them? Nothing but Clifts, and Holes, and Rocks. Where did they meet and gather together? Among the Buſhes, and the Nettles; what do they there? They bray like Aſſes, and vex themſelves like wild Aſſes that have no graſs. And if ſin make man thus miſerable in this life, Oh what will ſin do in the life to come! Then it will drive the wicked into the Wilderneſs indeed, into Clifts, and Holes, and Rocks indeed: And whereas now ſin ſtings them like Nettles, it will hereafter ſting them like Scorpions; the little finger of ſin, in the next life, will be heavier then the loins of it in this; that is, God who is the avenger of ſin, will then pour vengeance upon ſinners to the utmoſt.

From the conſideration of all theſe ſad iſſues of ſin laid together, take this Corollary.

Sin is very deceitful. As all ſin is againſt the truth of God, ſo it ſelf hath no truth at all in it. Sinful man breaks all the Commandments of God, and ſin breaks all its promiſes with man. The Apoſtle exhorts us (*Heb.* 3. 13.) *To exhort one another dayly, while it is called to day, leſt any of us be hardned through the deceitfulneſs of ſin.* Now, ſin hardneth us, when we dare venture upon the committing of it; and what makes thus daring and fool-hardy to run ſuch an adventure? Surely the hopes of ſome good we ſhall get by doing it, or at leaſt an aſſurance of impunity or freedom from evil, though we do it. For both theſe ſin undertakes, and will give us its word, if we will take it; and are there not enow who will and do take it every day? *Sin hath more credit with the moſt of men then God himſelf hath:* He promiſeth, and few believe him: Sin promiſeth, and there are only that few who believe it not: But ſin which is ſo large and free in promiſing, is not only narrow and ſlow in performing, but utterly denies performance; or its performances run quite croſs to its promiſes. Sin promiſes Gold and pays with Droſs, it promiſeth Bread and pays with Stones, it promiſeth Honour and pays with diſgrace, it promiſeth a Paradiſe and payeth with a Wilderneſs, it promiſeth liberty and payeth with bondage; in a word, it promiſeth us all manner of content, and pays us with utter diſappointment and diſſatisfaction: If any man hath a mind to be fed with Mallows, and lodg'd in Caves, and torn with Buſhes, and ſtung with Nettles, and ſcorcht with everlaſting burnings, let him hearken to the voyce, believe the promiſes, and take the word of ſin.

Thus we have in theſe words a deſcription of the ſtate or condition of thoſe perſons, who deſpiſed *Job*; a further deſcription of their perſons and pedigree, as alſo of their actions followeth,

VERS. 8, 9, 10.

They were Children of fools, yea Children of baſe men: They were viler then the Earth.

And now I am their ſong, yea I am their by-word.

They abhor me, they flee far from me, and ſpare not to ſpit in my face.

JOB having ſhewed in the former Context, how miſerable his deriders, or their fathers were in their preſent condition (*they fed upon Mallows and Juniper Roots: They brayed among the Buſhes, and gathered themſelves among the Nettles*) proceeds in this 8. verſe to ſhew how ſordid they were in their Original, or from how baſe a Root they ſprung; he gives us their pedigree, not only from the degree or Title of their Parents, but from their qualities.

Verſe 8. **They were Children of fools, yea Children of baſe men.**

נבל *Stultus ſtolidus, qui de mente defluxit.*

The word which we render **fools**, denotes a man fallen or failing and withered in his underſtanding, a fool wants filling, or furniture for his mind, he is but bare walls or an empty Houſe. Thus *Abigail* deſcants, and, not lightly but diſcreetly, plays the Critick upon her Husbands name (1 *Sam.* 25. 25.) Nabal *is his name, and folly is with him*; as if ſhe had ſaid, *He is a man of no underſtanding, his upper Rooms are ill tenanted or inhabited.* Our preſent Text ſaith of theſe men, *They were Children of* Nabal, that's the word. *A Son of* Nabal, is of the ſame ſignification in holy language with a *Son of* Belial: *Sons of* Belial are diſobedient rebellious ones, who will not endure the yoak, nor do what they know: *Sons of* Nabal, are fooliſh ones, ſuch as know not what they ought to do, or how they ought to do it. Mr. *Broughton* renders, *vile Children:* And another in the Superlative, *Men moſt wicked or flagitious.*

Homines flagitioſiſſimi. Jun.

There are two ſorts of fools: Firſt, ſuch as want wit or underſtanding; and they are in two ranks, either ſuch as have no wit or underſtanding at all, whom we call *meer fools* and *naturals.* Secondly, ſuch as have but a little wit, or are but thinly furniſht in their Intellectuals, ſuch as have not an underſtanding ſutable to their undertakings.

Secondly, In Scripture that man is called a fool, not only who wants underſtanding, but who wants honeſty and integrity; not only is he a fool, who hath little or no wit to chuſe his way, but he who makes little or no conſcience of his ways. Such I conceive *Job* intends in the preſent Text, they were not Children of ſuch fools as wanted underſtanding, or had no underſtanding, but they were Children of ſuch fools as want honeſty in their actions, and conſcience in their dealings.

Again, For the opening of this denomination, *Children of fools*, we may expound it by an Hebraiſm, not as reſpecting their parents from whom they deſcended, but themſelves, they were fools themſelves, what ever their parents were. *Children of fools*, are fools; ſo frequently in Scripture (*Pſal.* 4. 2.) *O ye Sons of men*, that is, *O ye men, how long will ye turn my glory into ſhame?* The Pſalmiſt having ſummon'd all at once to attention, *Hear this all ye people, give ear all ye inhabitants of the Earth* (*Pſal.* 49. 1.) preſently puts them in this diviſion (*verſ.* 2.) *Both low and high*; the Hebrew is, *Sons of men, and Sons of men*, that is, men in high place, and men in low place, as the exigence of the Text makes the difference between the two Original words, *Adam* and *Iſh*, ſignifying man. So (*Iſa.* 1. 8.) *Daughter of* Sion, that is, *Sion*; and (*Pſal.* 137. 8.) *Daughter of* Babylon, that is, *Babylon*; and (*Jer.* 46. 24.) *Daughter of* Egypt, that is, *Egypt.* Thus here they were *Children of fools*, that is, they were very fools.

Etiam filii hominis, etiam filii viri. Mont. *Filii ſtultorum & ignobilium, iidem ſunt qui ſtulti & ignobiles.* Sanct.

The general ſenſe of the Text ſutes to both Interpretations, either that their parents were fools, or that they were ſuch: Now both or either of theſe being fools of the ſecond ſort, ſuch as wanted honeſty and goodneſs.

Obſerve, *A wicked man is but a fool.*

The Scripture calls them ſo more then once, eſpecially in the Book of wiſe *Solomons* Proverbs. The whole body of the *Jews* was called a fooliſh people and unwiſe, becauſe they were a ſinful people (*Deut.* 32. 6.) Such uſually judge all others fools, becauſe they walk not in their paths, nor run with them into the ſame exceſs of riot, they think others have not ſo much underſtanding as they, and therefore do not what they do, whereas the true reaſon is, not becauſe they have leſs underſtanding, but becauſe they have more Conſcience then they. To fear God is mans wiſdome, and to depart from evil, is his underſtanding; what wiſdome or underſtanding have they, who neither fear God, nor depart from evil? The ungodly man is a fool;

Firſt, Becauſe he knows not what is good and right in it ſelf.

Secondly, Becauſe if he know it, yet he will not do it, and that makes him a fool much more. 'Tis folly enough not to know what is right, but to know what is right and not to do it, is the height of folly.

Thirdly, He is a fool, becauſe he knows not what is good for himſelf, yea he miſtakes ſo extreamly wide in that point, that what he thinks good for himſelf, is not only bad but worſt for himſelf. He is ready to conclude, he doth beſt for himſelf when he doth that which is right in his own eyes, though he neglects or refuſeth to do what is right in Gods eyes, nor can he be perſwaded, but that is beſt for himſelf, which is ſo in his own eyes, till both his ſight and feeling tell him the contrary. *David* ſaith both of and to the wicked man (*Pſal.* 49. 18.) *Though whiles he lived he bleſſed his Soul, and men will praiſe thee when thou doeſt well to thy ſelf*; that is (as I conceive) though a worldling have a high opinion of his wayes and works, and preſumes he hath done very wiſely for his Soul as well as for his body; and though flatterers will commend him highly when he pampers and provides for himſelf, and makes much of himſelf, living in pleaſure, and taking the cream of the Creature (this, in the account of carnal men, is for a man to do well to himſelf, as they ſaid (*Pſal.* 4. 6.) *Who will ſhew us any good?* That is, any good chear, plenty of corn and wine, as the next words in *Davids* choice, explain it; now, I ſay, though others or a mans ſelf ſhall think he hath done beſt, and therefore moſt wiſely for himſelf in running ſuch a courſe as this) yet ſuch a man hath done very ill, and therefore very unwiſely, indeed like a very fool for himſelf, as the words which follow in that 49 Pſalm (*v.* 19 20.) fully inform us; for as well and wiſely as he hath done for himſelf while he lived, *he* (when he dyeth) *ſhall go to the generation of his fathers, they ſhall never ſee light:* From whence this general concluſion (which concludes all ſuch men in the number of fools) is inferred, *Man that is in honour, and underſtandeth not, is like the Beaſts that periſh.* Such a man poſſibly, carried a reputation in the world, as if he had engroſſed all the wit and wiſdom from the reſt of the world. But at laſt he ſhall ſee himſelf like a Beaſt that periſheth, and then both himſelf and his learned flatterers will be forced to cry out, *We fools*, we thought the people of God to be a company of hare-brain'd mad people, but now we ſee we are ſo. *They are Children of fools*,.

בני בלי שם *Filii ſine nomine* i.e. *ignobiles. Græci Anonymum vocant, quod ignobile eſt.*

Yea Children of baſe men.] The Hebrew is, *Of men without a name*, that is, obſcure and vulgar men. Mr. *Broughton* renders, *yea a kind without fame*, that is, men whoſe names are not taken notice of. Whereas by an *Hebraiſm*, men of great renown, or famous men, are called *men of name* (Gen. 6. 4.) The names of great men are upon every mans tongue while they live, and when they dye their names are Chronicl'd and kept upon Record for poſterity. *Job*'s deriders took away his good name, being themſelves men *without name*, or rather men of an ill name, being of a low degree, yea of the loweſt degree, for ſome render the Original up to a Superlative; *The moſt Ignominious among men.* They were ſuch as either never lived in any reputation, or (which is worſe) they had out-lived it. Such was their parentage, who made it their buſineſs to diſparage and deride that worthy man, that man to whoſe worth God himſelf had given teſtimony. *They were Children of baſe men.*

Etiam homines ignominioſiſſimi. Jun.

There are two ſorts of baſe men ſpoken of in Scripture: Firſt, ſuch as are baſe in their blood, and birth; for though it be a truth, that *God hath made of one blood all Nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the Earth* (Acts 17. 26) yet it cannot be denied, but men may be diſtinguiſhed by their blood; ſome are of a more noble blood then others, their Anceſtors or Predeceſſors were men of honour and power, beyond their contemporaries. Though all men are made of one blood *materially*, yet they are made of blood differing *circumſtantially*. In common ſpeech he is a baſe man, that is born of mean parents,

Secondly, There are baſe men in Scripture language, who are ſuch in their conditions. Some are high and great in birth, place, power, and ſway in the World, who yet muſt be numbered among baſe men.. In the book of *Daniel*, that great King *Antiochus* is called *a vile perſon*; and *David* (Pſal. 15. 4.) giving the character of a Son of *Sion*, ſaith he is one *in whoſe eyes a vile perſon is abhorred.* The vile perſon there intended is not one poor and low in the world, a man that bears not a breadth, nor carries a Grandeur in the eyes of men; but the vile perſon there is the wicked and unrighteous man.

Hence Note, *Wickedneſs and unworthy actions render men vile and baſe in the ſight of God and all good men.*

Godlineſs and holineſs put a beauty upon men (*Solomon* in all his glory was not arrayed like one of them) though they are very low and unbeautiful to the eye. It is ſaid of the faithful *Elders* among the *Jews*, that *through faith they obtained a good report*, (Heb. 11. 1.) The holy actions of their faith made them famous. But wickedneſs obſcures the name and debaſeth the blood and Spirits of men: No man hath reaſon to boaſt of his great Titles, Power, or high place in the World, as if honour lay in them; true honour, is Honeſty, Juſtice, Grace, Righteouſneſs; when theſe ſhine in the lives and actions of any, they are honourable indeed (*Iſa.* 42. 2.) *Since thou waſt precious in my ſight* (none but the Godly are ſo in the ſight of God) *thou haſt been honourable.* Suppoſe the World hath not called nor accounted thee ſo, yet thou haſt been ſo in my account.

Again, Theſe men who acted ſo baſely towards *Job*, were the Children of baſe men.

Hence Obſerve, *The Image of Parents doth uſually appear and is inſtampt upon their Children.*

As every Child is his Father multiplyed, ſo moſt Children are their fathers exemplified. In one ſence, every Child that comes into the World bears the Image of his Father. It is ſaid of *Adam* (*Gen.* 5. 3.) *He begat a Son in his own likeneſs, after his Image*; Having fallen and ſin'd, he left the impreſſion of his ſinful nature, contracted by that fall, upon his Son: Poſſibly, *Seth* (the Son of *Adam*) there ſpoken of, was not very like his father in his feature as a man, but certainly he was very like him in his frailty as a ſinner. Thus every Parent whether good or bad conveighs his Image, and it is a black Image, to his Child; but as ſome Parents (beſides the ſinfulneſs of their natures) are tainted with ſpecial ſins in their life, ſo are their Children; *Such a Son, ſuch a Father*; the Child treads in the ſteps of his Father. And though no Child derives any thing naturally from his Parents but their ſin (even the Children of the godly receive no godlineſs by their natural birth) yet moſtly the Children of godly Parents bear their Image in godlineſs, they prove and act godly. We cannot affirm univerſally either way, that all the Children of ungodly men are ungodly in their lives, or that all the Children of godly men are godly in their lives: That's often croſt (Generation and regeneration proceed from quite different principles) holineſs runs not in a blood; and though ſin doth, yet the power of grace can change the courſe of nature: God makes exceptions to the general rule as himſelf pleaſeth. Good Parents have evil children, and ſome evil parents have good children; but for the moſt part the Children of godly men, being under the Covenant of grace, hold forth the gracious Image of their Parents; and the Children of wicked men, being ſtrangers from the Covenant, hold forth the Image of their Parents, which is corrupt according to the deceitful luſts. *They were Children of baſe men*,

They were viler then the Earth.

Or (as we ſay) *men unworthy to go upon the ground*; thus *Job* heaps up ſeveral expreſſions, to make their deſcription full. *Viler then the Earth.*

It ſeems, *the Earth is vile*, elſe theſe men could not be called *viler then the Earth?*

I anſwer, The Earth is vile, not in it ſelf, for the Earth is the Creature of God, and ſo good, for all was good that God made: And there's an excellency in the Earth as to it's uſe and ends; as alſo an anſwerableneſs in it to thoſe ends and uſes for which God did Create it; therefore in that reſpect the Earth is not vile, 'tis not vile in its own nature: But the Earth may be called vile;

Firſt, Comparatively to other parts of the Creation, becauſe it is loweſt, and as it were, the ſink of the World, according to the courſe of nature; 'tis alſo the groſſeſt part of the World, the water is finer and more pure then the Earth, the air is finer and more pure then the water, and the fire is finer and more pure then the air; the Earth is the groſſeſt part, and, upon the matter, but the droſs of the other parts.

Ipſo quod pedibus calcant ſolo dejectiores. Bez.

Secondly, The Earth may be called vile, as to vulgar opinion and eſteem. 'Tis that which every one treads upon; both men and beaſts have it continually under their feet; ſo that in common account the Earth is a vile and low thing. *Duſt thou art* (ſaith the Lord, *Gen.* 3. 19.) *and to duſt thou ſhalt return*; as if he had ſaid, thou art vile and mean in thy Original, and thou ſhalt conclude where thou didſt begin: Though now man ſeemeth to be ſomewhat better then duſt, yet to duſt he ſhall return. And hence the body of man is called *vile* (*Phil.* 3,21.) *Who ſhall change our vile body*: Our bodies are called vile from ſeveral grounds, eſpecially as they are defiled with, and inſtrumental unto ſin, it is not my purpoſe here to inſiſt upon that, or thoſe other grounds why the body of man is wrapt up in that humbling Epithete by the Spirit of God; but among the reſt this Text leads me to call our bodies vile in reference to the matter of them: The body of the firſt man was formed out of the Earth, and he is ſaid (by the Apoſtle 1 *Cor.* 15.47.) *To be of the Earth, Earthly*; and as in the firſt mans body, ſo in the bodies of all men, Earth is the predominant Element; and therefore ours are vile bodies, the chief ingredient of their mixture being the Earth, which comparatively to thoſe nobler and higher Elements is but vile. The Earth is vile in this conſideration, but theſe men are called viler then the Earth, as to their manners and converſations.

Hence Note, *The vileneſs of mens qualities and conditions, makes them viler then that which is vileſt in their conſtitution.*

The bodies of the moſt ſin-leſs and holy Men are vile Earth, but the ſinfulneſs and unholineſs of men, renders them viler then the Earth. *Abraham*, believing *Abraham*, ſaid to God (*Gen.* 18. 27.) *I am but duſt and aſhes*: The beſt of the Saints are but duſt materially as God made them, and they are but aſhes meritoriouſly, even they have deſerved, that God ſhould make them aſhes, that is, conſume in them and for their ſin to aſhes, as he did *Sodome*, for which *Abraham* interceded when he made this confeſſion, *I am duſt and aſhes.* Now what is duſt and aſhes? Duſt is Earth made by the heat of the Sun, and aſhes is Earth made by the heat of the fire; he that is duſt and aſhes (ſo the beſt of Saints are) is the ſmalleſt and vileſt Earth, yet the worſt of Saints is not viler then the Earth. A wicked man is Earth, and not only ſo, but he is viler then the Earth. A Saint is made of vile Earth, as the wicked are, in his natural conſtitution, but a Saint is made more excellent then the Heavens by ſpiritual regeneration. Thus he is Earth, and better then Earth. A wicked man is but made of vile Earth, yet himſelf is viler then the Earth; he is Earth, yet worſer then the Earth, yea worſe then Hell, by moral corruption. Grace ſets us above the Earth, he is heavenly that is godly: Sin ſets us below the Earth, he is helliſh that is wicked, and ſo is viler then the Earth. A wicked man hath Hell in his Soul, as he hath Earth in his Body: But a Godly man hath Heaven in his Soul, while he hath a Body of Earth, The one is *Heavenly minded*, and the other is *Earthly minded*, or minds only *Earthly things*, and to be *Earthly minded, is to be Helliſhly minded*; that wiſdome (as the Apoſtle *James* ſpeaks, *Chap.* 3. 15.) *is not from above*, which ſets the mind upon things below, yea it is not only (as he there adds) *earthly and ſenſual*, but *deviliſh*, and therefore, without doubt Helliſh.

They were viler then the Earth.

There are yet other reading of the Text. Firſt, ſome thus; *They were ſmitten out of the Earth.* Secondly, Mr. *Broughton* thus; *They were baniſhed from the Earth*: A third to the ſame ſenſe; *They were moſt miſerable wanderers*; and ſo a fourth, *They were ſmitten and caſt out of the Earth*; and a fifth, *With blows or ſtripes they were driven from the Earth*: The reaſon of theſe various tranſlations is, becauſe the word here uſed ſignifies to *ſmite* as well as to be *low*, or *vile*; we ſay, *They were viler then the Earth*: Theſe readings ſay, they were baniſhed, beaten, ſmitten out of the Earth. The word in Scripture is uſed to ſet forth the work of repentance, which conſiſts in a contrite Spirit, in a heart ſmitten and beaten to duſt, under a ſenſe of ſin. So we read it (*Iſa.* 66. 2.) *To this man will I look, even to him* (ſaith the Lord) *that is of a contrite Spirit*, Now a contrite or ſmitten Spirit is a Spirit vile in its own eyes, though moſt precious in the ſight of God. And as this word is applied by a metaphor to the breaking of the Spirit, ſo properly the breaking of the body in any of the limbs or members of it. Thus a lame man, is called a man ſmitten or broken in his feet. The Kings of *Egypt* were generally called *Pharaoh*, and we read of one of them (2 *Kings* 23. 29.) who for diſtinction, was called *Pahraoh Necho*, that is; *Pharaoh the lame*, or the *Halter*; which additional Title is made by the word in this Text. And as this word is uſed here in *Job* comparatively, to the Earth, for the ſetting forth of his deriders; ſo *David* uſeth it alone to ſet forth his (*Pſal.* 35.) where having ſhewed how compaſſionate he was to his enemies in their affliction (*v.* 14.) he preſently ſhews (*v.* 15.) how incompaſſionate, or barbarouſly cruel rather, his enemies were to him in his. *But in my adverſity they rejoyced, and gathered themſelves together, yea the abjects gathered themſelves together againſt me.* Abjects are vile perſons, men ſmitten in their eſtates and credits, yea often as Slaves or ill Servants ſmitten with cudgels, or whips; ſo a learned tranſlator renders the Pſalm; *The ſmitten gathered againſt me*; that is, vile men who deſerve and uſe to be beaten and cudgel'd. Thus here *Job*'s deriders were deſcended of broken and beaten men, they were men (as ſome ſpeak) of broken fortunes, and beaten for their ill manners out of the Earth. This reacheth our tranſlation fully: For what are they who are beaten and driven out of the Earth? They are moſtly a vile generation, men viler then the Earth, which all men tread upon. The godly are often baniſhed and beaten out of the Earth, for that which is their true worth, but theſe were driven out of the Earth, and baniſhed for their unworthineſs. This tranſlation heightens the ſenſe, and lays the parentage of *Job*'s deſpiſers, as low as words can lay them. *They were viler then the Earth.*

Afflictiſſimi erant extorres. Jun.
Percuſſierant & à terra abjecti. Piſ.
Ejecti cum verberibus è terra. Scult.
נכאו *Quidam reddunt percuſſi ſunt à* נצה Druſ.
נכה רנח *Afflictus animo*
נכה צלים *Afflictus pedibus.* i.e. *Claudus.*
Pharo Necho. i. e. *Pharo Claudus.* Merc.

Congregaverunt ſe ſuper me percuſſi. Mont.
נכים *Sunt homines, afflicti, percuſſi, fortunis everſi, viles.* Merc.

Job having thus deſcribed the perſons that derided him, proceeds to ſhew how they derided him, or what affronts and injuries they put upon him, what hard thoughts they had of him in the 9. and 10. verſes. Theſe were of three ſorts.

Firſt, In words, in verſe 9. *And now I am their ſong, yea I am their by-word.*

Secondly, In heart, at verſe 10. *They abhor me.*

Thirdly, In deed, or in act; and that two wayes; firſt, refuſing his ſociety, *they flee far from me*; ſecondly, abuſing his perſon, *and ſpare not to ſpit in my face.*

In verſe 9. he deſcribes the abuſes they put upon him in their words, and evil ſpeakings.

Verſe 9. And now I am their ſong.

They ſpake like themſelves, they were baſe, and they ſpake baſely. (*Iſa.* 32. 6.) *The vile perſon will ſpeak villany.* Theſe perſons were viler then the Earth, and that they were ſo, their ſpeech bewrayed them: They ſpake nothing but villany. *And now* (ſaith *Job*) *I am their ſong.* There is an Emphaſis upon that *now* (as was noted at the firſt verſe) Intimating that the time was when none durſt or would be ſo bold with him; time was when good men honoured and reverenced him, and the worſt of men, they who reſpected him not for his goodneſs, were yet afraid of his power; but now (ſaith he) in this time of my affliction, now I am bound up in miſery, they take liberty to abuſe me and offer me any injury; *I am their ſong*, that is, I am the matter or ſubject of their ſong, they make ſongs, they make ſcoffing ſongs upon me and my afflictions. The word notes ſongs, not only ſung with the voice, but play'd upon an Inſtrument of muſick. For both the Act of the Muſician in playing, and the Muſician himſelf, as alſo his Inſtrument, are expreſt by this word in ſeveral forms, eſpecially in the titles of *Davids* Pſalms (*Pſal.* 4. *Pſal.* 6. *Pſal.* 54. *Pſal.* 61. &c.) *To the chief Muſician upon* Neginoth, a muſical Inſtrument ſo called. *Now I am their ſong.* Not only a ſong ſung with the voice, but a ſong played, implying that to wind up their ſpirits to the higheſt peg of vain mirth at *Job*'s miſery, they not only made ſongs of him, but played them upon an Inſtrument.

Hi ſunt qui me nunc cantillabt. Bez.
De eo faciebant deriſorias cantilenas. Aquin.
נצינה *Proprie muſica pulſatio nam* מנגנ *qui manu pulſat inſtrumenta.* Druſ.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *Ungodly men deſpiſe the godly, yea though deeply afflicted.*

The afflicted ſhould have comforting ſongs ſung to them, not ſcoffing ſongs ſung at them. There are ſongs of praiſe and thankſgiving; and there are ſongs of abuſe and reproach. God was *Davids* ſong, or *David* made God his ſong, his praiſing ſong. That is, he made ſongs of praiſe to God (*Pſal.* 118. 14.) *The Lord is my ſtrength and ſong, and is become my ſalvation.* And as *David*, ſo *Moſes* made God his ſong (*Exod.* 15. 2.) what ſong? His praiſing, his rejoycing, his triumphing ſong; but wicked men make the godly (even in affliction) their ſcoffing, their reproaching, their abuſing ſong. To make abuſive ſongs of others, is the worſt way of abuſe, 'tis the height of deriſion, to deride in ſongs. For it ſhews that the derider hath it much in his Spirit; and takes high content in it, when he can take time to turn his malice into a ſong, and poetize in reproaches, yea it ſhews that it not only ſutes his Spirit much, but is ſoakt into and ſetled upon his Spirit. That which we ſing, ſinks deeper and effects more then that which we barely ſay or make report of. And as ſongs ſink deep into the mind of him that makes or ſings them, ſo they go deeper or more to the heart of him in whoſe diſparagement they are made or ſung. To be abuſed by the looſeſt word that falls from the looſeſt lips, will ſtick upon moſt mens Spirits; but to be abuſed in a ſong, or compoſure of words, to be ſung and cryed about, ſticks much more: There is as it were an indelible Character of Infamy left upon men, when once they are made ſongs, or ſongs are made of them. Therefore among ſober Heathens, it was forbidden under a very great penalty that any ſhould make ſcornful ludibrious ſongs, verſes, or poems of any, eſpecially of great men. And among the *Romans* it was death to do it, becauſe ſuch ſcurrilities gave occaſion many times of very great diſturbances, and mens blood being heated by ſuch abuſes to revenge it, might proceed not only to blows, but ſhedding of blood. And as ſome (they are ſo pained till delivered of it) had rather loſe their friend, then their frothy jeſt; ſo others have loſt their life for their jeſt; it is no wonder if that hath fallen under the reſtraint of Laws which endangers life. Beſides, Honour is one of the moſt precious things in the World (*a good name is better then precious oyntment*, Eccl. 7. 1.) therefore if Magiſtrates ſhould take care of the goods of men, much more of their good names, and of their honour. I will not ſtay to give further evidence how vile a thing it is to make jeering ſongs of men, eſpecially to make ſuch ſongs of men in miſery; in which caſe it is not only a great Injury, but the greateſt Inhumanity.

Lege 12. Tabularum ſancitum eſt; ne quis maledicum carmen in quēquam ſcriberet ut ultimo afficeretur ſupplicio. Tul lib.4.Queſt

Again, We may conſider theſe ſongs not only as an abuſe put upon *Job*, of whom they were made, but as the recreation and merriment of thoſe that made them: For why or when do men uſually ſing? The Apoſtle *James* will tell us (*Chap.* 5. 13.) *Is any merry, let him ſing Pſalms?* Men ſing Pſalms or ſongs, either when they are merry, or would make themſelves merry; then it follows, that theſe men did much pleaſe themſelves with *Job*'s affliction, who thus ſpeaks of them, *I am their Song.*

Hence Note, *Ungodly men rejoyce in and at the afflictions of others, eſpecially at the afflictions of the godly.*

The *Philiſtines* having taken *Sampſon*, bound him and put out his eyes, then called him, *when their hearts were merry, to make them ſport* (*Jud.* 16. 25.) And the Text ſaith, that *he made them ſport*. Surely *Sampſon*, being both a holy man, and an afflicted priſoner, had as little mind, as he had cauſe or reaſon to make the *Philiſtines* ſport. When therefore 'tis ſaid, *he made them ſport*, we muſt underſtand it paſſively, that he was the ſubject of their ſport, not the actor of it; they pleaſed themſelves to ſee the man grope out his way, or ſtumble in it; every one had a jeſt or a flout to beſtow upon him; they little thought how quickly he would change the ſcene, and turn their Comedy into a doleful Tragedy, their laughter into deadly groans and lamentable out-cryes. But as God ſhewed his juſtice, ſo they their cruelty and their ſcorn; they muſt needs make ſport with their Captive, a man in miſery. Thus *David* deſcribes the behaviour of his enemies in his ſelf-humiliation (*Pſal.* 69. 10, 11, 12.) *When I wept and chaſtned my Soul with faſting, this was to my reproach; I made ſackcloth alſo my garment, and I became a proverb to them; they that ſit in the gate ſpeak againſt me, I am the ſong of the drunkard*; as if he had ſaid, my mournings are their rejoycings: And my tears their wine. And as they jeared him in his voluntary or ſelf-humiliations, ſo when the hand of God humbled him (*Pſal.* 35. 15.) *In mine adverſity they rejoyced, and gathered themſelves together, yea the abjects* (for the opening of which word this Text was lately alledged) *gathered themſelves together againſt me, and I knew it not, they did tear me* (that is, my honour and good name with reproaches and ſcornful ſlanders) *and ceaſed not; with hypocritical mockers at feaſts they gnaſhed upon me with their teeth.* Mocking was the muſick of their feaſting, and they glutted themſelves with ſcorn more then with meat and drink, or rather (as we ſpeak proverbially) mocking and ſcorning was meat, drink, and cloth to them. Sad *Jeremy* found the ſame Spirit working in many at the calamities of *Jeruſalem*; for thus he brings in the Church of the *Jews* bemoaning her captivity (*Lament.* 3. 14.) *I was a deriſion to all my people* (that is, to all the perfidious ones among my people, or to *Moab*, *Amalek* and *Edom*, who were formerly ſubject to me as my people) *and their ſong all the day long.* We uſe to ſay, *Love me a little, and love me long*, but theſe (ſaith he) did not only ſcorn me much, but ſcorn me long, even all the day long; and (*verſ.* 63.) *Behold their ſitting down* (to eat) *and their riſing up* (from eating, or in the whole courſe of their time) *I am their muſick.* O how they inſulted over the poor Church in her affliction! Thus alſo ſome expound that in the Prophet (*Ezek.* 33. 32.) *And lo, thou art to them as a very lovely ſong, of one that hath a pleaſant voyce, and can play well upon an Inſtrument*: That is, his hearers went away and made lovely merry ſongs of him, in ſcorn and deriſion, either of his perſon or doctrine. Thoſe words of the former verſe, *For with their mouth they ſhew much love*, ſtrictly rendred out of the Original confirm this interpretation, as appears in the Margin of our own Bibles, where the Hebrew is thus expreſs'd; *They make loves or jeſts.* It ſeems the fine wits of thoſe times uſed to make libellous rithms or ſonnets upon *Ezekiel*, and his Sermons. Some to this day having heard the word of God preached, go away and laugh at him that preached it, and ſo the Miniſter is but as a ſong to them; and I know not which is the greater ſin, or ſhews the prophaner Spirit, to deride the word of God preached, or to deride a godly man afflicted; for as the will of God is heard and derided in the one, ſo 'tis ſeen and derided in the other. The will of God as to holineſs, or what we ought to do, is ſeen in man *as he is godly*, and the will of God as to providence, or what himſelf hath done, is ſeen in man as he is *afflicted*, and therefore to deride a godly afflicted man, is to deride the will of God all over, or quite through. Which will yet further appear in the next obſervation.

Thirdly, In that *Job* chargeth them with this as a proof of their unmanly baſeneſs.

Obſerve, *'Tis not only Impiety but Inhumanity to rejoyce at the afflictions of others.*

Though the *Jews*, when *Titus* and his Roman Army beſieged *Jeruſalem*, had mightily provoked him by their obſtinate oppoſition and refuſal of Articles, for a fair ſurrender of the place; yet when he ſaw the extremities to which they were reduced, and the inexpreſſible ſufferings of all ſorts of people, he could not but expreſs ſorrow, and ſhed tears at the ſight of ſo much death and blood ſhed in the midſt of his conquered enemies. Not only grace but good nature (as we ſay) or common Ingenuity teacheth us to pity thoſe that are ſick, and to mourn with thoſe that mourn: Mere Heathen Moraliſts teach us to rejoyce in the joy of others, and to be afflicted in their ſorrows. Is it not abominable to ſee Chriſtians act the Counter-part, either ſorrowing at the joys, or rejoycing at the ſorrows of their Brethren! Among all the mixt affections, that's of the worſt compoſition, which is made up of joy and hatred, when moved with hatred we are gladded with another mans calamity; this the proper affection of Devils, or wicked Spirits. As they are moſt like the Devil, who do miſchief to pleaſe themſelves as well as to hurt others; ſo they are next in likeneſs to him who pleaſe themſelves in ſeeing miſchief or hurt befall others. If the Devil have any Joy, it is in the miſery that man ſuffers; this is a vice rare among Heathens, and it ſhould be the abhorrence of Chriſtians.

Ἐπιχαιρεκακία *eſt affectus ex odio & gaudio mixtus, cum odio impulſi lætamur vel gaudemus in aliorum calamitatibus. Eſtq; affectus proprius diabolorum.* Magir. phyſ.

Yea I am their by-word.] Or, *I am to them for a word.* This expreſſion was opened (*Chap.* 16. *verſ.* 17.) therefore I ſhall but briefly touch it here. *Job*'s being a *by-word*, notes two things.

In communi, quaſi proverbiis utebantur Jobi *infortunia.*

First,

inducentes eum in exemplum culpa & miſeria. Aquin.

Firſt, Frequency of ſpeech about him, or that he was much in their diſcourſe; a thing or perſon much and often ſpoken of, is *a by-word*; as if he had ſaid, nothing was ſo commonly talked of, as my calamity, and my ſelf: I am the common theam.

Nihil tam vulgare ac tritum quã Jobi *calamitas; præbeo illis garriendi argumentum.* Bez.

Secondly, As it notes frequency of ſpeaking, ſo contemptuous ſpeaking, or ſpeaking of another in ſcorn, both meet here; *I am their by-word:* They often talk of me, and they talk of me deſpitefully, ſcornfully; their words are reproaches, and their ſpeakings of me deſpiſings.

Hence Obſerve, *The great falls of men, eſpecially the falls of great men, are much ſpoken of, but little conſidered by the common ſort of men.*

They are much ſpoken of, yea they are contemptuouſly ſpoken of; I might add, they are lightly ſpoken of, or they are ſpoken of without due conſideration. *David* ſaith (*Pſal.* 69. 11.) *I made ſackcloath my garment, and I became a proverb,* or a *by-word to them*; that is, they talked much of me. Again (*verſe* 26.) *They perſecute him whom thou haſt ſmitten, and they talk to the grief of thoſe whom thou haſt wounded:* It is an eaſie matter to talk much of, but a hard thing to make a right uſe of the ſufferings of others. Few improve their brethrens ſufferings, either to the glory of God, or to the good of their own Souls. As there is a voice in the Rod which ſmites our ſelves, ſo in that with which we ſee our brethren ſmitten; and therefore were we wiſe, when we ſpeak of the ſufferings of others, we ſhould ſpeak of them, not to deſpiſe them, but to inſtruct and admoniſh our ſelves by them. All the examples of the judgments of God upon his people in former times that are written, were written for our inſtruction and admonition (1 *Cor.* 10. 11.) not to make a common diſcourſe or Table talk of them, but for our learning; ſo the preſent diſpenſations of God are for our inſtruction too. How ſad is it to hear moſt men reporting ſad providences, while they do it, either to pleaſe themſelves, or reproach thoſe who are fallen under them. Juſt as we may conceive *Jobs* enemies diſcourſing of him and his ſufferings in their meetings; *Friends, Neighbours, have you not heard what is befallen* Job? *Or have you not heard how* Job *is fallen? He lately was as a Star, yea as the Sun ſhining bright in the Firmament of the State; what think ye friends, neighbours, of the ſudden ruine and downfal of this man? How ſtrangely is he caſt down? He that had ſuch an abundance, is ſtript of all; he that had ſuch great power and authority, no man regards him: He that had ſo many Servants to attend him, is now forced to ſcrape his own ſores; is not this an argument (friends) that ſurely he was proud of what he had gotten, or that he got it by injuſtice and oppreſſion? Yea, is not this an argument that he regarded not God, though he ſeemed zealous to worſhip him? See how God hath met with him: See how God hath met with that Tyrant, with that Oppreſſor, with that Uſurper, with that meer fancy or ſhadow of piety; ſee how God hath turned him down to the duſt.* Such (poſſibly) was the diſcourſe of wicked men about *Job*, not how they might glorifie God, or benefit themſelves by the fall of ſo eminent a perſon: And is not the diſcourſe of many of the ſame ſtrein and tendency? Do not they diſcant thus upon the ſeverer diſpenſations of God towards ſome of his precious Servants?

Thus far of the firſt way, in which *Jobs* deriders vented themſelves againſt him. Now from abuſe by words, the Text proceeds to their diſdainful thoughts, and from thence to their diſdainful acts: Which were twofold; Firſt, *They fled from him*; Secondly, *They ſpat in his face.*

Verſ. 10. **They abhor me.**

תעב *Averſari abominari ſignificat omnibus ſenſibus abhorrere ab aliqua re.*

The word imports averſation, proceeding from abomination or loathing (*Iſa.* 1. 13.) *Bring no more oblations to me; Incenſe is an abomination to me,* ſaid the Lord to the hypocritical *Jews*; there is nothing more abhorrent to God then falſe worſhip, and falſe-hearted worſhippers; ſuch an abhorrence was *Job*, though a worſhipper in truth, to his deriders. It was a great affliction to *Job* to be jeer'd in their ſongs, and to be made their Table-talk, or high-way talk; but to be abhorr'd and deteſted as a monſter of men, as a man unworthy to live among men, this was far more afflictive then the former; yet thus they dealt with upright *Job*, *they abhorr'd him.*

Here it may be enquired, upon what account they did abhor him?

There is an abhorrence of man; firſt, in regard of his ſinfulneſs, this only renders man an abhorrence in the ſight of God. Secondly, in regard of his miſerableneſs. The worſt of *Jobs* enemies could not eſpy any real ſin-ſpots upon him, though poſſibly they fancied ſuch as had they been true would have made him abominable; but that which was both real and viſible, his poor forlorn condition, might ſtir up in their proud hearts an abhorrence of him. Again, we abhor things or perſons under a threefold notion: Firſt, as infectious; thus we abhor thoſe that have the Plague, the Leproſie, or any other contagious diſeaſe; Secondly, we abhor thoſe things which ſome call *unlucky*, as if the meeting or ſight of them did foreſpeak ſome evil ready to fall upon us. Thirdly, we abhor that which is monſtrous, deformed, or miſhapen; 'tis not improbable, that thoſe baſe men might abhor *Job* under the firſt and laſt, if not under all theſe three conſiderations; for his diſeaſes and ſores were very offenſive, if not infectious, and they had rendred him very unpleaſing, doubtleſs, and deformed to the eye, as if he had been ſome miſhapen Image of a man, rather then a living man: For theſe reaſons they, who in Chapter twenty ninth honoured him, as if he had been more then a man, now abhorr'd him as if he were not only below, or leſs then a man, but ſome hateful or hurtful Beaſt.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *Nothing is more uncertain then honour among men.*

The ſame perſon continuing alſo the ſame for his ſpirituals and morals, may be admired to day, and abhorr'd to morrow.

Secondly, Obſerve, *Moſt men fancy to themſelves horrid and monſtrous notions of thoſe that are under terrible and ſore Judgments.*

What kind of man is this (thought they) with whom God deals thus? Many form and ſhape their thoughts of the man ſuffering, according to the idæa or pattern of thoſe things which he ſuffers, as hath been ſhewed from other paſſages of this Book.

Thirdly, Note, *Many are abhorr'd among men, who are highly honoured and loved by God.*

God doth not abhor but love the righteous whom he ſmites, though men do; they lie in his boſome, and are in his very heart, while under his afflicting hand. *The wicked bleſs the Covetous, whom the Lord abhors* (*Pſal.* 10. 2.) and the Lord kiſſeth the righteous, whom wicked men abhor; and then moſt, when they abhor them moſt. See how croſs the Judgment of men is to the Judgment of God; they bleſs the Covetous, they think them to be very bleſſed men, though God abhor them, and they abhor thoſe whom God bleſſeth; that is, whom God delights in and rejoyceth over. Chriſt tells us (*Luke* 16. 15.) *That which is highly eſteemed among men is an abomination in the ſight of God.* And whether we reſpect things or perſons, that which is abominated by men, is often highly eſteemed by God. *Jobs* friends abhorr'd him, but the Lord loved him. *They abhor me*

And flee far from me.] This follows neceſſarily upon the former; where there is an alienation of affection, there enſues eſtrangement in converſation. Formerly all made addreſſes to *Jobs* Court, and were glad if they could but come nigh him, or get into the preſence Chamber; but now they *flee from him*, yea they not only *flee from him*, but *flee far from him*, as if they thought they could never go far enough from him. And why all this? He was now ſick and ſore, poor and deſtitute, his worldly comforts were fled from him, and therefore theſe men fled from him too.

Hence Note, *When riches and honours depart, carnal friends and flatterers will depart alſo:* Or, *When worldly things leave us, the men of the World will leave us.*

Solomon ſaith (*Pro.* 23. 5.) *Riches make themſelves wings, and flee away as an Eagle toward Heaven.* And we often ſee when Riches are upon the wing, pretending friends will make themſelves wings, and flee away alſo. Few friends will abide by the poor and miſerable; *the poor is hated of his own neighbour* (*Prov.* 14.20.) And again (*Prov.* 19. 4.) *Wealth maketh many friends*; *but the poor is ſeparated from his Neighbour*; that is, his Neighbour ſeperates from him, or as this Text ſpeaks, *flyes far from him*. Poverty is indeed a line of ſeparation, but it often proves a wall of ſeparation; and as all rich men are far from poverty, ſo many of them are far from the poor, though they dwell at next door. When our Lord Jeſus Chriſt was under an Arreſt by the Officers of the high Prieſt, all forſook him and fled, even his own Diſciples run for it. They are rare friends, of whom it may be ſaid, as Chriſt ſpake once to his Diſciples (*Luke* 22. 28.) *Ye are they who have continued with me in my temptation.* As temptation tryeth us, ſo it tryeth our friends: Temptation tryeth our faith, patience, and ſincerity; and it tryeth their love, compaſſion, and charity. *A friend* (ſaith *Solomon*, *Prov.* 17. 17.) *loveth at all times*; that is, a friend ought to love at all times, that's the true genious of a friend; and a true friend will be ever thus ingenious. But ſuch a friend is not to be had under every hedge. There are enow that will continue with their friends in their proſperity, greatneſs and glory, but will they continue with them in their temptations, when nothing but Clouds and darkneſs are about them? How happy are they who are under the ſtrength and influences of that promiſe (*Heb.* 13. 5.) *I will never leave thee, nor forſake thee.* When thy riches are gone, honours gone, friends gone, when all theſe, and all elſe flee far from thee, yet ſaith God, I will not be gone, *I will never leave thee.* Friends may flee from thee when riches are fled, but I will never flee from thee when riches are fled: I will never leave thee, nor forſake thee, I will not do it in thy loweſt, in thy worſt condition. Thrice happy and ever bleſſed are they that have an intereſt in God as their friend, who is neareſt to us when ſorrows are at hand, and worldly comforters ſtand afar off. *They* (ſaith *Job*) *flee far from him.*

And ſpare not to ſpit in my face.

The Hebrew is, *And with-held not ſpittle from my face.* When *Job* ſaith, *They ſpare not to ſpit in my face*, their not ſparing this part of their misbehaviour imports two things.

Firſt, That they were very frequent in doing it, or did it very much.

Secondly, That the thing was done in the height of contempt. A man may be contemn'd beyond all reaſon, though ſpitting in his face be ſpared, or abated him, but theſe miſcreants would not ſo much as ſpare or abate that.

Further for the clearing of this paſſage, take two or three opinions, what ſhould be meant by ſpitting in his face; 'tis very ſtrange (almoſt incredible) that they ſhould arrive at that height of lewdneſs and impudence to ſpit in his face; the words then may be conſidered three wayes.

Firſt, In a proper ſence, or ſtrictly; ſo moſt of the Latines interpret them: And it may not be thought impoſſible that wicked men, Satans inſtruments, ſhould do ſuch a thing, when we conſider how far *Job* was given up to the power of Satan, nothing was excepted but his life. And we know that Jeſus Chriſt himſelf endured ſpitting upon his face litterally; as both the Propheſie ſpake of him (*Iſa.* 50. 6.) *he with-held not his face from ſhame and ſpitting*; as alſo the Hiſtory reports (*Mat.* 26. 67. & 27. 30.) *They ſpit in his face.*

Secondly, Others expound it thus; they did ſpit contemptuouſly before him, or in his ſight: So that phraſe (*in his face*) is rendred (*Deut.* 4. 37.) *Becauſe he* (that is, the Lord) *loved thy fathers, therefore he choſe their ſeed after them, and brought them forth in his ſight*, or, *in his face.* To ſpit in the ſight of great perſons, or before their face, is a great Incivility, and (upon the matter) *to ſpit in their face*; and therefore the Maſters of manners and Courtſhip ſay, that in addreſſing unto great perſons, no man ſhould dare ſo much as to ſpit in their preſence, or when they are before them, but turn aſide upon ſuch neceſſities of nature. Some ſtick much upon this Interpretation; as if *Job* had thus expreſſed himſelf; they who had more manners heretofore, and knew what belonged to my ſtate (being a Magiſtrate) now quite forget both themſelves and me, they have now laid down or forgotten all reſpect and civility.

Quaſi Job *querebatur quod non averſa facie ſputa & ſalivas coram eo eijcerent, quod cum eſſet in proſperis facere non auſi eſſent, ſed omni reverentia vultum ſimul cum corpore divertiſſent.* Bold.

Cyrus exercuit principes ſuos ut neq; ſpuere neq; mucum emittere apparerent. Zenoph. In ſua pedia de cyto. lib. 8.

Thirdly, We may Interpret the words metaphorically; neither for a direct ſpitting in his face, nor in his preſence, but for any kind of diſgrace and diſreſpect put upon him, eſpecially by rude and uncomely language. In which ſence *Job* alſo complained (*Chap.* 16. 10.) *They have ſmitten me upon the cheek reproachfully*; that is, they have ſmitten me with reproaches. By a Metaphor a man is ſmitten upon the cheek or face, when he is reproached with opprobrious words, and likewiſe his face is ſpit upon, when reproached. So that when *Job* ſaith, *They ſpit in my face*; It is as if he had more plainly expreſſed himſelf thus; *What need I ſtand to reckon up particular abuſes, they did not ſpare to do me the greateſt indignity, and to pour the greateſt contempt imaginable upon me, even as if they did ſpit in my very face.* Ill words are like the ſpittle or foam of an angry mouth; and when any ſhall give a man ill language openly, or (as we ſay) to his face, it may be ſaid they ſpit in his face. We read (*Deut.* 25. 9.) in the caſe of a man that would not take his deceaſed brothers wife; *Then ſhall his brothers wife come unto him in the preſence of the Elders, and ſhall looſe his ſhooe from off his foot, and ſpit in his face.* There is much debate among Interpreters about this action, and moſt conclude, that ſhe did not directly ſpit in the mans face, but caſt his refuſal of her as a great diſhonour upon him. The words following may be expounded to the ſame ſence; *And it ſhall be ſaid, ſo ſhall it be done unto that man that will not build up his brothers houſe*: That is, let it be a blot and a reproach to him, let him be deteſted. We uſually ſpit at the ſight or mention of thoſe things which we nauſeate and deteſt. Again (*Num.* 12. 14.) when *Moſes* ſaith concerning *Miriam*; *If her father had ſpit in her face*: The Chaldee Paraphraſe hath it, *If her father had grievouſly chid or reproved her, ſhould ſhe not be aſhamed ſeven dayes?* The rebukes of Parents are a kind of ſpitting in their Childrens faces. We have ſuch a proverbial ſpeech among us, when we would deny a thing, charged upon us, with greateſt indignation, we ſay, if it can be proved that I have done ſo or ſo, *I will give you leave to ſpit in my face*; that is, to uſe me, or ſpeak of me with utmoſt diſgrace. So that here is the complement of all their evil manners, the filling up of all their contemptuous carriages towards *Job*; if there were any action or abuſe worſe then other, they did not forbear to do it, even to do as bad as to ſpit in his face.

Per ſputum intelliguntur injuriæ & contumeliæ coram & in facie jactatæ. Utrumq; enim fœdum oris excrementum eſt, ſive putre ſputum ſive turpe verbū. Fluxa verba quaſi defluentes ſalivas emittunt. Greg. *Idem videtur ſenſiſſe Auguſtinus, hunc locum ſic exponens Malè me innoteſcere fecerunt.*

רק *ſputum, unde* רקה *conſpuendus.* Mat. 5. 22.

Si pater increpando increpaſſet. Chald. Paraph.

Some are of opinion, that *Job* ſpake thus with ſpecial reference to *Bildad* and *Zophar*, two of his three friends, who indeed had given him very courſe language, and did only not ſpit in his face; but I cannot ſubſcribe to that conjecture, becauſe the character of the perſons complained of by *Job* for offering him this indignity, is utterly unſutable to the gravity and goodneſs of thoſe worthy men; and therefore let it remain upon that ruder crew of the ill-bred multitude, whoſe impudence and ignorance might ſufficiently prompt them to do and ſpeak againſt him as ill as is imaginable. *They ſpare not to ſpit in my face.*

Hoc propter Bildadum *&* Zopharum *videtur dicere, aquibus atrociſſimè convitiis proſciſſus fuerat & tantum non conſputus.* Merc.

Hence Note, Firſt, *There is no action ſo vile and uncivil, which evil men will forbear when they have an opportunity.*

They will not ſpare to ſpit in a mans face, in the proper, much leſs in the metaphorical ſence: They who have no credit of their own, care little whom they diſcredit, or how they diſcredit others. *As Innocency and goodneſs, ſo honour and greatneſs, are no defence againſt an evil tounge; that will break and ſtrike through all.* *Job* once great and honourable, ſtill good and innocent, found it ſo.

Hence Note, Secondly, *There is no Indignity ſo baſe and ignominious, but a godly man may meet with it in and from the World.*

The beſt of men may have the worſt reproaches caſt upon them; they may hear themſelves called fools, hypocrites, time-ſervers, what not? How often have ſuch Titles been ſpit in the faces of the deareſt and moſt precious Servants of God? Therefore Saints had need be inſtructed how to paſs through evil report, as well as good report. Do not think it ſtrange to be diſhonour'd. It was the Counſel which *Cæſar* gave his Souldiers at a Battel; *Souldiers ſtrike at their faces.* Thus many will not ſpare faces; they ſpit upon the hononr and reputations of the righteous.

The Lord threatens the drunken *Chaldean* (*Hab.* 2. 16.) *That ſhameful ſpewing ſhall be upon his glory.* But wicked men will ſpit and ſpew ſhame upon the glory of the moſt ſober and holy men.

VERS. 11, 12.

Becauſe he hath looſed my cord, and afflicted me; they have alſo let looſe the bridle before me.

Upon my right hand riſe the youth, they puſh away my feet, and they raiſe up againſt me the wayes of their deſtruction.

IN the former part of this Chapter, we have had a large deſcription of *Jobs* deſpiſers, or what ſort of men they were. A good man is rarely found at any ſuch work, and he never continues at it. Theſe mens work was as bad almoſt as is imaginable, and themſelves (as appears by *Jobs* report of them) were no better. Yet *Job* doth not ſtay in them, nor ſpend himſelf in bitter invectives againſt them, but having ſhewed what they were, he, as heretofore, gathers up his ſpirits, and turns from the creature unto God, riſing higher in his thoughts then any thing in thoſe poor deſpiſers, for the reaſon why he was deſpiſed; *Job* looked beyond the inſtrumental to the ſupream cauſe of his ſufferings, even unto God, who hath both the tongues and ſpirits of men in his hand; that is, at his command. And therefore he now begins to give us an account how and whence it came to paſs, that ſuch vile perſons, men viler then the Earth, trampled on him as the Earth, or as the mire in the ſtreets. And the account which he gives is laid down in the verſe following.

Verſ. 11. **Becauſe he hath looſed my cord, and afflicted me, they have alſo let looſe the bridle upon me.**

As if he had ſaid, *Though I hear and ſee, to my ſorrow, what theſe miſcreants both ſay and do againſt me, yet I have ſearched and found, a greater wheel in this turn of my eſtate then they. Men have deſpiſed me, becauſe God hath afflicted me, yea God hath therefore afflicted me, that he might expoſe me to this tryal, the deſpight of men. Men have let looſe the bridle upon me, but God firſt looſed my cord; yea he therefore looſed my cord that men might take an advantage to let looſe the bridle upon me.* So then,

In thoſe words *Job* aſſerts two things of God, as the reaſon, why that baſe generation inſulted over him.

Firſt, *He hath looſed my cord*; Secondly, *He hath afflicted me, and therefore they have let looſe the bridle upon me*; or we may put both reaſons into one; *God hath afflicted me by letting looſe my cord, and therefore they have let looſe the bridle upon me.*

Now becauſe God is not mentioned at all in the former part of the Chapter, ſome queſtion whether this act of looſing *Jobs* cord, is to be referred unto God, or unto man? Moſt Interpreters refer it to God, ſome to men; in ſpecial to thoſe men, his friends, who had held and maintain'd that unkind diſpute againſt him. According to this expoſition, the relative *He* is taken diſtributively; *becauſe he*, that is, every one of them, *hath looſed my cord*; *they*, that is, theſe rude wretches *have let looſe the bridle upon me.* But I rather incline to the former opinion, and ſo ſhall proſecute the Text, as the Antecedent to *he*, is God, *becauſe he*, that is, *becauſe God hath looſed my cord*, &c. And it is uſual in Scripture (we have had ſeveral paſſages of like obſervation in this book) to ſpeak of God without any expreſs mention, only by that relative *he*; becauſe when God is much concerned in a buſineſs, and hath been often ſo expreſſed, there's no need to name him alwayes expreſly as to every particular paſſage of it. And doubtleſs God was ſo much upon the heart of *Job* in this matter, that he often intends him where he doth not name him.

Interdum voces aliquæ referũtur non ad id quod expreſſum fuit ſcriptura aut voce, ſed ad id quod quis animo verſat aut ſenſu aliquo capit. Auguſt.

He hath looſed.] That is, *opened*, *untwiſted*, or *untyed* my cord, and ſo all is fallen looſe. We may expound this word in alluſion unto things bundl'd or tyed up; as when Corn is bound into a ſheaf, or, as when wood is bound together (as our word is) into a fagot; if once the cord or the band which holds theſe together be looſed, they preſently fall aſunder.

He hath looſed my cord.] But what is this cord? There are four Interpretations about it.

Firſt, Some interpret it of the natural band or cord of the body. The body hath its cords, ligaments, and bands; the nerves or ſinews faſten, tye, and hold the ſeveral members of the body together; taking this ſence of the word, *Jobs* meaning may be given out, as if he had ſaid, *By my extream pains and ſickneſſes, God hath even ſhattered me in pieces, as if all my bones and ſinews were broken*, and when theſe brutes ſee me in this torture and woful plight, they inſtead of pitying me deride me, they let looſe the bridle upon me. 'Tis true the tortures and preſſures upon *Jobs* body were exceeding great; he was even torn aſunder and unjointed, like a man that's rackt; and it is as true, that bodily weakneſs layes good men open to the contempt of wicked men. But I do not judge this proper to *Jobs* ſcope and purpoſe here.

Verbum hoc ſignificat aliquando corporis colgamenta, q. d. compagem totius corporis mei, ſolvit hoc canto dolore. Apud. Merc.

Secondly, Others, by *his cord*, underſtand the abilities, and powers of his mind, the ſtrength of his parts to direct, as alſo his courage to execute the duties of his place; theſe are as a cord whereby Magiſtrates faſten all men to them, in reſpect and reverence. So that of the Prophet is expounded (*Iſa.* 45. 1.) *Thus ſaith the Lord to his anointed, to* Cyrus, *whoſe right hand I have holden (or ſtrengthned) to ſubdue Nations before him: And I will looſe the loynes of Kings to open before him the two-leaved gates, and the gates ſhall not be ſhut.* The loynes of Kings are looſed, when their ſpirit and courage fail, when their wiſdome and underſtanding fail, ſo that they either know not what to do, or dare not attempt the doing of what they know. Now, when the loynes of a man are ſaid to be looſed, it notes that he is greatly diſtreſſed and pained. (*Iſa.* 21. 3.) *Therefore are my loynes filled with pain, pangs have taken hold upon me, as the pangs of a woman that travaileth: I was bowed down at the hearing of it, I was diſmayed at the ſeeing of it.* So (*Dan.* 5. 6.) *Then the Kings countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, ſo that the joynts* (girdles, bindings, or knots, as the *Chaldee* hath it) *of his loynes were looſed, and his knees ſmote one againſt another.* Thus *Job* is ſuppoſed to complain here, that God had looſed the cord of his ſtrength, both in reſpect of his body by ſore pains, and of his mind by dreadful terrors, which gave many occaſion to let themſelves looſe in reviling and reproaching him.

Thirdly, Say others, *This cord was his outward proſperous eſtate, his riches, and worldly ſubſtance.* Theſe indeed are a mans cord, they tye up and keep him and his family and friends together, yea they are a cord or band upon a mans enemies to keep them from hurting him: Riches are a great binder of others to us in a way of obſervance and reſpect. And therefore when a man looſeth a plentiful eſtate, when that is ſcatter'd from him, *he* (as we ſay) *is broken*, his cord is looſed, and all falls aſunder. I grant *Jobs* cord of worldly ſubſtance, was once great and ſtrong, and then ravel'd out and looſed, this might draw contempt upon him; yet I conceive this is not the matter here intended,

Fourthly, By the cord, that (*Job* complains) God had looſed, we are chiefly, if not only, to underſtand the authority and power, with which, as a Magiſtrate, he was inveſted. Authority or Magiſtratical power are a cord, yea they are like *Solomons* threefold cord, which cannot eaſily be broken; power over men is a great binder of men, both to reverence and obedience. *Job* had a full experience of this, as appeared in the former Chapter, and therefore no marvel if he was thus ſenſible of the want of it, and complains thus paſſionately, that God had taken off the hearts of the people from their former fear of and ſubjection to him, ſo that they who before did riſe up and even tremble at his preſence, now ſlighted him, and did not only withdraw their reſpects, but pour contempt upon him. Thus we may expound that of the heathen Princes and people (*Pſ.* 2. 3.) *Let us break their bands*; that is, let us caſt off all fear and regard of them. Mr. *Broughton* renders, *He hath looſed his ſtring*; which he thus gloſſes, *the ſtring or rein of government, that holdeth baſe from ſtriving with mighty.* By that alſo may be underſtood his *bow-ſtring*, of which he ſpake (*Chap.* 29. 20.) *My bow* (that is, my power and authority) *was renewed in my hand*; but now my bowſtring is looſed or ſlackned in my hand.

Deus ademit illa mihi propter quæ, rex, verebantur me olim; quia ille non amplius injicit timorem mei animis ipſorum. Coc.

There is a difference between the reading and writing of

theſe

יתרי Nervum ſuum.

יתרי Nervum meum. Solvit nervum meum, ſc. arcus. Ita innuit omne robur ſibi ademptum à deo nam, per arcum omne robur intelligitur. Druſ.

Lectio יתרי Funem meum, de ipſo Job, & ſcriptura eſt יתרו De domino funem ſuum quo ſc. eos mihi conſtringebat et morigeros reddebat; vel certe eorum quiſque funem ſuum quem illis imponebam ſolvit. Merc.

ענה Humiliatus afflictus fuit.

theſe words, as the learned Hebircians obſerve. The *reading* is, *He hath looſed my cord*, the *writing* is, *He hath looſed his cord*; that is either the Lord hath looſed his cord, whereby he formerly held the people in awe and obedience to me; or, *he*, that is every one of them hath looſed and ſhook off that cord or that ſubjection which my authority and greatneſs did heretofore put upon them. But whether we read *my cord*, or *his cord*, the general ſence of the words is the ſame. For if *Job* ſaith, *My cord*, he means that Authority and Power which he derived from God; as if he ſaith, *His cord*, he means the ſame Authority and Power which God had put upon him, or into his hand for the government and protection of that people. *He hath looſed my cord or ſtring*,

And afflicted me.] We may take this clauſe either as diſtinctly from the precedent words, and ſo it contains a brief of all thoſe other troubles wherewith God hath viſited him; as if he had ſaid, *Over and beſides the rage and reproach of man which I lie under, the Lord himſelf hath laid a very hard and heavy hand upon me by thoſe immediate ſtroaks of my affliction.* Or we take it as wrapt up in the former expreſſion, implying that his great affliction was the looſing of his cord, or the withdrawing of that reſpect which had been given him.

The word which we tranſlate to *afflict*, properly ſignifies to *humble* and to lay low; ſelf-humiliation is or ought to be the effect and fruit of affliction. They that are afflicted ſhould be humbled, and that greatly under the hand of God. But if we do not actively humble and lay our ſelves low, when we are afflicted, yet every affliction is in its own nature a paſſive humiliation, or laying of us low. And to be ſure ungodly men will afflict us and lay us low by their contempt and ſlighting of us, when God afflicts us; as it followeth in the Text, becauſe *he hath afflicted me*,

They have alſo let looſe the bridle upon me.

Effrænes in me feruntur. Tygur.

Theſe words contain the conſequent, yea the effect, reſpecting men, of the Lords afflicting hand upon his faithful ſervant *Job*. Thoſe men did not pity or pray for him, much leſs did they honour and ſubmit to him, but quite caſt off the yoke and brake the bonds, *They have let looſe the bridle upon me. They*, that is, that baſe crew of whom he had ſpoken before, *have let looſe the bridle*; God hath looſed my cord, and they have let looſe the bridle, or caſt the bridle as it were out of their mouth. What was this bridle? We may underſtand it either of the bridle of their tongues, or of the bridle of his Authority. And when once this latter was looſned, they quickly let looſe the former.

Firſt, thus, They have let looſe the bridle of their tongues before me; there was once a bridle upon their tongues, when for the Majeſty of *Jobs* perſon, and the ready obſervance which was given him, no man durſt ſpeak in his preſence, but even Princes ſtood mute (*Chap.* 29.9.) When any ſpeak without due regard of the perſon to, or before whom they ſpeak, then *the bridle of their tongue is looſed.* Reverential fear is a ſtrong bridle, it keeps the tongue in order, or from running out diſorderly, and makes us take heed what we ſay, and to whom. A looſe and unruly tongue, ſhews a looſer and more unruly ſpirit. *David* was a man after Gods own heart, and he would have a tongue after Gods own heart too; therefore as he reſolved to bridle his tongue (*Pſal.* 39.1.) *I ſaid I will take heed to my wayes, that I ſin not with my tongue: I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me*; So he begged of God to watch it (*Pſal.* 141.3.) *Set a watch (O Lord) before my mouth, keep the door of my lips*; He was afraid leaſt his mouth ſhould open, and his lips unlock without licence. He was convinc'd how much his mouth needed a watch, and his lips a bridle. A Lock upon the Houſe door keeps it faſt, and a Bridle in the Horſes mouth holds him in. There was never any Door had ſo much need of a Lock, nor Horſe of a Bridle, as the mouth and lips of man have. And no ſooner had God let looſe *Jobs* cord of Authority, his binder to obedience, which formerly over-aw'd that lawleſs generation, but preſently they let looſe the bridle, and cared not what they ſpake of him, or to him; they were not afraid to revile him, and they durſt do it openly, *They let looſe the bridle*,

Before me.] As if he had ſaid, they did not go into a corner, or behind my back to do it; they did it to my face. Some will revile men of Authority, and blaſpheme dignities, when their cord is in ſtrength; but then they do it cloſely, or in private, there they take liberty to let looſe the bridle of their tongues upon the beſt of men. But this Rabble was not only undutiful, but impudent, they ſpake evil of him before him. The Preacher (*Eccl.* 10.20.) gives a ſtrict caution, *Curſe not the King, no, not in thy thought, and curſe not the rich in thy bed-chamber.* The thoughts of man are ſilent, inaudable words. Our thoughts lodge in our bed-chamber, in the heart, which is the moſt retired and darkſome Room in man, yet there he ought not to ſpeak evil of Princes; and beſides the ſinfulneſs of ſuch thought-curſes, there is danger in them. He that takes liberty to curſe his betters, eſpecially Princes in his thoughts, will hardly be able to reſtrain himſelf from curſing them with his tongue. That which is much in our thoughts, is quickly out in words; the tongue can hardly hold that which the heart delights to hold; and therefore *Jobs* enemies having their hearts ſo full of contempt againſt him, could not contain themſelves, but muſt let looſe the bridle of their tongues before him.

But what made them thus bold with their unbridled tongues? Surely they had caſt off another bridle before they did caſt off this; and that directs me to the other interpretation of theſe words, *They have looſed the bridle before me*; that is,

Non poſſunt à me amplius frænari, ſive authoritate, ſive eloquentia & argumentis. Coc.

Fertur equis auriga, nec audit currus habenas. Virg. 1. Georg.

Secondly, The bridle of his Magiſtracy; as if he had ſaid, *Neither my power nor my preſence, neither my Authority nor my Reaſon have any weight with them, I were as good ſay nothing as ſpeak; they have thrown off the bridle, and are no more a ſociety, but a rout or unruly multitude of men. David* admoniſheth ungoverned men (*Pſal.* 32.19.) *Be ye not as the Horſe or as the Mule, which have no underſtanding; whoſe mouth muſt be held in with bit and bridle, leſt they come near unto thee.* Moſt men are like the Horſe and Mule, were not a bit and bridle put into their mouthes, they would never bridle themſelves, there would be no living near them; and many are apt to take any occaſion to let looſe the bridle, and put the bit out of their mouthes, which is put into them: Evil men throw off ſubjection both to God and man. O how few would go right, or do right, were it not that they find themſelves under the command or check of a Bridle. We read indeed of a bridle uſed to another end (*Iſa.* 30.28.) *And there ſhall be a bridle in the jaws of the people, cauſing them to err.* The power of the *Aſſyrian* and *Babylonian* Monarchs, was this bridle in the jaws of the Nations, who being an erring power, uſed their power to make others err in Idolatrous ways; yet there, I conceive, the meaning of the Prophet is, that the *Aſſyrian* power cauſed the people to err, or wander like Captives from their own Country. There is a captivating bridle, and there is a governing bridle; there is a bridle cauſing to err, and there is a bridle which keeps to order. Some Princes uſe their power for the good, others for the hurt of the people; yet the people hurt themſelves worſt when they throw off the powers. *They have let looſe the bridle.*

Now, for as much as under theſe Metaphors of a cord, and of a bridle, Authority and obedience to Authority, are ſhadowed and held forth to us.

Firſt, Note, *Reverence is the band of obedience from man to man.*

Take away reverence, and all ſorts and degrees of men are hudled into a confuſed heap. The Apoſtle (1 *Pet.* 2.17.) joines reverence to God with reverence to Magiſtrates, *Fear God, honour the King.* Take away honour, and preſently we looſe ſubjection. As reverential fear keeps man in his due obedience towards God; ſo honour maintains obedience towards man. If once men caſt off the fear of God, they ſoon let looſe the bridle before him, and ſlight both him and his word. *Abraham* concluded (*Gen.* 20.11.) *I thought, ſurely the fear of God is not in this place, and they will ſlay me for my wives ſake*; as if he had ſaid, there is no bridle, no tie upon them, therefore they will do any thing that comes next, any thing that they have a mind and power to do. And if the fear of man be not in any place, what will men forbear to do! if there be not a reverential awe upon Children towards their Parents, if there be not a reverential awe upon Servants towards their Maſters, if there be not a reverential awe upon Subjects towards the Magiſtrate, what wickedneſs, what violence may we not expect and quickly ſee! No ſooner is that cord looſed, but the bridle is let looſe too.

Secondly, Note, *Reverence is due from inferiours to their ſuperiours, eſpecially to Magiſtrates.*

Job reports not only matter of fact, or what they did, but matter of iniquity, or that they did very ill. It is the ſin of the people, when they deſpiſe and trample upon the Authority of their Princes, and throw off the reins of Government. The Apoſtle *Paul* gives that ſtrict charge, *Let every Soul be ſubject to the higher powers* (Rom. 13. 1.) And ſo every Soul ought to be.

Firſt, That the ordinance of God may be acknowledged and ſubmitted to. This and that ſort, form or model of Magiſtracy, is indeed a humane creation, or an ordinance of man, (1 *Pet.* 2. 13.) But that there ſhould be Magiſtrates, and they honoured by the people, is an ordinance of God, or a divine appointment. As therefore it is a high contempt to caſt off thoſe ordinances of divine worſhip wherein we immediately honour God; ſo to caſt off thoſe ordinances of humane order wherein we ought to honour man. The reſpect which we give to the powers of this world, is not a matter of complement but Conſcience, nor are we under a liberty, but a neceſſity to give it.

Secondly, Every Soul muſt be ſubject to the higher powers, that there may be a ſubmiſſion to the ſpecial or preſent diſpenſation or providence of God, as well as to his ſtanding ordinance: God changeth power from veſſel to veſſel as himſelf pleaſeth, and in what veſſel ſoever, he puts it, we muſt ſubmit to it. As ſome refuſe to ſerve the God who made them, but make themſelves a god and then ſerve him; ſo ſome will not ſubmit to the Magiſtrate which God hath made them, but muſt have one of their own making or chuſing before they will ſubmit to him. Whereas indeed as none are at a liberty whether they will ſubmit to Government or no, ſo no private perſons are at a liberty, what Governours they will ſubmit to; and therefore the Apoſtle determines all particular or private perſons in that point (*Rom.* 13. 1.) *The powers that be* (let them be who they will) *are ordained of God.* And ſo the Pſalmiſt long before; *Promotion cometh not from the Eaſt, or from the Weſt, nor from the South, but God is the Judge, he putteth down one and ſetteth up another,* (*Pſal.* 75. 5,6,7.) Now, to own the will of God in his particular deſignment of a Governour, is our duty as much as to own his will in appointing government. *Nebuchadnezzar* was condemned to a beſtial life, *till he ſhould* learn this leſſon and make this acknowledgment (*Dan.* 4.32.) *They ſhall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling ſhall be with the Beaſts of the field; they ſhall make thee to eat graſs as Oxen, and ſeven times ſhall paſs over thee, until thou know that the moſt High ruleth in the Kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomſoever he will.* And therefore when we ſee God by ſignal providences taking a Kingdom from one perſon or family, who are we that we ſhould contradict or riſe up againſt his Donation? We muſt not ſay, if power were in ſuch a hand we would reverence it, if in ſuch a way we would ſubmit to it; for in whatſoever hand God puts it, duty binds us to obey it; if *he* (as *Elihu* ſpeaks at the 34. Chapter of this book, *verſ.* 24.) *ſhall break in pieces mighty men without number* (or as we put in the Margin, *without ſearching out*, that is, without any legal proceſs, or courſe appearing openly to man: If I ſay, God ſhall thus break in pieces mighty men) *and ſet others in their ſtead,* who are we, that we ſhould ſet our ſelves againſt him?

Thirdly, Every Soul muſt be ſubject to the higher powers, that we may honour the impreſſions of God upon the higher powers; there is a ſtamp or impreſs of the power, wiſdom, juſtice, and ſoveraignty of God upon Magiſtrates, yea God puts his own name upon them; *I* (ſaith the Lord, *Pſal.* 82.6.) *have ſaid, ye are Gods*; now as all the appearances of God are to be reſpected, ſo eſpecially the great and illuſtrious appearances of God, ſuch as are upon Princes; and therefore *Job* complains of this as their ſin as well as his own affliction, that becauſe his *cord was looſed, they let looſe the bridle before him.*

Fourthly, The benefits that we receive by government, call for reverence to Government; as God hath ſet Magiſtrates above others, ſo he hath ſet them up for others, that is, for a common intereſt; no man ſhould live to himſelf, much leſs ſhould any rule or govern to himſelf: Yea, he that would govern all to himſelf, doth not at all govern. Thus the Apoſtle argues for ſubjection (*Rom.* 13. 5.) *Wherefore ye muſt needs be ſubject,* why needs? Or what's the neceſſity? He tells us at the 6. verſe of the ſame Chapter, *For this cauſe pay you tribute alſo, for they are Gods Miniſters, attending continually upon this very thing.* But you will ſay, what is this thing, upon which Magiſtrates by vertue of their Office continually attend? We may read what it is, at the 4. verſe; *For he is the Miniſter of God to thee for good*; that is, for thy profit and protection, if (as he ſpeaks at the third verſe,) thou art ſuch a one *as doeſt good.* Indeed if *thou do that which is evil* (as it follows in the fourth verſe) *be afraid: For he beareth not the Sword in vain, for he is the Miniſter of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doth evil.* And though this execution of wrath (which is a moſt neceſſary part of the Magiſtrates Office) be not good to him that doth evil, yet (as poſſibly it may prove a good to him, ſo) certainly it is for good to all others, as it is a means to deterr ſome from doing evil, and the reſt from ſuffering evil. Therefore, as there are two things to be paid to Magiſtrates, Tribute and Honour, ſo both are payable upon this account, becauſe they are the Miniſters of God for good, and many benefits redound to mankind by them, and thoſe ſo great, that ſome have concluded, *Tyranny better or more beneficial then Anarchy*; 'tis not only an inconvenience, but a ruine to be without government. *When every one doth what is good in his own eyes* (Judg. 17.6.) then there is very little good done; yea much evil is done in the eyes both of God and righteous men. And it is obſervable, both when it was ſaid ſo, and upon what occaſion it is ſo often ſaid in that book of *Judges*; as to the firſt, the time when it was ſaid, *every man did that which was right in his own eyes,* was *when there was no King in* Iſrael; that is, no Judge nor ſupream Magiſtrate; in which latitude, not ſtrictly (as the word *King* is taken (*Gen.* 36. 31. *Deut.* 33. 5.) ſo) it muſt be taken in all the places where 'tis uſed in the Book of *Judges*; becauſe the people of *Iſrael* never had a King among them to that day, nor till the days of *Saul*; ſo that when he ſaith, *In thoſe days there was no King in* Iſrael, his meaning muſt be this, that in thoſe days they had no ſetled Judge among them, ſuch as *Moſes*, *Joſhua*, &c. were before, and *Samuel* was after thoſe days, to keep to order and obſervance of the Law, and to puniſh the non-obſervers of it. Thus we ſee when it was ſaid, *that every man did what was right in his own eyes*, it was when there was no Judge in the Land. Now, Secondly, if we take notice upon what occaſion that ſaying is ſo often repeated, that will ſhew us (as in a glaſs) the ſad complexion and black deformed face of thoſe times. The firſt occaſion upon which the Spirit of God breaks out into theſe words, we have at the 5. verſe of this 17. Chapter; *And the man* Micah *had an Houſe of Gods, and made an* Ephod *and* Teraphim, *and conſecrated one of his Sons, who became his Prieſt.* Thus in the ſtate of Anarchy, when no man had no other guide to lead him, but his own blind and corrupt nature, which runs headlong to all enormities, this man ſet up his deteſtable Idolatry; and ſo thoſe words, *Every man did what was right in his own eyes*, are brought to ſhew, that *Micahs* worſhip was ſtark naught, and that, if there had been in thoſe days a Judge in *Iſrael*, he would or ought to have reſtrained him from that groſs ſuperſtition and impiety, in which he then went on without check or controul. Again, we find theſe words (*Chap.* 18. *v.* 1.) and there they are prefixed as a reaſon why the *Danites* were forced to provide an inheritance for themſelves, whereas, while that people had a Judge among them, the Tribes were ordered to aſſiſt one another in deſtroying the *Canaanites*, and getting the poſſeſſion of that inheritance which was deſigned them by lot upon the firſt diviſion of the Land, as we read (*Numb.* 32. 21. *Judg.* 1. 3.) but now being deſtitute of a ſupream Magiſtrate, they lookt only to themſelves, and would not give one another this brotherly aſſiſtance. Thirdly, we find thoſe words again (*Chap.* 19. 1.) And there they intimate, that the reaſon, why the Levites wife committed whoredom,

dom, and the men of *Gibeah* ſuch abominable leudneſs (as the following hiſtory ſets forth at large) was becauſe there was no Magiſtrate to direct them in their duty, nor to correct their departures from it; and when the ſacred Hiſtorian, had declared that bloody War, and the great calamities which came upon that people as the fruit and conſequent of that wickedneſs in *Gibeah*, he ſhuts up the book with the recital of the ſame words (*Chap.* 21. 25.) *In thoſe days there was no King in* Iſrael, *every man did that which was right in his own eyes.* As if he had ſaid, I can refer all theſe miſchiefs and confuſions, to no other head but this, the want of a head to govern *Iſrael*. And to conclude this point, the Prophet deſcribes the like woful condition of a people, when the ſtay and ſtaff, or (as *Job* ſpeaks here) the cord and bridle of government is broken (*Iſa.* 3. 5.) *And the people ſhall be oppreſſed, every one by another, and every one by his neighbour; the Child ſhall behave himſelf proudly againſt the ancient, and the baſe againſt the honourable.* Here you ſee plainly, what comes on't when the cord is looſed, and the bridle thrown up, then *the Child behaves himſelf proudly againſt the Ancient, and the baſe againſt the honourable*; They are in a very forlorn condition, who have *Children for their Princes, and Babes to rule over them*, as the ſame Prophet ſpeaks at the 4. verſe of that Chapter; that is, whoſe Princes and Rulers are like Babes or Children in either of theſe two reſpects; firſt, as having no more underſtanding then Children; ſecondly, as having no more power then Children; that is, having very little of either: Yet 'tis more eligible to have a Prince who is but a Child, and a Ruler like a Babe, then to be quite bereft of Princes and Rulers. For then the Child will behave himſelf proudly againſt the Ancient, and the people will ſoon be oppreſſed every one by his Neighbour. Which is one of the ſevereſt curſes that God can threaten a people with, in reſpect of outward things; they who are not governed by Laws, ſhall be oppreſſed by one anothers luſts, and whereas they complained of oppreſſion by thoſe that were in power, they ſhall find themſelves oppreſſed ten times more by thoſe that have no power (except force) but ſtand in a level with themſelves.

Thirdly, Whereas *Job* aſcribes the looſing of his cord to God;

> Obſerve, *It is of God that Magiſtrates retain or loſe the reverence that is due unto them from the people.*

Quamdiu favet alicui deus, occulta quadam vi homines in officio cõtinet. Merl.

God looſeth their cord in diſpleaſure, and he knits and holds it faſt (as long as he pleaſeth) in mercy. The favour of God is the tye of all true affection and reſpect between man and man. He hath the love and the hatred, the good will and the ill-will of men at his diſpoſe; he commands fear, and it removes at his command. He can cauſe the terror of his people to fall upon fierce and ſtrong Nations, ſo that they ſhall not riſe up againſt them. His terror reſtrains their wrath and rage as with a bridle. When *Jacob* and his ſmall Companies marched through the Enemies Country, after they had provoked them greatly by the ſlaughter of the *Shechemites*, whom *Simeon* and *Levi* ſlew for defiling their ſiſter *Dinah*, it is ſaid (*Gen.* 35. 5.) *The terror of God was upon the Cities that were round about them, and they did not purſue after the Sons of* Jacob. Thus God promiſed his people (*Deut.* 2. 25.) *This day will I begin to put the dread of thee, and the fear of thee upon the Nations, that are under the whole Heaven, who ſhall hear report of thee, and ſhall tremble and be in anguiſh becauſe of thee.* See what an influence God hath upon the Spirits of men; he can put the fear and dread of his people upon all the people under the whole Heavens, he can make thoſe who are more and greater, to dread the fewer and the leſs. This was performed alſo to *David* (1 Chron. 14. 17.) *The fame of* David *went out into all lands, and the Lord brought the fear of him upon all Nations.* Now the Lord who is able to cauſe the fear of his people, or the fear of a perſon highly honoured by him to take hold of Nations, which are not under their power; ſurely he is able to make the fear and reverence that is due to a Magiſtrate, to take hold of all the people that are under him. And if God once looſed his cord, they fear him no more, they will ſoon either contemn him, or riſe up and rebel againſt him. There is a ſecret power of God which ſtrengthens or weakens the cord of duty to Magiſtracy. Some Magiſtrates live in much outward pomp and ſplendour, who yet have not the hearts of the people; and others who are but mean in appearance, are yet much loved and highly eſteemed, this is a plain demonſtration that the thing is of God. We have two great inſtances of this, one in *Solomon*, another in *Rehoboam*; *Solomon* was a mighty King in his time, and his reſpect among the people was very great, all Nations did him honour, his Subjects honoured him much more; yet when *Solomon* provoked God by marrying ſtrange Wives, and building Idol-Temples, God looſed the cord of his authority, and the people looſed the bridle before him. The Lord ſtirred up ſeveral adverſaries unto *Solomon* from abroad (1 *Kings* 11. 14, 23.) and at the 26. verſe, *Jeroboam* who was not only his Subject, but his Servant, *even he lift up his hand againſt the King. Solomon* was not only a powerful King, but a King of peace, yet War brake in upon him, not only from abroad by ſtrangers, but from him who lived in the bowels of his own dominion. The ſpring of all this trouble was meritoriouſly from his own ſin, and efficiently from the juſt diſpleaſure of God, both which are expreſſed in two verſes (1 *Kings* 11. 9, 10.) *And the Lord was angry with* Solomon, *becauſe his heart was turned from the Lord God of* Iſrael, *who had appeared unto him twice.* When the gracious appearances of God are either forgotten or ill requited, we muſt look for angry appearances. If Princes turn from God after he appears to them in love, he will ſuffer men to turn from and appear againſt them in diſloyalty. This doom *Solomon* heard in the next words; *Wherefore the Lord ſaid unto* Solomon, *foraſmuch as this is done of thee, and thou haſt not kept my covenant and my Statutes which I commanded thee; I will ſurely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it unto thy ſervant.* Thus *Solomons cord was looſed, and his Servant looſed the bridle before him.*

As for his Son and Succeſſour *Rehoboam*, God looſed his cord while he, following the counſel of the young men, reſolved to ſtraiten theirs; attempting to make them Slaves, he loſt them as Subjects, and they threw up the bridle profeſſedly and daringly before his face (1 *Kings* 12. 16.) *So when all* Iſrael *ſaw that the King hearkned not unto them, the people anſwered the King, ſaying, What portion have we in* David? *Neither have we Inheritance in the Son of* Jeſſe: *To your tents, O* Iſrael: *Now ſee to thine own Houſe,* David: *ſo* Iſrael *departed unto their Tents.* If ever any people, ſurely theſe looſed the bridle before their Princes face. And all this was of God, in judgment, for the great ſins wherewith *Solomon* had provoked him.

There is a Spirit of pride and diſobedience in man ready to throw off the bridle of Chriſts government, who is ſet as King by the mighty hand of God, upon the holy hill of *Sion* (*Pſal.* 2. 1, 2.) *Why do the Heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The Kings of the Earth ſet themſelves, and the Rulers take counſel together, againſt the Lord, and againſt his anointed, ſaying, Let us break their bands aſunder and caſt away their cords from us.* Thus the unruly ſons of men, both Princes and People would quite lay aſide Chriſt, and break all the bands and cords by which he reſtrains and governs them. How much more when God looſeth the cord of Earthly Princes, will their people let looſe the bridle, and break all bands? Nothing ſhall hold them. It is not, Firſt, the power and ſoveraignty, nor ſecondly, , the wiſdom and policy of Princes, nor thirdly, their riches, nor fourthly, their friends and alliances that can keep up the peoples reverence and reſpect to them, if once God withdraw from them. Some Princes have hoped and projected to hold their Subjects under by power, and policy, by Armies at home and confederacies abroad, yet could not do it; all theſe cords have been broken (as *Sampſon* brake the withs and ropes with which the *Philiſtines* bound him) *as a thread of tow is broken when it toucheth* (or ſmelleth) *the fire.* How is it imaginable that ſo many Hundred-Thouſands of men ſhould ſubmit themſelves to the power of one, or of a few men, unleſs God were in it? Therefore, to ſhut up this point, I ſhall only add theſe two words of counſel to Magiſtrates.

First, Be thankful when your cord is not looſed, nor the bridle let looſe before you, acknowledge God in it; as *David* confeſſed that it was *God who avenged him, and ſubdued the people* (the enemy-people) *under him* (Pſal. 18. 47.) ſo he ſaith as much of his native Subjects (*Pſal.* 144. 2.) *He ſubdueth my people under me.*

Secondly, As you are adviſed (*Pſal.* 2. 10, 11, 12.) *Be wiſe O ye Kings, be inſtructed ye Judges of the Earth: Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoyce with trembling: Kiſs the S n leſt he be angry, and ye periſh from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little: Bleſſed are all they that put their truſt in him.* Fear God, that you may be feared in the hearts of your people, ſerve him, that they may ſerve you; and *kiſs the Son leſt he be angry*, that is, ſubmit to *Jeſus Chriſt who is King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, whoſe, the Kingdom is, and who is the governour among the Nations.* Give him, firſt, the kiſs of love, and ſecondly, the kiſs of divine homage, as you deſire and expect your Subjects ſhould give you the kiſs of loyalty and of a civil homage. If the wrath of Chriſt be kindled againſt Princes, who knows how ſoon or how much the wrath of men may be kindled againſt them alſo; if God let looſe the cord, they will let looſe the bridle, before the faces of the greateſt potentates in the World.

Fourthly, Obſerve, more Generally, *When once God hath withdrawn from a man in any kind, he lies open to all manner of affronts, troubles, and injuries from the Creature.*

Quia deus mihi contrarius eſt, ideo omnia mihi contraria ſunt. Brent.

If God be againſt us, all things will be againſt us, whole ſwarms and Armies of ſorrows and miſchiefs will ruſh in upon us like unbridled Horſes. No evil could touch *Job*, while God maintain'd a hedg about him, but as ſoon as God (for his tryal) had broken a gap in that, all evil brake in upon him; how much more will evil break in upon them, whoſe hedge God breaks (that is, withdraws his protection) in anger? The Apoſtle gives believers an excellent ground of comfort, *If God be for us, who can be againſt us?* (Rom. 8. 31.) And ſurely, If God be againſt us, who can be for us? If God be againſt us, all things will be againſt us, even thoſe things will prove againſt us in the iſſue which we are moſt confident of, that they will be for us. The Lord tells *Eli* by a Meſſenger of his own, a man of God (1 *Sam.* 2. 30.) *Them that honour me, I will honour*; that is, I will honour them my ſelf, and cauſe others to honour them; (God gives honour to the Creature by the Creature) *But he that deſpiſeth me ſhall be lightly eſteemed*; that is, I will eſteem him lightly my ſelf, and cauſe others to eſteem him lightly too. If God eſteem a man lightly, he ſhall not continue long in any mans eſtimation. What good ſoever we hold, we hold it by holding in with God. Let us take heed of provoking him to looſe our cord, for then every bridle will be let looſe before us. *He hath looſed my cord,*

And afflicted me.] I have ſpoken often of affliction, and ſhall not add any thing about it here, but in connection with the words which go before and follow.

Hence Note, Firſt, *To loſe reſpect and reverence among men, eſpecially for a Magiſtrate to loſe it, is a great affliction.*

'Tis an affliction to Parents and Maſters to loſe their reverence and reſpect among their Children and Servants; and 'tis ſo to a Magiſtrate when he loſeth due reſpect among his Subjects. *Honour thy father, and thy mother* (whether natural or civil) is the firſt commandement with promiſe; as they ſin much who refuſe to give this honour, and ſo loſe the benefit of the promiſe; ſo they ſuffer much who are refuſed this honour, and loſe the priviledge of their relation.

Again, Conſider the affliction in reference to the iſſue *He hath afflicted me, and they have let looſe the bridle before me.*

Hence Note, *They that are afflicted are uſually deſpiſed.*

A good man is too apt to abate his value of thoſe whom he ſees afflicted; but wicked men (ſuch as *Job* here deſcribes) cannot do otherwiſe, they are ready to reproach and vilifie the afflicted. Such judge the worth of men only by what they are worth; nor know they for what to honour them, but for their outward honour, their goodly garb and greatneſs in the World; the purple and fine linnen, the gay cloaths; and the gold ring ſet perſons higher in their eſtimate, then all the graces of the Spirit; and where the former are not ſeen, the latter are not at all eſteemed. Jeſus Chriſt himſelf, becauſe afflicted and humbled (though he had received the Spirit above meaſure, and was the faireſt of ten Thouſand, yet) *was deſpiſed and rejected of men* (Iſa. 53. 1, 2, 3.) And 'tis a popular errour, that if a man be afflicted, he is deſpiſed and rejected even of God too.

Laſtly, Whereas *Job* riſeth up to the conſideration of God under this diſgrace which he found among men, *He hath looſed my cord.*

Note, *A godly man looks beyond man to God in all the evils and wrongs that he receives from men.*

When *Job* ſaw his deriders looſing the bridle, he concluded preſently that God had looſed his cord; as in all the benefits and comforts received from men, a godly man looks beyond man, and ſaith, ſurely God hath put my caſe into this mans heart, and therefore, he hath ſhewed me kindneſs, and been a comfort to me. Thus ſpake *Paul, God that comforteth thoſe that are caſt down, comforted us by the coming of* Titus (2 Cor. 7. 6.) He did not ſay we were comforted by the coming of *Titus*, but God hath comforted us by the coming of *Titus*. It is God who comforteth us by ſuch a man, and 'tis God who afflicteth us by ſuch a man. It ſhews a holy frame when we ſtay not in Creatures, but are carried to God as the Author both of our comforts and croſſes. When *Shimei* curſed *David*, his Servants ſtirred him up to revenge: No, ſaith he, *What have I to do with you ye Sons of* Zeruiah? *ſo let him curſe, becauſe the Lord hath ſaid unto him, curſe* David. But where or how did the Lord ſay that to *Shimei*? Had *Shimei* any rule in the word or warrant from God to ſay ſo? Surely no; the Law of God expreſly forbad him to ſay ſo (*Exod.* 22. 28.) *Thou ſhalt not revile the Gods, nor curſe the Ruler of thy people.* The Lord ſaid ſo, only in his providence, which gave *Shimei* an opportunity to ſay ſo, for the tryal of *David*, as alſo a colour to think *David* was ſuch a man as he had ſaid. Thus the Lord bid *Shimei* curſe *David*; and *David* ſubmitted ſo fully to this diſpenſation of God in giving him correction by *Shimei*'s curſing tongue, that he adds, *Who ſhall then ſay, wherefore haſt thou done ſo?* (2 Sam. 16. 10.) As if he had ſaid in *Job*'s language, *God hath looſed my cord, and this man looſeth the bridle of his tongue upon me*, and therefore who ſhall ſay, *Why haſt thou done ſo?* Not but that *Shimei* ſinned in that he did ſo, yea and deſerved to dye for it, as afterwards he did by the command of *Solomon*, and *David*'s advice given him upon his death-bed. But at that preſent he would have nothing either done or ſaid to him, leſt he ſhould ſeem (though he was deeply ſenſible of what *Shimei* had done) impatient under Gods hand, leaving him to the ſway of his own malice in doing it.

Before I paſs from this Text, I ſhall only mention the tranſlation of the Septuagint and vulgar Latin, who render it thus; *For he hath opened his Quiver againſt me, and afflicted me, and put a bridle into my mouth.* As if (according to the ſence of this verſion) *Job* had ſaid; *God hath ſhot his arrows thick upon me, and made me, as it were, his But or mark to be continually aimed at; or as if I were ſome fierce and unruly Horſe, he hath put a bridle into my mouth to curb and keep me quiet.* But this is rather an addition to, then a tranſlation of the Scripture. And though God did open his Quiver upon *Job*, and put a bridle into his mouth, yet that truth is quite beſides, not only the letter but the ſcope of this place.

Pharetram enim ſuam aperuit & afflixit me, & frænum poſuit in os meum. Vulg. ἀνοίξας φαρέτραν. &c. Sept.

Verſe 12. **Upon my right hand riſe the youth, they puſh away my feet, and they raiſe up againſt me the wayes of their deſtruction.**

In this verſe, and the three that follow, *Job* deſcribes more particularly how he was uſed; God having looſed his cord, and men having let looſe the bridle before him.

Firſt, *At my right hand riſe up the youth.* Why, ſaith he, dom, and the men of *Gibeah* ſuch abominable leudneſs (as the following hiſtory ſets forth at large) was becauſe there was no Magiſtrate to direct them in their duty, nor to correct their departures from it; and when the ſacred Hiſtorian, had declared that bloody War, and the great calamities which came upon that people as the fruit and conſequent of that wickedneſs in *Gibeah*, he ſhuts up the book with the recital of the ſame words (*Chap.* 21.25.) *In thoſe days there was no King in* Iſrael, *every man did that which was right in his own eyes.* As if he had ſaid, I can refer all theſe miſchiefs and confuſions, to no other head but this, the want of a head to govern *Iſrael*. And to conclude this point, the Prophet deſcribes the like woful condition of a people, when the ſtay and ſtaff, or (as *Job* ſpeaks here) the cord and bridle of government is broken (*Iſa.* 3. 5.) *And the people ſhall be oppreſſed, every one by another, and every one by his neighbour; the Child ſhall behave himſelf proudly againſt the ancient, and the baſe againſt the honourable.* Here you ſee plainly, what comes on't when the cord is looſed, and the bridle thrown up, then *the Child behaves himſelf proudly againſt the Ancient, and the baſe againſt the honourable*; They are in a very forlorn condition, who have *Children for their Princes, and Babes to rule over them*, as the ſame Prophet ſpeaks at the 4. verſe of that Chapter; that is, whoſe Princes and Rulers are like Babes or Children in either of theſe two reſpects; firſt, as having no more underſtanding then Children; ſecondly, as having no more power then Children; that is, having very little of either: Yet 'tis more eligible to have a Prince who is but a Child, and a Ruler like a Babe, then to be quite bereft of Princes and Rulers. For then the Child will behave himſelf proudly againſt the Ancient, and the people will ſoon be oppreſſed every one by his Neighbour. Which is one of the ſevereſt curſes that God can threaten a people with, in reſpect of outward things; they who are not governed by Laws, ſhall be oppreſſed by one anothers luſts, and whereas they complained of oppreſſion by thoſe that were in power, they ſhall find themſelves oppreſſed ten times more by thoſe that have no power (except force) but ſtand in a level with themſelves.

Thirdly, Whereas *Job* aſcribes the looſing of his cord to God;

Obſerve, *It is of God that Magiſtrates retain or loſe the reverence that is due unto them from the people.*

God looſeth their cord in diſpleaſure, and he knits and holds it faſt (as long as he pleaſeth) in mercy. The favour of God is the tye of all true affection and reſpect between man and man. He hath the love and the hatred, the good will and the ill-will of men at his diſpoſe; he commands fear, and it removes at his command. He can cauſe the terror of his people to fall upon fierce and ſtrong Nations, ſo that they ſhall not riſe up againſt them. His terror reſtrains their wrath and rage as with a bridle. When *Jacob* and his ſmall Companies marched through the Enemies Country, after they had provoked them greatly by the ſlaughter of the *Shechemites*, whom *Simeon* and *Levi* ſlew for defiling their ſiſter *Dinah*, it is ſaid (*Gen.* 35. 5.) *The terror of God was upon the Cities that were round about them, and they did not purſue after the Sons of* Jacob. Thus God promiſed his people (*Deut.* 2. 25.) *This day will I begin to put the dread of thee, and the fear of thee upon the Nations, that are under the whole Heaven, who ſhall hear report of thee, and ſhall tremble and be in anguiſh becauſe of thee.* See what an influence God hath upon the Spirits of men; he can put the fear and dread of his people upon all the people under the whole Heavens, he can make thoſe who are more and greater, to dread the fewer and the leſs. This was performed alſo to *David* (1 Chron. 14 17.) *The fame of* David *went out into all lands, and the Lord brought the fear of him upon all Nations.* Now the Lord who is able to cauſe the fear of his people, or the fear of a perſon highly honoured by him to take hold of Nations, which are not under their power; ſurely he is able to make the fear and reverence that is due to a Magiſtrate, to take hold of all the people that are under him. And if God once looſed his cord, they fear him no more, they will ſoon either contemn him, or riſe up and rebel againſt him. There is a ſecret power of God which ſtrengthens or weakens the cord of duty to Magiſtracy. Some Magiſtrates live in much outward pomp and ſplendour, who yet have not the hearts of the people; and others who are but mean in appearance, are yet much loved and highly eſteemed, this is a plain demonſtration that the thing is of God. We have two great inſtances of this, one in *Solomon*, another in *Rehoboam*; *Solomon* was a mighty King in his time, and his reſpect among the people was very great, all Nations did him honour, his Subjects honoured him much more; yet when *Solomon* provoked God by marrying ſtrange Wives, and building Idol-Temples, God looſed the cord of his authority, and the people looſed the bridle before him. The Lord ſtirred up ſeveral adverſaries unto *Solomon* from abroad (1 *Kings* 11. 14, 23.) and at the 26. verſe, *Jeroboam* who was not only his Subject, but his Servant, *even he lift up his hand againſt the King. Solomon* was not only a powerful King, but a King of peace, yet War brake in upon him, not only from abroad by ſtrangers, but from him who lived in the bowels of his own dominion. The ſpring of all this trouble was meritoriouſly from his own ſin, and efficiently from the juſt diſpleaſure of God, both which are expreſſed in two verſes (1 *Kings* 11. 9, 10.) *And the Lord was angry with* Solomon, *becauſe his heart was turned from the Lord God of* Iſrael, *who had appeared unto him twice.* When the gracious appearances of God are either forgotten or ill requited, we muſt look for angry appearances. If Princes turn from God after he appears to them in love, he will ſuffer men to turn from and appear againſt them in diſloyalty. This doom *Solomon* heard in the next words; *Wherefore the Lord ſaid unto* Solomon, *foraſmuch as this is done of thee, and thou haſt not kept my covenant and my Statutes which I commanded thee; I will ſurely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it unto thy ſervant.* Thus *Solomons cord was looſed, and his Servant looſed the bridle before him.*

As for his Son and Succeſſour *Rehoboam*, God looſed his cord while he, following the counſel of the young men, reſolved to ſtraiten theirs; attempting to make them Slaves, he loſt them as Subjects, and they threw up the bridle profeſſedly and daringly before his face (1 *Kings* 12. 16.) *So when all* Iſrael *ſaw that the King hearkned not unto them, the people anſwered the King, ſaying, What portion have we in* David? *Neither have we Inheritance in the Son of* Jeſſe: *To your tents, O* Iſrael: *Now ſee to thine own Houſe,* David: *ſo* Iſrael *departed unto their Tents.* If ever any people, ſurely theſe looſed the bridle before their Princes face. And all this was of God, in judgment, for the great ſins wherewith *Solomon* had provoked him.

There is a Spirit of pride and diſobedience in man ready to throw off the bridle of Chriſts government, who is ſet as King by the mighty hand of God, upon the holy hill of *Sion* (*Pſal.* 2. 1, 2.) *Why do the Heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The Kings of the Earth ſet themſelves, and the Rulers take counſel together, againſt the Lord, and againſt his anointed, ſaying, Let us break their bands aſunder and caſt away their cords from us.* Thus the unruly ſons of men, both Princes and People would quite lay aſide Chriſt, and break all the bands and cords by which he reſtrains and governs them. How much more when God looſeth the cord of Earthly Princes, will their people let looſe the bridle, and break all bands? Nothing ſhall hold them. It is not, Firſt, the power and ſoveraignty, nor ſecondly, , the wiſdom and policy of Princes, nor thirdly, their riches, nor fourthly, their friends and alliances that can keep up the peoples reverence and reſpect to them, if once God withdraw from them. Some Princes have hoped and projected to hold their Subjects under by power, and policy, by Armies at home and confederacies abroad, yet could not do it; all theſe cords have been broken (as *Sampſon* brake the withs and ropes with which the *Philiſtines* bound him) *as a thread of tow is broken when it toucheth* (or ſmelleth) *the fire.* How is it imaginable that ſo many Hundred-Thouſands of men ſhould ſubmit themſelves to the power of one, or of a few men, unleſs God were in it? Therefore, to ſhut up this point, I ſhall only add theſe two words of counſel to Magiſtrates.

First, Be thankful when your cord is not looſed, nor the

Quandiu favet alicui deus, occulta quadam vi homines in officio cõtinet. Merl.

the bridle let looſe before you, acknowledge God in it; as *David* confeſſed that it was *God who avenged him, and ſubdued the people* (the enemy-people) *under him* (Pſal. 18. 47.) ſo he ſaith as much of his native Subjects (*Pſal.* 144. 2.) *He ſubdueth my people under me.*

Secondly, As you are adviſed (*Pſal.* 2. 10, 11, 12.) *Be wiſe O ye Kings, be inſtructed ye Judges of the Earth: Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoyce with trembling: Kiſs the Son leſt he be angry, and ye periſh from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little: Bleſſed are all they that put their truſt in him.* Fear God, that you may be feared in the hearts of your people, ſerve him, that they may ſerve you; and *kiſs the Son leſt he be angry,* that is, ſubmit to *Jeſus Chriſt who is King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, whoſe, the Kingdom is, and who is the governour among the Nations.* Give him, firſt, the kiſs of love, and ſecondly, the kiſs of divine homage, as you deſire and expect your Subjects ſhould give you the kiſs of loyalty and of a civil homage. If the wrath of Chriſt be kindled againſt Princes, who knows how ſoon or how much the wrath of men may be kindled againſt them alſo; if God let looſe the cord, they will let looſe the bridle, before the faces of the greateſt potentates in the World.

Fourthly, Obſerve, more Generally, *When once God hath withdrawn from a man in any kind, he lies open to all manner of affronts, troubles, and injuries from the Creature.*

Quia deus mihi contrarius eſt, ideo omnia mihi contraria ſunt. Brent.

If God be againſt us, all things will be againſt us, whole ſwarms and Armies of ſorrows and miſchiefs will ruſh in upon us like unbridled Horſes. No evil could touch *Job*, while God maintain'd a hedg about him, but as ſoon as God (for his tryal) had broken a gap in that, all evil brake in upon him; how much more will evil break in upon them, whoſe hedge God breaks (that is, withdraws his protection) in anger? The Apoſtle gives believers an excellent ground of comfort, *If God be for us, who can be againſt us?* (Rom. 8. 31.) And ſurely, If God be againſt us, who can be for us? If God be againſt us, all things will be againſt us, even thoſe things will prove againſt us in the iſſue which we are moſt confident of, that they will be for us. The Lord tells *Eli* by a Meſſenger of his own, a man of God (1 *Sam.* 2. 30.) *Them that honour me, I will honour*; that is, I will honour them my ſelf, and cauſe others to honour them; (God gives honour to the Creature by the Creature) *But he that deſpiſeth me ſhall be lightly eſteemed*; that is, I will eſteem him lightly my ſelf, and cauſe others to eſteem him lightly too. If God eſteem a man lightly, he ſhall not continue long in any mans eſtimation. What good ſoever we hold, we hold it by holding in with God. Let us take heed of provoking him to looſe our cord, for then every bridle will be let looſe before us. *He hath looſed my cord,*

And afflicted me.] I have ſpoken often of affliction, and ſhall not add any thing about it here, but in connection with the words which go before and follow.

Hence Note, Firſt, *To loſe reſpect and reverence among men, eſpecially for a Magiſtrate to loſe it, is a great affliction.*

'Tis an affliction to Parents and Maſters to loſe their reverence and reſpect among their Children and Servants; and 'tis ſo to a Magiſtrate when he loſeth due reſpect among his Subjects. *Honour thy father, and thy mother* (whether natural or civil) is the firſt commandement with promiſe; as they ſin much who refuſe to give this honour, and ſo loſe the benefit of the promiſe; ſo they ſuffer much who are refuſed this honour, and loſe the priviledge of their relation.

Again, Conſider the affliction in reference to the iſſue *He hath afflicted me, and they have let looſe the bridle before me.*

Hence Note, *They that are afflicted are uſually deſpiſed.*

A good man is too apt to abate his value of thoſe whom he ſees afflicted; but wicked men (ſuch as *Job* here deſcribes) cannot do otherwiſe, they are ready to reproach and vilifie the afflicted. Such judge the worth of men only by what they are worth; nor know they for what to honour them, but for their outward honour, their goodly garb and greatneſs in the World; the purple and fine linnen, the gay cloaths; and the gold ring ſet perſons higher in their eſtimate, then all the graces of the Spirit; and where the former are not ſeen, the latter are not at all eſteemed. Jeſus Chriſt himſelf, becauſe afflicted and humbled (though he had received the Spirit above meaſure, and was the faireſt of ten Thouſand, yet) *was deſpiſed and rejected of men* (Iſa. 53. 1, 2, 3.) And 'tis a popular errour, that if a man be afflicted, he is deſpiſed and rejected even of God too.

Laſtly, Whereas *Job* riſeth up to the conſideration of God under this diſgrace which he found among men, *He hath looſed my cord.*

Note, *A godly man looks beyond man to God in all the evils and wrongs that he receives from men.*

When *Job* ſaw his deriders looſing the bridle, he concluded preſently that God had looſed his cord; as in all the benefits and comforts received from men, a godly man looks beyond man, and ſaith, ſurely God hath put my caſe into this mans heart, and therefore, he hath ſhewed me kindneſs, and been a comfort to me. Thus ſpake *Paul*, *God that comforteth thoſe that are caſt down, comforted us by the coming of* Titus (2 Cor. 7. 6.) He did not ſay we were comforted by the coming of *Titus*, but God hath comforted us by the coming of *Titus*. It is God who comforteth us by ſuch a man, and 'tis God who afflicteth us by ſuch a man. It ſhews a holy frame when we ſtay not in Creatures, but are carried to God as the Author both of our comforts and croſſes. When *Shimei* curſed *David*, his Servants ſtirred him up to revenge: No, ſaith he, *What have I to do with you ye Sons of* Zeruiah? *ſo let him curſe, becauſe the Lord hath ſaid unto him, curſe* David. But where or how did the Lord ſay that to *Shimei*? Had *Shimei* any rule in the word or warrant from God to ſay ſo? Surely no; the Law of God expreſly forbad him to ſay ſo (*Exod.* 22. 28.) *Thou ſhalt not revile the Gods, nor curſe the Ruler of thy people.* The Lord ſaid ſo, only in his providence, which gave *Shimei* an opportunity to ſay ſo, for the tryal of *David*, as alſo a colour to think *David* was ſuch a man as he had ſaid. Thus the Lord bid *Shimei* curſe *David*; and *David* ſubmitted ſo fully to this diſpenſation of God in giving him correction by *Shimei*'s curſing tongue, that he adds, *Who ſhall then ſay, wherefore haſt thou done ſo?* (2 Sam. 16. 10.) As if he had ſaid in *Job*'s language, *God hath looſed my cord, and this man looſeth the bridle of his tongue upon me,* and therefore who ſhall ſay, *Why haſt thou done ſo?* Not but that *Shimei* ſinned in that he did ſo, yea and deſerved to dye for it, as afterwards he did by the command of *Solomon*, and *David*'s advice given him upon his death-bed. But at that preſent he would have nothing either done or ſaid to him, leſt he ſhould ſeem (though he was deeply ſenſible of what *Shimei* had done) impatient under Gods hand, leaving him to the ſway of his own malice in doing it.

Before I paſs from this Text, I ſhall only mention the tranſlation of the Septuagint and vulgar Latin, who render it thus; *For he hath opened his Quiver againſt me, and afflicted me, and put a bridle into my mouth.* As if (according to the ſence of this verſion) *Job* had ſaid; *God hath ſhot his arrows thick upon me, and made me, as it were, his But or mark to be continually aimed at; or as if I were ſome fierce and unruly Horſe, he hath put a bridle into my mouth to curb and keep me quiet.* But this is rather an addition to, then a tranſlation of the Scripture. And though God did open his Quiver upon *Job*, and put a bridle into his mouth, yet that truth is quite beſides, not only the letter but the ſcope of this place.

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Verſe 12. **Upon my right hand riſe the youth, they puſh away my feet, and they raiſe up againſt me the wayes of their deſtruction.**

In this verſe, and the three that follow, *Job* deſcribes more particularly how he was uſed; God having looſed his cord, and men having let looſe the bridle before him.

Firſt, *At my right hand riſe up the youth.* Why, ſaith he, *at my right hand?* There may be a threefold ſignification of this riſing at the right hand.

Firſt, The right hand ſignifies ſuperiority of place; to be on the right hand of a man, is to be on his upper hand. When *Bathſheba Solomons* mother came into his preſence, he called for a Chair and ſet *her at his right hand* (1 Kings 2. 19.) And at the great day of Judgment, when all mankind ſhall ſtand before God, the Sheep are ſaid to ſtand at his right hand, and the Goats at his left (*Matth.* 25. 33.) So that (according to this ſence of the word) when the youth roſe up at *Job*'s right hand, it is as much as to ſay, they took the upper hand of him, or they took the wall of him, as if they had been his betters. To ſee a youth take the wall or upper hand of an old man, eſpecially of a man in Authority, how uncivil, how unſeemly is it! How great an affront is it!

Ipſo locutionis uſu pro dextro habere dicimus, quod pao magnopenſamus; pro ſiniſtro vero id quod deſpicimus. Greg. 2. Moral. ca. 20.

Secondly, The right hand ſignifies ſtrength; *They riſe up at my right hand*, or (as others render) *againſt my right hand*, that is, where I have my ſtrength and power; they oppoſe me, even in that little that is left. Thus *to riſe at the right hand*, is to riſe as an enemy to invade. And hence one of the curſes pronounced in that Prophetical Pſalm (109. 6.) againſt *Judas* is, *Let Satan ſtand at his right hand.* We read of Satan in the ſame poſture (*Zach.* 3. 1.) *And he ſhewed me* Joſhua *the high Prieſt ſtanding before the Angel of the Lord, and Satan ſtanding at his right hand to reſiſt him.* At his right hand, that is, his weapon hand as well as his working hand. Satan was at hand as an accuſer, and he was at the right hand as an oppoſer.

Ad dextram quod in ea præcipuè robur ſit, quod illi enervare ſtuduerint. Merc.

Satan ſtabat à dextris; nempe eum locum occupans, qui non ſolù accuſatoris erat ſed etiam ejus, qui de accuſato certiſſimam victoriam præſumebat relaturam. Bold.

Thirdly, *To riſe at the right hand*, may be taken only to note the nearneſs of thoſe perſons to *Job*, in place, when they did abuſe him; they did it at his very elbow (as we ſay) or (as the Text ſaith) at his right hand. So the Scripture ſpeaks (*Pſal.* 110. 5.) *The Lord at thy right hand* (that is, the Lord who is very near thee, or preſent with thee) *ſhall ſtrike through Kings in the day of his wrath.* (Pſal. 121. 5.) *The Lord is thy keeper: The Lord is thy ſhade upon thy right hand*; that is, the Lord will be very nigh in a time of trouble to do thee good and keep thee from evil. When *Job* ſaith, *At my right hand riſe up the youth.* We may underſtand it in any of theſe ſences: They took the place of me; even youths behaved themſelves inſolently, as if they had been my mates or peers, yea my Maſters and Superiours, and not only ſo, but they oppoſed me as enemies, and came up cloſe to affront me. Thus at my right hand roſe up the youth.

There is a twofold riſing up; firſt, a riſing up in reſpect and reverence, and ſo it well becomes youth, yea the aged when their betters are in preſence, to riſe up. (*Job* 29. 8.) *The young men ſaw me and hid themſelves: And the aged aroſe and ſtood up.*

Secondly, There is *a riſing up* in contempt and rebellion, and that is commonly called *a riſing*. To riſe notes a ſuddain unexpected aſſault or attempt; ſuch was this doubtleſs upon *Job*; he once little expected ſuch uſage from youths, who was an awe upon the Aged.

Verbum ſurgendi inſultum denotat aliquando et hoſtilem impetum, quo hoſtis ex improviſo è latebris erumpitur. Bold.

Upon my right hand riſe the youth.

The noun is in the ſingular number, yet joyned with a verb of the plural, to note that every one of, or all the youth did it; the word ſignifies alſo a bloſſom, becauſe youth is the bloſſoming time of mans life; and ſo among the Hebrews the young Sons of the Prieſts were called, *The bloſſoms of the Prieſts*; and hence Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates, *ſpringals*; and another, *wanton youths*; and a third, *little boys*; laſtly, others make it a compound, of two nouns, the one ſignifying a flower, and the other a thiſtle; by which they would underſtand light vain men, who are like the flower of a thiſtle, or like thiſtle-down. We render clearly, *Upon my right hand riſe the youth.*

Super dextram parvulus inſurgunt, i. e. quilibet parvulus. Mont.

Nomen פרחח *eſt numeri ſingularis, cum quo jũgitur verbũ numeri pluralis, ad ſignificandũ collectionem ſingulorum.* Piſc.

They puſh away my feet.

Thus he deſcribes the carriage of thoſe ruder youths; they riſe up, what to do? Was it for reverence? No, *They puſh away my feet*; we may conſider theſe words, either literally, and properly, and ſo we can hardly conceive, that the youths came directly (as we ſay) to trip up his heels, or to caſt him down; that were too groſs an interpretation. But as before *ſpitting in his face*, was expounded, not formally, but for the greateſt contempt: So here *the puſhing away of his feet*, implyes extream incivility, or any kind of ill behaviour of the younger ſort towards him, there's no need to take it properly.

Alii volunt eſſe nomen compoſitum à חח־פרח *q. d. flos ſpinæ, per quem intelligunt homines leves et contemptibiles qui aſſimilantur flori ſpinæ. In verbis doctorum Hebræorum filii parvuli ſacerdotum vocantur* פרחי כהונה *Pirche cohannah, flores ſacerdotum.* Bold.

Laſcivientes adoleſcentes. Bez.

Pueri parvuli. Druſ.

Videntur hæc dici per ſynecdochen ſpeciei hyperbolicam, ad ſignificandum extremum ſui contemptum. Piſc.

And raiſe up againſt me the ways of their deſtruction.

Theſe are military words, alluding to the beſieging of a Caſtle, or City; the word ſignifies *a way raiſed up*, or a mount artificially caſt up and formed, upon which a battery is made againſt any ſtrong hold. In this ſence the word is uſed in that expoſtulatory chiding meſſage, which the Lord ſent to *Pharaoh* by his ſervant *Moſes* (*Exod.* 9. 17.) *As yet exalteſt thou thy ſelf againſt my people, that thou wilt not let them go to ſerve me?* That is, doſt thou raiſe up or put obſtructions in the way of my people to hinder them from goiug out of *Egypt?* And *Job* uſeth a like form of ſpeaking (*Chap.* 19. 12.) in alluſion to a ſiege, ſhewing how hardly he was dealt with. *His troops come together, and raiſe up their way againſt me, and incamp round about my Tabernacle.*

They raiſe up againſt me the ways or works of their deſtruction. That is, they deal as if they intended to deſtroy me, ſo it is rendred by a learned Tranſlater, *They raiſe up againſt me deſtroying ways.* Mr. *Broughton* renders thus; *They caſt upon me the Cauſes of their woe*; that is, they ſay all their miſeries were brought upon them by my means, and ſo they take their fill of revenge upon me. The general ſence of the verſe is as if he had ſaid; *They tryed their utmoſt to afflict and vex me*; which he expreſſeth under theſe metaphorical terms, *of puſhing away his feet, and raiſing up againſt him the ways of their deſtruction.*

מסלה *via elevata, à* מלל *elevo. Metaphora à re caſtrenſi. Munire vel ſternere viam dicimus, quod fit aggeſta terra vel lapidibus.*

Num adhuc impedimenta ponis populo meo, ne liceat ipſi egredi. Rivet. in loc.

Semitas exitiales. Jun.

Dicit, exitii ſui, quod ei ſtruebant, perdere eum cupientes, propriè איד *vapor, metaphoricè autem exitium calamitas.* Druſ.

From the conſideration of the perſons here ſpoken of by *Job*, *the youth*, even little ones, or Children did not forbear to do this (he complained at the 19. Chapter, in the ſame ſtrein (*verſ.* 18.) *Yea young Children deſpiſed me, I aroſe and they ſpake againſt me.*

Note, *They that are ſo young that they are good for little, yet are ready enough to do much evil.*

Youth who ſhould riſe up in reverence, are apt to riſe up in rebellion (*2 Kings* 2. 23.) we read of little Children that came out to mock the Prophet, they had no mind, poſſibly, no underſtanding to hearken to or reverence inſtruction from the Prophet, yet they could deride him. (*Pſal.* 58. 3.) *The wicked are eſtranged from the womb, they go aſtray as ſoon as they be born, ſpeaking lies.* How early do men ſin! How late do they repent! As ſoon as they are born they go aſtray, but if left to themſelves they will not return till they die, they will never return. Children can neither go nor ſpeak as ſoon as born, but *as ſoon as born they can go aſtray and ſpeak lies*; that is, their firſt ſpeaking is lying, and their firſt going is ſtraying; yea when they cannot go naturally, they can go aſtray morally or metaphorically; the firſt ſtep they are able to to take, is a ſtep out of the way. *Auſtin* ſaid of little Children, in reference to the univerſal bondage of mankind by nature; *They cannot go, yet they are fetter'd*; they are as much in the chains of ſin as in their ſwadling cloaths. *Nature needs no School nor Tutor to learn evil and do amiſs.* As ill weeds grow apace, ſo they need no culture, no care to make them grow, they grow alone; it was noted before that the word in the Original for a *Child*, ſignifieth a *Bloſſom*; *They that are but bloſſoms themſelves, bear and bring forth much ſinful fruit.*

Nondum ambulant ſed jam ſunt compediti. Auguſt.

Secondly, Note, *As diſreſpect is grievous from any, ſo moſt from thoſe that ſhould be moſt reſpectful.*

Youth, if any, ſhould reverence grave men. A young man takes it ill to be ill uſed by an aged man, what is it then for an aged man, to be abuſed by youths or Children!

Laſtly, Obſerve, *Evil men are very apt to inſult over and oppreſs thoſe that are under the preſſure of outward evils.*

This hath been elſe-where noted, and therefore, it may ſuffice to mention it here. The Proverb is, *When the Oak is down, every one comes and gathers Wood.* When a good man is upon the ground, every wretch takes pleaſure to trample upon him. But remember, *an afflicted perſon is a ſacred thing*, and ſhould not therefore be touched with prophane and filthy hands, take heed of touching thoſe with ſcorn, whom God hath touched with ſorrow. It is not ſo eaſie as it is ſinful to vex thoſe whom God hath wounded. Man never ſins with a higher hand againſt man, then in perſecuting thoſe who are laid low; And ſtill the lower the perſon is, the higher is the ſin of his perſecuters. As God is exalted moſt in his mercy by remembring us for good in our low eſtate, ſo the malice of man is in its greateſt exaltation, when he adds to their evils who are in a low eſtate. They were the vileſt men on earth, yea viler then the earth, who roſe up againſt *Job* in his low eſtate.

Miſer eſt res ſacra. In miſero facile peccatum, ſed magno malo

To conclude this verſe; It may be enquired, and that not unneceſſarily, nor unprofitably; What opportunity this vile people could have to offer ſuch affronts to *Job*, or to put him to ſo much ſuffering in this time of his ſufferings?

I anſwer; Firſt, Some think that *Job* doth in all this only prophecy of the ſufferings of Chriſt, and the Church, in and from the World.

Secondly, Others conceive that *Job* ſpake all this, only to ſhew that he was brought into ſuch a calamitous condition, by the hand of God, as might very well have expoſed or laid him open to all theſe fore-mentioned abuſes from the hands and tongues of men.

But though *Job*'s ſufferings, as here expreſſed, may very well typifie thoſe of Chriſt and the Church, and were ſuch as might put him upon the fear of ſuch reproaches and abuſes, though he had never felt them; yet I doubt not but *Job* ſpeaks hiſtorically in this place, not prophetically, and what he indeed experienced in that caſe, as done to him, not meerly what in that caſe he might have expected to be done. For though in that brief narrative of the loſs of his eſtate and Children, as alſo of his bodily ſores, which is made in the two firſt Chapters of this Book, before his friends addreſs to and conference with him, there be no mention of theſe rude ſpeakings and actings of the vulgar againſt him; yet there might be time enough for all theſe afflictions to fall upon him, either before the diſpute began, or in the intervals of it (for we cannot conceive it done at once) or in both. And while we allay (as hath been done) ſome of the harſher expreſſions, with a mildneſs of interpretation, we need not fear to ſay, that *Job* who was to be tryed (as a pattern or exemplar of patience) to the utmoſt, endured all theſe tryals.

VERS. 13, 14.

They marr my path, they ſet forward my Calamity, they have no helper.

They came upon me as a wide breaking in of waters: In the deſolation they rolled themſelves upon me.

JOB ſtill proſecutes the ſame point and ſubject, not only the uncivil, but the cruel carriage of thoſe vile wretches towards him.

Verſ. 13. **They marr my path.**

The word is only uſed in this place all the Bible over: *A path is marr'd* when 'tis broken and made unfit to walk or go in; when a path becomes impaſſable, then 'tis marr'd.

They marr my path.] What path? The Word ſignifies a *ſtreight path*; ſtreight I mean, as ſtreight is oppoſed to broad, not as ſtreight is oppoſed to crooked, though both may be taken in here. *Job*, holy and upright *Job*, did not walk in the broad path, nor did he walk in crooked paths. *They marr my path.*

נתס *rupit, diſrupit, deſtruxit. Hoc loco tantum habetur.*

What then was his path? There is a three-fold underſtanding of this,

Firſt, Some conceive he means the path or way by which he hoped to eſcape and get out of theſe troubles. As if he had ſaid, *They have obſtructed and ſtopt up all the wayes of my deliverance as much as in them lyeth.* Some ſtick much upon this Expoſition: I cannot get out of my trouble, out of this ſore affliction, becauſe theſe men have cut off all ſuccours, and ſhut up all out-gates from this ſad condition; They are as a barr in my way, hindring the attainment of what I ſo much deſire and look for. A City that is beſieged by Enemies lying round about it, and encamping againſt it, may yet for a while have ſome way, ſome means left for relief to enter; but if the watchful Enemy once ſtop up all avenues, and ſhut them in perfectly, their caſe is deſperate. Thus *Job* ſpeaks (according to this Expoſition) as a man beſieged, when he ſaith, *They marr my path*; As if he had ſaid, *I am ſorely diſtreſſed, all imaginable wayes either of deliverance from my troubles, or of comfort in them, are hidden from me; I am entangled with ſo many evils, that I cannot extricate my ſelf. And this is more grievous to me then all my ſufferings, that I have no remedy for my ſufferings.*

Impedimento mihi ſunt, quo minus aſſequar quod cupio. Vatabl.

There is a truth in this ſence; yet I conceive *Job* is not upon it here, and we know, that, (as to appearances) he had given up all thoughts of his reſtoring to a preſent worldly proſperity long before, and ſeemed to expect no end of the troubles of his life, but by the ending of his life. Therefore ſurely he is not now complaining, that the path to his former enjoyments was ſpoil'd, and made not only difficult but impaſſable; nor that the Door of ſuch hopes was ſhut and lockt againſt him. And indeed *Job* was ſo far from feeding, or nouriſhing the hopes of a return to ſuch a condition, as his friends had often promiſed him in caſe of his repentance, that the utmoſt of his deſires was but for a little breathing before he yielded up his breath (*Chap.* 10. 20, 21.) *Are not my dayes few? Ceaſe then and let me alone that I may take comfort a little, before I go whence I ſhall not return, even to the land of darkneſs and ſhadow of death.* Therefore

Secondly, His *path*, and the *marring* of it, is rather to be underſtood of that holy Courſe of life which he had both taken and run in obedience to and purſuance of the commandments of God. The whole proceſs and progreſs of his works and undertakings, in a faithful diſcharge of all incumbent duties both towards God and towards man, was the path which his Enemies marr'd; yea his purpoſe and intendment for the time to come, as well as his practice for the time paſt, was the path which they marr'd. As if he had ſaid, My enemies oppoſe me in all that good which I have done or would do. They marr that moral and ſpiritual, that honeſt and righteous path which I have trodden, and intend ſtill to tread.

Semitam dicit vitæ rationem, quam hi plane deſtruxerunt et conturbarunt. Druſ. *Omnes proceſſus operum meorum.* Aquin. *Quicquid vellem, quicquid pararem, diſſiparunt.* Pined.

But it may be queſtion'd how did *they marr it*?

I anſwer; Firſt, By ſpeaking evil of the good which he had done; they caſt dirt upon his wayes, the dirt of odious and ſpiteful calumniations. His was a clean path, a holy and a juſt path, as he had often proteſted in his former Apologies, and will more in the next Chapter, yet his Friends judged that he had walked in very foul wayes. So that, when he complains, *They marr my path.* It is as if he had ſaid; *They ſay I have been an Oppreſſor and injurious among men, that I have been a hypocrite, and a pretender only to zeal for God*; thus they marr'd his path. We have heard *Job* often troubled and grieved, that; even thoſe grave men his Friends ſhould not only be ſuſpicious of, but uſe ſuch undue liberty of ſpeech in aſperſing his former wayes; and of that he complains here, as the work of thoſe vile perſons who derided him. Theſe men who never ſet foot in a good way themſelves, judged ill of all *Job*'s wayes. They walked in bad wayes, and they concluded his were no better, yea worſe then theirs. *They marr my path.*

Hence Note; *To ſpeak evil of the good wayes of others, is to marr and deſtroy their wayes.*

Slander is therefore a great ſin, becauſe it ſpoils or defaceth a mans way, rendring it ſuch as it is not, and polluting what it is. That which is a way of light, ſlander makes a way of darkneſs; That which is a way of peace and love, ſlander makes a way of ſtrife and wrath; That which is a way of righteouſneſs, ſlander makes a way of Injuſtice and oppreſſion; That which is a way of charity and pity to the poor, ſlander and reproach make a way of hard-heartedneſs and cruelty. As *Paul* ſaid to *Elymas* the ſorcerer (*Acts* 13. 10.) *O full of all ſubtlety and all malice, wilt thou not ceaſe to pervert the right wayes of the Lord?* So we may ſay to many ſubtle and malicious ſlanderers, will ye not ceaſe to pervert the right wayes of men?

Secondly, Theſe words may reſpect the time to come; And ſo his meaning is, as they ſpeak evil of the good which I have done, and report me otherwiſe then I have been; either through ignorance not knowing, or through malice not willing to know what I have done or been; So they hinder me in the good which I would do; I would do good and better, I would advance and proceed in paths of righteouſneſs and holineſs, but theſe do what they can to hinder me; *They marr my path.*

Hence Note; *They who are evil are ready to hinder others in doing good.*

They who care not to do good themſelves, deſire not that others ſhould do it; Like thoſe Lawyers whom Chriſt reproves and denounceth a Woe againſt (*Luke* 11.52.) *They take away the key of knowledge, they enter not in themſelves, and them that are entring in they hinder.* Not to have a will to enter and walk in a good way our ſelves is ſinful enough, but to ſtop or diſcourage thoſe that would, is much more ſinful; The former may proceed only from ſloth or a want of love to the wayes of God, but the latter muſt needs proceed from ſpight to and hatred of the wayes of God, or of thoſe who walk in them. They ſhall be loweſt in Hell, who hinder others from Heaven. *They marr my path.*

They ſet forward my Calamity.

In the former words *Job* deſcribed the perverſeneſs of his Enemies, either by their reproaching him for, or oppoſing him in the wayes of equity and piety; here he deſcribes them might and main (as we ſay) helping on his miſery.

מהותי *Eſt autem* הוה *ſive* הוה *contritio, calamitas, pernicies; qui ſonus eſt in voce Jehova.* Druſ.

Augent meam calamitatem & promovent. velut cadentem impellunt. Merc.

Job's Calamity came faſt enough upon him, and ſtuck cloſe enough to him, yet theſe mens charity was to ſet it forward, or to put it on faſter, as if they were afraid he would never be miſerable enough, nor ſoon enough. The word which we render *Calamity*, ſignifies any evil accident or trouble befalling us in this World. We render it *miſchief*, (*Ezek.* 7. 26.) *Miſchief ſhall come upon miſchief*, &c. Theſe vile perſons helped on his miſchief, or that which was moſt miſchievous unto him: Though his caſe was exceeding ſad, and the chain of his affliction exceeding heavy, though his ſores and ſorrows preſt him continually, yet as if all theſe were too little and too light, yea as if all theſe evils were too ſlow paced, and did not come thick and quick enough upon him, they did their beſt to haſten and make them worſe; He was falling, and they thruſt him down, he was down, and they trampled upon him. All this and more, we may conceive *Job* intending, while he not only ſaith but complaineth, *They ſet forward my Calamity.*

Hence note the evil diſpoſition of theſe men, or the diſpoſition of evil men.

Baſe and wicked men make it their buſineſs to add ſorrow to the ſorrowful, and trouble to thoſe that are troubled.

To thruſt a man forward when he is going down; to puſh him on when he is falling, argues a very wicked ſpirit. Charity (ſhall I ſay) nay, common humanity commands to help the diſtreſſed out of their calamities; what ſhall we call it then, which ſets forward the calamity of thoſe who are in diſtreſs! How angry was the Lord in that caſe (*Zeph.* 1. 15.) *I am very ſore diſpleaſed* (ſaith he) *with the Heathen that are at eaſe*; (men may have much outward eaſe under the ſecret diſpleaſure of God) I am diſpleaſed and ſore diſpleaſed, why? *For I was but a little diſpleaſed* (with my People, with *Jeruſalem*) *and they helped forward the affliction.* As *Saul* under-acted his Commiſſion againſt *Amaleck*, ſo the *Babylonians* over-acted their Commiſſions againſt *Jeruſalem*: God did juſtly in ſending them, but they did cruelly and acted their own malice, not the deſign of God; they laid on load. Such is the cruel diſpoſition of ungodly men toward the people of God; if ever they find God correcting them with cords, they will do their utmoſt to ſcourge them with Scorpions: And when God layes his little finger upon them, if they can, they will lay their loyns, their whole weight upon them, they help forward the affliction.

How contrary is the ſpirit of carnal men to the mind of God; if God give them Commiſſion to go forth, and deſtroy utterly, to heighten the calamity of his enemies to the utmoſt, they will be ſparing, they think God is too ſevere, and they'le take upon them to be more merciful. God ſent *Saul* forth, and gave him his Commiſſion, (1 *Sam.* 15. 3.) *Now go ſlay Amaleck, and utterly deſtroy all that they have, and ſpare them not, but ſlay both man and woman, Infant and Suckling, Ox and Sheep, Camel and Aſs*; He indeed deſtroy'd many of them, but thought it too much cruelty to ſpare none; He ſpared *Agag* for pity, and he ſpared the fat cattel, as he pretended, for pity, that he might offer them in ſacrifice to the Lord. He would needs be more merciful then God; this is the wiſdom of man. So *Ahab*, as wicked a King as lived, he would take upon him to be merciful, when God had no mind he ſhould (1 *Kings* 20. 42.) he had *Benhadad* in his power, a wicked Prince, and he was glad of an opportunity to let him go, and called him Brother. But how did God take it at his hands? (*ver.* 42.) *Thus ſaith the Lord, becauſe thou haſt let go out of thy hand, a man whom I have appointed to utter deſtruction; therefore thy life ſhall go for his life, and thy people for his people.* *Benhadad* was appointed by God to utter deſtruction, yet *Ahab* was favourable to him, and let him go free. But when the Lord ſmites his own people ſparingly, (there is a ſparing mercy in ſmiting.) The wicked ſmite without mercy, and will not ſpare. When God intends not their deſtruction but correction, the men of the World are unſatisfied with any thing that is leſs then their utter deſtruction (*Iſa.* 47. 6.) *I was wroth with my people, I have polluted mine Inheritance, and given them into thine hand:* (This the Lord acknowledgeth he had done) *thou didſt ſhew them no mercy.* As if the Lord had ſaid, I was angry, indeed, with mine Inheritance and put them into thy power, *but thou* (thou haſt exceeded thy orders in the execution of them,) *thou haſt ſhewed no mercy; and upon the Ancient thou didſt lay the yoak*, and not only a yoak, but a heavy yoak, *yea thou didſt very heavily lay the yoak, even upon the Ancient.* The *Edomites* and *Philiſtines* are under the ſame rebuke (*Ezek.* 25. 12. 15.) *Thus ſaith the Lord God, becauſe* Edom *hath dealt againſt the houſe of* Judah *by taking vengeance, and hath greatly offended and revenged himſelf upon them.* Again (*ver.* 15.) *Thus ſaith the Lord God, becauſe the* Philiſtines *have dealt by revenge, and taken vengeance with a deſpiteful heart to deſtroy it for the old hatred. Therefore behold I will ſtretch out my hand upon the* Philiſtines. Both theſe bloody Nations over-acted the diſpleaſure of God againſt his people, and acting their own private ſpirit ſet forward their calamity. We read (2 *Chron.* 28. 9.) that God being angry with *Judah*, the *Iſraelites* came and deſtroyed their brethren *with a rage that reacheth unto heaven*, that is, with the extreameſt rage imaginable. They who ſaid, *Let us build us a City, and a Tower, whoſe top may reach to Heaven* (Gen. 11. 4.) were ſurely reſolved to build as high as they could; and doubtleſs, they were as outragious as they could, in deſtroying their Brethren, who deſtroyed them with a rage that reached unto heaven, or with a rage, the cry whereof came up to God in Heaven, as the cry of *Abel*'s blood did (*Gen.* 4.) as alſo the cry of *Sodom*'s filthineſs (*Gen.* 18.) The Lord was gracious to *Paul* (*Phil.* 2. 27.) in reference to his dear friend *Epaphroditus*, who was very ſick, ſick unto death, but ſaith he, *the Lord hath had mercy on him, and not on him only, but on me alſo*; Why? *Leſt I ſhould have ſorrow upon ſorrow.* *Paul* had ſome ſorrow upon him at that time, and therefore the Lord would not take away his friend, leſt he ſhould ſet forward his ſorrow, and cauſe the wound to bleed afreſh. But theſe wretches put ſorrow upon ſorrow; where the Lord ſends ſorrow, they heap on ſorrow; If they have the handling of the matter, they will be ſure to make the ſorrowful know ſorrow. There are two ſpecial grounds of this; Firſt, As the nature of man is cruel and unnatural, ſo the very mercies of the wicked are cruel; no marvail then if they urge Calamities, where the Lord lays any Calamity. Secondly, The Lord and they have different ends; the ends which God hath are to purge or humble and try his people, that they may come forth Gold. And therefore he moderates their Calamity to theſe bleſſed ends. But the ends of wicked men, are either to revenge themſelves, and eaſe their ſpleen, or to enrich themſelves, and fill their purſes. They deſign the raiſing of themſelves on the ruines of thoſe whom God is afflicting, and therefore they do it to the utmoſt line of their power and opportunity. This ſtir'd the afflicted Jews to awaken the vengeance of God upon their inſatiable Enemies, (*Pſal.* 137.7.) *Remember, O Lord, the Children of Edom, in the day of* Jeruſalem, *who ſaid* (in the day of *Jeruſalem*'s Calamity) *raſe it*, *raſe it even to the Foundations thereof.* Well might *David* make that election (2 *Sam.* 24. 14.) *Let me fall now into the hand of the Lord* (*for his mercies are great*) *and let not me fall into the hand of man.* As if he had ſaid, Seeing there is no avoiding it, but I and my people muſt ſuffer, I deſire we may ſuffer by the immediate hand of God, who in judgment remembers mercy ; Whereas men will be altogether unmerciful ; If God give me up into their hands, there will be no ho with them, therefore let the deſtroying Angel ſlay with the Sword of peſtilence, rather then men with the ſword of War. They will be ſure to help forward mine affliction, and the affliction of my people. If God did not ſet bounds to the wrath of man towards man, it would at once overflow all the bounds of reaſon and moderation.

There is another reading of this part of the verſe, which I ſhall a little touch upon before I paſs from it. For the word ſignifies, not only, as we render, *to ſet forward*, but *to profit*, or advantage, and we commonly ſay of a man that profits or thrives in his calling, *he goes forward*; and of a man that doth not thrive in his calling or buſineſs, *he goes backward in the World.* Taking the word in this notion, it holds out more of the wickedneſs and ill frame of theſe mens ſpirits ; for as (according to the former reading) they added to his Calamity ; So (according to this) they took his Calamity as an addition or advantage to themſelves. Thus Mr. *Broughton*, *They hold my heavineſs a profit* ; Or, *They profit themſelves by my heavineſs* ; I am hewed down, and they gather my chips and broken boughs to make themſelves a fire, or to build themſelves houſes with ; they grow rich by my loſs, and riſe by my downfall, they are greater by my leſſening ; at leaſt (according to Mr. *Broughtons* tranſlation,) if they did not actually profit themſelves by his Calamity, yet they held his Calamity to be their profit ; that is, it was to them as if they had got profit by it, they thought their own neſts were better feathered, by the plucking off his feathers. Theſe barbarous people (whom (it is like) he might have provoked in the time of his Power and Magiſtracy) looked upon his loſſes as their gettings, upon his ſickneſs as their health, upon his ruine and undoing as their making, they were as well pleaſed with his emptyings, as if themſelves had been filled by it.

Ad contritionem meã proſunt ; in fonte eſt הועיל *quod prodeſſe ſignificat.* Druſ.

Lætati ſunt ad contritionem meã perinde ac ſi nacti eſſent magnã utilitatem. Pagn.

> Hence take this Note ; *Wicked men are apt to rejoyce, as if they had gained or gotten much, when they ſee the godly in trouble, or ſuffer loſs.*

Some are pleaſed more then with their own getting thouſands of Gold and Silver, to ſee others beggar'd and ſtript of all. I grant there is a profit to be had by the afflictions and heavineſs of others ; could we manage them aright, we might make a great Improvement of every croſs, of every rod that we ſee upon our brethren. Such providences of God to them ſhould provoke us, Firſt, To conſider and ſearch our wayes ; Secondly, To remember the ſlipperineſs of our condition ; Thirdly, To prepare for evil times. (*Eccl.* 7. 2.) *It is better to go to the houſe of mourning, then to the houſe of mirth* ; *for this is the end of all men, and the living will lay it to heart*, that is, the living ought to lay it to heart, and they who are indeed alive, ſpiritually alive, will lay it to heart, and grow more ſpiritual in their lives by it. The living will get by the death of others ; a godly man counts the ſaddeſt diſpenſations of God upon his Neighbour (in this ſenſe) his profit, and actually profits by them. This is a good, a bleſſed way of profiting, by other mens harms ; it is well for us if we can thus *hold the heavineſs of others a profit* ; but the ſpirit of theſe wretches was of another ſtrain, they lookt upon the Calamity of *Job* as a gain or advantage to them, it was the Joy and rejoycing of their hearts, to ſee him in heavineſs. Lay both theſe interpretations together, and they yield us this third Obſervation.

> *Either to ſet forward and add to the affliction of others, or to be pleaſed with their affliction, as a matter of advantage to our ſelves, is the ſign of, or argues a heart deſperately wicked.*

Nothing is more oppoſite to the rules of common humanity then this, how oppoſite then is it to the rules of Goſpel-Charity ! This overthrows at once the whole law of love, which teacheth us, Firſt, That it is our duty to commiſerate and pity thoſe who are afflicted, and not only ſo, but Secondly, To comfort, relieve, and ſupport them in their affliction, and Thirdly, To help, deliver, and free them from their affliction, yea, Fourthly, To count their loſs our loſs, their affliction our affliction, and their ſorrows our ſorrows. Now for a man to ſet forward the affliction of others, and to hold their heavineſs a profit, this is a mighty aggravation as of the act of that mans ſin, ſo of the ſinfulneſs of that man ; even as to help others forward in ſin, or to be pleaſed with others when they ſin, is an evidence of a heart deſperately naught. There is ſuch a generation in the World, who help ſin forward, and are well pleaſed to ſee others ſin. Which was one of the blackeſt Characters, if not the blackeſt Character that was given of the Gentiles in their dark condition of ignorance and unbelief (*Rom.* 1. 32.) *Who knowing the Judgment of God, that they who commit ſuch things are worthy of death, not only do the ſame, but have pleaſure in them that do them.* The very top (as it were) of all the wickedneſs which they had done was this, that they had pleaſure in ſuch as did wickedly ; and ſo were not only actors, but ſetters on in ſin, and promoters of the Devils cauſe, and work in the World. Now, I ſay, as to ſet a man forward in ſin, and to be pleaſed with him when he is forwardeſt at it, argues a vile debauched hardned heart : So to ſet forward a mans affliction, and to be pleaſed when he is in trouble, this is ſuch another argument of ſuch a heart. We cannot put two worſer brands upon any man, then to ſay, He is one that ſets forward the ſins of others, and is pleaſed when they ſin, or that he ſets forward the ſorrows of others, and is pleaſed with their ſorrows ; Eſpecially when any man ſhall do this (as theſe men did it) of his own meer motion, and in his own ſtrength, without the counſel or aſſiſtance of any other. Thus it is no ſooner ſaid here, *They ſet forward my Calamity*, but to heighten it, *Job* preſently adds ;

Et non fuit qui ferret auxilium. Vulg.

They have no helper.

Some read theſe words as implying *Job*'s deſolate condition, or helpleſs againſt thoſe who ſet forward his calamity. *There is no helper to them*, that is, *againſt them*, I am oppreſſed, and even ſwallow'd up, but where is he that undertakes for me ? As if he had ſaid, *I am alone, I have none to appear for me, none to patronize me, none to take my part, or ſpeak a good word for me* ; I have none to aſſiſt me in the leaſt ; They ſet forward my Calamity, but I have no helper. The vulgar tranſlation is expreſs to this ſenſe ; *And there was none to bring me any help.* It was thus indeed with *Job*, he poor man was deſtitute of help and friends in that time of his greateſt need, and it is a too much experienced truth, that men in Calamity are uſually deſerted of friends and helpers. This cauſed *David* to cry out (*Pſal.* 12. 1, 2.) *Help Lord, for the godly man ceaſeth, for the faithful fail from among the Children of men, They ſpeak vanity every one to his neighbour, with flattering lips, and with a double tongue do they ſpeak* ; As if he had ſaid, They either flatly deny me help, or promiſe it flatteringly ; They ſay, they will help, and they only ſay it, therefore help Lord, for I am helpleſs. Lover and friend haſt thou put far from me, O be thou neer unto me !

Mihi ſcilicet, dum ab iis opprimerer. Aquin.

Non eſt adjutor illis, i. e. *adverſus illos.* Bez.

Quod quidã recentiorum contextum corrumpit, quaſi Job *queratur ſibi nullum eſſe adjutorem &* למו *illis pro* לו: *illi ſumit tolerari poteſt.* Merc.

Non adjutor eis. Mont.

Nemine opem ferente ipſis. Jun.

But this tranſlation gives ſo great a ſtrein to the Original Text, and is ſo little favoured by it, that I ſhall not ſtay upon it.

The clear literal reading is, *There is no helper to them*, or they ſet forward my Calamity, *No man bringing them any help.*

They have no helper.] Theſe words fall under three diſtinct Expoſitions.

First, As carrying (which was even now intimated) an argument of the extream boldneſs and impudence of theſe

Quamvis ſoli ſint & careant adjutoribus, adeo tamen audaces & præſidentes ſunt, ut ſoli maligno ſtudio in me omnibus modis irruant. Jun.

perſons, that though none did offer them any help, aſſiſtance, or countenance, yet they would go on. As none offered to joyn with them in this attempt upon *Job*, ſo they did not look, much leſs wait for any, but ruſht on confidently without their ſeconds. *They had no helper.*

Non opus habent adjutore ad me conficiendum, jam enim de me actum eſt, nec ex eorū manibus poſſum effugere. Merc. Ramb. *Soli ſufficiunt ad me vexandum non egent aliorum opera.* Druſ.

Secondly, Theſe words are a clear argument of *Job's* extream weakneſs. They who ſet forward his Calamity, or ſet themſelves againſt him, though they were but mean and alone, without any auxiliaries or abetters, yet they eaſily enough wrong'd and worſted him. As if *Job* had ſaid, *I am no match for them; for alas, I am a man quite ſpent, and drawn down to the lees, I have neither ſtrength of body, nor ſtrength of eſtate; nor ſtrength of counſel about me; All my Intereſts and powers, as to this World, are broken and gone, ſo that even a Company of baſe men that appear upon their own ſcore, and account, are too ſtrong for me. I am not able to help my ſelf, no not againſt thoſe who have no helper; Nor can I make my party good againſt thoſe who have none to take their part.* Even they who are ſo vile and unworthy, that none will own or aſſiſt them, afflict me, and I cannot reſiſt them. How weak was this mighty man grown, who could not bear up againſt mean men, who had none to ſtrengthen them! *Job's* oppoſers had not much power, but *Job* himſelf had none.

He that is weak himſelf, is eaſily oppreſt by others, though themſelves are but weak.

Thirdly, We may underſtand theſe words rather of a moral, then of any natural or civil helper; And ſo, *They have no helper*, is, they have no perſwader, they have none to put them on, none to ſtir them up, none to provoke them to do me this miſchief, yet they do it. As if he had ſaid, They are ſo active of themſelves, that they need none to act, or encourage them in their way. 'Tis but ſeldom that men will adventure upon any thing of moment, till ſome or other joyn with them, and (as it were) ſet their wheels a going, or oyl their wheels by counſel and encouragement; but theſe mens wheels ran faſt enough without oyling. And as they had no bridle of ingenuity to ſtop them, ſo they needed no ſpur of oratory to quicken them. *They have no helper.*

Hence Note; *The nature of man is forward enough to evil, he needs no helper, no perſwader.*

When we are called to do good, we need much help both from God and man; we need many Encouragements, both by promiſes and perſwaſions, our hearts hang back, and our ſpirits recoyl from every ſpiritual duty. Even the Elect are in ſome degree unto every good work reprobate; that is, they find not ſuch a readineſs as becomes them. Natural corruption is their dayly clog and pull-back; ſo that, as the Apoſtle ſpake and felt in his own caſe (*Rom.* 7. 18.) when they would do good, *evil is preſent with them; and when to will is preſent, how to perform that which is good they find not.* A good man wants help, he wants ſtrength to do good, but when a wicked man would do miſchief, he wants no helper; the way to Hell is downhill all the way, much ado we have to ſtay the wheels, and keep our ſelves from running head-long. Man is ſo prone to ſin, that he needs no teacher. The Apoſtle indeed ſaith (1 *Theſ.* 4. 9.) *As touching brotherly love, ye need not that I write unto you, for ye your ſelves are taught of God to love one another.* 'Tis true, Believers ſhould not need to be written or ſpoken to in this point; They who have faith in Chriſt, how can they be without love one to another? Yet believers have much need to be taught that leſſon; yea and all other holy leſſons, though they know them in the Scriptures of God, and are as to notion eſtabliſhed in the preſent truth. We are wiſe and free to evil, but to good we have no wiſdom, no freedom, but by grace, and that is mixed with ſo much bondage, that without freſh aſſiſtances we find not our ſelves free to it. A godly man never doth good without the help of God, and 'tis ſeldom that a wicked man doth evil without the help of the Devil, (he would alwayes make one there) though he can do it ſufficiently without him or any other helper.

There is yet another rendring of this clauſe given by Mr. *Broughton*, which may yield us ſome further inſtruction from them; *They hold my heavineſs a profit* (ſo he tranſlates the former words) *though they be never the better*; that is, though they have no benefit by it. Such was their malice, that they held his trouble their advantage, though it did not at all advantage them. The Original may bear this tranſlation, and it carries a notable deſcription of that ſpirit, of which the wicked are, or with which they are often moved. Their actions are naught, but their ſpirit or principle is far worſe. *They ſet forward my Calamity* (ſaith *Job*) *or hold my heavineſs a profit, though they have no help by it, or though they be never the better.*

We may underſtand this reading two wayes.

Firſt, In reference to their Judgment, or light, though they ſee and are convinc'd they can get nothing by it, yet they will do it.

Secondly, In reference to the event: Though by all their wicked dealings with me, they do not advantage themſelves in the iſſue, yet they proceed to deal wickedly with me. From the former underſtanding of the words,

Note, *Some will do miſchief to others, though they ſee they ſhall get no benefit by it themſelves,*

As a godly man will do good (where duty calls him) for goodneſs ſake, for duties ſake, though he gain no worldly advantage by it; ſo wicked men will do evil freely, even though they do not get ſo much as a pin of their ſleeve, or a paring of their nails by it, though they ſee clearly, that all they gain by it, they may (as we ſay) put in their eyes, and ſee never the worſe. *David* (Pſal. 120. 3.) gives a rebuke to ſuch a wicked generation as *Job* here ſpeaks of, *What ſhall be given to thee, or done unto thee, thou falſe tongue?* What doſt thou expect, thou falſe tongue, in pleading a bad cauſe? What fee or reward haſt thou for being an accuſer inſtead of an advocate? What ſhall it profit thee (as we put in the Margin) What ſhalt thou gain by thy deceitful tongue? Or (as our Margin hath it again) *What ſhall the deceitful tongue give unto thee*, that thou goeſt about ſlandring thy Brother, and tearing his good name? Hath thy deceitful tongue houſes or lands to give thee? Hath it any treaſures of Gold and Silver to beſtow upon thee? Surely as it ſelf is, ſo it gives only *ſharp arrows of the mighty, and coals of Juniper*, as the next verſe in that Pſalm intimates. Some tear the names of men in high places, and not a few the names of their brethren or equals (as the hypocrite is charged (*Pſal.* 50. 20.) *Thou ſitteſt and ſpeakeſt againſt thy Brother, thou ſlandereſt thine own Mothers ſon:* Thou ſitteſt at it, as if it were thy trade and occupation, thou doſt not make a tranſient work, or a by-buſineſs of it, thou ſitteſt cloſe at it.) But what do they get? The tongue indeed will ſpeak often in theſe cauſes *gratis*, or without a fee, but it never doth without danger and damage to the ſpeaker. As ſuch ſpeakers ſhoot arrows, like the arrows of the mighty, and as they ſcatter coals, like the coals of Juniper, ſo they uſually get an arrow in their own ſides, and not only burn their fingers, but heap coals of fire upon their own heads. Ungodly men will do miſchief to other men, purely for miſchiefs ſake, yet when once miſchief is done, it proves moſt miſchievous to the doers of it; And while they hold their brethrens heavineſs a profit, though they are never the better, they ſhall feel and find themſelves in a ſhort time much the worſe.

Secondly, As theſe words imply the event or fruitfulneſs of thoſe actings.

Obſerve, *When a man hath caſt up his accounts, he ſhall be forced to confeſs, that he hath gained nothing by ſin, or by doing any thing that is evil, either in it ſelf or unto others.*

The Apoſtles were ſlanderouſly reported, and ſome affirmed that they ſaid, *Let us do evil that good may come of it*, (Rom. 3. 8.) Now as it is an abomination to do the leaſt ſinful evil for the good of others (though the good we propoſe be the ſaving of their ſouls, yea, though we would propoſe to our ſelves a higher good in the doing of any ſinful evil, then the ſaving a whole World of ſouls, *The Glory of God*, yet (I ſay) to do it were an abomination, as the Apoſtles concluſion even againſt ſuch pretenders doth fully evince, when he ſaith, *whoſe damnation is juſt.*)

So it is both an high abomination, and the higheſt folly for any man to do evil that good may come to himſelf. I call this an high abomination, becauſe it is extreamly ſinful to ſeek our own good in an evil way; and I call it the higheſt folly, becauſe how earneſtly ſoever we ſeek our own good in an evil way, we ſhall never find it. For when ſin hath done us all the kindneſs and good turnes it can, we in the upſhot ſhall be never the better. But as we ſpeak proverbially of ſome men, *What they get in the Hundred, they looſe in the Shire*; ſo we may ſay of all who go ſinful wayes for gain, look what they get (if they get any thing) in temporals, they looſe in ſpirituals and eternals, and if ſo, what are they the better!

Job having thus far deſcribed the wicked actings of his oppoſers, proceeds to illuſtrate thoſe actings by a double ſimilitude.

Verſ. 14. **They came upon me as a wide breaking in of waters: In the deſolation they rolled themſelves upon me.**

They came upon me.] Though the word ſignifies to come in an ordinary way of motion, as a friend cometh to his friend upon buſineſs or viſitation; yet ſometimes it denotes a hoſtile Invaſion, or an Enemy-like charge; to come upon a man as a thief to aſſault him, or (as *Solomon* ſaith, (though he uſeth another word) *Poverty and want ſhall come upon the ſluggard*) *like an armed man*, (Prov. 24. 34.) or as he deſcribes the Calamity of the wicked (*Prov.* 1. 27.) *Whoſe fear cometh as deſolation, and whoſe deſtruction cometh as a whirl-wind.* In this ſence you are to underſtand it here, *They come upon me*, not in an ordinary walking pace or gate, but in a March, in a charge, as Enemies; they ſet, they ruſh, they run in upon me. The ſimilitude which follows neceſſitates this ſence of the word. *They came upon me,*

As a wide breaking in of waters.] As the breaking in, and as the wide breaking in, for Explication ſake we add *of waters* in our tranſlation: The Hebrew is; *They came upon me as a wide breach.* So Mr. *Broughton, They came as into a broad breach*; they aſſaulted me with violence. And becauſe the Hebrew text doth not determine the ſimilitude (as we do in our tranſlation, *breaking in of waters*) therefore there are ſome other apprehenſions concerning the alluſion. I ſhall inſtance in three.

כפרץ *pro* ככפרץ *ut in rupturâ.*

Firſt, As an alluſion to an Army, who when they have built their batteries, and made a breach in the wall by the Cannon, then they come up to the ſtorm, they come up like a flood; That act of war is uſually called *ſtorming*; when a breach is made, the aſſailants ſtorm the City, or Fort. Thus the alluſion may hold here, they came upon me as an Army at a wide breach; they fell pell mell upon me.

Veniunt ſuper me magno impetu ut fluvius ſolet rupto aggere. Vatab. Tygur.

Secondly, The ſimilitude may refer to the Sea, or to the waters of ſome mighty River, when it hath broke the banks; for then the water comes powring in; or to ſome Land-flood, which over-runs the whole Countrey, and ſweeps all away before it. We read in Scripture of *a ſweeping rain*; Great waters make clean work. Thus ſaith *Job*, theſe men having broken the banks of modeſty and ſobriety, take their full ſcope to inſult over me as they pleaſe, how much ſoever it diſpleaſeth me; and I am no more able to withſtand them, then a man is able to withſtand the violence of a Sea, or of an inundation breaking in upon him.

Thirdly, The words may bear an alluſion to a field, vineyard, or a garden, in whoſe hedge, fence, or wall, when a breach is made, then either ſavage beaſts, or hungry diſorderly perſons come in and ſpoyl the Corn, the Vines, the fruits, then they make havock of all. We have at once a ſad and elegant deſcription of the Church under ſore oppreſſion, in metaphors of this ſtrain, (*Pſal.* 80. 12, 13.) *Why haſt thou broken down our hedge* (*or hedges*) *ſo that all they that paſs by the way do pluck us. The Boar out of the wood doth waſt it, and the wild beaſts of the field devoure it.* The hedge of the vineyard, the Church (of which the Prophet ſpeaks (*Iſa.* 5. 5.) is, the Lords protection, and when that's removed, ſhe is ſoon not only invaded but ſpoiled; then every paſſenger almoſt will have a pluck at her, and profeſſed powerful Enemies. (ſuch as the Pſalmiſt intends by the Boar out of the wood, and the wild beaſts out of the field) will lay her waſt and devour her. We may conceive *Job* complaining that he was as a field or vineyard, whoſe hedge or fence being broken down, theſe rude men ruſht in at the gap (like beaſts) to eat him up.

Hence Note, Firſt in general, *If the Lord once withdraw his protection, every evil invadeth us and prevaileth over us.*

As an Army at the breach of a wall, or as the Sea at a breach of the banks, or as wild beaſts at the breach of the hedge, ſo evils come in upon us thick and threefold, when once God is departed from us. It is the Lords power that fenceth and keeps all ſafe. In the firſt Chapter of this Book we read *Job* had a hedge about him, and ſuch a hedge as the Devil could not break through, to touch a pin of his ſleeve, or to pluck a leaf from his tree; He was ſo fortified that he could not take hurt; but when the Lord had broken down his hedge, or made a gap in it, The beaſts of prey, *Chaldeans* and *Sabeans* quickly entred, and made an utter devaſtation. When our Lord Chriſt was exerciſed in fulfilling his miniſtry and mediatorſhip here on earth; the Jews were mad at it, they would have deſtroyed him at the enterance of his work, but they could not; they were bloodily minded, and bloodily reſolved againſt him, and ſometimes they attempted his deſtruction, but could not effect it; none of their plots took; Why? Chriſts time was not come, that is, the time that God would deliver him up into their hands: Till that time came, Chriſt was wall'd about, he was kept ſafe; but at laſt God broke the hedge, took away his protection, then the Son of man was betrayed into the hand of ſinners, and then Chriſt ſaid to his enemies, *This is your hour, and the power of darkneſs*, (*Luke* 22. 53.) that is, now you may do what you will with me, or you may have your will of me; *This is your hour*, the time wherein you are permitted to exerciſe your rage and utmoſt wrath againſt me; and now the Prince of darkneſs hath power by you his inſtruments to put me out of the World, who am the light of the World. Thus I lye open as a City without walls or gates, you may come and ſpoil me as you pleaſe; *It is of God that our fence is maintained, and our wall not broken down, to let in dangers, and death it ſelf.*

More diſtinctly obſerve from hence; *They come upon me as the breaking in of waters,*

Wicked men act violently.

How violently doth an Army aſſault the breach? How violently do the waters ruſh in when the bank is overthrown? As grace makes men act violently, ſo doth corruption. Chriſt ſaith, (*Matth.* 11. 12.) *The kingdom of Heaven ſuffers violence.* Believers ruſh upon it with all their might; and the kingdome of Heaven comes to us with a kind of violence; it is a day of power, God brings his Army, and ſtormes our ſouls, and then we grow violent for God, and the things of God; we are graciouſly violent to ſerve and obey him, when he by a bleſſed violence hath broken our ſtony, our ſtubborn and diſobedient hearts; And till then the nature of man is ſinfully violent, or violent upon ſin, and comes, like a flood, enraged by the wind to do any thing that is evil.

Secondly, Note, *Uſually wicked men are unanimous in doing evil.*

When an Army comes to ſtorm, they fall on together; and when the waters come, they come in together at the breach. Thus *Job*'s deſpiſers were united in their deſpightful carriages towards him, as if they had been but one man; they came like a flood. Good men ſhould joyn heart and hand, they ſhould come as one man to do good; And as it is their duty to do ſo, ſo it is moſt deſirable and delightfull to ſee them do ſo. (*Pſal.* 133. 1.) *Behold how good and how pleaſant a thing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity*; That is, when, as they cohabit or dwell together; ſo they act and joyn together in the ſame way and work. But do we come upon a good work, as an Army, or as a flood, all together? Our diviſions are ſad; Good men are divided greatly about the doing of that which is good. When and where ſhall we ſee any conſiderable number of good men like the Church (*Acts:* 2. 42.)

of one accord, or as having but one ſoul in many bodies. Moſt good men are contrary to many, as the wicked are contrary to them all; yea ſome are as contrary to themſelves at times, as if they had two ſouls, yea many ſouls in one body. The dividedneſs of men in a good matter, is as lamentable as their union and oneneſs in a bad one. *They came upon me* (ſaith *Job*) *as a wide breaking in of waters*; and as it follows,

In the deſolation they rolled themſelves upon me.

Mr. *Broughton* renders, *In the broken place they tumble.* The word ſignifies to ſound, to make a noiſe: And ſo 'tis elegantly applyed to deſtruction or deſolation, which are uſually effected with noiſe and tumult, deſtruction and deſolation are moſtly made by War; and the Prophet tells us (*Iſa.* 9. 5.) That, *every Battel of the warriour is with a Confuſed noiſe, and garments rolled in blood.* The Clattering of Armour, neighing of Horſes, the ſcreechings and groanings of wounded and dying men, ſeem to put all the Elements into a Cumbuſtion in a day of battel; ſuch is the force of this Word here uſed. As if *Job* had ſaid, In the Confuſed noiſe of my troubles they roll themſelves upon me.

שאה *Sonuit, perſonuit, tumultuatus eſt, deſolatus eſt, quod in deſolationibus, tumultus maximè excitentur.*

Some tranſlate, not *deſolation* but *darkneſs*; As if he had ſaid, They come ſecretly upon me, as men that lye in ambuſh to ſurprize me; But theſe men were bold fac'd enough, and therefore rather as we, *In the deſolation they rolled themſelves upon me.*

Alii pro caligine ſumunt, ſed malo pro calamitate. Merc.

Thoſe words (**upon me**) we ſupply in a different character: The Hebrew is, *in the deſolation they roll themſelves*: The Original word which ſignifies to roll, is applyed to the rolling of a wheel, or to any thing turned and forced on with violence. Thus the Lord threatens *Babylon* (*Jer.* 51. 25.) *Behold, I am againſt thee O deſtroying mountain, ſaith the Lord, which deſtroyeſt all the earth, and I will ſtretch out mine hand upon thee, and will roll thee down from the rocks, and will make thee a burnt mountain.* Thou haſt preſumed thy ſelf faſt ſeated upon a rock, and eſtabliſhed there; Thou haſt preſumed thy ſelf as ſtrong as a mountain, ſo ſtrong, that thou haſt no more fear of being caſt down or deſtroyed, then a mountain. Thou haſt been ſuch a deſtroying mountain, that now thou think'ſt thy ſelf not to be deſtroyable, or too big to be deſtroyed, but I will roll thee down, as if thou wert a Chariot wheel, or a tennis ball, as any thing of eaſieſt motion, as ſome gloſs that place, I will throw thee wholly down, as a thing that tumbles from a high place. In a like expreſſion the Prophet *Eſay* threatens the Nations (*Iſa.* 17. 13.) *God ſhall rebuke them, and they ſhall flee far off, and ſhall be chaſed as the chaff of the mountains before the wind, and like a rolling thing before the whirl-wind.* Further, this word is uſed in a very ſpiritual ſence, to ſignifie the moſt proper and eſſentiall act of faith upon God. To roll our ſelves upon God, is the committing of our ſelves, and of our caſe to him, to put *our* affiance and truſt in him in all our needs, whether reſpecting temporals, or eternals. We render (*Pſal.* 22. 8.) *He truſted on the Lord*, and we put in the Margin, *he rolled himſelf upon the Lord.* So (*Pſal.* 37. 5.) *Commit thy way unto the Lord*; The Hebrew is, *roll thy way upon the Lord*, that is, caſt thy ſelf and thy way upon the Lord with aſſurance and confidence that he will do it for thee. It is good for us in any time of deſolation to roll our ſelves upon God believingly; but 'tis ſad when men roll themſelves, or lay their whole weight upon us (as theſe men did upon *Job*) in the day of our deſolation.

גלל *Volvere dicitur aliquando de rota, & iis quæ magno impetu inſtar rotæ devolvuntur.*

But when *Job* ſaith, *They rolled themſelves upon me in the deſolation*; what meanes he? Certainly they were far from truſting themſelves upon *Job*, he was in their opinion as a rotten ſtick, or a bruiſed reed, as a thing of nought, therefore that cannot be his ſence or intendment in this paſſage. But there is another Scripture ſignification of the word *roll*, which may reach the preſent caſe. We find it (*Gen.* 43. 18.) where when *Joſeph* upon the appearance of his brethren the ſecond time, gave order that they ſhould be brought in to dinner, they were afraid, their own guilt made them very ſuſpicious, and they ſaid in their hearts, *Becauſe of the money that was returned in our ſacks at the firſt time are we brought in, that he may ſeek occaſion againſt us, and fall upon us*, &c. The Hebrew word is that in the Text (as we ſay in the Margin) *That he may roll himſelf upon us*: As if they had ſaid, Joſeph *the Governour hath call'd for us into the houſe, that under the colour of ſome offence, he may make us his ſlaves.* The Seventy read that place clearly to this purpoſe; *He hath called us in to charge us, or to accuſe us, to draw up an accuſation againſt us.* So then, to roll our ſelves upon another man, is by way of accuſation, or Charge, to oppreſs and caſt him down. In which ſence (though negatively) the word is uſed (*Joſh.* 5. 9.) *And the Lord ſaid unto* Joſhua, *This day have I rolled away the reproach of* Egypt *from off you*; *Wherefore the name of the place is called* Gilgal (or rolling) *to this day.* God rolled away the reproach of *Egypt* from *Iſrael*, by doing great things, and working wonders for them. *Egypt* heaped reproaches upon them, but God took them off; or they were once reproached in *Egypt* as ſlaves and captives, but now God made them not only free-men but Conquerors; But chiefly at that time (as the precedent words lead us to expound it) God took off the reproach of *Egypt* from his people *Iſrael* (as by receiving them into Covenant formerly, ſo) by renewing the ſign of his Covenant circumciſion (which had been intermitted all the time of their dwelling or journeying rather in the Wilderneſs) This which was the reproach of *Egypt*, that is, a reproach lying upon them and all Heathen Nations, that they were uncircumciſed, the Lord in that day rolled from *Iſrael*, by reſtoring that mark, which did ſo eminently diſtinguiſh them from the *Egyptians.* Now as there is a rolling away of reproach from us, ſo there is a rolling of reproach upon us. Thus they rolled themſelves upon *Job*, while they reviled and derided him in the deſolation. We may take *Job*'s meaning yet more diſtinct in theſe brief propoſitions or aſſertions.

Συκοφαντῆσαι ἡμᾶς, *ut calumniatur nos & imponat nobis.* Sept.

Firſt, When he ſaith, *They rolled themſelves upon him in the deſolation*, he intimates, that, *They gave up themſelves wholly to vex him, and to encreaſe his Calamity.* They did not trouble him accidentally or ignorantly, but adviſedly and induſtriouſly in that deplorable condition.

Secondly, The words imply, that they did not touch and trouble him a little or lightly, as it were with a finger, but that they laid their whole weight upon him, as he doth the whole weight of his body upon another, that rolleth himſelf upon him.

Thirdly, When he ſaith, *They rolled themſelves upon me in the deſolation, or under the deſolation*, we may underſtand him thus; *They take an advantage from my troubles to trouble me the more*, and from the preſent preſſures that are upon me to oppreſs me utterly. They ſee I am in a deſolate condition, and cannot help my ſelf, and they make uſe of it as an opportunity to make me (if it might be) yet more deſolate.

Fourthly, Rolling is an action of delight, a man rolls himſelf upon his bed, or upon the green graſs for his pleaſure; ſo it may intimate, that *Job*'s deriders (which ſpirit of theirs hath been obſerved from other paſſages) took content in his troubles, and rolled themſelves upon his deſolation, or deſolate condition, upon the duſt and aſhes in which he rolled, as upon a bed of ſpices, or of Roſes. There are but few good men who roll themſelves upon the deſolation of others with pity and compaſſion, but there are many wicked men who can do it with a kind of triumph and contentation. There are but few good men who can roll themſelves upon God, by believing and relying, in the time of their affliction; but there are many who can rudely roll themſelves upon the afflicted with rejoycing.

Fifthly, *They rolled themſelves upon him in the deſolation*, by the blackeſt ſlanders and ſevereſt cenſures. They ſought occaſions againſt, and laid heavy accuſations upon him; a ſlanderer or falſe accuſer rolls himſelf upon another mans good name, or credit, to pollute and ſtain it, nor will he give over his rolling, till he hath made it as black (if it may be) in the opinion of others, as it is in his own. That *Job*'s name was rolled upon and ſuſpected, yea charged with fouleſt crimes (becauſe of his afflictions) as if he had been one of the vileſt pieces that ever was in the world, we have ſeen before, *Is not thy wickedneſs great, and thine iniquities infinite?* ſaid *Eliphaz* (*Chap.* 22. 5.) and there were others, beſides the rabble of whom he now ſpeaks, who ſpake little leſs or better of him.

Laſtly, Conſider the time when they did this, *In the deſolation they rolled themſelves upon me.*

When the Godly are down and under hatches, when they are loweſt in worldly appearances, then wicked men are apt to raiſe ſlanders, and to charge them higheſt.

Wicked men never love nor favour the godly, but they do not alwayes expreſs their hatred againſt them. They have malice enough in their hearts at all times to do it, but they have not alwayes an opportunity in their hand. Good men are ſometimes upon the higher ground, and 'tis hard rolling up hill; But if ever they fall below them, or are reduced to that which *Job* calls a deſolation, or a deſolate condition, then they will not ſpare. As a godly mans extremity is Gods opportunity, to help and relieve him, *in the mount he will be ſeen*; ſo a godly mans extremity is a wicked mans opportunity to vex and diſtreſs him, *in the valley he will be ſeen.* We read how *Amaleck* (that people of Gods curſe) rolled themſelves upon the deſolation of the children of *Iſrael* in their paſſage to *Canaan*, which provoked the Lord to leave a ſad *memento* againſt them (*Deut.* 25. 17, 18.) *Remember what* Amaleck *did unto thee by the way, when ye were come forth out of* Egypt; *How he met thee by the way, and ſmote the hindmoſt of thee, even all that were feeble behind thee, when thou waſt faint and weary, and he feared not God.* We ſee here the kindneſs and charity of an *Amalekite*, when he ſeeth any that bear the name of God, feeble and faint and weary, he inſtead of meeting them with bread and water to comfort them, meets them with ſword and ſpear to kill them in their weakneſs. And thus *Shimei* rolled himſelf in the deſolation upon *David*; who fleeing upon the rebellion of *Abſalon* from *Jeruſalem*, *came forth* (2 *Sam.* 16. 5, 6.) What to do? Was it to aſſiſt him in that calamity? No, ſaith the Text, *he came forth, and curſed ſtill as he came* (every ſtep he took, he took up a curſe againſt *David*) *and he caſt ſtones at him, and at all his ſervants*; *And thus ſaid* Shimei *when he curſed, come out, come out thou bloody man, thou man of* Belial, *the Lord hath returned upon thee all the blood of the houſe of* Saul, &c. *Thou art taken in thy miſchief, becauſe thou art a bloody man.* With what double rage and malicious rhetorick did this wicked man vent his ſpleen upon his own Soveraign when he found him ſurprized with that ſore affliction. How high doth malice riſe, when Innocence is laid low! *David* might well ſay of this wretch, as *Job* in the Text, *In the deſolation he rolled himſelf upon me.* And there have not been a few who have had too much cauſe to ſay as much.

Ad meas miſerias devoluti ſunt. Vulg. i.e. *Totaliter ad hoc intenderunt, ut me miſerum redderent.*

All theſe hints of interpretation meet and center in one point. That *Job's* enemies, or ill-willers, ſet themſelves againſt him with all their might, and dedicated all their wit and ſtrength to ſerve Satans double deſign; Firſt, To make him as miſerable as they could in his ſufferings; and Secondly, To make all the world believe (if they could) that he had been unrighteous in his actings; Or at leaſt, they hoped to make him ſo miſerable, that he ſhould even be forced to let go his former righteouſneſs or integrity, and breaking out into blaſphemy, curſe God and dye. And that he was put hard to it to keep his ſoul from this worſt impatience, will further appear by what he ſaith of himſelf in the next verſe.

VERS. 15.

Terrours are turned upon me: They purſue my ſoul as the wind: And my welfare paſſeth away as a cloud.

IN this verſe and thoſe which follow to the nineteenth, incluſively, *Job* ſets forth, Firſt, the trouble that was upon his ſpirit; Secondly, the paines which were upon his body; Thirdly he gives the ſum of both.

The trouble upon his ſpirit is expreſſed under the notion of *terrors, and the pouring out of his ſoul upon him,* (ver. 15, 16.)

The pains of his body are deſcribed (*ver* 17, 18.) *My bones are pierced in me in the night ſeaſon, and my ſinews take no reſt. By the great force of my diſeaſe is my garment changed.*

The ſum or iſſue of both is ſet down (*ver.* 19.) *He hath caſt me into the mire, and I am become like duſt and aſhes.* As if he had ſaid, *What with the terrors upon my ſoul, and the pains upon my body,* I am brought to nothing, I am but duſt in my conſtitution, I am become but *mire and dirt* by my affliction.

Verſe 15. **Terrors are turned upon me.**

The Hebrew is, *terrors is turned*, that is, terror of every kind and of every degree is come and fallen upon me, or hath taken hold of me: All things ſeem to center in this one thing, *My trouble*, or *to make me miſerable.*

בלהות *terrores conſternationes. In Hebræo, plurale nomen cum ſingulari verbo conſtruitur, & quidem cum diverſitate generis* Scult. *Anomalia numeri & generis.* Piſc.

Terrors are the foreſt troubles of the ſoul in this temporal life, and they are moſt like thoſe eternal troubles which poſſeſs the ſoules of the damned in the next life. And as terrors diſcompoſe the mind, and put it out of all due frame and order; ſo the conſtruction of this text, wherein *Job* complains of them, is out of all grammatical frame and order. Here being as the learned Hebricians obſerve, a double *anomolie*, or breach of Grammar rules in it. The word *terrors* being of the plural number, is joyned in conſtruction with a verb of the ſingular number; there is alſo a like irregularity in the *Genders* of theſe two words. As if the Spirit of God would hint to us, by theſe irregular and diſturb'd expreſſions, how much diſturbance and irregularity, ſuch terrors work and impreſs upon the affections. *Terrors are turned upon me.*

There are ſeverall words in this Book tranſlated *terrors*; That here uſed, ſignifieth ſuch terrors as fill the mind with affrighting amazement and confuſed fears; ſuch terrors as even ſhake the ſeat of reaſon, and, only not, make a man beſides himſelf.

Theſe terrors *Job* ſhadows out by a double ſimilitude.

Firſt, By the ſimilitude of a violent ſtormy wind, driving all before it, *They purſue my ſoul as the wind.*

Secondly, Of a melting vaniſhing cloud, *My welfare paſſeth away as a cloud*: That is, My grievous terrors cauſe my welfare to paſs away as a cloud. Thus he aggravates his terrors by their ſtrong and ſtrange effects. But what were theſe terrors?

Firſt, Some expound the word *perſonally*; *Terrors are turned upon me*, that is, *Terrible men turn upon me.* As if his meaning were, Thoſe terrible ones, whoſe uncivil and inhumane carriage towards me I have deſcribed, thoſe terrible ones, *who in my deſolation rolled themſelves upon me*, are now turned upon me like wild beaſts to tear me in pieces. Indeed ſome men are ſo terrible, that they may be called *terror* it ſelf; ſo troubleſome, that they may be called *trouble*; ſo grievous to others, that we may ſay of them (as commonly we do in ſuch caſes) they are their *grief.* The Prophet *Jeremy* denounceth that dreadful threatning againſt *Paſhur* (*Jer.* 20. 3, 4.) *The Lord hath not called thy name* Paſhur, *but Magor-miſſabib*, that is, *fear round about, for behold thus ſaith the Lord, I will make thee a terror to thy ſelf.* And as the Lord can make every man a terror to himſelf, ſo he can make himſelf a terror to any man; And this the ſame Prophet moſt earneſtly deprecates (*Chap.* 17. 17.) *Be not a terror unto me, thou art my hope in the day of evil.* Yea the Apoſtle ſaith as much of Magiſtrates with reference to their duty in puniſhing offenders (*Rom.* 13. 3.) *Rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil*: Rulers are (we ſee) not only terrible, but a terror, they are ſo to thoſe to whom God will be a terror much more, in the day when he deals with them. Magiſtrates or Rulers are, that is, by vertue of their place they ought to be a terror, or exceeding terrible to evil works, that is, to evil workers. Now, what God is, and the Magiſtrate ought to be to evil workers, that ungodly baſe ſpirited men are to good works, that is, to them whoſe works are good, *A terror*: And the better any good man is, the more terrible evil men will be unto him. But I ſhall not ſtay upon this Expoſition. For

Secondly, Doubtleſs the terrors here ſpoken of, were thoſe inward fears and troubles which aſſaulted *Job's* ſpirit while he was compaſſed without with outward troubles. As he was exerciſed with manifold afflictions, both as to his body, ſtate, ſo his ſoul, his mind did not eſcape untouched; Nay, he was deeply, moſt deeply wounded there. *Terrors are turned upon me.*

Hence Note, *A godly man may not only be in trouble, but under terror.*

As the troubles of the righteous are many, ſo they are manifold; they have many of the ſame kind, and they have them in ſeveral kinds. They may have not only a troubled ſtate but a troubled heart. There are heart-terrors of two ſorts ſpoken of in this Book. Firſt, Such as are the portion of the wicked. They have the terrors of an evil conſcience, which are ſent like Purſevants from God to attach them, and as tormentors to vex them. Of theſe *Eliphaz* is to be underſtood (*Chap.* 15. 20. 21. 24.) Whereas treating of the wicked mans condition, he ſaith thus 'tis with him; *He travaileth with pain all his dayes* (one dayes pain is a ſore burden) *a dreadful ſound is in his ears* (his phancy beats up a dreadful alarme againſt him continually) *Trouble and anguiſh ſhall make him afraid, they ſhall prevail againſt him as a King ready to the battel.* Of theſe terrors (proper to the wicked) read more (*Chap.* 20. 25. *Chap.* 27. 20.) Secondly, both in this Book and elſewhere in Scripture, we find terrors ſent upon good men. *Job* had ſad experience of them, (*Chap.* 6. 4.) *The terrors of God do ſet themſelves in array againſt me.* And ſo had *Heman* (*Pſal.* 88. 15.) *While I ſuffer thy terrors I am diſtracted.* Both the Godly and ungodly have terrors, yet of a different kind, and to a very different end. I ſhall not ſtay here, to enlarge about theſe terrors, having ſpoken of both ſorts of terror upon thoſe ſeveral places of this Book lately mentioned. Only conſider *Job* complaineth of theſe as the soreſt of his afflictions.

Hence Note, *Inward terrors or troubles of mind, are more grievous then all outward troubles.*

What the *Chaldeans* and *Sabeans* did in ſpoyling and preying upon his eſtate, yea what Satan did to his body in ſmiting him with boyls and botches, were but a ſport to theſe terrors with which he was ſmitten by the hand of God. When an arrow is ſhot into the ſoul, who is able to expreſs the pain of it? A wounded ſpirit who can bear! Bodily ſufferings and the deepeſt woundings of the fleſh, are but as the prick or ſcratch of a pin to the ſufferings of the ſoul. That's a woful Judgment which the Lord threatneth to bring upon his people in caſe of diſobedience (*Levit.* 26. 15, 16.) *If ye ſhall deſpiſe my ſtatutes, if your ſoul abhor my Judgments,* &c. *I alſo will do this unto you, I will even appoint over you terror, conſumption, and the burning ague, that ſhall conſume the eyes, and cauſe ſorrow of heart.* As if he had ſaid, If ye will not obey me as your King, I will make terror a King over you, terror ſhall prevail and rule over you, terror ſhall bring you into ſubjection, and hold your necks under its iron yoak, as a mighty King; I will not only appoint the ſword, famine, and peſtilence over you, which are outward viſible troubles, but I will appoint terror, which is inward trouble and vexation of mind over you. The Lord renewed this threat (*Deut.* 32. 25.) *The ſword without, and terror within, ſhall deſtroy both the young man and the Virgin, the Suckling alſo with the man of grey haires.* Terror within is the uſual effect of the ſword without. And though we may expound *ſword without* and *terror within*, by grievous troubles without dores and within dores, in the open field or high wayes, and in the houſe; yet ſword *without*, may alſo note judgment upon the body, and terror *within*, trouble and affrightment upon the mind or ſpirit. Many are ſlain by terrors within, who feel no ſtroak without. Thus the Prophet ſpeaks of the Jewiſh Nation (*Iſa.* 22. 2.) *Thy ſlain men are not ſlain with the ſword nor dead in battel.* How then were they ſlain? And of what dyed they? Some expound it thus; They were not ſlain with the ſword, but by the peſtilence, nor dyed they by battel, but by famine; yet others (to which I rather incline) conceive the Prophets meaning to be, that ſuch terror would take hold upon them at the report of the enemies reproach, that they ſhould be ſtruck dead, or dye with fear. Thus *Rahab* tells the ſpies (*Joſhua* 2. 9.) *I know the Lord hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint becauſe of you.* Your terror is fallen upon us (ſaith ſhe) and that is worſe to us then your Army which is ready to fall upon us. We are as dead with fear of you, before ever your ſword hath toucht us. Hence the Prophet makes that earneſt deprecation toucht before (*Jer.* 17. 17.) *Lord, be not thou a terror unto me. Jeremiah* doth not deprecate the evil day it ſelf, he ſaith not, Lord, let not an evil day come upon me; *But be not thou a terror to me in the evil day.* I ſhall be able (through thy aſſiſtance) to bear and wreſtle with the evil day, but I am not able to wreſtle with or bear thy terror in the evil day. It is ſaid, (*Iſa.* 33. 10.) *Thine eyes ſhall ſee the King in his beauty, they ſhall behold the land that is very far off. Thine heart ſhall meditate terror.* Saints ſhall meditate terror with a kind of joy, as being above it, and delivered from it by their King. But to meditate terror with nothing but terror before our eyes, is terrible indeed. Hence that promiſe (*Iſa.* 54. 14.) *In righteouſneſs ſhalt thou be eſtabliſhed: Thou ſhalt be far from oppreſſion, for thou ſhalt not fear; and from terror, for it ſhall not come near thee. Job*'s caſe was far from that promiſed mercy while he cryed out in the anguiſh of his ſoul.

Terrors are turned upon me.] There ſeems to be an alluſion in the word **turned**, to a wild beaſt, to a Lion, or a Bear, who ſeeing his prey turns upon it, and then follows it with all eagerneſs, as the next words intimate.

They purſue my ſoul as the wind.

See what work they made with him, *They purſue his ſoul.* The Word ſignifieth to follow very cloſely and earneſtly; As a perſecutor followeth a good man to take away his life, or as the Hound follows the Hare or Deer to catch his prey. The word is uſed in Scripture both in a good and in an evil ſence; (*Pſal.* 23. 6.) *Surely goodneſs and mercy ſhall follow* (or purſue,) *me all the dayes of my life.* 'Tis a full mercy to be followed or purſued with mercy, to have mercies even thruſt upon us. And as good purſues good men, ſo good men are ſaid to purſue that which is good, (*Pſal.* 34. 14.) *Depart from evil and do good, ſeek peace and purſue it.* 'Tis this word, we ſhould follow peace with all our might and heat; not as upon a cold ſent, but in the warmth and ſtrength of our ſpirits (*Prov.* 15. 9.) *The way of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord: But he loveth him that followeth after* (or purſueth) *righteouſneſs.* Righteouſneſs hath many oppoſers and perverters, but few purſuers. *We can never run far enough from evil, nor faſt enough after that which is good.* Yet the nature of man is far more ſlack to purſue good then evil, yea indeed the nature of man can hardly be reclaimed or held back from the fierceſt purſuit of evil. This word is uſed in caution by *Solomon* (*Prov.* 11. 19.) *As righteouſneſs tendeth to life; So he that purſueth evil, purſueth it to his own death. Solomon* doth not ſay, he that *doth evil*, but he that *purſueth evil*; That is, who doth it with a kind of force and violence, or he that hunteth and followeth this game earneſtly, ſhall dye for it, or only catch his death by it. Thus here terrors purſued *Job*'s ſoul, they hunted him, and preſt hard upon him. *Terrors* (ſaith he) *purſue*

רדף *Secutus, inſecutus, proſecutus, perſecutus fuit. In bonum & in malum.*

My ſoul.] The word by us tranſlated **ſoul**, falls under much variety of rendring; The Septuagint ſay, *They purſue my hope*; I ſee not upon what ground they raiſe this interpretation, unleſs we take it in a figure, *hope*, for that which his ſoul hoped for; and ſo the Vulgar, *They purſue my deſire*; that is, all that I had in this world worth the deſiring; and hence a third ſaith, *They purſue my children*; I ſee as little reaſon for that (though children are the moſt deſireable pieces of the world) ſeeing his children were dead and gone. A fourth ſort render it, *They purſue my honour, my dignity.* A fifth, *They purſue my ingenuity*; that is, as the ſame Author gloſſeth it, *my glory*, meaning that glory both of his ſtate and actions which he had deſcribed in the former Chapter. Mr. *Broughton* renders neer to this ſence; *Each courſe my Nobility as the wind*; As if he had ſaid, They have deprived me not only of my riches and wealth, of all means of exerciſing bounty, or ſhewing my ſelf honourable, but (as much as in them lyeth) they have deprived me of my credit, eſtimation and honour. In purſuance of which expoſition ſome tranſlate the latter part of the verſe (*And my welfare paſſeth away as a cloud*) thus, *I as a Prince or Saviour paſs away.* The Hebrew words ſignifying *Welfare, Salvation,* or *Saviour*, are all of one and the ſame root. Mr. *Calvin* inſiſts chiefly upon this meaning of the words as his tranſlation expreſſeth it, *They purſued mine excellency as a wind.* All theſe readings, *They purſued my dignity, my nobility, my ingenuity, mine excellency,* carry a fair complyance with *Job*'s ſcope, and the general

נְדִיבָה · נדב *Aliqui reddunt animam meam, alii ultroneam meam, alii ſpontaneam meam, quod in idē recidit: alii principalem aut munificam meam. Princeps a munificentia dictus, quaſi munificus & liberalis.* Druſ. *Animam meam nobilem & inclytam.* Vatab. *Animam meam beneficentia ſtudioſam.* Tigur. *Ingenuitatē meam.* Jun.

purpoſe of this Scripture. For whereas he had been exalted in dignity, and was a man of a very noble extraction; Notwithſtanding all this, theſe vile perſons before ſpoken of, did what they could with their black mouths and ſlanderous tongues, to obſcure and darken his name, to *turn his glory into ſhame, and to lay his honour in the duſt*, as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaketh. Nor can it be doubted but *Job* after all the affronts and ignominious uſages which that unworthy ſort of men offered him, had reaſon enough to aſſert not only his integrity and honeſty, but his dignity and his honour, which they had ſo wretchedly torn and ſtained; or at leaſt to complain that thoſe impudent perſons who had caſt off all ſhame, ſhould thus falſely and barbarouſly attempt or invade his honour, and caſt ſhame upon him. Thus we may well accommodate thoſe various tranſlations to the Text; yet I conceive our own every way as ſutable to *Job*'s intendment, and the purport of the whole Chapter; And therefore I ſhall return to the explication and improvment of that.

They purſue my ſoul.] That is, they purſue me to the uttermoſt; They are not contented with my body, or goods, or good name, they would have my ſoul alſo. That which we are ſaid to do or deſire with our ſoul, we do and we deſire it to the utmoſt; *Praiſe the Lord, O my ſoul*, ſaid *David* (*Pſal.* 103. 1.) *With my ſoul have I deſired thee in the night*, ſaith the Church (*Iſa.* 20. 9.) Now, as what we do and deſire with our ſoul, we both do and deſire it with greateſt earneſtneſs; ſo when we purſue or proſecute the ſoul of another, we purſue and proſecute him earneſtly. It is ſaid of the *Adultereſs* (*Prov.* 6. 26.) *She will hunt for the precious life or ſoul.* And the devil, *that mighty hunter*, is alwayes hunting for the ſoul; And do we not know that both the Devil and the Adultreſs hunt, as with all their might, ſo with unwearied diligence; Thus ſaith *Job*, they hunt or *purſue my ſoul*, The *ſoul* in Scripture is often put for the whole man, the perſon, and ſo tis here; Only to ſhew what mark Satan chiefly aimed at by all the inſtruments which he ſtir'd up and acted to afflict *Job*, it is here ſaid they *purſued his ſoul.* What cared the Devil for his Oxen, Camels and Aſſes, which he plundered by the *Chaldeans* and *Sabeans?* What cared he for his flocks of Sheep which he conſumed by fire? Or for his Children, whom he deſtroyed by a wind? Yea what cared Satan for his body, which he ſmote with ſores and loathſome diſeaſes? Yea what cared he for his honour, and good name, which he devoured by the foul mouths of thoſe abuſive miſcreants? All that he ſhot at through all theſe, was his ſoul, which he knew would be a morſel fit only for himſelf, if once he could but provoke him by all or any of theſe temptations to blaſpheme God and dye. *They purſue my ſoul.*

And why did the Devil by all his agents purſue *Job*'s ſoul? That reading which our tranſlators put in the Margin of our Bibles, may give us a profitable account or reaſon of it; *They purſue my principal one*; The Text ſaith *my ſoul*, the Margin ſaith *my principal one*; we may joyn both in this following obſervation.

The ſoul of man is the principal part of man.

The ſoul is as a Princeſs in man; The ſoul rules and governs the body, and diſpoſeth all the natural motions of it, even as a Prince diſpoſeth of all civil motions and affairs in his Dominions. Man acts not, nor doth a finger ſtir without order from the ſoul, and therefore the ſoul moſt juſtly deſerves, and moſt properly bears the honour of this Noble Title, *The Princeſs or principal one in man.* As man is a Prince over all the inferior creatures, ſo the ſoul is a Princeſs in man. It will not be either unprofitable or impertinent a while to proſecute this notion of the ſoul. There are two or three other words uſed in the Hebrew of the old Teſtament, for the ſoul of man, but none of them have ſuch an Emphaſis or ſignificancy as this under diſcuſſion; *A principal one.* The ſoul may be ſtiled, *The principal one*, or chief part in man, with reſpect

Firſt, to its Original; For although God made the body of man as well as his ſoul, yet he hath declared himſelf more in Scripture, as to the making of the ſoul, then of the body; (*Gen.* 2. 7.) *And the Lord God formed man of the duſt of the ground, and breathed into his noſtrils the breath of life: And man became a living ſoul.* The body was formed out of pre-exiſting matter, but the ſoul was breathed immediately from God himſelf. And to ſhew how much the ſoul of man doth excel his body, man is not called a living body, but a living ſoul. *Denomination is uſually given and taken from the more noble part.* Yea the Original of the ſoul is ſo much from God beyond that of the body, that the Scripture ſpeaks often as if God had to do only with the Original of the ſoul, leaving the Original of the body to the earth for the material cauſe of it, and to the natural father, as the inſtrumental cauſe of it. The former is expreſs (*Eccl.* 12. 7.) where *Solomon* ſhewing what becomes of man, or how he is beſtowed after his diſſolution by death, ſtates it thus, *Then ſhall the duſt* (that is, the body) *return to the earth as it was, and the ſpirit* (that is, the ſoul) *ſhall return to God who gave it.* The latter is as expreſs (*Heb.* 12. 9.) *Furthermore, we have had Fathers of our fleſh, which corrected us, and we gave them reverence, ſhall we not much rather be in ſubjection to the father of ſpirits, and live?* The ſoul is not traduced from earthly parents, but produced by the power of God; It doth not reſult or ſpring from the craſis or temperament of the body, as the life or ſoul of a beaſt doth, but is the peculiar gift of God; God gave to beaſts breath and life, but he did not breath into them the breath of life; The life of beaſts was concreated with their bodies, whereas the body of man was firſt formed, and then by a ſecond act the ſoul was at once infuſed, and the body enlivened. *God breathed into mans body the breath of life, and he became a living ſoul*; yet his ſoul was not of God by way of emanation (as ſome have both erroneouſly and blaſphemouſly aſſerted) but of or from God by an act of creation. And as the excellency of the ſoul above the body doth appear by its Original, ſo

Miror ſi conſenſeris huic homini (Vincentio, nimirum Victori) quòd anima ex Deo ita ſit, ut ab ipſo emanarit. Auguſt. ad Petrum presbyt.

Secondly, By its Operations; 'Tis the ſoul which doth all the Noble work in man. The ſenſitive life which man hath in common with beaſts, ſerves him only to perform or put forth thoſe acts which are common to beaſts and men; as to hear, to ſee, to taſt, to ſmell, to feel, to move from place to place, to eat and drink; But 'tis the ſoul in man which underſtandeth, reaſoneth and diſcourſeth; 'Tis the ſoul which willeth, deſireth, and remembreth; And 'tis the ſoul which loveth, hateth, rejoyceth, ſorroweth. And though beaſts which have only a ſenſitive or bodily life, do ſome things like theſe, yet properly they can do none of theſe, nor can they do any of them at all in compariſon of man, whoſe ſole prerogative it is to be endowed with a reaſonable ſoul.

Thirdly, (which further exalts the ſoul, as *Mans principal one*, above his body,) when the body hath done growing in bigneſs and talneſs of ſtature; Then the ſoul often hath its greateſt growth in knowledge, wiſdom and underſtanding. When the body ſits ſtill and moves neither hand nor foot, the ſoul can be in its ſwifteſt motions, and travel in meditation to the ends of the earth, it can then aſcend the heights of Heaven, and go down to the depths of Hell. Again, when the body is weakned by ſickneſs and old age, yea brought to the duſt of death, then the ſoul can gather ſtrength, and renew its ſpiritual youth like the Eagle. Thus ſpake the Apoſtle (2 *Cor.* 4. 16.) *Though our outward man periſh, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.* And this the Apoſtle *John* (*Ep.* 3. 2.) doth more then intimate, when he ſaith to his well-beloved *Gaius*, *I wiſh above all things* (he meaneth worldly things) *that thou mayeſt proſper and be in health* (that is, that thou mayeſt proſper in thy health) *as thy ſoul proſpereth.* It ſhould ſeem, that good man and friendly hoſt of the Saints, *Gaius*, had but a weak conſumptive body, yet a very thriving and vigorous ſoul. And 'tis a general truth, that as we every where ſee (and have cauſe to bewail it) men of ſtrong, healthy, active bodies, yet having poor, weak, lame, ſickly ſouls; ſo we may ſometimes ſee (and have cauſe to rejoyce in it) men carrying about them feeble, decaying, dying bodies, yet healthy and lively ſouls. Once more, when the body is in extreameſt pains, when 'tis even tortur'd with the ſtone, gout, colick, and other acute diſeaſes, yea when 'tis tormented with the moſt exquiſite ſufferings which the wit of cruel Tyrants and perſecuters can invent, or their rage and malice inflict upon the body, by racking, burning, breaking the bones, opening the bowels, and pouring in boyling lead, yet then the ſouls repleniſht with comfort, and rejoyceth with joy unſpeakable and full of glory.

Thirdly, The ſoul is our *principal one*, if we conſider the immortality of it. The earthly tabernacle of mans body ſhakes and is ready to fall into the earth every day. *Duſt thou art and unto duſt thou ſhalt return*, was the ſentence of God upon the body of man as ſoon as he had ſinned. Death entred at the ſame door by which ſin did; And therefore it is appointed for men once to dye (*Heb.* 9. 27.) There's no avoiding the mortality of the body. But the ſoul is an immortal piece, and it is immortal not only by divine ordination, as the body of *Adam* was before the fall (who then had a poſſibility not to dye, though his body conſidered in its materials was in a poſſibility of dying.) But the ſoul is immortal, according to its natural conſtitutive properties, or the perfection of its nature; when God made the ſoul, he ſtampt immortality upon the very being and conſtitution of it. Thus Angels and the ſouls of men are immortal, becauſe free from elementary matter and all contrariety of qualities, which are the ſeed or root of corruption. The ſoul is not only ſpiritual, but a ſpirit, as the Angels are, and ſo is of an everlaſting make, and cannot be diſſolved.

But ſome may ſay, you put too much honour upon the ſoul, in aſcribing immortality to it: The Apoſtle ſaith (1 *Tim.* 6. 16.) *God only hath immortality*, &c. Why then do you ſay, the ſoul is immortal? Is not this to put a Crown of dignity upon the ſoul, which is the Lords peculiar?

I anſwer; God only is immortal, ſimply, abſolutely, primitively and independently; yet the ſoul hath alſo a dependent communicated immortality; or the ſoul is immortal by its conſtitution received and derived from God; He hath not put any ingredients of death into it. And were it not thus, the ſoul were not above the body, but (as to this) the bodies equal. Beſides, were not the ſoul immortal, to what purpoſe were all thoſe promiſes of eternal life, and threatnings of eternal death? Again, Chriſt proving the reſurrection of the body, (*Matth.* 22. 31, 32.) ſaith to the Jews, *Have ye not read that which was ſpoken to you* (while it was ſpoken to your Fathers) *by God, ſaying, I am the God of* Abraham, *and the God of* Iſaac, *and the God of* Jacob; From which Chriſt maketh this inference in the cloſe of the verſe; *God is not the God of the dead, but of the living*. But were not *Abraham*, *Iſaac* and *Jacob* dead? Yes, their bodies were dead, but their ſouls lived, and thence he argues that their bodies alſo ſhould be raiſed again to life, and remarried to their living ſouls. The very queſtions, doubts and debates, which have been made about the ſouls immortality, are a proof that it is immortal; For as none can diſtinguiſh between rational and irrational, who have not a rational ſoul, ſo none can diſtinguiſh between mortal and immortal, who have not an immortal ſoul. 'Tis alſo ſome proof of it, that there is an affectation of a kind of immortality diſcernable in the worſt of men. What pillars, what monuments have they erected to perpetuate or immortalize their memories? Yea the Scripture ſaith (*Pſal.* 49. 11.) *Their inward thought is, that their houſes ſhall continue for ever, and their dwelling places to all generations, they call their lands after their own names.* Nothing leſs will ſerve their turns, then *for ever*, and *to all Generations.* The unſatisfiedneſs of the mind with temporal things, when looked upon as Temporal, and thoſe reachings of the ſoul, even in carnal men, after an eternity of enjoyment, ſhew plainly that the ſoul is eternal; I have ſome where read, That *Epicurus*, (whom Antiquity hath ſo far branded for placing the chief good of man in pleaſure (though ſome ſay he meant it not of ſenſual, but contemplative pleaſure) that all voluptuous perſons, or perſons given up to and drencht in ſenſual pleaſure take their denomination (whether rightly or no, is not my work to diſcuſs) from him, and are vulgarly called *Epicures*; 'tis reported, I ſay, that this *Epicurus*) gave a penſion for perpetuity, that his Birth-day might be remembred and ſolemniz'd perpetually. All theſe latter conſiderations, are evidences from nature, beſides the evidences of Scripture, That the ſoul is immortal. And

We call the ſoul immortal, not only as that which ſhall never have a total and final end, or be extinct for ever; But we call it immortal, as that which ſhall never have any pauſe of its exiſtence, as the body ſhall.

There is an opinion ſtart up or awakened among us about the ſouls ſleeping, that is, dying with the body; Theſe vain Opinioniſts make the ſoul nothing elſe but an effect iſſuing from the temperament of the body (which was toucht before) as the life of a beaſt is. But we ſay the ſoul is immortal, and ceaſeth not at all, it ſhall not as the body be reſtored by the reſurrection from the dead to an immortality, but ſhall remain for ever immortal. The Scripture calls us to believe the reſurrection of the body, we hear nothing there about a reſurrection of the ſoul. The truth is, the ſoul falls not with the body, and therefore hath no need to riſe with it. Though the tye be broken between the ſoul and the body, yet the ſoul retains its being. The Word of God and divine reaſon grounded thereupon, every where confutes this dream of the ſouls ſleep; or as ſome have more broadly called it of the ſouls mortality though a little veiled under the title of *Mans Mortality*, by man underſtanding the whole man, conſiſting of body and ſoul. Let me only ſay to ſuch, if the ſoul doth not exiſt or live while the body remaineth under the power of death, and is conſumed to duſt, why ſhould *Paul* ſay (*Phil.* 1. 23.) *I am in a ſtrait between two, having a deſire to depart and to be with Chriſt, which is far better,* if he had not believed that his ſoul ſhould live when departed? What advantage ſhould he get, or what gain by death as to his being with Chriſt, if his ſoul ſhould ceaſe to be, or be aſleep with his body when he was dead? *Paul* was ſurely more with Chriſt, and enjoyed more of Chriſt while he lived, then he could do after death, if his ſoul did not ſurvive his body, and go to heaven while his body went to the Earth, and was houſed in the grave. And again, why doth the ſame Apoſtle aſſert (2 *Cor.* 5. 6.) *Whileſt we are at home in the body, we are abſent from the Lord*; and (*ver.* 8.) *We are confident, I ſay, and willing rather to be abſent from the body and to be preſent with the Lord*; Why all this? If the ſoul go down to the duſt with the body, what preſence have we with the Lord, when we dye? Wherefore upon theſe and many other Scripture Authorities which might be alledged, we conclude, The ſoul is immortal, not (as theſe pretend and grant) becauſe it ſhall be raiſed to an immortal life with the body, but becauſe it abides and lives, when ſeparate and parted from the body. I ſhall only add this caution; They who begin to deny the immortality of the ſoul (in this ſenſe) are in a fair way to deny its immortality in any ſenſe. *Atheiſm is a weed that hath grown apace in this age*, Though I am much perſwaded 'tis now a withering.

Now, If the ſoul be *our principal one*, upon all theſe aforementioned accounts, ſurely we have cauſe to complain of many for dealing ſo ill with their ſouls. The Lord by his holy Prophet reproves thoſe *who called Zion an out-caſt, ſaying, This is Zion, whom no man ſeeketh after.* Have we not cauſe to reprove thoſe, who regard their ſouls as if they were no better then out-caſts, nor worth the ſeeking after? How many are there who value their ſouls as if they were of no value? Who ſell their principal one for a thing of nought? The Prophet complains of thoſe Oppreſſors who *ſold the poor for a pair of ſhoos* (Amos 2. 6.) do not many ſell their ſouls at as goodly a price as a pair of ſhoos? They who hazzard their ſouls for the higheſt earthly concernments, they who aim not at ſmall matters when they ſin, but (as the Eagle which ſtoops not at a fly) purſue the beſt game in the world to the wrong of their ſouls, neither know the worth of their ſouls, nor the worthleſneſs of the world. How fooliſh then are they who looſe their ſouls to catch and get flyes! Remember your ſoul is your principal one. And therefore they only are truly wiſe, who beſtow their principal care upon their principal one, their ſoul. We ſhould pay our greateſt tribute of labour for the ſafety of this principal one in our boſomes; yet we ſadly ſee (as *Solomon* ſaid, *Eccl.* 6. 7.) *All the labour of a man is for his mouth, for what he ſhall eat and drink.* Many hundreds of profeſſions have been invented, and their profeſſors are labouring all day for the body, but how few are at work for the enriching and ſaving of their own ſouls? How do men ſtudy the health of their bodies, the ſafety of their bodies, the

adorning

ing of their bodies, while the health and ſafety, while the adorning and beautifying of their ſouls is little thought on, yea, while the ſoul ſits in the tattered beggarly rags of the old *Adam*, filthy and unclean. When *Pambus* ſaw an Harlot curiouſly dreſſing and trimming her ſelf with her comb and her glaſs, he broke out into tears, upon a double conſideration: Firſt, Becauſe ſhe took ſo much care to undo her ſoul: Secondly, becauſe he took too little care in providing for his own. What pleaſing objects are ſought out for the eye? what delightful muſick for the ear? what delicate diſhes for the palate? while the ſoul feeds only upon ſcraps, while thoſe things which eye hath not ſeen, which ear hath not heard, are not enquired after for the ſoul: And is this to eſteem the ſoul *our principal one*! Are not ſome men at more charge by the year about one member of the body, yea, about that which is but an excrement of the body, their hair, then they are at about their ſouls? And which is yet worſe, do not ſome even willingly let their ſouls ſtarve here and dye for ever to ſave charges? Is this to eſteem the ſoul our *principal one?* Some are ſo greedy after, and pride themſelves ſo much in bodily beauty, that they will paint for it, rather then not appear in it; and all the ſpiritual beauty which not a few deſire for their ſouls, is but to have them painted over with a little formal Profeſſion of Religion; whereas indeed the ſoul is never ſo ugly and unlovely in the eye of God, as when 'tis thus painted. The faireſt colours of hypocriſie are more abominable before God, then the fouleſt dirt of meer prophaneneſs. Generally men would have every thing good about them; they would have good air to breath in, good houſes to dwell in, good ſervants to attend them, good horſes to ride on; and while they would thus have all good about them, they (as one of the Ancients complained) are not at all ſolicitous to have that which is more then all, or *their principal one*, their ſoul, good within them. Men will not truſt their bodies in the hand of an unskilful Phyſician; nor will they venture their bodies at Sea with an unexperienced Pilot; yet ſome will truſt their ſouls with meer Empericks in Divinity, with men *unskilful in the word of righteouſneſs*, with Phyſicians of no value, with Pilots of no experience in the compaſs of ſoul matters and concernments. Laſtly, If a man have an eſtate in the world, he will ſettle and diſpoſe it the ſureſt way he can before he dyes; yea, ſome will diſpoſe of their bodies, and direct how and where to be buried before they dye; while in the mean-time their ſouls, which have made all theſe ſettlements and diſpoſures, remain undiſpoſed of, and at the greateſt uncertainties imaginable, what ſhall become of them, and whither they ſhall go when they dye. And is this to reckon or eſtimate the ſoul as *our principal one? David* prophecying of Chriſt, ſaith (*Pſal.* 22. 20.) *Deliver my ſoul from the ſword; my darling from the power of the dog*! His ſoul was his *darling*, or his *only one* (as we put in the Margin) As *Job* here calls it the *principal one*, ſo *David*, both there and *Pſal.* 35. 17. calls it *his only one*. Parents who have but one only Child, make that their darling; and ſometimes, though a Parent hath many Children, yet he ſets his love upon one as his darling, or *only one*. *Every mans ſoul is or ought to be his darling, his choice one, his only one, for indeed he hath but one.* And if a mans ſoul be loſt, the man is loſt; all is loſt in that one which is his *principal one*.

Quomodo fit ut inter bona tua omnia non vis eſſe malum niſi teipſum. Aug. Serm. 145. de Tempore.

Thus I have ventured a little diſcourſe ſomewhat beyond the rules of an Expoſition, to improve this uſeful notion of the ſoul, taking my hint from the Hebrew elegancy or propriety of the Original, obſerved by our Tranſlators, rendring the ſame word, *ſoul*, in the Text, and *principal one* in the Margin of our Bibles. Chriſt, ſpeaking of the Church, ſaith (*Cant.* 6. 9.) *My dove, my undefiled is but one; ſhe is the only one of her mother; ſhe is the choice one of her that bare her.* O get your ſouls waſhed from their defilement, and keep them undefiled, your ſoul is your choice, your choiceſt one, the ſoul is your *only one*. *They purſue my ſoul (or my principal one.)*

Ventorum celeritas in proverbio eſt; unde ocyor vento. Druſ.

As the wind.] That is, as the wind purſues the duſt or ſtubble. The wind may be ſaid to purſue under a threefold apprehenſion: Firſt, With much ſuddenneſs, The wind blows when and where it liſteth for all that man can do, or let him do what he liſt. Secondly, The wind purſues with great violence, it bears down all, or carries all before it. Thirdly, The wind comes ſwiftly; and therefore hath wings aſcribed to it. *David* ſaith (*Pſal.* 18. 10.) *The Lord rode upon a Cherub and did flie, yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind.* That is, He came, as, with irreſiſtible power, nothing could withſtand him, or ſtand before him; ſo, with fulleſt ſpeed and celerity, nothing could eſcape him. So then, to purſue as the wind, is a proverbial ſpeech, importing ſuddenneſs, ſtrength, and ſwiftneſs in coming. Thus, *Terrors purſued his ſoul as the wind:* They came ſuddenly upon him before he was aware of them; they came forcibly upon him, he could not withſtand them, he was almoſt quite overthrown or overborn by them; they came ſwiftly upon him, his were winged flying terrors, he could not flee from them, nor eſcape them. *They purſue my ſoul as the wind,*

And my welfare paſſeth away as a Cloud.

The word which we render **welfare**, ſignifies *ſalvation*; ſo Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates here, *My ſalvation is paſſed away as a Cloud.* But ſhall we think that *Job* was deſperate, or that all his hopes of ſalvation were fled and gone? Nothing leſs. Salvation is twofold, either temporal or eternal; it concerns either the ſtate of the ſoul in grace and glory, or of the body in peace and proſperity. In the former ſence, *Job* was ſo far from thinking that *his welfare or ſalvation was paſſed away*, that he was aſſured it ſhould not; he was ſo far from deſponding or deſpairing in that point, that his faith was riſen up to a pleropory or full perſwaſion (*Chap.* 19. 25) *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he ſhall ſtand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms deſtroy this body, yet in my fleſh ſhall I ſee God, whom I ſhall ſee for my ſelf, and mine eyes ſhall behold him, and not another*, &c. And (*Chap.* 13. 15.) *Though he ſlay me, yet will I truſt in him, but I will maintain mine own wayes before him; he alſo ſhall be my ſalvation.* Surely then, *Job* had not thrown up his hopes of eternal ſalvation. But as for his temporal ſalvation, or the welfare of his body and outward eſtate in this world, he had laid down the expectation of it; and he might well ſuppoſe that thoſe many ſad providences of God ſpake aloud to him, and with one voice, that he was a gone man as to the comforts and enjoyments of this preſent life.

Yet take ſpiritual ſalvation in a large ſence (as we render it) for the preſent welfare of his ſoul, or for thoſe comforts which uſually attend thoſe who are in a ſtate of ſalvation, and then he might ſay that his ſoul-ſalvation was paſſed away as a Cloud. Thus *David*'s ſalvation was paſſed away, when he prayed (*Pſal.* 51. 12.) *Reſtore unto me the joy of thy ſalvation.*

Hence Note, *There is no good in this life, but may either in part, or in whole, in kind, or at leaſt in degree, paſs away and be parted from us.*

As there is no corporal good, as health and ſtrength, riches and honour, friends and relations, but may wholly and altogether paſs away (1 *John* 2. 17.) *The world paſſeth away, and the luſts thereof*; that is, all thoſe things of the world after which we luſt. So there is no ſpiritual good which may not paſs away in part, or as to the ſenſible degrees of our injoyment: We way loſe the ſight not only of things viſible (which is moſt grievous to a natural man) but of things inviſible (which is moſt grievous to the ſpiritual man.) *Solomon* ſpeaks of riches (*Prov.* 23. 5.) *They certainly make themſelves wings, they flee away as an Eagle towards Heaven.* They flee away as an Eagle which will not come to the lure, nor be called back again. There are many Birds of prey which ye may allure back to your hand; but riches flee towards Heaven as an Eagle which will not be lured back. Thus alſo the comforts of the ſoul often make themſelves wings and flee away; only this comfort remains, though not with us, yet for us, they will certainly return. They do not flee away as the Eagle towards Heaven; though we be *in darkneſs, and ſee no light*, we ſhall have light, and ſee no darkneſs; thoſe former conſolations which are paſſed away as a cloud, and leave us under a cloud, ſhall riſe again as the Sun ſhining in full ſtrength and brightneſs. *My welfare paſſeth away*

As a Cloud.] Before he ſaid, *Terrors purſued me as the wind*; here (ſaith he) *My welfare paſſeth away as a cloud.* This ſimilitude is of the ſame ſignification with the former. Clouds paſs ſwiftly, (*Iſa.* 60. 8.) *Who are theſe that flie as a cloud?* Said the Church, admiring the quick and free acceſs of the Gentiles to faith in Chriſt. And clouds when the Sun ariſeth and ſhineth clearly paſs away (as to ſight) totally, there's no appearance of them. When the Spirit of God by the Prophet *Hoſea* would ſet forth that total deſolation which was to fall upon *Iſrael* for their idolatry, we find it thus expreſſed (*Hoſ.* 13. 3.) *Therefore they ſhall be as the morning cloud, and as the early dew it paſſeth away.* To which we may add that of the ſame Prophet, (*Hoſ.* 6. 4.) O Ephraim *what ſhall I do unto thee?* O Judah *what ſhall I do unto thee? For your goodneſs is as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away.* As our goodneſs in reference to God, ſo the goodneſs of God to us ſometimes paſſeth away like a cloud. And ſo ſome expound that Text, not of their goodneſs towards God, but of the goodneſs of God towards them. It is altogether impoſſible, that either the goodneſs of God in his nature, or the goodneſs of his actions ſhould paſs away; He is good for ever, and whatſoever he doth is good; He can no more ceaſe to be or to do good, then he can ceaſe to be God; yet the ſenſible goodneſs of God in temporal things often paſſeth away, and the ſweetneſs of his goodneſs in ſpirituals may ſometimes paſs away ſo far, that we can make out nothing of it to our ſelves, nor ſee the good of any promiſe that belongs to us. And then indeed, *our welfare is paſſed away as a cloud.*

Nubes citò tranſiens ſymbolum eſt rei deficientis & citò evaneſcentis. Pined.

Job having thus given us a deſcription of the terrors and troubles which fell upon his ſpirit, proceeds to ſhew their ſad effects both upon his inward and outward man.

VERS. 16, 17.

And now my ſoul is poured out upon me; The dayes of affliction have taken hold upon me.

My bones are pierced in the night ſeaſon: And my ſinews take no reſt.

IN the former verſe *Job* opened the troubles of his mind, terrors purſued or perſecuted *his ſoul, his principal one*: In this ſixteenth, as alſo in the ſeventeenth and eighteenth verſes, we have a deſcription of the pains and languiſhments of his body, together with their effects upon his ſpirit; and at the nineteenth verſe we have the reſult of all; in which as in a glaſs we may ſee in what plight and pickle *Job* was, or to what he was reduced by all theſe ſufferings, *He hath caſt me into the mire, and I am become like duſt and aſhes.*

Verſ. 16. **And now my ſoul is poured out upon me.**

And now;] That is, things being come to this paſs, or to this extreamity, the waters of trouble being ſwell'd and grown thus high, *Now my ſoul is poured out upon me.* At the fifteenth verſe he ſaid, *Terrors purſued my ſoul as the wind*; here he ſaith, *My ſoul is poured out upon mee.* This pouring out of his ſoul upon him, was not only a conſequent, but an effect of that terrible purſuit which was made after his ſoul.

In the Original, there are two different words uſed in theſe two places, both which we, in our tranſlation, render *ſoul.* *Job* uſed a very peculiar word in the former verſe, to expreſs his ſoul by, calling it in ſtrictneſs of reading, *his chief or principal one*; but in this verſe he uſeth a word of a more large and Common ſignification to the ſame purpoſe, which therefore in Scripture is rendred under various notions.

נפש

Firſt, ſometimes no more is intended by it then the breath of man; which is an effect of life; *Mans breath* (that is, his life) *is in his noſtrils*; He that hath breath in his noſtrils, lives, and to have our breath in our noſtrils, notes the frailty of our lives.

Secondly, The word imports not only breath, but life, which is the ſpring of breath. God ſaith (*Job* 2. 6.) *Behold he is in thine hand, but ſpare his life,* or breath, (we render it *ſoul.*) *David* praying for deliverance from his Enemy, uſeth this argument, (*Pſal.* 7. 2.) *Leſt he tear my ſoul like a Lion, renting it in pieces, while there is none to deliver.* It is not in the power of all the Lions or Tyrants, in the world to touch the ſoul of man; when they have kild the body, they have no more to do; but when he ſaith, *leſt they tear my ſoul,* the meaning is, leſt they take away my life; As if he had ſaid, *They ſeek to deſtroy me, they thirſt after my blood, I ſee nothing elſe will quench their bloody thirſt, Therefore O Lord deliver me.* So 'tis ſaid of *Rachel* in travail with child (*Gen.* 35. 18.) *It came to paſs as her ſoul was departing,* (for ſhe dyed;) That is, as her life was departing, or as ſhe was dying, *that ſhe called his name Benoni.*

Thirdly, The word notes any creature endued with *a ſenſitive life.* In which general ſence *Moſes* gives it (*Gen.* 1. 24.) *And God ſaid, let the earth bring forth the living creature (or ſoul) after his kind, cattel and creeping thing,* &c.

נפש חיה *Animam viventem.*

Fourthly, 'Tis put for the whole man, conſiſting of ſoul and body (*Gen.* 12. 5.) *And* Abraham *took* Sarah *his wife, and* Lot *his Brothers ſon, and all the ſubſtance that they had gathered, and the ſouls that they had gotten in* Charan, *and they went forth,* &c.

Fifthly, It ſometimes ſignifies a Carkaſs, or a dead body, a body from which the ſoul is departed (*Levit.* 19. 28.) *Ye ſhall not make any cutting in your fleſh for the dead,* or *for a ſoul.* We find the Word again in that ſence (*Numb.* 5. 2.) *Command the Children of* Iſrael *that they put out of the Camp every Leper, and every one that hath an Iſſue, and whoſoever is defiled by the dead.* So (*Hag.* 2. 13.) *If one that is unclean by a dead body touch any of theſe,* &c. It may ſeem very ſtrange that the ſame word ſhould ſignifie life and a dead body, yet it doth, for this reaſon (ſay ſome) that we might remember that life and ſoul belong to the dead bodies of men, or that even a dead body ſhall be raiſed again by the power of God to life, and remarried (after that long ſeparation) to the ſoul in the morning of the reſurrection.

Animamq; ſepulchro condimus. Virg. Æneid. 4.

Sixthly, This word imports appetite, deſire, will, luſt, which are acts of the ſoul. (*Pſal.* 27. 12.) *Deliver mee not over unto the will* (or luſt) *of mine enemies.* The word is, *Deliver me not over to the ſoul of mine enemies*; that is, Deliver me not over to ſuch a ſoul as hath only will and luſt, without reaſon to direct either its reſolutions or actions by. *Solomon* applyeth it alſo to that inferiour faculty, ſenſual appetite, (*Prov.* 23. 2.) *When thou ſitteſt to eat with a Ruler, conſider diligently what is before thee, and put a knife to thy throat, if thou be a man given to appetite, if thou be a man that haſt a ſoul*; that is, a ſoul made up of or maſter'd by appetite. The Hebrew ſtrictly taken is thus rendred, *If thou art a Maſter of the ſoul or appetite.* And the Text would run well in that plain ſence, as if *Solomon* had ſaid, If thou art a Maſter of, or canſt rule and command, thy ſoul or appetite, then ſhew it by thy moderation in eating, or by checking thy appetite when thou ſitteſt at the Rulers table. But we render it, and ſo do moſt of the learned tranſlaters, as a phraſe ſignifying a man very apt to be maſter'd by his appetite, In which ſence the word is rendred again (*Prov.* 22. 24.) *Make no friendſhip with an angry man*; the Hebrew is *with a Maſter of anger,* we render it according to the ſcope and exigence of the place *with an angry man*, that is, with a man who is apt to be maſter'd and overcome with anger, or (as we commonly expreſs it) with a man who hath no command of his paſſions. Thus in the Scripture firſt alleged, the text neceſſitates that meaning of the phraſe, which our tranſlation holds out, if thou art a man given to ſoul or appetite; As if *Solomon* had ſaid, If thou haſt an appetite which thou canſt not well rule, thou hadſt need look well to it at all times, but then eſpecially when thou ſitteſt with the Ruler. Rulers have full Tables, and many when they are at them, inſtead of putting a knife to their throats by abſtinence, put a knife to their throats by their intemperance, and ſo while they fill their bellies, deſtroy their lives, and cut their own throats. When men are famiſht with want of food, we uſually ſay, their throats are cut without a knife; and ſo are theirs who over-feed themſelves. But to return to the point for which this paſſage in the *Proverbs* was inſtanc'd in; Namely, to ſhew that the Word by which *Job* expreſſeth his ſoul, ſignifieth among other things, meer will, luſt or appetite.

אם בעל נפש *Si comas animæ.* Mont. *Si dominus animæ.* Jun. *Si præditus cupiditate ſis.* Pagn.

When *Job* ſaith, *My Soul is poured out upon me,* we may take the word *Soul* two wayes,

Firſt, For life (*my Soul is poured out upon me*) that is, I am ready to dye; I am waſted, I am ſpent, my Spirits are even gone, I am near expiring, my life is ready to be poured out as water upon the ground, which cannot be gathered up again.

Secondly, We may expound it by that which is the ſtrength of the Soul; Courage and Chearfulneſs under affliction; *my Soul*, that is, my Spirit, my ſtrength, yea my patience, are all near ſpent and gone, exhauſted and poured out; I have been ſo long worried and wearied with theſe afflictions, that I can hold out no longer. Thus the Lord made a gracious promiſe to his afflicted People, (*Iſa.* 57. 16.) *I will not contend for ever, neither will I be alwayes wroth: For the Spirit ſhould fail before me, and the Souls which I have made*; that is, the Souls which I have made will be even unmade, as to their joyes, comforts and courage; they will utterly fail, or as *Job* ſaith, *be poured out.*

תשתפך *Effundit. Voluit ſub eleganti rei, quæ ad modum aquæ fluidæ ſe effundat ſimilitudine, hunc ſuum languorem & animæ deliquium exprimere.* Bold.

My Soul is poured out.] There is an Elegancy in that Expreſſion (*poured out*) the word is applied to water, wine, or any liquid; and to *pour out*, in Scripture, notes abundance, or the giving forth of much in quantity or degree. The Lord ſaith in that great and glorious promiſe, (*Joel* 2. 28.) *It ſhall come to paſs in the latter dayes that I will pour out of my Spirit upon all fleſh*; that is, Believers in thoſe latter dayes ſhall have plenty of the Spirit; not dews and drops only, diſtilling upon them, but ſhowers and mighty rains, even floods of the Spirit, both in gifts and graces. So that promiſe is expreſſed by another Prophet, (*Iſa.* 44. 3.) *I will pour water upon him that is thirſty, and floods upon the dry ground,* (which is thus explain'd in the latter part of the ſame verſe) *I will pour my Spirit upon thy ſeed, and my bleſſing upon thine Off-ſpring.* So that when *Job* ſaith (*my Soul is poured out*) he would tell us that he was abundant in thoſe ſorrows and troubles of Spirit, his Soul was ſo much poured out, that there was ſcarce any thing, ſcarce a drop of his Soul left within. That's the difference between God's pouring out of himſelf, and his pouring out the creature, or the creatures pouring out it ſelf. When God pours out himſelf; that is, his gifts and bleſſings, he pours out abundantly, and though he pours out ſo much as fills the Creature, yet how much ſo ever he pours out, he doth not at all empty himſelf; man waſteth and emptieth his own ſtock by pouring out, but God doth not; man may pour out till nothing's left; for his is but the fulneſs of a Veſſel, how full ſoever he is: but God pours out as a fountain, and therefore is alwayes full. *Job* might well ſay, *my Soul is poured out*, his Soul was once a Veſſel or a Ciſtern full of ſtrength, life, livelineſs, joy and comfort, but his long ſufferings and afflictions had almoſt emptied and drawn him dry to the very bottom. His all, or all his, Soul and all was poured out; He had only ſo much Soul left him as would ſerve him to tell others, that he had ſcarce any Soul left; *My Soul is poured out.*

Nunc utiq; omnis ille vigor animi quaſi liquefactus diſtituit. Bez.

Yet further, this phraſe of pouring out, may bear a threefold conſideration.

First, The Greek Scholiaſt underſtands this effuſion or pouring out, of the irreſolution and unſetledneſs of *Job's* mind; what to do, or what courſe to take for his own relief in, or deliverance from his troubles. When a man knows not where to pitch, what to reſolve on, his Soul is (as it were) diſſolved and poured out. And when a man comes to a ſetledneſs of purpoſe in any point, the ſeveral powers of his Soul are (upon the matter) gathered up and knit together again.

Diſſolvitur i.e. *ſuſpenſa hæret anima.* Nicet.

Secondly, To pour out the Soul, is in Scripture language, *to be much in prayer.* As prayer is called in Scripture *the lifting up of the Soul to God,* (Pſal. 25. 1.) ſo the pouring out of the Soul before God. When that much grieved and gracious Woman *Hannah* was praying, *Eli* thought ſhe had been diſtemper'd with wine; *How long wilt thou be drunken? Put away thy wine from thee.* The good Woman anſwered, *No my Lord, I am a Woman of a ſorrowful Spirit, I have drunken neither wine nor ſtrong drink, but have poured out my Soul before the Lord,* (1 Sam. 1. 15.) that is, I have prayed, yea I have prayed much and earneſtly. Prayer is a pouring out of the Soul, eſpecially, earneſt, important, fervent prayer. So in the confeſſion of ſin, the Soul is poured out in ſorrows, and in ſupplication for ſupply of wants, the Soul is poured out in deſires, and in faith. Thus we are exhorted to pray at once in faith and fervency, (*Pſal.* 62. 8.) *Truſt in him at all times, ye People pour out your hearts before him*; that is, pray to him, and pray to him abundantly, pray to him earneſtly, let your Souls go forth in your ſupplications. When *David* was in great diſtreſs, he ſaith, (*Pſal.* 142. 2.) *I poured out my complaint before him, I ſhewed before him my troubles*; that is, I prayed unto him with all my Soul, or I prayed my very Soul unto him. (*Lament.* 2. 18, 19.) *Their heart cryed unto the Lord,* &c. *Ariſe, Cry out in the night: In the beginning of the watches pour out thine heart like water before the face of the Lord: Lift up thy hands toward him.* So then, prayer may be called a pouring out of the Soul or heart to God, and it is ſo, for two reaſons.

Firſt, Becauſe when Saints are in great trouble or ſtraits of any kind, then their hearts are enlarged, and they open their whole mind to God, they keep nothing back: They tell him of all their doubts, deſires, hopes, fears, ſins; they tell him of all their temptations, ſorrows, and afflictions: When all comes out, there is a pouring out of the heart.

Secondly, It is called a pouring out of the heart, not only becauſe of the abundance of matter uttered in prayer, but becauſe of the fervency and earneſtneſs of the Spirit in prayer; when prayer comes not forth droppingly, droopingly, ſleepily, dreamingly, or drouſily, but with a mighty force, with ſtrong affections, like a flood or torrent, when 'tis a *working or in-wrought prayer,* then the Soul is poured forth; then we may be ſaid not only to pray much, but to be much in prayer. It is an eaſie matter to pour out words in prayer, but it is a hard matter, yea without the Spirit an impoſſible matter to pour out the Soul, the heart before the Lord in prayer; yea there are many that pour out tears before God, and yet pour not out their hearts and Souls before God in prayer. In this ſenſe, doubtleſs, *Job's* Soul was poured out upon him. The Apoſtle *James* (Chap. 5. 13.) gives this direction; *Is any man afflicted? Let him pray.* *Job* was not only a man afflicted, but much and greatly afflicted, therefore, ſurely, he (being God) did not only pray, but he prayed much and greatly in his affliction.

Thirdly, This phraſe of pouring out the Soul, may import a nearneſs to death, or a giving up of the Ghoſt. A dying man poureth out his Soul; thus the Woman ſpake in her petition to *David* for the return of *Abſalom,* (2 *Sam.* 14. 14.) *We muſt needs die, and be as water ſpilt upon the ground which cannot be gathered up again.* The body is like an empty Veſſel when once the Soul is departed, or ſpilt like water upon the ground. So the word is uſed (*Lam.* 2. 12.) Where the Prophet deſcribing the extream Famine in *Jeruſalem* ſaith, *The children and the ſucklings ſwoon in the ſtreets, they cry to their Mothers, where is Corn and Wine?* (O what a ſad Condition were they in, when they ſaid, *Where is Corn and Wine?*) *When they ſwooned as the wounded in the Streets of the City, when their Soul was poured out into their Mothers boſom.* Poor Children cryed out, O where's bread? We at this day have bread enough, and to ſpare, (bleſſed be God) but it was not ſo with *Jeruſalem* in that day; O Mother where's wine? Where's bread cryed the poor Children? And then they ſwooned even as the wounded in the Streets, and were ready to pour out their Souls into their Mothers boſome; that is, they were ready to die and expire for want of bread. Thus alſo *Job's* Soul was poured out, he was ready to ſwoon and to die; ſo he tells us with much livelineſs and quickneſs both of ſpeech and ſpirit (*Chap.* 17. 1.) *My breath is corrupt, my dayes are extinct, the graves are ready for me.* All which expreſſions do but reach this interpretation of his complaint in the preſent Text, *My Soul is poured out upon me.*

Now though the two former Expoſitions of theſe words, as they import; Firſt, The unſetledneſs and unreſolvedneſs of *Job's* ſpirit what to do, or Secondly, His ſetledneſs and utmoſt reſolution to vent his Soul in prayer, that God would both ſhew him what to do, and help him to do it in that extremity, (though, I ſay, both theſe openings of the Text carry a fair reſpect to it) yet I conceive this laſt or third moſt proper and ſutable to it; And therefore

Hence Note, *Man is a poor frail creature, a brittle creature, he quickly fails and faints under his burden.*

If God do but touch him, and leave him under the hand of an affliction, preſently he feels his very Soul ready to be poured out upon him. The fleſh of man, that is, his Natural eſtate as man, is graſs, that is, like graſs; the graſs let alone will quickly wither, but uſually the graſs is cut or eaten down before it withers; many are cropt in their greenneſs, or in the height and flouriſh of outward proſperity, their Soul is poured out. *Man at his beſt eſtate is altogether vanity.* Which is both explained and urged further in the words following.

ימי. עני

The dayes of affliction (or, affliction dayes) have taken hold upon me.

Man hath his dayes of Conſolation, and his dayes of affliction, his dayes of peace, and his dayes of trouble, his good dayes, and his bad dayes, in this world. The Text may be rendred either *The dayes of affliction* (as we) or, as others, *the dayes of humiliation, the dayes of preſſing down, the dayes of laying low,* (all this the word ſignifies) theſe ſad and dark dayes *have taken hold upon me.*

אחז cepit, apprehendit, tenuit, poſſedit.

To take hold, is properly the act of a living Creature, of man eſpecially, when he ſeizeth, apprehends, or attacheth any thing or perſon. And it notes not bare holding, but holding faſt and ſure; Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates, *Affliction dayes have caught me*; As if he had ſaid, I had hope to eſcape them, but they have been too nimble for me; they have caught me, as the Hound doth the Hare, or a Snare the Bird. The vulgar Tranſlation ſaith, *The dayes of affliction have poſſeſt me*: Holding notes Having and poſſeſſing; as in our Law-forms of Conveyance or Leaſe, *To have and to hold*, is to poſſeſs either for term of years, or for ever. Thus *Job* ſpeaks as if he had been wholly delivered into the hand of affliction, and were fully poſſeſſed by it; or as if he were under the dominion, rule, and power of affliction, as his Lord and Maſter. The Seventy render it ſhortly; *The dayes of affliction have me*; they have me in their power, I am bound under them: Our reading attains the ſame ſence; *The dayes of affliction have taken hold upon me.*

Me tanquam re ſua utuntur dies & tempora mortis. Bold.

Ἔχουσι δέ με ἡμέραι ὀδυνῶν. Sept.

Hence Note, *Affliction hath its day.*

The dayes of affliction are dayes appointed, dayes ſet out by God. As there are dayes wherein God will have us afflict our ſelves, (*Eſai.* 22. 13.) *In that day the Lord called to mourning, and to faſting, and unto ſackcloth, and unto aſhes*; that is, the providences of God to his people in that day had that voyce in them, and did (as it were) call aloud upon them, to mourn, to faſt, to repent in Sackcloth and aſhes. *Faſting dayes, are ſelf-afflicting dayes*, or as *Moſes* calls them (*Levit.* 16. 29.) *Soul-afflicting dayes.* Now (I ſay) as God appoints us dayes, wherein to afflict our ſelves; ſo God appoints dayes, wherein he will afflict us. All the dayes of our lives are meaſured or ſet out unto us, and they are of two ſorts; Firſt, *Affliction dayes*; Secondly, *Conſolation dayes*; as was ſhewed before. Sorrow and joy take up and divide all our dayes between them. The life of man is a kind of *Checker-work*, there's white and black, and more black then white, that's our preſent ſtate. *Jacob* ſaid of the dayes of his life, *They were few, and they were evil,* (Gen. 47. 9.) As his dayes were not many conſidered in themſelves and few compared with ſome of his anceſtors, ſo they were evil with reſpect to his manifold afflictions; and he gave the denomination of his few dayes by evil, becauſe the moſt or major part of his dayes were in that ſence evil. And uſually the troubles of our life are moſt, they are more and greater then our Comforts, they out-number and out-weigh them as to outwards. The Saints indeed have inward Joy in their outward ſorrows and tribulations, but their tribulations and ſorrows appear more, or are more viſible then their joyes.

Secondly, In that he calls them dayes of affliction,

Obſerve, *Afflictions may continue long, or a great while, not only for a day, but for dayes.*

Though that be a truth (*Pſal.* 30. 5.) *Sorrow endures for a night, but joy cometh in the morning*; The Lord often makes ſuch ſuddain changes, yet we are not to underſtand it ſtrictly, as if this were the meaning, that they who have ſorrow in the evening, ſhall at the next break of day have joy, or, that as ſoon as the day returns, their comforts ſhall return too. But the meaning is this, after ſorrow they ſhall have joy, as ſure as the morning follows the night. A righteous mans troubles, tryals and ſorrows may abide many Natural dayes and nights with him: He may find (as *Job* did, *Chap.* 7. 3.) himſelf *made to poſſeſs Moneths of vanity*, and not only a night of wearineſs, but (as he there ſpeaks) *wearisome nights appointed to him.* The ſcope and meaning of that Text in the Pſalm is only this; the righteous ſhall have a ſucceſſion of joy after ſorrow, their ſorrow ſhall not be perpetual, nor abide for ever. *As the rod of the wicked* ſhall not (*Pſal.* 125. 3.) ſo God will not let his rod reſt upon the lot of the righteous. Though their night of ſorrow continue many dayes and weeks, yea Months and Years, yet they ſhall have a morning of joy. *Solomon* ſaith of the mere worldly man, (*Eccl.* 5. 17.) *All his dayes he eateth in darkneſs, and he hath much ſorrow and wrath with his ſickneſs.* And as through his vexatious cares in getting and keeping the things of the world, he deprives himſelf of all comfort in the uſe of them all the dayes of his life, ſo when he dieth, *he goes to the generation of his fathers, they* (that is, both he and they) *ſhall never ſee light,* (*Pſal.* 49. 19.) Thus in this life a wicked mans night of trouble runs through all his dayes, for all his dayes he eateth in darkneſs, through the darkneſs of his own Spirit and practice; and the life to come, (through the righteous judgement of God) will be to him as one everlaſting night, for he ſhall never ſee (that is, enjoy) light. But here's the comfort of the righteous, that if their affliction dayes are many, yet they are but dayes of affliction, they ſhall not feel an eternity of affliction. *Saints have affliction dayes, The wicked have an Eternity of affliction*; no affliction ſhall enter into the eternity of Saints, the whole eternity of the wicked ſhall be affliction. When once Believers have done with dayes, they have done with ſorrows; all tears ſhall be wiped not only off from, but out of their eyes: The very ſpring of tears ſhall be dryed up for ever, and they delivered not only from actual ſorrow, but from the poſſibility of it. 'Tis but while our lives are meaſured by dayes, that the dayes of the godly are darkned with clouds or nights of trouble.

Thirdly, In that *Job* ſpeaks of affliction dayes taking hold of him;

Note, *Affliction will come in its time, in its ſeaſon or day.*

When the day appointed comes, affliction will come. Affliction dayes will as certainly come, as our Birth-day came, or as our death day is coming, and there is one and the ſame reaſon of all, even becauſe they are all appointed. All the changes of our dayes, our dayes of joy, and our dayes of ſorrow, our feaſt dayes, and our faſt dayes; the dayes wherein we eat the fat and drink the ſweet; and the dayes wherein we drink tears, and feed upon aſhes, are under an unchangeable appointment: There's no avoiding them, they will come, they will take hold of us, and poſſeſs us. *David* ſaith of the wicked man, (*Pſal.* 37. 13.) *The Lord ſhall laugh at him*; Why? *For he ſeeth that his day is coming:* The wicked man pleaſeth himſelf in his proſperous condition, then he laughs and rejoyceth; and then the Lord laughs at him. None have ſuch cauſe to mourn as they, at whom God laughs. God laughs at the wicked man; and why? Becauſe he ſees a day of blackneſs, a day of Clouds and darkneſs, a day of gloomineſs and thick darkneſs (as the Prophet *Joel* ſpeaks) that is, a day of great trouble coming juſtly upon him: The Lord ſees that a black day is coming upon the wicked man, which will turn all his plots againſt the righteous (in the hoped ſucceſs of which he rejoyced) upon his own head. Now as ſome ungodly men have ſpecially appointed black dayes coming upon them in this World for ruine and deſtruction; ſo the godly have dayes of affliction appointed them for trial and correction: Nor doth the beſt of Saints know how ſoon ſuch a day may come upon him: Now it is a day of health with a godly man, but a day of ſickneſs may quickly come upon him; now it is a day of riches, but a day of poverty may quickly come upon him; now it is a day of credit or honour in the World, but a day of diſgrace and reproach from the World may be coming, and quickly come upon him. It is ſaid (*Pſal.* 37. 18.) *The Lord knoweth the dayes of the upright*; that is, he knows what kind of dayes or times they ſhall live in and paſs thorough. He knows not only what natural, but what providential dayes ſhall go over their heads, what changes they ſhall be in, or meet with while they are paſſing through this World. Look what troubles the Lord knows will come upon any day, they will come at their day as ſure as the day cometh.

Fourthly, *Job* doth only ſay that dayes of affliction came upon him, but they took hold upon him.

Hence Note, *When affliction comes, it takes hold, it takes faſt hold, and will not let us go till God gives leave.*

Affliction doth not only ſtick but ſtrike and take hold by order from God; it cannot touch us without commiſſion, and when commiſſion'd it will take hold, faſt hold of us and will not let us go. It is ſaid concerning the Heatheniſh Idolatrous Princes and People of thoſe Lands which the Children of *Iſarel* were to poſſeſs; *The People ſhall hear, and be afraid: Sorrows ſhall take hold of the Inhabitants of* Paleſtina, (Exod. 15. 14.) The report of what God had done againſt the *Egyptians*, made thoſe remoter Nations tremble, and ſorrow took them Priſoners long before they were ſlain by the Sword. And what the Scripture ſpeaks in that place of the wicked and uncircumciſed Nations; The ſame *David* ſaith of himſelf, (*Pſal.* 116. 3.) *The ſorrows of death compaſſed me about: And the pains of Hell gat hold upon me.* The Original word is, *found me,* as we put in the Margin; they found him, as an Officer or Sergeant finds a perſon that he is ſent out to attach or arreſt; who no ſooner finds him, but he takes hold of him, or (as we ſay) takes him into cuſtody. And when Warrants are ſent out to take a man, who keeps out of the way, the return is, *Non eſt inventus, the man is not found*, he cannot be met with or taken hold of. *David*'s pains quickly found him, and having found him they gat hold of him; ſuch finding is ſo certainly and ſuddainly followed with taking hold, and holding what is taken, that one word in the Hebrew ſerves to expreſs both acts. When God ſends out troubles and afflictions as Officers to attach any man, they will find him, and finding him, they will take hold of him. The dayes of affliction will take hold, there's no ſtriving, no ſtrugling with them, no getting out of their hands. Theſe divine Purſevants will neither be perſwaded nor bribed to let you go, till God ſpeak the word, till God ſay deliver him, releaſe him: Till God ſend his warrant to have the Priſon-door opened, and the poor Soul ſet free from affliction, he hath no relief, no help for it.

Affliction having thus taken hold of *Job*, he tells us in the next Verſe, how hardly it uſed him.

Verſ. 17. **My bones are pierced in the night ſeaſon: And my ſinews take no reſt.**

עצם
Os oſſis à robore, ſignificat etiam rei cujuſquā ſubſtantiam, eſſentiam, rem ipſam.

Theſe words are a deſcription of *Job*'s bodily ſickneſs according to the letter of the Text) ſuch is the malignity of ſome violent Diſeaſes, that they not only corrode the fleſh, but enter into the very bones; *my bones are pierced.* The word properly ſignifies ſtrength, and becauſe bones are the ſtrongeſt part of a man, (bones are to the body, as Timber, Rafters, Poſts and Pillars to the Houſe, the ſtrength of it) therefore our bones and our ſtrength are ſignificantly expreſſed by the ſame word. *Job* ſpeaks of his bones, to ſhew that the ſtrength of his body was invaded and ſhaken, and by his bones, he intends his whole body in the beſt ſtrength of it; which (ſome conceive) he called *his bones* for this reaſon alſo, becauſe his body was ſo waſted and conſumed, that he had nothing left but bones, or he was nothing, but, as it were, a *Skeleton* or *pack of bones.* He could ſcarce ſay, his fleſh was pierced, he having little or none to pierce. *Job* uſeth the ſame Elegancy in ſetting forth or aggravating the extremity of his ſufferings (*Chap.* 7. 15.) *My Soul chuſeth death rather then life*; ſo we Tranſlate; but the Hebrew is, *rather then my bones*; As if he had ſaid, *I had rather dye then live in a body waſted to the skin and bones*; *It is more then eligible with me to lay my bones down in the Grave, then to bear them up and down upon the earth. I live with a company of bare bones, and it were better for me to dye then to live in the fleſh and have none, or to live with conſuming pining dying fleſh.* Thus here, *My bones are pierced*, my pains and ſorrows have worn me to the bones.

Yet further and more particularly when *Job* ſaith, *My bones are pierced within me in the night ſeaſon.* There are four things in the words of this complaint, which exceedly highten his ſorrows, and might well give him cauſe to ſay, that *dayes of affliction had taken hold upon him.*

Dolor graviſſimus eſt qui oſſa penetrare dicitur, quia oſſa interiora ſunt & ita dura ut nullo morbo ceſſura videantur. Sanct.

Firſt, In that he had not only pain in his fleſh, but in his very bones. When in Scripture, the bones are ſpoken of as being in pain, it notes very great dolour and pain; for as the bones lye within the fleſh, and are hard to come at, or to be reached by pain, ſo they are very hard and may ſeem impregnable againſt all pain: When, therefore pain pierceth the bones, it muſt needs be a very ſharp and powerful pain Hence that grievous cry, (*Pſal.* 31. 10.) *Hear O Lord, have mercy upon me; for my life is ſpent with grief, and my years with ſighing: My ſtrength faileth becauſe of mine iniquity, and my bones are conſumed*; that is, my ſorrow is no comon ſorrow, 'tis great and deep, it pierceth my bones. Thus King *Hezekiah* deſcribes his extream ſickneſs, (*Iſa.* 38. 13.) *I reckoned till morning, that as a Lion ſo will he break all my bones*; not that he thought God would indeed cruſh his bones, but thereby he would ſet out the violence of his ſickneſs, which he made full account would make an end of him before the morning were over or at an end, even as when a fierce hunger-bitten Lion tears the fleſh and cracks the bones of a poor Sheep or Lamb. And thus *Elihu* deſcribes his ſick man, (*Chap.* 33. 19.) *He is chaſtened with pain upon his Bed, and the multitude of his bones with ſtrong pain*; That is, his whole body, or all his bones are chaſtned, and he is pained in every joynt and part of his body. The breaking of the bones, and trouble upon the bones, import not only the soreſt ſufferings of the Body, but of the Soul alſo. When *David* would tell us how exceedingly he was grieved for his ſin, he prayes, (*Pſal.* 51. 8.) *Make me to hear joy and gladneſs, that the bones which thou haſt broken may rejoyce.* When we break the Commandments of God by ſinning, 'tis no marvail (and when 'tis with godly ſorrow to repentance, 'tis a mercy) if God break our bones with ſorrow for our ſins, that is, if he bring us to the deepeſt ſence of his diſpleaſure; and of our own folly for our ſins; even as if he had broken our bones upon the Wheel, or diſ-joynted them with a Rack. Heart-breakings are more painful then bone-breakings, and are therefore expreſſed by breaking the bones, becauſe that to ſenſe is moſt painful. *David* prayes again in he ſame Rhetorical ſtrain (*Pſal.* 6. 2.) *O Lord heal me, for my bones are vexed.* It was the healing of his Soul which he prayed for, and the trouble which he had for wounding it, he calls the vexing of his bones, (*Pſal.* 102. 3.) *My dayes are conſumed like ſmoke, and my bones are burnt up as an hearth.* So in that Prophecy of Chriſt's ſorrows, (*Pſal.* 22. 14.) *All my bones were out of joint.* (*Pſal.* 32. 3.) *While I kept ſilence my bones waxed old,* &c. What do all theſe Texts ſpeak, but the ſorrow of a Soul pained under the apprehenſions of divine wrath for ſin, either our own, or of others, as the caſe of Chriſt was.

So on the contrary, when God is ſaid to make the bones fat, it notes much mercy, or mercy all over. The Prophet puts this among the promiſes to them that keep a faſt indeed (*Iſa.* 58. 11.) *The Lord ſhall guide thee continually, and ſatisfie thy Soul in drought, and make fat thy bones*; As if he had ſaid, Fear not leanneſs or waſting of thy body with faſting, for God will make fat thy bones, that is, he will comfort thee, and fill thee with joy both of Soul *and* body. And when the Lord would expreſs his greateſt care over any one of his People; 'tis ſaid, *He keepeth all his bones, not one of them is broken,* (Pſal. 34. 20.) When *all our bones praiſe God* (as *David* ſaid his ſhould, *Pſal.* 35. 10.) *and ſay, Lord who is like unto thee!* O how well is it with us? And when all our bones mourn before God, who can tell how ill 'tis with us? And hence thoſe things which have the greateſt efficacy in afflicting and refreſhing, or do moſt exquiſitely affect the ſenſe, whether with pain or pleaſure, are compared to Oyl which pierceth the bones. There's the Oyl of gladneſs, (*Pſal.* 45. 7.) and there's the Oyl of ſorrow, (*Pſal.* 109. 18.) *As he clotheth himſelf with curſing, ſo let it come upon him; let it come into his bowels like water, and like Oyl into his bones:* The curſe ſoaks into the bones like Oyl, not to ſupple and ſtrengthen them as Oyl doth, but to vex and torment them, as a curſe doth. The curſe enters the bones like Oyl, ſecretly and powerfully, but it works like it ſelf ſorrowfully and painfully.

Secondly, To aggravate his affliction, *Job* doth not ſay this or that bone of mine was pierced, but *my bones are pierced*, that is, all my bones. If a man have an ach in one of his bones, if he have but one broken bone, or but one bone out of joint, he will find pain enough: But when all his bones are broken, he is nothing but pain. *Job* laments that all his bones were pierced, as if they had been but one bone. The Original is more clear to this ſence, which may be thus rendered, *Every one of my bones are ſhaken*; a Verb plural being joyned with a Noun ſingular, is diſtributive to every one in particular. *Job*'s fleſh was ſo ſmitten with ſoars, that his whole body looked like one continued ſoar; and his bones were ſo univerſally pierced, as if indeed he had but one bone to be pierced. He had not the bone of a little Toe or Finger free.

Thirdly, *Job* doth not ſay, all his bones were *pained*, but they were all *pierced*; ſome read it, *broken*: The Seventy render, *My bones are burnt*; as if he had ſaid, I feel a fire in my bones, which ſucks and dries up the moiſture and marrow of them. The piercing of the bones muſt needs be a moſt grievous pain; for though the bone it ſelf hath no ſenſe, yet the Membranes and Muſcles that are next the bones, are of a more exquiſite ſenſe, then the fleſh in any part or member of the body. Therefore to pierce the bones, cannot but cauſe the greateſt bodily pain ſufferable or imaginable. When the Apoſtle would ſet forth the ſad and ſore troubles both of Body and Soul, which *they who will be rich* draw upon themſelves, he ſaith (1 *Tim.* 6. 10.) *They have pierced themſelves through with many ſorrows.*

נקר i.e. קנב *Ut ab Hebræis exponitur, perforavit, effodit.* Merc.

Fourthly, When *Job* ſaith, *My bones are pierced in the night ſeaſon.*

There's another aggravation of his pain and grief. Theſe words, *in the night ſeaſon,* ſhew more then the long continuance of his pain, even the unceſſantneſs of his pain. As if he had ſaid, *The night which uſually gives refreſhing to man, was ſo far from affording me any, that then I was moſt reſtleſs.* It hightens our affliction, when it comes or ſtayes upon us in that ſeaſon which is appointed for repoſe. Some can ſleep away much of their pain and ſorrow, but *Job* had ſorrow in the night, in ſtead of ſleep. Sleep is the beſt Medicine for wearineſs, it conquers our cares, and gives at leaſt ſome truce from the aſſaults of ſorrow. The labour and travel of the day wears out, ſpends and waſtes our ſtrength, but in the night we reſt, and recruit or repair our ſtrength again. Now if the night be ſpent in torturing pains, how doth our ſtrength ſpend? To what a condition is ſuch a poor Soul brought, whoſe very bones take no reſt in the night ſeaſon! Here's a fourth aggravation of *Job*'s affliction; Firſt, It was in his bones; Secondly, in all his bones; Thirdly, it pierced his bones; and Fourthly, It was upon him in the night ſeaſon; when others went to reſt, he took none; his pains ſtayed upon him day and night. Thus the lamenting Prophet labours to keep the ſorrows of the Captive *Jews* awake, (*Lam.* 2. 18, 19.) *Let tears run down like a River day and night, give thy ſelf no reſt, let not the apple of thine eye ceaſe, ariſe cry out in the night, in the beginning of the Watches pour out thine heart like water before the face of the Lord.*

Somnus laſſorum medicus, edomitor curarum, induciæ dolorum.

E cœlo quod eſt ſupra terram ac proinde ſupra hominem. Druſ.

Further, Whereas we ſeem to underſtand that his pain was it, which pierced his bones, ſome read it thus, *He hath pierced my bones*, that is, the Lord hath commanded theſe dayes of affliction, or the affliction of theſe dayes to pierce my bones, even in the night ſeaſon.

Again, Others thus; *The night pierceth my bones*; the letter of the Original is cleareſt for this reading: As if he ſaid, I feell more pain in the night then in the day: the day day paineth my fleſh, but the night pierceth my bones. (Mr. *Broughton* Tranſlates,) *The night pierceth my bones from me*; we ſay, *in me*, The Hebrew is, *From above me*; as aſcribing all his pains to God, who had afflicted him from Heaven, or from on high.

And my ſinews take no reſt.

Some read *my Nerves*, others, *my Veins*, many *my Pulſes take no reſt*: The Hebrew is, *They lie not down, or ſleep not.* The Pulſe ſignifies the Nature of the Diſeaſe; Phyſicians learn much of the ſtate of the whole body by the pulſe. Now, ſaith *Job*, my Pulſe, my ſinews take no reſt. When the Pulſe beats high, and quick, as if it were in a rage, then certainly the patient is in a very great Diſtemper. Now, the Pulſe uſeth to move more temperately in the night, when the heat is drawn into the inward parts, yet *Job* (it ſeems) by reaſon of his great inflammation, and the acuteneſs of his Diſeaſe, found his Pulſe as quick in the night as in the day, and the pulſe being ſo reſtleſs, he could take no reſt.

צירקים *Nervi, venæ, arteriæ, muſculi. Arabes vocant venas pulſatiles, quæ ab Hebræis.* רפקים *vocantur a* רפק *pulſavit.* Druſ.

Neq; pulſus meus redditur minor tempore nocturno, qui tamen minui deberet, quia calor retrahitur in partem interiorem. Vatabl.

Pulſus eſt cordis arteriarumq; motus, nativi caloris moderator ex diaſtole ſyſtoleq; conſiſtens, ut dicunt Medici.

Qui me comedunt non dormiund. Vul.

Nec quieſcunt vermes digredientes a me. Tygur.

There is yet another reading, which I ſhall touch a little, and ſo ſhut up the Expoſition of this Verſe. For whereas we ſay, *my ſinews*, that ſaith, *They that eat me take no reſt*: Which is explained two wayes.

Firſt, For the Worms or Lice which bred in his putrified fleſh, which we may ſuppoſe as troubleſom as the malice of the Devil could make them: As if he had ſaid, *The Vermine which are generated in my wounds and ſoars, take no reſt, nor will they ſuffer me to take any; they lie alwayes biting, and working, and gnawing, as if they would eat me up. How then can I take reſt?*

Secondly, Others, by theſe *Eaters*, underſtand his *illwillers* and *detractors*. They eat up a man, who ſlander and ſpeak evil of him; theſe eat up a man's credit, or good name. And theſe (ſaith *Job* according to this Expoſition) *give me no reſt*; I am continually followed by men, whoſe tongues are ſet on fire, whoſe malice is reſtleſs; no wonder then if my reputation be ſmoakt and ſmother'd, ſcorcht and almoſt conſumed to aſhes, among thoſe who know or believe no more nor better of me, then theſe men report, who are alwayes reporting evil of me. They that thus eat me, who would eat up and devour my honour and innocency at a morſel, are hungry ſtill, and will not give over eating; *They that eat me take no reſt.* This is an undeniable truth, *Detractors eat, yea ſwallow up the reputation of the innocent*: But I ſhall not ſtay upon theſe readings, which are but far fetcht and forein conjectures.

I cloſe and conclude with our own Tranſlation, which plainly holds forth, that *Job* was now come to the utmoſt ſtretch and extremity of affliction, *His bones were pierced within him in the night ſeaſon, and his ſinews took no reſt.* He had a continual Feaver, a burning heat feeding upon the vitals of his body, while his Soul was poured out upon him.

Hence Note, *The beſt of men are ſubject to the worſt extremities, both of Soul and Body.*

Job was not only afflicted, but extreamly afflicted, not only was his body ſmitten but his Soul, and not his Soul only but his body. He hath his load both upon fleſh and Spirit, both without and within; or as the Apoſtle expreſſeth it in his own caſe, (2 *Cor.* 7. 5.) *without were fightings, within were ſnares.* At the fifteenth Verſe, we read of *terrours purſuing his Soul*; and at the ſixteenth (he ſaith) *his Soul was poured out upon him, affliction dayes took hold of him*; in the ſeventeenth Verſe, *His bones were pierced in the night ſeaſon, and his ſinews took no reſt.* What could be added (and doubtleſs if Satan had known of any thing, he would have added it) to make him yet more miſerable! There was but one thing more (and that Satan could not add) the wrath of God mingled with his ſufferings, which might have added to his miſery, and yet he had a ſhare, as to preſent apprehenſions, of that alſo. Now, *when pains of body, and terrours of ſoul meet together, then 'tis full ſea with affliction; then 'tis an affliction day indeed.* Though the body be extreamly afflicted and pained, yet if the Soul be free; if there be no darts of darkneſs ſticking there, a man may bear up with it, and abide it; as *Solomon* tells us, (*Pro.* 18.4.) *The ſpirit of a man will ſuſtain his Infirmities*; that is, the ſickneſſes and weakneſſes, the pains and troubles which fall upon his outward man. Though a man have many ſores and ſorrows upon his fleſh, yet he may be born up by the ſtrength of his ſpirit under them all. For though I like not at all thoſe vain opinions of ſome Ancient Philoſophers, who held and pretended to maintain, That the pains of the body were nothing to the Soul, or that the Soul was not at all afflicted with or concern'd in them; yet this is a noble ſolid truth, that the Soul being ſerene and free, will, to admiration, ſupport the body, with a patient and inſuperable reſolution, under the greateſt bodyly pains and preſſures. And if a man having his ſpirit wounded, hath yet his body and worldly eſtate untoucht, this is ſome kind of eaſe or relief to him, though (I confeſs) a very ſmall one; but when the mind is troubled, and the body diſeaſed, when at once the Spirit of a man is wounded, and all outward comforts ſcatter'd, who can tell the ſadneſs of that mans condition! yet as all theſe evils poſſibly may, ſo they often actually have met and center'd in the ſame man, and he worthily reckoned among the beſt of men.

Let *them* therefore conſider the goodneſs of God, who though they have affliction-days of many kinds, yet have not affliction days of both or of all kinds: As few have ever attained *Jobs* graces, ſo few have ever felt *Jobs* tryalls, either as to kind and number, or as to degree and meaſure at the ſame time. It may be your bodys are ſickly and pained, but are you made a heap of bones? are your bones pierced? are your ſinews reſtleſs? or if your affliction pierceth to the bones, yet are your ſpirits wounded? is the peace of your Souls broken? if you have quietneſs there, and all be well within, you are within a little of well. 'Tis ſparing mercy when our afflicton days leave ſomewhat whole and untoucht, but 'tis great mercy when in affliction days our beſt part, our Soul is left whole and untoucht; 'Tis ſparing mercy when all ſorts of ſorrowful evils come not at once, or all together, eſpecially when (though we have many, yet) we are altogether freed from the evils of inward terror, and of a troubled conſcience, which are worſt of all.

VERS. 18, 19, 20.

By the great force of my diſeaſe, is my garment changed: it bindeth me about as the collar of my coat.

He hath caſt me into the mire, and I am become like duſt and aſhes.

I cry unto thee, and thou doeſt not hear me: I ſtand up, and thou regardeſt me not.

IN the former verſe *Job* ſhewed both the extremity and unceſſantneſs of his ſickneſs? *His bones were pierced in the night ſeaſon, and his ſinews took no reſt.* In this 18. and in the 19. Verſe, he further proſecutes the ſame ſad argument, adding that in the 20. which made it yet more ſad, the remedileſneſs of it. *I cry unto thee, and thou doeſt not hear me: I ſtand up, and thou regardeſt me not.* I am left forlorn to ſink or ſwim, it boots me not to call for help, for I find none, I am neither heard nor helped.

Verſ. 18. **By the great force of my diſeaſe, is my garment changed: it bindeth me about as the collar of my Coat.**

Thoſe words **my diſeaſe**, are not expreſt in the Hebrew, and therefore the text hath a twofold rendring by way of ſupply.

Firſt, Some referring it unto God, read the Text thus; *By the greatneſs of the force or power* (that is, of God in afflicting me) *is my garment changed*; And 'tis a truth, that although God afflicteth his own people in meaſure, and doth not ſuffer his whole diſpleaſure to ariſe againſt them, yet he puts forth force and power in the afflicting of his own people, as well as in deſtroying of the wicked, or his utter enemies.

Ob magnitudinem virium ſc. *Dei, quas nimirum exerit in me flagellando.* Piſc.

But ſecondly, we and ſeveral others, (referring this effect to his diſeaſe, which alſo was from God, as *Job* acknowledged, and ſo both readings meet in one ſence) render, *by the great force of my diſeaſe, is my garment changed.* Diſeaſes are our weakneſſes, and they weaken us, yet they are of great force or power; and therefore force may well be aſcribed to them. Some diſeaſes appear but little, and work ſlowly, or lingringly; other diſeaſes riſe high, work fiercely, and appear in power, they have a power in them, an irreſiſtible power, they come, like an armed man, and then (as *Job* ſpeaks) by their great force, they make great changes. The force of a diſeaſe bears down, yea beats down the force of the body, and caſteth it firſt on the bed, and then into the grave; No man is able to ſtand before the force of diſeaſes. Mighty Gyants, even the mightieſt ſons of *Anak* have been overthrown by them, ſuch is their force; They who have been too ſtrong for all men, may quickly meet with their match, and feel a diſeaſe too ſtrong for them. *By the great force of my diſeaſe* (ſaith *Job*,)

Robur dicit vim morbi, morbus autem erat ulcus peſſimum, cujus ſanies veſtem ejus inquinabat. Druſ.

Is my garment changed,] As the diſeaſe had an effect upon his body; ſo his body had an effect upon his garment. But is it not ſtrange that *Job* under a deadly diſeaſe ſhould complain about his garment? As if a man that hath received a ſtab with a dagger, or is thruſt through the body with a ſword, ſhould think rather of the hole that is made in his coat, then of the wound which is made in his fleſh: yet thus *Job* ſpeaks, *By the great force of my diſeaſe, is my garment changed*; He doth not ſay my body is weakned and changed, or I am brought to deaths door, but, *my garment, is changed*; yet while he ſpeaks of his garment, he means more then his garment, when he ſaith, *My garment is changed,* he intends the change of his whole body which wore that garment; only to ſhew how great a change it wrought upon his body, he tells us of a change upon his very garment. As if he had ſaid, *The ſores that are upon my body run continually, and have changed not only my garment of fleſh, but the garment which covers my fleſh. O conſider in what a pickle I am, who have ſo vehement a diſeaſe broken out upon my body, that you may ſee it in my garment. Judge, I pray, what a change my poor body hath ſuffered by the change of my Garment.* And his garment might be changed in a double reſpect:

Firſt, In reſpect of the colour of it, his garment was (as it were) new died in the gore and filth that iſſued from his ulcerous Sores; it was once a pure and fair garment, but then polluted, and (as ſome give the illuſtration) *his garment had put on another garment.* His garment was covered over with that loathſome purulent matter, which was digeſted in and flowed out of thoſe biles and botches with which Satan (having obtained leave from God) *ſmote him from the ſole of his foot unto his crown,* (Chap. 2. 7.)

Ipſa veſtis mea aliam veſtem induit, dum ſc. *repletur ſanie ex ulceribus defluente.* Piſc.

Secondly, We may take theſe words not as implying a change upon his garment, but his change of garments. In which ſence the word is uſed (1 *Kings* 22. 30) where, *the King of Iſrael ſaid unto Jehoſhaphat, I will diſguiſe my ſelf and enter into the Battel*; that is, I will change my habit, or put off that royal apparel which I uſually wear as a King, and put on ſuch as ſhall not ſignifie who or what I am. A diſguiſe is moſt uſually made by change of garments; though we often change our garments, and not to diſguiſe our ſelves. Now, when *Job* ſaith, *By the great force of my diſeaſe, is my garment changed*; his meaning may be this; *My diſeaſe is ſo offenſive both to my ſelf and others, that I am forced to ſhift or change my garments often.* Change of Garments is a refreſhing to the body, but to be neceſſitated to change our garments, that we may keep our ſelves ſweet and clean is a ſign of a noyſomely diſeaſed and putrified body. Surely in this ſence *Job* had cauſe enough to ſay, *By the great force of my diſeaſe, is my garment changed.* Hence take two Cautions.

Verbum התחפש *eſt mutare habitum.* Merc.

Firſt, *Boaſt not of your bodily ſtrength or force.* There is no ſtanding before the face of a diſeaſe. As the men of *Samaria* ſaid concerning *Jehu* (2 Kings 10. 4.) *Behold two kings ſtood not before him, how then can we ſtand?* Thus any man may ſay concerning any ſtrong ſickneſs or diſeaſe, behold no King, no man of might was ever able to ſtand before it, how then can I? Let not the ſtrong man boaſt of his ſtrength; for as bodyly ſtrength is a thing of ſo low a form, that it is not worth the boaſting in, how long ſo ever it continueth in its beſt perfection, ſo it is a thing of no long continuance: Though a mans height be as the Cedars of *Lebanon*, and his ſtrength as the Oaks of *Baſhan*, yet the force of a diſeaſe will pull him down, or root him up: And as it may do ſo to any ſtrong man, ſo uſually it doth ſo to thoſe ſooneſt who truſt in or boaſt of their ſtrength.

Secondly, *Boaſt not of your garments*; Be not proud of your apparel, God can ſend you a ſore that ſhall change the colour and ſtain the beauty of them; let them who change their garments often in wantonneſs and delicacy, or for vain oſtentation; remember, and tremble while they remember, that God can make them change their garments for the very ſtench, and noyſomneſs of them; *He can give priſon-garments, inſtead of pride-garments; and ſick-bed-garments, inſtead of feaſting-garments.* As he graciouſly gives the *garments of praiſe for the ſpirit of heavineſs* to the meek and humble, (*Iſa.* 61. 3.) ſo he righteouſly gives the garment of heavineſs to thoſe who have a ſpirit of pride, or a proud ſpirit. Take heed you abuſe not your goodly coſtly cloathing and garments, as a flag of vanity, leſt you provoke the Lord to cloath you with raggs or filthy garments. When *Joſhua the High-Prieſt was cloathed with filthy garments, and ſtood before the Angel* (that is, Chriſt in the viſion, *Zech.* 3. 3.) we read in the fourth Verſe, how *He* (that is, Chriſt the Angel) *anſwered and ſpake unto thoſe that ſtood before him, ſaying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he ſaid, I have cauſed thine iniquity to paſs from thee, and I will cloath thee with change of raiment.* As Chriſt in rich mercy takes away the filthy garments of his people, both of ſin and miſery or affliction, (ſuch were thoſe with which *Joſhua* was cloathed) and gives them change of raiment, that is, pardon through his blood and righteouſneſs, as alſo outward peace and proſperity. So Chriſt in much wrath takes away the pompous garments, the purple and fine linnen, with which the wicked either men or women are cloathed, (themſelves being cloathed with wickedneſs) and gives them filthy garments; or as another Prophet ſpeaks, (*Iſa.* 3. 24.) *It comes to paſs that in ſtead of ſweet ſmell, there is a ſtench, and in ſtead of a girdle a rent, and in ſtead of well ſet hair baldneſs, and in ſtead of a ſtomacher a girding with ſackcloth, and burning in ſtead of beauty.*

The vulgar Tranſlation ſaith (as in the former Verſe) *Through the multitude of them is my garment conſumed*; That is, The multitude of lice or vermin that breed in my garment, is ſo great that my garment is changed, or conſumed, and even eaten up by them. As *Jobs* ſickneſs poſſibly brought this change of his garment upon him; ſo the ſin of many hath certainly done it; They who through pride would not ſuffer the leaſt ſpot or duſt upon their garments, have had their garments, yea and their skin too eaten up with lice. Thoſe diſeaſes are indeed full of force, which breed and bring forth theſe uncouth forces, whole Armies and ſwarms of lice and vermin (of which we have many examples in the Hiſtories of Gods ſevereſt Judgments upon the cruel perſecuters of his people, and ſuch was that upon *Herod* for his pride, *Acts* 12. 23. Thoſe diſeaſes (I ſay) are full of force, which bring forth ſuch forces) to eat up the fleſh and change the Garment. *By the great force of my diſeaſe, is my garment changed.*

In multitudine eorum conſumitur veſtimentum meum. Vulg. *Tanta eſt vermium multitudo ut non ſolum carnem comedunt, ſed veſtimenta corrodunt.* Aquin.

It bindeth me about as the collar of my coat.

Some read here alſo, *he bindeth*, &c. that is, God bindeth me about with ſores, (making me but one ſore) even as the collar of my coat bindeth my coat. We tranſlate well, *It*; that is, the diſeaſe, or the ſickneſs *binds me about, as the collar of my coat*; it girts and holds me, as a cloſe and over-cloſe collar doth the neck. *Job* alludes in this expreſſion to the frequent well known faſhion of the garments of thoſe times and places wherein he lived; which had no ſeam (ſuch was Chriſts coat, *Joh.* 19. 23.) but were one whole piece *woven from the top throughout*, only they had a collar, through which the head was put, and ſo hung looſe about the body. As the collar binds the upper part of the coat or garment; ſo it binds the neck of him that wears it. Thus *Jobs* diſeaſe bound him about, as the collar of his coat; he was ſtraitly bound by it. Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates, *as the edge of my coat girds me*; but whether the one or the other word be uſed, the ſence is the ſame; his diſeaſe ſtuck cloſe to him, and girded him in as the upper-edge, (which muſt needs be the collar) *or his coat.*

Tunicis inconſutilibus veteres Iſraelitæ utebantur undiq; clauſis præterquam infra & ſupra; erat autem supernè os anguſtum per quod induebantur tunicæ. Merc.

Hence note. *We can neither bear bodily diſeaſes and diſtempers with eaſe, nor caſt them off eaſily.*

How many are bound about with or made priſoners to a diſeaſe; ſickneſs holds us faſt, we cannot get our necks out of that collar when we will. Then

Firſt, Be thankful for health continued; health is a great bleſſing, the Prince of temporal bleſſings, though we little prize it, or give the Lord glory by ſerving him with it. They who feel pain, and are under the arreſt of ſickneſs, would give much and even ſpend (as that woman in the Goſpel did) all that they have upon Phyſicians and medicines, to get eaſe and cure; whereas they who are well and ſtrong do ſeldom (and then for the moſt part but formally) give thanks for it, or go to the expence of a due praiſe to God for it.

Secondly, Becauſe (the body being ſubject to ſo many diſeaſes and ſickneſſes) the outward man (though inſenſibly) decayeth day by day, we ſhould look after an increaſe of the inner man day by day; that as our bodies decline towards the grave, ſo our Souls may incline and grow up towards Heaven. And that when we lay down theſe earthly tabernacles in the duſt, we may do it in a fullneſs of hope to receive them again from the duſt, freed and exonerated from all thoſe ſickneſſes and diſeaſes; which now bind us about, like the collar of our coat, and (as *Job* proceeds in the report of his ſad condition) make us like duſt, before we go to the duſt.

Verſe 19. **He hath caſt me into the mire, and I am become like duſt and aſhes.**

This Verſe is the utmoſt line of mortality on this ſide death and the grave; when a living man ſticks in the mire, and looks like duſt and aſhes, we can hardly tell whether we ſhould reckon him among the living or the dead; yet to this exigence was *Job* reduc'd.

He hath caſt me into the mire.] The word which we tranſlate, **to caſt**, ſignifieth alſo *to teach*, and therefore ſome render the Text, *He* (that is, God) *hath taught me in the mire.* There is no ſtate (in this life) ſo bad wherein God cannot teach us to be better. He often makes the dunghil or mire our School, and there he inſtructs us. That's a very ſpiritual ſence. When God ſends his into the dirty and miery places of affliction, he ſends them to learn ſome leſſon or other which they would not underſtand in the fair paſtures of their proſperity. Are they ſick? he teacheth them in the mire of ſickneſs, to look after ſoul-health. Are they in the mire of poverty? he teacheth them in their poverty to look after the true riches. They are happy who learn how to cleanſe themſelves though in the mire, who get inſtruction by correction.

But rather the word (as we give it) ſignifieth, *to caſt down*, and to caſt down with ſtrength; ſo that though the other be a more ſpiritual ſence, yet this is a more proper and commodious ſenſe in this place. *He hath caſt me into the mire.* What mire? 'Tis uſual in Scripture to ſignifie any ſtate of great adverſity by mire. *David* acknowledged the goodneſs of God in his deliverance from trouble under this Notion (*Pſal.* 40. 2.) *He brought me alſo out of an horrible pit, out of the miery clay.* And under the ſame metaphor he bewails his trouble (*Pſal.* 69. 2.) *I ſink in deep mire where there is no ſtanding:* And (*Ver.* 14.) He prayeth, *Deliver me out of the mire, and let me not ſink.* Such was the mire into which *Job* was caſt. And this aggravated *Jobs* affliction, God did not only caſt mire upon him, but caſt him into the mire; and again, God did not meerly let him fall into the mire of trouble and ſickneſs, but he caſt him into it. This caſting notes, firſt, a violent act, we caſt or throw a thing out of our hands with force: Secondly, an act of diſpleaſure, when we caſt a thing upon the ground, much more when we caſt it into the dirt and mire, we do it with a kind of indignation; what we caſt from us any how is offenſive to us, much more doth that offend us, which we caſt into the mire. Yea to be caſt into the mire notes two things further.

Firſt, Pollution all over; when mire is caſt upon us, it defiles us, but to be caſt into the mire, is a total defilement.

contumelioſum & grave eſt in lutum projicere. Merc.

Secondly, Utmoſt ſhame, it is a diſgraceful thing to be caſt into the dirt, and tumbled into the mire. *Job* was in both notions caſt into the mire, he was afflicted all over, and he was revil'd both in and with his afflictions. He was double-dirted, He was dirted with poverty, and dirted with reproach; and 'tis rare that any good man who is caſt into the former dirt, that of poverty, can keep himſelf out of the latter, the dirt of reproach, we are ſure *Job* could not. And therefore when we hear him crying out, *He hath caſt me into the mire*, His meaning is, I am caſt into great and deep affliction; my worldly goods are gone, and ſo is my good name, my health is gone, and ſo is my honour, my outward proſperity is gone, and ſo is my inward peace; once I was upon a mountain, but now I am in the mire, I was wont to ſit upon the throne, but now I ſit in the duſt, or upon a dunghil; *He hath caſt me into the mire.*

Hence take notice; Firſt, *How conſtant Job was in acknowledging God as the Author of all his ſufferings; He hath caſt me*, &c.

This truth hath been touched heretofore, and therefore I only name it. We ought to own God in our throwing down as well as in our lifting up, as well caſting us into the mire, as ſetting us with Princes.

Secondly, Note; *God ſometimes declareth indignation againſt his ſervants in afflicting them.*

He caſteth his Jewels into the mire, as if they were but mire. Thoſe Cities who had rejected the preaching and miracles of Chriſt, who had caſt away the tenders of grace and mercy in the Goſpel, as a worthleſs, uſeleſs thing, are only threatned to be caſt to deſtruction, (*Matth.* 11.23.) *And thou Capernaum which are exalted unto heaven, ſhalt be brought* (thruſt or caſt) *down to hell*; thou ſhalt not only fall down to hell by thy own weight, or according to thy own natural tendency, (for indeed hell is the center of all wicked men) but thou ſhalt be brought or preſſed down with violence and fierce wrathful indignation. We have a like deſcription of the ruin of *Babylon*, (*Revel.* 18.21.) *And a mighty Angel took up a ſtone like a great mill-ſtone, and caſt it into the Sea* (This action of the Angel was emblematical, and himſelf had order to expound it) *ſaying, thus with violence ſhall that great City Babylon be thrown down, and ſhall be found no more at all.* As with violence *Babylon* ſhall be thrown down, ſo with violence doth the Lord ſometimes throw down many of the ſons of *Sion.* He throws down his *Iſraelites* as he threw down the *Egyptians*, of whom 'tis ſaid (*Exod.* 15.4.) *Pharaohs Charets and his hoſt hath he caſt into the Sea*; God threw them as a man throws a ſtone out of his hand into the Sea. And thus *Ethan* ſpeaks of the great change which God made in the ſtate of the Kingdom of *Iſrael* by *Jeroboam*, to whom ten tribes of twelve revolted, (*Pſal.* 89. 39.) *Thou haſt made void the Covenant of thy ſervant: thou haſt profaned his crown by caſting it to the ground.* Thoſe words, *by caſting it*, are not expreſt in the Original, but thoſe words, *to the ground* plainly imply as much, *thou haſt profaned his Crown to the ground.* Crowns have a kind of ſacredneſs in them, (eſpecially the Crown of *Iſrael* had) They are made and appointed to ſit upon the heads of Princes, and therefore, they are in a ſort prophaned when caſt upon the ground. God made ſuch a breach in the Kingdom of *David* in the time of *Rehoboam*, his Grand-child, as might well be called a caſting of his Crown to the ground, as if it had been a prophane thing, and as his Crown ſo his throne was caſt down, (*Ver.* 44.) *Thou haſt made his glory to ceaſe: and caſt his throne down to the ground.* Thus God dealt with the family of *David*, a man after his own heart, when the heart of his family began to depart from God, and joyn with Idols. And thus God deals with many of his Saints, he viſibly throws them, and violently throws them into the mire, and defaceth all their earthly glory.

Thirdly, Note; *There is no ſuffering condition ſo low and ſordid, but God ſometimes caſts his choiceſt ſervants into it.*

He caſts them not only into affliction, but into the dirt of affliction. The Church of God may lye among the pots, as that ſuppoſition of the Pſalmiſt intimates, (*Pſal.* 68. 13.) *Though ye have lien among the pots, yet ſhall ye be as the wings of a Dove covered with Silver, and her feathers with yellow Gold.* Indeed the Church of God hath more then once lien among the pots, and lookt like a very ſcullion in the chimny corner among the aſhes. *Jeremiah* was a faithful and a precious Prophet, yet God ſuffered him to be caſt, or caſt him into the mire literally, (*Jer.* 38. 6.) *They took Jeremiah and caſt him into the dungeon of Malchiah the ſon of Hammelech that was in the Court of the Priſon: and they let down Jeremiah with cords: and in the dungeon there was no water, but mire: ſo Jeremiah ſunk in the mire.* As *Jeremiah* ſtuck in the literal mire, ſo have ſome other precious Saints; but as for the mire in a figure (of which this Text and poynt ſpeak) who can tell how many of them have been caſt into it? God lets his people ſink into any mire but the mire of ſin; of which the Apoſtle ſpeaks (2 *Pet.* 2. 2.) And while God keeps us out of that mire, we may well bear it, whatſoever mire he caſts us into. Sin is the worſt mire, much worſe then mire. The wicked caſt themſelves into the mire of ſin like ſwine, they love to do it, and God in judgment leaves them there for ever; and he often caſts (though he never leaves any Saint) the beſt of Saints into the worſt mire of afflictions. A *Job* may have cauſe to ſay, He hath *caſt me into the mire*,

And I am become like duſt and aſhes.

That is, ſuch is my preſent condition: I who was beautiful as the light, and ſhining as the Sun, am now become like duſt and aſhes, that is, I am brought as low and made as vile to the eye of man as vile can be; I may be compared to duſt and aſhes. 'Tis ſaid (*Pſal.* 49.20.) *Man that is in honour and underſtandeth not, is like the beaſts that periſh*; That is, he may be compared to the beaſts that periſh. The Apoſtle ſpeaks alſo in that form, (*Rom.* 9.29.) *Except the Lord of Sabbath had left us a ſeed, we had been as Sodom, and been made like unto Gomorrha*; That is, our condition and theirs compared together had been much alike; ſo here, *I am become like duſt and aſhes*; That is, I am ſuch for a man as duſt or aſhes are unto men, a thing of lighteſt eſtimation. When *Abraham* would teſtifie before the Lord how little he was in his own opinion, he thus expreſſeth himſelf, (*Gen.* 18.27.) *Behold now I have taken upon me to ſpeak unto the Lord which am but duſt and aſhes.* And when 'tis ſaid of God (*Pſal.* 103.14.) *He remembreth that we are duſt*; the meaning is, he remembreth how poor and frail our original is. And therefore when *Job* ſaith, *I am become like duſt and aſhes*, his ſence of himſelf was this, I am reduced to the meaneſt eſtate that is incident to man; I was once duſt, and ſo I ſeem to be now, I can be but aſhes, and ſuch I am already in appearance. *I am become* (and in what likeneſs can I be more uncomely?) *like duſt and aſhes.*

Hence Obſerve; Firſt, *Great afflictions and troubles ſhew us what we are, and even make us what we were, and ſhall be.*

We are but duſt and aſhes at beſt, yet it doth not appear to us that we are ſo when we are at our beſt, but when extream afflictions and ſickneſſes bring us to the borders of death, and we are ready to drop into the grave, then we begin to think that we are what we are, duſt and aſhes; man will ſcarce be perſwaded that he is duſt, until he is ready to go to the duſt. As the Apoſtle ſaith in another caſe, (1 *Joh.* 3.2.) *Beloved, now are we the ſons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we ſhall be. But we know, that when he ſhall appear, we ſhall be like him; for we ſhall ſee him as he is.* The ſons of God do not yet know what their own ſonſhip is, as to all the priviledges and excellencies of it, nor ſhall they fully know it until they come to Heaven, which is our full enjoyment of thoſe excellencies and priviledges. Now as Saints know little of their future happineſs till they enjoy it; ſo we know little of our preſent frailty till we feel it; we are now duſt and aſhes, yet it doth ſcarce appear to us that we are ſo, till ſome great changes are upon us, till ſome ſickneſs take hold of us, and then we begin to bethink our ſelves how frail we are, or to think that we are but duſt and aſhes, *David* could ſay, (*Pſal.* 39. 5.) *Behold, thou haſt made my dayes as an hand-breadth, and mine age is as nothing*

thing before thee: verily every man at his beſt eſtate is altogether vanity, Selah. Man is vanity, that's a truth, (and the truth of *Jobs* Text,) yea every man in his beſt eſtate, in his glory, beauty, and ſtrength, in his riches, dignity and power, when he is aſcended to and ſeated upon the higheſt throne of honour attainable in this world, is even then but vanity, duſt and aſhes; but he is not convinced of this, until he is taught it by afflictions and humbling providences. *'Tis ſeldom that a man in his beſt eſtate, ſeeth the worſt of his eſtate; that he is altogether vanity, duſt and aſhes.* Man was firſt formed out of the duſt, by the creating hand of God, and the afflicting hand of God turns him (as it were) back again into the duſt, yea into duſt. When man is at his worſt iſſue, he is no worſe then he was in his original, duſt. That which ſickneſs did to *Job*, death will ſhortly do and more to us all, we ſhall become duſt and aſhes. Sickneſs makes us like duſt and aſhes, but death makes us duſt and aſhes; death is not far from diſeaſes, nor a grave from a ſick-bed. The Papiſts have a day according to their blind devotion (and it hath been known among us) which they call *the day of aſhes*, or *Aſh-wedneſday*. *'Tis ſuperſtition to keep a day of aſhes, or an Aſh-wedneſday*, but 'tis a good piece of ſound religion every day to remember that we are but duſt and aſhes; 'Tis our wiſdom to conſider that willingly in our ſtrength and health, which a little ſickneſs and weakneſs will bring us to, whether we will or no. The beſt of Saints are, in their own opinion but duſt and aſhes, when 'tis beſt with them in the world, eſpecially then, when they draw near to and converſe with God; and the greateſt of men might ſee themſelves duſt and aſhes, would they but a while lay down the thoughts of their worldly greatneſs, and in their thoughts converſe with death. *I am become like duſt and aſhes.*

Job was in his own apprehenſion as if he had indeed been reſolved into his firſt principle duſt, even the duſt of death; yet *Job* was renewed and reſtored, as the event proved afterwards, comparing that even with his then preſent ſtate and opinion of himſelf.

Note; *We can never be brought ſo low by any affliction or diſeaſe, but God can bring us up again.*

Who can be lower then duſt and aſhes; there's little probability, and therefore ſcarce any hope of a reſtauration when once we are brought thus low; yet though *Job* was thus low brought, he was reſtored; though he gave himſelf up for a dead man, and judged his bones as ſcattered upon the graves mouth; yet God raiſed him up again. *Hannah* in her ſong was full of ſuch a faith, (1 *Sam.* 2. 8.) *He raiſeth up the poor out of the duſt, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghil, to ſet them among Princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory: for the pillars of the earth are the Lords, and he hath ſet the world upon them*; as it is thus in regard of our civil ſtate, God raiſeth us, when we are in the duſt, and upon the dunghil, ſo in regard of our natural, when man is duſt and aſhes, ready to be ſhovel'd into the grave, God raiſeth him up. The Lord killeth and maketh alive; he enlivens thoſe who are numbred among the dead. The ſtate of the *Jews* in captivity was like a ſtate of death, therefore the Prophet (*Ezek.* 37.) is brought into a valley where he had a viſion of dry bones, and it was asked him, Can theſe dry bones live? *Lord thou knoweſt*, (ſaid he.) Though that people were in their captivity as dry bones, God raiſed them up again; *Thus ſaith the Lord God unto theſe bones, behold I will cauſe breath to enter into you, and ye ſhall live: and I will lay ſinews upon you, and will bring up fleſh upon you, and cover you with skin*, &c. *So I propheſied as I was commanded, and as I propheſied there was a noiſe, and behold a ſhaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone; and when I beheld, lo the ſinews and the fleſh came upon them, and the skin covered them above*, &c. *So I propheſied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived and ſtood up upon their feet an exceeding great Army.* How eaſily can God command a reſurrection from affliction, who can command it from the grave! And therefore he by a reſurrection from the grave, repreſented to *Ezekiel*, the reſurrection of his people *Iſrael* from their affliction. *Both or all things are alike eaſie to him, to whom nothing is hard.* The natural, civil, and ſpiritual death, are in the hand of the living, the ever-living God.

Here we have ſeen *Jobs* afflictions, which look't like death; in the next verſe *Job* ſpeaks of an affliction more grievous then death, and that was, God ſeemed to turn a deaf ear upon him.

Verſ. 20. **I cry unto thee, and thou doſt not hear me: I ſtand up, and thou regardeſt me not.**

I cry;] That is, I pray, and I pray earneſtly, I even ſhout in prayer; I pray with utmoſt intention, fervency, yea vehemency of Spirit; to *cry* is more then barely to pray; every godly man prayeth, who doth but humbly, ſincerely and feelingly manifeſt his deſires unto God in faith through Jeſus Chriſt. But he that cryes doth more then manifeſt his deſires, he deſires and would not be delayed, will not be denied. The importance of this word, hath been opened before (*Chap.* 16. 18. *Chap.* 27. 9.) and therefore I ſhall not further inſiſt upon it here. When *Job* was become like duſt and aſhes, when he was caſt into the mire, what then? (ſaith he) *I cry unto thee.*

Hence obſerve; *There is no ſtate ſo low, but a godly man may have a freedom with God in prayer.*

Though a poor Soul be in the mire, though he be but duſt and aſhes, yet he hath acceſs to the throne of Grace. *Jonah cried unto God out of the belly of hell*, (Chap. 2. 2.) That is, (as 'tis ſaid, *Ver.* 1.) *out of the fiſhes belly*, which was to *Jonah* as a hell or grave, (*Sheol* is indifferent to both) for there *Jonah* lay not only buryed as the dead are in a grave, but tormented and troubled in ſpirit, as the damned are in hell. And certainly could we ſuppoſe a godly man thrown really into hell, he would pray there; let his condition be what it will, he will pray; prayer is the language and breath of the new creature, and therefore let him be what and where he can be, he will be praying; the new creature muſt work out its ſelf in the manifeſtation of holy deſires and prayers.

Secondly, Conſidering *Job* in this his low condition praying,

Note; *It is our duty to pray moſt, and uſually we pray beſt, when 'tis worſt with us; when we are nigh the mire and duſt, prayer is not only moſt ſeaſonable, but moſt pure.*

Yea God expects prayer moſt when we are moſt afflicted, and therefore ſaith the Scripture, *Is any man afflicted? let him pray.* Are you in the mire? then pray. Are you in duſt and aſhes? that's not only *a time, but The time of prayer.*

Thirdly, *Job* in that condition did not only pray, but cry.

Hence obſerve; *Affliction provokes a Soul to pray to the utmoſt, to pray not only in ſincerity, but with fervency, not only to pray with faith, but with a holy paſſion, or paſſionately.*

When we cry, our paſſions come forth, at our eyes, at our hands, at our mouths; we cry in weeping, and cry out in ſpeaking. It is ſaid of that afflicted woman (*Matth.* 15. 22.) *Behold a woman of Canaan came out of the ſame coaſts, and cried unto him, ſaying, have mercy on me, O Lord, thou ſon of David, my daughter is grievouſly vexed with a devil.* She came crying with a full mouth, as if ſhe would aſſault Chriſt by prayer; it is a cuſtom at the onſet of a battel, for Armies to fall on and charge with a ſhout, with a cry; and 'tis noted that ſome Armies have prevailed more with their cryes then with their ſwords, more with their tongues and voyces, then with their hands and blows. Thus the cry, the ſhout, which the Soul makes in prayer, doth more ſometimes with God, then the matter of prayer; And therefore this was a great temptation to *Job*, and he ſpeaks of it, as of a ſtrange and unuſual thing with God, not to give audience, when the Soul is in ſuch an exigence. *I cry unto thee, And thou doeſt not hear*, &c.

Hence note; *When prayer is ſent out with a cry to God in affliction, it is a wonder if it be not preſently heard.*

As I ſhewed before that *Jonah* (Chap. 2. 2.) prayed in the belly of Hell, ſo if we look upon that Scripture again, we ſhall find, that he praying with a cry was quickly anſwered and prevailed mightily with God; *I cryed by reaſon of my affliction unto the Lord, and he heard me, out of the belly of Hell cryed I; and thou heardeſt my voice*; that the Lord heard him, is as often repeated as that he cryed unto the Lord; as if the Spirit of God would teach us, that crying prayer ſhall not miſs a hearing. So *David* concludes and reckons upon it, (*Pſal.* 55. 17.) *Evening and Morning, and at Noon, will I pray and cry aloud, and he ſhall hear my voice.* Mark, he doth not ſay barely, I will pray, Evening, Morning, and Noon, thrice a day, that is, very often every day, but he adds, *and cry aloud*, and what will this loud cry obtain? A hearing without doubt, ſo he aſſures himſelf; *He ſhall hear me. David* ſpeaks as if ſuch prayer did lay a command or put a force upon God himſelf; *He ſhall hear me*; not that God hears any prayer whether he will or no (as men ſometimes do that upon importunity which they have no mind to) but he hath no will, no mind not to hear ſuch prayers, the prayers of thoſe who cry aloud to him. As affliction puts the Soul upon crying, (want cannot bluſh, pinching neceſſity knows not the Laws of modeſty, we commonly ſay, *Neceſſity hath no Law*, it cryes, and ſhouts, and wreſtles, and tugs, it will take no denial, nor will it take notice that we are denied, but almoſt quite forgetting good manners, or uſing no more then will do us good, it will thruſt even upon God himſelf, and cry out to him too. Now as affliction puts us upon crying to God) ſo crying puts God upon doing for us. (*Luke* 18. 7.) *Shall not God avenge his elect that cry unto him night and day!* Shall he not! Chriſt ſpeaks of it as of a thing which God cannot but do in honour, as well as truth in faithfulneſs. Shall not God! Sounds thus high, God certainly will, and ſo 'tis expounded (*Ver.* 8.) *I tell you that he will avenge them ſpeedily.* That of the Apoſtle (*Rom.* 8. 32.) carries the ſame commanding ſence with it; *He that ſpared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how ſhall he not with him alſo freely give us all things elſe?* What good thing, that is good for us, can God ſtick at to give us, who did not ſtick at that good, that beſt gift *his own Son*! So when God hath given a Believer not only the grace and Spirit of prayer, but a gracious fervency and importunity of Spirit in prayer, ſo that he cryeth night and day to him, how ſhall he not give him that which he prayeth for. Winged prayers have uſually winged anſwers, they are anſwered ſpeedily; though prayer, as prayer put up ſincerely in the Name of Chriſt with faith ſhall not be unanſwered, yet the vehemency and ardency of our Spirits in prayer prevails moſt for a ſuddain anſwer. Such a prayer like an Arrow drawn to the head with a ſtrong arm, flyes ſwiftly and effectually. The Apoſtle *James* gives us this aſſurance (*Chap.* 5. 16.) *Confeſs your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed: The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.* In-wrought prayer, or prayer that hath a Spirit in it. carrieth all before it: The word is applyed to thoſe that are poſſeſt with an evil Spirit; and we read in the Goſpel how violently ſuch men are acted (*Mark.* 5. 3, 4.) Surely that prayer which is acted by the holy Spirit, nothing can bind or hold from prevailing. (*Pſal.* 34. 5.) *They looked unto him and were lightned: And their faces were not aſhamed. This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him and ſaved him out of all his trouble.* The Lord heard him when he cried; and when did he cry? When he was poor, or diſtreſſed; ordinary prayer would not ſerve his turn then; and then he had more then an ordinary hearing. But though *Job* (poor man!) cried in his affliction, yet (which even amazed him) *he was not heard, I cry unto thee, but thou doeſt not hear me.* We are not to underſtand it as if God did not hear at all, or not take in the ſence of what he prayed: As God hears whoſoever ſpeaks, and whatſoever is ſpoken all the World over, ſo he heareth our loweſt whiſpers as much as our loudeſt cryes; yea he hears the language of our hearts; what we think is as evident and audible to God, as what we ſpeak; therefore when *Job* ſaith, *Thou doeſt not hear*; His meaning is, thou doeſt not anſwer, nor give me in the mercy, the relief, for which I cry unto thee. Thus *Job* cried to God and was not heard, and ſo have many others

But ſome may ſay, how can we reconcile this to the tenderneſs and mercifulneſs of God, whoſe very nature is goodneſs, and who is moſt free and ready to do good? Again, how can we reconcile this to thoſe many promiſes of God in Scripture concerning the hearing of prayer? Hath he not ſaid, *Call upon me, and I will deliver; ſeek and you ſhall find, ask and it ſhall be given, knock and it ſhall be opened unto you?* How are theſe promiſes true, if we (as *Job* here) cry unto God, and he doth not hear us?

I anſwer, The Lord makes good his word of promiſe, and acts according to his own Nature, which is infinitely good, yet this doth not always appear ſo to us; the prayer of faith is alwayes heard and anſwered, but the anſwer and goodneſs of God to us in it, is not alwayes reported and diſcovered to us. God certainly hears what we ſpeak, but we many times do not hear what he ſpeaks, though he ſpeak peace to us. God alwayes hears the prayer of faith and anſwers it, but we do not always hear what the anſwer is. It is ſaid expreſly (1 *John* 5. 14. 15.) *And this is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us. And if we know that he hear us whatſoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we deſired of him.* Tis a Holy Scriptural confidence that God will hear us when we pray, and therefore every Believer may confident that he is heard. God makes ſome *defers*, though, properly, he makes no *delayes*, much leſs gives any flat denials to the prayer of faith. There is a wide difference between the deferring of an anſwer and the delaying of it, much more between that and the denial of it; that is a delay of help when help comes not in due time and ſeaſon, or when it comes too late. God never faileth to give help in the moſt needful ſeaſon, though he often defers to give it at our ſeaſon. In the Mount he will be ſeen, (*Gen.* 22. 14.) Thus God alwayes heareth the cry of his People, yet *Job* ſaid true, when he complained, *I cryed unto thee, and thou doeſt not hear me.*

Hence Note, Firſt, *Not to be heard in a day of trouble and affliction, is more troubleſome to a gracious heart then all his afflictions.*

When *Job* had ſaid, *He hath caſt me into the mire, and I am become like duſt and aſhes*, then he adds in the laſt place as the complement of all his ſufferings, *I cry unto thee, and thou heareſt me not*; as if this were worſe then all the reſt, worſe then his ſoars, worſe then the mire, duſt and aſhes. When any poor Soul, like the poor Woman ſpoken of (*Matth.* 15. 22.) ſhall cry to Chriſt, *Thou Son of* David *have mercy on me*; and he (as the Evangeliſt ſaith, *Verſ.* 23. in that Womans caſe) *anſwer him not a word*; how doth this ſtrike him to the very heart, and under what a temptation is ſuch a poor Soul, think you? Yea, how many temptations fall upon his Spirit, think you, in ſuch a caſe? Is he not ready to ſay in his heart; *Is that true which I have ſo often heard, that God is the God hearing prayer? Is that true which is told us in his word for a truth, that he is rich unto all that call upon him? How can this be, when after ſo many cryes and calls, he anſwers me not a word? He hath ſaid that we ſhall not ſeek him in vain, and yet I can get nothing from him when I ſeek him. In ſuch a ſtreſs Nature will quickly reſolve, ſeeing he will not be found of me nor anſwer me, I will not ſeek to nor call upon him any more, come what will come, I will come no more at him, who is liberal of his promiſes, but fails in his performances.* This is a ſore temptation, ſuch a temptation as a formaliſt cannot bear up againſt. Only the Soul of a ſound Believer, hopes for an anſwer when he hears none; and will not forſake, nor turn away from prayer, though he ſee no return of it, yea though God ſeems to turn away his prayer. Though to appearance God ſhould ſhrink from his promiſe, yet he will not ſhrink from his duty; indeed God ſhrinks not at all from his promiſe, *Heaven and Earth ſhall paſs away, but not a tittle of his word ſhall paſs.*

I grant there are many prayers that God heareth not at all, (*Prov.* 1. 28.) *Then ſhall they call upon me, but I will not anſwer, they ſhall ſeek me early, but ſhall not find me.* And *we know* (as the blind man ſaid, *John* 9. 31.) *that God heareth not ſinners, but if any man be a worſhipper of God, and doth his will, him he heareth. If I regard iniquity in my heart,* (ſaid *David*, Pſal. 66. 18.) *the Lord will not hear me.* While a Saint acts like a wicked man, he ſhall be dealt with accordingly; how ſhall God hear their requeſts, who do not hearken to his commands! God will not hear a Saints prayer, unleſs he live like a Saint, and he will not fail to hear him, as *David* found in that *Pſalm.* (*Verſ.* 19, 20.) *But verily God hath heard me; he hath attended to the voice of my prayer; bleſſed be God, who hath not turned away my prayer, nor his mercy from me.* Godly men are ever anſwered in effect, though not alwayes in kind. And wicked men are rarely anſwered in kind, but never in effect. Whatſoever they ask, they ask that they may conſume it upon their luſts, and therefore *they ask and receive not,* (*James* 4. 3.) And if a godly man ask (as poſſibly he may) for ſomewhat to lay out and conſume upon his luſt, he alſo ſhall ask and not receive. A godly man (in temptation) may pray as a wicked man doth, and then God will no more hear him he then doth a wicked man. And he often defers to hear the prayer of a godly man when he prayeth in the moſt holy and Spiritual manner, and he doth ſo for many reaſons, I ſhall name only two. Firſt, To exerciſe his graces, his faith and patience. Secondly, To draw out more of the Spirit of prayer from him, or that he may pray more. God doth not ſtop anſwering prayer, to the intent that Saints ſhould ſtop praying, but to the end they ſhould renew prayer. *I cry unto thee, and thou heareſt me not.* He was ſtill crying, though God as to his apprehenſion was not hearing.

Job thought he was not heard, becauſe he had not preſent deliverance; and in that ſenſe indeed he was not heard; and thus many of the Saints may pray and not be heard; that is, they may pray and not have preſent deliverance.

But how may we know that we are heard at any time, eſpecially then when we have not preſent deliverance?

I anſwer it in four things,

Firſt, By the quietneſs of our Spirits; 'Tis a ſign prayer is anſwered when we are ſatisfied, though the thing be not given in which we prayed for. *Hannah* having poured out her Soul before the Lord, *went her way and did eat, and her countenance was no more ſad,* (1 Sam. 1. 18.) The Text ſaith nothing of the anſwer of her prayer at that time. But the peace and ſatisfaction which ſhe had in her own Spirit about it, was an argument that the thing was granted, as indeed it was.

Secondly, Though we receive not the mercy preſently, yet if we receive freſh ſtrength to bear the want of it, that's an anſwer; ſo *Paul* was anſwered, God did not remove the meſſenger of Satan from him, but he ſaid; *My grace is ſufficient for thee, and my ſtrength is made perfect in weakneſs,* though I remove not the evil, yet my power ſhall ſupport thee under it.

Thirdly, We are anſwered; when though the evil be not removed, yet we have faith and patience to wait and tarry the Lords leiſure for the removal of it. When patience hath *a perfect work* (either in expecting or ſuffering) *we are perfect and entire, wanting nothing,* though we have not what we want, *Jam.* 1. 4.

Laſtly, He is *anſwered in prayer that is more Heavenly, or more in Heaven after prayer.* He that is edified in his holy faith, hath certainly prayed in the Holy Ghoſt, (*Jude Ver.* 20.) and ſure enough, every ſuch prayer is heard.

> Secondly, Note, *Godly men are alwayes heard of God, yet they often think they are not heard. I cry unto thee, but thou doſt not hear me.*

It was ſo with Jeſus Chriſt himſelf, (*Pſal.* 22. 2.) He cryed, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me! Why art thou ſo far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring? O my God I cry in the day time, but thou heareſt not; and in the night ſeaſon, and am not ſilent.* 'Tis a ground of much comfort to remember, that as Chriſt bore other kind of afflictions for us, ſo that affliction alſo, not to be heard, when he prayed; even Chriſt was not heard as to ſenſe and preſent apprehenſion as he was man; Chriſt indured not only ſorrow and death for us, but a denial of deliverance from death, and of ſenſible comforts under the ſorrows of death, and that ſhould bear us up, that as Chriſt endured and overcame other temptations in our ſtead, ſo this alſo that his father turned a deaf ear to him, when he cryed.

Chriſtus hanc carnis noſtræ deſperationem, qua exiſtimamus nos, in malis non exaudiri, in ſuo humero ut & alios humanos morbos tranſtulit, ut eam vinceret, & ut nos in eo vinceremus. Brent.

Further, it ſeems *Job* uſed to be heard, elſe he had not taken notice of his not being heard; *I cry unto thee, and thou doeſt not hear me.*

> Hence Note, *A godly man hath this priviledge, to be heard in prayer.*

As we ſay of the Favourite of a great Prince, ſo we may of him, He hath the ear of the King, the ear of God.

> Again Note, *It is very grievous to thoſe that have had the ear of God not to have it, or for them that uſe to be heard not to be heard.*

A man that hath had the ear of great Prince, if he ſhould be ſhut out from him, it would cut him to the heart, if not kill him; for a ſtranger that never had any thing to do with him, to be denied Audience, 'tis no great matter. *The loſs of any priviledge afflicts more then never to have had it.*

I ſtand up, and thou regardeſt me not.

To ſtand up is a poſture of the body, which ſignifies in Scripture;

Firſt, Only the preſence of a man where he is; (*Math.* 16. 28.) *Verily I ſay unto you, there be ſome ſtanding* (that is preſent) *here, which ſhall not taſt of death, till they ſee the Son of man coming in his Kingdom.* Thus (*John* 1. 26.) John *anſwered them, ſaying, I Baptize with water, but there ſtandeth one among you whom ye know not.* And again, (*John* 18. 18.) Peter *ſtood with them* (he was among them at the fire) *and warmed himſelf.*

Secondly, To ſtand notes the upright poſture of a man, as oppoſed to ſtooping, kneeling and lying, (*Kings* 8. 22.) *And* Solomon *ſtood* (he did not kneel in his prayer, which is the moſt uſual praying poſture, but *ſtood*) *before the Altar of the Lord in the preſence of the Congregation of* Iſrael, *and ſpread his hands toward Heaven.*

Thirdly, Standing ſignifies the readineſs of a man to act or ſpeak. He that hath a mind to ſpeak ſtands up, (*Luke* 19. 8.) *And* Zacheus *ſtood, and ſaid unto the Lord, Behold the half of my goods I give to the poor.* When *Joſhua the High Prieſt was ſtanding before the Lord* (ready to pray for the people) *Satan was ſtanding at his right hand* (ſhewing his readineſs) *to reſiſt him,* Zech. 3. 1.

Fourthly, To ſtand up, notes conſtancy and perſeverance, (Phil. 4. 1.) *Therefore my Brethren, dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, ſo ſtand faſt in the Lord my dearly beloved,* (Coloſſ. 4. 12.) Epaphras *who is one of you, a ſervant of Chriſt, ſaluteth you, alwayes labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may ſtand* (that is, continue) *perfect, and compleat in all the will of God* (1 Theſ. 3. 8.) *For now we live, if ye ſtand faſt in the Lord.* The word which we render *ſtand faſt* in two of theſe Text, is only *ſtand* in the Greek; he that doth not ſtand faſt, can hardly be ſaid to ſtand; and he that *ſtandeth faſt in the Lord,* perſevereth or is conſtant in the faith and profeſſion of the Lord.

When *Job* ſaith, *I ſtand up,* what doth this geſture intimate? Surely his conſtancy and perſeverance in prayer, ſtanding is ſo much a prayer-geſture, that it is ſometimes put for prayer, (*Jere.* 15. 1.) *Though* Moſes *and* Samuel *ſtood before me;* That is, prayed and made interceſſion before me for this People; yet my mind could not be towards them. But as ſtanding notes prayer, ſo more then bare prayer, even much inſtancy and continuance in prayer, as alſo waiting for an anſwer to prayer. Thus we are to take it here; and ſo ſome Tranſlate the Text, I hold on or perſevere, but thou regardeſt not, or thou regardeſt me not, though I am ſtill urging and importuning thee by prayer.

In clamore intentio eſt orantis, in ſtando perſeverantia & indeclinabilis fiducia. Philip. *Perſeverantem minime curas.* Tygur.

Hence Note, *True Believers will not only pray earneſtly, but perſeveringly; not only cry, but ſtand before God, and abide by it.*

Suppoſe they get nothing at preſent, yet they will not be put off, nor diſcouraged, but ſtand to it; fervency in prayer is good, but perſeverance is better.

Further, When *Job* ſaith, *I ſtand up*, we may conſider him in the poſture of a ſervant, ready to receive commiſſion or command from his Maſter, whither to go, and what to do. As if *Job* had ſaid, When I have prayed for mercy at the hand of God, I ſtand up to expect his orders for direction in matter of duty. It is an excellent frame of Spirit, when we have cryed to God to do for us, then to ſtand waiting what God would have us do. Some will pray to receive favours from him, who yet are unwilling to receive commands from him. They cry out for relief, but they care not to obey; or they would have God do their will, but they have no will to do his. *I ſtand up.*

And thou regardeſt me not.] Thou ſeeſt me not, or takeſt no notice of me, if a man when we come before him, will not ſo much as look upon us, what can be a greater diſreſpect? As *the Lord heard the cry of the Children of* Iſrael *by reaſon of their Task-Maſters*, ſo he ſaith, *I have ſurely ſeen the affliction of my People, which are in* Egypt, (Exod. 3.7, 9.) That is, I have fully conſidered their oppreſſions, and have a due regard unto their perſons. *David* begs ſuch a look of God, (*Pſal.* 25. 18.) *Look upon mine affliction, and my pain, and forgive all my ſins. Hagar* perceived and was very ſenſible that ſhe had it, (*Gen.* 16. 13, 14.) *And ſhe called the Name of the Lord that ſpake unto her, Thou God ſeeſt me: For ſhe ſaid, have I alſo here looked after him that ſeeth me: Wherefore the Well was called* Beer-lahai-roi, *behold it is between* Kadeſh, *and* Bered. It will be our perfect happineſs in the next life to have a ſight of God, and it is a high priviledge in this life to be ſeen of God. God (I grant) ſeeth all men, and to be ſeen only ſo as all men are ſeen cannot be a priviledge to any man. But when *Hagar* put ſuch a remark both upon God who ſaw her, and upon the place where he ſaw her, purely in reference to his ſeeing of her, doubtleſs ſhe intended more then common ſeeing, or ſuch a ſight as God beſtows upon, and indeed (becauſe he is all eye-all, ſight) is common to all men. So that when *Hagar* ſaid, *Thou God ſeeſt me*, her meaning is, God did that for her which *Job* complains he did not for him; *He regarded her.* This ſight of God, or ſuch a look from him, is a high, a ſignal favour. The ſight of God is operative and influential upon man. As the Lords not ſeeing or not taking notice of wicked men, is their undoing, and he ſends them to Hell, and utter damnation, with this killing word, *Depart from me, I know you not*; ſo when God takes notice of his, 'tis as the doing of all for them, and when he gives them any intimation of his regard to them, 'tis life and peace to them, yea 'tis Heaven and Salvation to them. Conſider then how ſad it was with *Job*, who ſaith to God, *Thou regardeſt me not*, that is, I have no preſent teſtimony of any favour from thee, or acceptance with thee.

But may ſome ſay, is it not very ſinful for any godly man to ſay thus to God, *I cry unto thee, and thou doeſt not hear me, I ſtand up and thou regardeſt me not?* Is not this to charge God fooliſhly, yea to charge him falſly? Whom doth God regard, if he regard not the godly? And whoſe cry will he hear, if he hear not theirs?

I anſwer, Theſe are not the words, nor is this the ſpeech of one that accuſeth God as unfaithful to his word of promiſe, but they are the words of one, that (ſomewhat over-boldly indeed) expoſtulates with God for putting off, or deferring the performance of his word or promiſe. Saints often expoſtulate or reaſon their caſe with God, why he doth not hear their prayers, nor give them a token for good that he regards their perſons, but they never accuſe God, nor ſay directly, we pray and God doth not at all regard. To ſay ſo were to charge God fooliſhly and falſly.

To conclude, Some read this laſt clauſe without a negation, *I ſtand up and thou regardeſt or markeſt me*; and in the Hebrew there is none, as the different letter in which the Negative particle, *not*, is Printed in our Bibles, doth plainly inform the Reader. So that we aſſume the Negative out of the former part; the Original is only thus, *I cry unto thee, and thou doeſt not hear me, I ſtand up, and thou regardeſt, or markeſt me.* Thus Mr. *Broughton* gives his Tranſlation affirmative, *But thou doeſt mark me*; How? To help me; No, but (as the ſame Author gloſſeth his Tranſlation) to bring upon me all kinds of puniſhment, or to eſpy all advantages how to afflict me more, as if thou wert not only pleaſed to afflict me, but pleaſed with my affliction. As if *Job* here intended the marking of an enemy, to preſs heavier and heavier upon his oppoſite, till he totally vanquiſhed him, or get his will of him. Our Negative Tranſlation ſuits beſt with the former words; and this Affirmative Tranſlation complies beſt with the words which follow; *Thou art cruel to me.*

Conſideras me, *non ut opituleris, ſed ut gravius punias quaſi voluptatem capiens ex mea Miſeria.* Dreſ.

VERS. 21, 22, 23, 24.

Thou art become cruel to me: With thy ſtrong hand thou oppoſeſt thy ſelf againſt me.
Thou liftest me up to the wind: Thou causeſt me to ride upon it, and diſſolveſt my ſubſtance:
For I know that thou wilt bring me to death, and to the Houſe appointed for all living.
Howbeit, he will not ſtretch out his hand to the Grave, though they cry in his deſtruction.

IN the former Verſe *Job* complained, that he prayed and was not heard: That he waited upon God and was not regarded; but now he complains higher, or ſhews the height of that complaint.

Verſ. 21. **Thou art become cruel to me: With thy ſtrong hand thou oppoſeſt thy ſelf againſt me.**

Thou art become] The Hebrew is, *Thou art turned, or changed:* There is no change nor turning, not ſo much as a ſhadow of it in God, yet as to us he often appears changed and turned. So we underſtand the Prophet ſpeaking of God's dealing with the People of *Iſrael*, (*Iſa.* 63. 10.) *They rebelled, and vexed his holy Spirit, therefore he was turned to be their enemy*; that is, he who had beſtowed upon them the higheſt marks of honour and friendſhip, did then declare himſelf in the poſture of an enemy. The unkind returns which they made for the tokens of his love conſtrained him (as it were) to take up Arms, and turn their enemy, or (as it follows there) to fight againſt them.

So then, this turning may be conſidered with a twofold reſpect.

Firſt, With reſpect to the Nature of God; thus God turneth not; he ever is what he was, and he ever will be what he is.

Secondly, With reſpect to the actings of God; thus in his actions or workings he changes from what he was, and becomes what he hath not been. In this ſence we are to underſtand *Job* here, when he ſpeaks this extream hard word of God, *Thou art become cruel*; As if he had ſaid, *Lord, the copy of thy carriage and countenance towards me is changed: Thou O God, who heretofore haſt been tender of me, and even dandledſt me on thy knees, as a darling, now dealeſt harſhly with me, frowneſt upon me, and ſeemeſt even to daſh me againſt the ſtones: Thou art become cruel to me.*

Factus es mihi ſævus qui clemens eſſe ſoleas; & talem te quondam in me exhibueris, nunc longe alium exhibes. Mer.

To be cruel, is to ſhew no mercy, or not to be toucht with pity and compaſſion when we ſee others in miſery. Cruelty declares it ſelf two wayes.

Firſt, In laying a heavy hand of trouble and affliction upon others, as thoſe Egyptian Task-Maſters did upon the children of *Iſrael*, till they made them groan under their burden.

Secondly, In not helping or in not ſhewing bowels to thoſe whom we ſee troubled and afflicted, though we our ſelves have not laid ſo much as a little finger upon them. Not only are they cruel who put others to more grievous ſufferings then they ought, but they alſo are cruel, who are incompaſſionate towards others in their ſufferings. Whatſoever is excluſive of mercy may be reſolved into cruelty; and therefore we find to be cruel and not to ſhew mercy joyned together as ſynonymous expreſſions intending the ſame thing. (*Jer.* 6. 23.) *They ſhall lay hold on Bow and Spear: They are cruel, and have no mercy.* Mercy and cruelty are remoteſt oppoſites; And they are moſt cruel, or have nothing but cruelty in them, who have no mercy. As this is the deſcription of the *Babylonians*, who deſtroyed *Jeruſalem*, ſo we have a like deſcription of the deſtroyers of *Babylon*, (*Jer.* 50.42.) *Babylon* ſhall be as cruelly handled as ever that handled *Sion*. (*Prov.* 12. 10.) *A righteous* (or good) *man is merciful, but the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel*; that is, inſtead of ſhewing mercy they are cruel, or that which looks moſt like mercy in them, is, in effect, but cruelty.

Job ſeemeth to charge God with cruelty in both theſe reſpects. Firſt, becauſe he laid ſuch heavy afflictions upon him, or preſſed him ſo ſore. Secondly, Becauſe being in that condition, ſo afflicted, ſo preſſed, he ſhewed him no pity, no compaſſion, but appeared as hard as a Rock to him, as not at all moved either with his calamity, or with his crys; *I ſtand up, but thou regardeſt me not*; *Thou art become cruel to me.*

With thy ſtrong hand thou oppoſeſt thy ſelf againſt me.

The Text is; *With the ſtrength of thy hand*; the hand of God hath all ſtrength in it, or is all ſtrength; and the hand of God ſignifieth ſtrength, where his ſtrength is not expreſſed. When the Prophet ſaith, (*Iſa.* 59. 1.) *The hand of the Lord is not ſhortned*; his meaning is, The ſtrength of the Lord is not abated; but where we have the ſtrength and the hand of God put together, or as we Tranſlate, *The ſtrong hand* of God, there the ſtrongeſt ſtrength is intended. The ſtrength of God's hand, or this ſtrong hand, is his omnipotency. His ſtrength is ſuch that he can do all things which are acts of ſtrength. The Scripture ſaith, *he cannot lye*, (*Tit.* 1.2.) *He cannot deny himſelf*, (2 *Tim.* 2. 13.) becauſe theſe are acts of weakneſs, yea of ſinfulneſs, not of ſtrength and power. Again, the hand of God is ſo ſtrong that he can do whatſoever he will, though he will not do whatſoever he can. His power hath no limit but his own pleaſure, (*Pſal.* 115. 3.) *Our God is in the Heavens, he hath done whatſoever he pleaſed*; how ſtrong is his hand, which never failed, nor can fail in doing what himſelf is willing ſhould be done!

With thy ſtrong hand thou oppoſeſt thy ſelf againſt me.

And it is but thus, that God oppoſeth his worſt and moſt inveterate enemies, (*Pſal.* 89. 10.) *Thou haſt broken* Rahab, (that is, *Egypt*) *in pieces as one that is ſlain, thou haſt ſcattered thine enemies with thy ſtrong arm*: We put in the Margin, *With thine arm of ſtrength*. In the twenty third Chapter of this Book, Verſe 6. *Job* makes his Appeal to God, and deſireth Audience of him, ſupported with his confidence, that God who is ſo full of bowels would not oppoſe him with his ſtrong hand! *Will he plead againſt me with his great power?* That is, he will not plead againſt me with his great power. Yet here we ſee what his thoughts were of God, *With thy ſtrong hand thou oppoſeſt thy ſelf againſt me.* Thou doſt not only plead againſt me, but thou oppoſeſt thy ſelf againſt me, not only doſt thou ſpeak words againſt me, but thou acteſt againſt me, and that ſtrongly.

In Hebræo eſt unicum verbum חשטמני *a* שטם *cui affine eſt* שטן *quod eſt adverſari.* Piſ. Ἐνάντιος ἀντικείμενος. *Pro robore manus tuæ inteſtinum odium exerces adverſum me.* Jun. *Te mihi Oſorem oſtendis ita graviter affligens, ac ſi meo diſſes.* Merc.

Thou oppoſeſt thy ſelf againſt me.] The word here uſed is very near in ſound, and as near in ſenſe to that word *Satan*, which ſignifies an adverſary; and is one of the Devils names: He is juſtly called *Satan*, becauſe he is a profeſt enemy to man, an implacable enemy. He is contrary to us, he ſets himſelf quite croſs to us, and loves to lye croſs in every buſineſs which tends to our good, and the glory of God. The word is ſometimes rendred to hate, becauſe oppoſition uſually riſeth from and is the effect of hatred, (*Pſal.* 109.4.) *For my love they are my adverſaries*; or, *for my love they hate me.* And thus ſome Tranſlate here, *With thy hand ſhould ſtrong doeſt excerciſe inward hatred againſt me.*

Thus we ſee how this good man's Spirit was tranſported; and it may be very much queſtion'd how it could conſiſt with the grace of *Job*, or with his reaſon, to call God cruel, and to ſay, that he oppoſed or hated him.

I anſwer; Firſt, *Job* ſpake this, not to accuſe God either of unrighteouſneſs, or of changeableneſs, but he was carried out in extravagant language, by the extremity of his miſery and pain; he conceived himſelf in ſuch a condition as worſe could not be, and to ſenſe God appeared ſo ſevere to him, as if he had been cruel to him, and oppoſed him with hatred.

Secondly, I anſwer; though *Job* ſpake thus as being over-born by his preſent ſufferings, yet he cannot altogether be acquitted of impatience and paſſionateneſs. And he had failed thus more then once before (*Chap.*16.13.*Chap.* 19.8, 9, 10.) in all which Texts he ſpared not to complain that God had declared himſelf as an enemy, or had carryed himſelf like an enemy towards him. We are not to reckon theſe paſſages among his graces, but his failings, nor do they ſhew, what he ought to have done, but what he did and ought not; or they inform us, what apprehenſions a good man may have of God, not what the affections of God are towards good men. *Thou art cruel to me,* &c.

Hence Obſerve, *Though God be a full Sea of mercy in his own Nature, and hath nothing but mercy in his thoughts and purpoſes towards his own People; yet his outward actings do often appear exceeding ſevere and cruel.*

As it is ſaid of the enemies of the People of God; *They may do any thing againſt them but prevail.* So God doth every thing againſt his People like one that is cruel, only he is not cruel. It is ſaid of *Jacob* (*Gen.* 31.2.) that *he beheld the countenance of* Laban, *and behold it was not toward him as before*, or (as we put in the Margin) *as yeſterday, and the day before.* Now as it is often with man towards man, ſo 'tis ſometimes with God towards man, he changeth his face, and if we behold his countenance, it is not toward us, as before. But as for his heart, that changeth not, 'tis toward his people to day as it was yeſterday, and it will be toward them to morrow, yea even for ever as it is to day; yet the People of God find ſuch turns of providence as put them to queſtion, whether the very heart of God be not turned from them. Doth not the Pſalmiſt complain (*Pſal.* 77. 7.) as if God had laid him aſide in his thoughts? Was he not upon thoſe deſponding Queries, *Will the Lord caſt off for ever? And will he be favourable no more? Is his mercy clean gone for ever? Doth his promiſe fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath he in anger ſhut up his tender mercies?* He found the preſent dealings of God grievous and rigorous toward him, and he was for a while doubtful whether ever it would be otherwiſe. I ſay, he was ſo only a while, becauſe in the next words, (*Verſ.* 10.) he corrected himſelf and ſaw he was miſtaken: *And I ſaid, this is my infirmity*, &c. And no wonder, if the people of God ſometimes apprehend his dealings with them to be cruel, ſeeing we find himſelf ſometimes ſaying they are ſo; (*Jer.* 30. 14.) *All thy lovers have forgotten thee, they ſeek thee not, for I have wounded thee with the Sword of an enemy, with the chaſtiſement of a cruel one, for the multitude of thine iniquities, becauſe thy ſins are increaſt.* He doth not ſay, I have ſent enemies to wound thee, and a cruel one to chaſten thee; but I have wounded thee as an enemy, and chaſtened thee like a cruel one. *Hezekiah* that good King doubted God would deal cruelly with him, even when he was upon his Sick-Bed, (*Iſa.* 38. 13.) *I reckon'd till morning, that as a Lion, ſo will he break all my bones. Hezekiah* had dreadful apprehenſions of God, he feared that before the morning came upon him, God would come upon him like a fierce hungry Lion, and cruſh his bones. *David* ſaith, (*Pſal.* 25. 10.) *All the wayes of God are mercy and truth to them that fear him, and that keep his Covenant*: If all his wayes, then his hardeſt wayes to ſuch are mercy and truth; So they are in the iſſue and event, they are ſo in the purpoſe and intendment of God, he will work them to it at laſt: but they are not alwayes ſo in appearance, and unto the preſent ſenſe of thoſe that fear him, and that keep his Covenant; they often find his wayes towards them like the wayes of a cruel one. We read thoſe words, *For his mercy* (that is, the mercy of God) *endureth for ever*, repeated as many times as there are verſes in the hundred thirty ſix Pſalm. That Pſalm begins, *O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever. O give thanks to* *the God of gods, for his mercy endureth for ever:* And it concludes as it began, *O give thanks to the God of Heaven, for his mercy endureth for ever*: That is, God doth never ceaſe to be merciful, no, not when he acteth with greateſt ſeverity: And though in that Pſalm no ſad acts of God towards his *Iſrael* be inſtanc'd in, yet the truth is univerſal, That the ſaddeſt actings of God, in the ſufferings of his *Iſrael*, put no interruption to his mercy; *His mercy endures for ever.* The Lord beareth a tenderneſs of affection to them in their ſmarteſt afflictions; even then he is tender beyond the tenderneſs of a Mother to her ſucking Child (*Iſa.* 49. 16.) *Can a Mother forget her ſucking Child, that ſhe ſhould not have compaſſion on the Son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. I have graven thee upon the palms of mine hand, thy walls are continually before me:* As if he had ſaid, I can no more forget thee then a man can forget that which is alwayes in his eye, or the memorial whereof he daily carrieth in his hand. And if we look a verſe or two before the Text alledged, we ſhall find a ſhining evidence of the truth I am now upon: At the thirteenth verſe the Lord invites all to rejoyce, *Sing O Heavens, and be joyful O Earth, and break forth into ſinging O Mountains, for God hath comforted his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted.* This was good news; but it was not believed when told, at leaſt not expected before it was told: For in the next words the Prophet aſſures us, what dark miſgiving thoughts *Zion* had of God, and what hard concluſions ſhe had made againſt her ſelf (*ver.* 14.) *But* Zion *ſaid, The Lord hath forſaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me.* Thus ſaid *Zion*; but (ſaith the Lord) *Zion*, thou art miſtaken; for, *Can a Woman forget her ſucking Child?* &c. No more, not ſo much, nor at all can I forget thee; that is, not have a favourable remembrance of thee. The greateſt ſtorms of Divine anger againſt *Zion*, do not extinguiſh the flames of Divine love to *Zion*. There may be changes in the works of God, but he is in one mind, or his mind is alwayes the ſame to his, and that is a mind to do them good by all he doth to them.

Sit licet in natos facies auſtera parentum; Æqua tamen ſemper mens eſt & amica voluntas.

Secondly, Obſerve, *The ſenſe of pain and preſent ſmart, may make the beſt of Saints ſpeak uncomely, and beſides their duty.*

It was not only too much for *Job* to ſay of God, but more then a damned ſoul can truly ſay of God, *Thou art become cruel to me:* He that never exceeds juſtice is never cruel. We have heard many of the Saints under greateſt ſufferings, ſo far from ſaying God is cruel, that they have confeſſed, *God is good, God is merciful, God is kind*; this loſs is of God, this ſtroke is of God, this pain is of God, this wound is of God, and yet God is merciful, yet God is gracious, yet God is good: If *Job*, who in this extremity makes report of God as cruel, and cryes out, O cruel! how cruel! If he (I ſay) when the fit was over had been asked his opinion of God, what he thought of God, and what the thoughts of God were towards him; ſurely he would have ſaid, God is gracious, God is good and kind to me: He would have called him Redeemer (as *Chap.* 19. 25.) and not Deſtroyer. There he could ſay, *I know that my Redeemer liveth*, even when he was ready to dye under his hand (and *Chap.* 13. 16.) *He alſo ſhall be my ſalvation:* Theſe were his thoughts when he conſidered the matter; but when he was carried out in paſſion through the violence of pain, how intemperately did he ſpeak? *We cannot alwayes judge of a mans eſtate by his actions, or by his ſpeeches. While the heart is right, words may go wrong.*

Thirdly, Comparing this verſe with the former, where he ſaid, *I cry, and thou heareſt not*; and here preſently adds, *Thou art cruel to me.*

Obſerve, *It is a great temptation not to be heard in prayer for the removing of affliction, or not to be eaſed and relieved when we pray; but it is a greater temptation to be more afflicted when we pray.*

We are hard put to it, if we find not an Income of mercy when we cry to God; but if we find an inundation of ſeverity, O how ſtrong is that temptation! It puts a good man hard to it, if when he cryes to God, his troubles do not decreaſe, how much more when his troubles increaſe? or when he gets nothing by prayer but blows, as if prayer did only put God in mind to lay more load upon him. If when a poor ſoul asketh bread, he hath nothing but ſtones thrown at his head; if when he asketh fiſh, God doth (as it were) ſting him with ſcorpions: This is an unſpeakable temptation. We know prayer is the afflicted ſouls firſt and laſt; that is, his beſt refuge; indeed all his refuge; and when a man doth not find any relief in his laſt refuge, how ſadly muſt this ſit upon his ſpirit? Thus it was with *Job*, not only was he neglected, not heard, not regarded when he cryed, but God preſt affliction more and more upon him when he cryed. The appearances of God in angry diſpenſations, when we are praying, ſeeking, begging, knocking, wreſtling for mercy, are very burdenſome to the beſt of men, and cut the ſoul exceedingly. Miſgivings of mind that God is againſt us, are our greateſt miſeries, in a time of miſery.

Laſtly, Conſider again how this good man ſpake, *Thou art cruel to me, with thy ſtrong hand thou oppoſeſt me. Job* is ſet up for a mirror of patience, and we have heard of the patience of *Job*, yet here we may ſee the impatience of *Job*.

Hence Note, *They who have ſtrongeſt grace, have not their graces alwayes in the ſame ſtrength. Their beſt graces are ſometimes worſted and get a foil.*

That particular grace which is their Crown, is not alwayes Crowned or Conquering: The Crown of *Job*'s graces was his Patience; that's the grace for which he is cryed up in Scripture, yet he did not alwayes ſhew forth patience, nor act the patient man. *Abraham* was ſtrong in faith, yet he was not alwayes in the ſame ſtrength of faith; we find his fear too hard for his faith in the caſe of his wife, therefore he called her ſiſter, and durſt not truſt God in owning his relation; *Abraham*'s faith had ebbings and declinings. He that hath much humility, may ſometimes act proudly: And he that hath much ſelf-denial, may ſometimes act ſelf-ſeekingly. A ſtate of grace is ſure, but the workings of grace are variable; The nature of it is unchangable, but the degrees of it ſuffer many changes. 'Tis the happineſs of Saints that the grace which they have in Chriſt their head, knows no decay, as alſo that the grace which is in themſelves ſhall recover from its decayes, and triumph after all its foils. *Job*'s grace did ſo at laſt, though he yet proceeds in ſuch a language of complaint as further diſcovers the weakneſs of it.

Verſ. 22. **Thou lifteſt me up to the wind: Thou cauſeſt me to ride upon it: Thou diſſolveſt my ſubſtance.**

The general ſence of this verſe is as the former, a bewailing of his affliction in the moſt ſignificant metaphors and higheſt ſtreins of ſorrow.

Thou lifteſt me up to the wind] Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates *Thou takeſt me up unto a wind, and cauſeſt me to ride upon it:* Here we may behold *Job* upon his Chariot, not a triumphing but a mourning Chariot; He rode upon the wind, and he tells who ſet him there; *Thou* (O God) *cauſeſt me to ride upon it.* But what was this wind to which *Job* was lifted up, and upon which he rode?

Firſt by this wind, we may moſt fitly underſtand his fierce and ſtrong afflictions; As if he had ſaid, *Thou* (O *God*) *haſt given my affliction full force and ſcope againſt me: Thou ſetteſt me before the wind, and lifteſt me up with it; I am alwayes weatherbeaten, never under the lee-ſhore.* When the ſtorm is up we may avoid it much and get to ſhelter; but he that is lifted up to the wind is expoſed to its full force and courſe. As the wind raiſeth and carries away ſtubble or chaff, or duſt, ſo moſt probably *Job* conceived himſelf lifted up and carried away, he ſcarce knew whither, or into what condition by ſtrong afflictions, and temptations.

Ut ſtipulam vortex qui dicitur typhon. Jun.

Secondly, *Thou lifteſt me up to the wind*, is conceived by others as an expreſſion of his former felicity; As if he had ſaid, *Thou didſt lift me up once to the height of outward proſperity, and madeſt me ride aloft as upon the wings of the wind*, but now *thou diſſolveſt my ſubſtance*, or breakeſt me like a bubble. I was once in the skies, but now I am in the duſt.

And ſome put an aggravation upon this expoſition, as if *Job* had ſuſpected, that God did lift him up on

Sunt qui eo riferunt, ut ſe dicat exaltatam à Deo ut gravius dejiceritur, ut ſolemus res quas vehementius confringere volumus. Merc.

high, with a purpoſe to caſt him down. But that is too bold an impoſition upon the holy Man, unleſs we underſtand it moderately; That God lifted him up on purpoſe to caſt him down, that in his caſting down he might have advantage both to try *Job*s grace, and to glorifie his own power and goodneſs in raiſing him up again to a greater height then he had been at. For as God ſaith of *Pharaoh* (*Exod.* 9. 16.) *In very deed for this cauſe have I raiſed thee up, for to ſhew in thee my power, and that my name may be declared in all the earth.* Now (I ſay) as God raiſed *Pharaoh*, and hath doubtleſs in the courſe of his providence raiſed many other wicked men very high, with a deſign to manifeſt his power and his juſtice in caſting them down and deſtroying them; ſo he hath raiſed up many godly men, with a purpoſe to glorifie his power and his goodneſs, both in their caſting down and reſtoring. And in this ſence we may as ſafely ſay, that God lifted him up to the wind on purpoſe to caſt him down, as we may truly ſay, that God did caſt him down after he had lifted him up to the wind of worldly honour, and cauſed him for many years to ride peaceably upon it.

But I ſhall a little further exemplifie this notion of *riding*; which frequently in Scripture notes great felicity, with outward pomp and dignity. *Solomon* ſaith (*Eccleſ.* 10. 7.) *I ſaw Servants riding on horſeback, and Princes walking as Servants upon the earth*; That is, I ſaw mean men raiſed to great glory, they rid, while Princes (or ſuch as once were Princes) went on foot, that is, were reduced to a low condition. And as riding ſignifies an honourable ſtate, ſo eſpecially riding upon the Clouds, upon the winds, upon the Heavens, ſuch riding is an argument of higheſt dignity; And 'tis often reported of God himſelf, to ſet forth his excellency and glory. (*Pſal.* 18. 20.) *He rode upon a Cherub, and did fly, he did fly upon the wings of the winds.* Thus (*Pſal.* 33. 34. 68. 32.) *Sing unto God ye kingdoms of the earth: O ſing praiſes to the Lord*, Selah. *To him that rideth on the Heaven of Heavens which were of old. Lo, he doth ſend out his voice, and that a mighty voice. Aſcribe ye ſtrength unto God, his excellency is over* Iſrael, *and his ſtrength is in the Clouds.* So *Moſes* in his Song, (*Deut.* 33. 26.) *There is none like unto the God of* Jeſurun, *who rideth upon the Heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky.* And when the Lord would ſet forth the greateſt advancement of his people, he expreſſeth it by riding, and by riding on the high places, (*Deut.* 32. 13. *Iſa.* 58. 14.) *Then ſhalt thou delight thy ſelf in the Lord, and he ſhall cauſe thee to ride upon the high places of the Earth, and feed thee with the heritage of* Jacob *thy Father.* In both places, this promiſe of riding upon the high places of the earth, is an aſſurance given of the moſt full poſſeſſion of and dominion over the greateſt things of the earth.

So that according to this ſecond Interpretation, *to ride upon the wind*, denotes *Job*'s former highneſs and proſperous ſtate, in which he was mounted triumphantly, and gallantly, upon the Chariot of worldly Greatneſs. The deſcription which he gives of his honour in the former Chapter, complyes well with this notion; whereas now, he found that true (*Pſal* 102. 10.) *Becauſe of thine Indignation, and thy wrath, thou haſt lifted me up, and caſt me down.* Naturaliſts report that the Eagle takes the ſhell-fiſh, and lifting it up a great height, lets it fall upon a Rock to break it. Thus ſaith *Job*, *Thou haſt lifted up to the wind*, and letteſt me fall to cruſh me, as the next words imply, *Thou diſſolveſt my ſubſtance.* This is a truth; proſperity is a riding, and a riding, as it were, upon the wings of the wind, and it may well be called ſo, becauſe of the incertainty and many changes of it: But I do not conceive that Interpretation proper to this place, and therefore I rather adhere to the former.

Aben-Ezra.

One of the Rabbins hath a conceit by himſelf, I may call it a dream; That *Job* did but tell his dream, while he ſpake thus. As if through the diſtemper of his ſickneſs, he in his ſleep, had phancied himſelf carried away with the wind into the air, and riding on the Clouds: But I leave that as a brain-ſick imagination; rather then a ſerious expoſition of the Text.

Yet further, theſe words, *Thou lifteſt me up to the wind, and cauſeſt me to ride upon it*, Compar'd with thoſe that follow, *Thou diſſolveſt my ſubſtance*, ſeem to be a compariſon drawn from Clouds and Vapours, which are exhaled and lifted up high in the air by the Sun, but are quickly diſſolved and blown away by the wind. Thus *Job* repreſents his own condition; He was as a Vapour lifted up a while, but ſoon ſcattered and blown away.

Hence Note; *God uſeth much liberty in dealing with his Servants.*

Our God (ſaith the Prophet, *Pſal.* 115. 3.) *is in the Heavens, and hath done whatſoever he pleaſed.* He walks by no rule but his own pleaſure, and though that be in it ſelf the beſt, the ſureſt, and moſt unerring rule, yet, as to us, it puts it ſelf forth, and appears, full of changes and alterations. This day the Lord is pleaſed to give us matter of rejoycing, and the next day of ſorrow; One day he is pleaſed to fill us, and another day to empty us. He ſends a wind ſometimes to raiſe us up, and anon a wind to caſt us down, he toſſeth and tumbleth us to and fro, even as a ſtubble, and as a dry leaf: And *who may ſay to him, what doeſt thou?* Do not think that this is a dream, as the Rabbin interprets it; or a Poetical fiction, when we hear of men lifted up to and riding on the winds, and then falling down to the diſſolving of their ſubſtance. The Lords wayes with men are above our reach, and therefore he fetcheth compariſons to expreſs them, from the winds, and from the Clouds, of whoſe various motions and interchanges, we can give little account with all our skill. *Thou lifteſt me up to the wind, thou cauſeſt me to ride upon it.*

And diſſolveſt my ſubſtance.

מוג *diſſolvi, liqueſcere, deſtrui ad nihilum redigi ſigni.*

The word ſignifies *to melt*, as metal is melted in the fire; and by a Metaphor 'tis applyed to the fayling of courage, which is a melting of the mind. (1 *Sam.* 14. 16.) *And the watchmen of* Saul *in* Gibeah *of* Benjamin *looked, and behold the multitude melted away, and they went on beating down one another*; that is, their courage failed them, or their hearts fainted. The Prophet ſaith, (*Iſa.* 64. 7.) *We are conſumed in our Iniquities*, or (it is this word) *we are melted away in our Iniquities*, our ſtrength fails, our comforts fail, our ſpirits fail, every thing fails. This word is uſed alſo (to anſwer the alluſion before mentioned) to note the melting of Clouds when they are diſſolved into rain, or drop away in ſhowers. Thus ſaith *Job*, that of mine which was moſt ſubſtantial is diſſolved and dropt away like a Cloud. It is ſaid (*Pſal.* 46. 7.) *He* (that is God) *uttered his voice, and the earth melted.* And again, (*Amos* 9. 5.) *The Lord of hoſts is he that toucheth the Land, and it ſhall melt*; That is, both perſons and things ſhall conſume away. Thus every mans particular death is called a diſſolution, (2 *Cor.* 5. 1.) And the end of the World (which is a kind of general death) is called the diſſolution of it, (2 *Pet.* 3. 11.) *Seeing all theſe things* (that is, the Heavens and the Earth with all their ſubſtance) *ſhall be diſſolved, what manner of perſons ought we to be*, &c. All worldly ſubſtances ſhall one day be diſſolved; And *Job* in his day of trouble could ſay to God, *Thou diſſolveſt*

תושיה *Eſſentia, certa ratio vivendi, ſapientia.*

My ſubſtance.] The word is of a various and comprehenſive ſignification. Some tranſlate it, *Wiſdom: Thou diſſolveſt my Wiſdom*, as importing his affliction was ſo great that his very underſtanding was at a ſtand, or that he was doted, as we ſay, and rendred unable to make uſe of his reaſon, as if his meaning were, *thou bringeſt me to my wits end.* The Pſalmiſt (*Pſal.* 107. 27.) deſcribing the dreadful dangers and wonderful deliverances of Mariners, or Sea-men, ſaith, *They reel to and fro, and ſtagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits end:* We put in the Margin, *All their Wiſdom is ſwallowed up*; As the men themſelves, Ship and all, are ready to be ſwallowed up, ſo their wits are many times ſwallowed up with fear and amazement, before the Ship is ſwallowed up by the Waves of the Sea. Thus *Job* is conceived to ſay, that his wiſdom was ſwallowed up, he knew not what to do, nor how to carry himſelf: He ſeemed now brought to a far worſe condition then he was in (*Chap.* 6. 13.) when he ſaid, *Is not my help in me? And is Wiſdom driven quite from me?* Do you think I have no reaſon nor underſtanding about me? But here (according to this reading) his Wiſdom was driven quite from him, *Thou haſt diſſolved, or melted down all my Wiſdom:* I am not able to make uſe

Nihil mihi rationis aut certi præſcripti remanet quo me geram, ſed plane inops mentis ſum, nec animo nec corpore ſubſiſtam. Merc.

of it; or (as others read it) *Thou haſt diſſolved, or ſeparated me from wiſdom:* The meaning of both is but one, I know not what to reſolve or do in this caſe.

Diſſolvit me ratio ſeu ordinatio tua.

Secondly, the words are tranſlated thus; *Thy wiſdom, or thy appointment hath diſſolved me.* According to this reading we may conceive *Job* ſpeaking thus; *In all this hurry of things, when I am carried up and down, I know not how, nor whither, and am as one altogether confuſed; yet thou, O God, acteſt towards me in wiſdom, thy wiſdom hath diſſolved me; or thou haſt diſſolved me wiſely. True, Lord, I am altogether at uncertainties, as one toſſed with the wind, but it is by a law from thee, by thy rule or ſtatute that it is ſo. I am unſetled, but it is ſetled in Heaven that I ſhould be ſo; I am in a very fleeting condition, as a thing hurried or moved by the wind, but thou haſt eſtabliſhed it by an immoveable decree that I ſhould be thus;* A Divine appointment hath diſſolved me; that's a good ſence.

Irriſiſti legē & decretum meum. i. e. *meam vivendi rationem non probaſti, impietatis damnaſti, & ſupplicio affeciſti.* Vatabl.

Thirdly, Thus; *Thou haſt diſſolved my decree, purpoſe or appointment*; that is, Thou haſt broken my courſe of life, and put me beſide my intended method; thou haſt declared thy ſelf unſatisfied with my way, and hadſt not approved what I propoſed to do, and ſo upon the matter, haſt gratified mine enemies, who have hard thoughts of me, and cenſure me as an evil doer; I had decreed in my ſelf what to do, and how to mannage all my truſts and concernments; But thou haſt ſeen it good to reſcind, or nullifie what I decreed, and take me off by theſe continued troubles, from all my intendments. *Thou diſſolveſt my decree.*

Effecis ut diffluam ſubſtantia. Jun.

Fourthly, According to our reading; **Thou diſſolveſt my ſubſtance:** Is plainly this; *Thou makeſt my bodily ſtrength to melt away, as alſo the ſtrength of my eſtate.* A mans worldly goods and poſſeſſions are commonly called his *ſubſtance*: Thou haſt melted away my friends, my Children, my Servants, my Cattel, my Power, my Honour, my all; I have nothing left of this World that can be called ſubſtance. My body, which is left, is but the skeleton of a body, and my life which yet remains, is but the ſhadow of a life; *Thou diſſolveſt my ſubſtance.*

Hence Note; *There is nothing ſo durable, or laſting among all the good things of this life, but God can melt and diſſolve it quickly.*

Though a mans ſubſtance be ſo compact, and well ſetled that it ſeems unmovable, or not to be ſhaken, yet how ſoon doth it move, under the afflicting hand of God? That which is as hard as Adamant, melts like wax before the fire. What the Prophet ſpake in reference to the Mountains or powers of the Earth, which troubled the peace, or hindered the comforts of *Sion*, (*Iſa.* 64. 1.) *O that thou wouldeſt rent the Heavens, that thou wouldeſt come down*; As if he had ſaid, *Lord, take to heart the wrongs and indignities which thine enemies have put upon thy people, as alſo the blaſphemies which they have belched out boldly againſt thy Majeſty; Lord do not hold thy hand any longer, but come down like a ſtorm of lightning and thunder, filled with a holy fury and juſt indignation, as if thou didſt rent the very Heavens for haſt to be among us. O that now thou wouldeſt thus ſhew thy ſelf here on earth, and not alwayes confine thy dreadful power to Heaven.* But what would be the effect of ſuch an appearance? The next words tell us, *That the Mountains might flow down at thy preſence.* Theſe Mountains are not to be underſtood properly, but metaphorically, for the great things, or great men of the World, thoſe things and powers which are moſt compact and conſolidated by the beſt skill and policy of man into a Mountain, or into many (in mans Judgment) impregnable Mountains, flow down like piles of ſnow at the preſence of God. Moſt Mountains are of a hard maſſie, ſome of a rocky ſubſtance, yet theſe flow down like a ſtream at the angry preſence of God. It is uſual to ſee waters flowing down from Mountains; But, to ſee a Mountain flow down like water, to ſee Rocks melt and diſſolve like wax is miraculous. Yet ſaith the Prophet, the very Mountains ſhall flow down at thy preſence, that is, thou diſſolveſt the ſtrength of the Mountains, of the great men of the World, and they become like a liquid ſtream, or (ſo the Prophet himſelf explains it, *ver.* 2) *As when the melting fire burneth, the fire cauſeth the waters to boyl, to make thy name known to thine adverſaries, that the nations may tremble at thy preſence.* If the Lord can make Mountains melt like wax or ſnow before the Sun or fire, ſurely thoſe things which are moſt ſubſtantial ſhall vaniſh as a ſhadow, as a nothing at the word of his power.

There are but few things ſo ſubſtantial that they will abide, and cannot be diſſolved: Spiritual things, the favour of God, his grace to us, his grace in us, our intereſt in Chriſt; theſe can never be diſſolved. Though the Mountains be removed, (ſaith God) yet I will never diſſolve the Covenant of my peace, that ſhall ſtand for ever; every thing ſhall be diſſolved, but not that. (*Prov.* 8. 21.) *Solomon* ſaith, *The Lord will make his people to inherit ſubſtance*, that is, they ſhall have that which is worthy of the name of ſubſtance; there is a ſubſtantiality in their common mercies, much more in their peculiar and diſtinguiſhing mercies. Worldly men do not inherit ſubſtance, the beſt of their ſubſtance is like a ſhadow; but God giveth his people ſubſtance. And hence the old Saints *took joyfully the ſpoiling of their goods, knowing in themſelves that they had in Heaven, a better and an enduring ſubſtance*, (Heb. 10. 34.) a ſubſtance that would abide wind and weather, fire, and water, the greateſt tryals, and remain undiſſolved, yea untoucht. But whether the Lord deal out judgments to the wicked, or chaſtiſements to his children, he ſoon diſſolveth all their worldly ſubſtance; whatſoever the world accounts moſt ſubſtantial, cannot ſtand before his decree of diſſolution.

Iſa. 54. 10.

Verſ. 23. **For I know that thou wilt bring me to death, and to the houſe appointed for all living.**

For I know:] That is, I am fully perſwaded of this thing, *Job* had a knowledg of faith, not only that Chriſt lived (*Chap* 19. 25.) *I know that my Redeemer liveth*) but that himſelf ſhould dye. So the Apoſtle (2 *Cor.* 5. 1.) *I know that when the earthly Tabernacle of this houſe ſhall be diſſolved*, &c. *Paul* ſpeaks of that knowledge of faith, which is aſſurance, and as he knew or was aſſured that when the Earthly houſe of his bodily Tabernacle ſhould be diſſolved, he had a building of God, an houſe not made with hands, Eternal in the Heavens; So he knew or was aſſured that the Earthly Tabernacle of his body ſhou'd be diſſolved. And when *Job* ſaith, *I know that thou wilt bring me to death*, this notes not only that which is very ſure and certain in it ſelf, but that which he himſelf was aſſured of, and that with a kind of Joy and delight; he ſpake of it as of a thing that he took pleaſure in, as if he had ſaid, *'Tis my comfort to remember, that thou wilt bring me to death.*

That thou wilt bring me to death.] The Hebrew is, *That thou wilt make me return*; But he had not been dead before, how then could he return to death? To avoid this ſeeming difficulty, ſome expound thoſe words, *Thou wilt make me to return*, thou wilt make me come or go to death; For ſo in Scripture to return is as much as to come; but there is a great Elegancy in it, if we take it according to the Hebrew, *thou wilt make me to return*, and underſtand it thus; Thou wilt reduce me back again unto the Earth. For though *Job* when he ſhould dye could not in congruity of ſpeech be ſaid to return to death, or the grave, becauſe he had neither been dead nor buried, yet when he ſhould dye, he might be ſaid (not only congruouſly but very ſignificantly) to return to the earth, or to the duſt, becauſe he was once (in the firſt *Adam*) there and taken thence before.

Redire ponitur pro venire vel ire. Ruth 1. 11.

Hence Note; *Death brings us back to what we once were; and ſhews us what we are.*

So the ſentence was given (*Gen.* 3. 17.) *Duſt thou art, and to duſt thou ſhalt return.* (Eccleſ. 12. 7.) *The duſt ſhall return to the earth as it was, and the ſpirit ſhall return to God that gave it*; Mans body is duſt materially while he lives, and when he dyes his body goes to *its own*, the duſt, and becomes duſt formally. (*Pſal.* 90. 3.) *Thou turneſt man to deſtruction*; that is, to death, Death is the deſtruction of all men as to their bodily compoſition and outward enjoyments, in which ſence 'tis alſo ſaid, (*Iſa.* 57. 1.) that *the righteous periſh when they dy*; Thus *Moſes* ſaith of God, *Thou turneſt man to deſtruction, and ſayeſt, return ye Children of men.* God having turned man to death, preſently ſaith *retnrn ye Children of men*, that is, go back into what you were, return to the duſt. Some expound that place by an Irony, thou turneſt man to deſtruction, or thou ſayeſt to man dye, and then return; quit thy ſelf from death as well as thou canſt; come back if thou canſt; but I rather take it in the former ſence, implying that by death man is converted into his own principles. Some render *Job*'s Text ſo; *Death will reſtore me* (that is) *to what I once was:* If we conſider the dominion of death over man, in reference to the ſtate of Innocency, ſo it is a tyranny, for death takes poſſeſſion of that which was not its own. Man was at firſt ſet up in a poſſibility not to dye; but if we conſider man as fallen, and as under that Law which God gave; *Duſt thou art, and to duſt thou ſhalt return.* Thus death doth its duty, and brings us (by the appointment of God) back again to what we once were, that is to duſt.

Mors reſtituet me. Tigur.

I know that thou wilt bring me to death. There are two opinions about the reaſon of theſe words.

Firſt, As if *Job* ſpake meerly to move God compaſſionately to conſider his frailty, that ſo he might deal more favourably with him; *I know I ſhall dye ſhortly, Lord, let it pleaſe thee that I may enjoy a little eaſe while I live.* Good men have often put God in mind of their frailty, that they might the more move him to pity. The Pſalmiſt ſeems to expoſtulate with God upon this point, (*Pſal.* 89. 46, 47.) *How long Lord, wilt thou hide thy ſelf, for ever? Shall thy wrath burn like fire? Remember how ſhort my time is: Wherefore haſt thou made all men in vain?* As if he had ſaid, The longeſt time that any man hath or can expect to live, is but ſhort, therefore Lord do not ſhorten that which is ſo ſhort. Surely man lives to little purpoſe (even in vain) if he live leſs then that little time which is commonly cut out and appointed for his life. And as that holy man, urged God with the remembrance of mans ſhort life, that he might prevail with him not to ſhorten it, ſo *David* aſſures us that the remembrance of it moveth him to compaſſionate us in it, (*Pſal.* 103. 13, 14.) *Like as a Father pitieth his children, ſo the Lord pitieth them that fear him; For he knoweth our frame, he remembreth that we are duſt.* To this effect *Job* is ſuppoſed praying, *Lord, remember I am but duſt, I know I ſhall dye ere long: O ſpare me a little, let me have fair quarter that ſmall while, while I am in this world.*

But, Secondly, I rather conceive the reaſon to be, becauſe he did even deſpair of recovery, he ſaw himſelf ſo beſet with Infirmities, ſo wounded and weakned by his ſickneſſes and ſores, that he looked upon himſelf, not only as a man ſubject to death; but as a dead man. *I know thou wilt bring me to death*, I ſee that's thy purpoſe by the way in which thou handleſt me: He doth not ſpeak thus as to the general ſtate of mankind; for every man may ſay to God, *I know thou wilt bring me to death*; But having the ſymptoms of death upon him, he had the ſentence of death in him, and even ſaw hmſelf upon the borders of the grave; As if he had ſaid, *There's no eſcaping death for a man that is in ſuch a plight, or brought ſo low as I am at this time.*

> Hence Note; Firſt, *When we are under great ſickneſs and weakneſs of body, it is very proper for us to look upon our ſelves as bronght to the very gate and valley of the ſhadow of death, and dropping in to the grave. When we are very ſick, 'tis good to have a perſwaſion that we ſhall dye.*

It is our duty to think we muſt dye ere long, and may dye quickly when we are in health, and ſtrength, when we feel not the leſt ach in our bones, nor diſtemper in our bodies, (*The flower and beſt perfections of nature are no ſuperſedeas, no ſtop to preſent death*) but when a man is nothing but ſores, and ſickneſſes, but pains and paroxyſms, what hath he elſe to think of, or what elſe ſhould he think of, but his diſſolution and his grave? When a man feels the impreſſions of death upon him, and ſees viſions of death upon him, what ſhould he either meditate or ſpeak of but of dying, or of his preparations for death? What ſhould he do but labour to ſet all even both God-ward and world-ward, to ſee that all is right between God to whom he is going, and his own ſoul; as alſo between himſelf and the world, which he is leaving, or from which he is going? We ſhould not put the evil day far from us in a good day, but when the evil day hath over-taken us, then to be talking of life, and hopes of recovering, is not only unſutable and incongruous, but very unſafe and dangerous. Some are hardly perſwaded they ſhall dye, though the tokens of death appear upon them: And ſome viſiters of the ſick, when they ſee the picture of death in the ſick mans face, will yet feed him with hopes of life; It is good to comfort our friends in ſickneſs with the thoughts of eternal life, but to flatter them with hopes of this life may prove deadly. How ſhall they ever dye with comfort, who are troubled to hear death ſpoken of! We find *Job* in that condition talking freely of his grave, *I know* (ſaith he) *that thou wilt bring me to death:* I look upon this as a ſickneſs unto death; and that now I am upon my death bed.

Secondly, Comparing this with the event;

> Obſerve, *A godly man may be much miſtaken about the purpoſes of God to him in outward things, and eſpecially about the date of his own life.*

I know (ſaith *Job*) *that thou wilt bring me to death*: But *Job* was miſtaken. Though Saints cannot be miſtaken in their aſſurances about ſpiritual and eternal things, yet they may be deceived in their aſſurances about temporal things. We may think our ſelves ſure of outward mercies, and miſs them, we may have an aſſurance that death will be the concluſion of our preſent afflictions, and yet miſ-reckon our ſelves, as *Job* did, who had a very flouriſhing time of life for many years after he gave himſelf for dead. A man may have the ſentence of death in himſelf, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, (2 *Cor* 1. 9.) when God (as to that time) hath given out no ſuch ſentence. And therefore we ought not to conclude peremptorily in this point; for though the premiſes of Gods dealings with us, ſeem to tell us that death muſt be our ſudden concluſion; yet the time is a ſecret, and faith in the infinite power and goodneſs of God may give us ſome hope of reſtoring when 'tis worſt with us, we not having received any revelation from God forbidding ſuch a hope. 'Tis wiſdom to be alwayes ready for death, but 'tis more then comes to our ſhare peremptorily to determine the period of our lives. As many come ſhort of their reckonings about life, ſo the reckonings of ſome are too ſhort. We ought every day to number our dayes ſpiritually, but no man can number either his own or any other mans dayes arithmetically, not becauſe they are more then a man can (for a Child may) know how to number them, but becauſe the number of them (whether few or many, much leſs how many or how few) is not known to any man.

Further, *Job* ſeems to be thus concluſive about the concluſion of this life, (*I know that thou wilt bring me to death*) with a kind of ſweet content.

> Thirdly, Hence Note, *A godly man can ſpeak very familiarly and comfortably of his death.*

Though *Job* ſpake complainingly of his ſufferings and pains, yet when he ſpake of his death, he ſpake rejoycingly, as one refreſhed with good news. *I know that thou wilt bring me to death*, that's the thing I expect, and that pleaſeth me. O welcome death! Welcome grave; A godly man can pleaſe himſelf with theſe thoughts, not only as death is an end of all his ſorrows, but as 'tis the beginning of his endleſs joyes.

Laſtly, When he ſaith, *I know that thou wilt bring me to death*;

> Obſerve, *Death is at the diſpoſe and command of God.*

He doth not ſay, my diſeaſe or ſickneſs will bring me to death, but, *thou wilt bring me to death*; or thou wilt bring me to death by the hand of theſe ſickneſſes. It is good for us to ſee our death as well as our life in the hand of God: Death cannot come of it ſelf till 'tis ſent, or till it is commanded and commiſſion'd; unleſs God bring us to the grave, all the ſickneſſes in the world cannot do it; unleſs God ſay, dye, all the powers in the world cannot kill. *I know that thou wilt bring me to death*;

בית מועד *Domus conventus unde tentorium conventus; vel Domus ſtatuit.* i. e. *ſtatuta & aſſignata omni viventi.* Druſ.

And to the houſe appointed for all living.] The words are a deſcription of the grave; *Job* calls it a *houſe*, and a houſe *appointed*, and a houſe appointed *for all living*. And though he ſaith not by whom this houſe was appointed for ſo great an entertainment, yet doubtleſs he means God himſelf was the appointer; he built this lightſome world as a houſe for man to live in, and he hath appointed the dark grave as a houſe for all living; that is, he hath appointed the living when they dye, to reſt and take up their lodging in that houſe. Thus as men build houſes for themſelves to live in, ſo God hath appointed a houſe for all living men when they dye.

In the Levitical Law, we read of *the Tabernacle of the Congregation*, or *the Tabernacle of appointment*, becauſe thither all the people of *Iſrael* were appointed to come, and there to congregate upon ſeveral occaſions of ſolemn worſhip. Here we have *the houſe of appointment*, or *the houſe of the Congregation*, that is, the houſe where all men muſt congregate, and meet together. And when *Job* calls it *a houſe appointed*, it hath a double reference; Firſt, to place; Secondly, to time. The grave is the place appointed of God where the living ſhall be laid; and it is appointed of God when they ſhall be laid there. It is a houſe appointed

For all living.] That's a great houſe ſure which hath room enough for the reception of all living. Uſually every living man hath a houſe by himſelf; but here is a houſe for all living. While the living are in the world, they take up a great deal of room, but death puts us neer together, and crouds the men who took up the greateſt breadth above ground, into a narrow compaſs under ground, the grave; That's *the houſe* for *all living*.

Some extend **all living**, to all things that live; Thus the beaſts of the earth, and fowls of the air, may be numbred among the living; but *Job* is ſpeaking of men only; and ſo the *all living*, are *all men living*; Adam *called his Wives name* Eve, *becauſe ſhe was the Mother of all living*, (Gen. 3.20) As *Eve* was the Mother, ſo the grave is the houſe of all living. The grave is ſpoken of, as if it were but one houſe; all that have lived are gone to it, and all the living are going to it; it is the general Rendevouz, or meeting-place, of mankind; all who live in this world, when they dye and go out of the world, go to the grave; that's their laſt reſort.

Hence Note, Firſt, *All that live muſt die, and all that die are bound for the grave; that's their next ſtage.*

Mankind is as under an appointment for death, ſo for the grave; we no ſooner begin to live then we begin to die, and (as 'tis proverbially ſaid) *we ſup death in our firſt ſpoonful of broath*; I am ſure we did in the firſt or neer the firſt morſel that ever was eaten. When ſin came into the world (and that came by eating) death came in with it; we may juſtly take up a complaint againſt, or a lamentation over ſin. We may cry out, *O ſin, ſin, ſin, Thou haſt* (*meritoriouſly*) *made all the funerals that ever were in the world.* We had never known what it means to depart out of this life, if we by ſin had not firſt departed from the living God. What havock hath ſin made in the world? What heaps upon heaps hath it laid? It was once ſaid of the goodly buildings in *Rome*, *The ſins of* Germany, (meaning the mony got by the Popes factors for ſin-pardons granted the *Germans*) have built theſe. And when we ſee thoſe goodly buildings the bodies of men ruin'd and caſt to the ground, yea into the ground, we may ſafely ſay, the ſins of men have unbuilt or pul'd down their bodies. *Death is the wages of ſin*, (Rom. 6. 23.) And Maſter ſin payeth all his ſervants, with this black and bad Money, *death*.

Vivendi principium, moriendi initium eſt, & ut dicitur in primo pulmento mortem devoramus. Brent.

The Pſalmiſt puts this into a negative Queſtion, (*Pſal.* 89. 48.) *What man is he that liveth and ſhall not ſee death? Shall he deliver his ſoul from the hand of the grave? Selah.* His meaning is, no man can avoid the ſight of death, or eſcape the grave. And therefore the Holy Ghoſt doth not leave this aſſertion bare, but cloſeth it with that word of *Mark*, that emphatical ſignal word, *Selah*, to ſeal and aſſure the truth of it, or to command our utmoſt attention to it, This is a *Selah* of meditation, and it layeth a kind of arreſt upon our ſpirits, not to paſs from the Text, till we have ſeriouſly and feelingly conſidered theſe words, *What man is he that liveth, and ſhall not ſee death?* And leſt any man ſhould preſume he might not, the Pſalmiſt expreſſeth *man* not by that common word *Adam*, which tells him that his original is from the Earth, and ſo naturally weak and very brittle ware; nor doth he expreſs man by that word *Enos*, which implyeth his accidental or rather, providential infirmities, ſickneſſes and ſorrows; but he calls him *Geber*, which repreſents man in his beſt ſtate of ſtrength, riches, honour and worldly greatneſs; as if he had ſaid, What rich, what great, what mighty man is there that liveth, and ſhall not ſee death?

David indeed ſpeaks of ſome, (*Pſal.* 49. 7, 8, 9, 10.) *That truſt in their wealth, and boaſt themſelves in the multitude of their riches*; Rich men can do great things, but here is a thing they cannot do; *none of them can by any means redeem his Brother, nor give to God a ranſome for him.* From what cannot a rich man redeem his Brother? It is true of ſpiritual redemption, yea that is furtheſt out of the rich mans reach, money will not do it. (1 *Pet.* 1. 18.) *We are not redeemed with corruptible things, ſuch as Silver, and Gold, but with the precious blood of the Son of God*; but the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks of a lower redemption, to which all the riches of man cannot reach, *none of them can by any means redeem his Brother, or give to God a ranſome for him; the redemption of their ſoul* (that is, of their perſon from the grave) *is precious, and it ceaſeth for ever.* And that he ſpeaks of their redemption from the grave, is more clearly expreſſed at the eleventh verſe, *that he ſhould ſtill live for ever, and not ſee corruption.* Jeſus Chriſt did not ſo redeem us that we ſhould live for ever, and not ſee corruption; It was the priviledge of Jeſus Chriſt the redeemer not to ſee corruption; but Jeſus Chriſt, hath not redeemed us that we ſhall not ſee corruption; he hath redeemed us that we ſhall live for ever in heaven, but he hath not redeemed us from corruption, that we ſhould live for ever on earth, or not ſee corruption in the grave; for (as it is ſaid at the tenth verſe of the Pſalm) *We ſee that wiſe men dy, likewiſe the Fool, and the brutiſh perſon periſh, and leave their wealth to others*; As if he had ſaid, Neither the one nor the other ſort of men, could make this uſe or improvement of their wealth, to deliver themſelves from going to the grave; for if they could, they would have laid all out upon that purchaſe; but they could not do it, therefore *they leave their wealth to others.* Doubtleſs they would have given out all they were worth, to redeem themſelves from the grave; what would not rich men give to do this, they would leave nothing to Children or Executors, could they but bribe off death with all their riches. There is no title can be given to man which ſets him further from death, then to call him God, and this high title God himſelf (not a flatterer) hath cloathed ſome men with, (*Pſal.* 82. 6, 7.) *I ſaid ye are gods*, (but with the ſame breath he adds) *ye ſhall dye like men.*

And as riches and honour cannot ſhelter from death, ſo neither can knowledge nor wiſdom; *Solomon* who was the richeſt treaſury of wiſdom (of a meer man) that ever lived, did not only dye himſelf, but ſaid (*Eccl.* 2. 16.) *How dyeth the wiſe man and the Fool?* Yea, which is more then that (unleſs *Solomon* as elſewhere, ſo there by his wiſe man meant a holy man) we may add, *How dieth the godly man as the wicked? How dyeth the juſt man as the unjuſt?* For though there be the utmoſt unlikeneſs between the godly and the wicked, both in the manner of their life, and in the conſequents of their death, yet in this they are both alike, they both die; Holineſs it ſelf, as man is conſtituted in this world, cannot ſhelter from death.

As the reign of ſin (which was toucht before) brings in the reign of death; ſo whereſoever ſin hath but a being, death will have a footing. And therefore though juſt or godly men live not in ſin, yea are dead to ſin, yet becauſe ſin lives in them, they alſo muſt dye. Yea hence it came to paſs that Jeſus Chriſt dyed, even becauſe, though he had no ſin in him, yet our ſins were laid upon him; as if ſin where it was only imputed or charged, brought death, as in the caſe of Chriſt himſelf, then how much more where it is inherent and acted, as it is in the beſt of Godly men. This is a common truth, and generally acknowledg'd, that all muſt dy, but 'tis not common for men to live in, much leſs to live up to the knowledge of this truth, that they muſt dye.

But ſome may ſay, this is not a general truth; that all muſt dye, nor is this an indiſpenſible appointment, that *the grave is the houſe appointed for all living*; Some have lived and not dyed, and ſome ſhall live and not die, nor ever go to the grave.

Firſt, There are ſome, that have lived who never dyed, but have gone to God by a leap over the grave, or have eſcaped the grave in their way to Glory (*Gen.* 5. 24.) *And* Enoch *walked with God, and he was not, for God took him*; this is a difficult Scripture, but the Apoſtle (*Heb.* 11. 5.) gives a full and an unerring Comment upon it, *By faith* Enoch *was tranſlated, that he ſhould not ſee death, and he was not found, becauſe God had tranſlated him; for before his tranſlation he had this teſtimony, that he pleaſed God.* *Enoch* was tranſlated, he did not *ſee death*; there's one that never went to the houſe of the grave. As God had tranſlated him before out of a ſinful into a holy ſtate, ſo *Enoch* was ſuch a proficient in grace, that God tranſlated him from grace to glory, without ſo much as looking into the grave. How then is the grave the houſe appointed for all living? And do we not read that *Eliah* made the ſame eſcape? Was not he taken up to Heaven in a fiery Chariot? (2 *Kings* 2.23.) there's another who went not to that houſe: How then was it appointed for all living? And as I have inſtanced in two that have lived, and went not to the grave, ſo the Scripture ſpeaks of many who ſhall live hereafter, and never go to the grave, *Behold* (ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 15. 51.) *I ſhew you a myſtery, we ſhall not all ſleep* (that is, we ſhall not all die, that, by ſleep he means death, the whole diſcourſe of that Chapter makes it evident) what then ſhall become of us? That's anſwer'd in the next word, *But we ſhall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the laſt trumpet, for the trumpet ſhall ſound, and the dead ſhall be raiſed incorruptible, and we ſhall be changed.* And again (1 *Theſ.* 4. 17.) *Then we which are alive, and remain, ſhall be caught up together with them in the Clouds, to meet the Lord in the Air, and ſo ſhall we ever be with the Lord.* When Chriſt cometh to Judgment, the living Saints on earth ſhall not die, nor deſcend into the grave, but ſhall preſently aſcend or be caught up into the Clouds. Therefore *the grave is not the houſe of all living.*

Exceptio firmat regulam.

I anſwer, Firſt, Thoſe few exceptions do not at all infirm the truth of the general rule, but rather confirm it; this is the rule, that all muſt die, becauſe none eſcape, but upon ſome ſpecial exception. And though none of the Saints on earth who ſhall be found alive at the general reſurrection of the dead ſhall die, yet they ſhall have ſomewhat which is equivalent to death, they ſhall be changed, and death, at the fourteenth Chapter of this Book (*ver.* 14.) is called a change. This change is the putting off our mortality, that change will be the putting on of immortality: The one is a change by being uncloathed, the other is a change by being cloathed upon, as the Apoſtle diſtinguiſheth them (2 *Cor.* 5,4.) And becauſe the day of the reſurrection, when all living Believers ſhall be changed and not die, is a ſecret reſerved in the boſom of God, we who live can have no aſſurance of any change but of that by death, and therefore we have reaſon to believe, that *God will bring us to death, or to the houſe appointed for all living.*

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *We die by appointment, the time is appointed when we muſt die, and a place is appointed for us when we are dead.*

Death is natural, but we die by a Law; we die by appointment. Some ſay of Malefactors who are put to death for crimes committed againſt the Law, *They are ſlain by the Law*; And we may ſay of every man, *He is ſlain by a Law* (*Heb.* 9. 27.) *It is appointed for men once to die,* and the grave is the houſe appointed for all living. The living are appointed for that houſe, and that houſe for them; death came in by mans act, but death proceeds by an act of God; man let death in by breaking a Commandment; and now death aſſaults and breaks in upon man by a Commandment. God threatened man with death in caſe of ſin; and he hath appointed men to die, becauſe they have ſinned.

And ſeeing the grave is the houſe appointed for all living, then by way of Corollary.

Firſt, We ſhould prepare for our going to that houſe: That houſe is quickly made ready for us, let us make ready for that houſe. Do it, Firſt, By ſetting your houſes in order (2 *Kings* 20. 1.) Secondly, By ſetting your hearts in order; *How miſerable are they, who when they are ſo sick that they cannot live, are yet ſo unprepared that they dare not die.* Whatſoever goodly or beautiful houſes we have now, we muſt ſhortly have a little dark cold underground houſe, called the Grave; be not ſtrangers in your thoughts to that houſe, to which, we who ſhould be ſtrangers and are but pilgrims in this world, are travelling every day. And how ſtately, how proud, how high ſoever men have been in this world, they muſt ſtoop to and enter into that low-built, dark, and ſilent houſe; *It is the houſe appointed for all living.*

Secondly, Seeing it is ſo, when God calls us to take up our lodging there, let us quietly and chearfully obey his call. The Appointments of God muſt be obeyed. Chriſt was obedient unto death, even the death of the croſs (*Phil.* 2.8.) And he with a holy anger at any natural (though unſinful) reluctance, ſaid, *The cup which my Father hath given me, ſhall I not drink?* (John 18. 11.) And what cup was that? It was the cup of death, a bitter cup, about which he made that earneſt prayer (*Mat.* 26. 39.) *O my Father, if it be poſſible, let this cup paſs from me*; yet that was not a more earneſt, then it was an humble and ſubmitting prayer, therefore he adds (*ver.* 42.) *O my Father, if this cup may not paſs from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.* We may pray againſt death, but then we muſt pray as Chriſt did, laying our prayer at the foot of God. That which makes our lives ſweet as well as holy, is, that we live having our wills drawn forth in continued acts of obedience to the will of God: and that which makes death, the bitter cup of death ſweet to us, and us holy in dying, is, that we die in obedience to the will and appointment of God. The Apoſtle moves all men to a ſteddineſs (not a ſenſeleſneſs) of ſpirit under affliction upon this ground (1 *Theſ.* 3. 3.) *That no man be moved by theſe afflictions, for you your ſelves know, that we are appointed thereunto.* I may alſo caution all men, againſt all unquiet motions at the approach of death, for we know that we are appointed thereunto. We know, That, firſt, the kind; Secondly, The time of our death are appointed. Let this be an argument to keep off undue trouble of ſpirit when we are ſummon'd to the grave.

This alſo ſhould prevail with us to make a quiet ſurrender of our deareſt relations when God calls for them. Death meddles not with thy friend without commiſſion: There is no ſtriving with the Decrees of Heaven; if we do, we ſin and increaſe our ſorrow by it. To be without natural affection, is to be below a Heathen; to be over-born by natural affection, is to be below a Chriſtian. The divine appointment teacheth us moderation.

Thirdly, This alſo flows from the ſame General truth;

God takes notice what becomes of us when we are dead, as well as when we are alive.

God hath appointed a houſe for us when we dye; and his providence watcheth over us there; he hath appointed us our houſes here in this world, and he hath appointed us our houſe when we go out of the world: His care followeth us to the grave. We do not die by hap, or at a venture, nor are we buried by hap, or at a venture; our houſe is appointed, and that's matter of comfort; God knows where to fetch every mans bones, where to have every mans duſt, he knows the houſes, the dwellings of the dead diſtinctly; and though many thouſands be thruſt and throng'd into one houſe, into one grave, yet God knoweth how to diſtinguiſh every mans duſt, and will in the day of the reſurrection give him his own again. *Job*'s faith was raiſed to this pitch of confidence (*Chap.* 19. 26, 27.) *Though after my skin worms deſtroy this body, yet in my fleſh ſhall I ſee God, whom I ſhall ſee for my ſelf, and mine eyes ſhall behold, and not another,* (or not a ſtranger) *though my reins be conſumed within me, or in my boſom.* There *Job* ſpake his aſſurance of a perſonal reſurrection, as here of his perſonal death. *I know thou wilt bring me to death, and to the houſe appointed for all living.* But how then? Or what thoughts had *Job* further of his condition, when houſed in the grave? He tells us that in the next verſe.

Verſe 24. **Howbeit, he will not ſtretch out his hand to the grave, though they cry in his deſtruction.**

This verſe hath many textual difficulties ariſing both from the doubtful conſtruction of the words together, and their ſignification taken aſunder. So that 'tis ſomewhat uncertain which to conclude or pitch upon, as alſo whether the whole ſenſe of the verſe ſhould be connected, with that which precedes, or with that which followeth after; yet that which ariſeth either way, or from any of the readgiven, as it is a uſeful truth, ſo it is that which may well comply with *Job*'s ſcope and preſent purpoſe:

Howbeit, he will not ſtretch out his hand to the Grave: As if he had ſaid, *Though I know God will bring me to the Grave, or houſe appointed for all living, yet* (or *nevertheleſs*) I know and am very confident, *he will not ſtretch out his hand to the Grave.*

But what means he, by **ſtretching out the hand to the Grave**?

I anſwer; As the hand of man notes the power of man, ſo doth the hand of God his power; and *to ſtretch out the hand,* may have a twofold ſignificancy, both according to Scripture language, and common uſage.

Firſt, To ſtretch out the hand, ſignifies to help, ſuccour, and deliver. We ordinarily deſire a man to lend us his hand, when we deſire his help, and when we have a mind to help another, we uſe to put forth or ſtretch out our hand to him. *When* Peter *began to ſink, and cried, ſaying, Lord ſave me, immediately Jeſus ſtretched forth his hand, and caught him* (Matth. 14. 31.) The Apoſtles (*Acts* 4. 30.) pray, That the Lord *by ſtretching forth his hand to heal,* and by doing wonders by the Name of Jeſus Chriſt, would confirm them with boldneſs in preaching the Goſpel. To ſtretch out the hand to God, is an imploring of ſuccour and ſalvation from him (*Pſal.* 88. 9. and 143. 6.) And when the Lord would ſhew how ready he is to ſave and ſuccour us, he ſaith, *All the day long I have ſtretched out my hands unto a diſobedient and gain-ſaying people* (Rom. 10. 21.)

Secondly, To ſtretch forth the hand, is to put forth power to hurt and ſmite. Thus in the Book of *Exodus* (*Chap.* 3. 20.) the Lord threatens, *I will ſtretch out my hand, and ſmite* Egypt *with all my wonders.* And ſtill when *Moſes* brought thoſe wonderful plagues upon *Egypt,* he is ſaid to ſtretch out his hand upon it. In this tenour the Prophets often expreſs the dreadful diſpenſations of God, in the firſt appearances of them, as alſo in their continuance (*Iſa.* 9. 12, 13.) *Notwithſtanding all this, his anger is not turned away, but his hand is ſtretched out ſtill?* For what? To afflict, yea, to deſtroy and cut off his own people. Thus man puts forth or layeth his hand upon man, as it ſeems *Joſeph*'s Brethren were reſolved till *Reuben* took them off (*Gen.* 37. 22.) *Lay no hand upon him,* tis the word in this Text, *ſtretch not out thy hand upon him*; that is, do him no violence. (*Exod.* 24. 11.) *And upon the Nobles of the Children of* Iſrael, *he layed or ſtretched not his hand*; that is, God did not lay his wrathful hand upon them to deſtroy them, but *they did eat and drink*; that is, their health and ſtrength was graciouſly continued, or they felt no harm, notwithſtanding that viſion of God; of which *Jacob* took ſpecial notice (*Exod.* 32. 30.) *I have ſeen God face to face* (that is, I have had a clear apparition of God, though in humane ſhape wreſtling with me) *and my life is preſerved.*

Thus we ſee, That to ſtretch out the hand, is taken in Scripture both in a good and in an evil ſenſe, or that God doth ſometimes ſtretch out his hand to help and deliver, as alſo to hurt and deſtroy. In which of theſe two ſenſes *Job* ſaith here, that God will not *ſtretch out his hand to the grave,* ſhall be reſolved in the further explication of the Text.

עי *Acervus, cumulus eſt acervus proprie lapidum indigeſtus, unde pro deſolatione ſumitur.* Merc. *Tumulus à tumendo,*

Tue word which we render **Grave**, ſignifieth an *heap,* becauſe Graves are covered with a riſing earth, or are headed with ſtone. The Latine word notes *ſwelling,* becauſe the Grave ſwells upward as a heap of any thing doth. To be made a heap notes utter deſolation (*Jer.* 26. 18. *Mich.* 1. 6. *Chap.* 3. 17. as alſo *Pſal.* 79. 1.) where the holy Prophet breaks out into this paſſionate complaint, *O God, the Heathen are come into thine inheritance, thy holy Temple have they defiled; they have laid* Jeruſalem *on heaps*; which ſome underſtand thus, they have made *Jeruſalem* to be nothing but Graves. Such multitudes were cruelly ſlain and murdered, that *Jeruſalem* was (as it were) but *one grave.* It is ſaid of the Children of *Iſrael* (Numb. 21. 11.) where ſeveral of their journeys and pitchings are reported in their paſſage to *Canaan, They journeyed from* Oboth, *and pitched at* Jie Abarim, *in the Wilderneſs which is before* Moab, *toward the Sun riſing*; we put in the Margin, *Heaps of* Abarim. The word *Abarim,* ſignifies *Paſſengers,* or *Strangers,* or as ſome conceive and read it, *the Hebrews:* As if that word did not denote (as moſt expound it) the mountainous places of *Moab* in general, but ſome ſpecial place in the Country of *Moab,* ſo called from the many Graves of the *Hebrews* buried there in ancient times. It being ſuppoſed that *Heber* the Patriarch and root of the *Hebrews* was the firſt Prince or Chief of that Region after the Flood. So that from theſe ancient graves or heaps the place took its denomination. But I note that only by the way, there being no need to ſtay upon the proof of ſo plain a matter, That Graves or Tombs may well be called heaps, and both be expreſſed by one word. *He will ſtretch out his hand to the grave,*

Though they cry in his deſtruction.

That is, Though they who are ready to die and be carried to the grave make complaint, and ſupplication, when he is deſtroying them. In the ſame ſenſe that dying is called *periſhing,* 'tis called alſo *deſtruction*; death is the deſtruction of the outward man, or of the fleſh; death layes this high, ſtrong, and beautiful building of the body of man, or the bodies of thoſe men which are higheſt, ſtrongeſt, and moſt beautiful, low and level with the ground, yea, below the level or ſurface of the ground. Now that which not only defaceth, but pulls down ſo goodly a fabrick, and breaks in ſunder all our worldly relations and correſpondencies may juſtly bear this inglorious title, *Deſtruction.* And ſo theſe words of the Text, *Though they cry in his deſtruction,* carry this meaning; Though they cry when he, that is, God, is bringing them to deſtruction or death.

But though we have attained the meaning of the ſingle terms of this verſe; yet how to put them together, or what interpretation to give of them as put together, is not ſo eaſily attained; nor hath it a little divided the Judgments and apprehenſions of learned men, what to conclude upon. I intend not to ſtay in a diſcuſſion of all that hath been offered, but among the various interpretations given of this verſe, there are only two which I ſhall a little inſiſt upon.

Firſt, That *Job* here ſets forth the reſolvedneſs of God to bring him to the grave, and ſo doth but purſue what he ſpake in the former verſe, *I know he will bring me to death, and to the houſe appointed for all living*; I know alſo *that he will not ſtretch out his hand to the grave, though they cry in his deſtruction*; that is, though there be never ſo great a cry, never ſo many prayers or interceſſions made for me by my friends, when God is deſtroying me as to my fleſh, or taking away this life from me: God will not ſtretch out his hand to help or ſuccour me, to relieve or reſcue me out of the hand of the grave, let men mourn and take on in my behalf as much as they will. Thus the words ſeem to carry a ſenſe like thoſe of the Lord in the Prophet (*Jer.* 15. 1.) *Then ſaid the Lord unto me, though* Moſes *and* Samuel *ſtood before me* (that is, praying and crying that I would ſpare this people) *yet my mind could not be toward this people; caſt them out of my ſight, and let them go forth, ſuch as are for death to death,* &c. As if the Lord had ſpoken in the language of *Job,* Though they who have had greateſt favours from me, and have greateſt power with me, ſhould interpoſe and mediate even with ſtrongeſt cries, and moſt melting entreaties, that I would ſtretch out my hand to Death, to the Sword, to the Famine, to the Captivity, to deliver this people from thoſe evils, when I am about to bring them upon them, yet I would not. And thus here, *He will not ſtretch out his hand to the Grave, though they cry in his deſtruction.*

Hence Note, *God can do the greateſt and hardeſt things with eaſe.*

What is more eaſie then for a man to ſtretch or to put out his hand; if God would but ſtretch out his hand to the grave, he could help up thoſe who are ready to ſink into it, yea, thoſe who are in it. A word from God gave all things their being, and the very intimation of an act from God, (the ſtretching out of the hand is no more) reſtoreth any man to his well being. We may take the Obſervation in both ſences of ſtretching out the hand ; God can do the greateſt things for our help, or for our hurt, by putting out his hand. All the plagues of *Egypt*, were wrought by the ſtretching out of Gods hand ; and all the deliverances that God wrought for his people, were wrought by ſtretching out his hand. A ſtretched out hand, implies both the ſtrength of God to deliver, and how eaſie a thing it is for God to work our deliverance. Thus the Lord ſpake (*Pſal.* 81. 13, 14.) *O that my people had hearkned unto me : And* Iſrael *had walked in my wayes : I ſhould ſoon have ſubdued their enemies, and turned my hand againſt their Adverſaries.* How ſoon can God both ſubdue Enemies and ſave his people, who can do both with the turning of his hand. *That God will have any thing done, is ſufficient for the doing of it.* And if his will be not for the doing of a thing, it cannot be done by any power. He will not ſtretch out his hand to the grave (ſaith *Job* ;) therefore, when he brings me thither, I muſt lie by it, I muſt abide there.

Secondly, From the ſenſe of the whole verſe already given.

> Note, *There is no recovery out of the grave, as to this world, when once we die.*

No hand can fetch us thence but the hand of God, and he will not yet ſtretch out his hand to the grave. 'Tis a fundamental Article of faith, that God will ſtretch out his hand to the grave in the day of the reſurrection; he will bring all the dead out of their houſes in due time ; all men ſhall ſtand up before him, though none of the wicked ſhall be able to ſtand in Judgment. But that time is not yet come, and till it come the ſentence of death is irreverſible, upon all fleſh. What though God hath already ſtretched out his hand to the grave, for the raiſing of ſome perſons from the dead by a miraculous power ? Yet as thoſe few that have eſcaped death, make no breach upon the general truth, that all muſt die. So it doth not at all infringe this general truth, that God doth not ſtretch forth his hand to the grave, becauſe ſome have been raiſed and recovered out of it. *Job* knew there would be a returning at the reſurrection; he made a noble confeſſion of this faith at the nineteenth Chapter of this Book. And he was as much aſſured that in caſe he then died, God would not ſtretch out his hand to the grave, to fetch him from thence, either to a natural life, to eat, drink, and ſleep ; or to a civil life, to buy, and ſell, and rule as he had done ; no nor to ſuch a ſpiritual life of ſerving and praiſing him in this world, as he had lived to that day. This was the reaſon why *David* did ſo earneſtly deprecate death (*Pſal.* 6. 4, 5.) *Return, O Lord, deliver my ſoul,* (that is, me from death) *O ſave me* (from the grave he meant) *for thy mercies ſake ; for in death there is no remembrance of thee : In the grave who ſhall give thee thanks ?* And again, (*Pſal.* 30. 9.) *What profit is there in my blood, when I go down to the pit ? Shall the duſt praiſe thee ? Shall it declare thy truth !* And as theſe Scriptures ſhew that the dead do not praiſe God , ſo thoſe bemoaning queſtions of diſtreſſed, almoſt diſtracted *Heman*, ſhew that God will not by any preſent ſtretching out of his hand miraculouſly raiſe the dead to praiſe him, (*Pſal.* 88. 10.) *Wilt thou ſhew wonders to the dead ? Shall the dead ariſe and praiſe thee ? Selah.* His meaning is, they that are once dead, ſhall not be raiſed to praiſe God again here, but ſhall be detained Priſoners under the power of death till the general reſurrection. So that, as the dead cannot praiſe God, ſo they ſhall not be raiſed to praiſe God in a mortal ſtate. *The living, the living, they ſhall praiſe him,* as *Hezekiah* ſaid in his ſong of praiſe, having eſcaped the grave (*Iſa.* 38. 18.) *For the grave,* (that is they who are gone to the grave) *cannot praiſe thee ; death* (that is, the dead) *cannot celebrate thee. They that go down to the pit cannot hope for thy truth* ; that is, for the fulfilling of any of thoſe promiſes which thou haſt made to thy people concerning the bleſſings of this life, whether perſonal or publick ; and hence he infers, *the living, the living, he ſhall praiſe thee* (that is, it is his duty to praiſe thee, and he hath yet an opportunity to praiſe thee) *as I do this day,* (and purpoſe to tranſmit it to poſterity, that thy praiſes may laſt in this World, as long as the world laſts) *the Father to the Children ſhall make known thy truth.* As if he had ſaid, Had I died of this ſickneſs , and gone to my grave , I had not performed this duty of praiſing thee , *as I do this day,* nor could I have left the memorial of this mercy for thy praiſe to after-ages. *He will not ſtretch out his hand to the grave, though they cry in his deſtruction.*

> Thirdly, Hence Note, *There's uſually a great cry when God either takes, or is about to take men out of the world by death.*

There is a cry of ſupplication when he is about to do it, and a cry of lamentation when it is done, eſpecially when it is done in an unuſual manner. As in that laſt plague upon *Egypt*, the ſlaying of all their firſt-born in one night, by an immediate ſtroak from God, (*Exod.* 12. 30.) *And* Pharaoh *roſe up in the night, he and all his ſervants, and all the* Egyptians, *and there was a great cry in* Egypt ; *for there was not an houſe where there was not one dead.* And when bloody *Herod* had murdered the Infants, *then* (Matth. 2. 17, 18.) *was fulfilled that which was ſpoken by* Jeremy, *the Prophet, ſaying, In* Rama *was there a voice heard, lamentation and weeping, and great mourning,* Rachel *weeping for her Children, and would not be comforted becauſe they are not* ; that is, becauſe they are dead, and died thus, and are not any more for this world. 'Tis no eaſie matter to part with thoſe we love, eſpecially when they are a part of our ſelves, as children are and other neer relations may be ſaid to be. Our fear of loſing friends, will provoke us to cry in praying, and our ſorrow for their loſs will cauſe us to cry in lamenting. *Job* ſpeaks of this cry as of what was uſually heard in ſuch ſad caſes ; *Though they cry in his deſtruction,*

> Note, Fourthly, *As no crying can prevail with God, to fetch thoſe from the grave, who are once dead ; ſo prayer cannot prevail to preſerve any alive when the appointed time of death is once come.*

The Apoſtle *James* aſſerts (*Chap.* 5. 15.) *The prayer of faith, ſhall ſave the ſick* ; but prayer doth not raiſe the dead. Some have had a faith of miracles for healing the ſick, but that (I conceive) is not the faith which the Apoſtle intends when he ſaith, *the prayer of faith, ſhall ſave the ſick* : Ordinary faith in truth and ſtrength may do that. *David* ſpake as if he had been redeemed not from ſickneſs, but from death, (*Pſal.* 30. 2, 3.) *O Lord, thou haſt brought forth my ſoul from the grave.* But was *David*'s ſoul in the grave ? His body had not then been in the grave, and therefore ſurely his ſoul was not ; and if his body had been in the grave, yet his ſoul could not. The ſoul is a ſpiritual ſubſtance and immortal ; the ſoul dieth not, therefore it is not buried ; How then ſaith *David, Thou haſt brought forth my ſoul from the grave ?* I anſwer : The ſoul is there put for the man or for the perſon. But it ſeems then, *David* was in the grave, and God ſtretcht out his hand to fetch him thence ? I anſwer, by the grave in the Pſalm we are to underſtand, great dangers, deadly dangers. And ſo, *David*'s meaning is only this, *O Lord, thou haſt brought me forth from thoſe evils, and troubles , which I feared would certainly bring me to my grave* ; I have eſcaped the grave very narrowly, I was in my own thought, and in the thoughts of others a dead man , but thou haſt redeemed me from the ſnares and fears of death. The Apoſtle hath a like expreſſion (2 *Cor.* 1. 9, 10.) *We had the ſentence of death in our ſelves, that we ſhould not truſt in our ſelves, but in God who raiſeth the dead. Who hath delivered us from ſo great a death, and doth deliver, in whom alſo we truſt, that he will yet deliver.* This great death was a deadly danger , from which the Apoſtles were delivered ; and in that ſenſe, God often ſtretcheth out his hand to the grave , or to death ; he delivers thoſe who are ready to periſh, or who look on themſelves as *free among the dead* : But for thoſe that are dead properly, we have no warrant to believe that God will ſtretch out his hand to their grave, though they cry in his deſtruction. It is not matter of duty, but of preſumption , to ſeek God by prayer for the return of the dead to life.

So much of theſe words in their firſt ſcope, as if *Job* would here ſet forth, the ſetled purpoſe of God concerning his death, as if he had ſaid, I know I ſhall go to the grave, and there is no fetching me back from thence, *he will not ſtretch out his hand*

hand to the grave, though they cry in his deſtruction, when he hath deſtroyed them.

Secondly, The ſcope of this verſe may be thus conceived, as if *Job* had ſpoken theſe words to comfort himſelf in that ſuppoſition, that he ſhould preſently die; *I know he will bring me to death, to the place appointed for all living; howbeit, he will not ſtretch forth his hand to the grave:* That is, I know he will not afflict me after I am dead, or when I am in the grave; though he ſtretch forth his hand upon me now while I am alive in my own houſe, yet he will not trouble me in that other houſe, my grave; there I ſhall have an end of, and be delivered from all my ſorrows, and ſufferings. Thus men greatly pained and afflicted uſe to comfort themſelves, when they have no comfort to expect in this life, that death will be a concluſion and a cure of all their pains and afflictions. It is uſually ſaid, that when old age is a mans diſeaſe, there is no cure, no medicine for it but death; and it is as true of ſome troubles and griefs which we may meet with before we are old, there is no remedy left for us but death, or death will be our certain remedy, for then they muſt leave us. And then the meaning of that latter clauſe of the verſe,

Sane precatio non porrigit manum (quamvis) in contractione illius (*ſit*) clamor. i. e. *tam certe non proderunt preces ad Deum, quamvis ſoleant homines tempore calamitatis clamare ad Deum.* Vatabl. *Poſſunt iſta verba hominis vehementèr dolentis atque ſui cruciatus medicinam & ſolatium quaerentis non ex alio, quā ex ipſa morte.* Pined. *Hoc ipſum me non nihil ſolatur, quod quantumvis fruſtra clament calamitoſi dum conteruntur: tamen Dei manus cadaver ſemel ſepultum & omnis ſenſus expers amplius non attinget.* Bez.

Though they cry in his deſtruction, may be thus underſtood; Though other men or I my ſelf cry and complain under his hand, while he is bringing death upon me or them, yet being once dead, nor they nor I ſhall complain any more.. Some read the words with an Interrogation, *He will not ſtretch out his hand to the grave; Is there any cry in his deſtruction?* That is, do men cry any more when once God hath ſent them to the grave? There's no crying there; therefore no ſenſe of any ſuffering there; if harm or pain were felt in death or in deſtruction, men would cry there; But is there any cry in his deſtruction? or when he hath deſtroyed men? Surely there is none: *Who ever heard a dead man cry?* This argues, that God ſtretcheth not forth his hand to the grave, or that when men die they are paſt all ſorrow. This, I conceive, to be the pain ſcope of the words.

Hence Obſerve, *Death puts an end to all our troubles; God will not ſtretch forth his hand to the grave.*

When we are once paſt this life, we are paſt the line of affliction; when we are out of this world, we are got beyond the confines of ſorrow; God will not ſtretch forth his hand to the grave; there we are in ſanctuary, or under covert. As there is no counſel nor work, nor device in the grave (*Eccleſ.* 9. 10.) ſo no trouble nor affliction there. That which is propheſied as a fruit of the wonderful reſtoring of the Church in the latter dayes (*Rev.* 7. 17. *Chap.* 21. 4.) *God ſhall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there ſhall be no more death, neither ſorrow, nor crying, neither ſhall there be any more pain, for the former things are paſſed away.* Now, I ſay, as it ſhall be in that day of the Churches bleſſed reſtitution, all tears ſhall be wiped away from the eyes of all the godly; ſo when any one goeth to the grave, all tears are then wiped away from his eyes; there is no more pain, no more ſorrow, no more crying there; as *Job* ſhewed at large in the third Chapter, *ver.* 17, 18, 19. *There the weary be at reſt; the Servant is free from his Maſter.* As death is the cure of all diſeaſes, ſo of all our ſorrows; *Death is our redemption from affliction, and the reſurrection will be our redemption from death;* and therefore the reſurrection is called *the day of redemption,* that is, of our bodies; then we ſhall be recovered from the captivity of the grave, as now the grave is a redemption from our captivity under affliction and ſorrow.

פיד *Oppreſſio, caſus vel eventus malus.* Prov. 24. 22.

Afflictis ſepulchrum redemptio eſt,

But it may be objected, Is there an end of ſorrow when we go to the grave?

I anſwer; There is in reference to the godly, or true Believers; there's an end alſo of bodily ſufferings to the wicked, they know no more thoſe kind of ſufferings which they felt in the world, when once they are houſed in the grave; yet then they are under the worſt of ſufferings; for though God will not ſtretch forth his hand to the grave, to afflict their bodies, yet he will ſtretch forth his hand to hell to afflict their ſouls. Chriſt giveth that warning (*Luke* 12. 5.) *Fear not them, who when they have killed the body, have no more that they can do* (men have done their worſt when they have kill'd the body) *but* (ſaith Chriſt) *I will forewarn you, whom you ſhall fear, fear him, which after he hath killed the body, hath power to caſt you into hell; yea, I ſay, fear him.* It is a miſerable comfort that many carnal men take to themſelves in their preſent ſorrows and ſufferings; O (ſay they) we ſhall die ſhortly, and then we ſhall be out of our pains: Alas! when wicked men die, though they get out of one kind of pain, and miſery, yet they fall into thoſe miſeries which are a thouſand times worſe; they go out of the ſcorching Sun into the conſuming fire; all the miſery they indure on this ſide the grave, is but as the exceſſive heat of the Sun to the hotteſt fire, in compariſon of what they ſhall indure. They who die in their ſins ſhall find death the beginning of infinitely worſe ſorrows, then thoſe to which it puts an end. Though there be no tears, no ſorrows in the grave, to which the body goes, yet in hell (which is the grave of wicked mens ſouls as ſoon as they dye, and will be the everlaſting grave both of their ſouls and bodies, when they riſe again; in hell, I ſay) there is weeping, and wailing, and gnaſhing of teeth for evermore. Therefore let no unbeliever or prophane perſon pleaſe himſelf with this, that his ſufferings will be over in the grave; for the wrath of God will burn againſt ſuch for ever; and that which is ſaid by the Prophet will be fulfilled upon them, yet *the anger of God is not turned away, but his hand will be ſtretched out ſtill.* As this is often verified in the renewing, and reviving of temporal Judgments upon the impenitent in this life; ſo much more in pouring eternal vengeance upon them in the life which is to come. The very blind Heathens had a notion, that though death gave eaſe to good men, yet it increaſed the torment of evil men; they had ſome glimmerings of this, though no faith about it. What elſe means that Fable or Fiction of theirs, concerning the puniſhment to which *Titius* was adjudged? That while his bowels were eaten out by a Vultur, his bowels were renewed as faſt as the Vultur eat them, that ſo his torment might be everlaſting. The ſame reaſon is aſſigned by heatheniſh antiquity, why they feigned the heart of *Prometheus* growing as faſt as the Eagle fed upon it, that ſo the Eagle might never want food, nor *Prometheus* pain. This is moſt true in the ſenſe here intended, the hand of the Lord will be ſtretcht out for ever, to rend the bowels of the wicked, yet their bowels ſhall for ever grow, and their pain for ever renew. As wicked men, could they have lived alwayes here, would have ſinned alwayes; ſo where they ſhall alwayes live, they ſhall alwayes ſuffer. And their ſufferings ſhall not only be continued beyond this life, but increaſed. The little finger of the Lord will be heavier upon them, after they are out of the world, then his whole loins were in this world; here they are whipped with Cords, but there they ſhall with Scorpions. As for the Godly, they may take theſe three Corollaries from this general truth, with reſpect to their condition after death.

Ne unquam deſit Aquila pabulum aut Prometheo *dolor.*

Firſt *Death is good to thoſe that are good*; death carries them beyond the reach of affliction, and freeth them from all the evils of this life. (2 *Cor.* 5. 4.) *We groan earneſtly being burdened*: Believers would fain be rid of their burdens, they groan for another ſtate, in which they ſhall be unburdened. *As all groan naturally when they die, ſo Believers groan ſpiritually for death*; it is that which they would have, not for it ſelf, but that their burdens may be removed, and they have a full enjoyment of God. They are glad to be delivered from the burdens of fear, of care, of ſorrow, of pain, but moſt of all to be delivered from the burden of their corruptions, and temptations. Sin is the greateſt burden of all, and that which adds weight to all our other burdens. And there is not only a negative, but an affirmative or poſitive good in death to thoſe that are good, as it frees them from all thoſe things that are evil, ſo it is a means to let them into and lead them unto the full poſſeſſion and enjoyment of their chiefeſt good, *The preſence of God, in whoſe preſence there is* (not only no ſorrow, but) *fulneſs of joy, and at whoſe right hand there are* (not only no pains, but) *pleaſures for evermore!* Though while Believers live, they are in deaths often; yet once dying, they ſhall alwayes live.

Secondly, This comfort is in it; if death, and the grave free Believers from all their ſufferings, then the ſufferings of Believers (like the pleaſures of ſin) are but for a ſeaſon. This life is but ſhort, therefore the ſufferings of this life cannot be long. We ſpeak ſadly ſometimes, O our ſorrows, and our ſufferings are long-viſag'd, they look as if they would alwayes laſt. A little trouble is much to us, and if it continue long, we reckon it a kind of eternity; we quickly think the ſorrows and troubles of this life, ſo long and ſo broad, that they cannot be meaſured, yet our life is ſo narrow and ſhort, that we can hardly find any thing ſhort and narrow enough to meaſure it by. Our life at broadeſt is but as a *hand breadth*, and at longeſt 'tis but a *ſpan-long*. Certainly our ſorrows cannot be very broad, nor our afflictions very long, ſeeing our lives are ſo ſhort and narrow. Therefore the Apoſtle calls all our afflictions, even thoſe that are heavieſt, *light afflictions, which are but for a moment*; our afflictions can be but for a moment, becauſe our lives are but for a moment: So that if the afflictions of a Godly man be as long as his life, (and longer they cannot be) yet they are but ſhort and momentany. For the time of his life compared with all time is very ſhort, even a poor pittance and parcel of time, but the time of this life compared with eternity is but a moment, yea the times of all men that ever lived or ſhall live till time ſhall be no more, being laid or ſummed up together, and their total ſum compared with eternity, are but an indiviſible point or moment of time.

Thirdly, Let not true Believers fear the grave, for there they ſhall bury all their fears, nor let them mourn immoderately when their godly friends go to the grave, for then they ſhall neither weep nor mourn any more; why ſhould any be over-burthened with ſorrow for them, who are diſburden'd of all their ſorrows? Eſpecially why ſhould any mourn for *them* as men without hope, *who* are paſt not only all cauſe but all fear or poſſibility of mourning. 'Tis very uncomely to have any unquietneſs upon our ſpirits for their death, who being dead are at reſt.

There is yet a third ſcope of theſe words according to Mr. *Broughton*'s tranſlation, which joyns them with the verſe following; as if they did not hold out *Job*'s aſſurance of freedom from affliction, when he ſhould die, (as they have been already opened) but his compaſſion to thoſe who were in affliction while they and he lived: His tranſlation runs thus; *And prayed I not when plague was ſent, when hurt came to any, thereupon cryed I not?* This reading is very remote from ours; and it may ſeem ſtrange that the Original text ſhould bear it, or give it any countenance. But the ground and reaſon of this difference in the tranſlation ariſeth from the Hebrew word, which we render, *to the grave*, as if it conſiſted of two words; but Mr. *Broughton*, and ſome others, take thoſe two for own word, which ſignifieth *to pray, to requeſt or deſire*; hence he tranſlates, *prayed not I when plague was ſent?* That is, when God ſtretched forth his hand to plague or ſmite them; prayed not I when hurt and deſtruction came upon them? I did. Thus alſo the learned *Junius* reads the Text, *Was there not requeſt made when he ſent forth his hand? Was there not a cry for theſe things, in his oppreſſion?* Which he explains thus; *Did not I in the behalf of other calamitous men, beſeech God in a pious pitiful manner, when he was chaſtning them?* This reading and the Expoſition given upon it, fall in clearly with the next or twenty-fifth verſe, where *Job* puts the queſtion, *Did not I weep for him that was in trouble?* &c. Therefore I ſhall not ſtay to make out or improve this interpretation any further from this verſe, but remit it to that which follows.

בעי *In acervo*, עי *acervus, cumulus, eſt acervus proprie lapidū indigeſtus: unde pro deſolatione ſumitur.* Merc.

בעה *petiit, rogavit, quaſivit, oravit.*

Enimvero, annon poſtulatio fiebat cum immitteret manū? Non vociferatio propter iſta in oppreſſione ejus? Jun.

i. e. *Nonne aliorum calamitoſorum nomine deū flagellantem deprecabar pio & humano officio?* Jun.

VERS. 25, 26, 27.

Did not I weep for him that was in trouble? Was not my ſoul grieved for the poor?

When I looked for good, then evil came unto me: And when I waited for light, there came darkneſs.

My bowels boiled, and reſted not: The dayes of affliction prevented me.

IN theſe words, and thoſe that follow to the end of the Chapter, *Job* doth two things principally.

Firſt, He ſheweth, how he had formerly carried himſelf, or what heart he had towards them who were in the depths of miſery, himſelf being then in the height of proſperity, this he affirms by way of queſtion in the twenty-fifth verſe, *Did not I weep for him that was in trouble?* &c. Surely I did.

Secondly, He tells us how himſelf had been diſappointed and fruſtrated either in his expectation of like compaſſions from men, in the day of his perſonal troubles, or in his expectation of good from God, or in both. And this he doth in the twenty-ſixth and twenty-ſeventh verſes; *When I looked for good, then evil came unto me*, &c. And I found none to comfort me in the midſt of all my evils; *My bowels boiled, and reſted not*, &c. Once *Job* had no troubles, but thoſe of other men, and when he had troubles ſtore of his own, he received no help from other men.

Verſ 25. **Did not I weep for him that was in trouble?**

In this verſe *Job* ſets forth the ſympathizing frame of his ſpirit with the ſorrows of others in the midſt of his own joyes and outward enjoyments. When he (Good man) ſaw any caſt down with or wrapt up in affliction, how was it with him? He made himſelf a partaker of their affliction, or a partner in it, and ſhared in their troubles with them.

Did not I weep?] The words in the letter of the Hebrew carry in them the nature of an Oath, and include a ſecret imprecation upon himſelf: As if he had ſaid, *If I did not weep for him that was in trouble, let God require it; let me ſuffer any evil, if I did not grieve in a true ſence of the evils which others ſuffered*; Or thus, *God knoweth, or God is my witneſs, If I have not mourned when I ſaw any man in miſery.* And here we may take notice once for all, that from this verſe to the end of the next Chapter, *Job* uſeth this manner of ſpeech eighteen times, joyning imprecations all along with his aſſertions, to clear his own innocency, and free himſelf from thoſe blames and crimes which his ſuſpicious and cenſorious friends had fixed upon him.

In Hebræo eſt reticentia quædam, quaſi cum Juramento imprecatorio Pined. *Quidlibet mali contingat, mihi ſi non flevi calamitoſis.* Tigur.

We tranſlate the words barely as an affirming queſtion; *Did not I weep for him that was in trouble?* That is, I did weep for him that was in trouble; no man can upon good ground deny, or diſprove what I profeſs in this matter.

Did not I weep, &c.] Weeping is the effect of ſorrowing; or weeping is the language of ſorrow, 'tis dropping at the eye or flowing out in tears; and tears are as ſo many real words, whereby we expreſs our grief; *Tears* (*as it hath been ſaid*) *have ſometime the weight of words*; they are the trueſt Rhetorick of a troubled ſoul, and have a prevailing winning *ſuada* or perſwaſiveneſs in them beyond the loudeſt and quainteſt Oratory, both with God and man. They ſay moſt, who ſay nothing but tears. *Job*'s was no dry ſorrow, his compaſſionate bowels melted and diſſolved into floods of tears, when he ſaw others ready to be ſwallowed up in the floods of ſorrow, *Did not I weep?* &c.

Interdum lacrymæ pondera vocis habent.

Weeping is of two ſorts in Scripture.

Firſt, For ſin, hence the tears of repentance; and in this ſenſe, from the word here uſed, that place, where the *Iſraelites* are deſcribed in a ſolemn work of repentance, had its name, (*Judg.* 2. 1, 4, 5.) *An Angel of the Lord came up from* Gilgal, *to* Bochim, *and ſaid, I made you to go up out of* Egypt, &c. *And it came to paſs when the Angel of the Lord, ſpake theſe words unto all the Children of* Iſrael, *that the people lift up their voice and wept, and they called the name of the place* Bochim (that is, *weepers,*) *and they ſacrifiſed there unto the Lord.* This was a publick weeping, and one of the moſt ſolemn exerciſes of repenting ſorrow, that we meet with in the whole Book of God. That people being under a ſore rebuke for their diſobedience, and that by an Angel of God, or God the Angel, called in Scripture, the Angel of the Covenant Chriſt Jeſus, as might be cleared by many arguments from the Text, if that were my buſineſs here, (being I ſay, under this rebuke, they) mourned and wept ſo much before the Lord, that the place was called *Bochim* or *Weepers*. We read of the *Valley of* Baca, (*Pſal.* 84. 6.) which word *Baca* in the Hebrew, is there rendred by ſome *Mulberry-trees*, which are moſt apt to grow in dry ſandy places, and ſo that text is tranſlated by the learned Hebricians, who paſſing through *the valley of Mulberry-trees make it a well*; that is (ſay ſome) though it was a dry place, yet they being in their paſſage to the place of

Gods worſhip were not diſcouraged with the heat and drought of it, but counted it as a well of refreſhing waters. This is a very pious and ſpiritual ſenſe of thoſe words in the Pſalm; yet the Septuagint render, *As they paſs through the valley of weeping*; as it that were a known place where there had been much weeping, or where they uſed to weep in a holy manner before the Lord. And one of the Ancients expounds it particularly of that valley called *Bochim*, before ſpoken of in the ſecond Chapter of the Book of the *Judges*. Yea, ſome Criticks tell us, That the *Mulberry-tree* hath its name in the Hebrew from weeping; becauſe that fruit being full of Juice, drops as the eye doth tears. But I need n t ſtay upon ſuch difficult Scriptures to find out weepers for ſin. It was *David*s ſin, rather then his ſickneſs, or the remembrance of his ſin in his ſickneſs, which cauſed him *to make his bed to ſwim all the night, and* (by day) *to water his couch with tears*. Strange Hyperboles of holy ſorrow (*Pſal.* 6. 6.) And the Evangeliſt reports of *Peter*, that he no ſooner remembred his ſin in denying his Maſter, but he preſently *went out and wept bitterly* (Luke 22. 62.) Now as there is a weeping for ſin, ſo

τῶ κλαυθμῶνος. Sept. *Fletus*, Hier. à בכה *cum He in fine, quod eſt flere. Baſilius de certa quadam valle intelligit, quæ Judicũ ſecundo locus Flentiũ dicitur* Muſ. *in* Pſal *Morum à fletu dictam veriſimile eſt, forte propter ſuccum quem inſtar lachrymæ fructus fundit.* Leigh. Crit. Sacr. ex Fulleri Concerd. Hebr.

Secondly, There is weeping under ſufferings: And theſe ſufferings are of two ſorts.

Firſt, Our own ſufferings; when the Lord layeth heavy afflictions upon us, we ought not to be as ſtocks and ſtones unſenſible of his hand, but to mourn and weep under his chaſtiſements. If we do not, we deſpiſe his chaſtenings, againſt which the Apoſtle by Scripture Authority cautions all the Sons of God (*Heb.* 12. 5.)

Secondly, There is a weeping for the ſufferings of others, which is properly called the weeping of Compaſſion: Tears often diſtil from the ſenſe of thoſe evils which are upon our friends and brethren. Thus ſaith *Job*, *Did not I weep?* His was not a weeping either for his ſin, or for his ſufferings, he was in great proſperity in that time to which this act refers, but he wept for the ſufferings of others, as is expreſs in the Text, *Did not I weep*

For him that was in miſery?] The Hebrew is, *For him that was in a hard day*: So Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates, *Did not I weep for the hard of dayes?* That is, for him that was in a hard day: We ſay of troubleſome times, they are *hard times*; many live in hard and troubleſome dayes, or have a hard time of it, while the times are fair and ſerene to others. The word is uſed two wayes: Firſt, In an active ſenſe, and ſo it notes men who are ſo hard, that is, have ſo hardned themſelves, that there is no dealing with them, nor perſwading of them (*Ezek.* 2. 4.) *They are impudent Children, and ſtiff hearted, I do ſend thee unto them, and thou ſhalt ſay unto them, thus ſaith the Lord*, &c. The Hebrew is, *Children hard of face*; that is, ſuch whoſe faces (as we ſay) are ſteeled, or who are *brazen-faced*. 'Tis ſaid in the third Chapter of the ſame Book at the ſeventh verſe, *But the houſe of* Iſrael *will not hearken unto thee, for they will not hearken unto me, for all the houſe of* Iſrael *are impudent and hard-hearted*; we put in the Margin, *Stiff of forehead, and hard of heart*; that is, ſuch as have hardened their hearts againſt my fear, againſt my counſel and commands. Secondly, The word is uſed in a paſſive ſignification; when any paſs through difficulties, we ſay, they are hard put to it, or have a hard day of it. Thus (*Gen.* 35. 16.) *Jacob and his retinue journeyed from* Bethel, *and there was but a little way to come to* Ephrath; *and* Rachel *travailed, and ſhe had hard Labour*: *Rachel* being on her Journey fell in travail, and (as we ſay) ſhe *had a hard bargain of it*; it was a hard day with her, for ſhe dyed. That good Woman *Hannah* being much provoked prayed much, but *Eli* thought her to be drunken, no, ſaith ſhe, *My Lord, I am a woman of a ſorrowful ſpirit* (1 *Sam.* 1. 15.) the word is that in the Text, *I am a woman of a hard ſpirit*; that is, I am under a great deal of hardſhip, and trouble, hard things are put upon me, and I have eaſed my ſoul (which is the beſt eaſe of ſouls) by prayer. Thus the confuſed and troubleſome ſtate of the wicked is expreſſed (*Iſai.* 8. 21.) *And they ſhall paſs through it hardly beſtead, and hungry, and it ſhall come to paſs, that when they ſhall be hungry, they ſhall fret themſelves, and curſe their King, and their God, and look upward.* The hard things which they ſuffered raiſed hard thoughts and hard words, both of their chief among men, and of their God; they curſed their King, who, as they ſuppoſed, brought them into thoſe ſtraits; and they ſpake no better of their God, who did not deliver them out of their ſtraits, or when they *were hard beſtead and hungry*. As theſe men curſed him who brought them into, or would not deliver them out of a hard day, ſo *Job* wept when he ſaw any in it. *Did not I weep for him that was in a hard day?* That is, in a hard or troubleſome condition.

Si non flevi ei, cui durus dies, i e. *cui dura & gravis conditio.* δυσήμερος. Cdc. Per durum diem *illum ſpecialitèr intelligit cui gravis aliqua & acerbiſſima afflictio contigerat.*

And was not my ſoul grieved for the poor?

In the former part of the verſe, *Job* ſpake of external ſorrow; *Did not I weep?* Weeping is ſorrow expreſſed; in this latter part of the verſe, *Job* ſpeaks of internal ſorrow, or ſorrow conceived, *Was not my ſoul grieved?* It is poſſible for a man to weep and have tears in his eyes, when he hath no ſorrow in his heart: Some weep for their ſins, who do not grieve for them; and ſome weep for the ſorrows and troubles of others, when their heart is not affected, much leſs afflicted with their troubles; but ſaith *Job*, *Was not my ſoul grieved* (within me) *for the poor?* Was I not inwardly and really grieved? Mine was not an hypocritical ſhew or ſhadow of ſorrow, but my ſorrow came from my heart; as my heart was grieved for my own tranſgreſſions, ſo for the afflictions of the poor. As the rejoycing of the ſoul is the greateſt rejoycing, *My ſoul magnifieth the Lord, and my ſpirit rejoyceth in God my Saviour*, ſaid the Virgin; that is, I greatly rejoyce; ſo the ſorrow of the ſoul is the greateſt ſorrow.

Was not my ſoul grieved?] There is an Elegancy in the word, and 'tis uſed only in this one place all the Scripture over; and I find a twofold rendring of it.

Firſt, Some with reference to water, *Was not my ſoul like a pool, or a lake of water?* I did not only ſhed tears from mine eyes without, but my ſoul within was as a ſpring of water: As if he had ſaid, *My tears came from the fountain of my heart, or I was heartily ſorry for the poor.*

Secondly, Others, though poſſibly with too much curioſity, yet not without probability, take up the metaphor from that other Element, *Fire*; an Hebrew word of near affinity to it, ſignifying *to burn*; and ſo this clauſe is rendred. *Did not my ſoul burn for the poor?* The former tranſlation ſeems to ſay, that he had ſprings of water in him: And this latter, that he had ſecret flames of fire burning in his breaſt while he beheld the troubles of the poor. 'Tis not unſutable to Scripture language, to ſay a man burns with ſorrow: The Apoſtle *Paul* ſo expreſſeth his affections to the Churches, and his grief for any trouble appearing among them (2 *Cor.* 11. 29.) *Who is offended, and I burn not?* With what did *Paul* burn? He burned with ſorrow, with grief. Mr. *Broughton* gives this tranſlation of *Job*'s Text, *Did not my ſoul burn for the poor?* Implying that *Job*'s bowels were even fired with compaſſion. As there is an ardency of love and deſire, ſo of grief and ſorrow for their ſufferings whom we love, and whoſe welfare we deſire. The Septuagint render it as we upon the matter, *My ſoul ſighed or groaned ſeeing a man in ſtraits or neceſſities*; Such are the poor.

עגם *Doluit, triſtis, triſtatus fuit ſunt qui exponunt*, reſtagnavit lachrymas anima mea; ab אגם *quaſi* ע *pro* א *ſit poſitũ quod forſan ſubtilius eſt.* Merc. *Sunt qui per* uri *exponunt quaſi affine ſit verbo* עור *quod eſt æſtulari*, &c. *nimis curioſè.* Merc.

Ἐστέναξα ἰδὼν ἄνδρα ἐν ἀνάγκαις. Sept.

The word *poor* hath been opened in other paſſages of this Book; only note there are two ſorts of poor; ſome are poor by pedigree; or in reference to their original condition, they were poor born, or beggars born, and never knew what it is to have riches, no nor a competency in the things of this life. We may call theſe naturally poor, as we may call others naturally rich, men born to great eſtates and inheritances. Of ſuch rich men we ſay proverbially, *Their Fathers were born before them*. Again, there are *providential poor*, or men made poor by ſome ſpecial croſs or afflicting diſpenſations: Thus many who were once rich, very rich, become poor; they looſe all by the unrighteous dealings of men, or by the righteous dealings of God, either as a puniſhment, or as a tryal. The great riches of ſome men is burnt or conſumed in an hour by fire, or wrackt and ſwallowed up in a moment by the waters. It is an affliction to be born poor; but it is a greater affliction for a man born, or made rich, to become poor. And this poor man is ſo much more the object of pity then the other; by how much to loſe much is more grievous to any man, then to have little. We may ſuppoſe *Job* was grieved for the poor of both ſorts, but eſpecially for the latter ſort of poor; *Was not my ſoul grieved for the poor?* Both branches of this verſe are, for matter, the ſame, or the difference between them is but this, that the one demonſtrates the reality of the other, or is a further Teſtimony of it. *Did not I weep for him that was in trouble? Was not my ſoul grieved for the poor?*

Hence Obſerve, *It is a duty to compaſſionate others in their afflictions.*

To weep for thoſe that are in hard dayes, to be grieved for thoſe that are pinch't and pin'd with poverty, is a duty to which we are called under a threefold Conſideration.

In humanum plane eſt humanis caſibus & calamitatibus non ingemiſcere. Dictum Mar. Anton.

Firſt, As men, being of the ſelf-ſame nature, mould and matter with them that are troubled or poor, even nature invites to ſympathize with thoſe that are of the ſame common nature. A Heathen ſaid, *'Tis inhumane not to grieve at humane calamities*; a beaſt will make a diſcovery of ſomewhat like this towards other beaſts; how much more ſhould man towards man!

Secondly, We are to compaſſionate thoſe that are poor or in trouble, not only as being in the ſame general nature, but as therefore being our ſelves ſubject to the ſame ſpecial troubles wherewith others are troubled, and to the ſame ſorrows wherewith any other are made ſorrowful. The Apoſtle gives us this argument, (*Heb.* 13. 1, 2, 3.) *Let brotherly love continue; be not forgetful to entertain ſtrangers; for thereby ſome have entertained Angels unawares.* And at the third verſe, *Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them, and them which ſuffer adverſity, as being your ſelves alſo in the body*; that is, alive in the body, and ſo obnoxious to the like ſufferings. What hath fallen upon any man in the body, may fall upon another whileſt he is in the body; as all men have one common nature, ſo in that common nature they may quickly meet with the ſame common afflictions. As the Apoſtle comforts and encourageth the *Corinthians* to bear up againſt all thoſe troubles which had befallen them, or might befal them for the profeſſion of the Goſpel, and keeping the worſhip pure, becauſe *no temptation* (that is affliction) *had taken them, but ſuch as is common to man* (or a *humane temptation*) (1 *Cor* 10. 13.) So it ſhould move us to pity the afflicted becauſe no temptation hath taken them, but ſuch as is common to man; that is, ſuch as may take any man, and our ſelves may be taken with it as ſoon as any.

Thirdly, We ſhould compaſſionate the troubles of many, as being in the ſame faith with us; this conſideration reaches godly men only. One godly man ſhould compaſſionate another, as being a member of the ſame myſtical body. And upon this ground the Apoſtle calls the Church to this duty eminently, with reference to all the members of it, (*Rom.* 12. 15.) *Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love, rejoycing in hope,* (that is, of good to your ſelves) *patience in tribulation* (that is, under the evils which you ſuffer) Then follows (*ver.* 15.) *Rejoyce with them that rejoyce,* (that is, rejoyce at the good of others) *and weep with them that weep,* that is, at the evils which others ſuffer. He is full to this point again (1 *Cor.* 12. 26.) *And whether one member ſuffer, all the members ſuffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoyce with it*; that is, as it is unfailably and unfeignedly in the natural body, ſo it ought to be among or in the ſpiritual body of the Saints joyned in a holy Church-fellowſhip though they ſometimes fail in this duty) if one member ſuffer, all the members ſhould ſuffer with him, and if one be honoured, all ſhould rejoyce with him. *For* (as it follows, *ver.* 27.) *ye are the body of Chriſt, and members in particular,* or (or as the Greek hath it ſtrictly) *members of a part*; that is, ye are members of that Church which is a part of the univerſal Church, or *ye are members each one for his part,* according to the place or office which ye hold in the body; and therefore ye ſhould have a fellow-feeling of each others afflictions, as if every one of you were afflicted, when any one of you is afflicted.

And not only doth it become godly men to be full of ſympathizing affections one towards another, but in a degree towards all men, even their enemies; for them the Goſpel commands us to love. And though that be the new Commandment of love in Goſpel-times, yet we find it in uſe before that time. This was *David*'s practice, (*Pſal.* 35. 13, 14.) where ſpeaking of his enemies, who had rewarded him with evil for good, he makes this ſolemn profeſſion, *But as for me, when they were ſick, my cloathing was ſackcloth, I humbled my ſoul with faſting, and my prayer returned into my own boſome* (that is, I beſtowed hearty prayers upon, and whether they got any good by them or no, I am ſure I did, I found the comfort and the bleſſing of them in my boſome) nor did I only pray for them, but, *I behaved my ſelf as though he* (that is, every one of them) *had been my friend or brother; I bowed down heavily as one that mourneth for his Mother; but in my ſorrows they rejoyced.* *David*'s enemies could rejoyce in his ruine, yet he could not but mourn in that which was leſs then theirs. As God delighteth not in the death of a ſinner, ſo neither doth he that is godly. It grieves a godly man moſt to ſee others ſinful, rivers of tears ſhould run down our eyes, (as they did *David*'s) becauſe men kept not the Law of God, (*Pſal.* 119. 136.) and tears ſhould drop from our eyes when we ſee men under the revenging hand of God, for not keeping or tranſgreſſing his Law: How much more doth it become the Saints, as the Apoſtle counſels them, (*Col.* 3. 12.) *To put on as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies and kindneſs* towards each other, in any ſad and ſuffering condition. We ſhould put on not only bowels and mercy, *but bowels of mercy*; we ſhould be clothed with bowels of mercy, not only to grieve for the Saints that are in miſery, but to relieve them in and help them out of miſery. And therefore,

Further, Conſider *Job*'s tears are not barely to be taken for tears of compaſſion; ſo to weep for thoſe that are in trouble is but dry comfort, though we could weep Rivers and Floods of tears over them in their troubles. Compaſſion muſt be accompained with action, and our charity with liberality as we are able, to ſuccour and comfort thoſe that are in trouble, and to ſupply their neceſſities, Thus the Apoſtle both cautions and directs, (*James* 2. 15, 16.) *If a brother or ſiſter be naked and deſtitute of daily food, and one of you ſay unto them, depart in peace, be you warmed and filled: Notwithſtanding ye give them not thoſe things, which are needful to the body, what doth it profit?* To compaſſionate another with words and tears, and do no more, is an unprofitable compaſſion; what doth it profit, ſaith the Apoſtle? As to give others real relief will not hinder our profit, ſo to give them (as to bodily wants) only a verbal relief, doth not profit them. *Solomon* ſaith (*Prov.* 22. 9.) *He that hath a bountiful eye, ſhall be bleſſed; for he giveth of his bread to the poor.* He doth not ſay, he ſhall be bleſſed, becauſe, *he giveth good words to the poor,* (we may be bountiful of them good cheap, and the poor ſtarve for all that bounty) but *he that giveth his bread to the poor ſhall be bleſſed*; for he indeed is a bleſſing to the poor. Again, *Solomon* doth not ſay, He that interrogates the poor, and puts queſtions to them, how they came by their poverty? Some when the poor addreſs to them for ſome ſupply of their wants make it their buſineſs to query what brought them into want; which is as if a man being fallen into a pit of water the next paſſenger hearing his out-cry for help, ſhould only ask him how fell you in? but never lend him a hand or uſe any means to draw him out, (I ſay, *Solomon* doth not ſay, he that queſtions the poor how they came by their poverty) ſhall be bleſſed, but he that giveth of his bread to the poor. Our verbal compaſſions of the poor, are poor things, and our tears but dry things, unleſs we give them bread. The heart of Chriſt was full of trouble for us that were ſick and an trouble, but he ſtayed not there, he took care to deliver us out of our troubles, to cure us of our ſickneſſes, and to make us happy for ever. The Apoſtle minds us of theſe real compaſſions of Chriſt, to make us really compaſſionate, (2 *Cor.* 8. 9.) *Ye know the grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that though he was rich, yet for your ſakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich*; he did not only pity us in our poverty, but took a courſe to make us rich, and to ſet us up in a good and plentiful eſtate again, And he was fitted to ſuccour us in our ſufferings by a ſenſe of his own ſufferings. (*Heb.* 2. 18.) *For in that he himſelf hath ſuffered, being tempted, he is able to ſuccour them that are tempted.* Jeſus Chriſt hath transferred all our ſufferings to himſelf, and ſo giveth us help in our wants through a ſenſe of what himſelf once wanted and ſuffered. This the Apoſtle had aſſigned as the reaſon why he ſubmitted to a ſuffering condition, (*verſ.* 17.) *Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful high Prieſt in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the ſins of the people.* Jeſus Chriſt was merciful before he took our nature, God is infinitely merciful, and Chriſt as the Son or ſecond perſon in the Trinity, thought no robbery to be equal with God, and therefore muſt needs be infinitely merciful before he took our nature) but he was not merciful by way of Compaſſion, or as having a ſympathy with us, or a ſence of our ſorrows, and ſufferings upon him, from his own experience, as he was God; as ſuch purely he could not be ſenſible of our ſorrows in that way. And for this cauſe (among many other cauſes) he became man, that ſo he might be ſenſible of them, and that having taken our ſorrows upon himſelf, he might give us a ready relief and help out of them. This is compleat Charity, when our compaſſions are active for the relief of thoſe that are in miſery. I grant if we compare heart-compaſſion and hand-relief together, the former is in it ſelf more excellent then the latter; for he that gives relief, offers ſomewhat out of himſelf, but he that beſtows compaſſion upon another, gives him ſomewhat of himſelf, or from within himſelf, he gives him his heart and good will, which is better then any external gift; yet if any man ſhall think he hath done enough, (it being in his power to do more) for an afflicted friend or brother, when he hath pitied him and beſtowed a parcel of good words only upon him, let him know he hath done nothing at all for him. *Compaſſion is better then the fruits of it, but compaſſion without fruit is not good.* He that gives a cup of cold water only, (where need is) in compaſſion, ſhall not loſe his reward, but compaſſion alone (where cold water is needed, and we have it to give) ſhall have no reward.

Exterior largiens rē extra ſemet ipſum præbuit, qui autem fletū & compaſſionem porximo tribuit aliquid de ſemetipſo dedit. Greg. Moral.

Laſtly, If it be a duty to weep for thoſe that are in hard days, and to be grieved for the poor; then

Firſt, How ſhort are they of their duty, that rejoyce not only in, but at the ſorrows of others, and who are glad of their grief? The wickedneſs of ſuch was ſhewed (*verſ.* 9.)

Secondly, How ſhort are they of this duty, who in hard days upon others, in ſtead of pitying and weeping for them, upbraid them with their troubles, and caſt their afflictions in their teeth. Such natural and cruel men, have alſo been branded from other paſſages of this Book and Chapter.

Thirdly, How far are they departed from this duty, who inſtead of weeping with thoſe that weep, do their beſt to render their condition worſe, to impoveriſh the very poor, and ſo inſtead of drying up and wiping off the tears of thoſe that weep, they make them weep more or afreſh. How deſervedly are they abhor'd both of God and good men, who and affliction to the afflicted, and put Gall and Wormwood into their cup, whoſe ſouls are in bitterneſs.

Secondly, The circumſtance of time is conſiderable, when *Job* was thus filled with pity and compaſſion; was it not in the height and flouriſh of this worldly wealth? Was it not when he was at eaſe in his Houſe, and had enough? Was it not when he was not in hard days? When trouble and poverty were far from him? Even then he wept for him that was in trouble, and his Soul was grieved for the poor.

Hence Obſerve, *A godly man layeth the troubles and wants of others to heart, when he himſelf is freeſt and furtheſt from trouble.*

Job being in ſuch proſperity, as he deſcribes in the 29. Chapter, had no cauſe to weep for any of his own concernments. The Candle of the Lord did ſhine upon his head, and the Rocks poured him out Rivers of oyl; yet then he was pouring out tears for the poor. Thus *Nehemiah* a godly man was the Kings Cup-bearer, and had (though a captive) not only liberty but the favour of the Prince; yet when he heard of the afflictions of his brethren that were in *Jeruſalem*, he could not then rejoyce in his perſonal enjoyments, but wept and looked ſo ſadly, that coming to do his office, the King took notice of it, and asked, *Art thou ſick?* The affliction of his brethren was his ſickneſs, and all the trouble that lay upon him, was the report of their trouble. When worldly men are at eaſe, they little think and care as little who is in pain; when they are warm, they think no body is a cold, and when they are full-fed, they ſcarce believe that any are hungry. When *David* wanting bread ſent meſſengers to *Nabal*, who made a feaſt at that time like a King, he would not take notice of his ſtraits, nor ſend him ſo much as a loaf of bread. O how many are there, who if they can but get into an earthly Paradiſe, never trouble themſelves with thoſe that are in a wilderneſs of trouble; ſick and poor, and wanting perſons, are as far from their hearts, as ſickneſs, poverty and want are from their Houſes. *Few feel that which others feel, till they feel it themſelves.* *Job* felt no trouble himſelf, but he felt the troubles of many others.

Take this Corollary from the whole.

The life of man in this World is trouble and ſorrow.

We are either dayly preſſed with our own ſufferings, or we ought to be with the ſufferings of others. Moſt times we are preſſed with burdens of our own; and if at any time we are not, yet there are burdens enow upon our friends and relations at home, or upon the people and Churches of God abroad to preſs us. We may well conclude from theſe premiſes, as old *Jacob* did, *Few and evil are the days of our pilgrimage*, for as they who have had moſt days have lived but a little while, ſo they who have had the beſt days have lived but with little eaſe, or (as we ſay) in a kind of *little eaſe*. What with our own ſorrows; what with the ſorrows of others, what have we elſe but ſorrow?

Job having thus ſhewed in what frame his heart was towards thoſe whom he ſaw afflicted with any evil, proceeds to ſhew how himſelf was diſappointed of that good which he expected.

Verſ. 26. **When I looked for good then evil came unto me.**

The word rendred, **looked for**, notes hope, which is an inward look, or the look of the mind. The Soul hath its eye as well as the body; there is an eye of faith in the Soul, looking upon the truth of the promiſe; and there is an eye of hope in the Soul, looking for the good of the promiſe. And until we look to the promiſe, believing the truth of it, we can never look to the promiſe hoping for the good of it. Thus *David* reſolved (*Pſal.* 121.1.) *I will lift up mine eyes upon the hills, from whence cometh my help, my help cometh from the Lord*, &c. What eyes did *David* lift up to the hills? Surely thoſe the holy faith and hope; and ſo did *Jod* when he ſaid here in the Text, *I looked*

For good.] What good? There is a threefold good; firſt, Natural, health and ſtrength; ſecondly, Civil, peace and plenty; thirdly, Moral or Spiritual good, the Grace and comforts of the Spirit, here in this place *Job* intends the two former ſorts of good, with the latter branch of the third; as if he had ſaid, I expected the continuance of my health and ſtrength, of my peace and plenty, as alſo of the joys and comforts of the holy Ghoſt; but when I looked for good, or that theſe good things ſhould abide with me,

Then evil came.] Evil is of two ſorts; firſt, of ſin; ſecondly, of ſufferings; the latter is meant here, *evil came*, that is, *trouble came, affliction came*; evil of as many ſorts came as the good was, for the continuance whereof I looked; evil came upon me (as we ſay) thick and threefold, it came upon me like an armed man, I could not withſtand, much leſs overcome it. *When I looked for good, then*, even in the midſt, in the height and heat of my expectations, *evil came.*

And when I waited for light.

The ſecond part of the verſe, is in ſence the ſame with the former; *light* here is the ſame in general with *good* there (as often elſewhere in Scripture) *I waited for light*; what then?

Then came darkneſs.] As *light* is the ſame with *good*, ſo darkneſs is the ſame with *evil*, and here (as often elſewhere in Scripture) Darkneſs is put for all ſorts of evil.

The words are plain, and need no labour of expoſition. I ſhall only note ſome things from them.

Firſt, in general, *Good men are often deceived of, and miſs their expectation in this world, eſpecially about the things of the World.*

A godly man hath a twofold expectation; firſt, about the things of the world to come; ſecondly, about the things of this world; a godly mans expectation ſhall not be loſt in reference to the things of the world to come, but he may loſe many of his expectations as to the things of this world. How often are we deceived in our expectations from men, and then moſt when we expect moſt from them? *Men are a lie,* (Pſal. 62. 9.) an active lie, they deceive others, and a paſſive lie, they are deceived by others; and they who are moſt actively a lie, are moſt uſually and moſt deſervedly a paſſive lie, or fed with lies. We may look for this and that at the hand of man, and meet with neither. (*Iſa.* 20. 5.) *They ſhall be afraid and aſhamed of* Ethiopia *their expectation, and of* Egypt *their glory*; that is, they who expected much help, and gloried or boaſted of the help, which they ſhould have from *Ethiopia* and *Egypt* (as the *Jews* and others did) looked ſo long for it that they were aſhamed to look any longer, and at laſt went without it; as is expreſſed in the words following (*v.* 6.) *And the inhabitants of this Iſle ſhall ſay in that day, behold, ſuch is our expectation whither we flee for help to be delivered* (that is, we ſee what is become of theſe *Ethiopians* and *Egyptians*, who undertook to protect us) *from the King of* Aſſyria, (they we ſee could not protect themſelves from the forces of *Aſſyria*) *and how ſhall we eſcape?* That is, we cannot eſcape by their means, we fly to *Ethiopia* and *Egypt* for help and deliverance from the King of *Aſſyria*, but their help is vain, they could not help themſelves. The help of man is often vain, when he gives us the beſt help which he hath promiſed; but ſome are ſo vain, that though they promiſe us help, they will not give it. (*Zech.* 9. 5.) Aſhkelon *ſhall ſee it and fear :* Gaza *alſo ſhall ſee it and be very ſorrowful : And* Ekron *for her expectation ſhall be aſhamed, and the King ſhall periſh from* Gaza, *and* Aſhkelon *ſhall not be inhabited.* There is nothing more common then diſappointments from men. And as men uſually fail and diſappoint our expectation, ſo God alſo doth ſometimes. God never fails his own promiſes, but he may fail our expectations, yet 'tis then only, when we expect without, beſide, or beyond the promiſe. (*Jer.*8. 15.) *We looked for peace, but no good come, and for a time of health, and behold trouble.* The *Jews* had great hopes that God would give them proſperous and happy times; but while they looked that God ſhould keep promiſes, they took no care to keep Commandments, ſo their own confeſſion clears that, (*v.* 14.) *Our God hath given us water of gall to drink, becauſe we have ſinned againſt the Lord.*) Thus to hope for the good of the promiſe, is to hope beſide yea againſt the truth of the promiſe. That other Prophet aſſigns the ſame reaſon of their diſappointment, (*Iſa.* 59. 9.) *Therefore is judgment far from us, neither doth juſtice overtake us, we wait for light, but behold obſcurity, for brightneſs, but we walk in darkneſs.* And why was all this? The anſwer is plain, (*v.* 12, 13.) *For our tranſgreſſions are multiplied before thee, and our ſins witneſs againſt us,* &c. And as for a puniſhment of ſin, as alſo for the exerciſe of patience and tryal of grace, God fruſtrates the preſent expectation of his own people, ſo much more will he for the former reaſon diſappoint wicked men of theirs; they ſhall look for light, but it will be darkneſs for ever. (*Prov.* 10. 28.) *The hope of the righteous ſhall be gladneſs,* (that is, the utmoſt iſſue of it ſhall be gladneſs) *but the expectation of the wicked ſhall periſh.* The wicked expect the periſhing of the righteous, but that expectation of the wicked ſhall periſh, becauſe the righteous ſhall never periſh. The things which the wicked chiefly hope for, are periſhing things, and that hope often periſheth; but if they hope for the things which periſh not, that hope always periſheth, for they themſelves ſhall periſh for ever. This *Solomon* aſſerts fully, (*Cap.* 11. 7.) *when a wicked man dyeth, his expectation ſhall periſh, and the hope of the unjuſt man periſheth.* Hope or expectation is uſually long liv'd; and though the hope of wicked men be blind and ſickly, yet it often holds out or lives as long as they live. But when the wicked die, they and their hope, they and their expectation die and expire together. I grant the hope of a juſt man endeth when he dieth, yet it doth not die, but it is perfected in fruition, as *Solomon* more then intimates at the 23, verſe of the ſame Chapter, *The deſire of the righteous is only good.* It is a maxim in Philoſophy, *All things deſire good :* And in that ſence the deſire of all men, as it is deſire, is only of that which is good. But as the righteous only deſire to do that which is good, ſo in ſtrict ſence, they only deſire to have that which is good, The deſire of the righteous as righteous, is only good, and always good; for as he deſires God above all, ſo he deſires God in all, in whom is all good, and nothing but good. Thus *the deſire of the righteous* (and therefore their hope, for we can hope for nothing but what we deſire) *is only good.* But (as it follows in the ſame verſe) *The expectation of the wicked is wrath*; that is, he expects the accompliſhment of his wrath, or when his expectation is accompliſhed, it is in wrath, and proves wrath to him. We cannot ſay, that a wicked man doth properly and explicitly expect wrath, he hath great preſumptions of mercy, but he ſhall have wrath in the room of that mercy which he preſumptuouſly expected; he looked for many good days here, and for the favour of God hereafter, but he ſeldom finds the former, (and when he doth they are evil to him) but he ſhall not at all find the latter. What good he hath, he hath it in this world, and 'tis of this world, he hath none of another kind, none beyond this world. When the rich man in Hell deſired but a drop of water to cool his tongue, he was anſwer'd with, Son, remember thou haſt had thy good things, there are no more to be had for thee.

Again, Both good and bad may fail in their expectations, but with a vaſt difference, the wicked look and receive not, becauſe they look not in faith, their expectation is but a fancy, they have no ground to look for good, and therefore they look for good and receive none. All true good comes out of a promiſe; they who have nothing to do with the promiſe, (as the wicked having no faith, have not, though I grant the promiſe, (I mean the abſolute promiſe) may have to do with them; now I ſay, the wicked being in the ſence opened, without the promiſe) have no ground to expect or hope for the good of the promiſe. But as for the Godly, though they preſently receive not what they look for, yet looking in faith they ſhall at laſt, one time or other receive it. (*Pſal.* 9. 18.) *The needy ſhall not always be forgotten : The expectation of the poor* (that is, of the godly poor) *ſhall not periſh for ever.*

Further, ſinners diſappoint God of his expectation, and therefore no marvail if God diſappoint them of theirs. (*Iſa.* 5. 4.) *What could have been done more to my vineyard that I have not done to it,* (ſaith the Lord;) *Wherefore when I looked that it ſhould bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes: and I looked for Judgment, and behold oppreſſion, for righteouſneſs, and behold a cry.* God hath his expectation upon man, and man, ſinful man deceives God of his expectation : He looks for righteouſneſs, for reformation, for the fruits of repentance, of faith, and love, but finds none; how juſtly then doth God let ſinners look for peace, and not find it, for mercy and find none! Yea the beſt of his people are deſervedly ſhortned in their expectation upon this ground, who is there among them that hath not failed the expectation of God? Where is that care to pleaſe God, that fear of offending him, that circumſpect walking, that redeeming of time, that denyal of our ſelves, the zeal for him, which upon the account of his free grace in Chriſt, and our hope through Chriſt, he might hope, yea challenge from us: And if we make God look ſo often for that which he receives not, ſhall we think it ſtrange if we receive not that for which we look.

Yet doubtleſs, this was not *Job*'s caſe; we do not find that he had diſappointed the expectation of God in any thing, (humane frailty only excepted) and as God gave him a high teſtimony in this point, ſo alſo did his own conſcience; and therefore when he ſaith, *I looked for good*, we have reaſon to conclude that he had a good ground to look for it, yet he miſt it. *When I looked for good, then evil came.*

Hence Obſerve, Secondly, *A godly man conſidering and examining his own heart and life, may find no ſpecial reaſon there why God afflicts him, or cauſeth evil to come upon him.*

God taketh away good, and ſends evil upon us for one of theſe two reaſons; either

Firſt, When we grow wanton and vain, or play the wantons, and feed our vanity with the good things of God; when we let go the bridle of moderation, and ſerve our bellies rather then the Lord Jeſus in the uſe of our worldly comforts, then 'tis time for God, and uſually God takes that time to take them from us, and give us aſhes for bread, or mingle our drink with weeping; thus Chriſt denounceth a *woe to them that laugh now*, (*Luke* 6.25.) They are not threatned with a woe meerly for laughing, to do ſo is not unlawful, but innocently natural and proper to man as man. But Chriſt thunders a woe againſt (as *Solomon* calls it, *Eccl.* 2.2.) mad or immoderate laughter and rejoycing in the uſe of the Creature, after ſuch laughing comes crying, woe and ſorrow.

Secondly, Evil comes uſually inſtead of the good we look for, when our hearts are hardned and our bowels ſhut up againſt all pity and compaſſion towards thoſe who are under the preſent ſufferings of evil. This brought evil upon *Jeruſalem* when ſhe looked for good (*Ezek.* 16.49.) *Pride, fulneſs of bread, and abundance of Idleneſs was in her, neither did ſhe ſtrengthen the hand of the poor and needy.* But it was not thus with holy *Job*; he did not drown himſelf in carnal pleaſures, he did not ſteep his Spirit in Earthly enjoyments; nor did *Job* look upon himſelf as unconcern'd in the troubles and ſtraits of the diſtreſſed and neceſſitous. *Job's* heart was not fil'd with riches and poſſeſſions, but with pity and compaſſion to the poor. Now though *Job* was a man of this admirable temper, both as to his own abundance, and the wants of others, both as to the good which himſelf once had, and as to the evils which others endured; yet when he lookt for good, evil came, and he was not onely diſappointed of his hopes, but afflicted greatly. Some have met with ſufferings, which (though as ſinners they have deſerved, yet) they have not procured by their ſins. God afflicts none of his people but for holy ends, but he afflicts many of them without any reſpect to their unholineſs.

Thirdly, Conſider the word, *when*, which refers to the circumſtance of time, wherein evil befel *Job*; *When I looked for good, then evil came.* This *when*, may have a double reference. Firſt, to the time of his proſperity, and ſo to his looking for good, was the continuance or prolongation of it. Now compare the ſcope of this verſe, and this ſeaſon wherein *Job* looked for good, with the former verſe; *Did not I weep with him that was in trouble*; and we may Obſerve,

They that are pitiful and charitable to others in their ſorrows, may with a hopeful probability look for the continuation of their own comforts.

Our condoling with and ſuccouring thoſe who are in trouble is a fair argument that we ſhall keep our peace.

Secondly, *When*, may refer to the time of his affliction; and that, both as he looked for pity in and deliverance out of his affliction, or the renewing of his proſperity, *when I looked for good*, that is, when I in my afflicted ſtate, waited for good, for pity from men, and for the repair of thoſe ſad breaches, which were made upon me by the hand of God, then evil came, and I was more wrapt up in or intangled with trouble then before.

Hence Note, *He that hath helped others out of their afflictions, may probably look for pity in and help out of his affliction.*

Chriſt gives that general rule (*Luke* 6. 38.) *With the ſame meaſure that ye mete withall, it ſhall be meaſured to you again.* That rule hath the force both of a promiſe and of a threatning in it. And as it reſpects the quantity, that you ſhall have as much or more meaſured to you then you meaſure; ſo it reſpects the kind and quality of that which is meaſured more. For if we meaſure evil to others, we muſt look that evil ſhall be meaſured to us again; and if we meaſure out good to others, we may warrantably look that good ſhould be meaſured out to us again; *Job* thought he ſhould have the good of compaſſion meaſured out freely to him in his affliction, he having meaſured it out abundantly to others in theirs. And that the hearts of men would never have been hardned into ſtones in the day of his calamity, when as his heart had melted into tears at the calamity of others. That of *David* gives much aſſurance of this, (*Pſal.* 41. 1, 2, 3.) *Bleſſed is the man that conſidereth the poor, the Lord will deliver him* (not the poor only, but him alſo that wiſely conſidereth the poor) *in the time of trouble; the Lord will preſerve him, and keep him alive, and he ſhall be bleſſed upon the Earth; and thou wilt not deliver him to the will of his enemies. The Lord will ſtrengthen him upon the bed of languiſhing: Thou wilt make his bed in his ſickneſs.* To conſider the poor, is both to pity and help them. And he that is pitiful to the poor, ſhall according to this Scripture be delivered out of trouble, or preſerved from trouble, both which are high acts of mercy. And therefore *Job* ſeems to wonder at it, that evil ſhould come, when he had this and ſo many other probable grounds, upon which he might look for good.

Hence take two Corollaries.

First, *We are apt to think ſtrange of our afflictions, when we ſee no reaſon for them.*

If we cannot charge our ſelves with ſin, we conclude, we ſhall not ſuffer.

Secondly, Note, *They that have been moſt exact in their walkings, ſhould yet look and prepare for changes.*

Grace gives us a good title, the beſt title to Earthly things, but it doth not aſſure the poſſeſſion of them. They who are dead to worldly enjoyments, may yet ſee them die. And how compaſſionate ſoever any man hath been to the poor, pained and afflicted, yet himſelf may become poor, and pained, and afflicted; as *Job* ſhews us further by his own experience and example in the next verſe.

Verſ. 27. My bowels boyled and reſted not; the days of affliction prevented me.

From this verſe to the end of the Chapter, *Job* reckons up ſeveral ſad effects of his afflictions and ſorrows.

My bowels boyled, or *were hot.*

As I was full of ſorrows without, ſo I was inwardly inflamed as it were with ſorrow, his bowels were as a ſeething or boiling pot upon the fire. The Bowels ſignifie in Scripture, Firſt, the moſt feeling compaſſions of the mind: *Put on* (ſaith the Apoſtle, *Col.* 3. 12.) *as the elect of God, bowels of mercy*; that is, be ye very merciful. Secondly, The bowels ſignifie the moſt ſecret workings and cogitations of the mind, (*Prov.* 20. 27.) *The Spirit of man is the candle of the Lord, ſearching all the inward parts* (or Bowels) *of the belly*; that is, thoſe thoughts, contrivements, and conceptions which lye cloſeſt or moſt out of ſight in the mind of man. And hence the *boyling of the bowels*, imports inward trouble, or troubled thoughts, either with fear or grief, or both. Thus 'tis ſaid of *Daniel* (*Dan.* 4. 10.) *He was aſtoniſhed for one hour, and his thoughts troubled him*; and ſo of *Belſhazzar* when he ſaw *the hand-writing upon the wall* (Dan. 5. 1.) *his countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him*; that is, his breaſt or bowels were full of boyling tumultuating thoughts. Many Scriptures ſet out the inward Agony of the mind by fire and boyling. A man in great perplexity, is as if he were in a fire, or a fire in him; care is a fire, fear is a fire, and ſo is ſorrow, *My bowels boyled* (ſaith *Job*,) As the Lords anger is like a burning fire, (*Lam.* 2 3.) *He hath cut off in his fierce Anger all the horn of* Iſrael, *he hath drawn back his right hand from before the enemy, and he burned againſt* Jacob *like a flaming fire which devoureth round about.* Now as the Lords anger, which cauſeth him to bring trouble upon a people or a perſon is like fire, ſo is that ſorrow with which man is affected in the day of the Lords anger. Thus ſpake *Jeremie* (Lam. 1.20.) *Behold O Lord, for I am in diſtreſs, my bowels are troubled, my heart is turned within me.* The heart or bowels are the ſeat of the paſſions; and when paſſion is ſo ſtrong that it turns the heart, and ſo hot that 'tis ſaid to make the bowels boyl, then paſſion is at the higheſt; *My bowels boyled*

Velut infremuerunt ebullierunt olla more intima atq; membra in me, Merc.

Angorem animi & dolorum acerbitatem exprimere ſolet igni, ardor, flamma; inde curarum æſtus dicitur, et cum qui dicitur aliquis cũ anxiis & moleſtis contabeſcit curis. Sanct.

And reſted not.] The Hebrew is, *Were not ſilent*, pain makes a noiſe, pain ſpeaks loud (*Iſa.* 16. 11.) *My bowels ſhall ſound like an Harp for* Moab. And when we are freed from pain a ſweet ſilence followeth. (*Pſal.* 107. 29.) *He maketh the Storm a calm, ſo that the waves thereof are ſtill (or the waves thereof are ſilent what.)* a roaring noiſe is there in a proper ſtorm at Sea? And is there not a roaring noiſe in the metaphorical ſtorms of trouble? Or if we take the words *reſted not*, in their ordinary ſence, then they note the unceſſantneſs of his ſorrow; that *reſteth*, which ceaſeth or giveth over working; as it is ſaid (*Exod.* 20. 11.) *In ſix days the Lord made Heaven and Earth, the Sea and all that in them is, and reſted the ſeventh day*; thus *Job's bowels boyled and reſted not*, that is, his ſorrow ceaſed not, he had no (*lucida intervalla*) comfortable lightſome intermiſſions of or vacations from his pains and griefs; he had not ſever fits, but a continual burning fever; new fewel was daily, yea hourly added to feed the fire and keep his bowels boyling; *My bowels* (ſaith he) *boyled and reſted not*.

The days of affliction prevented me.

He had ſaid a little before (*verſ.* 16.) *The days of affliction have taken hold upon me*; here he ſaith,, *they have prevented me*, that is, they came ſuddenly upon me, or unlook'd for. Some read, *they met me*, ſo the word is rendred in that charge againſt the *Moabites* and *Ammonites* (Deut. 23. 3, 4.) *Even to their tenth generation ſhall they not enter into the Congregation of the Lord for ever, becauſe they met you not with bread and with water in the way when ye came out of* Egypt, &c. Now whether we read *Job's* Text, *The days of affliction met me, or prevented me*, the ſence is the ſame, Implying, that thoſe days of affliction came ſomewhat unawares, or when he looked not for them, or when he looked not for them, or when he was looking, as he ſaid in the former verſe for other, for better days. There are two ſorts of meeting, firſt, looked for; ſecondly, unlooked for; oftentimes a friend meets us whom we thought not of, and ſo may an enemy; the latter meeting is meant here. Such meetings are uncomfortable preventings.

Anticipaverunt me. *Vatabl.* *Quod alii dicunt* Apprehenderunt me, *minus eſt. Nam verbum Originale proprie ſignificat illã rationem veniendi, aut aliquid aliud faciendi, quod tempore & loco eſt ante nos.*

Some conceive *Job* ſaid, *The days of evil prevented him*, becauſe he met with thoſe evils in the beſt of his Age, which uſually come not till the latter end, or cloſe of a mans age. There are ſome evils and afflictions which are ſo uſual in old age that they are even natural or congenial to it; of theſe *Solomon* ſpeaks and cautions young men, (*Eccl.* 12. 1.) *Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou ſhalt ſay, I have no pleaſure in them.* Let any man but live, and he ſhall out-live his bodily ſtrength and pleaſures. What can we expect to meet with in old age but pain and ſorrow? When, as *Solomon* there Allegorizeth the *Sun, and the light, and the Moon, and the Stars are darkned, and the Clouds return after the rain, in the day when the keepers of the Houſe ſhall tremble, and the ſtrong men ſhall bow themſelves,* &c. That is, when the powers of nature ſhall inevitably ſuffer an univerſal decay; what can any man (I ſay) expect then put pain and ſorrow? But when a man is in the beſt of his days, he looks for good days, and the continuance of his bodily ſtrength. Therefore *Job* being broken not only in his eſtate but in his ſtrength, being not only impoveriſhed but pained and diſeaſed, in the beſt of his days, he might well ſay, *The days of affliction have prevented me.*

Talia paſſus ſum, qualis in ætate jã grandi ac frigida patiuntur ſenes. Sanct.

Again, Some read this in connection with the former verſe, as if what he ſaith here were an effect of what he ſaid there; *Becauſe when I looked for good, evil came to me; and when I hoped for light, darkneſs came upon me, therefore my bowels boyled within me,* ſo that they could not reſt. Taking the Text in this dependance.

Quòd bonũ expectanti mihi evenit malum; & ſperanti lucem evenit caligo; viſcera mea efferviſacta ſunt, adeo ut non quieſcant. Jun.

Obſerve, *It is exceeding painful and afflictive to miſs our expectations, or not to receive the good which we hope and wait for.*

When we look for evil, and expect the coming of trouble, 'tis burdenſome and grievous enough when it comes; but to meet with evil when we wait for good, doubles the weight of evil. To be croſſed in our expectations, makes our croſs heavy and our bowe's boyl.

Then how will the bowels of wicked men boyl in ſorrow for ever, when when they ſhall be quite fruſtrated of their hopes and loſe all their expectations? Such are often full of hopes, and big with the expectation of good things, not only in this life but in the next; they hope their Souls ſhall go to Heaven when their bodies go to the grave; they look for light, even the light of glory after the darkneſs of death, but darkneſs ſhall be their portion, and they ſhall go *to the generation of their fathers, where they ſhall never ſee light*. In the ſeventh of *Matthew* (*verſ.*24.) we find wicked men looking for, yea laying claim to glory; they knock at Heaven Gate, as if they had much acquaintance there, yet all they ſhall hear from Chriſt is, *I never knew you, depart from me ye that work iniquity.* O what boyling of bowels will theſe men feel in the fire that never goeth out, when holy *Job* found ſuch a boyling of his bowels in a fire that quickly went out? *My bowels boyled, the days of affliction prevented me.*

Hence Note, Firſt, *The holieſt and beſt of men, are apt to think afflictions further off from them then they are.*

We uſually ſay, *Bad news comes before it is looked for.* Every godly man thinks he may fall into affliction; but though he hath a ſence of this upon him, that afflictions may come; yet he thinks them further off then they are, or that they will not come ſo ſoon as they do. The Prophet ſpeaking of voluptuous ſenſualiſts ſaith (*Amos* 6. 3.) *They put the evil day far from them.* And as theſe put it far from themſelves, ſo the falſe Prophet aſſured others, that it was not only far from them, but ſhould never over-take them, (*Jer.* 14. 15.) *Therefore thus ſaith the Lord concerning the Prophets that propheſie in my name, and I ſent them not, yet they ſay Sword and Famine ſhall not be in this Land, by Sword and Famine ſhall theſe Prophets be conſumed.* And again, (*Jer.* 5. 12.) *They have belyed the Lord, and ſaid it is not he, neither ſhall evil come upon us, neither ſhall we ſee Sword nor Famine.* Now as evil men put the evil day far from themſelves, and falſe Prophets put it farther from them, ſo godly men ſeldom think that the evil day is ſo near as indeed it is. Yea they may have a ſecret hope that the evil day will not come at all, but that they ſhall dye in their neſt, as *Job* once ſaid; but as God prevents us often with his mercies and loving kindneſſes, *David* hoped he would; *The God of my mercy ſhall prevent me,* (*Pſal.* 59. 10.) and he prayed that we would, (*Pſal.* 79. 8.) *O remember not againſt us our former iniquities, let thy tender mercies ſpeedily prevent us; for we are brought very low.* And as God ſometimes doth it, beyond both our hopes and prayers. (*Pſ.*21. 3.) *For thou preventeſt him with the bleſſings of goodneſs, thou ſetteſt a Crown of pure Gold upon his head.* Now (I ſay) as God hath preventing mercies, he ſends in mercy, or ſuch a ſpecial mercy, before we look for it; ſo it is as true, that God hath preventing Judgments, and that he ſends in afflictions before they are looked for; ſad troubles, ſad ſickneſſes, ſad breakings, ſad loſſes, ſad miſcarriages of Servants and Children come unlooked for upon many of the Servants of God. *David* experienced this alſo, (*Pſal.* 18. 5.) *The ſorrows of Hell compaſſed me about, the ſnares of death prevented me*; That is, deadly ſnares, ſuch ſnares as endangered my life ſurpriſed me, when I had no thought of any ſuch miſchief.

Laſtly, Note, *Unexpected afflictions afflict us moſt.*

As evil ſhall moſt certainly come upon thoſe ſinners who expect it not. (*Amos* 9. 10.) *All the ſinners of my people ſhall die by the Sword, which ſay, the evil ſhall not overtake nor prevent us.* So it will be moſt terrible to them when it comes. As to miſs the good that we look for (which was obſerved before) ſo to meet with any evil that we looked not for, cuts to the quick. *Job* looked for good, but it came not, he looked not for ſuch troubles, and they came. *The days of evil prevented him.* As we may look for good, ſo evil ſhould not be unlooked for. If the coming of trouble be looked for, it will not trouble us ſo much when it comes. We may poſſibly prevent or hide our ſelves from expected evils, but to be ſure we may be the better armed for them. Whereas they who do not foreſee them at all, feel them moſt. What peril, what poverty, what croſs, what ſickneſs, what loſs is there that we may not look for? Are not all theſe incident to our nature, as we are men? Are they not deſerved by us, as we are ſinners? yea as we are Saints, we may look for tryals; and if as Saints we look not for them, we hardly know what it is to be a Saint.

'Tis our wiſdom to way-lay troubles in our thoughts, and perſonate the worſt outward eſtate ſometimes, while we enjoy the beſt. They are not only wiſe men, but the beſt and choiſeſt Saints, who uſe their good days and things, as if they might every day change to worſe, yea to the worſt. To look for evil fearſully is below faith, but to look for it preparingly, is a very ſpiritual exerciſe of faith. To be upon the rack of expectation, is to antedate our ſorrows; but to be upon thoughts of them, and ſo to converſe with them, that (as the Apoſtle ſaith) the fiery tryal may not be ſtrange to us, this as it is our duty, though tryals never come, ſo it will be a great ſupport to us when they come. It is ſinful when we are behind-hand in meditating what we may ſuffer, as well as when we are behind-hand in conſidering what we ought to do. They undergo tryals with moſt patience, who are ofteneſt minding a day of tryal. And uſually they have unlooked for comforts, who are graciouſly looking for their Croſs. And though it be good to be full of holy faith, that our mercies ſhall be continued, yet it is as good to be full of holy fear that our mercies may be changed. *Happy are they who are at once believing for good days, and preparing for them; yea happy alſo are they who are at onc believing about evil days, and preparing for them.* This was the frame and poſture of Righteous *Noah*'s Spirit, (*Heb.* 11.7.) *Who by faith, being warned of God of things not ſeen as yet, moved with fear prepared an Ark to the ſaving of his Houſe, by the which he condemned the World.* The old World would never believe nor fear the coming of the Flood, and ſo were drowned and ſwallowed up in it; the days of affliction at once prevented and deſtroyed them; *Noah* did both believe and fear the coming of the Flood, and ſo eſcaped it; while his faith aſſured him the Flood would come, his fear provoked him to provide an Ark (as God had appointed) to ſave himſelf and his in when it came. To be prevented by mercy, is the ſweeteſt and pureſt way of receiving mery, and to be prevented by affliction is the ſoreſt way of enduring affliction.

This latter age of the World, or (as I may call it) *Dregs of Time*, hath much need of this awakening conſideration; ſeeing Chriſt himſelf hath foretold us that the ſame Spirit of ſlumber and carnal ſecurity which poſſeſſed the old World (as we commonly call it) ſhall alſo poſſeſs the World when 'tis indeed grown old, (*Luke* 17. 26, 27, 28, 29.) *As it was in the days of* Noah, *ſo ſhall it be in the days of the Son of man*, (that is, in all the days wherein Chriſt reveals himſelf in any eminent way of judgment againſt the World, and eſpecially in the *laſt judgment day*) *they did eat, they drank, they married Wives, they were given in marriage*, (that is, they did all theſe things as if they had nothing elſe to do, and nothing at all to fear, though *Noah* had thunder'd the approaching deluge in their ears) *until the day that* Noah *entred into the Ark: And the Flood came and deſtroyed them all.* The days of Affliction by water did not more prevent and ſurpriſe that old World, then the day of Affliction by fire ſhall prevent this. That day *ſhall come when* (as the Apoſtle *Peter* ſpeaks, 2 *Ep.* 3. 2, 3.) *ſcoffers ſhall come, walking after their own luſts, and ſaying, where is the promiſe of his coming?* Will not that day of Affliction prevent theſe men? Let all prepare for it, the moſt will be prevented by it.

VERS. 28, 29, 30, 31.

I went mourning without the Sun: I ſtood up, and I cryed in the Congregation.
I am Brother to Dragons, and a companion to Owls.
My skin is black upon me, and my bones are burnt with heat.
My Harp alſo is turned to mourning, and my Organ into the voyce of them that weep.

These four verſes continue and conclude *Job*'s complaint, or lamenting diſcourſe about his grievous ſufferings.

I went mourning.] *Job* confeſſed himſelf a ſtranger and a traveller in this World, as all his fathers were, and his travel was a ſad one, *I* (ſaith he) *went mourning.*

The word which we render **mourning**, ſignifies, *black or blackneſs*, hence ſome tranſlate, *I went in black*, or *in black Garments*. Blackneſs is the mourners colour, and Garments of black are the mourners livery; we render clearly to his ſence, *I went mourning*. The Church (*Cant.* 1. 5.) ſaith, *I am like the Tents of* Kedar. The *Kedarens* lived in Tents, and theirs were black Tents, they lived in open Fields, and under the ſcorching Sun; ſo that when the Church ſaid, *I am like the Tents of* Kedar, her meaning was plainly this, *I am black*; and when *Job* ſaith, *I went mourning*; we may underſtand him both of inward ſorrow, or ſorrow of the heart, in which ſence *David* profeſſed (*Pſal.* 38. 6.) *I go mourning all the day long*; and expoſtulates (*Pſal.* 42. 6.) *Why go I mourning becauſe of the oppreſſion of the enemy?* As alſo of ſorrow expreſſed outwardly, either in ſpeech, geſture, or habit; as we commonly ſay, *Such a man goeth in or weareth mourning.*

קדר *Obſcurus obſcuratus, luce privatus fuit, nigruit; per Metaphoram contriſtatus fuit. Sic latinè Atrati dicuntur lugentes. Lugubri habitu inceſſi.* Tygur. *Pullatus.* Pagn.

Hence Note, *As the beſt of our life hath ſorrow mixt with it; ſo much of our life is nothing elſe but ſorrow.*

Chriſt himſelf, *was a man of ſorrow, and acquainted with grief*, (Iſa. 53. 2, 3.) He was not only a ſorrowful man, but a man of ſorrow, while he was paying the debt of our ſin, and purchaſing joy for ſinners. Therefore we who are not only ſinful men, but (in a ſort) men of ſin, muſt not think much, if we, who alſo (through grace) are his members, do in this agree with our head; if we are men of ſorrow, as he was, if we are acquainted daily with grief, as he was, if we go mourning as he did, we have no reaſon to be offended at it. Our days, at beſt, are *few and evil*, as *Jacob* ſaid; and at worſt, our days are but *many evils*; and ſhould it not make us long for that life wherein we ſhall ſorrow no more, nor know what it is to go mourning any more? When our Garments ſhall be always white, as to innocency, they ſhall be ſo alſo as to joy, and we ſhall not be blackt with ſorrow, when we are fully waſht from the blackneſs of ſin. *I went mourning*

Without the Sun.] The Sun is expreſſed by three words in the Hebrew, whereof the firſt ſignifies to be a Servant or publick Miniſter of God to the World; a ſecond ſignifies Drineſs, becauſe the Sun by heat cauſeth drineſs; a third (that of the Text) ſignifies heat, which doth not only dry, but warm and comfort.

Some read the words thus; *I went mourning out of the Sun*; ſo Mr. *Broughton, I walked black out of the Sun.* As if he had ſaid, *I took no pleaſure to walk in the Sun; I had ſo much grief upon my heart, ſo much darkneſs within, that the outward light was little or nothing to me; when the Sun ſhined, it did not ſhine to me; to me the Sun was as a Cloud, or but a ſhadow, yea I avoided the Sun, and ſought ſolitary places where to mourn in private, and weep out my ſorrows by my ſelf alone; I went mourning out of the Sun.*

Sol hic חמה *dicitur à calore, alibi vocatur* שמש *à miniſtro &* חרם *à ſiccitate.* Druſ.

Hence Obſerve, *Thoſe Creatures which are moſt pleaſant in themſelves, give us no content in great ſorrows and afflictions.*

To a Soul in bitterneſs every thing is bitter except Chriſt; and to a darkned Soul no Sun ſhines bright, but the Sun of righteouſneſs. *Solomon* ſaith (*Eccleſ.* 11. 7.) *Truly light is ſweet, and a pleaſant thing it is, for the eyes to behold the Sun*; yet a man in ſorrow, eſpecially a man of ſorrow, cares not for the light of the Sun, he draws the curtain, and will make all dark, till the day-Star ariſeth in his heart and gives him light. The things that are moſt ſweet and contentful to nature, have no ſweetneſs, give no content, or are out of date, to a man diſconſolate, till God ſaith unto him, be of good chear, be comforted. Neareſt natural Relations, Wife, Children, Friends, are dead to a diſconſolate Soul; greateſt Worldly poſſeſſions, Honours and Riches, Houſes and Lands, Thouſands of Gold and Silver, are ſavourleſs to a diſtreſſed Soul, he goes mourning out of all theſe things, or mourns in the midſt of them. The Scripture ſaith, (*Prov.* 11. 4.) *Riches profits not in the day of wrath, but righteouſneſs delivereth from death.* Riches are no advantage, no ſhelter at all to wicked men, when the wrath of God breaks out upon them, and they are no better then poverty to a godly man, when the favour of God is hidden from him. We cannot comfort any man in an evil day, by telling him of his bags of Gold and Silver, of his Lands and Houſes, he goes mourning when ſuch comforters have done and ſpoken their beſt.

Secondly, Theſe words (as we tranſlate) *I went mourning without the Sun*, may ſignifie no more but this; *I was in ſuch a mourning condition as had no comfort at all in it.* Some are in mourning, and yet have ſome Sun-beams when they mourn, that is, they have ſome comfort, ſome joy in their ſorrows, ſome light ariſeth to them in their darkneſs; but ſaith *Job*, *I went mourning without the Sun*, I had nothing to comfort me; no light, no refreſhing rayes to keep up my Spirit, I went mourning, and no Sun to comfort me. The ſorrow of ſome men hath nothing but ſorrow with it. As there may be an eſtate, ſo comfortable, that it hath nothing but comfort, or 'tis a comfortable eſtate quite through. (*Prov.* 10. 22.) *The bleſſing of the Lord maketh rich, and he addeth no ſorrow with it.* Many make themſelves rich in ſuch a way, as addeth much ſorrow to their riches, yea (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks of ſuch rich men, 1 *Tim.* 6. 10.) *They pierce themſelves through with many ſorrows.* Ill gotten riches in ſtead of making their owners hearts merry, make their Conſciences ake, and give them many a ſtitch in their ſides: But when the bleſſing of God upon honeſt endeavours makes a man rich, he eats the labour of his hands with joy, and knows not what ſorrow (in that point) meaneth; his eſtate is comfortable, and ſo is his life; ſuch a man hath pure comfort. Now (I ſay) as there may be a condition ſo comfortable, that it hath no ſorrow with it; ſo there may be a condition ſo ſorrowful, that it hath no joy with it, ſo dark that it hath no Sun with it. Many poor Souls go mourning without the Sun, and know not for a long time what comfort meaneth. Chriſt the Sun of righteouſneſs can ſhine upon us, and give us light in our greateſt outward darkneſs; but oftentimes he doth not, and then ſuch a Soul cryes out, I go mourning without the Sun; I cannot find Chriſt, I have no communion with, no communications of light or love from Chriſt, that's a ſad condition indeed. And ſuch was theirs who are ſpoken of (*Iſa.* 50. 10.) who though they feared the Lord, and obeyed the voyce of his Servant, yet *walked in darkneſs, and ſaw no light.*

Ater alijs; ſole dicitur de eo qui ater eſt mœrore non à ſole; vult dicere quem ſol non decoloraverit, ſed res aſperæ pullatum incedere fecerint. Druſ.

Thirdly, *I went mourning without the Sun*, may be expounded thus; *I was ſcorched black, but it was not with the Sun.* As if he had ſaid, *My blackneſs, or mourning hue was not from the heat of the Sun.* That did not diſcolour me, I was not offended at all by that, nor much by any outward cauſe; my blackneſs was cauſed by inward ſorrow. Bodily blackneſs is uſually from the Sun, but many (in *Job*'s caſe) are black without the Sun. As the Scripture ſpeaks alſo both in another caſe and in that; *They are drunken, but not with wine*, (Iſa. 29. 9.) that is, they are drunk with ſin, while they drink iniquity like water, and take their full cups of it. Some are drunken with pride and ſelf-confidence, others are drunken with grief and trouble, as the ſame Prophet hath it, (*Chap.* 51. 21.) *Hear now this thou afflicted and drunken, but not with wine*; with what then? With affliction So we may anſwer from that 17. verſe, of that Chapter; *Awake, awake, ſtand up O* Jeruſalem, *which haſt drunken at the hand of the Lord the cup of his fury; thou haſt drunken the dregs of the cup of trembling, and wrung them out.* Now as theſe were drunken and not with wine, ſo *Job* went in *black or mourning*, but not with the Sun; he was not *Sun-burnt*, but *Sorrow-burnt.* As that *godly ſorrow, which works repentance unto ſalvation not to be repented of,* is followed many bleſſed effects upon the Soul which are exactly enumerated by the Apoſtle, (2 *Cor.* 7. 11.) and as *the ſorrow of the World* (that is, ſorrow either meerly about worldly matters, or in a worldly manner) is followed with that dreadful black effect, Death, as the ſame Apoſtle ſaith at the 10. verſe of that Chapter; *The ſorrow of the World worketh death.* So that ſorrow which a godly man often meets with both in and from the World, may be followed with very grievous and viſible effects upon him. The Church before ſpoken of, (*Cant.* 1. 5.) having ſaid, *I am like the Tents of* Kedar, that is, (as hath been expounded) I am black, preſently (*verſ.* 6.) tells us the cauſe of her blackneſs; *Look not upon me* (that is either with a deſpiſing or deſpairing eye) *becauſe I am black, becauſe the Sun hath looked upon me.* What Sun? The Sun of perſecution and trouble from the malicious World hath looked upon me. Perſecution ſprings not out of the duſt, but is darted from above (as the providence of God permits) like the beams of the Sun. The Church was black with the fiery beams of that Sun. The viſage of the Church in her Captivity and Famine *was blacker then a coal*, or (as we put in the Margin) *darker then blackneſs*; and the Prophet either conſidering that or ſome other grievous affliction of the Church, ſaith of himſelf, (*Jer.* 8. 21.) *For the hurt of the daughter of my people, am I hurt, I am black: Aſtoniſhment hath taken hold on me.* *Job* was in a Famine, comparatively to his former plenty, and he was in a real Famine and deep Conſumption of all his former comforts; he had a Sun of perſecution looking upon him alſo, he was perſecuted both by the Devil and by evil men, yea his good friends (though not intentionally) had a hand in it too. And as he had all theſe outward troubles, which grieved him not a little; ſo he had inward trouble, which grieved him much more, and pained him at the very heart; he endured both the hidings of Gods face or favour from him, and the appearings of his angry frowns; the angry appearances of God, or the arrows of his appearing anger were ſhot into his Spirit. And O how black did theſe hot impreſſions make him! He might ſay with truth enough, according to the tendency of this interpretation, *I went mourning, or black, without the Sun.* I had ſo many extraordinary Suns caſting their ſcorching beams upon me both viſibly and inviſibly, that I need not aſcribe the cauſe of my pitiful blackneſs to the ordinary Sun.

There is yet another reading of thoſe words, which I ſhall but touch and paſs away.

The Greek and vulgar Latine tranſlations, ſay not as we, *I went mourning without the Sun*, but *I went mourning without fury or anger*; a word in the Hebrew of near ſound to that which ſignifies the *Sun*, ſignifies alſo anger or fury. And as to the matter it ſelf, we know blackneſs proceeds from heat, *Negroes* or *Blackmores* are born in hot climates; and as blackneſs proceeds from heat, ſo heat cauſeth choler or anger. This or that before mentioned might be the ground of that diverſity in the tranſlation, which though I approve not, yet the ſence is good, and we may make a profitable uſe of it; *Job* and ſuch as he, the truly godly, *go mourning without fury, or without wrath.* A godly man doth not rage when God afflicts him, he is not fill'd with anger becauſe full of ſorrow, he is not like a wild Bull when God puts him into his net, but abides patiently and quietly under the hand of God, he entertains his afflictions kindly, as the Lord ſaid his people ſhould or ought, (*Lev.* 26. 41.) *If then their uncircumciſed heart be humbled, and they then accept of the puniſhment of their iniquity, then will I remember my Covenant with* Jacob. The Lord looks we ſhould accept our Chaſtiſement, not except againſt it, much leſs be in a fume or rage, in a ſtorm of paſſion, or in a fret, when his hand is heavieſt on us. Nothing is more unſeemly then when we are afflicted to be diſcontented. Man naturally cannot bear blows, but lifts up his thoughts furiouſly againſt him that ſmites him; but know, 'tis dangerous to mingle anger with our ſorrow, or to be troubled in our ſelves when God is pleaſed to ſend us trouble. This is a good ſence, but I do not inſiſt upon it, the other reading being more clear to the Text. *I went mourning without the Sun,*

Obſerva Græcos & vulgatum חמה *legiſſe pro* חמה *iram ſeu furorem pro ſole. Nigri eſſe ſolent bilioſi & qui irati ſunt.* Merc

I ſtood up and cryed in the Congregation.

Job's troubles put him into various poſtures, of which he could give no good account. He could neither ſit nor lie nor ſtand in quiet. When he ſtood up, ſuddain fits and pangs came upon him. *He ſtood up and cryed.* The word *Cry* hath been opened before more then once. Here *Job*'s crying implyes two things.

Firſt, The diſtreſs of his Spirit, and the extream ſorrow of his heart. A man in diſtreſs cryes out for one of theſe three reaſons, either, firſt, becauſe he is afraid, or ſecondly, becauſe he is pained, or thirdly, becauſe he would be helped and comforted. *Job* cryed, and he cryed vehemently, upon the latter two, if not upon all theſe three reaſons.

Hence Note, *To cry out in pain, is not inconſiſtent with patience.*

Job was a man of patience, yet he cryed out; as he cryed out before in prayer, ſo here for pain, and ſuccour in his pain. The patience of Jeſus Chriſt had a perfect work (as the Apoſtle (*James* 1. 4.) adviſeth and exhorteth ours ſhould) yet when he was in the extremity of his ſufferings, *he cryed out*; Even He ſaith the Scripture, (*Heb.* 5. 7.) *in the dayes of his fleſh offered up prayers and ſupplications, with ſtrong cryes and tears, unto him that was able to ſave him from death, and was heard in that he feared.* The Evangeliſt *Matthew* tells us, he doubled his cry, (*Chap.* 26. 46.) *About the ninth hour Jeſus cryed with a loud voice, ſaying, Eli, Eli, Lamaſabachthani, that is to ſay, my God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* And at the 50th verſe; *Jeſus when he had cryed again with a loud voice yielded up the Ghoſt.* Here was cry upon cry, when Jeſus Chriſt had cryed, he cryed again and gave up the ghoſt; Then he gave his bittereſt cry, his bearing groan, when like a woman in Travail to bring forth that bleſſed Birth life for us, he gave up his own. It is not unbecoming a man of ſtrongeſt courage, yea of ſtrongeſt faith to cry out in great extremities; Chriſt did it who had the ſtrongeſt courage and the fullneſs of grace. To cry out murmuringly, is not only uncomely but ſinful, but to cry out humbly and ſenſibly diſhonors no man. A good man in great pain ſaid, *I groan, but I do not grumble.* Nature at beſt even when cloathed with Grace, being pincht and pained will bemoan it ſelf. *Job ſtood up and cryed*, and that not in ſecret, but as it followeth,

Excitat vocis contentio viris, ut malum fortius feratur minuſq; ſentiatur. Merl.

In the Congregation.] It may be queſtioned what Congregation did he cry in? May we not ſuppoſe *Job* a priſoner in his houſe ſhut up in his Chamber by ſickneſs? How then did he *cry in the Congregation*?

I anſwer, though *Job* went not to the Congregation, yet 'tis probable that a Congregation came to him; 'Tis ſure, many came to him, ſome to counſel him, and ſome to ſee him, ſome to comfort him and ſome to wonder at him; for he was *a ſpectacle to the world, to Angels, and to men.* Now (ſaith *Job*) in the very *Congregation*, when there was a great company, a throng of viſitants round about me, *I cryed*; his ſorrow was ſo great that he could not bite it in, nor conceal it, no not from the Congregation; extremity of pain will vent it ſelf, 'twill out, let who will be preſent, though a whole Congregation be preſent. Thus the good man ſets forth his ſorrow in all the circumſtances of it.

Tanta eſt hæc mea calamitas ut nulla me frequentia hominum cohibeant quo minus palam inconditos iſtos clamores edam. Bez.

I ſhall paſs from this verſe when I have only minded the Reader that ſome expound it in connexion with the 25. where *Job* profeſſeth his compaſſionate feeling of the miſeries, ſorrows and ſufferings of others: *Did not I weep for him that was in trouble? Was not my Soul grieved for the poor?* As if he had ſaid, *I had ſo great a ſence and fellow-feeling of other mens afflictions, that I went mourning without the Sun; nothing could comfort me while my friends were ſorrowful: I thought the Sun did not ſhine upon me while they were in darkneſs, and not only ſo, but I could not contain or content my ſelf, till I had preſented their caſe to the whole Congregation, that I might move others to pity them and pray for them as well as my ſelf.* That's a truth, but I rather keep to the former rendring, and take the words as importing the publication of his own ſorrows, not of the ſorrows of others in the Congregation. And if we would know what the ſpecial form of his cry in the Congregation was; ſome conceive it drawn up and expreſſed in the next verſe.

Verſ, 29. I am a Brother to Dragons and a companion to Owls.

As if *Job* had thus bemoaned himſelf before all Beholders; *Alas, alas, I am no more (I ſee) reckon'd or eſteemed among men as a man; nor do I find my ſelf fit for the ſociety of men, but of Beaſts and Birds rather, and thoſe the moſt unmanly among Beaſts and Birds, Dragons and Owls, whoſe faſhion or cuſtom of life ſeems more agreeable to my preſent temper and condition, then that of a man, I am a Brother to Dragons*, &c.

Dragons are ſorted among the Beaſts of the Earth, Owls among the Fowls of the Air. But how was *Job* a Brother to the one, or a companion to the other? I anſwer, when *Job* ſaith, *I am a Brother to Dragons*, it notes only thus much, I am much at leaſt ſomewhat like them, or I am reduced to ſuch a condition providentially as they are in naturally. I, by my affliction am rendred ſuch as they are by their conſtitution. The word *brother* is often uſed in Scripture, to note likeneſs, and no more. Thus *Simeon* and *Levi* are called *brethren* by their old dying father *Jacob*, (Gen, 49. 5.) We cannot imagine that he intended only to tell us that they were brethren in nature, for ſo all his twelve Sons were as well as they two; but when he ſaid, *Simeon* and *Levi are brethren*, his meaning was this, they are men of a like Spirit, they are both fierce and bloody, at leaſt they were ſo in one remarkable action, *Inſtruments of cruelty were in their habitations, in their anger they ſlew a man*, &c. Yea it is conceived that *Simeon* and *Levi* were brethren in a worſer murder (though a moſt bleſſed one in the effects and fruits of it) then that of the *Shechemites*; for as it is undeniable that the Prieſts (who were of the Tribe of *Levi*) were the moſt cruel enemies that Chriſt had, and ſought his death with greateſt earneſtneſs; ſo (as our late learned Annotators upon the Bible have obſerved) ſome ſay, *Judas* who betrayed him, was of the tribe of *Simeon*. Thus theſe two tribes were Brethren in bloodſhed as much as in blood. *Solomon* alſo gives us this notion of a Brother, (*Prov.* 18. 1.) *He alſo that is ſlothfull in his work, is brother to him that is a great waſter*; that is, he is like him, he is ſuch an other, a ſlothful man is as bad as a waſtful man; He that folds up his arms in idleneſs, add he that opens his hand in waſtfulneſs, reſemble each other as to their iſſue, though they are very different in their way; for as one of them gets nothing, ſo the other ſpends all he gets or hath, and it is all a caſe, whether a man gets nothing, or ſpends all, for both come to nought. And as one deſcants both wittily and truly upon them, they like Brethren bear the ſame coat, the ragged coat of Beggery, only with this difference; the waſter runs into Beggery, but the ſluggard or he that is ſlothful ſits ſtill, till Beggery comes upon him. Now in the ſame ſence, that the ſloathful man is brother to the waſter, *Job* was a brother to Dragons; he looked upon himſelf under that preſent diſpenſation, as very like them. *I am a brother to Dragons.*

The word which we render *Dragon*, ſignifieth alſo a *Whale*, ſo we render it (*Chap.* 7. 12.) *Am I a Sea; or a Whale?* So that, this one word hath two great monſters in the belly of it; Firſt, the *Whale*, who is a water-monſter as to bigneſs. Secondly, The *Dragon*, who is a Land-monſter as to dreadfulneſs. Here we take the word for the Land-monſter, *I am a brother to Dragons*,

Vox תנים *nunc terreſtri nunc pro marina bellua uſurpatur.*

And a companion to Owls.] The ſence is one in both; ſome render, *a companion to Oſtriches*; the Text ſtrictly is *to the daughter of the Oſtrich, or of the Owl.* And hence ſome underſtand it of young Owls, which make a great noiſe, when the old ones are gone from them; but it may as well be underſtood of Owls in general by a common Hebraiſm, ſo the Daughter of the Oſtrich or Owl, is the Oſtrich or the Owl her ſelf. Which manner of ſpeaking was opened and exemplified by many Scripture-inſtances at the 8. verſe of this Chapter.

And though in this verſe, the word is rendred by ſome, *Owl*, by others, *Oſtrich*; yet we ſhould rather keep to our tranſlation, becauſe the Oſtrich is expreſſed by a diſtinct word at *Chap.* 39. *verſ.* 16. of this Book. And the Etymological ſence of the word here uſe is applicable to the Owl rather then to the Oſtrich. For it ſignifieth to make a horrid ſcrieching noiſe; and to anſwer one another in it like an Eccho, as Owls uſe to do.

Laſtly, When *Job* ſaith, *I am a brother to Dragons, and a companion to Owls*, we may underſtand it in one of theſe two ſences.

Dicta eſt ulula יענה *à lugubri cantu nam* ענה *ſignificat interdum vocem lugubrem edere ut videre eſt.* Iſa. 13. 22. Piſcat.

Firſt, Thus; I ſit alone as they do, Dragons are melancholy Creatures, they love ſolitary places and Deſarts, and darkeſt retirements. Hence that of the Church (*Pſ.* 41. 19.) *Though thou haſt ſore broken us in the place of Dragons*, is rendred by the Septuagint, *In a place un-inhabited or unfit to be inhabited.* Dragons dwell where none dwell; as they are dangerous Neighbours, all men avoid them, and as they delight not in Neighbour-hood, ſo they avoid all men. Nor are Owls more ſociable the Dragons; they (as we know) ſit all day alone, and come abroad only in the night, when all other Birds are gone to Rooſt, or are at reſt. And if at any time they appear in the day, all the

Loco inhabitabili. Sept.

the Birds in the Air make a riot againſt them, and either beat or hoot them home again. We read in ſeveral Scriptures, that as ſoon as the Lord threatens to make any City deſolate and without inhabitant, preſently Dragons and Owls are named for the inhabitants of it. (*Iſa.* 13. 19.) *Babylon the glory of Kingdoms, the beauty of the* Chaldees *excellency, ſhall be as when God overthrew* Sodom *and* Gomorrha, *it ſhall never be inhabited,* that is, by men; by whom then? Even by *doleful Creatures, Owls and Dragons,* (verſ. 21, 22.) And in like caſe the ſame Prophet ſaith, (*Chap.* 34. 13.) *It ſhall be a habitation of Dragons, and a court for Owls.* They ſhall King it and Lord it there. So that when *Job* ſaith, *I am a brother to Dragons, and a companion to Owls,* his meaning is, *I love ſolitarineſs, and delight to be alone*; he indeed ſaid before, *I ſtood up, and cryed in the Congregation,* many came about him, but they, it ſeems, were rather a trouble to him, yea a kind of terror to him by their unkindneſs. The company that came to him uſed him little better then ordinary Birds do the Owl, ſome making a wonderment at his miſery, and others (as he complained about the beginning of this Chapter) hooting at him in deriſion. Thus he was *a companion to Owls.* And beſides, 'tis the nature of ſorrow to deſire ſolitarineſs: *Look away from me,* (ſaith the Prophet, *Iſa.* 22. 4.) *I will weep bitterly, labour not to comfort me,* &c. Thus ſaith *Job, I am a brother to Dragons,* &c. I would be alone, (as Dragons and Owls covet to be) in my ſorrows, rather then have the company of ſuch comforters. The Prophet *Jeremiah* maketh a like wiſh (upon the ſence of the trouble which he had among his people, *Chap.* 9. 2.) *O that I had in the Wilderneſs a lodging of wayfaring men, that I might leave my people and go from them, for they be all Adulterers, and an aſſembly of treacherous men.* He that deſireth a Wilderneſs life, deſireth a retired ſolitary life, and declares himſelf *a brother to Dragons, and a companion to Owls.*

Secondly, When *Job* ſaith, *I am a brother to Dragons, and a companion to Owls,* his meaning may be this, I do as they; what's that? Dragons make a mournful cry, a terrible noiſe. Natural Hiſtories ſpeak much of the dreadful cryes of the Dragon, eſpecially when he is in Battel with the Elephant; and as all Naturaliſts agree, that the Dragon makes a fearful noiſe and howling, ſo the Scriptures conſents with them, (*Mich.* 1. 8.) *Therefore I will wail and howl, I will go ſtript and naked, I will make a wailing like the Dragons, and mourning like the Owls.* When the Prophet would expreſs his deepeſt ſorrowful ſence of the miſeries, which he foreſaw falling upon *Samaria* and *Jeruſalem* for their Idolatry, he knew not how to parallel it, but by that of Dragons and Owls, *I will make a wailing like the Dragons,* &c. *For her wound is uncurable*; or, *ſhe is grievouſly ſick of her wounds,* as we put in the Margin. We find *David* complaining in language near this, (*Pſal.* 102. 6, 7.) *I am like a Pelican of the Wilderneſs, I am like an Owl of the Deſart; I watch and am as a Sparrow alone upon the Houſe-top.* And *Hezekiahs* thankſgiving Song ſets forth the ſorrows of his ſickneſs in ſuch like ſtrains, (*Iſa.* 38. 14.) *Like a Crane or a Swallow, ſo did I chatter, I did mourn like as a Dove, mine eyes fail with looking upward; O Lord, I am oppreſſed, undertake for me.* The doleful ditties and lamenting tunes of thoſe Birds and Fowls, the Pelican, the Sparrow, the Crane, the Swallow, and the Dove, bear a correſpondence with this proteſtation of *Job, I am a brother to Dragons, and a companion to Owls.* They are ſolitary, ſo am I, they chatter and cry and mourn out their ſorrows, ſo do I. The worſt of their conditions and lamentations is not worſe then mine; I am their brother and companion in affliction.

Frater draconum ob miſerabilem & lamentabilem planctum, vociferatione funeſta imitatus ſu. Jun.

Laſtly, Some expound the *Dragons* and the *Owls* here ſpoken of by *Job* metaphorically, for thoſe terrible cruel and uncouth ones that were about him; whoſe carriage was ſo inſolent and inhumane, ſo void of compaſſion, yea of diſcretion towards him, that as *David* once ſaid, *My Soul is as among Lions,* ſo *Job* might ſay, mine is among Owls and Dragons, that is, among men either fierce and Dragoniſh, or among men inconſiderate and Owliſh. In the 19. Chapter *Job* brings ſuch a charge againſt his whole family or Domeſtick relations (*v.* 15. &c.) *They that dwell in mine Houſe, and my maidens count me for a ſtranger. I am an Alien in their ſight, I called my Servant and he gave me no anſwer; my breath is ſtrange to my Wife, though I intreated for the Childrens ſake of mine own body, yea young Children deſpiſed me, all my inward friends abhorred me.* They from whom he might expect the readieſt offices of love and duty, ſeemed to have put off not only their particular and ſpecial bonds of duty, but even common modeſty, and civility, acting rather the part of Beaſts then of men, of Dragons and Owls rather then of Wife, Friends or Servants, are there not many even at this day, after ſo long a ſhining forth of Goſpel light and love, who ſhew no more pity or charity, give no more comfort or ſuccour to their brethren in the fleſh, yea to their brethren (by profeſſion) in the faith, then a Dragon or an Owl will do? And may not they who have ſuch friends and kindred ſay, (without breach of charity) we are brethren to Dragons and companions to Owls? This interpretation carrieth a fair Tropological or Moral inſtruction in it; but the former being textual and proper, I inſiſt rather upon that. *I am a brother to Dragons, and a companion to Owls.*

Hence Note, Firſt, *They that are higheſt in Grace and Saintſhip, may yet act ſometimes, not only below their Grace and Saintſhip, but even below Reaſon and Manhood.*

Job was a holy as man as lived; yet he was ſometimes in his diſtreſs more like a Dragon or an Owl then a holy man. He continued always in the ſame grace, yet his grace did not always continue the ſame. He had much, very much cauſe of grief, yet he grieved too much when he had a wailing like the Dragons and a mourning like the Owls. A godly man may act below himſelf, even like a beaſt two ways. Firſt, in ſinning, as *David* confeſſed, (*Pſal.* 73. 21, 22.) *So fooliſh was I and ignorant, I was as a Beaſt before thee; Neverthel*eſ*s, I am continually with thee, thou haſt holden me be my right hand.* When *David* envied the proſperity of the wicked, he cenſured it as a beaſt-like folly and ignorance, and judged himſelf not only unlike a holy man, but unlike a man that's rational. While good men give any ſcope to a luſt, and do ſinfully, they play the Beaſts, and behave themſelves more like Dragons or Owls then true believers. Secondly, as good men are ſometimes like Beaſts in ſinning, ſo alſo in ſorrowing. The Apoſtle would not have believers *ſorrow* (for the dead) *as others* (that is as Heathens) *which have no hope,* much more would he not have them ſorrow either upon that or any other account like Brutes, which have no underſtanding, no knowledg; yet who knows how far he may be tranſported by the weight of an affliction, and the preſſure of grief? *Saints do not always mourn like Saints, they ſometimes mourn like Dragons or like Owls.*

Secondly, Note, *We may be called brethren and companions of thoſe whoſe manners and actions we imitate, what though we are not at all akin to them, or in company with them? yet we are their companions and brethren when we do or ſuffer like them. We are like to every thing which we imitate, whether it be good or bad.*

As Chriſt told ſome of the *Jews,* the Devil was their father becauſe they walked in his ways, and reſembled him in their works; ſo we may call any one a mans Brother, whoſe works he reſembleth. *Solomon* gives us this in a full aſſertion, (*Prov.* 13. 20.) *He that walketh with wiſe men ſhall be wiſe; but a companion of fools ſhall be deſtroy'd.* To walk with them is not to take a turn with them in the fields, or barely to go in company with them when and whither they go; but to walk with the wiſe, is to follow their example, and to tread the ſame paths of wiſdom which they tread. They who thus walk with wiſe men, attain to wiſdom, and prove wiſe men themſelves. And when *Solomon* adds, *A companion of fools ſhall be deſtroy'd*; his meaning is not, that every one that is in the company of a fool ſhall be deſtroyed, but he that conforms to them and take up their fooliſh faſhions; he that is or doth like a fool, is properly a fools companion, and only he. In which ſence *Solomon* ſpeaks again, (*Prov.* 28. 7.) *Whoſo keepeth the Law is a wiſe Son, but he that is a companion of riotous men* (that is, he that doth like riotous men) *ſhameth his Father*; he that doth like a Dragon, is Brother to a Dragon, and he that doth like an Owl, is a companion of Owls. I may add, He that doth like a Dog, or a Swine, or a Fox, is their Brother and companion. *I am* (cryed *Job*) *a Brother of Dragons, and a companion to Owls.* And he gives us ſome further account why he was ſo in the words which follow.

Verſ. 30. **My ſkin is black upon me, and my bones are burnt with heat.**

The ſkin is the outward or upper Garment of Nature; the beauty and bravery of Nature appears in the ſkin. What was become of *Job*'s beauty and bravery we may eaſily judg, when he made this complaint,

My ſkin is black.] He had ſaid a little before, *I went mourning or black without the Sun*, now ſaith he, *my ſkin is black.* But what made *Job*'s ſkin black? Or what means he by the blackneſs of his ſkin? He was black without the Sun, his ſkin was not tand (as we ſay) nor burnt black with the outward heat of the air, but with the grief of his heart, his ſorrows boyled up, and changed the colour of his ſkin.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *Great afflictions and ſorrows, quickly fade the beauty of the body, and ſpoil the faireſt face.*

Strong (eſpecially if laſting) diſeaſes take off beauty, or give blackneſs inſtead of beauty. (*Pſal.* 39. 11.) *When thou with rebukes doſt correct man for iniquity, thou makeſt his beauty to conſume away like a moth, ſurely every man is vanity, Selah.* The ſkin cannot hold its own againſt the ill effects of ſickneſs, much leſs when the rebukes of God upon the Soul for iniquity are mingled with the ſickneſs of the body. Then look after ſpiritual beauty, the beauty of the Soul, that grows fairer by affliction, that never fades by ſickneſs; nothing but the ſin of man and the anger of God can make that fade. When the fleſhly ſkin waxeth black with ſorrow, that retains its beauty and its brightneſs. The beauty of grace holds againſt the coldeſt blaſts, and the moſt burning heats. *Job*'s ſkin was black, his Spirit was not. When *Stephen* the Protomartyr was under tryal for his life, and near ſtoning to death, *All that ſate in the Council looking ſtedfaſtly on him, ſaw his face as if it had been the face of an Angel,* (*Acts* 6. 15.) *Stephens* ſkin waxed fairer as the fury of his perſecuters waxed hotter; God was pleaſed to print (as it were) a viſible Not Guilty upon his face, while his adverſaries were accuſing him of blaſphemy as black as a coal. And though the ſkins and faces of many of the Saints have been perſecuted and afflicted into blackneſs, yet their Souls and Conſciences never could, but under the darkeſt appearances or covers of trouble and ſorrow they have ſtill retained a real comlineſs; and under the blackeſt ſkin, a beautiful Soul. While *David* ſaid (*Pſal.* 119. 83.) *I am become like a bottle in the ſmoak*; (he ſaid alſo) *Yet do not I forget thy Statutes.* *David* through the force of his afflictions was like a bottle in the ſmoak, which if of leather ſhrinks and ſhrivels up, and if of more ſolid materials, yet loſeth its beauty and is quickly ſooted black. But when *David* was as a bottle in the ſmoak, yet the holy frame of his heart did not ſhrink nor alter; for he adds, *Yet do not I forget thy precepts*; though my beauty is gone, yet my grace is not; *I am like a bottle in the ſmoak*, (that's true) *but I do not forget thy Statutes*, that's as true. If outward beauty fail, where there is no inward beauty, if the ſkin be black, and the Conſcience black too, how great, how miſerably uncomly is that blackneſs? The Prophet lamenting the famine of the *Jews*, ſaith (*Lam.* 4. 8.) *Their viſage is blacker then a coal, they are not known in the ſtreets, their ſkin cleaveth to their bones, it is withered, it is become like a ſtick.* And he preſents them making a like lamentation (*Chap.* 5. 10.) *Our ſkin was black like an Oven, becauſe of the terrible famine.* Thus ſickneſs, famine, any kind of deep affliction makes ſad impreſſions upon the ſkin, the beauty of that is ſoon blown off, and to be ſure old age will ſhrivel it up and make it look like a bottle in the ſmoak. Therefore, I ſay again, look to the beauty of the Soul which fadeth not, which the tears of ſorrow cannot ſtain nor death it ſelf deface, (1 *Pet.* 1. 7.) *The tryal of our faith* (or our tryed faith) *being much more precious then of Gold that periſheth, though it be tryed with fire, will be found unto praiſe, and honour, and glory, at the appearing of Jeſus Chriſt.* Faith comes purified, not corrupted, out of the fire; the body comes out black, but grace comes out white. *Job* was aſſured of this (*Ch.* 23. 10.) *When he hath tryed me, I ſhall come forth as Gold.* Yet here he ſaith, *My ſkin is black*,

And my bones are burnt with heat.

Theſe words are a further and a fuller deſcription of *Job*'s calamity. *My bones* (ſaith he) *are burnt*, that is, my affliction doth not only afflict my ſkin, or the outſide of my body, but my very bones; it dries up the marrow and moiſture there. I feel a fire within me, drinking up my ſpirits, and ready to burn the very Beams and Rafters of this Houſe of Clay, my bones. As there is a fire which viſibly conſumes our Houſes (we have ſeen many ſuch ſad ſpectacles) ſo there are fires which inviſibly conſume our bodies and our bones. God can as quickly kindle a fire which ſhall conſume this Houſe of the Body which himſelf hath built, as thoſe Houſes which we have built. Some afflictions are as a fire, which burns inward to the bones.

Hence Obſerve, *Great ſorrow waſts and ſpends not only the beauty, but the ſtrength of man.*

It reacheth to the bones. *David* ſpake more then once of this effect of his ſorrows, eſpecially of his ſin-ſorrows, or ſorrows occaſion'd by his ſin. (*Pſal.* 32. 3.) *When I kept ſilence* (not confeſſing my ſin) *my bones waxed old*, that is, I had ſuch trouble in my Soul, as even haſtned me into old age, or made the ſymptoms or tokens of it to appear upon me before their time. *David's bones waxed old*, He complains alſo as *Job* that *his bones was burnt*, (*Pſal.* 102. 3.) *My days are conſumed like ſmoak, my bones are burnt as an hearth, my heart is ſmitten and withered like graſs, ſo that I forget to eat my bread; by reaſon of the voyce of my groaning my bones cleave to my ſkin.* How many metaphors and hyperboles, or exceſſes of ſpeech hath *David* brought together in this one context, to ſhew how exceſſively his heart was wounded with ſorrow for the affliction of *Sion*; let ſorrow come from what cauſe it will, if once it be great and ſincere, it will leave marks enough to tell every man where it is. *Solomon* ſaith, (*Prov.* 15. 13.) *A merry heart maketh a chearful countenance, but by ſorrow of the heart, the Spirit is broken.* And again, more emphatically and juſt in *Job*'s phraſe (*Chap.* 17. 22.) *A merry heart doth good like a medicine, but a broken Spirit dryeth the bones.* By a merry heart in both Texts *Solomon* intends the ſame thing, but he intends neither of them of carnal mirth. The merry heart there meant, is a heart merry upon holy grounds, eſpecially upon a ſight, by faith, of our reconciliation to God through Chriſt, and of our acceptance in him; this will make the heart merry to purpoſe, and ſuch a merry heart, or (as ſome render) good Conſcience is like a medicine indeed, it refreſheth the whole body. Now as ſuch a merry heart is a medicine, ſo there is a ſorrowful heart, which is as a diſeaſe or a conſumption to the whole body; it waſts and withers the fleſh, it ſcorcheth and ſpoileth the complection, it dries the bones, and breaks the Spirit. Such were *Job*'s ſorrows, *My bones are burnt.* And when he felt ſuch fires of ſorrow kindled in him by his great affliction, it was time for him to ſilence his Organ and his Harp, So he did.

Verſ. 31. **My Harp is turned into mourning, and my Organ into the voyce of them that weep.**

Job having made this ſad narrative of his ſorrows, what could be expected but this ſad concluſion? Time was when *Job* had his muſick; he was wont (it ſeems) to uſe his Harp and Organ, both to excite and expreſs his joy, but he either totally diſuſed them, or uſed them only to play ſad and doleful tunes, to feed and ſtrengthen ſorrow.

Lætus meus et glorioſus ſtatus meus triſti commutatus eſt. Jun.

My Harp is turned into mourning; or according to the letter of the Hebrew, *my Harp is for mourning*,

As if *Job* had ſaid, my Harp is now for no other ſervice but for ſorrow, 'tis ſet or wound up to no tune or leſſon but *lachrymæ* or lamentation. I mind nothing but my troubles, and they always mind me. The Harp which is an

Significat omnem ſuam lætitiam, cujus ſigna ſunt inſtrumenta muſi-

ca in mœrorem, & animi anxietatem verſam eſſe. Merc.
Cithara mea. i. e. *hilaritas mea; metonymia adjuncti.* Piſc.

לְקוֹל בֹּכִים
In vocem flentium.

עֻגָב
Genus organi muſici ab amore ſic dictum. Moller. in Pſal. 150.

Inſtrument of mirth, may by a Metonymy of the adjunct be put for mirth it ſelf; *My Harp*, that is, *my mirth is turned into mourning*,

And my Organ into the voyce of them that weep.

Mr. *Broughton* renders; *And pleaſant ſounds be weepers voyce.* We had the Organ at *Chap.* 21. *verſ.* 11,12. *They ſend out their little ones like a flock, and their Children dance, they take the Timbrel and Harp, and rejoyce at the ſound of the Organ.* The word rendred *Organ*, comes from a root that ſignifies *to love*, and to love with a kind of exceſs, either becauſe that Inſtrument of Muſick is much loved, or becauſe it ſtirs up affection, and is an incentive of love.

The general ſence of the whole verſe is but this; my comforting ſounds are changed into a mourning ſound; all my joys are turned into ſorrows, which he expreſſeth by laying aſide his Harp and Organ, which before were a help to his joy, and heightned his delights.

Hence Note, Firſt, *Muſick is an ancient Art.*

Job had his muſical Inſtruments: We find their invention mentioned in the very firſt Ages of the World, (*Gen.* 4. 21.) *And his brothers name was* Jubal, *he was the Father of all ſuch as handle the Harp and Organ.* The two Inſtruments ſpoken of by *Job*, were invented by *Jubal*, he was the *Father* (the firſt Inventer of any Art is called the Father of all thoſe (though none of his Children) that profeſs it after him, in which ſence *Jubal* was the father) *of all ſuch as handle* (that is, play skilfully upon) *the Harp and Organ.*

Secondly, Note, *As muſick was a very ancient, ſo a lawful Art or invention.*

It is no ſin to have or uſe a Harp or an Organ. *Godlineſs doth not deprive us of outward comforts. Job* a man that feared God had his muſick. Muſick is not ſinful, unleſs

Firſt, When 'tis uſed wantonly to ſtir up or awaken luſt; Or

Secondly, When 'tis uſed unreaſonably, and that

Firſt, In reſpect of the muchneſs or continuance of it at any time. When men are all for mirth and muſick; we muſt not make muſick our work, but our recreation, and uſe it only as ſauce not as diet.

Secondly, In reſpect of the ſpecial ſtate of the time; as we muſt not uſe it much at any time, ſo not at all, at ſometimes. What thoſe times are the Prophet tells us expreſly (*Iſa.*22.10,12.) *In that day did the Lord God of Hoſts, call to weeping, and to mourning, and to baldneſs, and to girding with ſackcloth; and behold joy and gladneſs, ſlaying Oxen and killing Sheep, eating fleſh, and drinking wine.* Theſe two great affections of joy and ſorrow, are both beautiful in their ſeaſons, even ſorrow is comely in its ſeaſon, and joy it ſelf when unſeaſonable, hath not only no beauty, but much danger, becauſe much provocation in it. And therefore as the Prophet ſets a *Behold* of wonder and aſtoniſhment before the mention of ſuch joy, (*v.* 13.) *Behold joy and gladneſs*; as if he had ſaid, what a ſtrange, what an uncouth and uncomely ſight is this, that men ſhould thus either perverſely contradict, or groſly miſtake the directions of providence, that upon the very day wherein that calls to mourning, *&c.* They ſhould be found rejoycing; now (I ſay) as the Prophet ſets a Behold of wonder before ſuch a joy, ſo he follows it with a dreadful denunciation in the next verſe, (14.) *And it was revealed in my ears by the Lord of Hoſts, ſurely this iniquity ſhall not be purged from you, till ye die.* That is, it ſhall never be purged or pardoned, and if guilt be not pardon'd, we are in danger of puniſhment every hour. To be doing with *Harp and Organ in ſuffering times, may bring Swords and Spears upon us.* It is both our duty and our ſecurity, to humble our ſelves, when God humbles us; and to lay away our Muſick as ſoon as ever we ſee the Lord taking it away. The Lord by *Moſes* ſaid to the Children of *Iſrael*, *Put off thy ornaments, that I may know what to do unto thee*, (Exod. 33. 5.) God knows well enough, what to do, and what he will do with us at all times: his counſels and reſolves what to do, depend not upon what we do: Yet when there are appearances of diſpleaſure, as then there were againſt the Children of *Iſrael* for their Idolatry in making the *golden calf*, (*I will come up into the midſt of thee in a moment and conſume thee*; when (I ſay) the diſpleaſure of God appears thus againſt a people) then he ſpeaks as a man unreſolved either for ſparing or for deſtroying, and ſeems willing to be determin'd either for judgment or for mercy, by what he finds in us. And bids us *put off our Ornaments*, that is, lay down our pride, and lie naked in the duſt, that he may know what to do with us: as if he ſhould ſay, I will ſhew thee mercy, if thou repent; or I will puniſh thee, if thou perſiſt in thy pride and impenitency; though I have decreed what to do with thee, yet thou ſhalt find my dealings with thee ſutable to what thou doeſt. Therefore in a time of paſſed provocation, and of feared affliction, let us as the Apoſtle adviſeth (*James.* 4. 9.) *Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep, let our laughter be turned to mourning, and our joy to heavineſs, let us humble our ſelves in the ſight of the Lord, and he ſhall lift us up.* Woe to thoſe who will not be afflicted when God afflicts them, who when God caſts them down, yet hold up their heads in mirth and jollity. The Lord loves to ſee us bear our Croſs, but he cannot endure to ſee us make ſport with it, or make ſlight of it. If God once perceive us driving away our ſorrow with our Harp and Organ, or drowning it in wine, he can quickly turn that wine into water, and drown the ſound of our Harp with mourning, and the pleaſant tunes of our Organ with the voyce of weeping. The *Jews* found this made good upon them; they would not ſit down and weep over the ſins which they had committed in *Jeruſalem*; but *by the Rivers of* Babylon, *there they ſate down and wept*, (*Pſal.* 137. 1.) And what did they then with their Harps? *They hung them up upon Willows in the midſt thereof*; they had little mind to their muſick in that ſorrowful day; yea when the *Babylonians* who carried them away Captives, required of them a ſong; they anſwered, *How ſhall we ſing?* And they did not anſwer, *How ſhall we ſing a prophane ſong in a ſtrange Land, but how ſhall we ſing the Lords ſong in a ſtrange Land*, or, *in the Land of a ſtranger?* They who will not hang up their Harps and forbear their ſong in their own Land, when their ſins call them to mourning, may ſoon be forced to both by the cry of their miſery in a ſtrange Land, yea though their enemies call them to ſinging.

Again, We may ſuppoſe that *Job* put away his muſick, his Harp and Organ, not only as being unſeaſonable, but irkſome and troubleſome to him, in that time of his trouble. His Harp and Organ gave a harſh ſound, and grated his ear, when he was in that condition; *All muſick is out of tune to an afflicted Soul, 'tis grievous to them that are grieved*; outward mirth doth often increaſe rather then abate our ſorrows. The Scripture is full to that point, (*Prov.* 25. 20.) *As he that taketh away a garment in cold weather, and as vineger upon nitre, ſo is he that ſingeth ſongs unto an heavy heart.* A garment taken away in cold weather, makes the perſon colder from whom it is taken, and vinegar being cold and moiſt, doth but exaſperate and draw out the ſharpneſs of nitre, which is hot and dry; thus a heavy heart by a kind of Antiperiſtaſis, is made more heavy by a delightful ſong; even as (on the contrary) that hot and fiery vapour which is in a Cloud, is more enraged and breaks out into thunder and lightning, when 'tis compaſſed about with and more cloſely pent in by coldneſs. Though in ſome leſſer caſes ſorrow is moderated, yea and removed by muſick, yet great and ſetled ſorrows are rather exulcerated and vexed by it. And as this is true of common ſorrow cauſed by any outward affliction, ſo it is more true and moſt true of that ſpecial ſorrow and heavineſs of heart, which is cauſed by pricks of Conſcience and the ſence of ſin, or by the hidings of Gods face, and the withdrawings of his favour. How ungrateful and unwelcome is carnal mirth to a wounded Spirit? To a Soul that mourns under the apprehenſions of divine diſpleaſure! Therefore when the Apoſtle *James* would preſcribe that to Saints which is proper both in ſad and comfortable diſpenſations, he ſaith (*Chap.* 5. 13.) *Is any among you afflicted? let him pray*, (that's muſick in the ears of God) *Is any man merry?* (that is, hath he cauſe to be merry, and is his heart wound up and tuned to it?) *let him ſing Pſalms*, or (as the Greek hath it, for there 'tis but one word) *let him ſing*; holy ſongs he means for the matter, and let him ſing in a holy manner, not to pleaſe the fleſh, but to quicken and recreate his Spirit. We ſee by this Apoſtolical direction, that as our eſtate in this World is full of change, ſo we muſt apply our ſelves to a change of Duties. Singing is proper to a proſperous eſtate, ſinging not only to the praiſe of God, but ſinging his praiſe; prayer is our beſt remedy, as God to whom we pray is our beſt refuge, in a day of adverſity and affliction.

Laſtly, Note, *God can quickly ſpoil all our muſick and mirth, he can change our pleaſure into pain, our delights into lamentations, our health into ſickneſs, our Harp and Organ into mourning and weeping.*

The Prophet gives a large deſcription of ſuch a change ready to fall upon that Land, (*Iſa.* 24. 7, 8, 9.) *The new wine mourneth, the vine languiſheth, all the merry-hearted do ſigh; the mirth of Tabrets ceaſeth, the noiſe of them that rejoyce endeth, the joy of the Harp ceaſeth, they ſhall not drink wine with a ſong, ſtrong drink ſhall be bitter to them that drink it.* Wine makes the heart of man glad; therefore to ſhew how much the wine-drinkers ſhall mourn, he ſaith *the wine ſhall mourn.* We read a like ſad denunciation made by another Prophet in the name of the Lord, (*Jer.* 7. 34.) *Then will I cauſe to ceaſe from the City of* Judah, *and from the Streets of* Jeruſalem, *the voyce of mirth, and the voyce of gladneſs, the voyce of the Bridegroom, and the voyce of the Bride, for the Lord ſhall be deſolate.* And again, (*Jer.* 25. 10.) *Moreover I will take from them the voyce of mirth, and the voyce of gladneſs; the voyce of the Bridegroom, and the voyce of the Bride, the ſound of the Milſtones, and the light of the Candle.* And if *Jeruſalem* hath felt ſuch changes, ſhall *Babylon* eſcape? We are aſſured ſhe ſhall not. (*Revel.* 18. 21, 22, 23.) *And a mighty Angel took up a ſtone, like a great mil-ſtone, and caſt it into the Sea, ſaying, thus with violence ſhall that great City* Babylon *be thrown down, and ſhall be found no more at all. And the voyce of Harpers and Muſicians, and of Pipers and Trumpeters ſhall be heard no more at all in thee, and no Craftſman of whatſoever Craft ſhall be found any more in thee, and the ſound of a mil-ſtone ſhall be heard no more in thee,* &c. All this is propheſied of *Babylon,* when ſhe ſhall ſing her ſong, *I ſit a Queen, and am no Widdow, and ſhall ſee no ſorrow*; that is, all is well, and will be well with me, ſhall be *Babylons* ſong. But what ſaith God? *Reward her even as ſhe hath rewarded thee, double unto her double according to her works; in the Cup which ſhe hath filled, fill to her double. Babylon* had Harpers and Trumpeters, to make her lovers merry, but they ſhall be heard no more at all in her. The voyce of mirth may ceaſe in *Jeruſalem,* ſhe may have a total change of her proſperity; but the voyce of mirth ſhall be heard no more at all in *Babylon,* her proſperity ſhall have a final change, hers ſhall be a perpetual deſolations.

And foraſmuch as the Lord hath and doth turn mirth into mourning, and joy into ſorrow, let us not reckon upon many good days, much leſs that all our days ſhall be good, that is, days of mirth and muſick, days of peace and joy, Harp and Organ days in this World.

The Apoſtle minds us of a very neceſſary doctrine (1 *Cor.* 7. 29.) *This I ſay Brethren, the time is ſhort*; and he gives us a very uſeful inference from it, in the words immediately following; *It remaineth, that both they that have wives be as if they had none, and they that weep as though they wept not; and they that rejoyce, as though they rejoyced not; and they that buy as though they poſſeſſed not, and they that uſe this World as not abuſing it, for the faſhion of this World paſſeth away.*

Time is ſhort in all the notions of it, Take it firſt for the whole duration of this World, from the firſt day of Creation to the day of the diſſolution of all things, ſo (compared with eternity) time is ſhort, all times put together make but a ſhort time. Secondly, take Time for the whole duration of any one mans life, ſo 'tis ſhorter, ſo ſhort, that 'tis nothing. Thirdly, take time, for the ſpecial ſeaſon either of doing or enjoying good in this life, ſo 'tis ſhorteſt of all.

The ſhortneſs of time in all theſe conſiderations, but eſpecially in the laſt, ſhould keep our hearts in a great deal of moderation towards the beſt and ſweeteſt of our worldly enjoyments. And indeed all theſe *Nots* in the Apoſtles Text, before alledged, are not negations, but moderations or qualifications of our reſpects to Earthly contentments. We are as apt to over-do, or to do too much in worldly things, as we are to under-do, or to do too little in Heavenly things. Our two great failings are, firſt, that we do but make uſe of thoſe things which we ſhould enjoy; ſecondly, that we enjoy thoſe things which we ſhould only make uſe of. O how few are there who have learnt that holy art of Marriage; *To have Wives as if they had none?* How few are there who have learnt that holy trade of Merchandize, *To buy as if they poſſeſſed not?* How few are there who have learnt that holy skill and cunning in Muſick and diſports, *To rejoyce as if they rejoyced not?* How few have learned that divine wiſdome, which contains all that was ſaid before, *To uſe this World as not abuſing it.* Now what ſtronger arguments can be uſed to provoke every man to the ſtudy and attainment of all theſe points of ſpiritual learning, then theſe two which the Apoſtle urgeth; prefixing the former of them before all theſe practical leſſons, *The time is ſhort*; and cloſing them all with the latter, *The faſhion of this World paſſeth away.* As the World it ſelf ſhall paſs away ſhortly, ſo the moſt beautiful and delightful ſcheems or ſhews of it are paſſing away every moment. And as every man at his beſt eſtate is altogether vanity, (*Pſal.* 39. 5.) ſo is the beſt worldly eſtate of all men.

In the Twenty-Ninth Chapter of this Book, *Job* appeared as likely as any man to continue in his proſperity, and now you ſee through what a hard Chapter of his adverſity I have travailed; the *way* of this thirtieh Chapter is ſet with Briers and Thorns, 'tis full of Gall and Wormwood: And as we have travailed through it, we have met with rents and ſcratches, with ſighs and groans, with pains and troubles. *Job* hath now finiſht the diſcovery of his eſtate on both ſides, his former proſperous, and his then preſent afflicted eſtate, and being got over both, he proceeds to a moſt paſſionate profeſſion of his integrity; though his Harp was turned to mourning, and his Organ into the voyce of them that weep; yet he ſtill held faſt his integrity, yea and was reſolved to hold it out. Though God had caſt him into the mire of affliction, and his friends looking upon his affliction, did caſt him for a wicked man who had wallowed in the mire of ſin; yet he again and once for all, juſtifies himſelf againſt the accuſations and ſuſpicions of men.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXI. Verſ. 1.

I made a Covenant with mine eyes, why then ſhould I think upon a maid?

IN this Chapter *Job* makes a large narrative about his own integrity, and exact walkings, according to the rule of the word, in duty both to God and man. Yea, he doth not only ſay it, but ſwear it, binding the heavieſt curſes upon himſelf by dreadful imprecations of divine vengeance, if it were not ſo?

And this he did, not as the Phariſee (*Luke* 18.) proudly to proclaim his own goodneſs, but to wipe off the dirt of thoſe aſperſions which his friends had caſt upon him; or to ſhew that he was no ſuch man as they imagined him; and that therefore he was not held under the preſſure of thoſe grievous ſufferings, as a puniſhment, either of any cloſe hypocriſie, or of any open wicked practices. Upon the whole matter he might well hope that his friends would take up better thoughts, and a more equal opinion of him; or if after all the profeſſions of his integrity they ſhould not judg him him a good man, that yet they would be more ſenſible of thoſe evils which he had for ſo long a time endured. Theſe or ſurely ſuch as theſe were *Job's* aims, while throughout this whole Chapter he laboured ſo earneſtly to purge himſelf from the ſuſpition of both groſs crimes, and ſecret ſins.

The ſecret ſins which he purged himſelf, were

Firſt, Unchaſt deſires, or heart-uncleanneſs, which he was ſo far from nouriſhing or feeding, that he did his utmoſt to prevent the very firſt occaſions and motions of it, *verſ.* 1. *I made a Covenant with mine eyes.*

Secondly, Truſt upon or reſt in the beſt things of this world, *verſ.* 24, 25. *If I have made Gold my hope*, &c.

Thirdly, A Spirit of revenge, *verſ.* 29, 30. *If I rejoyced at the deſtruction of him that hated me, or lift up my ſelf when evil found him.*

Fourthly, Hypocriſie, or the palliation of ſin, *verſ.* 33. *If I have covered my tranſgreſſions as* Adam, *by hiding mine iniquity in my boſome.*

Fifthly, Baſe fear when his duty called him to appear, *verſ.* 34. *Did I fear a great multitude, or did the contempt of families terrifie me*, &c.

The groſſer crimes from which he purged himſelf in this Chapter, were

Firſt, Unrighteouſneſs or injurious dealing with men, *verſ.* 5, 6, 7, 8. *If I have walked with vanity, or if my foot hath haſted to deceit*, &c.

Secondly, Adultery, or the abuſe of other mens wives, *verſ.* 9, 10, 11, 12. *If my heart hath been deceived by a woman, or if I have laid wait at my neighbours door*, &c.

Thirdly, Undue auſterity and harſhneſs to his ſervants, *verſ.* 13, 14, 15. *If I did deſpiſe the cauſe of my man Servant or of my maid Servant, when they contended with me*, &c.

Fourthly, Uncharitableneſs or incompaſſionateneſs, to the poor, eſpecially the widow, and the fatherleſs, *verſ.* 16, 17, 18, 19, 20. *If I have withheld the poor from their deſire; or have cauſed the eyes of the widows to fail, or have eaten my morſel my ſelf alone, and the fatherleſs hath not eaten thereof*, &c.

Fifthly, He purged himſelf from any violent oppreſſion of the fatherleſs, *verſ.* 21, 22, 23. *If I have lift up my hand againſt the fatherleſs, when I ſaw my help in the gate*, &c.

Sixthly, From Idolatry or Creature-Adoration, *verſ.* 26, 27, 28. *If I beheld the Sun when it ſhined, or the Moon walking in brightneſs, and my heart hath been ſecretly enticed*, &c.

Seventhly, Unhoſpitableneſs, to ſtrangers, *verſ.* 31, 32. *If the men of my Tabernacle ſaid not, O that we had of his fleſh, we cannot be ſatisfied, The ſtranger did not lodge in the Street, but I opened my door to the Traveller.*

Eighthly, and laſtly, He purgeth himſelf from invading or taking lands and poſſeſſions without a right claim and Title made to them, yea from uſing any mans labour upon them, without paying wages, *v.* 38, 39, 40. *If my land cry againſt me, and the furrows likewiſe thereof complain; if I have eaten the fruits thereof without money, or have cauſed the owners thereof to loſe their life, let Thiſtles grow inſtead of Wheat, and Cockle inſtead of Barley.*

Thus far of the general ſcope, as alſo of the ſpecial matters contained in this Chapter.

Verſ. 1. **I made a Covenant with mine eyes; why then ſhould I think upon a maid.**

The ſum of this verſe is *Job's* care, yea carefulneſs to preſerve himſelf pure, from all taints of unchaſtity and uncleanneſs, even to a thought.

In it we more diſtinctly conſider.

Firſt, the means which he uſed for this purpoſe, *A Covenant.*

Secondly, The parties to this Covenant, he and his eyes; *I made a Covenant with mine eyes.*

Thirdly, The deſired ſucceſs or iſſue of this means uſed or Covenant made, *Why then ſhould I think upon a maid?*

I made a Covenant.] The word (*Berith*) which we render, *a Covenant*, comes from a root which ſignifies two things (both which are conſiderable in the nature and formalities of a Covenant) Firſt, to chooſe exactly and judiciouſly; becauſe a Covenant (as all elective acts,) is an act of ſad and ſerious deliberation. All elections are, or ought to be made upon the moſt rational turn and ſway of Judgment, not upon any catch of phancy or hurry of paſſions. Secondly, it ſignifies to eat moderately or ſoberly, this alſo refers to the nature and uſe of a Covenant, which is to draw ſeveral parties into a friendly communion and correſpondence one with another. Hence it hath been accuſtomed upon the making of Covenants, for the parties covenanting to feaſt temperately together, *Gen.* 29. 30.

בריה *Fœdus pactum à* ברה *Elegit, ſelegit, parum modicum edit.*

A Covenant ſtrictly taken is more then a promiſe; a Covenant differs from a promiſe gradually, and in the formalities of it, not naturally, or in the ſubſtance of it; God made promiſes to *Abraham*, Gen. 12. and Gen. 13. but he made no Covenant with him till *Chap.* 15. *verſ.* 18. *In that day the Lord made a Covenant with* Abraham. As the Collection of many Stars makes a Conſtellation, ſo the Collection of many promiſes makes a Covenant; or, as (*Gen.* 1. 10.) *the gathering together of the waters, was by the Lord called Seas*, ſo we may call the gathering together of many promiſes and Conditions a Covenant. The Lord gathers together all thoſe promiſes of mercy which lie ſcattered up and down throughout the whole Volume of the Scriptures into his Covenant with man, and man gathers all thoſe conditions of duty which are to be found all the Scripture over, and puts them into his Covenant with God.

This is the nature and buſineſs of a Covenant properly taken. But here, when *Job* ſaith, *He made a Covenant with his eyes*, the word *Covenant* is to be underſtood improperly only, or in alluſion; and ſo it imports only thus much, that *Job* did uſe all ſerious and ſanctified means to keep himſelf from taking any taint or defilement by vain looks, and wanton glances of his eyes. As *David* (*Pſal.* 39. 1.) *kept his mouth with bit and bridle while the wicked were before him*, ſo *Job* kept his eyes with Covenant and promiſe while any ſuch objects were before him as might allure him to wickedneſs. He did not raſhly ſwear nor coldly wiſh chaſtity, no nor barely purpoſe and propoſe to himſelf, that he would avoid luſtful provocations; but he did ſolemnly engage and bind himſelf to uſe all poſſible diligence and godly care to prevent the entrance of any poyſonous or bewitching vapour at his eyes, and that his ſpirit ſhould not receive infection by his ſenſe. Thus he gave the law to his eyes, and would not ſuffer them to wander, much leſs to feed themſelves where they ſhould not.

I made a Covenant with mine eyes.

ברית
כרתי
Fœdus percuſſi.

The Hebrew is, *I cut or ſtroke a Covenant.* The word which we render, *made*, ſignifies properly to cut or ſtrike, and 'tis applyed to the buſineſs of a Covenant, becauſe at Covenant-making ſome beaſts being killed and cut aſunder, the Covenant-makers paſſed between the divided parts. When God made that firſt Grand Covenant with *Abraham* (Gen. 15. 9, 10.) *He ſaid unto him, Take an Heifer of three years old, and a She-goat of three years old,* &c. *And he took unto him all theſe and divided them in the midſt, and laid thoſe pieces one againſt another,* &c. At the ſeventeenth verſe, *Behold a ſmoaking furnace and a burning lamp* (which latter was an Emblem of Gods ſpecial preſence for the deliverance of his people) *paſſed between thoſe pieces.* We have an inſtance of the ſame ceremony in making a Covenant (*Jer.* 34. 18.) *They cut the Calf in twain, and paſſed between the parts thereof.* Upon this uſage or cuſtom the phraſe is grounded of cutting or ſtriking a Covenant (*Pſal.* 50. 5. and 89. 3.) Which ceremony had the ſignification of this ſevere curſe intimated by it, *Let him be cut aſunder, let the members of his body be divided, as this ſlain beaſt, who violates this ſacred Oath. I made a Covenant*

With mine eyes.] *Job* knew what would moſt probably prove his ſnare, and therefore he ſet the ſtrongeſt watch againſt it. His eyes were readieſt to make him break Covenant with God; What then could he do better then to make *a Covenant with his eyes?*

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *The nature of man is exceedingly prone and bent to ſin.*

We need not bind our ſelves not to do that which we are not ſtrongly bent to do, Covenants are holy bonds. The Prophet (*Iſa.* 5. 18.) tells us of thoſe who *draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and ſin as it were with a cart-rope.* Some are drawn by motives of profit and pleaſure unto ſin, or ſin is forced and preſſed upon them by ſuch like inducements; but others draw ſin unto, yea force and preſs it upon themſelves; they draw ſin to them, as a Horſe draws a Cart to him; by all means and with all their might they toil and even tire themſelves in wicked practices. Now that which ſome men do in act, all men would do by nature, unleſs through grace, or at leaſt by education and moral perſwaſions they put a reſtraint upon their violent luſts and paſſions. *Paul* himſelf found, that, *when he would do good evil was preſent with him* (Rom. 7. 21. and *ver.* 23.) he ſaw another Law in his members (Laws have a binding and preſſing power, he ſaw another Law in his members) warring againſt the Law of his mind, and bringing him into captivity to the Law (that is, the power) of ſin which was in his members; yea, this did work ſo ſtrongly and dreadfully in him, that he was forced to cry out for help (*ver.* 24.) *O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death!* Now if *Paul*, a perſon regenerate, in whom the conquering and reigning power of ſin was broken, found ſuch an impetuous bent in his ſoul to ſin, what is it in them (though poſſibly they neither find nor feel it) who are yet unregenerate, and ſo have or are under the reigning and unbroken power of ſin!

Secondly, Conſidering who *Job* was, and what the ſpecial ſin was againſt which, he here made a Covenant.

Obſerve. *The beſt of men are ſubject to the temptation of the vileſt and vaineſt ſins.*

Uncleanneſs and fornication, are ſuch ſins as many honeſt Heathens have profeſſedly abhorr'd, and bluſh'd at the mention of: And yet *Job*, a man much acquainted with and fearing God much, had much ado to keep himſelf clear from them. There is no ſin ſo filthy and unnatural, but the ſeed of it (in remiſs degrees) remains in the nature of a gracious man; murder, adultery, theft, envy, malice againſt man, yea, and blaſphemy againſt God, dwell in thoſe who are the workmanſhip of God, and the Temples of the holy Ghoſt. That good man declared his ſenſibleneſs of this, who, when report was made to him of any groſs ſin committed by the vileſt of men, was wont to bleſs God that he was not the man that had committed it; implying, that even he, notwithſtanding grace received, had ſo much corruption yet unmortified and unſubdued, as would have hurried him into the dirtieſt wayes of ſin, if the Spirit of God hath not both led him into and kept him in the wayes of holineſs. A godly man cannot live in the leaſt ſin; yet the greateſt ſins have ſomewhat of life in a godly man; *Job* had never covenanted againſt uncleanneſs, if he had not found the motions of it in himſelf.

Thirdly, Obſerve, *A gracious heart engageth himſelf to the utmoſt in the uſe of holy means againſt ſin.*

What ſtronger engagement can a man put upon himſelf, or bind himſelf with then a Covenant? That's alwayes an implicite virtual Oath, and it hath an explicite formal Oath often annexed to it; *David* ſaith (*Pſal.* 109. 106.) *I have ſworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments!* Thus a godly man fortifies himſelf (through grace) with ſacred Oaths and Covenants againſt all the aſſaults and incurſions of Satans helliſh temptations, and his own curſed corruptions. A Hypocrite would ſin if he might, but he that is ſincere ſets himſelf with all his might againſt ſin. *He hath no true will againſt ſin as it is unlawful, who could or doth wiſh that it were lawful to ſin.* And he who hath a real purpoſe to keep his Covenant with God not to do evil, makes a firm Covenant with himſelf not to do it.

Vellem ſi liceret, non ſane nolens peccatum, quia volebat licere peccatum.

Fourthly, Obſerve, *The eye is an Inlet to ſin, eſpecially to the ſin of uncleanneſs.*

Notum eſt illud; uritq; videndo fœmina.

Luſt enters at that window; the eye feeds greedily upon wanton objects; and there the fire uſually begins to kindle, which enflames firſt, and at laſt conſumes the whole man. Any of the Senſes may endanger the ſoul to uncleanneſs, but the eye moſt. The eye may endanger the ſoul to any ſin almoſt, but moſt to uncleanneſs. I grant Covetouſneſs is by way of eminence, called *the luſt of the eyes*, by the Apoſtle *John* (1 Epiſt. 2. 16.) yet, I conceive, the reaſon of it is not only, poſſibly, not ſo much becauſe, ſeeing the things of this world doth provoke the ſpirit of man to covet them, or becauſe covetous men deſire to ſee the things of this world, as becauſe, this is indeed all the benefit (if it may be called a benefit) which covetous men get by inordinate deſiring and gathering the things of the world, *a ſight of them with their eyes:* That of *Solomon* ſeems to carry a fair accommodation with this notion (*Eccleſ.* 5. 11.) *When goods increaſe, they are increaſed that eat them; and what good is there to the owners thereof, ſaving the beholding of them with their eyes?* But I ſhall not inſiſt upon this: It is enough to the point in hand, that though the Scripture gives inſtance of many ſins taking fire at the eye, yet the moſt frequent Inſtances are about the ſin expreſſed in this Text. The firſt ſin (which had all ſin in it, and brought ſin upon all the world) began here (*Gen.* 3. 6.) *When the Woman ſaw that the tree was good for food, and pleaſant to the eyes,* &c. *ſhe took of the fruit thereof and did eat. Solomon* counſels, *Not to look upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup* (*Prov.* 23. 31.) becauſe drunkenneſs and the intemperate uſe of the creature may come in at the eye. *Achan* confeſſeth (*Joſh.* 7. 21.) *When I ſaw among the ſpoils a goodly Babyloniſh Garment,* &c. *then I coveted and took them.* Covetouſneſs enter'd at his eye: Our Lord Jeſus Chriſt was tempted to that ſin by the eye (*Mat.* 4. 8.) *The Devil took him up into an exceeding high Mountain, and ſhewed him all the Kingdoms of the World, and the glory of them;* but he neither coveted, nor took them. Thus (I ſay) the Scripture gives inſtance of ſeveral ſins beginning at the eye; but of all ſins the entrance of uncleanneſs at the eye is moſt exampl'd in Scripture. That firſt unequal matching in marriage is thus deſcribed (*Gen.* 6. 2.) *The Sons of God* (that is, the deſcendants of *Seth* and *Enoch*, who profeſſed the pure worſhip of the true God) *ſaw the daughters of men* (that is, ſuch as came of the wicked and curſed race of *Cain*) *that they were fair, and they took them wives of all whom they choſe.* They were guided by ſenſe, not by reaſon, much leſs by grace in the choice of their Wives. They had no reſpect to ſpiritual beauty or deformity, but only to that which was corporal; they cared not how foul and ugly ſouls their Wives had, ſo they had but fair faces and a white skin. While men chuſe Wives meerly by the eye, their marriage is a kind of Adultery, and themſelves may be numbred among the unclean, ſo they are in heart and in their ſtate both perſonal and relational. As ſinful marriages were occaſion'd by the eye, ſo alſo were ſinnings both beſide and againſt marriage. When *Dinah, Jacob*'s Daughter, *went out to ſee the Daughters of the Land*, Sechem *the Son of* Hamor, *the* Hivite, *Prince of the Country, ſaw her, and took her, and lay with her, and defiled her* (Gen. 34. 1, 2.) Yea *David* was thus defiled, while walking upon the roof of his houſe, he ſaw a woman waſhing her ſelf, *and the woman* (ſaith the Text) *was very beautiful to look upon* (2 Sam. 11. 2.) When Chriſt ſaith (*Matth.* 5. 28.) *Whoſoever looketh on a woman to luſt after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart*, he more then intimates, that whoſoever looketh wantonly on a woman, is at next door to or within a ſtep of bodily Adultery. And hence the Apoſtle *Peter* characters ſome men (2 *Pet.* 2. 14.) *Having eyes full of Adultery* (or as we put in the Margin, *Full of an Adultereſs*) *and that cannot ceaſe from ſin.* Where the eye is full of Adultery, the heart is full of it too; and if once the eye and heart be taken, the man cannot hold out againſt the aſſaults of luſt. When the Out-works are once gained and poſſeſſed by an enemy, all is in danger to be taken; but when both eyes and heart are taken with a beauty, not only the Out-works, but the main Fort or Citadel alſo is taken, and how then can the beſieged City make further oppoſition?

O then, ſet a watch upon your eyes, *guard that paſs well*, if you deſire to preſerve your purity. He forgets that he is or hath fleſh about him, who hopes his heart ſhall not run the ſame courſe with his eye. It was the Motto of a great Commander in war, to ſhew the facility of his Conqueſts over ſtrongeſt places and opponents, *I came, I ſaw, I overcame*; that is, I overcame as ſoon as I could come and ſee; but many will have cauſe ſadly to take up this motto, *We came, we ſaw, we were overcome*; that is, we no ſooner came and ſaw, but we were overcome, we were preſently ſoyled at the eye. This will be the Drunkards complaint at laſt, yea when it will be too late, I came, I ſaw the wine, and was not only overcome to drink, but overcome by drinking. This will be the covetous mans complaint, I came and ſaw the gold, the goodly glitter of worldly ſhews, and was overcome. This will be the Adulterers complaint, I looked and luſted, and was overcome. How ſhould they be looked to, which affect the heart, and infect the whole man with a look? 'Tis more dangerous to ſlip with the eye, then with the foot; broken bones are eaſier ſet, then a broken conſcience. And as for that dirt, thoſe ſpots which we get by a ſlip of the foot, they are clearneſs and beauty compared with that defilement, which we get by a fall into ſin let in at the eye.

Veni. vidi, vici.

Chriſt had no ſooner ſaid, *Whoſoever looketh on a woman to luſt after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart* (Matth. 5. 28.) but he immediately adds this counſel or command (*ver.* 29.) *If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and caſt it from thee, for it is profitable for thee, that one of thy members ſhould periſh, and not that thy whole body ſhould be caſt into hell.* To pluck out the right eye, and caſt it away, is to mortifie the luſts of the fleſh through the Spirit, by the exerciſe of faith upon the croſs, or death, and ſufferings of our Lord Jeſus. When carnal concupiſcence is thus killed and caſt out, the right eye is plucked out, the very eye of the body is then plucked out ſpiritually, and (while this work of mortification is kept up and carried on) the eye ſhall no more offend us; that is, ſhall not cauſe us to offend. This is the proper effect of making a Covenant with the eye. The Lord promiſeth (*Hoſ.* 2. 18.) that he will *make a Covenant for his people with the beaſts of the field:* And while a godly man makes a covenant with his eyes, he makes a covenant with the beaſts of his body: What are the eyes and all other ſenſitive faculties but beaſts, compared with thoſe more noble faculties of ſpiritual reaſon and underſtanding? And unleſs thoſe beaſts are bound to their good behaviour, what with their vanity and treachery, what with their lightneſs and importunity, they will break the bounds of chaſtity and modeſty, and make the heart of man a through-fare, and his body a very Brothel-houſe of uncleanneſs. *Zaleuchus* the *Locrian* Law-giver, appointed the pulling out of the eyes for the puniſhment of thoſe who had committed Adultery: And ſurely the beſt way to prevent Adultery, is in the Scripture ſenſe, here intended, to pluck out our eyes; that is, as *Job* here did, to make a covenant with them: *I* (ſaith he) *have made a covenant with mine eyes.*

Fifthly, Obſerve, *That ſin may be avoided, we muſt avoid whatſoever leads to or occaſions it.*

As this cauſed *Job* to covenant ſtrongly with his eyes; ſo it cauſed *David* to pray earneſtly about his eyes (*Pſal.* 119. 37.) *Turn away mine eyes* (or as the Hebrew may be rendred, *make them to paſs*) *from beholding vanity.* The eye is apt to make a ſtand, or fix it ſelf, when we come in view of an enſnaring object, therefore 'tis our duty to haſten it away, or to pray that God would make it paſs off from it. *Joſeph* did not only not hearken to his adulterous Miſtreſs to lie with her, but he would not ſo much as be with her, he avoided her company (*Gen.* 39. 10.) He that feareth burning muſt take heed of playing with fire; he that feareth drowning muſt keep out of deep waters; he that feareth the Plague muſt not go into an infected houſe. Would they avoid ſin who preſent themſelves to the opportunities of it, and bring their corruptions and temptations as it were to an interview? *I* (ſaith *Job*) *have made a covenant with mine eyes,*

Why then ſhould I think upon a Maid?

Some read, *How then*, &c. either reading attains the ſame ſenſe: As if he had ſaid, Seeing I have made a covenant with mine eyes, why ſhould I think upon a Maid, and ſo break my covenant and my conſcience together? or as *Joſeph* ſpake in a like caſe (*Gen.* 39. 9.) *How then can I do this great wickedneſs and ſin againſt God? Why then*

Should I think upon a Maid?] He doth not ſay, *Why then ſhould I look, but, Why then ſhould I think upon a Maid?* He made his covenant with his eyes, and the act or work of the eyes is to ſee or look, not to think: Thinking is an act of the underſtanding, not of ſenſe; yet becauſe many thoughts are occaſion'd by the ſight of the eyes, therefore it is not unuſual in Scripture to attribute thoſe acts which imply thinking to the eyes. Thus ſaith *Solomon* (Eccleſ. 2. 10.) *Whatſoever mine eyes deſired* (or asked of me) *I kept not from them.* Deſires are thoughts working after and longing for enjoyment. The conſent of the heart and of the eyes is ſo great, that we may well enough be ſaid to ſee with our hearts and to think with our eyes.

שאלו *Poſtulaverunt.*

But why doth *Job* thus ſtrongly diſown thinking upon a Maid? Surely it is not unlawful either to look or think upon a Maid. I grant it is not. And therefore, we are not to underſtand *Job* of bare thinking upon a Maid, but of thinking to ſuch an end, or with ſuch an evil purpoſe, as he diſclaims in the whole tendency of this Text. The Conjugation of the Hebrew Verb which we render, to *Think*, ſignifies a very fixed and ſetled work of the mind in thinking. As if *Job* had ſaid, I have made ſuch a conant with mine eyes, that now I cannot ſtand gazing or poring upon the beauty of a Maid, till my heart be enflamed, or I entertain laſcivious and unchaſt thoughts about her.

אתבונן *Proprie eſt meipſum intelligere aut expendere feci, & ſic aſpectum cum fixa cogitatione indicat.*

But why doth *Job* ſay, *Why then ſhould I think upon a Maid?* Should he not rather have ſaid, Why then ſhould I think upon a Woman, or upon any Woman kind? Did his covenant reſtrain him only from thinking upon a Maid, and not from thinking (in the ſenſe expounded) upon other Women?

For the clearing of this doubt, I anſwer,

Firſt, The word (*Bethulah*) here uſed, may be taken in general for any or every fair and beautiful Woman, whether Maid, Wife, or Widow. So we read (*Joel* 1. 8.)

בתולה *Præſertim in abſtracto ſumitur nonnunquā pro qualibet pulchra muliere ſive virgo ſit ſive non.* Bold.

Lament like a Virgin (or young Widow-woman) *girded with ſackcloth for the Husband of her youth.*

Secondly, *Job* ſpeaketh by name only of a Maid or Virgin, becauſe ſuch in the flower of youth are moſt beautiful, and ſo moſt alluring, and therefore if they were as dead to him, ſurely much more other women in whom there was leſs provocation to that folly. If a man will not drink intemperately of the beſt Wine, much leſs will he of that which is baſe and diſ-ſpirited. He that doth not luſt after the faireſt face, is above the temptation of a deformed or unhandſome piece. Chaſtity is moſt aſſaulted and hazarded by beauty. This was the reaſon which ſome Hiſtorians give why *Alexander the Great* would not ſuffer thoſe moſt beautiful *Perſian* Virgins, the Daughters of *Darius* to be brought into his preſence, leſt he who had conquered ſuch mighty Armies of men, ſhould himſelf be conquered by thoſe Captive-women. So then, *Job* inſtanceth the preſervation of his chaſtity, where it was moſt difficult to preſerve it; and having ſo far conquered all ſolicitations from Maiden-beauty, that he would not ſo much as think upon a Maid, he might well conclude himſelf a conqueror (through grace) over all aſſaults from women-kind.

Lis eſt cum forma magna pudicitiæ.

Thirdly, *Job* might ſay, *Why then ſhould I think upon a Maid?* To ſhew, that if he made conſcience of the leſſer ſin, then much more of the greater. Fornication or the committing of folly with a Maid (though it be a very great ſin, and to her an irreparable diſhonour) is yet a leſſer ſin then adultery, which is the committing of folly with another mans Wife. And therefore alſo *Job* ſpecially acquits himſelf of, and proteſts againſt that former wickedneſs, that he might give evidence how much he abhorred the latter.

Fourthly, *Job* a little after (*ver.* 9. 10.) purgeth himſelf expreſly from all adulterous complotments or embracements, and therefore here he ſpeaks only of his freedom from thoſe other ſinful and defiling thoughts about any ſingle or unmarried perſon; *Why then ſhould I think upon a Maid?*

The words thus opened, yield ſeveral inſtructions.

Firſt, In that *Job* having made a covenant with his eyes, preſently adds, *Why then, or how then ſhould I think upon a Maid?*

Obſerve, *To ſin againſt a Covenant is a great aggravation of ſin.*

The more we are bound or juſtly bind our ſelves not to do a thing, the more we ſin in doing it. A covenant is a bond, a ſacred bond, 'tis not ſafe to trifle with ſacred things. The Lord threatned to ſend a ſword upon his own people, that ſhould *avenge the quarrel of his Covenant* (Levit. 26. 25.)

Secondly, *Job* having made a covenant with his eyes, puts the Queſtion, *Why then ſhould I think upon a Maid?*

Hence Note, *It is good often to put Queſtions to and catechiſe our own ſouls.*

When *David* found himſelf almoſt overſet with grief, he falls to queſtioning the matter (*Pſal.* 42 5.) *Why art thou caſt down, O my ſoul, and why art thou diſquieted in me?* Give me an account, a reaſon, O my ſoul, why is it thus with thee? As we may ſtop immoderate grief, by asking a reaſon why do we grieve thus? So we may ſtop the inordinate motions and deſires of luſt, by asking a reaſon, why ſhould we do thus? When temptation hath prevailed with us to do evil, repentance will cauſe us to ask what have we done? Yea, to conſider what we have done. And when we are tempted to do evil, common prudence, much more ſpecial grace will cauſe us to ask what are we doing? Or why ſhould we do it? Some have ſaid, that, man by reſting, or a quiet retirement, grows more wiſe, or improves in wiſdom. 'Tis as true, that man by theſe kind of motions and traverſes of his ſoul, grows both wiſer and holier. The reaſon why ſo many do things, which are, at leaſt, very queſtionable, is becauſe they did not queſtion themſelves about the doing of them. We ſay (and we ſay it truly) A fool may put more Queſtions then many wiſe men can anſwer: But that man is not wiſe, nor can he do wiſely, who doth not put many Queſtions to himſelf about the things which he is about to do.

Foraſmuch as *Job* made a covenant with his eyes, that he might not *think upon a Maid.*

Thirdly, Obſerve, *That which is in the eye, eſpecially, if it be much or long in the eye, gets quickly to the heart.*

'Tis no eaſie matter to ſtay our ſelves from thinking of that which we have been ſeeing: The eyes are as doors by which Meſſengers enter, and meſſages are ſent into the ſoul concerning all things which are done and ſeen abroad; yea, at theſe doors the ſoul it ſelf doth, as it were, go forth and ſcatter it ſelf among thoſe things which are done and ſeen abroad. In this ſenſe the ſoul may be ſaid to cleave to, yea, to dwell in the eye; and where this works that will not be idle. Therefore let not your eye (if it be poſſible) ever ſee that, upon which you would not have your mind think. One great reaſon why we find it ſo hard a matter to bring our minds to think of God, is, becauſe he is inviſible. And becauſe we ſhould have ſome help this way, he who is altogether inviſible in his nature, hath made himſelf viſible in his works, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks (*Rom.* 1. 20.) *The inviſible things of him, from the creation of the world are clearly ſeen, being underſtood by the things that are made, even his eternal Power and Godhead:* And becauſe Jeſus Chriſt in perſon is gone out of our ſight, therefore, that we might keep him in our minds, he hath left a viſible remembrance of himſelf in his holy Supper, in which we ſhew forth, and, even to the eye, act his death till he cometh. And ſurely the power of ſight is very great upon the thoughts of the heart, elſe the Apoſtle would never have laid ſo ſevere a rebuke upon the *Galatians* for not obeying the truth, for this reaſon, becauſe Jeſus Chriſt had been evidently ſet forth before their eyes crucified among them (*Gal.* 3. 1.) We have, no doubt, a very great advantage to think much and often of that good which we much and often ſee; and 'tis no ſmall trouble to keep that evil out of our thoughts which is much in our eyes. This may be ſome matter of comfort, yea, in part a recompence to thoſe who have loſt their eye-ſight. A Heathen hearing a man bitterly bewailing that loſs, comforted him chiefly upon this conſideration; *Doſt not thou underſtand* (ſaith he) *that thy blindneſs is a part of thy innocence? Doſt thou not know that the eye puts adultery into this mans mind, and inceſt into anothers? Doth not the eye ſhew this man a houſe which his heart preſently covets? And what evil is there which the thoughts of the heart are not let out to by the ſight of the eyes?* Though blindneſs be in it ſelf an evil, yet it may be good to us, eſpecially by ſhadowing all evil from our ſight. Even *Job* could not promiſe himſelf, not *to think upon a Maid,* till he *had made a covenant with his eyes.*

Nonne intelligis partem innocentiæ eſſe cæcitatem. Senec.

Fifthly, Obſerve, *Inordinate thoughts are ſins.*

Job doth not ſay, I have made a covenant with mine eyes, why then ſhould I corporally defile or commit actual fornication with a Maid, but, *Why ſhould I think upon a Maid?* The ſin of the old world, for which God brought a deluge upon the whole world, is thus deſcribed (*Gen.* 6. 5.) *And God ſaw that the wickedneſs of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.* Such as the work of their hearts was, ſuch was the work of their hands, both ſtark naught; and their evil thoughts were as much put to their account for ſinfulneſs, as their evil works were. A man cannot render himſelf more vile and foul in the eye of God by acting, then he may do by thinking: Hence was that paſſionate counſel or command in the Prophet (*Jer.* 4. 14.) *O Jeruſalem, waſh thine heart from wickedneſs, that thou mayeſt be ſaved: How long ſhall thy vain thoughts lodge in thee?* As if he had ſaid, All thy hopes of being ſaved, or of eſcaping the vengeance of God, whether temporal or eternal, will prove but preſumptious or *vain thoughts*; that is, ſuch as ſhall never be anſwered with thy expected ſafety or deliverance, while thy heart is thus unclean by and unwaſht from ſinful or wicked thoughts. The Apoſtle *Peter* in that dreadful increpation which he thunders out againſt *Simon Magus*, ſeems to make the greateſt doubt of the mercy of God to him about, or that the mercy of God would ſtick moſt at the pardoning of his thoughts (*Acts* 8. 22.) *Repent* (ſaith he) *therefore of this thy wickedneſs; and pray God, if perhaps the thought of* *thy heart may be forgiven thee:* As if he had ſaid, 'Tis this vile thought of thy heart, if any thing or above any thing which will be thy eternal ruine, and render thy caſe remedileſs.

There are three ſteps or degrees of ſin, before it comes to the outward act.

Firſt, When ſome fleeting tranſient thoughts of evil ariſe from, and are ſlightly formed up in the fancy, or are occaſion'd by the ſight of ſomewhat from without.

Secondly, When the mind ſtayeth upon ſuch thoughts, gives them ſome entertainment, holds parley with them, and hath a kind of delight in them.

Thirdly, when we cloſe freely with them, and ſettle fully upon them, ſo that nothing delayes the drawing of them forth into act, but the want of power or opportunity. When evil thoughts are wrought up to this height, then ſin is fully formed and ſhapen in us, ſuppoſe the outward act ſhould never be committed. And though an evil thought conſidered abſtractly or in it ſelf be leſs ſinful then an outward evil act, yet every evil thought is very ſinful; and concerning their ſinfulneſs I ſhall lay down theſe five brief Aſſertions.

Firſt, The leaſt evil thought, though unconſented to is ſinful, mortally ſinful, it calls for death as the wages of it. If any evil thoughts are ſinful and deſerve death, theſe alſo do; the reaſon is, becauſe degrees do not vary the kind or nature of ſin, and therefore they neither add nor take away the properties or effects of it: Greater degrees may add ſomewhat to the properties and effects; that is, they may make them greater, but they do not add them. And ſo leſſer degrees may abate or take ſomewhat from the properties and effects of ſin, but they cannot take them away.

Secondly, When evil thoughts are conſented to, and delighted in, they are more vile and ſinful then any ſudden or unpremeditated acts of ſin.

Thirdly, Some ſins, and thoſe the vileſt, are or may be compleated in the thoughts; ſuch are envy at anothers good, rejoycing in anothers hurt, diſcontent with our own condition, pride in our own condition, or in any thing we have or are, as alſo, unbelief of the Word of God, whether in the Hiſtory or Propheſie, whether in the promiſes or threatnings of it.

Fourthly, Evil thoughts are ſo ſinful, that as they are moſt like the Devils ſins, ſo they render us moſt like the Devil in ſinning. Evil thoughts are called by ſome, the Firſt-born of the Devil, they have compared them to the Vipers brood, which eat out and deſtroy their own mother; to burning coals, or fire carried in the boſom, which quickly ſcorch, and will at laſt conſume him that carrieth them; as alſo to the little ones of *Babylon* (ſpoken of *Pſalm* 137.9.) which 'tis our happineſs to take and daſh againſt the ſtones. Theſe evil thoughts are indeed worſe then thoſe Idols put into a ſecret place, the makers whereof the Lord pronounceth curſed (*Deut.* 27. 15.) Evil thoughts, like Idols, are molten and graven, formed and faſhioned in the heart, and then laid up or put into that ſecret place; there are the chambers of this imagery.

Fifthly, Evil thoughts, as they are very ſinful, and in ſome caſes more ſinful then other ſins; ſo in all caſes they are more dangerous then other ſins. And that upon a twofold ground: Firſt, The multiplicity of them; many Flies and Graſhoppers (ſmall creatures) ſpoiled *Egypt*, a great Kingdom; many Lice eat up and deſtroyed *Herod* a great King; many twine threads will make a cord big enough to bind the ſtrongeſt Giant, yea, a cable big enough to hold the greateſt Ship; a huge multitude of little ſands will endanger a Veſſel at Sea as much as the mightieſt Rock. While we conſider, what multitudes, what myriads of evil thoughts are moving in us, or paſſing through us, how ſhould we tremble at the danger? And yet there is a ſecond thing conſiderable in evil thoughts, which endangers us more then the multitude of them, and that is, our inſenſibleneſs of them. We quickly take notice of, and poſſibly are ſtartled at evil words, or evil acts, but as for evil thoughts, they ſwarm in us, and yet ſcarce fall under any obſervation, much leſs are they taken into any ſolemn or ſerious examination. Now, how dangerous it is to have many unſeen enemies near about us, every man can conclude. Yet ſuch are our evil thoughts. How wiſely then and how holily did *Job*, who took ſo much care to keep his thoughts in compaſs, and ſeriouſly ſaid, *Why then ſhould I think upon a Maid?*

Hence Note, Sixthly, *A gracious heart is as careful not to ſin by evil thoughts as by evil acts.*

And indeed conſcience of and about our thoughts, is the great Character and diſcovery of a godly man. He that takes leave to think what he will, would gladly have leave to do what he will. Our thoughts are leaſt known to others; but we may beſt know our ſelves by our thoughts; and he who is afraid (as every godly man is) to think amiſs, will much more fear to do amiſs.

Laſtly, Obſerve, *It is an excellent means to keep our ſelves from ſinful actings, to keep our ſelves from ſinful thinkings.*

What we muſt not act, we muſt not think, unleſs it be how we may beſt be preſerved from acting it. That man can never hold diſtance enough from doing what is unfit, who doth not (which *Job* here did) hold his heart at a due diſtance from thinking of what is unfit. There are many things to be done, that we may not do evil. Firſt, We muſt be ſober in the uſe of the creature: Secondly, We muſt be diligent in our callings; Satan will quickly find us work, if we find not our own: Thirdly, We muſt meditate much in the Word: Fourthly, We muſt ſtudy the vanity of the creature: Fifthly, We muſt be much in prayer: Sixthly, We muſt admire the beauty of holineſs, the invaluable worth of a pure and chaſt mind: Seventhly, We muſt live much in the thoughts of our own death, but eſpecially in the thoughts of the death of Chriſt. Now as all theſe things ſhould be done, that we may be preſerved from doing evil; ſo many things muſt be avoided, that the ſame end may be attained, chiefly theſe four: Firſt, We muſt avoid wanton ſpeeches; luſt comes often in at the ear: Secondly, Wanton dances and dalliances; luſt is much provoked by the touch: Thirdly, Wanton ſpectacles; luſt is ſtirred by the ſight: Fourthly, Wanton thoughts; luſt is fomented by the heart. All theſe, doubtleſs, holy and chaſt *Job* avoided, the two latter are expreſſed in the Text, while he ſaid, *I have made a covenant with mine eyes, why then ſhould I think upon a Maid?*

VERS. 2, 3, 4.

For what portion of God is there from above? And what inheritance of the Almighty from on high?
Is not deſtruction to the wicked? And a ſtrange puniſhment to the workers of iniquity?
Doth not he ſee my wayes, and count all my ſteps?

IN theſe three verſes *Job* gives a reaſon of that holy watch which he had kept over himſelf, or of the guard which he ſet upon his ſenſes, his eyes eſpecially, in the former verſe; *I have made a Covenant with mine eyes, why then ſhould I think upon a Maid?* Here (I ſay) he gives a reaſon of that holy ſtrictneſs and gracious ſeverity, yea, he gives us three reaſons of it, as will appear in opening of theſe words.

Firſt, Becauſe his neglect of that watch over himſelf might juſtly have hinder'd that good which he expected from the hand or bleſſing of God (*ver.* 2.) *What portion of God is there from above?* That is, from God, to that man who care not how, nor on what he looks, but gives undue liberty to his eyes, and ſo to his thoughts; Can this man look in faith for a portion of good, or for a good portion from God, who looks not to himſelf in holy fear?

Secondly, Becauſe as ſuch a man ſhall have only a lean, or no portion at all from God, ſo he hath reaſon to expect utter perdition and ruine from him. (*ver.* 3.) *Is not deſtruction to the wicked, and a ſtrange puniſhment to the workers of iniquity?* Certainly it is, God will puniſh and deſtroy them ſtrangely.

The third reaſon which he gives of that care he had over his own eyes, was his apprehenſion of the eye of God; as if he had ſaid, it is but need for me or for any man to look to his own eyes, who believes that the eyes of God are alwayes upon him, and upon all his wayes. (*ver.* 4.) *Doth* *not he ſee my wayes, and count all my ſteps?* If Gods eye be upon us ſtrictly, watching not only what way we take in general, but what ſpecial and particular ſteps we take in that way, ſhall we let our eyes run at random, and fix upon any object that comes next, without ſo much as putting the queſtion to our hearts, whether right or wrong, good or bad? Any one of theſe three reaſons, much more all three laid together, have weight enough in them to preſs even a rational, ſurely then a godly man to maintain a conſtant watch over his eyes, that his thought contract no pollution by them. *That's the ſcope and common tendency of the context now in hand.*

Verſe. 2. **What portion of God is there from above, or, what lot?**

God as a Father, provides portions for his Children, and cuts out or divides to every one his lot: Every godly man hath a Childs portion from God his Father. *What portion*

Of God is there from above?] That is, Firſt, What portion is there prepared and laid up by God, either firſt in his Decree, or Secondly, in his Promiſes, (our portions are thus laid up, they are laid up in the Decree or Purpoſes, as alſo in the Covenant and Promiſes of God) Now, *what ſhare or portion* (ſaith *Job*) *can any man hope for in the Decree or Promiſes of God*, if he neglect the Commandments of God? Secondly, *What portion of God is there from above?* That is, What portion is there wrought or cut out by the providence of God for his good whoſe wayes are evil? *That which is laid up in promiſes for us, is wrought out or brought forth by providences.* The love of God makes promiſes, and the care of God fulfills them. We have that diſtinction expreſly (*Pſal.* 31. 19.) *O how great is thy goodneſs which thou haſt laid up for them that fear thee, and which thou haſt wrought for them that truſt in thee before the ſons of men?* Here is a twofold goodneſs of God.

Genitivus efficientis. Piſc.

Firſt, A goodneſs *laid up*; Where? Surely in his Decrees and Promiſes.

Secondly, A goodneſs *wrought out.* How? Surely by his Diſpenſations and Providences. When *Job* ſaith, *What portion of God is here?* (*ſc.* for the wicked) we may extend his negative queſtion to both: There is no portion either in the promiſes or providences of God for a wicked man. *What portion of God is there*

From above?] The Scripture every where ſpeaks of God *as above*, and therefore all our good is ſpoken of as coming from above; there is neither above nor beneath to God, for he fills Heaven and Earth; but according to our apprehenſions and notions, God is generally ſaid to be above, that is, in Heaven, which is called by the Prophet (*Iſa.* 63. 15.) *The habitation of his holineſs, and of his glory*, from whence he is alſo there deſired to look down upon his Church and people. So that any portion received from God, is rightly ſaid to be *from above.* Thus the Apoſtle *James* ſpeaks (*Chap.* 1. 17.) *Every good gift, and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableneſs, neither ſhadow of turning.* Our good gifts do not ſpring out of the duſt, they are not vapours exhaled or drawn up from the earth, but they are influences coming from above, and falling upon man on earth. And as every good gift is from above, ſo indeed are our very troubles; as *Eliphaz* told *Job* at the fifth Chapter of this Book (*ver.* 6.) *Affliction cometh not forth of the duſt, neither doth trouble ſpring out of the ground.* And if our afflictions and troubleſome evils come from above, not from the ground, then much more our mercies are not from the ground, but from above. *What portion of God is there from above?*

And what inheritance of the Almighty from on high?

This latter part of the verſe is in ſenſe the ſame with the former; *What inheritance?* An inheritance may be of two ſorts, or it falls under a twofold conſideration, Firſt, There is an inheritance, to which we have only a right; Secondly, There is an inheritance, of which we have poſſeſſion. The word in the text notes an inheritance poſſeſſed, or in hand. Again, a man may come to poſſeſs and inheritance two wayes; Firſt, In his own right, as being the lineal or lawful heir: Secondly, By free gift, as having it voluntarily beſtowed upon him. We may take the word *inheritance* in either, but rather in both notions here, becauſe that which a Believer receives as his right, being a Son of God, he receives it alſo of a free gift, becauſe it is a free gift that we are ſons, (*John* 1. 12.) So that when *Job* ſaith, *What inheritance*, &c. His meaning is only this, Such a man can never have an eſtabliſhed comfortable eſtate from the Almighty.

Non ירושה *eſt in fonte ſed* נחלה *quod proprie poſſeſſionem denotat.* Druſ.

There is ſome critical difference in Law, between a portion and an inheritance. A portion in that ſtrictneſs conſiſts of Money or Moveables, or, as Lawyers ſpeak, of goods and Chattels. And inheritance is of houſes and lands. *Job* in either word (I ſuppoſe) includes both, and ſo there is no difference between them in the mind of this Scripture. *What inheritance*

Of the Almighty from on high?] This Title, or Name of God, *Shaddai*, rendred *Almighty*, hath been opened more then once before; I ſhall only add here, The Almighty is he who hath all things in his hand, and therefore he can give as great portions, and as large inheritances as he pleaſeth: He is infinitely full in himſelf; yea he is infinitely full of himſelf; and the earth is his with the fulneſs of it; yea, Heaven with all the fulneſs and furniture of it is his. But what inheritance of the Almighty is there to ungodly men, either in Heaven or Earth? Either from below, or

From on high?] The queſtion muſt be reſolved into this negative Propoſition, There is no inheritance of the Almighty from on high to that race or generation of men. The words are plain and need no further labour of an Expoſition; yet there is a threefold apprehenſion about the ſcope and purpoſe of them.

Firſt, Some underſtand them thus; *What portion of God is there from above, and what inheritance of the Almighty from on high?* As if *Job* had complained, that notwithſtanding all his care to preſerve himſelf clean and pure, both in heart and life, notwithſtanding all his circumſpect walkings, and holy watchfulneſs, yet he found that God had not beſtowed a portion of good, but of evil upon him, and that (as he ſpake, *Chap.* 7. 3.) The Almighty had made him inherit or poſſeſs nothing but *wearisome nights and months of vanity.* Thus *Job* is ſuppoſed expreſſing his grievance, *What recompence have I gotten of God for my chaſtity but chaſtiſements? I have not ſuffered mine to glance wantonly, yet I ſuffer from the hand of God as if I were ſome filthy wanton, or debaucht adulterer.* Moſt of the Rabbins inſiſt upon this ſence, and ſo do ſome of our own Interpreters, who alſo lengthen out the ſame ſcope to the third and fourth verſes; *Is not deſtruction to the wicked*, &c? As if he had ſaid, *How comes it to paſs that God deals thus with me? If deſtruction be to the wicked, why am I deſtroy'd? The eye of the Lord is upon all my wayes, he knows I have laboured to keep my ſelf pure as the Temple of the Holy Ghoſt, yet a ſtrange puniſhment is my portion: What portion of God is there to me from above, and what inheritance of the Almighty from on high is beſtowed on me, but ſores and ſickneſſes? Are not a broken ſtate, a blotted name, and a troubled ſoul, the lot of my preſent inheritance?* But I ſhall not inſiſt upon this ſence, becauſe it ſavours of too high a diſcontent, as if *Job* had found no fruit of his obedience, nor reſpect from God, though he had diligently maintain'd a reſpect to all his Commandments. And therefore.

Secondly, I rather conceive that theſe words (as I intimated before) give us a reaſon why *Job* was ſo careful to keek himſelf pure and chaſt; becauſe there is no portion of God from above, nor inheritance of the Almighty from on high, to wicked men. What is there to be gotten, what fruit, benefit, or advantage can he expect from God, that gives himſelf up to the Dominion of any luſt? Thus the *Chaldee* Paraphraſe expreſſeth it; *What good portion, or what portion of good could I have from God, if I had let mine eyes wander after, and my thoughts feed upon forbidden pleaſures?*

Ubi eſt merces mea quod caſtiſſimè vixerim? quid datur mihi ab omnipotente qui in excelſis habitat præmium propter vitam bene actam? nihil minus affligor quàm flagitioſiſſimus quiſque. Hæc autem vox non eſt fidei vel ſe humiliantis ſed potius indignantis Brent.

Hence Obſerve, *He that is wicked, or doth wickedly, hath no ground to hope for good from God.*

What good can a meer natural, or unregenerate man expect, ſeeing while he is *without Chriſt, and an Alien from the Commonwealth of* Iſrael, He is alſo a *ſtranger from the Covenant of promiſe.* And therefore the Apoſtle in the ſame place (*Eph.* 2. 12.) concludes him *without hope*

(that is without any true ground of hope, as well as *without God*, that is, without the favour of God) *in the world*; the natural man being without Chriſt, is without the promiſe; and being without the promiſe, he cannot but be without hope too; or if he do hope for any good, his hope is meer preſumption. For as the truth of the promiſe is the object of faith, ſo the good of the promiſe is the object of hope. Faith cannot live, much leſs can hope be lively without a promiſe, and therefore unregenerate men are hopeleſs as to all conditional promiſes, till their ſtate is changed by free grace revealed in the abſolute Promiſe; And though it be a clear Goſpel truth, and the glory of Goſpel-truths, that there are many precious abſolute Promiſes made concerning unregenerate or unconverted perſons, yet properly even thoſe Promiſes are not made to them but of them. Now if a perſon conſidered only as unregenerate can expect no good, and ſo is hopeleſs, much more are they hopeleſs who have heightened their natural ſinfulneſs by actual ſins, and *have given themſelves over to laſciviouſneſs, to work all uncleanneſs with greedineſs.* Can they come and plead with God in prayer to give them a portion from on high, who have thus highly provoked him? Will the Lord open any of his treaſures to ſuch, but the treaſures of his wrath? We may ſay to ſuch ſinners as *Peter* did to *Simon Magus* (Acts 8. 21.) *You have neither part nor lot in this matter, for your heart is not right in the ſight of God. Simon Magus* hoped to receive great matters from the Apoſtles, but when *Peter* ſaw him offering money to purchaſe the holy Ghoſt, he tells him plainly, *Thou haſt neither part nor lot in this manner.* Thus I may ſay to ungodly men, Ye have no part nor portion in God. Go repent of your wickedneſs, ye that are proud, covetous, or unclean; cleanſe your hands ye ſinners, and purifie your hearts ye double-minded, elſe *what portion of God is there from above, and what inheritance of the Almighty from on high* to men either of your ſpirit or practice.

Quam enim partem haberet Deus deſuper in me? Vulg. *In tantum Deus in me partem habet, in quantum mens mea ad ſuperiora rapitur. Si vero per luxuriam mens mea ad carnalē luxuriam ejiciatur nullam partem in me Deus deſuper habebit.* Aquin.

There is another reading of theſe words, which I ſhall take notice of, both becauſe the Text may bear it, and becauſe it hath a uſefullneſs in it. 'Tis given thus;

For what portion ſhould God above have in me? As if he had ſaid, *When my eye is polluted with wanton looks, and when im pure thoughts have corrupted thoſe higher and more noble faculties of my ſoul, what ſhould God do with me? Or why ſhould he regard me?* As man draws neer to God by the ſpiritual actings and motions of his mind, ſo by fleſhly motions he departs from him, and renders himſelf a ſubject unfit for God to own.

Hence Obſerve, *God hath no part nor portion in a wicked man.*

As wicked men have no part nor portion in God; ſo God hath no part nor portion in wicked men; God hath a portion only in Believers, and theirs only in him (*Deut.* 32. 9.) *The Lords portion is his people,* Jacob *is the lot of his inheritance:* There we have both the words of the Text. When *Peter* (John. 13. 8.) ſaid to Chriſt, *Thou ſhalt never waſh my feet; Jeſus anſwered him, if I waſh thee not, thou haſt no part with me.* As they that are not waſhed have no part in Chriſt; ſo Chriſt hath no part in thoſe that are not waſhed; that is, he doth not look upon them as his own; or he doth not own them. The wicked are Satans portion, he owns them, and they (though few do it profeſſedly) own him. *The greateſt part of mankind will fall to the Devils ſhare.* Conſider what portion or intereſt God hath in you, if you do wickedly, he hath none at all. Impure thoughts, and wicked actions, defile a man both within and without, God will have his portion clean and holy; God hath and will have a portion among men, but it is a fair portion. The ſacrifices of old were of clean beaſts and of them without ſpot; none are the part and portion of God, but the clean and ſpotleſs. They that defile themſelves with adultery and fornication, God will judge, but he cannot approve. When God calleth for the heart as his portion, he means a pure heart, and a whole heart; he calls for our whole body to be his Temple, but it muſt be a chaſt body, a body free (through Grace) from defilements. (1 *Cor.* 6. 15.) *Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Chriſt, ſhvll I then take the members of Chriſt, and make them the members of a Harlot? God forbid.* Clean bodies, not the members of a Harlot, are the members of Chriſt. The Apoſtle joyns thoſe two together, the *fornicator, and the prophane,* and figures them both by *Eſau* who was caſt out, and in whom God had no part nor portion (*Heb.* 12. 16.) *Leſt there be any fornicator or prophane perſon as* Eſau, *who for one morſel of meat ſold his birth-right.* Even ſo doth every wicked and unclean perſon; he ſels his birth-right for a poor morſel of meat, for a vaniſhing pleaſure; theſe like *Eſau* are hated of God, he hath no pleaſure, nor portion in them: Yea (as the Lord ſpeaks in the Prophet concerning hated *Eſau* (*Mal.* 1. 3.) *He will lay their Mountains and their heritage waſt for the Dragons of the Wilderneſs,* and will at laſt do that againſt them for ever, which the Church complained God had done againſt her for a time, (*Pſal.* 44. 10.) He will *break them ſore in the place of Dragons, and cover them with the ſhadow of death.*

Thirdly, This verſe may be underſtood, as a query or queſtion, to which anſwer is made in the next verſe; *What portion of God is there from above?* &c. What hath God deſigned them to, and provided for them? I will tell you what (ſaith *Job*) *Is not deſtruction to the wicked, and a ſtrange puniſhment to the workers of iniquity?* This connexion is of like ſenſe with that of the Apoſtle (*Rom.* 6. 21.) *What fruit had ye then of thoſe things whereof ye are now aſhamed? For the end of thoſe things is death.* As here the queſtion is, *What portion of God is there from above?* &c. So there the queſtion is, *What fruit had ye?* To this the Apoſtle anſwers, *The end of thoſe things is death.* And *Job*'s anſwer is the ſame, though preſented in a queſtion, *Is not deſtruction to the wicked?* That's a pregnant Expoſition, leading to the next verſe; only before I come to thoſe words take this Inference from the verſe in hand.

Job, we ſee, propounds this as a reaſon why he was ſo watchful over his eyes and heart, namely leſt it ſhould hinder his portion with God, or take God off from being his portion.

Then, *A godly man may keep his heart off from doing evil, leſt doing it he ſhould keep off good from himſeef.*

Thus *Job* a godly man tutor'd his ſoul, and thus any godly man may. When we are tempted to ſin, we may well demand, *What portion ſhall we have from God?* Or conclude we can have no portion worth the having: 'Tis beſt to watch againſt ſin, and over our own ſouls, becauſe we love holineſs, and deſire to pleaſe God, or becauſe we would not grieve him, theſe are the moſt ſpiritual Arguments of our abſtinence from worldly luſts, yet 'tis good to ſay, I will abſtain, and take care of mine eyes and heart leſt I ſin, becauſe ſin will hinder my receiving a portion from God, or weaken my plea with God for a portion. What was ill anſwered by that Kinſman, when he was invited to marry *Ruth* (Chap. 4. 6.) will be a good anſwer when we at any time are tempted to contract with ſin, or match with any wickedneſs. We cannot do it, *leſt we mar our own inheritance.* As ſelf-love might move us, if there were nothing elſe to move us, to do good, ſeeing by doing good we do moſt good to our ſelves; ſo ſelf-love may move us, were there no other motive not to do evil, ſeeing by doing evil we do moſt evil to our ſelves. Will any man knowingly ſpoil his own portion, and mar his own inheritance? If we have no love to God, none to holineſs, yet let us take heed of ſin, leſt we undo our ſelves, and loſe our portion. There is a ſelf-love, which is the root of all evil (2 *Tim.* 3. 1, 2.) *This know alſo that in the laſt dayes perillous times ſhall come, for men ſhall be lovers of their own ſelves, covetous, boaſters, proud, blaſphemers, diſobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy.* There is alſo a ſelf-love that is good, and is a root of all good; did men love themſelves truly, they would not be covetous but charitable; they would not be proud but humble, obedient, thankful, holy. True ſelf-love is ſo good, that it is the rule of loving others and doing them good. *Thou ſhalt love thy neighbour as thy ſelf*; though we ought to turn from evil upon higher principles, yet we have need to deal with our ſouls upon this alſo, and upon all other Topicks (and all little enough) eſpecially upon thoſe two which are the moſt general and comprehenſive ones; the withholding of good from us, and the drawing of evil upon us, as it follows in the next verſe.

Verſe 3. **Is not deſtruction to the wicked, and a ſtrange puniſhment to the workers of iniquity?**

Whether we take theſe words as an Anſwer to the ſecond verſe, or as the ſecond reaſon of what *Job* aſſerted concerning himſelf in the firſt verſe, the meaning is alike; he would not hinder his own mercies, nor would he run upon his own miſchief.

איד *Perditio pernicies interitus.*

Is not deſtruction to the wicked?] Is not that their portion, and all the portion they can rationally expect from God? The word ſignifieth utter deſtruction, ruining deſtruction, ſuch as leaves nothing undeſtroyed, like that which the Prophet *Nahum* threatened the Lords Enemies with (*Chap.* 1. 9.) *What do ye imagine againſt the Lord? He will make an utter end: Affliction ſhall not riſe up the ſecond time.* The *Ninevites* and *Aſſyrians*, to whom the Prophet turns his ſpeech, thought they had to do only with the people of *Iſrael* and *Judah*, but the Lord ſaw himſelf concern'd and ſo imagin'd againſt and oppoſed in the imaginations or counſels which they took, and in the oppoſition which they made againſt his people; and therefore tells them of ſuch a deſtruction ready to fall upon them, as might evidence that the hand of God was in it; *He will make an utter end*; A conſuming end he means. He will make ſuch an end, as that he ſhall not need to begin again. He will deſtroy them as it were at one blow. *Affliction ſhall not riſe a ſecond time.* 'Tis a mercy and a favour when God having afflicted once, will not let affliction come again to deſtroy what is left. But it ſhews fulneſs of wrath when God deſtroyeth ſo fully at once that there's nothing left for an affliction to deſtroy if it ſhould come a ſecond time. Such a deep deſtruction, *Job* intended, when he ſaid, *Is not deſtruction to*

The wicked?] He doth not ſay, is not deſtruction to him that ſinneth? For then deſtruction muſt be to all; But, *Is not deſtruction to the wicked?* That is, to ſuch as love and live in ſin, to ſuch as trade and go on in ſin, adding ſin to ſin, drawing iniquity with cords of vanity, and ſin as it were with Cart-ropes; *Is not deſtruction* (to ſuch) *to the wicked?* Certainly it is. And though it be not as yet, yet certainly it ſhall be, it ſhall ſo certainly be, that he ſpeaks of it (as the fall of *Babylon* is propheſied, *Rev.* 14. 8.) in the preſent time, *Is not deſtruction to the wicked?* It is.

> Hence Note, *Utter ruining deſtruction is the portion of wicked men, as ſurely as if they were already deſtroyed.*

And if they are plainly dealt with, they muſt be told ſo, and if they would deal plainly and faithfully with their own ſouls, they muſt tell themſelves ſo. Wicked men alwayes flatter themſelves, and are often flattered with hopes of peace here and ſalvation hereafter. But the truth it ſelf hath ſaid, *Deſtruction is to the wicked.* I ſhall not inſiſt further upon it here, having met with it upon ſeveral paſſages of this Book, and ſomewhat enlarged upon it at the twenty-ninth verſe of the twentieth Chapter.

ונכר לפעלי און *Et alienatio operariis iniquitatis. Et quidem exitium extraneitatis.* Piſc.

איד *Reſpicit ad* חלק *ſortem vel portionem* נכר *reſpicit ad* נחלה *hæreditatem qui enim alienus eſt non hæreditat.* Coc.

ביום נכרו *In die alienationis vel in qua alienatus eſt.*

And a ſtrange puniſhment to the workers of iniquity.

The word **puniſhment** is not expreſſed in the Hebrew, but ſupplyed (to clear this ſenſe) by our Tranſlators. Now as *Deſtruction* in the former part of this verſe ſeems to ſtand in direct oppoſition to *portion* in the ſecond verſe. So the Word here rendred *ſtrange puniſhment*, or ſtrictly *alienation*, ſeems to ſtand in oppoſition to *inheritance* in the ſame verſe. A ſtranger doth not inherit. And alienation is either a violent turning of a man out of his inheritance, or a legal paſſing of it from him to another. At the twelfth verſe of the Prophecy of *Obadiah*, 'tis ſaid, *Thou ſhouldeſt not have looked on the day of thy Brother, in the day that he became a ſtranger*; Or in the day of his alienation when he was thruſt out of his inheritance, and ſtrangers took poſſeſſion of it: Or according to this rendring of *Job*'s Text, in the day of thy brothers *ſtrange puniſhment*, thou ſhouldeſt not have looked upon him rejoycingly, or inſultingly, but when ſtrange evils and troubles did befal him (which we render fully, *In the day that he became a ſtranger*) thou oughteſt to have pitied and prayed for him. Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates this place in *Job*, neer in ſence to that in *Obadiah*, *And be not ill doers rid away?* That is, are they not driven out or baniſhed out of houſe and home? According to which reading their alienation or being made ſtrangers is their particular puniſtment; but according to ours their puniſhment in general, whatſoever it is, is a ſtrange one. *Is there not a ſtrange puniſhment?* (ſome render *a monſtrous puniſhment*) *to the workers of iniquity?*

This ſtrangeneſs of their puniſhment, may be underſtood two wayes.

Firſt, As intimating ſuch a puniſhment, as God doth not uſually inflict upon any: That is ſtrange to us that is ſeldome ſeen or done.

> Hence Obſerve, *God puniſheth ſome wicked men, in unheard of and unuſual wayes.*

As the corruptions of men ſometimes bring forth new and ſtrange births of ſin, ſuch as either to the matter or manner, have either not at all or only rarely been brought forth or committed: So God inflicts upon ſome ſinners new and rare puniſhments, ſuch as either have not at all or very rarely been inflicted. Thus the Prophet threatneth (*Iſa.* 28. 21.) *The Lord ſhall riſe up as in mount* Perazim, *he ſhall be wrath as in the Valley of* Gibeon, *that he may do his work, his ſtrange work, and bring to paſs his act, his ſtrange act.* This *ſtrange work*, *this ſtrange act* of the Lord againſt a provoking people may be expounded in general of all his works of judgment, becauſe judgments are the ſtrange works of God, in compariſon of his works of mercy, *mercy pleaſeth him*, or as the Prophet ſpeaks (*Mic.* 7. 18.) *He delighteth in mercy*; and he did ſo eſpecially with reference to the people of *Iſrael*, his own people, who had enjoyed the multitude of his mercies, manifold mercies, and that for a long time together. Therefore any work of judgment upon them was a ſtrange work. Now as all puniſhments are (in a ſenſe) the ſtrange work of God, compared with his works of mercy (though we know, judgment and mercy according to occaſions are alike to him) ſo ſome puniſhments are ſtrange puniſhments in compariſon of others. There are puniſhments that we do not wonder at, they are common; and there are ſtrange puniſhments, wonderful puniſhments, ſuch as we ſtand ama'zed at. *Moſes* (Deut. 28. 59. 61.) denounced theſe alſo againſt the *Iſraelites* in caſe of diſobedience; *Then the Lord will make thy plagues wonderful, and the plagues of thy ſeed, even great plagues, and of long continuance, and ſore ſickneſſes, and of long continuance. Moreover, he will bring upon thee all the diſeaſes of* Egypt *which thou waſt afraid of, and they ſhall cleave unto thee, alſo every ſickneſs, and every plague, which is not written in the Book of this Law, them will the Lord bring upon thee, until thou be deſtroyed.* Here are ſtrange afflictions, ſuch as had not been written or heard of, *I will make thy plagues wonderfull*; Thy plagues ſhall be ſuch as either have not been ſeen at all or rarely ſeen.

Secondly, It may be called *a ſtrange puniſhment*, with reſpect to the perſons puniſhed; they who ſpend their years in vain delights, in fulfilling the luſts of the fleſh, and following the courſe of this World, are not uſed to puniſhment, nor acquainted with ſorrow. Puniſhment is ſtrange to them that live in pleaſure; they know not what it means, nor have they any experience of it, When they feel ſmart, or pain, they feel that which they never felt before. It is ſaid of Chriſt in the Prophecy (*Iſa.* 53. 3.) *He is deſpiſed and rejected of men, a man of ſorrows, and acquainted with grief*: Grief was no ſtrange thing to Chriſt, he had been trained up to it; but as for men of joy, wanton and voluptuous perſons, they are not at all acquainted with grief, and they hope alwayes to eſcape acquaintance with it. And therefore as any puniſhment is ſtrange to thoſe who have conſtantly received favours and mercies from God, ſo is it alſo to them who have conſtantly accuſtomed themſelves to carnal contentments and delights.

Calamitatem inuſitatam & cui minime aſſueverant ſuſtinent. Druſ.

> Hence Note, *God can quickly and often doth make them know ſorrow, who never knew it, nor were uſed to it before.*

Rich men know not what poverty means; yet God can make them poor, and melt down their vaſt eſtates, their heaps of wealth in a moment, like heaps of ſnow before the Sun, and bring them to ſtark beggery: Is not this to ſuch a ſtrange puniſhment? So when a man that hath lived at his full Table, (as the Glutton is deſcribed) faring deliciouſly every day, not knowing what hunger means; when (I ſay) God brings this man to a morſel of bread, or as it is ſaid in the *Lamentations* of *Jeremy*, to embrace dung-hills, and ſcrape there for a mouldy cruſt, is not this a ſtrange puniſhment to him? Again, When a man that hath been healthful and ſtrong all his dayes, never knowing what an hours ſickneſs meaneth, When (I ſay) God ſends diſeaſes to waſt and weaken, or to torment and vex his body, ſuch as the Gout, Stone, *&c.* Is not this to him a ſtrange puniſhment? Many may ſay in reference to their afflictions, as the Lord ſpake concerning *Ephraim*, (Jer. 31. 18.) *I have ſurely heard* Ephraim *bemoaning himſelf thus; Thou haſt chaſtized me, and I was chaſtized as a Bullock unaccuſtomed to the yoak. Ephraim* was wont to be dandled on the knee, or laid in the boſome like a pleaſant Child, not to be under the yoak like a ſlave or a captive. As all carnal men are like Bullocks unaccuſtomed to the yoak of active obedience, (they are the ſons of *Belial*) ſo when God lays the yoak of paſſive obedience upon the neck of ſome of his *Ephraims*, they are unaccuſtomed to it; much more are many of the workers of iniquity. God leaves them long to their way and their will; and as it is ſaid of *David's* indulgence to *Adoniah*, (*1 Kings* 1. 6.) that *he had not diſpleaſed him at any time, by ſaying, why haſt thou done ſo*; So the Lord (poſſibly) doth not diſpleaſe ſome workers of iniquity for a long time, by any kind of outward puniſhment for what they have done; but he can ſoon do it, and hath often done it, putting ſuch a yoak of ſuffering upon their fair and tender necks as they never felt, much leſs were accuſtomed to before. Their puniſhment whatſoever it is, muſt needs be ſtrange to them, who have all their former dayes been ſtrangers unto puniſhment.

Further, the Word *puniſhment*, is not expreſſed in the Hebrew text, but only implyed and couched in another word. And ſo the Scripture ſpeaks elſewhere, ſpeaking of puniſhment (*Amos.* 4. 12, 13.) *Therefore thus will I do unto thee,* O Iſrael, *and becauſe I will do thus to thee, prepare to meet thy God,* O Iſrael. The Lord threatens the people of *Iſrael*, for their incorrigibleneſs under puniſhment, with other puniſhments, then Famine and Sword and peſtilence (all which they had formerly felt) but he doth not tell them how or in what kind he will puniſh them, but leaves them to imagine the worſt, or intimates that he would bring upon them worſe evils then they could imagine; *Thus will I do unto thee,* &c. So here when *Job* ſaith; *Is not deſtruction to the wicked, and a ſtrange to the workers of iniquity?* not ſaying what *ſtrange* he means. Surely his meaning is, that it is an evil ſo ſtrange, that he was either loth or knew not how to expreſs it, which ſhall come upon *the workers of iniquity.*

Yea ſome conceive that this Word which we render as an adjective or Epithete, *ſtrange,* is to be taken ſubſtantially, for *ſtrangeneſs* or *Alienation,* and ſo is not an intimation of ſome other puniſhment, but an expreſſion of that particular puniſhment which ſhall come upon the workers of iniquity. And then the words are rendred thus; *Is not ſtrangeneſs* (eſtrangement or Alienation) *to the workers of iniquity?* But you will ſay, what puniſhment is there in that, or what puniſhment is that? I anſwer, The worſt of all puniſhments. *Strangeneſs ſhall be to the workers of iniquity*; that is, *They ſhall be ſtrangers to God,* they ſhall be ſtrangers, not only to their own habitations, and relations, to their kindred and Countrey (though that is ſometimes their puniſhment) but they ſhall be ſtrangers to God alſo. As they have not owned him in his wayes, the wayes of holineſs, ſo he will not own them in their wayes, the wayes of wickedneſs.

Hence Note, *Alienation or eſtrangement from God, is the worſt of all puniſhments.*

God is the chief Good, there is none good but God, therefore alienation from him muſt needs be the greateſt evil. Who can ſhew us any good, if God ſhew us none?

There is a twofold eſtrangment or Alienation from God.

Firſt, Active, when men alienate or eſtrange themſelves from God; for as all men are ſtrangers from God by nature (*Eph.* 4. 18.) Having *their underſtandings darkned, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, becauſe of the blindneſs of their minds* (the heart of a natural man goeth off from God, and the thoughts of God, he doth not like to think of God, or, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks (*Rom.* 1. 28.) *to retain God in his knowledge*; now as all men are thus alienated from God in the ſtate of nature) ſo many are much more alienated from him by ſinful practiſes; man grows more a ſtranger to God by renewed acts of ſin, then he is by the ſinfulneſs of his old condition; and eſpecially by acts of uncleanneſs, againſt which *Job* profeſſed (*ver.* 1.) and by acts of unrighteouſneſs, againſt which he profeſſeth (*ver.* 5.) they that deſire union with the creature ſinfully, either by acts of wantonneſs or of injuſtice, ſhall find their hearts going further off from communion with God. Thus 'tis ſaid of *Solomon* (1 Kings 11. 4.) *It came to paſs when* Solomon *was old, that his Wives turned away his heart after other gods, and his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, as was the heart of* David *his Father.* His Wives, that is, the ill counſel or example of his Wives, and his inordinate affection to his Wives, eſtranged him from God; that worſhip and ſervice which he owed and ſhould have given to God, he gave to Idols. As that luſt turned him away, ſo any luſt turns man away, yea takes man away from God; as the Prophet ſpeaks (*Hoſ.* 4. 11.) *Whoredome Wine, and new Wine, take away the heart*; that is, they make a man heart-leſs, ſpirit-leſs to any thing that is good, much more to any pure communion with God himſelf. And as theſe take away the heart from whatſoever is holy, juſt, and good, ſo they pitch and place the heart upon baſe things; new Wine takes away the heart of a man from man, and leaves him only the heart of a Beaſt. He that is drowned in ſenſuality, loſeth the uſe of common ſenſe and reaſon, how much more is he below the exerciſe of Grace and Godlineſs? Even a godly man falling into ſin, ſhall find an eſtrangement from God upon his heart, unleſs he ſpeedily riſe again by repentance.

Impuri homines à re divina (quod ingens quoquè ſcelus eſt & ſceleris pœna) abalienato ſunt animo.

Secondly, As there is an active, ſo a paſſive alienation from God. Some men are caſt out, or (as it were) excommunicated by God; As there is a paſſive alienation from the Church of God, when a corrupt member is caſt out and cut off by a juſt cenſure or ſentence from fellowſhip with it. (For as ſome withdraw ſcandalouſly, that is, without any juſt cauſe from the Church, and *forſake* (againſt which the Apoſtle cautions the *Hebrews*, Chap. 10. 25) *the aſſembling themſelves together,* ſo others for a juſt cauſe, that is, for ſcandal, are caſt out of the Church) ſo when any withdraw and alienate themſelves from God by following their luſts, then God caſts them out, and will have nothing to do with them, but lets them ſtand as perſons excommunicated and baniſhed from his preſence. God cannot bear but loaths unchaſt perſons, and ſaith to them, be gone, get ye hence; you have ſtrangely gone from me, and my heart is gone and eſtrang'd from you. Thus the Lord proteſted againſt his own people for their Apoſtacies (*Jer.* 15. 1.) *Then ſaid the Lord unto me, though* Moſes *and* Samuel *ſtood before me, yet my mind could not be towards this people; caſt them out of my ſight, and let them go forth.* There is a dreadful alienation of God from a perſon or a people, when he openly profeſſeth *his heart cannot be towards them.* We have a Prophecy of this concerning both the Leaders and whole body of the Jewiſh Nation, who oppoſed the miniſtry of Chriſt for the ſalvation of his people (*Zech.* 11. 8.) *Three Shepheards alſo* (that is, as moſt interpret, the Scribes, Phariſees and Saduces) *I cut off in one moneth, and my ſoul loathed them, and their ſoul alſo abhorred me.* Here we ſee a reciprocal alienation, they abhorred Chriſt, and Chriſt loathed them; they never left abhorring Chriſt, till they had (by death) caſt him out of the World; and Chriſt never left loathing them, till he had caſt them out of the Church, and made them wanderers among the Nations. Holy *David* ſets out this alienation of God diſtinctly (*Pſal.* 5. 4, 5, 6.) *Thou art not a God that hath pleaſure in wickedneſs* (that is, in wicked men) *neither ſhall evil* (that is, evil perſons) *dwell with thee: The fooliſh ſhall not ſtand in thy ſight, thou hateſt all workers of iniquity, thou ſhalt deſtroy them that ſpeak leaſing, the Lord will abhor the bloody and deceitful man.* Here the Lords alienation from the wicked is ſet forth gradually, and ſeems to riſe by ſix ſteps. Firſt, *He hath no pleaſure in them*; Secondly,

Ἀπαλλοτρίωσις τοῖς ποιῦσιν ἀνομίαν. Sept. *Poteſt ſimplicitèr intelligi cum Græcis ἀπαλλοτρίωσις alienatio, quod eos ſit à ſe abalienaturus prorſus dominus & in tenebras exteriores ablegaturus.* Merc.

ly, *They ſhall not dwell with him*; Thirdly, He caſteth them forth; *They ſhall not ſtand in his ſight*; Fourthly, His heart turns from them; *Thou hateſt all the workers of iniquity*; Fifthly, His hand is turned upon them; *Thou ſhalt deſtroy them that ſpeak leaſing*; Sixthly, His ſpirit riſeth againſt them, and is alienated from them; *The Lord will abhor the bloody man.* This eſtrangement is indeed a *ſtrange* (yet a certain) *puniſhment to*

The workers of iniquity.] Theſe words, *the workers of iniquity*, may be conſidered two wayes.

Malorum Artifices.

Firſt, As intending (not all Degrees of ſinners, or ſinners of every Degree, but) the higheſt Degree of ſinners, great and groſs ſinners, reſolved and wilful ſinners. Such as ſin induſtriouſly, and (as it were) artificially with skill and care to get themſelves a name, as if they had an ambition to be accounted *workmen* that need not be aſhamed in doing that whereof all ought to be aſhamed; theſe in ſtrictneſs of Scripture ſenſe are *workers of iniquity.*

Hence Note, *Notorious ſinners, make ſin their buſineſs, or their trade.*

Though every ſin be *a work of iniquity*, yet only ſome ſinners *are workers of iniquity*; and they who are called ſo make it there calling to ſin. We read of ſome (*Rev.* 22-15.) *who love and make a lie.* A lie may be told by thoſe who neither love nor make it; but there are lie-makers, and they (ſure enough) are lovers of a lie. Such Craftſmen in ſinning are alſo deſcribed (*Pſal.* 58. 2.) *Yea in heart you work wickedneſs. you weigh the violence of your hands in the earth.* The Pſalmiſt doth not ſay, they had wickedneſs in their heart, but they did work it there; *The heart is a ſhop within, an under-ground ſhop*, there they did cloſely contrive forge and hammer out their wicked purpoſes, and fit them into actions: Yea *they weighed the violence of their hands in the Earth.* That's an alluſion to Merchants, who buy and ſell by weight, they weigh their Commodity to an ounce, they do not give it out in groſs but by exact weight Thus (ſaith the Pſalmiſt) *they weigh the violence of their hands*, they do not oppreſs groſly, but with a kind of exactneſs and skill, they ſit down and conſider what and how much violence they may uſe in ſuch a caſe, or how much ſuch a perſon may endure, or ſuch a ſeaſon may bear; they are wiſer then to do all at once, or all to one, leſt they ſpoil all. They weigh what they do, though what they do be ſo bad that it will hold no weight, when God comes to weigh it. Nor do they arrive at this skill preſently, but after they have (as it were) ſerved an apprenticeſhip for it; and they bind themſelves to the trade very early; for as it follows at the third verſe of that Pſalm, *The wicked are eſtranged from the womb, they go aſtray as ſoon as they are born, ſpeaking lies*, that is, they are eſtranged both by nature, and by early practice; they loſe no time, they go to it young, even as ſoon as they are born, that is as ſoon as they are fit for any uſe, or to do any thing, they are uſing and fitting themſelves to do wickedly.

Secondly, as theſe *workers of iniquity* may be taken for all ſtudied or great ſinners of any kind; ſo for that ſpecial kind or ſort of ſinners, who give themſelves over to uncleanneſs and wantonneſs, which is the ſpecial iniquity which *Job* here diſclaims, and from which he had, by a ſacred covenant with his eyes, laboured to preſerve himſelf. *Is not a ſtrange puniſhment to the workers of* (this) *iniquity.*

Hence Obſerve, *God doth often inflict unheard of or ſtrange puniſhments upon unclean perſons.*

As there is no reſolved ſinner, but God followeth him with puniſhments; ſo he follows ſuch ſinners with ſtrange puniſhments. And as they often deviſe new wayes to ſatisfie (which will never be ſatisfied) their luſt, So God may be ſaid to deviſe new wayes to ſatisfie (which muſt be ſatisfied) his Juſtice. There is a new and a ſtrange diſeaſe peculiar to unclean perſons, moſt know how it is called, and many feel the ſad effects of it; we may well call it a new and a ſtrange puniſhment, becauſe it was not heard of till theſe latter Ages of the world: The *Italian Neopolitans* felt it firſt, and now 'tis commonly called the *French diſeaſe.* How often do they live and lie in grievous pain, who have been greedy of unlawful and forbidden pleaſures? How often are ſuch forc'd to ſpend their time and ſtate upon medicines and Phyſicians, to patch up a poor rotting carkaſs, which they have ruin'd by their folly? With what incurable aches are ſuch tormented? What feebleneſs falls upon their limbs? How are their ſenſes ſpent and ſtupified? How unſavory is the breath, how inſufferable the ſtench of theſe painted Sepulchres? What loathſome ſores break out upon them? What Armies of diſeaſes aſſault them? How doth old age haſten upon them? How many deaths do they endure before they die? He that thus ſows to the fleſh, ſhall of the fleſh reap a plentiful harveſt of corruption. God finds out ſtrange puniſhments for theſe workers of iniquity. Hence *Solomon* gives this warning againſt the whoriſh Woman (*Prov.* 7. 25, 26, 27.) *Let not thine heart decline to her wayes, go not aſtray in her paths; for ſhe hath caſt down many wounded, yea many ſtrong men have been ſlain by her, her houſe is the way to Hell, going down to the Chambers of death.* The ſin of uncleanneſs doth not only wound the body, but kill it; The ſtrange Woman caſteth ſtrong men down, not only upon a bed of ſickneſs, but of death: Yea, ſhe hath ſlain many not in reſpect of their temporal but eternal life, ſhe ſends them to Hell as well as to the grave. They who are poſſeſſed with this unclean ſpirit, are not only ſpiritually but (upon the matter) corporally dead while they live; And may be ſaid like him in the Goſpel (*Mark* 5. 3.) who in another ſenſe was poſſeſſed with an unclean Spirit, *to have their dwelling among the tombs*; and when they die indeed and go to their tombs, what hope can we have of their going any whither but to Hell? and therefore it followeth in this place (*ver.* 27.) *Her houſe is the way to Hell.* For ſeeing in her houſe that courſe of ſinning is practis'd and continued, which muſt needs (without repentance) end or conclude in Hell, her houſe is juſtly called the way to Hell. Thus, as at the firſt, ſo ſtill death worketh by the Woman, yet, as then, ſo ſtill man cannot excuſe himſelf by the Woman, ſeeing he hath been ſo often warned, that while he goeth to the Chambers of a *ſtrange Woman, he is going down to the Chambers of death.* O how ſtrange, how unlooked for (though they have no reaſon to look for any other) will that puniſhment be to theſe workers of iniquity?

Laſtly, Seeing there is (in one ſenſe or other) *a ſtrange puniſhment to the workers of* any *iniquity*, we are admoniſht, *To meditate often upon the ſad conſequents of ſin* (which at beſt and at leaſt is a work of iniquity) that our hearts may be awed from it. How often doth the Lord lay the ax of puniſhment (in his holy Word) to the root of all iniquity, that he might cut it down, yea root it up? And we have but need to make uſe of the terror of God, as well as of his mercy, to preſerve our ſouls from the growth and curſed fruits of it. Iniquity works in us, that we may work iniquity; O let the bitter fruit of iniquity work in us a holy reſolution to lay aſide or not to meddle with that work. It is good to forbear the works of iniquity, becauſe of the evil that follows them, though it is beſt to avoid them, becauſe of the evil that is in them. 'Tis our wiſdom to make uſe of the fear of Hell to keep us from that which leads to Hell. The fear of loſing the favour of God ſhould prevail moſt with us, but the fear of pulling down wrath upon our ſelves may prevail much with us to abandon and abominate all the works of iniquity. Thus *Job* affected his own heart to abandon them; for (as it follows) ſaith he,

Verſe 4. **Doth not he ſee my wayes, and count all my ſteps?**

This verſe contains (as was ſhewed before) the third reaſon of what he affirmed in the firſt verſe. The ſtrict covenant which he had made with his eyes; 'Tis alſo a reaſon of what he ſaid in the ſecond and third verſes, That God would ſurely withhold all good from him, and bring all evil upon him, if he had been wicked, or done wickedly. The argument may be gathered up thus;

He that hates all the wayes and works of iniquity, and is able to puniſh them, will ſurely puniſh them, when he ſeeth and diſcovereth them.

But God who hates and is able to puniſh all the wayes and works of iniquity, doth alſo ſee and diſcover them all.

Therefore he will ſurely puniſh them.

The latter part of the aſſumption, is the plain ſubject of this fourth verſe.

Doth not he ſee my wayes? &c.] That God ſeeth all men and their wayes, was an article of *Job*'s faith; and therefore he could not but believe that God ſaw him and his. *Doth not he ſee my wayes?* How blind were I if I did not ſee his truth! God is all ſight, all eye, his eye beholdeth all things. *Doth not he ſee my wayes?* Surely he doth, that is, *He knoweth all that I do*; He knoweth all that I ſpeak, yea he knoweth what I think. The ſight of God is the knowledge of God, and the object of that knowledge is all things, whether reſerved in the heart, as our *thoughts*, or uttered at the lips, *as our words*, or any way effected and brought to iſſue, as *our deeds*; which is yet more fully expreſſed in the next clauſe.

And count all my ſteps?] As ſeeing is an act of ſenſe; ſo counting is a work of the underſtanding. God (as it were) acts both the *Arithmetician and the Watchman*: He ſeeth or obſerveth all our wayes, and he counts or reckons all our ſteps, not ſome of, but all our ſteps. And when we find theſe two words in conjunction, *wayes and ſteps*, the Word *wayes*, may be taken for what is inward, *Doth not he ſee my wayes?* that is, my purpoſes, and intentions, my thoughts and reſolutions. And then ſteps denote works and actions, which are external and progreſſive. Our ſteps or acts are guided and ſhaped according to our counſels and deſignments.

כפר *Numeravit res, per numeros recenſuit.*

Doth not he count all my ſteps?] The word ſignifies not only to take the count or number of things, how many they are, but alſo to judge and diſtinguiſh concerning them, what they are; as alſo to preſerve a record or keep a regiſter of them, both as to their number and their nature; and hence *Sepher*, ſignifieth any Catalogue of names or the *Muſter-roll* of an Army, or any Book wherein matters are digeſted, rehearſed, and declared. So that here *Job* gives glory to God in the acknowledgment of that perfect knowledge which he had of every particular turn and motion of his life, which he calleth his *ſteps*, in purſuance of that frequent ſcriptural metaphor, which we have alſo in the former part of this verſe, calling the general courſe of a man, whether outward of his converſation, or inward of his cogitations, *His way*.

I have met with like paſſages ſetting forth the omniſcience of God elſewhere in this Book, and expreſly in the ſame terms with this (*Chap.* 14. 16.) and therefore I ſhall only give ſome brief touches from both parts of the verſe together.

Note, First, *There is nothing of man hid from or a ſecret unto God.*

He that ſeeth our wayes, and counteth all our ſteps, cannot be a ſtranger to what we are, to what we are doing or have done. The Lord doth not ſee in general only, or take a light tranſient view of us, but he views us exactly, and (as it were) caſts or ſums up all our ſteps, and he doth it two wayes; Firſt, as to their number; Secondly, as to their nature; He knows how many ſteps we take, how many acts paſs from us. All finite numbers (and there can be no other) are but as one to him, who is infinitely one. And as God knows how many our ſteps are, ſo he knows of what kind and quality they are, whether good or bad, right or wrong, holy or prophane. As he will not call that work evil which is good to injure us, ſo he will never call that good which is evil to favour us. (2 *Chron.* 16. 9.) *The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole Earth, to ſhew himſelf ſtrong in the behalf of them whoſe heart is perfect towards him*; and whatſoever imperfection there is either in the heart or way of man, God quickly finds it out; as it follows in the ſame place; *Herein* (ſaith the Lord by his Prophet to *Aſa*) *thou haſt done fooliſhly, from henceforth thou ſhalt have wars.* *Aſa*, a good King no ſooner ſtept awry but the Lord took notice of it, and preſently told him, wherein; *Herein thou haſt done fooliſhly*; this act is thy fault and thy folly. For, as *Solomon* aſſureth us (*Prov.* 5. 21.) *The wayes of man are before the eyes of the Lord*, ſo he aſſureth us that *he pondereth all his goings*, he doth not only number them but ponder and weigh them, he can weigh them to a grain, and though he (through grace) giveth his people many grains of allowance, and is not extream to mark what they do amiſs, yet he doth not give them one grain of allowance to do what is amiſs. For as the ſame *Solomon* tells us (*Prov.* 15. 3.) that *the eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good*; ſo he beholdeth the good to reward it, and the evil to puniſh it.

Hence take this Corollary, *God who ſeeth and takes an account of all our wayes and ſteps, will certainly puniſh thoſe who take a liberty to ſtep out of thoſe wayes, which himſelf hath chalked out, and commanded us to walk in.*

If God did not ſee our wayes, we might ſin and go unpuniſhed, but foraſmuch as he ſeeth them with purer eyes then to behold iniquity and approve it, he is ingaged both in juſtice and honour to puniſh all that iniquity of our wayes which he ſeeth or beholdeth. *David* makes this the very deſign of Gods ſuperintendency over the wayes of men (*Pſal.* 10. 14.) *Thou haſt ſeen it; for thou beholdeſt miſchief and ſpite to requite it with thy hand; the poor committeth himſelf unto thee, thou art the helper of the fatherleſs.* Thus the Pſalmiſt repreſents the Lord as having taken a view or ſurveigh of the wayes of men, *Thou haſt ſeen*, what had God ſeen? Even all that wickedneſs and oppreſſion of the poor ſpoken of in the former part of the Pſalm, as alſo the blaſphemy of the wicked againſt himſelf. (*ver.* 13.) *Wherefore doth the wicked contemn God? He hath ſaid in his heart, thou wilt not requite it.* What ſaith the Pſalmiſt concerning God, to this vain, confident man; *Thou* (ſaith he) *beholdeth miſchief and ſpite*, but to what purpoſe? The next words tells us that, *to requite it with thy hand.* As thou haſt ſeen what miſchief they have done ſpitefully, ſo in due time thou wilt requite it righteouſly. The Lord is not a bare ſpectator, he is both a rewarder, and an avenger. Therefore from the ground of this truth, that the Lord ſeeth all our wayes, and counteth all our ſteps, we (as the Prophet exhorts (*Iſa.* 3. 10, 11.) may *ſay to the righteous, that it ſhall be well with them, for they ſhall eat the fruit of their doings.* We may alſo ſay, *woe unto the wicked, it ſhall be ill with him, for the reward of his hands ſhall be given him.* Only Idols, which have eyes and ſee not, have hands and ſtrike not.

Thirdly, This truth, it ſeems was much upon *Job*'s ſpirit; for he ſpeaks it or brings it in with an emphatical quickneſs; *Doth not he ſee my wayes?*

Hence Note, *A gracious heart conſiders himſelf much and alwayes under the eye of God.*

And as it ſhews a very holy frame of heart to do ſo, ſo it is an excellent means to keep the heart in a ſteddy frame of holineſs. Thus 'tis ſaid in that prophecy of Chriſt (*Pſal.* 16. 8.) *I have ſet the Lord always before me, becauſe he is at my right hand, I ſhall not be moved.* He that ſets the Lord, alwayes before him, ſuppoſeth the Lord alwayes ſeeing him; As by faith he ſeeth the Lord, who is inviſible, ſo he conſidereth himſelf as viſible and naked to the Lord; and *becauſe the Lord is at his right hand*, therefore he riſeth up to this immoveable confidence, that *he ſhall never be moved.* Temptation ſhall not prevailingly move him to ſin againſt God, nor ſhall afflictions and ſufferings prevailingly move him to deſert the ways and work of God. Our hearts are fixed truſting in and obeying God, or in a holy truſt upon and obedience unto God, while the eye of our faith is fixed upon God, as having his eye of omniſcience fixed on us. As this remembrance, that God ſeeth us is a powerful means to keep us from ſinking under affliction, ſo from yielding unto temptation. It is impoſſible to live either comfortably or holily, unleſs we make God always preſent with us. As, in that full preſence of God, ſpoken of at the eleventh verſe of this Pſalm, for which we wait, there is fulneſs of joy with fulneſs of holineſs, and *at his right hand there are pleaſures* (with purity) *for evermore*; ſo, as we are more filled with with the preſence of God here, both our joy and our holineſs are the fuller, and as we get God more at our right hand, we likewiſe get more both pleaſure and purity while we are in this world.

Laſtly, Whereas *Job* made this ſight of God a motive of his making a Covenant with his eyes.

Note, *A gracious heart is ſweetly over-awed by the ſerious thoughts of the preſence of God with him, and of his eye upon him.*

Thus *Joſeph* argued the matter both with his wanton Miſtriſs, and with his own ſoul, (*Gen.* 39. 9.) *How then can I do this great wickedneſs and ſin againſt God*? As if he had ſaid, ſhould I conſent to do this great wickedneſs, I can no more keep out of the ſight of God while I do it, then I can keep to the rule or Law of God while I do it; As therefore I hate to do it in the latter reſpect, ſo I am afraid to do it in the former reſpect.

The Apoſtle exhorts *Servants to obey their Maſters according to the fleſh*, (that is, their earthly Maſters) *in all things, not with eye ſervice as men-pleaſers, but in ſingleneſs of heart, fearing God.* To ſerve men meerly becauſe or while their eyes is upon us, proves us ſuch as would pleaſe men in our ſervice, though the ſervice of ſuch is indeed pleaſing to no man who knows or finds it to be ſuch. And ſurely to ſerve God in doing good or avoiding evil, meerly becauſe he ſeeth us, or hath his eye upon us, is ſuch a piece of eye-ſervice as renders our perſons not only unpleaſing but odious to God, how much ſoever the ſervice we do is in its own nature pleaſing to him. And if God forbiddeth us to ſerve one another with eye ſervice, then much more doth he forbid us to ſerve himſelf ſo. Nevertheleſs, though all eye-ſervice be unacceptable to God, yet he accepts it well that we ſhould ſet him alwayes before our eyes, doing every good thing as in his ſight, and forbearing to do any evil becauſe we are in his ſight, A godly man abſtains from doing evil not only becauſe he believes God ſeeth what he doth, but becauſe he hates it; a wicked man doth the evil which himſelf loves, becauſe he hopes God ſeeth him not in doing it, or that he can hide from him what he hath done.

That which Adulterers do moſt harden themſelves by is, that as they are ſure no man ſees them, ſo they preſume God ſees them not. And we may conceive that *Job* adds this as a reaſon which kept his heart in compaſs, with ſpecial reference to that ſin, which himſelf had diſclaimed in the firſt verſe, becauſe unclean perſons uſually flatter themſelves into this falſe hope, that God doth not ſee them in their dark retirements while they commit that ſin.

VERS. 5, 6.

If I have walked with vanity, or if my foot hath haſted to deceit;
Let me be weighed in an even balance, that God may know mine integrity.

The ſcope of *Job* in theſe two verſes, and the two which follow, is to acquit himſelf from the ſuſpition or imputation of doing wrong to others that himſelf might gain by it.

Verſe 5. **If I have walked with vanity, or if my foot hath haſted to deceit**, &c.

This verſe is expounded by ſome relatively, and that in a twofold relation. Firſt, to the words immediately fore going; *Doth not he* (that is, God) *ſee my wayes, and count all my ſteps? Doth not he ſee it, if I have walked with vanity, or if my foot hath haſted to deceit?* As if he had ſaid, God who ſeeth all my wayes, knoweth whether or no I have walked with vanity, *&c.* Intimating alſo that he had abſtained and turned his foot from all falſe wayes, becauſe he knew or was aſſured that all his wayes were known to God, and that he would puniſh him for any wilful error of his wayes. Secondly, Theſe words are expounded with relation to that wiſh which followeth at the ſixth verſe; *Let me be weighed in an even ballance.* As if *Job* had ſaid, *If I have walked as you ſay I have, let that be tryed, and let me appear in mine own colours, or let me be weighed that it may appear how light and vain I have been in my walkings; if I have been ſo; I am willing to be weighed and thereby to be diſcovered whether I have walkt in wayes of vanity, or have haſtened to deceit.*

Others take the words abſolutely, and independently, only ſuppoſing *Job*'s uſual imprecation in theſe caſes; And then the ſenſe of this verſe, is plainly no more but this. *If I have walked with vanity, or my foot hath haſted to deceit.* Then let the righteous God avenge it, let *evil befal me*; and he points us to the particular evil at the eighth verſe, *Then let me ſow and let another eat, yea let my off-ſpring be rooted out.*

Once more, ſome read the words interrogatively, or by way of Queſtion; *Have I walked with vanity? Or hath my foot haſted to deceit*? Surely no; the queſtion carries a ſtrong negation, I have neither done ſo nor ſo.

But I rather add here to the former reading *Job* here aſſirming of himſelf by a ſolemn imprecation, that he had not walked with vanity, while he ſaith,

If I have walked with vanity, &c.] Walking implyeth frequent acts, or a courſe of life, as hath been ſhewed from ſeveral texts in this Book. For as every act of our lives is a ſtep, ſo the whole of our actions, is our walk. *If I have walked*

With vanity.] Or if vanity and I have been companions, or have walked together. He warns the *Epheſians* (Chap. 5. 11.) *to have no fellowſhip with the unfruitful works of darkneſs but to reprove them rather.* We chuſe thoſe ſins as our fellows and companions with which we conſtantly walk. 'Tis bad enough to walk with vain perſons, but 'tis worſe to walk with vanity; *Job* proteſted againſt both while he names the worſt of them, the latter; *If I have walked with*

עם־שוא
Cum temeritate.

Vanity.] The Word ſignifies alſo *inconſiderateneſs* or *raſhneſs*; As if he had ſaid, *If I have been unadviſed or fooliſh or heady in my walking, then,* &c. The oppoſite whereof is, *circumſpect walking*, to which the Apoſtle exhorts (*Eph.* 5. 15.) We may alſo tranſlate it, *unprofitableneſs*; that which is vain is unprofitable, it produceth no benefit, no good, either to others or our ſelves. A vain man is a meer outſide, an empty nothing; he is but ſounding braſs and a tinkling Cymbal; a meer Cipher without a figure, he ſtands for nought; what then is vanity, but as the Prophet ſpeaks (*Iſa.* 40. 17.) *Leſs then nothing.*

The Septuagint render in the concrete, *If I have walked with mockers.* What are mockers and ſcoffers, but vain perſons? Nor doth any thing more diſcover vanity of ſpirit, then mocking. Now they who walk with ſuch vain perſons, walk alſo with vanity, and they that walk with any vanity, cannot be better then vain perſons. Though a man be not known by himſelf, yet he is known by his company; any of theſe tranſlations may anſwer *Job*'s purpoſe.

Εἰ δὲ ἤμην πεπορευμένος μετὰ γελοιαστῶν. *Si inceſſi cū irriſoribus.* Sept.

Yet I ſhall take the word more generally.

Firſt, For any ſinful way, or courſe of life. Sin and vanity uſualy expreſs one another; and therefore to walk in ſin is to walk in vanity. Secondly, To walk with vanity, is to purſue and ſeek after any worldly thing, or the things which are preſent. And ſo the meaning is, if I have made it my buſineſs to get the World, this were a vanity; the beſt of meer worldly things are vanity, yea *vanity of vanities, ſaith the Preacher, vanity of vanities, all is vanity* (Eccl. 1. 2.) The vanity whereof *Solomon* the inſpired preacher ſpeaketh, is the contentment which worldly good things promiſe, but cannot perform or make good. And ſo they are *vanity of vanities*, that is the greateſt vanity, ſuperlative vanity, or more then vanity, if any thing can be more vain, then vanity it ſelf is. Yea the Preacher as if he had a mind to ſay more of worldly things but could not, ſaith the ſame again, and leſt he ſhould not have ſaid all, he ſaith once more, *All is vanity.* And though nothing of this world is vanity conſidered ſimply in it ſelf (for the contrary aſſertion carrieth a reflection upon the wiſdom of him who created the world and all things in it) yet in three reſpects all worldly things are *altogether vanity*: Firſt, As compared with thoſe better things of the world to come, or with eternals. Secondly, As conſidered in their utter inability to advance man to the enjoyment of thoſe things which are eternal; or the bleſſedneſs of the World to come. Thirdly, As uſed by fallen man, whoſe firſt ſin made the creature ſubject to vanity, and whoſe after-ſins, in the acting and fulfilling of his luſts, have made it to him it to him a vain ſubject. And therefore as one of the Ancients gave very ſerious warning, If men were truely wiſe, *They would write this divine ſentence upon the palms of their hands, and upon their garments, upon the Gates of their houſes, but eſpecially upon their hearts and conſciences, Vanity of Vanities, All is vanity.* Thirdly, To walk *with vanity*, is to deal falſly, and then vanity in the former part of the verſe and deceit in the latter are the ſame; and hence, fourthly ſome tranſlate; *If I have walked with or in a lie.* There is a lie in word, and there is a lie in practice. This reading agrees with the deſcription of the perſon that ſhall aſcend the holy hill of God

In vanitate. i.e. in aliqua falſitate; dicuntur enim vana illa quæ ſoliditatem non habent; ſoliditas autem maxima eſt per veritatem. Aquin.

Si inceſſi cū mendacio. Targ.

Si non ſyncere verſatus ſum cum hominibus tranſigens, non fucatè, aliud in ore habens aliud in pectore clauſum gerens. Pined.

God (*Pſal.* 24.4.) *Who hath clean hands and a pure heart, who hath not lift up his ſoul to vanity, nor ſworn deceitfully.* And again (*Pſal.* 12.2.) *They ſpeak vanity every one with his neighbour, with flattering lips and with a double heart,* &c. Once more (*Pſal.* 4.2.) *How long will ye love vanity, and ſeek after leaſing?* In all which Scriptures, vanity in the firſt part of the verſe ſeems to be expounded by deceitful ſwearing, flattering and lying in the latter.

So then, though *vanity* in this Text may include all ſinful wayes, and the eager proſecution of all worldly things (in an honeſt way) which are but vanity; yet it is chiefly to be underſtood of purſuing worldly things in a falſe way, by over-reaching and deceiving thoſe with whom we have to do. And that's the ſin which *Job* here proteſts againſt before the Lord, as will appear further in opening the next words: But before I meddle with them, take ſome Obſervations from what hath been already opened; *If I have walked with vanity.*

Hence Note, Firſt, *Sinful wayes are vain wayes.*

Sin is vanity under all the notions of vanity: Firſt, It is vanity becauſe unprofitable. So the Prophet *Samuel* defines a vain thing (1 *Sam.* 12.21.) while he dehorts the people of *Iſrael* from following their own wayes, and going away from the Lord, *Turn ye not aſide from following the Lord, but ſerve him with all your heart, and turn ye not aſide, for then ſhould ye go after vain things which cannot profit nor deliver, for they are vain.* Sinful wayes are unprofitable wayes, and therefore vain wayes. Carnal men look upon the wayes of God as vain. They ſay it is a vain thing to ſerve the Lord. They can get better wages, or trade to better profit elſewhere. But we may truly affirm that ſinful wayes have no real profit in them, as the Apoſtle doth while he puts the queſtion (*Rom.*6.21.) *What fruit had ye then in thoſe things whereof ye are now aſhamed? For the end of thoſe things is death.* Come produce your fruit, your profit, tell me, how much you made of ſin while you made ſo much of it.

Secondly, Sin is vain not only becauſe it can do us no good, but becauſe it doth us much hurt. There is not only a negative, or privative, but a poſitive evil in it, or flowing from it. The effects of ſin are fatal and deadly. 'Tis an *Egyptian* Reed, which is not only too weak to ſupport us, but ſharp enough to wound us: He that leans and layeth the ſtreſs of himſelf upon any creature of God, much more he that leans upon ſin, which is his own creature, gets nothing by it but ſhame and ruine. (*Jer.* 4.18.) *Thy way and thy doings have procured theſe things unto thee; this is thy wickedneſs becauſe it is bitter.* If any one enquire what thoſe things were which their doings procured them, he may receive ſadning ſatisfaction to that doubt from the former part of the Chapter, eſpecially from the ſixth verſe, where the Lord threatneth, *I will bring evil from the North, and a great deſtruction:* This deſtruction was their wickedneſs, that is, the reward of their wickedneſs, as another Prophet telleth us (*Hoſ.*13.9.) *O Iſrael, thou haſt deſtroyed thy ſelf;* thy ſin hath utterly undone thee. Sin deſtroyeth two wayes: Firſt, Meritoriouſly: Secondly, Inſtrumentally. It alwayes deſerves deſtruction, and often works our deſtruction: By ſinful actings many pull the houſe upon their own heads, and are buried in the ruins. And when a mans own ſin is the thing which ruines him, how vain a thing is his ſin to him!

Thirdly, Sin is vain, and to walk with ſin is to walk in vanity; becauſe it deceiveth us: Sin makes us many fair promiſes, not only that it will do us no hurt, but that it will do us much good; yet it can neither do us good, nor can it keep off hurt from us. Sin is a meer pretender, yea an impoſtor. (*Epheſ.* 4.22.) *Put off concerning the former converſation the old man which is corrupt according to the deceitful luſts.* Luſt makes us many proffers, but it alwayes leaves us under diſappointments; And is not that a vanity which doth ſo?

Again, taking *vanity* more ſtrictly, as was ſhewed in the explication of the Text.

Obſerve, *As all ſin, ſo eſpecially the ſin of falſe dealing, or wronging others by wayes of unrighteouſneſs, is a vain thing, a very vanity.*

That's the ſin which *Job* ſo vehemently diſclaimeth in this context, and he had done it more then once before. How vain a thing is it to enrich our ſelves by impoveriſhing another? Seeing he who doth ſo draws that upon himſelf which is worſe then poverty; and while he deceiveth his brother, deceives himſelf moſt. Unjuſt gain proves our own loſs: And is not loſing gain a vanity? Now that every man who gains by injuſtice is a loſer by his gain, may be cleared by theſe following Conſiderations.

Firſt, A man either repents of wronging others, or he repents not: There's no middle between theſe two. If he repents of what he hath done, his repentance is a demonſtration that what he had done was vain. No wiſe man will do that knowingly, of which he muſt or ought to repent. Repentance is the relief of folly. And if ever God give a ſinner true repentance for his iniquity, his own Conſcience will preach and preſs this Doctrine upon him, That ſin is folly.

Secondly, Unjuſt gain is a vanity, becauſe he that repents of it to purpoſe, will be convinced that there is a neceſſity for him to reſtore and give back what he hath gotten unjuſtly. 'Tis indeed a mercy, and the beſt of the caſe, when a mans Conſcience is ſick of his (in this ſenſe) unrighteous Mammon, and he vomits it up again by reſtitution. But is it not a vanity to get that which we may not keep, and keep a good Conſcience too? Is it not a vanity and a madneſs to gather that which we muſt ſcatter, or to take that from the right owners, which we cannot poſſeſs as our own?

Again, if we inſiſt upon the other part of the ſuppoſition, That he who hath done wrong repents not, nor reſtoreth what he hath wrongfully gotten, this will prove a greater vanity. For

Firſt, Though he hold what he hath, yet it is under a curſe; and the curſe of God will either make the beauty of it fade as a flower, and wither in his hand, or (which is worſe) his heart will be hardened the more, and he the more dangerouſly enſnared by it. But

Secondly, he that repents not, but holds what he hath unduly gotten, is often brought to ſhame and trouble in the face of the world: And is not that gain a vanity, by which we loſe (which to a meer mortal man is more precious then thouſands of Gold and Silver) our credit and reputation? What hath any man to loſe (as to this world) which is worth the having when once he hath loſt his good name?

Thirdly, Suppoſe a man holds what he hath unrighteouſly gotten, and holds it without either danger or diſgrace, ſuppoſe he keeps his gain, and keeps up his reputation too; yet at laſt, or (as we ſpeak) at the long run, he muſt confeſs he hath walked in a vain ſhadow, and diſquieted himſelf in vain. He will find that he hath made but a very bad market, though his preſent profit be very great. Thus Chriſt himſelf concludes (*Mat.* 16.26.) *What is a man profited if he gain the whole world, and loſe his own ſoul? Or what ſhall he give in exchange for his ſoul?* Suppoſe he gets and gets, not only ſome pieces and patches, ſome odd ends of the world, but the whole world, with all its array and furniture, yet, if he repents not, he loſeth his own ſoul by the bargain: And when he hath ſet down the loſs of his ſoul upon the one leaf of his Book, and the value of the world upon the other, what will appear at the foot of the account but loſs, loſs, loſs, irreparable loſs? The world hath not enough in its richeſt treaſures to ballance the loſs of the pooreſt ſoul.

Thirdly, Obſerve, *A godly man doth not, cannot walk on in a ſinful or a deceitful way.*

He may (very poſſibly) ſtep out of the way, and turn aſide, but he doth not continue out of the way, he walks not in crooked wayes. *Job* durſt not ſay, I never did any thing vainly; but he ſaid it confidently, *I have not walked with vanity.* There is much vanity in the beſt of men, and ſome vanity paſſeth from them, yet their courſe, their walk is not with vanity. This or that act of ſin doth not denominate any mans perſon or his condition. 'Tis a habit of ſinning which denominates both. In this ſenſe the Apoſtle *John* ſaith (1 *Epiſt.* 3.9.) *Whoſoever is born of God doth not commit ſin, for the Seed of God remaineth in him; and he cannot ſin becauſe he is born of God.* He cannot remain in ſin in whom the *Seed of God* (that is, a principle of new life and grace by Chriſt) remaineth. Sin remains in him that is born of God, but he that is born of God doth not remain in ſin, either as to a ſinful ſtate, or a ſinful converſation. Againſt the latter *Job* makes proteſtation here, while he ſaith, *If I have walked with vanity*,

Or, If my foot hath haſted to deceit.

The feet, in proper ſence are the pillars and ſupporters of the body, They are thoſe members of the body, by which our locomotive faculty is exerciſed; And in a tropical ſence, our feet ſignifie our affections, which are to the Soul as the feet to the Body; Whitherſoever we are carried our affections carry us. When *Solomon* adviſeth (*Eccl.* 5. 1.) *Keep thy foot when thou goeſt to the houſe of God*, he intends not a ſuperſtitious affectation of a demure outward gate or bodily behaviour, but a due attention to the motions or affections of the mind; As if he had ſaid, *Look well with what heart you go to the publick worſhip, or what moves you to go and worſhip.* The foot, and the hand, are the two great inſtruments of action. Yet the foot (which the hand doth not) includes the action both of the outward and inward man. We move from place to place by our outward feet, and whatſoever we do freely in any place, our affections move us to the doing of it. *If my foot*

Pes meus. i. e. *affectus meus, & quæcunque altera virtus animæ eſt motionis principium.* Aquin.

Hath haſted to deceit.] Before he ſpake of *walking*, now of *haſting*. To walk intimates the ſettledneſs of our courſe, to *haſte* the forwardneſs or quickneſs of it. A man that is very hot and zealous upon a buſineſs, doth not only walk, but run or go apace, he makes haſte. *If my foot hath haſted*

To deceit.] That is, to or about any work or act wherein I have deceived others; Deceivers are no ſlugs at their work; we ſay proverbially, *They muſt needs run whom the Devil drives*; There are none more driven by the Devil than deceivers are. *If my foot hath haſted to deceit.* Deceit is any ſubtle, cloſe or ſecret way of wronging others. And when *Job* ſaith he had not haſted to deceit, we are not to take it as a grant, that he uſed deceit leiſurely, or acted it with ſlow pace; but his meaning is, that he did not ſo much as ſtir a foot towards it, yea that he turned and haſted from it. I have ſhewed the vanity of deceit before, Here I ſhall ſhew the ſinfulneſs of it. *If my foot hath haſted to deceit.*

Hence obſerve, *All deceit is carefully to be avoided.*

Deceit is an odious thing both to God and all good men. God is the God of truth; as he cannot be deceived becauſe he is infinitely wiſe and all knowing; So he cannot deceive becauſe he is infinitely true and faithful; and though all men in ſome ſence are lyars; yet every good man is (in his meaſure) a man of truth. The Spirit of God gives it as the character of the *man that ſhall aſcend into the hill of God*, *he hath not lift up his ſoul to vanity, nor ſworn deceitfully* (Pſal. 24. 4.) They that can make haſte to deal deceitfully, will not be very ſlow or backward to ſwear deceitfully. And how great a wickedneſs falſe-ſpeaking, much more falſe-ſwearing is, *Solomon* tells us, (*Prov.* 12. 22.) *Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord*; Though lyars often perfume their lips with fair words to men, yet the Lord ſmells the ſtench and ill ſavour of their rotten hearts. What *Solomon* meaneth *by lying lips*, appears by the following oppoſition, *but they that deal truly are his* (that is the Lords) *delight*. Lying words are uſually accompanied with lying works, and they who ſpeak not the truth, will not deal truly. They who ſpeak the truth and do it, whoſe works make a comment upon their words, *are the delight of God*. *To ſay what is true, and to be true to what we ſay, is a high character of Godlineſs. A godly man hath ſo much love to and zeal for truth and honeſty, that whatſoever he ſpeaks, he ſpeaks it as if he were upon his oath.* And though an oath be a more ſacred thing than a word, yet he will not be bound conſcientiouſly by an oath, who makes no conſcience of his word. I grant there is ſome liberty and latitude allowable in ſpeaking as to ſpecial caſes, yet we ſhould always keep within the bounds of truth. No man will ſpeak deceitfully, but he that intends to deal deceitfully; And as all deceit whether it be in ſpeaking or dealing is an abomination to God, ſo it hath not only an ill name, but an odious one among all men, even thoſe who are moſt remote from God, the Heathens.

Quicquid dixeris juratum te putares.

Firſt, Becauſe 'tis contrary to the Law and light of nature; every ſinful act is the more ſinful, by how much it is a ſin againſt a more common light. There are ſome ſins which God will puniſh ſeverely, which are ſins only againſt divine inſtitution and ſpecial revelation; But ſuch ſins as are againſt the general light of nature, ſuch ſins, as he that never heard of a Bible condemneth, how doth God condemn them! How ſeverely will he puniſh them?

Secondly, As deceit is a ſin againſt the light or law of nature; ſo againſt the expreſs laws both of God and man. I need not quote the laws of men againſt it; What Nation or Common-wealth hath not enacted laws and declared penalties againſt it? I need not ſtay to prove it a ſin againſt the law of God; who forbids all kind of deceit, in thoſe two negative laws; *Thou ſhalt not ſteal*; *Thou ſhalt not bear falſe witneſs againſt thy neighbour.* Whatever fine colours men put upon falſe dealing, the beſt of it muſt come out under this plain cenſure, *ſtealing*. The Deceiver ſhall be ranked and numbred among thieves. And whatſoever fine colours men put upon falſe ſpeaking, it muſt come under this plain cenſure of lying and falſe-witneſs-bearing. Deceit croſſeth all the laws of commerce and converſe with men, and breaks aſunder all the tyes and bonds of humane ſociety; what can we call (except downright blaſphemy againſt God) more odious than that which doth ſo?

Thirdly, Deceit is (in ſome ſence) far worſe than open violence; we cry out (and well we may) againſt thieves and robbers, who aſſault honeſt travellers upon the high-way, and take their purſes; yet Deceit is more dangerous and detrimental than that, becauſe we have no defence againſt it, nor (in moſt caſes) remedy for it; yea 'tis done, and that not ſeldom, under the notion of friendſhip and courteſie. Now as it is a more odious crime to poyſon a man whom we invite to our table, than to kill him openly in the field; Becauſe poyſon is then conveyed ſecretly and under a pretence of kindneſs; So to wrong thoſe whom we invite to deal with us, is worſe than doing it by open invaſion or violence.

Tuta frequenſque via eſt per amici fallere nomen.

Let none think this a ſuperfluous warning; For as our hearts are deceitful, ſo they are eaſily drawn to uſe deceit. Some (that I ſay not many) men would deceive God himſelf. That's the buſineſs of all hypocrites, and they are more (as we ſay) than a good many. Now what an hypocrite is in religious, the ſame is a deceitful man in civil things. The one would deceive God, the other men. Yea ſuch is the baſeneſs and vilany of our deceitful hearts, that we often yea ofteneſt deceive our ſelves; And indeed we are always (though not at all intentionally) contriving and plotting our own ruine, while we pretend to pleaſe and hope to raiſe our ſelves, by deceiving, that is, by wronging others; no wonder then if we are inclined to wrong others, when we ſee a ſelf-advantage, yea ſelf-advantage doth ſo blind or deceive our eyes, that we can hardly ſee deceit where we ſee profit.

To arm our ſelves againſt this ſin, let us often remember that truth is very precious to God; Truth of heart is ſo, and ſo is truth of word carried on to truth of action, both in ſpirituals and in civils. God loves truth ſo much, that he takes it up for his Title, and calls himſelf *the true God*, both in oppoſition to Idols which are lying vanities, and to vain men who give themſelves up to lying; Yea the greateſt honour which we can do to God is this, when by believing we put to our ſeal that *He is true* (Joh. 3. 33.) And when the Apoſtle would ſet forth the honour and beauty of the new creature, he calls it *that new man which after God is created in righteouſneſs and true holineſs* (*Eph.* 4. 24.) The new man is made, *after God*, that is, (as it were) of God's faſhion, or in his likeneſs, which is holineſs, yet the Apoſtle doth not ſay only, *in holineſs* (for there may be an appearance of holineſs which is not after God, or the image of God) But *in true holineſs*; which includes both holineſs in truth, and the holineſs of truth. Truth is a holy thing; truth reſpecting God, and truth reſpecting man; Of which the Apoſtle ſpeaks in the next words (*v.* 25.) *Wherefore putting away lying, ſpeak every man truth with his neighbour*, &c. For even that truth holds forth the image and likeneſs of God too. In this image or likeneſs of God, *Job* deſired to appear when he ſaid, *If my foot hath haſted to deceit.*

Secondly, As in theſe words *Job* ſets forth what himſelf was by grace, ſo what every man is by nature; which we may take in this Obſervation.

Man naturally makes haſte to ſin.

Yea *Solomon* ſeemeth to affirm, that whenſoever we make haſte it is to ſin (*Prov.* 19. 2.) *He that haſteth with his feet ſinneth.* But doth every one ſin that haſteth with his feet? *David made haſte and delayed not to keep the commandments of God*; ſurely then a man may make haſte and not ſin. The Church excites Chriſt (*Cant.* 8. 14.) *Make haſte my beloved, and be thou like a roe or young hart upon the mountains of Bether.* Chriſt, in whom is no ſin, makes haſte with his feet. Why then ſaith *Solomon, He that haſteth with his feet ſinneth?* I anſwer, He leaves it indefinitely with reſpect to man, becauſe men are moſt apt to make haſte about that which is ſinful. We have both the tide of corruption and the wind of temptation carrying us on ſo haſtily to ſin, that we ſcarcely, no nor at all, but by grace, haſte with our feet to any thing but to ſin. Or we may expound theſe latter words of the verſe by the former, *That the ſoul be without knowledg is not good; but he that haſteth with his foot ſinneth. Solomon* condemns only an ignorant raſhneſs, or a raſh ignorance. A man who makes ſuch haſte in a buſineſs that he will not ſtand to examine whether it be right or wrong, nor take time to inform himſelf whether his way be good or evil; the man, I ſay, who maketh ſuch haſte with his feet, can hardly hit upon any thing but ſin, and ſo makes a great deal more haſte than good ſpeed. So that, when *Solomon* ſaith, *He that haſteth with his feet ſinneth*, his meaning either is, that they who act haſtily, are in extream danger to act ſinfully, or that man makes ſo little haſte to any thing but to ſin, that whenſoever he makes haſte, we may ſuſpect it is to ſin. His haſte and ſpeed that way are teſtified by many Scriptures. *Their feet run to evil* (ſaith the Prophet, *Iſa.* 59. 7.) *and make haſte to ſhed blood.* And the Apoſtle from the Pſalm (*Rom.* 3. 15.) *Their feet are ſwift to ſhed blood.* We ſee few *haſtning righteouſneſs* (as it was prophecyed Chriſt ſhould, *Iſa.* 16. 5.) But we ſee too many *haſtning unrighteouſneſs*, that is, making haſte to do unrighteouſly. As a godly man hath a bent and forwardneſs of Spirit to that which is good; *I made haſte* (ſaith *David*, Pſal. 119. 60.) *and delayed not to keep thy Commandments.* So a wicked man hath a bent to do evil. The tide and ſtream of his ſoul ſets that way, and therefore he makes haſte *to break the commandments.* Both make haſte from the ſame common principle, *That ſutableneſs which is between the heart and the work*; Though their ſpecial characteriſtical principles, are not only different but utterly contrary. Why doth a godly man make haſte to keep the commandments of God? 'Tis becauſe the commandments and his heart are ſutable. Grace conforms our will to the will of God, or, 'tis our conformity to his will. Grace is not only the conformity of our actions (that's a fruit of grace) but the conformity of our wills to the will of God. From this principle of conformity to the will of God, ariſeth a promptneſs to obey the commandments of God (which are the exemplifications of his will) in all that receive the grace of God. Thus alſo the heart of a natural man is ſutable to the world, and therefore he makes haſt to get it, ſo much haſte that he ſcarce conſiders how he gets it, but haſtens to deceit, rather than he will not get it. Thus *Solomon* determines (*Prov.* 28. 20.) *He that maketh haſte to be rich, ſhall not be innocent*; that is, he by his haſte to get much riches, contracts much guilt; For as the Apoſtle concludes (1 *Tim.* 6. 9.) *They that will be rich, fall into temptation and a ſnare, and into many fooliſh and hurtful luſts, which drown men in perdition and deſtruction.* The eager purſuit of the world layeth a man open to ſo many temptations, that he can hardly hold his innocency, and if once a man loſe that, he is often a loſt man for this world, and he is ſo always for the next, and he that is under either of theſe loſſes, eſpecially the latter is drowned in perdition and deſtruction. The word in that text of the *Proverbs* which we render *innocent*, ſignifieth, *unpuniſhed*, ſo we put in the Margin, *He ſhall not be unpuniſhed*; Guilt hath in it, yea is an obligation to puniſhment; And if ſuch guilty ones eſcape puniſhment in this life, yet puniſhment will be ſure to find them in that which is to come. As *Job* was convinced of the ſinfulneſs, ſo of the dangerouſneſs of this ſin; And therefore ſaith, *If my foot hath haſted to deceit.*

Verſ. 6. **Let me be weighed in an even ballance, that God may know mine integrity.**

We ſay in the text, **Let me be weighed**, and put in the Margin; *Let him weigh me*; *Job* ſpeaks indefinitely, not determining who this *he* ſhould be, nor caring who it ſhould be; Let God weigh me, let man weigh me, let friends or foes weigh me. I paſs not, ſo they do me juſtice, and take (as I mean it) my true weight. Mr. *Broughton* renders reſtrictively, *Let God weigh me in an even ballance.* We tranſlate paſſively, *Let me be weighed.* The ſence is the ſame in either reading. The word is appliable to any kind of weighing; But here, that of a right judgment and underſtanding, reſpecting both the ſtate of perſons and nature of actions is intended; 'Tis a metaphorical alluſion to Merchants or Tradeſmen, who weigh their goods, and ſell them by weight; in old time all payments in Money whether of gold or ſilver were paſſed by weight (and ſo they are in ſome places at this day) *I weighed him the money in the ballances*, ſaith the Prophet (*Jer.* 32. 10.) when he (according to the word of the Lord) bought the field of *Hananeel* his Uncles Son. From this Hebrew root in the Text the word *Shekel* is derived, ſignifying a piece of coin among the *Jews*, frequently mentioned in Scripture, which was of a known weight, and the Standard, by which all other weights were regulated. Such alſo was the *Stater* among the *Grecians*. *Job* deſires to be weighed exactly, as gold in the ballance.

שקל *libravit, ponderavit.*

Στατὴρ *ab* ἱστάναι *ponderare.*

He ſaid before, *If I have haſted to deceit*; And here he ſeems to ſay, If I have uſed any deceit in my dealings with men, or in my ſervices and addreſſes to God, let God weigh me, and ſhame me for my lightneſs. *Let me be weighed*, or, *Let him weigh me*; that is, let him try me to the utmoſt in my morals, and in my civils; let him try me in the whole courſe of my life; let him try me as a man, and try me as a Magiſtrate, let all my ways, works, and words, yea all my thoughts, purpoſes and deſigns be tryed and weighed. He includes all theſe in the word *Me*, which he offers to the ballance. And indeed though our outward actions are all that man can weigh, yet they are the leaſt part of that which God will weigh when he comes to weigh us. Thus we may extend the *me* in the text to *Job* in all his capacities and relations; he was willing to be weighed and tryed throughout, only he deſired a fair proceeding, and a righteous tryal; *Let me be weighed*, ſaith he,

In an even ballance.] A *Ballance* properly taken is an Artificial Inſtrument, wherein any thing which is weighable is put to be weighed, or that the weight of it may be taken and known. And though all ballances though of different kinds and ſorts, as to matter and ſize, ſhould be of one kind and ſort as to truth and evenneſs; yet through the corruption of men and manners, there are ballances of two ſorts; Firſt, even or right; Secondly, uneven or deceitful ballances. *Job* craves no favour, but *to be weighed in an even ballance*; that is in ſuch a ballance, as hath no intrinſecal preponderation one way or other, but turneth truly as thoſe things which are put into it do preponderate, or are more weighty. The Hebrew is, *in ballances of juſtice*, that is, in juſt ballances; in ballances ſo juſt, that Juſtice her ſelf may be ſaid to have made them, or ſo juſt that (as Juſtice is commonly pictured or emblem'd) Juſtice her ſelf might hold them in her hand to weigh with. The ballance hath a kind of ſacredneſs in it. And becauſe men are apt to deceive by falſe ballances, therefore in all well-govern'd Kingdoms and Common-wealths there is a *publick ballance*, by which all other ballances are to be tryed, and to which they muſt be conformed. The *Kings beam*, or, *The States beam* hath a publick Officer to attend it. *Job* would be tryed by ſuch a beam or ballance, *an even ballance*; As if he had ſaid, *I deſire with all my heart, that God would take full cognizance of me, and weigh me exactly according to righteouſneſs. O that he would aſſume my judgment into his own hand, who, I am ſure, would do me right, and weigh all my matters impartially. I know his eyes cannot be ſo blinded with mine afflictions* (*though mens* *are) but that for all them he would diſcern and judg me upright.*

But was not this a huge boldneſs (may ſome ſay) in *Job*, that he ſhould call ſo earneſtly to be weighed? was not this a boaſt of, if not a truſting to his own righteouſneſs?

I anſwer, *Job* did not deſire to be weighed, nor offered he himſelf to be weighed like a proud ſelf-Juſtificiary, as if he thought he had no ſin in him, or as if he thought his ſins were but light, or could bear no weight to over-ballance his good deeds. It was not any ſwelling opinion of the worth or merit of what he had done, but a ſound ſaving faith in the mercy and free grace of God through the Redeemer, together with the integrity of his heart towards God, which gave him the confidence to deſire and ſtand this Tryal. *Job* was not further off in time than in temper of ſpirit and true Goſpel-knowledg; from thoſe old Popiſh Monks, who were wont to tell their blind Votaries of St. *Michael*'s ballances, and that he, when a man dyed, put all his good works into one ballance, and his evil ones into the other, and if his evil deeds did out-weigh his good deeds, then the poor ſoul muſt go to Hell, but if his good deeds did out-weigh his evil deeds, then he was ſure of Heaven. This was the goodly (ſhall I call it in ſcorn or in truth) the deadly Goſpel doctrine of thoſe dark times, in which the blind led the blind and both (we have cauſe to fear) fell into the ditch. And doth not this vail of ignorance as to the myſtery of free-grace in the Goſpel remain upon the hearts of many untaken away until this day? What utter ſtrangers are they who dream of ſuch a kind of ballancing our good and evil deeds both to Law and Goſpel? This is ſo far from being the Goſpel ballance, that it is not ſo much as the ballance of the Law. For if a man ſin but once, he is gone for ever by the Law. The covenant of works, or the meer legal covenant ſaith (*Gal.* 3. 10.) *Curſed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the Law to do them.* It is not the doing more evil than good, but the doing of any evil at all, which condemns according to the tenour of that covenant. If a man could be ſuppoſed to have but the weight of one grain of ſin in him, that would make all his good works of no weight under the covenant of works. And though a mans ſins are (as indeed every mans ſins, the ſins of the moſt holy man on earth are) heavier than the ſand, and of more weight than a thouſand mountains, and his own righteouſneſs not bearing the weight of a feather, indeed none at all, but rather (ſo the Prophet calls them, *Iſa.* 64.6.) *as filthy rags*, yet that man being in the covenant of grace hath a righteouſneſs, even the Righteouſneſs of faith, which will make him bear weight enough before God in the ballance of the Goſpel Sanctuary, and will infinitely out-weigh all his ſins.

But, to return, *Job* ſtood not upon any legal juſtification of himſelf, or of his ways. His purpoſe was only to ſhew that he had a clear conſcience, and that (as *Paul* profeſſed before the Counſel (*Acts* 23. 1.) *He had lived in all good conſcience before God until that day*; and that if he were weighed in an even ballance, he ſhould neither be found an hypocrite towards God, nor a deceiver towards man. Upon theſe aſſurances *Job* was ready to be weighed, not upon any conceit of ſelf-righteouſneſs; and this he expreſſeth in the latter part of the verſe, *That God may know mine integrity*; This was all that *Job* ſtood to maintain, his honeſty and ſincerity; And as to that he was but forward enough to challenge all men, though poſſibly (as himſelf at laſt was convinced) a little too forward and confident before God, while he ſaid, *Let me be weighed in an even ballance.*

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *A ſincere godly man is willing to have himſelf and all his ways brought to tryal.*

He is not afraid of the ballance; no not of God's ballance; Though he cannot ſay his ſins are fewer than his good deeds; yet he can ſay (through grace) his heart is upright with God in all the good which he hath done, or that there is a vein, a thread of uprightneſs running through the whole web of his life. The Apoſtle *Paul* had no ſooner ſaid (2 *Cor.* 5. 10.) *We muſt all appear before the Judgment-ſeat of Chriſt, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done whether it be good or bad*; (which is as if he had ſaid in *Job*'s language, we muſt all appear before Chriſt to be weighed in an even ballance, that it may appear what we are, Now (I ſay) the Apoſtle had no ſooner ſpoken of this general weighing day, when all men muſt appear, and from the ſence of the terror of the Lord againſt all thoſe who ſhall be found too light, perſwaded men to look to it) but he preſently adds with a kind of Joy, *But we are manifeſt unto God, and I truſt alſo are made manifeſt* (meaning the *Corinthians*) *to your conſciences.* As if he had ſaid, This is my comfort, and the comfort of my Fellow-labourers in the Goſpel. That we are well aſſured God hath weighed us, and that our weight is manifeſt to God; he knows not only what we have done, but (which bears the greateſt weight with him) with what hearts we have been doing it. They who rejoyce that God hath weighed them, cannot but be willing he ſhould weigh them again, and they who are willing to be weighed by God, cannot be unwilling to be weighed by men, if they will but do it in an even ballance.

Secondly, Note, *Perſons and things ſhould be weighed before we give ſentence and judgment upon them.*

Some are too haſty, they judg others light before they have weighed them, at leaſt before they have weighed them in an even ballance. To give ſentence before tryal is not good, though the ſentence given ſhould be good. The Apoſtles rule is, *Prove all things, hold faſt that which is good* (1 Theſ. 5. 21.) Suppoſe we hold that which is good, yet if we have not proved it to be good, 'tis no better to us than that which is evil. Now if our judging a thing good which is ſo, without weighing it, doth not commend us to God, how great will their condemnation be, who judg thoſe things evil which they have never weighed, or if they have, it hath been in an unrighteous ballance?

Thirdly, Obſerve, *We muſt weigh perſons and things righteouſly, not in the ballance of prejudice and paſſion, but in the ballance of juſtice and moderation.*

How often doth the Scripture condemn uneven ballances, as a burden both to God and man? God will not indure that you ſhould weigh the meaneſt commodity you trade in with falſe ballances, or by a bag of deceitful weights. Thus he commanded the Children of *Iſrael* by *Moſes* (Lev. 19. 36.) *Juſt ballances, juſt weights, a juſt Ephah, and a juſt Hin ſhall ye have; I am the Lord your God, which brought you out of the Land of Egypt.* As if he had ſaid, I have delivered you from your oppreſſors, therefore take heed ye do not oppreſs one another. *A falſe ballance* (ſaith *Solomon*, Prov. 11. 1.) *is an abomination to the Lord, but a juſt weight is his delight.* And again (*Prov.* 16. 11.) *A juſt weight and ballance are the Lords* (They have (as it were) his ſeal upon them, and he owneth them for his) *for all the weights of the bag* (that is, all juſt weights, and there ought to be no other in the bag) *are his work.* 'Tis therefore a high offence againſt God, and a colouring of theft with juſtice, to weigh with uneven ballances. Hence the Lord ſpeaks with high indignation (*Mic.* 6. 11.) *Shall I count them pure with the wicked ballances, and with the bag of deceitful weights?* As if he had ſaid, whatſoever I do, I abhor to do that; I can as ſoon count an Adulterer or a drunkard pure, as they that uſe deceitful weights. Their neighbours (poſſibly) may count them pure, and they ('tis like enough) count themſelves ſo, but ſo will not I, to whom the true account of every mans worth is perfectly known. Now if the Lord will not indure that we ſhould weigh any thing for ſale in an uneven ballance; what think you will God ſay to them who weigh men and their actions in uneven ballances? *There are not more falſe ballances for wares and commodities, than there are for perſons and actions.* Where almoſt among men ſhall we find a ballance of Juſtice for man, Though the weighing of a man or of a matter, is of greater conſequence, than the weighing of any worldly Merchandize? 'Tis much more difficult to get an even internal ballance of reaſon and judgment to diſcover the right of a cauſe, than to get an even external ballance to find out the weight of a commodity. And ſurely we have reaſon to be very exact in weighing both our own works, and the works of other men, ſeeing the Lord will certainly weigh both theirs and ours over again, and that in a moſt even ballance. The

Scripture ſpeaks much and often of God weighing the ways and works of men; and 'tis not what we judg of our ſelves, but what he judgeth that muſt determine our condition. (*Prov.* 16. 2.) *All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes.* Some men, I grant, are condemned in and of themſelves, yet if every man might be his own final Judg, few or none (as we ſay) would be condemned. The eyes of moſt men are ſo unclean, that all their ways are clean in their own eyes. But howſoever any man may acquit himſelf, or be acquitted by others, yet God judgeth rightly; he judgeth not by appearances, but by realities, he judgeth the inſide as well as the outſide, and therefore it followeth in the ſame verſe, *But God weigheth the ſpirits.* The ſpirit of a man often miſtakes the weight of his own actions, but God who is himſelf a ſpirit, never miſſeth the weight of our ſpirits. Some have ſerious weighty ſpirits, others have light and frothy ſpirits. We can do ſomewhat towards the weighing of actions, but we can hardly, if at all, tell how to weigh ſpirits, God weigheth both. (1 *Sam.* 2. 3.) *The Lord is a God of knowledg, and by him actions are weighed.* He can eaſily weigh actions, who weigheth ſpirits, which are the principle and ſpring of action. And as God weigheth the actions of all men righteouſly, ſo the actions of all righteous men favourably, (*Iſa.* 26. 7.) *The way of the juſt is uprightneſs, thou moſt upright doeſt weigh the path of the juſt.* Which Scripture though according to other tranſlations, it be interpreted of the providential path wherein the upright walk, that God doth ſmooth and level it for them; yet according to our tranſlation, it plainly holds out the point in hand, that God taketh ſpecial conſideration, as if it were by weighing of the moral path of an upright man, that is of the path of his converſation.

Yea, God hath a beam and a ballance not only to weigh particular perſons, but whole Nations by, not only to weigh private perſons, but the greateſt Princes by. (*Dan.* 5.25.) *And this is the writing that was written, Mene Mene Tekel Upharſin; God hath numbred thy kingdom, and finiſhed it, thou art weighed in the ballances, and art found wanting. Belſhazzar* a great King, was weighed in that capacity as a King, both he and his government were weighed in the ballance and found wanting; that is, he wanted righteouſneſs in the Adminiſtration of his great power over the Nations. Thus God weigheth the metaphorical as well as the proper Mountains in ſcales and the hills in a ballance (*Iſa.*40.12.) Is it not time then for us to be weighing our ſelves, ſeeing we our ſelves are and ſhall be weighed? We ſhall be tryed and examined, therefore it is our duty and our intereſt to try and examine our ſelves. Every man ſhould put the queſtion often to his own ſoul, *Am I weight in the ballance of the Sanctuary,* in the Lord's ballance? The Apoſtles counſel is (1 *Cor.* 11. 28.) *Let a man* (that is, every man) *examine,* or in *Job's* phraſe, *weigh himſelf,* and 'tis but need he ſhould, for *God will weigh us all,* in all that we are and have and do. Doubtleſs holy *Job* had often weighed himſelf, elſe he had never ſignified this deſire, *Let me be weighed in an even ballance,*

That God may know mine integrity.

But was *Job's* integrity a ſecret to God? muſt God take ſuch a courſe, before he could know it? muſt he ſtand conſidering and poyzing him and his ways as in a ballance, before he could give a definitive ſentence concerning them? Doth not God know without tryal or inquiſition? Doth not God know intuitively, in himſelf and from himſelf? Hath he not the neat and exact weight of all perſons and actions in his own mind? Is not he omniſcient? carrieth he not the ballance of all things always in his infinite and infallible underſtanding?

How then doth *Job* ſay, *Let me be weighed in an even ballance, that God may know mine integrity?*

I anſwer, It is moſt true and undeniable, that God knows all things in himſelf, not only when they are, but he knew them before they were, even from eternity. Yet the Scripture ſpeaks of God ſometimes as beginning to know this or that in time, or upon inquiry; which doth not import any neſcience in God of ſuch things till then, but only a teſtimony of his divine omniſcience. God is then ſaid to know, firſt, when he makes it manifeſt to us that he doth; or ſecondly, when he makes that known to others which himſelf knew while none elſe did. Some things are then ſaid to be done by or known to man when they appear to be ſo, though they were both done by him and known to him long before; much more is it ſo in reference to God. He knew what was in the heart of the children of *Iſrael* before he brought them out of *Egypt*; yet *Moſes* ſaith (*Deut.* 8. 2.) *The Lord thy God led thee theſe forty years in the wilderneſs, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thy heart, whether thou wouldſt keep his commandments or no.* The beſt of men have corruptions in them which themſelves know not, they have many more corruptions which others know not. God led *Iſrael* about in the wilderneſs thoſe forty years, and there exerciſed them with various providences, that he might make them and others know that unbelief, that rebellion and frowardneſs which himſelf knew lay in their hearts undiſcerned, till ſtraits and temptations drew it out. When *Abraham* had offered up his Son at the command of God, we find God preſently telling him (*Gen.* 22. 12.) *Now I know that thou feareſt me.* The Lord knew that before, but he ſpake ſo, becauſe by that tryal he had made *Abraham's* holy fear known. Thus *David* prayed (*Pſal.* 139. 23.) *Search me O God and know my heart: try me and know my thoughts.* Why did *David* deſire this of God? he tells us at the 24. verſe, *And ſee if there be any wicked way in me*; yet he had ſaid (*v.* 1.) *O Lord, thou haſt ſearched me and known me*; and (*v.* 2.) *Thou underſtandeſt my thoughts afar off. David* knew, that God knew him to a thought, and that he knew his thoughts not only when they were in being, but before they were, he knew his thoughts *afar off*, that is, before he had actually thought them. God doth not ſearch us to know what we are, he knows it without ſearch. But he is ſaid to ſearch what he knows, that he may make us know what we did not: So then, as *David* deſired God to ſearch him, and ſee whether there were any wicked way in him; ſo *Job* deſired God to weigh him, that he might ſee the good way that was in him, or that it might appear to his friends who judged him an hypocrite, that he was upright; *Let God weigh me, or let me be weighed in an even ballance, that God may know*

Quædam tunc fieri dicuntur cum facta eſſe manifeſtantur.

Sciat deus, *perinde eſt ac ſcire faciat, optavit nempe judicium quod univerſis hominibus innoteſceret.* Pined.

Dicit, ſciat Deus, *non quaſi de novo cognoſciturus, ſed quaſi alios de novo ſcire facturus.* Aquin.

Mine integrity.] The word which we tranſlate *integrity,* may be underſtood two ways.

Firſt, Generally, and ſo it is that grace which runs through and graces all our duties; Integrity is a general vertue, or the vertue of all our vertues; Integrity adorns and crowns all; There is an integrity in every thing that is truly good, and the more any man excels in goodneſs, the fuller he is of integrity. The word, as hath been ſhewed heretofore, properly ſignifieth perfection or ſimplicity; honeſt ſimplicity, not ignorant ſimplicity. The Scripture calls it alſo *ſingleneſs of heart,* in oppoſition to that double mindedneſs or complexedneſs which is in hypocrites whoſe hearts are not ſingle, but plighted and folded to wrap up and hide the badneſs and baſeneſs of their purpoſes. *Job* was as famous for this Grace of integrity before his tryal, as he was in and after it for the grace of patience. Therefore the Lord ſaid to Satan (*Chap.* 2. 3.) *Haſt thou conſidered my ſervant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, and ſtill he holdeth faſt his integrity? Job* held his integrity, that is, his ſincerity, though he could hold nothing elſe, and the Devil had made many violent aſſaults to pull that from him too.

Secondly, *Integrity* may be taken ſtrictly, as oppoſed to deceit or vanity, in the former verſe; ſo it notes the righteouſneſs of a man's way and practice, when he deals ſquarely and fairly with all men that he hath to do with: And thus 'tis the ſame with honeſty and faithfulneſs. He that performeth his promiſe according to ingagement, and diſchargeth his truſt according to agreement is a man of integrity: As he that doth good to many is a man of charity, ſo he that doth right to all is a man of integrity. 'Tis integrity in this latter notion which *Job* ſeems here to put to the teſt and tryal of God; For as in the former verſe he had proteſted, that *his foot had not haſted to deceit,* ſo in the verſe following he proteſteth, that *no blot had cleaved to his hands.* In both he obviates or taketh off that ſuſpition of unrighteous dealing in any way of commerce or converſe with men as a man, or of unrighteous diſtributions unto men as a Magiſtrate or a man of Authority. As to both which duties his friends had often charged him not only with failings, but wilful prevaricatings. And therefore *Job* being burdened with theſe ugly accuſations for perverting the ballances of Juſtice, had reaſon enough for his own vindication, to beg this juſt favour in the Text, *Let me be weighed in an even ballance, that God may know* (that is, make known) *mine Integrity.*

Hence Note, *Though a godly man hath the root of all ſin in him, and much ſin hath been done by him, yet he hath always an integrity of heart and hand, both towards God and towards man abiding with him.*

A godly man ſins, and he ſins not, He ſins in many things, but he doth not give himſelf a liberty to ſin in any thing, and that's his integrity. When God came to weigh *Job*, doubtleſs there was ſomething in him beſides integrity, doubtleſs there was, yet ſaith he, *Let God know mine integrity.*

Obſerve, Secondly, *Though a Godly man knoweth he hath much ſin in him, yet he is confident when God weigheth him he will not take notice of them, but only of his integrity.*

He is confident God will not mention iniquity where he finds ſincerity, and that the failings which he hath bewailed, ſhall not be remembred. The Lord ſpeaks of *David* as if he had never ſinned ſave only but once; ſo we read in the reign of wicked *Abijam* King of *Judah* (1 Kings 15.3.) *who walked in all the ſins of his father* (*Rehoboam*) *which he had done before him. And his heart was not perfect with the Lord as the heart of David his father; Nevertheleſs for Davids ſake did the Lord God give him a lamp in Jeruſalem, to ſet up his ſon after him, and to eſtabliſh Jeruſalem; Becauſe David did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, and turned not aſide from any thing that he commanded him all the days of his life, ſave only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite.* The Scripture reports divers failings of *David*, and queſtionleſs he had many that are not reported. Yet God would take notice but of one, knowing his integrity. The righteouſneſs or attonement of Chriſt only takes off the guilt of ſin from us; but our own uprightneſs or integrity, may take away the reproach of ſin from us.

Again, When *Job* ſaith, *Let me be weighed*, &c. *that God may know mine integrity.* He intimates thus much to us, That nothing is ſo pleaſing to him that is upright as to know that God knoweth he is. As it is a ſmall matter with thoſe who are ſincere to be condemned by men, ſo it is not much with them to be commended or approved by them; for indeed neither *he that commendeth himſelf*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, (2 *Cor.* 10. 18.) nor he that is commended by others, *is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth.* The Teſtimony or Letters commendatory of all the men in the world will do us no good, unleſs God give us his alſo. Therefore ſaith *Job*, I would be weighed that God may know, or approve, or give teſtimony to my integrity. The knowledg of God is frequently put in Scripture for his Approbation; And that interpretation of it here makes the ſence of the text very clear.

I ſhall paſs from theſe words when I have only named the tranſlation of the Septuagint, who render this verſe, not as *Job*'s deſire to be weighed in an even ballance, but as an Aſſertion concerning himſelf; *I have ſtood in an even Ballance (or kept an even poiſe in all my actions) And the Lord knoweth my integrity or innocency.* As if he had ſaid, I have laboured to keep the golden mean of Juſtice towards all men in all things; and the Lord who knows all things, knows I have, or I have not ſuffered my ſelf to be ſwayed or over-ballanced by any partial or ſelf-reſpects to violate Juſtice in any matter, and the Lord, who knows all things, knows I have not. This rendring carries a fair ſence as to *Job*'s ſcope, but it doth not carry ſo even a ballance, nor ſo rightly weigh the conſtruction of the Original text as the former, and therefore, I ſhall ſay no more of it.

*Ἕστημαι γὰρ ἐν ζυγῷ δικαίῳ, οἶδε δὲ ὁ κύριος τὴν ἀκακίαν μου. *Steti enim in ſtatera juſta, novit autem dominus innocentiam meam.* Sept.

VERS. 7, 8.

If my ſtep hath turned out of the way, and mine heart walked after mine eyes, and if any blot hath cleaved to my hands:

Then let me ſow, and let another eat, yea let my off-ſpring be rooted out.

JOB from the fifth to the ninth verſe of this Chapter, proceeds in purging himſelf by ſacred Imprecations, from the ſuſpition of injuſtice towards men. At the fifth verſe he ſaid, *If I have walked with vanity; or if my foot hath haſted to deceit;* here

Verſ. 7. He ſaith, **If my ſtep hath turned out of the way, and mine heart followed after mine eyes.**

So that in this verſe he heightens what he had ſaid before in aſſerting the integrity of his heart, and the righteouſneſs of his ways.

If my ſtep have turned out of the way.] There is an inward ſtep, and that is deſire, or the motion of the heart; and there is an outward ſtep, and that is endeavour, or the motion of the body to any buſineſs. *Job* doth not ſpeak in the plural number, *If my ſteps*, but in the ſingular, *If my ſtep hath turned out of the way*; Thereby intimating that he had looked to every ſtep, and that he did not give way to any one wandring thought for the advancement of his own profit by his neighbours loſs or damage; not that *Job* walked ſo exactly, or that any man can, as not to make a falſe ſtep, or never to ſwerve or decline from the right way (for there is no perfection of life in this life) but, when *Job* ſaith, *my ſtep hath not turned out of the way*, we are to underſtand this proteſtation;

Toties greſſus de via declinat quoties noſtra cogitatio iter rectitudinis per conſenſum relinquit errore. Greg.

Firſt, Of his aim and purpoſe, it was both his purpoſe and endeavour to keep every ſtep even, to walk with a right foot, or as *Solomon* adviſeth (*Prov.* 4. 26, 27.) *To ponder the path of his feet, to order all his ways aright; not to turn to the right hand, nor to the left, but to remove his foot from evil.* And therefore,

Secondly, If at any time he did ſtep aſide, and fail in any thing, yet he did it not willingly, nor deliberately, nor delightingly, but was miſtaken or miſled through inadvertency or infirmity. This is the ſum of what *Job* affirms, when he ſaith, that, *his ſtep had not turned*

Out of the way.] Some tranſlate with an emphaſis, *Out of that way*; indeed there is but one right way, but one way wherein God would have us to walk, all ways beſides that are crooked ways, by-ways, and while we walk in them, we do but wander out of the way. *If my ſtep hath turned out of that way*; yet this way may be taken two ways.

Firſt, For the way of Righteouſneſs and truth in general.

Secondly, For that ſpecial way of truth and righteouſneſs which conſiſts in the preſerving of each man's inheritance intire to himſelf. And this is conceived by ſome Interpreters to be *Job*'s purpoſe here; as if he had ſaid, *I have not gone beyond thoſe bounds which ſever and diſtinguiſh my poſſeſſions, or lands, from the lands of other men; I have not invaded their eſtates, either violently or cunningly.* There are three ways of wronging our Neighbours in their Eſtates.

Firſt, By removing Land-marks.

Secondly, By a forcible entry upon and caſting them out of their poſſeſſions.

Thirdly, By putting Cattle into their grounds to eat up the fruits of it.

Some inſiſt much upon this interpretation, becauſe of the ſutableneſs of it, with the letter of that ſevere and ſolemn imprecation, which immediately followeth at the 8. verſe; *Then let me ſow, and let another eat, yea let my off-ſpring be rooted out*; As if he had ſaid, *If I have taken other mens eſtates, then let other men take mine*; but I conceive we need not take the word *way* ſo narrowly, but for the way of holineſs and righteouſneſs at large, which yet is a narrow way. *If my ſtep hath turned out of the way.*

Hence note, Firſt, *God hath given man a way to walk in.*

We are not left at large to do what, or to go where we will. Our way muſt be God's way, *Bleſſed is the man that walketh not in the counſel of the ungodly, nor ſtandeth in the way of ſinners* (*Pſal.* 1. 1.) There is a way of ſinners, and a way of Saints. There is God's way and the Devil's way: God hath ſhewed his people their way; and Satan endeavours to put them out of the way; *Bleſſed are the undefiled in the way*, ſaith *David* (Pſal. 119.1.) What that is he tells us in the latter part of the verſe; *Who walks in the law of the Lord*; and he tells us ſo again (*v.* 32.) *I will run the way of thy Commandments, when thou ſhalt enlarge my heart.* The Prophet calls it a High way (*Iſa.* 35 8.)

A high way ſhall be there, and a way, and it ſhall be called the way of holineſs; the unclean ſhall not paſs over it, but it ſhall be for thoſe, the wayfaring man, though a fool, ſhall not err therein. The King of Heavens high way, is the way of holineſs; And that is,

Firſt, The beſt way. The Apoſtle exhorts (1 *Cor.* 12. 31.) *To covet earneſtly the beſt gifts, and yet* (ſaith he) *ſhew I you a more excellent way.* That comparative is a ſuperlative, The moſt excellent way; that is, the way of grace, the way of faith, hope, and charity, the exerciſe of which three graces contains the perfect way of Holineſs.

Secondly, 'Tis the ſhorteſt way; The way of ſin is about. We make our ſelves work by doing ill work, and lengthen our way, by going ill ways. How far ſoever we go in wrong ways, we muſt come back every ſtep of it by repentance, before we can begin to go right, or take one ſtep in a right way.

Thirdly, This way is the ſafeſt way; they that keep the way of Commandments are kept by promiſes, yea the promiſes hold a banner of protection over them; while we travel in God's way. God appoints us a guard, a convoy of Angels (*Pſal.* 91. 11.) *He ſhall give his Angels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy ways* (that is, while thou keepeſt in thoſe ways which he hath given thee to walk in there) *they ſhall bear thee up in their hands, leſt thou daſh thy foot againſt a ſtone*; that is, leſt thou take any hurt, or fall into any danger. How ſafely are they kept who are thus kept, and thus are all they kept who walk in the way of holineſs. No Prince in the world, who is not a Saint, hath ſuch a *Guard* at home, ſuch a *Life-guard* when he goes abroad, as the meaneſt Saint hath.

Fourthly, The way of holineſs is the moſt pleaſant way; *Her ways* (that is, the ways of wiſdom ſaith *Solomon*, Prov. 3. 17.) *are ways of pleaſantneſs, and all her paths are peace*; that is, they yield us much ſweet peace and ſoul-pleaſure in the very act of walking in them, and they will yield us much more in the iſſue or end of them, though in ſome ſence they are endleſs. By-ways, and wrong ways, may pleaſe a while, yet always at laſt, and often at preſent they are troubleſom and toylſom ways, they are bitterneſs in the end. *Thou art wearied in the greatneſs of thy ways*, ſaith the Prophet (*Iſa.* 57. 10.) Worldly men are often wearied in their way, and they will be weary of their ways, when once they ſee either what indeed they are, or whither they lead them. A good man may be wearied in his way, but he ſhall never be weary of it, both becauſe he knows his way is good, and the end of it is better. His way is good, and his way is pleaſant, and therefore chiefly pleaſant to him becauſe tis good.

Fifthly, This way, the way of righteouſneſs and holineſs is a clean way; The ways of ſin are dirty ways, he that walks in them doth at once defile and deſtroy himſelf. Saints are therefore *undefiled in the way* (Pſal. 119. 1.) becauſe the way wherein they walk is undefiled. And as they are clean ways, ſo they are cleanſing ways too, and the farther or longer we walk in them, the cleaner ſhall we be,

Secondly, Obſerve, *Sin is a turning out of the way.*

David confeſſed his ſins under the Metaphor of *wandrings* (Pſal. 119. 176.) *I have gone aſtray like a ſheep that is loſt.* A good man goeth ſometimes out of his way, but all the goings of a carnal man are out of the way, he is always wandering, for he is always ſinning; what is ſinning, but wandering? and what is wandering, but going out of the way? *A Godly man is careful not to go out of the way*; he prayeth earneſtly (as *David* did, *Pſal.* 119. 10.) *O let me not wander from thy commandments.* But a carnal man is willing to go out of the way, and by his good will (indeed his bad will) he would always go out of the way; and therefore the Prophet ſaith of ſuch (*Jer.* 14. 10.) *Thus have they loved to wander, they have not refrained their feet.* No man loves to go out of the way to his earthly home, but how few of thoſe who pretend a love to Heaven as their home, love the way to it? He that goes a journey is careful of his way, he would take and keep, the beſt, the ſhorteſt, the eaſieſt, the ſafeſt way. If he knows it not, he will enquire of every man he meets, whether he muſt turn to the right hand or to the left. And if any man (of whom he enquires and asks the way) ſets him in a wrong way, is he not angry? And if he himſelf miſs or miſtake his way, doth he not grieve? doth not every ſtep tire him? hath he not as it were a clog upon his heels, when he is uncertain, whether he is in his way, or out of it? Now ſeeing men are ſo careful not to miſs their outward way, that they may get well to their journeys end; is it not to be lamented, that they are even willing, yea deſirous to go out of their ſpiritual way? moſt are not only negligent of their way, never enquiring about it, as the Lord by his Prophet commands us to do (*Jer.* 6. 16.) *Stand ye in the ways and ſee* (that is, ſtay a while and conſider your way before ye venture to go in it; for ſo it follows) *and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye ſhall find reſt for your ſouls*; (now I ſay moſt are not only negligent of their way) But when they are ſhewed the right way, they are obſtinate and wilfully reſolve againſt it, as the Prophet tells us thoſe Jews were in the cloſe of the ſame verſe, *But they ſaid, we will not walk therein. Job* was afraid that any one ſtep of his ſhould turn out of the way, whereas the moſt of men utterly refuſe to turn or ſtep into it.

Thirdly, Obſerve, *Every moral act or work of man, is a ſtep, either in the way, or out of the way, which God hath given us to walk in.*

All the while we are thinking, ſpeaking, or doing, we are moving in a good way or in a bad one. Though there are ſome things indifferent in their nature, that is, they may be done, or they may be left undone without ſin; yet there is nothing indifferent when it is done by us. Whatſoever we do, we do either well or ill in doing it; if we hit not the right way, our ſtep turns out of the way, and then we are in a wrong way; There is no way lyes between theſe two.

Fourthly, Obſerve, *Falſe ways, or wrong ways, are indeed no ways.*

Job ſpeaks as if there were but one way; *If my ſtep hath turned out of the way.* The way of holineſs and righteouſneſs is not only better than other ways, the ways of ſin and error, but 'tis the only way. They who turn out of that way are in a wilderneſs not in a way; in a Maze not in a way.

Fifthly, Obſerve, *He that is Godly and ſincere, would not turn one ſtep out of the way of God.*

He would not only be in the way of holineſs; but he would only be in the way of holineſs; He as the Apoſtle exhorts (*Eph.* 5. 15.) *walks circumſpectly*, he looks to every ſtep, that he may keep his foot from evil. He had rather fall ſeven times a day into affliction, than ſtumble once into tranſgreſſion. *If my ſtep hath turned out of the way,*

And my heart hath walked after mine eyes.

The **heart** is put here, as elſewhere often in Scripture for the whole inward man, yet eſpecially for the will, deſires and affections. The heart may be ſaid to follow or walk after the eyes, when from a principle of innate or natural corruption and vitioſity, we deſire and embrace (without diſpute) whatſoever is pleaſing to or flattereth our eyes) or when we indulge thoſe luſts which are kindled at our eyes.

Job profeſſed at the firſt verſe of this Chapter, that he had made a covenant with his eyes, as to wanton looks after women; and here he profeſſeth that he had not only kept that covenant, but enlarged it as to all other objects: ſo that though his eyes ſaw ſinful allurements, yet he did not ſuffer them to have acceſs to his heart, nor ſuffer his heart to run after them. The Prophet diſcovering the ſinfulneſs of the *Jews* ſaith, *Their heart walketh after the heart of their deteſtable things*; that is, they heartily follow the way and worſhip of Idols. As the heart of a godly man is after the heart of God; So the heart of Idolaters is after the heart, that is, the worſt of their Idols, they love them quite thorough, or thoroughly. The heart hath its way; ſin lyes cloſe there, and it moves from thence (*Iſa.* 57. 17, 18.) *For the iniquity of his covetouſneſs, was I wroth and ſmote him, I hid me and was wroth, and he went on frowardly in the way of his heart*; And as the heart hath a way, ſo 'tis uſually led into that way by the eyes.

Sequi dicitur animus oculos cum pro innata vitioſitate expetit quicquid oculis placet. Mer. *Si indulſi cupiditatibus meis per oculos accenſis.* Piſc.

If mine heart hath walked after mine eyes, ſaith *Job*.

His ſuppoſition may be reſolved into theſe negations; *I* *have not acted according to ſence, but according to rule, or I have not acted according to ſence, but according to reaſon, yea according to faith.* The heart (as was toucht before) followeth the eyes; firſt, when we chooſe thoſe things which have a fair though a periſhing appearance; when we do what is before us, whether it be right or wrong, juſt or unjuſt. Laſtly, the heart walks after the eyes, when we would get all we ſee, and have as much in our hands, as we have in our eyes; we ſay, *'tis better filling a mans belly, than his eye*, yet that which filleth a mans eye, cannot fill his heart, how long ſoever his heart walketh after his eyes. And therefore *Job* did wiſely as well as holily, when if his eyes did wander and rove unduely at any time, or when he occaſionally and inevitably ſaw that which had matter of temptation in it, yet he did not ſuffer his heart to wander after it, much leſs to cloſe with it, and feed upon it. When his eye was enſnared and caught by any unlawful object, yet he ſtopt it at his heart, his ſoul oppoſed it. It is ſaid in Nature, that *an error in the firſt concoction is ſeldom helped by the ſecond*; and an error in the eye is ſeldom rectified at the heart; but *Job* did it, though his eye were extravagant, yet he kept his heart at home. *If my heart hath walked after mine eyes.*

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *The eye doth often miſlead the heart.*

The eye uſually falls a luſting upon any delightful object; we ſeldom ſee any creature of God that is beautiful, and fair, but we draw it to an occaſion of ſinning againſt God, and ſo defile the beauty of our own ſouls. Our beholding that which is good in it ſelf, endangers us to evil; If we are not very careful to watch over and keep our hearts, our eyes will ſeduce and maſter them. The looks and caſts of the eye ſtrike fire upon the heart, and that like tinder is quickly ſet on fire. The eye is no ſooner affected, but the heart is enflamed, and then preſently ſin is perfected, unleſs grace prevent. There are three ſteps or degrees of ſin; Firſt, by ſence, when that is pleaſed; Secondly, by deſire, when that is moved; Thirdly, by the will, when that is fully reſolved and determined upon any ſin. If once ſence ſtir up deſire, it is more then probable that deſire will overcome the will, and fix it upon the attainment and enjoyment of the moſt ſinful object. The eye is an importunate ſuiter to the heart, And 'tis a great part of our ſpiritual wiſdom, to know when we ought to give way to, and when to deny that which the eye ſues for.

There are four ſpecial ſins, to which the eye doth miſlead the heart.

Oculus & cor duo ſunt proxenetæ peccati. Perſonam in Judicio reſpicere hoc loco poſt oculos ambulare dicitur. Brent.

De avaritia ſermo eſt. Sanct.

Firſt, To wantonneſs, of which *Job* ſpake in the firſt verſe.

Secondly, To injuſtice; when the Judge looks upon the man more then upon the cauſe, or upon the gift more then upon right, Juſtice is ſoon perverted and turned aſide. And therfore Juſtice is commonly pictured, hood-winkt or blind; implying, that where the perſon is looked upon, the cauſe ſeldom is. And this ſome will have ſpecially intended here.

Thirdly, The eye miſleads the heart to covetouſneſs and covetous practices. Thus *Achan* confeſſed (*Joſh.* 7.21.) *When I ſaw among the ſpoyls a goodly Babyloniſh garment, and two hundred ſhekels of ſilver, and a wedg of gold of fifty ſhekels weight, then I coveted them and took them, and behold they are hid in the earth in the midſt of my tent, and the ſilver under it.* Here we have ſins progreſs, *Achans* eye provoked him to covet, his covetouſneſs, provoked him firſt to take, and ſecondly, to uſe the beſt means he could to keep thoſe forbidden ſpoils. The Apoſtle *John* (1 Ep. 2. 16.) diſtinguiſheth all that is in the world into three luſts, *The luſt of the fleſh* (that is, wantonneſs or uncleanneſs) *the luſt of the eyes* (that is, Covetouſneſs) *the pride of life* (that is, Ambition and deſire of honour) Covetouſneſs is juſtly called the luſt of the eyes, both becauſe the ſight of the eye blows up covetous deſires, as alſo becauſe as *Solomon* ſaith (Eccl. 5. 11.) *When goods increaſe, they are increaſed that eat them, and what good is there to the owners thereof, ſaving the beholding of them with their eyes?* And if ſo, is not Covetouſneſs purely the luſt of the eyes? This (I conceive) was the particular ſin for the accompliſhment whereof *Job* here proteſts, that his heart had not walked after his eye. His ſoul did not hunger nor haſten after the enjoyment of that worldly wealth which was daily preſented to or within the proſpect of his eye.

Fourthly, The eye enſnares the heart to Idolatry; To prevent which the Lord gave that Law to the *Iſraelites* about making fringes in the border of their garment (*Numb.* 15. 38, 39.) *And it ſhall be unto you for a fringe, that ye may look upon it, and remember all the Commandments of the Lord and do them, and that ye ſeek not after your own hearts, and your own eyes, after which ye uſe to go a whoring.* God prepared an object upon which they ſhould fix, and buſie their eyes, he would have them make a fringe upon which ſome memorials of the Law were written (theſe the proud Phariſees did enlarge, *Matth.* 23. 5, 6.) that ſo their eyes might be taken up in beholding the will of God, and not ſeek after their own hearts, and eyes, after which they uſed to go a whoring (forgetting their vow of loyalty to God) as ſoon as they ſaw any vain thing, an Idol eſpecially; as the Lord complaineth of them by his Prophet (*Ezek.* 6. 9.) *And they that eſcape of you ſhall remember me among the Nations, whither they ſhall be carried Captives, becauſe I am broken with their whoriſh heart, which hath departed from me, and with their eyes, which go a whoring after their Idols; and they ſhall loath themſelves for the evils which they have committed in all their abominations.* Their eyes are ſaid to go a whoring, becauſe their eyes carried their hearts off from the true God (who had eſpouſed them as his peculiar people) to joyn themſelves with Idols, which was ſpiritual whoredom and fornication. The ſame Prophet gives the reaſon of the Lords anger againſt that people in the ſame terms. (*Ezek.* 20. 23, 24, 25.) *I lifted up mine hand unto them alſo in the wilderneſs, that I would ſcatter them among the heathen, and diſperſe them through the Countries: becauſe they had not executed my Judgments, but had deſpiſed my ſtatutes, and had polluted my Sabbaths, and their eyes were after their fathers Idols. Wherefore I gave them alſo ſtatutes that were not good, and judgments whereby they ſhould not live.* Thus their whoring eyes (which were a provocation to the eyes of his glory) were puniſhed by God in a wonderful manner, even *with ſtatutes which were not good.* Not that God did give them any bad Law either moral or ceremonial; For all the Laws of God are holy and juſt and good; yea they are ſuch, that if they were perfectly kept, men might live in them. So that theſe ſtatutes which were not good, were not of things to be done, but of things to be ſuffered, even all thoſe ſore puniſhments which the Lord as by a ſtatute from heaven inflicted upon that people in the wilderneſs. Or the Lord may be ſaid to have given them ſtatutes, which were not good, when he gave them up to their own luſts, or to follow the evil ſtatutes and inventions of other men, as a puniſhment of their Idolatrous eyes.

When *David* prayed (*Pſal.* 119. 37.) *Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity*; he ſhews how apt the eyes are to lead the heart to all theſe vanities. That profeſſion which *Solomon* makes (*Eccl.* 2. 10.) is a very ſtrange one; *Whatſoever mine eyes deſired, I kept not from them, I withheld not my heart from any joy*; that is, I gave mine eyes full ſcope to go whither they would to gather up delights; I turned them looſe to the whole heard of the creature, and to pitch upon what game they pleaſed to pleaſe themſelves. The eye is a craving ſence, and will ask enough if it may have for the asking. *Solomon* was thus bountiful to the ſuits of his eye, whatſoever that deſired he kept not from it: and to ſhew how cloſe his heart followed his eye in this purſuit, he adds, *I withheld not my heart from any joy.* He was as free to his heart as he was to his eye, letting that take in all the contentments which his ſence could meet with or preſent unto him. *Solomon*'s practice ſeems directly oppoſite to this of *Job*; He was careful that his heart ſhould not walk after his eyes, but *Solomon* let his heart walk whitherſoever his eyes carried it. He let both his eyes and his heart go without a keeper, he did not withhold his heart from any thing which delighted his eye. *Solomon* doth not in this ſet us an example what we ſhould do, but by his example tells us that they who do ſo, ſhall find no better than he confeſſeth himſelf had done, when his heart had hunted after his eyes through all creatures for creature-contentments (*v.* 11.) *Behold all was vanity and vexation of ſpirit, and there was no profit under the Sun.* And therefore while he ſeems to give the young man liberty to do ſo, he checks him in it (*Eccl.* 11. 9.) *Rejoyce O young man in thy youth, and let thine heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the ſight of thine eyes, but know thou, that for all theſe things God will bring thee into Judgment*; As if he had ſaid, let thine heart follow after thine eyes, and ſee what thou ſhalt get by it in the day of Judgment.

But it may be objected, that uncleanneſs, covetouſneſs, and all ſenſual luſts, are firſt in the heart. Chriſt is expreſs in the Goſpel (*Math.* 15. 19.) *Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, falſe witneſs, blaſphemies.* The heart is that unclean fountain out of which theſe filthy ſtreams iſſue continually.. Were the heart pure, the eye would be ſo too. The eye cannot ſin alone, nor hath it any undue motion, but as provoked by the heart, how then ſaith *Job, that his heart did not walk after his eyes?* Whereas rather the heart doth miſlead the eye, and the eye when it offends doth but walk after the heart.

I anſwer, Both the eye and the heart, the outward and the inward man, the ſences and the affections have their ſhare and act their ſeveral parts in ſin. To clear this we muſt remember, that ſin of any kind may be conſidered; firſt, in its root and original; ſecondly, in its motions and occaſions. Sin is originally in the heart, it dwells there, it is rooted there, as the Apoſtle ſhews in the 7*th* chapter of his Epiſtle to the *Romans* v. 17*th.* but conſider ſin in its motions and occaſions, conſider what brings it forth, and draws it out; then we may ſay, ſin is in and from the eye, becauſe the eye allures the heart, and occaſions it unto ſin. What the eye ſees, ſtirs the heart to ſin. The ſeed of all ſin is (I grant) in the heart, but there it lyes and moves not ordinarily till the ſight of the eye, or the hearing of the ear, draweth it out. This object ſtirs up wantonneſs, and that covetouſneſs, a third revenge and wrathfulneſs: ſo that though ſin be originally in the heart, yet occaſionally it is from the eye. Indeed if there were no corruption in the heart, the eye could not miſlead it; if the heart were not vain, what the eye ſees would not engage us after vanity. Chriſt was tempted by the eye, the Devil took him up and ſhewed him in one view all the glory of the world, but becauſe the Prince of this world found nothing in him, the ſight of all this world could do nothing upon him; his heart did not at all walk after his eyes to ſin, becauſe his heart was altogether clean from ſin. It is ſaid (*Gen.* 3. 6.) *When the woman ſaw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleaſant to the eyes, and a tree to be deſired to make one wiſe; ſhe took of the fruit thereof,* &c. Yet we are not to think, that the ſight of the eye in a ſtate of innocency could have infected the womans heart, had not ſome poyſon got into her heart before, had not the Serpent inſtilled a vicious deſire into her mind, had he not wrought ſome inordinate affection or affectation rather in the woman to mend her eſtate, the ſight of the tree had never overcome her. But we read how before that ſight of the tree overcame her, ſhe minced the matter, and abated the ſtrictneſs of that Divine Law which forbad the eating of the tree, with a peremptory penalty; *In the day that thou eateſt thereof in dying thou ſhalt die, or thou ſhalt ſurely die,* this (I ſay) ſhe abated with at leaſt an *implicit peradventure,* while ſhe ſaid to the Serpent (*Gen.* 3. 3.) *God hath ſaid, ye ſhall not eat of it leſt ye die.* Thus the Devil firſt enſnared the womans heart, elſe her heart had not followed her eye, nor given her leave to taſte that tree. So then ſin is originally in the heart, but occaſionally from the eye; if there were no ſin in the heart, there would be no hurt taken at the eye; but the heart being ſinful, every vain ſight of the eye endangers it to ſin, by awakning thoſe luſts which lie cloſe, and are as it were (till ſuch occaſions are offered) dormant there.

Secondly, When *Job* ſaith, *his heart did not walk after his eye;* he ſheweth what the natural courſe or walk of the heart is, even after the eye; that is, after vanity.

Hence Obſerve, *The natural mans heart walketh after his eyes, or he is led by ſence.*

In homine per corruptelam naturæ, omnia inverſa ſunt; quod ſequi debet ducit, quod ducere, ſequitur. Non [illegible] *in illo* [illegible] τὸ ἡ- [illegible] *per.* Cor.

As the ſervant ſhould follow the Maſter, not the Maſter the ſervant, ſo the heart ſhould not follow the eye, but the eye the heart. Corruption hath inverted this order; And therefore no ſooner doth a corrupt eye ſee any thing that is vain, but the heart is ſtirred up to luſt after it. There are many things in the world worthy to be ſeen, as the beauty and ſymmetry of the body of man, The luſtre of precious ſtones, the order and ornaments of the heavens, yet the heart ſhould not walk after any of them, nor be taken ſo with them, as to be taken off from God a moment. All our ſences ſhould be kept holy, clean, and God ward. As ſoon as we look upon any creature, the glory of God ſhould appear to us in it, and we ſhould be led by it to honour him, and be wholly enflamed with his love; the ſight of our eyes ſhould help us on in goodneſs. But where ſin bears rule (as it doth in all perſons unregenerate) ſence bears rule too, and often over-rules, yea captivates not only the will and affections, but the underſtanding and judgment, and then which way ſoever the eye walketh, the heart walketh alſo, and danceth after it. *Moſes* reporting the corruption of the old world, or the ſtate of thoſe degenerating times, ſaith, *When the ſons of God* (that is, ſuch as profeſſed and held out the worſhip of the true God) *ſaw the daughters of men that they were fair, they took them wives of all that they choſe;* they did not make their choice by their judgment and reaſon, but by their ſence: when they ſaw thoſe daughters of men beautiful and handſom they were ſatisfied, never enquiring (which ſhould be the firſt and greateſt enquiry about a wife) whether they were godly and gracious, or whether they had any thing in them that ſavour'd or looked like holineſs and goodneſs, which the Apoſtle *Peter* ſpeaking of and to women (1 *Ep.* 3, 4, 5.) calls, *The hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet ſpirit, which is in the ſight of God of great price; after which manner in old time the holy women alſo who truſted in God adorned themſelves;* As for theſe beauties and ornaments (I ſay) they looked not after them, when they choſe them wives. Thus their hearts walked without the leaſt controul after their eyes, nor did they look at any thing in a wife but what was viſible and bodily. The Apoſtle (2 *Cor.* 4. 18.) ſaith of believers, *We look not at the things that are ſeen;* that is, Things viſible are not the chief mark in our eye, they are not our aim and ſcope. We look further, and we look higher; or we may commodiouſly enough explain the Apoſtle by *Job*, *We look not at the things that are ſeen;* that is, while we ſee them, our hearts do not walk after them. Our hearts are at once fixed upon and moving after inviſibles; that is, we walk not by ſight, but by faith, which is the great ſpiritual difference among men; moſt walk by ſight, few by faith.

Thirdly, Obſerve, *Both the eye and the heart are diligently to be watched and looked unto.*

We muſt look to our eyes, leſt they inſnare our hearts, and we muſt look to our hearts, leſt they be inſnared by our eyes; but I ſhall not inſiſt upon this, having ſpoken to it before at the firſt verſe; and there ſhewed how diligent we ought to be in watching the eye, and in keeping the heart from walking or wandering vainly after it. *Job* having proteſted his integrity in this point, *If mine heart hath walked after mine eye,* makes yet a further proteſtation;

Cum ea quæ ſenſui jucunda ſunt in vita contempleris, vide ne capiaris iiſdem, nam in illis laqueus & eſca mortis latitat; Neq; enim nudum piſcator hamum in aqua dimittit. Ephrem Ser. de recta vivendi ratione.

And if any blot hath cleaved to my hands.

As the heart of a natural man is ready to walk after his eyes, ſo his hands are ready to work after his heart, or he is apt to do what his heart ſuggeſteth. Therefore *Job* to clear himſelf quite thorough, profeſſeth, that as his heart did not follow his eye, ſo his hand had not been defiled by his heart, that is, by any work which his heart had ſet him about: He doth none but good and clean work, who is able (as *Job* here did) to challenge all the world and ſay,

If any blot hath cleaved to my hands.

Some of the Hebrews render the Original word generally, as ſignifying *any thing: If any thing hath cleaved to my hands,* that is, any unlawful or unjuſt thing. We take it ſtrictly and expreſly for an evil thing; which whatſoever it is, is a blot.

If any blot (ſpot or taint) **hath cleaved to my hands.**] This carrieth the mind of the text more clearly, though both rendrings meet in the ſame interpretation. The blot here diſclaimed by *Job* is a ſin-blot, or any unrighteous act; As if he had ſaid, *If any unjuſt gain, the gain of oppreſſion hath cleaved to my hands, then let me be oppreſſed, let me ſow and another eat,* &c.

Quidam Hebræorum מאום *macula exponunt* מאומה *quicquam rerum ſcilicet alienarum per fraudem aut rapinam, eodem ſenſu ſed malo pro macula.* Merc.

'Tis ſaid of thoſe captive Jews, who purpoſed not to defile themſelves with the Kings meat, that *they were children in whom was no blemiſh, but well favoured and skilful in all wiſdom,* &c. (*Dan.* 1. 4.) As they had no bodily blemiſh upon them, ſo they were careful to keep themſelves from any ſoul-blemiſh or moral blot. This alſo was ſo much the care of holy *Job*, that he durſt ſtake or adventure all that he had or ever might have in the world, upon the clearing of his honour and integrity in that point.

If any blot hath cleaved (*or been glu'd*, as the word properly ſignifieth) **to my hands.**

We tranſlate it by *cleaving*, becauſe things glued cleave together. It notes alſo the neareſt union of affection. (*Gen.* 34. 3.) *And his ſoul clave unto Dinah the daughter of Jacob, and he loved the damſel, and ſpake kindly to the damſel.* As greateſt affliction is ſet forth by this word (*Pſal.* 44. 25.) *Our ſoul is bowed down to the duſt, our belly cleaveth unto the earth*; So alſo the greateſt affection, not only of man to man, but of God to man. (*Jer.* 13. 11.) *For as the girdle cleaveth to the loins of a man, ſo have I cauſed to cleave unto me the whole houſe of Iſrael, and the whole houſe of Judah ſaith the Lord, that they might be unto me for a people, and for a name, and for a praiſe, and for a glory; but they would not hear.* The Lord is therefore ſaid to cauſe that people to cleave to him as a girdle, becauſe of their nearneſs to him, and his love to them. God was deſirous they ſhould ſit cloſe to him, and he had a purpoſe to make them conſpicuous to the world, as a girdle is when it is claſped and ſo cleaveth to the loins of a man.

This notion of the word ſutes fully with the ſpecial ſin that *Job* proteſts againſt, gain by unjuſt dealing, for what is ſo gotten ſticks in the fingers and cleaveth as cloſe to the hand of an unrighteous man, as thoſe things which are faſt glued together.

The Septuagint render thus; *If I have touched gifts* (or bribes) *with my hands*; And ſo this blot may more particularly be expounded of bribe-taking, which as it perverts juſtice, ſo it blots and blemiſhes their reputation who uſe it. A Bribe received doth two things: Firſt, it blinds the eyes of the receiver, ſo that he cannot or rather will not ſee right from wrong. Secondly, it defiles and corrupts the hands, it puts a baſe blot upon them. Bribe-taking hands are blotted hands, not only becauſe to take bribes is a blot, but becauſe the taking of them makes many a blot, both in the mind of the taker, and in the matter or buſineſs which he undertaketh. Therefore the Prophet (*Iſa.* 33. 15.) gives this deſcription of a righteous man; *He deſpiſeth the gain of oppreſſion, he ſhackleth his hands from holding of bribes.* If any bribe fall into his hand, he ſhaketh it off as we do dirt, or as *Paul* did the Viper that hung upon his hand; yea as ſome interpret the Prophet, he ſhaketh his hand from taking hold of, or receiving any bribe. From the which righteous *Job* alſo vindicates himſelf, while he ſaith, *If any blot hath cleaved to my hands.*

Εἰ δὲ καὶ ταῖς χερσὶ μου ἡψάμην δώρων. Sept.

Hence obſerve, *Sin is a blot.*

There are three things in ſin.

Firſt, *The fault*; every man that ſinneth is faulty, for he doth what he ſhould not.

Secondly, *The guilt*; which is a binding over to puniſhment. Whoſoever ſinneth and commits a fault is obliged to anſwer it, and to be ſure he ſhall at the great Seſſions.

Thirdly, There is in every ſin a *ſpot a blemiſh*; ſin hath not only a fault, and a guilt, but a ſpot, the ſinner is diſhonoured by it and gets a reproach. There is a twofold ſin-blot; the godly man hath his blot, and the wicked man hath his blot. This diſtinction may be grounded upon that ſpeech of *Moſes* (Deut. 32. 5.) *They have corrupted themſelves, their ſpot* (or blot) *is not the ſpot of his Children, they are a perverſe and crooked generation*; that is, they ſin as if they were the children of this world, yea as if they were the Devil's children, they ſin as if they had never heard of God, they ſin as the Heathen; The children of God have their ſpot, but theirs was not the ſpot of his children.

Every ſin is a blot, and 'tis firſt an inward blot, a ſoul blot, that which blots the hand (in this ſence) blots the heart alſo. Sin is not a blemiſh upon the ſkin, nor a ſpot upon the face, nor is only a ſpot upon the name and reputation of a man, but 'tis a ſpot upon his ſpirit. And as ſin is an internal blot, ſo ſecondly, it is an eternal blot, an indelible blot, unleſs Chriſt fetch it out; nothing can cleanſe the ſoul from ſin-ſpots, but the blood of Jeſus Chriſt, who was the Lamb without ſpot.

Secondly, Take this blot more particularly, for unrighteouſneſs, or injuſtice in any kind. There are two ſorts of Juſtice, and each hath its blot, there is *Commutative Juſtice*, that's the Merchants Juſtice in dealing and trading with men, 'tis a blot to wrong any man in dealing. There is alſo *Diſtributive Juſtice*, that's the Magiſtrates Juſtice; 'Tis his blot not to give every man his own, in ruling over men. Theſe blots render both Merchants and Magiſtrates not only diſhoneſt and diſhonorable, but odious and abominable in the eyes of God and all good men. What ſo diſgraceful as to be a Deceiver? What ſo diſhonorable as to be a corrupter of Juſtice? Let all ſuch remember the Apoſtles ſerious exhortation (*James* 4. 8.) *Cleanſe your hands ye ſinners, and purifie your hearts ye double-minded.* Unjuſt gain is oppreſſion, and oppreſſion is blood; God will not endure that ſuch hands as have oppreſſed others, and ſo defiled themſelves, ſhould be lifted up to him; *I will*, ſaith the Apoſtle, that is, God by me declareth his will, *that men pray every where lifting up holy hands* (1 *Tim.* 2. 8.) And therefore, the Lord ſaid to *Iſrael* (Iſa. 1. 15.) *When ye ſpread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood*; That is, the guilt of blood cleaves to your hands. And ſo it doth, not only when we murder a man and take away his life, but when by oppreſſion or extortion we take away a man's goods, which are his livelihood. Thus blots of blood cleave to the hands of many, who think not of it, and ſo carry it ſilently (though it cryeth aloud for vengeance) to their grave.

Thirdly, Whereas *Job* ſaith, *If any blot hath cleaved to my hands.*

Obſerve, *That which is unjuſtly gotten and taken away, is not eaſily parted with, it cleaves to the hand.*

The Prophet ſaith of the obſtinate Jews (*Jer.* 8. 5.) *They hold faſt deceit*, which as it may be underſtood of their deceitful ways of getting, ſo it is as true of what is deceitfully gotten. O how faſt do men hold that, which they ought not to touch? *The unrighteous Mammon*, that is, the Mammon which they have gained by unrighteouſneſs (That's a true, though not the only ſence in which the Scripture calls worldly wealth, *The unrighteous Mammon*) We ſay of thieves, that *they have pitchy hands*, becauſe what they can lay hands on is their own, it cleaves to them as if their hands were pitcht. And as the groſs, ſo the cloſe thief hath pitchy hands too, both as to having and holding. He is as backward to let go his ſinful gettings, as he was forward to take them up; He is loth to reſtore. There are few inſtances of reſtitution. Who ſaith like *Zacheus* (Luke 19. 8.) *If I have taken any thing from any man by falſe accuſation, I reſtore him four-fold.* 'Tis beſt not to do any wrong, and 'tis the next beſt to repair thoſe whom we have wronged. And as 'tis good to reſtore becauſe it is juſt, ſo becauſe it is ſafe, and that not only in reference to the Soul which is in danger of being loſt for ever by ſuch gain; but alſo in reference to an intereſt in this world. The gain of unrighteouſneſs uſually cauſeth a rot in the eſtate, or kindles a fire in the houſe which conſumes all.

Fures picatas manus; quibus facile aliquid adhæret, habere dicuntur.

Fourthly, Note, *Though a godly man by temptation may get a blot upon his hand in medling with the world, yet he will not let it cleave to his hands.*

Poſſibly *Job* durſt not ſay, I never had any blot upon my hand, but he ſaith it confidently, that No blot cleaved to his hands. It is very probable that *David* found ſome blot upon his hand, when he profeſſed (*Pſal.* 26. 6.) *I will waſh my hands in innocency; ſo will I compaſs thine Altar. Zacheus* had gotten a blot upon his hand, but as ſoon as he believed, he would not let it ſtick there. As there is ſcarce any man having to do in this muddy dirty world, who doth not get ſome blot; ſo there is no godly man who ſeeing it, or being convinced of it, but is reſtleſs till he hath waſht his hands of it by the renewed acts of repentance and of faith. Sin-blots cannot cleave long to their hands, who have real union with Chriſt, and (as that good man *Barnabas* exhorted the Antiochians *Acts* 11. 23.) *with purpoſe of heart cleave unto the Lord.*

Thus it appears what a pattern of integrity *Job* holds out for our inſtruction and imitation; *His ſtep did not turn out of the way, his heart did not follow his eyes, nor did any blot* (of unjuſt gain) *cleave to his hands*, and that it was ſo with him, he upon the matter takes his oath by a vehement

Imprecation in the verſe following, *If my ſtep hath turned out of the way*, &c.

Verſ. 8. Then let me ſow, and let another eat, yea let my off-ſpring be rooted out.

The ſum of this verſe is, as if *Job* had ſaid, *If I have ſinfully gotten other mens goods, then let me not quietly or comfortably injoy my own.*

Let me ſow.] We may conſider ſowing;

Firſt, Properly what ſuch ſowing is all know, 'tis the Huſband-man's work to caſt the ſeed into the earth in hope of a Harveſt.

Secondly, If we conſider ſowing improperly or metaphorically, Then any kind of work or labour may be called ſowing. The Apoſtle ſpeaks ſo of all our works (*Gal.* 6. 7.) *Be not deceived, God is not mocked, for whatſoever a man ſoweth, that ſhall he alſo reap*; that is, whatſoever a mans work is, his reward or the iſſue will be like it. Our actions are as ſeed ſown in the ground, and our harveſt will be ſutable to our ſeed-time. We may expound ſowing in this Text, either properly or improperly; let me till my land and ſow it, or let me labour in any kind, and let others take the profit of it, *If any blot hath cleaved to my hands*; *Let me ſow*

And let another eat.] This act of eating may alſo be underſtood, firſt, ſtrictly for the receiving of food into the body, to nouriſh, ſtrengthen and comfort it. Secondly, eating may be taken in a large ſence for any kind of injoyment, *let another eat*, that is, let him receive the benefit, let him have the comfort of my labours.

צאצאים *Germina a* יצא *exiit.*

And let my off-ſpring be rooted out.] The word *off-ſpring* may alſo be taken two ways.

First, Properly according to the letter of the Hebrew; And ſo it ſignifies a plant, or the branch of a tree; As if *Job* had ſaid, let my Orchards and Plantations be rooted out. And then as in the former part of the verſe he imprecated wrath upon his labours in ſowing his land with corn, ſo in this latter he imprecates vengeance upon his labour in planting Groves, Orchards and Gardens. Let what I have ſown be eaten by others, and let what I have planted be rooted up. Let men ſpoil all my labour, let what I have done either for profit or for pleaſure, come to nought. Some inſiſt much upon this tranſlation and expoſition, becauſe it ſuits beſt (as they conceive) with the former part of the verſe.

Faxit mihi juſtus judex, ut extranei ſatis meis veſcantur, & quæcunq; mihi germinant radicitùs perdantur. Bez.

Secondly, The word is taken improperly and metaphorically in Scripture, for Children, who are as ſprouts and branches growing out of man, or as his tender olive plants round about his table (*Pſal.* 128. 3.) Thus we render, *Let my off-ſpring be rooted out.* And thus the ſence is heightned. As if *Job* had ſaid, *I am willing not only to loſe what I have ſown, or to have my Corn violently taken away, if I have wronged others; but I am willing, that my children or poſterity ſhould be utterly extirpated, who are more dear to me than all other things.* The word is uſed in this ſence (*Chap.* 21. 8.) *Their ſeed is eſtabliſhed in their ſight with them, and their off-ſpring before their eyes.* And again (*Chap.* 27. 14.) *If his Children be multiplied, it is for the ſword, and his off-ſpring ſhall not be ſatisfied with bread.*

Quamvis alias in hoc libro צאצאים *germina metaphoricè liberi intelligantur à parentibus exeuntes, hic malo in genuino ſenſu cum Hebræis ſumi, ut poſterior pars verſus priorem declaret, pro germinibus è terra exeuntibus,* Merc

Some object againſt this tranſlation, that it had been a vain thing for *Job* to imprecate upon himſelf the loſs of his children, becauſe at that time he had none, his ſons and daughters being all deſtroyed while they were feaſting, by the fall of a houſe (*Chap.* 1. 19.) ſo that his off-ſpring being rooted out before, how could he congruouſly wiſh that his off-ſpring ſhould be rooted out.

I anſwer, Firſt, *Job* might well enough uſe ſuch an imprecation upon ſuppoſition, that if ever he ſhould have children, if God ſhould reſtore him that bleſſing, he might wiſh them rooted out; that neither he nor his might ever proſper.

Again, Should we ſuppoſe that *Job* had no expectation of Children, and indeed he often gave up himſelf for a dead man, and even called for the grave: ſuppoſe, I ſay, he had no expectation of Children, yet it was not improper for him to ſay, *Let my off-ſpring be rooted out*; that is, if I had children, who are the beſt treaſure in the world, I would venture them upon the iſſue of this my profeſſion and proteſtation, *That no blot hath cleaved to my hand.* So that we need not narrow up the text to the former interpretation, becauſe *Job* had no Children; for as he might ſay, *Let others eat what I have ſown*, though he had not ſo much as an acre of Corn, he might ſay, *Let my off-ſpring be rooted out*, though at that time he had no off-ſpring upon the earth: his imprecation carrieth only this general ſence, that he would indeed undergo the utmoſt of penal evils, if he had done thoſe ſin-evils of which he was ſuſpected.

Talis optandi modus nihil niſi affectus requirit; potuitq; petere mala ſibi inferri, ſi ſtatus id ferret.

Laſtly, For the clearing of this verſe, it may be queſtioned whether it be lawful, or how far forth it is lawful to uſe Imprecations or to wiſh evil to our ſelves.

I anſwer, An Imprecation, being a kind of oath, if an oath be lawful, that is lawful too, but it is lawful to uſe an oath in a ſerious matter, and in a ſerious manner, for our vindication, and the ending of a Controverſie; and therefore upon theſe terms it is lawful to uſe Imprecations. *Job* had ſpoken often before, but he could not be believed, and therefore he was neceſſitated to make this Imprecation. As for the ſinfulneſs and danger of uſing Imprecations lightly, I ſhall not ſtay upon it here, having ſpoken to that point before upon thoſe words of *Job* (Chap. 16. 18.) *O earth cover not thou my blood, and let my cry have no place.*

Only from the matter of this Imprecation, *Let me ſow, and let another eat.*

Obſerve, *It is a ſore Judgment upon us, when others injoy the fruit of our labours, and not our ſelves, nor ours.*

This was threatned (*Lev.* 26. 16.) *Ye ſhall ſow your ſeed in vain, for your enemies ſhall eat it.* And again (*Deut.* 28. 38.) *Thou ſhalt carry much ſeed out into the field, and ſhalt gather but little in, for the Locuſt ſhall conſume it.* So (*Iſa.* 1. 7.) *Your land ſtrangers devour it in your preſence*; that is, they eat up or ſpoil the corn and other fruits which your land brings forth. The Prophet *Jeremy* puts this among the greateſt evils which the Jews lamented in their captivity (*Lam.* 5. 2.) *Our inheritance is turned to ſtrangers, our houſes to Aliens.* 'Tis a ſad affliction to build, and others to dwell in our houſes; to ſow, and others to eat the increaſe of our field. The Apoſtle puts thoſe queſtions (1 *Cor.* 9. 7.) *Who goeth a warfare at any time, at his own charges? Who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock?* This is a law of nature, and every mans common right, that where he ſows he ſhould reap, *&c.* Therefore to ſow and not to reap muſt needs be a vexatious ſuffering. As thoſe ſins are vileſt which are againſt the very light of Nature, ſo thoſe afflictions are moſt grievous which carry ſomewhat in them againſt the law of Nature, as for a man's own child to riſe up againſt him, or to ſee others eat what we have ſown. The Lord made a promiſe, yea took an oath to his people, That a time ſhould come when this evil ſhould befall them no more (*Iſa.* 62. 8.) *The Lord hath ſworn by his right hand, and by the Arm of his ſtrength, ſurely I will no more give thy Corn to be meat for thine enemies, and the ſons of the ſtranger ſhall not drink thy wine, for which thou haſt laboured; but they that have gathered it ſhall eat it, and praiſe the Lord.* And again the promiſe runs in the ſame terms (*Iſa.* 65. 21, 22.) concluding thus; *Mine elect ſhall long injoy the work of their hands.* A Heathen Poet bewails this; *O* (ſaith he) *to what a paſs hath diſcord brought us, have we ſown, and ſhall the wicked Souldier, ſhall the Barbarian come in, and take all? O ſee for whom have we ſown our fields!*

Impius hæc tam culta novalia miles habebit? Barbarus has ſegetes? en quo diſcordia cives Perduxit miſeros: en queis conſuevimus agros. Ovid.

Secondly, From the correſpondence of the ſin and puniſhment, *Let me ſow and let another eat*, if I have unjuſtly eaten the labours of others.

Obſerve, *God doth often puniſh ſin, in way of retaliation.*

He puniſheth ſin in ſuch a way, that you may read the ſin in the puniſhment: when they who have unjuſtly eaten what others ſowed, ſhall have that eaten up which themſelves have ſowed, is not this exact Juſtice! Thus the Lord threatned the cruel oppreſſors of his people, and their ſubtle circumventers, (*Iſa.* 33. 1.) *Woe to thee that ſpoyleſt, and thou waſt not ſpoiled, and dealeſt treacherouſly, and they dealt not treacherouſly with thee; when thou ſhalt ceaſe to ſpoil, thou ſhalt be ſpoiled, and when thou ſhalt make an end to deal treacherouſly, they ſhall deal treacherouſly with thee*; he doth not mean, that they would make an end of their treacherous dealing, by giving it over in a way of repentance, but

Juſtus eſt ut ſi quis bona aliena rapuit, bona ejus ab aliis rapiantur.

but in way of ſatiety; as if he had ſaid, when you have filled and glutted your ſelves with the ſpoils of others, till ye cannot get down a morſel more, then others ſhall feed and fill themſelves with your ſpoils, (*Hab.* 2, 8.) *Becauſe thou haſt ſpoiled many Nations, all the remnant of the people ſhall ſpoil thee, becauſe of mens blood, and for the violence of the Land, of the City, and of all that dwell therein.* How notable is that acclamation of the Angel of the waters (*Rev.* 16. 5,6.) *Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art and waſt, and ſhalt be, becauſe thou haſt judged thus: For they have ſhed the blood of Saints and Prophets, and thou haſt given them blood to drink, for they are worthy.* To this voice *John* heard another (ecchoing as it were) *out of the Altar, Even ſo Lord God Almighty, True and righteous are thy Judgments.* Yea we may ſay, that the Judgments of the Lord are not only true and righteous, but critical and curious, when they that have ſhed blood unjuſtly, ſee their own blood ſhed; when they are made drunk with their own blood, who have drunk the blood of others. This alſo is the Lord's ſentence againſt *Babylon* (Rev. 18. 6.) *Reward her even as ſhe rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works; in the Cup which ſhe hath filled, fill to her double.* The Cup that *Babylon* filled was a Cup of blood, and therefore ſaith God, *Babylon* ſhall have a double Cup of blood. She ſhall have the ſame in kind, and double in meaſure, or degree. *The puniſhment of many ſinners is as a glaſs wherein they may ſee the filthy face and deformed portraicture of their ſin.*

From the laſt words, *Let my off-ſpring be rooted out,*

Note, *The loſs of Children is the greateſt outward loſs.*

When *Job* would wiſh upon himſelf the worſt of outward evils, he goes off from wiſhing any further loſs of his goods, and wiſheth the loſs of his children. The ſevereſt threatning which the Lord commanded *Moſes* to denounce againſt *Pharaoh* if he ſhould refuſe to let *Iſrael* his ſon, *his Firſt-born* go to ſerve him, was this; *Behold I will ſlay thy ſon thy firſt-born* (Exod. 4. 23.) And though the other nine plagues were full of terror and aſtoniſhment, yet we do not read that either *Pharaoh* or the *Egyptians made a great cry* till this was executed (*Exod.* 12. 30.) And when bloody *Herod* commanded all the male children to be ſlain, *Then* (ſaith the Goſpel, *Mat.* 2. 17, 18.) *was fulfilled that which was ſpoken by Jeremy the Prophet, ſaying, In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation and weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, becauſe they are not.* Children are not only parts of our ſelves, but even our whole ſelves multiplyed, and therefore tender-hearted Parents feel as many deaths themſelves as they have children dye. How obſtinate is that ſorrow which reſolves againſt, the only means of its removal, comfort! Some who have loſt the ſolace of their children, have found no ſolace but in ſorrowing for them. And though this was inordinate ſorrow, or the over-acting of it; yet that which is ordinary and orderly (where there is a due working of Natural affection) for the loſs of Children is very great; yea it is ſo great, that the ſorrow for ſin, by which Chriſt is pierced, yea the ſorrow for that ſpecial ſin of piercing Chriſt, which 'tis prophecied the repenting *Jews* ſhall be affected and afflicted with at laſt (which ſurely will be as deep and as ſoaking a ſorrow as ever any was, that ſorrow I ſay) is but parallel'd by his mourning, who mourneth for his only Son, and by his bitterneſs, who is in bitterneſs for his firſt-born (*Zach.* 12. 10.) Then God layeth his axe to the root of a man's heart, when he lets him ſee his off-ſpring rooted out.

Some can part eaſily enough with their children, yea ſome are ready to think themſelves eaſed by parting with them, and are even willing their children ſhould die to ſave charges. How inhumane, how unnatural this is needs no other proof but the report of it. Children are the beſt goods, the beſt good things which God hath to give us, except his Grace and Himſelf. God will give (as he promiſed *Iſa.* 56. 4, 5.) *to the Eunuchs that keep his Sabbaths, and chuſe the things that pleaſe him, and take hold of his Covenant, a name and a place in his houſe, and within his walls, better than of ſons and daughters.* Yet it muſt be confeſſed that the name of ſons and daughters is the beſt outward treaſure in our houſe, and the moſt beautiful ornament of our walls. How naked are thoſe walls, how unfurniſht is that houſe, where the children are taken down and removed by death, eſpecially where (as *Job* ſpeaks) a man's off-ſpring are wholly rooted out?

VERS. 9, 10, 11, 12.

If mine heart hath been deceived by a woman, or if I have laid wait at my neighbours door:
Then let my wife grind unto another, and let others bow down upon her.
For this is an heinous crime, yea, it is an iniquity to be puniſhed by the Judges.
For it is a fire that conſumeth to deſtruction, and would root out all my increaſe.

JOB having acquitted himſelf, both by way of proteſtation, and imprecation; Firſt, from fornication and wantonneſs with young Women or Maidens, in the firſt, ſecond, third, and fourth verſes of this Chapter: Having alſo ſecondly, by a like proteſtation and imprecation, acquitted himſelf from all deceit and guile in his dealings with men, in the fifth, ſixth, ſeventh, and eighth verſes foregoing; he in this context proceeds to acquit himſelf in like manner, from that groſſer part of wantonneſs, and uncleanneſs, adultery, or the abuſe of his Neighbours wife; which he doth,

Firſt, By a ſtrong denial, that he was chargeable with any ſuch crime, *v.* 9. *If my heart hath been deceived by a woman, or if I have laid wait at my neighbours door*; As if he had ſaid, I know I have not done it, nor can any man upon his knowledg charge me with it.

Secondly, He doth it by imprecating the like meaſure upon himſelf, in caſe he were guilty of this crime, at the tenth verſe, *Then let my wife grind unto another*, &c.

Thirdly, He ſignifieth what he had in his eye, which kept him from this wickedneſs, and that may be conſidered two ways.

Firſt, The greatneſs, and the vileneſs of the ſin conſidered in its own nature, which he lays down at the beginning of the 11. verſe; *For this is a heinous crime*, this is no ordinary ſin; As if he had ſaid, Suppoſe this were a ſin of the leaſt dimenſion, yet I ought to avoid it, how much more ſeeing it is a notorious wickedneſs, *a heinous crime.*

Secondly, As he was kept from it, by conſidering the foulneſs and filthineſs of the ſin in its own nature, ſo likewiſe, by conſidering, the woful, and ſad conſequents and effects of it, or the bitter fruits which that ſin bringeth forth, and thoſe twofold.

Firſt, Puniſhment from man, at the latter end of the 11. verſe; *Yea it is an iniquity to be puniſhed by the Judges:* A man may commit many ſins, which the Judges have nothing to do with, there's no humane law againſt them; but this is ſuch a groſs and heinous crime, that the law takes Cognizance of it, and is therefore to be puniſhed by the Judges.

Secondly, This ſin is purſued with divine vengeance, if it eſcape the vengeance of man, or if earthly Judges neglect to puniſh it, yet God the Judg of all the earth will not; he will pay it home; *It is a fire that conſumeth to deſtruction, and would root out all mine increaſe.* As if he had ſaid, *The fire of this luſt in my heart will kindle a devouring fire in my houſe, and will not only lop off the boughs and branches, but utterly root up all that I have planted, how fairly ſoever it ſhould flouriſh and increaſe.*

Thus we have the parts and reſolution of theſe four verſes. The general ſcope and tendency of which is *Job*'s acquittal of himſelf from that worſer ſort of filthineſs and uncleanneſs; he thought it not enough to ſay, that neither his eye nor heart had vainly wandered after maids or virgins; but he alſo diſclaims that groſſer crime, *adultery.*

Verſ. 9. **If my heart hath been deceived by a woman,** &c.

In this verſe *Job* offers two things to prove his clearneſs from that ſin.

Firſt, That he had kept a faithful watch at all times upon his heart, leſt it ſhould go vainly out after, or be enticed by women.

Secondly, He had been careful to avoid (which is the cuſtom of unclean perſons to ſeek) all opportunities of running into that ſin. As he watcht his heart at all times, ſo he never watcht his time at his neighbours door, to injoy thoſe forbidden pleaſures.

If my heart hath been deceived by a woman.

What the heart is, hath been explained already upon ſeveral paſſages of this Book; here 'tis put for the will and affections, for the concupiſcible appetite or deſire of the ſoul. The heart of an Adulterer is a Brothel-houſe of filthy deſires. *Job* begins at the root, he openeth the very fountain of uncleanneſs. As the blood of Chriſt *is a fountain opened for ſin and for uncleanneſs* (Zech. 13. 1.) that is, for the waſhing away and purging out of ſin and uncleanneſs; ſo the heart of man is a fountain opened both for taking in, and letting out of ſin and of uncleanneſs, eſpecially the ſin of uncleanneſs. For though (as was ſhewed in the former context) the eye is a great occaſion of inflaming the heart with this luſt (the heart taking fire at the eye) yet even this luſtful eye, or the luſt of this eye cometh out of the heart (*Math.* 15. 19.) *Out of the heart proceed adulteries, fornications,* &c. There they have their beginning, that's the cage or neſt, which is full of theſe unclean birds, and from thence they take their flight; they proceed out of the heart, or as the Greek word properly ſignifies, They march like an Army out of the fort or ſtrong hold of the heart, upon ſome baſe expedition, to beſiege ſome neighbours houſe, and aſſault the chaſtity of his wife. Therefore, I ſay, *Job* is at the very fountain of this ſin, while he ſaith,

Ἐξέρχομαι *proprie ſignificat exire in expeditionem & pugnam contra hoſtes.* Novar.

If my heart hath been deceived, or allured.

The word which we tranſlate *Deceived*, ſignifies to ſeduce or deceive, either by flattery or by any kind of ſubtlety, and craft. The heart, yea the whole man is drawn out of the way of righteouſneſs, holineſs and chaſtity, by ſubtle pretences, and falſe perſwaſions. Further to clear the emphaſis of the text, we may take notice, that the words are paſſive, *If my heart hath been deceived by a woman:* he doth not ſay, *If my heart hath deceived or beguiled me*, in ſpeaking to a woman, but if my heart hath been deceived by a woman ſpeaking to me. Which implies that *Job* had not only not been deceived, or catcht at unawares, by ſome ſudden or unexpected meeting with or ſight of other mens wives; but that though he had been ſet upon, tempted and aſſaulted (as *Joſeph* was by his Maſter's wife) with many fair ſpeeches and cunning allurements to entertain ſuch a motion, yet he remained untainted, his heart was not deceived, nor enſnared, but manfully withſtood all thoſe feminine aſſaults, even when he was in the vigour and flower of his youth. To be victorious againſt ſuch attempts, is not every man's honour. One of the Ancients ſaith, That among all battels we moſt hardly overcome in thoſe which aſſault chaſtity; Conflicts with luſtful temptation are frequent, but the conqueſt of them few and rare. *Solomon* having ſhewed at large how the ſilly young man was captivated by a ſtrange woman, concludes with an awakning admonition (*Prov.* 7. 25, 26.) *Let not thine heart decline to her wayes, go not aſtray to her paths, for ſhe hath caſt down many wounded, yea many ſtrong men have been ſlain by her.* Her ways of deceit are many, and, one way or other, not a few have been overcome by her. To be a conqueror of a ſingle woman in this ſence, is a greater glory than to conquer an Army of men. Chaſt *Job* wore the crown of this gracious conqueſt; no whoriſh woman could ever take that Fort or Caſtle, that Citadel of his heart. *My heart* (ſaith he) *hath not been deceived*

פתה *Eſt ſeducere, decipere, blanditiis techniſque alicujus cor deflectere ad id quod eſt præter rationem veritatis & prudentiæ.* Bold.

Inter omnia certamina duriora ſūt prælia caſtitatis, ubi quotidiana eſt pugna & rara victoria. Auguſt. Ser. 250. de Temp.

By a woman.] The woman here intended is not a woman at large, but a harlot, and ſhe another man's wife; ſo the Septuagint expreſs it, *If my heart hath followed the wife of another. Job* ſpake of unmarried women, maids, or virgins, at the firſt verſe; *I made a covenant with my eyes, why then ſhould I think upon a maid?* and here *Job* made a covenant with his heart, that it ſhould not be deceived by a woman, or another man's wife.

Εἰ ἐξηκολούθησεν ἡ καρδία μου γυναικὶ ἑτέρου. *Si ſecutum eſt cor meum mulierem viri alterius.* Sept.

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *The heart, which is the great deceiver, is often ſet upon to be deceived.*

While *Job* ſaith his heart had not been deceived, he intimates that many a time it had been attempted by thoſe deceivers. Who hath not found, by ſad experience, the truth of that Teſtimony which the holy Prophet gives againſt the heart of man (*Jer.* 17. 9.) *The heart is deceitful above all things, and deſperately wicked, who can know it?* The heart of man is a miſchievous piece, even a piece of miſchief; 'Tis wily, fraudulent, full of impoſture, prone to ſupplant; 'Tis always plotting and contriving miſchief, to inſnare it ſelf, or ruine others; 'tis like a crooked way full of turnings and windings, a very labyrinth; There is nothing like it, no match for it in ſubtlety; 'tis deceitful above all things, and about all things; pretending one thing when it intends another: moſtly croſſing our promiſes both to God and man by ſecret purpoſes. *Who can know it?* No man can know another man's heart at all, no man can know all, no nor one half of his own heart; God only can. Now as the heart is the greateſt deceiver of others, ſo it is as greatly deceived; Our own hearts put fallacies and tricks upon us, and there are as many fallacies and tricks put upon the heart by the world, and by Sathan: 'Tis deceitful above all things, and 'tis deceived more than any thing. He is a wiſe and a holy man indeed, whoſe heart doth not deceive him. And he is no leſs, whoſe heart hath not been deceived. But where ſhall we find ſuch a man? who is there either ſo wiſe or ſo holy, whoſe heart hath not deceived him, or whoſe heart hath not been deceived? They are beſt who have been leaſt deceived, there are none ſo good as not to be deceived at all; There are not many who can ſay (as *Job* here did) their hearts have not been deceived by a woman.

Hence obſerve, Secondly, *Women have often proved men-Deceivers. The woman was firſt made for man's good; ſhe was made for a meet helper* (Gen. 2. 18.) *yet through the corruption of man, ſhe becomes his ſnare, a meer deceiver.*

All that God made was good, and it was all made good for man. But man turning to evil from good, hath turned all his own good to evil. What good thing is there which one time or other one way or other hath not been evil to man? That was a dreadful denunciation againſt the *Jews*, whom the Spirit of prophecy fore-ſaw crucifying Chriſt, giving him gall for meat, and in his thirſt giving him vinegar to drink (*Pſal.* 69. 22.) *Let their Table become a ſnare before them, and that which ſhould have been for their welfare, let it become a trap.* Now as this was a ſpecial curſe upon that people for that ſpecial ſin; ſo ſin in general hath ſubjected all men to ſome droppings of this curſe. And as while we look through the whole creation, we meet with ſnares and traps in thoſe things which were inſtituted and appointed for a Table to us, or for our welfare; ſo this is moſt obvious in that part of the creation, *Woman*, in reference to whom the Lord ſaid, *It is not good for man to be alone*; How ſoon did ſhe become a ſnare to the firſt man, and ſo an occaſion of his fall, in whom mankind fell, and had been loſt for ever if Free-Grace had not provided a remedy. The Devil uſed the Serpent, as an inſtrument, to deceive the woman, and he uſed the woman, as an inſtrument to deceive the man. The firſt deceit that ever was put upon man, was by the agency of a woman; Satan well knew how potent that weaker veſſel would be to do man a miſchief. He knew the man would not eaſily ſuſpect any harm from the woman, and he knew he could as hardly refuſe it, when it was tendred to him by her hand, and urged upon him by her perſwaſion. The Apoſtle uſeth this as an argument to humble the woman, and to keep her within the ſphere of her proper duty. (1 *Tim.* 2. 11, 12, 13, 14.) *Let the woman learn in ſilence with all ſubjection; But I ſuffer not a woman to teach* (that is, in the Church, ſhe may teach her children and ſervants at home) *nor to uſurp authority over the man, but to be in ſilence. For Adam was firſt formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived* (that is, immediately or at firſt hand by the Serpent, or he was not deceived by that error or miſtake (as ſome conceive) that he ſhould be made more wiſe and knowing by eating it, for he heard not thoſe reaſonings or inſinuations of the Serpent, thus (I ſay) *Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the tranſgreſſion*; that is, ſhe was firſt in the tranſgreſſion, and having tranſgreſſed her ſelf by eating the forbidden fruit, ſhe gave unto her huſband and he did eat; ſhe was not in the tranſgreſſion as a plotter and contriver of it (ſo the Serpent only was in it) yet ſhe was in the tranſgreſſion more then by her own act, for ſhe was made uſe of both by her examp'e in eating, and by her offer to *Adam* to draw him to eat, and ſo into the tranſgreſſion. And though *Adams* ſin was greater then *Eves*, firſt, becauſe he received the commandment in perſon from God, which forbad his eating of that tree; and Secondly, becauſe he had greater ſtrength, as alſo greater knowledg and wiſdom then ſhe, yet in this her ſin was greater then his, that ſhe was the engin that brought him into that ſnare of the Devil.

And as the firſt man was deceived by the firſt woman; ſo to deceive man hath been the trade of ſome women ever ſince. *Solomon* tells us his experience in this matter (*Eccl.* 7. 26) *I find more bitter then death, the woman whoſe heart is ſnares and nets, and her hands as bands. Solomon* doth not here charge woman-kind or women in general, as if all of them were more bitter then death, or as if the hearts of all of them were ſnares and nets; But he ſaith he *had found the woman* or, *That woman* (as the Original may be rendred) *whoſe heart is ſnares and nets, and whoſe hands, are bands*, that is, who by what ſhe deviſeth in her heart, and uttereth with her mouth, and acts with her hand, doth inſnare, intice, and captivate man. This woman he found *more bitter then death*; For death doth only ſeparate the Soul from the Body, But ſhe, by enſnaring and captivating a man to ſin, ſeparates both body and ſoul from God. No corporal death gives a man ſo many bitter draughts as ſin doth. And therefore it followeth in the ſame Verſe; *Whoſo pleaſeth God ſhall eſcape from her.* The Hebrew is, *He that is good before God ſhall eſcape from her*; that is, he that hath a good and an honeſt heart, (which is the thing which God chiefly looks to and moſt highly prizeth) ſhall be delivered from the ſnares and nets which her heart hath made, and her hands ſpread to catch and entangle vain men. Only they who pleaſe God, or with whom God is pleaſed, and ſo beſtoweth this ſpecial grace and ſingular favour upon them, can eſcape her ſnares; and therefore it follows in the cloſe of the ſame Verſe, *But the ſinner ſhall be taken by her.* And to be taken by her is neither better nor worſe, then to be taken by the Devil; is not then ſuch a deceitful *woman more bitter then death?*

Now as there are many vicious, yea flagitious women (the reproach of their ſex) ſuch as *Solomon* there deſcribes, who actively deceive men, that is, who lay ſnares and ſpread nets to entrap them, who make it their trade and buſineſs to ruin the eſtates, to deſtroy the bodys and ſouls of men; ſo there are others who deceive paſſively; who though they do not plot to deceive any, yet many are deceived by them; They may be innocent, yet men doting upon, and luſting after their beauty are drawn away and deceived; thus they deceive paſſively; *That woman is happy, who being beautiful, is neither proud of it her ſelf, nor thereby a ſnare to others.* And becauſe *Job* ſpeaks it ſo Emphatically, *My heart hath not been deceived by a woman,* I will ſhew you ſeven ways, by which women deceive the hearts of men.

Firſt, They deceive by their favour and natural beauty; Beauty is good, a good gift of God, yet it often doth hurt, it hurts many who have it, and it hurts not a few who behold it. *Solomons* mother, who knew well the heart of a woman, having painted out a vertuous woman in her beſt beauty and moſt proper colours, preſently adds (*Pro.* 31. 30.) *Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain, but a woman that feareth the Lord, ſhe ſhall be praiſed.* Favour is not here put for good will; as we ſay, I have ſuch a mans favour, or am in favour with him; but favour is the external comlineſs and handſomneſs of a perſon. Thus we ſpeak in common language; ſuch a one *hath a good favour*, you *favour* ſuch a one, that is, you are like him, or *I know your favour*. It is ſaid, as a part of *Joſephs* commendation (*Gen.* 39. 6.) that *he was a goodly perſon and well-favoured.* As his perſon was highly favoured by God, as alſo by *Pharaoh*, who made him his *Favourite*, ſo he was a well-favoured perſon; this is intended by *Solomon*, when he ſaith, *Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain. Joſephs* favour deceived his wanton Miſtreſs, and had almoſt undone him; For though while her heart was deceived by him, his heart was not deceived by her, but graciouſly reſiſted her ſolicitations and preſerved his chaſtity, yet he loſt his liberty and got a priſon while he kept himſelf free from that pollution. Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain two ways.

Firſt, Becauſe it deceives thoſe that have it; How ſoon doth favour fade, and beauty wither away? The beauty and favour of the face, is like a flower of the field, which quickly declines; old age will certainly do it, time wrinkles and deforms the beſt bodily favour, and uſually that ſooneſt which is beſt: yea before old age comes, the beauty of many is gone, ſickneſs and ſorrow, cares and tears will ſtain it. If the face be but a while flooded with tears, favour and beauty are drowned and defac'd. Many have uſed high waſhings to preſerve their natural beauty, or to get them an artificial one; but God hath waſht off their beauty with briniſh tears, and broken their favour with heart breaking ſorrows. Some flatter themſelves they ſhall ever be green, and freſh, as the ſpring, but they have felt an autumn, yea a hard providential winter which hath blown off, yea frozen off all their natural bravery.

Secondly, Favour it is deceitful; becauſe it deceives thoſe that look upon it, ſtirring up vain thoughts and luſts, which while they pleaſe the phancies of men, do indeed befool their underſtandings, and render them objects of pity to many, and to the moſt of contempt and ſcorn.

Secondly, The woman deceives by the very caſt of her eye; luſt looks out at thoſe windows of the eyes, and from thence thoſe ſhowers of amorous darts are caſt, and arrows ſhot which have wounded many a heart to death. Thus it is ſaid of *Potiphars* adulterous wife (*Gen.* 39. 7.) *She caſt her eyes upon Joſeph and ſaid, lie with me.* The holy Prophet (*Iſa.* 3. 16.) reproves the vain daughters of *Zion, who walked with ſtretched out necks, and wanton eyes*; the Hebrew is, (and ſo we put in the Margin) *deceiving with their eyes.* The eye is as full of deceit, as the heart or tongue are. There are ſnares and nets in a wanton womans eye, and many have been intangled, and taken by them. The holy Ghoſt ſetting forth the moſt pure and ardent love of Jeſus Chriſt to his Spouſe the Church, and how his heart was (as I may ſay) taken with her ſpiritual beauty, is pleaſed to expreſs it in this very notion (where note by the way, that in the Book of *Canticles* the Spirit of God often alludes divinely to thoſe things which ſome men and women do vainly, while in higheſt ſtreins he tells us of that ſweet reciprocation of unſpotted affections between Chriſt and his Spouſe) for thus he is repreſented ſinging to his Beloved (*Cant.* 4. 9.) *Thou haſt raviſhed my heart, my ſiſter, my Spouſe, thou haſt raviſhed my heart, with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck.* How ſpiritually paſſionate is this language of love! Raviſhment is the ecſtaſie of Joy; He that is raviſht in ſpirit, ſcarce knows where he is, what he doth, or ſpeaketh. Thus was Chriſts heart raviſht; *His ſiſter* (ſo he calls the Church with reſpect to his own future incarnation) *his Spouſe* (ſo he calls her with reſpect to his preſent affection) had raviſht his heart, or (as the Septuagint tranſlate) unhearted him; ſhe had gotten away his heart from him (and then what might ſhe not get of him?) But how did ſhe raviſh or get away the heart of Chriſt? The Text anſwers, *With one of thine eyes*; that is, with a caſt or glance of thine eye. Chriſt ſaid of the Spouſe at the firſt Verſe of the fourth Chapter, *Behold thou art fair my love, behold thou art fair, thou haſt doves eyes*; That is, ſimple, chaſt, pure eyes; ſuch is the eye of faith, which not only looks up to, but looks into Heaven, and ſeeth him who is inviſible; 'Tis this one eye of faith (though this is never alone, or without the eye of love) which raviſheth the heart of Chriſt. This eye of faith gives Chriſt ſuch a look, that his heart cannot but be toucht with it graciouſly; even as the wanton looks of Adulterous women touch and wound the hearts of graceleſs men. That's the ſecond way, by which women deceive the hearts of men, They can do it with their eyes.

Thirdly, Women deceive the hearts of men, as by their eyes, ſo by their tongues; Their muſical voyce is a ſnare, that's a deceiver too. The whoriſh woman hath her bewitching ſongs and melodious ditties, by which ſhe inſinuates her poyſon at the ear to the heart. That Poetical Fable of the Sirens drawing Sea-paſſengers to them by ſinging, and then devouring them, was but the ſhadow of what I am now upon. And how few are there who can ſtop their ears (as *Ulyſſes* is ſaid to command his companions) or (as he did) bind themſelves faſt while they paſs by theſe inchanting Sirens. We have many who will (with the deaf Adder) ſtop their ears, and will not hearken to the voyce of the charmer charming wiſely, yea charming never ſo wiſely; But there are not many (comparatively to thoſe who do not) who ſtop their ears at the voyce of theſe charmers, charming vainly, yea charming never ſo vainly.

Fourthly, Women deceive as by the muſicalneſs and ſweetneſs of their voyce, ſo by the Rhetoricalneſs of their ſpeech, and flattering perſwaſions. As ſome women have their melodious Tunes, ſo others have oyly eloquent tongues and ſubtle inſinuating language, by which they wind themſelves into the affections, and ſteal away the hearts of men. Of ſuch *Solomon* gives warning (*Pro.* 2.) where he aſſures us, that as when wiſdom entreth into the heart, and knowledg is pleaſant to the Soul, it will *deliver us from the way of the evil man, from the man that ſpeaketh froward things* (Verſ. 12.) ſo it will *deliver us from the ſtrange woman, even from the ſtranger which flattereth with her words* (Verſ. 16.) This ſtrange woman, is either another mans wife, or ſuch a one as is not a wife; And ſhe, how neer a neighbour, or how well known ſoever ſhe is unto any man, ought to be as a ſtranger to his bed and embraces, yet ſhe is apt enough to ſmooth and pave man a way to both by her fauning flattering words. For as the ſame *Solomon* tells us again (*Pro.* 5. 3.) *The lips of a ſtrange woman drop as an honey-comb, and her mouth is ſmoother then oyle.* The lips of man or woman drop ſweetly like an honey-comb, when the Bees that make it are honeſt and gracious thoughts in the heart; But the honey-words which drop from the lips of a ſtrange woman, are made by ſtinging waſps, by vile, graceleſs, helliſh thoughts. And therefore a harlot is full of luſt not of love, her kiſs hath venom in it, and all the honey which drops from her lips is pernicious poyſon. And yet with this poiſonous honey of her lips, *and with her mouth* (that is, the words of her mouth) which is ſmoother then oyl, ſhe allures and deceives the heart of vain man. We find this the iſſue of her glozing diſcourſe (*Pro.*7.21.) *With much fair ſpeech, ſhe cauſed him to yield, with the flattering of her lips, ſhe forced him*; her words led him away captive to her will; the young man, whom this harlot enticed, is expreſſed by a word which implyeth him eaſie and perſwadable, one that would be ſoon catcht with a mouth full of good words; But ſhe plyed him ſo faſt and gave him ſo many mouth-fulls of good words, that ſhe put a kind of force upon him, and won him over to her ſelf, that is, to her ill courſes, whether he would or no. How woful is that victory where ſin rides in triumph, and how terrible a force is it which makes a breach, whereat the Devil enters. Yet the young man could not plead this force as his excuſe. It was his own folly which ſubjected him to her force. And how much ſoever ſhe forced him, ſhe had the leave of his own heart. Nothing compells luſt but it ſelf, nor is any man properly forced to that with which he is delighted. No man commits fornication againſt his will; Only to ſhew that there is a great force in a harlots flattery, it is here ſaid, *With the flattery of her lips ſhe forced him.*

Nulla ad libidinem vis eſt, niſi ipſa, Neſcit quodlibet cogi. Tertul.

Fifthly, The heart of a man is ſometimes deceived by the gay attire, and vain-dreſſes, and new-fangled faſhions of a woman. Though ſhe be not beautiful, though ſhe hath not many fine words, yet her fine cloaths may prove a ſnare; Harlots have their proper attire when they intend to deceive. This *Solomon* reports as one way by which the young man was deceived (*Pro.* 7. 10.) *Behold there met him a woman with the attire of an harlot*; ſhe was fitted for the purpoſe from head to foot to deceive. The Prophet (*Zech.* 13.4.) intimates, that ſome uſed *to wear a rough garment to deceive.* A harlot weareth ſoft ſilken garments to deceive. Her wantonneſs appeareth in her attire, her cloathing is a flag of vanity to allure beholders, and draw eyes upon her. The Prophet leads us to the wardrobe and opens the cabinets of the proud daughters of *Jeruſalem*, and ſhews us by name, or gives us an exact inventory of all their vain dreſſes, while he threatens the ſpoil and removal of them (*Chap.*3.18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23.) *In that day the Lord will take away the bravery of their tinkling ornaments about their feet, and their cauls, and their round tiers like the Moons, the chains and the bracelets,* &c. Not that ſuch apparel and ornaments were ſimply or in themſelves ſinful and unlawful to be uſed, But that which the Prophet condemns, is firſt, their exceſs in them, Secondly, their affectation and abuſe of them, to the fomenting of their own pride, and provoking the luſts of others.

Sixthly, Women deceive by their bold, toyiſh deportment and wanton geſtures. Thus *Solomon* deſcribes the harlot (*Pro.*7.13.) *She caught him, and kiſſed him, and with an impudent face ſaid unto him,* &c. Though ſhe had been ſilent and ſaid nothing to him, yet her action towards him ſpake loudly and plainly enough what her mind and meaning was. Geſtures are full of ſignifications. And 'tis no hard matter to expound them. The behaviour of a wanton woman needs no comment.

Seventhly, Women deceive with their gate or manner of going (*Iſa.* 3. 16.) *Solomon* ſaith of a wicked man, *He teacheth with his feet* (*Pro.*6.13.) And ſo doth a wicked woman, not only becauſe ſhe goeth in wayes morally ſinful, but becauſe while ſhe goeth in material ways, ſhe hath a ſinful faſhion or manner of going. Thus the Prophet taxeth the degenerate Daughters of *Zion* (*Iſa.* 3. 16.) *They are haughty* (ſaith he) *and walk with ſtretched forth necks,* &c. *Walking and mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet.* They trip it as they go; The Hebrew word rendred *mincing*, is by ſome derived from a root which ſignifies to beat or play upon a taber, and ſo they tranſlate, *Tabering as they go*, which may be expounded of their creaking ſhoes or pantofles, or rather of an affected clap or ſtroak upon the floor as they ſet down their feet, which ſutes beſt with that which followeth, *They make a tinkling with their feet.* The general ſence is, that what with their twinkling eyes, what with their tinkling feet, they declared the lightneſs of their ſpirits, and their aptneſs to deceive others, though themſelves moſt.

Thus we ſee it is no ſmall matter which *Job* profeſſeth, while he ſaith, *My heart hath not been deceived by a woman*; Modeſt women may deceive paſſively; They may be an occaſion by their beauty, to entice thoſe who vainly look on them; and many vile women make it their buſineſs purpoſely to deceive men, and they practice many ways, even theſe ſeven ways to do it, by their fair faces, by their wanton looks, by their ſweet voyces, by their eloquent perſwaſions, by their vain attire, by their inſinuating geſtures, and mincing motions, making a tinkling with their feet; he that can avoid all theſe ſnares and aſſaults of women, is for chaſtity, a man of men; poſſibly *Job* had been aſſaulted by women all theſe ways. But of this we are ſure, that how many ways ſoever he was aſſaulted by women, yet he was never conquered. He puts himſelf in that point to the judgment both of God and man, while he ſaith, *My heart hath not been deceived by a woman*, And as here he profeſſeth that himſelf had not been deceived by women, ſo he makes a like profeſſion that he had much leſs attempted to deceive any woman; This he doth in the words which follow,

Or if I have laid wait at my neighbours door;

The word rendred to *lay wait*, ſignifieth to watch narrowly, to ſet (as it were) an ambuſh for ſuddain ſurpriſal. Souldiers in time of war keep Centinel to prevent ſuddain attempts, and they lie in wait at or neer the Gates of their Enemies, to make, if opportunity be offered, a ſuddain attempt. That's alſo the manner of Thieves and Robbers in time of peace. *Job* may allude to either, while he ſaith, *If I have laid wait at my neighbours door.* Unclean perſons are vigilant, they watch all opportunities to ſatisfie their luſts; and ſo do all ſorts of reſolved ſinners, who therefore, as to their waiting to do any kind of miſchief, are compared to the Lyon, (*Pſal.* 10. 8, 9.) *He lieth in wait ſecretly as a Lyon in his Den, he lieth in wait to catch the poor, he doth catch the poor when he draweth him into his net, he croucheth and humbleth himſelf, that the poor may fall by his ſtrength.* Thus the oppreſſor lieth in wait for his prey. He is at once a Lion for his fierceneſs and greedineſs, as alſo for his diligence and watchfulneſs. *Solomon* warns his Son againſt a conjunction with the wicked in ſuch like practices (*Pro.* 1. 10, 11.) *My ſon, if ſinners entice thee, conſent thou not, if they ſay, come with us, let us lay wait for blood, let us lurk privily for the innocent without cauſe,* (that is, without any cauſe given by them) *my ſon walk not*

ארב *obſervavit, ſpeculatus, inſidiatus fuit; cognatum eſt cum* ערב *veſper.*

Εἰ καὶ ἐγκάθετος ἐγενόμην ἐπὶ θύραις αὐτῆς. *Si obſedi januas ejus.* Sept.

thou in the way with them, reſtrain thy foot from their path. The Adulterer is as watchful as the thief, or the oppreſſor; He beſiegeth and beſets his neighbours houſe, that he may find a time to abuſe his neighbours wife. Now when *Job* giveth this inſtance in one particular, he includes all the cuſtoms of unclean perſons, the cunning fetches and artifices which they make uſe of to compaſs and bring about their filthy deſigns. Mr. *Broughton* renders the whole verſe thus; *If mine heart were drawn by a woman, that I waited at my neighbours door:* As if he had ſaid, Though poſſibly temptations by women, have made ſome impreſſion upon me, yet none of them did ever riſe ſo high, or prevail ſo far over me, as to cauſe me to ſtudy ways or contrive means how to fulfil or attain the accompliſhment of ſuch fleſhly luſts. I have ſpoken of the Adulterers waiting (*Chap.* 24. 15.) therefore I ſhall ſay the leſs now; yet take two or three notes from theſe words; *If I have waited at my neighbours door.*

Per ſynecdochen exprimit Adulterorum artes, quibus ad perpetrandum ſcelus uti ſolent. Merl.

Firſt, *Strong deſires, and motions within put on to ſutable actions, and endeavours without.*

He whoſe heart is once deceived by a woman, will preſently lie in wait; *Job* in denying the one, denieth the other; my heart hath not been deceived by her, nor did I lie in wait, &c. As if he had ſaid, *Had mine heart been deceived by a woman, I could not have forborn lying in wait, I muſt have uſed thoſe means to the utmoſt which I found moſt convenient to get my deſire.* What a man would have, he will do what he can to have it; ſuch as our motions within are, ſuch alſo are our actions without. 'Tis ſo in ſpirituals, if a man be taken with any holy truth, his heart will be acting in obedience to it, if his heart be catcht with deſire to know the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom he hath ſent, which is eternal life, he will (as 'tis ſaid *Pro.* 2. 3, 4.) *cry after knowledg, and lift up his voyce for underſtanding, he will ſeek her as ſilver, and ſearch for her as for hidden treaſures:* Or as *Solomon* ſpeaks neer the language of *Job's* Text (*Pro.* 8. 34.) *He will watch dayly at wiſdoms gates, and wait at the poſt of her doors.* Deſire is the hunger of the Soul, we need not bid a Soul pincht with hunger ſeek bread, his own hunger will bid him faſt enough. The ſlothful have ſomewhat like deſire, but theirs is not a true deſire, becauſe (as *Solomon* ſaith) *their hands refuſe to labour.* We think no labour too much for that which we deſire much; nor any waiting no lying in wait too long for that after which we long. Jeſus Chriſt expreſſeth the ſtrength of his deſire, and the ardency of his affections to poor Souls, by waiting at their doors. He ſtayed and knocked at the Churches door, ſaying, *Open to me my ſiſter, my love, my dove, my undefiled, for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night.* (Cant. 5. 2.) He that waits knocking at a door till he finds his hair wet with dew, muſt needs wait long; yet thus Chriſt waits for ſweet communion with believers, even beyond the waiting of a moſt affectionate lover. He ſpeaks thus again (*Revel.* 3. 20.) *Behold I ſtand at the door, and knock, if any man hear my voyce, and open the door, I will come in to him, and ſup with him.* Why doth Jeſus Chriſt ſtand at the door, and knock? why doth he take ſo much pains and exerciſe ſo much patience? Surely 'tis becauſe he hath a great deſire to enjoy the ſweet ſociety of his People. Now I ſay, as holy deſires, and Soul-motions tend to action, as they put us on to ſeek after and wait for Chriſt, and put Chriſt on to ſeek after and wait for us; ſo if the heart of a man be once engaged and his luſts blown up by any ſinful temptation, he will be working and waiting, he will be ſeeking and earneſtly purſuing all opportunities which may ſerve his ends. And therefore

Honeſtiſſimus amator Noſtri, ad inſtar turpitèr amantium, qui importune obſident etiam nocte amicorum fores. Bern.

Secondly, As to this particular ſin, *If I have laid wait at my neighbours door.*

Note, *Unclean perſons will not refuſe any pains to enjoy forbidden pleaſures.*

They will wait all night, they will watch like ſervants or ſlaves to ſatisfie their filthy luſts; let the weather and danger be what they will they will venture both health and life, in hope to ſpeed. They are no longer their own Maſters, who ſerve thoſe luſts and pleaſures. When a man hath loſt his heart, he will loſe himſelf in ſeeking that which hath taken it away. How pittifully did *Sampſon* enſlave himſelf to *Dalilah?* At how dear a rate did he give her aſſurance that he loved her? What a woſul courſe did *Amnon* run to enjoy his inceſtuous deſires? He *was ſo vexed* (ſaith the Text, 2 *Sam.* 13. 2.) *that he fell ſick for his ſiſter Tamar*; and a little after by the advice of a friend, who is alſo there called a ſubtle man, and had indeed more of the ſubtle man then of the true friend in him (by his advice I ſay) he counterfeited a ſickneſs (*Ver.* 6.) or made himſelf ſick, that is more ſick then he was; and all this to get privacy with his ſiſter, and ſo his will, his ſenſual will upon her. Luſt knows no limits either of Nature, Reaſon, or Religion. Though *Amnon* could not lie in wait at his ſiſters door, yet by a ſtratagem he got her to wait upon him within his own door, that he might defile her.

Thirdly, *Job* doth not only ſay, he never committed Adultery with his neighbours wife, but he did not lie in wait at his neighbours door, that is, he kept his feet from going in any of thoſe ways, which led to that groſs iniquity. Had he lain in wait at his neighbours door, he could not have pleaded his innocency, or freedom from Adultery, though he had never (as indeed he had not) lain with his neighbours wife.

Hence obſerve, *They who ſet themſelves in any ſinful way, are guilty of the ſin, though they do not actually commit it.*

As the good which we would do and wait to do, is reckoned to us as done, though either through diſability or want of opportunity, we are hindred or taken off from doing it; ſo the evil which we would do and wait to do, ſhall be reckon'd to us as done, though ſomewhat intervene which ſtops us from doing it. A reſolved will to do, without the deed done, is enough to denominate us either good or evil. It is not our being hindred or prevented in doing the evil we had a mind to, but our repentance that there was ſuch a mind in us, and the pardon of it, that makes us guiltleſs. They that lie in wait for blood, will be caſt for murderers at Gods Bar, though they ſhed not a drop of Blood; And they who lie in wait at their neighbours door, will be caſt for Adulterers, though they never ſet foot over the threſhold. *David* being reſolved to avenge himſelf upon *Nabal*, and upon his march to the execution, was ſtopt by the counſel of *Abigail*, a diſcreet woman, which he accepted as from God, ſaying, *Bleſſed be God, and bleſſed be thou who haſt met me this day, and kept me from ſhedding Blood*; Though *David* did not ſhed *Nabals* Blood, yet if he had not been ſtopt againſt his will from ſhedding it, meerly by ſome outward accident, he had been guilty, but *David* accepting of this ſtop, and bleſſing God for it, the ſin was not charged upon him. To be ſtopt in a way of revenge, or in a way of uncleanneſs, by an external providence, which we are troubled at, leaves the ſin fully upon us. Indeed if we have had a purpoſe to do any evil, and can bleſs God, who hath *hedged up our way with thorns* (as the Lord ſaid he would do *Iſraels*, Hoſ. 2. 6.) *and made a wall that we cannot find our paths*, which lead to the accompliſhment of that evil, (in this caſe, I ſay) God will not lay that evil to our charge. When we are glad that we are croſſed and ſucceſleſs in ſin, when we account ſickneſs, poverty, any affliction a mercy, becauſe we ſee it hath checkt us in what our corruptions were carrying or hurrying us out to, this ſhews either that it was our temptation rather then our proper inclination which carried us to it, or that the inclination is now (through grace) changed, and we become other men.

Laſtly, When *Job* ſaith, *If I have laid wait at my neighbours door*; He ſpeaks (as was intimated before) of a greater ſin, then barely to have had his heart deceived by a woman, becauſe that might be by ſome ſuddain unexpected irritation, but this muſt needs be from a ſetled reſolution.

Hence obſerve, *By how much any man ſins, with the more deliberation, by ſo much the greater is his ſin.*

To wait to ſin, is to ſin deliberately, yea to wait to ſin, is to ſin reſolvedly; That ſin is exceeding ſinfully committed which we ſet and prepare our ſelves to commit. *David* deſcribing a wicked man, ſaith (*Pſal.* 36. 4.) *He ſetteth himſelf in a way that is not good*; that is, in an evil way; he doth not only fall into ſin, or through miſtake go into an evil way (that may be the caſe of a good man), but he takes or chuſeth an evil way, and then ſets or ſettles himſelf in it, reſolving not to leave it, no nor to be beaten out of it. Sin may be ſaid to wait for a godly man, that is, Satan waits and watches his ſeaſon to tempt him unto ſin, but a godly man doth not wait nor watch to ſin. It is bad enough to be overtaken with ſin, or with a fault (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Gal.* 6. 1.) but to be taken with ſin, and ſo to wait for a ſeaſon to take our fill of it, is as bad as bad can be. It is the height of the Lords goodneſs, that *he waiteth to be gracious* (*Iſ.* 30. 18.) that is, to do us good. This alſo is the height of mans goodneſs, when he not only doth that good which he is put upon and preſſed unto, but when he waiteth to do good, and ſeeks occaſions of doing good; And this is the height of mans ſinfulneſs when he waits to do evil, and ſeeks occaſions, or open doors for the doing of it. From all ſuch ſtudied wickedneſs *Job* clears himſelf by this proteſt, *If I have laid wait at my neighbours door*, which he backs with a ſutable imprecation in the next Verſe.

Verſ. 10. *Then let my wife grind unto another, and let others bow down upon her.*

This verſe contains *Job*'s wiſh of Evil to himſelf, if he had done either of thoſe evils ſpoken of in the former verſe.

Sunt ex Hebræis qui ad literam exponunt. Molet uxor mea in piſtrino alterius, q. d. ſerviat ſervitutem graviſſimam Druſ.

Let my wife grind unto another. That is, Firſt, Say ſome, *Let her be a ſlave*, let her be reduced to the loweſt condition; let her be a ſervant in the moſt inferiour form of ſervitude. To grind in a Mill is the meaneſt imployment; To govern and to grind note the two extreams of mans eſtate in this life. (*Exod.* 11. 5.) *And all the firſt-born in the land of Egypt ſhall die, from the firſt born of Pharaoh that ſitteth upon his throne, even unto the firſt-born of the maid-ſervant, that is behind the Mill.* Chriſt ſhewing in what poſtures the world ſhall be found at his coming, ſaith, *Two women* (that is, Bond-women) *ſhall be grinding in the Mill* (Math. 24. 41.) And when the *Philiſtines* had bound *Sampſon* and put out his eyes (*Judges* 16. 21.) they put *Sampſon* to grind in the Mill. Anciently Mills were ſet up in priſons, and there poor Captives were kept to work at them. And hence in good Authors, to ſend a perſon to the Mill-houſe is the ſame, as to ſend him to priſon or to puniſhment; For which reaſon (I ſuppoſe) the Chaldee Paraphraſe renders this Text in *Job*, *Let her ſerve*, or, *let my wife become a ſervant*.

תשמש *famuletur.* Chald.

Paſſim apud doctores Talmudicos, ut Hebræi notant, molendi verbum ſumitur ut honeſta cognominatione rem maxime obſcœnam deſignent. Merc.

Yet if we conſider both the antecedents and conſequents of theſe words, I conceive another ſenſe rather intended, which is alſo followed by moſt Interpreters, eſpecially by the Talmudiſts or Jewiſh Doctors, who generally conſent in this uſe of the word, which in the received language of thoſe times denotes an obſcene act by a modeſt and inoffenſive expreſſion. According to this expoſition, when *Job* ſaith, *Let my wife grind unto another*, his meaning is plainly this, *Let my wife turn Harlot.* The Septuagint tranſlate fully to this ſence, *Let my wife pleaſe or give content to another.* The vulgar Latin and Chaldee Paraphraſe yet more fully and literally, *Let my wife be a whore*, or, *Let my wife lie with another man.* And in the Greek tongue the ſame word ſignifies both to grind in a Mill, and to commit Adultery; nor is the ſame phraſe unuſual in good Authors among the Latins. And whereas we render that of the Prophet *Jeremy* deſcribing the miſeries of the people of God in the Babyloniſh Captivity (*Lam.* 5. 13.) *They took the young men to grind*; The vulgar Latin Reads, *They immodeſtly abuſed the young men:* which clearly complies with this latter expoſition of this firſt part of *Job*'s wiſh, *Let my wife grind unto another.* And that this ſhould be his meaning is more then probable by the latter part of his wiſh, which (and that is all I ſhall ſay for the expounding of it) can have no other meaning, *And let others bow down upon her.*

But here a Queſtion may ariſe, how *Job* (without ſin) could wiſh ſuch a thing as this; he made many imprecations, of pœnal evils upon himſelf; But might he imprecate ſin-evil or any evil of ſin upon another? might he wiſh that his wife ſhould be diſloyal and become a harlot, or that others ſhould abuſe his wife; might he deſire that his adultery ſhould be puniſhed with his wives adultery? or that ſhe might be falſe to his bed, if he had been ſo to hers? Are theſe lawful wiſhes?

I anſwer, It is not lawful to acquit our ſelves from a charge of ſin, by wiſhing that either our ſelves or others might fall into ſin. Therefore Firſt, *Job* wiſhed this, not as if he deſired to have it ſo, but to ſhew how far he was from giving any cauſe why it ſhould be ſo. Secondly, he did it to aſſure us how much he abhorr'd adultery, ſeeing all men abhor, what he wiſht, that their wives ſhould be Adultereſſes; Thirdly, this imprecation informs us, that he could not only ſubmit himſelf to bodily puniſhment, as he had done before in other caſes; but even to a blot of greateſt diſhonour upon his name and family in this caſe. Fourthly, holy *Job* did not wiſh his Adultery might be puniſhed with his wives adultery; but he ſpeaks thus to ſhew, that by the law of counter-paſſion he deſerved it ſhould be ſo, if he had done ſo. This is one of the moſt unnatural wiſhes that any man can make, yet it contains the moſt connatural or proportionable puniſhment imaginable to the ſin in revenge whereof he wiſheth it. An adulterous and unfaithful wiſe is the fitteſt affliction for an adulterous and unfaithful husband. Breach of the marriage-covenant is a due reward for marriage-covenant-breakers.

Ἀρέσαι ἄρα ϰ ἡ γυνή μȣ ἑτέρῳ. *placeat quoq; mea uxor alteri.* Sep. *Scortum alterius ſit uxor mea.* Vulg. *Rem habeat cum alio uxor mea.* Trag. *Apud Græcos* μυλλω *utrumq; valet, tam molere quam adulterare Ut liquet ex Theocrito Idyl* δ *ubi* μύλλας *i. e. molens meretrix vocatur. Alienas permolere Uxores.* Horat. Ser. 1. *Adoleſcentibus impudicè abuſi ſunt.* Vulg.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt. *God may juſtly give up their wives to be abuſed by others, who give themſelves up to abuſe others mens wives.*

Job hoc ſibi non imprecatur, ſed exponit quid commeritus eſſet ſi id flagitii commiſiſſet. Ramban. *Imprecationis forma horrenda, ſed quæ indicat, quid juſto dei judicio eveniet alieni thori corruptoribus.* *Connexa inter ſe ſunt, homo nec abſtinens alieni matrimonii nec cuſtos ſui.* Quintil.

To do Juſtice by the laws of retaliation is the moſt exquiſite Juſtice; And though the Juſtice of man cannot, may not always proceed by that rule, yet the Juſtice of God both can and may. He can make a ſin a puniſhment, who is himſelf free from the leaſt touch of ſin: he can puniſh the husbands adultery with the wives, and then puniſh the wife for her adultery too. What the Lord did in *Davids* caſe, (and that was a very ſad one) was very near this. *David* was overcome by that temptation over which *Job* proteſted himſelf (through grace) a conquerer; *Davids heart was deceived by a woman*, and being deceived, he upon the matter (laid wait) at his neighbours door; (a godly man for one Act may ſin as bad as the worſt of ſinners, it cannot be denied but in that act *David* did ſo, for,) he luſted after his neighbours wife, he ſolicited her chaſtity, and obtained his deſire; and how did God chaſtiſe this great ſin? The Holy Story tells us, his wives were given up to another, as *Nathan* threatned (2 *Sam.* 1[illegible] 11.) *Thus ſaith the Lord, behold I will raiſe up evil againſt thee out of thine own houſe, and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them to thy neighbour, and he ſhall lie with thy wives in the ſight of this Sun. For thou didſt it ſecretly, but I will do this thing before all Iſrael, and before this Sun.* *Davids* heart was but once deceived by a woman, and God ſpared him not; yea puniſhed him in ſuch a way, as might well make his heart not only ake, but bleed at the remembrance of his ſin; nor indeed could he hear of, or be told what had been done by his Son, but he muſt ſee or be told by his own conſcience, what himſelf had done. When the people of *Iſrael* had committed ſpiritual Adultery, and (as the Prophet ſpeaks, *Hoſ.* 4. 12.) *had gone a whoring from under their God*; they are ſhewed their puniſhment in the 13. Verſe, *Therefore your daughters ſhall commit whoredom, and your ſpouſes ſhall commit Adultery.* Yea as the Lord in much wrath puniſhed that former ſin with this ſin, ſo he told them in more and further wrath, that he would leave theſe latter ſins for a time, poſſibly for the whole time of this life (as to any outward appearance) altogether unpuniſhed (*Ver.* 14.) *I will not puniſh your daughters, when they commit whoredom, nor your ſpouſes when they commit adultery*; As if he had ſaid, I will let them alone in their adulteries; they ſhall be as wicked as they will, I will not hinder them, I will not at preſent check the courſe or full career of their luſts by any viſible pœnal evil or affliction. Not that the Lord owned or allowed them for a moment in thoſe impure acts and noiſom abominations, but he gave them up in Judgment to the power of their luſts, and would not give them any trouble how much ſoever they deſerved. God ſometimes leaves ſons or daughters to their luſts, in Judgment to their Fathers, as he leaves a wife to ſuch like luſts in judgment to her husband; So it follows in the Prophet, *I will not puniſh your daughters when they commit whoredom, nor your ſpouſes when they commit adultery, for themſelves* (that is, their fathers & husbands) *are ſeparated with whores, and they ſacrifice with harlots.* Some expound it of ſpiritual, others of corporal uncleanneſs, but take the words either way, they hold out the ſame general truth, that the reaſon why their daughters and ſpouſes were given up to the vileſt uncleanneſſes, was becauſe themſelves were vile and unclean. This the Lord hath often done, and we muſt adore his Juſtice (though ſevere) in doing it.

Secondly, Obſerve. *The diſloyalty of a wife, is one of the greateſt evils that can befall a husband.*

It is a great evil to all men becauſe of the diſhonour of it. It is a greater becauſe of the trouble and vexation of it. It is greateſt of all becauſe of the ſin and filthineſs of it. *Job* knew not how to wiſh a greater miſchief to himſelf, as to any worldly comfort, then this, an unfaithful wife. We read how extreamly the ſons of *Jacob* were both grieved and enraged, when they heard that *Shechem* had raviſhed their ſiſter *Dinah* (Gen. 34. 7.) and when after that deep revenge taken by *Simeon* and *Levi* in the ſlaughter of the *Shechemites*, *Jacob* reproved them, ſaying, *Ye have troubled me*, &c. They preſently and bluntly anſwered him with a queſtion (*Ver.* 31.) *Should he deal with our ſiſter as with an harlot?* As if they had ſaid, This is inſufferable. Indeed it was ſo; but ſo alſo was their way of revenging it. Now if the raviſhment of a ſiſter be ſo highly reſented by her Brethren, then much more is the whoredom of a wife by her husband. It is reported of the *Lacedemonians*, That they had three ill wiſhes for ſuch as they were offended with. Firſt, They wiſht, *They might build*, becauſe that's troubleſome and coſtly; Secondly, That *they might dreſs horſes*, becauſe that's low and ſervile; Thirdly, They wiſht thoſe whom they moſt hated, That *their wives might be harlots*, becauſe, That's a perpetual Diſgrace.

And if the diſloyalty of a wife is the greateſt diſgrace to her husband; then, how great is the wickedneſs of thoſe husbands, who have taught or provoked their wives to be ſo by their own examples? For though it be no excuſe, much leſs warrant for a wife to be diſloyal to her husband, becauſe he hath been ſo to her, yet how can any man expect his wife ſhould be true to him while he is falſe to her. Indeed grace will keep a wife to her duty how much ſoever her husband departs from his; And the Scripture teacheth her to ſeek a divorce from him, but utterly forbids her to take any ſuch revenge upon him; nor can ſhe take it without doing her ſelf a greater wrong then ſhe doth to him. Yet what hath that husband to ſay for himſelf; whoſe conſcience tells him, that his own example hath ſet his wife the copy of that abominable wickedneſs; and that he hath taught her to break her faith by breaking it firſt himſelf. He that would have faith kept muſt keep his faith. That which thou thy ſelf wouldſt not ſuffer from another take heed of doing to any, eſpecially to a wife, who is as thy ſelf, or a ſecond ſelf.

Improbus eſt qui ab uxore pudicitiam exigit, ipſe alienarum corruptor uxorum. Senec. Epiſt. 9.

Thirdly, Conſider *Job* is here clearing himſelf from the ſuſpition of a foul ſin, by wiſhing ſin his puniſhment.

Hence obſerve, *Thoſe ſins that are puniſhed with ſin, have the greateſt puniſhment.*

There is nothing ſo bad as ſin, and therefore ſin muſt needs be the foreſt puniſhment; God is never more diſpleaſed or provoked, then when he ſuffers men to do that which diſpleaſeth and provokes him more. Thus the Lord puniſhed the wickedneſs of the old Gentiles (*Rom.* 1. 26. 28.) *By giving them up to vile affections, and a reprobate mind*, and ſo to thoſe bodily filthineſſes which are the abhorrence of nature; all which the Apoſtle wraps up in thoſe milder words (which yet have a world of divine revenge in them) *The doing of thoſe things which are not convenient.* Sin is a worſe puniſhment, then ſword and fire, then poverty and ſickneſs, then famine and peſtilence, and death, yea then a thouſand bodily deaths. Sin is a puniſhment without bound or bottom, no man knows the height and depth, the length and breadth of it. Who can tell when or where it will end? 'tis endleſs. When God puniſheth a ſin, with ſin upon our ſelves, or families, upon our wives and children, O how dreadful a puniſhment is that! and O how deeply do they ſin, who provoke the Lord to puniſh their ſin with ſin, giving up either themſelves or their relations, wives or children to take their full ſwinge in the ſame or in any other ſinful way, wherein we have gone aſtray, and departed from the living God. None are ſo miſerable as they who proſper in ſin, who go on ſinning and proſpering.

Laſtly, Conſider that the Language which the holy Ghoſt uſeth in this verſe, doth as much cover as expreſs thoſe acts of filthineſs, and uncleanneſs.

Hence obſerve. *When we ſpeak of unclean things, we we ſhould wrap them up in clean words.*

The Scripture is rightly called the *holy language*; For ſo it is, not only becauſe the matter it ſpeaks of is all holy, or becauſe it ſpeaks always to a holy purpoſe, but alſo becauſe when it ſpeaks of things unholy and offenſive, not fit to be named, it ſtill ſhadows them with ſuch metaphors and circumlocutions as take away the offenſiveneſs of them. Thus, the eaſing of nature is expreſſed by *covering the feet* (Judg. 3. 24.) and Adultery, by *going in to a Woman*, in the Title of the fifty and firſt Pſalm; Here by grinding, and bowing down. The Apoſtle gives this charge to Saints (*Eph.* 5. 3.) *But fornication and all uncleanneſs or covetouſneſs, let it not be once named among you as becometh Saints*; And (*Ver.* 12.) *It is a ſhame to ſpeak of thoſe things which are done of them in ſecret.* What the Gentiles were not aſhamed to do, the Apoſtle was (and would have us to be) aſhamed to ſpeak. Some ſins are of ſo ill a name and ſo reproveable, that they ſhould not be named, but to reprove them, and ſcarce then by their own names. The Lord chargeth the children of *Iſrael* (Exod. 23. 13.) *In all things that I have ſaid unto you be circumſpect: and make no mention of the names of other gods, neither let it be heard out of thy mouth.* That is, either thou ſhalt not at all ſpeak of them, or not without ſome note of diſlike or teſtimony of thy utter deteſtation of them. In which ſence alſo the Lord ſaith (*Hoſ.* 2. 17.) *I will take away the Names of Baalim out of her mouth, and they ſhall no more be remembred by their Name. Evil words* (ſaith the Apoſtle out of a heathen Poet. (1 *Cor.* 15. 33.) *or communication, corrupt good manners.* And ſo they do both as to the worſhip of God, and common practice among men. When *blaſpheming God* is ſpoken of. The Hebrew text expreſſeth it by way of contrary ſpeaking, that is, by a word which ſignifies to *bleſs*, as was ſhewed at the ſecond Chapter of this Book: When *Jobs* wife ſaid to him (as we tranſlate) *Curſe God and dye*, the Original is, *Bleſs God and dye.* To curſe God is an act ſo execrable, that the Jews abhorr'd to mention it in any way, but that which is figurative; ſo likewiſe the Hebrew word for *a whore or harlot*, is a *ſeparate or Holy woman.* They were loth to foul their mouths with ſuch a loathſom creature in a proper dreſs of ſpeech; Or to ſhew how contrary all ought to be from her they ſpake of her only by contraries. The Spaniards call a harlot in ſcorn or deteſtation, *The honourable woman*, that is, the baſe woman. As the Scripture ſpeaks or words ill matters, ſo ſhould we. Chriſtians ſhould ſeaſon their ſpeeches with modeſty; And their words ſhould miniſter grace not offence to their hearers. What ſhall we ſay, then, of thoſe, who, not only, broadly name the fouleſt acts of ſin, but act them broadly; if, as the Apoſtle ſaith, ſuch ſins ſhould not be ſo much as named among Saints, what ſhall we think of thoſe who would go under the name of Saints, and yet do ſuch things?

Hebræi nullum habent proprium nomen rei turpis. Rab. Moiſes lib. 3. Ductorij dubiorum. c. 10. קדשה *meretrix à* קדש *per Antiphraſin quia minime ſancta, vel per Euphemiſmum; la Honorata quaſi minime honorata.*

Job having thus proteſted his innocency, as to the breach of his conjugal Covenant, proceeds to tell us what preſerved him in it, and kept him both in heart and life from any ſuch extravagancy. The firſt thing which he propounded to himſelf was the greatneſs and foulneſs of the ſin conſidered in it ſelf or in its own nature.

Verſe 11. **For this is an heinous crime, &c.**

The Original is but one word without any epithete, we tranſlate not barely, *This is a crime*, but exegetically, *An heinous crime*; Which epithete is clearly intimated in the Hebrew root ſignifying properly *to meditate, deviſe or think.* And though it be a middle word (as Grammarians ſpeak) and ſo applicable either to good or evil thoughts and devices. Yet if we look through the whole current of Scripture, it is not only moſt commonly, but almoſt always taken in an ill ſence, to note ſuch heart deviſings and thinkings, as tend to miſchief, or have miſchief intended by them. And hence the noun (uſed in the Text) ſignifies any evil practice,

Vox זמה *a radice* זמם *quod eſt cogitare, propriè ſignificat cogitationem ſed ferè ſemper ſumitur in malum, ſc. pro eo ſcelere quod adverſus alium nefariè molimur & in opus prodit.* Merc.

practice, fore-plotted and deviſed. So that the ſupplement in our tranſlation is a proper expoſition of the force of the Original, *An heinous crime*; and we find it often uſed in Scripture to expreſs the moſt heinous crimes. When the law of *Moſes* forbids inceſtuous marriages by this word (*Lev.* 18. 17.) *Thou ſhalt not uncover the nakedneſs of a woman and her daughter*, &c. Why? *It is wickedneſs or an heinous crime.* How great a wickedneſs is it for a Father, who ſhould by all means preſerve his daughters chaſtity, and reſtrain her from wantonneſs, to encourage and expoſe her to it? This wickedneſs is called by the ſame name (*Lev.* 19. 29.) *Do not proſtitute thy daughter to cauſe her to be a whore, leſt the land be full of whoredom, and the land become full of wickedneſs*, even of ſtudied and contrived wickedneſs. That Abomination acted upon the Levites wife or Concubine, is delivered in this word (*Judges* 10. 6.) *They have committed lewdneſs and folly in Iſrael.* And when the Pſalmiſt would ſet forth that wrathful malice which lies working in the head and heart of an ungodly man, he gives it thus (*Pſal.* 37. 12.) *The wicked plotteth againſt the juſt.* Once more, I find it applyed to that heinous crime of bearing falſe witneſs (*Deut.* 19.18,19.) *If the witneſs be a falſe witneſs, and hath teſtified falſly againſt his brother, Then ſhall ye do unto him as he thought to have done unto his brother*; That is, as he miſchievouſly plotted to do againſt his brother. The Rabbins put this title upon a falſe witneſs, becauſe he is full of thoughts how to carry a buſineſs wrongfully againſt his brother. Thus the Prophet *Ezekiel* ſeems to apply it (*Ezek.* 22. 9.) where making a Catalogue of *Jeruſalems* ſins, he put this in among the greateſt of them; *In thee are men that carry tales* (that is, falſe tales, and ſo bear falſe witneſs) *to ſhed blood, and in thee they eat upon the mountains, in the midſt of thee they commit lewdneſs.* 'Tis this word, *Zimmah*, which the Septuagint render, *Unholy things*; As if the Lord had ſaid, Thou that art a holy people to me by profeſſion, and ſhouldeſt be holy in thy converſation, thou doeſt lewd filthy and unholy things. They eat upon the mountains, there's lewdneſs againſt the firſt Table; They bear falſe witneſs, there's lewdneſs againſt the ſecond Table. So then the force of this word in all forms implyeth a ſtudied and contrived evil, and that is whatſoever it is, *An heinous crime.*

Apud prophanos dicitur nequitia.
Non ego Nequitiæ dicerer eſſe caput. Propert. lib. 2.

Apud Rabbinos.
ער זומם
teſtis malitioſus.

Hence Note, Firſt, *There are degrees of ſin.*

All are not of the ſame ſize, weight, or meaſure. Men differ not more in ſtatur, then their iniquities do; every fault is not a crime, and every crime is not *an heinous crime.* There is much ſinfulneſs in every ſin, yet there is not a like ſinfulneſs. When the people of *Iſrael* committed Idolatry, *Moſes returned unto the Lord and ſaid, Oh this people have ſinned a great ſin, and have made them Gods of Gold* (Exod. 32. 31.) There is no ſin little in it ſelf, yet ſome ſins compared with others are eminently great, and even little ſins will be charged upon them as great ones, who encourage themſelves, or take liberty to do them, becauſe they think them little.

Secondly, From the reaſon why this word is expreſſed *an heinous crime,*

Obſerve, *Thoſe are heinous ſins which are committed adviſedly, or with deliberation.*

When any evil is plotted, when men ſit down and meditate how to bring it about, this wind's it up to an high degree, and to ſin thus, is to ſin with a high hand (*Iſa.* 32.7.) *The inſtruments alſo of the Churl are evil*; That is, the perſons or the means which he uſeth to bring an evil matter about are evil; for as it followeth, *He deviſeth wicked devices to deſtroy the poor with lying words, even when the needy ſpeaketh right*; that is, be his cauſe never ſo right, and never ſo righteouſly or truly managed, yet he hath ſome trick or nicity or other to pervert it. To wrong any man is ſinful, much more to wrong the poor, and to deviſe or contrive how to do it is yet more ſinful. (*Pro.* 24. 8, 9.) *He that deviſeth to do evil, ſhall be called a miſchievous perſon.* To do evil is natural to man in his depraved ſtate; But to deviſe evil is the Art of depraved Nature. The Devil is the Maſter of evil deviſes; and they that do ſo are his Schollers. He that doth evil, being tempted to it, is a weak man: But (ſaith *Solomon*) he that deviſeth to do evil, deſerves to be called a miſchievous perſon. Men often miſcal both things and perſons, but God doth not; What and whom he calleth ſo or ſo, is certainly ſo. What a black brand doth the Scripture ſet upon *Balaam, who taught Balac to caſt a ſtumbling block before the Children of Iſrael, to eat things ſacrificed unto Idols, and to commit fornication* (Rev. 2.14.) *Balaam* was the Inventer of this ſtratagem, which brought ſo great a miſchief upon the people of God; How fitly then may he be called a miſchievous perſon? Such another Maſter of evil deviſes was *Jeroboam*, who is as often almoſt ſtigmatiz'd as remembred in Scripture with that helliſh Title, *Jeroboam the ſon of Nebat who made Iſrael to ſin.* He was not only a party in but the Author of that woful Apoſtacy of the ten Tribes from the pure worſhip of God, by ſetting up thoſe two golden Calves, The one in *Bethel*, and the other in *Dan*; and *by offering ſacrifice upon the Altar which he had made in Bethel, the fifteenth day of the eighth month, even in the month* ſaith the Scripture, (1 *Kings* 12. 33.) *which he had deviſed of his own heart.* Thus as *Solomon* concludes in the next verſe to that in the *Proverbs* laſt opened, *The thought of fooliſhneſs is ſin*; That is, a fooliſh or a wicked man is thinking and caſting about how and which way he may ſin; And as the ſame *Solomon* hath it (*Pro.* 21.4.) *The plowing of the wicked is ſin:* both the field which he ploweth, that is, the matter which he is about, and the furrows which he makes, his workings and plottings in every matter are ſinful; he is always contriving and hatching ſome miſchief. His ſin is full of deliberation, and therefore full of abomination, or deep corruption, as the Prophet ſpeaks (*Hoſ.* 9.9.) *They have deeply corrupted themſelves, as in the dayes of Gibeah*; that is, as the men of *Gibeah* corrupted themſelves in abuſing the Levites Concubine (*Judg.* 20. 6.) Some ſinful corruptions lye as it were in the skin, or they are but skin-deep, they appear as a botch or ſore in the fleſh; but there are other corruptions that are like an exulceration in the lungs, heart, or liver, in the bowels or intralls. There is ſin in the hand as outwardly acted, and there is ſin in the heart, which is a plot or contrivement how to act it. Some are hurried into evil, or violently thruſt upon it by force of a temptation: Others ſit down and conſult how to bring it forth.

There are two things which very much abate and extenuate, though not totally excuſe a ſin.

Firſt, Ignorance, when we ſin and do not know it to be ſin.

Secondly, Violence, when a ſuddain ſtrong temptation ruſhing upon us unawares, doth rather drive then intice us to it. But when we ſin knowingly, leiſurely and adviſedly, our ſin is great, even an heinous crime. We may add another Conſideration which makes any ſin a heinous crime; that is, when we take content in the act of doing it, eſpecially after the act done. *Solomon* ſpeaks of ſuch (*Pro.* 2. 14.) *Who rejoyce to do evil, and delight in the frowardneſs of the wicked.* And the Prophet (*Jer.* 11. 15.) chargeth *Judah* with this aggravation of ſin; *When thou doeſt evil, then thou rejoyceſt.* They who now rejoyce to do evil, ſhall (unleſs they ſorrow for it here with a godly ſorrow) weep for ever under the ſufferance of evil; Satan is glad to ſee men play the fools (that is, ſport) with ſin here, that he may play the Tyrant over them hereafter.

Again, As to the particular ſin here proteſted againſt.

Thirdly, Obſerve, *Adultery is a notorious ſin, an heinous crime.*

It is uſually a plotted ſin, and hath many contrivements in it. I have ſpoken of the devices of the Adulterer (*Chap.* 24. 15.) Many are traders and Artiſts in this wickedneſs. Adulterers ſet their wits upon the tenters to deviſe means for the ſatisfying of their luſts. The Prophet (*Jer.* 29. 23.) calls it, *villany*; *Becauſe they have committed villany in Iſrael, and have committed* (or, in committing) *adultery with their neighbours wives.* So the latter branch is exegetical, ſhewing what that villany was which they committed, even Adultery with their neighbours wives. 'Tis alſo called folly, lewdneſs, filthineſs, uncleanneſs, &c. Theſe are the terms and titles put upon Adultery in Scripture to ſhew the vileneſs of it. When *Abraham* through fear denyed his wife, and ſo ſubjected her unto a temptation (*Gen.* 20. 9.) *Abimelech* came to him and expoſtulated the matter with him, ſaying, *What haſt thou done unto us? And what have I offended thee, that thou haſt brought on me and on my kingdom a great ſin? Thou haſt done deeds unto me that ought not to be done. And Abimelech ſaid unto Abraham, What ſaweſt thou that thou haſt done this thing?* That is, in denying or at leaſt concealing that ſhe was thy wife, and ſo expoſing her to the danger of adultery. This he calls *a great ſin.* And he chargeth *Abraham* with bringing on him and on his people a great ſin, becauſe he had brought them in danger of it. When *Joſeph* was ſolicited by his wanton Miſtreſs to adultery, he puts her off, with *How then can I do this great wickedneſs and ſin againſt God*(Gen. 39. 9.) He a young man counted it wickedneſs, and a great wickedneſs, though ſome make light of it, and count it only a trick of youth. But God judgeth not as man judgeth; Chriſt ſaith (*Luke* 16. 15.) *That which is highly eſteemed among men* (as good, yea as a great good) *is abomination in the ſight of God*; how much more then are thoſe things abomination in the ſight of God, which in the eſtimate of ungodly men are but a light or a little ſin-evil. And that Adultery, how lightly ſoever any man eſteems the ſin of it, is yet a great ſin, or (as the Text calls it) *an heinous crime*, we may demonſtrate ſeveral ways.

Firſt, It is a direct breach of a divine commandment, there's a law againſt it by name, Adultery is not a ſin againſt Scripture-conſequences and inferences, but againſt the expreſs letter of Scripture, which ſaith to every man, *Thou ſhalt not commit adultery.*

Secondly, Adultery is *an heinous crime*, as it is a breach of a ſpecial ſolemn Covenant between husband and wife in the day of their eſpouſals or marriage; they then gave up themſelves mutually to each other, the husband to be no more his own, much leſs any other womans but his wives, and the wife to be no more her own, much leſs to be any other mans but her husbands; and this ſolemnly witneſſed in the preſence of God and before his people. Therefore adultery is a Covenant-breaking as well as a Commandment-breaking ſin. (*Mal.* 2. 14.) *Yet ye ſay, Wherefore? Becauſe the Lord hath been witneſs between thee and the wife of thy youth, againſt whom thou haſt dealt treacherouſly: yet is ſhe thy companion, and the wife of thy Covenant*; That is, the wife with whom thou haſt covenanted to be hers, as well as ſhe to be thine only. The covenant is reciprocal. The husband is to the wife the husband of her covenant, and the wife is to the husband the wife of this covenant. He to her and ſhe to him hath covenanted to be faithful and loyal.

Thirdly, To ſhew the heinouſneſs of this crime, *Solomon* makes it worſe then Theft (*Pro.* 6. 30.) *Men do not deſpiſe a thief if he ſteal to ſatisfie his ſoul when he is hungry*, &c. Which we are not to underſtand abſolutely, but comparatively to ſome other ſort of ſinners, and particularly of the Adulterer (*Ver.* 32.) *But who ſo committeth adultery with a woman lacketh underſtanding, he that doth it deſtroyeth his own Soul*, As if he had ſaid, A thief is a wiſer and an honeſter man then an Adulterer (though a thief be far enough from being an honeſt or a wiſe man) And we may ſay Adultery is worſe then Theft, as being indeed the worſt theft. To ſteal any thing from another is wickedneſs, and the better that is which is ſtoln the theft is the worſe. But adultery ſteals that which is more valuable then gold and ſilver, or any goods whatſoever that belong to us; He that commits adultery ſteals from a man the beſt thing that he hath, his wife, who is one fleſh with him; yea Adultery is ſelf-robbery, it robs us firſt of our honeſty; Secondly, of our honour; It robs thoſe that are unborn as well as thoſe that are born; it ſteals away the whole inheritance, which often goes not to the right heir, but to a ſpurious brood. It is a wrong to whole private families as well as perſons, yea it is a wrong to the publick or to nations. The evil of it hath been ſhewed more largely at the twenty fourth Chapter of this Book, therefore I ſhall add no more here; But only mind the Reader of thoſe Scriptures (1 *Cor.* 6. 19.) *What? know you not that your body is the Temple of the holy Ghoſt which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own.* And (1 *Cor.* 3. 17.) *If any man defile the Temple of God, him ſhall God deſtroy.* Adultery defiles the Temple of God. There is ſacriledge in it. Our Bodies are or ought to be dedicated unto God, and ſet apart for his ſervice. From theſe premiſes, we may conclude, *This is an heinous crime*, And what more?

It is an iniquity to be puniſhed by the Judges.

The Hebrew is very conciſe, conſiſting only of two words. That which we render *Judges*, is taken either ſtrictly of a conſtituted Magiſtrate, or more largely for any one that is an arbitrator or umpire of differences between man and man, or that judgeth and determineth upon any matter. Thus *Moſes* ſpeaks, (*Deut.* 32. 31.) *Their rock is not as our rock* (that is, the Idols or creature helps which they rely on, are not like God, upon whom we rely for help) *Our enemies themſelves being Judges.* That is, let any of our enemies ſit down and conſider this thing, they muſt be convinced and determin the queſtion for us though againſt themſelves.

פלילים עון *Iniquitas Judicum.*

Some take the word *Judges* here in this large ſence, as to Judge imports any kind of conſideration of or pondering upon a buſineſs. And ſo they make this latter part of the verſe as an expoſition of the former. *This is an heinous crime*, and an iniquity commited by thoſe who judge perpend or conſider the matter; As if he had ſaid, few fall into this ſin abruptly or without meditation, There are many deviſings and workings in the heart antecedent to the perpetration of it. That's a truth.

But I ſuppoſe the Judges here intended, to be ſuch perſons as have power to judge and puniſh the Adulterer upon deliberation about the circumſtances of his ſin; not the perſons who fall into the ſin of Adultery, deliberating (as they often do) how to accommodate all circumſtances for the committing of that ſin. Thus the word is uſed for Judges by office (*Exod.* 21. 22) *He ſhall pay according to the Judges*; This is, what the Judges ſhall determine, or as the ſentence of the Judges ſhall be. And it is often applyed in Scripture and elſewhere to thoſe who are called to decide matters of difference between others. And hence the ſame word in another form, ſignifieth to pray; and the reaſon is, becauſe prayer doth as it were put our cauſe into the hand of God to be judged and determined by him, what he will be pleaſed to do concerning it or us. Thus we read (*Pſal.* 106. 30.) *Then ſtood up Phineas and executed judgment, ſo the Plague was ſtayed.* The Chaldee ſaith, *Phineas aroſe and prayed*, &c. The Septuagint give the ſame ſence in their tranſlation, *He aroſe and appeaſed*, or *made a pacification.* So the word hath this threefold ſignification; Firſt, to judge; Secondly, to pray; Thirdly, to make a pacification, becauſe as in prayer we commit our cauſe to the judgment and determination of God, ſo it is our great buſineſs in prayer to make our peace and ſeek reconciliation with God through the Atonement of Jeſus Chriſt. We render it well in the noun, *by the Judges*,

Iſta verba iniquitas judicata vel judicum ſeu potius judicantium, ſunt prioris ſententiæ expoſitio; ut ſenſus ſit, eſt iniquitas eorum qui benè perpendunt; non eorum qui ex abrupto peccant. Bold.

פלילים *dicuntur arbitri in lege; hinc generaliter Pelilim, pro judicibus qui cauſas cognoſcunt & diſceptant.* Mer.

התפלל *oravit quod qui orationem habet ad aliquem is cauſam ſuam ad illum referat & judicandum permittat.* Merc.

This is an iniquity to be puniſhed by the Judges.] Theſe words (*to be puniſhed*) are not expreſly in the Original; and therefore the Text is tranſlated, firſt, by ſome, *This is a judged ſin.* As if *Job* had ſaid, This is a judged caſe, or that which hath been often determined an heinous crime by the Judges in all Common wealths. Secondly thus; An iniquity that ought to be judged of by the Magiſtrate. So Mr. *Broughton*, *This is a ſin for the Judges*; that is, A ſin fit for the Judges to take notice of and puniſh. It is not only an iniquity that men ſhould avoid, decry, and reprove, but it ſhould be brought to publique judgment and cenſure. From theſe rendrings it appears that *Jobs* ſcope here is to ſhew, that this is ſuch a breach of the Law, ſuch a tranſgreſſion as requires more then an ordinary dealing with. And therefore thoſe additional words which we put to the text in another letter, *To be puniſhed*, Are a plain expoſition what the Spirit of God meaneth, when he ſaith here by *Job*, *It is an iniquity for the Judges.*

Iniquitas Judicata. Iniquitas Judicanda. Comp.ut.

Hence Obſerve, *Adultery is a ſin that deſerveth to be puniſhed by the Magiſtrate.*

There are ſome ſins which the Magiſtrate is not to puniſh; other ſins there are which he cannot puniſh, becauſe they fall not under his cognizance. But Adultery calls for the Magiſtrates coercion.

Firſt, Becauſe it is a wrong to any Common-wealth, and many wayes diſturbs the peace of it, by riots and quarrels.

Secondly, Becauſe it diſturbs the peace of Families, and provokes implacable diſſenſions there.

Thirdly, Becauſe it provokes the wrath of God, and brings dreadful calamities upon Nations. (*Hoſ.* 4. 2.) God hath a controverſie with nations, and ſends Judgments upon them for it; Therefore it is *an iniquity that ought to be judged*; or, *An iniquity to be puniſhed by the Judges.* There are as many conſiderations in this ſin, which cry to Magiſtrates to puniſh it, and put a ſtop to it, as there are in moſt ſins, if not in any ſin, which lieth within the verge of his power. And therefore in all ages and places where Magiſtracy hath been, this ſin hath come under their ſword and cenſure. Adultery is not only a very ſinful ſin, and a very ſhameful ſin, but a ſin againſt which the very light of nature hath given ſevereſt ſentence. Among the ancient *Germans*, if a wiſe were taken in adultery, the law gave her up to the will of her husband, to do with her what he would, not only to exerciſe ſeverity towards her, but even to put her to death. They thought nothing cruelty which was inflicted for Adultery. The *Saxons* before their converſion to the Chriſtian Religion, did ſo deteſt Adultery, that they ſtrangled the Adultereſs, and then burnt her; and hung the Adulterer over the fire till he dyed. The *Romans* made many pœnal laws againſt this ſin. And it ſeems the *Canaanites* had a law, or at leaſt a cuſtom among them, to puniſh adultery with burnings; when *Judah* heard that *Tamar* was with child by adultery, he preſently ſentenced her to the fire (*Gen.* 38. 24.) *And it came to paſs about three months after that it was told Judah, ſaying, Tamar thy daughter in law hath played the harlot, and alſo behold ſhe is with child by whoredom. And Judah ſaid, bring her forth and let her be burnt.* This, I conceive, *Judah* ſpake according to the cuſtom of the place where he lived; for there was no ſuch law then given by God to the Patriarchs. We read how thoſe two falſe Prophets *Ahab* and *Zedekiah* were delivered by God into the hand of that Heathen Prince *Nebuchadnezzar*, who for this heinous crime put them both to exquiſite torments by fire. And the judgment was ſo remarkable that it grew into a Proverb (*Jer.* 29. 22, 23.) *And of them ſhall be taken up a curſe by all the captivity of Judah which are in Babylon, ſaying, The Lord make thee like Zedekiah and like Ahab, whom the King of Babylon roaſted in the fire, becauſe they committed villany in Iſrael, and have committed adultery with their neighbours wives*, &c. Thus the fire of luſt was puniſhed by fire, even among thoſe who had no light to ſee the heinouſneſs of this crime by, but that of Nature. And though few offenders in that kind have fallen under this puniſhment, yet *Solomon* tells us they are all lyable to that or ſome other grievous puniſhment (*Pro.* 6. 2. &c.) *Can a man take fire in his boſom, and his clothes not be burnt; Can one go upon hot coals, and his feet not burnt? So is he that goeth in to his neighbours wife, whoſoever toucheth her ſhall not be innocent*; That is, he ſhall be greatly guilty; And what is guilt but an obligation to puniſhment. When *David* fell into this heinous crime, he found to his ſmart that he was far from being innocent; He taſted, yea was filled with the bitter fruits of it all his days. For though *Nathan* upon his repentance and the humble confeſſion of his ſin, had declared his pardon (2 *Sam.* 12. 13.) And ſaid unto him, *The Lord hath put away thy ſin, thou ſhalt not die*; that is, thou ſhalt not die either preſently (as this thy ſin according to law deſerves) nor eternally, as every ſin by the law deſerves, though I ſay *David* was thus pardoned as to condemnation; yet he was threatned (even in the ſame breath) with ſore and grievous chaſtiſements. God would let him know, and others in him, that his own Children ſhall pay dear for it (not at all in a way of fatisfaction to Juſtice) if they venture to provoke his Fatherly diſpleaſure by that or any other heinous crime.

Tacitus de Antiquis Germanis.

Non ut Judex ita ſtatuit, ſed ex gentis illius conſuetudine in Judiciis recepta fieri procuravit. Merl.

The Moſaical law made Adultery death (*Lev.* 20. 10.) And the death to which that law adjudged Adulterers was ſtoning (*Deut.* 22. 23. 24.) When Chriſt was captiouſly queſtioned by the Jews about the woman taken in adultery, they urged this law (*Joh.* 8. 3, 4.) *And the Scribes and Phariſees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery, and when they had ſet her in the midſt, they ſaid unto him, Maſter, this woman was taken in adultery in the very act. Now Moſes in the law commanded us that ſuch ſhould be ſtoned; but what ſayeſt thou? This they ſaid tempting him, that they might have to accuſe him. But Jeſus ſtooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not: So when they continued asking him, he lift up himſelf and ſaid unto them; He that is without ſin among you, let him firſt caſt a ſtone at her.* As they propoſed a queſtion to inſnare him, ſo he makes a propoſal to them, as they thought, to inſnare them; As if he had ſaid, though I do not deny but ſhe is worthy to be puniſhed with death; Yet here is an anſwer for you; *He that is without ſin among you, let him caſt the firſt ſtone at her*, (Ver. 9.) *And they which heard it being convicted by their own conſcience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldeſt even unto the laſt: And Jeſus was left alone, and the woman ſtanding in the midſt; When Jeſus had lift up himſelf, and ſaw none but the woman, he ſaid unto her, woman where are thoſe thine accuſers? hath no man condemned thee? ſhe ſaid, no man Lord. And Jeſus ſaid unto her, neither do I condemn thee, go, and ſin no more.* He ſaith not, no man ought to condemn thee, but ſeeing none have condemned thee, I will not take that office upon me, I came not into the world to exerciſe Judiciary power againſt offenders, but to purchaſe and procure pardon for offenders. Though Chriſt would have nothing to do in judging that ſin according to the law, yet he doth not deny but rather determin that it was a ſin condemned by the law, and *to be puniſhed by the Judges.*

Nor is it a ſmall piece of Juſtice or of the Judges duty to proſecute and execute thoſe laws which concern either the preventing or puniſhing of this *heinous crime.* And if this crime ſhould eſcape unpuniſhed by men, yet ſure enough God will take his time, and find out ways to puniſh it, yea he will make this ſin puniſh it ſelf, or make it a puniſhment to it ſelf, rather then it ſhall not be puniſhed: As *Job* ſhews in the next Verſe.

Verſ. 12. For it is a fire that conſumeth to deſtruction, and would root out all mine increaſe.

This Verſe contains a further conſideration, which kept *Job* from theſe defilements; And ſurely if the heinouſneſs of the crime in its own nature, and the puniſhableneſs of it by men, be not enough to draw off the Sons and Daughters of Men from it, yet the fiery indignation and wrath of God may.

For it is a fire that conſumeth to deſtruction,] or, *A fire eating to deſtruction*; as the elegancy of the Hebrew hath it. Fire is a great eater; fire hath a ſtrong ſtomack, a little will not appeaſe its appetite; it eats all even to deſtruction; That is, it eats till all be deſtroyed. Some render it, *a fire that eateth to Hell*, (the ſame word ſignifieth Hell and deſtruction) or, *it conſumeth to deſtruction*; that is, to the place of deſtruction, into which they are caſt who periſh with an everlaſting deſtruction. There are ſeveral expoſitions and opinions about this fire; I will give you four diſtinct ones.

אש תאכל *Ignis comedens. Ignis videtur habere os & linguam & actiones comedendi.* 1 King. 18. 38. Iſa. 9. 5.

עד אבדון *Ad Gehennam uſq;* Piſc.

Firſt, Some conceive, that *Job* in theſe words carrieth on his imprecation, or maketh another imprecation; As if he had ſaid, If I have laid wait at my neighbours door, if thoſe ſinful fires have kindled in my boſom, then let fire conſume my houſe, and all I have to deſtruction.

Secondly, Others expound this fire in a tropological or moral ſence; luſt doth not only meritoriouſly kindle outward fires to conſume and deſtroy us, but it ſelf is a conſuming fire, and it conſumes to deſtruction. The fire of this luſt conſumes both body and goods, that is, the good things which concern the body. Further, it conſumes the good things of the Soul; it conſumes the indowments and furniture of the Soul, all the ſtock and ſtore of the inner man, all vertuous diſpoſitions and inclinations. This fire burns up thoſe buds and bloſſoms of the mind, good thoughts and deſires, right affections and intentions. This fire is moſt deſtructive to our beſt goods or good things. And as it devours the flowers of ingenuity and vertue in moral men, with the gifts and appearances of goodneſs in common profeſſors, ſo it extreamly withers the real graces of godly men. This ſin conſumed *David* even to deſtruction, and brought him as low as Hell in his ſpiritual condition. *David* was brought ſo low by it, this fire had ſo conſumed his graces, that he begs (*Pſal.* 51. 10.) *Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right ſpirit within me:* and this fire had ſo conſumed his comforts, that he pray'd, *Reſtore to me the joy of thy Salvation* (Verſ. 12.) The fire of this

Adulterium eſt ignis omnia virtutum & ſanctarum rerum in homine incrementa conſumens. Phil.

luſt

Aſmodeus ille dæmon malus, qui dicitur rex ſuper omnes filios luxuriæ; nomen habet ab igne nam אש *ignis eſt et* מדד *metiri is igitur eſt qui ignem menſurat, novitque quantum incendii luxuriæ in corde humano excitari poſſit, &c.* Pined.

luſt makes woful havock whereſoever it comes and kindles. That evil Spirit *Aſmodeus*, who is called by ſome, a King over all the ſons of luſt and uncleaneſs, hath his name compounded of two words, the firſt ſignifying *fire*, the ſecond *to meaſure*, becauſe he (as it were) meaſures out fire, filthy fire, and blows up thoſe luſtful flames in proportion to the deſires and opportunities of unclean perſons.

Thirdly, This fire ſay others is the fire of jealouſie, kindled either in Husband or wife when wronged by adultery. *Solomon* deſcribes the jealouſie of an abuſed Husband (*Prov.* 6. 34, 35.) *Jealouſie is the rage of a man* (that is, jealouſie puts man into ſuch a rage, that it hardly leaves him to be a man, and what is rage but fire in man?) therefore it followeth, *He will not ſpare in the day of vengeance*; he will ſpare no more then fire will by any entreaty; yea he will not let this fire be quencht with that which often quencheth rage, a gift, or ranſom; *He will not regard any ranſom, neither will he reſt content; though thou giveſt many gifts*; we know 'tis fire which kindles fire; the fire of adultery, kindles the fire of jealouſie, which nothing can put out. 'Tis in its kind an unquenchable fire, a fire that goeth not out of man, till man goeth out of the World.

Ignis dicitur ab effectu.

Fourthly, I rather take this fire for thoſe conſuming effects which are produced by this ſin, Firſt, it kindles divine wrath, which is often compared to fire, as God himſelf in his anger is (*Heb.* 12. 29.) *Our God is a conſuming fire.* Not that this or any other ſin makes any change in God, but when we ſin, God diſcovers that wrath againſt ſinners, which before he did not. Secondly, all or any other evils which God in wrath ſends upon ſinners, are as a fire to conſume them to the deſtruction. (*Deut.* 32. 22.) *A fire is kindled in mine anger* (that is, mine anger hath kindled a fire) *and it ſhall burn to the loweſt Hell, and ſhall conſume the Earth with her increaſe.* So *Job* ſpeaks in the cloſe of this verſe. *It would root out all mine increaſe.* Adultery is a ſin, which not only pulls off the leaves, flowers and fruit, or which only pulls down the branches, boughs, and body of the Tree; as it was ſaid of that Tree (*Dan.* 4. 14.) *Hew down the Tree, and cut off his branches, ſhake off his leaves, and ſcatter his fruit,* &c. *Neverthele*ſ*s, leave the ſtump of his roots in the Earth, even with a band of Iron and braſs in the tender graſs of the field,* &c. But Adultery pulleth up the very roots; it not only deflours mans eſtate or takes off the beauty and glory of it, but layeth it waſt root and branch.

It would root out all mine increaſe.

תבואה *à radice* בוא *quod eſt venire, exire, egredi. Specialiter & cum adjuncto dicitur fructus terræ,* &c.

The word ſignifieth all kind of **increaſe**, or any thing that cometh forth; eſpecially the increaſe of the Earth or of Cattel, (*Lev.* 23. 29.) Hence we may expound it in this largeſt ſence; as if *Job* had ſaid, This ſin of Adultery would have utterly ruin'd and undone me.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *As adultery is a foul ſin in the nature of it, ſo it is a dangerous ſin in the effects and conſequents of it.*

It is a fire, or it ſtirs up a fire, it provokes the wrath of God, and that wrath of God ſends fire to conſume all. How many have felt the woful conſumptions and deſtructions which this ſin hath made? How many have been conſumed to deſtruction by it? Adultery conſumes all.

Scortum viro ſicut eruca cytino. Proverb. Hebr. *Omnia hujus ſeculi bona diſſipat, vorat, perdit, eo nempe ſenſu, quo Helena dicitur conſumpſiſſe Trojanos.*

Firſt, It conſumes Riches, and is a moth in a mans outward eſtate, many have been begger'd by it. The Hebrew proverb is, *As the Palmer-worm to the buds of the Pomgranates, ſo is a Harlot to a man.* And *Solomon*'s ſpecial proverb ſaith as much (*Prov.* 6. 26.) *By means of a whoriſh woman a man is brought to a piece of bread,* &c. Beggery attends at the Adulterers door, and wantonneſs is paid with want. Great and Noble families, large and fair revenues have been eaten up, and brought to nothing by it. Uncleanneſs is a coſtly ſin; for beſides incident expences which are many, (and expence of time which is moſt) Harlots and whoriſh women often demands great bribes of their adulterous lovers; Hiſtory tells us of one profeſſing that curſed Trade, who demanded ſo high, that her lover was wiſe enough to anſwer; *I will not buy repentance ſo dear.*

Secondly this fire conſumeth (which is better then wealth, yea then precious ointment) a mans honour and good name, among all thoſe whoſe names are truly honorable. Adultery expoſeth to obloquie; *Solomon* tells us, it leaves an indelible blot of diſgrace upon the Adulterer (*Prov.* 6. 33.) *A wound and diſhonour ſhall he get* (that is, a wound in his honour) *and his reproach ſhall not be wiped away.* Some men get honour while they get wounds; ſo do valiant Souldiers in lawful Wars; and ſo do noble Martyrs in faithful ſufferings, or ſufferings for the faith. Theſe get honour while they get wounds, and ſtill the more wounds the more honour. But certainly the Adulterer can never get honour by any wounds he gets, and he gets many in that baſe and ignoble War, ſeeing his greateſt wound is in his honour, and the ſcar of that wound is ſuch as cannot be taken out. The ſcar of reproach which that ſin made in the name of *David*, was not quite wiped away, though the ſin as to guilt was pardoned. God hath cauſed that ſin of his to be mentioned, even in thoſe Scriptures where he is pleaſed to paſs over all his other ſins as if he had never ſin'd them.

Thirdly, As it conſumes honour, ſo the health and ſtrength of the body, it leaves the man ſpirit-leſs, and unfit for the labour of any honeſt or honourable employment. *Solomon* gives this, among the former, as an argument to draw off all wandrings of affection after unlawful pleaſures (*Prov.* 5. 8, 9, 10, 11.) *Remove thy way far from her, and come not nigh the door of her Houſe, leſt thou give thine honour unto others, and thy years unto the cruel; leſt ſtrangers be filled with thy wealth, and thy labours be in the Houſe of a ſtranger.* (Thus he urgeth the two former Topicks, poverty and diſgrace, then follows this third) *And thou mourn at laſt when thy fleſh and body are conſumed.* A whoriſh woman doth not only waſt the ſubſtance of a mans wealth, which his or his progenitors labour hath gotten, but ſhe waſts alſo the ſubſtance of his fleſh, by which he is enabled to labour, and at laſt leaves nothing but a debilitated languiſhing body, and a mind full of anguiſh.

Fourthly, This fire conſumes life, and ſhortens the days of man on Earth; it brings untimely old age, or makes a man old before his time, or makes an end of him before he is old.

I might ſhew Fifthly, how this ſin darkens and dulls the underſtanding; how ſixthly, it defiles the Conſcience; how ſeventhly, it enthrals the will, and makes the affections wild; how eightly, it deſtroys or weakens the memory; how ninthly, it corrupts all the ſences; how tenthly, it brings wrath, contention, diviſion and confuſions into the family. And

Nequitia eſt quæ te non ſinit eſſe ſenem. Ovid. lib. 1. Faſt.

Laſtly, Which is worſt of all, it is ſuch a fire a devours the peace of the Soul, and eats up the hopes of eternal life. Adultery conſumes not only to a temporal but to eternal deſtruction; though we deny the Popiſh diſtinction of ſins into mortal and venial, yet ſome ſins (and this above many) are, ſpecially markt in Scripture as mortal ſins. Every ſin hath death in it, the wages of ſin as ſin (not as great) is death (*Rom.* 6. 23.) yet this is one of the moſt dangerouſly deadly ſins. *Solomon* ſpeaks of the Adulterers caſe as deſperate (*Prov.* 2. 19.) *None that go unto her return again, neither take they hold of the paths of life.* Not that every one who commits that ſin is irrecoverably damned; the free and powerful grace of God hath given both repentance and pardon to the worſt of ſinners. But when the Spirit of God ſaith, *None that go unto her return*, we are to underſtand it, firſt of ſuch as are accuſtomed to that filthineſs, which is implied in that word *go*, noting a continued act, or a conſtant courſe of it. Secondly, when 'tis ſaid, *none return*, it teacheth us, that very few of them, or (as we ſay) few or none of them return. Thirdly, it ſhews how extream difficult it is for ſuch to return; where there is much delight, much of the will in any ſin, O how unwilling are men to leave it, and come off from it! Adultery is a bewitching ſin, an enthralling ſin, and God in wrath gives Adulterers up many times into the hands of their luſts, ſo that they prevail over them for ever. Laſtly, that which makes the recovery of ſuch ſo difficult, is that they ſeldom perceive their own danger, and are apt to flatter themſelves that God will not be ſo ſevere as to caſt them to Hell, or ſhut them out of Heaven for it. When the Adulterer is put into that black Catalogue, of which it is ſaid none of them ſhall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, the Apoſtle promiſeth a caution againſt this ſelf-flattery and deceit (1 *Cor.* 6. 9.) *Be not deceived* *neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abuſers of themſelves with mankind,* &c. *ſhall inherit the Kingdom of God.* As if he had ſaid, I know many will think this over-hard and harſh, and feed themſelves with vain hopes of ſpeeding better then ſo; But, ſaith he, *Be not deceived.* And as there he would not have them deceive themſelves with vain hopes, ſo he cautions the ſame ſort of ſinners, to take heed of being *deceived with the vain words* of other men, who poſſibly might ſpeak peace to them in this ſin; *For* (ſaith he, *Eph.* 5.6. let others ſay what they will) *becauſe of theſe things the wrath of God cometh upon the children of diſobedience.*

Again, *Job* having ſaid, Adultery is an heinous crime, and that the Judges ought to take notice of it and puniſh it, he preſently adds, *it is a fire,* &c.

Hence obſerve, Secondly, *The more ſinful any ſin is, the more certain are the woful effects of it.*

By how much any ſin goes higher in tranſgreſſing the rule of the law of God, by ſo much doth it fall the lower under the penalty of the law. Every ſin hath deſtruction in it, yet deſtruction is not the iſſue of every ſin; But *Job* ſpeaks of this ſin as unavoydably concluding under this iſſue, *It is a fire that conſumeth to deſtruction.*

Thirdly, Whereas *Job* having ſpoken of this ſin as calling for puniſhment from the Judges, preſently ſpeaks of its puniſhment by God, we may note.

If Magiſtrates neglect to puniſh adultery, yet God will not.

The Lord will kindle a fire that ſhall conſume ſuch ſinners to deſtruction, though men touch them not with a little finger, The Judges of the earth often let thoſe wholeſome laws which have been made againſt this heinous crime (as it was once complained in the Common-wealth of *Rome*) lie dormant or aſleep; yet the judgment of God againſt it ſlumbreth not, (*Heb.* 13.4.) *Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judg:* As if the Apoſtle had ſaid, let men neglect to judg Adulterers, God will be ſure to judg them, *&c.* But will not God judg all other ſinners? Doubtleſs he will. Why then doth the Apoſtle ſay, *Whoremongers and adulterers God will judg.* The meaning is, firſt, he will judg them certainly; Secondly, he will judg them ſeverely, God hath ways enough to puniſh this ſin, he hath rods, yea ſcorpions ready for the backs of theſe fools. And he can make his little finger heavier upon the back of this ſin, then the Magiſtrates loins; And where the Magiſtrate doth not his part, he uſually doth ſo. It is the complaint of a modern Expoſiter upon this place; *The fire of divine Judgments* (ſaith he) *hath waſted far and near in revenge of theſe unruly luſts, which the world makes but a ſport of, and paſſeth by as a jeſting matter, ſo that they are themſelves the deſtroyers of Chaſtity who ought to be the maintainers and defenders of it.* If this ſin be not judged and puniſhed in private offenders, it may quickly call down publick Judgments. The Prophet (*Hoſ.* 4.1,2.) numbers Adultery among thoſe abominations, for which the Lord hath a Controverſie with the inhabitants of a Land, yea for this un-oppoſed and unpuniſhed ſin a land ſometimes ſpeweth or vomiteth out its inhabitants (*Lev.* 18.20,25,28.) And O how burdenſom are the inhabitants of a land to it, when it ſpeweth out its inhabitants!

Lex Julia dormit.

Late nunc ignis ille divini judicii omnia corripuit & vaſtavit propter vagas libidines, quas mundus hic pro joco & ludo ducit, ita ut pudicitiæ ſint expugnatores, qui ejus defenſores eſſe debuerunt. Merl.

Fourthly, In that the Spirit of God directs *Job* to expreſs this ſin, which is a metaphorical fire in the nature of it, by natural fire, as to the deſtructive effects of it. Here again

Obſerve; *God ſometimes ſheweth us the nature of a ſin in the puniſhment of it, or lets men ſee their ſin in their puniſhment.*

This bodily luſt is a fire, As the Apoſtle ſpeaks (*Rom.* 1.27.) *They burned in their luſt one towards another*; So here one fire kindles another, and God puniſheth burning with burning; many make it their buſineſs to blow up thoſe luſtful fires, (whereas we ſhould make it our buſineſs to quench and mortifie them) therefore the Lord kindles a fire in his anger to burn them up. This was litterally acted upon *Sodom* and *Gomorrha*; They burned in their unnatural helliſh luſts (*Gen.* 19.) and the Lord ſent a fire from Heaven which eat them up. We may conceive that many Nations and Common-wealths have appointed that puniſhment of fire for Adulterers, becauſe that ſin hath in it the nature of fire. Yea God hath prepared that lake which burneth with fire and brimſtone, to puniſh theſe burnings and filthy fires.

Further, *Job* ſpeaking of this ſin, Acquaints us not only with the evil nature of it, as it is *an heinous crime*, but with the evil effects of it, as it renders us obnoxious to the laws of men, eſpecially to the law of God, and thoſe terrible fires which are kindled in his wrath againſt it. All theſe conſiderations *Job* laid to his own heart, and improved them to keep himſelf at the utmoſt diſtance from complying with the Allurements of this luſt.

Hence note, *We may look to the effects and ſad conſequents of ſin, as well as the nature of it, to keep our ſelves from falling into it.*

A godly man is carried out againſt ſin, chiefly as it is a breach of the law, a defilement of the Soul, and a grief to the Spirit of God. But yet he knows how to make uſe of all other notions, in which it is repreſented. He can make uſe of the fire and wrath that is in ſin. And this not in a legal but ſpiritual way. He that hath attained to the greateſt ſpiritualneſs may do ſo, and be ſpiritual in it. How holy a man was *Job*! how full of evangelical principles! yet thoſe principles of the danger of ſin had their place with him. Chriſt directs to ſuch apprehenſions (*Luk.* 12.5.) *Fear him which after he hath killed, hath power to caſt into hell, I ſay unto you fear him.* Threatnings have their uſe as well as promiſes; And they who are heirs of the promiſe, know how to make a profitable uſe of threatnings. A godly man looks not only to the evil and filth of ſin, and abhors it, but he looks alſo to the danger of ſin and avoids it. He looks upon the blackneſs of ſin and loaths it; And he looks upon the fire that is in ſin and fears it. *Who can take fire in his boſom, and not be burnt?* is *Solomons* queſtion in relation to this ſin of adultery, (*Pro.* 6.27.) Surely no man can; He that takes this ſin into his boſom, takes fire into his boſom, and will not fire in the boſom burn? And we may put another queſtion in relation to the ſame ſin; Is any man ſo fooliſh or fool-hardy, as to take fire into his boſom? Surely no man is. But though no man will take natural fire into his boſom, no nor touch it willingly with his little finger, yet how many are there who take this figurative fire into their boſoms, yea let it lie burning in their Souls.

Again, *Job* ſaith of Adultery, *It is a fire that conſumeth*; He puts it in a direct predication.

Hence note, Sixthly, *The evils that at any time are upon us, are vertually or in effect our ſins.*

Thus the Prophet tells the people of *Iſrael* (*Jer.* 4.18.) *Thy way and thy doings have procured theſe things unto thee, this is thy wickedneſs, becauſe it is bitter, becauſe it reacheth unto thine heart.* So we may ſay of the fire that conſumeth theſe ſinners, *This is your adultery, this is your uncleanneſs.* We may ſay of Famine, and the ſword deſtroying other ſinners, theſe are your drunkenneſs, *&c.* Some wickedneſs or other produceth all theſe.

Laſtly, (ſaith *Job*) *it is a fire that conſumeth.* We ſay of thoſe natural elements, fire and water, *They are good ſervants, But bad Maſters*, becauſe they are deſtructive where they have a prevailing power. Fire hath of it ſelf but one way of coming to an end or going out, and that is by the utter conſumption of that matter which feeds it, or is the fewel of it; ſuch a thing is ſin.

Ignis unum terminum vincendi habet ut deſtruatur quod ſubactum eſt. Plutarch. in Camillis.

Hence note, *Sin conſumeth all.*

Fire is an unmerciful element, But ſin is ten thouſand times more unmerciful. Myſtical fire is more unmerciful then natural fire. Natural fire when it hath done its utmoſt can but conſume corporal things, but this myſtical fire conſumeth ſpiritual things. It conſumeth and will conſume the whole ſubſtance of the Soul (I mean not as to the being, but comfortable being of it) unleſs the blood of Chriſt quench it. Sin will never leave till it hath deſtroyed all in one of theſe two ſences, either by taking away our being in this world, or by giving us a moſt miſerable being in the world to come.

Thus *Job* hath purged himſelf by proteſtation from a third ſin, the ſin of Adultery; He proceeds to a fourth, And that is injuſtice towards or harſh dealing with his ſervants.

VERS. 13, 14, 15.

If I did deſpiſe the cauſe of my man-ſervant, or of my maid-ſervant, when they contended with me:
What then ſhall I do, when God riſeth up? and when he viſiteth, what ſhall I anſwer him?
Did not he that made me in the womb, make him? and did not one faſhion us in the womb.

IN the four Verſes laſt opened, *Job* approved himſelf a faithful Husband to his Wife, *his heart had not been deceived by a woman; he had not laid wait at his neighbours door.* In theſe three Verſes he proceeds to prove that he had been a juſt Maſter to his ſervants. Thus *Job* ſhined bright in the ſphere of all his relations, and was an ornament to them all; and indeed the profeſſion of Religion ſhines brighteſt and is moſt adorn'd in our anſwerableneſs to the duty of our relation, as Husbands to our Wives, as Fathers to our Children, as Maſters to our ſervants. How juſtly and gently *Job* had carried himſelf in that relation of a Maſter to his ſervants, appears

Firſt, In that conditional propoſition, *Ver. 13. If I did deſpiſe the caſe of my man-ſervant, or of my maid-ſervant, when they contended with me;* Which may be reſolved into this negative; I never did deſpiſe the cauſe of my man-ſervant; nor of my maid ſervant, when they contended with me. Nor doth he barely deny the doing of this, But

Secondly, He gives us the grounds upon which, or the motives why he did it not. And thoſe very prevailing ones.

Firſt, Becauſe he knew that himſelf had a Maſter, and that he was an impartial Maſter, who would take an account of him, as well as of his meaneſt ſervant (*Ver. 14.*) *What then ſhall I do when God riſeth up? and when he viſiteth, what ſhall I anſwer?* This is, I can never anſwer it in caſe I have been unjuſt to my ſervants.

The ſecond motive or ground preſſing *Job*'s ſpirit to an evenneſs, and moderation toward his ſervants, was becauſe he had no preheminence over them, as to his and their natural production and procreation. He and they were formed and moulded by the ſame individual hand or power, and in the ſame ſpecifical place or houſe (*Ver. 15.*) *Did not he that made me in the womb, make him? and did not one faſhion us in the womb?* As if he had ſaid, *Though my ſervant and I be at a diſtance, and much differenced in our civil condition or capacity, yet we are the ſame in our natural, and therefore I have always had a regard to do him right, and to deal with him as my equal in that one reſpect, how much ſoever in other reſpects I know my ſelf his ſuperior and above him.* Thus you have the ſcope and parts of theſe three Verſes. Which I ſhall now more diſtinctly open.

Verſ. 13. *If I did deſpiſe the cauſe of my man-ſervant, or of my maid-ſervant,* &c.

Men in power are very apt to deſpiſe thoſe who are below them, and proud men cannot but do ſo. They that are in high places, have uſually high thoughts of themſelves, and they that are high-minded can have no other. With what diſdain do ſuch behold poor underlings? how lightly do they eſteem, yea how heartily do they deſpiſe them?

The word rendred *deſpiſe*, ſignifieth alſo to loath, and ſuch loathing as cauſeth vomiting. In proper ſence to deſpiſe another is to ſlight him; yea it is ſlighting to the utmoſt, ſuch ſlighting as we beſtow upon the vileſt and moſt abject either things or perſons. Now when *Job* ſaith, *If I did deſpiſe*, or, *I did not deſpiſe the cauſe of my man-ſervant*, we are not to take the words in a ſtrict and rigid ſence, as if *Job* only denied that he did deſpiſe the cauſe of his ſervant, or utterly reject him as unworthy to be heard when he complained to him or brought his cauſe before him; Bnt when he ſaith, *I did not deſpiſe the cauſe of my man-ſervant*, &c. his meaning is, I treated with him fairly, and heard him favourably, I gave him all that reſpect which was due unto him in his place, and to his cauſe in the equity of it. Thus the Scripture ſpeaks often by that figure which Rhetoricians call *Meioſis*, giving us a word of a lower ſignification then the ſcope of the place intendeth. Thus when *David* ſaith (*Pſal. 51. 17.*) *A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not deſpiſe*, the meaning is, God graciouſly accepts and highly prizeth a broken heart. And when the Apoſtle dehorts the *Theſſalonians*, and us in them, from deſpiſing Prophecy (*1 Epiſt. 5. 20.*) we are not to think we have done our duty, if we do not ſlight that ordinance of Prophecy, or not utterly caſt it off and lay it aſide as uſeleſs; but when the Apoſtle dehorts from deſpiſing, he exhorts to an honourable eſteem of it, or that we ſhould uſe and attend it often. So here *Job*'s purpoſe is to ſhew, that he gave his ſervants, all deſerved countenance and encouragement, when he only ſaith, *If I did deſpiſe*

מאס *effert nauſeam quandam rei viliſſimæ & abjectiſſimæ.*

The cauſe of my man-ſervant, &c.

The word rendred *cauſe*, ſignifieth alſo *judgment, rule, meaſure*, we tranſlate clearly to the point in hand, *the cauſe of my man-ſervant*; that is, I did not deny him Juſtice when he called for my Judgment in a righteous or good cauſe: I did not throw the buſineſs out of the Court, or ſay I would not meddle with his matters, *I did not deſpiſe the cauſe*

משפט *variam habet notionem, ſignificat enim judicium, normam, menſuram, regulam, legem.*

Of my man-ſervant, or maid-ſervant.

He expreſſeth ſervants under both ſexes, becauſe he would ſhew how extenſive his Juſtice was. The word rendred *man-ſervant*, put alone, ſignifieth a ſervant in general; but becauſe the *maid-ſervant* is expreſt, we tranſlate diſtinguiſhly, *man-ſervant, If I did deſpiſe the cauſe of my man-ſervant,*

Or of my maid-ſervant.

Who being of the weaker ſex had the leſs ability or opportunity of the two, to right her ſelf, if I had done her wrong; yet I did not deſpiſe the cauſe, no not of *my maid-ſervant.*

The word rendred *maid-ſervant*, ſignifieth *to be true and truſty, and faithful*; As if he had ſaid, *I did not deſpiſe the cauſe of a faithful ſervant, though a ſimple maiden.* He had reaſon to deſpiſe a wicked and unfaithful ſervant, but the meaneſt ſervant, the meaneſt of maid-ſervants that was truſty and did her duty faithfully, *Job* did not deſpiſe. *If I did deſpiſe the cauſe of my man-ſervant, or of my maid-ſervant,*

אמה *domus fidelem fidam miniſtram ſonat.*

When they contended with me.

The word rendred, *to contend*, ſignifies both judicial and extrajudicial contendings. 'Tis yet reſtrain'd uſually to contending in words and law-ſuits. The Children of *Iſrael* (Exod. 17. 2.) did chide with *Moſes* when they wanted water, and thereupon (*Ver. 7.*) *he called the name of the place Maſſah and Meribah, becauſe of the chiding of the Children of Iſrael,* &c.

But how did *Job*'s ſervants contend with him? I anſwer, we are not to underſtand this *contending*, either firſt, of bold, or as we ſay, ſaucy contendings; *Job* was a wiſe man, and would not have indured ſuch unmannerly ſervants in his houſe. Neither ſecondly, are we to underſtand it, of contending, by gain-ſaying, or contradicting his orders and commands, a Maſter who knows his place will not ſuffer that. Nor thirdly, are we to underſtand it of any unreaſonable murmuring and diſlike upon every frivolous or light occaſion. Theſe things are not to be permitted, much leſs cheriſhed in any (ſuch as *Job*'s was) well governed family: and if ſervants will contend thus with their Maſters, they have reaſon not only to deſpiſe and diſlike them, but unleſs they amend, to diſmiſs, and put them out of their houſes. Therefore this contending of his ſervants with him, was upon ſome conſiderable cauſe, and then he did not deſpiſe them, *Though they contended with him.*

ריב *in foro & extra litigavit, cauſam dixit, contendit, jurgavit. De verbata tantum contentione dicitur.*

There is a theefold expoſition of this their contending with him.

Firſt, Some interpret it of complaints made by his ſervants againſt him before other Judges. But this is objected againſt upon a double reaſon. Firſt, Becauſe ſervants in thoſe times had not the liberty of impleading their Maſters, though

Si quid ambiguum in quo famuli deciſionem judiciariam quærerent, non eos imperioſe rejici, ſed ad judicem alium, ego ipſe ſupremus regionis judex rem totam remiſi. Paraph. *Servis olim non competebat actio in jure civili.* Druſ.

though they had done them wrong, or made them (as the *Egyptian* task-maſters made the *Iſraelites*, Exod. 1. 13.) ſerve with rigor. Secondly, *Job* being himſelf a Magiſtrate, and as ſome aſſert the chief Magiſtrate in that Country, would not (probably) admit of an appeal, eſpecially made by a ſervant from himſelf; And therefore, though to have done ſo would have argued a very great condeſcenſion in *Job*, yet I do not conceive this proper to the Text.

Secondly, Others expound it of contentions between ſervant and ſervant brought before him to judge and determine; As if he had ſaid, When my ſervants complained of, or brought accuſations againſt one another, I did not deſpiſe their cauſe, but laboured to reconcile them, or do them Juſtice as well as any other of my ſubjects or people within my Dominion. But though it be a great honour to a man in Authority, to ſee Juſtice done in his own family as well as abroad, and that, as he will not ſuffer his ſubjects, ſo not his ſervants to oppreſs and wrong one another. Yet the Text doth not favour this interpretation; which without too great a violence done to the Grammatical conſtruction, cannot be rendred *when they contended before me*, but *with me*. And therefore

Servis meis libertæ orationis & cauſæ ſuæ defendendæ poteſtatem faciebam ut ſi quid fortè à me per injuriam in eos committi ſuſpicarentur, audacter dicerent. Olimp.

Thirdly, (as we render) This contention was moſt probably with himſelf. As if *Job* had ſaid. *When any of my ſervants had matter of complaint about any houſhold grievance, I gave them free liberty to do it; they were not afraid to preſent their caſe to me, whom they always found their Patron as well as their Maſter; and as ready to do them right, as to expect ſervice from them.* Sometimes ſervants complain that their reward or wages is too little, ſometimes that their work is too much and lyeth too heavy upon them. When *Job*'s ſervants contended with him about theſe or any ſuch matters, he heard them patiently, and either gave them redreſs, if their complaints were right, which many Maſters would not, or convinced them by his wiſdom and the weight of his reaſons, that their complaints were unreaſonable, which moſt Maſters could not. *I did not deſpiſe the cauſe of my man-ſervant, or of my maid-ſervant, when they contended with me.*

Hence note, Firſt, *There may be occaſions of contending, or differences ariſing between Maſters and Servants, even in well ordered Families.*

Job was a juſt man, *A man that feared God and eſchewed evil*; yet he intimates there had been contentions in his Family. 'Tis hard (if not impoſſible) to walk ſo evenly in any relation, but there may be occaſions of complaint. And as the Maſter hath uſually many occaſions to complain of his ſervant, ſo the ſervant may have ſome to complain of his Maſter. The corruptions of men will work in all relations, nor is any eſtate in this life without its ſpecial temptations. The Apoſtle *Paul* was ſurely much convinced of this, elſe he had never taken up ſo great a part of his ſhort Epiſtles to the *Coloſſians* and *Epheſians*, of thoſe alſo to *Timothy* and *Titus*, in giving ſuch exact and particular rules about the duties both of Maſters and Servants.

Secondly, Obſerve. *A Servants cauſe muſt not be ſlighted.*

Meminerimus & adverſus infimos juſtitiam eſſe ſervandam: Eſt autem infima conditio & fortuna ſervorum. Cic. lib. 1. de Offic.

God hath ſet Maſters over their ſervants, but he hath not given them a liberty to trample them under their feet; ſervants are under their Maſters power, not under their luſts, they are to be governed, not deſpiſed by them. Maſters ſhould be as ready to diſcharge duty towards their ſervants, as to require duty and ſervice of them. When the Apoſtle (*Eph.* 6. 5.) had exhorted ſervants to do their duty, and to do it (as they ought) *with fear and trembling in ſingleneſs of heart as unto Chriſt*; he adds (*Ver.* 9.) *And ye Maſters do the ſame things unto them*; That is, do that in your place which belongs to you, as you expect they ſhould do what belongs to them in theirs. As they ought to ſerve, ſo you ought to govern in the fear of God. Maſters are not bound to do the ſame things for the matter with their ſervants. They are not to wait upon their ſervants, or be at their appointment, as ſervants ought, for then all order were diſſolved. But Maſters are bound to do the ſame things for the manner, for the care of both ſhould be in their mutual duties chiefly to pleaſe and approve their hearts to God. Thus we are to underſtand the Apoſtle when he ſaith to Maſters concerning ſervants, *Do the ſame things unto them, forbearing threatning* (that is, hard and grievous words, cloathed with wrath) *knowing that your Maſter alſo is in Heaven.* He urgeth the ſame argument again (*Col.* 4. 1.) *Maſters give unto your ſervants that which is juſt and equal, knowing that ye alſo have a Maſter in Heaven.* There is no Maſter but is a ſervant; And therefore as he requires work of his ſervants; ſo his Maſter requires this work of him, that he do what is juſt and equal to his ſervants. And as every ſervant muſt be juſtly dealt with, ſo ſome ſervants deſerve to be kindly and reſpectfully dealt with. It is ſaid (*Luk.* 7. 2.) *The Centurion had a ſervant who was dear unto him.* Both the Syriack and Greek word imports *a ſervant of great price, or a precious ſervant.* Good and faithful ſervants are rare, and therefore precious, As ſuch ſervants are of great uſe, ſo they ſhould be of great price or eſteem with their Maſters. *A wiſe ſervant* (ſaith *Solomon*, Pro. 17. 2.) *ſhall have rule over a ſon that cauſeth ſhame, and ſhall have a part of the inheritance among the Brethren.* The Moraliſt ſaid of a faithful ſervant, he is (*humilis amicus*) *a leſſer friend, an inferiour friend*; and indeed much ſuperior to many, who are under the name of friends and are our kindred. Some in high prejudices againſt ſervants, and poſſibly from their own experiences, having never met with thoſe that were good, have ſaid, *There is nothing worſe then a ſervant, no not then a good ſervant; if you uſe him well, he will be the worſe, if ill, he will be ſtark naught.* But we need not take theſe mens votes, againſt ſervants, for Oracles; The Oracles of God, the holy Scriptures have ſpoken better things of them and for them. This is all I ſhall ſay of them, that (as in all other relations among men) for a few good there are many bad, and that like *Jeremies* figgs, the good uſually are very good, and the bad very bad.

Eadem dicit non opere aut officio ſed modo & proportione. Eſtius.

יקיר Ἔτιμος. *Familiariter cum ſervis tuis vivis? hoc prudentiam tuam, hoc eruditionem decet. Servi ſunt? imo contubernales, imo humiles amici, imo conſervi.* Sen. Epiſt. 47.

Servo nihil pejus ne bono quidem; ſi benè tractas pejor eſt, ſi malè peſſimus.

Again, *Job* was not only a Maſter but a Magiſtrate, and ſo he was two removes from his ſervant. The meaneſt man in the world, that hath a ſervant is above his ſervant; But ſome are above their ſervants more then others. *Job* was above them by a double diſtance; yet fearing God he ſpeaks thus; *I did not deſpiſe*, &c.

Hence note, *A godly man will not make uſe of his power, to the oppreſſion of any, how mean ſoever.*

Though his ſervants are his ſubjects alſo, yet he will not wrong them. 'Tis a rare thing for a man to be a righteous Judg in his own cauſe, and that towards an inferior. And if we conſider the ſtate and condition of ſervants in thoſe times wherein *Job* lived, we ſhall ſee that he was a mirror of patience in bearing with his ſervants, as well as in bearing his ſufferings under the hand of God. For

Firſt, Servants in thoſe times could not change their Maſters at pleaſure, if they diſpleaſed them: they could not go from them when they would. Servants were then in the nature of ſlaves, or ſervants for life.

Secondly, Such ſervants had nothing that they could call their own; what they got it was to their Maſters uſe.

Thirdly, Their Maſters might uſe them at their pleaſure. No plea was allowed them in Courts of Juſtice. Servants had none to right or relieve them, how much ſoever their Maſters did abuſe and wrong them, or deny them thoſe things that were neceſſary.

Omnis illis ne illos licebant. Senec.

Fourthly, In ſome places Maſters had power of life and death; If a Maſter had kill'd his ſervant, there was no more matter made of it, nor account given about it, then if he had kill'd a beaſt. Their ſervants were their own, even as their cattel were their own; Thus it was in thoſe times. But under the light and knowledg of the Goſpel, ſervants have better terms, and Maſters have only a limited power over them. This ſhews the evenneſs of *Job*'s ſpirit, his gentleneſs and kindneſs in not taking liberty to do what the courſe of the world gave him leave to do, becauſe it was againſt a good conſcience and the will of God. He did not deal with his ſervants by his Prerogative, but they had free liberty to plead for themſelves. And where in equity he was obliged to do them right he did it. From all take theſe five inferences.

Firſt, If *Job* were ſo ready to hear his ſervants when they contended with him; then much more to right them againſt the contentions of other men.

Secondly, If he dealt mildly with them that contended with him, then much more with thoſe who were meek and quiet.

Thirdly, If he were thus reſpectful to ſervants, then much more to friends and equals.

Fourthly, They that are advanced unto any authority, ſhould remember that God doth not give them power to be proud of it, or vex others with it. Let not the greateſt Princes think that the world was made for them, but they for the world. The reaſon why God hath ſet up Maſters and Magiſtrates, is not the advancemet of one or more above the reſt, but that there might be order and government for the good of all men in common.

Fifthly, Every man ſhould be owned as a Maſter in his own family. That's the Orignial of all Government; and a man may expect to be heard and obſerv'd in his own Houſe.

Job having ſhewed how he treated his ſervants, ſheweth upon what ground it was ſo, or what fell upon his thoughts, cauſing him to carry himſelf with ſo much moderation towards them.

Verſ. 14. **What then ſhall I do, when God riſeth up? and when he viſiteth, what ſhall I anſwer?**

As if he had ſaid, when God ſhall be awakened by the cry of my oppreſſed ſervants, what then will become of me? Theſe are the words of a man in diſtreſs, or in a ſtrait; he turns himſelf this way and that, he thinks of this and that, but nothing will do; and then in much amazement of Spirit, he crys out, what ſhall I do? I know not what to do. Such was the language of good King *Jehoſhaphat* (2 Chron. 20. 12.) *We know not what to do, but our eyes are upon thee.*

This praiſe, *What ſhall I do?* May have a threefold ſignification.

First, 'Tis a word of enquiry; *What ſhall I do?* Saith he, that asketh counſel and advice, not knowing and being unreſolved what to do; that the loweſt ſenee.

Secondly, It is a word of grief and trouble; *What ſhall I do?* Saith he, that bemoaneth his own ſad caſe, or bad condition, being perplexed in mind about what he hath done or fears to ſuffer.

Thirdly, (which is the height of it) 'Tis a word of deſpair, *What ſhall I do?* Saith he, that thinks is quite undone. *Job* might ſay in all theſe ſences, *What ſhall I do?* *Job*'s fair dealing with his ſervants, did not proceed meerly from the ingenuity and gentleneſs of his nature, much leſs from a fear of humane Laws, but from a holy fear of God in his righteous judgments. *What ſhall I do?* If I have done that which God and my own Conſcience bear me witneſs, I never did, *deſpiſed the cauſe of my man-ſervant, or of my maid-ſervant, when they contended with me.* If that were my caſe, in how woful a caſe were I? *What ſhall I do*

Deus Judex ſedere dicitur quando jus reddit, in executione ſententiæ idem quaſi ſurgit. Druſ. *Surrectio eſt declaratio potentiæ.* Rab. David in Pſal. 68. 1, 2.

When God riſeth up?] Properly God doth neither ſit nor riſe, but theſe poſtures are attributed to God in Scripture figuratively, or after the manner of men, who ſometimes ſit and ſometimes riſe. God is ſaid to ſit in alluſion to Earthly Judges who ſit to hear Cauſes and give Sentence; and when God proceeds to Execution, then he is ſaid to riſe up. To riſe up notes a readineſs or preſent preparedneſs for ſpeech or action. He that riſeth up bucgles himſelf to ſome buſineſs, to do what he hath determined. Gods riſing up is but the manifeſtation of his purpoſe, and the actuating of his power. Thus *Moſes* prayed and thus the Church of the *Jews* was taught to pray at the removing of the Ark (*Numb.* 10. 35. *Pſal.* 68. 1.) *Riſe up Lord* (ſaid *Moſes*) *and let thine enemies ſcattered. Let God ariſe* (ſaid the Church) *let his enemies be ſcattered, let them alſo that hate him flee before him.* The very riſing of God is the fall and fliht of his enemies, Who can ſtand when he riſeth? What elſe then is his riſing but the exertion or putting forth of his great power? And therefore *Job* had reaſon enough to put this trembling queſtion, *What ſhould I do when God riſeth up?*

And when he viſiteth, what ſhall I anſwer?

To viſit is taken three ways in Scripture.

First, To viſit is to ſhew favour and kindneſs freely *Luke* 1. 68.) *God hath viſited and redeemed his people*, and (*verſ.* 78.) *Through the tender mercies of our God, whereby the day-ſpring from on high hath viſited us.* This was the kindeſt viſit that ever was made in this world. Chriſt in the great day will recount and everlaſtingly reward the kindneſs of thoſe who have viſited him (that is, any member of his) when he was ſick. And how will his people for ever recount his kindneſs to them, and bleſs him for it, who viſited them when they were ſin ſick to death, yea dead in ſins and treſpaſſes.

Secondly, To viſit is to declare diſpleaſure and to puniſh (*Exod.* 32. 34.) *Nevertheleſs, in the day when I viſit I will viſit their ſin upon them*; that is, I will puniſh them for it, and they ſhall feel the ſmart of this ſin. The Scripture ſpeaks much and often of this viſitation. This is a ſad viſit, yet always a righteous and juſt one.

Thirdly, to viſit is the work of any ſuperior, when he reckons with or calls thoſe to account, who are under his charge and inſpection. Thus the founders of Colledges and Hoſpitals appoint Viſitors to enquire how the ſtatutes and rules of thoſe Societies are obſerved, how their Revenues are diſpoſed, and how the Officers and Governours of them have diſcharged their truſt, and performed their duties. The viſitation here ſpoken of is directly this third, and conſequentially the ſecond. As if *Job* had ſaid, when God who is the great Superintendent over all the families in the World, ſhall come to viſit mine, and to enquire how I have dealt with my ſervants, if I have wronged them, or not done them right againſt thoſe who would, *What ſhall I anſwer?* Surely I ſhall have never a word to ſay, I ſhall not be able to frame an anſwer my ſelf, nor can any Advocate among the ſons of men draw up one for me, which will hold water in the day of that viſitation. *When he viſiteth, what ſhall I anſwer?*

In viſitatione ejus; cū ipſe in nos animadvertet.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *A godly man remembers, how much ſoever he is above others on Earth, that yet God in Heaven is above him.*

He conſiders, there is one who will riſe up and viſit for him that is oppreſſed; *Job* looked upon himſelf not only as he was a Lord and Maſter, but as having or as being under a Lord and Maſter. There are few ſo high on Earth, who have not ſome on Earth higher then they; but there are none on Earth ſo high, who have not one higher then they. The proud *Aſſyrian* Prince *ſaid in his heart* (Iſa. 14. 13, 14.) *I will aſcend into Heaven, I will exalt my Throne above the Stars of God, I will aſcend above the heights of the Clouds, I will be like the moſt high*; yet how unlike he was to the moſt High, and how low the moſt High laid him, notwithſtanding all his pride and pomp, we read at the 15. verſe of the ſame Chapter, *Thou ſhalt be brought down to Hell, to the ſides of the Pit.* 'Tis good for all that are in place above others, to think often of this, leſt they provoke the moſt high God, who hath ſet them on high, to lay them low, yea lower then the loweſt. One of the Ancients reproving the extream and unlimited ſeverity of Maſters towards their Servants, or of Princes towards their Subjects, gives them this ſchooling; *You do not acknowledg your Lord God or God to be your Lord, while you exerciſe ſuch Lordſhip over men.* It is reported of *Trajan* the Emperour, that he gave free leave to his Subjects to implead him in open Court, and his chief glory was this, that in Law-ſuits his Exchequer was often caſt; *Which* (ſaith the ſame Author) *never hath bad cauſe, but under a good Prince.* Nations and Families are happy, when Magiſtrates and Maſters remember there is a Maſter over them, and act as men accountable to a higher power. *Job* knew there was one who would riſe up and viſit him, as he viſited his Servants, and required duty and obedience from them. *What then ſhould I do, when God riſeth up?*

Non agnoſcis dominum deum tuum, cum ſic exerceas ipſe Dominatum. Cyprian. in tract. contra Demetr.

Præcipua tua gloria eſt, ſæpius vincitur fiſcus cujus mala cauſa nunquam eſt niſi ſub bone principe. Plin. in panegyr. Trajani.

Hence Note, Secondly, *The fear of God not of man, keeps a godly man from doing wrong to any the meaneſt man.*

Job poſſibly might have eſcaped well enough from all the men in the World, if he had trampled his Servants under his feet, or (as ſome ſay) made dice of their bones; but the fear of God preſerved him from ſuch rigorous and unrighteous dealings. *Abraham* argued (*Gen.* 20. 11.) *I thought ſurely the fear of God is not in this place, and therefore they will ſlay me.* And ſurely where the fear of the Lord rules in the heart, it will over-rule the life and keep power within its bounds or due compaſs from breaking out to the hurt of others. Thus *Joſeph* ſpake to his Brethreh (*Gen.* 42. 18.) *Do this and live, for I fear God*; As if he had ſaid, I being ſo far above you, could make good my accuſation againſt you that ye are ſpies, and deſtroy you, and no man in *Egypt* but would take my part: *But I fear God, therefore do this and live.* There are many who, were it not for the fear of men, would never make any ſtop or ſcruple to do what they have power and will to do. Yea there are ſome, who make a kind of mockery at it, when they are told God will judg them; *Let us alone* (ſay they) *till that day and we care not.* Atheiſm lies cloſe in the hearts of moſt over whom it prevails, yet it prevails ſo mightily over ſome, that they cannot keep it cloſe, but out it will, at their lips. That Judg in the Parable, *feared not God, nor regarded man.* They who are not awed by the fear of God, will do little in love to man. *Job* ſaith at the 34. verſe of this Chapter, *Did I fear a great multitude? Or did the contempt of families terrifie me?* That is, did I for fear of men, either of the many or of the mighty forbear to do Juſtice? I did not: I was above ſuch cowardiſe and baſe fears. But though *Job* was not afraid of men, ſo as to be kept from his duty, yet the fear of God kept him from doing any thing againſt his duty. *What ſhould I do, when God riſeth up?* &c.

Thirdly, Note, *The fear of evil to be endured, is a good motive to keep us from doing evil.*

Job was really afraid of after-reckonings, if he had over-reckoned, or dealt unrighteouſly with his ſervants. It is our duty to mind our danger, that we may be more mindful of the rule. Penalties are the word of God as well as Precepts, and Threatnings as well as Commandments. Not to do evil meerly for fear of evil, or only for wraths ſake, is the fear of a Slave not of a Son; yet that fear of evil which helps to keep the heart and life clean, is a ſon-like fear. Fear is a grace as well as love, and works as purely in a gracious Soul. This fear doth not trouble us in our way, but ſtays us in it. *Job* was a man fearing God, and this fear wrought in his heart when he ſaid, *What ſhould I do when God riſeth up, and when he viſiteth what ſhall I anſwer?*

Timor hic non perturbat ſed confirmat. August.

Fourthly, Obſerve, *God will call all to an account about what they have done, and puniſh all thoſe that have done wrong.*

There is nothing paſſeth from man, but he muſt paſs an account about it ſooner or later. When the people of *Iſrael* were in hard bondage, God aroſe for them, and called *Egypt* to a reckoning (*Exod.* 3. 7.) *I have ſeen, I have ſeen the affliction of my people,* &c. *And I am come down to deliver them,* &c. And by *Moſes* he warns Maſters to uſe their ſervants well, leſt it go ill with themſelves (*Deut.* 24. 14, 15.) *Thou ſhalt not oppreſs an hired ſervant that is poor and needy,* &c. *At his day thou ſhalt give him his hire, neither ſhall the Sun go down upon it, for he is poor, and ſetteth his heart upon it, leſt he cry againſt thee unto the Lord, and it be ſin unto thee*; that is, leſt as it is ſin in its nature, ſo thou findeth and feeleſt it to be ſin in the effects of it. Thus the Apoſtle awakens the griping rich men of thoſe times, and of all times (*James* 5. 4.) *Behold the hire of the labourers, which is of you kept back by fraud cryeth; And the cryes of them which have reaped, are entred into the ears of the Lord of Sabbaoth.* (Pſal. 12. 5.) *For the oppreſſion of the poor, for the ſighing of the needy; now will I ariſe, ſaith the Lord, I will ſet him in ſafety from him that puffeth at him.* And when the Lord ſets the poor in ſafety, will not their rich oppreſſors be in danger? He that folds the ſheep, will deſtroy the Lions and the Wolves. Once more; *If thou* (ſaith *Solomon,* Eccl. 5. 8.) *ſeeſt the oppreſſion of the poor, and violent perverting of Judgment and Juſtice in a Province, marvel not at the matter* (that is, do not wonder that great men are ſo wicked, as to oppreſs thoſe whom they ought both to protect and relieve, neither do thou wonder that God ſuffers them to go on in their wicked oppreſſions, be confident that he will not always ſuffer them) *for* (as it follows there) *he that is higher then the Higheſt* (and who is that but the moſt high God) *regardeth,* that is, taketh notice what oppreſſors do, and what the oppreſſed ſuffer, and will in the fitteſt ſeaſon right, yea recompence the one, and reckon with, yea ruine the other. Therefore as the Prophet admoniſheth all men to be quiet and look to their duty, becauſe the Lord was riſen (*Zach.* 2. 13.) *Be ſilent, O all fleſh before the Lord, for he is raiſed up out of his holy habitation*; that is, he hath begun to ſhew himſelf in his mighty power and providences for the aſſerting of his peoples liberty, and the reſtoring of *Jeruſalem* to her ancient beauty; ſo we may admoniſh all men to be and do ſo, becauſe God will certainly riſe up to viſit and call every man to an account for what he hath done.

This call of man to account, may be conſidered in three periods.

Firſt, God doth it often in this life, he reckons with them by ſtroaks, he lays trouble upon their loins, and gives them up to as hard hands as ever they have laid upon others.

Secondly, God calleth men to an account at the hour of death; *It is appointed for men once to die, and then cometh the Judgment.* There is a perſonal particular judgment before the general Judgment.

Thirdly, God will ariſe to viſit and call all men to an account at the Reſurrection of the dead. Then every one muſt anſwer for himſelf, and for all that he hath done. No man ſhall eſcape that Judgment of God, nor can any thing in man eſcape that Judgment. In that viſitation day Chriſt will look thorough us, he will look thorough our works, and thorough our hearts. As we muſt all appear before the Judgment-ſeat of Chriſt, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to what he hath done whether it be good or bad (2 *Cor.* 5. 10.) ſo then it will appear not only what is good and what is bad, but how good and how bad every thing which hath been done is. In that great Audit and viſitation day, none but the righteous ſhall be able to anſwer. And though they will anſwer according to their own righteouſneſs, yet they cannot anſwer in it. As none but the righteous ſhall ſtand in that Judgment, ſo none can ſtand but in the righteouſneſs of Chriſt the Judg; and if none can anſwer then but in the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, which is the righteouſneſs of God, what will become of them that are not righteous, ſo much as with the righteouſneſs of man? How will it fare with ſuch, we may learn in the next point, grounded upon thoſe words of *Job* in the former part of the verſe, *What ſhall I do when,* &c.

Hence Obſerve, Fifthly, *Sinners of all ſorts, eſpecially oppreſſors, will be at their wits end, they will not know what to do, or what to ſay when God ariſeth and calls them to an account.*

Who is able to expreſs, yea or conceive, with what confuſed horror the guilty ſons of men will cry out in that day, *What ſhall we do? When the great day of the Lords wrath is come, who ſhall be able to ſtand*; (Rev. 6. 17.) Now ſinners flatter and ſo acquit themſelves; they have many plea's and excuſes, to colour over their fouleſt actions and oppreſſions: But as the Apoſtle ſaith (*Rom.* 2. 1.) *Thou art inexcuſable, O man*; that is, there is no excuſe, no Apology to be made for thee in this caſe by others, neither wilt thou at laſt have the confidence (though now thou haſt) to make any for thy ſelf; for (*verſ.* 3.) *Thinkeſt thou this O man, that judgeſt them which do ſuch things, and doeſt the ſame, that thou ſhalt eſcape* (by thy fine excuſes) *the judgment of God?* Yea though a man doth only that evil which he never judged or condemned; but applauded and juſtified others, yea and himſelf in, yet he ſhall not eſcape the Judgment of God. As in the buſineſs of Juſtification every mouth ſhall be ſtopped (one and other) and all the World become guilty before God; ſo the World of unjuſt and ungodly men ſhall ſtand guilty before God, and have their mouths ſtopt for ever. *When the Lord came to view thoſe that were at the wedding* (Matth. 22. 11.) What had the man to anſwer, who had not on a wedding garment? The Text ſaith, *he was ſpeechleſs,* he had not a word to ſay for himſelf. The Prophet repreſents the ſad condition of ſinners in this form (*Iſa.* 10. 1, 2.) *Woe unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, and that write grievouſneſs that they have preſcribed* (that is, who are not only ſo unjuſt as to give order for the doing of grievous things, but ſo impudent as to cauſe their orders to be entred and recorded as publick Monuments of their injuſtice and oppreſſion) *to turn aſide the needy from judgment, and to take away the right from the poor of my people, that widows may be their prey, and that they may rob the fatherleſs. And what will ye do in the day of viſitation and in the deſolation which ſhall come from far?* The Prophet ſpeaks of the ſame viſitation for kind that *Job* did, and he ſpeaks of the perſons to be viſited in the ſame words; *What will ye do?* And (as it follows) *to whom will ye flee for help?* As the poor have ſought help of you but found none, ſo you ſhall ſeek to others for help but ſhall not find it, *And where will ye leave your glory?* That is, your riches and worldly goods which you have ſcraped out of the bellies of the poor, and count your glory, or glory in them. This will be the general cry of ſinners when God comes to viſit, what ſhall we do? Who will help us? They who now will not do what they know they ought, or will do what they know they ought not, ſhall at laſt cry out in vain, woe and alaſs, what ſhall we do? We know not what to do. When God called *Cain* to account for his brothers blood, which cryed to him for vengeance, he had nothing to anſwer, but that which was no anſwer, *Am I my brothers keeper?* When God ſhall call the idle and unprofitable ſervant to account, who hath hid his Talent in a napkin or under ground, what will he anſwer? When God ſhall call the evil ſervant to account, who took his brother by the throat for an hundred pence, after himſelf had been forgiven all his debt, even ten thouſand Talents, what will he have to anſwer? There are many ſinners, who ſtand mute now, and will not confeſs their ſins, and in the great viſitation day, all ſinners will be forced to ſtand mute, as not being able to anſwer for ſo much as any one for their ſins. Unleſs now men get the anſwer of a good Conſcience purged by the blood and Spirit of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, their evil Conſciences will never be able to make any anſwer at his Tribunal. Let every impenitent ſinner put theſe Queſtions often to his own heart, *What ſhall I do, when God riſeth up? And when he viſiteth, what ſhall I anſwer?* He that ſeriouſly catechizeth his own Soul with theſe Queſtions, will either reſolve, in the ſtrength of Chriſt, not to continue in ſin any longer, or elſe he ſeems reſolved to ſit ſilent in darkneſs under the wrath of Chriſt for evermore.

This is the firſt reaſon which *Job* made uſe of to keep himſelf in a due temper and even carriage towards his ſervants, the conſideration of the account, that God would call him to, *When he viſiteth, what ſhall I anſwer?* He ſubjoins a ſecond reaſon why he did not deſpiſe the cauſe of his ſervant.

Verſ. 15. **Did not he that made me in the womb make him, and did not one faſhion us in the womb?**

This reaſon is taken from the oneneſs or likeneſs of ſervants and Maſters. There are three conſiderations under which Maſters and ſervants are all one.

Firſt, (which is the greateſt of all) as to Goſpel grace; a ſervant may as ſoon and as much be made partaker of the grace of the Goſpel as his Maſter, and a common man as ſoon as any Prince or King. *In Chriſt Jeſus there is neither Greek nor Jew, bond nor free* (Col. 3.11.) that is, Chriſt had as much reſpect to the one as to the other, in the laying down of his life, and ſtill hath in the offers of his grace. He doth not beſtow free-grace upon any man becauſe he is free, or free-born, nor doth he deny it any man becauſe he is bound, being either born or made a Bond man.

Secondly, The Maſter and the ſervant ſhall ſtand alike before the Lord in the Judgment at the great day (*Rev.* 20.12.) *And I ſaw the dead ſmall and great ſtand before God, and the Books were opened: And another Book was opened which is the Book of life, and the dead were judged out of thoſe things which were written in the Books, according to their works.* Great men and ſmall men are all men. Nor doth he mean it only (if at all) of great and ſmall in ſtature, but of great and ſmall in degree. Thus Lords and Maſters are great men, Subjects and Servants are ſmall men; theſe dead, that is, raiſed from the dead, *John* ſaw (in viſion) ſtanding alike (though much unlike in this World) before God to be judged at the end of the world. He had ſuch a viſion, though (as ſome interpret) not intending the ſame time or thing. (*Rev.* 6.15.) *And the Kings of the Earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief Captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman and every free-man hid themſelves,* &c. Why ſo? (*v.* 17.) *For the great day of his wrath is come*; that is, a day of great wrath is come upon the wicked of all ſorts.

Thirdly, They are alike in their original formation. This *Job* urgeth in the Text upon his own heart; *Did not he that made me in the womb make him?* He that made the Maſter, made the Servant. And he that faſhioned them, faſhioned them alike in the womb. Maſters and Servants were not made by ſeveral hands. Did the God of Heaven make Maſters and great men, Kings and Princes, and did ſome inferiour power make Servants, Plebeians and the poor? No; (ſaith *Job*)

He that made him, made me.] There is a great elegancy in the Hebrew, which tranſlations cannot well reach; *He that made me, made him.* We both had the ſame efficient, the ſame faſhioner.

Nota Eleganter dici עשהו עשני *qui me fecit, fecit & illum.* Merc. כון *Elegātem et concinnam formationem & omniū membrorū aptam inter ſe proportionem, jam inde à matris utero elaboratam ſignificat.*

Did not one faſhion us in the womb?

The word which we render *to faſhion*, ſignifies two things; firſt, the firmneſs of a work; and ſecondly, the fitneſs and exactneſs, the ſymmetry and (as it were) curioſity of it. Both which do wonderfully appear in the frame of mans body, (as Naturaliſts have obſerved with amazement) is the moſt proportionable and beſt faſhioned piece in the World; and the pattern of all Artificial proportions. How admirably is the body of man contrived and put together! How comely is the faſhion of it! *Did not one faſhion us in the womb?* As if *Job* had ſaid, God was as exact and curious, or (as I may ſay) he took as much pains in the forming and limiting the meaneſt ſervant as the mightieſt Prince in the World; and though the bodies of men have diſtinct and particular features, complexions, and favours (otherwiſe they could not be known from one another) yet they have all one common or general both faſhion and faſhioner. *Did not he that made me in the womb make him? Did not one faſhion us in the womb?*

Hence Note, *God is as much the maker of every man who is conceived and born by natural generation, as he was the maker of man at firſt by Creation.*

Moſes thus deſcribes the Creation of man (*Gen.* 2.7.) *The Lord God formed man of the duſt of the ground, and breathed into his Noſtrils the breath of life: And man became a living Soul.* Now what God did then immediately, he doth ſtill by means. Do not think that God made man at firſt, and that ever ſince men have made one another. No (ſaith *Job*) *he that made me in the womb made him, David* will inform us (*Pſal.* 139.14.) *I am fearfully and wonderfully made, marvellous are thy works,* &c. As if he had ſaid, Lord I am wonderfully made, and thou haſt made me, I am a part or parcel of thy marvellous works, yea the Breviate or Compendium of them all. The frame of the body (much more the frame of the Soul, moſt of all the frame of the new Creature in the Soul) is Gods work, and it is a wonderful work of God. And therefore *David* could not ſatisfie himſelf in the bare affirmation of of this, but enlargeth in the explication of it (*verſ.* 15.) *My ſubſtance was not hid from thee when I was made in ſecret, and curiouſly wrought in the loweſt parts of the Earth. Thine eyes did ſee my ſubſtance yet being unperfect, and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were faſhioned, when as yet there was none of them.* *David* took no notice of father or mother, but aſcribed the whole efficiency of himſelf to God. And indeed *David* was as much made by God as *Adam*; and ſo is every ſon of *Adam*. Though we are begotten and born of our Earthly parents, yet God is the chief parent and the only faſhioner of us all. Thus graciouſly ſpake *Jacob* to his Brother *Eſau*, (Gen. 33.5.) demanding, *Who are theſe with thee? And he ſaid, The Children which God hath graciouſly given me.* Therefore as the Spirit of God warns (*Pſal.* 100.3) *Know ye that the Lord is God, it is he that hath made us and not we our ſelves.* Which as it is true eſpecially of our ſpiritual making, ſo 'tis true alſo of our natural. And if ſo, Then,

Firſt, Give glory to God and acknowledg his hand in the framing of your bodies; and know that as your beauty is from him, ſo are your very blemiſhes. The faults and errata's that are in Nature, came not without a divine order, they are not meerly accidental but appointed.

Secondly, Take heed of pride in beauty or in any natural accompliſhments; *What haſt thou that thou haſt not received?* Is true of bodily endowments as well as ſpiritual, and doth equally caſt down pride in either. And if there be a blot or a diſproportion of parts in the compoſure of the body, yet ſeeing it comes by the hand of God, do not murmur, be not diſcontent. *Woe to him that ſtriveth with his Maker, ſhall the clay ſay to him that faſhioneth it, What makeſt thou?* (Iſa. 45. 9.) This argument both the Prophet and the Apoſtle after him (*Rom.*9.20.) makes uſe of to a higher purpoſe. The former to quiet the murmurings of men againſt Gods preſent providential diſpenſations. The latter to ſtop all diſputes and quarrellings about his eternal purpoſes and decrees in diſpoſing of men according to the ſoveraign pleaſure of his own will. And if this argument be enough to allay either of thoſe murmurings and diſputes, how much more thoſe diſcontents and impatiences which ſtir in and break out from ſome, becauſe their bodys are not better faſhion'd and more model'd to their own mind?

Secondly, If we are all made by God, and made as much now by him as at the firſt, *take heed of perverting his work by putting that which he hath made to ſerve him, to ſerve againſt him.* Our bodies are of him, therefore they ſhould be to him, The Apoſtle chargeth us (1 *Cor.* 6. 20.) to glorifie God in our body, and in our ſpirit, which are Gods by purchaſe or redemption: Our bodies alſo are his by Creation or formation, upon which account we are likewiſe bound to glorifie him by and in them. It is uncomely to uſe or employ any thing contrary to the end or uſe for which it was made. And it is not only uncomely but extreamly dangerous to employ it againſt its Maker. Though our obligation to God be greateſt for our ſpiritual making, or for making us Saints, yet there is a great obligation upon us for our corporal making, or for making us men. So then as Saints owe themſelves in ſpecial to God, becauſe he hath faſhioned them by his Word and Spirit, ſo all men owe themſelves to God, becauſe he hath faſhioned them in the womb. And as we are wholly made and faſhioned by God (we have not made ſo much as a little finger of our ſelves, no nor ſo much as a hair of our head) ſo let us give up our ſelves wholly to God; let us take heed of keeping back an ear, or an eye, or an hand from God, To keep any one member from God, or to give it up to any other, will be as dangerous as the ſin of *Ananias* and *Saphira* (Acts 5.) who kept back a part of the price, when they had dedicated it all to God. And know that we are not in our power, or at our choice (as they were before the dedication of their eſtates) whether we will dedicate our bodies with all their members, and our Souls too with all their faculties unto God or no, but it is as much our duty to dedicate them, as it is when we do ſo to dedicate them wholly unto God. *Did not he that made me in the womb make him?*

Secondly, Obſerve, *God is as much in the making of the meaneſt Servant, as the greateſt Lord in the World.*

Yea he hath beſtowed as much coſt on the out-ſide and on the in-ſide (as to naturals) of thoſe that are low as of thoſe that are higheſt in the World. The Body and Soul of a Servant is as good as his Maſters. Yea oftentimes a Servant hath a better Body, a more beautiful and comely Body, a Body better compact and conſtituted then his Maſters; yea and not ſeldom a better Soul, that is, a better judgment and underſtanding, he may be wiſer and more judicious then his Maſter. (*Prov.* 14. 31.) *He that oppreſſeth the poor, reproacheth his maker.* We may underſtand it both ways; the oppreſſour reproacheth his own maker, and ſo the maker of the poor man too, becauſe both have but one and the ſame maker. We have that ſence more fully (*Prov.* 22. 2.) *The rich and the poor meet together, the Lord is the maker of them all.* The rich and poor are at greateſt diſtance in their outward eſtate, yet in many things they meet. They meet both (as *Job* ſpeaks in the Text) in the womb; both being conceived and faſhioned there, and brought forth from thence. They both meet in one common Nature, being reaſonable Creatures, conſiſting of Soul and Body. They both breath in the ſame air, and dwell upon the ſame Earth. They both meet in the ſame Maker, and in the ſame Maſter; the ſame ſupream hand makes one man rich, and another man poor; the ſame alſo maketh the man that is poor and the man that is rich: Yea they both meet in this, that the rich man or the Maſter needs the poor man or a Servant as much as the poor man needs the rich or a Servant his Maſter. The one needs work as much as the other needs wages; the rich man ſtands in as much need of the poor mans labour, as the poor man doth of the rich mans relief. Whatſoever differences, or degrees there are among men, they meet and are alike in many, yea in moſt things. And that God who hath made both the Maſter and the Servant, the Rich and the Poor, can quickly make (as he hath often made) the Rich man Poor, and the Poor man Rich; the Maſter a Servant, and the Servant a Maſter.

Yet many act towards their Servants, and the poor, as if they were of another mould or Original; and keep at ſuch a diſtance as if they had never met in any thing, nor ever could. Though indeed (as one of the Ancients cenſure ſuch) He that contemns any man becauſe he moves in a lower worldly ſphere then himſelf, *is himſelf not above but below all men*; for he diveſts himſelf of his humanity, and doth not act like a man while he ſo proudly conceits himſelf unlike other men. They are men of no real worth or value, who value themſelves over-much beyond other men. What is there in the matter or the maker of one man more then of the other? And that any man is poor, or a Servant, doth not ariſe from his Nature, but from providence or divine diſpenſation. Heathens have ſaid, *It is not Nature but Fortune that ſets a man in the ſtate of a Servant*; Chriſtians ſhould ſay, it is not Nature but God that doth it. *Auguſtine* in his 19. Book of the City of God, hath an excellent paſſage to this purpoſe; *At firſt* (ſaith he) *God gave man dominion over the irrational Creatures, not over men. The word Servant was not heard of early in the World.* The firſt news we have of it was by *Noah*, (*Gen.* 9. 25.) *Curſed be* Canaan, *a Servant of Servants ſhall he be.* Servants came not at firſt from the inſtitution of God, but from the ſin of man. God did not impoſe the ſtate of a Servant upon man, till man by ſin refuſed the ſervice of God. When we look upon our Servants from whom we expect ſervice and obedience, it ſhould mind us of our diſobedience to our Lord and Maſter. And we ſhould often remember with much ſelf humiliation, that it was our rebellion againſt God, which hath brought man into this kind of ſubjection to man.

Rationalem hominem factum ad imaginem ſuam noluit niſi irrationalibus dominari, non hominem homini, ſed hominem pecori, &c. Nomen itaque ſervi culpa meruit non natura. Auguſt. l. 19. de Civ. Dei cap. 15.

Thirdly, from the connexion and ſcope of theſe three verſes laid together. Obſerve,

This conſideration, that *Maſters and Servants have the ſame Maker*, ſhould meeken and moderate the Spirits of Maſters towards their Servants, and keep all men in high place from high and ſwelling thoughts of themſelves, as alſo from contemning thoughts of thoſe who are of any lower form then they in the World. *Job* was confident (*Chap.* 14. 15.) *That God would have a deſire to the work of his hands.* Surely then all they that are the work of his hands, ſhould under that notion, both have a deſire and give a ſuitable reſpect to one another. *God humbleth himſelf* (Pſ. 113. 6.) *to behold* (that is, to take care of and provide for) *the things that are in Heaven and in the Earth*, and ſhall men be ſo proud as not to behold with a favourable regard thoſe who are (where themſelves are) on Earth. When the Apoſtle *Peter* ſaw *Cornelius* inclining to give him more honour then came to the ſhare of a Creature, he not only modeſtly but graciouſly declined it, ſaying, *Stand up, I my ſelf alſo am a man* (Acts 10. 26.) Now as we ſhould take heed of receiving more honour from any man then becomes us as men, becauſe this were to intrench upon Gods prerogative, and to take that from God, which he hath ſaid he will not give to any other (his glory.) So we ſhould take heed of deſpiſing the meaneſt men, or our meaneſt Servants, ſeeing they alſo are men, and men of the ſame make, having alſo the ſame Maker with our ſelves; becauſe in deſpiſing them we reflect upon God who made them, and deny them that reſpect which he hath commanded every man to give unto any other man. For as the Apoſtle ſaith of the members of the Natural Body (1 *Cor.* 12. 23, 24.) *Thoſe members of the body which we think to be leſs honourable, upon theſe we beſtow more abundant honour, and our uncomely parts have* *more aboundant comlineſs ; for our comely parts have no need, but God hath ſo tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacketh, that there ſhould be no ſchiſm in the body, but that the members ſhould have the ſame care one of another* ; As (I ſay) God hath ordered the members of the Natural body (which the Apoſtle there applies and makes uſe of with reſpect to the Spiritual body, the Church, which is a company of profeſſing believers gathered by their own free conſent into a holy fellowſhip) So alſo he hath ordered the members of that Civil body whether greater in Nations and Commonwealths or leſſer in houſholds and families, ſo that there might be no ſchiſm in them neither, but that the leſs honourable members might be both cared for and encouraged by fitting reſpects to do their duty for the good of the whole Body.

And if Maſters and Governours ought to carry it mildly, moderately and honourably toward their Servants, then let Servants and all inferiours under Government, remember it is our duty to carry it humbly and reſpectfully towards their Maſters, Superiours, and Governours. And therefore we find the Apoſtle *Paul* in his Epiſtles as ſtrict in giving charge to Servants to walk orderly and obey the commands of their Maſters in all things according to the will of God, as he is careful to moderate the rigour of Maſters in exerciſing their power over, and in giving commands to their Servants. And as he teacheth Maſters to uſe their Servants well, ſo he teacheth Servants to behave themſelves *well towards their Maſters.* And he urgeth this eſpecially upon Servants profeſſing Godlineſs, leſt they bring a ſcandal upon profeſſion (1 *Tim.* 6. 1.) *Let as many Servants as are under the yoke, count their own Maſters worthy of all honour, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blaſphemed.* And where thoſe Servants which being believers had alſo believing Maſters, might poſſibly by their oneneſs with them in ſpiritual priviledges forget the diſtance of their civil relation, and ſo grow more bold and familiar with them (becauſe Brethren in the faith) then became Servants in the family ; therefore he adds a ſpecial caveat in that caſe to prevent ſuch preſumption (*verſ.* 2.) which let the reader conſult. Thoſe families are happy, peaceable, and proſperous, where Maſters know how to command, and Servants how to obey out of Conſcience and in the fear of God.

VERS. 16, 17, 18.

If I have withheld the poor from their deſire, or have cauſed the eyes of the widow to fail.

Or have eaten my morſel my ſelf alone, and the fatherleſs hath not eaten thereof.

For from my youth he was brought up with me as with a father, and I have guided her from my mothers womb.

IN theſe three verſes, as alſo in thoſe following to the 24. verſe of this Chapter (all which make up one intire context) *Job* avows his care of and tenderneſs towards the poor. Which he makes appear ;

Firſt, By his readineſs to help them in their ſtraits, yea to help them out of their ſtraits, at the 16. verſe ; *If I have withheld the poor from their deſire, or have cauſed the eyes of the widow to fail.*

Secondly, He ſhews it by the comfortable proviſion he had made for them, or by their free admiſſion to and entertainment at his Table ; *v.* 17. *If I have eaten my morſel my ſelf alone, and the fatherleſs hath not eaten thereof* : And he ſeems to give a reaſon or proof of both theſe acts at the 18. verſe, *For from my youth he was brought up with me as with a father, and I have guided her from my mothers womb.*

Thirdly, He ſhews his care of and charity to the poor, as in feeding, ſo in clothing them at verſ. 19, 20. *If I have ſeen any periſh for want of clothing, or any poor without covering : If his loins have not bleſſed me, and if he were not warmed with the fleece of my ſheep,*

Fourthly, He ſhews it by his forbearance of all rigorous courſes againſt them, though he had power and opportunity, yea poſſibly ſometimes a provocation to do it ; *verſ.* 21. *If I have lift up my hand againſt the fatherleſs, when I ſaw my help in the gate,* As if he had ſaid, *I could have done it, but I did it not* ; In all theſe particulars he exemplifies and gives inſtance of his tenderneſs to the poor. And this he he confirms two ways.

Firſt, By a dreadful imprecation upon himſelf in caſe he had not done ſo, at *verſ.* 22. *Then let mine arm fall from my ſhoulder-blade, and mine arm be broken from the bone.*

Secondly, he confirms it by the dreadful apprehenſions that he had of the majeſty of God, which kept him from doing ſo, at the 23. verſe ; *For deſtruction from God was a terrour to me : And by reaſon of his highneſs I could not endure.* Thus you have the ſcope of *Job*, as alſo the ſeveral parts of this context, from the 16. verſe incluſively to the 24. verſe excluſively, in which as in a glaſs we may behold not only the beautiful and lovely face, but the honeſt heart and working bowels of a well-grounded and rightly exerciſed charity.

Verſ. 16. **If I have with-held the poor from their deſire.**

This verſe contains the firſt point of *Job*'s rich compaſſion to the poor. As if he had ſaid ; *I was not only careful that they ſhould not want things of abſolute neceſſity, but gave them what they could reaſonably deſire.* Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates ; *If I ſtayed the poor from the wiſhed*, that is, from the enjoyment of that good which they wiſhed. Others ſay, *If I have forbidden the deſire of the poor.* The word in the Hebrew ſignifies to hinder or ſtop, to forbid or to with-hold. (*Prov.* 23. 13.) *With-hold* (or forbid) *not correction from the Child.* As Parents are not to with-hold correction themſelves, ſo they are not to forbid others duly to correct their Children. If I (ſaith *Job*) have with-held or ſtayed the poor from their deſire, if I have forbidden their deſire, ſo that they could not have what they deſired, &c.

מנע *Prohibuit, cohibuit, impedivit*

The word rendred the **poor**, imports a perſon ſpent, utterly waſted and exhauſted ; ſuch indeed are the poor, their purſes are drawn dry, they have little or nothing left, to help themſelves and their families. *If I have with-held the poor*

דל *Exhauſtus viribus aut facultatibus.*

From their deſire.] Deſire is the motion of the Soul after any apparent good. 'Tis not poſſible for any man to ſtop the deſire of another man in this ſence, to do ſo is the ſole prerogative of God, or only in the power of God ; he indeed can lock up the deſires of the Creature, even the fierceſt and moſt eager deſires of the Creature. Beaſts have a deſire in their kind ; God ſtopt the hunger of Lions, which is their deſire after food (*Dan.* 6. 22.) *My God* (ſaith *Daniel*) *hath ſhut the mouths of the Lions.* How did he ſhut them ? Not by muzling their mouths, but by abating the edge of their natural appetite or hunger. God commanded the Children of *Iſrael* to appear before him thrice in the year ; and leſt they ſhould ſay, what will become of our Houſes and Lands when we leave them empty and are gone up to the ſolemn feaſts ? Will not our enemies take that advantage to invade our Land and poil our Goods ? Fear not that, ſaith the Lord (*Exod.* 34. 24.) *For I will caſt out the Nations before thee, and enlarge thy borders, neither ſhall any man deſire thy Land, when thou ſhalt go up to appear before the Lord thy God, thrice in the year.* Their land was a pleaſant land, a land flowing with milk and honey, that is, abounding with all good things, and therefore a very deſirable land, yet the Lord when he pleaſed could with hold the deſires of all men from it ; this the Lord can do, he can with-hold the deſire of man, but man cannot with-hold his own deſire, much leſs the deſire of any other man. Now, though no man can ſtop another from deſiring any thing, yet many men can and often have ſtopt them from the having or enjoying of the thing which they deſire, and that is *Job*'s meaning here : The act of the faculty is put for the object, deſire for the thing deſired. As faith is put for the Doctrine or truth believed, and hope for the thing hoped, ſo deſire for the thing deſired. But what is the deſire of the poor ? Surely the deſire of the poor is relief, and this relief is threefold ; or 'tis given three ways.

Firſt, By the purſe ; this relieves the poor againſt penury.

Secondly, By power ; this relieves them againſt oppreſſion ; the authority of a Magiſtrate delivers the poor out of the hand of their oppreſſors.

Thirdly, Relief is given the poor by counſel, that relieves their ignorance; counſel what to do is as valuable as money, and in many caſes a more deſirable charity. We may ſuppoſe *Job*'s charity extended to the poor, in giving them their deſire in any of or in all theſe ways, he neither denyed them his purſe, nor his power, nor his counſel, when deſired, *If I have with-held the poor from their deſire.*

Job ſpeaks in a very great latitude, as though he had not ſtopped them in any of their deſires: He puts no expreſs limit to his charity, yet we may conceive a limit. He was a wiſer and a better man then to ſatisfie the poor, either firſt in their unreaſonable deſires of great things; or ſecondly, in their vain and wanton deſires of the leaſt things; or thirdly, in their deſires of a ſupply to pretended wants and feigned neceſſities: We ſhould carefully diſtinguiſh between the deſires of the poor, and their clamors, between their need and their luſt or humor. As there are many who feign piety, ſo there are ſome who can feign poverty, and whoſe very diſtreſſes are but artifices. When *Job* profeſſeth againſt with-holding the poor from their deſire, he intends it of real deſires ariſing from their wants, not of artificial or made deſires proceeding from wantonneſs or deſign. *If I have with-held the poor from their deſire.*

Nos omnibus quidem debemus miſericordiam, ſed quia pleriq; fraude eam quærunt et fingunt ærumnam; ideo ubi cauſa manifeſtatur perſona cognoſcitur, tẽpus urget, largius ſe debet profũdere miſericordia. Ambroſ. 1. Offic. c.30.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *It is a duty to relieve the poor, or to grant them their deſire.*

To do acts of charity is a duty as well as to do acts of Juſtice; yea charity is alſo an act of Juſtice, and to with-hold the poor from their deſire, (as their deſire hath been ſtated and circumſtantiated) is to with-hold their right from them. *Solomon* calls for this duty in the expreſs word of the Text (*Prov.* 3. 27.) *With-hold not good from him to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it.* Good is ſo due to thoſe of whom we have borrowed it, that we cannot with-hold it at all without ſin when 'tis in our power to repay it. Good is ſo due to ſome who would borrow, that we cannot with-hold it without ſin, when it is in our power to lend it. And good is ſo due to many poor who crave it, that we cannot with-hold it without ſin, when it is in our power to give or beſtow it. And doubtleſs it is as much our duty to give ſomewhat to thoſe poor who ask, and to lend ſomewhat to thoſe poor who would borrow, as it is to pay all that we owe to thoſe of whom we have borrowed. Thus the Lord charged his ancient people (*Deut.* 15. 7, 11.) *If there be among you a poor man, of one of thy brethren, within any of thy gates, in the Land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou ſhalt not harden thy heart, nor ſhut thine hand from thy poor brother.* Where, to engage their charity, Firſt, The Lord calls the poor their *Brethren*; Secondly, He tells them the land wherein they dwelt was given them; they did not deſerve or earn it; they did not get or conquer it by their power, but God (whoſe the Earth is, and the fulneſs of it) gave it to them; therefore they ought to give ſome of the fruits of it to their poor and needy Brethren. And while the Lord warns them not to harden their heart, nor to ſhut their hands againſt them, his meaning is, that they ſhould be free and liberal to the poor, and with open heart and hand give them their deſire. Thus the Lord explains his own meaning (*v.* 11.) *The poor ſhall never ceaſe out of the land: Therefore I command thee, ſaying, thou ſhalt* (not only not ſhut but) *open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy in the land.* God could make all men rich, but he will have ſome poor, that the charity of the rich may be exerciſed. The grace of charity would be idle, and (as it were) have a perpetual vacation, did not the providence of God provide ſuch objects for it to work upon. And as God by *Moſes* in the Law told the *Jews, The poor ſhall never ceaſe out of the Land*, ſo Chriſt tells us in the Goſpel (*Mark* 14. 7.) *Ye have the poor with you always, and whenſoever ye will, ye may do them good.* God hath ſo ordered it, that we ſhall never want opportunity, though we often want hearts to expreſs our charity. And leſt any ſhould think the poor (becauſe poſſibly not of their kindred) un-related to them, therefore the Lord (in that place of *Deuteronomy*) calls the poor man our Brother, and our poor, *Thou ſhalt open thy hand wide unto thy Brother, to thy poor, and thy needy in the land*, which though it had (I grant) a peculiar reſpect to that people, who were Gods peculiar people, and all of *Abrahams* family, yet it reacheth all people, who are alſo to account the poor their Brethren, and ſo their poor, even as their neereſt Relations are theirs. Yea the Lord calls the poor our own fleſh (*Iſa.* 58. 7.) *And that thou hide not thy ſelf from thine own fleſh*, As if he had ſaid; do not withdraw, and pull back, do not diſappear when the poor man appears, for he is not only fleſh as thou art, but thine own fleſh. And ſo if thou ſuffereſt the poor to periſh, thou ſuffereſt thy ſelf, even thine own fleſh (in kind though not in number) to periſh. That Maxime of the Apoſtle (*Eph.* 5. 29.) is founded in nature; *No man ever hated his own fleſh, but nouriſheth and cheriſheth it.* Are not they unnatural, who refuſe to nouriſh and cheriſh the poor, whom the Spirit of God calls *our own fleſh*? And if ſuch declare againſt themſelves (according to this rule) that they are wanting as to nature or natural principles, how much more are they wanting to grace and ſpiritual principles? The Apoſtle *John* (1 Ep. 3. 17.) admoniſheth Saints to fill up their profeſſion with the ready actings of this love, and tells them the neglect of that duty would prove that they had little love to God; *Whoſo hath this Worlds goods, and ſeeth his brother hath need, and ſhutteth up his bowels of compaſſion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?* And as ſuch ſhew little love to God, ſo *Solomon* aſſures them they ſhall find little love from God. For God doth not barely propoſe this duty, but preſſeth us with the conſideration of our own danger if we neglect it (*Prov.* 21. 13.) *Who ſo ſtoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he alſo ſhall cry himſelf and not be heard.* There is nothing worſe to be feared, or which produceth worſe effects to be felt by man, then not to be heard by God. Therefore as Chriſt exhorts (*Matth.* 5. 42.) *Give to him that asketh thee: And from him that would borrow of thee, turn not thou away.* And is it not a reproach to Chriſtians, not to give to thoſe who ask, when ſome Heathens have been much troubled when nothing hath been asked of them? Again, *Job* ſpeaks of the deſire of the poor, and the Hebrews have a word, for a poor man, which in the Root ſignifies to deſire, implying that poor men who have little in poſſeſſion, are much in deſiring to have more.

Quid eſt? cur nihil petis? Lamprid. de Severo Imperat.

Hence Note, *They who are full of wants, are alſo full of deſires.*

As ſome who have no wants have many deſires; they are never ſatisfied how much ſoever they are filled. So they who are under real and ſenſible wants, cannot but have many deſires, and thoſe ſo ſtrong and ſtirring ſometimes, that 'tis not eaſie to with-hold them from their deſire; ſtrong deſires will hardly take a denial; poverty puts on to importunity, yea ſome under great wants, are ſo preſſed with deſire, that they take ſinful ways to have their deſires fulfilled. *Agur* feared this when he prayed, *Give me not poverty, leſt I put forth my hand and ſteal* (Prov. 30. 9.) The deſires of many are too ſtrong for their Conſciences, and then they quickly break the bounds of righteouſneſs and common honeſty rather then they will be with-held from their deſire. They that are under a ſence of their want in ſpirituals, of their want of grace, and of the favour of God, of the enjoyments of Chriſt, O what deſires, what ſtrong and vehement deſires have they? How will they break through all impediments to obtain what they deſire? The poor in Spirit have greateſt deſires and uſe the greateſt endeavours after ſpiritual things; they ſee they have but a little, and therefore they will be urging to have more, and when they have got more, though they are thankful for it, yet they will not ſit down in it, nor ſay it is enough, becauſe ſtill that which they get gives them a clearer ſight of more to be gotten. Their richeſt and fulleſt attainments in grace, do but diſcover their poverty and emptineſs, and therefore ſeeing themſelves always wanting, they are always deſiring; and ſurely the Lord will not with-hold theſe poor from their deſires, as *Job* profeſſed he did not thoſe who applyed to him for help and ſupply; *If I have with-held the poor from their deſire,*

Or have cauſed the eyes of the widow to fail.

Theſe words are near in ſence with the former. Mr. *Broughton* reads, *If I have conſumed the eyes of the widow.* *Job* did not with-hold any truely poor from their deſire, much leſs did he with-hold the poor widow from her deſire, *he ſuffered not her eyes to fail*; that is, he did not long defer to do that for her which ſhe deſired, nor weary her with waiting. Some do not totally deny, but they are full of delays, and they put off poor ſuiters ſo long, that both purſe and patience are quite ſpent. But (ſaith *Job*) *I have not cauſed the eyes of the widow to fail* by long delays, much leſs by denials. The paſſions of the mind are viſible in the eye; ſometimes we ſee joy ſitting there, and ſometimes we ſee ſorrow ſitting there, at one time we may ſee pleaſedneſs in the eye, at another time diſpleaſure and anger. Thus alſo (as here) we may ſee hope or expectation in the eye. The earneſt intentive look of the eye upon any man, hath (as it were) this voice in it, I deſire your help. He that looks much upon or to another, looks for ſomewhat from him. The look of the eye to God hath the force of a prayer in it, yea this is often put for prayer, becauſe in prayer uſually, the eye is lifted up to God (*Pſ.* 121. 1.) *I will lift up mine eyes to the Hills from whence cometh my help.* Again (*Pſal.* 123. 2.) *Behold as the eyes of Servants look unto the hand of their Maſters, and the eyes of a maiden to the hand of her miſtreſs; ſo our eyes wait upon the Lord our God, untill that he have mercy upon us.* That is, we will wait and pray, or pray waiting for his mercy. And as the eye waits on God, ſo in proportion upon man. When *Peter* and *John* came into the Temple (*Acts* 3.) there ſate a poor lame man asking an alms (*v.*2.) *And Peter faſtening his eyes upon him, with* John, *ſaid look on us* (v.4.) As if he had ſaid, you look upon many others as perſons able to relieve your neceſſities, but now look on us, and ſee what we will do for you; *And he gave heed unto them*, ſaith the Text (*v.*5.) *expecting to receive ſomething from them*; that is, he faſtned his eyes upon them, he beheld them as an expectant of relief. Thus the widow (we may ſuppoſe) came to *Job* and look't pitifully upon him, or gave him an humble look of expectation, as if ſhe had ſaid, Give me your aſſiſtance, do ſuch a thing for me; and when ſhe did ſo, he did not cauſe her eyes to fail, nor did he feed her with vain hopes, as they do who are forward to make promiſes, but ſlow to make performance. Every where in Scripture the fruſtrating of expectation, is called the failing of the eye, or is the cauſe of it. (*Pſ.* 69. 3.) *I am weary of my crying, my throat is dryed; mine eyes fail, while I wait for my God*; that is, God is pleaſed to put me to ſuch long waiting, and expectation, that my eyes are even worn with looking, and my heart with expecting (*Pſal.* 119. 133.) *Mine eyes fail for thy ſalvation, and for the word of thy righteouſneſs*; that is, for the receiving of the benefit, bleſſing, deliverance, or ſalvation, which that word of thy righteouſneſs hath promiſed to me, and made me to wait for. And as God, to try the faith and patience of his people, lets them wait till their eyes begin to fail; ſo men either through unfaithfulneſs, or weakneſs, oft cauſe the eyes of thoſe who wait upon them to fail utterly. (*Lam.* 4. 17.) *As for us, our eyes as yet failed for our vain help*; that is, we lookt for help, and no help came, and ſo our eyes failed in our expectation. But upon whom did they wait in this total fruſtration? The next words tell us, *We have watched for a Nation that could not ſave us.* The Hebrew is, In our watching we have watched, or (as that Elegancy imports) we have earneſtly watched for a Nation that could not ſave us; that is; for the *Egyptians* who promiſed us help, and upon whom we truſted for help, but all in vain. They proved a weak reed, upon which while we leaned we were not ſupported but wounded. Righteous *Job* dealt not thus with his expectants and dependants; he did not cauſe the eyes of the widow to fail, he did not let them wait till they were weary, or tired, or grieved. And this we may underſtand him ſpeaking in a two-fold reference.

Per aſpectu oculorum vivacem et intenſum in aliquid denotatur ſpes ardens rem quæ aſpicitur acquirendi, vel ab eo qui aſpicitur aliquod bonum reſpiciendi. Bold.

Si quis quod expectat non obtinet, id dicitur conſumptio oculorum. Si viduas lactavi vana ſpe. Tygur.

Firſt, As to delays of Juſtice; as if he had ſaid, I have not let them wait long for their right, I have not given them dilatory anſwers and put-offs, hoping to be ſpurr'd up with gifts and brib'd into expedition.

Secondly, As to delays of charity: As if he had ſaid, I have not let the widow wait long for my alms, what I gave her, I gave her ſpeedily,

In both theſe reſpects, or for both theſe helps, poor widows wait; and they are conſtrained to wait long for ſome mens charity, and longer for other mens juſtice; ſo long for both ſometimes that their eyes fail, and their ſpirits ſink in deſpair of either. In neither of theſe reſpects did *Job* grieve the widow. He neither wronged her himſelf, neither did he delay to right her when ſhe was wronged by others; He neither made her poor himſelf, nor did he delay to relieve her poverty. Thus he anſwers that which *Eliphaz* charged him directly with (*Chap.* 22. 7. 9.) *Thou haſt not given water to the weary to drink, and thou haſt with-holden bread from the hungry, thou haſt ſent widows away empty, and the arms of the fatherleſs have been broken.* No, ſaith *Job*, I have many witneſſes, and my conſcience, which is more then a thouſand witneſſes, tell me, that, *I have not cauſed the eyes of the widow to fail.*

And when he ſaith ſo, we are to expound it in a better ſence then his words expreſs; there is leſs in what he ſpake, then in what he did for the widow; for his meaning is this, I was ſo far from making her eyes to fail with waiting, that I made her heart glad, and ſent her away rejoicing, becauſe of her juſt and ſpeedy diſpatch. Expedition hath coſt ſome very dear; *Job* did not only not deny the widow his juſtice, or his charity, but diſpatch her quickly; none paid for expedition who appealed to his Tribunal, nor did the expectation of any periſh who applied to him for relief. *If I have cauſed the eyes of the widow to fail.*

Hence Note, *We ought not only to help the poor, but to help them ſpeedily.*

Speedy relief, is double relief; he that gives at once, gives twice. Therefore as *Solomon* adviſeth (*Prov.* 3. 28.) *Say not to thy Neighbour, go, and come again, and to morrow I will give, when thou haſt it by thee.* As we muſt not ſay, but do, ſo we ſhould not defer to do. 'Tis dangerous to ſay, we will give to morrow when we know not whether a to morrow ſhall be given us. If we have it now to give, let us give it now, for who knows whether he ſhall have any any thing to give hereafter. And if delays are not denials of help to man, yet they are of obedience to God; who as he commands us to give, ſo to give now. The poor are ready to ſtarve, and ſhall we be unready to give what we have ready by us? The poor may periſh to day, and what good will your Alms do them to morrow? As God will not bear it that we ſhould ſay to him we will obey him to morrow, when he calls for obedience to day (take heed of making the Lords eyes fail in waiting) ſo God will not bear it, if we ſay to the poor, Go and come again to morrow, he requires it to day, though the poor do only intreat it. The Apoſtles rule is (*Rom.* 12. 8.) *He that ſheweth mercy with chearfulneſs.* And again (2 *Cor.* 9. 7.) *The Lord loveth a chearful giver.* Now that which a man doth chearfully he will do it ſpeedily. And every good thing the ſooner it is done, the better it is done. Nor can that be done too ſpeedily, which ſhould be done preſently. To do a charity, or to do Juſtice late is next door to the not doing it at all. As he that asks faintly beſpeaks a denyal, ſo he that grants ſlowly, gives with a kind of denyal; and to be ſure ſo much of the beneficialneſs of any benefit is taken off from thoſe to whom 'tis given, as alſo ſo much of the thanks from thoſe who give it, as delay is made in the giving of it. As the Lord gives ſometimes preventingly (*Iſa.* 65. 24.) *Before they call I will anſwer*, or makes his grant contemporary, or beat the ſame date with our requeſts (as it follows in the ſame verſe) *and whiles they are yet ſpeaking I will do*; ſo ſhould we in our proportion do to thoſe who make ſuits and requeſts to us.

Tarde velle nolentis eſt: Proprium eſt libenter facientis cito facere. Senec.

Tu non intelligis tantum de gratia te demere, quantum moræ adjicis. Senec. de Benef. lib. 2. cap. 5.

How contrary to this rule of giving and doing good to others are they who ſeem to take a kind of pleaſure to put others to the pain of expectation; they love to be waited on. And they therefore hold petitioners upon the rack of expectation, becauſe they love to be waited upon; we may diſcover three ſorts of this humour.

Firſt, Some when they know the thing deſired is not in their power to do, yet they will not ſay plainly they cannot do it (to be ſpeedy in denying what we cannot do, is a favour as well as to be ſpeedy in granting what we can do, yet I ſay, ſome will not preſently ſay they cannot do, what indeed they cannot.) becauſe they have an ambition to be attended upon and much ſought unto.

Secondly, Others who from the firſt moment that a ſuit is made to them, are reſolved in their own breaſts or are fully intended never to do it,though it be in their power to do it; yet they will not ſay they will not do it, but hold poor ſuiters in a long ſuſpence. It is ſome courteſie to ſay we will not do,what we have no mind to do and are purpoſed not to do. But the policy of men is too great for this point of charity.

Thirdly, There are others, who are both able and willing, yea reſolved to grant the poor their deſire, yet for ſtate they make the poor ſtay and the widows wait till their eyes fail; and ſo do as much torment ſuiters with their delays, as they benefit them with their relief. They that take ſuch ſtate in doing courteſies, loſe their reward with God, and their reſpects from man. He that ſtays long for a favour, hath more then half deſerved and paid for it. 'Tis the priviledg of God to make man wait his pleaſure. Yet he never delays his people but 'tis in wiſdom, yea and in mercy alſo (*Iſa.* 30. 18.) *The Lord is the God of Judgment, bleſſed are all they that wait for him.* As God doth no man wrong how long ſoever he makes him wait, ſo how long ſoever we wait on him we loſe no time, nor will it be at all to our loſs. Waiting upon God in faith and patience turns always to a good account, and hath great reward. But let men take heed how they take ſtate upon them in making the pooreſt man wait for their charity, or any man for their Juſtice. They will be found failing in duty who thus cauſe the eyes of any, eſpecially (which *Job* here profeſſeth he did not) *the eyes of the widow to fail.*

Secondly, Obſerve, *When ſuits are long deferred, and unanſwered, ſuiters are greatly afflicted.*

The failing of the eyes is painful, and implies a decay in nature; the eyes fail through old age, or through much bodily weakneſs and want. 'Tis ſaid (*Jer.* 14. 6.) *The wild Aſſes did ſtand in the high places, they ſnuffed up the wind like Dragons, their eyes did fail becauſe there was no graſs.* Whatſoever makes the eyes fail is afflictive; therefore long delays muſt needs be a great affliction, ſeeing they make the eyes fail; yea delays do more then make the eyes fail, they make the heart fail too (*Prov.* 13. 12.) *Hope deferred, makes the heart ſick; but when the deſire cometh, it is a Tree of life.* 'Tis the word in the former part of this verſe, *when the deſire cometh*; that is, when the thing deſired cometh, it is as a Tree of life. A lingring Hope is like a lingring Conſumption, it weakens the whole man. Hope having conceived ſome probable good approaching, waits for the birth of it; and we are like a woman in travel till it be brought forth: Long travel in Child-bearing makes the mother ſick and faint, and ſo doth hope make us, when we travel long in the bringing of it forth. But as a woman forgets the pain of her travel for joy that a man is born, ſo doth he that ſees his hope, that is, the thing hoped for born. This *Solomon* expreſſeth to the life, when he ſaith, *The deſire come is a Tree of life.* As when Chriſt who is called *The deſire of Nations* (Hag. 2. 7.) ſhall come, he will be *a Tree of life* to all true believers; ſo in its degree and meaſure is the coming of any good thing which we deſire. The fulfilling of deſire is ſo great a relief that it is a kind of new life to the Soul, and cauſeth our dead hearts to revive. The hearts of many Godly men have been made ſick when God hath deferred their hope; *David* ſaid (*Pſal.* 69. 3.) *Mine eyes fail while I wait for my God.* And again (*Pſ.* 119 82.) *Mine eyes fail for thy word*; that is, in waiting to receive that good which thou haſt promiſed in thy word. Whether God or man keep us long at a diſtance from our hopes, we quickly meet with grief of heart and failing of eyes. Total denying and long delaying are not far aſunder.

Thirdly, Obſerve, *The widows caſe and cauſe muſt not be delayed.*

If widows are not ſpeedily relieved, they are double grieved. They are weak, and not able to bear much; they are under ſorrow already. To defer their hope, is to give them ſorrow upon ſorrow. She hath ſorrow enough for the loſs of her Husband, with whom ſhe had lived comfortably. Now every delay put upon her puts her in mind of that loſs and makes that wound bleed afreſh. It was not thus (ſaith ſhe) when I had a Husband, then I had no need to wait, now I wait and cannot get relief in my greateſt needs. Magiſtrates ſhould be Husbands to the widow, and eſpouſe their cauſe (according to Juſtice) with tenderneſs. God charged the Princes of *Iſrael*, with this ſpecial defect of duty (*Iſa.* 1. 23.) *They judg not the fatherleſs, neither doth the widows cauſe come unto them*; that is, they refuſe to receive and hear the widows cauſe, they will not admit it to come before them; ſhe cannot bribe it to a hearing, and therefore it ſticks by the way, and comes not to a hearing. But though men will not judg her cauſe, yet God will (*Pſal.* 68. 5.) *A father of the fatherleſs, a Judg of the widows is God in his holy habitation.* God is ſo much the widows Judg that he is ſpoken of as if he were a Judg for none but widows. And men are ſo little in judging their cauſe, as if they did not judg the widows cauſe at all. *The widows cauſe* (ſaith the Prophet) *doth not come before them.* How greatly do they fail in duty who cauſe the eyes of the widow to fail, and who add ſorrow to their ſtate, whoſe ſtate at beſt is a ſorrowful one. This cruelty *Job* at once denyed and abhorred, while he ſaid, *If I have cauſed the eyes of the widow to fail.* He proceeds to a further teſtimony of his tenderneſs to the poor in the words which follow.

Verſ. 17. **Or have eaten my morſel my ſelf alone, and the fatherleſs hath not eaten thereof.**

In this verſe *Job* ſhews both his charity, and his hoſpitality, charity may be exerciſed without doors, but hoſpitality is exerciſed within doors. And that hoſpitality is beſt which is alſo an act of charity; *Job*'s was ſuch, *He did not eat his morſelf himſelf alone*, there was hoſpitality, and his gueſts were not, or not they only, his rich and wealthy Neighbours, but the fatherleſs, *And the fatherleſs hath not eaten thereof*, there was his charity.

If I have eaten my morſel my ſelf alone.

A morſel is proderly but ſo much meat as we may put into the mouth at once; by which diminutive word, *a morſel or a mouth-full*, the Scripture uſually ſets forth the ancient entertainments, which were as frugal as they were hearty. When *Abraham* invited thoſe three men, who indeed were Angels, and one of them (whom he called *my Lord*) the Lord of men and Angels, he only ſaid (*Gen.* 18. 5.) *Reſt your ſelves under the Tree, and I will fetch a morſel of bread and comfort ye your hearts.* *Abraham* was ſparing of his words, but not of his coſt; he invited them to a morſel, but provided them cakes made of three meaſures of fine meal, and a Calf tender and good with butter and milk; you may read his bill of fare (*verſ.* 6, 7, 8.) Thus *Eliah* when he had deſired the widow-woman to fetch him a little water (1 *Kings* 17, 10, 11.) *As ſhe was going to fetch it, he called to her, and ſaid, bring me I pray thee a morſel of bread in thine hand*; he did not deſire a feaſt, or a full Table, but a morſel. Thus ſaith *Job*, *I have not eaten my morſel my ſelf alone*; that is, what ever good chear I had, I had it for others as well as my ſelf and my family, I had a ſpare Room and a ſpare Trencher for a friend at my Table, eſpecially for the poor and fatherleſs; theſe were my welcome gueſts, as it follows;

פת ψῶμος *Fruſtum rei eſculentæ quantum bucca ſemel capere poteſt.* Druſ.

And the fatherleſs have not eaten with me.

By the **fatherleſs**, we are not to underſtand ſtrictly, ſuch as had loſt their parents, but any in want or diſtreſs, as hath been ſhewed from the ſame expreſſion in ſeveral other paſſages of this Book. When *Job* relieved the hungry bellies of the poor, he did not only ſend them a portion from his Table, but he gave them a place and a portion at his Table, the poor did not only eat of his meat but ſate at meat with him, he did not diſdain to have them at his Table.

Hence Note, Firſt, *Hoſpitality is a duty.*

As we make proviſion for our ſelves and family, ſo (if able) we ſhould make allowance for ſtrangers alſo. When *David* heard that *Nabal* ſheared his ſheep, he ſent out ten young men to greet them in his name, and gave them inſtructions; *Thus ſhall ye ſay to him that liveth in proſperity, Peace be both to thee, and peace be to thy Houſe, and peace be unto all that thou haſt,* &c. *Let the young men find favour in thine eyes (for we come in a good day) give I pray thee whatſoever cometh next to thy hand unto thy Servants and unto thy Son* David. Had *David* been at his mercy he could not have ſent him a fairer meſſage. Yet this covetous churl was ſo far from ſending him a liberal preſent, that he could not give him a good word, or a civil anſwer. But preſently falls a reviling him (1 *Sam.* 25. 10.) *Who is* David? *And who is the Son of* Jeſſe? *There be many Servants now adays that break away every man from his Maſter. Shall I then take my bread, and my water, and my fleſh, that I have killed for my ſhearers, and give it unto men, whom I know not whence they be?* As if he had ſaid, *Shall I feed theſe vagabonds and beggers?* The man was all in his poſſeſſives, *my bread, and my water, and my fleſh, that I have killed for my ſhearers;* he had not a morſel to ſend *David*, but ſent more then a mouth-ful of bad words. This mans name was agreeable to his Nature; *Nabal was his name, and folly was with him.* His folly was, he would ſend nothing to ſtrangers out of his Houſe; and theirs is like his, who have nothing for ſtrangers in their Houſes. *Abraham* ſtood in his Tent door, and no ſooner ſaw ſtrangers paſſing by, but called them in and gave them entertainment. The Apoſtle (*Heb.* 13. 2.) alluding to that act of *Abrahams* hoſpitality, gives believers this Admonition, *Forget not to entertain ſtrangers, for ſo ſome have entertained Angels unawares.* We are commanded (*Rom.* 12. 13.) not only *to diſtribute to the neceſſity of Saints, but to be given to hoſpitality.* And as this is charged upon all Believers, ſo eſpecially upon the Miniſters of the Goſpel (1 *Tim.* 3. 2.) *A Biſhop* (beſides many other Qualifications there enumerated) *muſt be ſober, of good behaviour, given to hoſpitality, apt to teach, not given to wine.* And again (*Tit.* 1. 5.) *He muſt not be given to filthy lucre, but he muſt be a lover of hoſpitality; a lover of good men, ſober.* Yet note, as in theſe Texts the Apoſtle commends hoſpitality to the Miniſters of the Goſpel, ſo he regulates it. They muſt be given to hoſpitality, yet ſober and of good behaviour; they muſt be given to hoſpitality, yet not given to wine, nor filthy lucre; they muſt be given to hoſpitality, yet apt to teach; their hoſpitality muſt not hinder either their private ſtudies or publick labours. That hoſpitality which is inconſiſtent with ſobriety, or unfits for duty, is uncomely and ſinful in any man, much more in a Miniſter of the Goſpel. Some are given to riotous Houſe-keeping, but few are given to true hoſpitality. The former is the abhorrence of a meer Civil man, the latter is both the duty and commendation of a Godly man. Moderate feaſting of friends is love, and feeding of the poor in charity, is an ornament to the Goſpel and a fruit of Grace. As their ſin is great who laviſh out the Creature in ſurfeting and drunkenneſs, or who make proviſion for the fleſh to fulfil the luſts of it; ſo alſo is theirs who baſely ſpare the Creature and will not make proviſion either for their friends to nouriſh love, or for the poor to relieve their neceſſities.

Secondly, Conſider who were *Job*'s gueſts? Moſtly the poor and fatherleſs, and he names them only.

Hence Obſerve, *The hoſpitality of good men is chiefly deſigned for the help of the neceſſitous, the poor and the fatherleſs.*

'Tis moſt acceptable to God when we feed the poor, though it be not unlawful to invite and feaſt the rich. Indeed Chriſt being invited to eat bread at the Houſe of a Phariſee, *ſaid to him that bad him* (Luke 14. 12, 13.) *When thou makeſt a dinner, or a ſupper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinſmen, nor thy rich neighbour, leſt they alſo bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee. But when thou makeſt a feaſt, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind.* This is Chriſts rule, and *Job*'s practice anſwered it; the fatherleſs did eat with him. Yet the Scripture laſt mentioned is not an abſolutely reſtrictive command to invite the poor and none elſe; for we are commanded *to uſe hoſpitality one to another without grudging* (1 Pet. 4. 9.) that is, to give reciprocal entertainments; he doth not only ſay *uſe hoſpitality*, but uſe it *one to another*, or mutually, which cannot be underſtood of entertaining the poor only; for they are not able to invite their inviters. Therefore as when the Lord ſaith (*Hoſ.* 6. 6.) *I deſired mercy and not ſacrifice*; he doth not prohibit ſacrifice, that is, outward performance of duties, or the performance of outward duties, but ſhews that he is more and rather pleaſed with mercy then with ſacrifice, or that ſacrifice without mercy doth not pleaſe him at all. So when Chriſt ſaith call the poor not the rich to thy Table, he doth not forbid the bidding of the rich, but chargeth us rather to bid the poor, and if we have not enough for both, then, what we have to ſpare muſt be for thoſe who have nothing, not for thoſe who have enough already. We muſt prefer the doing of charities, before the doing of courteſies. It is recorded by Mr. *Fox* in the *Book of Martyrs*, concerning that eminent Servant and Witneſs of Jeſus Chriſt *John Hooper* Biſhop of *Worceſter*, that he kept a conſtant Table for the poor, or his Board of Beggars, who were daily ſerved with whole and wholeſome meats, before himſelf ſate down to dinner. There are great *Houſe-keepers* who are not *good Houſe-keepers*, becauſe their Houſekeeping is for the great not for the good, not for the houſehold of faith, eſpecially not for the poor of that houſe-hold. Bleſſed are thoſe feaſt-makers, who make the bowels of the hungry to bleſs them. *Solomon*'s good direction falls in with this good practice, as ſome expound it (*Eccl.* 11. 1.) *Caſt thy bread upon the water*, that is, upon the poor, or upon thoſe to whom thou haſt no more expectation to receive any thing again, then thou canſt rationally expect thy bread again when thou haſt caſt it upon the water, or that thou ſhouldeſt reap a plentiful Harveſt of that ſeed which thou haſt caſt upon the waves of the Sea, not into the furrows of the Earth. The holy Prophet aſſures us, that this feeding of the poor is more acceptable from God then our own abſtaining from food (*Iſa.* 58. 6, 7.) *This is the faſt that I have choſen, that thou deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are caſt out to thy Houſe. When thou ſeeſt the naked, that thou cover him, and that thou hide not thy ſelf from thine own fleſh.* This is the Lords faſt, and the Lord accounts no faſt holy, but when 'tis followed with ſuch a feaſt; and therefore that cuſtom in the Churches of making a Collection for the poor in the cloſe of a day of faſt and ſolemn humiliation, is not to be reckoned a formality, but an eſſential part of that great and important duty. To comfort and refreſh the bodies of the afflicted, is as pleaſing to God, as the afflicting of our own Souls. 'Tis ſad to ſee the poor neglected at any time, but eſpecially at that time. And 'tis as ſad to ſee how the practice of moſt, at all times, runs quite contrary or croſs to the rule of Chriſt given us in the Goſpel, that ſaith, *Invite not thy brethren, nor the rich, but the poor*; whereas uſually the rich are invited and not the poor. And whereas (in ſpirituals) God fills the hungry with good things, but ſends the rich empty away; moſt men (as to corporals) fill the rich with their good things, with the fat and the ſweet, but ſend the poor either quite empty away, or only a little relieved (to keep them from ſtarving) with the refuſe of their Table. Which latter practice is alſo reproved by the practice of *Job* in this Text.

For, ſaith he, *If I have eaten my morſel my ſelf alone, and the fatherleſs hath not eaten thereof.*

Hence Note, *A good man will give the poor ſuch things as are good, to eat, yea ſometimes as good as he eats himſelf: He doth not think it below him, that they ſhould eat with him, and of what he himſelf eats.*

Job did not put off the poor with ſcraps only (though I do not ſay 'tis ſinful to give broken meat to the poor) yet 'tis plain he did not put off the poor with ſuch poor reliefs, nor ſhould we. Some think any thing they have, the worſt they have, good enough for thoſe who have nothing. But as Chriſt ſaith concerning ſpiritual bread (*Matth.* 15. 26.) *It is not meet to take the Childrens bread, and to caſt it to Dogs*; So I may ſay in reference to material bread; *It is not good to take Dogs bread, and to give it to the Children*; that is, to give corrupt or unſavory bread and meat to the poor. The beſt which we have is but given us, or indeed lent to us, and therefore what we give to the poor ſhould be good, eſpecially ſeeing what is given to the poor, is lent to the Lord, from whoſe hand we receive all our riches. And ſhould we lend baſe money, or mouldy bread to the Lord? Again, when we feed the godly poor, we feed Chriſt himſelf (*Matth.* 25. 35, 40.) and ſhall we not feed Chriſt our Lord and Maſter with that which is good? Alms is a ſacrifice (*Heb.* 13. 16.) Now as the Lord did highly diſguſt it and took it very ill at the hands of the *Jews*, when they offered the blind, and lame, and ſick for ſacrifices; *Is it not evil* (ſaith the Lord, *Mal.* 1. 8.) *Offer it now unto thy Governour, will he be pleaſed with thee, or accept thy perſon?* Yea he adds (*v.* 14.) *Curſed be the Deceiver that hath in his flock a male, and voweth and ſacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing; for I am a great King, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts.* Now, I ſay, as the Lord took it ill, when the proper ſacrifices were of corrupt things; ſo he will not take it well when theſe metaphorical ſacrifices are no better. Indeed if we have no better, if we have but a cup of cold water only to give, we (giving it to one of thoſe little ones in the name of a Diſciple) ſhall not loſe our reward (*Matth.* 10. 42.) But the deceiver is curſed who giveth that which is bad, when he hath good or better to give. There is (I know) a great fault among ſome poor, they will ſcarce be contented with any thing but what is fine, and of the beſt; when they have had good wholeſom food give them, they will throw it behind the door, or upon the dunghil. There is a fault alſo among ſome rich men, who give that to the poor which is fitter for the dunghil, then for the body of man.

Illud non ſolum charitatis ſed urbanitatis etiam et inſignis animi demiſſionis et modeſtiæ eſt, Quod Buccellam *dicit, cum ingentibus beneficiis et minimè parco victu de orphanis bene mereretur.* Pined. *Cum* Lacedemonianii Smyrnæis *egentibus ingentē commeatum miſiſſent, Nihil magni eſt (inquiunt) hæc enim collegimus unius diei prandio nobis et jumentis detracto.* Plutarch.

Laſtly, *Job* ſpeaks not here of any feaſt he made the poor, but only of a morſel, *I have not eaten my morſel my ſelf alone,* yet doubtleſs he had plenty at his Table, and did (as the Lord doth the rich) even load the poor with his benefits and beneficences daily.

Hence Note, *A gracious heart counts that but a little that he hath done and given.*

He ſaith not I have made the poor a feaſt, but I have given them a morſel; nothing makes our charity greater in the eye of God, then when 'tis little in our own; when we call a feaſt a morſel, and a full dinner a bit. *Plutarch* ſaith, that the *Lacedemonians* gave not only a charity, but a liberality and a bounty to the diſtreſſed *Smyrnians*; they ſent them a very full ſupply, yet gave their Meſſengers inſtruction to tell them, that they had only ſpared them a meals-meat from themſelves, and a foddering from their Cattel. As it was the ingenuity of that Heathen people to put a ſmall value upon a great benefit; ſo alſo it is the piety of Chriſtians to do ſo; as they ſhould not at all blow a Trumpet, or ſpeak much of what they give; ſo they ſhould not think it much; as this is the ſin of ſome, they think much (as we ſay, that is, they grudg) to give any thing; ſo the ſin of others is this, they think what they have given to be much. The leſs we eſteem our good deeds, the more God eſteems them; the lower our charity is rated in our own Book, the higher it is in Gods Book; we ſhall not need to fear our works ſhall not be enough rewarded, unleſs we ſay much or the moſt of them; if any thing bring them a low reward from God, our over-rating them will. *Job* having thus ſhewed the openneſs of his heart and hand and houſe for the free entertainment of the poor and fatherleſs, gives us an account of the time how long or ſince when he had grown into this neerneſs of a gracious and diſcreet familiarity and freedom with them, in the next words.

Verſ. 18. **For from my youth he was brought up with me as with a father, and I have guided her from my mothers womb.**

Quia ab infantia mea crevit mecū miſeratio, et ab utero matris meæ deduci eam. Vulg. *Videtur legiſſe* כאב *dolor.* Druſ.

There is another reading of theſe words, which I ſhall ſpeak a little to before I open our own. 'Tis that of the vulgar Latine, which tranſlates *Job*'s Text thus.

For from my youth compaſſion did grow up with me, and I did bring her up even from my mothers womb.

Theſe words which we render, **as a father**, conſiſting of a particle of likeneſs, and *Ab*, ſignifying *a father*, ſome conjoin into one word ſignifying *ſorrow or grief of mind*, ariſing either from our own troubles and ſufferings, or from the ſufferings and troubles of others, which we properly call *compaſſion*. *From my youth, compaſſion* (or trouble of mind for the troubles of others) *did grow up with me.* The mind of this reading is to ſhew the connaturalneſs of *Job*'s practice with his Spirit; as if he had ſaid, I have not been forced, or unwillingly drawn to this courſe of charity; but have been moved to it by an inward principle, and as naturally, as it is natural for a Hound to hunt his prey, for a Bird to fly in the air, or for a Stone to fall down-ward to the Earth. I have an intrinſecal tendency to this great duty, and am led, not driven to it. Not that it was natural to him, in oppoſition to that which is by grace; but it became connatural to him by grace. *Job* knew that as he had his being from God, ſo much more his gracious being. He did not make himſelf in his mothers womb, much leſs did he make himſelf merciful in his mothesr womb. That was a ſpecial work of God upon him, framing his heart to ſuch works from the womb. He attributes nothing to himſelf but all to God; for as he knew he was not made man in the womb by his own power, ſo he knew he was much leſs made a good man from the womb by any power of his own. This tranſlation thus expounded carrieth a pious ſence.

Jobo naturalis videtur fuiſſe miſericordia, à qua ſe ad levandas miſerorum ærumnas impellebatur intrinſecus, ſicut ad venandum Canis, &c. Sanct.

Conſtat quia ſuæ virtuti nihil tribuit, qui profecto teſtatur, quod hoc ipſum conditoris munere accepit. Quia ſicut ſuo opere in utero conditus non fuit; ita nec ſua virtute ab utero pius fuit. Gregor. lib. 21. cap. 12.

But moſt of the learned Hebricians render the Text as we do; *For from my youth he was brought up with me; he?* Who was that? *the fatherleſs.*

And I have guided her from my mothers womb; her? who was that? *The widow.* So that *Job* gives an account of his charitable practice, as that which he had not lately taken up, but was long accuſtomed to;

For from my youth he was brought up with me.

As if he had ſaid: *No ſooner was I able to look or ſtep into the World, but I became a friend to the fatherleſs, and a patron and protector of the poor. I quickly or very early took notice of their condition, laid it to heart, and gave them my beſt aſſiſtance.* The word which we render, *He was brought up with me* (for theſe words are there knit up in one) ſignifies to grow and wax great, or to be great. Indeed the poor (as we ſay in our language of an inward boſom friend) were *great with* Job, when he was greateſt. And he as a father brought up the poor, when himſelf was young, or before he was a father.

à גדל גדלני *Magnus fuit, crevit, adolevit, nutritus enutritus fuit, pueri enim dum nutriuntur augmentum capiunt.*

Hence Note, *Grace works betimes in ſome.*

As there is a ſeed of ſin and corruption in all Children, ſo we may ſee the fruits of the Spirit in ſome Children.

From my youth, he was brought up with me.

The Apoſtle *Paul* ſaith of *Timothy* (1 Tim. 3. 5.) *From a Child thou haſt known the holy Scriptures.* His firſt acquaintance was an acquaintance with God in his word. How ſweet is it to ſee vertue bloſſoming when nature doth? And the puttings forth of faith contemporary with the firſt puttings forth of reaſon; or to ſee thoſe acting ſpiritually, who have but begun to act rationally. The Lord ſhould have our firſt fruits, yea as the old Law commanded, our *firſt firſt fruits*; they are bleſſed who remember their Creator indeed in any of their days, but 'tis our duty to remember him in the days our youth, and to dedicate our firſt firſt fruits unto him. And though ſome are afraid to preſs good things upon their Children, leſt they ſhould over-burden them; yet *Solomon* a wiſer then they, yea the Spirit of God, a wiſer then *Solomon* gives us better advice. (*Prov.* 22. 6.) *Train up a Child in the way he ſhould go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.* Though ſome Children have gone out of the way in which they were trained, and their golden youth hath concluded in an Iron old age; which poſſibly gave occaſion to that reproaching Proverb, *A young Saint, an old Devil*: Yet of this we are ſure, that few who continue in the Devils power til they are old, become Saints. And there is no more reaſon to ſtop any from training up a child in the way he ſhould go for fear he hold not on to old age, then there is to ſet a Traveller in his right way in the morning for fear he ſhould miſs his way before night. Uſually they who begin well, end well, and they who begin in true grace, ſhall certainly continue in it, and end in Glory. A Heathen ſaid, *'Tis a great matter to accuſtom any one from his youth to any thing.* And another, *That ſent with which a new Cask is ſeaſoned,* and ſo thoſe principles with which a Child is influenced, *holds long. Cuſtom hath a great power whether in good or evil.* Thus they ſpeak in Nature; and 'tis

A teneris aſſueſcere multum eſt. Quo ſemel eſt imbuta recens ſervabit odorem teſta diu.

'tis moſt true in grace; that tincture of true holineſs which the Soul receives, though never ſo early, abides for ever. The Prophet ſaith (*Lam.* 3.27.) *It is good for a man to bear the yoke in his youth*; What yoke? There is a twofold yoke; firſt, the yoke of ſuffering; ſecondly, the yoke of doing: He there ſpeaks of the yoke of ſuffering; but it is as true of the yoke of doing; *it is good for a man to bear that yoke in his youth.* Some have never met with a croſs in their youth, and how doth it trouble them to meet with it in their old age? Many have never done good in their youth, and how reprobate are they in their old age to every good work!

Caput rei eſt, hoc vel illo modo hominem aſſueſieri. Ariſt. l. 2. Eth. cap. 1.

Secondly, Obſerve, *A gracious heart is full of compaſſion to thoſe that are in want.*

They who have experienced the compaſſions of God to themſelves (as every gracious Soul hath) cannot but be moved with compaſſion to others. Compaſſion to and upon a right object, is an eminent act of grace. We carry a great burthen upon our ſelves, when we bear compaſſion to others. As we partake with others in the good things they enjoy by rejoycing with them; ſo we partake with others in the evils which they ſuffer by compaſſionating them. When the Apoſtle *Paul* had reckoned up his ſufferings or paſſions (2 *Cor.* 11.24. &c.) *Of the Jews five times received I forty ſtripes ſave one,* &c. *In wearineſs, in painfulneſs, in watchings often, in hunger and thirſt, in faſtings often, in cold and nakedneſs*: Having, I ſay, thus ſpoken of his perſonal paſſions; he preſently reports the heavy burdens of compaſſion which lay upon him (*v.* 28, 29.) *Beſides thoſe things which are without* (ſaith he) *that which cometh upon me dayly, the care of all the Churches; who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is offended, and I burn not?* As if he had ſaid, whatſoever the afflictions or infirmities of others are, I have my ſhare with them. And as it is the ſupport and comfort of the whole Church, as alſo of every believer, to remember that Jeſus Chriſt bears their burthen with them, that he ſuffers with them now, as once he ſuffered for them (we may indeed ſay of Jeſus Chriſt, that all the poor and afflicted Saints, that ever were, are, or ſhall be in the World; have been brought up with him as a father, and he hath had compaſſion of them in meaſure, now (I ſay) as it is the joy of all ſuffering Saints, that they are brought up with Chriſt as with a father) ſo it is a great ſtay and comfort to ſuffering Saints, that their fellow-Brethren are affected with their condition, and take compaſſion of them.

Non eſt mediocris in adverſitate conſolatio quod ex cõmunione ſanctorum certi ſumus in afflictionibus noſtris totã eccleſiam imo et Chriſtum nobiſcum pati. Brent.

Again, In that *Job* ſaith, *From my youth he was brought up with me,*

Note, *A gracious heart perſeveres in doing good.*

Job doth not ſay he did it in his youth only, but from his youth; ſome have great appearances of goodneſs in their youth, but goodneſs doth not grow up with them; yea as they grow their appearances of goodneſs decay, and wither, and come to nothing. I ſay, their appearances of goodneſs, for (as was toucht before) we cannot be too confident of the earlieſt appearances of real goodneſs. As *Job* began in his youth, ſo he continued, and grew up in this ſpirit, principle and practice all his days.

Fourthly, In that *Job* ſaith, *He was brought up with me as with a father from my youth.*

Obſerve, *A gracious heart hath a fatherly reſpect to the fatherleſs.*

He not only doth for them as a friend, but as a father; or he hath not only a reſpect to them but a fatherly reſpect. The heart and ſpirit with which we do a thing, is, more then the thing we do; can you do good as a father? You may do good as a man, but can you do good as a father? To do ſo is moſt pleaſant to God our father, who as he doth good, ſo he doth good as a father. Thus we read (*Pſal.* 68.5.) *A father of the fatherleſs, and a Judg of the widows is God in his holy habitation.* And if God be a father to the fatherleſs, doubtleſs he acts with the heart and in the ſpirit of a father toward them; and ſo ſhould we. Further as *Job* was like a father to the fatherleſs, ſo he was a Counſeller to the widow, as he ſhews in the cloſe of this verſe.

And I have guided her from my mothers womb.

That is, the widow; how did *Job* guide her? With his counſel and advice; guides ſhew the right way; that's the buſineſs of a guide, *Job* was the widows guide, not to ſhew her the way to this or that place, but to ſhew her the way of this or that buſineſs, and to help her out of this or that diſtreſs. When ſhe poor Creature was intangled, and in a maze, not knowing what to do, or which way to ſet a ſtep forward in her affairs, then he directed her. And (ſaith he) I have been *a guide to her*

Dux ei fui non tam Itineris quam rerum agendarum. Druſ. Ducebam, *i. e. dirigebam ejus negotia.* Merc.

From my mothers womb.] This is a high or hyperbolical ſpeech, importing that he had been both early and conſtantly the widows guide. As the fatherleſs were brought up with him as with a father, ſo he had been the widows guide from his mothers womb.

Hence Note, *To give good counſel and inſtruction to the ignorant, is a work of great mercy, even as great a work of mercy as to give bread to the hungry, or cloathing to the naked.*

We may do a diſtreſſed widow as good a turn by opening our mouths to her, as by opening our purſes to her. Good counſel is a good Alms; and though the Apoſtle reproves thoſe who give no Alms but in words (*James* 2. 15, 16.) *If a Brother or a Siſter be naked, and deſtitute of daily food, and one of you ſay unto him, depart in peace, be you warmed and filled: Notwithſtanding ye give them not thoſe things which are needful to the Body, what doth it profit?* Bare words will not ſatisfie hunger, nor will they make a covering for the naked; yet words may procure bread for the hungry, and cloathing for the naked; and in many caſes we may relieve the neceſſities of others with our tongues as well as with our hands. It is a great mercy in God, to guide man (*Pſal.* 32. 8.) *I will inſtruct thee and teach thee in the way that thou ſhalt go; I will guide thee with mine eye.* And ſo the promiſe runs in the Prophet (*Iſa.* 58. 11.) *I will guide thee continually.* Now as it is a great favour from God to good men, to guide them in their way (the way of man is not in himſelf, (*Jer.* 10.23.) ſo it is a great favour from man to man, eſpecially to a poor man, moſt of all a poor widow, to guide and direct her in her way, to ſhew her what courſe ſhe muſt ſteer and take for the right ending of any intricate buſineſs, or for the attainment of her righteous ends. And if to guide others in civil and outward affairs and concernments be a great charity, then how great a charity is it to guide poor Souls in ſpirituals, and ſhew them their way Heaven-ward? To give anſwer to that queſtion, what ſhall I do to be ſaved? Or to thoſe, how have I walked to all well-pleaſing? How may I keep my Conſcience in all my ways without offence toward God and toward man? to anſwer theſe queſtions, to give counſel in and reſolve theſe caſes is (I ſay) the beſt charity in the World, infinitely better (which yet muſt not be neglected) then all worldly charities. Soul-guides are the moſt uſeful and neceſſary guides; and doubtleſs *Job* was well skill'd and practiſed in this ſort of guiding as well as in the other; for ſo *Eliphaz* doth at once upbraid him, and inform us (*Chap.* 4. 3, 4.) *Behold thou haſt inſtructed many, and thou haſt ſtrengthned the weak hands, thy words have upholden him that was falling, and thou haſt ſtrengthned the feeble knees.* *Job* had been every way a guide, and he had always been the widows guide; *I* (ſaith he) *have guided her from my mothers womb.*

Laſtly, Note, *A godly man is not ſatisfied with doing good once or twice, in a little matter, or for a little while, but he would do good in all matters and always (as* Job *did it) even from his mothers womb.*

To ſin or do evil once or at any time is too much and too often, becauſe we ought not to ſin or do evil at all; but as we cannot do good too often, ſo unleſs we do it often, it will be to us as if we had not done it at all, becauſe we ought to do it always, Some who began late to do good, have been accepted and rewarded, but how ſoon ſoever we begin to do it, we ſhall neither be accepted nor rewarded, if we ceaſe or give over doing it. How much are they miſtaken, who if they have done a poor Soul good once, think themſelves diſcharged for ever from doing any more? Once in their days, they think enough for all their days: Yea they will repeat and report what they have done, as an argument why they ſhould do no more. He did good from Deſign not from Nature (I mean renewed Nature) who ſaith, he hath done enough, and will do no more, when 'tis in the power of his hand to do more. He that is good, will according to his ability and opportunity, according to time and talent, do good once and again, more and more, often and ever, As he that *ſate on the white Horſe* (Rev. 6. 2.) *went forth conquering and to conquer*, that is, with a purpoſe never to leave conquering while there was an enemy to conquer; ſo a good man goes forth doing and to do good, as long as there remains any good undone which he can and is called to do.

VERS. 19, 20, 21.

If I have ſeen any periſh for want of Clothing, or any poor without Covering.

If his loins have not bleſſed me, and if he were not warmed with the fleece of my ſheep.

If I have lift up my hand againſt the fatherleſs, when I ſaw my help in the gate.

JOB proceeds in the vindication of his charity toward the poor, his failing in that point of duty having been objected againſt him in the 22. Chapter, that he had hardened his heart and ſhut up all bowels of compaſſion to thoſe who were in diſtreſs; yea that he had not only not ſupplyed their wants, but taken what they had from thoſe that wanted (*verſ.* 6.) *Thou haſt ſtripped the naked of their cloathing*. And therefore as in the former Context, he denyed that he had *with-held the poor from their deſire, or had cauſed the eyes of the widow to fail*, ſo in theſe words he affirms that he had been ſo far from ſtripping the naked of their clothing, that he had Clothed and Covered them.

Verſ. 19. **If I have ſeen any periſh for want of Clothing.**

The eye affects the heart, *Job*'s eye did ſo much affect his heart when he ſaw the naked, that he could not but put forth his hand to put a covering upon them: His own Cloths did not ſit eaſie, nor keep him warm, while he ſaw the poor cold and naked.

Si deſpexi pereuntem, &c. Vulg.

The vulgar Latine reads the Text, *If I have deſpiſed him that was ready to periſh for want of Clothing*. As we are apt (ſo the Apoſtle *James* tells us, *Chap.* 2. 2, 3.) to have reſpect to a man with a gold ring, that wears goodly apparel, or gay clothing; ſo a man in brave and rich apparel, is apt to deſpiſe the poor in rags. This verſion carries a clear ſence, but our own is clearer to the letter of the Text. *If I have ſeen*

Any periſh for want of Clothing.

That is, ready to ſtarve and die with cold and nakedneſs; *Job* doth not ſay, if I have ſeen any want gay Cloths (which are often but flags of vanity) he did not ſupply the pride of any, but the neceſſities of all. Charity is diſcreet as well as pitiful, and as it is ready to relieve the wants, ſo it will not nouriſh wantonneſs in any. They were periſhing perſons, not vain nor proud perſons whom *Job*'s charity clothed. *If I* (ſaith he) *have ſeen any periſh for want of clothing*.

Hence Note, Firſt, *Dying is periſhing.*

Thus the Prophet phraſeth it (*Iſa.* 57. 1.) *The righteous periſh and no man layeth it to heart.* Death is not a periſhing as to our future eternal being, but as to our preſent temporal being: Natural death is our periſhing to all worldly comforts; eternal death is our periſhing to all comforts. The worſt death and the worſt of death is but the periſhing of our comfortable being, not of our being.

Secondly, Periſhing is here ſuppoſed the effect of want.

Hence Obſerve, *Nakedneſs or want of Clothing, is a killing want.*

The body cannot bear nakedneſs long and live: The body can no more bear the want of Clothing, then it can bear the want of bread; cold kil's as well as hunger. See in this, the bitter fruits of ſin: It is ſaid (*Gen.* 2. 25.) *The man and his wife were both naked, and were not aſhamed.* There was no matter of ſhame in nakedneſs, when there was no matter of ſin in it. And as man was not aſhamed, ſo he was not cold by reaſon of his nakedneſs, the air was not then injurious nor afflictive to his body; whereas now Clothing ſerves not only to hide ſhame, but to keep us from periſhing. There are two great uſes of Clothing; firſt, to cover our nakedneſs; ſecondly, to preſerve our lives: As death is an uncloathing, ſo we die if we are not Clothed. And here let me mind you, in a ſpiritual ſence, of another Clothing, which if we want we muſt indeed periſh, and periſh for ever; O how many are there that are ready to periſh for want of that Clothing! What's that? Why, it is Chriſt, they that are not clothed with him ſhall periſh eternally, not only in Body, but in Soul (*Rom.* 13. 14.) *Put ye on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* Cloth your ſelves with him; Chriſt is our ſpiritual Clothing: Firſt, in his righteouſneſs to juſtifie us; ſo he is our Clothing to cover our ſin-guiltineſs; ſecondly, in his graces to ſanctifie us; ſo he is our Clothing not properly to cover, but to cleanſe us from our ſin-filthineſs and pollution. (*Eph.* 4. 24.) *Put on the new man*; that is, Chriſt in his Graces, or the Graces of Jeſus Chriſt. (*Coloſ.* 3. 12.) *Put on as the elect of God bowels of mercy, loving kindneſs, humility,* &c. Here's Clothing indeed; and remember how much ſoever you are Clothed, you will periſh for want of Clothing, unleſs you be Clothed with Chriſt, both to Juſtifie and to Sanctifie you. Remember that warning of Chriſt to the Church of *Laodicea* (Rev. 3. 18.) *I counſel thee to buy of me Gold tryed in the fire, that thou mayeſt be rich, and white Raiment that thou mayeſt be Clothed. If I* (ſaith *Job*) *have ſeen any periſh for want of Clothing*;

Or any poor without covering.

Conſider both in this and the former part of the verſe how univerſally *Job* ſpeaks; he doth not ſay, if I have ſeen this or that man periſh for want of Clothing, but, *If I have ſeen any periſh for want of Clothing, or any poor without Covering.*

Again, Whereas *Job* ſaid before, *If I have ſeen any periſh for want of Clothing*; he ſaith here, *if I have ſeen any poor without Covering*: Though they were not ready to periſh for want, yet if they being poor wanted, or were without a covering, he gave them wherewithal to cover them. And poſſibly, this *covering* in the latter part of the verſe may be extended further then clothing in the former part of it. A Houſe is a covering as well as a Garment. And the poor many times are naked not only of cloths, but of Houſes, they have not a Houſe, nor a hole in a Houſe to hide their heads. We may well ſuppoſe *Job*'s charity ſo large, that when he ſaw the poor want any thing needful for them, whether clothing or houſing to cover them, he provided for them, and did not ſuffer them to be naked, either clothleſs or harborleſs; he did not let them lie in the ſtreets or open air, but gave them convenient ſhelter from the injury of the weather. Chriſt, who endured more then all afflictions for our ſakes, endured this alſo in particular. *The Foxes have holes* (ſaith he, *Matth.* 8. 20.) *and the Birds have neſts, but the Son of man hath not whereon to lay his head.* Chriſt was poor without this covering: And ſo are many poor at this day, who find not a *Job* to give them a covering.

כסות *Operimentū à* כסה *texit operuit.*

Further, The root of the word here uſed for a *covering*, is applied in Scripture to the pardon of ſin, (*Pſal.* 32. 1.) *Bleſſed is the man whoſe iniquity is forgiven, and whoſe ſin is covered.* When ſin is pardoned 'tis covered, God ſees it no more with a vindictive eye. Excuſes are Garments of our own making to cover ſin; woe unto thoſe whoſe ſins are thus covered. Pardon is a Garment of Gods providing and making to cover ſin with, bleſſed are they whoſe ſins are thus covered. Thoſe poor who are without a covering for their Bodys, are to be pitied, but with what tears ſhould we lament thoſe (how rich ſoever they are in this World) who are without a covering for their Souls! And ſo ſtand naked in the ſtorms and under thoſe dreadful droppings of the wrath of God. But to the ſcope of the Text,

Firſt, In that *Job* ſaith not only, *If I have ſeen any periſh*, but, *if I have ſeen any poor without covering.*

Obſerve, *We ought not only to help the poor againſt deſtroying and killing wants, but even againſt pinching and afflicting wants.*

What though the poor be not quite ſtarved with cold and hunger, yet if they are ſo preſſed with theſe wants, that their lives are made altogether uncomfortable, and as it were a continual death, our neglect of them is inexcuſable. As God gives the rich not only enough for their neceſſities, but for their moderate delight; ſo the rich ſhould at leaſt give to or provide for the poor enough to ſatisfie their neceſſities, and fit them for the duties of this life.

Secondly, As to the particular charities here Inſtanced in.

Note, *To cloath the naked, to provide covering for the harborleſs, are ſpecial remarkable acts of Charity.*

The latter of theſe acts of charity is reckon'd up among many acts of righteouſneſs (*Ezek.* 18. 7.) *If a man be juſt*, &c. *If he hath given his bread to the hungry, and hath covered the naked with a Garment.* We have both put into the deſcription of a true faſt (*Iſa.* 58. 7.) *Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are caſt out to thy houſe; when thou ſeeſt the naked that thou cover him.* Jeſus Chriſt will ſay to the ſheep on his right hand in that great day, *I was a ſtranger and ye took me in, I was naked and ye clothed me:* And (*ver.* 43,) he will ſay to the Goats on his left hand, *I was a ſtranger and ye took me not in, naked and ye clothed me not.* When *Dorcas* died the widows ſhewed the Coats and Garments which ſhe had made while ſhe was *with them* (Acts 9. 39.) What Coats were theſe? And for whom? They were Coats for the poor and needy; ſhe did not ſpend her time and eſtate in making rich apparel for her ſelf, but convenient Coats for the poor; and it ſeems ſhe had a ſtore of them ready made as the needs of the poor appeared. That good Woman was full of charity, and *as charity will cover a Multitude of ſins* (1 Pet. 4. 8) that is, it will not ſtrictly take notice of, but in ſilence paſs by the faults and failings of many when they are againſt our ſelves eſpecially (as charity, I ſay, thus covers a multitude of ſins, which are the ſpiritual nakedneſs of others) ſo it will cover the bodily nakedneſs of as many as it can; and provokes us rather to have but few cloaths our ſelves, then that the poor ſhould have none. When the people (*Luke* 3. 10, 11.) ſaid to *John Baptiſt, What ſhall we do?* He anſwered and ſaid unto them, *He that hath two Coats let him impart to him that hath none, and he that hath meat do the like.* How unbecoming is it that any ſhould have not only Food and Rayment, but full Tables and wardrobes, variety of meats and many changes of apparel, and yet ſee the poor ſtarve and go naked! Yet ſome let their old Clothes lie by them till they are moth-eaten, while others are naked, and ſuffer time to wear them out rather then the poor. The Apoſtle *James* ſaith (*Chap.* 5. 1, 2.) *Go to now ye rich men, weep and howl for the miſeries that ſhall come upon you, your riches are corrupt, and your Garments Moth-eaten*; you make ſo many for your ſelves, that you cannot wear them out, only the moths eat them out, and yet you make none for the poor, nor will you let the poor have any of them which you have made, *the Moths ſhall have them firſt.* The ſame Apoſtle (*Chap.* 2. 15, 16.) ſhews us with what cold Garments ſome cloath the naked, and cover the poor, even with a few good words and wiſhes, that's thin clothing indeed, and very cheap; yet they who cloath the poor only with complements, with breath and air, will find it very coſtly to them, when Chriſt ſhall ſay, *I was naked and ye cloathed me not, depart from me.* Let them who will not give the poor any but thoſe cold coverings of words, tremble to think what cold comfort thoſe words will be unto them. They will pay dear for it at laſt, who now think it good huſbandry to ſpare their purſes, and beſtow as little coſt as they can, or none at all (willingly) upon the poor; *Job* did cloath or cover them with good words (which is more then ſome beſtow upon them, yea ſome cover them with bad words, with rebukes and ſcorns, with revilings and reproaches, it may be with blows; But as *Job* did not cover the poor with bad words, ſo he did not cover them only with good words) but where we ſaw any periſh for want of clothing, or the poor without covering, he really or with good deeds cloathed and covered them.

Thirdly, *Job* had before ſpoken of the exerciſe of his Charity in feeding the poor, yet that did not ſatisfie him, he alſo clothed and covered them.

Hence Obſerve, *They who have ability ought to abound in all kinds of Charity.*

He that is truely charitable, doth not only give bread to the hungry, but Clothing to the naked. As wants multiply, ſo his ſupplies are multiplied. It is not enough to act Charity of one ſort, or to do it in one point, we muſt be ready to act it in all. Few (I grant) have eſtates like *Job*, he was a man of great ſubſtance, he had many thouſands of ſheep, many hundreds of Oxen, &c. All cannot equal him, yet all muſt imitate him, and do as he did, though they cannot do as much as he. The note intends only, that every man ought to do according to his proportion, and not ſay, I have done ſuch a good work to this poor man, therefore I need do no more, I gave him bread when he was hungry, therefore I need not or at leaſt I am not bound to give him clothing for his nakedneſs. If we can expreſs our charity but once or one way, that once and one way are accepted. But how often or how many wayes ſoever we have expreſſed it, we are not accepted, if we can but will not expreſs it any more. The widow (*Luke* 21. 42.) gave but two mites (ſcarce enough to keep a man one day from ſtarving, much leſs to provide a man dayly food and clothing) yet Chriſt ſaith, *She hath caſt in more then they all*; and the reaſon was, becauſe ſhe had caſt in her all. A little from thoſe who have little, is looked upon by God as a great deal; but do not think it enough to do a little, when you have ability to do much; *Charge them that be rich* (ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 *Tim.* 6. 18.) *that they do good*, and to ſhew that it is not enough for them to do a little good, he adds, *that they be rich in good works, ready to diſtribute, willing to communicate.* Do not diſcharge your ſelves you that are rich from doing again, becauſe you have once done; ſay not you need not cloath the naked, becauſe you have fed the hungry; *They who think they have done enough, loſe the thanks of all they have done.* For as the Apoſtle (2 *Pet.* 1. 6, 7.) ſpeaks of adding one grace to another, *to vertue knowledge; and to knowledge patience, and to patience brotherly kindneſs, and to brotherly kindneſs charity.* Now (I ſay) as we are to add the acts of ſeveral graces, ſo ſeveral acts of the ſame grace together; as you muſt add to your vertue charity, ſo you muſt add charity to charity; one way of charity to another, and one work of charity to another in the ſame way. Charity to men is the Lords work, both becauſe the Lord works it in us, and becauſe the Lord commands us that work. Now we muſt be (as the Apoſtle exhorts, 1 *Cor.* 15, 58.) *Stedfaſt and unmoveable, alwayes abounding in the work of the Lord.* To do this work of the Lord a little, is far from abounding in it, and to do it once or twice, is as far from doing it alwayes. We never abound in any work of the Lord, if we ſet our ſelves any other bounds in doing it, then the Lord hath ſet us. The bounds which the Lord hath ſet us are only theſe two; firſt, As we have opportunity (*Gal.* 6. 10.) Secondly, As we have ability (2 *Cor.* 16. 2.) We muſt alwayes relieve the wants of others as we are able, and ſometimes (as it was with the Churches of *Macedonia*, 2 Cor. 8. 2, 3.) above what we are able.

Fourthly, *Job* doth not ſay, if I have ſeen this or that man periſh, or this or that man without covering, but, *if I have ſeen any periſh, any without covering:* As he was exerciſed in all ſorts of charity, ſo his charity was exerciſed towards all ſorts of perſons; As he did not excuſe himſelf from clothing the naked, becauſe he fed the hungry; ſo he did not excuſe himſelf from feeding and clothing this poor and naked man, becauſe he had fed and clothed that or another. 'Tis our duty (ſo far as we are able) not to ſee any want, not to ſee any periſh for cold or hunger, both good and bad muſt be kept alive; we muſt act the grace of charity toward them who have not the grace of faith. The Scripture is plain, (*Gal.* 6. 10.) *As we have opportunity, let us do good to all, eſpecially unto them who are of the houſhold of faith*; We muſt put a difference between men upon whom we beſtow our charity, but we muſt not reſtrain it from any men, let them be what they will, they muſt have relief as men; Though they differ from us in religion, yea though they are irreligious, yet ſomewhat muſt be done for them if they are in want. Though all men have not the renewed Image of God, yet all men, even the worſt of men, have ſomewhat of his Image. Though all men have not received Grace, yet all have received the ſame common nature. Again, we muſt do to others as we would they ſhould do to us. There is no godly man, who if he ſhould fall into extream diſtreſs, but would be glad to receive help and relief, though at the hand of a wicked man, and therefore the godly ought to do good to the wicked in their diſtreſs. Beſides, the hardning of our hearts againſt them that are wicked, may harden them in their wickedneſs, and bring a ſcandal upon the profeſſion of Religion. God himſelf hath given us his own example to do ſo (*Matth.* 5. 44, 45.) *Do good to them that hate you, that ye may be the Children of your Father in Heaven* (that is, that you may evidence and declare your ſelves to be ſo) *for he maketh his Sun to riſe on the evil and on the good; and ſendeth rain on the juſt and on the unjuſt.* Holy *Job* was of this Goſpel-ſpirit, though he lived long before the height of Goſpel-times; he would not ſee any periſh for want of cloathing, nor any poor without covering. Charity is never compleat, nor full handed till we *do all acts of charity, and act charity unto all, in one degree or other; If I have ſeen any periſh for want of cloathing,* &c.

Verſe 20. **If his loins have not bleſſed me, if he were not warmed with the fleece of my Sheep.**

To bleſs, as mans act, is to wiſh or pray for a bleſſing. Man cannot bleſs man but by wiſhing him well, or praying for a bleſſing upon him. 'Tis God who bleſſeth man by beſtowing a bleſſing upon him; if he do but pronounce a bleſſing upon us, we are certainly bleſſed. Man ſometime bleſſeth thoſe whom God abhorreth (*Pſal.* 10. 3.) and often abhorreth thoſe whom God bleſſeth. To bleſs unerringly and effectually is only in the power, or 'tis the prerogative of God alone.

But why is it ſaid here, *If his loins have not bleſſed me?* Are our loins the inſtruments of bleſſing? I anſwer,

Firſt, Some take the words figuratively, as if *Job* had ſaid, If there had been a tongue in the poor mans loins, had his loins been vocal, he would have ſpoken a bleſſing with his loins. We find frequently in Scripture ſpeech aſcribed to ſpeechleſs things, to things which have no power of ſpeaking. Thus Chriſt rebukes the envious importunity of the Phariſees for the ſilencing of his Diſciples, who cryed *Hoſanna, bleſſed be the King that cometh in the Name of the Lord* (Luke 19. 40.) *I tell you, that if theſe ſhould hold their peace, the ſtones would immediately cry out.*

Secondly, Rather the loins are here put ſynecdochically for the perſon, *If his loins have not bleſſed me*; that is, if the poor whoſe loins I covered have not bleſſed me. 'Tis uſual in Scripture to put a part for the whole, and a member moſt concerned for the man. Here *Job* repreſents the poor mans acknowledgment or thanks, becauſe his loins were cloathed and warmed with the fleece of his Sheep.

Thirdly, Which further heightens the ſenſe, when *Job* ſaith, *If his loins have not bleſſed me:* It may imply the ſtrong, hearty, and affectionate deſires of the poor for a bleſſing upon *Job:* As if he had ſaid, The poor man bleſſed me with all his might, and ſtrength. The ſtrength of a man (as it is ſaid of *Behemoth, Job* 40. 16.) is in his loins. And therefore as a man is ſaid to do that with his heart which he doth very ſincerely; or to do that with his ſoul which he doth very affectionately; ſo a man is ſaid to do that with his loins wherein he puts forth his ſtrength to the utmoſt. The loins are the ſeat of ſtrength; and hence among the Latines, a weak man is thus expreſſed, *A man without loins.* And in Scripture to have *our loins girt*, is to do a thing with readineſs and with all our might (*Luke* 12. 35.) ſo here, *If his loins did not bleſs me*; as, if he did not bleſs me feelingly and ſtrongly.

Fourthly, (*If his loins have not bleſſed me*) may ſignifie, that *Job*'s work of charity in clothing the naked, did it ſelf (as it were) ſpeak for, or beſpeak a bleſſing at the hand of God for him. As the blood of *Abel* is ſaid to cry to the Lord for a curſe or for vengeance upon his brother *Cain* (murder is ſo foul and ſo unnatural a work, that though none complain of it, yet it will cry out of it ſelf) ſo every act of charity hath a tongue in it, and cryeth to God for a bleſſing upon the charitable. The warmth which we give to the loins of the naked, and the refreſhing which we give to the bowels of the hungry, theſe very acts of love and compaſſion, pray or cry to God for good to us, though men ſay nothing of us. This is both a ſpiritual and an incouraging ſenſe of the Text, *If his loins have not bleſſed me.*

Hence Note, Firſt, *It is the duty of thoſe who are relieved, to pray for and wiſh a bleſſing upon them who are the Inſtruments of their relief.*

Job ſpeaks here not only the practice, but the duty of the poor, and tells us as much what they ought to do, as what they did. From whomſoever we receive good, to them we owe (at leaſt) thanks and good wiſhes. The Goſpel teacheth us to pray for thoſe who deſpitefully uſe us and perſecute us; how much more ſhould we pray for thoſe who uſe us kindly, and provide for us? The Goſpel bids bleſs thoſe who curſe us; How much more ſhould we bleſs thoſe who bleſs us, or are a bleſſing to us? An unthankful receiver renders himſelf altogether unworthy of what he hath already received, much more to receive any more; our loins ſhould bleſs him that hath covered them, and our bowels thoſe who have refreſhed them. And if ſo, O how ſhould our loins bleſs God who hath warmed and refreſhed both loins and bowels with ſo many bleſſings! How ſhould we trumpet forth his praiſes who loadeth us with his benefits daily! If a poor man ought to bleſs his Benefactor for any morſel of bread to ſtay his hunger, for any caſt garment to cover his nakedneſs; what ſhould we do, who receive all our bread, all our clothing, all our comforts, all our graces from the hand of God! How ſhould we bleſs Jeſus Chriſt, who ſatisfieth the hunger of our ſouls with his own fleſh, who clothes and warms our loins, with that Golden fleece of his own everlaſting Righteouſneſs!

Secondly, Obſerve, *If they who have received good by us will not be thankful, the very good which they have received, will thank, yea, commend and praiſe us.*

If we do good, we cannot loſe our thanks for it, though no man thank us. As the very doing of good is a reward to it ſelf; ſo it ſelf will one way or other procure us a reward. Who would not be alwayes doing good, ſeeing we are aſſured that the good we do, will do us more good then thoſe to or for whom we do it? If the poor whom we have fed will not bleſs us, yet their hungry bellies will; if the naked whom we have cloathed do not bleſs us, yet their warmed loins will bleſs us, whether they will or no. That good which we have done will bleſs us, though they do not to whom we have done it. *Let us not be weary in well-doing* (ſaith the Apoſtle, *Gal.* 6. 9.) *for in due ſeaſon we ſhall reap if we faint not.* Is man ungrateful to us? Will he not give us ſo much as a good word, for whom we have done much good? Yet while he carrieth his belly and his loins about him, they will bleſs us. No ſooner is that deſcription of a vertuous Woman and of her vertuous works concluded, but preſently follows (*Prov.* 31. 31.) *Give her of the fruit of her hands, and let her own works praiſe her in the gate.* Suppoſe ſhe hath no Orator to praiſe her there, yet her works will praiſe her; vertuous actions are the moſt eloquent Orators. *They ſpeak beſt who do beſt.* And as our good works will praiſe, commend, and bleſs us when men do not; ſo our evil works, or our neglect of good works will diſpraiſe and complain of us when men do not; though the poor, who ask food and rayment of us and have been denied do not cry againſt us, nor wiſh a curſe upon us, yet their naked loins and hungry bellies will. It is ſaid (*Hab.* 2. 11.) concerning houſes built by violence and oppreſſion (many have raiſed their own houſes upon the ruine of others) *The ſtone ſhall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber ſhall anſwer it:* As if the Prophet had thus expreſſed it, All the materials of the houſe from ſide to ſide, from room to room, from the foundation to the roof, ſhall agree in this doleful ſong, we were built by blood, and woe will be the portion of our builder. It may be a poor oppreſſed man knows not how nor where to complain, yet the ſtones out of the wall know. Every work doth either curſe or bleſs us. The good or evil which we do, will ſpeak good or evil of us. It is an extream miſery if our works are evil, though all men ſpeak well of us. And it is a great mercy if when no man ſpeaks good of us, our works are good. That the loins of the poor bleſs us, may ſatisfie us when we miſs the bleſſing of their lips. *If* (ſaith *Job*) *his loins have not bleſſed me,*

If he were not warmed with the fleece of my Sheep.

We are not to take *the fleece* properly, as if *Job* wrapt a fleece about the loins of the poor; but, by his fleece, he means garments made of his fleece; or cloth to be made up into garments.

If he were not warmed.] *Job* did not only give the poor man ſomewhat to cover his nakedneſs, or to hide his ſhame, but he gave him that which was comfortable to him, that which was a defence againſt the wind and weather: *He was warmed* (ſaith he) *with the fleece*

Of my Sheep.] Not with the fleece which I took from other mens Sheep. *Job* was as honeſt as he was charitable: He cloathed the naked with his own fleece. The word here uſed for *a fleece*, ſignifies any thing, that being cut is ready to grow again: 'Tis applyed in Scripture, Firſt, To the mown graſs: Secondly, To the ſhorn fleece. Graſs is, as it were, the fleece of the earth; and wooll is the graſs of the Sheep. That Prophecy of Chriſt (*Pſal.* 72.6.) which we tranſlate, *He ſhall come down like rain upon the mown graſs*; others tranſlate, *He ſhall come down like rain upon a fleece of wooll.* Yet, I conceive, the former verſion moſt proper in the Pſalm, becauſe of the words which follow, *And like ſhowers upon the earth.* But in *Job* the Text reſtrains us to the latter ſignification, A fleece of wool, which is the natural matter of cloathing; *If he were not warm with the fleece of my ſheep.*

[illegible] *Ut germen excisum, existentibus adhuc radicibus, quæ pluviæ beneficio germinare poſſunt, & lanam tonſam vellusque ſignificat à verbo* [illegible] *ſuccidere, excidere.*

Hence Note, Firſt, *We ſhould give the poor not only that which is for bare neceſſity, but for their comfort.*

Job did not cloath the poor with Sheep skins when he had taken the fleece off from them, but he cloathed them with the fleece. God began the cloathing of man with matter of the loweſt rate (*Gen.* 3. 21.) with Coats of skins; but God taught *Job* to make the poor Coats, not with the skins of the Sheep, but with the fleece. The people of God are deſcribed in their perſecuted ſtate (*Heb.* 11.37.) *Wandring in Sheeps-skins and Goat-skins.* Thoſe Worthies in the faith had much ado to ſave their own skins, or (as *Job* ſpeaks) to eſcape with the skin of their teeth from the rage of cruel Tyrants, and therefore glad of the bare skins of beaſts to cover or diſguiſe their own. Our charity is a kind of perſecution, if it puts the poor into no better a habit then perſecution did thoſe bleſſed Martyrs. I know good cloathing may be made of skins well wrought without the fleece; yet *Job*'s charity giving the fleece not the bare skin to the poor for cloathing, teacheth us to be ſomewhat liberal when we are charitable; and to give the needy, though not the beſt, yet not the worſt for their relief.

Secondly, In that he ſaith, *With the fleece of my Sheep*;

Note, *We muſt be ſure that what we give to the poor, whether in food or rayment, be of our own.*

Job gave them of his own morſel to eat (*ver.* 17.) and here of the fleece of his own Sheep to wear (*Prov.* 3.9.) *Honour the Lord with thy ſubſtance.* We cannot honour the Lord in giving that, which we have gotten by diſhonouring the Lord; that is, by tranſgreſſing the Commandment of the Lord. Do you think you can fulfil the law of Love or Charity, by breaking the law of Juſtice or righteouſneſs! *Nathan* ſpake a Parable of this import to *David*, when he would convince him of and reprove him for his ſin (2 *Sam.* 12.) He tells him of two men in one City, the one rich and the other poor, *&c.* and there came a Traveller to the rich man, to whom indeed he gave, 'tis like, free welcome and entertainment; But at whoſe coſt? He had ſtore of his own; *But* (ſaith *Nathan*, ver. 4.) *he ſpared to take of his own flock, and of his own herd to dreſs for the wayfaring man that was come unto him, but took the poor mans Lamb and dreſſed it for him that was come to him.* He was hoſpitable at his Neighbours charge. *David* was ſo ſcandaliz'd at this parabolical hiſtory, that his anger was greatly kindled, and preſently ſwore a ſentence of death againſt the man that had ſo done. And ſurely if *David* was ſo offended with that mans hoſpitality, God will not be pleaſed with thoſe mens charity, who give relief out of that which they have wrongfully gotten. To feed the hungry and cloath the naked at other mens coſt, is not to honour God, but to mock him. 'Tis a great wickedneſs to do injuſtice that we may do acts of charity: And when men have deſerved the curſe of many by griping, then to hope for the bleſſing of ſome by giving. We muſt not be charitable with other mens fleeces, nor fleece others (as we ſay) that we may be charitable. Shall we furniſh our ſelves by cruelty to perform works of pity? And when we have fleeced others by harſh, rigid, extorting courſes, ſhall we then hope to make amends for all, by ſending a part of our fleece to the poor? How unacceptable ſhall I ſay, or rather how abominable is this charity to God! Take heed of cloathing any by making others naked: Give not that bread to the poor, which you have unduly gained, though from the rich. What is wrongfully gotten muſt be reſtored; and if we can neither find thoſe whom we have wronged, nor their heirs to reſtore it to, then the poor are their heirs, as was ſhewed at the eighteenth verſe of the twentieth Chapter. And what (in that caſe) you give the poor, muſt not be given to them as an Alms, but as their dues; not at all in a way of charity, but of juſtice. Or not as that which you have a liberty to give, but as that which you have no liberty to keep. Look then that the fleece which warms the loins of the poor man comes from the back of your own Sheep. See how exact this holy man was in all his wayes; he gave all manner of charity, and he gave to all; and it was pure charity, he gave his own. To clear which yet further, *Job* having thus proteſted for his charity to the poor, proteſts againſt all manner of injuſtice towards the poor.

Verſe 21. **If I have lifted up my hand againſt the fatherleſs, when I ſaw my help in the gate.**

To lift up the hand in Scripture is taken ſometimes in a good, and ſometimes in an evil ſence; there is a lifting up of the hand for; and there is a lifting up of the hand againſt.

More diſtinctly: Firſt, In a good ſenſe: To lift up the hand is a geſture of praying, or of praiſe; *I will* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *that men pray every where, lifting up pure hands* (1 Tim. 2. 8.) Prayer in the eſſence of it is a lifting up of the heart to God, and in ſignification of that 'tis accompanied with the lifting up of the hand to God. Secondly, To lift up the hand, is a geſture of ſwearing, or taking a ſacred Oath. Thus *Abram* anſwered the King of *Sodom* when he offered him the ſpoils (*Gen.* 14.22.) *I have lifted up my hand to the moſt high God* (that is, I have ſworn) *that I will not take,* &c. And thus the Lords lifting up his hand is his ſwearing (*Ezek.* 20. 5.) *Thus ſaith the Lord God, in the day when I choſe* Iſrael, *and lifted up my hand* (or ſware, as we put in the Margin) *unto the ſeed of the houſe of* Jacob, *&c.* Thirdly, It is a geſture importing readineſs, and ſpecial intention in doing a thing (*Pſal.* 119 48.) *My hands* (ſaith *David*) *alſo will I lift up to thy Commandments*; as a man that is willing to do a thing, and addreſſeth himſelf to the doing of it, lifts up his hand; ſo a godly man is deſcribed lifting up his hand to fulfil and obey the Commands of God. Fourthly, Lifting up of the hand is a geſture intimating our deſire to call or invite another to come to us, or do ſomewhat for us (*Iſa.* 49.22.) *Thus ſaith the Lord, behold I will lift up my hands to the Gentiles*; that is, I will call them into the fellowſhip of the Church, and admit *them* into the Commonwealth of *Iſrael* who have all this while been Aliens from it.

Again, To lift up the hand is taken in a bad ſenſe; and ſo it muſt be underſtood here, as that addition neceſſitates it, *againſt the fatherleſs.* Thus to lift up the hand againſt any one, notes, Firſt, A preſent purpoſe to hurt or vex. Secondly, It ſignifies a menace or threat; 'tis ordinary to ſhake or lift up the hand at thoſe with whom we are much diſpleaſed, Thirdly, It notes actual rebellion and oppoſition, or revenge (2 *Sam.* 20. 21.) *A man of Mount* Ephraim, Sheba *by name, the ſon of* Bichri, *hath lift up his hand againſt the King, even againſt* David; that is, he hath done wickedly againſt *David*, or ſet himſelf againſt *David*, to raiſe ſedition and ruine him. We may expound it in any of or in all theſe three notions, as uſed by *Job*, *If I have lift up my hand againſt the fatherleſs*; that is, if I have done any thing that bears the ſignification of an ill intendment, or of a threatning againſt the fatherleſs, much more if I have uſed any violence againſt the fatherleſs, to oppreſs him in his right, then, &c. Some expound that of the Prophet (*Iſa.* 58. 9.) *If thou take away from the midſt of thee the putting forth of the finger, and ſpeaking vanity*, as a threatning both by word and geſture, and ſo in tendency to *ſmiting with the fiſt of wickedneſs*, of which the Prophet ſpake at the fourth verſe foregoing. It ſeems the *Jews* were wont to deal rigorouſly in urging the Law upon their debtors, much more upon ſuppoſed malefactors, even to violence and ſtriking. So they dealt with Chriſt (*Math.* 26. 67.) *Then did they ſpit in his face and buffeted him, and others ſmote him with the palms of their hands.* Which uncivil uſage he doubtleſs received either by the command, or at leaſt by the connivence of thoſe in power: And ſo 'tis ſaid expreſly of the High Prieſt *Ananias*, that he *Commanded them that ſtood by* Paul *to ſmite him on the mouth* (*Acts* 23. 2.) Againſt all theſe rigorous courſes *Job* proteſts while he ſaith, *If I have lifted up my hand againſt the fatherleſs:* As if he had ſaid, I have neither threatened, nor have I actually vexed the poor and fatherleſs; I have neither given a ſign or intimation to others, by lifting up my hand to afflict them, nor have I done it my ſelf. I conceive alſo we may thus take it in a way of diminution, as denying the leaſt hurt, or appearance of hurt to the fatherleſs: As if he had ſaid, I have been ſo far from oppreſſing them, or laying my whole weight upon them, that I have not ſo much as lifted up my hand againſt them, or touched them with a little finger. The Phariſees (as Chriſt chargeth them in the Goſpel) laid heavy burdens upon others, which themſelves would not touch ſo much as with a little finger; *Job* was ſo tender-hearted and compaſſionate, that he would not lift up his hand, no nor wrongfully lay the weight of his little finger upon the fatherleſs.

Placet ut iſta manus elevatio fieri intelligatur modo imperativo, qua ſolent impii principes elevato manu ſuis ſatellitibus ſignum dare, ut in aliquem irruant, illumq; aut vulnerent aut perimant. Bold.

Si inhumanè repuli, cecidi aut interminatus ſum. Jun.

Laſtly, Becauſe they were wont in Ancient times (and 'tis a uſe in theſe times) to give their vote by lifting up the hand when matters came to the queſtion, therefore ſome interpret theſe words, *If I have lifted up my hand againſt the fatherleſs*, as a denial that he had given his ſuffrage or voice againſt them. According to all theſe interpretations, eſpecially the two laſt, *Job* repels and denies that Charge of harſhneſs and ill dealing with the poor to the utmoſt; he had neither heart nor voice, neither hand nor tongue to do them wrong, either by himſelf or by the agency of others. *If I have lift up my hand againſt the fatherleſs,*

When I ſaw my help in the gate.

Etiam cum viderem me in porta ſuperiorem. Vulg.

Job puts this as a ſpecial note of his Integrity; the Vulgar Latine renders very ſignificantly, *Even when I ſaw my ſelf of greateſt power in the gate.* By the *Gate* here underſtand (as often before) the place of Judgment, which according to the manner of the *Jews*, as alſo of other Nations, was wont to be in the gate of the City: Now, ſaith *Job*, I have not oppreſſed or cruſhed the fatherleſs, when ſitting in the place of Judicature, I ſaw all that were about me ready to aſſiſt me, and take part with me in any matter, if I had but deſired it. I had authority enough in my own hand to order what I would have done, and I had the ſtrength of hands enough to execute my orders; none durſt oppoſe or contradict me, the Judges themſelves would have complied with me, had they ſeen me inclining to ſuch a Judgment: yet though I had all theſe advantages on my ſide, I have not made uſe of them to the wrong of the pooreſt Orphan; *If I have lifted up my hand againſt the fatherleſs:* Thus *Job* ſeems to ſay, *I might have had what I would, if I had but lift up my hand, I could have done what I liſt, and none on earth could hinder me, no man durſt complain; or if any had, how would he have mended himſelf? The Judges were for me, I had help in the gate; if I had trampled upon my oppoſers, and thruſt their cauſe out of the Court, they had been, as to me, remedileſs, though I had not been guiltleſs; but I have not only forborn, but from my very heart abhorr'd to do ſuch unworthy things.* This ſurely was his ſenſe, or to this effect, when he ſaid, *If I have lift up my hand againſt the fatherleſs, when I ſaw my help in the gate.*

Hence Note, Firſt, *To do any thing which hath in it but a ſhadow of oppreſſing the poor is very ſinful.*

The putting forth of the finger, the lifting up of the hand, a ſignification of our conſent to afflict the fatherleſs, is an high offence, both againſt God the righteous Judge, and againſt man, whoſe right is overthrown. The rule is expreſs (1 *Theſ.* 5. 22.) *Abſtain from all appearance of evil.*

Secondly, Obſerve, *To have power in our hands to do wrong, is a great temptation to do it.*

He that hath ability to oppreſs, ſeldom wants opportunity to do it, and 'tis more ſeldom that he wants a mind to do it. *Laban* told *Jacob* (Gen. 31. 29.) *It is in the power of my hand to do thee hurt*; he could have cruſhed *Jacob*, And what hinder'd him? Surely not a principle of love to righteouſneſs, nor a holy fear of wronging him, but a divine rebuke (as himſelf acknowledged in the ſame verſe) *The God of your Fathers ſpake unto me yeſter-night, ſaying, Take thou heed that thou ſpeak not to* Jacob *either good or bad.* *Jacob* alſo told him as much (*ver.* 42.) *God hath ſeen mine affliction, and the labour of mine hands, and rebuked thee yeſter-night.* As if he had ſaid, Unleſs God had ſtopt and checkt thy power from doing me a miſchief, thy own heart, thy conſcience had not. *Solomon* adviſeth (*Prov.* 3. 28.) *Say not unto thy neighbour, go, and come again, and to morrow I will give thee, when thou haſt it by thee*; that is, when it is in the power of thy hand to do it. As we have all need to be excited to do good, though we have power in our hands to do it; ſo when many have power in their hands to do hurt, they can hardly be diſſwaded or kept off from doing it. That we have a power to do good, doth ſcarce tempt or ſtir us to do it; but the very having a power to do evil, tempts us as often as the occaſions of it are preſented to us. Nothing hinders ſome from doing evil, but the want of worldly power: O what a world of evil would theſe do if they had power! And the beſt of men, the greateſt lovers of righteouſneſs, find work enough ſometimes with their own hearts to keep clear from acts of unrighteouſneſs, when power and occaſion, joyning with their own intereſt, meet together.

Hence Note, Thirdly, *It is an argument of much grace, not to do evil when we have power and opportunity in our hands to do it.*

That man gives a ſtrong teſtimony of his own integrity, who hath not a heart to do that evil which the power in his hand enables him to do. It cannot be denied, but our refuſal to do any evil which we have humane help enough to do, ſhews the prevalency of divine help. Then Grace is mighty in us, or as the Apoſtle ſpeaks (*Col.* 1. 29.) *Worketh in us mightily*, when we are weak as to thoſe ſinful works, for which we have the greateſt either natural or civil power. *Paul* could ſay (2 *Cor.* 13. 8.) *I can do nothing againſt the truth, but for the truth.* *Paul* could have ſet his wits againſt the truth, and plaid the Sophiſter as well as any other man; but he had no heart to do any thing againſt the truth. This is an infallible Argument, not only of the truth, but of the ſtrength of grace (2 *John* 3.9.) *He that is born of God cannot ſin* (Why not?) Not becauſe he hath not a natural power, not becauſe he hath no civil power, not becauſe he hath no corruption ſuiting ſin, not becauſe he hath no temptation provoking him to ſin, not becauſe he alwayes wants opportunity to ſin; he that is born of God hath moſt of theſe advantages to ſin alwayes, and he ſometimes hath all of them, ſo that none of theſe are the proper reaſons why he cannot commit ſin. The true reaſon is, becauſe his heart is turned and ſet another way, or becauſe (as that Scripture expreſſeth the reaſon) *The ſeed of God remaineth in him.* When a godly man hath as much power and opportunity as others to ſin, yet he doth not ſin as others, becauſe the power of grace not only reſtrains and ſuperſedes, but changeth and altereth the powers of Nature. We ſhould alwayes do the ſame things, if we were alwayes the ſame men. We ſhould all do alike, if we were all alike. How glorious is that grace of God in man, which gives him a power not to ſin, how much ſoever it is in his power to ſin: And ſtill the glory of that grace is the greater in keeping us from ſinning, by how much our power to ſin is greater for a Magiſtrate who ſeeth (as *Job* did) his help in the gate to afflict the fatherleſs, or ſubvert any man in his cauſe, and yet not to lift up a hand or a finger, not to contribute the leaſt appearance of his power to do it, but (as doubtleſs *Job* alſo did) to contribute all his power againſt it. This is Juſtice in triumph.

Further, For as much as *Job* ſaith, that *he ſaw his help in the gate*,

> Obſerve, *Men in great power and place cannot want help to carry through the moſt unjuſt and oppreſſive actions, if they do but deſire it.*

When *Jezabel* the Queen had a mind to murder *Naboth*, ſhe ſaw her help in the gate, ſhe wanted neither falſe Witneſſes to accuſe him, nor ignorant or unrighteous Judges to condemn him. When *Abſalom* was reſolved to ſlay his Brother *Amnon*, he did but make his mind known, and he had help enough. How many have been thus incouraged to adventure in a bad cauſe? O, ſay they, we ſee our *help in the gate*; 'tis but bribing ſuch a one, and the match will be quickly made up, a preſent will win ſuch a mans heart, and he will win us two or three more, and we have a way to get a fourth, and if we get but a fifth, or a ſixth, we ſhall carry it againſt all the world; let our cauſe be what it will, we ſee our help in the gate. Thus Judgment is bought and ſold without reſpect either to honour or honeſty. There hath been ſuch corruption in all ages, it were indeed the glory of our age if no ſuch corruption were to be found among us. But are there not ſome whoſe office it is to relieve the oppreſſed, who have lent a helping hand to their oppreſſors? The fatherleſs rarely find help in the gate; but they who lift up their hand againſt the fatherleſs find too much help there. How ſad is it when they that ſhould help the fatherleſs in the gate, ſee the fatherleſs trod under foot in the gate, and give them no help! Woe to thoſe who help the mighty againſt the weak in a wrong cauſe, or who will not help the weak againſt the mighty in a right cauſe. How ſhall ſuch ſtand before the juſt God in the gate of the great Judgment, who have overthrown the cauſe of the poor in the gate unjuſtly; eſpecially conſidering how oft their ears have been beaten with theſe admonitions, and in what light they live.

> Fifthly, Note, *Righteous Magiſtrates will not uſe their power to oppreſs others, how much opportunity and advantage ſoever they have to do it, though they ſee their help in the gate.*

Id tantum poſſumus quod jure poſſumus.

A righteous Magiſtrate knows, *That he only can do that which he can lawfully or rightly do.* As the Law gives him no power; ſo he is convinced, that he hath no power beyond, much leſs againſt the Law; and therefore concludes, I can do no more then I ought to do; he had rather be accounted weak then unjuſt, and impotent then oppreſſive; yea, he counts this his ſtrength, and power, not to oppreſs, not to be unjuſt.

Laſtly, In that *Job* would not lift up his hand againſt the fatherleſs, when he ſaw his help in the gate.

> Note, *Men in power ſhould not ſatisfie themſelves with what will paſs among, or be countenanced by men, but conſider what is right in it ſelf, what is right in the ſight of God, and that they are in the ſight of God.*

A bad buſineſs may paſs very well among men, and we may have Advocates who will anſwer for us, and ſtop the mouths of all gain-ſayers; But can they ſtop the mouth of Conſcience? Can they blind the eyes of God, or impoſe upon him? God is the Judge of all the earth, and he will at laſt ſit in Judgment upon all the Judges of the earth: Now, as *Moſes* pleaded with God about his threatned and intended Judgment upon *Sodom* (Gen. 18. 25.) *Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?* Doubtleſs he will, though all the Judges of the earth ſhould do wrong. And as he will do them right, whom the Judges of the earth have wrong'd, ſo he will pronounce a righteous Judgment upon all unrighteous Judges. The Judgment of God will be very terrible upon thoſe who have done any thing (and not repented of it) againſt the Law; but his Judgment will be moſt terrible upon thoſe who have Judged againſt the Law, and either for fear or favour, for the ſatisfying of their coveteouſneſs or revenge have perverted Juſtice, and overthrown the righteous cauſe of the poor and fatherleſs in the gate. *Jehoſhaphat* ſaid to his Judges (2 *Chron.* 19. 6.) *Take heed what ye do, for ye judge not for man, but for the Lord*; that is, ye do not ſo much fill my place who am your King, as Gods place who is King of Kings. How ſeverely therefore will the Lord proceed with unrighteous Judges, ſeeing, as much as in them lyes, they make or render God himſelf an unrighteous Judge?

Therefore to ſhut up this point, let men in power diligently attend the end for which they have received their power, and then they will not eaſily go out of their way in the exerciſe of it. Surely what the Apoſtle aſſerts concerning the end of that power which the then Apoſtles did receive, and all the Miniſters of the Goſpel ſince, in their capacity, have received (1 *Cor.* 13. 8.) is true in the general concerning the end or ſcope of all Magiſtratical power, *It is for edification, and not for deſtruction.* Magiſtrates ſhould more attend building then pulling down, and be more in protection then puniſhment. Magiſtrates are ſaid to *bear the Sword*, not to be Swords; and they are ſaid *to be Shields* (*Pſal.* 47. 9.) not to bear Shields; and all to ſhew that protection and preſervation are more eſſential and intrinſecal to their office then deſtruction and puniſhment are. Protection is the moſt proper work of Magiſtrates. Indeed deſtruction is their work too, but that is a by-work, that comes in a way of conſequence, as it doth alſo in the Miniſters work. The word is the ſavour of death as well as the ſavour of life; but that which is or ſhould be chiefly aimed at in both theſe great Ordinances of Magiſtracy and Miniſtry, is edification and protection, not deſtruction; and if at any time deſtruction, yet only the deſtruction of the wicked and evil doers, yea, only of wickedneſs and evil deeds. What ſhall we ſay then either of or to thoſe Magiſtrates, who in the exerciſe of their power aim at deſtruction rather then at protection, yea, at the deſtruction of the poor and fatherleſs, rather then of the proud and mercileſs. Is there any honour in ſuch a victory? Let all who are inveſted with a lawful power, take heed they uſe it lawfully. The worſt uſe power can be put to, is the oppreſſion of the poor, and the bearing up a bad cauſe. Theſe were the abhorrence of *Job*'s ſoul; *If I have lift up my hand againſt the fatherleſs, when I ſaw my help in the gate.*

VERS. 22, 23.

Then let mine arm fall from my ſhoulder-blade, and mine arm be broken from the bone.

For deſtruction from God was a terror to me: and by reaſon of his highneſs I could not endure.

IN the former verſe *Job* earneſtly proteſted his integrity, yea, and his tenderneſs toward the poor and fatherleſs, even when he had the faireſt opportunity to cruſh and oppreſs them; when he ſaw his *help in the gate.*

He now binds that proteſtation by a ſolemn and ſacred imprecation, calling down a dreadful judgment upon himſelf if it were not ſo. I have met with matter of this nature more then once before; *Job* imprecating vengeance upon his own head, to aſſure the truth of what he had proteſted. How and in what caſes imprecations may be made, hath there been ſhewed. And therefore I ſhall not ſtay upon it here, but only a little open the matter of this imprecation.

Verſe 22. **Then let mine arm fall from my ſhoulder-blade, &c.**

שכם *Juxta Hebræos eſt propriè tota latitudo humeri, quæ extat à collo ad brachium, utrinque.* Merc.

The Hebrew is, *Let mine arm fall from my ſhoulder.* The word rendred *ſhoulder-blade*, notes all that breadth of the body, from the neck to both the arms. And 'tis uſed metaphorically by the Prophet (*Zeph.* 3. 9.) to expreſs that oneneſs of heart and ſpirit, which ſhall be among the people of God in the latter dayes, *Then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may call upon the Name of the*

Lord, to ſerve him with one conſent, or, *with one ſhoulder* (as we put it in the Margin) Which is an alluſion either to oxen drawing unitedly and at once in the ſame yoak, or to ſeveral men unanimouſly joyning their ſtrength to bear the ſame burden. 'Tis tranſlated *back*, (Pſal.21.12.) *Therefore ſhalt thou make them to turn their back*, or their ſhoulder; we put in the Margin. *Thou ſhalt ſet them as a But, when thou ſhalt make ready thine Arrows upon thy ſtrings, againſt the face of them*; we render clearly to the ſcope of this place in *Job*, as well as the ſenſe of the word, *The ſhoulder, or the ſhoulder-blade*; the next clauſe is of the ſame ſenſe.

And let mine arm be broken from the bone, Or, *From the chanel bone.*

The Word ſignifieth a Reed or a Cane, as alſo a ſpeare, which is long and ſlender like a Reed; the bone in the arm reaching from the ſhoulder to the elbow, or rather to the hand-wriſt, reſembles alſo a Cane, both as to the length and hollowneſs of it, *Let mine arm be broken from the bone.*

This imprecation may be conſidered, either with reference to all that *Job* ſpake in the former Context, or more particularly, to the twentieth verſe, to which 'tis moſt ſutable, hitting the point fully according to the Law of retaliation; *If mine hand* (ſaith he) *hath been lifted up againſt the fatherleſs, then let mine arm fall from my ſhoulder blade*; As if he had ſaid, let God puniſh me in that very member and part, which may moſt evidently point out my ſin. Let him even write my ſin upon my judgment; which cannot be done more viſibly, then when a man who hath unjuſtly lift up his hand againſt the fatherleſs, feels his arm falling off from his ſhoulder blade. *Let mine arm fall from my ſhoulder-blade*, &c. Hence (paſſing by the doctrine of imprecations before handled) we may obſerve,

First, *The loſs of an arm or limb of the body, is a grievous loſs.*

God hath ſo compacted and built up this houſe of clay, mans body, he hath put it in to ſuch an exquiſite frame, that if any one member be wanting, or but out of order, the whole is diſabled; if any one member be loſt, it is a loſs to the whole body. The Apoſtle treating of that ſpiritual body or corporation, the Church (1 *Cor.* 12.26.) ſhews what a ſympathy there is or ought to be among the members, and that in the ſuffering of any one of them, they all ſuffer, the whole ſpiritual body ſuffers in one member, even as the natural body doth. The eye ſees for the whole body, and the ear hears for the whole body, and the hand works for the whole body; and therefore the loſs of any one member is a great loſs, becauſe 'tis both the pain and loſs of the whole body. And if ſo, then

Firſt, Let us be ſenſible of their affliction, who ſuffer the loſs of a limb or bodyly member.

Secondly, Let thoſe be thankful who enjoy the uſe and benefit of all their bodyly members; a man that wants the uſe of his arm, O how thankful would he be, to have it reſtored again? Yet while we enjoy the uſe and ſervice of all our bodily members, we ſeldome take notice of the mercy, or are truely thankful for it.

Thirdly, Let us be admoniſht, to imploy every part, and member of the body well; let us uſe our hands, our feet, our eyes, our tongues to the honour of God. That's the Apoſtles advice (1 *Cor.*6.20.) *Ye are bought with a price, therefore glorifie God in your body, and in your ſpirit, which are Gods.* God hath a title, a right to the ſervice of both, not only by creation becauſe he made them, but by redemption, becauſe he hath bought or paid for them. Let all our bones honour the Lord, as *David* reſolved his ſhould (*Pſal.* 35. 10.) *All my bones ſhall ſay, Lord who is like unto thee?* Thoſe bones which God hath compacted, and joyned together in that admirable ſtructure of the body, ſhould joyn in his praiſe, and all the members of the body *ſhould be yielded as inſtruments of righteouſneſs unto God* (Rom. 6. 13.) Take heed of abuſing ſo much as a little finger, do not give up a hair of your head to the ſervice of ſin, for it is the Lords; let us take heed of mis-imploying our bodily members, leſt we provoke God to deny us the comfortable uſe of them. For,

Secondly, Note, *It is juſt, that they who abuſe the members of their body, to the hurt of man, or the diſhonour of God, ſhould loſe the uſe of them.*

He that lifts up his hand unrighteouſly, forfeits the uſe of it, and God hath ſometime taken the forfeiture. We take a knife out of a Childs hand, when we ſee he doth hurt with it; much more a Sword out of a mad-mans hand, who is bent to do hurt with it. Surely as we take artificial Inſtruments of hurt out of their hands who abuſe them, ſo God may juſtly take away the the uſe of any natural Inſtrument which we abuſe. Thus the Juſtice of God over-took *Jeroboam* (1 Kings 13.4.) who when he lift up his hand againſt the Prophet that propheſied againſt his Idolatrous Altar, preſently his hand withered, and he was not able to draw it in, or to bring it back, till the Prophet prayed for the reſtoring of it. God can quickly wither a hand or an arm that is ſtretch out to do miſchief. 'Tis a righteous thing for God to ſmite an abuſed eye with blindneſs, to ſmite an abuſed ear with deafneſs, an abuſed arm with lameneſs, and an abuſed tongue with an inability of ſpeaking. 'Tis fit that ſhould be deſtroyed which perverts the end for which it was made; and an equal thing, that God ſhould recal his favours when we fight againſt him, or act croſs to our duty with them.

Juſtum eſt ut homo mēbris privetur quibus ad injuſtitiam utitur. Aquin.

Job having given us an aſſurance of his integrity, by imprecating this penal evil upon himſelf, proceeds to give us a rational accouut of it, or to ſhew us what it was, that ſtopt him from acting that ſinful evil of oppreſſing the poor, the fatherleſs, and the widow.

Verſe 23. **For deſtruction from God was a terror to me: And by reaſon of his highneſs I could not endure.**

The Word rendred **deſtruction**, ſignifies properly any noyſome killing vapour; Such are the wrathful diſpenſations of God to man: As if he had ſaid, I was not afraid of any trouble, or deſtruction from men, but deſtruction from God was a terror to me.

The vulgar Latine tranſlates well to the ſenſe, though wide from the letter of the Text, *For I alwayes feared God as the waves of a raging and tumultuous Sea, ready to overwhelm me*; As if he had ſaid. I ſaw a Sea of wrath, into which I ſhould plunge my ſelf, by ſuch unrighteous actings. Such viſions or apprehenſions of an angry God, to ſee him as a raging Sea ready to ſwallow us up, or as a conſuming fire to devoure us when we ſin, are great effects of a lively and working faith. But I ſhall not ſtay upon that verſion, becauſe 'tis rather Rhetorical then literal.

Semper enim quaſi tumentes ſuper me fluctus timui Deum. Vulg.

Mr. *Broughton* renders, *The Omnipotents feared woe held me*; that is, it took hold of me, and withheld me from oppreſſing wayes.

We ſay, **Deſtruction from God**; Some more cloſe to the Grammatical ſtrictneſs of the text; *Deſtruction of God*, where the Genitive caſe notes the efficient cauſe, not the ſubject of deſtruction; that is, firſt, ſuch deſtruction as God uſes to ſend upon oppreſſors, or ſecondly, ſuch deſtruction as eminently and evidently declares the power of God, and that God is the author of it, was (ſaith *Job*) *a terror to me*; I by faith did apprehend that deſtruction which God in his Word threatneth ſinners, eſpecially oppreſſors with, as If I had already felt it. *Deſtruction from God*

איד־אל *Ex verbo, vapor dei; eſt genitivus efficientis.*

Was a terror to me.] There is a two-fold terror; Firſt, that which doth ariſe from a meer ſlaviſh fear of God as a Judge or avenger; Secondly, there is a terror, which ariſeth from a Child-like fear, at once looking upon God as a Father, and as a righteous Judge. This terror was upon *Job*; he knew that (though a ſon, though a Child) if he ſhould take liberty to break the bonds of duty, and tranſgreſs the Law of God, he ſhould ſmart for it; his Father would not be a cockering, or an indulgent Father to him, but he ſhould feel the ſmart of his rod, and feel it the more, by how much he was the nearer to him. Thus the Lord told his own people (*Amos* 3. 2.) *You only have I known of all the families of the earth, therefore I will puniſh you for all your iniquities. Deſtruction from God was a terror to me.*

Hence Note, Firſt, *God is mighty to deſtroy, as well as to ſave.*

There is one Law-giver (ſaith the Apoſtle, *James* 4. 12.) *who is able to ſave, and to deſtroy*; he can as eaſily deſtroy thoſe who violate, as ſave thoſe who obey his Laws. There is the ſame power of God in both, and God is honoured in the exerciſe of both theſe powers. That Title by which God is ſo often expreſſed *El-ſhaddai*, imports the deſtroying, as well as the preſerving, ſaving, and nouriſhing power of God. As God hath declared himſelf, ſo we ought to honour him, to own him, to ſtudy him, and to know him; know then, there is deſtruction from God, as well as ſalvation from God. And, as *to the Lord our God belong the iſſues* (or out-gates) *from death*, that is, God hath choice of wayes to deliver his Servants from the extreameſt dangers of death; So to the Lord our God belong the entrances unto death; that is, God hath infinite wayes to lead his Enemies into the chambers and ſnares of death.

Secondly, If we conſider who are the objects of this deſtruction, even they who are guilty of oppreſſion; or in what caſe *Job* feared it, namely, if he had lift up his hand violently or unrighteouſly againſt the fatherleſs.

Obſerve, *They who deſtroy men unjuſtly, may juſtly expect deſtruction from God.*

God is a God of deſtruction, but he is deſtruction to the wicked only, or to unjuſt deſtroyers. God is a God of ſalvation to his own people; a Believer needs not fear deſtruction; *I* (ſaith Chriſt *John.* 10. 31.) *have given them eternal life, and they ſhall never periſh.* Indeeed while a Believer acts unlike a believer, God may deal with him, as he doth with unbelievers, he may deal with him in outward diſpenſations, as he doth with the World, while he conforms to the World; but take him under the notion of a Believer, he is not within the compaſs of deſtruction: God is to him, only a God of ſalvation. The deſtruction of God is the proper portion of men-deſtroyers. *The wicked are ſons of perdition* (ſo *Judas* was called (*John.* 17. 12.) And ſo Antichriſt is called (2 *Theſ.* 2, 3.) the wicked, I ſay, are ſons of perdition) in a double notion; Firſt, they are ſons of perdition actively, they make it their work ſometimes to deſtroy others, and the deſtruction of others is often the conſequent, yea the proper effect of their work; Secondly, they are the *ſons of perdition* paſſively, that is, they ſhall certainly be deſtroyed; and ſo 'tis expreſly propheſied concerning the latter of thoſe ſons of perdition, (2 *Theſ.* 2. 8.) *Whom the Lord ſhall conſume with the ſpirit of his mouth, and deſtroy with the brightneſs of his coming.*

Thirdly, Note, *A Believer hath, and may have dreadful apprehenſions of the deſtroying power of God.*

As *he makes God his fear* (Iſa. 8. 13.) in oppoſition to the fear of mans deſtroying power, ſo it is good for him to fear the deſtroying power of God, and often to conſider the wrath of God againſt ſinners, to keep himſelf from ſinning againſt God. For though a Believer obeyeth and keeps off from ſin upon higher and nobler terms then wrath, yet he makes a good improvement of thoſe terms; wrath and deſtruction from the Almighty are ſuch a terror to him, that as he will not, ſo he dares not ſin. As we are delivered by Jeſus Chriſt out of the hands of all our enemies, that we may ſerve him in holineſs and righteouſneſs without the fear of man, ſo in the fear of God all our dayes. All Believers are warned *to work out their ſalvation with fear and trembling* (Phil. 2. 12.) that is, they ſhould fear and tremble to do any thing which doth not (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Heb.* 6. 9.) accompany ſalvation while they are working it out. *Princes muſt be juſt ruling in fear of God* (2 Sam. 23. 3.) The Kings of the earth are called, (*Pſal.* 2. 10.) *To ſerve him with fear, and to rejoyce before him with trembling, to kiſs the Son leſt he be angry*, Deſtruction from the Almighty ſhould be a terror to them againſt doing evil, who by their office are a terror to evil-doers. It was the unjuſt Judge who neither regarded men nor feared God (*Luke* 18. 2.) God delights to ſee the ſons of men honour him in all that he is, he delights to ſee them honour him in his Juſtice, and in his wrath, as well as in his love and mercy. When Chriſt ſaw his Diſciples daunted with the fear of men, (*Luke* 12. 4, 5.) He ſaith, *Be not afraid of them that kill the body*, &c. *But I will forewarn you whom you ſhall fear; fear him; which after he hath killed hath power to caſt into Hell, yea, I ſay unto you, fear him.* While he takes them off from the fear of man, he doth not take them off from all fear, yea he urgeth them with the fear of God; he would have deſtruction from the Almighty a terror to them. And, ſuch is the proneneſs of man to ſin, that he needs all manner of help, and the ſtrength of all ſorts of arguments to keep him from it.

Idonea, ratio, à principibus ſemper recolenda, ut Dei timore coerciti nihil injuſtum, nihil violentum attentant. Merl.

Laſtly, We may take this counſel from *Job's* profeſſion, when we are about to do any thing, let us examine and conſider, whether God allow it or no; if he diſallow it, let us forbear and fear to meddle with it, though men flatter us or give us liberty, yea though they aſſiſt and give us help. The reaſon why ſo many break the rules, both of piety towards God, and of honeſty towards man, is becauſe they have laid by or aſide, all fear of deſtruction from the Almighty. *Deſtruction from the Almighty was a terror to me;*

And by reaſon of his highneſs I could not endure.

The root of the word here rendred **Highneſs**, ſignifies two things; Firſt, *to lift up*; Secondly, *To bear.* Upon which ground this Text is diverſly tranſlated; Some thus, *by reaſon of his weight or burden I could not endure*; or, *I could not bear his burden.* But what was this heavy burden? The wrath of God is a burden, and the only burden which man cannot bear. I, ſaith *Job* (according to this tranſlation) was preſſed in my ſpirit with a ſenſe of the wrath of God. The weight of Divine diſpleaſure is intolerable, who can bear it? That's a good ſenſe; and therefore threatning Prophecies in Scripture (which are manifeſtations of the wrathful diſpleaſure of God againſt men or Nations) are often called *burdens.* Thus we read (*Iſa.* 13. 1.) *The burden of* Babylon *which* Iſaiah *the ſon of* Amos *did ſee.* And (*Iſa.* 15. 1.) *The burden of* Moab, *Becauſe in the night* Ar *of* Moab *is laid waſt.* Once more (*Iſa.* 17. 1.) *The burden of* Damaſcus; *behold* Damaſcus *is taken away from being a City, and it ſhall be a ruinous heap.* See the like, *Chap.* 19. 1. and 21. 1. 11. and 22. 1. and 23. 1. All theſe Propheſies declared heavy Judgments ready to fall down upon the head of *Babylon, Moab* and *Damaſcus*, &c. to cruſh and ruine them, to break and deſtroy them. Thus *Jehu* ſpake when he had executed the ſentence of God upon *Jehoram*, (2 Kings 9. 25.) *Then ſaid* Jehu *to* Bidkar *his Captain, take up and caſt him in the porton of the field of* Naboth *the* Jezreelite: *For remember, how that when I and thou rode together after* Ahab *his Father, the Lord laid this burden upon him*; that is, paſſed this heavy doom upon him. There is one very obſervable Scripture (*Jer.* 23, 33.) where the people are charged with mocking the Lords Prophet for their frequent uſe of this word, *The Burden of the Lord: And when this people, or the Prophet* (that is, falſe prophet) *or a Prieſt* (that is, a prophane Prieſt) *ſhall ask thee, ſaying, what is the burden of the Lord? Thou ſhalt then ſay unto them, what burden? I will even forſake you ſaith the Lord; when they ſhall ask*, that is, when they ſhall ſay in ſcorn, or ſcoffingly, *what is the burden of the Lord?* We know you have ſome burden for us, we uſe to hear nothing but burdens or threatnings you, as if you were born with the word *burden* in your mouths (So they derided the Prophets, and their threatning Propheſies, called burdens) what is the burden of the Lord? Thou ſhalt ſay unto them, *I will even forſake you, ſaith the Lord.* That's your burden, and that's enough to break your backs for ever. And to ſhew how highly the Lord was diſpleaſed with their abuſing his Prophets for the frequent uſe of this Word; he tells them (*ver.* 34.) *And as for the Prophet, and the Prieſt, and the people that ſhall ſay, the burden of the Lord*, (that is, if any one ſhall ſay it with ſcorn or deriſion to the Prophet) *I will puniſh that man and his houſe*, I will be a burden to him, ſaith the Lord; Yea the Lord was ſo offended with their abuſe of this word *burden*, that he commanded it ſhould be no more uſed (as many words which men have corrupted, are diſ-uſed by men) (*ver.* 35.) *Thus ſhall ye ſay every one to his neighbour, and every one to his Brother, what hath the Lord anſwered, and what hath the Lord ſpoken*: As if he had ſaid, Be ſure you uſe this ſcorning word no more, but if you enquire of the Prophet, you ſhall ſpeak thus, *What hath the Lord anſwered and ſpoken*, (ver. 36.) *and the burden of the*

Pondus ejus ferre non potui. Vulg.

Lord ſhall you mention no more; for every mans word ſhall be his burden; for you have perverted the words of the living God, of the Lord of hoſts our God. (ver. 37.) *Thus ſhalt thou ſay to the Prophet, what hath the Lord anſwered? And what hath the Lord ſpoken?* Thus he repeats it again. And whereas notwithſtanding this prohibition, the people continued to uſe this word, *The burden of the Lord*; Mark what the Lord ſaith at the thirty eighth verſe; *Becauſe you ſay this word, the burden of the Lord, and I have ſent unto you, ſaying, ye ſhall not ſay the burden of the Lord; therefore behold I even I will utterly forget you, and I will forſake you, and the City that I gave you, and your Fathers, and caſt out of my preſence: And I will bring an everlaſting reproach upon you, and a perpetual ſhame, which ſhall not be forgotten.* I have inſiſted upon this notable Scripture only to ſhew, *how famous* that word was, *The burden of the Lord*, importing a Propheſie that carried the ſignification of the foreſt diſpleaſure of God in it againſt a provoking people; as alſo how that word *became infamous* when the people abuſed it, ſaying in ſcorn, *The burden of the Lord*; as they alſo in ſcorn abuſed that moſt precious word, *The Holy One of* Iſrael. For, becauſe the Prophets were wont to preface their Sermons, with, *Thus ſaith the holy One of* Iſrael, or ſometimes to conclude them, with, *The holy One of* Iſrael *hath ſaid it*; Therefore the prophane ones among that people ſaid in deriſion (*Iſa.* 5. 19.) *Let him make ſpeed and haſten his work, that we may ſee it; and let the Counſel of the Holy One of* Iſrael *draw nigh that we may know it.* Thus they in *Iſaiah* made a jeſt of that moſt excellent Name of God, *The Holy One of* Iſrael, as theſe in *Jeremy* derided thoſe dreadful Meſſages of God by his holy Prophets, called, *The burden of the Lord.* But to return from this digreſſion, occaſion'd by the correſpondence of many Scriptures with this verſion of *Job*'s Text, *I could not bear his weight or burden.*

Now from this reading of the words, *By reaſon of his burden or heavineſs I could not endure.*

Obſerve, *The wrath of God is very burdenſome.*

'Tis a burden too heavy to be born; Man cannot bear it; The Apoſtatizing Angels could not bear it; yea Jeſus Chriſt himſelf, when he undertook the redemption of fallen man ſweat drops of blood in bearing it. *David* confeſſed (*Pſa.* 38. 4.) *Mine iniquities are gone over my head: as an heavy burden, they are too heavy for me.* But what made his iniquities ſo heavy? doubtleſs it was his apprehenſion of the wrath of God which his iniquities had deſerved, and by their guilt ſubjected him unto. Carnal men have mountains of iniquity upon them, yet are not burdened with them, but make light, yea a ſport of them, becauſe they are not ſenſible of that wrath which is due to them. *Moſes* in his prayer (*Pſal.* 90. 11. That's the Title of it) cryed out, *Who knoweth the power of thine Anger? Even according to thy fear, ſo is thy wrath.* There is a power, and a weight in the anger of the Lord, which no man (who apprehends it) is able to endure or ſtand under; yea, no man is able fully to apprehend it. As there is an incomprehenſible love of God; even a height, and breadth, and length, and depth, which man is not able to comprehend; ſo is his anger, ſo is his wrath incomprehenſible. They who apprehend the leaſt of it, are preſſed with its weight beyond enduring. As glory which is the full manifeſtation of God to the ſoul, in his love, and goodneſs, and holineſs, is called a *weight*, (2 *Cor.* 4. 17.) what weight? not a burdenſome weight, not an oppreſſing weight but an honorable weight, it is called a weight, becauſe of the greatneſs, and excellency of it, and becauſe it makes thoſe who have it weighty and honourable. Now as there is a bleſſed weight, or a weight of bleſſedneſs in Glory; ſo there is a miſerable weight, a weight of miſery in that wrath of God, which is ready to be poured down upon the head of ſinners. 'Tis ſuch a weight of miſery as will cruſh the ſtrongeſt Giant like a Moth. And unleſs God put forth a power in man to bear him up under the power of his anger, it would ſink him to nothing. The Apoſtle (*Heb.* 10. 31.) gives warning to all, leſt they come under this weight. *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God*; that is, to fall under the weight of his diſpleaſure. When *David* had ſaid (*Pſal.* 32. 4.) *Day and night thy hand was heavy upon me*; he preſently tells us what ſad effects he found of it; *My moiſture* (ſaith he) *is turned into the droughts of Summer.* The weight of Gods hand is heavy upon his own people, in time of affliction, and deſertion, when he at once chaſtens them and hides his face from them. But what is that to the hand of God that ſhall be upon the wicked for ever? If that anger of God which doth but purge and cleanſe the Godly be ſo heavy, O how heavy is that anger of God which reprobates and conſumes the ungodly? When, they falling into the hand of God, the hand of God falls upon them, it will fall heavy upon them indeed. The Prophet ſpeaks of the *lighting down of the Arm of God with the indignation of his anger, and with the flame of a devouring fire, with ſcattering, and tempeſt, and hail-ſtones* (Iſa. 30. 30.) When the power of God (called by the Prophet *his Arm*) cloathed with the indignation (that is, with the very ſpirits) of his anger, like a devouring fire, or a ſcattering tempeſt ſhall light down or reſt upon ſinners (in which ſenſe *Damaſcus* is called *the reſt of the burden of the Word of the Lord*, that is, of his wrath declared in that burdenſom word, *Zach.* 9. 1. When, I ſay, the wrath of God ſhall thus light down and reſt upon ſinners) O how reſtleſs will they be for ever!

Perpendere ſūmopere debemus, quomodo feratur illa ira quæ reprobat, ſi ferri modo vix valet ejus ira quæ purgat. Greg. l. 22. cap. ult.

But I will not ſtay any longer upon this verſion of the Text, though it be a profitable one, and ſutable enough to *Job*'s ſcope. Our rendring is clear and proper,

By reaſon of his Highneſs, I could not endure.] The root of the Word which we tranſlate **Highneſs**, ſignifies *to elevate*, or, *lift up*; and it imports both Highneſs of place, and Highneſs of power and dignity, local Highneſs, and civil Highneſs. And therefore Princes are expreſſed by this Word, becauſe they are high, or perſons lifted up above the reſt of the people; *by reaſon of his Highneſs* (of his Princely Highneſs or Majeſty)

I could not endure.] The Hebrew is only thus, *by reaſon of his Highneſs I could not*, leaving us to conceive what he could not do, by reaſon of the Highneſs of God; and hence the ſupplement is variouſly made to this, *I could not*; and it may be queſtioned what was it that *Job* could not by reaſon of the Highneſs of God? Firſt, Some read, *I could not withſtand or reſiſt*, he would be too hard for me; Secondly, Mr. *Broughton* reads (which reacheth the ſame ſenſe) *I could not ſtand before his Highneſs.* A third makes the ſupplement thus, *I could not eſcape, nor get out of his hand*; his Highneſs is ſuch, that if I had done wickedly, there had been no avoiding or fleeing from his revenging hand. We make up the ſenſe with the Word *Endure*, *By reaſon of his Highneſs I could not endure.* And indeed as he could not ſtand nor withſtand, nor fly from him, ſo it is as true that being under the hand of God he could not endure his Highneſs. The power and Greatneſs, the excellency and Highneſs of God, daſheth man out of countenance, and confounds him.

Nunquam me parem exiſtimavi ad repugnādum Deum & ſuſtinendam illius impetum in me currentem. Pined.

But why could not *Job* endure the Highneſs of God, ſeeing the Prophet ſpeaks of thoſe who rejoyce and triumph in it (*Iſa.* 13. 3.) *I have commanded my ſanctified ones, I have alſo called my mighty ones for mine anger, even them that rejoyce in my Highneſs.*

I anſwer, The Lord in that place deſcribes thoſe Worthies to whom he had *lifted up his banner* (ver. 2.) and whom he had fitted for that great ſervice of his anger, the overthrow of *Babylon*; and therefore he terms them *ſanctified ones* (that is) men ſpecially prepared and ſet apart for that work, as well as *mighty ones for his anger*, that is, mighty to execute his anger upon *Babylon*; now they whom God doth call and ſpirit for any noble undertaking in the execution of his anger againſt Babyloniſh Enemies, have much cauſe to rejoyce and exult in the Highneſs of God, or that they therein ſerve the high God. But when any man inſtead of being the inſtrument, is the object of Gods anger, how can he then rejoyce in his Highneſs? Yea then he muſt ſay (as *Job* here did upon ſuppoſition of Gods anger againſt him) *By reaſon of his Highneſs I cannot endure.*

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *Highneſs belongs to God.*

God is often in Scripture called, *The high God, the moſt high God*, and unto God Highneſs and power properly belong; power and Highneſs are originally and fundamentally in God; all the power and Highneſs that are in the creature, flow forth and are derived from him. As God is the fountain of all the Goodneſs, ſo of all the Greatneſs that is in man. There are high ones among men, but Highneſs is the Lords, yea the *high ones* are the Lords; He conſtitutes them, and he rules them at his pleaſure, and for his pleaſure. (*Pſal.* 135. 5.) *Our God is above all Gods. There are Gods many, and Lords many,* as the Apoſtle ſpeaks (1 *Cor.* 8. 5.) that is, (as himſelf explains it) there *are many that are called Gods.* All Magiſtrates are called Gods; and God gives them leave to wear that Title, yea himſelf hath put that Title upon them; *yet to us there is but one God the Father, of whom are all things, and we by him.* The God of Heaven is infinitely above all the Gods of the Earth, Kings and Princes; and what is the Highneſs of Idols; or dung-hill Gods to him. when the Gods upon the Throne are nothing unto him? *Our God is above all Gods:* Or, As *Solomon* expreſſeth it (*Eccl.* 5. 8.) *He is higher, then the higheſt.* As in nature there is *nothing greater then the Greateſt,* ſo *none higher then the Higheſt.* There is no Degree beyond the ſuperlative. This maxim holds univerſally in things of the ſame kind; but there may be ſomewhat of one kind greater then the greateſt and higher then the higheſt of another kind. There is no man higher then the higheſt man; but God is infinitely higher then the higheſt of men. Yea as all the wiſdom of man is folly to the wiſdom of God, and all the ſtrength of man weakneſs to the ſtreugth of God, ſo the Highneſs of the higheſt men is lowneſs and baſeneſs to the Highneſs of God. This ſuper-ſuperlatve Highneſs of God appears,

Firſt, In the extent of his Juriſdiction. The ſoveraignty of God hath no bounds nor limits; it reacheth to all places, and to all times; men who have great power in ſome place, have none in other places: Men, who are high at one time, are low at another time; but the Lords Highneſs and power are alike at all times, and in all places. *Thou Lord* (ſaith the Prophet, *Pſal.* 92. 8.) *art moſt High for evermore.*

Secondly, This his Highneſs appears in the abſoluteneſs of his Juriſdiction; he governs by no Law but his will, nor acts he by any rule but his pleaſure. *Our God is in the Heavens* (ſaith the Church in anſwer to that feared reproach of the Heathen, *Pſal.* 115. 4. *Where is now their God?*) *and hath done whatſoever he pleaſed.* And thus much a Heathen Prince. The Higheſt then on earth, after ſeven years baniſhment among beaſts was convinced of (*Dan.* 4. 34 35.) *And at the end of the dayes, I* Nebuchadnezzar *lift up mine eyes unto heaven. and mine underſtanding returned unto me, and I bleſſed the Moſt High, and praiſed and honored him that liveth for ever; whoſe dominion is an everlaſting dominion, and his kingdom from generation to generation; And all the inhabitants of the earth, are reputed as nothing, and he doth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can ſtay his hand, or ſay unto him, what doſt thou?* Here's abſolute Highneſs or Soveraignty; God doth what he will and he cannot be ſtopt or ſtayed in what he will do: and as none can ſtay his hand from what he will do, ſo none can queſtion or call him to what an account for what he hath done. And here I might ſhew the Highneſs of God in the abſolute exerciſe of a ſixfold power; Firſt, in commanding; Secondly, in forbidding; Thirdly, in permitting; Fourthly, in rewarding; Fifthly, in puniſhing; Sixthly, in ſetting up and pulling down, what and whom and how he will. He doth all theſe things (and theſe are the flowers of his Crown) according to the pleaſure of his own will, and *who may ſay unto him, what doſt thou?*

Take three or four Inferences or Corollaries from the conſideration of this Highneſs of God.

Firſt, If God be ſo high, *Then walk humbly before him, and keep your ſpirits low, that is, lowly.* The Prophet propoſeth the peoples Queſtion (*Mich.* 6. 6.) *Wherewith ſhall I come before the Lord, and bow my ſelf before the high God? Shall I come before him with burnt Offerings, with Calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleaſed with thouſands of Rams, or with ten thouſand Rivers of Oyl? Shall I give my firſt born for my tranſgreſſion, the fruit of my body for the ſin of my Soul?* As if they had ſaid, If any of theſe things will pleaſe the Lord, the moſt high God, he ſhall have them with all our hearts; yet they would not give God their hearts, which was the thing he looked for. Thus they hankerd and beat the buſh, deſiring to put the Lord off with ſhadows and Ceremonies, with Sacrifices and Oblations. But ſtill they kept cloſe to their ſins, and their hearts were far off from him. They would be very profuſe, ſpare for no coſt, make hyperbolical offers of thouſands of Rams, and ten thouſands Rivers of Oyl, yea if God would have (which of all outward things were moſt dear and precious to them) their very Children in ſacrifice, he ſhould have them, yet in the mean time, that which was the true ſacrifice and only acceptable to God (*Pſal.* 51. 17.) their hearts or themſelves (*Rom.* 12. 1.) in a way of ſpiritual obedience, they would by no means offer unto God. And therefore to ſhew the vanity and hypocriſie of all theſe fair and formal flouriſhes; the Prophet comes plainly to the matter (*ver.* 8.) *He* (that is, God) *hath ſhewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do juſtly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?* As if he had ſaid, Away with theſe flattering pretenſions; you do but ſhuffle and trifle with God in all theſe things; you need not make ſo many queries about what will pleaſe God, he hath ſpoken his mind clearly; *Do juſtly, and ſhew mercy,* there's the all of ſecond Table duties; *walk humbly with thy God,* there's the ſum of firſt Table duties. Surely, to walk humbly and with a lowly mind before the high God, is the beſt of, yea all ſacrifices; a ſubmitting ſpirit is moſt ſutable in all our approaches to the ſupream power. The high God expects our ſpirits ſhould comply with what he will have us do, and with whatſoever himſelf is pleaſed to do with us. There's nothing in man ſo anſwerable to the Highneſs of God as ſubmiſſion. The Apoſtle *James* comprehends the whole of our duty in two things, whereof the firſt is ſubmiſſion, the ſecond is reſiſtance (*James.* 4. 7.) *Reſiſt the Devil, and ſubmit to God.* This poſture of mans ſpirit is intended in that of his body (*Lam.* 3. 28.) *He ſitteth alone, and keepeth ſilence, becauſe he hath born it upon him;* that is, he who is under the yoak of God, (He had ſaid a little before, *it is good for a man to bear the yoak in his youth*) ought to be quiet, he muſt not make either a ſtir or a clamour about the dealings of God with him. *As it is our ſtrength to ſit ſtill* in dependance upon God for his help (*Iſa.* 30. 7. 15.) ſo it is our wiſdom to ſit ſtill in ſubmiſſion to the hand of God. The high God looks that every high imagination, every thought exalting it ſelf whether againſt any of his ſtanding laws and ordinances, or temporary diſpenſations and providences, ſhould be brought down (2 *Cor.* 10. 5.) 'Tis all the reaſon in the World that the will of the high God ſhould be above our wills, that his will ſhould be uppermoſt, who himſelf is ſo.

Secondly, The Highneſs of God, ſhould lead us to give him high ſervices; we ſhould ſerve the Lord in lowlineſs of mind, but not with low minds; our minds and hearts ſhould be exceedingly lifted up in the ſervice of the high God. That was a very holy as well as a noble reſolution of *Solomon* about the building of the Temple (2 *Chron.* 2. 5.) *The houſe which I build is great, for great is our God above all Gods. Solomon* would proportion a houſe for God, according to the God of the houſe, he is a great God (ſaith he) and therefore he muſt have a great houſe; he is a high God (ſaith the Scripture) therefore he muſt have high ſervices, he muſt be ſerved with a heart lifted up. The heart of good King *Jehoſhaphat was lifted up, or incouraged and ſtrengthened in the wayes of the Lord* (2 Chron. 17. 6.) As he was ſerving the high God, ſo his heart went high in his ſervice. When we pray, our prayers ſhould be high prayers, or prayers lifted up to the high God; *I lift up my ſoul to thee,* ſaid *David* (Pſal. 25. 1.) Such was the deſire of King *Hezekiah,* in his Meſſage to *Iſaiah* the Prophet, in *that day of rebuke and blaſphemy* (Kings 19. 4.) *Wherefore lift up a prayer for the remnant that is left.* Thus alſo the praiſes of God, ſhould be high praiſes, (*Pſal.* 149. 6.) *Let the high praiſes of God be in their mouth;* yea all our thoughts and words concerning God ſhould be high (*Exod.* 15. 11.) We ſhould both ſay, and think, think and ſay, *Who is a God like unto thee?*

Thirdly, The conſideration of the Highneſs of God, ſhould make all other things low in our eyes. As he that hath low or little thoughts of God, will quickly have high and great thoughts of himſelf, yea he will think every thing great; ſo he that hath great and high thoughts of God, thinks nothing great or high but God. How little are the greateſt dangers, and the greateſt enemies, in our eyes, when once God is great there? We ſhall ſay (as *Zech.* 4. 6.)

Who art thou, O great Mountain before Zerubbabel (that is, the power and ſtrength of the high God in Zerubbabel?) *thou ſhalt become a plain:* God never makes Mountains plains for us, till he hath made Mountains plains to us, or in our eſtimation. The Apoſtle having a high eſteem of Chriſt, *Accounted all things, but dung, and droſs,* (Phil. 3. 8.) The reaſon why any over-rate the things of this World, why they reckon their Gold and Silver, better then Gold and Silver, and their honours better then honour, is becauſe they under-rate Chriſt, they account Chriſt leſs then Chriſt, his blood lower, then his blood is, and his ſufferings of a ſmaller value, then his ſufferings are. They make Chriſt leſs then he is, elſe they would never make the things of the world greater then they are. What a nothing is all in our ſelves to us, and all in others to us, yea all other both things and perſons to us, when we have ſeen God in Chriſt our all, or our allneſs in God through Chriſt! Did we converſe with God by faith in his Highneſs and greatneſs, what could be high or great in our eyes in compariſon of him? We commonly ſay, *Nothing is high or great to a high or great ſpirit*; how much more may we ſay, nothing is high or great to a ſpirit heightned and greatned in God?

Animo magno nihil magnum.

Fourthly, The remembrance of Gods Highneſs is very comfortable to all that are in a low condition, they having an intereſt in him, or being (through grace) related to him. The high God *ſets the poor on high* (Pſal. 107. 41.) For as another Scripture aſſures us, *Though our God be high, yet he hath regard to the lowly* (Pſal. 138. 6.) Here is comfort to thoſe that are low and lowly, who are low in eſtate, and lowly in ſpirit, who have the grace of lowlineſs in a condition of lowneſs; they have a friend on high, and he being higher then the higheſt, can raiſe thoſe on high, who are lower (in their own ſight) then the loweſt.

Laſtly, If the Lord be moſt high, then let us make the Lord our higheſt end, and exalt him, not only in, but above all our ſelf-aims and deſigns. The beſt way to ſet forward or attain to our own ends, is to make God our higheſt end. While we ſincerely advance the name of God, we need take no care of our own advancement; let God alone with that. But if any man ſets his own ends above God, let him know, he ſets himſelf above God too, yea he makes himſelf his God; which is at once the height of ſin, of madneſs, and of preſumption.

Again, When *Job* ſaith, *By reaſon of his highneſs I could not endure*; Conſider *Job* was a man in high place himſelf, *Job held the height of the Hill*, others were but in the valley, in thoſe times to which theſe words refer. And yet, ſaith he, *By reaſon of his Highneſs I could not endure.*

Hence Note; Secondly, *They that are higheſt have reaſon to tremble at the Highneſs of God.*

They who are Cedars for height, and Oaks for ſtrength, cannot endure by reaſon of his Highneſs, yea the Lord who is high loves to ſhake the high ones, and to caſt them down. (*Iſa.* 2. 11, 12.) *The day of the Lord of hoſts ſhall be upon every one that is proud, and lifted up upon all the Cedars of Lebanon,* &c. And at the nineteenth verſe the Prophet tells us, *The high ones ſhall go into the Holes of the Rocks, and into the Caves of the Earth for fear of the Lord, and for the Glory of his Majeſty, when he ariſeth to ſhake teribly the earth.* As *Satan* hath a ſpiteful ambition to be dealing with thoſe who are moſt eminent for grace in the Church; this Chriſt told *Peter* (Luke 22. 31.) *Simeon, Simeon, behold, Satan hath deſired to have you, that he may ſift you as Wheat*; So the Lord hath (if I may ſo ſpeak) an holy ambition to be dealing with thoſe who are moſt eminent for power in the world; I mean with thoſe, who as they are high in place, and power, ſo high in their own thoughts. The Lord hath no quarrel with thoſe that are high, becauſe they are high, but becauſe they carry themſelves proudly in their Highneſs (*Exod.* 18. 11.) *In the thing wherein they dealt proudly, God was above them*; God did not oppoſe them becauſe they were high, but becauſe they were high minded. *The high Arm* (with a high mind) *ſhall be broken* (*Job* 38. 15.) And hence that caution to the high ones of the Earth (*Pſal.* 75. 4, 5.) *Lift not up your horns on high, ſpeak not with a ſtiff-neck; for promotion cometh neither from the Eaſt, nor from the Weſt, nor from the South; But God is the Judge, he putteth down one and ſetteth up another.* This conſideration, that 'tis the high one in Heaven who makes men high or low on earth, ſhould keep their ſpirits lowly who are higheſt here on earth. To every high-minded one the Lord will ſay, as (*Jer.* 49. 16.) *Thy terribleneſs hath deceived thee, and the pride of thy heart, O thou that dwelleſt in the clefts of the Rocks, that hideſt thee within the Holes, though thou ſhouldeſt make thy neſt as high as the Eagle, I will bring thee down from thence.* The Eagle flies high and builds high, yet her neſt is not out of Gods reach; nor in the neſt of any metaphorical Eagle. How often hath God pull'd down the throne of Princes, or Princes from their thrones (*Jer.* 13. 18.) *Say to the King, and to the Queen, humble your ſelves, ſit down for your principality ſhall come down, yea even the Crown of your glory.* The Lord puts the Queſtion to the higheſt and the ſtrongeſt (*Ezek.* 22. 14.) *Can thy heart endure, or can thy hand be ſtrong, in the day that I ſhall deal with thee?* As if he had ſaid, *How ſtrong and high ſoever thou art, yet when I the moſt high one ſhall deal with thee, thy ſtrength will ſtand thee in no ſtead; it will be inconſiderable, and ſhrink to nothing.* That's the ground of the Apoſtle objurgation, *Do ye provoke the Lord to jealouſie? Are ye ſtronger then he?* (1 Cor. 10. 22.) Can you ſtand it out with him? Are ye his match? Is a Thiſtle any match for the Cedar, or a Whelp for a Lion? Much leſs, infinitely leſs is man for God. How eaſily can the Lord thunder down from his highneſs, and from his high places, upon the heads of the talleſt *Anakims* and mighty *Nimrod*'s in this lower world! And if they who are high, cannot endure nor ſtand before the highneſs of the Lord, what ſhall become of them who are low; As the Apoſtle *Peter* argues in another caſe (1 *Pet.* 4. 18.) *If the righteous ſcarcely be ſaved, where ſhall the ungodly and the ſinner appear?* So I may in this, if the ſtrong cannot at all ſtand before him, how ſhall the weak and poor? And if the weak and poor ones preſume to ſin, and provoke the Lord, they ſhall find his highneſs as terrible to them, as to the higheſt, richeſt, and greateſt in the world.

Thirdly, From that other reading of the words, *By reaſon of his Highneſs I could not eſcape.*

Obſerve, *As no man is able to bear the wrath of God, ſo no man is able to flee or get away from it.*

And how ſad is it when a man cannot eſcape from that, which he cannot endure! If the diſpleaſure of God were ſuch as we could avoid or run from, ſuch as we could get out of the reach of it, ſinners had ſomewhat to bear themſelves upon; but as we are not able to ſtand in his hand, nor endure his hand, ſo we cannot get out of his hand. Now, as no man, no nor the Devil with all his powers of darkneſs is able to pluck a Believer out of the protecting and ſaving hand of God (*John* 10. 29.) ſo no man is able to deliver himſelf, nor can he be reſcued by any other, out of the puniſhing and revenging hand of God. And as there is no getting out of his hand, ſo no keeping out of it; we can neither flee nor hide our ſelves from him who is every where. 'Tis grievous, when a man falls into the hand of his conſcience, becauſe he can neither flee, nor hide himſelf from his conſcience; every man carrieth that about him, whereſoever he goeth. This (I ſay) makes a mans caſe unſpeakably miſerable, when he falls into the hands of his own conſcience. And is it not much more ſad, when a man falls into the hands of God, who can be infinitely more terrible to us then our conſciences, and who only makes our own conſciences at any time a terror to us? Remember ſinners, you can no more (no nor ſo much) get out of the hand, or clear from the hand or preſence of God, then you can from the hand or preſence of your own conſciences. Whitherſoever you go, God is with you, whether you will or no. *Whither ſhall we go from his preſence? If we aſcend up into Heaven, he is there; and if we make our bed in Hell, he is there,* &c. (*Pſal.* 139. 8.) And whereſoever we are (ſuppoſe we could be in Heaven, yet) if an angry conſcience and an angry God be with us, we make our bed in Hell, or our bed is a Hell to us. *How can Creatures comfort thoſe to whom God is a terror?* Woe to ſinners, who provoke that God, whoſe preſence they can neither abide nor avoid.

Thus *Job* hath given an account both of his integrity (in thoſe particulars opened) and likewiſe of the reaſon why he kept his integrity. *Deſtruction from God was a terror to him, and by reaſon of his highneſs he could not endure.* As *Job* would not ſin againſt God becauſe he loved him, ſo he durſt not ſin againſt God, becauſe he feared him.

He now proceeds to give a further account of himſelf, by ſhewing that as he had not gotten riches by unrighteouſneſs, ſo he had uſed and diſpenſed them righteouſly; for ſuppoſe a man hath not pulled his riches out of the mouths and bellies of the poor, nor hath wronged any man by open violence, or ſecret fraud, to advantage his own eſtate; yet he may be an unrighteous Steward, or a covetous retainer of his eſtate: His heart may go out ſinfully upon that which came in without ſin; againſt this *Job* proteſts in the next words.

VERS. 24, 25,

If I have made Gold my hope, or have ſaid to the fine Gold, Thou art my confidence.

If I rejoyced becauſe my wealth was great, and becauſe mine hand had gotten much.

IN the former Context *Job* cleared himſelf (which aſperſion had been caſt upon him by his friends more then once) from any unlawful or oppreſſing wayes of gain, *He had not lift up his hand againſt the fatherleſs, though he ſaw his help in the gate.* In this twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth verſe, he clears himſelf from any undue frame of ſpirit in reference to what he had gotten lawfully, or was lawfully poſſeſſed of. Now, he that can profeſs before God and men, that he hath not uſed any undue means to get riches, and that his heart is not in any undue frame towards riches duely gotten, this man is a man of men, A man after the heart of God. And this *Job* doth, in the words before us three wayes,

Firſt, He profeſſeth that he had not made worldly things, no not the beſt of them (*Gold*) *his hope.*

Secondly, He profeſſeth that he had not made the beſt of Gold, (*fine Gold*) *his confidence.* The fineſt Gold was not the object of his truſt.

Thirdly, He profeſſeth he had not made the abundance of Gold his joy, nor the muchneſs of it the matter of his rejoycing; *If I rejoyced becauſe my wealth was great, and becauſe my hand had gotten much,* &c. Thus *Job* diſclaimeth joy, hope, and confidence in the creature, therefore as his hand was clean in the getting of it, ſo his heart was clear in the uſing of it.

Verſe 24. **If I have made Gold my hope,** &c.

That's the firſt thing. He doth not ſay, *if I have hoped for Gold,* But *if I have made Gold my hope.* Gold is the choiſeſt of earthly things. 'tis that refined earth which moſt men hope for, and very many covet after. And here Gold is put (by a Synecdoche of the part for the whole) for all earthly things. So that, when *Job* ſaith, *If I have made Gold my hope,* his meaning is, if I have made any good thing on Earth *my hope.* One of the Greek tranſlators renders; *If I have made Gold my ſafety, my ſecurity; or the cauſe why I was not afraid.* As if he had ſaid, *I did not put fear away from me becauſe I had much Gold, or worldly goods about me. I did not think my ſelf ſafe or out of the reach of danger, becauſe I was rich.* The Septuagint have an elegant and a very ſignificant rendring, though not ſo clearly complying with the original Text as ours; *If I have made Gold my Wife,* Or, *If I have married Gold.* Such is the ſpirit of a worldly man towards worldly things, that he doth not only love them, but is in love with them. As a man doth not only love her whom he would marry (ſo he doth any Friend) but he is in love with her and is reſtleſs till he enjoyeth her. Yea I may ſay, worldly men are married to worldly things, not only as to a Wife (who ſhould be in ſubjection to her husband) but as to their husband to whom they are ſubject. They may juſtly be called, *Wives to riches, and riches their husband, who are at the will and command of riches.* Worldly men are ſo, more then the Wife is or ought to be at the will and command of her husband. But I ſhall not ſtay upon that tranſlation, which though it depart not from the ſcope of the Text, yet from the words it doth. And therefore I ſhall follow our own which is clear to both.

Ἀφοβίαν *ſecuritatem meam,* i. e. *cauſam cur minus pavetem.* Symach.

Εἰ ἔταξα χρυσίον εἰς χοῦν μου. *Si poſui aurum in conjugium meũ. Quod in Edit. Romæ mendum videtur pro* ἰσχύν μου *robur meum.* Pined.

If I have made Gold my hope.] The Word rendred *hope* or *expectation,* ſ[illegible]ifies alſo the *Reins* or *Bowels.* One of the Rabbins gives this reaſon of it, becauſe the Bowels or Reins are the ſeat of the affections, from which as our fears ſo our hopes are formed. (*Pſal.* 7. 9.) *The righteous God trieth the hearts and Reins,* that is, the whole inner man of every man, his thoughts and deſires, his hopes and aims. *David* begs of God to make this diſcovery of him in the ſame words (*Pſal.* 26. 2.) *Examine me O Lord, and prove me, try my Reins, and my heart;* As if he had ſaid, Lord I am willing to be tryed to the utmoſt, and that the bent and inward motions of my ſoul may appear to (from which I know they are not, cannot be hid) thine all-ſeeing eye. Nor is there any thing which lies more cloſe and ſecret in the boſome of man then his hope doth; and look what any man earneſtly hopes for, his mind is often turning to, if not alwayes fixed upon. *If I* (ſaith *Job*) *have made Gold my hope;* that is, if my mind hath been upon it, or in the longing expectation of it.

כסל *Eſt proprie ile &* כסלים *ilia & renes ubi ſedes affectuũ; inde fit ut* כסל *pro ſpe & fiducia ſumatur.* Merc.

Hope is an affection of the mind put forth or acted upon good, future and poſſible. The object of hope (according to this definition) is good under a twofold notion; hope looks to that which is *good*; no man ever did or can hope for that which is evil in it ſelf, and to him, if it appeared ſo to him, though many have hoped for that which indeed is ſo, and hath proved ſo to them in the event. And as the object of hope is ſome good thing; ſo it is good, Firſt, as future and to come; for that which a man hath in his poſſeſſion, or doth already injoy, he cannot hope for: Injoyment ſwallows up hope, or rather perfects it. Secondly, the object of hope is ſome poſſible good, or ſuch a good as we have grounds to attain. Impoſſibles are rather the object of deſpair then of hope. But though this be the nature of hope ſtrictly taken, that it reſpects only good future or attained and poſſible or attainable: Yet Gold already attained and poſſeſſed is as much the object of hope in the ſence of this Text, as that which is only attainable and unpoſſeſs'd. And as men hope to get Gold, ſo they make the Gold which they have gotten their hope.

There is a great difference between hoping for Gold, and making Gold our hope. We may hope for Gold or any of the good things of this life, but we muſt not make Gold or any thing of this life our hope.

To make Gold either gotten or to be gotten our hope, implyeth theſe four things.

Firſt, An high eſtimation of it, as that which can do great things for us, or ſtand us in ſtead beyond any other thing, to make us happy.

Secondly, A longing deſire after it; there is alwayes ſo much deſire of that we hope for, that the thing hoped for is ſometime expreſſed by deſire (*Prov.* 13. 12.) *Hope deferred maketh the heart ſick, but when the deſire* (that is, the thing hoped for) *cometh, it is a tree of life.*

Thirdly, Utmoſt earneſt endeavours to obtain it; that which a man makes his hope he will make his work, and never ceaſeth working, either till he hath attained it, or is convinced that there is no poſſibility of attaining it.

Fourthly, To make Gold our hope, implyeth much trouble and anxiety of mind, when once we ſee our endeavours ineffectual and unſucceſsful about the attaining of it. If hope deferred (as *Solomon* ſpeaks in the Scripture laſt named) maketh the heart ſick, ſurely then when hope dies, or (as *Zophar* ſpeaks, *Chap.* 11. 20.) is *as the giving up of the Ghoſt,* the heart muſt needs dye too.

Now, when *Job* ſaith, *If I have made Gold my hope,* &c. He utterly diſclaims, as any ſuch eſtimation of it, that it could do great things for him, or make him a happy man, ſo that he had any longing deſire after it, or that he uſed any extream earneſtneſs of endeavours to attain it, or that he was vext and troubled in mind when by his moderate endeavours he could not attain it. *Job* underſtood well enough the worth and uſe of Gold, he well knew how many advantages it brings, yea how potent it is in the affairs of Sates and Kingdoms as well as beneficial to private families; yet he knew he ſhould have made more of it, then it is worth, or can be worthy of, if he had made it his hope, and therefore he profeſſeth; *If I have made Gold my hope,* &c.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *The natural man makes Gold or earthly things his ſcope and hope.*

He would live to grow rich, an[illegible]de himſelf with thick clay. What this godly man profeſſeth he did not, that a natural man doth, and [illegible] his nature to do it. *He that is of the earth is earthly, and ſpeaketh of the earth* (John 3. 13.) *For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth ſpeaketh.* The words of a man are the image of his thoughts; that the thoughts of natural men are earthly, or ſmell of the earth, we learn from another Scripture (*Pſal.* 49. 11.) *Their inward thought is that their houſes ſhall continue for ever, and their dwelling places to all generations,* &c. And what are their houſes but heaps of earth, and the beſt furniture of them, Gold and Silver but refined earth? The Apoſtle (1 *Tim.* 6. 9.) gives the ſame character of the natural man; *he will be rich*; That's his reſolve, and the bent of his ſpirit, that he lives to and lives for. What he hath is little or nothing to him, unleſs he hath more; and that more ſatisfieth him no more when he hath it, then the little did which he had before. Believers have another bent, *We,* ſaith the Apoſtle (2 *Cor.* 4. 18.) *look not at the things which are ſeen, but at the things which are not ſeen,* that is, not at naturals and temporals, but at ſpirituals and eternals; theſe, not thoſe are our aym or the mark (ſo the word ſignifies) at which we ſhoot and level all our deſires and indeavours. But worldly men (who are the oppoſites to *we* in the Text) they look at the things which are ſeen, and they look chiefly at them; as for the things that are not ſeen, they know not what to make of them. Godly men have their eye upon inviſibles, they expect not their happineſs in this world, but in that which is to come (1 *Cor.* 15. 19.) *If in this life only we have hope in Chriſt, we are of all men moſt miſerable.* How miſerable then are they who make the things of this life their hope! Who look for nothing but what the eye of ſenſe or carnal reaſon may look upon? How many are there, who if they may have Gold and Silver enough, Houſes and Lands enough, then they think they ſhall have enough. Though indeed when they have as much as they at preſent deſire, the mouth of deſire is not ſtopt, nor do their hearts ſay, it is enough.

Secondly, Note, *To make Gold our hope is exceeding ſinful.*

As every man who hath in him a real hope of glory, purifieth himſelf from ſinful acts and deſires (1 *John* 3. 3.) ſo he purifieth himſelf from this hope. The hope which we have of heavenly things is pure and it purifieth us; but the hope of earthly things is uſually impure, and to make earthly things our hope cannot but be impure, therefore we have great need to purifie our ſelves from all ſuch hopes. God only is to be made our hope, and to make him ſo is both our duty and our intereſt. Hope is a part of that honour and worſhip which is proper to God; and 'tis worſhip required in the firſt Commandement; hope in God is natural worſhip, that worſhip which the bare diſcoveries of God, though he had never made a law about it calls for. The knowledge of the excellency and all-ſufficiency of God commands us to hope in him. And to ſhew how much God ſhould be hoped for and hoped in, yea and made our hope, the Scripture more then once calls him our hope (*Jer.* 14. 8.) *O the hope of* Iſrael, *the Saviour thereof in time of trouble.* And as God is *the hope of* Iſrael, taken collectively for all the people of God, ſo he is the hope of every *Iſraelite* indeed. Upon this ground the Prophet makes that deprecation (*Jer.* 17. 17.) *Be not thou a teror unto me, thou art my hope in the day of evil.* And therefore *David* inhibits his ſoul all other hopes but God (*Pſal.* 62. 5.) *My ſoul wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from him.* As if he had ſaid *O my ſoul, I give thee this counſel, yea this charge, I lay this holy command upon thee, do not wait upon any Creature* (as making that thy hope) *let thy expectation be from God alone.* He urgeth the ſame reſtriction by way of aſſertion in the next verſe; *He only is my Rock and my ſalvation.* As this Scripture ſhews the entireneſs of a Saints hope in God; ſo that other is like unto it (*Pſal.* 73. 25.) *Whom have I in Heaven but thee? And there is none upon earth that I deſire beſides thee.* As if he had ſaid, I neither know of nor depend upon the help of any but God alone; and what he denies as to perſons he denyeth alſo as to things on this ſide God. Hope is the anchor of the ſoul, but this anchor muſt not be caſt as the Mariner caſteth his; who that his Ship may be ſtayed in a Storm caſts his anchor downward to take hold in the earth: We muſt caſt the anchor of hope upwards and faſten it in Heaven. So the Apoſtle directs (*Heb.* 6. 19.) *which hope we have as an anchor of the ſoul, both ſure and ſtedfaſt, and which entreth into that within the Vail, whither the fore-runner is for us entred, even Jeſus,* &c. Our hope muſt enter into Heaven and fix there. The beſt of the earth is not ground good enough, nor ſure enough for our anchor hold. Whatſoever we make our hope, we make our God and is there any thing on earth good enough to be our God? *Moſes* complains to God bitterly of the people of *Iſrael* (Exod. 32. 31.) *O this people have ſinned a great ſin, and have made them Gods of Gold.* They indeed formally made a Golden Calf and worſhipped it; this act of Idolatry was their ſin, and their ſmart; in ſo much that it was a ſaying among the *Jews* when ever they were preſſed with any grievous affliction; *This is ſomewhat of the Golden Calf.* That which was their ſin groſly, is in a more ſpiritually ſinful way the ſin of thouſands every day, *They make Gods of Gold, or a God of Gold.* This is done as often as any man makes Gold his hope; and this the worldly man doth dayly, or all his dayes. Yea ſo far as any godly man is carried out inordinately after Gold, he in ſome degree makes Gold his hope, and in the ſame degree his God. It is ſinful to hope for Gold immoderately, but to make Gold our hope in the leaſt degree is abominable. And they who make it their hope, will quickly make it their confidence, which is a further height of this ſin, renounced expreſly by *Job* in the next words.

Or have ſaid to the fine Gold, Thou art my confidence.

But is Gold to be ſpoken with or ſpoken to? it ſeems the heart hath a tongue, it ſpeaks to Gold. *As the Fool hath ſaid in his heart there is no God* (Pſal. 14. 1.) So in his heart he ſaith, Gold is his God, while he ſaith in his heart it is *his confidence.* Moſt worldly men ſay this in their heart only (there are but few ſo wicked as openly to profeſs with their mouths that Gold is their confidence) Yea many who profeſs highly that God is their confidence, will be found upon ſearch to make Gold their confidence.

If I (ſaith *Job*) *have ſaid* (with heart or tongue) **To the fine Gold,** &c. As Gold is the fineſt metal, ſo there is ſome Gold more fine then other Gold. Some Gold is nothing but Gold, it hath not the leaſt droſs or alloy in it. Gold is uſually minted out with an alloy. *Job* had no confidence in fine, none in the fineſt Gold. The Septuagint render, *If I have truſted in the precious ſtone.* As if in the former part of the verſe he had diſclaimed his hope in gold, and here in gems. But it is better to keep to our tranſlation. The Word ſignifying Gold of the higheſt price; from this word we have that Title of ſome of the Pſalms, *Michtam, a Golden Pſalm. If I have ſaid to the fine Gold, Thou art*

κ̀ λίθῳ πολυτελεῖ ἐπεποίθησα. *Si in lapide pretioſo fidebam.*

כתם *Singularis ſpecies auri eſt vel etiã ſignatũ aut ſculptum, & convenit cũ* מכתם *clino dium.* Sculｔ.

בטח *Notat fiduciæ fundamentum; id in quo acquieſcit animus & ſecurus eſt.*

My confidence.] Confidence is the higheſt act of faith; what we confide in we ſettle upon. Confidence is the fulleſt reſt of the ſoul. An act of recumbence gives ſome reſt to the ſoul, but confidence is the ſecureſt reſt of the Soul. So much the Word here implies, even ſuch a confidence as leaves not ſo much as a jealous thought in the mind. Thus *David* confeſſeth (*Pſal.* 30. 6.) *In my proſperity I ſaid I ſhall never be moved, Lord by thy favour thou haſt made my Mountain to ſtand ſtrong.* The rich man was riſen up to this confidence while he ſaid (*Luke* 12. 19.) *Soul thou haſt much goods laid up for many years, take thine eaſe, eat, drink, and be merry.* Then we have made Gold or the things of the World our confidence, when we find an acquieſcence flowing from our recumbence upon them. What is faith but a going out of ſelf and a reſting upon Chriſt? And what is aſſurance but the ſouls reſt in Chriſt? The heart of a carnal man ſits down and reſts upon worldly things, as a godly man ſits down upon and reſts in Chriſt.

Again, While *Job* profeſſeth he had not ſaid to the fine Gold, *Thou art my confidence,* He is brought in perſonating the counterpart of a carnal covetous man, entertaining

ing diſcourſe or talking to his Gold. He no ſooner enters his Cloſet and openeth his Cheſt, but he falls into a Colloquy with his gold. As a man meeting a dear ancient acquaintance, preſently ſalutes him, with *O my friend, I am glad to ſee you!* So ſaith he to his gold, to his fine gold; *O my friend, my love, my joy, my hope, my confidence, I am glad to ſee you ſafe, you will ſtand by me when all friends fail, you will not ſee me want, nor ſuffer me to be wronged, as long as you laſt, and that I wiſh may be for ever. Yea he ſpeaks to his gold not only with a kind of blandiment and adulation, as his choiceſt friend, but with a kind of Adoration as his chiefeſt good.* We commonly ſay, *A penny in our purſe is better than a friend at Court.* But ſome are apt to think the Gold in their purſe better to them than the God of Heaven. Doubtleſs that man doth ſo, who ſaith (which *Job* did not) *to the fine gold, Thou art my confidence.*

Verba illa, ſi obryzo dixi fiducia mea blandimentum quoddam præ ſe ferunt & quandam velut adorationem auri, quam ægre fert deus. Merl.

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *Man is apt to grow in confidence upon the account of worldly abundance.*

Thus the Scripture every where deciphers the ſpirit of worldly men (*Pſal.* 49. 6.) *They truſt in their wealth, and boaſt themſelves in the multitude of their riches.* Here we have the rich man *truſting and boaſting*, ſurely that is very confident truſting, which iſſues it ſelf into boaſting. That man is aſcended to the higheſt ſtep of faith in God, who makes his boaſt of God; ſuch faith have they in fine Gold, who boaſt in it. *David* having ſhewed the wicked man, by the righteous judgment of God, rooted out of the land of the living; ſhews us in the next verſe the righteous man at once fearing and laughing at this ſight, as alſo pointing at him, ſaying, (*Pſal.* 52. 7.) *Loe this is the man that made not God his ſtrength*; The words are a divine but cutting ſarcaſm. The Original is *Geber*, which ſignifieth a ſtrong valiant man; As we ſay in Engliſh, *Loe, This is the brave and gallant man, you wot of.* But who was this for a man? He was one (ſaith he) that *truſted in the abundance of his riches.* O 'tis hard to abound in riches, and not to truſt in them. Hence that caution (*Pſal.* 62. 10.) *If riches increaſe, ſet not your heart upon them.* Now what is the ſetting of the heart upon riches, but our rejoycing and truſting in them. And becauſe the heart of man is ſo eaſily perſwaded into this ſinful truſt upon riches, therefore the Apoſtle is urgent with *Timothy* to perſwade all rich men, not only meer worldly rich men, but godly rich men againſt it; yea he urgeth *Timothy* to perſwade rich men againſt two ſins, which are worſe than all the poverty in the world, yet the uſual attendants of riches, *Pride and Confidence* (1 Tim. 6. 17.) *Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded.* As chaſtity or the purity both of mind and body is indangered among the pleaſures and delights of the world: ſo is humility among the wealth and riches of the world. Therefore charge them that are rich, and charge them home with this thing, that *They be not high-minded.* How apt are men to be lifted up with the things of this lower world! Riches at once ſink the mind down-ward in covetous cares, and lift it upward in proud conceits. A little of the world will make ſome men great in their own eyes; and others deſpicable in their eyes; They will not look upon or ſpeak to a poor man, ſcarcely to any man that is not as rich as themſelves; They carry it as if they were men of another world, or made of another mould, if they have got but a ſtep in worldly things beyond their neighbours. Yea ſome, who are counted the only wiſe men; pride themſelves (like that fooliſh bird) while they look upon their painted feathers, and think they are of more worth, becauſe they are worth more than their brethren. Many (ſaith Mr. *Calvin*) who boaſt now a dayes of riches, are as if a man ſhould think himſelf greatly preferred, when he is but mounted upon the blade of an onion, and when they have only got upon a mole-hil, they bear themſelves as if they were carried in the Chariot of the Sun. To ſee a man rich in purſe and poor in ſpirit is a great wonder. Now becauſe men are thus endangered to pride by riches, Therefore (ſaith the Apoſtle) *Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded.* And charge them ſecondly, *That they truſt not in uncertain riches, but in the living God.* There's the rich man's temptation. Riches are a temptation two wayes eſpecially; Firſt, they tempt men to do unrighteous things, or to go unrighteous wayes for the getting of them. Secondly, they tempt to vain confidence as ſoon as they are gotten. Let me give you three brief demonſtrations, to ſhew there is an extream tendency in riches to work up the heart to a confidence in them.

Firſt, Riches, gold and ſilver have a ſtrength in them; This tends and invites to a confidence in them; And though the ſtrength of riches is greater in opinion than in reality, yet it cannot be denied, but there is a great deal of ſtrength in riches. (*Prov.* 10. 15.) *The rich mans wealth is his ſtrong City, the deſtruction of the poor is their poverty.* The rich man ſecureth himſelf againſt all aſſaults; and doubts not but he ſhall endure the hardeſt and longeſt ſiege in this well-fortified and well-garriſon'd City, and therefore like a man gotten into a ſtrong Hold or City, he is apt to ſcorn and bid defyance to all his enemies, to all wants and dangers. Whereas *the poor mans poverty is his deſtruction*; that is, he being poor lyes open like a City without walls and gates to every approaching and invading evil. Now if riches be, eſpecially if men judg them to be their ſtrength and fortification, their ſafety and protection, no marvail if they put confidence in them.

Secondly, As they have a ſtrength in them, ſo an anſwerableneſs to, yea a command upon all outward good things. *Solomon* ſaith (*Eccl.* 10. 19.) *Money anſwereth all things.* There is (as ſome conceive) an elegant *Proſopopœia* in the words; ſuppoſing ſpeech in all things, or all things ſpeaking and calling aloud to money, and money ſpeaking, yea giving a ſatisfactory anſwer to all things that ſpeak to it; nor can it be denied but that money (in ſome ſence) gives anſwer to all things. Firſt, ordinarily and honeſtly it anſwereth all our bodily wants, and obtaineth all bodily ſupplies. A man may have any ſuch thing for money, that will buy whatever is needful for or contentful to this preſent life. Secondly, Money will procure aſſiſtance or the help of any man's labour and pains, of any man's art or skill. Thirdly, Money will buy our peace and pacifie the wrath of man. *Jacob* ſaid (*Gen.* 32. 20.) *I will pacifie him with the preſent that goeth before.* And ſo *Solomon* tells us, (*Prov.* 21. 14.) *A gift in ſecret pacifieth anger, and a reward in the boſom, ſtrong wrath.* The paſſions of men are charm'd with gold and ſilver. And there are few ſo angry with the perſon of a man, as to be angry with his gift; eſpecially if it be given (as the text ſaith) in ſecret, and tell no tales. If you can put a reward cloſely into the boſom, it will be too ſtrong for ſtrong wrath and drive it out of the boſom. Money makes all friends again. Not a word more with many, when once that hath ſpoken and done its errand. Fourthly, if men will uſe their gold and ſilver diſhoneſtly, they can break the golden bars of Juſtice and Righteouſneſs (*Prov.* 17. 23.) *A wicked man taketh a gift out of the boſom to pervert the ways of Judgment.* Gold and Silver pervert many things, eſpecially matters of right, and often obtain a covering for the greateſt acts of unrighteouſneſs. Money hath a great power with thoſe who are in power. Thoſe powers which we ought to be ſubject to, are too ſubject themſelves to the power of it. Fifthly, a golden key will open any priſon door, and caſt the watch-man into a deep ſleep. Gold will break open gates of iron, as well as ſilence the Orator's tongue, and blind the Judge's eye; it will bind the ſtrong man's hands, and blunt the edg of the ſword; it makes war, and makes peace; what almoſt can it not do with corrupt minds? Is it then any wonder that a meer natural man ſhould ſay *to the fine gold, Thou art my confidence?*

Aurum præſtat plurima quæ hominum admiratur ſtupor & appetit immoderata cupiditas. Maxime tamen valet in Judiciis, ubi venalia ſunt omnia & perquam raro pecunioſus homo inventus eſt nocens. Sanct.

Thirdly, Gold is the worldly man's Idol god. The Apoſtle (*Eph.* 5. 5. *Col.* 3. 5.) calls Covetouſneſs Idolatry, and the covetous man an Idolater, therefore Gold muſt needs be his Idol, and riches his Deity. As among the Heathens, ſo among ſome Chriſtians, in name, money hath devotions paid it as to a goddeſs. And if there be this wickedneſs and madneſs in the hearts of men to eſteem riches as their god, no marvail if they put their truſt in them. 'Tis natural for every man to truſt in that, which he accounts his god, whatſoever it is; Though but a leek or an onion, the old *Egyptians* would confide in it; Though but a dunghil-god, or a devil god, though a new god, a god but of yeſterday, as *Moſes* ſpeaks (*Deut.* 32. 17.) yet degenerate *Iſraelites* will ſacrifice to him. Therefore let me add theſe three words of advice.

Firſt, When God gives you riches, gold and ſilver, ſuſpect what your hearts may do with them. *It is good to fear alwayes, eſpecially, when we have what we moſt deſire.* To be jealous over our own ſouls is one of the beſt means of ſafety.

Secondly, When you have gold in your hand, pray that it may not get into your heart, but be kept under your feet, as the Church is deſcribed (*Rev.* 12. 1.) having the *Moon* (that is, all worldly things) there. How much ſoever you have of the world it cannot hurt you while you keep it under your feet; but if the leaſt of it get up into your hearts, it will undo you.

Thirdly, Pray for a right judgment above riches. We ſeldom err in our affections, till we err in underſtanding; and we cannot but over-love that which we over-value. They only truſt in God, who truly know him (*Pſal.* 9.10.) and they who truly know what Gold is, will never either make it their truſt, or truſt in it.

Again, Why doth *Job* diſclaim this confidence? Surely, becauſe ſuch confidence is as vain as it is ſinful.

Hence note, *It is a very vanity to put confidence in riches, in Gold or fine Gold.*

For, firſt, riches cannot make us either better or wiſer. *Solomon* ſaith indeed (*Prov.* 14.24.) *The crown of the wiſe is their riches.* But riches never crowned any man with wiſdom; riches are a crown to the wiſe, becauſe they as Kings rule over them and command them; They command them at their pleaſure, and uſe them for their honour. Wiſdom makes riches a crown; but riches cannot make a man wiſe. Wiſdom guides a godly man to the true uſe and improvement of riches, and ſo they adorn him and make him very uſeful. But (as it follows in that text of the *Proverbs*) *the fooliſhneſs of fools is folly*, that is, let a fool have never ſo much riches, he will diſcover his folly and ſhew himſelf by ſo much the more fooliſh, by how much the richer he is. Riches in the hand of a fool are but (as we ſay) a Fool's-Bauble, with which he makes himſelf a little ſport; or they are there, like a ſword in the hand of a Mad-man, by which he doth both himſelf and others hurt. *Wiſdom is good with an inheritance* (Eccl. 7. 11.) that is, an inheritance enables a wiſe man to do good, and to ſhew that he is good; But an inheritance is bad with folly, that is, it doth but enable a fooliſh man to do miſchief, and publiſh his own folly; which though it had not been leſs had he been poor, yet it had been leſs known and ſeen.

Secondly, As they cannot make us better, ſo they cannot make our lives more comfortable to us. This is the ground of Chriſt's warning (*Luke* 12. 15.) *Take heed and beware of covetouſneſs; for man's life* (that is, the comfort of it) *conſiſteth not in the abundance of the things which he poſſeſſeth.* Yea, *Solomon* (Eccl. 5. 13.) ſhews, that a rich man's life is ſo far from being more comfortable to him, becauſe he is rich, that indeed it is more troubleſom; *There is a ſore evil which I have ſeen under the Sun, namely, riches kept by the owners thereof to their hurt.* And (*v.* 17.) *All his dayes alſo he eateth in darkneſs.* In what kind of darkneſs? Though he hath Sun-light at his dinner, and Taper-light at his ſupper, yet he *eateth in darkneſs*, that is, he hath no comfort nor contentment in what he eateth. How vain is it to put confidence in that, which when we have it moſt, and have it faſt, leaves us comfortleſs?

Thirdly, They cannot, by their own ſtrength deliver us from any evil, and they are not at all available to deliver us from that greateſt penal evil the wrath of God (*Prov.* 11.4.) *Riches avail not in the day of wrath.* They can do no good towards the ſecuring us from divine vengeance; Only, *Righteouſneſs delivereth from death.* And as they cannot at all deliver from the wrath of God (*Ezek.* 7. 19.) ſo they cannot alwayes deliver from the wrath of man; So ſome expound that place (*Iſa.* 13. 12.) *I will make a man more precious than fine Gold, even a man than the golden wedg of Ophir*; That is, ſuch ſhall be the fury and fierceneſs of thoſe that ſhall deſtroy *Babylon*, that they will not take any ranſom, nor be moved with any offer of the fineſt Gold to ſpare the life of a Babylonian. Further, riches cannot deliver from the pains of the body, much leſs from the pangs of conſcience; therefore put no confidence in them.

Fourthly, Why ſhould we deſire riches, or at all truſt in them, ſeeing they cannot at all ſatisfie our deſires? (*Eccl.* 5. 10.) *He that loveth ſilver ſhall not be ſatisfied with ſilver, nor he that loveth abundance with increaſe: this is alſo vanity.* The mind of man is ſo large and wide, that all this world cannot fill it; nor doth it bear any due proportion to it. Heaven cannot ſatisfie the ſoul without God, much leſs can this earth, yea, riches, gold and ſilver are ſo far from ſatisfying deſire, that they are but fewel to increaſe the flame of it. And as they increaſe deſire, ſo they take away or rob us of our reſt (*v.* 12.) *The ſleep of a labouring man is ſweet, whether he eat little or much; but the abundance of the rich will not ſuffer him to ſleep:* That is, he hath ſuch abundance of cares about his abundance of riches, that he cannot be quiet night nor day.

And as they are a trouble to the body in hindring ſleep; ſo (which is infinitely worſe) they are a ſnare to the ſoul, and caſt that into a dead ſleep. How often do they intangle the ſpirits, and weaken the graces of good men? How often do they ſtrengthen their luſts, and furniſh their corruptions? They hinder many from believing and receiving the Goſpel (*Luke* 14. 16, 17, 18.) They choak the Word in others who ſeem to have received the Goſpel (*Math.* 13. 22.) How often do riches lead to neglect of duty, yea to a denyal of God? Hence that good man beg'd (*Prov.* 30. 9.) *Give me not riches, leſt I be full and deny thee, and ſay, Who is the Lord? Julian* the Apoſtate, ſpoiled the Chriſtians in thoſe times, of their outward eſtates, and then ſaid in ſcorn, *That he did it to make them more expedite or ready for the kingdom of heaven, as their Maſter had taught them.* Woe to ſcorners, yet there is a ſerious truth in that Atheiſtical ſcorn; We are made the more ready for heaven, by how much we are the leſs cumbred with earthly things. Laſtly, as riches clogg many in the ways of God; ſo they cauſe ſome totally to forſake and Apoſtatize from that profeſſion which they once made of them. Thus *Paul* complained (2 *Tim.* 4. 10.) *Demas hath forſaken me, having loved this preſent world.* Well therefore might the Apoſtle conclude (1 *Tim.* 6.10.) *The love of money is the root of all evil, which while ſome have coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themſelves through with many ſorrows.* Add to all this, that amazing ſentence of Chriſt (*Math.* 19. 23, 24.) *Then ſaid Jeſus to his Diſciples, verily I ſay unto you, that a rich man ſhall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven; And again I ſay unto you, it is eaſier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.* This ſaying aſtoniſhed the Diſciples, and therefore Chriſt gives a twofold mollifying interpretation of it; firſt, in the 26. verſe of the ſame Chapter; *With men this is impoſſible, but with God all things are poſſible.* Secondly (*Mark* 10. 24.) *How hard is it for them that truſt in riches to enter into the kingdom of God?* So then 'tis not the poſſeſſing or having of riches which renders the rich man's caſe ſo difficult, but truſting in them; 'tis hard for any rich man, but 'tis impoſſible for a rich man truſting in riches to enter into the kingdom of God: and I may ſay from Scripture grounds, 'tis impoſſible for any man who hath riches not to truſt in them, but by the grace and power of God. Judg then how ſtrong *Job* was in the grace of God, who could ſay, that he had never ſaid *to the fine Gold, Thou art my Confidence.* Nor doth *Job* diſclaim confidence in gold only becauſe it is a vanity to confide in it, but alſo becauſe 'tis baſe, exceeding baſe to confide in it.

Hence note, *Confidence in Gold embaſeth the mind of man, or nothing makes the ſoul ſo droſſie as confidence in fine Gold.*

Yea, as confidence in Gold abaſeth the mind of man, ſo it abaſeth (in man's thoughts) God himſelf. God is little or nothing to them, who have an over-great eſteem of Gold. They have low and poor thoughts of God, who have high thoughts of riches; yea they think the All-ſufficiency of God too little for them, who look upon any creature as ſufficient for them.

Again, He that makes gold his confidence, is confident if he have gold enough he ſhall do well enough without God. He ſcarce believes that he hath any need of or dependance upon God, when once he ſees himſelf above dependance upon man. How great a wickedneſs is it for a man to rob the living God of that which is his greateſt honour, and give it to a liveleſs creature. As hope, ſo confidence much more, is proper to God. God will do nothing for us, unleſs we make him our confidence. And the creature will be nothing to us, if we make it our confidence.

From the whole matter take theſe two inferences.

Firſt, Of how excellent a ſpirit are they, who while (like *Job*) they have the cream of the creature, and all the contentments of the world courting them daily, the rock pouring them out rivers of oyl, *&c.* Yet keep the world at a due diſtance, and never make the beſt of it, the leaſt of their hope, nor the All of it any of their confidence? how clean do ſuch keep their hearts from the pollution of the world, how pure, how entire to God!

Secondly, This adminiſters ſupport to the Godly poor; for as they want many comforts which the rich enjoy, ſo they are freed from many temptations which annoy the rich. Riches are a mercy (they are ſo with the bleſſing and grace of God) yet *they are a dangerous mercy.* And though poverty be a trouble and a burden, yet it is a ſafe trouble, and (comparatively to riches) a light burden. I do not intend pinching poverty, or their poverty who are in a neceſſitous condition, but theirs who are in a mean condition. Gold is good, yet both an inferior good and an uncertain good; riches make cloggs for the ſoul in its courſe to heaven, but they make themſelves wings and fly as an Eagle to heaven. Gold is good, but 'tis a deceitful good; riches promiſe much, but perform little; and while they pay our debts, they do not pay their own; Gold is good, but 'tis ſo to us only when we uſe it well; Grace is ſo good, that it makes us uſe it well; Gold is ſuch a good as makes moſt who have it, uſe it ill, and enjoy it worſe; As *Job* plainly intimates in the words which follow.

For as in theſe words *Job* hath renounced all hope in gold, and confidence in the fineſt gold, ſo in the next (which is the common ſin of thoſe who enjoy much gold) he proceeds to renounce all inordinate joy or rejoycing in it.

Verſ. 25. **If I rejoyced becauſe my wealth was great, and becauſe my hand had gotten much.**

This argues the frame of *Job's* ſpirit yet more ſpiritual, and more refined from the droſs of earthlineſs. Poſſibly a man may not make Gold his hope, nor ſay to the fine gold, thou art my confidence, whoſe heart is over-affected with his wealth, and fluſht with ſecret rejoycings that his hand hath gotten much; But, ſaith *Job*, I did not ſo much as *rejoyce becauſe my wealth was great*, Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates, *If I joyed that my wealth grew.* Wealth, in ſome mens hands eſpecially, is a growing thing, it grows like a plant, it ſhoots forth buds and bloſſoms from day to day, like a tree planted in a fruitful ſoil, and by the waters ſide. *Job* was a growing man in wealth as well as in Grace, but this latter growth, not the former, was the matter and occaſion of his joy.

Rejoycing is the opening or dilatation of the heart upon the receiving of ſome preſent good. That which cauſeth joy muſt be good, and a good thing preſent; for if it be abſent how good ſoever it is, it only cauſeth hope, or if it cauſe joy, it is becauſe our hope is ſo ſtrong and lively, that it gives a kind of preſent fruition or enjoyment. As ſorrow ſtraightens and ſhuts up the heart, ſo joy unlocketh and enlargeth it. *If I rejoyced*

Becauſe my wealth was great.] The word which we tranſlate **wealth**, ſignifies properly, *ſtrength*, or, *power*; and ſo by a metonymie of the effect, riches and wealth, becauſe much of a man's ſtrength, of his civil ſtrength conſiſts in wealth or riches; A wealthy rich man is a powerful man; wealth doth great matters in the ſphere of this world; therefore the Scriptures Elegantly expreſs riches and ſtrength by the ſame word. 'Tis alſo rendred *Subſtance* (Mich. 4 13.) We uſually call a wealthy man a ſubſtantial man, or a man of ſubſtance. *If I rejoyced becauſe my wealth*

חיל *Significat robur, potentiam, & per metonymiam, illa in quibus robur conſiſtit ut ſunt divitiæ.*

Was great.] It is not ſo much the thing as the degree of it that cauſeth rejoycing, if a man have but a little of that which is good, or no more than will juſt ſerve his turn, he doth not rejoyce much, yea he ſcarce rejoyceth at all; but when the good which he enjoyeth is great, his joy is great. Wealth put alone notes a great quantity of worldly goods, much more *Great wealth.* When there is much good in the hand, then uſually there is much joy in the heart. Therefore ſaith *Job*, *If I rejoyced becauſe my wealth was great*; though I had the greateſt occaſion and temptation to rejoyce in wealth, yet I did not; I was poſſeſſed of no ſmall matters, I was not among the middle ſort of rich men, but with the higheſt, yet I rejoyced not in my riches.

For the clearing of this proteſtation againſt rejoycing in wealth, it may be demanded; *Is it not lawful to rejoyce in the good things of this life?* eſpecially in the abundance of the good things of this life? and doth not *Job* ſpeak more of himſelf than is proper to man, or was ever found in a mortal man? is it poſſible that a man (who enjoys the uſe of his reaſon) ſhould have wealth, and great wealth, and yet be inſenſible of it? or not to be affected with it?

I anſwer, *Job* doth not proteſt againſt all manner, nor againſt all degrees of Joy: for

Firſt, 'Tis natural to man to rejoyce in that which is good, in any kind of good; as it is natural to man (as man) to deſire that which is good; ſo it is natural to man (as man) to rejoyce in that which is good. *Joys run to the ſame length with deſires.*

Secondly, We find that God himſelf requires rejoycing, not only in ſpiritual, but even in outward good things. When the Lord commanded the Children of *Iſrael* to bring their ſacrifices and holy offerings to the place which he ſhould chuſe to put his name there, even unto his habitation, he there required them not only to rejoyce in his ſervice and in their ſoul-mercies, but in their riches and bodily mercies (*Deut.* 12. 5, 6, 7.) *There ye ſhall eat before the Lord your God, and you ſhall rejoyce in all that you put your hand unto, you and your houſhold, wherein the Lord thy God hath bleſſed thee.* The things which they put their hands unto, were their worldly labours and buſineſſes, the Lord's bleſſing upon thoſe labours gave them an increaſe of worldly wealth; This bleſſing they muſt receive and uſe with rejoycing.

Thirdly, Joy in outward good things, is a part of that praiſe and thankfulneſs (and ſo of that worſhip) which is due and muſt be pay'd unto God. He reckons himſelf diſhonoured and neglected, if we receive ſo much as a morſel of bread with a ſour face, or with a ſullen ſpirit; yea he would have us chearful, and rejoyce in the leaſt outward comforts, which he beſtows upon us. Now if it be a part of our duty to rejoyce in the ſmalleſt portion of temporal mercies, why doth *Job* ſo earneſtly diſclaim rejoycing in the greateſt? or wherein doth the ſinfulneſs of rejoycing in wealth, in great wealth conſiſt?

I anſwer, rejoycing in worldly wealth, great or little, is not good.

Firſt, When we ſo rejoyce in it, as that we ſit down, acquieſce and reſt in it; All reſting joy in the creature is a moving or going away from God. Such was the joy of the rich man (*Luke* 12. 19.) who when his grounds brought forth plentifully, and he had prepared great barns to beſtow his fruits and goods in, ſaid to his ſoul, *Thou haſt much goods laid up for many years, take thine eaſe, eat, drink and be merry*; ſit down here, thou art well, thou art in a warm place, in a good houſe; when our ſouls reſt in corporal enjoyments, this is ſin.

Secondly, 'Tis ſinful to rejoyce in wealth, in the greateſt wealth, boaſting of it, as a piece (at leaſt) of our happineſs and glory. Thus 'tis reported of *Haman* (Eſth. 5. 11, 12.) who, when he came home from Court, *called his friends, and Zereſh his wife, and told them of the glory of his riches, and the multitude of his children, and of all the things wherein the King had promoted him, and how he had advanced him above the Princes and ſervants of the King. Haman ſaid moreover, yea Eſther the Queen did let no man come in with the King into the banquet that ſhe had prepared, but my ſelf, and to morrow am I invited unto her alſo by the King.* Such rejoycing as this either in wealth or honour with men, is one of the ſureſt ſigns of a heart eſtranged from the things and ways of God. They know not what favour with or by Chriſt means, who can thus glory in the favours or cry up themſelves the Favourites of the greateſt earthly Princes.

Thirdly, 'Tis ſinful to rejoyce in wealth as *our good*; riches are called our goods, and they are good things, but take heed of making them *your good*, as they did, and there were many of them (*Pſal.* 4. 6.) who ſaid, *Who will ſhew us any good?* what was that good which they would ſo fain be ſhewed? *It was Corn, and wine, and oyl*; therefore *David* ſaith (at the 7. verſe) *Thou haſt put Joy into my heart more than in the time when their Corn and wine increaſed.* Though corn and wine were good things, yet holy *David* would not call them his good; though gold and ſilver are your goods, yet wo to them who ſay they are *their good.* We muſt make nothing our good but God, and the things of God; there is a holy skill in a believer, he can critically diſtinguiſh between *his goods and his Good.*

Fourthly, So to rejoyce in wealth or in riches, as to forget, yea or to abate our rejoycing in God: All ſuch rejoycing is not only vain but abominable. The greateſt joy which a godly man takes in his greateſt wealth, doth not leſſen but heighten and increaſe his joy in God. The beſt advantage which he makes of what God gives him of this world, is to raiſe up his ſoul in the praiſes of God. *David* takes notice (*Pſal.* 10. 3, 4.) that when the wicked *boaſteth of his hearts deſire* (and what is the deſire of his heart? Surely his riches; for as it followeth in the ſame verſe, *he bleſſeth the covetous whom God abhorreth*; when I ſay, he boaſteth of his hearts deſire) *God is not in all his thoughts*; that is, God is not at all in his thoughts. He rejoyceth ſo much upon a worldly account, that he hath no joy left for God, or he quite forgetteth and leaves God out in his rejoycings. The people of *Iſrael* had a ſevere caution given them (*Deut.* 6. 10, 11, 12.) *And it ſhall be when the Lord thy God ſhall have brought thee into the Land which he ſware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Iſaac, and to Jacob, to give thee great and goodly Cities which thou buildedſt not, and houſes full of all good things, which thou filledſt not, and wells digged which thou diggedſt not, Vineyards and Olive trees which thou plantedſt not; when thou haſt eaten and art full, then beware that thou forget not the Lord which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the houſe of bondage*; As if the Lord had ſaid by *Moſes*, Let not contentment and delight in the good things which I ſhall give you to eat, eat out your thoughts of and delights in me, who am the giver of all theſe good things. Here's thy danger and thy ſnare, leſt when thou art come to great wealth, thou ſhouldſt forget the great God who made thee wealthy.

Fifthly, 'Tis much more ſinful to rejoyce in wealth, in great wealth, when we ſo rejoyce in it, as not only to forget God, but to rebell and kick againſt him. And indeed as to remember God and obey him is the ſame thing in Scripture ſence; So they who forget God are very near rebellion againſt him. (*Deut.* 32. 15.) *Jeſhurun waxed fat and kicked; thou art waxen fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered with fatneſs; Then he forſook God which made him, and lightly eſteemed the rock of his ſalvation; they provoked him to jealouſie with ſtrange gods*, &c. *Jeſhurun* ſignifies righteouſneſs or uprightneſs. A Title moſt ſuitable to the duty of *Iſrael*, who ought to be an upright and righteous people. But they proved (when wealthy) like fatted oxen (to them alſo the word in ſound is applicable, and ſome conceive that *Moſes* uſeth it on purpoſe to give them a cloſe reproof, I ſay when *Iſrael* grew wealthy which was their fatneſs, then like fatted oxen) they kicked againſt God who had fed them; that is, they rebelled againſt the Commands and ways of God, they refuſed the rule of duty for his worſhip, and made them new gods; thus they rejoyced in their own greatneſs with neglect of the greatneſs of God.

Sixthly, So to rejoyce in wealth as by our wealth to make proviſion for our luſts, or (as it were) to let out our wealth to the uſe of any luſt is very ſinful; All ſuch rejoycing the Apoſtle forbids (*Rom.* 13. *ult.*) *Make no proviſion for the fleſh, to fulfill the luſts thereof.* Godly men provide for their neceſſities, wicked men lay up and lay out for their luſts.

Seventhly and laſtly, any ſuch rejoycing in wealth as doth but abate the edge, and allay the ſweetneſs of our Joy in God is ſinful; and that's it which *Job* here diſclaims; he did not ſo rejoyce in his worldly wealth as to leſſen his heavenly joy. His joy in riches was a poor joy compared with his joy in God; His joy in God was above and conquered all his other joyes. The Church (*Pſal.* 137. 6.) preferred *Jeruſalem before her chief Joy.* The Godly Jews in captivity could have rejoyced, and did in the reſtoring of their civil liberties and priviledges; but they made *Jeruſalem* their chiefeſt joy; And why was *Jeruſalem* their chief joy? Surely by *Jeruſalem* they intended their ſpiritual liberties and priviledges; the chiefeſt of which was their freer and fuller enjoyment of God in his holy Ordinances and appointments for publick worſhip. Now when *Job* ſaith, *I rejoyced not becauſe my wealth was great*; it is as if he had ſaid, *My greateſt Joy in worldly things was not ſo much as my leaſt Joy in ſpiritual things, or the higheſt of my earthly joy was lower than the loweſt of my heavenly joyes.* Yea his greateſt joy in his great wealth was in that reſpect ſo little, that he could ſafely profeſs he did not at all rejoyce in it. *Job* was doubtleſs very thankful for, and ſenſible enough of the favour of God in beſtowing ſuch great wealth upon him, yet the ſenſe which he had of the favour of God in beſtowing grace and ſalvation, yea and himſelf upon him, did even ſwallow the remembrance of, and ſo the joy which he took in all other favours. *If I rejoyced becauſe my wealth was great.*

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *Man is apt enough to rejoyce in worldly wealth.*

Were it not ſo, it had not been worth the while for *Job* to have proteſted that he did not. We have a natural bent to rejoyce in what is pleaſing to nature, therefore in riches, which furniſh nature with all varieties of pleaſures and contentments; yea ſinful nature is beſt pleaſed with thoſe things which are worſt, and to rejoyce in that which ſhould be the object of our hatred, and will be (if conſented to) the matter of our ſorrow, ſinful ſordid ſenſual pleaſures. O how ready are our hearts to open at the firſt knock of worldly delights of any kind! Indeed the world is neer of kin to man, even to a great part of the beſt men; the comforts of it fit us well, and we can taſte and reliſh them ſavourly; and therefore it is no marvel that our Joys run out after them till grace puts a ſtop upon them and mortifies them, or turns them into another channel.

Secondly, For as much as *Job* doth not proteſt againſt all joy (as hath been explained) but againſt immoderate exceſſive and irregular Joy.

Obſerve, Secondly, *That our joy about earthly things doth uſually exceed and go out of Compaſs.*

We are quickly more taken with the world than 'tis worth; and as we are apt to rejoyce in what we ought not (miſſing our object) ſo (miſſing our meaſure) to rejoyce in what we may, more than we ought. The world is too narrow for our paſſions; we ſoon over-ſorrow the worſt things which the world can inflict, and we as ſoon over-joy the beſt things which the world can afford. Chriſt perceived the hearts of his Diſciples tranſported too far in rejoycing at their conqueſts over evil ſpirits. For having called, commiſſion'd, and ſent out his twelve Apoſtles to ſubdue and bring in the Jewiſh Nation to the acknowledgment of and faith in him, at the ſixth Chapter of the Goſpel of *Luke*; He at the firſt verſe of the tenth Chapter prepared and ſent out a band of ſeventy Auxiliaries to proſecute and advance the ſame bleſſed deſign. And to ſhew that the weapons of their warfare were not carnal, but mighty through God, theſe returning, report the ſucceſs of their expedition, and ſhew Chriſt the trophies of their victory (*v.* 17.) *Lord even the Devils are ſubject to us through thy Name.* Yea (ſaith Chriſt) I know it to be ſo, yours is no vain boaſt, I my ſelf can bear you witneſs, the effects of your miniſtry have been very great in mine eye (*v.* 18.) *I beheld Satan like lightning fall from heaven.* And becauſe they had mannaged their Commiſſion ſo well, Chriſt enlargeth it at the 19. verſe; *Behold I give you power to tread on Serpents and Scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing ſhall by any means hurt you.* Now Chriſt (who knows the meaſure and temper of every ſpirit) fore-ſeeing that his Diſciples might be over-joyed with the thought of thoſe paſt and theſe promiſed victories and conqueſts (which were indeed greater than all the *Caſars* and *Pompeys* in the world ever attained unto; he, I ſay, fore-ſeeing this) gave them an allay, by counſel and caution (*v.* 20.) *Notwithſtanding in this rejoyce not, that the ſpirits are ſubject unto you, but rather rejoyce in this, that your names are written in heaven.* Where he at once corrects or checks the ſuſpected exceſſes of their joy, for victories gained over evil ſpirits, and directs them to rejoyce in that wherein there could be no exceſs, their hopes of and intereſt in eternal glory. Now if good men are apt to exceed in their rejoycings about ſome priviledges which are of a ſpiritual nature (ſuch is that gift of power over evil ſpirits) ſurely then carnal men cannot ſtop their joyes from exceeding, and godly men are very prone to exceed in rejoycing about earthly things. How ſeldom is it that we rejoyce in ſpiritual things? we can hardly bring our hearts to any due height or heat of holy joy: And O how over-ſoon do our hearts over-act their joy in temporal things! When we rejoyce in God, we rejoyce as if we did not, we rejoyce but faintly, narrowly, ſorrily; yea while we are in the fleſh we can never rejoyce enough in ſpiritual things, only this is our comfort, that in heaven we ſhall rejoyce in God, and in God alone, and as we can never rejoyce too much in him, ſo then we ſhall rejoyce enough in him; our joy ſhall then be full, and we ſhall rejoyce our fill in God.

Thirdly, In that *Job* diſclaims all inordinate rejoycing in his great wealth,

Obſerve, *To rejoyce much in the beſt or greateſt of worldly things is greatly ſinful.*

The leaſt of our affections is enough for the greateſt good which this world yields. Nor is any thing of this world to have any thing of our affections, but in a ſubſerviency and ſubordination unto God. The Apoſtle gives us excellent counſel for the moderating of our joys about, and the drawing off our deſires from creature-enjoyments (*2 Cor.* 7. 30, 31.) *The time is ſhort, brethren; it remaineth therefore, that they who rejoyce be as if they rejoyced not.* So to do a thing as if we did it not, is to do it ſo little that we can ſcarce diſcern whether it be done at all or no. The Apoſtle doth not totally forbid that joy, but regulates it; he would have us rejoyce in the good things of this life, yet ſo, as it may appear we are dead to them. And if we conſider wealth, the greateſt worldly wealth in its utmoſt worth, we have reaſon enough to be ſo. For,

Firſt, as to its matter and extraction, 'tis of the earth; Secondly, as to its acquiſition and attainment, 'tis troubleſom to get it; Thirdly, when we have gotten it, new troubles and cares are begotten by it; Fourthly, the utmoſt uſe and enjoyment of it is but for the ſhort time of this life, and why ſhould we rejoyce much in that at any time, which we can enjoy but a little time? Fifthly, joy in wealth produceth many dangerous effects, unleſs it be well tempered and corrected through grace. For,

Firſt, it ſteals the heart away from better things, while we feed too heartily upon earthly things; and drink large draughts at the ciſtern of the creature, we little mind (if we do not forſake) the fountain of living waters (*Jer.* 2. 13.) much friendſhip and familiarity with the world, breeds an eſtrangement between God and the Soul; the more we converſe with creatures, the leſs fellowſhip we have with Chriſt: and then he is jealous of us, that we have found out other lovers, and are grown wanton with our wealth. This is ſpiritual Adultery, and a going a whoring from God. The Apoſtle *James* calls it ſo expreſly (*Chap.* 4. 3, 4.) *Ye ask and receive not, becauſe ye ask amiſs, that ye may conſume it upon your luſts. Ye Adulterers and Adultereſſes know ye not,* &c. The Adulterer cares not for his wife, and the Adultereſs is eſtranged from her own husband, ſhe regards not his company; And thus when the heart is taken with the beauty and glitter of the world, it is eſtranged from God.

Secondly, Such Joy in great wealth blows up the heart with vain oſtentation and ſwells it with pride, nothing keeps the heart ſo low as Joy in the higheſt things; and Joy in low things, or in things below, ſets the heart on high. Here's a ſtrange contrariety of effects; low things make the heart proudly high; and high things make the heart graciouſly low.

Thirdly, Inordinate worldly joy make the heart like the world, foul and unclean. The world is corrupt, and it corrupts thoſe who luſt after it (*2 Pet.* 1. 4.) They who rejoyce much in the world luſt after it, and ſuch cannot *eſcape the corruption that is in the world through luſt.*

Fourthly, Joy over-acted upon the world, deads the heart to all ſpiritual actings and quencheth the Spirit. The fire of worldly joy is as water caſt upon the holy Spirit, and upon our graces; O how deadly cold is the heart of a man to heavenly things when once he is heated with rejoycings about the things of the earth!

Fifthly, Immoderate Joy about earthly things alwayes concludes in diſſatisfaction, often in vexation; The world at beſt is not good enough, and at moſt is not big enough to fill or ſatisfie the mind of man; And ſtill the greater our expectations are from the world, (they who rejoyce much in it, expect moſt from it, now I ſay, the greater our expectations are) the greater are our diſappointments; Nothing vexeth more than diſappointment; and they are moſt vexed with diſappointments about the world, who have rejoyced moſt in it. So that we muſt ſay of worldly Joy as *Solomon* doth (*Prov.* 14. 13.) *Even in ſuch laughter the heart is ſorrowful,* or if not, *yet the end of that mirth is heavineſs.*

But ſome may ſay, how then ſhall we order our Joy? I will anſwer this query; Firſt, with reſpect to thoſe who have more than wealth to rejoyce in; Secondly, to thoſe who have nothing but wealth to rejoyce in.

To thoſe who have more than wealth to rejoyce in, that is, to godly men, *Who are begotten again unto a lively hope by the reſurrection of Chriſt from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled,* to all ſuch I ſay, let your joy about corporal and temporal things lead you to rejoyce in thoſe things which are ſpiritual and eternal. Take occaſion from your great wealth (if your lot be there) to rejoyce in better and greater things than wealth. The beſt improvement of the creature is, to make it a ſtair or a ladder to aſcend up to God by. And to get a ſence of better things than the earth hath any, is the beſt uſe we can make of the good, of the beſt things we find on earth. Therefore as Chriſt ſaid to thoſe whom he perceived over-fearing the evils of this life, *I will ſhew you whom you ſhall fear, fear him, who when he hath kill'd the body, can caſt both ſoul and body into hell*; So I may ſay to thoſe who find their hearts over-joy'd about the good things of this life, I will ſhew you in whom and in what to rejoyce; rejoyce in him, and in that which can advance both body and ſoul to heaven.

Firſt, Rejoyce in God thorough Jeſus Chriſt. *We,* ſaith *Paul* (Phil. 3. 9.) *are the Circumciſion which worſhip God in the ſpirit, and rejoyce in Chriſt Jeſus, and have no confidence in the fleſh.*

Secondly, Rejoyce in the means of knowing and enjoying God by Jeſus Chriſt. *I was glad* (ſaith *David,* Pſal. 122. 1, 2.) *when they ſaid unto me, let us go into the houſe of the Lord; Our feet ſhall ſtand within thy gates, O Jeruſalem.* In the houſe of God the ſolemn worſhip of God was celebrated, there he manifeſted himſelf to his people, and there they enjoyed his ſpecial preſence. This made *David*'s heart more glad than all the wealth of his kingdom. The *Ark of Iſrael* was therefore called and eſteemed the glory of *Iſrael* by that good dying woman (*1 Sam.* 4. 21.) becauſe it was, Firſt, a type of the perſon of Chriſt; Secondly, a pledg of his preſence with them; Thirdly, a means of enjoying him. And ſurely what was the glory of *Iſrael,* was or ought to have been the principal matter of their joy.

Thirdly, Rejoyce in the grace of God, and in the fruits of his Spirit. One dram, yea a grain of grace, gives more cauſe of rejoycing than ten thouſand talents, yea than ten thouſand mountains of gold. What are the fruits of the earth to the fruits of the Spirit? let the beholding and gathering up of thoſe fruits cauſe joy in you like the joy of harveſt.

Fourthly, Rejoyce in the favour and loving kindneſs of God, That is better than life (*Pſal.* 63. 3.) how much more than the good things of this life? When many ſpake of Corn and Wine, *David* took occaſion to ſpeak of the light of God's Countenance, and to rejoyce in it. Thoſe beams of light which ſhine from the pleaſed face of God upon the ſoul, will cauſe joys there unſpeakable and glorious.

Fifthly, Rejoyce in the teſtimony of a good Conſcience; that's a continual feaſt; and more pleaſant than muſick at a banquet of wine (*2 Cor.* 1. 12.) *This is our rejoycing, the Teſtimony of our Conſcience, that in ſimplicity and godly ſincerity we have had our Converſation in the world.* To get and keep a good Conſcience, is more to be rejoyced in, than the getting and keeping the greateſt portions of this world. While a Conſcience well informed ſpeaks us fair, we may ſing for joy, though all men reproach and rail upon us.

Sixthly, Rejoyce in the hope of the glory of God! (*Rom.* 5. 2.) that hope is better than all your poſſeſſions; that goodneſs which God hath wrought for us is much to be rejoyced in, much more that which he hath laid up for us.

Seventhly, *Rejoyce that your names are written in heaven!* (*Luke* 10. 20.) That's better than to have your names written among the rich, or with the Honorable of the earth.

Eighthly, Rejoyce even in the Croſs of Chriſt, or in his ſufferings for you. *Paul* rejoyced ſo much in that, that he with higheſt indignation or diſdain, forbad the leaſt motion of any other Joy. (*Gal.* 6. 14.) *God forbid that I ſhould glory, ſave in the Croſs of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, by whom* (*or whereby*) *the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world.* The ſorrows and ſufferings of Chriſt for our ſins, ſhould at once wound our hearts with ſorrow that we have ſinned, and affect our hearts with joy, that through his ſtripes we are healed of our ſin-wounds.

Ninthly, Rejoyce, as in the Croſs of Chriſt for you, ſo in your croſs for Chriſt. How honorable is it to rejoyce in ſuffering for Chriſt, and in our conformity to Chriſt by ſuffering. Suffering for Chriſt is not every ones priviledg, *'tis given* but to ſome (*Phil.* 1. 29.) And though ſuffering even for Chriſt be grievous to the fleſh, yet as Chriſt himſelf exhorts (*Matth.* 5. 12.) we have reaſon *to rejoyce and be exceeding glad, for great is our reward in heaven.* So thoſe bleſſed ones did (*Heb.* 10. 34.) *who took joyfully the ſpoiling of their goods, knowing in themſelves that they had in heaven a better and an enduring ſubſtance.* Many rejoyce at the increaſing of their goods and livelyhoods, but can you rejoyce in the ſpoiling of your goods and livelyhoods, yea of your lives for Chriſt? that's joy worthy of a Chriſtian.

Secondly, As for thoſe who have nothing but wealth to rejoyce in, meer worldly men, who as they have a great portion in the things of this life, ſo they have their whole portion in this life; I may ſay to ſuch, ceaſe rejoycing that your wealth is great; mourn rather for your miſery is great. Go home and weep over your gold and ſilver, as the Apoſtle *James* ſpeaks (*Chap.* 5. 1, 2, 3.) *Go to now ye rich men, weep and howl for the miſery that ſhall come upon you, your riches are corrupt,* &c. You that have not a God, nor a Chriſt, nor the pardon of ſin to rejoyce in, how can you rejoyce in riches which are corrupt, in gold and ſilver which are cankered? The marks of divine diſpleaſure are viſible upon all theſe enjoyments, and will you rejoyce in them? Nay rather as the ſame Apoſtle counſels you (*James* 4 9.) *Be afflicted and weep and mourn; for your laughter ſhall be turned into mourning, and your joy into heavineſs.* 'Tis better to turn your mirth into mourning, than to have it turned into mourning. They who turn their mirth into mourning, may find comfort after it; But they ſhall know nothing but mourning, whoſe mirth is turned into mourning. How ſad is it for any to rejoyce for a day, who are in a condition which tends to mourning for eternity? Wealth which cauſeth ſuch joy is periſhing, and muſt ſhortly be parted with; but ſin unrepented of and unpardoned, which will certainly produce ſorrow, abides upon the ſoul for ever, and therefore their ſorrow muſt. That's the meaning of Chriſt (*Luke* 6. 25.) *Wo to you that laugh now, for ye ſhall mourn and weep*; that is, you who laugh in the uſe or poſſeſſion of outward things, and have nothing elſe, no grace, no Intereſt in Chriſt, no favour with God to rejoyce in, ſhall weep at laſt and mourn everlaſtingly. *Sorrow of heart, without change of heart, is the portion of ſinners for ever.*

If I rejoyced becauſe my wealth was great.

Comparing this proteſtation of *Job* with that due Compoſure of his ſpirit before ſpoken of (*Chap.* 1. 21.) when all was loſt, ſee there how he took it? *Naked came I out of my mothers womb, and naked ſhall I return; the Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away, bleſſed be the name of the Lord.*

Hence note, *They who do not rejoyce much in the poſſeſſion of worldly things, will not grieve much at the loſs of them.*

The reaſon why *Job* had ſuch an admirable ſpirit of moderation in his ſorrow about worldly things, was becauſe he had ſuch an admirable ſpirit of moderation about his joy in worldly things; he never rejoyced much in having them, therefore he never ſorrowed much in loſing them. The Apoſtle puts theſe two together (1 *Cor.* 7. 30.) *Rejoyce as if ye rejoyced not, and weep as if ye wept not*; As if he had ſaid, if when theſe things of the world are taken from you, you would not be oppreſſed with ſorrow, but weep as if you wept not; then, while you hold them, rejoyce as if you rejoyced not. Sorrow will break their backs, yea their hearts, who ſee that taken from them, with which themſelves were over-much taken. We are always afflicted with the paſſion of ſorrow in parting with any thing, proportionably to our paſſion of joy in holding it. *If I rejoyced becauſe my wealth was great,*

And becauſe my hand had gotten much.

This cloſe of the verſe is very remarkable; ſome rejoyce not ſo much in wealth, becauſe they have it as becauſe they have got it, or becauſe 'tis of their own fetching in; They more value a leſſer eſtate attained by their own Induſtry, policy, and contrivances, than a greater deſcended to them by inheritance from their Anceſtors. What is of our own gaining, is naturally more pleaſing to us than what is of other mens giving. We often hear rich men acknowledging, they had no great matter to begin with, but this they glory in, their hand hath gotten much. Such will ſay of that or 'tother rich man, *his father was born before him*: that is, he hath his eſtate by deſcent, his hand hath gotten little. And therefore it argues a further ſpiritualneſs in this holy man; that as he rejoyced not in wealth conveyed to him by his fore-fathers, ſo not in his own greateſt acquirements of wealth, that's the ſcope of theſe words; *If I rejoyced*

Becauſe my hand had gotten much.] The hand is the great Inſtrument of action; yet we need not underſtand it, that *Job* got his eſtate by hand-labour; he was a Magiſtrate, a man of great power and place; but that is ſaid to be gotten by the hand, which is any way gotten by our diligence. All that we get may come under this title, *gotten by the hand.* Thus *Solomon* ſpeaks (*Eccl.* 9. 10.) *Whatſoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might.* Head-work or wit-work, is hand-work in *Solomon*'s ſence as well as any other work. *Moſes* (*Levit.* 25. 47.) puts *the work of the hand* for all kind of work. The Hebrew of *Job*'s text is, *Becauſe my hand hath found much.* So (*Pſal.* 21. 8. *Iſa.* 10. 10.) *If I rejoyced becauſe my hand had found or gotten*

Invenit. i.e. obtinuit.

Much.] The word notes a maſs or weight of wealth. The Septuagint tranſlate, *If I put my hand to the getting of innumerable wealth*; As if the meaning were, that he bounded his deſires in getting wealth. Some put their hands yea their hearts to the gathering of innumerable riches; they would be rich without all bounds. They never think they have enough, and therefore they would be always getting more; as the Prophet ſaith (*Hab.* 2. 6.) *How long?* So we may ſay, *How much?* No man knows. The Scholiaſt ſaith, *Job did not put his hand to innumerables, becauſe he ſet a limit to his deſires in getting riches; and whatſoever was beyond that, he diſtributed it to the poor.* This is a good ſence, but I rather keep to that of our own reading, which doth not make theſe words a new proteſtation, but a heightning of that in the former part of the verſe. As if he had ſaid, *Though I not only had much riches, but made my ſelf rich, yet I did not rejoyce in it.*

כביר *Plus eſt quam multum* q. d. *Ingentem auri argenti & opum vim.* 'Ει δὲ ϗ ἐπ' ἀναριθμήτοις ἐθέμην χεῖρα μȣ. *Et ſi in innumerabilibus poſui manum meam.* Sept. *Auguſtinus legit animam meam.*

Hence note, Firſt, *Much diligence and activity in any kind, puts us in a probable way for the getting of much.*

As ſlothfulneſs tends to the loſing of all, ſo diligence to the getting of much; *The diligent hand maketh rich,* that is, there is a great advantage in diligence toward the attainment of riches.

Secondly, In that *Job* diſclaims his rejoycing in riches as got by his own hand; He indeed uſed diligence in getting riches, but he would not take notice of them as gotten by him.

Hence note, *It is ſinful to aſcribe our gains to our own getting.*

They who do ſo, put themſelves in the place of God, as if they were able to give an Iſſue to their own Endeavours, and make them ſucceſsful. Whereas (*Pſal.* 127. 1, 2, 3.)

Except the Lord build the houſe, they labour in vain that build it; Except the Lord keep the City, the watch-man waketh in vain. It is vain for you to riſe up early, to ſit up late, to eat the bread of ſorrows. There is a vanity, that is, a ſucceſsleſneſs in all that we put our heads or hearts or hands unto, till God breaths a bleſſing upon us. We build in vain, and watch in vain, and labour in vain, if God with-hold or with-draw his bleſſing. *I* (ſaith *Solomon*, *Eccl.* 9. 11.) *returned and ſaw under the Sun, that the race is not to the ſwift, nor the battel to the ſtrong, neither yet bread to the wiſe, nor riches to men of underſtanding, nor favour to men of skill, but time and chance hapneth to them all*; that is, they are under the over-ruling and all-diſpoſing hand of God; Which gives ſuch iſſues to mens undertakings as himſelf pleaſes, not ſuch as they purpoſe and intend; ſo that they ſeem to fall out rather caſually than anſwerably to thoſe means, which have been uſed and managed with the greateſt probability in order to their attainment. Therefore let no man glory in man, how ſwift, how ſtrong, how wiſe, how underſtanding, how skilful ſoever, for no man is able to aſſure the effect of what he engageth in or goeth about. He that thinks he can do any one thing effectually, aſſumes his priviledge who alone doth all things.

Thirdly, Obſerve, *Carnal or natural men aſcribe their wealth to their own getting more then to the bleſſing of God.*

When a godly man hath got much in the world, and hath been very induſtrious in getting it; when the iſſue of his labours riſeth not only up to, but exceeds his expectation; he ſaith (as *Peter* when he had heal'd the Cripple) *why ſtand ye looking upon me, as if I by my own power had got this wealth?* When others admire his ſucceſs, he puts it back, with a Why do ye take notice of me, as if my wit, my policy, my cunning, my induſtry, my hand had done this? I know ſome are forward enough to aſcribe that to the bleſſing of God, which they have more reaſon to charge upon their own ſin, and indirect dealing, upon their injuſtice and unrighteouſneſs, take heed of fathering ſuch riches upon the bleſſing of God. Many are rich by common providence; God lets them proſper in their ſin as a puniſhment of their ſin. Only they who thrive by righteouſneſs may ſay of their wealth as *Jacob* of his Children, *This is that wealth which God hath graciouſly given us.* Now as ſome are rich by the grace and favour of God; ſo none are rich but by the leave of God. There are many witty, politick and painful men that could never get riches by their utmoſt Endeavours; it is of God that any get wealth. But the carnal man takes all or moſt to himſelf, and never aſcribes his ſucceſs in getting wealth to God, unleſs it be to eaſe himſelf of his ſin in getting it. Man naturally deſires to be ſomewhat to himſelf, and to be looked upon as the Author and finiſher of his own greatneſs. And therefore God chargeth his own people to take heed of this (*Deut.* 8. 14, 17, 18.) *Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God which brought thee out of the land of Egypt,* &c. *And thou ſay in thy heart, my power and the might of my hand hath gotten me this wealth.* Men ſometimes thank God with their tongues, and ſay, Bleſſed be God we are rich; and yet with their hearts they ſay, *With my might and power have I got this: but thou ſhalt remember the Lord thy God, for he it is that gives thee power to get wealth.* Many labour to get wealth, but God is he that gives power to get wealth; and 'tis of grace that any acknowledg this power to be of God. The proud *Aſſyrian* would not acknowledg this, we hear the language not only of his heart but of his tongue (*Iſa.* 10. 13.) *He ſaith by the ſtrength of my hand I have done it, and by my wiſdom, for I am prudent.* And ſuitable to this opinion was the practice of the *Chaldeans* (*Hab.* 1. 16.) *They ſacrifice to their own nets, and burn Incenſe unto their drag, becauſe by them their portion is fat and their meat plenteous*; that is, they conceive that their hand or the means which they have deviſed and uſed, hath procured them all their ſtore and plenty, and therefore they ſacrifice and burn Incenſe to them; that is, having aſcribed to them that efficiency which is proper to God, they alſo beſtow upon them that honour which is proper to God, incenſe and ſacrifice. Thus *Nebuchadnezzar* boaſted (*Dan.* 4. 30.) *This is great Babylon which I have built for the houſe of the kingdom* (that was his deſign, but by what means did he effect it? he ſignifies that plainly enough, as to his own apprehenſion, in the next words, *by the might of my power*; (to which he again ſubjoins and that more fully, the final cauſe or his aim in raiſing this mighty ſtructure) *For the honour of my Majeſty. Man is a covetous Creature, he would have all for himſelf; and he is a proud creature, he attributes all to himſelf, or thinks he hath all from himſelf.* Man would have even ſalvation it ſelf by his own getting. Hence that great Controverſie, and continual tugging about Juſtification by works.

But it may be objected, Surely to rejoyce that our hand hath gotten much, is not ſinful; for *Solomon* ſaith (*Eccl.* 5. 19.) *Every man to whom God hath given riches and health, and hath given him power to eat thereof, and to take pleaſure, and to rejoyce in his labour* (that is, in the effects or fruits of his labour) *this is the gift of God.*

I anſwer, We may indeed rejoyce in our labour, or that our hand hath gotten much; yet not as if the ſucceſs were from our ſelves, but becauſe God hath uſed us as inſtruments in his hand to obtain that ſucceſs. And as this is the bleſſing of God upon his people, ſo 'tis a ſpecial gift or favour to his people, when God gives them a heart to rejoyce in that which their hand hath gotten.

From theſe two verſes conſidered together, take theſe brief Corollaries.

Firſt, *It is lawful for us to endeavour the increaſe of our worldly eſtate, or to get wealth.* The hand is a great getter, and 'tis a mercy when it is ſo in the way of any lawful calling, whether in tillage of the earth, or commerce with Nations.

Secondly, *Men ought to labour in their Callings, and get wealth by their hands.* Though all are not bound to live by manual or hand-labour, yet in ſome *honeſt trade* (as our Margin hath it, *Tit.* 3. 14.) or uſeful Calling, all ought to labour. God bids *the ſluggard go to the Ant* (Prov. 6.6.) and the Apoſtles command is (*Eph.* 4. 28.) *Let him that hath ſtoln ſteal no more, but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good*; that is, let him put his hand, that is, himſelf, to ſome good work.

Thirdly, *We may lawfully poſſeſs or keep the wealth and good things which we have got by our hands.* We may keep that in our hands for uſe which our hands have got into our poſſeſſion. *Job* got much by his hands, and we read (*Chap.* 1. 3.) that he had much in his poſſeſſion. The Scripture doth no where counſel us voluntarily to throw our wealth out of our hands, though it often commands us to throw it out of our hearts.

Fourthly, *Riches honeſtly gotten by the hand are good, and the good bleſſings of God. Solomon* ſaith (*Prov.* 10. 4.) *The diligent hand maketh rich*; and in the 22. verſe of the ſame Chapter, he ſaith, *The bleſſing of God maketh rich.* Thoſe are bleſſed riches which the bleſſing of God gives in either immediately without our diligence, or by our diligence. Many eminent ſervants of God, ſpoken of in Scripture, have been enrich'd by the bleſſing of God upon their diligent hands; *Abraham* was rich, and ſo was *Iſaac* and *Jacob*, all induſtrious men (according to the cuſtom of the great men of thoſe times) about corn and cattel.

Laſtly, Remember theſe two Cautions, and get as much wealth as you can.

Firſt, Take heed of getting any thing unjuſtly. He that gets unjuſtly in bargaining, buying or ſelling, ſteals, as well as he that takes away without either leave or bargain. Though a little gotten by righteouſneſs is not riches, yet 'tis better than the greateſt riches gotten by unrighteouſneſs. *Only they are getters indeed who keep a good Conſcience.*

Secondly, Take heed of truſting to or rejoycing in what you have juſtly gotten. They who avoid theſe two evils move ſafely, and without danger (as this holy man did) in getting wealth. *Job* had abundance, ſuch abundance as was a continual temptation to rejoyce in it. He had Gold, and fine Gold, his hand had gotten much; yet his heart was kept pure from any (ſo far as is conſiſtent with humane frailty) defilement with it, and free from all bondage to it.

VERS. 26, 27, 28.

If I beheld the Sun when it ſhined, or the Moon walking in brightneſs:
And my heatt hath been ſecretly enticed, or my mouth hath kiſſed my hand:
This alſo were an iniquity to be puniſhed by the Judg: for I ſhould have denied the God that is above.

IN theſe three verſes *Job* proteſteth his freedom from, yea his abhorrence of Idolatry; Concerning which we may conſider;

Firſt, The object of Idolatry, a creature, here the *Sun and Moon* are ſpecified; *If I beheld the Sun when it ſhined, or the Moon walking in brightneſs.*

Secondly, The manner of committing Idolatry; and that is two-fold.

Firſt, Internal, The ſeduction of the heart, there it begins, *If my heart hath been ſecretly enticed* (v. 27.)

Secondly, External; The Action or geſture of the body; *If my mouth hath kiſſed my hand:* there it is perfected.

Thirdly, The extream ſinfulneſs of Idolatry; which is manifeſted two ways *(v. 28.)*

Firſt, By that ſeverity which man ought to uſe againſt it. *This alſo were an iniquity to be puniſhed by the Judg.*

Secondly, By the notorious evil that is in the nature of it againſt God, as the ground of that ſeverity; *For I ſhould have denied the God that is above.*

Thus we ſee both the matter of this context, and the general ſcope of it. *Job*'s clearing himſelf from the ſuſpition of Idolatrous practices.

Yet before I meddle with the expoſition of particulars in reference to that intendment, I ſhall take notice of three opinions which carry the ſence of theſe words wholly another way.

Firſt, The Septuagint or Greek tranſlaters render the text, as a reaſon why *Job* made not gold his hope, nor fine gold his confidence; why he did not rejoyce in his great wealth, or becauſe his hand had gotten much: in a word, why he was not taken or enſnared with the beauty and luſtre, with the worth and weight of any earthly thing. To which ſence they tranſlate the 26. verſe thus; *Do we not ſee the Sun which ſhined failing, and the Moon decreaſing?* As if *Job* had ſaid, *Why ſhould I rejoyce in gold and ſilver? Are they not fading and uncertain? Are they not ſubject to decays and changes? Doth not the moſt dazling light of worldly glory decline into darkneſs and obſcurity? Though I now behold the Sun ſhining, yet many times 'tis under a cloud, and ſometimes eclipſed. And if I behold the Moon walking in brightneſs, or at full, yet ſoon after ſhe is in her wane, and waſtes as if ſhe were not.* This is a pious ſence, but I conceive it too great a departure from the Original, and therefore I only mention it, and paſs from it.

An non videmus ſolem qui lucebat deficientem, lunam autem decreſcentem? Sept.

Secondly, Some of the Rabbins connect theſe words with the two former verſes, which concern his wealth and worldly ſubſtance, thus, *If I beholding the Sun when it ſhined, or the Moon walking in brightneſs, have aſcribed my proſperity or ſucceſs to the benignity of their influences rather than to the bleſſing of God*; or, thus; *If I have looked up to the planets and conſtellations of heaven, to the Sun, Moon, or Stars, and have thanked them that I have thrived in the world, then,* &c. As there are ſome who complain they were born under an unlucky Planet when they are croſs'd in their worldly expectations; ſo there are others who in ſtead of thanking the God of heaven, thank the heavens as their God for their riches and increaſe; they bleſs themſelves that they were born under ſuch or ſuch a favourable Planet, lucky Star, or enriching Conſtellation; theſe, they judg, have made them ſucceſsful. But, ſaith *Job*, as I did not rejoyce in my wealth, nor ſay my own hand hath gotten it, ſo I did not aſcribe my getting of wealth to the Sun, or Moon, or Stars, no nor to any ſecond cauſes, either ſublunary or cœleſtial, but wholly and alone to God, whoſe bleſſing upon my diligence hath made me rich in all earthly bleſſings.

Rambam hos verſiculos cum jam dictis de auro & opibus connectit, hoc ſenſu, ſi ſolem aut lunam reſpexi, illis opes meas tribuens non Deo, &c. Merc.

There is a third interpretation which makes this verſe, as alſo the two which follow, a further heightning of what *Job* had profeſſed before againſt his rejoycing in the greatneſs of his wealth; As if he had ſaid, *When my worldly proſperity was like the ſhining Sun, or like the Moon walking in brightneſs, yet then I was ſo far from glorying in it, that I took little notice of it, I did not behold it, I did ſcarce look upon it, or I did not look upon it, as worth the looking upon, compared with ſpiritual excellencies and my Intereſt in God.*

Videre lumen ſplendens, &c. *hoc loco eſt gloriari fœlicitate, & ea pro ſua libidine non tàm uti quàm frui. Siquidem lumen communi phraſi hujus libri pro fœlicitate ſumitur.* Brent.

Some of the learned are much for this expoſition, judging it improbable that *Job* ſhould here intend any vindication of himſelf from the imputation of Idolatry, becauſe his friends never objected it againſt him. They charged him with many other crimes, but we do not read that ever they raiſed the leaſt duſt of a ſuſpition about this. Upon theſe grounds they are confirmed in the preſent expoſition, that while *Job* denieth that he ever *beheld the Sun when it ſhined, and the Moon walking in brightneſs*, his meaning is only this, that he never gloried in any earthly riches or preheminence, which in Scripture are often ſet forth by light, and may here by the light of the Sun and brightneſs of the Moon. *Job indeed had a very glorious and illuſtrious eſtate in the world, he did ſhine in the ſphere of an outward proſperity like the Sun in its ſtrength, or like the Moon walking in brightneſs.* Yet he was not affected with thoſe things, nor was his heart ſwell'd, nor his mind lifted up vainly by them. So that as he proteſted (*Chap.* 9.21.) *If I were perfect* (as to morals and ſpirituals) *I would not know my ſoul*; So he ſaith here (as to civils and temporals) though I did ſhine as the Sun, and were bright as the Moon in the eyes of the world, yet I did not ſee my ſelf in that Glory. And, ſurely he that can ſay ſo in truth of heart, hath an excellent frame of heart. This interpretation is carried quite through the Context by the ſame Authors. *If my heart hath been ſecretly enticed*; that is, with the beauty of the world. Some though they make a verbal profeſſion, and a great bluſter of words againſt rejoycing in outward things, and ſay they regard neither gold nor ſilver, neither the Sunſhine of the one, nor the Moon-ſhine of the other; yet their hearts go after them in ſecret. *But* (*Job* could ſay) *my heart hath not been ſecretly enticed*; nor (as it follows in the ſame verſe) *hath my hand kiſſed my mouth*; That is, my mouth hath not kiſſed my hand, as congratulating my own diligence and endeavours for bringing me in ſuch abundance, and amaſſing ſuch heaps of riches. Some (as hath been anciently noted) have ſaid of their *right hand, Thou art our God*; that is, they have boaſted of what they have gotten and done by their hand; To do ſo *is a Judged iniquity*; ſo they connect the next verſe with this in the ſame file of interpretation: and they have this help for it, becauſe thoſe words, *to be puniſhed*, are not expreſly in the Hebrew text. As if *Job* had ſaid, *if my mouth had kiſſed my hand*, that is, adored and applauded my own wiſdom and endeavours, as the cauſe of my great proſperity, *I ſhould have denied the God that is above.* Now it is a great truth, that whatſoever we aſcribe any efficiency to we make that our God, and ſo deny the God that is above. Which agrees clearly with that of *Agur* (*Prov.* 30. 8, 9.) praying for a middle eſtate, or that God would cut him out his portion neither too big nor too little; *Give me neither poverty nor riches, feed me with food convenient for me, leſt I be full and deny thee, and ſay, who is the Lord?* As to ſit down in a creature-fulneſs is to deny God, ſo for any man to make himſelf the Author of his own creature-fulneſs is to deny God alſo. This expoſition being ſo much inſiſted upon, I would not leave it quite out, yet I ſhall not ſtay in it, but proceed to the opening of this context according to the moſt generally approved opinion, as containing *Job*'s diſclaimer of all falſe worſhip and Idolatry.

Nunquam meis divitiis, ſucceſſibus, potentia aut majeſtate confiſus ſum, neq; gloriatus; Eſt autem carni nihil difficilius quam ferre ut dicitur bonos dies; citius enim ſub iis ſuccumbit quam ſub cruce. Brent.

Dextra mihi Deus eſt.

Verſ. 26. **If I beheld the Sun when it ſhined, &c.**

But is there any hurt in beholding the Sun when it ſhineth? May we not contemplate the works of creation, and behold them in their greateſt beauty and brightneſs? Why then doth *Job* put this among the ſins which he ſo vehemently diſowns, that he did not *behold the Sun when it ſhined*; what fault is there in that? or if there be, how could *Job* eſcape that fault?

I anſwer, it is ſo far from being a ſin that it is indeed a duty to *behold the Sun when it ſhineth, and the Moon walking in brightneſs.* It is our duty to view and conſider the creatures for either of theſe two ends.

His verbis innuit ſe nunquam aſtra pro diis coluiſſe; quod gentes olim faciebant; unde θεοὶ dicti ἀπὸ τῦ θεῖν, quòd aſtra in perpetuo motu ſint, & ſemper quaſi currant. Druſ.

Firſt, That in them as in a glaſs we may ſee the glory, the power, the wiſdom and goodneſs of God. When the Creatures are not ſo much objects upon which we look as means by and thorough which we look unto and ſee God, then we improve them rightly. Thus the holy Ghoſt directs us by the Prophet (*Iſa.* 40. 26.) *Lift up your eyes on high* (there's a command or a direction at leaſt) *and behold:* (What ſhould they behold? What, the things or Creatures, the Sun, Moon, and Stars, which are on high? No, but as it followeth in that place of the Prophet, *behold*) *who hath created theſe things, that bringeth out their Hoſt; by number: He calleth them all by names, by the greatneſs of his might, for that he is ſtrong in power, not one faileth.* When the Prophet calls them to lift up their eyes on high, he would not have their ſight terminated in any created thing on high, but in him, *who hath created all high things.* Behold them, but do not ſtay in them; let not high things be the limit or bound of your ſight, but glaſſes in and by which you are helped to ſee him who is *The Moſt High.* Pore not upon the Sun, Moon, and Stars, but paſs thorough them unto God, who hath Created them, and brings out their Hoſt by number, though to us a numberleſs Hoſt.

Secondly, As it is our duty to behold the Sun and Moon, even all things on high, to honour and exalt God in our eyes, ſo to humble and abaſe our ſelves in our eyes; that is the uſe we find made of this ſight (*Pſal.* 8. 3, 4.) *When I conſider the Heavens, the works of thy fingers, the Moon and the Stars which thou haſt ordained. What is man that thou art mindful of him, or the Son of man that thou viſiteſt him?* As if he had ſaid, What is man, that God ſhould make ſuch Creatures for him, that he ſhould ſet up a Sun and a Moon and Stars for him? To behold the beauty of the Creature that we may abaſe our ſelves, is a work of Grace about the things of nature. Thus to behold the Sun when it ſhineth and the Moon walking in brightneſs, is a command, not the breaking of a command, a duty not a ſin.

But how is it a ſin to behold them? The word which is here uſed in the Hebrew imports two things beſides bare ſeeing, which will help us towards an anſwer. Firſt, an affecting delight in them; Secondly, an admiring ſtay of the mind upon them: Such was that which the Angels gave ſome reproof to, though it were upon Chriſt himſelf when he aſcended into Heaven (*Acts* 1. 10, 11.) *And as they looked ſtedfaſtly toward Heaven, as he went up, behold two men ſtood by them in white apparel, which alſo ſaid, ye men of* Galilee, *why ſtand ye gazing up into Heaven,* &c. Such a pleaſing gazing ſight of the Sun *Job* here denies: And ſo Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates; *If I admired the Sun when it ſhined*; that is, if I beheld the ſhining Sun with any exceſſive admiration; if I ſtood glutting my eyes upon it, as taken with its beauty, or ſatisfying my ſelf in it, this were iniquity.

Videndi verbum lætitia voluptatem affert hoc loco; affert etiam intentionem quandam et animi et oculorum in rem quæ videtur; Hæc recte conveniunt in adoratione. Ἐμβλέποντες; *ſignificat oculis fixis, cum admiratione, cum complacentia aliquid intueri.*

Secondly, To behold the Sun and Moon, ſo as to attribute any of that comfort which we receive by them to them, this is iniquity.

Thirdly, To behold the Sun or Moon, as if they had a divine power, or were worthy of divine honour and worſhip, *this is the iniquity* which *Job* chiefly diſclaimeth, when he ſaith, *If I beheld the Sun when it ſhineth,* &c. Hence ſome tranſlate the whole verſe thus; *If I by or in beholding the Sun when it ſhined,* &c. *my heart hath been ſecretly enticed, and my mouth hath kiſſed my hand, this were an iniquity,* &c.

Si aſpiciendo lucem &c. *pellectus eſt in occulto animus meus.* Jun.

If I beheld the Sun when it ſhined.

The Hebrew word here rendred **Sun**, properly taken ſignifieth *light*, and ſo ſome tranſlate; *If I beheld the light when it ſhined.* The ſame word may well ſignifie both light and the Sun, becauſe the Sun is the greateſt light, the Candle of the World. *David* (Pſal. 136. 7, 8.) exhorts us to give him thanks *that made great lights, the Sun to rule the day,* or (as our Margin hath it) *for the ruling by day.* And the Sun is ſo great a light, that though the Moon be one of the two great lights, yet 'tis comparatively called *the leſſer light,* (*Gen.* 1. 16.) *God made two great lights, the greater light to rule the day, and the leſſer light to rule the night.* So that by way of Emphaſis we may call the Sun, *The light.*

Sol hic אור *vocatur* i. e. *lux; quia luce ſua cuncta colluſtret, & eſt Metonymia qua adjunctum ponitur pro ſubjecto vel effectus pro cauſa, hinc Ægyptiaca vox* ὦρ☉ *quia ſolem appellant teſte Macrobio.* Druſ.

There is another reaſon in the Text, why we ſhould tranſlate this general word *light* the *Sun,* for ſeeing in the latter part of the verſe, the Moon is named, therefore it is moſt proper to reſtrain the general word *light,* to the Sun in the former part of it. *If I beheld the Sun*

When it ſhined.] That is, the Sun in his full ſtrength, luſtre, and glory. The Sun ſhines always, but it doth not always ſhine to us. The Sun ſhines not to us at all in the night, for then the Earth obſcures it, it is below our Horizon; and the Sun though it ſhine always in the day, yet we do not always ſee it ſhine, becauſe ſometimes the Clouds cover it, and ſometimes the Moon ſhadoweth it, as in the Eclipſe. So that, though the Sun ſhineth always, yet we cannot always behold the ſhining of it. The Sun is a lamp that never goeth out, it hath burned everlaſtingly from the Creation to this day, yet to this or that place, at this or that time it doth not ſhine. *If I beheld the Sun when it ſhined,*

Or the Moon walking in brightneſs.

The word rendred **brightneſs**, ſignifies precious (*Zech.* 14. 6.) *And it ſhall come to paſs in that day, that the light ſhall not be clear nor dark;* we put in the Margin, *precious nor thickneſs.* Thus Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates here, *The Moon walking precious,* and adds this gloſs, *The new Moon; of which yet fools ſay, God ſave her.* It ſeemeth he had obſerved ſuch a vain ſalutation given the new Moon by ignorant or ſuperſtitious perſons. And as he expounds it by the *new Moon,* ſo others by the *full Moon,* becauſe the Moon when ſhe is at the full hath her greateſt communications of light from the Sun; ſo that, if at any time ſhe inſnare the heart of man with her beautiful countenance, 'tis moſt probably at the full. The Moon at full walks in the precious light of the Sun, and the Moon in her wane, walks from the precious light of the Sun. *If I beheld the Moon*

יקר *Pretioſum interdum ſignificat clarum claritate inſigni.*

Walking in brightneſs.] **Walking** is the proper motion of a man; the Moon is ſaid to walk becauſe ſhe moves and keeps on with a conſtant pace. The Moon at full is ſaid to walk in *brightneſs,* becauſe then ſhe walks, as it were, in ſtate, or in a kind of triumph, ſhe then ſhews her faireſt face, to attract the eyes of all beholders, and to entice the hearts of the ſuperſtitious, to adore and worſhip her.

Some read the whole verſe disjointly, or without any copulative, in three parts, repeating the verb, *If I beheld,* in all three, *If I beheld the Sun, If I beheld the Moon, If I beheld the precious thing, which doth encompaſs all,* that is, *The whole frame of Heaven with all its Hoſt, moving about us.* As if *Job* had ſaid, *I never beheld either or all of theſe goodly Creatures ſo with my eyes, that my heart hath been enticed to give them any veneration.*

Si vidi ſolem, ſi vidi lunam, ſi vidi pretioſum ambiens i. e. *totam illam cœlorum machinam* &c. Merl.

Thus we ſee in what ſence *Job* diſclaimeth his beholding the Sun and Moon. Before I proceed to verſe 27, where the manner of Idolatrous Creature-worſhip is ſet forth, take a few notes from the words already opened.

First, Note, *The nature of man is extreamly prone to Idolatry or falſe worſhip.*

Job here diſclaims the doing of that which many did, and which he himſelf poſſibly had found motions in his own heart to do. If there were not a ſtrong natural inclination in man to this ſin, it were no great matter not to be vitiated with it. As it is ſaid concerning ſufferings, *'Tis no vertue to endure that which we do not feel*; So 'tis ſcarce an act of Grace to abſtain from that, to which we have no temptation nor deſire. The ſtronger the ſettings of the heart and affections are towards any ſin, the more is the power of God manifeſted in us by our oppoſition of it, and victory over it. And therefore when *Job* ſaith, I did not behold the Sun when it ſhined, he intimates a preſſure upon the Spirit of man (poſſibly upon his own) to it, both by the temptation of Satan, and innate corruption. For not only hath the ignorant and blind world found the power of this temptation, but even the wiſeſt and moſt knowing among the Sons of men. Not only the vulgar Heathen, but the moſt learned among the Heathens, the ancient Philoſophers, men eminent in Moral vertues, and deep-ſighted in the ſecrets of nature, have been exceedingly inſnared with Idolatrous opinions and practices. *Auguſtine* chargeth the Platonicks with it. And *Lactantius* falls down-right upon them for their baſe compliance with the vulgar in Idol-worſhip. *What doth it advantage us* (ſaith he) *to preach thus to the ignorant multitude, when we ſee*

Auguſt. *li.* 10. *de Civ. dei. cap.* 1. Lactantius *lib.* 2. *de Origine Erroris cap.* 3.

even

Vidente terrena & manufacta venerari; vana eſſe intelligis & tamen eadem facis quæ faciunt ipſi, quos ipſe ſtultiſſimos confiteris. Quid igitur profuit videre te veritatem, quam nec defenſurus es, nec ſecuturus?

even learned and prudent men, who know the vanity of thoſe ſuperſtitions, yet ſtiffly perſiſting in them, and doing that which they themſelves condemn (are not ſuch condemned of themſelves?) and in ſpecial he applyeth his ſpeech to *Cicero* the Orator; *I ſee thee worſhipping earthly things, and ſuch as are made with hands. Thou knoweſt well enough that they are vain, and yet thou doeſt the ſame things, which they do, whom thou confeſſeſt to be very fools. Therefore what doth it avail thee, that thou ſeeſt the truth, which thou wilt neither defend nor follow; But ſurely thou feareſt the priſon of Socrates, and therefore dareſt not undertake the patronage of truth.*

Yea this ſin hath ſpread further than the wiſeſt of the heathen; for even the people of God have been infected with and captivated by it. *There is a ſeed of this worſt ſin in the hearts of good men.* The *Iſraelites* made them a Golden calf (*Exod.* 32. 1.) of which *Moſes* ſaith (*v.* 31.) *they have made them gods of Gold.* And are there not many Chriſtians in name (the Papiſts eſpecially) groſly tainted with Idolatry? The Apoſtle numbers Idolatry among fleſhly luſts (*Gal.* 5. 20.) *Now the luſts of the fleſh are manifeſt, which are theſe, adultery, fornication, uncleanneſs, laſciviouſneſs, Idolatry,* &c. All fleſh hath been corrupted as much with this luſt of the fleſh, as with any other whatſoever. And I conceive falſe worſhip is therefore often in Scripture called Adultery and Whoredom, to ſhew, that the heart of man is as much heated and carried out to this ſpiritual pollution, as unto that which is corporal. The Adulterer doth not more burn with his impure fires, than the Idolater with his. Thus the Prophet deſcribes them (*Iſa.* 57. 3, 4, 5.) *Draw neer hither, ye ſons of the Sorcerer, the ſeed of the Adulterer and the Whore; againſt whom do ye ſport your ſelves? againſt whom make ye a wide mouth, and draw out the tongue? are ye not children of tranſgreſſion, a ſeed of falſhood? inflaming your ſelves with Idols under every green tree,* &c. See what a ſignificant word the Spirit of God uſeth. They *inflamed themſelves with Idols,* which were worthy of nothing but a flame, or to be caſt into the fire and burnt to aſhes. Their hearts took fire like dry trees, yea like tinder, under the green trees where they adored their Idols. And poſſibly, they are ſaid to inflame themſelves with their Idols, becauſe they are uſually given up to bodily pollutions, who thus pollute their ſouls. Idolatry is often puniſhed by Adultery. And becauſe ſome may wonder why men ſhould be ſo forward to and inflamed with Idol-worſhip; I will give you two reaſons why.

Firſt, Becauſe 'tis a worſhip of our own invention; men are moſt forward to that ſervice of God which is of man's finding out, and ſetting up. 'Tis ſaid (1 *Kings* 12. 33.) that *Jeroboam's* idolatrous feaſt to the Calves was ſet up *even in the moneth which he had deviſed in his own heart.* That worſhip was of his own inſtitution, and ſo was the time of it. And how zealous are many in obſerving days which men have appointed, and wherein they exerciſe a devotion of their own deviſing! Hence that Apoſtolical Caution or Admonition (*Col.* 2. 18.) *Let no man beguile you of your reward, in a voluntary humility and worſhipping of Angels, intruding into thoſe things which he hath not ſeen. Which things* (ſaith he, *v.* 23.) *have indeed a ſhew of wiſdom in will-worſhip and humility, and neglecting of the body, not in any honour to the ſatiſfying of the fleſh.* All duties of worſhip and humility ought to be voluntary, as voluntary is oppoſed to conſtrained, but they muſt not be voluntary as voluntary is oppoſed to inſtituted or appointed. God doth no more approve of that worſhip which we give him according to our will, than he doth our neglect of that which is according to his own will, or which himſelf hath willed. But man likes it better to worſhip a God of his own making, than the God that made him. And he likes any way of worſhipping God which is of his own framing, more than that which is of God's appointing. In this, above all things, the heart of man is deceitful and deſperately wicked, ſeeing while it ſeems very zealous to honour God, it hath no zeal to do it in any way but that which reflects higheſt diſhonour upon him.

Secondly, Men are naturally taken with Idolatry and falſe worſhip, becauſe 'tis ſo external and courts, yea feaſts their ſenſes with glittering and ſpecious forms. Falſe worſhip is chiefly ſpent in that which *profiteth not* (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks 1 *Tim.* 4. 8.) though it pleaſeth much, a meer *bodily exerciſe.* Whereas the ſtreſs of true worſhip lies upon the inner man. (*Joh.* 4. 24.) *God is a Spirit and they that worſhip him muſt worſhip him in ſpirit and in truth.* A natural man loves not that which is ſpiritual; at moſt he likes only the form and outſide of it. He loves to worſhip what may be ſeen, rather than what is to be believed. As he walketh by ſight not by faith, ſo he alſo worſhippeth. His converſation and his devotion are both of the ſame ſtrein and temper.

Secondly, Obſerve, *Idolatry is the giving of divine honour to the Creature.*

Thus the Apoſtle deſcribes the Idolatrous Gentiles (*Rom.* 1. 23.) *Who changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like unto corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beaſts and creeping things.* Man was at firſt created in the image of God after his likeneſs (*Gen.* 1. 26.) But woe unto thoſe who change the glory (that is, the inviſibility, ſimplicity, eternity, and incomprehenſibility) of God into an image or the likeneſs of man; yet Idolaters do worſe and go lower than this, They change the glory of God into the likeneſs of a beaſt; The *Iſraelites* did ſo (*Pſal.* 106. 20.) *They changed their Glory* (that is, God who indeed was and ſhould have been by them accounted their glory) *into the likeneſs of an Oxe that eateth Graſs.* The Idolater changes the glory of the living the ever-living God into the likeneſs of liveleſs things, or into things which are themſelves as liveleſs, as an Image or likeneſs is, *The Sun and Moon.*

Thirdly, Obſerve, *Idolatry is a very great ſin.*

The firſt Commandment forbids it (*Exod.* 20. 2, 3.) *Thou ſhalt have none other gods but me*; That is, Thou ſhalt not ſet up a falſe God to worſhip; nor ſhalt thou ſet up a falſe worſhip of the true God, that's forbidden in the ſecond Commandment; *Thou ſhalt not make to thy ſelf any graven image.* As we are to worſhip none but God, ſo God will not indure to be worſhipped in any other way or by any other means than himſelf is pleaſed to appoint. Idolaters poſſibly think themſelves full of zeal for God while they deviſe a worſhip for God, yet indeed they are haters of God, and ſo they are called in the ſame law, (*v.* 5.) *For I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, viſiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me.* We can ſhew no love to God but in keeping his Commandments; therefore they that ſet up falſe gods to worſhip, or worſhip the true God in a falſe manner, are haters of God, ſeeing while they pretend to worſhip God, they diſhonour him by breaking his Commandments. (*Iſa.* 42. 8.) *My glory will I not give to another, neither my praiſe to graven images.* It is the Glory of God that he is ſo free in giving, yet he will not give away his glory, neither to any thing of our making by art, ſuch are graven Images, nor to any thing of his own making in nature, ſuch are the Sun and Moon. The glory of God is ſuch a flower of his Crown, as God will not part with in the leaſt to any Creature. Idolatry is the higheſt ſacriledg, It ſteals that from God which all men do or ought to dedicate unto him, the Glory of his Being.

Fourthly, Obſerve, *The Sun and Moon have been Idoliz'd or Idolatrouſly adored and worſhipped as gods by many Nations.*

That the old Gentiles worſhipped thoſe two great luminaries the Sun and Moon, is as clear from Antiquity as the ſhining of the Sun at noon, or of the Moon at full. *Macrobius* teſtifieth that the Sun was accounted and adored as a God under the name of *Adonis* by the *Aſſyrians* and *Phenicians.* The ſame Author tells us, that the *Egyptians* worſhipped the Sun under the name of *Oſiris*, whom they repreſented in the form of an *Eye,* expreſſed upon a regal Scepter, thereby ſignifying the ruling and all-ſeeing power of the Sun, which is called by Antiquity, *The eye of the world.* Another of the Ancients ſaith, that the *Egyptians* beholding and admiring the beautiful furniture and array of the world, concluded that there were two Gods, and thoſe Eternal, *The Sun and the Moon*, The former of the two they called *Oſiris*, the latter *Iſis.* The ſame Author reports again, That the *Perſians* worſhipped the Sun, and the

Macrob. lib. 1. *Satur. c.* 21.

Diodor. l. 1. *cap.* 2.

*Plin.lib.*36. *cap.* 8.

Regio Heliopolitana ubi ſolis Civitas eſt in aggere ingenti poſita quæ ſolis templum habet. Strab. lib. 17.

the *Grecians* the Moon. *Pliny* alſo informs us, that the *Egyptian* Kings conſecrated certain *Obelisks*, figured with the rayes of the Sun, and inſcribed with Letters or Mottoes of their own deviſing in Honour of the Sun. And that the *Egyptians* worſhipped the Sun, we have a greater witneſs than any of theſe, even the holy Scriptures or Word of God. (*Iſa.* 19. 18.) *In that day ſhall five Cities in the land of Egypt ſpeak the language of Canaan, and ſwear to the Lord of hoſts* (that is, they ſhall be converted to the knowledg and pure worſhip of the true God) *and one ſhall be called the City of deſtruction*; So we tranſlate the text, and put in the Margin; Or *of Heres* or *of the Sun,* As if he had ſaid, even that Idolatrous City which was dedicated to the Sun, or where the Sun was eſpecially worſhipped, ſhall be converted. Again, the Prophet *Jeremie* (Chap. 43.) fore-telling the deſtruction of *Egypt* by *Nebuchadnezzar* and his *Babylonians*, concludes thus (*v.* 13.) *He ſhall break alſo the images of Bethſhemeſh, that is in the land of Egypt; and the houſes of the gods of the Egyptians ſhall he burn with fire. Bethſhemeſh* (as our Margin hath it) ſignifieth, *The Houſe of the Sun*; which was alſo called by the Grecians *Heliopolis*, the City of the Sun. And as the Sun was worſhipped in thoſe remoter Nations, ſo alſo nearer home by our Anceſtors before the light of the Goſpel ſhined to them. The learned *Verſtegan* in his deſcription of the manners and cuſtoms of the old pagan *Saxons*, ſaith, *Unto the day dedicated to the eſpecial Adoration of the Idol of the Sun, They gave the name of Sunday, as much as to ſay, The Suns day, or the day of the Sun.* The next to this according to the courſe of the days of the week, was the Idol of the Moon, from whence our ſecond day of the week yet retains the name of *Monday*, or *Moons-day*. And (by the way) I conceive it a needful piece of reformation in theſe times to expreſs the days of the week by ſome other names, than by thoſe (which are in common uſe among us) borrowed from the practices of groſſeſt Idolaters.

And as the old Heathen Gentiles were deeply infected with this kind of Idolatry; ſo the Jews (who were the peculiar people of God) did not forbear to imitate them in it (*Judg.* 2. 13.) *They forſook the Lord, and ſerved Baal and Aſhtaroth. Baal* ſignifieth *Lord*, or *Maſter*, and it was a common name applyed to Idol Gods, but eminently to the Sun; This was the God of the *Zidonians* (1 Kings 16. 31.) As alſo was *Aſhtaroth* (1 Kings 11.5, 33.) This *Aſhtaroth* was the ſame which the Greeks worſhipped under the Title of *Diana*, or the Moon; And how famous an Idol that was, read (*Acts* 19. 27.) which is ſuppoſed to be meant by *The Queen of heaven* (*Jer.* 7. 18. *Jer.* 44. 17, 25.) The horrible Apoſtacy and defection of the Jews to this abominable worſhip is often and often reproved by the Prophets: And their extream zeal about it is expreſſed by ſuch a Rhetorical accumulation of words, as we ſcarce find the like all the Bible over (*Jer.* 8.) where the Lord threatneth all degrees of men in the Jewiſh Nation from the King to the common people, that their enemies ſhould pull their bones out of their Graves; And ſaith he (*v.* 2.) *They ſhall ſpread them before the Sun, and the Moon, and all the hoſt of heaven, whom they have loved, and whom they have ſerved, and after whom they have walked, and whom they have ſought, and whom they have worſhipped.* And whereas the Church ſaith (*Cant.* 1. 6.) *Look not upon me becauſe I am black, becauſe the Sun hath looked upon me* (which is generally expounded of the blackneſs of the Church by reaſon of perſecution) The Chaldee Paraphraſe gives this ſence of it; *The Congregation of Iſrael ſaid before the Heathen, do not deſpiſe me, becauſe I am blacker than you, having according to your cuſtoms, worſhipped the Sun and Moon. Falſe Prophets have been the cauſe that the hot diſpleaſure of God hath fallen upon me; they taught me to ſerve your Idols, and walk in your ways; I beholding the Sun have adored it, and am become black.* I find one of the Jewiſh Rabbins joyning with this interpretation, and thus gloſſing the Churches ſad complaint; *I am black, while I worſhip creatures (forgetting the Creator) and this viſible Sun for the Sun of righteouſneſs.*

Denigrata ſum dum creaturas adoro, (omiſſo creatore) & ſolem hunc aſpectabilem adoro pro ſole Juſtitiæ. Rab. Sol.

Thus we ſee how the very Jews were mad upon the worſhip of the Sun and Moon, though they were not only ſhewed the vanity of ſuch worſhip, but warned not to do it, and threatned in caſe they ſhould do it. (*Deut.* 4. 15, 19.) *Take ye therefore good heed unto your ſelves (for ye ſaw no manner of ſimilitude on the day that the Lord ſpake unto you in Horeb out of the midſt of the fire) leſt ye corrupt your ſelves, and make you a graven Image, the ſimilitude of any figure, the likeneſs of male or female,* &c. And having caution'd them againſt making the figure of any living thing, whether on the earth, or in the air and waters, he proceeds to give them caution againſt the Adoration of the hoſt of heaven. (*v.* 19.) *And leſt thou lift up thine eyes to heaven, and when thou ſeeſt the Sun, and the Moon, and the Stars, even all the hoſt of heaven, ſhouldſt be driven to worſhip them, and ſerve them, which the Lord thy God hath divided (or imparted) to all Nations under heaven.* As if he had ſaid, Will you ſerve the Sun and Moon in ſtead of God, when as God hath made them to ſerve you and all Nations? What is the Sun? your ſervant. What is the Moon? your ſervant. Wherefore do the Sun and Moon ſhine but to give you light, and to influence the earth, that it may be fruitful, and bring forth what is neceſſary both for your uſe and delight?

Nor doth it ſeem to be without the ſpecial direction of the moſt wiſe God, That the Sun which many have doted upon and worſhipped as a God, ſhould be expreſſed in the Hebrew language by the word *Shemeſh*, a ſervant, whoſe root is *Shamaſh*, which ſignifieth to ſerve; as if the Lord would imply in the very name of the Sun, how improper it is for any in the world to worſhip that as a god, which God hath made a ſervant to all men in the world, holding as it were the Candle to them in all the labours of the day. The Creatures how high or noble ſoever were made for man's ſervice, and ſhall man at once both degrade himſelf and diſhonour God by ſerving and worſhipping the creatures in the place of God, or as if they were Gods? O Take heed, that ye do not this great evil; which is indeed two great evils (*Jer.* 2. 13.) *A forſaking of the fountain of living waters, and a digging to your ſelves Ciſterns, broken Ciſterns which can hold no water.* Hence that ſevere threatning (*Deut.* 17. 3, 4.) *If there be found among you man or woman,* &c. *that hath gone and ſerved other gods and worſhipped them, either the Sun or Moon, or any of the hoſt of heaven which I have not commanded,* &c. *Then* (v. 5.) *Thou ſhalt bring forth that man or that woman (which hath committed that wicked thing) unto thy gates, and ſhalt ſtone them with ſtones till they die.* And when the Magiſtrate did not puniſh this ſin, God himſelf (in due time) did. (2 *Kings* 17. 16, 17, 18. 2 *Kings* 21. 3. *Jer.* 7. 18, 19, 20. *Ezek.* 8. 16, 17, 18.)

If any queſtion what ſhould move either Jew or Gentile to worſhip the Sun, Moon and Stars; I anſwer, Firſt, the ſtupendious greatneſs, or vaſtneſs rather, of thoſe heavenly bodies; Secondly, the exact order in which they move and have moved (in their natural courſe) from the beginning until now; Thirdly, the unwearied conſtancy of their motion; Fourthly, the incredible ſwiftneſs of their motion; Fifthly, their beauty and brightneſs; Whence *David* ſpeaking of the heavens, ſaith (*Pſal.* 19. 5.) *In them hath he ſet a Tabernacle for the Sun, which is as a bridegroom coming out of his Chamber, and rejoyceth as a ſtrong man to run a race.* The Sun comes forth like a Bridegroom, as if he would make all the world in love with him, and therefore no great wonder if many are. Sixthly, their power, operations, and influences, whence; Seventhly, their beneficialneſs and uſefulneſs to the world, eſpecially to mankind (there's no living without them) may with all the former conſiderations eaſily entice worldly men to worſhip them. Yea ſome were perſwaded that there was a kind of divinity in them; at leaſt that God would never have endowed them with ſuch admirable beauty, vertue, and efficacy, but that he intended ſome honour and reſpect ſhould be done to them by the ſons of men. Yea ſome of the Stoical Philoſophers were of opinion, that *thoſe heavenly bodies were endued with life, and that their motion was rational and voluntary.* He that will may read *Lactantius* both reporting and refuting the vanity of theſe imaginations concerning the Sun, Moon, and Stars, and of that Divine worſhip which thereupon was beſtowed upon them.

Veterum pleriq; ſolis & lunæ pulchritudine, præſtantia & magna utilitate ac commoditatibus innumeris adducti quas hæc ſidera hominibus afferunt ea putarunt deos eſſe & pro diis adorarunt. Merc.

Lactantius libr. 2. *de Origine erroris, cap.* 5.

And ſurely this is one and not the leaſt part of that vanity to which the creature is made ſubject by reaſon of ſin (*Rom.* 8. 20.) That vanity conſiſts chiefly (I conceive) in two things; Firſt, when the creature is afflicted by the rigour and cruelty of men, or abuſed to ſerve their luſts, their pride, their wantonneſs and luxury; This is the vanity to which the creature is made ſubject in defect, or by ſetting it lower than it ought to be. Secondly, the creature is made ſubject to vanity in exceſs, or by ſetting it too high, and by aſcribing that honour to it, which is alone due to God the Creator. Thus the Papiſts ſubject the *Bleſſed Virgin Mary* to vanity, as alſo other Saints, and the Angels, when they pray to them and uſe them as Mediators of interceſſion unto God. And when man gives any creature the Sun or Moon divine Adoration, or adoreth God by them, he abuſeth them to vanity.

Here it may be queſtioned, that for as much as *Job* in this place purgeth himſelf from the ſuſpition and imputation of all falſe worſhip, why doth he inſtance onely in his not-worſhipping the Sun and Moon? There having been almoſt innumerable Idols or falſe gods worſhipped in the world, why doth he not diſclaim the worſhip of all thoſe?

I anſwer, Becauſe the Sun and Moon with the hoſt of heaven, have the greateſt power to attract the heart into an admiration and over-eſtimation of them. So that when *Job* ſaith he did not worſhip the Sun and Moon, it is a diſclaimer of all Idolatrous worſhip. He that is not overcome by that which hath the greateſt power to draw him from the living and true God to falſe worſhip, declares himſelf untoucht of all falſe or Idolatrous worſhip. There's no danger that he will worſhip any inferior creature, who refrains the worſhip of thoſe nobler creatures the Sun and Moon.

Further, the worſhip of images, which are the work of mens hands, was of much a latter date than the worſhip of the Sun. How Image-worſhip crept into the world, we find well reported in that Apocryphal book of *Wiſdom* (Chap. 14. v. 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19. 20.) *When a father mourned grievouſly for his Son that was taken away ſuddenly, he made an image for him that was once dead, whom now he worſhipped as a god, and ordained to his ſervants ceremonies and ſacrifices*, &c. One of the Ancients gives an example, which may make a good Commentary upon that text of *Wiſdom*. There was (ſaith he) one *Syrophanes* an *Egyptian* by birth, and in ſubſtance very rich, who begat a Son, whom he paſſionately loved and doated on, intending to make him heir of his vaſt eſtate. But death quickly ſnatcht him away and leſt his Father overwhelm'd with ſorrow, becauſe having ſo great an inheritance, he had none to inherit it; and the only eaſe he could give his troubled mind, was to enjoy him in a ſhadow, whom he had loſt as to the ſubſtance; and therefore he ſets up the ſtatue or image of his Son in his houſe, and ſo ſeeking a remedy of his grief, he found a ſeminary yea a reſurrection of it; his ſorrow being renewed every day by that ſight. Now (ſaith my Author) all the family obſerving how their Lord was affected with this ſtatue of his Son, began to make garlands for it, and put ornaments upon it, to pleaſe and flatter the humour of their Maſter, yea ſometimes a ſervant having committed a fault would run to this image as to a Sanctuary to avoid the fury of his Maſter, and there to ask his pardon. Thus the worſhip of images crept into the world long after the worſhip of the Sun, and therefore *Job* having quit himſelf from that, might well think he had ſufficiently acquitted himſelf from all the reſt.

Triſtitiæ remedium quærens ſeminarium potius doloris invenit neſciensquod ſola ſit medicina miſeriarum oblivio. Fecerat enim ille unde luctus reſurrectionem aſſidueacquireret, non in quo luctus ſolatium inveniret. Fulg. lib. 1. Mythol.

Fifthly, Whereas *Job* ſaith, *If I beheld the Sun*, &c.

Obſerve, *We may quickly over-act our ſences upon the Creature.*

'Tis dangerous to look much, and long upon that which may inſnare us; *Solomon* gives warning (*Prov.* 23. 31.) *Look not upon the wine when it is red, when it gives its colour in the cup.* As if he had ſaid, *Wink and drink.* Not that it is unlawful to look upon the wine in the Cup, but there is a ſnare, a danger in it; we may be catcht with the beauty of it; and if we are ſo, it will bite like a Serpent. Looking curiouſly invites to drinking inordinately. Therefore as *Solomon* ſaith, Look not on the wine; ſo *Job* durſt not look upon the Sun; he beheld not the Sun when it ſhined, nor the Moon walking in brightneſs. As we muſt not at all look upon the creature as the end of our actions, or as aiming meerly at their attainment and enjoyment in what we do; So we ſhould not make them over-much our object, nor feed our ſences too liberally upon them.

Hence Sixthly, Note, *The Eye is both a provocation and an inlet to Idolatry as well as to Adultery.*

In the firſt verſe of this Chapter *Job* intimates that the Eye is an inlet to Adultery, and here that it is an inlet to Idolatry: That Caution given by *Moſes* expreſſeth it fully (*Deut.* 4. 15, 16, 19.) *Take ye therefore good heed unto your ſelves (for ye ſaw no manner of ſimilitude on the day that the Lord ſpake unto you in Horeb out of the midſt of the fire) leſt ye corrupt your ſelves, and make you a graven image*, &c. *And leſt thou lift up thine eyes to heaven; and when thou ſeeſt the Sun and the Moon and the Stars, even all the hoſt of heaven, ſhouldeſt be driven to worſhip them, and ſerve them*, &c. While the Lord forbids them the worſhip of graven images the work of man's hand, he alſo forbids them to worſhip the Sun, Moon, and Stars, the work of his hands, and for prevention of all ſuch abominable worſhip, he admoniſheth them not to lift up their eyes to heaven (in the ſence formerly opened) leſt when they behold the Sun, Moon, and the Stars, they ſhould be driven to worſhip them, that is, leſt their minds ſhould be inſnared by the ſight of their eyes, and driven by ſome ſecret impulſe upon their hearts to commit that groſs Idolatry; for as there is a ſecret impulſe upon the ſoul of a godly man to the doing of good; as *Paul* ſaith (2 *Cor.* 5. 14.) *The love of Chriſt conſtraineth us*; that is, we are preſt in Spirit to lay out our ſelves to the utmoſt for Chriſt, who laid down his life for us; So there is a ſecret impulſe upon the ſoul of a natural man to evil, and that works moſt ſtrongly when 'tis ſet a work from without, eſpecially by the ſight of the eye. Behold not the Sun and Moon, &c. too intently, ſaith *Moſes*, leſt thou be driven to worſhip them; thou haſt not the Command of thy ſelf, therefore do not unneceſſarily or willingly venture upon the occaſions of that ſin, leſt thou be carried to it (upon the matter) whether thou wilt or no. Beware of heart-inticing objects.

Seventhly, If we conſider how induſtriouſly *Job* acquits himſelf from this practice, the worſhipping of the Sun and Moon, as a great wickedneſs, though very commonly and very anciently practiſed;

We may note from it, *Antiquity and Univerſality will not bear us out in Errour, or in Idolatrous worſhip.*

It is no excuſe to us, when we do evil, to ſay many do it, or our fore-fathers did it. The worſhip of the Sun and Moon had ſpread it ſelf almoſt over the face of the whole earth, and was become an Epidemical infection, yet *Job* durſt not bear himſelf upon that; A godly man dares not follow a multitude to do evil; he will not take up ſuperſtitious cuſtoms upon truſt, either becauſe they have been long uſed, or are uſed univerſally. Example is no plea againſt a rule, nor antiquity againſt truth. *If I beheld the Sun when it ſhined*, &c.

Verſ. 27. **And my heart hath been ſecretly enticed, or my mouth hath kiſſed my hand.**

Job in the former verſe diſclaimed Idolatrous worſhip, as to the object of it; In this he denies it as to the manner of it; and that either inward or outward.

If my heart hath been ſecretly enticed; there he denies Internal adoration; *or if my mouth hath kiſſed my hand*; there he denies External adoration, both heart and hand were free.

If my heart hath been ſecretly enticed.] The heart is here put for the whole inner man; There is a threefold reading of theſe words; Some thus; *If my heart hath rejoyced in ſecret.* Truly (ſaith *Solomon*, Eccl. 11. 7.) *the light is ſweet, and a pleaſant thing it is for the eyes to behold the Sun*; yet we may quickly take too much pleaſure in ſeeing it. And according to this tranſlation *Job* was very moderate in taking that pleaſure; *If my heart* (ſaith he) *hath rejoyced in ſecret.* Joy is Internal worſhip, to rejoyce in God is to worſhip him in ſpirit, and 'tis the moſt ſpiritual part of true worſhip. To rejoyce in the Creature, is to worſhip it, and becauſe it is the moſt ſpiritual, therefore 'tis the worſt part of falſe worſhip. *Job* diſclaimed joy in reference to wealth at the 25 verſe;

Si lætatum eſt in abſcondito cor meum. Vulg.

If I rejoyced becauſe my wealth was great. And here, according to this reading he diſclaims it in reference to Idols. And hence I conceive.

Symmachus.

Secondly, One of the Greek tranſlations hath it, *If my heart hath been enlarged, or opened* (that is, with joy, that's heart-enlargement) *when I ſaw the Sun ſhine, and the Moon walking in brightneſs.* The Hebrew word is rendered *to Enlarge.* (Gen. 9. 27.) *God ſhall Enlarge Japheth, and he ſhall dwell in the Tents of Shem*; that is, God ſhall convert the Gentiles to the true worſhip of his Name, they ſhall be brought into the Tents of *Shem*, that is, into the true Church, and for that end he will enlarge their hearts. They ſhall not have a narrow heart, as now they have, while they worſhip poor Creatures, ſtocks and ſtones, Sun and Moon, but they ſhall have a heart widened and truly greatned to worſhip the true the great God. Thus *Job* might ſay, *If my heart hath been Enlarged at the ſight of the Sun*, &c. When a pleaſing object is preſented to the eye, the heart opens to receive it, as when an unpleaſing object is preſented, the heart locks or ſhuts it ſelf againſt it. Both theſe are good readings, *If my heart hath rejoyced, or if my heart hath opened and been enlarged when I beheld the Sun.*

ויפת *ſi cor meum fuit ſpecie illectum, credulitate ſeductum, ſtultitia infatuatam. Ab eadem radice dicitur puer aut parvulus, quaſi ſuaſibilis.*

But the moſt common and moſt clear reading is, *If my heart hath been ſecretly Enticed, or tempted with the fair beauty of the Sun and Moon*; if I have been ſeduced with a vain or eaſie Credulity, to put the Sun or Moon in the place of God, and to give them reverence, this were a groſs iniquity. As children are enticed with a nut, or an apple, with a bable or a toy, ſo are ſuperſtitious perſons. What are Idols but toys and bables, fitter by far for children to play with, then for men to worſhip? nor are any children (upon a true account) ſo childiſh and toyiſh as the moſt aged and ſerious Idolaters; And indeed the more ſerious any are at it, the more childiſh they are at it. *Job* proteſts againſt all ſuch levity, *If my heart hath been Enticed*, if I have been taken with the goodly appearances, with the ſhining and glittering outſide of theſe Excellent Creatures, Sun and Moon, then, &c. *If my heart hath been Enticed*

In ſecret.] The heart of man, even of every man is a ſecret, 'tis a peculiar to God alone, and therefore it might ſeem enough to have ſaid, *If my heart hath been Enticed*, but *Job* adds, *If my heart hath been Enticed in ſecret*, that is, if my heart hath been enticed to worſhip the Sun or Moon ſecretly. God is to be worſhipped not only publiquely but ſecretly. So the words ſtand in oppoſition to open or profeſt Idolatry. There is a two-fold ſecrecy of worſhip, whether true or falſe.

Firſt, When it is acted wholly in the heart; as there is adultery in the heart, and theſt in the heart, ſo there is Idolatry in the heart, which never appears outwardly at all; that's one way of ſecret worſhip, when we worſhip in the heart only.

Secondly, Worſhip performed by an outward voyce or geſture, may yet be in ſecret too, that is, out of the ſight and view of others, in a private place or Cloſet; as Chriſt ſaith (*Matth.* 6. 6.) *When thou prayeſt enter into thy Cloſet, and when thou haſt ſhut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in ſecret*, &c. There is a ſecretneſs of place as well as of ſpirit in worſhip, God ſeeth ſecret heart-worſhip (which we may give him every where) & he ſeeth ſecret place-worſhip which the eye of man ſeeth not. The Lord calls *Ezekiel* (Chap. 8. 7, 8.) to behold the Idolatry of that people committed in this kind of ſecrecy, they were not only Idolaters in the ſecret of their hearts (or hearty Idolaters) but in ſecret places. *And he brought me to the door of the Court, and when I looked behold a door in the wall; Then ſaid he unto me, Son of man, dig now in the wall, and when I had digged, behold a door* (they were immur'd, they were ſhut up) *and he ſaid unto me, go in, and behold the wicked abominations that they do here; So I went in and ſaw*, &c. *Then ſaid he unto me* (Ver. 12.) *Son of man, haſt thou ſeen what the Ancients of the houſe of Iſrael do in the dark? Every man in the Chambers of his Imagery, for they ſay, the Lord ſeeth us not.* When *Job* ſaith, *If my heart hath been ſecretly enticed*; we may take it both ways. If I have been enticed to Idolatrous ſecret heart-worſhip, or ſecret place-worſhip, where there was none to ſee me, &c.

Hence Obſerve; Firſt, *Idolatry begins at the heart.*

As Chriſt ſaith (*Matth.* 15. 19.) *Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murthers, adulteries, blaſphemies* (which are the higheſt diſhonours put upon the true God) ſo I may ſay Idolatries (which are honours put upon falſe Gods) proceed out of the heart alſo. Thus the Law ſpake to the Jews (*Deut.* 11. 16.) *Take heed to your ſelves, that your heart be not deceived, and ye turn aſide, and ſerve other gods, and worſhip them.* Though the occaſions of ſin may be from without, or before us, yet the ſource and original of it is in the heart. When the Prophet *Iſaiah* had at large deſcribed the folly and madneſs of Idolaters in the 44. Chapter, from the 9. Verſe incluſively to the 20. Verſe, he concludes, *He feedeth of aſhes, a deceived heart hath turned him aſide, that he cannot deliver his Soul, nor ſay, is there not a lie in my right hand?* Idols give a great provocation to the eye, as was ſhewed before, but they can do us no hurt till the heart be catcht and infected by them.

Secondly, Obſerve, *Man is not forced, but cozened, enticed, and flattered into ſinful, eſpecially into Idolatrous wayes.*

The Apoſtle *James* ſaith (*Chap.* 1. 14.) *Let no man ſay when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own luſt, and enticed.* 'Tis luſt in the heart which draws away both eye and knee and hand to joyn with the temptation. A godly man is not forced but perſwaded and enticed to that which is good (ſo we expreſs it in the Margin of *Gen.* 9. 27.) *God ſhall perſwade Japheth to dwell in the Tents of Shem*; he ſhall not thruſt him in by force, nor compel him by Club-law (as we ſay) but his heart being toucht, as it were, with that bleſſed Loadſtone of divine love, ſhall freely receive the faith of the Goſpel, and follow Chriſt. Thus a wicked man is not driven (though the Devil would be a Driver and they muſt needs run whom the Devil drives) but drawn to ſin by the prevailing enticements of that luſt which dwelleth in his heart, and hath got the hand of him.

Thirdly, In that he ſaith, *If my heart hath been ſecretly enticed*;

Obſerve, *The moſt ſecret acts of ſin are both obvious to and odious in the ſight of God.*

He ſeeth in ſecret, and cannot but hate (ſuch is his Holineſs) the ſin which he ſeeth; though evil be done out of the Eye of all the world, yet it is naked and manifeſt in his ſight, with whom we have to do. The cloſeſt heart-ſin is as clear to God as that which is written in the forehead, and 'tis as hateful always, ſometimes more; For though open ſins as to the danger of Infecting others are worſe then ſecret ſins, yet if we conſider the ſpirit of the ſinner, ſecret ſins are the worſt. How greatly do they provoke God who while they ſin againſt him, would alſo impoſe upon him; ſo thoſe Idolaters in ſecret hoped they ſhould (*Ezek.* 8. 12.) when they ſaid, *God ſhall not ſee it, he hath forſaken the earth*: If we can but keep our ſelves from the Eye of man (ſaid they) we need not fear the Eye of God, we can eaſily put a blind upon him. As he that hides his ſin by not confeſſing it, ſo he that thinks it hidden while he is committing it, ſhall not proſper. A good deed the more ſecret it is, the better it is in the ſight of God; And an evil deed the more ſecret it is, the worſe it is in the ſight of God.

Fourthly, In that *Job* adds in the next verſe (ſuppoſing his ſin were ſecret) *it were an Iniquity to be puniſhed*;

Note, *Secret ſins ſhall not go unpuniſhed.*

A human Judg can puniſh no ſin but what is proved by witneſs. Heart-iniquities fall not under any human ſentence. But heart-ſins the moſt hidden ſins ſhall not eſcape a divine ſentence. As the moſt ſecret good works done by man to man, and the moſt ſecret holy worſhip of God, ſhall receive a reward from God (*Matth.* 6. 46.) *When thou doſt alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doth; that thine alms may be in ſecret: And thy Father which ſeeth in ſecret, himſelf ſhall reward thee openly. And when thou prayeſt enter into thy Cloſet and ſhut thy door*, &c.

And thy Father that ſeeth in ſecret, he ſhall reward thee openly. Now, I ſay, as good, ſo evil workers in ſecret ſhall be rewarded (each in their kind) openly by God who ſeeth in ſecret.

Fifthly, Obſerve, *The heart is ſpecially to be looked to in worſhip.*

As we are not accepted by God in true worſhip, though we draw neer to him with our lips, if our hearts are far from him; *Iſa.* 29. 13. (many give outward worſhip to God, but there's no heart in it) ſo they are abominable in the ſight of God who draw neer to Idols with their hearts in falſe worſhip, though their lips and knees be far from them. I grant, God will not bear it if we give ſo much as corporal reverence to Idols (as *Naaman* the *Aſſyrian* ſeemed to deſire a diſpenſation to do in the houſe of *Rimmon*, 2 Kings 5. 18.) though we profeſs to to reſerve our hearts to him; But he will leſs bear it, if we give our hearts to Idols, though we refrain all corporal reverence. Outward acts alone or without the heart in falſe worſhip are abominable in the ſight of God, yet inward acts though alone or without the bodily, are much more abominable. When we worſhip God in ſecret places, and in the ſecret of our heart we give him the trueſt acknowledgment of his Godhead. God is moſt honoured by Congregational or publick worſhip, but he is moſt pleaſed with private worſhip, with private family-worſhip, and private Cloſet-worſhip, yet with none of theſe without heart-worſhip which is the moſt private worſhip of all. When we at once approve and pour out our hearts in ſecret, this is pure worſhip indeed. And though we act no Idolatrous worſhip openly, yet if our heart be in it, his Soul abhors us. Outward falſe worſhip diſhonours God moſt, but inward falſe worſhip diſpleaſeth him moſt. *Job* was careful to worſhip God with his heart both ſecretly and openly; and he was as careful not to give any ſecret, or heart-worſhip to Idols, as he was to avoid their open worſhip; *If my heart hath been ſecretly Enticed*

And my mouth hath kiſſed my hand.

In theſe words *Job* denies the giving of any outward worſhip to the Sun and Moon; As if he had ſaid, *I have been ſo far from giving them my heart, that I have not ſo much as given them my hand,* or as ſome explain it, with reference to the former part of the verſe, I never had any inward heart-motion, or it was never ſo much as in my thoughts to perform any outward act of adoration to the Sun and Moon. More particularly;

There is a three-fold Interpretation of this Clauſe; Mr. *Broughton* renders the whole verſe in connexion with the former; *If I admired the Sun when it ſhined; and the Moon walking precious; That my heart was cloſely deceived; no, my hand kiſſed my mouth;* He gives his ſence in this ſhort gloſs upon it, *I ſtopped all Idolatrous ſpeech of Star-worſhip; for which Babel bred confuſion.* As if he had ſaid, I have not ſo much as entertained diſpute or changed a word about falſe worſhip. One of the Rabbins taketh the Text in the ſame ſence, as if *Job* had cloſed up his mouth with his hand againſt all ſuch diſcourſes.

Ben Peritſel.

Secondly, Others following our tranſlation give the ſence thus; *If my hand hath kiſſed my mouth,* that is, if I have been wrapped up or amus'd in a ſilent wonder when I beheld the Sun and Moon. The putting of the hand to the mouth hath been uſed as an Emblem of ſilence; and ſome ſilence is a kind of reverence or worſhip. According to this interpretation, *Job* ſeems to ſay, I have not been ſtruck ſilent with any admiration of the ſhining Sun or of the Moon walking in brightneſs.

Paræmiacum illud eſt, Deum coli ſilentio. Sanct.

Thirdly, rather, as our reading imports, the words are a denial of any outward act of Idolatrous worſhip; and ſo the phraſe is uſed both in Scripture, and among ancient Authors. There is a two-fold kiſſing; Firſt, in way of ſalutation among friends and familiars; Secondly, in a way of homage and ſubmiſſion, or at leaſt in a way of honour and reſpect towards ſuperiors. (*Gen.* 41. 40.) *Pharaoh* ſaith to *Joſeph, Thou ſhalt be over my houſe, and according to thy word ſhall all my people be ruled,* or (as we put in the Margin) *be armed or kiſs;* that is, they ſhall ſubmit to thy order and commands. Such was the kiſs which *Samuel* gave *Saul* when he had anointed him King (1 *Sam.* 10. 1.) *Then Samuel took a vial of Oyl, and poured it upon his head, and kiſſed him, and ſaid, is it not becauſe the Lord hath anointed thee to be Captain over his Inheritance?* As if he had ſaid, I, by the Lords appointment, have anointed thee King, and in token of my ſubjection to thee as my Soveraign Lord, I have kiſſed thee. So (*Pro.* 24. 26.) *Every man ſhall kiſs his lips that giveth a right anſwer;* that is, every man ſhall love, honour, and reſpect him. And to ſhew that kiſſing implieth ſubjection to Kings and Princes, the Kings and Princes of the earth are commanded to *kiſs the Son* (Pſal. 2. 7.) with what kiſs? not only with a kiſs of love and affection, but with a kiſs of homage and ſubjection; the Kings of the Earth to whom all do homage, even they muſt do homage to Chriſt the King of Kings. This kiſſing of the Son is oppoſed to the breaking of his bands, and caſting away his Cords from them in the beginning of the Pſalm: and as this kiſſing doth note homage, reverence, and reſpect in general; ſo eſpecially it notes the reverence or worſhip given to Idols (1 *Kings* 19. 18.) when the Prophet *Elijah* complained that there were no pure worſhippers left, the Lord anſwered; *Yet I have left me ſeven thouſand in Iſrael, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kiſſed him. Baal* as I ſhewed upon the former verſe was the Sun. So (*Hoſ.* 13. 2.) *And now they ſin more and more, and have made them molten Images of their ſilver, and Idols according to their own underſtanding, all of it the work of the Craftſmen: they ſay of them let the men that ſacrifice kiſs the Calves* (that is, worſhip them) *in Dan and in Bethel.*

Pleriq; veſtrum affectione aliquando cœleſtia adorandi ad ſolis ortum labia vibratis. Tertul. Apol. cap. 16.

Beſides theſe Scripture evidences; ſeveral of the Ancient both Fathers and Hiſtorians make mention of this worſhip-geſture. That is moſt remarkable which *Minutius Fœlix* reports of *Cæcilius*, who looking upon the Image of *Serapis* (ſignifying the Sun) according to the uſe of the ſuperſtitious vulgar, he put his hand to his lips and kiſſed it. And *Tertullian* directing his ſpeech to the Heathen, tells them, Moſt of you, out of a devotion to the heavenly bodies, uſe at the riſing of the Sun to greet it with a kiſs. And becauſe they were not able to reach the Sun and Moon in the firmament, therefore they uſed to lift up their hands to them, and then put them to their mouths in token of Adoration, or that they received their breath and life from them; and ſometimes they did not kiſs their hand at all, but only drawing their lips into the form of a kiſs bowed themſelves. But when they adored artificial Idols or Images of any matter made with hands, then they uſed to kiſs the Image it ſelf, if it ſtood within reach. *Cicero* in one of his Orations tells us how *The Brazen Statue of Hercules was had in ſo much veneration among the Agrigentines,* (a people inhabiting a City ſo called in *Sicily*,) *that the opening of its mouth and chin, were much worn by their frequent kiſſing of it when they came to worſhip.* From all theſe teſtimonies it appears that the old heathen nations were wont either to kiſs the Idol it ſelf which they Adored, or as a ſymbol and token of adoration to kiſs their hands and make obeyſance towards it. And doubtleſs *Job* had either ſeen or been informed of the like cuſtom in thoſe elder times, and therefore by way of denyal ſaid, *If my mouth hath kiſſed my hand.*

Inter Adorandum dexteram ad oſculum referimus. Plin. lib. 28. c. 2.

Cæcilius ſimulachro Serapidis viſo, ut vulgus ſuperſtitioſus ſolet manum ori admovens oſculum labiis impreſſit. Minutius in Oct.

Qui Adorant ſolent deoſculari manum & capita ſubmittere. Hierom. in Ruffin.

Cicero Actione quarta in Verrem.

Note, Firſt, *Outward adoration of any Creature is ſinful.*

We may give reverence to men, but we muſt not adore them, how great ſoever; how much leſs may we adore ſenceleſs things, whether natural or artificial. As we muſt not give them our hearts, ſo not our hands, not our mouths. God requires the heart eſpecially in worſhip; but he muſt have our bodies alſo. When the Apoſtle calls to the worſhip of God, he expreſſeth it by the body (*Rom.* 12. 1.) *I beſeech you brethren by the mercies of God, preſent your bodies a living ſacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, which is your reaſonable ſervice,* or (as ſome render it) your ſervice according to the word. As if he had ſaid, If you would worſhip according to the word, preſent your bodies, that is, your whole man, ſoul and body to God. Now where the body only is expreſt as the ſubject of worſhip, it implies at leaſt that it muſt not be left out in holy worſhip, nor allowed to any falſe or Idolatrous worſhip. There is a generation who ſay they ſerve God with their ſpirits, and then what though they be at Idolatrous worſhip with their bodies, and bow their knees to *Baal?* what though their hand kiſs their mouth, or they do any outward act according to the cuſtom of the place where they are? ſo their hearts be with God; but God will have the hand as well as the heart, he will have the body as well as the ſoul dedicated to him. As a prophane wretch once ſaid, *I have ſworn with my tongue, but I have reſerved my heart unſworn.* So ſome go to falſe worſhip with their bodies, and ſay they will keep their heart to God. Let ſuch remember that of the Apoſtle (*1 Cor.6.20.*) *Ye are bought with a price, therefore glorifie God in your body and in your ſpirit which are Gods.* God is to be glorified in all our ways, eſpecially in his worſhip, with all that which he hath redeemed or bought. Take heed of giving ſo much as a kiſs or a bow to Idols. Many of the perſecuting Heathens in the primitive Church were ſatisfied if a Chriſtian would but take a little frankincenſe and throw it upon their Altar; yet the faithful profeſſors of thoſe times choſe rather to die then to do any thing, though never ſo little, which might carry the leaſt ſignification ſo much as by a meer external act of compliance with them.

Lingua juravi, mentem gero injuratam.

Secondly, Note, *Superſtition is very Ceremonious.*

Superſtitious worſhip is a kind of Antick worſhip; what bowings, what cringings are uſed at it? how ridiculous are many at it, while they would be thought moſt zealous? He that reads the Popiſh rituals might think they intended rather to court it and complement it with God, then humble themſelves before him, Or that they came to his worſhip rather to ſhew themſelves mannerly, then to be made more holy. The ſimplicity of the Goſpel, and the worſhip of God in ſpirit, knows none of theſe faſhions; And the beſt acceptance which ſuch will find with God will be ſignified to them in that chiding Queſtion; Who required theſe things at your hands?

Verſ. 28. **This alſo were an iniquity to be puniſhed by the Judg: for I ſhould have denied the God that is above.**

In opening the 26. verſe, we have ſeen both the proneneſs of mans nature to the ſin of Idolatry, and the nature of Idolatry; And in opening the 27. verſe, we have ſeen the manner how Idolatry works, both internally inticing the heart, and externally by kiſſing the hand, or by outward adoration, and proſtration of the body: In this verſe *Job* proceeds to ſet forth the hainous ſinfulneſs of Idolatry.

This alſo were an iniquity to be puniſhed by the Judg; Or, *This is an iniquity for the Judg.*

Etiam hoc eſt peccatum Grande. Tharg. *Quæ eſt iniquitas maxima.* Vulg. ϗ τῦτο μοὶ ἆρα ἀνομία μεγίϛη λογισθεῖν. Sept. *Hæc eſt iniquitas Judicata.* Mont. *Etiam hæc eſt iniquitas judicialis.* i. e. *ad Judices pertinens, in quam ipſi animadvertere debent.* Druſ. *Ut ſupra de Adulterio dixerat, ſed pluraliter,* עון פלילים *iniquitas judicum, hic peleli, Judicis,* i. e. *digna quæ a judice puniatur.* Merc.

There are three readings of theſe words.

Firſt, Some conceive them only importing the ſinfulneſs of this ſinful practice. So the Chaldee Paraphraſe, and ſo the Vulgar Latin; *This is a grand or the greateſt iniquity.* The Septuagint give the ſame ſence, Tranſlating; *And this verily is in my opinion the greateſt ſin:* All theſe ſpeak nothing at all of the penalneſs of the ſin, or as it is a ſin to be puniſhed by the Judg, but all three agree with one conſent that Idolatry is a grievous Sin.

A ſecond reading alſo ſaith nothing of this ſin, as a matter to be puniſhed by the Judg, but ſaith only, *This is a Judged ſin*; as if the meaning of *Job* were, *This ſin of Idolatry is in the Judgment of many, if not of the moſt, a very great wickedneſs.*

Thirdly, The Original is tranſlated ſtrictly to the letter; *This is an iniquity for the Judg*; that is, as we ſupply the Text, *This is an iniquity to be puniſhed by the Judg.* Mr. *Broughton* falls in with this reading; *So this had been a ſin to be judged*; that is ſuch a ſin as the Judg ought to take notice of, and to puniſh. From theſe three readings of the Text, I ſhall give you theſe three notes or obſervations, and intend but to touch upon the two former; my ſtay will be upon the latter.

From the firſt, which makes theſe words ſignifie nothing elſe, but an aggravation of the ſinfulneſs of Idolatry.

Obſerve, *Idolatry is a great, a hainous, a grand iniquity.*

And it is ſo becauſe it ſtrikes ſo directly at God; As old *Eli* ſaid to his ſons (*1Sam. 2. 25.*) *If one man ſin againſt another, the Judg ſhall judg him* (the Hebrew is, *The Gods ſhall judg him*; that is, The Magiſtrates ſhall judg him, who in Scripture are called Gods) *but if a man ſin againſt the Lord, who ſhall intreat for him?* There is no ſin which man commits againſt man, but God is concerned in it, and wronged by it. But ſome ſins are committed immediately againſt God, and fly directly in his face, among which Idolatry is a chief one. Now *if a man ſin againſt the Lord,* that is, preſumptuouſly and knowingly, *who ſhall intreat for him?* that is, what man can mediate a reconciliation or make up the breach between man and the offended Majeſty of God? None but Chriſt can heal this breach; And to ſhew how exceedingly God is offended and prophaned by Idolatry, the Scripture calls it *a provocation of the eyes of his Glory* (Iſa. 3. 8.) which that it refers to their Idol-worſhip is clear from the 20. verſe of the ſecond Chapter. There are many provoking ſins, but we may place Idolatry in the head of them. God cannot abide to behold that ſin, it is even a pain to the eyes of his glory, or to his moſt glorious eyes. Can a husband endure to ſee his wife go into the embraces of a ſtranger? Idolatry is a going a-whoring from God, and an unchaſt following of other lovers. *God is of purer eyes then to behold any iniquity* (Hab. 1. 13.) There is no ſin that he takes any pleaſure in, leaſt of all in Idolatry. How can he with patience behold that impurity wherein he ſeeth his own glory darkned, his love ſlighted, and his name ſo immediately abuſed? The Scripture calls it alſo *an abomination*, which refers to the burdenſomneſs of any thing to the ſtomach; As Idolatry is a moſt unpleaſant ſpectacle to the eye of God, ſo 'tis loathſom to his ſtomach he cannot bear it; His own people the Jews turned his ſtomach (as I may ſay) when they turned to it, and he ſpewed them out of his mouth for it. Idolatry is that *Gall* and *Wormwood*, ſpoken of (*Deut.* 29. 18.) which how offenſive they are to the taſt or palate every one knows. Thus Idolatry is every way offenſive, it is a pain to the eyes of God, a burden to his ſtomach, bitterneſs to his palate; all which are ſpoken in a figure to ſet forth the greatneſs of this ſin; and the Lords great diſpleaſure againſt it.

Beſides, to ſhew how great this ſin is, the greateſt ſins are in Scripture but ſhadowed by, likened or compared to Idolatry; we cannot put a worſer Title upon any ſin then to call it *Idolatry*; as if the ſinfulneſs of Idolatry were the meaſure of all other ſins; and as any ſin comes neerer to that, ſo much the more ſinful it were (*1 Sam.* 15. 23.) when *Samuel* reproved *Saul* for his half obedience (which was indeed a non-obedience, yea a Rebellion) in executing his Commiſſion againſt the *Amalekites*, he ſaith at the 23. verſe; *For rebellion is as the ſin of witch-craft, and ſtubbornneſs is as iniquity and Idolatry.* *Saul* did not properly commit that ſin of Idolatry, when he failed in the execution of the command of God againſt the *Amalekites*; yet to ſhew the hainouſneſs of that ſin, *Samuel* told him, his *Stubborneſs was as iniquity and Idolatry.* As all thoſe ſins which are againſt our neighbour, are ſumm'd up in that one ſin of *blood* or *murder* (*Iſa.* 1. 15. *Ezek.* 9. 9.) becauſe that is the height of all the evil that a man commits againſt, or can inflict upon his neighbour; ſo that all impieties againſt God, are included in Idolatry. And we find theſe two mentioned in one verſe, as the heads to which all the ſins of *Jeruſalem* were reducible (*Ezek.* 22. 2, 3, 4.) *Now thou ſon of man, wilt thou judg, wilt thou judg the bloody City: Yea thou ſhalt ſhew her all her abominations, Then ſay thou, thus ſaith the Lord God, The City ſheddeth blood in the midſt of it, that her time may come, and maketh Idols againſt her ſelf to defile her ſelf. Thou art become guilty in thy blood that thou haſt ſhed, and haſt defiled thy ſelf in thine Idols which thou haſt made.* Thus Idolatry is matcht with murder, being indeed a pair of matchleſs ſins; The one fighting in chief againſt God, the other againſt man.

From the ſecond Reading; Note, *Idolatry or creature-worſhip is a practice which in all times hath been judged ſinful and wicked: 'tis a judged iniquity.*

In the worſt of times ſome have appeared againſt it.

Gideon was called *Jerub-baal* (Judg.6.32.) becauſe he caſt down the Idolatrous Altar of *Baal*. In all times ſome *Jerub-baals* have riſen up and both pleaded and acted againſt Idol-worſhip. It were eaſie both from Scripture as alſo from the Hiſtory of the Church to give an account that as in every age Idolatry hath found Patrons and Advocates, ſo oppoſers and impleaders, who have accuſed, arraigned and judged it for one of the fouleſt abominations: but to engage ſo far in that way, would be out of mine.

> From the third Reading, Obſerve, *Idolatry is a ſin, not only great in it ſelf, and which hath been great in the account and judgment of Godly men in all ages, But a ſin which falls under the cognizance, and ſo under the ſentence of the Judg; this alſo were an iniquity to be puniſhed by the Judg.*

I grant that thoſe words, *to be puniſhed by*, are not expreſſed in the Hebrew Text, which is conciſe, according to the Idiom of that Language; and ſo gives it only thus; *This alſo is an iniquity for the Judg. David* ſpake in ſuch a brief (*Pſal.* 120.7.) *I am peace, or I peace*, that is, *I am for peace*, I am a lover and liker of peace. So here, *This alſo is an iniquity for the Judg*; that is, (as we render) *an iniquity to be puniſhed by the Judg.* This ſupplement or gloſs is no corrupting of the Text, (as it hath been overboldly charged) but a fair expoſition of it.

Yet here a queſtion ariſeth about the Judg that is to puniſh this iniquity. For there are ſome, who admitting this reading for good and fair, yet will not admit that the Judg here intended as the puniſher of Idolatry, is an ordinary, no nor any human Judg; but ſay the Judg who is to puniſh this iniquity is God, the Judg of all the world; as if *Job*'s meaning were only this, God the Judg of all men will judg and puniſh Idolaters. There is no Queſtion but Idolatry is a ſin which God will judg, but whether it be a truth taken excluſively as to all other Judges, that is a Queſtion. God will puniſh Idolaters, and he will puniſh them ſorely and ſeverely; yet to reſtrain the Text to God alone ſhutting out any other from having cogniſance in this matter, I ſee no reaſon for it, but rather much reaſon to the contrary.

Firſt, *Job* ſeems to put it as a ſpecialty upon this ſin of Idolatry beyond many other ſins, that it is a ſin to be puniſhed by the Judg; now if by the Judg we underſtand God alone, excluding all other Judges, then there is no more ſaid of this ſin then of any other. For God will judg all the ſins of all men all the world over (*Eccl.* 12.14.) *He ſhall bring every work into Judgment, with every ſecret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil*; and as a Judg he will puniſh the ſins of all thoſe who go on impenitently in them, yea they ſhall be under the everlaſting puniſhment of that Judg; let the ſin be what it will, let it be the leaſt ſin imaginable, if any one live and die in it without repentance, without taking hold of Chriſt by faith for the pardon of it, God will judg and puniſh that man for it eternally. So that, I ſay, there is no more ſpoken of this ſin, in that ſence, then is competent with or common to any other ſin whatſoever. Yet *Job* in this place ſeems to ſpeak ſomewhat more of it then falls upon every other ſin; and we know there are a number of ſins puniſhable by God, which yet neither can nor ought to be puniſhed by man; Man cannot puniſh many ſins becauſe he doth not know them; and there are many ſins which he ought not to puniſh, though he do know them; becauſe they are not in his commiſſion to take notice of.

Further, Secondly, there are ſome ſins puniſhable by man, of which the Scripture ſpeaks as if God only did puniſh them. (*Heb.* 13.4.) *Marriage is honourable among all, and the bed undefiled, but whoremongers and adulterers God will judg.* And it hath been ſhewed in opening the 24. Chapter of this Book, how eminently God appears in Judgment, even in this life againſt that ſort of ſinners. Yet though God is ſpoken of in that Scripture as the only Judg of Whoremongers and Adulterers, yet no man will deny but that Adulterers are to be puniſhed by man alſo.

Thirdly, I conceive, *Job* gives a diſtinction of ſins in this Chapter, whereof ſome are puniſhed by God alone, and others both by God and man; and ſo much the word *Alſo* at the beginning of the verſe ſeemeth to intimate; *This alſo were an iniquity to be puniſhed by the Judg.* The word *alſo* connects and couples this ſin of Idolatry with ſome other ſin which *Job* had inſtanc'd in before, falling (as all acknowledg) within the cognizance and under the puniſhment of human Judges: and that is the ſin of Adultery at the eleventh verſe, where *Job* purging himſelf from that filthineſs, ſaith, *If mine heart hath been deceived by a woman, if I have laid wait at my neighbours door, then,* &c. *for this is an hainous crime, yea it is an iniquity to be puniſhed by the Judges. Job* paſſing from this ſin to ſeveral others, from all which he acquitted himſelf by ſevere imprecations, he proceeds to do the like as to the ſin of Idolatry, concluding, *This alſo is an iniquity to be puniſhed by the Judg*; As if he had ſaid, Look what I concluded before of Adultery, the ſame I conclude again of Idolatry, *This alſo is an iniquity to be puniſhed by the Judg.* I have ſpoken of many ſins which God will judg, though they never come nor can come under the Judgment of men. Magiſtrates have nothing to do with thoſe ſins; but as for the ſin of Adultery, and this alſo of Idolatry, theſe are ſins to be puniſhed by the Judg.

I know ſome make the connection with the verſe immediately fore-going, and thence gather an argument that this 28. verſe cannot be expounded of any human, but of the divine Judg alone, God himſelf. There *Job* ſpake of covetouſneſs, *If I ſaid to the Gold, thou art my hope, and to the fine Gold, thou art my confidence; or if I rejoyced becauſe my wealth was great,* &c. And then proceeds to the ſin of Idolatry, *This alſo were an iniquity to be puniſhed by the Judg.* As if *Job* joyned this ſin of Idolatry, with that of covetouſneſs. Now becauſe it is agreed on all hands, that covetouſneſs, or the inordinate deſire of riches, is a ſin which earthly Judges cannot puniſh, it is not under any Legal cenſure. For though covetouſneſs or the love of money, is puniſhed every day in the effects of it, ſtealing, oppreſſion, and wrong dealing, yet covetouſneſs in it ſelf, in its own name, or in perſon (as we ſay) is never puniſhed by any human Judg. Covetouſneſs is an inward tranſgreſſion, and ſo cannot be brought to an outward Tryal; we may have vehement ſuſpitions of a man that he is covetous, yet no man knows the heart, which is the proper ſeat of covetouſneſs. And if it were infallibly known that a man were covetous, yet the civil Magiſtrate cannot puniſh any man for it; ſeeing covetouſneſs wrongs no man but the covetous perſon himſelf, till it breaks forth into unrighteous and oppreſſive acts. Now becauſe *Job* connects Idolatry with a ſin that cannot fall under the ſentence of an earthly Judg, therefore ſome conclude that Idolatry doth not.

But there is no neceſſity at all that thoſe coupling or connecting words *this alſo* ſhould refer to the words immediately foregoing, and not to the words of that other context beginning at the 11. verſe of this Chapter, wherein *Job* had ſpoken of a ſin by name, which is to be puniſhed by the Judg. As if he had ſaid, what I ſpake of Adultery (*Ver.* 11.) that it is a ſin to be puniſhed by the Judg, the ſame I affirm alſo of Idolatry, It is an iniquity to be puniſhed by the Judg. And if we peruſe all the former part of the Chapter, yea and the latter too, we ſhall find all the ſins that *Job* diſclaimeth and purgeth himſelf from to be ſuch as fall under the puniſhment of God only, except theſe two of Adultery (*Ver.* 11.) and of Idolatry (*Ver.* 28.) as alſo that mentioned (*Ver.* 39.) which, I ſuppoſe, will appear upon examination, to be a ſin of this ſort alſo, the forceable or violent taking away the life of a man.

For theſe reaſons and conſiderations, I cannot incline to their opinion, who reſtrain the Text, to God alone as Judg; though no doubt God will moſt eminently judg this iniquity of Idolatry; and therefore I ſhall joyn with thoſe in the expoſition of this Scripture, who put Idolatry under the Judgment of man, as well as the Judgment of God; and ſo the point is plainly this;

It is the Magiſtrates duty to puniſh Idolatry.

It is an iniquity to be puniſhed by the Judg.] As the great Judg in Heaven will certainly do it, ſo earthly Judges may and ought to do it. There are not a few (I know) who urge it as the Magiſtrates duty to puniſh almoſt upon every diſſent in Religion, and to drive men by his ſword to an orthodoxneſs in opinion; or that the Magiſtrate muſt draw his ſword upon every one who doth not comply with that which is publickly owned for truth: They would have all men who diſſent from what is ſo held forth taught not only as *Gideon* did the men of *Succoth*, (Judg. 8. 16.) *with the briers and thorns of the wilderneſs*, but with bonds and impriſonment, with fines and confiſcations, yea in ſome caſes puniſhed with death. Such a ſpirit hath appeared even in this age, as was in *Paul*, when *Saul* (Act. 9. 1.) breathing out threatnings and ſlaughters againſt all who believe not as they believe, or who diſſent from their opinion and practice, ſo making room or cutting a way for what they call Religion into the hearts and heads of men, with the Magiſtrates ſword. Now, as I utterly diſlike an univerſal or wild toleration, for every one to do and ſpeak, act and vent what they pleaſe in matters of Religion, or in the worſhip of God; ſo I do as much diſlike their univerſal non-toleration, who ſay, the Magiſtrate muſt by force and power reſtrain whatſoever is contrary, or different from the common tenet, or what is generally owned within his dominion or Juriſdiction.

And therefore I conceive that the matter lieth between theſe two extreams: and to give my own ſence upon the occaſion offered in this Text, I ſhall take a little liberty beyond my ordinary way of expoſition, to ſhew two things.

Firſt, In reference unto all men, what they ought to do in caſe of difference from their brethren in opinion about the things of God.

Secondly, What the Magiſtrate is to do in that caſe.

Firſt, For Brethren, I ſay, indifferency of ſpirit in matters of faith and worſhip, as if it matter'd not, or were not worth the while to ſtand upon it, what opinions, and perſwaſions men are of, or what way of Religion they are in, this, I ſay, is hateful to God, and ſhould be the abomination of every good man. Every man ought to pray and labour for a ſpirit of diſcerning about and of zeal for the truths and holy appointments of God.

Secondly, The means which the Scripture holds out to all for the reducing of erroneous perſons, is to perſwade and argue with them. That's the contention which the Apoſtle *Jude* means (*Ver.* 3.) *Contend earneſtly for the faith which was once delivered to the Saints*; he would have every one contend and contend with all the weapons of this holy War, which the authority of God allows and furniſheth us with, even with Scripture demonſtrations, and divine reaſonings, to confute and repel errors, and ſtop the mouth of Gain-ſaiers.

Thirdly, The more pernicious any falſe doctrin or practice in Religion is, the more earneſtly it ought to be contended againſt. Thus far every error in opinion and ſinful practice in worſhip, ſhould be judged by all men.

Further, as to the Magiſtrate, I ſhall lay down theſe four Concluſions.

Firſt, All thoſe evil opinions, and hereſies, which tend in their own nature to the diſturbance of the civil peace and good government of mankind, ought to be ſuppreſſed by the Magiſtrate, and the owners of them to be puniſhed by all ſuch means as are ſutable to the conſervation of the publick ſafety.

Secondly, All ſuch opinions and erroneous doctrins as are accompanied with any notorious ſins in practice, (which ſins are alſo actually practiſed by the followers and abetters of thoſe opinions, like that of the *Nicolaitans* of old, or the *Ranters* among us) tending to or teaching uncleanneſs, and opening a door for luſt, and removing the ancient Landmarks of good and evil, and ſo letting in a flood of wickedneſs. Theſe, doubtleſs, the Magiſtrate ought to take notice of, and to ſuppreſs.

Thirdly, All profeſſed Atheiſm and open blaſphemy againſt God, ought to be puniſhed by the Magiſtrate; I do not ſay that every opinion which hath blaſphemy in it by deduction or remote conſequences, but that which is bare-faced and profeſſed blaſphemy againſt God, the Magiſtrate ought to puniſh. The reaſon is, becauſe ſuch cannot ſay that the Magiſtrate puniſheth them for their conſcience, ſeeing they cannot ſo much as pretend conſcience for what they ſay or hold; conſcience being that power of the Soul, which hath immediate communion or converſe with God; and therefore ſuppoſeth God to be, and to be ſuch a one as he hath (according to their apprehenſion of him, though not always according to the truth of his being) revealed himſelf to be: and therefore they who deny God to be, or blaſpheme him in his being, can never pretend any thing of conſcience for it. Conſcience is a tenderneſs to offend God, now for a man to blaſpheme God, and to profeſs atheiſtical principles, this takes away all colour of conſcience in tenderneſs to offend God; and how can he complain that he ſuffers for his conſcience, who hath no conſcience to ſuffer for?

Fourthly, That *Idolatry is to be puniſhed by the Magiſtrate*, I need not go any further for a proof then the Text, though I do not reſtrain all puniſhable Idolatry to that particular way mentioned in the Text, the worſhipping of the Sun, Moon, and Stars; but I ſay, any Idolatry of that rank, and rate, is to be puniſhed by the Judg. To clear my meaning in this we may diſtinguiſh of Idolatry.

Firſt, There is Idolatry improperly ſo called; which is the inordinate going forth of the Soul to any creature, in love, in deſire, in delight, in truſt or confidence; this kind of Idolatry was ſpoken of at the 24. Verſe; *If I have made Gold my hope, or have ſaid to the fine Gold, Thou art my confidence.* Thus the Apoſtle (*Eph.* 5. 5.) calleth a covetous man an Idolater. Now when I ſay Idolatry is a ſin to be puniſhed by the Judg, I do not mean this kind of Idolatry, which is ſo called in a metaphorical ſence, though the fulneſs of that ſin be in it in a ſpiritual way, yet that's not the Idolatry here intended.

Secondly, There is Idolatry properly ſo called, and that is two-fold.

Firſt, The worſhipping the true God by falſe means, or in a wrong way; which is ſtrictly the Idolatry of the ſecond Commandment; *Thou ſhalt not make to thy ſelf any graven Image*, &c. That is, thou ſhalt not worſhip God in a way of thy own deviſing: Though thou pretendeſt to worſhip the true God, yet if thou uſe means of thy own to help on thy devotion, thou art an Idolater. What the Magiſtrate may do as to the puniſhing of this ſort of Idolatry, I ſhall not meddle with it, ſeeing it belongeth not to this Text.

Secondly, Proper Idolatry is the ſetting up, and worſhipping of a falſe God; This is, ſtrictly, Idolatry againſt the firſt Commandment; And this is not only a worſhipping of the creator by the creature, but a worſhipping of the creature for the creator. Of this the Apoſtle ſpeaks (*Rom.* 1. 25.) *Who change the truth of God into a lie, and worſhip and ſerve the creature more then the creator, who is bleſſed for evermore.* Some are of opinion that there was never any Idolatry (eſpecially not among the profeſſing people of God) but of the firſt ſort; And that all their Idols, even *Baal* and *Aſhtaroth* were only falſe means of worſhipping the true God; Yet I doubt not but there is an Idolatry ſpoken of in Scripture, and uſed in the world, which is the ſetting up of the creature for God; and of this Idolatry the Text and point I am upon is chiefly intended; *If I beheld the Sun when it ſhined, or the Moon walking in brightneſs*, &c. That is, if I have fallen down to theſe creatures, and given them adoration, then &c. To clear it a little further, we may diſtinguiſh of this Idolatry.

Firſt, In its internal acts, when the *heart is inticed*.

Secondly, In its external acts; when as *Job* ſaith, *the mouth kiſſeth the hand*; that is, when by outward practices and proſtrations towards the creature a man declares his worſhip of it, or that he attributes a divine power thereunto. Of the former Idolatry, that of the heart, the Magiſtrate can have no proof, and therefore cannot puniſh it. But when Idolatry holdeth up its head avowedly, then the Magiſtrate may and ought to take notice of it, and puniſh it. That the Magiſtrate did puniſh ſuch Idolatry among the Jews is without controverſie, the Law is expreſs for it (*Deut.* 13. 6, 7, 8, 9, &c. to the ſixteenth Verſe) when any man ſaid, *Come let us go ſerve other Gods, he was to be ſtoned with ſtones till he died.* And that the Magiſtrate may puniſh ſuch kind of Idolatry at this day, beſides the authority of this Text. We may argue thus;

Such evil acts committed by man as are contrary to the light of nature, or which a man guided only by the light of nature might ſhun and avoid, the Magiſtrate may puniſh, or they are puniſhable by the Magiſtrate;

But this kind of Idolatry we are ſpeaking of, is an evil act againſt the light of nature;

Therefore the Magiſtrate may puniſh it. The major or firſt propoſition is agreed by all, whatſoever is againſt the light of nature the Magiſtrate may puniſh; the light of nature is the ſphere of the Magiſtrates activity. And for the minor or ſecond propoſition, *that ſuch Idolatry is againſt the light of nature*, is proved at large (*Rom.* 1.19,20,21,22.) where the Apoſtles drift or ſcope is to ſhew that the old Gentiles ſinned againſt the light of nature when they committed that groſs Idolatry; *For* (ſaith he) *that which may be known of God, is manifeſt in or to them*, (who are meerly in nature) *for God hath ſhewed it unto them*; how hath God ſhewed it unto them? not by the light of Scripture, nor by the light of the Spirit, or divine Revelation, but by the frame or fabrick of the world, as it followeth plainly in that place; *For the inviſible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly ſeen, being underſtood by the things which are made, even his eternal power, and God-head, ſo that they are without excuſe.* The reaſon why ſuch Idolaters were without excuſe, was becauſe the very light of nature might teach them, that there is an eternal power and God-head, who made the world, or that the world was made by ſome eternal power; It could not make it ſelf; And therefore they muſt needs be inexcuſable who worſhipped the things that are made in the place of their maker. Seeing then, this kind of Idolatry is a ſin againſt the light of nature, and the Magiſtrate hath power to puniſh ſins againſt the light of nature, it follows that where ſuch Idolatry breaks forth, and proof is made of it, the Magiſtrate may puniſh it. *This alſo is an iniquity to be puniſhed by the Judg.* The ground why it is ſo is alſo aſſigned by *Job* in the next words.

For I ſhould have denied the God that is above.

כחש *mentiri.*

As if he had ſaid, If any require an account of my opinion, why I aſſert, that Idolatry is an iniquity to be puniſhed by the Judg, my anſwer is this, Idolatry is a God-denying ſin. And I in adoring the Sun and Moon as Gods, *ſhould have denied the God that is above.*

The word rendred *to deny*, is taken firſt metaphorically for any kind of deceiving our expectation. Thus the Prophet ſpeaks (*Hab.* 3. 17.) *Though the labour of the Olive ſhall fail, or lie*, that is, yeeld no oyl; and when the harveſt comes ſhort of hope, the Latins ſay, *the Harveſt lies*, That is, it deceives the hope of the husbandman.

Spem mentita ſeges.

Secondly, Taken properly it notes a direct denial of what is asked (*Gen.* 18.15) *Then Sarah denied, ſaying, I did not laugh.*

Thirdly, It ſignifies *to be-lie*, which is to report a matter otherwiſe of another then it is (*Jer.* 5. 11,12.) *They have belied the Lord, and ſaid, it is not he, neither ſhall evil come upon us, we ſhall not ſee Sword, nor Famine.*

Fourthly, It notes the yielding of feigned or falſe ſubjection (*Pſal.* 18.44.) *Thine Enemies ſhould have ſubmitted themſelves* (or lied) *to thee*; that is, (as we put in the Margin) yielded feigned ſubmiſſion. So (*Pſal.* 66. 3. *Pſal.* 81. 15.) The providences of God do ſometimes ſo overpower the enemies of his people, that they are compelled to pretend ſubmiſſion, though their hearts be far from it. There is much of this kind of lying in Idolatry, a pretending of ſubjection, and ſubmiſſion to God, when indeed there is nothing in the heart but ſtubbornneſs and rebellion againſt him.

I ſhould have denied the God that is above.] What it is to *deny God*, may further appear by its contrary, *confeſſing* (John 1.14,20.) *He confeſſed and denied not but confeſſed*; confeſſion is oppoſed to denial. There is a two-fold confeſſion; Firſt, a confeſſion of repentance; Secondly, of praiſe. (*Gen.*49.8.) *Judah thy Brethren ſhall confeſs or praiſe thee*, that is, they ſhall make confeſſion of thee to thy praiſe; they ſhall not be aſhamed of thee, but acknowledg thee, and readily give themſelves up to be governed by thee. Our confeſſion of God ſtands in direct oppoſition to the denial of him; And it is a confeſſion of praiſe, and honour, which we give to God; ſo Chriſt ſpeaketh of himſelf (*Math.* 10. 32,33,) *Whoſoever ſhall confeſs me before men, him will I confeſs alſo before my Father which is in Heaven*; *But whoſoever ſhall deny me before men, him will I alſo deny before my Father which is in Heaven.* And again (*Mark* 8. 38.) *Whoſoever therefore ſhall be aſhamed of me, and of my words in this adulterous and ſinful generation; of him alſo ſhall the Son of Man be aſhamed when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy Angels.* From theſe Scriptures compared together, we ſee firſt, that, not to confeſs Chriſt is to deny him, and that to deny Chriſt is to be aſhamed of him, as if he were not worth the owning. When *Job* ſaith, *I ſhould have denied the God that is above*, we may underſtand him in every ſence of denial. Some Idolatry is a flat denial of God, and all Idolatry is but a feigned ſubjection to or a flattering of God, a belying of God and a ſhameful diſowning of him. Yet I conceive, the denial here intended is ſpecially a flat and plain denial of him, *I ſhould have denied the God that is above.*

Non pudebit illos tui, tuum ſe dicent, conſentient in tuū imperium.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *To deny God is a hainous wickedneſs.*

'Tis all ſin bound up in one, God is denied many ways; Firſt, in regard of his being, or that he is. This is the groſſeſt denial of him; Secondly, in reference to the manner of his being, or that he is ſuch as he hath indeed declared himſelf to be. Thus God is denied when we form up ſuch notions of him in our brain as are unbecoming his glorious Majeſty. When we have apprehenſions of God unſutable to his Holineſs, his mercy, his juſtice, and his power, we deny the God who is, and ſet up a God who is not.

Again, there is a two-fold denying of God. Firſt, in words expreſly and openly; Secondly, in practice, cloſely and conſequentially. The Apoſtle gives us the ground of this diſtinction (*Tit.*1.16.) *They confeſs that they know God, but in works they deny him.* There may be at once a profeſſing of God, and a denial of him. Many a mans practice ſpeaks aloud that there is no God, when he makes a fair confeſſion and profeſſion of him with his tongue.

This practical denial of God may be run into five ways.

Firſt, To live in a profeſſed courſe of ſin, is a denying of God; For, firſt, ſuch deny their obligation to obey God, or the abſolute dominion of God to command them; Secondly, they deny, much more, any willingneſs (which is our duty) to be ſubject to the will of God. Thirdly, they deny the Juſtice and goodneſs of that Law under which they are, and by which they ought to walk. An obſtinate ſinner bears his teſtimony boldly againſt God in all that he is, and in all that he hath ſpoken.

Secondly, They may be ſaid to deny God in their practice, who do not, Firſt, hope for the reward of obedience promiſed; nor Secondly, fear the puniſhment of diſobedience threatned. If any man ſhall ſay in his heart, what doth it profit, or what good ſhall I get by walking holily and humbly with God? and what hurt ſhall I get if I take liberty to walk unholily, and proudly againſt God? This is not only a denying, but a defying of God, who *is a rewarder of them that diligently ſeek him* (Heb. 11. 6.) and will take vengeance of all them that wilfully and reſolvedly diſobey him. They (ſaith the Prophet, *Zeph.* 1. 12.) are men *ſetled on their lees* (that is, hardned in ſin) *that ſay in their heart, the Lord will not do good, neither will he do evil*; that is, he will neither reward nor puniſh. It matters not whether we do good or evil, for he will do neither to us.

Thirdly, They that ſwear falſly deny God eminently, though they do it never ſo covertly. Such either ſuppoſe that God doth not know they ſwear falſly, or that God will not puniſh nor *be a ſwift witneſs* (as he hath ſaid he will, *Mal.* 3. 5.) *againſt falſe ſwearers.*

Fourthly, Not to love God is to deny him, for he that doth not love God, doth not acknowledg him to be good, and ſo denieth him to be. We love that which we judg to be good, therefore they who do not love God, deny his goodneſs, and ſo (upon the matter) his very being; ſeeing God can no more ceaſe to be good, then he can ceaſe to be.

Fifthly, (which is the ſpecial way of denying God intended in this Text) The worſhip of a falſe or Idol God, is a denial of the true, of the living God. And the Idolater may well be ſaid to deny God with a lie; becauſe he that doth not acknowledg and reverence God but the creature, goeth againſt the dictates of his own mind; ſeeing man by nature may not only ſee God in the creature, but diſtinguiſh him from the creature.

At beſt, Idolaters deny God by attributing that honour to creatures which God never gave them, nor alloweth us to give to any but himſelf. The nobleſt creatures in the world, the holy Angels in Heaven, are but our fellow-ſervants. When *John* would needs fall down before the Angel, and worſhip him, he ſaid, *See thou do it not, I am thy fellow ſervant*; and as the higheſt creatures are our fellow ſervants, ſo all other creatures are our ſervants; God made the whole hoſt of Heaven, and all things here below to ſerve man, as hath been ſhewed before: therefore to worſhip them, though we ſhould ſay we do not terminate our worſhip in them, but offer our worſhip by them, yet that is a denying of God. Idolaters put a worſhip upon God inſtead of worſhipping him; Will-worſhip is the worſhip of our own will, not the worſhip of God, who will be worſhipped only as himſelf willeth.

Impietas horrenda eſt, pro domino ſervos colere, pro creatore creaturas.

But as for thoſe who not only worſhip God by the creature, but the creature for or as God, they deny God moſt groſly; for though they deny not that God is, yet they deny what God is; They either deny that God is but one, or that he is ſuch a one as he hath manifeſted himſelf to be, both in his word, and works. Indeed to ſet up another God, or to ſay, there are many gods, is to ſay, there is no God. *Polytheiſm is Atheiſm.* And therefore the Apoſtle concludes of Idolaters (*Rom.* 1. 15.) *They change the truth of God into a lie*; that is, into an Idol. Idols are a lie, either firſt, becauſe they promiſe, or pretend what they are not in truth; or Secondly, becauſe they are a plain denial of the true God. If I (ſaith *Job*) had Adored the Sun, I ſhould have denied the God that is above, yea though I ſhould notwithſtanding that, acknowledg him to be above all gods; and that my humbling or bowing my ſelf to the creature, was not to abate but rather to exalt my worſhip of him, that being only (as I might pretend) a help to my devotion. For he that boweth before or to a creature in worſhip, whether he ſaith he doth it only as a means to draw up his heart to God, or as a ſign of the preſence of God, or as to a Mediator between God and him, (in the former ſence Papiſts worſhip Images, and in the latter Saints and Angels, he I ſay, that doth any of theſe) will be found a denier of God, how much ſoever he boaſteth of the worſhip of the one true God, and denieth that he worſhippeth the creature as God. *I ſhould have denied the God,*

Non aſſeri poteſt Deus alius, ſine veri Dei negatione, cum nequeunt plures dii eſſe.

Numinum multitudinem, numinum eſſe nullitatem aſſerit Athanaſius. Orat. contra Idololat.

That is above.] *Job* uſeth that word *above* ſignificantly, having ſpoken of the Sun and Moon before, which are above us, or on high, he adds, *If I had worſhipped Sun, and Moon, I had denied the God that is above*, not only above the earth, but above the Sun and Moon, and all the hoſt of Heaven. The Sun is below in compariſon of the God above; this God who is above all in power, and above all in place, above all in glory, above all in dignity. Should I have denied.

Hence Note, *God is above by a more eminent and ſpecial preſence.*

God is neither above nor below as circumſcribed in any place, God is both above & below as filling all places; God is not more above then he is below as to his real preſence, but God is more above then he is below as to the manifeſtation of his preſence. In this ſence *Job* ſpeaks of God as above; and we find throughout the Scripture, that all prayers, and ſpeeches, directed to God, are directed to him as above. As letters ſent to a Prince, are directed to him at his Court, which is the place of his uſual reſidence, and where he moſt declares his power and greatneſs; ſo all the prayers, ſpeeches, addreſſes made to God in Scripture, are made to him as above, or in Heaven. Chriſt giving us that pattern of prayer (*Matth.* 6.) directs us to God above, *Say, Our Father which art in Heaven*; Chriſt knew that, *God our Father* is as much on earth as in Heaven, in regard of his eſſential and real preſence, yet he bids us pray, *Our Father which art in Heaven*, not our Father which art on Earth. And when Chriſt himſelf prayed to his Father, (*Joh.*17.1.) *He lift up his eyes to Heaven, and ſaid, Father glorifie thy Son.* Heaven is *the habitation of Gods holineſs, and of his glory*; And therefore they who in theſe times decry ſuch ſpeeches as theſe, and will let us know they know nothing of Heaven or Hell, neither what they are, nor where they are, let ſuch know it is enough for us to know, what the Scripture ſaith, that *Heaven is above, and Hell below*; and why ſhould not we ſpeak as the Scripture ſpeaks, let above and below be what they will. Therefore when we ſpeak to God, let us remember that he is above, and let us get our hearts up to him, *let us* (as the Church ſpeaks in her low and deſolate condition, *Lam.* 3.41.) *Lift up our hearts and our hands unto God in the Heavens.* How uncomely as well as ſinful were it, if while we pray to the God that is above, our hearts ſhould be groveling here below?

VERS. 29, 30.

If I rejoyced at the deſtruction of him that hated me, or lift up my ſelf when evil found him:

(Neither have I ſuffered my mouth to ſin, by wiſhing a curſe to his Soul.)

IN this context *Job* ſtill affirms the clearneſs of his own Integrity, and in ſpecial, his clearneſs from any boyling deſire of revenge upon his foreſt and moſt profeſſed Adverſaries, which he proves,

Firſt, Becauſe he had not expreſſed, no nor been affected with that paſſion of joy at the downfal of his adverſary, or in the day of his ſorrow. Thus he ſpeaks in the former part of the 29. Verſe.

If I rejoyced at the deſtruction of him that hated me; that is, I did not rejoyce at his deſtruction.

Secondly, He proves it by his avoydance of ſuch actions, as teſtifie a ſpirit of revenge, and thoſe are two.

Firſt, He had not uſed any proud geſture, or inſulting behaviour toward his Enemy, when ſuppreſſed and brought underfoot. This he intends in the latter part of the 29. Verſe, where he ſaith, *or lift up my ſelf when evil found him.*

Secondly, He profeſſeth that he did not vent any ſpiteful words, or evil wiſhes againſt his perſon, (*Ver.* 30.) *Neither have I ſuffered my mouth to ſin by wiſhing a curſe to his Soul.*

Yet further, *Job* proves his innocence as to this ſin of revenge, by ſhewing his abſtinence from and forbearance of all thoſe actings, whether ſecret or open, though greatly provoked and preſſed thereunto; though he wanted not thoſe about him, who were continually blowing the coals, and urging him to right himſelf to the utmoſt upon thoſe who had wronged him, yet he was not moved. This I conceive to be the ſence of the 31. Verſe. *If the men of my tabernacle ſaid not, O that we had of his fleſh! we cannot be ſatisfied.* Of which hereafter.

Thus you have the ſum and aim of theſe two Verſes; I ſhall now proceed to the particular explication of them.

Verſ. 29. **If I rejoyced at the deſtruction of him that hated me.**

Joy is a paſſion of the mind, ariſing from the apprehenſion of ſome preſent or neer approaching good. Holy *Job* (it ſeems) never looked upon the evil which befel his enemy, as a good to himſelf, and ſo it was not to him a matter or occaſion of joy.

If I rejoyced.] The word notes a very freſh and active Joy, ſuch as appears in men upon the liberal drinking of Wine (*Pſal.* 104. 15.) *Wine maketh glad the heart of man*; That is, it makes him heartily glad. And to ſome, the tears, yea the blood of their Enemies taſt as ſweetly, go down as pleaſantly, and are as refreſhing as a Cup of the moſt delicious and richeſt Wine: It puts (as it were) a new *life* into them, to ſee their enemies in the ſnares of death. *Job* was of another ſpirit; *If I rejoyced* (ſaith he) as one refreſht with Wine, when I ſaw the blood of mine enemies; If I took content in their ſorrows, or comfort in their grones, Then let my ſorrows be multiplied. *If I rejoyced*

At the deſtruction of him that hated me.] The word which we render *deſtruction*, notes *utter ruin*, or ruin without remedy, ſuch a ruin as is not capable of relief; or as the Lord threatens *Babylon* by the Prophet (*Iſa.* 47. 9.) *Judgment*

פיד *tale exitium denotat unde quis redimi non poteſt* Bold.

Judgment in its perfection of it; that is, a compleat and irrecoverable overthrow. *The beſom of deſtruction* (ſpoken of *Iſa.* 14. 23.) ſweeps all away at once, even the moſt precious Jewels and richeſt treaſure of ſinners are but as dirt and rubbiſh before it. Its ſuch a clean riddance, that (as another Prophet, *Nah.* 1. 9. expreſſeth it) *Affliction ſhall not riſe up the ſecond time.* Some deſtructions leave ſome work for a ſecond, yea for a third deſtruction; but there may be a deſtruction which leaves nothing to be deſtroyed, not *a ſtone upon a ſtone,* as Chriſt propheſied of the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem.* When *Job* ſaw his enemy thus deſtroyed, and thoſe that hated him broken with a breach that could not be healed, and which utterly diſabled them for ever to do him a miſchief, or revenge themſelves upon him, *Yet he rejoyced* not at it. *If I rejoyced at the deſtruction of him*

שנא
odio habuit contempſit neglexit.

That hated me.] The root of the word rendred *to hate,* ſignifies both to hate and to neglect, yea to contemn; and thoſe whom we hate, we always neglect, and often contemn too. So the word is uſed *Gen.* 26. 27. as alſo 2 *Sam.* 13. 22. *And Abſalom ſpake unto his brother Amnon neither good nor bad* (that is, he ſlighted and contemned him) *for Abſalom hated Amnon becauſe he had forced his ſiſter Tamar.* As he ſpake nothing at all to him about that matter, the abuſe of his ſiſter, ſo doubtleſs he grew more reſerved then formerly towards him in all other matters, becauſe he hated him. *Job*'s haters were alſo his deriders and deſpiſers, as was ſhewed at the firſt, ninth and tenth verſes of the former Chapter. *If I have rejoyced at the deſtruction of him that hated me.*

To clear how much *Job* ſaid, when he ſaid, the men at whoſe ruin he did not rejoyce, were ſuch *as hated him,* let us conſider what he did not ſay of them.

Firſt, He did not ſay, *If I have rejoyced at the deſtruction of him that was not my friend, or benefactor*; and yet not to do another good when we have power, and opportunity in our hands, is a degree of hatred; he that withholds a favour from him who needs it, is a negative Enemy.

Secondly, He did not ſay, *If I rejoyced at the deſtruction of him that never wrong'd me, nor did me harm*; And yet there are many who do ſo, yea who rejoyce at the deſtruction of thoſe who either have, or would have done them good.

Thirdly, He did not ſay, *If I rejoyced at the deſtruction of him that hath taken diſtaſt, and diſpleaſure at me*; not a few are ready to do ſo upon every light occaſion, yea though we may be under the preſent diſpleaſure of a man as well as of God, who yet really loves us.

But *Job* ſaith plainly (and what could he ſay more to prove the truth or highten the degrees of his charity) *If I rejoyced at the deſtruction of him that hated me, even with a deadly hatred*; If I rejoyced at the deſtruction of my worſt enemy, my inward enemy, my hearty enemy, whoſe ſpirit was ſteept in bitterneſs, in the gall and wormwood of implacable malice againſt me, who as he hath often ſought to deſtroy me, ſo he would have rejoyced to purpoſe, and clapt his hands for joy at my deſtruction. Such as this, was the Character of the man that hated *Job*, of the man at whoſe deſtruction he did not rejoyce.

Quid aliud ageret ſi evangelii tempore natus eſſet. Sanct.

Thus we ſee of what temper *Job* was, *Job* lived in dark times, in times far remote from the fulneſs of Goſpel light, yet how full was his heart of Goſpel love. He lived long before Chriſt in the world, yet how like was his love to the love of Chriſt? who not only did good to, but dyed for thoſe that hated him. *Job*'s charity might well become, yea it was ſuch as is rarely found among thoſe who live in the cleareſt Goſpel light. Certainly he far exceeded the light and learning of the Jewiſh Rabbines, and underſtood the meaning of the Law of love in thoſe times better then the Phariſees did in Chriſts time. What greater evidence of love (except that of Chriſt himſelf, who, as was ſaid before, dyed for thoſe that hated him) could be given then this, not to rejoyce at the death or deſtruction of him that hated him?

Yet, Some poſſibly may object; Had it not been a greater evidence of love, if *Job* had done good to him that hated him, then only not to *Rejoyce at the deſtruction of him that hated him?* Is it not more charity to do good to an enemy, then not to rejoyce at the evil which he ſuffers?

Some have ſaid, The reaſon why *Job* ſaid not, he did good to or loved his enemies, or thoſe that hated him, was becauſe the law of loving an enemy was not in force in his time, and ſo he was not obliged to ſuch a duty. For proof of which opinion they alledg that of Chriſt in his Sermon upon the Mount (*Matth.* 5. 43.) *Ye have heard that it hath been ſaid of old, Thou ſhalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.* Which they Interpret as if this were the rule given by God for thoſe elder times, *Thou ſhalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.* Whereas when Chriſt ſaith, *It hath been ſaid,* he doth not mean, that this was the rule given out by God to them of old, but this was the Gloſs given by man: God ſaid in the Law, *Thou ſhalt love thy neighbour*; but he never ſaid, *Thou ſhalt hate thine enemy*; that was the expoſition or comment which the Phariſees made upon the Text, and it was indeed a groſs corruption of it. As if that Commandment, *Thou ſhalt love thy neighbour,* implied, *Thou ſhalt hate thine enemy.* Thus they interpreted the Law by the rule of Contraries; As if becauſe we muſt love our neighbour, therefore we might hate our enemies; and poſſibly they were miſled to that Interpretation, by thoſe charges which the Children of *Iſrael* received, to root out the old Inhabitants of the Land of *Canaan*, the *Jebuſites*, the *Pereſites*, &c. Whence they drew down this falſe concluſion, as if they might hate all ſorts of Enemies, even private perſonal enemies. But though the Law of loving our enemies be, in ſpecial, a Goſpel Law both publiſhed and practiſed by Chriſt in a more clear and excellent way then ever before; yet the Law of loving an enemy (as to the matter and ſubſtance of it) was from the beginning, as will appear further in the proſecution of this point, therefore that was not the Reaſon.

The true reaſon why *Job* did not expreſs the Integrity of his ſpirit in this matter, by ſaying, *he did good to his enemies,* but by ſaying, *he did not rejoyce at their deſtruction,* was, Becauſe not to rejoyce at the deſtruction of an enemy, doth ſhew a very great degree of love and goodneſs to them, yea in ſome caſes it is all that love which we are to ſhew, and all the good we are bound to do to an enemy; For though we are to love Enemies, yet we muſt not give out all our love to thim. There is a love of *Pity*, and there is a love of *delight*; A love of *Complacency*, and a love of *Compaſſion.* The love which we are to give out *to enemies,* is a love of *Pity and Compaſſion,* not a love of *Complacency and delight*; For no man is bound to take his enemy into his boſom, and to give him an opportunity to ruin him, nor is any man bound ſo to do good to his enemy, as to enable him to do him hurt. So that, Not to rejoyce at the deſtruction of an enemy, may carry the full ſence of the Law, commanding us to love our enemies.

Again, I anſwer, That, often through the ſhews and ſhadows of pretended love and doing good to an enemy, the heart of man is deceived. For while he ſaith he loves his enemy, he doth only ſay ſo. And whereas ſome think they love an enemy, becauſe they do not actually attempt to revenge themſelves upon him, or to take away his life; this alſo may fall ſhort of any the leaſt degree of love to him: but not to rejoyce at the deſtruction of an enemy, is a convincing argument of love to him and ſignifies much more then meerly to abſtain from hurting or deſtroying him. So that, both the ſincerity and the ſtrength of our love to an enemy is moſt diſcernable in our not rejoycing at his fall. Thus one of the Ancients determines this queſtion; *The proſperity* (ſaith he) *or the fall of an enemy, is that which puts us indeed to the tryal of our love.* The proſperity of an enemy tryeth us whether we can bear it & not be ſurprized with envy; his fall tryeth us, whether we can ſee it, or hear of it, and not be ſurprized with joy. And doubtleſs, He that is troubled at his enemies proſperity, will alſo rejoyce at his calamity. So that the greateſt tryal of true Goſpel love to an enemy, lieth in the mortification of all ſuch Joys. And how hard it is not to rejoyce at the hurt of an enemy, or of one that hates us, no man knows but he that hath been hated and hurt by an enemy. A man may for ever forbear to hurt his enemy, or to lay violent hands on him, and yet he may heartily wiſh his deſtruction by the hand of others. And he that rejoyceth at the hurt of another, may rather be judged to want power then

Dilectionis vim occulte & veracites aut profectus inimici aut caſus interrogat. Conſtat quia non amat quem non vult eſſe meliorem. Eumq; etiam ſtantem voto perſequitur, quem cecidiſſe gratulatur. Greg.

a will to hurt him himſelf; or that he forbears to hurt him that hated him rather becauſe he was afraid of hurting and endangering himſelf by doing it, then becauſe he had had no mind to do it. And therefore *Job* puts himſelf upon the higheſt and ſureſt tryal, whether his heart were right in this thing, while he ſaith, *If I rejoyced at the deſtruction of him that hated me.*

Further, Conſider how love riſeth by ſeveral ſteps or degrees.

Firſt, To do a Friend good is a great act of love; yet it is not ſo great a curteſie to do good to a Friend, as it is a wickedneſs to do him hurt. *Is this thy kindneſs to thy friend?*

Secondly, It is a great act of love to bear wrong done by an enemy patiently; yet not ſo great as freely to forgive him that wrong.

Thirdly, It is a great act of love, not to hurt an enemy when we have power to do it; yet it is a greater to do him good; or to repair, in what we may, his honour. When *Cæſar* commanded the Statues of *Pompey*, which ſome had pul'd down, to be ſet up again; *Cicero* told him, That in reſtoring the Statues of *Pompey* he had erected his own.

Cæſari cum ſtatuas Pompeii dejectas erigi juſſit, Cicero dixit; Pompeii ſtatuas reſtituendo, tuas defixiſti.

Fourthly, Not to rejoyce at the miſery of an enemy, is an act of perfect charity.

Fifthly, To mourn at the fall of an enemy, is an act of pureſt pity.

From theſe ſeveral ſteps of love, the queſtion receives a clearer anſwer, why *Job* doth not expreſs his Integrity in this point, by ſaying he *loved* or did good to him that hated him, but by ſaying, he rejoyced not at his deſtruction.

Here Firſt, If we duly conſider what kind of man *Job* was (as appears both by the teſtimony which was given him by God (*Chap.* 1. 1.) and by that which he gave of himſelf, as in the preſence and fear of God in the 29. Chap. of this Book) we may well ſtand and wonder how he could have an enemy, or why any man ſhould hate him, *Job*, both as a man, and as a Magiſtrate, deſerved to be (as a Great Prince was once called) *The delight of Mankind.* He was to the poor ſo curteous, ſo merciful to his friends, ſo juſt to all, that ſurely all men had reaſon to delight in him, yea to make him their delight, yet he had enemies, and ſuch as maligned him; *If I rejoyced at the deſtruction of him that hated me.*

Hence Obſerve, *Good men, even the beſt of men, they who love God, and are loved of God, are often hated, extreamly hated among men.*

David, A man after Gods own heart, complains of that hearty hatred which he found in and from the world (*Pſal.* 69.4.) *They that hate me without cauſe, are more then the hairs of my head*; How many they are no man can tell, neither could *David* tell how many enemies he had, not only becauſe he had many ſecret enemies whom he knew not, but becauſe his very known enemies were ſo many, that (according to common language) they were innumerable.

Enmity is rooted and fixt in the hearts of all natural men againſt holy men; And though it be not always ſeen working, yet it is always at work. Thus the Lord told the Serpent, that is the Devil, who had abuſed the Serpent to be inſtrumental for the fall of man (*Gen.* 3. 15.) *I will put enmity between thee and the woman, between her ſeed and thy ſeed*; that is, between the Godly and the wicked: The ſpiritual ſeed of the Serpent, hates, and they cannot but hate the ſpiritual ſeed of the woman; 'tis their nature to do it, and therefore they muſt needs do it. The fire ſhall as ſoon loſe its heat, or a ſtone its weight, as a natural man his hatred of thoſe that are ſpiritual. God himſelf is hated by all ungodly men; *They are enemies to him in their mind by wicked works* (Col. 1. 21.) and ſo they are to all thoſe who bear his image. The Apoſtle puts theſe two together (*Rom.* 1. 30.) *Back-biters, haters of God*; No wonder it they back-bite men, who hate God. And as Chriſt hath forewarn'd (*Matth.* 10. 25.) *If they have called the Maſter of the houſe Beelzebub, how much more ſhall they call them of his houſhold?* All true Believers are of the houſhold of Jeſus Chriſt; yea they are his members. Chriſt our head was hated by the world; and therefore his members muſt look for hatred while they are in the world. This enmity brake forth into act as early as it could; The ſecond man that ever was born in the world was hated by him who in nature was the Firſt born; *Cain* hated his Brother, and his hatred concluded in the murder of his Brother (*Gen.* 4. 5, 8.) The Apoſtle *John* ſheweth us of what linage *Cain* was, while he exhorts to love (1 *Epiſt.* 3. 11, 12.) *This is the meſſage that ye have heard from the beginning, that we ſhould love one another. Not as Cain who was of that wicked one and ſlew his Brother. Cain* who hated and ſlew his brother, was not ſo much *Adams* ſon as the Devils ſon; and that he was ſo, is clear by the reaſon which the Apoſtle aſſigns why he ſlew him, *even becauſe his own works were evil, and his Brothers righteous.* That was all the reaſon which he had to hate him; and no other appearing reaſon had *Job* given any man to hate him, but becauſe he was *perfect and upright, a man that feared God and eſchewed evil.* As the Fleſh which is in a Believer hates (wherefore elſe doth it luſt againſt and continually oppoſe) the Spirit (*Gal.* 5. 17.) ſo they who are only fleſh, luſt againſt thoſe who are ſpiritual, or who (as 'tis ſaid of *Iſaac* in oppoſition to *Iſmael*, who was *born after the fleſh*) *are born after the Spirit.* For theſe alſo are contrary one to the other, (which is the reaſon given by the Apoſtle in the other Text, why there is ſuch an endleſs War between Fleſh and Spirit in a Believer) yea, There is a five-fold contrariety between a Godly and a wicked man.

Firſt, They are contrary in their nature; unholineſs (by reaſon of ſin) is the nature of a wicked man, and holineſs (through grace) is the nature of a godly man; He not only *eſcapeth the corruption which is in the world through luſt, but is made a partaker of the divine nature* (2 Pet. 1. 4.)

Secondly, They have a contrary pedegree and Original. It's ſaid of *Cain, he was of the wicked one*, that is, the Devil; but Saints are born of God, he is their Father.

Thirdly, They are contrary in their courſe; The Godly walk in the way of Gods Commandments, in the narrow way; the wicked walk in the way of their own hearts, in the broad way.

Fourthly, They are contrary not only as to their external courſe, but as to their internal motions, their hopes and their fears, their joyes and their ſorrows (theſe are the motions of the Soul) are as contrary as their natures are, or as the four winds of Heaven are.

Fifthly, and laſtly, They are contrary in their ends; taking the end in a double notion.

Firſt, As end imports our aim and deſign; A godly mans chief aim is the glory of God; A wicked man aims at himſelf chiefly, or at ſelf-advancement in all he doth; *God is not in all his thoughts* (Pſal. 10. 4.) that is, not at all in his thoughts, either to mind his word as his rule, or his glory as his end.

Secondly, They are contrary in their end, as end notes the upſhot and concluſion of all. *Mark the perfect man* (ſaith *David* Pſal. 37. 37, 38.) *and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace. But the tranſgreſſors ſhall be deſtroyed together, the end of the wicked ſhall be cut off*; that is, This ſhall be their end (and 'tis a ſad one) they ſhall be cut off and deſtroyed. Now they who differ in all theſe reſpects, and are under a contrariety of nature, of pedegree, of way, of motion, of end how; is it poſſible but there muſt be enmity and hatred between them? The one is *light*, the other *darkneſs*, now as the Apoſtle argues it (2 *Cor.* 6. 14.) *What Communion hath light with darkneſs?* No more hath righteouſneſs with unrighteouſneſs. *What agreement hath the Temple of God with Idols?* No more hath he that believeth with an Infidel. The wicked are called Serpents, Wolves, Lyons, theſe names are not ſpit out of a rayling mouth, or from a ſpleeniſh ſpirit, they are not the evaporations of an angry man, but they are dictates of the holy Spirit, and beſtowed upon them by the moſt wiſe God, who knows unerringly how to call every thing and perſon by a name, moſt ſignificative both of their nature and temper. On the other hand the Godly are called by the ſame Spirit of God, *Sheep, Lambs, Doves.* And there is not only a difference between theſe, but a contrariety, yea an antipathy as to qualities and principles. Now antipathies are not againſt this or that Individual only, but againſt the whole kind, and eſpecially againſt the moſt eminent individuals of any kind. And therefore becauſe *Job* was a man ſo eminent and exemplary, both for piety and for Juſtice, he was hated the more. *'Tis the nature of evil men, to hate thoſe that are good, and 'tis their cuſtom the better they are the more to hate them.*

Secondly, Whereas *Job* ſaith, *If I rejoyced at the deſtruction of him that hated me.*

Obſerve, *Man is very apt to rejoyce in the hurt, or at the fall of thoſe that hate him.*

At vindicta bonum vita jucundius ipſa.

Some Heathens have found the revengeful taking away of an enemies life more ſweet to them then their own lives; and while *Job* profeſſeth he did not, doubtleſs he found a great Combat in himſelf not to do it; 'tis no eaſie thing, not to rejoyce when an enemy falls. Deſire of revenge either upon an apprehenſion of wrong received, or of hatred expreſſed by others againſt us, doth ſo deeply poſſeſs the minds of many, that there's nothing more difficult then to reſtrain it, how difficult then is it to remove and heal it? And ſurely if the beſt men examin their hearts honeſtly and thoroughly, they ſhall find a great deal of this old leven lie hidden in them, even while they are profeſſing againſt it, and think they have purged it out. Who is there that hath not ſome ſecret rejoycings and pleaſing motions within, when he hears of the death or hurt of his enemy? and how hardly can ſome, who are great Maſters at the art of diſſimulation, diſſemble it? As for the groſſer ſort of Mankind they declare this ſin (as *Sodom* did her other ſins) they hide it not. Yea they proclaim it to all the world, how ſweet revenge is to them, and how much they rejoyce at the deſtruction of thoſe that hate them, and of thoſe whom they themſelves hate. And the Church of God ſaw or rather fore-ſaw thoſe who hated her, ſo forward to triumph in her ruins that ſhe ſends this check and cooler of their paſſion (*Mich.* 7.8.) *Rejoyce not againſt me O mine enemy, when I fall I ſhall ariſe*; As if ſhe had ſaid, I know as ſoon as you ſee me down, or hear of my down-fall, you will be rejoycing preſently, but don't rejoyce at my fall; For I ſhall ariſe to your fall. *David* complains of ſuch malignants (*Pſal.* 35.15.) *In my adverſity they rejoyced, and gathered themſelves together, yea the abjects gathered themſelves together.* It is ſaid (*Rev.* 11.10.) when the *two witneſſes* ſhall be ſlain, then *they that dwelt upon earth* (that is, meer earthly men) *ſhall rejoyce over them, and make merry, and ſhall ſend gifts one to another, becauſe theſe two Prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth.* Now as the wicked ſet themſelves and provoke others to rejoyce at the deſtruction of thoſe they hate; So a godly man hath ſomewhat to do to keep himſelf from rejoycing, when they who hate him are deſtroyed. 'Tis an argument of much grace and holy moderation, when the heart is not lifted up at the fall of an enemy. The paſſion of revenge hath not prevailed ſo far over many as to compel them to contrive and plot evil againſt their enemies, or to lie in wait to act and execute it; yet they can be well enough pleaſed and inwardly delighted when they hear of any evil befalling them: yea ſome think they have diſcharged and paid the whole debt of love to an enemy very fully, if they do neither deviſe nor act miſchief againſt him, when as in the mean time they nouriſh ſecret riſings in their Souls againſt him; and upon reports of his deſtruction ſecret rejoycings at it; yet revenge in the affections is altogether as ſinful before God (though not at all pœnal among men) as that which breaks out into open violence; yea, they who rejoyce at the deſtruction of their enemy are ſelf-avengers, as well as they who deſtroy him. And therefore

Thirdly, Obſerve, *To rejoyce at the deſtruction of an enemy, is to take revenge upon an enemy, 'tis an act of revenge.*

Thus the Lord threatned *Edom* by his Prophet (*Obad. Ver.* 10.11,12.) *For thy violence againſt thy brother Jacob ſhame ſhall cover thee, and thou ſhalt be cut off for ever.* But what was this violence, which *Edom*, the poſterity of *Eſau* did to the deſcendants of *Jacob*? It doth not appear in this context of the Prophet that they actually did them violence, but they conſented to and were well pleaſed with the violence which was done them by the *Babylonians*, and ſo 'tis explained in the next verſe, *In the day that thou ſtoodeſt on the other ſide, in the day that ſtrangers carried away his forces, and forreiners entred into his gates, and caſt lots upon Jeruſalem, even thou waſt as one of them*; that is, Thou waſt as one of them that had a hand in his ruin. And hence that prayer of the Church (*Pſal.* 137.7.) *Remember O Lord, the children of Edom, in the day of Jeruſalem; who ſaid, raſe it, raſe it, even to the foundation thereof*; They did not raſe it themſelves, but they encouraged thoſe who did it. Thus they were as one of them; And the Prophet ſhews further, how they were as one of them, by rejoycing, and by being well pleaſed to ſee their brethren carried into captivity (*Ver.* 12.) *Thou ſhouldeſt not have rejoyced over the children of Judah in the day of their deſtruction.* This their rejoycing rendred them ſelf-revengers, though they did not ſo much as touch their brethren. To be enviouſly troubled at the good of others, and to be rejoycingly pleaſed at the hurt of others, are alike ſinful. *David* prophecied the deſtruction of *Saul* his enemy (1 *Sam.* 26. 10.) *As the Lord liveth, the Lord ſhall ſmite him, or his day ſhall come to die, or he ſhall deſcend into battel and periſh*; that is, He ſhall either die a natural death, or a violent death, either by ſome immediate hand of God upon him, or by the ſword of the enemy. But, that *David* was not pleaſed nor rejoyced at the deſtruction of *Saul*, the Funeral elegy or lamentation which he made at the report of his death, and the ſevere puniſhment of him who hoped for a reward for reporting himſelf (though only in curteſie and commiſeration) the Author of it, do ſufficiently declare (2 *Sam.* 1.)

But you will ſay, May we not rejoyce at the deſtruction of an Enemy, why not? Did not *Moſes* and all *Iſrael* rejoyce with ſinging at the deſtruction of *Pharaoh* (Exod. 15.) *Then ſang Moſes and the children of Iſrael this ſong unto the Lord, and ſpake, ſaying, I will ſing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed glorioſly: the Horſe and his Rider hath he caſt into the Sea.* And *David* himſelf (1 *Sam.* 25.39.) bleſſeth God for the death of *Nabal*, who had only been uncivil to him; *Bleſſed be the Lord* (ſaith he) *that hath pleaded the cauſe of my reproach from the hand of Nabal, and hath kept his ſervant from evil, for the Lord hath returned the wickedneſs of Nabal upon his own head.* Now to bleſs God for any thing, is to put it among our bleſſings, which is an argument of ſome kind of rejoycing in it. And (*Heſt.* 8. 15, 16.) When the plot of *Haman* againſt the Jews was diſcovered and defeated, and *Haman*, who hated them, hanged; The Text ſaith, *That the City of Shuſhan rejoyced*; that is, the Jews in *Shuſhan* rejoyced, *they had light and gladneſs and joy and honour*; and it was a good day, a day of feaſting quite through all the Provinces, upon the account of the fall of their enemies. Further, ſaith not *Solomon* (Pro. 11.10.) *When the wicked periſh there is ſhouting*; that is, ſhouting for Joy; How then can it be concluded ſinful to rejoyce at the fall or deſtruction of an Enemy, or of thoſe who hate us.

For anſwer to this objection, we muſt diſtinguiſh; Firſt, of Enemies; Secondly, of Joy.

Enemies are of two ſorts; either private, or publick, either enemies to a man, or (as I may ſay) enemies to mankind, eſpecially to a ſort of mankind.

Again, Some are not only publick, but reſolved and incorrigible enemies, they are fixt in their wrath and hatred, in their plottings and deſignings againſt the peace and proſperity of the people of God. Now when we affirm, that 'tis ſinful to rejoyce at the deſtruction of thoſe that hate us, or of our enemies, we are eſpecially to underſtand it of private and perſonal enemies, and not of the enemies of our publick peace, or of *Sions* proſperity. And yet we may exceed in our rejoycings even at their deſtruction, we muſt therefore diſtinguiſh, as about enemies, ſo about Joy.

Firſt then, there is a joy meerly at the miſchief fallen upon our enemies.

Secondly, There is a joy, becauſe by their fall ſome good or benefit redounds to the publick, as namely, Freedom from civil bondage and bloody perſecution for conſcience ſake, the free paſſage of the Goſpel, and the pure adminiſtrations of worſhip. It is not lawful to rejoyce at the deſtruction of the greateſt or worſt publick Enemies, as it is a miſchief to them, but as it is a good to others, and as their cutting off, cuts them off from an opportunity to do miſchief. With theſe limitations, we may without breach of charity, both be grieved at the proſperity, and rejoyce at the ruin of an Adverſary; Or when God raiſeth up Inſtruments to pull down cruel oppreſſors, or pulls them down himſelf, if we grieve at their miſery, and only rejoyce in and bleſs God for our own mercies and deliverances, we ſin not in our rejoycings. Thus we may be both innocently troubled at the riſing, & glad at the ruin of thoſe who hate us.

Evenire plerumq; ſolet, ut non amiſſa charitate & inimici nos ruina lætificet & rurſum ejus gloria ſine invidiæ culpa nos contriſtet. Greg.

Or take it thus; We muſt not rejoyce, no not at the deſtruction of the worſt enemies, out of a deſire of revenge upon them, or wrath againſt them. But we may rejoyce,

Firſt, Becauſe in their fall Glory ariſeth to the name of God.

Secondly, Becauſe the downfal of our oppreſſors, may terrifie others from oppreſſing us.

Thirdly, Becauſe it is a Conviction upon all, that God governs, rules and orders the world (*Pſal.* 58. 10, 11.) *The righteous ſhall rejoyce when he ſeeth the vengeance, ſo that a man ſhall ſay, Verily there is a God that judgeth in the earth.* When God ſmites the wicked, we ſhould grieve at the miſery of him that is ſmitten, and congratulate the Juſtice of him that ſmote him; that ſo we may neither ſhew our ſelves revengeful towards man, nor unthankful towards God.

Cum perverſum omnipotens percuſſit, condolendum eſt miſeriæ pereuntis, & congaudendum juſtitiæ judicis; ut nec pereunti homini exiſtimemus adverſarii, nec judicanti Deo inveniamur ingrati. Greg. lib. 22. cap. 11.

Fourthly, Becauſe hereby good men are Incouraged in the ſervice of God. Thus *Zachary* prayed in his Song (*Luke* 1. 74.) That God would *grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of all our Enemies, might ſerve him without fear, in holineſs and righteouſneſs before him all the days of our life.* Free liberty to ſerve God is one of the choiceſt fruits of the deſtruction of evil men. When the enemies were either appeaſed or ſuppreſſed (*Acts* 9. 31.) *Then had the Churches reſt throughout all Judea, and Galilee, and Samaria, and were edified, walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the holy Ghoſt, were multiplied.* When theſe ſweet and bleſſed mercies accrew to the Church and people of God, by the fall of Enemies, there's matter of great Joy.

Laſtly, We may rejoyce at the deſtruction of common enemies, becauſe by the viſible demonſtrations of divine diſpleaſure againſt them, ſome may be not only (as was toucht before) convinced of the righteouſneſs of Gods ways, but converted from the error of their own ways. This effect was eminent in the deſtruction of *Haman*, that profeſſeth enemy of the Jewiſh Nation (*Heſt.* 8. 17.) *Many of the people of the land became Jews, for the fear of the Jews fell upon them.* And (which is more matter of rejoycing) ſuch common enemies whoſe perſons ſurvive the deſtruction of their eſtates and powers, may poſſibly be converted themſelves, as perſecuting *Saul* was (*Acts* 9.) Affliction and trouble upon ſome enemies hath (through the gracious working of God by it) been a means to humble their hearts, and open their eyes to ſee the hand of God, and his power, againſt which they have ſo long contended, and ſo no longer to kick againſt the pricks. Upon theſe or the like Conſiderations we may rejoyce at the deſtruction of an Enemy, and not otherwiſe, eſpecially not upon any private quarrel or wrong received whatſoever.

And that any other rejoycing in that caſe is not good, appears many ways; But I ſhall only add, that the Law of *Moſes* (Exod. 23. 4, 5.) commanded the Jews to bring back an enemies beaſt that was gon aſtray; and if they ſaw the Aſs of him that hated them lying under a burden, they might not forbear to help him. Surely, that Law which commanded a charity to the fallen or ſtrayed beaſt of an enemy, did alſo forbid ſuch rejoycing when an enemy himſelf fell, or was deſtroyed. *David* (Pſal. 35. 13.) was ſo far from rejoycing at the fall of his enemies, that in their ſickneſs and adverſity, *He wept and put on ſackcloth; he was as one that mourned.* Heathens have done ſomewhat like this of *David*, though not with *Davids* ſpirit. The Hiſtory ſaith, *Scipio* wept at the burning of *Carthage:* And *Titus* wept for the miſery brought upon the Jews his enemies, at the ſiege and ſackage of *Jeruſalem.* Indeed nature ſeems to prompt us a little this way; It being engraven upon the hearts of all men; Not to do that to others which themſelves would not have others do to them: Who would not take it ill, if when his houſe is on fire, or his Ship wrackt at Sea, his neighbour ſhould look on it, or hear of it, laughing and ſaying, I am glad of this, this is as I would have it? If when a Father chaſtens a ſtubborn child, his other children ſhould inſult over him, how unnatural were it? It is much more unnatural for Chriſtians to rejoyce over the ſevere diſpenſations of God towards ſtubborn men, or the deſtruction of their enemies. He hath not the heart of a man in him, much leſs of a Chriſtian, whoſe heart is glad at the miſery of any man. Chriſtian love never acts to the full, but when we love our friends in God, and our enemies for God.

And to keep down rejoycing at the deſtruction of an enemy, remember there are none ſo neer deſtruction as they who rejoyce unduely at the deſtruction of others, though enemies. Upon this ground *Solomon* prohibits all ſuch joyes (*Pro.* 24. 17, 18.) *Rejoyce not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he ſtumbleth, leſt the Lord ſee it, and it diſpleaſe him, and he turn away his wrath from him.* To be glad at the ſtumbling, or to rejoyce at the falling of an enemy, is to be an enemy to our ſelves. He that is glad when his enemy ſtumbles, and rejoyceth at his fall, ſtumbles and falls far worſe himſelf. For as in doing ſo he falls into ſin, which is the worſt kind of falling, ſo he is in danger of falling into ſome worſer miſery then he. God who righteth us by the fall of an enemy, will alſo right himſelf upon us, if we diſpleaſe him by any ſinful rejoycing at his fall. When the Lord (as *Solomon* here ſaith) turns away his wrath from that enemy in whoſe fall he ſees any rejoyce, he will turn it upon thoſe who rejoyce at his fall. The turning away of Gods wrath from that enemy in whoſe fall any rejoyce, doth not ſignifie that God is reconciled to or well pleaſed with him, but that he is angry and diſpleaſed with thoſe who ſo rejoyce. As he that doth good to his enemy, in ſo doing *ſhall heap coals of fire on his head* (Rom. 12. 20.) ſo he that is glad at the harms of his enemy, may quickly heap coals of fire upon his own. The whole 25. and 26. Chapters of the Prophecy of *Ezekiel* are ſpent in ſhewing how God did take vengeance on thoſe who rejoyced at the deſtruction of his people, whom they counted enemies, as you may ſee in reading but the contents of thoſe two Chapters. For a further prevention of ſuch dangerous joys, take this advice; When thine enemy falleth, think thus; I my ſelf am either like him or worſe or better then he. If thou art better, then conſider who made thee to differ. If thou art but ſuch a one as he, much more if thou art worſe then he, remember, that thou haſt cauſe rather to bleſs God, and wonder, that thou art ſpared and ſtandeſt; then to rejoyce that he is ſmitten and fallen.

I ſhall conclude this obſervation, with one inference or Corollary from it.

If it be ſinful to rejoyce at the hurt of thoſe, who have or would do us hurt, what is it then to rejoyce at the hurt of thoſe who either have or would do us good. And if it be ſo ſinful to rejoyce at the hurt of ſuch, what is it to do them hurt? What a wickedneſs is it to vex and moleſt thoſe, who are our friends, and have ſought our peace?

Fourthly, Obſerve, *A godly man keeps a ſtrict hand over, and makes a Conſcience of his paſſions, as well as he keeps a ſtrict hand over his actions, and makes a Conſcience of his Converſation.*

If but a thought ſtir amiſs he checks it, and will bring it in ſubjection. He watches the motions of his mind as much as or more then the motions of his outward man: This is ſpiritual walking indeed, when we look to our joys, and to our ſorrows, when we look to our hopes, and to our fears, when we look to regulate and moderate theſe inward workings; this is an Argument of a ſpiritual man indeed. Such a one was *Job*, he would profeſs that he was clear, not only from any revengeful deſtruction of his enemy, but from rejoycing at his deſtruction. *If I rejoyced at the deſtruction of him that hated me*, or (as it follows in the Text.)

Liſt up my ſelf when evil found him.

Here *Job* diſclaims any uncomely external actings towards a ſuffering enemy. I (ſaith he) did not *lift up my ſelf*, or as Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates, *beſtir me*; that is, in pride or boaſting, as if I would preſently advance upon his ruins, and raiſe my ſelf by his fall.

Καὶ εἶπεν ἡ καρδία μου Εὖγε; *& dixit cor meum Euge.* 70. *In commentariis Græcis repetitur* Euge, Euge.

The Septuagint render this part of the verſe as the former, denying all ſecret complacency at the deſtruction of his enemy. *If my heart hath ſaid, O well, or this pleaſeth me wonderouſly well.* Some of the Greek Commentators double the word; *If mine heart hath ſaid, O well, O well*, or as it is ſaid in the Pſalm, *Aha, aha, ſo would I have it.* Thus read, the words are both a continuation and a fuller explication of what he ſaid before, his denial of any cloſe content he took at the ruin of his enemy.

Si Jubilavi cum occurret ei malum Targ. Καὶ ἐπανέστην ὅτι κατέλαβεν αὐτὸν κάκωσις. *Si inſurrexi quando apprehendit eum afflictio* Sym. *Aliquid hoſtile affert illa exultatio.*

But I rather underſtand theſe words, *Or lift up my ſelf*, &c. Of that which is external; As if *Job* had ſaid, *If I have uſed any vaunting behaviour, or triumphing geſtures when I heard of or ſaw that evil had found my enemy.*

Though *evil* in this latter part of the verſe, and *deſtruction* in the former, be the ſame for the matter or kind, yet ſome conceive they are not the ſame for degree, every deſtruction is an evil, but every evil is not a deſtruction; and if we take *evil* here for ſome leſſer trouble or *loſs* (Mr. *Broughton* renders the Hebrew, by that word, *when he found loſs*) this greatens and increaſes *Job's* charity, who as he did not rejoyce at the utter ruin of him that hated him, ſo he did not ſo much as give himſelf a liberty (which ſome good men in like caſes take) to make himſelf merry with (as we ſpeak) any ſhrewd turn which was done to his enemy. Thus *Job* clears himſelf within from rejoycing, and without from inſulting when miſchief of any kind or degree befel or found him, who ſought to do him a miſchief. The ſignificancy of theſe words, *when evil found him*, deſerves to be a little enquired into before I give the notes. *If I lifted up my ſelf,*

When evil found him.] 'Tis an uſual Scripture phraſe, to ſay evil finds a man when he falls into it. (*Deut.* 31. 17.) The Lord telling the people of *Iſrael* what they muſt expect in caſe of diſobedience, concludes in general, *That many evils and troubles ſhall befal them*; The Hebrew is, *Many evils and troubles ſhall find them* (Pſal. 116. 3.) *The pains of Hell gat hold upon me*; the Hebrew is, *found me*: this Finding may have a three-fold interpretation.

Firſt, A thing is found (as we ſay) by accident; ſo that is found which was never ſought for: A man travelling upon the high way, may find a purſe of Gold, or a piece of money, he went not out to ſeek it, but he found it; though there be a providence of God in all ſuch findings, yet, as to man, they are accidental. Thus it is ſaid (*Deut.* 19. 5.) *When a man goeth into the wood with his neighbour, to hew wood, and his hand fetcheth a ſtroak with the Axe to cut down the Tree, and the head ſlippeth from the helve, and lighteth upon his neighbour*, &c. The Hebrew is, *it findeth his neighbour*: The man did not go out with a murtherous purpoſe or an intent to kill his neighbour, but the head found him and ſlew him beſides his intention.

Secondly, Finding notes an earneſt purſuit of, or ſearching for a thing which we either once had but have loſt, or have a deſire to enjoy. This is Finding upon enquiry, and is as the moſt common ſence of the word in other places, ſo the ſpecial ſence of it in this; *If I have lift up my ſelf when evil purſued and found him*: As if *Job* had ſaid, When divine vengeance followed and overtook mine enemy, I did not lift up my ſelf.

Hence Note, *Judgment will ſeek after ungodly men, till it finds and overtakes them.*

Let a man hide his ſin as much as he can, God will find it out, and let a ſinner hide himſelf as much as he can, puniſhment will find him out; Though he goeth into the clefts of the Rock, though he deſcends to the depths of the Sea, yet puniſhment will find him out (*Pſal.* 140. 11.) *Evil ſhall hunt the violent man to overthrow him.* 'Tis an alluſion to hounds that are of a quick ſent, and purſue the game with pleaſure; they do not ſee the deer, or the hare, yet they follow upon the ſent. And though ſometimes they have a very cold and dead ſent, yet they will follow and work it out; Thus evil ſhall hunt the violent man to overthrow him: and though ſometimes he hath as it were, got out of the view or ſight of evil, and thinks himſelf under covert, yet theſe evils like a company of greedy hounds, will purſue, till they have overtaken and overthrown him. That of *Moſes* to the two Tribes and a half, is full to this purpoſe, when they deſir'd to ſtay on the other ſide of *Jordan*; he there gave them a grave exhortation to ſearch their own hearts, and then concluded, *If ye will not do ſo* (according to my counſel) *then*, (ſaith he) *Behold ye have ſinned againſt the Lord, and be ſure your ſin will find you out* (Numb. 32. 23.) As if he had ſaid, *You may make fair pretences to me, but if you do not as I have counſelled you, to go over Jordan armed to help ſettle your Brethren in their poſſeſſions: You have ſinned againſt the Lord, and though I find you not out, yet your ſin will, what excuſes ſoever you make, what colours ſoever you put upon it, you will find this to be your ſin; And your ſin (in the effects or puniſhments of it) will find you out.* The Lord threaten'd his ancient people the Jews by the Prophet, That he would take a courſe with them, notwithſtanding all their Refuges and hiding places; And therefore he gives it under thoſe elegant metaphors of fiſhing and hunting (*Jer.* 16. 16.) *Behold I will ſend Fiſhers among you, and they ſhall fiſh you; And after that I will ſend for many hunters, and they ſhall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the Rocks*; That is, you think your ſelves ſafe as a Fiſh under water, but I will ſend ſuch among you as ſhall caſt in their hooks and nets to take you; And though you get to your Coverts as wild beaſts, yet I will ſend hunters to you, that ſhall purſue you, and overtake you, and find you out.

Thirdly, This manner of ſpeech (*when evil found him*) notes the ſecurity and careleſneſs of a ſinner; He is often without ſo much as the leaſt ſuſpition, or thought of evil, when evil is ready to catch hold of him; evil finds the ſinner when he doth not think of it, or when he leaſt expects it.

Quod inveniſſet eum malum. i. e. *ex inſperato ei ſuperveniſſet.* Aquin.

Hence Note, *Unlookt for evils overtake them ſooneſt who run on faſteſt in doing evil.*

They ſhall ſay as *Ahab* to *Eliah*, *Haſt thou found me O mine enemy?* yea, *Eliah* found him; *Ahab* had been ſeeking *Eliah*, but could not find him; But *Eliah* found *Ahab*. Thus will every ſecure ſinner be forced at laſt to ſay of the evils which God ſends upon him, *Have you found me? They who have moſt cauſe to expect evil, expect it leaſt; And they who are always doing evil, put the evil day, and the evil of the day furtheſt from themſelves.* Whenſoever evil comes and finds them, it finds them unprepared, it finds them unfitted, it finds them (as that Text in *Luke* which ſpeaks of the evil ſervant) eating, and drinking, and beating their fellow-ſervants; they are quite upon another buſineſs, they are hot in doing evil, and they little think, much leſs, fear that evil will find them. *If I lift up my ſelf when evil found him.*

Laſtly, From this whole verſe we may Obſerve, how much the patience of Beleevers differs from the patience of the beſt of heathens, whether in bearing troubles, or forgiving injuries. It is granted that ſeveral of them have acted very high to appearance in the exerciſe of that vertue. *Ariſtotle* adviſed *Alexander the Great*, that he looking upon himſelf as a man above all men, ſhould never take notice of or be moved at the ill words and reproachful ſpeeches of any, but neglect them. When one ſtruck *Cato* unawares in a bath, and preſently askt his pardon; *Cato* anſwered, *I do not remember that any man ſtruck me.* He thought it better not to acknowledg that he had been ſtrucken, then condeſcend to pardon him that did it. And when a boiſterous perſon abuſed *Socrates*, beating his face (as we ſay) black and blew, all the revenge he took was to write upon his own Forehead, *Such a man did it.* Yet theſe were but Heatheniſh boaſts and ſhadows of patience, not the true vertue, much leſs the grace of patience. Here was no real ſubmiſſion to the hand of God who permitted theſe diſpenſations, as there was in *David* when *Shimei* reviled and curſed him; here was no ſence or acknowledgment of their own vileneſs, no ſign of chariay, but a deep contempt of thoſe who wronged them, joyned with a ſwelling prid and an inſuperable height of ſpirit in their own ſuppoſed worthineſs or greatneſs.

All which are at the furtheſt diſtance and remove from that patience and charity which appeared actually in *Job*, and ſhould be the temper of every Chriſtian under ſuch incivilities and enmities acted towards him by his enemies, or thoſe that hate him.

Verſe 30. (**Neither have I ſuffered my mouth to ſin by wiſhing a curſe to his Soul**)

We (which ſome other tranſlaters do not) read theſe words in a parentheſis; and I grant there is a full ſence without them; yet they make the ſence much fuller. For as in the former verſe *Job* proteſted that he neither ſecretly rejoyced, nor outwardly boaſted either at the total ruin and deſtruction which befel, or at any leſſer evil which found him that hated him; ſo in this verſe he proceeds to purge himſelf from all revengeful ſpeeches, or from venting his heart at his mouth, by wiſhing either deſtruction or any evil to him that hated him; as if he had ſaid, *Both my heart and my tongue is clean in this matter, I have not rejoyced when trouble came upon my enemy, much leſs did I deſire or wiſh that it might come upon him.*

Neither have I ſuffered my mouth to ſin.

We tranſlate **mouth**, the Text is, *palate*, which is a part of the mouth; and ſo Mr. *Broughton* renders, *No, I let not my palate ſin*; The tongue and palate are parts of the mouth, and as all of them joined are the inſtruments of ſpeech, ſo any of them alone are expreſſed to be ſo in Scripture; *Neither have I*

Suffered my palate or mouth to ſin.

ולא נתתי *Non dedi; i.e. non ſivi, non permiſi ſic paſſim ſumitur verbum* נתן *dedit, quando cum infinitivo aut Gerundio conſtruitur.* Druſ.

The Hebrew is, *Neither have I given my mouth to ſin*, that is, I have not given way to my mouth, nor indulged this liberty to my tongue; I have not taken off the bridle of a watchful reſtraint from my lips, nor let my words run at random without controul. So this form of ſpeech is uſed in the 9. Chapter of this Book (*v.* 18.) where *Job* complaining of the preſſures, the continual preſſures that burdned him, ſaith *he* (that is, *God*) *will not ſuffer me to take my breath*; the Hebrew is, *he will not give me*, (that is, leave) *to take my breath*. Thus (*Gen.*20.6.) when *Abraham* by diſſembling (at leaſt) that *Sarah* was his wife put her into a danger of being abuſed by *Abimelech*, who yet being rebuked by God in a dream, could plead, *In the integrity of my heart and innocency of my hands have I done this*; *yea* (ſaith the Lord) *I know thou didſt this in the integrity of my heart; for I with-held thee from ſinning againſt me; therefore ſuffered I thee not to touch her*; As if the Lord had ſaid, Thou waſt ready to have given way to thy affections, but I would not; I would not ſuffer thee to run into that error. In this manner *Moſes* (Numb. 21.23.) expreſſeth that unkind ſtop which the King of the *Amorites* gave the Children of *Iſrael* in their march to *Canaan*, *And* Sihon *would not ſuffer* Iſrael *to paſs through his border*; the Hebrew is, *Sihon would not give* Iſrael (that is, freedom) *to paſs through his border*. And thus 'tis ſaid in that propheſie concerning Chriſt (*Pſal.*16.10.) *Neither wilt thou ſuffer thy holy one to ſee corruption*, or, *thou wilt not give corruption any power over thy holy one*; corruption (had it been let alone to take its courſe) would have ſeiſed upon the body of Chriſt, as well as upon the body of any other man, but God did not give corruption leave to do ſo, he would not ſuffer it to take its courſe againſt him. To die was enough to ſatisfie the penalty of the Law; there was no neceſſity that the body of Chriſt ſhould corrupt to do it; yea if the body of Chriſt had corrupted in the grave, his ſatisfaction had not appeared. The ſame language is uſed in another Pſalm, to ſignifie preſervation from civil corruption (*Pſal.* 121. 3.) *He will not ſuffer thy foot to be moved*; that is, none ſhall be able to diſturb thy peace; the Text is, *He will not give thy foot to be moved*; as if he had ſaid, Many will endeavour to caſt thee down, but by the power and providence of God, thou ſhalt be upheld and maintain'd firm in thy place or ſtanding. This word is uſed again (*Ezek.* 14 8.) where the Lord tells his people, that if any of them coming to a Prophet to enquire of him, ſhould yet ſet up Idols in his heart, and put the ſtumbling block of his iniquity before his face, *he would ſet his face againſt that man, and make him a ſign and a proverb*; the Hebrew is, *I will give my face againſt him*, that is, I will give leave to my wrath and fierce indignation to proceed in full force againſt him. The face in Scripture ſignifies, as love and favour, ſo wrath and anger, becauſe there is uſually a diſcovery or an image of theſe paſſions printed upon and diſcernable in the face. Once more, the Prophet *Daniel* ſpeaks in this form (*Chap.* 9. 3.) to ſhew how he put out all the powers of his Soul wreſtling in prayer with God, *When I underſtood by Books the number of the Years whereof the word of the Lord came to* Jeremiah *the Prophet that he would accompliſh Seventy Years in the deſolations of* Jeruſalem. *Then I ſet my face unto the Lord God to ſeek by prayers and ſupplications, with faſting and ſack-cloth and aſhes.* The Text is, *I gave my face*, that is, I gave my ſelf wholly up to theſe duties of prayer and faſting, I put no reſtraint no ſtop nor check at all upon my Spirit, but let it go forth with all its might, ſtriving and working with God for the accompliſhment of that gracious promiſe to and propheſie concerning his captivated people.

Thus we ſee the force and uſage of the word throughout the Scriptures of the old Teſtament; and in this ſence we are to underſtand *Job*'s profeſſion here, *neither have I ſuffered (or given) my mouth to ſin*; as if he hed ſaid, my mouth was forward and ready enough, if it might have had leave, or if I would have given it liberty to have wiſhed ill to my enemy, but I did not ſuffer my mouth to run into that ſin.

Dare gutture ad peccandum eſt Hebraiſmus, pro peccare gutture ſive ore ſive lingua, quæ ſunt formandæ vocis inſtrumenta; vel eſt quicquid in buccam venit ſine fræno effundere.

I grant it is a harder matter not to ſuffer the heart to ſin, then not to ſuffer the mouth to ſin, and therefore when *Job* had ſaid in the former verſe, that he had put a ſtop upon his heart, he did more then ſay (which he ſaith here) that he had put a ſtop upon his tongue; *the motions of the Soul are leſs in our power then thoſe of the bodily members*; yet to ſhew that he was compleat in this point of love even towards his enemies, *Job* expreſſeth it by both. It is uſual in Scripture to ſpeak of that firſt, which is hardeſt to be done, or not to be done, and then of that which is eaſieſt; making the latter a ſign of the former, or making the latter which is eaſieſt more credible, when we have overcome that which is more difficult. When *Job* had once aſſured us that his heart did not run over in rejoycing, we may eaſily believe, that his mouth did not break out in evil ſpeaking; *Neither have I ſuffered my mouth to ſin.*

Solet Scriptura non ſemel, quod difficilius eſt præmittere, & quæ minora ſunt poſtponere ut ſignum ſint præcedentium aut ex præcedentibus facilius credantur. Sanct.

Firſt, In that he ſaith he did not ſuffer or give way to any paſſion, or diſtemper of his Spirit to vent it ſelf at his tongue.

> Obſerve, *the corruptions of a good man may preſs him, and preſs him ſore, both to do and ſpeak ſinfully.*

Job was hard put to it, when he ſaith, *he did not ſuffer his mouth to ſin*: He had much ado to lock up his lips. *Moſes* was a very holy and a meek man, the meekeſt man on the face of the Earth, yet corruption was ſo ſtirred in him, that once it prevailed over him, and foiled him ſorely; he could not hold his tongue, but (being vext and angry) *ſpake unadviſedly with his lips* (Pſal. 106.33.) The power of innate corruption is chiefly ſeen in two things.

Firſt, In the oppoſition that it makes againſt our doing of good; this the Apoſtle treats of at large (*Rom.* 7. 18, 23.) *When I would do good evil is preſent with me: When to will is preſent, how to perform I know not*; why not? What hindred? His corruptions ſtood up in oppoſition and rebelled againſt the good he was about to do, as he confeſſed at the 23. verſe; *I ſee another law in my members warring againſt the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law* (that is, the power) *of ſin, which is in my members.* His corruptions brought ſuch an Army againſt him, that (as 'tis ſaid *Gal.* 5. 17. upon the ſame conſideration of the luſtings of the fleſh againſt the Spirit) *he could not do the thing that he would.* Luſt would always ſtop us wholly and it uſually clogs us extreamly when we are addreſſing our ſelves to any holy duty. And therefore we are exhorted (*Heb.* 12. 1.) as *to lay aſide every weight* (of worldly encumbrance) ſo, *the ſin which doth ſo eaſily beſet us* (any ſpecial indwelling corruption) *that ſo we may run with patience the race that is ſet before us*; as a man that hath a burthen at his back, or a long garment dangling about his heels is unfit to run a race, ſo are they for the ſpiritual race who are entangled with the love of the World, or with any ſinful compliances.

Secondly, Natural corruption beſtirs it ſelf, and ſhews its power by provoking and preſſing us, by goading and moving us to that which is evil. Of this the Apoſtle *James* ſpeaks (*Chap.* 1. 14.) *Let no man ſay when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man*; that is, he doth not tempt any man to the evil of ſin; God doth not provoke nor blow up any mans luſts or paſſions, his pride or covetouſneſs. He tempts many by putting them to the harder exerciſes and ſervices of grace; but he tempts no man by drawing out or ſtirring up his corruptions. How then is man tempted? The Apoſtle anſwers in the next words; *But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away with his own luſt and inticed.* 'Tis luſt which inticeth, and by inticement draws man to ſin. Uſually the Devil ſets luſt a work, and luſt ſets man a-work, yet luſt doth often ſet man a-work, though the Devil ſtand by and do nothing. Our luſts, that is, our luſtful and deceitful hearts are a fountain of ſin, 'tis no eaſie matter to reſiſt, and 'tis extreamly hard to conquer the motions of them. Thus the power of luſt is great, both in oppoſing us when we would do good, and in provoking us to do evil. *Job's* mouth would fain have been ſpeaking unduly, but he did not ſuffer it.

Secondly, Obſerve, *Moſt men, that I ſay not all men, ſuffer themſelves to run into, more evils or ſins, both by ſpeech and practice, then they are neceſſitated unto,* or, *they commit many ſins which they might avoid.*

As ſome do even invite temptations and provoke their luſts to activeneſs, ſo there are none ſo active as they ought and might to reſiſt temptations, and repel their luſtful provocations. Though a man in his natural ſtate hath no power to do that which is properly and ſpiritually good, yet man even in a natural ſtate hath a power to ſtop himſelf in ſomewhat that is evil; a natural man may put ſome check upon his luſts and corruptions, he may bridle and bind them more then he doth. And as there is no natural man that gives himſelf ſuch a ſtop as he might againſt ſin; ſo there are very few (if any) godly men who do it. They that have grace, rarely improve their grace to the utmoſt in hindering and checking the torrent of their corrupt affections. As natural men are led captive by the Devil at his will, ſo the beſt of men fail in ſetting their renewed will reſolutely againſt the Devil. The Apoſtle doth more then imply the deficiency of believers, both in reſiſting luſtful motions from within, and ſatanical ſolicitations from without, while he ſaith (*Rom.* 6. 12, 13.) *Let not ſin therefore reign in your mortal bodies, that ye ſhould obey it in the luſts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as inſtruments of unrighteouſneſs unto ſin; but yield your ſelves unto God*; As if he had ſaid, Your corruptions will move, and Satan will ſolicit you, they will be calling upon you to give up the members of your Bodies, and the powers of your Soul as inſtruments or weapons of unrighteouſneſs, but I exhort you to turn a deaf ear to them, and hearken only to the call of God, who commands you to yield your ſelves unto him, *as they are alive from the dead, and your members as inſtruments of righteouſneſs unto God*; that is, make it appear that you have received a new ſpiritual life, by your yielding to God, and by your not yielding to the Devil: Do not give up any of your members at his ſummons, let not any luſt have your tongue, or hand, or eye, or foot. As *Moſes* would not yield *Pharaoh* a Hoof to ſtay behind from the ſervice of God, ſo let us yield a hair of our head to be an inſtrument of unrighteouſneſs unto ſin, how ſtrongly ſoever Satan or luſt move for it; and to be ſure they will not be wanting in moving. Let a man (which is the particular caſe of the Text) be wronged, or at leaſt think he is, preſently he hears the Devil who is a revengeful Spirit, or his own Spirit of revenge calling for his underſtanding to plot ſome way of revenge, for his heart to wiſh it, for his tongue to threaten it, or for his hand to act and execute it. In all ſuch caſes we ſhould peremptorily deny to yield ſo much as a little finger to ſuch a ſervice. And he that doth ſo, is indeed (through grace) a Maſter of himſelf, and a Conqueror over Satan. But we may lament that there are ſo few of theſe Conquerors and Maſters of themſelves, ſo few watchful keepers of theſe Inſtruments, of theſe weapons of unrighteouſneſs; moſt quickly and eaſily yield them up and let them out, to the ſervice either of this Spirit of revenge, or of ſome other evil Spirit. Where are the men that can ſay (as *Job* here did) in truth, we have not ſuffered our mouth to ſin, when we have been tempted to ſpeak ſinfully; we have not ſuffered our eye to ſin, when we have been tempted to look wantonly; we have not ſuffered our hand to ſin, when we have been tempted to act unrighteouſly. A truely godly man can ſay, that he ſuffers when he ſins, that is, he is rather paſſive then active in ſinning, being buried and violently over-born by temptation, but this will be the charge and condemnation of the World, that they have ſuffered themſelves to ſin. *Peter* rebuked *Ananias* (Acts 5. 3.) becauſe he had yielded up his tongue, an inſtrument unto ſin, *Why hath Satan filled thine heart, to lie to the Holy Ghoſt, and to keep back part of the price of the land?* Why didſt thou yield up thy tongue at the command of thy covetous, or thy unbelieving heart? Why hath Satan filled thy heart? Thou mighteſt have denied Satan when he tempted thee to deny part of the price. Thus the Lord may ſay to moſt ſinners, why hath Satan ſo prevailed? Why have you yielded your hearts and Conſciences as Slave and Captives to him, without ever ſtriking ſtroak for it? Conſider this thing, it is matter of great glory not to yield our ſelves at the call or command of corruption, and it is not only the ſin but the ſhame of man, to ſuffer himſelf to be captivated by the command, or to be at the beck and diſpoſal of his luſts.

To clear this a little further, I ſhall ſhew by what ſteps or degrees the Judgment of God acts towards ſinners in this thing, as alſo by what ſteps or degrees the luſts of men work towards the enſlaving of themſelves in this moſt miſerable bondage of corruption.

Firſt, God in way of puniſhment ſuffers men to be overcome and drawn away by their luſts. Thus the Apoſtle ſaith (*Acts* 14 16.) *God ſuffered all Nations* (except the *Jewiſh* Nation) *to walk in their own ways*; that is, he did not check or ſtop them in their ſinful ways and workings, as he did his own people the *Jews* (for we are not to underſtand the Apoſtle abſolutely, but comparatively) there never was any man, much leſs a Nation of men in the world, who had not ſome ſtop againſt ſin, the ſtop of the light of nature at leaſt; but every Nation hath not had the ſtop of Ordinances, the preaching of the Word, the motions of the Spirit, theſe the *Jews* God's peculiar people had when the old *Gentiles* had them not; they were ſuffered to go on in their own ways without the light of the Word, or help of holy Ordinances. Thus it is ſaid (*Pſal.* 147. 19, 20.) *He ſheweth his word unto* Jacob, *his Statutes and his Judgments unto* Iſrael: *He hath not dealt ſo with any Nation, and as for his Judgments they have not known them.* In this ſence God ſuffered all Nations to walk in their own ways; he gave them not his Word, his Statutes, his Judgments, to ſhew them his ways, or to hinder them in their own, and this was a ſore Judgment.

Secondly, God doth not only ſuffer Nations and Perſons to walk in their own ways, but ſometimes (when his wrath is boiled up to the higheſt) he gives up Nations and Perſons to their own hearts luſt (*Rom.* 1. 26.) *For this cauſe God gave them up to vile affections: For even their Women did change the natural uſe into that which is againſt nature*; and (*verſ.* 28.) *God gave them over to a reprobate mind* (or a mind void of Judgment) *to do thoſe things which are not convenient.* God did not only leave them to their luſts, but let them work wickedneſs without check and control, but in a Judiciary way he put them into the hand of their luſt, and (as 'tis ſaid in that dreadful prophetical threat, *Pſal.* 69. 27.) *He added iniquity to their iniquity*; that is, he gave them full ſcope in ſin, making their latter iniquity the puniſhment of their former iniquity. The fulfilling of which threat upon the *Jews*, who maliciouſly perſecuted and crucified Chriſt, is ſet down at large by the Apoſtle (1 *Theſ.* 2. 15, 16.) *Who both killed the Lord Jeſus, and their own Prophets, and have perſecuted us: And they pleaſe not God, and are contrary to all men; forbidding us to ſpeak to the* Gentiles, *that they might be ſaved, to fill up their ſins alway: for the wrath is come upon them to the utmoſt.* The Apoſtle ſaith not, wrath is come upon them, but (*not anter*) *the wrath* is come upon them to the utmoſt; that is, the wrath threatned in the Pſalm laſt cited, *Add iniquity to their iniquity*; for thus the *Jews* were given up to the wrathfulneſs of their own Spirits againſt Chriſt and the Goſpel, *to fill up their ſins alway*, as the Apoſtle there ſpeaks. And ſo God added iniquity to their iniquity, and did not *let them come* (as it follows in that place of the Pſalm) *into his righteouſneſs*; that is, into the righteouſneſs of Chriſt by faith, but left them as to the pollution of their own luſts, ſo to a Juſtification by their own works (*Rom.* 10.3.) which was a greater judgment then the other, and the perfecting of the threatning to the utmoſt.

Thus we ſee how God in his ſecret but moſt righteous Judgment, firſt ſuffers men to walk in their own ways, and then, ſecondly, gives them up to their own hearts luſt. Now conſider alſo how and by what ſteps the luſts of men work to the enthralling of themſelves unto ſin.

Firſt, Moſt men ſuffer themſelves to be carried away by every temptation; they never check any ſinful motion, they ſay not to their hearts, what are you thinking? Nor to their mouths, what are you ſpeaking? nor to your hands, are you doing? Nor to their feet, whither are ye walking? But ſuffer heart, and tongue, hand, and foot, to run what courſe they will, and the beſt of Saints take not ſuch a ſtrict courſe, either with their hearts or tongues, hands and feet, as they ought.

Secondly, Many do not only ſuffer themſelves to ſin, but give themſelves up to ſin. That's the word which the Pſalmiſt uſeth, while he ſpeaks of ſinning by word (*Pſal.* 50. 19.) *Thou giveſt thy tongue to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit.* And that's the Apoſtles word (*Eph.* 4. 19.) while he ſpeaks of ſinfull works, *Who being paſt feeling, have given themſelves over unto laſciviouſneſs, to work all uncleanneſs with greedineſs.* They who give themſelves to ſin, do more then ſuffer themſelves to ſin; they as 'tis ſaid (*Pſal.* 36. 4.) *Set themſelves in a way that is not good*; that is, in an evil way, or in the worſt of ways; yea they (in direct oppoſition to that of the Apoſtle, (*Rom.* 12. 1.) preſent their bodies a dead ſacrifice, unholy and abominable unto God, acceptable to the Devil, which is their unreaſonable or unworldly ſervice.

Thirdly, There are ſome who do more then give, they ſell themſelves to do evil; as 'tis ſaid of *Ahab* (1 Kings 21. 20.) *There was none like* Ahab (he was a wicked man by himſelf) *who ſold himſelf to work wickedneſs in the ſight of the Lord, whom* Jezebel *his wife ſtirred up.* And ſo the Lord ſpeaks of thoſe Apoſtatizing Idolatrizing *Jews* (2 Kings 17. 17.) *They cauſed their Sons and their Daughters to paſs through the fire, and uſed divination and inchantments, and ſold themſelves to do evil in the ſight of the Lord, to provoke him to anger.* How divinely contrary was *Job*'s practice to the practice of all theſe! He did not ſuffer himſelf to ſin, theſe not only ſuffered, but gave up and ſold themſelves to do evil. All men are given to ſin by nature, but ſome do by a kind of covenant give up themſelves unto ſin; men are given to this or that ſin by their temper, thus one is given to anger, another to wantonneſs; this is bad enough, but for any to give themſelves to ſin is far worſe, and they who ſell themſelves to do wickedly, do worſt of all. 'Tis the affliction of Saints that they are *ſold under ſin* (Rom. 7. 14.) and 'tis the joy and affectation of ſome wicked men to ſell themſelves unto ſin. They do ill enough who ſuffer themſelves to do evil, but they are extreamly wicked who devote and dedicate themſelves to it, eſpecially they who make a compact with the Devil, who make a bargain and ſale of themſelves to do it. Bleſſed and holy is that man who can ſay and ſay truly what *Job* here did, *I have not ſuffered my mouth to ſin.*

Thirdly, Obſerve, *A godly man watcheth over himſelf, over his mouth eſpecially, leſt ſin break out there.*

David gave this counſel to others (*Pſal.* 34. 13.) *Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from ſpeaking guile.* And he took this courſe and counſel himſelf (*Pſal.* 39. 1,2.) *I ſaid I will take heed to my ways, that I ſin not with my tongue: I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me. I was dumb with ſilence, I held my peace, even from good, and my ſorrow was ſtirred.* Thus *David*, religious *David* (as *Job*) did not ſuffer his mouth to ſin. And the Apoſtle *James* tells us (*Chap.* 1. 26.) *If any man ſeem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, that mans Religion is vain.* That, ſuch a mans Religion is vain, may be underſtood two ways. Firſt, that he hath no Religion, nothing but a ſhew of it, that which hath nothing but a ſhew, ſhews it ſelf to be nothing. Meer appearances are nullities. Some who ſeem Religious, ſpeak ſo vainly, that their Religion is as vain as their ſpeech, and we may argue that the one is nothing, becauſe the other is worſe then nothing. Secondly, ſuch a mans Religion is vain, becauſe his Religion doth not perform its office, which is, to bridle up his tongue from ſinful ſpeakings, and all the members of his body from ſinful actings. That which doth not reach the end to which it was appointed and deſigned is a vain thing. Surely *David* was afraid his Religion might fall under this ſentence of vanity, when he prayed ſo heartily (*Pſ.* 141. 3.) *Set a watch (O Lord) before my mouth, keep the door of my lips.* God who is infinitely glorious will yet condeſcend to be our door-keeper, to be a door-keeper to our hearts, yea to keep the door of our lips, he will not diſdain that office, when we humbly ſue unto him to undertake it. As a godly man begs of God to open his mouth for holy uſes (*Pſal.* 51. 15.) *Open thou my lips, and my mouth ſhall ſhew forth thy praiſe* (we cannot open our lips to the praiſe of God, unleſs God come with his key and unlock them) ſo he begs of God to ſhut his mouth, and keep the door of his lips for him, that he ſin not with his tongue.

Fourthly, 'Tis remarkable, that *Job* did not ſay I endeavoured that my mouth ſhould not ſin, but he ſaith, *Neither have I ſuffered my mouth to ſin.*

Hence Obſerve, *A godly man carefully watching over himſelf, keeps his mouth from ſinful ſpeakings.*

He doth not only attempt this reſtraint, but he may attain it; this labour ſhall not be in vain in the Lord. Yet we are not to underſtand the point, as if a godly man might attain to ſuch a conqueſt over corruption as never to ſin at all by word, but as to this or that temptation he may. Thus *Job* prevailed over his heart and tongue not to curſe man, his real enemy as before he did, not to curſe God when he acted towards him in appearance like an enemy. But ſaith not the Apoſtle *James* (Chap. 3. 8.) *The tongue no man can tame, it is an unruly evil.* This ſome underſtand with reference to the tongues of other men, who can tame his intemperate tongue that boaſteth, *my tongue is my own, who is Lord over me?* But we may better underſtand it of a mans own tongue; the tongue is often too hard for the whole man; *no man can tame it*; that is, no man can tame it of himſelf; but a man may obtain power of God to tame it. This unruly evil may be ruled and brought under good government by the ſtrength of grace. The tongue is an unruly evil, but not an unconquerable evil. A godly man may come off with victory, and be more then a conqueror (through the ſtrength of Chriſt) over all thoſe temptations which would ſet the tongue a fire in evil ſpeaking, or by evil ſpeaking kindle a fire among others. The tongue is a fire, and 'tis bellows alſo, from both ill tongued perſons are juſtly called *incendiaries*, yet this fire may be quench't, and theſe bellows may be broken and made breath-leſs as to the kindling of the flames of contention.

Indeed the oppoſition of moſt as againſt other corruptions, ſo againſt this of evil ſpeaking is not to conqueſt; though they make ſome offers to bridle their tongues, and ſay they will not ſuffer their mouth to ſin, yet their tongues are their Maſters. I will give you a twofold reaſon why the oppoſition which many make againſt this evil of the tongue, or any other evil is not to victory.

Firſt, Becauſe 'tis weak and ſlight; a carnal mans reſiſting of evil is like his deſiring of good; he deſireth good, but attains it not, becauſe his deſires are weak and cold, there is no ſtrength, no heat in them: Thus alſo he oppoſeth evil but cannot prevail, becauſe he oppoſeth it faintly.

Secondly, 'Tis not only weak but falſe and treacherous; he is not real or hearty in it; *Job* ſet himſelf in good earneſt againſt his tongue, when it was ready to break out ſinfully, and he did it prevailingly. His was a hearty, and therefore an effectual reſiſtance. While ſome decry both evil works and evil words, they delight in them, and hold ſecret correſpondence with them. *Job* oppoſed his tongue really, and he had his will of it; *He ſuffered not his mouth to ſin.*

Fifthly, Obſerve, *The mouth or tongue of man, is a very great and common inſtrument of ſin.*

That's the general truth of this verſe. The tongue is an engin of more miſchief both to our ſelves and others then any other member of the body. The Apoſtle ſaith (*Rom.* 3. 13.) of natural men, *Their throat is an open Sepulcher.* Which ſimilitude ſtands in two things; firſt, becauſe there comes a ſtench out of their throats by filthy ill-ſented and unſavory words; ſecondly, becauſe they gape after and devour the credit and good name of their Neighbours. The tongue of man being rightly uſed is his glory. When *David* ſaith (*Pſal.* 57.8.) *Awake my glory,* he calls his tongue to awake. The tongue is mans glory, becauſe it lifteth up the glory of God; and as the tongue of a godly man is his glory, ſo the tongues of wicked men are their ſhame, they proclaim their own ſin, and hide it not. We are ſuch as our words are; ſuch, I mean, as our words ordinarily are. No good man can ſpeak much evil, and how little ſoever he ſpeaks (being convinced of it) he repents of it. And though a bad man may ſpeak good words, yet his words (except in ſound) are no better then he is. For while he ſpeaks what he is not, or means not, or believes not, or practiſes not, though what he ſpeaks be good in it ſelf, and may do good to others, yet as ſpoken by him, 'tis as bad as he is; he is hypocritical, and ſo are his words. Therefore the Apoſtle *James* concludes (*Chap.* 3. 2.) *If any man offend not in word he is a perfect man*; not only perfect, as perfection is oppoſed to hypocriſie and notes ſincerity, but perfect as perfection is oppoſed to a leſſer degree of grace, and notes our growth and progreſs in holineſs. He is not only a beginner, but a great proficient in grace who offends not in word. That man hath a great command of his thoughts, who can command his tongue; and ſo declars himſelf *a perfect man.* And when the Apoſtle ſaith; *If any man offend not in word,* he intimates that there are very few, but do offend, and offend greatly in word. The tongue is much and often imployed in the ſervice of ſin; there is no member in the body that Satan makes ſo much uſe of, as he doth of this, and ill words are as bad work as any he ſets us about. *Solomon* ſaith (*Prov.* 18. 21.) *Death and life are in the power of the tongue*; that is, according to the right or ill uſing of the tongue, we may collect whether men are dead or alive as to God, and whether they are bound for death or for life, for Heaven or Hell. That's the meaning of Chriſt (*Matth.* 12. 37.) *By thy words thou ſhalt be juſtified, and by thy words thou ſhalt be condemned*; we are not juſtified in a ſtrict ſence, either by our words or works; nothing but the righteouſneſs of Chriſt received and applyed by faith can do that, yet according to the uſage of the tongue the ſentence of condemnation and juſtification will be pronounced in that great day. Chriſt will ſpeak of men according to what they have ſpoken; and as others have heard them ſpeaking, ſo they ſhall hear Chriſt ſpeaking.

Undique nobis diabolus inſidias parare conſuevit, ſed facilius ore peccante; nullum illi æquè cõgruum organum eſt in miniſterium interitus. Chryſoſt.

Again, As we uſually fall into tongue-ſins, ſo we eaſily fall into them. For, firſt, there is a ſpeedy paſſage between the heart and tongue, the heart is quickly at the tongues end; evil thoughts are ſoon formed up into evil words. Secondly, ſpeech is a natural and humane act flowing from the light and life of reaſon, there is no labour, no ſtudy for it; words are at hand preſently, and eaſie to be had, and therefore we ſay, *good or kind words are good cheap*; good words are worth much, but, as words, they coſt us little. We do that readily which we do naturally. Gracious good words are not natural to us, but to ſpeak even them is a work of nature. Thirdly, corrupt ſpeaking is very pleaſing to our corrupt nature; evil words are as muſick to an evil mind. 'Tis a grief to the Spirit of God to hear bad words come out of a good mans mouth (*Eph.*4.29,30.) but bad words are beſt (I mean delightfully beſt) to the Spirit of a bad man. Rotten words ſavour ſweetly to a rotten heart. Fourthly, evil ſpeaking is very advantageous, and gainful to many (as they count gain) 'tis not only pleaſant but profitable. Many a mans tongue brings him in a preſent revenue; ſome trade in lies as much as in wares, or they trade off their wares with lies. *Solomon* (Prov. 21.6.) calls *the getting of treaſure by a lying tongue, a vanity toſſed to and fro, of them that ſeek death.* Where he ſhews, firſt, that there's much gaining by lying; when a man is buying and ſelling, when he is driving a bargain, how apt is he to make an ill uſe of his tongue? Secondly, that, what is got by lying, profits little, yea hurts much; for thirdly, they who ſpeaks lies ſeek death. But do any one ſeek death? No man ſeeks death in it ſelf, or directly, but many ſeek death conſequentially; they ſeek death, when they think they only ſeek a livelihood; the way of lying is the way to death, even to eternal death. Thus *the getting of treaſure by a lying tongue, is a vanity toſſed to and fro, of them that ſeek death*; that is, the wealth and treaſure which they get by bandying words upon a lying tongue, is not like to ſtay long in their hands, nor to prove durable ſubſtance, either to themſelves or their heirs. In this ſence alſo that of the Apoſtle (*James* 3.6.) is a truth; *The tongue is a fire* (it ſets that on fire which is got by ſinful words) *and the tongue is a world of iniquity* (that is, there is a world of iniquity in it) *ſo is the tongue amongſt our members, that it defileth the whole body, and ſetteth on fire the whole courſe of nature, and* (would you know whence the tongue takes fire? The next words tell us) *it is ſet on fire of Hell*; that is, by the Devil, who is the father of lies and ſlanders. As an evil tongue ſets on *fire the whole courſe of nature,* that is, all the powers and faculties of Soul and Body, by which nature moves and makes its courſe; ſo it ſelf is ſet on fire by him who hath diſordered the whole courſe of nature. The fire of Hell kindles this fire.

To conclude this point, and ſo to paſs to the latter part of the verſe; I ſhall briefly enumerate the ſeveral ways by which the mouth ſins, or what kind of words are ſinful; and then it will appear how ſoon we may miſs our duty in ſpeaking, when we ſee how many ways we may ſpeak amiſs.

Firſt, All idle or workleſs words, that is, words which work to no good end (ſo they are expreſſed in the Greek, *Matth.* 12. 37.) all ſuch words (I ſay) are ſinful. Thoſe are evil words which do no good as well as thoſe which do hurt. *Eliphaz* ſaith to *Job* (*Chap.*15.3.) *Should a wiſe man reaſon with unprofitable talk? Or with ſpeeches wherewith he can do no good?* While we ſpeak that which doth not profit others, we ſpeak to our own loſs. Many are troubled at thoſe words by which they have done hurt to, or infected others, but few are troubled for thoſe words by which they have done no good, or not edified others.

Secondly, Unſeaſonable words are offenſive words (*Eccl.* 3.7.) *There is a time to keep ſilence, and a time to ſpeak. A word fitly* (that is opportunely) *ſpoken, is like apples of gold in pictures of ſilver,* that is, 'tis pleaſant and unprofitable, (*Prov.* 25.11.) *But a word unfitly or unſeaſonably ſpoken,* is always unacceptable, and troubleſome, and 'tis ſometimes ſinful.

Thirdly, As the mouth ſins by unſeaſonable words, ſo ſpecially by unſeaſoned words (*Col.*4.6.) *Let your ſpeech be always with grace, ſeaſoned with ſalt.* Words are ſeaſoned with a two-fold ſalt. Firſt, with the ſalt of truth; and that of a double truth; firſt, the truth of doctrine or aſſertion oppoſed to error and falſhood; ſecondly, the truth of heart or ſincerity, oppoſed to hypocriſie and diſſimulation. Secondly, with the ſalt of grace and holineſs. As grace is poured into the lips (*Pſ.* 45. 2.) that is, miniſter'd to the ſpeaker, ſo 'tis poured out of the lips, that is, miniſter'd to the hearer. Thoſe muſt needs be unſeaſoned words that have neither grace nor truth in them. The people wonder'd at the gracious words which came out of the mouth of Chriſt, and we may lament the ungracious words which proceed from the mouths of ſome who are called Chriſtians.

Fourthly, Harſh, uncharitable and cenſorious words, are the ſins of the mouth. Chriſt will come to judg the ungodly for the hard ſpeeches which they have ſpoken againſt him (*Jude* v. 15.) either immediately againſt his perſon, or mediately againſt his ſervants. As there are ſoft words, ſo hard words. Some ſpeak words as hard as ſtones, yea they ſtone their Brethren with words.

Fifthly, Haſty inconſiderate words, ſpoken to men, but eſpecially to God, are ſins of the mouth; hence *Solomon's* caution (*Eccleſ.* 5. 2.) *Be not raſh with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be haſty to utter any thing before God.* All raſh words ſpoken to God are ſinful, ſo alſo are thoſe which we ſpeak to one another; we ſhould conſider our words before we utter them, and deliver them both by weight and by tale.

Sixthly, Obſcene wanton words are very ſinful; theſe the Apoſtle forbids with much ſeverity (*Eph.* 5.4.) *Neither filthineſs nor fooliſh talking, nor jeſting, which are not convenient* (that is, which are altogether uncomely) *but rather*

ther giving of thanks. Let your tongues be imployed in the praiſes of God, not in poiſoning one another; filthy words are poiſon taken in at the ear, and they defile and infect the heart.

Seventhly, Boaſting proud words are ſinful. They that ſwell in their own thoughts, are apt to ſpeak ſwelling words of themſelves; it is beſt both to think and ſpeak of our ſelves, below our ſelves.

Eighthly, Detracting leſſening words concerning others are ſinful; as proud men make more of themſelves then they are, ſo they uſually diminiſh the worth of others. It is immodeſty to ſpeak all the truth or the moſt of our ſelves, and it is diſhoneſty to ſpeak leſs then the truth of others, eſpecially when we do it with a deſire to hide what they are, or to render them unacceptable.

Ninthly, Flattering words are ſins of the mouth, theſe are directly contrary to the former, the detractor takes away from the due praiſe of another; but the flatterer gives him more then is due, and puffs him up with undeſerved praiſes. And as all flattering words in all men are ſinful; ſo thoſe and theirs eſpecially that flatter others into a better opinion of their ſpiritual eſtate, or that they are better God-wards then indeed they are, are exceeding ſinful, and no leſs dangerous. *Faithful are the wounds of a friend* (ſaith *Solomon*, Prov. 27.6.) *but the kiſſes of an enemy are deceitful.* The wounding friend is a juſt reprover; the kiſſing enemy is a flatterer, and the truth is, every flatterer is an enemy, how near a friend ſo ever he is either by relation or profeſſion,

Tenthly, Slandering and reproaching words, which caſt dirt in the face of a mans credit, and are as dead flies thrown into that which is better then the moſt precious ointment, are extreamly ſinful.

Eleventhly, Prophane and blaſpheming words, when any ſpeak ſlightly and lightly of God or of the things of God, of his word and ways, his truths, ordinances, and people, O how abominable are they?

Twelfthly, Provoking quarrelling words, ſuch as ſtir up wrath and contention, ſuch as kindle paſſion, and widen breaches, in ſtead of healing, cloſing, and cementing them, are altogether contrary to the law of love.

To all theſe we may add, ſcoffing, and jearing words; grieving, cutting, and vexing words; ſpiteful and malicious words, lying, falſe, and deceitful words, of what kind ſoever, and for what end ſoever ſpoken. Now if all theſe, and more which might be named, are ſins of the mouth, then conſider how great an inſtrument of ſin the mouth is; and remember you will have ſomewhat to do, (to do as this good man did) not to ſuffer your mouth to ſin.

Job having affirmed, that he did not ſuffer his mouth to ſin, proceeds in the latter part of this verſe, to ſhew the particular ſin that he kept his mouth from, *neither have I ſuffered my mouth to ſin*

By wiſhing a curſe to his Soul.

That is, to the Soul of my moſt profeſſed and wretched enemy. Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates, *to wiſh his Soul under a curſe.*

שאל. *Eſt poſtulare, cupere, orare vel petere more mendicorũ.*

The word which we render to **wiſh**, ſignifieth, firſt, to demand or require a thing as our due in point of juſtice; ſecondly, to aſk a thing as a favour in way of courteſie, as a poor man aſks for an alms, or begs for relief (*Prov.* 20. 4.) *The ſluggard will not plow by reaſon of the cold* (or winter) *therefore he begs in Harveſt and hath nothing.* And again (*Pſal.* 109. 10.) *Let his Children be continual vagabonds, and beg, let them ſeek their bread alſo out of their deſolate places.* Thirdly, as here in the Text, it is often uſed to note the requeſting or asking of any thing of God in prayer; I did not wiſh, that is, pray for a curſe upon his Soul (2 *Chron.* 20.4.) *And* Judah *gathered themſelves together to aſk help of the Lord*; that is, to pray for help. And ſo the word is uſed (1 *Sam.* 1. 17, 20, 27.) And hence both the *Grave* and *Hell* are ſignified by this word, becauſe they are ever craving and never have enough.

אלה *Ejulavit, lamentatus eſt, juravit, execratus eſt.*

The word rendred, *A curſe*, ſignifieth in the verb, *to lament, to cry out* (Joel. 1. 8.) as alſo to ſwear and curſe (*Judges* 17. 2.) *And he ſaid unto his mother, the eleven Hundred ſhekels of Silver that were taken from thee, about which thou curſedſt, and ſpakeſt of alſo in mine ears,* &c. So in *Solomon*'s prayer (1 *Kings* 8. 31.) *If any man treſpaſs againſt his Brother, and an Oath be laid upon him to cauſe him to ſwear, and the Oath came before thine Altar in this Houſe, then* &c. Thus here the noun notes an Oath with an execration or a curſe. (*Deut.* 29. 21.) *And the Lord ſhall ſeparate him* (that is, the reſolved ſinner) *unto evil out of all the Tribes of* Iſrael, *according to all the curſes of the Covenant that are written in this Book of the Law.* And the reaſon why the ſame word ſignifieth both an Oath and a Curſe was becauſe in taking an Oath, they bound and burdened themſelves with a curſe, ſometimes explicitly, always implicitly in caſe they did not ſwear truly, or not perform the Oath which they had truly ſworn. To wiſh a curſe upon our ſelves or others, is to wiſh the worſt we can either upon our ſelves or others. The firſt ſentence of wrath that ever God pronounced in this World, was in this form of words, though not in the formal Original word of this preſent Text (*Gen.* 3. 14.) *And the Lord God ſaid unto the Serpent* (whom the Devil uſed as the inſtrument of mans fall, therein alſo ſpecially intending the Devil himſelf, who had both contrived the fall of man, and uſed the Serpent as the inſtrument of it) *thou art curſed above all Cattel, and above every Beaſt of the field,* As to wiſh or pronounce a bleſſing, includes a deſire of all good; ſo to wiſh or pronounce a curſe, includes a deſire of all evil. Six of the twelve Tribes of *Iſrael* were command *to ſtand upon Mount* Gerizim *to bleſs, and ſix of them upon Mount* Ebal *to curſe* (Deut. 27. 12, 13.) that is, to wiſh and pray for all good or all evil, according as the people were or did good or evil. *Balack* was confident he ſhould have brought miſchief enough upon the Children of *Iſrael*, if he could have got *Balaam* to curſe them. The curſe is ſuch a miſchief as opens a door to let in all other miſchiefs with it. That man is miſerable enough who is under a curſe; and therefore whatſoever miſery *Job*'s enemies attempted to bring upon him, he never wiſhed this miſery, a curſe upon them.

Verbum proprie execrari ſignificat, & per Metonymiam jurare, quia Jusjurandum cum execratione jungi ſolet.

Further, *Job* doth not ſay, *I did not wiſh a curſe* upon his eſtate, or upon his Children and family; he doth not ſay, I did not wiſh a curſe upon his labours and undertakings, nor doth he ſay, I did not wiſh a curſe upon his body; but he ſaith, I did *wiſh a curſe*

Upon his Soul] What the Soul is, hath been ſhewed at the 15. verſe of the former Chapter, and the ſeveral ſignifications of the word in Scripture was ſhewed at the 16. verſe of the ſame Chapter; here we may take it,

Firſt, Strictly, in oppoſition to the body: Now as to wiſh a curſe is to wiſh the greateſt evil, ſo to wiſh a curſe upon the Soul is to wiſh the greateſt curſe. A man may bear a curſe any where better and eaſier then upon his Soul. Better have a curſe upon our eſtate, or name, upon the Children of our bodys, or upon our own bodys, then upon our Souls. Theſe the curſe goes deepeſt, ann lyeth heavieſt. 'Tis ſaid of *Joſeph* when a Captive and a Priſoner (*Pſal.* 105. 18.) *His feet they hurt with fetters, he was laid in Iron*, our Margin hath it, *his Soul came into Iron*, or as the old tranſlation ſaith, *The Iron entred into his Soul*; Not that Iron or any material thing can hurt the Soul; no Tyrants weapon, no inſtruments of cruelty could ever touch that; when they have hurt and killed the body they have gone their utmoſt length; *after that* (as Chriſt ſpeaks, *Luke* 12. 4.) *they have no more that they can do.* But the Iron was ſaid to enter into *Joſeph*'s Soul, becauſe they put him to as much miſery as they could: The miſery of the Soul being the greateſt miſery. For as the health and proſperity of the Soul is the beſt health and proſperity, as the Apoſtle ſaith (3. *Ep. John* 1, 2.) *Beloved, I wiſh above all things, that thou mayeſt proſper, and be in health, even as thy Soul proſpereth*; So the Souls ſickneſſes, declinings and decayings, are the worſt ſickneſſes, declinings, and decayings. And hence it is, that while ſome are exceedingly heightned in wrath and reſolutions of revenge, it will not ſerve their turn, nor ſatisfie the paſſion of their vindictive Spirits to wiſh a curſe upon the bodys of their enemies, but they wiſh a curſe upon their very Souls; as that *Italian* who provoked one who had offended him to blaſpheme God, and then ſtabbed him to death, boaſting that he had taken a noble revenge, a revenge upon Soul and Body together, as he thought; revenge upon the Soul is the worſt and deepeſt revenge. Yet ſome are ſo wickedly ignorant, that they have not forborn to wiſh a curſe upon their own Souls, and even prayed God to damn them, little knowing or not all believing what the damnation either of Soul or Body is. In this firſt ſence of the word, *Job* ſurely, was at furtheſt diſtance from wiſhing a curſe upon the Soul of him that hated him.

Secondly, We may take *Soul* for the life; neither ſo did *Job* wiſh a curſe upon the Soul of his enemy; *Job* did not pray his enemy to death, nor beg of God to cut off the thread of his life. The Lord ſaid to *Solomon* (1 Kings 3. 11.) *Becauſe thou haſt asked this thing* (an underſtanding heart) *and haſt not asked for thy ſelf long life: Neither haſt asked riches for thy ſelf, nor haſt asked the life of thine enemies; Behold* &c. We are much tempted to wiſh every thing and perſon removed out of the way which we think ſtands in our way, and them wrapt up even in the darkneſs of death, whom we conceive hindring our light.

Thirdly, I conceive we may take the word *Soul* here in the largeſt ſence, as it ſignifies the whole man; *I have not wiſhed a curſe upon his Soul*; that is upon his perſon.

Hence Note, Firſt, *The heart and mouth of man are naturally bent to wiſh and beſpeak evil to others.*

The Apoſtle puts this among the other, the bad qualities of all thoſe who are under ſin, that is, all perſons unregenerate (who are under both the condemning and commanding power of ſin, *Rom.* 3. 9, 14.) *Their mouth is full of curſing and bitterneſs*, that is, of bitter curſes. How ready are we to wiſh hurt unto thoſe who we believe would hurt us, eſpecially to thoſe who have actually done us hurt? Every man naturally deſires that wherein he delighteth, and he is apt to wiſh for that which he deſires. He that rejoiceth at the deſtruction of his enemy, can hardly forbear to wiſh it; they who can do no hurt to others can wiſh it, and uſually they who can do leaſt wiſh it moſt; and what their hands cannot reach to, they ſtrive to reach and effect with their tongues. *Salvian* found this curſed Spirit, the Spirit of curſing, much up in his days; *Curſes* (ſaith he) *are the firſt inſtruments of anger, and that which we cannot do becauſe we are weak, we wiſh may be done, becauſe we are enraged.* To pray for good to others; or to bleſs them, is one of the moſt proper works of grace; and to pray for evil upon others, or to curſe them, is one of the moſt proper works of unrenewed nature.

Naturaliter homo deſiderat ea de quibus gaudet, & deſiderium interius explicat verbis, &c. Aquin. in loc.

Prima ſēper irarum tela ſunt maledicta, quæ non poſſumus imbecilli, optamus irati. Salvian.

Secondly, Obſerve, *To curſe or wiſh ill to another, though an enemy, is very ſinful.*

Curſing is one of the worſt uſes or ſervices the tongue of man can be put to, as bleſſing is one of the beſt. He that wiſheth a curſe upon another, puts God to the doing of that, which either, firſt, he is not able to do, or ſecondly, is afraid to do, or thirdly, is aſhamed to do; now what a wickedneſs is it for man to deſire God to do that for him, which as himſelf cannot, ſo he is either afraid or aſhamed to do. Chriſt in his Sermon upon the Mount (*Math.* 5. 44.) commands us *to love our enemies, and to bleſs thoſe that curſe us.* And the Apoſtle ſaith (*Rom.* 12. 14.) *Bleſs them that perſecute you, bleſs and curſe not.* The Law of Goſpel-love doth not reſt in Negatives. 'Tis much to refrain from evil actings towards an enemy, 'tis more to refrain from wiſhing him evil, or curſing him, but 'tis moſt of all to bleſs him. And whereas ſome may wonder why the Apoſtle ſhould ſay, *Bleſs and curſe not*, and not rather curſe not but bleſs; for a man that abſtains from curſing may not yet proceed to bleſs, but it would be a ſtrange thing if when a man hath bleſſed his enemy he ſhould then proceed to curſe him. I anſwer, when the Apoſtle ſaith, *Bleſs and curſe not*, I conceive his meaning may be only this, that we ſhould carry it alike, firſt, to all perſecutors, and not bleſs ſome or curſe others, or ſecondly, that we ſhould carry it alike at all times; and not by any extremity which they uſe to us, turn our ſelves from bleſſing to curſing.

Qui maledictionibus inimicum impetunt, quid aliud in eum Deum facere volunt, niſi quod ipſi facere aut nequeunt aut erubeſcunt. Greg.

But ſome may ſay, it is altogether unlawful to curſe an enemy, or to wiſh him evil, have we not many examples of dreadful curſes in Scripture; *David* pours down a whole ſhower of them upon the heads of the *Jews*, whom he foreſhewed crucifying Chriſt (*Pſal.* 69. 22, 23, 24.) *Let their Table become a ſnare before them, and that which ſhould have been for their welfare let it become a trap; let their eyes be darkned that they ſee not, and make their loins continually to ſhake, pour out thy indignation upon them, and let thy wrathful anger take hold of them.* Theſe curſes are repeated by the Apoſtle (*Rom.* 11. 9.) *And* David *ſaith, let their Table become a ſnare, and a trap, and a ſtumbling block, and a recompence unto them; let their eyes be darkned that they may not ſee, and bow down their back alway.* We read alſo, that when a Captain was ſent up with his fifty to apprehend *Eliah* (2 Kings 1. 10, 11.) *He prayed, and ſaid, If I be a man of God, then let fire come down from Heaven, and conſume thee and thy fifty; and there came down fire from Heaven and conſumed him and his fifty.* And when Children mocked *Eliſha* his ſucceſſor, and ſaid, *Go up thou bald-head, go up thou bald-head; he turned back and looked upon them, and curſed them in the name of the Lord, and preſently there came forth two ſhe-Bears out of the wood and tare forty and two Children of them* (2 Kings 2. 24.) Doth not *Paul* curſe falſe teachers (*Gal.* 5. 12.) *I would they were even cut off that trouble you.* And we have an irrecoverable curſe pronounced by the ſame Apoſtle upon all falſe-hearted profeſſors (1 *Cor.* 16. 22.) *If any man love not the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, let him be* Anathema Maranatha; that is, let him be accurſed till the Lord come, let him be ever laſtingly accurſed, then ſurely it is not unlawful to curſe.

I anſwer; Firſt, That place in the Pſalm is rather a propheſie then an imprecation, or 'tis a prophetical imprecation, fore-telling from God what evil ſhould fall upon the *Jews*, not a wiſh from himſelf that evil ſhould fall upon them. The Spirit of God fore-ſeeing how the obſtinate unbelieving *Jews* would be hardned againſt, and act their malice to the utmoſt upon Chriſt when he ſhould come in the fleſh, ſtirred up and directed the Spirit of *David* to declare this heavy doom againſt them.

Secondly, The Prophets and holy men, mentioned in Scripture, who curſed others, may be conſidered either as private perſons, and as to their perſonal concernments, and in that capacity they uſed all meekneſs of ſpeech, and curſed none; or they may be conſidered as publick perſons, imployed in Gods work, or called to make known his mind to the ſons of men; and in that capacity as they were not to fear any man, ſo not to ſpare any man; they being charged at their own peril to tell others what peril they were in. And therefore they boldly declared the curſe of God (not their own) againſt thoſe who deſerved it.

Thirdly, I anſwer; theſe curſes proceeded not from a Spirit of revenge, or from any impulſe of wrath in the Prophets themſelves, but were ſpoken, Firſt, to terrifie the wicked, and leave monitory examples of the righteous judgments of God before the eyes of all men. Secondly, to confirm and incourage the faithful, by letting them ſee how ſuddainly and how eaſily, even with a word of his mouth, God could deſtroy their ſtrongeſt enemies, yea that they are already blaſted by, and withering under a curſe. Thirdly, thoſe curſes were denounced in a heat of zeal, for the glory of God, and the good of the Church, they had not the leaſt heat of private revenge in them. When the Prophets and Apoſtles breathed out curſes, like the fumes and flames of Hell it ſelf, againſt ſinners, their minds were calm, ſerene, and Heavenly. Laſtly, thoſe curſes were pronounced (not as carnal men curſe one another in a ſtorm of paſſion, but) by vertue of their office and commiſſion. As the civil Magiſtrate gives ſentence of death upon a malefactor, who diſturbs the publick peace, and offers violence to the life of his fellow Citizens; ſo did the Prophets and holy men of God, pronounce the ſentence of ſome fearful curſe upon the known and incorrigible enemies of God, and of his people.

So then thoſe Scripture examples before mentioned, are no warrant or ground at all for any to belch out Curſes againſt the Soul, State, Life, or Perſon of another upon perſonal reſpects. *Job* proteſted his innocency in this, towards his enemy, *I have not ſuffered my mouth to ſin, by wiſhing a curſe to his Soul.*

VERS. 31, 32.

If the men of my Tabernacle ſaid not, O that we had of his fleſh! we cannot be ſatisfied.

The ſtranger did not lodge in the ſtreet: But I opened my door to the Traveller.

THE former of theſe two verſes comes under a twofold conſideration.

Firſt, As referring to the words going before at the 30. verſe.

Secondly, As referring to the words following after at the 32. verſe.

Firſt, as referring to the words going before, wherein *Job* having diſclaimed all ſecret content in, and open Inſultation at the fall of his enemy; as alſo any wiſh or curſe upon him, which might cauſe him to fall. Here in this verſe, to ſhew the ſteadineſs and unmoveableneſs of his Spirit in that frame of love, he tells us, how he forbare the leaſt intimation of or inclination to revenge upon thoſe that hated him, yea, though there wanted not thoſe about him, who labour'd to provoke and fire his Spirit with revengeful ſuggeſtions. That's the general ſence of the 31. verſe, as it refers to the words going before; what ſence it bears as referring to the following verſe, ſhall be ſhewed in its place.

Verſ. 31. **If the men of my Tabernacle ſaid not.**

מתי אהלי *Mortales tentorii at c. 19.* מתי סודי *viri ſecreti mei.*

We have a like form of ſpeech at the 19. verſe of the 19. Chapter, *The men of my Secrets*, which we render, *All my inward friends abhorred me*, that is, *The men of my council*, who knew my boſom, and were acquainted with my heart; ſuch are indeed inward friends, or, *men of our ſecrets*. Thus here, *the men of my Tabernacle*, that is, the men who lived neareſt to and about me, ſuch as were of my houſhold and family, So the words are a Periphraſis either of friends or ſervants; the latter dwell, the former uſe to frequent our Tabernacles, that is, our Houſes, for then they dwelt in Tabernacles, or moveable Houſes, which had a covering, but no foundation. And hence the Houſes and Palaces of Princes (ſuch we may ſuppoſe *Job's* to have been, even their Houſes) were called Tabernacles, becauſe in thoſe days men dwelt in Tabernacles, and not in founded and fixed Houſes; or Godly men called their fixed, founded and beſt built Houſes Tabernacles, becauſe they looked upon themſelves as pilgrims and ſtrangers in this World, or having here an abiding place, or (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Heb.* 13.14.) *A continuing City, but ſeeking one to come, even a City having foundations, whoſe builder and maker is God. If the men of my Tabernacle*

Said not.] What ſaid they? *If they ſaid not,*

O that we had of his fleſh!] This was the wiſh or deſire of the men of *Job's* Tabernacle, *O that we had of his fleſh!* Two things are here to be examined for the opening of theſe words.

Firſt, *Whoſe fleſh* they meant, when they ſaid, *O that we had of his fleſh!*

Secondly, What is meant by that fleſh, which they had ſuch a mind to have?

To the firſt enquiry, whoſe fleſh did the men of *Job's* Tabernacle mean, when they ſaid, *O that we had of his fleſh!*

I anſwer, according to that line of Interpretation that I am now upon (and which I conceive the beſt) we are to underſtand the fleſh of *Job's* Enemies is here meant. As if he had ſaid, *I have been ſtirred up by my domeſtick relations, both by my friends and ſervants, to take utmoſt revenge upon my Enemies; yea when they ſaw me ſilent and patient at my own wrong, they were ſo paſſionately and deeply affected with it, that they deſired to eat the very fleſh of my enemies, and to drink their blood*; that is, *for my ſake to ruine and deſtroy them.* We commonly ſay of a man who is eagerly bent and ſet to revenge, *he could eat his enemy without ſalt. There is nothing ſo hungry as revenge*, nor can any thing ſatisfie the hunger of revenge, but the ruine of him who is ſuppoſed (though wrongfully) to have done the wrong. When *Haman* conceived himſelf affronted by *Mordecai*, who refuſed to give him reverence, or bow to him, *he* (ſaith the Scripture, *Eſth.* 3. 6.) *thought ſcorn to lay hands on* Mordecai *alone, but ſought to deſtroy all the* Jews *that were throughout the whole Kingdom of* Ahaſuerus, *even the people of* Mordecai. As if he had ſaid in the phraſe of of this Text, *O that I had their fleſh, or I will have the fleſh of them all, I cannot elſe be ſatisfied. If the men of my Tabernacle ſaid not* (ſaith *Job*) *O that we had of his fleſh!*

Secondly, What meant theſe men by fleſh? For anſwer to that query, we may take notice, that fleſh is taken four ways in Scripture.

Firſt, Strictly, in oppoſition to the bones of the body (*Gen.* 2. 23.) *This is fleſh of my fleſh, and bone of my bone,* ſaid *Adam* when God preſented the woman to him for a wife.

Secondly, Fleſh is put for the whole body, oppoſed to the Soul (*Gen.* 2. 24.) *They two ſhall be one fleſh*, that is, one body, ſpeaking of Husband and Wife.

Thirdly, Fleſh is put in general for every Creature of the Earth, having a ſenſitive life. (*Gen.* 7.21.) *All fleſh died that moved upon the Earth, both of Fowl, and of Cattel, and of Beaſt, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the Earth, and every man.* Every living thing is all fleſh.

Fourthly, Fleſh is put for the whole man, both Soul and body, while we continue in this ſtate of frailty and mortality (*Deut.* 5. 26.) *For who is there of all fleſh, who hath heard the voyce of the living God ſpeaking out of the midſt of the fire as we have heard?* That is, who of all mankind, or what Nation among all the Nations of the Earth, hath had this priviledg to hear the immediate voyce of God, but we of this Nation? We have had an unparallel'd favour. The Prophet makes Proclamation at the command of the Lord (*Iſa.* 40. 5, 6.) *All fleſh is graſs*; that is, man conſiſting of Soul and Body, whole man is a fading Creature, he withers quickly as to his preſent condition, he is but graſs: Sickneſs fades his beauty, and then death comes and mows him down, his body returns to the duſt from whence it came, and his Spirit returns to God that gave it. When *Job's* Houſhold Friends or Servants, the men of his Tabernacle deſired the fleſh of his enemies, we are not to underſtand it of the fleſh which they had in their grounds, their Beaſts and Cattel, nor ſtrictly of the fleſh of their Bodies oppoſed to bones; nor of the Body oppoſed to the Soul; but the meaning is, O that the men who hate *Job* our good friend and Maſter were in our power, and at our diſpoſe, O that we had the handling of them a while, we ſhould quickly make them ſee their error and miſtake in oppoſing or vexing him. And how eager they were to have the fleſh or perſons of his enemies in their power, appears in the laſt words of the verſe; for till then (ſay they)

We cannot be ſatisfied.] The word here tranſlated, to be **ſatisfied**, ſignifies alſo to *ſwear*, becauſe when a man ſwears to another, he ſhould reſt ſatisfied; there can be no greater, no higher ſatisfaction given then an Oath; therefore the Apoſtle ſaith (*Heb.* 6.16.) *An Oath for confirmation is the end of all ſtrife*; that is, every man ſhould reſt ſatisfied in it, and ſtrive no more.

We (ſaid the men of *Job's* Tabernacle) **cannot be ſatisfied.**

That is, nothing will ſtay our hunger but the fleſh, nothing will ſtay our thirſt but the blood of thine enemies, unleſs we have them, or our will on them, we ſhall be reſtleſs; we cannot live comfortably if they live, nothing will pleaſe us but their death; without that *we cannot be ſatisfied.*

לא נשבע

The word ſignifies any kind of filling, whether to ſatisfaction, or to loathing; in the former ſignification the Prophet uſeth it (*Hoſ.* 13.6.) ſpeaks of bruitiſh men living like Epicures in Carnal contents; *According to their Paſture, ſo were they filled*; that is, they reſted in ſenſual injoyments with neglect of God, (as it follows) *they were filled and their heart was exalted* (not in faith and holineſs but) in pride and inſolence, *therefore* (ſaith God) *they have forgotten me*, I am no more minded nor thought of, their paſtures have filled them, and that's enough for them, they have no want of me, they are ſatisfied. And as they were filled with the fat Beaſt of their paſture, ſo was God too, but in a contrary ſence, they to ſatisfaction, he to loathing. (*Iſa.* 1. 11.) *To what purpoſe is the multitude of your ſacrifices unto me, ſaith the Lord? I am full of the burnt offerings of Rams, and the fat of fed Beaſts*; That is, I am cloyed with them, as the ſtomach of a man is with overmuch good meat, or loaths that which is diſtaſtful. That God was only thus filled or ſatisfied with the ſacrifices of that formal and hypocritical people, appears plainly from the words which follow in the ſame verſe, *I delight not in the blood of Bullocks*, &c. In the preſent Text it imports filling to ſatisfaction; the men of *Job's* Tabernacle could not be ſatisfied without the fleſh of his enemies.

Job complained of his friends ſeverity or cruelty rather to himſelf in this language (*Chap.* 19.21, 22.) *Have pity* *upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends, for the hand of God hath touched me*; and it ſeems, they had more then touched him, for it follows; *Why do ye perſecute me as God, and are not ſatisfied with my fleſh?* In what ſence *Job's* friends were not ſatisfied with his fleſh, hath been ſhewed in the expoſition upon that Chapter, in what ſence the men of his Tabernacle ſaid, they could not be ſatisfied without the fleſh of his enemies, hath been ſhewed in the preſent expoſition, which we may recollect into this brief Paraphraſe. As if *Job* had ſaid, *I never ſought revenge upon mine enemies, though I had thoſe near me who ceaſed not to urge me to it. The men of my Tabernacle, my truſtieſt ſervants and moſt intimate acquaintance were ſo enraged at my wrong, that they proffer'd their ſervice to right me, and if I have but given the word, or held up my finger, they would have done it to the full. I needed not to hire aſſaſſinates, nor bribe any with promiſes or rewards to undertake my quarrel; I had enow to appear for me unask'd and undeſired: Yea I had much ado to quiet their Spirits, and command them to hold their hands, when I heard them crying out, O that we had of his fleſh, we cannot be ſatisfied.*

From this Interpretation of the Text, as it imports the incitement or provocation which *Job* had from the men of his Tabernacle, whether friends or ſervants to avenge himſelf by their hands upon thoſe that hated him, or had done him wrong;

> We may Obſerve, Firſt, *Great men ſeldom want ſuch about them as are ready to provoke and ſet them on to do evil, eſpecally to pour out revenges upon their adverſaries.*

As Satan is never wanting to ſtir up that paſſion himſelf, ſo he ſeldom wants Inſtruments to do it. *David* was a holy and a good man, and he, no doubt, made the beſt choyce he could both of friends and ſervants, yet he had thoſe about him who often provoked him to revenge, far beyond and againſt the temper of his own Spirit. We have two or three pregnant inſtances to this purpoſe; the firſt is reported (1 *Sam.* 24.) where when *David* had found or ſurprized *Saul* his profeſſed enemy in a cave, and ſo had him at an advantage; what ſaid his ſervants, or the men of his Tabernacle? The fourth verſe tells us; *And the men of David ſaid unto him, behold the day in which the Lord hath delivered thine enemy into thy hand, that thou mayeſt do unto him as it ſhall ſeem good unto thee.* As if he had ſaid to *David, You have long waited for ſuch a day, now lay hold on this opportunity, let not him that hateth you ſlip out of your hand, if* Saul *get looſe from you, he may find you work enough, therefore behold the day in which the Lord hath delivered thine enemy into thy hand*; but *David* would not hearken to them; he thought he had done too much when he cut off the lap of *Sauls* garment: He had not a Spirit of revenge moving in him, though moved to it. And how much *David's* ſervants were ſet upon this revenge appears fully at the 7. verſe; *So* David *ſtayed his ſervants with theſe words, and ſuffered them not to riſe againſt* Saul. He was put to uſe his beſt Rhetorick and Divinity too, to pacifie their minds and hold off their hands from proſecuting that attempt upon the fleſh or life of *Saul*. Again (1 *Sam.* 26.) when *David* came down to *Saul's* Camp and there found him aſleep, with his ſpear ſtuck in the ground at his bolſter, and *Abner* and the people lying round about him; *Then ſaid* Abiſhai *to* David, *God hath delivered thine enemy into thy hand this day: Now therefore let me ſmite him I pray thee with the ſpear even to the Earth at once, and I will not ſmite him the ſecond time.* As if he had ſaid, Now thou mayeſt rid thy ſelf of all thy troubles at one blow if thou wilt; but if thou wilt not do it, let me do it; I'le diſpatch him quickly, let me I pray thee ſmite him; I have an arm ſtrong enough to conclude thy troubles and his days with one ſtroak. Thus *David* was provoked a ſecond time by *Abiſhai* (a man of his Tabernacle) to take revenge upon *Saul*. Once more (2 *Sam.* 16. 9.) when *Shimei* curſed *David* fleeing from *Jeruſalem* at the riſing and rebellion of *Abſolom*; *Then ſaid* Abiſhai *the Son of* Zeruiah *unto the King, Why ſhould this dead dog curſe my Lord the King, let me go over and take off his head.* Here the ſame great man of *David's* Tabernacle ſtir'd him up to revenge a third time, and ſaid in effect, O that I had his fleſh! I cannot be ſatisfied till I have it; my fingers itch at him, pray Sir, let me fall upon him.

Yea we find the ſervants of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt himſelf, very forward to ſtir him up to anger and revenge againſt thoſe that uſed him uncivilly and diſcourteouſly (*Luke* 9. 54, 55.) *And when his Diſciples* James *and* John *ſaw this* (that is, that they would not receive Chriſt) *they ſaid, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from Heaven and conſume them even as* Elias *did?* As if they had ſaid, Lord give effect to our prayers, and we will command fire from Heaven to deſtroy them. Thus in all ages men of power have had tempters near them, even in their boſoms, to provoke and ſtir them up to do evil, eſpecially this evil; to revenge themſelves upon their enemies.

Manſuetudinis Evangelicæ videtur Job *expreſſa figura qui ſuos domeſticos adverſus hoſtes excandeſcentes placabat & leniebat.* Mert.

Secondly, Conſider *Job* was far from any ſuch hunger or thirſt after revenge, as his ſervants provoked him to; indeed (as one ſaith) he ſhewed the expreſs image of Goſpel-meekneſs, while he pacified and mollified the anger of his domeſticks.

> Hence Note, *A godly man is many times far leſs affected and troubled at his own wrongs, then others are in his behalf.*

The men of *Job's* Tabernacle were ſo far from patience at their own wrongs, that they had no patience at his; they could not bear the affronts and injuries that were offered him, but he could. As *Job's* patience under the afflicting hand of God, ſo under the reviling and abuſive tongues and hands of men, had a perfect work. The hotteſt and higheſt flame of revenge in the men of his Tabernacle, could not heat his Spirit. Yet

Thirdly, No doubt *Job* was hard put to it to refrain his Paſſions when thus provoked.

> Hence Obſerve, *Ill counſel from friends or ſervants about us, is very enſnaring and dangerous.*

And therefore 'tis a great piece of Satans policy, to put it into the heart of near friends or ſervants, to blow up the coals of any paſſion. *There was none like* Ahab (ſaith the Scripture) *whom* Jezabel *his wife ſtirred up. Ahab* ſold himſelf to work wickedneſs; but his wife was the temptreſs, and bid him make the bargain. *Solomons* wives (as wiſe as he was) drew away his heart to Idolatry. And a ſervant ſometimes proves as ſtrong and as prevailing a tempter as a wife. The learned Sir *Francis Bacon* in his Eſſay about Marriage, concludes, *'Tis indifferent for Judges and Magiſtrates whether they marry or no; for* (ſaith he) *if they be facile and corrupt, you ſhall have a ſervant five times worſe then a wife.* Let ſervants remember they cannot in any thing more diſſerve, nor diſoblige their Maſters, then by ſerving their ill humours and paſſions, when commanded by them; how wicked then are thoſe ſervants who nouriſh their ill humours, and add fewel to that fire which they ſhould labour to quench? We cannot do any man a worſe office, nor ſhew him more real diſaffection, then by abetting him in evil, and oyling his wheels by counſel or encouragement, when we ſee him in any ſinful motion. Such counſel hath often proved fatal, and ſuch encouragements do but haſten, yea precipitate men into ruine. The Apoſtle rule is (*Heb.* 10. 24.) *Let us provoke another to love and to good works.* The beſt need a ſpur to do well; he is the trueſt friend and the moſt faithful ſervant, who is fulleſt of theſe holy provocations; he loves his friend to purpoſe, who provokes him to love; and that ſervant works for his Maſter to purpoſe; who provokes him to good works. But to provoke to wrath, to revenge, or to any evil work, is to officiate for the Devil, or to do the Devils work, whoſe proper work it is to provoke us to evil, and to obſtruct us in all good works. And 'tis hard to determine who ſerves the Devils turn, and promotes his intereſt moſt, he that hinders and cools the Spirit of another that is about to do good, or he that thruſts him forward and furniſheth him with aſſiſtance to do evil.

> Fourthly, Note, *Not to do, or to forbear the doing of that evil to which we are provoked, and greatly provoked, is an argument of much ſtrength of grace, or of a great meaſure of goodneſs.*

It had been well if *Job* had not taken revenge upon his enemies, when friends (perceiving his Spirit bent that way) had adviſed him againſt it. 'Tis a good ſign of grace to be willingly ſtopt from doing any intended evil. *David* (1 Sam. 25.) was much reſolved to revenge himſelf upon *Nabal*, his heart was fired with fury enough to conſume him and all that he had; *his fury* (as the Lord ſpeaks of himſelf when *Gog* ſhall come up againſt the land of *Iſrael*, Ezek. 38. 18. *His fury*, (I ſay) *was come up in his face*; yet how meekly did he ſubmit, how ſoon was he taken off by the diſſwaſion of *Abigail* a diſcreet woman, who gave him advice and counſel to the contrary? *Bleſſed be the Lord God of* Iſrael (ſaith he) *which ſent thee this day to meet me, and bleſſed be thy advice, and bleſſed be thou, which haſt kept me this day from coming to ſhed blood, and from avenging my ſelf with mine own hand.* This (I ſay) was a great act of grace; but it is a far higher act of grace to forbear revenge when we are provoked and counſelled to it: When it ſhall be whiſpered in our ear; *Will you endure this? Will you bear this? Will you be ſuch a fool? Will you ſtand like a ſtock or a ſtone?* Surely for a man to be as deaf as a ſtock to ſuch whiſperers as theſe, is grace in the height of it. As it ſhews much ſtrength of grace when we are ſtrongly ſet upon by the temptation of Satan, to reſiſt and forbear, ſo when we are ſet upon by friends, by ſervants, or relations; who in ſuch caſes are as the Devils right hand, to aſſiſt us in doing miſchief. Again, as (on the other ſide) not to do that good which we are adviſed, and counſelled, yea provoked to, by friends and relations, who are (which is one of the beſt offices of a friend) like goads in our ſides to put us on in the ways of holineſs, (as, this I ſay) argues much ſtrength and prevalency of corruption; ſo it is an evidence that grace prevails mightily in the Soul, when being much perſwaded to any kind of evil, we ſtand firm as a Rock, and are as the deaf Adder that ſtops her ear againſt the voice of the Charmer, though he Charm never ſo wiſely: They have the beſt ears who cannot hear, and the beſt hearts who cannot bear ſuch Charmers. As they are bleſſed who hear good good counſel and receive it, ſo alſo are they, who hear bad counſel and refuſe it.

Fifthly, Obſerve, *A godly man doth not only ſtop his ears when he is tempted to do evil, but he rebukes ſuch tempters and declares againſt them.*

Acerrimè tale vindictæ ſtudium in illis reprehendebat. Merc.

We have great reaſon to believe (though it be not expreſſed) that *Job* did ſo, that he reproved his ſervants here, as he did his wife before when ſhe gave him evil counſel (*Chap.* 2. 10.) *Thou ſpeakeſt as one of the fooliſh women ſpeaketh:* He did not only ſtop his ears againſt her counſel, but reproved her for it, and that with no eaſie reproof; *Thou ſpeakeſt* (ſaid he) *as one of the fooliſh women ſpeaketh. What? Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and ſhall we not receive evil?* And thus in that Scripture before mentioned concerning *David*, when *Abiſhai* begg'd leave to take off the head of *Shimei* who had reviled and curſed *David*, he turned with ſome paſſion, no doubt upon him, and ſaid, *What have I to do with you, ye Sons of* Zeruiah? (2 Sam. 16. 10.) He did not only deny him leave to take off *Shimei*'s head, but checkt him for asking it. So (*Luke* 9. 55.) when the Diſciples would have called for fire from Heaven, Chriſt turned about angerly and ſaid, *Ye know not what Spirit ye are of*; ye ſpeak like fooliſh men; *A vindictive Spirit is not a Goſpel Spirit.* As a godly man will not endure that others ſhould flatter him up into pride for the good that is in him, or hath been done by him; ſo he will not endure thoſe that provoke him to evil, but declares his utter deteſtation and ill opinion of them; he tells them (as indeed they are) ye are the hand of the Devil, ye are but his agents. A godly man ſays when any give him ill counſel in one kind or other, *the hand of the Devil is in all this*; as Chriſt told *Peter* plainly, though a good man, and an eminent Diſciple, when he diſſwaded him from ſufferings. *Job*'s ſervants moved him to put his enemies to hardeſt ſufferings; and Chriſts ſervant diſcouraged or diſſwaded him from venturing upon hard or ſuffering ſervices: *Maſter, this ſhall not be unto thee:* But Chriſt was not only not taken off from his purpoſe of ſuffering, but (*Matth.* 16. 22, 23.) *turned about and ſaid, get thee behind me Satan, thou ſavoureſt not the things that be of God, but thoſe that be of men*; I hear the Devil ſpeaking in thee. Chriſt would not call him *Peter*, but Satan, though but a litttle before (*verſ.* 18.) he ſaid; *Thou art* Peter, *and upon this Rock* (upon this Confeſſion which thou haſt made) *will I build my Church.* Jeſus Chriſt reſented the ill counſel of *Peter* (a Diſciple, a man of his Tabernacle) with greateſt Indignation; we ſhould not only not do the evil we are adviſed to, but make the adviſer know that we take it ill at his hands to be ſo adviſed.

Sixthly, What ſaid the men of *Job*'s Tabernacle? *O that we had of his fleſh!*

Hence Obſerve, *Revenge is cruel, it would eat up and devour all.*

Old *Jacob* upon his death-bed (remembring what his Sons *Simeon* and *Levi* had done to the *Shechemites*) gave this character of wrathful anger, *Curſed be their anger for it was fierce, and their wrath for it was cruel* (Gen. 49. 7.) When the Spirit of revenge was upon them, they cared not what blood they drank, what fleſh they devoured. *David* deſcribeth the like cruel temper of his enemies (*Pſal.* 27. 2.) *When the wicked even mine enemies came upon me to eat up my fleſh, they ſtumbled and fell.* What were theſe enemies? Were they Canibals? Men-eaters? No! But to ſhew their cruelty, he ſaith, *They would even eat my fleſh.* The Church ſaith the ſame (*Pſal.* 124. 3.) *Except the Lord had been on our ſide when men roſe up againſt us, they had ſwallowed us down quick*; they had even eaten us up at a morſel, they would have eaten us without ſalt as we ſay. That's a dreadful Propheſie (*Zach.* 11. 9.) *And the reſt ſhall every one eat the fleſh of another:* Which was fulfilled when the *Romans* beſieged and took *Jeruſalem*; for then, not only ſome through extream hunger did eat the fleſh of others, but ſuch was their malice, that they did eat one anothers fleſh thorough revenge. *Joſephus* their Hiſtorian reports what deadly feuds and factions there were among themſelves, within their own Walls, when the *Roman* Army had begirt them round about and was ready every moment to devour them all; even then they were ſo full of Indignation, of Wrath, of Jealouſies, of unholy Emulations one againſt another, that they could even have eaten one another. Some have ſaid of revenge, *O how ſweet is it!* Every thing pleaſeth us, which ſuits our principle, and therefore nothing is more pleaſing to a revengeful mind then revenge. *Nero* being enraged againſt the Citizens of *Rome*, could not be ſatisfied without their fleſh, or the hardeſt ſufferings of it. He ſet the City on fire, and then to ſhew what content he took in it, betook himſelf to mirth and Muſick.

Laſtly, Whereas the men of his Tabernacle ſaid, *O that we had of his fleſh! We cannot be ſatisfied.*

Obſerve, *Malice is unſatisfied till it hath got the utmoſt or fulleſt revenge; it is not well, till it hath done its worſt.*

Love is not ſatisfied till we have the higheſt enjoyment of the thing or perſon loved; 'tis thus in the real love we have one to another, eſpecially in the real love we have to Chriſt, O how unſatisfied are believers till they enjoy him perſonally as now they do ſpiritually! nothing can ſatiſfie a Saint, but the fleſh or perſon of Chriſt; and therefore as Communion with him at his Table is ſweet to them where his broken fleſh is fed on by faith, ſo they can never be fully ſatisfied till they behold his glorified fleſh in Heaven. One of the Ancients ſaid, *Lord my heart is unquiet till I return to thee.* Now as love finds no full ſatisfaction till it attains full fruition, ſo wrath is unſatisfied till it hath gotten full revenge. I muſt have his fleſh (ſaith the wrathful man) I cannot be ſatisfied elſe; 'tis a death to me (ſaith revenge) to ſee my enemy live. *Haman* having conceived wrath againſt *Mordecai* (Heſt. 3. 5.) nothing would ſatisfie him but his fleſh; yea he could eat up the fleſh not only of *Mordecai*, but of the whole Jewiſh Nation, as was toucht before, *Haman* thought ſcorn to lay his hand upon *Mordecai* alone (he was not a mouthfull for him) he muſt ſtretch it out upon all the *Jews*. Thus *Heſter* in her ſupplication, repreſents their caſe to King *Ahaſhuerus* (Chap 7. 3, 4.) *We are ſold to be ſlaves to be deſtroyed and to periſh*: Here are three hard words; firſt, *we are ſold to be ſlaves*; yet, ſaith ſhe, if his malice and revenge had gone no further then our liberty, I ſhould have held my peace; but the malice of this man knows no bounds; we are not only ſold to be ſlaves; but ſecondly, *to be deſtroyed*; and, thirdly, *to periſh*; he will ſuffer no remains, no more remembrance of us in the world. *Haman*'s was a reaching revenge. As nothing will ſatisfie the holy revenge which Saints take upon ſin, but the ruine of it. The Apoſtle ſetting down the effects of godly ſorrow in a Church (which holds alſo in every truely penitent perſon) reckons up, among ſeveral others, theſe two (2 *Cor.* 7. 11.) *Indignation and Revenge*: Godly ſorrow working repentance not to be repented of, fills the Soul with indignation againſt ſin, whether in our ſelves or others, nor will the repenting Soul put up the matter till it hath both plotted and graciouſly acted the higheſt revenge. It will not ſatisfie a godly man to have corruption a little reſtrain'd or abated, to have the horns and nails of it cut and pared, or to have (in this ſence) the *ſuperfluity of his naughtineſs*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, removed and laid aſide, but he muſt pull it up root and branch, and get it utterly mortified. For though a gracious Soul bleſſeth God for any leſſer power obtained againſt corruption, or that it doth not King and Lord it over him; yet he is not ſatisfied with this, his deſign is the ruine of it; and he never leaves praying and ſtriving with Chriſt till every thought be brought into ſubjection. Thus we ſee how far holy revenge goes, and unholy revenge would go as far in its own way, nor will it ſit down and be ſatisfied till it hath gone thus far. Covetouſneſs is a very ſwallowing and an unſatiable luſt; yet I know not whether revenge be not more unſatiable then covetouſneſs; it will never have done where there is any thing to be done; this is certain, a covetous man cannot be more inſatiable then a malicious or revengeful man.

And ſeeing the revenges of enraged enemies are ſo unſatiable, that nothing will ſatisfie them but our fleſh, what cauſe have we to bleſs God who keeps us out of their hands; we may well ſay as the Church in the Pſalm, *Many a time had we been ſwallowed up, if the Lord had not been on our ſide when men roſe up againſt us.* Our enemies are as far enraged as ever, and as they wiſh in ſecret, *O that we had of their fleſh!* So where they may be bold they will adventure to ſay it openly. What cauſe then have we to bleſs God that we have been kept from the power of bloody minded men, who would act if they had opportunity with a rage as high as Heaven, or rather with a rage as low as Hell; it would be a rage as high as Heaven not only in that proverbial ſence, becauſe it would be exceeding high, or as high as it could, but in plain ſence becauſe reflexively it would be againſt God himſelf, who is in Heaven, though poſſibly they might pretend for God; and it would be a rage as low as Hell Originally, for thence it comes; a Spirit of Implacability is *Earthly, Senſual, Deviliſh* (James 3. 15.) *O that we had their fleſh! we cannot be ſatisfied.*

There is yet another apprehenſion of the ſcope of this verſe as it refers to the former, which I ſhall but repreſent and paſs from it. The ſum of it may be thus conceived; as if *Job* here were proving how far he was from a deſire of revenge upon his enemies, by ſhewing his patience under the wrongs and unworthy behaviour of his domeſtick friends or ſervants. As if he had ſaid, *If the men of my Houſe did at any time expreſs paſſion againſt me*, and break out into ſo much boldneſs, as not only ſecretly to wiſh, but openly to ſay, *O that we had our Maſters fleſh to eat!* yet I reſrain'd my ſelf towards them, and did not break out in diſpleaſure againſt them. *Solomon* gives counſel to Maſters or Governours of families in ſuch caſes (*Eccleſ.* 7. 21.) *Do not give heed to every word that is ſpoken; leſt thou hear thy ſervant curſe thee.* As if he had ſaid, *Do not take too much notice of every paſſage and word ſpoken in thy family; though poſſibly thou mayeſt hear a ſervant curſe thee, that is, ſpeak undutifully of thee, or wiſh thee evil, yet do not hear what thou heareſt; as 'tis good to bear injuries patiently from thoſe who are without doors, or from ſtrangers, ſo it is our wiſeſt courſe, not to examine over-ſtrictly all that is ſpoken or done within doors, or by thoſe who are near about us.* And the Preacher gives a good reaſon for this prudent connivence in the next verſe; *For oftentimes thine own heart knoweth, that thou thy ſelf likewiſe haſt curſed others.* That is, ſpoken unduely of them; 'tis a good conſideration and a neceſſary one to keep us off from ſeverity towards others, often to remember what we have done to or ſpoken of others. And he will never bear injuries from enemies abroad, who cannot in ſome meaſure bear evil words and unhandſome carriages from the men of his own Houſe. That, *Job* received many incivilities even from his own ſervants, appears by his complaint at the 19. Chapter (*verſ.* 15.) And how much *David* was preſſed with the wrongs which he received from his friends and familiars, beyond what ever his open and profeſſed enemies had done or could do againſt him, we may read very paſſionately expreſſed (*Pſal.* 55. 12, 13, 14, 15.) *It was not an enemy that reproached me, then I could have born it, neither was it he that hated me, that did magnifie himſelf againſt me, but it was thou, a man, mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance, we took ſweet counſel together, and walked to the Houſe of God as friends*; we joined as one both in civil converſe, and holy worſhip.

So much of the interpretation of theſe words as they bear reference to the former verſe.

There is another vein of interpretation which carrieth their ſence forward to the verſe following, *If the men of my Tabernacle ſaid not, O that we had of his fleſh! The ſtranger did not lodg in the ſtreets*, &c. Thus they bear a two-fold expoſition.

First, As expreſſing extream anger againſt *Job*.

Secondly, As expreſſing extream love to *Job*; both theſe which are the greateſt contraries are wrought out from theſe words. I will touch at each of them.

Firſt, Some expound theſe words as implying the greateſt anger againſt *Job*; as if, the men of his Tabernacle, his ſervants had been dayly vext with *Job* becauſe of the trouble he put them to by the continual entertainment of ſo many ſtrangers, of whom he ſpeaks at the 32. verſe, or as if *Job* kept ſo much hoſpitality for ſtrangers, that his family fared the worſe for it, and were ſo incenſed againſt their Maſter for it, that they would ſometimes cry out, *O that we had of his fleſh!* That is, of our Maſters fleſh; that we might eat him in revenge for that trouble which he puts us to, by bringing or admitting ſo many ſtrangers to his Houſe, that we either have no time to eat our meat, or no meat left to eat, *we cannot be ſatisfied.* Mr. *Broughton* renders the Text thus; *Have not the folk of my Houſe ſaid, O that we had his fleſh!* and he gives a two-fold gloſs upon it; Firſt, as to the former Interpretation, *A ſpeech of hatred to the Enemy*; Secondly, as to the latter, *Or for hoſpitality, that the ſervants dinner was given to ſtrangers, that they tarried to roaſt more*; which ſo troubled his ſervants, as theſe expoſitors ſuppoſe, that they could even have eaten their Maſter. But, firſt, there is no probability that *Job* who was ſo liberal and kind to ſtrangers, ſhould be any way hard or unjuſt to his own ſervant, eſpecially not ſo hard as to draw out their Spirits in ſuch bitter language againſt him; how he dealt with his ſervants we have under his own Oath at the 13. verſe of this Chapter; and can we think that *Job* who was ſo equal and benign to his ſervants, could be (upon any account) thus diſtaſted by them? Nor, ſecondly, it is probable that *Job*'s ſervants were not willing to do the beſt offices to ſtrangers, and to ſhew reſpect where their Maſter ſhewed love? Nor, thirdly, is it to be ſuppoſed that he would keep ſuch ill-bred and ill-condition'd ſervants, as would look ſourly upon thoſe whom he their Maſter had invited to his Houſe, or ſpeak ill of him for inviting them. One of the Ancients diſcourſing about *Abraham*'s hoſpitality, ſaith, *No man living in a wiſe mans family is backward to offices of humanity; both men and women, free men and ſervants are free to beſtow their labour in miniſtring to ſtrangers.* Upon theſe conſiderations, I cannot judg this expoſition commodious or agreeing to this place.

Amphibolia oritur ex relativo מבשרו de carne ejus, *prioribus ad inimicum* Jobi *aliis ad* Jobum *ipſum referentibus affixum. Quaſi* Jobum *domeſtici odio proſecuti ſint, & ei fuerint infenſiores, quod eos in excipiendis & tractandis peregrinis immodice fatigarent.* Merc. *Niſi fuerim ita hoſpitalis ut hoſpitalitate mea defeſſi domeſtici mei cōquererētur non eſſe ſibi tantum otii ut cibum capere poſſint* &c. *Sic enim accipiendum docent ſequentia.* Jun. Piſc.

Nemo ad humanitatis officia ſegnis eſt in ſapientis familia; tam mulieres quàm viri, tàm ſervi quam ingenui promptè miniſtrant hoſpitibus. Philo de Hoſpital. Abra.

But there is another reaſon why at leaſt ſome of *Job*'s ſervants might be angry with him, namely, the ſtrictneſs of his Houſhold diſcipline. Doubtleſs, was a ſevere obſerver of family duties; he would not endure diſorderly perſons in his Houſe, who kept not to the rules of Godlineſs and ſobriety. We may parallel *Job* with *David* in this thing, whoſe reſolutions about the choice and government of his family are ſet down (*Pſal.* 101. 6.) *Mine eyes ſhall be upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me, he that walketh in a perfect way he ſhall ſerve me; he that worketh deceit ſhall not dwell within my Houſe: He that telleth lyes, ſhall not tarry in my ſight.* It ſeems *David* looked all the land over among his Subjects, to find choice perſons whom he might make his ſervants. And here he gives us an exact character of them, both in the affirmative and in the negative, or whom he admitted into, and whom he expelled from and caſt out of his family; the faithful and ſuch as walked in a perfect way were admitted, deceitful workers and lye-tellers (under which two all ſorts of wicked perſons are comprehended, theſe I ſay) either were not at all received into his family, or upon diſcovery of their naughtineſs they were diſcharged and caſt out. Now *Job* exerciſing ſuch a ſtrict diſcipline as this in his family, did poſſibly ſo torment ſome of his ſervants, that they counted his Houſe a Priſon, and even wiſht his death, or could have eaten him up alive. Thus the interpretation of theſe words carrieth an expreſſion of extreameſt anger in *Job*'s ſervants at the ſtrictneſs of his Houſhold-government.

Secondly, Others expound them as an argument of the extream love and good will which his ſervants bare him. As *Job* was not revengeful to his enemies, ſo he was very kind and ſweet to thoſe of his own family, both to his ſervants and friends; this gained ſo far upon their affections, that they wiſht to be always in his ſight; they could not be ſatisfied without his fleſh, that is, his preſence, or himſelf in perſon. 'Tis a great evidence of a mans juſtice, kindneſs, and goodneſs in his family, when there is a ſtrong deſire in his ſervants to have him always with them.

Again, Others inſiſting upon this general ſence of theſe words, *O that we had of his fleſh*, give out their meaning yet more ſpecially; that as *Job* was ready to entertain ſtrangers in his Houſe, ſo he made ſuch plentiful proviſion for his ſervants, that they had no mind to change their Maſter, nor remove to any other ſervice. He kept ſo good a Table, that they deſired no mans fleſh, or dyet but his.

We ſee how the apprehenſions of learned men have varied about the intendment of *Job* in this verſe; but I rather incline to the firſt Interpretation, as holding out the moſt proper ſcope of the place; and therefore it ſhall ſuffice only to have touched at theſe things, leaving the reader (undetermined) to his own underſtanding about them.

Job having declared himſelf free and far from revenge to enemies, though provoked by his own ſervants, proceeds to declare how ready and free he was to ſhew love and reſpect to any that needed it, and by name to ſtrangers and travellers.

Verſe 32. **The ſtranger did not lodg in the ſtreet: but I opened my door to the traveller.**

A **ſtranger**, is a perſon abſent from his own home, and place of abode or birth, and here he is not only ſo but deſtitute of lodging and neceſſaries. And in thoſe days moſt ſtrangers were deſtitute of conveniency for lodging, there being no common Inns to lodg ſtrangers in; and there are few at this day in the Eaſtern Countries, ſo that ſtrangers muſt lodg in the ſtreets, if none will open to them. But then (ſaith *Job*) *the ſtranger did not lodg in the ſtreet*,

But I opened my door to the traveller.

The former part of the verſe was negative, this latter is affirmative. And as the negative Commandments include an affirmative, while the Law ſaith, *Thou ſhalt do no murder*, it teacheth us to cheriſh and preſerve the life of our brother; ſo *Job*'s negative propoſition, *The ſtranger did not lodg in the ſtreets*, includes this affirmative, *I opened my door to the traveller*; yet to ſhew the compleatneſs of his hoſpitality, he expreſſeth both, *The ſtranger did not lodg in the ſtreet; but I opened my door to the traveller*; that is, I cauſed my door to ſtand open, or my doors were readily opened when ſtrangers came by. The Hebrew is, *I opened my door to the way*: As if *Job* had ſaid, *I built my Houſe toward the high-way, that ſtrangers who paſſed by, might ſee it and come in. I was not afraid my Houſe ſhould ſtand open to view.* Some build in a corner, or in a covert of Trees and Woods out of the common Road, that they may be out of the danger of entertainment. But (ſaith *Job*) *I opened my door to the way*; we tranſlate, *to the traveller*, that is, to the way-faring man, or the man that travels by the way. The ſtranger in the former part of the verſe, and the traveller here are the ſame; he that travels from his own home is a ſtranger wherefoever he comes; We call our neareſt friends and relations ſtrangers when they travel from their own Houſes to ours. *I opened my door to the traveller.*

Hence Note, Firſt, *Strangers and travellers are ſubject to hardſhip, even to lodg in the ſtreets and open air, unleſs ſome open their doors and give them lodging.*

When *Jacob* travel'd from his fathers Houſe, he lodged under the Canopy of Heaven, and had nothing but the Earth for his bed, and a Stone for his pillow. The Hebrew word which ſignifies a *ſtranger*, comes from a Root, ſignifying *to fear*, and the reaſon of it is aſſigned from the condition of ſtrangers, they being ſubject to many dangers, and ſo by many conſequence to fears. Doubtleſs, the Spirit of God foreſaw that ſtrangers were expoſed to many inconveniences, and therefore gave caution to his ancient people the *Jews* to treat thoſe fairly who being ſtrangers by birth and Nation, ſhould deſire to dwell among them (*Exod.* 22. 21.) *Thou ſhalt neither vex a ſtranger, nor oppreſs him, for ye were ſtrangers in the land of* Egypt. And again (*Levit.* 19. 33, 34.) *If a ſtranger ſojourn with thee in your land, ye ſhall not vex him, but the ſtranger that dwelleth with you ſhall be as one born amongſt you, that thou ſhalt love him as thy ſelf*, &c. Theſe cautionary Laws made for ſtrangers (that is, for proſelytes of other Nations converted to the *Jewiſh* Religion) do more then intimate what hard meaſure ſtrangers uſe to find and meet with in the World.

גור *Significat peregrinari & timere; etenim pavidi ſemper ſunt peregrini.*

And therefore the people of God who (though dwelling in their native Country) are all ſtrangers in this world, ſhould not think much if they meet with hardſhip ſometimes, but be always prepared and armed for it, as their preſent condition forewarns them of it. The old Patriarchs *confeſſed that they were ſtrangers and pilgrims on the Earth* (Heb. 11. 13.) As this kept their hearts looſe from expecting or ſeeking their contents here below, ſo it bore up and ſupported their Spirits with much contentation, when they found trouble and ill uſages here below. They who remember that they are not at home, and that they are not far from home, or that it cannot be long before they ſhall be at home, will eaſily digeſt or lightly paſs over the bad and coarſe entertainment which they have abroad. The Apoſtle *Peter* (1 Eph. 2. 11.) *Beſeecheth all believers as ſtrangers and pilgrims to abſtain from fleſhly luſts which war againſt the Soul.* How unſutable as well as ſinful is it for them to luſt after worldly things (ſuch are all the luſtings of the fleſh) who are themſelves but ſtrangers in the World. 'Tis both the honour and the ſafety of thoſe who are ſtrangers in the World, to be ſtrangers to it; and becauſe they have but a little while to ſtay in it, to look but little after it, and for little from it. The ſame Apoſtle exhorts us (*Chap.* 1. 17.) *to paſs the time of our ſojourning here in fear*; He doth not mean in a diſtracting much leſs in a tormenting fear of what evils we may ſuffer here, but in a holy filil fear of doing any evil, or in the fear of God, which alone keeps us from the fear of man, which as ſpiritual pilgrims and ſtrangers, we are ſubject to.

Secondly, From *Job*'s profeſſed practice in opening his door to ſtrangers and travellers.

Obſerve, *It is a duty to ſhew kindneſs to ſtrangers.*

The Apoſtle gives warning (*Heb.* 13. 2.) *Be not forgetful to entertain ſtrangers* (that is, remember it well) *for thereby ſome have entertained Angels unawares.* Yea (which is a more bleſſed ſurpriſal) we may entertain Chriſt unawares; and indeed in every entertainment of a poor godly ſtranger, Chriſt himſelf is entertained. *Job* did not (nor ſhould any good man) make tipling entertainments, or entertainment for tiplers. Some uſe much exceſs in their Houſes, but no true hoſpitality: Some open their doors ſo much to riotous friends, that they have not a bed nor a morſel for true ſtrangers. The duty of hoſpitality is often urged in Scripture; ſober hoſpitality is good between neighbour and neighbour, but 'tis beſt when exerciſed toward the traveller and the ſtranger. The Heathen had a very great zeal, and a kind of religiouſneſs in the entertainment of ſtrangers; therefore they ſurnamed their *Jupiter* by a Title which ſignifies reſpect to ſtrangers: Surely Goſpel-

Ethnici veteres ſanctè jus hoſpitii, coluerunt eiq; Jovem, quem propterea ξένιον vocarunt tuendo & conſervando præeſſe crediderunt. Sanct.

Goſpel-grace ſhould ſpiritualize us in that duty which Heathens were ſo naturalized unto: And we find that Jeſus Chriſt in the great day of Judgment puts in this good work by name (*Matth.* 25. 35.) *I was a ſtranger and ye took me in.* Jeſus Chriſt is a ſtranger in his members; Chriſt in believers is in want and deſtitute. A Goſpel Miniſter muſt be *given to hoſpitality* (1 Tim. 3. 2.) *and a lover of hoſpitality* (Tit. 1. 8.) of ſuch hoſpitality as I here ſpeak of, and ſo muſt they who receive the Goſpel. The Apoſtle gives the rule about the widow (1 *Tim.* 5. 10.) *If ſhe have lodged ſtrangers*; as implying, that elſe ſhe will never be fit to look to the weak and ſick of the Church.

Thirdly, In that *Job* opened his door to ſtrangers.

> Note, *A good man is ready to entertain ſtrangers; as he is ready for other good works ſo for this.*

The ſtranger needs not ſtand knocking long at his door to get in, he openeth his door to him; *Job* in this ſence, *kept open Houſe.* So did *Abraham* before him (*Gen.* 18. 1, 2, 3.) who ſtood in his Tent door, and when he ſaw ſtrangers a good way off, he went out and brought them in. *Lot* (*Gen.* 19.) readily entertained thoſe that came to *Sodom*, he invited them into his Houſe. And in the 19. of *Judges*, we have a like example of hoſpitality.

Laſtly, Note in general, from this carriage of *Job* who being a man of a free Spirit opened his door to the traveller,

> *That which we are ready and willing to do, we put all things in a readineſs to do.*

Job did not lock up his doors, but open'd them, he open'd them to the way; *Job* had a free Spirit, and he kept a free Houſe for good purpoſes; if we have a mind to a duty, our door will be open that way, that is, we will put all things in poſture for it; as becauſe the Lord is ready to pardon ſin. he keeps as it were blank pardons by him, it is but putting a name to them, and all's done preſently; ſo a Soul that is willing to honour Jeſus Chriſt in the Goſpel, puts all things in a readineſs, he puts off his cooling company, and his buſineſs; he will have nothing to hinder him. *Martha* though a good woman in the main, yet was not ſo ready to hear Chriſt as her ſiſter *Mary*, and therefore was cumbred with many things. When the heart is ready to hear or pray, impediments are removed, the door of the Soul is unlockt and ſtands open for thoſe duties. If once the Lord by any providence or opportunity ſaith, *Seek ye my face*, the heart of ſuch a man ſaith to the Lord, *thy face will I ſeek* (Pſal. 27. 8.) Indeed when once the heart is ready all is ready, and till the heart be ready nothing is. Evil men (*Tit.* 1. 16.) are to *every good work Reprobate*, or unready, they cannot come off clearly nor freely to them, many ſtops and difficulties are in the way, this rub and 'tother rub, ſometimes a Lion is in the way; upon one account or other they are unready to every good work: But a godly man hath his heart open firſt, and then his door to every good work. O how ſhould *our everlaſting doors ſtand always open, that the King of glory way to enter in* (Pſal. 24. 9.) Chriſt ſtands at the door and knocks (*Rev.* 3. 20. *Cant.* 5. 3.) Let not the door of your hearts be ſhut againſt him, ſhut it only againſt the World in which *you are ſtrangers*, and againſt Satan who is *that ſtranger.*

Verſe 33. **If I covered my tranſgreſſions as** Adam: **By hiding mine iniquity in my boſom.**

Job having ſpoken much in many particulars for the vindication of his own integrity; ſeems in this 33. verſe to prevent an objection which his friends or others might make againſt that diſcourſe. As if he had ſaid, *We have heard you ſpeaking your own praiſes much and long; we ſee you are very tender of your own honour, and cannot endure that ſhould be toucht. You have given us a Catalogue of your good works, and ſhewed us your light ſide, your ſhining vertues: But have you no ſins? Is your life indeed free from faults and errors? Have not you a dark ſide alſo? Are you a man, above all men, without ſpot and blameleſs? Are you abſolutely perfect, and without your failing?* To this heap of reflecting queries, we may ſuppoſe *Job* giving anſwer, in the word of this Text; as if he had ſaid, *I readily acknowledge that I have ſinned, and have had my failings as well as other men, for I alſo am a Son of* Adam; *I have no perfection to boaſt of, but that of uprightneſs and of an honeſt bent to pleaſe God in all things. I am far from ſaying I have not ſinned; only thus much I can ſay for my ſelf, (through grace) that I have neither as* Adam *the firſt man once did, nor as moſt men the Sons of* Adam *ſtill do, ſtudied to conceal my ſins; but I have humbly confeſſed them unto God, and believingly begged their pardon at his hands.* That's (I conceive) *Job's* ſcope in theſe words. He did not ſay, *I have not tranſgreſſed*; but he ſaid, *I have not covered my tranſgreſſions.*

Verſ. 33. **If I have covered my tranſgreſſions as** Adam.

The words are of a Negative ſence; I have not covered my tranſgreſſions; yet the Negative hath a reſtriction in it; he doth not ſay abſolutely, *I have not covered my tranſgreſſions*, but, *I have not covered them as* Adam; and how *Adam* covered them is implyed, if not expreſſed in the latter part of the verſe, *by hiding mine iniquity in my boſom.*

If I have covered my tranſgreſſions.] The Original word ſignifieth properly to cover with a garment or vail, with any thing, which gives ſhadow or is a means of concealment. Yet ſome diſtinguiſh the native ſignification of this word from another in the Hebrew tongue ſomewhat near it in the letter; that ſignifying to cover as Houſes or Tents cover us (and from thence the word *Succoth* ſignifying Tents or Booths, is derived) which cover us by being over us, or we being in them, whereas this word ſignifies to cover as cloths or garments cover us, by being put upon us or by our putting them on. But not to ſtay upon that ſtrictneſs of the word in its proper ſence; here we are to underſtand it metaphorically, and ſo 'tis applyed two ways in Scripture; firſt, to that gracious act of God in pardoning our tranſgreſſions; ſecondly, to that ungracious act of man in denying or excuſing his tranſgreſſions. 'Tis an act of greateſt grace in God to cover our tranſgreſſions by a pardon. He never ſhews himſelf more as God, then when he thus hides the ſin of man. And 'tis an act moſt oppoſite to grace, for man to cover his ſin by denying or excuſing it; man never ſhews himſelf more a man, a ſinful man, then when he covers his ſin. That act of divine pardoning grace *David* expreſſeth in the language of *Job's* Text (*Pſal.* 32. 1.) *Bleſſed is the man whoſe tranſgreſſion is forgiven, and whoſe ſin is covered.* By whom covered? Not by himſelf but by God. That which is called the forgiveneſs of ſin in the former part of the verſe, is called covering of it in the latter part. *Solomon* ſpeaks the ſame thing of God, though he uſed another word (*Prov.* 25. 2.) *It is the glory of God to conceal* (or cover) *a thing*; he means a ſinful thing, or that which is worſe then nothing, ſin. To clear this a little further; we read in Scripture of a four-fold covering of ſin for good.

כסה *Texit, operuit, abſcondit imponendo aliquid quo tegas, tanquam operculo aut veſte.* סכך *eſt tegere obumbrando* כסה *attingendo.*

Firſt, There is a covering of ſin, by mercy or free love; that indeed is the fountain from whence this tranſcendent favour, the forgiveneſs of ſin floweth to us. *I, even I am he* (ſaith the Lord, *Iſa.* 43. 25.) *that blotteth out thy tranſgreſſions for my names ſake, and will not remember thy ſins.* That is, the riſe and firſt moving cauſe of this is in my ſelf, it proceeds out of my own boſom. There is no moving cauſe antecedent to the love of God, why ſinners are pardoned, though there be a firſt or chief working cauſe of the pardoning or covering of our ſins; and that is the next way of covering ſin.

Secondly, Sin is covered as by the free favour and mercy of God, ſo by the righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt; God covers ſin from his juſtice, yet he will ſuffer no damage in point of juſtice; though he ſtop the proceedings of juſtice, he loſeth nothing by it, becauſe as ſin is covered by his own mercy, ſo by the meritorious obedience of Chriſt, which gives full ſatisfaction to all the demands of juſtice. The *mercy-ſeat* or propitiatory (which was an illuſtrious type of Chriſt) covered the Ark in which the Law was kept (*Exod.* 25. 10, 17.) This mercy ſeat was of the ſame length and breadth with the Ark. And *Moſes* was commanded to put the Mercy ſeat upon the Ark, implying that all our tranſgreſſions of the law of God, are covered by the righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt, who is both our propitiatory (*Rom.* 3. 25.) and our propitiation (1 *Joh.* 2. 2.) that is, who by the ſacrifice of himſelf hath made our atonement or agreement with God, which was figured by the propitiatory or *mercy-ſeat*, covering all thoſe tranſgreſſions which we were any way chargeable with by the Law.

Ιλαστήριον *propitiatorium.* Ιλασμὸς *propitiatio.*

Thirdly, Sins are covered as by the mercy of God, and the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, ſo by the charity of man. Thus any godly man may and ought to cover the ſin of his brother (1 *Pet.* 4. 8.) *Above all things have perfect charity among your ſelves; for charity ſhall cover the multitude of ſins.* True charity hath a garment long and large enough to cover many, yea a multitude of ſins. Charity cannot cover our own ſins as to the juſtification of our perſons before God, 'tis a garment too thin and too narrow for that purpoſe, nor was it ever cut out and appointed by God to ſuch a uſe; but charity ſhould and may cover the ſins of others, as to the preſervation of their credit among men, and the maintaining of our peace and correſpondence with them. 'Tis dangerous as well as unwarrantable to cover the ſins of others by flattery (ſuch a covering of ſin is not only an encouragement to ſin, but may prove the utter undoing of the ſinner) but to cover a ſin by charity, that is, while we are admoniſhing or wiſely reproving our brother our ſelves, to conceal it from others, or not to publiſh and blaze it abroad to his ſhame, or the provocation of paſſion in him, is a great piece of Chriſtian duty, and may be a means of recovering him from the power and practice of his ſin. Thus *Solomon* ſaith (*Prov.* 10. 12.) *Hatred ſtirreth up ſtrife, but love covereth all ſins*; That is, the love of man to man prevents wrath by covering ſin for the ſinners good, not to cloak and harden him in his ſin, but to win him out of it; or love covereth, that is, pardoneth all the ſins of others ſo far as they concern any injury done to us; thus Chriſt teacheth us to forgive thoſe that *treſpaſs againſt us* (Matth. 6. 12. 15.) yea love cauſeth others to forgive us the wrongs which we have done them; whereas *hatred* (that is, any expreſſion of hatred either by words or actions) doth but ſtir up ſtrife, and make the breach wider. Hatred always increaſeth ſtrife where it is, and often begins it where it is not; love always looks upon great wrongs as ſmall, and upon ſmall ones as none at all. The Church Hiſtory reports of *Conſtantine* the Great and firſt Chriſtian Emperor, that when ſeveral accuſations were brought againſt ſome of the Biſhops aſſembled at the Councel of *Nice*, He would not ſuffer them to be urged in publick, but profeſſed he would rather cover them with his royal robes, than let them break out to the hinderance of the work, and the ſcandal of thoſe perſons who were concerned in them.

Fourthly, Man alſo is ſaid in Scripture to cover ſin by the converſion of the ſinner (*James* 5. 19. 20.) *Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him, let him know, that he which converteth the ſinner from the error of his way, ſhall ſave a ſoul from death, and ſhall hide a multitude of ſins*; That is, if any one among you who hath made an outward profeſſion of the truth, ſhall turn aſide from the rule of the Goſpel, whether in matters of faith or of a holy life, in this caſe take notice that whoſoever ſhall be bleſſed as an inſtrument in God's hand, by prayer or reproof, by counſels or any endeavours to recover him out of that wandering and backſliding condition, This man ſhall have the honour (be he who he will, Miniſter or brother) *to ſave a ſoul from death, and hide a multitude of ſins.* Some, I know, underſtand theſe words of the Apoſtle, as referring to the ſalvation of the perſon who is the inſtrument of this converſion; his ſoul ſhall be ſaved and his ſins ſhall be hidden how many ſoever they are; and the Apoſtle *Paul* joyns both for the encouragement of *Timothy* in his Miniſtry (1 *Tim.* 4. 16.) *In ſo doing, thou ſhalt ſave thy ſelf and them that hear thee.* But the current of this Text runs clearly to the perſon reduced from the error of his way; *Thou ſhalt ſave a ſoul*, that is, his ſoul, *and hide a multitude of ſins*, that is, of his ſins; as if he had ſaid, thou ſhalt be a means of bringing him to a ſight of his ſin, and ſo to humble himſelf before God and ſeek the pardon of them, which is the only true and happy hiding and covering of them.

Thus I have ſhewed four coverings of ſin, and in all theſe ſences, it is good for us, to have our ſins covered. Bleſſed are they whoſe ſins are covered by the free favour of God, by the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, and by the wiſe charity of their brethren, either not divulging them, or converting the ſinner from them.

But there is a ſinful way in which ſin is covered, or there is a covering of ſin, which is both the ſin and miſery of man, ſuch a covering of ſin as will cover him with ſhame and confuſion of face for ever. And that's it which *Job* diſclaims. He ſought and ſought doubtleſs with all his ſoul to get his ſin covered with the mercy of God, with the righteouſneſs of Chriſt the redeemer, but he durſt not make a cover for ſin himſelf; *If I covered*

My tranſgreſſions.] The word notes great or greateſt ſins, even rebellions and blaſphemy: by both which that ſpeech of *Elihu* (Chap. 34. 37.) is rendred, and our tranſlation takes the former, *For he addeth rebellion unto his ſin.* To rebel is more than barely to ſin, Rebellion is impudent and pertinacious ſinning. Many ſin, who (in ſtrict ſence) do not rebel; they that rebel ſin with all their might. They not only do evil, but do it againſt the light of good counſel given by others, and againſt the light of their own conſciences. How ſinful are they, who add rebellion to their ſin? Some take it thus here, *I have not covered my tranſgreſſions or my great ſins*; as if *Job* had ſaid, *I have not hid the worſt of my ſelf, I have not only not ſought to conceal my common frailties, but not my fouleſt ſpots, and greateſt rebellions againſt God.* Many are free to confeſs leſſer ſins, but they prepare coverings for their groſs enormities. So that if we take the word *tranſgreſſions*, in this peculiar ſignification, it much advanceth and advantageth the ſincerity of *Job*'s heart in this profeſſion.

Vox Hebræa פשע *latiſſimè patet, ut etiam leviora crimina comprehendat.* Druſ.

Yet I ſuppoſe we are not tied to that ſtrictneſs of the word in this place. And we find it ſometimes uſed to expreſs ordinary ſins and common failings in other places of Scripture. (*Prov.* 10. 19.) *In the multitude of words there wanteth not ſin*; That is, there is uſually ſtore of ſin in ſtore of words; yet we know a ſlip of the tongue (for we cannot probably interpret that Scripture of meditated evil ſpeaking, a ſlip of the tongue I ſay) is not reckoned among great ſins, though no ſin conſidered in it ſelf be little. So here I conceive *Job* intends that he did not cover any ſin, whether great or little, when he ſaith, *If I covered my tranſgreſſions*

As Adam.] There's the reſtriction or modification of the act denyed. Yet this word *Adam* may be taken two ways; Firſt, more narrowly as a proper name. The firſt man was called *Adam* from *Adamah*, *red earth*, out of which the Lord made or created him. (*Gen.* 2. 7.) *And the Lord God formed man of the duſt of the ground, and breathed into his noſtrils the breath of life.* As *Adam* was formed out of the duſt of the earth, ſo from that he took his name. And this ſutes elegantly with *Job*'s purpoſe; and is alſo an argument that *Job* was well acquainted with, and inſtructed about, thoſe neceſſary principles of religion, the ſtate of the firſt man in his innocency, as alſo with his fall from that ſtate, and the ſad effects and conſequents of it. *Adam* having ſinned, imployed that little wit or vain ſubtlety he had left to cover his ſin, and hide it from God, as I ſhall have occaſion to ſhew more particularly, in the proſecution of this Scripture. Therefore ſaith *Job*, *If I covered my tranſgreſſion as Adam*, the firſt man *Adam*. Whether *Moſes* had written his five books before *Job*'s time is a querie of a difficult, if at all of a poſſible, reſolution; yet however, God was not wanting to his Church, but either by tradition from man to man, or by immediate revelation from himſelf, continued the doctrine of the creation and fall of man, with the neceſſary truths depending thereupon among his people from *Adam* to *Moſes*, which might give *Job* light enough to ſay even with reſpect to that perſonal act of *Adam*, *If I have covered my tranſgreſſions as Adam.*

Secondly, We may take the word *Adam* more largely, that is, Appellatively, or as a common name applicable to all men; for every man, ſince the firſt man *Adam*, is an *Adam*. There are three words by which man is expreſſed in Scripture.

Firſt, *Iſh*, which ſignifieth man in his higheſt excellency and dignity, in the quickneſs of his parts and gifts, in the beſt dreſs or habit of Nature or of Grace.

Secondly, *Enoſh*, which notes man compaſſed about with infirmity, even weakly, ſickly, ſad and ſorrowful man, or man (though poſſibly renewed by grace, yet) cloathed and burdened with the troubleſom iſſues of a ſinful nature.

The third word is that of the Text, *Adam*, and this belongs to all mankind, or to man as man, whether great or ſmall, ſtrong or weak, every man is *Adam*, his body being of

Si texi ſicut reliqui homines. Merc.

the earth earthly. *If I have covered my tranſgreſſions as Adam*; That is, as men uſually do. Thus the Prophet ſpeaks (*Hoſea* 6. 7.) *But they, like men, have tranſgreſſed the Covenant.* We put in the Margin, *like Adam.* And in the Margin of this Text in *Job*, we put, *after the manner of men*, *If I covered my tranſgreſſions after the manner of men*; That is, as the race and generality of mankind have heretofore done and do to this day. As if he had ſaid, *I have not trod the path, nor followed the courſe of the world, who make it their firſt buſineſs to ſin, and their next to cover and hide their ſins.* Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates fully to this ſence of the word, *If I have covered my ſin as every man doth*; implying that this is an epidemical practical diſeaſe, infecting all ſorts and degrees of men. *If I covered my tranſgreſſions as Adam,*

By hiding mine iniquity in my boſom.

In theſe words *Job* further explains how he did not cover his ſin, *He did not hide it in his boſom.* The word tranſlated *to hide*, notes a cunning artificial hiding, ſuch as hunters or fowlers uſe when they would take their prey, Theſe lay their nets very cloſely (for as *Solomon* ſaith (*Prov.* 1. 17.) *Surely in vain is the net ſpread in the ſight of any bird*) and ſo the Pſalmiſt expreſſeth it in the ſame alluſion (*Pſal.* 9. 15.) *The heathen are ſunk down in the pit that they made, in the net which they hid is their own foot taken*; Such a hiding of his iniquity *Job* denieth, a cloſe cunning hiding; or like that of the *ſlothful man* (Prov. 19. 24.) *who hideth his hand in his boſom, and will not bring it to his mouth again*, he had rather ſtarve than work, and periſh rather than be at the pains to feed himſelf. Thus the ſinner hideth his iniquity in his boſom, and will not bring it to his mouth again; that is, he had rather be, at leaſt he will venture to be damned than confeſs or diſcover it; He will not bring his boſom-ſin to his mouth in a holy confeſſion either to God or man. *I* (ſaith *Job*) *have not hid*

עון *Pravitas perverſitas.*

Mine iniquity.] That is, the iniquity which I am moſt prone to, and which my heart goeth moſt after; every man hath ſome iniquity, which he may call his ſpecial iniquity more than any other iniquity. The word *iniquity* in this latter part of the verſe, and *tranſgreſſion* in the former are the ſame in ſubſtance; yet this word properly ſignifieth that which is crooked or bowed. Holy actions are ſtraight right, and tend upward; ſinful actions are crooked and bend downward. *Cain* the firſt-born ſinner applyed this word to his ſin, or to the fruit of it, his puniſhment, or to both (*Gen.* 4. 13.) *My puniſhment is greater than I can bear*; we put in the Margin, *Mine iniquity is greater, than that it may be forgiven.* And as it notes the crookedneſs of our actions, ſo the vicioſity of our natures, or original ſin (*Pſal.* 51. 5.) *Behold* (ſaith repenting *David*) *I was ſhapen in* (that moſt crooked and miſhapen thing called) *iniquity.* This original iniquity as well as any actual (though the former lyes cloſeſt and deepeſt there) muſt not be hidden in our boſom; and we may well conceive that *Job* had an aim at this, when he ſaid, *I have not covered my tranſgreſſions, by hiding mine iniquity*

Hebræi בחבי *in ſinu meo, fere expoſuit* בסתרי *in occulto meo & latibulo, inter ſcrinia ſc. & cogitationes cordis mei; non dubium eſt quin tranſlatitiè ad mentis receſſum & conſcientiæ arcanum res hæc pertineat.* Merc. *Kimhi petit ab* חבב *quod eſt deligere deduci quaſi*

In my boſom.] This phraſe, *To hide iniquity in the boſom*, imports the neareſt cloſing with and loving imbraces of any iniquity. The boſom is a ſecret place, and to put a thing in the boſom, is to keep it as ſecret as we can. Thus ſome tranſlate the Text, *by hiding my iniquity in ſecret, or in ſecreſie*; that is, in the remoteſt retirements, in the moſt privy boxes and contrivements of the heart and conſcience. Our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who was manifeſted in the fulneſs of time, and had been hid all the time or rather eternity before from the world, is ſaid to come out of the boſom of the Father (*Joh.* 1. 18.) *And John the beloved Diſciple leaned in Chriſts boſom* (*Joh.* 13. 23.) that is, he had moſt intimate converſe with Chriſt, and knew more of his heart than moſt of the other Diſciples; We commonly call a very near friend, a *Boſom friend.*

Yet further, Some of the Jewiſh Rabbins tranſlate, thus; *If I have hid my ſin in my ſelf-love, or in the love of my ſelf*, or as Mr. *Broughton*, *of a ſelf-love.* With which reading other late learned Interpreters agree; Some thus; *Hiding my ſin becauſe I loved it, or out of love to my ſelf.* As ſelf love is a ſin, ſo many hide their ſins out of love to ſelf. Thoſe things that we love dearly and have a precious eſteem of, we hide ſafely; That's the emphaſis of theſe latter tranſlations; *If I have hid my iniquity becauſe I loved it*, or, *Becauſe of my ſelf-love*; As if *Job* had aſſigned two things, which might have prevailed with him to conceal his ſin, if he had not feared God; Firſt, the pattern he had from *Adam*, or from the daily practice of moſt men. Secondly, the love which man naturally bears to ſin. *I have not covered my tranſgreſſions like Adam*, nor hath my love to them overcome me to hide them.

באהבתי *in amore mei & φιλαυτίᾳ, qua homines natura laborant, ſe & ſua vel peccata amantes. Abdendo ex dilectione mea iniquitatem meam.* Jun.

Again, When *Job* ſaith, he did not *cover his tranſgreſſions*, nor *hide his iniquity in his boſom.* We muſt underſtand him in the full latitude of theſe words; And ſo more is intended than expreſſed; even that he acknowledged and confeſſed his ſin. As he did not proclaim his ſin in the market-place, ſo he did diſcover it, as in duty he ought, that is, in time, place, and manner convenient. He not only did not hide his ſin, but he acknowledged and confeſſed it. As all the negative precepts include their affirmatives, ſo ſome negative practices include their affirmatives. According to which rule of Scripture-interpretation, we may conclude, that when *Job* ſaid, *I have not covered my tranſgreſſions*, &c. his meaning was, he did confeſs and declare them with ſorrow and brokenneſs of heart, that he might give glory to God under a ſence of his own vileneſs, and of the riches of his free grace in the pardon of them. Thus much for the explication and underſtanding of this verſe; *If I have covered my tranſgreſſions as Adam, by hiding mine iniquity in my boſom.*

From the whole, obſerve, Firſt, *Man loves to hide and ſeek coverings for his ſin.*

Satan and our corrupt hearts have no ſooner prevailed with us to do evil, but they preſently counſel and perſwade us to conceal the evil we have done. Sin enters ſecretly and ſuddainly. It comes like a thief to rob and ſpoil us of our beſt treaſure. Moſt ſins are committed in the dark, that is, ſecretly; and all ſins ſo committed would be kept in the darkneſs of concealment and ſecrecy. Sin is darkneſs, and a work of darkneſs; Now darkneſs being ſo congenial to ſin, ſinners muſt needs love darkneſs. Moſt of our ſins are unknown to others, yea many of our ſins are unknown to our ſelves. Therefore *David* had no ſooner put this queſtion (*Pſal.* 19. 12.) *Who can underſtand his errours?* But he preſently puts up this petition, *Cleanſe thou me from ſecret faults.* And theſe ſecret faults by him intended in that prayer, were not ſuch as he had committed out of the eye or ſight of others, but ſuch as had eſcaped or were not at all diſcerned by the eye of his own obſervation. Now, as moſt of our ſins are unknown to other men, and many of our ſins are unknown to our ſelves, ſo it is the deſire of ſinful man, that all his ſins might be unknown to God. Man, as man, that is, as ſinful man deſireth that there might be a ſeal ſet or a veil put upon all his ſins. It is as natural to man to be a ſin-coverer as a ſin-committer; And he had rather make ſome poor ſhift of his own to cover it than go to God (whoſe priviledg and glory it is to cover ſin) to have his ſin covered. It was ſo with *Adam* the firſt man; when he had ſinned, how buſie was he to hide his ſin? It was ſo with *Cain* the ſecond man; when he had ſinned, how willing was he to hide his ſin? *Cain* ſpilt his brother's innocent blood like water upon the ground, but he would fain have ſtopped the mouth of his brother's blood from crying up to heaven. And when God came to make inquiſition for blood, and put the queſtion to him, *Where is Abel thy brother?* He anſwered the Lord firſt, with a plain lye, *I know not*; and, ſecondly, with a preſumptuous querie, *Am I my brothers keeper?* What have I to do with him? he is old enough to look to himſelf. Thus it was with the firſt, thus with the ſecond ſinner, and ſo it hath been with ſinners ever ſince. Do not our own hearts tell us that it is ſo? Have not the ſons of men been buſie in all generations to prepare coverings for their tranſgreſſions? and are they not upon the ſame buſineſs at this day? If any ſhall enquire, whence it cometh to paſs that men are thus ſinfully diligent in providing covers for their ſin? I anſwer, the reaſon of it ariſeth chiefly two ways.

Firſt, From pride; man hath an high ſpirit though he do low things, things as low as hell; ſuch a thing is ſin, even the beſt or leaſt of it, a low helliſh thing, a thing as low as hell;

hel; yet ſinners riſe up to heaven in high and proud thoughts of themſelves; and therefore they will hide their ſin if they can, and when they have done any foul work, cover it. The ſeeming profits and vain pleaſures of ſin, they like well, but they are too proud to love the ſhame and diſgrace that uſually attends it. As ſin hath that in the effects of it which may cauſe a ſtout man to tremble, ſo it hath that in the nature of it, which may cauſe an impudent man to bluſh. It is a blot, a reproach and a diſhonour; It debaſeth man in the eye and opinion of all godly wiſe and holy men. And the more wiſe, holy, and godly any man is, the more are ſinners debaſed in his eye. That's one part of his character that ſhall abide in the tabernacle, and dwell in the holy hill of God (*Pſal.* 15. 4.) *In his eyes a vile* (not a poor but a wicked) *perſon is contemned.* And hence it is, that a wicked perſon will hide his ſin as much as he can; He likes his ſin well enough, but he likes not the contempt and ſhame that it expoſeth him unto. He hath ſome care of his credit, though none of his conſcience; and would preſerve his own honour, while he diſhonoureth God. And therefore had rather run the hazzard of being covered with everlaſting ſhame by covering his ſin, than take any preſent ſhame to himſelf by confeſſing it.

Secondly, This covering of ſin ariſeth from want of faith; He that cannot believe his ſin ſhall be covered by God, will cover it himſelf. True confeſſion proceeds from faith, and is one of the bleſſed fruits of it. He that ſaith he hath ſinned. and knows what he ſaith, ſees wrath due to ſin, and himſelf obnoxious to eternal death; unbelief as to pardon cauſeth fear of puniſhment: and no marvail if an unbeliever labour to hide that, which he ſees will be his death. The unbeliever will never be a confeſſor, either of God's truth or of his own ſin. Shame and fear cauſe men to hide both their ſins and themſelves; ſhame bids the proud man cover his ſin, and fear the unbeliever. Or pride at once bids the ſame man cover his ſin for fear of ſhame, and unbelief bids him cover it for fear of puniſhment.

Secondly, When *Job* ſaith, *If I have covered my tranſgreſſions as Adam*; he intimates that *Adam* framed covers for his ſin, or that it is the manner of men to do ſo.

Hence obſerve, *The ſinful heart of man ſuggeſts and finds out many ways to cover ſin.*

As man hath a mind to hide his ſin, ſo he is daily imagining how to hide it. Man's natural corruption hath not ſhewed it ſelf more pregnant or fruitful in any thing than in this (*Eccl.* 7. 26.) *God hath made man upright* (or *right*, God is rightneſs it ſelf, and as he extendeth himſelf into his works, they are all right, man eſpecially had the image of God's rightneſs ſtampt upon him in his firſt creation) *but they* (not only the firſt, or this or that man, but all men) *have ſought out many inventions*; and thoſe bad ones, very bad ones. There are many honeſt inventions reſpecting uſeful Arts and Sciences, which man hath found out by the common light which God hath given: But here *Solomon* ſpeaks of inventions oppoſed to uprightneſs; and what are they but evil inventions? And this is one of man's worſt inventions to hide that which is evil, and to make blinds for the covering of his ſin. He hath been moſt unhappily witty in theſe inventions. Man's trade ſince the fall of *Adam*, is like that of *Adam*; What was his? *Moſes* tells us of man's firſt invention to hide his bodily nakedneſs (*Gen.* 3. 7.) *The eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked, and they ſewed fig-leaves together, and made themſelves aprons.* Before they ſinned they were cloathed with the robe of innocency, but when they had ſinned they cloathed themſelves with fig-leaves. A little after he tells us of man's ſecond invention (upon which I ſhall inſiſt further hereafter) to cover the nakedneſs of his ſoul. And ever ſince it hath been man's moſt natural trade to make fig-leaf-coverings, poor ſhifts and ſhaddows to hide his ſoul-nakedneſs from the eyes of men, and if it were poſſible from the eyes of God too. We read in Scripture of ſome very witty inventions which women have uſed to cover and hide their purpoſes. I will inſtance in three, which are very remarkable. Firſt, was not that a witty invention of *Rachel*, who having taken away her father's images, hid them in the Camels furniture? (*Gen.* 31. 34.) And the holy ſtory tells us, how her wit wrought to keep the Camels furniture from being ſearcht, when her father came into her tent. The ſecond inſtance ſhall be that of *Rahab*, who to hide the Spies carried them up and covered them up with flax ſtalks on the roof of the houſe (*Joſh.* 2. 6.) Take a third in the woman of *Bahurim*, who uſed a notable invention to ſecure the meſſengers that went to carry tidings to *David*, cauſing them to go down into a well (2 *Sam.* 17. 18.) *And the woman took and ſpread a covering over the wells mouth; and ſpread ground corn thereon, and the thing was not known.* And indeed ſuſpition it ſelf could hardly ſuſpect that *well*, which had ſuch a covering. I mention theſe, to ſhew what ſtrange inventions have been uſed to cover things, perſons and deſigns. Yet theſe were but groſs, coarſe, and dull pieces of invention compared with thoſe which the heart of man daily finds out to cover his tranſgreſſions. O how cunning are ſinners grown to cover their ſin! What falſe doors? what trapdoors? what turnings and windings? what labyrinths and *Meanders*? what ſhadows and vails, hath the heart of man invented and made to keep, conveigh or cover ſin out of ſight? The heart of man is ſtrangely engaged in theſe devices, yet of them all we may ſay as the Prophet *Iſaiah* doth of their attempts and devices who would hide themſelves from the judgments of God (*Iſa.* 28. 20.) *The bed is ſhorter then that a man can ſtretch himſelf on it, and the covering narrower then that he can wrap himſelf in it.* When ſinners have ſtretcht their wits upon the very tenters to deviſe new covers and cloaks for ſin, both they and their ſins ſtand naked in the ſight of God, or (as we ſay) they do all the while but dance in a net; yea they lay themſelves the more open to the juſtice of God, by how much they think themſelves more concealed from his knowledg. And therefore as the ſame Prophet denounced a ſevere threatning againſt the Jews, for ſeeking to ſhelter themſelves from thoſe ſtorms which hung over their heads and were ready to fall upon them by going to *Egypt* or any foraign nation for ſuccour. (*Iſa.* 30. 1.) *Woe to the rebellious children, ſaith the Lord, that take counſel but not of me, and that cover with a covering, but not of my Spirit, that they may adde ſin to ſin,* or thereby adding ſin to ſin, that is, adding this ſin of truſting in the creature, particularly in the ſhadow of *Egypt*, in a day of diſtreſs, to all their other ſins; Now, I ſay, as the Jews were threatned for ſeeking ſuch a cover from troubles, ſo their caſe is as dangerous, who ſeek or make vain coverings for their ſin. The Spirit of God hath provided a covering for all our ſins, yet few have an heart to make uſe of it. But how mad are the moſt of men to cover one ſin with another, to cover ſin by that which is it ſelf more ſinful. To all ſuch the Lord ſaith, Woe to them that cover with a covering, *but not of my Spirit*; that is, not with ſuch a covering as my Spirit hath ſhewed them and directed them unto; Theſe indeed add ſin to ſin; The covering is as ſinful as the ſin which they would cover.

But what are thoſe coverings (diſclaimed here by *Job*) and which are uſually made by the ſons of men to keep their tranſgreſſions out of ſight, or ſecret?

For anſwer to this querie, I ſhall ſhew you ſix covers of ſin, all invented and uſed by ſinful man, and the ſixth will give occaſion to ſpeak further to this point.

Firſt, Sin is covered when 'tis not confeſſed, or by bare concealment; When *Achan* had taken the accurſed thing, the goodly *Babyloniſh* garment, the wedg of gold, and the two hundred ſhekels of ſilver, he hid them and never ſaid 'twas he, till the lot ſaid 'twas he. The lot told the tribe, the lot told the family, the lot told the houſhold, yea the lot came upon his own head, and yet he ſtood mute and ſpake not a word of his ſin, till *Joſhua* ſaid unto him (*Joſh.* 7. 19.) *My ſon give I pray thee, glory to the Lord God of Iſrael, and make confeſſion unto him, and tell me now, what haſt thou done? hide it not*; As if he had ſaid, hitherto thou haſt hid thy ſin by not confeſſing it, but let me adviſe thee, hide it no longer. Some malefactors ſtand mute before the Judg, they conceal their ſin, and they have a judgment ſutable, they ſtand ſilent like a ſtone, and are covered and preſſed to death with ſtones. He that doth not diſcover his ſin when and as he ought, covers it. 'Tis dangerous enough to do that which needs confeſſion, but not to confeſs what we have ſo done is deſperate.

Secondly, There is a covering of ſin by putting the act done upon others, or by cauſing them to own it as if we had done nothing. *David*, a holy man, laboured to make this covering, for his great tranſgreſſions. When he had committed adultery with *Bathſhebah*, and ſhe *having conceived, ſent and told David, ſaying, I am with child*; he preſently in all haſte ſent for *Uriah* her husband home out of the Army, and uſed all the means his hardned heart and ſubtle head could invent to make him go home and converſe with his wife (2 *Sam.* 11.6, 7, &c.) that ſo it might be ſuppoſed the child was his. But the man was of a gallant ſpirit, and diſdained to take any private contentment in his family and home relations, while the Army was abroad in the field upon publick ſervice. Now *David* being diſappointed and his ſinful project failing for this firſt covering of his ſin, he projects a ſecond and that a far worſe one than the firſt. He will make murder the covering of his Adultery; and becauſe murder was too foul a ſin to appear openly; therefore being (in that hurry of paſſions and temptations) reſolved to take away the life of *Uriah*, he provided a covering for that ſin before he committed it (except in his heart) giving order to his General *Joab* to put him upon a hot and hazardous ſervice, that he might fall by the ſword of the children of *Ammon*, and yet not ſo much by their ſword as by the commanded treachery of his own party. How deceitful, how deſperately wicked was *David*'s heart (in this particular act) though (in his general ſtate) a man after God's own heart! How many ſins did he commit to make a covering for that one ſin! His Adulterous act muſt be covered with a conjugal one by *Uriah*, and becauſe *Uriah* would not do that ſober, he made him drunk to do it; and becauſe that would not take, *Uriah* muſt dye, that he might take the widdow for his wiſe and ſo by a conjugal act of his own cover his former Adulterous act; and to make the ſyſteme of this ſin compleat, the plotted deſigned death of *Uriah* muſt be covered by the common fate of Mankind, and the chance of war. The ſword (ſaith he) devoured *ſo and ſuch* (as we put in the Margin) *or one as well as another* (as we put in the Text) (2 *Sam.* 11.26.) when as *David* wiſhed and intended it ſhould devour *Uriah* rather than any other.

The third cover of ſin is lying, which is the knowing and direct affirmation of that which is not true, or the denyal of that which is. *Ananias* and *Saphira* ſinned greatly by keeping back part of the price for which they ſold their poſſeſſion, having dedicated the whole to publick uſe. And when *Peter* put the queſtion to the woman (*Acts* 5. 8.) *Tell me whether ye ſold the land for ſo much, and ſhe ſaid, yea for ſo much*, as both ſinned by keeping back part of the price, ſo ſhe covered their ſin by affirming they brought in the whole; We ſold it for juſt ſo much (as we brought in, that was her meaning) we had not a penny more for it; *Then Peter ſaid unto her, how is it that ye have agreed to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? Behold the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door, and ſhall carry thee out.* A dreadful Judgment! They who covered their ſin with a lie, are themſelves covered with the earth. And as ſin is often covered by a lie in the firſt notion of it, The affirmation of that which is not, or is falſe, ſo alſo by a lie in the ſecond notion of it, the flat and peremptory denyal of that which is, or is true. Thus when *Gehazi* had gone covetouſly after *Naaman* for a gift; as he got it by framing a lie, ſo he covered it with a lie (2 *Kings* 5.25.) *Whence comeſt thou Gehazi?* ſaid *Eliſha*, *And he ſaid, thy ſervant went* (not hither or thither, that is, as we tranſlate) *no whither*. This covering of his tranſgreſſion coſt *Gehazi* dear too, He having got gifts from *Naaman* by a lie, to ſatisfie his covetouſneſs, and having told his Maſter another groſs lie to cover it, is himſelf covered with the leproſie of *Naaman*. He having committed and ſinfully covered a ſin as *red as ſcarlet* (as the Prophet *Iſaiah* ſpeaks *Chap.* 1.18.) *went out* (being ſtrucken with his Maſters ſentence) *from his preſence a leper as white as ſnow*.

Fourthly, Others cover their tranſgreſſions by Juſtifying and maintaining them. What they have done ill they ſay is well done. They are ſo far from denying what they have done, that they applaud it, and will needs cover their ſinful acts by a high perſwaſion of their ſinleſsneſs, yea of their praiſe-worthineſs. When the Lord ſaid to *Jonah*, to angry, pettiſh *Jonah* (Chap. 4. 9.) *Doeſt thou well to be angry for the gourd?* He was ſo far from ſaying, Lord I am ſorry for my paſſion, I confeſs I have a fooliſh and a froward heart, which will not acquieſce in thy diſpenſations; I find and feel my proud ſpirit troubled becauſe I have not the honour to have my Propheſies fulfilled and made good; *Jonah*, I ſay, was ſo far from any of theſe acknowledgments that he had done ill in being ſo paſſionate about the gourd, that he juſtifieth his paſſion with this moſt confident aſſertion, *I do well to be angry even unto death.* Thus he ſet up his will againſt the will of God, and thought he had reaſon enough to be angry at what God had done, both in ſparing the repenting City of *Niniveh*, and in ſmiting a periſhing gourd. And as there are ſome who cover their ſins by a real, *though not by an intentional juſtifying of them* (they think they have done very well when they have done exceeding ill; as Chriſt foretells his Diſciples (*Joh.* 16. 2.) *The time cometh that whoſoever killeth you will think he doth God ſervice.*) So there are many who cover their ſins by an intentional Juſtification of them; that is, though they know they have done evil, yet they will juſtifie it, and put a fair colour upon it. Hypocrites will juſtifie their own perſons, how bad ſoever they are, and prophane perſons will juſtifie many of their actions how bad ſoever they are. As there is a ſpirit in man luſting continually to do evil, and not good, ſo there is a ſpirit in man to uphold an evil act as if it were good. The Prophet tells us there are ſuch, while he denounceth a woe againſt them, that call *evil good and good evil, that put light for darkneſs and darkneſs for light, that put bitter for ſweet and ſweet for bitter* (Iſa. 5. 20.) which cannot be underſtood of thoſe who do it ignorantly (though even ſuch are in a worſe caſe) but of thoſe who do it ſtudiedly and purpoſely; or we are not to underſtand it of thoſe who do it by miſtake, but of thoſe who would have other miſtake what they have done, and therefore they will juſtifie that which is evil, as if it were good. For as many juſtifie thoſe who are ungodly, ſo there are others who juſtifie their own ungodlineſs. There are none ſo proper objects of God's condemnation as they who, to cover, juſtifie their ſins. And to clear this a little further, I ſhall touch upon a threefold Juſtification of ſin.

Firſt, Some juſtifie their ſins by unbelief, ſo giving them a power to condemn them; For whereas *God ſent his Son in the likeneſs of ſinful fleſh, and for ſin* (or as we put in the Margin, *by a ſacrifice for ſin*) *condemned ſin in the fleſh* (Rom. 8. 3.) They through their own unbelief, not taking hold of that ſacrifice of Chriſt for the condemning of ſin (that is, for diſabling of ſin (as a condemned perſon is diſabled in Law) to bring in evidence or bear witneſs againſt them) juſtifie ſin, and ſuffer it to take its full courſe for their utter condemnation.

Secondly, Others juſtifie ſin by giving it a liberty to rule, command, and maſter them, even to do what it will with them; Theſe letting their luſts carry them to the committing of any evil without rebuke, controul or check, juſtifie their ſin.

Thirdly (which is the point in hand) not a few juſtifie their ſins by defending them; They who inſtead of repenting of and judging themſelves for their ſins, are Patrons and Advocates for them, putting a fair gloſs upon a foul matter, and making thoſe actions which are as black as hell, look beautiful as the heavens, what do they elſe in all they do but juſtifie their ſins, and acquit them from any charge of evil? Of ſuch the Apoſtle *Paul* ſaith, *They glory in their ſhame* (Phil. 3. 19.) that is, in thoſe things whereof they ought to be aſhamed, they boaſt and glory. No man glorieth in that which he apprehends to be his ſhame. But many glory in that, which is indeed their ſhame, and will appear to be ſo in the iſſue.

Fifthly, They who dare not cover ſin by juſtifying it (they go not ſo far) yet they cover it by extenuating and leſſening it; While they acknowledg it to be a ſin, they ſay it is but a ſmall one. They confeſs the fact to be a fault, but cover much of the faultineſs of it. As a godly man when he confeſſeth the goodneſs of God heightens and aggravates it; He ſaith, how wonderfully good hath the Lord been to me! So when he confeſſeth his ſin he heightens and greatens it, he ſaith, O how exceeding ſinful is my ſin! But as a carnal man makes light of the goodneſs of God to him, ſo he doth alſo of his ſin againſt God. He is not ſenſible of the evil of his ſin, though he confeſſeth he hath done evil in ſinning; or (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Rom.* 5.20.) Sin doth not abound to him, though he hath abounded in ſin; *The law entred that the offence might abound*; That is, in the ſinfulneſs of it as to our apprehenſion; Whereas a natural man littles and leſſens his ſin, 'tis but a ſmall matter in his eyes. He extenuates or makes it little; Firſt, in the nature of it; Secondly, in the circumſtances of it.

Sixthly and laſtly, Many cover their tranſgreſſions by excuſing them; or making apologies for themſelves, though they have tranſgreſſed. When a ſin is ſo plain and barefaced, that it cannot be denied, and ſo groſs that it can neither be defended nor extenuated in it ſelf; yet the heart of man will find ſomewhat to cover the evil of it with, either in part or in whole as done by him. The ſinner will ſay, I am very far from Juſtifying this act; I do not ſay, nor think it is well done, I dare not ſo much as extenuate it, I confeſs it is a ſin, and a great ſin, but pray conſider, I am to be excuſed, if not altogether, yet almoſt or in a great meaſure I am excuſable. What I have done is blameworthy, yet I am not worthy of ſo much, no nor of any ſuch blame as you imagine for doing it. The blame lyeth upon ſome other perſon, or upon ſome other thing. Pray put the ſaddle upon the right horſe, and let that bear the blame, which deſerves it. As ſome make excuſes when they ſhould either do or receive good: when the great offer of grace by Chriſt is made in the Goſpel, moſt excuſe themſelves from receiving it; The parable of the Supper (*Luke* 14. 18.) ſhews that plainly; *And they all with one conſent began to make excuſe: the firſt ſaid I have bought a piece of ground and I muſt needs go and ſee it, I pray thee have me excuſed*, &c. They did not rudely and uncivilly deny to come, but their buſineſs would not permit them, they had other occaſions at that time, they were not at leiſure to look after ſuch poor things as ſoul matters. Now as many plead excuſes for their not receiving that which is good, ſo others plead excuſes for the evil which they have done; and will needs lay the blame ſomewhere elſe. This was the covering which *Adam* our firſt parent made for his ſin; when God called him to queſtion about eating the forbidden fruit, he did not deny it, he did not go about to juſtifie himſelf in it, he did not ſo much as extenuate or leſſen it; all that he did, was this, he excuſed himſelf about it; It was a great ſin, but he was not ſo much in fault as the woman; *The woman which thou gaveſt to be with me, ſhe gave me of the tree, and I did eat.* And when the Lord dealt with the woman and call'd her to account: what ſay you woman? ſhe did not deny it, but ſhe had her excuſe too, ſhe hoped to eaſe and unburden her ſelf of the fault, it ſhould not ſtick upon her, nor lye at her door, ſhe had this to plead for her ſelf, *The Serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.* I did not tranſgreſs of my own accord, nor was this a ſin of my ſeeking. If the Serpent had not couſen'd me, I might have been long enough before I had medled with or toucht the forbidden fruit. Neither *Adam* nor the woman denied what they had done; but both of them thought they were very pardonable in doing it. Both made a confeſſion of the fault, yet theirs was a faulty confeſſion. They covered their ſin while they did acknowledg it, and hid it in their boſoms while they held it out upon their tongues. Thus did *Adam* the firſt man, and thus do the ſons of *Adam* daily cover their ſins. And I ſhall (on this occaſion) yet a little further open the ſubtlety of *Adam* the firſt man, and of all men naturally deſcending from him, in covering their tranſgreſſions; for as much as *Job* doth ſo expreſly diſavow the imitation of either in covering his, while his purpoſe was boldly to affirm, that he had not covered them at all.

Nor is it improper or impertinent for the further clearing and expoſition of this Scripture, and it may be very profitable and uſeful in our daily converſation to conſider, if not all, yet at leaſt ſome of the principal of thoſe ways by which *Adam* at firſt, and his poſterity ever ſince, have laboured to excuſe, and ſo to cover or to make excuſes, coverings of their tranſgreſſions.

I ſhall begin with that of *Adam* in perſon, and then give inſtances of *Adam* in his poſterity. *If I have covered my tranſgreſſions as Adam*, that is, as the firſt *Adam*.

What *Adam*'s covering was, hath been ſhewed in general before, as we find it expreſſed (*Gen.* 3. 12.) where the Lord having called him to account for eating of the tree of knowledg, he made this plea for himſelf; *The woman whom thou gaveſt me, to be with me; ſhe gave me of the tree and I did eat*; *Adam* confeſſed the fact, *I did eat*, but he excuſed himſelf as to the fault; and by what did he excuſe himſelf? He did it by the perſwaſion of his wife, as the Lord tells him at the 17. verſe, *Becauſe thou haſt harkened to the voice of thy wife, and haſt eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, ſaying, thou ſhalt not eat of it, curſed be the ground for thy ſake*, &c. As if the Lord had ſaid, *I ſpake to thee and thou wouldeſt not harken unto me, thy wife hath ſpoken, and thou haſt harkned unto her; yea thou haſt preſumed that thy harkning unto her, will excuſe thy not harkning unto me.*

Thus it was with *Adam*; And is it not thus with the ſons of *Adam?* How often have the perſwaſions of others been pleaded as a covering for their tranſgreſſions. *Saul* being ſent forth cloathed with a Commiſſion from God himſelf, in the miniſtry of *Samuel*, to ſlay the *Amalekites*, to make an utter end of them, not to ſpare man, woman, or child, nor ſheep, nor oxen, nor camels, nor aſſes (1 *Sam.* 15. 3.) Accordingly he undertook the war, and upon his return meeting *Samuel*, ſaluted him with this aſſurance of his good ſervice and ſucceſs, *Bleſſed be thou of the Lord, I have performed the commandment of the Lord* (v. 13.) To whom when *Samuel* anſwered, *What meaneth then this bleating of the ſheep in my ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear*, *Saul* replyed at the 15. verſe, *They have brought them from the Amalekites, for the people ſpared the beſt of the ſheep, and of the oxen, to ſacrifice to the Lord thy God, and the reſt we have utterly deſtroyed*; *They* (ſaith he) *have brought them*, that is, they moved or perſwaded me to ſpare and bring them, and I was overwrought by their perſwaſion, *Saul* was King, it was *Saul's* place to command, and the peoples to obey; but he was willing to ſpeak of himſelf as obeying the people, that he might excuſe his own ſin in diſobeying God. It was the perſwading voice of the people which prevailed with him, and by that he thought himſelf excuſable, yea and ſtood it out a great while with *Samuel* (verſ. 20, 21.) *I have* (ſaith he) *obeyed the voyce of the Lord, and have gone the way which the Lord ſent me, and have brought Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly deſtroyed the Amalekites. But the people took of the ſpoil*, &c. *to ſacrifice unto the Lord thy God in Gilgal.* As if he had ſaid, *Why doeſt thou charge this ſin ſo ſtrictly upon me? if the act be evil, yet it can ſcarce be called mine, I did it at the deſire of the people, I only yielded to them, and was born down by their importunity.* And thus *Aaron*, the High-Prieſt being challenged by *Moſes* for making the golden Calf (*Exod.* 32. 21.) put it upon the people (*verſ.* 22.) *And Aaron ſaid, let not the anger of my Lord wax hot: thou kneweſt this people, that they are ſet on miſchief; for they ſaid unto me, make us gods which ſhall go before us; for as for this Moſes, we wot not what is become of him:* As if *Aaron* had ſaid, *The ſin is theirs, and not mine, it was not my will, but their wilfulneſs which forged this Calf.* Again, when *Pilate* had awarded an unjuſt ſentence againſt Chriſt, it ſeems his conſcience checked him for it, yet he had this help, this plaiſter for the ſore, he hoped to eaſe himſelf by caſting it upon the people, and therefore (*Matth.* 27. 24.) he called for water, and waſhed his hands, by which ceremony, he would declare his own integrity, ſaying, *I am innocent of the blood of this juſt perſon, ſee ye to it*; I have condemned him indeed, but it was upon your perſwaſion. Thus we ſee, how *Adam* firſt, and the ſons of *Adam* all along have taken up this plea. But was *Adam* excuſed, becauſe he ſinned by the perſwaſion of his wife? was *Saul* acquitted, becauſe he diſobeyed God upon the perſwaſion of the people? was *Aaron* held faultleſs, becauſe he made the Calf upon the urgency of the *Iſraelites?* or *Pilate*, becauſe he condemned Chriſt upon the out-cry of the Jews? were any of theſe held guiltleſs as to their tranſgreſſions, becauſe they had this plea, the importunity of others? The Scripture tells us theſe were coverings too ſhort and too narrow to hide their tranſgreſſions; yea *Samuel* handled *Saul* ſo plainly, and brought his ſin ſo home to his conſcience, that he was forced to confeſs (*verſ.* 24.) *I have ſinned, for I have tranſgreſſed the Commandment of the Lord, and thy word, becauſe I feared the people and obeyed their voice.* And therefore remember, we muſt act according to the voice of God, and not according to the votes of men; yea, remember, this plea doth rather aggravate our ſin, than any way abate it; what? ſhall we do more upon the perſwaſions of men, than upon the command of God, and think to be excuſed by it? ſhall mens intreaties give check to the law of God? ſhall the word of friends or relations be more forcible, than the direct rule of his Word? *Solomon* ſaith (*Prov.* 1. 10.) *My ſon, if ſinners intice thee conſent thou not*; As if he had ſaid, *It will be no boot for thee to plead, when thou haſt ſinned, that thou didſt it by the inticement of ſinners.* In the ſame book (*Chap.* 7.21.) we read of a young man inſnared by a harlot. *With much fair ſpeech ſhe cauſed him to yield, and with the flattery of her lips* (or by *her ſmooth tongue*) *ſhe forced him*; as if the young man's will were ſcarce in the thing, yet this did not help him; for away he goes like an oxe to the ſlaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the ſtocks. That's a moſt remarkable inſtance (1 *Kings* 13. *verſ.* 18,20,21.) where we read of a Prophet that had received a commandment from the Lord to do a meſſage to *Jeroboam*, and he performed it fully, denouncing a curſe againſt his Altar. But upon his return another Prophet met him, and ſaid unto him (*verſ.* 18.) *I am a Prophet alſo as thou art, and an Angel ſpake unto me by the word of the Lord, ſaying, bring him back with thee into thine houſe, that he may eat bread, and drink water, but he lyed unto him*; This Prophet was perſwaded by a Prophet, who avouched divine authority; *an Angel* (ſaith he) *ſpake unto me in the name of the Lord to bring thee back*; yet though he came back upon this ſtrong perſwaſion he is doom'd to an untimely death for it by that pretended Prophet, who preſently cryed out to the man of God that came from *Judah* (verſ. 21.) *Saying, thus ſaith the Lord, for as much as thou haſt diſobeyed the mouth of the Lord, and haſt not kept his commandment, which the Lord thy God commanded thee, thy carcaſs ſhall not come into the ſepulcher of thy fathers*; and ſoon after *a Lion met him by the way and ſlew him. This* (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks of many other dreadful providences, 1 *Cor.* 10. 11.) *happened to him for an enſample, and is written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come*, that we may for ever ſhut our ears againſt the voice of a man, yea againſt the voice of an Angel from heaven perſwading to do any thing contrary or contradictory to the known voice of God.

Secondly, Say others we have done amiſs indeed, but we did it upon the command of our ſuperiors, and is not that enough to ſave us harmleſs?

I anſwer, Though a Maſter command his Servant, or a Parent his Child, or a Prince his Subject, that which is ſinful, yet if either ſervant, or child, or ſubject do it, the ſin will reſt upon their own ſouls; yea though poſſibly the ſuperior ſhould explicitly take the ſin upon himſelf, and when the inferior ſcruples or boggles at the thing, ſhould ſay, let the blame be upon me, only do as I command you, and be obedient to my voice, yet neither will this excuſe the ſinner. He that commands unlawful things is doubly guilty, but this doth not make him guiltleſs that obeyeth. The ſin will lye upon the doer as well as the commander. The warranty of the greateſt man in the world, cannot ſecure us againſt the wrath of God. The ſoul that ſins muſt bear it, how much ſoever others engage to bear it. Puniſhment will fall where God appoints it, not where man; God will not be at our direction whom to puniſh when his Law is broken. *Rebeckah* ſpake thus to her ſon, when ſhe drew him into that ſubtle practice for the obtaining of the bleſſing (*Gen.* 27. 8.) *Now therefore my Son, obey my voice, according to that which I command thee*; yet *Jacob* was afraid of obeying his mothers voice, commanding him to get the bleſſing in a diſguiſe or by a fraud, and therefore ſaid (*verſ.* 12.) *My father peradventure will feel me, and I ſhall ſeem to him as a deceiver, and I ſhall receive a curſe, and not a bleſſing*; He had miſgiving thoughts, that the matter would not end well, which ſhould be ſo begun; And therefore his mother to relieve him out of thoſe fears, ſaith to them (*verſ.* 13.) *Upon me be the curſe my ſon, only obey my voice*; ſcruple not what I command, I am your mother; *Jacob* obeyed and really got the bleſſing, yet his ſinful way of getting it (notwithſtanding his mother undertaking for him) got him many a knock and cold blaſt all his days, ſo that at laſt he gave this account or ſhort hiſtory of his life, *Few and evil have the dayes of the years of my life been* (Gen. 47. 9.) which he ſpake not only (as every man may do) upon the common conſideration of humane frailty, but upon conſideration of thoſe ſpecial and eminent afflictions, which he met with all the days of his life above othee men. All which were after-reckonings (in way of chaſtiſement, not at all of ſatisfaction) for that former ſin. The bleſſing which he got was an ineſtimable benefit, yet he was ſoundly paid, or he paid ſoundly for his fraudulent getting of it, though his mother promiſed to ſtand between him and *harms-way*. As alſo (which is another Scripture-inſtance in this caſe) did *Abſalom* to his ſervants, when he was reſolved, and had plotted to take away his brother *Amnon*'s life (2 *Sam.* 13. 28.) *Now Abſalom* (ſaith that Scripture) *had commanded his ſervants, ſaying, mark ye now when Amnon's heart is merry with wine, and when I ſay unto you, ſmite Amnon, then kill him, fear not, have not I commanded you? be couragious, and be valiant.* As if he had ſaid, Never queſtion the matter, is it not enough that I bid you do it, I will excuſe you to the king my father, if he ſhould be diſpleaſed at what is done, nor need you fear the diſpleaſure of God, ſeeing you have done it not as your own act, but as my command. Proud men will not only give wicked commands, but undertake to ſave the inſtruments of their wickedneſs harmleſs, and ſee them indemnified, who ſhall obey them: they will take the ſin and the curſe upon themſelves; and they ſhall be ſure enough of it, and ſo ſhall they alſo who obey them. Therefore let ſervants, children, and all inferiors, beware of doing that upon the command of man which God hath not commanded. Children, ſervants, and ſubjects muſt obey, but 'tis in the Lord, they muſt not obey againſt the Lord. The Apoſtle ſaith to ſervants, *Obey your Maſters in all things* (Col. 3. 22.) that is, *in all lawful things*, as the next words expound his meaning, *not with eye-ſervice as men-pleaſers, but in ſingleneſs of heart fearing God*; obey your Maſters, but fear God, that is, obey them ſo far as is conſiſtent with the fear of God. No Maſter hath power to command his ſervant againſt the Lord, nor hath any ſervant liberty to obey his Maſter againſt the Lord; no man hath power either in commanding or obeying, beyond the Law. We muſt ſo pleaſe men, as not to diſpleaſe God; if the ſuperior tranſgreſſeth the bounds of his power in commanding, the inferior tranſgreſſeth the limits of his duty in obeying. Neither do we in this at all let looſe the bonds of duty; To clear which, conſider there are two things in which the duty of an inferior doth conſiſt.

Id tantum poſſumus quod Jure poſſumus.

First, Subjection to the power of his ſuperior.

Secondly, Obedience to the command of his ſuperior; now in all things which are lawful and anſwerable to the mind of God, ſervants ought both to be ſubject to the power, and to obey the commands of thoſe that are over them; but in unlawful things they muſt only be ſubject to their power, not obey their commands. There is a great difference between theſe two, we may yield ſubjection, and yet refuſe obedience, as Caſuiſts determine; or which is the ſame, There may be paſſive obedience to the full, where active obedience is not at all; they who are always ſubject to the power of others, are not always ſubject to their commands. The Apoſtle *Peter* (1 Ep. 2. 18, 20.) bids ſervants be *ſubject to their Maſters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but alſo to the froward*; but he doth not teach them to obey their Maſters in all things, but rather *to ſuffer for conſcience ſake towards God* (verſ. 19.) Servants are to ſuffer not only when they have committed a fault, but they are to ſuffer rather than commit a fault, or ſin againſt God. We muſt ſerve men for God's ſake, we muſt not forſake God to ſerve men; conſcience bids inferiors to be obedient, but they muſt not be obedient againſt conſcience; if it were not ſometimes lawful to refuſe obedience to the commands of thoſe who are above us, the world might quickly be ruined in duty. There lyes no duty to obey by doing, when commands are againſt duty, or of things unlawful to be done. There is no diſputing the commands of God, and there are no commands but his, which may not be diſputed; nor can we be charged with diſobeying any commands (though we do them not) but thoſe which we are bound to obey by doing them, and thoſe are only the commands of God, and ſuch as ſubſerve his commands.

Subjectio poteſt eſſe ubi non eſt obedientia.

Peccat ſervus obtemperando, ubi peccat dominus imperando.

Thirdly, ſaith another, If I had only a bare command I confeſs that would not excuſe me, but the truth is, I was not only commanded, but threatned, and greatly threatned; if I had not done it I muſt have ſuffered deeply; and ſurely, God will not hold a poor creature to ſo hard a law, as to condemn him for doing that which he had no mind to do, but was threatned to do it, and muſt needs be undone if he did it not; it ſeems not only unreaſonable, but incompatible, not only with the goodneſs of God, but with his Juſtice, to put that ſin upon any man's ſcore, which he did, not as delighted but as terrified. Yet to the pretenders of this plea, I muſt ſay as the Apoſtle (2 *Cor.* 5. 10.) *Knowing the terror of the Lord we perſwade men.* Remember the Lord threatens if you do ill, and what are all the evils which man threatens or can inflict, if you do it not? If the wrath of man terrifieth you to do evil, ſhould not the wrath of God terrifie you much more from doing evil? One of the Ancients brings in a perſon making this excuſe, when urged to exceſſive drinking; *I did it indeed, but a great man in the company compelled me to it, a dagger was ſet at my breaſt, with this word, drink or die.* But the Anſwer given in that particular caſe may ſerve for all caſes. *Although* (ſaith he) *the matter be brought to this hard iſſue, that it be ſaid to thee, either drink or die, it were better for thee that in preſervation and defence of thy own temperance and ſobriety, thou ſhouldſt die, than that thou ſhould ſave thy life by thy intemperance; or it were much more eligible that thy body ſhould be ſlain ſober, than that thy ſoul ſhould be damn'd drunken.* The Apoſtles were ſtraitly threatned (*Acts* 4. 17.) not to ſpeak any more, nor to teach in the name of Jeſus, but did they ſatisfie themſelves and ſit down in ſilence, becauſe threatned to forbear ſpeaking? read their anſwer (*verſ.* 19, 20.) *Whether it be right in the ſight of God, to hearken unto you more than unto God, judg ye; for we cannot but ſpeak the things which we have ſeen and heard.* Now if threatnings be no excuſe to us for the forbearing of a good duty, or obedience to an affirmative command, (which though it oblige (*ſemper*) always, yet not (*ad ſemper*) to all times; now, I ſay, if they would not forbear to do good when men threatned) much leſs will mens threatnings excuſe us, if we for fear of them do evil or tranſgreſs a negative command, which as it is always binding, ſo it binds always or at all times; There's no moment much leſs ſeaſon for the doing of evil, though there may be a ſeaſon of forbearing to do that which is good. There is no neceſſity of ſinning, nor can any extremity excuſe for doing evil; but there may be a neceſſity of our forbearance at this or that time to do this or that good duty, and that neceſſity will be admitted by God as a pleadable excuſe of our forbearance. *Elihu* chargeth *Job* (Chap. 36. 21.) *Thou haſt choſen iniquity rather than affliction,* whereas indeed when theſe two are propoſed to our choice, affliction and tranſgreſſion, whether to ſin or to ſuffer, we ſhould without any deliberation or conſult upon the point, chuſe afflictions and ſufferings, yea death it ſelf rather than iniquity. Therefore ſay not, I ſinned for fear being threatned with utmoſt penalties and extremities; remember who threatens from heaven, and then you will not much regard who threatens on earth. The three children were threatned with a fiery furnace (*Dan.* 3. 16.) *Daniel* himſelf was threatned to be caſt into the Lions den (*Dan.* 6. 10.) yet as the former would not do that evil, the worſhipping of the golden image, ſo the latter would not forbear to do that good, the praying to and worſhipping the true God, for all their threatnings.

Perſona potens me cogit ut amplius biberem, &c. Etiamſi veniretur ad hoc ut tibi diceretur aut bibas aut morieris; melius erit ut caro tua ſobria occideretur, quam præ ebrietate anima moreretur. Auguſt. Ser. 232. de Tempore.

Fourthly, ſaith another of the ſons of *Adam*, true, I have ſinned, I have ſworn raſhly, but ſuch a man provoked me; if I have done any man wrong or given him ill language, it was upon ill language firſt received from him, or upon wrong firſt done to me; and if I have requited him in his kind, I hope this is no great matter; In this I may be excuſed, ſeeing he began with me, and urged me to it: I had not wronged him, if he had not wronged me, nor had I given him an ill word, if he had not reviled me. Thus many wrap up the matter, and cover their tranſgreſſions.

I anſwer, Can that which was ſinful in another, make the ſame act done by thee ſinleſs? was it ſinful in him to give thee ill language, or was it ſinful in him to do thee wrong, and will it not be ſinful in thee alſo to give ill language, or do wrong! the law given us of God muſt be the guide of our actings towards men not the actings of other men towards us. That's a good rule; *Do to others as you would be done to by others*; that rule will carry us quite through the world. But this is a falſe and a moſt perverſe rule; *Do to others, as they have done to you*; this is a moſt unſcriptural rule. *Thou ſhalt not give railing for railing, and when thou art curſed thou ſhalt bleſs*; that's the command of Chriſt; and ſhall any look to be excuſed for railing on another, becauſe he railed upon him firſt? or ſhall he think to be excuſed for curſing another becauſe himſelf was curſed. Take heed of theſe pretendings, 'tis the will of God we ſhould do good againſt evil, *Can it then be good to return evil for evil?*

Fifthly, Another will ſay, true, I have done it, but are there not many who do the like or worſe? I am ſo far from being alone in it, that almoſt all men are with me in it. And I hope that which all men do, no man ſhall be blamed for? This is a common practice.

It was the error of the old *Pelagians*, that corruption was not traduced into the nature of man by the fall of the firſt man, but that ſin is continued by imitation; Children (ſay they) ſeeing their parents or others do evil, take it up by example: Now, though this hath been juſtly condemned as a groſs error; and the contrary aſſerted both as a Scriptural and as an experimental truth that the whole maſs of mankind by nature is ſteeped in ſin, and that we have the root of every evil matter in our ſelves; yet 'tis a truth alſo, that we do ill by example, and that ſin is mightily increaſed by imitation. What one doth others are apt to do, and the moſt of men go where they ſee others go, rather than where they ought to go! yea they begin to conclude they may go ſafely enough in a bad way, if they ſee others go before them in it.

But what though many go in wrong ways, and do unrighteous things? yea what though all ſhould go and do ſo, yet that would not excuſe any one that goeth or doth ſo. Would it have been any excuſe, think you, for *Noah* to have complyed with that wicked generation, when all fleſh had corrupted their way before God; *Noah* might have ſaid, I follow the track, I do as the reſt, all go this way, and ſhould I ſtand alone? ſhould I be ſingular? *Noah* had no ſuch reaſonings, he followed the rule, not the example of that age. Thus ſaith the text (*Gen.* 6. 9.) *Noah was a juſt man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God*; That is, he kept cloſe communion with God, let the world go whither it would; He was not led away with the courſe, nor carried down with the current of the times, nor would he write after their crooked and blotted copy. *Lot* dwelt in *Sodom*, where ten righteous perſons were not to be found, though the preſervation of the whole City, and the pardon of them all from preſent periſhing lay upon it; Yet *Lot* preſerved himſelf pure, and *his righteous ſoul was vexed from day to day, with their unlawful deeds.* The Lord gave a ſpecial Law by *Moſes* to obviate this miſchief (*Exod.* 23. 2.) *Thou ſhalt not follow a multitude to do evil:* Which law doth more than imply, that many would encourage, and ſome even warrant themſelves in doing evil by the example of the multitude. It is ſomewhat difficult to break the ice, and begin; But when many have begun to us in a way of ſin, O how hard is it not to follow? To follow the moſt is to follow the worſt, for ſo the moſt are; and to follow them as far as they go, is to go to hell, for thither they moſt go. It will be but cold comfort to periſh with a great company.

Nor is it any whit ſafer or better to follow *the mighty* than *to follow the many*, yet ſome think themſelves very ſafe, while they walk in their way, how bad ſoever the way be. Had we (ſay they) only the multitude to follow, they being rude, and vain, it were not ſo excuſable; but we ſee great men do it, yea the wiſe and learned men of the world do it, and ſhall not we be excuſed for doing that which the great and wiſe and learned men of the world do? No doubt we ſhall. Thus they plead to their own perdition; 'Tis indeed the unhappy priviledg of great ones to have more followers of their worſt actions, than of their perſons. Many ſin as it were (*cum privilegio*) under the cloak of great mens ſinnings. The very errors and miſtakes of Rulers may prove a rule for others to erre and miſtake by, and the Authority of their perſons puts a kind

Habet aliquid ex iniquo omne magnum exemplum. Tacit.

of authentickneſs upon their moſt unwarrantable practices. And therefore (to note that by the way) it much concerns thoſe that are above others in place, to take heed what they do, eſpecially before their inferiors, becauſe they are apt to bear themſelves high upon the example of thoſe that are above them. It hath been ſaid, *Much reverence is due to children*; we ſay (and we ſay truely) children owe great reverence to their parents, and elders; And 'tis as true, *Parents and Elders ſhould carry it reverently towards their children*, becauſe the example of a parent, or ſuperior, emboldens children to do the like, even to a likeneſs in vanity, whether in ſpeech or behaviour; And as children are ready to take up the example of parents, ſo are all inferiors, the example of thoſe above them. What? (ſay they) do not our Lords and Maſters do theſe things, and ſhall we ſtick at them, are we wiſer than they? Do they ſwear and ſhall we ſcruple an oath? Are they drunken, and ſhall not we freely take our cups? are they wantons and fornicators, and ſhall we poor underlings forbear? Do they prophane the Sabbath, and may not we break it? Surely, we may, and be blameleſs. O how deſperately are many ſervants and mean men hardned and deboiſt by example of their Lords and Maſters! The Phariſees checkt thoſe Officers in the Goſpel when they had not attached and brought Chriſt to them, becauſe they ſeemed to have better thoughts of him than the rulers had (*Joh.* 7. 47, 48, 49.) *Are ye alſo deceived? have any of the rulers or of the Phariſees believed on him? but this people, who knoweth not the Law are curſed.* As if they had ſaid, What will you take upon you to be better, or to underſtand better than your rulers? Will you take upon you to believe or be religious beyond their example? Now as ſome think the faith of inferior perſons muſt be pinn'd upon the rulers ſleeve, and that they muſt believe as their great Maſters believe, ſo, many inferior perſons are perſwaded they may well enough pin the practice of their ſuperiors upon their ſleeve, and in all things without danger do as they do.

Maxima debetur pueris reverentia.

There are others who bear themſelves out in an evil matter beyond all reproof, if they ſee any that profeſs godlineſs to do ſuch things; As they embolden themſelves by the falls of good men recorded in the holy Scriptures, by the drunkenneſs of *Noah*, and by the uncleanneſs of *David*, &c. The cloud of Scripture-witneſſes hath a bright ſide, that is, the gracious actings of the Saints, and a dark ſide, that is, the weakneſſes and failings of the Saints; Now as they go to the dark ſide of the Saints departed, ſo alſo of the living Saints to ſtrengthen themſelves in their wickedneſs. But remember the Lord hath not left us to live by example, but by rule, therefore never plead example againſt rule, neither the example of the multitude; nor of the great, nor of the wiſe and learned, no nor of the godly and holy in their departures from the rule. The Apoſtle himſelf when he would be imitated, durſt not propoſe himſelf univerſally to be imitated, *Be ye followers of me as I alſo am of Chriſt*: if I go a ſtep out of the way follow me not there, ſay not becauſe an Apoſtle did it, therefore I may do it; We cannot be excuſed in following the unholy actings of any man, how holy ſoever he is.

Thus upon the occaſion of *Adam's* firſt excuſe, laying his ſin upon his wives perſwaſion, I have ſhewed you many other wayes wherein the ſons of *Adam* treading in his ſteps, make ſuch like coverings and excuſes for their ſin; and from them all it hath appeared, that neither perſwaſions, nor commands, nor threats, nor injuries and provocations received, nor examples given, will ſerve for a covering of our tranſgreſſions. All ſuch pleas are invalid, nor ſhall any man be accepted in them; yea we do but ſo much the more uncover the ſhame of our nakedneſs, by how much we are the more ſubtle and induſtrious to provide ſuch coverings for it.

Further, (if we look into the Hiſtory of *Geneſis*) we may find another excuſe which *Adam* made for his ſin, which I ſhall a little conſider, for a fuller confirmation of the point in hand. Several of the learned both ancient and modern, have noted it as a ſecond unſafe and altogether unprofitable covering of tranſgreſſion.

If I covered my tranſgreſſions as Adam.

As *Adam* laid his ſin upon his wives perſwaſion, ſo upon the diſpenſation of God; *The woman* (ſaith he, *verſ.* 12.) *whom thou gaveſt to be with me, ſhe gave me of the tree, and I did eat*; As if he had ſaid, *Why am I ſo preſt with this act, as my fault, the eating the forbidden tree? for, Lord if thou hadſt not given me this woman, I had never done it, the woman which thou gaveſt to be with me, ſhe gave it me, and I did eat; Lord, why didſt thou put ſuch a ſnare upon me, why didſt thou leave me to ſuch a temptation by the woman which thou gaveſt me; if any fault be in eating of this tree, I muſt lay it at thy door; had it not been for this woman, I might have done well enough, ſurely I had not fallen into this great tranſgreſſion, if thou hadſt not made this woman my companion.* Thus *Adam* hoped to cover his ſin, and leave the blame of it upon God himſelf.

Factum quod nequit negare, frigide fatetur, comedi *ſed culpam in mulierem & deum removet.* Par. in loc.

And as *Adam* then, ſo many at this day cover their tranſgreſſions, and excuſe their ſins, by putting them upon God. That preventing Admonition of the Apoſtle (*James* 1. 13.) doth more than intimate ſuch a curſed plea, always at hand in the heart of man, *Let no man ſay when he is tempted, I am tempted of God*; As if the Apoſtle had ſaid, the mind of man is very apt to conceive this bad plea for himſelf, and his tongue is as ready to utter it, even to ſay, when he is tempted, I am tempted of God, if God had not brought me into ſuch a condition, if God had not ſet things in ſuch a way, I had never been intangled, much leſs overcome by this or that temptation. The Apoſtle in that place gives warning to all, that they make no ſuch vain Apologies, nor go about to eaſe themſelves, when they have ſinned, by caſting their ſin upon God, or by accuſing his providence, as the cauſe of it; yet this warning hath not prevented the doing of it. One of the Ancients obſerved and reproved this practice as a common error in his time; *Many* (ſaith he) *when they are detected in any ſin, ſay preſently, God hath willed this, or he would have things go thus; what have I done? where is my fault? this thing could not have been, unleſs it had been the will of God*; for all things fall out according to his *will*, that is, he might hinder and ſtop them if he would, or he might put them into another courſe if he pleaſed; *if he work none can let, if he let none can work.*

Videtur fuiſſe inter fideles Hebræos, qui de peccatis ſuis reprehenſi providentiam dei omnia gubernantis prætendere ſolerent. Par. in primum Cap. Epiſt. Jacob.

Multi quando inveniuntur in peccatis, dicunt, deus hoc voluit, quid ergo feci? hoc eſt pronunciare adverſus deum. Auguſt. in Pſal. 32.

Thus men, preſumptuous men are not afraid to charge God himſelf with their ſins, that they may diſcharge themſelves. I ſhall give you two reaſons why they do ſo.

Firſt, Man hath a natural deſire to juſtifie himſelf, and that deſire is ſo ſtrong, that he cares not much whom he beſpattereth, or whom he burdens, ſo he may but eaſe and acquit himſelf, nor cares he whom he wrongs, ſo he may make his own ways appear upright.

Secondly, Sin is ſuch an ugly monſter that no man will own it, if he can chuſe, but had rather lay this child of darkneſs at any man's door, yea at God's door than father it himſelf. And though there are but few who will ſay this plainly, yet many ſpeak it in parables, or by conſequences and inferences. I ſhall therefore clear what I mean and aim at by giving a few inſtances.

Firſt, Saith one, it is my ill fortune, or my fate, that I have done this evil; ſuch Heathen language is often heard from their mouths, who profeſs Chriſtianity. Now, what is this deſtiny, chance, fortune, or fate, which they babble about? what do all theſe uncouth words import, but that order into which God hath put all things, or that iſſue unto which his infinite wiſdom hath diſpoſed all actions and events in this world? There is no other chance nor fate, but that which is indeed the counſel and diſpenſation of God; and therefore when any cry out, this was our ill fortune, this was our ill hap, what do they accuſe but the holy counſels and moſt righteous diſpenſations of God?

Secondly, Saith another, it was the unlucky or malignant aſpect of the Stars when I was born, which drew yea and neceſſitated me to take and engage in this wicked courſe. Many have a great itch in this age to conſult Aſtrologers, to find out the poſitions or conjunctions of the Planets in their nativity, or to conſider the influences whether good or bad, promiſing or threatning of thoſe Stars under whoſe predominance they were born, and from thence to receive Prophetical concluſions, what their croſſes, and what their comforts, what their way, and what their end in this world ſhall probably (ſay ſome) or certainly (ſay others) be. That ancient father in the place before cited, having reproved thoſe in general who charge their ſins upon God, brings them in making this objection. Poſſibly you who ſay this, will alſo ſay, who chargeth his ſin upon God? He anſwers; Firſt, by a direct affirmation; *Yea* (ſaith he) *ſome there are that ſpeak this openly*; As reverend Mr. *Calvin* and his followers have been falſely charged by the Papiſts for making God the Author of ſin by their opinions and aſſertions about prædeſtination; ſo others from a prophane ſpirit and principle ſpeak it out broadly; and are not afraid to affront God himſelf with theſe blaſphemous imputations. But what though ſome be not ſo groſs? yet, ſecondly, there are too too many, who weave the ſame web with a finer thred; and therefore his ſecond anſwer is; *They who ſay not this, what ſay they? even this*; *It was my fate to do it, the Stars cauſed me to do it*; *I could not help it, I was unavoidably carried to it. And thus* (ſaith he) *by a circuit they fetch it about, and accuſe God as the cauſe of their ſins, to whom they will not come directly and confeſs their ſins, that by Chriſt they may obtain the pardon of them, and peace for their own poor ſouls. That worthy of Elder days* comes up yet cloſer to them in ſome following paſſages; *Thou ſayſt thy unlucky ſtars have done it*; *their ill aſpects have inclined thy heart to ſuch ſins*; *but what are the ſtars? who made them? did not God? are they not the work of his hands? and who orders them and their motions? doth not God? there is not a ſtar moves but by his appointment. The ſtars are God's militia, his hoſt*; *They ſtir not, but by the commandment of God*; *now if God made the ſtars, and orders the motion of the ſtars, and thou ſayſt the ſtars have cauſed thee to ſin*; *conſider, doſt thou not ſay, God made thee to ſin? And therefore ſurely God is unjuſt, and thou art juſt, becauſe unleſs he had placed the ſtars ſo, thou hadſt not ſinned ſo.* Thus man blaſphemouſly turns his ſin upon God; and while he will not accuſe himſelf for that which he hath done very ill, he accuſes God who made him and all things very good.

Thirdly, Others accuſe the times and places in which they live; *I* (ſaid one that was ſtark naught) *live in* Rome, *where no man can be better*; I live in times ſo univerſally infected, that no man can eſcape the infection, nor be innocent. Is not this to accuſe God alſo? who was it that caſt thy lot to live at ſuch a time, and in ſuch a place in the world? did not God? hath not he (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Acts* 17. 26.) *made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitations*: therefore he that chargeth the place where he lives with his ſin, chargeth God with his ſin, who diſpoſeth of all men both as to time and place, or who hath both their times and places in his hand, or diſpoſe.

Fourthly, Not a few charge their ſin upon their callings; as if they could not do or live honeſtly in them; I know there are ſome ſinful or diſhoneſt callings; Therefore as the Apoſtle exhorts (*Tit.* 3. 14.) *Let all learn to maintain good works* (or as we put in the Margin, *profeſs honeſt trades*) for neceſſary uſes, and avoid thoſe that are uſeleſs and unneceſſary. As for lawful callings, God hath appointed man to live and labour in them. Now for any man (when he hath done amiſs) to ſay, my calling put me upon it, or was the cauſe of my miſcarriage, is as much as to ſay, God put him upon it. The Apoſtle gives this rule to the converted *Corinthians* (1 Cor. 7. 20.) *Let every man abide in the ſame calling wherein he was called.* Some it ſeems, being called to the knowledg of Chriſt, thought they muſt leave their worldly callings, and imployments, as if they were ſinful ſnares to them, or unneceſſary diverſions from better things. Nay, ſaith *Paul*, *abide in the calling wherein ye were called*, that is, look in what honeſt civil calling the ſpiritual call of God hath found you, keep to that calling ſtill; God doth not call us off from our imployments and buſineſs, but he calls us to be juſt and holy in them. The grace of God doth not ſet us above commerce with men, nor doth our entrance into God's ſervice, any way acquit us from ſerving one another in our lawful callings; And therefore for any man to ſay, his calling makes him ſin, either by doing what he ought not, or by neglecting what he ought, is to caſt his ſin upon God, and to blame God's ordinance with his own diſobedience.

Fifthly, Some complain of their poverty, or of the ſtreights into which the providence of God hath caſt them, as the cauſe of their ſin, of their ſtealing or murmuring and diſcontent. Theſe alſo riſe up againſt God, and lay the dirt of their filthy hearts and ways at the gates of heaven. For though there be indeed a great temptation in ſuch a ſtraitned and afflicted condition (as both *Agur's* Prayer, *Prov.* 30. 8, 9. and the experiences of many have taught us) yet it doth not at all neceſſitate any man to ſin; and ſuch a condition is appointed us as an occaſion for the tryal of our patience, and dependance upon God in the exerciſe of all other graces, not to ſet our corruptions awork, or to excuſe us when we are overcome by them.

Thus we ſee, that though moſt forbear to ſpeak this broadly and openly, that God is the cauſe of their ſin, yet they do it by inferences, as *Adam* did, *the woman which thou gaveſt to be with me* (ſaid he) was the means of my fall; and, ſay they, if we had been born under a better planet, if we had lived in better times and places, or had not been brought into a low condition, wherein we knew not what to do, we had never done this. O learn to accuſe the naughtineſs and corruption that is in your hearts, as the fountain of all your ſinful actings; for know, it is not any ſtar, it is neither time, nor place, nor calling, but the wickedneſs of your own hearts, which hath led you into ſin, and undone you.

There is yet a third head of excuſe, by which that firſt tranſgreſſion of *Adam* was intended to be covered; And I may call it, *The woman a covering*; For, when the Lord ſaw what ſad ſhifts the man had made to cover his ſin, inſtead of confeſſing it; then he put the Queſtion to the woman alſo in the 13. verſe; *And the Lord God ſaid to the woman, what is this that thou haſt done? and the woman ſaid, the Serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.* Here is no denial of the fact, the woman confeſs'd ſhe had eaten the forbidden fruit, but the Serpent beguiled me (ſaid ſhe) alas, if I had been let alone I ſhould not have eaten, but there was a cunning Serpent, he came upon me unawares and inticed me with fair promiſes, and ſo I did eat. This was a truth, the Serpent had indeed beguiled her; What the woman ſaid, was true enough, that the Serpent had beguiled her, but what ſhe intended in ſaying ſo, was not true. Namely, that ſhe was therefore to be excuſed becauſe ſo beguiled. Yea this very excuſe accuſed her, and ſhe was defiled by that which ſhe thought would purge her.

Now as I ſhewed before, that there is ſuch a ſinful principle in man to charge his ſin on God, ſo I ſhall now ſhew that there is a common practice among men to charge their ſin upon the Devil. The meer act of charging ſin upon God is abominable, and the intent with which ſome charge ſin upon the Devil is very ſinful. I do not ſay that it is ſinful, for any one that hath ſinned to charge his ſin upon the Devil; for the Devil is, in ſome ſence, the author of all ſin, as having brought it firſt into the world; he is the father of lies, and the furtherer of lies, as alſo of all other ſins, to the utmoſt that he can. Now becauſe the Devil hath ſo near and ſo ſtrong a relation to every ſin, we may therefore charge all our ſins upon him, and do him no wrong at all; but the intent of charging ſin upon the Devil may be very ſinful. To do it as the woman did it, and as many at this day do it with hope to diſcharge themſelves, this is a ſin, this is to cover our tranſgreſſions as *Eve*, and while we ſeek thus to clear our ſelves from the guilt of ſin, we faſten and fix it the more upon our conſciences, and the more provoke God to wrath againſt us for it. There are many (as hath been anciently noted) who wave or avoid the confeſſion of their ſins, and make it their buſineſs to accuſe, and cry out of the Devil, *O the Devil, this ſubtle Serpent, this roaring Lion, he, he hath deceived us, he hath prevailed upon us. We were neither wiſe enough to diſcern his wiles, nor ſtrong enough to reſiſt his force.* Thus they ſpeak, hoping to unburden themſelves by it.

Multi confeſſionem peccati fugiunt, ut ipſum Satanam accuſent; ſe autem nihil mali feciſſe dicant. Aug.

But let no man think to excuſe himſelf by accuſing the Devil; For though Sathan doth much in cauſing every man to ſin, yet he cannot force any man to ſin; though Sathan tempt us to ſin, and allures the will ſtrongly to it, yet he cannot make any man ſin whether he will or no. Though Satan may tempt us whether we will or no, yet he cannot overcome us in any temptation unleſs we our ſelves will. And until we yield our conſent (which is an act of the will) the temptations of the Devil, and his aſſaults defile us not; they are indeed our afflictions, and our troubles, but not our ſins, till they are accepted of, and embraced by us. So then, the fault is every man's own; Sathan hath beguiled you, but did not you conſent? did not you accept of the temptation? it is not his temptation which makes you guilty, but your admittance of it. As it was ſaid long ago, and may much more in this ſlandering age; *If to accuſe another did make him guilty, none could be innocent.* So, I may ſay in this caſe alſo, *If to be tempted by the Devil would make a man guilty, no man ſhould be long guiltleſs, even of the moſt horrid crimes that ever the Sun beheld.* Jeſus Chriſt himſelf had not been without guilt, if to be tempted makes a man guilty. How did the Devil tempt and aſſault Chriſt! How did he follow him in one hour (as we may conceive) with a threefold temptation! beſides all the temptations which probably followed, the holy Text ſaying, *he left him for a ſeaſon.* Yet Jeſus Chriſt came off from thoſe three and all other temptations without any touch, without any the leaſt ſpot of ſin; He kept himſelf (ſo do believers, by him, themſelves, 1 *Jo.* 5. 18) *And that wicked one toucht him not*, that is, left no evil impreſſion upon him, how much ſoever he preſſed him to evil. The Prince of this world came, but found nothing in him; he had malice ſufficient in his heart againſt Chriſt, but he found nothing in Chriſt, to take with his temptation. There being not the leaſt motion in the heart of Jeſus Chriſt towards a complyance with the Devil, but an utter abomination and deteſtation of him, he was not at all hurt with any of his temptations: and ſo far as we keep off our conſent to the Devil, his temptations cannot hurt us. Ill thoughts ſpringing up in us are our ſins, though we conſent not to them; but evil thoughts ſuggeſted by Sathan are not our ſins till conſented to. Therefore take heed of excuſing your ſelves by charging your ſin upon the Devil, and his temptations; charge it rather upon your ſelves, and your own in dwelling corruptions; the Devil doth only ſtrike the fire, your hearts are the tinder, if your hearts were not tinder, his ſparks could not kindle upon you; Sathan doth not prevail over us by force, but by guile, he inſnares us, and wins our hearts; he vexeth us by his wiles, as *Moſes* ſaid the *Midianites* did the children of *Iſrael* in the wilderneſs. Were the Devil left to himſelf he would break us with his power, but he is reſtrained there, and hath only wiles and tricks to vex us with. He deals with us like a *Machiavel* or an *Achitophel*, not like a *Goliah*, or an *Alexander*. And hence it is ſaid in the *Revelation*, *He deceiveth the whole earth*; He doth all by craſt, he cunningly inſnares our affections, and being a Spirit can inſinuate ſtrongly into ours. The Apoſtle *Peter* dealing with *Ananias* (Acts 5. 3.) expoſtulates the matter with him thus; *Why hath Sathan filled thy heart to lie to the Holy Ghoſt?* As if he had ſaid, *Sathan tempted thee indeed, but why haſt thou given up thy conſent? why haſt thou yielded ſo eaſily to do ſuch an abomination?* Sathan in a ſpecial manner *takes ſome men captive at his will* (2 Tim. 2. 26.) But he leads no man captive againſt his will; Sathan leads many captive at his own will and beck, he finds them ready, they are free to come at the firſt call of a temptation, yea poſſibly they are ready to call for a temptation; but Sathan leads none captive againſt their own wills: or, take it thus, many are taken captive by Sathan at his will, but Sathan cannot captivate the will of any man; whenſoever any man ſins, he ſins freely. Therefore Sathan's temptation cannot be an excuſe to any man, and the hearts of moſt men are as much in the temptation, as Sathan himſelf was, and they riſe to the bait as willingly as he caſts in the hook.

Thus I have opened the ſecond obſervation, wherein it appears that the heart of man is very pregnant in finding out and ſuggeſting variety of coverings for the hiding of ſin. And by inſiſting upon theſe three grand heads of excuſes practiſed by our firſt parents (the man excuſing his ſin by the perſwaſion of the woman, as alſo by the diſpenſation of God, and the woman excuſing her ſin by the temptation of the Devil, by theſe I ſay) it appears what *Job* meant in this Scripture when he ſaid, *If I have covered my tranſgreſſions as Adam.* And I might ſhew you many other coverings of tranſgreſſions, taking *Adam* Appellatively, *If I have covered my tranſgreſſions as men*, that is, as the common ſort of men generally do, who have ſeveral coverings induſtriouſly, and artificially framed, and wrought to hide their ſins with; but poſſibly I have gone too far already from my method of expoſition: yet this diſcovery was ſo proper to the expreſs words of the Text, that I could not well paſs it by, though it ſhould be called a digreſſion.

There are yet other obſervations which I ſhall give from this Text, when I have added only this one word of Caution from all that I have ſaid.

Beware of this practice, the covering of ſin, as much as of committing it; and know that to cover a ſin committed, is to commit a new one; yea they who make cob-web coverings for their tranſgreſſions (ſuch are theſe and all ſuch-like excuſes) will be forced at laſt as they (*Rev.* 6. 16.) *to call to the rock to cover them, and to the mountains to hide them* (but all in vain) *from the preſence of him that ſits upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.* There is but one covering of tranſgreſſion which can ſtand us in any ſtead, *Jeſus Chriſt our real Propitiatory.* Go to Chriſt, and make him your covering, cover your ſelves with his righteouſneſs, that's a garment large enough and clean enough to hide all your ſins, and to keep off all that wrath which ſin hath deſerved, and calls for; cover your ſins *with the ſecond Adam*, but do not cover your ſins as the *firſt Adam*; either by the excuſes mentioned, or by any other; they are all deceitful, and too narrow for the purpoſe. This holy and good man *Job*, proteſted he never made ſuch ſinful artifices the hidings of his ſin.

If I have covered my tranſgreſſions as Adam, by hiding mine iniquity in my boſom.

From *Job*'s ſcope and deſign in making this proteſtation, that he had not covered his tranſgreſſions.

Obſerve, Thirdly, *To cover and hide ſin is ſin; 'tis the adding of ſin to ſin.*

Job is purging himſelf from this as well as from any of thoſe Enormities mentioned and profeſſed againſt in the foregoing paſſages of this Chapter; he doth not only ſay, I have not luſted after my neighbours wife, nor wrong'd my ſervants, nor oppreſſed the poor, nor put confidence in gold, nor worſhipped the Sun, he (I ſay) doth not only ſay, I have not committed theſe foul tranſgreſſions, but I have not put a fair covering upon any of my tranſgreſſions; thereby intimating that to have done ſo, had been to commit a greater ſin then any of thoſe which he had not committed. And ſurely neither our own ſinful hearts, nor Sathan would be ſo buſie to provoke us to cover our ſins, were it not very ſinful. That great enemy ſets us about no work but bad work, black work, helliſh work: he knows well enough that to hide a ſin committed is to commit a freſh ſin, yea to commit a greater ſin than that which we would hide, why elſe ſhould he tempt us to hide it? and this is one of the great depths of Sathan, he perſwades us to hide evil done, pretending our good by it, or as if he would befriend us; but indeed he aſſaults us as an enemy, and intends us a further miſchief. The concealing of ſin is the keeping of the Devil's counſel, and the doubling of our tranſgreſſion. Sin is the diſeaſe of the ſoul, and there is no ſuch way to increaſe and make a diſeaſe deſperate as to conceal it: Silence feeds and cheriſheth the diſeaſes of the body; and ſo it doth the diſeaſes of our ſouls. Sin increaſeth two ways, by concealment, or by hiding.

Crimen tacendo ampliatur, ſi latet fit ex minimo magnum. Bern. Νόσον τρέφει σιωπή.

Firſt, In the guilt of it: The obligation to puniſhment takes ſtronger hold upon the ſoul, and every man is bound the faſter with thoſe chains of darkneſs, by how much the more he labours to keep his ſins in the dark: the longer a ſin remains upon the conſcience unpardoned, the more doth the guilt of it increaſe: now all the while ſin is hid, all the while ſin is artificially and intentionally covered, it remains unpardoned; and therefore the guilt of it muſt needs increaſe upon the ſoul.

Secondly, Sin being thus covered increaſeth in the filth and contagion of it, in the ſtrength and power of it; it gains more upon the ſoul, it grows more maſter, and more maſterly; luſt begins to rage, rave, it commands and carries all before it, while we are ſo fooliſh as to keep it cloſe and covered. Thus a concealed ſin is greatly increaſed both in the guilt and in the power of it.

If any ſay, Surely it is not ſo ſinful to cover and hide ſin; for doth not the Scripture condemn thoſe that did not hide it? why doth it rebuke any for not hiding their ſins, if to hide ſin be ſo ſinful? The Prophet ſeems to ſpeak that expreſly (*Iſa.* 3. 9.) *The ſhew of their countenance teſtifieth againſt them* (they were ſo far from hiding their ſins in their boſom, that they did even print them in their foreheads, *The ſhew of their countenance doth witneſs againſt them*) *they declare their ſin as Sodom, they hide it not.* Thus the Prophet reproves them, and makes this a very great aggravation of their ſins, that they did not hide their ſins?

I anſwer, There is a twofold not hiding of ſin; Firſt, there is a not hiding which proceeds from repentance; Secondly, there is another ſort of not hiding of ſin, which proceeds from impudence; or there is a not hiding of ſin which proceeds from a broken heart, and there is a not hiding of ſin that proceeds from a brazen face, from a brow of braſs. That's the meaning of the Prophet when he reproves thoſe debauched Jews becauſe they did not hide their ſin, he reproves them for their impudence, that when they had done wickedly, they boaſted of it, and held it forth, they cared not who knew it; therefore ſaith the Text, *they declare their ſin as Sodom*; they did not declare their ſin as the mourners in *Sion* from an humbled heart and a contrite ſpirit; but they declared their ſins like the filthy *Sodomites.* We are like to have a goodly pattern of repentance from *Sodom*; where all were wicked, except *Lot* and his neareſt relations. By two ſorts of men the ſin of the world is mightily hightned; Firſt, Some are ſo deboyſt that they will not hide their ſins: Secondly, others are ſo hypocritical that they uſe all the courſes they can to hide their ſins; *Not to hide our ſin through impudence, and to hide it in hypocriſie, are alike abominable in the ſight of God:* and that's it which *Job* labours to purge himſelf from, as much as from uncleanneſs, oppreſſion, covetouſneſs, or any other act of ſin before ſpecified.

Fourthly, As *Job* in ſpeaking this would deny the hiding and covering of his ſin, ſo he affirms the Confeſſion of it, as was ſhewed in the explication of the Text. So that here is more intended then expreſt; when he ſaith he did not cover his meaning is, he diſcovered his ſin; when he ſaith he did not hide it, his meaning is, he did diſcloſe it.

Hence obſerve, *A godly man doth not only not hide, but is ready to confeſs his ſin.*

He makes confeſſion that he may be freed from condemnation; ſo ſome underſtand that (*Iſa.* 43. 26.) *Put me in remembrance* (ſaith the Lord, that is, mind me, both of my promiſed mercies, and of thy provoking tranſgreſſions) *Let us plead together: declare thou that thou mayſt be juſtified.* This is a great Goſpel truth, though it be queſtionable, whether intended in that place. A godly man hath ſecret ſins (that is, ſins which he knows not of) but he doth not keep his ſins ſecret, he is willing to make them known. He doth not cover them from the knowledg of God, no nor of men, when and as he is bound to give an account of them. Confeſſion of ſin is an indiſpenſable piece of true repentance. They who are indeed humbled in the ſight of their ſins will not hide them out of ſight; They declare them always to God, and are not aſhamed to declare them to man alſo in a Goſpel-way. As 'tis ſinful to blow a trumpet, or proclaim our good works, ſo we are not bound to publiſh our ſins or evil deeds to the world; but when we are called, and ſee it a duty to confeſs them, we muſt not hide, but confeſs them: 'Tis a great part of our holineſs to confeſs our Iniquities; and as the holieſt man in this world is imperfect and hath ſins to confeſs; ſo it is a good degree of his holineſs and perfection to confeſs his ſins. Our bleſſedneſs conſiſts in the remiſſion of ſin (*Pſal.* 32. 1.) *Bleſſed is he whoſe tranſgreſſion is forgiven, whoſe ſin is covered.* And therefore we cannot be bleſſed if our ſins be unconfeſs'd (*Pſal.* 32. 5.) *I ſaid I will confeſs mine Iniquity, and thou forgaveſt me the iniquity of my ſin:* the pardon was given out upon his Confeſſion (1 *Joh.* 1. 9.) *If we confeſs our ſins, God is faithful and juſt to forgive us our ſins*; And if he had ſaid, Sin unconfeſs'd ſhall not be forgiven; *He that covereth his ſins ſhall not proſper; but whoſo confeſſeth and forſaketh them* (and only he) *ſhall find mercy* (Prov. 28. 13.)

But you will ſay, is this all that *Job* did, barely to confeſs his ſin, when he ſaith, he did not cover it?

I anſwer, The holy Confeſſion of ſin, which is oppoſed to the covering or hiding of ſin; hath three things in it.

Firſt, A confeſſion of the fact, or of the thing done; *Joſhua* ſaid to *Achan* (Joſh. 7. 19.) *My Son, give glory to God, and tell me, what haſt thou done?* tell me the ſtory, give me a narrative of thy ſin. And accordingly he declared the fact; *When I ſaw among the ſpoils a goodly Babyloniſh garment, and two hundred ſhekels of ſilver, and a wedg of gold of fifty ſhekels weight: then I coveted them, and took them.* Repentant confeſſion begins at the confeſſion of the fact.

Secondly, As there is a confeſſion of the fact, ſo of the fault, that is, that in doing ſo we have done amiſs, or done ſinfully and fooliſhly. When *David* made a confeſſion or acknowledgment of that ſin, his numbring the people, he doth not only ſay, I have done it, but he ſaith, *I have done very fooliſhly,* (2 Sam. 23. 10.) Nor did he only confeſs that great ſin of Adultery, but he confeſſed the fault (*Pſal.* 51. 4.) *Againſt thee, thee only have I ſinned, and done this evil in thy ſight:* I have done this, and in doing this I have done evil. This is the life of Goſpel repentance. Some confeſs the fact, who yet are not humbled under the ſence of their own folly and faultineſs.

Thirdly, There is in Confeſſion not only an acknowledgment of the fact and fault, but a ſubmiſſion to the puniſhment; Confeſſion is a judging of our ſelves worthy of death; he that confeſſeth doth as it were put the rope about his own neck, and tells the Lord he is as a dead man before him. True Confeſſion is a ſubmitting to the ſentence of the Judg, yea a judging of our ſelves, and a juſtifying of God in all, even in his ſharpeſt and ſevereſt diſpenſations. Thus *David* (in *Pſal.* 51. 4.) *I have done evil in thy ſight, that thou mayſt be juſtified when thou ſpeakeſt, and be clear when thou Judgeſt*; That is, when thou judgeſt me as a father, when thou correcteſt and chaſtiſeſt me (as God did wonderfully chaſtiſe him for thoſe ſins, the ſword never departed from his family) Lord I confeſs thou art juſt in all thoſe ſharp and ſevere judgments that I have been threatned with in reference to that ſin. *Daniel*'s heart was in the ſame frame while he faſted and prayed, and confeſſed the ſins of the people of *Iſrael* (Dan. 9. 7, 8.) *O Lord* (ſaith he) *Righteouſneſs belongeth unto thee, but unto us confuſion of faces, as at this day, to the men of Judah,* &c. *becauſe of their treſpaſs that they have treſpaſſed againſt thee,* &c.

But ſome may ſay, Is there a neceſſity to make ſuch a confeſſion of ſin? ſeeing God is already acquainted with, and knows our ſins, with all the circumſtances and aggravations of them, what need we confeſs them? why ſhould we tell that to God which he knows already?

I anſwer, Firſt, we do not Confeſs, to inform God of what he knows not, but to give glory to God in that which he knows: So ſaith *Joſhua* to *Achan,* do not hide thy ſin, but confeſs it, and *give glory to God*; give him the glory of his juſtice and righteouſneſs in puniſhing, and the glory of his patience and mercy in pardoning. A true gracious confeſſion gives God the glory of all his attributes, and puts a Crown upon all his divine perfections. So then, we confeſs, not to inform God, but to honour and glorifie him.

Secondly, We are called to an acknowledgment and Confeſſion of our ſins to God, that we our ſelves may be the more deeply affected with them; we need not inform God, but we have need enough to affect our own ſouls: As we make confeſſion of the mercies and goodneſs of God, and repeat his kindneſſes to us, that our ſouls may be the more affected with thankfulneſs for them; So we are to make confeſſion of our own ſinfulneſs, that we may be the more affected with the vileneſs and filthineſs of them, and with godly ſorrow for them.

Thirdly, The knowledg which God hath of ſin in and by himſelf, may be a terror to ſinners; his knowing of them by us is only a ground of comfort; God hath no where promiſed to pardon ſin becauſe he knows it, but he hath if we make it known. Unleſs God know our ſins by our confeſſion, he knows them only to our condemnation: he knows them enough already to condemn us, though we do not confeſs them, but he will not know them ſo as to acquit us, unleſs we confeſs them. And indeed nothing is known properly to God in that capacity as he pardons and forgives, but that which is acknowledged by us. When a Judg is to give ſentence upon perſons or

actions,

Nihil eſt notum judici niſi judicialiter ſit notum.

actions, he takes notice of nothing but what is made known to him as a Judg; what he knows in a private capacity is no ground for him to proceed to ſentence upon; every thing muſt be proved Judicially, or witneſſed openly in Court, before he gives Judgment, either to acquit or condemn. 'Tis ſo in this caſe; Though all our ſins are known to God, yet none of them are known to him as a Judg but what we confeſs; and therefore he will not pardon them or acquit us from them till they are confeſſed.

Further, That acknowledgment of ſin, oppoſed to covering and hiding of ſin, is

Firſt, a confeſſion of all ſin; *If I* (ſaith *Job*) *have hid my tranſgreſſions,* that is, any of my tranſgreſſions; he doth not ſay this or that, but he intends them all together; If a man confeſs many, and cover but one, all are as if they were covered; as the Apoſtle *James* ſpeaks about tranſgreſſion, *He that keeps the whole Law, and offends in any one point, is guilty of all* (James 2. 10.) So he that confeſſeth all his ſins, and hides one, hath hid all and confeſs'd none.

But you will ſay, is it poſſible for a man to confeſs all his ſins?

I anſwer, We may confeſs them all as to kind, though not as to individual particular Acts; for indeed they are more in number than the hairs of our head; They are innumerable, we cannot reckon them up. As we cannot reckon up all the mercies of God in the particular acts of them towards us, yet we may reckon the ſpecies or kinds of the mercies of God to us; So 'tis in the confeſſion of ſin. *Aaron* was commanded (*Lev.* 16. 21.) *to lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and to confeſs over him all the iniquities of the Children of Iſrael; and all their tranſgreſſions in all their ſins.*

Secondly, We muſt not hide but confeſs our ſpecial ſins in a ſpecial manner (*Exod.* 32. 31.) *And Moſes returned unto the Lord, and ſaid, O this people have ſinned a great ſin, and have made them gods of gold.* We have a like form of confeſſion (1 *Sam.* 12. 19.) *And all the people ſaid unto Samuel, Pray for thy ſervants unto the Lord thy God, that we dye not; for we have added to all our ſins, this evil, to ask us a king.* So ſaith *Job, If I have hid my tranſgreſſions,* or, *hid mine iniquity in my boſom,* that is, thoſe tranſgreſſions, or that iniquity which may ſeem to bear a greater title to me, or I to it, than any other ſin committed by me; if I have not made ſpecial confeſſion of my ſpecial ſin, then, &c.

Thirdly, That Confeſſion which is oppoſed to the covering of ſin, takes in not only the body of ſin, or as I may ſay, the matter of it, but all the ſeveral Circumſtances and aggravations of it. There is an Iniquity of ſin, as *David* ſpeaks (*Pſal.* 32. 5.) *Thou forgaveſt the iniquity of my ſin;* he doth not only ſay my ſin, but the Iniquity of my ſin, he ſpeaks of the ſinfulneſs of ſin; and the Prophet tells *Iſrael, In thy filthineſs is lewdneſs* (Ezek. 14. 13.) This lewdneſs or Iniquity of ſin ariſeth from the conſideration of thoſe circumſtances with which it is cloathed. Thus *Ezra* at once heightens both the mercy of God to the Jews, and their ſinfulneſs againſt God (*Ezra* 9. 13, 14.) *And after all that is come upon us for our evil deeds, and for our great treſpaſs, ſeeing that thou our God haſt puniſhed us leſs than our iniquities deſerve, and haſt given us ſuch deliverance as this.* As he confeſſed not only that God had given them deliverance, but ſuch a deliverance, yea (ſaith he) *ſuch a deliverance as this;* ſo we ſhould confeſs not only that we have committed iniquity, but ſuch an iniquity, yea ſuch an iniquity as this, or an iniquity thus and thus circumſtantiated.

Further (to cloſe this obſervation) he that would confeſs ſin in oppoſition to that hiding and covering which *Job* here diſavows, muſt do it,

Firſt, Feelingly, as to the weight and ſmart of it; yea taſtingly, as to the bitterneſs and unſavorineſs of it, unleſs we have a taſt how bitter ſin is, unleſs we are preſſed and even ſweat in the agony of our ſpirits, under the weight and burden of it, we do not confeſs to purpoſe, but rather cover it.

Secondly, He that confeſſeth his ſin in oppoſition to this covering, confeſſeth it, ſincerely, as ſin, or he doth it in the uprightneſs of his ſoul: many confeſs ſin, only as 'tis an Inconveniency, or diſadvantage to them. Now thus to confeſs ſin, is to cover it. While we grow angry with ſin meerly as it is a trouble to us, and hath brought ſome Inconveniency upon us, we do no more than is natural. As Mariners throw out their wares in a ſtorm when they are afraid the veſſel will ſink, or be ſwallowed up of the waves, they'l do any thing then to ſave their lives; but when they are in a calm, or got ſafe to harbour, then they wiſh with all their hearts they had thoſe goods again; 'Tis juſt ſo with many ſinners, when ſome ſtorm or trouble is upon them, then they'l throw their ſins overboard; but when they are in a ſafe harbour, they wiſh and call for their old ſins again: ſuch confeſſion of ſin is indeed the covering of it.

Thirdly, Sin muſt be confeſs'd with ſelf-abhorrence, as well as ſin-abhorrence. Thus did *Job* (Chap. 42. 6.) *I abhor my ſelf, and repent in duſt and aſhes.* They who ſay they repent of ſin, but do not abhor themſelves for ſin, ſeem only to repent; or theirs is tongue-repentance, not heart-repentance.

Laſtly, He that confeſſeth his ſin in oppoſition to this covering in the Text, confeſſeth it believingly, and hath as one eye upon ſin, ſo another upon Chriſt. Unleſs faith be mixed with our confeſſions of ſin, our ſins remain covered with that black veil of the wrath of God to condemnation, not with that bleſſed veil of the mercy of God in the righteouſneſs of Chriſt to Juſtification. *Judas* confeſs'd his ſin, *I have done evil in betraying innocent blood* (Matth. 27. 4.) and here's the money (ſaid he) take it among you, I'le not keep a peny of it; (many will vomit up their unjuſt gain, the gain of oppreſſion, when it burdens them, they'l throw it back as *Judas* did) but *Judas* had no faith to mingle with his confeſſion; he did not confeſs believingly, but deſpairingly, *He went and hanged himſelf.* As the Word of God which forbids the committing of ſin, doth not profit us, unleſs it be mingled with faith, ſo neither do our own words, by which we confeſs ſin, and profeſs our repentance for it, pleaſe God, unleſs they are mingled with faith. God never covered any ſin graciouſly, which was not confeſſed believingly. *If I have covered my tranſgreſſions,*

By hiding mine iniquity in my boſom.

Here it is *mine iniquity,* as before *my tranſgreſſions.* From theſe poſſeſſive and appropriating words in the Text, *my,* and *mine,* If I have covered *My tranſgreſſions,* and hid *mine Iniquity.*

Obſerve, *Every man, even the beſt of men have ſome ſins more peculiar to them than other ſins are.*

A good man, even a *Job,* hath ſome tranſgreſſion, ſome iniquity, of which he may ſay, This is *my tranſgreſſion,* this is *mine Iniquity. David* ſpake in the ſame language (*Pſal.* 18. 23.) *I alſo was upright before him* (that is, before the Lord) *and I kept my ſelf from mine Iniquity. David* had the ſeed of all ſin in him, but there was ſome ſin that was *David*'s ſpecial ſin, there was ſome ſin that dogg'd, and haunted, and vext him more than many; now, ſaith he, my labour was, and in the uprightneſs of my ſoul it was my great labour, *to keep my ſelf from mine Iniquity;* that is, from that Iniquity to which my heart hath often been ſolicited, and by which I have been moſt endangered.

And as particular perſons, ſo whole Nations have been charged with their ſpecial ſins. The Characteriſtical ſin of the *Iſraelites* was Idolatry, they were a people extreamly prone to falſe worſhip. And the Apoſtle *Paul* (*Tit.* 1. 12.) gives this Character of the *Cretians* out of their own Poet; *They are always lyars, evil beaſts, ſlow bellies:* That Nation was extreamly given to lying and to ſloth. And it appears by the Epiſtles of *Paul* to the *Corinthians,* that they were extreamly given to uncleanneſs and wantonneſs. Why ſhould the Apoſtle ſo often touch upon that ſtring, and give counſel againſt that ſin, had it not been the ſpecial ſin of that people? The *Germans* have been taxed for drunkenneſs. The *Spaniard* with pride, avarice, and deſire of domination: other Nations have had their marks, and I might lay my hand alſo upon our own, though indeed many ſins appear ſo National among us, that it is hard to ſay which is our National ſin. The ſeed of all ſin (experience ſhews) is in every particular perſon; and the corruption of nature is procreative of any ſin whatſoever (there is not the blackeſt ſin that ever was committed in the world, but there is ſomewhat in the nature of every man out of which that ſin might be formed and produced) yet corruption acts in this man one way, in that another. As the earth hath a ſeminal vertue in it to bring forth any thing, yet one ground bears ſuch a fruit, ſuch a grain ſpecially; So though there be the ſame common ſinfulneſs in all men, yet that puts it ſelf forth in much variety, in ſome it appears moſt in pride, in others by covetouſneſs, in a third ſort by wrath, in a fourth by wantonneſs. The body of man hath in it the ſeed of all diſeaſes, yet one mans body is moſt ſubject to fevers, and another mans to the dropſie. 'Tis thus alſo with the ſoul or mind of man. And this proclivity of men to any ſpecial ſin ariſeth,

Firſt, From the conſtitution of the body; there are ſome ſins which are ſpecial to thoſe that are melancholy, ſome to thoſe that are ſanguin, ſome to thoſe that are phlegmatick, ſome to thoſe that are cholerick; The temperament of the body hath a great influence upon the manners of the mind.

Secondly, Special ſins follow others from the courſe and condition of their lives; one calling leads to this ſin, and another to that. For though the fault be not in the calling, yet there are peculiar opportunities, occaſions, and temptations in every calling. Now as Aſtrologers tell us of bad Conjunctions of Planets, ſo it is a bad Conjunction when a mans inward Corruption and outward Condition joyn together, to lead him into the ſnare of any ſin. Upon theſe and ſuch like grounds every man hath ſome ſin or other more peculiarly his. As every godly man hath the root of all grace in him, yet he finds this or that grace more active in him then another, which may be called his ſpecial grace, as faith was *Abraham*'s ſpecial grace, and patience *Job*'s, &c. So it is likewiſe with reſpect to ſin.

Sixthly, Obſerve, *Though* Job, *or any godly man may have ſome ſpecial ſin to which he is more ſubject then to any other ſin, yet he hath no beloved ſin.*

There is a vaſt difference between theſe two; A ſpecial ſin and a beloved ſin. *David* had a ſin, and *Job* had a ſin, which was his ſpecial ſin, but neither of theſe had any ſin that was their beloved ſin; they had no ſin which they hid in their boſome. And therefore in this Text while *Job* calleth ſome ſin or other *His iniquity*, he denyeth that he had any beloved ſin; for, ſaith he, did I hide it in my boſome? Did I ſhew any favour to it? Did I cover it and keep it warm? No, I did not. A beloved ſin lieth in the boſome (as the Diſciple whom Jeſus loved leaned in his) and next the heart of a carnal man. A godly man hath many ſins, yet he hath not one beloved or boſome ſin; he may have a ſin to which his will inclines, and his affections run out ſtrongly, yet he hath no ſin which he bears any good will to, or doth affect. Yea that which is the ſpecial ſin of a godly man, is his ſpecial burden; it is not delighted in, but lamented; there is no ſin which coſts him ſo much ſorrow as that to which either the temper of his body, or the occaſions of his life lead him. That ſin which he finds his heart moſt ſet upon, he ſets his heart, his whole ſoul moſt againſt. The Scripture gives much evidence that *David* (though a man after Gods own heart) was very apt to fall into the ſin of lying: We read of his faultering in that kind, when he was in ſtraights and hard put to it, more then once; but it is as clear in Scripture, that his heart was ſet againſt lying, and that it was the grief and dayly burden of his ſoul: That ſin is a mans greateſt burden and grief, which he prayes moſt to be delivered from; how earneſtly did *David* pray to be deliver'd from the ſin of lying (*Pſal.* 119. 19.) *Keep me from the way of lying, teach me thy Statutes*: And as he prayed earneſtly againſt lying, ſo he as earneſtly deteſted it (*verſ.* 163.) *I hate and abhor lying, but thy Law do I love.* And he tells us how he was affected or afflicted rather with that ſin, whatſoever it was which was *his iniquity* (*Pſal.* 31. 10.) *My life is ſpent with grief, and my years with ſighing: My ſtrength faileth, and my bones are conſumed*; (here are deep expreſſions of a troubled ſpirit) and why all this? He gives us the reaſon of it in the ſame verſe, *becauſe of mine iniquity*; As if he had ſaid, there is a baſe corruption which ſo haunts and dogs me, that my life is ſpent with grief, and my years with ſighing: He found (it ſeems) his heart running out to ſome ſin, which yet was ſo far from being a beloved ſin that it was the breaking of his heart, and the conſumption of his bones.

But ſome will ſay, how may we diſtinguiſh a ſpecial ſin from a beloved ſin?

I anſwer; Firſt, That is a mans beloved ſin which he dayly feeds and nouriſheth, which he provides for, and to which all his other ſins are ſervants. The beloved ſin is that to which all a mans other ſins do miniſter, they attend upon that ſin, and all that he doth runs into it. The Phariſees had their beloved ſin, and that was vain glory, they loved to be highly eſteemed and cryed up in the world. Chriſt taking notice of that generation, tells us that whatever they did had a reſpect to the feeding of their vain glory, or deſire of being uppermoſt in the World (*Matth.* 6. 2.) they gave alms and ſeemed to be very charitable in feeding the poor, but the truth was, they only fed their own pride and vain glory, therefore they ſounded a Trumpet that they might have praiſe of men; they did not give alms ſo much to relieve poor men, as to get applauſe among rich men, or all men. And when they prayed (*ver.* 5.) they did it that they might be ſeen of men, their very prayers alſo were the nouriſhment of their vain glory: yea they fed that luſt when they faſted; *For* (ſaith Chriſt, *ver.* 10.) *when they faſt they diſſigure their faces* (that is, they uſe artificial devices to make their faces appear as it were in another form, they looked ſowr; and why?) *That they may appear to men to faſt.* Their very abſtinence from food fed their fleſh: Yea Chriſt concludes concerning the whole courſe of theſe Phariſees (*Matth.* 23. 5.) *All their works they do to be ſeen of men*; they ſet every wheel a going to draw a reputation upon themſelves. And thus all the Inordinate cares which a covetous man takes, all the wrongs and oppreſſions with which he afflicts others, and the frauds by which he circumvents them, are only for the ſatisfying of (though it be impoſſible to ſatisfie it) his covetouſneſs. And thus alſo if ambition be a mans beloved ſin, all that he doth is to aſcend the top of the ſtairs, to get into the ſaddle, or (as the Prophet ſpeaks, *Jer.* 49. 16.) *to hold the height of the hill.* Every ſin centers it ſelf in the beloved ſin. As if the body have a wound or bruiſe, all the humours run to that diſeaſed part; ſo a beloved ſin (which is our wound and diſeaſe) draws all the humours of the ſoul to it.

Secondly, That's a mans beloved or boſome ſin which his thoughts are moſt upon: *David* ſaith, *O how I love thy Law! 'tis my meditation night and day* (Pſal. 119. 97.) I cannot keep my thoughts off from it, becauſe I love it. So that ſin which hath moſt of our thoughts, hath moſt of our love and that which hath our chief thoughts is our chiefly beloved ſin.

Thirdly, That's a ſin in the boſome which we cannot endure ſhould be toucht, reproved, or ſpoken againſt. *David* had a darling Son, *whom he had not diſpleaſed at any time, by ſaying why haſt thou done ſo?* (1 Kings 1. 6.) He that hath a darling ſin will be diſpleaſed if it be ſaid to him, why do you ſo? He cannot love thoſe who ſmite the ſin which he loveth. The reaſon why the Phariſees were ſo angry with Chriſt and ſought his death, was becauſe he ſmote them in this tender part, and alwayes hit at the ſin in their boſome, or was alwayes pointing at their boſome ſin. *Herod* had a beloved ſin; and he could not bear the Baptiſt who warned him of it. *Herod* caſt *John* into priſon when he told him of *Herodias*, and checkt his inceſtuous love.

Fourthly, That's a ſin in the boſome which a man ſtands up for, and will maintain by argument. We defend that which is in our boſome; what lieth neer the heart, the ſeat of life, we protect as our lives; Sinners will ſtrain all the wit and reaſon they have to juſtifie their beloved ſin. How ſtrongly are they engaged in their affections to a ſin, who appear as Patrons and Advocates for it?

Laſtly, That's a beloved ſin which we would hide and cover, which we would keep cloſe and ſecret. To juſtifie ſin, when it is known or ſeen, and to hide it out of ſight, are evidences both clear and ſtrong, that 'tis a beloved one.

Again, From the Text, *If I have covered my tranſgreſſion as Adam*; that is, as the firſt man did.

UMI

Obſerve, *All men are naturally infected with the ſin of the firſt man; there is the ſame ſinfulneſs in all men now as was in the firſt man after he had ſinned.*

We are apt to ſin as *Adam* did, and to hide our ſin as he did. We have the ſame bad principle that he had. *If I have covered my tranſgreſſion as Adam:* Old-*Adam* is in our boſoms, and in our bowels, we carry him about us, and he is continually provoking and ſtirring us up both to do evil and to cover it.

Laſtly, As the word *Adam* is taken appellatively; *If I have covered my ſin as other men*; that is, as men commonly do.

Note, *All men are alike in ſin and ſinful practices, till grace makes the difference.*

What any one man doth, all men would do, did not God change their hearts, and new mould their ſpirits. It is common to man or mankind to cover his ſin, not proper to this or that particular man; *As in water face anſwereth to face, ſo* (ſaith *Solomon*, Prov. 27. 19.) *the heart of man to man.* The general corruption of nature is alike in all men; nor is there any ſpecial inclination to this or that ſin, or way of ſinning, in the heart of any man, but others may be found with anſwerable inclinations.

VERS. 34.

Did I fear a great multitude, or did the contempt of families terrifie me, that I kept ſilence, and went not out of the door?

THis holy man *Job* ſtill proceeds to aſſert and maintain his integrity: In the former verſe he hath ſhewed us, that he had *not covered his tranſgreſſion as* Adam, *by hiding his iniquity in his boſom.* And here he tells us, that *he did not fear a great multitude, nor was he terrified with the contempt of families*, into a ſinful ſilence or forbearance to appear when the duty of his place called him to come forth and ſpeak in a good cauſe. I ſhall open the particular terms, and then give out their ſcope and ſenſe more fully.

Verſe 34. **Did I fear a great multitude?**

ערץ *Importat prævalentiã cum terrore.*

The word notes more then ordinary fear, even a ſtrong prevailing fear, which puts the whole man into motion, or into a commotion rather, into a rout and concuſſion of the ſpirits and powers both of body and ſoul; ſuch are the effects of great fear.

Did I fear a great multitude?] We may expound it, Firſt, Paſſively, *Did I fear?* That is, Was I afraid of, *was I put into a trembling fit for fear of a great multitude?* Secondly, The word may be taken Actively, to make afraid, to oppreſs, and break with violence. He that can break and cruſh all that ſtand in his way is a man to be feared. And hence the Scripture ſaith (*Pſal.* 89. 7.) *God is greatly to be feared in the Aſſembly of the Saints.* God is ſuch a Majeſty, that all, even his own people have reaſon to quake and tremble at his preſence or appearance; and as he is dreadful in his eſſential Majeſty, ſo in the providential puttings forth and actings of that Majeſty. The Prophet tells us in what a woful plight the Inhabitants of the earth, the higheſt (not excepted) will be, when God deals with them (*Iſa.* 2. 19.) *They ſhall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his Majeſty, when he ariſeth to ſhake terribly the earth. Job* uſing another word (*Chap.* 9. 34.) deprecates this dreadful Majeſty of God, or the puttings forth of his terrible power, *Let him take away his rod from me, and let not his fear terrifie me*; and he expoſtulates with God by the ſame word (*Chap.* 13. 25.) *Wilt thou break a leaf driven to and fro? And wilt thou purſue the dry ſtubble? Wilt thou break?* Wilt thou ſhake terribly, or cruſh in pieces ſuch a poor creature as I am? Thus many of the moſt learned Interpreters tranſlate here; We ſay, *Did I fear a great multitude afraid:* They ſay, *I could make a great multitude afraid:* Or as Mr. *Broughton* renders it, *I could oppreſs a great troop.*

המון רבה *Significat τὸν ὄχλον, vulgus promiſcuum hominesque è plebe quos Græci τοὺς τυχόντας appellant.* Druſ.

Did I fear a great multitude?] The word ſignifieth the *common rout*, the promiſcuous vulgar; who gather together like many waters, as they are deſcribed in Scripture (*Ezek.* 39. 11.) *And the valley ſhall be called the valley of* Hamon Gog; that is, *the valley of the multitude of* Gog. *Did I fear a great multitude?*

Or did the contempt of families terrifie me?

Contemptus Familiarũ *i.e. contemptiſſimus vel abjectiſſimus inter eas.* Druſ.

Certè fregiſſem multitudinem magnam ſed deſpectiſſimus familiarum terrebat me: & tacebam nec egrediebar ex oſtio. Bez.

Theſe words are taken two wayes; Firſt, Implying the anger and diſpleaſure of families againſt him. *Did the contempt or the wrath and rage of families banding and conſpiring againſt me terrifie me?* Secondly, According to the other reading of the former words, theſe latter are rendred thus, *I could oppreſs a great multitude, but the contempt of families* (that is, the meaneſt or moſt contemned of any family, the pooreſt and loweſt in the family) *did terrifie me.* Mr. *Broughton's* tranſlation carrieth the ſame ſenſe, *But ſuch families as came to baſeneſs made me ſhrink, that I was dumb and went not out of doors.* According to this rendring the Abſtract is put for the Concrete. *The contempt of families*, either for thoſe families which conſidered together are moſt contemptible, or for any ſingle perſon of a family, who either is by his place, or hath made himſelf by his folly the moſt contemptible among them. There are ſome in every family, who by their place are the contempt or loweſt of them; there are others, who though by their place they may be among the chief of the family, or principal branches of it, yet make themſelves the object of contempt.

There are three wayes in which men may become the contempt of the family.

Firſt, By their poverty, and the meanneſs of their condition; though it be ſinful to contemn the poor, yet uſually the poor of a family are the contempt of it.

Secondly, Others are the contempt of families, becauſe of the weakneſs of their parts and gifts, becauſe of their ignorance, and want of underſtanding. A mans abilities, whether natural or acquired, eſpecially gracious abilities raiſe him up in honour and reſpect.

Talem Tertullianus *exprimens Græcam lectionem* ἐξουθένημα *vocat*, nullifamen, & *latine dicere ſolet fax plebis.*

Thirdly, Some are the contempt of families for their ill manners, for their lewd, ſcandalous and wicked courſes; theſe are worthy of nothing but contempt, both by thoſe of their own families, and by thoſe who are ſtrangers to them. *David* a type of Chriſt ſpeaks of himſelf as *the contempt of families* (ſo low was Chriſt humbled for our ſakes, *Pſal.* 22. 6.) *I am a worm and no man; a reproach of men, and deſpiſed of the people.* Chriſt was not only reproached among men, but a reproach of men; that is, under greateſt reproach. *David* complains again of ſuch a contemptible generation (*Pſal.* 35. 15.) *But in mine adverſity they rejoyced and gathered themſelves together; yea, the abjects gathered themſelves together againſt me.* The original word is not the ſame uſed here by *Job*, yet it comes up fully to his ſenſe, importing ſuch as well deſerved the whipping poſt, even theſe (ſaith he) *gathered themſelves together againſt me.*

נכים

Did the contempt of families, &c.] The word **families**, may be taken two wayes.

Significat ſe nunquam accepiſſe perſonam ſuorum propinquorum nec inordinatè erga ſanguine conjunctos jus dixiſſe. Pined.

Firſt, To note thoſe who were united to him in a nearneſs by blood or by alliance: As if he had ſaid, I was not afraid to diſpleaſe my neareſt Kindred and Allies for Righteouſneſs or Juſtice ſake.

Secondly, *Families* may be put for men of great power, for men of honour, note, and name. And ſo the word *families*, is oppoſed to the *multitude*, who are not taken notice of for name or family. So ſome conceive this latter part of the verſe oppoſed to the former; *Did I fear a great multitude, or did the contempt of families*, of the greateſt and higheſt families terrifie me? Thus according to that double notion of the word *families*, *Job* was not terrified, either by thoſe that were near him and of his kindred, nor by thoſe who were great in power, did either the one or the other (ſaith he)

חתת *Territus, conſternatus fuit, mente jacuit.*

Terrifie me?] Or did they make me amazed? Was I in a conſternation of ſpirit becauſe of the contempt of families? The word noteth any diſcouragement or failing of ſpirit (*Deut.* 1. 21.) *The Lord God of thy fathers hath ſaid unto thee, fear not, neither be diſcouraged*; let not thy ſpirits fail. Thus in the Prophet (*Jer.* 50. 2, 3.) *Declare ye among the Nations, and publiſh and conceal not; Say* Babylon *is taken*,

taken, Bell *is confounded*, &c. That is, All the Adherents of *Bell* are creſt-fallen, and, like men in a confuſed amazement, know not what to do. Now (ſaith *Job*) was there ſuch a terror upon my ſpirit? Was I overwhelmed with the fear of the mighty? *Did contempt of families terrifie me?*

That I kept ſilence and went not out of the door.

As if he had ſaid, *Was I ſo terrified that I kept ſilence, and durſt not ſhew either my head or mine opinion, or that I durſt not appear and engage againſt ſinful and evil wayes, or for the help of thoſe who were oppreſſed?* The word notes ſilence or ſtilneſs, not only in ſpeech but in motion. Thus *Joſhua*, according to the Hebrew elegancy, bid the Sun be ſilent (*Joſh.* 10. 12.) *Sun ſtand thou ſtill upon Gibeon*, or, *Sun be thou ſilent.* The Sun ſpeaks not but in a figure, as all inanimate Creatures do the glory and power of God. Yet ſaith *Joſhua, Sun be ſilent*; that is, *move not.* Silence puts a ſtop to motion; and things that have no motion are ſaid to be ſilent. The grave or death is called ſilence (*Pſal.* 115. 17.) and a people deſtroyed are ſaid to be ſilenced (*Iſa.* 15. 1.) Ar *of* Moab *is laid waſte, and brought to ſilence*, or *cut off*, as our Margin hath it. The word is alſo uſed for our waiting upon God in faith and patience (*Pſal.* 62. 1.) *Truly my ſoul waiteth upon God*; or, *My ſoul is dumb and ſilent for God.* I am quiet from baſe and unworthy fears, murmurings, or toſſings of mind. I was never ſo put to it (ſaith *Job*) that my tongue ſtirred not, or that my hand moved not when I ſaw a juſt occaſion, or reaſon for either. *Was I ſilent*

דמם *Siluit, tacuit.*

And went not out of the door.] When duty called me either to ſpeak or do? No, it was not thus with me, *I was never ſo terrified that I kept ſilence and went not out of the door.*

Again, as theſe words are taken by way of negation; *I did not keep ſilence, or I did not keep within doors*, though the multitude roſe upon me, or great families appeared againſt me; ſo they are taken alſo in the ſenſe of a grant or conceſſion, by thoſe who expound the former part of the verſe actively, *I could have made a great multitude afraid, but the contempt* (or meaneſt) *of families terrified me ſo, that I neither ſpake a word, nor ſtirred a foot, but carried my ſelf as a man aſhamed and convinced when I ſaw the matter was not right.*

Having thus opened the words diſtinctly, I ſhall propoſe a threefold interpretation of them as they ſtand together.

Firſt, From the connection with the verſe going before, where *Job* profeſſed that he did not cover his ſin; the ſenſe is given thus; *Did I fear a great multitude?* As if he had ſaid, *I was ſo far from covering my tranſgreſſions, or hiding mine iniquity in my boſome, that if at any time I had done amiſs, I did confeſs my error, and was not afraid nor aſhamed to do it, no not before a great multitude. Nor did I cover my ſin as being terrified with the contempt that I might run into, if it were diſcovered and known. Shame from man did not trouble me; but if I had erred, I was free in the acknowledgment of my error; I kept not my ſin in ſilence, nor did I conceal my ſelf at home. I did more fear God then any ſhame men could caſt upon me, and had rather fall under the contempt of families by confeſſing my ſin, then that he ſhould not be glorified by my confeſſion.* Or (as others render the meaning of the latter words in complyance with this interpretation) *I was ſilent*; that is, I did not excuſe my ſin; and I went not boldly out of my doors, but ſtayed at home, as aſhamed of my ſelf, for what I had done.

Tacui *i. e. non excuſavi factum meum*; Nec egreſſus ſum oſtiū, *ut ſolent, quos pudet alicujus criminis.* Druſ.

Hence Note, *A godly man, a man of a tender conſcience and upright ſpirit, will not hide his ſin, no not for fear a multitude ſhould hear of it, or whole families ſhould contemn and reproach him for it.*

He can give glory to God, and take ſhame to himſelf. Thus *Joſhua* counſell'd *Achan* (Joſh. 7. 19.) *My Son, give I pray thee glory to the Lord God of* Iſrael, *and make confeſſion unto him, and tell me what haſt thou done*, &c. As if he had ſaid, *Be not afraid that the great multitude, or the families of* Iſrael *will deſpiſe thee, but give glory to God though thou lie in the duſt.* There are two caſes eſpecially wherein we ought to acknowledge our ſin even before men.

Firſt, In trouble of conſcience, when we can get no eaſe, no ſatisfaction by prayer and ſelf-ſearching; when the ſoul finds no reſt, but the ſore runneth and putrifieth, the wound ſtinketh and is corrupt, as *David* ſpake in his own caſe (*Pſal.* 38. 5.) In this caſe it is a duty to lay open our ſin to man. I do not ſay, to the *multitude*, but unto thoſe who are wiſe and godly, either Miniſters or Chriſtians. In a troubled dark condition, 'tis dangerous to ſhut up ſorrow in our own breaſts; fear of reproach and ſhame from men ſhould not hinder us from diſcovering the plague of our heart to thoſe that are diſcreet and faithful.

Secondly, If many have taken offence at our ſin, if a multitude are ſcandalized at what we have done, it is a duty to acknowledge and confeſs it, even before the multitude; that ſo our repentance may be as publick as our ſin hath been, and ſpread as far as our failing hath done.

Secondly, Taking the former clauſe actively; *I could have made a great multitude afraid, or I could oppreſs a great multitude* (which reading (as I noted) is much inſiſted upon by ſome Interpreters) yet the moſt contemptible perſon of any family made me afraid, if he had Juſtice on his ſide, I durſt not (the fear of God was upon me) appear againſt him, or oppoſe him in his cauſe. This reading argues much holineſs, humility, and ſelf-denial in this righteous man.

And it may teach us, Firſt, *How much power ſoever a juſt and good man hath in his hand, he will not uſe any of it to the wrong of any the pooreſt man.*

He that is righteous knows he hath no power, and finds he hath no will but to do righteous things. *Laban* ſaid to *Jacob* (Gen. 31. 29.) *It is in the power of my hand to do you hurt*; ſo he bragg'd over *Jacob*: And we do not find that *Laban*'s ſpirit or principle ſtopped him from hurting *Jacob*; for (ſaith he) *The God of your Fathers ſpake unto me yeſternight, ſaying, Take thou heed, that thou ſpeak not to* Jacob *either good or bad*: That is, Do not ſpeak to him good or bad as to this matter of his return to thee; do not allure him by promiſes, nor terrifie him by threatnings to deſiſt from his intended journey. *Laban*'s ſpirit was checked by the Lord not to uſe his power againſt *Jacob*, but it is not clear that he had a principle of righteouſneſs and meekneſs in him to check himſelf from doing it. When a man can ſay, it is in the power of my hand to do you hurt, but the Lord hath given me another heart, I dare not do you wrong, nor will I oppreſs you in your right; this is an excellent and a gracious frame: And this appeared eminently in *Joſeph* (*Gen.* 50.) His Father *Jacob* being dead, his Brethren were afraid that he would take revenge upon them (*ver.* 15.) *And when* Joſeph's *Brethren ſaw that their Father was dead, they ſaid,* Joſeph *will peradventure hate us, and will certainly requite us all the evil which we did unto him.* This *Joſeph* our Brother is a man in power, and having the command of all *Egypt*, he is able to break the whole multitude of us; and while we remember our unjuſt and ill uſage of him, what can we expect but hard uſage from him? And therefore they humbly addreſſed unto him (*ver.* 16, 17.) *And they ſent a Meſſenger unto* Joſeph, *ſaying, thy Father did command before he dyed, ſaying, So ſhall ye ſay unto* Joſeph, *forgive, I pray thee, the treſpaſs of thy Brethren and their ſin; for they did unto thee evil: And now we pray thee, forgive the treſpaſs of the ſervants of the God of thy Father. And* Joſeph *wept when they ſpake unto him.* (It troubled him to be ſuſpected of revengeful purpoſes towards them) *And* Joſeph *ſaid unto them* (ver. 19, 20.) *Fear not, for am I in the place of God?* As if he had ſaid, Vengeance belongs to God, not to me; and ſeeing God hath over-ruled your unkindneſs and ill dealing with me, for the good both of your ſelves and others, I am ſo far from meaning you any hurt, that I will ſtill do you good. Thus he reproved them for the evil which they had done, and relieved them againſt all fears, that he would do them any hurt, in the words following; *As for you, ye thought evil againſt me, but God meant it unto good, to bring to paſs as it is this day to ſave much people alive: Now therefore fear ye not, I will nouriſh you and your little ones; and he comforted them, and ſpake kindly to them.* A godly man is ſo ſenſible of the kindneſs of God to him, that he cannot return unkindneſs where he hath received it, though he could eaſily do it; *They indeed know what it is to uſe power* *aright, who when they need not fear what a multitude can do againſt them, yet fear to do wrong to any ſingle perſon.* As *Paul* ſpeaks of Church-power (2 *Cor.* 13. 8.) So ſaith any godly man (what magiſtratical or military power ſoever he hath) *I can do nothing againſt the truth, but for the truth.* I am for the truth (ſaith *Paul*) there I am a Gyant, but *I can do nothing againſt the truth*; I have neither ſtrength nor underſtanding for that work. So ſaith a godly man, though I could break a Troop, yet I will not break a bruiſed Reed againſt right; I cannot lift up my hand, nor open my mouth, nor ſtir a foot againſt a righteous man, though in rags, or under my feet. And indeed it is weakneſs, not power to do any thing againſt the truth or righteouſneſs (*Ezek.* 16. 30.) *How weak art thou ſeeing thou doſt theſe things* (what things were theſe, the doing whereof argued weakneſs? No good I warrant you; ſo it follows in the ſame place) *The works of an imperious whoriſh woman.*

Secondly, Note, *It is a high commendation and a ſtrong proof of the truth and power of Grace, when we have a power to do evil and do it not, nor have any heart to do it.*

Many want nothing but power to do miſchief; they have a heart for it, but they have not a hand. If they could but break a troop and oppreſs the multitude, whom would they not oppreſs? Whom would they not terrifie? The Lord reſtraineth them in their power, elſe they would uſe it to the utmoſt. *Thou wilt cauſe thine ear to hear* (ſaith *David,* Pſal. 10. 18.) *To judge the fatherleſs and the oppreſſed, that the man of the earth may no more oppreſs,* or (as we put in the Margin) *terrifie.* The *man of the earth* (that is, the man who is great and ſtrong upon earth, or in earthly things) hath an heart to oppreſs, there is nothing wanting but leave and opportunity. When once he hath opportunity, he will not only oppreſs, but alwayes oppreſs, he will never make an end of oppreſſing; and therefore the Pſalmiſt prayes, that God would come and take order with him, that *he may no more oppreſs*: As if he had ſaid, Lord, if thou letteſt him alone, he will oppreſs more and more, even his evermore; yea, he will not only oppreſs, but triumph and pride himſelf in his oppreſſions, as he is deſcribed in another Scripture (*Pſal.* 52. 1.) *Why boaſteſt thou thy ſelf in miſchief, O mighty man?* (That's a Pſalm of *David, when* Doeg *the* Edomite *came and told* Saul, *and ſaid unto him,* David *is come to the houſe of* Abimelech) *Why boaſteſt thou thy ſelf in miſchief, O mighty man?* (ſaid *David* then) *The goodneſs of God endureth continually.* God hath all power in his hand, he could cruſh all men as a moth; He is God Almighty, able to deſtroy whom he pleaſeth, and when he pleaſeth, yet *the goodneſs of God endureth continually.* He is good, and he loveth to be doing good; whereas (*ver.* 3.) *Thou loveſt evil more then good,* and therefore exerciſeſt thy power in the doing of evil rather then good.

Si abjectiſſimæ ſortis homo ad me venit, & vitiorum meorum amicè admonuit æquo animo tuli, tacui nec contra eum contendi. Lavat.

Again, Taking this interpretation, *I could break or terrifie a great multitude, yet the contempt of families terrified me:* That is, If the meaneſt of the family did but advertiſe me wherein I had done wrong, I was afraid to proceed.

Hence Obſerve, *A godly man is willing to receive counſel or reproof, where there is cauſe, from the meaneſt perſons.*

He looks not upon the ſpeaker, but what is ſpoken; nor doth he contemn what the contempt of families telleth him, if he telleth truth. It is ſaid in that prophetical Promiſe (*Iſa.* 11. 6.) *The Wolf ſhall dwell with the Lamb, and the Leopard ſhall lye down with the Kid, and the Calf, and the young Lion, and the Fatling together, and a little Child ſhall lead them.* Here's a gracious metamorphoſis; they who were wild and fierce as Lions, ſhall be turned into Lambs; they ſhall have ſuch a tameneſs and mildneſs of ſpirit, that a little Child may lead them. As if the Prophet had ſaid, If the leaſt (who are able) give counſel, if but a Child give counſel, they will follow him in the way of righteouſneſs. As he that is godly and rightly principled, will not be led out of the way of truth, holineſs, and righteouſneſs, by the dictates or directions of the moſt ancient Fathers (gray hairs command no reverence, but (where they are a Crown of glory,) as being found in the wayes of righteouſneſs) ſo if a little Child, or the greeneſt head ſhew him the way of righteouſneſs, he cannot but give reverence and follow it; or if a little Child ſhew him where he is gone out of the way, he is convinced and will not go one ſtep further. *Job* profeſſed at the thirteenth verſe of this Chapter; *If I did deſpiſe the cauſe of my man-ſervant or of my maid-ſervant when they contended with me,* &c. *Job* was ready to hear not only his great Lords and Counſellers, but his common Servants; ſhe that ſwept the houſe, and he that rubb'd his horſe heels, was not refuſed nor rejected by him. *There is much grace, a height of grace ſhewed in being willing to receive counſel or reproof from the leaſt and loweſt.* Moſtly, rich and great men are a terror to all reprovers, and have this unhappineſs with their greatneſs, that they may ruine themſelves uncontroul'd. Poſſibly ſome may mutter at them in ſecret, but no man dares ſpeak openly or plainly to them. *Job* points at ſuch proud ones (*Chap.* 21. 30, 31.) *The wicked is reſerved to the day of deſtruction,* &c. *Who ſhall declare his way to his face? And who ſhall repay him what he hath done?* The man is paſt dealing with; you take a Lion by the beard, and a Bear by the tooth, when you reprove him. *Job* was a great man, yet if truth were ſpoken by a Child or a Servant, he hearkened to it; his example ſhould be our warning, not to deſpiſe neceſſary warnings, what hand ſoever brings them to us. If the Meſſage be of God, 'tis no great matter how little the Meſſenger is. And if our conſciences tell us he ſpeaks truth, and that his finger is upon our ſore, let us not caſt it away, nor reject it, leſt we be caſt away among thoſe who reject the counſel of God againſt themſelves, who often ſendeth ſuch meſſages, whether of counſel or reproof, to us, on purpoſe, by perſons of leaſt reſpect, that he may try whether we reſpect truth without reſpect of perſons. A godly man will not ſay, what's he that he ſhould be a Monitor, that he ſhould tell me of my faults, or undertake to teach me? If it be a ſin that we are told of, or a duty that we are taught, it is honourable for us to lay down our ſin and take up our duty, though he be (as to a worldly account) contemptible, who hath dealt with us about either.

There is a third interpretation of theſe words, which I conceive to be yet more clear unto the ſcope of this Text, and that ariſeth from the Text as it ſtands in our tranſlation. *Job* had been ſhewing before what he was, and how he had behaved himſelf in ſeveral of his Relations, as a Neighbour, as a Husband, as a Maſter, as a Magiſtrate; and as there he profeſſed his Magiſtratical integrity, ſo here the courage and undauntedneſs of his ſpirit, in the diſcharge of that office. *Did I fear* (ſaith he) *a great multitude? Or did the contempt of families terrifie me, that I kept ſilence, and went not out of the door?* As if he had ſaid, *The violence of the people never hinder'd me from doing my duty, nor did I at any time go out of my way, leſt I ſhould diſpleaſe the neareſt of my own family, or the greateſt families. It never troubled me who oppoſed me, whether conſidered for number, nearneſs, or greatneſs, while I was for juſtice. The contempt of any man did not make me keep ſilence, nor ſtay me in the leaſt from doing what was right and equal to all men.*

Excludit à ſe inordinatum timorem corporalium periculorum, qui quidem maxime ſolet procedere ex multitudine contra hominem inſurgente. Aquin.

No man can do good but he ſhall have croſs motions, both from the fleſh within him, and from fleſh without him. We meet with moſt rubs when we would walk in an even way. It ſeems *Job* in the diſcharge of his office, met with many, even with a multitude of oppoſers, eſpecially with oppoſition from the multitude, and therefore ſaith, *Did I fear a great multitude?*

Hence Note, Firſt, *The multitude, or generality of men, are prone to oppoſe that which is good, and thoſe who do good.*

There is a principle of unrighteouſneſs in all men by nature, and moſt men in their practice oppoſe that which is righteous. We find the multitude oppoſing the greateſt good work that ever the Lord did, the ſetting his Son upon his holy hill of *Sion.* The whole world of ungodly men, both Princes and people were up in arms to oppoſe this glorious work of God (*Pſal.* 2. 1, 2.) *Why do the Heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The Kings of the earth ſet themſelves, and the Princes take counſel together, againſt the Lord and againſt his Anointed, ſaying, let us break their bands aſunder.* Obedience to Chriſt is the worlds bondage, and they will get looſe if they can. And as in that, ſo in other caſes, the people rage and imagine vain things, when the beſt things are in doing. They that follow the multitude ſhall ſeldom do any thing that is good. When *Moſes* came down from the Mount and charged *Aaron* with making that Idol; *Aaron* by way of excuſe tells him the people had preſſed him to make it (*Exod.* 32. 22.) *And* Aaron *ſaid, let not the anger of my Lord wax hot; thou knoweſt the people that they are ſet on miſchief; for they ſaid unto me, make us gods,* &c. *Aaron* ſhould not have heard, much leſs feared the multitude, but he did. Sometimes (I grant) *The voice of the people is the voice of God*; that is, God moves the multitude by a ſecret over-powering influence upon their ſpirits, to cry up and call alowd for that to be done which himſelf (in his wonderful providences, and according to his eternal counſels) is about to do. But in moſt caſes, we may ſay, *The voice of the people is the voice of the Devil.* And if you will pleaſe the moſt of men, or *The many*, you ſhall never do any thing that is pleaſing to God, or profitable unto men. The multitude is an unruly beaſt, hurried by paſſion, not guided by rule or reaſon. And as ſome excuſe their doing evil by the urgency of the people; ſo others are kept from doing good by the oppoſition of the people. *Saul* (as was ſhewed more largely upon the former verſe) would needs excuſe the miſcarriage of that ſervice which God called him to, by the cry of the people (1 *Sam.* 15. 21.) *The people took of the ſpoil,* &c. As if *Saul* had ſaid, *Could I turn ſuch a torrent, could I fully execute the Commiſſion which God gave me when the people would not conſent and cleave to me?* They who fear the people, or reſolve to pleaſe the people, ſhall, at beſt, do the work of God to halves, and uſually they leave it quite undone, or do that which is juſt contrary to it. *Job* could ſay, *Did I fear a great multitude?* This was not ſo much a gallant, as a truly gracious reſolution; and *there are but few who have acted up to it.* The ſtream of the multitude doth often carry even Magiſtrates and great ones down with it, to the doing of unworthy and unrighteous things, or ſtops them from doing thoſe things which are honourable and righteous. Every Magiſtrate is not cloathed with *Job*'s ſpirit, to be above the ſway of a great multitude. *Pilate* was carried to one of the worſt actions in the world (though it had the beſt and moſt bleſſed iſſue) to paſs an unjuſt ſentence upon Chriſt (who was as innocent as innocency it ſelf) meerly becauſe he feared the multitude (*Matth.* 27. 24.) *When* Pilate *ſaw that he could prevail nothing, but rather a tumult was made, he took water and waſhed his hands before the multitude, ſaying, I am innocent from the blood of this juſt perſon: ſee ye to it.* It is your cry and your rage that hath prevailed with me, I offered you *Barabbas* to be crucified and Jeſus to be releaſed, but nothing (I perceive) will content you except Jeſus die, therefore take him. See how this *Roman* Judge was baffled and overcome by the multitude, to condemn a righteous perſon againſt the dictate of his own conſcience, and the light of his judgment. And we read (*Acts* 12. 2.) How *Herod had killed* James *the Brother of* John *with the ſword; and becauſe he ſaw it pleaſed the* Jews, *he proceeded further to take* Peter *alſo*, &c. Thus ſome do injuſtice for fear of the multitude, and others to gain the love and good will of the multitude, care not to be both bloody and unjuſt.

Vox populi vox Dei.

Secondly, Note, *A godly man, eſpecially a godly Magiſtrate, will do juſt and righteous things, though all the world riſe up againſt him.*

This is the honour of Magiſtracy, and by this they ſhew themſelves Gods indeed, men acted by the Spirit of God, and acting in the power of God. Magiſtrates ſhould not yield no not an hairs breadth through the importunity of a multitude. It is againſt the duty of a private Chriſtian to have fellowſhip with the unfruitful works of darkneſs, much more for thoſe that are in power. It is beſt to get and keep the heart ſo eſtabliſhed, as neither to do nor forbear to do for fear of the multitude, or for fear we bring (as we ſay) fiſts about our ears, and an old houſe upon our heads. We ſhould be reſolute in a good cauſe, though we purchaſe to our ſelves the hatred of the whole world. And it is but needful that we ſhould caſt up our account aforehand about this thing; for while we ſet our ſelves to reſiſt evil (the moſt being every where the worſt) we are like to have the whole world of evil men our enemies. While ſo many flatter themſelves, few or none can digeſt reproof, and but a few Juſtice, from others.

Again, Conſider the ſecond branch of this verſe according to the ſecond acceptation of the word *families*, *The contempt of families did not terrifie me.* I (ſaith *Job*) neither feared whole families, nor the heads or chiefs of families. Some poſſibly can trample upon the multitude, and ſlight the common ſort, but they fear the great ones.

Hence Note, *Righteous men will do righteous things, both in their publick and private capacities, though they provoke the mighty, and run the hazzard of their hotteſt diſpleaſure.*

Zimri *was a Prince of a chief houſe among the* Simeonites (*Numb.* 25. 15.) yet *Phineas* was not afraid to provoke that great family in *Iſrael*, but in his zeal for the Lord thruſt both him and *Cozbi* his Harlot through the belly, and ſlew them, and received high commendation from the Lord for doing it. The day of mans Juſtice ſhould be like that of the Lords ſpoken of by the Prophet (*Iſa.* 2. 12, 13.) *The day of the Lord of hoſts ſhall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up, and he ſhall be brought low; and upon all the Cedars of* Lebanon, *that are high and lifted up, and upon all the Oaks of* Baſhan; *and upon all high Mountains, and upon all the Hills that are lifted up:* That is, Upon thoſe perſons who are greateſt, higheſt, and ſtrongeſt, like Mountains and Hills, like Cedars and Oaks in the world. God in the execution of his Judgments regardeth not the greatneſs of men, but impartially poureth vengeance upon them; nor ſhould men where Juſtice and Righteouſneſs call for it: He is not worthy the name or office of a Magiſtrate, who cannot (in this ſenſe) contemn the contempt of families.

Secondly, As the word *families*, ſignifieth ſuch as are of near relation to us, as ſome here interpret.

Note, *The fear of diſpleaſing Kindred, and thoſe in relation, often proves a great obſtruction to Juſtice.*

Some would do right, but there is a Kinſman, a Brother in the caſe. We ſay, *It is hard to love and to be wiſe. Affections pervert the judgment.* And therefore by an ancient Law it was provided, that no man ſhould be choſen to exerciſe the office of a Magiſtrate in the Province where he was bred and born; leſt he ſhould be tempted to favour his Kindred and Allies in the forbearance of Juſtice, or might ſeem harſh and rigorous in doing Juſtice, either againſt or upon them. It is not eaſie to ſee a fault and puniſh it in thoſe that are near us; and 'tis hardeſt to ſee faults in our ſelves, becauſe we are neareſt our ſelves. Naturaliſts obſerve, that when a ſenſible object is laid near the ſenſe, the operation is hindred. There is no man can ſee himſelf well till he get quite out of himſelf. And our nearneſs to others makes it ſomewhat difficult for us to diſcern their faults, but more to cenſure and puniſh them. How hard was it for *David* to ſee treaſon in a Son? We are loth to diſpleaſe Kindred, or to be diſpleaſed with them. It was the commendation of the Tribe of *Levi*, (and the Lord honoured them with the Prieſthood for it) that they took no notice of Relations in the Lord cauſe (*Deut.* 33. 8, 9.) *And of* Levi *he ſaid, let thy* Thummim *and thy* Urim *be with thy holy one whom thou didſt prove at* Maſſah, *and with whom thou didſt ſtrive at the waters of* Meribah. *Who ſaid unto his Father, and to his Mother, I have not ſeen him, neither did he acknowledge his Brethren, nor knew his own Children: they obſerved thy Word, and kept thy Covenant.* Had theſe Levites caſt off all natural affection? How is it then ſaid, they did not know Father or Mother? It was in executing the Lords Command, as appears (*Exod.* 32. 27.) *And he* (that is, *Moſes*) *ſaid unto them, thus ſaith the Lord God of* Iſrael, *Put every man his ſword by his ſide, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the Camp, and ſlay every man his Brother, and every man his Companion, and every man his Neighbour.* Now, when the other Tribes were unwilling to execute this ſentence of God upon their Kindred and near Relations, *Levi* did it, as is reported in the next words (*ver.* 28.) *And the Children of* Levi *did according to the word of* Moſes, *and there fell of the people that day about*

In ea provincia ex qua quis originem traxit officium fiſcale adminiſtrare prohibitum fuit, ne aut gratioſus aut calumnioſus apud ſuos eſſe videatur. Paulus Juriſc. lib. 5 Sent.

Senſibile poſitum ſuper ſenſum tollit ſenſationem.

three thouſand men; *for* Moſes *had ſaid, Conſecrate your ſelves to day to the Lord, even every man upon his ſon, and upon his Brother, that he may beſtow upon you a bleſſing this day.* *Levi* did not know Father or Mother or Child ſo, as to be partial in or neglect the execution of the Decree aud ſentence of God. It is a great point of holy knowledge in ſuch caſes not to know Father or Mother or any Relations; and it is a truth, that the knowledge of Relations often byaſſeth us from duty in many caſes. When a Kinſman is in the caſe, the Law (in ſome mens opinion) is otherwiſe. If *David* s heart had not been ſtrongly as well as ſincerely ſet for God, The contempt of his Wife had cooled his zeal, and made him aſhamed of his Dancing before the Ark (1 *Sam.* 6. 16.) That was a noble reſolution of *Saul*, if it had been well grounded, when he caſt Lots to find out who had eaten contrary to the Oath wherein he had raſhly engaged the Army (1 *Sam.* 14. 24, 39.) *For as the Lord liveth which ſaveth* Iſrael, *though it be* Jonathan *my Son, he ſhall ſurely die.* Had *Saul* done well in adjuring the people not to eat till the Evening, he had done eminently well in reſolving not to ſpare his own Son for eating; but the former being bad, the latter was worſe. Be ſure you are upon a right matter, and then the more ſtiff and reſolved you are againſt reſpect to Relations, the better are your reſolutions. Perſonal Relations ſhould ſway nothing in a publick cauſe, nor ſhould any notice of perſons turn us aſide from doing right. The Lord ſaid (*Jer.* 22. 24.) *Though* Coniah *the Son of* Jehoiakim *King of* Judah, *were the Signet npon my right hand, yet would I pluck him thence*; that is, though he were as near to me and as uſeful as a Signet is to man (for this is ſpoken only after the manner of men) yet he ſhall bear his puniſhment, and know that he hath grievouſly ſinned againſt me. This (in proportion) was *Job's* honour, he would not ſpare Signet-Friends, he had rather provoke all the Relations he had in the World, then depart from the rule, and ſo provoke his firſt beſt Friend the Lord, and his next beſt Friend his own conſcience; God is our beſt Friend, and ſhall we adventure a contempt from God to avoid the contempt of Friends? How good and ſweet a Friend a good conſcience is, none know but they that have it, nor all they neither: But to be ſure, 'tis better and eaſier being under the diſpleaſure of a thouſand Families and Kindreds and Relations then under the diſpleaſure either of God above, or of our conſcience in onr boſome. Here's our duty both in publick and private tranſactions, never be over-born by Families, either not to do right, or to do unrighteouſly. How upright a man was *Job*, who alwayes did what was right, though againſt the vote, Firſt, Of the Multitude; Secondly, Of his Kindred; Thirdly, Of great Families: All theſe did not move him at all, nor did they bear the weight of one hair in the ballance for the turning him out of his way.

And this is a good pattern for the Miniſters of the Goſpel; They ſhould not fear to do the duty of their place and office; Though, Firſt, The Multitude are diſpleaſed; Though, Secondly, Their Kindred and Fathers Family contemn them for it; Though, Thirdly, Great men are angry, and are ready to powr out wrath upon them if they do. Magiſtrates and Miniſters act like themſelves when they are ſwayed by conſcience towards God, not by humane Concernments or Conſiderations.

VERS. 35, 36, 37.

O that one would hear me, behold, my deſire is, that the Almighty would anſwer me, and that mine adverſary had written a Book.

Surely I would take it upon my ſhoulder, and bind it as a Crown to me.

I would declare unto him the number of my ſteps, as a Prince would I go near unto him.

JOB having given many evidences and proofs of his integrity in the foregoing part of this Chapter, ſadly, and moſt ſeriouſly imprecating the Judgments of God upon himſelf, if his teſtimony were not true; he in theſe three verſes ſhews his aſſurance of the goodneſs of his cauſe, by his willingneſs to have the whole matter yet more fully heard and examined even before the pureſt and moſt impartial tribunal. We have two things moſt conſiderable in this Context,

Firſt, *Job's* earneſt requeſt or petition that he might come to a tryal, *O that one would hear me, my deſire is that the Almighty would anſwer me* (ver. 35.)

Secondly, His profeſſion, with what heart and frame of ſpirit he hoped to appear and ſtand forth in the day of his tryal (*ver.* 36, 37.) *Surely I would take it upon my ſhoulder, and bind it as a Crown to me*; *I would declare to him the number of my ſteps, and as a Prince would I go near unto him.* Theſe are words of confidence, like confidence it ſelf, yet no groundleſs confidence, nor the confidence of the wicked, which God will reject, and in which they ſhall never proſper.

Verſe 35. **O that one would hear me,** Or according to the letter, *O that it were given to me to have a hearer for me.*

Job calleth for a Judge, and doubts not but his Judge will prove his Patron; he calls for a Judge to hear him with equity and moderation of ſpirit, of which kind of hearing he had found little from his friends.

Judicem audientem me. Pagn. *Judicem appellet ſed gratiæ ut* Ἐπιεικείας, *hoc enim toto libro ſibi negari queritur.* Coc.

O that one would hear me.] He ſpeaks indefinitely, as if he were very indifferent who the perſon were, ſo he were but an indifferent perſon that had the hearing of his cauſe, any perſon unbyaſt and uningaged ſhould ſatisfie him. Some render, *O that I had a Judge to hear me*; the Text is only, *O that I had one to hear me*, but becauſe 'tis the buſineſs of Judges to hear and determine cauſes, therefore it is well rendered, *O that I had a Judge to hear me*; *or a hearing Judge.* The Lord gave command for *hearing* as well as *Judging* (*Deut.* 1. 16.) *I charged your Judges at that time, ſaying, hear between your Brethren*; There can be no judging without hearing, therefore *a Judge* is called a *hearer*. Thus *Abſhalon* in his flattering and dſloyal ſalutes (2 *Sam.* 15. 3.) beſpake every man he met, *See thy matters are good and right, but there is no man deputed of the King to hear thee*; there is not a *hearer*, that is, there is not a Judge to hear and determine your caſe. *O that I were made Judge in the Land*, or the hearer and determiner of differences between you; how readily and how righteouſly would I diſpatch your cauſes! And hence the place where Judges uſe to hear cauſes, is called *The Auditory* (Acts 25. 23.) *When they were come in to the hearing place* that is, to the place where cauſes were heard and Judgment given. When *Job* ſaith, *O that one would hear me*, he intends not an ordinary hearer, or any one that came next, but a Judge to take cognizance of and make ſome determination about his caſe and ſtate: And while *Job* begs for a Judge or a hearer, he doth not appeal from God, as if he were unwilling to acquieſce and reſt in his Judgment; but he deſired that God would order him ſuch a Judge, or ſuch a hearer as might do him right, according to the integrity of his heart, and the equity of his cauſe. And though he ſpake in the former part of the verſe, as if he were content any Judge ſhould end it, yet we find he draws down his deſire to God himſelf in the latter part of the verſe; *My deſire is that the Almighty would anſwer me.*

Ἀκροατήριον, *Auditorium Juriſconſultorum verbum pro eo loco, ubi jus dicitur.* Bez.

O that one would hear me.] There is an Eleganey in the Hebrew Text; Grammarians tell us that the Participle is joyned with a dative Pronoun of favour; O that one would hear me, with regard to my ſad caſe, or with compaſſion of my troubled condition; *O that he would give me a hearer for me*; Such a hearer I mean as is affected with and ſenſible of my ſorrowful ſtate. *Job* had been long heard, how many debates and diſcourſes had there paſſed between him and his Friends? And yet now he ſpeaks as if he had not been heard to that day.

Participiū audiens jungitur ac dativo favoris. Quis dabit mihi audientem mihi? Judicem deſiderat, qui ex æquo quidē judicat, ſed tamen in bonum. Bold.

Hence Obſerve, *They who do not hear well, do not hear at all*; *a matter is never heard till it be rightly heard.*

And as 'tis profitable to conſider this, in reference to the hearing of ſuch controverſal debates, as paſſed between *Job* and his Friends; ſo in reference to our ordinary hearing the uncontroverted doctrines of the Goſpel. Many faithful Miniſters of Chriſt have preached long, and have had many hearers, who may yet cry out as *Job* in the Text, *O that men would hear us!* They have not been heard, though they have had many hearers; few have heard them, though they have had a Multitude of hearers. How many Sermons ſoever you hear, till you hear them to profit, you hear them not at all. And how many cauſes ſoever the Judge heareth, till he heareth them with equity and equirinity, he doth not hear them at all. After *Job* had been ſo long hard, he had reaſon to cry out, *O that one would hear me.*

Secondly, Note, *A good man deſires, and deſires earneſtly to have his cauſe throughly heard, to have it heard to purpoſe.*

As a godly man would have his prayers heard, that is, granted, (The Lord is ſaid not to hear that prayer, which he doth not grant.) He gives God no reſt till he hath ſome hopes or intimations that his holy deſires are heard, and anſwered. So every man in diſtreſs or trouble, every man under hard cenſures, ſlanders, or miſ-underſtandings, longs to be heard, and O how long and tedious is the time till he hath obtained a deſired hearing? 'Tis a great pain not to be heard at any time, but then moſt when we our ſelves are (as *Job* was) in pain. When the body is in pain, and the mind in pain when we are wounded within, and wounded without, O how grievous and painful is it not to be heard, but to have our matters ſtill hanging in ſuſpenſe, and no end, no determination made about them! *O that one would hear me.*

Behold my deſire is, that the Almighty would anſwer me.

In this clauſe *Job* pitcheth upon God for his Judge; As if he had ſaid with *David* (Pſal. 73. 25.) *Whom have I in Heaven but thee? And there is none upon the Earth that I deſire beſides thee. Where ſhall I have a Judge on earth or in Heaven but thee? Behold my deſire is that the Almighty would anſwer me.*

Deducunt alii à תוה *quod eſt figurare;* & תו *eſt* χάραγμα *lineis ductis conſtans, quod quia uſum ſigni habet, hinc ſignum verti ſolet.* Coc. תו *Significat etiam terminum, unde* Thau *litera, quod claudat Alphabetum.* Druſ. *Qui ſignum interpretantur, locum hanc ita enarrant En ſignum innocentiæ meæ eſt Deus omnipotens, qui pro me teſtatur.* Druſ. Merc. תוי *pro* תאוי *quod uſitatius dicunt* תאותי *deſiderium meum, à radice* אוה *unde latinis aveo.* Druſ. *Reſpondeat pro me, vel teſtimonium perhibeat de mea innocentia.* Druſ. *Reſpondere ſæpe connotat convenientiam. Sic verbo reſpondere eſt confirmare, fateri, approbare; opere autem reſpondere eſt facere deſiderata.*

The Word which we tranſlate, **My deſire**, Is rendred by ſome, thus, *my ſign is that the Almighty would anſwer me*; and ſo we put in the Margin of our Bible. They who follow this reading derive the word from a Root which ſignifies, *to mark*, or *to make a figure*. So the word is uſed (*Ezek.* 9. 4.) *Set a mark upon the heads of thoſe that mourn for the abominations that are committed in the Land*, the word ſignifies alſo *the uttermoſt end or term of a thing*. The Hebrew Alphabet being cloſed with that letter. They who inſiſt upon this ſignification of the word, read not (as we) *my deſire*, but *my ſign or my mark is that the Almighty would anſwer me.* As if he had ſaid, *The mark or ſcope that I aim at when I cry, O that one would hear me, is this, that the Almighty would anſwer me: Though I ſeem to ſpeak at large or at rovers, yet I have a mark, and the mark I ſhoot at is this, to have a hearing from God, O that God would be the Judge of my innocency and integrity, againſt all the falſe ſuppoſitions and miſpriſions which my Friends have had or made of me to this day.*

But I rather adhere to our own tranſlation, *my deſire is*, &c. And ſo the word is derived from a Root which ſignifieth *to wiſh or deſire*; *my wiſh* (ſaith he) *or deſire is that the Almighty would anſwer me.* There is a threefold anſwering.

Firſt, There is an anſwering to thoſe who ask Queſtions, for the reſolving of their doubts.

Secondly, There is an anſwering to thoſe who make petitions for the ſupply of their wants, or the grant of their requeſts.

Thirdly, There's an anſwering to thoſe that plead againſt us, or lay any charge upon us, for the clearing of our innocency, and wiping away of thoſe objections: In this latter ſenſe we are to take it here, *O that the Almighty would anſwer me*, that is, that he would undertake and clear my cauſe, that he would be Judge, and Witneſs on my ſide. To anſwer, ſignifies alſo to teſtifie, or to give a Teſtimony concerning another. Again, we anſwer; Firſt, In words, when we confirm, acknowledge, and approve, what another hath ſaid or done; Secondly, We anſwer by our actions (there is anſwering by the hand as well as by the tongue) when we do the thing that is deſired of us. *O that the Almighty would anſwer me.* *Job* having not found an equal Judge on earth, and knowing that none but God knew the ſecrets of his heart, deſires that he would be his Judge. So that he calls God to be his Judge, becauſe he alone was acquainted fully with his inſide, and perfectly diſcerned all the motions of his ſoul, his ends and aims, as well as the manner of his life. Thus he appealed from men (who are uſually led by their affections, by their love or hatred) to God, who (from the evidence of things) judgeth unerringly.

Hence Note, *A godly man deſires above all things that God would hear, and judge his cauſe or caſe.*

David made this prayer (*Pſal.* 26. 1.) *Judge me O Lord, for I have walked in my integrity.* And again (*Pſal.* 35. 24.) *Judge me O Lord my God according to thy righteouſneſs, and let them not rejoyce over me.* I have many Judges, many that judge me according to their unrighteouſneſs; but (ſaith he) *Judge me O Lord, according to thy righteouſneſs.* Once more (*Pſal.* 43. 1.) *Judge me, O God, and plead my cauſe againſt an ungodly Nation.* *David* deſires the Lord to ſuſtain both the art of an Advocate to plead his cauſe, and of a Judge to determine it.

But why doth *Job* (or why ſhould any godly man) deſire ſo earneſtly to have God to Judge him? The reaſon is, becauſe God is the beſt Judge, for firſt he is the moſt knowing Judge; they who have bad cauſes deſire much to come before bad or ignorant Judges, who cannot look far into them, much leſs look through them, they love to come before blind Judges, or if they be ſeeing Judges, they will do what they can to put out their eyes, they will blind them with gifts, as the Scripture ſpeaks, *Gifts put out the eyes*, But he that hath a good cauſe, deſires to have a knowing Judge, a Judge learned in the Law. And therefore a godly man muſt needs deſire God to be his judge, who knoweth him throughly, who knoweth not only the way without him, but that within him too, who knoweth not only his actions but his thoughts, who knoweth not only what he doth, but what he aims at, the purpoſes, intents, and deſigns of all his actions. Whom ſhould a godly man deſire to judge him in compariſon of God, who knows the frame of his heart, who though he cannot but ſee many faults, and ſinful failings in him, yet he knows alſo whatſoever is good in him, that is, whatſoever himſelf hath wrought in him, and helped him to work by his Spirit. God knows the work of his own grace, together with the moſt ſecret workings of all that grace. And therefore a godly man deſires moſt of all that God ſhould Judge him. Again, Secondly, He deſires it becauſe he knows God will be as juſt in determining his cauſe, as he is knowing about his cauſe; he cannot be turned aſide, nor byaſs'd by any means; no ſolicitations, no threats, no promiſes, no flatteries, no witcheries can in the leaſt draw the Lord off from that which is right. And as he is a juſt, and a knowing Judge; ſo, Thirdly, He is a merciful Judge, and will award to us according to the tenour of a Covenant of grace; he will not enter into Judgment with us, upon ſtrict legal terms, upon the terms of the Covenant of works; for then who could deſire God to be his Judge? *Enter not into Judgment with thy Servant O Lord*, (every one muſt ſay) *for no fleſh is righteous in thy ſight*; but a Believer knows God will judge him upon the terms of the Covenant of grace, and therefore he deſireth no other Judge but God. *Behold, my deſire is that the Almighty would anſwer me.*

And that my Adverſary had written a Book.

Whereas ſome might object againſt *Job*'s wiſh; you, perhaps, would have the Almighty for your judge, becauſe you hope he will favour you; no ſaith *Job*, I am willing that God ſhould know the very worſt of my caſe; As I deſire that God ſhould judge me, ſo that *my Adverſary ſhould write a Book*, and charge me home. The Hebrew is *the man of my contention*. There is a threeſold interpretation about this man of his contention.

איש ריבי *Vir litis meæ*, ſc. *qui contra me litigat.*

Vocat Deum virum contentionis, i.e. ἀντίδικον *in qua loquendi forma* אוש *vir, tantum valet ac* בעל *dominus.* Bold. [illegible]

Firſt, Some by this *Adverſary* or *man of contention*, underſtand God himſelf, who had dealt with *Job* in outward diſpenſations like an enemy, or an adverſary, like a man full of contention. The Lord ſaith (*Iſa.* 57. 15.) *I will not contend for ever*, &c. I have been long contending, long ſtriving, I have been as an Adverſary to this people for a great while; *But I will not contend for ever, leſt the ſpirit ſhould fail before me, and the ſouls that I have made.* Hence ſome conceive that even God himſelf may here be called *Job*'s Adverſary, or the man of his contention. So the

Scripture elſewhere expreſſeth the Lord under the word *Man* (*Exod.* 15. 3.) *The Lord is a Man of War, the Lord is his name*; As if he had ſaid, The Lord is ſuch a man of War as is alſo Lord and Maſter of the War, he wins the day and triumphs in every Battel. The Lord is a fighting man, too mighty for all fighting men. In which ſenſe, the Lord may be called here *a man of contention*; he can contend and ſtrive, and carry it like an Adverſary againſt all opponents.

Secondly, Others expound it of his Advocate; 'Tis the office of an Advocate to contend for his Client. *O that the Almighty would anſwer me, and that the man of my contention had written a Book*; that is, O that he who is to plead for me and mannage my cauſe at the hearing, had drawn up his Book, ſtated my caſe, and laid forth my condition, that the Almighty might proceed to judgment upon it.

Thirdly, 'Tis taken as we tranſlate for his real Adverſary; *O that the man of my contention*, or *my Adverſary* whoſoever he is that hath or will contend with me, had drawn up his Book, his Book of accuſation, and had filled it with the worſt matter that he could get againſt me; it ſhould be all one to me what he can ſay againſt me, while I have the Almighty for my Judge. Thus he alludes to thoſe who bring in a charge or Inditement in writing againſt offenders when they are tryed or arraigned. Such Books or Bills of Inditement are read in open Court before the Judge the Priſoner ſtanding at the bar to receive his Judgment. *O that my Adverſary had written a Book.* From the Elegancy of the Hebrew, *Job* calling his Adverſary *a man of contention.*

Obſerve, *Some men are ſuch lovers of ſtrife, that they are men of ſtrife.*

They are all for ſtrife, and debate, ſtrife is the very Element wherein they live, they live in the troubled waters, yea I may ſay, they live and they love to live in the very fire of trouble, they are men of contention. The good Prophet was ſo accounted (*Jer.* 15. 10.) *Wo is me my Mother, that thou haſt born me a man of ſtrife, a man of contention to the whole earth*; *I have neither lent on uſury, nor men have lent to me on uſury, yet every one of them doth curſe me*, that is, I meddle not with buſineſs, I intangled not my ſelf with worldly affairs, I neither lent nor borrowed, I neither bought nor ſold, yet *I am a man of ſtrife, and contention.* Some though they are nothing but peace in their ſpirits and ſpeeches, yet are men of contention to the whole earth, that is, while they only ſpeak the truth, and hold out the purity of the wayes, and worſhip of God, this vexeth all the world of wicked men. Such are men of ſtrife and contention to the whole earth, every one wrangles with them, none can bear them. It is ſaid of the two witneſſes (*Rev.* 11. 10.) *They tormented the men that dwelt upon the earth.* We read of a man (*Rev.* 2. 13.) the notation of whoſe name (*Antipas*) is a man againſt *all men*; not that he was for contention, but he was a man ſo holy in his life and zealous for the truth of God, that all man (upon the matter) contended with him, and he was ſlain in the contention. The noble *Athanaſius* in the time of the Arrian Hereſie, oppoſed the whole world, he was a man of contention to the whole earth. In this ſenſe ſome good men the faithful witneſſes of Chriſt are men of contention and ſtrife. But many (as *Job* calls his Adverſaries) are men of contention in an ill ſenſe, that is, they deſire contention and ſtir up ſtrife. *Behold* (ſaith the Prophet, *Iſa.* 11. 11.) *All they that were incenſed againſt thee ſhall be aſhamed and confounded, they ſhall be as nothing, and they that ſtrive with thee ſhall periſh*, We put in the Margin, *the men of thy ſtrife*; that is, men that are for nothing but ſtrife, or whoſe ſtrongeſt bent is to ſtrife, and their ambition to be men of contention. Chriſt was ſo converſant with ſorrow that he is called *a man of ſorrows* (Iſa. 53. 3.) And the ſpirit of Antichriſt is ſo ſteeped in ſin, that he is called *the man of ſin* (2 Theſ. 2. 3.) And by a like Hebraiſm or Elegancy of ſpeech, they who love to fiſh in troubled waters, or will be troubling the waters though they get no fiſh, are deſervedly called men of trouble, or men of ſtrife.

Secondly, When *Job* ſaith, *O that my Adverſary had written a Book*, that is, a Book of accuſation, a charge, a libel, or an inditement againſt me, I wiſh with all my heart he had brought it in, let him do his worſt.

Note, *While our own Book of conſcience hath nothing but good in it, or while the Book of our own conſcience is for us, we need not fear, nor much care who write Books againſt us.*

Let our Adverſaries write Books as large as they will, while we do well; let them ſay their worſt while we do good. It hath been the diſtemper of moſt times, and 'tis of theſe to write Books of contention, and publiſh ſtrife; we may ſay of may (as it was ſaid of ſome old Philoſophers) *They ſpeak or pen whole cart loads of reproach and ſlander.* What is the fence againſt all this? Nothing but a good conſcience, he that can ſay his conſcience writes nothing but good, and finds the records of that fair for him, may take courage and comfort, when men charge nothing but filth and dirt upon him. *Paul* had enough to ſay for himſelf, when ſtanding before the Council he could ſay (*Act.* 23. 1.) *Men and Brethren, I have lived in all good conſcience before God, untill this day.* And though as ſoon as he had ſaid ſo, *Annanias* commanded to ſmite him on the mouth, yet he was well enough, becauſe his conſcience did not ſmite him. He tells us alſo (2 *Cor.* 1.) that though he and others with him, had been preſſed above meaſure, in ſo much (ſaith he, *v.* 8, 9.) *that we deſpaired even of life, and had the ſentence of death in our ſelves?* *Yet* (*ver.* 12.) *our rejoycing is this, the Teſtimony of our conſcience.* A good conſcience is an impregnable fort, It fears not the fierceſt battery of evil tongues, or pens.

ὅλας ἁμάξας βλασφημιῶν. Lucian.

Thirdly, Obſerve, *It is a convincing argument, that a man hath a good conſcience and a good cauſe, when he is willing to be tryed, and to have the worſt laid to his charge.*

He that is guilty catcheth at any thing for a covering, and deſires to ſhadow himſelf that he may eſcape unſeen; fain he would keep his actions and his wayes fairly mantled over; he that is honeſt makes no coverings of what he hath done, nor doth he fear the diſcoveries which any man can make of them. He that is Gold cares not to be guilded, nor is he unwilling to be tryed. He ſaith (as *Job* in the Text) *My deſire is that the Almighty would anſwer me, and that mine Adverſary had written a Book.*

Verſe 36. **Surely I would take it on my ſhoulder.** Mr. *Broughton* renders the word of aſſervation, *Surely*, As an Oath; *I ſwear I would bear it on my ſhoulder.*

Theſe words are a confirmation of what he ſpake laſt; As if he had ſaid, When my Adverſary hath made his Book as big and as heavy as he can, I ſhall bear it for all that; *I would bear it upon my ſhoulder.* Sin or guilt are a burden which no man is able to bear; who can take up any one ſin, the leaſt ſin, upon his ſhoulders, and ſtand under it? *Any one ſin lived in and loved, will not only over burden our ſhoulders, but break our backs.* But (ſaith *Job*) let mine Adverſary write my faults and failings, I can bear the Book upon my ſhoulders; Why? Becauſe he knew his Adverſary could write no ſinful practice, that he lived in or loved, or deſired to keep in his boſome, as he profeſſed at the thirty-third verſe. Yea when *Job* ſaith, *I would bear it upon my ſhoulder*, he doth not only intimate it ſuch a burden as would not preſs him down, nor break his back, but that it would be his honour, and that he ſhould bear that Book as a Banner of victory, or as an Enſign of glory. He was confident that whatſoever his Adverſary could write, with an intendment to diſparage him, would in the iſſue turn to his praiſe.

Verbis ſignificantiſſimis exprimit, quam ſit ſibi bene conſcius, & quam certò perſuaſus ſit ſingula accuſationis capita laudi ſibi ac ornamento fore. Merl.

There is yet another interpretation of theſe words, *I would bear it on my ſhoulder*; As if *Job*'s meaning were; Suppoſe my Adverſary find real faults in me, and charge me with them upon due proof; yet *I will take his Book upon my ſhoulder, and bear it patiently as my burden*; I will acknowledge and confeſs what I have done amiſs, and neither deny or excuſe it. The word which we tranſlate *to take upon the ſhoulder*, ſignifies the taking up of a heavy burden, and 'tis applied to the bearing of any puniſhment; that's a good ſenſe; if my Adverſary doth write my faults indeed, I will bear his charge upon my ſhoulder, and take it patiently;

ently; I am ready to ſubmit, as to the dealings and chaſtenings of God, ſo to the reproofs of man. *Job* was far from thinking he could bear the guilt of his ſin upon his ſhoulder (he might as well bear the weight of the whole earth as of one ſin) only if found faulty or guilty he would quietly bear the blame. But if his Adverſaries Book ſhould be found a ſlander, and his integrity appear through all his accuſations, what then?

I would bind it as a Crown to me (ſaith he)

The word is plural in the Original; *I would tie it for Crowns to me*; So Mr. *Broughton* renders. Crowns are glorious things, they are the greateſt glory of this World, they are emblems of Soveraignty, or of higheſt Magiſtracy and Majeſty. *I would bind it as Crowns.* The leaves and lines of this Book ſhall be as ſo many Pieces and Jewels of my Crown, or as many Crowns ſet with precious ſtones. *I would bind it to me as a Crown, or as Crowns.*

But why doth *Job* ſpeak thus? Had he no ſin, no faults, that he ſaith, I would bind the Book as crowns to me? Did he think nothing could be written of him which he had cauſe to be aſhamed of?

I anſwer; Though as ſome men make Garments to cover their ſin, ſo others cover themſelves with ſin as with a Garment (*Pſal.* 73. 6.) and bind their ſin to them as a Crown glorying in their ſhame; yet *Job* was far from either of theſe ungodly tempers: Yea though he had lived like an Angel, yet he knew God might find juſt cauſe enough to charge him with folly. And therefore in this boaſting expreſſion, he only intimates his integrity, that he was neither a lover of ſin, nor a deſpiſer of goodneſs. Or when *Job* ſaith, *I would bind it as Crowns to me*, his meaning is only this, Though my Adverſary find out and hit upon my offences, yet I ſhall not be like a common malefactor or condemn'd offender; no, the very Book of my offences will be not only my defence, and clearing, but my honour and glory. All that can be charged upon any man muſt come under one of theſe three notions.

Firſt, Either it is falſe, and that which he never did, (*Job*'s Friends had charged him with many things which he never did, with ſuch things as he never contributed ſo much as a thought or put a little finger to the doing of them) now that which a man is falſely charged with, he can eaſily (at leaſt in the ſight of God and of his own conſcience) diſcharge himſelf of. And that which at firſt was but a calumny, will at laſt be his Crown.

Secondly, Suppoſe the fact charged be true, yet if it be found ſuch as he hath been humbled for, and repented of, and turned from, and unfeignedly beg'd ſtrength againſt, it ſhall not turn to his ſhame. Sins hidden and continued in are our ſhame, and will be our confuſion, but ſins confeſſed and repented of, are our comfort and our Crown; we cannot take comfort in any ſin, though confeſſed and repented of; but we may take much comfort that to our knowledge we have no ſins, but ſuch as we have confeſſed and repented of.

Erit mihi ſcelerũ confeſſio pro corona. Pined.

Thirdly, If true, 'tis either pardoned or unpardoned. *Job* might ſay, let it be granted, that my Adverſary hath filled every page and line of the Book with ſuch ſins as I have indeed committed, yet they are all freely pardoned, God hath fully diſcharged me of them, and given me my (*quietus eſt*, or) acquittance into my boſome. Now then what though my Adverſary accuſeth me? what though he write a Book of accuſations againſt me? I have already accuſed my ſelf as much before God, and God hath forgiven me; there is an act of oblivion paſſed upon all my tranſgreſſions in the Court of Heaven; the Lord hath ſaid, that my ſins and my iniquities he will remember no more, then what do all theſe charges amount to? *Who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of Gods Elect? It is God that juſtifieth, who is he that condemneth? It is Chriſt that died.* Theſe challenges are univerſal; And though many have both charged and condemned the very elect for whom Chriſt died; yet if once a man hath confeſſed his ſin, and God hath forgiven his ſin, all the charges of men and Devils will be but ſlanders and unſeaſonable accuſations.

Thus *Job* might triumph over the man of contention, and ſay, whatever my Adverſary can write, is either what I have not done, or if I have done it, I have undone it by confeſſing it, and God hath undone it by pardoning it; the Lord hath taken away my ſin through the blood of the Covenant, and I know that I ſhall be juſtified. Upon this conſideration of Goſpel-grace, *Job* had reaſon enough to tell his Adverſary, that he would bear his Book of inditement upon his ſhoulder, and bind it to him as a Crown.

Hence Note, Firſt, *Wrongful accuſations are matter of honour, rather then of diſgrace to the innocent.*

There are two ſorts of wrongful accuſations; Firſt, When we are accuſed of thoſe evils which we never did. Secondly when we are accuſed for doing that which is good, as if it were evil; both or either of theſe accuſations are our Crown. It is ſaid in that Prophecy of Chriſt (*Iſa.* 50. 7, 8, 9.) *The Lord God will help me, therefore ſhall not I be confounded, therefore have I ſet my face as a flint, and I know I ſhall not be aſhamed.* Jeſus Chriſt had a Book written againſt him, but he could ſay, *I know I ſhall never be aſhamed*; and why? The reaſon is evident; There was not one word of truth in all the inditement brought againſt Jeſus Chriſt; he was charged with many groſs ſins, and called (as we ſay) all to naught. He was called a Glutton, a Drunkard, a Devil, a friend to Publicans and Sinners, but (ſaith he) *I know I ſhall not be aſhamed*, I ſhall have honour from and glory with God notwithſtanding all theſe accuſations. *He is near that juſtifieth me, who will contend with me? Let us ſtand together, who is my Adverſary let him come near to me? Behold the Lord God will help me; who is he that ſhall condemn me? Lo, they ſhall all wax old as a garment, the Moth ſhall eat them up.* Thus we ſee Chriſt had a number of accuſations heaped upon him, as if he had been the worſt of ſinners, but none of them could reach or touch his honour; for he had never toucht any ſin. And though all the ſins of his people were juſtly charged upon him (he having undertaken to be their Mediator, and to ſtand in the place of ſinners) yet he bare them with infinite ſtrength, and to the ſatisfaction of his Fathers juſtice upon his ſhoulder, and ſo bound them to him as his Crown. We find alſo how the Adverſaries of that faithful Prophet write a Book of ſlanderous reports againſt him (*Jer.* 20. 10.) *I have heard the defaming of many* (that is, many defaming me) *report ſay they and we will report it, all my familiars*, or (as the Hebrew hath it) *every man of my peace watched for my halting* (they are hungry for ſomewhat againſt me) *ſaying, peradventure he will be inticed* (we by ſome cunning inſinuation or other ſhall bring him into a ſnare, or within our danger) *and we ſhall prevail againſt him, and we ſhall take our revenge on him. But the Lord is with me as a mighty terrible one; therefore my perſecutors ſhall ſtumble, they ſhall not prevail* &c. This was the Prophets confidence; he knew theſe were falſe reports, and would therefore be as Crowns upon his head, not a ſnare to his feet. The Saints in the primitive times made Crowns of all their accuſations, and gloried in thoſe things which their prophane Adverſaries accounted their ſhame and their crime. Their faults were made by their Enemies, not done by themſelves: Or they accuſed them of that which was not their fault but their glory. They charged that as ſin upon them which was their vertue, and their higheſt acting grace was all they had to diſgrace them with. And are not ſuch diſgraces our glory and our Crown? Chriſt hath pronounced all them bleſſed, and therefore honourable, who are thus diſgraced (*Math.* 5. 11, 12.) *Bleſſed are you when men ſhall revile you, and perſecute you, and ſhall ſay all manner of evil againſt you falſely for my names ſake: Rejoyce and be exceeding glad for great is your reward in Heaven*; That, to be ſure, is no leſs then a Crown, far greater and better then all earthly Crowns. To that Crown we muſt expect to paſs (as the holy Apoſtle did, 2 *Cor.* 6. 8.) *by honour, and diſhonour, by good report, and ill report, as deceivers and yet true.* If there be any truth in ill reports, they are dirt in our faces, and we have cauſe to be humbled under them; but if ill reports be falſe, we have cauſe to rejoyce in them, and they will be Crowns upon our heads.

Let me add theſe four good counſels about thoſe evil reports which may fall upon us. Firſt, If ill reports are true, then be humbled; Secondly, If falſe, be comforted:

Thirdly, If they have any thing of truth, or (not being altogether untrue) have ſome very ſimilitude or likeneſs to truth, then, 'tis good for us to ſearch our hearts and try our wayes more ſtrictly, whether (though we have not done the thing reported) we have not given juſt occaſion for ſuch a report; or (though we have not done that evil) whether we have avoided all the appearances of that evil which is reported of us. It was ſaid of a Virgin, *She was chaſt indeed, but not thought to be ſo, becauſe ſhe was more wantonly attired then became a chaſt Virgin.* Though we are not ſo ill as ſome ſuſpect, yet poſſibly we are not ſo good as we would be thought and ought to be; This ſhould be matter as of preſent humiliation, ſo of future caution. Fourthly, If we have not given ſo much as any outward occaſion of ſuſpition, yet we ſhall do well to enquire whether we have not ſome affection to and ſecret liking of ſuch ſins; this God ſometimes puniſheth by ill reports, and makes us ſee the undue wandrings of our own hearts, by the undue wandrings of other mens tongues concerning us.

Again, Seeing *Job*, though he had many ſins, and thoſe ſuch as his Adverſary might write a Book of, yet could bind the Book of his accuſations as a Crown to him.

Note, *Pardoned ſins cannot hurt the ſinner; and though it troubles him that he hath ſinned, yet his ſins cannot trouble him.*

He (ſaith the Apoſtle) who is *once purged hath no more conſcience of ſin* (Heb. 10. 2.) that is, though he knoweth he hath many ſins, yet he hath not a trembling, tormenting, accuſing conſcience becauſe he is purged and his ſins pardoned through that one ſacrifice of Jeſus Chriſt. This is the glory of the Goſpel: Free grace in Juſtification takes all our ſins off the file, as if they were not at all. Pardon is the blotting out of tranſgreſſions out of Gods Book, and if they are once blotted out of Gods Book, we need not care who writes them in their Book, nor what Books men or Devils write againſt us.

Laſtly, Seeing though *Job* had ſinned, yet he relieved himſelf with this, that he was upright, and had an aſſurance in his own ſoul, that he did not love his ſin, nor hide it in his boſome.

Hence Note, *We ſhall never be put to ſhame for thoſe ſins which we do not love.*

A little ſin loved will be not only our ſhame, but our ruine, whereas great ſins truely hated, ſhall be ſo far from ruining us that they ſhall not make us aſhamed. A ſin hid in the boſome, will one day make the ſinner hide his head; But he that knoweth, he hath no ſin in his boſome, may bear his ſin on his ſhoulder and bind it as a crown upon his head. He that is ſincere, is aſhamed of the leaſt ſin, but he ſhall not be put to ſhame for the greateſt; as it follows;

Verſe 37. **I would declare to him the number of my ſteps.**

'Tis queſtioned, who is meant by the **Him** to whom *Job* would make this declaration. Some refer it to God, and ſome to the Adverſary; the ſenſe is much one, whether to the one or the other. It ſhews much holy confidence, and a great teſtimony of a clear conſcience to be willing to make known the whole courſe of our lives to God or man. *I will declare to him the number of my ſteps*; As if *Job* had ſaid, *I ſhould be ſo far from refuſing the Book written againſt me, though all the miſcarriages of my life were raked together and ſum'd up in it, that I am ready my ſelf to give an account of my whole life. I am ready to make a fuller confeſſion and declaration of my ſins, then my Adverſary can make againſt me. I would furniſh him with matter for his Book, beyond all that he or any man elſe knows of me; I would declare the number of*

Tantum abeſt ut eum reſpuerem, ut etiam eum adjuvarem, qui librum talem conſcribere inſtituiſſet adverſum me; omnia illa acta mea ſigillatim enumerarem. Merc.

My ſteps.] He means not corporal ſteps, but moral, the motions or actions of his life, whether in thought, word, or deed; theſe are our ſteps, and every act of theſe is a ſtep forward or backward, Heaven-ward or Hell-ward. So that when *Job* ſaith, *I would declare to him the number of my ſteps*; it is, as if he had ſaid, I would give him an account or a narrative of all that I have done in this world.

But can any man do that? We may more eaſily take the number of our ſteps in walking then of our hearts in thinking, of our tongues in ſpeaking, or of our hands in doing. How then could *Job* ſay, *I would declare unto him the number of my ſteps*, ſeeing they are innumerable?

I anſwer; We are not to nnderſtand it, as if *Job* would undertake to declare all his particular acts, or every thought, word, or deed, which had paſſed him all his dayes. But firſt, their kind, good and evil, or how he had moved in naturals, how in civils, how in ſpirituals. Secondly, When he ſaith, *I would declare unto him the number of my ſteps*; his meaning is, I would be exact in diſcovering the courſe of my whole life, even as if I had told every ſtep. Thirdly, When he ſaith *I would declare to him the number of my ſteps*, his meaning is not, that he would ſpecifie every one of them, but that he would not hid or conceal any one of them; many hide and cover their ſteps in ſinful wayes. It ſhall not be imputed to a man as ſin, that he is not able to remember all his ſins; but 'tis his ſin if he hide or ſeek to put a covering upon any of them. Thus *Job* would declare the number of his ſteps, and diſcover his life, even to his Adverſary; As if he had ſaid, *When he hath written his Book, I will tell another manner of ſtory of my ſelf then he hath or can; when he hath ſaid as much as he can againſt me, I will yet freely ſay much more againſt my ſelf. I would declare to him the number of my ſteps.*

Hence Note, *A gracious heart hath a very obſervant eye upon his own wayes.*

Job kept an account of himſelf, and of all his wayes, and this is one of the beſt accounts we can keep. Many keep an account of their expences, and incomes; they know what goes out, and what comes in every year; but how few are there that keep account of their lives and converſations, of their thoughts, of their words and works, theſe paſs without account; though they muſt all be accounted for hereafter. And how ſhall we declare the number of our ſteps, if we keep not an account of them? 'Tis a great piece of the practice of godlineſs to put the Queſtion often to our ſouls, What have we done? The Prophet (*Jer.* 8. 6.) ſets forth the wickedneſs of that age, when no man ſaid, *What have I done?* What's my way? What my ſteps? What have I been ſpeaking? What have I been doing? Where have my thoughts been? Only they who have kept an account, are and will be willing to give an account. And how ſad will it be with them to be called to an account by God, who have never called themſelves to an account, nor conſidered how or which way to make it? A godly man knows he muſt declare his wayes to God hereafter, and he is ready (when there is cauſe) to declare them to his fellow-brethren here. He cares not (ſo far as is fit) who knows his whole heart and life. As every one ſhould be ready (1 *Pet.* 3. 15.) *to give a reaſon of the hope that is in him with meekneſs, and godly fear*; ſo to give an account of what hath been done by him, with the ſame meekneſs and godly fear. But how ſhall any man give an account of what he hath done; who keeps no account of what he hath done? *David* made a ſtrict ſearch of himſelf, both as to what he hath done, and what God hath done to him (*Pſal.* 77. 5, 6,) *I have conſidered the dayes of old, the years of ancient times. I call to remembrance my ſong in the night; I commune with mine own heart, and my ſpirit made diligent ſearch*; I ſearched my ſelf as with a Broom in my hand(ſo ſome render that Text) I ſwept my heart; or as others expreſs the Elegancy of the Original, *I ſearched as with a Spade in my hand*, I digged into my heart and life; or as a third gives the Alluſion, *I ſearched as with a Fan in my hand*, to find out what was chaff. He, ſurely, ſearched himſelf to purpoſe, who ſwept and dig'd and fan'd all his words and works, yea the very aims, ends, and intentions of all his works; and it was high time for him to do ſo, when the providences of God wrought ſo ſtrangely and unwontedly towards him, that he was put to thoſe trembling Queſtions (*ver.* 7.) *Will the Lord caſt off for ever? Will he be favourable no more?* 'Tis no time for us to favour our ſelves by a ſlothful non-animadverſion upon our wayes, when the favour of God and the light of his countenance begins to be over-caſt and clouded towards us. Then if ever we ſhould reſolve with the Church (*Lam.* 3. 40.) *to ſearch and try our wayes, and turn again to the Lord.* And as for the man, who (though he hath had his faylings) yet

Scopebam ſpiritum meum. Fodiebam quaſi agrum. Hier. *Sarriebam ſpiritum meum.* Sept. *Scrutabar, ventilabã; omnia mire afferunt curam et diligentiam in excutienda conſcientia.* Pined.

yet hath not perverſely turned from the Lord, he may ſay with an acceptable boldneſs (as *Job* did) *I would declare to him the number of my ſteps*;

As a Prince would I go neer unto him.

נציך

Dux quaſi anteſignanus.

The word ſtrictly ſignifies, *a Leader or a Captain*, marching before his company.

Some render, *I would go neer to him as to a Prince*; that is, I would beſpeak or intreat his favour, I would honour him as a Prince, or as ſome great one. Here again it is queſtioned, who is meant by the *Him* in the Text, to whom *Job* would go as if he were a Prince. Firſt, Some underſtand the antecedent to be the *Adverſary*, As if he had ſaid, I would go to him and ſhew him reſpect, even as if he were a Prince, though he be my Adverſary. Secondly, we may rather refer it to God himſelf; I would go to God and ſeek his favour. Men uſe ambitiouſly to ſeek the favour of a Prince; either of theſe references ſuit well with that reading.

Haberem eum ut principem virum etſi adverſarius. Merc.

But our tranſlation ſeems more ſutable to the ſcope of the Text; *I as a Prince would go to him*, that is, I would go, or apply my ſelf to the Almighty *with a Princely ſpirit*; I would not ſtand as a guilty wretch at the bar, unable or afraid to hold up my head; I would not ſtay till I was cited, and ſubpœna'd to appear by my Adverſary, but I would come freely of my own accord; *as a Prince would I go neer him*, or I would (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Heb.* 4. 16.) *come boldly to the throne of grace*, with the freeſt and nobleſt ſtrain of ſpirit imaginable; *As a Prince I would come*

Quaſi princeps. i. e. *animo liberrimo.* Brent.

Neer to him.] Faith is our drawing neer to God, and the more faith we act in coming to him, the neerer we draw to him. As Princes we go neer to him by faith, that is, we have the cloſeſt and freeſt communion with him. *Job* would not keep at a diſtance from his Judge, as a malefactor doth, but as a Prince he would *go neer unto him*. There is abundance of Goſpel in theſe words; *As a Prince would I go neer to him.*

Hence Obſerve, *A believer through grace hath courage and boldneſs, Princely boldneſs with God.*

When men ſuſpect and charge him moſt and worſt, yet his faith and courage fail not. *Solomon* hath told us (*Pro.* 28. 1.) *The righteous is as bold as a Lion*, who is a King or Prince among all the beaſts of the field. 'Tis true of him that is righteous in his actions and perſonal qualifications, that is a man of righteous principles, and righteous in his practices hath much warrantable boldneſs, both towards God and man; but 'tis much more true of him that is righteous by the imputed righteouſneſs of faith in Juſtification, he, indeed, is bold as a Lion before God, and with God; not bold to ſin againſt him as many are, but bold to come and plead for and upon the pardon of ſin, through the blood and ſufferings of Jeſus Chriſt. A juſtified perſon hath a principle ſpirit; *David* prayed (Pſal. 51. 12) *Uphold me with thy free* (or *princely*) *ſpirit*. When *David* had fallen into thoſe groſs ſins; his courage and ſpirit fell too; he wanted his former free acceſs in addreſſing to God; though he remained in the ſtate of ſalvation, yet he had loſt the joy of his ſalvation; therefore he prayed; *Reſtore to me the joy of thy ſalvation, and uphold me with thy free ſpirit.* As if he had ſaid, *I could once as a Prince come neer to thee O Lord, but alas, now I cannot; my heart is ready to ſink, and my ſpirits to fail within me, O do thou uphold me by thy free ſpirit, which alone can make my ſpirit free, and cauſe me* (*as I have done formerly*) *to draw neer with a well grounded boldneſs and full aſſurance of faith. O that I might once again as a Prince go neer unto thee.*

Hic ſe profert illa fidei πληροφορία *quæ efficit ut freti Chriſti Juſtitia ſecurè inſultēt morti, peccato, Satanæ ipſiſq; inferorum portis.* Merk.

Thus we ſee *Job*'s princely freedom in going to God, and in that an evidence of Goſpel light and liberty breaking out even in thoſe times of darkneſs and bondage. The Jewiſh Church was ſubject to bondage all their dayes, yet ſome had much of the glorious liberty of the ſons of God, and none a more glorious liberty then this holy man (though a ſtranger to them) who even while his Adverſary was charging him, would go neer to God as a Prince, and challenge all thoſe who had any thing to lay to his charge, ſeeing he knew that God had Juſtified him; *If God be for us, who can be againſt us?* (Rom. 8. 31.)

Vides in Jobo maximam fiduciam planè conſentientē Evangelicæ parrheſiæ. Coc.

Laſtly, We may from *Job*'s example take notice, that though we are not juſtified by the teſtimony of our conſcience; yet conſcience teſtifieth that we are juſtified, and we may riſe up to a holy confidence from Scripture-grounds by the ſpirit, that God accepteth of us in Chriſt, notwithſtanding our ſins, as alſo that he heareth our petitions, and will at laſt give us the *white ſtone of abſolution, with the new name written in it*, though the Adverſary write a Book of accuſation againſt us. The Popiſh Doctors deny that a juſt man may know that he is juſt or juſtified: *Paul* indeed ſaid (and ſo in effect did *Job*) though he knew nothing by himſelf, yet he was not thereby juſtified; but he never ſaid (nor did *Job*) that he did not know he was juſtified.

VERS. 38, 39, 40.

If my Land cry againſt me, or that the Furrows likewiſe thereof complain:

If I have eaten the fruits thereof without Money, or have cauſed the Owners thereof to loſe their life:

Let Thiſtles grow in ſtead of Wheat, and Cockle in ſtead of Barly: The words of Job **are ended.**

THis holy and juſt man had abundantly vindicated his own integrity by an Induction of many particular inſtances in the former part of the Chapter, and having put (as it were) a parentheſis, a little ſtop to the current of that point in the three former verſes; here he returns again to and re-aſſumes the ſame ſubject, purging himſelf (for that's the ſcope of this Context; which is alſo the concluſion of *Job*'s diſcourſe) from all unjuſt oppreſſive wayes, either in getting or uſing the things of this world, by an expreſs imprecation of a grievous miſchief upon himſelf in the cloſe or laſt verſe; *Let Thiſtles grow in ſtead of Wheat, and Cockle in ſtead of Barley*, if it be not as I have affirmed.

Before I come to the opening of the words, take this note from the general purpoſe of them.

A godly man is very exact and curious in clearing himſelf from ſcandalous aſperſions and ſuſpitions.

As he deſires to be very circumſpect and accurate in his walking (that was *Job*'s care) ſo he is very exact in vindicating the uprightneſs of his wayes; and when theſe two go together, they make a bleſſed harmony. Some are very careleſs in their walking, who are very zealous for their credit; they will be much in juſtifying themſelves, that either they have done well, or not done ill, when they have been negligent enough in well doing, or in taking heed leſt they do ill. But (I ſay) when a man hath been careful in his walkings and actions, he cannot be too careful in his own clearings and vindications. As a godly man will confeſs all his ſins to humble himſelf before God, ſo he may aſſert the utmoſt of his own integrity, that he may juſtifie himſelf and glorifie God before men. This good man in the Text was not afraid of over-doing in this point: He had formerly affirmed himſelf (God was his Witneſs) a man upright, and theſe his laſt words ſeal to the truth of the ſame affirmation, that he had walked uprightly.

If my Land cry againſt me.] The Word ſignifies **Land** in general, and yet more properly, manured Land, or Land prepared and fitted by dreſſing and manuring to nouriſh and bring forth Corn and Graſs, Plants and fruits, that is, Land well husbanded, till'd and dreſt. *If my Land*

אדמה

Humū quæ colitur propriè ſignificat ſeu tellurem & agrum frugibus & arboribus cōſitum. Bold.

Cry againſt me.] By a uſual figure in Scripture, acts of life are aſcribed to things liveleſs, and acts of reaſon to thoſe things which have not ſo much as ſenſe. To cry and complain, are acts of reaſon put out by them who are unreaſonably dealt with. Here we have crying and complaining aſcribed to Land, and to the Furrows of the Field, which neither know what man doth, nor are ſenſible of what man doth to them. This elegant *proſopopœia* is very frequent in Scripture; and tis alwayes uſed to note great cauſe given of crying or complaining. And here the attribution of a cry to liveleſs Land, ſhews the ſin of oppreſſion to be ſo crying a ſin, that even things without life would complain of it could they ſpeak, though the oppreſſed, who can, dare not. The cry of men againſt us is an argument that we have done much amiſs, but the cry of land, and of the Furrows of the field, argue it much more.

If my Land cry againſt me.] There is a twofold general ſenſe of theſe words in reference to the ſin which *Job* would purge himſelf from; when he ſaith, *if my Land cry againſt me.*

Firſt, They may import that he never got any Furrow or foot of Land into his poſſeſſion wrongfully, either by open violence, or by ſecret fraud and ſubtle enſnaring devices. Some will oppreſs by Law, that is, by colour of Law and pretenſions of equity; *Job* abhor'd that as much as down-right and bare fac'd oppreſſion.

Secondly, They may import, that he never uſed any unrighteouſneſs for the improving of his Land; tis poſſible for a man to have Land which is truely and legally his own, either by juſt deſcent and inheritance, or by valuable price, purchaſe, and good conveyance. And yet to uſe it ſo that his Land may cry againſt him, and upbraid him with unrighteouſneſs. Moſt conceive this latter ſenſe *Job*'s intendment here, yet I ſee no reaſon why we may not very well take in both. As if he had ſaid; *My Land hath not cryed againſt me as violently or cunningly wreſted out of the hand of the lawful proprietors, nor can my Land cry and complain againſt me, as having been unrighteous in the uſe of it, or in my dealings with others about it, whether Farmers to whom I have let it, or Labourers whom I have called to dreſs and till it. If my land cry againſt me,*

בכה *Flevit præ dolore aut luctu, deſiderio aut gaudio.*

Or the Furrows likewiſe thereof complain.] Not only his Land, but not *the* **Furrows**, that is, not ſo much as any one Furrow of it had cauſe to *complain*; the Hebrew is *to weep.* The word ſignifies to weep both for ſorrow and for joy, yet doubtleſs here, 'tis weeping for ſorrow (that only is accompanied with complaining) which *Job* denies he had given the Furrows of his field any occaſion for. I (ſaith *Job*) have not made the Furrows of my field a *Bochim*, a place of weeping, or (as we render) of *complaining.* Every juſt complaint ſuppoſeth ſome juſtice ſuffered by us, or ſome miſery fallen upon us. When, as *David* ſaith (*Pſal.* 144. 14, 15.) *There is no complaining in our ſtreets*, then we may conclude as he doth, *happy is that people that is in ſuch a caſe*; we may alſo well conclude, happy is that particular perſon, whoſe Land cryeth not againſt him, and whoſe Furrows make no complaining in his field.

From the words as they hold out in general that *Job* gave his Land no cauſe of crying, nor his Furrows of complaining;

> Obſerve, Firſt, *Sin is ſo hateful a thing, and ſo burdenſome, that the ſenſeleſs Creatures will bear witneſs againſt it, and complain of it againſt evil men, if men do not.*

There will never want a cry againſt ſinners; the very earth ſhall do it, the Furrows of the field ſhall do it, if it be not otherwiſe done. And they who do well acting juſtly towards men, and walking holily towards God, ſhall not want teſtimony of their well-doings? If men neglect or refuſe to give it, the very ſtones of the ſtreet ſhall give it. When Chriſt came triumphantly in *Jeruſalem, the people ſpreading their garments in the way, and the whole multitude of Diſciples rejoycing and praiſing God for all the mighty works which they had ſeen, ſaying, Bleſſed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord, peace in Heaven and glory in the higheſt.* This ſtirred the envious jealouſie of the Phariſees, they could not bear it, but deſired Chriſt to rebuke his Diſciples; to whom he replyed, *If theſe ſhould hold their peace, the ſtones would immediately cry out* (Luke 19. 39, 40.) As if Chriſt had ſaid; The ſpeech-leſs ſtones will ſpeak and give witneſs to me if men will not. They who are owned of God ſhall not one time or other, one way or other, want ownings or witneſſings from the creature. The Story, or Legend rather, tells us, That *Bede* blind with age, being brought by his Leader to a preaching-place, where there were no hearers, but a heap of ſtones; thoſe ſtones (Sermon and prayer being ended) cryed out, *Amen venerable Beda*; 'tis ſo in truth, with reference to thoſe that are good, and do good; if all the men in the world, if men and Angels be ſilent, and either forbear or diſdain to give teſtimony for them, The very ſtones will ſay, *Amen*, the Walls will bear them witneſs. So on the contrary, if a ſinner, an ungodly oppreſſor ſhould have none to implead or impeach him, none to give witneſs or teſtifie againſt him, the very earth ſhall do it, the Furrows of the field ſhall do it: God will raiſe up witneſſes againſt him, where and when he thinks it is impoſſible any ſhould be had. *If man riſe up againſt the will of God, the creatures will riſe up againſt him as one man.* The Prophet (*Hab.* 2. 10, 11.) makes a threatning report of a ſtrange *Antiphony* or *Anſwerſong*, in this caſe, or to the point in hand; *Thou* (meaning the covetous and ambitious *Chaldean*) *haſt conſulted ſhame to thy houſe by cutting off many people, and haſt ſinned againſt thy ſoul*: As if he had ſaid, Thou haſt ſinned greatly, and though thy ſin be againſt God chiefly as to the moral evil of it, yet thy ſin is chiefly againſt thy own ſoul as to the pœnal evil of it; Thou in the acting of thy outragious luſts, haſt hurt thy ſelf more then others, more then all the Nations whom thou haſt oppreſſed. And if there ſhould want witneſſes of thy ſinful oppreſſions (none daring to open his mouth againſt thee) yet *the Stone ſhall cry out of the Wall, and the Beam out of the Timber ſhall anſwer it.* Here are witneſſes without exception, Stones and Beams, Walls and Timber: Theſe are witneſſes that cannot be ſuborned to witneſs a falſhood, nor can they be ſilenced with bribes or promiſes of reward from witneſſing the truth. Theſe faithful witneſſes like Muſicians or Choriſters ſhall anſwer one another, from poſt to pillar, from ſide to ſide; one ſide that ſhall ſing, *Behold blood*, and the other ſhall anſwer, *Behold deceit*, the Stone ſhall cry, *Behold covetouſneſs*, and the Beam ſhall anſwer, *Behold cruelty*; the Stone ſhall cry, *Behold oppreſſion*, and the Beam ſhall anſwer, *Behold perjury*; the Stone ſhall cry, *Behold envy*, and the Beam ſhall anſwer, *Behold malice.* Thus inanimates ſhall cry and anſwer one another in their cry againſt wicked men, rather then there ſhall want a witneſs of their wickedneſs. *Job* ſuppoſed ſuch a thing, when he ſaid, *If my Land cry againſt me, or the Furrows thereof likewiſe complain.*

Secondly, from theſe words, *Crying, Weeping, Complaining*:

> Note, *Some ſins are crying ſins, vocal ſins, which being done, ſay ſuch were the doers, and woe to the doers of them.*

Every action hath its voice; The good we do commends us, and any ill we do reproves us, but ſome evil done cry out upon us, yea and out againſt us. The Prophet is charged by the Lord (*Iſa.* 58. 1.) *Cry aloud and ſpare not, lift up thy voice like a Trumpet, ſhew my people their tranſgreſſion, and the houſe of* Jacob *their ſins.* But though the Prophets do not cry at all; yet the ſins of a people will cry aloud, they will lift up their voice like a trumpet, and cry aloud againſt ſinners: The land will cry, and the Furrows will complain, though the Prophets ſhould prove dumb Dogs that cannot bark, or fauning Dogs that will not bite.

And conſider what ſort of ſins thoſe chiefly are, which cry to God, and againſt man.

Firſt, Such ſins as diſturb humane ſociety, and overthrow common ſafety, peace and liberty, are crying ſins. When a neighbour is ſo un-neighbourly, as not to let his neighbour live in ſafety by him, this cryeth; *Cain*'s murder of his Brother was a ſin againſt mankind, or againſt the common converſe of man with man. If brethren of the ſame blood ſhed one anothers blood, who can be ſafe? There's no living in the world if the Laws of brotherhood and neighbourhood are ſo highly violated; therefore God himſelf told *Cain*; *The voice of thy Brothers blood cryeth unto me from the ground* (Gen. 4. 10.) Blood is the beſt and the worſt ſpeaker in the world. The blood which Chriſt our elder brother freely ſhed for us, ſpeaks peace and pardon; but the blood of a Brother violently ſhed by us, ſpeaks wrath and vengeance. When the Apoſtle ſaith (*Heb.* 12. 24.) *We are come to the blood of ſprinkling, that ſpeaketh better things, then that of* Abel; His meaning is, not that *Abel*'s blood ſpake any good at all, but that the blood of Chriſt ſpeaks incomparatively good or the beſt things for us, as the blood of *Abel* ſpake incomparatively bad, or the worſt things againſt *Cain*.

Secondly, Thoſe ſins which are committed with a high hand, that is, with impudence and boldneſs againſt the light of nature, are crying ſins (*Gen.* 18. 22.) *The cry* *of Sodom* (that is, the cry of the ſin of *Sodom*) *is come up to me*, ſaith the Lord. What was the ſin of *Sodom*, which made ſuch an out-cry to Heaven? It was the abomination of nature, Man burning in luſt towards man; Sodomy is the name and character with which that ſin hath gone and is branded to this day. The more voyces ſpeak againſt any ſin, the louder and the ſtronger is the cry of that ſin againſt us. That ſin which is condemned both by the voyce of the Law and of the Goſpel, both by the voyce of the Law of Nations and of nature; O how loud, how ſtrong a cry doth that make in the ears of God, do call down wrath upon the un-repenting ſinner!

Thirdly, Thoſe foul ſins which are committed in ſecret; ſo ſecretly that they are paſt finding out as to men (for as God hath his ways and judgments which are altogether paſt finding out; *His ways are in the deep, his paths are in the Sea, his footſteps are not known*; ſo we may ſay of ſome ſinners (in a degree) their path is in the Sea, and their footſteps are not known in the ways of wickedneſs: their ſinful motions are like the motions of the Eagle in the air, which leaves no track, or like that of a Serpent on a rock, which cannot be diſcerned) Now when a ſin which according to its nature falls under the Magiſtrates Cognizance, doth yet by its privacy eſcape both the cognizance and ſentence of man. when (I ſay) ſins are thus ſilently committed and wrapt up in darkneſs, when they are notſeen by men, nor confeſſed before God, then they cry to God, who alone can; and who certainly will bring to light the hidden things of darkneſs, and Judg the ſecrets of men, or thoſe things which men have done amiſs in the greateſt ſecrecy.

Fourthly, The open ſins of ſuch perſons cry to God for Juſtice, whoſe perſons are (upon the matter) above the Juſtice of man. There's no dealing with ſome ſinners, as they break the rule of the Law, ſo they fear not the penalty of the Law. They are great offenders in every ſence; great offenders as to the hainouſneſs of their offences, and great offenders as to the eminence of their places; there is no coercing them by any human power. Now when the ſins of men are beyond the reach of mans Juſtice, they cry to God for Juſtice, who is able to humble the proudeſt, to cruſh the ſtouteſt, and deal with the ſtrongeſt tranſgreſſors, whoſe day is chiefly againſt the *chiefs*, againſt the Oaks and Cedars, againſt the high walls and towers, that is, againſt every offending perſon, how high or ſtrong ſoever he is.

All theſe ſins and ways of ſinning are ſaid to cry to God for vengeance upon ſinners, and are reſtleſs in their cry; yet, not, firſt, as if the Lord wanted an evidence of the fact till they cryed, or took no notice of them till theſe complaints informed him. Nor ſecondly, as if he needed excitation or awakning to do Juſtice upon ſinners, eſpecially upon great and preſumptuous ſinners; but only to ſhew the notoriouſneſs and provocation of thoſe ſins, which is ſuch that they beſpeak their own puniſhment, ſuch that God is bound in honour to brand them with ſome ſignal ſtroak of his diſpleaſure.

Thirdly, Conſidering that the ſpecial ſin here aimed at and profeſſed againſt by *Job*, is the ſin of Oppreſſion in one kind or other; either oppreſſion (as hath been ſhewed) by invading other mens lands, or oppreſſion in the unjuſt uſage of his own.

Obſerve, *Oppreſſion is a notorious crying ſin.*

That land or eſtate, which hath been gotten by unrighteouſneſs cryeth, or carryeth the cry of thoſe that have been wronged up into the ears of God, and beggs, yea ſolicits that he would do them right. As oppreſſion makes men cry and complain, ſo oppreſſion it ſelf doth cry and complain; when the oppreſſed ſit down mourning and crying, then oppreſſion cryes; And though the mouths of the oppreſſed ſhould be ſtopt, ſo that they cannot cry, yet the mouth of oppreſſion cannot be ſtopt from crying. And if the ſin of oppreſſion cry, how much more do the oppreſſed cry? If the land or houſe which is unjuſtly taken away, cryeth, how much more do they cry from whom theſe have been unjuſtly taken away? Thus oppreſſion cryes and the oppreſſed cry, and what with the one or t'other cry, or between both cryes, there's no end of crying, till the cry or continual clamour of that ſin come up with importunity, before God the righteous Judg, to whom vengeance belongeth, and who will *ſpeedily avenge his Elect who cry unto him day and night, though he bear long with them* (Luke 18. 7.) that is, though he delay that execution of the Judgment cryed for ſo long, that in mans account it be reckoned very long, and is long indeed conſidering how ſuddain and preſent a ſtroak, that oppreſſion deſerved. The oppreſſion of the people of God in *Egypt* cryed, and they cryed too; The Lord heard both the voyce of their oppreſſion, and their voyce who were oppreſſed (*Exod.* 3. 7.) *And the Lord ſaid, I have ſurely ſeen the affliction of my people, which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry, by reaſon of their task-maſters; for I know their ſorrows.* And as the Lord heard the cry of his people when they were oppreſſed by the *Egyptians*; ſo he bids them take heed of oppreſſing one another, for he would quickly hear the cry of any, eſpecially of the poor that ſhould be oppreſſed by them (*Exod.* 22. 22, 23.) *Ye ſhall not afflict any widdow or fatherleſs child; if thou afflict them in any wiſe, and they cry at all unto me, I will ſurely hear their cry.* There are three things in this monition which exceedingly heighten the ſenſe which God hath of any wrong done to the poor; Firſt (ſaith the Lord) *If thou afflict them in any wiſe*; that is, in any kind or in any degree; Secondly, *If they cry at all unto me*; that is, if they make any the leaſt moan or complaint to me; then, Thirdly, *I will ſurely hear*; the Lord doth not ſay peradventure or probably I may hear, but ſurely, or doubtleſs, I will hear; that is, make their oppreſſors ſmart for it.

Fourthly, Whereas the very land and the furrows of it are here brought in crying and complaining.

Note, *The ſin of man is a burden to the ſenſeleſs Creatures.*

As the ſin of man hath defiled the whole Creation, and made it ſubject to vanity (That's the Apoſtles doctrine, *Rom.* 8. 20.) ſo it is a vexation and grief to the creature, as the ſame Apoſtle tells us (*Ver.* 22. 23.) *For we know that the whole Creation groaneth and travaileth* (like a child-bearing woman) *in pain together until now, and not only they but our ſelves alſo, who have the firſt fruits of the Spirit groan within our ſelves.* They groan and we groan, the whole Creation groaneth, being ſubject to vanity (as abuſed and burdened by the luſt of men) and therefore *waiteth for the manifeſtation of the Sons of God*; that is, for that liberty which (according to their meaſure and capacity) they hope for and expect, when the full priviledges and dignities of the Sons of God ſhall be manifeſted; For then no mans land ſhall cry any more at all, nor ſhall the furrows of it complain; as *Job* here profeſſed his did not by any ſpecial unworthy carriage or dealing of his with it, or with men about it.

There are four things which may cauſe the land to cry, and the furrows of it to complain. Firſt, when it hath been gotten unjuſtly; Secondly, when ſervants are over-wrought in plowing and dreſſing it; Thirdly, when the labourer is denyed or delayed his wages; Fourthly, (which ſome inſiſt much upon in this place) when the land is over-much plowed and (as we ſpeak) haraſſed, never being ſuffered to reſt or lie fallow, but put continually or every year to the bearing of a crop, till the very heart of it be worn out. And therefore the Lord commanded the Jews (*Levit.* 25. 4, 5.) *In the ſeventh year ſhall be a Sabbath of reſt unto the land, a Sabbath for the Lord; thou ſhalt neither ſow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard.* As the Sabbath day was a reſt from thoſe labours which God laid upon man for ſin (*Gen.* 3. 19.) ſo the Sabbath year was a reſt for the ground, which God had curſed for the ſin of man: in which God ſeems to intimate a tenderneſs to the very ground. We may conceive *Job* diſclaiming any or all theſe wrongs done to or about his land, while he ſaid; *If my land cry againſt me, or the furrows likewiſe thereof complain*; as it follows,

Verſ. 39. **If I have eaten the fruit thereof without money, or have cauſed the owners thereof to loſe their life.**

This verſe informeth us yet more particularly what it is which cauſeth the cry of the land, or the complaint of the

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vis, robur, potentia, humor nativus in quo vigor & robur corporis conſiſtit.

ſurrows of the field. *If I* (ſaith *Job*) *have eaten the fruit thereof without money.* The Hebrew is, *the ſtrength thereof.* Thus Mr. *Broughton* Tranſlates ; *If I ate her ſtrength without ſilver.* And as this word ſignifieth Strength in general, ſo that radical moiſture or native humour wherein the procreative ſtrength of the Creature doth conſiſt: when the earth puts forth fruit, it puts forth ſtrength. One ſpecial curſe laid upon *Cain* for killing his brother *Abel* was (*Gen.* 4. 12.) *When thou tilleſt the earth, it ſhall not henceforth yield unto thee her ſtrength*; that is, it ſhall not be fruitful, nor anſwer (as it uſed) the expectation of the Husbandman. The earth lets out its ſtrength, or keeps it in, as the Lord gives order and ſpeaks the word; As the fruit of the ground, ſo the fruit of every thing is and ſhews the ſtrength of it. Sin is the fruit of corruption (the corrupt nature of man brings forth no other fruit) and when we ſin, what do we but ſhew the ſtrength or force of our corruption? and ſtill the more we ſin, the ſtronger and more forceable do our corruptions ſhew themſelves. When a godly man acts holily and is fruitful in good works, he puts forth the ſtrength of his inner man, the ſtrength of his Soul; every act of grace is an effect or fruit of the grace of God working in man. Jeſus Chriſt eats the ſtrength of a believers Soul, when he eats the fruit of his graces, or his gracious fruits, as the Church invites him to do (*Cant.* 4. 16.) *Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleaſant fruits*; that is, the fruits of Faith and Love, which thorow my abiding in him I bear and bring forth (theſe fruits are the delight, the pleaſure of Jeſus Chriſt) and we give Chriſt our ſtrength when we give him the fruits of holineſs, and *are filled with thoſe fruits of righteouſneſs which* (as the Apoſtles ſpeaks, *Phil.* 1. 11.) *are by him* (that is, by vertue of our union with and abiding in him) *to the praiſe and glory of God.* Thus, as by grace, the holy fruit of the Soul is the ſtrength of the Soul, ſo by nature the fruit of the earth is the ſtrength of the earth; and the earth beſtows her ſtrength upon us every year, when it brings forth fruit: which (as the Apoſtle told the heathen *Lyſtrians*, Acts 14. 17.) is a witneſs of the goodneſs and faithfulneſs of God, *filling our hearts with food and gladneſs.* We (commonly) call fruitful ground, ſtrong ground, and that ground which is unfit for or yields little corn, or graſs, or herbs, we call weak ground: 'Tis more then probable that *Job*'s land was ſtrong and fruitful land, and therefore he ſaith, *If I have eaten the fruit* (or *the ſtrength*) *thereof*

Without money,] *without ſilver*, ſaith the Text, becauſe ſilver was the moſt uſual money in all payments; Gold was more rare even in the days of *Solomon* (1 Kings 10. 21.) Money is ſo much in ſilver that all money may go under the common name of ſilver. Now when *Job* ſaith, he did not eat the fruit of his land without mony, or ſilver; His meaning is, that he had eaten nothing but what he paid for; or he aſſures us that he had not either,

Firſt, taken away other mens land by force or fraud (as *Ahab* took away *Naboth*'s vineyard) and ſo eaten the fruit thereof without mony. They who intrude upon other mens rights and get their land into their hands without mony, are groſly guilty of eating the fruit of their land without mony; (Though indeed no man payeth ſo dear for what he eateth, as they who in this ſence, eat without mony) Or *Job*'s meaning was,

Secondly, that he had not eaten the fruit of his land without mony, by refuſing to pay his ſervants and labourers, who were imployed to dreſs and manure it for his uſe. When they by whoſe labour and ſweat the earth brings forth, are denied their hire, wages, or a comfortable incouragement and valuable ſatisfaction for their pains; Then the owner of the land may be ſaid to eat the fruit of it without mony. This latter ſence, of *eating without mony*, is that, I conceive, from which *Job* here acquits himſelf by this proteſtation. Taking it for granted that the land was his own by right of inheritance or of purchaſe, yet he adds, *If I have eaten the fruit thereof without money*; that is, if I have cauſed others to take pains and bring in my fruits (that's not every mans work, *Job* was a great man and a Magiſtrate, it was not his buſineſs to till the ground, and gather in the fruits of it, he had ſervants to do that for him, but ſaith he, if others have brought in my fruits) and I have not paid them for their pains in doing it, and ſo have eaten without mony, let this be ſin to me, or let me feel the juſt ſmart and puniſhment of this ſin; let my beſt fruits and ſweeteſt meats have ſour ſauce, if I have been ſound or can be proved to have eaten my bread, or dipt my morſels in this unrighteouſneſs, the withholding from poor ſervants and labourers the wages of righteouſneſs. *If I have eaten the fruit thereof without mony.*

Hence Note, *Every man ought to pay for what he eats*; or, *no man* (*who is able to pay for what he eats*) *ought to eat what he hath not paid for.*

All the bread we eat is ſtolen bread, unleſs we pay ſome valuable price or other for it. There is a two-fold paying for what we eat, that we may eat our own (not ſtolen) bread, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks in his counſel and direction about diſorderly walkers and buſie bodies (that is, Idle perſons) among the *Theſſalonians* (2 Epiſt. 3. 12.) *Now them that are ſuch we command and exhort by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that with quietneſs they work and eat their own bread.* This Apoſtolical command, ſhews us the Firſt way of eating our own bread; that is, when we take pains in perſon that we may have bread to eat; ſo the rule is given (*Gen.* 3. 19.) *In the ſweat of thy face ſhalt thou eat thy bread, till thou return to the ground,* that is, till thou dieſt, or as long as thou liveſt. That is truely our bread which we labour for in any honeſt calling; and he that payeth labour, payeth a great price for what he eats. Secondly, that bread alſo is our own, for which though we do not labour in kind, that is, in dreſſing and ſowing the ground, yet we labouring in ſome kind or other, that is, in ſome profitable trade or employment ſubſervient to the good of mankind, do either pay a due price for it unto thoſe of whom we have it, or pay thoſe a due price for their labour who get it for us, by dreſſing and ſowing our ground. So then, this is to eat our own bread, when we either labour our ſelves to get it, or recompence thoſe who get it, for their labour; we our ſelves alſo labouring as the providence of God calls us forth to be of uſe in our Generation.

Secondly, In that *Job* is thus ſolicitous to vindicate himſelf from taking other mens labour without ſatisfying them for it;

Obſerve, *As all oppreſſion is very ſinful, ſo eſpecially the detaining of the labourers wages; or when we call men to do our work, but give them no reward.*

If other mens labour feeds us, and we do not feed them for their labour, this is a great and a crying oppreſſion (*Jer.* 22. 13.) *Wo to him that buildeth his houſe by unrighteouſneſs, and his chambers by wrong, that uſeth his neighbours ſervice without wages, and giveth him not for his work.* As they build their houſes by unrighteouſneſs and by wrong, who get mony unrighteouſly with which to pay their labourers; ſo alſo do they who having mony righteouſly gotten, yet refuſe to pay their labourers. *I will come neer to you in judgment, and I will be a ſwift witneſs* (ſaith the Lord, *Mal.* 3. 5.) *againſt the ſorcerers, and againſt the adulterers, and againſt falſe ſwearers, and againſt them that oppreſs the hireling in his wages.* What this ſin is, and how highly provoking, we may ſee both by the ſins with which 'tis joyned, *Sorcery, Adultery and Perjury*, as alſo by the ſpeed which the Lord will make to declare and execute his wrath upon the practiſers of it. The Apoſtle brings it in with a word of attention and admiration (*Jam.* 5. 4.) *Behold, the hire of the labourers which have reaped down your fields, which you have kept back by fraud, and the cryes of them which reaped have entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabboth.* Though the poor labourers durſt not complain openly, yet the hire kept back dares and will, as deſiring to go to him to whom it properly belongs. You have made the labourer ſweat at your work, and in giving you his ſweat, he hath given you his ſtrength and blood, and ſhall he have nothing for all this? will not this cry? 'Tis a baſe ſin covetouſly to keep our own, but to keep that which is anothers injuriouſly, to keep the labourers hire after we have ſuckt out his ſweat and ſpirits in doing our work, this is not only ſinful but inhuman. How great

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a Cruelty is it, when the earth and the labourer have as it were joyned together to give out fruit in abundance, That yet men ſhould be ſo penurious and baſe ſpirited as to eat that fruit without mony; and to devour the fatneſs and the ſweetneſs of it without conſidering their pains who brought it home. And as this is true of husbandmen who labour in the field and till the ground, ſo of all kinds of labourers in Towns and Cities of Commerce. They who drive great trades and have many labouring callings under them, ſhould take heed of eating the labours of poor handicrafts men without mony; Such often complain, they are ſo far from getting bread to eat (that is, things convenient and neceſſary for the maintenance of their charge by their work) that they cannot (as they commonly ſpeak) get water to waſh their hands. Trades bring forth fruit by labour as well as the earth doth, and to wrong or oppreſs any labourer by denying him a competent recompence for his labour, is to eat fruit without mony. 'Tis uſually ſaid, *There's nothing cheap but poor mens labour.* And remember that you eat the fruit of your trade or of your land without mony, not only firſt, when you altogether withhold the hire of the labourer, but Secondly when you do not give him proportionably for his labour, that he may live by you, and have ſome little incouragement, for himſelf, his wife and children; yea thirdly, the guilt of this ſin ſticks upon thoſe who are afraid poor labourers ſhould thrive or get ſome what aforehand by them. Such a one was *Laban*, of whom *Jacob* complained to his wives *Rachel* and *Leah* (*Gen.* 31. 7.) *Your Father hath deceived me, and changed my wages ten times. Laban* could not bear it, that *Jacob* ſhould have any thing about him, and therefore would be ſtill ſhuffling and altering with him. This is an argument of an oppreſſing ſpirit. And fourthly, the guilt and ſtain of this ſin is contracted when there is a deferring of the poor labourers reward, or when any unneceſſarily put off the payment of his wages. What the Scripture ſaith of giving in charity, is much more true of paying in juſtice, *Say not to thy Brother, go, and come again to morrow when it is in the power of thy hand to do it.* The Law among the Judicials of *Moſes* was very ſevere for the prevention of ſuch delays (*Deut.* 24. 14,15.) *Thou ſhalt not oppreſs an hired ſervant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy ſtrangers that are in thy land within thy gates; at his day thou ſhalt give him his hire: neither ſhall the Sun go down upon it, for he is poor and ſetteth his heart upon it, leſt he cry againſt thee to the Lord, and it be ſin unto thee*; that is, leſt the Lord cauſe thee to ſmart for this ſin, and make thee feel it to be ſin in thy ſufferings, while thou wouldeſt not avoyd it by his warnings. That Law did not only forbid the utter denying of the labourers wages, but the detaining of it for a night. You may be found eating the fruit of your land without mony, when you unduely withhold (though but a mite) what is due to them who have laboured for it. *Job* it ſeems was ſo tender in this point that he could not eat a morſel of bread while he thought the labourer was unpaid. *If I* (ſaith he) *have eaten the fruit thereof without mony,*

Or have cauſed the owners thereof to loſe their life.

There is ſome difficulty in theſe words. Two things are chiefly enquired for the right underſtanding of them. Firſt, who are meant by theſe *owners* of the land. Secondly, what is meant *by loſing their life.*

The word which we tranſlate **Owners**, may be expounded three ways.

Firſt, Some take it, for the former poſſeſſors, or proprietors; As if *Job* had ſaid, I have not come to the poſſeſſion of my land by undoing and ruining thoſe that were rightly poſſeſſed of it.

Secondly, Others underſtand by *owners* the labourers, who having a right to the wages which they have earned by their work, are here called *owners or Maſters of the land*, becauſe ſo far as their labour comes to, they ought to have a livelihood out of it, as well as the proper owners or Land-lords.

Thirdly, Say ſome, theſe *owners* are the poor, the ſtranger, the widdow, and the fatherleſs, who alſo may be called *owners* of the rich mans land, becauſe a ſhare is due to them, as *Solomon* ſpeaks expreſly (*Pro.* 3. 27.) *Withhold not good from them to whom it is due,* we put in the Margin, *The owners thereof,* which cannot with any congruity of ſence be meant of thoſe who were legal and proper owners, becauſe 'tis clear (from the ſcope of the place) that the admonition is given to, not concerning ſuch owners; who yet ought to know that even the poor are owners and Maſters of a part with them, and that they ought not to deny them a part, *when* (as that Scripture concludes) *it is in the power of their hand to do it*; that is, when they have ſome overplus of eſtate by them, which they may (as occaſion offers it ſelf) expend upon charitable uſes. The poor have a right in charity to the poſſeſſions of the rich; and though when the rich will part with nothing to them, the laws of men ſhould take no hold of it, yet the law of God doth; that will certainly caſt and condemn ſuch narrow-hearted and cloſe-handed rich men as having unconſcionably with-held that relief from the poor which is their due.

Locupletes qui ſua mercede fraudant colonos (utcunq; ſit propria ipſorum terræ poſſeſſio) furti rei ſunt, non ſecus ac ſi ex alienis agris fructus aut vi aut fraude decerperent. Merl.

Indigentes vocantur בעלי טיב *domini boni.*

Now, when *Job* ſaith, *I have not cauſed the owners thereof to loſe their life*, I conceive that the owners by him intended muſt be taken in ſome one of theſe ſences, and may ſafely be taken in them all; either for thoſe who were the former proper owners of the land, or for the labouring poor, or for the poor who were unable to labour. *Job* proteſteth himſelf clear (and ſo every juſt man will approve himſelf to be) from the oppreſſion or vexation of any of theſe, not only by not taking from them that which he had no right to, but by not with-holding from them that which was their due, either as having earned it by their work, or as being neceſſitated to ask it by their wants. *If I have cauſed the owners thereof,*

To loſe their life.] This latter clauſe may be taken two ways; Firſt, in a ſtrict ſence, for thruſting them out of the world by violence, and enſnaring them to death by ſome abuſed law, or Secondly, in a large ſence, It may note the putting of them to any grievous trouble or hardſhip. For they are as it were, deprived of their lives, who are deprived of the ſupport and comfort of their lives. The Hebrew word complies fairly with this expoſition, which ſignifies not only to expire or die, but to grieve and pine away while we live. The poor labourers livelihood comes in by his labour; and that which is a mans livelihood may well be called his life. Thus when *Job* ſaith, *I have not cauſed the owners thereof to loſe their life*, he may be thus underſtood, I have not by troubling and vexing them, tired and worn out their ſpirit, nor made their lives bitter and burdenſom to them which had been a continual dying, and, in a ſort, the looſing of their life, while they had it. The people of *Iſrael* in *Egypt*, were as dead men, being continually oppreſſed by cruel task-maſters: and when they were in *Babylon*, their ſtate during that Captivity was preſented under the type of *dead bones* (Ezek. 37.) So then, when *Job* ſaith, *he had not cauſed the owners thereof to loſe their life*, This loſs of life may be taken either ſtrictly, importing that he had not deſtroyed the life of any to get their eſtate; nor had he made the life of any ſad and ſorrowful by vexatious dealings with them, or denying them their right.

Iſta phraſis non tam mori ſignificat vel ſpiritum penitus emittere, quam inter labores ineluctabiles fere deficere & ſyncopen pati præ inedia.

Hence Obſerve, *Covetouſneſs ſometimes concludes in murder, and is uſually accompanied with Cruelty.*

The covetous quickly grow cruel, and as they make more of Gold and ſilver then they are (they make riches their god, and are therefore called *Idolaters*) ſo they make leſs of their brethren then they ſhould; they adore their Gold as if it were a god, and they abuſe their brethren, as if they were not ſo good as beaſts. *Solomon* ſaith (*Pro.* 12. 10.) *A righteous man regards the life of his beaſt*; that is, he will not work him unreaſonably, much leſs work him to death, and he will not deny his beaſt a reward when he hath done his work, but gives him fodder and food fit for him; but an unrighteous covetous man hath little or no regard to the life of his brother, but makes him work and will not allow him wherewithal to live, which (in effect) is the taking away of his life. We read how Covetouſneſs produced murder in kind in the caſe of *Naboth*; *Ahab* that he might take his vineyard, took away his life; as the Prophet charged him (1 *Kings* 21. 19.) *Haſt thou kild, and alſo taken poſſeſſion?* And covetouſneſs doth this often equivalently, afflicting and troubling the poor, till they either die with grief, or their lives are a dayly death to them. Remember Chriſts Admonition, *Beware of Covetouſneſs.* No man knows whither covetouſneſs will carry him; it hath ſet many down in blood; and while they have over-loved and over-valued the eſtates of other men, they have hated their lives, and ſplit their blood, like water upon the ground. *The love of mony is the root of all evil,* ſaith the Apoſtle (*1 Tim.* 6. 10.) Who can tell what gall and wormwood may ſpring from that bitter root both to himſelf and others? How baſely do many carry it (through covetouſneſs) towards labourers? how baſely towards ſervants? how baſely towards tenants? racking their rents and laying load upon them, till they periſh or expire, yea how baſely do many (through covetouſneſs) carry it towards themſelves; often denying themſelves (while they have abundance) the neceſſaries of this life, and ſometimes even letting themſelves die to ſave charges. Covetouſneſs is the root-ſin, which *Job* diſclaimeth, while he diſclaims all theſe acts of ſin. *The forcing of his land to cry againſt him, and the furrows thereof to complain; his eating the fruits thereof without mony, and his cauſing the owners thereof to loſe their life;* all theſe acts of cruelty and oppreſſion, were ſo much the abhorrence of his Soul, that in caſe he were guilty of any one of them towards man, he wiſheth his land might be burdened with this following curſe from God.

Verſ. 40. **Let Thiſtles grow in ſtead of Wheat, and Cockle in ſtead of Barley.**

Job makes a paſſionate and a rhetorical concluſion: This imprecation carries, in the very face and letter of it, a ſutableneſs to the ſin which he had diſclaimed. Nothing ſo proper to puniſh injuſtice in getting or ill uſing land, as an improper product of the land; and what can be a more improper product then for land to *bring forth Thiſtles in ſtead of Wheat, and Cockle in ſtead of Barley.*

Let Thiſtles grow, &c.] The word rendred *Thiſtles,* is ſometime taken in general for any ill weed, ſometime particularly for thorns (*Cant.* 2. 2.) *As the Lilly among thorns, ſo is my love among the daughters.* Thus again (*Pro.* 26. 9. *Hoſ.* 9. 8.) Theſe uſually grow in deſolate places (*Iſa.* 34. 13.) *Thorns ſhall come up in her palaces;* that is, her palaces being ruined and uninhabited of men, thorns ſhall root and ſhoot up there. We render it *Thiſtles* (2 Kings 14. 9.) *The Thiſtle that was in Lebanon ſent to the Cedar that was in Lebanon,* &c. Thorns and Thiſtles are troubleſom any where, but in Corn they are very hurtful. This curſe God laid upon the earth when man had ſinned (*Gen.* 3. 18.) *Curſed is the ground for thy ſake, in ſorrow ſhalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns alſo and Thiſtles ſhall it bring forth to thee, and thou ſhalt eat the herb of the field. Job* did as it were awaken and revive this ancient general curſe upon all lands, upon his own land eminently and conſpicuouſly, while he ſaid, *Let Thiſtles grow*

חוח *Septuaginta reddunt κνίδην urtica & alibi ἄκαν ut hic Symmachus ἄκανος Generale nomen eſt ſentium, quales in locis dirutis & derelictis adnaſci ſolet.* Druſ.

In ſtead of Wheat.] As Thiſtles are reckoned among the worſt ſort of weeds, or are here put for all ſorts of weeds; ſo wheat is indeed the beſt of grains. The beſt bread (which is the ſtaff of mans life) is that made of Wheat. And when the Pſalmiſt would ſhew what excellent proviſion the Lord would have made for his people in caſe of their obedience, he gives it thus (*Pſal.* 81. 16.) *He ſhould have fed them alſo with the fineſt,* or (as our Margin hath it) *with the fat of Wheat.* So that *Job* wiſheth the worſt for the beſt, while he ſaid, *Let thiſtles grow inſtead of Wheat;*

And Cockle in ſtead of Barley.

The ſence is the ſame; the word tranſlated *Cockle,* ſignifies any ſtinking or ill-ſented weed, alſo *ſour ill taſted grapes* (Iſa. 5. 4.) We may take it here ſtrictly, properly, and in kind, (as we render) for that ſpecial weed ſo called, which grows often among Corn, or ſynecdochically, for any thing which hinders the fruitfulneſs of the earth, when ſown with uſeful ſeed. The plain meaning is, Let the land which I till deceive my hopes, let it never hereafter anſwer the pains, labour and coſt, which I beſtow upon it, let me ſow the pureſt Wheat in the ſpring, and let me reap Thiſtles at Harveſt, let me ſow good Barley, and let my crop be Cockle. Thus let the Lord deal with me, if I have given my land cauſe to cry againſt me, or the furrows thereof to complain.

באשה *lolium, vel ſpina quædam ejus nominis fœtida, nam in* באש *ſignificatio fœtoris unde* באושים *uvæ fœtidæ, quas labruſcas dicimus.*

Hence note, Firſt, *The earth naturally yields that which is ſown; that's proper to the earth; If you ſow Wheat you ſhall have Wheat, if you ſow Barley you ſhall have Barley again.*

Thus the Lord ſpeaks alſo in reference to moral ſeed by the Apoſtle (*Gal.* 6. 7.) *Whatſoever a man ſoweth, that ſhall he alſo reap.* All that we do, or all our works are like ſeed ſown; if our works be holy and good, we ſhall have a harveſt ſutable to them; if they are wicked, unjuſt, and unrighteous, we ſhall have an anſwerable return: in morals, what we reap is always like what we have ſowed. The Lord (ſaith the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 2. 6, 7.) *Will render to every man according to their works; to them who by patient continuance in well-doing, ſeek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life; but unto them that are contentious, and obey not the truth, but obey unrighteouſneſs, indignation and wrath.* And as in morals the harveſt is always like the ſeed-time, ſo in naturals the harveſt would always be like the ſeed-time did not ſin hinder it.

Hence Note, Secondly, *Sin changeth the natural courſe of things;* or, *God to puniſh and chaſtiſe the ſin of man changeth the natural courſe of things.*

As God is the efficient, ſo ſin is the meritorious cauſe of theſe changes; it was ſin which brought the firſt change upon nature; the earth (as created by God) had only a ſeminal vertue in it for the production of thoſe things which were good, uſeful, and profitable for man. That was it which God implanted in the earth, or (I may ſay) that was the general plant of the earth, A power to bring forth that which was good. But ſin (which is the worſt weed) being brought forth, God commanded the earth to bring forth bryars and thorns, and mixed our beſt fruits with weeds; And as that general curſe was laid upon the earth for the firſt tranſgreſſion of man, ſo when men multiply their tranſgreſſions, and dayly bring forth evil inſtead of good fruits, when their lives are full of bryars and thorns, of Cockle and thiſtles, they may look that God ſhould renew and heighten that curſe, and give them a crop of thiſtles in ſtead of Wheat, and of Cockle in ſtead of barley. We read how the Lord expoſtulated with his vineyard of old (*Iſa.* 5. 4, 7.) *What could I have done more to my vineyard that I have not done to it? Wherefore, when I looked it ſhould bring forth grapes, did it bring forth wild grapes?* What thoſe wild grapes were, the 7. Verſe tells us; *When I looked for Judgment, Behold oppreſſion; for righteouſneſs, Behold a Cry.* (That's the bad word in this Text, *a Cry*) Now (I ſay) when particular perſons, Churches or Nations diſappoint the Lords expectation thus ſadly, and when he having watered and dreſt them, proteſted and taken care of them, they in ſtead of Judgment bring forth oppreſſion, and in ſtead of righteouſneſs a cry; Then the Lord in Judgment may charge their vineyards to bring forth wild grapes in ſtead of grapes, and their fields to bear *Thiſtles in ſtead of Wheat, and Cockle in ſtead of Barley.* Look to it, as you would have an anſwerable return of any of your labours, or that the earth ſhould bring forth that which is ſown by the bleſſing of God upon it, or that any thing you take in hand ſhould proſper and produce a deſired effect (every man hath a ground to till, and a plow going, that hath a lawful calling, and every man is looking for a harveſt, now (I ſay) if you would not reap thiſtles in ſtead of wheat, and Cockle in ſtead of Barley (as the husbandman in the Country would not) let your actions be juſt and good, ſow to your ſelves in righteouſneſs, and you ſhall reap with rejoycing, whereas they that ſow the wind ſhall reap the whirl-wind.

Thirdly, *Job* in theſe words calls down a very great affliction upon himſelf, that he ſhould ſow wheat, and reap thiſtles, and have his barley return'd in Cockle.

Hence Obſerve, *Not to receive the good we expect, is a ſore affliction.*

To find thorns where we ſet them, or cockle where we have ſown it, doth not trouble us, but to ſee thorns grow where we ſowed wheat, is not only a loſs and a trouble, but a torment. It is a great burthen to the Lord when he miſſeth his expectation among men; when he looks for grapes, and we bring forth wild grapes, when he hath planted and watered his vineyard, then to ſee it unfruitful, or ill fruited, this is a provocation. If the Lord had let his vineyard lie undreſs'd (as *Solomon* ſaith of the field of the ſluggard, *Pro.* 24. 30.) it would not trouble him much to ſee it overgrown with Thorns, and the face of it covered with nettles (there are ſome of whom God looks for nothing but wild grapes, he doth not expect to gather grapes of thorns nor figs of thiſtles) But when a people are the plantation of the Lord, dreſt and manured by the preaching of the Goſpel, and the uſe of holy things, then the Lord is at once both grieved and provoked, if they are either barren of good fruit, or bring forth bad. Where the Lord ſoweth he looks to reap, and where he ſoweth much to reap much; muſt he not therefore be much troubled when he either reaps little or nothing where he had ſowed much, or nothing at all of that which he expected to reap, but the clean contrary? As to meet with changes for the better, or to have good come up in the place of evil, to have wheat for thiſtles and barley for cockle, doth exceedingly rejoyce the heart of man, (There are ſuch changes promiſed in Scripture, *Iſa.* 55. 13.) *In ſtead of the thorn ſhall come up the fir-tree, and in ſtead of the bryar ſhall come up the mirtle-tree, and it ſhall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlaſting ſign that ſhall not be cut off.* The Lord will ſo work for his people one day, that where there were none but bryars and thorns (the beſt of men in degenerate times have been as a bryar, and the moſt upright of them ſharper then a thorn-hedg, *Mich.* 7. 4.) ſuch as trouble and vex his people, there ſhall come up in ſtead of thoſe thorns fir-trees, that is, ſuch as ſhall be very uſeful, and in ſtead of the bryar a mirtle-tree, that is, a godly man ſhall be in place and power. Mirtle-trees ſignifie the people of God (*Zech.* 1. 8.) *Chriſt was in the botom among the Mirtle-trees,* (that is, with the Church) O how will this rejoyce the Saints when they ſee ſuch changes as theſe in the world! and ſuch they ſhall ſee: As the Prophet ſhews in another Allegory (*Iſa.*60.17.) *For braſs I will bring Gold, and for Iron I will bring Silver, and for wood Braſs, and for ſtones Iron. I will alſo make thy Officers peace, and thine exactors righteouſneſs*; that is, things ſhall mend beyond expectation, your changes for the better ſhall exceed your hopes. O how good is it to us when things grow better then we lookt for! And O how ſad is it to be looking for good, and to ſee all grow naught, or waxing worſe and worſe! Thiſtles in place of wheat, and cockle in place of barley; as they ſaid (*Jer.* 8. 15.) *We looked for peace, and no good came, and for a time of health, and behold trouble.* Theſe doleful words are expounded two ways. Firſt, ſome conceive them to be a rebuke of the peoples groundleſs expectation of good days, and a proſperous condition; As if the holy Prophet had thus beſpoken them; *You may look for peace as long, and as confidently as you pleaſe, but I aſſure you, that ye only pleaſe or flatter your ſelves with vain hopes in doing ſo; for while you are thus bad no good will come, and while your ways and lives are not amended, the times will not, cannot mend; look alſo (if you will) for health or healing, that the preſent crazy ſickly ſtate of things ſhould recover ſtrength, and that your diviſions and breaches ſhould be cloſed and cured, but in this alſo you will find your ſelves diſappointed, for you ſhall behold nothing but breaking and dividing among your ſelves, till ye return and are reconciled unto God.* This is a good ſence of the Text, though a ſad one to the people both of thoſe times and ours; Nor is the Second, any whit more comfortable, which (according to our Tranſlation) makes it the peoples complaint to or of their falſe and flattering Prophets. As if they had ſaid; *We (having been often encouraged and warranted by you to expect ſpeedy deliverance) have long looked for peace and proſperity, but alas, how were we deluded and miſlead by you our leaders: for no good came, or good was not? and we looked as earneſtly for healing, but behold trouble; we ſee nothing to this day, but viſions of fear and amazement, nothing but tokens of ruin, and ſome haſtning deſolation.* Thus to fall ſhort of or below our expectings, is the lengthning and heightning of our miſery. This miſery *Job* wiſht upon himſelf, that he ſhould not have what he had cauſe to look for, if he had willingly and knowingly cauſed any to miſs that which they might juſtly expect and look for at his hands; and having ſpoken this he gives over ſpeaking, ſo it followeth;

The Words of Job are ended.

Here's the end of this Chapter, the end of *Job*'s large diſcourſe continued throughout the five fore-going Chapters, as alſo the end of his whole diſcourſe, debate, or diſputation with his friends.

The words of Job are ended.] There's a Queſtion ſtarted by ſome about theſe words, whether they are a part of that which by way of eminence above all writings we call the Scripture, or whether they were only added by the Tranſcriber of the Book, I will not ſtay upon the reaſons one way or other, but conclude in that opinion that theſe words are a part of Scripture. *The words of Job are ended.*

And 'tis conſiderable that the word here uſed ſignifies *ending* with perfection, or ending to purpoſe; As if it had been ſaid, *Job* hath now brought the matter to a full iſſue. In the firſt verſe of the firſt Chapter, God gave teſtimony concerning *Job*, that he was *a perfect man*, and now he ſaith, the words of *Job* are *perfect*; ſuch as the man was, ſuch were his words, he was a perfect man, and here are perfect words. For we muſt not take theſe words as noting only a bare Concluſion, here *is an end of what Job ſpake.* But *Job* having brought his matters to a good end, to a perfect iſſue, he breaks off his work (as it were) glorying and ſits down not only quietly, but triumphantly, his work (as to the truth of his caſe) being ſo well ended. The ſeventy ſecond Pſalm concludes in this form; *The prayers of David the ſon of Jeſſe are ended.* Not that *David* made no more prayers, or pray'd no more, but the perfection of prayer was recollected into that Pſalm; For there holy *David* having by faith, in Spirit, prayed for and about the glory of the kingdom of Jeſus Chriſt, (which is the buſineſs of that Pſalm) it might well be ſaid, *The prayers of David the Son of Jeſſe are ended*; they are Compleat, and wound up to the higheſt imaginable perfection of a prayer; ſo here, *The words of Job are ſaid to be ended*; that is, *Job* hath ſaid as much and as well for himſelf as could be ſaid, or as could be expected he ſhould ſay. And though he ſaid more afterwards (we ſhall find him ſpeaking twice more, to very great purpoſe before the Book ends) yet he never ſpake more in his own defence againſt what his friends had ſpoken; as to any ſuch ſpeaking, he had not a word more to ſpeak, nor did he ſpeak a word more; and therefore this concluſion well becomes his going off from this point under diſcuſſion. *The words of Job are ended.*

Thus (by the good hand of God with me) I have gone through a good part of my way and work, One and thirty Chapters of this Book have been opened in theſe expoſitory exerciſes, and publiſhed to the world. And though I am come to the end of *Job*'s words, yet my work is not ended; There's more yet to be done. Behold *Elihu* entring the ſtage and acting a very great part towards the ſtating and moderating of this Controverſie; and when he hath done God himſelf begins and determins the matter fully and unqueſtionably; who though he gives ſome check to *Job*, yet he gives the Crown to him alſo; and determins the Controverſie for him againſt his three friends.

AN EXPOSITION WITH Practical Obſervations

UPON THE
THIRTY-SECOND, THIRTY-THIRD,
AND THIRTY-FOURTH
CHAPTERS
Of the Book of

JOB.

TO THE
CHRISTIAN READER,
TO
Thoſe eſpecially of this CITY, who yet continue helpful towards this
WORK.

SIRS,

YE *have had (according to my poor meaſure) the whole diſputation between* Job *and his three friends*, Eliphaz, Bildad *and* Zophar, *explicated in* Nine Parts *already publiſhed; I now (through the bleſſing and good hand of God with me) preſent you with the* Tenth; *which indeed, without any deſign or pre-intent of mine, proves like the* Tenth wave *from the vaſt Ocean of this holy Book, ſomewhat bigger, and fuller, I cannot ſay (and 'tis my reproof having been ſo long converſant in this Book that I cannot ſay) ſtronger and better,* i. e. *more ſpiritual (which alone is the ſtrength of Scripture writings) then the former; but ſuch as it is (and that it is ſuch as it is, I own and humbly acknowledg the goodneſs of God in uſing me to do it,) ſuch as it is (I ſay) I freely tender it to your favourable acceptance, and dedicate it to the glory of God and the common good: knowing that it is both my duty and Intereſt to ſhew the ſmall improvement though but of one ſingle talent, rather then, either through ſloth or ſlaviſh modeſty to hide it in a Napkin.*

In the prefatory Epiſtle to the Second part of this Book, there was an endeavour of a diſcovery concerning the diſtinct opinion of Job's *three friends, as alſo of what himſelf held faſt and inſiſted upon all along in diſtinction from theirs. And now that I have done with all that was ſaid on both ſides by the diſputants, and am come to open the diſcourſe of* Elihu, *who appeared as* Moderator *to give a determination about the Great Queſtion, ſo long ventilated among them; it may ſeem ſomewhat neceſſary, and I am much perſwaded (if in any competency attained) it will not be unprofitable, to give the* Reader *a brief proſpect of what* Elihu *aimeth at and doth in this his large and accurate diſcourſe, continued in ſix Chapters throughout and divided into (beſides his General preface which takes up the whole thirty ſecond Chapter) four remarkable Sections.*

Elihu *is introduced by the pen-man of this Book in a great paſſion, both with* Job *and his three friends, and he gives us an account why he was in ſuch a heat of paſſion with both* (Chap. 32. 2, 3.) Then was kindled the wrath of *Elihu*; againſt *Job* was his wrath kindled, becauſe he had juſtified himſelf rather then God. Alſo againſt his three friends was his wrath kindled, becauſe they had found no Anſwer, and yet had condemned *Job*.

It remains therefore, that Elihu *was the man, who found an anſwer in this great difficulty and yet condemned not* Job. *And indeed he condemned him not (as his friends had done) as a man imperfect and crooked in his ways, as a man that feared not God and eſchewed not evil; In or for theſe things* Elihu *did not condemn* Job, *though his wrath was kindled againſt him: he condemned him only for this, becauſe he complained ſo much of the ſeverity of Gods dealings with him, and ſo, by conſequence* juſtified himſelf rather then God. *And in that point or for that fault he ſpared him not, but reproved him as ſharply and condemned him as deeply as his friends had done upon other and thoſe (moſt of them) undue and inſufficient grounds. Thus we read his cenſure of him* (Chap. 34, 35.) *Job* hath ſpoken without knowledg, and his words were without wiſdom. *And again* (Chap. 35. 16.) Therefore *Job* openeth his mouth in vain, he multiplyeth *words* without knowledg; *that is, without a clear knowledge of himſelf both as a creature and as a ſinner, as alſo of the deſign and purpoſe of God in afflicting him.*

Now, beſides thoſe paſſages in the diſcourſe of Elihu *wherein he chargeth* Job*'s three friends with folly for condemning* Job *when they could not anſwer him, and thoſe wherein he reproves* Job*'s ignorance or want of knowledg, for wondring how ſuch great evils ſhould fall upon him, notwithſtanding his integrity, likewiſe his boldneſs or peremptorineſs in his own cauſe, juſtifying himſelf rather then God, yea and deſiring to plead his cauſe before him; I ſay beſides theſe paſſages, we at firſt reading might conclude that* Elihu *did nothing elſe throughout theſe ſix Chapters, but enlarge or paraphraſe upon thoſe things, which had long before been ſpoken to by* Eliphaz, Bildad, *and* Zophar, *and by* Job *himſelf as much as by any of, if not beyond all them three.*

But upon further conſideration of the matter in the whole ſeries and contexture of his diſcourſe, we may collect two things, inſtanced in and inſiſted on by Elihu *alone, upon which his particular opinion and ſentence is grounded in diſtinction from all the reſt. The clear underſtanding of which, will lead us to a fair ſolution or removal of thoſe doubts which ariſe about the Queſtion or matter in debate.*

The two diſtinct points produced by Elihu, *are, Firſt, about Revelation, or how God is pleaſed to manifeſt his mind and will to man. Secondly, about Mediation, or the means which God hath graciouſly afforded man to heal thoſe breaches, which ſin hath made between God and him, and ſo either firſtly, or afreſh to reconcile man again to himſelf.*

The Former of theſe is handled (Chap. 33. Ver. 14, 15, 16, 17.) For God ſpeaketh once, yea twice, though man perceiveth it not. In a dream, in a viſion of the night, when deep ſleep falleth upon men: Then he openeth the ears of men, and ſealeth their inſtruction, that he may withdraw man from his purpoſe, and hide pride from man. *And thus, as it is ſaid in the Verſe following,* He keepeth back his Soul from the Pit, and his life from periſhing by the ſword; *that is, theſe ſpeakings of God are by the ſaving power and Spirit of God made effectual for his ſalvation both temporal and eternal.*

The latter is handled in the ſame Chapter, beginning at the 23. *Verſe to the end of the* 30. If there be a meſſenger (or Angel) with him, an interpreter, one among a thouſand, to ſhew unto man his uprightneſs: then he is gracious unto him, and ſaith, Deliver him from going down to the Pit, I have found a ranſom. His fleſh ſhall be freſher then a Childs, he ſhall return to the days of his youth. He ſhall pray unto God, and he will be favourable to him, and he ſhall ſee his face with joy, *&c.*

Hence the opinion or determination of Elihu *may be thus conceived.*

That, notwithſtanding all the confuſions and diſorders which ſeem to be in the affairs of this world, the providence of God over mankind in general, and his great mercy towards the righteous in ſpecial, is ſeen moſt eminently in theſe two things.

Firſt, In that he inſpires them with the knowledg of Heavenly things, or acquaints them ſome way or other with his mind, both as to the meaning of what he doth to them, and of what he would have them do.

Secondly, In that he provideth and ſends them a meſſenger or Mediator both to inſtruct them in their duty, and to pray for mercy, and ſo conſequently to deliver them, when their Soul draweth neer to the Grave, and their life to the deſtroyers.

Both theſe gracious diſpenſations of God are proper to righteous men, or at leaſt appropriate to them in a peculiar manner; the righteous are the men for whom God provides a meſſenger or Mediator, and the righteous are the men whom God ſavingly and effectually inſpires with the knowledg of his will, in the things which concern both their preſent work and future reward. Neither hath Satan any power ſo to darken their underſtandings about thoſe great things as to make them miſcarry; and as for all his other miſchievous plots and practices againſt them, they ſerve to a clean contrary purpoſe then he intendeth, according to that moſt comfortable aſſertion of the Apoſtle (Rom. 8. 28.) We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpoſe.

Satan provoked God for a licence to heap outward calamities upon Job, *in ſtripping him* *naked of his worldly ſubſtance, and in tormenting his body with grievous pains and ſickneſs; which latter* Elihu *proſecutes at large* (Chap. 33. 19, 20, 21, 22.) He is chaſtned alſo with pain upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with ſtrong pain; ſo that his life abhorreth bread, &c. *And what he ſpeaks of ſickneſs is applicable to any or all ſorts of affliction; in all which (as it is ſaid,* Verſ. 27, 28, 29, 30.) God looketh upon men; and if any ſay, I have ſinned and perverted that which is right, and it profiteth me not; he will deliver his Soul from going into the pit, and his life ſhall ſee the light. Lo, all theſe things worketh God oftentimes with man, to bring back his Soul from the pit, to be enlightned with the light of the living.

From theſe premiſes we may collect both what is proper to the righteous; and that, in whatſoever is common to them with the wicked, there is neither diſorder nor confuſion. For though the beſt of the righteous are lyable to the ſame outward evils which the worſt of the wicked are, yet their condition is not the ſame; ſeeing to the wicked thoſe evils are purely puniſhments; and but the beginning of thoſe ſorrows which ſhall never end; whereas to the righteous they are either but chaſtiſements for ſome ſin already committed, or medicaments to prevent the committing either of the ſame, or of ſome other ſin. And as for thoſe who by ſuch chaſtnings are brought to a ſight of their ſins and forſake them, their Souls are *(by this means,* Verſ. 30.) brought back from the pit to be enlightned with the light of the living.

This point is yet more fully and plainly proſecuted by Elihu *in the thirty-ſixth Chapter; where he informeth us, how ſufferings are differently to be conceived of according to a threefold difference of the perſons ſuffering. The firſt and chief, is of thoſe, who are truely righteous and keep cloſe to God in righteous ways. The ſecond is of thoſe who being righteous in their ſtate have fallen foully in their way, with whom we may alſo reckon ſuch as are yet in an unrighteous ſtate, yet ſhall be and at laſt are converted and brought home to God. The third is of thoſe who perſevere and obſtinately continue in their wicked ſtate and ways, ſtopping their ears, and hardning their hearts, both againſt inſtruction and correction.*

Elihu *ſeemeth to put all theſe together* (Verſ. 5, 6.) Behold God is mighty and deſpiſeth not any, he is mighty in ſtrength and wiſdom, he preſerveth not the life of the wicked, but giveth right to the poor. *More diſtinctly,*

He ſpeaks of the firſt (Verſ. 7.) He *(that is, God)* withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous: But with Kings are they on the Throne, yea, he doth eſtabliſh them for ever, and they are exalted.

He ſpeaks of the ſecond ſort (Verſ. 8, 9, 10, 11.) And if they be bound in Fetters, and holden in the Cords of affliction, then he ſheweth them their work and their iniquity, that they have exceeded. He openeth alſo their ear to diſcipline, and commandeth that they return from iniquity, &c.

He ſpeaks of the third ſort (Verſ. 13, 14.) But the Hypocrites in heart heap up wrath; they cry not when he bindeth them; they die in youth, and their life is among the unclean.

Theſe three ſorts of men are dealt with by God according to their kind. The laſt of them being altogether wicked and incorrigible, abide under wrath for ever.

The ſecond being in an evil ſtate, or having done that which is evil, yet humbling themſelves (through grace) and being bettered by their afflictions, are uſually reſtored to a proſperous eſtate in this life, and in caſe they dye under affliction, are alwayes crowned with the bleſſedneſs of eternal life.

The Firſt ſort, walking conſtantly (humane frailties excepted) in their uprightneſs, are not only preſerved in peace, but receive high favours and ſpecial marks of honour from the bountiful hand of God; which is true, eſpecially according to the condition of thoſe times, wherein God did more engage himſelf to his faithful Servants in promiſes of temporal happineſs, then now he doth in Goſpel times.

And yet even theſe, as now they are not, ſo then they were not always exempted from ſufferings; for as the ſecond ſort of righteous men are often afflicted in a way of chaſtiſement for their ſins; ſo the Lord reſerves to himſelf a liberty (his Soveraignty allowing it) to afflict the beſt and holieſt of his Servants for the trial of their graces, or the magnifying of his own grace to them and in them; as a Maſter of Heroick Arts and Games *impoſeth a very laborious task upon his* Scholar-Champion, *not as a puniſhment of any default, but to confirm his ſtrength and exerciſe his valour.*

The due conſideration of all theſe things laid together by Elihu, *might well ſatisfie* Job, *and ſuſtain his faith in a patient bearing the burden of all thoſe calamities, which the Great and moſt wiſe God was pleaſed to impoſe upon him, and likewiſe convince him that he had failed much in giving out ſo many impatient complaints about them. And no doubt they prevailed much with him, both towards his conviction, and the quieting of his heart under thoſe diſpenſations; For we hear no more of him in that language.*

Yet Elihu *thought he had not done enough, but continueth his diſcourſe, and draweth a further demonſtration for his purpoſe, from the wonderful works of God in nature, from the rain, thunder, ſnow, winds,* &c. *Which he doth from the* 27. *Verſe of the* 36. *Chapter, to the end of the* 37. *and with that concludes his anſwer.*

The ſcope of Elihu *in that long and learned Philoſophical Lecture was to teach and aſſure* Job, *that, God who cauſeth and diſpoſeth thoſe various alterations and terrible impreſſions in the air, both for the humbling and benefiting of man, doth much more both ſend and over-rule all thoſe changes and afflictions which befal the ſons of men, here on earth, to humble them and do them good. And further to aſſure him, that if man be not able to give a ſatisfying reaſon of thoſe works of God in nature, but is often gravel'd and forced to ſit down in a ſilent admiration; then ſurely man is much leſs able to fathom the depth of Gods purpoſes in all the works of his providence, but muſt in many of them only ſit down quietly and ſubmit; For (as* Elihu *concludeth from theſe premiſes* (Chap. 37. 23, 24.) Touching the Almighty we cannot find him out, he is excellent in power and in Judgment, and in plenty of Juſtice he will not afflict, *(either cauſeleſly or more then needs, though we ſeldom ſee the cauſes or acknowledg the need of his afflictions)* men do *(that is, they ought)* therefore fear him; *and if any are ſo proud and high in their own thoughts that they do not, at their peril be it, for)* he reſpecteth not any that are wiſe in heart; *that is, as the carnal wiſdom of wotldly men cannot be a bar, ſo the true wiſdom of godly men is no priviledg againſt the Soveraign power of God in afflicting them. And therefore* Job, *though truely wiſe in heart, muſt not look for any ſuch reſpect from God as to be untoucht by or priviledg'd from affliction.*

For the cloſe of all, we may ſum up the whole ſcope of Elihu*'s under taking with* Job, *yea of the whole Book of* Job *in theſe ſix points or propoſitions.*

Firſt, No man can ſtand before God in his own perſonal righteouſneſs.

Secondly, How righteous ſoever any perſon is, yet the Lord may afflict and break him in what way and in what degree himſelf thinks fit.

Thirdly, God hath moſt wiſe and gracious aims in afflicting his righteous ſervants.

Fourthly, His moſt righteous ſervants may not take the liberty to complain as if they were wrong'd, or as if God were either rigorous or unrighteous in the leaſt, how much or how long ſoever they are afflicted.

Fifthly, There is nothing gotten by complaining or ſtriving under the afflicting hand of God; and therefore,

Sixthly, 'Tis beſt for us or our wiſeſt way when things are at worſt with us to give glory to God both as juſt and good, and (poſſeſſing our Souls with patience) by faith to wait in hope, till he giveth us a freſh experience of his goodneſs, either by ſweetning our troubles to us, and ſupporting us under them, or by bringing us out of them (as he did Job) *in the fitteſt ſeaſon.*

If in peruſing this diſcourſe of Elihu *we carry theſe general reſults in our eye, we ſhall read both the Text and Comment with more clearneſs in our underſtandings at all times, and with more profit (when at any time under them) in our chaſtenings, which, that we all may is the prayer of*

YOUR AFFECTIONATE SERVANT
in this work of Chriſt

The 24. of the 3. Month.
1661.

JOSEPH CARYL.

AN
EXPOSITION
WITH
Practical Obſervations
UPON THE
THIRTY-SECOND, THIRTY-THIRD,
AND THIRTY-FOURTH
CHAPTERS
Of the Book of
JOB.

CHAP. XXXII. Verſ. 1, 2, 3.

So theſe three men ceaſed to anſwer Job, *becauſe he was righteous in his own eyes.*

Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu *the Son of* Barachel *the* Buzite, *of the kindred of* Ram; *againſt* Job *was his wrath kindled, becauſe he juſtified himſelf rather then God.*

Alſo againſt his three Friends was his wrath kindled; becauſe they had found no anſwer, and yet had condemned Job.

The laſt Chapter ended with theſe words, *The words of* Job *are ended*; the beginning of this tells us his three Friends had ended theirs. *So theſe three men ceaſed to anſwer* Job: Thus we have had the whole diſpute between *Job* and his three Friends: Now followeth the determination of it. The Diſputants having done, the Moderators begin; Firſt *Elihu*, and after him God himſelf. *Elihu* ſpends ſix whole Chapters in delivering his mind upon this Controverſie; yet he makes ſome pauſes and overtures, moving or inviting *Job* to a reply. But *Job* interpoſed not a word.

We may conſider this whole diſcourſe of *Elihu* in four diſtinct parts; the firſt contained in the thirty-ſecond, and thirty third Chapters; the ſecond in the thirty-fourth; the third in the thirty-fifth; and the fourth in the thirty-ſixth and thirty-ſeventh Chapters of this Book.

In the firſt part he directeth his ſpeech; Firſt, To *Job*'s three Friends, in this thirty-ſecond Chapter; Secondly, To *Job* himſelf in the thirty-third.

In this Chapter we may conſider, Firſt, A rational tranſition from the diſpute between *Job* and his Friends: to this diſcourſe of *Elihu*, in the five firſt verſes; Secondly, We have a very Rhetorical pathetical Preface, wherein *Elihu* endeavoureth to gain attention by giving an account, or the reaſons of his undertaking, in which he interweaves many Apologies for himſelf, in venturing upon ſo hard a task, reſpecting both his youth, and the weight of the Argument. He amplifies and continueth upon this ſubject to the end of the thirty-ſecond Chapter; wherein he engageth himſelf by ſolemn promiſe to carry on the buſineſs without reſpect of perſons, without fear or flattery.

Yet more diſtinctly in this firſt part, The tranſition; Firſt, A reaſon is aſſigned why *Job*'s Friends left off ſpeaking. *As it is not good to begin to ſpeak, ſo neither to give over ſpeaking, till we ſee and can give a reaſon for it:* The reaſon here given, is, becauſe *Job was righteous in his own eyes* (ver. 1.) Secondly, A reaſon is given not only why *Elihu* did begin to ſpeak, but why he began to ſpeak as he did, *in anger*; Firſt, Againſt *Job*, which is laid down in the ſecond verſe, *Becauſe he juſtified himſelf rather then God:* Secondly, Againſt his Friends (*ver.* 3.) *Becauſe they had found no anſwer, yet had condemned Job*, or, *becauſe they cenſured him, though they could not confute him.* In the fourth and fifth verſes we have a diſcovery of the cauſe of *Elihu*'s modeſty in forbearing ſo long to ſpeak, which he further inlargeth in the following parts of the Chapter.

Verſe 1. **So theſe three men ceaſed to anſwer Job.**

They who had maintained the diſpute all this while, *ceaſed*, reſted, or ſate down. When men ſpeak they uſually ſtand up or ſtand forth. The word in the Hebrew may be rendred thus, *They ſabbatized*, implying they had found it a week of hard work, and ſtrong labour in dealing and tugging with *Job:* And now as if their *ſeventh day* or *Sabbath* were come, they ſate down and took their reſt. Speaking, eſpecially arguing and diſputing with a knowing and reſolved Adverſary, is tough work; and they who have been at it to purpoſe, may for very wearineſs have cauſe enough to reſt or take their Sabbath; ſo did theſe three men, they ceaſed or ſabbatiz'd from anſwering *Job*.

Verbũ ipſũ שבת *indicat contentionem & defatigationem diſputationis præteritæ & ingentem vim poſitam in repugnando & refutando.* Pined.

We may yet further enquire, why did they ceaſe? Firſt, Some men ceaſe to anſwer, becauſe they have no more to anſwer. Secondly, Others ceaſe to anſwer, becauſe they ſuppoſe they have anſwered enough already, and will anſwer no more. Some ſay the former was the reaſon why *Job*'s three Friends ceaſed to anſwer, they had no more to anſwer: Others take the latter, that they had no mind, no will to give any further anſwer. But the Reaſon expreſſed in the Text (which ſhould ſatisfie us and ſuperſede further Queries) is,

Becauſe he was righteous in his own eyes.

As if it had been ſaid, *Becauſe they ſaw they had done no good upon him,* Job *kept his ground and maintained his ſtanding, he diſputed every inch with them, and yielded not an inch; as they found him at firſt, ſo he was at laſt, they ſaw him a man immovably ſet down in his own purpoſe and opinion, and therefore, becauſe they could get nothing by ſpeaking, they would ſpeak no more. 'Tis but loſt labour* (as we ſay) *to waſh the Blackmore.* The conſtancy and warmth of *Job* in defending himſelf they judged obſtinacy, and a humour to oppoſe, or but the ſwelling of a proud ſpirit; whereas indeed it was the love of truth, not of contention, a zeal to do himſelf right, not to do them wrong, which cauſed him ſtill to hold up the Bucklers, and adhere ſo ſtiffly to his own opinion. Thus deſpairing to convince or bring him to an acknowledgment, that he was unrighteous, *They ceaſed*

Becauſe he was righteous in his own eyes.] That's ſuch another form of ſpeaking (*Prov.* 3. 7.) *Be not wiſe in thine own eyes:* As alſo that (*Prov.* 26. 12.) *Seeſt thou a man wiſe in his own conceit, there is more hope of a fool then of him.* You may eaſier reduce a man that is indeed ignorant, then him that thinks himſelf very wiſe, or knowing, but is not. This was the apprehenſion of *Job*'s Friends concerning him, *He was a man* (thought they, and ſo they ſaid) *righteous in his own eyes.*

There are three ſorts of righteous perſons: Firſt, Such as are righteous in the eyes of God, and ſo the godly are under a twofold notion: Firſt, As being pardoned for, or juſtified from their unrighteouſneſs, through faith in Chriſt, bleſſed are they who are thus accounted righteous in the eyes of God. Secondly, They are righteous, as avoiding unrighteous, and doing righteous things. There is a ſeed, a principle of righteouſneſs in perſons juſtified and regenerated, which daily puts it ſelf forth in righteous actings; *He that doth righteouſneſs is righteous* (1 John 3. 7.) He is ſo, both as to his ſtate, and as to his actions, in the eyes of God and good men.

Secondly, Many are righteous in the eyes of men, they have fair appearances and out-ſides; you can read nothing amiſs in their converſation, yet they are unrighteous, yea, altogether unrighteous in the eyes of God, yea, and poſſibly in their own too; they cannot but ſee their own wickedneſs, though they can conceal it from the ſight of others. Hypocrites are like painted Sepulchres, fair without (as Chriſt ſpake of the Phariſees) but within full of rottenneſs. They ſeem that to men which God ſeeth they are not; they can ſhew their beſt ſide to, and hide their worſt from men, but they cannot play this game with God; he ſeeth their beſt is bad, becauſe it is but the covering, not the hating, not the mortifying of that which is bad.

Thirdly, there is another ſort who are righteous in their own eyes; ſuch *Solomon* deſcribes (*Prov.* 30. 12.) *There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not waſhed from their filthineſs.* Theſe have a great opinion of themſelves; they think all is right and well with them, when indeed they are filthy and unclean, their hearts being yet unchanged, though their wayes are ſmoothed; and though they may have left off to do many filthy things, yet they are not waſhed from their filthineſs. The Text in hand puts *Job* into this third ſort of righteous men. But was it thus with him? I anſwer; Firſt, *Job* was a man righteous in the eyes of God, in both the notions mentioned; he was righteous as juſtified, and righteous as ſanctified. Secondly, *Job* was a man righteous in the eyes of many men; for he ſaith (*Chap.* 29. 11.) *The ear which heard me bleſſed me; and the eye which ſaw me gave witneſs to me*; yet *Job* had not an univerſal teſtimony given by men; there were ſome, I cannot ſay many, in whoſe eyes he was unrighteous; he was ſo in the eyes and opinion of his Friends eſpecially. Though none could, as to the eye, tax *Job* with any unrighteouſneſs, no not they who doubtleſs had ſifted his life to the bran, yet his Friends thought him unrighteous, and he ſtood judg'd as unrighteous in their eye.

As for the third ſort of righteouſneſs, that of being righteous in our own eyes we muſt diſtinguiſh; *Job* was indeed righteous in his own eyes in a good ſenſe, and that under a twofold conſideration: Firſt, As not having committed any groſs or ſcandalous act of wickedneſs, as he profeſſed at large and with much confidence in that apology and vindication which he made for himſelf in the Chapter foregoing; where he calls down the ſevereſt judgments of God upon himſelf, if he had done ſuch things as he was ſuſpected of, eſpecially if he had defiled himſelf with thoſe common pollutions of the world, wantonneſs, injuſtice and oppreſſion. *Job* ſtood upon it that he was thus righteous. Secondly, *Job* was righteous in his own eyes, as to the allowing of himſelf in any the leaſt ſin or unevenneſs, either of heart or life; thus much his proteſtation or imprecation amounts to in the thirty-third verſe of that Chapter, *If I have covered my tranſgreſſions as* Adam, *by hiding mine iniquity in my boſom:* As if he had ſaid, I have not lived in the love of any ſin whatſoever. Thus *Job* was righteous in his own eyes, proteſting to God and before men, that as he was not ſcandalouſly wicked in any kind, ſo he was not cloſely nor hypocritically wicked; every ſin was his burden, and the abhorrence of his ſoul. In any other ſenſe *Job* was far from being righteous in his own eyes; he never either ſaid or thought he had done no evil, or was altogether ſinleſs, like white paper without blot or blur; yea, we very often find him confeſſing his ſins and failings (*Chap.* 7. 20.) *I have ſinned; What ſhall I do unto thee, thou preſerver of men?* He maketh a like acknowledgment (*Chap.* 9. 2.) *I know it is ſo of a truth, but how ſhall man be juſt with God? If he will contend with him, he cannot anſwer him one of a thouſand.* Again (*ver.* 20.) *If I juſtifie my ſelf, my mouth ſhall condemn me: If I ſay I am perfect, it ſhall alſo prove me perverſe.* And while he affirms the general viciouſneſs of nature, he muſt needs imply his own (*Chap.* 15. 14.) *What is man that he ſhould be clean? And he which is born of a woman, that he ſhould be righteous? Behold he putteth no truſt in his Saints, yea, the Heavens are not clean in his ſight, how much more abominable and filthy is man?* In this univerſal concluſion he includeth himſelf, therefore *Job* was far from being righteous in his own eyes, in any proud opinion of his own righteouſneſs or freedom from any ſtain of ſin. So much for the opening of thoſe words, containing the reaſon why his Friends ceaſed to anſwer, *Becauſe he was righteous in his own eyes.*

It was the deſign of theſe three men not only to convince *Job* that he was a ſinner, but to bring him upon his knees as a notorious ſinner; and yet all their Allegations and Arguments could not bring him to it; *My righteouſneſs* (ſaid he, *Chap.* 27. 6.) *I hold faſt, I will not let it go.* Now, when they ſaw him thus reſolved and ſtiff in maintaining the goodneſs of his cauſe, and the integrity of his ſpirit, they quitted the buſineſs, or as the Text ſaith, *Ceaſed to anſwer.*

Hence Note, *We ceaſe to do, when we cannot attain our end in doing.*

Impoſſibiliū nullus eſt conatus.

When we ſee it is in vain to perſwade, we give over perſwading; deſpair of working our end, puts an end to our working. Induſtry is at a ſtand, yea withdraweth, when impoſſibilities appear. And though nothing be impoſſible unto God, yet we find God himſelf giving over both ſpeaking and ſmiting when he ſeeth he is like to do no good by either. Thus he expreſſeth his purpoſe (*Iſa.* 1. 5.) when he had ſpent many rods of ſore judgments and afflictions upon that people, when he had ſtricken them, till from the crown of the head to the ſole of the feet they were nothing but a continued wound, and yet they received not correction, he preſently reaſons thus, *Why ſhould ye be ſtricken any more, ye will revolt more and more*: As if he had ſaid, *The end why I ſmote you was to amend you, to bring you home to my ſelf, to cauſe you to turn back, or return from your evil wayes; but I ſee I have loſt my labour, and ſpent not only my rods but my ſcorpions in vain upon you, therefore I will ceaſe from this kind of work, why ſhould ye be ſtricken any more, ye will revolt more and more?* And when God hath ſpoken long to a people who regard it not, he ceaſeth to ſpeak any more, but ſaith, Why ſhould ye be taught any more? Let the Prophets tongue cleave to the roof of his mouth, let him be dumb and ſilent, as the word is (*Ezek.* 3. 26.) *Thou ſhalt be dumb, and ſhalt not be a reprover* (why?) *for they are a rebellious houſe.* After all thy ſpeaking they continue rebelling, therefore ſpeak no more. We read the like dreadful prohibition (*Hoſ.* 4. 4.) *Let no man ſtrive nor reprove another* (let all wayes of reclaiming this people be laid aſide) *for thy people are as they that ſtrive with the Prieſt*: That is, They are obdurate and deſperately ingaged in wickedneſs (*Hoſ.* 4. 17.) Ephraim *is joyned to Idols* (he cleaveth and ſticketh faſt to them, he will not be pulled from his own inventions) *let him alone.* Thus God ſaith to his Prophets and Miniſters *ceaſe*; he ſaith to his Ordinances, *ceaſe*, when ſinners will not ceaſe to ſin and do wickedly againſt the Lord. The ſame unprofitable and incorrigible people are threatned in the ſame manner by another Prophet (*Amos* 8. 9.) *It ſhall come to paſs in that day, ſaith the Lord God, that I will cauſe the Sun to go down at noon.* And (*ver.* 11.) *I will ſend a famine in the Land; not a famine of bread, but of hearing the word of the Lord.* God would ſtop the raining down of heavenly Manna, and the people ſhould not hear, becauſe they would not. Such was the ſentence of Chriſt againſt the *Jews* (Matth. 23. 37.) O Jeruſalem, Jeruſalem, *thou that killeſt the Prophets, and ſtoneſt them which are ſent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy Children together as a Hen gathereth her Chickens under her wings, but ye would not?* What follows this refuſal? Read and tremble (*ver.* 38.) *Behold your houſe is left unto you deſolate, for I ſay unto you, ye ſhall not ſee me henceforth,* &c. As if he had ſaid, Becauſe ye have been ſo unteachable, therefore ye ſhall be taught no more. It is ſad, when we give God occaſion to give over either ſpeaking to us, or afflicting us. God will not alwayes ſtrive with the unwillingneſs, much leſs with the wilfulneſs of man; nor will men be alwayes doing that to men, which they ſee doth them no good. *So theſe three men ceaſed,* &c.

Secondly, Hence Note, *When men are obſtinate and will not be reclaimed, it is good to give over.*

Why ſhould they who in any kind are abſolutely reſolved, be further moved? (*Acts* 21. 14.) *When* Paul's *friends ſaw he would not be perſwaded, they ceaſed*: They had uſed much perſwaſion to keep him from going up to *Jeruſalem*, becauſe of the ſufferings that were propheſied ſhould befal him there; yet when he ſtood out, in an holy obſtinacy againſt them, cloathed with a gracious ſpirit of courage to ſuffer for Chriſt, *When he would not be perſwaded they ceaſed, ſaying, the will of the Lord be done.* As it was the height of *Paul*'s holineſs, that he would not be perſwaded, he was obſtinate for Gods cauſe, or for the doing of a duty; ſo it is the height of many mens wickedneſs that they will not be perſwaded, they are obſtinate againſt God, or againſt the doing of their duty: Such as are infected with the luſt of contending, will maintain that opinion pertinaciouſly, which they cannot maintain truly. As ſome ſtrive for the love of victory, rather then of truth; ſo others ſtrive becauſe they love ſtrife even more then victory, and had rather contend then conquer, becauſe that puts an end to ſtrife. In ſuch caſes they do beſt who do no more: And if *Job*'s caſe had been ſuch, if he had held up the diſcourſe, not for truth but for victory, or becauſe he would have the laſt word, like a clamorous Sophiſter, who hath alwayes ſomewhat to ſay, though nothing to the purpoſe; in that caſe, I ſay, *Job*'s Friends had done wiſely in ceaſing to anſwer; they indeed did well upon their own ſuppoſition, though as to the truth of *Job*'s condition they failed greatly. *Job* was not a man of that ſpirit. He that perſiſts in holding and defending truth, is not obſtinate, but conſtant.

Further, as to the ground why they ceaſed, according to their ſuppoſition,

Obſerve, *To be righteous in our own eyes is hateful both to God and good men.*

A man is never ſo vile in the eyes of thoſe who can diſcern him, as when he is righteous in his own; how righteous ſoever any man is, he ſhould be little in owning it. To inſiſt much upon our own righteouſneſs, ſavours rankly of a Phariſee (*Luke* 18. 9.) Chriſt ſpake a Parable to this purpoſe (that's the title of the Parable, *ver.* 9.) *And he ſpake this Parable unto certain which truſted in themſelves that they were righteous, and deſpiſed others.* Then follows the Phariſees boaſt of his faſting twice in the week, &c. And when the Text ſaith (*ver.* 14.) *The Publican went down to his houſe juſtified rather then the other*; it doth not imply that the Phariſee was at all juſtified, but rather that being righteous in his own eyes, he was under a ſad ſentence of condemnation [illegible] the eyes of God. The meaning is not, that the Phariſee was ſomewhat juſtified, and the Publican more; but that the Phariſee was not juſtified at all. It is our duty to follow after righteouſneſs, but our ſin to boaſt of it (*Matth.* 5. 3.) *Bleſſed are the poor in ſpirit. The more poor we are in ſpirit, the more rich we are in ſpirituals.* Poverty of ſpirit is directly oppoſite to our being righteous in our own eyes. *Chriſt came not to call the righteous, but ſinners to repentance* (Matth. 9. 13.) By the righteous there we are to underſtand thoſe that are righteous in their own eyes, thoſe that have high thoughts of themſelves: The ſinners whom Chriſt calls to repentance are the poor in ſpirit, though indeed the righteous in their own eyes are the greateſt ſinners. As we never do worſe, or more againſt right, then when we do that (as it was ſaid of that ungovern'd age, *Judg.* 17. 6.) which is right in our own eyes; ſo we are never worſe, then when we are righteous in our own eyes.

From the whole matter of theſe words, we ſee, that as *Job*'s Friends had been miſtaken all along in that which they ſpake, ſo now in the reaſon of their ceaſing to ſpeak; which was a ſuppoſal that *Job* was righteous in his own eyes.

Hence Obſerve, *There is nothing more common then for men to miſtake and miſ-judge one another.*

Job's Friends concluded him ſetled in a proud conceit of his own righteouſneſs, becauſe he conſtantly denied their charge of unrighteouſneſs. Some impoſe an opinion upon their brethren which is not theirs, and make them ſay that which they do not affirm: How injurious is this? Yea, ſome miſ-judge the word of God as well as the words of men. They wreſt the Scriptures (2 *Pet.* 3. 16.) They make the Scripture ſpeak that, which the holy Ghoſt never intended. It is dangerous to ſtrain the word of a man, much more the word of God. The former proceeds from a want of charity, but the latter is a great impiety. There could not be a more unrighteous thought conceived of *Job* in any mans heart, then that he was (as his Friends thought him) righteous in his own eyes; yet thus they thought him, nor would they think otherwiſe of him, let him ſay what he would to the contrary. So much of the firſt verſe, which giveth us a reaſon why *Job*'s Friends ſate down and ceaſed to anſwer; His being (as they judged him) righteous in his own eyes. In the next verſe *Elihu* gives out a ſeverer Judgment againſt him then this; To be at all righteous in our own eyes (according to the ſenſe intended) argues a man to be both very blind and very proud, but for a man to be ſo righteous in his own eyes, as that he dares juſtifie himſelf rather then the moſt righteous God, argues not only blindneſs and pride, but pride and blaſphemy: Yet thus ſaith *Elihu* of *Job*, as it followeth.

Verſe 2. **Then was kindled the wrath of** Elihu, **the Son of** Barachel **the** Buzite, **of the kindred of** Ram; **againſt** Job **was his wrath kindled, becauſe he juſtified himſelf rather then God.**

Here comes in the fourth Speaker, as a Moderator or Determiner of this great Diſpute; and he begins, much unlike a Moderator, *in a heat*.

Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu.

Novus hic eſt diſputandi actus, nova etiam argumentandi forma, tanto ſubtilior, quanto magis in ſeipſam reflexa. Nam videtur argumentari (ut logici loquuntur) quaſi ad hominem, ex ipſis Jobi *verbis & dictis.* Pined.

It is very common for men to grow hot in diſpute; but for a man to begin his diſpute with an heat, that's very ſtrange: Many have been all in a flame upon a little diſcourſe; but to be in a flame upon the entrance of a diſcourſe, is a thing almoſt unheard of. Yet thus it was with this man.

Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu] The Hebrew is, *His noſe or noſtrils were angry*. The Metaphor is taken from Horſes, Bears, Lions, Bulls, or any furious Creatures, who ſend forth fumes of wrath or anger at their noſtrils. The blood at the heart of an angred angry man is inflamed, and he, as it were, breaths out fire and ſmoak at his mouth and noſtrils. *Elihu* came in a flame to this buſineſs.

How unceſſant were the oppoſitions of *Job*! No ſooner had thoſe three men ceaſed ſpeaking, but a fourth riſeth up to ſpeak. The good man found no reſt; his three Friends had their Sabbath, they ceaſed or reſted from the diſpute, but *Job* was at week-day labour ſtill, attending the words of this angry Moderator. Mr. *Broughton* renders, *The anger of* Elihu *was in choler. Anger is hot, but his anger was heat*, or, at leaſt, his anger was heated, yea, it was not only heated as at the fire, but kindled like a fire.

Philoſophi iram ζέσιν αἵματος faciunt, ſpiritus affectuū inſtrumenta ſunt: ut res phantaſiæ imprimitur, iræ ſpiritus commovetur ad habendam vel depellendam. &c.

Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu.] Anger is a fire; and (as *Solomon* ſaith) *Can a man take fire in his boſom, and not be burned?* So I may ſay, Can a man carry anger in his boſom, and not burn himſelf, if not others with it? And as fire is blown up by bellows, ſo is anger by provocation. The anger of God is expreſſed in a heat (*Deut.* 29. 24.) *What meaneth the heat of this great anger?* (ver. 20.) *The anger of the Lord and his jealouſie ſhall ſmoak againſt that man*, And (*Pſal.* 2. 12.) *If his wrath be kindled but a little*, &c. The leaſt ſparklings of it are terrible. The anger of God is a moſt dreadful fire; and the anger of man hath much dread in it. We have need to look to our paſſions. Fire is good but it muſt be kept in its due place; fire on the hearth, fire in the chimney is good, but fire in the roof, or among the houſhold-ſtuff conſumeth all. There is (as I may ſay) an hearth for anger where it will do no hurt. *Then was kindled the wrath*

Of Elihu **the Son of** Barachel.] There are many queſtions about this perſon among the learned; it would be too great a diverſion, and poſſibly an unprofitable one to ſtay upon them. We have him here deſcribed, Firſt, By his name. The Hebrew Etymologiſts ſay, This proper name *Elihu* ſignifieth, *He is my God*, or *my God is he*. And as he is deſcribed by his name, ſo by his nativity or parentage; Elihu *the Son of* Barachel *the* Buzite, *of the kindred of* Ram.

His Fathers name **Barachel**, ſignifies in the Hebrew, *One whom God hath bleſſed*, or, *the bleſſing of God*. The Sons name was, *My God is the Lord*. And the Fathers name was, *The bleſſing of God*, or, *one whom God hath bleſſed*. We may note a piece of holy devotion in the old Fathers, in giving ſignificant names to their Children. And ſurely it may be of much uſe to give our Children good and ſignificant names, ſuch names as carry a remembrance of duty, or of mercy. When *Alexander the Great*, met with a common Souldier whoſe name was *Alexander*, he ſaid to him, *Be ſure thou do nothing unworthy the name of Alexander*. His name had a great encouragement in it to gallantry in war. And it is noted of *Diadumenus*, that having obtained both the Empire and the name of *Antoninus*, he ſaid, *I will labour all I can, that I may not be injurious to the name of the Antonines*. This ſhould be much more our care and ſtudy, where holineſs makes the name honourable; *John* ſignifieth the *Grace of God*; and, as I remember, it is the ſaying of one of the Ancients, concerning a bad man ſo called, *Thy name is John, but thou art not John*; thy name ſignifieth *grace*, but thou art not *gracious*. *Ambroſe* ſaid to the Virgin *Agnes*, or *Anne*, *There is chaſtity in thy name, do not contradict thy name*. So *Jerome* writing to *Pammachius*, which name ſignifieth a *fighter againſt all*, *Do thou* (ſaith he) *fight againſt all ſin, againſt the Devil, the world, and thy own corruption*. The ſame Author writing to *Melecius*, which ſignifies, *Honey ſweetneſs*, *Have thou* (ſaith he) *the ſweetneſs of Honey in thy manners*. And to *Probus* he writes, *Thy name ſignifieth honeſty, Then be thou an honeſt man*. The Apoſtle exhorts (2 *Tim.* 2. 19.) *Let every one that nameth the Name of Chriſt depart from iniquity*. It is a great argument, ſeeing all who profeſs the Goſpel are called Chriſtians, from Chriſt, that therefore they ſhould adorn that moſt worthy Name by worthy walking. And let me ſay to all thoſe whoſe names ſignifie any thing of God, of Grace, or Goodneſs, ye have a good and gracious name, let not your actions be a reproach to God, nor a ſhame to the profeſſion of his grace. A good heart will make a good uſe of every thing, and is provoked to have more then a name for that grace or goodneſs which is in his name, even to be really that which his name is. How ſhould an *Elihu*, whoſe name ſignifies *He is my God*, labour after this holy aſſurance, that *God is his*? How ſhould a *Barachel*, whoſe name ſignifieth the *Bleſſing of God*, be alwayes praying and waiting for the bleſſing of God, or returning praiſe to God (both in heart and life) for all his Bleſſings? Elihu *the Son of* Barachel

Ego curabo ne deſim nomini Antoninorum.

The Buzite.] Here *Elihu* is deſcribed by his family, as before by his Father. *The* Buzite, that is, coming from *Buz*. Yet there is a difference about that; ſome ſay he had that name from the place where he dwelt; we read (*Jer.* 25. 23.) of a place called *Buz*. Others ſay, he was called the *Buzite* from the name of his family; as he deſcended from *Buz* the Son of *Nahor Abraham*'s Brother (*Gen.* 22. 21.) Milcah *hath born Children unto thy Brother* Nahor, Huz *his firſt born, and* Buz *his Brother*. Maſter *Broughton* is clear in it, who gives this gloſs upon the Text, Elihu *the* Buzite, *of* Buz, Abraham*'s Brothers Son, of the family of* Ram, *famous then for knowledge*. Rebecca *and* Jacob *ſeem to have left Religion in* Nahor*'s houſe*. Thus far he. *Jerome* ſaith, Elihu *was deſcended from the ſecond Son of* Milcah, *whom the Septuagint call* Bauz, *from him was* Balaam *the Sorcerer, who according to the Tradition of the* Jews *was this* Elihu *ſpoken of in the Book of* Job, *at firſt, an holy man and a Prophet, but afterwards an Apoſtate*. But I leave that as a Rabbinical Tradition.

Hieron. in tract. Heb. ſuper Geneſin.

Apparet, quod ſicut Eliu dicitur Buzitis quia originem traxit ex Buz; ita dicitur de Ram ratione maternæ originis. Melcha enim mater Buz fuit filia Aram unde & 70. loco Ram legunt

We have yet a further deſcription of *Elihu* in the Text, **Of the kindred of** Ram, of the family or poſterity of *Ram*. Who this *Ram* was is much controverted by Interpreters; nor is the controverſie yet ended who this *Ram* was. Some ſay he was that *Ram* ſpoken of (*Ruth* 4. 19.) but it is not likely, that he was ſo ancient as *Job*, or if he were, he would not leave the *Iſraelites* (from whom *Pharez* was deſcended) to dwell among the *Edomites*. Others ſay he was that *Aram* mentioned (*Gen.* 22. 21.) But neither doth this appear true; for then *Elihu* could not be a *Buzite*, but muſt draw his line from *Kemuel* the Brother of *Buz*.

The *Chaldee* Paraphraſe tells us, he was *Abraham.* And to clear this 'tis ſaid (as our own learned Annotators have given it) that he had a threefold gradation in his name: Firſt, He was called only *Ram*, which ſignifieth *high:* Secondly, *Abram*, which ſignifieth *A high Father:* Thirdly, *Abraham*, which ſignifieth *the high Father of a multitude.* But, upon which to determine I conceive it impoſſible, nor is there any great matter in it. Only this ſeems clear, that the family of *Ram* was ſome great and illuſtrious family in thoſe times; and we may take notice how diſtinct and punctual the Penman of this Book was in deſcribing the pedegree of *Elihu.* And there may be two reaſons why the Spirit of God directed him to be ſo; Firſt, Becauſe he was but a young man; and therefore as *Saul* (1 *Sam.* 17. 56.) when he ſaw *David* a young man, he asked after his parentage, *Enquire whoſe Son this ſtripling is:* I would fain know his kindred. So the kindred of *Elihu* is thus diſtinctly ſet down, that he, who by reaſon of his youth was little known as to his perſon, might be the better known by his Anceſtors, or Parentage.

Aram. Proinde ſicut tres reges viſitaverant Job cauſa amicitiæ, ita Eliu cauſa cognationis, de qua vendicavit ſibi in Job pluſculum audacioris licentiæ. Janſon. *Quis iſte fuerit, quærunt interpretes, Gramatici certant, & adhuc ſub judice lis eſt.* Druſ. *Neutri ſententiæ accederem, ſed Ram alium quempiam fuiſſe putarim virum celebrem & clarum ex familia Nahor.* Merc.

Secondly, His Parentage is thus diſtinctly ſet down, to aſſure us, that this is a true Hiſtory; for ſome have made the whole Book of *Job* to be but a Parable, aſſerting there was no ſuch real thing. But this one paſſage gives an undeniable proof, that this was a real Hiſtory, and the matter really acted. This perſon being deſcribed by his own name, and his Fathers name, and the next of his kindred.

From the conſideration of the perſon who carried on ſo great a part in this buſineſs, Elihu *the Son of* Barachel *the* Buzite, *of the kindred of* Ram, who was of a ſtrange Country, and if allyed to *Abraham*, yet at a great diſtance;

> We may obſerve, *God did preſerve a ſeed of Religion, and of holy men to maintain his truth among thoſe who lived in dark places, and were wrapt up in many errors and ſuperſtitions.*

This was alſo noted from the firſt words of this Book, *There was a man in the Land of* Uz: A man of gracious accompliſhments, and of a heavenly light. Here alſo was *Elihu* the *Buzite*, a man that had great knowledge about holy things (as we ſhall ſee afterwards) in thoſe parts and times when and where abundance of darkneſs, blindneſs, and ignorance reigned.

Having thus deſcribed *Elihu*, the Hiſtorian proceeds.

Againſt Job was his wrath kindled, becauſe he juſtified himſelf rather then God.

In the former part of the verſe it is ſaid, *Then was kindled the wrath of* Elihu; not ſpecifying againſt whom, nor the cauſe why; here he doubles the ſame words, with an addition, firſt, of the perſon with whom he was angry, *Againſt* Job *was his wrath kindled.* And as he tells us the mark or object of his wrath, ſo he gives, ſecondly, the reaſon of it, *Becauſe he juſtified himſelf rather then God.* Before I come to the explication of this latter branch, take theſe two brief Notes.

> Firſt, *A godly man in maintaining a good cauſe, may give juſt reaſon of anothers paſſion or anger.*

Job was a good man, and his cauſe was good, yet you ſee a wiſe and a good mans wrath is kindled. *Paul* and *Barnabas* were two good men, yet a difference aroſe between them (*Acts* 15. 39.) *And the contention was ſo ſharp between them that they departed aſunder.*

Secondly, Conſidering the cauſe of this anger in general, *Becauſe he juſtified himſelf rather then God*; we ſee it was an anger for Gods cauſe.

> Hence Note, *Anger for God or in the cauſe of God is holy anger.*

Though for the moſt part the fleſh or our carnal corruption is the cauſe of anger, and it begins at ſelf; yet ſometimes it is ſtirr'd in the cauſe of God. It is ſaid of *Moſes*, the meekeſt man on earth (*Numb.* 12. 3.) that when he ſaw the idolatry of the people (*Exod.* 32. 19.) *His anger waxed hot*; He was ſo angry, that he caſt the Tables of the Law which God had written with his own hand, out of his hand and broke them. It is ſaid (*Mark* 3. 5.) *Jeſus Chriſt looked about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardneſs of their hearts:* He alſo expreſt a great deal of zealous anger (*John* 2. 15.) *When he made a whip of ſmall cords, and drove the buyers and ſellers out of the Temple.* Some of the Hebrews tell us, that the word here uſed for anger, ſignifieth anger carried out to the deſtruction of ſin, and that is a very gracious anger. There are two things which exceedingly declare the holineſs of a mans ſpirit. Firſt, When he can patiently bear loads of evil and wrongs in his own cauſe, or which have but a private reſpect. Secondly, When he is ready to take fire in the cauſe of God; many dull and ſluggiſh ſouls can hear God abuſed, and their ſpirits ſtir no more then a ſtone; *Elihu* was angry, but it was in the cauſe of God; or, *Becauſe* Job *juſtified himſelf rather then* God. When we are angry with ſin, we are angry (as the Apoſtle adviſeth us to be) and *ſin not.* That's anger without ſin, when we are angry with ſin; and are ſtirred up to oppoſe and ſuppreſs the pride and inſolency of mans ſpirit or ſpeeches againſt God: To be angry for our own honour, and intereſt, or Gourd, is an argument of undue love to ſelf. When God ſpared *Nineveh*, the Prophet was exceeding angry (*Jon.* 4. 1.) But his was ſinful anger, becauſe he was angry for his own ſake, fearing to be called a falſe Prophet; he ſet himſelf down to ſee what would become of the City, that he might have a perſonal glory, and he cryed up for a Prophet indeed. And when God had ſmitten his Gourd, he was angry, and angry *unto the death* (*ver.* 8.) and all becauſe he miſſed that which pleaſed himſelf. Many can be angry when they themſelves are diſcredited; but when diſhonour is caſt upon God, or his intereſt ſlighted, how quiet and tame, how cold and dull are their ſpirits! The anger of this man was a noble anger, as to the occaſion and riſe of it, *Job*s ſelf-juſtification, or

[illegible] *Id genus iræ notat, quo fertur quis ad abolitionem peccati, cum quo ſi ſit veritas juſtiſſimus affectus eſt.* Coc. *Hoc probes abnegationem tui & mundi ſi injuriarum ferens ſis, peccatum autem ferre non poſſis; idque ita ut non ad vindicandū ſed ad emendandum extimulares*

Becauſe he juſtified himſelf rather then God.] This is a high point, and may juſtly provoke our anger: *Elihu* was not angry with *Job* becauſe he juſtified himſelf againſt his Friends, but becauſe he juſtified himſelf rather then God.

Here a Queſtion will ariſe, and it will ask ſome pains to determine it: Was this true? Did *Job* juſtifie himſelf rather then God? Was it poſſible *Job* ſhould do ſo? I ſhall give only a general anſwer to this Queſtion; *Job* did not juſtifie himſelf rather then God, either explicitely, or intentionally, but by conſequents he did. And though it be granted that *Job* gave juſt occaſion of this ſharp reproof by his raſh and paſſionate ſpeeches, uttered in the heat of diſpute, and in the grief of his heart, yet it cannot be denied that *Elihu* did ſomewhat ſtrain *Job*'s words, though not beyond their ſenſe, yet beyond his ſenſe, and gave them the hardeſt interpretation (ſomewhat beſide the rule of charity) which they could bear; nor did he obſerve that meekneſs and moderation which might well have become him, to a man in that caſe. *O how hard is it not to offend or do ill, while we are doing well!*

To clear this a little further, conſider, There is a twofold ſtraining of words; Firſt, Beyond the ſenſe of the words ſpoken: Secondly, Beyond the ſenſe of the Speaker. I do not ſay, *Elihu*, in affirming this of *Job*, ſtrained his words beyond their ſenſe, but he ſtrained them beyond *Job*'s ſenſe. *Job* ſpake words which might lay him under this cenſure, that he juſtified himſelf rather then God; but this was far from his intention; for doubtleſs he had rather a thouſand times his tongue ſhould have been cut out of his mouth, then to juſtifie himſelf with it rather then God, or to ſpeak a word to the diſparagement of Gods Juſtice. So then it was hard for *Elihu* to charge *Job* thus, though *Job* had let fall ſome inconſiderate ſpeeches, which adminiſtred occaſion for ſuch a charge. And as one of the Ancients ſpeaks of difficulties and ſeeming contradictions in Scripture, *Diſtinguiſh the times, and the Scriptures will accord:* So diſtinguiſh the time of this diſpute, take *Job* at the beginning of it, before he was teazed and heated by his Friends, and then he ſpake at a very low rate of himſelf, *If I were righteous I would not know my own ſoul.* But in the heat and towards the latter end of this long diſpute, *Job* gave too much advantage for ſuch a conſtruction to be put upon his words, that *he juſtified himſelf rather then God*; then which nothing can be ſaid more unjuſtifiable, nor more reprovable.

Hence Obſerve, *To juſtifie our ſelves doth uſually and juſtly lay us open to the reproof of others*; or, *To juſtifie our ſelves, draws blame upon our ſelves.*

To juſtifie, Is four wayes uſed in Scripture.

Firſt, (which is the moſt remarkable and excellent act of it) God juſtifieth man (*Rom.* 8. 33.) *It is God that juſtifieth.* This act of divine grace conſiſts in two things; Firſt, In the imputation of Chriſts righteouſneſs to us; Secondly, In the free remiſſion of our ſins.

Secondly, Man juſtifieth God (*Luk.* 7. 29. 30.) *And all the people that heard him, and the Publicans juſtified God, being baptized with the Baptiſm of John.* Where to juſtifie imports as much as to glorifie doth (*Acts* 13. 48.) *And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and glorified the Word of the Lord*, That is, they readily approved and received the word of the Lord; when we approve the Doctrine. and doings of God, his word and works, then we juſtifie him. And how ready ſhould we be on all occaſions to juſtifie God, who only is and is altogether good, when he is ſo graciouſly ready to juſtifie us who are evil, altogether evil and ungodly.

Thirdly, We read in Scripture of man juſtifying man, which is done any of theſe three wayes.

Firſt, He that conſents to what another hath done (though the deed be evil) juſtifieth him in doing it. A ſecret liking of any mans action is (as much as that amounts to) the juſtification of his perſon.

Secondly, He that openly approveth or applaudeth what another hath done, juſtifieth him much more. To conſent with ſinners is ſinful, to flatter them in their ſin is abominable.

Thirdly, He that ſtands up to mantain and defend what another hath done, juſtifies him moſt of all. All theſe acts of juſtification *Job* denied his friends, while he ſaid (*Chap.* 27. 5.) *God forbid I ſhould juſtifie you*; that is, that I ſhould ſecretly conſent to or openly approve and maintain what you have ſaid concerning me, or you in ſaying it.

Fourthly, the ſame man is ſaid to juſtifie himſelf; this ſelf-juſtification is that which kindled the wrath of *Elihu* againſt *Job*; The Text is expreſs; *Becauſe he juſtified himſelf*, &c. This juſtification of our ſelves is of two ſorts.

Firſt, Internal and mental; when in our hearts we give ſentence for, or approve of our ſelves; when we inwardly boaſt and glory of our ſelves, whether in what we are, or in what we do and affirm. The Phariſee (*Luke* 18. 11.) *ſtood and prayed thus with himſelf* (or to himſelf, that is, ſilently) *God I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjuſt, Adulterers, or even as this Publican; I faſt twice in the week*, &c. Thus he juſtified himſelf.

Secondly, There is an external and vocal ſelf-juſtification, when we openly commend, and cry up our ſelves; Thus *Jehu* juſtified himſelf (2 *Kings* 10. 16.) *Come ſee my zeal for the Lord*; He would needs blow a Trumpet, and proclaim before all men how good a man he was, and what good he had done.

Yet further, the juſtification of our ſelves is two-fold.

Firſt, Lawful, yea and commendable; take that in two particulars.

Firſt, that man who is really and indeed in a juſtified ſtate, through the free grace of God in Chriſt, he, when a juſt occaſion is offered, may juſtifie himſelf declaratively before men; for as we ought alwayes to juſtifie our ſelves declaratively by our works, that is, give evidence by our works that we are juſtified by faith; ſo we may juſtifie our ſelves by our words, to magnifie the rich grace of God in juſtifying us freely through Chriſt. *David* called others to take notice of what God had done for his ſoul (*Pſal.* 66. 16.) Thus a Believer may lawfully at any time, and at all times, it is his duty to juſtifie himſelf before men, by giving as the Apoſtle directs (1 *Pet.* 3. 15.) *an anſwer to every one that asketh a reaſon of the hope that is in him*, (that is, of his juſtified ſtate) *with meekneſs and fear.*

Secondly, A man that is ſound at heart, honeſt and upright with God, may lawfully juſtifie himſelf, as to the integrity of his intentions, purpoſes, and deſigns, when he falls under other mens jealouſies and ſuſpitions. *David* being often unjuſtly condemned by *Saul*, was as often in this work of juſtifying himſelf againſt him (*Pſal.* 7. 8.) *Judge me, O Lord, according to my righteouſneſs, and according to mine integrity that is in me*; As if he had ſaid, I am judged unrighteouſly, but I appeal to thy righteous judgment, who fully knoweſt (which I alſo know, my conſcience bearing witneſs) mine integrity. I appeal to thy mercy for the many ſins which I have committed againſt thy ſelf, but I appeal to thy Juſtice whether (as I am accuſed) I have at all ſinned againſt *Saul*. We may read *Paul* doing the ſame at large while he profeſſed (1 *Theſ.* 2. 3, 4.) that he did not act upon covetous deſigns for himſelf, nor was a flatterer of others, but as *he was allowed of God to be put in truſt with the Goſpel, even ſo he ſpake, not as pleaſing men but God, which tryeth the heart.* As it was the continual practice of falſe Apoſtles and others to diſcredit *Paul's* Miniſtery, by bringing his perſon out of credit; ſo it was his continual care to counter-work them, by a profeſſed vindication of himſelf. We may lawfully juſtifie our ſelves and our actings, when we are not only ſuſpected, but faſly accuſed and wrongfully charged about them, and that either of theſe two wayes.

Firſt, When we are charged to have done that evil, which we never did, then we may juſtifie our ſelves by a flat denial; *David* did ſo in that caſe (*Pſal.* 7. 3, 4.) *O Lord my God, if I have done this, if there be iniquity in my hand*, &c. As if he had ſaid, O God, thou knoweſt I have not done this which many burden me with. Again (*Pſal.* 30. 11.) *Falſe witneſs did riſe up, they laid to my charge things that I knew not*; I have not had ſo much as a thought to do that which they ſay I have actually done. Thus he diſcharged himſelf of thoſe crimes, which indeed he never committed nor was guilty of.

Secondly, We may juſtifie our ſelves lawfully, when the good we have done is charged upon us as an evil deed, or we looked upon as evil doers, when we have done nothing for the matter, but our duty, and that in the manner according to rule. Thus when *Paul* had iuſtified himſelf, by denying the evil which *Tertullus* accuſed him of (*Acts.* 24. 12, 13.) he preſently juſtified himſelf alſo in what he had done well, though his enemies judged it evil (*verſ.* 14.) *But this I confeſs, that after the way which they call hereſie, ſo worſhip I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the Law and the Prophets.* This ſelf-juſtification is often very needful; for as there are ſome who call evil good, ſo there are others, who call good evil, and make that a mans fault which is his commendation. It was counted a crime by ſome of old to be leſs vitious then others, and it is accounted a crime by ſome at this day to be more vertuous then others; to be more holy, more exact, more wiſely preciſe and circumſpect in our wayes then others, many interpret folly, and ſtamp with madneſs. (2 *Cor.* 5. 13.) *Paul* was thought *beſide himſelf*, a meer Frantick in his high actings for Jeſus Chriſt; when our actions are thus miſ-repreſented, and put under ſuch diſguiſes, every good man is obliged to do himſelf right. For as we may honeſtly accuſe others, and declare the evil that we know they have done, when called to it; ſo we may ſpeak; ſo we may ſpeak out and declare the good we have done, and maintain that to be good (if it be good) which we have done, (though many call it evil) when called to it. Thus a man may ſtand upon his terms with all men, and yet be humble, and deeply ſenſible of his own ſinfulneſs and vileneſs before God. *Paul* ſaw nothing, upon the matter, but ſin in himſelf (*Rom.* 7. 14. 24.) *When I would do good, evil is preſent with me; O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death?* That is, of ſin; as 'tis called (*Rom.* 6. 6.) Thus he ſpake when he had to do with God; but when he had to do with men, when he ſaw himſelf called to anſwer the accuſations, and wipe off the aſperſions which the enemies of the Goſpel caſt upon him. (1 *Cor.* 4. 4.) then he ſaith, *I know nothing* (that is, no evil) *by my ſelf.* *Paul* was very conſcious of his natural infirmity, yet very confident of his ſpiritual integrity. And therefore when he ſaw the Glory of God was like to be obſcured through his abaſement, and to be eclipſed by the ſhadows and darkneſs which men caſt upon his Miniſtery, then he took due honour to himſelf, and made the moſt of himſelf according to truth, in the eyes of all the world. Thus I have ſhewed what juſtifying of our ſelves is lawful, and I have done it that we may more clearly diſcern, what I am to ſhew next, or

Secondly, Namely, what that juſtifying of our ſelves is, which indeed is unlawful, reprovable and blame-worthy; I ſhall inſtance it in a few particulars.

Firſt, They juſtifie themſelves ſinfully, who do good with a deſire to be ſeen and applauded of men for it; thus Chriſt charged the Phariſees (*Math.* 6. 5.) *They pray ſtanding in the Synagogues, and in the corners of the ſtreets, that they may be ſeen of men:* And (*ver.* 16.) *They disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to faſt.* It is not a ſin to be ſeen of men in doing good, but to do good to be ſeen of men is ſinful, and the patching up of a ſelf-juſtification.

Secondly, They juſtifie themſelves ſinfully, who would pretend, or ſeem to have done that good, which indeed they have not. There is as much of this hypocriſie lodging and working now in the hearts of the Children of men, as was of old in the heart of *Saul* (1 *Sam.* 15. 13, 14. *to verſe* 22.) who profeſſed highly to have fulfilled the will of God to a hairs breadth; *Bleſſed be thou of the Lord* (ſaid he to *Samuel*) *I have performed the commandment of the Lord*; Thus he inſiſted upon his integrity, and juſtified himſelf to the face of *Samuel*, who quickly convinced him that he had done the Lords work to halves.

Thirdly, They juſtifie themſelves ſinfully, who either totally deny, or extenuate and leſſen the evil that they have done; this kind of ſinful ſelf-juſtification was opened largely at the thirty third verſe of the former Chapter, upon that imprecation made by *Job*, *If I covered my tranſgreſſion as* Adam, *by hiding mine iniquity in my boſome.* I refer the Reader thither for a fuller diſcovery of it.

Fourthly, They juſtifie themſelves ſinfully, who mingle their own works with the works or righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt for juſtification; for though ſuch pretend to Chriſt, and ſay they take up Chriſt and his righteouſneſs for juſtification yet it will be found a ſelf juſtification only; ſeeing unleſs Chriſt juſtifie us wholly, he juſtifieth us not at all; as the Apoſtle concludes (*Gal.* 5.4.) *Chriſt is become of no effect unto you, whoſoever of you are juſtified by the Law; ye are fallen from grace*; That is, ye who mingle your works with grace, are not juſtified by grace, but (which will be (unleſs repented of) your condemnation) by your works.

Laſtly, They juſtifie themſelves ſinfully, who ſay they are juſtified by Chriſt from their ſins, while they continue in their ſins, and hold faſt their iniquities; for as they that mingle their own good works with the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, are ſelf-juſtifiers, ſo alſo are they that take hold of the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, while they will not let go, nor part with their evil works. To look for juſtification while we continue in the love and practice of any known ſin and unrighteouſneſs, is as ſinful as to expect juſtification by our own righteouſneſs.

Object. But doth not the Scripture ſay, that *God juſtifieth the ungodly*? (*Rom.* 4. 5.)

I anſwer, Though God juſtifieth the ungodly, yet the juſtified are not ungodly; God juſtifieth the ungodly and makes them holy by the grace of ſanctification, as well as righteous by the grace of juſtification: Righteouſneſs of life is alwayes the fruit of righteouſneſs by faith. Therefore if any man continuing in any known ſin, ſaith he is juſtified, he hath juſtified himſelf, for none do ſo who are juſtified of God. O how deeply are they condemned by God who thus juſtifie themſelves! Nothing is more deſirable then to be juſtified by God, and nothing is more dangerous then to juſtifie our ſelves, either by our own righteouſneſs, or in our righteouſneſs. Now as to juſtifie our ſelves in any of theſe wayes, is exceeding ſinful before God, ſo to juſtifie our ſelves any way, layeth us open or obnoxious to the cenſures of men. And that's the reaſon why this holy man *Job* was ſo deeply cenſured; for though he juſtified not himſelf in any of thoſe ſenſes which are ſinful, yet he did ſome way juſtifie himſelf, and while he juſtified himſelf only as he might, he was condemned as having juſtified himſelf in a way which he might not, We had need be very cautious, how we any way or in any kind juſtified our ſelves, few having done it without incurring cenſure, if not condemnation from others.

But what was *Job's* ſelf-juſtification, or of what kind, that it raiſed ſuch a duſt, yea kindled ſuch a flame of Anger in the breaſt of *Elihu*? I anſwer;

Job did not juſtifie himſelf by lies or falſhoods; that was not the matter for which *Elihu* was angry with *Job*, but becauſe he ſuppoſed he was more tender of his own name then of Gods. Thus the Text ſpeaks expreſly; *Againſt* Job *was his wrath kindled, becauſe he juſtified himſelf rather then God.*

Hence Note, *To juſtifie our ſelves rather then God, is not only ſinful but flagitious, not only ſinful but blaſphemous.*

Let God be true and every man a lyar (Rom. 3, 4.) wo to thoſe who go about to ſave their own honour, by ſpeaking that which reflects diſhonour upon God, or who keep their own credit untoucht, by expoſing his to any hazzard; let God be juſt and every man unrighteous. As whoſoever exalts himſelf, humbles God (when we exalt our ſelves vainly) we humble God as much as we can, and ſo it will be interpreted) ſo he that juſtifies himſelf in any degree unduely accuſeth God, how much more he that juſtifieth himſelf rather then God? To commend or praiſe our ſelves, in the hearing of men is unſavory, to commend or praiſe our ſelves rather then men (who are our fellows, yea though our inferiors) is odious, how much more to juſtifie our ſelves rather then God, who is infinitely above us. It becomes the beſt of men, to accuſe, judge and condemn themſelves, to draw up their own Inditement, and ſay, we have deſerved worſe then we ſuffer from the hand of God, and have done leſs then duty requires at [illegible] hand.

But, Becauſe to juſtifie our ſelves rather then God, is a thing ſo horrid, few will be brought under this conviction, that they are guilty of it, or chargeable with it. And therefore I ſhall endeavour to make it appear, that there are many who though they do not juſtifie themſelves rather then God directly and barefaced, yet they do it ſecretly or conſtructively. I ſhall make out this in general as it may concern any man, while I more diſtinctly ſhew, how *Job* incurred this ſuſpition, and gave *Elihu* more then a probable ground to ſay, that he juſtified himſelf rather then God. *Job* never ſaid, he was more juſt then God, but he ſaid many things which gave *Elihu* occaſion to ſay, That ſurely he *juſtified himſelf rather then God.*

Firſt, When he ſpake ſo largely of his own innocency, ſpending five whole Chapters in the vindication of it, and ſpake ſo little, comparatively, of the Righteouſneſs and juſtice of God, this might bring him under a ſuſpition of juſtifying himſelf rather then God. For what could this intimate to his hearers, but that he had better performed the part of a gracious and righteous man, then God had of a gracious Father or righteous Judge. Though all that be true (how much ſoever it is) which we ſpeak of our ſelves, yet it is not good to ſpeak much, much leſs all of our ſelves; eſpecially when upon that account, we may ſeem to diſpute either the juſtice or goodneſs of God in dealing out the troubles and afflictions, under which we ſuffer.

Secondly, While *Job* did ſo often and ſo boldly offer to plead his cauſe before Gods tribunal, and was ſo importunate for a hearing, this carried a ſecret implication, that God had not dealt well with him, or at leaſt had not conſidered his cauſe throughly, for if he had, ſurely he ſhould have found more favourable dealing from God then he daily experienced.

Thirdly, While *Job* complained ſo often and greatly of the greatneſs of his afflictions, of the weight and heavineſs of the hand of God upon him, and, that he being but a poor worm, the great and mighty God ſhould ſtretch out his ſtrong hand againſt him; This alſo might be conſtrued; as if he thought God did not take a due meaſure of his infirmities, but let temptations take hold of him which were not common to man, and burdened him beyond what he was able to bear. Now, what was this, but to juſtified himſelf rather then God?

Fourthly, While he complained that the hand of God had not only touched him, but even abode and dwelt upon him, that he was conſumed from morning to morning, that he had not only weariſom nights, but months of vanity appointed to him, that his afflictions were not only exceeding ſharp, but exceeding long, yea that though they were extreamly violent, yet perpetual, this bare hard upon the goodneſs and wiſdom of God. For, to ſay that God overacts in the meaſure, and exceeds in the continuance of our afflictions, reflect alike upon the honour of God, and are rather a juſtification of our ſelves in bearing the Croſs, then of God in laying it on.

Fifthly, *Job* in ſeveral paſſages of this book deſired God to make an end of him, and take him out of this world; he was troubled that God did not kill him out of hand, or outright; this was a juſtification of himſelf rather then God, as if he knew better, whether it were more fit for him to live in a ſickly, weakly, painful condition, or to be delivered out of it by death. As we ſhould be willing to die, when God calls, ſo to live till God calls, and not to haſten death; He that believes (as he ought) will not make haſt out of the troubles of this world, much leſs out of the world, becauſe he finds it troubleſome.

Sixthly, He ſeemed to juſtifie himſelf rather then God, while he was ſo much troubled, becauſe God did not preſently reveal to him the reaſon of his troubles; *Why is light given to a man whoſe way is hid, and whom God hath hedged in?* Was his complaint (*Chap.* 3.23.) that is, wherefore is the light of this natural life given to me, whoſe way is in the dark, and who know not the reaſon why I am thus afflicted? We ought to ſit down in this aſſurance, be our condition never ſo reſtleſs, that the moſt wiſe God hath a reaſon for every ſtroke of trouble he layeth upon our loins, though we ſee it not. They who cannot fully reſign themſelves and their wayes to God, yea, reſolve their wills into the will of God, are much diſquieted and reſtleſs in their minds, [illegible] they ſee not the reaſon of Gods dealing with them [illegible] why it is ſo with them? Let all ſuch know, this alſo is to make our ſelves wiſer then God, and to juſtifie our ſelves rather then him. And therefore from all theſe conſiderations take theſe two inferences, which may keep us ever at a diſtance from this high preſumption, yea (which we ſhould carefully avoid) from the ſhadow and appearance of it; the juſtifying of our ſelves rather then God.

Firſt, It is enough to condemn us under the guilt of this ſin, if we allow not all that God doth to be good, yea and beſt for us, how much or how long, or in what kind ſoever he is pleaſed to afflict us with evil. It is our duty *to accept*, that is, to take well at Gods hand, *the puniſhment of our iniquity* (Lev. 26.41.) how much more to welcome the soreſt and heavieſt croſs which he is pleaſed to lay upon us, either for the chaſtiſement of our failings and falls, or for the tryal and exerciſe of our graces. It is ſaid (2 *Sam.* 3. 36.) *Whatſoever the King* (meaning *David*) *did, pleaſed all the people*; There was a wonderful concent and harmony between the peoples ſpirit and *David*'s actions; Surely whatſoever God doth, ſhould pleaſe all his people, whatever he diſpenſeth, be it ſweet or ſowr, hard or ſoft, light or darkneſs, it ſhould pleaſe all his people, and pleaſe them highly; and ſo far as we come ſhort of this frame of heart, ſo far do we juſtifie our ſelves rather then God.

Secondly, *It is a fault not only if we are not ſatisfied and pleaſed with what God doth, but if we do not praiſe and glorifie God in and for what he doth; and that not only in his juſtice that he hath done us no wrong, but in his goodneſs, that he hath done all for our profit.* That which turns to mans profit, ſhould alſo turn to the praiſe of God; but (as the holy Apoſtle aſſureth us, *Heb.* 12.10.) God chaſtneth his Children *for their profit* (and that the beſt and nobleſt profit) *that they might be partakers of his holineſs*; therefore we ought to praiſe and glorifie him, or to glorifie him with our praiſes while he is chaſtning us. *Truely God is good to* Iſrael (Pſal. 73.1.) He is ſo not only when he gives *Iſrael* outward good things, or things good to ſenſe, but when he afflicts, when he writes bitter things againſt his *Iſrael* and ſhews them only viſions of ſorrow and matter of amazement. Till our ſouls are wrought up to this Juſtification of God in his goodneſs, when things are worſt with us, we in ſome degree juſtifie our ſelves rather then God.

Again, For as much as *Job*, who cannot in all things be acquitted from this charge of juſtifying himſelf rather then God, was yet of another ſpirit and principle, then indeed or profeſſedly to juſtifie himſelf rather then God.

Obſerve; *We may ſpeak amiſs and wrong God when we do not intend it, nor have the leaſt thought to do ſo.*

David prayeth for the pardon of unknown ſins (*Pſal.* 19.12.) *Cleanſe thou me from ſecret faults, keep back thy Servant alſo from preſumptuous ſins, let them not have dominion over me.* To juſtifie our ſelves rather then God knowingly, is a preſumptuous ſin, to lay any blame upon God directly is blaſphemy; *David* prayed not only to be kept from ſuch groſs ſins, but to be cleanſed from ſecret ſins, that is, from thoſe ſins which he did not know that he had committed them, and which he never had any intent to commit. We may ſo miſ-place words and miſ-guide actions, when we think not of it, that we may quickly ſin againſt God, yea and juſtifie our ſelves rather then God; That which we do or ſpeak is to be judged by a rule, whether it be good or evil, not meerly by our intentions though good nor by our not intending of evil. We may be judged to have done or ſaid *evil, though we meant no evil in doing or in ſaying ſo.* Words and actions well meant may ſometimes juſtly undergo an ill conſtruction. They that hear ſhould interpret every word in the moſt favorable ſence; but if we ſpeak unwarily and unſafely or (as *Moſes* once) *unadviſedly with our lips*, we may thank our ſelves if we fall under reproof for what we have ſpoken. Therefore beg of God to ſet a watch over your mouth, and to keep the door of your lips, let nothing paſs unexamined. 'Tis our wiſdom to read every word over and over before we ſpeak it; many hear ill, who have ſpoken well, how much more may they who ſpeak doubtfully or dangerouſly. We have ſeen the cauſe why *Elihu* was ſo angry with *Job*, the next verſe will tell us why he was ſo angry with *Job*'s three Friends.

Verſe 3. **Alſo againſt his three Friends was his wrath kindled, becauſe they had found no anſwer, and yet had condemned** Job.

We find *Elihu* angry on all hands, angry with *Job*, and angry with his three friends; ſome query upon this renewing of his anger (as God did *Jonah*) whether he did well to be thus angry or thus to appear in paſſion, and break out afreſh in wrath? And whether the reaſons of his anger will bear him out to have been angry with reaſon; anger prevails moſt in thoſe in whom reaſon prevails leaſt, and they have uſually the ſtrongeſt paſſions, who have the weakeſt judgments; Children and aged perſons, the ſick and pained are apt to be angry with others, and hard to be pleaſed themſelves. And 'tis a general *axiom*; *The weak and impotent are naturally angry and paſſionate.* Therefore we had need look to our paſſions, that they grow not ſtrong, for they will ſoon proclaim us weak: He is a wiſe man indeed, that can be at once wiſe and angry. (*Proverbs* 19. 11.) *The diſcretion of a man deferreth his anger, and it is his glory to paſs over a tranſgreſſion*; And as there *Solomon* teacheth us, that diſcretion maſtereth anger, ſo he aſſureth us, that angry perſons are more then indiſcreet, fooliſh. (*Eccleſ.* 7.9.) *Anger reſteth in the boſome of Fools.* Anger often aſſaults the prudent, but if it abides and takes up its lodging in any boſome, 'tis in the boſome of a Fool, at leaſt, in that point, he doth fooliſhly who lendeth his boſome (though but one night) for anger to lodge in. And as at all times, ſo then eſpecially we ſhould narrowly watch and ſeverely bridle our paſſions, when (as *Elihu* here did) we undertake to adviſe thoſe who are miſtaken, or to reduce thoſe that are out of the way; when we give counſel to others, we ſhould be ſedate and quiet our ſelves. A Phyſician muſt not be angry with his patient, nor is it proper to apply medicinal healing counſel to the mind of another with an exulcerated mind. Much might be ſaid concerning this anger of *Elihu*, but I have ſpoken to that before in opening the former verſe, therefore I ſhall not ſtay here upon it; but proceed to conſider the reaſon why he was ſo.

Invalidum omne naturâ querulum eſt.

Becauſe they had found no anſwer, and yet had condemned Job.

Not to find an anſwer may proceed;

Firſt, From a defect of pains and induſtry in ſeeking it; an anſwer muſt be ſought and dig'd for, it muſt be ſtudied and prayed for, elſe it will not be found.

Secondly, The not finding of an anſwer, may riſe from the defect of ability, not of induſtury; many labour hard, but can make nothing of it; 'Tis probable *Job*'s three friends laboured much, yet found no anſwer; and then it was no defect of induſtry but of ability, they found no anſwer, becauſe they could not. They (as we commonly ſpeak) did even beat their brains, and bite their nails for an anſwer, but could not attain it; they pumpt hard, but the water would not come, God hid the thing from their eyes; ſo then, they had not found any anſwer, becauſe after all their ſearch they could not; nor ſhould it ſeem ſtrange to us that they could not. At beſt we know but in part here, and till God by his Spirit teach us, we know nothing at all; ſo that I ſay, it ſhould not ſeem ſtrange to us, that theſe wiſe and good men could find no anſwer for *Job*, but that which follows ſeems ſtrange, even to amazement, that though they could not, *yet* (which, how alſo could they anſwer to their own conſciences!)

Had condemned Job.] What, condemn a man, and not anſwer him? 'tis worſe then to condemn a man, and not hear him. Poſſibly he that is condemned unheard, may yet deſerve a condemnation; but if we condemn a man unanſwered, he certainly, as to us, is condemned undeſervedly. And therefore this courſe of proceeding (if any) is liable not only to ſuſpition whether it be right, but to condemnation as utterly unrighteous. Though it may be a good mans caſe not to find an anſwer, yet ſurely a good man will not condemn when he cannot anſwer.

But it may be demanded; Did *Job*'s friends indeed find no anſwer before they condemned him? we have heard of their anſwers all along. No ſooner had *Job* ended his former ſpeeches, but they preſently anſwered (*Chap.* 4. 1.) *Then* Eliphaz *the Temanite anſwered and ſaid* (Chap. 8. 1.) *Then anſwered* Bildad *the Shuhite and ſaid* (Chap. 11. 1.) *Then anſwered* Zophar *the Naamathite and ſaid*; yea they all three anſwered *Job* a ſecond time, and two of them a third, how then could *Elihu* juſtly ſay, *they found no anſwer, and yet had condemned* Job?

For anſwer to this objection; I ſay, they anſwered *Job*, but they did not anſwer ſufficiently. The vulgar Latin tranſlation puts this gloſs (which is more then the rules of tranſlation allow) into the Text, rendring the original thus; *Becauſe they had found no rational anſwer, and yet had condemned* Job. They did not find out nor hit upon the right anſwer. improper and inſufficient anſwers, how many ſoever of them we heap up againſt any mans argument, are no anſwers, they are not worthy to be called anſwers. That only is an anſwer which carrieth a conviction in it, which reacheth the ſtate and ſtrength of the queſtion, or removeth the objection. In this ſenſe *Job*'s three friends *had found no anſwer and yet had condemned* Job.

Eò quod non inveniſſent reſponſionem rationalem. Vulg.

The Hebrew *is they made him wicked*, or condemned him as a wicked man. So the Septuagint, *they had no anſwer for him, and yet concluded him wicked*; we ſay, *they had condemned* Job; And the reaſon of it is, becauſe to condemn a man is to leave under a ſuppoſal of wickedneſs, and to ſtigmatize or brand him for a wicked man. All the wicked ſhall at laſt be condemned, and none ought to be condemned, nor are any condemned juſtly now but the wicked; *He that juſtifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the juſt, even they both are an abomination to the Lord*, (*Pro.* 17. 15.) There is a very elegant tranſpoſition of the words in the Hebrew; we may render the Text thus; *He that juſtifieth the wicked, and wickedeth the juſt*, &c. The Law of *Moſes* gave an expreſs rule againſt this perverſion of Judgment, in terms quite croſs to thoſe in *Solomon* (Deut. 25. 1.) *If there be any controverſie between men, and they come unto Judgment, that the Judges may judge them, then they ſhall juſtifie the righteous, and condemn the wicked.* Which we may render thus; *They ſhall juſtifie the juſt and wickediſe the wicked*, that is, they ſhall declare the juſt man juſt, and the wicked man to be wicked. That man either really is, or is accounted wicked, who is caſt in his cauſe and condemned. That was a dreadful ſentence (the Scripture (*Acts* 1. 20.) ſhews it fulfilled upon the traytor *Judas*) *when he is judged, let him be condemned* (Pſal. 109. 7.) We put in the Margin, *let him go out guilty or wicked.* In this ſenſe *Job*'s three friends when when they condemned him, caſt him as a wicked man, though they had nothing to anſwer the plea which he made for his own integrity. We muſt not conceive any ſuch wickedneſs in them, that they were reſolved to condemn him right or wrong, yet they held their concluſion againſt the light and reaſon of all his premiſes, and though they could prove no ill againſt him, yet vehemently ſuſpecting him, they concluded he was an ill man, and ſo condemned him.

וירשיעו καὶ ἔθεντο αὐτὸν εἶναι ἀσεβῆ. Sept. *& poſuerunt eum eſſe impium.*

Damnarunt pro impio, etſi nulla in eum crimina probare poſſent quibus ille ſuam vitam contaminaſſent. Merc.

> Hence Note, Firſt, *Some will proceed to condemn both perſons and opinions, though they can give no reaſonable account why they condemn either.*

We read (*Iſa.* 56. 10.) *of dumb Dogs, that cannot bark*, that is, who know not what to ſpeak or ſay to purpoſe. There are many who (in this ſenſe) cannot bark, yet they will bite; and when they have no anſwer, they will condemn; and uſually dumb Dogs that cannot bark have the ſharpeſt teeth and are beſt at biting, or they are better at condemning then at anſwering. As ſome find an anſwer where there is none; that is, when ſuch reaſons are laid before them as are unanſwerable, yet they will not give over anſwering, but ſtill ſeek a knot in a ruſh, and draw the ſaw of contention as well without end as without cauſe; ſo others cannot find an anſwer where it is; yet when they cannot anſwer, they can cenſure and condemn him for wicked or perverſe, whom they cannot prove ſo. 'Tis much eaſier to ſay a man is faulty then to find his fault; yet they who have a mind to find faults, are ſeldome to ſeek for ſomewhat or other which they call ſo.

> Note Secondly, *To condemn opinions or perſons when we cannot anſwer them, is a practice juſtly condemnable.*

'Tis unjuſt (as was intimated before) to condemn a man before he is heard. For though poſſibly a man unheard may have juſtice when he is condemned, yet all agree 'tis injuſtice to condemn him when he is not heard; now if it be injuſtice to condemn a wicked man before he is heard, how unjuſt is it to condemn a man in whom we can find no wickedneſs after we have heard him?

Thirdly, From the manner of the phraſe here uſed,

> Note, *To condemn a man is to render him wicked.*

Condemnation (as was ſhewed) is due only to the wicked, and if an innocent be condemned; he is reputed wicked, and receives puniſhment as guilty. As that ſentence of condemnation which proceeds out of the mouth of God againſt impenitent ſinners and evil doers, binds the guilt of their evil deeds upon them, and delivers them up to puniſhment; ſo he that condemns his Brother, faſtneth guilt upon him, and ſpeaks him deſerving puniſhment; for as where guilt is, puniſhment followeth, ſo a fault is conceived to go before. There are theſe three things in ſin, the fault, the guilt, and the blot, or pollution of it; he that faſtneth guilt by condemnation, faſtneth the fault and blot much more, how ſad is it then to be deſervedly under condemnation? And how great is the priviledge of Believers, to whom (though in themſelves they deſerve it) *there is no condemnation!* (Rom. 8. 1.) They who in this life are paſt condemnation, are alſo paſſed from death to life. Many are condemned who are good in the ſight of God; but all condemnation makes a man evil, yea wicked in the ſight of the World. And becauſe every ſentence of condemnation renders a man wicked in the eyes of worldly men, therefore righteous Magiſtrates will not condemn haſtily; They will not judge (as Chriſt did not, *Iſa.* 11. 3.) *after the ſight of their eyes, nor reprove after the hearing of their ears*; To judge *by the ſight of the eye*, is to judge according to the firſt appearance of things, before inquiſition hath been made, and to reprove by *the hearing of the ear*, is to reprove according to the firſt report which is made, without examination. We muſt not judge thus, becauſe we muſt judge in righteouſneſs, which cannot be, if we judge thus, How deliberate, how tender ſhould we be in condemning any man, ſeeing condemnation doth not only impoſe a puniſhment upon, but ſuppoſe a crime, a wickedneſs, a fault in him? It is grievous enough to bear puniſhment, but to bear the burden of a crime or fault, is in reality much more grievous.

But ſeeing *Elihu* declares his anger againſt *Job*'s three friends, becauſe they condemned *Job*, and had found no anſwer. Some will ſay, did not *Elihu* condemn *Job* ſo too? No, he condemned him indeed, but he firſt found an anſwer. Again, *Elihu* condemned *Job*, but not as his friends condemned him, his friends condemned him as to his ſtate, judging him unſound at heart; but *Elihu* condemned him only as to this or that particular act or ſpeech; he condemned him, Firſt, Becauſe he ſpake ſo largely in the juſtification of himſelf (*Chap.* 33. 8, 9, 10, 11.) *Surely thou haſt ſpoken in my hearing, and I have heard the voice of thy words, ſaying, I am clean without tranſgreſſion; I am innocent, neither is there iniquity in me.* (And Chap. 34. 5, 6.) *For* Job *hath ſaid, I am righteous, and God hath taken away my judgment. Should I lie againſt my right? My wound is incurable without tranſgreſſion.* Secondly, He condemned him for complying with the wicked: not that he thought *Job* acted like them, but becauſe being a godly man, he in his ſufferings ſpake ſometimes and behaved himſelf like them (*Chap.* 34. 8.) *Which goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, and walketh with wicked men.* Further, he charged him with ſtubbornneſs againſt God (*Chap.* 34. 37.) *For he addeth rebellion unto his ſin;* and (which ſounds ſtrangely) with an eaſineſs towards evil men (*Chap.* 36. 17.) *Thou haſt fulfilled the judgment of the wicked: judgment and juſtice take hold on thee.* Thus *Elihu* condemned *Job* many wayes; but he condemned him not, without finding an anſwer.

Yea, I may ſay, *Elihu* is he, who in this great controverſie and difficulty, hath found an anſwer, and yet hath not condemned *Job*, that is, he hath not condemned him as his three friends had condemned him: He condemned not *Job* as one perverſe and crooked in his wayes, he condemned him not as one that feared not God and eſchewed not evil, he condemned him not as an hypocrite, rotten at heart and unſound in his eſtate; thus *Elihu* found an anſwer for *Job*, but condemned him not, no not while his wrath was kindled againſt him, becauſe he juſtified himſelf rather then God.

And the proceſs of this Book will ſhew, that though *Elihu* (in this ſenſe ſpoken of) condemned not *Job*, yet he found an unanſwerable anſwer, ſuch an anſwer, as to which *Job* neither could nor would make any reply; and that is the ſpecial buſineſs we have to look at in proſecuting his diſcourſe, even to find out the anſwer which he found; for that will be as the key of the work, to open the whole matter to us, and to ſhew us wherein *Job* had either failed or exceded, either in bearing the croſſes laid upon him by God, or in managing this controverſie with his friends.

VERS. 4, 5, 6, 7.

Now Elihu had waited till Job had ſpoken: Becauſe they were elder then he,

When Elihu ſaw that there was no anſwer in the mouth of theſe three men, then his wrath was kindled.

And Elihu the Son of Barachel the Buzite anſwered and ſaid, I am young, and ye are very old, wherefore I was afraid, and durſt not ſhew you mine opinion.

I ſaid Dayes ſhould ſpeak, and multitude of years ſhould teach wiſdom.

This Context aſſigns the reaſon, Firſt, Why *Elihu* forbared ſo long to ſpeak, namely, becauſe he was young: that reaſon you have in the fourth verſe, as alſo in the ſixth and ſeventh. Secondly, Why he began at laſt to ſpeak, namely, becauſe his elders, thoſe grave ancient men would or could ſpeak no more. This he lays down in the fifth verſe, *When* Elihu *ſaw that there was no anſwer in the mouth of theſe three men, then* &c.

Verſe 4. **Now Elihu had waited till Job had ſpoken.**

The Hebrew is, *He expected* Job *in words.* *Job* was long in words, or he ſpake long in many words; and all that while *Elihu* waited, he kept ſilent; but when *Job* had ſpoken out, and *Elihu* had ſtay'd ſome time after to ſee whether either himſelf or his friends would ſpeak again, then he began. Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates, *yet* Elihu *waited to ſpeak with* Job. The words notes the moſt patient expectation, a waiting with much long-ſufferance, a waiting alſo in much confidence, as reſerving our ſelves till better times, or for a more favourable diſpenſation. So the word is uſed (*Dan.* 12. 12.) *Bleſſed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thouſand three hundred and five and thirty dayes;* that is, Bleſſed is he that waiteth out thoſe dayes of the Propheſie there ſpecified; he hath a ſtretched-out patience, that waiteth to the very laſt day, and to the laſt of that day. The word is uſed again (*Habak.* 2. 3.) *If the viſion* (that is, the mercy or deliverance revealed and promiſed) *tarry, wait for it;* that is, If it tarry beyond the time ſuppoſed by man (it never tarries beyond the time appointed by God) wait patiently for it, that is, for the accompliſhment of it; yea the word implyeth a waiting, as it were, with open mouth, or gaping to receive that good which is aſſured by propheſie or in the promiſe. Such an expectation is here aſcribed to *Elihu*, he waited for the iſſue of that great and long debate between *Job* and his three friends, or he gaped for ſuch a ſolid anſwer as might ſatisfie him, and determine the Queſtion under debate. *Now* Elihu *had waited till* Job *had ſpoken.*

חכה
Sapientem expectationem ſonat, qua duramus in malis, nos rebus melioribus ſervantes.
Bold.

Hence Note, Firſt, *As it is alwayes our duty to wait on God, ſo ſometimes on men.*

We ſhould wait, Firſt, To ſee what men will do for us. We ſhould wait, Secondly, To hear what men have to ſay to us; we ſhould wait for counſel, for comfort, for inſtruction, for conviction. We ſhould wait, Thirdly, To perform duty, and to do good to men. Thus God is pleaſed to wait upon (his creature) man, (*Iſa.* 30. 18.) *Therefore will I wait to be gracious.* As God waiteth to beſtow acts of grace on man, ſo man ſhould wait to perform offices of love and reſpect to man, or to give him advice, help and aſſiſtance, as his caſe and needs require.

Secondly, Conſider *Elihu* who had waited long as a hearer, was afterwards a great ſpeaker.

Hence Note, *They that will ſpeak to any mans caſe rightly, muſt firſt hear him patiently.*

They muſt be hearers, who would be learners. *Paul* ſate at the feet of *Gamaliel,* there he waited as a learner; and if they muſt wait as hearers, who would be learners, how much more ought they, who would be teachers, reprovers, or reformers?

Thirdly, *Elihu* waited that he might ſpeak opportunely, or in time.

Hence Note, *Due times and ſeaſons of ſpeaking muſt be obſerved and taken.*

(*Eccleſiaſtes* 3. 7.) *There is a time to ſpeak, and a time to keep ſilence.* The providences of God point wiſe men to both. And uſually times of ſilence fit us for times of ſpeaking; *Every thing is beautiful in its ſeaſon;* words ſpoken in their ſeaſon, are not only more effectual, but more beautiful, they are *like Apples of Gold in pictures of Silver.* And therefore as the wiſe man gives us caution, (*Eccleſ.* 5. 2.) *Not to be raſh with our mouths to utter any thing before God:* So we ſhould not be raſh with our mouths to utter any thing before men, but well to conſider what we have to ſay, and wait our time to ſay it. The Apoſtle *James* (*Chap.* 1. 19.) would have us *ſwift to hear, ſlow to ſpeak;* and probably, the ſlower we are to ſpeak, the ſurer we ſpeak; *Haſty ſpeaking hath given men more dangerous ſtumbles and falls, then ever haſty going did.* The Prophet repreſents our Lord Jeſus Chriſt thus beſpeaking his Father as to his preparation and furniture for the exerciſe of his Prophetical, yea of his whole Mediatorial office (*Iſa.* 50. 4.) *Thou haſt given me the tongue of the learned that I might know how to ſpeak a word in ſeaſon.* As there is much wiſdom in hitting the matter what to ſpeak, and the manner of ſpeaking, how to cloath and dreſs the matter of our ſpeech; ſo there is much wiſdom in hitting the time and ſeaſon when to ſpeak. And as to time a thing well in acting, ſo to time it well in ſpeaking, is the better half of it. Elihu *waited till* Job *had ſpoken.* What I have now touched, may be one reaſon of his waiting; But the ſpecial reaſon of it follows in the Text.

Becauſe they were elder then he. And good reaſon that he ſhould wait upon his elders.

זקן
Significat non tantum ſenem ſed ſenio confectum, & non tantum ſenem ætate ſed ſapientia.

The Hebrew is, *They were elder for dayes;* they were not only *old men for dayes, but elder for dayes then he;* The word, ſtrictly taken, imports a man more then old, even one that is worn with age. Further, it denotes a two-fold elderſhip; Firſt, an elderſhip in time, dayes or years. Secondly, an elderſhip in wiſdom, and underſtanding. *They are our Elders indeed, who are wiſer then we; elderſhip in time deſerves reſpect, but elderſhip in wiſdom commands it.* And as ſuch are expreſt by this word in the Hebrew, ſo both the *Grecians* and *Romans* expreſs their wiſe men by a word of the ſame force, *Senators* were Elders, not alwayes in time (there was no Law much leſs neceſſity that every Senator ſhould be an old man) but in underſtanding: Every Senator ought to be a wiſe man, though not an old man. They who are to govern others wiſely, had need be furniſhed with wiſdome themſelves. Gray hairs alone cannot make a good Magiſtrate. We read the word applyed both to Church-Elders called (*Iſa.* 37. 7.) *The Elders of the Prieſts*, and to State-Elders, called Elders of the people (*Exod.* 17. 5.) or of the Land (*Gen.* 50. 7.) *The Elders of the Land of* Egypt *went with them.* 'Tis ſaid (*Pſal.* 105. 21, 22.) Pharaoh *made* Joſeph *Lord of his houſe, and ruler of all his ſubſtance, to bind his Princes at his pleaſure, and teach his Senators wiſdom.* Young *Joſeph* made *Pharaoh*'s wiſe men wiſer, and gave counſel to his counſellers. Here *Elihu* calls *Job*'s friends *Elders* and we may take him either ſpeaking ſtrictly, that they were his Elders in time, or ſpeaking modeſtly, that they were his Elders in wiſdom, knowledge, and underſtanding, and therefore he was not haſty to ſpeak, but gave them their ſcope, waiting till *Job* had ſpoken, *Becauſe they were elder then he.*

Hence Note, Firſt in general, *Young men ſhould ſhew reſpect and wait upon their Elders.*

The Apoſtle would not have *Timothy* ſlighted, though young (1 *Tim.* 4. 12.) *Let no man deſpiſe thy youth*: He chargeth the people not to deſpiſe *Timothy* becauſe young; and he chargeth *Timothy* to carry it ſo, that none might have the ſhew of a cauſe to deſpiſe him though young; *Let no man deſpiſe thy youth*; let not thoſe that ſeek occaſion find it. Now, as young men, eſpecially young Miniſters ſhould be ſo holy and grave in their converſation, as not to draw diſreſpect or contempt upon themſelves, and as no man ought to deſpiſe the young meerly becauſe they are young; ſo all men ought to honour old age. The old Law was expreſs for it (*Levit.* 19. 32.) *Thou ſhalt riſe up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man, and fear thy God, I am the Lord.* See, how theſe two are joyned together, *Thou ſhalt honour the face of the old man, and fear thy God*; As if he had ſaid, honour old men in the fear of God, or ſhew fear to God in the reverence and honour which thou giveſt to old men, who having lived a long time or many dayes in the world, bear at leaſt a ſhadow of the eternity of God who is *The ancient of dayes*, who lives and abides for ever. There is a two-fold ſtamp of God upon old men, more then upon other men, Firſt their very age hath a ſtamp of God upon it, for though all ages put together, are not a moment to eternity, yet, as to our computation and reckoning, old age bears the faireſt image of eternity: Secondly, Old men bear a reſemblance of God in their wiſdom, ('tis to be ſuppoſed that the oldeſt are wiſeſt, as *Elihu* ſpeaks *ver.* 7.) So then old men are to be reverenced not only for their precedence in time, but for their experience, wiſdom, knowledge and prudence, all which repreſent them more like to God then younger men.

Seris venit uſus ab annis.

Mira in hoc elucet antiquorum in publicis concertationibus gravitas & ſtupendum inviolabiliter ſervati in dicendo ac reſpondendo ordinis exemplum. Bold.

Secondly, Look to the ſpecial way wherein *Elihu* ſhewed reverence to his Elders, even by his long ſilence; he did not rudely nor raſhly break into diſcourſe, but waited till they had done. This modeſty of *Elihu* is both commendable and imitable, who would ſay nothing as long as *Job* or any of his friends had any thing to ſay, becauſe they were elder then he. As the light of nature teacheth reverence to the aged in all caſes, ſo more particularly, in this. There ſhines (as to this point) an admirable comlineſs in the diſputes of the Ancients, and a moſt eminent example of order inviolably kept both in propoſing and anſwering. Their rule or maxime was, *Let the Seniors ſpeak, let the Juniors hear: Let Old men teach, let young men learn.* It is the note of a learned Commentator upon this place from what himſelf had obſerved. Living (ſaith he) once at *Paris* in *France*, where, in a Monaſtery, *three Indians* were brought up and inſtructed in the Chriſtian Religion, I could not but admire to behold how ſtudiouſly, and ſtrictly they kept to the Laws of ſpeaking, the younger not offering a word till the Elder had done; The practice of theſe *Indians* brought with them out of Heatheniſm may reprove the imprudence of many, yea the impudence of ſome young men among us, who will be firſt in talk, when their betters and Elders are in place; The Prophet threatned this as a great judgment (*Iſa.* 3. 5.) *The Child ſhall behave himſelf proudly againſt the Ancient.* The Child is not to be taken here ſtrictly, but for any inferiour in age, though poſſibly himſelf be arrived to the ſtate of manhood. As if the Prophet had ſaid, there ſhall be a general confuſion among all Degrees of men, without reſpect had to age or place, every ſtripling will take the boldneſs to talk and act unſeemly before his betters. Obeyſance and ſilence, bowing the body, and holding the peace, are reſpects which ought to be paid to our Superiours whether in time or authority.

Majores natu loquantur, juniores audiant; ſenes doceant, adoleſcentes diſcant; Pulcherrima diſciplinæ ſententia. Druſ.

But as young men ſhould not be forward to ſpeak in the preſence of their Elders, ſo they ſhould not be afraid to ſpeak when there is cauſe for it, eſpecially when their Elders forbear or refuſe to ſpeak any more. Thus *Elihu* who had long kept his mouth (as *David* in another caſe did Pſal. 39. 1.) *with a bridle, and was dumb with ſilence, yet at laſt his heart was hot within him, and while he was muſing, the fire burned, and* (as it followeth) *he ſpake with his tongue.*

Verſe 5. **When Elihu ſaw that there was no anſwer in the mouth of theſe three men, then his wrath was kindled.**

When Elihu *ſaw it*, that is, when he was as much aſſured of it (by their geſture and carriage) as if it had been viſible, that thoſe three men had no more to ſay, or would ſay no more (for the words may be referred indifferently to their will or power, when, I ſay, he ſaw they had no more to ſay) Either, firſt, to convince *Job* of error, or ſecondly, to defend the truth of God, which they had undertaken (when he ſaw this) *his wrath was kindled*, at that inſtant time, and for that very reaſon, *his wrath was kindled.* Some conceive (as was ſhewed before) that this anger proceeded from the paſſionateneſs of his ſpirit, and ſo tax him with it as his fault; but I rather conſent with thoſe who ſay it proceeded from his zeal for God, and ſo it was his vertue and his praiſe.

I have met with theſe words two or three times already ſince I entred upon this Chapter, and therefore I ſhall not ſtay upon them here; and as this anger of *Elihu* was ſpoken of before, ſo the ſame reaſon which was given before of his anger is repeated and reported here again; *Then his wrath was kindled becauſe they had no anſwer in their mouths*, that is, becauſe they had no more to ſay againſt *Job* whom they had condemned; and becauſe they had no more to ſay for God whoſe cauſe in afflicting *Job* they had defended; I ſhall only add a few brief Notes upon this Verſe and ſo paſs on.

Firſt, *Some men anſwer till they have no more to anſwer.*

'Tis very poſſible for a good and a wiſe man to be at the bottom of his reaſon, in ſome points, or to be brought to ſuch a wall, that he can go no further; *David* ſaith, *I have ſeen an end of all perfection*, which as it is true of all outward commodities and conveniences, which men enjoy, ſo both of their corporal and intellectual abilities, or of what they can either do or ſay. The beſt of men may ſee the end of their beſt perfections in all things, but Grace, and the hope of Glory. Their ſtock and treaſure may be quite ſpent, their ſpring exhauſted, and they gone to their utmoſt line and length. There's no more anſwer in their mouth, nor work in their hand.

Secondly Note, *It may put a wiſe man into paſſion to ſee how ill ſome wiſe men uſe their reaſon, or that they can make no further uſe of it.*

Then was the anger of *Elihu* kindled when he ſaw, they could anſwer no more, or that *there was no anſwer in the mouth of theſe three men.*

Thirdly, As the anger of *Elihu* is often ſpoken of, ſo ſtill we find ſomewhat or other is aſſigned as a ground of it;

Whence Note; *We ſhould ſee good reaſon for our anger before we are angry, whether in our own cauſe, or in the cauſe of God.*

There is nothing can excuſe anger but the cauſe of it. Reaſon is a good plea for paſſion; And he that hath a true reaſon for his anger, will probably manage his anger with reaſon, yea, and mingle it with grace; and ſo his proves not only a rational, but a gracious anger.

Fourthly Note, *Provoked patience breaks out into greater paſſion.*

In the former Verſe, we find *Job* waiting, he waited long and patiently; but being diſappointed of what he waited for, his wrath broke out; *His anger was kindled*; As when God waits long and is diſappointed, his anger is increaſed in the manifeſtation of it (Rom. 2. 4, 5.) *Deſpiſeſt thou the riches of his goodneſs and forbearance and long-ſuffering, not knowing that the goodneſs of God leads thee to repentance? But after thy hardneſs and impenitent heart, treaſureſt up wrath*, &c. As if he had ſaid, The more patience God ſpends upon thee, the more wrath is treaſured up for thee, and that wrath will break out the more fiercely and violently to conſume thee, the longer it hath been treaſured up. Now I ſay, as the wrath of God is the more declared againſt man, by how much his patience is the more abuſed; So the abuſed patience of man will turn to greater anger, and he groweth the more paſſionate by how much he hath been the more and the oftner deceived. Thus *Elihu* is ſtill deſcribed acting angerly, yet in the very next verſe we ſhall find him ſpeaking ſoberly, plainly and to purpoſe.

Verſe 6. **And** Elihu **the Son of** Barachel **the** Buzite **anſwered and ſaid.**

When *Elihu* ſaw theſe three men gravel'd, and that after all the outcry they made againſt *Job*, they were forced to leave him as they found him, unconvinced of thoſe crimes, of that hypocriſie, which they had laid to his charge, he hereupon ſaw himſelf ingaged to undertake the matter and offer his opinion.

Concerning *Elihu*, his name, his Fathers name, *Barachel*, his tribe or ſtock, a *Buzite*, I have ſpoken at the ſecond verſe, and ſhall not add any thing of it here; only take notice, that here *Elihu* begins his own preface; the former part of the Chapter contained the report of the divine hiſtorian concerning *Elihu*; but theſe are the words of *Elihu* himſelf; here he begins like an Orator to gain favour with an attention of his hearers, or to prepare the minds of his hearers to receive what he had to ſay; And upon this ſubject or piece of Rhetorick (making Prefaces) he ſpends the whole that remains of this Chapter. *And* Elihu, &c. *Anſwered and ſaid.*

I am young and ye are very old (that is it which he ſaid) **therefore I was afraid and durſt not ſhew mine opinion.**

As if he had ſaid, *I am conſcious to my ſelf of the weakneſs which accompanieth youth; I very well know my own incompetency for ſuch a work; I am young.*

Parvus ſecundum dies. Heb.

The Hebrew is, *I am few of dayes*, or, *little according to dayes*; if you ſhould reckon or meaſure me by dayes, I am very little; and is not every man ſo? If you meaſure any man by dayes, is not he very little? *Thou haſt made my age a ſpan long* (ſaid *David*, Pſal. 39. 7.) that's quickly meaſured. *Job* ſpake thus (*Chap.* 14. 1.) *Man that is born of a Woman, is of few dayes, and full of trouble*; He ſaith not, this or that man, but *man*, take old men, the Elders, take all men, the oldeſt men are but few of dayes in themſelves conſidered; and comparatively to the age or rather the eternity of God, their utmoſt age is but as a drop to the ocean. Thus all men, even ancient men are few of dayes, which is here the deſcription of a young man, *I am young* (ſaith *Elihu*) *or few of dayes*; but compare one man with another, ſo ſome have few dayes, and others many dayes; young men have few dayes, and old men have many dayes, compared with one another. *I am young*,

ישיש *Decrepitus.*

And ye are very old] The word notes decrepid old age, the very dregs of age, the utmoſt line of life; old age like a heavy burden bows the back, and cripples the limbs of the ſtrongeſt and ſtouteſt ſons of *Adam*. See more of this word (*Chap.* 15. 10.) There are ſeveral diviſions of the life of man, ſome caſt it into four parts, ſutable to the four ſeaſons of the year; ſome into five, alluding to the Acts of an Interlude or play; others into ſeven, an alluſion to the Planets; now whatever diviſion you make of the life of man, this decrepid old age is the laſt. *I am young and ye are very old.*

Hominis ætates in ſeptē partitur Hippocrates
1 Parvulus ad Ann. 7.
2 Puer ad An. 14.
3 Adoleſcens ad An. 21.
4 Juvenis ad An. 28.
5 Vir ad An. 50.
6 Senex ad An. 56.
7 Decrepitus poſt quamdiu vivit.

Wherefore I was afraid, and durſt not ſhew mine opinion.

What effect that ſenſe which *Elihu* had of his youth or fewneſs of days produced in him, is ſet forth in theſe words; 'twas *fear, I* (ſaith he) *was afraid*, &c. There is (as to this point) a twofold fear: Firſt, a cowardly fear; Secondly, a modeſt fear; when *Elihu* ſaith, *he was afraid*, he doth not mean the fear of a coward; but of a modeſt man: It is not cowardize to be afraid of doing many things, to fear to do thoſe things which are unlawful, or which are uncomely, is no part of cowardize. This latter fear ſurprized or rather compoſed *Elihu*; he was a man bold ſpirited enough, but modeſty made him afraid to ſhew his opinion. There is a great elegancy in thoſe words; *I durſt not ſhew mine opinion*; They imply, he hid his ſpeech, as Serpents hide themſelves when men approach. (*Micah* 7. 17.) Serpents which are a Terror to men, and make them afraid, are alſo afraid of men, their appearance cauſeth them to run and hide their heads. The Rabbins take much pains in their Criticiſms about this word to expreſs a vertuous modeſty. As it is a duty to be (as Chriſt exhorts his Diſciples to be) eſpecially in times of perſecution (*Matth.* 10. 10.) *wiſe as Serpents*, ſo it is a vertue to be fearful as Serpents, even to fear as much to be heard by ſome men, as Serpents fear to be ſeen by any man. Thus *Elihu* held down his head, he was afraid and durſt not ſhew his opinion ſuddenly, nor declare his judgment in the caſe, for the reverence he bare to thoſe graver and elder heads.

זחל *Eſt ſerpere & denotat timorem ſerpentum latebras quærentium & videri metuentium.* Aben-Ezra.

Reptilium more dimiſit me; unde vulgatus reddit, Demiſſo capite veritus ſum. Druſ.

Note Hence, Firſt, *Young men are apt to run into miſtakes, their heat uſually exceeds their light.*

Youth drives furiouſly, and commonly carrieth preſumption with it, or is it ſelf hurried by preſumption. Though God hath given a young man a good underſtanding, quick parts, and a ready tongue, yet he wants much, becauſe he hath not ſeen much, and ſo is very liable to miſcarriage. He cannot look through, nor ſee to the end of things; for as it is the great and ſole priviledge of God to caſt an eye quite through all intermediate, both actions and revolutions, and to ſee the end from the beginning: So it is more peculiar to thoſe that are aged and long experienced, to ſee much of the end of things in their beginnings, or to ſee what is like to be as well as what is. 'Tis the part of a wiſe man to conſider what may come, and whither things tend; there is much weakneſs and deficiency in young men as to this. As moſt young men want ſenſes exerciſed (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks of all unimproved Chriſtians of what age ſoever (*Heb.* 5. 19.) as I ſay, moſt young men want ſenſes exerciſed) to diſcern what is good or evil; ſo they want ſenſes exerciſed to diſcern what good or evil is like to be, they rarely ſee effects in their cauſes, or events in their prognoſticks. Therefore *Elihu* might well ſay, *I am young, therefore I durſt not venture to ſhew mine opinion. Paul* giveth *Timothy* ſomewhat a ſtrange warning (2 *Tim.* 2. 22.) *Flee youthful luſts. Timothy* was young, but was he noted for indulgence to any youthful luſts? What luſts doth he mean? Surely not drunkenneſs, nor uncleanneſs, nor any looſe behaviour; for though the moſt ſober and temperate young men, have in them the ſeed of all theſe, yea of every luſt, yet *Timothy* at that time was a pattern, a mirrour, not only of ſobriety, but of holineſs; and *Paul* was even forced to bid him take more liberty in the uſe of the creature, then he uſed to allow himſelf; *Drink no longer water, but uſe a little wine for thy ſtomach ſake, and for thy often infirmities.* Surely *Timothy* was a man that fled ſuch youthful luſts faſt and far enough when he drank nothing but water, and muſt be bid to drink a little Wine (1 *Tim.* 5. 23.) What luſts then were they which *Timothy* was exhorted to flee? The words following (*ver.* 23, 24, 25.) ſeem to clear it; that becauſe he was young, he ſhould take heed of ruſhing into unneceſſary Queſtions and diſputes, which young men are apt to do in the heat of their ſpirits; nor are there any luſts of the lower or ſenſual appetite, to which the heart of man is more intemperately and vainly carried out, then to thoſe of the underſtanding; and therefore the Apoſtle counſels *Timothy* to *avoid unprofitable Queſtions, knowing that theſe gender ſtrife*; (Thoſe Queſtions cannot promote faith in or holineſs towards God, which only ſtir up and foment ſtriſe among men) *and the ſervants of the Lord muſt not ſtrive, but be gentle to all, and patient.* Theſe vertues, and graces, are oppoſed chiefly to the youthful luſts which *Paul* exhorts *Timothy* to take heed of; As if he had ſaid, *Be not too hot-headed and haſty (as young men are very apt to be) in purſuing of controverſies and entangling thy ſelf in the thickets of Opinioniſts.* *Elihu* was of an excellent temper, who, becauſe young, was afraid and durſt not ſhew his opinion.

Secondly, Note, *It is good to fear, and ſuſpect our own judgments*, or, *to fear that we may erre; they ſeldom do or ſpeak amiſs who fear they may.*

An over-confidence of being in the right, hath ſet'ed many in a wrong way; to be under a ſence of our readineſs to fall, preſerves us from falling, (*Hoſea* 13. 1.) *When Ephraim ſpake trembling, then, he exalted himſelf*; There are ſeveral ſences given of that place, but according to our tranſlation, the meaning is carried thus; When *Ephraim* was in an humble frame, and jealous of himſelf, not confident, nor over-bold (as ſome are who preſume to carry all before them) when he ſpake trembling, or did even tremble to ſpeak, then he did that which tended to his own advancement and exaltation. This gracious trembling doth at once ſettle us the faſter, and raiſe us the higher in the ways and things of God. *It is a high point of wiſdom to have low apprehenſions of our ſelves*; though that be true, *You ſhall be eſteemed of others, as you eſteem your ſelves*; *If a man under-value himſelf others will*; *yet*, 'tis beſt erring on that hand; *Let the price be much too low, rather then any thing too high, when you are occaſioned to put a value upon or rate your ſelves.*

Tanti eris aliis quanti tibi fueris.

Again, Conſider what an excellent ſpeaker *Elihu* was when he came to it, as will appear hereafter, yet ſee how he ſtood trembling, he durſt not ſpeak, nor offer his Opinion.

Hence Note, *Uſually they who have moſt ability to ſpeak, are moſt backward to ſpeak, or ſparing of ſpeech.*

They are not eaſily brought to it, who have it in them; The belly of *Elihu* was as full with matter, as an Egg with meat or a bottle with wine; yet how ſlow was he in opening himſelf? They who are and have leaſt are moſt deſirous, if not ambitious, to appear moſt, and would make up in ſeeming what they are not in being. As *Elihu* in this verſe hath ſhewed himſelf afraid to ſay any thing, ſo he ſhews us in the next, who, he hoped, would have ſaid all, and altogether have ſaved him a labour.

Verſ. 7. **I ſaid, days ſhould ſpeak, and multitude of years ſhould teach wiſdom;**

Loquantur dies *ſunt enim verba permittentis* q. d. *ſinam loqui illos, non præripiam eis loquendi locum.* Piſc.

Or, as the Text may be rendred, *let days ſpeak*; days ſhall not be hindred by me from ſpeaking, let days ſpeak their fill, But what meaneth he, when he ſaith, *let days ſpeak?* how can days ſpeak; 'tis an elegancy in Rhetorick, when that which belongs to a perſon, is aſcribed to a thing, as here ſpeech to time, *let days ſpeak*; that is, let thoſe who number many days, who have lived and ſeen many days, let them ſpeak; they who have lived moſt days on earth, are yet indeed (as *Bildad* told *Job*, Chap. 8. 9.) *but of yeſterday*, and ſo have lived, as it were, but a day; yet, according to common account, ſome men are ſo very old, that you may call them *days*, and to them we may well ſay, *let days ſpeak.* We read of one who was called *John of Times*, becauſe he had lived (if the Records ſpeak true) three hundred years and more. An old man is a man of days; and thus *Elihu* might ſay, let days, that is, *old men ſpeak.*

Johannes de Temporibus.

But Children can ſpeak, why then doth he ſay, *days ſhould ſpeak?* I anſwer; There is a twofold ſpeaking; Firſt, natural, thus Children, as ſoon as they are out of their ſwadling-bands, learn to ſpeak; ſuch ſpeaking is but a natural act; Secondly, There is a ſpeaking which is an artificial or ſtudied act; thus Orators and men of eloquence ſpeak; ſuch ſpeaking *Elihu* intended when he ſaid, *days ſhould ſpeak*; *He looked they ſhould ſpeak to purpoſe*, ſpeak by rule, even the quinteſſence of reaſon; he preſumed they would have brought forth ſomewhat worthy of their years, and that he ſhould have received ſuch inſtruction from them, as they had learned from old age it ſelf; *I ſaid days ſhould ſpeak.* Children can ſpeak words, but old men ſhould ſpeak things, every word ſhould have its weight; their tongues ſhould drop as the hony-comb, and be a tree of life to feed and refreſh many. It is moſt truly ſaid of the word of God in Scripture, *Every tittle of it hath a mountain of ſence*, a mighty weight of truth in it; And ſurely the words of old men ſhould be weighty and convincing; They ſhould ſpeak truth with ſuch evidence both of teſtimony and reaſon as may put to ſilence all thoſe who ſpeak againſt or beſides either truth or reaſon. As, *day unto day* (ſaith *David*, Pſal. 19. 2.) *uttereth ſpeech*; that is, every day ſpeaks ſomwhat; ſo *men of days* ſhould ſpeak much both for inſtruction and conviction. *I ſaid days ſhould ſpeak.*

Hence Note, *That's not to be eſteemed as done at all, which is not well done, or not done to purpoſe.*

An old man doth not ſpeak unleſs he ſpeaks wiſely, edifyingly, and to the point. The aged ſpeak like children, when they ſpeak fooliſhly, or unfruitfully. He only is a good ſpeaker, who ſpeaks that which may do others good, or make them better. We ſay proverbially and truly both of ſaying and doing, *As good never a whit, as never the better. I ſaid days ſhould ſpeak, and multitude of years ſhould teach wiſdom.*

Elihu reckons the age of aged men, by *multitude of Years*; this he doth only to heighten the matter; what wiſdom might he not expect from a multitude of Years? that is, from ſuch as had lived a multitude of Years. Certainly thought *Elihu*, they *will*,

Teach wiſdom.] There is a twofold wiſdom; Firſt, that which is meerly rational; Secondly, that which is ſpiritual; or there is firſt, a common; Secondly, an holy wiſdom; *Elihu* expected wiſdom of both ſorts, but chiefly of the latter, from multitude of years. He expected they would teach the wiſdom which the Spirit of God had taught them; that wiſdom which conſiſts in the true knowledg of God and of our ſelves, that wiſdom which is from above, that which man hath not from himſelf, nor is taught him by days or years, by uſe or experience only. And it was very probable, that they who from their youth had been inſtructed in the things of God, being grown old, ſhould alſo be grown further in this wiſdom, and riper in this ſort of knowledg. And therefore *Elihu* ſpake according to the rule of right reaſon, when he judged that thoſe three aged men had attained to a very high degree of divine light. Such is the goodneſs of God to his people, that uſually they grow in grace and knowledg as they grow in years; For though God is Debtor to no man (but Creditor to all men) and though old age in it ſelf conſidered, deſerves nothing of God, yea is not only undeſerving, but (becauſe ſin multiplies as our days do) ill deſerving, yet as Chriſt ſaith, *To him that hath*, (that is, who uſeth and improveth what he hath) *more ſhall be given*; And therefore though true wiſdom be a free gift, and is infuſed and wrought by the Spirit of God, yet we may in probability, and ought according to charity, judg, that they who have moſt days, have alſo moſt wiſdom. Though wiſdom be not entailed upon old age, yet there we are moſt likely to find it. *I ſaid, multitude of years ſhould teach wiſdom.*

Sapientiam intelligit, quæ in vera dei & noſtri cognitione ſita eſt; cujus author ſit ſpiritus dei, non hominis animus, non anni, non uſus, non experientia. Merl.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *We may well expect they ſhould be very wiſe, and knowing, who have had much means, and many opportunities of obtaining knowledg and wiſdom.*

And therefore we have reaſon to expect much wiſdom from thoſe who have had a multitude of years paſt over their heads; It is a common rule in Logick, *When ſufficient cauſes are put in act, the effect muſt needs follow*; And ſo where probable cauſes are in act, probably the effect will follow. Old men having been well brought up in youth, and having had fair opportunities to attain knowledg and wiſdom, are rightly preſumed and judged well ſtor'd and ſtockt with both. Where ſhall we find wiſdom, if not among the Ancients? where, if not among a multitude or throng of years and days? Where elſe ſhould we look for it? Shall we go and enquire among the green heads and young beginners for it? Shall we go to novices and children for it? We may ſay, ſurely they who have been long taught, have learned much, ſurely they who have heard many ſoul-ſearching Sermons, and continued from day to day under the droppings of divine truths, are full of fruit and very fruitful; whither ſhall we go for fruit elſe, if not to theſe? ſhall we go to thoſe that live as upon the mountains of *Gilboa*, where *David* prayed no rain might fall? Shall we go for Goſpel-fruit to the *wild* naked untaught *Indians* and *Barbarians*, or to the rightly inſtituted and plentifully-inſtructed Churches of Chriſt? May we not more then ſay, conclude, ſurely theſe are wiſe, and full of ſpiritual underſtanding? The Roman Orator *Cicero* took it for granted that his ſon *Marcus* was well grounded in and plentifully furniſhed with the principles of Philoſophy, becauſe he had been at *Athens* a whole Year, and there heard *Cratippus* a famous Philoſopher read many excellent Lectures about things natural and moral. And may we not ſay to many thouſands of Goſpel-hearers and profeſſors, what? you that have heard ſuch, and ſuch able Miniſters, you that have had the word ſo long preached, and that at *London* (more famous for Goſpel knowledg, then *Athens* for Philoſophy) ſurely you are filled with all knowledg in the myſtery of Chriſt, and with all goodneſs in the practice of godlineſs. And doubtleſs, the Lord will argue it with thoſe that have had time and opportunities, as a rich price in their hand to get wiſdom, as *Elihu* did with his friends being aged men. Who can imagin, but that they are full of wiſdom, that they abound in knowledg and ſpiritual underſtanding, who abounding in days and years, have abounded alſo in means of knowledg?

Cauſis ſufficientibus poſitis in actu neceſſario ſequitur effectus

Quanquam te Marce Fili Annum jam audientem Cratippum idq; Athenis abundare oportet præceptis inſtitutiſq; Philoſophiæ, &c. Cic. de Offi. lib. 1.

Note Secondly, *As old men ſhould abound in knowledg, ſo they ſhould approve themſelves ready to teach the ignorant.*

I ſaid days ſhould ſpeak, and multitude of years ſhould teach wiſdom. 'Tis a duty incumbent upon them who have learned much, to teach much. To conveigh wiſdom and knowledg to others is moſt proper to ſuch, as well as moſt ornamental, and honourable. To be knowing our ſelves is a great mercy, and to help others to the knowledg of what we know is a great duty; we loſe one ſpecial end of knowing, if we know only for our ſelves. To communicate and diffuſe our knowledg to others is the nobleſt way of uſing it, and the beſt way of improving it, and that in a double reſpect; Firſt, it is the beſt way of improving it, as to increaſe; Secondly, it is the beſt way of improving it, as to reward. The more we give out our knowledg, the more we ſhall have of it, and the more we ſhall have for it both from God and men. The Apoſtle ſaith of a Goſpel Miniſter (1 *Tim.* 3. 2.) *He muſt be apt to teach*, not only able, but apt, that is, ready and willing to teach, now what the Apoſtle ſpeaks there of an Elder by office, is true of thoſe that are elders in time, they alſo ſhould be apt to teach; not only able, but ready and willing to teach in and according to their ſphere and power. *I ſaid days ſhould ſpeak*, &c.

Thirdly, Note, *'Tis a reproach to old age, not to be knowing and wiſe, not to be able and apt to teach wiſdom.*

That old age is venerable, not which hath white hair, but which whiteneth with vertuous and worthy actions; *Elihu* ſpeaks here, not only narratively but reprovingly, he reflects upon the ancient, whoſe abilities come not up to or do not equal their years. The aged may well bluſh and be aſhamed to be found ignorant of, or unſkilful in any thing that they ought to know. The Apoſtle ſhames the *Hebrews* with this, *and tells them they were dull of hearing* (Heb. 5. 11, 12.) *becauſe when for the time they ought to be Teachers, they had need that one ſhould teach them again which be the firſt principles of the Oracles of God, and were become ſuch as had need of Milk and not of ſtrong Meat*; As if he had ſaid, When for the time, days, and years, which have gone over your heads, (the reproof lies there) you ſhould be able to teach others, what a ſhame is it that you your ſelves ſhould not be capable of thoſe higher teachings, which he calls *ſtrong Meat*, but muſt be dealt with about the very principles of Religion, and be fed like Children with milk and ſpoons? How is it that you who ſhould have had *ſences exerciſed to diſcern both good and evil*, ſhould be ſo little able to diſtinguiſh them, either in their kinds or degrees. Theſe were ſpiritually Children, while naturally old men; They had not learned of their teachers, when the Apoſtle had reaſon to hope they had been able to teach learners, yea were learned teachers. Some are exceeding old, and exceeding ignorant, they have multitude of days upon them, yet if asked, they are not able to hold forth the leaſt Number of divine truths, poſſibly not one in a right underſtanding; *As gray hairs are a crown of glory when found in the way of righteouſneſs*, ſo gray hairs are crowns of glory, when found in a way of wiſdom, knowledg, and underſtanding, otherwiſe to be old and dotiſh, old and ſottiſh, how diſhonorable is it! yea, they that are old and ignorant, ſhall at laſt find their old age, a ſtrong aggravation, as of all their ſins, ſo eſpecially of their ignorance.

Senectus illa venerabilis eſt, non quæ canis ſed meritis albeſcit. Amb. lib. 7. Epiſt. 30.

VERS. 8, 9.

But there is a ſpirit in man: and the inſpiration of the Almighty giveth them underſtanding.

Great men are not always wiſe, neither do the aged underſtand judgment.

Elihu, as was ſhewed in the former words, having in vain waited for the wiſdom of the Ancient, proceeds in this Context to give the reaſon why the Ancient are not always wiſe.

Verſ. 8. **There is a ſpirit in man; and the inſpiration of the Almighty giveth underſtanding.**

There's the reaſon of it; we render the firſt word of this eighth verſe by the Adverſative particle *(But) there is a ſpirit in man*; it is uſually rendered by the Affirmative particle, *verily*, truly, or indeed. Mr. *Broughton* ſaith, *Certes a ſpirit is in ſad man.*

There is ſome difference in opinion about this *ſpirit* affirmed to be in man. Divers expound *Elihu* intending the Spirit of God; *there is a ſpirit*; that is, the divine Spirit, the holy Spirit of God, or God the Spirit is in man. One of the Greek tranſlations puts it into the Text; *Surely the Spirit of God is in man*; and the Chaldee paraphraſe gives it in a like expreſſion; *Surely there is a prophetick ſpirit in the ſon of man*, or, *in the ſons of men*. Some are induced to this interpretation, becauſe it would be (ſay they) but a cold argument to commend what he had to ſay for the rectifying *Job*, by telling him that man hath a reaſonable Soul, which is common to all men. Yet I rather conceive that in this firſt part of the verſe, the ſpirit ſpoken of is the natural ſpirit of man, which in the latter part of the verſe he affirms is inſtructed, by the inſpiration of the Almighty, with ſupernatural light for ſpecial ſervices. The word is often uſed in Scripture to note the reaſonable Soul, or thoſe powers of the Soul which are the veſſels of reaſon, or in which natural reaſon hath its ſeat and exerciſe. There is a power of reaſoning in man, or a ſpirit which is able to diſcourſe of all things; there was ſuch a natural power implanted in man at his Creation, and though that power be much weakned and broken by the fall, yet there are, to this day, ſome remains of it in all men as born into this world; *Surely there is a ſpirit in man*; And becauſe the word is univerſal, or extendable to all men, therefore it is more then probable the word *ſpirit* here is to be taken in the largeſt ſence; for every man hath not the Spirit of God: yea the word here uſed for man, notes man of the meaneſt rank or loweſt form; ſurely there is a ſpirit (in *Enoſh* Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates) *in ſad man*, in ſickly man, in weak man, in the ſickleſt, weakeſt and loweſt of men there is a Soul, a Spirit indued with reaſon; this is, as the *ſubſtratum* or

Ὄντως δὲ πνεῦμα Θεοῦ ἐστιν ἐν ἀνθρώποις. Symmach.

רוח *animam rationalem denotat.*

or ground of the whole buſineſs, *Surely there is a ſpirit in man.* And in the latter part of the Verſe, *Elihu* ſheweth what that is which heighteneth, raiſeth and improveth this natural ſpirit, certainly there is a ſpirit in man every man hath a reaſonable Soul.

And the inſpiration of the Almighty giveth underſtanding.

Ineſt quidem hominibus vis illa rationatrix ſed quæ niſi Dei afflatu dirigatur, verè ſapere non poteſt. Bez.

נשמת שדי à נשם *anhelavit.*

The work of God inlightning man is expreſſed by *breathing*; when Jeſus Chriſt gave his Diſciples the Spirit, he breathed upon them, (or inſpired them) *and ſaid, receive ye the holy Ghoſt* (*John* 20.22.) For, as in the firſt Creation, when God gave man a natural being, he *breathed into his noſtrils the breath of life, and man became a living Soul* (Gen. 2. 7.) ſo in the ſecond or new Creation God breaths a ſpiritual life into that life, and man becomes a quickned Soul; And as his own Soul is quickned by the holy Spirit of grace, ſo he is fitted, as an inſtrument in the hand of God, to quicken the Souls of others with grace, or to inſtruct them in the ways of grace. *The inſpiration of the Almighty*

Giveth underſtanding.] But hath not the reaſonable Soul of every man an underſtanding? Doubtleſs it hath. Therefore I anſwer; The underſtanding may be taken two ways; Firſt, for the faculty; Secondly, for the furniture and enrichings of it; now though every man hath an underſtanding, yet every man hath not a furniſhed and an enriched underſtanding, a beautified and an adorned underſtanding. The Scripture ſpeaks of ſome men as if they were nothing but underſtanding (*Prov.* 1. 5.) *A wiſe man will increaſe knowledg, and a man of underſtanding will attain unto all Counſel*; Every man hath an underſtanding, but every man is not *a man of underſtanding*; every man is not a man of underſtanding in natural and civil things, much leſs in things divine and ſpiritual. As ſome men have ſo much will, or rather wilfulneſs, that they are nothing but will; and ſome have ſo much paſſion, that they are nothing but paſſion; ſo others have ſuch riches and treaſures of underſtanding, as if they were nothing but underſtanding. Now, it is the ſpecial inſpiration of the Almighty which giveth ſuch an underſtanding; that is, an enlarged and an enriched underſtanding. We ſay, *the inſpiration of the Almighty*

תבינם *Intellectificat eos.* Bren.

Giveth underſtanding.] The Hebrew is but one word, which we may expreſs as ſome do, It *Intellectifieth.* So then, the ſcope and meaning of this Verſe is plainly this; That howſoever every man, the meaneſt of men, hath a reaſonable Soul, yet the furniture of the underſtanding, or mans fulneſs of wiſdom and knowledg is by gift or inſpiration of the Almighty; and therefore ſome read the Verſe thus; *Surely there is a ſpirit in man, but the inſpiration of the Almighty maketh them to underſtand.* Thus *Elihu* would gain credit and Authority to what he had to deliver, as being by the teachings and dictates of the Spirit of God. The Seventy comply fully with this rendering; *There is a ſpirit in men, but the inſpiration of the Almighty teacheth*; As if *Elihu* had ſaid, *Though man be endued with natural knowledg and reaſon, which can do ſomewhat, yet until light ſhines from above, till the ſpirit of God comes in and enlargeth the natural ſpirit, it cannot ſee far, nor do any great matter.* Or take the ſence of the whole verſe thus, in connection with what went before; *Though old age hath odds of youth, yet one man as well as another hath a ſpirit of reaſon and judgment in him, whereby through ſupply of ſpecial inſpiration from God (who can do all things) he may be able to know that which want of years denieth him.* From the words thus opened,

Eſt ſpiritus in hominibus, ſpiratio autem omnipotentis docet. Sept.

Obſerve, Firſt, *Wiſdom or underſtanding is the gift of the Spirit of God.*

We have a like aſſertion by way of queſtion in the 38. Chapter of this Book (*Ver.* 36.) *Who hath put wiſdom into the inward parts, or who hath given underſtanding to the heart?* who hath? hath man put wiſdom into himſelf; or hath he made his own heart to underſtand? the queſtion denies, no, man hath not done it. Wiſdom is an Influence or an Inſpiration from the Almighty; knowledg to order common things is of the Lord (*Iſa.* 28.26,29.) *His God doth inſtruct him* (the husbandman he means) *to diſcretion* (in ordering the ground) *and doth teach him*; how much more in ſpiritual things and the myſteries of the kingdom of Heaven. (*Pro.*16.1.) *The preparation of the heart in man, and the anſwer of the Tongue* (that is, The fitting of the heart for any right anſwer of the Tongue) *is from the Lord*; both the general preparation of the heart for ſervice or uſe, and the ſpecial preparation of it to this or that ſervice and uſe is of the Lord, and ſo is the Anſwer of the Tongue for the diſcharge of it. (*Eccleſ.* 2. 26.) *God giveth to a man that is good in his ſight, wiſdom and knowledg and joy*; As God giveth man the knowledg of things, ſo wiſdom to know how to order and manage the things that he knoweth; Some have more knowledg then they know how to manage, their knowledg maſters them, they are not maſters of their knowledg; they have more knowledg then wiſdom. Now God gives to him that is good in his ſight (that is, to the man whom he chooſeth and is pleaſed with) knowledg and wiſdom; and then he gives him joy, that is, Comfort in the exerciſe of that knowledg wherewith he is endued; this is a notable and a noble gift of God. We read (*Iſa.* 11. 2.) *The ſpirit of the Lord ſhall reſt upon him, the ſpirit of wiſdom and underſtanding*; It is a propheſie of Chriſt, who being made in all things like to man, had a natural ſpirit, or a reaſonable faculty, and he had that furniſhed by the ſpirit without meaſure; the ſpirit of the Lord reſted upon him, *the ſpirit of wiſdom and underſtanding, the ſpirit of counſel and might, the ſpirit of knowledg and of the fear of the Lord*; even Chriſt as man received an unction or inſpiration from the Almighty for the fulfilling of his Mediatorial Office; much more do meer men for the fulfilling of any Office they are called unto. (2 *Cor.* 3. 5.) *We are not ſufficient of our ſelves ſo much as to think a good thought*; Our ſufficiency is by the Inſpiration of the Almighty. (*James* 1.17.) *Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above*; It is not a vapour that riſeth out of the earth, but an Influence which diſtills and drops down from Heaven, it is from above; that is, from God who though he be every where filling both Heaven and Earth with his eſſential preſence, yet (according to Scripture Language) his moſt glorious and maniſeſtative preſence is *above*; and therefore to ſay, every good gift is from above, is all one as to ſay, it is from God. *Daniel* and thoſe other three Noble youths of the Jewiſh race exceeded all the wiſe men of *Chaldea* in rare abilities, and the Scripture tells us, whence it was, that they did ſo. (*Dan.* 1.17.) *As for theſe four Children, God gave them knowledg and skill in all learning and wiſdom*; and the aſſertion is laid down in general (*Dan.* 2.21.) *He* (that is, God) *changeth times and ſeaſons, he removeth Kings and ſetteth up Kings, he giveth wiſdom to the wiſe, and knowledg to them that know underſtanding*; All theſe Scriptures ſpeak with one conſent the language of this Text, *It is the Inſpiration of the Almighty that giveth underſtanding.* And if we compare (1 *Sam.* 10. 1.) with the 6. 9. 11. and 12. Verſes of the ſame Chapter, we have a moſt remarkable paſſage to this purpoſe. Where *Saul* having received the unction from *Samuel*, both as an aſſurance of and a preparation for the exerciſe of his kingly Office over *Iſrael*; *Samuel* tells him (*Ver.* 6.) *The Spirit of the Lord will come upon thee, and thou ſhalt prophecy with them* (that is, with the company of Prophets ſpoken of in the former Verſe) *and ſhalt be turned into another man.* And the holy Text adds (*Ver.* 9.) *God gave* (or as we put in the Margin *turned*) *him another heart.* There is a twofold turning or changing of the heart, or of a man into another man. Firſt, by gifts of Illumination; Secondly, by the grace of Sanctification; the great change of the heart is that change, of Converſion, by the grace of Sanctification; *Saul* was not turned into another man, nor had he another heart, as changed by Grace (for he ſhewed ſtill his old heart in his new kingly ſtate) but he had *another heart*, or he was another man as changed by gifts; the ſpirit of the Almighty gave him underſtanding for the Government which he was called to; for whereas before he had only a private ſpirit, taken up about cattel and the affairs of husbandry, then God gave him a ſpirit of prudence and valour, a ſpirit of wiſdom and magnanimity, a Noble and an Heroical Spirit, befitting the Governour of ſo great and populous a kingdom, both in peace and War. Every Calling is a myſtery, much more the Calling of Kings and Supream Magiſtrates. It was ſaid to Imperial *Rome*; *Do thou remember to Rule Nations and Kingdoms, let theſe be thy Arts*; This Art the Spirit of the

Tu regere imperio populos Romane memento. Hæ tibi ſint artes—

Lord gave *Saul*, even knowledg and skill to rule and govern; yea he had a gift of Illumination, not only for government, but for propheſie, he was found amongſt the Prophets; and when (*verſ.* 11.) they asked (wondering) *Is* Saul *alſo among the Prophets*? as if they had ſaid, How ſtrange and unheard of a thing is this, that *Saul* ſhould be furniſhed with the gift of propheſie, and join himſelf with the Prophets? They who before were acquainted with his perſon and manner of education were even amazed at the ſight; and while they were ſurprized with this amazement, *one of the ſame place* (as it ſeems wiſer then the reſt) *Anſwered and ſaid, but who is their father?* (verſ. 12.) That's the ſpecial word, for which I alledg this Text. What? *Saul* among the Prophets! Is it not ſtrange that he ſhould be inſpired! *Then one anſwered and ſaid, who is their father?* As if he had ſaid, Do not any longer ſtand wondering at this thing, but conſider who is the father of *Saul* as a Prophet, as alſo the father of all theſe Prophets. *Saul* was the Son of *Kiſh* as to natural deſcent, but he had another father as he was a Prophet, and ſo all theſe Prophets, had (beſides their fathers as men) one and the ſame father as Prophets. Therefore wonder not that ye hear *Saul* prophecying, for all theſe whom ye hear and ſee prophecying, have not theſe gifts by birth from men, nor by induſtry from themſelves, but from God who is a free agent, and inſpireth whom he pleaſeth. The ſame God who, by inſpiration, hath freely beſtowed thoſe gifts upon the other Prophets, hath alſo inſpired *Saul* with a gift of prophecy. The Spirit of God is his father (in that capacity) as well as the father of theſe other Prophets. And hence the Scripture runs in the plural number, *who is their father?* Unleſs God give power from above, the underſtanding is dark, the memory unfaithful, the tongue ſtammering; it is light from on high that teacheth the skill of prophecy. *Solomon* had the greateſt meaſure of underſtanding of any meer man ſince the fall of man, and of him it is ſaid, (1 *Kings* 4. 29.) *God gave* Solomon *wiſdom and underſtanding exceeding much, and largeneſs of heart, even as the ſand that is on the Sea-ſhore.* Solomon's heart had been as narrow as another mans, if the inſpiration of the Almighty had not widened it. When *Moſes* was ſo ſinfully modeſt, as to excuſe his Embaſſie to *Pharaoh*, ſuppoſing himſelf not fitted for ſuch an undertaking (*Exod.* 4. 10, 11.) *O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore nor ſince thou haſt ſpoken unto thy ſervant, but I am ſlow of ſpeech, and of a ſlow tongue.* God preſently put the queſtion to him, *Who hath made mans mouth?* &c. As if he had ſaid, Cannot he give words into thy mouth, who gave thee a mouth? Cannot he act thy Organs of ſpeech who made them? *Now therefore go and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou ſhalt ſay.* The inſpiration of the Almighty ſhall give thee underſtanding. Heathen Poets have boaſted of their raptures and inſpirations. The people of God have a promiſe of the Spirit to lead them into all truth, and to help them in maintaining thoſe truths.

Eſt Deus in nobis, ſunt & commercia cœli, ſedibus æthereis ſpiritus iſte venit. Ovid.

From this general, that the furniture of the underſtanding is the gift of God, or by inſpiration of the Almighty, take theſe hints by way of Corollary.

Firſt, If a right underſtanding flow from the inſpiration of the Almighty, then pray for an underſtanding, pray for the Spirit; *Ye have not becauſe ye ask not*, ſaith the Apoſtle (*James* 4. 2.) God gives wiſdom, but he gives it to them that ask it (*Jam.* 1. 5.) *If any man want wiſdom, let him ask it of God, who giveth liberally and upbraideth not.* God upbraideth us not, either with our want of wiſdom, or with the abundance of wiſdom, that he is pleaſed to ſupply us with, and give out to us. When *Solomon* was put to his choice what to ask, he ſaid, *Give thy ſervant an underſtanding heart.* God gave *Solomon* wiſdom, but *Solomon* asked it firſt. All good things are ſhut up in promiſes, and the promiſes are opened to give out their good things, when we pray. (*Prov.* 23. 5.) *When thou cryeſt after knowledg, and lifteſt up thy voyce for underſtanding, then ſhalt thou underſtand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledg of God. To pray well is to ſtudy well*, becauſe by prayer light comes in from on high to make ſtudies ſucceſsful, and the work to proſper in our hand. As the Almighty breatheth down on us, ſo we muſt breath up to the Almighty. To expect and not to pray, is to tempt God, not to truſt him.

Secondly, Do not only pray for wiſdom, but uſe means, but be induſtrious for the obtaining of it; *The gift of God doth not take off the diligence of man.* God doth not work in us that we ſhould ſit ſtill. (*Prov.* 2. 4.) *Then ſhalt thou know wiſdom when thou ſeekeſt her as ſilver, and ſearcheſt for her as for hid treaſure.* And where is this treaſure to be had? Surely in the mines of Scripture, and in all thoſe appointments wherein God hath promiſed to meet his people, to ſhine upon them and give them the knowledg of his ways in Jeſus Chriſt.

Thirdly, Be thankful for any gift of knowledg; for every beam and ray of light be thankful; it is God who commands light to ſhine out of darkneſs, and that God who at firſt commanded light to ſhine out of darkneſs, dayly ſhineth into our hearts, *to give the light of the knowledg of the glory of God in the face of Jeſus Chriſt*, (2 Cor. 4. 6.)

Fourthly, If underſtanding be from inſpiration, then they who have received much underſtanding, muſt be caution'd againſt two evils; firſt, not to be proud, nor high minded; that our gifts come from on high, ſhould make us very low in our own eyes. *What haſt thou that thou haſt not received, and if thou haſt received it, why doeſt thou glory as if thou hadſt not received it?* Theſe are the Apoſtles Soul-humbling and Pride-mortifying queſtions or expoſtulations rather (1 *Cor.* 4. 7.) You that have received the greateſt gifts, whom the inſpiration of the Almighty hath made moſt wiſe and underſtanding, be ye moſt humble in your ſelves. Secondly, let me add (which is another dangerous Rock upon which great gifts are apt to daſh and ſplit you) take heed of deſpiſing thoſe who have received leſs; our portions are divided and allotted to us by the hand of God. Divine wiſdom gives us our portion of wiſdom; he that hath moſt, hath no more then God hath given; and he that hath leaſt, hath as much as God is pleaſed to give. They deſpiſe the wiſdom and queſtion the underſtanding of God in giving wiſdom, who deſpiſe thoſe to whom he gives leſs wiſdom and underſtanding then he hath given to themſelves.

Fifthly, To thoſe who have received but little, I ſay alſo two things, by way of caution; firſt, do not envy thoſe who have received much; it is of God that they have more then you, is your eye evil becauſe the eye of God is good? Secondly, be not diſcontented with your own leſſer portion; do not ſit down ſullen; ſay not, we will do nothing with what we have received, becauſe we have not ſo much as others: We know the doom paſſed on him who having but one talent hid it in a napkin. If we are diſcontent with a little portion, or with one talent, that little is too much, and that one too many for us; nothing doth more dim the glory of God, nor more deſtroy and eat out our own comforts, then diſcontent; the Devil, ſince his fall, is the moſt diſcontented Spirit in the World, and he was not contented while he ſtood, he thought he was not high enough, and that was his undoing. They who are diſcontent with the gift of God, loſe what is given, and ſo fall into deeper diſcontent; yea, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks in another caſe (1 *Tim.* 3. 6.) *into the condemnation of the Devil.*

Sixthly, Then, let us not be lifted up in our own natural wiſdom and reaſon, he that *would be wiſe, muſt become a fool*, (1 Cor. 3. 18.) until we ſee our own wiſdom folly, we cannot attain the wiſdom of God, or Godly wiſdom.

Seventhly, This ſhews us the reaſon of the various kinds, and ſeveral meaſures of gifts among the Sons of men. Men differ not more in the meaſures and degrees of their outward eſtates, worldly riches, titles and honours, then they do in the meaſures and degrees of their inward abilities, wiſdom, knowledg, and underſtanding: Men differ not more in the feature and figure of their faces, then in the furniture of their minds. One hath five talents, another two, a third but one. And as the various degrees of the ſame gift, ſo diverſities of gifts are from the ſoveraign pleaſure of God. The Apoſtle is large and very diſtinct in this matter (1 *Cor.* 12. 4, 8, 9, 11.) *There are diverſities of gifts, but the ſame Spirit; to one is given by the Spirit the word of wiſdom, to another the word of knowledg by the ſame Spirit, to another prophecy, to another diſcerning of Spirits, to another divers kinds of tongues*, &c. *But all theſe worketh that one and the ſelf-ſame Spirit, dividing to every man ſeverally as he will.* It is only the will of the Spirit, the will of God which makes this diviſion and diverſification of gifts among men. And as the Apoſtle ſheweth here the riſe or ſpring of all to be from God, ſo he had ſhewed that the reaſon and intendment of all this is the benefit of men (*Ver.* 7.) *The manifeſtation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withall.* Whatever your gift is God hath given it for profit and uſe. One hath skill in ſciences, another in languages, one is more acute, another more ſolid, one hath a ſtronger judgment, another a quicker phanſie and a more ſearching invention. One is beſt at an argument to convince the underſtanding, another at a motive to quicken the affections; one can confute an error and ſtate a Controverſie well, and another can beſt diſcover ſin, and convince the Conſcience; one hath weight of matter, but is ſlow of ſpeech, another hath a fluent tongue, but is leſs material; a third is both; but all to profit withall. Such a Character was given of thoſe three Eminent men in the beginning of the reformation, *Luther*, *Eraſmus*, and *Melancthon*; *Luther* had matter and not words, he did not affect any exactneſs of ſtile or ſpeech; *Eraſmus* had words at will, but leſs weight of matter; *Melancthon* was full in both, there was a concurrence or complication of many eminent gifts in him. The ſame *Eraſmus*, mentioned laſt but one, hath a like paſſage in his Preface to the works of the Ancients (which he with wonderful skil and induſtry redeemed from many miſtakes, and ſet forth more defecate and pure to the view and uſe of the world) where obſerving the different veins of divers Authors in their writings, he concludes thus; *Several men have their ſeveral gifts, as it pleaſeth the gift-giving Spirit to give to them.* In *Athanaſius* we admire a ſerious perſpicuity of ſpeaking, and in *Chryſoſtom* a flowing Eloquence; in *Baſil*, beſides his ſublimity, a pleaſant language; in *Hilary* we ſee a lofty ſtile, well matcht with the loftineſs of his matter; in *Cyprian* we reverence a ſpirit worthy the Crown of Martyrdom; and we are in love with the ſweet incentives and modeſty of St. *Ambroſe*; In *Jerome* we commend his rich treaſures of Scripture-knowledg, and muſt acknowledg in *Gregory* a pure and unpoliſht ſanctity. He ſhuts up this; *Leſt I ſhould be tedious*; others have, from the bounty of the ſame Spirit, their diſtinct abilities, by which they are commended to the conſciences of the Godly. *The Inſpiration of the Almighty giveth underſtanding.* And as this is true with reſpect to the gifts of Illumination, which *Elihu* pitcheth here upon; ſo 'tis much more true in reference to the gifts of ſanctification; The Inſpiration of the Almighty giveth a ſpiritual underſtanding to know ſin, and hate it, to know Chriſt and love him; ſo to know as to be conformed unto, yea transformed into that which we know. The Inſpiration of the Almighty gives this underſtanding, *this heart-changing and life-renewing underſtanding.*

Res ſine verbis Lutherus, verba ſine rebus Eraſmus, res & verba Philippus.

Again, *There is a ſpirit* [*in man*] *and the Inſpiration of the Almighty giveth them underſtanding*; The word is *Enos, weak man.*

Hence Note, *God can make the weakeſt and the unlikelieſt of men wiſe and full of underſtanding.*

It is no matter what the man is, if God will uſe him; he can make *Enos* to be *Iſh*, the weak man ſtrong, the ignorant a learned, a knowing man; *Amos* was a husbandman, and God gave him an excellent underſtanding; the Apoſtles were Fiſhermen, and yet the Inſpiration of the Almighty made them wiſe above many; God can make the wiſe fooliſh, and fools wiſe. The power of God triumphs over all humane power, and in all humane infirmity. So much the Apoſtle teacheth (1 *Cor.* 1. 27.) *God hath choſen the fooliſh things of the world to confound the wiſe, and the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty*; *And baſe things of the world, and things which are deſpiſed hath God choſen, yea and things which are not, to bring to nought things which are, that no fleſh ſhould glory in his preſence.* God chuſeth thoſe things which have the greateſt improbability for his work, that the power and ſucceſs of the work may be aſcribed to him alone. When we chuſe, we ſhould chuſe thoſe that are fit for the work, to which they are choſen; we ſhould not chuſe a fool to govern, nor one that is of low parts himſelf to teach others; we ſhould pitch upon the wiſeſt and ableſt we can get. *Joſeph* ſaid well to *Pharaoh* (Gen. 41. 33.) *Look out a man diſcreet and wiſe, and ſet him over the Land of Egypt.* We cannot make men wiſer then they are, and therefore we muſt chuſe and take thoſe that are wiſe to do our work. But when God comes to do his work, he often takes the fooliſh and the weak, becauſe as he calleth them to, ſo he can fit them for his work. As the ſtrongeſt oppoſition of nature againſt grace cannot hinder the work of the Spirit; when the Spirit comes, he will make a proud man humble, a covetous man liberal, an unclean perſon modeſt and temperate; ſo the weakneſs of nature cannot hinder his work. If a man be low in parts, God can raiſe him; *Out of the mouths of babes and ſucklings haſt thou ordained ſtrength* (Pſal. 8. 2.) or (as Chriſt alledgeth that Text, *Matth.* 21. 16.) *Thou haſt perfected praiſe*; one might think, Surely God will take the aged, the learned and great for his praiſe; no, he ordains praiſe to himſelf out of the mouths of babes and ſucklings, that is, out of their mouths who in all natural conſiderations, are no way formed up nor fitted to ſhew forth his praiſe. *Iſa.* 32. 4.) *The heart of the raſh* (or *haſty*) *ſhall underſtand knowledg.* Heady and inconſiderate perſons, whoſe tongues (as we ſay) run before their wits, ſhall then be grave, adviſed, and ſerious, both in what they do, and (as it followeth) in what they ſay; *The tongue of the ſtammerers ſhall ſpeak plainly*, that is, clear words with clear reaſon; or they ſhall ſpeak well both in matter and form, right things rightly. All this the Lord doth that he may honour himſelf, and lift up his own name only, which alone is to be lifted up. *Never fear to put an empty veſſel to a full fountain*; no matter how empty the veſſel be, if the fountain be full; God delights in broken weak and empty creatures, that he may mend, ſtrengthen, and fill them. *There is a ſpirit in man* [*in weak man*] *and the Inſpiration of the Almighty giveth them underſtanding.*

Elihu having ſhewed the Original of mans wiſdom to be from God in this 8. *Verſe*, makes an inference from it in the 9. *The inſpiration of the Almighty giveth underſtanding*; And what then? Surely even hence it cometh to paſs, that,

Verſ. 9. Great men are not always wiſe, neither do the aged underſtand Judgment.

It is well conceived by ſome Interperters, that the Apoſtle doth more then allude to, even cite this Text (1 *Cor.* 1. 26.) *You ſee your Calling Brethren, how that not many wiſe men after the fleſh, not many mighty, not many Noble are called.* If God ſhould chuſe only or moſtly wiſe men, they would be ready to ſay, we are choſen for our wiſdom; If he ſhould chuſe and call only or moſtly rich men, they would be ready to think, we are choſen for our riches; If he ſhould call only or moſtly Kings and Princes, they would conclude, we are called for our Greatneſs. Therefore the Lord paſſeth by moſt of theſe, and calleth the Fiſherman, calleth the poor man, the ignorant man, and ſaith, You that have nothing, you that (in the eſteem of the world) are nothing, do you follow me, who have all things, and can ſupply you with all. Thus here ſaith *Elihu*, *Great men are not always wiſe*; Why not? the reaſon is becauſe God doth not always beſtow wiſdom upon them, It is the Inſpiration of the Almighty that giveth underſtanding; Greatneſs doth it not; *Not many wiſe men after the fleſh*, not many Great or Noble are called. *Elihu* and the Apoſtle *Paul* ſpeak the ſame thing almoſt in the ſame words. This is alſo a proof of the divine Authority of this Book, as well as that (1 *Cor.* 1. 19.) taken out of the ſpeech of *Eliphaz* in the 5. Chapter at the 13. Verſe; *He taketh the wiſe in their own craftineſs*, &c.

Great men are not always wiſe.

The word **always** is not at all in the Original Text, and therefore put in a different Character; *Great men are not wiſe*; but it's well ſupplied by that word *always*; For the meaning of *Elihu* is not that great men are never wiſe, but not always wiſe.

Great men, the Rabbies, the honourable men of the world, men in Authority and great place are intended by this word. The Officers which King *Ahaſuerus* ſet over his feaſt, are called *Rabbies* (*Eſt.* 1. 8.) ſo that we may expound it here in the largeſt ſence, as including all ſorts and degrees of Great ones.

רב *Magnus unde Rabbi Magiſter, qui multam eruditionem habet. Honorabiles* Pag. *Magnates.* Tygur.

Great men are not always wiſe.

That is, wiſdom neither floweth from, nor is it always aſſociated with greatneſs: As ſome are little yet great, little in the World, yet great in true wiſdom; ſo others are great, yet little, they are little in wiſdom, or have little true wiſdom; though they are great in the World, or have great worldly wiſdom.

Hence Note, *It is not greatneſs of birth, of place, or power, that can make any man wiſe, nor doth it at all aſſure us, that a man is wiſe, becauſe we ſee him exalted to and ſettled in a place of power and greatneſs.*

The Prophet (*Jer.* 5. 4, 5.) finding ſome very incorrigible and hardned in ſinful courſes, concluded them mean perſons, and in the loweſt form of the people. Therefore I ſaid, *Surely theſe are poor, they are fooliſh, for they know not the way of the Lord, nor the Judgment of their God.* To be poor and fooliſh is very common; theſe are poor and fooliſh (ſaith the Prophet) but ſurely I ſhall find the great ones better accommodated with wiſdom; and thereupon he reſolved, *I will get me to the great men, and will ſpeak unto them, for they have known the way of the Lord, and the Judgment of their God*; That is, theſe great men have had great means of knowledg, and we have reaſon to ſuppoſe them as great in knowledg, as they are in place or in power. But did the great men anſwer his expectation? Did he find that in them, which he ſought and looked for? Nothing leſs: The great men proved more fooliſh, or leſs in true knowledg then the poor, as it followeth, *But theſe have altogether broken the yoke and burſt the bonds*; as if he had ſaid, *I thought theſe great men had been wiſe, but I ſee they are very fools.* What can be a greater argument of folly, then to break thoſe yoaks and bonds, which the wiſdom of God hath put upon us? 'Tis both our wiſdom and our freedom to be bound by the moſt wiſe and holy will of God; and hence the Prophet accounts this one as ſtrong as a thouſand arguments, to prove that the great men among the *Jews* were not wiſe, becauſe they were not only unwilling to be bound to the obedience of the will of God, but wilfully burſt thoſe bonds. When Jeſus Chriſt came into the World, the great ones, the *Rabbies* had the leaſt true wiſdom, they would not believe on him, nor receive him; yea ſome boaſted of this their unbelief as an argument of their wiſdom (*John* 7. 48, 49.) *Have any of the Rulers, or of the Phariſees believed on him?* No; they were too wiſe to believe; faith in Chriſt was left to the fools, and counted folly by thoſe wiſe men; *But this people* (ſay they, meaning the common ſort or ignorant vulgar) *who knoweth not the Law are curſed.* And they thought them accurſed becauſe they believed in and received Jeſus Chriſt, the chiefeſt bleſſing. Great men are not always wiſe in civil things, very rarely in ſpiritual things; they have not always the wiſdom of a man, they ſeldom have the wiſdom of a real Chriſtian. They are not always worldly wiſe, or wiſe for this preſent world, much leſs are they always wiſe for the world which is to come. *Great in title, and wiſe in truth, are a ſweet couple, but ſeldom ſeen.* If ſo

Then *there is no taking of things upon truſt from the greateſt in the World.* As it is dangerous to follow the multitude (*Exod.* 23. 2.) the moſt are uſually the worſt, and they who are evil, will lead to evil; ſo there is no following great ones blindfold, for even they are often blind, or (which is worſe) will not ſee; and they who either do not or will not ſee their own way, may ſoon lead others out of the way, and turn them aſide to that which is not good.

Οὐχ οἱ πολύχρονοι εἰσιν σοφοί. Sept.

Again, This firſt part of the verſe (*Great men are not always wiſe*) is rendred by the Septuagint, *men of many years, or great in years, are not always wiſe.* The Original word may refer to greatneſs of age, which conſiſts in having lived many years, as well as to greatneſs of honour, which conſiſts in the injoying of high places and dignities. But I rather adhere to our tranſlation, that the great men here intended are the great in power and place, not in years and days, though it be a truth, that ſuch are not always wiſe; and if we take in that ſence alſo, it is a further confirmation of the general truth in hand, that wiſdom is the gift of God, and therefore thoſe men are not always wiſe, whom we might moſt probably look upon as ſuch. For as we ſee great men, who have the advantage of means for education in learning, are not always the wiſeſt; ſo the aged, who have that great advantage of time and experience to gather wiſdom are not; both often come ſhort in abilities of underſtanding and prudence, the former of their inferiours, the latter of their Juniors. This is expreſs in the latter part of the verſe, and therefore needs not be inferred from this firſt part of it, by way of interpretation; *Great men are not always wiſe*, then follows this disjunctive propoſition;

Neither do the aged underſtand Judgment; or, *that which is right.*

The word *Miſhpat* is taken two ways in Scripture; firſt, for the rule of righteouſneſs; *Samuel* told the people, the judgment or manner of the Kingdom, (1 *Sam.* 10. 25.) that is, how the Kingdom ſhould be ordered and governed, according to judgment and rules of righteouſneſs. Secondly, Such an actual Adminiſtration as is according to that rule of righteouſneſs, is in Scripture called judgment. The aged do not always underſtand judgment in either notion; they do not always underſtand the rule, nor do they always act according to the rule which they underſtand; they who fail in one, much more in both theſe, do not underſtand judgment. Sometimes the aged are at a loſs and know not what to do, and oftentimes they are ſo intangled with their luſts, that they will not do what they know. Yet here remember, theſe words are not to be taken as an abſolute negation of wiſdom to the ancient, much leſs as a reproach upon them: For uſually the aged are moſt underſtanding in judgment, and we may more probably and do more frequently find judgment with them, then among thoſe that are young. And therefore when *Elihu* ſaith, *neither do the aged underſtand Judgment*; his meaning is only this, old age doth not give wiſdom, nor is it the old mans priviledg only, to underſtand Judgment.

Hence Note, *As honour or greatneſs of eſtate, ſo age or greatneſs of years, doth not confer wiſdom upon any man.*

Time doth neither ſtop nor convey knowledg and underſtanding; old men have not their knowledg by their Antiquity, and therefore, *as no man is wiſe at all times, ſo no man is made wiſe by time.* In a ſtrict ſence, wiſdom is not the *Daughter of time*, but the *gift of the eternal.* It is not time but divine favour which makes wiſe. They are ſoon made wiſe and learned, whom God will teach. The teachings of God make young men like the ancients in wiſdom, and without his teaching, the aged are like Children in folly. God ſometimes denieth wiſdom to the ancient, and ſometimes he takes wiſdom from them. And God ſuffers old men to act like Children, to go out of the way, to do fooliſhly, that he may ſtain the glory of all fleſh, and that all might both know and have their dependance on him alone. Hence take two or three deductions.

Intelligentia juris non pendet à ſenectute. Piſc.

Firſt, From the connection of theſe two verſes, we learn that, *The Spirit of God is not tyed to any age or degree of men*; *the inſpiration of the Almighty giveth underſtanding*; *great men are not always wiſe*, &c. The Spirit of God is a free Spirit; and as the Spirit is free becauſe he moves without any deſert in the object; as alſo becauſe he gives liberally, plentifully, and abundantly; ſo the Spirit of God is free as to the choice of objects, he give here and not there, he paſſeth by this man, and takes hold of that, he ſometimes paſſeth by the rich, and takes the poor, (*Eccl.* 9. 15.) *The poor wiſe man ſaved the City*; ſometimes he paſſeth by the old, and takes the young; and he doth all this, that we might aſcribe all to himſelf, not to the age of man, not to any thing in man. God hath promiſed to be with his Church, and with his Miniſters by his Spirit to the end of the World; but the Spirit hath his choice as to particular men, and none have been more deceived then they that thought the Spirit in bonds or tyed to them; *Come* (ſay they, *Jer.* 18. 18.) *let us deviſe devices againſt* Jeremiah; *for the Law ſhall not periſh from the Prieſt, nor Counſel from the wiſe, nor the word from the Prophet*; The Prieſts are of this opinion, and *Jeremiah* is out of the way, he is a falſe Prophet, and therefore certainly we may proceed in our devices againſt him, for we have the opinion of the Prieſts and Prophets with us; Thus they ſpake, as if the Spirit of God had been bound up to that order. We ought to ſeek wiſdom at the Prieſts mouth; yet they who reſt upon their wiſdom may ſoon be deceived; knowledg may periſh from the Prieſts mouth, and counſel from the ancient. The great Cheat which the Pope hath put upon the world is, *That the Spirit of God is tyed to the pumels of his Chair, or that there he cannot erre.* But as particular men, ſo whole Councils of learned and aged men have erred. True wiſdom is not the birth of time, nor the peculiar of a party, but the free gift of the Spirit of God, who is moſt free, both in what he giveth, and to whom he giveth. Therefore

Secondly, *Let us not pin our faith or our Conſciences upon men, how great, or how Ancient ſoever they are*; Let us give reſpect to the Ancient, and the Honourable, (not to do it is not only uncivil but ſinful) yet let us not give up our Conſciences to them; *For great men are not always wiſe, neither do the aged underſtand Judgment*; We muſt not reverence any mans perſon to the prejudice of the truth. The opinions of great or ancient men are not to be received, as Oracles, without debate; we have liberty to conſider of them, and to compare them with the rule: We muſt prove all things, and hold faſt that only which is good. A heathen gave that direction to thoſe who hear Philoſophical diſcourſes; *You muſt take off all thoſe conſiderations which concern the perſon ſpeaking, and only mind what is ſpoken:* his Antiquity, that he is an old man, and his authority, that he is a great man, muſt not ſway you; His outward geſture, tone and gravity, his ſevere or demure looks, which much affect, almoſt aſtoniſh unlearned auditors, and make them ready to ſwallow any thing that is uttered, muſt all be laid aſide when the matter delivered and aſſerted, comes to be examin'd and laid in the ballance. Believe what is ſaid becauſe you judg it true, do not believe it true becauſe ſuch or ſuch a man hath ſaid it; becauſe an old man, or a great man, or a good man hath ſaid it. How ſtrictly then and religiouſly is this to be obſerved in hearing the word of God, and the doctrins of faith? in that caſe be ſure to lay aſide all that concerns the ſpeaker, and weigh what he ſpeaks alone and ſingle in the Ballance of the Sanctuary.

Quæ in Philoſophia dicuntur ea oportet exiſtimatione ejus qui dicit detracta, ſeorſum per ſe examinari, Etenim canities dictis, geſtus, ſupercilium, &c. faciunt ad percellendum imperitum Auditorem. Plutarch. de Auditione.

Thirdly, Then, *we ought not to deſpiſe what young men ſay, becauſe of their youth.* If old men be not always wiſe, then wiſdom may be with the young; ſometimes an opinion is undervalued, becauſe it is the opinion of a young man; and truths are not received, becauſe he that delivers them hath not ſeen many days. As it is a ſin to adore old age, or to give up our faith and Conſcience to it; ſo it is a ſin to ſlight youth, in doing ſo we may ſlight the truth. *Paul* ſaith to *Timothy*, *Let no man deſpiſe thy youth*; Which as it is a Caution to *Timothy* (as hath been ſhewed) to carry himſelf wiſely and warily, leſt he ſhould occaſion others to ſlight or deſpiſe him; ſo it is a Caution to the people, that they ſhould not deſpiſe him becauſe of his youth; That which is the true glory of *gray hairs, doth ſometimes Crown the youthful head,* wiſdom (I mean) and ripeneſs of underſtanding. It was ſaid of a godly woman, *She had a youthful body, but an aged mind. Samuel* was young in years, but in grace elder then old *Eli*; *Jeremiah* was young, but how wiſe did the Inſpiration of God make him? *Daniel* was young, yet wiſer then all the Magicians and Aſtrologers; *Timothy* and *Titus* were young, yet Honourable for prudence and piety; and therefore, ſeeing great men are not always wiſe, neither do the aged underſtand Judgment, as we ſhould not accept what old men ſay becauſe of their age; ſo let us not ſlight what young men ſay becauſe of their youth.

---Tempora quippe virtutem non prima negant, non ultima donant.

Corpore juvencula, animo cana fuit. Ambr. de Agnete. Ser. 90.

When God furniſheth young men with abilities, and calleth them to his work, even old men muſt be willing, at leaſt not diſdain, to hear them. Chriſt muſt be heard in or by whomſoever he will ſpeak. God indeed doth uſually ſerve himſelf by the aged, yet he hath abundantly teſtified that truth is not bound up to old age. Modeſty ſhould bridle young men from being over-forward to ſhew themſelves, but it muſt not ſhut or ſeal up their lips. Old men muſt have the preheminence; *Elihu* ſhews us that order (*Ver.* 7.) *I* (ſaith he) *ſaid days ſhall ſpeak, and multitude of years ſhall teach wiſdom:* We muſt firſt attend and give ear to our elders. And when we are to chuſe Officers or Governours, to chuſe ignorant Greenheads before knowing Gray hairs, were a preverting of all order. Therefore men of years having grace and wiſdom proportionable, are to be preferred before the younger. In that caſe it were a ſhame to advance young men, with a neglect of the aged. But when God gives more grace and underſtanding to young men then to ancients, our approbation ſhould follow his preparation, and whom he qualifies beſt, we ſhould ſooneſt chuſe. *The order of Nature is good, yet not always fitteſt to be obſerved.* Right reaſon and the rule of the word of God muſt ſway and caſt our vote, not the age and years of men. When *Samuel* was ſent to anoint a King in the place of *Saul* among the ſons of *Jeſſe*, he looking on *Eliab* ſaid, *Surely the Lords anointed is before him* (1Sam. 16. 5.) *but the Lord ſaid unto him* (Ver. 6.) *Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his ſtature, becauſe I have refuſed him, for the Lord ſeeth not as man ſeeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.* Now, as we are not to be taken with the beauty and ſtature of men, ſo not with their gray hairs and outward gravity. *Old men are not always wiſe*; wiſdom and a heart for God, a good heart, or a heart to do good, may dwell with a Green Head, even with a greener then ſeven, the eighth or greeneſt of all (ſo was *Davids*) that come or ſtand in a day of Election before us.

VERS. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14.

Therefore I ſaid, Hearken to me: I alſo will ſhew mine opinion.

Behold, I waited for your words: I gave ear to your reaſons, whileſt you ſearched out what to ſay.

Yea, I attended unto you: and behold, there was none of you that convinced Job, or that anſwered his words:

Leſt ye ſhould ſay; We have found out wiſdom: God thruſteth him down and not man.

Now he hath not directed his words againſt me: neither will I anſwer him with your ſpeeches.

ELihu, having aſſerted this negative propoſition in the former verſe, *Great men are not always wiſe, neither do the aged underſtand Judgment*, makes his inference from it in theſe words.

Verſ. 10. Therefore I ſaid, Hearken to me.

As if he had ſaid; *Though I am none of the great men of the world, though I am none of the aged among the ſons of men, yet hearken unto me; for ſeeing great and aged men are not always wiſe, nor have ingroſſed all wiſdom and underſtanding to themſelves, it is poſſible that ſome beams of wiſdom may ſhine forth even from ſo mean a Junior, even from ſuch a puny as* (I muſt confeſs) *I am.*

We may alſo make the inference from the 8. verſe; *There is a ſpirit in man, and the inſpiration of the Almighty giveth underſtanding. Therefore I ſaid hearken to me*; As if he had ſaid, *Though I am a young man, and have not had either thoſe natural or accidental advantages of the ancient for the gathering of any great ſtock or treaſures of wiſdom, yet there is an inſpiration of the Almighty which giveth underſtanding. If the Lord will make uſe of me, and inſpire me, if he pleaſe to breath his truths into me, and irradiate my Soul with divine light, I may be able to do and ſay ſomething in this matter.* The inference, you ſee, follows well and without ſtrain from either of thoſe premiſes.

Therefore I ſaid, hearken to me.] It may be queried, to whom did *Elihu* ſay thus? We tranſlate the words indefinitely, not determining them to this or that perſon; But the Original ſeems to ſpeak perſonally; *Therefore I ſaid, hear thou me.* Which may be underſtood two ways; Firſt, that *Elihu* directed his ſpeech principally to *Job*, *Hear thou what I ſhall ſay.* Secondly, that *Elihu* ſpake to the whole company there preſent, as if they had been but one man, we may ſpeak in a congregation of hundreds and thouſands, we may ſpeak to many, as if there were but one to hear; as what is ſpoken to a few, may be intended to all. (*Mark* 13. 37.) *What I ſay unto you,* (my Diſciples)

Diſciples) *I ſay unto all*; *watch.* So that which is ſaid to all, is ſurely ſaid to every one in the aſſembly where 'tis ſaid. Though we take *Elihu* here, as ſpeaking directly but to one perſon, yet we muſt take him as deſiring that every perſon preſent ſhould take it as ſpoken to himſelf; *Hearken to me.*

Hence Note, Firſt, *When any ſpeak reaſon, and hold out truth, they are to be heard.*

No man ſhould ſtop his ear with a prejudice to the perſon. He that ſpeaks truth, deſerves to be heard: though (as *Elihu*) he be a young man, or inferior to many in age, yet he is to be heard, though inferior to many in power and experience, yet he is to be heard; (*Eccleſ.4. 13.*) *Better is a poor and wiſe child, then an old and fooliſh King that will not be admoniſhed.* And better is a poor and wiſe child, then an old man that can give no admonition. As that man is in a ſad condition, whether King or Subject, that will not be admoniſhed, ſo that man, be he never ſo ancient, is not much to be regarded, that is not able to give admonition. But though both diſcreet young men, and diſcreet poor men are to be heard when they ſpeak truth and reaſon, yet that of *Solomon* (*Eccl.9.16.*) is too often verified; *The poor mans wiſdom is deſpiſed, and his words are not heard.* Moſt conclude, If a man be poor, his counſel is ſo too, and if he be young, how can he be a counſeller? yet, *hear me* (ſaith *Elihu*)

דעי
Scientiam meam.
Mont.

I alſo will ſhew mine opinion, *or my knowledg.*

I will ſhew what my underſtanding is, or what light God hath given me in this caſe. The words are plain.

Note from them, *What truth or truths we have received and know, we ſhould communicate and make known.*

'Tis a duty to ſhew our opinion when we have a call and an occaſion to ſhew it, as *Elihu* here had. Some have knowledg, who will not ſhew it; They (which Chriſt forbids, *Matth* 5 15.) put their candle under a buſhel. God hath lighted a candle, and ſet it up in ſome mens ſpirits, yet they either quite conceal or much obſcure it. God hath given them a talent of knowledg, and they like the unprofitable ſervant, wrap it up in a Napkin. They will not ſhew their opinion. Not to ſhew what we have, when called to it, is a denial that we have it. As good not have a candle, or a talent, as let our candle be hid, or hide our talent. The very Heathen condemned this, while they ſaid, *Covered vertue, is buried vertue.* Yea while a man covers his vertues, parts, and abilities, he burieth himſelf alive, or is dead while he lives. As, the Scripture ſaith, they have only a name to be alive, but are dead, who make a ſhew of more then they have (*Rev.* 3. 2.) ſo they have a name to be dead, or may be numbred among the dead, who will not ſhew what indeed they have.

There are two things which hinder men from ſhewing their opinion; Firſt, idleneſs, they are loth to take the pains to ſhew it. Secondly, ſhamefaſtneſs; There is a commendable modeſty, 'tis not good to be over-forward in ſhewing our opinion; But that modeſty is ſinful, which quite hinders us from ſhewing our opinion. They who keep in their knowledg and opinion either through idleneſs, or ſhamefaſtneſs, do almoſt as ill as they who ſhew their opinion, and declare their knowledg through pride and high-mindedneſs, or meerly to ſhew themſelves, to ſhew their wit, and to make a noiſe of their parts and learning. 'Tis ſinful ſelf-pleaſing either to know only that we may know, or to publiſh what we know only to be known. With ſome 'tis nothing that they have knowledg, unleſs others know that they have it. An affectation to appear knowing, is as bad as to be ignorant. *I will ſhew mine opinion* (ſaith *Elihu*) But why would he ſhew it? We have reaſon to judg, it was from the honeſty of his heart, not from the height of his Spirit. And when ever we ſhew our opinion, we ought to ſhew it out of an honeſt heart, and for honeſt ends, ſuch as theſe.

Firſt, To inſtruct thoſe who are ignorant.

Secondly, To reduce thoſe who are out of the way.

Thirdly, To feed hungry Souls with wholeſom dorine. (*Prov.* 10. 21.) *The lips of the righteous feed many.*

Fourthly, To ſtrengthen the weak.

Fifthly, To confirm the doubtful.

Sixthly, To comfort the ſorrowful.

Seventhly, To encourage the fearful.

Eightly, To quicken the ſlothful in the ways and work of God.

Laſtly, and above all, That God may be glorified by the uſe of the talent that he hath given. (1 *Pet.*4.10.) *As every man hath received the gift, even ſo miniſter the ſame one to another, as good Stewards of the manifold grace of God.* Stewards muſt not ſet up their own, but their Maſters Intereſt. We ſhould miniſter by every gift as Stewards of the manifold grace of God.

I will ſhew mine opinion (ſaith *Elihu.*)

But what haſte? *Elihu* it ſeemeth foreſaw ſome ready to object; Why do you a young man take upon you to ſpeak in a cauſe, wherein ſo many of your Elders and Betters have not prevailed? why are you ſo buſie? 'Tis much boldneſs for you, or ſuch as you to declare your opinion in this controverſie, wherein ſuch wiſe, learned, and godly men have, without ſucceſs, ingaged already. To this Objection, *Elihu* makes a preventing anſwer, rendring this account of his undertaking; As if he had ſaid, *I have attentively obſerved all the paſſages and traverſes of this diſpute, I have heard all that* Job'*s friends have offered, whether for vindication of the juſtice and righteouſneſs of God in laying that great affliction upon him, or for the conviction of* Job, *to make him ſee his ſin, and ſit down humbled. I have heard all this* (ſaith *Elihu*) *and upon the whole matter I find,* Job *is yet unanſwered, or that there is need of a further anſwer to ſtop his mouth, to ſilence his complaints, and humble him under the hand and ſoveraign power of God.*

This is the ſcope and ſum of theſe two verſes following.

Verſ. 11. **Behold, I waited for your words, I gave ear to your reaſons, whileſt you ſearched out what to ſay.**

Verſ. 12. **Yea I attended unto you; and behold, there is none of you that convinced Job, or that anſwered his words.**

You have the general ſence of the Text, I ſhall yet proceed to a more particular explication of it.

Behold, I waited for your words.

יחל
Moratus eſt, præſtolatus eſt, expectavit.

The word which we tranſlate **to wait**, imports three things in Scripture; Firſt, an act of hope, or to be carried towards any thing deſirable, with a wonderful deſire to enjoy it; *Hope cauſeth the Soul to breath after fruition.* Secondly, the word implyeth that grief or trouble which poſſeſſeth the mind upon a long ſtay or detainment of that good which we deſire and hope to attain. Thirdly, it notes, the Souls patient waiting (though grieved and burdened with preſent delaies) for future enjoyment. In all or any of theſe ſences, *Elihu* might ſay, *Behold, I waited for your words*, I earneſtly deſired to hear you ſpeak to ſatisfaction, and I am grieved that you did not; and I would, if need were, patiently wait ſtill, did I not perceive you had done, and quitted your hands of this work.

לדבוי כם
Attendi uſq; ad ſenſa veſtra; Jun. *i. e. Accuratiſſimè & quam penitiſſi ne ſenſa animi veſtri exploravi.* Id.
Audivi prudentiam veſtram. Vulg.
Diligentiſſime auſcultavi rationes veſtras, quas ex & pro intelligentia veſtra attuliſtis, & quas doctas eſſe putaſtis & ad rem aptas. Merc.

Behold, I waited for your words.] Mr. *Broughton* renders, *Behold, I waited through your ſpeech*, or, *into your words*, I ſtood ſtill, but I have not been aſleep, I have long expected, you would ſay what is right, and I have ſeriouſly conſidered what you ſaid, *I waited for your words*;

I gave ear to your reaſons.] That is, to find what convincing reaſon was couched in your arguments. The Hebrew is, *I gave ear to your underſtanding*; That is, I attended to find out your apprehenſions, or to gather up your ſence in this matter, that I might not miſtake your meaning, nor anſwer at random. The vulgar tranſlation reads it, *I have heard your wiſdom*; That is, what wiſdom there was in your words. The truth or reaſon that is in words, is the wiſdom of them. So that, when *Elihu* ſaith, *I gave ear to your reaſons*, or, *to your underſtanding*, it intimates that he took the exacteſt heed he poſſibly could to find out the utmoſt tendency and purpoſe of their diſcourſe. As if he had ſaid; *I have weighed every tittle that ye have ſpoken, and tryed it by mine ear, to find whether it were ſolid yea or no.*

There is one clauſe further to be opened in this verſe; *I gave ear to your reaſons,*

While you ſearched out what to ſay.

This implyeth that *Job*'s friends did ever and anon, take time to conſider either each man with himſelf, or that they conſulted one with another, what anſwer to ſhape and make to *Job*.

חקר *Scrutatus, perſcrutatus eſt remota & abſtruſa.*

Whileſt ye ſearched out.] The word which we tranſlate *to ſearch out*, notes the ſtricteſt ſearch after that which is hidden, remote and ſecret. 'Tis applyed (*Deut.* 13. 14.) to that care which Judges ought to take in finding out the truth of an accuſation brought againſt enticers to Idolatry. The ſtrictneſs of the Original is, *While ye ſearched out words,* As if he had ſaid, *I am perſwaded you have ſtrained your ſelves to the utmoſt, to find out what to ſay, you did not ſpeak what came next, but ſearched for your anſwers.*

We may learn a good leſſon from the practice of *Elihu*; we ſee he was no idle hearer; yea in him we have the deſcription or character of an active hearer; *I waited for your words, I gave ear to your reaſonings, while ye ſearched out what to ſay.*

Hence Note, *We muſt diligently hear and give ear, weigh and conſider what is ſpoken, before we give anſwer.*

No man is well prepared to anſwer, but he that hath been an attentive hearer. And as no man can be a fit anſwerer in points under diſputation, ſo no man can be a fruitful practiſer in points of inſtruction, but he that hath been a diligent hearer. 'Tis our duty, when the word is preacht, to wait, not for a ſound of words, not for fine words, or words dreſſed up with affected eloquence, but for ſound ſavory words, for words that have weight and light in them, for words that have ſtrength and authority in them, to prevail upon the heart, and conquer us to obedience. Theſe are the only words, worth the waiting for; and for theſe we ought to wait.

Secondly, Before *Elihu* comes to give his opinion, he tells *Job*'s friends, that he had diligently heard the matter out, even all their reaſonings and ſearchings.

Hence Note, *We muſt not make a judgment from any one part of a diſcourſe, we muſt take all together.*

We muſt compare the firſt and laſt, the *Alpha* and *Omega*, the beginning and ending of what is ſaid; We muſt look quite through. 'Tis not ingenuous to pick up this or that paſſage, to take a piece here, and a piece there; we can never make a true judgment, till the whole is laid together. As, many exceedingly miſtake about the works of God, ſo about the words of men, becauſe they judg the whole by this or that part: Whereas they ſhould judg of the parts by the whole. As therefore we ought not to make concluſions about the providential works of God, till the laſt Act, or till all is concluded; ſo we muſt not judg the diſcourſes of men, till the laſt word, or till they have concluded their diſcourſe. Hear a man out, and then anſwer him.

Ab æquo attentionem ſibi conciliat. Merc.

Thirdly, *Elihu* ſeems to challenge it as his due to be heard ſpeak, after he had fully heard them ſpeaking.

Hence Note, *They who have had the patience to hear others, ought to have the priviledg of being heard themſelves.*

Hear me, ſaith *Elihu*; Why ſo? *I have heard you.* It is but equal and rational, that he ſhould have liberty of ſpeaking, who hath ſhewed an attentive perſeverance in hearing.

From the laſt branch of the Verſe, *while ye ſearched out what to ſay,*

Obſerve, *We ought to ponder and try what we ſpeak, before we ſpeak it.*

The work of the tongue muſt follow that of the underſtanding. (*Eccl.* 12. 10.) *The Preacher ſought to find out acceptable words or words of delight, words of pleaſure.* The Preacher ſought; But how did he ſeek? He ſought diligently and earneſtly. The Preacher ſought, but in what way did he ſeek? ſurely he ſought by diligent ſtudy and earneſt prayer, *to find out acceptable words*, what words were thoſe? not *men-pleaſing words*, not ſoft words, which might paſs with all ſorts, or humour all phanſies, not ſuch words as would ſerve for pillows under bad mens elbows. The acceptable words which the Preacher ſought, were words of truth and ſobriety, words of power and Authority; in no other ſence may we ſeek out acceptable words, or words of delight; nor is there any true delight, but in words of truth. Thus every faithful Preacher ſhould ſeek to find out acceptable words; every holy and wholſom doctrin is made up of ſuch words. Only thoſe doctrins and exhortations which are formed and compoſed of ſuch words, are (as the Apoſtle ſaith of the great doctrin of Jeſus Chriſt, manifeſted in the fleſh to ſave ſinners) *faithful ſayings, and worthy of acceptation* (1 Tim. 1.15.) *Elihu* took notice of this in *Job*'s friends, they did not ſpeak hand over head, but ſearched what they might ſay moſt to the purpoſe (as they judged) of the cauſe in hand, and to the profit of their hearers.

Elihu thought he had not yet ſpoken enough in way of apology for himſelf. And therefore the Penman of this diſpute repreſents him ſpeaking further, yet much to the ſame ſence.

Verſ. 12. **Yea, I attended unto you, and behold, there was none of you that convinced Job, or that anſwered his words.**

Uſq; ad intima veſtra conſiderabam vos. Druſ.

I attended unto you; That is, *I did not only deſire to receive full ſatisfaction from you, but I attended, hoping at laſt to find it.* I ſtayed, I did not make haſte, nor did I haſten you. Some expound the word with a great ſignificancy, I did as throughly conſider and attend what was ſaid, as if I had looked into you. Thus (ſaith *Elihu*) *I attended unto you.*

But what did he find? He found two faults in their words after he had attended unto them throughly, Firſt, he found them faulty, becauſe *none of them had convinced Job.* Their proofs did not make good their accuſations. The ſecond fault which *Elihu* found, was, They had not refuted *Job*'s aſſertion. As if he had ſaid, *Ye have ſpoken much, but upon the matter have done little. I waited, and I attended, expecting great things from you, but I have been deceived in my expectation. For having taken out the ſtrength and ſubſtance, the ſpirits and quinteſſence of your ſpeech, I find nothing coming up, either to a conviction of* Job, *as faulty in matter of fact, nor to an anſwer of him, as defective in matter of argument. So that when I have laid all that ye have ſpoken in the ballance, it weighs too light,* Job *is your match, yea, he hath over-matcht you.*

Behold, there is none of you that convinceth Job.

Ἐλέγχειν.

The Hebrew word which we here tranſlate *to convince*, anſwers the Greek in the New Teſtament, which is alſo tranſlated, *To reprove or convince.* And both the Hebrew and the Greek, carry a threefold ſignification.

Ἔλεγχος.

Firſt, to prove, or to make good what is affirmed, either Firſt by reaſon and argument, or, Secondly, by teſtimony and authority. When ſuch proofs and reaſons, ſuch teſtimonies and authorities are brought in, as a man can make no exceptions againſt, or cannot evade nor reply to, then he is convinced. The Apoſtle giving a deſcription of faith (*Heb.* 11. 1.) ſaith, *It is the ſubſtance of things hoped for, and the evidence* (or conviction) *of things not ſeen.* The Spirit of God makes conviction before faith acts. He brings ſuch proofs ſuch clear evidences, that though the thing be not ſeen, yet the ſoul ſits down convinced, that it is ſo, as fully as if we had ſeen it. The greateſt conviction we have to believe, is from authority and teſtimony; yea, that's properly and only faith, when we conſent to a thing upon the teſtimony and authority of another.

Ἔλεγξον.

Secondly, The word ſignifies to reprove, or rebuke with words. (*Math.* 18. 15.) *Moreover, if thy brother ſhall treſpaſs againſt thee, go and tell him of his fault.* To reprove a man, is Firſt to tell him of his fault, and then to blame him for it. Every mans fault muſt be clearly proved, before he can be juſtly reproved. Thus the Baptiſt reproved *Herod* (Luke 3.19.) And becauſe Light proves, therefore it alſo reproves (*John* 3. 20.) *Every one that doth evil, hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, leſt his deeds ſhould be reproved.* The ſame word is uſed (*Eph.* 5. 11.) *Have no fellowſhip with the unfruitful works of darkneſs, but rather reprove them.* And again (*1 Tim.* 5. 20.) *Them that ſin* (that is, either openly, before all, or whoſe ſin hath been proved before all) *rebuke, before all;*

all, and, as the ſame Apoſtle directs (*Tit.* 2. 25.) *Rebuke them ſharply.*

Thirdly, The word ſignifieth, as to prove and reprove, ſo to chaſten and correct, to rebuke by the hand as well as by the Tongue (*Heb.* 12 5.) *Ye have forgotten the exhortation which ſpeaketh unto you as unto Children; my ſon, deſpiſe not thou the chaſtning of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him.* When thou art rebuked of him by blows, or receiveſt ſenſible convictions. (*Rev.* 3. 19.) *Whom I love I rebuke and chaſten.* Here in the Text we muſt underſtand the word in the firſt ſence. *There is none of you that hath convinced Job*; That is, ye have not proved what ye have ſaid; Ye have called him an hypocrite, and told him that he hath oppreſſed the poor, and detained the right of the fatherleſs; But ye have proved none of theſe evils againſt him. Ye have not proved the matter of fact, that he might ſit down penitentially confeſſing himſelf ſuch an offender, as ye have accuſed him to be.

Ὑπ' αὐτοῦ ἐλεγχόμενος, *cum ab eo argueris.*

Hence, Note, *We can never convince another by what we ſay, until we prove what we ſay.*

If we reprove any man for an errour in his judgment, and do not prove it to be an errour; or if we reprove a man for ſin in practice, and do not prove his practice ſinful, or that he hath practiſed that ſin, no conviction follows. What is ſaid and not proved comes to the ear only, not to the conſcience. Therefore ſaith Chriſt (*John* 8. 46.) *Which of you convinceth me of ſin?* Find a ſpot in my life if you can. I know you are ready to ſlander me with, but you cannot convince me of evil. It is ſaid of *Apollos* (Acts 18. 28.) *He mightily convinced the Jews.* How did he convince them? not by reproving them only, for not receiving the Meſſias; he did not barely tell them, ye are a company of unbelievers: but he reproved them by proving the neceſſity of their receiving Chriſt the Meſſias, and the evil of rejecting him, *ſhewing by the Scriptures that Jeſus was the Chriſt.* Here was proof, and ſo conviction followed. He convinced them by Authority, by the teſtimony of the word, comparing Scripture with Scripture, the Propheſie, with the Hiſtory of Chriſt. The Apoſtle would have the Miniſters of the Goſpel mighty at this work (*Tit.* 1. 8.) They muſt *hold faſt the faithful word, that they may be able by ſound doctrin, both to exhort and to convince the gain-ſayers.* Not only muſt they be able to rebuke gain-ſayers, this will not do it; they muſt alſo convince them, or *ſtop their mouths.* (James 2. 9.) *If any of you have reſpect to perſons, ye commit ſin, and are convinced of the Law as tranſgreſſours.* How doth the Law convince? Not only by reproving, but by proving, It ſhews us a rule, and ſaith, there you have departed from it; here is the line, and there ye have tranſgreſſed, or gone over it. Thus ye are convinced, that ye are tranſgreſſors. He is both wiſe and faithful, he doth his work like a workman that needeth not be aſhamed, who not only gives reproof but proof, either of error in judgment, or of evil in practice. For the cloſe of this point, I may ſhew you three great convincers.

Firſt, The holy Spirit of God; This Office of the Spirit Chriſt ſets forth (*John* 16. 7.) *I will ſend the Comforter, and when he is come* (what ſhall he do?) *He will convince the world of ſin, and of righteouſneſs, and of Judgment*; That is, he will bring proof home to the conſcience, to ſhew ſinners their evil ſtate and evil lives; He will alſo bring home to their ſpirits the alſufficiency of the righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt, and ſo overcome their unbelief, that they ſhall not be able to refuſe the offers of grace. He will likewiſe ſhew them ſuch reaſons why they ought to be holy, and walk in the ways of righteouſneſs, that they ſhall neither have power nor will to gain-ſay.

The ſecond great convincer, is Conſcience. They who were ſo forward to accuſe the woman taken in adultery (*John* 8. 9.) were at laſt *convicted by their own Conſcience, and went out one by one*; Their conſcience told them they were guilty, if not for that ſin, yet of other ſins as bad as that. They were ſo far before from judging themſelves for, that they took no notice of their own faults; they were ſevere againſt the woman, but they flattered themſelves, till Chriſt made their own conſciences, their convincers. And ſurely conſcience will one time or other convince to purpoſe; They who have refuſed or outſtood conviction by the word, yea and put by the motions of the Spirit, ſhall at laſt find conſcience convincing and ſpeaking home to them.

The third great Convincer, is Jeſus Chriſt in perſon; Of him in the performance of this Office, the Apoſtle ſpeaks clearly (*Jude* v. 15.) *Behold the Lord cometh with ten thouſand of his Saints* (And what comes he to do?) *To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them, of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard ſpeeches which ungodly ſinners have ſpoken againſt him.* Chriſt will make the greateſt of ungodly ones in that great day to acknowledg, that all their hard ſpeeches which they have ſpoken againſt the Saints, or godly men, were ſpoken againſt him. When prophane men are among their wicked companions, they can jear at the godly profeſſors of the name of Chriſt; even while they pretend to honour Chriſt; But Chriſt will make them ſee, that they ſcorned him, while they ſcorned the leaſt of thoſe that feared him, and believed on his name. The great day will be a day not only of executing Judgment, but of conviction, every mouth ſhall be ſtopped, and all the world of wicked men ſhall become guilty in their own ſight before God. Theſe are the three great Convincers. The holy Spirit of God, the Conſcience of every man, and Jeſus Chriſt in the judgment of the great day.

And let thoſe who now undertake that great work of conviction, often remember (which was a little before mentioned and ſet down) the method to be uſed and obſerved in it; Firſt, prove the matter, and then reprove the man. None were ever wrought to any good, by bare reproof, much leſs by force. Men are not to be driven into the faith by fire and ſword, by terrors and impriſonments; conviction muſt do it; and that will do it to purpoſe. This is the firſt thing which *Elihu* blamed and burdened *Job*'s friends with; They reproved him, but did not bring ſufficient convincing proof againſt him. *There was none of you that convinced Job.*

Secondly, He lays this to their charge, that **They had not anſwered his words.** As ye have not proved your own allegations, ſo ye have not refuted nor infirmed his reaſons.

But how could *Elihu* ſay, They had not anſwered his words, when to every word he ſpake we find their ſeveral anſwers? *Then Eliphaz the Temanite anſwered and ſaid*; *Then Bildad the Shuhite anſwered and ſaid*; The like is ſaid of *Zophar the Naamathite.* They had been anſwering all the while, yet ſaith *Elihu, Behold, there was none of you that anſwered his words.* I ſhall reſolve this doubt, by giving this Note; which was alſo given upon the 3. Verſe, where ſee more.

Unleſs we anſwer home to the matter, and (as we ſay) hit the nail on the head, we have given no anſwer. We have not anſwered, unleſs we give a ſatisfactory anſwer. When the Reſpondent in Schools acquits himſelf well, The Moderator brings him off honorably, ſaying, *Thy Anſwers ſuffice.* *Job*'s friends had been anſwering long, and they made many long anſwers, but *Elihu*, the Moderator was forced to tell them, ye have not anſwered ſufficiently.

Laſtly, *Elihu* having heard all their anſwers, and finding that they did not reach a proof againſt *Job*, nor anſwer his reaſonings and replies, he ſpeaks himſelf.

Hence Note, *When we have weighed all duely, and find that others have not done the deed, we muſt not diſſemble our judgments, nor flatter them in their faulty anſwers.*

Elihu would not do ſo, and the reaſon why he would not, is laid down in the next words.

Verſ. 13. **Leſt ye ſhould ſay, we have found out wiſdom; God thruſteth him down not man.**

In the former Verſe *Elihu* ſhewed his own diſappointment, while he waited upon others; *I attended unto you* (ſaith he to *Job*'s three friends) *and behold, there was none of you that convinced Job, or that anſwered his words*; Then follows, *Leſt ye ſhould ſay, we have found out wiſdom*, &c. In which words *Elihu* proceeds with his Preface, that he might the more fairly fall into diſcourſe with *Job*; for having told *Job*'s friends that he had waited in vain, for ſatisfaction from their anſwers or replies, they having not convinced him, either by ſolid reaſon, or by Authentick Authority and teſtimony, that he was ſo bad as they judged him to be; He adds, this I affirm.

Leſt ye ſhould ſay, we have found out wiſdom.

That is, leſt ye ſhould ſay it boaſtingly, and *cry victory* againſt this afflicted man. The word is often uſed in Scripture to ſignifie *ſaying* with boaſting, or ſpeaking in pride of Spirit. The Baptiſt (*Matth.* 3. 9.) tells the Phariſees, *Think not to ſay within your ſelves, we have* Abraham *to our father*; his meaning is, do not ſpeak of your pedegree boaſtingly nor proudly: That ye are *Abraham*'s Children will do you no good, unleſs ye are good, like your father *Abraham*, and do as he did. So here, *Leſt ye ſhould* (proudly) *ſay, we have found out wiſdom*; we have found the myſtery of the whole matter, we have found out the key, which unlocks this ſecret, or as Mr. *Calvins* tranſlater wittily as well as truly expreſſeth, *We have found out the bean in the Cake*, we ſay, *Leſt ye ſhould ſay, we have found out wiſdom*; that is, that which will ſurely prove us wiſe men, and gain us the reputation of wiſdom among all wiſe and knowing men. What their ſpecial reſolve was, which they counted wiſdom, follows in the cloſe of the verſe according to our reading, *God thruſteth him down not man.* But before I deal with that concluſion, I ſhall briefly note two things from thoſe words, *Leſt ye ſhould ſay, we have found out wiſdom.*

Rem acu tetigimus & ipſũ cardinem in quo tota controverſia vertitur de Jobo. Druſ.

First, *Man is very apt to ſpeak boaſtingly, to have high thoughts, and then to utter great words of himſelf.* Man is a proud piece of fleſh, and a ſmall matter will make him ſhew his pride, and ſpread his plumes (like that naturally painted bird) if not explicitely in words, yet his Spirit will ſwell, and be puſt up with towring conceits of himſelf. The Prophet *Habakkuk* deſcribes his temper (*Chap.* 2. 4.) *He that is lifted up, his Spirit is not upright in him*; *a proud Spirit is always a falſe Spirit. They who think highly of themſelves, think themſelves higher then they are.* And 'tis a great argument that man is naturally very proud, becauſe God hath given ſo many ſtops and checks to his pride, or hath made ſo many proviſions againſt it. The very contrivance of the work of Redemption in that way by the hand of Jeſus Chriſt, had this great deſign in it; for as the chief deſign in reference to man was his ſalvation (that was the ultimate end as to man) ſo there was another deſign in it, why God would ſave man that way, which the Apoſtle layeth down (1 *Cor.* 1. 29.) *That no fleſh ſhould glory in his ſight*; while God intended to give man glory, he took a courſe to cut off all glorying from man. God would not ſet up man again to work his own ſalvation, leſt he ſhould be proud of his works. Though we are now called *to work out our own ſalvation* (Phil. 2. 12.) yet it is wholy wrought by another; and we are there commanded to work out our own ſalvation *with fear* and trembling, not with preſumption and boaſting.

Again, How apt is man to boaſt of any good he doth? Seeing he is not aſhamed to boaſt ſometimes when he doth evil, and of that which is evil, even of the luſts and luſtings of his evil heart. (*Pſ.* 10. 3.) *The wicked boaſteth of his hearts deſire.* And what good is there in the deſire of a wicked mans heart? He (as ſuch) can deſire nothing, but what is worſe then nothing, ſin or vanity, and yet he boaſts of it.

Yea, man is ready to boaſt, not only of evil done, but of his ability to do evil; they in the Prophet boaſted that they *were mighty to drink wine, and men of ſtrength to mingle ſtrong drink*, (*Iſa* 5. 22.) How do ſome pleaſe themſelves that they are in power, only, becauſe that gives them an advantage to oppreſs whom they pleaſe, or all thoſe with whom they are diſpleaſed. *David* ſaw that Spirit ruling and raging in ſpiteful *Doeg*, whom he therefore checks, (*Pſal.* 52. 1.) *Why boaſteſt thou thy ſelf in miſchief, O mighty man?* The Apoſtle found thoſe (*Phil.* 3. 19.) who *gloried in their ſhame*; that is, in ſinful practices (even making their belly their God) whereof they ought to be aſhamed. The Prophet ſpake of their like long before, (*Iſa.* 3. 9.) *They declare their ſin as* Sodome, *they hide it not*; As if it had been their ornament and their honour, their beauty and bravery to be wicked.

But eſpecially if bad men do that which is good, they boaſt of it. A carnal man may for the matter do good; yea, he may have a zeal for God. *Jehu* ſaid, *Come ſee my zeal for the Lord*, (2 Kings 10. 16.) But *Jehu* deſired more to have his zeal for the Lord ſeen, then to be zealous for the Lord. And ſo his was indeed zeal for himſelf, not for the Lord. The Phariſees did many good things, but they could not forbear boaſting in the good they did; they do all (ſaith Chriſt, who knew not only what they did, but with what heart) to be ſeen of men, or to have praiſe with men. Yea, not only are evil men ready to boaſt of the good they do, but the temptation lies hard alſo upon godly men to do ſo, their hearts are often unduely tranſported, as with the thoughts of their gifts, parts, and graces, ſo with what they do through the gift of grace. Our very graces, much more our outward priviledges, may be an occaſion of boaſting. Pride and boaſting are weeds which grow up from the beſt and richeſt ſoil. 'Tis rare to ſee any man rich in gifts and graces, and poor in Spirit; poverty of Spirit is the pureſt and trueſt riches of grace.

Secondly, As to the particular here ſpoken of, *Leſt ye ſhould ſay, we have found out wiſdom.*

Note, *Man is very prone to make boaſt of or glory in that which he calleth wiſdom.*

When he hath found out (though but ſuppoſed) wiſdom, he cannot contain, he muſt cry it up. It is ſaid of the old *Mathematician*, when (after long ſtudy and beating his brains) he had found out a concluſion in Geometry, he ran about the City (as if tranſported) or raviſhed with this loud out-cry, *I have found it, I have found it*; and thus *Job*'s friends were ready to cry out, *they had found, they had found out wiſdom.* There is indeed a very great temptation in the finding out or attaining of wiſdom, to puff man up, and to make him vain-glorious. We have great cauſe to be humbled, that we have ſo little wiſdom; and they that have any ſtore (as they think) more then their Neighbours, are in great danger of being proud of it. *Knowledge puffeth up*, (1 *Cor.* 8. 1.) When the head is full, the heart grows high. Yet this is to be underſtood of literal knowledg, not of ſpiritual, , or of knowledg when and where it is alone without grace, not of gracious knowledg. The more a gracious man knows, the more humble he is, becauſe his knowledg ſhews him his own vileneſs and emptineſs; but the more a carnal man knows, the more proud he is, becauſe (while ſuch) whatſoever or how much ſoever he knoweth, he knoweth not himſelf, nor doth he know any thing as he ought to know it, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks there at the ſecond verſe. And as meer natural men, ſo they who are but ſmatterers, or beginners in the ways of godlineſs, are alſo very ready to be tranſported with an opinion of their parts and knowledg, And therefore, the ſame Apoſtle gives it in charge to *Timothy* (1 Tim. 3. 6.) that he who is called and received unto Office in the Church, ſhould not be a *novice*; he means it not ſo much of one that is young in years, as if one that is young in the faith, a new plant in the Church, or one newly converted. And he gives this as a reaſon, *Leſt being puft up* (with pride he means) by being in ſuch a function, or by having ſuch reputation for wiſdom and knowledg, as is requiſite to a Goſpel Miniſter, *he* (which is a ſad fall, if not a down-fall into utter ruine.) *fall into the condemnation of the Devil.* Not that the Devil will condemn him for his pride, no, the more proud men are, the more the Devil approves of them, nor is it the Devils office to condemn, it is his office to execute; he is the executioner, not the Judg; and what ever he condemneth any man for, he will not condemn him for pride, no nor for any ſin. So that when the Apoſtle ſaith, *Leſt he fall into the condemnation of the Devil*, it is as if he had ſaid, *Leſt he be condemned for the ſame ſin that the Devil was condemned for, which was pride*: And it was pride (for he is the right father of the *Gnoſticks*) ariſing out of a high opinion, or conceit of his own wiſdom, and knowledg. *Zophar* ſaid (*Job* 11. 12.) *Vain man would be wiſe.* But is it an argument of a mans vanity that he would be wiſe? It is a mans duty to be wiſe, that's a good deſire; why then doth he ſay, *Vain man would be wiſe?* The meaning is, vain man would be in account for wiſdom, he would be reckoned among wiſe men, or he deſires more to be thought wiſe, then to be wiſe. *A vain man, indeed, cannot deſire any good, but in reference to ſome evil that cleaves to it*; and upon that account he may deſire to be wiſe. The firſt ſin came into the World by an attempt to get wiſdome, or by a proud thought in the hopes of attaining farther wiſdom.

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wiſdom. The wiſdom which our firſt parents ſought for, was not wiſdom to know God, for that is the moſt excellent wiſdom, *It is eternal life to know God*; So then it was not wiſdom to know God, but it was wiſdom to be *knowing as God*, which they affected, they would be high and lifted up above the rate of a creature in knowledg, and that was their ruin. And I ſhall ſhew (in two things) why there is ſuch a temptation in wiſdom, or the reaſon why when we have found out that which hath a ſhew of wiſdom in it, we are ſo forward to applaud our ſelves, and boaſt in it.

Firſt, 'Tis ſo, becauſe wiſdom is no common Commodity, as I may ſay; wiſdom is but in few hands, if you conſider the multitude of men in the world. Now that which few have, all who have it are ready to be proud of. No man is proud of that which is every mans; no man is proud that he is a man, or proud that he hath reaſon, becauſe that is common to all men; but all men are not wiſe, all men are not learned, all men have not an improved wiſdom, reaſon, and underſtanding; that hath a peculiarity in it, and therefore of that many are proud.

Secondly, Wiſdom is not only rare, but very uſeful, and (which reacheth this point more fully) very ornamental; and how apt are we to be proud of our ornaments? A man is not proud of his ordinary Clothes, nor a woman of her every-day dreſs, but when a man or woman have their ornaments and Jewels on, their Gay-cloathing and rich apparel on, then they are apt to be proud and lifted up: So it is in this caſe; Wiſdom is like Gay-cloathing, it is a Jewel, an ornament, and therefore man is under a temptation when he hath any thing of wiſdom, eſpecially any eminency of wiſdom about him, to be lifted up and deſpiſe others: yea, to arrogate great things to himſelf, and to preſume that he can do no ſmall matters with his brain, or the engin of his underſtanding. It is a great attainment *to be full of knowledg, and full of humility, high in parts, and lowly in Spirit*; *Leſt ye ſhould ſay, we have found out wiſdom.*

God thruſteth him down, not man; or as others read, *God hath caſt him down, not man.*

The Omnipotent doth toſs him not man, ſaith Mr. *Broughton*. The word ſignifies to *toſs a man* (as it were) *in a blanket*, That is, to toſs him as we pleaſe far enough from his pleaſure, or to toſs him in open view. As if they had ſaid, ſee how the omnipotent toſſeth this man; *The Omnipotent toſſeth him not man.* There are two references of theſe words given by Expoſitors.

Firſt, Some expound them as the words of *Elihu*. Secondly, Others as the words of *Job*'s three friends.

Firſt, *Leſt ye ſhould ſay, we have found out wiſdom. I* (ſaith *Elihu*) ſay, *God ſhall thruſt him down not man.* That's the principle by which I will deal with *Job*, and ſo thruſt him down from that opinion which he hath of himſelf, and humble him, (that's the ſence of the words (*thruſt him down*) according to this interpretation) God ſhall do it and not man. Some of the learned inſiſt much upon this interpretation; wherein *Elihu* is ſupoſed making a great diſcovery of his humility, as not daring to undertake *Job* himſelf, but going about it in the ſtrength and power of God; As if he had ſaid, *'Tis a work above or too hard for man to put Job off from that opinion wherein he is ſetled. To do this is a work worthy of God, nor can it be done by any power, but that which is properly divine. And ſeeing God is graciouſly pleaſed to uſe the miniſtery of man for the bringing about ſuch works of Grace; far be it from me that I ſhould arrogate and aſſume that to my ſelf which God is pleaſed to work by my word.* We may paralel this ſpeech of *Elihu* with two other places of Scripture, which will give light to it. Firſt, (*Gen.* 42. 16.) *And Joſeph anſwered Pharaoh, ſaying, It is not in me, but God ſhall give Pharaoh an anſwer of peace.* When *Pharaoh* propoſed to him his Dreams of the ſeven lean kine, and of the ſeven thin ears of Corn, *Joſeph* profeſſed it was not in him to expound them, but only in God; and that God would do it he was confident; *God ſhall give to Pharaoh an anſwer of peace.* I own no wiſdom in or of my ſelf, enabling me to reſolve this Queſtion, or to open this ſecret; *If ever I do it, 'tis God who doth it, not I*; unleſs he reveal the ſecret unto me, I cannot reveal it unto thee. Thus alſo ſpake *Daniel*, (Dan. 2.27.) When all the wiſe men of *Babylon* were foil'd, and gravell'd at the Kings propoſal, *The ſecret which the King hath demanded, cannot the wiſe men, the Aſtrologers, the Magicians, and the South-ſayers ſhew unto the King.* They cannot do it; it is not put by way of interrogation, cannot they do it? but *they cannot*, by way of negative aſſertion; how then can it be done? or who can do it? He anſwers, *But there is a God in heaven that revealeth ſecrets, and maketh known to the King Nebuchadnezzar what ſhall be in the latter days.* As if he had ſaid, *As thy Magicians cannot, ſo I will not undertake to reveal the ſecret, but God both can and will*, He will ſurely do it, yea, he is now doing it; the Text ſpeaks as of a preſent act, *He maketh known to the King*, &c. Thus (according to the expoſition before us) *Elihu* ſaith here, *Leſt ye ſhould ſay, we have found out wiſdom*; I tell you plainly, I will not undertake him, and I am much aſſured ye cannot, therefore, *Let God thruſt him down*, let God deal with him, and conquer him, not I, not you, *not man*, not any man. If God will uſe me as a poor inſtrument to do it, I am ready, but the whole efficacy and power muſt be from himſelf. This carrieth a profitable and a holy ſence; every good man aſcribes the effect of all that he ſpeaks in perſwading others for good to the power of God. God muſt convert the ſinner, not man, not the preacher; God muſt humble the proud, not man, God muſt caſt him down from his high thoughts, or caſt down the high thoughts that are in him, not man; God muſt ſoften and break the hard heart, not man; in a word, 'tis God who both thruſteth man down by a gracious work of repentance and ſelf-abhorrence, and raiſeth him up by a powerful work of faith and holy confidence in Jeſus Chriſt: when man hath done his beſt, he can do nothing effectually, only God can. Whatſoever good man doth, God doth it in him and by him. Hence thoſe creature-abaſing and Chriſt-exalting queſtions (1 *Cor.* 3. 5.) *Who is Paul? and who is Apollo? but Miniſters by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man. Paul* puts a ſlight upon himſelf, and a ſlight upon all inſtruments, that the whole power might be of God, as he concludes (*Ver.* 7.) *So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increaſe.* God only thruſts man down from his vain and carnal ſtate, God only lifts him up unto a bleſſed and a heavenly ſtate. This, you ſee, is an improveable interpretation, as the words are ſuppoſed ſpoken by *Elihu*.

Non eſt hoc opus ullius hominis ut Iobum depellat à ſua ſententia, ſed divina plane virtute opus eſt. Cum tamen Deus humano miniſterio utatur gratioſe ad perficiendas res hujuſmodi, abſit ut mihi arrogarem, quod Deus ſermone meo effecturus eſt. Jun.

But, I rather refer them to *Job*'s friends, being collected or gathered up by *Elihu*, as the iſſue of their whole diſcourſe with *Job*. *God thruſteth him down, and not man.* This is it, that you mean (ſaith *Elihu*) this is the top of your wiſdom, the flower and Cream, the ſum and ſubſtance of all your arguments. All that ye have ſaid is reducible to this one poſition, *God thruſteth him down, not man*, and therefore he is a wicked man; This is the wiſdom which ye glory to have found.

Now though we take the words as the ſum of what *Job*'s friends had ſpoken, collected and drawn together by *Elihu*, yet there is ſome variety in opening the ſence of them; I will but touch a little at what is offered by ſeveral Interpreters, and ſtay upon that which I conceive moſt proper to the place.

First, Some conceive that in theſe words an account is given why *Job*'s friends gave over ſpeaking, or why they ſtood ſilent, either reſolving to ſpeak no more, or preſuming they had ſpoken all; As if they had ſaid, *We have found out and concluded among our ſelves, that 'tis moſt adviſeable for us, or our wiſeſt way to ſay no more*; you poſſibly think we can ſay no more, but we do induſtriouſly forbear to ſay any more; why ſhould we trouble him any further; God troubleth and vexeth him enough. *God thruſteth him down*, therefore let not man; And therefore we think it our wiſdom (having ſaid this) to forbear and give him over, for we will not add affliction any longer to the afflicted. So that as the Apoſtle ſpeaks concerning the repenting Corinthian (2 *Cor.* 2. 6, 7.) *Sufficient to ſuch a man is this puniſhment which was inflicted of man, ſo that contrariwiſe ye ought rather to forgive him and comfort him, leſt perhaps ſuch a one ſhould be ſwallowed up with overmuch ſorrow*; ſo *Job*'s friends (according to this Expoſition) are brought in ſpeaking the ſame ſence; *Sufficient to him is that puniſhment which hath been inflicted on him by one, even by God, ſo that contrariwiſe we ought rather*

Elihu *de amicorum Jobi ſilentio conquerenti, ſic reſpondent. Fecimus de induſtria, non oportet hominem exagitare Jobum: ſatis eſt quod à Deo exagitetur.* Vatabl.

Cum Deus propellat eum nihil ultra neceſſe eſt ut ab homine impugnetur; ut afflicto inſuper addatur afflictio; quia ſatis eſt quod Deus eum ob ſua peccata perſequatur. Rab. Levi.

rather to comfort him, leſt he ſhould be ſwallowed up with overmuch ſorrow.

Secondly, Others give their meaning thus rigidly; *We think it our wiſdom to ſay no more, but to remit or give him up to God, as a man that is obſtinate and will not be convinced.* *Elihu* told them a little before that none had convinced *Job*; and here they are repreſented, ſaying, we indeed have left him to God, as unconvincible by us, and therefore, *God muſt thruſt him down, not man.* There is a truth in this; ſome men are ſo obſtinate in their ways, though evil, and ſtiff in their opinions, though groſſeſt errors, that there is no more dealing with them, ſuch as theſe are paſt mans skill to recall or reclaim, they muſt be left to God. As in extream dangerous caſes of travel in child-birth, the good women ſigh and give over, ſaying, *This is not womans work, we muſt leave her to the man*; So in dealing with ſome men, after long labour and no ſucceſs, we muſt even ſay, This is not mans work, he muſt be left to God, who alone can thruſt him down, man cannot.

Thirdly, That which is, I conceive, chiefly intended, take thus; I (ſaith *Elihu*) have undertaken after long waiting and expectance to ſhew mine opinion, *Leſt ye ſhould ſay, we have found out wiſdom*; That is, an argument ſo ſtrongly concluding *Job* a wicked man, that no wiſe man can object againſt it. But what was that irrefragable argument, by which *Job*'s friends hoped to conclude him, and ſtop his mouth for ever? Surely that which followed in this verſe, *God thruſteth him down, not man*; That *Job*'s friends laid the main ground-work of their hard opinion concerning him in the dealings of God with him, is evident by what hath been ſhewed from many paſſages quite through the Book; All which may be reſolved into the ſenſe, now given, of this one; *God thruſteth him down, not man,* and therefore he is a wicked man.

Iſta animi obfirmatio omne amplius loquendi deſiderium adimit cum eo homine, quum nemo homo poterit, ſed deus ſolus de iſta animi pertinacia depellere. Jun.

Cum Job affligatur & inuſitato modo affligatur, idq; à Deo juſto, qui nec fallere nec falli poteſt in ſuo judicio, conſequitur planè Jobum eſſe improbum. Aquin. Druſ. Merc.

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *The afflictions and thruſtings down of ſome men are eminently from the hand of God.*

Every affliction is from God, but ſome are more from God. As God is more viſibly ſeen in the lifting up of ſome men, ſo in the caſting down of others. Every man that is lifted up, is lifted up by the hand of God; 'Tis the moſt High, who one way or other, ſetteth any man on high; but in ſetting up ſome men on high, his workings are ſo high, that every man may ſee them and ſay, The finger of God is there, the hand of God hath done it. 'Tis thus alſo in thruſting men down; every affliction, every thruſting down, is from God, there is a hand of God in it; for as *Eliphaz* ſpake (*Chap.* 5. 6.) *Affliction comes not forth of the duſt, nor doth trouble ſpring out of the ground:* Whence then are troubles? Surely they drop down from heaven; they are from the earth as to the contracting of them, but from heaven as to the contriving of them. Yet there are ſome troubles which fall from heaven more apparently than others do; That is, there is more of God, more of the hand of God in ſuch a diſpenſation, than there is in others, though there be a hand of God in every one: therefore ſay *Job*'s friends, *God thruſts him down, and not man*; this mans afflictions are mighty ſtroaks from heaven. For though God hath raiſed up and uſed inſtruments againſt him, yet himſelf hath appeared moſt againſt him.

Secondly, Obſerve, *Thoſe afflictions wherein God doth eminently appear againſt a man, ſeem to bear the greateſt witneſs againſt him of his ſinfulneſs or wickedneſs.*

That was the ſcope of *Job*'s friends, This is, ſay they, an undeniable argument, that the man is wicked, becauſe there is ſuch an eminent hand of God upon him. This was the foundation upon which they built all their ſeveral cenſures of him, yea, their hardeſt ſentences againſt him. And there is a fair probability in this way of arguing, upon four Conſiderations.

Firſt, It may be urged, thus; God is juſt, (men indeed are often unjuſt and unrighteous in the evil which they bring upon others; but God is juſt) and therefore he would not lay his hand upon any man in this manner, unleſs he were a wicked man. Surely his iniquity hath found him out, whom the hand of God hath thus found out.

Secondly, God is merciful, he is gracious, (*Lament.* 3. 33.) *He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the Children of men.* Now if God hath declared himſelf ſo unwilling to grieve the Children of men, ſurely, when we ſee him ſo willingly grieve a man, as he hath grieved this or that man, may we not ſay, he is a wicked man? Judgment is called God's *ſtrange work*, but in judging ſome, he acteth as if judgment were his *proper work*, as if he were in his Element when he is laying heavy ſtroaks on their backs; therefore may we not conclude ſuch among the wicked?

Thirdly, *God is wiſe*; he cannot be deceived concerning any man; therefore there is ſome great reaſon why he afflicts, and what reaſon can more probably be given of a great affliction, than ſome great ſin? As God is ſo true that he will not deceive any man, ſo he is ſo wiſe that he cannot be deceived in any man. He cannot miſs his mark, nor fall upon a wrong ſubject in his diſpenſations; therefore we have fair warrant to ſay, that a man againſt whom God appears ſo much, appears very foul to him, whatever fair appearances he may have among men.

Fourthly, Take this Conſideration alſo, when men afflict their brethren, they often do it either out of reſolved malice, or in heat of revenge; but God cannot do it with ſuch a ſpirit, nor from ſuch principles; *The higheſt acts of revenge in God, are but the awards of Juſtice.* Again, Men will afflict others out of envy, or to eaſe themſelves; as the Apoſtle ſpeaks of parents chaſtning their children (*Heb.* 12. 9. 10.) *We have had fathers of our fleſh, which have corrected us, and we gave them reverence, ſhall we not much more be in ſubjection to the father of ſpirits and live? For they verily for a few days chaſtned us after their own pleaſure,* or (as that Text may more clearly be rendred out of the original Greek) *as it ſeemed good to them, or as they thought good*; As if he had ſaid, They will do it upon their natural prerogative, or the right of paternity, without giving any account; Yea, a father will afflict and chaſten his child ſometimes (in another ſenſe) for *his pleaſure*; That is, to vent his paſſion, and eaſe himſelf: but God never chaſteneth us in paſſion, nor ever purely upon prerogative, but with a reſpect alſo to our ſpiritual (which is the beſt) profit, and for our good. Now among the good things which God aimeth at in afflicting any man, this is not the leaſt, the purging out of his evils. And therefore when we cannot aſcribe the chaſtiſement of man to man, but to God alone, 'tis a witneſs againſt him, at leaſt, it draws a ſuſpition upon him of ſome great ſinfulneſs lodged in him, or ſinful ways walked in by him.

Κατὰ τὸ δοκοῦν αὐτοῖς. *Prout ipſis videbatur.* Bez.

Thirdly, obſerve, *It is no concluding argument againſt any man that he is wicked, becauſe God afflicts him immediately*; or, *how much ſoever the hand of God appears in an affliction, 'tis no concluding argument againſt the afflicted.*

'Tis one principal ſcope intended by *Elihu* in this diſcourſe, to ſhew that there were other cauſes and reaſons of God's afflicting *Job*, or any man elſe beſides him. And that we ſhould not make Concluſions, that the greateſt ſufferers, are the greateſt ſinners. For firſt, though indeed God threatneth to puniſh the wicked, who wilfully tranſgreſs his Law, yet he afflicts many, without reſpect to wickedneſs. Secondly, though God threatens the wicked only or chiefly at leaſt, yet he reſerves a liberty to try the innocent; yea, as *Job* ſaith in the 9. Chapter, *He laughs at the trial of the innocent*; And therefore the moſt innocent are moſt tryed. I have had occaſion more than once to ſhew why they are moſt or ſo much tryed. Firſt, for the exerciſe of their faith; Secondly, for the improvement of their patience; Thirdly, to humble them; Fourthly, ſometimes to ſet them up for examples to others; as the Apoſtle *James* ſpeaks (*Chap.* 5. 10.) *Take, my Brethren, the Prophets, who have ſpoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of ſuffering affliction and of patience.* The Prophets have ſuffered affliction, and God hath let them ſuffer, that they might be patterns of ſuffering; and 'tis ſo in many other inſtances; Fifthly, God doth it to mortifie their corruptions; Sixthly, to prevent future tranſgreſſions, he hedgeth up their way with thorns; Seventhly, to diſcover or gain a teſtimony of their ſincerity. They ſerve Chriſt to purpoſe, who can ſuffer while they ſerve, and bleed under his croſs, while they ſweat under his yoke. Surely then, there is no concluding againſt any man that he is a ſon of *Belial*, or hath caſt off the yoke of Chriſt, becauſe Chriſt burdeneth him with his croſs. Yet this was the great *Maxime*, which *Job*'s friends inſiſted upon, He muſt needs be a wicked man, becauſe the Lord had thruſt him down, not man.

But when we ſee good men thruſt down by the hand of God, there is a better uſe to be made of it, than to judg them, and that is to be watchful over our ſelves, leſt we put a rod into the hand of God to chaſten us, or a ſword into his hand to wound us. For as Chriſt ſpake (*Luke* 23. 33.) *If it be thus done to the green tree, what ſhall be done to the dry?* If Chriſt ſuffered ſo much, who was a green flouriſhing fruit-bearing tree, what may we who are dry and barren trees? Or take the meer ſons of men, ſome of them comparatively to others, are as green trees flouriſhing in grace and holineſs, who yet are under ſore affliction; and if this be done to a green tree, what ſhall be done to thoſe who are but dry barren fruitleſs trees, yea, trees that bring forth evil fruit? The Apoſtle (1 *Pet.* 4. 17.) gives a ſutable caution; *If Judgment begin at the houſe of God* (he does not ſay at the Temple of Idols, But if it begin at the houſe of God) *what will the end be of thoſe that obey not the Goſpel!* Let others look to it when they ſee God afflicting his people, when they ſee God bringing ſuch troubles into his own houſe, what troubles may they expect, who are indeed but a den of thieves, and whoſe houſes are, yea who themſelves are as a Cage of unclean birds? Thus we ſee the great argument diſproved, which *Job*'s friends uſed to prove him wicked, becauſe *God did thruſt him down, not man.* And, ſaith *Elihu*, this is it you ſay and boaſt of, as your wiſdom; but indeed you have not convinced *Job*, no not by this. What you have taken for a demonſtration, is but a fallacy. And though I might wave mine own trouble in ſhewing that it is ſo, becauſe I am not the man (but ye are the men) to whom *Job* hath ſhaped his whole diſcourſe, yet I cannot forbear to do it, only I promiſe you, I will not tread in your ſteps, nor take up your method in doing it. That's the ſum of the words which follow.

Verſ. 14. **Now he hath not directed his words againſt me, neither will I anſwer him with your ſpeeches.**

In this verſe *Elihu* ſpeaks Negatively in two things; Firſt, He tells us, that *Job* had not ſpoken profeſſedly, nor directly to him. Secondly, he tells us, how he would not deal with *Job*; that is, not as his friends before had done.

Now he hath not directed his words againſt me.

As if *Elihu* had ſaid, I confeſs I have not been at all ſpoken to all this while, unleſs in common with all the Auditory, and therefore might well enough look upon my ſelf as unconcern'd in this matter.

The word here uſed *to direct*, hath a great elegancy in it, and may be an alluſion; Firſt, to an Archer who aims at, or directs his arrow to the mark. Secondly, to a Warrier, eſpecially a Commander in War, who ſets his men in battel array againſt the enemy; As if *Elihu* had ſaid, *Job hath not aimed at me, nor hath he ordered or ſet his words in order to oppreſs me. Job hath not drawn up his forces, nor ſet himſelf in array againſt me, but againſt you; And ſo perhaps that hate and bitterneſs of ſpirit, which you have contracted by this long-continued debate with Job, hath given you occaſion prudently to withdraw, and forbear the entertainment of any further diſcourſe with him. Yea, poſſibly ye are now fallen into a deep contempt of him, as a man forſaken of God, and therefore to be no more dealt with by man. But there is not the like reaſon for me to forbear ſpeaking with him; ſeeing as he hath not at all oppoſed me, ſo I am not at all diſturbed in my own thoughts about him, nor is my ſpirit imbittered with any vindictive motions againſt him; and ſhall therefore enter into the liſts of this diſputation, with a peaceable and quiet mind; or rather I ſhall (being a perſon every way unprejudic'd) do my beſt endeavour to moderate and compoſe this great difference between you. Now he hath not directed his words againſt me,* &c.

ערך *digeſſit, diſpoſuit, ordinavit, verbum bellicum de acie ordinanda dicitur.* Merc.

Hence note, Firſt, *Our words ſhould be well ordered.*

They ſhould be drawn up like a well-diſciplin'd Army, in rank and file. Confuſion in words is as bad as confuſion in things; Some heap up words, but they do not rightly diſpoſe nor order them; all they ſpeak is out of joynt or frame. As a multitude or rout of men, doth not make an Army; we may ſee ten thouſand men together, and yet no Army; why? becauſe they are not in order or method, they are not under Diſcipline, and ſo they are but a confuſed throng, not an Hoſt of men. And thus a great many words hudled and throng'd together, are of no more force nor uſe, than a number of men without order; Method is very good in every thing we do, eſpecially in what we ſpeak; A ſpeech rightly ordered, is like an Army rightly marſhalled. A word fitly ſpoken, fitly as to the ſeaſon of it, and fitly as to the jointing and diſpoſing of it (we may take in both in that place of *Solomon*, *A word fitly ſpoken*) *is like apples of gold in pictures of ſilver.*

There is another thing conſiderable in this former part of the verſe, *Elihu* (as was lately intimated) ſpake thus to ſhew he came to the diſpute unprovoked; *He hath not directed his words againſt me*; he hath not toucht me. Ye indeed have been provoked by his words, he hath touched you often and often to the quick, and this hath made you touchy, angry and paſſionate, and you have grown into heats; but becauſe he hath not directed his ſpeech againſt me, therefore I ſhall come upon the ſtage, and enter this diſpute with much coolneſs and temper. In a word, I bring no paſſion againſt his perſon, as you (being ſtung by his words) have done.

Vult oſtendere quod non loquitur quaſi provocatus. Aquin.

Hence note, Secondly, *They who are not provoked, have no reaſon to ſpeak provokingly.*

That's it which *Elihu* would have *Job* perſwaded of; we uſe to ſay, *Speak when you are ſpoken to.* Then ſurely we are not to ſpeak otherwiſe, than we are ſpoken to; we muſt not give railing for railing, much leſs may we rail when railing is not given.

He hath not directed his words againſt me.] One of the Ancients Commenting upon this Text, ſaith, *Elihu* diſcovers pride in this ſpeech, *He hath not directed his ſpeech againſt me*; As if *Elihu* diſdained to take notice of what was ſpoken to them; which (ſaith he) is the humor of a proud man; who looks not upon himſelf as engaged by any thing ſpoken, unleſs you ſpeak perſonally and directly to him; whereas Chriſt ſpeaking perſonally to his Diſciples only, would yet have all men ſee themſelves ſpoken to (*Mark* 13. 34.) *What I ſay to you, I ſay to all, watch.* *Elihu* ſhould have taken what *Job* ſpake to his three friends, as ſpoken to all that were preſent, and ſo might well enough have ſpared this complement, as my Author conceives. But I paſs that as a curioſity; Eſpecially becauſe it appears plainly enough, that *Elihu*, though the words were not ſpoken directly to him, yet did take himſelf to be much concerned; and therefore riſeth up as a Moderator in this Controverſie between *Job* and his three friends. *He hath not directed his words againſt me*;

Superbi quæ ad communem omnium utilitatem dicuntur nunquam ſibi dicta exiſtimant. Greg.

Neither will I anſwer him with your ſpeeches.

I will not go your way, nor follow your example in this undertaking; I ſhall proceed upon other principles, and uſe other *mediums* than ye have done; ſuch, I hope, as will be found much more effectual, and attain their end. We may take theſe words;

I will not anſwer him with your ſpeeches, two ways; Firſt, as their ſpeeches had too little light of reaſon in them; Secondly, as their ſpeeches had too much fire of paſſion in them. As if he had ſaid, I will uſe milder words and ſtronger arguments; I utterly diſapprove the courſe you have taken with him; and therefore I will neither inſiſt upon your theme to condemn him for an hypocrite, nor uſe your argument to prove it, becauſe God hath thus ſorely afflicted him; for I hold that a meer Sophiſm. *I will not anſwer him with your ſpeeches*; That is, with ſpeeches which have ſo much paſſion, and ſo little true reaſon in them, as to the point in hand. For though *Job*'s friends had ſpoken many things of much weight and reaſon conſidered abſtractly, or *in theſi*, yet when it came to the *hypotheſis*, as appliable to *Job*'s ſpecial caſe, then their ſpeeches had little or no weight in them. So that in this profeſſion *Elihu* ſeems to promiſe theſe two things.

Mihi integrum eſt reſpondere & quidem longe aliter & ex alio fundamento, licet me directè Jobus non oppugnaverit. Scult.

Non ſequar vias veſtras in reſpondendo, ſed aliàs efficaciores inveniam. Aquin.

Firſt, That he would uſe ſtronger arguments than they had done; I will not uſe yours, that is, weak ones, I purpoſe to come better prepared to the Combat than you; for though *Elihu* doth ſometimes uſe ſuch arguments as they, yet he doth not uſe them to their end to prove that *Job* acted rebelliouſly, or like a wicked man againſt God, as they did: but to ſhew, that he carried himſelf too highly, or over-confidently towards God. And this (as it appears by the iſſue) took more upon *Job* than all his friends hard ſuſpitions, charges, and accuſations. This humbled him, this ſilenced him; he had nothing to return, but ſate down convinced; and therefore *Elihu* dealt with him in more ſtrength of reaſon and divine authority than they had done.

Secondly, When *Elihu* ſaith, *I will not anſwer him with your ſpeeches*, he ſeems to engage that he would deal mildly with him, or without paſſion; he would not uſe bitter words, but debate and argue the matter gently and meekly. For though *Elihu* gave *Job* many ſevere reproofs, yet always in a more friendly manner, not to prove that he had done wickedly, but to convince him that he had ſpoken over-boldly; or that while he was ſo zealous to defend his own innocency, he ſometimes intrencht upon the ſoveraignty of God, in his eager and earneſt deſire of pleading his cauſe before him. And ſurely it was but need that *Job* ſhould have a man of a milder temper ſent in to ſpeak to him, elſe his ſpirit might have been quite over-whelm'd and ſunk. Nor was it without the ſpecial hand of God, that after this poor afflicted ſoul had been ſo hardly uſed, and ſo grievouſly cenſured by thoſe rigid diſputants, he ſhould at laſt meet with a man more meek and compaſſionate, in ſome meaſure, to mitigate and allay his ſorrow.

Firſt, In that *Elihu* ſaith, *I will not anſwer him with your ſpeeches.*

Obſerve, *It is not good to imitate others in any thing they do or ſpeak which is not good.*

We muſt not either act or ſpeak by example, but by rule, or by example only ſo far as it anſwers the rule. 'Tis dangerous treading in their ſteps who tread awry. When *Paul* found that *Peter* did not go right, he was reſolved not only not to follow him, but to reprove him (*Gal.* 2. 14.) Thus ſaith *Elihu*, here I will not write after your Copy, nor take up directions from what you have done, for I ſee you have gone and done amiſs.

Again, When *Elihu* ſaith, *I will not anſwer him with your ſpeeches.*

Note Secondly, *What we ſpeak ſhould be our own ſence, not the ſence of others, unleſs their ſence, either of things or perſons, be the ſame with ours.*

Some pin their opinion upon the ſleeves of others, and they will be juſt of the judgment of ſuch a man; what he ſaith, they will ſay. As ſome expect that every one ſhould be of their Judgment, and ſay as they ſay; they are *many Maſters* (which the Apoſtle *James* forbids, *My Brethren, be not many Maſters*, do not take upon you to give the rule to all others, ſome are proud at this rate, they think themſelves able to give the rule to all men) ſo not a few are ſo eaſie, that preſently they will take up any thing as a rule from any Maſter; whereas we ſhould not be ſo apt to follow, but labour to have the Judgment or reaſon of things in our ſelves, rather than to take it up upon truſt. When *Luther* was much troubled about the dealings of God in the world, to ſee how matters went, and was ſaying within himſelf, Surely it were better things were carried thus and thus; while *Luther* (I ſay) was thus troubled, he thought he heard this word of reproof from God; *O Martin, Martin, I ſee thou art very wiſe, thou canſt give rules, even to God himſelf, but I am not a God eaſie to be led by men. I will not take thy counſel, though I ſee thou haſt an honeſt heart in what thou counſelleſt. I have a way of my own, and I will have my own way, though the world, yea, though good men, and my own faithful ſervants are grieved and mourn at it.* Man would appoint to God himſelf, but God will not model matters by mans wiſdom, nor in his way. Thus in the preſent caſe (I only allude) it is not good for us when we hear what others ſay, preſently to receive it, or take the impreſſion from them; and ſo anſwer in their words, or vote their opinions, though they are wiſe and good men; *Elihu* takes the liberty to diſſent, as in his opinion, ſo in his Method of proceeding with *Job*, I will anſwer, but it ſhall not be with your ſpeeches, I will take my own courſe.

Martine, Martine, tu valde ſapis, ſed ego non ſum Deus ſequax.

Thirdly, Note, *The failings and miſtakes of others, ſhould be our warnings not to do the like.*

Elihu obſerved where they miſſed as to the matter in hand, he obſerved alſo wherein they miſſed, as to the manner of proceeding; and he obſerved both well, and wiſely to avoid the like inconveniences; and thereupon profeſſed, *I will not anſwer him with your ſpeeches.*

Fourthly, Note, *We ſhould anſwer to every point and perſon with reaſon and ſweetneſs, not with paſſion and bitterneſs.*

There is no convincing others with wrath; *The wrath of man* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *works not the righteouſneſs of God*, (*James* 1. 20.) That is, wrath will never bring about nor effect thoſe righteous things, or ends, which God would have us aim at. The wrath of man puts him quite out of the way of righteouſneſs, both out of the way of right ſpeaking, and of right acting. To ſhew much reaſon, and little paſſion, is our wiſdom. So the Apoſtle gives the rule (2 *Tim.* 2. 26.) *The ſervant of the Lord muſt not ſtrive*; he doth not mean it of bodily ſtriving; As if he had ſaid, he muſt not be a fighter. As when the Apoſtle ſaith (1 *Tim.* 3. 3.) *A Miniſter muſt not be a ſtriker*; It can hardly be thought he ſhould intend only, if at all, that Miniſters ſhould not be like groſly boyſterous men, who are not ſo much as civil in their behaviour; ſurely ſuch are far enough off from a fitneſs to be received into the Miniſtry; therefore ſome expound the Apoſtle to the point in hand, he muſt be no ſtriker with his tongue in paſſion, anger, and wrath, no word ſtriker. There is great ſtriking, yea, wounding with words. Though Miniſters muſt ſtrike and wound with the authority of God, yet not with their own animoſities. They muſt wound the conſciences of ſinners, with the Word and Spirit of God, but not with their own wrathful ſpirits; ſuch ſtrikers they may not be, nor may the ſervant of the Lord ſtrive thus, *but be gentle to all men, apt to teach*, yea, patient in teaching. It is a great exerciſe of patience to teach, with line upon line, precept upon precept; When we ſee little received or heeded, yet to inſiſt upon it, this is patience; *In meekneſs inſtructing ſuch as oppoſe themſelves, if God peradventure will give repentance to the acknowledgment of the truth.* As the Apoſtle *James* exhorts (*Chap.* 1. 21.) *to receive the word with meekneſs*; that's a moſt neceſſary rule in hearing the Word; for many times the hearer is in a paſſion, there is ſuch a ſtorm in his bowels that he cannot hear to purpoſe, therefore if any would receive the ingraffed word, they muſt receive it with meekneſs. I ſay alſo the word ſhould be given out or ſpoken *in meekneſs*, though not with coldneſs; I do not ſay with coldneſs or with a ſlightneſs of ſpirit, but with meekneſs. And the truth is, mild ſpeaking or meekneſs of ſpeech (as to the ſpirit and conſcience of the hearer) is not only moſt comfortable, but moſt prevailing. Meekneſs ſhould be ſhewed, even where there is the greateſt zeal; and zeal then prevails moſt, when there is moſt meekneſs in it. The Apoſtle *Jude* ſaith, *Of ſome have compaſſion, making a difference, others ſave with fear*; That is, ſave them by preaching that which may make them afraid, ſcare them out of their ſins; but yet ſtill this is to be done in a ſpirit of meekneſs. (*Gal.* 6. 1.) *If any one be overtaken in a fault* (what then? rail on him, rage againſt him, and revile him? no, but ſaith the Apoſtle) *ye that are ſpiritual, reſtore ſuch a one with the ſpirit of meekneſs; conſidering thy ſelf, leſt thou alſo be tempted.* Bones muſt be ſet (to that the word which we tranſlate *reſtore* alludes) with a tender hand. Thoſe three things which are required in a good Chyrurgeon, or Bone-ſetter, are as neceſſary in a reprover, or in him that would reduce another from the error of his way. Firſt, He muſt have an *Eagles eye*, to diſcern where the fault or failing is. Secondly, A *Lyons heart*, to deal freely with the faulty, how great ſoever they are. Thirdly, A *Ladies hand*, to uſe them gently and tenderly. All which will more fully appear, while

Laſtly, From the example of *Elihu*, we collect and learn, that a good Moderator or compoſer of differences, muſt avoid five things. Firſt, lightneſs of ſpirit and of ſpeech. It is not good to ſpeak lightly of little things, but it is a ſhame to ſpeak lightly of great things. Weighty matters muſt be handled weightily, and we ſhould put not a little finger, but our ſhoulders to them! Secondly, paſſionateneſs of ſpirit and of ſpeech, muſt be avoided. That which hinders reaſon, had need be ſhut out while we are reaſoning. What a contradiction in the adjunct is it, to hear of an angry moderator? or to ſee a man ſet himſelf to compoſe differences between others with a diſcompoſed ſpirit of his own. Thirdly, partiality in ſpeaking, or the favouring of a party muſt be laid aſide; for as *Elihu* did not ſpare to tell *Job*'s friends their own, ſo neither did he ſpare to tell *Job* his own, he was not partial on either ſide. What can be imagin'd more uncomly, than that he who ſtands between two ſhould lean to any one? or that he who comes to be an Umpire or a Judg, ſhould make himſelf a party or an Advocate. Fourthly, he muſt avoid timorouſneſs, and not be daunted with what man ſhall ſay or can do againſt him, while he is doing his duty. *The fear of man is a ſnare* (ſaith *Solomon*) That man had not need be in a ſnare himſelf, whoſe buſineſs it is to bring others out of the ſnares of error, whether in opinion or in practice. Fifthly, he muſt beware of an eaſineſs to be drawn aſide, either by the perſwaſions or applauſes of men. A Judg between others muſt keep his own ſtanding.

Thus far concerning theſe two verſes, wherein *Elihu* is ſtill carrying on his Preface, to prepare *Job* to receive attentively what he had to ſay. In the next place, *Elihu* turning to the ſtanders by, ſignifies to them in what condition he found *Job*'s friends.

VERS. 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20.

They were amazed, they anſwered no more, they left off ſpeaking.
When I had waited, (for they ſpake not, but ſtood ſtill, and anſwered no more)
I ſaid, I will anſwer alſo my part, I alſo will ſhew mine opinion.
For I am full of matter, the ſpirit within me conſtraineth me.
Behold, my belly is as wine which hath no vent, it is ready to burſt like new bottles.
I will ſpeak, that I may be refreſhed: I will open my lips and anſwer.

ELihu had ſpoken of his friends ſilence before, and here he returns to it again, with a further addition and aggravation.

Verſ. 15. They were amazed, they anſwered no more, they left off ſpeaking, &c.

There are two opinions concerning the perſon who ſpake theſe words. Firſt, Some refer them to the writer or penman of this Book, but I rather take them as the words of *Elihu* himſelf.

חתת *Eum pavorem affert, quo affici ſolent, qui ab hoſte potentiſſimo ſuperantur.*

They were amazed.] The root ſignifies to be affected with a very paſſionate and ſtrong fear, even ſuch a fear as they are arreſted with who flee or fall before their Enemies in battel. So the word is uſed (*Jer.* 50. 26.) *A ſword is upon her mighty men, and they ſhall be diſmayed.* Diſmay or amazement, is the diſplacing, at leaſt the diſturbing of reaſon it ſelf; *Elihu* ſhews how unable and unfit *Job*'s friends were to argue with him any further, ſeeing upon the matter, they had loſt the uſe of their reaſon, and were as men crack-brain'd, or broken in their underſtanding. *They were amazed.*

העתיקו q. d. *ab illis ablata ſunt verba.*

They anſwered no more, they left off ſpeaking, or] Speech was departed from them; there is a two-fold Expoſition of that ſpeech (*they left off ſpeaking*) Some underſtand it paſſively, like that (*Luke* 12. 20.) *This night ſhall thy ſoul be required, or taken from thee*; thou ſhalt not freely deliver it up, but it ſhall be ſnatcht from thee; So here, their ſpeech was taken from them; or by an unanſwerable conviction, ſilence was impoſed upon them. Mr. *Broughton* renders, *They do ſpeak no more, ſpeeches be departed from them.* How can they ſpeak from whom ſpeech is departed.

We tranſlate actively, *they left off ſpeaking*, as implying a voluntary act, they gave a ſtop to themſelves; either they were not able, or it was not fit for them to ſay any more. The Hebrew is, *They removed ſpeech from themſelves*, and ſo became as ſilent as if they could not ſpeak at all. They were as mute as fiſhes. The following verſe being of the ſame ſenſe, I ſhall open that before I give the obſervations from this.

Verſ. 16. When I had waited (for they ſpake not but ſtood ſtill, and anſwered no more.)

Stare pro tacere.

Job waited hoping they would ſpeak ſomewhat worthy of themſelves, worthy of that opinion and reputation which they had in the world for wiſdom, but they deceived his expectation, He could not have nor hear a word more from them. This *Elihu* puts into a parentheſis (*for they ſpake not, but ſtood ſtill, and anſwered no more*) He uſeth many words to the ſame purpoſe, to ſhew that there was ſomewhat extraordinary in their ſilence; *They ſpake not, their tongues ſtood ſtill.* As ſpeech is the image of the mind, and from the abundance of the heart, ſo it is by the motion of the tongue. If the tongue ſtand ſtill, diſcourſe is ſtay'd. Their mouths were ſtopt, as being either unable or aſhamed to urge their accuſations and arguments any further. *They ſtood ſtill and anſwered no more.* It is ſaid of thoſe forward accuſers of the woman taken in adultery (*John* 8. 9.) *That being Convicted by their own Conſcience, they went away one by one*; they ſhrunk away, having not a word to reply; And ſo did *Job*'s friends, who while they ſtood ſtill, carried it as men unwilling to be heard or ſeen any more upon the place. *They were amazed,* &c.

Firſt, Hence note, *Amazement unfits us for argument.*

Where wondering begins, diſputing ends. *They were amazed, they anſwered no more.*

Secondly, Note, *The ſame men are ſometimes ſo changed, that they can ſcarcely be known to be the ſame men.*

Eliphaz ſaid (*Chap.* 4. 2.) *Who can withhold himſelf from ſpeaking?* He was ſo forward that he could not be kept from words, but now he had not a word in his keeping, ſpeech was withheld, or departed.

Thirdly, Note, *Falſe grounds or poſitions, cannot be always maintain'd.*

God will ſupply both matter and form, arguments and words, to confirm his own truth; they who are in the right, ſhall not want reaſon to back it: but they who are in the wrong, may quickly find a ſtop, and have no more to ſay, The Apoſtles were weak, becauſe unwilling in a bad cauſe (2 *Cor.* 13. 8.) *We can do nothing againſt the truth, but for the truth*; and they who are willing to be againſt the truth, ſhall be weak and not able long to do any thing againſt it (*They ſpake no more*) *As God gives a banner,* (that is, outward power) *to them that fear him, that it may be diſplayed, becauſe of the truth* (*Pſal.* 60. 4.) So he gives wiſdom and underſtanding (that is, inward power) for the maintaining of the truth. *In thy majeſty ride proſperouſly becauſe of the truth* (*Pſal.* 45. 4.) As Chriſt who is truth, and the giver forth of truth, ſo they who are undertakers for truth, ſhall ride and proſper. Truth may be borne down by power, and out-fac'd by impudence, but it cannot be overcome. *Never fear to undertake a good Cauſe; and ever fear to undertake a bad one, for it will be ſlur'd at laſt.* Truth may be oppoſed, but truth-defenders ſhall never be aſhamed, nor want a tongue to ſpeak for it. Chriſt (*Matth.* 10. 17.) warns his Diſciples what entertainment they were like to find in the world; *They ſhall deliver you up to Rulers, ye ſhall be brought before Governours and Kings for my ſake*; But he withal incourageth them; *Take no thought what ye ſhall ſpeak, or what ye ſhall anſwer.* For ſome might ſay, What if we ſhould be called in queſtion for the truths of the Goſpel? we are willing to burn for them (as that Martyr ſaid) but we fear we cannot diſpute for them. Well, ſaith Chriſt, *take no thought what you ſhall ſpeak, for it ſhall be given you in the ſame hour.* God himſelf by his Spirit will prompt you, he will whiſper ſuch things into your ears, as all your oppoſers ſhall not be able to gainſay. Indeed we ſee ſome men of corrupt minds, and reprobate concerning the truth (as the Apoſtle gives their Character) who have courage enough to ſet forth lies, and ſlander the truth, who ſtrain their wits to the utmoſt, and (as the Prophet ſpeaks, (*Jer.*

(*Jer.* 9. 3.) *bend their tongues like their bow for lyes.* But let them remember what the Apoſtle ſaid of ſuch as they (2 *Tim.*3.8.) *Now as Jannes and Jambres withſtood Moſes, ſo do theſe alſo reſiſt the truth*; but (*verſ.* 9.) *they ſhall proceed no further, for their folly ſhall be made manifeſt to all men*; That is, ſhortly all ſhall ſee that theſe men have but plaid the fools: we may ſay of all thoſe who hold wild ranting opinions, they ſhall proceed no further, though they act highly againſt the truth now, yet ſtay but a while, and they will have nothing to anſwer or return, they will have emptied their quiver, and quite ſpent their powder, you ſhall hear no more of them.

From that 16. verſe, where *Elihu* addeth, *I waited (for they ſpake not but ſtood ſtill, and anſwered no more.)*

Obſerve Firſt, *It is our wiſdom and our duty to ſtay our time before we put our ſelves out upon buſineſs.*

It is good to wait; God himſelf is not haſty upon us, he waits to be gracious, and we muſt wait our ſeaſon to be ſerviceable; *Elihu* did not preſently engage. The Providences of God, and the Exigency of things, muſt put us on, we muſt not put our ſelves on. Chriſt tells us (*Matth.* 9. 38.) *The harveſt is great, and the labourers few, pray therefore the Lord of the harveſt that he would thruſt forth labourers into his harveſt*; he doth not ſay, *pray that labourers would thruſt forth themſelves into the harveſt*, or run into it before they are ſent, but pray the Lord of the harveſt that he would thruſt forth labourers; that is, that he would powerfully incline their hearts to the work, whom he hath fitted and prepared for it. And as until we are, at leaſt both competently prepared, and fairly inclined to that or any other good work, 'tis beſt for us to wait; ſo when once we are prepared and inclined, 'tis beſt for us, without delay, to ſet upon the work; *Elihu* did ſo, as appears in the next verſe.

Verſ. 17. **I ſaid alſo I will anſwer my part, I will ſhew my opinion.**

Now *Elihu* addreſſeth to his work, his duty; and in this with the verſes following to the end of the Chapter, we have, firſt, his reſolvedneſs to ſpeak,. *I ſaid I will anſwer for my part*, &c. Secondly, his ability, readineſs and furniture to ſpeak (*v.* 18.) *For I am full of matter*, &c. Thirdly, we have the motives that preſt him to ſpeak, or that he was exceedingly preſt to it in the latter end of the 18. verſe, as alſo *verſ.* 19, 20. *My ſpirit within me conſtraineth me. Behold my belly is as wine which hath no vent*, &c. *I will ſpeak that I may be refreſhed.* Fourthly; in the two laſt verſes, he tells us what caution, yea what conſcience he meant to uſe in ſpeaking (*v.*20.) *Let me not I pray you accept any mans perſon: neither let me give flattering titles unto man*, &c.

I ſaid I will anſwer for my part, &c.] Now you have done, I will begin; thoſe words, *I ſaid*, are not in the Hebrew Text explicitely, yet are well underſtood. I will anſwer *for my part*, that is, (as ſome conceive, the force of the phraſe) I will anſwer with my ſtrength, and might, I will put my ſhoulders to it; but better Grammarians conclude, that the word imports, A man's ſhare or portion in any work to be done, rather than the ſtrength which the workman uſeth or puts forth in doing it. And ſo the ſenſe is plain, as if *Elihu* had ſaid, they have done their part, they have gone to the utmoſt of their line; now I ſee it falls to my turn to ſpeak, and I will do what falls to my turn, *I will anſwer alſo for my part.*

Illud quod aliqui partem interpretantur pro mea virili parte aut pro viribus, Latinè potius dictum eſt, quam ad germanam vocis ſignificationem. Pined.

I alſo will ſhew my opinion.] We had theſe words in the negative at the 6, verſe; There *Elihu* ſaid, *I was afraid and durſt not ſhew you my opinion*; But here, as alſo before (*verſ.* 10.) *Elihu* had taken courage and was reſolved to *ſhew his opinion.* I ſhall not ſtay upon any opening of this clauſe, only I ſhall note two or three things briefly from it, as connected with the former verſe. There we had *Elihu* waiting, here we have him purpoſing to ſpeak.

Hence note, *They who conſider and wait before they ſpeak, ſpeak moſt prevailingly, moſt weightily.*

It was long e're *Elihu* ventured to ſpeak, but when he did, he did it to purpoſe and with full effect. That which comes from our own heart, is moſt like to take upon the hearts of others; they ſpeak as much from their hearts as with their tongues, whom we ſee long waiting before we hear them ſpeaking. And therefore, it is not good, no not for good ſpeakers, to be ſpeaking before they have been waiting; many through haſte bring forth untimely births, and unripe fruit; *Elihu* could ſay, *I have waited*, before he ſaid, *I will anſwer for my part.*

Secondly, Note, *We ought to obſerve order in ſpeaking, and act our proper part.*

I will anſwer for my part (ſaith *Elihu*) or my turn is come to anſwer. The Apoſtle *Paul* gives this rule at large (1 *Cor.* 14. 28, 29, 30.) He would have no Interruption, no confuſion in Church-meetings, or Church-ſpeakings.

Thirdly, When he ſaith, *I will anſwer alſo for my part, I alſo will ſhew mine opinion.*

Note, *He that hath received a gift or talent, ſhould make uſe of it, and not hide it.*

It is good to be doing our part, and ſhewing our opinion where we may be uſeful: Some love to act other mens parts rather than their own, and to intrude into Provinces which are not theirs. But whatſoever our hand finds to do (as *Solomon* ſpeaks, *Eccl.* 9. 10.) that is, whatſoever is, as *Elihu* here calls it, our part, that we ſhould do *with all our might.* More was given about uſing our talent and ſhewing our opinion at the 10. verſe of this Chapter, whither I refer the Reader.

Fourthly, *Elihu* was here but an auditor, not a diſputant, not a party, he came in only upon the by; yet having received a word he utters it.

Hence note, *Every man ſhould think himſelf concern'd to ſpeak for the truth, when 'tis wronged, and do his beſt to right it,*

Or we ſhould take all occaſions and ſeaſons of doing good by our words as well as by our works. As it is not good to out-run providence, ſo to neglect or foreſlow it is not good.

Laſtly, Obſerve, *What others fail in, we ſhould labour to ſupply in the cauſe of God, and for his truth.*

It is a Proverbial ſpeech among the Hebrews; *Where there is not a man, there be thou a man*; That is, if we ſee any unable to carry on and go thorow-ſtitch with the work before them, we ſhould lend a hand to help and ſupply them; thus ſaith *Elihu, I will anſwer for my part, I alſo will ſhew mine opinion.* And it ſeems (by that which follows) *Elihu* did ſo, not only to anſwer his duty, but to empty and eaſe his ſpirit. For,

Ubi non eſt vir, tu vir eſto.

In the 18, 19, and 20. verſes, he gives us that further account of his interpoſition about this controverſie.

Verſ. 18. **For I am full of matter.**

Yea, I am under a mighty Conſtraint; there is a kind of force upon me, *The Spirit within me conſtraineth me.*

I am full of matter.] The Original is, *I am full of words*; yet of more than words, as appears in the following part of this Chapter; therefore we tranſlate, *I am full of matter*; that is, I am full of ſuch words as are material; words of truth, words of ſoberneſs: I am full of ſuch words as will carry with them a Conviction home to thy Conſcience, O *Job*, and ſilence all thy complaints. Or as if *Elihu* had ſaid to *Job*'s friends, Though ye have ſpent your ſtore upon *Job*, yet I have ſtore and plenty by me to ſpend upon him. Thus he reflects upon them as ſcanty and ſhort in their undertaking; your Lamps have ſpent their oyl, you have emptied your veſſels; ſo have not I, *I am full of matter.*

Cum ait ſe plenum, amicarum inopiam notare videtur. Pined.

The Spirit within me conſtraineth me.

The Text is; *My ſpirit in my belly conſtraineth me.* Maſter *Broughton* renders, *My bellies ſpirit doth preſs me:* The Seventy render, *The ſpirit of my belly deſtroyeth me.* A Greek tranſlater ſaith, *My ſpirit within me ſets me on fire*, or, *I am all in a flame.* The word which we render, *Conſtrain*, ſignifies to preſs very ſore (*Judges* 14. 17.) *And it came to paſs the ſeventh day, that he told her, becauſe ſhe lay ſore upon him, or conſtrained him.*

צוק *In Hiphil anxit, anguſtiavit, preſſit.* Συνέχει με. Sym.

It may be queſtioned, whoſe ſpirit, or what ſpirit it was that conſtrained *Elihu*?

Some expound it of the Spirit of God; he dictates both words and matter to me. Maſter *Calvin* ſeems to comply with this Expoſition; *God hath printed ſuch a mark in the doctrine of Elihu, that the heavenly Spirit is apparent in his mouth*; *God* (ſaith *Elihu*) *hath put his Seal to what I have to ſay, therefore do not receive it as the word of a mortal man*, the Spirit of God conſtrains me. *Paul* uſeth a word in the Greek of like ſignificancy (2 *Cor.* 5. 14.) *The love of Chriſt conſtraineth me, it preſſeth and overbeareth me*; I am not able to get out of the power of it.

Again, Others underſtand it of his own ſpirit, yet acted by the Spirit of God (*Prov.* 29. 11.) *A fool uttereth all his ſpirit*; we tranſlate, *all his mind*; the ſpirit preſſing *Elihu* was his mind carried ſtrongly or reſolvedly bent upon this buſineſs. The ſtrong inclination or diſpoſition of a mans mind to any thing good or bad, as in Scripture language called *his Spirit*.

The Spirit within me.] The Hebrew is, *The ſpirit of my belly*; Which form of ſpeech notes only that which is moſt internal, or lyeth cloſeſt within us. *Solomon* ſaith of the words of wiſdom (*Prov.* 22. 18.) *It is a pleaſant thing if thou keep them within thee*; The Original is, *in thy belly*. (*John* 7. 38.) *Out of his belly ſhall flow rivers of living water*; That is, out of his inward man; there ſhall be a ſpirit in his ſpirit (for this Chriſt ſpake of the Spirit which ſhould be given) and the ſame word is uſed of the wicked man (*Job* 15. 35.) *His belly* (that is, his mind or underſtanding) *prepareth deceit*. And *Solomon* (*Cant.* 7. 2.) ſpeaking of the Church, ſaith, *Her belly is like an heap of wheat ſet about with lillies*; That is, ſhe is big with holy thoughts and conceptions, as a woman great with child, ready to be delivered. A gracious heart is continually meditating and conceiving holy things, which it brings forth, and is as it were delivered of, upon any good occaſion. *The ſpirit within me conſtraineth me.*

Spiritus ventris eſt πληροφορία & alacritas urgens & extimulans ad loquendum. Coc.

What *Elihu* had thus ſpoken in plain terms by way of aſſertion in this verſe, he illuſtrates by way of ſimilitude or alluſion in the next.

Verſ. 19. **Behold, my belly is as wine which hath no vent, it is ready to burſt like new bottles.**

חמר חדת *Vinum novum vel muſtum, cui non eſt ademptum obthuraculum ut exhalet.* Jun.

Elihu proſecutes the ſame thing in another way; and to ſhew how troubleſom it was to refrain ſpeaking any longer, his thoughts being not only too many, but too working to be incloſed in ſo narrow a room as his own breaſt, he compares them to wine, or to new wine, which will either find or make its way out.

The whole ſimilitude is exceeding elegant, Firſt, he compares his thoughts, or the matter he had in his mind to wine. Secondly, he compares his ſoul or ſpirit to bottles, his inward man was the veſſel that held this wine. Thirdly, he compares his long ſilence to the ſtopple or cork of the bottle. Fourthly, he compares that trouble and grief of mind which this forbearance to ſpeak brought upon him, to the working which is in a bottle ſo ſtopt, or having no vent. Fifthly, he compares his intended ſpeaking to the opening of the bottle which gives it vent.

Behold my belly is as wine; that is, the thoughts of my belly are as **wine.**] The Chaldee Paraphraſe ſaith, *as new wine*, which is full of ſpirits, and being ſtopt is ready to break the bottle; which ſhews the mighty force which *Elihu*'s thoughts had upon him, they would out, there was no ſtopping of them. Chriſt ſaith, (*Matth.* 9. 17.) *No man putteth new wine into old bottles*, but men put new wine into new bottles; why? becauſe they are ſtronger, and ſo more fit to preſerve the wine; *My belly is as wine.*

It is ready to burſt like new bottles.

The word which we render **bottles**, is never uſed in Scripture elſewhere in this ſenſe, but it is often uſed to ſignifie Wizards, or ſuch as have familiar Spirits (*Iſa.* 8. 19. *Iſa.* 29. 4.) becauſe they who uſed thoſe helliſh arts by compact with the Devil, did ſpeak out of their belly, and ſo as it were, out of a bottle. Now, ſaith *Elihu*, *My belly is as new wine that hath no vent, and it is ready to burſt like new bottles*; even new bottles will break, unleſs the new wine have ſome vent. And becauſe though new bottles be ſtronger than old to keep in wine, yet the wine may be ſo ſtrong as to break them, therefore *Elihu* hereby ſhews that his deſire or neceſſity of ſpeaking was ſo urgent upon him, that though he ſhould ſtrengthen himſelf, yea ſtrive with himſelf as much as he could to refrain from ſpeaking, yet ſpeak he muſt. *I am full of matter*, &c.

אוב *pro utre non alibi reperitur, ſæpe pro pythoni; quod qui hoc divi*[illegible] *genere uterentur velut ex utribus vocem emitterent.*

Unde à Græcis ἐγγαστρίμυθοι dicuntur. Merc.

Obſerve, Firſt, *A man ſhould not ſpeak, eſpecially in weighty matters, till himſelf be well ſtored with matter.*

Secondly, Obſerve, *When ſome veſſels are drawn quite dry, and inſtruments ſpent and worn to the ſtumps, when they can neither do nor ſay any more, then God fills up and furniſheth others for his purpoſe.*

There was not a drop more to be ſqueez'd out of *Job*'s friends, but *Elihu* was a full bottle (*Mal.* 2. 15.) there is a reſidue of the Spirit; God hath more Spirit or ſpiritual abilities to diſpoſe of, and beſtow then he hath yet diſpoſed of to, or beſtowed upon any one or all the ſons of men.

Thirdly, Note, *God can furniſh Inſtruments with proper gifts for the work which he calls them to.*

Here was a man cut out on purpoſe for this work, he was clothed with a ſpirit of prudence and courage, as well as with a ſpirit of diſcerning. We have a wonderful example of this in *Luther*, who came forth againſt all the powers of the Papacy. What a ſpirit had he? his was a ſpirit of might, his ſpirit conſtrained him, his belly was like a bottle full of new wine, there was no ſtopping of it. Others would have been daunted and cowed down with the tenth of that oppoſition which he met with, but he was bold as a Lyon, who turneth not aſide.

Again, Why did *Elihu* come forth? why did his ſpirit conſtrain him? what made his belly like wine? Some charge him with pride and arrogancy of ſpirit, as if he did it out of vain oſtentation, to ſhew his parts and gifts, to ſet himſelf above thoſe other Worthies who had dealt and diſcourſed with *Job* before. But we have reaſon enough (conſidering what he ſpake, and what the iſſue of his ſpeaking was) to determine, that he was moved with a zeal for God, and to do good to *Job*, not with a ſpirit of pride, to ſhew his learning, wit or wiſdom among men; and therefore we find that when the whole matter was brought to an iſſue, and God himſelf came to deal with *Job* and his three friends, God commends *Job*, and reproves his three friends, but there is no reproof upon *Elihu*. Now for as much as God himſelf doth not charge him, what hath man to do to charge him? Not only charity but reaſon and judgment command us to think his deſign honeſt, and his ayms ſincere, while he profeſſeth under ſo vehement an impulſe or impreſſion upon his ſpirit to engage and ſpeak in this matter.

Hence note, Thirdly, *To ſee truth ill handled, ſhould fill our ſpirits with much zeal for God.*

That was it which drew *Elihu* to this engagement, he ſaw thoſe men (though good men) had put a diſguiſe upon the things and dealings of God; and if men diſguiſe the truth, and maintain error, if they deface the doctrines of faith and pure worſhip, with their own phanſies and falſe gloſſes, it ſhould kindle a holy fire and fervour of ſpirit in us, to aſſert and vindicate the truth. Our ſpirit within us (in all ſuch caſes) ſhould conſtrain us.

Fifthly, In that *Elihu* was ſo conſtrained and preſſed in ſpirit, as wine which hath no vent, or as a woman with Child ready to travel;

Note, *It is a pain not to ſpeak when we have much to utter, and much mind to utter it.*

When *Elihu* was full he had a conſtraint upon him to vent his opinion. *David* ſaith (*Pſal.* 39. 1, 2, 3.) *I held my peace, even from good words*; (he did not only forbear idle and evil diſcourſe, but refrain'd from good) but it was trouble to him not to ſpeak, eſpecially not to ſpeak good words; therefore he adds, *My heart waxed hot within me.* *Jeremy* found it no eaſie work to keep in words; yea, he deſcribes himſelf as much pained by not delivering his mind, as a woman is when not delivered in child-birth (*Jer.* 20. 9.) *Then ſaid I, I will not make mention of him, nor ſpeak any more in his name, but his word was in my heart as a burning fire ſhut up in my bones, and I* *was weary with forbearing, and I could not ſtay.* There was wine, new wine in his belly, yea there was a fire within him; as we may be weary with ſpeaking, ſo with not ſpeaking, or forbearing to ſpeak, (*Jer.* 4. 19.) *My bowels, my bowels, I am pained at the very heart, my heart maketh a noiſe in me, I cannot hold my peace.* Read him in the like trouble upon the ſame occaſion (*Jer.* 6. 11.) *Eliphaz* (Chap. 4. 2.) was thus preſſed, *Who can withhold himſelf from ſpeaking?* 'Tis a great pain, to be mind-bound, or not to deliver our mind, when our minds are full, and we full of deſire to deliver it.

Sixthly, When he ſaith, *I am Conſtrain'd, I am like a bottle ready to burſt,* It teacheth us,

The Spirit of God doth ſo over-power ſome men, that they cannot contain.

The Phariſees and High Prieſts, thought to ſtop up the Apoſtles, thoſe bottles full of the new wine of the myſteries of Chriſt, and therefore gave them counſel, yea a command to ſpeak no more in his name. At the 10. verſe, they ſaid of ſome in a common ſence, *Theſe men are full of new wine,* that is, they are drunken; but the truth was, they were full of the Spirit, full of Goſpel-truths, and like bottles full of new wine they could not hold. And when the Phariſees and high Prieſts would have ſtopt up thoſe bottles, and charged them that they ſhould ſpeak no more in the name of Jeſus; they anſwered, *Whether it be meet to obey God or man judg ye; for we cannot but ſpeak the things that we have ſeen and heard:* you may cut out our tongues if ye will, take away the organs of ſpeech ye may, but otherwiſe we cannot but ſpeak. As it is ſaid of Chriſt, they could not reſiſt the Spirit by which he ſpake; ſo they were not able to reſiſt the Spirit by which the Apoſtles ſpake. Some have ſuch Impulſes from the Devil upon them, that they cannot but ſpeak boldly as well as wickedly and blaſphemouſly; it is ſtrange to ſee what ſome both old and new Impoſtors have done, their bellies have been like bottles full of new wine, they have even burſt to vent their wicked opinions. *Bernard* diſcourſing of ſuch an Opinioniſt in his time, ſaith, *He hungers and thirſts for Auditors, into whoſe boſoms he might empty himſelf, and pour out all his ſentiments, that he might appear who and how great a man he was. He careth not to teach thee what thou knoweſt not, nor to be taught by thee what he doth not know; but that himſelf may be known to know what he knoweth.* Now if there be ſuch preſſures upon the ſpirits of vain men to be delivered of their falſe and airy conceptions: How much more when a man hath ſtrong impreſſions from the Spirit of God ('tis diſcernable by the matter that comes out of the bottle, whether it be the wine of *Sodom*, or of *Sion*) is he unable to contain himſelf? Such a man muſt ſpeak not only to inſtruct and refreſh others, but (as it followeth in the next verſe) to eaſe and refreſh himſelf.

Eſurit & ſitit auditores quibus omne quod ſentit effundat, quibus qualis & quantus ſit innoteſcat. Non curat te docere vel à te doceri quod neſcit, ſed ut ſcire ſciatur quod ſcit. Bern.

Verſ. 20. **I will ſpeak that I may be refreſhed.**

The Hebrew is, *That I may breath,* or, *I may have room.* The word properly ſignifies, that which is enlarged or widened; when a veſſel is full, and you draw ſome of the liquor out of it, then there is room; So ſaith *Elihu, I will ſpeak, that I may be refreſhed, or have room.*

I will open my lips, and anſwer.] To open the lips is a preparation to ſpeaking; Chriſt opened his mouth and ſpake; ſpeaking is begun with opening the mouth; a man may open his lips for other ends than for ſpeaking, and a dumb man opens his lips who cannot ſpeak, yet no man can ſpeak without opening his lips: and why did *Elihu* open his lips? it was to refreſh himſelf.

Hence note, *He that ſpeaks his mind, eaſeth his mind.*

'Tis good to ſpeak to refreſh our ſelves, but 'tis much better to ſpeak for the refreſhing of others; yea, we ſhould ſpeak (though to our own pain) that we may refreſh others, and ſpeak away their pain (*Iſa.* 50. 4.) *Thou haſt given me the tongue of the learned, to ſpeak a word in ſeaſon to him that is weary;* They are good words indeed which refreſh both the ſpeaker, and the hearers. But the deſign of ſpeaking is rather for the refreſhing of hearers, than of the ſpeaker. How vainly then do they ſpend their breath in ſpeaking, who ſpeak without any deſign of good, or of refreſhing, either to themſelves or others, who ſpeak only to be applauded and taken notice of, to be cryed up and commended for eloquent ſpeakers. Theſe are ſad deſigns of ſpeaking; better be a ſtammerer, than ſuch an Orator, better be dumb and not able to ſpeak, than to ſpeak for ſuch ends, with greateſt ability. Unleſs we ſpeak, that others may be informed, converted, comforted, edified, ſaved, ſome way or other bettered, we were as good hold our peace and ſay nothing. The holy Apoſtle profeſſed (1 *Cor.* 14. 19.) *I had rather ſpeak five words with my underſtanding, that I might teach others alſo, than ten thouſand words in an unknown tongue.* To ſpeak ſtrange words in an unknown tongue, may gain us a name among men; But neither are any ſouls gained, nor doth any ſoul gain the worth of one farthing in ſpiritual knowledg by hearing thouſands and ten thouſands of words ſpoken in an unknown tongue. We ſhould think all thoſe words even as loſt to us, by which we have not, at leaſt, intended the gain and good of others. But ſuppoſe, while we ſincerely intend the good of others in ſpeaking, they get no good by what is ſpoken; yet it ſhall not be without good to us: for as *Elihu* here hoped, ſo may we to be refreſhed by it; for *when a man hath diſcharged his duty to God and man, in ſpeaking his mind, it cannot but be a great eaſe to his mind. Elihu* had a great duty upon him, to moderate and ſet this buſineſs right between *Job* and his friends, to take down that height of ſpirit that was in *Job*, and to allay that ſharpneſs and bitterneſs of ſpirit that was in his friends. When we have in ſincerity diſcharged our duty to all others, and done that which our Conſciences charge upon us, how doth it quiet and refreſh our minds? and how many have been burdened and diſquieted in their ſpirits for neglecting this duty: They (I ſay) who neglecting to ſpeak when it was incumbent upon them to ſpeak, and the cauſe of God required it, have found it a burden upon them long after. When *Mordecai* had acquainted Queen *Eſther* with the ſad condition of the *Jews*, (whoſe deſtruction *Haman* had plotted) and adviſed the meſſenger to *charge her, that ſhe ſhould go in unto the King to make ſupplication unto him, and to make requeſt before him for her people* (Eſth. 4. 8.) She returned him anſwer by the ſame meſſenger, that ſhe could not do this without running the hazzard of her own life (*verſ.* 10, 11.) yet *Mordecai* replyed (*verſ.* 14.) *If thou altogether holdſt thy peace* (let the danger be what it will) *at this time, then ſhall their enlargement and deliverance ariſe to the Jews from another place, but thou and thy fathers houſe ſhall be deſtroyed: and who knows whether thou art come to the kingdom for ſuch a time as this?* As if he had ſaid, It is thy duty to ſpeak for thy people at ſuch a time as this, and therefore if thou doeſt not break through all difficulties to ſpeak, thy ſilence will coſt thee dear, probably thou wilt loſe thy own life by it, or if not, then certainly thy conſcience will trouble and vex thee for it as long as thou liveſt. Many offend in ſpeaking, and we may in many caſes offend both God and man, yea our ſelves too (when we ſee our opportunities loſt) by neglecting to ſpeak.

רוח *latus, dilatatus, recreatus loquar & mihi latum erit.* i.e. *erit mihi dilatio, recreatio.* Merc. *Per verba evaporata interiorem fervorem & ab anxietate deſiderij requieſcam.* Aquin.

VERS. 21, 22.

Let me not, I pray you, accept any mans perſon: neither let me give flattering titles unto man.

For I know not to give flattering titles: in ſo doing, my Maker would ſoon take me away.

IN theſe two verſes *Elihu* concludes (in which he had continued long) the Preface to his following diſcourſe and procedure with *Job*; Here alſo he acquaints us in what manner he meant to proceed with him; about which we may conſider two things.

Firſt, His reſolvedneſs or the ſetledneſs of his purpoſe what courſe to take. Secondly, the reaſons which moved him to it. The former he expreſſeth negatively in the 21. verſe, and that in two points.

Firſt, *He would not accept any mans perſon.*

Secondly, *He would not give flattering titles unto man.*

Theſe two negatives (as the negative precepts in the Law of God) are to be underſtood with their affirmatives

I

I will not accept any mans perſon, is, I will have and give an equal, or neither a more nor leſs (to the beſt of my underſtanding) than a due regard to every man's perſon. And, *I will not give flattering titles*; that is, I purpoſe to ſpeak plainly, I will not complement men, but do my beſt to accompliſh the matter. And as he aſſures us how he will proceed in this 11. verſe, ſo

Secondly, He gives us the reaſons of this his intended impartial, plain, and down-right proceeding in the 22. Theſe reaſons are two-fold.

Firſt, He would not do otherwiſe, becauſe he could not with any content to himſelf. It was againſt the very grain of his ſpirit to do otherwiſe; his diſpoſition lay a quite contrary way, he was a man of another genius or temper, a man of another mould and make, than to do ſuch low and unworthy things, as accepting the perſons of, or giving flattering titles unto men. He is expreſs in this (*verſ.* 22.) *I know not to give flattering titles.*

Secondly, He would not becauſe he durſt not *give flattering titles, nor accept the perſons of men.* The danger and dammage he ſhould incur by doing ſo, kept him from doing ſo, as well as his own indiſpoſition to it. He ſhould lay himſelf open and obnoxious to the wrath of God by ſuch ſeeking the favour of men; as appears in the cloſe of the verſe; *In ſo doing my Maker would ſoon take me away.*

Thus you have the parts and purpoſe of theſe words; I ſhall now give a more diſtinct explication and account of them.

Verſ. 21. **Let me not, I pray you, accept any mans perſon; or, let me not now.**

נא adverbium ſeu particula obſecrantis, ſeu adhortandi, ut ſodes, amabo, Latinis.

So that particle is rendred (*Job* 5. 1.) *Call now, if there be any that will anſwer thee*; yet 'tis an Adverb of beſeeching or intreating; and therefore we render well, *Let me not, I pray you*; which rendring ſeems to have in it theſe two things. As if *Elihu* had ſaid,

Firſt, Expect not that I ſhould, nor believe that I will do any ſuch thing, as the accepting of perſons, or the giving of flattering titles.

Secondly, Be not offended if I do not, be not angry with me, if I deal plainly with you; pray give me leave to uſe my own freedom and liberty when I am ſpeaking; for I am reſolved to do it, and not to accept the perſons of men, nor to give them flattering titles. The words may be rendred alſo in a direct negation, *Verily I will not accept any mans perſon.* But I ſhall keep to our reading.

Non accipiam, ut ſit לא *pro* אל *quæ enallage inſolens non eſt.* Druſ.

Let me not, I pray you, accept any mans perſon.

פני איש

The Hebrew is, *Let me not lift up any mans perſon*; or (which the Apoſtle forbids) *Let me not have any mans perſon in admiration*; I will not over-reverence any man, nor give him a reſpect beyond himſelf. The word which we render *perſon*, is in Hebrew, *face*, *Let me not lift up the face of a man*, or wonder at any mans face, as the Septuagint often render this phraſe. And it is uſual to put the face, or the countenance for the perſon, becauſe the face declares the perſon and ſhews who the man is; and it is elegantly expreſſed by the face, becauſe accepting of perſons, importeth a reſpect to others for their outſide, or in conſideration of ſome external glory. *Let me not accept the face of any man, or perſon*, let him be who he will. The original word *iſh*, moſt properly ſignifieth an eminent, or honourable man, a learned or wiſe man. As if *Elihu* had ſaid, I will not accept or lift up the face of a man, though he be (*iſh*) a man never ſo much lifted up, and exalted above his brethren. To accept the perſon of a man, is not a fault in it ſelf; for as our perſons are accepted of God, ſo ought our perſons to be accepted with one another; yea, it is a duty to accept the perſon of a man; that is, to give him favour, honour, and due reſpect. Not only civility and humanity, but religion it ſelf calls us to give outward reverence to them who excel, and are ſuperior, either to others or our ſelves. God himſelf is ſaid to accept the perſons of his people firſt, and then their ſacrifices or ſervices. And we ought to accept the perſons of men according to their differences in place and power, eſpecially according to thoſe gifts and graces, which ſhine in them. Therefore when *Elihu* ſaith, *Let me not, I pray you, accept any mans perſon*, his meaning is, let me not do it in prejudice to the cauſe or truth that is before us. Then we are properly and ſtrictly ſaid *to accept perſons*, when in any matter, buſineſs, or point of controverſie, our eyes are ſo dazel'd or blinded by external appearances, that we have reſpect rather to the perſon of the man, than to the matter, or the truth of the cauſe in hand. So then, this ſin of accepting perſons, is always committed when we are more ſwayed by, or when there is more attributed to perſons than to things, that is, when the mans worth is more looked to than the worth or merit of his cauſe; or further, when ſomething in a perſon which hath no reſpect to the goodneſs, or badneſs of his cauſe, moves us to give him more or leſs than is meet, this is ſinfully to accept or reſpect a perſon. Thus *Elihu* acquits himſelf from all thoſe bonds and blinds which his reſpect to thoſe worthy perſons before him, might lay upon him. They were ancient and grave men, they were wiſe and good men, he had a great reſpect for them, he owed much reverence to them, conſidering their age and gravity, their degree and dignity; yet he owed a greater reſpect to God, and to the truth, than to their perſons, and was thereupon reſolved, (though he had many and great temptations to do it,) *not to accept the perſons of men.*

Hence note, *To accept perſons in prejudice to the cauſe or truth before us, is a high offence both to God and good men.*

'Tis ſo in a double notion; Firſt, in the act of it, becauſe we do that which in it ſelf is not right, nor according to the mind of God. Secondly, in the iſſue, conſequence or effects of it, becauſe by reſpecting perſons, we are endangered to many other ſins. While *Solomon* only ſaith (*Prov.* 28 21.) *To have reſpect of perſons is not good*; his meaning is, 'tis very evil, 'tis ſtark naught. And the reaſon which he gives of the evil of it, is not only becauſe the act in it ſelf is evil, but becauſe the iſſue and conſequence of it is worſe; For, (ſaith that Scripture) *for a piece of bread that man will tranſgreſs*; That is, he that reſpects perſons, will turn aſide from Juſtice, for his own advantage, though it be very ſmall, even for a piece of bread. The Prophet complains of thoſe (*Amos* 2. 6.) *who ſold the righteous for ſilver, and the poor for a pair of ſhoes.* They who have ſold or given up themſelves to this crooked Spirit of reſpecting perſons, will not ſtick to ſell both the perſons of the righteous, and the moſt righteous cauſes, not only (as the Prophet ſaith) for a pair of ſhoes, but (as we ſay) for a pair of ſhoe-buckles. *They will ſoon judg amiſs of things, who have reſpect to perſons, and they always look beſide the cauſe, who look too much upon the face*; nothing ſhould weigh with us in judgment, but truth or right, and that in a five-fold oppoſition.

Firſt, Truth and right muſt weigh with us in oppoſition to relation. When a Brother, or a neer Kinſman be in the cauſe, we muſt not decline, nor be biaſſed from the truth, yea though it be on his ſide to whom we have no relation, but that of *man*.

Secondly, We muſt keep to the truth, and do juſtice in oppoſition to friendſhip. Though he be my friend, my old friend, and my fathers friend, I muſt not reſpect him, if truth ſtand upon the other ſide, upon the ſide of the meereſt ſtranger. It was anciently ſaid, *Socrates is my friend, and Plato is my friend, but truth is more my friend, and therefore I will ſtick to that.*

Amicus Socrates, Amicus Plato, ſed magis amica veritas.

Thirdly, We muſt hold to truth, in oppoſition to, or notwithſtanding the hatred of men; ſuppoſe a man bears us ill will, yea in other things hath wronged us, yet if his preſent cauſe be righteous, we muſt do him right: We may not bring in our particular wrongs or quarrels upon any cauſe, but that about which the wrong or quarrel riſeth. They ſhew the pureſt love to righteouſneſs, who act righteouſly towards thoſe that hate them, and will not wrong thoſe who have attempted to oppreſs and ruine them. A true lover of Juſtice will do to others as himſelf would have others do to him, yea though they have not done to him, as they would be done to.

Fourthly, we muſt ſtand to truth in oppoſition to riches and worldly abundance; riches uſually find more friends and favourers, than righteouſneſs doth. And 'tis uſual to favour the rich more than the righteous. How often is truth on the poor mans ſide over-ballanced by his adverſaries purſe? But, O how poor are they in ſpirituals and morals, who thus reſpect the perſons of the rich!

Fifthly, We muſt judg for truth in oppoſition to worldly greatneſs and power; and that in a two-fold conſideration.

Firſt, Though men have a power to reward, and prefer us, to do great things for us, yet this ſhould not draw us aſide; woe to thoſe who reſpect the greatneſs of the perſon inſtead of the goodneſs of the cauſe: yet how many are there who care not how bad a great mans cauſe is, if he will but engage to do them good? yea ſome great men look upon themſelves as much undervalued, if they be not favoured in their cauſe (how bad ſoever it be) becauſe they are able to do them good who favour it. *Balak* took it very ill at *Balaam*'s hands, when he ſeemed unmoved by his ability to advance and reward him. *Did not I earneſtly ſend for thee, to call thee? Wherefore cameſt thou not to me, am I not able indeed to promote thee to honour?* (Numb. 22. 37.) And wilt not thou ſerve my intereſt, when I have ſuch a power to advance thine? Thus alſo *Saul* thought all muſt cleave to him, and forſake the cauſe of *David*, becauſe he was great and could prefer them (1 *Sam.* 22. 7.) *Will the ſon of Jeſſe give every one of you fields, and vineyards, and make you all Captains of thouſands, and Captains of hundreds?* Hath he any great places to beſtow, and honours to give? Why then do ye ſeem to adhere to him and his party. Hope of reward makes a great bias upon ſome mens ſpirits, and carrieth them quite off from truth.

There is a ſecond conſideration prevailing much with many in this matter; for though they are unmoved by rewards, and will not bite at the bait of ſelf-advancement; yet, ſay they, O he is a great man, and hath great power, he may do me a ſhrewd turn, he may vex me and undo me, he may ſit upon my skirts hereafter and ruine me. Thus where hope doth not, fear may carry a man from reſpect to right to the reſpect of perſons. But know, That be a man never ſo great, and able to do me a miſchief, yet truth muſt be maintained and Juſtice be done, though we ſhould be quite undone by appearing for it. It hath been ſaid of old, *Let juſtice be done, though heaven fall*; much more ſhould it be done, though we for doing and abetting it fall to the earth. *Moſes* gave that charge more than once (*Levit.* 19. 15. *Deut.* 1. 16, 17.) *Thou ſhalt not reſpect the perſon of the poor, nor honour the mighty, but in righteouſneſs ſhalt thou judg thy neighbour.* Again, *Ye ſhall not reſpect perſons in Judgment, but ye ſhall hear the ſmall as well as the great, you ſhall not be afraid of the face of man, for the judgment is Gods*; neither undue pity to the poor, nor carnal fear of the great (which too often do) ought to put any check or ſtop to the execution of Juſtice. So in that excellent model of inſtructions which *Jehoſhaphat* gave his Judges (2 *Chron.* 19. 7.) *Wherefore now let the fear of the Lord be upon you, take heed, and do it; for there is no iniquity with the Lord our God, nor reſpect of perſons, nor taking of gifts.* As if he had ſaid, Do not you reſpect perſons, for God reſpects no perſons; he is no gift-taker, therefore be ye no gift-takers; your duty is to give every one his due. That which is right to one man is right to another, either in the ſame, or in any parallel caſe; That which is the rich mans right in his cauſe, is the right of the poor man in his cauſe; yea it is as ſinful not to have a due reſpect to the rich man in his caſe, as not to have reſpect to the poor man in his. Then all ſorts and degrees of men are judged righteouſly, when there is no regard had or notice taken in Judgment, of what ſort or degree any man is. *Judges are called gods, and therefore ſhould act like God without reſpect to men.*

Quod uni æquum eſt, non debet alteri in eodem caſu eſſe iniquum.

And as this is a truth in all thoſe caſes of judgment, where Magiſtrates ſit in the place of God, ſo it is as true in all the private judgments and determinations of brethren concerning perſons or things, which (by way of diſtinction from the former) is commonly called the putting or referring of a matter in difference *to men*. We muſt take heed in private judgments, that we be not ſwayed according to the condition of perſons, nor muſt we make the fault great or leſs, the cauſe better or worſe, becauſe the perſon is greater or leſs, friend or ſtranger to us. The Apoſtle gives this counſel and caution to the Churches (*James* 2. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.) *My Brethren, have not the faith* (that is, the doctrine of faith or profeſſion) *of our Lord Jeſus, the Lord of glory, with reſpect of perſons; For if there come into your aſſembly a man with a gold ring, and there come in alſo a poor man in vile rayment, and you have reſpect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and ſay unto him, ſit thou here in a good place, and ſay to the poor, ſtand thou there, or ſit here under my footſtool: are ye not then partial in your ſelves, and are become judges of evil thoughts?* In adminiſtring the things of God which are ſpiritual, we muſt obſerve no civil difference, no diſtinction among men. Chriſt hath given himſelf alike and equally to rich and poor, bond and free, and therefore, as to Church priviledges and enjoyments, they muſt all be alike, and equal unto us. No man is to be known after the fleſh in the things of the Spirit (2 *Cor.* 5. 16.) that is, no man is to be valued meerly, upon natural or worldly accounts; if we do, then (as the Apoſtle *James* concludes in the place laſt before mentioned) *are we not partial in our ſelves?* that is (as ſome alſo tranſlate that reproving queſtion) *Have we not made a difference,* a groundleſs difference, or a difference grounded upon carnal reſpects, rather than upon any ſolid reaſon; and ſo as it follows in the cloſe of the verſe, *are become judges of evil thoughts*, that is, have made our judgment of thoſe perſons, according to the dictate of our own evil and corrupt thoughts, not according to the rule of the word.

Further, this ſin of reſpecting perſons, is found alſo in the ordinary converſe of men; For when we caſt favours upon thoſe that are ill deſerving, and commend thoſe (as we ſay) to the skies, who ſhould rather fall under our ſevereſt cenſure, and are led to do all this alſo, becauſe the perſon is a kinſman or a friend; for though (*cæteris paribus*, other qualifications and circumſtances being equal) we are to reſpect friends and kindred, who are our own fleſh, before ſtrangers, yet virtue and worth ſhould outweigh relations, and (as *Levi* in doing Juſtice, *Deut.* 33. 9.) ſo we in beſtowing rewards, *ſhould not acknowledg our Brethren, nor acknowledg our own children*; but let ſuch have our rewards who beſt deſerve them.

I may add this alſo, To take up this or that form of Religion, becauſe ſuch and ſuch perſons are in it, and to reject another, though better, becauſe none but a few that are deſpiſed and contemned are in it, is a moſt dangerous way of reſpecting perſons. This was the meaning of that queſtion (*John* 7. 48.) *Have any of the rulers, or of the Phariſees, believed on him?* As if certainly that muſt always be the beſt way and rule of believing, which is profeſſed by the rulers? Or as if it were ground enough to reject a way of Religion, becauſe the common people or the poor are moſtly found in it. Thus 'tis ſtoried of a great Prince that was converted to the Chriſtian faith, and reſolved to be baptized, that ſeeing a great many poor men in his way as he went, he asked to whom they belonged; it was anſwered they were Chriſtians, and of that religion which he was entring into; what, doth Chriſt keep his ſervants ſo poor? (ſaid he) I will not ſerve ſuch a Maſter, and ſo drew back, even while he was but ſetting his face towards Chriſt. I might inſtance the ſinfulneſs of accepting perſons in many other particular caſes, as well as theſe, but theſe may ſuffice for a taſt. *Let me not* (ſaith *Elihu*) *accept any mans perſon,*

Neither let me give flattering titles unto man.

In the former part of the verſe it was *Iſh*, here it is *Adam*; I will not reſpect the perſon of the greateſt men, nor will I flatter any earthly, any mortal man. Mr. *Broughton* renders, *That I reſpect an earthly man.* The vulgar latine tranſlates the whole verſe thus; *I will not accept any mans perſons, and I will not equal God to man*; As if he had ſaid, *I will not meaſure God by man, in his dealings and proceedings with man; As my purpoſe is to ſpeak truth, and ſpare no man, ſo I will not wrong God by drawing him down to the rules of men. What is man that he ſhould compare with God?* But, though this be a truth, yet becauſe it departs ſo far from the Original text, I will not ſtay upon it. Our reading is clear.

Græci vertant כנה *cognominandi per* ἐπιτρέπεσθαι *revereri, &* θαυμάσαι πρόσωπον, *mirari perſonā reddiderunt.* Merc. *Et deum homini non æquabo.* Vulg.

I will not give flattering titles.] There are ſeveral other readings of theſe words, which I ſhall propoſe and paſs to our own. Firſt, *I will not uſe a preface*, or, *I will not ſtand prefacing with man.* Flatteries are uſually ſet forth in affected Prefaces and Apologies. Secondly, *Let me not change names before men*; or, *let me not ſpeak to man under a borrowed name*; That

Apud hominem præfatione non utar. Jun. *Et apud hominem ne permutem nomina.* Coc.

Et ad hominem non mutato nomine loquar. Merc. *Ego non in gratiam ejus tectis verbis utar occultè eum deſignans & nomen proprium immutans. Verbum* כנה *ſignificat aliquem occultè deſignare.* Merc. לא אכנה *כנה eſt mutatis rerum nominibus agere, ut non poſſis niſi obſcurè quid ſentiatur intelligi. Cujus contrarium eſt aperire os, & σκάφην, σκάφην appellare.* Coc.

That is, let me ſpeak plainly and clearly without ambages and fetches; let me ſpeak to every man, and about every thing by its own name, and not with covered words, as if I were unwilling to touch thoſe to whom I ſpeak. Our tranſlation is yet more clear to the ſcope and tendency of this place; *I will not give flattering titles.*

This ſentence is but two words in the Hebrew; The verb ſignifies (ſay the Rabbins) to *hide*, or *conceal*, or to carry a matter cloſely and obſcurely; and they give the reaſon of it, becauſe in flattering there is a hiding of what men are, and a ſhewing of what they are not. The word ſignifieth alſo to give a *nick-name* or a *by-name*, and ſo the ſenſe is; I will not give ſecret reflections, nor gird at any man upon the by; *Job*'s friends had done ſo ſometimes, though they after ſpake explicitely and directly enough. Further, the word ſignifies the giving of *any additional title.* Thus I find it uſed in the Prophet (*Iſa.* 44. 5.) *One ſhall ſay, I am the Lords:* (ſpeaking how perſons ſhall flow into the Church) *and another ſhall call himſelf by the name of Jacob: and another ſhall ſubſcribe with his hand unto the Lord, and ſirname himſelf by the name of Iſrael: He ſhall ſirname himſelf*; that's the word here uſed, he ſhall take up that title, that illuſtrious title, he ſhall liſt or enroll himſelf among the people of God, and think it his honour and glory *to ſirname himſelf by the name of Iſrael.* The word is ſo uſed again (*Iſa.* 45. 4.) *For Jacob my ſervants ſake, and Iſrael mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have ſirnamed thee, though thou haſt not known me.* It is ſpoken of *Cyrus*, I have given thee a glorious title; God did not only name *Cyrus*, but gave him a ſirname, he called him, *Cyrus my ſervant*, *and Cyrus mine anointed.* Thus the word ſignifies to give a title, or a ſirname; now there are ſirnames or titles of two ſorts; Firſt, diſgraceful and reviling ones, juſtly given to, but commonly by vile men. Secondly, Honourable and advancing ones. And theſe are of two ſorts.

Firſt, Such as are true and well deſerved, many by the great acts which they have done, have purchaſed ſirnames; *Alexander* King of *Greece*, for his warlike valour and ſucceſſes, was called *The Great*; And among the Romans *Scipio* after his victories over the *Carthaginians* in *Africa*, was ſirnamed *Africanus.* The Roman Hiſtories ſupply ſundry examples of this kind. And when in Scripture *Paul* is called an *Apoſtle*, *Peter* an *Apoſtle*, They well deſerved theſe honourable Titles, becauſe as they were meerly of Grace immediately called and ſent of God, to publiſh and plant the Goſpel all the world over, ſo they laboured abundantly in it, and by their miniſtery ſubdued and conquered the world to the faith and obedience of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

Secondly, There are alſo titles and ſirnames, which are meer pieces of flattery, there being no worth in the perſon that may juſtly deſerve them. 'Tis not ſinful to give titles, but as we tranſlate *to give flattering titles unto men.* We ſhould call men as they are, and as they deſerve; *I will call a ſpade a ſpade*, (ſaith *Elihu*) he that is good I will call him good, and he that is bad I will call him bad; and that which is ill done I will ſay it is ill done; *Let me not give flattering titles unto men.*

Hence obſerve, *Flattery is iniquity: to give flattering titles unto men is to tranſgreſs the Law of God.*

Some will not give true and due Titles to any man; The moſt truly honourable perſons and higheſt Magiſtrates, ſhall have nothing from them but *Thou* and *Thee*. *Jacob* a holy and a plain man, yet called his own brother, *My Lord Eſau*, (Gen. 32. 4. Gen. 33. 8.) *Luke* the Evangeliſt called *Theophilus*, *Moſt excellent* (Luke 1. 3.) And *Paul* ſtiled *Feſtus*, *Moſt Noble* (Acts 26. 25.) Now as they erre upon one extream, who will not give true titles, ſo do they on the other, who give (which *Elihu* here diſclaims) flattering titles. There is a two-fold flattery.

First, In promiſes.

Secondly, In praiſes.

Some are full of flattery in promiſes, they will tell you of great matters which they will do for you, yet mean no ſuch thing. Thus (*Pſal.* 78. 36.) The children of *Iſrael* dealt with God, when in the time of their ſtraights and calamities they promiſed to do great and good things, they would turn to the Lord and ſerve him; *Nevertheleſs* (ſaith the text) *they did flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues; for their heart was not right with him*, &c. Thus many upon their ſick beds, or in a day of trouble, what promiſes will they make? How deeply will they engage for duty, if God will reſtore them? how holy and zealous and upright will they be? they will leave their former ill courſes, and yet all is but flattery, they really intend it not. 'Tis flattery in promiſes to God, when there is not a purpoſe in the heart to do what we ſay, but only to get our ends upon him; And we deal no better many times by one another; men in ſtreights will promiſe any thing, and when they have gained enlargement, perform nothing.

Secondly, There is a flattery in praiſes, and that's here profeſſed againſt. This flattery in praiſing hath a double reſpect.

Firſt, To the actions of men. 'Tis flattery to call that act good that is naught, that juſt that is unrighteous; To put titles of virtue upon thoſe things that are vicious, to call that which is indeed a covetous act, a thrifty one, and to call that act which is cruel, juſt, at moſt but ſtrict or ſevere, this is to flatter men in what they do.

Secondly, There is a flattery of perſons, as to what they have and are, when we ſpeak more of them than is in them, when we ſpeak highly of them, who are low in all abilities and attainments. How groſly do they give flattering titles, who blow up very Ideots with a conceit of their learning, who extol fools for wiſdom, and commend the wicked as vertuous, yea recommend them as patterns of virtue?

Multi ſunt qui vitia virtutibus vicinis honeſtare contendunt & vitium omne palliant adumbrata nomenclaturæ vicino ſubjecta virtutis. Baſil. in Pſal. 61.

We ſhould give honour to all men to whom it belongs; but we are not to flatter any man, for that belongs to no man (*Rom.* 13. 7.) *Render therefore to all their dues, tribute to whom tribute is due, cuſtom to whom cuſtom, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour.* There is an honour that belongs to men with reſpect to their degrees, when none belongs to them with reſpect to their qualities. He that is very honourable as to his place, may not deſerve any honour as to his worth, yet he muſt be honoured as much as his place comes to. And as there is an honour due to thoſe that are above us, ſo there is an honour due to thoſe that are our equals, yea to thoſe that are our inferiours, and below us. The Apoſtle gives that direction more than once; we have it firſt (*Rom.* 12. 10.) *Be kindly affectionate one to another, in honour preferring one another.* The people of God ſhould be ſo far from an ambitious affectation of preheminence above others, that they ſhould freely and really (not as many do complementally) give others the preheminence, and offer them the upper place or hand; The grace of humility, doth not only forbid us to exalt our ſelves above our betters, but it alſo (in many caſes) bids us ſet our ſelves below thoſe whoſe betters we are. One of the Ancients hath made three degrees of this kind of humility. The firſt is, when we make our ſelves inferior to our equals; The ſecond, when we make our ſelves but equal to our inferiors; The third, when we make our ſelves inferior even to our inferiors, and leſs than thoſe who are leſs than we. Of this third ſort of humility, the Apoſtle ſpeaks again in that ſerious admonition to the Church (*Phil.* 2. 3.) *Let nothing be done through ſtrife, or vainglory, but in lowlineſs of mind; Let each eſteem other better than himſelf.* As it is good to judg (according to truth) the worſt of our ſelves, and the beſt of others, ſo it is good to have a better opinion of others than of our ſelves.

So then, the point lyeth not againſt giving honour to any man, or to men of all ſorts, but only againſt the giving of undue honour to any. Of that the Apoſtle ſpeaks (*Gal.* 1. 10.) *If I yet pleaſe men, I ſhould not be the ſervant of Chriſt*; that is, if I ſhould pleaſe men by flattery, ſmoothing them up in their ſins or errors, I could not be the ſervant of Chriſt. They that were the ſtrict obſervers of Chriſt, could not but obſerve this in him, that though he came to ſave man, yet he was far enough from pleaſing, that is, humouring any man. (*Luke* 20. 21.) *And they asked him, ſaying, Maſter, we know that thou ſayeſt and teacheſt rightly, neither accepteſt thou the perſon of any, but teacheſt the way of God truly.*

Yet caution is to be uſed here. For ſome go ſo far to the other hand, that while they think they ought not to flatter or pleaſe, they care not how they ſlight or diſreſpect the perſons of men; and in ſtead of forbearing (as they ought)

ought) to give undue titles, they will not (as was toucht before) give ſo much as thoſe that are due, that's a ſin in defect, as the other is in exceſs. And they ſin much more who while they refuſe to give flattering titles, are free to give reviling titles. There are theſe two great tongue-evils among men; Some give flattering titles, others give reviling titles, detracting, calumniating, and biting titles; it is as dangerous not to forbear the one, as to be free and forward in giving the other, and therefore we ſhould take heed of both theſe extreams, that our ſpeech may have an equal reſpect to truth, both while we praiſe, and while we reprove.

Verſ. 22. **For I know not how to give flattering titles.**

Neſcio cognominare; i. e. *Blandiri*. Bez.

It ſeems to have little virtue in it, or matter of commendation, not to give flattering titles, when we are not able, or know not how to give them; To hear one that is (as we ſpeak) a meer *Countryman*, or a *Clown* ſay, I will not give flattering titles, ſpeaks not his praiſe at all, becauſe 'tis ſuppoſed he at moſt can but but ſpeak ſenſe, or true Engliſh; but to hear a learned man, or ſome great Courtier ſay, I will not give flattering titles, this is ſomething, this ſhews that his honeſty maſters his ability, and that his conſcience is too ſtrong for his parts. How is it then that *Elihu* ſaith, *I know not to give flattering titles?* Had not *Elihu* wit and skill, words and language at command to give them? Was he ſo coarſely bred that he could not reach them?

I anſwer, Thoſe words, **I know not**, may have a threefold interpretation.

Firſt, *I know not*, is, I have not made that piece of knowledg my ſtudy, I have not ſet my ſelf to learn the art of flattery, nor to gain the skill of carnal Courtſhip. Thus *I know not* to do it, is, I have not ſet my ſelf to do it, I have not made it my buſineſs, or my aim to do it; *A good man hath*, or at leaſt *deſireth no skill in that which is evil, or not his duty*; how much ſoever any man knows to flatter, yet we may ſay he knows not to flatter who abhorreth flattery; And can ſay (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Eph.* 4. 20.) *He hath not ſo learned Chriſt*; that is, he hath heard no ſuch leſſons, nor received any ſuch inſtruction in the ſchool of Chriſt.

Thus *Elihu* ſaith, *I know not to give flattering titles.* And doubtleſs, 'tis beſt being an Ideot, or a bungler at the doing of that which is not good, or (as the Apoſtle ſaith, ſome are to every good work) to be reprobate to every evil work, and word. How knowing are they, who can ſay in truth, they know not how to lie, or flatter, *&c.* I dare not ſay (with the Papiſts) that ignorance is, but I am ſure this neſcience is not only the mother of devotion, but a great point of devotion it ſelf. And in this ſenſe every godly man, and only a godly man knoweth not how to do evil.

For as the wicked may have the Theory of good works, and know what it is to pray, what it is to hear the Word of God, yet they have no skill, they are not ſtudied, nor fitted for the practice of thoſe works; So a godly man may know in ſpeculation what it is to do wickedly, and how to do it as well as the moſt wicked man in the world, yet he is not at all diſpoſed nor ready for the practice of any wickedneſs. As nature makes us reprobate to good, ſo grace to evil works. The Prophet ſaith of a bad ſort of men, (*Jer.* 4. 22.) *They are wiſe to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledg.* Were they an ignorant people? No, the meaning is, they had not ſet themſelves to learn the doing of that good which they knew; theirs were not ſins of ignorance, but of wilfulneſs, and perverſneſs. So on the other hand, 'tis the commendation of the people of God, *They are wiſe to do good, but to do evil they have no knowledg. I know not to give flattering titles.*

Secondly, As to know a thing or perſon, imports the allowance and approbation of it. (*Pſal.* 1. 6.) *The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous*; that is, he approveth it. (*Pſal.* 101. 4.) *I will not know a wicked perſon*; that is, I like him not, I regard him not, I will never give him teſtimony, he ſhall neither have my hand, nor my heart. So, not to know a thing or perſon, notes our diſallowance and diſtaſte of either; in this ſenſe Chriſt will ſay to thoſe great knowing profeſſors (*Luke* 13. 27.) *I tell you, I know you not whence you are, depart from me*, &c. Thus, here when *Elihu* profeſſeth, *I know not to give flattering titles*; his meaning is, I like not, yea, I cannot abide to do it I may be as much skilled as any man to ſpeak high words, poſſibly I could Court it as well as others, but I have no heart to do it, yea it is the abhorrence of my ſoul to do it. *A good man doth not approve the doing of evil, and therefore though he know well enough how to do evil, yet he is truely ſaid not to know how to do it.*

Thirdly, *Not to know a thing*, is not to be accuſtomed, or practiſed in it. Thus when *Elihu* ſaith, *I know not to give flattering titles*; he ſeems to ſay, *It is not my manner, I have not been uſed to flatter.* As uſe doth not only make fitneſs, but increaſeth our knowledg, ſo diſuſe doth at once unfit us to do a thing, and diminiſheth our knowledg how to do it. And therefore what we uſe not to do, we are rightly ſaid not to know to do. *I know not to give flattering titles.*

Hence note, *The ſpirit of a good man is ſet againſt all that is evil, he cannot cloſe nor comply with it.*

His underſtanding aſſenteth not to it, his will chuſeth it not, his conſcience cannot ſwallow it, though not a camel, but a gnat, the leaſt of ſin-evils, much leſs doth he give himſelf up to the free and cuſtomary practice of great ſins. A good man may well be ſaid, not to know to ſin, becauſe though he knoweth the nature of all ſins, yet he knowingly declines the doing of every ſin. *I know not to give flattering titles,*

In ſo doing my Maker would ſoon take me away.

Thoſe words, **in ſo doing**, are not expreſſed in the Original, but ſupplied to make up the ſenſe; and yet we may very well read the text without them; *I know not to give flattering titles, my Maker would ſoon take me away*, or as Mr. *Broughton* renders, *my Maker would be my taker away.*

My Maker.] *Elihu* expreſſeth God, by the work of creation, or by his relation to God as a creator; *Elihu* doth but include himſelf in the number of thoſe whom God hath made, he doth not exclude others from being made by God, as much as himſelf, while he ſaith, *My Maker.* God is the Maker of every man, and is ſo in a threefold conſideration.

Firſt, He is the Maker of every man, in his natural conſtitution, as he is a man, conſiſting of a reaſonable ſoul and body. *I am fearfully and wonderfully made*, ſaid *David*, with reſpect to both, (*Pſal.* 119. 14.)

Secondly, God is every mans Maker, in his civil ſtate, as well as in his natural; he formeth us up into ſuch and ſuch a condition, as rich, or as poor, as high, or as low, as Governours or as governed, according to the pleaſure of his own will. (*Prov.* 22. 2.) *The rich and the poor meet together, the Lord is the Maker of them both*; he meaneth it not only, if at all in that place, that the Lord hath made them both as men, but he hath made the one a rich man, and the other a poor man. Thus the Lord is the maker of them both. And as the Lord makes men rich, ſo great and honourable. (*Pſal.* 75. 6.) *Promotion cometh not from the Eaſt, nor from the Weſt, nor from the South*; It cometh from none of theſe parts or points of earth or heaven, it cometh from nothing under heaven, but from the God of heaven; *God is the Judg, he putteth down one, and ſetteth up another.*

Thirdly, The Lord is the Maker of every man in his ſpiritual ſtate, as good, and holy, and gracious. (*Eph.* 2. 10.) *We are his workmanſhip, created in Chriſt Jeſus unto good works*; till we are wrought by God, we can do none of God's work, nor have we any mind to do it. Now when *Elihu* ſaith, *My Maker would ſoon take me away*, we may underſtand it in all theſe three ſenſes; he that made me this body and ſoul, when I came into the world, he that ordered my way and ſtate all this while that I have been in this world, he that formed me up into a new life, the life of Grace, and hath made me a *new man* in this and for another world. This *my Maker would ſoon take me away.*

Hence Note, *It is good to remember God as our Maker.*

Man would not make ſuch ill work in the world, if he remembred God his Maker, or that himſelf is the work of God. We ſhould remember God our Maker; Firſt, as to our being, as from him we receive life and breath. Secondly,

condly, as to our well being, as from him we receive all good things, both for this life and a better. (*Eccleſ.* 12.1.) *Remember now thy creator* (not only that God is a creator, but thy creator, remember this) *in the days of thy youth*; And ſurely if thou remembreſt him well, thou wilt not forget thy ſelf ſo much as to forget the duty which thou oweſt him. Think often upon thy Maker, and then this thought will be upon thee always, *If I owe my ſelf wholly unto God for making me in nature, now much more do I owe my ſelf unto God for making me a new creature?* We ought to live wholly to him from whom we have received our lives. He that hath made us ſhould have the uſe of us. He hath made all things for himſelf, (*Prov.* 16.4.) chiefly man, who is the chief of all viſibles which he hath made. Thoſe two *Memento's*, That we are made by the power of God: and that the price by which we are redeemed is the blood of God, ſhould conſtrain us at all times and in all things to be at the call and command of God. *My Maker*

In voce ישאני *tolleret me, alludit ad præcedens* אשא *q. d. Si capiam faciem me capiet.* Coc.

Would ſoon take me away.] We had the ſame word in the former verſe, there 'tis uſed for accepting a perſon; here for taking away a perſon. The Learned Hebricians take notice of an elegant flower of Rhetorick in this expreſſion; *If I take perſons, God will take away my perſon*; ſo we may tranſlate the Text; *If I take men, my God will take me away.* Yea my Maker would not only take me away at laſt, or (as we ſay) *firſt or laſt*, but he would make diſpatch, and be quick with me, *My Maker would*

כמעט

Soon take me away.] Some render, *He would take me away as a little thing*; But the mind of our tranſlation is, he would take me away in *a little time.* The original word bears either ſignification, and ſo may the ſcope of the Text; My Maker would take me away as a little thing, he would blow me away as a feather, or as duſt, and cruſh me as a moth; and he would do it in a moment, in a little time; all the men of the world, yea the whole world is but a little thing before God, and he can quickly take both away. *Iſa.* 40. 15.) *Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the ſmall duſt of the Ballance; Behold, he taketh up the Iſlands as a very little thing.* Now if whole Iſlands, if all Nations are ſuch little things as drops and duſts, then, what is any one particular man, how big ſoever he be? And how ſoon can God take him away! Little things are taken away in a little time. So the word is uſed in the ſecond Pſalm (*verſ.* 12.) *If his wrath be kindled but a little*, or but, *as a little thing*; if the wrath of Chriſt be kindled only ſo far that you ſee but a ſpark of it, *bleſſed are they that truſt in him*; There is no ſtanding before the leaſt wrath of the great God, by the greateſt of the ſons of men.

We tranſlate, *He would ſoon take me away*, or he would do it *in a little time*, my ruine needs not be long in working, he would rid his hands of me preſently; to take or ſnatch a man away, notes three things.

Firſt, A violent death, or a violence in death.

Secondly, A ſpeedy or ſudden death, a quick diſpatch. When the fire was kindled and the word ſent out againſt *Korah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*, their Maker ſoon took them away; he bid the earth open, and it took them away in the twinkling of an eye; they went down quick into hell. It is ſaid of a wicked man in this book (*Chap.* 27.21.) *The Eaſt wind carrieth him away*; there alſo this word is uſed, that is, judgment like ſome fierce impetuous wind, ſhall blow him from his ſtanding and blaſt all his glory.

Sunt qui ישאני *tolleret me, exponunt, combureret me, ut aliquando ſumitur hoc verbum à flamma, quæ in ſublime tollitur.* Merc.

Some give the ſenſe by the effect of fire, *My Maker would ſoon burn or conſume me.* The word in the Hebrew ſignifieth *to burn*, as well as to take away, and we know the burning of a thing is the taking of it quite away; fire makes clean riddance. And again, fire or flame riſeth up (as a thing that is taken up) into the air, and that which is burned in the fire may be ſaid to be taken up with it. Thus alſo 'tis tranſlated (2 *Sam.* 5. 20, 21.) *David came unto Baal-perazim, and David ſmote them there,* &c. *and there they left their Images, and David and his men burnt them*; we put in the margin, *and David and his men took them away*; which is the tranſlation here in *Job.* Either of the readings is clear and full to the purpoſe; God hath fire, he hath hell fire unquenchable for ſinners, their Maker can quickly conſume and burn them up. (*Iſa.* 27.4.) *Who would ſet the briars and thorns in battel againſt me? I would paſs through them and burn them up together.* How quickly can the Lord burn wicked men, who like briars and thorns ſcratch and tear the innocent? wicked men can no more ſtand before the wrath of God, than briars and thorns can ſtand before a flaming fire. That's a good reading; ours comes to the ſame ſenſe, *My Maker would ſoon take me away.*

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *As flattery and accepting of perſons are great, ſo they are very dangerous ſins, they are wrath-provoking ſins.*

If we flatter men, God will not flatter us, he will deal plainly with us. To receive flattery, or to ſuffer our ſelves to be flattered, is very dangerous, as we ſee in the example of *Herod* (*Acts* 12. 22, 23.) who having made a very eloquent Oration, *The people gave a ſhout, ſaying, it is the voice of a God, and not of a man*; They gave him flattering titles, or (as ſome render the former part of this verſe) they wondered at his perſon. But what was the iſſue of it? Preſently (ſaith the Text) *the Angel of the Lord ſmote him, becauſe he gave not God the glory, and he was eaten up with worms, and gave up the ghoſt.* Thus his Maker took him ſoon away, for taking that glory to himſelf. O take heed of entertaining flatteries when given, we ſhould put them back from us, as we would a poyſonous cup. High commendations of Sermons given to the Preacher, may have a ſad conſequence. *When men give much glory to men, 'tis hard for men to give the glory back again to God.* *Herod* was ſo pleaſed and tickled with the glory which the people gave him, that he could not part with it, and ſo loſt himſelf. Becauſe he forgat that he was a worm, he was deſtroyed by worms. The tranſlation given us by the Septuagint of this Text in *Job*, complies fully with that dreadful example in the *Acts*; *I know not how to give flattering titles, for in ſo doing the worms or moths will eat me up.* The words of *Elihu* thus rendred in *Job* are a threatning aſſertion, That the worms ſhall eat thoſe that give flatteries; and the judgment which fell upon *Herod*, is an example threatning all thoſe that receive flattering titles, with that dreadful doom *of being eaten up by worms.* And doubtleſs, if not that, yet either ſome other corporal and viſible judgment, or (which is much worſe) ſome ſpiritual and inviſible judgment, will overtake thoſe who love either to flatter others, or to be flattered themſelves. And as that example ſhews how dangerous it is to receive flatteries; ſo to give flatteries, hath in it a double danger.

Καὶ ἐμὲ σῆτες ἔδονται, *& me tineæ edent.* Sept.

Firſt, It is dangerous to others. When Paraſites flatter Princes, when Miniſters flatter the people, how doth it inſnare their ſouls? 'Tis hell and death to flatter ſinners, and not to deal plainly with them; to give lenitives inſtead of corroſives; to give oyl where vinegar ſhould be given; to heal the hurt of the ſoul deceitfully, is the greateſt hurt and wounding to the ſoul. Flatteries are thoſe pillows ſpoken of in the Prophet (*Ezek.* 13. 18.) ſowed to the arm-holes or elbows of wicked men, upon which many ſleep without fear, till they dye without hope; yea theſe flatteries as well as any falſities and errors of doctrine, whether reſpecting faith or worſhip, are that *untempered mortar*, of and againſt which the Prophet ſpeaks in the ſame Chapter (*verſ.* 10. 15.) wherewith ſome daubed that wall of vain confidence which others built, while they *ſeduced the people, ſaying, peace, and there was no peace.* How often do the true Prophets warn the people againſt theſe flatteries of the falſe Prophets? And how ſadly doth the Prophet *Jeremy* bewail them? (*Lam.* 2. 14.) *Thy Prophets have ſeen vain and fooliſh things for thee, and they have not diſcovered thine iniquity, to turn away thy captivity; but have ſeen for thee falſe burdens, and cauſes of baniſhment*; that is, the viſions which they have ſeen, they pretend, at leaſt, to have had from God, but they are their own dreams and brain-ſick phanſies, and ſo the *cauſe of thy baniſhment*; they have undone thee with theſe deceits, ſoothing thee up in thoſe thy ſins, which procured thy baniſhment, and cauſed the Lord to thruſt thee out, and ſend thee far away from thine own Land. They have fed, yea filled thee with falſe hopes, till thy condition was hopeleſs. How many thouſands have been deſtroyed by flatteries both for here and for ever? And if flattery be ſo dangerous to the receiver, then

Secondly, It muſt needs be much more dangerous to the giver. It is no ſmall ſin to palliate or cover the ſins of others;

Non leve ſcelus eſt veritatem palliare. Merc.

others; but it is a far greater ſin to commend the ſin of others, or to commend others in their ſin. And we may take the meaſure of this ſin by the puniſhment of it. When we hear the Lord threatning flatterers with ſuddain deſtruction, doth it not proclaim to all the World, that their ſin is full of provocation? The Lord bears long with many ſorts of ſinners, but not with ſinners of this ſort. *My maker would ſoon take me away.*

Hence Note, Secondly, *God can make quick diſpatch with ſinners.*

Neſcit tarda molimina ſpiritus ſancti gratia.

As the grace of God towards ſinners, ſo his wrath needs no long time in preparations. When we deſign great actions, we muſt take time to fit our ſelves. Princes muſt have time to ſet out an Army or a Navy, when they would either defend themſelves againſt, or revenge themſelves upon their enemies; but God can preſently proceed to action, yea to execution. He that made all with a word ſpeaking, can deſtroy the wicked as ſoon as ſpeak the word; he can do it in the twinkling of an eye, with the turning of a hand. *My maker would ſoon take me away.*

Thirdly, Becauſe *Elihu*, being about to ſpeak in that great cauſe, ſets God before him, and God in his Judgments, in caſe he ſhould ſpeak or do amiſs;

Note, Thirdly, *They that do or ſpeak evil, have reaſon to expect evil at the hand of God.*

If I ſhould flatter (ſaith Elihu) *my Maker would ſoon take me away.* I have reaſon to fear he will; not that God takes away every ſinner as ſoon as he ſins, (God rarely uſeth Martial Law, or executes men upon the place, we ſhould live and walk more by ſence then by faith if he ſhould do ſo) but any ſinner may expect it. God (I ſay) is very patient and long-ſuffering, he doth not often take ſinners away, either in the act, or immediately after the act of ſin. Yet there is no ſinner but hath cauſe to fear, leſt as ſoon as he hath done any evil, God ſhould make him feel evil, and inſtantly take him away. *David* prayeth (*Pſal.* 28. 3.) *Draw me not away with the wicked, and with the workers of iniquity.* There is a two-fold *drawing away* with the workers of iniquity. Firſt, to do as they do; that is, wickedly. Thus many are drawn away with the workers of iniquity; and 'tis a good and moſt neceſſary part of prayer, to beg that God would not thus draw us away with the workers of iniquity, that is, that he would not ſuffer the workers of iniquity to draw us away into their leud and ſinful courſes. Secondly, there is a *drawing away* to puniſhment, and execution. In that ſence (I conceive) *David* prayed, *Lord draw me not away with the workers of iniquity,* who are taken away by ſome ſudden ſtroak of Judgment; though I may have provoked thee, yet let not forth thy wrath upon me, as thou ſometimes doeſt upon the workers of iniquity: Do not draw me out as Cattel out of the Paſture where they have been fed and fatted for the ſlaughter. Every worker of iniquity is in danger of preſent death, and may look that God will be a ſwift witneſs againſt him: Though moſt are reprieved, yet no man is ſure of that.

Again, In that *Elihu* repreſents God to himſelf ready to take him away, in caſe of flattery and prevarication in that cauſe;

Note, Fourthly, *It is good for us to over-awe our Souls with the remembrance of the judgments and terrours of God.*

'Tis profitable ſometimes to converſe with the threatnings, as well as with the promiſes; 'tis profitable to remember what God is able to do againſt us, as well as to remember what God is able to do for us; even believers ſhould go into the dreadful treaſuries of wrath, into the thunders and lightnings of divine diſpleaſure, as well as into the delightful treaſuries of mercy, of love and compaſſion; it is good for a good man to think God may take me away, as well as to think God will ſave and deliver me; we need even theſe meditations of God, to keep down our corruptions, and to fright our luſts. Though it be the more Goſpel way to make uſe of love, yet the Goſpel it ſelf teacheth us to make uſe of wrath, (2 *Cor.* 5. 11.) *Knowing the terrour of the Lord we perſwade men.*

Laſtly, Note, *When we go about any great work, when we are either to ſpeak or do in any weighty matter, it is good for us to ſet God before our eyes, to think of and remember our maker.*

As in great undertakings we ſhould remember our Maker, waiting for and depending upon his aſſiſtance, ſtrength, and bleſſings, in what we do or go about; ſo we ſhould remember him to keep our hearts right. And to remember ſeriouſly, believingly and ſpiritually, that God beholds and ſeeth us in all our ways and works, and that according to the frame of our hearts, and the way that we take in every action, ſuch will the reward and iſſue be, cannot but have a mighty command, and an anſwerable effect upon us. We can hardly do amiſs with God in our eye. And therefore as it is ſaid of a wicked man (*Pſal.* 10. 4.) that *through the pride of his countenance he will not ſeek after God, God is not in all his thoughts.* So *David* ſaid of himſelf (though in that Pſalm he ſpeaks chiefly as a type of Chriſt) and ſo in proportion or as to ſincerity every godly man ſaith like *David,* (Pſal. 16. 8.) *I have ſet the Lord always before me: Becauſe he is at my right hand, therefore I ſhall not be moved*; that is, as I ſhall not be utterly overthrown by any evil of trouble, ſo I ſhall not be overcome by any evil of temptation: Or I ſhall not be moved either in a way of diſcouragement by the troubles I meet with, or in a way of inticement by the temptations I meet with. How ſtedfaſt, how unmoveable are they in the work of the Lord, how do they keep off from every evil work, who ſet the Lord always before them, and have him at their right hand! Could we but ſet the Lord before us, either in his mercies or in his terrors, we ſhould not be moved from doing our duty in whatſoever we are called to do.

Thus far *Elihu* hath drawn out his ſpeech; in a way of preface, preparing himſelf for his great undertaking with *Job*; he hath now fully ſhewed the grounds why he undertook to deal with him, and what method he would uſe in that undertaking. In the next Chapter, and ſo forward to the end of the 37. we have what he ſaid, and how he managed the whole matter.

CHAP. XXXIII. Verſ. 1, 2, 3.

Wherefore, Job, *I pray thee, hear my ſpeeches, and hearken to all my words.*

Behold now I have opened my mouth, my tongue hath ſpoken in my mouth.

My words ſhall be of the uprightneſs of my heart: And my lips ſhall utter knowledge clearly.

Elihu having ſpent the whole former Chapter in prefacing to *Job's* friends, directs his ſpeech now to *Job* himſelf; yet not without a renewed Preface, as will appear in opening this Chapter. Wherein we may take notice of four heads of his diſcourſe.

Firſt, we have his Preface in the ſeven former verſes of the Chapter.

Secondly, A propoſition of the matter to be debated, or of the things that *Elihu* had obſerved in *Job's* ſpeech about this Controverſie, from the 7. verſe to the 12.

Thirdly, We have his confutation of what *Job* had affirmed, from the 12. verſe to the 31.

Laſtly, We have his concluſion, exciting *Job* to make anſwer to what he had ſpoken, elſe to hear him ſpeaking, further in the three laſt verſes of the Chapter.

Elihu in his Preface, moves *Job* about two things; firſt, to attend what he was about to ſay.

Secondly, to make reply to and anſwer what he ſhould ſay.

Elihu moves *Job* to the former duty ſeveral ways.

Firſt, By a mild Intreaty and ſweet Inſinuation in the firſt verſe; *Wherefore,* Job, *I pray thee, hear my ſpeeches, and hearken to my words.* As if he had ſaid, *I do not come authoritatively and rigorouſly upon thee, to command or demand thy attention, but as a faithful friend I deſire thee to attend unto my ſpeech, and hearken to my voice.*

Secondly, He moves him to hear, by profeſſing his own readineſs and preparedneſs to ſpeak, in verſe 2. *Behold now I have opened my mouth, my tongue hath ſpoken in my mouth;* that is, I have been (as it were) tuning my inſtrument, and fitting my ſelf for diſcourſe, let me not loſe my labour nor my ſtudy.

Thirdly, He moves him to attend from the ſincerity and gracious Ingenuity of his heart in that which he had to ſay to him. This he layeth before him in verſe 3. *My words ſhall be of the uprightneſs of my heart, and my lips ſhall utter knowledge clearly.* What better incouragement to hear! And

Fourthly, *Elihu* moves him to hear from the conſideration of his preſent ſtate, as a man, not only made by God, but by him inſtructed for the work which he had undertaken. the former of which is expreſt, the latter implyed in verſe 4. *The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.* Thus *Elihu* calls out *Job* to hear. And

Secondly, As he invites him to hear what he had to ſay, ſo he provokes him to anſwer what he ſhould ſay, verſe 5. *If thou canſt anſwer me, ſet thy words in order before me, ſtand up.* As if he had ſaid, Be not diſcouraged, take heart man, do thy beſt to defend thy ſelf, and make good thy own cauſe againſt what I ſhall ſay; ſpare me not; do thy beſt, thy utmoſt.

Having thus incouraged him in general to anſwer, he proceeds to give him two ſpecial motives.

Firſt, from their common ſtate or condition, in verſe 6. *Behold, I am according to thy wiſh in Gods ſtead; I alſo am formed out of the clay.* As if he had ſaid; *You have often deſired to plead with God, or that God would hear your plea; now conſider, I am in Gods ſtead, though a man like your ſelf.*

Secondly, He incourageth him from the tenderneſs of his Spirit toward him, reſpecting his preſent condition, promiſing to deal with, or treat him fairly, gently, in verſe 7. *Behold my terrour ſhall not make thee afraid, neither ſhall my hand be heavy upon thee.* That favour *Job* had asked of God, in the 9. Chapter; *Let not thy terror make me afraid.* Now ſaith *Elihu*, that which thou didſt fear from God, thou needeſt not at all fear in dealing with me, *My terror ſhall not make thee afraid,* &c. Thus *Elihu* begins with *Job*, that he might lead him to receive fairly, or anſwer fully what he had to ſay.

The three firſt verſes of the Chapter, contain the firſt part of the Preface, wherein *Elihu* excites and calls forth *Job's* attention by thoſe four conſiderations already diſtinctly propoſed, the firſt whereof is laid down,

Verſ. 1. **Wherefore, Job, I pray thee, hear my ſpeeches, and hearken to all my words.**

Elihu begins very mildly, ſweetly, inſinuatingly, even intreatingly, and beſeechingly, *Wherefore,*

I pray thee.] The word which we tranſlate, *I pray thee,* is in the Hebrew language a monoſyllable Adverb of obſecration or exhortation. *I pray thee.*

נא *Adhortantis vel excitantis tum etiam obſecrantis.*

Hence Note, *'Tis good to uſe gentleneſs towards thoſe with whom we have to deal, eſpecially with thoſe who are either outwardly afflicted, or troubled in Spirit.*

Intreaties have great power; and therefore though the Prophets and Apoſtles ſpeak ſometimes in a threatning way, and command attention upon utmoſt peril, yet for the moſt part they beſpeak it with Intreaties, (2 *Cor.* 5. 20.) *Now then we as Embaſſadors for Chriſt, as though God did beſeech you by us, we pray you in Chriſts ſtead be ye reconciled to God.* The Apoſtles went about a begging, as it were, with this meſſage, with the beſt meſſage that ever was carried forth to the World, *Reconciliation unto God; we pray you.* And again (2 *Cor.* 6. 1.) *We then as workers together with him, beſeech you alſo that you receive not the grace of God in vain;* that is, the doctrine of the Goſpel holding forth the grace and favour of God freely in Jeſus Chriſt, (1 *Theſ.* 4. 1.) *Furthermore, we beſeech you brethren, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to pleaſe God, ſo ye would abound more and more.* As he did beſeech them not to receive the grace of God in vain, ſo he did beſeech them to a progreſs in and an Improvement of that grace. Again (1 *Theſ.* 2. 7.) *We were gentle among you, even as a Nurſe cheriſheth her Children;* how tender is a Nurſe to the Infant hanging at her breaſt, or dandled on her knee! *Speak ye comfortably to* Jeruſalem, was the Lords direction when ſhe was in her warfare; that is, in a troubled and afflicted condition. (*Iſa.* 40. 2.) The Hebrew is, *Speak to her heart;* ſpeak ſuch words as may revive her heart, and add freſh Spirits and life to her. The Apoſtles rule for the reſtoring of thoſe that are fallen, is, that they ſhould be kindly treated (*Gal.* 6. 1.) *Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye that are ſpiritual reſtore ſuch an one with the Spirit of meekneſs.* It is a great point of holy skill ſo to order a reproof as not to provoke; ſo to ſpeak as to ſpeak open, or pick the lock of the heart; affectionate intreaties are bleſſed pick-locks, which do not ſtrain the wards, but effectually lift up the holders and ſhoot the bolt of the heart, cauſing it to ſtand wide open to receive and take in the truth of promiſes, counſels and reproofs. *Meek words meeken the Spirit.* 'Tis hard to refuſe what we perceive ſpoken in love; and if any thing will ſoften a hard heart, ſoft language is moſt likely to do it. When *Abigail* came out and met *David* upon his way, hot upon revenge,, yea having (upon the matter) ſworn revenge againſt *Nabal* and his Houſe, yet her intreaties and mild words overcame that mighty warriour, at leaſt, took off the edg of his Spirit, and of all his party, (1 *Sam.* 25. 33.) Nor did he only accept of or ſubmit to her counſel, but gave thanks both to God and her for it; *Bleſſed be the Lord, and bleſſed be thy advice, which haſt kept me this day, from ſhedding blood.* Gentle words, like gentle rain, ſoak deep, and make the Soul, like a fruitful Tree, bud and bloſſom. For as paſſion in the ſpeaker, begets paſſion in the hearer, and heat brings forth heat, ſo kind and kindly words, are not only moſt uſeful, but moſt powerful. There is a rebuking, and that cuttingly, or a ſpeaking of cutting words, uſeful in ſome caſes, then eſpecially, when ſinners have not only done evil, but are ſetled and reſolved in it. But in caſe of affliction, ſpecially of inward affliction, or trouble of Spirit, ſoft words are beſt and do beſt. *Hear, I pray thee,* ſaith *Elihu,*

And hearken to all my words.] Here's hearing, and hearkning, to hearken is more then to hear; to hear is barely to receive the ſound of words; but to hearken is to take up the ſenſe of them, or as it were to ſuck out the ſtrength and ſweetneſs of them; to hearken is to weigh or ponder every tittle ſpoken, and take the value of it. The word in the Text, which ſignifies *to hearken,* hath a ſingular elegancy in it. One of the Rabbins renders, *Ear my words*; hear my words and ear them. The ſame word which in the verb ſignifies to hearken, which is the work of the ear, ſignifies alſo the ear, or inſtrument of that work in the noun. To *ear words,* notes the moſt diligent attention, as to *eye a thing,* notes the moſt accurate inſpection. The word ſignifies alſo the beam of a ballance, becauſe by the ear, or by the two ears (as by a ballance) words are tryed and poiſed, whether they are weighty and ſolid, or light and chaffy; when *Elihu* ſaith, hearken to, or weigh my words, he intimates that he meant to ſpeak words which had worth in them, or that he meant to ſpeak matter more then words. And therefore he would not have a word loſt, *Hearken,* ſaith he,

To all my words.] Not to this or that only, but to all; as if he had ſaid, *I intend not, and I hope I ſhall not ſpeak one needleſs or unuſeful word*; not a word beſide the buſineſs. Therefore *hearken to all my words.*

Hence Note, Firſt, *They who ſpeak to inſtruction, admonition or exhortation, ſhould not uſe one word more then is uſeful, not a word more then is to the purpoſe.*

Seeing, *every idle word that men ſhall ſpeak, they ſhall give account for it in the day of Judgment,* (Matth. 12.36.) How ſhould every man take heed of ſpeaking an idle word, a word of which he can give no good account for any good it is likely to do. Idle words will make ſad work one day, and words of no value or account, will turn to a heavy account in the great day. *That's an idle word, which doth neither work the heart for good, nor ſtrengthen the hand to or in a good work.* And if we ſhould be careful not to ſpeak one idle word, or not one word unworthy to be heard, how ſhould we avoid evil words, or words which corrupt the hearers.

Secondly, As the words refer to that duty which *Elihu* minds *Job* of, and moved him to, *Hearkning to all his words.*

Note, *They who hear, eſpecially about holy things and Soul-matters, ſhould hear all.*

One word ſhould not be loſt, when every word is precious. We gather up the filings and leaſt duſts of Gold. The ear ſhould gather all that truth which the mouth ſcatters, and the heart ſhould lay it up as treaſure. We may charge many ſorts of men with deficiency at ear-work. And ſurely if men will not hear all that they ought to believe and do, they can neither do nor believe any thing that they hear.

Firſt, Some will not hear the word at all, they are like the deaf Adder ſtopping their ears at the voyce of the charmer, charm he never ſo wiſely to them.

Secondly, Others think that there's not a word more to be heard, but what they have heard already, who can ſpeak what they know not?

Thirdly, There are few who hearken to any word that is ſpoken; that is, who make it their buſineſs to hear, who hear with diligence, and labour at it. As it is a great labour to ſpeak, ſo I aſſure you, it is no ſmall nor eaſie labour to hear, if you hear indeed and as you ſhould. To hear the word is the exerciſe of the whole Soul. Among many hearers, there are but few hearkners, ſuch I mean as weigh and conſider what they hear.

Fourthly, There are very few who hear and hearken to all the words of righteouſneſs and ſalvation. As ſome though they hear all, yet hearken to halves, ſo others will hear but half, or only ſo much as pleaſeth them of what is ſpoken. When the King of *Judah* (Jer. 36.23.) had the Roll brought to him which *Baruch* had written from the mouth of *Jeremiah,* he heard three or four leaves of it read to him as he ſate by the fire, and then he cauſed it to be cut with a penknife and caſt into the fire; he did not read it out, he had enough of it, he had (as we ſay) *his belly full,* but his heart was altogether empty, he was very angry and vext at the word, but not at all humbled nor affected with it; and therefore would not hear all thoſe words.

Again, To hearken is to obey, to ſubmit and yield up our ſelves to the truth we hear. *Samuel* tells *Saul* (1 Sam. 15.22.) *To obey is better then ſacrifice, and to hearken then the fat of Rams*; to obey and to hearken is the ſame thing; the obedient ear is the hearkning ear. *Mine ear haſt thou opened* (ſaith Chriſt, *Pſal.* 40.6.) This opening or digging of his ear (as we put in the Margin) ſignified his readineſs to obey, as 'tis expreſſed (*verſ.* 7, 8.) *Then ſaid I loe I come*; *I delight to do thy will, O my God.* And in reference to this he had ſaid before (*verſ.* 6.) *Sacrifice and offering thou didſt not deſire, burnt-offering and ſin-offering haſt thou not required*; that is, for themſelves, or comparatively to that, which in the volum of thy Book is written of me, that I ſhould do. Which clearly expounds and is almoſt the ſame in terms with that of *Samuel*; *To obey is better then Sacrifice, and to hearken, then the fat of Rams.* Thus *Elihu* preſſeth *Job* to hearken to *all his words* obedientially, or to hearken with a purpoſe to obey. Take a few conſiderations, why we ſhould both hear and hearken to, that is, obey, the whole mind of God, all thoſe words which have the ſtamp of divine authority upon them.

Firſt, All the words of God are alike holy and true, pure and precious. Though ſome truths are more neceſſary to be known and believed then others, yet all are neceſſary, nor can we be diſcharged from the duty of hearing and obeying any one of them, if called.

Secondly, There is a like or the ſame power and authority in all the words of God; ſo that to neglect or ſlight [illegible]y one word, is to put a ſlight upon the authority of God himſelf. There is but one Law-giver and word-ſender.

Thirdly, Not to ſubmit to any one word (though it be ſuppoſed we hearken to all others) draws upon us the guilt of non-ſubmiſſion or diſobedience to the whole word of God. That's the Apoſtles concluſion (*James* 2. 12.) *Whoſoever ſhall keep the whole Law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all*; for though in many things we offend all, yet there is a Goſpel-ſence wherein we are ſaid to keep the whole Law of God. And ſo the Apoſtle meaning is, that whoſoever ſhall give himſelf a looſe or a liberty, whoſoever ſhall diſpence or indulge himſelf in breaking any one command of God, he breaks all, that is, he declares himſelf ready to break all, if he had a like occaſion or temptation.

Fourthly, We would have all our words hearkned to by God, we would have God grant all our Petitions, all o[illegible] Requeſts and Supplications, and ſhall not we hearken to and obey all the precepts of God? Shall we not receive and believe all his promiſes and threatnings?

Fifthly, As we deſire God would, ſo God hath promiſed to hear all our words, even all the requeſts of his people which are according to his will. Chriſt ſpeaks without reſtriction (*Matth.* 21.22.) *All things whatſoever ye ask in my name, believing, ye ſhall receive.* And again (*Joh.* 14.13, 14.) *Whatſoever ye ſhall ask in my name, that will I do, &c.* Nor are there any reſtrictions upon the promiſes of God in granting and doing what we ask, but only theſe two; firſt, that we ask *right things*; ſecondly, that we ask *aright.* Now if the Lord hath promiſed to hearken to all our words, not to this or that, but to all our words which are according to his will, (we have no liberty to ask beyond the will of God, beyond the rule of Scripture,

ture, nor can we ask any thing beyond that, but it is to our hurt and damage, now if God (I ſay) will hearken to all our words) ſhould not we hearken to all his?

Laſtly, The condition upon which God hath promiſed to hear all our words, is, that we ſhould be ready to hear and hearken to all his words, (1 *John* 3.22.) *Whatſoever we ask we receive, becauſe we keep his Commandments, and do the things that pleaſe him.* It were not confidence, but higheſt and moſt hateful impudence, to expect that God ſhould pleaſe us by giving us what we ask, while we refuſe (which is the condition of that promiſe) to do the things that pleaſe him. Thus *Elihu* would have *Job* hearken to all his words, he being about to ſpeak, not his own, but the words of God. And that *Job* might not delay the opening of his ear to hear, *Elihu* tells him further in the next verſe, that himſelf had already opened his mouth to ſpeak.

Verſe 2. **Behold now I have opened my mouth, my mouth, my tongue hath ſpoken in my mouth.**

This phraſe **of opening the mouth**, imports four things.

Firſt, That a man hath been long ſilent; they that are full of talk, and ſpeak out of ſeaſon, may be ſaid to have their mouth always open, rather then at any time to open their mouths. But *Elihu* profeſſed in the former Chapter that he had waited as a Diſciple to hear and to learn, and had waited with utmoſt patience; therefore he might well ſay, *Behold now I have opened my mouth*, and taken upon me to ſpeak. So (*Chap.* 3.1.) after *Job* had ſate ſilent a great while, it is ſaid, *Then* Job *opened his mouth, and curſed the day of his birth*; Thus to open the mouth, intimates much ſilence and forbearance of ſpeech, and long expectation of a ſeaſon or opportunity to ſpeak.

Secondly, Opening the mouth, implyeth as ſpeaking after much ſilence, ſo with much prudence. A fools mouth is therefore ſaid to be always open, becauſe whenſoever he ſpeaketh, he is found ſpeaking imprudently and impertinently. But a wiſe man will not ſpeak, unleſs he may ſpeak to purpoſe, and ſo opens his mouth to ſpeak. *Solomon* ſaith, (*Prov.* 24. 7.) *Wiſdom is too high for a fool, he openeth not his mouth in the gate*; that is he is unfit to ſpeak in the preſence of wiſe and judicious men, he may open his mouth in the ſtreets, and in common company, but he opens not his mouth in the gate, where the Elders and Magiſtrates uſed to meet and judg the weightieſt matters. There is a four-fold conſideration to be had, as to the due opening of the mouth, (and 'tis no ſmall matter to open the mouth with thoſe conſiderations.)

Os aperire dicuntur apud Hebræos, qui in- [illegible] ſermonem ſerium & de re gravi. Piſc.

Firſt, Conſideration is to be had of the place ond company where, and to whom we ſpeak. We muſt not caſt pearls before ſwine, nor give ſtrong meat to Children.

Secondly, The time and ſeaſon wherein we ſpeak muſt be conſidered; every truth is not fit for every time. Chriſt would not ſpeak all at once to his Diſciples, for this reaſon, (*John* 16. 12.) *I have many things to ſay unto you, but ye cannot bear them now*; and becauſe ye cannot bear them now, therefore I will not ſay them now.

Thirdly, Conſideration is to be had how and in what way to ſpeak, whether inſtructingly, or exhortingly, reprovingly, or comfortably, we ſhould always labour to divide the word of God, and what we ſpeak from it aright, giving every one his proper part and portion. Then a man opens his mouth to ſpeak, when he conſiders how to ſort his ſpeech according to the ſtate of things and perſons before him.

Fourthly, Conſideration is to be had of the end or tendency of ſpeech, what our aim and mark is; we ſay, *a fools bolt is ſoon ſhot*, he conſiders not his aim and mark in ſpeaking; he that opens his mouth, looks to his mark, and drives a deſign, or hath a purpoſe in every word that paſſeth from him.

Thirdly, This phraſe of opening the mouth, notes liberty of ſpeech, or boldneſs in ſpeaking; when a man doth not ſpeak in his throat, as untaught Children do; nor in his belly, or in a bottle, as Witches and Sorcerers are ſaid to do, that peep and mutter (*Iſa.* 8. 19.) When a man (I ſay) doth not ſpeak any of theſe covert ways, but freely and liberally, then indeed he opens his mouth to ſpeak. We have that expreſſion in the promiſe, (*Ezek.* 29. 21.) *In that day will I cauſe the horn of the Houſe of* Iſrael *to bud forth, and I will give thee the opening of the mouth in the midſt of them, and they ſhall know that I am the Lord*; That is, I will give thee boldneſs, and liberty of ſpeech: Time was when thou didſt not dare to ſpeak a word for God, or of God, of his praiſe, name and worſhip, or if thou didſt it was but in a corner, or whiſpered in ſecret; but the time ſhall come when I will give thee the opening of the mouth; thou ſhalt ſpeak my truth and praiſes boldly: And the enemy ſhall know that I the Lord have procured thee this liberty. 'Tis a great mercy when God gives his people the opening of the mouth, or liberty of ſpeech, to ſpeak boldly, no man hindring, no not ſo much as diſcouraging them. The Prophet makes that the character of *an evil time, when the prudent keep ſilence*, (Amos 5. 13.) As in evil or calamitous times, it becomes the godly prudent to be willingly ſilent, adoring the juſtice of Gods ſevereſt diſpenſations towards them with patience and without murmuring at his hand. So in ſome evil times they are forced to keep ſilence, (though as *David* ſpake, *Pſal.* 39. 2. their ſorrows be ſtirred) either leſt by ſpeaking, even nothing but truth and reaſon, they draw further ſorrows upon themſelves; or becauſe they ſee it but loſt labour to ſpeak to a people obſtinate and reſolved on their way.

Inde videtur dici אוב *verbo, quod ipſi velut utres inflati turgeſcant & ſpiritus immundus ex illorum ventre reſpondeat.*

Fourthly, This phraſe of opening the mouth to ſpeak, notes the things ſpoken to be of very great worth, ſuch as have been long concocted and digeſted, and at laſt ready to be brought forth, as out of the treaſury of an honeſt and underſtanding heart. The heart is the treaſury of words, there they are ſtored up: And from thence iſſued forth; as Chriſt ſaith, *Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth ſpeaketh.* As there is a ſtock of evil words in the hearts of evil men, ſo of good and gracious words in the hearts of godly men, and when they open their mouths (according to this notion) it is to bring forth the treaſures, and riches of their hearts, to bring forth the gold and ſilver and precious things ſtored up there; all theſe are very uſeful interpretations of this phraſe; and I might give diſtinct obſervations from them, but it may ſuffice to have named them. I ſhall only add that the laſt is conceived by ſome to be chiefly intended in the latter branch of this verſe.

Os aperire eſt bene diſcuſſa & præmeditata habere dicenda. Bold.

My tongue hath ſpoken in my mouth.

This ſeems a ſtrange expreſſion; where ſhould the tongue ſpeak but in the mouth? When the tongue is out of the mouth, can it ſpeak? As the mouth cannot ſpeak without the tongue, ſo the tongue cannot ſpeak out of the mouth: Why then doth he ſay;

My tongue hath ſpoken in my mouth.] The Hebrew is, *In my palate*, the palate being a part of the mouth, and one ſpecial Inſtrument of ſpeech (Naturaliſts reckon five, *The lips, the tongue, the teeth, the palate, and the throat*) 'tis put for all; but there is more in it then ſo, for every man ſpeaks in his mouth, or by the palate which is the *heaven, roof or cieling of the mouth.* Therefore when *Elihu* ſaith, *My tongue hath ſpoken in my mouth*, or in my palate; the palate may be conſidered as the inſtrument of taſting as well as of ſpeaking. We ſay ſuch a thing is very ſavory to the palate; and we call that *Palate wine*, which is quick and lively, briſk and pleaſant to the taſt. Thus when *Elihu* ſaith here, *My tongue hath ſpoken in my mouth or palate*; his meaning is; I have uttered only that which I have well conſidered, what my tongue hath ſpoken to you, I have taſted my ſelf; I have put every word to my palate; for as a man that taſteth wine or any other ſapid thing, muſt have it upon his palate, before he can make a Judgment, whether it be ſweet or ſharp, quick or flat: So ſaith *Elihu*, my mouth hath ſpoken in my palate, I taſted my words before I ſpake them.

Palatum oris cœlum eſt. Druſ. *Præmeditata & quaſi intelligentia meæ palato prægustata ſum prolaturus.* B.Z. *Bene ſapui verba mea antequam illa efferendo tibi aliiſq; ſapienda & guſtanda traderem.* Bold. *Non ſequar verba aliorum, ſed proprios conceptus enunciabo.* Aquin.

Hence Note, *Judicious and wiſe men will taſt and try what they intend to ſpeak before they utter it.*

The ſpeaker preſents his words to the taſt of the hearer; for as this Scripture hath it at the 3. verſe of the next Chapter, *The ear tryeth words, as the mouth taſteth meat*; now he that ventures his words to the taſt and cenſure of others, had need take a taſt of them before he doth it. *My tongue hath ſpoken in my mouth.*

Secondly, From the ſcope of *Elihu* in adding this, namely, to gain attention, Note, *There is great reaſon we ſhould hear that carefully, which the ſpeaker hath prepared with care.*

They who regard not what they ſpeak, deſerve no regard when they ſpeak; but a weighing ſpeaker, ſhould have a weighing hearer. And what any mans tongue (in the ſence of *Elihu*) hath *ſpoken in his mouth*, that we ſhould hear, not only with our ear, but with our heart. This a ſtrong argument to quicken attention, yet *Elihu* gives in another, and a ſtronger in the next verſe.

Verſe 3. **My words ſhall be of the uprightneſs of my heart, my lips ſhall utter knowledg clearly.**

In the former verſe *Elihu* called for an open ear, becauſe he opened his mouth, and was about to ſpeak, or had ſpoken what he had well taſted. In this verſe he preſſeth the ſame duty, by profeſſing all manner of Ingenuity and Integrity in what he was about to ſpeak. He would ſpeak not only ſeriouſly, but honeſtly, not only from his underſtanding, but his Conſcience.

My words ſhall be of the uprightneſs of my heart.

The meaning is not, that the uprightneſs of his heart ſhould be the ſubject upon which he would treat, though that be a bleſſed and moſt uſeful ſubject, yet it was not the point he intended to diſcuſs: But when he ſaith, *My words ſhall be of the uprightneſs of my heart*, his meaning is, my words ſhall flow from the uprightneſs of my heart, I will ſpeak in the uprightneſs of my heart, or according to the uprightneſs of my heart; my words ſhall be upright as my heart is; the plain truth is this, *I will ſpeak truth plainly, I'le ſpeak as I think, you may ſee the Image of my heart upon every word, I will ſpeak without dawbing, without either ſimulation or diſſimulation.* Some conceive this to be a ſecret reproof of, or reflection upon *Job*'s friends, as if *Elihu* had ſuſpected them to have ſpoken worſe of *Job*, then they could think him to be in their hearts. But as we cannot judg mens hearts directly, ſo there is no reaſon why we ſhould judg ſo of their hearts conjecturally. It is enough to the purpoſe, that *Elihu* aſſerts his own uprightneſs without reflecting upon or ſuſpecting the uprightneſs of thoſe, who had dealt with *Job* before; *My words ſhall be in the uprightneſs of my heart.*

Sincerè & abſque ullo fuco proferam animi mei ſenſa. Bez.

This uprightneſs of his heart may have a three-fold oppoſition. Firſt, to paſſion; ſome ſpeak in the heat and fire of their hearts, rather then in the uprightneſs of them; it is good to ſpeak with the heat and fire of zeal in our hearts; but take heed of the heat and fire of paſſion, I will not ſpeak in the heat, but in the uprightneſs of my heart, ſaith *Elihu*.

Secondly, This uprightneſs may be oppos'd to partiality, I will not ſpare when there is cauſe to ſpeak home, nor preſs, nor load thee with any thing where there is not cauſe for it.

Thirdly, This uprightneſs in ſpeaking, may be alſo oppos'd to ſpeaking without clear ground or proof. And 'tis ſuppoſed that *Elihu* aimed more ſpecially at this, *Job*'s friends having been ſo high in his reproof, charging him with divers things for which they had no proof, but only a vehement ſuſpition. The words of *Eliphaz* are full (*Chap.* 22. 5.) *Is not thy wickedneſs great, and thine iniquities infinite? For thou haſt taken a pledg from thy brother for nought, and ſtripped the naked of their Clothing: Thou haſt ſent widows empty away, and the arms of the fatherleſs have been broken*: Surely *Eliphaz* could not ſpeak this in the uprightneſs of his heart, knowing it to be ſo, though he ſpake it in this uprightneſs of his heart, that he really thought it to be ſo. Which kind of uprightneſs *Paul* had in perſecuting the Saints, (*Acts* 26. 9.) *I verily thought with my ſelf, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jeſus of* Nazareth. Thus *Job*'s friends verily thought he had done many groſs things contrary to the Law of God, but they only thought ſo, they could not prove it; this is a lame kind of uprightneſs, and in oppoſition to this *Elihu* might now ſay, I will not charge or burden thee with any thing but what I know to be true, and had even from thy own mouth. *My words ſhall be of the uprightneſs of my heart.*

Non loquar ad calumniandum vel ad ridendum, ſed ſimplici animo ad veritatem manifeſtandam. Aquin.

I ſhall not ſtay to give particular notes from theſe words, according to this three-fold oppoſition; the Reader may improve them in that, as he hath occaſion; only in general Obſerve,

The heart and tongue ſhould go together.

The tongue ſhould always be the hearts Interpreter, and the heart ſhould always be the tongues ſuggeſter; what is ſpoken with the tongue ſhould be firſt ſtampt upon the heart, and wrought off from it. Thus it ſhould be in all our communications and exhortations, eſpecially when we ſpeak or exhort about the things of God, and diſpenſe the myſteries of Heaven. *David* ſpake from his heart while he ſpake from his faith (*Pſal.* 116. 10.) *I believed, therefore have I ſpoken.* Believing is an act of the heart, with the heart man believeth; ſo that to ſay, *I believed, therefore have I ſpoken*; is as if he had ſaid, *I would never have ſpoken theſe things, if my heart had not been clear and upright in them.* The Apoſtle takes up that very proteſtation from *David* (2 Cor. 4. 13.) *According as it is written, I believed, therefore have I ſpoken; we alſo believe, and therefore ſpeak*; that is, we moved others to believe nothing but what we believed, yea, were fully aſſured of, our ſelves, as the next words of the Apoſtle import, *Knowing, that he which raiſed up the Lord Jeſus, ſhall raiſe us up alſo by Jeſus, and ſhall preſent us with you.* To ſpeak what we in our heart believe, is to ſpeak in the uprightneſs of our hearts.

Some ſpeak without their hearts, that is, coldly, they have no heart at all in ſpeaking; as ſome hear without their hearts, only with their ears; ſo ſome ſpeak without the heart, only with the tongue.

Secondly, Others ſpeak what was never in their hearts; they have no experience in themſelves of what they ſay to others. They throw out their words at a venture. It is ſad to ſpeak that as a truth, or a comfort to others, which we have not found in our ſelves, that is, have not felt the operation of it upon our own hearts. How are they to be lamented, who ſpeak of the things of God as a Stage-player, who acts the part of, or perſonates a Prince, being themſelves but a poor Plebeian? It is bad to ſpeak without our hearts, or coldly, but 'tis worſe to ſpeak what was never in our hearts, or hypocritically.

Thirdly, Not a few ſpeak quite againſt their hearts; theſe are at fartheſt diſtance from ſpeaking in the uprightneſs of their heart; they ſpeak with a falſe and malicious heart, they ſpeak with a deceitful and double heart, with a heart and a heart. There are three ways wherein men ſpeak againſt their own hearts and Conſciences.

Firſt, In the profeſſion which they make of themſelves, (*Rev.* 2. 9.) Chriſt writing to the Church of *Smyrna*, ſaith, *I know thy faith and patience*, &c, and the *Blaſphemy of them who ſay they are* Jews *and are not, but lie*, &c. And ſo at Chapter 3. verſe 9. *Which ſay they are* Jews *and are not, but do lie.* We are not to underſtand it ſtrictly, that they profeſſed themſelves to be of the Nation of the *Jews*, the Children of *Abraham*. A *Jew* there is, any one that holdeth out a profeſſion of the faith of Chriſt. Old Teſtament words are often applyed to the new Teſtament, or Goſpel ſtate; they ſay they are *Jews*, that is, true believers, but they are not, and do lie; to lie, is to go againſt a mans mind, againſt his Conſcience; they make a great profeſſion of godlineſs and holineſs, of Chriſt and his ways, and they lie at every word; for indeed they are *the Synagogue of Satan.* Thus at this day ſome make profeſſion before the Church of God, and by ſuch profeſſion get admittance into the Church of God, who yet belong to the Synagogue of Satan. The Apoſtle *John* ſpeaks of ſuch, (1 *Ep. John* 2. 19.) *They went out from us, but they were not of us*; that is, they were not truly of us, though they once deſired to come in and join themſelves to us, and for a time walked with us.

Secondly, The tongue ſpeaks againſt the heart many times in the promiſes which men make to others of what they will do. O what courteſies and friendſhips will ſome men profeſs! they will tell you aloud how they love you, and how much they are your ſervants, while there is nothing in their hearts, but deceit and guile, yea poſſibly nothing but wrath and revenge to death. Thus *Iſhmael* went *out weeping all along as he went* (Jer. 41. 6.) and ſaid, *Come to* Gedaliah, *the Son of* Ahikam, yet he invited them into the City as poor Birds into a ſnare, to deſtroy them preſently; he was ſeemingly troubled at their affliction and wept, but his were Crocodiles tears, he murthered them as ſoon as he had them in his power.

Thirdly, Some ſpeak againſt their hearts doctrinally or in the Doctrine which they propound and teach. There are three ſorts who ſpeak amiſs doctrinally.

Firſt, Some ſpeak that which is not right in the uprightneſs of their hearts; or, I may ſay, they ſpeak that which is falſe with a true heart; that is, they think it to be a truth which they utter, when 'tis an error, and will be found ſo at laſt, When ever we ſee different opinions ſtifly maintained among honeſt and godly men, (which though it be a very ſad ſight, yet it is too often ſeen; In that caſe I ſay) one ſide always ſpeak that which is falſe with a true heart, and utters error uprightly. The truth is, ſome men defend an error with better and more honeſt hearts, then ſome others defend the truth. For

Secondly, There are ſuch as ſpeak right without any uprightneſs of heart, or they ſpeak truth with a falſe heart; this *Elihu* ſpecially profeſſeth againſt; he would not only ſpeak that which was right, but with uprightneſs, The Apoſtle found ſeveral teachers of this ſecond ſort (*Phil.* 1. 16, 17, 18.) Some preach Chriſt, that is, the Goſpel, yea the truth of Chriſt in the Goſpel, (elſe the Apoſtle would not have rejoyced in it, as he profeſſeth he did at the 18 verſe, *I therein do rejoyce, yea and will rejoyce*) yet theſe men did not preach in the uprightneſs of their own hearts; for, ſaith he, *Some preach Chriſt out of envy and ſtrife, and ſome out of good will*, (they preached Chriſt, pure Goſpel, yet not with pure hearts, for, he adds, they did it) *ſuppoſing to add affliction to my bonds*; they preacht to oppoſe the Apoſtles more then to ſet up Chriſt, and though they preached the truth, yet they did it more *in pretence then in truth*; as 'tis ſaid at the 18. verſe. The ſame Apoſtle ſpeaks of others, (2 *Cor.* 11. 13. 14.) who preached what was true for the matter, and yet he calls them *falſe Apoſtles, deceitful workers, transforming themſelves into the Apoſtles of Chriſt, and no marvel, for Satan himſelf is transformed into an Angel of light*. They formed and ſhaped themſelves into Angels of light, and took up the doctrine of the faithful Apoſtles of Jeſus Chriſt in ſome things, yet they did it not in the uprightneſs of their hearts, but that they might weaken the eſtimation of the true Apoſtles in the hearts of the people, and ſet up themſelves there, that ſo in other things they might with greater efficacy or more effectually, miſlead them or draw them into error. Thus ſome are found ſpeaking lies in the truth of their hearts, and others ſpeaking truth in the falſeneſs of their hearts.

Thirdly, Many ſpeak that which is falſe with a falſe heart; this is the height of wickedneſs. The Apoſtle propheſieth of ſuch (1 *Tim.* 4. 2.) *Who ſhall ſpeak lies in hypocriſie:* The matter they ſpeak is a lie, and they ſpeak it with a baſe and falſe heart too. And therefore he ſaith of theſe in the ſame verſe, *Their Conſciences are ſeared with a hot iron*; that is, they are inſenſible both of the miſchief they do, and of the miſery they muſt ſuffer.

Elihu profeſſeth himſelf to be none of all theſe; he ſpake that which was right and true in the uprightneſs and truth of his heart. Such a one the Apoſtle directs the Goſpel Deacon to be, (1 *Tim.* 3. 9.) *Holding the myſtery of faith in a pure Conſcience*, which is the ſame with an upright heart. And he tells us (1 *Theſ.* 2. 4, 5.) That himſelf did not uſe any guile in the miniſtration of the Goſpel. He had truth on his ſide, and he had truth in his heart, as he alſo profeſſed to his Brethren the *Jews*, (*Rom.* 9. 1, 2.) *I ſpeak the truth in Chriſt, I lie not, my Conſcience alſo bearing me witneſs in the holy Ghoſt*, &c. And again, (2 *Cor.* 2. 17.) *We are not of thoſe that corrupt the truth; we ſpeak the truth, and ſpeak it truly.* He is a better ſpeaker that ſpeaks with an upright heart, then he that ſpeaks with an eloquent tongue; he is the happy ſpeaker, who ſpeaks more with his heart then with his tongue, that can ſay with *Elihu* to *Job*, *My words ſhall be of the uprightneſs of my heart.* Words ſpoken of that ſubject, and words flowing from that ſubject, are lovely words. Of this latter ſort ſaith *Elihu* to *Job*; *My words ſhall be.*

And my lips ſhall utter knowledg clearly.

Job had charged his three friends (*Chap.* 13. 4.) that they were *forgers of lies*. This *Elihu* ingageth againſt, while he ſaith, *My lips ſhall utter knowledg clearly.*

Quia tribus amicis Jobus impſurat quod eſſent fabricatores mendacii, hoc à ſe excludit dicens & ſententiam labia mea puram loquentur. Aquin.

כרור

Purum planum perſpicuum, à fuco alienum ſincerum & ab omni ſcoria doli aut mendacii purgatorem. Merc.

The word here tranſlated Clearly, is rendred two ways.

First, As an Adjective.

Secondly, As an Adverb.

Many render it as an Adjective, *My lips ſhall utter clear knowledg*, or diſtinct knowledg; clear as to the matter; pure, plain, without any adulteration, deceit, or guile, as to the manner. So the word is often uſed, I might give you many Scriptures for it. The Prophet ſpeaking in the perſon of Chriſt (*Iſa.* 49. 2.) ſaith, *He hath made me a poliſhed ſhaft*, the Hebrew is, *a pure ſhaft*, a glittering, ſhining ſhaſt. (*Jer.* 5. 11.) *He made bright his arrows*, there this word is uſed. It is applyed alſo to chief men (1 *Chron.* 7. 48.) *Theſe were choice men*, pure men. So ſaith *Elihu* (*My lips ſhall utter clear ſhining pure knowledg.*)

Hence Note, *We ſhould ſpeak clear truth. Truth without mixture, truth well winnowed, doctrine well refined.*

The Commandment of the Lord is a pure word (*Pſal.* 19. 8.) There's not any droſs at all in it, 'tis like Silver tried ſeven times in the fire (*Pſal.* 12. 6.) The Prophet among other bleſſings which God promiſeth to his Church and people, hath this (*Iſa.* 30. 24.) *The Oxen likewiſe and the young Aſſes that ear the ground ſhall eat clean Provender, free from the ſtraw, and chaff, duſt and darnel.* But may we not here renew the Apoſtles queſtion, (1 *Cor.* 9. 9, 10.) *Doth God take care for Oxen?* or ſaith he it altogether for our ſakes? For our ſakes no doubt it is written; that *the mouth of the Oxe treading out the corn, ſhould not be muzzel'd*, was written for the Miniſters ſake, to aſſure them, that while they labour in the Goſpel to feed Souls, their Bodies ſhould be fed. And that the *Oxen and young Aſſes ſhall eat clean Provender*, was written for the peoples ſake, to aſſure them, that Chriſt would ſend them ſuch Miniſters as ſhould feed them with pure, holy, wholeſom doctrine, not with the chaff of unwritten traditions, nor with the mixtures of humane inventions. They ſhould be taught clear knowledg, as *Elihu* here ſpeaketh. This mercy was alſo propheſied (*Zeph.* 3. 9.) *Then will I turn to the people a pure language*, or a *clean lip*: It is this word, that is, what they ſpeak, ſhall be pure truth, their language ſhall be, not only Grammatically pure, proper and genuine, but Theologically pure, without any tincture of error in it.

Secondly, As the word is taken (according to our tranſlation) Adverbially.

Note, *We ought to ſpeak truth clearly.*

Some ſpeak clear truths, who yet do not ſpeak them clearly. They ſpeak great truths, yet obſcure them in their own way of expreſſions; they who wrap up ſound doctrine in hard uncouth words, or deliver it in an unneceſſary multitude of words, do rather puzzle and confound their Auditors, then inform or inſtruct them. And they who ſpeak not knowledg clearly, are like thoſe who mud the waters, or raiſe a duſt in the air, which will not let others ſee diſtinctly what they hold or put in either. Speaking in dark words and ſtrange notions, is like ſpeaking in a ſtrange language. They only ſpeak profitably, who ſpeak clearly. We commonly ſay, *Truth ſeeks no corners*; truth would not be hid. What are obſcure and ambiguous words, of a doubtful conſtruction and interpretation, but *corners*, wherein many hide truth, while they pretend to ſpeak and publiſh it. Such ſpeakers as well as they who ſpeak in an unknown language, are *Barbarians* to their hearers. And therefore as the Apoſtle in reference to an unknown tongue, ſo ſhould we ſay in reference to any covert or obſcure way of ſpeaking in our own mother tongue, *We had rather ſpeak five words that others may be edified, then ten thouſand words in hard and ſtrange expreſſions.* Though we ſpeak in a known language, yet doubtful words hinder edifying as much as an unknown language doth; yea ſuch are as a foreiner to their hearers, while they ſpeak in their own Country-tongue. 'Tis a ſpecial gift of God, to ſpeak knowledg clearly. The Apoſtle hath left that excellent advice with all who are called to ſpeak the great things of eternal life, (1 *Pet.* 4. 11.) *If any man ſpeak* (that is, if he ſpeak about the things of God, divine things) *let* *him ſpeak as the Oracles of God.* What are they? The Oracles of God are the known word of God. But how are theſe Oracles to be known? Surely as God ſpake them, plainly and clearly; The Oracles of God were ſpoken without ambiguity, therefore let no man ſpeak them as the Oracles of the Devil were ſpoken, or as the Devil ſpake his Oracles, that is, ambiguouſly and doubtfully; the Devil of old gave out all his anſwers and Oracles doubtfully and darkly to his dark and blinded votaries; what he ſaid might bear ſeveral conſtructions. And he ſpake ſo on purpoſe, that whatſoever the event or iſſue proved to be, he (though the father of lies) might have the reputation of ſpeaking truth. The Devils Oracle gave *Crœſus* ſuch an anſwer as he might interpret either of a great ſucceſs, or of a great overthrow, when he asked counſel about his Wars. And when *Saul* came to inquire of the Witch of *Endor*, that is, of the Devil, (1 *Sam.* 28. 11.) he gave him a doubtful reſolve; *To morrow ſhalt thou and thy Sons be with me* (verſ. 19.) Which ambiguous anſwer might be underſtood as of the next day following, ſo indefinitely of any day near approaching. Satan loves not to ſpeak knowledg clearly. But the ſervants and meſſengers of Chriſt, muſt us great plaineſs of ſpeech while they are treating of and giving out the mind of God to his people; and be careful that as the doctrine is ſound which they deliver, ſo there may be a clearneſs in their delivering of it. Their lips (as *Elihu* ingaged his ſhould) ought to *utter knowledg clearly.*

Crœſus Halym penetrās magnam pervertet opum vim.

VERS. 4, 5, 6, 7.

The Spirit of God hath formed me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.
If thou canſt anſwer me, ſet thy words in order before me, ſtand up.
Behold, I am according to thy wiſh in Gods ſtead: I alſo am formed out of the clay.
Behold, my terror ſhall not make thee afraid, neither ſhall my hand be heavy upon thee.

IN theſe four verſes, *Elihu* ſtill proſecutes a diſcreet prefatory inſinuation both of himſelf and of his intended diſcourſe into the heart of *Job*, that both might find welcome, and good entertainment there. *Elihu* had aſſured him at the third verſe, that he would ſpeak in the uprightneſs of his heart, or that he would deal candidly, and clearly with him. That was a ſtrong argument to gain attention. And in this fourth verſe, he argueth with and urgeth *Job*, to give him attention, becauſe he was a man of Gods making, as *Job* alſo was. The ſame hand wrought them both, and therefore, why ſhould there be a ſtrangeneſs between them? Or an unwillingneſs to give or receive counſel and help from one another?

Verſe 4. **The Spirit of God hath formed me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.**

I ſhall open theſe words two ways.

Firſt, As a direct propoſition, or aſſertion,

Secondly, In their connection and dependance, as they are here uſed, for an argument of perſwaſion.

First, Conſider the Text, as an aſſertion; **The Spirit of God hath made me,** &c. The word doth not ſignifie barely to **make**, or to clap up a work any how, but to make with art, to make *ſkilfully*, to compoſe and faſhion a thing with exacteſt grace, comelineſs, and beauty. Thus are we made by the Spirit of God. Man is an excellent piece of work, yea man is the *Maſter-piece* of all the viſible works of God. *The Spirit of God hath made me.*

עשני *Faciendi verbum artificioſam & elaboratam agendi rationem aſſert.* Pined.

There are two things here to be enquired; firſt, what we are to underſtand by the Spirit of God, to whom *Elihu* attributes his making. Secondly, why doth *Elihu* attribute his making to the Spirit of God? To the former queſtion, I anſwer; firſt, negatively, that by the Spirit of God we are not to underſtand a power or vertue put forth by God, in which ſence we ſometimes read the Spirit of God in Scripture. But by the Spirit of God here, we are to underſtand God the Spirit. In which ſence we read (*Gen.* 1. 2.) *The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.* As alſo (*Math.* 3. 16.) *He ſaw the Spirit of God deſcending like a Dove, and lighting upon him*; that is, upon Jeſus Chriſt, baptized by *John* in *Jordan*.

The ſecond queſtion is, Why doth *Elihu* attribute his making to the Spirit of God? Regeneration or our new-making is properly the work of the Spirit, but is Creation, or our natural conſtitution his work alſo? Saith not *Moſes* (*Gen.* 2. 7.) *The Lord God formed man out of the duſt of the Earth*; *Jehovah Elohim* formed man. And if we look into the firſt of *John* verſ. 2, 3. we read thus; *In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God; the ſame was in the beginning with God, all things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made, that was made.* There our maker (for the making of all things is attributed to him) is the Son, the ſecond perſon in the holy Trinity, or the *Word*, who (as it followeth in that Chapter) *was made fleſh.* Why then doth *Elihu* here aſcribe his making to the Spirit? And how are theſe Scriptures reconciled?

I anſwer, by that received *Maxime* in Divinity, *The works of the holy Trinity towards the Creature are undivided.* So that, while this Scripture aſcribes the making of man to the Spirit or third perſon in the Trinity, it doth not at all croſs thoſe which aſcribe it to the firſt or ſecond, the Father or the Son. *The Spirit of God hath made me.*

Hence Note, Firſt, *Man as to his bodily making, or the making of his body, is the workmanſhip of God.*

As we are his workmanſhip Created in Chriſt Jeſus to good (or holy) *works*, (Eph. 2. 10.) ſo we are his workmanſhip Created to common and natural works. We have heard of that divine conſultation or reſolution rather (*Gen.* 1. 26.) *Let us make man:* The Father made man, and the Son made man, and the holy Spirit made man; the Father by the Son, through the holy Spirit made man. What a glorious, what a mighty power is put forth for the production of ſuch a poor Creature as man is! And this is true, not only of the firſt man in his Creation, but of every man ſince the Creation, there is a concurrence of a divine power and workmanſhip in the ſetting up of man as man. (*Pſal.* 100. 3.) *It is he that made us, and not we our ſelves*; God doth not only make us holy men, but he makes us men. Hence *David* (Pſal 13. 9, 14.) *I am fearfully, and wonderfully made.* He ſpeaks there of the frame of his Body, though that be much more true in reference to the admirable frame of the new Creature which is ſet up in the Soul; ſo, indeed we are fearfully and wonderfully made. (*Iſa.* 27. 11.) *Thus is a people of no underſtanding* (but did God ever make a people without natural underſtanding? Surely no, but they were a people without ſpiritual underſtanding, they did not underſtand what the mind, and meaning of God was, and what their own duty was; ſuch are a people of no underſtanding, how wiſe ſoever they are in their own eyes, or in the eyes of the World, what followeth?) *Therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will ſhew them no favour*; That is, God who made and formed them, both in their natural capacity as men, as alſo in their civil and ſpiritual capacity as a Church and Nation, or as a National Church (underſtanding it of the *Jews*) will not have mercy on them, will not favour them. We read the ſame Church at once looking to God as their maker and moſt earneſtly moving and imploring his pity upon the ſame account. (*Iſa.* 64. 8, 9.) *But now O Lord, thou art our Father, we are the Clay, and thou our Potter, and we all are the work of thy hand*; As if they had ſaid, thou O Lord, haſt moulded us as thy Creatures, and faſhioned us as thy Church, when we were but a rude maſs or heap without form or comlineſs, therefore do not mar thy own work, do not break the Veſſels of thine own making, or as it followeth in the ſame Chapter, *Be not wroth very ſore O Lord, neither remember iniquity for ever, behold, we beſeech thee, we are all thy people.*

Hence Conſider, Firſt, *That, we owe not only our well-being, but our very being unto God.* And therefore

Secondly, No man ought to look upon himſelf as his own; ſo the Apoſtle argues (1 *Cor.* 6. 19.) *Know ye not that your Body is the Temple of the holy Ghoſt, which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?* No man is his own, he is Gods, who hath made him. Saints and believers eſpecially are not their own in that reſpect; as alſo becauſe their Bodies *are the Temple of the holy Ghoſt*;

that is, the holy Ghoſt hath ſanctified them for himſelf, for his peculiar ſervice, and for his habitation. Now as the Bodies of Saints are the Temple of the holy Ghoſt, becauſe he doth ſanctifie them; ſo they are the Temple of the holy Ghoſt, becauſe he hath reared them up, and built them. That conſideration ſhould urge us to duty; our Bodies are Temples built, as well as Temples ſanctified by the holy Ghoſt; and therefore we are not our own at all, nor in any reſpect; and if we are not our own at all, but the Lords, then we ought to be always for the Lord,

Hence, Thirdly, Hath *the Spirit of God* made us? (as *Elihu* ſaith) then let the Spirit uſe us; how ſad is it, that when the Spirit of God hath made our Bodies and Souls, we ſhould let the wicked Spirit uſe either (as he doth both the Bodies and Souls of carnal men) to his baſe ſervices. The evil Spirit did neither make our Bodies nor our Souls, why ſhould he have the command of either? Therefore *as your members have been weapons of unrighteouſneſs to ſin, ſo let them be inſtruments of righteouſneſs unto God.* Seeing the holy Spirit hath made us, let not the evil Spirit uſe ſo much as a little finger of us; for, he hath not made not only ſo much as a little finger of our hand, but ſo much as the leaſt hair of our heads (as Chriſt ſaith we our ſelves cannot, *Matth.* 5. 36.) *white or black.* And therefore let not the evil Spirit make uſe of one hair of our heads white or black, as a flag of pride and vanity, or to be an occaſion of ſin to others. He that maketh the Houſe ought to have the poſſeſſion and ſervice of it, either to dwell in it himſelf, or to receive rent and profit from him that dwells in it. The Spirit having made us, ſhould not only have the rent and revenue, but the full poſſeſſion of us for ever. That which is of God ſhould be for God, for him always, and only for him.

Secondly, In that the making of man is attributed to the Spirit,

Obſerve, *The Spirit of God is God.*

The holy Ghoſt is not only a power of God, or a word gone out from God, but the holy Ghoſt is God. This is clear from the efficiency of the holy Spirit; *The Spirit of God hath made me.* The work of Creation is attributable to none but God. That power which at firſt ſet up man in his Creation, continueth him to this day; this power and great prerogative is given to the Spirit; therefore the Spirit is God. (*Pſal.* 33. 6.) *By the word of the Lord* (his ſubſtantial Word or Son) *were the Heavens made, and all the Hoſt of them, by the breath* (or Spirit) *of his mouth*; that is, *Jehovah* by his eternal Son and Spirit made all things. The Heavens and their Hoſt, are there expreſſed by a *Synecdoche* of the part, for the whole Creation, or for all Creatures both in Heaven and in Earth. Again (*Pſal.* 104. 30.) *Thou ſendeſt forth thy Spirit, they are Created*; The Spirit of God Creates every day: what is it that continueth things in their Created being, but providence? That's a true axiome in Divinity; *Providence is Creation continued*; now the Spirit of God who Created at firſt, Creates to this day; *Thou ſendeſt forth thy Spirit, they are Created.* The work of Creation was finiſhed in the firſt ſix days of the World, but the work of Creation is renewed every day, and ſo continued to the end of the World. Succeſſive providential Creation as well as original Creation is aſcribed to the Spirit.

The Scripture is full of arguments to prove that the holy Ghoſt is God; which (becauſe this fundamental truth is blaſphemouſly ſpoken againſt) I ſhall a little touch upon.

Firſt, As the Spirit Createth and maketh the natural man conſiſting of Body and Soul, ſo he regenerateth (which is a greater Creation) the whole into a ſpiritual man; therefore he is God. (*John* 3. 5.) *Except a man be born again of water, and of the Spirit* (that is, of the Spirit who is as water) *he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.* The holy Ghoſt is alſo call'd, *The ſanctifier*; ſanctification is regeneration in progreſs, and motion; regeneration is ſanctification begun, and ſanctification is regeneration perfecting from day to day. (2 *Theſ.* 2. 13.) *We are bound to give thanks to God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, becauſe God hath from the beginning choſen you to ſalvation, through ſanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth.* And the Apoſtle *Peter* writes to the *Elect* (1 Pet. 1. 2.) *according to the foreknowledg of God the father, through ſanctification of the Spirit.* Now, who can do theſe great things but God? Who can regenerate, or give a new nature, who can ſanctifie or perfect that new nature but God alone? Men and Angels muſt let their works alone for ever, or (as we tranſlate, *Pſal.* 49. 8.) theſe acts ceaſe for ever from men and Angels, as much as the redemption of man from the grave, or from Hell, from corruption or condemnation.

Secondly, The Spirit is omniſcient, *He knoweth all things*, (1 Cor. 1. 12. & 2. 10. 19.) *The Spirit knoweth all things, yea the deep things of God.* He is not only acquainted with, and privie to the ſurface and outſide of things, but he ſearcheth things to the bottom of them. Nor doth he ſearch only the deep or bottom things of common men, or of the chiefeſt of men, Kings and Princes, (whoſe hearts are uſually as much deeper then other mens, as their perſons and places are higher) but the Spirit ſearcheth the deep things, the bottom things of God, the things of God that lie loweſt, and moſt out of ſight, the Spirit underſtandeth, therefore the Spirit is God. For (as the Apoſtle argueth, 1 *Cor.* 2. 11.) *No man knoweth the things of a man, ſave the Spirit of a man that is in him; even ſo the things of God knoweth no man but the Spirit of God*, or, he that is God; if the Spirit that is in man, were not man, or the intellectual power in man, it could never know the things of man; and if the Spirit of God were not God, he could never ſearch and know the deep, the deepeſt things of God.

Thirdly, As the Spirit of God knoweth all things, as he ſearcheth the deep things. even all the ſecrets, and myſteries of God; ſo he teacheth all things, even all thoſe ſecrets and myſteries of God. which 'tis needful or uſeful for man to know. The Spirit is a teacher, and he teacheth effectually (*John* 16. 13.) *When the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth: For he ſhall not ſpeak of himſelf* (that is, he ſhall not teach you a private doctrine, or that which is contrary to that ye have learned of me) *but whatſoever he ſhall hear, that ſhall he ſpeak, and he will ſhew you things to come.* Which laſt words are

A fourth argument that he is God. As the Spirit teacheth, ſo he foretelleth all things (1 *Tim.* 4. 1.) *Now the Spirit ſpeaketh expreſly, that in the latter times ſome ſhall depart from the faith, giving heed to ſeducing Spirits and doctrines of Devils.* The Spirit of God clearly foreſeeth and infallibly foretelleth what ſhall be, before it it is, therefore he is God. The Lord by his holy Prophet (*Iſa.* 41. 23.) challengeth all the falſe Idol gods of the Heathen to give that proof of their Divinity; *Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are Gods.* As if he had ſaid, do that and we will yield the cauſe. Men and Devils may gheſs at, but none can indeed ſhew things to come but God.

Fifthly, The Spirit appoints to himſelf Officers and Miniſters in the Church, therefore he is God, (*Acts* 13. 2.) *The holy Ghoſt ſaid, ſeparate me* Barnabas *and* Saul *for the work whereunto I have called them.*

Sixthly, The holy Ghoſt furniſheth thoſe Officers whom he calleth with power and gifts, as he pleaſeth, that they may be fit for the work or miniſtry of the Goſpel (1 *Cor.* 12. 8, 11.) *To one is given by the Spirit, the word of wiſdom, to another the word of knowledg by the ſame Spirit,* &c. *But all theſe worketh that one and the ſelf-ſame Spirit, dividing to every man ſeverally as he will.* Now, who can give wiſdom and knowledg, who can give them prerogatively, following in this diſtribution, or diviſion of gifts, no rule, nor giving any other reaſon of it but his own will, except God only?

Seventhly, The holy Ghoſt is ſinned againſt; therefore he is God. Some, poſſibly may object and ſay, this is not a convincing or demonſtrative argument, that the holy Ghoſt is God, becauſe he is ſinned againſt; for man may ſin againſt man. All ſecond table ſins are ſins againſt our Neighbour; and the Apoſtle tells the *Corinthians* (1 Eph. 8. 12.) that while they uſed their lawful liberty in eating with offence, they *ſinned againſt the Brethren.* I anſwer, whoſoever is properly ſinned againſt is God, becauſe God is the Law giver. And, though many actions of men are direct wrongs to man, yet in every wrong done to man, God alſo is wronged, and, in ſtrict ſence, he only is ſinned againſt by man. For the reaſon why any action is a wrong to man, is becauſe it is againſt ſome Law of God. And if to be ſinned

ſinned againſt in ſtrict ſence, be proper to God only; then the argument ſtands good, that the holy Spirit is God, becauſe he is ſinned againſt; eſpecially, if we conſider, that there is ſuch an Emphaſis put upon ſinning againſt the holy Ghoſt in the holy Scripture (more if poſſible then upon ſinning againſt the Father, or the Son) (*Matth.* 12. 31.) *Wherefore, I ſay unto you* (ſaith Chriſt) *All manner of ſin and blaſphemy ſhall be forgiven unto men, but the blaſphemy againſt the holy Ghoſt ſhall not be forgiven unto men*; As if he had ſaid, Though you ſin againſt the Father, and the Son, it ſhall be forgiven you, but if you ſin againſt the holy Ghoſt it ſhall not be forgiven either in this World or in the World to come; that is, it ſhall never be forgiven. Seeing then there is more in ſinning againſt the holy Ghoſt then againſt the Father, or the Son, who are God, the holy Ghoſt muſt needs be God. For though there is no degree or gradual difference in the deity, each perſon being coeternal, coequal, and conſubſtantial; yet the Scripture attributes more in that caſe, as to the point of ſinning againſt the holy Ghoſt, then to ſinning againſt the Father, or the Son; therefore certainly the holy Ghoſt is God.

Laſtly, The holy Ghoſt is the object of divine worſhip; are not we baptized *in the name of the Father, Son, and holy Ghoſt?* Is the Father, and the Son God, and the holy Ghoſt not God, who is joined with them in the ſame honour? Shall a Creature come in competition with God? And doth not the Scripture or word of God, direct us to pray for grace from the Spirit as well as from the Father or the Son? (2 *Cor.* 13. 13. *Rev.* 1. 4.) Thus we ſee how full the Scripture is in giving the glory of the ſame works upon us, and of the ſame worſhip from us to the Spirit, as to the Father and the Son: And therefore from all theſe premiſes we may conclude, that the holy Ghoſt with the Father and the Son, is God bleſſed and to be glorified for evermore. *The Spirit of God hath made me,*

And the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.

נשמה *Spiritus ex ore egrediens, halitus, flatus, anima, proprie ſignificat halitum, per metonymiam effecti, animam; per ſynecdochen membri animal.* Piſc. in Deut. 10. 16.

The words carry an alluſion (as Interpreters generally agree) to that of *Moſes* deſcribing the Creation of man (*Gen.* 2. 7.) *And the Lord God formed man out of the duſt of the Earth, and breathed into his noſtrils the breath of life, and man became a living Soul. Elihu* ſpeaks near in the ſame form, fully to the ſame effect; *The breath of the Almighty hath given me life*, or, *enlivened me*; As if he had ſaid, That Soul which the Lord hath breathed into me, hath made me live. The Soul of man may be called the breath of the Almighty, becauſe the Almighty is expreſſed infuſing it into man at firſt by breathing. And therefore the word *Neſhamah*, which properly ſignifies the breath, doth alſo by a Metonymie of the effect ſignifie the Soul it ſelf which cauſeth breathing. Thus our tranſlaters render it (*Iſa.* 57. 16.) *I* (ſaith the Lord) *will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth, for the Spirit ſhould fail before me, and the Souls which I have made.* As the Soul of man was breathed in by God, ſo the Soul is that by which man breaths. Breath and Soul come and go together. Some comparing the Original word (*Shamaiim*) for the Heavens, with this word (*Neſhamah*) which here we tranſlate *breath*, take notice of their near affinity, intimating that the Soul of man is of a Heavenly pedegree, or comes from Heaven; yea the latine word (*mens*) ſignifying the *mind*, is of the ſame conſonant letters with the Hebrew *Neſhamah*, and, as ſome conceive, is derived from it.

So then, I take theſe words, *The breath of the Almighty*, as a deſcription of that part of man which is oppoſed to his dody; *The Spirit of God hath made me*; that is, hath ſet me up as a man, in humane ſhape, *And the breath of the Almighty hath given me life*; that is, this Soul which the Almighty hath breathed into me, hath made me a living man, ready for any humane act, or (as *Moſes* ſpeaks) *God breathing into my noſtrils the breath of life, I became a living Soul.*

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *The Soul of man floweth immediately from God.*

'Tis the breath of God; not that God liveth by breathing; the way of his life is infinitely above our apprehenſion; but 'tis clear in Scripture, that the Almighty breathed into man the powers of life. And therefore he is called (by way of Eminence) *The father of Spirits*, (Heb. 12. 9.) For though the Almighty is rightly entituled the Father of the whole man, though both Body and Soul are the work of God, yet he is in a further ſence, the father of our Spirits, or Souls, then of our Bodies. And here *Solomon* ſhewing how man is diſpoſed of when theſe two are ſeparated by death, ſaith (*Eccleſ.* 12. 7.) *Then ſhall the duſt* (that is, the Body) *return to the Earth as it was, and the Spirit* (that is, the Soul) *ſhall return to God who gave it*, The Body is the gift of God, but the Body is not the breath of God, it is not ſuch an immediate gift of God as the Soul is; when the Body of man was made at firſt, God took the duſt of the Earth and formed his Body out of it, but when he gave him a Soul, he breathed that from himſelf; it was an immediate effect of Gods power, not dealing with, nor working upon any præ-exiſting matter. The Spirit or Soul of man is purely of God, ſolely of God. And hence we may infer.

Firſt, Then the Soul is not a vapour, ariſing from the craſis or temperament of the Body, as the life of a Beaſt is.

Secondly, Then the Soul of man is not traduced from the parents in generation, as many learned men affirm, eſpecially, to eaſe themſelves of thoſe difficulties about the conveyance of Original ſin or defilement into the Soul.

Thirdly, We may hence alſo infer, then the Soul is not corruptible; it is an immortal ſubſtance. How can that be corruptible or mortal, which hath its riſe (as I may ſay) immediately from God, or is breathed in by the Almighty, who is altogether incorruptible and immortal. And whereas there is a twofold incorruptibility; firſt, by divine ordination, that is, God appoints ſuch a thing ſhall not corrupt, and therefore it doth not; ſo the Body of man in it's firſt Creation was incorruptible, ſorthough it were in it ſelf corruptible, being made out of the Earth, yet by the appointment of God, if man had continued in his integrity he had not died. And therefore it is ſaid, *By ſin came death*; yea doubtleſs if God ſhould command and appoint the meaneſt worm that moves upon the Earth to live for ever, or the moſt fading flower that groweth out of the Earth to flouriſh for ever, both the one and the other would do ſo. Secondly, there is an incorruptibility in ſome things, not merely by a Law or ap- appointment of God, but as from that intrinſecal nature, which God hath beſtowed upon them, and implanted in them. Thus the Angels are immortal, they have an incorruptible nature, and likewiſe the Soul of man, being breathed from the Almighty, is in it's own nature incorruptible; it hath naturally no ſeeds of diſſolution in it, becauſe no contrariety, no contrary qualities in it, as all Bodies or corporeal ſubſtances have. I know the Apoſtle ſaith (1 *Tim.* 6. 16.) *God only hath immortality*; it's true, he only hath it in himſelf independently, originally, but he derives and gives it as a talent to ſome Creatures in a way of dependance upon himſelf.

Secondly, Obſerve, *The Soul brings in the life of the Body, the life of man.*

What is the Body without the Soul, but a lump of clay; as ſoon as ever the Soul departs, life departs, man dieth and becomes a putrifying Carkaſs; yet ſuch is the folly of moſt men, that all their care is for the life of the Body, which is (at beſt) a dying life, they utterly neglect the Soul, which, as it is the life of the Body, ſo it ſelf never dieth. The Soul is the Jewel, the Body is but the Cabinet, the Soul is the Kernel, the Body is but the Shell. Will you be ſolicitous, about a Cabinet, and a Shell, and ſlight the Jewel, or throw away the Kernel? Will you take care of that which liveth, the Body, and will you not take care of that which holds your life, the Soul? Again,

Note, *Life is the gift of God.*

If the Soul which is the cauſe of life in man, be of God, then the life of man is of God alſo. The cauſe of the cauſe is the cauſe of the effect or thing cauſed. But we need not argue it from Logick rules, Scripture teſtimony being ſo abundant in this thing. (*Acts* 17. 25.) *He giveth to all, life and breath, and all things.* And (*v.* 28.) *In him we live and move and have our being.* Spiritual and eternal life, are the gift of God, ſo alſo is natural life. And if ſo, Then

Firſt, Live to God; Secondly, ſeeing God gives us life, we ſhould be willing to give up our lives to God. Yea

Thirdly, we ſhould therefore be ready to give up, or rather to lay down our lives for God. And as we ſhould give up our lives to God when he calls for them by natural death, ſo we ſhould give up our lives for God, when he calls us to bear witneſs to his name and truth by violent death.

I ſhall yet take notice of one thing further, before I paſs from this verſe; *The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.*

Some, upon good grounds, refer the firſt clauſe; *The Spirit of God hath made me*, to the Creation both of Soul and Body; and the ſecond or latter clauſe, *the breath of the Almighty hath given me life*, to that quickning which we receive by the Spirit to the duties whereinto we are called in this life. The breath of the Almighty hath given me life; that is, hath fitted and prepared me for the ſeveral offices and ſervices of life. As if *Elihu* had ſaid, *The Spirit of God hath not only made me a man, but a man for work, yea the Spirit of God hath quickned me to the preſent work and buſineſs I am come about.* Thus, life imports not only ſpiritual life in the being of it, but all the furniture, ornaments, and abilities of a ſpiritual life, The Septuagint render this profeſſion made by *Elihu* expreſly, to this ſence, holding out a ſtrong aſſurance which *Elihu* had, that God had both called and prepared him for the ſervice he was come about and ingaged in. *The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath inſtructed me.* Another of the Greek Interpreters ſpeaks as much; *I am not ignorant, that of my ſelf I am able to do nothing, but I have received this power from God*; As if *Elihu* had ſaid, *The Spirit of the Almighty hath quickned me to this work I am now upon, and taught me what both to ſay and do in thy caſe, O* Job.

Πνοὴ δὲ παντοκράτορος ἡ διδάσκουσά με. *Spiratio omnipotentis eſt quæ docet me.* Sept. *Haud me latet non à meipſo, ſed à Deo hunc prudentiæ ſenſum me accepiſſe.* Nicet.

Hence Note, *God giveth not only the life of nature unto men, but he fits them for all the duties, and ſervices of this life.*

We, indeed, are ſcarcely to be reckoned among the living, if we have no more but a natural life; what is it to be able to eat and drink, to hear, and ſee, and ſpeak? unleſs we have more then this, we deſerve not to be numbered or written among the living; we are upon the matter, but dead lumps, and clods of clay. It is the breath of the Almighty that quickens us and ſuperadds ability to do good, that frames, faſhions, and fits us for every good word, and work; *This is the life of man*; when a man is fitted for duty, and ſervice, when he is furniſhed for imployment, to ſtand God, and his Brethren in ſome ſtead while he is in this World, then he lives. The motions, impulſes and influences, the teachings and guidings of the Spirit of God, are the life of our lives. We can do nothing of our ſelves, till the Almighty beſtows a new life upon us, and as we can do nothing at all in ſpirituals, till he gives us a new life, ſo we can do nothing to purpoſe till the Spirit acts and ſtirs up that life in us. It is the Spirit who firſt beſtows; ſecondly, increaſeth; thirdly, excites our ſpiritual life, and puts the new Creature into motion. All our good thoughts and holy actings, all our uprightneſs and ſincerity, all our ſtrength and ability flow from the Spirit; until the holy Spirit works in us, we ſit ſtill; and when the Spirit worketh, we muſt not ſit ſtill; *I* (ſaith the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 15. 18.) *will not dare to ſpeak of any of thoſe things, which Chriſt hath not wrought by me, to make the* Gentiles *obedient by word, and deed*; As if he had ſaid, *My own works are not worth the naming, I will not ſo much as mention any thing that Chriſt hath not wrought in me by the Spirit*; That was a mighty work which he was enabled to do, to make the Gentiles obedient in word, and deed. Chriſt did not leave him to do it in his own power. The breath of the Almighty enabled him; and ſo he doth all thoſe that are able and willing, ready for and ſucceſsful in any ſuch holy work.

Let us therefore aſcribe all to his working and quickening; let us ſet down our ſeveral Items of receit in our account-books, confeſſing that we have nothing of our own. This gift, that grace, that ability to do, to ſpeak, to ſuffer, to act, we have received from him. Let the whole Inventory of our Souls riches, have God's name written upon it, and aſcribed to his praiſe alone. And if we thus uncloth our ſelves, by giving God the glory of all, we ſhall loſe nothing by it, for God will apparel and furniſh us, deck and adorn us better every day. The poorer we are in our ſelves, the richer will he make us. To be thus diminiſh't is the beſt way to our increaſe. 'Tis the breath of the Almighty that teacheth us, and if we can but humbly enough, that is, heartily acknowledge it, we ſhall be taught and learn enough.

So much of theſe words as they are a direct aſſertion. I ſhall conſider them a little in their connection, and reference both to what went before, and to that which follows after; which was the ſecond conſideration of this verſe at firſt propoſed,

Firſt, This verſe may be connected with the three former verſes, and then the ſence appeareth thus; As if *Elihu* had ſaid, *O* Job, *I have moved thee to hear me patiently, and attentively, and let it not ſeem grievous to thee to do ſo; for, though I am thy inferiour in age, and degree, yet I am a man as well as thou, and I have a Soul and Body like thine, yea the Spirit of God that made me, hath alſo furniſhed me; I have received ability from God as thou haſt, I ſtand upon even ground, or equal terms with thee, as to Creation, and I am not altogether void of inſtruction; and therefore as a man I have a poſſibility to underſtand reaſon; and as a man indowed by the Spirit of God, I have a capability to direct thee about the ways of God, or how to underſtand and comport with his providences towards thee. Thou haſt been long under the hand of God, and long in the hands of men, who have rather intangled and troubled thy mind then eaſed it; who knows but that I, who all this while have been but a looker on, may ſee ſomewhat in thy caſe, which hath hitherto been hid from thy former undertakers? Therefore pray favour me* (*it may prove in the iſſue a favour to thy ſelf*) *with an hour or two of patient attention.* Take this note from it;

> *The conſideration of our common original, that we have all one maker, or are all come out of the hand of God, ſhould make us willing to hear, and learn of one another.*

Thus *Elihu* argueth; *Hear me*; why? *Becauſe the Spirit of God hath made me, as well as thee*; do not deſpiſe what I have to ſay, as if you were a man of another mould, or pedigree, the ſame God, out of the ſame matter, by the ſame Word, and Spirit, hath form'd us both. Some pictures are more highly prized then others of the ſame perſon, becauſe drawn by a better hand, by an *Apelles*, or a *Michael Angelo*. The fame of the Artiſt or workman puts a value upon the work; and the title of the Author doth ſometimes commend a piece more then, in truth, either the form or matter. But come among the Sons of men, all their faces and features are drawn by one hand; the ſame moſt exact hand of God hath wrought and faſhioned them all; both as to their outſide, and inſide, both as to the former of theſe Houſes of Clay, and as to all the ornaments and beautifyings of them. As we all walk upon the ſame Earth, drink out of the ſame Water, breath in the ſame Air; as we are all covered with the ſame Canopy of Heaven, and lighted with the ſame Sun, ſo we are all made with the ſame hand; the Spirit of God hath made one as well as another; this man hath not had a better pencil nor a more ſkilful Limner then that. Thus we may argue from the common condition of man in Nature, to a mutual condeſcenſion among men. Indeed Chriſtians, who have higher principles, have alſo higher topicks and arguments then that, why they ſhould condeſcend one to another; and (as the Apoſtle directs, *Eph*, 4. 4, 5, 6.) *Keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.* Saints ſhould *be lowly and meek with long-ſuffering, forbearing one another in love*, (as the Apoſtle there exhorts) not only becauſe one hand hath made all their Bodies, but becauſe they are one Body; though they are many natural Bodies, yet one myſtical Body; *There is no Body, and one Spirit*; as one Spirit hath made them, ſo they are made one Spirit; *There is alſo* (as it followeth) *one Hope, one Lord, one Faith, one Baptiſm, one God, and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.* How ſhould all Saints be one, who are comprehended and united under this ſeven-fold oneneſs? That we have all one maker in Nature, is a very moving argument to meekneſs, love, and unity, but that all believers are made one by Grace, is a much more moving argument.

Again, we may conſider theſe words in connection with the three following verſes, and then, as in connection with the former, they are a prevention of *Job*'s pride, ſo in this, they are a prevention of his fear, or an incouragement of him to a chearful hearing of what *Elihu* had to ſay. *Job* had been dealt ſeverely with by his three friends, and the terror of God was upon him, he was under much deſpondency of Spirit. Now (ſaith *Elihu*) *Anſwer me if thou canſt, ſtand up, ſet thy words in order before me, for the Spirit of God hath made me, and given me life; I am a Creature, and I am but a Creature, I am no more then thou art, I am made of God, and thou art made of God as well as I, I was made out of the duſt, as thou art; I am not God to terrifie thee, but I am ſent of God, to counſel and comfort thee, my hand ſhall not be heavy upon thee, I promiſe to deal tenderly with thee, I am ſuch a one as thy ſelf, as I am not worſe, ſo I am not better, we ſtand alike together in this diſpute; therefore thou mayeſt freely come forth, and anſwer me, who am but a poor Creature, as thy ſelf is.* Thus *Elihu* beſpeaks *Job* in the ſixth and ſeventh verſes; *If thou canſt anſwer me, ſet thy words in order before me, ſtand up, Behold, I am according to thy wiſh. Speak freely, and clear thy ſelf, if thou art able, thou haſt free leave for me.*

Verſe 5. **If thou canſt anſwer me, ſet thy words in order before me, ſtand up.**

This verſe may have a four-fold reſpect.

Firſt, To the inſufficiency, or incompetency of *Job*'s parts and intellectuals to deal with *Elihu* in this matter; as if they were a daring challenge, anſwer me if thou canſt, do thy worſt. And hence ſome of the Ancients charge *Elihu*, as if he came upon *Job* boaſtingly, and ſpake thus in the pride of his own Spirit, and in the diſdain of *Job*, at once to ſhew and ſlight his weakneſs, *If thou canſt anſwer me.* As if (like ſome irrefragable Doctor) he had ſaid; *I ſhall ſpeak ſuch reaſon, as I know thou canſt not anſwer: do what thou canſt, ſet all thy wits awork, and beat thy brains as much as thou wilt, thou wilt but loſe thy labour, and weary thy ſelf in vain.* Thus the meaning of, *Anſwer me if thou canſt*, is, *Thou canſt not anſwer.* But I ſuppoſe *Elihu*, (though hot ſpirited enough) was yet of a better Spirit and temper then to ſpeak either thus proudly of himſelf, or deſpiſingly of ſo worthy a man as he had before him; nor did *Elihu* look upon *Job* as ſuch a puny to him, or ſo much his underling as that he durſt not hold up the Bucklers in diſpute againſt him. *Elihu* knew *Job* was an old experienced Souldier, well verſ'd in the ways and things of God. And therefore

Secondly, (**If thou canſt**) may rather refer to the weakneſs and ſoreneſs of *Job*'s body, to the wounds or troubles which he had received and felt from the Almighty in his Spirit, then to any inability of his mind for argument. As if *Elihu* had ſaid; *I conſider how it is with thee, thou art a man diſeaſed and diſtempered in thy Body, fitter to lie upon or keep thy bed, then to ſtand up to a diſpute, fitter for a Hoſpital then for the Schools. Thou alſo haſt a troubled and an afflicted Spirit, I doubt thou art not in caſe to anſwer me, or to ſtand up longer in a way of diſpute; but thus I ſay, if thou canſt anſwer me, pray do: Set thy words in order before me. I will not lay this burden upon thee, unleſs thou art willing to take it, unleſs thou findeſt thou haſt ſtrength and ſpirit to bear and carry it through. Anſwer me if thou canſt, otherwiſe I will ſpeak my thoughts out, and make what uſe of it thou pleaſeſt.*

Thirdly, I conceive *Elihu* might here intend to let *Job* underſtand, that he was reſolved to put him to the utmoſt, that he was reſolved to bring the ſtrongeſt arguments, and uſe the quickeſt way of reaſoning for his conviction that he could; and that therefore he alſo adviſeth *Job* to do the like, to do his beſt, to buckle himſelf to the buſineſs with all his might, for he was not come to dally with him: He would have him ſet his ſhoulders to the work, and gather all the forces of his Soul to the battail, he bids him bring forth even his Horſemen for his defence (as I may ſpeak in alluſion to that in the 12. of *Jeremy*; *If thou haſt run with footmen, and they have wearied thee, how ſhalt thou contend with horſes?*) *Elihu* was purpoſed and reſolved to bring out his greateſt ſtrength, his horſemen to the battail, and therefore wiſheth *Job* do ſo too. Thus he gives him fair warning, *If thou canſt, anſwer me*; do thy utmoſt, I am ready for thee.

Fourthly, While *Elihu* ſaith, *If thou canſt, anſwer me, ſet thy words in order before me, ſtand up.* We may take his words as a gentle and ſweet invitation to the work; as if he had ſaid, *If thou haſt ſpirits enough left to hold diſcourſe with me, or to reply upon me, come friend, ſpare me not, ſet thy words in order before me, I will not be a terror to thee.* Or there may be this condeſcending ſence in theſe words of *Elihu*; *Do not think (O Job) becauſe I begin to ſpeak, that therefore I mean to ſpeak all, or to have all the diſcourſe my ſelf; aſſure thy ſelf, I have no purpoſe to hinder thee in any defence which thou art able to make for thy ſelf: No, though I am come with my beſt preparations to urge thee, and reply upon thee, as to all that hath paſt between thee and thy friends, yet I am as willing that thou ſhouldeſt anſwer, as I am ready prepared, and preſt to ſpeak; thou haſt free leave to make thy Apology, to ſay what thou canſt for thy ſelf, I intend not to impoſe upon thee, nor by any authority to compel thee to ſtand to my ſentence, as if I were thy Maſter, or would Lord it over thee; Do and ſpeak thy beſt for thy own vindication, I am ready to receive it from thee, and give thee a fair account of my thoughts about it. If thou canſt, anſwer me,*

Set thy words in order before me.

ערך

'Tis a metaphorical ſpeech, often and moſt properly uſed for the marſhalling of an Army; and ſo is elegantly apply'ed here in this matter of controverſie, or polemical diſcourſe. *Set thy words*, thy reaſons, thy arguments, as it were in battail aray againſt me; we had the word in the former Chapter at verſe 14. It is applyed alſo to the exactneſs of the heart in prayer, not an affected exactneſs or curioſity about words, or to word it with God, but it notes exactneſs or ſpiritualneſs rather in meditating and diſpoſing the ſtrongeſt Scripture reaſonings, to prevail with God in prayer. Prayer is, as it were, a battail fought in Heaven, not in wrath or revenge, but with faith and holy ſubmiſſion. Thus did *Jacob* when he wraſtled with the Angel, (*Gen.* 32.) And thus *David* ſpeaks (*Pſal.* 5. 3.) *In the morning I will direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up*, or, *I will marſhall my prayer*, I will bring up petition after petition, pleading after pleading, even till I am become like *Jacob* a Prince with God, till I have won the field, and got the day. Thus the word is applyed by a metaphor both to diſputations with men, and ſupplications to God. Further, we may take the meaning plainly without any ſtrain of the rhetorique, *Set thy words in order before me.* Method is good in every thing, either an expreſs or a covert method. Sometimes 'tis the beſt of art to cover it; in ſpeaking there is a ſpecial uſe of method; for, though, as one ſaid very well (ſpeaking of thoſe who are more curious about method, then ſerious about matter) *Method never converted any man*; yet method and the ordering of words, is very uſeful. Our ſpeeches ſhould not be heaps of words, but words bound up, not a throng of words, but words ſet in aray, or, as it were, in rank and file. The Prophet (*Joel* 2. 5.) deſcribes a terrible Judgment of God *by a ſtrong people ſet in battail aray.* In purſuance of which ſence, Mr. *Broughton* renders the next words, not (as we) *ſtand up*, but *ſtand to it*, as Commanders ſay to their Souldiers, *ſtand to it*; and the *Italian* tranſlation thus; *Set thy words in order before me, preſent thy ſelf to the Combate.* Thus he continues the metaphor; as if he had ſaid; *Chuſe thy ground, and maintain it like a valiant Champion; I do not deſire thou ſhouldſt yield me an inch of ground, yield to nothing but the truth, diſpute every patch with me, ſtand up, ſtand to it*; ſtand as if thou wert to fight a battail, not only for thy honour, but for thy life. The Apoſtle (1 *Cor* 16. 13.) ſpeaks in that language about our ſpiritual War; *Watch ye, ſtand faſt, quit your ſelves like men; man it*, be ſtrong. There is ſuch a ſence in *Elihu*'s exhortation here to *Job*; *Set thy words in order before me, ſtand up.*

Sta quaſi in acie, ad pugnandum contra me & convincendum me rationibus. Druſ.
'Ανδρίζεσθε *viriliter agite.*

Now, in that *Elihu* when he was thus bent to ſpeak, and was ſo full of matter to ſpeak, that as he tells us in the former Chapter, *He was like bottles of wine, and that he could not hold*, yet gave *Job* fair law, and bids him anſwer, if he could.

Note Firſt, *In all matters of difference we ſhould be as willing to hear what others can anſwer, as we are deſirous that others ſhould hear what we can object.*

If thou canſt, anſwer me. It is good to ſpeak in a right cauſe, eſpecially to ſpeak rightly, and it is very good to learn what can be anſwered.

Note Secondly, *Elihu* looking upon *Job* as a man in a weak condition, ſpeaks incouragingly, *ſtand up*; as much as to ſay, *Take heart.*

It is our duty to refreſh thoſe that are troubled, or to comfort thoſe that are weak, whether in body or in mind.

We ſhould do our beſt to put ſtrength and infuſe ſpirits into ſinking hearts and fainting ſpirits. Thus *God dwells* (Iſa. 57. 51. and ſo ſhould we) *with him that is of a contrite and humble ſpirit, to revive the ſpirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.*

Thirdly, As theſe words, *If thou canſt, anſwer me*, import that as *Elihu* intended to put *Job* to the utmoſt, ſo he would have *Job* beſtir himſelf to the utmoſt.

Hence Note, *Every man ſhould do his beſt for the clearing or maintaining a good and righteous cauſe.*

'Tis ſinful to be ſlight in matters of moment. *Whatſoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all my might* (ſaith *Solomon*, Eccleſ. 9. 10.) we ſhould eſpecially do theſe two things with all our might; firſt, maintain the truth of God; ſecondly, our own integrity. The former of theſe was chiefly upon the hand of *Elihu* in this undertaking, the latter upon the hand of *Job*. To betray the truth of God, is the worſt kind both of cowardiſe and treachery; and to betray our own integrity is next to that. There is nothing more unworthy a man, much more a Chriſtian, then to leave either truth, or our own integrity to ſink or ſwim, to ſhift for themſelves. Thus *Elihu* provokes *Job* to the combate, and ſends him a friendly challenge, which leſt he ſhould refuſe or not accept, he gives him a comfortable account (as a cordial) what manner of man he ſhould find him to be, even a man moulded and modell'd to his own heart, or minted to his mind, as will appear in the next verſe.

Verſe 6. **Behold, I am according to thy wiſh in Gods ſtead.**

Here we have a very winning argument (as was ſhewed in opening the whole Context) to incourage *Job* both to hear and anſwer. If ever a man will ſpeak when he comes to a buſineſs, it is when things and perſons are according to his wiſh. *Job* had oftentimes wiſht that he might be mildly heard by God, and not ſo harſhly dealt with by man; his friends having been ſo over-ſevere and rigorous toward him, that he was even compelled in the bitterneſs of his Soul, to cry out, *He that is afflicted, ſhould have pitty from his friends.* Yea, when *Job* wiſht to be heard by God, he, with much earneſtneſs deprecated his ſeverity, (*Chap.* 9. 34. and *Chap.* 13. 24.) *Let not thy dread make me afraid.* Thus, *Job* had wiſht for a mild and gentle treatment from all hands. In anſwer to which deſire *Elihu* preſents himſelf to him.

Behold, I am according to thy wiſh in Gods ſtead.

Thoſe words (**according to thy wiſh**) may have a twofold interpretation, firſt, as we render, *according to thy wiſh*, is, according to what thou haſt heretofore ſpoken or drawn out in wiſhes; thou haſt thy vote, thy wiſh, and what wouldſt thou have more? As if he had ſaid; O Job, *I have heard the wiſhing ſuch wiſhes, that thou mighteſt be more tenderly handled; that God not oppreſs thee with his Majeſty, nor thy friends with their ſeverity. Now thou haſt thy deſire, and I do here promiſe my ſelf ſuch a one to thee as thou haſt deſired; for as I will be a faithful advocate for God, ſo, I, who am in Gods ſtead, will not (as thou haſt prayed God would not at the hearing of thy caſe) be terrible nor dreadful to thee; I doubt not but to carry the matter with thee to thy hearts content. I am according to thy wiſh.*

Hence Note, *We ſhould labour as much as in us lieth to anſwer the deſires and wiſhes of others in all things lawful, eſpecially when they are weak and labouring under ſore burthens of affliction and infirmity.*

It is not good to be croſs-grain'd at any time to our brethren, much leſs at ſuch a time; ſome love (as it were) to lie thwart in every buſineſs, nor is any thing more deſireable to them, then to oppoſe another mans deſire. The ſweetneſs and ingenuity of theſe words, *I am according to your wiſh*, in what I ſafely may, is ſeldom heard among brethren. Some indeed are too forward to be according to the wiſh of others in things that are ſinful. When Thieves and Murderers ſay to them, *Come, come with us, let us lay wait for blood, let us lurk privily for the innocent without cauſe*, &c. *Caſt in your lot among us, let us all have one purſe*, They ſay, we are according to your wiſh, we will go with you. When the prophane ſay, come run with us into all exceſs of riot, to drunkenneſs and uncleaneſs, they anſwer, we are according to your wiſh, we are for you. It is good to lie croſs to the ſinful deſires of men; but to comply with their honeſt deſires, and to anſwer every good wiſh of their Souls, is a great part of our goodneſs, and of our fulfilling the Law of love: We ſhould ſtrive in that ſence, to fall in with every ones wiſh, and to become all things to all men, both for their edification and conſolation. *Behold, I am according to thy wiſh.*

Secondly, Theſe words are rendred ſtrictly out of the Original thus, *I am according to thy mouth, or meaſure*; I am in the ſame condition and ſtate as thou art. Thus alſo they are words of incouragement to *Job*, aſſuring him that he ſhould not be overpower'd, nor born down by force. This form of ſpeaking is uſed frequently in Scripture, to note the ſutableneſs or proportion of things. The *Iſraelites* (Exod. 16. 21.) gathered Manna every morning, *Every man according to his eating.* The Hebrew is, *Every one did gather to the mouth of his eating*, that is, according to the meaſure of his eating, ſuch was the meaſure of his gathering. The *Nazarite* was to offer *according to the vow which he vowed* (Numb. 6. 21.) The Hebrew is, *according to the mouth of his vow.* Again 'tis ſaid (*Numb.* 7. 5.) *Moſes* was to give the offerings of the Princes of *Iſrael* to the *Levites, to every man according to his ſervice*, or, *according to the mouth* (that is, the condition and degree) of his ſervice. Once more, *Solomon* (Prov. 12. 6.) preſſing the good and genuine education of Children, expreſſeth it thus; *Train up a Child in the way that he ſhould go*; the Original *upon the mouth of his way*; that is, in ſuch a way as is not only good and honeſt in it ſelf, but moſt proper and congenial to the Spirit, diſpoſition, and capacity of the Child. As Children are to be fed with ſuch meats, ſo to be taught in ſuch a manner as they can moſt eaſily and profitably digeſt. After this manner, or to this ſence, *Elihu* ſpeaks to *Job, Stand up, I am according to thy mouth or meaſure*; as if he had ſaid; *God indeed is infinitely above thy meaſure, but I, who am come to deal with thee in Gods ſtead, am according to thy mouth or meaſure, therefore take courage; one man is like another, the meaſure of one man is the meaſure of another.* There are I grant ſeveral differences among men, both as to civils and ſpirituals; there are ſeveral gradual and perſonal differences, but no ſpecifical difference among men; every man is according to the mouth or meaſure of any other man: In that God only tranſcends the meaſure of all men; *My thoughts are not as your thoughts, nor my ways as your ways; but look as the Heavens are high above the Earth, ſo my thoughts are above your thoughts, and my ways above your ways*, ſaith the Lord (*Iſa.* 55. 8, 9.) But the ways of one man are like the ways of other men, and the thoughts of one man are like the thoughts of other men; there is no ſuch tranſcendency among men; they are all (as men) of one meaſure, that is, not only finite, but they are all ſhort and narrow, even they who carry the greateſt length and breadth among the ſons of men. If we conſider man with man, as to his ſinful condition, ſo one man is perfectly like another; one man is of the ſame meaſure with another; as *Solomon* expreſſeth it (*Prov.* 27. 19.) *As in water face anſwers face, ſo the heart of man to man.* If man look down into the water, that face which he ſeeth in the water is like that face which ſeeth the water. Thus the hearts of the Children of men anſwer one another, heart anſwers heart, as face anſwers face: And as man anſwers man fully, as to natural ſinfulneſs, ſo moſtly as to natural abilities, as for thoſe which are acquired, though the difference may be ſo great that one man may be clearly diſcerned to excel another, yet that man who excels moſt, doth not exceed man; and therefore may be compaſſed by man. It is ſaid (*Rev.* 21.

כפיך *Secundum os tuum.* i. e. *ſicut tu.*

Juxta os edere ſui. Heb.

Juxta os voti ſui. Heb.

Juxta os ſervitii. Heb.

Super os viæ ſuæ. Heb.

(*Rev.* 21. 17.) That the wall of the new *Jeruſalem was meaſured according to the meaſure of a man, that is, of the Angel.* There is one meaſure of an Angel, and there is another meaſure of a man; Angels have a meaſure above men; why then doth he ſay according to the meaſure of a man, that is, of the Angel? I anſwer, he ſpeaks ſo becauſe the Angel appeared in the ſhape of a man, to do that work. Now as the meaſure (that is, the Ability) of an Angel is above mans; So God hath a meaſure infinitely above both men and Angels. But men are of a meaſure. *I am according to thy mouth or meaſure.*

Hence Note, Firſt, *Man and man are of a meaſure.*

Let us not make a God of any man, no nor an Angel. The Apoſtle *Jude* reproves thoſe who had the perſons of men in admiration. Men will be leſs to us then was expected, if we expect too much from them, or more from them, then is meet. For though one man may have a little more height and largeneſs of parts and gifts, in that which is either acquired or infuſed, then his neighbour, yet what man is there in the world, but hath his match, and ſhall find his meaſure in ſome other men? Yea, though ſome men exceedingly out-go others, yet their equals may be found among men, no man out-goes all men. The beſt of men have but the meaſure of a man.

Secondly, Take this Caution from it; *Let no man make a God of himſelf, or look upon himſelf as if he were in his meaſure beyond all other men.* We are very apt to do ſo. And if we have but little more then ſome others, we are ready to think we have more then all others, or to look upon our ſelves as if we tranſcended the meaſure of mankind, and ſo ſwell preſently with pride and ſelf-conceit; then which nothing is more uncomely or unmanly. Not a few eſteem themſelves ſo unparallel'd in the parts and beauty of their bodies, that they deſpiſe others, and many do it in reference to the endowments and abilities of their minds; they have ſuch a quickneſs of underſtanding, ſuch a ſtrength of memory, ſuch a fluency of ſpeech, ſuch a depth of reaſon, ſuch power of arguing, as they ſuppoſe none can match them or meaſure with them. All ſuch have forgotten that they are but men. Therefore as no man ſhould admire another ſo let him not think highly of himſelf, let him rather think that though poſſibly there are ſome below him, yet there may be many, yea a great many more above him, and enow that are upon the ſame level with him. *I am according to thy wiſh or meaſure,* ſaith *Elihu,*

לאל *Pro Deo; erga Deum.*

In Gods ſtead.] But how came *Elihu* to be in Gods ſtead? Had he a Commiſſion from God to undertake *Job*? Was he, as I may ſay, Gods Delegate or Ambaſſador? Did God ſend him out upon this errand? If not, why did he take ſo much to himſelf, as to ſay, *I am according to thy wiſh in Gods ſtead?*

I cannot ſay, that *Elihu* had any formal Commiſſion to come out, and appear in Gods ſtead, as an Atturny appears in ſtead of his Client, or as an Ambaſſador in the ſtead of his Prince; but doubtleſs *Elihu* had an equivalent or virtual Commiſſion, even a mighty impreſſion upon his ſpirit, by the Spirit of God to do ſo; his heart was drawn out ſecretly, but ſtrongly to ſtand up and undertake for God, towards the determination of this long continued diſpute. *I am* (ſaith he) *in Gods ſtead* or place; in that place which if God himſelf ſhould ſupply, he would be a dread and a terror to thee. But I a man of like paſſions as thy ſelf, and being here in Gods behalf, and by his authority, in his name and for his glory to ſpeak unto thee, I ſhall yet ſpeak according to the meaſure of a man, and therefore, thou needeſt not fear that my terror ſhould make thee afraid, *I am in Gods ſtead.*

Non quod ſe Dei loco illi aut Deum illi futurum aut eſſe dicat, ſed quod Dei partes & cauſam ſit contra illum defenſurus. Ut quia ille cum Deo ob ejus majeſtatem congredi verebatur, offerat ſe Jobo *Dei loco illi futurum.* Merc.

Ego juxta os tuum Deo. i. e. *pro Deo, eſt enim dativus favoris.* Bold.

Hence Note, *They who ſpeak to others about the things of God, ſhould ſpeak as God, or as put in Gods place and ſtead.*

'Tis enough to make all the Miniſters of Chriſt tremble and cry out in the Apoſtles words, *Who is ſufficient for theſe things?* To remember that when they ſpeak to men, they ſpeak in Gods ſtead. *We* (ſaith the ſame Apoſtle, 2 *Cor.* 5. 20.) *are Ambaſſadors for Chriſt, as though God did beſeech you by us, we pray you in Chriſts ſtead, be ye reconciled to God.* Thus ſpake he who had indeed an immediate call and commiſſion from God; and they who have not ſuch an immediate call and commiſſion as he had, yet ſpeaking of or about the things of God; and coming in the name of God, they ſhould ſpeak as placed in Gods ſtead. And if the Miniſters of Chriſt ought to ſpeak as in Gods ſtead, then ſurely they that hear, ſhould hear them a ſpeaking in Gods ſtead. The Apoſtle teſtifies of the *Galathians* (Gal. 4. 14.) *My temptation which was in my fleſh ye deſpiſed not, nor rejected, but received me as an Angel of God, even as Chriſt Jeſus.* Ye received me not only as an Angel or Meſſenger of Chriſt, but as if Chriſt had been there in perſon, ſo did ye receive me. He gives the ſame teſtimony of the *Theſſalonians* (1 Theſ. 2 13.) *For this cauſe alſo thank we God without ceaſing, becauſe when ye received the word of God, which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of man, but (as it is in truth) the word of God, which effectually worketh alſo in you that believe.* I do not ſay, that what every man ſpeaketh about the things of God, is preſently to be taken for the Word of God, or as if God ſpake it. But if that be his ſcope and purpoſe, if that be his Theme and his buſineſs, if that be the ſubject matter and ſubſtance of his ſpeech, Then he (as to the body of his ſpeech) is to be lookt upon as uttering the word and mind of God in Gods ſtead. 'Tis a very great means to advance our profit in hearing the Word, when they who ſpeak it are lookt upon as ſpeaking in Gods ſtead, and not bringing an errand of their own.

Before I paſs from this firſt clauſe of the verſe, I ſhall briefly touch two other readings and interpretations of it.

Firſt, Thus; *Behold, I am, as if thy mouth were to God*; that is, thou needeſt not as thou haſt wiſhed to go or adreſs to God himſelf for the laying open of thy cauſe, the matter may be done between me and thee, even as if thou hadſt ſpoken to God himſelf.

Ecce ego quaſi eſſet os tuum ad deum. Coc.

Secondly, Some render thoſe latter words not *in Gods ſtead* as we, But, *in reſpect of God.* As if he had ſaid, In reſpect of God, I ſtand in the ſame proportion, or upon the ſame terms with thy ſelf, for he is the God of us both, nor did God make me of any better or more excellent matter then thou art made of; which he fully expreſſeth in the cloſe of the verſe, as it followeth,

I alſo am formed out of the Clay.

Theſe words are another argument (as was ſhewed when I gave the proſpect of the whole Context) why *Job* ſhould hear *Elihu*; I am in Gods ſtead indeed, but I am a poor creature, moulded out of the duſt, made up of earth, as thou art; *I alſo am formed out of the Clay*; therefore ſtand up, anſwer me, and fear not; anſwer me and ſpare not. The higheſt and holyeſt that ever diſpenſed the mind of God, in Gods ſtead, to his Church and people here on earth, were made of earth, and were formed out of Clay. The Apoſtle makes that humble confeſſion of himſelf and fellow-Apoſtles (2 Cor. 4. 6.) *We have this treaſure in earthen Veſſels, that the excellency of the power might be of God.* The weakneſs of the inſtrument lifts up the glory of the ſuperior agent. They who by commiſſion are the Miniſters of God, and ſo in Gods ſtead, are yet but as other men in their natural ſtructure and conſtitution. (*Acts* 10. 26.) when *Cornelius* gave too much reſpect, a kind of Adoration to *Peter*, he forbad him, ſaying, *Stand up, I alſo am a man.* As if he had ſaid with *Elihu*, I am formed out of the Clay as well as thee. There is a reſpect due to the perſons of men, and much more to the Meſſengers of God, yet too much may ſoon be given; I will none of that, ſaith *Peter*; *I alſo am a man.* So *Paul* and *Barnabas* (Acts 14. 15.) when the people were ſo heightned in their ignorant reſpects, that they would have ſacrificed to them, as Gods, *They rent their cloaths* (as in caſe of blaſphemy) *and ran in among the people, crying out and ſaying, Sirs, why do ye theſe things? We alſo are men ſubject to like paſſions with you,* &c.

קרצתי *Exciſus.*

I am alſo [**formed**] Or as the Hebrew ſignifies, *Cut out of the Clay.* As the Potter cuts off a rude lump of Clay from the whole maſs of Clay before him, to make a Veſſel of it; ſo man is cut out of that maſs of mankind; for though the birth and original of man is now by another way, then the firſt mans was, yet we may all look upon our ſelves as having the ſame original; we are cut out of the Clay, and formed out of the duſt.

Hence Note, *For the matter all men have one original. I am formed out of the Clay.*

I have heretofore met with this point, and therefore paſs it here.

Secondly, From the ſcope of *Elihu*, Note, *The conſideration of our common condition ſhould fit us with compaſſion one to another; much more ſhould it keep us from inſulting over one another.*

Elihu uſed this expreſſion, to aſſure *Job* that he would deal very tenderly with him; What, doſt thou think, that I who am a piece of clay will inſult over thee, who art as good a piece of clay as I? Why ſhould one earthen veſſel daſh hard upon another? When we are tempted to pride in our ſelves, let us remember that we are clay, when we are provoked to anger againſt our brethren, or to any harſh and rigorous dealing with them, let us remember that we alſo are clay, that our pedigree and our ſtock is from the duſt as well as others. If our feet be but a little fouled, we think our ſelves ſomewhat humbled by it, if but a little dirt ſtick to our ſhoes, or hang about our clothes, we are ſomewhat aſhamed of our ſelves, yet the truth is, we are all duſt, all clay, all mire, we are nothing as to our bodies, but a little living duſt and breathing clay, why then ſhould we be lifted up in high thoughts of our ſelves? I might hence alſo give a third Note; 'tis a common Theme, but of important uſefulneſs.

Man is a very frail creature, he is clay.

But having had occaſion to ſpeak to this alſo heretofore, I ſhall not ſtay upon it. Only conſider, that as man is clay, ſo he is returning to clay, yea, turning into clay. We are but a little well compacted and compounded duſt, and we ſhall ere long crumble into duſt. We are every day going back, and ſhall ſhortly be gone back to what at firſt we were. Theſe conſiderations ſhould wither and nip the buddings of ſelf confidence, and bring down the height of mans ſpirit; *I alſo am formed out of the clay.*

We may take notice of one thing farther, *Elihu* ſpeaking here of his own natural formation, gives it in this ſtile; *I alſo am formed out of the clay.* This is a peculiar Scripture-expreſſion, or the proper phraſe of the holy Ghoſt, not of a heathen Author, Poet, or Orator. They at beſt had only ſome rude notions about this myſtery of mans original, his formation by the power of God out of the earth. Which may inform us, that the Saints and people of God in thoſe elder and darker times, were familiarly acquainted with the doctrine of the creation, and knew well how to ſpeak in a Scripture language, though they had not then the written Word or Scriptures; for 'tis a queſtion whether theſe tranſactions were before the giving of the Law or after; however, they were verſed in Scripture truths, and in thoſe forms of ſpeech by which God gave out his mind to their forefathers. Here's Scripture phraſe, *I alſo am formed out of the clay.* And therefore *Elihu*, as ſenſible of anothers frailty by the experience which he had of his own, ſubjoyns this aſſurance of his reſpect to *Job*'s weakneſs in what he ſhould further ſay.

Gentes enim hoc de primi hominis facta à Deo plaſnatione & ex terra formatione myſterium peritus ignorarunt. Bold.

Verſe 7. **Behold, my terror ſhall not make thee afraid, neither ſhall my hand be heavy upon thee.**

Elihu had given *Job* much ſecurity already that he would deal fairly with him; and here he gives him a promiſe for it: As if he had ſaid, *I give thee my hand, I plight thee my truth, that my terror ſhall not make thee afraid, nor ſhall my hand be heavy upon thee.* The Vulgar tranſlation reads, *My miracles* (or what I will do in a ſtrange and unuſual way) *ſhall not terrifie thee.* Indeed Miracles have a kind of terror in them; but we need not put ſuch a ſtrain upon the Text. The word which we tranſlate *terror*, ſignifies that which is moſt terrible and dreadful to man, even the Magiſtrates throne, the preſence of great Princes; of which Solomon ſaith (*Prov.* 20. 28.) *The King ſitting upon the throne, ſcattereth all evil with his eyes*; that is, with the terrible looks of Majeſty which God hath ſtampt upon him. The Prophet (*Jer.* 50. 38.) uſeth this word to expreſs Idols or falſe Gods by; and he calls them ſo either in a holy ſcorn; *O theſe dumb Idols which have eyes and ſee not, ears and hear not, feet and walk not*, are doubtleſs very ſhrewd and terrible things, are they not? Have we not great reaſon to fear what theſe doughty Gods will ſay or do, who can neither ſay nor do any thing? Thus he might call them in a way of ſcorn; or he calls thoſe Idols terrible things *Jebim*, from the event, becauſe fooliſh, vain, ignorant men, did exceedingly fear them, or were much terrified by them, and God left them to their own fears and terrors, as he ſpake by the Prophet (*Iſa.* 66. 4.) *I alſo will chuſe their deluſions, and bring their fears upon them.* As if he had ſaid, *Becauſe they being vainly deluded, have choſen to fear that which was not to be feared, therefore I alſo will make this my choice to bring that upon them which they feared, and hoped to avoid by following and worſhipping Idols, or by their idolatrous worſhip.* Now whereas *Job* was afraid of the terror of the true God, *Elihu*, who preſented himſelf in Gods ſtead, tells him, *My terror ſhall not make thee afraid.* And we may well conceive, that *Elihu* ſpake this ironically concerning himſelf; for having ſaid before, *I am but a piece of clay*, ſurely then *my terror cannot make thee afraid.* What terribleneſs is there in a piece of clay, in a clod of earth? What are the moſt terrible of the ſons of men, that they ſhould be a terror to us? We ought not to truſt in the mightieſt among men, why then ſhould we fear them? Or what need we fear them? *Who art thou* (ſaith the Prophet, *Iſa.* 51. 12, 13.) *that thou ſhouldeſt be afraid of a man that ſhall dye, and of the ſon of man that ſhall be made as graſs? and forgetteſt the Lord thy Maker.* We never fear men unduly, till we do one of or both theſe things, either firſt forget God who made us; or ſecondly, forget of what other men are made. I am but a piece of clay (ſaith *Elihu*) what matter of terror can I be to thee I wonder?

Virtutamen miraculum meum te non terrebit. Vulg.

Vox אימתי *terrorem denotat & ſepe illum, qui in facie regis, judicis, principis elucet.*

Terror minimè poteſt eſſe in maſſa luti, qualis eſt omnis homo.

In that *Elihu* giveth *Job* ſuch a promiſe, *Behold, my terror ſhall not make thee afraid*

Note, *Man ſhould ſhew himſelf fair and meek to men, eſpecially to a man in affliction.*

It is poſſible for a man, though he be but clay, as another man is, yet to cloath himſelf, as it were, with terror, yea, as as the neck of the Horſe is ſaid to be *cloathed* (Job 39. 19.) *with thunder.* He may put on a kind of dreadfulneſs as a garment, and appear very formidable to his brother. Some men indeed appear to men as a Wolf to a poor Sheep, or as a Bear and Lion to a Lamb. Though but clay, yet how ſcaringly do ſome men look and Lord it over their brethren! they will roar upon them like a Lion, and rend them like a Bear; clouds and darkneſs are in their faces, and ſtorm ſits upon their brows. There is a terribleneſs of man to man. Thus the holy Prophet (*Iſa.* 25. 2.) ſaith, *The blaſt of the terrible one is like a ſtorm againſt the wall.* Yea, ſome men are not only dreadful, like ſavage beaſts, but like devils, they even act or play the devil with their brethren. How far have they departed from their duty, and broken all the laws of love, which command us to be as God one to another in kindneſs, in mercy and compaſſion? I grant, Magiſtrates by their place and office are ſaid to be terrible, *yea a terror*, but it is *to evil doers* (Rom. 13. 3.) *Rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil*; that is, not to thoſe whoſe works are good, but to evil workers. And to them they ought to be a terror; *For they do not bear the ſword in vain*; that is, to hold it in their hands, or let it ruſt in the ſcabbard, and never ſtrike with it; *As they are Miniſters of God*, ſo Avengers towards men, to execute wrath upon him that doth evil. Again, Goſpel-miniſters in ſome caſes are to be terrible, they may be *Boanergeſſes*, ſons of thunder, to the obſtinate and rebellious, to the proud and preſumptuous ſinner; they muſt cut him out a portion to his condition, and *ſave him* (if it may be) *with fear.* But the general temper and carriage of the Miniſters of the Goſpel is meekneſs and gentleneſs, they ſhould be full of love and of compaſſion, *Inſtructing even thoſe that oppoſe themſelves, if God peradventure will give them repentance, to the acknowledging of the truth* (2 Tim. 2. 25, 26.) The Miniſters of Chriſt muſt not deal out terror, till there be a neceſſity of it: And alwayes they who do well, or are humbled for the evil which they have done, muſt be handled tenderly. *My terror ſhall not make thee afraid.*

Neither ſhall my hand be heavy upon thee.

Onus meum ſuper te non erit grave. Targ. *Quidam vocem* אכפי *ita ſumunt quaſi veniat ab* אכף *quod eſt incurvare. q. d. opus meũ quod tibi imponam non erit tale, ut ſub eo incurveris,* Bold. *Inflexit ſe ſuper eum os ſuum.* Mont.

My burthen ſhall not be heavy upon thee, ſaith the Chaldee Paraphraſe, and ſo ſome tranſlate out of the Hebrew, taking the derivation of the word from a root which ſignifieth to *bow down the back,* as we do when a burden is laid upon us. So the word is rendred (*Prov.* 16.26.) *He that laboureth labours for himſelf, for his mouth craveth it of him,* that's our reading; and we put in the Margent, *And his mouth boweth unto him.* The mouth of a labouring man boweth to him, as begging that he would get and give it ſomething to eat, and ſatisfie the craving of his hungry ſtomack. 'Tis ſad to ſee ſome poor men ſo given to idleneſs, that they had rather ſtarve then work, and when (according to the propriety of this Text in the *Proverbs*) *Their mouth* boweth to them, that they would take pains to get a little bread to eat, they had rather endure the burthen of hunger, then the burthen of labour: But I inſtance this place only for that word which ſignifies a *burthen,* or to burthen. Thoſe dreadful Propheſies which were publiſhed againſt any people in Scripture, are called *Burthens. The burthen of* Duma; *the burthen of* Damaſcus; *the burthen of* Babylon; that is, a Propheſie which had a burthen of calamity in it, able to break the backs of the ſtrongeſt Nations. So ſaith *Elihu* according to this tranſlation; *My burthen ſhall not be heavy upon thee.*

Eloquentia mea non erit tibi gravis. Vulg.

Others render it thus, *My eloquence ſhall not be heavy upon thee*; that's far from the Text; yet there is a truth in the thing. As if *Elihu* had ſaid, Though I am about to ſpeak, and have much to ſpeak, yet I would not ſpeak ſuch words, nor ſo many (I hope) as ſhall be burthenſom to thee. I would not burthen thee with eloquence; that is, either with affected eloquence, or the over-flowings of eloquence. Multiplicity of expreſſion is very burthenſom; nor is any thing in ſpeech more grievous to a wiſe man, then an unneceſſary heap of words. They who have a fluency of ſpeech, are uſually more pleaſed to hear themſelves ſpeak, then others are to hear them. *Elihu* (according to this reading) ſpake diſcreetly, and to the purpoſe, while he thus engageth to *Job*; *I will not burthen thee with my eloquence.* But I paſs that alſo.

כפי *pro* אכפי *vola mea. i. e. manus plaga, ut Aleph ſit addititium ſive Hermanticum.* Druſ.

We tranſlate fully and clearly to the Text, *My hand ſhall not be heavy upon thee.* The hand is taken two wayes; properly, and improperly; it is not to be taken properly here; we cannot ſuſpect *Elihu* of any ſuch rude behaviour, that he would lay a violent hand on *Job.* Improperly the hand ſignifies any act of a man towards man; ſo a mans words may be his hand: A mans hand may be heavy on him, whom he never touched or came near, yea, a mans hand may be heavy upon him whom he never ſaw. Our hand is heavy upon others, not only by outward violence upon the body, but by any preſſure upon the mind or inward man; our vexing or troubling another, whether by doing or ſaying that which afflicts him, is the laying of a heavy hand upon him. That's the meaning of *Elihu, My hand ſhall not be heavy upon thee*; that is, I will do nothing, nor will I ſay any thing, which (in it ſelf) ſhall be grievous and vexatious to thee. We find *David* complaining (*Pſal.* 32.4.) that *The hand of God was heavy upon him day and night*; that is, God appeared as diſpleaſed with him, he could not get evidence of his love in the pardon of his ſin; this preſſed his ſoul like an intolerable burthen. Great afflictions of any kind are a heavy hand upon us. *Elihu* who ſaw the heavy hand of God upon *Job* already, giveth him this comfortable promiſe, That he would not add grief to his ſorrow, *My hand ſhall not be heavy upon thee*; I know thou haſt thy load already. Theſe latter words are of the ſame general importance with the former: And we may Note further from them,

> *Meekneſs and gentle dealing becomes us while we would reduce others from their error, or reprove them for it.*

My hand ſhall not be heavy upon thee.] The Apoſtle called God to record concerning the *Corinthians* (2 *Cor.* 1.23, 24.) that it was to ſpare them that he had not come as then to *Corinth.* As if he had ſaid, I was loth to lay ſo heavy a hand upon you, or deal with ſuch ſeverity as your caſe required. And yet he adds, What ſeverity ſoever I or others ſhall uſe towards you, we ſhall uſe it, *Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but as helpers of your joy.* We ſhall not come with Lordly power upon you, we purpoſe not to carry it by meer authority and command, but of intreaty and love; we will not Lord it over your conſciences, but only regulate them, that your comforts may flow in more freely. Hard words are oftentimes more preſſing then the hardeſt blows. Words may weigh much more upon the ſpirit, then a heavy burthen upon the back. I grant a heavy hand muſt be laid upon ſome, there is no other way to deal with them. The word is a hammer and a fire. But as I intimated before, we muſt diſtinguiſh of perſons and of cauſes, and accordingly lay our hand. God hath not made his Miniſters Lions to ſcare his Flock, nor Bulls to gore them, but Shepherds to feed them and watch over them. And eſpecially when the hand of God is upon any, our hand ſhould not.

Lavater.

For concluſion, take here the laws of a juſt diſputation. *Elihu* in this Preface (I have yet gone no farther) gives *Job* free leave to anſwer, and ſet himſelf to the battel with him, and promiſeth to deal with him in the faireſt and in the meeteſt way he could wiſh or deſire. It is the obſervation of a modern Expoſiter upon this place, conſidering the equanimity and gentleneſs with which *Elihu* engaged himſelf to mannage this diſpute. *If ſuch a ſpirit* (ſaith he) *could be found as here* Elihu *profeſſeth in this controverſie with* Job, *how ſoon might all our controverſies be ended; but we ſee moſt men every where magiſterially impoſing one upon another, yea magiſtratically. If they cannot impoſe magiſterially, and make others believe what they ſay, becauſe they ſay it, then they will impoſe magiſtratically; the Magiſtrates ſword ſhall make way, if ſtrength of argument cannot. And* (ſaith he) *when they have diſputed a while and anſwer is made, they will not receive anſwer, but tell of priſons, of ſword and fire.* Thus he taxed the Popiſh Magiſtrates of thoſe times, who laid indeed a moſt heavy hand upon all who ſubmitted not to the Babyloniſh yoak. And it were well if there were not ſomething of ſuch a ſpirit, a bitter ſpirit, an impoſing ſpirit, a ſpirit of dominion over the faith of others remaining at this day; but that we could with ſweetneſs and gentleneſs treat about our differences, and ſay as this man did (though a man full of zeal for truth) to our diſſenters, we will not terrifie you with the Magiſtrates ſword, nor will we deal by ſubtleneſs; we will not perſwade you by bonds and priſons; *Our terror ſhall not make you afraid, nor our hand be heavy upon you; neither will we provoke other hands to be heavy on you*; we will carry all things fairly, amicably, Chriſtianly, waiting in the uſe of proper means, counſels, convictions, and prayers, till God ſhall make way into every mans ſpirit to receive the truth.

Hactenus exordium, ſequitur propoſitio.

Thus far *Elihu* hath (like a ſubtle Orator) prefac'd it with *Job,* to prepare him for an attentive hearing, for a candid conſtruction of, and a ready condeſcenſion to what he had ready to propoſe, and ſay.

VERS. 8, 9, 10, 11.

Surely thou haſt ſpoken in my hearing, and I have heard the voice of thy words, ſaying,

I am clean without tranſgreſſion, I am innocent, neither is there iniquity in me.

Behold, he findeth occaſions againſt me, he counteth me for his enemy.

He putteth my feet in the ſtocks, he marketh all my paths.

ELihu having ended his ſweet, ingenuous, and inſinuating Preface, falls roundly to his buſineſs, and begins a very ſharp charge. Bitter pills will hardly down, unleſs gilded over and wrapped in Sugar; nor will any mans ſtomach receive and digeſt them, unleſs well prepared. *Elihu* was wiſe enough to conſider this; he knew well what he had to ſay, and with whom to do, and therefore laid his buſineſs accordingly.

In this charge (to give a brief of the parts of it) *Elihu* tells *Job*; Firſt, He had heard him ſpeak (*ver.* 8.) Secondly, He tells him what he hath heard him ſpeak: And that may fall under theſe two heads; Firſt, That he had heard him juſtifying himſelf (*ver.* 9.) *I have heard thee,* *ſaying, I am clean without tranſgreſſion, I am innocent, neither is there iniquity in me.* Secondly, He had heard him unduly reflecting upon God, and that two wayes: Firſt, As over-ſeverely obſerving him, as it were, to gather up matter againſt him, in the beginning of the tenth verſe, and in the latter end of the eleventh, *Behold, he findeth occaſion againſt me, and marketh all my paths.* That's one reflection, and a very ſore one upon God. Secondly, *Elihu* chargeth him with reflecting upon God, as over-ſeverely dealing with him. That we have (*ver.* 10. and 11.) *He counteth me for his enemy, he putteth my feet in the ſtocks,* &c. Theſe things (ſaith *Elihu*). I have heard thee, ſaying; and having ſaid all this, he had indeed ſaid enough to make him blame-worthy.

Verſe 8. **Surely thou haſt ſpoken in my hearing, and I have heard the voice of thy words, ſaying.**

There is nothing difficult in this verſe. That which we render, *Thou haſt ſpoken in my hearing*, is in the Text; *Thou haſt ſpoken in mine ear*; that is, *I have not gathered up what I bring againſt thee upon uncertain reports, but have been an ear-witneſs of them. I have been one of thine hearers, I have ſtood by thee attentively, while thou haſt been complaining ſo bitterly. Surely thou haſt ſpoken in mine ear,*

And I have heard the voice of thy words, ſaying,

Thus and thus, as it followeth in the next words: As if *Elihu* had ſaid, O Job, *while I conſider thy preſent ſuffering condition, I deny not that thy affliction is great, and thy croſs heavy; I deny not that thy afflictions are many, and of long continuance; I deny not that in the debate held with thy friends, thou haſt ſpoken many things well, and haſt inſiſted upon very profitable and remarkable truths: nevertheleſs, I cannot diſſemble my diſlike of ſome things thou haſt ſpoken, and muſt tell thee plainly wherein, either through paſſion, or want of information, thou haſt been much miſtaken. And yet thou ſhalt ſee that I will not impoſe my ſenſe upon thy words, nor ſtrain nor torture them by undue and odious inferences to thy diſadvantage; but ſhall recollect and fairly repreſent ſome paſſages which have fallen from thee, and ſhew thee the error of them. I know thou canſt not deny that thou haſt ſaid the things which I am offended with; and I believe when thou haſt heard me a while, and conſidered better of them, thou wilt not undertake to defend them. Surely thou haſt ſpoken in my hearing, and I have heard the voice of thy words, ſaying, I am clean,* &c.

Firſt, In that *Elihu* coming to charge *Job* about what he had ſpoken, profeſſeth he had been a ſerious hearer of him, while he was ſpeaking;

> Obſerve, *What we object againſt others, we ſhould have good evidence and proof of it our ſelves.*

There are two infallible witneſſes, or they may be ſo: Firſt, Eye-witneſſes, ſuch as have ſeen that which they ſay; the witneſs of the eye is ſureſt as to what is done. Secondly, Ear-witneſſes, and they are the ſureſt as to what is ſpoken. We ſhould not take up accuſations by *hear-ſay, but be able to ſay, we have heard the accuſed ſay it.* Thus ſaid *Elihu*, I have not taken up this matter by the way, from thoſe I met with, but I have been upon the place my ſelf; I ſtood by thee and heard while theſe words dropped from thy mouth. Many report what they never heard, they report upon report; as thoſe Accuſers in the Prophet (*Jer.* 20. 10.) *Report* (*ſay they*) *and we will report it.* They cannot ſay as *Elihu*, You have ſpoken it in our hearing, and we have heard the voice of your words, but we hear you have ſpoken it; or you are famed for ſpeaking it. How many tranſgreſs the rules of charity, and break the bonds not only of civil friendſhip, but of Chriſtian love, upon reports of what others report. 'Tis dangerous to report more of others, then we have heard them ſay, till (at leaſt) we are ſure the reporters heard them ſay it.

Again, When *Elihu* ſaith, *Thou haſt ſpoken in my hearing, and I have heard the voice of thy words*; he would convince *Job* to the utmoſt.

> Hence Note, *To accuſe or condemn any man out of his own mouth, muſt needs ſtop his mouth.* Or, *To be condemned out of our own mouth, is an unanſwerable condemnation.*

When our own ſayings are brought againſt us, what have we to ſay? Chriſt told the evil and unprofitable ſervant, who would needs put in a plea for his idleneſs, and excuſe himſelf for hiding his Lords talent in a napkin (that is, for not uſing or improving his gift, *Luke* 19. 22.) *Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked ſervant*; I will go no further then thy own words. And we ſee, as that evil ſervant had done nothing before, ſo then he could ſay nothing, becauſe judged out of his own mouth. When the offenders tongue condemneth him, who can acquit him? (*Pſal.* 64. 8.) *So they ſhall make their own tongue to fall upon themſelves.* The tongues of ſome men have fallen upon them, and cruſht them like a mountain, and they have been preſſed down, yea, irrecoverably oppreſſed with the weight of their own words. The Apoſtle *Jude* tells us what the Lord will do when he comes to Judgment, in that great and ſolemn day of his ſecond Appearing (*ver.* 15.) *He ſhall convince all that are ungodly, of all their ungodly deeds, which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard ſpeeches, which ungodly ſinners have ſpoken againſt him.* He ſhall ſay to them, are not theſe your words? Can you deny them? Or have you any plea for them? Have you not ſpoken theſe things in my hearing? And have I not heard the voice of your words, ſpeaking thus and thus reproachfully of my Wayes, Ordinances, and Servants? This is like wounding a man with his own weapon; 'tis like the act of *David* in cutting off the head of *Goliah* with his own Sword. He that is condemned by his own ſaying, dyeth by his own ſword. *David* ſaith of Sycophants and Slanderers (*Pſal.* 55. 21.) *Their words were ſmoother then oyl, yet were they drawn ſwords.* Such draw theſe ſwords with an intent to wound other mens reputation or good name, but they ofteneſt wound their own: And as their words, who ſlander others, rebound upon themſelves, and turn to their own diſgrace, ſo alſo do theirs, for the moſt part, who are much in commending or poſſibly only (which was *Job*'s caſe) in vindicating themſelves. *Surely thou haſt ſpoken in my hearing,* &c.

But what had *Elihu* heard *Job* ſpeak? The next words are an anſwer, or declare the matter of his ſpeech; and in them, as was ſaid before, in opening the Context; *Elihu* firſt chargeth him with an over-Zeal in juſtifying himſelf, *I have heard the voice of thy words, ſaying*;

Verſe 9. **I am clean without tranſgreſſion, I am innocent, neither is there iniquity in me.**

This thou haſt ſaid, and this I charge upon thee as a great iniquity. For the clearing of theſe words, I ſhall do theſe four things, becauſe upon this charge the whole diſcourſe of *Elihu* throughout the Chapter depends.

Firſt, I ſhall give the ſenſe and explication of the words as here expreſſed by *Elihu*, and ſome brief Notes from them.

Secondly, I ſhall ſhew what matter of accuſation, or of fault there is in theſe words of *Job*, as brought by *Elihu* in charge againſt him, or how ſinful a thing it is for any man to ſay he is without ſin.

Thirdly, I ſhall enquire what ground *Job* had given *Elihu* to charge him with ſaying theſe things.

Fourthly, (Which followeth upon the third) I ſhall inquire whether *Elihu* dealt rightly and fairly with *Job*, in bringing this ſore and ſevere charge againſt him.

Firſt, To open the words, as they are an Aſſertion, Thou haſt ſaid, *I am clean without tranſgreſſion, I am innocent, neither is there iniquity in me.* Some diſtinguiſh the three terms uſed in the Text, as a denial of three ſeveral ſorts of ſin. Firſt, That, by *being clean without tranſgreſſion*, he intends his freedom from ſins againſt ſobriety, or that he had not ſinn'd againſt himſelf. Secondly, That, *by being innocent*, his meaning is, he had not done impiouſly againſt God. Thirdly, That, by *having no iniquity in him*, he clears himſelf of wrong done to man. Theſe three ſorts of ſin contain ſin in the whole latitude of it. All ſin is either againſt our ſelves, ſtrictly called intemperance, or againſt God, ſtrictly called impiety, or againſt man, ſtrictly called unrighteouſneſs. But though this hath a truth in it, as to the diſtinction of ſins, yet it may be over-nice to conclude *Elihu* had ſuch a diſtinct reſpect in theſe diſtinct expreſſions; and it may be queſtioned whether the words will bear it quite through. Therefore I paſs from it and leave it to the Readers Judgment.

Further as to the verſe in general, we may take notice, that the ſame thing is ſaid four times; twice affirmatively, *I am clean, I am innocent*; and twice negatively, *I am without tranſgreſſion, there is no iniquity in me.*

I am clean without tranſgreſſion.

The word which we render **clean**, implieth the cleaneſt of cleanneſs; 'tis rightly oppoſed to the word *tranſgreſſion*, which ſignifieth, a defection or turning off from God. Every ſin in the nature of it, is a defection from God; but ſome ſins are an intended or reſolved defection from him. Some even throw off the Soveraignty of God over them, and his power to command them, not being willing to ſubmit their backs to his burden, nor their necks to his yoak. Theſe are juſtly called *Sons of Belial*, they not only tranſgreſs the Law, but throw off the yoak of Chriſt from their necks, and his burden from their ſhoulders, and ſay (like them, *Luke* 19. 14.) *We will not have this man reign over us.* So then, when *Job* ſaid, *I am clean without tranſgreſſion*, he may be very well underſtood thus, *Though I have many failings, yet I am free from defection, though I have many weakneſſes, yet I am free from rebellion and obſtinacy. I ſtill retain an entire love to God, and am ready to ſubmit to his will, though I often find my heart, through corruption, riſing up againſt my duty; I am turned aſide through the ſtrength of temptations, but I turn not aſide through the bent of my affections.* This doubtleſs, or ſomewhat like this was *Job*'s ſenſe when ever he ſaid, *I am clean without tranſgreſſion.*

Hence Note, Firſt, *Tranſgreſſion is a pollution*, or, *Sin is a defilement.*

If once men ſtep over or beſides the line and rule of holineſs, the Law of God (which to do is tranſgreſſion) they become unholy. *Job* ſuppoſed himſelf unclean, if guilty of tranſgreſſion. Sin is an unclean thing, and it maketh man unclean. This the Church confeſſed (*Iſa.* 64. 6.) *We all are as an unclean thing*, or perſon: As if they had ſaid, Time was, when there was a choice people among us, who kept themſelves pure from common defilements; but now the contagion and corruption is ſo epidemical and univerſal, that the whole body of our people looks like a lump of filthineſs and uncleanneſs. We are overſpread with a loathſome Leproſie from head to foot, from top to toe. Holineſs keeps us fair, and righteouſneſs ſweet.

Secondly, Note, *A ſinleſs perſon is a clean perſon.*

When we arrive at perfect freedom from ſin, we ſhall be clean indeed, perfectly clean. And according to the degree or proportion of our freedom from ſin in this world, is our cleanneſs in this unclean world.

Secondly, Thou haſt ſaid, **I am innocent**; ſo we read: There are two ſignifications given by the Learned, which are of very uſeful conſideration for the clearing up of this Text. Firſt, The Hebrew word which we tranſlate *innocent*, is derived from a root, which ſignifieth to hide, to cover, or protect; and that two wayes: Firſt, To protect actively, or to defend others: Secondly, It notes protection paſſively, or to be protected by another. Some conceive that *Elihu* here intended it of *Job* in an active ſignification, whereas we ſay, *I am innocent*, they ſay, *I protect*, and ſo refer to him, as a Magiſtrate I have protected the oppreſſed, I have protected thoſe whom the ſons of violence have proſecuted. Indeed *Job* ſpeaks his practice much in that (*Chap.* 29. 12.) *I delivered the poor that cryed, and the fatherleſs, and him that had none to help him; the bleſſing of him that was ready to periſh came upon me, and I cauſed the widows heart to ſing for joy.* *Job* had been a *great Protector* of the poor; and by this word the Hebrews expreſs an Haven or Harbour for Ships; becauſe Harbours or Havens are places of protection to Ships: Firſt, They are places of protection to Ships from Winds and Storms, they are ſafe places from Rocks, Shelfs, and Sands; a Ship in harbour is under protection from the dangers of the Sea. Secondly, A Ship in harbour is under protection from Enemies and Pirats; while ſhe is abroad at Sea, if Enemies come ſhe muſt ſhift for her ſelf, ſhe muſt run or fight, but in the Harbour ſhe is under the protection of the State or Country where ſhe arriveth. Thus all Magiſtrates are or ſhould be; a juſt Magiſtrate is a good harbour for all that are in danger of the winds and ſtorms, of the rocks and rage of wicked men. Good Governours are an harbour, and Oppreſſors like ſtorms and rocks. That's one ſenſe of the word in the active ſignification. And taking it in this ſenſe, *Job* aſſerts highly for his own honour, while he ſaith, I have been a Protector of the oppreſſed, I have been a harbour, or a haven to the weather-beaten poor.

חנף · חף *Tegere & protegere, unde* חוף *portus, in quo naves ſunt tectæ & tutæ à vento.* Merc.

Secondly, Others take this protection paſſively, *I have been protected.* *Job* was once protected from all outward evil, from the invaſion of Devils and evil men. God made ſuch an hedge about him, that Satan could not touch him. But the ſenſe given of this protection here intended is ſpiritual, *I have been protected from the evil of the world, or from the evil world, I have been kept from that pollution and corruption, which* (as the Apoſtle *Peter* ſpeaks) *is in the world through luſt.* And that is a bleſſed, yea, the beſt part of a Saints protection, *He is kept through the power of God through faith unto ſalvation*; he is not given up to the defilements and apoſtacy of times or places, the Lord preſerves his ſpirit and his wayes pure and clean. Our tranſlation, *I am innocent*, compared with this, *I have been kept or protected from ſin*; the one is a very good expoſition and illuſtration of the other; *For innocency is our ſafety, and integrity our beſt keeper. Innocency is our fair haven, and ſafeſt harbour.* When the Winds are higheſt, and the Seas moſt rough and angry, there, if any where, we may ſhelter and anchor our ſelves from the ſtorm and tempeſt. Thus *David* prayed (*Pſal.* 25. 21.) *Let integrity and uprightneſs preſerve me*; that is, let me be preſerved in mine integrity and uprightneſs. And that he had been ſo preſerved, he tells us (*Pſal.* 41. 12.) *As for me thou upholdeſt me in mine integrity.* He that can ſay, *I am innocent*, ſhall have cauſe to ſay, *I am protected*; the innocent perſon is under covert; God protecteth the innocent, yea maketh innocency their protection. Man is never ſo well ſhelter'd, as by the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, and by his own innocency. 'Tis guilt which leaves our breaſt naked to every dart and thruſt.

Again to come a little nearer to our tranſlation (though this be very ſignificant) *I am innocent*; 'tis a Negative, I have done no hurt, or I have no guilt upon me. The Rabbins tell us, the word cometh from a root which ſignifieth to waſh; and ſo the Chaldee Paraphraſe renders, *I am waſhed:* Others thus, *I am bruſhed or comb'd:* Mr. *Broughton*, *I am neat*, like a man that hath put on his apparel decently; ſome are in a ſlovenly habit, or their clothes are foul; but *Job* could ſay as to his better part and ſpiritual cloathing, *I am innocent*, waſhed, bruſhed, comb'd. I have no filth in my skirts, nor foulneſs in my hands. I go not in the naſty habit of ſin, but in the lovely, comely, beautiful dreſs of Grace. Thus various is the ſenſe of the word which we tranſlate *innocent.* *Job*'s converſation was ſo well ordered, that it had not a plight nor an hair (common infirmities excepted) amiſs or out of order. Our tranſlation gives in his mind fully, yet it is not unprofitable to take in this plenty and copiouſneſs of elegant Metaphors riſing out of the original words, here rendred, *I am innocent.* But if we take the word ſtrictly, then to be innocent, is to do or to have done no hurt, to be harmleſs, and ſo guiltleſs of the hurt or harm of any.

חף *Ex Rabbinico verbo* חנף *exponunt quod ſignificat pectere & ſe mundare. Lotus ego.* Targ. *Terſus ego ſum.* Coc.

Hence Note, *Sin is an hurtful thing.*

It hurts, firſt our ſelves; ſecondly, it hurts others in whoſe ſight it is committed, either, firſt, by the ill example given them, or; ſecondly, by injury done to them; either, firſt, in their credit, or ſecondly, in their eſtates. Yea, thirdly, ſin hurts God himſelf; it hurts God in his honour. Innocency is properly that which doth no hurt; innocent perſons are harmleſs perſons; no man ever hurt himſelf, or others, much leſs the name and honour of God, while he holdeth his innocency.

Job's laſt aſſertion is, **Neither is there iniquity in me.** Iniquity is that pravity either of ſpirit or action which is contrary to all that righteouſneſs or rectitude which the rule of Gods Word requireth. It comprehends both the irregularity of our actions, and

עוב *Pravitas eſt rectitudini oppoſita.*

the irregularity of our thoughts or conceptions. 'Tis a departure from the way in which, and from the ſcope and mark, to which we ſhould direct our whole courſe. Iniquity is an unequal, an undue or crooked thing. It turneth others from their right, and is it ſelf a continal ſwerving from it. So much for the opening of theſe words, as they are a propoſition containing a charge brought againſt *Job*, *I have heard the voice of thy words, ſaying, I am clean from tranſgreſſion, I am innocent, neither is there iniquity in me.*

The ſecond point propoſed was, to conſider what matter of accuſation there is in theſe words. Matters of accuſation ariſe from our evil deeds; *That we are not clean from tranſgreſſion, that we are not innocent, that there is much iniquity in us*, Theſe are properly matter of accuſation. But here *Elihu* makes it matter of accuſation, that *Job* ſaid, he was clean from tranſgreſſion, that he was innocent, that there was no iniquity in him. And indeed, to be charged with the greateſt tranſgreſſion, is not more then this, to be charged with ſaying, we are clean from tranſgreſſion. To ſay we have no ſin, is very ſinful, to ſay we are without iniquity, is a ſaying full of iniquity, (1 *John* 1. 8.) *If we ſay we have no ſin* (Here is *Job* ſaying ſo, as *Elihu* chargeth him) *we deceive our ſelves, and the truth is not in us.* And (*ver.* 10.) *If any man ſay, he hath no ſin, he maketh God a lyar, and his word is not in him.* Now what greater ſin can there be, if we conſider the force of theſe two verſes, then for any man to ſay he hath no ſin? How extreamly ſinful this is, may be ſhewed in four things.

Firſt, It is extreme pride for any man to ſay; *I have no ſin*; What is pride? But an over-reckoning of our ſelves. When we value our ſelves, 'tis beſt to do it at an under rate, and to ſay leſs of our ſelves (if it may be) then we are, as *Paul* did, who called himſelf *leſs then the leaſt of all Saints*; Pride alwayes over-reckons and caſts us up more then we are worth. Some reckon their temporal and many more their ſpiritual eſtates at many thouſands (as I may ſay) when upon a true account they are worſe then nothing. So did the Church of *Laodicea* (Rev. 3. 17.) *Thou ſayeſt I am rich, and increaſed with goods, and have need of nothing, and knoweſt not that thou art wretched, and miſerable, and poor, and blind, and naked.* They who are ſoul-blind, cannot ſee either how bad they are, or what good they want; Nothing hinders the ſight of our wants ſo much as a conceit that we are full.

Secondly, It is the greateſt deceit, even ſelf-deceit, to ſay or ſuppoſe that we are (in this ſenſe) *clean without tranſgreſſion*; ſo ſaith that Text of the Apoſtle (*ver.* 8.) *He that ſaith he hath no ſin, deceiveth himſelf.* It is bad enough to deceive others, and woe to them that do ſo; but how bad is their condition who deceive themſelves! He is in an ill condition who is deceived by others; But if a man deceive himſelf, where ſhall he have his amends? Self-admirers, and ſelf-flatterers, are the greateſt ſelf-deceivers. And who or what ſhall be true to that man, who is falſe to himſelf?

Thirdly, It is a lye and the greateſt lye, (that's more then a bare deceit) for it is ſuch a lye as leaveth no truth at all in us. He that ſaith he hath no ſin in him, hath no truth in him; what hath he in him then, but a lye? Every ſin is a lye, and he that ſaith he hath no ſin in him, hath nothing of truth in him; what hath he then in him, or what is he, but a lye? (*ver.* 10.) *The Word of God is not in him*, which is the treaſury of all truth; and therefore he hath no truth in him, nor can have, till he hath repented of that lye.

Fourthly, (that ye may ſee there is exceeding much in this charge) *To ſay ſo, is blaſphemy, and the higheſt blaſphemy*; Why? Becauſe it makes God a lyar, he that ſaith he hath no ſin, doth not only deceive himſelf, but as much as in him lyeth, he makes God a lyar (*ver.* 10.) To deceive with a lye, is the worſt ſort of deceivings; and what lye is worſe then, or ſo bad as that which makes the God of truth a lyar, and turns the truth of God into a lye. Lay theſe four conſiderations together, and then it will appear how heavy a charge is contained in theſe words, when *Elihu* ſaith he had heard *Job* ſay, *he was clean without tranſgreſſion, he was innocent, and no iniquity in him.*

Therefore, Thirdly, Conſider a little further, what occaſion had *Job* given *Elihu* to ſay that he had ſaid, *I am clean from tranſgreſſion*, &c.

I anſwer, There are ſeveral paſſages upon which *Elihu* might pitch this charge; I will only name four Texts, out of which, poſſibly this might ariſe. Firſt, (*Chap.* 10. 7.) where *Job* ſpeaking to God himſelf ſaith; *Thou knoweſt that I am not wicked.* He appealed to the knowledge of God himſelf in the thing. The ſecond may be collected from (*Chap.* 16. 17.) *Not for any injuſtice in my hand, alſo my prayer is pure.* The, third from (*Chap.* 23. 10.) *But he knoweth the way that I take, when he hath tryed me I ſhall come forth as Gold*; *My foot hath held his ſteps, his way have I kept and not declined.* In the fourth place *Elihu* might take thoſe words (*Chap.* 27. 5.) *God forbid that I ſhould juſtifie you, till I die I will not remove my integrity from me. My righteouſneſs I hold faſt, and will not let it go, my heart ſhall not reproach me as long as I live.* All theſe are *Job*'s aſſertions concerning his own innocency, and theſe or ſuch like paſſages as theſe, *Elihu* ('tis likely) being an attentive hearer, had obſerved and picked up as the matter of firſt part of his charge, Job*'s ſelf-juſtification.*

Fourthly, and laſtly, let us conſider whether *Elihu* did rightly bring this charge againſt *Job* from theſe ſayings; Or whether he dealt ſo ingenuouſly with *Job* as he promiſed, while from theſe or the like paſſages he ſaith *Job* had ſaid, *I am clean without tranſgreſſion*, &c.

For anſwer, Firſt, take notice that *Elihu* was not the firſt that had charged *Job* thus; he had been thus charged by his three friends before. *Zophar* ſaid (*Chap.* 11. 4.) *Thou haſt ſaid my doctrine is pure, and I am clean in thine eyes*; that is, in the eyes of God. *Eliphaz* ſeems to ſay as much (*Chap.* 15. 14.) *What is man that he ſhould be clean? And he which is born of a Woman that he ſhould be righteous?* While *Eliphaz* put theſe Queſtions, he intimated that *Job* had made ſuch affirmations. *Bildad* likewiſe was upon the ſame ſtrain with him (*Chap.* 25. 4.) *How then can man be juſtified with God? Or how can he be clean that is born of a Woman?* We ſee then, this was not the firſt time by three, that *Job* had heard this charge, and had made anſwer for himſelf. And as theſe charges, ſo *Job's* anſwers have been opened heretofore upon thoſe former paſſages, and therefore I ſhall not ſtay much upon the point here, Yet becauſe *Elihu* reaſſumes this argument, yea makes it his ſtrongeſt argument againſt *Job*, I ſhall a little conſider whether he did rightly or no in this thing.

To clear which, we muſt remember, that *Job*'s innocency had received a three-fold Teſtimony in this Book.

Firſt, He received a Teſtimony from God himſelf, and that a very notable and glorious one (*Chap.* 1. 8.) *Haſt thou conſidered my Servant* Job, *that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man?*

Secondly, He received a further teſtimony from the penman of this Book, who having recorded the ſeveral afflictions of *Job*, and his behaviour under them, repeats it twice (*Chap.* 1. 21. and 2. 10.) *In all this* Job *ſinned not, nor charged God fooliſhly.* The teſtimony which God gave him, referred to his former actions or converſation before his affliction. The teſtimony which the Writer gave him, referred ſpecially to his latter words or ſpeeches under his affliction. Beſides theſe Teſtimonies which are not at all queſtioned nor can be; we find a third teſtimony, and that he gives of himſelf. Now though *Elihu* did highly reverence the teſtimony which God had given (if we may ſuppoſe he had notice of it) and would alſo the teſtimony of the pen-man of the Book, had it then been written; yet he queſtioned the teſtimony which *Job* gave of himſelf. Now, that there was ſome ſeverity in this charge upon that ſuſpition, may appear by conſidering it in a few particulars.

Firſt, It muſt be ſaid on *Job*'s part, or in favour of him, according to truth, that he never affirmed, he was not a ſinner. Nay we ſhall find him more then once, twice, or thrice, confeſſing the ſinfulneſs of his nature, and the ſins of his life. We find him alſo confeſſing that notwithſtanding all the righteouſneſs and integrity in him, yet he would own none of it before God; and that if he ſhould juſtifie himſelf, his own cloaths would abhor him. Therefore *Job* was far from ſaying he had no ſin in him, in a ſtrict ſenſe.

Secondly, Moſt of thoſe paſſages wherein he ſpeaks of himſelf as clean and righteous, may be underſtood of his imputative cleanneſs and righteouſneſs, as a perſon juſtified in the Redeemer, of whom he ſpake with ſuch a Goſpel ſpirit and full aſſurance of faith, that he might well aſſert this of himſelf, *I know that being juſtified, I am clean and without ſin.* It is no fault for a Believer to ſay, *I am clean without tranſgreſſion, through free Grace, in the Righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt.* Much of what *Job* ſpake in this matter is to be taken that way.

Thirdly, When *Job* affirms theſe things of himſelf, we may ſay this in favour of him, he means it of great tranſgreſſions. The words in the Text note defection and wilful ſwerving from the right way. His friends charged him with hypocriſie, with oppreſſion, with taking the pledge for nought, with ſtripping the naked of their cloathing. *Thine iniquity is great* (ſaid *Eliphaz*) *and thy ſin is infinite.* Now ſaith *Job, I am clean,* I have no ſuch tranſgreſſions. And he might well anſwer his friends charge of impiety againſt God, and iniquity towards men, with a flat denial, yea with an affirmation of the contrary; there is no ſuch iniquity in me, prove it if you can. He was unblameable in the ſight of man.

Fourthly, In favour of *Job* this may be ſaid; what he ſpake of himſelf and of his own righteouſneſs, was upon much provocation, or when his ſpirit was heated by his friends, who ſo conſtantly urged theſe crimes againſt him. In theſe heats he ſpake highly of himſelf, and though it doth not excuſe any mans ſin when he hath ſpoken ſinfully, to ſay I was provoked; yet it doth abate the greatneſs of the ſin. Good *Moſes* (who was the meekeſt man upon the earth) when through provocation he ſpake unadviſedly with his lips, felt the ſmart of it, and God reckoned ſorely with him for it: Yet to ſpeak amiſs upon provocation, is not ſo much amiſs, as to ſpeak ſo in cold blood, or unprovoked.

Fifthly, *Elihu* might have put a fairer interpretation and conſtruction upon theſe ſayings of *Job*; He might have taken them in the beſt ſenſe, as *Job* meant them, that he was righteous, clean and innocent in all his tranſactions with men, and had not wickedly at any time departed from God. And then there had not been ſuch matter of fault in what he ſaid, as was brought againſt him.

Yet, In vindication of *Elihu,* it muſt be granted, *Job* gave him occaſion to rebuke and blame what he had ſaid, and that chiefly upon theſe three accounts.

Firſt, Becauſe he ſpake many things of himſelf which had an appearance of boaſting, and ſo of vain ſpeaking. A little truly ſaid of our ſelves, or in our own commendation, may be thought too much, how much more, when we ſay much?

Secondly, He ſpake ſuch things as carry'd a ſhew of overboldneſs with God. He did not obſerve his diſtance, as he ought, when he ſo earneſtly preſſed for a hearing to plead his cauſe before God; eſpecially; when he ſo often complained of the ſeverity of Gods procedure with him, with which *Elihu* taxeth him directly in the two verſes following. Upon both theſe grounds *Elihu* thought (and was no doubt guided in it by the Spirit of God) to cut him to the quick, that *Job* might learn to ſpeak more humbly of himſelf, and more temperately to God. And therefore,

Thirdly, The Lord did righteouſly, yea and graciouſly let out the ſpirit of *Elihu* upon him in another way then his friends before had done. He did not charge him with wickedneſs in fact, but dealt with him about the unwarineſs of his words. *Job* could not ſay he had never ſpoken ſuch words, for ſuch words he did ſpeak, though he did not ſpeak them as *Elihu* took them. When words are out they muſt ſtand to the mercy of the hearers, and abide ſuch a judgment as may, with truth be made of them, though poſſibly, beſides the purpoſe of the ſpeaker. A man (in that caſe) is not wronged, he ſhould learn to ſpeak more warily, and not give occaſion of offence. Doubtleſs the Lord had a gracious intent upon *Job*, in ſtirring the ſpirit of *Elihu* to repreſent his words in the hardeſt ſenſe, that he might humble him. *Job's* ſpirit was yet too high and not broken enough, as it was afterwards. Nor doth *Job* reply or retort upon *Elihu* for this; And when the Lord himſelf began to deal with him, he ſaith, *Who is this that darkeneth counſel by words without knowledge* (Chap. 38. 2.) and *Job* himſelf being brought upon his knees confeſſeth (*Chap.* 42. 3.) *I have uttered that I underſtood not, things too wonderful for me, which I knew not:* I have been too bold I confeſs. Though it was not *Job's* purpoſe or meaning to ſpeak ſo (he had integrity in what he ſpake) yet his words did bear ſuch a conſtruction. And the Lord ſuffer'd *Elihu* to urge them upon him to the utmoſt.

Yet notwithſtanding all that hath been ſaid, I do conceive, that *Elihu* had not the leaſt imagination, that the meaning of *Job* in thoſe aſſertions concerning himſelf, was, that he had not ſinned at all, or that there was no ſin in him; but taking his words in the beſt and faireſt conſtruction they could bear, he yet ſaw cauſe to check and reprove him, for ſaying ſo much, in that condition, about his innocency; whereas he ſhould have been chiefly taken up in glorifying God, and humbling himſelf under his mighty hand. So much for the anſwer to the fourth query, what reaſon *Elihu* had to charge *Job* thus? It hath been ſhewed what may be ſaid in favour of *Job*; and alſo, that *Elihu* might without breach of charity charge him with theſe ſayings.

To ſhut up this verſe, take only two brief notes from the whole.

First, *The beſt of men have their failings, and are apt to over-report themſelves.*

Our moſt deliberate actions and ſpeeches have ſome tincture of the fleſh, how much more thoſe which paſs us in a paſſion? Though *Job* ſpake what was true, yet he ſpake more then was meet. And they that heard him might take juſt occaſion of offence, not knowing his ſpirit and the ſtrain of his heart in ſpeaking ſo. The Apoſtle *James* ſaith (*James* 3. 2.) *If any man offend not in word, the ſame is a perfect man, and able alſo to bridle the whole body.* He hath a mighty command over his ſpirit, that can command his tongue; eſpecially when he is provoked. It is a real part of perfection not to offend in word. This good man ſpake many things well, yet all was not well ſpoken.

Again, In that *Job* ſpake thus, under the preſſure of affliction;

Obſerve, *In times of affliction it is better to be much in bewailing of ſin, then in making reports wherein we have not ſinned.*

There will no hurt come of that; but while we are reporting our innocency, and good deeds, though what we ſpeak be true, yet 'tis ſubject to conſtruction, and layeth us open to reproof.

Laſtly, We may learn from the dealing of *Elihu* with *Job*, That in all diſputations and matters of controverſie with others, we ſhould take heed, that we faſten no uncharitable interpretation upon the words of our Adverſary, nor add any thing of our own to them, nor wreſt them beſides their grammatical and genuine conſtruction; yet even thoſe ſpeeches which are true in ſome reſpect, if they exceed the bounds of modeſty, may freely be reprehended. For we ought not only to do that which is good, and ſpeak that which is true for the matter, but we ought to do and ſpeak in a good or becoming manner. Thus far of the firſt fault which *Elihu* found and reproved in *Job*, his overconfidence in ſaying he was not faulty, or in juſtifying himſelf. In the two next verſes, he blames him with reflecting overboldly and unduely upon the dealings of God; the particulars whereof were expreſſed before in opening the whole Context, and come now to be further opened.

Quærit adverſum me & invenit confractiones, i. e. ut confringat & irrita faciat omnia mea ſtudia, inſtituta & conatus, ut nihil aſſequar eorum, quæ quæro & inſtituo. Merc.

Verſe 10. **Behold, he findeth occaſions againſt me, and counteth me for his enemy.**

Ecce confractiones adverſum me invenit. Bez.

These words contain the firſt part of the ſecond charge. For the clearing of which I ſhall firſt explicate the words and then by way of obſervation, ſhew what matter of charge or evil there is in them.

תנואות *Confractiones, contritiones & quaſi abolitiones. Sunt qui reddunt occaſiones, quaſi eſſet* תאנות *Literis tranſpoſitis, alii querelas.*

Behold, he findeth occaſions againſt me.

I have heretofore ſhewed the emphaſis of that word, *Behold*; And therefore, I paſs it here; *Behold,*

He (that is, God) **findeth occaſions againſt me,** Or, (ſtrictly from the Hebrew) *he findeth breaches.*

Ex radix נוא *Inde Hiphil* הניא *fregit, confregit, irritum fecit.* Merc. Μέμψιν δὲ κατ' ἐμοῦ εὗρεν. *Accuſatione autem adverſum me invenit.* Sept. *Qui querelas amat, quærit occaſiones unde illas excitat.* Bold. *Deus ſtudioſè quæſivit anſam me perſequendi.*

The Verb is tranſlated *Break* (Pſal. 141. 5.) It imports ſuch a breaking as is alſo a bringing to nought (*Pſal.* 33. 10.) 'Tis likewiſe applyed to the breaking of the heart by diſcouragements (*Numb.* 32. 7.) And it is ſignificantly enough tranſlated here, *He findeth breaches againſt me*; that is, ſomething or other to make a breach upon me, ſomething to complain of againſt me. The word is rendred in theſe three ſenſes; Firſt, *An occaſion*; Secondly, *A Breach*; Thirdly (as the Septuagint) *A complaint or accuſation.* We may joyn all three together; for a complaint or accuſation is commonly an occaſion of Breaches among men; he that loves Breaches will ſeek, and ſeldom miſſeth occaſions of complaint. We ſay of a man that is of a troubleſome ſpirit, and given to contention (which is alſo Mr. *Broughton*'s tranſlation) *Behold, he picketh a quarrel againſt me*; though I give him no juſt matter of offence, yet he either findeth or maketh one. Thus moſt of the Hebrew Writers carry it; he findeth occaſions to alter his former courſe with me, to caſt me off, to lay his hand upon me, even to ruine and break me to pieces.

Hence Obſerve, *To ſeek occaſions againſt another is hard and uncharitable dealing.*

Joſeph's Brethren were very ſuſpitious of this (*Gen.* 43. 18.) *The men were afraid becauſe they were brought to* Joſeph's *houſe. and they ſaid, becauſe of the Money that was found in our ſacks mouth the firſt time, are we brought in that he may ſeek occaſion againſt us*; As if they had ſaid, We well perceive he would gladly have ſome matter to accuſe us, and ſo to detain us upon that occaſion. Thus ſaid the King of *Iſrael* (2 Kings 5. 7.) when *Naaman* came to him with a meſſage from his Prince to deſire him that he would heal him of his Leproſie; the King of *Iſrael* began preſently to ſtartle, and thought it was nothing but a meer trick and a device to bring on ſome further deſign, what? Said he, *Am I God to kill and make alive, that this man is come to me? Wherefore conſider I pray you, and ſee how he ſeeketh a quarrel againſt me.* They may be judged to watch for a diſcourteſie who deſire courteſies of us beyond our power. This made the King of *Iſrael* jealous, that the King of *Syria* being confident of future ſucceſs, by his former ſucceſſes againſt *Iſrael*, was by this device only ſeeking an occaſion to renew the War. We have an eminent Scripture to this purpoſe (*Dan.* 6. 4, 5.) *Daniel* being advanced high at Court, it drew a great deal of envy upon him among the Princes and Preſidents; and therefore they reſolved to try their utmoſt to pull him down; and hereupon (ſaith the Text) *they ſought occaſions againſt* Daniel *concerning the kingdom*; that is, they enquired narrowly into his proceedings as to the management of that great power and truſt which the King had committed to him in civil things, but *they could find no occaſion, nor fault, foraſmuch as he was faithful.* They could not pick a hole in his coat (as we ſay) neither was there any error or fault found in him. When this would not do, then they would needs go another way to work (envy is reſtleſs) and becauſe they were diſappointed in their firſt attempt about civils, they proceeded to matters of religion; *Then ſaid thoſe men we ſhall not find occaſion againſt this* Daniel, *except we find it in regard of the Law of his God.* And we ſee in the following parts of the Chapter, what occaſion they found againſt him. This is hard dealing indeed, and it is quite contrary to the Law of Love in all the actings of it. The Apoſtle aſſures us (1 *Cor.* 13. 7.) *Love beareth all things*, Love hath ſtrong ſhoulders to bear wrongs and injuries, and *Love believeth all things*; not that a Believer is a vain credulous perſon, giving out his faith he knows not how, or to he knows not what; but he believeth all things to the utmoſt line of truth and reality, as alſo of appearance and probability; he that loves is very willing to believe that things are meant as they are ſpoken, and that they are intended as they are done. Thus he that loves much, *believes all things*, and further, *Charity hopeth all things*; it hopes the beſt, and puts the faireſt interpretation that may be upon thoſe things and doings which carry in them at leaſt ſome colour of ſuſpition; this is the Genius of Charity, the Character of Love. *It beareth all things, it believeth all things, it hopeth all things.* All which ſtand in direct oppoſition to the ſeeking of occaſions againſt our neighbour. And I ſhall briefly ſhew how much ſuch practices militate againſt and contradict the Royal Law of love, by ſeven ſteps.

Firſt, 'Tis againſt the Law of love, to be ready to take an occaſion when it is given; we ſhould be very ſlow and backward, in caſe of offence, to embrace or admit what is offered: Though indeed, it is with the heart of man, I mean with the fleſh in his heart in this point of the Law, as it is with the fleſh (that is, ſinful corruption) in the heart, as to the whole Law of God; of which the Apoſtle ſaith (*Rom.* 7. 8.) *Sin taking occaſion by the Commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiſcence.* And again (*Ver.* 11.) *Sin taking occaſion by the Commandment, deceived me, and by it ſlew me*: Sin took occaſion by the Law; the Law gave ſin no occaſion to work concupiſcence in *Paul.* The Law is far enough from being the cauſe of ſin, but it is (by accident not of it ſelf) the occaſion of ſin; yea, ſin preſently takes occaſion when it hath not indeed the ſhew of any juſt occaſion. The Law by its prohibition, by the ſtop and check which it puts upon the fleſh, by the diſcoveries which it makes of the contrariety of our corruptions to the holineſs of it, doth many times provoke and irritate, yea enrage and enflame them, but it affords not the leaſt countenance or encouragement to our corruptions. Now this (I ſay) is the wickedneſs of the heart of man, with reſpect to ſin in general, that it takes occaſion by the Commandment, to bend it ſelf againſt the commandment: And ſo as to any particular act againſt a Brother, to take an occaſion to do him a miſchief, is wickedneſs, and a work of the fleſh.

Secondly, It is ſinful to uſe our Chriſtian liberty, when it may be an occaſion of ſin, or the laying of a ſtumbling block before others, though we uſe it not with an intent or purpoſe to make them ſtumble or fall into ſin. The Apoſtle earneſtly cautions the *Romans* to take heed of this (*Rom.* 14. 13.) *Let us not therefore judge one another any more; but judge this rather, that no man put a ſtumbling block or an occaſion to fall in his Brothers way.* St. *Paul* is there ſpeaking about the obſervation of dayes commanded, and the uſe of meats forbidden by the ceremonial Law. Now though ſome had a liberty in their conſciences, to obſerve the one and uſe the other, yet he would not have them do either with offence to weaker Brethren: Our care ſhould be, either firſt to keep our Brother from falling, or to raiſe him up when fallen. Is it not then very ſinful not to forbear thoſe things (which are no abſolute duties) by which another may fall? And if it be ſo ſinful to do many things which in themſelves are not ſinful, when we know they may be an offence or occaſion of falling to others, though we intend it not; then how extreamly ſinful is it to do any thing with an intent to make them fall! This is properly the Devils trade, and woe to thoſe who take it out of his hand, or joyn partners with him in it.

Thirdly, When any ſhall deſire and even hunger after an occaſion of accuſing others, this is a very great height of wickedneſs. The Apoſtle ſpeaks of ſuch (2 *Cor.* 11. 9, 12.) where he tells us that he did forbear his own right, not receiving maintenance for preaching the Goſpel; *When* (ſaith he, *verſ.* 9.) *I was preſent with you and wanted, I was chargeable to no man.* But why? He anſwers (*ver.* 12.) *What I do I will do, that I may cut off occaſion from them which deſire occaſion.* Some did, it ſeems, deſire an occaſion to charge him with covetouſneſs and worldly mindedneſs, that he preached the Goſpel for filthy lucre; therefore, ſaith he, I will do this, that I may cut off occaſion from them that deſire occaſion to charge me with. The heart of man is full of evil deſires, and this is one of the worſt of them, to deſire another might be found doing that, which might miniſter an advantage to render him odious or blame-worthy.

Fourthly, Which is yet higher, ſome even purſue and hunt for occaſions to calumniate and ſlander their Brethren. The good Prophet *Jeremie* had ſtore of theſe ill neighbours (*Jer.* 20. 10.) *I have heard the defaming of many; fear is on every ſide; report, ſay they, and we will report it; all my familiars watched for my halting, ſaying, peradventure he will be inticed, and we ſhall prevail againſt him, and we ſhall take our revenge on him.* As if he had ſaid, *How glad would not only my open familiars, but cloſe Enemies be, of an occaſion againſt me? It would make them leap for joy to ſee me halt.* By his halting they meant his ſinning, his doing

doing that which was uncomely, or not ſuitable to his profeſſion; they watched, they lay at catch for his halting, not to hold him up, but to caſt him down. They ſaid, *report, and we will report it*; we will make ſomething or other of it, though in truth there be nothing. They had (which may be a fifth ſtep of this wickedneſs, a ſecret hope that he would halt and give them occaſion of inſulting. *Peradventure* (ſay they) *he will be enticed*, peradventure we ſhall catch him in this ſnare; this was their hope, and, if attained, their joy.

Which makes a ſixth ſtep of this wickedneſs; for ſo *David* deſcribes his enemies (*Pſal.* 38. 16, 17.) *They rejoyce when my foot ſlippeth; for I am ready to halt*, or (as we put in the Margin) *for halting*. There is a double halting, a halting by tranſgreſſion, and a halting by affliction; that I conceive *David* chiefly ſpake of in that place, becauſe he preſently adds in the cloſe of the ſeventeenth verſe, *And my ſorrow is continually before me*. He ſhews his Enemies poſſeſſed with the ſame evil ſpirit, and in the ſame poſture (*Pſal.* 35. 15.) *In mine adverſity, or in my halting, they rejoyced*. The ſame word is uſed in this Pſalm for adverſity which we had in the thirty eighth for *halting*. This is as true of evil men, as halting is taken in the other notion, for ſinning. The wicked are as, if not more, ready to rejoyce at falls, or halts, by ſinning, as at falls or halts by ſuffering. In both theſe caſes (as *David* found in this *Pſalm* 35. 15.) the very abjects will tear the beſt of men (as they did *David*) and not ceaſe. But what do they tear? Their fleſh if they can; but to be ſure (and ſo 'tis meant there) their good names and reputation by ſlanders and accuſations. O how contrary is this practice and that joy to the ſpirit of the Goſpel! The Apoſtle tells us, the Grace of Charity utterly abhors it (1 *Cor.* 13. 6.) *Charity rejoyceth not in iniquity*. It neither rejoyceth in doing iniquity it ſelf, nor to charge others with iniquity.

Seventhly, (which is the higheſt ſtep) Some rather then fail will form and frame occaſions againſt others; they will forge or fancy them in their own brain, and then accuſe their Brethren, as if they had been acting, what themſelves have been imagining. Such the Apoſtle *Peter* ſpeaks of (1 *Pet.* 3. 16.) where admoniſhing Saints to much ſtrictneſs and exactneſs in walking, he gives this account, why they ſhould do ſo, *That whereas they ſpake evil of you as evil doers, they may be aſhamed that falſely accuſe your good converſation in Chriſt*. They who have not ſo much as a ſhadow of truth, will make ſomething out of a lie; they will falſely accuſe, and ſtrongly impeach, knowing that if they do ſo, ſome of the dirt (at leaſt) will disfigure the faces, and ſtick upon the skirts of thoſe who are impeached. Thus I have given ſeven Degrees of this wickedneſs, every one of which plainly diſcover, and all put together, mightily aggravate the ſinfulneſs of this ſin, the ſeeking of occaſions againſt any man whoſoever, much more againſt any good man. And therefore (which was the ſecond point propoſed for the clearing of this truth) you ſee how great a matter of charge was brought by *Elihu* againſt *Job*, when he ſaith, *Job* hath ſaid, *He* (that is, God) *ſeeketh occaſions againſt me*.

Hence Note, Secondly, *To charge the Lord with a willingneſs to break with us, either upon no occaſion, or to ſeek an occaſion that he may, is exceeding ſinful, and diſhonourable to his Majeſty, neer to Blaſphemy*.

How ſinful is it, that we who give the Lord ſo many occaſions againſt us, that he needs not ſeek any, ſhould yet ſay he ſeeketh occaſions againſt us? The people of *Iſrael* (as it appears) intimated, at leaſt, that God had broken with them, or ſought occaſion to do it (this word is uſed in that Text, *Numb.* 14. 34.) while the Lord to ſhew how ill he reſented ſuch thoughts and jealouſies of him, tells them, *According to the number of the dayes in which ye ſearched the Land, even forty dayes (each day for a year) ſhall ye bear your iniquities, even forty years, and ye ſhall know my breach of promiſe*, or (as read in the Margin) *my Altering of my purpoſe*. As if he had ſaid, Ye ſhall know whether I have ſought occaſion againſt you, whether I have fruſtrated your hopes and endeavours, theſe forty years in the Wilderneſs or no; ye ſhall know whether I have done any thing to break and entangle you, or whether all this hath not proceeded from your own frowardneſs and unbelief. The Lord who ſearched their hearts, and ſaw the utmoſt ſcope of their complaints, found this evil thought lying at the bottom of all, that he ſurely had put them upon all thoſe difficulties, or brought them into thoſe ſtraits on purpoſe to break with them. And therefore, he ſaith, *Ye ſhall know my breach of promiſe*; Ye ſhall ſee one day, or at laſt, whether I have kept covenant, and ſtood to my engagement or you, whether I have ſought an occaſion againſt you, or you have given me occaſion to deal with you as I have done. So that when the Lord ſaid, *Ye ſhall know my breach of promiſe*; his meaning was, ye ſhall know that I have kept my promiſe to you exactly, or to a tittle, and that ye only have been the promiſe-breakers. 'Tis infinitely below the nature of God, to ſeek occaſions againſt the creature; And 'tis ſtrange that the Jews had any the remoteſt ſuſpition of him as doing ſo, after they had heard of thoſe glorious ſtiles and titles in which he proclaimed his name (*Exod.* 34. 6.) *The Lord, the Lord God, gracious and merciful, ſlow to anger, abundant in goodneſs and in truth, pardoning iniquity, tranſgreſſion, and ſin*. What can be ſpeld out of this name that ſhould yield the leaſt ſhadow of a jealouſie, that the Lord would ſeek occaſions againſt them. A good Prince deſires to find many good ſubjects who deſerve to be rewarded, but it troubles him to find any who deſerve to be puniſhed, or whom he is neceſſitated to puniſh; Now what is the goodneſs of the moſt benign and gracious Princes in the World, to the graciouſneſs and benignity of God! Again, his precious promiſes evidence the unworthineſs of ſuch a ſurmiſe; all which are full of mercy, and goodneſs, and patience, and pardon, and tenderneſs to poor ſinners: So far is the Lord from ſeeking occaſions to charge any one with what is not, that he ſeeks all the wayes and occaſions he can to do good, and to extend compaſſion to thoſe who have done amiſs. He even labours to deliver poor ſouls from their dangers, and from their ſins. How far is he then from deſiring to find them tripping and ſinning, or from urging ſin hardly, harſhly or cauſleſly upon them? Yea all the experiences of Saints bring in witneſs againſt this blaſphemous apprehenſion. They will tell us from what they have found and felt, that when they have given the Lord occaſion to deſtroy them, when they have put a Sword into his hand to ſmite them, when by their unbelief, and pride, and neglect of known duties, they have laid themſelves open to ruine and deſtruction, even then he hath held his hand and ſpared them. Is it not then a great, a groſs ſin, to charge the Lord, that he ſeeks occaſions againſt us? Yea indeed (as was touched before) the Lord needs not ſeek occaſion againſt any man, for as much as the beſt of men give him too much occaſion, and to often. He needs not ſtand to ſpy advantages againſt us, we lay our ſelves too open and naked to him continually. As in Fencing, when two that are very expert at that Art are ingaged, there is watching for an occaſion or advantage to get the maſtery; but if an expert Maſter of Defence be to deal with an ignorant fellow that knows not his poſtures, nor how to uſe his Weapon, he needs not ſeek occaſion, he may have him here and there and every where. It is ſo with the beſt of Saints, when they have to do with God; he needs not watch for an occaſion where to hit, or ſmite them, for they through their ignorance and folly, lay their naked breaſts open to his ſtroaks every day. Were he not infinite in mercy to cover our ſins, and to pardon our tranſgreſſions, we muſt needs periſh under his juſtice.

Cognoſcetis confractionem meam; ſi dici poſſit Latinè irritationem; non à verbo irrito ſed ab adjectivo irritus, q. d. *videbitis ut ego omnia acta veſtra per hos quadraginta annos irrita faciam, & conatus ac inſtituta impediam.* Merc.

Ecce invenit in me vacillationes. Scult. תנואות *vocat ea quæ pii faciunt præter rectum, ſed citra animum à Deo averſum, &c.* Coc.

Again, The word is rendred, *Infirmities, failings, or leſſer ſins*; that's another tranſlation of the Text, and 'tis a uſeful one; for as the former ſuppoſeth the Lord taking occaſion, where none at all was given; ſo this ſuppoſeth him to take the leaſt occaſion. As if *Elihu* ſuppoſed *Job* ſaying, *Behold, he ſeeks out my little faults, my vacillations, my trippings, my ſtumblings, in a word, my infirmities*. We may take them two wayes; Firſt, for his youthful ſins, the ſlips of his youth. Secondly, For his dayly ſins, commonly called failings. As if *Job* had ſaid, *Though I can charge my ſelf, and freely do with many ſins and weakneſſes, yet I am not a man chargeable with any crimes nor wickedneſſes, mine are no black nor bloody ſins, no crimſon, no skarlet ſins*;

Quæſivit Deus parva quædam, imo penè nulla peccata propter quæ, velut ſi nefanda crimina commiſiſſem, atroci me ſententia condemnavit. Bold.

ſins; I have not ſinned preſumptuouſly, or with a high hand, I have not given ſcope to my luſts, nor indulged my corruptions. I have not pleaſed my ſelf with diſpleaſing God; nor hath the bent of my ſoul been to break his commandments, as bonds, yoaks, or ſhackles put upon me by an Enemy; I have not rejected his dominion or rule over me in any wilſul defection or departure from his word. Yet notwithſtanding God finds out my infirmities and failings, and urgeth them ſorely againſt me, yea he deals with me as if I were his Enemy, even for thoſe ſins which I have committed through inadvertency or meer humane frailty: Some Interpreters inſiſt moſt upon this ſignification of the word, as if the matter which *Elihu* charged *Job* with, were that he ſhould ſay God carried it towards him as an Enemy for ſmall faults or leſſer ſins. Nor do I ſee any thing which hinders the joyning of this and the former reading together; for ſurely he ſeeks occaſions to puniſh and vex another, who inſiſts upon his leſſer ſins and imperfections, as if they were great and grievous crimes. From this latter or ſecond ſenſe of the word,

> Obſerve, Firſt, In general, *To take ſtrict notice of the failings, infirmities, or leſſer ſins of others, is a point of very great ſeverity.*

Some are pleaſed with nothing more then to hear and diſcourſe of other mens failings. 'Tis a great fault to be picking up the leſſer faults of others; yet how many are there, who if they can but ſee, as it were, any bare place, they will be charging at it; if they ſee but the leaſt ſcratch or ſore, they as the Fly, love to be feeding upon it, or raking in it. 'Tis our holineſs to take notice of the leaſt ſin in our ſelves; and the more holy any man is, the more quick-ſighted and quick-ſented he is in taking notice of his leſſer ſins (when the leaſt neglect of duty and of the leaſt negligence in performance of duty, any ill frame of heart, any vain thought, any idle word, and undue carriage, any uncomelineſs, is taken notice of and corrected, this ſhews an excellent frame of ſpirit, and a great meaſure of Grace) but it is not good to do ſo by others, yea it is an argument we are very much wanting and failing in holineſs our ſelves, when we are ſo apt to take notice of and aggravate every want and failing in our Brethren. Yea, when as Chriſt ſaith (*Matth.* 7. 3.) *We ſee a mote in our Brothers eye, we ſeldome ſee the beam in our own.* And it is an argument men have beams in their own eyes, when they are ſo quick-ſighted in looking after motes in their Brothers eye. I grant, it is a duty to be watchful over one another as Brethren, and to take notice, for right ends, of the leaſt faylings and faults of any. This is a duty if we do it with a purpoſe to pray for them, that they may walk more circumſpectly; or that we may lovingly reprove, admoniſh, and counſel them; as alſo that we may conſider our ſelves and our own wayes, leſt we fall as they have done. Thus to take notice of the leaſt failings of others, is a great Goſpel duty. But to take notice of mens faults, to cenſure or defame their perſons, to inſult over them, or accuſe them, this is the ſpirit of a *Cham*, who mocked at his Fathers nakedneſs. And thus to be critical about the faults of others, argues that we are careleſs of our own.

Secondly, As to the particular caſe in the Text, for which *Job* is tax'd by *Elihu*, that he ſaid thus of God.

> Obſerve, *To ſay or think of the Lord that he takes a ſtrict and ſevere notice of our infirmities to reckon with us rigidly for them is very ſinful.*

Such thoughts are a great derogation from the goodneſs and mercy of God. The Lord doth not willingly ſee the faults of his people; though he ſeeth them, yet he doth not willingly ſee them; he is glad when it is with his people, as it was at that time with *Iſrael* (Numb. 23. 21.) *He hath not beheld iniquity in* Jacob, *neither hath he ſeen perverſneſs in* Iſrael. But was there no ſin to be ſeen in *Jacob?* Was *Iſrael* altogether innocent at that time? Surely they, even they, and even then were a ſinful people, and had their faults, neither few nor ſmall, but becauſe there was no iniquity, no perverſneſs nor prevarication againſt God found among them at that time, therefore he over-looked all their ordinary failings and tranſgreſſions. As the Lord is ſo holy and of ſuch pure eyes that he cannot behold any ſin, the leaſt iniquity to approve of it (*Habak.* 1. 13.) ſo the Lord is ſo gracious and ſo full of compaſſion that he doth not ſeverely take notice of, nor look upon the leſſer ſins of his people. *David* exalts the name and glory of God at large for this (Pſal. 103. 8, 9, 10.) *The Lord is merciful and gracious, ſlow to anger, plenteous in mercy, he will not alwayes chide.* They are alwayes chiding, that are alwayes ſpying faults in Children, Servants or Relations; they who take notice of every little fault, ſhall find chiding-work enough in a family. *But the Lord will not alwayes chide; neither will he keep his anger for ever, he hath not dealt with us after our ſins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities: Like as a Father pittieth his Children, ſo the Lord pitieth them that fear him.* A Father doth not enquire into, much leſs puniſh every neglect of his Child. *I will ſpare them* (ſaith the Lord, *Mal.* 3. 17.) *as a Father ſpareth a ſon that ſerveth him.* If a Father ſeeth or is well perſwaded that his Son hath a heart to ſerve him, he will not curiouſly ſpy out the faults of his ſervice, but ſaith to his Child, *It is well done*, or at leaſt, I take that well which thou haſt done. Yea the Lord is ſo far from a ſtrict inquiry after ſuch faults, that he paſſeth by great tranſgreſſions (*Mic.* 7. 18.) *Who is a God like unto thee that pardoneth iniquity, and paſſeth by the tranſgreſſion of the remnant of his people? he retaineth not his anger for ever, becauſe he delighteth in mercy.* Though *Aſa* (1 Kings 15. 14.) was not through in the reformation; the high places were not removed, yet the Lord did not charge this upon him, for preſently it followeth in the ſacred Story; *Nevertheleſs, the heart of* Aſa *was perfect with God all his dayes.* Yea, though *Aſa* did fall into ſeveral ſins afterwards, impriſoning one of the Prophets, and oppreſſing ſome of the people, and in his ſickneſs ſeeking to the Phyſitians, and not to the Lord, yet the Lord did not charge theſe acts upon him; He was ſo far from a ſtrict inquiry after his leſſer ſins, that he took no notice of thoſe greater ſins, but ſaith, *His heart was perfect all his dayes.* So in the caſe of *David*, the Lord would not ſee many of his ſins, he would not blot *David*, nor burden his own memory with them, but paſſed an act of Oblivion upon them for ever. *Sarah* (Gen. 18. 12.) ſpake very unhandſomely when the Angel came to her and told her ſhe ſhould have a Son; yet the Apoſtle (1 *Pet.* 3. 6.) referring to that ſtory, gives *Sarah* a very high teſtimony or commendation for one good word that was mingled with a great many ill or undue ones, yea and actions too; *for ſhe laughed*; notwithſtanding all which, *Peter* ſets her as a pattern for all good Women profeſſing the Goſpel, to imitate: He would have them *be in ſubjection unto their own Husbands; even as* Sarah *obeyed* Abraham *calling him Lord, whoſe Daughters ye are* (ſaith he) *as long as ye do that which is well.* That one word which ſhe ſpake well, is recorded, yea reported to her praiſe, and all that were ill are buried in ſilence, forgotten and covered. The Lord hath reſpect to a little pure Gold, though mingled with a great deal of droſs, and owns a little good Corn, though a great deal of Chaff be in the ſame floor or heap. Surely then he will not bring our infirmities and ſlips to account againſt us, while our hearts are upright with him.

Thus you ſee what matter of charge there was in theſe words, when *Job* ſaid, *God ſought occaſion againſt him*, when he had given none, or that he had only given ſome ſmaller occaſion, and yet God dealt with *him as an Enemy.*

But did *Job* ever ſay, That God ſought occaſions againſt him, or took notice of his leſſer ſins ſo ſeverely?

I anſwer, Though ſome acquit *Job* wholly of this charge, and recriminate *Elihu* with this accuſation as a ſlander, yet *Job* had ſpoken words which might give occaſion to charge him thus (as was ſhewed alſo concerning thoſe former ſpeeches, *I am clean from tranſgreſſion, I am innocent, there is no iniquity in me*) though *Job* had not ſpoken theſe or ſuch like words, with that ſcope and ſpirit as *Elihu* might ſeem to alledge them; yet he had given *Elihu* cauſe enough to ſay ſo, while he ſpake more of himſelf then came to his ſhare, conſidering that he was a ſinful man, and more then did become him in his condition, being an afflicted man. Upon both which accounts, it had better becom'd him to have been much in humbling himſelf, either then at all in juſtifying himſelf. Now as *Job* had ſpoken words which might bear out *Elihu* in his former charge, *Secundum veritatem neutrū dixit Job in ſenſu quem imponit in Elihu.*

charge, ſo we find ſeveral ſpeeches or complaints concerning God, which may juſtifie him in this. As for inſtance (*Chap.* 14. 16, 17.) *For now thou numbreſt* (*or numbring thou numbreſt*) *my ſteps; doſt thou not watch over my ſins?* As if he had ſaid, thou watcheſt me ſo ſtrictly, ſo narrowly; that I cannot (in the leaſt) ſtep awry, but preſently I am obſerved and ſhall be ſure to hear of it; Yea, *my tranſgreſſion is ſealed up in a bag, and thou ſoweſt up mine iniquity*; that is, thou keepeſt the memory of my ſins, thou doſt not paſs them by, but haſt them ready by thee. When chaſt *Joſeph's* wanton miſtriſs diſappointed in her luſt, was reſolved to ſeek an occaſion of revenge, *ſhe laid up his Garment by her untill her Lord came home* (Gen. 39. 16.) To lay up the evil deed of another preſageth ill to him. And therefore when *Elihu* heard *Job* ſpeaking thus, might he not ſay, *Job* hath ſaid, *God ſeeketh occaſions againſt me*, yea, (which is more) as it followeth in the verſe under hand,

And counteth me for his Enemy.

Theſe words having been inſiſted upon ſomewhat largely from other paſſages of this Book (*Chap.* 13. 24. and 19. 11. and *Chap.* 30. 21. In all which places *Job* ſpake this complaint ſometimes expreſly, alwayes equivalently) I ſhall not here ſtay upon the explication of them, only for as much as *Job* having ſaid, that God took hold of ſmall occaſions given, or ſought occaſions not given, is preſently charged further by *Elihu*, with ſaying, *He counteth me for his Enemy.* From this Connection of the former with the latter part of the verſe.

> Note, *To ſeek or take eaſie occaſions againſt another, is an argument that we bear no good will to him*, or, *It is a ſign we look upon a man as an Enemy, when we are apt and ready to ſeek or take occaſions againſt him.*

There are two things which we are very ready to do towards thoſe we bear no good will unto, or whom we account our Enemies. Firſt, To diminiſh the good which they do, to ſpeak lightly of, and under-value their moſt praiſe-worthy deeds. Ill will never ſpake well either of perſons or actions. Secondly, whom we love not as friends, eſpecially whom we hate as Enemies, we are prone to heighten their faults, and double their failings; we (moſtly) look on the evil deeds of an Enemy in a multiplying, or in a magnifying glaſs; we make one fault many, and a little one great. A true friend will ſpeak the moſt of what is well done, and the leaſt he can, with truth, of what is ill; he is ſo far from ſeeking occaſions againſt whom he loves, that he will hardly ſee them, when he finds them unſought. A noble Enemy will not ſeek occaſions againſt a man, much leſs will a cordial friend. It is no wonder when *Job* is taxed with ſaying, God ſought occaſions againſt him, that he ſhould alſo ſay, *He counteth me for his Enemy.*

From the matter of theſe words, *He counteth me for his Enemy*, take theſe two notes.

> Firſt, *Even good men when they are ſorely grieved under the afflicting hand of God, are tempted to have hard apprehenſions of God, at leaſt to ſuſpect and fear that God is no friend to them.*

And this comes to paſs upon a double conſideration; Firſt, Nature when pinched will ſhew it ſelf; Now, man naturally, hath not only hard thoughts of God, but an enmity againſt him. And when nature is pinched, all the corruptions working in man, work this way, unleſs over-power'd and checkt by Grace. Secondly, When tis hard with us from the hand of God, then Satan takes his time to prompt us with hard thoughts of God, and to foment that enmity to the uttermoſt, of which our corrupt nature hath ſuch ſtore. What? Will Satan ſay, *Doth God love thee, and ſtarve thee?* What? Doth God pretend kindneſs to thee, and deal thus with thee? Is God thy friend, who takes away thy friends? Is God thy friend, who leaves thee in the hand of Enemies? Doth he pitty thee, and yet keep thee in theſe pains? Is this his kindneſs to his friend? How can he ſay he loves thee? And haſt not thou cauſe enough yet to ſay, *He counteth thee for his Enemy.* Thus Satan takes his time to provoke nature, which is forward enough of it ſelf to think and ſpeak hardly of God, if at any time he is pleaſed and ſees it fit to deal hardly with us. And how great a combate hath many a gracious ſoul both with Satan and his own heart, to get and keep up good and honourable thoughts of God in a ſuffering condition, or under dark and (to ſenſe) diſmal diſpenſations.

> Secondly, Note, *Whatſoever God doth to or with a godly man, he ſhould maintain good thoughts, and ſpeak well of God*, or, *when God deals moſt ſtrictly and ſeverely with his people, they ſhould not look upon it as an argument of any enmity or ill will againſt them, or that he counteth them his enemies.*

Let us take heed of ſuch thoughts; *David* profeſſed (*Pſal.* 73. 1.) *Truely God is good to* Iſrael, *even to them that are of a clean heart.* He is good to them (that's *David's* intent here) not only when he doth them good, (as to outward things I mean, and to ſenſible appearances, for all is good in the iſſue to the *Iſrael* of God; now, I ſay, God is good to his people, not only when he in that ſenſe doth them good) but when he afflicts them, and layeth many outward evils upon them. When, as it is ſaid after in that Pſalm (*ver.* 14.) *He plagueth them* (that word imports ſoreſt troubles) *all the day long, and chaſteneth them every morning*; when he gives them their breakfaſt in ſowre Herbs, or with ſevereſt whippings, yet then, even then he is good to them, and means them no harm at all. Therefore how hardly ſoever God deals with us, let us not think he counts us Enemies. The Temptation was ſtrong upon *David* to take up hard thoughts of God in that caſe, yea it prevailed ſo far upon him, that he concluded (*ver.* 13.) *Verily I have cleanſed my heart in vain, and waſhed my hands in innocency.* As if he had ſaid, A man hath little priviledge from the worſt of outward evils by his godlineſs; but the temptation did not prevail long, he ſoon recovered himſelf (*verſ.* 15.) *If I ſay I will ſpeak thus* (that is, that I have cleanſed my heart in vain) *Behold, I ſhould offend againſt the generation of thy Children*; that is, I ſhould wrong the whole kind or race of godly men throughout the World, as if hypocrites, or as if God did not love them, or were not good to them, for who is there among all thy Children whom either thou haſt not or mayeſt not chaſten as much as thou haſt chaſtned me. As no man can know the love of God by that which is before him, how proſperous ſoever it is; ſo it is moſt unſutable for any of the Children of God, to think that God is not good to them, or doth not love them, becauſe of the evil that is before them, how adverſe or diſaſterous ſoever it is. For, God having loved his people in Chriſt, he loves them for ever; when once he hath broken the enmity in our hearts towards himſelf, there is nothing ſhall ever be done by him towards us, which may ſpeak us his Enemies, or him our Enemy, though a *Job* in great affliction may ſay, *He counteth me for his Enemy*, And handles me like one too; as it followeth.

Verſe 11. He putteth my feet in the ſtocks, he marketh all my paths.

We had theſe words expreſly (*Chap.* 13. 27.) there they have been opened already, *Thou putteſt my feet alſo in the ſtocks, and lookeſt narrowly unto all my paths.* That which hath been ſaid as to the general ſenſe and ſcope of that Text, may ſerve for this; and therefore I refer the Reader thither. I ſhall only add two or three Notes from the metaphor; *He put my feet in the ſtocks*, that is, he preſſeth me with very cloſe and ſore afflictions.

> Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *To be in affliction, is to be in a painful condition; there is little eaſe in the ſtocks.*

No chaſtning for the preſent ſeemeth to be joyous but grievous (*Heb.* 12. 11.) To be under a croſs is to be under a burden.

Secondly, *Afflictions keep us under reſtraint.* He hath little liberty as well as little eaſe that is in the ſtocks: Afflictions hold us in, they are as a Priſon to us. Afflictions are a reſtraint two wayes; Firſt, to our corruptions; yea, through the grace of God, afflictions are more then reſtraints to corruption, they become the death of corruption, they are appointed (among other ſervices) for the mortifying of corruption, that it may not live in us, much more are they a reſtraint to corruption, that it may not get out, nor work in us as before. Many times, when a good man hath the World at will, his corruptions think to have their will too; and when he is at liberty, luſts would grow licentious: Therefore God ſeeth it neceſſary to put his Servants in the ſtocks, that their luſts may be in the ſtocks too. Thus he told the Church (*Hoſ.* 2. 6.) *Behold, I will hedge up thy way with Thorns, and make a Wall that ſhe ſhall not find her paths.* The Thorn-hedge was as a ſtocks to ſtop them that they ſhould not walk diſorderly, nor act inordinately as they had done. This courſe God takes with many, he puts them in the ſtocks, that he may keep them from the wayes of ſin, or give check to ſome unruly affection. When we need this diſcipline, we may look for it, and 'tis a mercy to be under it. Will you not keep order? (ſaith God) then you ſhall to the ſtocks. Secondly, Afflictions are a reſtraint to our comforts, as well as to our corruptions. As this expreſſion notes the taking of luſts ſhort, ſo the taking of us ſhort as to lawful liberties and enjoyments. Sickneſs upon the body ſowres all that this World hath, to us, and will not ſuffer us to uſe much of it, how much ſoever of it we poſſeſs. Many have enough to eat, who never eat in pleaſure, as *Job* ſaid (*Chap.* 21. 25.) And when in our proſperity we run out and take unlawful liberty, God ſends an affliction, as his ſtocks, to hold us from our lawful liberties. When we have had vain out goings and exceſſes of ſpirit, all going well with us and comfortably in the world, we may expect the ſtocks next, or that things ſhould go ill with us, yet for our good.

Thirdly, To be in the ſtocks is a diſgraceful thing; it is not only a pain and a reſtraint, but it is a reproach; He that is in the ſtocks, or in the pillory, is expoſed to ſhame, every one points at him, and many revile him. Affliction as to the eye of the world, carrieth diſgrace with it, or, at leaſt, ſubjects the perſon afflicted to diſgrace; and it hath been ſhewed from ſeveral paſſages of this Book, how *Job*'s afflictions were interpreted to his diſgrace; and he lookt upon, as I may ſay, like a vagabond in the ſtocks, that God had brought him thither, and clapt him by the heels for his miſdemeanours. Though afflictions diminiſh no mans honour or eſteem with God, or with his people (an afflicted Saint is as precious and honourable in their eyes, as when in the greateſt proſperity, The Clouds of trouble cannot eclipſe the glory of Grace, nor render the gracious contemptible to thoſe who know them ſuch) yet, as to the eye and opinion of worldly men they do. *Job* ſaid his afflictions were a witneſs againſt him, as if all were not right with him, yea, as if he had been very unrighteous. The ſtocks are a witneſs againſt a man, that ſurely he hath done ſome ill thing. Thus you ſee there is pain in affliction, reſtraint in affliction, diſgrace in affliction, eſpecially in the opinion of the world, and therefore to be in affliction is to be as in the ſtocks. *He putteth my feet in the ſtocks.*

He marketh all my paths.

Which ſome expound, as if when the Lord had let him out of the ſtocks, yet he was but like a Priſoner with his keeper at his heels; *He marketh all my paths.* I have ſpoken to this alſo before; I ſhall now only Note,

There is no ſtepping out of the eye or ſight of God.

He marks all our paths, not only our open paths, but our ſecret paths; not only what paths our feet walk in, but paths our hearts walk in. He marketh what our thoughts are, what our ſcope is, what our aims and ends are. He marketh not only our day-paths, but our night-paths; *He watcheth all our paths.* Take this Caution from it;

As the Lord marks all our paths, ſo it will be our wiſdom to mark our own paths.

If the Lords eye be ſo ſtrict over all our wayes, ſhall we be careleſs of our wayes? If he look upon our walkings, ſhall not we look to our walkings? There are many arguments (from love, from returns of thankfulneſs for received benefits) which ſhould provoke the people of God to heed and mark their own wayes; but ſurely this ought to be a very cogent argument, becauſe God marks them, *He marketh all our paths.* Therefore as the Apoſtle gives counſel and admonition (*Eph.* 5. 15.) *See that ye walk circumſpectly, not as Fools but as wiſe.* What our Wiſdom is, yea whether we have any wiſdom, whether we are wiſe or fools will be ſeen by our walkings. Some can talk and diſcourſe very wiſely, who yet walk very fooliſhly, and whoſe whole courſe is folly.

So much for the opening of this charge brought by *Elihu* againſt *Job*, his over-juſtifying of himſelf, and his reflecting upon the goodneſs and love of God. *Elihu* proceeds yet further to deal with and refute him, as alſo to anſwer for God. *Behold, in this thou art not juſt*, &c. This I charge thee with and will prove it, thou haſt ſpoken ſinfully and unbecomingſy of God and of thy ſelf in all this.

VERS. 12, 13.

Behold, in this thou art not juſt: I will anſwer thee, That God is greater then man.
Why doſt thou ſtrive againſt him? For he giveth not account of any of his matters.

IN theſe two verſes *Elihu* gives the firſt part of his anſwer, wherein we may take notice of theſe five things; Firſt, He tells *Job* that he had erred and was miſtaken, *Behold, in this thou art not juſt*; Secondly, He ſheweth him wherein he had been miſtaken, or what his error was; *In this thou art not juſt*, or, *Behold this, thou art not juſt in it.* Thirdly, *Elihu* lays down the general ground, upon which he intended to convince *Job* of his error and miſtake, the greatneſs of God, *I will anſwer thee that God is greater then man.* Fourthly, From that ground he draws out a check or reproof, in the beginning of the thirtieth verſe, *Why doſt thou ſtrive againſt him?* Fifthly and laſtly, he gives a reaſon of that reproof, which ariſeth alſo out of the former ground, the unqueſtionable Soveraignty of God; *For he giveth not account of any of his matters.*

Verſe 12. **Behold, in this thou art not juſt.**

Behold] He calls for ſerious attention, and diligent conſideration; *Behold this*; ſo the Hebrew rendred ſtrictly; we render, *Behold, in this thou art not juſt*; What is this? What's the antecedent to this? We may aſſign the antecedent in three things, or make it three-fold, according to what *Elihu* hath laid down before in way of charge againſt *Job* in the former Context; Firſt, *This*, that thou haſt boaſted thy ſelf ſo much of thy innocency and integrity. Verſe 8th. *Thou haſt ſpoken in my hearing, and I have heard the voice of thy words, ſaying, I am clean without tranſgreſſion*, &c.

Behold, in this thou art not juſt.] Secondly, **In this**, That is, in that thou haſt complained ſo much of the ſeveri- of Gods dealings and proceedings with thee (10. *and* 11.) *Behold, he findeth occaſion againſt me, and accounteth me for his Enemy; he putteth my feet in the ſtocks, he marketh all my paths; Behold, in this thou art not juſt.*

There is a third antecedent, which we may take up from ſeveral paſſages in the former part of the Book; and that is, becauſe thou haſt ſo often and ſo importunately deſired to plead with God, and haſt made ſo many ſuits for a hearing with him, as if thou hadſt ſomewhat to ſay, which might acquit thy ſelf and ſhew reaſon, why God ſhould not deal thus with thee; for though *Job* did not deſire to plead with God as having any intent to accuſe him of doing him wrong, yet he was therefore to be blamed, becauſe he deſired to plead with him; ſeeing it becomes man to ſubmit to the judgment of God without murmuring or complaining. So then *Elihu* had cauſe to charge him with this; God indeed paſſed it by, as knowing it did not proceed (as in the wicked) from malice, but from weakneſs and ignorance, as *Job* alſo himſelf humbly confeſſed at laſt. *Behold* (thou haſt too often called for Juſtice) *in this thou art not juſt.*

Hoc nomine juſtus non es, quod Deum in jus provocare auſus es. Merc.

Mr *Broughton* renders, *Lo here thou art not in the right.* Theſe words, *in this, or here*, may alſo have a negative reference to what *Job* had been charged wtih before by his friends. As if *Elihu* had ſaid; *I do not charge thee* *with ſuch crimes as thy friends have loaded thee with heretofore, I do not burden thee with groſs impiety, nor with hypocriſie, I do not tell thee thou haſt oppreſſed the poor, or wronged the widdow and the fatherleſs, I have nothing of this ſort to ſay againſt thee. But in this or here, I have ſomewhat to ſay; wherein my judgment alſo is that thou art not juſt, nor in the right; for however thou art otherwiſe, or in other things upright and righteous, however juſt thou haſt been in thy tranſactions with men; and pure in thy worſhip toward God, yet in this I am ſure, and I dare ſay it openly and avowedly, thou art no ways juſtifiable, much leſs juſt in that thou haſt cryed up thy own innocency, and ſpoken ſo much of the hard dealings of God with thee; yea, haſt been ſo bold as to deſire a day of hearing even before God himſelf.* Let this be the Queſtion or matter under debate; *Whether or no, Job ſpeaking thus highly of himſelf, and thus boldly of God, hath done right or no? Elihu* undertakes the negative, he engageth to prove that *Job* had not done well, or right, how innocent ſoever he was, in ſpeaking ſo much of his own innocency, or (how hardly ſoever God dealt with him) in making ſo many complaints of his ſeverity. *Elihu* undertakes to prove this negative; and *Job* never durſt undertake the affirmative, that he had done right or well in ſpeaking or doing ſo; and therefore in the cloſe of the buſineſs he ſits down convinced, that he had been too bold with God, and too forward in juſtifying himſelf.

His argument (which runs through this whole diſcourſe) to make good his negative aſſertion, may be formed up thus; *He that ſpeaks much of his own righteouſneſs, and ſeems to reflect upon the righteouſneſs of God, at leaſt that God hath been over-rigorous with him, is not juſt; nor juſtifiable in this.*

But thou O Job haſt ſpoken thus of thy ſelf, and thus of God in the extremity of thy pain, and in the anguiſh of thy Spirit.

Therefore in this thou art not juſt, nor juſtifiable. No man of underſtanding can take thy part, or be an Advocate for thee in this matter; As for me, I muſt needs be and am reſolved to be an Advocate for God againſt thee. The Major or firſt propoſition is not expreſt in the Text, the concluſion is given in the beginning of the 12. Verſe, and the aſſumption or 2. propoſition, is collected from *Job*'s own mouth in ſeveral places of this Book.

Again; beſides the general ſcope of the words, and the tendency of *Elihu* in this diſpute, we may conſider the manner of his ſpeech, how he deals with *Job*; *Behold, in this thou art not juſt.* In this manner of treating with *Job*, the ſweetneſs of his ſpirit, and likewiſe the boldneſs of it are obſervable. Theſe two vertues or excellencies of an Advocate, ſhew themſelves plainly in this one paſſage; *Behold, in this thou art not juſt.* For conſider, Firſt, He expreſſeth his reproof negatively, he doth not ſay, Behold, in this thou art wicked, or thou haſt impiouſly blaſphem'd the name of God, but he ſpeaks at as low a rate, as may be, *Behold, in this thou art not juſt, or juſtifiable,* thou haſt not done right, or thou art not right; there is a great good temper of ſpirit, and a mixture of much meekneſs in ſuch negative expreſſions: it being much leſs to ſay to a man, *in this thou art not juſt nor juſtifiable,* then to ſay poſitively or directly, in this thou art unjuſt, and deſerveſt to be condemned. For though there be no difference in the thing between not being juſt and being unjuſt, yet there is much more mildneſs in the words; and a man takes leſs offence, when told that he is not juſt, then in being told that he is unjuſt. The imputing of a crime to a man, is more and worſe, then the denying him a vertue, or that he is vertuous.

> Hence Note, *We ought to temper our reproofs with much gentleneſs and meekneſs.*

We ſhould not ſpeak cutting words, if other words will ſerve the turn. Thus the Apoſtle directs us (*Gal.* 6. 1.) *Brethren, if a man be overtaken with a fault, ye which are ſpiritual, reſtore ſuch a one with the ſpirit of meekneſs, conſidering thy ſelf, leſt thou alſo be tempted*; deal as gently with a fallen brother, as thou wouldeſt with a man whoſe bones are diſlocated or broken (ſo much the metaphor there uſed imports) There is a time indeed when we muſt rebuke (as the Apoſtle gives direction, *Tit.* 1. 13.) *ſharply*, or cuttingly; we muſt go to the quick, *that they may be ſound in the faith:* but there is a great regard to be had to the ſtate and ſpirits of thoſe with whom we have to deal. As it is our duty to receive the word with meekneſs (*James* 1. 21. ſome receive the word proudly, rigidly, in the worſt ſence they can, yea they receive it rebellingly, now as we ought to receive the word with meekneſs) ſo 'tis good to ſpeak the word with meekneſs, with as much meekneſs and tenderneſs as the caſe will bear.

Secondly, Conſider this manner of ſpeaking, *Behold, in this thou art not juſt, Elihu* tells him plainly of his faults, he reported them before, and here he applyed them home to his perſon; *Behold, in this,* thou remembereſt thy own words; Thou canſt not but take notice what thou haſt ſpoken; now I tell thee, *in this thing thou art not juſt*; *Elihu* doth not ſpeak doubtingly nor fearfully, nor doth he tell *Job* what the thoughts of others were upon the matter, but he tells him directly, categorically, plainly from himſelf, *in this thou art not juſt.*

> Hence Note, *We are to hold out our convictions and reproofs with plainneſs, and to lay our finger upon the very ſore; Behold, in this* (or that) *thou art not juſt.*

We are to ſpeak meekly, but not at random, not uncertainly, not flatteringly (*Pro.* 29. 25.) *A man that flattereth his neighbour, ſpreadeth a net for his feet*; he doth but intangle and inſnare him, in ſtead either of counſelling or comforting him. When a man is out, it is beſt to tell him ſo; how elſe ſhall he get in again? Flattering words are inſnaring words; *Behold, in this thou art not right.* One of the Ancients ſpeaking to this point, tells us; *It is more ſinful to flatter thoſe that do evil, then to do evil our ſelves.* And, ſurely it argueth a more corrupt mind, or a worſer principle to dawb ſinners with the untempered morter of flattery, then to be dawbed with the mire of any particular ſin or iniquity. A flatterer is a dawber and pillow-ſower; A flatterer hath not a true ſight of ſin himſelf, and he doth what he can to keep others from the ſight of it. It is ſafer to make ſinners ſmart then itch. *David* invited a wounding rather then ſuch a ſkinning of his ſore (*Pſal.* 141. 5.) *Let the righteous ſmite me, it ſhall be a kindneſs,* (that is, I will not only take it kindly, but ſhall find it a kindneſs) *and let him reprove me, and it ſhall be an excellent oyle, which ſhall break my head*; that is, it ſhall be ſo far from hurting, that it ſhall be (through Grace) a healing to me. No man had ever any cauſe to repent, either the giving or receiving of a wiſe and ſeaſonable reproof.

Majore ſupplicio dignus eſt qui male agentes laudat; quam qui male agit. Chry.

Behold, in this thou art not juſt.] But what is it, not to be juſt? I anſwer, not to be juſt, is not to give every man his due; yet *Elihu* intends it chiefly, of what *Job* had ſpoken unduely to God; *Behold, in this thou art not juſt.*

> Hence Note, *They who do not give God his right, are unjuſt, as well as they who do not give men their right.*

Yea not to give God his right, is by ſo much the greater injuſtice, then not to give man his right, by how much God is greater then man; look how much God is higher and greater then man, by ſo much is their ſin higher and greater, who give not God his right, then theirs, who give not man his right. Many think they are very juſt, very honeſt men, becauſe they give every man his due, they wrong, they defraud no man, not any neighbour, not any brother with whom they deal; come and charge them if you can. 'Tis very good, and more then moſt men can truly ſay of themſelves, when a man is able to ſay he is juſt to his neighbour, no man can challenge him of injuſtice. But many ſay this, who take no notice, how unjuſt they are to God; they are not at all ſenſible, how often they have denied God his right, nor how often they have done God wrong; they take no notice of this. They have ſecond-table Juſtice, but they have not firſt-table Juſtice; this is it that *Elihu* chargeth *Job* with. His friends charged him with ſecond-table injuſtice, that he was an oppreſſor, &c. But *Elihu* charged him with firſt-table Injuſtice, that he had done wrong to God. Therefore, remember, not to give God his due fear, his due love, his due truſt and ſubmiſſion (theſe are his rights by the firſt Commandment) is to be unjuſt; not to give God due worſhip according to his will, is to be unjuſt, becauſe in ſo doing you deny him his right in the ſecond Commandment; not to ſpeak or think reverently of the name, of the word, ways, and ordinances of God, is to be unjuſt to God, becauſe you deny him his right in the third Commandment. To break the Sabbath, to ſteal Gods time, and convert it to your own private uſe, to put it in your own purſes, as many do, this is Sacriledg, this is to be unjuſt to God, becauſe you give him not his right, nor that which is due to him by the fourth Commandment; ſo not to ſubmit to the rod of God, not to be quiet under the chaſtiſings of God, not to take all well at Gods hand, whatſoever he doth with us, or to us, is to be unjuſt to God, becauſe we then deny him the right of his ſoveraignty, and of that juſt power which he hath over his Creatures. *Behold, in this thou art not juſt.*

Elihu proceeds to give an account, diſtinctly, wherein this injuſtice lay.

I will anſwer thee, or (as Mr. *Broughton*) *I will tell thee,* **God is greater then man.**

We render well, *I will anſwer thee*, &c. There is a fourfold way of anſwering; Firſt, by information to a Queſtion propounded. Every Queſtion would have an anſwer. Secondly, by ſolution of an objection made; When any thing is objected againſt what is ſaid or held; then to unty the knot, is to anſwer. Thirdly, there is an anſwering by confutation of a falſe opinion or tenet; thus whole Books that hold unſound or heterodox opinions, are to be anſwered. Fourthly, there is an anſwer by way of reproof, or reprehenſion of faults or miſtakes, either in ſpeech or practice. *Elihu* his anſwer was of this laſt ſort. For he obſerving how *Job* had ſpoken, and what his carriage and demeanour had been, gives him a reprehenſive anſwer, *Behold, in this thou art not juſt, I will anſwer thee.* And what was his anſwer? even this, *God is greater then man*; or, *I will anſwer thee, that God is more then man*; The root of the word ſignifies to increaſe or grow great; but God is great, not by growth or increaſe, but in his eſſence and being. He who is infinite in greatneſs, can have no addition to his greatneſs. God is the great one, and he only is great. All men and things put together, are not only little nothings, but leſs then nothing compared to the great God. Further, the word by which God is here expreſt, notes the great power of God, the ſtrength of God; in oppoſition to which the word by which *man* is here expreſt, notes his weakneſs and pitiful frailty. And therefore Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates ſtrictly according to the propriety of the Original; *I muſt tell thee the puiſſant is greater then the ſorrowful man*; we ſay barely, *God*, he, *the puiſſant*, or the ſtrong, the mighty God; we ſay, *God is greater then man*, he, *then ſorrowful man.* There are three Original words, as I have ſometime noted, which expreſs *man*; *Adam*, importing the matter of which man was made, *Earth*; *Iſh* noting his beſt perfection; and *Enoſh*, intimating that ſad condition which was brought upon us by the fall; *Surely the puiſſant is greater then ſorrowful man.*

Reſpondebo tibi & reprehendam, idq; hac plane inſolubili ratione quia amplior eſt Deus & major multis partibus homine; ירבה i. e. יצדל *amplior eſt.* Merc.

But is not God greater then (*Iſh*) the wiſeſt and moſt accompliſht, the moſt perfect and mightieſt of men, as well as he is greater then (*Enoſh*) *ſorrowful or miſerable man?* I anſwer, the word *Enoſh* is not to be taken excluſively, as if when he ſaith, *the puiſſant is greater then the ſorrowful man*, he were not alſo greater then the greateſt or ſtrongeſt man; but it notes, that all men, or man conſidered in his beſt eſtate, is but weakneſs and wretchedneſs, when put in the ballance with *the great God*, or *the puiſſant*. *Lord what is man* (ſaith *David*, one of the beſt and greateſt of men, a King, *Pſal.* 144 3.) *that thou takeſt knowledg of him? or the ſon of man that thou makeſt account of him?* Now if it be even too much that God ſhould make any account of man, then what is any man in account to God? O what man or Angel is able to caſt up the account, how much the great God *is greater or more then man*. The words are plain, only there is ſomewhat yet to be added or touched upon, to clear up further the ſcope of *Elihu* in ſpeaking thus to *Job*, which I ſhall endeavour to clear and make out, when I have given a note or two from the words, as they are a plain propoſition; *God is greater then man.*

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *God is Great.*

He that is greater then the greateſt, is certainly great; he that is higher then the higheſt, is high. This greatneſs of God is every where celebrated in Scripture. The Prophet (*Iſa.* 12. 6.) calls *the inhabitant of Zion to cry out and ſhout*; why? *For great is the holy One of Iſrael in the midſt of thee*; That is, the holy one of *Iſrael* who is in the midſt of thee, is both great in himſelf, and declares his greatneſs in thee. (*Mal.* 1. 14.) *I am a great King, ſaith the Lord of hoſts, and my name is dreadful among the Heathens.* I need not ſtay to give particular Scriptures to hold forth the attribute of Gods greatneſs, his greatneſs runs through all his attributes. Whatſoever God is, he is great in it; He is great in power (*Pſal.* 56. 3. *Pſal.* 147. 5.) he is great in all ſorts of power, great in authoritative power, and great in executive power. As God commandeth what he pleaſeth to be done, ſo he can do what he commandeth. The power of man in doing is not always commenſurate with his power in commanding; but Gods is. He needs no help, much leſs any leave to execute what he willeth. Again, God is great in wiſdom, he hath the compaſs of all things in his underſtanding; God is ſo wiſe, that he is called *the only wiſe God* (1 Tim. 1. 17.) The wiſdom of men and Angels is folly to his. God is great alſo in his goodneſs, ſo great that Chriſt himſelf as man would not be called *good*, but told him that called him ſo by way of rebuke, *There is none good but one, that is God* (Matth. 19. 17.) Holy *David* brake out into the admiration of that goodneſs which God hath laid up, yea of that which he dayly worketh for man. How much more did he and ought we to admire that goodneſs which is not ſo much in himſelf as himſelf? (*Pſal.* 31. 19.) *O how great is thy goodneſs, which thou haſt laid up for them that fear thee, which thou workeſt for them that truſt upon thee before the ſons of men?* The goodneſs which God acts and puts forth for the creature, is a great goodneſs (*Iſa.* 63. 7. *Neh.* 9. 25.) but that goodneſs which is the goodneſs of his nature, is a goodneſs as great as God is, a goodneſs infinite in greatneſs. Again, how often is God called great, yea admired for his greatneſs *in mercy*? When *David* (2 Sam. 24. 14.) made choyce to fall into the hands of God; he gave this reaſon of it, *For his mercies are great.* He is alſo great in wrath; we read (2 *Kings* 23. 26.) of *the fierceneſs of his great wrath.* And how great is his Love? Firſt, in redeeming us by Chriſt (*Joh.* 3.16.) *God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son*, &c. God loved us ſo much in that gift, that no man could ever tell how much love he hath given us in it. Secondly, His love is great in quickning us with Chriſt (*Eph.* 2. 4.) *God who is rich in mercy, for the great Love wherewith he hath loved us, even when we were dead in ſins, hath quickned us together with Chriſt.* His love both in redeeming and quickning us is ſo great, that while we are called to the greateſt ſtudy after the knowledg of, we are told we cannot know the greatneſs of it, (*Eph.* 3. 18.) *That you may know the Love of God which paſſeth knowledg.* I will not ſtay upon this Attribute, the greatneſs of God, only take theſe five brief inferences from it; *God is Great.* Then

Firſt, *God can do great things, the greateſt things, for us; every thing is in working as it is in being*; they that are but little, can do but little; God being great in his being, that is, in his power, in his wiſdom, in his goodneſs, in his mercy, how eaſily can he do great things! The Scripture is abundant in ſhewing forth the great things which God hath done, and will do, 2 *Sam.* 7. 22, 23. *Job* 5. 9. *Pſal.* 71. 19. *Pſal.* 86. 10. *Pſal.* 92. 5. *Pſal.* 111. 2. *Pſal.* 126. 2, 3. *Pſal.* 136. 7, 17. *Joel* 2. 21. The works of God in all ages and in all places, have born the ſtamp of and given teſtimony to his excellent greatneſs. We ſay, *There is nothing great to a great mind, or to a man of a great ſpirit.* A great ſpirited man will overcome not only great difficulties, but ſeeming impoſſibilities, yea he is glad to meet with greateſt difficulties, becauſe they match the greatneſs of his mind. Then certainly the great God, doth nothing but great, and can do the greateſt things. 'Tis no matter how great the things are which we have need to be done for us, if we can but intereſt the great God in the doing of them. God can do great things in ways of mercy for his people, and he can do great things in ways of Judgment againſt his enemies. Though his

Enemies be great Oaks and Cedars, he can hew them down (*Amos* 2.9.) Though his Enemies be as great as the greateſt mountains, he can remove and level them; *Who art thou O great mountain before Zorobabel, thou ſhalt become a plain* (Zech.4.7.) That is, the great power of God, with *Zorobabel*, can overthrow or overturn thoſe powers which oppoſe or ſtand in the way of his Church and people, though they appear as inſeparable and immoveable as a great Mountain.

Secondly, If *God be great*, then he can pardon great tranſgreſſions; you that are great ſinners fear not. Were not God a great God, the leaſt of our ſins could not be pardoned; were not he great in mercy, and great in goodneſs, our hearts would fail us, yea our faith could have no bottom to come to him for the pardon of our great ſins; But why ſhould great ſins diſcourage us to ask their pardon of God, who is great in mercy? *David* made the greatneſs of his ſin his argument to move the Lord to pardon it (*Pſal.* 25.11.) *Pardon my ſin for it is great*; who could ſpeak thus, unleſs he had that upon his heart that he ſpake to the great God, who is greater in nothing, and hath magnified his greatneſs in nothing more then in acts of mercy to greateſt ſinners?

Thirdly, If God be a great God; then he muſt have great ſervices and duties; He muſt have great praiſe (*Pſal.* 48.1.) *great is the Lord and greatly to be praiſed*; he muſt have great love, we muſt love him even with all our heart, and with all our might. He muſt have great fear (*Pſal.* 89.7.) great faith (*Matth.* 15.28.) great honour from all his people. When *David* was about to make great preparations for the building of the Temple, he ſaith (1*Chron.* 29.11.) *Thine O Lord is greatneſs, and the power, and the glory*, &c. And when *Solomon* was about to build the Temple, he ſaith (2*Chron.*2.5.) *The houſe which I build is great, for great is our God above all Gods.* We ſee *David* prepared and *Solomon* builded in proportion to the God for whom the one prepared and the other built a houſe. Thus I may ſay of all you do for God or to God, let it be the greateſt your ſtock and ability can reach to, becauſe he is a great God The Lord himſelf uſeth that argument by the Prophet to urge his people to do their utmoſt in whatſoever they were called to do (*Mal.*1.14.) *Curſed be the deceiver which hath a male in his flock, and voweth and ſacrificeth to the Lord a corrupt thing*; (that is, who when he is able to perform a greater ſervice to the Lord, puts him off with a leſſer one) *for I am a great King, ſaith the Lord of hoſts*, &c. Therefore take heed of putting me off with weak female ſervices, I expect a male, your beſt, that ſervice which is moſt ſpiritual and maſculine.

Fourthly, If God be great, then, they who are but little themſelves, having an intereſt in God, may do great things too. The leaſt creature having an intereſt in the great God, is as great, yea infinitely greater then the greateſt in the world, who ſtand in their own ſtrength. *Moſes* ſaith (*Deut.* 4.38. *Deut.* 7.1.) that the preſence of God with *Iſrael* was ſuch, that by it they overcame Nations, greater and mightier then they; their littleneſs did not hinder them, becauſe the great God was with them in their works and ways; yea God loves to uſe ſmall inſtruments, that his own greatneſs who is the efficient may appear. That Queſtion which was twice put in the Prophet (*Amos* 7.2, 5.) is very often put in that caſe; *By whom ſhall Jacob ariſe? for he is ſmall.* That which made it ſo queſtionable whether *Jacob* ſhould riſe, was his ſmalneſs; And could we remember the greatneſs of the God of *Jacob*, we ſhould either never make ſuch Queſtions, or eaſily anſwer them.

Fifthly, Seeing God is great, we ſhould be always aſcribing greatneſs to God, we ſhould lift him up in his greatneſs. Thus *Moſes* exhorted others (*Deut.* 32.3.) *Becauſe I will publiſh the name of the Lord, aſcribe ye greatneſs to our God.* And *David* at once prophecieth the ſame of others, and promiſeth it for himſelf (*Pſal.* 145.6.) *Men ſhall ſpeak of the might of thy terrible acts, and I will declare thy greatneſs.*

Again, Conſider theſe words as they are expreſſed comparatively, *God is greater then man*; As God is great, ſo greater then the greateſt men. God is great above all Gods; that is, above all the Kings and Princes of the earth. *Now I know* (ſaid *Jethro*, *Exod.* 18.11.) *that God is greater then all Gods* (greater then *Pharaoh* and his *Egyptian* Princes) *for in the thing wherein they dealt proudly he was above them.* *David* challenged all the Gods on Gods behalf (*Pſal.* 77.13.) *Who is ſo great a God as our God?* Let any man name him if he can; He is a God above all Gods, that is, above the greateſt powers in this world who are called Gods. Thus Chriſt comforts believers with an aſſurance of ſafety for ever (*John* 10.29.) *My Father is greater then all*, then the Devil and all.

But ſome may ſay, who knoweth not this that God is great, or that he is greater then men or Devils? *Job* himſelf ſpake much of this ſubject, yea his friends made it their buſineſs to exalt the greatneſs of God, as we may ſee in ſeveral paſſages of this Book. So that *Elihu* ſeemeth to ſay no more here, then had been ſaid already, and doth no more then had been done already. Is not this then a cold way of arguing to tell *Job* that which he knew already?

For anſwer to this I ſhall ſtay a while (as was promiſed) before I go off from theſe words, to ſhew why, though for the matter this is no more then hath been ſaid already; that, yet *Elihu* had reaſon to bring this argument for the conviction of *Job*, that *God is greater then man*; for though the greatneſs of God hath been often ſpoken of in the courſe of this diſputation, between *Job* and his friends, yet neither *Job* nor his friends did handle or improve it to that point, or in that extent, as here intended by *Elihu*, as may appear by theſe following Conſiderations.

Firſt, When *Elihu* ſpake of the greatneſs of God, we are not to underſtand this greatneſs abſtractly or alone, but concretely or in conjunction with his goodneſs and righteouſneſs, with his mercy and faithfulneſs, *&c.* *Job* confeſſed the greatneſs of God, but he ſeemed to intimate ſeveral things, to the diſparagement of the goodneſs, mercy, and righteouſneſs of God. For though in his frequent complainings he did not queſtion, yet he did much darken and obſcure theſe Divine perfections. And therefore *Elihu* ſpeaking of the greatneſs of God, urgeth it in conjunction with all his perfections, and indeed they cannot be diſjoyned, except in notion or diſcourſe.

Secondly, *Elihu* inſiſted ſo much upon the greatneſs of God, to humble *Job*, and to convince him that he had done amiſs, in his bold appeals to him and complaints, about his dealing with him. *Elihu* doth wiſely to hold out the greatneſs and ſoveraignty of God, for the keeping down and repreſſion of his yet, unhumbled ſpirit.

Thirdly, *Elihu* mannageth this argument for another end and purpoſe, then his friends did. They uſed it to prove *Job* was wicked or had done wickedly in the former paſſages of his life; He to ſhew that *Job* ought to be patient under and quietly ſubmit to the preſent providences of God.

Fourthly, This argument which *Elihu* brings from the greatneſs of God, hath not at all the leſs force in it, becauſe grounded upon ſo common and generally received a principle, *the greatneſs of God*; yea, it hath therefore the greater force in it; for what is more unreaſonable then for man to intimate any thing which reflects upon God, or to complain of what God doth? when as God, by the common conſent of all reaſonable men, doth infinitely ſurpaſs all men, both in greatneſs, and in righteouſneſs, both in Juſtice, and in goodneſs. When the greatneſs of God appears in all theſe things, what can be more unreaſonable then for man to inſinuate any thing complainingly concerning God. From the conſideration of this ſcope which *Elihu* had in arguing from the greatneſs of God;

> Note, *We may ſpeak and believe aright, that God is great, and that he is greater then man, and yet not anſwer it in our practice, nor be duly affected with it.*

Elihu did not at all queſtion whether *Job* thought God greater then himſelf: that was not the point in controverſie: but he ſaw this principle was not anſwered in *Job*'s practice, or that he did not demean himſelf ſutably to the greatneſs of God, which he had proclaimed to others, and profeſſed himſelf to believe. And thus it is with many, moſt of all with thoſe under great temptations and preſſing afflictions. How apt are they to ſpeak and act below, yea beſide thoſe principles which they believe and hold forth in their profeſſion! It is an eaſie matter to ſay, and in words to acknowledg what God hath revealed himſelf to be, but O how hard is it to live and walk up to ſuch ſayings and acknowledgments? Many tell us, God is greater then man, yet while they do not fully ſubject themſelves to God, they in effect deny that God is greater then man. Many acknowledg fully that God is righteous, yet when they reſt not in his dealings with them, they imply ſome unrighteouſneſs in God. Many ſay God is wiſe, only wiſe, yet while they will be their own Carvers, and are unſatisfied with Gods allowances and providences, they make themſelves wiſer then God, or at leaſt imagin things might be ordered with greater wiſdom then they are. Many ſay God is great in mercy, greater infinitely then man, yet when they ſhould act faith about the pardon of their ſins, they act it as if God had but the mercy of a man, or as if his *thoughts were as our thoughts, and his ways* (in diſpencing favours) *like our ways*, and ſo they bring God down to their own ſize and ſcantlings. If theſe had been asked the Queſtion, whether God hath not greater mercy then man, they would have anſwered, doubtleſs he hath; and yet they are no more in believing, then if the mercy of God were of the ſame meaſure with the mercies of narrow-hearted man. Thus we model the great God, and our Idea's or apprehenſions of him according to what we ſee in our ſelves, not according to what he is and hath ſaid of himſelf. And what are our righteſt notions of God, but hoverings in the air, till we bring them down into practice, or live up to them, till every thing we do be an expoſition of what we ſpeak and believe of God. And when we believe indeed that God is greater then man, we make our ſelves juſt nothing before God: if we are any thing to our ſelves, or glory in any thing of our own, be it little or great before God, we do not give God the glory of his greatneſs. The Lord ſpeaking of his own greatneſs by the Prophet, ſaith, *All nations are but as the drop of the bucket to him, yea they are as a little thing, as nothing, leſs then nothing*; if therefore you make not every thing little, yea nothing before God, you detract from the glory of his greatneſs. Again, they only acknowledg God in his greatneſs, who both agree to all he doth as juſt, and receive it as good, yea as beſt, how bad ſoever it be to nature, or bitter to their ſence. Once more, they only acknowledg God fully in his greatneſs, who though God changeth and varieth his diſpenſations every day with them, though he empty them never ſo often from veſſel to veſſel, yet ſit down and ſay, God is unchangeable to them. It is becauſe the Lord changeth not that we are not conſumed (*Mal.* 3.6.) therefore what changes ſoever his people meet with, his heart and thoughts towards them are not changed.

> Secondly, Note, *The very reaſon why we do not ſtoop to God in ſilence, why we do not ſuffer him quietly to do with us and diſpoſe of us how he will, is, becauſe we do not lay to heart as we ought the greatneſs of God.*

Did we remember, that the great God is great in goodneſs, and great in wiſdom, as well as great in power; in a word, did we, when we ſay God is great, and greater then any man, know what we ſay, it would preſently ſtop our mouths, and for ever ſilence all our diſcontents and complainings, whether in reference to our perſonal or the publick concernments. We may pray that God would remove any affliction or evil that is upon us (to do ſo is not only our liberty but our duty) but we may not complain of any affliction, as an evil to us, nor would we ever make ſuch a complaint, if our hearts were taken up with this thought, that God is great in goodneſs. Why do we ſay, at any time, Surely we have ſuffered enough, or too much already? Why do we demand ſo curiouſly wherefore God ſhould uſe ſuch ſeverity againſt us? What is the reaſon of all this? even this, we do not conſider enough of his greatneſs. *All our inward troubles at our outward troubles ariſe from this, becauſe we do not enough believe or not remember who God is.* We by our ignorance and unbelief diveſt God (as much as in us lyeth) of his great goodneſs and wiſdom, when we fear, eſpecially when we conclude, things are not ordered for our good. And though every man is ready to ſay, he loaths yea trembles at ſuch thoughts, yet we may lodge many ſuch gueſts before we are aware. *Whenſoever we are over-grieved at any affliction, our own or others, or would* (without much free ſubmiſſion to the will of God) *have things go otherwiſe then they do, we, upon the matter, make our ſelves greater and wiſer then God.* And though this be far from our purpoſe, yet we cannot avoid the imputation of it. That which is not (as ſome diſtinguiſh) the aim, ſcope, and intendment of the ſpeaker or actor may yet be the aim and ſcope of his action, work or ſpeech; no doubt *Job* was very far from the leaſt thought of diminiſhing much more of denying the greatneſs of God, either in his power, wiſdom, or goodneſs, yea (as was granted before) he ſpake very highly of him in all theſe his glorious and divine perfections; It was not his end when he ſpake ſo impatiently and complainingly, to rob God of that honour of his greatneſs, yet *Elihu* did him no wrong when he ſaid his impatience and complainings did it. And if any ſhall be found complaining like *Job*, though they do not formally deny, that God is greater then man, yet that interpretation and conſtruction may juſtly be put upon their complaints.

Finis operis licet non operantis.

But ſome may here object and ſay, how was *Job* ſuch a mirror, ſuch a pattern of patience, as the Apoſtle *James* makes him (*Chap.* 5. 11.) If he manifeſted ſo much impatience as might be interpreted by others, though not intended by him a denial of the greatneſs of God?

I anſwer, though all agree (and the teſtimony of the Spirit of God is enough to confirm it, though all ſhould not agree) that the patience of *Job* was exceeding great, yet no man may ſay (nor doth the Spirit of God, in Scripture, ſay it) that his patience was perfect; his patience was ſuch as exceeded the moſt, yea (for ought that we know) the beſt of men, yet his was but the patience of a man, of a man compaſſed about with the like paſſions as other men. His patience was ſincere and without hypocriſie, but his patience was not compleat nor without infirmity; or his patience (we may ſay) was perfect as to the kind, but it was not perfect as to the degree. His patience deſerved both commendation and imitation; yet he ſhewed (at times) ſuch impatience as deſerved reproof, and ſhould not be imitated but mortified and avoyded. Good men do not only act leſs in goodneſs ſometimes, but ill and much amiſs. And while we ſee talleſt Cedars fail (they ſhall not utterly fall, *Job* did not) *Let him that thinketh he ſtandeth* (that is, who hath a ſtrong opinion of his own ſtrength) *take heed leſt he fall*, (as the Apoſtle cautions him, 1 *Cor*. 10.12.) for even the impatient complaints of *Job* in his ſufferings (like thoſe ſufferings of the *Iſraelites* for their ſins ſpoken of in the former verſes of that Chapter) fell from him for an enſample (or type) and are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the World are come.

Thus you ſee the reaſon why *Elihu* took up this common principle, which every Child learns out of a Catechiſm, to convince this holy man with. What was more known to *Job*, or to any knowing man, then this, that God is greater then man? Yet *Elihu* choſe this as the moſt commodious and effectual argument, to compoſe his ſpirit, and quiet him after all his diſtempered and tumultuating complaints; nor hath *Elihu* yet done arguing down the height and unquietneſs of *Job*'s Spirit. We have him both reproving him for it by way of Queſtion, and giving him another unanſwerable argument againſt it, in the next Verſe.

Quæ pueris ipſis decantata ſunt nobis in gravi lucta & perturbatione, ut nova quædam proponenda ſunt. Mert.

Verſ. 13. **Why doſt thou ſtrive againſt him, for he giveth not account of any of his matters?**

The words are a reproving Queſtion; As if he had ſaid, Thou doſt ill, very ill to ſtrive. There is a four-fold ſtriving, three of which are held forth in Scripture under the word of the Text.

First, There is a ſtriving with outward force and power, either perſonally man with man (properly called *contention*) or more generally, Nation with Nation, properly called *War*.

Secondly, There is a legal ſtriving, a ſtriving by way of plea, about matters of right and title. The word in the Text chiefly imports ſuch a judiciary ſtriving, a ſtrife in law, when the adverſe party or *Plaintiff* impleads and commenſeth his ſuit againſt the *Defendant*. Striving is taken in this cence and joined with warring in the deſcription of that conteſt which *Jephtah* had with the King of the Children of *Ammon* (Judg. 11.25.) *And now art thou any thing better then* Balack *the Son of* Zippor *King of* Moab? *Did he ever ſtrive againſt* Iſrael? *Or did he ever fight againſt them?* That is, did he either make War with *Iſrael*, or did he ſo much as challenge and plead his right to their Land by Law? That other name which *Joaſh Gideons* father occaſionally gave him (*Judg.* 6. 31, 32.) takes part from this word; *Therefore on that day he called him* Jerubbaal, *ſaying, Let* Baal *plead againſt him, becauſe he hath thrown down his Altar.* As if he had ſaid, Let *Baal* come and enter his action againſt my Son if he pleaſe; and let my Son alone to anſwer him.

ריב *Contendere pertinet ad judicialem & forenſem litem ad Dei tribunal inſtituendam; quod ſæpe poſtulavit* Job.

Thirdly, there is a logical ſtriving, or a ſtriving by dint of argument and reaſon. Thus diſputants ſtrive; and Books of controverſie abovt matters of faith and worſhip are called Books of *Polemical Divinity*. Nor indeed hath any kind of ſtrife been carried on with higher and hotter animoſities then thoſe managed by tongue and pen in writing and diſputing.

Fourthly, The word is applyed to any angry paſſionate chiding and complaining. Thus 'tis uſed in that famous Hiſtory (*Exod.* 17.) where the people of *Iſrael* (having journied from *Sin* and pitched in *Rephidim*, verſ. 1.) *did chide with Moſes:* From which act (verſ. 7.) *He called the place* Maſſa *and* Meribah, *becauſe of the chiding of the Children of* Iſrael, *and becauſe they tempted the Lord, ſaying, Is the Lord among us or not?* Becauſe the people of *Iſrael* ſtrove with *Moſes*, or rather with God himſelf, therefore to keep them under the ſence of this ſin and provocation, *Moſes* called the name of the place *Meribah*, which ſignifieth *Striving*. In this laſt ſence, as ſtriving is uſed by way of chiding and complaining we are to underſtand it here. *Why doſt thou ſtrive againſt him?* (ſaith *Elihu*) That is, why doſt thou chide and complain about the dealings of God with thee? Or becauſe he will not render thee a reaſon of his dealings with thee in this affliction. *Job* made many ſtriving and chiding complaints, his firſt were eminently ſuch (*Chap.* 3. 11.) *Why died I not from the womb? Why did I not give up the ghoſt when I came out of the belly? Why did the knees prevent me, or why the breaſts, that I ſhould ſuck?* He chideth hard about the hardneſs of his condition in this life, who chideth becauſe he liveth. Read him in the ſame language (*Chap.* 10, 18.) and in a language not much unlike it in ſeveral other places. Yea *Job* doth (I ſay not formally yet vertually) call out or challenge God more then once to plead with him, and make good his cauſe againſt him. *Why doſt thou ſtrive with him?*

For he giveth no account of any of his matters.

ענה

The word ſignifieth properly *to anſwer*, and ſo the Text might well enough be rendred here out of the original, *he anſwereth not*. Mr. *Broughton* ſaith, *He will not ſpeak for all his dealings*. If any man demand of God a reaſon of his doings, he may chuſe whether he will give it him or no: He will not be brought to a reckoning: *He will not, he needeth not to anſwer*, or give an account

Of any of his matters, or, *of any of his words.*

כל ובר יו

'Tis frequent in the Hebrew to expreſs matters or things, by this word, which in ſtrictneſs ſignifieth but *a word.* (Chap. 19. 28.) *Seeing the root of the matter* (the Text is the root of the word) *is found in me*. So here, *He giveth not account of any of his words or matters*. Again, the Original ſaith, *He giveth not account of all his matters*. We tranſlate full and right to the ſence, when we ſay, *He giveth not account of any of his matters*. For the meaning of *Elihu* is not that God giveth an account of ſome (though that be a truth) but not indeed of all his matters, he hath ſome reſerved caſes and counſels, but his meaning is, that he is not oblig'd to give any man an account of ſo much as of any of his matters. And then, that univerſal is to be taken diſtributively, *All for any*. So we render it (*Pſal.* 147.20.) where the Pſalmiſt ſhewing the ſpecial priviledges of Gods people, ſaith, *He hath not dealt ſo with all Nations*; we tranſlate more emphatically, *He hath not dealt ſo with any Nation*. God was ſo far from giving the ſame priviledg to all Nations, which he gave to his *Iſrael*, that he gave not the ſame to any Nation. As if he had ſaid, *God hath honoured his peculiar people with peculiar favours, go enquire and ſearch all the Nations of the World, and ye ſhall not pick out a people upon whom God hath beſtowed ſuch rich and precious mercies, as he hath upon his* Iſrael. And to this day the *Iſrael* of God in every Nation enjoy ſuch ſpiritual priviledges and mercies as the Nations with whom they are civilly mingled know not of. But, to the point; thus here, *He giveth not account of all*; that is, *not of any of his matters.*

לבל צוי.

Moſt of the Greek tranſlaters render (according to the ſtrictneſs of the letter) not matters but words: *Why doſt thou ſtrive with him? For his words are ſuch as to which none can anſwer.* As if the meaning of *Elihu* were; when God ſpeaks, no man is able to reply upon him, or contradict him. *His ſayings are indeed irrefragable.* Thus they gloſs their tranſlation; *Why doſt thou call him into Judgment, or ſtrive with him? For all his ſpeeches are ſuch as cannot be contradicted.* If God oppoſe, who can anſwer, and if God anſwer, who can oppoſe him? That's a good ſence, though not a good tranſlation.

Quid igitur ipſum vocas in judicium? omnes enim ſermones ejus ſunt ejuſmodi, quibus contradici non poſſit. Theod.

Some others interpret the latter part of the verſe as containing *Job*'s anſwer to the queſtion put by *Elihu* in the firſt part of it; *Why doſt thou ſtrive with God?* (ſaith *Elihu*) To which *Job* is ſuppoſed, replying, *Becauſe he gives me not an account of my matters*; God doth not anſwer to my words, and therefore pardon me, if I complain or ſtrive with him: I hope while I am thus unanſwered you will hold me excuſed if I move again and again, yea, even ſtrive for an anſwer. But the Grammar of the Text is againſt this reading, the words being plainly in the third perſon, *his matters*, not in the firſt, *my matters*; and 'tis too great a boldneſs with the Text, to make ſuch a change in the tranſlation. Beſides 'tis more agreeable to the ſcope of the place, to take the latter part of the verſe as a reaſon given by *Elihu*, why *Job* ſhould not ſtrive with God, then to take it as a reaſon given by *Job* why he did.

Græci in prima perſona דברי *verbis meis, & non in tertia ut nos legimus* דבריו *verbis ſuis; quaſi* Elihu *mimicῶς verba* Jobi *referat, cur cum eo auſus es contendere, dicens*, Quia omnibus verbis meis non reſpondet, *&c.* Bold.

I find a learned tranſlater among the Moderns who taking the latter part of the verſe as a reaſon given by *Job* of his ſtriving with God ſpoken of in the firſt, yet keeps to the third perſon; *Why doſt thou ſtrive with him? Becauſe he will not give an anſwer (or an account) of all his matters.* As if *Elihu* had ſaid, *I plainly perceive the cauſe why thou (O* Job*) art ſo unquiet, and ſtill perſiſteſt ſtriving with God, 'tis even becauſe he doth not anſwer thy ſo often repeated deſire, to ſummon thy appearance before him, and then to give thee an account of his proceedings with thee. But conſider, man; Art thou well in thy wits? Knoweſt thou what thou doſt, or ſayeſt? Wilt thou a poor narrow-hearted Creature take it ill at the hands of the great God, and as it were ſtrive with him, becauſe de doth not render a reaſon of all his matters, and expound all his doings unto thee?* The argument may be formed thus.

Quare adverſus eum litigas quod de omnibus rebus ſuis non reſpondeat? Jun.

He is not juſt or right who ſtriveth with God, becauſe God doth not give him a reaſon of all his actions and adminiſtrations.

But thou ſeemeſt to ſtrive with God, becauſe he hath not given thee an account or reaſon of his adminiſtrations towards thee; therefore thou art not juſt.

This is a fair and proper ſence; yet I ſhall keep to our reading, and make this latter part of the verſe, as a ground or reaſon given by *Elihu* why *Job* ought not to ſtrive with God, as thoſe two other readings make it a reaſon why he did; as if *Elihu* had ſaid, *Why doſt thou ſtrive againſt him?* Conſider as *God is greater then man*, ſo he is abſolute in his greatneſs, or his is a ſoveraign greatneſs. *For he giveth not account of any of his matters.*

This I conceive the beſt and cleareſt rendring of theſe words, which thus underſtood yields us ſeveral uſeful obſervations: Firſt, upon the whole matter, thus:

Gracious men do not always hold out the ſame gracious frame of Spirit.

There was a time when *Job* was ſo far from ſtriving with God, far from doing or ſpeaking any thing which had the leaſt ſhadow or ſavour of it. Time was, when *Job* was altogether for, and in ſubmitting to God; Let God do what he will with him, he had not a word to ſay againſt him. After all the ſad reports and meſſages which were brought to him of the devaſtation of his whole eſtate in the field, yea of the diſaſterous death of all his children in one day, and at once; did *Job* ſtrive with God? Did he utter one word of complaint, or ſo much as of any diſſatisfaction? No, not one, but gave glory by this confeſſion; *The Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken, bleſſed be the name of the Lord.* Was not here a clear yielding of himſelf up to God, to do what he would with him? Did he not freely lay himſelf low, when God had layed him at the loweſt? Who ever heard or read of a more perfect work of patience in a meer mortal man? Yet in the proceſs of the buſineſs, *Job* did not only ſpeak ſuch words as carried a ſhadow of ſtriving with God, but were real ſtrivings and uncomely pleadings with him. His heart did not retain that firſt ſweet ſubmiſſive frame throughout the affliction, which appeared to admiration at the beginning of it. The ſtate of grace abideth always, 'tis not (as ſome affirm) loſeable; 'tis not, like the beſt things of this world periſhing. But though a ſtate of grace abideth always, yet every mans grace (if any mans) doth not always abide in the ſame ſtate. A true frame of grace ſhall never be deſtroyed, but the heart of a gracious man doth not always continue in the ſame frame. The heat of grace may be cooled, the height of it abated, the ſtrength of it weakned, and the beauty of it faded. He that a while ago walked and acted very humbly, may upon another temptation act very proudly, and walk as if he were above all his brethren. He that one while hath acted very ſelf-denyingly, may at another time act very ſelf-ſeekingly. He that hath acted very lovingly, (the very law of love being ſtamped upon his words and works) may at another time act very unlovely and loveleſly, and do things which are very much beſide and below, yea contrary to the fulfilling of that Royal Law; He may be ſo far from bearing his brothers burden, (which is the fulfilling of that Law of Chriſt, *Gal.*6.2.) that he may be a burden to his Brother. And while at one time you might have done and ſpoken almoſt what you would to him, and he could bear it, at another time, do what you can, or ſpeak what you can, he is offended. Such changes and varieties are found upon the moſt gracious frames of ſpirit, which the beſt of Saints have in this world; We have only this to hold to, the ſtate of grace is unchangeable, and we are waiting for ſuch a frame of grace as ſhall never change. That gracious frame in which the hand of God will ſet us up in the day of our reſurrection to glory, ſhall never change, nor decline a hairs breadth to all eternity. We ſhall be as pure, and as holy, and as ſpiritual, and as heavenly, and as meek, and as full of the praiſe of God for ever, as ever. As full to eternity as in the very firſt moment in which that glorious frame ſhall be ſet up. But in this life to how great a degree of grace ſoever we attain, we ſeldom retain the ſame degree, but are flowing and ebbing like the water, waxing and waining like the Moon. *Job* was found ſtriving with God, who a little before had ſo humbly ſubmitted and was ſo fully reſigned unto him.

Secondly, Obſerve, *There is a ſpirit in man very apt to ſtrive with God.*

Do ye think (ſaith the Apoſtle, *Jam.*4.5.) that the Scripture ſaith in vain, *The ſpirit that dwelleth in us, luſteth to envy*, or (as the margin hath it) *enviouſly*; ſurely no; the Scripture doth not ſpeak this in vain, and if any think it doth, their thoughts are vain. Now, as there are luſtings in men to envy againſt their brethren, becauſe of the gifts and good things of God which they enjoy; ſo there are luſtings in men to diſcontent againſt God, becauſe of the evils which themſelves ſuffer. When God ſeems to contend with us, we really fall to contending with God. The waters of *Meribah* will be an everlaſting witneſs of this; of which *Moſes* ſaid (*Numb.* 20. 13.) *This is the water of Meribah, becauſe the children of Iſrael ſtrove with the Lord, and he was ſanctified in them.* The Apoſtle doth more then intimate this readineſs of man to ſtrive with God, while by a vehement expoſtulation he checks it, and reproves all men for it. (1 *Cor.* 10. 22.) *Do we provoke the Lord to jealouſie? are we ſtronger then he?* They preſume much upon their ſtrength, who are forward to ſtrive, they eſpecially who provoke and challenge others to ſtrive with them. There is a ſpirit in man which ſtouts it with God, even to a provocation of ſtrife with him.

But you will ſay, When may we be ſaid to ſtrive with God? I anſwer, we do it theſe four ways.

Firſt, Man ſtriveth with God by diſobeying his commands; that's a ſtrife with his holineſs. The Laws of God bear the image or ſtamp of his holineſs. All diſobedience is an unanſwerableneſs to the Law, wilful diſobedience is a making void the Law. He that is reſolved to ſin, wiſheth there were no Law to ſtop him from ſinning, or to puniſh him when he hath ſinned. What greater ſtrife can be raiſed againſt the Law-giver, then to wiſh he had given no ſuch Law?

Secondly, Men ſtrive with God, by not believing or diſtruſting his promiſes. That's a ſtrife with his faithfulneſs, or with his power. Unbelief is one of the worſt ways, if not the worſt of all the ways of ſtriving with God. The reaſon why that place at the rock in *Horeb* was called *Meribah* (Exod. 17. 7.) was becauſe the people did not believe. They thought they muſt die with thirſt in the wilderneſs when they ſaw no water. They fell to this ſin again a ſecond time upon the like occaſion, while they abode in *Kadeſh* (Numb. 20. 1, 2, 3.) And as the people ſtrove there with God by their rebellious unbelief, ſo alſo did *Moſes* and *Aaron* by their unbelief, that God would give water to ſuch rebels, as it follows in the ſame Chapter (*Ver.*10, 11, 12.) There is no ſin ſo often, or ſo properly called a provocation as unbelief is. Yea by unbelief we ſtrive ſo much with God, that we are ſaid to weary him (*Iſa.*7. 13.) O how do they weary God, who either think him ſo weak that he cannot, or ſo unfaithful that he will not make good his word, or perform his promiſes! The firſt of theſe is always in unbelief, the latter often.

Thirdly, We ſtrive with God by not bearing his hand, or by our impatience under the croſs which his hand layeth upon us: while we quarrel with the rod, we quarrel with God who chaſteneth us with it. This was the moſt ſpecial way in which *Job* ſtrove with God; and the ſinfulneſs of it, hath been ſeveral times toucht upon in this Book.

Fourthly, Any murmuring word about, yea any diſcontented thought with our own condition, though not vented by words, though it be kept in, and lie cloſe in the boſom, is a ſtriving with God. And ſo likewiſe is any tumultuating thought about his providences towards others and his ſtating of affairs in the World.

Now as there is ſuch a ſinful principle in man to ſtrive with God; ſo conſidering, as hath been ſhewed, how many ways it works (and many more ways of its working might be ſhewed, this, I ſay, being conſidered) we may be found ſtriving with God before we think of it, yea while we oppoſe the very thought of it. Therefore (as *Gamaliel* warned the *Jews*, ſaying (*Acts* 5. 39.) *Take heed what ye do, leſt haply ye be found even to fight againſt God*; Thoſe *Jews* did not think their oppoſing the Meſſengers and Miniſters of Chriſt, was a fighting againſt God; But *Gamaliël* told them plainly it was.) So in many other caſes, we may do and ſay that which brings us under the ſame charge of ſtriving with or againſt God, though we have no purpoſe (as *Job* had not) to ſtrive with him.

Again, As this Text ſheweth us *Job* ſtriving with God, ſo it ſheweth us *Elihu* ſtriving with or queſtioning *Job* about it. This Queſtion or expoſtulation, *Why doſt thou ſtrive with him?* was a chiding ſevere reproof of him for doing ſo.

Hence Note, *For man to ſtrive with God is moſt uncomely.*

Doth it ſuit the condition, or become the ſtate of man to do ſo? It doth not become man as a creature to ſtrive with God, much leſs as a new creature, as a profeſſed ſervant of God, as a Saint, as a Chriſtian. We never act ſo unlike either creatures, or new creatures, Saints, and Chriſtians, as when we ſtrive with God. 'Tis a ſhame for a child to ſtrive with his Father, or for a ſervant to ſtrive with his Maſter, how much more for a creature to ſtrive with his Creator, man with God?

Fourthly, The rebuke which *Elihu* gave *Job*, did not only import the uncomelineſs of his ſtriving with God, but the ſinfulneſs of it.

Hence Note, *To ſtrive with God (in any of thoſe ways before deſcribed) is a ſin exceeding ſinful.*

How extreamly ſinful it is for man to ſtrive with God, appears by all the relative duties of man to God: Every ſervant and ſon of God, is bound, firſt, to ſubmit to God; is it not exceeding ſinful to ſtrive where we ought to ſubmit? Secondly, Every godly man by theſe relations to God, is bound to be content with (which is more then barely to ſubmit to) all his dealings; Do not they ſin, who in ſtead of being content, ſtrive with God becauſe he deals ſo with them? Thirdly, Man ought, not only to be content, but to be well-pleaſed with what God doth; How far are they departed from a well-pleaſedneſs with God, who ſtrive againſt him, which is an act of high diſpleaſure? It is ſaid of *David* (2 Sam. 3.36.) *Whatſoever the King did pleaſed all the people.* The people did not ſay to *David* their King, do what you will, we will be pleaſed with it; But *David* was ſo gracious a Prince, ſo good a King, that he did nothing that was juſtly diſpleaſing to the people. 'Tis more then comes to the ſhare of a man, though a King, to ſay, Let him do what he will, we will be pleaſed with it; but 'tis certainly our duty to ſay to God, Do what you will, do your pleaſure with us, and to us, we will (through grace) be pleaſed with it. Is it not very ſinful to ſtrive with him about any thing he doth, in and with all whoſe doings we ought to acquieſce, and be well pleaſed?

Fifthly, Theſe words, *Why doſt thou ſtrive with him?* import a high preſumption in thoſe who do ſo.

Hence Obſerve, *Striving with God is a preſumptuous Sin.*

The Prophet ſaith, (*Iſa.* 45. 9.) *Woe unto him that ſtriveth with his maker. Let the potſherd ſtrive with the potſherds of the earth: Shall the clay ſay to him that faſhioneth it, what makeſt thou? or thy work, he hath no hands?* When the Prophet ſaith, *Let the potſherd ſtrive with the potſherds of the earth*; his meaning is, let man ſtrive with man, but let not any man preſume to ſtrive with his maker; for then the potſherd ſtriveth with [illegible] potter. In all which he doth not encourage man to ſtrive with man, (though his match) but ſheweth how inſufferable a boldneſs it is for any man (how matchleſs ſoever among men) to ſtrive with God. The King of *Judah* having ſent a challenge to the King of *Iſrael*, He returned this anſwer (2 *Kings* 14. 9.) *The thiſtle that was in Lebanon ſent to the Cedar that was in Lebanon*, &c. As if he had ſaid, What a preſumption is it for a thiſtle to equal it ſelf with a Cedar? And therefore he adviſeth (*Ver.* 10.) *Thou haſt indeed ſmitten Edom, and thy heart hath lifted thee up: glory of this and tarry at home; for why ſhouldeſt thou meddle to thy hurt, that thou ſhouldeſt fall, thou and Judah with thee?* As if he had ſaid, thou canſt get nothing by medling with me but blows, and moſt probably, thine own ruin to boot. Now if an earthly King ſhall look upon it as a preſumption for another King his equal in dignity to contend with him, how much more may the God of Heaven, who is King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, count it an high preſumption for any man, though the greateſt King on earth, to ſtrive with him?

Sixthly, We uſe to ſay to thoſe who act fooliſhly, Why do you thus? And therefore when *Elihu* ſaith to *Job*, *Why doſt thou ſtrive againſt him?*

We learn, *Striving with God is a fooliſh and a moſt irrational thing.*

Sinners are fools, all ſin is folly, irrationality is ſtampt upon every ſin. Striving with God is a ſin ſo eminently fooliſh as may carry away the bell, for fooliſhneſs, from all other ſins. I will give you three things, to ſhew why it muſt needs be ſo.

Firſt, We cannot help our ſelves by ſtriving with God. Chriſt argues the folly of inordinate cares from this ground (*Matth.* 6. 27.) *Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his ſtature?* It is not mans care, but the preſence and bleſſing of God which increaſeth both the ſtature of man and his eſtate. Cares may break our ſleep, yea break our hearts, but they cannot fill our purſes, nor heighten our perſons, either in a natural or in a civil notion. Is it not then a fooliſh thing to take inordinate care? is it not greater folly to ſtrive with God? Seeing as by caring you cannot get any of the good things of the world, ſo by ſtriving with God, you cannot get off any of thoſe evils which he layeth upon you. Secondly, Is it not a very fooliſh thing to ſtrive with God, ſeeing we are ſo far from helping our ſelves out of trouble by it, that we do but increaſe our trouble, and the more entangle our ſelves by it? What do we by ſtrugling but ſtraiten the bonds of our affliction, and get wearineſs, in ſtead of expected eaſe? till we are quiet with God, how can we hope that he ſhould ſend us quietneſs? Thirdly, It is a fooliſh thing to ſtrive with God, becauſe by ſtriving with him in reference to any miſery that is upon us, we hinder our ſelves from taking comfort in any remaining mercy. Though God takes away many mercies, yet while life remaineth there is ſomewhat of mercy remaining. When *Job* was ſtripped to his skin, yet he had ſomewhat left, which was a ground of his bleſſing God. The greateſt loſers have ſomewhat left, they eſcape at leaſt (as *Job* ſaid he did at worſt, *Chap.* 19. 20.) *with the skin of their teeth.* But while we ſtrive with God about the mercies we have loſt, we loſe the comfort of all the mercies we ſtill enjoy. And is it not extream folly to deprive our ſelves of what we have by complaining about what we have not? *Why doſt thou ſtrive?* Thus much from the emphaſis of the former part of the verſe, as 'tis put into a chiding or reproving Queſtion, *Why doſt thou ſtrive againſt him?* From the latter branch. *He giveth not account of any of his matters.*

Obſerve, Firſt, *The power and dominion of God is abſolute.*

God is not ſubject to any reckonings with man whatſoever he doth. He that may do what he will, and can do nothing but what is right, neither may nor can be brought to any account for what he hath done. He that is unaccountable is abſolute in power.

Further, God needs not give man any account, upon theſe three grounds. Firſt, He oweth no man any thing; He hath received nothing of us, and if a man hath not received, he needeth not account. They that have any truſt from men, are to give account. But what hath God received from man? Man receives his all from God. Why then ſhould God give any account?

Secondly, Conſider, the Lord hath wronged no man, nor can he. He is infinitely juſt and righteous in all his ways; He not only doth juſt things, but things are juſt becauſe he doth them. Why ſhould he give an account of any of his matters, who neither doth nor can do any matter which is unjuſt. If we knew and were fully aſſured of a man (in whoſe hands we have truſted much) that he were ſo juſt, that he would not (though he had opportunity) deceive us of a farthing, we would never call him to an account. As it is ſaid of thoſe treaſurers in the ſtory of the Kings (2 *Kings* 12. 15.) *They reckoned not with the men into whoſe hand they delivered the mony to be beſtowed on workmen, for they dealt faithfully.* An example hardly to be parallel'd in an age by the ſons of men. Many are more deſirous of truſts, then careful to diſcharge them; They love to have much treaſure paſs through their hands, that ſome of it may, in paſſage, ſlip into their own pockets and purſes. Juſtice and faithfulneſs are rare Jewels among men, and therefore it is but need they ſhould have a check upon them, and be called to an account. But the holy God is altogether juſt and faithful, therefore to what purpoſe ſhould he be called to an account. Let us reſt quiet in this acknowledgment, That he whoſe will is the higheſt reaſon; can do nothing without reaſon. Man was created under God, and then he returns to the order of his creation, when he prefers the judgment of God, even when he doth not underſtand it, before his own.

Thirdly, There is no man, no nor Angel, that hath any authority to call God to an account. They that are accountable to others, are under their power, either as being in degree above them, or as having made a compact and Covenant with them (though their equals) to give them

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Homo ſub Deo eſt conditus & ad conditionis ordinem redit, quando ſibi æquitatem judicis, etiam quam non intelligit anteponit. Greg. l. 13. Mor. c. 18.

an account. But who ſhall call God to an account, who is higher then the higheſt? And though God hath condeſcended to make a covenant with man, and therein given him aſſurance that he will do him good, yet God hath engaged himſelf to give us an account how or in what way he makes good or performs his Covenant. Man muſt give an account to God how he hath performed the Articles of the Covenant, not God to man. As man is a frail dying creature, ſo he is an accountable creature (*Luke* 16. 2.) *Give an account of thy Stewardſhip, for thou mayſt be no longer Steward* (Rom. 14. 12.) *So then every one of us ſhall give an account of himſelf to God.* God will call every man to a ſtrict account of his receits and expences, what talents of time and opportunities of parts and abilities, of Power and Authorities, have been put into his hand, as alſo how he hath husbanded and improved them. We, alas poor creatures, by ſtriving with God, call him (upon the matter) to give us an account of his matters; And in the mean time forget the account which we muſt give to him of all our matters. It is our duty and will be our wiſdom to account ſo with our ſelves every day, that we may be ready for our account in that great and laſt Audit-Day; And as to remember and prepare for our own account in that day, will keep us from doing or ſaying any thing which may be interpreted a calling of God to an account all our days: ſo that remembrance will make us ſtrive how to improve and be bettered by the afflictions and troubles wherewith we are exerciſed in the world, in ſtead of ſtriving with God, becauſe he puts us upon thoſe ſeverer exerciſes; for how we have improved our afflictions will be one part (and that a very conſiderable one) of our account to God in that day.

Laſtly, The two parts of this Verſe connected and conſidered together, (*Why doſt thou ſtrive againſt him, for he giveth not account of any of his matters?*) The latter being a reaſon of the former, give us this Obſervation;

> *God being abſolute in power we ought to ſit down quietly under all his dealings:* Or thus, *The conſideration of Gods abſolute Soveraignty, that he gives not account of any of his matters, ſhould ſtop all our ſtrivings and pleadings with or againſt God.*

Our ſtrivings againſt God are of two ſorts, or in a double reſpect; They reſpect either our eternal, or our temporal eſtate.

Firſt, With reſpect to our eternal ſtate (for about that we are apt to call God to account.) O what ſtrivings are there in the hearts of men about Gods abſolute Soveraignty in electing of ſome and rejecting of others. The Apoſtle is much upon it (*Rom.* 9.) where having repreſented the Lord ſpeaking thus by *Moſes* (*Verſ.* 15.) *I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compaſſion on whom I will have compaſſion:* He preſently prevents an Objection or the ſtriſe of man with God about that ſaying, (*Verſ.* 19.) *Thou wilt ſay then, why doth he yet find fault?* (As if men might find fault with God, if he in that caſe ſhould find fault with them?) *For who hath reſiſted his will?* This is mans plea againſt the ſoveraign will of God. But what ſaith the Lord by the Apoſtle to ſuch a pleader? We have his reproof of him for an anſwer in the next verſe, *Nay but O man, who art thou that replyeſt againſt God? ſhall the thing formed ſay to him that formed it, why haſt thou made me thus? Hath not the Potter power over the clay?* The Apoſtle brings in this Argument as to mans eternal ſtate; he muſt not ſtrive with God about that. He muſt not ſay, why doth God find fault with man? *O man, who art thou that doſt logick it thus with God?* His abſolute power is his reaſon why he diſpoſeth thus or thus of thee, or any man elſe. He will give thee no account why it is ſo, but his own will to have it ſo. For ſhame ſit down, ſtop thy mouth for ever, ſpeak not thus to God. If thou art, as thou canſt not deny, a thing formed by God, then ſay not why haſt thou made me thus. And as now thou ſtriveſt with God about that which thou canſt not underſtand, ſo at laſt (though now thou doſt not) thou ſhalt underſtand that thou oughteſt not to have ſtriven with him about it. And indeed if men have a mind to ſtrive with God, they may find as many occaſions for it in the doctrin of his conditional decrees of foreſeen faith, repentance, and preſevering obedience, as in his abſolute. We ſhall never want matter of quarrelling with God, till we have learned ſimply, that is, graciouſly to ſubmit.

Secondly, This truth ſhould much more quiet our ſpirits, and ſtop our ſtrivings in reference to our temporal eſtate. And that,

Firſt, As wrapt up in common with others. Did we conſider the Soveraign power of God in ordering the affairs of Nations and Churches, we would glorifie him in a gracious ſilence however we ſee things go with them. The Scripture urgeth us often to this fixedneſs of mind in the midſt of all publick revolutions and changes upon this only account. Hear *David* (*Pſal.* 46. 9, 10.) *Come behold the works of the Lord*, (What works? ruining works) *what deſolation he hath made in the earth.* God made ſtrange work in the World at that time, Thoſe Countrys which before were as the Garden of God, became like a deſolate Wilderneſs; who was able to bear this with patience? Yet the Spirit of God ſaith in the next words, it muſt be patiently born. When God lets men ſtrive and war with one another to a common confuſion, yet no man may ſtrive with God about it; and the reaſon given why no man may, is only this (which is indeed all the reaſon in the world) *He is God.* So it follows in the Pſalm, *Be ſtill and know that I am God*; As if the Lord had ſaid, not a word, do not ſtrive nor reply, whatever you ſee, hold your peace; know that I being God I give no account of any of my matters. Thus the Prophet cautions the whole world (*Zech.* 2. 13.) *Be ſilent O all fleſh before the Lord,* (do not diſpute the doings of God, do not murmure at them) *for he is raiſed up out of his holy habitation*: That is, God is going to work (as a man raiſed out of his bed is) therefore do not you trouble your ſelves, nor riſe up againſt him in your words or thoughts what work ſoever he makes. Like counſel is given (*Pſal.* 75. 5.) *Lift not up your horn on high, ſpeak not with a ſtiff neck; for promotion cometh neither from the Eaſt, nor from the Weſt, nor from the South: But God is the Judg, he putteth down one, and ſetteth up another.* All great changes proceed from his judgment; take heed of judging the ſentence of the great Judg. Remember, *That he whoſe name alone is* Jehovah, *is the moſt high over all the Earth.* (Pſal. 83. 18.)

Again, This is as true if we reſpect the private or perſonal eſtate of any man. If God makes a man poor in eſtate or deſpiſed in the World; if he make him ſick or weak in body, he muſt not ſay unquietly, why doth God thus? If he taketh away our Relations, if he empty our families we muſt not ſtrive with him. When old *Eli* had received one of the ſaddeſt meſſages that ever was ſent man. *It is the Lord* (ſaith he) *let him do what ſeemeth him good* (1 Sam. 3. 18.) So *David* (Pſal. 39. 9.) *I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, becauſe thou didſt it* (Pſal. 62. 1.) *Truly my Soul waiteth patiently upon God.* The word is, *my Soul is ſilent before God.* And (*Pſal.* 42. 5.) How doth *David* chide his Soul for making a noiſe? *Why art thou diſquieted, O my Soul? hope thou in God.*

But you will ſay, May we not at all ſtrive? What ever God doth in the World, or with us, muſt we ſit down under it, or reſt ſatisfied in it, and ſay nothing?

I anſwer, Firſt, we may and ought to be very ſenſible of all the dealings of God; but we muſt not be unquiet under any of them. It is one thing to feel the ſmart, and another thing to diſpute the rod. Some are under a kind of Stoical ſtupidity; they do not ſtrive with God, becauſe they do not mind what God doth, they are not ſenſible. Others are ſtout, ſturdy, and proud ſpirited, they care not for the croſs, they ſlight and deſpiſe rebukes. Thus or upon theſe grounds not to ſtrive with God is as bad, if not worſe then that ſtriving with him which this point diſſwades and diſapproves. We may, yea we ought to take notice of every ſtroak we receive from God.

Secondly, As we ſhould be ſenſible of the hand of God at any time upon us, ſo we may pray for the removing of his hand; 'Tis not a ſinful but a gracious act, to ſtrive with God by prayer for deliverance out of trouble.

Thirdly, A man under the Rod may uſe means to get it off, and free himſelf from it, even while he is quiet under it, So then, the quietneſs of mind in our afflicted condition here intended and preſſed, is oppoſed only, firſt, to fretting and repining. Secondly, to vexing and tumultuating. Thirdly, to diſtracting cares. Fourthly, to deſponding fears. Fifthly, to killing ſorrows. Sixthly, to uncompoſedneſs of ſpirit for our callings. Seventhly, to hard thoughts of God. Eighthly, to the uſing of any unlawful means to help to reſcue our ſelves out of the hand of evil.

And that we may be preſerved from all theſe ſtrivings againſt God, and unquietneſs of ſpirit under any of his ſaddeſt and darkeſt diſpenſations, which will certainly run us upon ſome of, if not all thoſe eight moſt dangerous rocks, laſt mentioned, Let me lay down a few conſiderations, why we ſhould not ſtrive with God in ſuch a manner: And preſcribe ſome preſervatives to keep us at the greateſt diſtance from it.

Firſt, Conſider, to ſtrive with God diſhonours God and darkens his glory; for hereby we call his wiſdom and goodneſs, yea his truth and faithfulneſs to us in Queſtion. What can be done more diſhonourable to God then this? God reſented it as a great diſhonour, that *Moſes* and *Aaron* did not *ſanctifie him* (that is, give glory to his name) *before the Children of Iſrael* (Num. 20. 12.) and therefore told them, *Ye ſhall not bring the Children of Iſrael into the land which I have given them.* As if he had ſaid, Ye have not honoured me as ye ought in this thing, and therefore I will not honour you in that. But what is it, that *Moſes* and *Aaron* did not ſanctifie God in? it was (ſaith the Text) *in not believing.* And what is that (at beſt) but a ſtriving with God, as to the truth of his word and his faithfulneſs in fulfilling it?

Secondly, Such ſtriving with God hinders the exerciſe of grace, and ſtops the work of the new creature. He that ſtriveth with God by way of murmuring, can never ſtrive with God by praying and believing.

Thirdly, Such ſtrivings with God are the exerciſings of our luſts and corruptions. Then is the time for anger and diſcontent, or any evil affection to come forth and act their part.

Fourthly, Striving with God is an argument that ſin hath much ſtrength in us, and that corruption hath got a mighty hand over us.

Fifthly, Striving with God layeth us open to all the temptations of Satan, to all the fiery darts of the Devil. Our ſhield is gone, when once we ſtrive with God, who is our ſhield in all Satans ſtrivings and aſſaults againſt us; And then we ſtand naked before that armed Enemy.

Sixthly, Striving with God, doth at once unfit us for every good duty, and putteth us further off from every deſired mercy.

Seventhly, and laſtly, Striving againſt God, makes man moſt like the Devil, who is the moſt unquiet and diſcontented creature in the world, and is always both ſtriving with God, and vexing at his own condition. The Devil's ſin at firſt was ſtriving with God, and 'tis the ſum of all his actings and workings againſt man ever ſince. None reſemble the Devil more lively then male-contents; and who are they but ſuch as ſtrive and ſtruggle againſt the afflictive providences of God.

Now for the preſerving and keeping of our hearts from this great, this complicated ſin, a ſin containing many ſins in it, and diſpoſing us to all ſin. Lay theſe things to heart.

Firſt, Let us conſider our own nothingneſs in compariſon of God. God is all, and what are we? we are nothing, and ſhall we ſtrive with God? ſhall folly ſtrive againſt wiſdom, and weakneſs againſt ſtrength? When the Prophet would comfort the people of God againſt the ſtrivings of the Nations with them, he doth it upon this conſideration (*Iſa.* 40. 17.) *All nations before him are as nothing, and they are counted to him leſs then nothing, and vanity; To whom will ye compare him?* And ſurely we may by the ſame argument, much more deter all men from ſtriving with God. Shall ſingle perſons ſtrive againſt him, to whom not only they, but whole nations are nothing, yea and leſs then nothing?

Secondly, Do we find our ſelves under a croſs, or in a hard condition? Remember we have deſerved no better. As we are nothing, ſo we have deſerved nothing. *Jacob* to keep his ſpirit quiet in a time of great diſtreſs confeſſed (*Gen.* 32. 10.) *Lord I am unworthy of the leaſt of thy mercies.* As if he had ſaid, I have no reaſon to complain, or be angry, to fret or vex at this diſpenſation, yea though thou ſhouldſt let the cloud of my brothers wrath break upon me, and ſwallow me up, for what am I? If we conſider we have deſerved no good, we ſhall never ſtrive with God about any evil that befalls us; eſpecially, if we conſider,

Thirdly, That we are ill-deſerving, or ſuch as deſerve the greateſt evils. None of us ſuffer but what our own ſin hath procured, yea ſin might have procured us ſorer ſufferings. Every ſin hath a croſs in the belly of it. And ſhall we ſtrive with God becauſe of our croſſes, when our ſins have made them?

Fourthly, Why ſhould we ſtrive with God about theſe things? Are they worth the ſtriving with God about? Surely they are not worth the ſtriving with men about, much leſs with God. If we were in the beſt outward eſtate that ever any man enjoyed in this World, yet we were not then got a ſtep beyond vanity (*Pſal.* 39. 5.) *Every man in his beſt eſtate is altogether vanity.* Suppoſe God ſhould give you a blank, and bid you ſit down and Write what you would have as to your outward ſtate, and then beſtow it upon you, yet in this beſt eſtate, you and your all are altogether vanity. And will ye ſtrive with God for taking a vain thing from you? Will you be ſo much diſſatisfied for the taking away or want of that which could not ſatisfie you when you had it, nor can when you have it again? If a man had all theſe comforts which he ſtrives for, they could not make him happy, why then ſhould he ſtrive becauſe they are removed from him? But as they are vanity, becauſe unable to ſatisfie when we have them, ſo they are vanity, becauſe of our uncertainty to hold them; Yea ſuppoſe we hold them as long as we can have them, it is but a while. And ſhall we ſtrive with God about loſing that which at longeſt we cannot keep long? To be ſure theſe things are not neceſſary for us: Chriſt ſaid to *Martha, There is one thing neceſſary* (Luke 10. 42.) But a worldly comfort of any kind is not the neceſſary thing which Chriſt there intends; And ſhall we ſtrive with God about unneceſſaries?

Fifthly, Know, afflictions are the portion of the people of God in this life. They are the corrections of a Father, and there is no ſon but hath his correction, or may have it. And ſhall we ſtrive with God for ſending us our portion, our ſon-like, child-like portion?

Sixthly, I would ſay this to believers, Why will ye ſtrive with God about any of your afflictions? they are for your good and benefit. And will ye ſtrive with God, becauſe he is doing you good? Let your afflictions be never ſo ſad, never ſo ſore, and to ſence never ſo bad, yet God is doing you good by them; be not angry with your own good?

Laſtly, Why do we ſtrive with God under our afflictions; He loveth us as much under affliction, as in a proſperous condition. God is tender to his in their troubles, and ſhall they be harſh to him, when he is ſo tender towards them? A parent that hath but nature, will tender his child moſt when ſick and weak, and will not God? Let us take heed we be not found ſtriving with, or having hard thoughts of God while the bowels of his moſt tender compaſſions are moving towards us.

To ſhut up this whole point. As Chriſt when he ſaw his Diſciples in danger to be carried away with the fear of man, ſaith to them (*Luke* 12. 4, 5.) *Be not afraid of them that can kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do; But I will forewarn you, whom you ſhall fear; fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to caſt into Hell, yea I ſay unto you, fear him.* Now, as becauſe men are apt to fear, yea moſtly to fear that which they ſhould not, Chriſt ſheweth them whom to fear. So (as hath been ſhewed) becauſe men are very apt to ſtrive, but they commonly ſtrive with thoſe, and about thoſe things, which they ſhould not. Therefore I will tell you with whom and with what ye ſhould ſtrive. If ye will needs be ſtriving, pray

Firſt, Strive with the ſin in your own boſoms, ſtrive with your own luſts and corruptions. One of the great Goſpel duties which we are called to, is to mortifie our earthly members. To ſtrive with all inordinate affections, with pride, with envie, with love of the world, and with uncharitableneſs to the death, is our duty, if ye will needs ſtrive, ſtrive with theſe.

Secondly, If you will needs be ſtriving, then ſtrive with the ſins of others in a gracious and zealous manner, as *Nehemiah* did, who contended with the Nobles for their prophanation of the Sabbath, and their unlawful marriages (*Neh.* 13. 17. & 25.) We ſhould ſtrive with one another to hinder that which is evil. *Gideon* broke down *Baals* altar, he ſtrove with *Baal*, and was therefore ſirnamed *Jerubbaal* (Judg. 6. 32.) So let us ſtrive with the corrupt practices, courſes, and cuſtoms of the times, we live in, not dally and comply with them as many do. The Apoſtle ſaith (*Heb.* 12. 4.) *Ye have not yet reſiſted unto blood, ſtriving againſt ſin*, This is, either the ſin of others, or the ſin which others would force you to. Though we ſhould ſtrive againſt our own ſins eſpecially, yet 'tis good to ſtrive againſt ſin in whomſoever we ſee it.

Thirdly, If you will be ſtriving, then ſtrive with Satan, The Adverſary; *Submit to God, and reſiſt the Devil*, contain the whole duty of man, (*James* 4. 7.) Our buſineſs is not to ſtrive with God, but to ſubmit to him; And our buſineſs is not to ſubmit to the Devil, but to ſtrive with him. How do moſt run a contrary courſe? They reſiſt God, and ſubmit to the Devil. O ſad! Here's a threefold bleſſed ſtriſe; Firſt, Strive with the luſts and corruptions of your own hearts; Secondly, Strive with the ſins of others, and their ſollicitations of you to ſin: Thirdly, Strive with the Devil and his temptations. Do not ſtrive with God, why ſhould we ſtrive with God at any time, or in any thing, whom at all times, and in all things, we ought to ſerve, honour and obey? So much of this chiding Queſtion, in which *Elihu* reproves *Job*, and he had given but too much occaſion for it. *Why doſt thou ſtrive with him? he giveth not account of any of his matters.*

VERS. 14.

For God ſpeaketh once, yea, twice, yet man perceiveth it not.

IN this Verſe and the context following, *Elihu* begins his ſecond anſwer to *Job*, which is alſo continued to the end of the Chapter. His anſwer is laid down,

Firſt, In general at the 14. Verſe.

Secondly, In particulars by way of inſtance, from the 15. Verſe to the 29.

Thirdly, He ſums up or recapitulates the whole of his diſcourſe, in the 29. and 30. Verſes.

Fourthly, Concludes, ſeriouſly inviting *Job* to anſwer what he had ſaid, as alſo, what he had yet to ſay, *Verſ.* 31. 32, 33.

This 14. Verſe hath ſome difficulty in it; And though the croſs and various thoughts of Interpreters about it have made it more difficult, yet there is one thing wherein all center and agree; That, *Elihu* in this 14. Verſe and ſo forward propounds certain ways by which God is pleaſed to reveal and manifeſt himſelf unto man. Firſt, to humble and bring man to a true ſenſe of himſelf; Secondly, to work in him an acknowledgment of his great goodneſs and righteouſneſs in all his dealings with the Children of men. For having ſaid at the 13. Verſe, *God gives not account of any of his matters*; He is above all reckonings and days of Audit (having thus, I ſay, aſſerted the abſolute ſoveraignty of God over man) he adds, to mitigate and allay the ſeeming ſeverity of this aſſertion, That although God be ſo high and great, that he is not at all obliged to give any account of himſelf or of his ways to the creature, nor will allow any man to be ſo bold as to ſtrive with him about, or queſtion any of his matters, yet he is pleaſed freely and graciouſly to condeſcend unto man many ways; and not only once but often, not only often in one way, but by ſeveral ways to give him clear intimations what his will is, what he requires of him, and calls unto him for, if man had but will and underſtanding to perceive it; *for he ſpeaketh once, yea, twice, yet man perceiveth it not.* So then, man hath no reaſon to complain (as *Job* ſometimes had done, and many others in like diſtreſſes do) that he is in the dark, and doth not perceive the mind of God towards him, why he is ſo afflicted, and why God contendeth with him; for God doth give touches, hints, and admonitions, ſometimes more privately, ſometimes more openly, and if man doth not perceive them, it is his own fault.

Deus nemini rationem reddere tenetur. Tanto tamen amore nos complectitur ut ſæpius judiciorum ſuorum rationes aperire dignetur, etſi id non ſemper obſervamus. Lavat.

Verſ. 14. **For he ſpeaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not.**

We render the firſt word of this verſe by that cauſal particle, *For*; yet becauſe the Text doth not ſtrictly carry a reaſon in it of what was ſaid before, but is rather an explication or an accommodation of it; therefore ſome begin the verſe, not with that cauſal particle *For*, but with an adverb of time, *When*. So Mr. *Broughton*, *When the omnipotent ſpeaketh once*, &c. And the reaſon of it is, becauſe we find another adverb of time anſwering this at the 16. verſe, *When God ſpeaketh once or twice, and man perceiveth it not*, &c. *Then he openeth the ears of men, and ſealeth their inſtruction.* As if *Elihu* had ſaid; *If ſpeaking will not do it, ſomewhat elſe ſhall; or when God having ſpoken once or twice, yet finds man unattentive and unſenſible, he takes another courſe; then he openeth the ears of men, and ſealeth up their inſtruction. If they underſtand not his meaning by dreams and viſions, he will awaken them to purpoſe.* We ſay,

For God ſpeaketh.] As if here a reaſon were given why God ſhould not be called at all (as being ſo great he ought not) to give man an account of any of his matters, *for he ſpeaketh once or twice*, he is aforehand with man.

For God ſpeaketh.] To ſpeak, in ſtrict ſence, as ſpeaking is the forming up of words by an articulate voyce, is proper to man; yet in Scripture God is ſaid to ſpeak, when or howſoever he maketh known his mind to man. Which he always doth in ſuch a way, as is moſt ſuitable to his own greatneſs, with reſpect to mans weakneſs. When God giveth us any intimation of his own will, and of our duty, of what he will do for us, or of what he would have us do, then he is ſaid to ſpeak to us. (*Heb.* 1. 1.) *God who at ſundry times and in divers manners ſpake in time paſt unto the Fathers by the Prophets, hath in theſe laſt days ſpoken to us by his Son.* God ſpake to the old Fathers, as at many times, or by many parts, ſo in divers ways and manners; he delivered his mind unto the people uſually by the Prophets, and to the Prophets in dreams and viſions. The ſpeaking of God was either immediate from himſelf in thoſe dreams and viſions to the Prophets, or mediate by the Prophets. And though now God doth not ſpeak to us immediately as he did to the Prophets before Chriſt came in the fleſh, and to the Apoſtles after he was come in the fleſh, yet all the Prophetical and Apoſtolical writings are the ſpeakings of God to us, beſides what he dayly ſpeaketh to us (anſwerable to what is written) both inwardly by the workings of his Spirit, and outwardly by the works of his providence. *For he ſpeaketh once*, &c.

Dei admonitio vocis & ſermonis ſæpe loco eſt, etſi non ſemper ipſe & loquatur ut ſæpe veteribus patribus loqui ſolebat quocunq; tandem modo admoneat. Merc.

Hence Note, *In what way ſoever God reveals his mind unto man, he ſpeaks unto him.*

Every manifeſtation of the will of God to us is a Sermon; what man ſpeaketh to us according to the word of God, is to be received as the word of God. For as God ſpeaketh to us, though not formally, yet expreſly in the holy Scriptures, which are his word, ſo he ſpeaketh to us vertually, though not expreſly by his works. And that, Firſt, by his works of creation; by them God is continually opening and manifeſting himſelf to man in his wiſdom, power, and goodneſs. He ſpeaketh to us, Secondly, by his works of providence, whether firſt they be works of mercy (every mercy hath a voyce in it, every bleſſing a ſpeech) or ſecondly, whether they be works of judgment (*Micah.* 6. 9) *The Lords voyce cryeth unto the City, and the man of wiſdom ſhall ſee thy name; hear ye the rod, and who hath appointed it.* Sickneſſes and loſſes, the croſſes & troubles that we meet with in the world, cry aloud to us, eſpecially when they make us (as they often do) cry aloud. *As the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament ſheweth his handy work, day unto day uttereth ſpeech, and night unto night ſheweth knowledg* (Pſal. 19. 1, 2.) ſo thoſe things that are done and acted night and day, utter the mind and ſpeak out the heart of God unto man.

כאחת *in una pro* כפעם אחת *in una vice.*

For God ſpeaketh once, yea twice.] The Hebrew is, *in once,* That is, for one *Turn or Time,* or by one means or way. The word *once*, hath a threefold ſignification in Scripture, all which are applyable to the Text in hand.

Firſt, *Once*, is as much as ſurely, certainly, verily, irrevocably. Thus (*Pſal.*89. 35.) *Once have I ſworn by my holineſs, that I will not lie unto David*; That is, I have ſurely ſworn, certainly ſworn, irrevocably ſworn, my word, yea my Oath is out, and it is immutable; That which God (in this ſence) once ſaith, it is always ſaid, or 'tis ſaid for ever; how much more that which he ſweareth? Thus the Apoſtle argueth (*Heb.*6. 17, 18.) *God willing more abundantly* (or more then needed as to him and the truth of the thing in it ſelf) *to ſhew unto the heirs of promiſe the immutability of his counſel confirmed it by an Oath, that by two immutable things, in which it is impoſſible for God to lie* (namely, his promiſe and his Oath) *we might have ſtrong conſolation*, &c. In like notion we may expound that *once*, which we find (*Heb.* 9. 27.) *And as it is appointed unto men once to die* (or to die once) *and after that cometh the judgment*. Some refer, *once*, to *die*, as if the meaning were, it is appointed unto men to die once, that is, men muſt expect to die a natural death, which happens but *once*, and *once* (at leaſt equivalently) will and muſt happen to all men. Others refer the *once* to *appointed* in the ſence of this preſent expoſition; *It is appointed once*; That is, God hath certainly and firmly appointed eſtabliſhed and decreed this thing, he hath ratified it in Heaven, that men muſt die; This ſtatute is irrevocable; The thing is appointed, and there is no reverſing or revoking of that appointment. This is a good ſence, and ſutable enough to the ſcope of *Elihu*; God ſpeaketh *once*, that is, what he ſpeaketh is a ſure and certain word, an infallible word; *the word ſetled for ever in Heaven* (Plal. 119. 89.) his promiſe is not only ſure but moſt ſure. As the Apoſtle ſpeaks (2 *Pet.* 1. 18,19.) *And this voyce which came from Heaven we heard when we were with him in the holy Mount. We have alſo a more ſure* (the Comparative imports the Superlative, *a moſt ſure*) *word of Prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that ſhineth in a dark place, until the day dawn and the day-ſtar ariſe in your hearts.* As the whole prophetical, ſo the whole Hiſtorical and Doctrinal word of God is moſt ſure, being once ſpoken it is ſpoken for ever, *And written as with a pen of Iron, and the point of a Diamond, and that upon a Rock which cannot be removed.* That which was vain-glorioully, and beyond the line of man, ſaid of the Law of the *Medes*, and *Perſians*, (Dan. 6. 8.) is only true of the word of God, it altereth not.

Semel loquitur Deus, & ſecundo id ipſum non repetet. Vulg. *Quia quod ſufficienter factum eſt iterare ſuperfluum eſt.* Aq.

Secondly, This *once* ſpeaking, notes the ſpeaking of a thing ſo *ſufficiently or fully*, that there is enough ſaid at once, and ſo no more needs be ſaid. The vulgar tranſlation takes up this ſence, *God hath ſpoken once*, that is, he hath ſpoken fully or ſufficiently for mans inſtruction and admonition at once, and therefore he tranſlates the latter part of the verſe, thus; *And he doth not repeat it the ſecond time.* That which is done at once ſufficiently, needs not be done a ſecond time; This is a truth; There is a ſufficiency and a fullneſs in the word of God once ſpoken, there needs nothing to be added: Or as others expound this tranſlation; when once God ſpeaks, that is, reſolves and determines a thing, he doth not (as man who often repents of what he hath purpoſed) bring it into a ſecond conſideration, for he cannot erre, and therefore he needs decree but once. But though this be a truth, yet I do not conceive it to be the meaning of this place, becauſe it doth not well agree with what goes before, and leſs with that which followeth at the 29. Verſe; *Loe all theſe things worketh God oftentimes*, or (as our Margin hath it) *twice and thrice with man*. And therefore here *Elihu* rather intimates the variety of thoſe ways by which God reveals himſelf to man, then the ſufficiency of any one of them. For though we grant any one of them ſufficient, yet God out of his abundant goodneſs is pleaſed to reveal himſelf more ways then one, and more times then once.

Thirdly, This *once*, may be taken excluſively; ſo in Scripture, *once* is *once* and *no more*, *once* and not again; or as we ſay, *once for all*, and ſo it is oppoſed to the repeating and acting over of the ſame thing. Thus *Abiſha* ſaid to *David* (1 Sam. 26. 8.) *God hath delivered thine enemy into thine hand this day, now therefore let me ſmite him, I pray thee, with the ſpear, even to the earth at once, and I will not ſmite him the ſecond time.* Once ſmiting is there oppoſed to ſmiting more then once; As if he had ſaid, I will pay him home, or diſpatch him at once, there will be no need to fetch another blow. Thus when the Apoſtle had ſaid in the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews* (Chap. 9. 27.) *It is appointed unto men once to die, and after this the judgment*, preſently he addeth, *So Chriſt was once offered to bear the ſins of many*; there alſo *once* is oppoſed to *twice*, or a ſecond time, excluding all repetition of the ſacrifice of Chriſt. As 'tis ſaid (*Heb.* 10. 10.) *By the which will we are ſanctified, through the offering of the body of Jeſus Chriſt once for all.* And therefore the ſame Apoſtle in the ſame Chapter (*Ver.* 26.) terrifieth Apoſtates with this dreadful doom; *If we ſin wilfully after that we have received the knowledg of the truth, there remaineth no more ſacrifice for ſins*; That is, neither will Chriſt give up himſelf to be a ſacrifice again for ſuch as have (after light received about it, and ſome ſeeming cloſings with it) caſt off that his ſacrifice, nor can any other ſacrifice be given. In this ſence alſo ſometimes God ſpeaks, *once*, He ſpeaks *once*, and will ſpeak no more, *once* and not a ſecond time; though we have a *twice* here in the Text, yet, I ſay, in ſome caſes and unto ſome perſons, God ſpeaketh once and will not ſpeak again. Whence take this obſervation or Admonition rather.

It is dangerous refuſing the firſt call, the firſt Word of God. Poſſibly, you may never hear more of him or from him, once may be all.

God may ſpeak in thy caſe, not only *once*, that is firmly and certainly, not only *once* that is ſufficiently, but once (that is excluſively, once) and no more for ever. That moving caution of the Apoſtle is grounded upon ſuch a ſad poſſibility as this (*Heb.* 3. 7.) *Wherefore as the holy Ghoſt ſaith, to day if ye will hear his voyce, harden not your hearts*; and again (*Verſ.* 13.) *Exhort one another dayly, while it is called, to day, leſt any of you be hardened through the deceitfulneſs of ſin.* As if it had been ſaid; hear to day, hear this hour of the day, for you know not, firſt, whether there will be a morrow or another day for you; Secondly, if you have a morrow, yet you know not whether you ſhall have a word to morrow; both time and ſeaſon, days and opportunities are in the hand of God; and he that neglects the ſeaſon of one day, hath no aſſurance of another day, much leſs of a ſeaſon with the day. Who knows whether the Cock ſhall crow twice or no? poſſibly the Cock may crow but once; in what a condition had *Peter* been if it had been ſo with him, for after he had (as Chriſt notwithſtanding all his confidence to the contrary, told him, *Mark* 14. 30.) denyed his maſter twice, he never called to mind the words of Chriſt, nor had any thought of humbling himſelf for what he had done, till (as 'tis ſaid, *Verſ.* 72.) *The ſecond time the Cock crew.* Every one hath not a promiſe (as *Peter* equivalently had) that the Cock ſhall crow twice, or that God will afford him means a ſecond time to awaken him out of his ſin. That which the Lord ſpake of affliction, to ſhew the fullneſs of it, may alſo be fulfilled concerning his warnings and admonitions (*Nahum* 1. 9.) *I will make an utter end, affliction ſhall not riſe up the ſecond time:* We ſhould hear at firſt ſpeaking, leſt it ſhould prove that when the Lord hath ſpoken once, he ſhould make an utter end, and ſay, inſtruction and admonition ſhall not riſe up a ſecond time. And to be ſure, as *Abraham* after he had interceded for *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* ſeveral times, ſaid at laſt (*Gen.* 18. 32.) *O let not the Lord be angry, and I will ſpeak yet but this once.* So the Lord when he hath ſpoken oft to ſinners and is not heard grows ſo angry, that he comes at laſt and ſaith, I will ſpeak yet but this once. God will at laſt come to his *but once* more to all men; and with ſome he is at his once at firſt and no more for ever. There is a time when every man ſhall hear his laſt word, and God will ſpeak but that once; and ſometimes it is but once in all that God will ſpeak. Therefore take heed, it is dangerous deferring, if God ſpeaks once, if he call and knock once, it is our ſin and folly too, that we do not hearken to, and open at his firſt call and knock, though the Lord doth (I grant) uſually and moſtly exerciſe much patience towards ſinners, calling and knocking once and again, as it followeth in the Text, *He ſpeaketh once,*

Yea twice, or a ſecond time.] Several of the Jewiſh writers this *twice* of the two ſorts or ways of divine Revelation which are ſpoken of in the following parts of this context; God ſpeaks to man by viſions and dreams, and God ſpeaks to man by diſeaſes and ſickneſſes, as we ſhall ſee afterward. But I rather take it more generally, not only as to the diverſe manner and diſtinct ways of his ſpeaking, but as to the divers times, or reiteration of his ſpeaking; *he ſpeaketh once, yea twice*: As he ſpeaks ſeveral ways, ſo ſeveral times, twice or thrice, poſſible, in the ſame way; twice by viſions, twice by dreams, twice by ſickneſſes, and often by his Miniſters; *He ſpeaketh once,*

Yea twice.] I ſhall conſider this *twice* three ways, and give a brief note from each.

In duabus & ſemel vicibus. i.e. *bis*; *quod uno verbo dicunt* פעמים *aut ſecundo,* i. e. *iterum ſemel iterumq; loquitur Deus una admonitione non ſemper contentus.* Druſ.

Firſt, conſider *twice* as to number; twice ſtrictly taken is more then once. One is no number, but two is.

Hence Note, *God is ſo gracious that he ſpeaks once and again, once and a ſecond time to ſinners.*

Who is there among us that hath not had experience of Gods ſpeaking to him more then once? And that not only with reſpect to the various ways of ſpeaking, but with reſpect to various times of ſpeaking. He ſpeaks more then once by his word, more then once by his works, whether of judgment, or of mercy. Some ſinners are conſumed in a moment or at once, (as it is ſaid of *Corah*, *Dathan,* and *Abiram* with their confederates, *Numb.* 16. 21.) others die of a lingering conſumption. God waiteth to be gracious, and therefore he rarely ſpeaketh his all or ſtriketh his all at once. He gives precept upon precept, line upon line, he ſends ſorrow upon ſorrow, croſs upon croſs, that ſinners may at laſt remember themſelves, return and live.

Secondly, As twice notes a number, ſo it may be conſidered as a ſmall number, yea as the ſmalleſt number; twice or two is the firſt number, the firſt ſtep into number. They that do a thing more then once cannot do it leſs then twice, nor can that number which is more then one be leſs then two. When the woman in the Book of *Kings* told the Prophet (1 *Kings* 17. 12.) *I am going to gather two ſticks*. Her meaning was, a very few ſticks, only enow to make a little fire to bake a Cake with. And when the Spirit of God would ſhew how few, comparatively to the rout of the World, they are and will be that bear witneſs to the truths of Jeſus Chriſt, he calleth them two Witneſſes (*Rev.* 11. 3.) they are a number, yet expreſt by the leaſt number, that we ſhould not have our eyes upon the multitude, or think, that is not the truth which is not followed by great numbers, or the moſt of the World. The train of Chriſt is not large, nor are his ways throng'd, few there be that find them. As they whom he calls forth to be eminently his witneſſes are not many, therefore called *two*; ſo they that receive their witneſs are not many; *The world wonders after the beaſt.* Thus as two or twice imply a ſmall number; ſo in Scripture language, that which is done more then twice is ſuppoſed done often or many times (2 *Kings* 6. 10) When the Prophet had told the King of *Iſrael* where the forces of the King of *Aſſyria* would come, and by that means defeated him of his purpoſe; it is ſaid, *And the King of Iſrael ſent unto the place which the man of God told him, and warned him of, and ſaved himſelf there, not once, nor twice*; that is, many times, which made the King of *Syria* wonder how it came to paſs that he was ſo often defeated; He thought he had laid his plots ſo wiſely and cloſely that the King of *Iſrael* could not eſcape, but he ſaved himſelf not once, nor twice; more then twice is many, but bare twice is the narroweſt compaſs of number imaginable.

Hence Note, *God hath not given us any ground to preſume upon frequent warnings or ſpeakings.*

Though he ſpeak more then once, yet it may be but twice, poſſibly but twice preciſely, probably but twice reſtrainedly taken. The Lord would not have us build upon the hope of future ſpeakings, to the neglect of what is preſently ſpoken. Though God be very patient and long-ſuffering to ſinful men, yet he hath not given any man, the leaſt occaſion, no not by a promiſe of ſpeaking a ſecond day, to continue one day, much leſs to continue long in ſin. When God ſpake (as I may ſay) at the largeſt rate of his patience to ſinners, he ſaid (*Gen.* 6.3.) *My ſpirit ſhall not always ſtrive with man*; *not always*, that is, though it ſtrive long, yet it ſhall not ſtrive very long; and that he may know it, I will give him a day, *yet his days ſhall be an hundred and twenty years.* This was ſomewhat a long day indeed; But remember this hundred and twenty years, was all the time that was granted to all the men of that World, there was not ſo much granted to every particular man of that world, poſſibly the Spirit of God did not ſtrive a day longer with many a one among them. Therefore take heed of preſuming. When the Lord ſpeaketh once, do not ſay, I will ſtay till he ſpeaks a ſecond time, and if he condeſcend to ſpeak twice, do not believe that he will always ſpeak.

Thirdly, *Twice*, may be conſidered as a ſmall certain number, put for a ſmall uncertain number. 'Tis frequent in Scripture, to put a certain number of any kind, for an uncertain; Sometimes a certain great number, for an uncertain great number; and ſometimes a ſmall certain number, for a ſmall uncertain number. As twice is not to be tyed up ſtrictly to the ſmalleſt number; ſo not to any number whether ſmall or great.

Hence Note, *No man knows how oft he ſhall be warned or ſpoken unto by God.*

God doth not put an abſolute ſtint upon any of his actions. Beware of neglecting the leaſt twice, the firſt twice, which is the loweſt twice; for though we cannot bind God up ſtrictly to twice, it may prove three times or four times, yet whether it ſhall be ſo many, or how many it ſhall be, no man nor Angel knoweth. Twice cannot be very often, and 'tis uncertain how often. Therefore if you hearken not when God hath ſpoken once (take it ſtrictly) do not ſtop your ears at the ſecond ſpeaking. It is ſaid, *Moſes ſmote the rock twice* (that was twice beyond his Commiſſion, for he ſhould not have ſmitten it at all) *and the water came out abundantly.* How many rocks, that is, hard hearts, hath God ſmitten by his word and his works twice, and yet we ſee not the waters of Godly ſorrow flowing out; The rocks are ſmitten more then twice with the rod of God, with the rod of his mouth in the Miniſtery of his word, they are ſmitten with admonition upon admonition, with reproof upon reproof, with threatning upon threatning, and yet the waters came not out abundantly, yea ſcarce at all. May not they fear that they ſhall have penal ſorrow upon ſorrow (*Paul* took notice of the goodneſs of God to him, that he did not let him have afflictive ſorrow upon ſorrow (*Phil.* 2. 27.) but, I ſay, may not they fear they ſhall have penal ſorrow upon ſorrow) that is, everlaſting floods of ſorrow, who after the Lords ſpeaking upon ſpeaking, and reproving upon reproving, give no proof of their godly penitential ſorrow? O how angry was the Lord with *Solomon*, *becauſe his heart was turned from the Lord God of Iſrael, which had appeared to him twice* (1 Kings 11.9.) God appeared to him in *Gibeon* (1 *Kings* 3.5.) when he was firſt made King, putting him to his choice, or giving him a blank to aſk what he would, and he choſe well, he choſe wiſdom and had it. God appeared to him a ſecond time after the building and dedication of the Temple (1 *Kings* 9. 2.) *And ſaid unto him, I have heard thy prayer, and thy ſupplication, that thou haſt made before me*, &c. Thus the Lord appeared ſolemnly unto *Solomon* twice, and but twice, for any thing that appears upon record, in that ſolemn manner. Now when notwithſtanding theſe two appearings of the Lord to *Solomon*, the heart of *Solomon* was turned away from the Lord God of *Iſrael, his anger was kindled againſt Solomon*, and the Lord ſmote him once, yea twice, renting his kingdom, and pulling away ten tribes at once, from his ſon and ſucceſſor. O do not refuſe God ſpeaking to you twice, or the renewed ſpeaking of God; to do ſo is very ſinful, and therefore very dangerous. For as 'tis a ſign of a holy heart, of a gracious frame of ſpirit, to hear twice at once ſpeaking; as *David* profeſſed he did (*Pſal.* 62. 11.) *God hath ſpoken once; twice have I heard this, that power belongeth unto God: alſo unto thee O Lord belongeth mercy.* There are ſeveral rendrings and interpretations of thoſe words; But that which to me ſeems moſt intended by our rendring is, I heard what was once ſpoken twice at once, that is,

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I heard it ſpeedily, and I heard it believingly; as ſoon as ever the word came to me, I received it, and I received it not only with my ear, but with my heart. That's a bleſſed way of hearing, and they who hear ſo, at firſt ſpeaking, may well be ſaid to hear that twice which God ſpeaketh once. But how ſad is it that God ſhould ſpeak twice, thrice, yea four times, and yet not be heard ſo much as once! When *Job* was brought upon his knees (*Chap.* 40. 5.) he ſaid, *Once have I ſpoken, but I will not anſwer: yea twice, but I will proceed no further. Job* began to be ſenſible of that which *Elihu* was working him to, that he had been too forward, yea too forward with God; *Job* began to ſee his error, and recanted it; *I have ſpoken once, yea twice, but I will proceed no further.* 'Tis good, that after once or twice ſinning or failing, we yet ſay we will proceed no further. O how deplorable is mans condition, when the Lord ſhall ſay, I have ſpoken once, yea twice, but now I will proceed no further, I will ſpeak no more! And this uſually comes to paſs, when men are dull and ſlow of heart to underſtand what he ſpeaketh, which as natural men always, ſo godly men often are, as it followeth in this Text; *He ſpeaketh once, yea twice,*

Yet man perceiveth it not.] That is, apprehendeth not ſometimes that God is ſpeaking to him, and he ſeldom underſtandeth what God is ſpeaking to him.

There is a little variety in the expoſition of this latter clauſe of the verſe; The word *man* not being expreſly in the Hebrew, (and therefore we find it put by our tranſlaters in a diſtinct character) the Text runs only thus; *God ſpeaketh once, yea twice, he perceiveth it not.* This hath occaſioned the vulgar Latine interpreter to refer this laſt clauſe of the verſe to God alſo; giving out the ſenſe thus; *God ſpeaketh once, and a ſecond time he doth not repeat it*; As if here were a warning given, that all ſhould attend the very firſt motion of Gods voice to them; *For he ſpeaketh once, and doth not repeat the ſame.* But I ſhall not ſtay upon that, becauſe I ſee not how the Hebrew word by us rendred *to perceive*, can with any tolerable ſignificancy be rendred to repeat: yet, there is a ſecond rendring of the Text in the ſame tenour, giving a genuine ſenſe of that word, which is very profitable and proper enough to the ſcope of the place, *God ſpeaketh once, and he doth not conſider upon it a ſecond time*; That is, when God ſpeaks or decrees to give forth any thing, he doth not take it into conſideration again or review and bring it about upon ſecond thoughts, as men often do; yea it is their duty (though it be a duty ariſing from their frailty) ſo to do. Men ought to conſider often and review their own words as well as their works. But (ſaith *Elihu*, according to this reading) *God ſpeaks once, and doth not conſider of it again*; for he hath the meaſure and compaſs of all things ſo fully in himſelf, that he needs not turn back his thoughts upon any of his determinations, as if there could be a miſtake, or any error in them. This is a very glorious truth, highly advancing the name of God above every name among the beſt of the children of men. And it ariſeth clearly from the Text, leaving out the ſupplement which we make of the word *man*. Yet according to the opinion of the moſt and beſt Expoſiters, yea according to the cleareſt ſcope and tendency of the Text, that word *man* is rather to be ſupplied, *God ſpeaketh once, yea twice,*

Semel loquitur Deus & ſecundo id ipſum non repetit. Vulg.

ושורבת *à radice intendit oculos, proſpexit, animadvertit, viderit. Semel loquitur Deus & ſecundo illud non conſiderat.* Scult.

And man perceiveth it not.] 'Tis common in Scripture to leave ſuch words unexpreſſed, as muſt neceſſarily be underſtood. And therefore I ſhall only inſiſt upon our own tranſlation,

Yet before I proceed to that, I ſhall touch upon another reading of theſe words, as referring unto man, which doth not ſo much carry a reproof of man's dulneſs, as a commendation of God's goodneſs, thus; *God ſpeaks once, yea twice, if man perceiveth it not.* As if he had ſaid, *If man be ſo weak and dark, ſo dull and ſlow of apprehenſion, as not to perceive Gods mind at his firſt ſpeaking, yet God is uſually ſo gracious and condeſcending as to ſpeak twice, or a ſecond time even to that man.* This reading doth exceedingly exalt and ſet forth the goodneſs and graciouſneſs of God; and we have frequent experience of it, that when God ſpeaks once, and finds creatures dull of hearing, he ſpeaks a ſecond time.

Loquitur Deus ſemel & duabus (vicibus) ad eum qui non conſideravit eum. Piſc.

Our reading gives in theſe words as a charge of mans darkneſs and ſlowneſs to apprehend the meaning of God ſpeaking to us either in his word or works. *God ſpeaks once, yea twice,*

Yet man perceiveth it not] The Hebrew is, *man ſeeth it not.* There is an eye in the underſtanding, the mind of man beholdeth the ſenſe of words, even as his bodily eye beholdeth the colours, and dimenſions of any material object: Yet the eye of mans mind is ſo bleared and dimlighted that though God ſpeak once, yea twice, he ſeeth, he perceiveth it not. That is, he doth not clearly perceive it. *Elihu* makes uſe of this word ſix times, *Job* thrice, *Zophar* once, in all which places, they intend an exact obſervation and through-ſpeculation of the matter which they treat upon, either in the affirmative or in the negative; here as a rebuke to man *Elihu* makes uſe of it in the negative, *man perceiveth it not.*

לא ישורנה *Non viderit illud, ſc. homo quod deus loquitur. Verbo hoc* שור *Elihu utitur ſexies Job ter, Zophar ſemel. Videtur iſto verbo diligens & clara ſignificari ſpeculatio & obſervatio curioſa.* Coc.

> Hence note, *Man of himſelf cannot perceive the mind of God in ſpiritual ſpeakings, or God ſpeaking about ſpiritual things.*

The Prophetical Sermons are called viſions; *The viſion of Iſaiah the ſon of Amos, which he ſaw* (Iſa. 1. 1.) yet when they preached them to the people, many of them ſaw nothing; their viſions were to the people as parables or dark ſayings. Man in general falls under a twofold conſideration; firſt, as unconverted or carnal; and in that ſtate he perceiveth not at all, when God ſpeaks once and twice, yea thrice, he perceiveth nothing. And that proceeds from a double ground.

Firſt, from the natural pravity of his heart, and the blindneſs of his mind. Of ſuch the Apoſtle ſaith (*Eph.* 4. 18.) *They have their underſtanding darkned, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, becauſe of the blindneſs of their heart.* And hence he concludes (*1 Cor.* 2. 14.) *The natural man perceiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are fooliſhneſs to him, neither can he know them, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned*; ſpiritual objects muſt have a ſpiritual eye to ſee them.

Secondly, this comes to paſs ſometimes from the judgment of God upon carnal men; who as in mercy he cauſeth the blind to ſee, ſo in wrath he ſtriketh thoſe that have no mind to ſee with greater blindneſs, and puniſhed their former rebellion and obſtinacy againſt the word received with an impotency to perceive it. Yea God doth not only leave ſuch in the blindneſs of their mind and dulneſs of their underſtanding, but gives them up to it. The Prophet *Iſaiah* was a Goſpel Preacher, he held out the light clearly, yet his hearers were under ſuch a doom, that the very light which he held out blinded them; ſo that the more he ſpake, the leſs they perceived. (*Iſa.* 6. 10.) *And he ſaid, go and tell this people, hear ye indeed, but underſtand not; and ſee ye indeed, but perceive not: make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and ſhut their eyes; leſt they ſee with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and underſtand with their hearts, and convert, and be healed.* This is a dreadful Scripture; The Lord is highly provoked indeed, when he judicially ſhuts up the eyes of men, and hardens their hearts againſt his own meſſages, not that he infuſeth any hardneſs or inſtilleth any ignorance into them; but gives them up to that ignorance, hardneſs and darkneſs which already poſſeſſeth them. And then though God ſpeak once or twice, or a hundred times, they perceive it not: They that harden their hearts, ſhall have them hardened by that which is the ordinary means to ſoften and melt them; and they that ſhut their eyes againſt any truth, are in danger of having them ſhut againſt all truth, even by that means which uſually openeth eyes. Thus we ſee that this firſt ſort of men, meer carnal men, cannot ſee or perceive when God ſpeaketh, and why it is ſo.

Secondly, (which I conceive rather to be the meaning of *Elihu* here). Man may be conſidered in his ſpiritual ſtate. That is, as converted and renewed in ſpirit, by the mighty working of the Spirit. Now to men in this eſtate God ſpeaks once, yea twice, *and they perceive it not.* They that are ſpiritual do not always perceive ſpiritual things. For,

Firſt, they have much corruption in them. Though they are renewed, yet they are renewed but in part; we ſee in part, and but darkly, yea ſometimes Saints can hardly ſee at all, eſpecially as to ſome diſpenſations and manifeſtations of God! he may ſpeak once, yea twice and thrice to them in ſuch a thing, or to ſuch a purpoſe, and they take little or no notice of it. He may point unto them by ſuch providences, and by ſuch Sermons, and yet they look upon themſelves as un-concerned, not making any home-application of what they outwardly hear or ſee, yea feel and ſmart under; and all this by reaſon of ſome prevailing corruption.

Secondly, this may proceed from their negligence and ſlothfulneſs; good men are not always careful as they ſhould, much leſs critical and wiſely curious to obſerve every providence of God, and to conſider why, or for what end ſuch or ſuch a word is ſent to them. As carnal men thruſt the word from them, ſo godly men fail much at all times, and at ſometimes wholly neglect to lay the Word to heart. They do not compare themſelves, that is, their lives and conſciences, their thoughts and ways with the Word, and then no wonder if they perceive not what is ſpoken to them. Even a *Job* may be hindred by his own indulgence from perceiving what God ſaith unto him. The Prophet complained of the people of God for not ſtriving to take hold of him. (Iſa. 64. 7.) *There is none that calleth upon thy name, that ſtirreth up himſelf to take hold on thee.* And may we not complain that few ſtir up themſelves either to take hold of the Word of God, or that the Word may take hold of them? *Paul* exhorted *Timothy* (2 *Tim.* 1. 6.) *to ſtir up the gift of God that was in him.* They that have received both gifts and grace may be much wanting to themſelves in ſtirring them up. Though we deny man's natural power, yet perſons converted have a ſpiritual power, which they often neglect to ſtir up. When the ſervants of *Benhadad* (1 Kings 20. 32, 33.) came to *Ahab* upon that meſſage to beg his life, it is ſaid, *The men did diligently obſerve whether any thing would come from him* that they might take hold of, and urge it in favour of their Maſter; and as ſoon as *Ahab* had dropt that word, *he is my Brother*, as ſoon as they had that word, *they did haſtily catch it*, and applied it for their preſent purpoſe. So they that are godly ſhould obſerve what is ſpoken unto them, what corruption is ſmitten by the word or by the rod of God, and as ſoon as ever ſuch a word is ſpoken, they ſhould take it up and apply it to themſelves.

Thirdly, thoſe many luſts that are in the heart of a godly man, not yet fully mortified, as ſecret pride, ſelf-love, and unbelief, theſe hinder him from underſtanding the mind of God. And therefore we are counſelled by the Apoſtle *James* (Chap. 1. 21.) *to lay aſide* (that is, to get ſubdued and mortified) *all filthineſs and ſuperfluity of naughtineſs, and* (ſo) *receive with meekneſs the ingraffed word which is able to ſave our ſouls.* As if he had ſaid, we can neither perceive nor receive the word ſavingly, unleſs our luſts are caſt out and caſt off. How much any man neglects this duty of mortifying his luſts, by ſo much is he rendred both unable to perceive the word, and unfit to profit by it.

Laſtly, Mr. *Broughton* renders the words thus, *God ſpeaks once, yea twice, and man will not mark it.* We ſay, *man perceiveth it not*; he ſaith, *man will not mark it.* As our reading ſhews the weakneſs and imperfections, or the negligence and ſlothfulneſs of man, when he doth not perceive what God ſpeaketh; ſo his ſheweth the obſtinacy of man. The will of man is as perverſe, as his underſtanding is blind. Man hath not only a wound or a weakneſs in his will unto that which is good, but he hath a rebellion in his will againſt that which is good, and that not by ſome occaſional diſguſt of ſudden guſt of paſſion, but he is naturally ſet and reſolved againſt that which is good. *Man will not mark* what God ſpeaketh in his word and works. Chriſt upbraids the *Jews* (*Joh.* 5. 40.) *Ye will not come unto me that ye may have life*; he chargeth the fault upon their wills. 'Tis certain, *man hath a will not to come to Chriſt for life*; yet that is a forced and far fetcht inference which ſome make from it, *that man* hath therefore power and *will to come.* Sure enough man hath a will not to come, he hath not only an inability, but an enmity and an oppoſition in his will againſt Chriſt: he will not come to Chriſt that he may be ſaved, but would take up his ſalvation ſomewhere elſe; he would be his own Saviour, or let any one ſave him, rather than be ſaved by Chriſt; all things conſidered, eſpecially this, that he muſt deny himſelf, and neither be found truſting to his own righteouſneſs, nor acting any unrighteouſneſs, if he deſires to be ſaved by Chriſt. And as there is a reſiſtance in the will of man againſt the true diſpenſation of Goſpel-grace; ſo againſt any other diſpenſation whereby God ſpeaketh to him. The unchanged will of man riſeth up againſt the will of God manifeſted in his works, as much as againſt his will manifeſted in his word (*Iſa.* 26. 11.) *Lord, when thy hand is lifted up they will not ſee.* If his hand be lifted up in publick judgments they will not ſee it, if in family or perſonal judgments and afflictions they will not ſee it, but ſhut their eyes and hoodwink their own underſtandings. Yea, they are oftentimes ſo wilfully, or rather ſo madly blind, that they had rather ſay it is the hand of *blind Fortune*, than the hand of the Almighty and All-ſeeing God. *Now who is ſo blind as they that will not ſee?* Till this rebellion againſt the holy will of God with which the will of man is filled be caſt out and ſubdued, let him ſpeak once, yea twice, let him ſpeak by word or works, by promiſes or by threatnings, by good or evil, yet man will not mark it. Thus much in general of God's revealing himſelf to man; In the next words we have the diſtinct ways ſet down by and in which he revealeth himſelf: *In a dream*, &c.

VERS. 15, 16, 17, 18.

In a dream, in a viſion of the night, when deep ſleep falleth upon men, in ſlumberings upon the bed:

Then he openeth the ears of men, and ſealeth their inſtruction.

That he may withdraw man from his purpoſe, and hide pride from man.

He keepeth back his ſoul from the pit, and his life from periſhing by the ſword.

ELihu having ſaid in the former verſe, that, *God ſpeaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not*; proceeds to give inſtance of thoſe ſeveral ways by which God ſpeaketh to man. His firſt Inſtance is given (*verſ.* 15.) where he brings in God ſpeaking to man in dreams and viſions. And as he ſhews us God ſpeaking in dreams and viſions, ſo he ſets down his aims or ends in doing ſo, and they are three-fold.

Firſt, God aims at mans inſtruction (*verſ.* 16.) *Then he openeth the ears of men, and ſealeth their inſtruction.*

The ſecond aim of God in ſuch diſpenſations, is repentance and humiliation (*verſ.* 17.) *That he may withdraw man from his purpoſe, and hide pride from man.*

The third and laſt end here expreſt why God ſpeaks by dreams and viſions, is mans ſalvation (*verſ.* 18.) *He keepeth back his ſoul from the pit, and his life from periſhing by the ſword.* Theſe are the parts and ſpecialties conſiderable in this context.

Verſ. 15. **In a dream, in a viſion of the night,** &c.

The root of the word rendred **a dream**, ſignifieth that which is thick, groſs or fat, and by a metaphor *a dream*, becauſe dreams are naturally cauſed by groſs and thick vapours, ariſing from the ſtomach and fuming up into the head. Sleep is cauſed immediately by vapours, and dreams are our work in ſleep. *A dream is an Imagination which the mind frames and forms, or which is formed and framed in the mind while we ſleep*; or, *A dream is the work of the ſoul, while the body is aſleep.* Sleep is the binding up of the outward ſenſes, hearing, ſeeing, feeling, &c. yet then the inward ſenſes, phantaſie and memory are at liberty and free to work. The phantaſie is very quick and nimble, when the body lieth as a log and ſtirs not. The phantaſie (as we ſay) builds Caſtles in the air, and makes ſtrange Chimera's in the brain by day, much more by night. In Dreams, there is an image of things or perſons repreſented to us. When *Pharaoh dreamed, he ſaw ſeven lean kine, and ſeven thin ears, as alſo ſeven fat kine and ſeven full ears of corn.* *Jacob* ſaw a ladder in his dream reaching up to heaven, and the Angels of God aſcending and deſcending. *Joſeph* ſaw his brethrens ſheaves doing obeyſance to his ſheaf, he ſaw alſo the Sun and Moon and eleven Stars, doing obeyſance to him. *Nebuchadnezzar* dreaming ſaw an Image with the head of gold, with ſhoulders and breaſt of ſilver, with belly and thighs of Braſs, and legs of Iron, &c. Theſe dreamers had images as clearly repreſented to their minds, as any thing can be

חלם *Pinguis, groſſus, ex vaporibus craſſis provenit ſomnus, quem ſomnia conſequuntur.*

to the moſt waking and wakeful eye of the body. And though in many dreams there are no ſuch formal ſimilitudes preſented to the mind, but only a voice heard ſpeaking, yet nothing can be declared to us in a dream without forming in our mind ſome kind of likeneſs. When it is ſaid that God came to *Abimelech*(*Gen.*20.and to *Laban*Gen.31.) and an Angel of the Lord to *Joſeph* (Matth.1.) ſpeaking to them in dreams, they had ſuch things exhibited to and impreſſed upon them, as gave the former two aſſurance that God ſpake to them, and the third that he was ſpoken to by an Angel of God.

Further, We may diſtinguiſh of dreams; Firſt, ſome are meer natural dreams; and they ariſe four ways; Firſt, from the temperature of the body, Melancholly and flegmatick perſons, have their ſpecial dreams, and ſo have men of a ſanguine and of a cholerick complection. The firſt incline to dream of ſad, the ſecond of ſottiſh, the third of pleaſant things, and the laſt of wrathful wranglings and contendings. Secondly, Natural dreams are cauſed by the diet or food which we eat, ſpecial meat inclining to ſpecial thoughts and imaginations. Thirdly, Meer natural dreams flow from the buſineſs or ſpecial work wherein we have been ingaged in the day; as *Solomon* ſpeaks (*Eccleſ.* 5.3.) *a dream cometh thorow the multitude of buſineſs*; that is, a man dreams at night of what he hath been doing in the day. Fourthly, Natural dreams ariſe from vehement affections to or deſires of what we want, and would have. Thus (*Iſa.*29.7.) *The hungry man dreams he eats, and the thirſty man dreams he drinks*; For being pincht with hunger, and parcht with thirſt, his appetite is not only ſtrong, but fierce and violent after meat and drink. Theſe and ſuch like are natural dreams. I call them ſo becauſe the riſe or reaſon of them is ſeated in nature, and they are ſuch as have no other cauſe but what is common and natural to man. Nature let alone or left under ſuch outward accidents will produce ſuch dreams.

Secondly, There are diabolical dreams; the devil knows how to ſtir the humours and work upon the phantaſies of the children of men. Satan is skilful and diligent in ſoliciting our luſts and corruptions both day and night, and they being once ſolicited or moved to work, cannot but work in us both ſleeping and waking. Yea the devil can inſpire falſe doctrines and opinions by dreams, as well as provoke to wicked practices. Of ſuch dreamers we read (*Deut.* 13.1, 3.) *If there be among you a falſe Prophet, or a dreamer of dreams.* Falſe Prophets had many dreams (*Jer.*23.25.) Such were wont to ſay, *I have dreamed, I have dreamed.* Becauſe the holy Prophets had their dreams from God, the Devil would give his unholy Prophets dreams too, which were lies and vanity, deceits and errors, leading them out of the way of God, whether we reſpect truth of doctrine, or purity of worſhip. We may reduce all diabolical dreams to theſe two heads; They are either, Firſt, falſe dreams, that is, dreams of falſhood, for he is the father and former of lyes; or, Secondly, they are filthy defiling dreams; for he is an unclean ſpirit, and the fueller of all filthy fires and uncleanneſſes, whether corporal or ſpiritual.

Thirdly, There are *divine dreams*, ſo called, Firſt, becauſe immediately ſent by God; Secondly, becauſe the ſubject-matter of them is divine and heavenly, or ſome manifeſtation of the holy will of God to man. There are five ſpecial Meſſages upon which dreams are ſent from God.

Firſt, To reprove or admoniſh; Thus God dealt with *Abimelech* in a dream, that he ſhould not meddle with *Sarah* (*Gen.* 20.3.) and with *Laban*, that he ſhould not hurt *Jacob*, nor hinder him in his journey back to his fathers houſe (*Gen.*31.24.) whereupon *Jacob* told him, *God rebuked thee yeſter-night.* That dream of *Pilate*'s wife (*Matth.* 27.19.) was ſent to admoniſh *Pilate* about giving Judgment againſt Chriſt.

Secondly, God ſends dreams to inſtruct, and inform; There are teaching dreams, that of *Joſeph* (*Matth.* 1.21.) was not only to ſhew him what to do about *Mary* his eſpouſed wife, but to inſtruct him about that great myſtery of God manifeſted in the fleſh, to ſave loſt man.

Thirdly, Dreams are ſent for ſupport and conſolation in a time of trouble (*Gen.*28.12.) God comforted *Jacob* by that dream, when he was in a deſolate condition, and aſſured him of his preſence.

Fourthly, Some dreams are ſent of God upon a ſad meſſage to afflict and terrifie; *Job* bemoaned his ſufferings and ſorrows by ſuch dreams (*Chap.* 7.13, 14.) *When I ſay my bed ſhall comfort me, my couch ſhall eaſe my complaint, then thou ſcareſt me with dreams, and terrifieſt me with viſions.*

Fifthly, God foreſheweth what ſhall come to paſs, he reveals his own counſels, as to future providences, by dreams and viſions. The ſeven years of famine were revealed to *Pharaoh* in a dream. And the great things of the Church, and of the world too, were revealed to *Daniel* in a dream, and in viſions of his head upon his bed (*Dan.*7.1.) The meſſage of the dream in the Text was for inſtruction and admonition, as will appear at the ſixteenth verſe; God ſpeaketh *in a dream*; and further

In a viſion of the night.] Some take **viſion** here as a ſecond way of divine revelation. And 'tis true, the Scripture ſpeaks of dreams and viſions diſtinctly (*Numb.*12.6.) Others make viſions to be only appurtenances to dreams; For though there have been viſions without dreams, yet dreams are ſeldom, if at all, without ſome kind of viſion. This ſeems the intendment of this Text, *In a dream, in a viſion of the night*; That is, in a dream with the viſion of the night, as making the viſion to be nothing elſe, but either a repreſentation of the matter dreamed of, or of the manner wherein it was repreſented to the dreamer. And I conceive, that *Elihu* in this verſe is ſpeaking only of one, not of two ways of God's revealing himſelf to man; or rather of one, than two. Yet whether we take the viſion diſtinctly from or jointly with the dream, the ſcope of *Elihu* in this Text is equally anſwered and fulfilled.

Further, *Elihu* doth not only report the way of God's diſcovering himſelf, that is, in a dream, in a viſion, but he declares the time or ſeaſon of theſe dreams and viſions, or of theſe viſions in a dream; that is, *the night*, and the night conſidered under this diviſion.

Firſt, *When deep ſleep falleth upon men.*

Secondly, When they have their *ſlumberings upon their bed*; that is (as I apprehend) at the beginning of the night, and break of day (for thoſe are the ſlumbring times of the night) or in the middle of the night or midnight, for then uſually men are fallen into and abide in a deep ſleep, or as we render, Then

Deep ſleep falleth upon men.] Some ſleeps, as we may ſay, are but ſhallow ſleeps, ſlight ſleeps, in compariſon of other; Deep ſleep is that which we call, Dead ſleep. The word here uſed by *Elihu*, notes the ſtrongeſt and the ſoundeſt ſleep, and therefore 'tis fitly diſtinguiſhed from *ſlumberings upon the bed.*

There are three words in the Hebrew which ſignifie *ſleep*; whereof the firſt ſignifies *ſleep* in general; the ſecond, *deep ſleep*; the third, any *ſlight ſleep*, which we here tranſlate *ſlumbering.* Ordinary ſleeping is more than ſlumbring, and a deep ſleep, more than ordinary ſleep; we commonly ſay, ſuch a man *is faſt aſleep*, he is, as it were, bound hand and foot. Sleep is the binding of the ſenſes, and ſo, by conſequence the binding of all the members of the body. We often find this diſtinction in Scripture (*Pſal.* 132.4.) *I will not give ſleep to mine eyes, nor ſlumber to my eye-lids*; that is, I will not only not give my ſelf to fall aſleep, but I will not ſo much as (according to our manner of ſpeaking in that matter) forget my ſelf. We find the ſame diſtinction (*Pſal.* 121.4.) *Behold, he that keepeth Iſrael ſhall neither ſlumber nor ſleep.* The words are a deſcription of the exact watchfulneſs of God over his people, he that doth not ſo much *as ſlumber*, he that never lays his eyes together, he that doth not only not take a nap (as we ſay) but not ſo much as once nod (to ſo little the Hebrew word may be drawn down, which is likewiſe the importance of the Greek word; he, I ſay, that doth not ſo much as nod) is far from ſleep, furtheſt of all from deep ſleep. In both theſe degrees of ſleep, the Lord ſpeaks by Dreams, firſt, *in deep ſleep*; ſecondly, *in ſlumbrings.*

תרדמה *Plus & quã* שנה & שנה *plus eſt quam* תנומה Aben Ezra.

נום *aliquando ſimpliciter redditur dormire; Græcè eſt* νυστάζειν *propriè capite nutante dormire.* Bold.

Some conceive that *Elihu* intended by theſe different words, to ſet forth two ſorts of dreams; Firſt, thoſe dreams which men have when extraordinary deep ſleep falls upon them; ſuch as that ſpoken of (*Gen.* 2.21.) *God commanded a deep ſleep to fall on Adam*, when he took the rib out of his ſide and formed the woman. We read alſo (*Gen.* 15. 12.) that a deep ſleep fell on *Abraham* when God revealed to him what ſhould become of his poſterity, and how they ſhould be in *Egypt*, and there much oppreſſed four hundred years, &c. It is ſaid alſo (1 *Sam.* 26. 12.) *A deep ſleep from the Lord was fallen upon them*; that is, upon *Saul*, and his guards, who lay round about him. And that might be called a ſleep from the Lord, both becauſe it was a ſleep which the Lord ſent, and becauſe it was an extreme deep ſleep. Secondly, there are dreams in ordinary ſleep, or in very ſlumbrings or noddings upon the bed, we may call them waking dreams. Thus *Elihu* ſheweth God taking ſeveral times or ſeaſons for the revealing of himſelf in dreams; ſometimes in deep ſleep, and often in the leaſt and ſlighteſt ſleeps, called ſlumbrings.

I ſhall not here inſiſt upon or diſcourſe the way of God's manifeſting himſelf to the Ancients, by dreams and viſions, but refer the Reader to what hath already been done upon the 4. Chapter at the 12. and 13. verſes; where *Eliphaz* ſpeaks almoſt in the ſame manner as *Elihu* here about viſions; And, indeed there is a very great conſent between their two parts in this book, that of *Eliphaz*, and this of *Elihu*; They were both holy and prophetical men, both of them had the ſame deſign in ſpeaking about dreams and viſions, namely, to convince and humble *Job*; and both of them expreſs themſelves in terms of a very near Cognation. So that if the Reader pleaſe to conſult that place (*Job* 4. 12, 13.) he will find theſe words farther cleared, as to the nature and ſeveral kinds of viſions. And if he turn to what hath been done upon the 14. verſe of the 7. Chapter, he may find the doctrine of dreams further opened.

Only let me add here a note or two.

Firſt, *It hath been the uſe of God to reveal his mind by dreams.*

And I may give you five reaſons why God uſed to apply himſelf to man in dreams: Firſt, becauſe in ſleep man is, as I may ſay, at beſt leiſure for God to deal with him; he is not diſtracted with buſineſs, nor hurried with the labours of this life, but is at reſt. Secondly, when we are awake we are very ready to debate and diſcuſs what we receive by our own reaſon, we are ready to Logick it with God; but in ſleep we take things barely as offered without diſcuſſions or diſputes. Thirdly, in ſleep when all is quiet, that which God repreſents, takes and leaves a deeper impreſſion upon the mind of man. Common experience teacheth us how dreams ſtick, and how thoſe apprehenſions which we have in our ſleep dwell and abide with us when awake. Fourthly, I conceive the Lord doth this chiefly that he may ſhew his divine skill in teaching and inſtructing man or that he hath a peculiar art in teaching; he teaches ſo, as none of the Maſters of learning were ever able to teach and inſtruct their Scholars. There was never any man could teach another when he was aſleep; they that are taught muſt at leaſt be awake, yea they muſt not only be awake but watchful; but now God is ſuch a teacher, ſuch an inſtructor, that when we are aſleep he can convey inſtruction and teach us his leſſons; this (I ſay) doth wonderfully magnifie the divine skill and power of God, who is able to make us hear and underſtand doctrine even when we are aſleep and cannot hear. There may be alſo a fifth conſideration moving God to this. Poſſibly God would hereby aſſure us, that the ſoul is a diſtinct eſſence, and hath its diſtinct operations from the body; and that even death it ſelf cannot deprive the ſoul of man of its working. For what is ſleep but a kind of death? *ſleep is a ſhort death, and death is a long ſleep.* Now when the body is (upon the matter) laid aſide, the ſoul can go to work: when the body lyes like a block and ſtirs not, the ſoul can beſtir it ſelf about many matters, and run its thoughts to the utmoſt ends of the earth, yea and raiſe them up to the higheſt heavens, in bleſſed intercourſes with God himſelf. There's no need to prove the matter of fact that 'tis ſo; what night, with reference to ſome or other, doth not utter this point of knowledg? nor need I ſtay to prove that this is, if not a demonſtrative, yet a very probable argument of the diſtinct ſubſtantiality of the ſoul from the body, namely its operations when the body (with all its proper and peculiar faculties and powers) is a ſleep, and contributes nothing to thoſe operations. For though it be granted that ſome irrational creatures (who have no immortal part, nor any thing ſubſtantial in them diſtinct from their bodies, though it be granted I ſay, that theſe) may have dreams; yet their dreams differ as much from thoſe of men, as themſelves do.

Secondly, Note, *The revelation of the mind of God by dreams and viſions, was much, yea moſt uſed in thoſe ancient times. When God had not ſo fully revealed his mind by Scripture or his mind in the Scripture, then he ſpake often in dreams and viſions*; and hence the old Prophets were called Seers.

The Apoſtle reports, God ſpeaking at ſundry times, and in divers manners in times paſt, unto the fathers by the Prophets, (*Heb.* 1. 1.) The Greek Text hath two very ſignificant words, the former moſt properly implying how God gave out his mind in divers meaſures, or how he parcelled it out, the other implying the ſeveral ways in which he gave it out. As the meaſures were various, ſometimes more, ſometimes leſs of his mind about divine matters and myſteries being diſpenſed, ſo the ways, manners and forms of this diſpenſation were very various; yet the moſt uſual way was by dreams and viſions (*Numb.* 12. 6.) *If there be a Prophet among you* (ſaith the Lord) *I the Lord will make my ſelf known unto him in a viſion, and ſpeak to him in a dream.* Yea we find that in the firſt days of the Goſpel, dreams and viſions were frequent. The Apoſtle falling into a trance had a viſion (*Acts* 10. 10.) *He ſaw heaven opened and a certain veſſel deſcend, &c.* And when Chriſt would have the Apoſtle *Paul* carry the Goſpel into *Macedonia*, a viſion appeared to him in the night (*Acts* 16. 9.) *There ſtood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, ſaying, come over to Macedonia and help us.* The ſame Apoſtle ſaith (2 *Cor.* 12. 1, 2.) *I will come to viſions and revelations of the Lord, whether in the body I cannot tell, or out of the body I cannot tell. Paul's* ſoul was wrapt up in ſuch high and intimate converſes with God, that he even forgot how it was with his body, or had little to do with it. Which ſuits well with that deſcription which the Apoſtle *John* gave of himſelf, when he had the whole mind of God concerning the ſtate of his Church to the end of the world, revealed to him in ſeveral viſions, *I* (ſaith he) *Rev.* 1. 10.) *was in the ſpirit on the Lords day*, &c. That's a famous promiſe, which was firſt reported by the Prophet *Joel* (*Chap.* 2. 28.) and after repeated by the Apoſtle *Peter* (*Acts* 2. 17.) *I will pour out my Spirit upon all fleſh, &c. and your young men ſhall ſee viſions, and your old men ſhall dream dreams.* Thus it is every where clear in Scripture, that dreams and viſions were frequent both in the Old Teſtament times, and in the beginning of the New;

Πολυμερῶς καὶ πολυτρόπως.

But now *in theſe laſt dayes* (as the Apoſtle ſaith *Heb.* 1. 2, 3. paſſing from thoſe former ways of Revelation deſcribed in the firſt verſe) *God having ſpoken to us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom alſo he made the Worlds, who is* [*alſo*] *the brightneſs of his glory, and the expreſs Image of his perſon: God I ſay having ſpoken to us by his Son*, and we having now a clearer manifeſtation of the mind of God than the old fathers had, the Son who once ſpake to us in perſon on earth, ſtill ſpeaking to us in the Goſpel every day; therefore now for any to look after dreams and viſions, or viſible apparitions for the revealing of the mind of God, is to go backward to the old ſtate of the Jewiſh Church, or to the infancy of the Goſpel Church, while the Canon or Rule of the Scripture as to all matters of faith and holy life was not fully finiſhed and compleated. And though we ought to be far from limiting God, yet he hath limited us from looking after any wiſdom in the knowledg of his will above that which is written (1 *Cor.* 4. 6.) The Apoſtle alſo teſtifying by the Spirit of God, that the Scripture is ſufficient to *make every man wiſe to ſalvation and the man of God perfect, throughly furniſhed unto all good works* (that good work eſpecially of helping others to ſalvation) 1 *Tim.* 3. 15. 17.

Luther obſerving how many were deluded in his time by dreams and viſions, which they falſely attributed to God, as the immediate Author of them; earneſtly prayed about two things: Firſt, that God would give him a ſound underſtanding of his mind revealed in the Scriptures. Secondly, that he would not ſend him dreams or viſions, yea, faith he, I even contracted with God that he would not. And doubtleſs

Ardentibus votis precatus ſum ut daret mihi Deus certum ſenſum ſcripturæ; & pactum feci cum Domino Deo meo, ne mihi viſiones vel ſomnia mitteret. Luth. loci com. quartæ claſſis.

leſs he did this upon a double ground. Firſt, to oppoſe the wild opinions and practices of thoſe, who had nothing to pretend for them but dreams and viſions. Secondly, to advance the honour of the written word in its ſufficiency, not only without the help of any humane tradition, but without any further divine revelation. And therefore though God ſhould pleaſe to ſpeak to us now by dreams and viſions, yet that were only (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks about his adding of an oath to his promiſe, *Heb.*6. 17.) to ſhew that he is (*ex abundanti*) more abundantly willing to ſatisfie our weakneſs by ſuch a condeſcenſion, than that there is a neceſſity of it, with reſpect to any deficiency of the Scriptures fulneſs. And hence it is, that if men ſhall profeſs they have received any thing from God by dreams or viſions, concerning what is either to be believed or done, the matter of thoſe dreams muſt be examined and weighed at the ballance of the Scriptures, and is no further to be credited than as 'tis found agreeable thereunto.

It cannot be denied but that men may make profitable uſe of their dreams at this day; they may ſee much of themſelves when their eyes are ſhut up by ſleep. Evil men may ſee their luſts at work in the night, and find out what luſt is moſt working and wakeful in them. What is ſaid in Hiſtory of the ancient Perſian Kings, that they were ſeldom ſeen in the day, but came to view in the night, is true of a mans ſpecial ſin, or of that ſin which reigns and Kings it in him. What ugly apparitions of luſt hath many a man in his nightly dreams, eſpecially of thoſe filthy luſts which are moſt proper to the night? Thus alſo good men have ſometimes a clearer ſight of their graces in the night by dreams, than in the duties of the day. What holy frames of heart? what lively actings of grace? what ſweet and raviſhing communion with God have many godly men found and felt in dreams? That may at leaſt, be ſomewhat of *David*'s meaning, when he ſaid (*Pſal.* 16. 17.) *My reins alſo inſtruct me in the night ſeaſon.*

Laſtly, Though we cannot make any certain concluſions, either what we are, or what we are to do from dreams; yet from them they who are wiſe and watchful may ſometimes gather ſtrong conjectures about both or either. To make dreams the rule or warrant of what we do is extreamly dangerous, yet that we may have hints what to do in a dream, I nothing doubt, nor can there be any danger in it, while the matter hinted is conſonant to the rule of the word, both as that which is lawful to be done, and lawful for us (all circumſtances conſidered) to do. Otherwiſe, whatſoever we may think our ſelves warned or warranted to do by dreams, is but a mock or trick put upon us by the Devil, or a deceit of our own fooliſh ſelfiſh hearts.

Thus we have ſeen the firſt way of God's ſpeaking to men of old, *by dreams and viſions of the night*; what work God is pleaſed to make with and in man by ſuch ſpeakings, will appear diſtinctly in the three following verſes.

Verſ. 16. **Then he openeth the ears of men, and ſealeth their inſtruction.**

In this verſe *Elihu* gives us the firſt of thoſe gracious deſigns or purpoſes of God in ſending dreams or viſions of the night; *then he openeth the ears of men.* There is a twofold ear of man, firſt external, that organ of hearing placed in the head. Secondly, internal, that power of hearing ſeated in the heart. God can uncover or open both. There are but few who have their outward ear ſtopt, we rarely meet with a deaf man. But we every where meet with and ſpeak to thoſe who are internally deaf. The Lord openeth this inward ear, and he only is able to do it. *God opened the heart* (or internal ear) *of Lydia to attend to the things which were ſpoken of Paul* (Acts 16. 14.) The Septuagint render this place of *Job* expreſly ſo. *Then he openeth the mind of men.* Their tranſlation comes cloſe to the ſenſe, though not to the letter of the Original.

Τότε ἀνακαλύπτει νοῦν ἀνθρώπων. Sep.

Further, the Hebrew is (as we put in the Margin) *He revealeth or uncovereth the ears of men.* This revealing or uncovering of the ear, ſay ſome, noteth only private ſpeaking, and is a ſimilitude taken from a common cuſtom among men, who when they would convey their mind ſecretly to a friend that ſtands by, put their head near to his ear, and take up the brim of his hat, or put by his hair (if long) that they may whiſper in his ear. Thus in a dream God whiſpers and ſpeaks ſilently unto men. This ſeems to have a ſutableneſs with that (*Chap.* 4. 12, 13.) where *Eliphaz* ſpake of a thing *brought ſecretly to him*, or that was whiſpered or ſtoln into him. But I conceive there is more in this place than the intendment of a ſecret and private conveyance of the mind of God unto man in a viſion or dream.

Quidam hanc loquendi formulam natam eſſe putant ex Hebræorum conſuetudine, qui cum antiquis ſeculis prolixam alerent comam, eaq; aures operirent, ſi quis arcanum aliquid in illorum aures inſuſurrare vellet deducebat defluentes capillos & in apertas aures tacito murmure aliquid inſtillabat. Sanct.

Cynthius aurem vellit & admonuit, &c. Virg.

And therefore this opening of the ear imports the removing or taking away of that (whatſoever it is) which hinders the effectual hearing or obeying of thoſe meſſages which God ſends to men. When God ſpake in a dream, he did more than ſpeak, he opened the ear, yea, he gave an ear to hear: This powerful work of God upon the heart is elegantly expreſſed by *opening* the ear, becauſe when the ears are ſtopt, we cannot hear, till that which ſtops them is pluckt out or taken away; ſo that here we have ſpeaking with effect, or the clear and penetrating power of the Spirit of God ſweetly and prevailingly inſinuating his mind to man. God ſpeaks ſo as he will be heard.

Loquitur & audire facit. Aurem revelare vel aperire eſt inſinuare aliquid auribus, quod intimis ſenſibus reponendum ſit. Clariorem & penetrantiorem inſinuationem voluntatis divinæ denotat. Coc.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *The ear of man is naturally ſtopt againſt the teachings of God.*

There are many things which ſtop the ears of man, or man hath many ear ſtoppers. I will name ſeven, all which God removes and takes away when he effectually reveals his mind to man. Firſt, the ear of man is ſtopt with Ignorance, that's a thick vail or covering upon the ear, and keeps out the mind of God till it be removed. And, Secondly, Unbelief is another ear-ſtopper; till the Lord removeth that we cannot hear. Thirdly, Impenitency or hardneſs of heart ſtops the ear, there are a number of Scriptures I might give for each of theſe. Fourthly, the love of any particular ſin is an ear-ſhutter or an ear-ſtopper, and the Lord removes that, when he opens the ear. Fifthly, Prejudices ſtop the ear, prejudices ſomtime againſt the perſon ſpeaking, ſomtime againſt the word ſpoken. That man will never hear a word to purpoſe, who hath a prejudice againſt the perſon, or a prejudice againſt the word, either a prejudice againſt the man, or againſt the matter. Sixthly, Pride ſtops the ear too, the proud man will not hearken, therefore God humbles and brings down the ſpirit, that the word may be heard. Seventhly, and laſtly, the World is a great ear-ſtopper, that locks up the ear againſt the word; the world in the profits of it, and the world in the pleaſures of it, and the world in the cares of it, and the world in the fears of it, the world by or in every one of theſe ſtops the ear, and by theſe the ears of all men naturally are ſtopped, ſo that they are as it is ſaid (*Pſal.*58.4.) *like the deaf adder, that ſtops her ear, and will not hear the voice of the charmer, charm he never ſo wiſely.* Till all theſe ſtoppers are removed, and the ear opened, there is no receiving of the word.

Secondly, Obſerve, *God is able to open and unlock the ear of man.*

Though it hath never ſo many ſtopp'es in it, he can pull them out, never ſo many locks upon it, though all the ſeven ſpoken of, and ſeven more obſtruct the ear, yet he can open them all, and make a free and uncontroulable paſſage for his word into the remoteſt and cloſeſt chambers of the ſoul. God can ſpeak loud enough, not only to make the deaf, but the dead hear his voice. *Verily, verily I ſay unto you* (ſaith Chriſt, *Joh.* 5. 25.) *the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead ſhall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear ſhall live.* By the dead he means not thoſe who are corporally, but ſpiritually dead, that is, dead in ſins and treſpaſſes, and in danger of eternal death for their ſins and treſpaſſes, even theſe heard the voice of the Son of God then ſpeaking perſonally, and heard it afterwards miniſterially, in the diſpenſation of the Goſpel, and that voice revived them, not only by giving them the comfort of that natural life which they had before, but by bringing in a new ſpiritual life which before they had not. Then the internal ear is opened to purpoſe when thoſe internal or myſtically dark graves of ſin are opened, and the ſoul comes forth into the light of life.

Yet more diſtinctly, God may be ſaid to uncover or open the ears of men, when he doth theſe four things.

Firſt, When he makes us not only to hear but to attend, not only to hear but to hearken; or not only to hear but to give ear. *Many give the word of God the hearing, but they do not give ear to the word of God.*

Secondly, God opens the ear when he makes us not only attend, but underſtand, or when he takes the veyl off from our minds. The Apoſtle ſaith of the *Jews* (2 Cor. 3. 14.) *The vail remaineth upon them untaken away to this day in the reading of the old Teſtament* (and it doth ſo ſtill) ſo that as they could not, ſo yet they cannot, *Look to the end of that which is aboliſhed*; that is, to Chriſt, who was the end or ſcope at which the whole Ceremonial Law (now aboliſhed) did then aim. When once the ear is divinely opened, then the vail of ignorance and ſpiritual blindneſs is taken off from the mind, both as to that greateſt truth, and all other neceſſary truths. The opened ear is an underſtanding ear.

Thirdly, God openeth the ear when he cauſeth us to believe what we perceive and underſtand. As faith ſets the whole ſoul awork for God, ſo faith is the great work of God upon the ſoul. When the ear is opened, truth is not only known, but ſavingly believed.

Fourthly, This opening of the ear maketh the ſoul obedient; Jeſus Chriſt in that great prophecy of him (*Pſal.* 40. 6.) to ſhew his ready obedience to his fathers command, ſaith, *Mine ear haſt thou opened* (or digged) The ear of Chriſt was never ſhut in the leaſt, either through ignorance or unbelief; but he is ſaid to have his ear opened, only to ſhew his conſtant preparedneſs and readineſs for obedience. He came into the world with an open ear to all the will of God; and therefore it followeth in the 7. and 8. verſes of that Pſalm, *Then ſaid I, loe I come, in the volume of thy book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God, yea thy law is within my heart.* Chriſt is brought in by another Prophet ſpeaking to the ſame point with ſome little variety, but with very great ſignificancy of expreſſion (*Iſa.* 50. 4, 5.) *He wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned*; we uſually ſay, Sleep is in the eye, yet this prophecy intimates a ſleep in the ear, *thou haſt wakened mine ear.* What we are to underſtand by this wakened ear, is clear in the next words of the ſame prophecy, *The Lord hath opened mine ear*, that's the word of *Eliphaz*, and the conſequence of opening the ear, ſet down in the Prophet, is the ſame now given in this point, *The Lord hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious.* He doth not ſay, The Lord opened mine ear, and I heard, but, *I was not rebellious*; that is, I gave up my ſelf to obey the word or command, which I heard. The ſame Prophet (*Iſa.* 48. 8) deſcribing the rebellion of the *Jews*, puts this as the reaſon of it, *Yea thou heardeſt not*, (that is, thou didſt not attend) *yea thou kneweſt not*, that is, thou didſt not underſtand, yea *thine ear was not opened*; as if he had ſaid, thine unopened ear was the cauſe why thou didſt neither attend, nor underſtand, nor obey the word ſpoken to thee. So much of the firſt gracious deſign of God in ſpeaking to men by dreams and viſions of the night; *Then he openeth the ears of men.* The ſecond is given in the latter part of the verſe.

And ſealeth their Inſtruction.

חתם ſignavit, obſignavit, confirmavit, perfecit.

The word ſignifies not only **to ſeal**, but to *perfect or conclude, He ſealeth Inſtruction.*

There is a threefold uſe of ſeals and ſealing; Firſt, to diſtinguiſh one thing from another; Secondly, to keep things ſafe and ſecret; Thirdly, ſealing is to confirm and ratifie; A Bond, Deed, or Evidence in writing, till it hath a Seal, is but a ſcrip of paper of no force, but when once the Seal is put to it, then it is confirmed, then there is ſtrength and force in it. A ſeal fortifies the writing, or maketh it authentick. *He ſealeth their*

Inſtruction.] The word here uſed ſignifies both correction and Inſtruction, and ſo it is rendred by ſome here, *He openeth their ears, or ſealeth their chaſtiſement.* Mr. *Broughton* takes that ſenſe. *And imprinteth why they are chaſtiſed*; that is, (as himſelf expounds it) when he hath chaſtiſed them, he ſealeth up the decree of their judgment; or as another, He propoſeth it unto them as firm and concluded, if they do not repent and imprinteth in their mind the certainty of it, as alſo the true cauſe of it. We render fully to the ſenſe of the word and ſcope of the Text, *He ſealeth their inſtruction*; that is, upon the opening of the ear there is a ſealing or a ſetting home the word which is received. When the ear is opened to receive, God will make men hold what they have received. The ſealing of inſtruction, ſignifies the efficacy, energy, or effectual working of God with the word, he ratifies and confirms it to the ſoul, he maketh his word as ſure to them as a ſealed Bond, both with reſpect to the duty commanded, and the mercy promiſed. And, indeed, we have as much need to have Inſtruction ſealed, as to have the ear opened; for 'tis poſſible the ear may be opened, we may hear and underſtand, and in ſome ſenſe believe, yea obey, and yet not have the inſtruction ſealed. The inſtruction is then ſealed, when we keep what is received, as the ear is opened when we receive what is offered. Unleſs the inſtruction be ſealed, we hear and obey only for the preſent, not for the time to come, that is, we do not retain and hide the word received for uſe and practice.

מוסר à radice יסר vincivit, ligavit, per metaphoram caſtigavit, erudivit, corripuit verbis aut verberibus.

Diſciplinam eorum velut impreſſo ſigillo conſignat. Tygur.

Phraſis obſignandi eruditionem, denotat efficaciter erudire ſc. *ut non concedatur ei qui eruditur non attendere & vim eruditionis non ſentire.* Coc.

Now, whether we take this ſealing in reference either to correction or inſtruction, it yields us matter of profitable meditation. Firſt, As it refers to correction.

Note, *God aſſureth ſinful man that he ſhall ſmart for it, unleſs he hearken and obey.*

It is as ſure that he ſhall, as if he ſaw it under hand and ſeal; or as if the ſentence were ingraven upon his conſcience, and fixt before his eyes. If the ear be not obedient to inſtruction, the back muſt ſubmit to correction; *If the world will not do it, the rod muſt*; *if teaching will not ſerve the turn, chaſtning ſhall*; *He ſealeth their correction.* Every correction threatned is not certainly inflicted; for *Elihu* ſaith afterward (*verſ.* 26.) *He ſhall pray unto God, and he will be favourable to him*; but the meaning is, mans correction is ſealed in caſe he proceeds on in his ſin; if he does not give proof that his ear is opened by his obedience to inſtruction, there is no eſcaping correction. The correction of the deareſt children of God is ſealed, if they hear and do not. God will not cocker his ſtubborn children, nor ſpoil them by ſparing the rod; He will certainly meet with them one time or other, either by ſickneſs, or poverty, or reproach; the order, the warrant is ſealed for their correction.

Caſtigationem eorum obſignat. i.e. *ſignificat eis ſe certo eos caſtigaturum niſi à peccato deſtiterint, non ſecus ac ſi ſententiam hanc literis mandaſſet, eaſq; literas obſignaſſet.* Piſc.

Vellicans ipſorum aures & iminentes ipſis caſtigationes animis ipſorum inſculpent. Bez.

We may much more apply this to the wicked, to the ungodly and rebellious, who though they have their outward ears open, yet their hearts remain ſhut; If the correction of the godly be ſealed in that caſe, to be ſure, the deſtruction of the wicked is; they are ſealed for death, yea they are ſealed for hell; the writ of their eternal Judgment is ſealed. *If Judgment muſt begin at the houſe of God, where ſhall the ungodly and the ſinner appear? what ſhall the end of them be that obey not the Goſpel of God?*

Further, Take it as we render it, referring to inſtruction, *He ſealeth their inſtruction.*

Whence note, *God is able to ſet home his inſtructions effectually upon the ſoul.*

He can leave ſuch an impreſſion upon the heart, as ſhall never be forgotten nor worn out. He can make every word ſtick; And ſo this is but a further illuſtration of what was ſaid before; he openeth their ears to receive the word, and then ſealeth inſtruction upon them. The Apoſtle ſpeaking of ſome perſons converted, who were the fruit of his miniſtry, ſaith, *Ye are the ſeal of mine Apoſtleſhip* (1 *Cor.* 9. 2, 3.) that is, ye confirm and ratifie my miniſtry, that it is of God, and that God is in it. Now as the converſion of ſinners, and the building up of Saints, is the ſeal of our miniſtry; ſo the ſealing of inſtruction upon the ſoul, is the converſion of ſinners, and the edification of Saints. When a ſinner is converted, his inſtruction is ſealed upon him, and when a Saint is built up and edified, and increaſeth in the things of God, then inſtruction is ſealed upon him alſo. And until we thus profit by the word, we have the word, as I may ſay, without a ſeal, nothing faſtens upon us.

Thus much of the firſt deſign of God in ſending dreams and viſions in thoſe times, it was to open the ears of men, and to ſeal their Inſtruction; This being only a general benefit aimed at by thoſe means, we have thoſe which are more ſpecial ſet down in the words which follow.

Verſ. 17. That he may withdraw man from his purpoſe and hide pride from man.

This 17. verſe contains two of thoſe bleſſed ends or deſigns of God in revealing himſelf to man by dreams and viſions, or by viſions in a dream, of which *Elihu* ſpake in the two former verſes; as then he takes an opportunity *to open the ears of men, and ſeal their Inſtruction*, to faſten and fix his word upon them, to make it ſtick and ſtay by them; ſo in all this his purpoſe is;

That he may withdraw man from his purpoſe.

הסיר *auferre erit, vel mutare in melius.*

The word rendred to **withdraw**, ſignifies, to take off, or put away, to remove or change for the better. (*Iſa.* 1. 16.) *Put away the evil of your doings*; that is, do no more evil, or (as the Lord ſpeaks by another Prophet, *Jer.* 44. 4.) *O do not this abominable thing that I hate*; we render the word in the other ſenſe (*Job* 27. 2.) *He hath removed my Judgment far from me.* There is in man a kind of ſetledneſs and reſolvedneſs upon his purpoſe, he will on; but ſaith *Elihu*, the Lord withdraws him, he ſtretcheth forth his hand, and pulls him back; *He withdraweth*

Man.] *Adam*, the earthly man; The proper name of the firſt man, is the common name of all men. Man is earthly by nature, and ſo are all his natural purpoſes. To draw an earthly man from that which is earthly, is no eaſie matter; only the power of God can do it; *He withdraweth man*

מעשה à עשה *fecit.*

From his purpoſe.] The word which we render **purpoſe**, properly ſignifies a *work*; and ſo it is tranſlated not only elſewhere, but here by ſeveral Interpreters. Mr. *Broughton* is expreſs, *That the earthly man leave off to work*, and then by *work*, he means an *evil work*, as by purpoſe an evil purpoſe. The word *work* ſet alone uſually ſignifies an evil work, as the word *wife* put alone is taken for a good wife (*Prov.* 8. 22.) *He that findeth a wife, findeth good*; every one that findeth a wife doth not find good, (there are many bad wives) only he that findeth a good wife findeth good. So on the contrary, the word *work* ſtanding here alone, implyeth a bad work. And to withdraw man from his work, or from his purpoſe, is to withdraw him from his evil work or purpoſe: The Septuagint gives it clearly ſo, *that he may withdraw man from unrighteouſneſs.* And Mr. *Broughton* gloſſing his own tranſlation, ſaith, *that he leave off mans work, and do the work of God.*

Ut amoveat homo opus, ſc. ſuum & anim m malum. Jun.

ἀποϛρέψαι ἄνθρωπον ἀπὸ ἀδικίας. Sept.

Again, This term *work*, ſeems oppoſed to the thought or concupiſcence of the inner man; *he withdraweth man from his work*, that his hand may not effect what his heart hath contrived: that the bitter root may not bring forth evil and bitter fruit. Or if we follow our tranſlation, the ſenſe will be the ſame; *He withdraweth man from his purpoſe*, that is, he checks and ſtops the inward motions and workings of mans heart, and ſo keeps him from bringing it to perfection by an outward evil work. (*Jam.* 1. 15.) *Then when luſt hath conceived, it bringeth forth ſin, and ſin, when it is finiſhed, brings forth death*; God in great mercy takes man off from his purpoſe when he finds him upon an evil device or purpoſe; he cruſheth the Cockatrice's egg that it may not be hatched, and deſtroyeth the conception of thoſe Babyloniſh brats that they may never come to the birth. (*Mich.* 2. 1.) *Woe to them that deviſe miſchief on their beds, when the morning is light they practiſe it, becauſe it is in the power of their hand.* The work begins at the heart, there 'tis plotted and contrived; *the heart is the work-houſe of ſin*; now the Lord withdraws man from his purpoſe, and will not ſuffer the inward work to be accompliſhed by the outward work.

Ut avertat hominem ab iis quæ fecit. Vulg.

Further, we may refer theſe words either to what is paſt, or to what is to come; ſome tranſlate (referring it to what is paſt) *that he may turn, or withdraw man from thoſe things which he hath done*; that is, from thoſe evils to which he hath already ſet his hand; this is done by giving man repentance, which is our being humbled for, and turning away from any evil already committed.

Our tranſlation refers it to what is intended to be done, for that's *a purpoſe*. So the meaning is, God doth theſe things that he may keep man from doing that evil or miſchief which he hath reſolved upon, or at leaſt is forming and hammering in his thoughts. *Abimelech* had an evil purpoſe for the matter (though poſſibly the purpoſe of his heart was not evil) for he ſaid to God (and God ſaid he ſpake true) *in the integrity of my heart, and innocency of my hands have I done this*, Gen. 20. 5, 6. (he was I ſay about an evil purpoſe for the matter) when he thought to take *Abram*'s wife from him, but the Lord came to him in a dream, and withdrew him from the evil of his purpoſe. *Laban* intended evil, or hard dealing to *Jacob*, but the Lord met him alſo in a dream, and withdrew him from his purpoſe, ſaying, (*Gen.* 31. 24.) *Take heed thou ſpeak not to Jacob, neither good nor bad*, that is, hinder him not in his journey, either by threatnings or by promiſes. Thus man is taken off or withdrawn from evil purpoſes by preventing grace, and from evil works by repenting grace.

I ſhall proſecute the words according to our reading only, which imports that when man hath ſome evil purpoſe upon his heart, the Lord viſits him in dreams and viſions of the night, to withdraw him from that purpoſe.

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *Man is very forward and eager upon evil purpoſes.*

God himſelf muſt come to withdraw and fetch him off, or otherwiſe he will be driving them on. The heart of man naturally hath no other purpoſes but evil purpoſes, and upon them it is ſet (as I may ſay) to purpoſe; that is, he will effect and bring them about if he can. When *Moſes* reproved *Aaron* concerning the golden Calf which he had made, at the inſtance and violent importunity of the people, *Aaron* anſwered for himſelf (*Exod.* 32. 23.) *Let not the anger of my Lord wax hot, thou knoweſt the people that they are ſet on miſchief*, they are bent to it, they have ſuch a mind to it, that there's no turning them from it; they will hear no reaſon nor take any denyal, when the fit is on them. There is a ſetting of the heart of man continually upon evil; the wind blows that way, and no other way, the wind ſits always in that bad corner till God turneth it. There are two gracious acts of God, ſpoken of in Scripture, which do exceedingly ſhew forth the ſinfulneſs of man; every act of grace doth in its meaſure aggravate the ſinfulneſs of man, and always the higher grace acteth, the more is the ſinfulneſs of man diſcovered, eſpecially (I ſay) in this twofold act of grace, The former whereof conſiſts in *drawing*; the latter in *withdrawing*; there is a gracious act of God in drawing the ſinful ſons and daughters of men to that which is good. Man is drawn, Firſt, into a ſtate of grace or goodneſs, by this he is made good. He is drawn, Secondly, to acts of grace or goodneſs, by this he doth good. Of the former Chriſt ſpeaks (*Joh.* 6. 44.) *No man can come to me, except the Father which hath ſent me draw him*, that is, no man can believe, (for by faith we come to Chriſt) except he receive power from on high. God draweth the ſoul to Chriſt, and that's a powerful act of divine drawing, though not a compulſory act: and as God muſt draw man into a ſtate of grace, which is our union with Chriſt by the Spirit in believing, ſo he draweth him to the acting of his graces. Of this latter the Church ſpeaketh to Chriſt (*Cant.* 1. 4.) *Draw me, and I will run after thee.* Theſe gracious drawings ſhew that we are not only utterly unable, but averſe to the receiving grace, and ſo becoming good, while we are in a ſtate of nature; as alſo that we are very backward to do that which is good, even when we are in a ſtate of grace. Now as God acts very graciouſly in drawing man to good, ſo Secondly, in withdrawing him from evil, from thoſe evil purpoſes and evil practices, to which all men are ſo eaſily, yet ſo ſtrongly carried. The Prophet (*Jer.* 2. 23, 24.) elegantly deſcribes the exceeding forwardneſs of that people to evil, while he compareth to *the ſwift Dromedary, traverſing her ways, and to the wild Aſs in the Wilderneſs that ſnuffeth up the wind at her pleaſure* (or *the deſire of her heart*) *in her occaſion who can turn her away?* As the wild Aſs ſet upon her pleaſure, and in her occaſion, when ſhe hath a mind to it, will not be turn'd away; ſuch is the heart of man. That other Prophet (*Iſa.* 5. 18.) telleth us of thoſe *who draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and ſin as it were with a cart-rope*; that is, they ſet themſelves with all their might to do miſchief. When men are thus vainly bent upon vanity, 'tis a mighty work of God to withdraw them from their work. When, what men are purpoſed to do they are faſtened to it as with cords and cart-ropes, what but the power of the great God can withdraw them from it?

Whence note, Secondly, *Unleſs God did withdraw and fetch us off from ſin, we ſhould run on in it continually.*

When man is in an evil way, he hath no mind to return till God turneth him; let come on't what will, he will venture: 'Tis only through grace that the heart either abſtains or returns from evil. *David* ſaith (*Pſal.* 18. 23.) *I have kept my ſelf from mine iniquity. David* kept himſelf from his iniquity, yet he was not his own keeper: It was by the power of God that he kept himſelf from that ſin to which he was moſt prone, even from that ſin to which his own corruptions and the Devils temptations were always drawing him. *David* had ſome ſpecial iniquity to which his heart was inclined more than any other, and from that he kept himſelf, being himſelf kept by the power of God through faith unto ſalvation. Of our ſelves we can neither keep our ſelves from doing iniquity, nor leave off doing that iniquity, which we have once done. How can man withhold himſelf from ſin, while ſin hath ſo great a hold of him, yea the Maſtery over him?

> Thirdly Note, *God is graciouſly pleaſed both to withdraw man from doing evil, and to draw him to repentance when he hath done evil.*

Between theſe two the grace of God is daily working in and towards man, and it worketh for the effecting of both many ways.

Firſt, By his word, and that in a fourfold conſideration. Firſt, by the word of his command, he every where in Scripture forbids man to do any evil, and bids him repent of every evil which he doth. Secondly, by the word of his threatnings; they are as thunderbolts to deter him. Thirdly, by the word of his promiſes, they are divine allurements, ſweetly yet effectually to entice him. Fourthly, by the word of his perſwaſions, they are full of taking arguments to convince and win him.

Secondly, God withdraws man from ſin, and draws him to repentance when he hath ſinned, *by his works:* Firſt, by his works of Judgment, they break him to theſe duties. Secondly, by his works of mercy, they melt him into theſe duties.

Thirdly, God withdraws man from ſin and draws him to repentance by his patience and long-ſuffering. (Rom. 2. 4.) *Deſpiſeſt thou the riches of his goodneſs and forbearance, and long-ſuffering, not knowing that the goodneſs of God leadeth them to repentance?* As if the Apoſtle had ſaid, O man, if thou knoweſt not the meaning of God's patience towards thee, and that this is the meaning of it, thou knoweſt nothing of the mind and meaning of God towards thee.

Fourthly, The Lord withdraweth man from evil purpoſes by ſeaſonable counſels. *David* was going on in a very bad purpoſe (1 *Sam.* 25.) and God ſtirred up *Abigail* to meet him, and by good counſel to withdraw him from his purpoſe: This *David* acknowledged (*verſ.* 32, 33.) *Bleſſed be the Lord God of Iſrael, which ſent thee this day to meet me.* As if he had ſaid, *I was* fully purpoſed to revenge my ſelf upon *Nabal*, and had not ſurely left a man of his houſe alive by the morning light, if thou hadſt not met me; therefore bleſſed be God who hath ſent thee, and bleſſed be thy advice, and bleſſed be thou which haſt kept me this day from coming to ſhed blood, and haſt by thy good counſel withdrawn me from that evil purpoſe.

Laſtly, Conſider God withdraweth man from his ſinful purpoſe, all or any of theſe ways, by putting forth his mighty power with them. For his word alone, his works alone, his patience alone, the counſel of man alone would not do it, if God did not ſtretch forth his own arm in and with theſe means for the doing of it. Nothing is any further efficacious than as God is with it. (*Numb.* 22.) *Balaam* was going on in his wicked purpoſe, being ſent for by *Balak* to curſe the people of God: And though the Lord ſent his Angel to be an adverſary to him in his way (*verſ.* 22.) ſo that his Aſs turned out of the way into the field, yet *Balaam* went on in his purpoſe, yea though the Angel ſtanding between two walls cauſed his Aſs to turn ſo ſuddenly, that ſhe cruſht *Balaam*'s foot againſt the wall (*verſ.* 25.) yet *Balaam* went on in his purpoſe: Once more though the Angel went further and ſtood in a narrow way, where there was no way to turn to the right hand nor to the left, ſo that the poor Aſs fell down under him (*verſ.* 27.) and *ſpeaking* (as the Apoſtle *Peter* expreſſeth it, 2 *Epiſt.* 2.) *with mans voice rebuked the madneſs of the Prophet;* Yet ſo mad he was that all theſe checks and warnings, could not withdraw him from his purpoſe. And what the Lord did at that time to *Balaam* by an Angel, that he doth by ſome other means and providences to ſtop many from their evil purpoſes, who yet will not be ſtopt. He ſpeaks to them in the miniſtry of his word, he ſpeaks to them in his works; he ſpreads their way with roſes, he hedgeth up their way with thorns, he beſtoweth ſweet mercies upon them, he ſends ſharp afflictions upon them, to withdraw them from their evil projects and purpoſes, yet on they go like *Balaam*, unleſs he ſend more than an Angel, even his holy Spirit to withdraw them.

Laſtly, *Elihu* reports it as a ſpecial favour of God to withdraw man from his purpoſe.

> Whence note, *It is a great mercy to be hinder'd in ſinful purpoſes and intendments.*

Diſappointments are acts of grace, when we are acting againſt grace; If God ſtop us from doing evil, not only by his word, but by blows, or by a hedg of thorns, yea if he ſtop us by a drawn ſword, it is a great mercy. Though God throw us to the ground (as he did *Saul*, afterwards *Paul*, when he went with a bloody purpoſe to vex and perſecute the Saints, *Acts* 9.) let us count our ſelves exalted, and rejoyce in it more than in any worldly exaltation. 'Tis a rich mercy to be kept from executing an evil purpoſe, though by our own poverty and outward miſery. The doing of that which is ſinful, is worſe than any thing that can be done to us, or endured by us, as a ſtop againſt ſin. Sin hath death in it; ſin hath wrath in it; ſin hath hell in it; ſin hath Devil and all in it; therefore to be kept from ſin, let it be by what means it will, if by pains and pining ſickneſſes, if by reproaches and diſgraces, yea if by death, we have cauſe to bleſs God. The greateſt and soreſt Judgment which God pours upon ſinful men, is to let them alone in or not to withdraw them from their ſins. To be ſuffered to go on and proſper in ſin, is the worſt of ſufferings, the laſt of Judgments, the next Judgment to hell it ſelf, and an infallible ſign of an heir of hell. Thus the wrath of God waxed hot againſt *Iſrael when he gave them up to their own hearts luſts, and they walked in their own Counſel* (Pſal. 81. 11.) This was the higheſt revenge that God could take upon that ſinful people. He ſaid a little before, *Iſrael would none of me;* when God wooed them they were ſo coy, they would have none of him; and then, ſaid he, go on, take your fill of ſin; I give you up to your own hearts luſts. The Lord did not ſay, I gave them up to the ſword, to the famine, or to the peſtilence, but to their own hearts luſts, and to walk on in their own way; *That perſon or people may be ſure, God hath purpoſed evil againſt them, whom he will not withdraw from their evil purpoſes.* The ſeverity of the wrath of God againſt the Gentiles is expreſt and ſumm'd up in this (*Rom.* 1. 26, 28.) *He gave them up to vile affections; he gave them up to a reprobate mind, to do things which were not convenient. A natural man left to himſelf, will ſoon do ſuch things as nature it ſelf abhorreth and bluſheth at.* The ſame dreadful doom is denounced (*Rev.* 22. 11.) *He that is unjuſt, let him be unjuſt ſtill; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy ſtill.* I will not withdraw him from his way, let him go on and periſh, let him go on and ſink down to the pit of perdition for ever. As St. *John* in the *Revelation* foretelling the Church, given up or left to (not in) great ſufferings of all ſorts; *Here is the patience of the Saints.* So when we ſee the world given up and left in great ſinnings of any ſort, eſpecially if to ſinnings of all ſorts, we may truly and ſadly ſay, *Here is the wrath of God.* 'Tis therefore a great mercy, if God will any way withdraw man from his ſinful ways and purpoſes eſpecially when he taketh ſuch gentle ways, as dreams and viſions, counſels and inſtructions, to *withdraw man from his purpoſe, and* (as it followeth in this verſe) *to*

Hide pride from man.] The word which we render to **hide**, is to hide by caſting a covering, a veyl, a garment, or any other thing, over what we deſire ſhould be hid, (*Prov.* 12. 23.) *A prudent man concealeth knowledg;* it is this word; he doth not pretend to know ſo much as he knoweth; he puts a veyl upon his own abilities, (as *Moſes* upon his face when there was ſuch a ſhining beauty imprinted there) rather than reveals them unneceſſarily or uncalled. *'Tis the fooliſh man, or he that hath but a ſhew of wiſdom, who loves and affects to be ſhewing it.* But to the Text. The word is uſed alſo, to note that gracious act of God, his

כסה *Texit, operuit, imponendo aliquid quo tegat.*

pardoning the ſin of man. (*Pſal.* 32. 1.) *Bleſſed is the man whoſe tranſgreſſion is forgiven, and whoſe ſin is covered.* God covers our ſins in the riches of his grace, by the perfect righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt.

Now there are two ways by which *God hideth pride from man*, Firſt, by pardoning it; Secondly, preventing it. Here to hide pride from man, properly, is not to pardon it when acted, but to prevent or keep man from the acting of it; God indeed hides the pride of man by pardoning it (and that's a high act of grace) and he hideth pride from man by keeping man from doing proudly, or from ſhewing his pride in his doings.

גוה *ſuperbia, excellentia.*

The word rendred *pride*, ſignifies Eminency, or Excellency, becauſe men are uſually proud of that wherein they are eminent and excel; there lyes the temptation to pride. And therefore as a man ſhould turn away his eyes from a beautiful harlot, leſt ſhe ſhould inſnare him, ſo God hides man's own beauties, eminencies, and excellencies, even his beſt works from him, leſt he ſhould be proud of them, and ſo go a whoring after them: or as God did with the body of *Moſes*, he not only buried him, but hid him (for 'tis ſaid, *Deut.* 34. 6. *No man knoweth of his ſepulcher to this day*) and 'tis well conceived that the reaſon why God hid his ſepulcher, was, leſt the people of *Iſrael* ſhould be drawn aſide to ſome undue or ſuperſtitious veneration of him. So God hideth (by ſome means or other) that which is moſt eminent in us, from us, leſt it ſhould draw us aſide to ſome undue eſtimation of it, and ſo prove but matter or fuel for pride to kindle upon. Thus the Lord hideth pride from us, when he hideth that from us, which (conſidering our corruption) may probably make us proud.

מגבר

And the original word here uſed to ſignifie the man from whom God hideth pride, hath a near cognation to this notion about hiding pride it ſelf. Man is twice expreſt in this verſe, yet not by the ſame word; The firſt word notes man in the weakneſs of his conſtitution, *an earthly man*; This ſecond notes man in the powerfulneſs of his condition, *a ſtrong man*, a mighty man, an eminent man, a man with all his furniture, in the fulneſs of his earthly glory and greatneſs; when man hath much natural power, much civil power, with the various additions and ornaments of both theſe powers upon him, then man is in greateſt danger to be proud, and then God *hideth pride from man*. And who can hide pride from ſuch a man but God alone? Men commonly blow up ſuch men with pride by great applauſes, and ſuch men have moſtly great thoughts and high apprehenſions of themſelves, and are very forward to diſcover (which is the greateſt diſcovery of their weakneſs) their own pride. *God only hideth pride from man*; that is he makes it not to be, as well as hinders its appearing; that which is hidden is as if it were not. The word is uſed in that ſenſe (*Job* 3. 10.) *Becauſe he did not hide ſorrow from mine eyes:* Sorrow is hidden from us when the matter of ſorrow is ſo taken away, that we ſorrow not at all. To hide pride is to take away the matter and occaſion, the incentives and motives of pride, whatſoever is a nurſe of pride, or doth encourage the pride of our hearts, that's *to hide pride from man.*

Again, We may take this word, *pride*, in a large ſenſe, as comprehending all ſin, *He withdraweth man from his purpoſe, and hideth pride*; that is, ſin of all ſorts *from man*; and doubtleſs there is pride of one kind or other in every act of ſin; There is a heightening of the ſpirit againſt God, ſome diſſatisfaction with the mind and will of God, and thence a ſetting up of our will againſt the will of God in every ſinner, eſpecially in bold and wilful ſinners. Such ſinners would not let the will of God ſtand, but deſire that their own may. This is pride; This in ſome degree is mingled with every ſin, and pride leads to all ſin; therefore in Scripture ſometimes an humble or meek man is oppos'd, not only to a proud man in ſpecial, but to a wicked man in general (*Pſal.* 147. 6.) *The Lord lifteth up the meek, he caſteth the wicked down to the ground.* Where the *wicked* man in the latter part of the verſe, ſtands in oppoſition to the *meek* or humble man in the former part of it. Nor can it be denied, but that as pride is in it ſelf a very great wickedneſs, ſo it gives a propenſion and fitneſs for the doing of all manner of wickedneſs. And thus take it in the largeſt ſenſe, 'tis a truth that God hideth pride, that is, every ſin from man, otherwiſe he would ſoon ſhew forth any ſin as much as pride. But I rather keep to that ſtrictneſs of Interpretation here, as pride is oppoſed to humility, which is not only a choice grace, but the ornament of all thoſe graces which are hidden in the heart, and held out in the life of a gracious man. And thus the Lord by exerciſing man with dreams and viſions in his affliction, doth firſt ſtop and check the very purpoſes of evil, that they come not to act, and when man hath brought to paſs or acted any good purpoſe, he keeps him from oſtentation. *He hideth pride from man.*

It being the Lords deſign to hide pride from man, by thoſe fore-named diſpenſations.

Obſerve, Firſt, *Man is naturally much diſpoſed and very prone to pride.*

Thoſe things which Children are apt to abuſe or hurt themſelves with, their parents hide from them; They will hide edge-tools from them, leſt they get a wound by medling with them; They will hide fruit from them, leſt by eating overmuch they get a ſurfet. Thus the Lord our tender father often hides all the means and occaſions of pride from the eyes of his children, becauſe they are ſo ready to boaſt and lift up themſelves in pride. *Man* (as was ſhewed at the 13. verſe of the former Chapter) *is a proud piece of fleſh, and hath much proud fleſh in him.* The Prophet ſaith (*Ezek.* 7. 10.) *Pride hath budded*; pride hath a root, and it brings forth fruit. There is a twofold pride, or pride of two ſorts. Firſt, ſecret unſeen pride, or pride of heart; Secondly, open viſible pride, or pride of life. In alluſion to the Prophets Metaphor, we may ſay, there is pride in the bud, and pride in the root. Pride buddeth outwardly,

Firſt, At the tongue, men ſpeak proud words, they ſpeak boaſtingly and vain-gloriouſly (*Pſal.* 75. 5.) *Speak not with a ſtiff neck*, that is, ſpeak not proudly. Pride budded at the tongue of *Nebuchadnezzar* (Dan. 4. 30.) when he walked in his Palace and ſaid, *Is not this great Babel that I have built for the houſe of the kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honour of my Majeſty.* Here was pride budding at the tongue.

Secondly, Pride buddeth alſo at the eye, in ſcornful lofty looks. *David* profeſt that *his heart was not haughty, nor his eyes lofty* (Pſal. 131. 1.) The haughtineſs of many mens hearts may be ſeen at thoſe windows of the body, the eyes, in lofty looks. Theſe are threatned with a downfall (*Pſal.* 18. 27.) *The Lord will bring down high looks*, that is, *proud men who look highly.* And again (*Iſa.* 2. 11.) *The lofty looks of man ſhall be humbled, and the haughtineſs of man ſhall be bowed down.* Once more ſaith the Lord (*Iſa.* 10. 13.) *I will puniſh the fruit of the ſtout heart of the King of Aſſyria, and the glory of his high looks.* There we have pride in the root, *a ſtout heart*, and pride in the fruit, *high looks.* (*Iſa.* 3. 11.) *The ſhew of their Countenance teſtifieth againſt them*; that is, they look proudly, though (which ſhould lay them in the duſt) they live very lewdly, yea they are proud of their lewdneſs.

Thirdly, How often doth pride bud in apparel, in vain faſhions, and new-fangled attires, in the affected adornings and trimmings of a body of clay? What are theſe but the buddings of pride? yea the flaggs and banners of pride. Some are as proud of their gay dreſſes, as the Peacock of his feathers. We commonly ſay, *Fine feathers make fine birds*, but how fooliſh are thoſe birds that are proud of Feathers!

Secondly, There is pride of heart, or pride budding in the ſpirit of man, which doth not ſhew it ſelf; only the mind ſwels within. When men have high thoughts of themſelves (though they do not (as the Apoſtle *Jude* hath it) ſpeak great ſwelling words of vanity, yet they have great ſwelling thoughts of vanity, then pride buddeth in their ſpirits, their minds ſwell, and the mind will ſwell more than the tongue. The tongue ſwells mightily, but the heart much more. The ſpirit of man may lift up it ſelf on high, when the man looks very demurely. (*Hab.* 2. 4.) *Behold, his ſoul which is lifted up, is not upright in him*; If the ſoul be lifted up, the man falls; He that is high-minded, cannot be upright in his mind.

It may be queſtioned, Whence it cometh to paſs, that the ſoul of man is ſo much and ſo often lifted up with pride? What cauſeth this ſwelling and heaving of his ſpirit? I anſwer, Firſt, Some are proud of their birth, either, that they are born of great men, or that they are born of good men. The Baptiſt admoniſhed the *Jews* of this piece of pride (*Matth.* 3. 19.) *Think not to ſay within your ſelves, we have Abraham to our father.* As if he had ſaid, I well perceive what makes you (as we ſpeak proverbially) ſtand ſo much upon your pantaſles? and talk within your ſelves, at ſuch a rate of your ſelves, is it not becauſe you are of *Abraham's* ſtock? But I ſay unto you, let not your heart ſwell with theſe thoughts, *we are Children of Abraham*; *for God is able even of theſe ſtones to raiſe up children to Abraham*; that is, God will not want a people, though he ſhould lay you aſide, and entertain you no longer for his people.

Secondly, Others are proud of riches, yea they *boaſt of the multitude of their riches* (Pſal. 49. 6.) Even they who deſire to hide their riches as much as they can, yet cannot but tell the world they are proud of their riches, ſo proud, that they ſlight and contemn all men that have not as much riches as they; O what rejoycings have moſt rich men over their riches? *Hezekiah* a great King and a good man (a rare conjunction) had much of that upon his ſpirit (*Iſa.* 39. 2.) when Ambaſſadors came from *Babylon*, *He was glad of them, and ſhewed them all his treaſure*; He affected they ſhould ſee what a rich King he was, and what maſſes of Gold and Silver as well as what multitudes of men were at his command.

Thirdly, Many are proud of their honours and powers in the world; They are high-minded, becauſe they are ſet in high places; 'Tis a diſhonour to ſome great men that they have not truly great ſpirits. And 'tis the temptation of all great men to have proud ſpirits.

Fourthly, Not a few are proud of their bodily perfections and ſtrength; many a ſoul is defiled and deformed with pride of the bodies beauty and fairneſs; many look not after the beauty of holineſs, while they doat upon the beauty of their own comelineſs; they ſee themſelves in their beauty, till they are proud of it, and care not (which ſhould be our greateſt care, and ſhall be our greateſt priviledg, *Iſa.* 33. 17.) *to ſee the King in his beauty.* As ſome truſt in their ſpiritual beauty (*Ezek.* 16. 15.) ſo others over-ween their corporal; both are the effects of pride; and the firſt is by ſo much the worſe of the two, by how much it riſeth from a better object.

Fifthly, Many are proud of their natural parts, proud of their gifts, proud of their wit, proud of their memory, proud of their eloquence and abilities of ſpeaking. As *knowledg it ſelf puffeth up* (1 Cor. 8. 1.) ſo do all thoſe endowments which ſerve either for the getting or expreſſing of our knowledg. Gifts and abilities, whether natural or improved and acquired, do not more fit us for ſervice, than tempt us to and (unleſs grace work mightily) taint us with pride.

Sixthly, As many are proud of what they have, ſo others are proud of what they have done, they are proud of their actions, their ſpirits ſwell with the thoughts of their own works. Some are ſo wicked, that they are proud of their evil works. The Apoſtle ſaith, *They glory in their ſhame* (Phil. 3. 19.) *David* complained of many (*Pſal.* 4.) who *turned his glory into ſhame*; but theſe turn their ſhame into glory, that is, they are proud of that for which they ought to be aſhamed. Now if ſome are proud of the evil, of the miſchief which they have done, how eaſily may we grow proud of the good which we have done? proud of our duties, proud of our righteous deeds, proud of our charitable deeds to men, proud of our prayers to God, proud of our zeal for God, as *Jehu* was who ſaid, *Come and ſee my zeal for the Lord.* The heart of a good man may ſoon have too much to do with what he hath done, his thoughts may quickly work too much towards and upon his own works. But as for hypocrites and ſelf-ſeekers, who do good to be ſeen of men, they cannot forbear ſeeing it themſelves, and ſurely that ſight of the eye cannot but affect the heart with pride.

Seventhly, Pride riſeth often from the ſucceſs of what is attempted and done, men are proud of victories. The *Aſſyrian* is deſcribed (*Iſa.* 10. 13, 14.) triumphing and inſulting, becauſe *he had put down the nations as a valiant man.* And (*Hab.* 1. 16.) we have the *Chaldeans ſacrificing to their net, and burning incenſe to their drag, becauſe by them their portion is fat, and their meat plenteous*; that is, they boaſted of and gloried in their great atchievements in war; ſo it ſeems to be explained in the next words (*verſ.* 17.) *Shall they therefore empty their net, and not ſpare continually to ſlay the nations?*

Eighthly, Pride ſpringeth out of the very mercies and ſalvation of God. Thus 'tis ſaid of *Hezekiah* (2 Chron. 32. 25.) after he had received two great mercies; Firſt, deliverance from a great enemy; and, Secondly, from a great ſickneſs; *He rendred not again according to the benefit done unto him, for his heart was lifted up.* How lifted up? not in thankfulneſs, for he rendred not according to the kindneſs, but in pride and high-mindedneſs; for preſently it is ſaid (*verſ.* 26.) *Notwithſtanding Hezekiah humbled himſelf for the pride of his heart.*

Ninthly, The heart is lifted up and waxeth proud with Church-Priviledges; Some ſay, they are in the Church, or they are the Church; they enjoy pure ordinances and adminiſtrations of holy worſhip above others. For this kind of pride the Prophet reproved the *Jews* (Jer. 7. 3, 4.) *Hear ye the word of the Lord, all ye of Judah, that enter in at theſe gates to worſhip the Lord, &c. Truſt ye not in lying words, ſaying, The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are we; The temple of the Lord are theſe*; As if he had ſaid, Be not proud of the Temple (what we truſt to, beſides God, we are proud of) nor of your Temple-priviledges, you will find no ſanctuary, no ſecurity there, unleſs you amend your ways; theſe things will do you no good, except you be better. The *Jews* were taxed alſo by the Apoſtle for ſuch a proud cry (*Rom.* 2. 17.) *Thou makeſt thy boaſt of God*; and can a man do better than to boaſt of God? but they ſwell'd with pride, they did not rejoyce with thankfulneſs, they contemn'd others, as if God were a God to them only, and ſaw ſomewhat in them above others, as the reaſon why he choſe them for his people above others. This was pride of ſpirit, or ſpiritual pride. And again to the *Jew* (verſ. 22.) *Thou that makeſt thy boaſt of the Law*; And is it not our duty to boaſt of the Law or Word of God? But the Apoſtle ſaw them proud of the Law, not obedient to it; He perceived their hearts were lifted up in their priviledg of having the letter of the Law, while both their hearts and lives were unconformed and unſubdued to the ſpiritualneſs of the Law.

Tenthly, Pride is ready to riſe in the heart of man from that divine light and thoſe extraordinary Revelations which he receives from God; and it is hard to keep the heart under when God diſcovers very much of himſelf to man. This was *Paul's* caſe (2 Cor. 12. 7.) *Leſt I ſhould be lifted up above meaſure through the abundance of revelations, there was given me a thorn in the fleſh, the meſſenger of Satan to buffet me.* Even *Paul* in that caſe needed a thorn in his fleſh to let out or prevent the Impoſtumation of his ſpirit. Some conceive the reaſon why the Prophet *Ezekiel* is ſo often called, *Son of Man*, was to keep him humble, while he had many revelations from God.

Eleventhly, Some have been proud not only of divine and heavenly, but of diabolical and helliſh Revelations. We read of one *Theudas boaſting himſelf to be ſome body* (Acts 5. 36.) This vain man pretended revelations from God, which were indeed from the Devil; And he ſwell'd with this conceit, boaſted himſelf to be *ſome body*, that is, he thought himſelf to be *every body*; as if the perfections of all men were center'd in him, or as if all others were *no body*, and he himſelf the only *ſome body*. The Apoſtle (*Acts* 8. 9.) ſpeaking of *Simon*, who had uſed ſorcery and bewitched the people of *Samaria*, ſaith, *He gave out that himſelf was ſome great one*; he ſwell'd with pride from his diabolical Revelations; giving out not only (as *Theudas*) that he was *ſome body*, but that he was *ſome great one.* Though indeed for a man to report himſelf *ſome body*, is (as both learned Grecians and Latines noted in the Margin tell us) to report himſelf a Great one. And who are greater in pride, than they who make great reports of themſelves, or report themſelves great?

Λέγων εἶναί τινα ἑαυτὸν, μέγας τις *idem atq;* μέγας. *Hinc illud Pindari,* τί δὲ τὶς; τί δ' ὔτις; *Quid eſt Aliquis?* i. e. *qui ſe putat eſſe aliquem.* σκιᾶς ὄναρ ἄνθρωπος. *Umbræ ſomnium homo. Hinc illud. Eſt filius alicujus.* i. e. *egregij viri, non è media turba aut terræ filius. Et illud. Fac ut me velis eſſe aliquem.* Cic. Lib. 3. ad Atticum Epiſt. 52.

How great a proneneſs there is in the heart of man to pride, may appear by all theſe inſtances; by which it appears that as there is much pride abiding in man, ſo by all or any of theſe occaſions it is daily budding out, unleſs God hide it from man, and nip it in the bud.

Yet here it may be queſtioned; Whence it cometh to paſs, that man is ſo prone to pride? or what is the ſpring of it?

I anſwer; Firſt, Pride ſprings from Inordinate ſelf-love, (2 *Tim.* 3. 2.) *Men ſhall be lovers of their own ſelves, Covetous, Boaſters, Proud.* They that are undue lovers of themſelves, or in love with themſelves, they preſently grow proud of themſelves. Self-love, and ſelf-flattery, are glaſſes in which if a man look upon himſelf, he appears double to what he is, or much greater than what he really is. Self-love is a *multiplying*, yea and a *magnifying glaſs*. 'Tis dangerous to ſee our ſelves through our own ſelf-love; That ſight of ſelf affects the heart with high thoughts of ſelf, which high thoughts the Lord would have all men caſt down, or caſt away, while he gives that admonition by his Apoſtle to the *Romans* (*Rom.* 12. 3.) *Let no man think of himſelf more highly than he ought to think* (that is, let him not think highly of himſelf at all) but (as it followeth in the ſame verſe) *Soberly, or to ſobriety.* For indeed many are drunken, yea mad, or mad-drunk with high, that is, proud thoughts of themſelves. Hence that of the ſame Apoſtle (*Gal.* 6. 3.) *If a man think himſelf to be ſomething, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himſelf;* he that thinks himſelf to be ſomething, is he that hath proud thoughts of himſelf; and ſuch a *ſomething*, is a meer *nothing*, that is, is no ſuch thing as he thinks himſelf to be; as is clear in the caſe of the Church of *Laodicea* (Rev. 3. 16.) Hence

Secondly, Pride ſprings from an opinion that what we have is better than indeed it is; the proud man thinks all his ſilver gold, and his braſs ſilver. We ſpeak proverbially of ſuch, *All their geeſe are ſwans;* they always over-rate their own commodities.

Thirdly, Pride ſprings from this falſe opinion, that what we have, we have it from our ſelves, or that 'tis of our own getting. The Apoſtles Pride-confounding queſtion, is, (1 *Cor.* 4. 7.) *What haſt thou that thou haſt not received?* As if he had ſaid, the true reaſon why men boaſt, or the ground of all their proud boaſting is this, they think not themſelves beholding to any for what they have; all is of themſelves, or by a ſelf improvement; they have ſomewhat (they imagine) which they have not received.

Fourthly, The proud man thinks what he hath, he alone hath it; at leaſt, that he hath it in a greater meaſure than any other. He is the Cedar, others are but ſhrubs. He is the Giant, others are but dwarfs. Only the humble attain that rule (*Rom.* 12. 10.) *In honour preferring one another:* as alſo that (*Phil.* 2. 3.) *In lowlineſs of mind, let each eſteem other better than himſelf.*

Fifthly, Pride riſeth from this thought, that what we have, we ſhall always have. Holy *David* began to be blown up with pride, as ſoon as ever *he ſaid in his proſperity, I ſhall never be moved. Babylon glorified her ſelf, having ſaid in her heart, I ſit a Queen, and am no widow, and ſhall ſee no ſorrow,* (Rev. 18. 7.)

Secondly, In that God is here ſaid *to hide pride from man;*

Obſerve, *Pride is a very vile and moſt odious ſin.*

If God hide it from mans eyes, then ſurely God himſelf is of purer eyes than to behold it, and be pleaſed (*Pſal.* 138. 6.) *The Lord knoweth the proud afar off;* He that meets a ſpectacle or perſon which he cannot endure to look upon, avoids it, or turns from it while he is yet afar off; whereas if the object be delightful, he draweth near, and comes as cloſe as he can; when therefore 'tis ſaid, *the Lord knoweth a proud man afar off,* it ſhews his diſdain of him, *He will ſcarce touch him with a pair of tongs,* (as we ſay) he cannot abide to come near him. He knows well enough how vile he is even at the greateſt diſtance. Pride is the firſt of thoſe ſeven *things which are an abomination to the Lord,* (*Prov.* 6. 17.) And how abominable a thing pride is, may appear further by theſe ſix Conſiderations.

Firſt, The folly and Irrationality of pride, renders it odious to God; nothing is more odious to a wiſe man than folly, how odious then is pride to the moſt wiſe God! When *Paul* did any thing which had but a ſhew of pride in it, though he did it only upon Conſtraint, yet he calls himſelf fool for doing it (2 *Cor.* 12. 11.) *I am become a fool in glorying, ye have compelled me.* Doth not this intimate, that in *Paul*'s opinion, all proud ſelf-gloriers and boaſters are fools, that is, ſuch as act below common ſenſe or reaſon. In the Hebrew language, the ſame word that ſignifies boaſting and pride, ſignifies folly and fooliſhneſs. The empty veſſel yields the greateſt ſound; and they that make ſo great a noiſe of themſelves, are uſually nothing elſe but a great noiſe themſelves, at leaſt they unavoidably raiſe a ſuſpition of themſelves, that they are but empty veſſels, or ſhallow rivers. This was *Solomon*'s concluſion (*Prov.* 25. 27.) *For men to ſearch their own glory is no glory;* that is, a man obſcures himſelf by ſelf glorying. How fooliſh, how irrational a thing is it for any man to glory proudly, when as by doing ſo he obſcures that which is the chiefeſt glory of man as man, his reaſon; and ſeems to put himſelf to the queſtion, whether he be a reaſonable creature yea or no.

Secondly, Pride is more abominable, becauſe it is not only the folly of man, but a robbery of God; nothing robs God of his honour ſo much as pride. It is ſaid of Jeſus Chriſt (*Phil.* 2. 6.) *He thought it no robbery to be equal with God;* He did not wrong God in making himſelf his equal, himſelf being God. But if men will match themſelves with God, or are lifted up in their ſpirits, (as proud men are beyond the line of man) this is a robbery of God. Whatſoever we take to our ſelves more than is due, we take from God, yea we ſteal from God. They who forget God the author and fountain of all they have, and take glory to themſelves, commit the worſt kind of robbery, and are the moſt dangerous Thieves. (*Iſa.* 42. 8.) *My glory will I not give to another;* therefore if any take glory to themſelves (as (I ſay again) all proud men do) 'tis ſtealing, and 'tis not only (as I may ſay) picking of his pocket, but the breaking open of his Treaſury, of his Cabinet, to carry away the chief Jewel of his Crown, ſo is *his glory* (Rom. 11. 36.) *All is from him, therefore all muſt be to him;* all is from the father of light, therefore what light, what gifts, what ſtrength ſoever we have, it muſt return to him in praiſes, and in the glorifying of his name; we may not deck or adorn our own name with it, nor put our name upon it? How much ſoever we have, we have received, it is from the Lord; therefore 'tis extreamly ſinful and ſacrilegious to take or keep it to our ſelves. And as whatſoever good we have, we have it of God, ſo whatſoever good we have done, we have had light and ſtrength from God to do it; natural yea ſpiritual ſtrength, not only the firſt power of acting, but all ſubſequent actings of that power are from God; therefore to have ſecret liftings up of ſpirit, in our own actings, is to rob God (*Pſal.* 51. 15.) *Open thou my lips, and my mouth ſhall ſhew forth thy praiſe,* ſaid *David;* As if he had ſaid, Lord if thou wilt open my lips, and help me to ſpeak as I ought, I will not ſhew forth my own praiſe, nor boaſt of what I have either ſpoken or done, but I will ſhew forth thy praiſe; becauſe the opening of the lips is from thee.

Thirdly, It is an abomination to be proud; for whatſoever any man hath done, or how good ſoever any man is, he is no better than he ſhould be, and hath done no more than was his duty to do; he hath done but his duty to God, and his duty to man, when he hath done his beſt, he hath done no more; every man is bound to do the good that he doth, how much ſoever it be that he doth; therefore it is both an ignoble and an abominable thing for any man to boaſt of what he hath done.

Fourthly, Is it abominable to boaſt of what we have done, ſeeing how much ſoever we have done, it will appear upon a right and due account, that we have done leſs than we ought, and are much ſhort of our duty, (*Luke* 17. 10.) *When ye ſhall have done all thoſe things which are commanded you, ſay, we are unprofitable ſervants, and have done but that which was our duty to do.* We can do nothing but what is our duty, but all we do is not the one half of our whole duty, and ſhall we glory as if we had obliged God by doing more than all!

Fifthly, It is an odious thing for any man to be proud of what he hath done, for God might have done it by another, if he pleaſed. No man is neceſſary to God, as if his work could not be done unleſs ſuch a one do it. He hath choice of inſtruments, and is able to fit thoſe for his buſineſs who are moſt unfit of themſelves. It is matter of thankfulneſs that God will call and uſe us to do him any ſervice, and enable us to do it; God could have put his talent into another mans hand; the riches, the power, the wiſdom, the learning, the parts which thou acteſt by, he could have put it into other hands; he can make the dumb to ſpeak, as well as the greateſt ſpeaker: He can make an Ideot, a Dunce, knowing and learned, as well as the moſt knowing among the learned; therefore the learned and the eloquent, have no reaſon to be proud, but much to be thankful: He can make the weakeſt to do as much as the ſtrongeſt; therefore the ſtrongeſt have no reaſon to be proud, but much to be thankful: He can raiſe Children to *Abraham* out of the ſtones of the ſtreet; therefore the *Jews* muſt not be proud, or think that God is beholding to them for being his people: *He can ordain ſtrength and his own praiſe out of the mouths of babes and ſucklings* (Pſal. 8. 2. Matth. 21. 16.) therefore the wiſe and prudent have no reaſon to be proud, but much to be thankful. O remember, It is of God's vouchſafement not of our deſert, that we are admitted to his ſervice.

Laſtly, Pride muſt needs be an odious thing, and that which God greatly abhorrs, becauſe it quite croſſeth the deſign of God in the Goſpel; which is to keep the creature humble and low, that he himſelf alone may be exalted; *He will not bear it that any fleſh ſhould glory in his preſence; He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord* (1 Cor. 1. 29, 31.) God will have his end upon all fleſh, and therefore he will dreadfully glorifie himſelf upon thoſe, who proudly glory in themſelves.

Further, The word by which man is expreſſed, from whom God hides pride, ſignifying (as was ſhewed) *a ſtrong mighty man*, the moſt accompliſhed and beſt furniſhed man;

> Obſerve, Thirdly, *Great men, wiſe men, rich men, are very ſubject to and often carried away by pride.*

God therefore hides pride from them, becauſe they lie ſo open to the aſſaults of pride; our riſing is oftentimes an occaſion of our falling. And that which God gives man for his good, proves (by reaſon of this corruption moſtly) his ſnare. One of the Ancients ſpeaking of Pride, ſaith 'tis the greateſt ſin, for four reaſons.

Firſt, In the antiquity of it, becauſe it was the firſt ſin, the Devil's ſin, before man ſinned; that ſin which he firſt dropt into man to make him fall, was the ſin by which himſelf fell; he would be higher, and more than he was, and he provoked man to be ſo too. 'Tis diſputed what was the original of original ſin, and the doubt lyeth between two, whether unbelief or pride had the precedency in man's fall, (a queſtion much like that, whether faith or repentance hath the precedency in his riſing) I ſhall only ſtate it thus; that which appeared firſt was unbelief; the woman put a peradventure upon the threatning of God in caſe of eating the forbidden fruit. But certainly pride was Contemporary with unbelief, man would needs lift up himſelf beyond the ſtate he had, and ſo fell from and loſt that eſtate.

Secondly, Saith he, Pride is productive of many other ſins, 'tis a fountain ſin, a root ſin, it nouriſheth, nurſeth, and bringeth up many other ſins; no man knoweth what ſin may be next, when pride is firſt.

Thirdly, The greatneſs of the ſin of pride may be argued from the over-ſpreading of it; pride hath infected many mortally; and who can ſay his heart is free from this plague, though poſſibly it be not the plague (or ſpecial maſter-ſin) of his heart? Pride is an Epidemical diſeaſe, all labour under this ſickneſs, and this ſickneſs hath got the maſtery over many.

His fourth reaſon is that of the Text and point; Pride is a great wickedneſs, becauſe uſually it infects great men. They that are great in power, great in gifts, great in learning, great in any thing, are ſure to be aſſaulted if not blemiſhed and blaſted with this ſin, inſomuch that it had been better for many to have been fools, than learned, low than high, mean than great, poor than rich in this world. There is a temptation in power, in greatneſs, in riches, in knowledg, in gifts, in the beſt things, to make the mind ſwell, and the man that is ſtored with them proud. Pride is (as I may ſay) of a very high extraction, it was conceived in and born by the now Apoſtate Angels, whoſe place, *firſt eſtate (or principality,* as we put in the Margin of the Epiſtle of *Jude* verſ. 6.) was aloft in heaven. Angels were the neareſt ſervants and attendants upon God himſelf, who calleth heaven *the habitation of his holineſs, and of his glory*; And ſurely the habitation which the Apoſtle *Jude* in the ſame verſe ſaith the Angels *left*, (and he calls it *their own*, that is, that which was allotted and allowed them by God as their portion, this habitation, I ſay,) muſt needs be a very high and excellent one, as themſelves by nature were in the higheſt claſſis or form of creatures. Now as pride began from and had its birth in theſe high and noble ſpirits (which gave one occaſion (though it be as helliſh a luſt as any in hell) to call it Heavenly by Nation) ſo the higher men are (who at higheſt are but duſt) the more doth pride haunt them, and inſinuate it ſelf to get a dwelling or ſeat in them, as the moſt proper and congenial ſubjects which it can find here on earth it ſelf, with thoſe of whom it firſt took poſſeſſion and whom it made its firſt habitation, being for ever caſt down from heaven. Pride having once dwelt in thoſe who were ſo high, loves ſtill to dwell or take up its lodging (at leaſt) in thoſe, who upon any reference whether to natural, civil, or ſpiritual things, are called and reputed *Higheſt*.

Quia natione cœleſtis ſublimium animos inhabitat. Hugo.

> Obſerve, Fourthly, *God by various means, even by all ſorts of means, gives check to the pride of man, he ſpeaketh once, yea twice to man in a dream, in a viſion of the night, that he may hide pride from man.*

Pride is a ſin which God proſecutes both night and day; if ſpeaking by day doth not mortifie it, ſpeaking in the night by dreams ſhall. *Nebuchadnezzar* was full of pride, and God humbled him by a dream, and brought down the haughtineſs of his heart by a viſion of the night. This great Monarch of the world was ſo full of pride that he boaſted it out (*Dan.* 4. 30.) *Is not this great Babylon that I have built for the houſe of the kingdom, and by the might of my power, and for the honour of my Majeſty?* Now while he ſpake thus walking in the Palace of the kingdom of *Babylon*, *there fell a voice from heaven, ſaying, O King Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is ſpoken, The kingdom is departed from thee,* &c. *And they ſhall drive thee from among men, And thy dwelling* (who haſt thought thy ſelf more than man) *ſhall be with the beaſts of the field.* The effect of this voice *Nebuchadnezzar* had in a dream, as appears by *Daniel*'s interpretation of it in the former part of the Chapter. God ſhewed him in that dream what his condition ſhould be, and he executed it upon him to the full, to pull down his pride; That, *he at laſt might know that the moſt High ruleth the Kingdoms of men, and giveth them to whomſoever he will.* Whereas then he thought that he alone ruled the world, and could give kingdoms to whom he would. How wonderfully did God oppoſe the pride of *Paul*'s ſpirit? he could not favour pride, no not in that eminent Apoſtle. *Leſt through the abundance of revelations he ſhould be exalted above meaſure, there was given him a thorn in the fleſh, the meſſenger of Satan to buffet him,* (2 Cor. 12. 7.) that is, God uſed extraordinary means to humble him. As here God is ſaid to humble by viſions, ſo there *Paul* being endangered to pride by receiving viſions, God found a ſtrange way to humble him, even by the buffetings of the meſſenger of Satan, who is the Prince of pride, and as (God ſpeaketh of the Leviathan at the 42. Chapter of this book, *verſ.* 34.) *a King over all the children of pride.* God doth ſo much reſiſt pride, that he cannot but *reſiſt the proud* (*James* 4. 6.) and *ſcorn the ſcorners*, (Prov. 3. 34.) yea he hath told us of a day (*Iſa.* 2. 11.) wherein *the lofty looks of man ſhall be humbled, and the haughtineſs of men ſhall be bowed down: and the Lord alone ſhall be exalted in that day.*

There are four ſpecial pride-ſubduing Conſiderations.

Firſt, They who are proud of what they have, are like to have no more. When the Apoſtle had ſaid (*James* 4. 6.) *He reſiſteth the proud* (he preſently adds) *but giveth more grace to the humble.* As if he had ſaid, Though the Lord hath given proud men much (for 'tis ſome gift of God, and uſually a great one of which men grow proud) yet he will now ſtop his hand and give them no more. The Lord gives to them who are humble and praiſe him, not to thoſe who are proud and praiſe themſelves.

Secondly, Not only doth the Lord ſtop his hand from giving more to thoſe who are proud, but often makes an act of revocation and takes away that which he hath already given. As he who idly puts his talent into a napkin, ſo he who vainly and vain-gloriouſly ſhews it, is in danger of having it taken away from him. *It is as ſinful to ſhew our talent proudly, as to hide it negligently. Nebuchadnezzar* boaſted proudly of his Kingdom, and preſently it was ſaid to him, *The Kingdom is departed from thee. Hezekiah* boaſted of his treaſure (*Iſa.* 39. 6.) and by and by the Lord told him, his treaſure ſhould be taken away, (though not immediately from him, yet from his poſterity) and carried to *Babylon*. 'Tis ſo in ſpirituals, when we proudly ſhew our treaſure, the treaſure of our knowledg, or other gifts and attainments, the Lord many times, in judgment, ſends them into captivity, takes them from us, and ſtrips us naked of that clothing and adorning whereof we are proud.

Thirdly, If God doth not take all away, yet what remains is withered and blaſted, it dries up and comes to little; if it be not quite removed, yet it appears no more in its former beauty and luſter. When *God with rebukes correcteth man for (this) iniquity, he maketh his beauty* (the beauty of his parts and gifts, yea of his graces) *to conſume away* (as *David* expreſſeth it, *Pſal.* 39. 11.) *like a moth*. O what a drineſs, and ſo a decayedneſs falls upon that Soul from whom the ſoaking dews and drops, the ſweet influences of Heaven are reſtrained! And ſurely if they are reſtrained from any, they are from proud men; no marvail then, if others ſee and they feel their withering, and even ſenſible declinings every day.

Fourthly, Suppoſe the gifts and parts of a proud man continue florid and appear ſtill acting in their former ſtrength, vigour, and beauty, yet God ſends a ſecret curſe upon them, and though he doth not wither them, yet he doth not delight in them, nor give them any acceptation. The beſt things how long ſoever continued to proud men, are no longer bleſſings to them; yea it had been good for them, that either they had never had them, or that they had been ſoon taken away. That as one ſaid falſely of the life of man in general, but truly of wicked men; *It had been beſt for them not to have been born, and their next beſt would be to die quickly.* So I may ſay in this caſe of proud men; it had been beſt for them they never had received any eminent gifts from God, and their next beſt would be to have them quickly taken away; for as wicked men in general (if they die unconverted) the longer they live, the worſer they live, and every day by adding new heaps of ſin, heap up further wrath againſt the day of wrath; ſo proud men in ſpecial, the longer they have and hold their gifts, their riches, their honours, their powers, do but abuſe them the more, to the increaſe of their ſin here, and (without repentance) ſhame hereafter.

Optimum eſt non naſci, proximum cito mori.

And therefore to ſhut up this obſervation, and the expoſition of this verſe, I ſhall only give ſome few directions or counſels for the cure of this Soul-ſickneſs pride, or for the pricking of a pride-ſwoln heart, that ſo the wind, that noxious wind of oſtentation, by which proud men are vainly puft up in their fleſhly minds, may be let out and voided.

Firſt, Let the proud man conſider what he is; ſome have asked blaſphemouſly, *What is the Almighty?* As we ſaw at the 21. Chapter of this Book: But it may well enough be asked, *What is man that the Almighty ſhould be mindful of him?* (Pſal. 144. 3, 4.) and may we not much more queſtion again, *What is man that he ſo ſhould be mindful of himſelf? David*, a great King ſaid to the Lord (2 *Sam.* 7. 18.) *Who am I, O Lord God, and what is my Houſe, that thou haſt brought me hitherto?* Thus every man ſhould ſay to himſelf, or put the queſtion to his own Soul; *Who am I? Or what am I*, that I ſhould have a proud thought? All men indeed differ in ſome things, and ſome differ in very many things. Men of high degree, and men of low degree differ, men of knowledge and ignorance differ, learned and unlearned men differ. And it is not only, as I may ſay, a piece of Heraldry, but a piece of Divinity to keep up the differences of men. Yet what is any man, whether high or low, knowing or ignorant, learned or unlearned, that he ſhould be proud? They all agree in this, they are all duſt and aſhes, they are all but as a ſhadow, or a vapour, they are all as graſs, or as a flower of the field, and at their beſt eſtate (in the very height of their excellency) they are altogether vanity. How much ſoever men differ in other things, yet in this they all agree, or are all alike in this, they are all vanity. Then what is man that he ſhould be proud? Shall duſt and aſhes, ſhall a paſſing ſhadow, or a diſappearing vapour, ſhall withering graſs, or fading flowers, ſhall vanity it ſelf be proud? The beſt of men at their beſt, are the worſt of all theſe, why then ſhould any man be proud? Yea I may put the queſtion further, *How can any man be proud, who knoweth what man is*, and acknowledgeth himſelf to be but a man. I will add yet further in this queſtioning way, how can any man be proud who knoweth himſelf to be (which is a more humbling conſideration, then any of or then all the former) a ſinful man! We ought always to be humbled for ſin, and ſhall we who are at all times ſinning, be proud at any time?

Secondly, To cure pride of ſpirit, conſider what every man is (as to this World) he cannot be long what he is. He that is high in the World, cannot be long in his Worldly heights. He that is rich in the World, cannot long enjoy his Worldly riches; yea knowledg vaniſheth; all ſuch kind of knowledg, learning and skill as men now have, is a meer vaniſhing thing; man, in his higheſt perfections, is very mutable, and the higher he is, the more mutable he is; what hath he then to be proud of? We have ſome changes every day, and when a few days are paſt, we ſhall come to our great change; our change by death is but a few days off, for the utmoſt of our days are but a few. As man is not to be accounted of by others, ſo not by himſelf, *becauſe his breath is in his noſtrils*, and he may quickly periſh (*Iſa.* 2. 22.) Shall periſhing things be proud things? Shall they be lifted up with what they have, who (as to this World) have ſo little being, that they can ſcarcely be ſaid to be. By this argument all men are called off from truſting thoſe that are higheſt in this World (*Pſal.* 146. 3.) *Their breath goeth forth.* And we have the ſame argument, not to be high in our own thoughts, becauſe our breath goeth forth, and there is an end of us.

Thirdly, Conſider all thoſe things which are as fewel and occaſions of pride in man, even for thoſe man muſt ſhortly give an account. And ſurely he who remembers that whatſoever he hath, be it riches, ſtrength, honour, parts, knowledge, or learning, he muſt come to a reckoning for it, that man will not over-reckon himſelf ſo much for it, as to be proud of it. The Apoſtle concludes, *So then every man muſt give an account of himſelf to God*, (*Rom.* 14. 12.) That is, of all his receits, and of all his expences, what hath been beſtowed upon him, and how he hath improved what hath been beſtowed. He muſt give an account of himſelf in his natural capacity as a man; and he muſt give an account of himſelf in his civil capacity, as a rich or great man; and he muſt give an account of himſelf in his ſpiritual capacity, as he hath enjoyed means to make him gracious, or to grow in grace. He muſt give an account of himſelf about all the good things he hath received, what good he hath done with them, either to himſelf or others. He that is ſerious upon ſuch a meditation as this, ſhall find two effects of it; firſt, it will keep him very buſie, and free him from idleneſs; ſecondly, it will keep him very humble and free him from pride. Who can glory vainly in his Stewardſhip (for all we have is put into our hands as Stewards, who, I ſay, can glory vainly in his Sttwardſhip) that always hears this voice ſounding in his ears, *Come give an account of thy ſtewardſhip, for thou mayeſt be no longer Steward.* O how ill an account will they make when they are asked, what they have done with their riches? Who muſt anſwer, *We have been proud of them?* who being asked, what have you done with your honour, muſt anſwer, *We have been proud of it?* Who being asked, what have you done with your knowledge, muſt anſwer, *we have been proud of it?* Theſe will be ſad anſwers in the day of account, yet proud men (whatſoever they have done with their receits) muſt make this anſwer, what other anſwer ſoever they make.

Fourthly, Conſider that the more any one hath received (and it is the degree upon which pride riſeth the more, I ſay the more eny one hath received) in any kind whatſoever, the ſtricter to will his account be; for the account will be propornable to what the receipt is. (*Luke* 12. 48.) *To whom ſoever much is given, of him ſhall be much required, and* *to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more*; where much is ſown, there God looks to reap much. He looketh not only for improving, but for ſutable, for proportionable improvement. If he that had received five talents (*Matth.* 25.) had brought only two talents more, and ſo made his five ſeven, this had not been proportionable; or if he that had received two, had made them three, this had not been proportionable; but he that received five, brought ten; and he that received two, brought four; this account was proportionable to the receipt; and therefore to theſe their Lord ſaid, *Well done good and faithful ſervants.* God looks for doubling, (as I may ſay) that we ſhould make his five ten, his two four. Therefore why ſhould any man be proud of what he hath received, ſeeing the more he hath received, the more great and ſtricter will his account be.

Fifthly, That pride may be cured and hid from your eyes, I adviſe, that *in the midſt of your fulneſs, you would think of your emptineſs, and in the midſt of your perfections, of your deficiencies*; think how much, and in how many things you are wanting, when any thought of pride ariſeth concerning what you enjoy, or wherein you abound. He that thinks how much he is wanting, will not be proud how much ſoever he aboundeth; and indeed our wantings being a great deal more then our aboundings, and our imperfections then our perfections, ſhould be to us greater matter of humbling, then our abounding or perfections can be an occaſion of pride. To clear this further, conſider your deficiencies two ways; firſt, in your ſelves; conſider how low you are in knowledge, how low in grace, how low in duty; remember that there is a great deal of darkneſs in the beſt of your light, a great deal of water in the beſt of your wine, and a great deal of droſs in the pureſt of your Silver; remember theſe weakneſſes in your ſelves, and then ſay as bleſſed *Paul* (Phil. 5. 22.) *I count not that I have already attained*; that is, that *I* have attained perfection, I am very much behind, very much below my duty, I am below what I might be and have attained to, both in the light of knowledge, and in the ſtrength of grace. I am below what I might be attained to, both as to zeal for, and as to faith in God. O how many are our deficiencies when we have profited moſt! Secondly, conſider your deficiencies in reference to others; the Apoſtle ſaith (2 *Cor.* 10. 12.) *They who compare themſelves with themſelves are not wiſe.* The reaſon why many think themſelves over-wiſe, is, becauſe they do dot (as they ought) compare themſelves with others, or if they compare themſelves with others, they compare themſelves only with thoſe that are below, not with thoſe who are above themſelves. They who compare themſelves with themſelves, or with thoſe only who are below themſelves, are not wiſe, though they think themſelves very wiſe. If we would compare our ſelves with other men, who are above us, it would mightily keep down the pride of our Spirits; for who is there but might ſee more in ſome, yea in many others then in himſelf? Now, as it is an excellent means to keep the Soul from murmuring and diſcontent, to conſider that many others are below us; ſo it is an excellent means to keep us from pride, to conſider that many others are above us; ſo much above us, that our knowledg is but ignorance to their knowledg, our ſtrength weakneſs, our faith unbelief, our patience unquietneſs of Spirit, our very fruitfulneſs barrenneſs compared with theirs; or to ſpeak alluſively, that our fat Kine are but lean to the fat ones of others, and our full ears but withered looked upon with their full ears. And as it is a good means to keep the Soul humble or to cure it of pride, to compare our ſelves with men who are much above us, ſo eſpecially, if we would but remember how much God is above us, in compariſon of whom all our fulneſs is indeed emptineſs, our ſtrength weakneſs, our riches poverty, and our light darkneſs. And therefore when *Job* (Chap. 42.) began to compare himſelf with God, and to ſet God before him, then he was in the duſt preſently; though he ſpake over-valuingly of himſelf ſometime, yet when once he came to ſet himſelf before God, then ſaith he, *I have ſpoken once, but I will ſpeak no more; I abhor my ſelf, and repent in duſt and aſhes.* And when the Prophet *Iſaiah* ſaw the Lord in his glory, and compared himſelf with him, he cryed out, *I am undone, I am a man of polluted lips*; all his graces, and all his gifts vaniſhed into nothing, when he conſidered the Lord before whom he ſtood. Thus we may keep down pride by conſidering our deficiencies, and comparing our ſelves with others who are above us, eſpecially by comparing our ſelves with God, to whom we are not ſo much as a drop of the bucket to the whole Ocean, nor the duſt of the ballance to the body of the whole Earth.

Sixthly, For the hiding and keeping down of pride, often reflect upon your own ſinfulneſs; our defects in good may keep our hearts low, but our abundance of ſinful evils may keep them much lower. While we conſider ſin in a two-fold notion, how ſhould it humble us? Firſt, as dwelling or abiding in us; Secondly, as acted and brought forth by us in either of theſe ways; look on ſin, and the heart muſt needs come down; thus poyſon may expel poyſon, the remembrance of ſin abiding in us and acted by us, may be a ſtop to the further acting, as of all other ſins, ſo eſpecially of this ſin, pride.

Seventhly, Let us be much in the meditation of Chriſt humbling and abaſing himſelf for us. What can kill pride, if the humblings of Chriſt do not? O how may we ſchool and catechiſe our proud Souls with the remembrances of Chriſt in his abaſements! What! An humble Chriſt, and a proud Chriſtian! An humble Maſter, and a proud Diſciple! Did Chriſt empty himſelf and make himſelf of no reputation, and ſhall we who are but emptineſs be lifted up with a reputation of our ſelves, or with the reputation which others have of us; did he abaſe himſelf to the form of a Servant, and ſhall we lift up our ſelves, as if we reigned as Kings! He humbled himſelf and became obedient to death, even the death of the Croſs; and what have we to glory in but the Croſs of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt (*Gal.* 6. 14.) if we have any thing to be proud of, 'tis the Croſs of Chriſt, *God forbid* (ſaith *Paul*) *that I ſhould glory* (or rejoice and triumph) *ſave in the Croſs of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, whereby I am crucified to the World, and the World to me.* Think often and much of the humblings of Chriſt, and then you will think of your ſelves as meer nothings. This is the moſt effectual means, through the Spirit, to bring down the ſwellings of our hearts, and *to hide pride from man.* Thus much of the ſecond deſign of Chriſt in ſpeaking to man in dreams and viſions of the night; the third followeth.

Verſ. 18. **He keepeth back his Soul from the pit, and his life from periſhing by the Sword.**

This verſe holds out another gracious intendment of God, in revealing him ſelf to man by dreams and viſions of the night. He doth it thereby to give man warning and wiſdom to prevent and eſcape that deſtruction which is ready to fall upon him.

He keepeth back his Soul from the pit.

Some refer this **He** to man himſelf, that is, when God hideth pride from man, then man keepeth his Soul from the pit, that is, thereby man is both admoniſhed and inſtructed how to keep his Soul from the pit. *They who avoid the mountains and precipices of pride, are moſt aſſured of eſcaping a down-fall into perdition.* *Solomon* tells us (*Prov.* 16. 18.) *Pride goeth before deſtruction, and a high mind before a fall*; ſuch a fall as *Elihu* here ſpeaks of, *falling into the pit*; therefore turning from pride is the eſcaping of the pit.

But rather (as moſt Interpreters) the relative (*He*) refers to God himſelf, who both begins and perfects this great work of grace; as he ſpeaketh with a purpoſe to withdraw man from his purpoſe, *&c.* ſo *he* having effectually withdrawn him from it, and hid pride from him, he thereby humbleth him in the duſt of repentance, and ſo keepeth back his Soul from the pit.

The word rendred, *keepeth back*, notes a threefold keeping back; firſt, by force, as a man holds another from falling into a pit, or running into danger; he holds him whether he will or no. Secondly, there is a holding or keeping back by perſwaſion or intreaties, by ſeaſonable advice and counſel; ſo *Abigail* kept *David* from ſhedding blood (1 *Sam.* 25.) Thirdly, there is a holding or keeping back by authority, when a command or an injunction forbids a man from going on and ſo ſtops his proceeding. Thus we ſee there is a keeping back, either by outward force,

of

חשך
Ita prohibere ſignificat ut cum de initio dicitur prohibetur, ne quid omnino à principio fiat: quod proprie inhibere dicitur: hic autem non ad initium refertur, ſed ad jam cœptum, quaſi jam eſſet homo in via ad exitium niſi Deus eum monuiſſet. Coc.

or by counſel, or by command. And there is a keeping back according to any of theſe three notions, two ways. Firſt, ſuch a keeping back, as hinders the very attempt, ſuch a keeping back, as ſtops the firſt motions, or ſtep into an undertaking. Secondly, there is a keeping back when a man is deeply engaged in an undertaking, when he is gone on and is near the journies end of his own purpoſe. Thus *David* was kept back from deſtroying *Nabal* when he was far advanced in that enterpriſe; and *Abimelek* was kept back from taking *Sarah Abrahams* wife when the matter had made a very great progreſs in his Spirit. Both theſe ways we may underſtand it here, though chiefly, I conceive, in the latter. Sometimes God keepeth man, either by his power, or by perſwaſions and commands ſent to him, from ſetting ſo much as one foot forward in any ſinful way leading to the pit; yet often he ſuffers him to go on a great way, and when he is advanced far towards, yea is near, very near to the pits brink, even ready to drop into it, then, then the Lord graciouſly keeps his Soul from falling into it. This word is uſed in the negative twice to ſet forth the high commendation of *Abraham* (Gen. 22.12.16.) When God had commanded *Abraham* to offer his Son, and he was ſo ready to do it, that preſently God tells him, *Now I know thou feareſt God, ſeeing thou haſt not with-held* (or kept back) *thy Son, thine only Son from me. Arabam* might have had many reaſonings within himſelf to keep back and with-hold his Son from being a Sacrifice, but, ſaith the Lord, *thou haſt not with-held or kept him back*; There the word is uſed in the negative, as alſo upon the ſame occaſion at verſe 16. of the ſame Chapter. And ſo by *Job* (*Chap.* 7. 11.) *Therefore I will not refrain* (*or keep back*) *my mouth.* It is as hard a matter to keep back, or hold the mouth in, as it is to keep back a head-ſtrong Horſe with a Bridle. Therefore the Holy Ghoſt uſeth that Metaphor (*Pſal.* 39. 1.) But ſaith *Job*, *I will not refrain my mouth*, I will not keep it back, let it take its courſe, *I will ſpeak in the bitterneſs of my Spirit.* The word imports powerful acting, take it either in the negative or affirmative. When the tongue is kept back, 'tis done by a mighty power of grace, and O how great as well as gracious is that power, which the Lord putteth forth to keep back a poor Soul that is going, going apace too, from falling into the pit. *He keepeth back*

His Soul from the pit.] But doth the Soul fall into the pit? I anſwer, firſt, the Soul is often in Scripture (by a Synecdoche) put for the whole man; *He keepeth back his Soul*, that is he keepeth him from the pit; ſecondly, poſſibly 'tis ſaid, *he keepeth his Soul from the pit*, to teach us that man by running on in ſin, ruines his beſt part, it is not only his Body, and his skin that he deſtroyeth by ſin, but his very Soul. 'Tis a mercy that God telleth us aforehand the worſt of that danger, and the greatneſs of the hazard, or how great a matter we venture upon evil ways and works. *He keepeth back his Soul*

שחת
Fovea, corruptio, mors. Eruens animam à corruptione. Vulg.

Ἐφείσατο δὲ τῆς ψυχῆς αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ θανάτου. Sept.
Probibebit animam ejus à fovea. Targ.

From the pit.] What pit? The word is rendred variouſly. Firſt thus, *he keeps back his Soul from corruption.* The word is uſed for corrupting by ſin (*Gen.* 6.12.) *And God looked upon the Earth, and behold it was corrupt: For all fleſh had corrupted his way upon the Earth*; that is, all men were grown wicked and ſtark naught. In the very next verſe (*verſ.* 13.) The ſame word is uſed to denote corrupting by puniſhment due to ſin; *Behold I will deſtroy* (or corrupt) *them with the Earth*; that is, I will deſtroy the face of the Earth, or deface the beauty of the Earth, and I will alſo deſtroy all men from off the face of the Earth. Secondly, the Septuagint render, *He ſpares his Soul from death.* Thirdly, the Chaldee Paraphraſe (as we) *He prohibites his Soul from the pit*; theſe three, corruption, death, and the pit are of near alliance; and the ſame word in the Hebrew tongue ſignifieth *corruption*, the *pit*, and *death*, the pit (or grave) is the place of corruption and the ſeat or Houſe of death. We find the pit and deſtruction put together (*Pſal.* 55. 23.) *they ſhall go to the pit of deſtruction*; So then the ſame word may well ſerve to ſignifie a pit, corruption and death; becauſe in the pit dead Bodies or Carkaſſes putrifie and corrupt. Yet *David* propheſying of Chriſt ſpeaks his aſſurance of eſcaping corruption, though not the pit or grave. (*Pſ.* 16.10.) *Thou wilt not ſuffer thy holy one to ſee corruption, or the pit.* It is this word; that is, *thou* wilt not ſuffer him to corrupt in the pit of the grave; though Chriſt being dead was buried and laid in pſt, *yet he did not ſee corruption in the pit.* That is, corruption had no power, no maſtery over him; for he looſed the bonds of death (it being impoſſible that he ſhould be held by them) the third day, yea with the firſt of that day, or as ſoon as it might be truly ſaid that it was the third day; Chriſt was buried in the latter part of the ſixth day of the week, and aroſe early the firſt day of the week, even when it *did but begin to dawn towards the firſt day of the week.* (Math. 28. 1.) And therefore ſeeing as Naturaliſts (according to Scripture evidence, *Joh.* 11.39.) teſtifie corruption doth not naturally take hold of the Body till the fourth day after death. The dead Body of Chriſt was altogether free from corruption, or Chriſt (as was fore-ſhewed by *David* in the Pſalm) ſaw no corruption.

Videre foveam eſt amplius quā ſepeliri, nimirum ut is demum perfecte dicatur videre foveam, non qui ad tempus eſt in fovea, ſed qui ejus vim corruptricem experitur, ſive videt corruptionem in ea; videre enim eſt ſentire ſive pati aliquid. Coc.

Further, this word *pit*, is taken not only for death, the grave, and corruption; but for thoſe contrivances and plots which are made and laid for any mans death or deſtruction. Thus *David* ſaid of his malicious and ſubtle enemies (*Pſal.* 7. 5.) *Into the pit which they have digged, themſelves are fallen*; that is, they are taken in their own plots; thoſe words of the Pſalmiſt are an alluſion to Hunters and Fowlers who make pits to inſnare Birds or Beaſts; we muſt not imagine that there were pits literally made for *David*, but the pit was a plot or contrivance to do him miſchief, and he bleſſed God that as himſelf had eſcaped that miſchief, ſo that the miſchief-plotters and contrivers were were taken with it themſelves. We have *David* ſpeaking again under the ſame metaphor (*Pſal.* 9. 15.) *The Heathen are ſunk down in the pit that they made.* And (*Pſal.* 35. 7.) *Without cauſe they have hid for me their net in a pit, which without cauſe they have digged for my Soul*; that is, they have laid a plot to undo and deſtroy me. And if we take pit in this ſence, it may hold well enough with the ſcope of the Text; for what is the pit, into which pride and evil purpoſes thruſt ſinful man, but that miſchief and miſery which Satan is continually plotting againſt him? And from this miſchievous plot it is that God delivereth man, while 'tis ſaid by *Elihu*, *he keepeth back*

Fovea denotat omnia vitæ diſcrimina Pin.

His Soul from the pit.] Some expound the word **Soul** in this former part of the verſe, in oppoſition to *life* in the latter part of it, *and his life from periſhing by the Sword.* Soul and life are ſometimes taken promiſcuouſly, or indifferently for the ſame thing; yet there is a very great difference between Soul and life; the life is nothing elſe but the union between Soul and Body; but the Soul is a ſpiritual ſubſtance diſtinct from the Body while remaining in it, and ſubſiſting it ſelf alone when ſeparate from it, That bond or knot which ties Soul and Body together, is, properly, that which *Elihu* ſpeaks of in the next words.

And his life.] As God keeps back his Soul from everlaſting deſtruction, ſo his life from temporal deſtruction. Though the Soul be moſt precious, yet life is very precious; *skin for skin, yea all that a man hath will he give for his life* (Chap. 2. 5.) 'Tis therefore no ſmall mercy for God to keep a mans *life*

From periſhing by the Sword.] The Sword is put ſometimes for War, that being the principal inſtrument of War, ſome inſiſt much upon that ſence here, as if the words contained a promiſe of being kept from periſhing by the Sword of an open enemy. But the Sword is here rather put for any kind or for all kinds of hurtful evils; what ever doth afflict, vex, or deſtroy may be called the Sword. The Text ſtrictly in the letter is thus rendred, *and his life from paſſing by or through the Sword*, we ſay, *from periſhing by the Sword*; which paſſing by the Sword is not to eſcape the Sword, but to fall by the Sword, thus 'tis ſaid of that idolatrous King *Ahaz* (2 Kings 16. 3.) *He cauſed his Sons to paſs through the fire*, the meaning is not that he delivered them out of the fire, but conſumed them in the fire; for he made them paſs through the fire to *Molech*, which was a ſacrificing of them to that abominable Idol. It is alſo ſaid (2 *Sam.* 12.31.) when *David* took *Rabba* and deſtroyed the *Ammonites*, *he made them paſs through the Brick-kiln*, not to ſave them, but to conſume them. Some conceive that this Brick-kiln through which *David* made thoſe captive *Ammonites* to paſs was the fire or furnace of *Molech*, that infamous Idol of the *Ammonites* (with whoſe bloody and moſt cruel devotions the apoſtatizing *Jews* or people of God, were in after times enſnared) and if ſo, then they might ſee God

Nomen gladii hoc in loco generaliter denotare puto, quicquid pungit, percutit, torquet, excruciat vel affligit. Bod.

turning their ſin into their puniſhment; and declaring his fiery wrath againſt them in that, by which they had declared their fooliſh and abominable zeal. But that which I quote their puniſhment for, is only the form of its expreſſion; he made them *paſs through the Brick-kiln*; that is, periſh in it. Thus here, *and his Soul from paſſing by the Sword*, is rightly tranſlated *from periſhing by the Sword*. The word rendred *Sword* ſignifies alſo any miſſive weapon, or weapon caſt with the hand, eſpecially a dart; ſo Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates, *and his life from going on the dart*. The general ſence of this verſe is plainly this;

Tranſire in gladium eſt idem quod incidere in manus & tela hoſtium, & cadere in bello. Gladius שׁלח *vocatur quaſi miſſile telum.* Druſ.

The Lord with-draweth man from his purpoſe, and hides pride from man, that ſo he may in mercy preſerve him from periſhing both in Body and Soul, or that he may keep him not only from the firſt, but from the ſecond death, which is the ſeparation of the whole man from the bleſſed preſence of God for ever. 'Tis a great favour to be kept from the pit where the Body corrupts, or from the Sword that wounds the fleſh, but to be kept from that everlaſting woe which ſhall overwhelm the wicked in that bottomleſs pit or lake of fire and brimſtone, this is the higheſt favour of God to loſt man. This is the pit, this the periſhing *from which* (ſaith *Elihu*) *the Lord keepeth back the Soul and life of man.*

Firſt, From the emphaſis of the word, *he keepeth back*, importing, that God, as it were by ſtrong hand or abſolute autorithy and command, keepeth the Soul of man from the pit,

> Note, *Man is very forward to run upon his own ruine, even to run upon eternal ruine, if the Lord did not hold, ſtay, and ſtop him.*

Man would tumble into the pit, at the very next ſtep, if God did not keep him. The way of man is naturally down to the pit, and all that he doth of his own ſelf is for his own undoing: And as he is kept back from the pit, ſo (as the Apoſtle *Peter* hath it, 1 *Epiſt.* 1. 5.) *he is kept by the power of God through faith unto ſalvation.*

Secondly, Conſidering the ſeaſon ſignified in the former verſe, that when man is going upon an evil work, or walking in the pride of his heart, God is keeping him from the pit.

> Note, *While man hath ſinful purpoſes and pride in his heart, all that while he is going on to deſtruction, both temporal and eternal.*

Every ſtep in ſin is a ſtep to miſery, and the further any man proceedeth on in ſin, the further he wanders from God; and the further he wanders from God, the nearer he comes to miſery. As the further we go from the Sun, the nearer we are to the cold, and the further we go from the fountain, the nearer we are to drought; ſo they that haſt to ſin, haſt to ſorrow, yea to Hell. *Solomon* ſaith of ſuch, they love death. There is no man loves death under the notion of death, there is no beauty, no amiableneſs; in death but all they may be ſaid to love death, who love ſin, and live in it. Every motion towards ſin, is a haſting into the arms and imbraces of death, ſinners wooe and invite death and the grave, yea Hell and deſtruction.

> Thirdly, Note, *The warning and admonitions which God gives to ſinful man, whether waking or ſleeping are to keep him from periſhing, to keep him from temporal, to keep him from eternal periſhing.*

This is the great end of preaching the Goſpel, the end alſo of preſſing the terrors of the Law; both have this aim to keep man from periſhing. When man is preſt to holineſs, and when he is repreſt from the ways of ſin, 'tis that he may not periſh for ever. God hath ſet up many ordinances, he hath imployed many inſtruments to adminiſter them; many thouſands go up and down preaching to the World, and crying out to the Sons of men, repent and believe, believe and repent; and why all this cry, but to keep Souls from the pit, and their life from periſhing by the Sword? The Apoſtle *Jude* exhorts to *ſave ſome with fear, and of others to have compaſſion*, that is, terrifie ſome that you may ſave them, make them afraid that they may not be damned; *ſave them with fear*, plucking them as it were out of the fire. Sinners are running into the fire, and do not perceive it; they are tumbling down to Hell and conſider it not; they muſt be pulled out of the fire, elſe they will burn in it for ever. The great buſineſs of the Goſpel is to pull Souls like firebrands out of the burning.

> Fourthly, Note, *They who turn from their evil purpoſes and the pride of their hearts, eſcape wrath, the pit, and the Sword.*

The wages of ſin is death, and well are they that eſcape, that miſs ſuch wages. If a ſinner turn from his purpoſe, from his ſinful way, if his pride be ſubdued and he emptied of himſelf, then *his Soul is kept from deſtruction, and his life from periſhing by the Sword.*

VERS. 19, 20, 21, 22.

He is chaſtened alſo with pain upon his Bed, and the multitude of his bones with ſtrong pain.
So that his life abhorreth bread, and his Soul dainty meat.
His fleſh is conſumed away, that it cannot be ſeen, and his bones that were not ſeen ſtick out.
His Soul draweth near unto the grave, and his life to the deſtroyer.

THE context of theſe four verſes, containeth a deſcription of the ſecond means, which the wiſdom of God is pleaſed often to uſe for the humiliation of man, and for the diſcovery or revelation of his mind unto him. *He ſpeaketh in a dream, in a viſion of the night*, as was ſhewed before, he ſpeaketh alſo by pains and ſickneſſes, as is now to be conſidered.

Verſe 19. **He is chaſtned alſo with pain.**

That particle which we render **alſo**, gives the Text an emphaſis (*He is chaſtned alſo*) for it imports, that here is a further addition or ſupplement of means, whereby the Lord doth awaken ſinners to attend and obey his voice. The ſubject of theſe four verſes, is *a ſick man*, or, *the ſickneſs of man. A ſorrowful Subject.* And the ſickneſs of man is ſet forth in theſe four verſes, by four ſad ſymptoms or effects.

The firſt is pain, grievous pain, *verſ.* 19. *He is chaſtened alſo with pain upon his Bed, and the multitude of his bones with ſtrong pain.*

The ſecond ſymptom of this ſickneſs, is loſs of appetite, and his nauſeating all manner of food (*verſ.* 20.) *So that his life abhorreth bread, and his Soul dainty meat.*

The third ſymptom of his ſickneſs is a general languiſhment or conſumption all his Body over (*verſ.* 21.) *His fleſh is conſumed away that it cannot be ſeen, and his bones that were not ſeen ſtick out.*

The fourth and laſt ſymptom of this grievous ſickneſs is fainting, ſwooning, or a readineſs to expire and give up the ghoſt (*verſ.* 22.) *His Soul draweth near to the grave, and his life to the deſtroyer*; that is, he is ſick, and even ſick to death. All theſe are ſpecial ſymptoms of a ſick man, or of the ſickneſs of man. I begin with the firſt.

He is chaſtened with pain upon his Bed.

The word which we render **to chaſten**, hath a twofold ſignification in Scripture.

Firſt, to reprove or convince both by authority and reaſon (*Lev.* 19. 17.) *Thou ſhalt not hate thy Brother in thy heart, thou ſhalt in any wiſe rebuke him*; or, *reproving thou ſhalt reprove him*; that is, *Thou ſhalt ſurely reprove him.* And in that famous Prophecy concerning Chriſt (*Iſa.* 11. 4.) *He ſhall reprove with equity*; we put in the Margin, *He ſhall argue with equity*, or convince by ſuch reaſons and arguments as ſhall carry the greateſt equity in them. Thus when Chriſt had finiſhed his Sermon on the Mount, it is ſaid (*Matth.* 7. 28, 29.) *The people* (his Auditors) *were aſtoniſhed at his doctrine, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the Scribes.* This Sermon carrying ſo great a reproof of the Scribes and Phariſees, both as to their life and doctrine throughout, may well be expounded as a fulfilling of that ancient prophecy; it being confeſſed in another place of the Goſpel, even by the Officers that were ſent to attach him (*John* 7. 46.) *Never man ſpake like this man.* The words of Chriſt had ſo much evidence, ſo much equity in them, that they who came to take and catch him, were taken and caught, if not to converſion, yet to ſuch a conviction, by what he ſpake, that they could not (they highly diſpleaſed their Maſters in ſaying ſo) but ſay, *Never man ſpake like this man*; as if they

יכח *arguit, reprehendit, corripuit verbis ſive factis.*

they had ſaid, *Surely, the man that ſpeaks thus is more then a man.*

Secondly, The word often ſignifies to correct, which is alſo to inſtruct; correction is for inſtruction. *Chaſtning is the moſt real reproving.* And ſo we render it, *He is chaſtned.* Man is inſtructed not only by ſpeech and counſel, but by ſtripes and corrections. Thus *David* prayed (*Pſal.* 6. 1.) *O Lord, rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chaſten me in thy hot diſpleaſure.* The firſt word which we render *rebuke,* is that in the Text; as if he had ſaid, *Lord do not rebuke me by angry afflictions, let me not find thee greatly diſpleaſed, and my ſelf ſorely chaſtned at once.* He deprecates the ſame again, and how grievous the effects of ſuch diſpenſations are, he ſheweth (*Pſal.* 38. 1.) *Rebuke me not in thy wrath.* (Pſal. 39. 11.) *When thou with rebukes doſt correct man for iniquity;* (he means it not only of word-rebukes, but of hand-rebukes alſo, when thou with ſuch doubled rebukes doſt chaſten man for iniquity) what then? The effects of it follow, even the ſtaining of the glory of all fleſh; *Thou makeſt his beauty to conſume away like a moth.* And ſo ſome interpret that (*Pſal.* 105. 15.) *He reproved Kings for their ſakes?* (ſpeaking of his own people) The Lord did not only ſpeak to thoſe Kings, but made them feel his hand, for his peoples ſake. *Abimelech* felt his hand for *Abrahams* ſake. And ſo did *Pharaoh* that hard-hearted King in a whole decade of plagues for *Iſraels* ſake, whom he had oppreſſed and would not let go. We render the word in this ſecond ſenſe, for a rebuke by blows or by correction, which yet hath a language in it, and ſpeaks with a loud voyce to man, *He is chaſtned*

כאב *Doluit corpore vel animo.*

With pain upon his bed.] Pain is both the concomitant, and effect of ſickneſs. The word noteth, firſt, the pain of the Body, cauſed either by the violence of inward diſtempers, or from the outward ſtroak of a wound (*Gen.* 34.) when the Sons of *Jacob* had prevailed with the *Shechemites* to receive Circumciſion, *It came to paſs on the third day, when they were ſore,* or pained with the wound of it, *Simeon* and *Levi came upon them* (Gen. 34. 25.) Secondly, the word ſignifieth as bodily pain cauſed any way, ſo pain of the mind, which is grief or ſorrow (*Pſal.* 69. 29.) *I am poor and ſorrowful.* Sorrow is always the effect of pain, either outward or inward, either of the fleſh or ſpirit; yet the wounds of the Spirit cauſe the greateſt pain; for of that *Solomon* ſaith (*Prov.* 18. 14.) *Who can bear it?* The ſame *Solomon* (Prov. 14. 13.) ſpeaking of a wicked man in his higheſt jollity, ſaith, *In laughter the heart is ſorrowful.* His Conſcience aketh (if he have an awakened Conſcience) even while he laugheth; and ſurely while the heart is ſorrowful and pained, laughter yieldeth little pleaſure. We may take pain in this Text in both ſenſes, but eſpecially in the former. The ſick man is often pained in mind, but always in his Body. *He is chaſtned with pain*

Upon his bed] There he uſed to have reſt, but being ſick, his bed becomes reſtleſs to him. To be *upon the bed,* is a periphraſis of ſickneſs; that of Chriſt (*Luke* 17. 34.) *There ſhall be two in one bed, the one ſhall be taken, and the other left,* as it may be meant of any two bed-fellows (eſpecially of Husband and Wife) in their health, ſo ſome take it principally of two in a ſick bed; grace takes hold of one and not of another upon a ſick bed. I inſiſt not upon that ſenſe, though it be a probable and a profitable one. But ſurely to ſay, *A man is chaſtened with pain upon his bed,* implyeth, the man to be in extraordinary pain; as to ſay, ſuch *a man keeps his bed,* implyeth, he hath more then an ordinary ſickneſs, or that he is very ſick. We have three expreſſions in our language gradually ſetting forth the ſickneſs of a perſon. Firſt, we ſay, *he keeps his Houſe;* he that is not doth not go abroad, ſickneſs houſes him. Secondly, we ſay, *he keeps his Chamber;* that's a further degree, when ſickneſs hath brought a man up ſtairs, and ſhut him in his Chamber, he is ſick indeed. Thirdly, we ſay, ſuch *a man keeps his Bed;* the meaning of which every one underſtands to be, that he is dangerouſly or extreamly ſick. Thus when *Elihu* ſaith, *He is chaſtened with pain upon his Bed;* we may conceive him ſo ill, that either he muſt not, or is not able to ſit up. And *Elihu* in ſpeaking thus, ſeems to have relation to what *Job* had ſaid (*Chap.* 7. 13.) *When I ſaid my Bed ſhall comfort me, and my Couch ſhall eaſe my complaint; then thou ſcareſt me with dreams, and terrifieſt me through viſions.* As if he had ſaid, O Job, *thou indeed haſt had recourſe heretofore, to thy Bed for refreſhing and comfort, in ſilent meditations and ſoliloquies with God, but he terrified thee with dreams, and ſpake to thee by ſcaring viſions, to turn thee from thy purpoſe. And not only ſo, but finding thee deaf to thoſe admonitions, or not regarding them, yea ſtill continuing thy unquiet murmurings, he hath now even made thee Bed-rid, or unable to riſe from thy Bed.* Though *Elihu* ſpake here in the third perſon, yet in all his ſpeech he intended and pointed at, yea ſet forth and pointed out *Job*'s condition. *He is chaſtened with pains upon his Bed,*

And the multitude of his bones with ſtrong pain.

A man may have pain, yea many pains, yet no pain in his bones. Bones are to the Body as Beams and Raſters, as Poſts and Pillars are to a Houſe. And when pain comes to the bones, when it ſhakes thoſe Poſts and Pillars, it muſt needs be a very ſtrong pain. Satan ſaid to God concerning *Job*, while he ſought new tryals for him, in the ſecond Chapter of this Book (*verſe* 5.) *Touch his bone and his fleſh, and he will curſe thee to thy face.* And that he might be fully tryed, the Lord ſuffer'd Satan to afflict him to the bone, nor did Satan leave a bone unafflicted; what *Elihu* ſpake here of man in general, was true of him, *The multitude of his bones were chaſtened with ſtrong pain.* To have any one bone in pain is an affliction, much more to have many bones pained and aking at once. But when the multitude of a mans bones, that is, all his bones are pained together, that's grievous. And ſuch a man is the while as it were upon a Rack. That by the multitude of bones here ſpoken of, we are to underſtand, not only many, or a great many of his bones, but all his bones, may appear from (*Job* 4. 14.) where *Eliphaz* deſcribing thoſe terrible viſions with which God ſometime viſited him, ſaith, *A Spirit paſſed before my face, the hair of my fleſh ſtood up,* &c. *which made all my bones to ſhake.* We put in the Margin, *The multitude of my bones.* The multitude of his bones are all his bones, he hath not ſo much as one bone free. The whole ſyſteme of his bones is as it were confounded and disjoinced. *The multitude of his bone is chaſtened*

Multitudo oſſium dicitur pro omnibus oſſious quam multa unt. Coc.

With ſtrong pain.] The word **Pain**, is not expreſs'd in the latter part of the verſe; the Hebrew is, *The multitude of his bones with ſtrong pain.* Mr. *Broughton* renders thus, *And all his bones with a ſore one.* The word which we tranſlate *ſtrong,* ſignifieth two things; firſt, as we render, *ſtrength or might* (Pſal. 74. 15.) *Thou driedſt up mighty Rivers;* God dried up the River *Jordan* for his people to paſs through, yea and the red Sea. Secondly, the word ſignifieth perpetual, laſting or continual. So ſome render that place in the Pſalms, not *ſtrong or mighty Rivers,* but *he dried up everlaſting or perpetual Rivers,* ſuch as had always run with a full ſtream, and were not like thoſe deceitful Brooks (ſpoken of in this Book, Chapter 6. verſe 15. to which *Job* compared his Brethren) which in Winter over-flow the Banks, but in Summer, *what time they wax warm, they vaniſh when it is hot, and are conſumed out of their place.* Now, in this place, I conceive, we may take the word in either ſenſe, either for ſtrong and great, or chronical and laſting pain. The man is ſo ſick that he hath no good hours, no comfortable intermiſſions, his pain continueth. And becauſe the word *pain* is not in the Text, therefore it hath cauſed ſeveral rendrings of theſe words, yet all meeting in the ſame ſenſe.

Firſt, Some join the word *ſtrong* to *bone,* or make it an epithete of the mans bones. *Though the multitude of his bones be ſtrong,* that is, though he were once a ſtrong man, ſound and perfect all over, or as we ſay, *ſound wind and limb,* not crazy, not having the leaſt flaw in him, yet he is chaſtened all over with pain.

In multitudine oſſium ejus eſt fortis. i. e. acris acerbus dolor.

Secondly, Others thus, *in the multitude of his bones,* or, *in all his bones there is a ſtrong one,* that is, a ſtrong pain or grief ſeizeth and poſſeſſeth all his bones.

Thirdly, Thus, *The contention of his bones is ſtrong;* the word which ſignifieth a *multitude,* being alike in the letters with another which ſignifieth *contention* or *ſtrife,* hath given occaſion for this reading; that of *David* is near the ſame, *There is no reſt in my bones* (Pſal. 38. 3.) as if *Elihu* had ſaid, the pain and anguiſh by which God doth contend

Legendo vocem וריב *& lis oſſium ejus vehemens eſt.* i. e. *dolor oſſium ejus per quem cum ipſo velut litigat.* Piſc. *Sunt ex Hebræis qui* רוב *multitudo, quia per* ו *ſcribatur* ריב *etſi legatur per* י *exponunt pro contentione, quaſi Deus cum oſſibus ejus contendat.* Merc.

with all his bones is ſtrong, or God hath a ſtrong controverſie with his bones upon his ſick Bed.

Laſtly, The vulgar tranſlates, *He maketh all his bones to wither, decay, and rot.* When there is a conſumption or a withering among the bones, how intolerable is the pain! Broken bones cauſe the acuteſt pains, but decaying bones the moſt conſtant pain. Withering bones are oppoſed to fatned bones in that promiſe made to him that faſts ſpiritually, not carnally only in abſtaining from fleſh (*Iſa.* 58. 11.) *The Lord will make fat thy bones*; as if he had ſaid, Do not fear that thou ſhalt pine by ſpiritual faſting, I will make fat thy bones. Which is true even in regard of that which is natural, the Lord reneweth bodily ſtrength to thoſe who humble themſelves Soul and Body. The Body ſhall not ſuffer in this ſervice of the Lord, if the Soul be truly afflicted in it. Yet when he ſaith, *he will make fat thy bones*, it reſpects eſpecially their ſpiritual ſtrength, that thrives beſt in a day of holy abſtinence and faſting. Here, when 'tis ſaid, *their bones ſhall wither through pain*, it notes the declining of the whole Body, becauſe as the bones are ſtrong in themſelves, ſo they are the ſtrength and ſupport of the whole outward man. When God ſmites the bones, then he ſhakes the Pillars and Rafters of our Earthly Houſe, and threatens the downfall of it. *He is chaſtened with pain upon his Bed, and the multitude of his bones with ſtrong pain.*

Taking theſe words in connection with the former, where *Elihu* ſpake of thoſe dreams and viſions by which God ſpeaks to man, and ſuppoſing (as there he doth) that becauſe the man is not well awakened by thoſe dreams and viſions from his ſecurity, therefore the Lord ſendeth pain and ſickneſs upon him, as a ſecond means to humble him, and make him underſtand himſelf.

· Obſerve, *They that will not be inſtructed by dreams, that is, by gentler means, ſhall be inſtructed by pains.*

They who will not take inſtruction, even in their ſleep, ſhall be taught by that, which will keep them awake. Several Scriptures tell us of the Lords proceeding with man from words to blows. And if the Lord proceeds from dreams (which are warnings in ſleep) to blows, if when he hath ſpoken to us in a dream, we hearken not, he will chaſten us with pain, even the multitude of our bones with ſtrong pain. Then much more will he proceed from words to blows with them that are warned being awake, if they hear not and take warning. That's an awakening word to thoſe who ſleep waking (*Pſal.* 7. 12, 13.) *If he turn not he will whet his Sword : He hath bent his bow and made it ready.* If men will not return upon word admonition and reproof, the Lord hath his arrows and his Sword to reprove them with. *Turn ye at my reproof*, ſaith the Lord (*Prov.* 1. 23.) I give you warning to turn, but if you do not, then (as preſently it followeth) *I will laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear cometh.* As you have ſeemed to mock at my counſels, ſo I will mock at your calamities, that is, I will ſhew you no pity, as you have ſhewed me no reſpect. Thus the Lord deals with proud rebellious man, who caſts off his yoak, yea ſometimes he deals very ſeverely with his own people (for they may put him to it) if words will not ſerve their turn (words in ſleep, and words when awake) they may expect blows next; and be made to feel the hand of God, becauſe they have not underſtood or not obeyed his will.

Secondly, From the manner of expreſſion, *He is chaſtened with pain upon his Bed.* The Spirit of God uſeth a word referring to inſtruction both by ſmiting and ſpeaking, to ſhew that there is a voice in the rod.

Hence Note, *The chaſtiſements of God upon us are our documents.*

When God ſends ſickneſs and grievous pains, he reproves ſinners from Heaven and chides them for the errours of their lives. The chaſtenings of the Lord are ſpeakings. He ſpeaketh by his rods beyond all the eloquence of words (*Mic.* 6. 9.) *Hear ye the rod.* The voice of God is in his rod; that ſpeaks ſo loud from Heaven in many ſtroaks, that the prophaneſt ſinners on Earth are ſometimes forced to hear and acknowledg it. As thoſe Magicians were forced by the plain evidence of the fact to ſay (*Ez.* 8. 19.) *This is the finger of God*; ſo they muſt ſay, *This is the voice of God.* He ſpeaks to us, and ſpeaks to purpoſe in theſe afflictions: The voice of God in affliction, exceeds all the rhetorick and perſwaſions of mortal men. The croſs is a School, in which they who are dull at hearing what God ſpeaks to them in his word, are wonderfully quickened up by his rod. *The words of the wiſe* (ſaith *Solomon*) *are goads.* And ſurely theſe goads of affliction are pricking piercing words, for the promoting and putting on of a lazy Soul in Gods work. *Job* had deſired God to to ſpeak with him, *Elihu* anſwers, Why doſt thou deſire more anſwers or directions from God? Hath not God ſpoken to thee in theſe ſores and ſickneſſes, in theſe chaſtiſements, with pain upon thy Bed? Is God wanting to thy inſtruction? Hath he not clearly told thee his mind and thy duty? Hath he not written, yea ingraven his will upon thy diſeaſed fleſh? What are the pains, the corruption, the conſumption, the ſtrange deformity, and ſad transfiguration of thy Body, but as ſo many voices of God, ſpeaking and ſpeaking aloud to thee, repent and humble thy ſelf? Therefore attend, hearken to and meditate upon the anſwers which he hath impreſſed or printed legibly upon thy head, face, and wrinkled forehead. Thou haſt his anſwer his own way, therefore be ſatisfied, and do not ſtand deſiring that God would anſwer thee after thy way, nor complaining becauſe he doth not. And we may reply not only to obſtinate ſinners, but to many of the people of God, when they enquire what the mind of God is, or what he intends towards them. His providences give you many items and memorandums; which if you can ſpell out and read, you may know his meaning. This leſſon, the ſignification of the word offereth us as the connection of the words offered in the former.

Thirdly, Learn Hence, *Man is a poor crazy Creature ſubject to all diſeaſes and infirmities.*

Yea, he is only ſubject to them, but he is the ſubject of them. His Body is as it were a Veſſel of natural corruption, as his Soul is a Veſſel of moral corruption. Man is called not only *Adam*, noting the matter of which he was made, *Earth, Red Earth*; but he is called *Enoſh*, that is, ſorrowful, ſighing, groaning man, he is a pined and a pining man: He is alſo called *Abel*, vanity, a poor vain man; which two latter Titles have befallen man ſince man fell from God.

Fourthly, (Which may check the groſs Atheiſme of many)

Obſerve, *Pain and ſickneſs come not by chance, nor are we to ſtay in nature for the cauſe of their coming.*

They come not at all by chance, nor do they come altogether from natural cauſes. Nature hath ſomewhat to do in their coming, but ſomewhat elſe much more, even ſo much more, that in reſpect of that, natural conſiderations may be quite ſhut out, and the whole cauſe aſcribed to that. But what is that? Surely, nothing elſe but, and nothing leſs then the will of God. He is pleaſed to give commiſſion to pains and ſickneſſes, and then they come. *Elihu* would teach *Job* (what he owned before) that God was the ſender and orderer of all his afflictions, as of the loſſes he had in his eſtate and Children, ſo of the pains and ſickneſſes which he felt in his Body. *Moſes* tells the Children of *Iſrael*, not only that Sword and Captivity, but the Peſtilence, Conſumptions, Feavours, and burning Agues are ſent by God himſelf, (*Deut.* 28. 21, 22.) What are diſeaſes but the Lords Meſſengers? When he pleaſeth he can trouble the temper and cauſe the humours of the body to corrupt. He can make them contend with one another to the death, let Phyſitians do what they can to quiet and pacifie them. Yea though ſome skilful Phyſitians have kept their own bodies in ſo due a temper, and to ſo exact a diet, that they could not ſee which way a diſeaſe could take hold of them, or have any advantage againſt them, yet ſickneſs hath come upon them like an armed man, and carryed them away to the grave.

Further, When *Elihu* ſaith of the ſick man, *the multitude of his bones are chaſtened with ſtrong pain.*

Note, *No man is ſo ſtrong, but the Lord is able to bring him down by pain and ſickneſs.*

He that is ſtrong as an Oak, and hath (as it were) a Body of Braſs and Sinews of Iron; yet the Lord can make him as weak as water. The Lord hath ſtrong pains for ſtrong men, and can quickly turn our ſtrength into weakneſs. Thus *Hezekiah* lamented in his ſickneſs (*Iſa.* 38. 13.) *I reckoned till morning that as a Lion, ſo will he break all my bones.* God can arm diſeaſes with the ſtrength of a Lion, who not only teareth the fleſh, but breaketh the bones with his teeth. *David* ſaith (*Pſal.* 39. 11.) *When thou with rebukes doſt correct man for iniquity, thou makeſt his beauty to conſume away like a moth, ſurely every man is vanity.* The word there rendred *beauty* ſignifieth *deſire*, thou makeſt his deſire, or that which is moſt deſireable in him to fade away; we will tranſlate *beauty*, becauſe beauty draweth the deſires of man after it, and is ſo much deſired, yea luſted after by man. Now, as when the Lord doth but touch the Body, he can make the beauty, ſo alſo the ſtrength of it to conſume away as a moth.

המורו *Deſiderabile bene ſanum & bene curatum corpus denotat.*

Sixthly, Whereas it is ſaid, *He is chaſtened with pain* [*upon his Bed,*]

> We learn, *The Lord can make thoſe things eaſeleſs and reſtleſs to us, which uſe to give us moſt eaſe and reſt.*

He that being up is weary, weary with walking, riding or labouring, hopeth to find eaſe in his Bed, yet then doth pain deny him reſt there, and filleth him (as *Job* complained, *Chap.* 7. 4.) *with toſſings to and fro unto the dawning of the day.* The Lord can make the Stocks or a Rack eaſie to us, and our Beds as uneaſie to us as the Stocks or a Rack uſually are.

> Laſtly, Obſerve, *The purpoſe of God in chaſtening man with ſickneſs, is to teach and inſtruct him, not vex and deſtroy him.*

The Lord hath many deſigns upon man when he afflicts him, about all which he inſtructs him by affliction. He deſigns

Firſt, To humble and break the ſtoutneſs of mans Spirit; hence ſickneſſes and afflictions are called humiliations; and the ſame word ſignifies both to be afflicted and humbled.

Secondly, To make men taſte how bitter a thing ſin is; *This is thy wickedneſs* (ſaith the Lord of his ſore Judgments brought upon his people *Iſrael*, Jer. 4. 18.) *Becauſe it is bitter.* Ye would not taſte the evil or bitterneſs of ſin by inſtruction, therefore I will teach you by affliction.

Thirdly, To put ſorrowful ſinful man upon the ſearch of his own heart, and the finding out of the errour of his ways. While men are ſtrong and healthful, they ſeldom find leiſure for that work. And therefore they are confined by ſickneſs to their Houſes, to their Chambers, yea to their Beds, that they may attend it, and read over the whole Book of their lives (*Lam.* 3. 39, 40.) *Wherefore doth the living man complain, a man for the puniſhment of his ſin; let us ſearch and try our ways, and turn to the Lord.* That's man's work upon his Bed, and 'tis God's aim in binding him to his Bed, that he may have liberty for that work.

Fourthly, Afflictions are deſign'd by God to bring man out of love with ſin, yea to ſtir up a holy hatred and revenge in him againſt it; as upon many other accounts, ſo upon this, becauſe it rewardeth him ſo ill, and he finds ſuch unſavory fruits of it. A little digging will diſcover ſin to be the root of all thoſe evil and bitter fruits, which we at any time are fed with in this World. Sin is the gall in our cup, and the gravel in our bread, and we are made to taſte bitterneſs and find trouble, that we may both know and acknowledg it to be ſo.

Fifthly, The purpoſe of God in afflicting us, is to ſet us a praying to and ſeeking after him. We ſeldom know our need of him, till we feel it, (*Hoſ.* 5. 15.) *In their affliction they will ſeek me early*; affliction puts man upon ſupplication, yet every man who is afflicted, doth not preſently ſeek God (many in their affliction mind not God, they ſeek to men, not to God, a croſs without a Chriſt, never made any ſeek God) but affliction through the workings of the Spirit of Chriſt, is a means to bring the Soul to God; and we ſee the effect of it at the beginning of the next Chapter in the ſame Prophet (*Hoſ.* 6. 1.) *Come let us return unto the Lord, for he hath torn, and he will heal us,* &c.

Sixthly, God is pleaſed to exerciſe us with croſſes, for the exerciſe of our graces, or to ſet grace awork; grace hath moſt buſineſs to do when we are taken off from all worldly buſineſs, and are laid upon our Bed, our ſick-Bed. Some work is not done ſo well any where elſe, as there. And many graces work beſt when 'tis worſt with us; they would even ſtand ſtill, and have nothing to do, if God did not bring us into ſtraights, or keep us for a ſeaſon in them. In a ſick-Bed the Lord ſhews us, and we may find work enough for all our graces; eſpecially for faith and patience, and ſubmiſſion of Spirit to his work and will. We may do better work (and do it better) in ſickneſs then in health.

Seventhly, God brings many upon their ſick-Beds, to teach them the worth of health, and make them thankful for it. They who are ſeldom ſick, are as ſeldom thankful for their health, and ſcarce reckon that for a mercy, the want whereof, they have never felt. 'Tis rare that we prize what we have, till we have it not.

Eighthly, God exerciſeth many with ſickneſs, with a purpoſe to put men upon a holy purpoſe of improving their health better, and of doing more for God while 'tis well with them.

Laſtly, not a few are afflicted, that God may have an opportunity to do his work, and declare his power. God himſelf would be hindred of much glorious work, in reſtoring and recovering them to health, did he not chaſten them upon ſick Beds. The queſtion was put about the blind man (*John* 9. 3, 4.) *Who did ſin, this man or his Parents, that he was born blind?* Jeſus anſwered neither hath this man ſinned nor his Parents, *but that the works of God ſhould be made manifeſt in him.* If there had not been a blind man in the World, how could the power of God have been made manifeſt in giving ſight to the blind? If ſome were not extreamly torturingly ſick, how would the power of God be ſeen in healing the ſick, and rebuking their pain? For all theſe purpoſes, *Man is chaſtened with pain upon his Bed, and the multitude of his bones with ſtrong pain.* We never profit by chaſtenings, till we anſwer the purpoſes of God in ſending them, and unleſs we know what and which they are, we can never anſwer them. If we anſwer theſe nine toucht upon, we ſhall either anſwer all, or, to be ſure, we ſhall baulk or refuſe none. *Elihu* having thus ſhewed us the ſick man in pain, proceeds to ſhew us what further effect his pain and ſickneſs wrought upon him.

Verſe 20. **So that his life abhorreth bread, and his Soul dainty meat.**

This verſe ſheweth the ſecond effect of ſickneſs. The former was pain, this is loſs of appetite, or nauſeouſneſs.

His life.] That is, his living Body; we may call the ſick mans Body a living Body, though it be hard to ſay whether we ſhould number him among the living or the dead. We read life put for the Body which liveth, or whereby it liveth. (*Pſal.* 88. 3.) *My Soul* (ſaith *Heman*) *is full of troubles, and my life draweth nigh unto the grave*; that is, I am ready to die, and my Body to be buried. He doth not ſay, he hath no great ſtomack to, but *his life*

Abhorreth bread.] The word here uſed is of a Syriack derivation; nor is it found any where in Scripture but here. The noun ſignifies any thing that is filthy, excrementicious or unclean; whence the verb is rendred to *abhor*, loath, or nauſeate; becauſe we abhor thoſe things which are filthy or unclean. *His life abhorreth*

Bread.] That is common food. Sometimes *bread* is put for all kind of diet; as *David* ſaid to *Mephiboſheth* (2 Sam. 9. 10.) *Thou ſhalt eat bread at my Table.* But becauſe of that oppoſition in the Text to dainties, by *bread*, we may here underſtand only ordinary food; *His life abhorreth bread,*

And his Soul dainty meat.] The Hebrew is, *Meat of deſire.* Not only ſuch meat, as men uſually deſire for the wholeſomneſs of it, but ſuch as curious palates deſire for the pleaſantneſs of it; ſuch meat is here meant; yea thirdly, ſuch meat as the man had a deſire to before his ſickneſs for the ſutableneſs of it to his own taſte and appetite, he then abhorreth.

Vox זהם *Syra eſt, notat nauſeare facere nauſeam.*

זוהמא *ſordes, ſcoriam, excrementum, quicquid ſordidum & immundum eſt vel in humano corpore vel ex eo excretum.* Druſ. Merc.

His Soul abhorreth dainty meat.] The turning of the ſtomack, and loſs of appetite, are uſual ſymptoms of ſickneſs; almoſt all ſickneſſes weaken the appetite, and ſome take it quite away, ſo that the patient not only hath no deſire to, but *loaths dainty meat, or meat of deſire.* This phraſe or form of ſpeaking is uſed (*Dan.* 10. 3.) *I* (ſaith he) *aet no pleaſant bread, or no bread of deſires* (as we put in the Margin) *neither came fleſh nor wine in my mouth.* 'Tis uſed again (2 *Chro.* 32. 27.) Hezekiah *made himſelf treaſuries for Silver and Gold,* &c. *and all manner of pleaſant jewels*; we put in the Margin, *for all jewels of deſire.* So (*Amos* 5. 11.) *Pleaſant vineyards, or vineyards of deſire.* It was the manner of the Hebrews to expreſs *pleaſant* by *deſirable,* becauſe pleaſant things are much deſired. *His Soul abhorreth meat of deſire, or dainty meat.*

Hence Note, Firſt, *'Tis a mercy to taſte our meat, or to take the comfort of what we eat.*

Many have meat, but cannot taſte it. That which giveth the beſt taſte to our meat, is a taſte of the goodneſs of God in it (1 *Pet.* 2. 1.) *If ye have taſted that the Lord is gracious.* It is ſweet to taſte meat and the goodneſs of the Lord together.

Secondly, Note, *God can quickly make thoſe things that are moſt deſirable to us, dainty meat, meat of deſire, loathſome to us.*

Some abhor meat, becauſe they have eaten of it long. The *Jews* did eat Manna and Quails till they loathed them (*Num.* 11. 20.) Others loath meat, becauſe they have eaten over-much. A third ſort, loath ſome meat by a natural antipathy againſt it. Fourthly, Others loath wholeſome meat out of a curioſity, becauſe it is not dainty enough. Laſtly, Sickneſs cauſeth a loathing of all meat, even of the moſt dainty and deſirable meat. And the Lord at any time can make that which was our deſire, our loathing. We have a like deſcription of a ſick man (*Pſal.* 107.18.) *His Soul abhorreth all manner of meat, and draweth near unto the gates of death.* !

Thirdly, Note, *The beſt of Creature-comforts are but vain comforts.*

What can dainty meat do a man good, when he is ſick and ready to die? Then Gold and Silver, Lands and Houſes, which are the dainty meat of a covetous man, are loathſome to him. When a man is ſick to death, his very Riches are ſapleſs and taſteleſs to him; Wiſe and Children, friends and acquaintance can yield little comfort in that dark hour, yea they often prove miſerable comforters: When we have moſt need of comfort, theſe things adminiſter leaſt or no comfort at all to us. Is it not our wiſdom then to get a ſtock of ſuch comforts, as will hold and abide freſh with us, when all worldly comforts either leave us, or become taſtleſs to us? Is it not good to get a ſtore of that food, which how ſick ſoever we are, our ſtomacks will never loath? Yea the ſicker we are, our Souls will the more like, hunger after, and feed the more heartily upon. *The fleſh of Chriſt is meat indeed* (John 6. 55.) Feed upon him by faith, in health and in ſickneſs, ye will never loath him. His fleſh is the true meat of deſires, ſuch meat as will fill and fatten us, but never cloy us. A hungry craving appetite after Chriſt, and ſweet ſatisfaction in him are inſeparable, and ſtill the ſtronger is our appetite, the greater is our ſatisfaction. And (which is yet a greater happineſs) our Souls will have the ſtrongeſt appetite, the moſt ſharp ſet ſtomack after Chriſt, when, through bodily ſickneſs, our ſtomacks cannot take down, but loath the very ſcent and ſight of the moſt pleaſant periſhing meat, and delicious Earthly dainties. Look, that ye provide ſomewhat to eat, that will go down upon a ſick-Bed; your ſick-Bed meat is Chriſt; all other dainty food may be an abhorring to you.

Further, Not only are we to conſider the ſickneſs of the Body, as the cauſe of this taſtleſneſs and liſtleſneſs after bread. But we are to conſider the ſick man *abhorring dainty meat,* under the hidings of Gods face, or in fears about his ſpiritual ſtate; as appears by that which followeth, *If there be a meſſenger with him, an interpreter, one of a thouſand to ſhew unto man his uprightneſs,* or to ſet him right in his ſpiritual ſtate, &c. The ſick man for want of that as well as for want of health, can taſte no ſweetneſs in the rareſt dainties.

Hence Note, *A ſenſe of divine diſpleaſure, or the hiding of divine ſavour from the Soul, renders all outward comforts comfortleſs to us.*

If a man have never ſo much health, yet the appearances of divine diſpleaſure will make him ſick of his moſt pleaſant things. Carnal men can eat and drink, and live upon pleaſures, yea upon the pleaſures of ſin, and go on merrily with them a while, becauſe they know not the meaning of the diſpleaſure of God, nor do they know what the favour of God meaneth; they underſtand not what they want, yea they flatter themſelves that they have enough, and are well enough, though they have nothing, and are nothing, that is of any worth. But if God once awaken them out of this dream, and ſhew them their curſed condition, all will be gall and wormwood to their taſte, or as gravel between their teeth. As the ſenſe of divine favour makes bitter things ſweet, and ſorrowful things comfortable to us, the ſour herbs of affliction dainties to us; ſo not only common but dainty meat, all the cates and viands of this World will be not only taſtleſs but bitter to us when God frowns upon us. An earneſt in the love and favour of God is the good of all good things.

For the cloſe of all, take theſe two Counſels, upon the occaſion of theſe words.

Firſt, *Receive your bread and dainty meat with prayer and thankſgiving*; you may quickly elſe come to abhor your bread, yea and your dainties. The word and prayer both ſanctifie and ſweeten all Creature-enjoyments.

Secondly, Take heed of abuſing your meat; ye may quickly be brought to a loathing of it. When they who have given themſelves up to luxury and intemperance lie upon their ſick-Beds and find their ſtomack turned from all their dainties, it will be moſt grievous to them to conſider how they have abuſed their dainties to feed their luſts. As ſome who abuſe the Creatures are puniſhed with the want of them, ſo others with an abhorrence and loathing of them.

So much for this ſecond ſymptom of ſickneſs, *His life abhorreth bread, and his Soul dainty meat.* The third followeth, and appeareth in the general decay and languiſhment of the ſick mans Body.

Verſe 21. **His fleſh is conſumed away, that it cannot be ſeen and his bones that were not ſeen, ſtick out.**

In this verſe and the next, *Elihu* ſtill inſiſts upon his deſcription of the ſick mans condition, and in them he gives us two other ſad effects or ſymptoms of his ſickneſs.

Firſt, The general waſte and conſumption of the Body (*verſ.* 21.)

Secondly, The utmoſt peril of life (*verſ.* 22.)

Elihu deſcribes the firſt effect of ſickneſs (the firſt here but the third in order) by two things.

Firſt, By the diſappearing of that which uſed to be ſeen, and appear very fair and beautiful; the viſible part grows (as it were) inviſible, *his fleſh is conſumed away, that it cannot be ſeen.*

Secondly, By the appearing of that which uſed not to be ſeen; his inviſible parts (not ſo in their own nature, but as to their place, I ſay, his inviſible parts) grow viſible, *His bones which were not ſeen, ſtick out.* Thus with much elegancy he ſets forth the ſorrowful and deplorable eſtate of the ſick man.

His fleſh is conſumed away.] As if he had ſaid, Before his ſickneſs he was full of fleſh, fat and fair, but falling into ſickneſs, he falls away, and is worn, (as we ſay) to skin and bones; *his fleſh is conſumed.* Fleſh, in Scripture, is taken two ways.

Firſt, Improperly, and Tropically.

Secondly, Literally or Properly.

In a Tropical and Improper ſenſe, *fleſh* ſignifieth our ſinful corruption (*Gal.* 5. 17.) *The fleſh evermore luſteth againſt the Spirit,* that is, the unregenerate part in man againſt the regenerate. Theſe two are always contending and combating with one another in all thoſe whom Chriſt hath conquered to himſelf. Happy are they that find their fleſh, in this ſenſe, conſuming away; and 'tis that which every man is ſtudying (who knows what godlineſs means) the conſumption of this fleſh, even the mortification of his luſts, of pride and earthlineſs, of wrath, envy, and unbelief.

Secondly, Fleſh by a figure is put for the whole natural Body, conſiſting of many parts diſſimilar to fleſh. Thus the Pſalmiſt complained in prayer, that, *the Lord had given the fleſh of his Saints, to the Beaſts of the Earth* (Pſal. 79. 2.) that is, he had expoſed their Bodies, through the rage and cruelty of their enemies, to the teeth and bowels of ſavage and ravenous Beaſts.

Thirdly, Fleſh is alſo put for the whole man conſiſting both of Soul and Body. (*Gen.* 6. 12, 13.) *The Lord ſaw that all fleſh had corrupted their ways.* That is, all men (who are made up of a Body and Soul) had corrupted their ways by letting looſe and acting their ſinful corruptions.

Fourthly, Fleſh is ſometimes put for that which is beſt in man, his greateſt natural perfections, whatſoever in him is leſs then grace, whatſoever is higheſt in him, below the Spirit is called fleſh in Scripture. When *Peter* (Matth. 16. 17.) had made that bleſſed confeſſion which is the Rock upon which the Church is built (*thou art Chriſt the Son of the living God*) preſently Chriſt tells him *fleſh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee*, that is, the higheſt, and the moſt perfect piece of nature hath not taught thee this leſſon; the Evangeliſt ſaith of all true believers (who have received this power (or priviledge) to become the ſons of God) *they are born not of blood, nor of the will of the fleſh* (John 1. 13.) that is, the beſt of the Creature, contributes nothing to the bringing forth of new Creatures, the ſons of God.

Fifthly, Fleſh by a figure is put for all that in Religion, or in the worſhip of God, which is outward, or open to the eye; whatſoever comes under any humane obſervation, is but the fleſh of Religion, or the fleſh of worſhip. In this ſence the Apoſtle puts the queſtion (*Rom.* 4. 1.) *What ſhall we ſay then, that* Abraham *our father, as pertaining to the fleſh, hath found?* What he means by the fleſh, he tells in the next words, *he was not juſtified by works*, that is, not by any thing that did appear, not by any thing done to him or done by him. He was not juſtified by Circumciſion, or by the uſe of any external rite, he was not juſtified by his own righteouſneſs, or obedience to the Law. The ſame Apoſtle alſo calls the very worſhip of the Goſpel, as to the outward part of it, *fleſh* (Phil. 3. 3.) *For we are the Circumciſion, which worſhip God in the Spirit, and rejoyce in Chriſt Jeſus, and have no confidence in the fleſh.* That is, in any outward work, or priviledg which we have in our Goſpel ſtate. All this fleſh likewiſe ought to be conſumed in our apprehenſions, that is, we muſt make nothing of it, nor reckon it any thing in our account for juſtification in the ſight of God or acceptance with him.

Secondly, Fleſh properly taken is that integral and ſimilar part of the Body, which is oppoſed to blood and bones, to veins and ſinews. When *Elihu* ſaith *his fleſh is conſumed*, we are to underſtand it either in this proper ſence, or in the ſecond figurative ſence before named, as fleſh is put for the whole Body; *his fleſh is conſumed*, that is, his fleſh in oppoſition to his bones ſpoken of before, or his fleſh, that is his outward man,

כלה
Senuit, conſenuit, conſumpſit.

Is conſumed.] The Original word ſignifies to *wax old*; for as when a man recovers from ſickneſs, his fleſh is ſaid to return like the fleſh of a Child. So when he is under the extremity of any ſickneſs, his fleſh, as it were, waxeth old, or withereth like the fleſh of an old man. Thus 'tis tranſlated (*Lamen.* 3. 4.) *My fleſh and my skin hath he made old*; that is, though I am not old in years, or how young ſoever I am, yet God, by many ſufferings, hath made me look like an old man; I am decayed and weak. *David* ſpeaking of wicked worldly men, tells us, (*Pſal.* 49. 14.) *Their beauty ſhall conſume in the grave*; As death and the grave make a total and final conſumption of the beauty of bad men, that is, of all the ſplendour and bravery wherein they lived, while they lived in the Body; ſo pains and ſickneſſes do exceedingly conſume the Body, and eat out the fleſh. As a tyrannical oppreſſor eats out the people under his government, in which ſence this word is applyed (*Dan.* 7. 25.) Or as a garment is worn out by time and uſing. The fleſh is often in Scripture compared to a garment, and dying to unclothing; becauſe when we die we put off the fleſh. The garment of the fleſh, that beautiful garment waxeth old and wears out apace on a ſick Bed. Sickneſs not only ſtaineth and abateth the beauty of it, but waſteth it deeply, ſo that, as it followeth,

It cannot be ſeen.] Or as Mr, *Broughton* renders, *his fleſh waſteth away from ſight*, or he hath no fleſh left to be ſeen.

Again, When it is ſaid, *his fleſh is conſumed away that it cannot be ſeen*, ſome expound it thus; *His fleſh is ſo conſumed away, that the ſeer withdraweth from it*; or no man cares to ſee it, that is, the ſick man is ſo diſcoloured and waſted, that viſiters and ſpectators ſtart and are almoſt frighted to look upon him. The fleſh of man in a healthful and flouriſhing condition, is a lovely ſpectacle, and draws beholders, but the fleſh of a very ſick man is a gaſtly ſpectacle and a regret to the beholder. We love not to ſee that which we do not like. Beauty attracts, deformity withdraws the eye. It is ſaid of *Jeſus Chriſt himſelf*, that he was ſo deformed by his ſufferings (*Iſa.* 52. 14.) that *many were aſtoniſh'd at him* (*his viſage was ſo marred more then any man, and his form more then the Sons of men*) and (*Iſa.* 53. 3.) *We hid as it were our faces from him, he was deſpiſed and we eſteemed him not*; that is, he was ſo diſ-figured by ſorrow, that no man cared to look upon him. Thus 'tis often with the ſick. And this is a profitable and a probable ſenſe of the Text in hand; *His fleſh is conſumed away*, and then he who before delighted to ſee it, is troubled at the ſight of it, or is rather affrighted then pleaſed in ſeeing it.

There is yet a fourth reading, which further aggravates the ſick mans Conſumption; *His fleſh is conſumed in ſight*; that is, ſay ſome, his fleſh doth conſume ſo faſt, that a man may almoſt ſee him conſume; as we ſay of ſome plants, they grow ſo faſt, that we may, almoſt, ſee them grow; ſo we may ſay of thoſe that decline and fade much, we may ſee them conſume, their fleſh conſumeth even to the eye or to view. He that looks ſtedfaſtly upon them, may ſee them fade and wither like a flower, yea they ſeem to fade by his looking or fixing his eye on them.

Quid ſi carnem conſumi à viſu, per elegantem hyperbolen eſſet, tam manifeſtè indies marceſcere, ut quaſi ab ipſo reſpicientis oculo cõſumi videatur. Bold.

Hence Note, Firſt, *The fleſh of man is a very fading and declining thing.*

It quickly conſumes and drips away in a diſeaſe; A violent feaver or any other acute diſeaſe, dries up the ſpirits, and drinks up the moyſture, and how ſoon doth ſuch a man decay! and as the extremity of a diſeaſe, ſo extreme want of food or famine conſumes the fleſh. Hunger having nothing to eat, feeds upon the fleſh of the hungry, till all be eaten up. We read (*Lamen.* 4. 8.) how rudely famin dealt with the fleſh of thoſe delicate *Nazarites, who were purer then ſnow, whiter then milk, they were more ruddy in Body then Rubies, their poliſhing was of Saphire*; yet the next words tell us, *Their viſage is blacker then a coal, they are not known in the ſtreets, their skin cleaveth to their bones: It is withered, it is become like a ſtick.* And though a man eſcape ſickneſs, and famin doth not eat up his fleſh, yet time (that great eater) will, old age will waſte what famin and ſickneſs have not toucht. As the Prophet threatned, what the Caterpillar hath left the Canker-worm ſhall devour; ſo what ſickneſs leaves, time will certainly conſume. Thus Bodily fleſh is every way liable to a Conſumption; and therefore the Prophet being commanded to cry, and putting the queſtion, what ſhall I cry? had this anſwer, *All fleſh is graſs.* (There indeed *fleſh* is taken in the moſt comprehenſive notion, as to all externals; not only the fleſh of the Body, but all the riches, honours, and dignities of this World, come under the name of fleſh there) *All fleſh is graſs* (Iſa. 40. 6.) But why doth he call it graſs? 'Tis ſo under a two-fold conſideration. Firſt, for the greeneſs and fairneſs of it. God hath put beauty upon this fading fleſh, both for the comfort, and for the tryal of man; that fleſh is fair as a flower, is matter of delight; and to abſtract our thoughts or wean our hearts from that which is fair and delightful, is matter of tryal. How hardly are we taken off from affecting fleſh, our own or others, while this graſs continues beautiful and green! Secondly, fleſh is graſs, becauſe ſoon gone (as it follows in the Prophet) *The graſs withereth and the flower fadeth; becauſe the Spirit of the Lord* (or his *breath* like a blaſting Eaſt-wind) *bloweth upon it*; which yet ſome expound more ſpiritually, of the Spirit of God diſcovering the vanity and mutability of all Earthly things to the Soul, for that preſently cauſeth the gayeſt and beſt of them to wither or be as a withered flower before our eyes. In which ſenſe *David* ſaid (*Pſal.* 119. 96.) *I have ſeen an end of all perfection.*

Take fleſh in the largeſt ſenſe, and 'tis a conſuming thing; *The faſhion* (or ſcheme) *of the world paſſeth away*, and ſo doth the faſhion of all thoſe perfections, or moſt perfect enjoyments, which are but of a Worldly birth and extraction. Fleſh under every form is a fading thing, eſpecially the fleſh of the beſt-form'd face and Body of man. Whence take theſe ſix inferences. If the fleſh the faireſt outſide of man be a fading thing, then

Firſt, Be not deſirous, much leſs ambitious, *to make a fair ſhew in the fleſh*; for it may prove but a vain ſhew, and at laſt not ſo much as a ſhew. Fleſh may ſo conſume away, that it cannot be ſeen. When the Apoſtle tells us of ſome, *Who deſire to make a fair ſhew in the fleſh* (Gal. 6. 12.) he ſpecially means it of thoſe that brave it and boaſt themſelves in the outward part of Religion, and would appear much in the form; *'Tis a moſt vain thing to deſire, to make a fair ſhew in the fleſh of ſpiritual things, as hypocrites and formaliſts do*; And 'tis a very vain thing to deſire to make a fair ſhew in the fleſh of corporal things, as proud and vain-glorious men love to do. Many deſire to make a fair ſhew in the fleſh of their Bodies, they love to have fair faces, and fair skins, to be fairly dreſt and deckt, is a great part of their care. But take heed of deſiring to make a fair ſhew in this or in any thing that is called fleſh. For when you have done all, fleſh will be a nothing; and after you have beſtowed much coſt upon the fleſh of this Body, that it may be ſeen, a ſickneſs may come and conſume it, that it cannot be ſeen.

Secondly, Take heed of priding your ſelves in the fleſh, when your fleſh (poſſibly unſought by you) makes a fair ſhew; though you have beauty, and the goodlieſt ſtructure of Body that every was ſeen, though you have riches and honour, the higheſt built eſtate that ever was enjoyed, what have you to be proud of? Will it not conſume and moulder away? May it not melt like a ſnow-ball, or like wax before the fire? Be not proud of any thing called fleſh, how goodly a ſight ſoever it is to the World, for in a little, in a very little time, there may be nothing of fleſh left in ſight. *His fleſh is conſumed away, that it cannot be ſeen.*

Thirdly, Be not over-careful to provide for your fleſh, the outward man, this Body, or any thing that concerns it. As the Apoſtle utterly forbids us to *make proviſion for the fleſh, to fulfil the luſts thereof* (Rom. 13. 14.) that is, thoſe luſts that are exerciſed in the fleſh; ſo, be not much careful, not at all unduly careful to make proviſion for your fleſh, to ſatisfie the neceſſities of it; for 'tis but a periſhing thing. Be not careful what you ſhall eat and drink, and wherewith you ſhall be clothed, as Chriſt himſelf adviſeth (*Matth.* 6.) The fleſh that you prepare for your fleſh, is not more periſhing then the fleſh for which it is prepared. *Meats for the belly and the belly for meats, but God ſhall deſtroy both it and them* (1 Cor. 6. 13.) It will not be long before there ſhall not be an end both of the meat that is eaten, and of eating meat.

Fourthly, If the fleſh may ſoon be ſo conſumed by the hand of God that it cannot be ſeen, then be not unwilling to waſte and conſume your fleſh which is ſeen in working for God, or in doing good work, which is the work of God: Your fleſh may conſume upon worſe terms quickly, then working for God, why then ſhould you be unwilling to conſume it in Gods work? Are not ſome ſo tender of their carkaſs, and their skin, that they are afraid (though that fear be their ſhame and ſin) of taking too much pains in the work of God, leſt they ſhould dammage their Bodies, endanger their health, and conſume their fleſh? This fleſh will waſte with idleneſs, is it not better to waſte it by induſtry in uſeful ſervices? The Apoſtle was willing *to ſpend and be ſpent* in the ſervice of the *Corinthians*; that is, he was willing to ſpend not only his purſe and his pains, but to be ſpent as to his bodily ſtrength, health and life. He cared not for his own fleſh, ſo he might be ſerviceable to their Spirits, and promote their ſpiritual good, (2 *Cor.* 12. 15.)

Fifthly, Be not unwilling to waſte and conſume your fleſh in duty with God; as the fleſh conſumes in work for God, ſo in duty with God, in prayer and faſting and ſelf-humbling, theſe are duties with God. Some are afraid of taking too much pains in theſe Soul-works with God, leſt they hurt their Bodies, their fleſh. We can never lay out our ſtrength, or bring our fleſh to a better market, we can never put it off at a higher rate (if it muſt be put off) then in ways of communion with God. Yet let us remember we have a promiſe, that our Bodies ſhall thrive as well as our Souls, even in thoſe duties of communion with God, which are moſt expenſive and ſevere to our fleſh, prayer with faſting. (*Iſa.* 58. 11.) *And the Lord ſhall guide thee continually, and ſatisfie thy Soul in drought, and make fat thy bones.* Which though it may have a more ſpiritual meaning, yet there is a truth in it as to the point in hand. Holy faſting, which is a *Soul-fatning* duty (as all agree) is under a gracious promiſe, that it ſhall alſo be a *Body-fatning*, yea a *Bone-fatning* duty. Now, though we have a good aſſurance, that while we are trading with God for the gain and increaſe of our Souls, our Bodies ſhall not waſte nor be loſers, yet we ſhould be ready to waſte and wear off the fleſh from our Bodies for the gain and increaſe of our Souls.

Sixthly, Why ſhould we be unwilling to offer our fleſh to be conſumed by the fury of men, or by the rage of flames in the cauſe of God, ſeeing it may ere long conſume by ſickneſs and not be ſeen? Why ſhould we be afraid to let our fleſh conſume or rot in priſons, or by tortures for Chriſt, ſeeing a diſeaſe will do it, and hath often done it? Thouſands of the bleſſed Martyrs, and ſuffering Saints, have rejoyced they had fleſh to conſume when God called them to it. So ſome interpret that Scripture before mentioned (2 *Cor.* 12. 14.) where the Apoſtle profeſſed, *I am willing to be ſpent for you* (how ſpent? As an offering or ſacrifice by fire) *in the ſervice of your faith*, and in bearing my witneſs to thoſe truths of that Goſpel which I have preached to you. And indeed, he in that ſenſe, ſpent his fleſh at the laſt, he ſuffered death, and let his fleſh fall, in holding up and holding out the faith of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. It is better that our fleſh ſhould be thus conſumed (if God calls us to it) then that we leave it to be conſumed by age or ſickneſs, by worms or rottenneſs. How freely ſhould we offer up this fleſh to ſo noble a conſumption, ſeeing we cannot keep it long from ſo mean a conſumption, do what we can?

Secondly, Note, *Sickneſs is a conſumer; ſickneſs is a conſumer of all that will conſume.*

It conſumes the Body, and it conſumes the purſe, yea it conſumes all our Worldly comforts and concernments, it conſumes every thing but grace. We ſay, *A time of ſickneſs is a ſpending time*; the uſual reference of that expreſſion, is to ſpirituals. In health we gather grace and lay up truths, which we ſpend in ſickneſs. But though ſickneſs be a ſpending time, yet, it is not (I am ſure it ought not to be) a waſting time to grace and ſpirituals. A ſpending time it is, that is, a time wherein a godly man may lay out a great deal of his ſpiritual ſtock and heavenly treaſure, a great deal of faith and patience, a great deal of ſweet contentation and ſelf-ſubmiſſion to God. But ſickneſs is not a waſting time to any of theſe graces or heavenly treaſures; yea where grace is real and active, it is not only not waſted or conſumed, but increaſed and improved, occaſionally, by ſickneſs; God having promiſed, *that all things ſhall work together for good to them that love him* (Rom. 8. 28.) will not ſuffer the beſt things of thoſe that love him (their graces) to take hurt by the worſt of Bodily ſickneſs. Sickneſs doth only dammage the Body, and deface the beauty of the fleſh; and it quickly doth, as *Elihu* affirms of his ſick man in the Text, *His fleſh is conſumed away, that it cannot be ſeen*, yea, as it followeth,

And his bones that were not ſeen, ſtick out.

Fleſh and bones are the two eminent materials of this fair and moſt regular building, the Body of man. The bones of a healthy and ſtrong man, are not ſeen becauſe they are covered with fleſh; they are only felt or perceived through their clothing, skin, and fleſh. God hath put theſe very comely and beautiful garments as a covering upon our bones: But ſickneſs pulls away theſe coverings, it pulls away the cloths from our bones, and makes them appear, as it were, naked. When the fat is dript away, and the fleſh is ſpent, the bones ſeem to ſtart out. We commonly ſay of a man that hath been conſumed by a lingring ſickneſs, *He is a very Skeleton, he looks like an Anatomy.* Which is nothing elſe but a pack of bones. The fleſh is gone. Thus *David* mourned (*Pſal.* 31. 10.) *My life is ſpent with grief, my years with ſighing, my ſtrength faileth because of mine iniquity: And my bones are conſumed.* The ſin-ſickneſs of a ſenſible Soul conſumes the bones, more then any Bodily ſickneſs. This was not only the conſuming but the breaking of *David*'s bones (*Pſal.* 51. 8.) And as his ſorrow for his own tranſgreſſions, ſo his ſorrow for the afflictions of *Sion*, had the like effect in him (*Pſal.* 102. 3, 4, 5.) *My days are conſumed like ſmoak or into ſmoak* (they vaniſh like ſmoak) *and my bones are burnt as a hearth. My heart is ſmitten, and withereth like graſs; ſo that I forget to eat my bread; by reaſon of the voyce of my groaning, my bones cleave to my skin.*

Some read this Text, *His bones are diminiſhed*, leſſened, waſted, or broken in pieces, as if the conſumption reached not only his fleſh but his bones too. That's a fierce diſeaſe which at one invaded and waſted the bones. The word which we render to *ſtick out*, ſignifieth in the Syriack Idiom, the abating, leſſening or breaking of any thing into leſſer parts or pieces. And ſo thoſe words (*are not ſeen*) in the Text (which according to our tranſlation refer to the time of health, when a man is ſo fat and full fleſhed, that his bones cannot be ſeen, ſcarcely felt, thoſe words I ſay) are referred according to this tranſlation to the time of ſickneſs, which is ſuppoſed ſo to diminiſh and waſte the bones, that by an ordinary ſtrain of Rhetorick they are ſaid, not to *be ſeen. His bones are diminiſhed, they are not ſeen.* We alſo render this word in that firſt prophetical word concerning our reſtoring by Chriſt (*Gen.* 3. 15.) by *bruiſing. It* (that is the womans ſeed) *ſhall bruiſe thy head* (that is the Devils) *and thou ſhalt bruiſe his heel.* When bones are bruiſed, and as it were ſhuffled together, they cannot be ſeen in their proper places, or as once they were fixt by nature. This various reading doth not vary the general ſence of the Text, but only heighten and increaſe it. We render fully and ſignificantly, *his bones that were not ſeen, ſtick out.*

Et comminuentur oſſa ejus, non videntur; interpretantes vocem ספו *in ſignificatione Syriaca.* Piſc. *Significationem Syriacam malo quam omnes penè Hebræi ſequuntur.* Merc.

Hence Note, *There is no man ſo ſtrong, there is nothiug in man ſo ſtrong that can ſtand out againſt the ſtrength of ſickneſs.*

Our bones are not made of Braſs, ſickneſs will diminiſh them, and pain maſter them.

Secondly, Whereas 'tis ſaid, *His fleſh (that was ſeen) is not ſeen, and his bones that were not ſeen ſtick out*, or are ſeen.

Obſerve, *Sickneſs makes a wonderful change in man.*

It puts that out of ſight which was ſeen, and it brings that in ſight which was not ſeen; this holds true, not only as to that which is natural in man, his fleſh and bones, of which this Text treats in the letter; but 'tis true alſo as to that which is moral and ſpiritual in man, his vertues and his vices, his graces, and his luſts or corruptions. How often is the fleſh (in a moral ſence) that is, the outward profeſſion of a Hypocrite conſumed in ſickneſs, and no more ſeen; *will the Hypocrite always call upon God?* (Job 27. 10.) He will not. He that doth all to be ſeen (that's the character of a Hypocrite, *Matth.* 6. 5.) will in a little time do ſuch a little or rather ſuch a nothing in Religion, that it cannot be ſeen at all. His profeſſion is ſick, when he is ſick; and then alſo that which was not ſeen ſticks out; the Hypocrite covereth many of his corruptions, his impatiency, murmuring, and unbelief, in a day of proſperity with the skin at leaſt or fair ſhew of faith, but in a day of trouble thoſe dead bones appear, and ſtick out. A day of ſorrow, ſickneſs, and trouble is a great diſcoverer; it occaſions the appearance and ſticking out of many baſe luſts that were not ſeen before. 'Tis ſo alſo in the better way with godly men, their corruptions, that appeared upon them before, are abated, waſted, and conſumed by affliction, and many of their graces which lay hid and unſeen, ſtick out and appear glorioſly in a day of trouble, or upon a ſick bed. Their patience and ſubmiſſion of Spirit under the hand of God, their long-ſufferance and ſweet ſelf-reſignation to the will of God, which lay hid, ſhew themſelves. Sickneſs and affliction make wonderful changes and diſcoveries both as to the outward and inward man; *'tis ſeldom ſeen or known either how good or how bad any man is, till he is in pain or reduced to ſome extremity*; till his very bones are vexed, or till, as *Elihu* further deſcribes the ſick man in the next verſe.

Verſe 22. **His Soul draweth nigh to the grave, and his life to the deſtroyer.**

When the diſeaſe is at the height (as Phyſitians ſpeak) then the ſick mans Soul draweth nigh unto and is ready to go down into the grave. But doth the Soul go to the grave? I anſwer, the Soul, here, as frequently in Scripture, is put for the perſon; as if he had ſaid, *the man draweth nigh to his grave*; the Soul being the nobleſt and moſt princely part of man, is honoured with the denomination of the whole man; or, becauſe all the World is nothing to us (as Chriſt told his Diſciples (*Matth.* 16. 26.) if we loſe our Souls, therefore man is ſpoken of as if he were nothing but a Soul (*Gen.* 14. 21.) *The King of* Sodom *ſaid unto* Abraham, *give me the Souls, and take the goods to thy ſelf*, we tranſlate, *give me the* perſons, and put in the Margin, *give me the Souls*; thus 'tis ſaid (*Gen.* 46. 27.) *All the Souls of the Houſe of* Jacob *that came into* Egypt *were threeſcore and ten.* The Apoſtles rule of obedience to Magiſtrates runs in this ſtrain, *Let every Soul* (that is, let every man) *be ſubject to the higher Powers* (Rom. 13.) And I conceive the Apoſtle expreſſeth it ſo, becauſe there ought not be an inward ſubjection to that, as to any other Ordinance of God; the Soul muſt be ſubject as well as the Body to the powers of this World, that is, there muſt be (though no ſubjection of Conſcience, yet) a conſcientious ſubjection unto Magiſtrates. Thus here, *his Soul* that is, himſelf, the man *draweth near*

Unto the grave.] To *corruption*, ſay ſome, *to the pit*, ſay others. Both are joined or meet in the grave, for that is the pit of corruption. The Greeks call the grave, *Fleſh-eater, to draw nigh to the grave*, imports ſuch a prevalency of diſeaſes as bring a man to the graves mouth, to the very point of death; and then (as we ſay) *he is drawing on.* Whither is a ſick man drawing on? Surely to his grave; *David* (*Pſ.* 107. 18.) having deſcribed the condition of ſick men, adds, *they draw nigh unto the gates of death*; here (which is the ſame) *Elihu* ſaith, *his Soul draweth nigh to the grave.*

לשחת *Corruptionis ſepulchrum à græcis vocatur* Sarcophagus.

Hence Note, *Diſeaſes and death are near one another.*

A ſick bed and a grave are not far diſtant; *David* ſpeaking of himſelf and others in extream danger of death by the cruel plots and cunning ſnares of the enemy, hath a like expreſſion (*Pſal.* 141. 7.) *Our bones are ſcattered at the graues mouth, as when one cutteth and cleaveth wood upon the Earth*; as if he had ſaid, we are ſo near death, that 'tis a miracle if we eſcape it. Though we are yet alive, yet we have the ſentence of death in our ſelves, and are within ſight of our graves. What *David* ſpake there of himſelf in conſort with others, *Heman* ſpake perſonally of himſelf (*Pſ.* 88. 3.) *My life draweth nigh unto the grave*; we are always in our health drawing towards the grave, but in ſickneſs we are drawing near unto it. There is but a little diſtance between any man and the grave, there is ſcarcely any diſtance at all between a man that is very ſick and the grave. Now if the ſick man be drawing near unto the grave, then

Firſt, Let them that are ſick remember the grave; 'tis our duty to be always remembring and meditating upon the grave in our health, much more ſhould that be our remembrance and meditation, when we are ſick, moſt of all when we are ſick unto death, or ready to die and drop into the grave.

Secondly, if the ſick are drawing near unto the grave, then let ſick men draw near unto God; if ever you will draw near unto God, the living God, be ſure to do it upon the borders of death; 'tis good yea beſt to draw nigh unto God when we are well, and all is well with us, even at beſt in the World (*Pſal.* 73. 25.) But when we are in danger or drawing nigh unto death, O how earneſtly ſhould we draw nigh unto God, in the actings of faith, and love, *To whom ſhould we go* (as *Peter* ſaid to Chriſt, *Joh.* 6. 68.) in the appearances and approaches of temporal death, but unto him who hath the words of eternal life. It is high time for us to draw nigh unto God, when any of the comforts of this life are withdrawing from us, is it not more then high time therefore, to draw nigh to him, when life it ſelf is withdrawing from us, and we drawing nigh to the grave! *How miſerable is their condition who have death near them, and God far from them! Though we walk through the valley of* *the ſhadow of death*, yet (as *David* profeſſed he would not, *Pſal.* 23. 4.) we need not *fear any evil, while God is with us*; but how will the very ſhadows of death put us in fear, if God be not with us? And what confidence can we have of his being with us, if we are not acquainted with him, if we uſe not to draw near to him?

Thirdly, If they that are ſick draw near unto the grave, then it is good for ſuch as come to viſit their ſick friends, wiſely to mind them of the grave; when will a diſcourſe with our friends of death and the grave be ſeaſonable, if not when we ſee them dying and going to the grave? Yet ſome, when they viſit ſick friends, will not ſpeak a word of either; they fear it may haſten death to hear of it, and that ſpeaking of the grave may put them into it, then which I know no fear more fooliſh, or more to be feared. Yea ſome will forbid viſiters to mention death, when their Relations lie ſick. O do not ſpeak of death to my Husband, ſaith the Wife, *&c.* But remember it, if the ſick are drawing near to the grave, they that viſit them ſhould remember them of the grave, both in prayer and in conference; to ſpeak of death cannot hurt the Body, but the not ſpeaking of it may hurt the Soul, and hinder it from getting out of the ſnares both of ſpiritual and eternal death. Yet godly prudence and great caution is to be uſed about it; none ſhould do it bluntly, nor ſuddenly, but having by diſcreet inſinuations, firſt hinted to the ſick man his danger of death, we ſhould then by faithful counſels prepare him for it, and by comfortable Scripture cordials ſtrengthen and arm his Spirits againſt it. Such ſavory and well mannaged diſcourſes of death may (through the bleſſing of God) be a ſavour of eternal life to the ſick man, and will not in the leaſt prejudice his recovery from ſickneſs, *When his Soul draweth near to the grave,*

לממתים *Mortificantibus.* Mont.

And his life to the deſtroyers.] The Hebrew is, *to thoſe that kill*, or *to life-deſtroyers*. There is a difference among Interpreters, who are here intended by theſe deſtroyers, to whom the ſick mans life draweth near, or who are theſe *life-deſtroyers*.

Firſt, Some thus, *his life to the deſtroyers*, that is, to his enemies that are ready to deſtroy him. But that's improper to the Text, which ſpeaking of ſickneſs cannot intend any deſtroying enemy but the laſt enemy which is to be deſtroyed, *death*, or the antecedents and uſual attendants of it, ſickneſſes.

Ad Angelos morti præfectos non incommodè refertur ſequentis verſiculi ratione habita, ubi Angeli vitam annunciantis unius de mille mentionem facit, ut ממתים *intelligas mortis nuncios.* Merc.

Secondly, By the deſtroyers others underſtand, *Angels*, who are commiſſion'd and ſent of God to cut the thread of life, and to take mortals out of this World by mortal diſeaſes; and ſo the deſtroying Angel in this verſe ſtands in oppoſition to that comforting Angel ſpoken of in the next verſe; *if there be a meſſenger or an Angel*, &c. That Angels have ſuch a Miniſtry, is clear, (2 *Sam.* 24. 16.) Where (*David* having choſen to fall into the hands of God) an Angel is preſently diſpatcht to do execution upon his people. *And when the Angel ſtretched out his hand upon* Jeruſalem *to deſtroy it, the Lord repented him of the evil, and ſaid to the Angel that deſtroyed the people, it is enough, ſtay now thine hand*, &c. That *deſtroyer* (ſo he is called, *Exod.* 12. 23.) who ſlew all the firſt born of the *Egyptians* (God's laſt and greateſt plague upon them, his tenth plague) is by moſt interpreted to be an Angel, yea by ſome a good Angel, becauſe appointed and directed by God to ſpare his people the *Jews*, and to pour out his vengeance upon the *Egyptians*, his and their enemies. For moſt uſually the wicked are plagued by good Angels, and the good, as *Job* in this Book was, are afflicted by evil Angels. Howbeit that Text ſay ſome (*Pſal.* 78. 49.) leadeth us rather to believe that it was an evil Angel; *He caſt upon them* (meaning the *Egyptians*) *the fierceneſs of his anger, wrath, indignation, and trouble, by ſending evil Angels among them.* Yet poſſibly thoſe Angels which deſtroyed the *Egyptians*, are called evil Angels, not becauſe they were ſo in their nature; but becauſe they were Miniſters of evil to that hard-hearted people. Which way ſoever we take it, there is a truth in it applicable to the Scripture here in hand. And ſo ſome expound that of *Solomon* (*Prov.* 17. 11.) *An evil man ſeeketh only rebellion, therefore a cruel Meſſenger ſhall be ſent againſt him.* The Text may be rendred *a cruel Angel*, that is, an Angel with a Meſſage of wrath and deſtruction ſhall be ſent unto him. The Apoſtle (1 *Cor.* 10. 10.) ſpeaking of thoſe dreadful Judgments, which God ſent upon his people the *Jews* in the Wilderneſs (ſuch as we are like to find in theſe Goſpel times, if we provoke him) for all thoſe things are ſaid *to have hapened unto them for Types or examples* (*verſ.* 11.) And there he gives us warning, *neither murmur ye, as ſome of them alſo murmured, and were deſtroyed of the deſtroyer.* That is, by the Peſtilence or Plague (as 'tis expreſſed, *Numb.* 14. 12, 37.) which the Apoſtle *Paul* calleth a *deſtroyer*, becauſe, doubtleſs it was executed by ſome inviſible deſtroyer, or Angel. The Devil, whom *John* in the *Revelation* (*Chap.* 9. 11.) calleth, *the Angel of the bottomleſs pit*, is there alſo ſet forth by this Title, *whoſe name in the Hebrew tongue is* Abaddon, *but in the Greek tongue hath his name* Apollyon. The Devil is the *Apollyon*, the *Abaddon*, both which ſignifie a deſtroyer; yea the Devil (*Heb.* 2. 14.) *is ſaid to have the power of death*, as if he were ſet over that ſad work, and Lorded it over dying men; yet (let us know to our comfort) the Devil hath not the power of death as a Lord, or Judg, but only as an Executioner; thus the ſick mans life may be ſaid to draw nigh to the deſtroyer, that is to the deſtroying Angel, or to the meſſenger of death.

Præſtat generale eſt & ad omnia mortis ſigna & mortifera, quicquid illud ſit referre. Merc.

Thirdly, We may take the *deſtroyers*, not for perſons ſent to deſtroy, but for diſeaſes, and ſickneſſes; theſe are deſtroyers. And thus it may be ſaid of a ſick man, *his life draweth nigh to the deſtroyers*, that is, he is in the hand or under the power of ſuch diſeaſes, as probably will deſtroy him. That ſeems to be Mr. *Broughtons* underſtanding of the words, who renders, *his Soul draweth nigh to the grave, and his life to killing maladies.* Whatſoever is a *death-bringer*, whatever is deadly or mortal to man, may be comprehended under this expreſſion, *The deſtroyers.* And ſo, theſe words, *His life draweth nigh to the deſtroyer*, may ſignifie only thus much, he is deadly, or (as we commonly expreſs it) mortally ſick. There's no hope of him, he is paſt recovery, the Phyſitians have given him over. *Heman* (*Pſ.* 88. 3, 4, 5.) ſpeaks to this ſence and near in this language of himſelf. *My Soul is full of troubles: My life draweth nigh unto the grave. I am counted with them that go down into the pit: I am as a man that hath no ſtrength. Free among the dead, like the ſlain that lie in the grave whom thou remembreſt no more. Heman* was alive, yet with reſpect either to the anguiſh of his Soul, or the pains of his Body, he looked upon himſelf as one *free among the dead*, that is, *as a dead man, his life drew near to the deſtroyers.* And hence

מות מתים *Hæc vox ex eo nata videtur, quod ſimus morti ſubjecti; Ita & à Græcis & à Latinis mortalis uſurpatus.* Martyn.

Fourthly, Others read the words not in an active ſence, (as we) *Deſtroyers*, but in a paſſive, *His life draweth nigh to thoſe who are deſtroyed* or *dead.* Dying men are ſo neer to, that they may be reckoned as *dead men.* That word of encouragement in the Prophet (*Iſa.* 41. 14.) Which we render, *Fear not thou worm* Jacob, *and ye men* (or as we put in the Margin *Few men*) *of* Iſrael, is rendred by ſome others, *Fear not thou worm* Jacob, *and ye that are dead of Iſrael*, that is, who are (in your own fearful apprehenſions or in the opinion of your proud and prepotent enemies) as dead men, or nigh unto death; or as we may expound it by that of *Paul* concerning himſelf and his Fellow-Apoſtles, with reſpect to the continual hazzard of their lives (1 *Cor.* 4. 9.) men, *as it were, appointed unto death*; yea, as the learned in the Hebrew language tell us, the word tranſlated in the Prophet *men*, with the change but of one point, and that only in the poſition of it, ſignifieth properly, *dead men.* We find the word applyed ſpecially to wicked worldly men (*Pſ.* 17. 14.) who are there called *the hand of God* (to afflict or take away the lives of Godly men) and are ſaid *to have their portion in this life*; the word I ſay, is applyed to them, as implying, that how much ſoever they rejoyce, either in the preſent enjoyments of this natural life, or in the hopes of a long natural life in this World, yet they always are within one point (or prick with a pen which is the ſhorteſt imaginable ſpace) of death. In which ſence alſo St. *Paul* ſpeaking of the different ſtate of the Body now in this life and after the Reſurrection from the dead, ſaith (1 *Cor.* 15. 54.) *When this mortal ſhall have put on immortality*; that is, when we, who now live in dying Bodies, or in Bodies bearing the marks or tokens of death, and looking like dead men, ſhall have put on the beautiful and glorious robes of immortality, *Then ſhall be brought to paſs the ſaying that is written, Death ſhall be ſwallowed up in victory.* Whereas now death which is ready enough to get the victory over healthy and ſtrong men, is ſo ready to get the victory over the weak and ſick men, that their life may very well be ſaid (according to this fourth and laſt interpretation) *To draw nigh to the deſtroyed, or thoſe that are already dead.* Thus if inſtead of Death-bringers, or Deſtroyers we read deſtroyed, or thoſe that have been brought to death, the meaning of *Elihu* in this paſſage is plain and eaſie; importing the ſick man ſo ſick, that there is ſcarce a ſtep or but a point between him and thoſe who are actually dead.

But whether we take the word in this paſſive ſenſe, and tranſlate *The Deſtroyed*, or in the active, as we, and tranſlate *Deſtroyers*, thereby underſtanding either Angels in ſpecial, or Diſeaſes in general ſent by God to deſtroy or take away the life of the ſick man; which way ſoever of theſe, I ſay, we expound the word, it yields a clear ſenſe as to the ſcope of the Text, and as to the truth of it (upon the matter) the very ſame. *His life draweth nigh to the Deſtroyers.*

Hence Note, Firſt, *Diſeaſes are Deſtroyers.*

Either they themſelves deſtroy when they come, or the Deſtroyer comes with them. (*Pſal.* 90. 3.) *Thou turneſt man to deſtruction, and ſayeſt, return ye children of men.* 'Tis a Pſalm penned by *Moſes* lamenting the frailty of mankind. He lived to ſee all *Iſrael*, whom under his hand and conduct God brought out of *Egypt*, die, except that renowned two, *Caleb* and *Joſhua*; and therefore he having ſeen the great deſtruction of that people for their murmurings and unbelief, for their ten-fold provocations in the Wilderneſs, might ſay from his own experience more then moſt men to that point of mans mortality. And as God turned that people to deſtruction, and ſaid according to that irrevocable ſentence (*Gen.* 3. 19.) *Return ye children of men to*, your original and firſt material, *duſt*: So he ſaith the ſame to men every day, who as they are duſt, ſo we ſee them returning to their duſt. Every Diſeaſe, if ſo commiſſion'd by God, is death, and every pain (if he ſay it) the period of our lives.

Again, *Elihu* is here ſpeaking of a man whom the Lord is but trying, teaching, and inſtructing upon his ſick bed; yet he ſaith, *His ſoul is drawing near to the grave, and his life to the deſtroyers.*

Hence Obſerve, *Thoſe afflictions which are but for inſtruction, may look like thoſe which are for deſtruction.*

When the Lord hath a purpoſe only to try a man, he often acts towards him as if he would kill him. If any ſhall ſay, this is hard, I anſwer, *A rough horſe muſt have a rough rider:* Rough wood will not cleave without a beetle and wedges. We put God to uſe extremities, that he may bring us to a moderation. Our ſpirits are often ſo rough and head-ſtrong, that they muſt be kept in with bit and bridle; they are ſo tough and knotty that there's no working, no cleaving of them till the Lord ſets his wedges to us, and layes on with his beetle of heavieſt and hardeſt afflictions: In a word, we even compel him to bring us to deaths-door, that he may teach us to live.

Now ſeeing pains and ſickneſſes (of which *Elihu* ſpeaks as the way and means by which God ſpeaks to ſinful man) are accompanied with ſuch dreadful ſymptoms and effects, loathing and loſs of appetite, conſumption of the fleſh, and the breaking of the very bones the ſoul drawing near to the grave, and life to the deſtroyers; ſeeing, I ſay, there are ſuch ſad effects of ſickneſs, remember,

Firſt, *Health is worth the praying to God for.*

Secondly, *Health is worth the praiſing of God for*; and that conſidered, either, firſt, as continued, or, ſecondly, as reſtored. 'Tis a mercy not to be pained, not to be ſick; 'tis a more ſenſible, though not a greater mercy to be freed from pain, and recovered out of ſickneſs. While we are kept free from pains and ſickneſſes, how thankful ſhould we be! And when we are freed from and brought out of the bonds of bodily pain and ſickneſſes, how ſoul-ſick, yea, how dead are we, if we are not thankful!

Thirdly, Seeing pains and ſickneſſes are ſuch ſad afflictions, be wiſe and careful for the preſervation of your health; do not throw away your health upon a luſt; do not expoſe your ſelves to laſting pains and pining ſickneſſes, for the ſatisfying of a wanton ſenſual appetite. The health and ſtrength of this frail body, are of more value then ten thouſand of thoſe vaniſhing delights. Yet how many are there, who run themſelves to the graves mouth, and into the thickeſt throngs of thoſe Deſtroyers, for the taking up of ſuch pitiful and periſhing delights? Who to pleaſe their fleſh for a few moments in ſurfeiting, drunkenneſs, and wantonneſs, bring many dayes, yea, months and years of pain and torment upon their fleſh? Yea, and not only ſhorten (I mean as to what they might probably have had by the courſe of nature) the number of their dayes, but ſuddenly end and extinguiſh them. It hath been ſaid of old, *Gluttony kills more men then the ſword*; that is, it caſts them into killing Diſeaſes. 'Tis a *maxime* in war, *Starve your enemy if you can rather then fight him; cut his throat without a knife; deſtroy him without drawing a ſword*; that is, with *hunger*. Some are indeed deſtroyed with hunger; and hunger, if not relieved, will deſtroy any man! Yet ſurfeiting deſtroyeth more then hunger, and 'tis a more quick and ſpeedy deſtroyer. We have known many who have cut their own throats, by cutting too much and too faſt for their bellies: Pampering the body deſtroyeth more bodies then ſtarving. Many while they draw nigh to their tables, their ſouls (as *Elihu* here ſaith) *are drawing neer to the grave, and their life to the deſtroyers.* Therefore, remember and conſider, O ye that are men given to appetite (as *Solomon* calleth ſuch, *Prov.* 23. 2.) or rather as the Hebrew elegancy there hath it, *Ye that are Maſters of appetite*, ſtudying your bellies, till indeed ye are maſtered by appetite, to you, I ſay, remember and conſider, *Health is more then meat, and life then dainty fare.* All the content that intemperance can give you, cannot recompence you for the pains that ſickneſs will give you; you may have pleaſure for an hour or two, and ſickneſs for a moneth or two, for a year or two. And if all the pleaſure we take in ſatisfying that, which though it may be glutted, yet will not be ſatisfied, a luſt, cannot recompence the pains that are found in a ſick bed for a few dayes, months, or years, how will it recompence any for thoſe everlaſting pains that are found in Hell, where the damned ſhall be alwayes converſing with death and deſtruction, and yet never die nor be deſtroyed.

Fourthly, Foraſmuch as ſickneſs is often accompanied with ſuch grievous dolours and racking tortures, let the ſick pray much that they may be armed with patience; who knows what tryals and extremities ſickneſs may bring him to? Though the beginnings and firſt appearances of it are but ſmall, like the Cloud which firſt appeared to the Servant of *Eliah*, only of a hands breadth, yea, though it begin but with the little finger of the hand, yet as that little Cloud did the whole face of the Heaven, ſo this little diſtemper may over-ſpread the whole body, and put you to the exerciſe of all your patience; it may hang and increaſe upon you, till it hath broken your bones, and conſumed your fleſh, and brought you to the graves mouth; therefore pray for patience.

Laſtly, Let not the ſtrong man glory in his ſtrength, nor the healthy man in his health; ſickneſs may come ſhortly, and then how ſtrong ſoever any man is, down he muſt, and lie by it There's no wreſtling away ſickneſs any way (if God ſend it and bid it come) but by wreſtling with God (as *Jacob* did, *Gen.* 32.) in prayer. If you think to wreſtle away bodily ſickneſs by bodily ſtrength and ſtriving with it, you will be thrown and get the fall. Who can ſtand before a Feaver, or a Conſumption, when they arreſt us in the Name of the Great King, and carry us Priſoners to our beds? Therefore let no man glory in his ſtrength, if any man do; it ſhews at preſent his moral weakneſs; and his natural weakneſs may quickly teach him another leſſon, and ſpoil his glorying.

VERS. 23, 24, 25, 26.

If there be a Meſſenger with him, an Interpreter, one among a thouſand, to ſhew unto man his uprightneſs:

Then he is gracious unto him, and ſaith; Deliver him from going down to the pit, I have found a ranſom.

His fleſh ſhall be freſher then a Childs: He ſhall return to the dayes of his youth.
He ſhall pray unto God, and he will be favourable unto him, and he ſhall ſee his face with joy; for he will render to man his righteouſneſs.

THeſe words hold forth the third way by which God ſpeaks or reveals himſelf to man, and recovers him out of his ſin. As if *Elihu* had ſaid, *When God hath brought a man to his ſick bed, and he yet continueth in his blindneſs, not perceiving either his own error, or the purpoſe and intention of God to him; if then beſides all this God ſo order the matter, that in his merciful providence he provideth for his further inſtruction, and ſends a ſpecial Meſſenger (as he doth me to thee) an Interpreter (which is a ſingular favour of God) to explain and expound the meaning of his dealings with him, and what his own condition is, to bring him to a true ſight and ſenſe of his ſin, and to ſet him upright in the ſight of God, by the actings of faith and repentance; this ſoon altereth the caſe, and hereupon God is preſently appeaſed towards him. Then he is gracious, and then many bleſſed fruits and effects of his grace do follow, and are heaped on him.* Here, therefore, we have a very illuſtrious Inſtance of Gods loving kindneſs to poor ſinful man, recovering and fetching him back (when he is as it were half dead) from the gates of death, reſtoring him both as to ſoul and body, putting him into a perfect (ſo far as on this ſide Heaven it may be called perfect) ſtate, and giving him indeed what he can reaſonably deſire of him. In the Context of theſe four verſes, conſider,

Firſt, The inſtrument or means by which God brings this about, and that is, by ſending a Meſſenger, or a choice Interpreter to the ſick mans bed, to counſel and adviſe him. *Ver.* 23. *If there be a Meſſenger with him,* &c.

Secondly, We have here the motive, or firſt moving cauſe of this mercy; that is, the grace or free favour of God, *Then he will be gracious unto him*; and ſaith, *Deliver him from going down to the pit*; that is, being gracious he will give forth this word for his deliverance. *Then he is gracious to him,* &c, (*ver.* 24.)

Thirdly, We have here the meritorious cauſe of this merciful deliverance; and that is a ranſom; *I have found a ranſom,* at the latter end of the twenty-fourth verſe.

Fourthly, We have the ſpecial benefits of this deliverance, which are twofold.

Firſt, Reſpecting his body; *He is delivered from the pit of death* (ver. 24.) And not only ſo, but he hath a life as new as when he began to live; *His fleſh ſhall be freſher then a Childs; the dayes of youth ſhall return to him again* (ver. 25.)

Secondly, We have the benefit reſpecting his ſoul (*ver.* 26.) *He ſhall pray, and God ſhall be favourable to him, and he ſhall ſee his face with joy; for he will render to man his righteouſneſs.*

Thus you have the parts and purpoſe of theſe words; I ſhall now proceed to the particulars.

If there be a Meſſenger with him.

Theſe words are Hypothetical, or by way of ſuppoſition; *If there be*; noting, that it is not alwayes ſo, every one hath not this mercy, to have a Meſſenger ſent him; it's a ſpecial priviledge granted by God to ſome; *If there be*

A Meſſenger.] What or who is this Meſſenger? The word in the Hebrew hath a threefold ſignification; all which are inſiſted upon by Interpreters upon this place.

Hypothetica locutio ſignificat libertatem Dei in conferendo hoc beneficio. Indicatio contingit quibus Deus vult. Coc.

לאך
inde
מלאך
Miſſus, legatus, nuncius.

Firſt, It ſignifieth an *Angel*; Now Angels properly taken are ſpiritual or incorporeal ſubſtances, whoſe both office and high dignity it is to attend about the Throne of God, and to be ſent forth upon his ſpecial ſervice (*Pſal.* 103.20.) *Bleſs the Lord ye his Angels that excel in ſtrength, that do his Commandments, and hearken to the voice of his Word. God hath thouſand thouſands of theſe Servants miniſtring to him, and ten thouſand times ten thouſand ſtanding before him* (Dan. 7. 10.)

Some ſtay upon this expoſition, affirming that here we are to underſtand an Angel by nature; and hereupon ground the miniſtring of Angels to thoſe who are either ſick in body, or troubled in mind. Yea, the Popiſh Writers would hence prove the interceſſion of Angels for man, and mans invocation of Angels; but though the expoſition be granted, yet it yields no ground for this Inference. For what though God ſhould ſend an Angel to inſtruct and comfort a ſick man, will it therefore follow that the ſick man ſhould pray to him, and ſo give him the honour which is due to God?

Secondly, The word is applied in particular to *Jeſus Chriſt the uncreated Angel, or the creating Angel, the Lord of Angels,* who by way of eminency is called, *The Angel of his preſence,* (Iſa. 63. 9.) *and the* (*Angel or*) *Meſſenger of the Covenant,* (Mal. 3. 1.) He alſo was that Angel of whom the Lord ſpake to the Children of *Iſrael* (*Exod.* 23. 20.) ſaying, *Behold I ſend an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not, for he will not pardon your tranſgreſſions* (if you perſiſt in them) *for my Name is in him*; that is, he is of the ſame nature with my ſelf, and with that nature he hath my name, *Jehovah.* Thus ſome carry it here, as if *Elihu* ſpecially intended the miniſtration of Jeſus Chriſt, the Angel of the Covenant, to the ſick ſinner, for his reſtoring both as to the health of ſoul and body. 'Tis true, Jeſus Chriſt is the great Angel, or Meſſenger, and he primarily and chiefly doth all the buſineſs for poor ſinners; he is the Meſſenger ſent from God, and he is the Interpreter of the mind of God, he came from the boſom of the Father, and reveals the Myſteries of Heaven to us by his holy Spirit. He indeed is *the one of a thouſand,* the chiefeſt of ten thouſand, to ſhew unto man his uprightneſs. Yet, I conceive, that in this place, not the Lord of Angels alone, but ſome Angel of the Lord is alſo intended. And therefore,

Vides quam clarè hoc loco Elihu *de Chriſto concionetur; per quem omnis conſcientia, quantumcunque per legem occiſa vivificatur, per quē omnis crux vitæ & liberationis initium eſt.* Erent.

Thirdly, The word *Angel* is appliable to every Meſſenger: The Scripture gives it firſt to thoſe that are ſent by men about any errand or buſineſs (1 *Sam.* 23. 27.) *But there came a Meſſenger unto* Saul, *ſaying, Haſt thee and come; for the* Philiſtims *have invaded the Land.* We read of an evil Meſſenger, (*Prov.* 13. 17.) who is either ſuch a one as brings an evil meſſage, or is himſelf evil (*Iſa.* 14. 32.) *What ſhall one then anſwer to the Meſſengers of the Nation, the Lord hath founded* Zion, *and the poor of his people ſhall truſt in it.* And as it notes a Meſſenger firſt by man, ſo a Meſſenger ſent by God. The ancient Prophets were in this ſenſe the Angels of God, his Meſſengers, and ſo are the Miniſters of the Goſpel at this day. The Epiſtles to the ſeven Churches are all directed to *the Angels of the Churches*; that is, to the ſeveral Paſtors or Miniſters of the Churches reſpectively. And thus we may conclude, that by the Meſſenger in this Text we are to underſtand any faithful Miniſter of Chriſt, ſent to convince, convert, or comfort a ſick troubled ſoul. And, as was intimated before, we may very well gather up both theſe latter interpretations into one, that which applieth it to Chriſt, and that which applieth it to the Miniſters of Chriſt. For ſo we have here both the Author and the Inſtrument of this comfort to the ſick man. *Jeſus Chriſt is the chief Meſſenger and Comforter of poor ſinners*; and the Miniſters of the Goſpel are Inſtruments in his hand, ſent out by him for the perfecting of that work. The word is applied to both, (*Mal.* 3. 1.) *Behold, I will ſend my Meſſenger* (or, *my Angel*) *and he ſhall prepare the way before me. John* the Baptiſt was Chriſts Meſſenger, as Chriſt himſelf (an infallible Interpreter) aſſureth us (*Mat.* 11. 10.) And preſently it follows, *The Lord whom ye ſeek ſhall ſuddenly come to his Temple, even the Meſſenger of the Covenant, whom ye delight in; behold, he ſhall come, ſaith the Lord of hoſts.* In the firſt part of the verſe *John* is called the *Lords Meſſenger,* and in the latter part *Chriſt* is called the *Lords Meſſenger.* Both were Meſſengers, yet with a mighty difference: and therefore *John,* the Meſſenger of Chriſt, ſaith of Chriſt the Meſſenger (*Matth.* 3. 11.) *He that cometh after me is mightier then I, whoſe ſhooes I am not worthy to bear.* And again (*John* 1. 26.) *He it is that coming after me is preferred before me, whoſe ſhooes latchet I am not worthy to unlooſe. If there be a Meſſenger.*

Nuncius eſt Propheta aliquis ſeu doctor à Deo miſſus. Piſc.

Hence Note, Firſt, *The Miniſters of Chriſt are the Meſſengers of Chriſt.*

Chriſt is the Fathers Meſſenger, and they are Meſſengers ſent out by Chriſt. *As my Father hath ſent me, ſo ſend*

I you,ſaid Chriſt to his *Apoſtles* (*John* 20. 21.) And though that Title of *Apoſtle*, which ſignifieth *One ſent*, or a *Meſſenger*, be moſt properly attributed to thoſe, who were immediately called and inſpired by Chriſt, yet in an allayed ſenſe it may be applied, commodiouſly enough, to any true Miniſter of the Goſpel, for he alſo is ſent; he hath both his miſſion and commiſſion mediately from Chriſt. Yea, the word *Apoſtle* is applyed in common to all or any that are ſent upon buſineſs (*John* 13. 16.) *He that is ſent* (let him be who he will or upon what occaſion ſoever he is ſent) *is not greater then he that ſends him.*

Apoſtolus hic non ſpecialis muneris, ſed generale nomen eſt, miſſum cum mandatis ſignificans. Grot.

So then, the Miniſters of the Goſpel are called the *Meſſengers* of Chriſt: Firſt, Becauſe they are ſent by Chriſt, and have a Commiſſion from him. Secondly, They are his *Meſſengers* becauſe they are inſtructed by Chriſt, and carry forth his mind; they may not ſpeak their own words, nor their own ſenſe,but the word which they bring, is or ought to be what they have received, or what Chriſt hath put into their mouths, that's their duty. And the Meſſengers of Chriſt are to ſpeak his mind,

Firſt,Plainly(1*Cor*.2.4.)*In the demonſtration of theSpirit.*

Secondly, Boldly, not flattering the perſons,nor fearing the faces of men. Thirdly, They ſhould ſpeak *authoritatively*, though they beſeech, and beg, and pray, yet they are to do all as having a warrant for what they do, and as being cloathed with power from on high.*If any man ſpeak*(ſaith the Apoſtle,1 *Pet*.4.11.) *let him ſpeak as the Oracles of God.* As he is to ſpeak *the Oracles of God*, ſo as the Oracles of God. Some ſpeak, who do not ſpeak the Oracles of God, but their own opinions. Others ſpeak the Oracles of God materially; that is,they deliver divine truths, yet they do not ſpeak them *as the Oracles of God*, with that authority which becomes the Goſpel; we ſay of ſome, *They marr their tale in the telling:* Though they report, or tell the mind of him that ſent them,yet they ſpoil it in reporting it: The Miniſters of the Goſpel ſpoil their Meſſage,unleſs they report it plainly, boldly, and with authority.

Thirdly, If Miniſters be the Meſſengers of Chriſt, ſurely then, they are to be heard, and their Meſſage is to be received; if God ſends a Meſſenger to us, ſhall we not open the door to him? If a friend ſend a Meſſenger to us, he takes it very ill (and well he may) if we do not. 'Tis below civility, 'tis an high affront to a man not to receive his Meſſage, what is it then to the moſt high God! How dreadful is that woe which Chriſt pronounceth againſt ſuch as refuſe either his Meſſengers,or their Meſſage (*Matth*. 10.14,15.) *Whoſoever ſhall not receive you,nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that houſe or City, ſhake off the duſt of your feet:* Implying,that God would ſo ſhake them off,or eſteem them no more then the vileſt duſt. Yea (as another Goſpel hath it, *Mark* 6. 11.) implying, that as they had not received the teſtimony which his Meſſengers bare of him, ſo their duſt ſhould be kept *as a teſtimony againſt them.* And leſt the miſchief threatned them in this enigmatical or covert ſpeech ſhould not be underſtood, Chriſt himſelf expounds it in the next words, *Verily, I ſay unto you, it ſhall be more tolerable for the Land of* Sodom *and* Gomorrha *in the day of Judgment, then for that City.*

Further, 'Tis not enough barely to receive Chriſts Meſſengers, they muſt be received as the Meſſengers of Chriſt. Such a reception the Apoſtle found among the *Galatians* (Chap. 4. 14.) *And my temptation* (*or daily affliction*) *which was in my fleſh, ye deſpiſed not, nor rejected, but received me as an Angel of God, even as Chriſt Jeſus.* And what is ſaid of the Meſſenger, is to be underſtood alſo of his Meſſage, both are to be received as from Chriſt. How is that, you will ſay? Take it in theſe four words, Firſt, When 'tis received *gladly* (*Acts* 2.4.) It ſhould be the joy of our hearts (the Pſalmiſt calls it the *joyful ſound*, Pſal. 89.15.) to hear a word from Chriſt. Secondly, When it is received *reverently*, and reſpectfully, as giving honour to the Meſſage and the Meſſenger for Chriſts ſake. Thirdly, When 'tis received obedientially, as ſubmitting to the Word; elſe your reſpectful and joyful receiving the meſſage of Chriſt is but a Complement or piece of Courtſhip. Fourthly, When their *whole meſſage* is thus received, as *Cornelius* ſaid to *Peter* (Acts 10. 33.) *We are all here preſent before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God.* We muſt receive not only thoſe things that ſute us well, but thoſe things that are moſt croſs to our corrupt natures and interests whether of worldly profit or pleaſure; this is to receive the Meſſengers and Meſſages of Jeſus Chriſt, as his *If there be a Meſſenger*,

An Interpreter] That's a ſecond ſtile, or title given to the man ſent to the ſick ſinner: The Hebrew word here rendred an *Interpreter*, cometh from a root ſignifying ſweetneſs, or to ſweeten. Some conceive the Latine word (*Mel*) for Honey hath its original from it,becauſe the Meſſage, or Interpretation that comes from God ſhould be ſweet,as Honey to us: *David* profeſſeth,*The Word of God is ſweeter then Honey, and the Honey-comb* (Pſal. 19. 10.) As if he had ſaid, 'Tis ſweeter to the ſoul then that which is ſweeteſt to ſenſe. Now,the *Meſſenger* ſent from God,is called an *Interpreter*,becauſe he is ſent to interpret and declare the mind of God to his people. Mr. *Broughton* renders, *A Teacher*. The word *Interpreter* may be taken three wayes.

מלץ *Dulcuit,inde* מליץ *oratorem vel interpretem ſignificat, quia dicentis ſermones dulces auditoribus ſunt.* Novar.

Firſt, For any one that interpreteth Tongues or Languages. Thus 'tis ſaid(*Gen*.42.23.) Joſeph *ſpake to his Brethren by an Interpreter*; they ('tis like) did not underſtand the Egyptian language, and he either for ſtate, or to conceal himſelf the better, would not ſeem to underſtand theirs.

Secondly, There is an Interpreter of Myſteries as well as of Languages. Many things ſpoken in our own Language may need an Interpreter more then the words of a ſtrange Language. We read (*Prov*. 1. 6.) *of a Parable, and the interpretation of it*. Parables are wiſe, but hard and dark ſayings,they need an Interpreter. The Goſpel is a myſtery, and he that can expound and declare the myſteries of the Goſpel is an *Interpreter* indeed.

Thirdly, The word *Interpreter* is taken in a larger ſenſe, for any perſon that interpoſeth between two, or that indeavours the ſetling of any matter in difference,either between God and man, or between man and man; (*Iſai*. 43. 27.) *Thy Teachers* (we put in the Margin *Interpreters*) *have tranſgreſſed againſt me.* As if he had ſaid, they who as Mediators ſhould have prayed for thee to me, and have declared my will to thee, are themſelves depraved.

מליץ *Certè eſt advocatus quem Chaldæi vocant* פרקליטא *paracletum, ſignificat eadem vox oratorem, Rhetorem.* Druſ.

Further, We may diſtinguiſh of a threefold Interpreter. Firſt, A grammatical Interpreter, whoſe buſineſs is to give the ſenſe of words. Secondly, A logical Interpreter, who gathers up the meaning, ſcope and mind of any ſentence, or the purpoſe of man in what he ſpeaketh. Thirdly, There is the divine or ſpiritual Interpreter, who labours to bring the truths of God and the heart of man together. The Apoſtle having treated about propheſying,concludes(1 *Cor*. 14. 25.) *And thus are the ſecrets of his heart made manifeſt, and ſo falling down on his face he will worſhip God, and report that God is in you of a truth*; as if the man that believed not,or one unlearned (for of ſuch he ſpeaks, *ver*. 24.) had ſaid, ſurely *theſe men underſtand what is in my heart, for they have brought the truth of God, and my heart together, ſo that I muſt confeſs God is in them*; that is, *there is a divine wiſdom or interpretation in them.* When *Elihu* ſaith, *If there be an Interpreter*, we are to underſtand him in this laſt ſenſe; not of one that can interpret words,like a Grammarian, or give the ſcope and ſenſe of words like a Logician,but of one that hath a divine skill to bring the truths of God home to the heart of man; that is, to convince and inform an ignorant conſcience, and to comfort, relieve, and ſupport a troubled conſcience. *If there be an Interpreter.*

Hence Note, *The Miniſters of Chriſt are the Interpreters of the mind and good will of God toward poor ſinners.*

They interpret the mind of God as to peace and reconciliation,as to grace and ſalvation, as well as to duty and holineſs of converſation. 'Tis the niceſt and hardeſt thing in the world to interpret the mind of God aright to a ſinner, to bring his heart to a cloſing with the great truths and promiſes of the Goſpel; he that can do this skilfully is worthy the name of an Interpreter. The Apoſtle ſaith of him who is but a Babe in Chriſt and uſeth milk (that is, lives upon the lower and more eaſie principles of faith) *he is unskilful in the word of righteouſneſs* (Heb. 5. 13.) that is, he knows not how to make out and mannage for his own comfort the Doctrine of free Grace through the alone righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt. And therefore, as firſt, God himſelf is the Author and Fountain of this Grace: As ſecondly, Jeſus Chriſt is the Purchaſer or Procurer of the fruits of this Grace to ſinners: As thirdly, The effectual Worker of our hearts to receive this Grace, as alſo the Witneſs-bearer and Sealer of it to our ſouls is the holy Spirit: As fourthly, The Word of the Goſpel is the Charter and Covenant of this Grace: So fifthly, The Miniſters of Chriſt are the Interpreters of this Grace; and they are, or ought to be skilful in this Word of Righteouſneſs. Their skill and duty is firſt to explain what the Covenant is, and rightly to lay down how the ſinners reconciliation to God is wrought. Secondly, To make a ſutable and ſeaſonable application of it, or to bring it home to the ſouls and conſciences of poor ſinners, as they find their ſtate to be. And as the Miniſters of Chriſt are Gods Interpreters to his people; ſo they are the peoples Interpreters unto God. They are the former two wayes: Firſt, By opening the mind of God to his people: Secondly, By urging and preſſing them to receive it both for their direction and conſolation. They are the latter four wayes: Firſt, By laying open and ſpreading the peoples wants and weakneſſes before God. Secondly, By confeſſing their ſins and tranſgreſſions to God. Thirdly, By intreating the Lord for them, or by praying for mercy, pardon, and forgiveneſs in their behalf, for ſins committed. Fourthly, By giving thanks in their name for mercies received. Thus they are firſt, Gods mouth to the people in preaching and declaring the Goſpel: Secondly, The peoples mouth to God in prayer and thankſgiving. And in both perform the work and office of an Interpreter.

And if the Miniſters of the Goſpel are Interpreters; then,

Firſt, Every Miniſter muſt be acquainted with the mind of God. He muſt have skill in the myſtery of the Goſpel. How ſhall he be able to interpret the mind of God to ſinners, who is not acquainted with the mind of God? *We have the mind of Chriſt* (ſaith the Apoſtle of himſelf and his fellow-labourers in the Goſpel, 1 *Cor.* 2. 16.) and when he ſaith, we have the mind of Chriſt, his meaning is not only this, that they had the mind of Chriſt written in a book, but they had a clear underſtanding of it, and ſo were fitted to interpret it to others.

Secondly, As he muſt have the knowledge of the Myſtery, ſo he muſt have the tongue of the Learned (*Iſa.* 50. 4.) *That he may be able to ſpeak a word in ſeaſon to him that is weary*; that is, to the wounded, and troubled in conſcience; this is the Interpreter intended by *Elihu.* He is one that hath learned, and is taught of God. Humane learning, the knowledge of Arts and Sciences, is good, and hath its uſe; but divine learning, or learning in divine things, that is to be divinely learned ('tis poſſible for one to have learning in divine things, and not to be divinely learned) is abſolutely neceſſary to make him an interpreter. It is not enough to know divine things, but he muſt know them divinely, or by the unction and teachings of the Spirit. The Apoſtle *John* (Rev. 10. 8.) *is commanded to eat the book*; this eating of the book, ſignifieth the ſpiritual knowledge of divine truths; in this ſenſe, we know no more then we eat, then we (as it were) turn into our own ſubſtance, that which is eaten becomes one with us; the myſtery of the Goſpel muſt be eaten by the Interpreter of Goſpel myſteries. A man cannot interpret the mind of God till he knows it; and he cannot know the mind of God, unleſs God himſelf reveals it; ſo the Apoſtle argueth (1 *Cor.* 2. from 12. to 16.) *As no man knoweth the mind of a man, but the ſpirit of a man that is in him; ſo the things of the Spirit of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God, and he to whom the Spirit of God doth reveal them.* And therefore though a man may have an ability to interpret the Word of God, as 'tis an excellent Book, a Book full of admirable knowledge, he may (I ſay) have an ability to interpret it ſoundly by humane learning, yet no man can do it ſavingly and convertingly, but by the help of the Spirit. (*Pſal.* 25. 14.) *The ſecret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will ſhew them his Covenant*; he will ſhew it effectually, he will make them know it. Thus *David* prayed (*Pſal.* 119. 18.) *Lord open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wonderous things out of thy Law.* Natural parts and humane Learning, Arts and Languages may give us an underſtanding of the tenour and literal meaning of the Law of God; but none of theſe can open our eyes to behold the wonders of the Law, much leſs the wonders and myſteries of the Goſpel. The opening of our eyes to behold theſe ſpiritual wonders is the Lords work, and it ſhould be marvellous in our eyes. For this opening of the eye (and nothing without this) will make any man the moſt ignorant man among a thouſand, *An Interpreter* **One among a thouſand.**] Theſe words contain either a third higher Title, or the higheſt commendation of the former two. A *Meſſenger*, an *Interpreter*, even ſuch a one as is *one among a thouſand*; *one* is no number, and a *thouſand* is put for the greateſt number; then *one among a thouſand*, or *one of a thouſand*, implyeth that the one here ſpoken of is a very rare one; only he that is ſeldom ſeen, or found, is *one among a thouſand*; *Solomon* ſaith (*Eccl.* 7. 24.) *One man among a thouſand have I found, but a woman among all thoſe have I not found.* There were very few wiſe or good men among many when he found but one among a thouſand. He might find men in great number, but the number of thoſe that deſerved to be called *men* was very ſmall, ſo ſmall, that he ſaith he found but *one* among a thouſand. So that here when *Elihu* calls the *Interpreter One among a thouſand*, he teacheth us, that ſuch a Meſſenger, ſuch an Interpreter is rarely to be had, or being had is a very rare and excellent one. 'Tis a proverbial ſpeech, with an Hyperbole, to ſay of any man, he is *one among a thouſand*; for though we are not to take it arithmetically or ſtrictly, yet *one* being no number, muſt needs ſignifie very few, or the ſmalleſt number; and a *thouſand* being the greateſt whole number muſt needs ſignifie many, very many, or a great number. And therefore to ſay of this *Interpreter*, *He is one among a thouſand*, muſt needs import, that even among a thouſand men we can hardly find one who hath a faculty or a competency for this office, or is fit to be honoured and adorned with this Title, *An Interpreter*.

Hi nuncii rari ſunt ita ut ex mille hominibus, vix unus reperiatur, qui munere illo rectè fungi poſſit. Piſc.

Hence Note, *True and faithful Interpreters of the mind of God are very rare.*

He is a rare and choice man that is pickt out of a thouſand men. The faithful Meſſengers and Interpreters of the mind of Chriſt, are rare under a twofold notion. Firſt, As being precious and of great worth and uſe. Such are the light of the world, and the ſalt of the earth: The minds of all men would be dark, and their manners corrupt, if God did not ſend out theſe Interpreters to inlighten and to ſeaſon them. Secondly, They are rare as not being every where to be had or met with; what is hardly had is highly prized. It is ſaid (1 *Sam.* 3. 1.) *The Word of God was precious in thoſe dayes.* Why ſo? The Reaſon is added, *There was no open viſion*; there were not ſuch frequent maninifeſtations of the mind of God as had been formerly; there were few Prophets, few Interpreters to be found in thoſe dayes. The true and faithful Meſſengers or Interpreters of the mind of God are rare at all times, in what numbers ſoever they appear, though they come like an Army by thouſands, though (as is ſaid, *Pſal.* 68. 11.) *God giving the word great be the company* (we put in the Margin *Army*) *of thoſe that publiſh it*, or (as the old tranſlation hath it) *Great be the Company of the Preachers.* They are rare alſo, becauſe not to be had at ſometimes and in many places. Look over the times or ages of the world, and you will find ſome of them were dark times, dayes of ignorance, there were few Interpreters; look at any time, or at this time over many parts and places of the world, and you ſhall find ſuch Interpreters are not to be found in the greateſt part, in the moſt places of it. Not one to be had in ſome whole Countries and huge tracts of the Earth. Go to all the Heathen and Mahometan Nations, and you ſhall not find one of theſe Meſſengers or Interpreters; go to *Greece,* which anciently engroſſed all knowledge, and was famous for all ſorts of learning, yet an Interpreter is ſcarcely to be found there in theſe dayes: Go to the Popiſh Nations, though they bear the Name of Chriſt, and abound with learned men, men learned in the knowledge not only of common Arts and Sciences, but in Divinity and the Scriptures; yet in the ſenſe here ſpoken of they have not many Interpreters, the moſt being ſuch as pervert and wreſt the Scriptures, and lead the people into error, rather the Meſſengers of Antichriſt, then of Chriſt; Satans Emiſſaries, then Gods Interpreters. So then, if we conſider, that ſeveral parts and Countries of the World are quite without, they have none, and others are filled with falſe Teachers and Interpreters of the Word of God, which are worſe then none, we muſt conclude an Interpreter *is one of a thouſand.*

Again, If we turn our eyes to thoſe parts of the world, where there are many ſound, orthodox, faithful Meſſengers and Interpreters of the Word of God (with which bleſſing this Nation, above many, if I ſay not above all) hath been crowned for a hundred years together; *England* as *Jeruſalem* of old (*Iſa.* 21. 1.) may well be called *a valley of viſion, a ſeminary of Seers*, becauſe of that abundance and variety of viſions and divine revelations which God hath ſtored us with in theſe latter ages: yet (I ſay) even here, as in all other the beſt reformed Proteſtant Churches and Chriſtian Nations, an *Interpreter* may be called *one of a thouſand*; and that in a twofold reference.

Firſt, If we conſider, the whole body of any reformed Nation, Miniſters are but few compared to all the people, they are hardly ſo much as one of a thouſand, throughout that whole Nation; there are but few who give themſelves up to the work of the Miniſtry. Few that dedicate themſelves to Chriſts ſervice in publiſhing the Goſpel, for the ſaving of ſouls; there is (I ſay) but one of a thouſand that is dedicated to that work.

For Firſt, Moſt are unwilling to meddle with that calling, becauſe of the laboriousneſs of it; Interpreters are they who labour in the Word and Doctrine, and not only ſo, but they muſt give a ſtrict account to Chriſt of their labours. Some good men have declined the miniſtry, being terrified both with the weight of the work, and the ſtrictneſs of the account, and doubtleſs (were we duly ſenſible) it might make the ableſt Miniſters tremble every hour of the day, to think what a burden of care and account lyeth upon them, who are ſet to watch over ſouls.

Secondly, Others will not enter into this calling, becauſe as the labour is great, and the account ſtrict, ſo the reward, as from man, is ſmall, it doth not lead to riches and greatneſs in the World, comparatively with other callings; though there be a comfortable competence allowed to the Miniſters of the Goſpel, yet there is not much of the world to be expected by them; yea, they are charged not to look for much, or not to do their work *for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind* (1 Pet. 5. 2.)

Thirdly, As the reward is ſmall, ſo the oppoſition is great; Miniſters are often perſecuted and reproacht, and the more faithful and diligent they are, the more they are oppoſed and reproached. To preach the Goſpel fully as it ſhould be preacht, is to provoke thouſands, and bring the World about our ears. No marvel then if the Meſſengers and Interpreters of it be not many, if they be but as one among a thouſand. Thus you ſee what hinders the generality of men from medling with that work. 'Tis but one among a thouſand that will engage in a work upon theſe hard terms, or that pre-apprehending them, hath faith and ſelf-denial enough to ſwallow and overcome them.

Again, Conſider thoſe that outwardly bear the name and title of the Miniſters of Chriſt, and you will find that among them, they who are true and faithful to their truſt, are upon the matter but one among a thouſand. As there are but few Miniſters among many men; ſo there are but few Miniſters among many that are true and right Interpreters. Do but take out or ſever theſe five ſorts from among them who pretend to be Miniſters, and then it will ſoon appear, that the Interpreters in truth are but few among many of thoſe that are ſo in title.

Firſt, Take away all thoſe, who thruſt themſelves boldly, or are admitted careleſly, or by miſtake, into the Miniſtry, who yet are ignorant, blind, ungifted, and ſo unable for the work.

Secondly, Take away thoſe, who though they have gifts and abilities, yet are lazy and ſlothful, ſuch as will not take pains nor work in the work.

Thirdly, Take away thoſe, who have gifts, and are induſtrious, yet are unſound (at leaſt in many points) and erroneous in their judgments, and ſo miſ-lead and miſ-guide thoſe, whoſe guides and leaders they are.

Fourthly, Take away thoſe, who though they are not unſound and erroneous, yet are prophane and ſcandalous, pulling down that truth with one hand which they have ſet up with another, or building again thoſe ſins by their practice, which they have deſtroyed by preaching, and ſo make themſelves (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks in a like caſe, *Gal.* 2. 18.) *tranſgreſſours*; for as God juſtly calls ſuch *tranſgreſſours*, becauſe they have ſinned againſt his Word, ſo they make themſelves tranſgreſſours, becauſe they ſin againſt their own; even againſt the Doctrine by which they have condemned thoſe ſins, which themſelves live in.

Fifthly, Take away thoſe, who though they are neither of theſe, neither ignorant, nor idle, nor unſound, nor ſcandalous, yet are but meer formal Preachers, ſuch as only ſpeak words, deliver the out ſide and skin of the Goſpel, but have no acquaintance with the marrow and power of it. Take away theſe five ſorts from among Miniſters, and ſurely this expreſſion of *Elihu* will be but too much verified, *The Interpreter is but one among a thouſand.* Abſtract all that are ignorant, idle, unſound, ſcandalous, formal diſpenſers of the Word, from thoſe who are commonly called Miniſters, and then, they who remain will be very few, ſo few, that every one of them may be reckoned, *one among a thouſand.* And we ſhall be forced to ſay, that *Elihu* hath not ſaid without cauſe, whether we reſpect their excellency or their ſcarcity, that any faithful Meſſenger or Interpreter *is one among a thouſand.*

This is not ſpoken by *Elihu* here, not ought it to be taken up by any of the moſt faithful Miniſters of Chriſt, to draw honour and reſpect upon themſelves, or that their perſons may be had in admiration who are faithful; this were a pitiful deſign of holding out ſuch a truth; but it ſerves for this end, that the people of God may ſee they have a bleſſing where any are faithful; and may learn how they ought to prize thoſe faithful Meſſengers, whom the Lord ſends among them, yea, how readily they ſhould receive the Grace of God which is tendred in their miniſtry. Theſe are not only each of them, *one Meſſenger*, or *Interpreter, but each one of them is one of a thouſand.* A ſoul convincing, converting, quickning, comforting Miniſter of the Goſpel is worth thouſands, and *one among a thouſand.* The Prophet ſaith (*Iſa.* 52. 7.) *How beautiful are the feet of them that bring glad tidings*, &c. By their feet he meaneth their *coming*, feet being the inſtruments of their coming to bring this glad tidings; yet when he ſaith, *Their feet are beautiful*, it may have a greater emphaſis, for (the feet being the loweſt part of the ſtructure of mans body) it may intend thus much, that even that which is loweſt and meaneſt in a Meſſenger of the Goſpel, his feet wearied and wet, yea foul and dirty with travel, have a beauty upon them, how much more his face and countenance? For if the very feet of ſuch News-bringers, of ſuch Meſſengers, and Interpreters, ſhould be acceptable and lovely (ſo beauty is) to all men, how much more ſhould their perſons, and moſt of all their meſſage and tidings be? And doubtleſs, if men did but underſtand it, they would acknowledge; that God hath committed ſuch a treaſury to them, as is better, and more beautiful, then all the gold and precious things of this world, and would cry out, O what a mercy is it to have ſuch a News-bringer? And what greedy News-mongers would they be? The *one among a thouſand* would be more deſirable then many thouſands of Gold and Silver.

Elihu having deſcribed the perſon, whom the Lord often makes inſtrumental for the reſtoring and comforting of the ſick ſinner, calling him, *A Meſſenger, an Interpreter, one of a thouſand* (which latter may be applicable to both the former) proceeds to ſhew the buſineſs of this Meſſenger, or Interpreter, who is one of a thouſand, more expreſly, or to ſet out what his work is, ſurely excellent and glorious work, even this,

To ſhew unto man his uprightneſs.

We are not to underſtand this ſhewing for a bare report of the thing; in which ſenſe the Prophet complain'd, *Lord, who hath believed our report!* (Iſai. 53. 1.) That is, we have ſhewed good things to the world, but who hath believed us? The *ſhewing* ſpoken of by *Elihu*, is not a bare declaration of the matter to the ear, but an effectual and powerful impreſſion of it upon the heart. Such a ſhewing as is ſpoken of at the ſixteenth verſe of this Chapter, *Then he openeth the ears of men:* The Lord ſpeaks ſo by his Meſſengers and Interpreters, that he not only makes the ear hear, but the heart too. The heart hears when we have a ſenſe, and are under the power of what is heard. As before we had a ſpiritual Interpreter, ſo here we have a ſpiritual ſhewing of his Interpretation. Here's a heavenly Meſſenger, and a heavenly meſſage to *the earthly man*; *To tell the earthly his rightfulneſs*, ſaith Mr. *Broughton.*

Now, becauſe of the Pronoun [*His*] *his uprightneſs*; It may be demanded whoſe uprightneſs he means? Or, what this uprightneſs is which the Interpreter ſheweth?

Firſt, Some expound it of Gods uprightneſs, and then the ſenſe runs thus; God ſendeth an Interpreter to *ſhew unto man his uprightneſs*, that is, his own right and juſt dealing with man; As if *Elihu* had ſaid, Gods Meſſenger ſhall convince this troubled man that God doth not wrong him, how much ſoever he doth afflict him, or that God is upright and faithful in his dealing with him. This *David* acknowledged (*Pſal.* 119. 75.) *In faithfulneſs thou haſt afflicted me*; that's a good ſenſe of the words, and very ſutable to the purpoſe of *Elihu*, who was about to convince *Job* that his complainings were very ſinful and uncomely, ſeeing God neither had nor would, nor, indeed, could do him any wrong. God is faithful, juſt, and right, yea, God is good and merciful to man, when he corrects him ſore. Mr *Broughton* gives this interpretation of his own tranſlation; *To tell the earthly his rightfulneſs*, that is, *God his mercy*. The uprightneſs of God is that by which he doth righteous things. This uprightneſs of God conſiſts not only in his holineſs, in his love of that which is good, and in his hatred of evil, but alſo in his preſervation of man according to his word of promiſe. 'Tis the righteouſneſs of God, that through the death and interceſſion of his Son, he ſhould ſave and heal the believing and repenting ſick ſinner.

Æquitatem illius. *i. e. Dei, qua omnia & nominatim ipſos laborantes regit & gubernat.* Jun.

Secondly, And more clearly (as I conceive) to the preſent ſcope of this place; the Antecedent to *His*, is the ſick man; and then, *to ſhew unto man his uprightneſs*, is to ſhew him his *own* uprightneſs.

But you will ſay; Is the Meſſenger or Interpreter, only to tell man how good he is, and what good he hath done? And ſo to flatter him into a good opinion of himſelf, or of his own good deeds?

I anſwer; This *ſhewing unto man his uprightneſs*, may be taken,

Firſt, As implying the mans ignorance of that uprightneſs which he hath; or that he hath an uprightneſs, but doth not know not know nor underſtand that he hath it. 'Tis ſo ſometimes with the ſound godly man, as well as with the ſick, when (though in bodily health, yet) he is diſcompoſed and troubled in mind; for then though he hath an uprightneſs of heart, an integrity towards God, or (as *Job* ſpeaks of himſelf) *the root of the matter in him*; that is, though he be truely converted and really godly, yet he ſeeth it not, ſuch temptations of Satan and troubles of mind aſſault him, ſuch Clouds of doubt, and darkneſs are upon him, that he is not able to make out his own ſtate. In this caſe the faithful Meſſenger or Interpreter coming to him, and inquiring how it is with him, picks out this from him, that there is an uprightneſs, and an integrity of heart in him towards God, and that his ſtate is good, though he cannot diſcern it. For as the life and ſtate of grace, is alwayes a ſecret to thoſe who have it not; ſo 'tis often a ſecret to thoſe that have it. Some men, never, few men alwayes underſtand their own condition, and 'tis very hard to make them underſtand it. For as it is with many hypocrites, and with all preſumptuous ones, you cannot beat them out of a good opinion of themſelves; though they are ſtark naught, rotten at heart, and have nothing to ſalve themſelves up with, but a little boldneſs and confidence, yet they will not be perſwaded off from their falſe foundations, and deceitful bottoms; they will be good in their own eyes, upright in their own opinion, and do not doubt but all's well with them, and will be well with them alwayes. Now, I ſay, as it is with ſome hypocrites, and all preſumptuous ones, they think themſelves to have an uprightneſs which they have not; ſo many are upright and ſincere who ſee it not, and tis a very hard work, the hardeſt work that the Miniſters of the Goſpel have to make them underſtand and ſee their own *uprightneſs*.

Secondly, The word *uprightneſs*, and the *ſhewing unto man his uprightneſs* here ſpoken of, takes in the whole duty, yea and the whole priviledge and intereſt of a Godly man, or that which will be his *uprightneſs* and ſet him right both before God and his own conſcience, To ſhew unto man this his uprightneſs, is to ſhew him when he is right, and how he may be ſetled in a right ſtate; in ſuch a ſtate as will be to him like Mount *Sion* which cannot be removed. Thus the uprightneſs of man comprehends the whole buſineſs both of faith and repentance, or all that which a ſinner is called both to do, and believe, for the repairing and mending of his loſt and ruin'd ſtate, for the putting and ſetling him in ſuch a ſtate as the Lord may own him as his, and be gracious to him. This, whatſoever it is, is mans uprightneſs or righteouſneſs, and the ſhewing unto man, this his uprightneſs is the bringing him word in the name of Chriſt, that God juſtifieth him from the guilt of all his ſins, and accepteth him into his favour.

Quid ipſum facere pro officio oporteat. Bez. *Quid hominem agere æquum ſit, ſc. ut agnitis peccatis Dei gratiam propter merita ſalvatoris imploret.* Scult.

Hence Obſerve, *The great duty of the Miniſters of the Goſpel, is to clear up to man, whether he be upright, or how he may ſtand upright with God.*

This Obſervation takes in both parts of the Expoſition. To ſhew unto man how it is with him, what his preſent ſtate, and condition is, and to ſhew unto man what he ought to be, or how he may be in a ſafe condition, this is the work of that Meſſenger and interpreter who is one among a thouſand, this is a bleſſed work, and thus it muſt be done.

Firſt, Man is to be ſhewed *the uprightneſs* of his ſtate, or that which muſt be and be had to make up the uprightneſs of his ſtate, which is

Firſt, His *firſt repentance*, or converſion to God. Fallen man can never come into a right ſtate, till he return to God from whom he fell. A mans ſinful ſtate is a crooked, perverſe, and wretched ſtate; repentance or returning to God, is the bringing of a man right again, it brings him to his uprightneſs, even to that ſtate, wherein he was firſt made; *Lo this have I found* (ſaith *Solomon*, Eccl. 7. 29.) *that God hath made man upright; but they have ſought out many inventions.* *Solomon* doth not diſcover the ſeveral branches and ſtreams of mans ſinfulneſs, but the root and ſpring of it he doth, the corruption of his nature by the fall. For as he found that God made man upright, ſo mutable, ſubject to temptation, and as eaſily yielding to the temptation, as admitting himſelf to be tempted: And ſo, not reſting in that way and means of happineſs (as the Devil his tempter did not) which the wiſdom and goodneſs of God had chalked out and allotted to him, but conceiting to himſelf a higher perfection, he then began and ſtill continueth to ſeek out variety of means (called by *Solomon, many inventions*) as then to get more then he had, ſo now to regain ſome ſhadow at leaſt of what he had. Theſe inventions, are all thoſe carnal ſhifts, whereby man hopes either to palliate his ſin, or to pacifie his conſcience. But all prove vain inventions; there being no poſſibility now, for man to get out of ſin, or to go back to God, and ſo to his firſt eſtate, but by repentance; That's Gods invention, and he hath concluded, that nothing without that ſhall bring man (the caſe of Infants is another thing) to that ſtate of uprightneſs, in which he was firſt made. And therefore the Apoſtle giving an account of his miniſtery, how he acted as a Meſſenger, or an Interpreter (He indeed was one among a thouſand) ſaith (*Acts* 20. 20, 21.) *I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you*, &c. *Teſtifying both to the Jews, and alſo to the Greeks, repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, which is

The ſecond thing wherein this uprightneſs of mans ſtate doth conſiſt. Theſe two, repentance towards God, and faith toward our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, were the ſum of all thoſe Sermons in which *Paul* gave counſel both to Jews and Gentiles what to do that they might be ſaved. And this is the work of all Goſpel-*Miniſters, in ſhewing unto man his uprghtneſs.* He that is converted, and believeth; he that turneth from ſin, and taketh hold of Jeſus Chriſt by faith for righteouſneſs, is in a better ſtate of uprightneſs, then when he was firſt made upright. The Prophet (*Hab.* 2. 4.) ſpeaking of faith, and that which is oppoſite to it ſelf-confidence, uſeth this word, *Behold his ſoul which is lifted up* (namely in thoughts of any ſelf or creature-ſufficiency) *is not upright in him.* A proud ſoul is not an upright ſoul. What is pride? Surely this, for a man to think himſelf in a good condition, or that he is well enough, that he wants nothing, as it is ſaid of the Church of *Laodicea* (Rev. 3. 17.) when yet he is empty and guilty; poor and peny-leſs in ſpirituals, wanting every thing; eſpecially a ſight and ſenſe of his poverty and wants; yet this is every mans thought of himſelf, till he is ſhewed what is *indeed his uprightneſs*. The natural mans ſpirit is lifted up, not to God nor in God by faith and repentance, but in himſelf. *The Soul thus lifted up is not upright* (ſaith the Prophet, and what ſaith he next?) *But the juſt ſhall live by his faith.* As if he had ſaid; *The man that lives by faith, or the man that believes, and ſo lives upon Chriſt, is upright and hath an uprightneſs which will hold him right*, which the uprightneſs of creation did not. Then the whole matter of mans uprightneſs was in himſelf, and he was to ſtand upon his own bottom, having no promiſe of ſupport. But now the main matter of mans uprightneſs is out of himſelf, and beſides, himſelf hath a promiſe to be ſupported in his uprightneſs. Man by the grace of repentance, turning from ſin, and by the grace of faith cloſing with the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, is ſet right in the Court of Heaven, and ſhall be preſerved (in his uprightneſs) by the power of God through faith unto ſalvation.

Again, When man is ſhewed his uprightneſs as to his ſtate, which is his life of juſtification; then he muſt alſo be ſhewed his uprightneſs as to his way or courſe of life in *ſanctification, or holineſs of converſation.* The Interpreter muſt not only bring man to Chriſt, but muſt tell him how he ought to walk in Chriſt. Man being ſet right, ought to go right, or (as 'tis ſaid, *Pſal.* 50.23.) *To order his converſation aright.* Mans uprightneſs in walking and working is an inſeparable fruit of his uprightneſs in Being.

Thirdly, The buſineſs of the Interpreter, is not only to bring the troubled Soul to a true ſenſe of ſin, to a clear ſight of Chriſt, and a ſutable converſation, but to furniſh him with Weapons to reſiſt Satans temptations, to ſhew him how to mannage *the ſword of the Spirit, and the ſhield of faith, that he may be able to quench all the fiery Darts of the Devil*; as alſo to anſwer, reſolve, and remove the doubts and ſcruples, that may ariſe in or are upon his own conſcience, and ſo to ſettle him in a ſweet and comfortable dependance upon Chriſt by faith as his uprightneſs and righteouſneſs, againſt all the fears which at any time aſſault his peace.

But ſome may ſay, Should not ſinners be ſhewed their un-uprightneſs or unrighteouſneſs, rather then their uprightneſs?

I anſwer; Firſt, 'Tis a piece of our ſhewing man his uprightneſs, to ſhew him that he hath no uprightneſs. The Spirit convinceth, firſt, of ſin, and then of righteouſneſs (*John* 16. 8.) Secondly, I anſwer, a mans uprightneſs (according to the meaning of this Scripture) cannot be ſhewed him, but he muſt alſo be ſhewed his unrighteouſneſs. Thirdly, I anſwer, The ſick man here ſpoken of, may be ſuppoſed a man troubled in mind about his ſins; and in that caſe the interpreters duty is to eaſe his mind by ſhewing him his uprightneſs in the way opened, rather then to burden his mind further by ſhewing him his ſin or unrighteouſneſs, And therefore laſtly,

To cloſe this point with a word of caution; When *Elihu* ſpeaks of an uprightneſs to be ſhewed the troubled Soul; 'Tis not that the Meſſenger who comes to relieve and comfort him, ſhould uſe flattering words, and blow him up with a conceit of his own good works, and ſo tell him a ſtory of his vertues or vertuous deeds. No, the uprightneſs chiefly intended here is the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, in and by which we are reconciled to and made one with God. Nor can we ever attain to this till we are made ſenſible of our own nothingneſs, till we are unhinged of ſelf, and quite taken off from any bottoming upon our own righteouſneſs. Some, when they have trouble of conſcience upon them, what do they? They fly to their own righteouſneſs; and when they are ſick, and ready to die, how do they prepare to ſtand right before God? They confeſs they have ſinned, and done amiſs, but they hope they have repented, and made amends for that; yea they can remember they have done ſuch, and ſuch, poſſibly, many good things, they have been juſt to all men, and charitable to the poor, they have heard the Word, and been at many a good Sermon, they have prayed and faſted, *&c.* Thus they patch up the buſineſs, as if this were their *only uprightneſs*, whereas, indeed, their only uprightneſs is the righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt. We never ſee where our uprightneſs is, till we ſee there is nothing that makes us ſtand upright in the Court of Heaven, but only Chriſt our righteouſneſs, This is the great duty of the Meſſengers, and Interpreters of Chriſt, to declare to man this righteouſneſs for his uprightneſs. And that hence it is (as *Elihu* proceeds in the next verſe to aſſure the ſick man) that God is and will be gracious to him.

Verſe 24. **Then he is gracious unto him, and ſaith, deliver him from going down into the pit, I have found a ranſome.**

Theſe words hold out the general iſſue and fruit of the labours and good counſel of that Meſſenger or Interpreter dealing with the ſick man, and ſhewing him his uprightneſs.

There are three diſtinct Interpretations which run quite through this verſe, and they ariſe from a different apprehenſion about the antecedent to this Pronoun [*He*] *then he is gracious unto him.* He; who is that? All the Popiſh Interpreters refer it to the *Guardian-Angel* ſent to attend on this ſick man; *Then he* (*the Angel*) *will be gracious, and he will ſay, deliver him.* But as I then laid by that opinion that the Meſſenger was an Angel properly taken, ſo I ſhall not ſtay upon that which is a conſequent of it, here.

Secondly, Several of our Proteſtant Interpreters refer this *he*, to the Meſſenger or Interpreter, to the Prophet or any ſpiritually wiſe and holy man, ſent of God to aſſiſt and help the ſick man in his diſtreſs. Some are ſo poſitive in this opinion, that they deny the Text any other reference; *This is to be underſtood of the Meſſenger* (ſaith one) *and not of God. And I grant 'tis ſutable to the buſineſs of the Meſſenger who comes to comfort and inſtruct the ſick man, that he ſhould pitty and compaſſionate him in that diſconſolate condition, and likewiſe pray for him, according to the tenour of theſe words in the Text, or to the ſame effect; O Lord God, be gracious to him, and deliver him, let him not go down to the pit, for the ranſome ſake which I have found.* As if *Elihu* had ſaid; *When that faithful Meſſenger ſhall have declared the benefits and grace of God to the afflicted man, then pittying his afflicted Soul, he ſhall pray for him; O God deliver him from death and condemnation, from the pit, and from deſtruction, for I have found and ſhewed him a ranſome, by which his Soul may be delivered, and his ſins pardoned.*

Hoc de nuncio dicitur non de Deo; aptè enim tribuitur nuncio & interpreti voluntatis Dei ut miſereatur hominis in ſummo vitæ diſcrimine conſtituti. Merl.

In the nineteenth Chapter of this Book at the twenty-ſeventh verſe, *Job* uſeth this word in his application to his friends, for their pitty to him, and more favourable dealing with him; *Have pitty upon me, have pitty upon me, O my friends, for the hand of God hath touched me.* As if he had ſaid, *The hand of God preſſeth me ſore, O let not your hand be heavy upon me too.* This Expoſition carrieth a great truth in it, and is not at all inconſiſtent with the letter of the Text; yet I ſhall not inſiſt upon it, but adhere rather to a third, which makes the Antecedent to this [*He*] to be God himſelf.

Et de gratia eum alloquutus dixerit redime eum nec diſcēdat in foveam expiationē (quā) inveni. Jun. *Summa orationis quæ apud Deum pro afflictis, habenda eſt.* Jun.

Then he is gracious.] That is, when the Meſſenger hath dealt with the ſick man, when he hath opened his condition to him, and ſhewed him his uprightneſs, or how he may ſtand upright before God, or what his righteouſneſs is before God, and hath brought his heart to an unfeigned ſorrow for his ſin, and to the actings of faith upon the promiſe; then God is gracious, and then he gives out the word for his reſtoring, and orders it to be preſently diſpatcht away to him; ſaying, *deliver him, unlooſe him, unbind him, let him not go down into the pit, I have found a ranſome.* Taking this for the general ſenſe of the Text, I ſhall proceed to open the particulars.

Then he will be gracious, or then, *he will have mercy upon him*, as Mr *Broughton* tranſlates. Then and not before; till then the Lord lets his bones ake, and his heart tremble, till then he ſuffers him to be brought ſo low that he is reckoned among the dead, but then, though not before, he ſheweth himſelf gracious unto him. When a poor man is reduced to the utmoſt extremity, then is Gods opportunity, then is the ſeaſon of mercy; and the Lord therefore lets us be at the loweſt, that we may be the more ſenſible of his goodneſs in raiſing and lifting us up: The Lord ſuffers many (as *Paul* ſpake of himſelf, 2 *Cor.* 1. 9.) *to have the ſentence of Death in themſelves, that they may learn not to truſt in themſelves, but in him who raiſeth the dead.* We ſeldome give God either the glory of his power by truſting him, or of his goodneſs by thanking him for our deliverances, till we are brought to the *laſt caſt* (as we ſay) or to ſuch an exigent as leaves no viſible means in probability, no nor of poſſibility to eſcape. And when 'tis thus with us, *then he is gracious.*

Secondly, *Then he is gracious*, that is, when the man is doubly humbled, when the mans heart is graciouſly broken, when the man is grown into an abhorrence of himſelf and of his ſin, or loaths himſelf for his ſin, as much as he loathed his meat, as 'tis ſaid in the former verſe; when his heart is thus taken quite off from all that is below in the world, and gathered up believingly to Jeſus Chriſt in the word of promiſe; *Then he is gracious.*

חנן *Miſertus, gratificatus, gratia proſecutus fuit: ex gratis donavit, beneficit.*

The Original word hath many comfortable ſignifications in it, yet all reſolvable into this one, *he is gracious.* It ſignifies to pitty, to have compaſſion, tenderly to regard, to beſtow grace, to do good, there is enough in the bowels of this word to bear up the ſpirit of the ſickeſt body, or of the moſt troubled Soul. It is ſaid (*Gen.* 6. 8.) Noah *found grace* (or favour) *in the eyes of the Lord.* *Noah* was the only man that held out the grace of God in that age, him only did God *find perfect or upright* in his Generation (*Gen.* 6. 9.) and *Noah* only was the man, that found grace or favour in the eyes of the Lord in that generation (*Gen.* 6. 8.) God was gracious to him and his, when the whole world periſhed by water. That proper name *John* is derived from this word; when God gave *Zachary* and *Elizabeth* a Son in their old age, he alſo directed how he would have him called, *ye ſhall call his name* John, which name, (as we may well conceive) was aſſigned him either becauſe God did very graciouſly and favourably beſtow that gift upon his Parents in their old age, and ſo ſhewed them much favour (*a Child at any time is a great favour from God, eſpecially in old age*) or, ſecondly, becauſe *John* was to open the Kingdom of Grace, to preach the Goſpel, and to prepare the way for Chriſt, by whom grace and truth came. The Baptiſt was as it were the *loop and button* between the legal and the Goſpel diſpenſation; therefore his name might well be called *John.* And there is frequent uſe in Scripture of the *Adverb* which comes from this *Verb*, to ſignifie injuries received without deſert or undeſervedly. (*Pſal.* 7. 4.) *Yea, I have delivered him that without cauſe was mine enemy*, or that was mine enemy *gratis.* And again (*Pſal.* 35. 7.) *For without cauſe have they hid for me their net in a pit, which without cauſe have they digged for my Soul.* Thus as the word ſignifies the doing of good (*gratis*) or when there is no deſert; ſo any injury done *gratis*, or when no provocation hath been given the party ſo to do. Now, as all the miſchief which the wicked plot againſt or do to the people of God is undeſerved, and floweth meerly from their malice, ſo all the good which God doth for his people is undeſerved, and floweth purely from the Fountain of his free grace, or from his compaſſions, which fail not. And ſurely the Lord deſerveth higheſt praiſes from man for any good he doth him, ſeeing what he doth is *gratis*, or undeſerved.

Δωρεὰν τῇ αὐτοῦ χάριτι. *Gratis* i. e. *ejus gratia.* Bez.

Further, This Hebrew word *Chinnam* anſwers the Greek word (δωρεὰν) rendred *freely* (*Rom.* 3. 24.) *We are juſtified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jeſus Chriſt.* How can unjuſt men deſerve juſtification; Therefore Mr. *Beza* tranſlates, *We are juſtified* gratis, that is, *by his grace.*

Again, When it is ſaid, then *he* (or, *the Lord*) *is gracious*, it may be taken two wayes. Firſt, as, to be gracious implyeth the intrinſecal graciouſneſs of his nature, or that mercifulneſs and kindneſs which dwells in the heart of God, and which indeed is God (for the graciouſneſs of God is the gracious God) thus God is alwayes and altogether gracious, he is infinitely and unceſſantly gracious. Secondly, When it is ſaid, *he is gracious*, it may note only the graciouſneſs of his acts, and diſpenſations; thus, as I may ſay, the Lord is gracious (*ad hinc & nunc*) as he ſees cauſe, at this time he is gracious and not at that time; that is, he puts forth acts of grace now, and not then. The Lord puts forth acts of grace, both according to the pleaſure of his one will, without reſpect to any thing in man, as alſo without reſpecting what man is or doth, according to his pleaſure. And thus we are chiefly to underſtand it here; *then he is gracious.* God is gracious in his nature alwayes, and alwayes alike gracious; but he is not alwayes alike gracious in his diſpenſations, or in giving forth acts of grace; he is gracious to man according to his ſecret will as he pleaſeth, but he is gracious according to his revealed will as man pleaſeth him.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *The firſt cauſe and ſpring of all our mercies is the graciouſneſs of God.* Or, *All our mercies flow out from the grace of God.*

That's the fountain, yea that's the Ocean which feeds and fills all the Channels of mercy, which ſtream to us, as our happineſs in this world, and for our everlaſting happineſs in the world which is to come. All is of grace fundamentally, or becauſe the Lord is and will be for ever gracious. Thus the Lord ſpake to *Moſes* (*Exod.* 33. 19.) *I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious.* My mercy ſhall flow out, when, and to whom, and where I pleaſe. And the proclamation which he made of himſelf in all his royal Titles runs in the ſame ſtrain (*Exod.* 34. 6.) *The Lord, the Lord God, merciful, and gracious, long-ſuffering, and abundant in goodneſs and truth, keeping mercy for thouſands, forgiving iniquity.* If we conſider God, firſt in doing us good; Secondly, In forgiving us the evil which we do; Thirdly, in delivering us from the evils which we now ſuffer; Fourthly, In delivering us from the fear of future ſufferings; all is from grace and from free grace. He doth us good though we are undeſerving any good, that's grace, yea, he doth us good though we are ill deſerving, and that's more grace. He doth all for us through grace, Firſt, In ſpirituals, and Secondly, In temporals; not only do the good things of eternal life, but the good things of this preſent life flow from grace unto his own people. Not only the health of their Souls, but the health of their bodies, not only deliverance from Hell, but deliverance from ſickneſs alſo, flow from his free grace in Jeſus Chriſt. Therefore of all their mercies and ſalvations (both as to the foundation and top-ſtone of them) the people of God muſt cry (as the Prophet *Zachary* (*Chap.* 4. 7.) foretels the people of God ſhould ſay of that longed for deliverance, when *that great Mountain ſhould become a plain before* Zerubbabel) *grace, grace, unto them*: That is, grace hath begun them, and grace alone will maintain, continue, and perfect what it hath begun. As there is nothing in us (except our miſery) which moves the Lord to begin, ſo there is nothing in us (but our inability) which moves the Lord to perfect what he hath begun. He ſeeth we cannot, and therefore he will perfect what he hath begun, and all this he doth that he may exalt his own name, and perfect the praiſe of his free grace towards us.

More diſtinctly, that all comes from grace, or from the graciouſneſs of God, may note theſe five things to us. Firſt, Not only that God doth all for his people freely, or without deſert. But Secondly, That he doth all things willingly, or without conſtraint for his people. Thirdly, That he doth all things forwardly for his people. He doth very much unaskt and unſought, and he is not much askt or hardly drawn to do any thing for his people. Though he hath ſaid of ſome things, *I will be ſought unto, or inquired after that I may do them for you* (*Ezek.* 36. 37.) yet his mercies are never forced nor wreſted from him by intreaties, but flow from a principle of love, naturally, as water out of a fountain. Fourthly, He doth all rejoycingly, *even with his whole heart, and with his whole Soul. Mercy pleaſeth him*, and he is pleaſed with occaſions of ſhewing mercy, 'tis no burden to him to do us good; mercy proceeds from his nature, and therefore he delighteth in mercy (*Mic.* 7. 18.) yea, to be merciful is his nature, and therefore he cannot but delight in it. Fifthly, graciouſneſs being the very nature of God, implyeth that he will do us good liberally, and conſtantly, or that (as the Apoſtle *James* ſpeaks) he giveth liberally; and upbraideth not; he doth not upbraid us with our poverty, who receive, nor doth he upbraid us with the riches of the gifts which himſelf beſtoweth; and becauſe they flow from his nature, therefore he doth not in the leaſt empty himſelf, how much ſoever he fills the creature with his gifts or goodneſs, Some men (upon the matter) even exhauſt and undo themſelves by liberality unto others; and they who give moſt, or have moſt to give, cannot alwayes give. It is ſaid in this Book, (*Chap.* 37. 11.) *By watering, he wearieth the thick Cloud*; that is, God commandeth the Cloud to give rain ſo long, that it hath not a drop more to give, but is quite ſpent. Springs or Fountains are never wearied or ſpent with watering, becauſe their waters come as freely and as faſt as they go; God is an everlaſting Spring of grace, and goodneſs, he is not wearied, nor emptyed by what he giveth out to, or doth for the creature, becauſe all floweth from his natural graciouſneſs as from a Fountain.

Then he is gracious.] I would urge the ſecond reference of that word (*then*) a little further; It was ſhewed before, that it might refer, Firſt, To the extremity of the ſick man, Secondly, To the ſick mans humiliation, or the right diſpoſure of his ſpirit to receive renewed acts of grace, and favour from the Lord.

Si ægrotus ille monitis illius nuncii paruerit ac proinde reſipuerit, tum &c. Piſc.

Hence Obſerve, Secondly, *God uſually diſpenſeth or giveth out acts of grace when we repent and turn from ſin, when we believe and lay hold upon the promiſe; Then he is gracious.*

It is ſaid (*Iſa.* 30. 18.) *Therefore will the Lord wait that he may be gracious.* The Lord hath alwayes a gracious diſpoſition, a gracious nature; he alwayes hath a ſtore and a ſtock, a rich ſtock and ſtore of mercy by him; but he doth not alwayes give it forth; no, *he waits to be gracious,* that is, he waits till we are in a fit frame, till we are in a due temper to receive his grace. And becauſe as to the diſpenſings of grace, God waits to be gracious; therefore many retard and hinder their own good; they are not yet in a frame to receive; their Veſſel is not yet ſeaſoned to hold mercy. The Lord waited to be gracious to *David* after his grievous fall, and therefore he did not give *Nathan* a Commiſſion to ſay, *Thy ſin is done away,* till *David*s heart was broken, and had ſaid (2 *Sam.* 12. 13.) *I have ſinned againſt the Lord*; But when once that word fell from him, then *Nathan* declared how gracious the Lord was to him. As ſoon as *David* ſaid, *I have ſinned* (that's an act of repentance) preſently *Nathan* ſaid, *the Lord hath done away thy ſin,* that's an act of grace. When did *Ephraim* hear a word of comfort from God? The Prophet tells us (*Jer.* 31. 18, 19, 20.) *I have heard* Ephraim *bemoaning himſelf* (that is, mourning over and bewailing his ſin) *ſaying, thou haſt chaſtiſed me, and I was chaſtiſed, as a Bullock unaccuſtomed to the yoak.* We have him there alſo praying, *Turn me, O Lord, and I ſhall be turned,* &c. Upon this, how graciouſly, how meltingly did the Lord ſpeak? *Is* Ephraim *my dear Son? Is he a pleaſant Child? Since I ſpake againſt him, I do earneſtly remember him ſtill* (or, *in remembring I remember him*) *my bowels are troubled for him, I will ſurely have mercy on him.* Now I will manifeſt my grace, and acquaint him with my goodneſs. The Lord was very gracious to *Saul* afterwards *Paul*, he ſent *Ananias* to him with a meſſage of mercy, as to reſtore the ſight of his bodily eyes, ſo to aſſure him that he ſhould be an inſtrument in the hand of Chriſt to open the eyes of many, *and a choſen Veſſel to bear his name before the Gentiles and Kings and the Children of* Iſrael (Acts 9. 15.) But when was this meſſage delivered him? The Text tells us (*ver.* 11.) *For behold he prayeth*; the man is in the duſt, he is brought upon his knees, his ſpirit is broken; that word *he prayeth*, comprehends the whole work of a gracious Soul, as to his humiliation and returning to the Lord. In the Parable of the prodigal Son, his Father is repreſented abundantly gracious to him; but he did not ſignifie it, he did not ſend the ring, nor the rich Robe to him, when he was abroad in a ſtrange Country among Harlots, drinking and waſting his eſtate, time and ſtrength vainly; we read of no acts of grace to him then, but when, being pinched with Famine and hunger, he came to himſelf, and began to bethink himſelf of coming back to his Fathers houſe, and that he had brought himſelf by his own folly to beggery, and want, and husks; when he was upon theſe terms, or reſolves to go home to his Father, and caſt himſelf at his feet as unworthy the name or priviledge of a Son, then his Father ran to meet him, fell on his neck and kiſſed him, then he put on the ring, and cloathed him with the Robe, then he killed the fatted Calf, and made a feaſt for him. All which ſcene of mercy doth but hold out this one word in the Text; *Then he is gracious.*

There are two ſorts of gracious acts of God. Firſt, Some are acts of abſolute grace, or of preventing grace; Theſe are put forth upon and exerciſed towards the creature, before there is any the leſt preparation in the heart, to draw them out or invite the beſtowing of them. Thus, the grace of God in election is abſolutely free, there was no proviſion of any qualification in man moving God to elect him. And ſo that wonderful act of grace (in which election firſt deſcends and diſcovers it ſelf) effectual vocation, is abſolutely free. God calls a ſinner when he is in the heat and hurry of his evil wayes, purſuing his luſts in the height of his pride, and in the hardneſs of his impenitent heart. Now, if when God firſt calleth a ſinner there is nothing in him but ſin; what can move God to call him but free grace? A third abſolute act of grace is juſtification; God doth not juſtifie a ſinner for any thing that he finds or ſees in us; As to us 'tis altogether free. *He juſtifieth the ungodly* (Rom. 4. 5.) when that wretched Infant was in its blood (which expreſſeth a miſerable unclean polluted condition) *then was a time of love* (Ezek. 16. 8.) then was God gracious. What lovelineſs was there in that Infant (repreſenting the beſt of men in that fallen natural eſtate) to draw out the love of God? Nothing at all, yea ſhe was altogether unlovely, yet then (ſaith God) *thy time was the time of love,* or then was the time of putting forth love in her converſion and vocation; *Then, I ſaid unto thee when thou waſt in thy blood, live.* And becauſe the thing might ſeem not only ſtrange, but even impoſſible, that the heart of God ſhould be towards ſuch a wretched one for good, the word is doubled, *yea I ſaid unto thee, when thou waſt in thy blood, live.* Theſe acts of abſolute free grace are the glory of the Covenant of grace; for if the Covenant ſhould hold out acts of grace only upon our pre-diſpoſitions, when ſhould we receive any act of grace? The promiſe is not of this tenour, *I will pardon them when their hearts are ſoft and tender*; but, *I will take away the heart of ſtone, and give them a heart of fleſh.*

Yet Secondly (as to the point in hand) there are conditional acts of grace, I may call them ſecond acts of grace, or renewed acts of grace. For when after converſion we fall into ſin, and by that evil heart of unbelief (remaining in a great meaſure unmortified) we depart from the living God (*Heb.* 3. 12.) God doth not give out freſh acts of grace, but upon repentance, and the renewings of our communion with him. Having once received grace, we being again helped and aſſiſted by grace, act graciouſly, before God declares himſelf gracious to us. When a man is caſt upon a ſick bed for ſin (that's the caſe of many) the Lord will ſee repentance before he will raiſe him up again. (*James* 5. 15.) *The prayer of faith ſhall ſave the ſick, and if he hath committed ſins, they ſhall be forgiven him*; that is, if he being caſt upon a ſick bed to correct or chaſten him for the ſin that he hath committed, ſhall humble himſelf, and ſeek the Lord by prayer, praying and calling for prayer; Then the ſin committed ſhall be forgiven him, and the Lord will raiſe him up again. 'Tis not the prayer of another that can obtain deliverance for the ſick, much leſs the forgiveneſs of his ſins, if himſelf be prayer-leſs and repentance-leſs. But while others pray for the ſick mans bodily health, they praying alſo for his ſouls health, the Lord gives him repentance for his ſin, and then a comfortable ſight of pardon. So then before the Lord puts out theſe ſecond acts of grace, he looks for and finds ſomething in the creature yet ſtill, that alſo is an effect of his grace both to them and in them, They, who have already received grace, muſt ſtir up their grace, and renew acts of grace (through grace) towards him, before he diſpenſes acts of grace towards them. And as conſolation in this life, ſo that higheſt and laſt act of grace, ſalvation, in the life to come, is not beſtow'd upon any, till they are fitted. God calls and converts the worſt of men, thoſe that are in their filth, and mud, and mire, but he will not ſave a filthy perſon, he will have him firſt purged and prepared. *Know ye not that the unrighteous ſhall not enter into the kingdome of God* (1 Cor. 6. 9.) and that *without holineſs no man ſhall ſee the Lord* (Heb. 12. 14.) There is no eternal ſalvation without preparation; nor is there any promiſe of temporal ſalvation without it. When a man is ſick to death (as in the Text) ſalvation comes not, the Lord is not gracious till the ſick mans ſpirit is humbled and ſet right; till the Meſſenger hath ſhewed him, how he may ſtand upright before the Lord, and he hath imbraced his meſſage; then, and not till then *he is gracious.* And as in theſe words we have the occaſion of this grace; ſo in the following words we have the publication of this grace; *Then he is gracious.*

And ſaith, Deliver him from going down into the pit.

And ſaith] That is, the Lord gives out an order preſently, he gives out a warrant for the releaſe of the ſick man. When earthly Princes have once granted pardon to an offender, they ſay, *deliver him*; they ſign a warrant for his deliverance out of Priſon, or they ſign a pardon, and ſay, deliver him from death, when he is at the place of execution. Thus concerning this ſick man, God ſaith, *deliver him from going down to the pit.*

פרע *ide quod* פדה *redemit, liberavit, verbum* פרע *non alias reperitur, & pro ratione loci intelligitur & exponitur pro* פדה. Merc.

The word rendred *deliver*, ſignifies alſo *to redeem*, 'tis uſed in this form no where elſe in all the Scripture. To free, deliver or redeem a man, intimates his perſon in hold, *then will he ſay, deliver him.* From what? There are as many ſorts of deliverances, as there are of troubles, each particular ſtrait, and trouble, hath a proportionable deliverance. There is deliverance, Firſt, From captivity or bondage. Secondly, From want or poverty. Thirdly, From imminent ſudden danger or peril by Land or Sea. Fourthly, From ſickneſſes and diſeaſes. Fifthly, From death; and that twofold; Firſt, From temporal, Secondly, From eternal death. Here when he ſaith, *deliver him*, we may determine this deliverance by the latter words of the Text, to be a deliverance from deadly ſickneſs; *deliver him from going down to the pit*; that is, deliver him from death; to go down to the pit, is often in Scripture put to ſignifie dying.

Further, The pit implies *corruption*, becauſe in the pit or grave, the body corrupts. It is ſaid indeed (*Numb.* 16. 30.) of that rebellious triumvirate, *Corah, Dathan, and Abiram, they went down alive into the pit*, but they went down to death, and ordinarily the dead only go down to the pit. The ſame phraſe is uſed (*Pſal.* 28. 1. *Pſal.* 88. 4. *Ezek.* 31. 14. *Ezek.* 32. 18, 24, 29, 30.) That Text is very remarkable (*Prov.* 28. 17.) *He that offereth violence to the blood of another, he ſhall flee to the pit, let no man ſtay him*; That is, the Murderer, who in wrath and hatred, or upon private revenge deſtroyeth the life of any man, ſhall haſten to deſtruction, either as chaſed and hurried by his own fears like *Cain* and *Judas*, or as proſecuted by the juſtice of the Magiſtrate. And as he thus haſteth to the pit, ſo *let no man ſtay him*, that is, Firſt, let no man conceal him; Secondly, Let no man move for his impunity, or ſolicite his pardon; or if any do, then Thirdly, Let not the Magiſtrate grant his pardon; for the old univerſal Law tells him his duty (*Gen.* 9. 6.) *He that ſheddeth mans blood, by man* (that is, by the Magiſtrate commanding, and by his Officers executing) *ſhall his blood be ſhed.* And as another Law hath it (*Deut.* 19. 13.) *Thine eye ſhall not ſpare him*, &c. The Magiſtrate who is in Gods ſtead, may not ſay of him, as here God doth of the ſick man, *Deliver him from going down to the pit. His blood is ill ſpared who would not ſpare the blood of another.*

But it may be queſtioned, for as much as the Text ſaith only in general, *deliver him*, Into whoſe hands this warrant for his deliverance is delivered? Or who is directed to deliver him? Maſter *Broughton* repreſents God ſpeaking this to the ſick mans diſeaſe, for thus he renders the Text; *Then he will have mercy upon him, and ſays, Spare him (O killing malady) from deſcending into the pit.* God will ſpeak thus to the diſeaſe (and there is a great elegancy in it) *ſpare him, O killing malady.* Diſeaſes come and go at Gods command; they hurt and they ſpare at his direction; as the Lords breath or word bloweth away the Winds (*Matth.* 8. 27.) *The men marveled, ſaying, who is this that even the Wind and the Seas obey him?* So the Lords breath bloweth away ſickneſs; if he do but ſpeak to a diſeaſe, to a Feaver, to an Ague, to a Dropſie, to a Conſumption, *O killing malady, ſpare him*, thou haſt done enough (any diſeaſe might prevail to death, did not God ſay, *ſpare him*) hold thy hand, not a blow more, not a fit more, *O killing malady.* Death it ſelf, much more ſickneſs, heareth the voice of God. And it may be ſaid to hear him, becauſe it doth that, which they who have the power of hearing ought to do; that is, it obeyeth or yieldeth to the voice and command of God, and will no longer afflict the ſick man. Diſeaſes may be ſaid to deliver a man from death, and the pit, when they depart from him. Yet,

Secondly, I conceive this warrant for the deliverance of the ſick man, is given out to the *Meſſenger or Interpreter, to the one among a thouſand*, that viſiteth him in his ſickneſs. He having been with him, and dealt with his conſcience, he having brought him into a good frame, the Lord is gracious, and in anſwer to his prayer, ſets it upon his heart that he ſhall recover, and warrants him to tell him ſo, which is, declaratively, to *deliver him from going down to the pit.* This act of mans delivering the ſick, is like that act of man pardoning the ſinner (*John* 20. 23.) that is, 'tis miniſterial or declarative, not original nor Authoritative. The Interpreter doth not deliver him, but tells him God will. We have the Pſalmiſt ſpeaking thus after his ſupplication and prayer made to the Lord for a ſick ſtate or Nation or for a ſick Church (that's his ſcope, *Pſal.* 85.) *Wilt thou not revive us again, that thy people may rejoyce in thee* (ver. 6.) Surely thou wilt, and he expreſſeth his confidence, that God would (*ver.* 8.) *I will hear what God the Lord will ſpeak, for he will ſpeak peace unto his people, and to his Saints.* When he had prayed he would hearken for news, or for a Meſſage from Heaven, whether or no, the Lord would order him to ſpeak peace to thoſe for whom he had been praying, and ſay, *deliver them from going down to the pit.* Thus did the Prophet *Habakkuk, I will ſtand upon my watch, and ſet me upon my Tower, and ſee what he will ſay unto me, and what I ſhall anſwer when I am reproved* (Chap. 2. 1.) In the next verſe, *The Lord anſwered and ſaid, write the Viſion and make it plain upon Tables, that he may run that readeth it.* And what was the anſwer? Surely deliverance; for having ſaid, *in the end it ſhall ſpeak and not lie* (ver. 3.) he concludes (*ver.* 4.) *The juſt ſhall live by his faith.* Believing deliverance, he ſhall at laſt be delivered from the pit of captivity and live.

Sequeſtrem illum Jubebit ei renunciare impetratam eſſe ſibi liberationem. Bez.

Here in the Text we muſt ſuppoſe this Meſſenger had prayed, and having prayed, he did not neglect his prayer, but was hearkning what the Lord would ſay. *Elihu* was confident the Lord would give a gracious anſwer, though not by an immediate voice or revelation to his ear, yet by an aſſurance of the mercy given into his ſpirit. When that good King *Hezekiah, was not only ſick unto death*, but had received an expreſs meſſage from the Lord, *Set thy houſe in order, for thou ſhalt dye and not live* (2 Kings 20. 1.) 'Tis ſaid at the ſecond verſe, *He turned his face to the wall, and prayed unto the Lord, ſaying*, &c. And at the fourth verſe, *The word of the Lord came to* Iſaiah *the Prophet, ſaying, turn again, and tell* Hezekiah *the Captain of my people; Thus ſaith the Lord, the God of* David *thy Father, I have heard thy prayer, I have ſeen thy tears, behold, I will heal thee*, &c. Here God gave a word formally, and put it into the Prophets mouth, *Go deliver him from going down to the pit.* And though the Lord doth not thus now in ſuch an explicite and open way, nor may we expect it, yet there is a virtual ſaying of this word from the Lord, and that ſometimes mightily impreſt upon the hearts of thoſe who have prayed and ſought unto him, for the ſick man, whereby (not by an ungrounded vain confidence, but by a ſcriptural holy confidence, comparing the promiſe with the mans condition) they are enabled to tell him, *The Lord hath delivered thee from going down to the pit.* And he ſhall as certainly be delivered, as if the Lord had ſent an expreſs from Heaven to tell him ſo. *Then he is gracious to him, and ſaith, deliver him from going down to the pit.*

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *Death is a going to the pit, a going to deſtruction,*

Thus it is ordinarily with all who die, to the pit they go. Many dye and go down to the bottomleſs pit; all who die may be ſaid to go to the pit. To go to the bottomleſs pit, is the circumlocution of eternal death, as to go to the pit is the circumlocution of temporal death.

Secondly, Foraſmuch as the man being ſick the Lord gives out this word, *Deliver him from going down to the pit*;

Note, *Sickneſs hath in it a tendency unto death.*

The ſick ſtand as it were upon the borders of the grave. Some not only put death far from them in health, but in their ſickneſs, until they are even dead, they ſcarce think themſelves dying. It is good for us in our health and beſt ſtrength to be looking into the pit, and conſidering upon what grounds of comfort we can deſcend into the grave. How much more ſhould we be thinking of and looking into the pit, when we are in a languiſhing and dying condition?

Thirdly, Obſerve, *The word and work of deliverance is from God alone; Then he will be gracious and ſay, deliver him from going down to the pit.*

God can, and God only can deliver from death; no creature in Heaven or Earth can ſpeak this but by commiſſion from God, none can open this ſecret till God interpret it. Deliverance is the Lords ſalvation, and the word of ſalvation from ſickneſs, as well as of ſalvation from Hell, comes out from the Lord.

But is it not ſaid (*Pro.* 11.4.) *Righteouſneſs delivereth from death?*

I anſwer, when it is ſaid, *Righteouſneſs delivereth from death*, The meaning is, God delivereth the righteous from death. He delivereth them from the ſting and terror, from all that which is properly called the evil of corporal death; and he delivereth them wholly from the leaſt touch or ſhadow of eternal death. And this righteouſneſs which delivers from death is not our own, but the righteouſneſs of Chriſt made ours by the appointment of God, and received as ours by faith. 'Tis neither any righteouſneſs wrought in us, nor any righteouſneſs wrought by us, but that righteouſneſs which is wrought for us, which delivereth from death: and that delivereth us from death, becauſe God ſaith of ſuch a righteous perſon, deliver him, as often from temporal death, or going down to the pit of the grave, ſo alwayes from eternal death, or going down to the pit of Hell.

Fourthly, In that this word *deliver him*, is given to the Meſſenger,

Obſerve, *God conveighs deliverance and mercy to us by men like our ſelves.*

He will have the creature beholden to the creature for his mercy, though mercy come freely and only from himſelf. God delivereth the ſick and the ſinner in ſuch a method that we may own, though not ſtay in his Meſſengers, as the inſtruments of his favour. God who can do all things by himſelf, will not do many things but by means. He ſaith to the Meſſenger, *Deliver him from going down to the pit.*

You will ſay, how can a Miniſter or a Meſſenger deliver the ſick from going down to the pit?

I anſwer (as was touched before) he delivers him by declaring to him the mind of God, by acquainting the ſick with the promiſes of deliverance, and by preſſing him to believe and reſt upon them; by aſſuring him that as God is able to perform the promiſe, ſo he is faithful and willing to perform it; yea that he hath given ſome tokens for good that he will deliver him from going down to the pit. Thus the work of Gods free grace, mercy, and power, is oftentimes attributed to Inſtruments and ſecond cauſes, becauſe they have their place and uſe in the bringing about the purpoſes of God for the good of his people. Hence ſome men are called *Saviours*; *And Saviours ſhall come up on mount* Zion (Obad. *verſ.* 21.) No man can ſave either from temporal or eternal deſtruction; *He that is our God is the God of ſalvation, and unto God the Lord belong the iſſues from death* (Pſal. 68.20.) yet ſaith the Prophet, *there ſhall come Saviours*; that is, God will raiſe up worthy men, *principal men* (as another Prophet calls them, *Mic.* 5.5.) who ſhall deſtroy *Zions* Enemies. Thus *Paul* admoniſheth *Timothy*, *Take heed to thy ſelf, and to thy doctrine, continue in them, for in ſo doing thou ſhalt ſave thy ſelf and them that hear thee* (1 Tim. 4.16.) The Apoſtle *James* (Chap. 5.20.) ſpeaks the ſame thing; *He which converteth a ſinner from the error of his way, ſhall ſave a ſoul from death, and ſhall hide a multitude of ſins.* And the ſame Apoſtle ſaith (as to the caſe in the Text) at the fifteenth verſe of the ſame Chapter; *The prayer of faith ſhall ſave the ſick.* Though none can ſave, yet many are means of our ſalvation. And the Lord is pleaſed to honour thoſe who are the means of any ſalvation, ſo far, as to ſay, *They ſave.* It is indeed the duty of all to aſcribe the all of every work and piece of ſalvation and deliverance to God only. When the people ſtood wondering at *Peter* and *John* after they had healed the lame man, *Peter* anſwered (*Acts* 3.12.) *Ye men of* Iſrael, *why marvel ye at this? Or why look ye ſo earneſtly on us, as if we by our own power or holineſs had made this man to walk. The God of* Abraham, &c. *Hath glorified his Son Jeſus*; As if they had ſaid, Therefore do ye alſo glorifie him, not us for delivering this lame man. Though God is pleaſed to put much honour upon man, by ſpeaking of what himſelf doth, as if man had done it; yet he will not give the glory of what he doth to any man, nor may any take it. God ſaith to the Meſſenger, *deliver him from going down to the pit*; but woe to that Meſſenger who ſaith (when he is delivered) I have delivered him from going down to the pit.

Thus we ſee the Spring of the ſick mans recovery, it is from the graciouſneſs of God, and we ſee the means of it; God gives a warrant to his Meſſenger, ſaying, *Deliver him from going down to the pit*; but what is the procuring or meritorious cauſe of this deliverance? As the Text hath ſhewed us the firſt moving cauſe, *The grace of God*, ſo it ſhews us the meritorious cauſe, by which his deliverance is procured; things are ſo ordered in the Covenant of grace, that though the Lord acts with infinite freeneſs, yet he hath appointed and ordered a way in which alone he will do, what he freely doth. This is expreſſed in the laſt clauſe of the verſe,

For I have found a Ranſom.

But where did God find it? Certainly in his own boſom, in his own heart; Jeſus Chriſt came out of the boſom of the Father, there he was, God found him in and with himſelf; God did not find the Ranſom by chance, nor did he find it by advice and conſultation with others, but he found it in himſelf, in his own infinite wiſdom and goodneſs; that is, he contrived it, he invented it there. This rare, this moſt excellent thing, *a Ranſom*, is the *Lords own invention. I have found it*, I know how to do this man good, I know how to ſave him, and do my own honour and Juſtice no hurt, no wrong: My honour is ſaved, my Juſtice is ſatisfied in doing it. *I have found a ranſom.*

The Word here rendred a **ranſom** ſignifies in the Verb, *to cover or to hide* that which before lay open, that it appear no more. Grace brings another face upon things, a new face, I may ſay upon our ſouls. The covering of ſin elegantly denotes the pardon of ſin. And what reaſon have we to be thankful and rejoyce, when ſin (our ſoul-durt and deformity) is covered! We have very foul faces (I mean outward converſations) and more foul Souls, or inward inclinations, till the Lord is graciouſly pleaſed to put a covering upon them. If we cover our own ſins we ſhall have no mercy, but if the Lord once cover our ſins, he cannot deny us mercy, that being it ſelf our greateſt mercy, and the fruit of his great mercy. *The Mercy-ſeat*, ſo famous in the Moſaical Pædagogy, is expreſt by this word, which properly ſignifieth a *Covering*. The *Mercy-ſeat* was it ſelf a *Covering of pure Gold, laid over the Ark*, in which Ark the Law was put (*Exod.* 25.17.21.) *Thou ſhalt put the Mercy-ſeat above upon the Ark, and in the Ark thou ſhalt put the Teſtimony that I ſhall give thee.* And as the dimenſions of the Ark were two Cubits and a half in length, and a Cubit and a half in breadth, ſo the ſame were the dimenſions of the Mercy-ſeat; (*Verſ.* 10.17.) which figured that as the Mercy-ſeat fully covered the Ark wherein the Law was, ſo Chriſt ſhould fully cover all our ſins, which are tranſgreſſions of the Law. The righteouſneſs of Chriſt is as long and as broad as the Law, and ſo, our ſins being covered with that ſhall never appear againſt us. Therefore alſo *from above this Mercy-ſeat between the two Cherubims* (the Lord ſaid, *verſ.* 22.) *I will meet thee, and I will commune with thee.* There was a gracious manifeſtation of the preſence of God above the *Mercy-ſeat*, becauſe that typified Jeſus Chriſt the true *Propitiatory or ranſom*, covering and hiding out of the ſight of God for ever all our defections, iniquities and tranſgreſſions. And hence the ſame word which ſignifies expiation or redemption, ſignifieth alſo the procuring cauſe of our Redemption, here called (as alſo in the New Teſtament) *A Ranſom.*

Verbum כפר *denotet expiationem, aut redemptionem, tum etiam pretium quod pro redemptione offertur. Significat etiā cooperire, linire, aut operire bitumine, quaſi priſtinam faciē rei alicujus aut immunditiē abſcondere; quod eleganter refertur ad abſterſionem peccati.* Pined.

I have found a Ranſom.] *A ranſom* is properly a price demanded for releaſe out of bondage. And when the Captive is releaſed, the price is paid; To be redeemed and to be ranſomed is the ſame thing. (*Iſa.* 35.9, 10.) *The redeemed ſhall paſs there, and the ranſomed*

of

Græci dicunt λύτρον *quod non eſt aliud quam ſanguis Chriſti, in quem & veteres crediderunt.* Merc.

of the Lord ſhall return and come to Sion, *and everlaſting joy upon their heads, they ſhall obtain joy and gladneſs, and ſorrow and ſighing ſhall flee away.* Thus here, *Deliver him* (ſaith the Lord) *from going down to the pit* ; *I am ſatisfied, I have found a price, a ranſom.* Both Law and Goſpel meet in this ; here is the Law, by which the man being humbled confeſſeth his own ſin, and the wrath of God due to it. Here is alſo the Goſpel, by which he hath been taught to believe, that his ſins are pardoned, and the wrath of God turned away from him for the ranſom which Chriſt hath paid.

So then, 'tis not as Popiſh Expoſiters tell us, *I have found a ranſom*; that is, I have found the mans good works, I have found his repentance, I have found his tears, his prayers, his alms, I now ſee that in him for which I may be propitious to him, and deliver him from the ſickneſs under which he is detained; thus they generally make ſomewhat in man, or done by man, his *ranſom,* at leaſt to have a ſhare in it. The heart (as was ſhewed before) is prepared for deliverance, by the workings of faith and repentance. But the ranſom upon which deliverance is given, is nothing at all wrought in us or by us. Wo to us notwithſtanding our prayers and repentance, our reformations and humiliations. To put theſe in place of a ranſom, or to hope for deliverance from the pit upon their account, is to pervert the whole Goſpel.

Apparet in homine aliquid æquitatis, ex quo ei miſerere poſſum, quā quærebam. Aquin.

Others give a better ſenſe, yet not clear enough, thus, *He hath humbled himſelf; and I am as well ſatisfied as if I had received a ranſom*, but I lay that by alſo. For when God ſaith, *I have found a ranſom*, we are to underſtand it of a real ranſom, of full pay or ſatisfaction, not of a ranſom by favour and acceptation. This ſatisfaction to the juſtice of God is only and wholly made by Jeſus Chriſt, without any the leaſt contribution from man. The perfect ranſom which the Lord finds is the blood of his own Son, which is called the blood of the Covenant, becauſe thereby the Covenant is confirmed, and all Covenant mercies aſſured to us. Upon this price or ranſom God reſtores the ſick ſinner and pardons him, he heals both his body and his ſoul. And that *Job* had knowledge of this ranſom as the only means of deliverance, appears (*Chap.* 17. 3. 19. 25.) *Deliver him, for I have found a ranſom.*

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *The redemption or deliverance of man by a ranſom is the invention of God, and the invention of God only.*

If all men on earth, yea, if all the Angels in Heaven had ſat from the foundation of the world to this day, in counſel, beating their brains, and debating this Queſtion, *How man, ſinful man, might be delivered out of the hand of the Law, or from that condemnatory ſentence under which the Law had caſt and detained him, with ſatisfaction, or without dammage to the Juſtice and righteouſneſs of God, they could never have found it out, nor any thing like it. This is Gods own invention*; or, if God had ſaid to fallen man, *I ſee thou art in a loſt pitiful condition, but ſit down and conſider how I may do thee good, and not wrong my ſelf, how I may relieve thee, and not diſhonour my ſelf, ~~I will~~ freely do it.* If God (I ſay) had given man a blank to write down what he would have done to bring this about, he could never have found it out ; but muſt have periſhed for ever in his ſin. The thought of a Ranſom in this way had never entred into the heart either of men or Angels, if God himſelf had not revealed it. Therefore the Apoſtle *Peter* having ſpoken of the great diligence of the old Prophets ſearching into and inquiring about that great myſtery, the way and means of mans ſalvation, concludes (1 *Epiſt.* 1. 12.) *Which things the Angels deſire to look into.* The word there uſed notes a curious prying into that which hath ſome veyled or ſecret rarity in it. We may conceive the Apoſtle in that word alluding to the Cherubims, which by Gods command, to *Moſes*, were made with their eyes looking down to the Mercy-ſeat or propitiatory in *the Holy of holies* (Exod. 25. 20.) figuring the Ranſom in the Text; yea and expreſſed by the ſame Hebrew word. The living Angels do that which thoſe repreſentative Angels ſeemed to do, they look earneſtly at the myſtery of our redemption made, or ranſom given by Jeſus Chriſt. There is ſuch an exquiſiteneſs in this invention, the deliverance of man by Chriſt, that the Angels deſire to look into it, even as men deſire to ſee rare inventions. And this exceedingly commends the wiſdom of God in our redemption, that it was a ſecret to the very glorious Angels. They did not know it, but as it was made known to them ; nor did God (as it ſeems) make it known to them firſtly or immediately, but it was revealed to them, occaſionally by the revelation of it firſt to the Church ; as the Apoſtle doth more then intimate, (*Eph.* 3. 10.) *To the intent, that now unto principalities and powers in heavenly places* (that is the holy Angels) *might be known by the Church the manifold wiſdom of God.* As if, had it not been for the light given to and ſpread abroad in the Church, the Angels had been in the dark to this day about that matter. And doubtleſs if the Angels did not gather up their knowledge of that myſtery by the miniſtery of the Apoſtles preaching it to the world, in a way of information, yet by their contemplation of what was done in the Church, and of the goodneſs of God to the Church, they ſaw as in a glaſs that manifold wiſdom of God which before they ſaw not, or were ignorant of. Now if the holy Angels knew not this myſtery, but as it was revealed, much leſs could man. *We* (ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 2. 6, 7, 8, 9.) *ſpeak wiſdom among them that are perfect : Yet not the wiſdom of this woald, nor of the Princes of this world, that come to nought. But we ſpeak the Wiſdom of God in a myſtery,* &c. *Which none of the Princes of this World know* (who uſe to be the moſt knowing men in the World) *for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory.* As if he had ſaid, Surely the Princes of the World would have adored, not reproached and crucified Chriſt, had they underſtood who he was, or the work which he came about. And therefore the Apoſtle calls it not only a myſtery, but a great myſtery, and that there is not the leaſt queſtion, but 'tis a great Myſtery. (1 *Tim.* 3. 16.) *Without controverſie great is the Myſtery of goodlineſs, God manifeſt in the fleſh; this great Myſtery, which from the beginning of the World hath been kid in God* (Eph. 3. 9.) that is in the counſel and Decree of God, hath been alſo ſome way or other revealed by God almoſt as ſoon as the world began; It was revealed to *Adam* by the promiſe of the Womans ſeed ; and to *Abraham* by promiſe, that in his Seed all the Nations of the Earth ſhould be bleſſed ; It was revealed to the Church of the Jews in Ceremonies and Propheſies, and it hath been revealed to the Church both of Jews and Gentiles by the Spirit in the preaching of the Word, ever ſince Chriſt paid this Ranſom to this day ; and it had been hidden to this day, if the Lord had not revealed it ; 'tis therefore the *Lords invention.*

Παρακύψαι.

Eccleſia ex Judæis pariter ac gentibus collecta, quaſi ſpeculum eſt in quo contemplantur Angeli mirificam Dei ſapientiam, quam anteà neſciebant. Calvin.

Let me add this by way of inference. We honour men that bring forth any rare invention. And if it be an invention which alſo produceth profit and advantage to mankind, how are the Authors of it admired, and their names recorded? All the inventions of the moſt refined wits in the world, are dull pieces to *this invention*, the redemption of man by Chriſt. And as there is the ſtamp of an infinite unchangeable wiſdom upon it ; ſo the profit which comes in by it to mankind is infinite and ineſtimable. How then ſhould we honour God, both for bringing this wonderful invention to light, and giving us the benefit of it freely ! It had been great mercy, if God had delivered us upon our finding out and propoſal of a way to him ; but he hath not only delivered us, but found out a way himſelf, and plotted how we might be delivered. What a glorious mercy is this ! When *Darius* ſaw how *Daniel* was inſnared by his act or decree, he was extreamly troubled, and (ſaith the Text, *Dan.* 6. 14.) he *was ſore diſpleaſed with himſelf, and ſet his heart on* Daniel *to deliver him, and he laboured* (beating his brains and ſtudying) *till the going down of the Sun to deliver him*, yet could not, but caſt he was to the hungry Lions, only he told him (*verſ.* 16.) *Thy God whom thou ſerveſt continually, he will deliver thee. Darius* could not find a ranſom, any means of deliverance for his Servant and great Favourite *Daniel.* But when we had brought our ſelves into a ſnare, and muſt have been caſt to the Lyons for ever, to be torn by them, the Lord brought forth this rare invention, a Ranſom, whereby we poor ſinners are delivered out of the mouth *of the roaring Lion, who goeth about continually to devoure us.*

Secondly, Inaſmuch as deliverance is got by ranſom,

Obſerve, *Our deliverance is coſtly.*

Souls are precious, they are dear ware; Blood, and that the Blood of Chriſt is their ranſom; (*Matth.* 20.28. *Rom.* 3.2,5. *Eph.* 1.7. *Col.* 1.14. *Heb.* 9.12. *Rev.* 5.9.) in compariſon of which all the treaſures of this world are traſh, our Gold and Silver corruptible, and our very righteouſneſs a corrupt thing. Deliverances are obtained three ways.

Firſt, By power or plain force; thus *Abraham* delivered his Nephew *Lot* when he was carryed Captive (*Gen.* 14. 14.) *He armed his trained ſervants, born in his houſe three hundred and eighteen*, and reſcued him. I may ſay, the Lord Jeſus hath delivered us thus, even by force and power, he hath beaten all our enemies, and having broken and *ſpoyled principalities and powers, he made a ſhew of them openly, triumphing over them in it* (his Croſs ſpoken of in the former verſe) *or in himſelf*; that is, in his own perſonal power, not by any aid or forreign aſſiſtance received from men or Angels.

Secondly, Deliverance is obtained by price or payment. When our friends or country-men are taken Captives by *Turks* or others, we cannot ſend an Army to reſcue them, but uſually we do it by ranſom; we buy them again out of the enemies hand, or out of bondage. Jeſus Chriſt hath delivered us, not only by power, but by price, it was not (as hath been already ſhewed) by Gold or Silver, but by his own moſt precious blood, (1 *Pet.* 1. 18.) Jeſus Chriſt hath delivered us out of the ſoul-deſtroying hand of Satan by force, but he delivers us out of the ſin-revenging hand of his Father by price. Chriſt owed the Devil nothing (nor do we) but blows, but having undertaken our cauſe, he owed his Father as much as our debt and deliverance from it amounted to, a vaſt Sum, yet he had enough to anſwer it to the utmoſt farthing, and did, and ſo delivered us.

There is a third way of deliverance, and that is by ſupplication and interceſſion, which may be conſidered two ways, Firſt, by our own prayers and ſupplications; Secondly, by the prayers and ſupplications of others; which prayers of others are properly called interceſſions. The interceſſion of a man with man may deliver him from the wrath of a man. And the interceſſion of a man with God, hath wrought the temporal deliverance of ſome both perſons, and Nations; and therefore when the Lord was reſolved not to ſpare his people, he forbad the interceſſion of the Prophet (*Jer.* 14.11.) *Pray not for this people for their good*: And he profeſſed (*Jer.* 15. 1.) *Though Moſes and Samuel* (thoſe two mighty Advocates) *ſtood before me* (praying he means for them) *yet my mind could not be towards this people, caſt them out of my ſight*; In that God would not deliver his people upon their interceſſion, is an argument that he often doth. But 'tis the interceſſion of Chriſt alone which carryeth it with God (and that always carryeth it, for the Father always heareth him, that is, granteth his requeſts) for the deliverance of his people both from temporal, ſpiritual and eternal evils. This interceſſion of Chriſt is the fruit of his blood ſhed, or of the ranſom paid down for us. For as his blood purchaſeth our deliverance, ſo by his interceſſion it is given in or applyed to us. We have the impetration of our pardon by Chriſts ſufferings, and the application of it, by Chriſt interceding for us. So then, we are delivered both by power, and price, and prayer, in ſeveral and diſtinct reſpects; But the preſent Text ſpeaks of deliverance only by a price, *I have found a ranſom*, I am well paid, ſaith God, for mans deliverance. This ranſom every poor ſoul may plead before the Lord, for his deliverance both from ſickneſs, death and Hell. He that hath nothing to offer to the Lord (as indeed the beſt have nothing of their own worth the offering, and if they offer any thing of their own, of how much worth ſoever it may ſeem to be, it will not paſs nor be accepted, he (I ſay) that hath nothing of his own to offer) yet may tell him he ſhall be well paid; he may tell God he ſhall have more by ſaving him, then by damning him. If he damn him he ſhall have but his own blood (the blood of a creature) for ſatisfaction; but if he ſave him, he ſhall have the blood of his Son, the blood of God, as a ranſom for his ſalvation.

Thirdly, Obſerve, *Though the Goſpel was not clearly and fully revealed in thoſe elder times, yet it was then ſavingly revealed.*

How doth the grace of God ſhine forth in mans deliverance by a ranſom, in this Scripture; Here is nothing ſaid of deliverance from ſickneſs by medicines, but by a ranſom; and if they knew that deliverance from a diſeaſe muſt come in by a ranſom, how much more, that deliverance from damnation muſt come in that way? The old Patriarchs had the knowledg of Chriſt to come, and not only was there a knowledg of him to come in that nation and Church of the Jews, but the light ſcattered abroad, the Land of *Uz* had it, *Job* had it, as hath appeared from ſeveral paſſages of this Book, *Elihu* had it as appeareth by this.

Fourthly, Obſerve, *Not only our eternal deliverances, but even our temporal deliverances and mercies, are purchaſed by the blood of Chriſt.*

A believer doth not eat a bit of bread, but he hath it by vertue of the purchaſe of Chriſt; Chriſt hath bought all good for us, and Chriſt hath bought us out of all evil. Chriſt hath not only purchaſt deliverance from Hell, and ſalvation in Heaven for us, but he hath purchaſt deliverance from a ſick bed, and freedom from bondage to men for us. (*Zech.* 9.11.) *As for thee alſo* (ſaith the Lord) *by the blood of thy Covenant* (that is, the Covenant which I have made with thee) *I have ſent forth thy Priſoners out of the pit wherein was no water*; That is, from the Babyloniſh Captivity. The Jews were delivered from corporal ſlavery, as well as ſpiritual, by the blood of Jeſus Chriſt, and ſo are the Covenant people of God to this day. The blood of the Covenant ſerves to all purpoſes, for the good things of this life, as well as of that which is to come. Nothing elſe can do us good to purpoſe, or deliver us from evil but the blood of Chriſt. (*Pſal.* 49.7,8.) *They that truſt in their wealth, and boaſt themſelves in the multitude of their riches, none of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ranſom for him.* In ſome caſes, as *Solomon* ſaith, (*Prov.* 13.8.) *The ranſom of a mans life are his riches.* As a mans riches do often endanger his life (all the fault of ſome men for which they have ſuffered as deep as death, hath been only this, they were rich) ſo a man by his riches may redeem his forfeited or endangered life, he may buy off the wrath of man, and ſo ranſom his life by his riches. But all the riches in the world cannot buy his life out of the hand of ſickneſs; though a man would lay out all his ſubſtance, and ſpend all that he hath upon Phyſitians (as the poor woman in the Goſpel did) yet that could not do it. We need the blood of Jeſus Chriſt to help us out of a ſick bed, and from temporal ſufferings as well as from Hell and everlaſting ſufferings. And the more ſpiritual any are, the more they have recourſe to the blood of Chriſt for all they would have, whether it be freedom from this or that evil, or enjoyment of this or that good.

Therefore, Firſt, When we hear of a ranſom let us remember that we are all naturally captives. Here is a ranſom for our Souls and a ranſom for our bodies, we are ranſomed from Hell, and ranſomed from death, ſurely then, we are (through ſin) made Captives to all theſe.

Secondly, In that the ranſom is expreſt by a word, that notes hiding or covering, it ſhould mind us, that, *Jeſus Chriſt by his blood* (which is our ranſom) *hath covered all our bloody ſins*; and ſurely the blood of our ſins will appear not only to our ſhame, but to our confuſion, unleſs the blood of Chriſt cover them.

Thirdly, We may hence infer, *The Lord ſhall be no loſer by ſaving the worſt of ſinners.* His Son hath taken care for that, he hath undertaken to ſee his Honour ſaved, and his Juſtice ſatiſfied.

Fourthly, In all your outward afflictions and ſickneſſes; apply to the blood of Chriſt for healing, for help and deliverance.

Fifthly, Being delivered from going down to the pit, from death by ſickneſs, *bleſs Chriſt for his blood.* We are reſcued from the arreſt of death, from *Deaths Sergeant*, ſickneſs, by the blood of Chriſt. And remember that as Chriſt ranſoms us from going down to the grave when we are ſick, ſo Chriſt will ranſom us from the power of the grave when we are dead. (*Hoſea* 13.14.) *I will ranſom them from the power of the grave.* Which though it were primarily meant of the deliverance of the Jews out of *Babylon*, where they ſeemed to be not only dead but buryed; yet the Apoſtle applyeth it clearly to the ranſoming of the body dead indeed and laid in the grave, by the power of Chriſt at the general reſurrection (1 *Cor.* 15. 54.) *For then ſhall be brought to paſs that ſaying that is written, Death is ſwallowed up of victory. O death where is thy ſting? O grave where is thy Victory?* Yea Chriſt hath ranſomed all thoſe from going down to the pit of Hell, who take hold of his ranſom by believing. See that you have an intereſt in this ranſom, elſe you will never have deliverance from going down to that pit. We read not all the Scripture over of any ranſom to deliver thoſe, who are once gone down to that bottomleſs pit. They that are in the grave ſhall be ranſomed and recovered by the power of Chriſt, but they that go into Hell ſhall never be ranſomed from thence. Take hold of this ranſom that ye may have full deliverance, both from ſickneſs leading to death here, and from Hell which is the ſecond death hereafter.

VERS. 25, 26.

His fleſh ſhall be freſher then a childs; he ſhall return to the days of his youth.

He ſhall pray unto God, and he will be favourable unto him, and he ſhall ſee his face with joy; for he will render unto man his righteouſneſs.

In theſe two verſes *Elihu* proceeds, to ſhew the perfecting of the ſick mans recovery, the foundation of which was laid in the Lords graciouſneſs to him, ſpoken of in the former verſe; and the Declaration of it in that word or warrant, which went out from God to the meſſenger about his deliverance *from going down to the pit.*

This mercy or recovery in the full extent of it, hath a two-fold reſpect; Firſt, to his body; Secondly, to his Soul.

The mercy as it reſpects his body, is laid down in the 25. Verſe; *His fleſh ſhall be freſher then a childs; he ſhall return as in the days of his youth.*

The mercy which reſpects his Soul, or the ſtate of his inward man, is laid down in the 26. Verſe; *He ſhall pray unto God, and he will be favourable unto him, and he ſhall ſee his face with joy; for he will render unto him his righteouſneſs.*

In this recovery of his Soul-ſtate, we may further conſider. Firſt, the cauſes of it.

Firſt, The Inſtrumental cauſe, *Prayer*; *He ſhall pray unto God.*

Secondly, The principal or efficient cauſe of it, together with the firſt moving cauſe, The kindneſs of God; *He will be favourable unto him.*

Secondly, The conſequence of this his renewed Soul-ſtate; *He ſhall ſee his face with joy.*

Thirdly, The matter wherein this joyful ſtate doth conſiſt, in the cloſe of the 26. Verſe; *For he will render to man his righteouſneſs.*

So much for the ſcope and parts of theſe two verſes; which ſhew the bleſſed iſſue, which God gives this diſtreſſed and ſick man from his afflictions and ſorrows.

Verſ. 25. **His fleſh ſhall be freſher then a Childs.**

By *fleſh* he means the natural fleſh of the body; this fleſh ſhall be freſh, yea *freſher*, and not only freſher then it was before he fell ſick in his man-hood, but then it was in his child hood, *freſher then a Childs.* The word which we render comparatively, *freſher*, ſignifies to wax ſoft or tender. 'Tis no where read in the whole Bible but here. Grammarians ſay, it is compounded of an Hebrew word, which ſignifies to be green or flouriſhing (*Chap.* 8. 16.) and of a Syriack word which ſignifies *to increaſe and grow as a plant*; we render it as noting the man mending apace (as ſome ſick men upon recovery do) in his ſtrength and health. He ſhall be freſh-coloured, who before was pale and wan, he ſhall be fullfleſhed, who before was fallen and lean; ſo that, when he ſaith, *His fleſh ſhall be freſher then a Childs,* 'Tis an Elegant hyperbolical expreſſion, to ſhew his perfect recovery from that mortal ſickneſs to health. As if he had ſaid; *God will reſtore him ſo, that there ſhall be no ſcar, nor print, no dregs, nor appearance of his former diſeaſe ſeen upon him.* We know how tender and ſoft, how delicate and fair, the fleſh of a little Child is, how ſweet his countenance is, how full of good blood his veins are, how healthy and ſtrong (as to his time) his whole body is. Thus it ſhall be with this ſick man; *His fleſh ſhall be freſher then a Childs*; he ſhall be as if he were new-born, or entred a ſecond time upon the ſtage of this world. Our ſpiritual eſtate of renovation by Chriſt is ſet forth as a youthful, or child-like ſtate, as to the purity and perfection of it (*Eph.* 5. 27.) *Chriſt ſhall preſent us to himſelf a glorious Church, not having ſpot or wrinkle, or any ſuch thing.* The Church hath her ſin-ſpots and wrinkles now in her militancy; but when Chriſt ſhall preſent the Church at laſt triumphantly to himſelf, then as himſelf was ever without ſpot or wrinkle, ſo ſhall the Church be. Her fleſh ſhall indeed be freſher then a Childs, being perfectly recovered out of her ſpiritual ſickneſs. And thus, in proportion, *Elihu* aſſures the penitent ſick man, that, when his peace is renewed with God, and his ſpirit ſet right for God, his very fleſh ſhall be without ſpot or wrinkle, *freſher then a Childs.* The latter part of the verſe bears the ſame ſence;

רטפש *Mollitur, recreatus fuit, alibi quam hic non legitur. Ex* צשוב *quod virentem ſignificat ac vegetum(ut* cap. 8. 16.) *&* פש *quod ſyriacè ſignificat creſcere,* q. d. *revireſcet plantarum more & germinum.* Merc.

Notat perfectiſſimum ſanitatis modum, qui nullum tranſacti morbi veſtigium relinquit. Mert.

He ſhall return as in the days of his youth.

That is, he ſhall not barely recover his health, and get upon his legs again (as we ſay) he ſhall not meerly eſcape death and the grave, but he ſhall have an addition of bodily ability, he ſhall, as it were, be young again. As ſickneſs makes a young man look old, ſo recovery from ſickneſs makes the old man look young. That's *to return to the days of his youth.*

Hence Note; Firſt, *Bodily beauty, health and ſtrength are the gift of God.*

He gives them, and takes them away at pleaſure, or having taken them away, he can give them back when he pleaſeth. *He kills and he makes alive, he bringeth down to the Grave, and bringeth up,* as *Hannah* ſaid in her Song (1 *Sam.* 2. 6.) How low ſoever a man is brought by ſickneſs, either proper or metaphorical, the Lord is able to raiſe him up again. We read (*Verſ.* 21) in how pitiful a plight, the ſick man was, how rather like a carkaſs then a living man he lookt, *His fleſh was conſumed, that it could not be ſeen, and his bones which were not ſeen, ſtood out*; as much as to ſay, *He was nothing but ſkin and bones*; yet, when in that caſe all hopes were gone, and all natural helps failed, it was no hard matter with God to cure him. When the skill of the Phyſician, and the vertue of medicines fail, the power of God faileth not. As it is in reference to thoſe outward dangers and deſperate exigents, which we meet with in this world by enemies and perſecutors, when we look upon our ſelves as dead men, when all hope of deliverance ſeems paſt and gone, then the Lord always can and often doth deliver. The Apoſtle gives us his experience of it (2 *Cor.* 1. 9, 10.) *We had the ſentence of death in our ſelves*; he ſpake not thus in regard of ſickneſs, but of trouble and perſecution; As if he had ſaid, The malice and wrath of our enemies was ſuch, that we thought we ſhould never eſcape, *We had the ſentence of death in our ſelves,* but providence ſuffered it to be ſo, that *we ſhould not truſt in our ſelves, but in God who raiſeth the dead.* As it is (I ſay) in ſuch dangers, ſo in dangerous deadly ſickneſſes; when a poor creature hath the ſentence of death in himſelf, when he makes no other reckoning but to die, as good King *Hezekiah* ſaid of himſelf in his ſickneſs (*Iſa.* 38. 13.) *I reckoned till morning, that, as a Lyon, ſo will he break all my bones, from day even to night wilt thou make an end of me*; yet then as in his caſe, ſo in many caſes the Lord ſtretcheth forth a healing hand and takes the ſick man up again, to continue in the land of the living.

Secondly, From the way of expreſſing this, in alluſion to a Child or a youth.

Note, *God he can quickly make the greateſt changes in nature, either for the better or for the worſe. He can turn youth into old age, and old age into youth.*

That is, he can make a young or a healthy man weak as an old man, and an old or ſickly man ſtrong as a young man; and as it is with natural, ſo with political bodys, as with perſons, ſo with nations. A nation that is flouriſhing in its youth, heat, ſtrength and glory, rich and full of peace and plenty, God can bring an oldneſs upon it, and cauſe it to decline every day. The Prophet ſpake of the ſtate of *Iſrael* in this notion (*Hoſ*. 7. 9.) *Gray hairs are here and there upon them, and they perceive it not*; they thought themſelves to be in a very youthful flouriſhing condition (as a ſtate) but the Lord brought gray hairs, that is, they were decaying, withering, weakning, and became a decrepid nation; And when a nation is gray-haired, old and withered, he can make it youthful, he can recover the honour and power of it, and cauſe the dread of it to fall upon the neighbouring nations round about. He turns a land into a wilderneſs, which before was as the garden of God; And he can change that land into a garden of God which now is a deſolate wilderneſs. The unchangeable Lord is viſible and glorious in all theſe changes. The health and ſtrength both of the body politick and natural are at his diſpoſe. He can bring a decay upon what is built, and repair what is decayed, whether in nations or perſons. When the earthly houſe of this Tabernacle is ready to drop down into the grave, and crumble into duſt, God by a word ſpeaking, repaireth it to as much beauty and ſtrength, as when, the firſt ſtone being laid, the top-ſtone was ſet up. When *Naaman* had once ſubmitted to and obeyed the Prophets counſel, which at firſt he deſpiſed, and waſhed in *Jordan*, *His fleſh* (ſaith the Text, 2 *Kings* 5. 14.) *came again like unto the fleſh of a little child.* The holy Pſalmiſt charged his own Soul *to praiſe the Lord, and all that was within him to bleſs his holy name* (Pſal. 103. 1, 5.) *Who had ſatisfied his mouth with good things, ſo that his youth was renewed as the Eagle.* This renovation of his youth may be underſtood three ways; Firſt, as to his natural ſtate, or bodyly ſtrength. Secondly, as to his civil ſtate or worldly ſucceſſes, as to his honour and kingly renown. Thirdly, as to his ſpiritual ſtate, or the hightning of his gifts, graces, and comforts. 'Tis probable, *David* had found a declenſion in all theſe, and at laſt through the goodneſs of God and his bleſſing upon him, the renewing of them all from that oldneſs to a youthfulneſs again, like that of Eagles. We find the ſame alluſion in the Prophet (*Iſa*. 40. 31.) *They that wait upon the Lord ſhall renew their ſtrength, they ſhall mount up as with Eagles wings.* Some Naturaliſts ſay, the Eagle reneweth her ſtrength by ſucking blood when her ſtomach is ſo weak that ſhe cannot feed upon the fleſh of her prey. Saints indeed renew their ſtrength as the Eagle, while by faith they ſuck the blood of Jeſus Chriſt; and they get cure of their own weakneſſes, while they believingly lay hold upon his ſtrength.

Thirdly, We heard in the former Verſe of a divine Warrant iſſued out for this mans recovery; *Then he is gracious to him, and ſaith, deliver him.* Here we have the Warrant executed; *His fleſh ſhall be freſher then a Childs.*

> Hence Obſerve, *The commands and warrants of God are effectual, they ſhall be obeyed and made good to Man.*

If God ſay, deliver him from a ſick bed, he ſhall be delivered; *I will work* (ſaith the Lord, *Iſa*. 43. 13, 14.) *And who ſhall let it? For your ſake I have ſent to Babylon, and have brought down all their Nobles*, or *bars*, as the margin reads it; I will have it done, I will break all thoſe Nobles who are as bars in the way of my peoples deliverance. So when the Lord ſends his warrant for the delivering of a ſick man, he will break all thoſe bars and bands by which diſeaſes and ſickneſſes hold him as a priſoner in his bed. Nothing can ſtand againſt the word of God: as by a word ſpeaking he gave the creature a being, when it had none (The Lord only ſpake the word, *Let there be light, let there be a firmament*, &c. *And it was ſo*) Thus alſo the word or warrant of God reneweth a wel-being to thoſe, with whom it is worſt, or a comfortable life to thoſe, who are compaſſed about with the ſorrows of death. The word of God prevails over all, or is effectual to every purpoſe (*Pſal*. 33. 9.) *He ſpake and it was done, he commanded and it ſtood faſt.*

Further, In this reſtoring of the ſick, we have a ſhadow of the reſurrection. The raiſing of a dying man from his bed, is like the raiſing of the dead from the grave. The ſpring of the year is a ſhadow of the reſurrection, becauſe then the earth returns to her youth, and is freſh as a Child. In winter all things are dead and deſolate, their gloſs and beauty is gone; but then cometh the ſpring and all revives again, the face of the earth looks freſh, corn and graſs, trees and plants flouriſh and put forth their buds and bloſſoms. Now, what the ſpring of the year is to the body of the earth, the ſame is the return of health to the body of man; In both we have an exemplar of the reſurrection, as alſo in the regeneration or new birth of the Soul, by the power of the holy Ghoſt. For till then we are, like old ſickly men, in the old man, yea we are dead. But no ſooner doth the Spirit bring us forth by a ſecond creation into the life of the new man, but we become in ſpirit freſh like Children, our youth returns to us again; that is, we return to that ſtate wherein we were firſt created and ſet up by God in righteouſneſs and true holineſs; yea into a better and ſurer ſtate then that. Man through grace is not only as he was in the firſt day of his creation, but better; He returns to the day of his youth, and receives ſuch a youth as ſhall never decay into old age; yea the older he is in nature, the younger, that is, the ſtronger and more beautiful he ſhall be in grace. *He ſhall* (according to that promiſe, *Pſal*. 92. 14.) *Still bring forth fruit in old age, he ſhall be fat and flouriſhing.* This renewed youthfulneſs and flouriſhing condition of the reſtored ſick man in ſpirituals, is ſpecially and fully ſet forth in the next verſe.

For *Elihu* having ſhewed the recovery of the ſick mans body, he proceeds to the recovery of his Soul, which eminently returns to the days of its youth, both in the puttings forth of or exerciſing the grace of God received, and in receiving more grace, favour, and comfort from God, as will appear in opening the words.

Verſ. 26. **He ſhall pray to God, and he will be favourable to him, and he ſhall ſee his face with joy, for he will render to man his righteouſneſs.**

Elihu gave us, before, one means of the ſick ſinful mans recovery from his bodyly and Soul ſickneſs, that was the counſel and inſtruction given in by *the meſſenger, the interpreter, one of a thouſand.* And here he ſets down another means by which he is reſtored to both, eſpecially to the ſweetneſs of both.

He ſhall pray unto God.] The word here uſed **to pray**, ſignifieth not barely to pray, or put up requeſts to God; 'Tis a word with an emphaſis, implying the Multiplying of prayer, and that not the multiplying of prayer ſo much by number, as by weight; the pouring forth or multiplying of ſtrong prayers, or, as it is ſaid of Chriſt, *In the days of his fleſh* (Heb. 5. 7.) *the offering up prayers and ſupplications, with ſtrong crying and tears.* There may be a multiplying of weak inſignificant words in the ears of God by prayer; But the faithful people of God, through the Spirit, pour out many ſtrong words in prayer (as Chriſt did in the days of his fleſh) to him who is able to ſave them from death or danger, and give them life. When *Elihu* ſaith, *He ſhall pray*, he intends ſuch prayers, even the urgency, importunity, or vehemency of the Soul in prayer. When *Iſaac* ſaw his wife *Rebecca* was long barren (he was forty years old before he married, and many years being elapſed in marriage, there was no appearance of Children) *Then* (ſaith the Text, *Gen*. 25. 21.) *Iſaac intreated the Lord for his wife, becauſe ſhe was barren, and the Lord was intreated of him, and Rebecca his wife conceived.* It cannot be imagined that *Iſaac* being ſo holy and gracious a man, had not prayed for that mercy before; Doubtleſs he prayed that God would fulfil the promiſe to his Father *Abraham* in giving him a Child: but when he ſaw the promiſe ſo long delayed, or ſtick ſo long in the birth, *then he intreated the Lord* ('tis this word) he poured out many and ſtrong prayers. The word is uſed again concerning *Manoah*, after his wife had received a promiſe from the Lord of bearing a Son, afterwards called *Sampſon* (Judg. 13. 8.) *Then Manoah intreated the Lord, and ſaid, O my Lord, let the man of God which thou didſt ſend, come again unto us*, &c. Fearing they might not fully follow the inſtructions given his wife for the education of their ſon, he earneſtly begged of the Lord further direction in that matter. That prophecy either of the Gentiles to be converted, or of the return of the diſperſed Jews, expreſſeth them by this word (*Zeph*. 3. 10.) *From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia, my ſuppliants ſhall come, even the daughter of my diſperſed ſhall bring mine offerings.* As if the Prophet had ſaid; They ſhall ſpend themſelves in ſupplications at their return, they ſhall come with ſtrong

עתר *Multiplicavit, propriè verba fortia & magna copia fudit in oratione. inde* עתרים *ſupplices.* Zeph. 3. 10.

petitions, with mighty prayers, as making prayer their buſineſs. They ſhall not come with frozen affections and cold requeſts, but with hearts flaming up in the ardency of their deſires, and urgency of their ſupplications to the Lord. That's the force of the word; *He ſhall pray*; As if *Elihu* had ſaid, He ſhall not come with dead-hearted prayers and petitions, (as many do in their ſickneſſes and ſorrows) nor with a formal *Lord have mercy upon me, and help me*; but he ſhall make a buſineſs of it, he ſhall pray to purpoſe, he ſhall pray with his whole ſtrength. In which ſence the Lord bid *Ananias* go to *Saul,* afterwards *Paul* (Acts 9.11.) *For behold he prayeth*; intimating that he had never prayed all his days before; nor indeed had he (though being brought up a ſtrict Phariſee, he was much in the form of prayer) ever prayed in power before.

He ſhall pray.] Some underſtand this, **He**, relating to the meſſenger praying for the ſick man, *He ſhall pray, and God will be favourable to him.* That's a truth, 'tis the work and duty of the meſſenger to pray for, as well as adviſe the ſick man. But I conceive rather the perſon here intended praying, is the ſick man for himſelf, who after he hath been counſelled, directed, and adviſed by the meſſenger what to do, applyeth himſelf to the doing of it.

Further, Some, who agree that the ſick man is the perſon praying, yet underſtand it of prayer after his recovery; who finding himſelf healed and ſtrengthened, prayeth unto God for grace, or for a right uſe of his health and ſtrength. But I rather underſtand it of his prayer unto God in the time of his affliction; who when his ſins and tranſgreſſions have been laid before him by the meſſenger, and his Soul-ſoars ſearched to the bottom, and faithfully dealt with, and ſo brought to a ſight of himſelf, and of his ſin, with the ſad effects of it viſible upon his pained and conſumptive body, is then ſtirred to ſeek the Lord, and intreat his favour; *He ſhall pray unto God*;

Hence Note, *Sickneſs is a prayer ſeaſon.*

Prayer is a duty never out of ſeaſon, yet at ſome times more in ſeaſon, and moſt in ſeaſon in times of affliction; *Is any man afflicted, let him pray,* (*James* 5.13.) And among all afflictions the affliction of ſickneſs ſeems to be a ſpecial ſeaſon calling for this duty. Therefore in the 14. verſe of the ſame Chapter, aſſoon as he had ſaid, *is any man afflicted, let him pray*, it followeth, *is any ſick among you, let him call for the Elders of the Church, and let them pray over him*; 'Tis high time for us when ſick to look about us, to call in prayer-aid, or help from others in prayer; yet 'tis not enough for the afflicted, or the ſick to get others to pray for them, they muſt pray for themſelves: ſome put off the duty of prayer to others, and think it ſufficeth if they ſend Bills to Miniſters or move friends to pray for them. I know ſickneſs indiſpoſeth to prayer, bodily pain and weakneſs hinder continuance and abiding in the duty; but that doth not excuſe the ſick from praying for themſelves. To deſire others to pray for us in bodily ſickneſs, and neglect it our ſelves is an ill ſymptome of a ſick Soul; yea to deſire others in that caſe to pray for us, when we have no heart to pray for our ſelves, is too clear a prognoſtick that their prayers will not profit us, nor be prevailing for us. *Pharaoh*, when under thoſe dreadful plagues, could ſend for *Moſes* and *Aaron* more then once, and ſaid unto them, *intreat the Lord for me*, (Exod. 9.27,28. *Chap.* 10.16,17.) But we read not that he intreated the Lord for himſelf. *Simon Magus* when ſtruck with the terrible threatnings of *Peter*, ſaid, *Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of theſe things which ye have ſpoken come upon me.* (Acts 8.24.) But we read not that he prayed for himſelf. *The prayers of others are rarely beneficial to any, unleſs they either pray or have a deſire to pray for themſelves. Elihu* repreſents the ſick man praying for himſelf, *he ſhall pray*

Unto God.] There's the object of prayer.

Hence Note, *Prayer in ſickneſs, and in all other caſes muſt be directed unto God, and to him only.*

Divine addreſſes are fit for none but God; For Firſt, none are worthy of this honour but God; Prayer is ſo great a part of that honour and worſhip which is due to God, that it is often put for his whole worſhip. *Mine houſe* (ſaith the Lord, *Iſa.* 56.7.) *ſhall be called an houſe of prayer for all Nations.* Secondly, none can hear, that is, anſwer prayer but God; there is no help to be had but in him. As it is his glory to be prayed to, and ſuch a glory as he will not part with to any other, ſo it is in vain to pray to any other. *In vain is Salvation hoped for from the hills, and from the multitude of Mountains* (that is, from the greateſt worldly Powers) *truly in the Lord our God is the Salvation of Iſrael,* (*Jerem.* 3.23.) God only was *David's Hills* (*Pſal.* 121.1,2.) *I lift my eyes to the hills from whence cometh my help*; what theſe *hills* were, himſelf explains in the next verſe; *My help cometh from the Lord who made Heaven and Earth. Baals* Prieſts called upon *Baal, they cryed Baal hear us*, but ſaith the Text, *there was neither voice, nor any that anſwered* (1 *Kings* 18.26.) It is not only ſinful, but ſenſeleſs to pray to any other then God alone. That popiſh Doctrin of invocation to Saints and Angels, is not only a will-worſhip, but folly and dotage.

Fourthly, *He ſhall pray*, &c.

Hence Obſerve, *If we would have any mercy from God, we muſt ask it.*

God is ready to give, but he looks to be intreated, and he will be intreated: What God hath promiſed to do for us, his doing of it muſt be obtained by prayer. Working prayer, worketh the promiſes to their iſſue, yea prayer worketh the prophecies, whether of ſalvation upon *Sion*, or ruin upon *Babylon* to their iſſue. Promiſes and propheſies are the expreſs will of God, and ſhall certainly be fulfilled in their ſeaſon; yet if we deſire their fulfilling, we muſt pray that he would fulfil them; and 'tis a token for good that God is about to fulfil them, when the hearts of his people are drawn out much in prayer for their fulfilling. There are ſome mercies, in the promiſes, rightly called preventing mercies, they come upon us before we ask; ſuch is the mercy of our vocation, converſion or turning to God; we are naturally ſo far from praying while we are in the ſtate of nature, that we are continually blaſpheming or diſhonouring the name of God; but, as for perſons converted, (who are eminently called heirs of the promiſe, that is, of the good in the promiſe) if they will have any good out of a promiſe, they muſt ask it. When the Prophet had declared many propheſies of good and great and glorious things which God would do for his people, he concludes with this direction from the Lord. (*Ezek.* 36.37.) *I will yet for this be enquired of by the houſe of Iſrael to do it for them.* As if the Lord had ſaid, *I will not do theſe things unasked*, as you look I ſhould do theſe things for you, ſo I look you ſhould pray unto me that they may be done. A promiſe was made to *Abraham* (*Gen.* 22.17.) that his ſeed ſhould be multiplyed as the Stars of Heaven; now might not *Iſaac* his Son have ſaid, God hath promiſed me children, what need I pray for them? But *Iſaac* knew better, he knew that the promiſe was to be brought to the birth by prayer, therefore he intreated the Lord that he might have Children.

Fifthly, from theſe words *He ſhall pray* compared with the next, *and he* (that is God) *will be favourable to him*;

Obſerve, *The Lord is ready to hear when we pray, ready to give when we ask.*

As prayer is honourable and delightful to God, ſo fruitful to man. *Ask and it ſhall be given you, ſeek and you ſhall find* (Matth. 7.7.) *He ſhall pray unto God, and he will be favourable unto him.* Prayer ſhall not be loſt, nor vaniſh into air. There was never any faithful prayer loſt; though the prayers of many have not been anſwered in kind, that is, they have not had the very thing they asked for; yet they have had an anſwer to their prayers; and though prayer be not always anſwered in our time, yet there is a time wherein all faithful prayers ſhall be anſwered; one age reaps the fruit of thoſe prayers which another age hath ſown. The ſeed time is one age, the harveſt in another. Latter Generations get good by the prayers of the former. Though we who pray ſee not the fruit of it, yet many ſhall find the fruit of it; and how often doth the fruit of prayer appear preſently, how often doth the anſwer come in upon the very putting up of the requeſt? (*Iſa.* 65.24.) *Before they call, I will anſwer, and while as they are yet ſpeaking, I will hear.* While the word is their mouth, the mercy ſhall be put into their hand. While the Church (*Acts* 12. 5. 16.)

5. 16.) was praying, *Peter* came in among them. As if God had ſaid, *there's your prayer*. What the Prophet *Eliſha* ſaid (2 *Kings* 6. 33.) of the meſſenger ſent to apprehend him; *Is not the ſound of his Maſters feet behind him?* The ſame may we ſay ſomtimes of this meſſenger, holy and fervent prayer, is not the *ſound of the mercy prayed for at the very heels of it?* Thus cloſe doth *Elihu* put the ſick mans prayer and the anſwer of God, *he ſhall pray unto God*,

And he will be favourable unto him.

רצה
Gratis eſt, εὐδοκεῖν, *ſignificat vehementer velle ac delectari.* Merc.

That is, he ſhall have a gracious and a ſpeedy anſwer; *he will be favourable unto him*, or, *he will accept him*, as Mr. *Broughton* renders; 'Tis a very comfortable word, it notes not only to *wiſh well to, or to be at peace, but to be well pleaſed with another, yea to be delighted, and take pleaſure in him.* 'Tis not barely, to be appeaſed and reconciled, to lay down wrath and diſpleaſure conceived againſt a man, but it notes much ſweetneſs of ſpirit towards him, and full content or complacency in him (*Pſal.* 149.4.) *The Lord taketh pleaſure in his people*, (they are as the joy of his heart) *he will beautifie the meek with ſalvation*; he will not only ſave them, but adorn them with ſalvation; they ſhall not only be delivered (after they have layen among the pots, (*Pſal.* 68. 13.) from the blackneſs and filth of their adverſity, but they ſhall have a beauty put upon them, or (as it followeth in that *Pſalm* laſt cited) *They ſhall be as the wings of a Dove covered with ſilver, and her feathers with yellow Gold. God will be favourable* to them, that is, he will give them *favours* to wear for him he will put *marks* of honour upon them, they ſhall not only be benifited, but beautified and crowned with Salvation.

God expreſſed that higheſt favour and moſt indeared affection which he bare to his own Son, as ſerving him, by no better nor more emphatical word then this (*Iſa.* 42.1.) *Behold my ſervant whom I uphold, mine elect in whom my Soul delighteth.* What is or can be more delightful to God then his Son? And what can be more comfortable to man, then to hear and know, that God delighteth in him, and bears favour to him (through his Son) with the ſame affection as he doth to his only begotten Son? *He will be favourable unto him.*

Whence Note, Firſt, *God is well pleaſed with, he is favourable to, and delighted in an humble ſinner.*

When a ſinner is brought upon his knees and becomes a ſuppliant, when as he is laid low by affliction, ſo he lyeth low in prayer and ſupplication, then the Lord will be favourable to him, and ſhew his delight in him. The Lord delighteth not in the ſtrength of the Horſe, he taketh not pleaſure in the legs of a man (*Pſal.* 147.10,11.) No man is favoured by God, becauſe of his outward favour, becauſe he hath a beautiful face, or ſtrong clean limbs, yea not only hath the Lord no pleaſure in any mans legs, but not in any mans brains, how reaching ſoever, nor in any mans wit how quick ſoever, nor in any mans judgment how deep ſoever, nor in any mans tongue how eloquent or well ſpoken ſoever, but the Lord *taketh pleaſure in them that fear him, in thoſe that hope in his mercy; in thoſe that walk humbly with him, and call upon him. Let me* (ſaith Chriſt to his Spouſe, *Cant.* 2.14.) *hear thy voyce for it is ſweet*; he means it not of an artificial ſinging voyce, but of a ſpiritual praying voyce. That's the muſick which the Church makes for Chriſt. Nothing is ſo tunable nor takes the ear and heart of Chriſt, like the voyce of prayer and praiſe from a gracious heart. All the beauties and rarities both of perſons and things are dull and flat, yea weariſom and loathſom to God in compariſon of a gracious, honeſt, humble Soul. Princes have their favourites (they are according to the language of this Text) favourable to ſome above many, either becauſe they are beautiful and goodly perſons, or becauſe they are men of excellent ſpeech, prudence and comporment. All godly men are Gods Favourites, he is favourable to them not only above many men in the world, but above all men of this world, who have their portion in this life; And he therefore favours them; becauſe they are the purchaſe of his Son, and the workmanſhip of his Spirit, convincing them of, and humbling them for their ſins, as alſo creating them after God in righteouſneſs and true holineſs. *Such ſhall be his Favourites.*

Secondly, Conſider the coherence or dependance of theſe words, *He ſhall call unto God, and he will be favourable unto him.* Whereas, before, all his complainings and outcryes ſtood him in no ſtead, now being humbled effectually, and taking hold of the righteouſneſs ſhewed and offered him by the Meſſenger of God, he no ſooner makes ſuit to God but is heard.

Hence Note, *God firſt ſhews regard to the perſon, then to the offering, to prayers and ſervices.*

This truth may be underſtood two ways, Firſt, in reference to the ſtate of grace. When *Abel* and *Cain* brought their ſacrifices or offerings, *God had reſpect to Abel and his offering*, but to *Cain and his offering had no reſpect*, (Gen. 4. 4, 5.) *Abel* was in a ſtate of grace, *Cain* was not, ſo the Apoſtle ſtates their caſe, (*Heb.* 11.4.) *By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent ſacrifice then Cain, by which he obtained witneſs that he* (his perſon) *was righteous, God teſtifying of his gifts*; and what did he teſtifie? Surely that his gifts were brought in faith, and were preſented from a principle of grace, which *Cain* had not; and therefore God did not approvingly teſtifie of his gifts. Till we cloſe with God by faith, God doth not cloſe with our ſervices by acceptance. Secondly, as this is true in reference to the ſtate of grace, ſo in reference to ſomewhat in the preſent actings or diſpoſitions of thoſe who are gracious. 'Tis poſſible for a godly man to act ſo ſinfully, and to be ſo ill diſpoſed to the frame of his heart, that God may ſeem to deny acceptation to his prayers, and ſervices. *David* ſaid (*Pſal.* 66.18.) *If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.* And God told the Jews, his Covenant people, (*Iſa.* 1. 15.) *When ye make many prayers, I will not hear; your hands are full of blood.* Thus while they who have a ſtate intereſt in Chriſt, walk unworthy of it, they are under the frowns of God, and his diſ-acceptation of all their duties, till they renew their repentance and humble themſelves. And I conceive this was the caſe of the ſick man in the Text (in whom doubtleſs, he aimed at *Job*) whom *Elihu* granted to be a godly man, yet under great diſtempers of ſpirit, which muſt be healed and removed before he could ſo call upon or pray unto God, as he would be favourable to him, or give him teſtimony of his favour. Thus we ſee, in both theſe references, how the perſon of a man muſt be reſpected and in favour before his prayers can. For as we can have no benefit by the interceſſion of Chriſt, till we accept his perſon, ſo God will not give us any benefit by our ſupplications, till himſelf accepteth our perſons, which he doth only in Chriſt. Many would be ſaved by Chriſt, they would be pardoned and get to Heaven, they would enjoy the benefits and priviledges which he hath purchaſed for his people, but they neglect Chriſt himſelf; nor do they think of cloſing with his perſon. Now, I ſay, as unleſs we have reſpect to the perſon of Chriſt, and deſire union with him, we have nothing to do with his benefits; ſo unleſs God hath reſpect to our perſons, we get no benefit, no anſwer of our prayers.

Thirdly, Note, *To have the favour of God, or to be accepted with him, is the top and ſum of all deſireable favours.*

'Tis the Alpha and Omega, the firſt and laſt of all other favours, to find God favourable to us; if God be favourable to us, it matters not much who frowns upon us, or what foul weather we meet with in this world. And, as to be in his favour ſhould be the chief of all our deſires, ſo to be aſſured of his favour ſhould be the chief of all our ſtudies and cares (2 *Cor.* 5.7.) *Herein* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *we labour, that whether preſent or abſent we may be accepted of him.* The word notes to labour ambitiouſly; as if he had ſaid, we labour as much for the favour of God, as ever any of the ſons of ambition laboured for the favour of Princes, or regard with the Kings of this world. No man ever plotted or flatter'd and crouched ſo much to the Kings of the earth for favour, as we do to God for favour; *herein we labour,* We make it our buſineſs to be accepted with him; if God once accept a man, you may turn him looſe, he will ſhift for one. How compleatly happy the condition of ſuch a favourite is, will appear yet further in opening the next clauſe of this Verſe.

And he ſhall ſee his face with joy.

When once God is favourable to a poor ſinner, then he ſhall be *uſed or dealt with like a favourite.* Great favourites ſtand in the preſence of Princes, and frequently ſee their faces. Whomſoever any man favours he freely admits to his preſence, and takes delight in his company. Thus *Elihu* ſpeaks of Gods favourite, *He ſhall ſee his face with joy.*

There is a twofold interpretation of theſe words tending both to the ſame ſpiritual ſenſe.

Videbit Deus faciem ejus cum lætitia, i. e. hilariter cum intuebitur, vultu læto & facili eum reſpiciet, cum ante vultum ſ ıtus avertebat. Merc.

Firſt, Some by the Antecedent *He*, underſtand God himſelf, and by *his face* the face of the humbled ſick man; and ſo the ſenſe of this aſſertion, *he ſhall ſee his face with joy*, is plainly this: God will look cheerfully and ſmilingly upon the face of this poor ſuppliant; God will look upon him, as we do upon friends whom we favour & have much reſpect for. Friends may ſee content and joy ſhining in or ſtampt upon our faces, when we look them in the face. The content which we take in ſeeing the face of another is viſible in the ſmiles and joys of our own faces. As when we look ſowrely, angrily, ſorrowfully, ſullenly upon a man, when darkneſs is ſeen in our faces, and clouds gather in our brows, ready to diſſolve into a ſtorm, this ſpeaks we bear him no good will or rather that we bear him much diſpleaſure. So when we look pleaſantly upon a man, doth it not ſay, that we are highly pleaſed with him? To be ſure, when God is at peace with a repenting ſinner, he no longer frowns upon him, nor turns his face from him as an enemy, but entertains and welcomes him as a friend; which is directly oppoſite to *Job*'s apprehenſion of God at the 10. Verſe of this Chapter, *Behold he findeth occaſions againſt me, he counteth me for his enemy.* This is a ſweet ſoul-reviving and raviſhing truth. God beholds the face of his people with joy, he beholds them ſmilingly, cheerfully, delightfully. *David* calls it *The light of Gods countenance* (Pſal. 4.6.)

Et videbit (homo) faciem Dei cum jubilo. Merc.

Secondly, (and I rather conceive that to be the meaning of the place) moſt relate the *He*, to the ſick man; who having been upon his knees humbling himſelf before God, and finding God favourable to him, he then ſeeth his face, that is, the face of God, *with joy.* God fills his ſoul with a great deal of peace, comfort, and ſweetneſs in his approaches to him. Before, poſſibly, if he did but think upon God, he was troubled as *Aſaph* found (*Pſal.* 77. 3.) *I remembred God, and was troubled.* To a man in great trouble, eſpecially in trouble of mind, the very thoughts of God (who is our only help in trouble) may be troubleſom; but when he is ſet right and reſtored to the favour of God, or God being again favourable unto him, he beholds his face with abundance of joy. Here are yet two things to be opened, or two Queries may be made and anſwered for the clearing of theſe words.

Firſt, What is meant by the *face of God*; Secondly, what is meant by *ſeeing his face.*

To the former query, I anſwer; Firſt, the face of God is the eſſential being or perfect Majeſty of God, of which himſelf ſaith to *Moſes* (Exod. 33. 23.) *My face ſhall not be ſeen.* Secondly, the good will and favour of God is his face (*Pſal.* 80. 3.) *Cauſe thy face to ſhine*, (that is, be good to us) *and we ſhall be ſaved.* Thirdly, the *face of God* in Scripture is put for any manifeſtations of God to man God manifeſteth himſelf in wrath to ſome men, (*Pſal.* 34. 16.) *The face of the Lord is againſt them that do evil*; That is, he is angry and greatly diſpleaſed with them. He manifeſteth himſelf in love to others, and all ſuch are ſaid either (as in the Text) to ſee his face, or (as other Texts expreſs it) to have his face ſhining upon them. God is a ſpirit, he hath no face properly; but as the face of a man is that, by which he is known (if a man hide his face we know not who he is, though we ſee all the other parts of his body, he is a concealed man) ſo that whatſoever it is, by which God is clearly known, that in Scripture language is called his face. And hence Thirdly, the worſhip and holy ordinances of God, are called the face of God (*Gen.* 4. 14.) becauſe they are great manifeſtations of God, or becauſe God is manifeſted in his Ordinances, in his word and worſhip, who and what he is. After a ſick man, through the help of God, is recovered; he goes into the congregation to give thanks; and then he may be ſaid to ſee the face of God, becauſe there he exhibits the ſigns of his preſence, and doth as it were ſhew his face. There as in a glaſs we behold the face of God, that is, the diſcoveries of his holineſs, of his love and goodneſs; The face of God is ſeen in his works, as the Apoſtle teacheth us, (*Rom.* 1. 20.) *The inviſible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly ſeen, being underſtood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and godhead:* much more in his word and Ordinances, and above all in Jeſus Chriſt is God ſeen and manifeſted. Jeſus Chriſt is the face of God, *the brightneſs of his glory, the expreſs image of his perſon*, (Heb. 1. 3.) *The light of the knowledg of the glory of God ſhineth to us in the face of Chriſt.* Thus the face of God is beheld in the face of Chriſt. There we may ſee how holy, how juſt, how good, and merciful God is; all this glory of God appeareth to us in the face of Chriſt, who is the higheſt manifeſtation of God. Here in the Text by the face of God, we are to underſtand any demonſtration of Gods favourable preſence; in which ſence of the word, *Aaron* was to bleſs the Children of *Iſrael* (*Numb.* 6. 25.) *The Lord make his face to ſhine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee. The Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.* That is, the Lord manifeſt himſelf to thee in ways of grace and peace, in favour and in mercy. *David* prayed in the ſame ſtile (*Pſal.* 67. 1.) *God be merciful to us, and bleſs us, and cauſe his face to ſhine upon us*; that is, give us tokens and pledges of his favour.

Facies Dei iram, quandoq; favorem notat. Druſ.

Secondly, *How ſee we the face of God?* Doth not God tell *Moſes, No man can ſee my face and live.* How then can the face of God be ſeen?

I anſwer; The face of God (which was touched before) as taken for the eſſence of God, or for his eſſential glory, cannot be ſeen; That's too tranſcendent a glory for man to behold. What we ſee of God is but ſome ray or beaming out of light and glory from himſelf, we cannot ſee himſelf. The eſſential or perſonal glory of God, is that face which cannot be ſeen, but the declarative glory of God is a face of God which may be clearly ſeen by faith in the light of his word and works. And to ſee the face of God, is nothing elſe but for a man to *know in himſelf* (as the Apoſtles word is in ſomewhat a parallel caſe, *Heb.* 10. 34.) that God is gracious to him, that is, to have an aſſurance of his favour, or a reflect act of faith about it. The holy Spirit ſheweth us what God is, and what the things of God are (1 *Cor.* 2. 12.) *We have received not the ſpirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we may know the things that are freely given to us of God*; that is, that we may be enlightned with the knowledg of the grace, goodneſs, and favour of God to us diſcovered in the Goſpel. The Spirit ſheweth us this bleſſed face of God, and we ſee it by the actings of our faith; all our viſions of God in this life are viſions of faith; upon whoſe wings all our intellectual powers ſoar aloft and are carried up to God. Faith is not only a work of the will in conſent and application, but a work of the underſtanding by aſſent and knowledg. Thus we ſee God (as a Spirit is only to be ſeen) with a ſpiritual eye. The viſion of God is intellectual, the viſion of faith. Thus the reconciled ſinner finding God favourable to him; he *ſeeth his face*

Videre faciem Dei, nihil aliud eſt quam ſentire apud animum ſuum Deum propitium. Coc.

In Jubilo. *i. e. in quodam inexplicabili gaudio.* Aquin.

With joy.] The word ſignifies joyful acclamations, or ſhouting for joy, ſuch as men uſe after great favours done them and benefits or rather bounties beſtowed upon them. There is a ſeeing of the face of God with terror; ſo the wicked ſhall ſee God, that is, they ſhall have manifeſtations of Gods diſpleaſure; they ſhall be made to ſee him with ſhame and ſorrow: They ſhall ſay (when they ſee him) to the *mountains and rocks, fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that ſitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.* They who never ſaw the face of God with joy, ſhall ſee it with horror and amazement. Saints ſee it with joy, they have unexpreſſible comfort and contentment in beholding God; they ſhall rejoyce with ſhouting, as in the year of *Jubile*, when they ſounded out their joyes with Trumpets, or made a joyful noiſe. 'Tis no ordinary but a triumphant joy, with which the godly ſee the face of God. Extraordinary ſights affect with extraordinary joy. Now the face of God being the higheſt and moſt glorious ſight in the World, it muſt needs affect the beholder with a glorious, with a *Jubilean joy. He ſhall ſee his face with Joy.*

Firſt, It being ſaid, *He ſhall ſee his face with Joy*, upon his prayer, and the humbling of himſelf before God, Obſerve, *God hides or vails his face, till we humble our ſouls and ſeek his face.*

God will not be ſeen at all times, no not by his own people; There are ſeveral caſes in which he turneth away his face in anger, or draws a curtain (as it were) yea a cloud between himſelf and the Soul. And this he doth, Firſt, and moſt uſually to try his people, how they can bear his withdrawings, and to ſee whether or to what they will betake themſelves, when he takes himſelf ſo much from them, that they cannot ſee him. Secondly, He doth it often to chaſten and correct man for ſin. To be under the hidings of Gods face, is the ſaddeſt effect of ſin to a ſenſible or an awakened Soul. *David* made a grievous complaint becauſe of this, whatever the cauſe or occaſion of it was. (*Pſal.*13.1.) The abſence of God from him (though poſſibly but for a ſhort time) was ſo tedious to him, that he cryed out, *How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord, for ever? How long wilt thou hide thy face from me?* Even Jeſus Chriſt while he ſtood in the place of ſinners, bare the hiding of his Fathers face, as the ſum of all thoſe puniſhments which were due to and deſerved by our ſin. This preſſed him more then all bodily ſufferings, and made him cry out, while he hung upon the Croſs, *My God, my God* (not why haſt thou left me to be crucified, but) *why haſt thou forſaken me?* (Matth.27.46.) Thirdly, God hideth his face from ſome, becauſe the manifeſtations of it have not been received thankfully, nor improved rightly. We ought to give thanks for the light of the Sun ſhining in the air, and alſo do our work in it; Is it any wonder if God cloud and eclipſe the light of his countenance towards thoſe, who neither prize it, nor improve it? If you would always ſee the face of God, then be ye always ſeen at the work and in the ways of God.

Secondly, Obſerve, *It is the ſole priviledge of Gods Favourites, or of thoſe to whom he is favourable, to ſee his face.*

As no man can ſee that face of God, his eſſential preſence, ſo none but Godly men ſhall ſee this face of God, his comfortable or bleſſed-making preſence. *Without holineſs no man ſhall ſee the Lord* (Heb. 12.14.) There is a two-fold viſion or ſight of God, and that negative aſſertion may be underſtood of either or of both. There's firſt, a viſion of God on earth; thus we ſee his face, as was ſhewed before, in the actings of faith; For though the Apoſtle oppoſeth theſe two, faith and ſight; *We walk by faith, and not by ſight* (2 Cor. 5.7.) yet faith hath its ſight; we walk not by ſight as the worldly men walk, who do as they ſee, and make their eyes both the guide of their conſciences, and the in-bringers of their comforts; we walk not by outward ſight, nor do we make concluſions how to guide our converſations, by what we ſee. We walk by faith, and that's the ſight which we have of God while we are here on earth, which cannot poſſibly be without holineſs; faith being ſo great a part of our holineſs, and (by drawing vertue from Chriſt daily) the maintainer of it all. Secondly, there is a ſight of the face of God in glory. And if none can enter into glory but holy men, then no man without holineſs can ſee the face of God there. Thus Chriſt ſaith of the Angels, *They always behold the face of my Father which is in Heaven* (Matth. 18. 10.) Now we ſee the face of God darkly as in a glaſs (1 *Cor.* 13. 12.) That is, in his word and works, in his ordinances and appointments; in theſe we have glimpſes of the face of God, but *we ſhall ſee him face to face*; That is, as fully and comprehenſively as creatures can; we can never comprehend God, but we ſhall have comprehenſions of God ſo far, as finite can take in the fruitions of Infinite. *We ſhall ſee his face with Joy.*

Thirdly, Note, *It is the greateſt joy and happineſs of man imaginable to ſee the face of God.*

Any manifeſtation of God is a joyful favour, and a full manifeſtation of him fills the heart with joy; *Lord lift up the light of thy countenance upon us* (ſaith *David*, Pſal. 4. 6, 7.) *thou haſt put gladneſs in my heart more then in the time their corn and wine increaſed*; As if he had ſaid, I rejoyce in thy favour more then worldlings do in their beſt enjoyments. *Shew us the Father and it ſufficeth us*, ſaid *Philip* (John 14 8.) let us have but that favour, and we deſire no more; we have enough, we can have no more, if we may *but ſee the Father.* True joy ſtands not in any ſights, nor in the ſight of any thing here below, but in the ſight of God above while we are below, and in a hope that we ſhall at laſt get above too, and there have an everlaſting ſight of him; *in whoſe preſence is fullneſs of joy, and at whoſe right hand are pleaſures for evermore.* We read in the Levitical Law, *of the ſhew-bread*, which was to be ſet in the holy place, upon a Table (*Exod.* 25. 30.) The Hebrew is, *the bread of faces.* There are two reaſons of this denomination; Firſt, Becauſe that bread did ſhew the gracious proviſion that God made for them all the way they journeyed from *Egypt* to *Canaan*, or that he ſpread a Table for them in the wilderneſs where they had no harveſt; To which the Prophet may allude (*Jer.*2.2.) *I remember* (ſaith the Lord) *the kindneſs of thy youth, the love of thy eſpouſals, when thou wenteſt after me in a land that was not ſown*; That is, when thou didſt truſt me for thy daily bread. Secondly, It was called the *ſhew-bread*, to teſtifie the ſpecial preſence of God with them, and that his eye was always upon them, ready to do them good upon all occaſions. This was the high priviledg of the Jews then, they had the *bread of faces*; and this is the joy of the people of God now, that what ever good they have, it is the face of God to them; their bread is the *bread of faces*, and their wine is the wine of faces, *&c.* That is, they are a ſignification of the favour and love of God to them, or they look upon the love and favour of God manifeſted in thoſe things, much more then upon the things themſelves. Now if it be ſo great a mercy to have ſome manifeſtation of the face or favour of God, or that we are always in the ſight and view of God; What will it be to us when we ſhall always abide in the preſence of God, and ſee his face with joy?

Laſtly, Note, *A juſtified perſon hath confidence to look up to and think of God; He doth it with joy; and that's the fruit of a well-grounded confidence.*

Where the Spirit of the Lord is (ſaith the Apoſtle, 2 *Cor.* 3. 17.) *There is liberty*, a liberty of addreſs and approach to God, a liberty alſo of ſpeech and prayer to God. True godlineſs hath much well-regulated boldneſs with God; and as a Godly man ought with reverence, ſo he can with a well-grounded confidence look God in the face.

For he will render unto man his righteouſneſs.

This latter part of the verſe giveth an account of the ground of that joy which the ſick man found in ſeeing the face of God. *He ſhall ſee his face with joy* (ſaith *Elihu*) *for he* (That is, God) *ſhall render unto man his righteouſneſs.*

He ſhall render;] The Hebrew is, *he will make to return*; The word ſignifieth, Firſt, to return to a place from whence we have departed (*Gen.* 18. 10.) Secondly, to return or turn from that diſpleaſure which was once conceived. When the Lord is, as it were, in a hot purſuit of ſinners, he returns or turns from his anger. The Prophet ſpeaks in the negative (*Iſa.* 5. 25.) *For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is ſtretched out ſtill*, or he is not returned from his anger. Thirdly, The word is uſed to note mans return unto God by repentance (*Deut.*30.28.) We by ſin turn away from God, and by repentance we return to him. Fourthly, It ſignifieth to return by way of requital (*Pſal.* 116. 12.) *What ſhall I render unto the Lord* (It is this word) or, *What ſhall I return to the Lord for all his benefits? David* was in an holy muſe or maze, what teſtimony of thankfulneſs he ſhould bring to the Lord. *What ſhall I render?* And in that ſenſe it is attributed both to God and man; ſometimes in relation to evil done, and then it notes to render puniſhment or revenge (*Pſal.* 28. 4.) *Render to them their deſert*, ſo the word is uſed by *Joſephs* brethren (*Gen.* 50. 15.) *He will certainly requite us all the evil which we did unto him*; they were jealous of their brothers love when their father was dead. And as it notes a return of evil done in way of revenge, ſo alſo a return of good done in way of reward, thus here,

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He will render unto man.] It is an indefinite aſſertion not to this or that man, but to man. *With God there is no reſpect of perſons, but he that worketh righteouſneſs* (let him be who he will) *is accepted of him.* To man, that is, to every man God will render,

His righteouſneſs.] Righteouſneſs is of two ſorts; Firſt, There is the righteonſneſs of our ſanctification, which conſiſts; Firſt, in our turning from or leaving to do evil; Secondly, in our doing good: this is a righteouſneſs wrought by us and dwelling or inherent in us. The Hebrews by this word often expreſs that which we call *alms or charity*; and the reaſon is two-fold, why alms or acts of charity are expreſſed by that word which ſignifieth righteouſneſs; Firſt, becauſe our charity or our alms muſt be given of thoſe things that are rightly gotten. We muſt not do unjuſtly that we may be charitable, nor wrong ſome to relieve others. Secondly, becauſe charity and alms is a due or right to the poor that are in want; we call it charity, but it is a work of duty (*Prov.* 3.27.) therefore 'tis well expreſſed by *righteouſneſs*. He ſhall render unto man *his righteouſneſs* or *beneficence*. We may take it in this large ſenſe; for this alſo is a part of our ſanctification. And when it is ſaid, he will render unto man *his righteouſneſs*, we are not to underſtand it of righteouſneſs in kind, but of the reward or fruit of his righteouſneſs. For here *Elihu* ſpeaks of a perſon already righteous, or at leaſt of him who had repented of and turned from his unrighteouſneſs. So that, to *return* or render unto man *his righteouſneſs*, is to return the mercy promiſed to thoſe that are righteous. For as iniquity or unrighteouſneſs is often put for the puniſhment of unrighteouſneſs; ſo equity or righteouſneſs is often put for the reward of righteouſneſs, or for that which God according to his righteous promiſe returns unto a righteous perſon. Thus we may underſtand *Elihu* here. As if he had ſaid, *God dealt with this man before, as with a ſinner, or he afflicted him for his ſin; But now he will deal kindly with him as with a righteous perſon, and removing his affliction, and taking his hand off from him, he will render his righteouſneſs to him, he will not reckon with him for any former unrighteouſneſs.*

Reddet juſtitiam. i.e. præmium juſtitiæ. Druſ.

From this notion of the word, Obſerve, *God uſually deals with men as they are, and according to what they do.*

If a godly man ſin he ſhall ſmart for it; and if a ſinner return and repent, God will ſhew him kindneſs. Though the mercy and kindneſs which God ſhews to a returning ſinner, be not for his returnings or repentings, yet 'tis according to them. The favour which God ſheweth any man is for Chriſts ſake, or for what Chriſt hath done and ſuffered, but it is according to what himſelf hath done or ſuffered. *David* experienced this himſelf (*Pſal.* 18.20.) *The Lord rewarded me according to my righteouſneſs*, &c. That is, as I have been a righteous and juſt perſon, ſo the Lord hath dealt with me. And he gives the rule with reſpect to all others (*Ver.* 25.) *With the upright thou wilt ſhew thy ſelf upright, with the pure thou wilt ſhew thy ſelf pure*, &c. That is, Thou wilt be ſuch to men in thy diſpenſations, as they are in their converſations and diſpoſitions, in the frame and bent of their hearts and lives. And it followeth (*Ver.*27.) *Thou wilt ſave the afflicted* (or humble) *people; but wilt bring down high looks*; That is, thoſe that are proud and high-minded. The Prophet holds out the ſame truth in way of direction (*Iſa.*3.10.) *Say ye to the righteous, it ſhall be well with him, for they ſhall eat of the fruit of their doings*; That is, they ſhall have good for the good they have done, or according to the good which they have done. (*Rom.* 2. 10.) *Glory, honour, and peace to every man that worketh good, to the Jew firſt, and alſo to the Gentile.*

If any object; But may it not be ill with men that do good and are good? Doth the Lord always render to man according to his righteouſneſs.

I anſwer; It is well at preſent with moſt that do well; look over all the ſons of men, and generally ye ſhall find that uſually the better they are, the better they live.

Secondly, I anſwer; It ſhall be well with all that do well, in the iſſue and for ever. This truth will abide to eternity; *God will render unto man according to his righteouſneſs.*

Secondly, We may take the word *righteouſneſs*, for the righteouſneſs of juſtification; Mr. *Broughton* inclines to that ſence, *He will reſtore unto man his juſtice.* And preſently adds by way of gloſs; *Juſtice is Chriſt*; It is Chriſts Juſtice or righteouſneſs that is reſtored to man. Chriſt is indeed *The Lord our righteouſneſs* (Jer. 23. 6.) And thus ſeveral others of the learned expound theſe words. *He will render unto man his righteouſneſs*; That is, he will beſtow upon him or reſtore to him righteouſneſs in Chriſt; he will account him righteous, though he hath no righteouſneſs of his own which will hold in Gods account. *Elihu*, I grant, calleth it *Mans righteouſneſs, his righteouſneſs*; yet we may well underſtand him calling it ſo, not becauſe it is wrought by, but becauſe it is imputed to or beſtowed upon man as his righteouſneſs. *That is ours which is freely given us*, ſo is righteouſneſs in juſtification by faith in Chriſt. We have no righteouſneſs wrought in us or by us, for that purpoſe; but we have a righteouſneſs wrought for us, and freely beſtowed upon us for that purpoſe, which is therefore truely called *mans righteouſneſs*.

Juſtitiam, quam ei confert in Chriſto, reputans eum pro juſto. Jun.

But ſome may Queſtion, how can it be ſaid, that God doth render or return to man this righteouſneſs, That is, the righteouſneſs of juſtification? Can this righteouſneſs be loſt? Can a perſon juſtified fall out of a juſtified ſtate?

I anſwer; The righteouſneſs of juſtification (which is true alſo of the righteouſneſs of ſanctification) as to the ſubſtance and being of it cannot be loſt; But it may be loſt as to the comfortable enjoyments and fruits of it, or as to our apprehenſion of it; And the Lord is ſaid to return to man the righteouſneſs of his juſtification, not as if the grace it ſelf were loſt or taken away from him, but becauſe the ſight and ſenſe of it, the ſweetneſs and joy of it, the workings and effects of it having been loſt, are now reſtored to him again. When the Lord by his Spirit gives the ſoul a clear and freſh evidence of it, or reneweth the teſtimony of his Spirit with our ſpirits, that our ſins are forgiven, and that we are juſtified, beloved, and accepted in Chriſt, then the Lord is ſaid to render unto man his righteouſneſs; otherwiſe, neither the faith, by which this righteouſneſs is applyed, nor the righteouſneſs it ſelf which is applyed to us by faith, is at any time loſt or removed. Only in this ſenſe, as in many other Scriptures, ſo in this, the Lord is ſaid to render unto man his righteouſneſs, both of ſanctification and juſtification. For, when a believer through ſin hath blotted his own evidences, and God hath left him under the darkneſs of his own ſpirit, for his negligent, unwatchful and unworthy walking, or when the Lord hideth his face, to try him what he will do, whether *he will truſt in his name while he walketh in darkneſs and ſeeth no light*, when, I ſay, after withdrawings for either of theſe reaſons or for any other the Lord gives him in a renewed evidence of his love, then he is ſaid to *render unto man his righteouſneſs*. It is in this caſe as with a man that labours under ſome ſtrong and dangerous diſeaſe, which taketh away his ſenſes, and leaves him half dead; we ſay, the man is gone, yet he recovers, his ſpeech returns, and his ſpirits revive, and then we ſay, *his life is rendred to him*, or he is brought back from the grave, we have fetched him again; not that his life was quite taken away (for he was not a carkaſs in that condition, a body without a Soul) but his life was, for that time, withdrawn, there was no appearance of it, no ſenſible breathing, no motion, no vital viſible operation. Thus we may conceive what is meant by the rendring unto man *his righteouſneſs*.

Nom enim ablata juſtitia redditur ſed ablatæ juſtitiæ ſenſus. Coc.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *A juſtified perſon is a righteous perſon.*

He hath a clothing of righteouſneſs; that which we call *his righteouſneſs*, is not properly but imputedly his. It is not a cloathing of his own making, but made for him and beſtowed freely upon him. (*Rom.* 10. 3.) *They being ignorant of the righteouſneſs of God, and going about to eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs, have not ſubmitted themſelves to the righteouſneſs of God.* It is Gods righteouſneſs not our own, and yet it is our own as well as the righteouſneſs of God, it being imputed and reckoned unto us for our righteouſneſs; it is the believers righteouſneſs as given to him, it is Chriſts righteouſneſs as wrought by him.

Secondly, Obſerve, *A juſtified perſon under great afflictions and temptations often loſeth the comfortable ſight and ſenſe of his own righteouſneſs.*

And ſo may look upon himſelf as an unrighteous perſon, as having no righteouſneſs, or as being unreconciled and unjuſtified. For, as many bold ſinners and hypocrites preſume they have a righteouſneſs when they have none, and boaſt themſelves to be in the number of the juſtified when they are not. So many an afflicted and tempted Soul, who is indeed juſtified in the ſight of God, may be unjuſtified in his own. Great afflictions have an appearance of divine diſpleaſure, which ſtands moſt oppoſite to juſtification. As affliction is a kind of darkneſs, ſo it often leaves the Soul in much darkneſs. And he that is in the dark is full of fear, he is apt to Queſtion his ſtate, whether he hath any thing of God in him or no. For though it be not good for a Chriſtian always to begin to live, he ſhould come to a point, and labour for a certainty; yet ſome are brought to ſuch a paſs that their former evidences and experiences are even dead and lie proſtrate, and they conſtrained to begin a new reckoning about their ſpiritual eſtate, or, as it were, to begin again to live.

Thirdly, Note, *Mans righteouſneſs or juſtification, is as loſt to him when he wants the evidence, that is, the comfort, ſweetneſs, and peace of it.*

When his ſoul-ſtate is ſo ravel'd and intangled, that he can make nothing of it, then his righteouſneſs is as loſt. *Thoſe things which appear not, are to us as if they were not. Not to know what we have, is a degree of not having.* When grace doth not act or is not uſed, we are ſaid in Scripture to lack grace, or to have none. (2 *Pet.* 1. 9.) *But he that lacketh theſe things is blind, and cannot ſee afar off.* The whole context carrieth it of believers, who are in a ſtate of grace, who yet not uſing grace are ſaid to lack it, and are called blind, as not able to ſee afar off, how it was with them when the work of converſion firſt began, and ſo have upon the matter forgotten that they were ever purged from their old ſins. That is, they act as a man that hath never had any acquaintance with God, or knew ſo much as the meaning *of repentance from dead works.* He, in the Goſpel, who had but one talent and did not uſe it, is ſaid to have none, *From him that hath not ſhall be taken away even that he hath* (Matth. 25. 29.) 'Tis a ſtrange expreſſion to ſay, that ſhall be taken away from a man which he hath not; yet the idle ſervant is ſaid not to have that one talent which he had, becauſe he did not uſe it, but laid it by as a dead ſtock. Now, as in reference unto the grace of ſanctification in us, when we do not act, we are ſaid to lack it, or not to have it, ſo in reference to the peace of juſtification, when we have not the comfort of it, we are ſaid to be without it. And therefore when peace is reſtored to the Soul, righteouſneſs or juſtification is reſtored alſo.

Further, from the connexion of theſe words, *He ſhall ſee his face with joy; for he will render unto man his righteouſneſs.*

Note, Fourthly, *When the ſight of our righteouſneſs or juſtified ſtate in Chriſt returns to us, our comforts return.*

We may be juſtified or in a juſtified ſtate, and not rejoyce. But if we know we are in a ſtate of juſtification, we cannot but rejoyce. It will make a man rejoyce to purpoſe, when he ſeeth the righteouſneſs of juſtification is clearly his (*Iſa.* 45. 25.) *Surely ſhall one ſay in the Lord have I righteouſneſs and ſtrength: One ſhall ſay this:* He ſhall not only have righteouſneſs in the Lord, but he ſhall ſay he hath; that is, he ſhall be able to make it out; he ſhall have the light of it upon his ſpirit, and then as it followeth in the Prophet; *In him ſhall all the ſeed of Iſrael be juſtified and ſhall glory.* When they are able to ſay this, then they ſhall not only rejoyce but glory. Glorying is the height of joy, or joy is in its full ſtrength. The Apoſtle ſaith (*Rom.* 14. 17.) *The kingdom of God is not meat and drink,* (What is it then?) *but righteouſneſs* (and what elſe?) *peace and joy in the holy Ghoſt.* Righteouſneſs brings in peace, that's the firſt fruit; The war is ended, the controverſie determined between God and the Soul, and when once peace is entred, joy will follow. It is uſual to make triumphs, when, a formerly broken, peace is made between two nations. When *Abimelech* ſent commiſſioners to make a covenant of peace with *Iſaac,* the holy Story ſaith (*Gen.* 26. 30.) *He made them a feaſt, and they did eat and drink.* Surely when God ſends his holy Spirit to ſpeak peace to a troubled Soul (againſt *whom his terrors have been ſet in array* (as *Job* said in his own caſe, *Chap.* 6. 4.) *and the arrows of the Almighty within him have drunk up his ſpirit*) he (I ſay) having his peace thus reſtored to him, cannot but have the joy of the Lord reſtored to him, as *David* prayed his might (*Pſal.* 51. 12.) *Reſtore unto me the joy of thy Salvation;* That is, ſhew me that I am juſtified, that my ſin is pardoned; this will bring back into my boſom the joy of thy ſalvation, and my drooping ſoul ſhall be not only refreſhed but feaſted as with marrow and fatneſs. Joy is a certain conſequent upon the ſight of our juſtification; Yea joy is not only a conſequent, but a fruit and effect of it; joy floweth out of the nature of it; nor is it ever interrupted or ſuſpended, but upon the hiding of righteouſneſs out of our ſight. And therefore joy returns unfailably when the Lord is pleaſed thus *to render unto man his righteouſneſs.*

VERS. 27, 28, 29, 30.

He looketh upon men, and if any ſay, I have ſinned, and perverted that which was right, and it profiteth me not;

He will deliver his Soul from going into the pit, and his life ſhall ſee the light.

Lo, all theſe things worketh GOD oftentimes with Man.

To bring back his Soul from the pit, and to be enlightned with the light of the living.

WE had the bleſſed iſſue of the Lords dealing with the ſick ſinner in the former verſe. Now, in the two firſt verſes of this context, we have the ſame caſe and iſſue put in general with reference to any man. And in the two latter, *Elihu* recapitulates or ſums up the whole matter, and then applyeth it to *Job* perſonally and particularly in the three laſt verſes of the Chapter.

He looketh upon men, &c.

The word notes a ſtrict beholding and fixing both of the outward and inward eye, that of the mind, with that of the body. 'Tis here, after the manner of men, attributed to God; He marks and animadverts upon men, how it is with them, or how they ſtand diſpoſed and affected.

ישר à radice שור *inſpexit, intentis & fixis oculis intuitus eſt.*

Yet there is a difference among interpreters, who is the antecedent to the word **He.** *He looketh upon men.* The doubt or Queſtion is to whom this relative pronoun *He* hath reſpect; whether to God or to the ſick man lately ſpoken of.

Some underſtand it chiefly of the ſick man recovered. *He looketh upon men;* That is, the ſick man looketh upon thoſe about him; and ſaith, *I have ſinned and perverted that which is right.* As if being raiſed from his ſick bed, he ſhould raiſe himſelf up, to give glory to God by confeſſing and acknowledging before men, that he had ſinned in perverting the rule of righteouſneſs given him to walk by, and had found by dear-bought experience, that *it profited him not.* The Italian tranſlater ſaith, *He afterwards ſhall turn himſelf towards man, and ſay, &c.* That is, he ſhall preach Gods grace to ſinful man, and propoſe himſelf an example of it, magnifying the grace of God to him, and acknowledging his own vileneſs. They who inſiſt upon this expoſition render the 28. verſe as the continued ſpeech of the ſick man, making it out to this effect, *I have ſinned and perverted that which was right, yet he hath delivered, or will deliver my Soul from going into the pit, and my life ſhall ſee the light.*

Qui hoc modo afflictus fuit, reſipiſcens intuetur homines & dicet. Druſ.

Fructum alium miſericordiæ domini in afflictum ſubjungit, quod ille liberatus, & culpam ſuam coram cæteris hominibus agnoſcet & Dei miſericordiam in ſe confitebitur ut alios ædificet, &c. Merc.

It muſt be granted, that to look upon or behold man, is in Scripture, a deſcriptive periphraſis or circumlocution, expreſſing a man recovered from ſome dangerous & deadly ſickneſs. And therefore when *Hezekiah* thought his ſickneſs was to death, and his caſe deſperate; He thus bemoned himſelf (*Iſa.* 38. 11.) *I ſhall not ſee the Lord, even the Lord in the land of the living; I ſhall behold man no more with the inhabitants of the world.* But, ſaith *Elihu,* the ſick man being perfectly recovered, talks with and looks upon men; And the firſt diſcourſe he iſſueth, is a confeſſion of repentance for his iniquity; *I have ſinned, I have perverted that which was right, and it profiteth not:* And his next is a confeſſion of praiſe for his recovery; *He hath delivered,* or I am aſſured *he will deliver my Soul from going down to the pit, and my life ſhall ſee the light.* This is a profitable expoſition;

and much inſiſted upon by ſome very learned Interpreters and therefore I ſhall make a little improvement of it by this brief obſervation.

It is our duty being recovered from ſickneſs, to confeſs and make known the goodneſs of God and our ſinfulneſs to to thoſe that are about us.

There is a three-fold confeſſion; firſt, of faith, that we believe what God hath revealed and promiſed to do for us. Secondly, of praiſe, that we thankfully acknowledg what God hath done for us according to his promiſe. Thirdly, of repentance that we are heartily ſorrowful for and bewail, what we have done againſt the command of God. We ſhould be aſhamed to ſin before men, but let us not be aſhamed to confeſs our ſinfulneſs, and (in ſome caſes) our ſpecial ſins before men. Though we neither impoſe nor extort particular confeſſions from men (as the Papiſts do) yet it is good for men who have been under the afflicting hand of God, and have had great experience of his mercy in raiſing them up, to declare what God hath done both for Soul and Body, that others may be bettered by their experiences.

But I ſhall not ſtay upon this, becauſe our tranſlation (which is clear and ſafe) runs another way, making the antecedent to this *he*, to be God; *he*, that is, God *looketh upon men, and ſaith, If any ſay, that I have ſinned, and have perverted that which is right, and it profited me not,* Then (as it followeth) *He will deliver him from going down to the pit, and his life ſhall ſee the light.* The ſenſe of the context in general, is plain; *God looketh upon men, and if he ſeeth them penitent, he will have mercy upon them, and deliver them, or give them that which is better then bodily deliverance.* More diſtinctly;

He looketh upon men.] It is the work of God at all times to look upon men; and he looketh ſo upon all men, as if he had but one man to look upon. His look upon men is not a bare look, but a conſidering, and an obſerving look. He ſo looks upon men, that he looks through them He looks upon them, and takes notice what they are, how it is with them, what they are doing, and at what they are driving. He looks upon them to conſider both the frame of their hearts, and the courſe of their lives: yea his looking is an expecting: He ſo looketh upon man, as looking for ſomewhat from man, or as deſiring to ſee ſomewhat in him. Though God hath no need of us, nor of any thing we can do, yet he looketh, waiteth, or hath an expectation, of ſomewhat to be done by us. He looketh upon ſick men, to ſee how they take it; with what patience they bear affliction, what the workings of their hearts are, what their repentings, what the actings of their faith; ſuch things as theſe the Lord looketh for from moſt men, moſtly from men under the rod, under ſad and ſorrowful diſpenſations. And the words following ſhew what it is expreſly which the Lord looketh for. Yet before I open them, note in general,

God loves to ſee occaſion of doing good to man.

What we love to do, we love the opportunities of doing it. The Lord is good and he loveth to do good, and therefore he is expreſſed as one troubled when he wants, and as one pleaſed when he hath the occaſions of doing it. We may take up that ſence eminently from that moſt pathetical wiſh (*Pſal.* 81. 13, 14, 15, 16.) *O that my people had hearkned unto me, and* Iſrael *had walked in my ways, I ſhould ſoon have ſubdued their enemies, and turned my hand againſt their adverſaries. The haters of the Lord, ſhould have ſubmitted themſelves, but their time ſhould have endured for ever: I ſhould have fed them alſo with the fineſt of the wheat,* &c. As if the Lord had ſaid, how glad ſhould I have been if my people had been but fitly qualified to give me occaſion of removing all evil from them, and of doing them all manner of good. The holy Prophet ſpeaks the heart of God in the ſame readineſs (*Iſa.* 30. 18.) *Therefore will the Lord wait that he may be gracious unto you, therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you.* As if he had ſaid, The Lord expects your reformation, that he may not proceed in rigour againſt you, or as ſome conceive rather, he only delayeth his putting an end to your troubles, till ye are humbled, expecting a ſeaſonable time to ſhew you that mercy in beſtowing of which he will exalt and advance his own name and honour, when once he ſeeeth you fitted and duly prepared to receive it. *The Lord* (ſaith *David,* Pſal. 14. 2.) *looked down from Heaven upon all the Children of men, to ſee if there were any did underſtand and ſeek God.* There he is repreſented looking down from Heaven to ſee if any did underſtand, as here, *he looketh upon men* to ſee if any do repent, *ſaying, I have ſinned,* &c. The Lord often, ye always looketh down upon Nations, Cities and People, to ſee if any have a right underſtanding of him, or a will with upright affections to him. The Lord at this day is looking upon the ſick, and looking upon the ſound, to ſee if there are any, who are going on faithfully in a right way, or repenting that they have gone wrong. *He looketh upon men; and if any ſay,*

I have ſinned.] In this latter part of the verſe, we have the matter expreſſed which the Lord looketh upon men for, 'tis repentance and godly ſorrow for ſin; *If any ſay, I have ſinned*; that is, if any repent. When the Lord ſaith, *If any ſay, I have ſinned,* he doth not mean it of a bare ſaying ſo, but, if any ſay ſo, laying his ſin to heart; if any ſay ſo from a true ſence of the evil of ſin; if any ſay ſo burden'd with ſin, and taſting the bitterneſs of it; if any ſhall ſay, *I have ſinned,* and ſay it thus, then *&c.* The word which we tranſlate *Sinned,* notes a miſtake of our aim or way; as if it had been ſaid; *If any man ſay,* I have gone beſides the line, and done beſides the rule. Sin is in all men a miſſing of the mark, and a ſtepping out of the right path; it is alſo in very many, as 'tis expreſſed in the next clauſe, *a perverting of that which is right. If any ſay, I have ſinned,*

And perverted that which is right.] The word implyeth more then osdinary ſinning, more then ſins of infirmity, which ariſe from ignorance and miſtake, even thoſe which are committed with a reſolvedneſs of Spirit, and purpoſe of heart; or they imply not thoſe ſins which a man falls into unadviſedly and unawares, but thoſe which he commits upon deliberation, and in the eye of the Law, that ſhewing him plainly what is right, and that he ought not to pervert it. So then in ſtrictneſs of ſenſe, *to pervert that which is right,* is to be willingly, yea wilfully unrighteous. The Church making a gradual confeſſion of her ſin by three ſteps, puts this word in the midſt (*Pſal.* 106. 6.) *We have ſinned with our fathers, we have committed iniquity* ('tis this word) or done that which is *crooked and perverſe*) *we have done wickedly. Cain,* the firſt man born, ſinned thus (*Gen.* 4. 13.) *My puniſhment is greater then I can bear* (ſo we render) or (as we put in the Margin) *Mine iniquity is greater then can be forgiven. Cain's* ſin was a perverſneſs, he knew he perverted that which was right in ſlaying his Brother. So that, here we have the confeſſion of ſin, with the aggravation of it, *a notorious ſin.* The penitent perſon doth not only ſay, I have ſinned, but I have ſinned greatly, or I have *perverted that which was right.* To ſin, and to pervert that which is right, are materially the ſame; only the latter intimates the manner how a ſin is committed, namely, when we would not be ruled by the Law, but accommodate the Law (as it were a leaden or *Lesbian* rule) to ſerve our luſts, ſo perverting that which was right, that we might countenance and embolden our ſelves in doing wrong. If any ask

עוה *Curvus obliquus contortus perverſus. Latini dicunt curvos mores.*

What is right? Surely, *right* is firſt, the Law, ſecondly, that which is done according to Law. *The ſtatutes of God are right, rejoycing the heart* (Pſal. 19. 8.) The word of God is right, and the rule of right, yea it is a ruling right. To pervert that which is right, or to pervert the Law of righteouſneſs, is to act againſt the light and convictions of Conſcience which will be our Judg. One of the Latine Interpreters uſeth a harſh and coarſe word to preſs this by; yet full and proper to the ſcope; *I have tortified* (or writhed and bended) *that which was right.* Another renders it, *I have prevaricated from that which was right.* Our word gives the ſence fully enough, *I have ſinned, and perverted that which was right.*

Peccavi & rectum tortificavi. Cajet. *Prævaricatus ſum à probitate.* Tygur.

Hence Note, Firſt, *Sin muſt be confeſſed. The Lord looks for it. He looketh upon men to ſee whether any will ſay, I have ſinned.*

He will have their ſin out of their own mouths. When *Nathan* brought the parable home to *David* and ſaid, *Thou art the man,* he preſently fell into confeſſion, *I have ſinned* (2 Sam. 12. 13.)

But ſome may ſay, Is this confeſſion of ſin ſufficient to ſay, *I have ſinned.*

I anſwer; Firſt, a general confeſſion of ſin, or that we have ſinned is not ſufficient, unleſs we are alſo willing and ready to confeſs before the Lord all our particular ſins. Some are ready enough to ſay, *they have ſinned*, who yet will ſcarce be brought to acknowledg any particular ſin; yea many ſay, they are great ſinners, who know not how or in what they have ſinned, nor what it is to ſin. Therefore barely to ſay, *I have ſinned*, is not a Goſpel-confeſſion of ſin. I anſwer, Secondly, Though a general confeſſion is only expreſſed in this and many other Scriptures, yet a ſpecial confeſſion is intended. The prodigal Son (*Luke* 15. 19.) Said, *I will return to my Father, and I will ſay to my Father, I have ſinned againſt Heaven, and againſt thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy Son.* He did not enumerate the particular evil acts he had committed and was guilty of, yet doubtleſs he had them as a burden upon his heart, and was willing to unburden himſelf of them, one by one in a hearty and heart-afflicting confeſſion. The publican (*Luke* 18. 13.) *ſtood afar off, and durſt not lift up his eyes to Heaven, but only ſaid, God be merciful to me a ſinner.* He ſtruck at all his ſins, though he did not by name touch any one of them. He that ſaith (knowing what he ſaith) *I have ſinned*, will not hide any one of his ſins; And he that indeed and truth confeſſeth any one, will cover none of his ſins. Thoſe ſins may be pardoned which are not expreſly confeſſed, but if we conceal or hide any ſin, and will not bring it forth in confeſſion we cannot, in faith, expect the pardon of it.

Peccatores ſe eſſe pleriq; confitentur etiam qui ſe nil peccaſſe non credunt. Greg. l. 24. Moral. c. 12.

Again, Conſider the time or ſeaſon when the Lord looked for this confeſſion; It was a time of trouble and affliction, of pain and ſorrow, the man was ſick, or but in a way of recovery out of his ſickneſs.

Hence Note, *Times of affliction are ſpecial times of confeſſion and repentance.*

Confeſſion of ſin muſt not be omitted (eſpecially not neglected) in our moſt comfortable days, much leſs in a day of trouble. A ſad and troubled ſtate calls us aloud to a gracious ſadneſs of heart, to the ſearch of our hearts and lives, which are preparatory to repentance and godly ſorrow. Uſually in proſperity men will not be at leiſure to ſearch their hearts, and take notice of their ſins. Therefore the Lord draweth them to confeſſion by drawing them from the world, by laying them upon their ſick beds, or by bringing them into ſtraits. And as when affliction is upon perſons or families, then is a ſpecial time to confeſs perſonal and family ſins; ſo to confeſs national ſins, is moſt ſeaſonable when affliction hath ſeized upon kingdoms and nations. The want and neglect of that publick confeſſion and ſorrow in ſuch a day is mightily aggravated, and moſt ſeverely threatned (*Iſa.* 22. 12,13,14.) God looketh and loveth to hear every man, ſaying, and a whole nation, as one man, ſaying in a day of ſorrow and trouble, *I have ſinned, and perverted that which was right.*

From the latter words, *I have perverted that which was right*, or, *the Law.*

Note, Firſt, *The law of God is the rule of righteouſneſs; a right rule.*

All rightneſs and righteouſneſs is comprehended in it, *and meaſured by it.*

Secondly, Learn, *Sin is a perverting of that which is right.*

Every (the leaſt) ſin is ſo in ſome degree, though here, poſſibly, ſins are intended of any, even of the higheſt degree. The Apoſtle defining ſin, calleth it (1 *John* 3.4.) *A tranſgreſſion of the Law*; and if ſo, it muſt needs be a perverting of that which is right: For what is or can be right, if the rule of righteouſneſs be not. What the Apoſtle ſpake to *Elymas* (Acts 13. 10.) *Wilt thou not ceaſe to prevert the right ways of the Lord*, ſhews the nature and effect of every ſin, and the more ſinful any ſin is, by ſo much the more doth it pervert that which is right. Some ſinners are ſaid to make void the law of God, to pervert it, as if they would quite ſubvert and diſanul it. *David* remembers God of ſuch, and deſires him to look to them betimes (*Pſal.* 119. 126.) *It is time for thee to work, for they have made void thy Law*; That is, they have done their beſt, or worſt rather, their utmoſt to make it void, and of no force; 'Tis not in the power of all the powers of the world, to vacate, reſcind or null one tittle of the law of God; Heaven and Earth ſhall paſs away before that, yet many attempt it, yea ſome do that which will be found and interpreted a making void of the law of God, who think themſelves great zealots for, or very zealous of the law. That will be the caſe of many, eſpecially, of all will-worſhippers.

Again, Conſider though the perſon here ſpoken of had not only ſinned, but perverted that which was right, that is, ſinned perverſly, yet upon confeſſion the Lord deals graciouſly with him.

Hence Note, *The free grace of God extends to the pardon of the greateſt ſins, even ſins of perverſneſs.*

Where ſin aboundeth, Grace aboundeth much more (*Rom.* 5. 20.) whether the abounding of ſin be taken in the number of it, or in the weight of it, that is, in the greatneſs and aggravations of it, grace hath its ſutable ſuper abounding (*Num.* 23.21.) When *Balaam* would ſhew that the people of *Iſrael* were a people impenetrable by his curſes, he ſaith, *The Lord hath ſeen no iniquity in Jacob, nor perverſneſs in Iſrael.* The word there uſed is of a different root from this in the Text, but the ſence is the ſame, implying, if the Lord had ſeen *perverſneſs in Iſrael*, it would have laid them open to a curſe; yet ſins made up of perverſneſs are within the compaſs of a pardon. There is no ſin excepted from pardon, but that which at once refuſeth and deſpiſeth it, the ſin againſt the holy Ghoſt (*Matth.* 12. 31.) This ſhould not incourage any to ſin perverſly, only it is a comfort to thoſe who have. They who have ſinned perverſly, or who have perverſneſs mingled with their ſin, ſhould not caſt off the hope of pardon, but woe to thoſe who ſin perverſly, (that is, againſt the light of their own conſciences) upon hopes of pardon. Such perſons have no true hope (they may have much preſumption) that they ſhall be pardoned. They who having ſinned perverſly, confeſs it, have good ground to pray for pardon, but they who go on ſinning perverſly, have no ground (while they do ſo) to hope for it. This Text ſpeaks of a perſon confeſſing and bewayling that he hath ſinned perverſly, not of a perſon purpoſing to ſin ſo, as appears further in the laſt clauſe of the Verſe; *If any ſay, I have ſinned and perverted that which is right.*

And it profiteth me not.] Here's another point of confeſſion, we muſt not only confeſs that we have ſinned, but the fruitleſneſs of ſin, or that ſin *profiteth not.* There are two rendrings, and ſo two ſeveral expoſitions of theſe words,

The word ſignifieth moſt properly that which is *equal*; And hence ſome give the ſence thus, (which carrieth in it an eminent work of repentance) *I have ſinned, and perverted that which was right, and have not that which is equal*; That is, *Though I am greatly afflicted, and my ſorrows lie heavy upon me, yet they are not equal to my ſinning, or perverſe dealings with the Lord. I have not received as I was worthy, or according to my ill deſervings.* The Septuagint ſpeak thus; *God hath not made a ſtrict inquiſition for my ſin.* My iniquity is not charged upon me to the utmoſt. I have ſinned grievouſly, but God hath dealt graciouſly with me, and hath not meaſured out to the full of mine iniquity. 'Tis an argument of true repentance to juſtifie God in afflicting us. This is a pious and a profitable rendring of the Text.

שׁוה *Poteſt eſſe verbum, poteſt eſſe & nomen fæmininum. Unde ſenſus eſt, non accepi tantundem, non repoſita eſt mihi par pœna pro peccato meo.* Coc. *Non dignè in me inquiſivit pro his quæ peccavi.* Sept.

Whence Obſerve, Firſt, *The puniſhment of ſin in this life is not equal to ſin.*

As all the ſufferings of this life are not worthy to be compared with the glory of the next life (*Rom.* 1. 18.) ſo neither are they comparable with the ſins of this life. When a man is under very ſore affliction, *chaſtened with pain upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with ſtrong pain: So that his life abhorreth bread, and his ſoul dainty meat*; yet he muſt confeſs, his ſufferings are leſs then his ſin. The Church of the Jews acknowledged this as to that great affliction, their captivity in *Babylon* (*Ezra.* 9. 13.) *After all that is come upon us for our evil deeds, and for our great treſpaſs, ſeeing that our God hath puniſhed us leſs then our* *iniquities deſerve*, &c. It was no little puniſhment which that people endured, yet they confeſſed it was leſs then their iniquity. The leaſt ſin is ſo great, that no puniſhment which man is capable of in this life can equal it; nor can that in the life to come equal it as to preſent degree, but only by the everlaſtingneſs of its duration.

Secondly, Note, *A Soul truly humbled is ready to confeſs to the glory of God, that his puniſhment and ſuffering is leſs then his ſin.*

As a godly man doth not think any ſin little, ſo he doth not think any affliction great compared with his ſin. *Cain* ſaid, *My puniſhment is greater then I can bear*; but he did not ſay, it was greater then his ſin. How hot ſoever the furnace of divine wrath is heated, yet ſinners muſt acknowledg there is ſparing mercy in it; and that God might have made it ſeven times hotter, and therefore hath afflicted them leſs then their ſin. As a godly man is ready to acknowledg his mercy more then he hath deſerved (*Gen.* 32. 10.) *I* (ſaid *Jacob*) *am not worthy of the leaſt of all the mercies, and all the truth which thou haſt ſhewed unto thy ſervant*, as if he had ſaid; I am leſs in my good actings then any of thy actings towards me for good have been; ſo he is ready to ſay, his greateſt afflictions or evils which he ſuffereth are leſs then his ſins, or then the evils which he hath done.

Verbum שוה *exponn, profuit non fuit mihi conducibile quod peccaram.* Merc.

Secondly. The word ſignifieth *to profit*, ſo we tranſlate; *And it profiteth me not.* Other Scriptures comply with this ſence (*Heſter* 3.8.) *Haman* in his malicious and envious ſuggeſtions againſt the Jews, tells the King, *It is not for the Kings profit to ſuffer them to continue.* He uſeth the ſame word again (*Heſt.* 5. 13.) where after he had reported all the great things that he enjoyed, he concludes; *What doth all this profit me? Or all this availeth me nothing, ſo long as I ſee Mordecai the Jew ſitting at the Kings gate?* Thus here, ſaith the ſick man, *I have ſinned, and it profited me not, or I have got nothing by it:* And when he ſaith, *it profited me not*; we are to expound it by a uſual figure in Scripture, whereby more is intended then is expreſſed, ſo that, *it profiteth me not*, is, *it had been very detrimental, dangerous, and deadly to me.* I feel and ſmart under the ſad iſſues of my ſin, my perverting that which was right hath done me (though I have had but my right) much wrong. *I have ſinned, and it profited me not.*

Hence Note, Firſt, *Sin pretends profit and advantage to a ſinner.*

There is no temptation comes without a bait. Though ſome ſin purely for ſins ſake; yet it is rare that ſin cometh without the offer of a bribe, and profit is one of the greateſt both baits and bribes that the Devil puts upon the hook of temptation, when he fiſheth for Souls. *You ſhall get by it*, ſaith that deceiver. But the repenting Soul, can truly ſay, *it profited me not*; I had thought to have gotten by my ſin, it promiſed me very fair, but I have got nothing but blows. The temptation with which the Devil aſſaulted our firſt parents was of this kind, He told the woman of profit, ſhe and her husband ſhould gain knowledg by it, (that's a noble gain) *They ſhould be as Gods knowing good and evil*, there's all profit imaginable in ſuch a knowledg. Chriſt himſelf who was God and perfectly knew good and evil, was alſo tempted with profit (*Math.* 4. 8, 9.) *The Devil ſhewed him all the kingdoms of the World* (and thoſe not with bare walls, but ready hung and furniſhed) *and the glory of them, and ſaid unto him, all theſe things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worſhip me.* If our head and the heir of all things was tempted with profit, how much more poor we! No marvail if Satan provide him Agents to ſay to us as they are repreſented (*Pro.* 1. 13.) *Come, caſt in your lot among us, we will all have one purſe*, or a joynt ſtock in this wicked trade; What they hoped to get by it, is told us in the next words; *We ſhall find all precious ſubſtance, and fill our houſes with ſpoil.* We ſhall get enough, and you ſhall ſhare with us if you will but come and go with us. We ſee what ſin promiſeth; But what doth the ſinner find? Himſelf anſwers, *It profited me not.*

Hence Learn, *There is nothing gotten by ſin, no good is gotten by it.*

The Apoſtle puts the Queſtion to ſinners (*Rom.* 6. 21.) *What fruit had ye then, in thoſe things whereof ye are now aſhamed?* Caſt up your account, and tell us what you find at the foot of it. Poſſibly ſome may ſay, we have gotten hundreds and thouſands, we have gotten houſes and lands, our barns are full of corn, our fields of cattel, and our bags are full of treaſure. But is it profit to have houſe and land, gold and ſilver come in by ſin? Let that Scripture anſwer (*Math.* 16. 26.) *What is a man profited if he ſhall gain the whole world and loſe his own Soul?* But ſome may ſay, they that are in Chriſt cannot loſe their Souls by ſin. I anſwer; Firſt, though they that are in Chriſt cannot be ſuch ſinful Souls, as to ſin away their Souls, though they cannot ſin at ſuch a rate, nor in ſuch a height as to loſe their Souls who have indeed found Chriſt, or rather who are found of him, and planted in him; yet the dammage which every ſin unrepented of and unpardoned puts man to is the loſs of his Soul. Secondly, ſuppoſe a ſinner repenteth, what hath he got by ſin, but the ſorrows of repentance. And though no man ſhall have cauſe to repent of true repentance for ſin, yet no man ſhall have cauſe to boaſt of the penny-worth he hath had by ſin which hath occaſion'd the ſorrows of that repentance. One hours communion with God in ways of holineſs is better then all the profits and pleaſures which any man hath got while he was committing that ſin, or running any courſe of ſin, whereof he now repenteth. At the beſt ſin diſhonours God, troubles our conſciences, and breaks our peace; at the beſt nothing is got by ſin which is worth the having, at worſt the Soul is loſt by it, which of all things we have is moſt worth the having.

Thirdly, Note, *Sin is exceeding dangerous and deſtructive to man.*

Some would ſin for the pleaſures and carnal contentments which are found in ſin, though they knew they ſhould make no earnings, or get no profit by it, yea though they knew they ſhould be and die beggers by it. Once more, if this were all, that they ſhould loſe Heaven by it, or if the meaning of loſing their Souls were only this, that their Souls ſhould be no more, they would eaſily venture it. But there is an affirmative in the negative, and when, 'tis ſaid, *ſin profiteth not*, the meaning is, it brings trouble and renders us miſerable for ever; *Fools* (that is, all ſinful men, ſaith the Spirit of God, *Pſal.* 107. 17.) *becauſe of their tranſgreſſion, and becauſe of their iniquities are afflicted*; and all ſuch among theſe fools, as die in their ſin are damned; and who is able to ſum up the dammage of damnation?

Fourthly, Learn, *Sinners ſhall be forced at laſt to confeſs that there is no profit in ſin.*

True penitents confeſs it willingly now; and impenitents ſhall confeſs it at laſt, whether they will or no; they ſhall have ſuch a conviction of the evil of ſin by their ſufferings, as will make them ſay, what hath pride profited me? And what hath envy profited me? What hath malice and wrath profited me? And what hath the fraudulent deceiving of my neighbour profited me? This will be the cry of ſinners to all eternity. O what hath ſin profited us? That which is the willing confeſſion of a gracious repentant here, will be the forced confeſſion of damned impenitents for ever hereafter. This will be a bitter repentance. Hell is and will be full of the words of repentance, but no fruit of repentance ſhall be found there. The damned ſhall not find either amendment in themſelves, or mercy from God. This will be the confeſſion of all ſinners at laſt (as of thoſe that repent and are ſaved, ſo of thoſe who repent when damned) we have ſinned and perverted that which was right, and it hath not profited us. And when once man hath made this hearty confeſſion to God of his ſin and folly, then God maketh him a gracious promiſe of deliverance and mercy, as appears in the tenour of the next Verſe.

Verſ. 28. **He will deliver his Soul from going into the pit, and his life ſhall ſee the light.**

There is a two-fold reading of this 28. verſe, as was ſhewed in opening the former. For whereas that 27. verſe is underſtood by ſome as the humble confeſſion of the ſick man recovered, and ſo read in this form; *He looketh upon men and ſaith, I have ſinned and perverted that which was right, and it profited me not*; then this 28. verſe is rendred to make up that ſenſe, as a thankful acknowledgment of his recovery, *He hath delivered my ſoul from going into the pit, and my life ſeeth the light.* Thus, as we had his confeſſion of repentance in the verſe fore-going, *I have ſinned*, &c. ſo here we have his confeſſion of praiſe and thankfulneſs; *He hath delivered my ſoul from going into the pit.* Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates to this ſenſe; *He ſaved my ſoul from going into the pit, that my life doth ſee the light.* Thus the ſick man being reſtored breaks out into thankſgiving; *The Lord in mercy hath freed me from death, hell, and the grave; I need not fear Satans accuſations; my body enjoys the light of the world, and my ſoul the light of Gods countenance ſhining upon me, which is better then life.* But becauſe our own reading is clear in the original Text, and holds out the ſcope of the context fully enough, therefore I ſhall proſecute that only.

Juxta hanc lectionem erit etiam hic verſus ex confeſſione reſtituti ægri Dei in ſe ſummam beneficentiam agnoſcentis. Merc.

He will deliver his ſoul from going into the pit.] The words are an aſſertion of the favour and goodneſs of God to the penitent ſick man; *He* (that is, God) *looketh upon men, and if he hear any ſaying, I have ſinned and perverted that which is right, and it profiteth me not*, if he make ſuch an humble and gracious confeſſion, this will be the iſſue; the Lord *will deliver his ſoul from going into the pit.* At the 18. verſe, we had words of the ſame import; *He keepeth back his ſoul from the pit, and his life, from periſhing by the ſword.* And again, at the 24. verſe, *Deliver him from going down to the pit.* To be delivered from the pit (as was there ſhewed) is to be delivered from death. And the word *ſoul* (as was then likewiſe expounded) is put for the perſon; As if it were ſaid, He will deliver him, the penitent man from death; and that both from temporal death, the death of the body, and from eternal death, the deſtruction of body and ſoul; or he will deliver him firſt from the pit of the grave; and ſecondly, from the pit of hell. *He will deliver his ſoul from the pit*,

And his life ſhall ſee the light.] That is, he ſhall live to ſee the light; *To ſee the light*, is a circumlocution of life; As if it had been ſaid, He ſhall recover out of his deadly ſickneſs, and behold the light of the Sun, as living men do. Thus *David* prayed (*Pſal.* 56. 13.) *That he might walk before God in the light of the living.* And thus the wicked man is threatned with eternal death (*Pſal.* 49. 19.) *He ſhall go to the generation of his fathers, they ſhall never ſee light*: That is, they ſhall never enjoy life, but be ſhut up in a perpetual night of death, or in the night of perpetual death.

Videre lucem periphraſis eſt vitæ; ſicut è contrario tenebræ ſunt ſymbolum mortis. Pined.

Secondly, When 'tis ſaid, *his life ſhall ſee the light*, we may underſtand it, not only for a bare return to life, or that he ſhall live, but that he ſhall live comfortably and proſperouſly, he ſhall lead a happy life. *To ſee the light*, is to live and rejoyce; light is pleaſant, it is comfortable to behold the Sun, as *Solomon* ſpeaks. To ſee light, comprehends all the comforts of this life, and of that to come, which is called, *the inheritance of the Saints in light*, (*Col.* 1. 12.) For as darkneſs is put not only for death, but for all the troubles of this life, and the torments of the next; ſo light is put both for life, and for all the comforts of this and the next life. All the bleſſings of this temporal life, and the perfect bleſſedneſs of eternal life, are comprehended in light. So that when 'tis ſaid, *his life ſhall ſee the light*, the ſenſe riſeth thus high; *He ſhall be happy for ever*; ſo extenſive is the favour of God to repenting perſons, that time is too narrow for it; everlaſting light ſhall be their portion. From the former branch of the words thus opened, *He will deliver him from the pit*,

Obſerve, *All our deliverances are of God.*

As there is none can deliver like God, ſo none can deliver but God. If he gives out the word that ſuch a man ſhall go to the pit, it is not in the power and skill of all the Princes and Phyſicians in the world, to ſave or ſtay him from it. And how low and deſperate ſoever any mans condition is, if God ſay the word, he is delivered and reprieved from going down into the pit.

Secondly, From the connexion with the former verſe, the ſick man having made this confeſſion, *I have ſinned and perverted that which is right, and it profiteth me not*, the Lord preſently delivers him, *&c.*

Obſerve, *God is ready to deliver humble praying and believing ſinners.*

That command hath a promiſe joyned to it (*Pſal.* 50. 15.) *Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver.* The 107. Pſalm ſpeaks this quite through, where we find many ſorts of periſhing perſons, crying unto God, and God delivering them from periſhing when they cryed. As when ſin cryeth God will afflict, ſo when ſinners cry, God will relieve them in or bring them out of their affliction.

From the latter branch, *His life ſhall ſee the light*,

Note, *Natural life, and light are a great bleſſing.*

God promiſeth much when he promiſeth life and light; The light of this life is no ſmall mercy, how much greater is the light of ſpiritual life? But who can conceive how great a mercy the light of eternal life is! yet all this God ſpeaks to the humble and believing ſinner, when he ſaith, *His life ſhall ſee the light.*

Secondly, Comparing the two parts of this Text together, *He will deliver him from going down to the pit, and his life ſhall ſee the light*,

Obſerve, *The mercy of God to humble ſinners, is a compleat mercy.*

Here is not only deliverance from evil, but the beſtowing of good; it is much to be kept from going down into the pit, but it is more to ſee light, the light of comfort here, and the light of glory hereafter. The mercy of God to his people is great in temporals, greater in ſpirituals, greateſt in eternals. The benefit of redemption (to ſhew the fulneſs of it) is ſet forth two ways; Firſt, by our freedom from evil; Secondly, by our enjoyment of good *John* 3. 16.) *God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth in him, ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life. He ſhall not periſh* (that is, he ſhall be delivered from going down to the pit) *he ſhall have everlaſting life*; that is (as the Text ſpeaks) *his life ſhall ſee the light.*

Elihu having at large drawn a deſcription or narration of the whole proceeding of God with ſinful man in all the parts and particulars of it, gives a brief of all that he ſaid, in the two next verſes.

Verſ. 29. **Lo all theſe things worketh God oftentimes with man;**

Verſ. 30. **To bring back his ſoul from the pit, to be enlightned with the light of the living.**

As the Apoſtle after he had diſcourſed at large, about the dignity of Chriſts Prieſt-hood, gathers up all together (*Heb.* 8. 1.) *Now of the things which we have ſpoken, this is the ſum: we have ſuch an high Prieſt, who is ſet on the right hand of the throne of the Majeſty in the heavens*: So *Elihu* having ſpoken much of the ſeveral ways, by which God revealeth himſelf to man, and works him to a ſight of his ſin, and penitential ſorrow for it, recollects and ſums up all in theſe words;

Lo all theſe things worketh God oftentimes with man, &c.

In theſe two verſes, we may take notice, chiefly of two things.

Firſt, The frequency of God's dealing thus with man (*verſ.* 29.) *Lo all theſe things worketh God oftentimes.*

Secondly, The deſign and purpoſe of God in doing ſo; *That he may bring back his ſoul from the pit, and be enlightned with the light of the living.*

Lo, all this worketh God oftentimes with man.] Here's the application of the former Doctrine; *Elihu* preſſeth his hearers with it, and bids them lay it to heart; As if he had ſaid, *I have not been ſpeaking of things in the clouds, but of what is really and daily acted among the children of men. Lo* (or behold) *all theſe things.* There are four ſpecial ſignifications in Scripture of this word, *Lo*, or *behold*, and they may all four meet in this place.

Firſt, It imports ſome new unheard of and wonderful thing (*Iſa.* 7. 14.) *Lo, or behold, a virgin ſhall conceive, and bear a ſon*: That a virgin ſhould bring forth a ſon, is a wonder of wonders, a wonder ſo much above the courſe and power of Nature, ſo much beyond the compaſs and comprehenſion of reaſon, that men and Angels have reaſon to be aſtoniſhed at it.

Secondly, 'Tis prefixed, to ſhew ſome extraordinary impulſe or readineſs of ſpirit for action. Thus Chriſt ſpeaketh in that other noble prophecy of him (*Pſal.* 40. 7.) *Then ſaid I, Lo, I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me*; *I delight to do thy will O my God*; *yea thy Law is within my heart: Lo, I come*, that is, I am ready to come, I am preſt upon the work, I am under the preſſure and command of my own ſpirit, as well as under thy appointment and decree to undertake and finiſh that work of mans redemption.

Thirdly, It frequently implieth matter worthy of weight and deepeſt conſideration. That's uſeful and remarkable which is thus prefaced. Thus *Solomon* ſpeaking of the field of the ſlothful man, ſaith (*Prov.* 24. 31.) *Lo, it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the ſtone wall thereof was broken down*: As if he had ſaid, Mark, this is a thing to be attended, the ſluggards field is full of thorns; that is, in a ſpiritual ſenſe, *ſlothful hearts are full of luſts and vanities.* In this language the Church invites all to conſider the glorious excellencies of God (*Iſa.* 29. 9.) *Lo, this is our God.* And thus Chriſt ſpeaks of the woman whom he had healed on the Sabbath day (*Luke* 13. 16.) *And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, theſe eighteen years, be looſed from her infirmity on the Sabbath day?* As if he had ſaid, Pray conſider the caſe and ſpeak your minds.

Fourthly, 'Tis often uſed in a way of ſtrong aſſertion, and affirmation, intimating the certainty of what is ſpoken (*Gen.* 1. 29.) *And God ſaid, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing ſeed.* And again (*Gen.* 12. 11.) *It came to paſs, when he was come near to enter into Egypt, that he ſaid unto Sarah his wife, Behold, now, I know that thou art a fair woman to look upon.* (Read *Pſal.* 132. 6. *Ezek.* 30. 9. *Luke* 1. 32.)

In the preſent Text it may have all theſe intendments; for is it not a wonderful thing, that God ſhould be gracious to poor creatures? is it not ſtrange that he ſhould take ſo much pains with, and exerciſe ſo much patience towards them? Secondly, *Lo, God worketh all theſe things*; He is ready to do them, he waiteth to be gracious, or to magnifie his grace in doing them. Thirdly, *Lo, God worketh all theſe things*; is not this a matter of great conſideration, ought we not to ſit down and weigh it well? Fourthly, *Lo, all theſe things worketh God*; certainly God hath and will work all theſe things; this is a truth out of all queſtion, a truth of which there is no doubt to be made. As the Apoſtle ſaith (1 *Tim.* 3. 16.) *Without controverſie, great is the myſtery of Godlineſs, God was manifeſt in the fleſh*; So I may ſay without controverſie, great is this myſtery of God's manifeſting himſelf to frail fleſh, and doing all theſe things here ſpoken of, awakening the conſciences of men by dreams, and working upon them by grievous ſickneſſes, ſending an interpreter one of a thouſand to declare unto man his uprightneſs, and at laſt delivering his ſoul from going down into the pit. *Lo, all theſe things worketh God.*

פעל *operatus eſt, egit, perfecit, uſurpatur etiam pro gubernatione rerum creatarum.*

There is ſomewhat peculiar in that expreſſion, *he worketh.* The native ſenſe of the word, implieth; Firſt, a willing work, not forced or conſtrained. Secondly, a full and compleat work, not an eſſay or offer, not a work begun only, but carried on to perfection. The wicked are called *workers of iniquity*, (Pſal. 5. 5.) becauſe they are free and ready to ſin, they have a ſtrong tyde and bent of ſpirit to do evil, and they do it not to halves, but throughly; they do not only begin or nibble at the bait a little (as a good man often doth) but greedily ſwallow it down hook and all; they are fully in it, and do it fully, they make a work of it, and ſo are *workers of iniquity.* The Lord doth good, as the wicked do evil; *All theſe things worketh God,* He worketh them willingly, he worketh them compleatly, (*Iſa.* 26. 12.) *Lord thou wilt ordain peace for us, for thou alſo haſt wrought all our works in us*; Thou art the Author and finiſher of them. We are invited (*Pſal.* 46. 8.) *to come and behold the works of the Lord, what deſolations he hath made in the earth.* The building works, and the deſolating works of God, whether reſpecting perſons or nations, are perfect works. *Lo, all theſe things worketh God.*

Hence note, *Whatever good we ſee wrought among or for the children of men, God is the worker of it.*

As he over-ruleth the evil which is done, and both ſendeth and ordereth the evil which is ſuffered; ſo he is the worker of all the good that is done. God worketh it all either immediately by himſelf, or mediately by ſecond cauſes; and what inſtrument ſoever is ſet a work, yet the work as to the matter and manner of it, as alſo to the reſult and iſſue of it, is the Lords. He was the worker of all that hath been ſpoken of in the former context; though we read of a meſſenger, of an interpreter, yet the work was Gods. 'Tis ſaid (*Gen.* 39. 22.) *The keeper of the priſon committed to Joſephs hand, all the priſoners that were in the priſon, and whatſoever they did there, he was the doer of it.* Not that he did every thing with his own hand in the priſon, but he gave the rule, and ordered all that was done. Much more may I ſay of the Lord, whatſoever is done in the world, eſpecially among his people, *God is the doer of it.* All goes through his hand. *Lo, all theſe things worketh God.*

Further, From the prefix, *Lo,*

Obſerve, *The works and dealings of God with men are wonderful, thoſe eſpecially which he worketh for the humbling of a ſinner, and for the delivering of a ſoul from going down to the pit.*

The breaking of the heart, the raiſing of it by faith, the renewing of its peace and comfort, are wonderful works of God. And the reaſon why we wonder no more at them, is, becauſe we conſider ſo little of them.

Hence again from the word, *Lo,*

Note, *The works of God are to be deeply conſidered, to be ſtayed upon.*

We muſt not paſs them by lightly, whether they be towards our ſelves or others, *God hath made his wonderful works to be remembred* (ſaith *David*, Pſal. 111. 4.) or *to be conſidered*, that's the deſign of God in his works, he hath made them for that end, that they ſhould be remembred, and attended to, or they are ſuch as cannot but be remembred; they leave their marks and memorials behind them. God ſets ſuch a ſtamp of his power, wiſdom, juſtice, and goodneſs upon his works, that they will not be forgotten. And as his outward providential works, are ſuch, ſo his ſpiritual works are much more ſuch. The godly-wiſe underſtand them ſo, they have a critical eye in diſcerning thoſe inviſible works of God with a poor ſoul, in reducing him from ſin, and bringing him to himſelf. *David* calleth all the godly to the conſideration of thoſe works in his own caſe (*Pſal.* 66. 16.) *Come and hear all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my ſoul.* What God doth for our bodies is very conſiderable, but what he hath done for our ſouls can never be enough conſidered nor admired. *Lo, all theſe things worketh God*

פעמים שלש

Ἰδοὺ ταῦτα πάντα ἐργάζεται ὁ ἰσχυρὸς ὁδοὺς τρεῖς μετὰ ἀνδρός. Sept.

διὰ τριῶν τούτων τρόπων. Schol.

Oftentimes with man.] The original is, *twice, thrice*, ſo we put in the margin, and render it *often-times*, in the Text. Some expound it, of thoſe three diſtinct ways, in which God dealeth with man, before deſcribed. The Septuagint are expreſs for that; *All theſe things worketh the ſtrong God three ways with man*, Which the Scholiaſt exemplifies in the three ways here noted by *Elihu*. Firſt, awakning him by dreams and viſions; Secondly, troubling him by ſickneſſes and afflictions; Thirdly, teaching him by Prophets and Interpreters. Yet, I conceive, the Text doth not ſtrictly recapitulate thoſe three ſeveral ways before ſpoken of, in theſe words, *twice, thrice*, but only ſhews us that God uſeth all theſe ways or any other, as his wiſdom ſhall think fit, many times, or oftentimes for the producing of thoſe bleſſed effects. *Lo, all theſe things worketh God oftentimes with man.*

Twice, thrice, is a double certain number, put for any ſingle uncertain number; And it only teacheth or aſſureth us, that God debateth with the ſons of men in all or any of theſe ways oftentimes, or more than once. If they do not anſwer his call or purpoſe (which they ſeldom do) at the firſt; he calleth again and again, *twice* or *thrice*, or often-times, that is, as often as he ſeeth it good, needful or expedient to do it. And we may ſuppoſe that *Elihu* uſeth this number *twice*, or *thrice*, in alluſion to the cuſtoms of men; whether civil Magiſtrates or Churches, who when they deal with others about any fault committed or offence given, they do not take them at the very firſt default, but warn and admoniſh them twice or thrice, or ſend them (as the caſe may require) ſeveral Citations to appear, and either to acknowledg their guilt, or acquit themſelves of it.

Theſe things worketh God twice or thrice.] And remember, it is but *twice* or *thrice*; which ſpeech though it may be well rendred (as we ſay) *oftentimes*, yet it is not *very often*; *once* is no number, *twice* is the leaſt number, and *thrice* is but a ſmall number, two or three witneſſes are the leaſt number of witneſſes that can be admitted in any buſineſs. That, the Lord will do this, *twice or thrice* proves that he will do it ſeveral times, men ſhall have means, and frequent means, but *twice or thrice*, may not be *very often*, much leſs *always*, there is a ſtint, and a determinate number in the breaſt of God; and that we might not expect to have his patience lengthned out always to us, 'tis put into the ſmalleſt numbers, *All theſe things worketh God twice or thrice*,

Tribus vicibus, i. e. *multoties, ſed utitur numero ternario, ut congruat humanæ conſuetudini, per quam ſolent homines ter moneri vel citari.* Aquin.

With man.] The word by which man is here expreſſed, is, no ordinary word; 'tis that word which ſignifieth the higheſt and greateſt of men, God deals thus not only with inferiour perſons, and mean men, but with great men, with men of note, with men of power and ſtrength; let men be as ſtrong, and ſtout, as they will, God can tame them, and bring them to his foot.

צבר *Non quemlibet virum importat, ſed ut plurimum nobilem illuſtrem, vel aliqua ratione ſpectabilem.* Bold.

Further, when he ſaith, *Lo, all theſe things God worketh oftentimes with man.* This appellative *man*, may be taken two ways.

Firſt, Perſonally or individually, that is, he worketh thus oftentimes with the ſame man, God is put to renew his actings more than once with one and the ſame man, becauſe he will not bow nor obey at firſt.

Secondly, We may take this word *man* ſpecially as implying ſeveral men, or men of all ſorts, as well as any one man of a ſort. That manner of ſpeaking is frequent in the old Teſtament (*Job* 1.4.) *And his ſons went and feaſted in their houſes, man his day*, or every one his day. So (*Joh.* 1. 7.) *And they ſaid, every one to his fellow*, or *man to his fellow*, ſo here God worketh theſe things oftentimes with man, that is, with ſeveral men, as ſeemeth good to him. The ſpeech is diſtributive. For though we are not to underſtand it ſo largely, as if God dealt thus with every particular man, yet he deals thus with many men, even with as many as himſelf pleaſeth, or hath purpoſed. *Lo, All theſe things worketh God oftentimes with man.*

q. d. *unicunq; hominum ſolet Deus prædicta ſuæ voluntatis judicia manifeſtare, ut ſit oratio diſtributiva.* Bold.

Hence note, *Such is the goodneſs of God, that though man is not wrought upon preſently, or at the firſt, yet he will come a ſecond or a third time to carry his work through with him.*

'Tis a mercy that God will ſpeak once, or uſe any means once with us, 'tis mercy that he will ſpeak any one word in any one way, to bring us off from ſin; 'tis mercy that he will ſend one viſion, or one affliction, to awaken us out of our ſecurity, or one meſſenger to inſtruct us once in our duty; but when the Lord is pleaſed to uſe ſeveral means, and thoſe ſeveral means, ſeveral times, how doth the abundant mercy and graciouſneſs of God appear in this! And as the mercy of God in general, ſo the patience of God in ſpecial appeareth abundantly in it. The Lord waits to be gracious, he waits the working of this or that means, of a ſecond and third means, and he waits the working of them all over again and again, or oftentimes; here is patience with long-ſufferance.

Secondly, Obſerve, *God will perfect his work, and bring it to an iſſue with ſinful man.*

God would not give over working to humble *Job*, till he had fully humbled him; And this made *Job* almoſt amazed at God's dealing with him (*Chap.* 7. 17, 18, 19.) *What is man that thou ſhouldſt magnifie him? and that thou ſhouldſt ſet thy heart upon him? And that thou ſhouldſt viſit him every morning, and try him every moment.* *Job* ſeemed much troubled at this inſtancy of God with him, and therefore expoſtulated in the next words, *How long wilt thou not depart from me, nor let me alone till I ſwallow down my ſpittle?* But, for all his crying, God would not depart from him, nor let him alone for a morning, no nor for a moment till he had finiſhed his work and accompliſhed his will both in him and upon him; till he had brought his heart into a due frame and temper under his mighty hand. If once or twice will not do it, he will do it thrice; The Lord is not weary either of working or waiting; *God is a rock* (ſaith *Moſes* Deut. 32. 4.) *and his work is perfect*; and of all his works, that of grace is moſt perfect. His viſible providential works are perfect or ſhall be before he hath done with them, or put his laſt hand to them, but his inviſible ſpiritual works are moſt perfect; as God worketh often to bring man out of the ſtate of ſin to grace; ſo he will not ceaſe working till grace be perfected, he will work till that work is wrought to the height, till the top-ſtone of it is ſet up, or as the Apoſtle phraſeth it (*Eph.* 4. 13.) *Till we all come to a perfect man, unto the meaſure of the ſtature of the fulneſs of Chriſt.* Though a man hath been once truly humbled, yet God humbles him again, that he may be humbled gradually as well as truly to his own mind. They that are humbled by affliction, may need more afflictions to humble them. The ſame means by which faith and repentance are wrought at firſt, do alſo increaſe and ſtrengthen faith and repentance. Thoſe means by which a man is at firſt purged, are very proper for his further purging (*John* 15. 2.) *Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.* As no man can be a true branch (hypocrites and formaliſts are branches only in appearance and profeſſion, they were never truly purged, now, I ſay, as no man can be a true branch) till he is purged, ſo God purgeth thoſe who are the true fruit-bearing branches more and more, that they may bring forth more fruit. And the means by which he purgeth them, that is, mortifieth their corruptions, ſeldom reach this bleſſed effect at once or twice working, and therefore the Lord is even conſtrained to work theſe things twice, thrice, or oftentimes, elſe the work would not be brought to the intended iſſue.

Thirdly, In that it is ſaid, *All theſe things worketh God oftentimes, not always.*

Obſerve, *Man ſhould make haſte to anſwer the call of God, and come up to what he requireth of him.*

For though God work theſe things oftentimes, yet no man knows how often he will work, and we may all know, he will not work always. 'Tis a high and dangerous preſumption to defer at any time upon hopes that God will work at another time, becauſe in ſome caſes he works oftentimes. Remember (as was ſhewed before in opening the words) this thrice is the leaſt number of often, as twice is the leaſt number of any; two or three are the leaſt number that makes a Church-aſſembly (*Matth.* 18. 20.) The Prophet ſaith (*Amos* 2.4.) *For three tranſgreſſions of Judah, and for four, I will not turn away the puniſhment thereof.* Implying that if men multiply their tranſgreſſions, God will not always give them means of repentance, but pour out wrath upon them, ſo *Elihu* ſaith, God worketh *twice and thrice*; but if men will ſin three or four times, where is their warrant that God will pardon or paſs by their ſins? The Prophet did not bind up the mercy of God preciſely to two or three tranſgreſſions, but if men ſin without bounds, he ſhews they have no ground to expect God ſhould be merciful. One of the Jewiſh Rabbins (as ſome expound him) concludes peremptorily, If man ſin twice or thrice God will ſpare, but if four times God will puniſh. We do not circumſcribe the grace of God to a ſpecial number, and poſſibly that Rabbin did not intend it ſo, but only that all ſhould take heed they do not abuſe the grace of God. That God multiplyeth to pardon, or (as we render, *Iſa.* 55 7.) *Pardoneth abundantly*, is no ſecurity for any man to ſin abundantly, or to multiply tranſgreſſions. *My ſpirit ſhall not always ſtrive with man* (ſaith the Lord, *Gen.* 6. 3.) I have ſtriven long already, and I will yet ſtrive longer, even an hundred and twenty years, but I will not ſtrive always. God gave *Jezebel* a ſpace to repent (*Rev.* 2. 21.) but when ſhe repented not, he did not promiſe her a new ſpace to repent in, but threatned her with wrath to the utmoſt if ſhe repented not. There is a frequency in the work of God to reduce ſinners, but not a perpetuity. And as in this verſe *Elihu* reports this frequency of his work, ſo in the next he reports that to be the deſign of it.

Rabbi Solom. colligit ter tantum homini ignoſcere Deum; at quarto ſi ad peccandum redierit eſſe quod ſibi à gehenna timeat; & id eſſe putat quod hoc loco ab Elihu dicatur.

Verſ. 30. **To bring back his ſoul from the pit, to be enlightned with the light of the living.**

This verſe (I ſay) ſheweth the purpoſe of God in working *twice, thrice, or oftentimes with man.* This purpoſe (as was touched before) is two-fold. Firſt, to free and deliver him from evil, the worſt of evils, a horrible *pit.* Secondly, to eſtate him in and give him poſſeſſion of not only that which is good, but beſt of all, *the light of the living.* Nor is this purpoſe of God a bare deſire (that's often fruitleſs and ſucceſsleſs) but a ſtrong or ſetled reſolution, *to bring back the ſick mans ſoul from the pit.* And *Elihu* (we may ſuppoſe) ſpake thus, as to preſs *Job* to haſten the work of his repentance; ſo to put him in hope (upon conſideration of this deſign of God in afflicting him) that he ſhould be delivered from his afflictions, and have not only his life continued, but the comforts of it reſtored to him. As if he had ſaid, *Be not afraid, do not look upon thy condition as hopeleſs, or that the humiliation of thy ſelf will be fruitleſs, for I dare aſſure thee, God hath gracious purpoſes and intendments towards thee in working theſe things.*

And here we have a two-fold gracious purpoſe of God expreſſed; Firſt, to deliver him from evil, *to bring back his ſoul from the pit.* Secondly, to do him good, or to beſtow poſitive bleſſings upon him (as was ſhewed at the 28. verſe) even *to be enlightned with the light of the living*; As if he had ſaid, *God in all this aims only at mans good, that his ſin unrepented of be not his death and deſtruction, and that under a ſenſe of Divine favour towards him, he may lead a comfortable life here, and be happy for ever.*

To bring back his ſoul from the pit.] It is ſaid at the 28. verſe, *He will deliver his ſoul from going into the pit*; in both places the pit is the ſame.

But ſeeing the Lord there promiſed to deliver his ſoul from going into the pit, how is he ſaid here, *to bring back his ſoul from the pit?* A man being delivered from going to the pit, cannot be ſaid to be brought back from the pit.

I anſwer in two things; the words rendred *to bring back his ſoul from the pit,* may be read thus; *to turn away his ſoul from the pit*; that is, to preſerve him from death. So the Hebrew word is uſed (*Chap.* 15. 13.) as alſo (*Mal.* 2. 6.) *He walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn away many from iniquity.* If we take that rendring of the word, then the expreſſions in both places bear the ſame ſenſe. But taking it according to our reading, in which *to bring back his ſoul from the pit,* ſounds, as if the man had been in the pit already; and it may well be ſaid ſo, becauſe a man in great affliction, whether of ſoul or body, is as it were, dead, or buried alive. For as when God converts a ſinner, he (upon the matter) brings him back from hell; ſo when he delivers him from any grievous ſickneſs, he doth (upon the matter) bring him back from the grave. *Heman* in ſpiritual afflictions and ſoul-deſertions, the terrours of the Lord being upon him, called himſelf *free among the dead, like the ſlain that lye in the grave, whom God remembreth no more, and they are cut off from thy hand,* (*Pſal.* 88. 5.) They that are near the pit of death, are not, much improperly, called dead, and they that being in ſuch a deſperate caſe are kept from going down to the pit, are not, much improperly ſaid to be brought back from the pit, or pulled out of it. In which ſenſe we may keep to our own reading; and ſo to *bring back his ſoul from the pit,* notes only the extream danger wherein he was, whether ſpiritual or temporal, and God's graciouſneſs in delivering him from it.

> Hence note, *When God reſtores a man out of any deſperate condition, whether of ſoul or body, he gives him a new life; he brings him in one reſpect back from the grave, and in another from hell.*

As a ſick man, he is brought from the grave, and as a ſinner he is brought from hell. Great deliverances are a kind of new creation; And freſh bleſſings are to us as freſh beings. Take theſe two inferences from it.

Firſt, How ſhould they, who have been under great outward afflictions, praiſe the Lord when they are delivered! They who having had the ſentence of death in themſelves, ſhould look upon themſelves when reſtored, as men raiſed from the dead. And how ſhould ſinners praiſe the Lord, when he hath reconciled them to himſelf, and pardoned their ſins. In doing this for them, he delivereth them from wrath, from hell, and from eternal death. Let ſuch praiſe the name of the Lord, and ſay, as in the Text, *He hath delivered our ſouls from the pit.*

Secondly, Let ſuch live unto God, having received a new life from God; They that have received a new temporal life from God, ought to dedicate it unto God; how much more they that have received new ſpiritual life? They that have received it indeed, cannot but dedicate it unto God. This negative mercy calls aloud for all that we are or have to be given up to God, but that poſitive mercy which followeth, calleth yet louder for it.

And to be enlightned with the light of the living.

Take it for temporal, ſpiritual, or eternal life, all theſe ends are accompliſhed in thoſe merciful works of God to poor ſinners; ſome reſtrain the Text to the light of this temporal life, others enlarge it to the light of ſpiritual and eternal life. We are *enlightned with the light of the living,* When the comforts of this life are reſtored, much more are they, who are reſtored to the comforts of their ſpiritual life, and ſo to the hope of eternal life.

Nomen חיים *non ſumitur pro quibuſlibet hominibus hac vita fruentibus, ſed pro divitibus potentibus, vivere eſt vigere, valere. Sunt qui ad futuram vitam referunt, ſed id ſi tam quidem Allegoricè intelligi, poſtquam ad literam de hac vita intellexeris.* Merc.

By **the living**, we are not to underſtand thoſe who are barely on this ſide the grave, and yet breath in the air; or who have only a weak ſhadowed ſpiritual life, which they ſcarce know of or perceive. The *living* here are they that live comfortably and proſperouſly both as to ſoul and body. Thus 'tis ſaid in that Prophecy of Chriſt (*Pſal.* 72. 13.) *He ſhall live, and to him ſhall be given of the gold of Sheba: prayer alſo ſhall be made for him continually, and daily ſhall he be praiſed.* Chriſt lives to purpoſe, he lives as a Prince, in power and dignity, yea he is the Prince of life. It was more than a ſenſitive or rational life which *David*'s faith was aſſured of, when he ſaid, (*Pſal.* 118. 17.) *I ſhall not dye but live*; his meaning was, I ſhall live honourably and triumphantly, declaring (with joy) the works of the Lord. Thus here, *To be enlightned with the light of the living,* is, to enjoy a comfortable life, or to live happily.

> Hence note, *A troubled ſtate is a dark ſtate, ſickneſs and ſorrow, whether inward or outward, are darkneſs.*

They are darkned with the darkneſs of the dead, whoſe life is wrapped up in anguiſh and ſorrow.

> Secondly, Note, *The deſign and purpoſe of God in all his ordinances, and providences towards his people is for their good.*

All that hath been ſaid before, emptieth it ſelf into theſe ſayings, *To keep back his ſoul from the pit, and to be enlightned with the light of the living.* The Lord hath no eye in theſe works to his own gain, but mans good. *The Lord doth not willingly grieve, nor afflict the children of men* (Lam. 3. 35.) He taketh no pleaſure in it abſtractly conſidered, nor doth he look for any profit by it: Much leſs doth he it (as it follows, *verſ.* 36.) meerly *to cruſh under his feet all the priſoners of the earth.* All that he expects by it as to himſelf is to be glorified by all (for himſelf is above all, and therefore deſigneth himſelf in all) yet the glory which God hath by man is only the manifeſtation of his glory, not any addition to it. The benefit which God aims at in afflicting man returns to man. He would have man bettered by affliction, and as ſoon as man is bettered by affliction, every thing ſhall go better with him, and he ſhall be delivered from affliction. (*Rom.* 8. 28.) *All things work together for the good of them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpoſe.* And as all things work together for the good of them, who are the called according to his purpoſe, ſo it is the purpoſe of God that all things ſhould work together for their good, and that is not a ſucceſsleſs purpoſe. Indeed every rod upon the backs of the wicked hath a voice in it, to call them from the pit of death and deſtruction, and to be enlightned with the light of the living, but God makes this call effectual to all his elect, none of whom ſhall periſh with the world. So that a godly man ſhould be ſo far from judging himſelf dealt with as an enemy (as *Job* in his extremity did) when he is moſt ſorely afflicted, that indeed he may ſee the love and fatherly care of God in it. All the providential diſpenſations of God work to glorious ends. Sometimes for the outward good of his people in this life, always for good as to their ſpiritual and eternal life.

Therefore, lay aſide hard thoughts of God whatſoever hard things he is a doing, or you are ſuffering. The ways in which God leads us, may poſſibly be very dark, yet they run to this point, to keep us from the pit of darkneſs, and that we may be enlightned with the light of the living.

> Thirdly, Note, *Man would undo himſelf both for here and for ever, if God did not work wonderfully for him, and powerfully keep him from deſtruction.*

All theſe things God worketh twice and thrice, to keep out ſouls from the pit; man left to himſelf would run headlong upon miſchief in this world, and upon eternal miſery in the world to come. Nothing but the hand of God can hold man from ruining himſelf. The heart of man is ſo ſet upon ſin, that he will rather loſe his ſoul, than leave his luſt; and will rather die than that ſhall. 'Tis as eaſie to ſtay the motion of the Sun, or to turn back the courſe of nature, as to ſtay or turn back the natural motion or courſe of the heart in ſinning. An almighty power muſt do the latter as well as the former. So that if the Lord did not put forth more than mercy, even mercy clothed with power, no man could be ſaved; ſhould God wiſh us never ſo well, and tell us what good he hath laid up for us, if we will but believe and obey him; ſhould he tell us he hath riches of mercy, and that every one who will come ſhall have his ſhare, yet we ſhould never have any, if left to our own chuſing. 'Tis a work therefore both of mercy and power which keeps us from the pit. God had much ado to keep *Lot* from being conſumed in *Sodom*. He had warning to be gone, yet he was loth to go; The Text ſaith (*Gen.* 19. 16.) *While Lot lingred the men laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters, the Lord being merciful to him, and they brought him forth, and ſet him without the City*; elſe probably he had lingred, till he had periſhed. Surely if God did not thruſt ſinners out of the *Sodom* of this world (as we ſay) by head and ſhoulders, they would periſh in it and with it. How wonderful is the goodneſs of God, who doth all theſe things, not only to keep poor creatures from going down to the pit, both temporally, and eternally, but alſo that they *may be enlightned with the light of the living?*

VERS. 31, 32, 33.

Mark well, O Job, hearken unto me, hold thy peace, and I will ſpeak.

If thou haſt any thing to ſay, anſwer me: ſpeak, for I deſire to juſtifie thee.

If not, hearken unto me; hold thy peace, and I ſhall teach thee wiſdom.

These three verſes contain the Epilogue or concluſion of *Elihu*'s firſt addreſs to *Job*. In which we may conſider theſe three things.

Firſt, He perſwadeth him to a due attention and ſilent conſideration, both of what he had ſaid, or ſhould ſay further. (*verſ.* 31.) *Mark well, O Job, hearken unto me,* &c.

Secondly, He gives him liberty, and fair leave to reply, if he ſhould pleaſe, to what he hath already ſpoken (*v.* 32.) *If thou haſt any thing to ſay, anſwer me, ſpeak.* To which conceſſion or invitation he adds a very friendly and an ingenuous reaſon in the cloſe of the verſe; *For I deſire to juſtifie thee.*

Thirdly, He profeſſeth his own readineſs to proceed and ſpeak further with him, or to carry on this diſcourſe, in caſe *Job* had nothing to reply. (*verſ.* 33.) *If not, hearken unto me, hold thy peace, and I ſhall teach thee wiſdom.*

Verſ. 31. **Mark well, O Job, hearken unto me.**

In this verſe *Elihu* calls for a twofold attention; Firſt, to thoſe things he had already ſpoken. Secondly, to thoſe things which he was yet to ſpeak. What he had already ſpoken, he deſireth him to conſider and make reply if he pleaſed, as is clear (*verſ.* 32.) and as to what he had yet further to ſay, he deſireth his attention and ſubmiſſion, as it followeth (*verſ.* 33.) *If not, hearken unto me, hold thy peace.*

Mark well, O Job, hearken unto me.] Here are two words of attention, **mark**, and **hearken**, and both very ſignificant ones. The word rendred *mark*, ſignifieth to attend, with utmoſt diligence; it is ſometimes rendred by *hearkning* (*Iſa.* 32. 3.) *The eyes of them that ſee ſhall not be dim: and the ears of them that hear ſhall hearken*; that is, they who heretofore, through the juſt judgment of God for their wilful ſhutting their eyes and ears, in ſeeing did ſee but not perceive, and in hearing did hear but not underſtand (*Iſa.* 6. 10. 29. 10. compared with *Matth.* 13. 14.) ſhall at laſt ſee clearly and attend diligently to the will of God delivered to them; yea it ſeems to note ſome ſpecial geſture, as the lifting up of the ear to hear. For as there is a lifting up of the voice in the zealous ſpeaker, ſo of the ear in the diligent hearer. To *mark* is to hear and obſerve, to hear and lay to heart the things which are ſpoken, *Mark well, O Job,*

קשב *Magnam mentis attentionem denotat, quæ fit cum geſtu, puta aurium arrectione.* Cornel. à Lap. in Pro. 2. 3.

And hearken.] That's a word of a large extent, to hearken is more than to hear; it takes in not only, firſt, the work of the ear, but ſecondly, the work of the mind; 'tis hearing firſt, with underſtanding; ſecondly, with believing; yea thirdly, it takes in the work of the whole man in obeying, or ſubmitting to what is ſpoken. Thus God ſaid to *Adam* (Gen. 3. 17.) *Becauſe thou haſt hearkned unto the voice of thy wife*, that is, becauſe thou haſt obeyed her voice, and done the thing ſhe perſwaded thee to; After hearkning comes doing. Laſtly, it includes alſo a work of the affections; hearkning is with delighting, that which we hearken to we are pleaſed with; 'tis (like good muſick) ſweet unto us; in this compaſs and extent we may expound theſe words, *Mark well, O Job, and hearken unto me.* And theſe words, eſpecially the former of the two, rendred *mark*, are often uſed in Scripture, when the people of God deſire and beg that he would take notice of and attend unto their prayer. Thus *David* more than once (*Pſ.* 5. 2.) *Hearken unto the voice of my cry, my King, and my God, for unto thee will I pray* (Pſal. 66. 19.) *but verily God hath heard me, he hath attended to the voice of my prayer* (Pſal. 130. 2.) *Lord hear my voice, let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my ſupplication.* Now, as when we deſire that God would hear our prayer, we deſire that he would be very attentive to our prayer, and not only ſo, but do what we pray for, and that our prayers may be welcom, acceptable, and delightful to him; ſo when we are ſaid to mark and hearken to what is ſpoken to us, all the powers of our inward man, the underſtanding, will and affections are at work in hearing.

שמע *Auſcultavit, exaudivit, dicto obediens fuit, paruit.*

> Hence note, *He that will profit by hearing muſt be an attentive hearer.*

He muſt mark and hearken, a fruitful hearer doth more then hear, he marks; not only is his ear at work, but his mind, his heart, his whole ſoul is, as it were, transformed into an ear, or is active at his ear. There are many, and it were well there were more *hearers* of the word, but there are few *markers* of the word, many come to Sermons, yet but few hearken unto Sermons; every hearer is not a *marker*, not a *hearkner* to what he heareth, and not being ſo, he can ſcarcely be called a hearer; for they only that are *markers* ſhall attain that mark of which the Apoſtle ſpeaks (*Phil.* 3. 14.) *I preſs toward the mark for the price of the high calling of God in Chriſt Jeſus.* What is our mark in hearing? is it not ſalvation by Chriſt, and glory with him? Now unleſs we are markers, we never preſs towards, much leſs attain that mark, *the price of the high calling of God in Chriſt Jeſus. Mark well, O Job, hearken unto me,*

Hold thy peace, and I will ſpeak.] 'Tis but one word in the Hebrew which we tranſlate, *hold thy peace*, and it ſignifieth properly to dig or plough the ground, and by a metaphor to think of, or to meditate, becauſe thoughts go deep in the ſoul, a man doth, as it were, plough up his own ſpirit, while he is meditating or thinking ſeriouſly (*Prov.* 3. 29.) *Deviſe not evil*, or (it is this word) *plough not up evil*; that's a bad ſoil indeed, to be ploughing up. They that plough evil, ſhall ſow the wind, and (except they repent) reap the whirlwind. The Prophet exhorting *Ephraim* to break up their fallow ground and ſow in righteouſneſs, that they might reap mercy (*Hoſ.* 10. 12.) reproves them (*verſ.* 13.) for a very unprofitable piece of husbandry, by this word, *Ye have ploughed wickedneſs, ye have reaped iniquity, ye have eaten the fruit of lyes*, that is, ye have plotted, deviſed, and contrived wicked things, and ye

חרש *Fodit, fundum aravit. Metaphoricè, cogitavit, fodit cogitatione, intentus vel attentus fuit rei alicujus conficiendæ, ſicut arator præparat terram ante ſeminatorem.*

have fared accordingly. Now as the word ſignifieth to meditate, by a metaphor, from digging or ploughing; ſo by the figure antiphraſis or contrary ſpeaking, it ſignifies to forbear doing or ſpeaking, to ſit ſtill, or as we render it here, to *hold our peace*, and ſay nothing. (*Iſa.* 41. 1.) *Keep ſilence before me, O Iſlands.* (Pſal. 50. 3.) *Our God ſhall come, and ſhall not keep ſilence*; that is, he will ſpeak aloud. *Elihu* beſpeaks *Job* in the affirmative, *hold thy peace*, be ſilent.

Videtur Jobus ſe avertiſſe, vel diſplicentiæ ſignum dediſſe, illum igitur ad ſe audiendum invitat. Scult.

Some conceive *Job* began to interrupt *Elihu*; or gave ſome token of diſlike, while he was diſcourſing; as if he had received his ſpeech with diſguſt, and not only inwardly ſtomached at it. But did not forbear to diſcover it by ſome ſignificant geſture or frown, and that *Elihu* perceiving this, deſired him to hold his peace; As if he had ſaid, If you deſire to reap any benefit by what I ſpeak, be patient, and do not interrupt me. But I conceive there was no ſuch height nor heat of ſpirit in *Job* at that time; He began now to be ſedate and quiet enough, being ſomewhat convinced of his former error and intemperance of ſpeech.

But ſome may ſay; was it not an over-bold part in *Elihu* a young man to impoſe ſilence upon *Job*, or to bid him *hold his peace?*

I anſwer; *Elihu* doth not bid *Job* hold his peace, either, firſt, as if he had ſeen him unwilling to let him ſpeak, or would not hear him any more; *Job* was a very patient hearer; he heard his friends patiently, and he had heard *Elihu* too with ſilence and patience, yea though *Elihu* offered him leave, yea almoſt provoked him to ſpeak (*verſ.* 5.) yet he did not but gave him ſcope to ſpeak out. Nor did *Elihu* ſpeak this, ſecondly, as if he ſlighted *Job*, or thought him a man unable to anſwer him, or ſpeak to purpoſe, for preſently in the next verſe he deſireth him again to ſpeak. Nor thirdly, as if he had ſuch high thoughts of his own wiſdom, and loved ſo much to hear himſelf ſpeak (as ſome men do) that he cared not to hear others, but would engroſs all the diſcourſe. Nor was it, fourthly, becauſe he ſaw ſuch an affectation in *Job* to ſpeak, that he needed (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks of ſome, *Tit.* 1. 11.) *to have his mouth ſtopt.* It was not upon any of theſe or ſuch like reaſons, that *Elihu* deſired *Job* to hold his peace; but it was either firſt, that himſelf might ſpeak more clearly, and carry his matter through to his underſtanding; or ſecondly, that he might ſet the matter more home upon his conſcience, and move him to conſider yet more ſeriouſly what he had ſaid, of the various ways of God's dealing with man to humble his ſoul, and bring him nearer to himſelf; or laſtly, that *Job* might perceive and take notice, that he was the man aimed at in all the foregoing parable. As if he had ſaid, Sit down quietly, and conſider with thy ſelf, whither all this diſcourſe hath tended, or whether or no thou art not the man intended in it. As Chriſt when he had ſpoken that parable of the ſower concluded (*Matth.* 13. 9.) *He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear*; that is, let him take it home to himſelf; or as Chriſt concludeth his Epiſtles to the ſeven Churches in the ſecond and third Chapters of the *Revelation*, with, *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit ſaith to the Churches*; ſo doth *Elihu* to *Job* in ſpecial, *Mark well, O Job, and hearken unto me, hold thy peace.*

This ſilence was made of old in great aſſemblies (*Majeſtate manus*) by putting the hand to the mouth, and then ſtretching it forth. *Acts* 12. 17. *Acts* 13. 16. *Chap.* 19. 23. *Chap.* 26. 1.

If any would know yet more diſtinctly what *Elihu* meant when he bid *Job hold his peace?* I anſwer,

Firſt, Negatively, not a bare ſilence, or ſaying nothing, but affirmatively, when he ſaith, *hold thy peace*; it might note theſe two things.

Firſt, That he would have him much in the work of conſideration, or to forbear ſpeaking, that he might be more in meditating, and weighing, and laying things to heart; he would have him bring what he had ſpoken to the ballance of the Sanctuary, and then to his own heart. A man is never more buſie than when he thus holds his peace.

Secondly, When he ſaith, *hold thy peace*, it might note that he deſired his ſubmiſſion to the counſel given, or to be given him; He would have him bridle his tongue, in token that his ſpirit was bridled. He would have *Job's* ſilence ſay, ſpeak on, I will ſay nothing, let the truth of God reign and rule over me by thy word. What *Samuel* anſwered to the Lord himſelf (1 *Sam.* 3. 10.) *Speak Lord, for thy ſervant heareth*; that ſhould we anſwer to thoſe who ſpeak to us from the Lord; ſpeak ye, we will hear and hold our peace: or we ſhould ſay with good *Cornelius*, when *Peter* came to him (*Acts* 10. 33.) *We are all here preſent before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God.* When a man holds his peace (upon theſe terms) 'tis a ſign he layeth down his own wiſdom, and his will, he doth not ſtand upon his *pantofles* (as we ſay) nor abound in his own ſence, but is ready to be delivered or caſt into the mould of any holy and wholeſom doctrine which ſhall be delivered unto him. *They are in the fitteſt frame to hold the truth which others ſpeak, who can withhold themſelves from ſpeaking.*

Further, There is a twofold *holding of the peace.* Firſt, at the works of God, or at what God doth (*Lev.* 10. 3.) when God had ſmitten the two ſons of *Aaron* dead with fire from heaven, *Aaron held his peace*; that is, he did not murmure at, nor contradict what God had done. That alſo was *David's* temper (*Pſal.* 39. 9.) *I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, becauſe thou Lord didſt it.* The Prophet *Jeremy* deſcribes an humbled ſoul in the ſame poſture (*Lam.* 3. 28.) *He ſitteth alone and keepeth ſilence, becauſe he hath born it upon him.* When God layeth his yoke or croſs upon us, 'tis our duty to be ſilent and ſubmit (*Zach.* 2. 13.) *Be ſilent, O all fleſh, before the Lord: for he is raiſed up out of his holy habitation*, that is, the Lord begins to work, therefore let all men, or men of all ſorts and degrees be quiet and ſay nothing either diſcontentedly or complainingly. In all theſe Scriptures, *holding our peace* is called for and commanded or ſhewed at the works of God.

Secondly, There is a holding of our peace at the word of God, or at what God ſpeaketh. Thus 'tis when not only the tongue but the heart is ſilent, and every thought is brought into ſubjection or captivity to the obedience of Chriſt. The heart of man often ſpeaks much, and is very clamorous, when he ſaith nothing with his tongue. That's to hold our peace indeed, when the heart is quiet, let God ſay or do what he will. 'Tis not more our duty *to reſiſt the Devil*, that is, all his helliſh whiſperings and temptations to the doing of evil, than 'tis *to ſubmit to God* in all his ſpeakings and diſpenſations. *Elihu* ſpeaking in the name of the Lord, faithfully adviſeth *Job* in this ſenſe, to *hold his peace.*

Hence learn, *We ought to ſubmit and keep ſilence when the truth of God is ſpoken.* Or, *when the mind of God is brought unto us, there muſt be no replying but obeying, no diſputing but ſubmitting.*

They have learned much, who know how and when to ſay nothing. *Solomon* ſaith (*Eccl.* 3. 6.) *There is a time to keep ſilence, and a time to ſpeak*; but this kind of ſilence is in ſeaſon at all times, we ought always to be ſilent thus, that is, always ſubmit to the mind of God. We need to be minded of this, becauſe the pride and over-weening of man is great. We have need to put a bridle upon our tongues, much more upon our hearts; it is hard to bring our wills and our underſtandings under; we are apt to ſtrive and ſtruggle when truth comes near us; yea to kick at it, when it comes very near and home to us, though indeed the nearer it comes the better, nor can it ever come too near. The Apoſtle *James* apprehended this when he gave that admonition (*Chap.* 1. 21.) *Receive with meekneſs, the ingraffed word, which is able to ſave your ſouls:* Meekneſs is that grace which moderates anger; a paſſionate or fierce ſpirit, receiveth not the word, but riſeth up againſt it, turns not to it but upon it; and, which is worſt of all, turns it to evil, not to good, turns light into darkneſs; and ſo the word of life becomes a ſavour of death for want of a due ſubmiſſion to it. Therefore *hearken, and hold your peace* when the word of God is ſpoken. Do not ſay it is but the word of man, becauſe delivered by man; God ſpeaks in and by his faithful Meſſengers; ye oppoſe the authority of the living God, not a mortal dying creature, when you reject the word. And remember, it is not only our duty but our liberty to give up our ſelves priſoners to the truths of God; we are never ſo free as when bound by it or to it. And as we ſhould hold our peace at or ſubmit to all the truths of God in all caſes, ſo eſpecially in theſe three.

Firſt, When we are reproved for our ſins in practice; then we ſhould not ſtand excuſing what we have done, but repent of it.

Secondly, When we are ſhewed our errour in opinion; then we ſhould not ſtand diſputing, and arguing for what we hold, but recant it. 'Tis time to hold our peace, when once it appears to us, that we do not hold the truth. To erre is common to man, but to perſevere in an errour, to the defence and patronage of it, is more than inhumane, deviliſh.

Thirdly, We ſhould hold our peace when our duty is plain before us; then we ſhould not ſtand queſtioning it, but do it. *Whatſoever thy hand findeth to do* (ſaith *Solomon, Eccl.* 9. 10. that is, whatſoever appears to be a duty) *do it with all thy might.* Hold thy tongue, but do not withhold thy hand when once thy hand hath found what muſt be done. *Elihu* at this time was dealing with *Job* upon all theſe three points; He told him his ſin, that he had been too querulous and impatient, he ſhewed him his error, that he had been too bold with God, becauſe innocent towards men; And he preſſed him to duty, both that, and how he ought to humble himſelf before the Lord. The Apoſtle treating about that great point of juſtification, tells us God will at laſt cauſe all men to hold their peace. (*Rom.* 3. 19.) *Now we know that what things ſoever the law ſaith, it ſaith to them who are under the law, that every mouth may be ſtopped, and all the world may become guilty before God*; that is, man will have nothing to ſay, but ſit down ſilent, and hold his peace, or only ſay, I am nothing, I have deſerved nothing but death and condemnation, when he once underſtands the holineſs and ſtrictneſs of the law, together with the unholineſs and looſeneſs of his own heart and life.

Hence note, *It ſpeaks, yea proclaims a gracious prudence, to know how and when to hold our peace and ſay nothing.*

When men inſiſt upon their own conceit and reaſon, when they logick it unduly with God or men, and will needs ſeem to know more than the word teacheth them, what do they but give evidence againſt themſelves, that as yet they know nothing as the word teacheth, or as they ought to know, and themſelves leaſt of all? 'Tis pride and preſumption, not prudence and underſtanding which opens ſuch mens mouths. We never profit by what we hear, till (in the ſenſe opened) we have learned *to hold our peace.* The counſel which *Elihu* gave *Job*, was to hold his peace; yet he laid no conſtraint upon him to refrain neceſſary ſpeaking, but put him upon it in the next verſe.

Verſ. 32. **If thou haſt any thing to ſay, anſwer me; ſpeak, for I deſire to juſtifie thee.**

Leſt *Elihu* ſhould be interpreted to have taken too much upon him, or to have denied *Job* his liberty of ſpeaking, when he ſaid, *hold thy peace*; he here calls him to ſpeak; This is a full proof, that his intent was not to bar him from ſpeaking, but only that he ſhould forbear unneceſſary ſpeaking. As if he had ſaid, *Now that I have gone thus far, if I have ſpoken any thing that thou art unſatisfied in, and doſt deſire I ſhould explain my ſelf about; ſpeak thy mind freely; for though I have more to ſay, yet I will not hinder thee from ſaying what thou canſt fairly ſay for thy ſelf, neither will I over-burthen thy memory, with too much at once, therefore come now and anſwer, if thou wilt or canſt, to what is already ſpoken.*

The Hebrew is, *If thou haſt words, anſwer me,* that is, if thou haſt arguments to defend thy ſelf with, or to oppoſe me; if thou haſt ſuch words ready, as have the weight of reaſon or authority in them to maintain thy cauſe, bring them forth, I am not afraid of what thou canſt object; neither am I unwilling to hear thy defence.

Some expound *Elihu* ſpeaking Ironically, at leaſt Rhetorically, *If thou haſt any thing to ſay, anſwer me, ſpeak and ſpare not.* As if he had ſaid, *Poſſibly thou canſt ſet all right, and ſhew me where I am wrong. Poſſibly thou thinkeſt I have ſpoken amiſs, when I ſaid, In this thou art not righteous. Go to then, ſhew me my miſtake, or wherein I have miſapprehended thee, make it good if thou art able againſt my aſſertion, that thou art juſt and righteous, even in that wherein I have endeavoured to detect thy unrighteouſneſs. Poſſibly thou mayſt bring me to be of thy opinion, and then ſurely I ſhall juſtifie thee, and retract my cenſure of thee.* Rhetoricians call this an Artificial prohibition, by a conceſſion; or the admitting of another to do that, which they know, he cannot do when he hath done his utmoſt, or (as we ſay) hath left no ſtone unturn'd to do it. But I conceive, *Elihu* ſpake plainly to *Job*, and did not like a ſubtle Orator, put him him upon impoſſibles, but like a ſincere friend, ſoberly and ſeriouſly invited him to do and ſay as much as was poſſible in his own defence. *If thou haſt any thing to ſay; anſwer me.*

Artificioſa prohibitio per conceſſionem.

Simile eſt illud poetæ. I, ſequere Italiam ventis, pete regna per undas. Virg. Æn. 4to.

Hence note, *Wiſe men though they have more to ſpeak, and purpoſe to ſpeak more, yet are willing that others ſhould ſpeak too.*

Though they can ſpeak ſtill, yet they are ready to ſit ſtill and hear. *The moſt prudent ſpeakers, are alſo patient hearers. Elihu* when he began to ſpeak (*Chap.* 32. 18, 19.) compared himſelf *to a full bottle*, he was even burdened with his own conceptions. *I am full of matter* (ſaid he there) *the ſpirit within me conſtraineth me; Behold, my belly is as wine which hath no vent, it is ready to burſt like new bottles:* And though he had not half emptied himſelf, yet he could ſtop his veſſel and contain himſelf. *Anſwer me*, I will hear. Though *Elihu* was warm in his work, labouring tooth and nail to convince and humble *Job*, and ſhew him wherein he had exceeded and offended, though he was teaching him to give glory to God, and to abhor himſelf (as at laſt he did) repenting in duſt and aſhes, yet he was unwilling to determine till he had heard him ſpeak, if he had any thing to ſpeak, and a mind to ſpeak it.

Hence note, *'Tis but equal to give him leave to ſpeak for himſelf, with whom we are unſatisfied.*

How elſe can we either get ſatisfaction, or *give an account* why we remain unſatisfied? We muſt not condemn any man in haſte, nor judg him till we have heard him. *Neceſſary ſtops are no delays.* They may procure not only a better but a ſpeedier iſſue of our buſineſs, eſpecially in matters of controverſie. Politicians have a rule, *Take time and you may do any thing.* To make haſte ſlowly is the ſureſt way of making haſte. Many a journying man had rid more miles in a day, if he had not rid too faſt. They who will do all at once, or in a breath, often loſe their breath, but ſeldom do any thing, that's worth the doing. And as haſtineſs hinders us in doing, ſo it altogether unfits us for cenſuring. Time brings forth truth; a ſentence deferred, may afterwards be given, but when it is once given, it cannot be recalled; therefore it is good before we cenſure, to hear every man out; If this moderation and well-tempered ingenuity were exerciſed in all our controverſies with others, it would be a great help to the ending of controverſies. And we ſhould either ſee no reaſon to condemn many, or condemn them with more reaſon, had we patience to hear them. But when firſt, we will not hear an anſwer, or when ſecondly, we ſuppreſs our oppoſites with power and violence, whom we cannot anſwer or convince by argument; or thirdly, when we interpret what they ſay in anſwer to the worſt ſenſe; or fourthly, when we are glad to find any weakneſs or inſufficiency in their anſwers, and are ſo haſty to condemn, that we will not give them leave to recollect their thoughts, or think better on't to mend their anſwers, and explain their meaning, either by ſpeech or writing; it is impoſſible breaches ſhould be healed, and differences reconciled, or that ever we ſhould come to a clear and full underſtanding of one another. This offer made by *Elihu* to *Job* is a good pattern, and ſhews us how to deal with brethren in all ſuch caſes: and that which followeth ſheweth the beſt and nobleſt ground of ſuch amicable condeſcenſions, even a willingneſs not only to agree with but to embrace thoſe from whom we differ. That's the general ſenſe of what *Elihu* aſſureth *Job*, and would have him confident of in the next words.

For I deſire to juſtifie thee.

As if he had ſaid; *I have not ſpoken all or any of theſe things to thee, becauſe I would conquer thee, nor do I now provoke, or invite thee to ſpeak, becauſe I have a mind to lye at catch, or entangle thee in thy anſwers, for I tell thee, my heart and my aim in this overture, is, I* (heartily) *deſire to juſtifie thee.*

The word whereby *Elihu* expreſſeth this *deſire*, ſignifieth more than a bare deſire.

It notes, Firſt, an earneſt deſire, or ſtrength of deſire.

Secondly, A pleaſing deſire, or delightful deſire.

The higheſt act of deſire is delight; delight is the intention and ſtrength of affection, or deſire at reſt. As if *Elihu* had ſaid, *I have not ſpoken out of ill will to thee, or deſire of victory over thee, nor would any thing be more welcom news to my ſoul, then to ſee juſt cauſe of juſtifying thee; it doth not pleaſe me at all to prove that thou art not juſt, it would extreamly pleaſe me, even raviſh my heart with joy if thou couldſt prove thy ſelf or thy cauſe ſo juſt and faultleſs, that nothing could be blamed or reproved in either. I deſire*

Non mihi volupe eſt, ut tuam cauſam injuſtam oſtendam, velim enim eſſe juſtam nec eſſe in te quod reprehendi poſſit. Merc.

To juſtifie thee.] That is, not only to judg thee a godly man, or a man fearing God (which I already do) but to judg that thou haſt in all things both done and ſpoken well, which as yet I do not, nor can, unleſs thou ſheweſt me better reaſon for it than hitherto thou haſt done. *To juſtifie* another is four ways applyed in Scripture; as was ſhewed more largely at the ſecond verſe of the former Chapter.

צדק *eſt non modo pietatis ſed & veritatis laudem tribuere; ſignificat ſe magis propendere ad defendendum quam increpandum.* Coc.

Firſt, and chiefly 'tis applied or attributed to God himſelf (*Rom.* 8. 33.) *It is God that juſtifieth.* God puts man into a ſtate of juſtification, he juſtifieth his perſon ſo fully, that none can (of right) lay any thing to his charge, much leſs condemn him upon any charge laid againſt him.

Secondly, Man juſtifieth God (*Luke* 7. 29, 30.) *And all the people that heard him, and the Publicans juſtified God, being baptized with the baptiſm of John.* God himſelf who is the Judg of all men, is condemned by many men; and when things are at worſt, he always hath ſome to juſtifie him. Man juſtifieth God when he honoureth God, taking his part, and owning both his power and his righteouſneſs in whatſoever he doth. It is impoſſible God ſhould be unjuſt, and God is pleaſed to ſay, we juſtifie him, when we maintain his ways as juſt and righteous.

Thirdly, Man juſtifieth himſelf, when he is either lifted up proudly in the thoughts of what he is or hath done well (*Luke* 18. 11.) or when he upon good grounds can maintain that to be well done which he hath done.

Fourthly, Man juſtifieth man, when he either conſents to, or approves of what he hath done or ſpoken, whether it be good or bad; he that approves of a man juſtifies him, though the man be unjuſt. (*Prov.* 17. 15,) *He that juſtifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the juſt, even they both are an abomination unto the Lord.* Let a man be never ſo wicked, and do never ſo wickedly, ſome through ignorance of his wickedneſs, and others through love to and liking of his wickedneſs (being ſuch themſelves) will approve of him, and give him their good word. But (as Chriſt ſpeaks, (*Math.* 11. 19.) *Wiſdom is juſtified of her children*; that is, the true lovers and followers of wiſdom, having a right knowledg and eſtimation of her worth, will ſtand by her, and ſpeak for her, when ſlighted by the blind and unknowing world. And as this is true of declarative wiſdom, ſo eſpecially of Chriſt, who is *eſſential wiſdom.* His children highly prize and juſtifie him, while the world condemns and contemns him. In this fourth ſenſe *Elihu* is to be underſtood here, *I deſire to juſtifie thee*; that is, to give teſtimony unto thee, or ſubſcribe thy certificate, that thou art worthy of commendation. Though *Elihu* was a man of a very warm and keen ſpirit, full of fire, and mettle, yet he diſcovered a very honeſt bent, and a well-governed intention towards *Job*, in ſaying, *I deſire to juſtifie thee*; for 'tis as if he had ſaid, *It would not pleaſe me at all to ſee cauſe of further cenſure, but it would pleaſe me fully to ſee cauſe of approving and acquitting thee.* Therefore do but ſtate thy caſe and make out the merits of it, and I ſhall yield ſo ſoon as I ſee cauſe. So then, *Elihu* did not carry himſelf in this buſineſs, firſt, as a party, or as one that had taken a ſide, and was reſolved to hold it (as ſome do) right or wrong, becauſe he had appeared in it. Nor Secondly, was he hurried by paſſion, or intemperance of ſpirit. Nor Thirdly, was he hood-winkt by prejudice, or fore-ſtalled by his opinion againſt the perſon. Nor Fourthly, was he engaged by love to contention or hopes of victory. Nor Fifthly, was he purpoſed to ſuppreſs, ſmother or keep down the truth. Nor Sixthly, had he any deſire to aſperſe *Job*, and make him appear black. Nor Seventhly, had he a mind to grieve the man, or burthen him with accuſations; but declared a clear candor and much melting compaſſion towards his afflicted Antagoniſt, hungring and thirſting, yea even longing for a juſt occaſion to juſtifie him.

Some, I grant, expound this word *juſtifie*, as uſed here by *Elihu* in a very bare and barren ſenſe, as if it implyed only thus much, *I will do thee right, or I have no mind to do thee wrong*; but ſurely the word is much more fruitful, and bears the ſignification of a great willingneſs in *Elihu* to render *Job* as fair as poſſibly he could, or as his cauſe would bear to all the world; he waited to underſtand ſo much of him and by him, as might enable him to ſay, he had neither ſpoken nor done any thing amiſs.

Verbum juſtificare ſumitur pro juſtitiam exercere, juſtè ac rectè procedere q. d. ſtatui apud me juxta æquitâtis leges tecum agere. Bold.

Hence note, Firſt, *A good man is glad to ſee any mans cauſe or caſe prove good, or better then he thought it.*

The Apoſtle giving ſeveral Characters of Goſpel-love or charity, ſaith (1 *Cor.* 13. 6.) *It rejoyceth not in iniquity, but rejoyceth in the truth.* As charity rejoyceth not in the doing of iniquity, ſo neither doth it, when others are found to have done iniquity. But it rejoyceth much, when any who are either ſuſpected or charged with iniquity, are upon due tryal found clear and acquitted. *Paul* wiſhed that all who heard him had been not only almoſt but altogether ſuch as he, except his bonds, (*Acts* 26. 29.) It is a great argument that a man is good and juſt, when he heartily wiſheth that he who hath given occaſion to others to think ill of him, may at laſt appear better than they thought him.

Secondly note, *A good man ſeeks not victory but truth, and the good of thoſe he deals with.*

When he contends earneſtly with others, he deſires as earneſtly that truth may gain by that contention. Where a ſpirit of ſtrife and uncharitableneſs poſſeſſeth the minds of many men, they love to be vexing and trampling upon thoſe they deal with, rather than helping and informing them. *This evil ſpirit is the familiar of this age*; That which the Apoſtle ſpake (*Phil.* 1. 15.) of not a few who had the name of Goſpel-Miniſters (*ſome preach Chriſt even of envy and ſtrife, and ſome alſo of good will*; the one preach Chriſt of contention, not ſincerely) the ſame may be ſaid of many diſputers and Polemical writers; they do it enviouſly, they do it out of love to ſtrife and contention, not out of love either to truth or to thoſe with whom they contend and ſtrive; this is a bad ſpirit, a ſpirit far unlike that which ruled in *Elihu*, who wiſhed that the ſharpeſt reprehenſions he gave *Job*, might end in his juſtification. There ſhould be ſuch a ſpirit in man contending with man, as there is in God contending with man; who doth not thunder againſt ſinners, becauſe he would have them periſh, or delighteth in their deſtruction; but doth it, firſt, to awaken them; ſecondly, to humble them; thirdly, to convert them; fourthly, to juſtifie them; and laſtly, to ſave them for ever. *I write not theſe things* (ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 4. 14.) *to ſhame you, but as my beloved ſons I warn you.* As if he had ſaid, I intend not to aſperſe you, or throw dirt upon you, but only adviſe you to wipe off the dirt that is caſt upon you, or to keep your ſelves out of the dirt. I would either be a means to cleanſe you, or provoke you to preſerve your ſelves clean.

Note Thirdly, *It is our duty to juſtifie thoſe whom we oppoſe, when they can clear themſelves.*

As *Elihu* ſpake very ingenuouſly, ſo not at all beyond his duty; we ſhould be glad when they whom we have ſuſpected or charged appear fair, or better than we ſuſpected; he that doth ſo muſt be juſtified: as we muſt not hold the truth of God, ſo we muſt not hold the credit of our neighbour in unrighteouſneſs. We ſhould have three ends in dealing and debating with others: Firſt, to convince them of their errors and ſins. Secondly, to recover them out of ſin and error. Thirdly, to acquit them in what they appear and can approve themſelves not to have ſinned or erred. *Elihu* aimed at and attained the firſt and ſecond in his debate with *Job*; and it would have been a greater contentment to him, if (there being no need of thoſe two) he had ſeen cauſe only to have done the third. *Speak* (ſaid he) *for I deſire to juſtifie thee.*

Verſ. 33. **If not, hearken unto me, hold thy peace, and I ſhall teach thee wiſdom.**

Elihu having deſired *Job* to ſpeak, and he either refuſing or having nothing to ſay, he re-aſſumed and re-inforced his former counſel.

Hearken unto me, hold thy peace.] Theſe words were opened, (*verſ.* 31.) therefore I need not ſtay upon them here; *If not, hearken,* &c. and indeed what ſhould they do but hear and ſubmit, who have nothing to anſwer or reply? eſpecially when ſo gainful an overture is made them for their encouragement to hear, as *Elihu* made *Job* in the next words, which are alſo the laſt of this diſcourſe;

And I ſhall teach thee wiſdom.] *Elihu* may ſeem to take much upon him, and ſhew himſelf very confident, when he thus undertook and promiſed to teach *Job* wiſdom; yet doubtleſs the ground of his confidence was not in himſelf, but in Gods aſſiſtance; and in *Job*'s humble ſilence. As if he had ſaid, *I ſee thou wilt not ſpeak, but hear, hear then, and I ſhall teach thee wiſdom; for God (I hope) will be with us in this matter, and both open my mouth to ſpeak, and thine ears to hear that which is wiſdom indeed; having given thee a heart to receive inſtruction, he will inſtruct thee to profit, and make thee wiſe to know thy duty and do it, by my miniſtry, though a weak and unworthy inſtrument in his hand.*

אלף
In Kal diſcere in Piel docere hinc Aleph Pædagogus, anteceſſor, dux, doctor, qui aliis ſolet præire ſicut Aleph prima litera reliquas antecedit.

I ſhall teach thee wiſdom.] The word which we render *to teach* in another conjugation ſignifieth to learn; and the Noun ſignifieth a *leader*, or *governor*. As the firſt letter *Aleph* in the Hebrew Alphabet is the leading letter to all that follow, ſo a *Teacher* ſhould be a *leader*, he ſhould go before thoſe that hear him, by good example as well as by wholſom doctrine. *Be thou an example of the Believers*, ſaith the Apoſtle to *Timothy* (1 *Epiſt.* 4. 12.) who was ſet up in the Church of *Epheſus* a Teacher and an Inſtructer.

Further, when *Elihu* ſaith, *I will teach thee wiſdom*; his meaning is, I ſhall acquaint thee with that which may make thee wiſe, or I ſhall ſhew thee wherein true wiſdom doth conſiſt. And that conſiſts chiefly in theſe two things. Firſt, in the knowledg of our ſelves; Secondly, in the knowledg of God: As if *Elihu* had ſaid, *I doubt not but I ſhall make thee know more fully what thou art, as alſo who God is.* And it plainly appears in the cloſe, that *Job* got a fuller light in both by what *Elihu* ſaid to him. He got a fuller ſoul-ſight of the ſoveraignty and highneſs of God, and a deeper humiliation in the ſight of his own ſinfulneſs and vileneſs. He that hath learned and is in the power of theſe two leſſons, is queſtionleſs a wiſe man; and he that faithfully teacheth theſe two leſſons doth not at all over-rate his doctrine if he call it wiſdom, nor doth he put too high a title upon his pains and endeavours, if he ſaith to his Auditors or Scholars, I will teach or have taught you wiſdom.

Laſtly, When *Elihu* ſaid, *I will teach thee wiſdom*; we muſt not conceive that he looked upon *Job* as unwiſe or ignorant; *Elihu* knew well enough he had not to do with a child or an ideot, but with a man of knowledg, with a man who was *skilful in the word of righteouſneſs, whoſe ſenſes* (as the Apoſtle expreſſeth it, *Heb.* 5. 14.) *were exerciſed to diſcern both good and evil.* His meaning then, when he ſaid *I will teach thee wiſdom*, was only this, I will teach thee to be wiſer and more knowing in ſome neceſſary truths, then as yet thou art, or at leaſt, haſt appeared to be. Or we may give his ſenſe in the language of the Apoſtle, (2 *Cor.* 1. 24.) I will teach thee wiſdom, not as *having dominion over thy faith, but as a helper of thy joy.*

Hence note, Firſt, *There are none ſo wiſe, none ſo holy, but they may learn more wiſdom, to be yet more holy.*

'Tis out of queſtion, he was never good, who thinks he can be no better; nor doth he yet know any thing aright, who ſaith he needs know no more. It is very ſad (which is the caſe of many, 2 *Tim.* 3 7.) to be *ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledg of the truth*: Yet they who (through grace) have been inabled to come to the knowledg of the truth muſt be ever learning; and the more any man doth know, the more he ſeeth his need, and the more willing he is, to be taught and know more. *The fear of God, that is wiſdom,* (ſaith *Job*, Chap. 28. 28.) *and to depart from evil, is underſtanding*; and God teſtified of *Job* that *he feared him, and eſchewed evil*, in the firſt verſe of this Book, now if ſo wiſe, ſo good a man as *Job* might learn wiſdom, let none think themſelves too wiſe or too good to learn.

Secondly, Note, *True wiſdom conſiſts in the true knowledg of our ſelves, and of God.*

This was the theme or ſubject upon which *Elihu* inſiſted, he was not teaching *Job* Humane, Philoſophical, or Natural wiſdom, but Heavenly and Divine wiſdom; the greateſt meer natural Philoſophers in the world (which title ſounds them, *lovers of wiſdom*) were meer ſtrangers to that, which we call true wiſdom; and (as the Apoſtle chargeth them, *Rom.* 1. 21, 22.) *became vain in their imaginations, and their fooliſh heart was darkened, profeſſing themſelves to be wiſe, they became fools.*

Thirdly, Note, *There is nothing worth the learning or knowing, but that which makes us truly wiſe.*

For that only ſheweth us the way to be truly happy. 'Tis our wiſdom to work for a right end, and that work can never attain its end but by the choice of right means. *Through deſire* (ſaith *Solomon*, Prov. 18. 1.) *a man having ſeparated himſelf, ſeeketh and intermedleth with all wiſdom.* The deſire of all things (ſay Naturaliſts) eſpecially of all men runs out to good. And the better any man is, the better is that good which he deſireth, yea, if any man be truly good, he deſireth that which is beſt; for the enjoyment of God, wherein alone happineſs doth conſiſt, is his ultimate and higheſt end. But what doth he to reach this end? *Solomon* points us to two things: Firſt, he ſeparateth himſelf from all thoſe lets and impediments which ſtop up the way, or lye croſs to his deſire. Secondly, *He ſeeketh and intermedleth with all wiſdom*, with all real and ſubſtantial wiſdom, (as the word there uſed ſignifieth) for he knoweth that nothing but ſuch wiſdom, acted in wiſe ways, is proper and ſucceſsful for the promoting of that noble end. Now if nothing but wiſdom can lead us to that end, what is there worth the learning or knowing except that which makes us wiſe?

Fourthly, From that frame of ſpirit which *Elihu* obſerved in *Job*.

Note, *They that are humble and meek are fitteſt to learn wiſdom.*

God reſiſteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble. (*Jam.* 4. 6.) The humble ſoul hath receiveth grace already, and that grace received is the way to all grace. (*Pſal.* 25. 9.) *The meek will he guide in judgment, the meek will he teach his way.* The way of God is wiſdom, and they whom God teacheth ſhall undoubtedly learn it.

Laſtly, *To teach ſpiritual wiſdom, or to teach man how to be ſpiritually wiſe, is the beſt leſſon that can be taught.*

They are bleſſed Maſters who make ſuch Scholars. The whole diſcourſe of *Elihu* is about ſpiritual wiſdom, not about the wiſdom of the world which God will deſtroy; not how to climb the pinnacles of honour, and get high in the world, not how to gather riches, and to lade our ſelves with thick clay; it was not how to be great or rich, but it was how to be holy and humble, how to give glory to God, and be fitted for glory with God; theſe were the leſſons of wiſdom which *Elihu* taught *Job*, and theſe are leſſons chiefly to be taught and learned by every man, who undertakes to be a teacher, or deſires to be a learner. Thus *Elihu* hath concluded his firſt diſcourſe with a promiſe to teach *Job* wiſdom, and how well he performed and made good his promiſe, will appear, to his praiſe, in opening the following Chapters.

CHAP. XXXIV. Verſ. 1, 2, 3, 4.

Furthermore, Elihu anſwered and ſaid,

Hear my words, O ye wiſe men, and give ear to me, ye that have knowledg.

For the ear tryeth words, as the mouth taſteth meat.

Let us chuſe to us judgment: let us know among our ſelves what is good.

THe former Chapter concluded *Elihu*'s firſt diſcourſe with *Job*: and we may well ſuppoſe that he had made ſome pauſe; to try whether *Job* would give him an anſwer, as he had invited him to do. But perceiving him ſilent, and forbearing to ſpeak; he himſelf proceeds to this ſecond ſpeech.

In which we may conſider:

Firſt, His Preface, in the four firſt verſes.

Secondly, His charge or accuſation brought againſt *Job*, from the 5. verſe Incluſively to the 10. Excluſively.

Thirdly, We have the refutation of what *Job* ſaid of himſelf, and ſeem'd to charge upon God; this is proſecuted with much variety from the 10. to the 30. verſe of this Chapter.

In the four laſt verſes, *Elihu* gathers up the ſtrength of all he had ſaid, and makes his Concluſion.

The four verſes now under hand, are a Preface to this ſecond undertaking of *Elihu* with *Job*: In which we have

Firſt, His tranſition from what he had ſaid, to what he was about to ſay, in the firſt verſe; *Furthermore.*

Secondly, We have his addreſs or application to thoſe about him for audience and diligent attention to what he had to ſay, in the 2. and 3. verſes; *Hear O ye wiſe men*, &c.

Thirdly, We have his motion; and the motion which he makes, is, that the whole procedure of the buſineſs might be both fair and friendly, as alſo judicious and juſt; or that they might to the utmoſt endeavour after a right underſtanding and diſcerning of the matter before them: *verſ.* 4. *Let us chuſe to our ſelves judgment*, &c.

Verſ. 1. **Furthermore, Elihu anſwered and ſaid, or, and Elihu anſwered and ſaid.**

It may here be queſtioned, by what propriety of ſpeech it can be ſaid that *Elihu* anſwered, ſeeing *Job* made no reply to what he had ſaid before.

To this query, I ſay, Firſt, that in Scripture both the beginning of a ſpeech, and the continuance of it, where nothing hath been interpoſed, is called an anſwer; we find it ſo frequently in the Goſpel (*Matth.* 11. 25.) *Then Jeſus anſwered and ſaid:* there was no queſtion, no diſcourſe antecedent, yet it is called an anſwer. The like is obſervable in the 17. of *Matthew*, verſ. 4. and *John* 2. 18.

Secondly, We may reſolve this doubt thus; though *Job* ſaid nothing now to which *Elihu* made anſwer; yet he had ſaid much which was yet unanſwered, altogether unanſwered by *Elihu*; therefore *Elihu* might ſay, that he proceeded to anſwer the many matters of *Job's* former ſpeech, to which as yet he had given no anſwer. This may ſuffice to ſhew how or why that which he ſaid further, was an anſwer, let us now conſider what *Elihu anſwered and ſaid.*

Verſ. 2. **Hear my words, O ye wiſe men, and give ear to me ye that have knowledg.**

As if he had ſaid, I will not be my own Judg in this matter, I refer it to the judgment of wiſe and knowing men, let them determine it.

We may here take notice; Firſt, of the character given the perſons to whom *Elihu* ſpake, or did addreſs his ſpeech, they were *wiſe men, men that had knowledg.*

Secondly, We may take notice of the earneſtneſs of his exhortation or admonition, to mind what he had to ſay, *Give ear, O ye wiſe men, O ye men that have knowledg.*

For the clearing of theſe words, we muſt enquire, firſt, who is *a wiſe man?* who, *a man that hath knowledg? a wiſe man* in diſtinction to a man that hath knowledg, is a man of mature judgment, of clear underſtanding, and ſolid prudence, in the managing either of diſcourſes or actions. *A man of knowledg* is one that hath improved his underſtanding by ſtudy, reading, or long experience. Some men are wiſe, who yet have not much knowledg; and ſome have a great deal of knowledg, who have very little wiſdom. Now *Elihu* ſpeaks to his auditory, as conſiſting or made up both of wiſe and knowing men; *O ye wiſe men*, that have great underſtanding and judgment; and, *O ye men of knowledg*, that have attained to learning and skill in all things knowable, hear my words and give ear. Here was a choice and ſelect auditory, wiſe men, and men of knowledg.

Secondly, It may be queried, whom *Elihu* intends by theſe wiſe men, and men that had knowledg?

Some conceive, he takes in all that were preſent at that long and ſolemn conference between *Job* and his friends; and that he deciphers the whole Company under theſe titles of wiſe and knowing men, inviting them all to attend what he had to ſay, they being ſo well fitted to judg what he had to ſay; *It is not good to give flattering titles to men, but it is good to give them winning titles, ſuch as may gain upon them for their good.*

Yet I rather conceive, that *Elihu* ſpeaks more ſpecially to ſome that were there preſent; namely, to *Job*'s three friends, who had had the matter in hand before, and now ſtood out: to theſe men he now turns himſelf, and bends his diſcourſe, ſaying, *Hear O ye wiſe men: hearken ye that have knowledg*; that is, ye *Eliphaz, Zophar*, and *Bildad*, who have all this while engaged with *Job*, give me leave to ſpeak a few words in your ears, and I pray attend unto me.

Thirdly, Suppoſing that they, ſpecially, were the wiſe and knowing men to whom he ſpake. It may be queſtion'd again, under what notion he called them wiſe and knowing men.

Some ſay, he called them ſo Ironically, putting a cloſe or ſecret ſcorn upon them; As if he had ſaid, *Hear me, O ye wiſe men, and hearken, O ye knowing men, ye that for years and age ſhould be indeed knowing and wiſe men; and are ſo in the reputation of others, as well as by your own profeſſion and pretenſion; Ye who came from far to undertake this weighty work, the comforting and counſelling of this your afflicted friend, ſee now how well you have acquitted your ſelves, and anſwered the expectation raiſed both of you and by you. Have ye not comforted him fairly, and counſelled him wiſely? Do ye not ſee how ſhort you are of your own propoſals? and how ill you have handled the matter, he remaining as far from conviction, ſatisfaction, or conſolation, as when you firſt began with him?* Thus ſome carry the ſenſe, but I ſhall not ſtay upon it, nor do I conceive that *Elihu* ſpake Ironically, but plainly, and in good earneſt, not only calling them wiſe and knowing men, but judging and believing they were ſo. Of theſe he begs audience.

Hear and give ear.] To *hear* is a natural act; a man that hath ears cannot chuſe but hear (unleſs he ſtop them) when any thing is ſpoken: but *to give ear*, is, as I may ſay, an artificial act, a ſtudied act, yea a ſpiritual act, when the matter ſpoken of is ſpiritual. *Elihu* doth not call for a bare hearing of words, but for a ſtudious hearing of the matter which ſhould be preſented to them; *hear and give ear*; or as the Elegancy of the Hebrew may be rendred, *ear my words:* for the word which we render to *give ear*, ſignifies

אזן *eſt auribus percipere ſive aurizare, ſi fas eſſet ita loqui.* Rab. Mord.

ſignifies alſo *the ear, ear my words.* We ſay of a thing that we deſire another would reach to us, *pray hand it hither,* putting the denomination of the Organ or Inſtrument upon the act; ſo by a like Elegancy, it is here ſaid, *Ear my words*; that is, hear ſtudiouſly and diligently, with an holy art and skill. As there is an art in ſpeaking, ſo there is a great, if not a greater art in hearing; *ear my words,* or, *give ear to me ye men that have knowledg.*

Et quia auribus velut brachijs : ſtateræ ponderantur quæ audivimus, ipſæ bilances eodem quo aures nomine אאזנ *appellantur. Et verbum audiendi ponderare ſignificat.* Bold.

From the Conſideration of the parties here ſpoken to, wiſe and knowing men.

Note, *The wiſe, and knowing, are to hear as well as ſpeak.*

They that are wiſe, need more wiſdom, and they that are knowing, may improve their knowledg by hearing: They who know many, yea moſt truths, may yet know more truths; and if any know all truths, they may yet know every truth more. This cauſed the Apoſtle to profeſs (2 *Pet.* 1. 12.) *I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of theſe things, though ye know them, and be eſtabliſhed in the preſent truth.* As the ignorant ought to hear that they may know, ſo they who have knowledg, ought to hear, that they may be more knowing; as they that are fools, ought to hear that they may be wiſe; ſo they that are wiſe ought to hear that they may be yet wiſer (*Prov.* 1. 5.) *A wiſe man will hear, and will increaſe learning. Solomon* having ſaid in the former verſe, that he ſpake theſe Proverbs, *To give ſubtlety to the ſimple, to the young men knowledg and diſcretion*; leſt any ſhould ſay, if your Proverbs or wiſe ſentences are ſo plain and eaſie, that the ſimple may ſound them, and young men comprehend them, then what profit ſhall wiſe and learned men get by reading or hearing them? ſhall not they loſe their labour and miſpend their time in the ſtudy of them? No, ſaith he, the greateſt Clerks and ripeſt wits may gather inſtruction from them, as well as the ſimple vulgar, and greener heads. Their depth will not drown a lamb, and they are deep enough to ſwim a Leviathan. And therefore as a wiſe man will hear, that is, is willing to hear, that he may increaſe learning; ſo let not the wiſeſt think themſelves too wiſe to hear, for they may increaſe their learning, how learned ſoever they are. And as the wiſeſt may learn every day, ſo they that are truly wiſe, do learn every hearing day, as the ſame *Solomon* tells us (*Prov.* 9. 8.) *Give inſtruction to a wiſe man, and he will be yet wiſer.* They are the moſt fooliſh of all men, who think themſelves ſo wiſe that they need no more inſtruction, and ſo knowing that they need learn no more knowledg. The word of God it is fitted for all ſorts and ſizes of men, it is for the ignorant, and for the knowing; it is for the fooliſh, and for the wiſe; it is milk for babes, and ſtrong meat for men; it is for them that are out of the Church to bring them in; and for thoſe that are within the Church to build them up (*Eph.* 4. 13.) *Till we all come unto a perfect man, unto the meaſure of the ſtature of the fulneſs of Chriſt*; till we are wiſe and knowing to perfection, and fulneſs of ſtature (which will not be on this ſide glory) we have need to give ear, and hear, for the perfecting of our knowledg, and the hightning of our ſtature.

Sapientum eſt velle diſcere.

Again, Theſe wiſe men were called to hear and give ear, not only that they might learn and increaſe knowledg by what was ſpoken, but to judg aright of what was ſpoken; for this was not ſo much the hearing of a Sermon (as I may ſay) as of a diſpute, or the debate of a Controverſie; and therefore wiſe men were deſired to hear it, that they might be able to judg, and give their opinion, (as 'tis ſaid in the 4. verſe) *Let us chuſe to our ſelves judgment, and know among our ſelves what is good.*

Hence note, Secondly, *We had need to hear and give ear, or to hear diligently, before we judg either of things or perſons.*

Though we may judg rightly of that we have not heard, or of that which we have heard ſlightly, yet we are not right Judges of any matter till we have heard it. 'Tis poſſible to hit upon a right judgment blindfold; but Judges muſt not be blind, nor judg blindfold. To judg right, not knowing it to be ſo, ſhall have no better reward than a wrong judgment. Yea they that are called to judg, muſt both hear and give ear, elſe they may quickly give wrong judgment.

Again, *Elihu* is ſpeaking here to wiſe and good men, yet how ſtrictly doth he exhort them? *Hear and give ear.*

Hence note, *Good men are often dull of hearing, and had need to be put forward.*

Chriſt tells his Diſciples that many are judicially ſo, and we know that all are naturally ſo (*Matth.* 13. 15.) and the Apoſtle tells the *Hebrews* they were ſo (*Chap.* 5. 11.) where treating of *Chriſt called of God, an high Prieſt after the order of Melchiſedeck,* he concludeth, *of whom we have many things to ſay, and hard to be uttered, ſeeing ye are dull of hearing.* But how did their dulneſs of hearing make thoſe things hard to be ſpoken or uttered? may it not be eaſie enough for a man to utter that which others are dull to hear? I anſwer, the Apoſtles meaning ſeems to be this? It was hard for him to utter or expound them ſo, as they might perceive the clear truth of thoſe great myſteries, becauſe their internal ear, or apprehending faculty was weak and dull. There is a ſtopple in the ear of man, and 'tis hard to pull it out. When any one ſpeaks to purpoſe, 'tis the duty of thoſe that are preſent to hear: and yet he that ſpeaks had need to invite and preſs all to hear, yea to hear and give ear. The words of the wiſe are goads to provoke and prick us on to hear the truth, as well as nails to faſten it (*Eccl.* 12. 11.) *Elihu* having called wiſe men to hear or ear his words, ſheweth the uſe or force of the ear in the next verſe.

Verſ. 3. **For the ear tryeth words, as the mouth taſteth meat.**

In this verſe *Elihu* gives the reaſon why he ſo earneſtly exhorted them to hear and give ear; *The ear tryeth words,* that is, by the hearing of the ear, words are tryed. It is the office of the ear to conveigh words to the underſtanding, that ſo a judgment may be made of them, before they are either received or rejected.

The word which we tranſlate *to try,* ſignifies to try as gold is tryed in the fire: the ear is, as it were, a furnace wherein words are tryed, the ear will diſcover whether what is ſaid be droſs or pure mettal. The Prophet (*Zach.* 13. 9.) ſpeaketh of a *third part* of men that ſhould be brought thorow the fire and tryed; as the fire of affliction and perſecution tryeth perſons, ſo man hath a fire and a touchſtone in his ear which tryeth words. The ear is given not only to hear a ſound of words, not only to underſtand the general meaning of words what they ſignifie in any language, but the ear is given to try the ſenſe and ſoundneſs of words. And when *Elihu* ſaith *words,* ſpeaking indefinitely, he includeth all words of one ſort or other; it tryeth good words, and it tryeth bad words; it tryeth heavenly words, and it tryeth earthly words; it tryeth natural words, and it tryeth ſpiritual words, the truth or falſhood of words are brought to tryal, at the bar and tribunal of the ear. But in what manner or after what ſimilitude doth the ear try words? The anſwer followeth;

בחנ *periculum fecit, probavit.*

As the mouth taſteth meat.] In the 12. Chapter we had the ſame expreſſion, and therefore I ſhall not ſtay upon it here. Only there the ſentence is made up by a particle Copulative; *The earth tryeth words, and the mouth taſteth meat.* Here by a particle of likeneſs; *The ear tryeth words, as the mouth taſteth meat.* There is a fair analogy or proportion, between the ear and the mouth, in diſcriminating their proper objects. Hearing and taſting, are two of thoſe five excellent uſeful ſenſes which God hath planted in the nature of man, the other three are ſeeing, ſmelling, feeling. Here we have a compariſon between two of the five ſenſes; look what the mouth is to meat, the ſame is the ear to words. In the mouth the ſenſe of taſting is placed as a Judg to diſcern between good and bad, ſavory and unſavory meats; and the ear of a man which receiveth words, is accompanied with an underſtanding, whereby we apprehend what is true, what is falſe, what is to be approved, and what refuſed. And the compariſon runs yet more clearly, while we conſider, that as the food which the mouth receiveth is prepared for the help of our natural or bodily life, ſo the words of inſtruction which the ear receiveth are prepared for the food of our ſouls, and the maintaining of our ſpiritual life.

Some conceive the compariſon is not here made between the two ſenſes of taſting and hearing, but that both are compared to thoſe wiſe and knowing men ſpoken of, and to whom appeal is made in the former verſe. For as all the ſenſes are not fitted to judg of words and meats, but only the ear and palate; ſo all men are not fit nor capable to judg of weighty matters and profound queſtions, but only wiſe and knowing men. And ſo according to this interpretation, both or either of theſe ſenſitive faculties, and both or either of their properties, are alike compared to wiſe and learned men, who are able not only to underſtand the ſound of words, but alſo exerciſe a judgment upon them, both to diſcern and determine what there is of truth and right in them. Hence that ſaying of the Ancient, *Wiſdom is a ſavory knowledg.* Wiſe men taſte and ſavour the things which they know. He ſurely was a wiſe man who ſaid of the word of God (*Jer.* 15. 16.) *Thy words were found, and I did eat them, and thy word was to me the joy and rejoycing of my heart. Hear, O ye wiſe men, and give ear to me ye that have knowledg; the ear tryeth words, as the mouth taſteth meat*; that is, as the ear of a man tryeth words, and as the mouth of a man doth taſte meat; ſo wiſe and knowing men try and taſte that which is ſpoken and heard. Thus both theſe ſenſitive faculties, their properties and powers are compared to wiſe men, who do not only hear the voice of him that ſpeaketh, but ſit down to conſider it. The mouth having taken meat and chewed it, taſtes it, and makes a judgment of it; Thus wiſe men deal with all they hear; ſo that, look what theſe two natural faculties do with natural things; with words naturally ſpoken, with meat naturally eaten; the ſame, they who are wiſe and knowing do to what is ſpoken ſpiritually and rationally, they try and judg it.

Sapientia eſt ſapida ſcientia.

But I conceive, we need not inſiſt ſtrictly upon this; For whether we compare theſe two ſenſes in their ſeveral operations to wiſe men, or whether we compare them in their operations one with another, yet (according to the ſenſe of our tranſlation) the meaning of *Elihu* is the ſame, namely, that thoſe wiſe men to whom he ſpake, ſhould not only hear but try what they heard, becauſe they had received a power ſo to do; *for the ear tryeth words, even as the mouth taſteth meat.*

Auris interna dicitur νοῦς, quæ vox alibi legitur in Græca editione pro οὖς, cum ſit ipſa mens, quæ verba & res dijudicat. Druſ.

There is a twofold ear, there is an outward ear, and an inward ear: And ſo a twofold tryal: The outward ear tryeth words of what ſignification they are, whether they are as we ſay good Engliſh, or Latine, &c. It tryeth them alſo as to their Grammatical ſenſe, or the conſtruction of what is ſpoken in the letter: The inward ear or underſtanding tryeth them as to their logical ſenſe, ſcope and tendency, as to their uſe, and force in the matter they are ſpoken to. Both ways *the ear tryeth words, as the mouth taſteth meat*; only with this difference, that the tryal which the mouth makes is meerly ſenſitive, and both begun and perfected in the mouth; but the tryal which the ear makes is chiefly intellectual, it is begun at the ear, but perfected by the underſtanding. It is the mind which judgeth, the ear only brings in the report of things to the mind.

> Hence note, Firſt, *The ſenſe of hearing is a great mercy, and of great uſe to mankind.*

Aurem audientem dicit auditorem verbi obedientem. Beda.

The ear is the chief gate or inlet to the ſoul; nor were our ears given only for an Ornament to the head, but for the enriching and bettering of the heart. The naturally rational ear given to hear and try words is a mercy; but when a ſpiritually rational ear is given with it to hear and try words, that's a mercy indeed. *Solomon* ſaith (*Prov.* 20. 12.) *The hearing ear, and the ſeeing eye, the Lord hath made even both of them.* Theſe natural ſenſes are of God's own creation, and the uſe of them his bleſſing, yet common to all mankind good and bad; but the ſpiritual ſenſes of ſeeing and hearing, are a ſpecial priviledg promiſed to the elect, and a fruit of Goſpel grace. (*Iſa.* 35. 5.) *Then the eyes of the blind ſhall be opened, and the ears of the deaf ſhall be unſtopped.* He meaneth it not either only or chiefly of the bodily eyes and ears (though Chriſt wrought miracles upon them, and healed both the blind and deaf in the days of his fleſh) but of the eyes and ears of the ſoul, which are often dark and ſtopt while the other are free enough in the exerciſe of their ſeveral faculties. The ſeeing eye, which both *Solomon* and *Iſaiah* intend, is, the eye which ſo ſeeth as that it followeth the good which it ſeeth; and that's their hearing ear which believeth and obeyeth what it heareth. A ſuperficial ſeeing eye is a blind eye, and a formal hearing ear is a deaf ear in the ſight and account of God. We ſay it is the ſymptom of ſome diſtemper or growing diſeaſe upon the body, when the palate doth not reliſh meat; Surely it argueth a diſeaſed and ſick ſoul, when we have no mind to hear nor find reliſh in the word of God.

> Secondly, Note, *Words are not to be received nor ſubmitted to, nor believed as true, till they are tryed.*

Itching ears are bad, (2 Tim. 4. 3.) *Trying ears are good.* You will not ſwallow your meat till you have chewed and taſted it; nor ſhould you ſwallow words, till you have tryed them; why elſe have we ears to hear? why are we truſted with reaſon to judg things with? or with rules to judg them by? There is no greater Tyranny in the World, than to command a man to believe, (by an implicit faith) as others believe; or to impoſe our opinions and aſſertions upon thoſe that hear them, and not to give them liberty to try them. This is to be at once (as the Apoſtle *James* expreſſeth it, *Chap.*3.1.) *many Maſters*, or many Maſters where we ſhould not be one.

But ſome will ſay, when the word of God is preached, is that to be tryed by men? have we a liberty to take that into conſideration or to take and refuſe it as we are perſwaded in our own judgments?

I anſwer, The word of God is not to be brought to the bar nor to be tryed by man. The word of God is our Judg, therefore ought not to be judged by us; the word of God is perfect, and how can we that are imperfect judg that which is perfect. The word of God is truth, and all men are lyars; we are not therefore to judg the word of God, nor try that: Yet when any man ſpeaks of or from the word of God, we are to try what he ſpeaks; that is, whether what he ſpeaks be according to the word of God, and his doctrine or interpretation grounded on the Text. Every one that ſpeaks about ſpiritual things profeſſeth he brings the word of God, and it muſt be tryed whether he doth ſo or no. It is a truth to which all are to ſubmit (without diſpute) by believing that *Jeſus Chriſt came into the world to ſave ſinners, to waſh away their ſins with his blood.* This is the word of God: yet when this truth is Preached, we may conſider whether it be managed according to the word of God or no. This great doctrine, which contains the ſum of the Goſpel, may have ſuch things mingled with it, as are not to be received for the word of God. Some in the primitive time thought and taught that there was no ſalvation by Chriſt unleſs they ſtill kept the ceremonial Law and were circumciſed; though they held that fundamental truth, that Chriſt dyed to ſave ſinners; yet when they came to the explication of it, they deſtroyed it by urging a neceſſity of continuing the ceremonial Law: whereas others judged rightly that faith only, without the uſe of any Jewiſh ceremony, purifieth the heart. Therefore a council of ſpiritual and godly wiſe men was called *to conſider of this matter.* (*Acts* 15. 6.) What to do? not to try the word of God, but to try which of thoſe two different opinions was according to the word of God. Thus when we hear a Sermon, though the Word of God and Chriſt crucified be the general ſubject of it, and that is not to be tryed, but received by faith and obeyed; yet what is ſpoken upon it and delivered about it as the mind of God in the Scripture, that is to be tryed (1 *Cor.*2.15.) *He that is ſpiritual, tryeth, or judgeth all things.* And again (1 *Cor.* 14. 29.) the Apoſtle gives this counſel about propheſying, *Let one or two ſpeak, and let the others judg*; what? the word of God, no! but whether they ſpeak according to the word of God, or no; In this ſenſe every one muſt judg for himſelf, we muſt not take all for granted, but try what we hear by the ear, as we do what we eat by the mouth.

> Thirdly, Note, *A ſpiritually judicious and conſiderate man will take time to judg of things that are ſpoken, as the palate doth of meats that are eaten.*

The ear tryeth words as the mouth taſteth meat; God hath given man a faculty for that end, and he is to uſe his faculty. We commonly ſay, *Look before you leap.* Surely then we ſhould taſte before we eat, and prove all things whether they are good or no, before we (electively) hold that which is good. (1 *Theſ.* 5.21.) *The noble Bereans received the word with all readineſs of mind*; yet they would make no more haſte than good ſpeed to receive it, for (as the Text ſaith, *Acts* 17.11.) *They ſearched the Scriptures daily whether thoſe things were ſo.*

Fourthly, Here are two Organs of ſenſe ſpoken of, *the ear*, and *the mouth*, both are of great uſe to man, but one of them, *the ear* is of a more frequent and noble uſe. Beaſts have both mouths and ears; but becauſe theirs is only a ſenſitive life, they make more uſe of their mouths then of their ears. Whereas man whoſe life is rational, yea and ſpiritual too, muſt or ought to make more uſe of his ears then of his mouth.

How doth this reprove all thoſe who are more in trying meats, then in trying words? Or more for taſting, then they are for hearing? It was a complaint of ſome in the former age, that they made themſelves like brute beaſts, which having both thoſe powers of hearing and taſting, have yet no regard to hearing, but are all for feeding and eating. They carry it like beaſts, and are more brutiſh then a beaſt, who employ their mouths more then their ears. A beaſt is made in that low form, to live to eat, and work, and ſo to die; man is of a higher form, next to that of Angels, and for him to ſpend his time in eating and drinking, as if his work lay at his mouth, not at his ear, is to degrade himſelf and lead a brutiſh life. The Apoſtle brings in ſuch brutes ſpeaking thus, (2*Cor.*15.32.) *Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we ſhall die*; not a word of uſing their ears: they ſay not, come let us hear the word of God, let us ſeek bread for our ſouls, but come, let us eat and drink; now for a man to be ſo much in eating, as to neglect hearing and meditating, what doth he but make himſelf like a beaſt of the earth, who ſhould be like the Angels in Heaven, dayly riſing up to a ſpiritual and heavenly life; God lifts us up to Heaven (as I may ſay) *by the ears*. Our ears were not given us only to hear delightful ſounds, or to commune one with another about the affairs of this life; the uſe of the ear is yet more noble, even to help us in the receiving of all ſaving and ſanctifying knowledg. *Faith comes by hearing*, (Rom.15.17) and ſo doth every grace, both as to the implantation and growth of it, till we come to glory. Therefore conſider how you uſe this excellent ſenſe of hearing, and how you improve in ſpirituals by what you have heard. We were made after the Image of God in knowledg and righteouſneſs, and it ſhould be the great deſign of our lives to get this image renewed; and that is done at the ear, 'tis wrought by hearing; faith, repentance, and every grace come in and are wrought at the ear. Some ſcoff at this latter age, calling it *a hearing age, not a working age*; we (ſay they) are much for *ear-work*, little for *hand-work*; all for Preaching, nothing for doing; nor can this reproach be quite wiped off, ſeeing with our plenty of Preaching, there is ſo little practiſing; as if men had turned all the members of their body into ears, and were nothing but hearing: To do nothing but hear, or to hear and do nothing, to hear much and act little, is a high provocation. To have a ſwel'd head and a feeble hand is the diſeaſe of Religion. Yet let not voluptuous Epicures who are all for the palate and belly-cheer think to excuſe themſelves, for not hearing, or for ſeldom hearing, becauſe ſome who hear much are found doing little, or ſeldom do what they hear: for as theſe ſhall be condemned by the word which they have heard and not done, ſo ſhall theſe for not hearing the word which would have ſhewed them what to do. It hath been anciently ſaid, *The belly hath no ears*, nor will they either mind hearing, or mind what they hear, who mind their bellies (not for hunger and the ſupport of nature, that is, (as *Solomon* ſpeaks *Eccl.*10.17.) for ſtrength but) for drunkenneſs or ſurfet. When a voluptuous perſon deſired *Cato* that he might live with him: No, ſaid *Cato*, I like not your ſociety, I do not love to converſe with a man who uſeth his mouth more then his ears; who is buſied more to pleaſe his taſt in eating and drinking, then to enrich his underſtanding by hearing and diſcourſing. The Apoſtle (*Tit.*1.12. referring them to one of their own Poets) calleth the *Cretians evil beaſts, ſlow bellies.* They were not ſlow to fill their bellies, but their full bellies (*their belly being their God*, as he told ſome among the *Philippians*, Chap. 3.19.) made them ſlow, yea reprobate to every good word and work. *Solomon* gives man a great charge when he ſaith (*Prov.*23.23.) *Buy truth, and ſell it not.* The mart for thoſe moſt precious commodities grace and truth, is kept (not at the belly, but) at the ear; there we buy *without mony, and without price* both grace and truth; to get theſe is to be wiſe merchants. The beſt market we can make, the beſt trade we can drive is with and at our ears: *The ear tryeth words, as the mouth taſteth meat.* And from this *Elihu* infers;

Cum eo vivere non poſſum cui palatum magis ſapiat quam cor. Plutarchus in vita Catonis.

Verſ. 4. Let us chuſe to our ſelves judgment; let us know among our ſelves what is good.

This verſe contains the ſecond requeſt which *Elihu* made to *Job*'s friends; The ſum of it is, that they might proceed judiciouſly and fairly in the cauſe before them. As if he had ſaid, *Seeing it is the office of the ear to try words, as the mouth taſteth meat; let us ſee what we can do with our ears towards the determination of this matter. Job hath often wiſhed to find one with whom he might debate and try this cauſe in judgment; let us give him his wiſh, and having throughly weighed the matter and merits of his cauſe, let us ſee what juſtice will award him. Let us chuſe to our ſelves judgment*, &c.

Let us chuſe,] To elect or chuſe is the work of the will. And to chuſe what is good, what is right, is a gracious work of a renewed will; as Gods Election of us from Eternity, ſo our Election of God and the things of God, at any time, is a very gracious work.

This affirmative act, To chuſe to us judgment, ſeems to imply a negative, the rejecting or laying aſide of whatſoever is contrary to or a hindrance of Judgment; that is, the laying aſide, Firſt, of all animoſities or undue heats of ſpirit; Secondly, of all prejudices and undue prepoſſeſſions; Thirdly, of all groundleſs ſuſpitions and jealouſies of the perſon we have to deal with, we can never chuſe judgment, till we are clear of all theſe.

The original word rendred to chuſe, ſignifies in the noun, *a young man*, a man in the flower of his age, in the beſt of his life, when his breaſts (as *Job* ſpake at the 20. Chapter) are full of milk, and his bones of marrow; and the reaſon is given, becauſe our younger time is our chuſing time, as to our way in this world; it ſhould be ſo much more for Heaven, or the things of another world. *Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth*, ſaith Solomon (Ec.12.1.) Some render thoſe words expreſly, *In the days of thy elections or chuſings*; As if he had ſaid, Remember to chuſe God in thy chuſing days, when thou chuſeſt thy calling in which to live, when thou chuſeſt a wife, with whom to ſpend thy life, then be ſure and remember above all things to chuſe God. When *Moſes* was a young man, he was famous for this choice (*Heb.*11.25,26.) *He choſe the reproach of Chriſt rather then the riches of Egypt*; when he had all the riches and honours of *Egypt* preſented to him, and courting him on the one ſide, and the reproach of Chriſt, affliction, poverty, diſgrace, threatning him on the other ſide, he choſe theſe rather; who would think that man wiſe who ſhould chuſe the reproach of Chriſt (in appearance nothing but dirt and droſs) before the riches of *Egypt*? Yet *Moſes* never ſhewed his wiſdom and learning ſo much in all the learning of the *Egyptians*, as he did in that choice.

In diebus electionum tuarum. Mont.

Let us chuſe Judgment.] Judgment may be taken two ways; Firſt, for the act of enquiry, let us diſcourſe and debate this matter, to find out what is juſt; Judgment is the reſult or ſentence given upon hearing and debate. And moſt properly a right ſentence is Judgment; and that by Judgment *Elihu* means a right ſentence, appears clearly from the next words:

Judicium eſt cauſæ Inquiſitio. Judicium pro æquo. Merc.

And let us know among our ſelves what is good.

Let us know,] That is, let us ſo try by the ear what ſhall be ſpoken, that we may come to a right knowledg, to a right guſt or taſt of what is good. There is a two-fold knowledg; Firſt, of ſimple intelligence, when we know any thing as it is preciſely in its own nature, true or falſe, good or evill; Secondly, of approbation, when we conclude what we know, to be true or good. We may take in both here, eſpecially the latter; It being (doubtleſs) the deſire of *Elihu* to find truth and goodneſs (if it were to be found) on *Job*'s ſide.

And when he ſaith, *That we may know what is good*; we may underſtand it either Comparatively or Poſitively; *that we may know what is good*; is, firſt, that we may know good from evil; Secondly, that we may know among good things,

Communis hic ſit nobis propoſitus ſcopus, ut accurata judicii lance, quæ hactenus in hac cauſa dicta ſunt probemus, & quod optimum eſt approbemus. Scult.

things, what is better, yea what is beſt; let us not only diſtinguiſh between good and bad, but between good and better, better and beſt. The reaſon of man is able to put a difference not only between wheat and tares, but if you bring him ſeveral ſamples of wheat, or other grain, he is able to judg which is the better, which is beſt; a knowing man will judg to two pence in a buſhel which is beſt; ſo in all other commodities we not only judg between that which is good, and that which is ſtark naught, but when we have many parcels and particulars of any kind before us good and uſeful, we judg which is the beſt, which the principal.

Thus in ſpirituals, we are not only to judg of things ſo far as to know good from evil (which yet is a good piece of knowledg; for many put *darkneſs for light, and light for darkneſs; bitter for ſweet, and ſweet for bitter*, as the Prophet complained (*Iſa.* 5.20.) that is, they huddle all things together in a *Chaos* of confuſion) but it ſhould be our care to know good from good, yea to know what excels among things that are excellent. 'Tis well when we know truth from falſhood, but we ſhould labour to know which among truths is the moſt precious truth. *Paul* having ſpoken of what was good, yea of the beſt gifts, ſaith, *Yet I will ſhew you a more excellent way* (1 Cor. 12. 31.) As if he had ſaid, This is a good way you are in, the exerciſe of the beſt gifts, but here's a more excellent way, the exerciſe of grace. Thus here I take good, not ſo much Poſitively as Comparatively, *Let us know what is good*, what is beſt, and what is beſt of all.

Firſt, In that he ſaith, *Let us chuſe to our ſelves Judgment*,

> Obſerve, *We muſt conſider deliberately and maturely before we paſs Judgment.*

Judgment is a choice thing, and muſt be made upon choice; it is not to be ſnatched up haſtily, but duely choſen. They that are upon the choice either of things or perſons, ſhould be much in Conſideration. How uncomely (beſides unrighteous) is it, to judg men or matters raſhly, to be hurried on to election with paſſion, or to judg upon hearſays and Conjectures? This is not to chuſe Judgment, but but to ſnatch it up: to chuſe Judgment is to do it with mature deliberation; there muſt be much weighing, elſe properly no judging; raſh judgment is uſually wrong judgment; and that layeth us open to another judgment, *Judg not that ye be not judged*, is Chriſts warning (*Matth.* 7.1.) that is do not judg haſtily, or harſhly, do not judg raſhly nor rigidly, much leſs falſly, for if you do, you ſhall be judged righteouſly (indeed) as to your caſe, but not comfortably as to your condition. They who will not chuſe Judgment, do, in the iſſue, chuſe Judgment, that is, not uſing deliberation in Judgment, they draw deſervedly upon themſelves a Judgment of condemnation.

Secondly, Taking it more generally, *Let us chuſe to our ſelves Judgment*, or that which is right.

> Note, *It is not enough for us to do Judgment, or that which is right, but we muſt chuſe it.*

'Tis a work of no acceptation with God to do that which is juſt, unleſs we chuſe it as well as do it, that is, unleſs our hearts cloſe with it, and pitch upon it. *Solomon* (Prov. 1.29.) chargeth the ſimple for not chuſing what was good; *they did not chuſe the fear of the Lord.* By the fear of the Lord, he means the true worſhip of the Lord, or any work of obedience, by which we teſtifie a holy fear of him; poſſibly they might do the fear of the Lord; poſſibly they worſhipped the Lord, they prayed to him, and heard his word, but they did not chuſe the fear of the Lord; they did not ſit down and judg that beſt, or moſt neceſſary, but took it up by accident, or by cuſtom, or for company, becauſe they ſaw others do it. It will not turn to our account to be found doing good, unleſs we chuſe to our ſelves that which is good. *Our elections are more eyed by God, then our actions: and the ſetting of our hearts, then the work of our hands.*

Thirdly, From the latter branch, *Let us know among our ſelves what is good.*

> Note, Firſt, *There's nothing worth our knowing, but that which is good.*

Whatſoever hath a moral, or a ſpiritual good in it, is worthy to be known; the truths, the works, the ways of God, are the moſt deſirable good things to be ſtudied and known (*Pſal.* 4. 6.) *There are many will ſay, who will ſhew us any good?* What's their good? Corn, Wine, Oil, Gold, Silver, Houſes, Lands, *&c.* Theſe are their good, and theſe are all their good; but though a godly man knoweth that theſe are good things, and bleſſeth God for any portion in them; yet that which he calls *his good, and the good*, is of a higher nature; We commonly call worldly things *our goods*, but we miſ-call them if we call them *our good.* The Favour of God is our good, grace is our good, faith and love and hope and righteouſneſs are good above all, God himſelf is good, and to know and enjoy him in Chriſt through the Spirit is our chiefeſt good here, and will be all our good hereafter. *Let us know what is good.*

From the Comparative ſenſe of the words, *Let us know what is good*, that is, if there be a better to be had let us know that;

> Obſerve, *It is not enough for us to have the knowledg of good things, but among good things the beſt are to be ſought out, to be known, and attained to.*

This was a ſpecial branch of the Apoſtles prayer for the *Philippians* (Phil. 1.10.) *That ye may approve the things that are Excellent*; or the things that differ in Excellency; Some are contented to ſit down in the loweſt form of Chriſts School; if they have but any thing which they may call good, or true, right and ſincere, they look no further; any thing ſatisfieth them, which will ſerve turn to keep them from periſhing; they have no holy aſpirings, nor godly covetous deſires after the beſt things, and the beſt of the beſt. God is willing and hath promiſed to give us not only good things, but the beſt things (*Pſal.* 81. 16.) *He ſhould have fed them alſo with the fineſt of the Wheat*, and *with Honey out of the rock ſhould I have ſatisfied thee*; 'tis a mercy to have wheat, but the fineſt of the wheat, and honey out of the rock, not ordinary honey, but the beſt honey, the pureſt honey, are greater mercies. We, by our ſins, deſerve that *God ſhould* (as the Prophet ſpeaks, *Iſa.* 30. 20.) *give us the bread of adverſity, and the water of affliction*; That is, either that he ſhould give us adverſity in ſtead of bread, and affliction in ſtead of water, or that he ſhould feed us with the coarſeſt bread, with husks and bran, and give us bitter waters, the waters of *Marah* to drink, yet he in mercy gives us pleaſant bread, and well-taſted water; yea were we better, he would give us the beſt bread, the fineſt of the wheat, and our cup ſhould be ſweeter to us then the ſweeteſt honey. *The reaſon why we have not of the beſt, is becauſe we are no better.* God now gives us not only good things, but the beſt of good things, even himſelf, his Son and Spirit, who are beſt of all (O how excellent is this loving kindneſs!) therefore let us not only look after good things, but the beſt of good things, to honour God, and lift up his name to the higheſt in this World; Let us labour to know and do the beſt things; and give God our beſt ſervices and pureſt praiſes, even the male of our flock, the firſt-born, the ſtrength of our whole Souls. To theſe higheſt attainments, *Elihu* perſwades thoſe wiſe and knowing men, promiſing to joyn with them in that ſearch; Come let us beat out the buſineſs with diligence, that we may at laſt chuſe Judgment, and know among our ſelves what is good, what is beſt.

VERS. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9.

For Job hath ſaid, I am righteous: and God hath taken away my Judgment.
Should I lie againſt my right? my wound is incurable without tranſgreſſion.
What man is like Job, who drinketh up ſcorning like water?
Which goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, and walketh with wicked men.
For he hath ſaid, It profiteth a man nothing, that he ſhould delight himſelf with God.

THe Preface hath been diſpatcht; the context of theſe five verſes contains the whole charge, or bill of complaint, drawn up by *Elihu* againſt *Job*, conſiſting of many particulars. This charge is double; The firſt part whereof is contained in the 5. and 6. verſes; the ſecond in the 7. 8. and 9. Verſes. In the firſt charge he alledgeth four things againſt *Job*; two in the 5. verſe, and two in the 6; The two things alledged againſt him in the 5. verſe are.

Firſt, That *Job* inſiſted too much upon his own righteouſneſs, *Job hath ſaid, I am righteous,*

Secondly, That he reflected too boldly upon the righteouſneſs of God, yea that upon the matter, he had accuſed God of unrighteouſneſs, or injuſtice, *God hath taken away my judgment.*

Verſ. 5. **For Job hath ſaid, I am righteous.**

That's the firſt charge, *Job hath ſaid*; *Elihu* gathers up, and collects thoſe paſſages of *Job*'s complaint, which he found moſt faulty, and layeth them (as we ſay) in his diſh; *Job hath ſaid*; we may well remember, and he cannot deny it, for he hath ſaid it, not once only, but often, not lightly, but ſeriouſly and aſſertingly, *I am juſt, or righteous*; that is, *I have ſufficiently ſhewed my innocency, and the equity of my cauſe, but I am not permitted to declare and hold it forth in ſuch a way as I would, before my judg; yea the Lord proceedeth with me, not in the ordinary way of Juſtice, but, being above law, afflicts me, at his pleaſure, though I am innocent.* This is the ſum of what *Job* ſaid, as often as he hath ſaid, *I am righteous.*

The firſt particle which we render *for*, imports, the clearneſs and truth of the charge; there is no avoyding the matter of fact; It will fall upon him, let him take it off and anſwer it if he can, or as well as he can. *For Job hath ſaid, I am righteous.*

Vocabulum כי quia *certitudinem & firmam aſſeverationem hic importat* q.d. *profecto equidem, verè, certè* Job *dixit, Juſtus ſum.* Pined. *Vid.* c. 33. 8, 9. where this point is alſo diſcuſſed.

But it may be queſtioned, where ſaid he this?

For anſwer, I ſhall do two things.

Firſt, Shew from what paſſages in *Job*'s former anſwers this charge may be made good, or at leaſt made up.

Secondly, I ſhall ſhew in what ſenſe *Job* ſaid this, and how *Elihu* and *Job* do either agree, or differ in the thing.

To the firſt, where ſaid *Job*, *I am righteous?*

I anſwer; We find not this direct aſſertion in terms, or in ſo wany words, but what he ſpake in ſeveral places amounts to it; (*Chap.* 13. 18.) *Behold, now I have ordered my cauſe, I know I ſhall be juſtified,* (Chap. 23. 10.) *But he knoweth the way that I take, when he hath tryed me, I ſhall come forth as Gold.* (Chap. 27.6.) *My righteouſneſs I hold faſt, and will not let it go*; and he inſiſted at large upon this point, his vindication from all unrighteouſneſs throughout the whole 31. Chapter. There we find him making frequent imprecations (*Ver.* 5. 6, 7.) *If I have walked with vanity, or if my foot hath haſted to deceit*; *Let me be weighed in an even ballance, that God may know mine integrity*; *If my ſtep hath turned out of the way, and mine heart walked after mine eyes, and if any blot hath cleaved to mine hands, then,* &c. In all which and many other paſſages of that Chapter, *Job* ſpake highly of his own innocency, and ſaid in effect, *I am righteous.* His other friends had taken notice of this before; *Eliphaz* hit him with it (*Chap.* 4. 17.) while he put thoſe queſtions; *Shall mortal man be more juſt then God? Shall a man be more pure then his maker?* And ſo did *Bildad* (Chap. 8. 6.) *If thou wert pure and upright, ſurely now he would awake for thee, and make the habitation of thy righteouſneſs proſperous.* Nor was *Zophar* behind with him (*Chap.* 11.4.) *Thou haſt ſaid, my doctrin is pure, I am clean in thine eyes.*

Secondly, In what ſenſe did he ſpeak this? For anſwer, when *Job* ſaid, *I am righteous*, we muſt conſider a two-fold righteouſneſs; Firſt, a perfect abſolute righteouſneſs, and that may be two-fold; Firſt, the righteouſneſs of juſtification, which is an imputed righteouſneſs; Secondly, the righteouſneſs of ſanctification, which is an in-wrought or inherent righteouſneſs; this latter is not abſolute, or perfect in degree, while we abide in this life, yet it is dayly growing up to perfection, and ſhall at laſt attain a perfect growth. If any ſay; Why then doth God call us to a perfection of ſanctification in this life, if it be not attainable in this life? I anſwer, he doth it, firſt, to ſhew how holy he is; Secondly, to ſhew how holy we ought to be; Thirdly, he doth it, that we might run to Chriſt, *who is the Lord our righteouſneſs*; *and who is made unto us of God, wiſdom, righteouſneſs, ſanctification, and redemption:* We being altogether ſhort of righteouſneſs, and ſhort in righteouſneſs, may go to him, and have a compleat and perfect righteouſneſs. Now beſides this abſolute righteouſneſs of juſtification, which is attainable here, and of ſanctification, which is not attainable here, but ſhall be hereafter, there is a comparatively perfect righteouſneſs of ſanctification, the righteouſneſs of uprightneſs, and ſincerity, when we ſtrive to the uttermoſt to pleaſe God in all things by doing good, and can ſay, we do not pleaſe our ſelves in any way of doing evil.

It ſhould ſeem that *Elihu* and *Job* did not well agree about the definition of juſtice or righteouſneſs. *Job* intending either civil righteouſneſs towards men, or a righteouſneſs imputed freely by God; but *Elihu* underſtood him of abſolute perfect perſonal righteouſneſs, which no man attains unto in this life. For when *Job* is charged with ſaying, *I am righteous*, he ſaid it either as a juſtified perſon, or as a ſanctified perſon. In the former ſenſe, he might ſay he was perfectly righteous, and in the latter he ſaid he was ſo, as to the ſincerity and uprightneſs of his heart with God, and this he might ſay of himſelf without fault or blame; for God himſelf had ſaid of him (*Chap.* 1.1.) that he *was a man perfect, and upright.*

Intelligitur juſtitia per fidem mediatoris ſpiritus ſancti Arrabone confirmata; Neq; enim aliam potuit habere Job, *qui ſuam claris verbis emoliretur* Coc.

I grant, *Job* ſeems to ſay, (though he ſaid it not, with that aim or intention, yet he ſeems to ſay) that he was even abſolutely righteous not only as juſtified but ſanctified, while he ſaid, (*Chap.* 31.7, 8.) *If there be any blot cleaving to my hands, if my ſteps have gone out of the way, or my heart been deceived,* &c. This gave *Elihu* occaſion to charge him with ſaying, *I am righteous*; he did not charge him with ſaying ſo, as juſtified through the free grace of God, nor did he charge him for ſaying ſo as to his ſincerity, but he charged him in theſe two reſpects.

Firſt, Becauſe he ſpake ſo much of the righteouſneſs of his way, and of his works; for though it were true he was righteous in the ſenſe by him intended, yet becauſe he made it his buſineſs, and ſpent a large diſcourſe to tell the world, how good, how juſt, and how holy a man he had been, this was more then became him in that condition.

Secondly, *Elihu* checkt him for ſaying ſo, becauſe (though he were fully righteous as juſtified and ſincerely righteous as ſanctified) he complained of his afflictions, as if God might not lay his hand heavy upon him, no nor touch a righteous perſon with an afflicting hand; or as if he and all other righteous perſons, ought to paſs all their days in peace, and have an exemption from the croſs. Whereas one great reaſon why God afflicted him ſo ſorely, was, to make it known to all the world in his example, that meerly upon his own prerogative and ſoveraignty, he both may and will when he pleaſeth, afflict the moſt innocent perſon in the world. Yea, the intent of *Elihu* in urging and burdening *Job* with thoſe ſayings, was to convince him, that though he was a child of God, and had walked before him in righteouſneſs and true holineſs, yet he ought to humble himſelf and bear with meekneſs and patience the soreſt viſitations of God And that therefore he ſhould not have pleaded his own integrity, to priviledg him from affliction, nor have ſaid, *Why do I ſuffer, ſeeing I am righteous?*

Hence Note, Firſt, *That, as it is altogether ſinful for any man to ſay,*

I am altogether without ſin; (for 1 *John* 1. 8. *If we ſay we have no ſin, there is no truth in us*; and he who ſaith (in that ſenſe) *I am righteous*, doth but declare his own unrighteouſneſs) ſo to ſpeak *much of our own righteouſneſs and goodneſs* (though we are both good and righteous) *is evil and very blameable.* For whereas *Job* ſaid, *I am righteous*, he ſhould rather have left others to ſay it, he ſhould have been ſatisfied that he was ſo without ſaying ſo; and though it cannot be denied that *Job* was extreamly urged to it (as hath been ſhewed more then once in opening this Book) and it had been but neceſſary for him to ſay it once or twice in his own defence, yet becauſe he ſaid it ſo often, it drew, and that deſervedly, this cenſure or charge upon him.

Hence take this corollary or inference, *If to ſpeak much of our own righteouſneſs be diſpleaſing, then how abominable is it to be proud of it or truſt upon it?*

There is nothing more pleaſing to God, then to ſee man walking in ways of righteouſneſs, nor is there any thing more diſpleaſing unto God, then to ſee a man lifted up with or leaning upon his own righteouſneſs. If we make our own righteouſneſs our ſtaff, God will make it our rod. And though he is far from ſcourging us becauſe we are righteous, yet he will correct us if we proclaim our own righteouſneſs, yea if we think it much, or think much of it. We muſt have a very great occaſion when at any time we bear witneſs to our own righteouſneſs, and goodneſs; but if the heart be lifted up in pride, or truſt, at all, upon it, this renders man odious in the ſight of God. God ſaved *Noah* out of that common deluge, in which the old world periſhed; *For* (ſaith the Lord, *Gen.* 7. 1.) *thee have I ſeen righteous before me in this generation. Noah* was righteous before God, and was ſaved when others periſhed; but ſurely had he vainly boaſted or unneceſſarily voted himſelf righteous before men, he had periſhed as well as others. It comes much to one and the ſame account with God, whether men be openly unrighteous, or whether (without a juſt cauſe and call) they open their righteouſneſs before men.

> Secondly, Note, *How righteous ſoever we are in life, yea though we are righteous by faith,* (which is our righteouſneſs unto life) *yet we muſt not plead that for our freedom from afflictions.*

We may plead the righteouſneſs of faith againſt condemnation, but not againſt correction; if any man be in Chriſt, he ſhall never be condemned; but though a man be in Chriſt, and juſtified by the higheſt actings of faith in the blood of the Covenant, yet he may be ſeverely corrected. This was (I conceive) the principal ſcope and intent of *Elihu* in charging *Job* thus, even to convince him, that though he was a faithful ſervant of God, and of a very unſtained converſation among men, yet he muſt not think himſelf above the croſs, but quietly and meekly ſubmit to it. *Job* ſpake ſometimes fully to that point, *He deſtroyeth the righteous and the wicked, if the ſcourge ſlay ſuddenly, he laugheth at the tryal of the innocent* (Chap. 9. 23.) yet at other times he forgot himſelf, and therefore he was (juſtly as to his preſent caſe, and profitably as to the future iſſue) remembred of it by this plain and home-dealer *Elihu. Job hath ſaid I am righteous,*

And God hath taken away my Judgment.

As if he had ſaid, Once thou didſt ſay, *God deſtroyeth the perfect and the wicked*, but now thou ſeemeſt to ſay, thou art greatly wrong'd, and thy Judgment quite taken away, becauſe being a righteous man thou art thus afflicted.

סור *Eſt auferre, declinare, divertere, ſubvertere.*

Mr. *Broughton* renders, *But the Omnipotent keeps back my right.* As Judgment is right fully given, ſo there is but little difference between keeping back our right, and *taking it away*, therefore the word ſignifieth not only *to take away*, or cauſe to decline, to divert and ſubvert, but to keep back or withhold any thing in any kind, as Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates expreſly. This is the thing (ſaith *Elihu*) which *Job* hath ſaid, *God hath taken away or kept back my Judgment.*

But where did *Job* ſay this? He ſaid it (*Chap.* 27. 2.) *As the Lord liveth, who hath taken away my Judgment, and the Almighty who hath vexed my Soul. Bildad* charged *Job* with it (*Chap.* 8. 3.) while he put this queſtion to him, *Doth God pervert Judgment? Or the Almighty pervert Juſtice?* Implying that *Job* had ſpoken words reflecting upon the Juſtice and Judgment of God, in taking away his Judgment.

But you will ſay, What is Judgment? And what is it to *take away Judgment?* Or how is a mans *Judgment taken away?*

I anſwer; There is a three-fold notion of Judgment in Scripture.

Firſt, Judgment is the reſult or iſſue of a mans reaſon about any matter or queſtion propounded to him. God ſometimes takes away mans Judgment in that ſenſe, and then he becomes a fool, and unable to judg. 'Tis a dreadful judgment when God thus takes away mans judgment, and gives him up to a *Reprobate* (or an unjudicious) *mind*, as he did the old Gentiles (*Rom.* 1. 28.) for then he will quickly do thoſe things *which are not convenient*; not being able to diſtinguiſh nor diſcern between true or falſe, he muſt needs put light for darkneſs, bitter for ſweet, ſweet for bitter; *Elihu* doth not repreſent *Job* complaining that God had taken away his judgment in this notion.

Secondly, Judgment is any angry diſpenſation or wrath poured out or executed upon perſons, nations, or Churches; *If judgment begin at the houſe of God,* (that is, if trouble or wrath begin at the Church of God) *what will the end of thoſe be that obey not the Goſpel?* (1 Pet. 4. 17.) *Davids* Song conſiſted of two parts (*Pſal.* 101. 1.) judgment was one of them, *I will ſing of mercy and judgment.* This notion of judgment is every where ſound in Scripture, yet neither is this the notion of it in this Scripture. God had not thus taken away *Job*'s judgment; he begg'd indeed that God would take away this his judgment, and it was the matter of his complaint, becauſe he did not take it away.

Thirdly, Judgment is right done or right due; right due, is judgment due; right done, is judgment done. Thus *David* prayed (*Pſal.* 72. 1.) *Give the King thy Judgments O God, and thy righteouſneſs to the Kings ſon;* That is, give him an underſtanding to do right, or to give every man his right. To do this is a thing ſo deſireable in all men, eſpecially in Kings and Princes, that when God at *Gibeon* ſent young King *Solomon* a blank from Heaven, and bid him ask what he would, he asked only this (1 *Kings* 3. 9.) *Give thy ſervant an underſtanding heart, to judg thy people, that I may diſcern between good and bad.* This is properly the judgment intended here. *Job* complained, *God hath taken away my Judgment;* That is, my right, or hath not done me right.

But how is Judgment taken away?

I ſhall anſwer it in three things.

Firſt, When right is quite ſubverted, and over-thrown. This the Prophet elegantly expreſſeth and reproveth (*Amos* 6. 12.) *Ye have turned judgment into gall, and the fruit of righteouſneſs into Hemlock.* Right done is ſweet and wholeſom, but right denied is bitter as Gall, and baneful like Hemlock.

Secondly, When Judgment is defer'd, ſtopped, or delayed, then 'tis taken away for a time. To have judgment long delayed, is always next degree to the denial of it, and ſometimes delay is more cruciating and grievous then a denial.

Thirdly, A mans judgment is ſaid to be taken away, when the ground, or cauſe, of Gods proceeding with him in judgment, is hid, or unmanifeſt; Judgment, as to us, is not, when the reaſon of it doth not appear to us, or when we ſee not the reaſon of it. To feel Judgment and not to ſee the cauſe of it, turns it into a torment; we ſay commonly, *Things that appear not, are as if they were not.* When the reaſon or ground of our ſufferings is not underſtood, 'tis as if we ſuffered without any ground of reaſon.

When *Job* complained, *God hath taken away my Judgment*, we are not to underſtand him, as if *Elihu* intended it in the firſt or groſſeſt ſenſe, that God had ſubverted his judgment, or had done him wrong. *Elihu* could not ſuſpect he had any ſuch blaſphemous opinion of God; for, that had fulfilled the Devils prophecy of him, *He will curſe thee to thy face.* But when he ſaid, *God hath taken away my Judgment;* he meant it according to the two latter interpretations, either that God deferred long to reſtore him, and anſwer his prayer, or that God had hid from him the reaſon of his dealing with him, ſo that he could not make it out, how, or why he was ſo ſorely and grievouſly handled. *Job* knew well his own innocency, but he did not well conſider Gods ſoveraignty, which alone anſwers enough for him, how much ſoever he in this world afflicts the innocent. And therefore for as much as God held him long in that ſad condition, and in the mean time hid his judgment, or the reaſon of it from him, this was *Job*'s grievance, and the burden of it preſſed him to cry out, *God hath taken away my Judgment.* In this he was too bold with God, and therefore he juſtly fell under this cenſure of *Elihu:* As if he had ſaid, It doth not at all become thee, O *Job*, as a creature, as a man, much leſs as a new creature, or as a godly man, to cry out (as thou haſt done) that God hath taken away thy Judgment, becauſe he doth not give thee an account, nor tell thee, why he judgeth thee; therefore humble thy ſelf that ever thou haſt ſaid (and take heed thou ſay it no more) *God hath taken away my Judgment.*

Hence Note, Firſt, *God ſometimes lets the goodneſs of his moſt precious ſervants lie in the dark.*

He goeth unuſual ways with many of his choyceſt ſervants; he doth not always declare their right, nor deal with them according to the ordinary rule, in giving good to them that are good, (as not always evil to them that are evil, the Lord is at his liberty in theſe preſent diſtributions, he is ſupream, and hath power over all fleſh) and ſo keeps their judgment in the clouds, or a ſecret to himſelf.

Secondly, Note, *The Lord ſometimes is pleaſed to defer and delay to do his ſervants right.*

And thus he takes away their Judgment. Though he hath a purpoſe to give it them, yet he doth not preſently give it them; at laſt he will make even with all men, each man ſhall have his judgment; he will reward every one according to his work, and the righteous, ſhall (without doubt) have a good reward.

Thirdly, Note, *When God doth either hide or defer the Judgment of a godly man, it doth very much affect, yea and afflict his heart.*

We are uſually much afflicted with any dark diſpenſation upon many accounts, eſpecially upon this, becauſe it makes us obnoxious to every mans cenſure. When God takes away our judgment, we fall under the hard judgments of men; And to lie under the ill opinions of men unvindicated or unrighted, is no eaſie burden. We have that promiſe (*Pſal.* 37.6.) *He ſhall bring forth thy righteouſneſs as the light, and thy judgment as the noon-day.* The righteouſneſs and judgment of a good man may be in a mid-night darkneſs as to man, and till that be brought to the light of other mens knowledg, himſelf hath, ſometimes, little light of comfort.

Fourthly, Note, *It is ſinful to complain, and to be troubled, as if God had not done us right, becauſe we ſee it not done, or becauſe he defers to do it.*

In this *Job* was moſt faulty, he uttered many paſſionate ſpeeches about what God had done, becauſe things were not brought to an iſſue, nor his condition ſtated and cleared up, either to the world, or to himſelf; This troubled him more then the extremity of his pain, or the greateſt of his troubles. How ſtifly *Job* ſtood upon it, that his Judgment was taken away, will appear yet further in the next words, which *Elihu* makes further matter of accuſation.

Verſ. 6. **Should I lie againſt my right? my wound is incurable without tranſgreſſion.**

In this verſe we have two other parts of the Indictment brought againſt *Job*, near of the ſame nature with the former; wherein he yet more vehemently urgeth his own integrity, and cryeth out both of the greatneſs and cauſeleſneſs (on his part) of his preſent ſufferings. More diſtinctly *Elihu* in this verſe chargeth him,

Firſt, That he did over-eagerly maintain his own cauſe, *Should I lie againſt my right?*

Secondly, That he ſpake of God as dealing over-harſhly with him; *My wound is incurable without tranſgreſſion;* Theſe things (ſaith *Elihu*) thou haſt alſo ſaid.

Should I lie againſt my right?] We read the words as a Queſtion; others read them as a direct propoſition; *There is a lie in Judging me,* or, *There is a lie againſt my right;* The word which we here tranſlate *right,* is the ſame which we tranſlate *Judgment* in the former verſe. And when he ſaith, *There is a lie againſt my right;* It is as if he had plainly ſaid, *I am falſly charged, I am wrongfully accuſed, I am not ſuch a man as I am ſuppoſed, nor have I done thoſe things whereof I am ſuſpected.* Every falſe accuſation brought againſt a man, is a lie againſt his right.

In judicando enim me mendacium eſt. Vulg.

Secondly, Others read it thus, *I ſhall make liers againſt my right;* That is, whoſoever ſtands up to prove any thing againſt me, as you have done, ſaying, *I am wicked, unrighteous, or hypocritical, I ſhall be able to prove him a lier.* But neither the Grammatical ſignification of the words will fairly bear this ſenſe, nor doth it well correſpond with the former verſe.

Super Judicium meum faciam mentiri. i. e. *falſi arguam hominem qui volet mecum contendere.* Cajet. Item Chald.

Thirdly, Thus; *I lie in my Judgment;* That is, I am deceived in it, or I fail of it. To *lie* in Scripture, is to fail, or to fruſtrate the hope of another. Some inſiſt much upon this ſenſe; as if he had ſaid, *I come ſhort of that which I looked for as my right or Judgment;* in this ſenſe the word is often applyed to things, but not to perſons, as ſome of the learned conclude upon this place. (*Iſa.* 58.11.) *Thou ſhalt be like a ſpring of water, whoſe waters fail not;* we put in the margin, *lie not, or deceive not.* 'Tis a promiſe made to thoſe who keep a true faſt, and keep it truely, God will be to them as a ſpring whoſe waters lie not. All our freſh ſprings are or ſhould be in God, and he is a ſpring whoſe waters are always freſh. No man ever came to him for matter, and was fruſtrated of his expectation. Thus alſo the word is uſed (*Hab.* 3.17.) *Although the labour of the Olive ſhall fail;* That is, though when you come to the Olive tree, you find no Olives there, nor ſee any hope of a drop of oil in your whole Olive-yard, yet you may ſtill rejoyce in the Lord, he is able to annoint and fill you always with the oil of gladneſs. Thus *Job* is conceived complaining here of his deceived hopes, much in that ſenſe as God himſelf in the Prophet (*Iſa.* 5.7.) is ſaid to be deceived. *He looked for judgment, but behold oppreſſion, for righteouſneſs, but behold a cry.* I (ſaith *Job*) *looked for better things, I looked for light, but behold darkneſs, I looked to be acquitted, but behold I am hardly thought of and cenſured on every hand, I am quite diſappointed, matters fall out and are otherwiſe then I did expect.*

In judicio meo mentior. Piſc. *Probarem ſi mentiri hoc ſenſu de perſona dici inveniretur nam de re uſurpari certum eſt.* Druſ.

Fourthly, *I lie in my right;* Is thus expounded, *I am thought to lie, while I maintain my right, or ſay I am righteous; I am judged a liar, for ſaying I have walked in the truth.*

In Jure meo mentior. i.e. *quum innocentiam meam defendo, putor mentiri.* Piſc.

All theſe readings of the Text are given from the affirmative tranſlation.

But we, as alſo ſeveral others tranſlate by an interrogation, intimating the heat and earneſtneſs of his ſpirit, in wiping off this aſperſion; *Should I lie againſt my right?* I ſhould not, I will not. As if *Elihu* had ſaid; *Job hath inſiſted ſo much upon his own righteouſneſs, and right, that he will not be taken off from it upon any terms, nay he hath ſaid, What? Should I knowing my ſelf to be innocent* (becauſe of this cry againſt me) *cry guilty to this indictment; and ſo betray my own innocency, or give away my right? Job ſtands ſo much upon his own righteouſneſs, that if he ſhould but acknowledg himſelf faulty, he thinks he ſhould lie, or wrong himſelf by ſpeaking againſt his knowledg and conſcience.* And indeed *Job* (Chap. 27.4,5,6.) ſpake fully to this effect, That it would be a wrong to or a lie againſt himſelf, if he ſhould not ſtand up to the uttermoſt in his own right, and defend his innocency; and 'tis probable *Elihu* hits at that paſſage, while he chargeth him with this paſſionate expoſtulation, What! *Should I lie againſt my right?* Would you have me ſay as you ſay, and ſo bear falſe witneſs, or be a falſe witneſs againſt my ſelf? What ever comes of it, I will not do that. *I will not lie againſt my right,* nor let go my integrity; I will not in civility to any other mans underſtanding of me, ſubſcribe to my own wrong, or ſay I am what I am not, or have done what I have not. *Elihu* brings this as a ſtrong proof of the height of *Job's* ſpirit, as if to confeſs his fault were to fall below himſelf, yea to belie himſelf; *Should I lie againſt my right?*

An par eſt ut mentiar ſuper innocentia mea? Vatabl.

Hence Note, Firſt, *To acknowledg we have done that, which we have not done, or that we are what we are not, is to lie againſt our own right, or to wrong our ſelves.*

As many lie, by ſpeaking more good of themſelves then is true, or by denying that evil which in truth they are guilty of; ſo he that ſubmits to that guilt which he is free from, or confeſſeth more evil of himſelf then is true, lieth againſt his own Soul. So did that *Amalekite* (2 Sam. 1.10. compared with 2 *Sam.* 31.4.) charge himſelf falſly with killing *Saul* in hope of a reward from *David* for his good news. As no man ought to lie againſt another, much leſs againſt himſelf; And as that man doth wickedly belie himſelf, who ſaith he is better then he is, (for that's horrible hypocriſie; all ſuch God will unmask one time or other, who thus cover themſelves with lies, and ſay (like thoſe in the Prophet) they have dreamed when they have ſeen nothing, but the vain phanſies of their own brains, nor felt any thing but the preſumption of their falſe hearts; Now (I ſay) as he doth wickedly belie himſelf who ſaith he is better then he is) ſo for any man to deny that good which God hath done for him, or wrought in him, or what he hath done or wrought in the fear and power of God, is a dangerous way of denying and belying his own right.

Hence Secondly Note, *No man ought to admit any charge againſt himſelf, wherein he is not guilty.*

It is not in our liberty to give up our own integrity, we may not give up the righteouſneſs and innocency of others to a falſe witneſs, if we can detect it, much leſs our own. Let no man lie againſt his right. It is our affliction only to be wronged by others, but 'tis our ſin to wrong either others, or our ſelves. Yet,

Thirdly, Note, *We may quickly over-act in ſtanding upon our own right.*

That caution of *Solomon* (*Eccl.* 7. 16.) ſeems to carry this obſervation in it. *Be not righteous overmuch, neither make thy ſelf over-wiſe: Why ſhouldeſt thou deſtroy thy ſelf?* Some expound this precept as a rule of policy, adviſing all to a moderation in the practice of (that wherein there can be, indeed, no exceſs) true piety and religion; as if it were a duty to ſtudy and comport our ſelves to a kind of neutrality and indifferency in the things of God, leſt we expoſe our ſelves to the wrath and rage of men, who cannot bear it with patience to ſee any that are better or do better then themſelves. But I conceive the Spirit of God in *Solomon,* was far from breathing any ſuch cold blaſt, to nip either the buddings or higheſt growths of godlineſs; and that he would not at all abate any in the practice of holineſs, but intends one of or all theſe three things. Firſt, to take men off from any opinionativeneſs, about what they judg to be righteous and themſelves righteous in doing it, willing them to take advice, and not to lean to their own underſtanding, nor to reſt in their own dictates as infallible; or Secondly, when he ſaith, *Be not righteous overmuch,* his meaning is, do not exact the utmoſt of others which the Law in the rigour of it will allow; he that will not remit any thing of his right, is not only over-righteous, but may ſoon do wrong; or Thirdly, when he ſaith, be not over-righteous, as he would not have men ſtand ſtrictly upon their right with others, ſo he would not have them ſpeak much of their own righteouſneſs; but rather ſometimes take blame to themſelves, then (which was *Job*'s caſe) proclaim themſelves altogether blameleſs. As we are not to betray our innocency, ſo not give a ſhadow of any boaſting in it. We ſeldom loſe by ſaying little of our ſelves. And in moſt caſes we ſhould rather truſt God (who hath promiſed he will do it, *Pſal.* 37. 6.) *to bring forth our righteouſneſs as the light,* then be over-induſtrious in bringing it to light, or in bringing it out of the darkneſs with which it lyeth obſcured, either by or among men. As we ought never to lie againſt our right, ſo it may not be convenient at ſome times to ſpeak all the truth of it which we can. This at leaſt was *Job*'s fault, and it will be any mans who doth like *Job,* yea though he ſhould be (which few have been or are like to be) under as great ſufferings as *Job.* The greatneſs whereof he aggravated to the hight in the next words, with which *Elihu* chargeth him,

My wound is incurable without tranſgreſſion.

An incurable wound is the worſt of wounds, and though to be wounded without tranſgreſſion is beſt for him that receives it, yet it is worſt for him that gives it. *My wound is incurable.*

The Hebrew is, *my arrow;* the arrow is a wounding weapon, and in this Text 'tis put for the wound it ſelf. *Job* complained (*Chap.* 6. 4.) *The arrows of the Almighty drink up my ſpirits;* There are arrows of two ſorts, and anſwerably there are wounds of two ſorts. There are firſt external, Secondly, internal arrows; God ſhooteth his arrows both into the fleſh, and ſpirit; the former make a wounded body, the latter a wounded Soul. *Job* may intend both, for he received wounds in both; his fleſh was wounded, and all that belong'd to fleſh, his eſtate, his credit and good name were wounded, his Soul and ſpirit were wounded alſo, the arrows of God were ſhot thick at him, and hit him from head to foot. *The Archers* (as dying *Jacob* ſaid of *Joſeph,* Gen. 49. 23, 24.) *ſorely grieved him, they* [*all*] *ſhot at him, and* (one of them Satan) *hated him; but though his bow* (as to the main) *abode in ſtrength, and the arms of his hands were made ſtrong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob;* yet he cryed out as if there had been no help, no healing, no hope for him. *My wound*

Graviſſima eſt ſagitta mea abſque tranſgreſſione. Bez.

Is incurable.] The word which we render *incurable,* ſignifies not only what is very dolorous, or grievous, but miſchievous, mortal, and deadly. And from this word man is called *Enoſh* in the Hebrew, to ſhew how infirm and frail he is, ſin having given him a wound which is incurable, by any thing but the blood of Jeſus Chriſt. *Job* felt his wounds, and he ſpake of them, as a man ſwallowed up with deſperation, and expected no cure of his preſent ſad condition; *My wound is incurable,* and he concluded with that which is yet harder, *My wound is incurable*

Hanc ſagittam Elihu *vocat,* אנוש i. e. *gravem doloratam peſſimè habentem hinc Enoſh homo ab infirmitate & fragilitate dictus.*

Without tranſgreſſion.] Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates, *My ſtroak is ſore without treſpaſs. Job* in ſaying his wound was incurable, ſhewed a defect in his faith, but in ſaying it was incurable without tranſgreſſion, he ſeemeth to ſhew his defect in truth. For ſurely had there not been tranſgreſſion in him, there had never been a wound upon him; God had never ſo much as broken our skin but for ſin; Man had never felt ſo much as the ſcratch of a pins point by the hand of God, if he had not once prevaricated and Apoſtatiz'd from God. We owe all our ſorrows to our ſins, all our woundings to our tranſgreſſings. How then doth *Job* ſay, *My wound is incurable without tranſgreſſion?* The word here uſed is not uſually put to ſignifie ſin in general (though ſome take it ſo) but ſome ſpecial kind of ſin, and that of more then an ordinary degree, a ſin with a malignity, a provoking ſin; As if the meaning of *Elihu* were, that he heard *Job* ſay, Though his ſin were not great, though it were not any rebellion againſt light, nor dangerous Apoſtacy, though his were a very curable ſin, yet his wound was altogether incurable, his wound was great, though his ſin was little. Now, becauſe Juſtice doth uſually apportion the puniſhment inflicted both to the nature and meaſure of the ſin committed, therefore *Elihu* takes it (and he had too much occaſion to do ſo) as a great reflection upon the juſtice of God, when he heard *Job* thus bemoaning himſelf, *My wound is incurable without tranſgreſſion.* To receive the leaſt wound without tranſgreſſion, is a great wound to juſtice, how greatly then doth he wound the Juſtice of God, who ſaith he hath received a great, yea an incurable *wound without tranſgreſſion.*

פשע *Denotat grave ſcelus vel Apoſtaſiam.* Scult.

But where ſpake *Job* theſe words, when ſaid he, *My wound is incurable without tranſgreſſion,* (we muſt bring in that, *Job hath ſaid,* to every one of theſe charges) I anſwer, *Job* ſpake of the arrows of God (*Chap.* 6. 4.) and that they were incurable, he ſaith in other words (*Chap.* 16. 13.) *His arrows compaſs me round about; he cleaveth my reins aſunder; he poureth out my gall upon the ground.* When a mans reins are cleft in ſunder with an arrow, and his gall poured on the ground, his wound is incurable.

But where did he ſay, *My wound is incurable without tranſgreſſion; Elihu* might collect that from (*Chap.* 9. 17.) *He breaketh me with a tempeſt, and multiplyeth my wounds without cauſe;* and from (*Chap.* 16. 16, 17.) *My face is foul with weeping,* &c. *Not for any injuſtice in my hands.* While *Mary* waſhed the feet of Chriſt with her tears (*Luke* 7. 38.) ſhe might be ſaid to foul her own face with her tears. Tears, which (in a qualified ſenſe, or as a token of true repentance) waſh and cleanſe the Soul, do yet blubber and disfigure the face. My face (ſaith *Job*) is foul with weeping, though my hands are not foul with ſinning, or any evil doing. This was, in effect to ſay what *Elihu* here cenſureth him for ſaying, *My wound is incurable without tranſgreſſion.*

Hence Note, Firſt, *God hath his arrows, he can wound us when and where he pleaſeth.*

He ſhooteth and miſſeth not his mark. He hath a quiver full of deadly arrows; take heed how ye provoke him. *Job* had a whole quiver of arrows emptied upon him for trial, for the exerciſe of his patience. Wo to thoſe upon whom God emptieth his quivers in vengeance. (*Pſal.* 7. 11, 12, 13.) *God is angry with the wicked every day; if he turn not, he will whet his ſword, he hath bent his bow, and made it ready; he hath alſo prepared for him the inſtruments of death, he ordaineth his arrows againſt the perſecutors.*

Secondly, Note, *The wounds which God makes cannot be healed by any medicines but his own.*

Job's wound was incurable, there was no balm for him in the *Gilead* of this world, no Phyſician there. And therefore the Lord bids *Egypt*, in ſcorn, ſeek healing there (*Jer.* 46. 11.) *Go up into Gilead and take balm, O virgin, the daughter of Egypt: in vain ſhalt thou uſe many medicines, for thou ſhalt not be cured.* Who can heal where God will wound? (*Pſal.* 38. 2, 3.) *Thine arrows ſtick faſt in me, there is no ſoundneſs in my fleſh*; even *David* complained that the wounds which the arrows of God had made in him were incurable. *Why is my pain perpetual* (ſaid the Prophet, *Jer.* 15. 18.) *and my wound incurable, which refuſeth to be healed? When* Ephraim *ſaw his ſickneſs, and* Judah *ſaw his wound, then went* Ephraim *to the Aſſyrian, and ſent to King* Jareb *to help him, yet could he not heal you, nor cure you of your wounds.* (Hoſ. 5. 13.) God gives ſtates or bodies politick ſuch wounds, as all the medicines and means in the world cannot help; They may go to the *Aſſyrian*, and ſend to King *Jareb*, to this and that power; They may call a whole colledg of State-Phyſicians or deepeſt politicians for counſel and advice, yet neither one nor other can be a healer to them. Therefore in the next Chapter (*Ver.* 1.) The Church concluded upon another courſe, and a better addreſs, then either to the *Aſſyrian*, or to King *Jareb*. *Come let us return unto the Lord, for he hath torn, and he will heal us*; only the Lord who gives the wound can heal the wound; the ſame hand which ſmites us muſt cure us, elſe our wound is incurable.

Thirdly, Note, *To complain of our wounds as incurable, or paſt cure, is an argument of our unbelief.*

'Tis good for us even to deſpair of help from creatures, and to ſay the leaſt wound (if but the ſcratch of a pin) is incurable by all the art, means, and medicines which this world can adminiſter, but to ſay our wound (though never ſo deep, dangerous, and deadly) is abſolutely incurable, is our ſin. While we ruin our ſelves (That is, while we provoke God to ruin us, yet) there is hope in God; *O Iſrael, thou haſt deſtroyed thy ſelf, but in me is thine help* (Hoſ. 13. 9.) *Deſpair as much as you will of creatures help, but ſtill hope in God.*

Thirdly, In that he ſaith, *My wound is incurable without tranſgreſſion,*

Note, *The Lord may, and doth take liberty to afflict thoſe grievouſly, who have not ſinned greatly.*

There is no man liveth and ſinneth not, yet every man is not (in ſtrict ſenſe) a ſinner, that is, a great ſinner, a rebel, a worker of iniquity; yet the Lord when 'tis needfull giveth them great wounds, who have not (comparatively) ſinned greatly. Though no ſin ſhould be little in our eye, yet there are degrees of ſin, and ſome are leſs then others in the eye both of God and man. *Elihu* chargeth *Job*, not as ſaying he had no ſin, but becauſe he complained his wounds were great, though his ſins were not; or that there was not a due proportion between his offence and his puniſhment, his ſins and his ſufferings.

Hence Note, Fourthly, *Though the Lord taketh liberty to afflict thoſe greatly that have not ſinned greatly, they muſt not take liberty to complain of the greatneſs of their afflictions, how little ſoever their ſins have been.*

A gracious heart looks upon the leaſt of his mercies, as greater then the greateſt of his good deſervings, and upon the greateſt of his ſufferings, as leſs then the leaſt of his ill deſervings or demerits. And ſurely (beſides that liberty which God hath, as he is ſupream, and ſoveraign, to afflict whom he will, and in what degree he will) we muſt know, that, the leaſt ſin deſerves the greateſt wound. And evil thought deſerves all the evil that can be heaped upon us. Whatſoever we ſuffer on this ſide hell is leſs then the leaſt of our ſins. And therefore if we have reaſon to confeſs our little ſins great, and our greateſt wounds little, compared with our little ſins; how much more ſhould we confeſs our great ſufferings little, compared with our great ſins, as the Church did (*Ezra.* 9. 13.) *After all that is come upon us* (our long and hard bondage in *Babylon*) *for our evil deeds, and for our great treſpaſs, thou O Lord, haſt puniſhed us leſs then our iniquities deſerve.*

Further, from the whole verſe, in that *Eliah* chargeth *Job* with theſe ſeveral ſayings,

Obſerve, Firſt, *A good mans ſayings are often worſe then his meanings.*

Elihu rebuketh his ſpeeches, not his ſpirits; his words though in ſome reſpect true, yet were dangerous, and becauſe not well explained by himſelf, ſcandalous to others: But his heart was not treacherous, nor the bent of his mind wrong ſet, in uttering them. Evil men may ſpeak good words, but 'tis with a bad heart; Good men ſometimes ſpeak bad and offenſive words, yet with honeſt hearts; and when their minds are ſerene, and they cleared from thoſe clouds of perturbation, which have darkned them, they (as *Job*) are ready to recant them, and repent of them.

Secondly, Note, *It is an high offence to intimate any thing which doth in the leaſt intrench upon the Juſtice, and righteouſneſs of God.*

To ſay, God hath taken away our judgment, may call down judgments; To ſay, we are wounded without tranſgreſſion, is a great tranſgreſſion; and the reaſon, why it is ſo, is plain, becauſe ſuch ſayings, tell the world, that we ſuffer, if not quite without deſert, yet more then we deſerve; and what is this but to juſtifie our ſelves, and lay blame upon God, then which (as was ſhewed at the 2. verſe of the 32. Chapter) nothing is more derogatory to God, or more blame-worthy in man?

Thirdly, Note, *If we ſpeak amiſs, or indiſcreetly about the dealings of God with us, we may thank our ſelves if we are hardly cenſured, and ſoundly chidden for it.*

Though *Job*'s heart was honeſt, yet his tongue was intemperate, and he too bold with God; and you ſee how God ſtir'd up the ſpirit of *Elihu* to lay it home to him, and bring him upon his knees for it. They who vent unwarrantable ſpeeches, muſt not think much if they meet with ſharp reproofs and cutting cenſures. Tongue-faults ſeldom eſcape without tongue-laſhes; And 'tis a mercy to meet with them from a faithful friend; Their laſhing and cutting tongues prove healing tongues, (*Pſal.* 141. 5.)

Fourthly, Note, *Every ſpeaker is at the mercy of his hearers.*

No man knows what gloſs his words may have put upon them when once uttered. Here are four ſayings brought againſt *Job*, yet *Job* never ſpoke any of them expreſly, or in ſo many words, but ſuch collections were made (indeed they were, as not falſe, ſo not favourable collections) from what he had ſpoken. And he had but a poor remedy left, to ſay he did not mean them ſo. Take heed what you ſpeak words are uſually judged as others underſtand them, not as you mean them. Indeed charity doth always incline to the beſt conſtruction; and will not interpret that ill, which may bear a better interpretation. But who knoweth whether his words ſhall always meet with a charitable interpreter? our words do not often meet with juſt and equal ones. Nothing, indeed, is more common with uncourteous hearers, then to miſconſtrue thoſe they hear, or to judg of what is ſpoken rather as it may be taken to the ſpeakers hurt and defamation, then their own profit or inſtruction. And therefore though I would adviſe every hearer to uſe as much charity as may be, yet I would alſo adviſe every ſpeaker to leave as little as may be to the charity of his hearers.

Thus much of the firſt part of the charge in theſe four ſayings. In the three verſes following, *Elihu* proſecutes the charge, and ſtandeth in admiration, as here at the ſayings of *Job*, ſo there of his doings.

VERS. 7, 8, 9.

What man is like Job, who drinketh up ſcorning like water?
Which goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, and walketh with wicked men.
For he hath ſaid, it profiteth a man nothing that he ſhould delight himſelf with God.

Theſe three verſes contain the ſecond charge or accuſation, which *Elihu* had drawn up againſt *Job*. And in it we may diſtinctly conſider; firſt, the form of it; ſecondly, the matter of it.

The form of it is by way of queſtion; *What man is like* Job? The matter of it conſiſts of three heads.

Firſt, That he was a man of a ſcornful Spirit towards others, or that he had ſubjected himſelf to the ſcorn of others; *What man is like* Job, *Which drinketh up ſcorning like water?*

Secondly, *Elihu* chargeth him, as having fellowſhip with men of a vain and offenſive converſation (*verſe* 8.) *Which goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, and walketh with wicked men.*

Thirdly, He chargeth him (which is indeed the ground of the former) that he was a man, not only of unſound, but of blaſphemous principles and opinions (*verſe* 9.) *For he hath ſaid, it profiteth a man nothing that he ſhould delight himſelf with God.* This 9. verſe is the proof of the eighth; for ſome might enquire, how doth it appear, that, *Job goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, and walketh with wicked men?* *Elihu* anſwers, It appeareth by his words, or from his own mouth; *For he hath ſaid, it profiteth a man nothing, that he ſhould delight himſelf with God.* And if a man once judg that there is no profit in the ways of God, he thereby declares his conſent to the ways of the wicked. That's the ſum of the charge, and theſe the parts of it.

Verſe 7. **What man is like** Job?

גבר *Non pro quolibet homine ſumitur ſed pro claro & ſapiente.*

The word rendred **Man**, doth not ſignifie every ordinary man, but a great or wiſe man, a famous or a powerful man. What great or wiſe man is like *Job?* Poſſibly ſome may be found among the dregs of the people or among the common ſort like himſelf, but among men of honour and reputation for wiſdom, ſurely, there are none to be found like him. Yet ſome take it (out of the ſtrictneſs of the Original word) for a man of the loweſt or meaneſt condition, what man is like *Job?* That is, no man, no not of the meaneſt degree is like him. And ſo the queſtion may be carried under a threefold notion.

Firſt, As a vilifying queſtion, *What man is like* Job? Who is there that hath but the name and face of a man that would do or ſpeak things as he? *Job*, in this matter, is worſe then any man, then the worſt of men. He acts and ſpeaks at a lower rate of prudence and piety then many, if not then any of the loweſt among the Sons of men.

Secondly, We may look upon it as an angry paſſionate queſtion, a queſtion carrying in it higheſt indignation; *What man is like* Job? who ſo vain, raſh, fooliſh and inconſiderate as he? I have ſcarce the patience to ſpeak or think of him.

Thirdly, We may take it as an admiring queſtion; *What man is like* Job? It is a thing unheard of, even a ſtupendious prodigie, that a man ſhould be or do as *Job*. All ſorts of men abſtain from or decline, yea ſcorn ſcorning ('tis a thing ſo unbecoming man) but chiefly they that are great, noble and honourable, ſuch as *Job* hath been in his time, yet he is turned ſcorner. As if he had ſaid, Who hath heard the like? Was there ever ſuch a man heard of, who either uſed ſuch ſcornful language againſt others, or laid himſelf ſo open to the ſcorn and contempt of others! *What man is like* Job,

Who drinketh up ſcorning like water?

That's matter of admiration; *Elihu* might have found out many other matters, wherein *Job* had no fellow, no parallel, ſcarce any like him in the World; who ſo afflicted, ſo humbled, ſo broken, ſo deſerted by his own relations, ſo vexed with friends and comforters like *Job?* But he doth not put the queſtion upon his ſufferings, but upon his ſin; *What man is like* Job, *who drinketh up ſcorning*, &c. *Drinking* is here uſed metaphorically, and ſo likewiſe are eating, devouring, and ſwallowing up often uſed in Scripture, to denote that which is done to be done with much greedineſs, and with a kind of delight. And whereas there is a three fold meaſure or degree of drinking; Firſt, ſoberly, or for neceſſity: Secondly, plentifully or for moderate delight; Thirdly exceſſively, or for drunkenneſs, and the ſatisfying of a luſt. This third ſeemeth to be here intended, even an exceſſive drinking of ſcorn, till he was as a drunken or mad-man with it, or (as we ſay) mad drunk; for the Text ſaith, *What man is like* Job, *who drinketh up ſcorning?* He doth not only taſt it a little, and ſip at the ſcorners cup, but drinks it up to a drop, or to the bottom. *He drinketh up*

Scorning.] And that's a ſtrange kind of drink, one of the worſt if not altogether the worſt of Natures brewing. Scorning may be taken two ways, either paſſively or actively; ſome take it in a paſſive ſignification; *What man is like* Job, *who drinketh up ſcorning like water?* That is, who is ſo ſcorned, or who ſubjecteth himſelf to the ſcorn of men as he hath done? What wiſe or diſcreet man did ever lay himſelf ſo naked, ſo open to contempt as he? Or who like him would render himſelf ſo ridiculous, ſuch a laughing ſtock to all his hearers, who are but rational and underſtanding men? It cannot be denied (nor doth *Elihu* in ſpeaking thus coarſely of him deny it) but that *Job*, moved doubtleſs by the Holy Ghoſt, had ſpoken many excellent things, full of divine light and learning, yet moved with paſſion, he ſpake ſometimes much amiſs, and is charged for it, as if like a ſhameleſs perſon, he had proffered himſelf, by laviſh and intemperate language to the laſh of every tongue.

Quis ita ridetur & ſannis excipitur ut Job? *bibit ſubſannationem id eſt ſubſannatur.* Druſ. *Significat Jobus ad ſe ridendum omnes provocare cum talibus ſermonibus utitur.* Merc.

Secondly, Scorning may be taken actively; *What man is like* Job, *who drinketh ſcorning like water?* That is, where ſhall we find ſuch a ſcorner? Who hath uttered ſo many reproachful ſpeeches, as *Job?* He drinketh ſcorning, as if he thought he could never fill himſelf enough with ſcorning. This interpretation may have a double reference,

Firſt, To his friends, who it ſeems, were very ſenſible that he put ſcorns upon them. *Zophar* complaineth of it (*Chap.* 11. 3.) *When thou mockeſt, ſhall no man make thee aſhamed*; As if he had ſaid, when thou haſt mocked and derided us, ſhall we let thee alone, and ſay nothing? Shall we ſuffer our ſelves to be abuſed and paſs it by in ſilence? Ought we not to tell thee of it, and rebuke thee for it openly, and to thy face, that thou mayeſt ſee thy error and be aſhamed of it?

Secondly, (which is yet higher, and I judg too high) his ſcorning is referred by ſome to the dealings and providences of God, as if he had ſpoken of them with a kind of ſcorn, at leaſt with that irreverence, and ſlightneſs of Spirit, which *Eliphaz* did early and earneſtly admoniſh him of (*Chap.* 5.17.) *Deſpiſe not thou the chaſtning of the Lord*; and which the Apoſtle calls *The exhortation, which ſpeaketh unto us as unto Children* (Heb. 12.5.) *My Son deſpiſe not thou the chaſtning of the Lord.* Thus alſo *Elihu* may in a qualified ſence be underſtood charging *Job* with *drinking up ſcorning like water.* As if upon the whole matter he had ſaid, *Job hath drunk ſcorn till he is almoſt drunk with it, at leaſt, he is ſo full of it, that he pours it out upon every one that comes near him, and which is worſt of all, he ſpeaks ſo unbecomingly, that we ſhall not much wrong him, if we ſay he hath ſpoken or acted deſpiſingly (which is a degree of ſpeaking or acting ſcornfully) concerning the chaſtnings of God upon him.*

Bibere ſubſannationem velut aquam eſt eſſe plenum ſermonibus ridiculis. Vatabl.

Further, When 'tis ſaid, *He drinketh ſcorning like water*; it may imply three things; firſt, the frequency of his ſcorning, he doth it commonly, he is at ſcorning as often as at drinking; ſecondly, the content which he was ſuppoſed to take in ſcorning, *water* cooleth and refreſheth the heated and wearied Body: Thirdly, it may note the eaſineſs or naturalneſs of it to him. To drink is natural to man, it puts him to no pains nor ſtudy. We ſay proverbially of that which a man doth without trouble; he doth it as eaſily as he drinks. But of this word *drinking* and *drinking like water*, the Reader may ſee more upon thoſe words (*Chap.* 15. 16.) *Man drinketh iniquity like water.*

Once more, whereas *Elihu* ſaith of *Job*, *He drinketh ſcorning like water.* Some have made a critical obſervation or diſtinction about it; *Elihu* doth not ſay, he drinketh ſcorning like *wine*, but like *water*; they who are provoked or led on to ſin by the delight and ſweetneſs which they find in ſin, are ſaid to drink it *like wine* (*Prov.* 4. 17.) They drink the wine of violence; or they drink violence *like wine.* It goeth down ſweetly and pleaſantly; but (ſay they) ſuch as ſin, not out of pleaſure but out of will or out of an affected maliciouſneſs, are ſaid *to drink iniquity like water*, which hath little pleaſure in it, little ſweetneſs or taſte in it. There's ſmall ſavour in water comparatively to wine and other delicate or delicious liquors. So that (according to this notion) they drink iniquity like water, who ſin for ſins ſake. And indeed ſome are ſo delighted in ſin it ſelf, that they will ſin in that which yields them no delight. The very act of doing evil is more contentful to them, then any fruit or conſequent of it. But we need not ſtay in this nicity, the general ſenſe falls hard enough upon *Job*, to drink ſcorning like water, is to be much and often in ſcorning. Water is the cheapeſt liquor, and of moſt common uſe; every man can go to the price of that which coſts nothing (in moſt places) but the labour of taking it up. *What man is like Job, that drinketh ſcorning like water?*

Taking the words in a paſſive ſenſe, as *Job* was a perſon ſcorned, and drunk in the ſcorns of men poured upon him, as the earth drinketh in water,

Note, *He behaveth himſelf unlike a man, that layeth himſelf open to, and readily admits the ſcorn of men.*

It is an affliction to be ſcorned by others; But it is a ſin to render our ſelves a ſcorn to others, and not to be ſenſible of it.

Secondly, (which I rather adhere to) taking the active ſenſe, he is charged with ſpeaking ſcornfully to his friends, or of the dealings of God with him; how far this charge might reach *Job*, hath been toucht a little already; and will be cleared yet further before the cloſe of the whole matter brought againſt him in this context. But in the mean time, from the general ſenſe of the words (not concluding *Job* broadly ſuch a one)

Obſerve, *Scorners are the vileſt ſort of men.*

What man is like *Job*, who drinketh ſcorning? Not to do good is ſinful, but either to ſcorn that which is good or thoſe that are good is far more ſinful. That man is gone his furtheſt length, or aſcended to the higheſt ſtep of ſin, who turneth ſcorner, or gives himſelf a liberty to ſcorn others. The firſt words of *David* ſpeak this (*Pſal.* 1. 1.) *Bleſſed is the man that walketh not in the counſel of the ungodly, nor ſtandeth in the way of ſinners, nor ſitteth in the ſeat of the ſcornful.* Here are three degrees of ſinning; walking, ſtanding, ſitting: He that ſitteth in the ſeat of the ſcornful, or hath commenced *ſcorner*, hath taken the higheſt degree, and is the chief Graduate in the Schools of ſin. And as to ſit in the ſeat of the ſcornful, is the higheſt degree of ſinning, ſo they that are got into that ſeat, care not how long they ſit in it, yea, are hardly ever got out of it. So much that chiding queſtion or expoſtulation of *Solomon* doth fully import (*Prov.* 1. 22.) *Ye ſcorners, how long will ye delight in ſcorning?* As if he had ſaid, When ſhall it once be? Will ye never have done, nor give over that trade? Scorners are therefore the worſt of men, becauſe they deride the beſt both of things and men (*Prov.* 21. 24.) *Proud and haughty ſcorner is his name, who dealeth in proud wrath.* Scorners are the Children of pride. A proud ſpirit vents it ſelf in ſcorning. Pride doth not appear ſo much in apparrel, in gay clothes and new fangled faſhions (all which are often uſed as flaggs of pride and vanity) nor doth pride appear ſo much in praiſing our ſelves (though there it appeareth much) as it doth in ſcorning others. *Proud ſcorner is his name.* And as the ſcorner is a proud deſpiſer of others, ſo a quarrelſom contender with others, and till he is ſeparated from men, there is nothing but ſeparation, no peace among men (*Prov.* 22. 10.) *Caſt out the ſcorner, and contention ſhall go out; yea ſtrife and reproach ſhall ceaſe;* which plainly intimateth, that ſtrife cannot go out till the ſcorner be caſt out. And therefore *Solomon* (Pro. 24. 9.) calleth *the ſcorner an abomination to man.* Thus the Scripture ſets the ſcorner among ſinners of the chiefeſt rank and firſt form; I may ſay, he is of the firſt three, if not the firſt of that three. Therefore take heed how ye drink ſcorning, eſpecially take heed it be not your mornings draught; for as it comes from the heart, ſo it will fly up into your head, and unfit you for any good work, at leaſt, that day.

Again, from the ſimilitude here uſed, *to drink up ſcorning like water*, which (as hath been ſhewed) holds out the readineſs and connaturalneſs of an action unto him that is charged with it.

Note, *The more eaſily any one ſinneth, the greater is his ſin.*

It is beſt to come hardly off in ſinning, and when it goeth hardly down; Many ſin as eaſily as they eat or drink. *They eat up my people as bread,* (ſaith God, *Pſal.* 14. 4.) That is, (as we ſay) they make no bones of it; there's nothing ſticks in their throats, nor troubles their conſcience. Where ſin lives altogether unmortified in any man (it doth ſo in every meer natural or unregenerate man) 'tis no more to him to ſin, then it is either to live, or to eat and drink for the maintaining of life. But they ſhall feel ſoreſt pains for ſinning, who have ſinned with greateſt eaſe; they ſhall drink dammage by ſcorning like Gall and Wormwood, who have drunk ſcorning like water. *Elihu* having thus taxed *Job* with ſcorning at good men, proceeds to tax him with overmuch freedom and familiarity with evil men.

Verſ. 8. **Which goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, and walketh with wicked men.**

As if he had ſaid, you may know what he is, by the company he keeps.

Noſcitur ex comite. &c.

He goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, or he aſſociates and puts himſelf into the ſociety of *the workers of iniquity.* *Elihu* doth not ſay, he dwelleth among the workers of iniquity; The beſt man in the world may dwell among bad men; *Lot* dwelt in *Sodom.* We muſt go out of the world, if we will not be among the wicked; the world is every where full of the workers of iniquity. But (ſaith he) *he goeth in company with them.* Which intimates the activeneſs of his ſpirit with them; yea the Election of his ſpirit, or that he choſe their company. Though a good man may be in the company of the wicked, yet he doth not chooſe their company; He is not of their body of their ſociety or gang. A wicked man doth not content himſelf to be among the ordinary ſort of ſinners, he is for, and beſt likes the worſt of ſinners, *workers of iniquity.* All are ſinners naturally, but ſome are ſinners artificially; they ſtudy ſin, they contrive and plot miſchief; *They deviſe iniquity upon their beds,* ſaith one Scripture; *They weave the ſpiders web,* ſaith another. Here's artificial ſinning. The Greeks call ſuch, *ſin-workers*, and crafts-men in evil. I have had occaſion to ſpeak of theſe from other paſſages of this Book. Here *Elihu* to highten the charge againſt *Job*, ſaith, *He goeth in company with* (ſuch or chooſeth ſuch kind of company) *the workers of iniquity;*

Κακούργους ϗ τέκτονας κακῶν.

And walketh with wicked men.] As our holineſs is expreſſed by walking with God, ſo our ſinfulneſs by walking with wicked men. To walk with God is all the commendation of *Enoch*, who was ſo holy on earth that God took him up to Heaven, (*Gen.* 5. 22.) *He had this teſtimony* (ſaith the Apoſtle, *Heb.* 11. 15.) *before his tranſlation, that he pleaſed God. To walk with God, is to pleaſe God,* or to give up our ſelves wholly to God. *Can two walk together except they be agreed?* Is the Prophets queſtion, (*Amos* 3. 3.) They who walk together are ſuppoſed to have one will, as they are ſeen to have one way. What God willeth they will, and what God willeth not, they will not who walk with him. To *walk with wicked men* implyeth an agreement with them, and a conformity to them, as being of their fraternity, company and livery. They that walk with wicked men, declare their familiarity with them, or that their mind and manners are the ſame. The Apoſtle tells the *Corinthians* (1 *Cor.* 3. 2.) *Whereas there is among you envying, ſtrife and diviſions, are ye not carnal and walk as men,* that is, as men in their natural and ſinful condition walk. Though ye are ſpiritual in your ſtate, yet ye act as carnal men. Now, as it is ſinful for a godly man to walk *as a man*, or according to man, (as our Margin hath it, for he ſhould walk *as God*) ſo it is much more ſinful to walk with wicked men, or according to the worſt of men. Thus the Apoſtle deſcribes the converſation of the *Epheſians* before converſion. (*Eph.* 22.) *And you hath he quickened who were dead in ſins and treſpaſſes, in which ſometimes ye walked according to the courſe of this World.* That is, according to the tide, current and ſtream of the times and places wherein ye lived. *Man naturally doth not walk where he ought to go, but where he ſeeth the moſt go.* He is led by the worſt of examples (ſuch are the examples of the moſt or of the many) rather then by the beſt of rules. It is our duty, and it ſhould be our delight to walk with thoſe who delight in the Law and in the way of God. *David* ſaith of his deceitful friend, but real enemy. (*Pſal.* 55. 14.)

Qua itur non qua eundum.

We walked unto the houſe of God in company. As if he had ſaid, time was when he and I were as if he had been I, both of us but one, in that one thing neceſſary, the worſhip and ſervice of God. It is a good argument, that man hath an heart for God, who walks with good men in the ways of God. To converſe much with or to be much in the company of good men, is a probable ſign of goodneſs; but when we walk with them to the houſe and worſhip of God, or converſe with them in the duties of holineſs, this is a great (though no infallible) argument of goodneſs. And to be ſure, to walk with evil men, eſpecially to joyn with them in doing evil, is an argument that the man is evil. Therefore *Elihu* may ſeem to bring a demonſtration againſt *Job*'s godlineſs (that he intended it not ſo I ſhall ſhew afterwards, but, I ſay, he ſeems to ſay ſo) while he ſaith, *Job walketh with wicked men.*

The Hebrew Phraſe uſed in the Text is more then (as we expreſs) *wicked men*, we may render it *men of wickedneſs*; the Scripture calleth thoſe men ſo who are (as it were) transformed into wickedneſs, or formed up of wickedneſs. As ſome men are ſo witty, that we call them *men of wit*, and others ſo judicious, that we call them *men of judgment*, as ſome are ſo skilful and cunning, that we call them *men of skill and cunning*; ſo ſome are ſo wicked, that the Scripture calls them *men of wickedneſs*; even with theſe very dregs of mankind, it ſeems *Job* conſorted. *He goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, and walketh with wicked men.*

But here it may be queſtioned, was it indeed ſo with *Job*, or was *Job* ſuch a man as he is expreſly charged to be both in this and the former verſe? Did *Elihu* judg him *a ſcorner, a companion of the workers of iniquity, and a walker with men of wickedneſs?* Doubtleſs that's not *Elihu*'s ſcope or intention; nor could he imagin that *Job*, in ſtrict ſenſe, was either a ſcorner of good men, or choſe the company of wicked men. And ſurely all that knew *Job* could certifie (upon their knowledg) that he was a man of a gracious ſpirit and unblemiſht life; that he loved good men and ſweetly converſed with them, and therefore was far from cloſing with deboiſt companions, or men of a profligate ſpirit. Why then doth *Elihu* ſpeak thus? Or ſpake he the words of truth and ſobriety while he ſpake thus?

I anſwer, this form of ſpeaking doth not always import a likeneſs of converſation and diſpoſition, as ſometimes it doth, (*Prov.* 1. 11, 15.) *Come with us, and caſt in thy lot among us, let us all have one purſe. My ſon, walk not thou in the way with them, refrain thy foot from their path*; that is, do not hearken to the call of thoſe workers of iniquity. Here in the Text to go in company with the workers of iniquity, and to walk with wicked men, notes only the doing or ſpeaking that which carrieth ſome likeneſs to them, not a being altogether like them. A man is ſaid to go and walk with others, when he ſpeaks or doth that which ſeems to ſuit and favour their principles, opinions or practices, though in truth they are the abhorrence of his Soul. *Elihu* durſt not, could not aſſert directly and properly that *Job*, who was a man famous for piety in the days of his proſperity, and who in his affliction had not the leaſt degree of ability or opportunity for it, walked with wicked men: But becauſe in the anguiſh of his Soul he ſpake ſometimes intemperately of the dealings of God (which is the guiſe, ſpirit, and common language, in ſuch caſes, of wicked and ungodly men) therefore he chargeth him as ſymbolizing or complying with men of wickedneſs. So that when *Elihu* ſaith, *he goeth with wicked men*, he doth not accuſe him for keeping bad company in his proſperity; but with ſpeaking hardly of God in his adverſity, as ungodly men uſe to do, when they are under his hand. He doth not ſay, you upon ſuch and ſuch a day kept evil company and converſed with men of wickedneſs; but you have ſpoken much like the wicked in the day of your calamity. That this was his ſcope appears plainly by the proof of this charge, which is alſo a new charge (*Verſ.* 9.) *For he hath ſaid, it profiteth a man nothing that he ſhould delight himſelf with God.* *Elihu* doth not ſay, *Job* walketh with wicked men, for we have ſeen him in their company, and he hath been as vain and wicked as they. But his proof that *Job* walked with the wicked was from his words; *For he hath ſaid, it profiteth a man nothing*, &c. This is the language of the wicked, thus they uſe to ſpeak about the ways of God; and *Job* hath ſpoken thus; therefore, *What man is like Job that drinketh ſcorning like water, which goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, and walketh with wicked men.* I need not ſtay here to ſhew how great an evil it is to keep evil company, for that was not the ſin which *Job* was accuſed of. Yet from the letter of the Text,

> Note, Firſt, *To aſſociate with wicked men, or to chuſe wicked men for our company, is the mark of a wicked man.*

A godly man may be among wicked men, but he doth not chuſe their company. He while with them is as *Lot* was in *Sodom*, his righteous Soul is vexed. A godly man is among wicked men, as his graces are among his corruptions; as his humility is with his pride, his faith with his unbelief, theſe are all in his Soul at once, but his faith doth always ſtrive againſt his unbelief, his humility oppoſeth his pride, his grace of ſelf-denial reſiſts his ſelf-ſeeking, his meekneſs his paſſions, and his patience the unquietneſs of ſpirit. A godly man is pained in the company of wicked men, as *David* was (*Pſal.* 120. 5.) *Wo is me that I ſojourn in Meſech, and dwell in the tents of Kedar. David* was there but he did not delight to be there. To aſſociate with the wicked is proper to the wicked. The Apoſtle gives that caution (*Eph.* 5. 11.) *Have no fellowſhip with the unfruitful works of darkneſs, but rather reprove them.* Seeing the works of darkneſs are unfruitful of any good, it muſt needs be bad to have followſhip with them. As we muſt not at all joyn with wicked men in ſpiritual communion or Church-fellowſhip (2 *Cor.* 6. 14.) *Be not unequally yoaked with unbelievers; for what communion hath light with darkneſs, and Chriſt with Belial*, &c. *Come out from among them, and touch no unclean thing.* So we ſhould have as little civil communion or ſellowſhip with them as we can; and when we are neceſſitated to have civil communion with them, we muſt utterly avoid all ſinful communion with them, that is, communion with them in their ſins. It is both a ſhame to Goſpel profeſſion and a great offence to the ſincere profeſſors of the Goſpel, when they who profeſs it are much in the company of the workers of iniquity, and walk with wicked men.

Secondly, From the matter of the charge,

> Obſerve, *While godly men behave themſelves like wicked men, they may be ſaid to go in company with them.*

This heavy charge falls juſtly upon them whether they demean themſelves in their affliction (as *Job* in ſome ſort did) like the wicked, or in the days of their fulneſs and proſperity. If we ſpeak or do like wicked men, we have our amends in our hands if we are numbred with them, though we are not really of their number. Some good men when they have got much of the world about them make but an ill uſe of it. Are wicked rich men proud? So are they in a great meaſure, you may ſee vanity in their houſes, and ſuperfluity upon their tables, as if they alſo were making proviſion for the fleſh to fulfil the luſts thereof. Now if a godly man, when he hath the abundance of this world makes himſelf more unfit for the next world; is he not in this like the wicked? Or if when God layeth him low, he be full of complainings and have riſings of heart againſt the dealings of God; what is this but to do like the wicked, who in their ſtraits quarrel with God, & blaſpheme his name? (*Iſa.* 8. *ult.*) *When they are hungry and hard beſtead, they curſe their God and their King.* Thus the wicked do; and it was the Devils plot to make *Job* do ſo too; & becauſe in the extremity of his ſufferings he ſpake ſuch things as ſavour'd of a murmuring ſpirit, *Elihu* taxeth him as walking with wicked men. For as when wicked men act and ſpeak like good men, it may be ſaid they go in the company with the godly, and walk with the workers of righteouſneſs, though they are ſtark naught all the while, being (as the Apoſtle gives their character, *Tit.* 1. 16.) *Abominable, diſobedient, and unto every good work reprobate*; So ſome good men under temptation act and ſpeak like the wicked, yet retain their goodneſs, and are as to the general ſtate of their perſons, and bent of their hearts, acceptable, obedient, and inclined to every good work. It will do the wicked no good at laſt, that they have thus gone in company with the good; but it is very ſinful for and hurtful to good men, to go in company or walk with wicked men, though it be but (as *Elihu* makes his proof of it againſt *Job*) only in uſing their *Sibboleth*, or ſpeaking a language like theirs.

Verſ. 9. **For he hath ſaid, it profiteth a man nothing that he ſhould delight himſelf with God.**

I ſhall, Firſt, open the words a little, and then, Secondly, inquire, (as of the former) how *Job* might fall under this accuſation.

He hath ſaid, it profiteth a man nothing.] That is, a man ſhall get nothing, or have no advantage by it. As Chriſt ſaith (*Mark.* 8. 36.) *What ſhall it profit a man to gain the whole world, and loſe his own Soul?* But what was this trade which *Elihu* accuſeth *Job* to have called unprofitable? Surely that which of all others is moſt profitable. *It profiteth a man nothing,*

That he ſhould delight himſelf with God.] This goes deep; *Elihu* doth not tax him with ſaying it profiteth a man nothing to do this or that good, which God commandeth, but (which is more) *that he ſhould*

Delight himſelf with God.] The word rendred **to delight**, hath a three-fold ſignification, and all very full to this point and Text.

רצו

First, *To run*, which is the ſpeed of our pace. Thus the Septuagint render it, *Although he run with God* (Cant. 1 4.) *By reaſon of the ſavour of thy good oyntments, therefore do the virgins love thee, draw us and we will run after thee.* To run is more then to walk. To walk with God, notes our obſervance of all holy duties, but to run the way of Gods commandments, notes us zealous in them and for them. To run, requires not only an honeſt heart, but a large one; and therefore *David* ſaid (*Pſal.* 119. 32.) *I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou ſhalt enlarge my heart. Thou* (ſaith *Elihu* to *Job*) *haſt ſaid*, (according to this reading of the word) *it ſhall not profit a man though he run with God*, though he make never ſo much ſpeed in his work and ways; though he be (beſides faithful and upright) forward and active for God.

Secondly, The word ſignifieth, *To have or be of the ſame will or mind with another.* Thus alſo ſome render it here; *It profiteth not a man, though he willeth with God, or be of the ſame mind with God.* The Apoſtle exhorts (*Phil.* 2. 5.) *Let this mind be in you which was in Chriſt Jeſus. To will* is an internal motion, *to run* an external; How faſt ſoever a man may run with God in outward actings, yet, poſſibly, he doth not will with God at all, nor hath a mind conformable to the mind of God. The hypocrite is thus ſet out (*Pſal.* 50. 18, 19.) *When thou ſaweſt a thief, thou conſentedſt with him, &c.* Thou hadſt a mind to be a thief as well as he. One wicked man minds and wills the ſame things with another, and all godly men will the ſame things with God. Yet (ſaith *Job*) *it ſhall not profit a man*, though he have the ſame will with God, or though he willeth the ſame good things which God himſelf willeth.

Thirdly, The word (according to our tranſlation) ſignifieth more then barely to will, it takes in the affections and joys of the Soul. He that delighteth in God, hath ſweet content and complacency in God, he not only approves of all the ſayings and doings of God, he not only followeth his counſel, and his conduct, but is highly pleaſed and fully ſatisfied in God. Delight is the reſt of the Soul. When we delight in God, and find every act of obedience our joy and our ſong our meat and our drink, then the heart is wound up to the higheſt pitch of holineſs. And therefore as his heart is fallen down to the loweſt pitch of unholineſs, who ſaith, it profiteth a man nothing to ſerve God, ſo is his much more who ſaith, *What ſhall it profit a man though he delight in God?*

But here again it may be queried, Where did *Job* ſay, *that it ſhould profit a man nothing though he delight himſelf with God?* If you read his diſcourſe all over, he never ſpake theſe words directly or explicitely, they are the language of hell. But *Job* had ſpoken words, which (unleſs taken in a very favourable conſtruction) might bear this cenſure. He ſpake thus, in a manner, while he at once juſtified himſelf ſo much, and cryed out as much of the hard dealings of God with him. And while in many paſſages of this Book he denieth that the godly have a preſent reward in this life, and alſo affirmeth that many wicked men injoy outward proſperity, and paſs unpuniſhed. Theſe ſpeeches might eaſily be interpreted (by common and carnal men eſpecially) that, *Job* thought it an unprofitable thing to delight in God. For if all things in this life come alike to all, to the godly, and to the wicked, what doth it profit a man (as to this life) that he ſhould delight himſelf in God? Who among the ſons of men (that knoweth of no profit beyond this life) can delight himſelf in that, which brings no profit? *Job* alſo ſaid (*Chap.* 9. 22.) *God deſtroyeth the wicked and the righteous*, that is, he afflicts the good as much as the bad, this was a principle which he held out all along. Now becauſe the Scripture ſaith; *He that cometh to God, muſt believe that God is, and that he is a rewarder of thoſe that diligently ſeek him* (Heb. 11 6.) and (1 Tim. 4. 8.) *Godlineſs is profitable for all things, having the promiſe of the life that now is, and of that which is to come*; (which Scriptures though not extant when *Job* lived, yet the truth contained in them was) *Elihu* might well be led into this apprehenſion, that *Job* had brought up an ill report upon the ways of God, as (in this life) unprofitable unto man. But though *Job* ſpake thus, yet he was far from ſpeaking this to juſtifie ſuch an opinion, that there is no profit for a man to delight himſelf with God. His meaning was only this, that a man may want temporal preſent profit, notwithſtanding his delighting in God. He was full and poſitive enough, that they who now delight in God, beſides the preſent inward peace and profit which they find and feel, ſhall hereafter be crowned with everlaſting rewards and delights. *Job* ſhould indeed have been more in juſtifying God, more in ſetting forth the preſent profitableneſs of his ways in the practice of an holy life; And becauſe he was ſo ſparing in this point, and inſiſted ſo often upon the afflictions of the people of God. *Elihu* chargeth him with ſaying, *It profiteth a man nothing to delight himſelf with God.*

Videtur principium unde ad omnia peccata feruntur improbi approbaſſe, eſt enim præmii fides non tantum futuri ſed hujus vitæ magnum incitamentum ad obſequium. Coc.

Hence Note; Firſt, *It is our duty, and the ſum of all holy duties to delight our ſelves in God.*

The very ſpirit of holineſs conſiſts in this; There is (as I may call it) a body of holineſs, but if you would have the ſpirit of holineſs (as by diſtillation we take the ſpirits of any liquor, or of any thing that liquor and moiſture hath in it, if, I ſay, we would have the ſpirits of holineſs) 'tis delighting in God. For as 'tis the ſpirit of ſinfulneſs to delight in ſin; ſo the ſpirit of Godlineſs is to delight in God.

Note, Secondly, *To account the ſervice of God unprofitable, is wickedneſs bordering upon blaſphemy.*

Job himſelf is now charged with that, which he charged upon the wicked (*Chap.* 21. 15.) *What is the Almighty that we ſhould ſerve him? And what profit ſhall we have that we pray unto him?* This grand prophaneſs the Prophet rebukes (*Mal.* 3. 14.) *Ye have ſaid, It is in vain to ſerve God, and what profit is there that we have kept his ordinances?* Thus the carnal heart, which would fain free or keep it ſelf from keeping the ordinances of God, is ready to queſtion, whether there be any profit in keeping them. And while ſuch ſeem only to put the queſtion, they indeed conclude, that there is no profit in keeping them; yet the truth is, the very keeping the ordinances of God, as it is an act of obedience to him, and of communion with him is very profitable, though we ſhould have no viſible nor ſenſible profit by it. In keeping the commandments of God, *there is great reward* (Pſal. 19. 11.) That is, the keeping of them is a reward, as well as a reward is promiſed to thoſe that keep them. The Reader may conſult this point further, at the 15. Verſe of the 21. Chapter.

Note, Thirdly, *Good men ſometimes ſpeak worſe then they mean.*

Job never thought it was no profit to ſerve God, yet he had let fall words which might bear that gloſs. As wicked men often ſpeak better then they mean: They have golden words in their mouths, when there is nothing but droſs in their hearts; their words are ſmoother then oil, yet they are drawn ſwords; their words ſound well, while they wound deep, (now as a carnal man ſpeaks often better then he means, and ſometimes ſpeaks purpoſely the beſt when he means worſt) ſo a godly man ſpeaks ſometimes worſe then he means, or he may ſpeak ill when he intends nothing but good. Holy *David* (which comes up fully to the ſenſe of what *Job* is taxed for ſaying here) ſaid (and what could he ſpeak more unholily) (*Pſal.*73.15.) *Verily I have cleanſed my heart in vain,* &c. What language was here? would one think to hear *David* foul his mouth with ſuch words as theſe? Would one think, that ſuch a word could have dropt from the mouth of *David*, whoſe mouth uſed to drop like an honey comb, and whoſe lips were wont to be like a tree of life feeding many? Yet *David* in temptation, that is, in great affliction (for he there complains that he was chaſtened every morning) ſpake thus with his tongue to the grief of his heart a little after. The tongue is an unruly member, (as the Apoſtle *James* ſaith, *Chap.* 3.8) *The tongue can no man tame*; we need a great command upon the heart to bridle the tongue, and tame that unruly beaſt. Many a good man hath been over-born with his tongue. That little member hath ſometimes cruſht both ſoul & body very ſorely. *Job's* tongue fell heavily upon him.

Obſerve, Fourthly; *Inconſiderate words render us obnoxious to ſevereſt cenſures.*

Thou haſt ſaid, It profiteth a man nothing to delight himſelf in God, is a very ſevere cenſure; And though *Job* did not deſerve it fully, yet he might have expreſſed himſelf more commodiouſly and profitably. *Juſt conſequences from what we ſay, may be charged upon us as our ſayings.* Indeed to wire-draw words or ſtrain conſequences from them, is very unchriſtian. Some deal ſo with the holy Scriptures (2 *Pet.*3.16.) *Wreſting them to their own deſtruction*; They torture and ſtretch them upon the tenters to their own hurt. And to wreſt a mans words, or as the Prophet ſpeaks (*Iſa.* 29.21.) *To make a man an offender for a word*, is an act of great uncharitableneſs towards man, and to God an high offence (Not but that a man may be an offender for his words; nor can a man be more truly an offender for any words, then when he ſpeaks reproachfully or ſlightly of the works of God) But when men ſpeak ſuch words as are real offences, and yield foul conſequences, fairly, they muſt bear the burden. And that was *Job's* caſe here.

But ſome may ſay, If *Job* never ſpake theſe words in terms, nor any words like them, with ſuch an intent, why doth he ſuffer *Elihu* to accuſe him, and not take off his accuſation, nor give a word of anſwer for himſelf? Why did he not vindicate himſelf, or make his Apology?

I anſwer, and my anſwer ſhall be the laſt note from this context.

A godly man will rather bear more blame then he deſerveth, then ſtand to excuſe himſelf when he hath deſerved any blame.

Job replyed no more, ſpake no more, but to ſhew that he yielded to what was ſaid, and ſubmitted to this diſpenſation of God in ſending *Elihu* to charge him thus. He took more upon him then he had ſaid, leſt he ſhould ſeem to juſtifie any thing that he had ſaid amiſs. (*Chap.*40.5.) *Once have I ſpoken, but I will not anſwer: yea twice, but I will proceed no further.* As if he had ſaid, I will make no more pleas for my ſelf, nor excuſes, I will cry guilty to the whole matter of my charge, though I might clear and diſcharge my ſelf of much of it. How far was the ſpirit of *Job* from theirs, who though charged with that only which they have directly done, or ſpoken, yet ſtand it out in pleading their excuſe, and will never fall down before reproofs, though what they have done or ſpoken amiſs, be ſo plain, that it needs no proof.

We ſhould be careful to ſpeak and do ſuch things as are not ſubject to reproof, but when through ignorance or raſhneſs we have run into an error, either of ſpeech or practice, we ſhould be ſo humble as to ſubject our ſelves to reproof, and take it well that we are rebuked for any evil. As it doubles an offence to undertake the defence of it, ſo not to defend an offence abateth and leſſeneth it. And as he who goeth about to cover his fault by finding out arguments and pleas for it, ſheweth that he hath a will or purpoſe to continue in it; ſo he that is ſilent, and hath not a word to ſay for it, gives a good teſtimony both of his ſorrow that he ever committed it, and of his reſolution never to commit it any more. They are highly to be commended who live unblameably, and they deſerve no ſmall commendation, who being ſenſible of their own fayling, can patiently bear the blame of it, without replying upon their reprovers.

VERS. 10, 11.

Therefore hearken unto me, ye men of underſtanding: far be it from God, that he ſhould do wickedneſs, and from the Almighty, that he ſhould commit iniquity.

For the work of a man ſhall he render unto him, and cauſe every man to find according to his ways.

Elihu having done with *Job's* charge for ſeveral unwarrantable ſayings in the former context, begins his refutation here, and directs his ſpeech,

Firſt, To *Job's* friends, ſpeaking to them from the 10. to the 16. verſe.

Secondly, To *Job* himſelf, from the 16. verſe of this Chapter to the 34.

In the two verſes now read, we have two general points.

Firſt, A vehement denial of any unrighteouſneſs in God, (*Ver.* 10.)

Secondly, A ſtrong proof or demonſtration, that there is no unrighteouſneſs in God, at the 11. verſe. He enters this confutation of *Job*, or the vindication of the honour of God from what *Job* had ſaid, with an inviting Preface.

Verſ. 10. **Therefore hearken unto me, ye men of underſtanding.**

Elihu like a cunning Orator often ſtirr'd up his auditors to attention, and made frequent inſinuations to wind himſelf and what he had to ſay into their good opinion. Here he beſpake not the promiſcuous multitude or common ſort of hearers, but wiſe men, or men of underſtanding, ſuch as are moſt fit to judg the weight and ſtrength of thoſe arguments and reaſons, by which any point is proved and confirmed.

Hearken unto me, ye men of underſtanding.] The Hebrew is, *ye men of heart*, ſo the Margin hath it; As the heart is the principle of natural life, ſo the principles and powers of the rational life are often aſcribed to the heart. *Job* told his friends (*Chap.*12.3.) *I have a heart* (we render, *I have an underſtanding*) *as well as you*; and in good Authors a *hearty man* ſignifies not only a man of courage, or a man of ſpirit, but a man of knowledg and underſtanding, a man more then ordinarily wiſe, a man of the higheſt Elevation for wiſdom, is called *a hearty man*. Naturaliſts have aſcribed the moving of ſeveral paſſions, to ſeveral internal parts of the body; laughter (ſay they) riſeth from the *Spleen*, anger from the *Gall*, love from the *Liver*, but to the *Heart* they give more then a paſſion, *underſtanding*, which is the nobleſt faculty of reaſon. Here *Elihu* calls upon men of heart, or of underſtanding to hearken to him.

Egregiè cordatus homo. i. e. *valde ſapiens.* Cic. 1. Tuſcul.

Hence Note, Firſt, *The beſt may need to have their attentions quickened.*

Some will not hear at all, they are like *the deaf adder* (Pſal. 48.4.5.) *that ſtoppeth her ear, which will not hearken to the voice of the charmer, charming never ſo wiſely*; The Prophet reproves ſuch (*Jer.*6.10.) *To whom ſhall I ſpeak and give warning, that they may hear, behold their ear is uncircumciſed and they cannot hearken*; *behold, the Word of the Lord is to them a reproach, they have no delight in it*; *they cannot hearken*, that is, they will not; or they cannot hearken, that is ſpiritually and obedientially, though they have a natural, yet they have not a gracious ear, as the ſame Prophet (*Chap.*11.6,7,8.) upbraided them; *yet they obeyed not, nor inclined their ear.* This ſinful deafneſs the Lord complained of alſo, (*Pſal.*81.8.) *Hear O my people*, (ſaith God) and at the 11. verſe, *My people would not hearken to my voice*; Now as bad men will not hear at all to purpoſe; ſo the beſt ſeldom hear ſo well or to ſo good purpoſe as they ought and might. Men of heart or of underſtanding are ſometimes ſlow of hearing, and may need to have their ear awakened.

Secondly, Note, *It is an incouragement in ſpeaking to have underſtanding hearers.*

When a people have not only ears, but hearts to hear, then the word is heard indeed. We may ſuppoſe underſtanding men will probably prove the beſt hearers; the Prophet was in hope to find it ſo, though he failed of his hopes. (*Jer.* 5. 4.) *Surely theſe are poor*, they are fooliſh (men of low parts, and thin intellectuals) *for they know not the way of the Lord, nor the judgment of their God. I will get me to the great men and will ſpeak unto them, for they have known the way of the Lord,* (they are wiſe ſurely and underſtanding) yet he was diſappointed in his recourſe to them, as it followeth in the ſame verſe, *but theſe have altogether broken the yoke, and burſt the bonds.* There is a natural wiſdom which hindereth the hearing of the word, therefore the Apoſtle ſaith; *Not many wiſe men after the fleſh are called*, that is, ſavingly called; the word hath its full effect upon few of them, they are not prevailed with to believe and obey; they are called, but they come not. Though wiſdom be an advantage to profitable hearing, yet all natural wiſe men do not hear profitably, nor indeed can any, by all the wiſdom of nature.

Thirdly note, *A man without underſtanding is a heartleſs man.*

Headleſs men are heartleſs men. It is ſaid (*Hoſ.* 7. 11.) *Ephraim is like a ſilly dove without a heart.* All the people of God are or ſhould be innocent doves, like doves for innocency and gracious ſimplicity; but how unbecoming is it that any of them ſhould be doves for ſillineſs or *ſilly doves without a heart*; that is, without any ſpirit or courage for God, and the things or ways of God. To be without a heart is to be without a due apprehenſion of the mind of God, or any true conformity thereunto; 'tis to have no knowledg either to do good, or to be good; all ſuch are ſilly doves without a heart, without underſtanding, and all ſuch are yet unfit and unprepared hearers. *Hearken to me ye men of underſtanding,*

Far be it from God that he ſhould do wickedly.

The Septuagint turn the ſenſe of the words into another channel; as if *Elihu* ſpake here in his own vindication, and not in Gods; and ſo they render the Text perſonally of *Elihu*; *Far be it from me that I ſhould do wickedly before God*; or, *that I ſhould pervert Juſtice before the Almighty*; as if *Elihu* had ſaid, *I am now to ſpeak before God, or in Gods preſence; God being my witneſs, therefore I had need look to it while I am ſpeaking before the righteous God, that I ſpeak righteouſly, and while I ſpeak before the God of truth, that I ſpeak according unto truth; far be it from me that I ſhould do wickedly before God*; there is a truth in this tranſlation. But this is not a true tranſlation according to the Hebrew; nor is it the truth of this place. *Elihu* ſpeaking in ſo weighty a matter, might well ſay *far be it from me to pervert juſtice* ſo much as in a word, becauſe I ſpeak before God, and am in the preſence of the Almighty. We ſhould not ſpeak a word amiſs in his ſight or hearing, who ſeeth and heareth what all men do and ſay, whatſoever they are doing or ſaying, eſpecially, when they are doing or ſaying that which is of near concernment to himſelf. This rendring gives us a uſeful caution. But doubtleſs *Elihu's* purpoſe here was not to ſhew with what reverence of God, himſelf was about to ſpeak, but that he was about to ſpeak for the vindication of the righteouſneſs of God, which he thought *Job* had wronged by that aſſertion when he ſaid, (*verſ.* 9.) *It profiteth a man nothing that he ſhould delight himſelf with God.* Hereupon *Elihu* with ſome heat of ſpirit turns upon him in theſe words,

Abſit à me coram domino impie agere, &c. Sept.

Far be it from God that he ſhould do wickedly.] The word rendred, God forbid, is often uſed in Scripture, implying the greateſt deteſtation and utter abhorrence of that which is extreamly offenſive to us; the root of it ſignifieth any thing that is prophane, filthy, or polluted; becauſe all prophane things and perſons are far from God that is, ſuch as he utterly abhorreth. Further, the verb ſignifieth as to pollute, or to prophane, ſo to offer violence, to wound and kill unjuſtly or murtherouſly; which ſenſe complyeth fully with the buſineſs in hand. *Job* had complained that his innocency, at leaſt that he being innocent, was ſorely afflicted and wounded, and lay as it were weltring in his gore and blood. Hereupon *Elihu* ſtands up to vindicate the righteouſneſs and juſtice of God, *Far be it from God*, &c. When a Judg doth unrighteouſly, he offereth violence to the Law, and viciates that chaſte Virgin Juſtice, committed to his care and keeping. All acts of injuſtice are therefore far from God, even the abomination of his ſoul, becauſe polluted and filthy in themſelves, as alſo ſuch as pollute and defile all thoſe that uſe them. Thus *Abraham* ſpake to God (*Gen.* 18. 23, 25.) *Wilt thou alſo deſtroy the righteous with the wicked, that be far from thee*, &c. He ſpake of it with indignation as a thing moſt unworthy of God, to wrap up good and bad in the ſame common calamity. When all *Joſeph's* brethren as one man (*Gen.* 44. 17.) offered to become his priſoners, *God forbid* (ſaid he) *that I ſhould do ſo*, ye ſhall not all ſuffer for one mans fault; let that be far from me, he that is found in fault only ſhall be my priſoner. Thus *Elihu* would remove the remoteſt ſuſpition of unrighteouſneſs from God when he ſaith, *far be it from God that he ſhould do wickedneſs.*

חלל *Profanum aut pollutum eſſe. A Deo procul eſt omne profanum. Affectionem indicat animi, qui ſcelus aliquid à ſe, vel ab alio deprecatur & horret.* Sanct.

Hence note, *We ſhould reject all unworthy thoughts of God with indignation and deteſtation.*

The Apoſtle ſhewed a ſpirit full of this fire (*Rom.* 3. 5, 6.) *Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? (I ſpeak as a man)* that is, natural or carnal men are apt to think ſo, but *God forbid*, or, let it not be once named by thoſe who name (that is, profeſs) the name of God. If every one *who nameth the name of Chriſt muſt depart from iniquity* (2 *Tim.* 2. 19.) woe to thoſe who ſay that Chriſt himſelf cloſeth with any iniquity. As God himſelf puts all evil far from him, ſo ſhould we put the leaſt thought of it far from God. What can be more unjuſt than to have ſo much as the ſhadow of a thought that God doth any injuſtice! away with ſuch blaſphemous ſuggeſtions, can he who is the very rule of righteouſneſs do unrighteouſly? To throw this dirt into the face of God, hath as much abſurdity and irrationality as blaſphemy in it. None but they who know not God, can have ſuch apprehenſions of him. To do wickedneſs is far from God, and therefore let man be far, even as far as the eaſt is from the weſt, from ſaying or thinking that he doth any. *Far be it from God*

That he ſhould do wickedneſs.] The Text is, *far be it from God from wickedneſs*, we render *that he ſhould do wickedneſs.* The word ſignifieth *wickedneſs* of the worſt ſort; that wickedneſs which does not only break the Law (ſo every the leaſt ſin doth) but ſlights it, and denyeth it any reverence or regard. It is far from a godly man to ſin at this rate, to do wickedneſs. Then, O how *far is it from God that he ſhould do wickedneſs,*

רשע *ſignificat quodvis peccati genus, quod contra æquitatis fit normam, omnique careat legis ratione.* Bold.

And from the Almighty, that he ſhould commit iniquity.

Elihu uſeth two Titles or Names of God, Firſt, *the ſtrong God*, the mighty God. Secondly, *Almighty*, the All-ſufficient God; *far be it from the All-ſufficient that he ſhould do any iniquity.* He that hath all things in his power, and can command Heaven and Earth, heart and hand, he that is able to ſupply all deficiencies in the creature by his all-ſufficiency, far be it from this *Almighty God* that he ſhould commit *iniquity* towards man. Strength without goodneſs is always unprofitable, and often hurtful. Goodneſs without ſtrength is very unuſeful becauſe ſo weak. But where both ſtrength & goodneſs meet and center in the ſame perſon, as he is able to do much good, ſo he hath no will to do evil or offer injury to others. How then ſhould the *All-ſufficient commit iniquity?*

The word rendred **iniquity** ſignifies any crookedneſs or perverſneſs, and diſtortion of right and juſtice. Now right or juſtice is diſtorted many ways, chiefly theſe five.

Firſt, by a flat denyal of it. Secondly, by a tedious delaying of it. Thirdly, by puniſhing where there is no fault. Fourthly, by not rewarding where there is deſert. Fifthly, Juſtice or right is diſtorted, by giving the ſame or alike award to thoſe who are unlike, or (in their acts or deſerts, whether good or bad) not the ſame. To do any of theſe perverſe or crooked things is the doing of iniquity, or the perverting of Juſtice. All theſe *Elihu* removeth far from God, while he ſaith, *Far be it from the Almighty that he ſhould commit iniquity.* God will not, cannot commit iniquity, either by denying or delaying juſtice, either by not puniſhing or rewarding where there is cauſe, or by dealing out alike to thoſe in whoſe doing and diſpoſitions there is an utter unlikeneſs. *Far be it from the Almighty, that he* ſhould commit any of theſe iniquities.

עול *fraudem aliquando innuit. Et generalitèr dicitur de omni injuria omniq; malo contra leges.*

Hence note, Firſt, *To do any act of injuſtice is wickedneſs.*

Elihu taxed *Job*, for complaining of God's Juſtice (*verſ.* 9.) And here he ſaith, *Far be it from God, that he ſhould do wickedneſs.* Injuſtice is wickedneſs againſt God, who commandeth us to be juſt, and it is wickedneſs againſt man, who is always wronged by injuſtice.

Secondly, As to that particular which *Elihu chargeth Job* with,

Note, *If the Lord ſhould not reward thoſe that ſerve him, and delight in him, he were unrighteous.*

(Heb. 6. 10.) *God is not unrighteous to forget your labour of love*; He is not unrighteous to forget it, that is, not to recompence it; by forgetting it, he doth not mean the letting of it ſlip out of his mind, but the not making a due return to it, or the not giving it a juſt reward. It is unrighteouſneſs in God not to reward thoſe who ſerve him, becauſe he hath promiſed to reward them. *Say to the righteous, it ſhall be well with him* (Iſa. 3. 10.) The promiſes run to it, all the Scripture over; and as it would be unrighteouſneſs in God not to reward thoſe that do well; ſo not to pardon them that have done ill when they confeſs their evil deeds, becauſe he hath promiſed to pardon them; and therefore the Scripture ſaith (1 *John* 1. 9.) *If we confeſs our ſins, he is faithful and juſt to forgive us our ſins.* The Scripture doth not ſay, he is merciful to forgive us our ſins, (though mercy act to the higheſt in the forgiveneſs of ſin) but he is faithful and juſt to forgive us our ſins; and the reaſon why the Scripture ſaith ſo, is becauſe forgiveneſs of ſin (in caſe of confeſſion) is under a promiſe. To come ſhort of our promiſes, is to be unrighteous; promiſes are bonds upon the promiſer, and oblige to performance.

Thirdly, Note, *The ſtrong God, the mighty God, neither doth nor can do any unrighteouſneſs or iniquity.*

I ſay, he neither doth nor can do iniquity. God can do no iniquity, becauſe in him there is none. *He is my rock* (ſaith *David, Pſal.* 92. 15.) *and there is no unrighteouſneſs in him.* As none can do righteouſneſs, but they that are righteous, ſo he that neither is nor can be unrighteous, cannot do any unrighteouſneſs. That in the Pſalm is very conſiderable, that while he ſaith, *There is no unrighteouſneſs in God,* he immediately before ſaid, *He is my rock*; implying that God can no more be moved or removed from doing righteouſly, than a rock can be removed out of its place. We find *Moſes* alſo giving God the ſame attribute, when he ſpake of his indeclinableneſs in juſtice (*Deut.* 32. 4.) *He is a rock, his work is perfect, all his ways are Judgment.* The ways of God are not all judgment, as Judgment is oppoſed to mercy; ſome of his ways are mercy, and others of them are Judgment; but all his ways are judgment, as Judgment is oppoſed to injuſtice or unrighteouſneſs, that's the ſignification of Judgment, when *Moſes* ſaith, *All his ways are Judgment; he is a God of truth, and without iniquity, juſt and right is he.* The Apoſtle puts this denying queſtion with much vehemency (*Rom.* 9. 14.) *What ſhall we ſay then, is there unrighteouſneſs with God? God forbid.* And 'tis very conſiderable that the Apoſtle put this queſtion with ſo much abhorrence, preſently after he had ſpoken of that Act of God which is ſo much quarrelled at by the ſons of men, as unrighteous and unjuſt; *Eſau have I hated, and Jacob have I loved, and that, when they had done neither good nor evil* (verſ. 11.) What (ſay ſome) will God do thus? will he hate or love, before ever men do good or evil? yes, ſuch acts of love and hatred, of election and rejection are gone out from God. And becauſe *Paul* foreſaw, that men (according to their narrow apprehenſion) would be ready to ſay, ſurely God is not right in this; therefore he ſubjoyns, *What ſhall we ſay then? is there unrighteouſneſs in God?* As if he had ſaid, I know ſome men will be ready enough to ſay ſo, and think they have reaſon enough to ſay ſo; They all muſt needs ſay ſo, who meaſure God by their ſhallow brains, (ſuch are the deepeſt brains compared with God) and therefore *Arminius*, with his followers, (that they may avoid this difficulty) carry the interpretation of this Scripture to another point, as if it had nothing to do with the eternal purpoſe of God concerning man, but only reſpected his dealings with them about temporals, or his dealing out temporals to them. I urge that Text becauſe it hath occaſion'd (through mans corruption) great contending and quarrelling about the righteouſneſs of God; yea ſome have preſumed, there can be no maintaining that opinion of the abſolute decree, without faſtening unrighteouſneſs upon God. But the Apoſtle by the Spirit foreſeeing this fleſhly objection, hath forelayed and prevented it, concluding, *O man, who art thou that replyeſt againſt God, ſhall the clay contend with the potter,* &c.

Now, as in this act of eternal Election, ſo in all providential acts, the Lord is infinitely, unmoveably and unſpottedly juſt and righteous; he not only doth righteous things, but he cannot do any thing that is unrighteous. And this ſeeming impotency is the real power of God, and his moſt glorious perfection. For, as 'tis from the weakneſs of man that he can do iniquity, ſo 'tis from the power of God that he cannot. That God cannot lye, that he cannot do any unworthy thing, is an argument of his omnipotence. God can no more do iniquity, then he can ceaſe to be God; his righteouſneſs, his juſtice is himſelf; the Juſtice of God is the juſt God, the righteouſneſs of God, is the righteous God; he hath not only a principle of righteouſneſs in him, as man may have, and every godly man truely hath, but he is righteouſneſs. A Heathen Poet had this apprehenſion of his Idol Gods; *They love not unrighteouſneſs, but honour Juſtice.* But Jehovah the true, the living God, doth more than affectionately love and honour Juſtice, He is eſſentially Juſt. That man who is in a ſtate of righteouſneſs, loves to be doing and will do righteous acts; things and perſons are in their working as they are in their being; *He that doth righteouſneſs is righteous,* (1 John 3. 7.) God is righteous, infinitely righteous, in his being, or nature, therefore he cannot but do that which is righteous; to do an unrighteous act were to offer violence to himſelf, to deſtroy himſelf.

Θεοὶ δὲ οὐ σχέτλια ἔργα φιλοῦσι, ἀλλὰ δίκην τιμῶσι. Homer.

Again, God doth not work by a rule without him, as men do (and therefore men often go beſide the rule, and do amiſs, or act unrighteouſly, becauſe the rule is one thing, and they are another, the rule is without them) but God himſelf is the very rule of all things, and hence it followeth undeniably, that every thing is righteous and juſt which he doth, even becauſe he doth it; 'tis enough to prove that right which is done, if we can prove God hath done it. The proud Monarch *Nebuchadnezzar*, was at laſt brought to this confeſſion (*Dan.* 4. 34, 35.) *At the end of the days* (namely, of his ſeven years baniſhment to the beaſts) *I Nebuchadnezzar lift up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine underſtanding returned unto me, and I bleſſed the moſt high,* &c. *Who doth according to his will* (there is the rule with him) *in the Army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can ſtay his hand, nor ſay unto him, what doſt thou?* Which is true upon a double account; Firſt, as to his ſoveraignty and dominion, he is ſupream Lord, and none can give him a check or countermand, *Who may ſay unto him, what doſt thou?* Secondly, with reſpect to his righteouſneſs. As he can do what he will; ſo he will do nothing, yea he can do nothing but what is right, or what he may; *Who can ſay unto him, thou haſt done amiſs? Who can ſee a fault in any of his works?* If God hath done a thing, there is no query to be put about it whether it be right or no? for he is righteouſneſs it ſelf.

Abraham uſeth another argument to ſhew that God can do no unrighteouſneſs (*Gen.* 18. 25.) *Shall not the Judg of all the earth do right?* God (ſaith he) is the Judg of all men, therefore he neither will nor can do wrong to any man. *Abraham* did not plead there, as if he doubted that God might do wrong, unleſs he by his interceſſion did take him off; but he brings an argument whereby he was aſſured that God would do right, yea could not but do right. *He is the Judg of all the earth.* So (*Rom.* 3. 6.) as ſoon as the Apoſtle had ſaid, *Is God unrighteous that takes vengeance? I ſpeak as a man*; he ſubjoyns, *God forbid, how then ſhall God judg the world?* God is Judg of all the world, and the univerſality of his power puts him above all poſſibility of error in the exerciſe of his power. The very reaſon why God doth not, cannot exerciſe his power beyond or beſides the limits of juſtice, is becauſe his power is altogether unlimited.

Fourthly, *Elihu* here ſpeaks of God under the notion of a Judg; *Shall he do wickedly? ſhall he commit iniquity?*

Hence note, *It is an abomination for Judges to do unjuſtly.*

Judges have juſtice, as it were, in their keeping, they have the charge of juſtice; is it not an abomination for the keepers or protectors of Juſtice to violate it! *Elihu* having thus denied unrighteouſneſs or any iniquity in God, proceeds to the proof of it. To deny had been enough in this matter, but he gives a demonſtration; as ſeveral have been held out already in proſecuting the former obſervation, ſo the following Text holds out another.

Verſ. 11. **For the work of a man ſhall he render unto him, and cauſe every man to find according to his way.**

As if he had ſaid, God doth every man right, therefore he is righteous, and there is no iniquity in him.

Elihu having denied any unrighteouſneſs to be in God, here ſheweth how he exerciſeth righteouſneſs.

The work of a man ſhall he render to him.] The work of a man is here put for the reward, iſſue, or fruit of his work; God doth not render every mans work to him in kind, that is, the thing it ſelf which he hath done, but the work in its reſult and reward. That which God returneth to a man according to his work, may be called a reward in a fourfold reſpect. Firſt, becauſe it hath in it the benefit of a reward to the worker. Secondly, becauſe it is given in anſwer to the work done. Thirdly, becauſe God hath given his people leave, yea a command to believe and wait for good fruit to themſelves, when they do good works. Fourthly, becauſe it is proportion'd to the work or duty performed. For as good is returned for good, ſo great good is returned for great good done. Though the greateſt good that ever was or can be done by a meer creature doth not deſerve (by any intrinſick worth) the leaſt good at the hand of God. Thus ſaith the Spirit (*Rev.* 14. 13.) *Bleſſed are the dead that dye in the Lord, from henceforth they reſt from their labours, and their works follow them*; not the works which they did, but that which is by promiſe due to them for thoſe works. The Prophet aſſureth us (*Iſa.* 32. 17.) *The work of righteouſneſs is peace*; we cannot underſtand it as a direct predication, but peace is the fruit or iſſue of the work of righteouſneſs, or as the latter part of the verſe clearly expounds it, *The effect of righteouſneſs ſhall be quietneſs and aſſurance for ever.* Which as it is moſt true of the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, *who is our peace* (Epheſ. 2. 14.) and our *Peace-maker through the blood of his croſs* (Col. 1. 20.) So it is true of man's righteouſneſs, the work whereof is (by promiſe) crowned with the bleſſings of peace, both ſpiritual and corporal, temporal and eternal. *The work of a man*

שלם *reddere ad pacem pertinet; quæ loquutio ſignificat perfectam debiti alicujus perſolutionem.* Bold.

Shall he render unto him.] The word ſignifies a full retribution, it ſignifies alſo, in the Noun, *peace*; becauſe when accounts are fully returned or rendred all is ſetled and quiet; when a man upon account is diſcharged, he hath a *quietus eſt*, that is an acquittance wherein he may be quiet; none can legally moleſt or trouble him. That which God will return to all men, they muſt and ſhall reſt in, though that which he will render to man for his evil works unrepented of, will give him no reſt.

The work of a man ſhall he render unto him.] The word is very general; he doth not ſay this, that, or 'tother work, but *the work*, which is as much as an univerſal, *every work of a man*, his good works, and his bad works, his open works, and his ſecret works, his great and leſſer works, there is not the leaſt grain of a mans works, that ſhall be unanſwered or unreturned to him; and, when the Text ſaith, *the work of a man*, &c. we are not to take works in an excluſive ſenſe, either firſt, as to words, as if God would render to man his works, but not his words; man's words will come to an account as well as his works; they muſt be anſwered for whether good or bad. (*Matth.* 12. 36, 37.) *For every idle word, that men ſhall ſpeak, they ſhall give account thereof in the day of judgment; for by thy words thou ſhalt be juſtified, and by thy words thou ſhalt be condemned*; that is, it ſhall be rendred to thee according to thy words, or as thy words have been, ſo it ſhall be with thee. Nor ſecondly, are we to take the works of a man, excluſively, or in oppoſition to his thoughts; as if God would render to man what he hath acted outwardly, but not what he hath acted inwardly, or would paſs by his thoughts. We muſt give an account of our thoughts, which are the ſpring of our works as well as of our words, which are the publiſhers and proclaimers of them. *God ſhall bring every work* (ſaith *Solomon*, Eccl. 12. 14.) *to judgment, and every ſecret thing*, the moſt ſecret whiſpers of the tongue, and the moſt ſecret plottings, contrivings, deviſings, deſignings, yea the ſimple and ſingle thinkings of the heart. Theſe are not only the moulds and principles of every work, but every one of theſe is a work, and all of them the whole work of the inner man; whoſe work, or what is wrought there, is chiefly, as well as only, under the inſpection and eye of God.

Again, *The work of a man ſhall he render unto him*, &c. He doth not ſay the works of another man ſhall he render to any man, but the work of a man ſhall he render to him; he that doth the work ſhall have the reward; the works of one man ſhall not be rendred to another, but every man's works ſhall. As the faith of another man ſhall not help us, if we have no faith; *Abraham's* faith (who had a mighty faith) will do us no good, if we have no faith of our own, ſo the good works of another man ſhall do us no good if we have none of our own. And as not the good works, ſo the evil works of others ſhall not be rendred to us. The hurtful works of others ſhall not hurt us, if we do no hurt. I grant we may partake of the evil works of others, yea, we may make other mens works our own, either by conſenting to them before they are done, or by approving them after they are done, or by not reproving them, when we have opportunity. In theſe and many other caſes, we may make other mens evil works our own; and ſo far as other mens works are our own, God ſhall render them alſo unto us: Hence that caution given by the Apoſtle to *Timothy* (1 *Tim.* 5. 22.) *Lay hands ſuddainly on no man, neither be partaker of other mens ſins, keep thy ſelf pure.* They that partake (in any of thoſe ways mentioned before, or in any other way) of any mans ſins may alſo quickly partake of his puniſhment. Thus *John heard a voice from Heaven* (Rev. 18. 4.) *ſaying, come out of her* (that is, out of Babylon) *my people, that ye be not partakers of her ſins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.* Not only is that work ours which we do, but that alſo may be ours, by participation, which others do. And by what title ſoever a work becomes any mans, *the work of the man ſhall God render unto him.*

And he will cauſe every man to find according to his ways.

This latter part of the verſe contains the ſame thing with the former in another cloathing of words.

In ſemitâ viri inveniet eum.

Some read the Text thus, *and he will find every man in his way*; let man go in what way he will, God will meet with him. That's a truth, God will meet or find a man in a good way to incourage, guide, aſſiſt and reward him. And God will meet or find a man in an evil way, to ſtop, oppoſe and puniſh him. God will find every man in his way, and man ſhall find God to him according as the way is wherein he findeth him.

We render very well, and fully to the ſenſe, *he will cauſe every man to find according to his way.*

Cajetanus.

I find an Interpreter over-curiouſly diſtinguiſhing between a man's *work* and his *way*, which doubtleſs here, in effect, are the ſame, yet there may be a gradual difference; *work* being taken for this or that particular act, and *way*, for a continued courſe either good or evil.

דרך *via, actiones ſignificat quatenùs ad finem diriguntur; Quemadmodum via initur metæ & termini cauſa. Emphaticè* via *dicuntur actiones ad certum finem directa.* Coc.

Again, The *way* of a man may be conſidered in aſſociation with his ends. Every man goeth ſuch or ſuch a way for ſome ſpecial end; no man takes a ſtep in any way without a purpoſe, nor doth any wiſe or good man take a ſtep in any way without a good purpoſe. Yet there is (*finis operis*) an end or iſſue of the work, as alſo (*finis operantis*) an end propoſed by the worker. And oftentimes that proves to be the end of a work which was not the end purpoſed by the worker. The end of a mans work or way, proves ſometimes better and ſometimes worſer than he propoſed. Poſſibly a man may not find according to that end of his way and work which he intended not, whether good or evil. But aſſuredly whatſoever good or evil end a man propoſeth to himſelf, when he enters upon his work or way, God will cauſe him to find accordingly. So that when *Elihu* ſaith, *God will cauſe every man to find according to his way*, he intimates, that God will not only render to man according to the matter of his work, or outward path of his way, but well conſidereth every mans ſcope and intendment, or what he would have his work iſſue in, and cauſeth him to find as he findeth that to be. As the end which man propoſeth to himſelf, hath a great influence upon his way, ſo upon his account with God about it. This is a good ſenſe. God will cauſe every man to find according to his way, both as his way is taken for the matter or courſe of his actions, as alſo for the ſcope and deſign of them.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *Every man ſhall have according to what he hath done.*

Our receivings will be according to our layings out, whether good or evil. God is ſo far from doing any man wrong, that every man ſhall have his due reward. (*Pſal.* 62. 12.) *Alſo to thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy, for thou rendereſt to every man according to his work.* And leſt any ſhould hope to eſcape the evil which at leaſt ſome of their evil works deſerve by the ſecrecy of them, that hope is quite daſhed becauſe God is the ſearcher and ſeer not only of our works but of our hearts (*Prov.* 24. 12.) *Doth not he that pondereth the heart conſider it, and he that keepeth the ſoul, doth not he know it?* (what follows?) *and ſhall not he render to every man according to his works? Solomon* ſpeaks in that place of ſuch as make excuſes to ſhift themſelves off from acts of charity; they will ſay, we know not whether it be ſo with him or no; poſſibly he may not be in ſuch want as he pretendeth. Take heed of theſe cloaks of covetouſneſs, and pitiful pleas to ſave your purſes from ſhewing pity to the poor, for (ſaith *Solomon*) *Will not God ſearch it out, and render to every man according to his work?* The holy Scripture abounds in this point. Read *Jer.* 32. 19. *Ezek.* 33. 10. *Rom.* 2. 6. 2 *Cor.* 5. 10. 1 *Pet.* 1. 17. *Rev.* 22. 12.

But ſome may ſay, how doth God render to every man his work? Is it not ſaid *He juſtifieth the ungodly* (Rom. 4. 5.) Are the works of an ungodly man rendred to him, when he is juſtified?

I anſwer, it is one thing what God will do through free grace, and another what he will deal out in ſtrictneſs of Juſtice. The Apoſtle ſpeaks in that place of the free grace of God to ſinners, not of his Juſtice againſt ſinners. Secondly, though God juſtifieth the ungodly, yet he never juſtifieth ungodlineſs; or, though he juſtifieth a man who hath done many evil works, yea all whoſe works are evil, yet he never juſtifieth nor rewardeth the work of an evil man. Thirdly, God acts according to juſtice and righteouſneſs where he juſtifieth the ungodly; he doth not ſhew favour to the ungodly in his own wrong. Acts of grace from God are not oppoſite to his Juſtice, much leſs do they contradict or overthrow it. He doth not juſtifie an ungodly man in himſelf, or meerly conſidered in his ungodlineſs, but he juſtifieth him in the righteouſneſs of another, even of Jeſus Chriſt, who hath given full ſatisfaction to the Juſtice of God with reſpect to the ungodly whom he juſtifieth. Laſtly, we may ſay, that God renders the work of an ungodly man to him when he juſtifieth him; for though then he hath not done, nor ever can do any works which deſerve the juſtification of his perſon; yet God doth render to him, according to that preſent work of faith in cloſing with the promiſe and the work of Chriſt's righteouſneſs therein tendred to him, and applyed by him for his juſtification.

Further, that other Scripture ſeems to lye in the way of this obſervation (*Pſal.* 103. 10.) *He hath not dealt with us after our ſins, or rewarded us according to our iniquities.* How then doth God render every man his work?

I anſwer as before; Acts of mercy do not croſs acts of juſtice. When the Lord doth not deal with any man according to his ſins, it is becauſe he hath freely pardoned his ſins; and he doth not reward a man according to his iniquity, becauſe his iniquities are done away; thus he deals with all his own people, who are received to favour through Jeſus Chriſt; but no wicked man, no impenitent perſon in the world, ſhall have cauſe to ſay, that God hath not dealt with him according to his ſin, or hath not rewarded him according to his iniquity. There may be ſome preſent ſtops of Juſtice, through the patience of God to wicked men; their works are not always preſently rendered into their boſomes, but they ſhall. God will render to every man according to his work, one way or other, one time or other; The full rendering to all men according to their works will be at the great day; in this world the godly do not ſometimes receive according to their good works, nor do the wicked according to their evil works; Good men are often rewarded with ſhame and reproach, with want and poverty, with baniſhment and impriſonment, with tortures and with death in this preſent world; but the Lord will have a time to render to them according to their works, though at no time for their works; ſo look upon wicked men, and their works, they go often unpuniſhed at the preſent, yea many of them proſper greatly (as I have had occaſion to ſhew more than once in opening this Book) they have their good things, many good things in this life, but the time will come when God will render to the wicked their work, and they ſhall be forced to ſay, that he hath cauſed them to find according to their ways. Take two or three inferences from this general truth.

If God will render the work of a man to him; Then

Firſt, Godly men have great incouragement to do good, yea to abound in doing good works. That's the Apoſtles argument (1 *Cor.* 15. 58.) *Be ye ſtedfaſt and unmoveable in the work of the Lord, foraſmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord*; that is, the Lord will render to every man his labour. Hence alſo that of *Solomon* (Eccl. 11. 1.) *Caſt thy bread upon the waters, for thou ſhalt find it after many days.* Charities done in faith as an holy offering to God, produce a ſure increaſe. To give with a right heart to the poor, is the beſt way of growing rich. For God will render to man according to that work. And as it may incourage to do good, ſo do it againſt all diſcouragements. We muſt not only do good when the Sun ſhines, when it is fair weather with us, and all men applaud us; but though men frown and ſcorn, though (which *Solomon* reports as one of the great vanities of this world, *Eccl.* 4. 4.) *For a right work, a man may be envied of his neighbour*; let us not hold our hand from doing good, though we are oppoſed and checkt, though we are traduced and ſlandred, though we are miſ-interpreted and have the fouleſt gloſſes put upon our faireſt works, though men call our zeal madneſs and our circumſpect walking hypocriſie, yea though we are perſecuted and ſuffer the worſt of evils, though men caſt ſtones at us (as they did at Chriſt for his good works) yet let us not be deterred from doing good. For howſoever men deal with us, or what rendrings ſoever we find from the world, yet God will render to us both according to the rightneſs of our work done, and according to the uprightneſs of our hearts in doing it. Let this provoke us not only to do the Lords work, but to do it with much patience, and perſeverance, for *in due time we ſhall reap if we faint not*; where there hath been ſowing, there will be reaping; and where the ſeed time hath been with tears, the harveſt or reaping time ſhall be with joy.

Secondly, This is a dreadful doctrine to *evil workers*; Some (as the Apoſtle calls the *Cretians*, out of their own Poet) *are evil beaſts, ſlow bellies*; and as they are ſlothful, or ſlow bellies at doing good; ſo they are very free and forward, very quick, lively, and nimble beaſts in doing evil. O how ſhould evil workers tremble at this Scripture, *To every man will God render according to his work*; as a cup of cold water given to a diſciple, in the name of a diſciple, ſhall not be loſt, but have a reward, and the giver fully paid for it; (*Matth.* 10. 42.) ſo not any the leaſt evil work, impenitently continued in, ſhall be unpuniſhed.

Further, God will not render to man according to the opinion he hath of himſelf. (A bad man and the worſt of his works may be good in his own conceit; *He may flatter himſelf in his own eyes, until his iniquity be found to be hateful*, Pſal. 36. 2.) But God will render unto man according to what his works are in truth.

Secondly, God will not render to man according to the thoughts which others have of him and of his work (ſome are high in the opinion not only of the world, but of ſome good men, they have a name to be alive while they are dead, and their works dead works) but God will render to man according to that clear, certain, and infallible knowledg, which himſelf (by whom *actions are weighed*, 1 Sam. 2. 3.) hath of them.

Thirdly, God will not render to man according to his good meanings, when his works are evil; many will confeſs they have done amiſs, but they had good intendments in it. A right end will not excuſe us, if our way be wrong; There is no pleading of meanings againſt commandments; nor will ſincerity of intentions, cover the deformity and irregularity of actions. The Apoſtle pronounceth a fearful doom againſt thoſe who ſaid (*Rom.* 3. 8.) *Let us do evil that good may come, whoſe damnation is juſt.*

Fourthly, As God will not render according to a mans good ends, if his work be evil; ſo remember, God will not render to man according to his good works, if his ends are bad. Therefore, conſider your end when you enter your way, and begin your work. (*Prov.* 21. 27.) *The ſacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord; how much more when he bringeth it with an evil mind*; that is, when he hath ſome bad end in doing it; A wicked mans ſacrifice is an abomination to the Lord at the beſt, but much more when he hath baſe deſigns in his ſacrifices or holy ſervices. *Herod* ſaid to the wiſe men (*Matth.* 3. 8.) *Go and ſearch diligently for the young child, and when ye have found him bring me word again, that I may come and worſhip him alſo:* It was a good work to enquire after Chriſt, and worſhip him, but his end was to deſtroy him. *Jezebel* pretended a holy faſt, but her end was to feaſt her ſelf with revenge upon innocent *Naboth*. The beſt works of hypocrites will have an ill return, becauſe they do them with an evil mind. There are three ſorts of good works, which will never turn to a good account.

Firſt, Thoſe good works which are done but for a ſeaſon; temporary good works, or the good works of temporary profeſſors, ſuch as are deſcribed (*Matth.* 13. 5. 7.) by the ſecond and third grounds, who bring forth for a while, but afterwards fall away; ſuch good works (I ſay) ſhall not have a good reward. If your goodneſs be as the morning cloud, and as the early dew it paſſeth away, it will do you no good. *He that endureth to the end ſhall be ſaved*, and none but he (*Matth.* 10. 22.) Chriſt exhorts the Church (*Rev.* 3. 11.) *Hold that faſt which thou haſt, that no man take thy crown.* They loſe the good works they have done, who hold not out in doing them. It will not advantage us to begin in the Spirit, if we end in the fleſh.

Secondly, Thoſe good works which are truſted to, or boaſted of, will never make a good return. Though a man ſhould continue doing good all the days of his life, yet if he buildeth his hope upon it, *his hope ſhall be cut off, and his truſt* (that is, what he truſteth to) *ſhall be a ſpiders web* (that is, weak like that, becauſe like that, woven out of his own bowels) *he ſhall lean upon his houſe, but it ſhall not ſtand, he ſhall hold it faſt, but it ſhall not endure* (Job 8. 14, 15.) you and your works will periſh together, if you depend upon your works. Good works truſted to, are as dangerous to the ſoul, as evil works perſevered in.

Thirdly, Thoſe good works which are done for baſe ends, to ſerve men, or to compaſs a worldly intereſt, ſhall have no reward from God, but that, which ſhall be upon every ſoul that ſinneth and repenteth not, anguiſh and tribulation.

VERS. 12, 13.

Yea, ſurely God will not do wickedly, neither will the Almighty pervert Judgment.

Who hath given him a charge over the earth? or who hath diſpoſed the whole world?

ELihu proceedeth in the proof of this point, (the vindication of the righteouſneſs of God) with a ſtrong aſſeveration;

Verſ. 12. **Yea, ſurely,**

או אמנם *Ingens eſt in originali aſſertionis vis.*

There is a mighty force of affirmation, in the original words, we may parallel them, with thoſe aſſertive ſpeeches frequently uſed by our Saviour *Jeſus Chriſt* in the Goſpel, *Amen, Amen, Verily, verily, I ſay unto you*; *Yea ſurely*, is as much as *verily, verily*; as if *Elihu* had ſaid, *There is no queſtion to be made of what I affirm, that God is righteous, or will not do wickedly*; as the Apoſtle writ to *Timothy* about the great myſtery of the Goſpel, *God manifeſted in the fleſh*, (1 Tim. 3. 16.) *without controverſie great* (or, as the word imports, confeſſedly on all hands, *great*) *is the myſtery of Godlineſs*; ſo here *Elihu* might ſpeak to *Job*, *This is a truth beyond diſpute or controverſie, an unqueſtionable truth, and ſuch a truth that, if once confeſſed, will quickly determine all the Queſtions, which are depending between you and me.* There are ſome *Maſter-truths, ruling truths*; ſuch a one is this in the Text, *Yea ſurely, or undoubtedly, God will not do wickedly.*

> Hence note, *It becomes us to grow up into higheſt confidences, about the truths of God, eſpecially about the truth and Juſtice of God.*

We ſhould not be as Meteors hanging in the air, ſpeaking with heſitation, poſſibly it is ſo, peradventure it is true; but (as the Apoſtle directs the *Coloſſians*, Chap. 2. 3.) *We muſt labour to grow up unto all riches of the full aſſurance of underſtanding*; as there is a full aſſurance of faith in believing, and of hope in waiting or expecting, ſo alſo of underſtanding in apprehending the things of God. We ſhould be (in a ſenſe) *Maſters of truth*; and then we are ſo indeed, when truth hath fully maſtered us, and prevailed upon both our judgment and affections, and we are led captive by light to the love and obedience of it. We have cauſe to bewail thoſe (much more have they cauſe to bewail themſelves) who are but Scepticks or Queſtioniſts in Religion, never coming to a point, nor able (after a due making up of their thoughts) to ſay, *Thus it is, and by this we will abide*, as *Elihu* did in the then preſent caſe, delivering himſelf confidently, *yea ſurely, or verily, verily,*

God will not do wickedly?] To clear the meaning in this Negative aſſertion, we muſt take in the higheſt affirmatives of the holineſs and Juſtice, of the righteouſneſs, truth, and faithfulneſs of God; For it ſounds like a flat and low commendation of God, to ſay, *he will not do wickedly*; for ſo it may be ſaid of every honeſt man. *He will not do wickedly*; but ſeeing in this Negative commendation given by man to God (as in all the Negative commandments given by God to man) all affirmatives are to be underſtood; what can be ſaid more to or more ſound out his praiſe and glory than this?

הרשיע *Eſt aliquando impium pronunciare, condemnare; aliquando verò impiè agere vel iniquè quippiam facere.* Merc.

God will not do wickedly?] The word here uſed for *doing wickedly*, ſignifies two things; Firſt, to pronounce any perſon wicked; and Secondly, to do any thing which is wicked; both theſe often meet together. For in many caſes to pronounce a perſon wicked, is to do a wicked thing; he that condemneth a juſt perſon pronounceth him wicked, and what thing can be done more wickedly than that? Some take the word in that ſenſe here, as a denial that God either hath done, or ever will condemn the innocent. There are two things wherein men do very wickedly, with reſpect to the perſons of men, both which the Lord abhors. Firſt, when they condemn the innocent. Secondly, when they acquit or clear the guilty. The former way of doing wickedly, is chiefly removed from God here by *Elihu*, as the latter is directly and expreſly by himſelf (*Exod.* 34. 7.) *The Lord, the Lord*, &c. *that will by no means clear the guilty.* To pronounce a guilty perſon innocent, or an innocent perſon guilty, if ignorantly done, is a great piece of weakneſs, and if knowingly done, is a great piece of wickedneſs. Yet, becauſe the latter part of the verſe ſpeaks particularly to clear God from wrong Judgment, therefore, I conceive, we may better expound this former part of it more largely, as a general denial of any evil act whatſoever, done by God. *Surely God will not do wickedly,*

Neither will the Almighty pervert Judgment.

עות *Detorquebit, curvabit.*

The Almighty, who hath power to do what he will, hath no will to do this evil. He will not *pervert Judgment.* The word ſignifies both to pervert and ſubvert, as alſo to bow, wreſt, or put out of order, to mingle or blend thoſe things together, which ſhould be for ever ſeparated, or, as we ſay, to mingle heaven and earth, yea heaven and hell together; ſo do they who mingle good and ill, right and wrong together. To pervert *Judgment*, is, to do all this, for then (which *Abraham* aſſured himſelf was far from God, *Gen.* 18. 25.) *The righteous are as the wicked*, that is, the righteous fare as ill as the wicked, or the wicked fare as well as the righteous. But *the Almighty will not pervert Judgment*, that is, the right which belongs to any man, and therefore, he will do every man right. We had the ſame poſition in terms (*Chap.* 8.3.) and we have had this whole verſe equivalently in the 10. of this Chapter, where *Elihu* ſaid, *Far be it from God, that he ſhould do wickedneſs, and from the Almighty, that he ſhould commit iniquity.* Here, only one verſe intervening, *Elihu* reports and repeats the ſame matter again; but it is no needleſs or vain repetition, for which Chriſt reproved the prayer of the Heathens (*Matth.* 6.7.) there are many repetitions in Scripture, but not one vain one; how often ſoever the ſame truth is repeated there, it hath its weight and uſe, not only as it is ſtill a truth, but as it is a truth repeated. And therefore I ſhall give a threefold reaſon why this truth is here again repeated, which will alſo lead us to a fuller improvement of it.

Firſt, Becauſe this truth is (as it were) the hinge upon which the whole controverſie between *Job* and *Elihu* is turned. *Job* was unſatisfied becauſe he was ſo ill handled, and therefore *Elihu* tells him often that God is righteous, and that he will not wrong any man. Hereby giving *Job* to underſtand, that God had done him nothing, or done nothing to him, but right. Such grand ſwaying, controlling truths ſhould be often, and can ſcarce be too often repeated.

Secondly, *Elihu* repeated this again, becauſe 'tis ſuch a truth, as no man can too much, no nor enough weigh and conſider the value and worth of it. Now, that which cannot be too often nor too much thought of, cannot (if rules of prudence be obſerved) be too much or too often ſpoken of. There is ſcarce any man who hath not ſometimes at leaſt indirectly and obliquely ſome hard thoughts of the proceedings of God, either in reference to himſelf or to others; Nor is there any thing that we have more temptations about, than that, ſurely, we are not in all things rightly dealt with, and that the diſpenſations of God are not ſo even, as they might. Theſe ſinful ſuſpitions are daily moving and fluctuating in the heart of man, and therefore this oppoſite principle ought to be faſtened and fixed there to the utmoſt, that the will and works of God are all juſt and righteous, yea that his will is the rule of all righteous workings; or, that as whatſoever is done in this world, is done by the diſpoſure of God, ſo God (though the thing be evil and unjuſt) is juſt and good in the diſpoſure of it. Therefore unleſs we reſiſt or contradict the will of God, we muſt ſay, whatſoever comes to paſs, comes righteouſly to paſs, becauſe it comes to paſs by the determinate will and counſel of God.

Thirdly, *Elihu* repeats this aſſertion, that he might the more commodiouſly make his tranſition or paſſage to the matter following, and proſecute it with greater ſucceſs. And therefore I ſhall not ſtay longer upon thoſe words, only,

Note, Firſt, This great truth, that *God will not do wickedly, neither will the Almighty pervert Judgment,*

Convinceth thoſe, not only of injudiciouſneſs, but of wickedneſs, who, though they are ready to acknowledg in general, *God is juſt*, yet as to thoſe particular providences, which concern them, or wherewith themſelves are pincht, do not, cannot acquieſce and reſt in the will of God, with freedom and ſatisfaction. That which is juſt ſhould not diſpleaſe us, though (in it ſelf) it be very bitter and unpleaſant to us.

Secondly, This truth is a ground of comfort to all the people of God, who are under heavy preſſures from this evil world, or who receive little reward or incouragement (as to ſenſe) from the good hand of God. Such are apt to ſay with the kingly Prophet (*Pſal.* 73. 13, 14.) *Verily in vain have we cleanſed our heart, and waſhed our hands in innocency, for all the day long have we been plagued, and chaſtened every morning. David* was under a temptation when he was under hatches, he could hardly perceive it worth the while to take pains in cleanſing and waſhing either heart or hand, while God was ſo conſtant and frequent in correcting and chaſtening him with ſo heavy a hand. Yet *David* ſoon after recovered out of this temptation, and concluded the Pſalm, with this particular aſſurance, (*verſ.* 28.) *It is good for me to draw neer to God,* as he had begun it (*verſ.* 1.) with a general aſſurance, *Truely God is good to Iſrael, even to ſuch as are of a clean heart.* God is good to thoſe who have a clean heart, even when they are in the greateſt ſufferance of evil, and therefore they who are clean hearted, have no reaſon at any time to ſay, nor ſhall they long ſay, they have cleanſed their heart in vain. Though now they ſmart, yet in due ſeaſon they ſhall be well rewarded for their waſhing. *The Judgments of God are ſuch, as no man can fully comprehend, ſuch as no man can juſtly reprehend. The Almighty will not pervert Judgment.*

Judicia dei plenè nemo comprehendit, juſtè nemo reprehendit. Auguſt. lib. 2. de Civ. Dei cap. 23.

Thoſe four things which cauſe men to pervert Judgment, are at the furtheſt diſtance or remove from God; whereof the firſt is envy at the good condition of others. The ſecond is groundleſs and unreaſonable love or hatred of their perſons. The third is fear of frowns from thoſe that are great, or fear of after-claps; Many are deterr'd from giving but a juſt meaſure, either of reward to good men, or puniſhment to evil men, leſt themſelves ſhould receive hard meaſure from thoſe who like neither. The fourth is hope of gain, or their private advantage. For as ſome pervert Judgment for bribes already received, ſo others for bribes promiſed, or upon expectation of ſome future favours. Now God (I ſay) is infinitely above theſe four, and all other imaginable by-reſpects, upon which Judgment is perverted every day, by the ſons of men. God is above all envy, yea above all that hatred or love which perverts Judgment; he is above all fear of evil, and hope of good. God hath nothing to fear, ſeeing none can reach him, much leſs hurt him; neither hath he any thing at all to hope for, ſeeing he is in the full poſſeſſion of all happineſs and bleſſedneſs, that is, of himſelf. Why then, or upon what account ſhould the Almighty pervert Judgment? ſo that, if at any time, we have any unbecoming thoughts of the Juſtice of God, either that he afflicts the good without reaſon, or proſpers the wicked againſt it; all this ariſeth from our ignorance, or the ſhortneſs of our ſight. We have not a full or perfect proſpect of things, we ſee but a little way backward, we are not wiſe to compare what's paſt with what's preſent, nor can we at all infallibly foreſee any thing future, or diſcern what ſhall be. Whereas God at once hath all things before him, he ſeeth what is paſt as well as what is preſent, and what ſhall be hereafter, as well as what hath been, and ſo the compleatneſs and indefectibility of his own Juſtice in all. And when we in the great day ſhall ſee all the works of God in the world brought and preſented together as in one view, we ſhall then ſay from the evidence of ſight, as now we ought from the evidence of faith, that the Almighty hath not in any one thing perverted Judgment. And therefore the Apoſtle doth moſt excellently and appoſitely call that day, *The day of the revelation of the righteous judgment of God* (Rom. 2. 5.)

Elihu having ſtrongly aſſerted, with a *yea ſurely*, that, *the Almighty will not pervert Judgment*, yet ſtayeth not in a bare (though ſo ſtrong an) aſſertion, (which he might) but gives us the proof and confirmation of it; as he hath denied that God will, ſo he proveth by undeniable arguments, that God will not do wickedly, that the Almighty will not pervert Judgment. And this he doth in the next or 13. verſe, and the two that follow.

Verſ. 13. **Who hath given him a charge over the earth? or who hath diſpoſed the whole world?**

Theſe words, (as was intimated before) are an argument proving that God neither hath nor can do wrong; That (as to the caſe in hand) he had not done *Job* wrong, yea, that, (as to all caſes) he can wrong no man. This argument is grounded upon the ſoveraignty, ſupremacy, or abſolute authority of God over all men. The ſum and force of it may be gathered up into this form.

He cannot do injuſtice to any, who of right hath an abſolute power ariſing from and reſiding in himſelf to do what he will with or towards all men.

But God hath ſuch a power, Therefore he cannot do any injuſtice. That, God hath ſuch an abſolute power ariſing from and reſiding in himſelf *Elihu* proves by a kind of Challenge.

Who hath given him a Charge over the earth?] Produce the man, let him ſhew his face, if he dareth. It is an expreſſion of the ſame importance with that of the Apoſtle (*Rom.* 8. 33.) *Who ſhall lay any thing to the Charge of Gods Elect?* let us ſee the man, let us ſee the devil, that ſhall ſo lay any thing to the Charge of God's Elect, as to prevail in his Charge; 'tis alſo like that other triumphant query, in the ſame Chapter (*verſ.* 31.) *If God be with us, who can be againſt us?* That is, who can be ſo againſt us as to hurt us, or carry the day againſt us? Thus here; *Who hath given him a Charge over the world?* let us ſee who; As if he had ſaid, *Are there any above God, from whom he deriveth his power? Or have any committed the Government of the earth to him as his truſt and charge, for the mannagement whereof he is to be accountable unto them? Surely no. And if no, then either God is juſt, or all the world muſt be in confuſion or under oppreſſion without any redreſs or remedy.* Mr. *Broughton* renders, *Who before him looked to the earth?* We ſay, *Who hath given him a Charge over the earth?* The ordinary ſignification of the word, *is to viſit*, and that

פקד על *ſequente ſumitur pro Jubere juxta morem Syriacū hinc* פקידים *præfecti.* Merc.

Firſt, In a way of favour, to ſee what others want (ſo we viſit the poor) or how they do, ſo we uſually viſit the ſick, and ſometimes thoſe that are well in health.

Secondly, It ſignifieth to viſit in a way of judgment, or to puniſh thoſe that have done amiſs. Thus the Lord threatens to viſit (that is, to puniſh) the iniquity of the fathers upon the children (*Exod.* 20. 5.)

Thirdly, The word ſignifieth to command, to iſſue out orders, to give a charge. This ſignification of the word is very frequent both in Scripture, and in daily uſe. Viſiters (we know) have power of Government; yea they have power over Governours to order and give them a charge, that they do, or to examine whether they have done the duty of their place. In this latter ſenſe, we render it here, *Who hath given him a Charge over the earth?* And ſo we read it (2 *Chron.* 36. 23.) *Thus ſaith* Cyrus *King of* Perſia, *all the kingdoms of the earth hath the Lord God of heaven given me. And he hath charged me to build him a houſe in* Jeruſalem, *which is in* Judah; *who is there among you of all his people, The Lord his God be with him, and let him go up.* God hath charged me (ſaith *Cyrus*) or he hath made that my buſineſs, a buſineſs incumbent upon me, to build him a houſe in *Jeruſalem*, that is, to further the work, to give the *Jews* leave to build the Temple of *Jeruſalem*; God hath charged me with this great truſt, and I am willing to anſwer it. The ſame thing is recorded, almoſt in the ſame words (*Ezra.* 1. 2.) *Thus ſaith* Cyrus *King of* Perſia, *the Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he hath charged me to build him a houſe at* Jeruſalem, *which is in* Judah. God giveth Princes their Charge, ſupream ſoveraign Princes, yea he giveth inferiour Princes and Magiſtrates, their Charge; but (ſaith *Elihu*) *Who hath given him a Charge?* Certainly, no man. There is yet a twofold reading of this former part of the verſe, both conſiderable.

Firſt, Thus; *Who for him hath viſited the earth?* As if it had been ſaid, Hath God ſet any to viſit, or to look to the earth for him, as if himſelf ſtood by and did nothing; God uſeth the power of man, he ſets up Magiſtrates to work for him; but he never puts the work out of his own hand, nor doth he need any hand to help him in that work, though he uſeth many: and though he ſaith, *By me* (yea for me) *Kings reign*, yet we may ſay with *Elihu* (in the notion now expreſt) *Who for him hath viſited the earth?* that's a good reading.

Secondly, *Who over him doth viſit the earth?* Is God any *mans Vicegerent?* is he *a Lord Deputy, or a Viceroy?* No, there is no man viſits the earth over him, for, (as we render clearly) *Who hath given him a Charge over the earth?* As if he had ſaid, *If God be an unjuſt Judg, is there any ſuperiour Judg to whom we may appeal for remedy or redreſs of our injuries?* Who over him viſiteth, or, *who hath given him a charge over*

The earth.] That is, over the inhabitants of the earth, or over the affairs of the earth. The Earth, by a Synecdoche of the continent for the matter contained, is here put for all perſons and tranſactions over the face of the whole earth. Who hath laid that great Charge, the diſpoſal of all things and people in the earth upon God? ſurely no man on earth, no Angel in heaven, nor all of them put together. How ſhould God derive a governing power from them, who derive their very power of being from him? He governs in his own right, not by commiſſion or deputation. We have the ſame point affirmed at the 36. Chapter of this Book, (*verſ.* 23.) *Who hath enjoyned him his way?* God knoweth and taketh his own way, no man ſheweth, much leſs commandeth him his way; *Who hath given him a Charge over the earth?*

Or who hath diſpoſed the whole world?] This Queſtion, as the former, contains a Negation; no Creature, none beſides God hath diſpoſed of the whole world, or of all of the world. Mr. *Broughron* renders, *Who hath ſetled all the dwelt land?* The word which we tranſlate *diſpoſed*, ſignifies to place with a kind of art, exactly, orderly, carefully; *Who hath thus diſpoſed the whole world?* There is a double diſpoſition of the world.

שם *poſuit arte, cura, & ordine, quod eſt diſpoſuit.*

Firſt, In Creation; who hath diſpoſed, joynted, and put the whole world in frame? who hath marſhal'd the ſeveral parts of the world as they now ſtand like the Hoſt of God? The world as created is expreſſed in the Greek by *beauty and order*; before God perfected the creation, all was a confuſed heap without *form and void:* But that rude indigeſted matter was drawn forth in the ſeveral works of that ſix-days Creation, into a moſt beautiful form and order. Thus God once diſpoſed all the world by Creation.

Secondly, God daily diſpoſeth the world by providence; And that's the diſpoſure which this Text eſpecially ſpeaks of; *Who hath diſpoſed* (in a providential way) *the whole world?* The word rendred *world* properly ſignifies, *the habitable world*; we find it oppoſed to the wilderneſs or deſert (*Iſa.* 14. 17.) where few or none inhabit. The word is very ſignificantly uſed here for the world, becauſe the habitable part of the world, or where men inhabit, are the ſtages on which the providences of God appear, and act moſt eminently and convincingly; *Who hath diſpoſed of the habitable world?* which the Greeks call, *The houſe of abiding:* Mr. *Broughton, The dwelt land*, that is, the land wherein men dwell.

תבל *orbis habitabilis, οἰκουμένην vocant.* i. e. *homines degentes in orbe habitabili.* Piſc.

Again, As the earth, before, is put for the inhabitants and occurrences of the earth; ſo whatſoever paſſeth, or is brought to paſs in the world, is here called the world. *Who hath diſpoſed the whole world?* He that made the whole world, diſpoſeth of the whole world, providence followeth Creation.

But ſome may ſay, Is this a good Argument to prove that God is juſt, becauſe he hath the ſupream power over all the world? Will it follow, that he adminiſtreth all things rightly, becauſe he hath a right to adminiſter all things? There ſeems but little of Argument in this, (may ſome ſay) many have a great deal of power who abuſe it, and they that have moſt power, uſually abuſe it moſt, and make it but a ſervant to their luſts and paſſions; therefore how is it a proof, that the Lord is righteous and will do no iniquity, becauſe he hath the power of all things in his hand, or is Lord over all?

I anſwer, This is a ſtrong argument, and (as I remember a good Author calls it) *a peremptory argument*, which can have no denial. The Lord is righteous, becauſe he is Lord over all; he is not King of ſome corner of the World, he is not King of the whole World by election or vote of the World, he is not choſen at all, much leſs (as many have been) by evil means and wicked combinations; God is the ſupream governour of all the world by natural right not choice, yet not (as ſome Princes are) by natural right of ſucceſſion inheriting after a mortal father; but by the natural right of creation, himſelf being the father of that world over which he is a governour. The Original of God's power is ſtated in himſelf; The eternal being of God, and his ſupream authority are inſeparable.

Yea, God is not only thus ſupream in adminiſtring Juſtice; but he is the ſum or fulneſs of Law and Juſtice, and therefore cannot pervert it. He whoſe power and goodneſs gave the world its being, how ſhould he act any thing which is not good in the exerciſe of his power over the World! Injuſtice is the breach of a Law, but how can God break a Law who is the ſource and fountain of all righteous Laws? who then ſhall dare to ſuſpect God of injuſtice, or require a reaſon why he doth this or that in the world, which himſelf hath made? yea, who hath not reaſon to admire and proclaim infinite goodneſs mixt with abſolute power, as in his making ſo in his ruling the world? For whoſe ſake or for fear of whom ſhould he pervert Juſtice, who hath all men alike under his power?

Earthly Judges may erre in judgment, but the Judg of all the earth cannot. God cannot do injuſtice through ignorance or miſtake; for he is omniſcient and knoweth all things; nor can he have a will to do unjuſtly, ſeeing his will is altogether juſt, and the rule or meaſure of all things that are juſt. As therefore he is not an idle Idol-god but moſt active in governing the World; ſo he is infinitely above the leaſt failure in the government of it. The ſun ſhall ſooner be turned into a cloud, and the morning light darken the earth, than any unrighteouſneſs proceed from God; yea, *when clouds and darkneſs are round about him* (that is, when we by reaſon either of the obſcureneſs or afflictiveneſs of his diſpenſations can give no account of them, yet even then) *righteouſneſs and judgment are the habitation of his Throne*; that is, his governing power abides unmoveably, or conſtantly (as in a habitation) within that bleſſed line and glorious ſphere of righteouſneſs. So then, the reaſoning of *Elihu* from the univerſality and independency of the governing power of God, to the righteouſneſs and equity of his government is not only probable, but demonſtrative and unanſwerable. He is alike mighty as the ſole creator, and juſt as the ſupream moderator of the World. If any man will preſume to charge God with perverting judgment in governing the earth, that man ſaith in effect that he hath given God a charge over the earth; And if any man be ſo impiouſly and impudently preſumptuous as to ſay that, let him come forth and anſwer this as peremptorily as truly denying queſtion of *Elihu*; *Who hath given him a charge over the earth?*

Ipſe quam potens eſt conditor tam pius eſt moderator. Hieron.

Hence Obſerve, *The power of God is a primitive or underived power.*

His power is of himſelf; yea, his power is himſelf; God doth not rule by Commiſſion or Deputation, all ruling power is fundamentally in him, as alſo the rule of that power, both which in God are one. Jeſus Chriſt as Mediator rules by Commiſſion; *All things* (ſaith he, *Math.* 11. 27.) *are delivered to me of my Father.* And again, the Baptiſt gave this teſtimony of him (*John* 3. 35.) *The father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand.* Jeſus Chriſt as Mediator receives his Charge from the Father, and he hath received a Charge over the whole earth, as Mediator. But conſider him as God, ſo the government of the world is fundamentally and eſſentially in him alſo. It is the higheſt honour of an earthly Prince, *when* (as it is ſaid of the *Chaldeans, Hab.* 1. 7.) *their Judgment and their dignity proceedeth of themſelves*; that is, when they rule in their own right, not in the right or by the deſignment of any other. How high then is the honour of God, who ruleth not only over all the people, but over all the Princes of the earth, his Judgment and dignity proceeding purely from himſelf!

Secondly, As the power of God is underived or proceeds only from himſelf; ſo the power of God is abſolute and unlimited. His is in the ſtricteſt ſenſe imaginable *ſupream power.* Heatheniſh *Nebuchadnezzar* confeſſed this truth (*Dan.* 4. 35.) *Before him* (that is, before God) *all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing, and he doth according to his will in the Armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can ſtay his hand, and ſay to him what doſt thou?* There's abſolute power, none can ſay, that is, none may preſume to ſay to him, *What doeſt thou?* no man ought to queſtion, much leſs to quarrel at the determinations of God, whether concerning perſons or nations; 'tis his right or prerogative to do what he will; and how much ſoever he acts by prerogative, he will do only that which is right; we may conſider the abſolute ſupremacy of God in a fivefold exerciſe of power.

Firſt, In commanding; He commandeth what he pleaſeth to be done; nor may his commands be diſputed; they muſt be obeyed, becauſe his.

Secondly, In prohibiting; He forbiddeth whatſoever diſpleaſeth him to be done. And how pleaſing, how right ſoever any thing is in our eyes, yet if he forbiddeth it, we muſt for ever forbear it. We all know by our own ſmart how dangerous it is to eat of a forbidden Tree.

Thirdly, In ſuffering, I mean it not of any ſuffering evil in himſelf (God is infinitely above that) but of his ſuffering others to do evil, or of his ſuffering any evil to be done. God may and doth permit, that which is naught, wicked, and unrighteous to be done in the world; and yet himſelf remains altogether holy, righteous, juſt, and good. This is a great part of the tranſcendency of his power.

Fourthly, In rewarding; God hath abſolute power, to reward; Firſt, whom he will; Secondly, for what he will, Thirdly, in what kind he will; Fourthly, in what degree or meaſure he will; Fifthly, for how long he will, he can give (which none of the Princes of the earth can) everlaſting rewards.

Fifthly, In puniſhing; God hath abſolute power to puniſh, and the abſoluteneſs of his power in puniſhing, may be exemplified in thoſe five particulars, wherein his power of rewarding (in the former Paragraph) was. In all theſe things we ſee the unlimitedneſs of the power of God, *Who hath given him a Charge over the earth? or who hath diſpoſed the whole world?* Himſelf alone doth it, and he doth it of himſelf. And for as much as there is ſuch a ſupremacy, ſuch an abſoluteneſs of power in God, take theſe three inferences from it.

Firſt, How freely ſhould we yield our ſelves to the commands of God, not queſtioning this as unequal, nor ſaying that is hard? we are more apt to find fault with the work which God requires us to do, than to remember that it is a great fault not to do it. The heart of man naturally riſeth againſt the will of God; *It is not ſubject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be* (Rom. 8, 7.) the wiſdom of the fleſh thinks there is ſome unrighteouſneſs, at leaſt ſome unreaſonableneſs or rigour in the commands of God, and therefore ſuch wiſe men hope they have reaſon on their ſide if they omit them or act againſt them. Any man will (at leaſt he cannot but confeſs he ought, to) be ſubject unto that which is equal and right. Man hath no colour to diſobey, till he hath put ſome blot upon the command. And ſeeing the commands of him who hath the charge over all the earth in himſelf, and from himſelf, cannot poſſibly have any blot or defect in them, let us take heed we be not found diſobeying.

Secondly, Seeing God hath the Charge of all the earth, we ſhould as readily ſubmit to his diſpenſations, works and dealings, as to his commands. The Jews of old complained (*Ezek.* 18. 29.) *The way of the Lord is not equal*; They did even tell him to his face, his ways were not equal, and therefore they would not ſubmit. The Church in captivity ſpake well (*Lam.* 3. 28.) *Out of the mouth of the moſt high proceedeth not evil and good*; that is, whatſoever the Lord hath pronounced to do or hath done concerning us, is morally good and not evil, though it be penally evil and not good. *Eli* ſpake well alſo to this point (1 *Sam.* 3. 18.) *It is the Lord, let him do what ſeems good in his own eyes*; yet the thing which God was about to do, was ſuch (*verſ.* 11.) as at which, *both the ears of every one that heard it ſhould tingle.* To have the heart quiet while the ears tingle, is pure ſubmiſſion. And any unquietneſs or murmurings at the dealings of God, whether reſpecting our perſons or our families, Churches, or Nations, are in ſome degree rebellions againſt the ſoveraign power of God.

Thirdly, If the Lord be ſupream, and have the charge over all the earth, then let us ſet him up as ſupream in all things, let his ends be above our ends; let us deſign God in all we do; He who is over all, ought to be honoured by all. All our actions as ſo many lines ought to center in his honour, who is the Center of power. *Of him and through him and to him are all things*, ſaith the Apoſtle (*Rom.* 11. 36.) Becauſe all things are *of him*, creating them, and *through him*, governing them, therefore all things ſhould be *to him*, that is, all perſons ſhould in all things they do, yea in all things that are done, aim at and deſign his glory, as the Apoſtle expreſly concludeth the verſe before cited; *To whom be glory for ever.*

Thirdly, Whereas it is ſaid, *Who hath given him a Charge over the earth? or who hath diſpoſed* (not a part, or parcel, or canton, or corner of, but) *the whole world?*

Obſerve, *The power of God is an univerſal power.*

It is extended throughout the world, to every patch and inch of it. What *David* ſaith of the Sun (*Pſal.* 19.6.) *His going forth is from the end of heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it, and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.* The ſame may we ſay of the circuit of God's power, there is nothing hid from, nor ſet beyond it. There is a fourfold univerſality of the power of God.

Firſt, In regard of perſons (*Pſal.* 97. 9.) *Thou Lord art high above all the earth, thou art exalted far above all Gods*; that is, above the Kings and Powers of the earth; whom the Scripture calleth Gods. If God hath a power over the Kings of the earth, then ſurely over the people of the earth; yea God is not only exalted and far exalted above this or that God or King, but above them all; This is a ſupremacy with utmoſt univerſality.

Secondly, His power is univerſal, as to places and nations; ſome places claim priviledg, and are exempt from the juriſdiction of Princes, if obnoxious perſons get thither, they are free from the courſe of the Law. There were *Cities of refuge* among the *Jews*, and *Sanctuaries* in the days of old among us, where evil-doers could not be toucht. But the power of the Lord reacheth all places, even to the horns of the Altar (*Pſal.* 83. 18.) *Thou whoſe name alone is Jehovah, art moſt high over all the earth.*

Thirdly, His power is univerſal, as in all places, ſo over all things; it extends to the ſtars of heaven, and to the fowls of the air, to the beaſts of the earth, and to the fiſhes of the Sea; to whatſoever moves in this world; they are all at the command of God, if he doth but ſpeak, they run and execute his will.

Fourthly, His power is univerſal, in reference to time; 'tis never out, nor ſhall ever end; he is *King immortal, and King eternal*, his Kingdom is an everlaſting Kingdom. The power of God is an univerſal power in all theſe conſiderations: His power of governing is of the ſame extent, as his power of creating was; that which he created at once, he governs always. He did not ſet up the fabrick of this world, and then leave it to it ſelf, but he preſerveth and ordereth all things in it. The well-being, the orderly being of the creature, is as much of God as the being of it.

Some ſay, God made the world at firſt, and ſet all the wheels of it a going, but now things go on by chance, by fortune, or by accident, at leaſt particular events are not under his government, but come to paſs as the wiſdom or folly of men is moſt active in the production of them.

I anſwer, to ſet up blind fortune, and chance, yea or the wit and policy of man as governing the world, is to ſet up other Gods in the world; if chance and fortune, or the wit of man, govern any part of the world, then they had a part in making the world. If you divide one power, you divide the other. For thoſe inviſible things of God, his eternal power and God-head, are as much, or as evidently ſeen, in the things which are done, as in the things which are made. 'Tis true indeed God uſeth many hands in governing, ordering, and diſpoſing the things of this world. The Princes of this world, are eminently his hand, but God doth not uſe any power in governing this world, to diminiſh his own, nor doth he withdraw his own power, what power ſoever he uſeth; 'tis his power that acts effectually, and gives ſucceſs in the acting of all power. It was ſaid to that King who prided himſelf in what he had done in the world; *Shall the Axe boaſt it ſelf againſt him that heweth therewith, or ſhall the ſaw magnifie it ſelf againſt him that ſhaketh it?* (Iſa. 10. 15.) As if the Lord had ſaid to that proud Aſſyrian Prince, *Doſt thou look upon thy ſelf, as if thou didſt all, and governedſt all? thou art no more in the governing the world* (though the chief earthly Governour of all the world) *then an Axe is in the hand of him that uſeth it; And though the artificer cannot do his work without an Axe, though he cannot divide his Timber without a ſaw, yet I the Lord am able to do my work without thee.* At beſt and moſt, men are but inſtruments in the hand of God; and he ſerves his own turn by men, not to ſignifie that he cannot work without them, nor that his work is done either with more eaſe to himſelf, or more ſucceſs as to it ſelf by their help (he is not ſo weak as to need help, nor is at all ſtrengthned by the help he uſeth) but only to ſhew that as he hath the command of, ſo he hath a uſe for every creature (*Iſa.* 7.18.) *The Lord ſhall hiſs for the fly*; if God do but hiſs to the fly, or any creature on earth, yea to the devils in hell, they are at his call, and do his will, though they intend it not. Further; though God can do all himſelf, yet he uſeth various inſtruments, that he may indear man to man, or that no man may ſay, he hath no need of another. Thus the Apoſtle argues (1 *Cor.* 12. 21.) *The eye cannot ſay unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you.* Surely then the feet cannot ſay to the head, we have no need of thee, nor the hand to the eye, we have no need of thee. That, Creatures may ſhew their love to one another, and ſee their need of one another, God is pleaſed to give them a charge to work and diſpoſe of the things in the world, though the charge and diſpoſure of the whole world be in himſelf.

Non eget alienis adjutoriis ad regendum mundum qui non eguit ad faciendum. Greg. Lib. 24. Moral. cap. 26.

Now if the Lord be thus inveſted with all power originally and eſſentially, then I would mind thoſe who are in power of two things, and thoſe that are under power of one.

Firſt, *Let them that have power remember to uſe it for God.* They that have but family-power ſhould uſe it for God; how much more they that have power over nations? (*Pſal.* 2. 10, 11.) *Be wiſ[illegible]w therefore, O ye Kings, be inſtructed, ye Judges of the earth, ſerve the Lord with fear, and rejoyce with trembling.* When he ſaith, *ſerve the Lord with fear*, I ſuppoſe he doth not intend it in that notion of *ſerving the Lord*, as ſerving him denotes our holineſs and obedience in general; but when he ſaith, *ſerve the Lord with fear*, his meaning is, ſerve him ſo in the exerciſe of your power, and in your places, as you have power in your hand, as you have received a Charge or Commiſſion from God over this or that part of the earth, ſo ſerve him with fear, in the uſe of that power. As man ought in all the ſervice of God to be in a holy fear, ſo eſpecially when he ſerveth God in the adminiſtration of power, becauſe all power is from God. And therefore (which is the next thing I would hence mind thoſe of that are in power)

Secondly, Remember, The day of account muſt needs be a ſad day to thoſe who abuſe their power to the oppreſſion of man; and chiefly to thoſe who turn their power againſt God; that is, againſt the ways and truths of God, againſt the ſervants and people of God, againſt the ends and deſigns of God. God will call ſuch as have had any charge over the earth to an account, and let them who either of theſe ways abuſe their power, conſider whether ſuch accounts will paſs as they muſt give. Surely when the day of the Lord ſhall be upon ſuch *Oaks and Cedars*, upon *ſuch mountains and hills*, as the Prophet (*Iſa.* 2. 13, 14.) calleth the Powers and Princes of this world, they will even be forced (as he deſcribes them at the 19. verſe) *to go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his Majeſty, when he ariſeth to ſhake terribly the earth.* It is bad to be abuſed by the power of man, but 'tis worſt for that man who abuſeth his power. *Thy terribleneſs hath deceived thee* (ſaith the Prophet, *Jer.* 49. 16.) *and the pride of thine heart, O thou that dwelleſt in the clefts of the rock, that holdeſt the height of the hill*; that is, thou that art in high power, and alſo holdeſt thy height, thou art deceived, and thy terribleneſs hath deceived thee; becauſe thou haſt been able to terrifie many with thy power, therefore thou haſt preſumed that none ſhall ever terrifie or trouble thee; This vain confidence hath deceived thee, for (as it followeth in the latter part of that verſe) *though thou ſhouldeſt make thy neſt as high as the Eagle, I will bring thee down from thence, ſaith the Lord*; that is, I will bring thee to a reckoning for terrifying thoſe with thy power whom thou ſhouldeſt have protected by it.

Laſtly, This is matter of great Comfort to all good men who are under power; though they are wronged and oppreſſed by the power of man, this may ſupport them, God hath power over all the earth, he hath the charge, and he will ſee them righted one time or other. (*Eccleſ.* 3. 16, 17.) *Moreover, I ſaw under the Sun the place of Judgment, that wickedneſs was there, and the place of righteouſneſs, that iniquity was there; I ſaid in mine heart, God ſhall judg the righteous and the wicked, for there is a time for every purpoſe and for every work.* And if for every purpoſe and work, then ſurely for this, the reviewing of the unrighteous judgments of the Princes and Powers of the earth, who hold the places of Judgment and righteouſneſs; to puniſh the perverting of which, the Lord who is Prince of the Kings of the earth often *poureth contempt upon Princes* (Pſal. 107. 40, 41.) *and cauſeth them to wander in the wilderneſs where there is no way*; *yet ſetteth he the poor on high from affliction, and maketh him families like a flock.* For as the Holy Ghoſt ſaith (*Pſal.* 138. 6, 7.) *Though the Lord be high, yet hath he regard to the lowly, but the proud he knoweth afar of*; hereupon his faith riſeth up to a full aſſurance in the next verſe; *Though I walk in the midſt of trouble, thou wilt revive me: thou ſhalt ſtretch forth thine hand againſt the wrath of mine enemies, and thy right hand ſhall ſave me.*

Thus much for the argument here uſed, the Lord is righteous, for he hath all power in his hand; and he hath no reaſon upon any account in the world to pervert power; yea for him to do any thing that is not righteous, were to act againſt himſelf, even againſt his own being and bleſſedneſs, who is God bleſſed for evermore.

VERS. 14, 15.

If he ſet his heart upon man: [illegible] he gather unto himſelf his ſpirit and his breath.

All fleſh ſhall periſh together, and man ſhall turn to his duſt.

IN theſe two verſes *Elihu* perfects the proof of what he lately aſſerted, that *God is juſt, and that there is no unrighteouſneſs in him* (verſ. 12.) *yea ſurely God will not do wickedly, neither will the Almighty pervert Judgment*, For, as *Moſes* in his dying ſong deſcribes him; *He is the rock, his work is perfect; for all his ways are judgment*; *a God of truth, and without iniquity, juſt and right is he.* The firſt argument for the confirmation of this was opened at the 13. verſe. And it was grounded upon the abſoluteneſs and univerſality of his dominion: Here we have a ſecond argument from the ſweet temperament of his power and goodneſs. God hath power enough in his hand at once to deſtroy all fleſh, and to command every man back into the duſt. But he doth not thus put out his power. We live and live comfortably; we enjoy not only our lives, but many mercies of this life; and therefore ſurely God doth not deal rigorouſly, much leſs unrighteouſly with man. *He that doth all men good beyond their deſerts, will not puniſh any man beyond his demerits.* He that doth not exerciſe his power always where he might, will not exerciſe it all where he ought not. That's the ſum and ſcope of *Elihu* in the context under hand.

Verſ. 14. **If he ſet his heart upon man.**

To *ſet the heart* upon any thing or perſon, is a Scripture expreſſion, often uſed, noting more than barely to think upon or mind both or either. It ſignifieth to have deep and ſerious thoughts, to think with conſideration and attention, yea with ſome height and heat of affection. And all this whether that thing which the heart and affections are ſet upon, pleaſe or diſpleaſe, be comfortable or grievous; for both love and hatred, hope and fear, are thoughtful of, and ſollicitous about their ſeveral objects. Hence that caution (*Pſal.* 62. 10.) *If riches increaſe, ſet not your heart upon them*; we naturally love riches, and therefore as naturally ſpend many thoughts, both how to get and how to keep them. If a man have riches, or an increaſe of riches, it is not unlawful for him to think of them, (yet we ſhould be as ſparing of our thoughts that way as can be, our thoughts and the bent of our ſouls ſhould always be upon God) but that which the Pſalmiſt forbids is the ſetling of our hearts; As if he had ſaid, *Let not your thoughts ſtay or dwell there.* Riches are themſelves tranſient things, therefore they ſhould have but our tranſient thoughts. *Set not your hearts upon them*, for they may quickly be unſetled. *Samuel* beſpake *Saul* in the ſame language about a worldly concernment, when he went out to ſeek his father's Aſſes (1 *Sam.* 9. 20.) *Set not thy mind on them.* 'Tis like *Saul* was overburdened with this thought, What's become of, or what ſhall I do for my father's Aſſes? Be not ſolicitous about them, ſaith *Samuel*, greater things are towards thee. *Abigail* uſeth the ſame form of ſpeaking to *David* concerning *Nabal* (1 Sam. 25. 23.) *Let not my Lord regard this man of Belial*, lay not to heart what *Nabal* hath ſaid or done. Thus *Jonadab* took off *David*'s fear, that in one day he had been deprived of all his Sons (2 *Sam.* 13. 33.) *Now therefore let not my Lord the King take the thing to heart, to think that all the Kings ſons are dead, for Amnon only is dead.* We are as apt to ſet our heart upon our loſſes, as upon our enjoyments. And to ſhew how little *Pharaoh* regarded the heavy hand of God upon him, it is ſaid (after *Moſes* had turned all the waters that were in the river to blood, *Exod.* 7. 23.) *And Pharaoh turned and went into his houſe, neither did ſet his heart to this alſo*; That is, he ſlighted what God had done. Let God ſpeak, and ſtrike once and again, yea, a third time, yet hard-hearted men do not lay it to heart, nor ſet their heart upon it. Thus here in the Affirmative it is ſaid of God, *If he ſet his heart upon man*; that is, if he do but intend and mind this matter, he can quickly bring it about, even the periſhing of all fleſh.

Apponere cor eſt velle, decernere, conſtituere. q.d. *Si ei ſuus animus ſuggerit.* Vatabl.

If he ſet his heart upon man.] The Text is rendred alſo, *If he ſet his heart againſt man*: The Hebrew particle ſignifieth not only upon, but againſt (*Amos* 7. 16.) *Propheſie not againſt Iſrael*, &c. And the general ſenſe of that reading may be given two ways.

אל *Valet contra. Si poneret contra eum cor ſuum.* i. e. *ſi ſibi proponeret hoſtiliter eum aggredi.* Piſc.

Firſt, *If he ſet his heart againſt man*, to inquire ſtrictly into his life and ways, if he ſhould critically mark all his errors, or faults, and ſo reſolve to proceed againſt him, he might ſoon make an end of him, as it followeth in the next verſe. As the ſtrongeſt, ſo the beſt and holieſt of men are not able to ſtand before him. Thus the words are an anſwer given by *Elihu* to that frequent requeſt of *Job*, that God would let him come near to judgment, and hear his cauſe argued and debated before him, even at his Bar; but ſaith *Elihu* (according to this ſenſe) If God ſet his heart againſt man, if he doth but ſtrictly enquire into his condition, courſe, and converſation, it would be ſad with him; *All men muſt periſh.* Thoſe two places in the Pſalms anſwer this interpretation fully, (*Pſal.* 130. 3.) *If thou Lord ſhouldſt mark iniquities, O Lord, who ſhould ſtand?* That is, No man ſhall; We cannot ſtand in our righteouſneſs before God, how then ſhall we ſtand in our iniquities! And therefore the ſecond Text deprecates the Lord's ſevere enquiry into our pureſt and moſt perfect ſervices, (*Pſal.* 143. 2.) *Enter not into judgment with thy ſervant, for in thy ſight ſhall no man living be juſtified.*

Secondly, *If he ſet his heart againſt man*, that is, If he have a general purpoſe to deſtroy and ruine him by his abſolute Soveraignty, he can eaſily do it; what God hath a mind to do, or only willeth it to be done, he hath power enough to do it: He can make any man miſerable, and not only ſtrip him of the comforts of this life, but of his life too: And as he hath power enough, if he would uſe it, ſo he hath ſoveraign unqueſtionable authority enough to bear him out in the uſe of his power. Now, ſeeing God who is cloathed with this abſolute power, yet doth not exerciſe ſuch a power, but having given man a being, continues to very many men a comfortable being in this world, & doth not willingly grieve or afflict any of the children of men, nor execute any vengeance upon them without their deſert; ſurely then God is righteous, he will not do wickedly. Thus we have the importance of the Tranſlation, *If he ſet his heart againſt man*: We ſay, which alſo beareth fairly enough the ſame ſenſe) *If he ſet his heart upon man.*

If he gathereth unto himſelf his ſpirit and his breath.

Some render it thus; *If he ſet his heart upon (or againſt) man, he will gather unto him his ſpirit and his breath*: and then, as it followeth, *All fleſh ſhall periſh together.*

Si direxerit ad eum cor ſuum, ſpiritum illius & flatum ad ſe trabet, Vulg.

We repeat the ſuppoſition according to the Hebrew Text; *If he ſet his heart upon man*; *If he gather to himſelf his ſpirit and his breath, then*, &c. Take either reading, the general ſenſe is the ſame, and in brief 'tis this: *If God have a mind to it, he can quickly thruſt all men out of the world.* He that gave man his ſpirit and his breath, can at pleaſure recal both, and then all fleſh periſheth and turneth again unto (what it once was) duſt. The Hebrew word which we render to *gather*, ſignifieth to add one thing or perſon to another: When *Rachel had conceived and bare a ſon*, Gen. 30. 22, 23.) *ſhe called* (from this word) *his name Joſeph, and ſaid, the Lord ſhall add to me another ſon.* Thus here, If God *add*, or *gather* to himſelf *his ſpirit and his breath*, that is, the ſpirit and breath of man, *&c.* We may diſtinguiſh

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Spiritus animam, & flatus vitam quæ ab anima provenit & conſervatur ſignificat; ego opinor idem eſſe hoc loco. Sanct.

diſtinguiſh between theſe two, ſpirit and breath (Some inſiſt much and curiouſly upon this diſtinction) The ſpirit denoting the ſoul or the internal rational power of man, and the breath that effect of life which followeth or floweth from the union of ſoul and body. The life of man is often expreſſed by *breath*; *Ceaſe ye from man, whoſe breath* (or life) *is in his noſtrils*; (Iſa. 2. 22.) If once man's breath goeth out, his life cannot ſtay behind; the ſpirit of a man is in this ſenſe diſtinct from his breath; for when the breath is vaniſhed, and is no more, the ſoul or ſpirit liveth. The Apoſtle in his prayer for the Theſſalonians (1 *Theſſ.* 5.23.) puts *ſoul and ſpirit* together: *The very God of peace ſanctifie you wholly, and I pray God, your whole ſpirit, and ſoul, and body, be preſerved harmleſs unto the coming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* There ('tis moſt probable) by the ſoul, he intends the inferiour powers in man, or his affections, and by the ſpirit, his higher powers of reaſon and underſtanding: yet the ſpirit is often put for that whole part of man which is contradiſtinct to his body. *Into thy hands I commend my ſpirit:* that is, my ſoul, not forgetting my body: And I conceive, we may ſafely expound it here in that latitude, as comprehending the whole inner man. Yet it is all one, as to the ſenſe of this place, whether we take ſpirit and breath diſtinctly or for the ſame; the ſpirit being ſo called from ſpiration or breathing; *If he gather unto him his ſpirit, and his breath.* The gathering of the ſpirit and breath of man unto God, is but a periphraſis or circumlocution of death, or of man's departure out of this life; when man was formed or created (*Gen.* 2.7.) it is ſaid, *God breathed into him the breath of life, and man became a living ſoul*: And when man dyeth, his breath or ſpirit may be ſaid to be gathered or returned back unto God; ſo then, the meaning of *Elihu* in this double ſuppoſition, (*If he ſet his heart upon man, if he gather to himſelf his ſpirit and his breath,*) is clearly this, if God were once reſolved, or ſhould but ſay the word, that man muſt preſently die, die he muſt, and that preſently.

Hence note, Firſt, *God can eaſily do whatſoever he hath a mind to do.*

If he do put his heart upon the doing of any thing, it is done; Men often ſet their hearts, yea and their hands unto that which they cannot do; if men could do that which they ſet their hearts to do, or have a mind to do, and thereupon ſet their hands to do, we ſhould have ſtrange work in the world. 'Tis a mercy to many men, that man is often fruſtrated in his thoughts and purpoſes, in his attempts and undertakings; and 'tis a glorious mercy to all that have an intereſt in God, that God never loſt a thought, nor can be hindred in any work he ſetteth his heart upon. He that can lett or ſtop all men in their works, can work, and none ſhall lett or ſtop him. What God will do, is not defeſible or undoable (if I may ſo expreſs it) by any power in heaven or earth. And as God can do what he will, and ask no man leave, ſo he can do what he will without trouble to himſelf; 'tis but the reſolve of his will, the turning of his hand, or the caſt of his eye (all which are ſoon diſpatcht) and 'tis done. Thus God breathed out his wiſhes for the welfare of Iſrael, (*Pſal.* 81. 13.) *O that my people had hearkned unto me,* &c. *I ſhould ſoon have ſubdued their enemies, and turned my hand againſt their adverſaries.* As if he had ſaid, *I could and would have eaſed them of all their enemies, even of all that roſe up againſt them eaſily, even with the turning of my hand*: What is more eaſily done, or more ſpeedily done, than the *turning of a hand?* Many things are hard to man, (and indeed very few things are eaſie to him, except it be to ſin, or to do evil, he can do evil eaſily) ſome things are are not only hard, but too hard, impoſſible for man; but there is nothing hard, much leſs too hard for God, he can eaſily do the hardeſt things; yea, the hardeſt things are as eaſie to him as the eaſieſt; for as (*Pſal.* 139.12.) *Darkneſs hideth not from the ſight of God, the darkneſs and the light are both alike to him*; ſo hardneſs hinders not the work of God, hardneſs and eaſineſs are both alike to him, if he ſet his heart upon it. From this general truth, take two inferences.

Firſt, How ſhould we fear before this God? How ſhould we tremble at the remembrance of, and walk humbly (in our higheſt aſſurance) with this God? We are much afraid to diſpleaſe thoſe men who can eaſily hurt us, and in whoſe hand it is to ruine us every hour: But O how little are we in this thought to fear the Lord, to take heed of diſpleaſing the Lord, who can with eaſe either help or hurt, either bring ſalvation or deſtruction, who in a moment can thruſt the ſoul out of the body, and caſt both into hell.

Secondly, We may hence make a ſtrong inference for the comfort of the people of God, when their ſtraits are moſt pinching, and their difficulties look like impoſſibilities, and are ſo indeed, while they look to man, when their enemies are ſtrongeſt, and the mountains which ſtand in the way of their expected comforts greateſt, if then God will be intreated to ſet his heart, and caſt his eye upon them, their ſtraits are preſently turned into inlargements, difficulties become eaſie, and mountains plains. If we can but ingage the Lord, (his own promiſe is the ſureſt ingagement, and indeed all that we can put upon him, or mind him of, if (I ſay) we can thus ingage the Lord to be with us, who can be (to our hurt, many will be to their own) againſt us?

Secondly, Note, *Our life is at the beck, diſpoſe and pleaſure of God.*

He can gather the ſpirit and the breath to himſelf whenſoever he pleaſeth: (*Pſal.* 104. 29.) *Thou hideſt thy face and they are troubled, and thou takeſt away their breath, they die, and return to their duſt.* If God hideth his face from us, 'tis death while we live; but if he take away our breath, we cannot live, but die. (*Pſal.* 90. 3.) *Thou turneſt man to deſtruction, and ſayeſt, Return ye children of men.* Here's man turning and returning upon the ſaying of God; man turneth to death, he returneth to duſt, and ſhall at laſt return from the duſt, and all this when God ſaith he muſt. Our life is a very frail thing, and it is in the hand of God to continue or take it away; to let us hold it, or gather it home to himſelf.

Thirdly, From the manner of ſpeaking, *If he gather to himſelf his ſpirit and his breath*;

Note, *When man dieth, he is gathered to God.*

When (as *Solomon* allegorizeth the death of man, *Eccl.* 12. 6,7.) *The ſilver cord is looſed, and the golden bowl broken,* &c. *Then ſhall the duſt* (that is, the body) *return to the earth as it was, and the ſpirit ſhall return to God who gave it*; that is, each part of man (when he departeth this world) ſhall go its proper way, and return to that which is moſt congenial to it; his body to the earth, from whence it is; his ſoul to God, of whom it is. God is a Spirit, the creating Spirit, and our created *ſpirits are gathered to God when they are ſeparated from the body*; yet remember there is a two-fold gathering or returning of the ſpirit to God.

Firſt, To abide and be bleſſed with him for ever; thus the ſpirits of believers or ſaints only are gathered to God when they depart out of this world.

Secondly, There is a gathering of the ſpirit to God, to be judged and diſpoſed of by him, to receive a ſentence of life or death from him. And thus the ſpirit of every man or woman that dieth, is gathered to God, be they good or bad, believers or unbelievers, (*Heb.* 9. 27.) *It is appointed for men once to die, but after this the judgment.* 'Tis the Statute Law of God, man muſt die, and the ſound of Judgment is at the heels of death. That Text ſaith, *but after this the Judgment.* The general day of judgment ſhall not be till the reſurrection of man from the dead; But there is a perſonal judgment, or a determining of every mans ſtate when he dieth; and for that end every mans ſpirit is gathered to God to receive his ſentence. The ſpirits of wicked men are gathered to him and condemned, the ſpirits of the righteous are gathered to him and acquitted: We are come, ſaith the Apoſtle (*Heb.* 12. 23.) *to God, the Judg of all, and to the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect.* *David* knew he muſt be gathered to God, but he earneſtly deprecated ſuch a gathering as moſt ſhall have, (*Pſal.* 26. 9.) *Gather not my ſoul with ſinners, nor my life with bloody men.* It is this word, when ſinners die, they are gathered; but *David* would not be gathered as they are gathered; They are gathered to God, but it is that they may be for ever ſeparated from him; they are gathered to a day of vengeance and wrath: Therefore *David* prayed, *Gather not my ſoul with ſinners.* Death is called a gathering in a threefold reference.

First, *A gathering to our people.* Thus it is ſaid of *Aaron*, (Num. 20. 24.) *Aaron ſhall be gathered unto his people, for he ſhall not enter into the land,* &c. Death ſeparates the people of God from their people, that is, from thoſe that are like them on earth, but it will be a means of bringing them into the ſociety of their people, or fellow-believers who are gone before them into heaven.

Secondly, Death is called *a gathering to our Fathers*, (*2 Chron.* 34. 28.) *Behold I will gather thee to thy Fathers, and thou ſhalt be gathered to thy grave in peace.* There's a gathering to a more ſpecial company, and that with other like Scriptures are an argument that we ſhall know our relations in heaven. For, *to be gathered to our Fathers*, ſpoken of in the firſt part of the verſe, is more than to be gathered to the grave, ſpoken of in the latter; and by our fathers, we are to underſtand more of our fathers than the grave hath in its keeping (which is but their bodies) even their ſouls, which are kept in heaven.

Thirdly, According to the phraſe of this Text, death is called a gathering to God; *If he gather unto himſelf his ſpirit and his breath.*

Whence note, Fourthly, *The ſpirit or ſoul of man hath its original from God.*

It is of him to whom it returneth; The ſoul or ſpirit of man is of God in a more ſpecial way than his body is; for though God giveth both, yet the Scripture (in the place before named) ſpeaks of the ſoul as the gift of God, but paſſeth by the body; *Eccleſ.* 12. 7.) *The duſt ſhall return to the earth, as it was; and the ſpirit ſhall return to God who gave it.* 'Tis God, not man, alone, who hath given us theſe bodies, but 'tis not man, but God alone who hath given us theſe ſpirits; therefore men are called *the fathers of our fleſh*, that is, of the body, in way of diſtinction, from God, *who is the father of ſpirits* (Heb. 12. 9.) *We have had fathers of our fleſh, which corrected us, and we gave them reverence, ſhall we not much rather be in ſubjection to the Father of ſpirits, and live*; that is, ſhall we not rather be ſubject to God than to man? Father of ſpirits is an Attribute or Title too high and honorable for any but God. One of the Ancients in his gracious breathing after God, brake out into this holy Paſſion; *My ſoul (O God) came from thee, and my heart is unquiet or reſtleſs until it return to thee again*; God is our center, and our reſt: He gathereth to himſelf mans ſpirit; and when he doth ſo, what then? what's the iſſue of it? *Elihu* tells us what in the next verſe,

Verſ. 15. **All fleſh ſhall periſh together, and man ſhall turn again to his duſt.**

As if he had ſaid, As ſoon as ever the ſpirit is gathered, the fleſh is conſumed, or, as we render, periſheth.

All fleſh, may be taken in the largeſt ſenſe, not only for all men that live, but for all living creatures: Thus largely *Moſes* extendeth it, (*Gen.* 6. 17.) *Behold, ſaith the Lord, I will bring a flood of water to deſtroy all fleſh*; that is, all the Beaſts of the earth, and Fowls of the air, together with Mankind, except a few of each in the Ark: ſo (*Pſal.* 136. 25.) *Who giveth food to all fleſh*, (that is, to man and beaſt) *for his mercy endureth for ever.* Yet ſome underſtand this firſt part more narrowly, for all fleſh except man; becauſe he addeth in the latter part of the verſe, *and man ſhall return again to his duſt:* But I conceive we are to take *all fleſh* here for all men, and only for men, it being uſual in Scripture to put the ſame thing twice, under different expreſſions. So then

All fleſh, that is, every man, be he who he will, *ſhall periſh.* Thus as *all fleſh* is reſtrained to man, ſo it extendeth over all men, yea over all things of man (*Iſa.* 40. 6.) *All fleſh is graſs, and all the goodlineſs thereof as the flower of the field*; that is, all men are periſhing, and all that man hath, meerly as a man, is as fading and periſhing as himſelf is.

Some take notice, that man was not called fleſh till after his fall; It's ſaid before, when God ſet him up in that primitive purity of his Creation, *Man became a living ſoul.* He was not ſpoken of at firſt as *fleſh*, but as a *living ſoul*, (*Gen.* 2. 7.) but as ſoon as man had ſinned, he was called *fleſh*, as if he had no ſoul. There may two other reaſons be be given why man is called fleſh, both following from the former. Firſt, Becauſe man ſince his fall doth moſt for his fleſh, and neglects his ſoul altogether, till being planted into the ſecond *Adam*, he is brought out of that wretched condition into which he fell by and with the firſt *Adam*. Secondly, He is called fleſh, becauſe, ſince the fall man is become weak and frail, both as to Naturals and Morals, (*Gen.* 6. 3.) *My ſpirit ſhall not always ſtrive with man, for that he alſo is fleſh:* As if the Lord had ſaid, *Now man declareth himſelf to be fleſh indeed, he acts like an impotent ſorry creature, he acts as if he ſcarce had a ſoul in him, as if he were no more then the beaſts of the earth: My ſpirit ſhall not always ſtrive with man, for that he alſo is fleſh*; and therefore (*verſ.* 30.) God told *Noah*, *The end of all fleſh is come before me*; that is, Man, and all his worldly glory, ſhall all be ſwept away with a deluge of water, as here,

All fleſh ſhall periſh together.] There is a two-fold periſhing; Firſt, By way of annihilation. Secondly, By way of tranſmutation. When *Elihu* ſaith, all fleſh ſhall periſh, we are not to underſtand it of annihilating all fleſh; (God can do that, he can turn man back into that nothing out of which he was made) but the periſhing in the Text importeth only a change, death is called a change, and a change to periſhing: as that good and great woman ſaid, *I will go in unto the King, and if I periſh, I periſh*, (Heſt. 4. 16.) that is, *If I die, I die.* The Prophet laments (*Iſa.* 57. 1.) *The righteous periſheth, and no man layeth it to heart. All fleſh ſhall periſh*

Together.] That is, without exception, one as well as another, rich and poor, high and low, ſtrong and weak, all are alike in the hand of God, (*Pſal.* 33. 13. 15.) *The Lord looketh from heaven, he beholdeth all the ſons of men,* &c. *he faſhioneth their hearts alike*, or *together*; that is, he faſhioneth the hearts of all men: God doth not ſo faſhion mens hearts alike, as to make them all alike, (faces do not differ ſo much as hearts) but as he faſhions one mans heart, ſo anothers; he faſhions the heart of a King, as well as the heart of a begger: *All fleſh ſhall periſh together*; *none either by power or policy can ſtand againſt a diſpleaſed God.* יחד

Again, We may take the word *together*, for *all at once*, God can make a total devaſtation in the earth, and ſweep all away as filth with the beſom of deſtruction; He can deſtroy all the world, or all men, who are the chief part of the world, together, or at one blow; ſo that (as the Prophet *Nahum* ſpeaks, *Chap.* 1. 9.) *Affliction ſhall not riſe up a ſecond time. All fleſh ſhall periſh together,*

And man ſhall return again unto duſt.

Or he ſhall go back unto duſt, that is, he ſhall dye: that's the ſentence which God gave upon man when he had ſinned (*Gen.* 3. 19.) *In the ſweat of thy face ſhalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground*; *for out of it waſt thou taken, for duſt thou art, and unto duſt ſhalt thou return.* Man was duſt before he ſinned; yet he had not returned to duſt, if he had not turned from God by ſin. Sin brought in death, and death brings us to the duſt. *All fleſh ſhall periſh together, and man ſhall return again unto duſt.*

Hence obſerve, *There is no one man hath more priviledg than another, againſt the ſentence of death.*

The greateſt Prince dyeth as ſoon as the meaneſt Peaſant. Death can as ſoon and as eaſily break into the ſtrongeſt fort or tower of ſtone, as into the meaneſt cottage of reeds. *High and low ſhall periſh together. Let none hope to ſecure themſelves by any thing of this world from going out of this world. Riches avail not in the day of death* (Prov. 11. 4.) High Titles and Honours avail not, ſtrength availeth not, beauty availeth not, none of theſe can be a protection, if God ſend out a writ or ſummons to the grave. Happy are they who get an aſſurance of life after death, for none have an aſſurance of life againſt death.

Again, In that death is here expreſſed under this notion of *periſhing*,

Obſerve, *Man is but in a periſhing condition while he is in this world.*

As all the things of the world are, ſo is man, while he abideth (if I may ſay he abideth) in this world. Chriſt earneſtly exhorts (*John* 6. 27.) *Labour not for the meat that periſheth.* Why ſhould we labour, that is, ſet our ſelves with our whole ſtrength and might to purſue periſhing things, ſeeing we our ſelves are periſhing? The more periſhing we are, the more reaſon we have to look after and labour for thoſe things which do not, which cannot periſh. When the Apoſtle ſaith (1 *Pet.* 1. 18.) *We are not redeemed with corruptible things from our vain converſation*, &c. He doth not inſtance in flowers or fruits of the earth, which quickly rot, but in gold and ſilver, which are the moſt durable and laſting metals; even theſe are corruptible; but we our ſelves, as to this bodily life, are corruptible, not only as gold and ſilver, but as the moſt fading flowers and ſummer fruits of the earth.

Further, From that other deſcription of death, as 'tis called *a returning again unto duſt*,

We learn, *Man is of the duſt*.

Unleſs man, as to his body, were of the duſt when he began to live, he could not be ſaid to return unto duſt when he dieth, or departs this life. Many men pore upon their pedigree, and their minds ſwell with pride, becauſe they are of ſuch or ſuch a noble deſcent; but let them remember, *man is of the duſt*. The ſoul or ſpirit of man is indeed from above, as was ſhewed before; and the body of man is (I grant) a compound of all the four Elements. Our bodily ſpirits (ſay Naturaliſts) are of the fire, our breath of the air, our blood of the water, and our fleſh and bones are moſt properly of the duſt of the earth; yet the whole body of man is denominated duſt, or earth; or as the Apoſtle ſtileth it (2 *Cor.* 5. 1.) 'Tis an *earthly houſe*; *If our earthly houſe of this tabernacle were diſſolved.* For though we may truly ſay, there is water, and air, and fire in this houſe, yet becauſe earth is the predominant Element, the whole body bears the denomination of that. God is not ſaid to form man of the water, or air, or fire, but of the duſt of the ground (*Gen.* 2. 7.) though all thoſe as well as earth were ingredients in the compoſition and formation of mans body. As man, with reſpect to his ſpirituals and morals, is denominated from that which is chief in him, ſo with reſpect to his naturals. Every man hath the ſeeds and principles of all ſin in him; yet many men are known and expreſſed by ſome ſpecial ſin. Thus one is called *a covetous man*, another *a malicious man*, &c. becauſe covetouſneſs and malice are their predominant ſins in practice, though the principles of all other ſins are in them. So for grace, one is ſaid to be *a patient man*, and another *an humble man*, and a third *a ſelf-denying man*. Though where any grace is all graces are, yet a godly man is known by that grace which acts moſt eminently and vigorouſly in him. In this notion man is ſaid to be of the duſt, and to return to duſt, as if he were nothing but duſt, becauſe duſt is the predominant Element in the natural conſtitution of man.

And if ſo, then this is an humbling conſideration. Some walk as if they thought the ground or earth not good enough for them to go upon. *Moſes* ſetting forth the dreadfulneſs of famine, as a puniſhment threatned the Jewiſh Nation in caſe of diſobedience, tells us it ſhall fall on all ſorts, both of men and women (*Deut.* 28. 56.) *The tender and delicate woman among you, which would not adventure to ſet the ſole of her foot upon the ground for delicateneſs and tenderneſs*, &c. Some are loth to put their feet to the ground, whereas the beſt foot that ever trod upon the ground is duſt as well as the ground trodden on, and 'tis *but duſt to duſt* when they are in the duſt, and dirt to dirt if they fall into the dirt. The Apoſtle, among other reaſons, for this alſo calleth the body of man *a vile body* (Phil. 3. 21.) *Who ſhall change our vile body that it may be faſhioned like unto his glorious body*. Our bodies are vile, chiefly from the contagion of ſin, that hath made them moſt vile: But they are comparatively vile, with reſpect to the very matter out of which they were all repreſentatively made when the firſt man was made, without the leaſt taint or touch of ſin. Man at beſt as to the body is but a little breathing duſt or moving Clay. And did we ſpiritually look upon the matter of our bodies, it would exceedingly humble our ſpirits, and keep them low even when like *Jordan* they are ready to over-flow all the banks of modeſty, and moderation. We hear of a Bird, who priding himſelf in ſpreading and peruſing his fine feathers, is preſently as it were, aſhamed by looking down upon his own black feet. Surely did man often conſider that his whole Body is of the earth, it would be an excellent means to keep his heart in a lowly frame, how highly ſoever himſelf is exalted in the Earth.

And as man, while he lives is from the duſt; ſo when he dyeth (that's another humbling conſideration) his body not only returneth unto duſt. but turneth into duſt. *David*, as the figure of Chriſt cryed out (*Pſal.* 22. 15.) *Thou haſt brought me into the duſt of death*. Duſt and death are neer acquaintance, and all that die, grow quickly into neerer acquaintance with the duſt. It is ſaid (*Pſal.* 103. 14.) *The Lord knoweth our frame, he remembreth that we are but duſt*. But what advantage is that to us, that the Lord knoweth the one, and remembreth the other; I may anſwer as the Apoſtle doth to another queſtion (*Rom.* 3. 2.) *much every way*, chiefly, becauſe he will pity us and ſpare us and deal tenderly with us, as conſidering how frail we are. Now as it may be our comfort that God remembreth we are but duſt, ſo 'tis our duty to remember that we are but duſt, and that we muſt to the duſt. Shall God remember that we are duſt, and ſhall not we remember it our ſelves? Did we more remember that we are duſt, we ſhould more prepare for our return to the duſt. Yea, I may ſay, we ſhould be more in Heaven, if we were more in our duſt; that is, the gracious and ſerious meditation of our natural vileneſs and infirmities would provoke us to look Heaven-wards, and prepare for Heaven, where theſe our *natural* Bodies ſhall become *ſpiritual* (1 Cor. 15. 44.) that is, they ſhall be like ſpirits (though not turned into ſpirits) living without food or ſleep, living free from wearineſs and ſickneſs, from pains and languiſhments, yea free from the remoteſt fear of ever dying or returning again into duſt. Such as theſe and many more would be our ſouls advantages, did we often (as becomes us) remember that our bodies are of the earth, and muſt ſhortly be earth again. Thus to be earthly minded, is the way to be Heavenly minded. Many are earthly minded, that is, they mind earthly things, but few mind that themſelves are earth. In what holy heights and elevations of ſpirit ſhould we be, if we could ſpiritually remember how low we once were, and how low, as to our bodies, we within a few dayes ſhall be.

Laſtly, This truth ſhould take us off from all creature-confidence, from truſting in man. *Curſed is the man* (ſaith the Lord, *Jer.* 17. 5.) *that truſteth in man, and maketh fleſh his arm*. 'Tis a curſed thing for man to truſt in man, becauſe truſt is an honour proper to God; he alone is to be truſted: And as it is a curſed, ſo it is alſo a fooliſh thing to truſt in man. *David* a great Prince giveth us this counſel from God (*Pſal.* 146. 3, 4.) *Put not your truſt in Princes, nor in the Son of man in whom there is no help; his breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth* (or to his duſt) *in that day all his thoughts periſh, happy is the man that hath the God of* Jacob *for his help*. What can duſt do for duſt? What can duſt get by duſt? That which is weak may become ſtrong, by truſting to, or leaning upon that which is ſtrong; the weakeſt man is ſtrong enough, while he truſteth upon the ſtrong God; but if weak truſt upon weak, how ſhall it be made ſtrong. Therefore let all fleſh hearken to the words of the holy Prophet (*Iſa.* 2. 21.) *Ceaſe ye from man, whoſe breath is in his noſtrills; for wherein is he to be accounted of?* Man himſelf is a *ſoon-ceaſing Creature* (*David* uſeth the Noun of this Verb to expreſs himſelf ſo, *Pſal.* 39. 4.) and therefore we have reaſon to *ceaſe from man*, to ceaſe from any high eſtimation of the higheſt men much more from any confidence in them. What can we aſſure our ſelves of from any man living, ſeeing he hath no aſſurance of his own life? The Prophet would have us underſtand that, while he ſaith, *his breath is in his noſtrills*; Mans life is gone as ſoon as his breath is gone, and how ſoon may that be gone! *David* deſcribeth a proud man, *puffing at his enemies* (Pſal. 10. 5.) He is puffed up and ſwelled with high conceits of himſelf, as if he had ſome great matter in him, and he puffs at others as if he could do ſome great matter againſt them, forgetting that himſelf is but (as to his being in this World) a puff of wind, which paſſeth away. As then, we need not fear what hurt man can do us, ſo we ſhould not hope nor have any expectation from him that he by his own power (how great ſoever his power is) can do us any good. *Wherein* (as to either of theſe purpoſes) *is man to be accounted of?* Man is an excellent creature, a creature of high account, as bearing the image of God, his ſoul is of more worth then the gain of the whole World

(*Matth.* 16.26.) and thus he is more to be accounted of, then all that in the World is moſt accounted of; but conſider him as to the frailty of his life, and the poſſibility, yea probability of his ſuddain paſſage out of this world, and then, *wherein is he to be accounted of?* If we oppoſe man to God, or compare man with God, or truſt man in ſtead of God, he is as vain and worthleſs as any thing, a thing of nothing, or leſs then nothing.

VERS. 16, 17,

If now thou haſt underſtanding, hear this; hearken to the voice of my words.

Shall even he that hateth right, govern? And wilt thou condemn him that is moſt juſt?

ELihu having thus far applied himſelf to *Job*'s friends upon an Aſſurance that they were men of underſtanding; for ſo he beſpake them at the tenth verſe; *Hearken unto me, ye men of underſtanding.* He now turneth his ſpeech particularly to *Job*, and he doth it upon a hopeful ſuppoſition, that he alſo was a man of underſtanding.

Verſe 16. **If now thou haſt underſtanding, hear this.**

The word which we render **underſtanding**, is not a *Noun*, but the infinitive of a Verb in the Hebrew: And it may be rendred thus; *If thou haſt to underſtand*; that is, if thou haſt an ability to underſtand, which in ſenſe is the ſame with our tranſlation, *If thou haſt underſtanding.* This form of ſpeaking by the infinitive for the Noun, is frequent both in Scripture and other Authors. Thus 'tis ſaid, *Your to know is nothing*; that is, *your knowledge is nothing, unleſs another know it, or be made knowing by it. Let us ſee* (ſaith the Orator) *what thy to live bleſſedly is*; that is, what thou counteſt bleſſedneſs. And another, *I have loſt to be aſhamed*; that is, ſhamefaſtneſs or modeſty. Thus *Elihu*, *If thou haſt to underſtand, hear this.*

But it may be queſtioned, did *Elihu* indeed ſuſpect whether *Job* did underſtand, or were an underſtanding man? Every man hath an underſtanding, as he is a man. To underſtand is the property, the inſeparable property of a reaſonable creature. Why then doth *Elihu* put a doubt upon *Job* in this, and ſay, *If now thou haſt underſtanding,* &c.

I anſwer; *Elihu* indeed deals with *Job* as if he were ſomewhat below man in this buſineſs; at leaſt, as if he were dull, and ſlow to receive, and apprehend what had been ſpoken to him, and therefore by this Apoſtrophe, he excites and ſtirs him up to ſet his underſtanding a-work to the utmoſt; As if he had ſaid, *Although thou haſt a habit of underſtanding, yet thou haſt not acted it like an underſtanding man*; *nor given ſuch proof of it in this matter as is expected.*

Further, Theſe words, *If now thou haſt underſtanding*, refer not to the faculty, but to the ſpecial attributes of his underſtanding; chiefly to theſe three.

Firſt, To the ſoundneſs of it; *If thou haſt any thing of a ſound underſtanding.* The underſtandings of many are ſick, and diſeaſed, their underſtandings are tainted and infected with errours and miſperſwaſions. Now *if thou haſt any thing of a ſound underſtanding left in thee*, if there remain yet any ſtrength in thy underſtanding, to apprehend the force of thoſe arguments and reaſons which I ſhall propoſe to convince thee by, *hear this.* Erroneous underſtandings are altogether unfit to entertain truth. As there muſt be a ſutableneſs between the ſtomach and the meat, elſe it is not digeſted, ſo between the mind and the object, elſe it cannot be received.

Secondly, To the uprightneſs or impartiality of it; *If thou haſt underſtanding*; that is, *if thou haſt an unbiaſſed underſtanding*; Sometimes the affections turn aſide, and bribe the underſtanding; ſelf-intereſt puts a blind upon the underſtanding. When a man hath a mind to that which is not right, he will have a mind to underſtand any thing that oppoſeth it.

Thirdly, To the ſpiritualneſs of it, *If thou haſt underſtanding*; that is, a renewed, a ſpiritual, an holy underſtanding, or the underſtanding of the holy, *hear this.* A man may have a great natural underſtanding, a deep judgment, and yet be a very Child, or a man of no underſtanding in the things of God. Only a ſpiritual underſtanding is ſuited to ſpiritual things, (as the object is, ſuch muſt the faculty be) that faculty which deals a-right about ſpiritual things, muſt be a ſpiritual faculty. The Apoſtle ſpeaks concludingly (1 *Cor.* 2. 14.) *The natural man* (that is, the man unconverted or unregenerate) *perceiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are fooliſhneſs unto him: Neither can he know them, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned.* And therefore the ſame Apoſtle profeſſeth to the *Coloſſians* (*Chap.* 1. 9.) *We do not ceaſe to pray for you, and to deſire that ye might be filled, with the knowledge of his will, in all wiſdom, and ſpiritual underſtanding.* The will of God being ſpiritual, cannot be truely known but by a ſpiritual underſtanding. According to this three-fold attribute of the underſtanding we may expound *Elihu* ſpeaking to *Job*, If thou haſt a ſpiritual underſtanding, and unbiaſſed underſtanding, a ſound underſtanding, *hear this.* As if he had ſaid, *I have ſpoken, and am about to ſpeak ſuch things as many call out the ſtrength, the beſt, the utmoſt line of a ſound, impartial and ſpiritual underſtanding, to ſound the bottom and the depth of them.* Thus he provokes him to attend, not only with his ear, but with his underſtanding, with the beſt of his underſtanding to the things he was to ſpeak. And in this ſenſe the moſt of men, all bad men have no underſtanding (*Pſal.* 14.2.) and *Job*, though a good man, had much deficiency in his. *If now thou haſt underſtanding, hear this.*

בינה
cum accentu in penultima non poteſt eſſe nomen verbale, ſed infinitivus loco nominis.
Si eſt intelligere. *i. e. intelligentia.* Druſ.
Scire tuum nihil eſt, &c. Juven.
Videamus beate vivere veſtrum quale ſit. Cic.
Hoc vereri perdidi. i. e. *pudorem.* Plaut.
Non caret aculeis Apoſtrophe quibus Jobi attentionem excitat. Si vel mica eſt in te bonæ mentis. Merc.
Infinitivus intelligere, non plenam intelligentiam indicat, ſed vel tenuiſſimum intellectum, qui infinitivus actionem præſentem non habitū ſignificat. Stupidum ergo & vecordē Jobum appellat, &c. Bold.
Si quid ſanæ mentis habes. Bez.

Hence Note, *He that hath not a right, a ſound, a ſpiritual underſtanding, can ſcarce be ſaid to have any underſtanding at all.*

There are many underſtanding men, who have not this underſtanding, or an underſtanding for this. While *David* ſaith (*Pſal.* 49. 20.) *Man that is in honour and underſtandeth not*, he ſuppoſeth, that a man aſcended to the higheſt pitch of honour, may yet be without underſtanding, that is, without a right, a ſound, a ſpiritual underſtanding; and then (as it followeth there) *he is like the beaſts that periſh.* Beaſts have no underſtanding at all, the rational or intellectual power is proper to man. A man in honour, not having this honour, a right underſtanding, may be numbred among the beaſts. *If thou haſt underſtanding,*

Hear this.] As if he had ſaid, I am not calling thee to hear an idle ſtory, or a trivial matter; *Hear this*, there is an emphaſis in the words both as to the Act and Object.

It is queſtioned what *Elihu* particularly intendeth by *this*, ſome refer it to what he had ſpoken before in *Job*'s audience; though directed to his friends: *Hear* what I have ſpoken to thy friends in the former part of the Chapter, in vindication of the righteouſneſs of God. Secondly, Others refer it to what *Elihu* was now about to ſay; I have not yet done, I have not yet brought out all my reaſons and arguments, I have not emptied my treaſures, I have yet more to ſay, *Hear this*: A third ſort refer theſe hortatory words, *hear this*, in the former part of the verſe, to what he had already ſpoken, and thoſe in the latter part of the verſe, *hearken to the voice of my words*, to what he had yet to ſpeak; but it is not much to the matter to which we refer them, it being clear, that what he had ſaid, and what he had to ſay, was matter of weight; and ſo *hear this*, is emphatical, *this great, this deep, this uſeful and neceſſary point of Doctrine*, which I already have declared, or am now about to declare unto thee.

Hence Note, *That which we hear, we ſhould labour to underſtand.*

(Col. 3. 16.) *Let the word of Chriſt dwell in you richly, in all wiſdom*; It is not enough to hear the word with our ears, or to have it in our mouths, it muſt dwell in our memories, and it muſt dwell there, not in a beggerly poor faſhion, but richly; which it never doth, till we have a ſound and clear underſtanding of it, and are both in heart and life conformed to it, yea transformed into it; that is it which the Apoſtle meaneth by the dwelling of the word in us richly in all wiſdom. And he further aſſureth them (*Chap.* 2. 1, 2.) that he had a *great conflict for them*; that is (as we put in the Margin) he had a great *fear or care of them* *that their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full aſſurance of underſtanding, to the acknowledgment of the Myſtery of God, and of the Father, and of Chriſt, in whom are hid all the treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge.* He had held forth thoſe great myſteries, the myſtery of God conſidered eſſentially, the myſtery of the Father conſidered perſonally, the myſtery of Chriſt conſidered mediatorily; and therefore he preſſeth them to get a full aſſurance of underſtanding about all theſe myſteries. When Chriſt was diſcourſing with his Diſciples after his reſurrection (*Luke* 24.45.) it is ſaid, *He opened their underſtanding, that they might underſtand the Scriptures*; and then they did not take in what he ſpake only at the ear, but at the heart alſo. Thus (*Acts* 16.14.) *The Lord opened the heart of* Lydia, *that ſhe attended unto the things which were ſpoken of* Paul; that is, he gave her an inward ear, and cauſed her to underſtand the things which he ſpake.

Secondly, Note, *Whatſoever we hear is loſt, and but ſcattered in the air, if we do not underſtand it.*

Though we have it in our books, yea, though we have it in our memories, 'tis loſt, if we underſtand it not; we read of a *book, ſealed within, and on the back-ſide, with ſeven ſeals* (Rev. 5. 1.) we read alſo (*ver.* 4.) that *John wept much, becauſe no man was found worthy to open and to read the book*: That ſealing of the book was nothing elſe but the ſhutting of it up from the underſtanding; and when Chriſt opened the book, he gave the underſtanding of it: The whole Book of God is a ſealed book, unleſs we have an underſtanding, or a ſaving knowledge of the truths therein contained. What *John* ſaid (*Rev.* 13. 18.) of counting that myſterious number of the Beaſt, muſt be ſaid in its proportion of the whole myſtery of godlineſs, let him that hath underſtanding count and conſider them.

Thirdly, Note, *Every underſtanding is not fit to receive the Truths of God.*

An unregenerate man is not fit to receive any of the Truths of God; *The natural man* (that is, the man who hath nothing but nature in him) *perceiveth not the things of God*, he hath not a ſutable faculty for them; and as a natural mans underſtanding cannot at all receive the things of God; ſo every degree of a ſpiritual underſtanding cannot receive all the truths of God, or not all the things of God in all their truth. The Apoſtle diſtributes perſons into ſeveral degrees, and calls ſome *babes*, and others *grown or perfect men*; that is, ſuch as have an underſtanding fit to take in and digeſt the higheſt and deepeſt things of God; and hence it is, that Chriſt told his Diſciples (*John* 16. 12.) who had a renewed underſtanding, only 'twas in a low degree, *I have many things to ſay unto you, but ye cannot bear them now*; I ſuppoſe the reaſon why Chriſt ſaith they could not bear thoſe *many things*, was not becauſe being *many*, they were too great a burden for their memories (though poſſibly there might be ſomewhat in that) but their inability of bearing thoſe many things, was chiefly in their underſtanding. There are ſome truths, which though a man can remember, yet he cannot bear them; and the more he remembers them, the leſs he can bear them; the weight and myſteriouſneſs of them even cracks his brain, till he receives more light from God, and more ſtrength of underſtanding, he cannot bear them: *If thou haſt underſtanding hear this*;

And hearken to the voice of my words.] This latter part of the verſe is but the repetition or further enforcement of the ſame thing; we had the like expreſſions *chap.* 33. 1, 8. and therefore I ſhall not ſtay upon this, only Note further from the whole,

The beginning of true wiſdom is to have a readineſs to hear, and to ſhew our ſelves teachable.

Some overween themſelves ſo much, as to matter of knowledge, that they will not be taught; they judge themſelves ſo learned, and fully inſtructed, that they will hear no more inſtruction, nor learn any other leſſon, they are paſt the School; yet alwayes they who know much in their own conceit, are leaſt knowing in truth and reality: There is nothing doth ſo much hinder the receiving of knowledge, as an imagination or proud prepoſſeſſion of it. *The ſluggard* (ſaith *Solomon*, Prov.26.16.) *is wiſer in his own conceit, then ſeven men that can render a reaſon*: They which have leaſt reaſon are the greateſt neglecters of it; only an underſtanding man is willing to hear, that he may gain more underſtanding. Therefore *Elihu* admoniſheth *Job*, *If now thou haſt underſtanding, hear this, and hearken to the voice of my words*: What *Elihu* would have *Job* hear and hearken to, followeth in the next verſe, and in thoſe which follow, to the end of *ver.* 33.

Verſe 17. **Shall even he that hateth right govern? And wilt thou condemn him that is moſt juſt?**

This is matter indeed worth the hearing and hearkning to.

Shall even he that hateth right govern?] Shall he? He ſhall not, or at leaſt ſhould not, he ought not; he of all men is the unfitteſt man to govern; that is, to do all men right, who hateth right. The Interrogation leads us to this ſtrong negation, or indignation rather: What! He that hateth right, whoſe very ſpirit is againſt it, whoſe affections withdraw from it, is he made up for a Governour! The Hebrew word notes *right* from man to man; *Juſtice or righteouſneſs conſiſts in the due order and comely diſpoſition of things and affairs, tranſacted and diſpenſed in this world from man to man, or between man and man*; it imports alſo that order into which the moſt wiſe providence of God placeth both things and perſons; we may take it here in both or either of theſe ſenſes; *Shall he that hateth right*

משפט *Judicium, ſignificat ordinem quo quicquid, in loco convenienti conſtituitur; ſic odiens judicium eſt, qui non ſubſcribit divino ordini.* Coc.

Govern?] The word rendred to *Govern* hath a threefold ſignification in Scripture. Firſt, and moſt properly, to *bind up*: Secondly, by a Metaphor, to *heal*; becauſe there is ſo great a uſe of binding in healing; the ſkilful ligature of a wound, or of a broken limb, is of ſo much conſequence in Chirurgery, or the Art of healing, that binding alone is put for healing; that which is well bound is in a fair way to healing. We find both theſe acts put together in that great Promiſe of the Churches glory under the Goſpel, (*Iſa.* 30. 26.) *Moreover the light of the Moon ſhall be as the light of the Sun*, &c. *in the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the ſtroke of their wound.*

חבש *Ligavit, alligavit; Dominari etiā ſignificat, quod qui dominatur ſuis liget præceptis legibuſque tranſgreſſores.* Pagn.

Many learned Tranſlators render the word here, by binding or healing, or by binding, as it refers to healing. The Vulgar Latine gives it paſſively, *Can he who doth not love right be healed?* The ſenſe of which reading is this; *God doth not uſe to heal or bind up the wounds of thoſe who hate right or juſtice*: Why ſhould the wounds of thoſe Magiſtrates be healed, who have no care, by doing right, to heal the wounds of others? I ſhall not ſtay upon this Tranſlation, becauſe the Original Text clearly carrieth an active ſignification. And ſome who retain this ſenſe of the word, tranſlate it actively, *Shall, or will God heal him that hateth right?* Surely he will not: If a man hate juſtice and right, how can he expect that God ſhould be a healer to him? And thus it is expounded in reference to *Job*, who complained that God did not heal him of his wounds; his wounds, though great, were not cured: Now ſaith *Elihu*, *Will God heal him that hateth right?* that is, who doth not approve of that which is right; or, as it followeth, *Who condemneth him that is moſt juſt?* as *Elihu* charged *Job* to have done.

Numquid qui non amat judiciū ſanari poteſt. Vulg.

An etiam odio habentis judiciū obligaret (ſc. *vulnus*) Jun.

Again, another renders, *Will he that hateth the right heal the wounded?* The ſenſe of which reading is given thus; Surely God who is ready to bind up and heal the wounds of thoſe that are afflicted when they repent, is no hater of right, no perverter of juſtice, as thou, O *Job*, haſt ſaid God doth; ſeeing God is ready to heal the wounds, and bind up the ſores of humbled ſinners, how unjuſtly haſt thou charged him with perverting of juſtice? The Tygurine verſion gives it thus, *Will he that hates right act the part of a Chirurgion?* Will he bind up and heal? Doubtleſs he will not, but will rather wound and afflict, vex and trouble more and more inſtead of being a healer. Either of theſe renderings bear a good ſenſe of this Scripture; yet I ſhall rather take up our Tranſlation, and inſiſt upon it. And therefore

An etiam is qui odio habet jus obligarit vulneratum. Piſc.

An qui odit judiciū Chirurgos imitaretur. Tygur.

Thirdly, The word ſignifies tropically *to rule or govern*; and the reaſon ariſeth clearly from the proper ſignification of it; becauſe he that is a Ruler or a Governour, is alſo a binder and a healer: Magiſtrates bind the people

Verbum ligandi יחבוש *ſumitur pro imperare vel rerum potiri, quia qui imperant ligant*, &c. Merc.

Leges à ligando dicuntur.

that are under them to order, they bind them by their Laws. Laws are as bonds, they have a binding power, they bind either to obedience or to puniſhment; and therefore Magiſtrates are binders, they bind the unruly and diſobedient, they bind with the rule of the Law, and with the penalties of the Law. When any break the rule of the Law, then they fall under the penalties of the Law; ſo that every way a Magiſtrate is a binder; and as he is a binder, ſo a healer: The Laws of Government by which people are bound, are for their healing, for the healing of their manners and corruptions; as alſo for the healing of thoſe whom they have oppreſſed or wounded by their evil manners and corruptions. Further, all Governours ſhould, and righteous Governours will improve their power and authority for the healing of thoſe differences that ariſe among their Subjects, or thoſe over whom they are ſet: In all theſe reſpects, Magiſtrates are *healers and binders.* Thus the Prophet (*Iſa.* 3.6,7.) expreſſeth them, *When a man ſhall take hold of his Brother, of the houſe of his Father, ſaying, thou haſt clothing, be thou our Ruler, and let this ruine be under thine hand:* Here is a breach, a ruine in the State or Commonwealth, let this be under thy hand, do thou untake the cure of this; but *in that day ſhall he ſwear* (ver. 7.) *I will not be a healer:* We put in the Margin, *A binder*; that is, I will not be your Governour; your caſe is ſo deſperate, and you are ſo obſtinate in your way, that I dare not undertake your cure, *I will not be a healer to you*; or, *I will not be your binder*; or as the reaſon of his refuſal is there given by the Prophet, from his own inability or incompetency for that undertaking; *In my houſe is neither bread nor clothing, make me not a Ruler of the people.* Thus the word very ſignificantly holds out the office and uſe of Governours, they are or ought to be binders or healers: The wounds of the Body politick need a healer as much as thoſe of the body natural; *Governours are State-Phyſicians*; and therefore we read very well, *Shall he that hateth right govern?* Mr. *Broughton* ſaith, *Can a foe to Judgment rule well?* Taking this ſenſe, *Elihu* doth two things in this verſe.

Firſt, He ſheweth how unfit an unjuſt perſon is to rule; this he doth in the former part of the verſe.

Secondly, He ſheweth how unfit it is to condemn or cenſure a juſt Ruler; this he doth in the latter part of the verſe, *Shall even he that hateth right govern?* He ought not. And ſhall he that governeth rightly be hated? Shall he fall under unrighteous condemnations who condemneth others rightly? He ſhould not. As he that is unjuſt is unfit to govern; ſo 'tis not only uncomely, but abominable to condemn a juſt Governour. This is the ſum of the whole verſe. From the former part of it already opened, *Shall he that hateth right govern?*

> Obſerve, Firſt, *Some men are haters of Juſtice, Right, and Righteouſneſs.*

What is there ſo good, but an evil man hateth it? And the better it is, the more he hateth it: How precious a thing is Righteouſneſs, yet 'tis hated (*Mic.* 3.1,2.) *Hear, I pray you, O heads of* Jacob, *&c. Is it not for you to know judgment, who hate the good and love the evil?* How precious a thing is peace? And yet there are *Peace-haters*; *My ſoul* (ſaith *David,* Pſal. 120.6.) *hath long dwelt with him that hateth peace.* How ſweet a thing is Light? The Light of the Goſpel, yet there are many Light-haters (*John* 3.20.) *He that doth evil* (loving to do it) *hateth the light*: How precious a thing is Holineſs? And yet there are *Holineſs-haters:* How precious a thing is Truth? And yet there are *Truth-haters:* How infinitely precious is God? And yet there are *God-haters:* (Rom. 1.30.) How lovely, how deſirable is Jeſus Chriſt, both as a Saviour and as a Sanctifier? Yet even Jeſus Chriſt (who hath loved us, and waſhed us with his own blood) is hated: There are many *Chriſt-haters,* as himſelf told the *Jews* (John 15.24.) *They have both ſeen and hated both me and my Father.* And if there be that principle of abomination in the heart of man to hate God and Chriſt, what good is there that the heart of man may not ſet his hatred upon? *Elihu* ſuppoſeth that there are haters of Right and Juſtice, which are the moſt amiable things in the world, and ſhould attract the love of all perſons to them.

Secondly, When *Elihu* ſaith, *Shall even he that hateth right govern?* How diſdainfully doth he ſpeak of ſuch? Hence Note, *To hate right is a moſt hateful thing.*

He is not worthy the name of a man that hateth right. When the Prophet *Eliſha* told *Hazael* what ſtrange things he ſhould do, what havock he ſhould make in the world, he ſaid (2 *Kings* 9.13.) *But what, is thy ſervant a dog, that he ſhould do this great thing?* As if he had ſaid, To do ſuch a thing renders a man as vile and contemptible as a dog: 'Tis a piece of unrighteouſneſs to reckon or number them among men, who are haters of that righteouſneſs which ſhould be exerciſed among men, and is the preſervation of mankind; not to honour righteouſneſs is a hateful thing; not to do right at all times, and in all things, is a hateful thing; what is it then to hate right? How juſtly hateful are Juſtice haters!

Some may ſay, Are there any indeed ſo bad as to hate right?

I anſwer, Firſt, There are ſome who profuſedly, plainly, with a bold and bare face hate the right; there is in all natural men a ſeed of this hatred, *The wiſdom of the fleſh is enmity againſt God*; and ſurely, if it be enmity againſt God, it muſt needs be enmity againſt all that is good; now as there is a ſeed of that enmity in every mans nature, ſo there will be the workings and fruits of that enmity in many mens lives.

Secondly, I anſwer, He may be ſaid to hate right that doth not approve right, that doth not love and delight in it; not to love, not to delight in that which is right, is to hate the right. As he that doth not love God, is a hater of God; the ſecond Commandment ſpeaks thus, *I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, viſiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, and ſhewing mercy to thouſands of them that love me, and keep my Commandments.* Hating of God, and loving of God, divide the whole world; they that do not love God hate him; there is no middle of participation between theſe two, between the love and hatred of God; ſo there is a hatred of Juſtice or right in him who loves it not; though a man do not make profeſſion againſt it, yet if he hath not an affection to it, he will at laſt be found amongſt that moſt hateful company, the haters of righteouſneſs: Not to hate evil is to love it; and not to love good, is to hate it in Gods account. Many ſtand as Neuters in the dayes of this world; but in that great day of the end of the world, there will be no Neuters ſeen; all ſhall ſtand in two parts, either among the Sheep or Goats; and among all the Sheep there will not be one found, who hath not been a lover of Goodneſs and Righteouſneſs; nor one among all the Goats, who hath not been (in the judgment and eſteem of God) a hater of them.

Thirdly, They may be ſaid (in a degree) to hate right, who though they have ſome love to it, yet love it in a leſs degree then they ſhould, or leſs then they ought; *A lower or leſſer degree of love, is a kind of hatred* in Scripture Language: The Law of *Moſes* ſaith (*Deut.* 21.15,16,17.) *If a man have two wives, one beloved, and another hated, and they have born him children, both the beloved and the hated; and if the firſt-born ſon be hers that was hated; then it ſhall be when he maketh his ſon inherit that which he hath, that he may not make the ſon of the beloved firſt-born before the ſon of the hated,* &c. But what doth he mean by the wife that is hated? Surely the wife that is not ſo much loved; though he loved both truly, yet not loving both in the ſame degree, he is ſaid to hate one of them: So I conceive that Scripture is to be underſtood (*Luke* 14.26.) where Chriſt gives the rule concerning Diſciple-ſhip, *If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and ſiſters, yea, and his own life alſo, he cannot be my Diſciple:* When Chriſt layeth this charge upon his Diſciples, to hate wife, and children, *&c.* would he have his Diſciples turn their hatred upon thoſe relations? The rule of the Word forbids that: So then, his meaning is only this, if in caſe of following me, a man find any ſtop or hindrance by theſe, he muſt not let out his love, ſo to wife, and children, *&c.* as to hinder his coming to, or following of me. Every man maſt take off ſo much love from theſe deareſt worldly enjoyments, as hinders men in following Chriſt; and he who through grace is enabled to do ſo, is in a true and clear Goſpel ſenſe ſaid to hate them. That which we can leave for Chriſt, we hate in compariſon of that love which we bear to Chriſt. Thus in the Text and Point, they may be ſaid to *hate the right*, who bear not a due proportion of love unto it; not to love righteouſneſs with higheſt and warmeſt affections, is a degree of hatred. Some love the right, but they love it lightly, they love it leſs then riches and gain; and therefore for ſelf-gain they turn aſide from, and forſake the right. Some will ſpeak fair for Juſtice, till the offer of private advantage either put out their eyes, or ſtop their mouths; he that loves not to do right to others more then to inrich himſelf, will quickly wrong others to inrich himſelf: Now he that upon any terms or conſideration whatſoever (though it were to the advantage only of ſome others who are poor and diſtreſſed, much more when it's for his own advantage) is drawn to pervert the right, is a hater of it. Remember, any leſſer degree of love to that which is right, may at any time be interpreted the hatred of it; and when we love it leſs then our own concernments, we cannot reſiſt temptations which intice us to do that which will declare a direct hatred of it.

Thirdly, From the whole tenour of theſe words, *Shall he that hateth right govern?*

Note, *They that hate right, or righteouſneſs, are altogether unfit to govern, or to be Governours.*

Nothing is more contrary to the ſtate of Government, or the qualification of a Governour, then to hate right; Righteouſneſs is the ſphere wherein he ought to walk, and never to move out of it; 'tis the buſineſs he hath to do, the trade which he hath to drive; whatſoever he doth in that capacity, he muſt be doing righteous things. So far as any man hath the power of Government in his hand, if it be but over a Family, much more over a Nation, he ought to do right; *David's* prayer for himſelf as a King, and for his Son who was to ſucceed him in the Kingdom, was only and altogether this (*Pſal.* 72. 1.) *Give the King thy Judgments, O Lord, and thy Righteouſneſs unto the Kings Son*; that is, teach both me and him what is right, give us a heart conformable to it, and a readineſs of mind alwayes to do it: That's the ſcope of his prayer when he ſaid, *Give the King thy Judgments, O Lord, and thy Righteouſneſs to the Kings Son:* Nor doth he barely pray for the gift of Judgment and Righteouſneſs, but he puts the ſtamp of God upon them; *Give them thy Judgments, and thy righteouſneſs.* It is poſſible for Kings to have a judgment of their own, and a righteouſneſs of their own, which are not the Judgments nor the Righteouſneſs of God. For as there is a Righteouſneſs of God, which ſome being ignorant of, truſt to a righteouſneſs of their own for the juſtification of their perſon; ſo there is a Righteouſneſs of God for the government of man, which ſome neglecting, uſe only a righteouſneſs of their own, both in condemning and juſtifying other mens both perſons and cauſes; Princes being in Gods place, ſhould exalt the Righteouſneſs of God in the governing of men. And therefore the ſame *David* in his dying ſong ſpake thus (2 *Sam.* 23. 3.) *He that ruleth over men muſt be juſt, ruling in the fear of God*; whoever he is he muſt be juſt, and he muſt be juſt in the fear of God, which he can never be, but in giving out the Righteouſneſs of God; that is, in diſpenſing that for righteouſneſs, which is right according to the will of God. And if he muſt do right thus, how ſhall he do it if he hate it? No man will do that willingly or conſtantly which he hateth; he that hates right is ſo far from doing it himſelf, that he cannot abide others ſhould do it. Whereas a Governour is not only to do right himſelf, but to appoint others to do it, and to ſee that they do it; or elſe to puniſh them for not doing it. The Rulers of the earth are ſaid *to bear the Sword* (Rom. 13. 4.) And they are ſaid *to be Shields* (Pſal. 47. 9.) They are Shields to protect the good, and Swords to take vengeance of thoſe that do evil; both which are the works of righteouſneſs. And if ſo, *Shall ever he that hateth right govern?*

Fieri ne poteſt ut qui omnibus imperat, juris amans non ſit, aut quicquam injuſte agat. Merc.

And wilt thou condemn him that is moſt juſt?

The ſcope of *Elihu* in the former part of the verſe was to demonſtrate that God is no hater of right, or righteouſneſs, for he is not only a Governour, but the Governour, all the world over, or over all the world; and it were a moſt abſurd thing, to think that he ſhould be the Governour of the world, and yet be a hater of right: Can it be imagin'd, that he who ruleth all men ſhould wrong any man? Now ſeeing God who ruleth all is alwayes moſt righteous, *Wilt thou* (*O* Job) *condemn him* (ſaith *Elihu*) *that is moſt juſt?* God our Governour is ſo far from hating, that he is ever promoting Juſtice; he that is ſo is moſt juſt; And wilt thou condemn him that is moſt juſt?

Wilt thou condemn?] *To condemn is to ſit in judgment, and give ſentence againſt another.* Wilt thou condemn, or give ſentence againſt God? *Wilt thou* (as ſome tranſlate according to the ſtrictneſs of the Original) *make him wicked, that is moſt juſt?* *Elihu* makes uſe of a very hard and ſevere word, and it is conceived that he purpoſely pitcht upon it, or pickt it out, to convince *Job*, that it is no ſmall fault, or offence, to complain of or to quarrel with the dealings of God. 'Tis indeed to condemn God, and to make him wicked, as the word imports; *Wilt thou condemn him,*

Et an juſtū inſignem impium facis? Heb.

That is moſt juſt?] Here are two words; in the Hebrew we put them together, and ſo render them by a ſuperlative, *moſt juſt*. Some tranſlate, *Wilt thou condemn him that is ſtrong and juſt?* That is, ſtrongly juſt, mightily juſt: God is full of ſtrength and might, ſo full that he, and he only is *Almighty*; yet his might never exceedeth right, nor his ſtrength his juſtice. Strength and juſtice are commenſurate in God. And while he is ſo ſtrong, that he can do what he will, he is ſo juſt that he will do nothing but what is righteous.

כביר צדק *Validum juſtum*, i. e. *qui valdè juſtus eſt.* Druſ. *Num eum, qui κατ' ἐξοχὴν juſtus eſt, ut Deus omniū judicio eſt, injuſtitiæ damnare ſuſtines,* 1 כביר *poteſt exponi validum, num juſtum & potentem eum qui ſimul & juſtus & potens eſt damnare audes, ſed malo* 2 כביר *exponere per* מאד *multum valde, q.d. enim qui ſumme juſtus eſt audes damnare, de eo queri, quaſi tibi ſit iniquior.* Rab. Sel. Merc.

Further, I find others joyning the word *ſtrong*, with the word *condemn:* As if *Elihu* had ſaid, *Wilt thou ſo confidently, and pertinaciouſly condemn the juſt God? To condemn God, though but a little, to paſs the eaſieſt ſentence of condemnation upon him is bad enough; but wilt thou ſtrongly condemn him?* We render clearly to the ſcope of the place, *Wilt thou condemn him that is moſt juſt?*

Hence Note, Firſt, *God is moſt juſt, or altogether juſt.*

He is ſtrongly juſt, mightily juſt; as he is ſtrongly merciful, putting forth a power in pardoning ſin, and ſhewing mercy, ſo he is ſtrongly juſt, or altogether juſt. The rule given to Judges by *Moſes* ſpeaketh thus (*Deut.* 16. 20.) *That which is altogether juſt ſhalt thou follow.* We put in the Margin, *Juſtice, Juſtice, ſhalt thou do*; that is, thou ſhalt do pure juſtice, nothing but juſtice, or juſtice without the leaſt mixture, tincture, or (if it be poſſible) without the leaſt ſhadow of injuſtice. I may ſay, *juſtice, juſtice is God*; that is, he is *altogether juſt*, ſtrongly juſt, everlaſtingly and unchangeably juſt. God is juſt under a threefold notion.

Firſt, As to be juſt is taken largely, importing a perſon accompliſhed with concurrence of all perfections, and vertuous qualities. In that ſenſe, I ſuppoſe, the Apoſtle uſeth the word (1 *Tim.* 1. 9.) *The Law is not given for* (that is, to terrifie or condemn) *a juſt man*; that is, for a man who is holy and good. Thus God is *altogether juſt*; for he hath all the lines of perfection, of holineſs, and goodneſs centring in him; he is not only juſt and vertuous, but juſtice and vertue it ſelf.

Δικαιός ἐστιν ὁ πᾶσαν ἀρετὴν ἔχων. Phavor.

Secondly, To be juſt, imports the keeping of promiſes, and the performance of our word. He is a juſt man, who when he hath ſpoken, you may know what to have of him, and where to have him. Some give words, and you can get nothing of them but words, that's injuſtice, becauſe our words bind us, and ſhould be as laws to us. A man may chuſe whether he will make promiſes, but when he hath promiſed it is not in his choice whether he will perform or no; his Word binds him. In this ſenſe *God is altogether juſt*. Whatſoever word you have had from God (and he hath given us many comfortable words for every condition) God is a juſt God, and will perform it to a tittle. That glorious and everlaſting witneſs is born to him by dying *Joſhua* (Joſh. 23. 14.) *And behold this day I am going the way of all the earth, and ye know in all your hearts, and in all your ſouls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God ſpake concerning you; all are come to paſs unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof.* In this ſenſe God is ſaid to be, not only merciful, but juſt in forgiving our ſins (1 *John* 1. 9.) *If we confeſs our ſins, he is faithful and juſt to forgive us our ſins, and to cleanſe us from all unrighteouſneſs.* If we confeſs our ſins ſpiritually and believingly, deeply, humbly, and affectionately; if we confeſs thus, he is juſt to forgive; Why, Becauſe he hath given a promiſe to forgive thoſe who make ſuch confeſſions of ſin. And thus 'tis in any other promiſe; he keeps his word, he keeps touch with man, he will not fail nor come ſhort in the leaſt, therefore he is altogether juſt.

Thirdly, He is juſt in the ſtricteſt acception of juſtice, giving every one his due. It is poſſible for a man to be juſt in neither of the two former notions, he may neither be vertuous in his actions, nor a keeper of his word as a man, and yet he may be juſt as a Magiſtrate, juſt as in a cauſe committed to his determination. But God is juſt in all theſe three conſiderations of a juſt man, and therefore he is eminently, or altogether juſt. And I conceive, the latter of the three is chiefly intended here, *God is moſt juſt*; that is, he never did, nor ever will, give an undue or an undeſerved ſentence upon any man.

I might ſhew diſtinctly, that God is juſt, and how juſt he is; Firſt, In rewarding thoſe that do well; Secondly, In puniſhing thoſe that do ill. And that becauſe he doth it; Firſt, By a Law; Secondly, By a Law publiſhed; Thirdly, By a Law poſſible (our inability of keeping the Law is conſequential to the giving of it; man hath drawn it upon himſelf) though now he cannot perform it at all, yet God is juſt in puniſhing, becauſe he ſins againſt a Law that he had a power (in his head or repreſentative) to have fulfilled. Fourthly, God is juſt, becauſe the penalties which he inflicteth flow from a right and juſt Law (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Rom.* 7. 12.) *The Law is holy, and juſt, and good*; and therefore all the awards that are grounded upon it muſt needs be juſt too. Fifthly, He puniſheth juſtly, becauſe he never puniſheth but upon proof and evidence; yea, he will make every mans Conſcience a witneſs againſt himſelf, or condemn him out of his own mouth. Sixthly, He puniſheth juſtly, becauſe he puniſheth impartially, neither fear, nor hope, nor favour, can divert him (*Iſa.* 27. 11. *Jer.* 22. 24.) Seventhly, He doth not only puniſh in a proportion to the Law, but often in a proportion to the ſin, and that not only to the meaſure of the ſin, but to the manner of the ſin; as that cruel King *Adonibezek* confeſſed, when himſelf was cruelly dealt with (his thumbs and great toes being cut off, *Judg.* 1. 7.) *As I have done ſo God hath requited me:* As if he had ſaid, God is juſt not only becauſe he hath puniſhed me in meaſure according to my ſin, but after the very ſame manner in which I ſinned, he hath, as it were, hit my ſin in the eye of all beholders; what I have done may be ſeen by what I ſuffer.

> Note, Secondly, *To condemn God, who is moſt juſt, is the higheſt point of injuſtice.*

Wilt thou condemn him that is moſt juſt? Wilt thou do ſuch a thing? What? Condemn him that is moſt juſt! How great a wickedneſs is this, if we conſider, Firſt, That whatever God doth, we ought to be patient under it. Secondly, That whatſoever God doth, we ought to acquieſce or reſt quietly and contentedly in it; that's more then to be patient. Thirdly, That whatſoever he doth, we ought to approve and juſtifie God in it. Fourthly, That we ought to magnifie God whatſoever he doth, though his diſpenſations are bitter and burthenſom; and if we do ſo we ſhall find the bittereſt diſpenſations ſweet to us. Now if we ought to be patient under, to acquieſce in, to approve of, yea, to magnifie and exalt the Name of God in all his dealings with us and determinations concerning us, then how ſinful is it to condemn him? What? Shall ſuch poor creatures as we take upon us to cenſure and condemn the works of God! Some ſay it at leaſt in their hearts, if they had the reins of government in their hands, they would carry things evener then God doth; they would put all things right, if they might have the rule; if they might a while do as they think fit, they would do all things fitly. Some will talk thus arrogantly of their fitneſs to govern the whole world, who have not wit enough to govern their own families; nor any grace at all to govern themſelves; yea, they will preſume they could govern all men, who are ſcarce fit to govern a heard of ſwine, or as *Job* ſpeaks (*Chap.* 30. 1.) *To be ſet over the dogs of a mans flock*; ſuch as theſe will take upon them to govern the world, and ſay they could do it better then 'tis done. Things ſhould not go thus, if they might have their will. Though indeed (like that raſh and inconſiderate young man in the fabulous Poet, who deſired for one day at leaſt to be Charioteer to the Sun) if they might have their will, they would ſet the whole world a-fire, or put all into a flame in one day. Thus, *Vain man would be wiſe* (as *Zophar* ſaid, *Chap.* 11. 12.) *though man be born like a wild Aſſes Colt*; that is, being altogether unwilling to be governed by any right Law, he would fain give the Law to and govern all; What is this but to condemn the moſt juſt? And how great, how blaſphemouſly impudent a wickedneſs is this!

But ſome may ſay, Did *Job* ever thus condemn God?

I anſwer; He did not condemn him in ſo many words, he did not formally ſit upon his Tribunal and condemn God, but he ſpake ſuch words as did ſhew a condemning of God, and *Elihu* juſtly condemned him for ſpeaking them.

> Hence Note, Laſtly, *Not to ſubmit freely to, or to complain of the dealings of God, is a condemning of God.*

This is a hard ſaying, we may be almoſt aſtoniſhed to hear it, What? Condemn God? Yea, ſo far as any man murmurs againſt the dealings of God, ſo far he condemns God. The Works of God muſt be ſubmitted to as well as his Word, his Diſpenſations muſt be obeyed as well as his Laws and Conſtitutions. Our complaints of what he doth are cenſures of his Perſon. We queſtion not only the Soveraignty and Power of God, but his very Wiſdom, and Truth, and Juſtice, when we reluct againſt any of his actings or awards concerning us, though they produce our greateſt ſufferings. This *Elihu* further aggravates in the next words, *Is it fit to ſay to a King, Thou art wicked? And to Princes, Ye are ungodly?* If men will be mannerly to Princes, how much more mannerly ought they to be towards God?

VERS. 18, 19.

Is it fit to ſay to a King, Thou art wicked? And to Princes, Ye are ungodly?

How much leſs to him that accepteth not the Perſons of Princes, nor regardeth the rich more then the poor? For they are all the work of his hands.

These two verſes are both an illuſtration, and a confirmation or proof of what *Elihu* ſpake laſt in the cloſe of the ſeventeenth verſe, *Wilt thou condemn him that is moſt juſt?* Hereupon he inſers,

Verſe 18. **Is it fit to ſay to a King, Thou art wicked?**

Thoſe words, **Is it fit**, are not literally and expreſly in the Hebrew; and therefore ſome connect theſe two verſes immediately with the former; *Wilt thou condemn him that is moſt juſt? Who ſaith to a King, O thou wicked; and to Princes, O ye ungodly.* That is, Who is ſo juſt, that he ſpares not to tell the greateſt Kings and Princes of their wickedneſs and ungodlineſs: Or as the Vulgar Tranſlation hath it, *Who ſaith to a King, O thou Apoſtate*: I tell thee, thou art fallen from that Juſtice and Righteouſneſs which thou didſt once exerciſe in thy Government. It is ſaid of *Nero*, he had his *five years* wherein he govern'd excellently, but afterward he proved Apoſtate, cruelly tyrannizing over (inſtead of ruling) his people: As there are Apoſtates in Spirituals, ſo in Civils; *An Apoſtate is an Hypocrite revealed*; *an Hypocrite is an Apoſtate vail'd:* God unvails Hypocrites of all ſorts, and will not fail ſooner or later to reprove their Apoſtacy. *It is better not to be good, then not to continue good:* Backſliders are worſe then they who never ſet one ſtep in the wayes of God and goodneſs.

Qui dicit Regi Apoſtata, qui vocat Duces impios, &c. Vulg.

An dicentē Regi O nequam, O improbe ingenuis, condemnares? Jun.

Quinquennium Neronis.

So then, according to this reading, the ſenſe may be given out thus: As if *Elihu* had ſaid, *How canſt thou (O* Job!) *poſſibly imagine that God ſhould be unjuſt, when he doth not forbear to tell the greateſt Kings of their injuſtice, and convince them of it; he who calleth degenerate Kings Apoſtates, and unjuſt Princes wicked; he that is thus impartial in reckoning with Kings, and the mighty men of the earth (as indeed God hath alwayes been, and will ever be) how ſhould he be unjuſt? Wilt thou condemn the moſt Juſt? Even him who is ſo juſt, that he rebukes injuſtice whereſoever he finds it, and* *who can find it whereſoever it it?* (Pſal. 105.14.) *He reproved Kings for their ſakes* (that is, for the ſake of his peculiar people, when they did them wrong,) *ſaying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my Prophets no harm:* Implying, that he truſts Kings with that great power to protect his anointed, and to ſave his Prophets from harm; and therefore would not take it well at their hands, if they abuſed their power to hurt and afflict them. This is a good reading, but I ſhall not inſiſt upon it, though ſome inſiſt much upon it, becauſe I would rather favour our own Tranſlation, and carry the Interpretation that way, as containing an argument to prove, that it is a moſt wicked thing to condemn God as unjuſt, becauſe men are ſcarce any where found ſo preſumptuous, or bold, as to ſay to a King, *Thou art wicked, or to Princes, ye are ungodly. It is much eaſier for any man, much more for great men to do evil, then for others to tell them ſo: And as the faults of Princes ſeldom find reprovers. ſo it requires a great deal of wiſpom, not to commit a fault in reproving them.*

Is it fit to ſay to a King, thou art wicked?] Is this a comly thing? Or will Kings endure it? And if ſo, doth it become thee, O *Job*, to ſpeak hardly of God? Or will he endure it? *Elihu* did not charge *Job* with ſpeaking evil of God directly; but would intimate to him, that while he was ſo unquiet under the afflicting hand of God, and preſſed him ſo often for a further hearing of his cauſe, he did very dangerouſly reflect upon his Juſtice; and that ſeeing we ſtand in awe of Kings and Soveraign Princes, and dare not misbehave our ſelves before them, nor let fall an unreverend word concerning them, how durſt he preſume to ſpeak any thing unſeemly of God? *Is it fit to ſay to a King,*

Thou art wicked?] Kings are ſupream, they are cloathed with Soveraign power over all perſons within their Dominion; is it therefore fit to uſe ſuch coarſe language, ſuch down-right unhewn ſpeeches in any addreſs to them; *Is it fit to ſay to a King, Thou art wicked?* The Original word imports the worſt ſort, the moſt infamous among wicked men; So Mr *Broughton* renders, *Is it meet that one ſay to a King, Belial?* Some give it in the Vocative caſe, is it meet for a Subject to ſay to his Soveraign, *O thou* Belial! *O thou wicked one?* Dare any ſpeak thus to a King?

This word *Belial* is often uſed in Scripture, to note, not only a wicked man in general, but an eminently wicked man, even a man in whom all wickedneſs is (as it were) centred and ſetled, the very lees and dregs of all men, who may be called wicked. When *Jezabel* procured and ſuborned two falſe witneſſes againſt *Naboth*, it is ſaid, *There came in two men, Children of Belial* (1 Kings 21. 13.) *and ſate before him: And the men of* Belial *witneſſed againſt him, even againſt* Naboth *in the preſence of the people, ſaying*, &c, Theſe witneſſes were perjured perſons; to tell a lie is the worſt of ſins, what then is it to ſwear a lie? No word could reach the height of this wickedneſs more fully, then to call them *Children of Belial*. When the Lord comforted the Church with the glad tydings of the Goſpel (*Nah.* 1. 15.) *Behold the feet of thoſe upon the Mountains that preach peace; O* Jeruſalem *keep thy ſolemn Feaſts, perform thy Vows*; He ſubjoyns this promiſe as a reaſon, *The wicked ſhall no more paſs through thee, he is utterly cut off:* We put in the Margin, *Belial ſhall no more paſs through thee*; that is, thou ſhalt then be freed from thoſe Belialiſts who formerly interrupted thy peace, by vexing and percecuting thee, or prophaned thy holy Aſſemblies by mixing themſelevs with thee: But I give thee aſſurance the time is coming, when *Belial* ſhall no more trouble thee. Yea *Belial* is a Title ſo full of wickedneſs, that it fits the Devil himſelf, whom the Scripture brands with that black mark, *The wicked one*, or *the evil one*. The Apoſtle puts that queſtion with much holy diſdain; (2 *Cor.* 6. 14, 15.) *What communion hath light with darkneſs? And what concord hath Chriſt with* Belial? That is, Chriſt with the Devil? They differ from the Devil only in fleſh and blood, in nature they are as bad as he, who bear his name.

Aliqui à בלי *ſine, &* טול *jugo deducunt, qui nullis legum vinculis teneatur aut jugo.*

This may yet further appear, if we look into the Grammatical derivation of it, *Belial*, is commonly expounded a man without a yoak, or a man that will not be yoaked; that is, a man who will not come under command, a lawleſs perſon; ſo we tranſlate the Apoſtle's word, (1 *Tim.* 1. 9.) *The Law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawleſs and diſobedient, for the ungodly, and for ſinners*, &c. That is, for the Sons of *Belial*, or, for ſuch as will not endure the yoak; the Law is a yoak, Chriſt calls the Law of the Goſpel his yoak (*Matth.* 11. 29.) and they that will not bear the yoak of Chriſt, ſhall never have benefit by the Croſs of Chriſt; we muſt take up the yoak of Chriſt, if we would taſte the fruit of the Croſs of Chriſt. Now a *Beliallist*, will not hear of, nor have to do with the yoak; he is like the wild Aſs deſcribed in the thirty ninth of *Job*, who will not be taught to plow, nor be bound in the furrow; you cannot make the wild Aſs work like the Ox. Wicked men have hard and ſtony hearts, yet ſuch ſoft, tender, and delicate necks, that they cannot abide the yoak; tis their bondage to be tyed to obedience.

Alii à יעל *proficere deducunt, quaſi ſignificet hominem qui ad nihil ſit utilis.* Merc.

Again, The notation of the word *Belial*, imports a perſon of no uſe, or altogether *unprofitable*, a man that is good for nothing; a meer unthrift, or ſpendthrift, a man that neither doth good to himſelf, nor to any others; as if he were born only to ſpoil and devour all that is before him, as if he came into the world to eat other mens labours; and not to labour that he might have to eat. Chriſt calleth the idle or ſlothful Servant, an *unprofitable Servant* (Matth. 25. 30.) and to be an unprofitable Servant, is to be a Son of *Belial*; one that hath no good in his heart, nor doth any good in his place, neither in his private nor publick capacity; neither in his own family, nor in the neighbourhood, and Nation where he lives. No man is born for himſelf, nor ought any man to live to himſelf. It were better not to live, then not to be doing good while we live. He that liveth only to profit himſelf, liveth to little purpoſe; to what purpoſe then doth he live, whoſe life is altogether unprofitable to himſelf? And indeed, he that is not in ſome reſpect or other a common good, or good to others, cannot be good, nor do any true good to himſelf; yet ſuch is the wicked man repreſented under the notion of this Text. Seeing then there are ſuch bad and baſe ſignificancies in the bowels of this word; is it ſufferable by a King? *Is it fit to ſay to a King, thou art* Belial, *or wicked?*

What can be ſaid more unfitly? What greater reproach can be caſt upon a King (who ought to be a living Law, a breathing Law, as alſo the Keeper of the Law by way of conſervation and protection) then to call him *Belial*, or one that will not keep the Law at all by way of obſervation? There are two wayes of keeping the Law, Firſt, By Conſervation; ſo Kings preſerve the Laws that they may have their free courſe to others, and be obeyed by others; in which ſenſe Kings are commonly called *Keepers of both Tables*. Secondly, By Obſervation; and as in the former ſenſe 'tis the prerogative of Kings to be Keepers of the Law, ſo it is their piety and their goodneſs to be Keepers of them in the latter. 'Tis poſſible a King may be a Keeper of the Law by Conſervation, and yet not be a Keeper of it by Obſervation; but then he ſhines moſt bright in the ſphere of his Royal Soveraignty, when he is every way a Keeper of the Law of God, and (ſo far as they reſpect himſelf) of his own,

Further, Is it fit to ſay to a King, *Belial?* As *Belial* deſigns an unprofitable perſon, a man good for nothing, a man of no uſe; what? Upon the Throne, and yet of no uſe to a Nation? How high an indignity is this to Regal dignity? Kings are ſet up for the greateſt uſe, for the moſt important ſervices, even for the profit and advantage of mankind, eſpecially of all within their Kingdoms and Dominions; as all are to ſerve them in their ſtate, ſo they count it their chiefeſt honour to advance the peace and profit of all their peaceable and profitable ſubjects: Therefore nothing can be ſaid more diſhonourably to a King then this, Thou art good for nothing, an unprofitable perſon, *Belial. Is it fit to ſay to a King, Thou art wicked?*

And to Princes, ye are ungodly?

Principes hic vocantur. נריבים *à liberalitate & munificentia: quaſi tu dicas* εὐεργέτας. Drui.

The word rendred **Princes**, ſignifies *munificent, bountiful, free, willing*; ſo Princes are called, to ſhew what they are or ſhould be, men of bountiful, noble, munificent, heroick, free ſpirits, open hearted, and open handed; they who are ſo, are Princes in truth as well as in Title. The holy Spirit of God, or God the holy Spirit, is called a *Princely Spirit* (Pſal. 51. 12.) we read it *Free Spirit*; and this free Princely Spirit of God, makes all his people of a free Princely Spirit, of a large heart, both as to duty Godwards,

wards, and as to Charity man-wards; (*Pſal.* 110. 3.) *In the day of thy power the people ſhall be willing*; they ſhall be as Princes; they ſhall ſerve thee as Sons, not as Slaves; a Royal Spirit is conveyed into them by the Spirit in the day of the Power of Jeſus Chriſt, or when he conquers them to the obedience of himſelf. By this appellation, worldly Princes, the Princes of this World are expreſſed in ſacred language, that ſo their very names might mind them of being ſuch, and of doing ſuch things as are the ornament both of their perſons and places. Theſe two high Titles in the Text, Kings and Princes, are ſometimes taken for the ſame; and in ſtricteſt ſenſe, Princes are the next Degree, or but one remove from Kings.

Again, There are ſome called Princes, who have the ſupream power within their own Territories. Others are called Princes, who have a delegated or derived power from Kings. The Apoſtle ſpeaks of ſuch (1 *Pet.* 2. 13.) charging the Church and people of God, *to ſubmit to every Ordinance of man for the Lords ſake, whether to the King as ſupream; or unto Governours as ſent by him, for the puniſhment of evil doers, and for the praiſe of them that do well. Elihu* brings in both, for the fuller confirmation of his point, and the ſtronger conviction of *Job*, *Is it fit to ſay to a King, thou art wicked? And to Princes* (who ſtand about his Throne, and ſerve him in his Government) *ye are ungodly?* Ye regard neither right nor reaſon, neither what's fit to be done, nor what to be adviſed? That's the ſenſe of the words as they are an argument from the leſs to the greater; if it be an uncomely and undecent thing (ſaith *Elihu*) *to ſay to a King thou art wicked; and to Princes ye are ungodly: How much more to him that accepteth not the perſons of Princes?* &c.

Hence Note, Firſt, *Men are not all of a rank, or all are not of an equal ſtate in this World.*

This Text ſpeaks of Kings and Princes; and the moſt of men are inferiour not only to Kings, but to Princes. God hath not made man upon earth as *minims* in writing, all of a height; but as in the Alphabet of Letters, ſome are longer and deeper then others; ſo in the Alphabet of mankind, ſome men are bigger and higher then others. Kings and Princes are but men, yet they are men in a great Letter, or they are among men as the *Aleph* among the Letters, which as it is firſt in order, ſo it ſignifies a Prince, a Chief, a Leader. And if the moſt wiſe God had not ordered ſuch an inequality among men, how ſhould order have been kept among men? Nothing (conſidering the corruptions and luſts of men) can be more unequal then that equality which ſome have vainly contended for among men. All men would fall down into confuſion, if ſome were not above. *That which keeps all up, is, only that ſome are uppermoſt, Kings and Princes.*

Secondly, (which is here principally aimed at,) Note, *It is moſt uncomely and ſinful, to revile or give reproachful words to Kings or Princes.*

When we ſay *It is not fit*, we ſay leſs then the thing is, or then the Text intendeth; there is more evil in it then a bare unfitneſs, 'tis indeed a very great wickedneſs, and ungodlineſs, *to ſay to a King, thou art wicked, and to Princes ye are ungodly.* To ſay ſo, is expreſly againſt the Rule (*Exod.* 22. 28.) *Thou ſhalt not revile the Gods* (or, as we put in the Margin, *Judges*) *nor curſe the Ruler of thy people:* And the Apoſtle *Paul* quotes this Text (*Acts* 23. 5.) when himſelf had ſlipt in that point, as he ſtood before the Judgment ſeat, and pleaded his own integrity; for when *Ananias* the high Prieſt *commanded them that ſtood by to ſmite him on the mouth*; Paul *ſaid unto him, God ſhall ſmite thee, thou whited Wall:* This drew a reproof upon him preſently from them that ſtood by (*verſ.* 4.) *Revileſt thou Gods high Prieſt?* And what doth *Paul* anſwer? (*verſ.* 5.) *I wiſt not Brethren, that he was the high Prieſt; for it is written, Thou ſhalt not ſpeak evil of the Ruler of thy people.* There hath been much diſpute about that anſwer, *I wiſt not that he was the high Prieſt:* Certainly *Paul* ſaw and knew that he was the high Prieſt; and it is as certain, that he did not tell a lie, when he ſaid, *I wiſt not that he was the high Prieſt:* His meaning I conceive was only this, as if he had ſaid, having received ſuch *unjuſt uſage in the Court, as to be openly ſmitten in time of hearing, I confeſs I was in a paſſion, and did not conſider, as I ought, that it was the high Prieſt; I ſpake raſhly and unadviſedly. I wiſt not,* that is, *I deliberated not with my ſelf who it was I ſpake to, for I ought not to have uſed ſuch language; the Scripture alſo having forbidden it, which ſaith, Thou ſhalt not curſe the Ruler of thy people.* It will not bear us out, to uſe ill words to Magiſtrates, though (as *Paul*'s caſe was) we are ill uſed by them. *Shimei* taking the advantage of *David*'s affliction, roſe up to this height of impudence againſt him, mentioned with indignation by *Elihu* in the Text, he openly and to his face called him *Belial* (2 *Sam.* 16. 5. 7.) *Come out thou bloody man, and thou man of* Belial: But we know what the iſſue was, he paid dear for it at laſt; though *David* forgave him at preſent, and did not ſuffer *Abiſhai* to take a ſudden revenge, yet upon his death-bed he delivered him over to his Son *Solomon*, to deal with him as he ſhould ſee good. And ſo great is the offenſiveneſs and unfitneſs of ſpeaking thus unto a King, that the Jews joyned it with blaſphemy againſt God himſelf. We read (1 *Kings* 21. 13.) how two falſe Witneſſes came againſt *Naboth*, ſaying, *Naboth blaſphemed God and the King*; as much as to ſay, we heard *Naboth* ſay of the King, *Belial*; and as ſoon as theſe two had brought in their evidence againſt him, that he had blaſphemed God and the King, they drew him out, and ſtoned him: Blaſphemy againſt God was death by the expreſs letter of the Law (*Lev.* 24. 15, 16.) It was alſo death by the ſame Law for any man to curſe his Father or his Mother (*Exod.* 21. 17.) And becauſe the King is (*Pater Patriæ*) the Father of his Country, it ſeems the curſing or blaſpheming of him, was alſo puniſhable by death. The Apoſtle *Jude* uſeth an equivalent word in the Greek (*Ep.* of *Jude*, *ver.* 8.) reproving a wicked Sect in thoſe times; They fear not *to blaſpheme, or ſpeak evil of Dignities:* There is blaſphemy againſt Princes, who are titular Gods, as well as againſt the only true God. Kings are to be feared, to be ſubmitted to, they are to be prayed for, therefore not to be reviled. *Is it fit to ſay unto a King, Belial?*

'Ουκ ἤδειν.

Yet this doth not ſtop the mouths of all men from telling Kings and Princes their faults, nor doth it juſtifie a ſilent diſſembling of them; much leſs doth it open the mouths of any to dawb Kings and Princes with the untempered morter of flatteries; Kings are no more to be flattered then they are to be reproached. Dignities muſt not be ſpoken evil of, yet they may be prudently and humbly told of their evils, and informed of their failings plainly. When *Eliah* met *Ahab*, who ſaid, *Art thou he that troubleth* Iſrael? *Eliah* anſwered (1 *Kings* 18. 18.) *I have not troubled* Iſrael, *but thou and thy Fathers houſe, in that ye have forſaken the Commandments of the Lord, and thou haſt followed* Baal. And we read how boldly *Eliſha* carried it to the King of *Iſrael* (2 *Kings* 3. 13, 14.) *What have I to do with thee? Get thee to the Prophets of thy Father, and to the Prophets of thy Mother: And* Eliſha *ſaid, as the Lord of Hoſts liveth before whom I ſtand; Surely, were it not that I regard the preſence of* Jehoſhaphat *the King of* Judah, *I would not look toward thee, nor ſee thee.* Thus the Prophets dealt with much gracious ſeverity towards mighty Princes. The Prophet *Iſaiah* feared not to ſay (*Iſa.* 1. 10.) *Hear the Word of the Lord ye Rulers of* Sodome, *Give ear unto the Law of our God, ye people of* Gomorrah; implying, that the Rulers of *Jeruſalem* were then but ſuch as the Rulers of *Sodom* once were, and that the people were no better then the people of *Gomorrah*; and it is conceived, that for this plainneſs and liberty of ſpeech, which the Prophet *Iſaiah* uſed toward the Princes and Rulers of *Judah*, he was put to death, being cut or mangled aſunder with a wooden Saw. One might think that *Ezekiel* did much forget himſelf, when he gave thoſe opprobrious terms to *Zedekiah* King of *Judah* (*Ezek.* 21. 25.) *And thou prophane wicked Prince of* Iſrael, *whoſe day is come, when iniquity ſhall have an end*; yet he ſinned not in this harſh reproof of his ſin, becauſe commanded of God to do it, and eſpecially directed by the holy Spirit. The Prophets might not diminiſh a word, but muſt give out what God gave in. *John* the Baptiſt *reproved* Herod *for* Herodias *his Brother* Philips *Wife, and for all the evils which he had done* (Luke 3. 19.) And Jeſus Chriſt himſelf called *Herod, Fox*; (Luke 13. 32.) The Prophets were often inſtructed and Commiſſioned to propheſie againſt the *Mountains*; that is, againſt the Princes and

Powers of the world; and therefore take the ſtate of the point, and of our duty about it, in theſe few concluſions, that we may not run upon the Rocks either way; neither upon the Rock of blaſphemy againſt Kings and Princes on the one ſide, nor upon the Rock of flattery on the other.

Firſt, The Power or State of Princes muſt never be reviled nor evil ſpoken of; kingly Power and Authority is alwayes to be reverenced and honoured; though the Prince be wicked, yet his Power is to be reverenced, and that's the pureſt reverence. For to reverence the Powers, only, becauſe, or when they are good, and do us good, and rule every way according to our mind, this is but a piece of ſelfiſhneſs; but when Princes are evil and bring evils upon us, yet to bear reſpect to the Power and Authority which they Exerciſe; this is to honour God, and to give true ſubmiſſion to his Ordinance. Whatſoever the perſon is, the power muſt be reverentially ſubmitted to.

Regia per ſe dignitas, nunquam non eſt colenda, etiam cum princeps iniquus eſt.

Secondly, It is high wickedneſs to ſpeak evil of the perſons of juſt and righteous Princes; that every man will acknowledge.

Thirdly, Kings and Princes muſt not be reproved for perſonal or private faults publickly. To do ſo is againſt the rule in any mans caſe; much more in the caſe of Kings and Princes.

Fourthly, Kings are not to be reproved for any of their faults, but by whoſe who have a Call to it; that was the reaſon of the liberty which the old Prophets uſed towards Kings, they were ſpecially commanded and Commiſſioned by God for it, and the peril was upon their own heads if they did it not; it is not for every one to reprove Princes, but for thoſe that are called to it.

Laſtly, Even thoſe that are called to it muſt do it with much ſubmiſſion; though they muſt not do it to halves and deceitfully, yet they are to do it reſpectfully. It is not fit to ſay to a King, *Belial*; ſuch rough and unhewn language is not for Princes: their fauls muſt only be inſinuated, if that may ſerve, as *Nathan* dealt with *David*, who though he knew what his ſin was, yet he did not ſay to him, *Thou Murtherer, thou Adulterer*, but intimated the matter by a Parable, and made him covertly, or in a third perſon charge himſelf, before he charged him, or applyed the Parable perſonally to him, with, *Thou art the man*. When *Miriam* the Siſter and *Aaron* the Brother of *Moſes* ſpake againſt him, becauſe of the *Ethiopian* Woman whom he had married (*Numb.* 12. 1.) though they were thus neerly related, yet ſpeaking irreverently of *Moſes* the Chief Magiſtrate, the Lord ſaid to them (*ver.* 8.) *Wherefore were ye not afraid to ſpeak againſt my Servant* Moſes ? Yet how common is this ſin ? The tongues of men walk exceeding looſly in their diſcourſies about the perſons and powers of Princes; and we every where find moſt pleaſed to hear well of themſelves, and ill of others, or to ſpeak well of themſelves, and ill of others, and the higher they are who are ſpoken of, or of whom they ſpeak evil, the more they are pleaſed both in hearing and ſpeaking evil of them. How unruly are their tongues, who cannot forbear their Rulers! Thus much of *Elihu*'s queſtion, as it is reſolved into a Negative propoſition, *It is not fit to ſay to a King, thou art ungodly.* We may further conſider it as an argument from the greater to the leſs, to prove, That it is a moſt wicked thing to ſpeak a word unduely of God. *Is it fit to ſay to a King, Thou are wicked ? And to Princes, ye are ungodly ?*

Verſe 19. How much leſs to him that accepteth not the perſons of Princes?

Who is that ? The words are a clear Periphraſis of God, he accepts not the perſons of Princes. As if *Elihu* had ſaid; the Kings and Princes of the Earth, expect ſuch great reſpect from their ſubjects, that no man ſhould dare to cenſure them or ſpeak evil of them, though they do evil, or deal unjuſtly; how much more unfit is it to ſpeak evil of God, or to charge his government with injuſtice, who never doth any evil, all whoſe wayes are not only juſt, but juſtice. He that accepteth not the perſons of Princes, who are the greateſt of men, can have neither will nor motive to deal unjuſtly with any man. I ſhall not ſtay to ſhew what it is to accept perſons ? Becauſe that hath been ſhewed at the ſeventh verſe of the thirteenth Chapter, as alſo *Chap.* 32. 21. only I'le give it in one word; To accept perſons is to have more reſpect to the man then to the matter; and that's a very common fault among men, and as commonly condemned by God. 'Tis a received axiom; *He that would or doth put on the perſon of a Judge, muſt put off the perſon of a friend*; that is, he muſt not be ſway'd by any reſpect whatſoever of friendſhip, or allyance, but muſt judge purely as the cauſe deſerveth.

Nor ſhall I ſtay to urge the greatneſs of the ſin of ſpeaking any thing uncomely of God, that alſo hath been ſpoken to in many former paſſages of this Chapter. Only from theſe words, *How much leſs to him that accepteth not the perſon of Princes ?*

Note Firſt, *That which ought not to be done or ſpoken to the greateſt of men, ought much leſs to be either done or ſpoken to God.*

The reaſon is, becauſe, Firſt, God is infinitely more to be reverenced then any man. Secondly, Becauſe God is infinitely more able to take vengeance, and certainly will, of any that ſhall do or ſpeak evil to him, then the greateſt among the Children of men. Yet how many are there who dare not offend a man not a great man eſpecially, either by word or deed, who are not afraid by both to offend and provoke the great God ? O remember, the force of this Text; if it be not fit to ſpeak unduely of Princes, How much leſs of him that *accepteth not the Perſons of Princes ?*

Hence Note, Secondly, *God is no accepter of perſons.*

He hath no reſpect to Princes in prejudice to truth and righteouſneſs, *but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteouſneſs* (be he never ſo poor) *is accepted with him* (Acts 10. 35.) and in every Nation he that feareth him not, but worketh unrighteouſneſs (be he never ſo great) is unacceptable yea abominable to him. The Scripture often attributes this glory to God (*Deut.* 10. 17. 2 *Chron.* 19. 7. *Gal.* 2. 6. *Col.* 3. 25.) And as it is the glory of God, that he is no accepter of perſons, ſo it is the duty of man (*Deut.* 1. 17.) Judgment muſt proceed and conclude with reſpect to the Rule, and command of God, not with reſpect to the perſons of men, or our relations to them. *Levi* was highly commended for this (*Deut.* 33. 9.) *who ſaid unto his Father and to his Mother, I have not ſeen him; neither did he acknowledge his Brethren, nor knew his own Children*, &c. When man accepteth not the perſons of men he acteth moſt like God, of whom *Elihu* ſaith, *He accepteth not the perſons of Princes,*

Nor regardeth the rich more then the poor.

That's a further deſcription of God; he doth not regard that is, acknowledge or know the one more then the other; he is (in the beſt things) as communicative to, and converſeth as familiarly with the poor as the rich; yea he doth not value or prize the rich man more then the poor; the poor man is worth as much as the rich man in Gods account; ſuppoſe the rich man worth thouſands, yea ten thouſands of Gold and Silver, and the poor man ſo poor that he is not worth a Shilling, yet in the account of God the poor man is worth as much as the rich man.

נכרו *Agnoſcere, familiariter tractare.*

The Scripture ſpeaks of two ſorts both of rich and poor men; there are men rich in ſpirituals, ſuch Chriſt intimates, who are (*Luke* 12. 20.) *rich towards God*, or as he ſpeaks of the Church of *Smyrna* (Rev. 2. 9.) rich in grace, *I know thy poverty, but thou art rich*; That is, I know thou art poor in earthly pelf, but rich in ſpirituals. The Apoſtle *James* puts the queſtion (*Chap.* 2. 5.) *Hath not God choſen the poor of this World rich in faith, and heirs of the Kingdome.* Now, it is moſt certain, that God regardeth the rich in ſpirituals, more then the poor in ſpirituals, he highly regardeth thoſe that *are poor in ſpirit*, and pronounceth them *bleſſed* (*Matth.* 5. 3.) *for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven*, but he regardeth not thoſe who are poor in ſpirituals; not them eſpecially who boaſt of their ſpiritual riches when they have none (they that have them are thankful for them, they do not boaſt of them) as the Church of *Laodicea* did, of whom Chriſt ſaid (*Rev.* 3. 16, 17.) *I will ſpew thee out of my mouth, becauſe thou ſayeſt I am rich and increaſed in goods, and knoweſt not that thou art poor.* Thus you ſee, there are a ſort of rich men, whom Chriſt regardeth more then the poor of that ſort. But as poor and rich are diſtinguiſhed meerly by abundance and want, by the ſmalneſs and greatneſs of their portion in the things of this world, as *Dives* and *Lazarus* in the Parable were, ſo he regardeth not the rich more then the poor. When a poor man is gracious as well as poor, God regardeth him more then any rich man who hath no grace; and when either both have grace alike, or both are alike without grace, he regardeth them both alike. When rich and poor have grace, they are both greatly regarded, and when neither of them have grace, neither of them are at all regarded by the God of all grace. Thus 'tis plain, *God regardeth the rich no more then the poor, nor the poor any whit leſs then the rich.*

שוע *eſt dives opulentus; quidam volunt deductum à* ישע *ſervando quod multos ſervare & juvare poſſit, vel à* שוע *clamando quod opulenti liberius & audaciùs loquantur.*

The word rendred *rich*, ſignifieth alſo *bountiful* (*Iſa.* 32. 5.) 'Tis alſo rendred, *The helpful, the ſaving man*; for though rich men are not alwayes helpful with their riches, nor ready to ſave others in diſtreſs; yet rich men may do both: They have alwayes in their hand power and uſually opportunity to be helpful to the poor, and to ſave the diſtreſſed. And ſurely, *as the Lord regardeth not the rich more then the poor*; ſo he regardeth thoſe rich men leaſt of all, who have no regard to help and ſave the poor. Once more, Some derive the word which we tranſlate *rich*, from a root which ſignifieth to *clamour*, or to ſpeak out and boldly, which complies well with that ſentence of *Solomon* (Pro. 18. 23.) *The poor uſeth intreaties* (that is, he ſpeaketh humbly or by way of ſupplication) *but the rich anſwereth roughly.* And as God regardeth not the rich more then the poor, ſo he regardeth thoſe rich men leaſt, who ſpeak loudly and roughly to the poor. Having thus opened the aſſertion of *Elihu*, that *God regardeth not the rich more then the poor*; let us conſider the reaſon of it in the next words.

For they are all the work of his hands.

As if he had ſaid, God cannot but deal impartially with all, becauſe all are the work of his hands: What reaſon hath he to reſpect one more then another, ſeeing the one is no more to him then t'other, they are all the work of his hands. Man as man is *the Off-ſpring of God* (Acts 17. 28.) He is alſo *the work of his hands*; that is, man is made by his power; as man deſcendeth from man, ſo he is called the fruit of the womb; but as man is the Off-ſpring of God, ſo he is called the work of his hands, and his hands have wrought the poor man as well as the rich; *They are all the work of his hands* in a two-fold reſpect.

Firſt, In their natural conſtitution God hath moulded them in the ſame faſhion, he hath given each of them a body and a Soul; a body framed of the ſame parts, a Soul conſiſting of the ſame powers. God hath beſtowed as much care and coſt upon the making of a poor mans body and Soul, as upon the rich mans. The richeſt man in the world, cannot boaſt that he hath any one member in his body or faculty in his Soul, more then a poor man hath.

Secondly; Look upon the rich and poor in their Civil ſtate, and ſo likewiſe they are the work of his hands: And that I conceive, is here intended as much as, if not more, then the former; not only is God the maker of the poor and of the rich in their natural ſtate, Soul and body; but as poor, and rich, he is the maker of them; that is, he maketh one man poor, and another man rich, as himſelf pleaſeth. (*Prov.* 22. 2.) *The rich and the poor meet together, the Lord is the maker of them all.* He hath made them men, and he hath made them rich or poor men. There is as much of the power and wiſdom of God ſeen in making ſome men poor and others rich, as there is in making them men; yea God thinks himſelf as much honoured in our acknowledgements that the poor with their poverty, as that the rich with all their riches, *are the work of his hands.*

Hence Note, Firſt, *Poor men are as much the work of God as the rich.*

As they have the ſame nature, and are of the ſame matter, as they are both made of the ſame ſtuff, or are both of a piece, ſo they have the ſame maker: And their maker hath been at as much charge in the making of the one, as in the making of the other: yea, and uſually, the poor man yields him a better rent, and brings more into his Treaſury then the rich man doth.

Secondly Note, *It is the Lord who makes men poor, and makes men rich.*

Agur prayed (*Prov.* 30. 8.) *Give me neither poverty nor riches. Agur* knew poverty was a gift of God as well as riches. It hath been ſaid (though prophanely) *Every man is the faſhioner of his own fortune, or the contriver of his own condition.* Some who acknowledge God hath made them men, think they have made themſelves rich, or great men; and we commonly look on thoſe who fail in their worldly Eſtates, that they have made themſelves poor and low in the world. I grant, there is a ſenſe wherein men make themſelves rich, and make themſelves poor; that is, when they do either by their ſins. God is not ſo engaged in the making of a man rich, when he enricheth himſelf by his ſin, by deceiving or oppreſſing his Brethren, as when he groweth rich in a way of Righteouſneſs: He that is inriched by oppreſſion, or deceit, or ſets his neſt on high by flattery, or by fraud, cannot thank God for his riches, or honours; and if he doth, he blaſphemouſly makes God a partner in thoſe ſins by which he hath got his riches and honours. For though it be a truth that there is a hand of God in his gettings (for all the craft, and policy, and oppreſſion which men uſe, will never be able to make them either rich or great, if God did not permit and order it ſo) yet the heart of God is not with him in it, and God will not own his own hand in giving them wealth or power, further then as they are a teſtimony againſt them, of his goodneſs, and their ingratitude. We may alſo ſay of ſome poor men, they have made themſelves poor, not God; He made *Job* poor, *The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away*, was his humble acknowledgement (*Chap.* 1. 21.) but there are ſome, of whom we cannot ſo much ſay God hath made them poor by his ſad providences to them, as that they have made themſelves poor by their idleneſs and improvidence, or by their prodigality and vain profuſeneſs; yet even of ſuch poor men we may truely ſay, there is a righteous hand of God upon them in leaving or giving them up to the luſts of their own heart, their lazineſs, or laviſhneſs, which produce their utter undoing, and bring them to a morſel of bread. So that let men be in what condition they will, the Lord is the former of it. The diligent hand maketh rich, but it is with the bleſſing of God; and when an indiligent man becomes poor, it is the curſe of God upon him for his ſin, as well as the conſequent of his ſin. Yea, when an honeſt diligent man becomes poor (that's the caſe of ſome) it is the Lords with-holding of his bleſſing, which makes all his labours fruitleſs and ſucceſsleſs; ſuch a man is indeed one of God's poor, or a poor man of God's making; and God will ſurely make the poverty of ſuch a man (if he continue in a believing dependance upon him, and in an humble ſubmiſſion to him, if he know how to want as well as to abound, how to be hungry as well as to be full, and in every eſtate hath learned therewith to be content, as the holy Apoſtle had) then (I ſay) God will ſurely make the poverty of ſuch a man better to him then riches, or the largeſt portion of this worlds enjoyment. The poor of God's ſpecial making, are under his ſpecial keeping and bleſſing: As they have but little, ſo they want nothing; God himſelf will alwayes be not only enough, but all to them.

Take two further inferences from the whole verſe.

First, *Princes, great and rich men muſt not expect to fare better with God becauſe of their greatneſs or riches.* For,

He doth not regard the rich more then the poor.

Secondly, *The meaneſt man needs not fear that he ſhall fare the worſe before God for his meanneſs.*

The moſt high God will not overlook thoſe in a low eſtate, he regardeth the poor as well as the rich; and that's matter of great comfort to the poor, when diſregarded by the rich. Though the Lord doth not make all men of an equal reſpect in the world, 'tis his will that ſome men ſhould be more regarded by men then others are, yet himſelf (in the ſenſe opened) beareth an equal reſpect to them all; *He regardeth not the rich more then the poor, for they are all the work of his hands.*

VERS. 20, 21, 22.

In a moment ſhall they die, and the people ſhall be troubled at midnight, and paſs away: And the mighty ſhall be taken away without hands.

For his eyes are upon the wayes of man, and he ſeeth all his doings.

There is no darkneſs nor ſhadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themſelves.

IN theſe three verſes *Elihu* doth two things principally: Firſt, he ſets forth the judgments of God: Secondly, He gives an account of the equity of them. He ſets forth the judgments of God,

Firſt, More generally, Upon People and Nations.

Secondly, Upon Princes and Governours; all this in the twentieth verſe. And in this judgment of God upon Nations we may take notice,

Firſt, Of the nature of it, and how it is deſcribed; and that is laid down three wayes. Firſt, *They ſhall die.* Secondly, *They ſhall be troubled.* Thirdly, *They ſhall paſs away.* Under theſe Notions the judgment of God upon People and Nations is expreſt.

Secondly, We may here conſider the ſuddenneſs of all this, *In a moment they ſhall die.*

Thirdly, We may conſider the ſeaſon (or rather as to man, the unſeaſonableneſs) of it, it ſhall be (though in a dreaming time) when they little dream of it; *The people ſhall be troubled at midnight.* Thus we have the judgment or ſad diſpenſation of God deſcribed in this twentieth verſe, both as to the acts of it, and likewiſe as to the manner of it upon the people.

Elihu having ſhewed the judgment of God upon the people in the former part of this twentieth verſe, declares alſo his judgment upon the Princes in the latter end of it; *The mighty ſhall be taken away without hand.* Where we ſee, Firſt, How Princes are expreſſed or called, *They are the mighty.* Secondly, What kind of judgment befalleth them, *They are taken away.* Thirdly, The manner how this is brought about, *They are taken away without hand.*

From the matter of the judgment of God both upon people and Princes, *Elihu* proceeds to give the reaſon why the Lord deals thus with both; this he doth in the two verſes following,

Firſt, Becauſe of their ſin; *They are workers of iniquity*; in the cloſe of the twenty-ſecond verſe.

Secondly, Becauſe, as they are workers of iniquity, ſo God is fully acquainted with all their iniquity, *&c.* *He ſeeth all their works*, and the iniquity of their works, nothing can cover it or them from his ſight; and therefore, as *Elihu* aſſerts the omniſcience of God poſitively in the twenty-firſt ver. ſo negatively in the twenty-ſecond verſe, *There is no darkneſs, nor ſhadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themſelves.* Now ſeeing the works of thoſe Nations and Princes were naught, and the naughtineſs of them was evident to God, how could he but puniſh them? And how juſt and righteous is he in puniſhing of them? By all this *Elihu* clears his general Aſſertion, or the point he drives at all this Chapter over, namely, to prove that God is righteous; againſt which poſition, he tells us before, *Job* having ſpoken dangerouſly, he was engaged to maintain it vigorouſly; which he doth here, eſpecially in that eminent branch of it, mentioned at the nineteenth verſe, *That he accepteth not the perſons of Princes, nor regardeth the rich more then the poor.* For, Princes as well as common people fall under his hand. So much for the parts and reſolution of theſe three verſes, as alſo for the general ſcope of them.

Yet before I go on to the particular explication of them, I would only mind the Reader of another Tranſlation of the whole twentieth verſe, which varieth ſomewhat from ours, rendring it as a deſcription of the judgment of God upon Princes, by the violence of the people; whereas according to our Tranſlation, it is a deſcription of the judgment of God both upon people and Princes. The Tranſlation I mean, is that of the Vulgar Latine, which runs in this form.

Verſe 20. **Suddenly ſhall they die, at midnight the people ſhall be in a tumult, and ſhall paſs over, and take away the violent man without hand.**

Subito morientur & in media nocte turbabuntur populi, & pertranſibunt, & auferent, violentum abſque manu. Vulg.

This Reading, and the Expoſitions given upon it, prove, That God is ſo far from accepting the perſons of Princes, that he does not only tell them their own, and reprove them to their face for their wickedneſs and Apoſtacy (as was ſhewed from the former reading of the eighteenth verſe) but deprives them alſo of their dignity, and pulls them from their power; and he doth it in ſuch a manner, that every man may underſtand and ſee the hand of God in it, becauſe they ſee no hands in it. The leſs of man appears in any work of providence, whether it be in a way of mercy or of judgment, the more of God is to be acknowledged in it: And where nothing of men appeareth, all, or the whole muſt be attributed unto God. The judgment which *Elihu* ſpeaks of here, ſeems (according to this Interpretation) to have much of man in it; yet becauſe the men ſuppoſed to be in it, are looked upon as ſuch as can do little in it, or ought to do nothing in it, therefore 'tis ſaid to be done *without hands.* Hiſtories have given many examples, and dreadful inſtances of ſuch calamities falling upon Princes by the riſing of the people; and then they are ſaid to be *taken away*

Without hand.] That is, Without any foreſeen appearance of ſuch a miſchief; a hand which was not thought of being lifted up againſt them. It is ſaid of wicked *Zimri*, who ſlew his Maſter, that when he ſaw the people conſpire againſt him, and the City taken, *he went into the Palace of the King's houſe, and* (in the heat of his rage) *ſet it on fire, and burnt the Kings houſe over him, and dyed* (1 Kin. 16. 18.) *Juſtine* reports the like concluſion (upon a like occaſion) of *Sardanapalus*, that effeminate and voluptuous Monarch of the Aſſyrian Empire. They who proſecute this Tranſlation, conceive *Elihu* reflecting upon *Job* in all this, who was very uncivilly treated by his own people, from whom he had deſerved higheſt reſpects, as he complained at the thirtieth Chapter, they raiſed up againſt him the wayes of their deſtruction; they uſed him very rudely, even deſpightfully; and he was in a pining conſuming condition, as a man taken away without hand. But I ſhall not inſiſt upon this reading, but take the words according to the ſcope before given, as a deſcription of a mixt judgment from God; a judgment partly upon the people, and partly upon Princes, a judgment upon the many, and a judgment upon the mighty; *In a moment ſhall they die.*

In a moment.] The Text is, *a moment they die*; Not, that they ſhall die but a moment, or be only for a moment dead, but they ſhall die before a moment is over; there is an Ellipſis of the prepoſition [*Beth*,] in the Hebrew, which we ſupply in our Tranſlation, *In a moment they ſhall die*: A moment is the leaſt particle or parcel of time; we cannot imagine any thing ſhorter then a moment, 'tis the very point of time (*Pſal.* 30. 5.) *His anger endureth for a moment* (ſaith *David*, when he would ſhew how very ſhort (comparatively) the anger of God towards his people is) *but in his favour is life*: Thus *Solomon* (Prov. 12. 19.) *He that ſpeaketh truth, his tongue ſhall be eſtabliſhed; but a lying tongue is for a moment*: A lye cannot laſt long; he that ſpeaks truth, what he ſpeaks to day, is good to morrow, and to morrow, and will be good for ever; but a lying tongue is for a moment; that is, his lies will be diſcovered, and uſually they are quickly diſcovered; though he live long to tell lies, or doth nothing but tell lies as long as he liveth, yet his lies ~~are not~~ long-lived. *Job* deſcribing the joy of the hypocrite (*Chap.* 20. 5.) ſaith, *It is but for a moment*; like a fire of Thorns, a blaze and gone: When the Apoſtle would ſtrengthen and encourage the hearts of Believers againſt all the troubles and ſorrows of this preſent life, he calls them (2 *Cor.* 4. 17.) Firſt, *Light*, Secondly, *ſhort*; *Our light afflictions that are but for a moment, work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.* And that we might know how quick the Devil was at his work with Chriſt, the Scripture ſaith (*Luke.* 4. 5.) *He ſhewed him all the Kingdoms of the World in a moment of time.* As to ſhew the inſtantaneouſneſs of our change from death to life in the reſurrection, it is ſaid (1 *Cor.* 15. 52.) *In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the laſt trump, we ſhall be changed:* So to ſhew the extream ſuddenneſs of theſe mens change from life to death, it is ſaid here, *In a moment*

רגע: *Punctum, momentum, tempus exiguum*: Ellipſis præpoſitionis ב

They ſhall die.] They? Who? Both great and ſmall, one and another of them ſhall die, or be ſwept away by death in a moment. There is a twofold death;

Firſt, Natural; When either ſickneſs or old age diſſolves the earthly houſe of this Tabernacle. The natural death of ſome is very lingring and ſlow, others are ſuddenly ſnatcht away, they die in a moment.

Secondly, There is a violent death; thus many are taken away by the ſword Martial, or Civil, others caſually: The Text is true both of natural and violent death, either of them may overtake us in a moment, yet I conceive the latter is here chiefly intended, *In a moment ſhall they die*; that is, ſome ſudden deſtruction ſhall come upon them, they ſhall be ſurprized by an unlooked for diſaſter, and removed out of the World, while they had not a thought of their removal.

Hence Note, Firſt, *Death of any ſort, may befall all ſorts of men.*

None can plead exemption or priviledge from the grave. It is appointed to men once to die; moſt die a natural death, and any man may die a violent death; who knows how he ſhall go out of this World? Chriſt told *Peter* (John 21, 18.) *When thou ſhalt be old, thou ſhalt ſtretch forth thy hands, and another ſhall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldſt not. This ſpake he, ſignifying by what death he ſhould glorifie God.* And what kind of death was that? The Church Hiſtory aſſureth us, 'twas a violent death. He (as his Maſter Jeſus Chriſt) was nailed to a Croſs, and died. *We come but one way into the World, but there are a thouſand wayes of going out.*

Note Secondly, *Death comes ſuddenly upon many men, and may upon all men.*

The whole life of the longeſt liver in this World, is but a moment, compared to eternity; and there is not any moment of our life, but (with reſpect to ſecond cauſes) we are ſubject to death in it: We alwayes in ſome ſenſe (though at ſome times more) carry our lives in our hand, and how ſoon, or by what hand they may be ſnatcht out of ours, we know not.

Now if our whole life be but a moment, and we ſubject to death every moment, how ſhould we ſtand prepared for death every moment? And how ſad is it to think, that they who may die the next moment, ſhould for dayes, and Weeks, and Moneths, and Years, never prepare for death? Moſt are loth to think of the end of their lives, till they are nearer the end of them; yet no man knoweth how near he is to the end of his life. Many put off the thoughts of death till it cometh, yet none can put off the coming of death; they would remove the meditation of death to the fall of their leaf, to the Winter, and worſt of their old age, yet they are not able to remove death one moment from the Spring and beſt of their youth.

Note, Thirdly, *Violent death, by the ſore and ſevere judgment of God, often ſweeps multitudes away in a moment.*

God can thruſt whole throngs of men, yea whole Nations into their graves together; it is ſaid (*Numb.* 16. 21.) of *Corah* and his Companions, *The earth did cover, or ſwallow them up in a moment*: And the Lord commanded *Moſes, to ſay unto the Children of* Iſrael (Exod. 33. 5.) *ye are a ſtiff-necked people; I will come up into the midſt of thee in a moment, and conſume thee:* As if the Lord had ſaid, *I will take no long time for it; I can quickly diſpatch you; how many ſoever there are of you, I will do it in a moment.* We have a like deſcription of the ſudden and quick diſpatch of men at the Lords word of Command (*Pſal.* 73. 19.) *How are they brought into deſolation, as in a moment, they are utterly conſumed with Terrors?* The final ruine of Babylon was thus propheſied (*Iſa.* 47. 9.) *Theſe two things ſhall come to thee in a moment, in one day, the loſs of Children and widowhood, they ſhall come upon thee in their perfection;* Thou ſhalt utterly be deſtroyed, and periſh at once for ever. The Prophet *Jeremiah* (Lam. 4. 6.) bewailed the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem,* whoſe Calamity was greater then that of *Sodome* and *Gomorrah,* which God deſtroyed in a moment: *Sodome* and *Gomorrah* were great Cities, yet how ſoon conſumed! In ſome ſenſe, there is a greater evil in a lingring deſtruction, then in a ſpeedy one; ſo the Prophet aggravates death by Famine, beyond death by fire; becauſe to die by Famine is a lingring death. *Cæſar* being warned that ſome lay in wait to deſtroy him ſuddenly, ſlighted it, and ſaid, unexpected death is moſt deſirable. And that's the Lot of many great men; to which ſome conceive the Pſalmiſt had reſpect, when he ſaid (*Pſal.* 82. 7.) *Ye ſhall die like men, and fall like one of the Princes*; that is, ſuddenly. But though in ſome ſenſe a ſpeedy death is more eligible then a lingring one, yet in many reſpects, to die ſuddenly, or in a moment, may be concluded a far greater judgment, then to ſee death coming by Degrees, and deſtruction walking towards us ſtep by ſtep. *Solomon* (Prov. 1. 27.) ſpeaks of *ſwift deſtruction, of deſtruction coming like a Whirlwind*; ſwift deſtruction overtakes them who are ſlow paced to receive and obey inſtruction. Thus the Lord can deal both with perſons and with Nations; he needs not make any delays, nor take time to do it, their deſtruction ſhall come (if he will ſend it) in a day, in an hour, yea, *in a moment ſhall they die.*

And the people ſhall be troubled at midnight.

That is, the body, or generality of the people, the *many ſhall be troubled*; they ſhall be as men amazed, or as the Metaphor imports, they ſhall be disjoynted; Men aſſociated under due Laws of Government, are as ſo many members of a well compacted Body; but when broken and ſcattered, they are like a body whoſe members are diſlocated, or out of joynt; unfit for any uſe or ſervice. And as there is a laxation of the members of the Body, a disjoynting of the bones, ſo there is a disjoynting of the faculties of the mind; in times of great trouble, not only is the body Politick, which conſiſts of many men, but the mind of every body, or of every ſingle man is much out of joynt. The word is applyed to thoſe great concuſſions of the world (*Pſal.* 18. 17.) *The earth ſhook and trembled, the Foundations alſo of the Hills were moved, and were ſhaken at the preſence of the Lord, becauſe he was wroth*; which we may interpret of the Princes and Powers of the earth, who are as Hills and mountains; if the Lord do but touch them in anger, they move, yea tremble, The word is applyed alſo to the Waves of the Sea (*Jer.* 5. 22.) which *roar, and toſs themſelves*: We commonly ſay, as in the Text, *The Sea is troubled,* or *'tis a troubled Sea,* a toſſing Sea. That expreſſion is alſo common among us, when we ſee a man much diſquieted, *he is* (we ſay) *in a great toſs*; even as a ſhip at Sea upon the proud Waves. Thus ſaith *Elihu,* the people ſhall be in a toſs, they ſhall feel a Storm in their minds, ſudden guſts of fear and ſorrow ſhall carry them they know not whither; or they ſhall be lifted up to heaven in vain confidences, and then fall down to Hell in deſpairing thoughts, as the Tempeſt at Sea is deſcribed in *Pſal.* 107. There is yet another rendring of the Text, in alluſion to Drunkards, who are overcome with Wine (*Jer.* 25. 16.) *And they ſhall drink, and be moved, and be mad*; the word which we tranſlate *move,* is that in the Text; now we know drunkenneſs moves men and puts all into diſorder and diſquietment: Thus the people (through the fierce anger of God, and the Wine of aſtoniſhment which he gives them to drink) ſhall be moved, they ſhall reel to and fro, and ſtagger like a drunken man. Great troubles and afflictions are called in Scripture the Wine of aſtoniſhment, becauſe they make many ſay and do they ſcarce know what; great troubles bereave men not only of their comforts, but of their reaſon; they do not only ſtraiten them, but aſtoniſh them. They who have drowned their wits in cups of worldly pleaſure, may ſoon have them drowned in full and overflowing cups of worldly ſorrow.

עם *Populus conſociatio hominum.*

ינעשו *a verbo* נעש *videtur ſignificare laxationem compagum.*

Beſides this expoſition of the peoples being troubled with perplexity, fear, and doubt, with anxiety, and uncertainty of ſpirit what to do, I ſay, beſides this, there is another way of being troubled, upon which ſome Expoſitors ſpecially inſiſt. *The people ſhall be troubled*; that is, ſhall be in a Tumult; they ſhall riſe up ſeditiouſly, and (as we ſay) *make a commotion,* they ſhall gather together as many Waters, with a roaring noiſe. Many people, are compared to many Waters; and there is ſometimes a confluence, a great confluence or flood of them tumbling together: The Poet tells us elegantly what rude work a people make when they riſe up like a flood of troubled Waters. *Their rage* (ſaith he) *finds out weapons, one throws ſtones, another throws*

Ac veluti magno in populo cum ſæpe coorta eſt Seditio, ſævitque animis ignobile vulgus, Jamque faces & ſaxa volant furor arma miniſtrat. Virg. Æneid. 1.

firebrands, till all's in a ſad combuſtion: Theſe waters, if let alone, may quickly put all into a flame. The Pſalmiſt aſcribes the quieting of the Sea, and the quieting of the people to God in one verſe; Yea, I conceive the one is but the explication of the other, (*Pſal.* 65.7.) *Which ſtilleth the noiſe of the Seas, the noiſe of their waves, and the tumult of their people.* Thus ſaith *Elihu*, the people ſhall be in a tumult, (this ſuits with that expoſition firſt given) ready to deſtroy whomſoever they meet next, or thoſe eſpecially who never did nor meant them any other hurt but to keep the peace, or bridle their head-ſtrong fury.

Yet, I rather adhere to the former Interpretation, *The people ſhall be troubled*, That is, they ſhall be in a great conſternation of ſpirit, neither being able (which they ſeldom are) to adviſe themſelves what to do, nor fit to receive (which they ſeldom will) advice from others. And (as *Elihu* adds) they ſhall be thus troubled.

At midnight.] Or, *In the half of the night*, as the words may be rendred; that's a great aggravation of the judgment. The night is a time of reſt, and midnight is the time of deepeſt reſt; ſo that for the people to be in a tumult, or troubled *at midnight*, is to be overtaken with matter of fear, when fear ſeemed furtheſt off, or when they ſuſpected nothing to make them afraid. *David* ſaith of ſome, (*Pſal.* 3.5.) *There were they in great fear, where no fear was.* To fear at midnight, is to fear when uſually no fear is, that is, when people are at reſt in their beds: And ſo to ſay, *the people ſhall be troubled at midnight*, ſignifieth either, Firſt, the coming of trouble upon a ſecure people, upon a people who thought themſelves, and while they thought themſelves not only out of the noiſe, but reach of danger: Or Secondly, It may ſignifie the coming of trouble upon a people altogether unfit to help themſelves; when a man is aſleep, he cannot give counſel how to prevent danger, and while he is in his bed, he is in no poſture to oppoſe it. All this may well be included in what *Elihu* ſaith, *The people ſhall be troubled at midnight.*

Cum maximè ſecuri.

Hence Note, Firſt, *There are National troubles as well as perſonal.*

God can ſcare not only a family, or this and that particular man, but a whole people at once; he cannot only make a child, or a woman, but a multitude, yea an Army of mighty men tremble like a child, and faint as the weakeſt woman. A people are many, yet every man ſhall be as if he were alone, or but one in the midſt of innumerable dangers, and of a thouſand deaths. *Moſes* in his Song foreſaw the dread of Nations upon the report of the Lords miraculous conduct of Iſrael through the red Sea, *Exod.* 15. 14, 15, 16.) *The people ſhall hear, and be afraid; ſorrow ſhall take hold on the inhabitants of Paleſtina, all the inhabitants of Canaan ſhall melt away.* And when Chriſt ſpeaks of thoſe dreadful Prognoſticks of his coming, he not only ſaith, *There ſhall be ſigns in the Sun, and in the Moon, and in the Stars, but upon the Earth diſtreſs of Nations, with perplexity*, (Luke 21.25.)

Secondly, Obſerve, *Both perſonal and publick troubles are at the command of God, as both publick and perſonal peace are.*

A people as well as a perſon, may and ſhall be troubſed, even at the midnight of their greateſt ſecurity, if God give the word. *I make peace* (ſaith the Lord, *Iſa.* 45.7.) *and create evil*; that is, the evil of trouble. There will be occaſion afterward to ſpeak further of this point from thoſe words (*Ver.* 29.) *When he giveth quietneſs, who can give trouble, and when he hideth his face, who can behold him? Whether it be done againſt a nation, or againſt a man only; trouble of all ſorts is at the command of God*; If he ſaith to ſuch or ſuch a miſchief, go to a nation, it will go; if he bid the ſword trouble them, if he bid peſtilence trouble them if he bid famin trouble them, if he bid their own diviſions trouble them, *the people ſhall be troubled*; Yea, *they ſhall be troubled at midnight.*

Whence Note, Thirdly, *Trouble takes or ſeizeth upon many when they leaſt expect it.*

God can ſend trouble when no man thinks of it. At midnight every one is in bed, all are for reſt and quiet. The Lord uſually executes his judgments upon the unwary world, upon a ſecure people (*Exod.* 12.29.) *At midnight the Lord ſmote all the firſt-born in the land of Egypt*, &c. *And Pharaoh roſe up in the night, he and all his ſervants, and all the Egyptians, and there was a great cry in Egypt.* We read alſo (2 *Kings* 19.35.) *In that night the Angel of the Lord went out and ſmote in the camp of the Aſſyrians, an hundred four-ſcore and five thouſand.* It was not a day-battel, but a night-battel; When they were all gone into their tents, and were at reſt, when the Army was ſecure; In that night did the Lord fight them by an Angel, and made a mighty ſlaughter among them. *Belſhazzar* King of the *Chaldeans* was ſlain in the night (*Dan.* 5.30.) even in that night *wherin he made a feaſt to a thouſand of his Lords, and drank wine before the thouſand* (Ver. 1.) In that night not only of his ſecurity, but of his jollity and ſenſuality, when he had even drowned himſelf and his great Lords with wine and belly-chear, in that very night the City was broken up, and *Belſhazzar* ſlain; Hiſtory tells us what dreadful work was made upon the *Babylonians* that night. The great Judgment day is ſo deſcribed; Jeſus Chriſt will, at laſt, trouble the world at midnight; *The Day of the Lord ſo cometh* (ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 *Theſ.* 5.2.) *as a thief in the night; when they ſhall ſay peace and ſafety, then ſudden deſtruction cometh upon them*, &c. Chriſt himſelf ſhadowing his coming under the parable of the ten Virgins, who all ſlumbred and ſlept, tells us (*Matth.* 25.6.) *At midnight there was a cry made, Behold the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him.* Though ſome were in a better condition then others, ſome wiſe, ſome fooliſh, yet all ſlept, and it was a kind of midnight to them all. Chriſt will come, and the people ſhall be troubled at midnight, and then there will be a dreadful Cry among the ſecure drowſie world. Therefore the Counſel of Chriſt is moſt proper (*Matth.* 13. 35.) *Watch, becauſe ye know not at what hour your Maſter may come, whether at even, or at midnight, or at Cock-crowing, or in the morning.* It is hard to be put to it at midnight, 'tis ſad to be in a ſleepy or ſlumbring condition when evil comes. The Goſpel ſheweth us, how much that man was troubled, when his neighbour came to borrow bread of him at midnight (*Luke* 11.5,7.) *Trouble me not, my Children are with me in bed, I cannot riſe and give thee.* If it be matter of trouble to be called out of our bed to do a courteſie for a friend at midnight, O what will it be to be called up to Judgment, or to be ſurprized with any Judgment at midnight! Therefore prepare and be ready for all changes. *At midnight the people ſhall be troubled,*

And paſs away.] Theſe words are a third part of the deſcription of the Judgment of God upon a people; *they ſhall die, they ſhall be troubled, they ſhall paſs away*; That is, ſome of them ſhall die, all ſhall be troubled, others *ſhall paſs away.* There is a three-fold notion of *paſſing away.*

Firſt, Some expound it thus. They ſhall be carried Captive out of their own Country; This with the former two make up a perfect Judgment upon any people; Some ſhall die, or be ſlain, all ſhall be troubled and vext, they ſhall be at their wits end, and the reſt ſhall be carried away Captive.

Secondly, *They ſhall paſs away*; That is, they ſhall paſs into their graves; the form of ſpeech here uſed may well bear that ſenſe, for death is a paſſing away, a paſſing out of this world (*Pſal.* 37.36.) *Lo he paſſed away and was gone*, That is, he died; And that which is death to the Heavens and the Earth (their great change when ever it ſhall be) is called *a paſſing away* (Matth. 5.18.) *Till Heaven and Earth paſs away, one jot or one tittle ſhall in no wiſe paſs away from the Law till all be fulfilled*; That is, the Law ſhall ſtand in force as long as the world ſtands. Thus to paſs away is to die. But I conceive, we are to expound this third branch of the Judgment diſtinctly from the former two, and therefore for as much as we have death in the firſt words, it will not be proper to take in death here again, or to expound *paſſing away* by dying. The third notion of, *they ſhall paſs away*, is, they ſhall run or flee for it, they know not whither, they ſhall flee for their lives from the danger impending over them. As ſome ſhall die, and all be troubled, ſo not a few ſhall endeavour to ſave their lives by flight. Chriſt in the Goſpel foretold the great troubles and afflictions which ſhould come upon

Tranſire intelligo, non pro migrare alio, ſed pro abire in ſepulchrum. Merc.

Jeruſalem, and in them there was a ſad concurrence or meeting of theſe three Judgments in the Text. For when after forty years the *Romans* invaded and ruin'd their City, many dyed and were deſtroyed by ſword and famin, all the people were troubled; O in what a hurry were they to ſee the *Roman Eagle* diſplayed before their Gates! and then they *paſſed away*; That is, as many as could, withdrew and got out of the danger. It is reported in Hiſtory, that before the Siege of that City, a voyce was heard in *Jeruſalem*, ſaying, (*Migremus hinc*) *let us paſs from hence*, they who believed that warning, departed ſoon after; And as ſome paſſed away before the Judgment came, ſo when it was come, many were ſtriving to be gone, or to paſs away. Therefore Chriſt admoniſhed them (*Matth.*24.20.) *Pray that your flight be not in the winter, nor on the Sabath day.* I conceive, we are to underſtand this Text diſtinctly of ſuch a paſſing away. *In a moment ſhall they die, and the people ſhall be troubled at midnight, and paſs away*; they ſhall do what they can to ſecure themſelves by out-running the danger.

Note from it, Firſt, *God hath variety of means to humble a ſinful people.*

Into how many ways do the Judgments of God divide themſelves; ſeveral perſons bear ſeveral parts; here is death to many, trouble to all, flight to ſome. That, in the Prophet, anſwers it fully (*Jer.*15.1.) where the Lord proteſting that nothing (no not the interceſſion of *Moſes* and *Samuel*) ſhould take off from his reſolve againſt that people, ſaith, *Such as are for death to death, and ſuch as are for the ſword to the ſword, and ſuch as are for the famin to the famin, and ſuch as are for the captivity to the captivity.* There's peſtilence, and ſword, and famin and captivity ready at the call of God to take away a provoking People.

Secondly, Note, *To paſs away, or to be put to our flight, is a grievous Judgment.*

To flee from the face of the purſuer, to run for our lives, who knows the trouble and terror of it, but they that have been in it? What a mercy is it that our dwellings are continued to us? That we abide in our places, that we neither die in a moment, are not ſurpriz'd by midnight-fears, but reſt quietly in our beds, though fears at midnight have been ready to ſurprize us. What a mercy is it, that we are not paſſing away, running, fleeing into the wilderneſs, as the poor Churches of God have done in ſeveral ages?

So much of Judgment upon the people in that threefold notion of it. We have here alſo Judgment upon Princes.

And the mighty ſhall be taken away without hand.

Not only *the many*, but *the mighty* ſhall feel the Judgments of God; For as 'tis ſaid in the former verſe, *He accepteth not the perſons of Princes, nor regardeth the rich more then the poor*; The mighty and the meaneſt of men are alike to God, when they are alike in ſinning againſt God: If they do evil alike, they ſhall ſuffer evil alike; God accepteth no mans perſon.

The mighty ſhall be taken away.] The word rendred, mighty, taken plurally, is uſed in Scripture to denote not only mighty men, but any creature that excels in might. And therefore according to the exigence of the place, it ſignifies ſometimes Angels, who being ſpirits, exceed all fleſh in might. The people of *Iſrael* in the wilderneſs did *eat Angels food* (Pſal. 78. 5.) the food of the *Abirims*, of the *mighty or ſtrong ones*: And as it is applyed to Angels who exceed the ſtrongeſt men in ſtrength, ſo it is applyed to any ſort of ſtrong beaſts, to the horſe (*Jer.* 47. 3.) to Bulls, (*Iſa.* 34. 7. *Jer.* 50. 11. *Pſal.* 22. 13. *Pſal.* 68. 31.) Thus the word riſeth above man to Angels, and falls below man to the beaſts of the earth; here 'tis applyable only to ſtrong and mighty men, of whom yet there are three ſorts.

אביר *Fortis robuſtus excellens fortitudine; pluraliter* Abirim *in genere forte ſignificat.*

Firſt, Some are men of a mighty arm.
Secondly, Others are mighty in Arms.
Thirdly, There are men mighty in Authority.

The firſt of theſe is a natural mighty man, he hath a mighty arm, a ſtrong body, or he excells in bodily ſtrength. The ſecond is a martial mighty man, a ſouldier, a man of war. The third is the Magiſtratical mighty man, he is cloathed with power both to puniſh and reward. Poſſibly he may have no bodily might, Yea, poſſibly he is no Souldier, yet a man of ſuch power he is, that he commands whole Nations. Now take the word *Mighty* in any of theſe three ſenſes, and it is a truth, *the mighty ſhall be taken away*, the mighty in ſtrength of the Arm, the mighty in ſtrength of Armies, the mighty in power and dignity, are by the hand of the Almighty God

Taken away.] *They ſhall take them away* (ſaith the Hebrew Text) That is, ſay ſome (according to the firſt tranſlation mentioned) *the people* ſhall violently take away the mighty. But by an uſual Hebraiſm we may read it Impersonally, *the mighty ſhall be taken away*, concealing or leaving it to be underſtood by whom. Like that ſpeech to the rich man (*Luke* 12. 25.) *This night do they require thy Soul of thee*, (ſo we put in the Margin) That is, (as the Text hath it) *this night* thy Soul *ſhall* be required of thee, they ſhall take thy Soul, that is, it ſhall be taken away; ſo here they ſhall take away the mighty, that is, the mighty ſhall be taken away or removed. We may take notice of a two-fold *remove* or taking away.

ויסירו אביר *Et amovent potentem, imperſonalitèr.* Piſc.

Firſt, There is a remove out of place and power; Thus a man is taken away when his Authority is taken away.

Secondly, There is a removing or taking of a man out of the world; Thus they are taken away whoſe perſons are deſtroyed, cut off, and periſh. The mighty, both ways or either way are often *taken away*. The perſons of many mighty men have fallen, and many more of them have fallen from their places and powers. Here they are under a general threatning, *They ſhall be taken away*. But how ſhall they be taken away? The Text anſwers.

Without hand.] It is ſomewhat ſtrange that they who are mighty, and have ſuch power in their hand, ſhould be taken away, and no hand touch them, or *without hand*. We uſe to ſay of a thing ſtrangly gone, or gone we know not how, *It cannot be gone without hands*; yet thus the Lord deals judicially with the mighty of the world; They ſhall be taken away *without hand*. There may be a threefold underſtanding of that expreſſion.

Firſt, Thus; *The mighty ſhall be taken away without hand*; That is, they ſhall have no hands to help them, or they ſhall be deſtitute of all human help. Sometimes God leaves or ſtrips the mighty naked, they who have had great power, and many thouſands ſtanding up to defend them, have not a hand for them, and ſo are taken away without hand, no man drawing a ſword or ſtriking a ſtroak for them.

Frequenter manus pro miniſterio, ſed frequentiſſime pro ope & auxilio ponitur. Pin.

Secondly, To do a thing *without hand*, is to do it with the ſmalleſt appearance of ſecond cauſes or inſtruments. We are ready to ſay, there muſt be a great deal of tugging to get the mighty down, who like Oaks are ſtrongly rooted and highly grown, who look like mountains, which cannot be removed, yet (ſaith *Elihu*) the Lord can take them away *without hand*; that is, *eaſily*, without any trouble at all, little means or very improbable means being uſed to effect it. So then to do a thing without hand, is to do it as if we put no hand no ſtreſs to it when we do it. As they who move ſwiftly or lightly are ſaid to go without ſetting a foot on the ground (*Dan.*8.5.) the *He-Goat* came and touched not the ground, he hid rather fly then go. So to do a thing, as if we did not put a hand to it, is to do it with the greateſt eaſe imaginable.

Thirdly, To do a thing without hand, is to do it without any viſible means at all, even by the immediate ſtroak or power of God. There is a hand of God in all things that are done in the world, but ſome things are done without any other hand, and are therefore moſt properly ſaid to be done without hand. Thus the Lord is able to do the greateſt things, even to take mighty men from the earth, no hand of man appearing or joyning with him in the action. Now, becauſe God uſually ſets inſtruments awork to effect his will in the world, and to bring about his counſels, therefore in what work ſoever he either quite leaves or ſeems to leave inſtruments out, that work is ſaid to be done without hand. The *Stone* which ſhall grow up to be a great mountain, That is, the Kingdom of Chriſt, is called *a ſtone cut out without hands* (Dan.2.34.) That is, without

Abſq; manu armatorum. Aquin.

Nutu tantum Dei. Merc.

without humane power. The kingdom of Chriſt ſhall be ſet up ſo much by the power of God without any earthly contribution, that it ſhall confeſſedly be ſaid to be ſet up without hands. Though we ought not to neglect the coming and advancement of the Kingdom of Chriſt in the world, yet we ſhould not be anxiouſly careful about it, when we ſee little or no means for it, yea though we ſee great very great means ſet againſt it, becauſe *a ſtone cut out without hands* ſhall do it.

The Apoſtle uſeth this form of ſpeaking, both as to eternals and ſpirituals. Concerning the former he is expreſs (*2 Cor.* 5. 1.) *We know that when the earthly houſe of this Tabernacle is diſſolved, we have a building of God, a houſe not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens*; That is, a houſe of Gods own immediate making, a houſe to the making whereof man hath added nothing. The fabrick of this viſible world is a houſe made without hands, much more is Heaven, and the glorious unſeen ſtate which Saints ſhall have hereafter. The houſe above, or ſtate of Glory is wholly of Gods making. And as our eternal eſtate is expreſſed by a houſe made without hands, ſo our ſpiritual eſtate is called by the ſame Apoſtle, *A work done without hands* (Col. 2. 11.) where having aſſerted our compleatneſs in Chriſt (*Ver.* 10.) he adds, *In whom alſo ye are circumciſed with the circumciſion made without hands.* The external literal circumciſion was made with hands; there was an operation of man in it, the cutting off the foreskin of the fleſh, but in the ſpiritual circumciſion, man hath no hand, it is the work of God alone; as alſo that effectual faith is which always accompanieth it, and is therefore called (*Ver.* 12.) *the faith of the operation of God.* There is a temporary faith which we may call a faith of the operation of man, but true ſaving faith is the operation of God, and may be ſaid as the ſpiritual circumciſion (which was ſignified and ſhadowed by the corporal) to be *made without hands.*

Indicatur divinum ſupplicium, cujus nulla humana cauſa aſſignari, aut quod nulla humana vi declinari poteſt.

Now as the Scripture ſpeaks both of ſpirituals and eternals which are made without hands, ſo this Text ſpeaks of externals and providentials in the ſame language, *The mighty ſhall be taken away without hand,* That is, without any creature-help or viſible human hand; what ever is done without a viſible hand, is done by the hand of God. *Elihu* intimates a puniſhment upon the mighty, which (as to the effecting of it) cannot be aſſigned to any thing in man, much leſs can the effecting of it, be hindred by man. The hand of God is moſt viſible, in doing that which no viſible hand hath done, or can undo. *They ſhall be taken away without hand.*

Hence Note, *The mightieſt have no might againſt God.*

That cannot be avoyded by any human power, which is done without human power. God ſlew the firſt-born of *Egypt*, and deſtroyed the *Aſſyrian* hoſt without hand, he did it by his Angel, no hand appearing againſt them. The Lord ſmote *Herod*, and he died without hand (*Acts* 12. 23.) *Immediately* (that is, preſently, as the Greek word imports, 'tis true alſo, immediately, that is, without human means, as our *Engliſh* word alſo imports) *the Angel of the Lord ſmote him, and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the Ghoſt.* What a poor worm was that mighty man in the hand of God, when God ſlew him without hand, and commanded the worms to eat him? Jeſus Chriſt, who is alſo the *mighty God* (Iſa. 9. 6.) called himſelf *a worm and no man*, in his humiliations for the redemption of loſt man (*Pſal.* 22. 6.) What are the mightieſt men but worms to God, who is ſo mighty, that if he ſay the word, worms become their Maſters. The mighty Giants are before God but pigmy's, punies, or Children. The Prophet gives a good warning (*Jer.* 9. 23.) *Let not the mighty man glory in his might.* Let him not glory in the might of his arm, Let him not glory in the might of his arms or Armies, though man have an Army of mighty men about him, yet let him not glory in them, no nor in the might of his power or authority. If any man uſeth his might againſt God, what is his might unto God? (*Pſal.* 52. 1.) *Why boaſteſt thou, O mighty man, that thou canſt do miſchief?* If a man be mighty, and have a mind to do miſchief with his might, eſpecially if he boaſteth in his might, becauſe he can do miſchief with it, he is not only ſinful, but weak and fooliſh. There is no greater moral weakneſs then to boaſt either of natural, martial, or civil ſtrength. Could any of the mighty men of this world ſtand before the might of God, they had ſomewhat to boaſt of. Read the word of the Lord againſt the mighty (*Iſa.* 2. 10.) Behold the Kings and Captains of the earth trembling before the preſence of the Lamb (*Rev.* 6. 15.) and then Judg how weak the ſtrongeſt are before the Lord? All ages are full of teaching examples, that there is no might to his who is Almighty.

Secondly, Note, *What ever God will do he can eaſily do it.*

He can effect it with a look, with a caſt of his eye, he can do it with a breath of his mouth, he can do it with a word. It is ſaid (*Exod.* 14. 24.) *God looked unto the hoſt of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and through the cloud, and troubled the hoſt of the Egyptians, and took off their Chariot wheels, that they drave them heavily.* To look upon them was an eaſie thing, God did not give them a ſtroak with his hand, but only a look with his eye, and that overthrew them.

Thirdly, Note, *God can do the greateſt things alone.*

He can ſubdue the mighty, though none come forth to his help againſt the mighty; they are curſed who do not help the Lord againſt the mighty, when they ſet their might againſt the Lord; (*Judg.* 5. 23.) *Curſe ye Meroz,* (ſaith the Angel of the Lord,) *curſe ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof, becauſe they came not forth to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord againſt the mighty.* But though it be the ſin of man not to help the Lord againſt the mighty, yet the withdrawing of their help doth not hinder the Lord in his purpoſe againſt the mighty: For, *He taketh away the mighty without hands.* Though men ſtir not, though Angels ſhould not ſtir to his help, yet his own arm can bring either ſalvation or deſtruction. It is ſaid of the Lord (*Iſa.* 44. 24.) *He ſtretched out the Heavens alone*; there was none to help him to unfold that vaſt canopy of Heaven, he ſtretcht out the Heavens alone. As in the Creation *he made all alone*, ſo in Providence he can act and effect all alone. *It is a great glory to God, that he hath many inſtruments to help him, many tongues to ſpeak for him, many hands to work for him; but it is a greater glory to God that he needs none to help him, none to ſpeak or work for him.* In this the glory of the Lord infinitely outſhines the glory of all the mighty Kings and Princes of the earth. They have done, and can do mighty things, but not without hands, and therefore they have the hands of thouſands at command for them; 'tis not their place to put their hand to the work, 'tis enough that they give commands and orders, 'tis the duty of others to execute all their righteous commands, and fullfil their orders. But the Lord hath not only a commanding power, but an executing power too in himſelf; though no hand move, yet his affairs ſtand not ſtill. God, and all creatures put together, are no more then God alone without any creature: Many are uſeful, but none are neceſſary unto God. Take two inferences from it.

Firſt, This is matter of terror to wicked men; though they ſee no hand in the world againſt them, much leſs any able to match them, leaſt of all to check them, yea though they ſee all hands for them, yet this is no ſecurity to them, this is no aſſurance of one hours ſafety, ſeeing the Lord taketh away the mighty without hand, and he uſually doth it when they ſee not which way any hand can reach them. It is the concluſion of one of the Ancients upon this place in reference to a mighty oppreſſour; *He is inviſibly pull'd down, who did viſibly pull down; He ruined others with hands, but himſelf ſhall be ruin'd without hand; he ſaw him whom he took away, but he ſhall not ſee him who takes him away.* Let them who live without fear of any hand, remember the Apoſtles admonition, (*Heb.* 10. 31.) *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hand of the living God, who takes away the mighty without hand.*

Inviſibiliter rapitur, qui viſibiliter rapiebat, Greg.

Secondly, This is matter of wonderful comfort, to all that fear God, and truſt upon him, whether Princes or people, whether mighty men or mean men. What though ye ſee no hand for you? yet 'tis enough if he be for you who ſaves you without hand. The protecting and ſaving power of God, is as great and as effectual as his deſtroying power is; yea, he oftner ſaves without hand, then he deſtroys without hand. As the Kings of the Earth, ſo the great King of Heaven and Earth, loves to deal his favours, and beſtow his rewards immediately with his own hand, but uſually afflicts and puniſheth by the hands of others. That's a moſt pregnant Scripture to this purpoſe, (*Hoſ.* 1.7.) where the Lord promiſeth *to ſave Judah*; But Judah might ſay, I am in a very low condition, and no help appears: Therefore he addeth, *I will ſave them by the Lord their God; and will not ſave them by Bow, nor by Sword, nor by Battel, nor by Horſes, nor Horſemen.* Judah ſhall be ſaved, though there be no hand to ſave them. *I will ſave them* (ſaith the Lord) *by the Lord their God.* I will do it immediately. And the Lord doth not only ſay (in the affirmative) he will ſave them without hand; but he ſaith alſo (in the Negative) that he will not ſave them with hands, *But I will not ſave them by Bow, nor Sword, nor Battel, nor Horſes, nor Horſemen*; there ſhall be no appearance of theſe helps, I have heretofore deſtroyed you by Sword, and Bow, by Horſes, and Horſemen, but I will have all the honour and thanks of your ſalvation to my ſelf, Though the Lords people have neither Horſes nor Horſemen, though they are as helpleſs as is imaginable, yet the Lord is able to ſave them, and he will do it in the fitteſt ſeaſon. As this is true in reference to Princes and Nations in their publick capacity, ſo private Chriſtians may take up the comfort of it. What though great diſtreſs and affliction be nigh, and no hand to ſave you, yet the Lord can ſave without hand; if you are low, he can raiſe you, though none lend a hand to raiſe you; if poor, he can enrich you; if weak, he can ſtrengthen you, though you have no means for either: It is an everlaſting ſpring of comfort, that the Lord can do all things without hand, that he needs not be beholden to the creature, nor ſtands in need of their help to effect either threatned judgments againſt Babylon, or his promiſed mercies unto Sion.

Thus we have ſeen *Elihu* deſcribing the righteous, though ſevere dealings of God, both with people and Princes, who deſpiſe his counſels, and provoke his wrath: The reaſon why they fall under his wrath, is further diſcovered in the next words.

VERS. 21, 22.

For his eyes are upon the ways of man, and he ſeeth all his goings.

There is no darkneſs nor ſhadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themſelves.

IN the former verſe *Elihu* reported the judgment of God both upon the people and upon the Princes of the earth, *In a moment ſhall they die,* &c. In theſe two verſes, he gives us a proof that the Lord is righteous in judgment both upon Princes and people, or he aſſigns the ground of it. That the words are a reaſon of the former, the Cauſal Particle in the beginning of the 21. verſe puts it out of queſtion.

Verſ. 21. **For his eyes are upon the ways of men.**

As if he had ſaid, God doth not theſe things, he troubles not Nations, and Nobles, People, or Princes, by an abſolute and ſoveraign power, or becauſe he will, but he finds juſt cauſe to do it; *What men do, is enough to juſtifie God in what they ſuffer:* He hath always power enough in his hand to deſtroy all men, and to turn this world back into its firſt nothing, but he never uſeth his power, nor puts it forth without cauſe.

For his eyes are upon the ways of man, &c.] God is a Spirit, the ſimplicity of his Eſſence is his firſt and higheſt perfection, he is purely incorporeal; yet as the paſſions of man's mind, ſo the members of his body are often in Scripture attributed unto God; we read of the *face of God*, of the *hand of God*, of the *ear of God*, and as in many other places, ſo in this, of the *eye of God:* Now as the ear of God notes only his power of hearing, and the hand of God his power of working, ſo the eye or eyes of God note only his power of ſeeing, knowing and diſcerning the ways of men. And when *Elihu* ſaith, *his eyes are upon the ways of man*, his meaning is only this, he clearly diſcerns and underſtands the ways of man.

Theſe words, *his eyes are upon the ways of man*, intimate, Firſt, A preſent act, he doth not ſay, they were, or they will be upon the ways of man, but *they are*. Secondly, They imply as a preſent, ſo a continued act; his eyes are ſo upon the ways of man, that they are never off them. The eyes of God dwell, as it were, upon the ways of man: His eyes are ſaid indeed *to run to and fro through the whole Earth*, (2 Chron. 16.8.) yet they do not wander from one object to another, but are fixed and ſetled upon every one. Thirdly, they imply an intentive act, or the ſeriouſneſs of the heart of God upon the ways of man. We may behold a thing, and yet take no great notice of it; but when our eyes are ſaid to be upon any thing, this imports they are buſied much upon it. Fourthly, This manner of ſpeaking ſignifieth not only a clear ſight, but that which is operative, carrying with it a moſt exact ſcrutiny or diſquiſition of the ways of men, according to that expreſſion of the Pſalmiſt, (*Pſal.* 11.4.) *His eyes behold, his eye-lids try the children of men.* God doth not only behold, but his eye-lids try the ways of men; That is, he ſo looks upon them, that he looks through them, and diſcerneth what they are to the utmoſt. God doth not only behold the body and bulk of our actions, but the ſoul and ſpirit of them, and while he ſeeth them, he ſeeth into them. All this, and much more then we can apprehend, is comprehended in thoſe words, *His eyes are upon*

The ways of man.] The word is plural, not *way*, but *ways*; which ſhews the extenſiveneſs of the ſight or knowledg of God: The word being put indefinitely, is to be taken univerſally: His eyes are not confined to this or that object, to this or that place, to this or that perſon, but his eyes look over all, *His eyes are upon the ways of man.*

Yet further, *the ways of man* may be diſtinguiſhed; Firſt, As they are either internal or external. The internal ways of man, are the ways of his heart, as the Prophet hath it, (*Iſa.* 57.17.) *He went on frowardly in the way of his heart.* And theſe ways of the heart, our inward ways are, firſt, our thoughts, what we imagin and conceive; ſecondly, our affections, what we love, and what we hate, what we rejoyce in, and what we mourn for, declare the way of our hearts. Thirdly, The ways of the heart are a man's purpoſes, reſolutions, and intentions what to do. Fourthly, The ways of the heart are man's deſigns, or his aims, what he drives at, or propoſeth as his end in all that he doth. In this latitude we are to underſtand the preſent Text; when *Elihu* ſaith, *the eyes of God are upon the ways of man,* remember they are upon his thoughts, upon his affections, upon his purpoſes, upon his deſigns and aims, all theſe are before the Lord; as it is ſaid of Chriſt, (*John* 2.25.) *He needed not that any ſhould teſtifie of man; for he knew what was in man*; That is, both the ſtate of his heart, and all the movings of it. And if the Lord's eyes be upon the internal ways of man, then certainly they are upon the external ways of man; if he knoweth what work the heart is at or about, certainly he knoweth what the hand is at or about. He that knoweth which way the mind goeth, cannot but know which way the foot goeth. His eyes are upon the external ways of man, but 'tis his chief glory that his eyes are upon the internal ways of man, (*Gen.* 6.5.) *The Lord ſaw that the wickedneſs of man was great upon the earth:* He ſaw man's actions or outward ways were very wicked, but beſides that, ſaith the Text, He ſaw, *that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.* He ſaw the ways within, what was formed up, or (as the word there notes) what creatures were made and faſhioned in the mind of man. Thus, if we take the ways in that diſtinction of internal and external, the eyes of God are upon them.

Secondly, Take the ways of man as differenced in their kinds, as they are either good or evil; the eyes of the Lord are upon both. *They are* (ſaith *Solomon*, Prov. 15.3.) *in every place, beholding the evil and the good:* That is, the evil ways and the good ways of men. But ſaith not the Prophet (*Hab.* 1.14.) *Thou art of purer eyes then to behold evil?* Which may ſeem, at firſt reading, to imply, that God doth not behold the evil ways or actings of men. I anſwer, if we diſtinguiſh the word *behold*, we ſhall ſoon reconcile theſe Scriptures. To *behold*, is either to diſcern what is before us, or to *behold*, is to approve what is before us. There is a ſeeing of knowledg, and there is a ſeeing of contentment; now when the Prophet ſaith, *the Lord* *is of purer eyes then to behold evil*, his meaning is, he doth not, he cannot behold with evil contentment or approbation, otherwiſe the Lord beholds evil, even all the evil in the world; *both good and evil are before him, who is himſelf only and altogether good. His eyes are upon the ways of*

Man.] Not only upon the ways of this or that man, but of every man; let man be what he will for a man, let him be a great man, or a mean man, let him be a rich man or a poor man, let him be a wiſe man or a fool, let him be an ignorant or a knowing man, let him be holy or a prophane man, let him be a ſubtle or a ſimple man, his eyes are upon him. Thoſe things which difference men among themſelves, make no difference at all among them, as to the eye of God. *His eyes are upon the ways of* (whomſoever you can call) *man.*

איש

And he ſeeth all his goings.] This latter clauſe of the verſe is of the ſame ſenſe with the former, therefore I ſhall not ſtay upon the opening of it. The Scripture often uſeth Synonyma's, and repeats the ſame thing in other terms, to ſhew the truth and certainty of it; and ſurely the Spirit gives a double ſtroke here, to ſtrike this truth home into our hearts, and faſten it in our minds, *He beholdeth the ways, and he ſeeth all the goings of man.* The word tranſlated *ſeeing*, ſignifieth a very curious or critical ſight, as was opened before.

ראה

Again, theſe latter words ſay, *he ſeeth*

All his goings.] Where we have the univerſal particle expreſt, which was only underſtood in the form. And though theſe two words, *ways* and *goings* may be expounded for the ſame thing, yet in this conjunction we may diſtinguiſh them, by underſtanding the word *ways*, for the conſtant courſe of a man's life, and the word *goings*, for his particular and renewed motions in thoſe ways. The Original word rendred *goings*, ſignifies ſometimes *going with much caution*, yea with a kind of ſtate or pomp, yet frequently any ordinary going.

צער
Incedere cum pompa, propriè deambulare.

Now, when *Elihu* aſſerts, *The Lord ſeeth all his goings*; we may ſum up the matter under theſe five conſiderations; He ſeeth Firſt, Where he goeth, what his path is. Secondly, He ſeeth whither he is going, what he makes the end of his journey or travel. Thirdly, when he goeth, or ſets out, what time he takes for every undertaking. Fourthly, how far he goeth, the Lord takes notice of every ſtep, what progreſs he makes in any buſineſs good or bad. Fifthly, he ſeeth in what manner he goeth, with what heart, with what mind, or frame of ſoul he goeth. Thus diſtinct and exact is the Lord in *beholding the ways, and in ſeeing all the goings of man.*

Hence Note, Firſt, *Surely the Lord is a God of knowledg.*

If we could conceive a man to have his eyes in all places, and upon all perſons, an eye upon all hearts, and an eye in all hearts, as well as an eye upon all hands, you would ſay this man muſt needs be a knowing man, eſpecially if he have ſuch an eye, as the eye of God is, a diſcerning eye, a diſtinguiſhing eye, a trying eye, an eye which ſeeth to the bottom of whatſoever it ſeeth. *Hannah* ſaid this in her ſong (1 *Sam.* 2. 3.) *Speak not ſo proudly, let not arrogancy come out of your lips; for the Lord is a God of knowledg, and by him actions are weighed.* 'Tis not a ſlight ſuperficial knowledg which God hath of things or perſons, *by him actions are weighed*, and ſo are the Actors. God puts all into an even ballance, and he will weigh both perſons and actions to a grain, yea every word and thought ſhall go into the ballance. It was ſaid to that great Monarch *Belteſhazzar*, by a hand-writing upon the wall, *Thou art weighed in the ballances.* The Lord weighed that great King, he weighed all his power, and the exerciſe of it; and he that weigheth Kings, will not leave the meaneſt ſubject unweighed; *by him actions are weighed.* We many times paſs over our actions without conſideration, and never take the weight of them, at leaſt, we never weigh them in the Sanctuary ballance. If they will bear weight in the ballance of the world, we preſume they will in Gods ballance alſo. But as the Lord is a God of knowledg otherwiſe then man is, ſo by him actions are weighed otherwiſe then by man. It is ſaid of Idols (*Pſal.* 115. 15.) *They have eyes and ſee not*; but we may ſay of the Lord Jehovah the true God, the living God, he hath properly, no eyes, yet he ſeeth; and his faculty of ſeeing is infinitely above that which himſelf hath planted in man. The Atheiſt while he is about the worſt work in the world, the breaking in pieces of the people of God, and afflicting his heritage, while he is ſlaying the widow, and the ſtranger, and murdering the fatherleſs, while he is (I ſay) at ſuch kind of work as this, he ſaith (*Pſal.* 94. 7.) *The Lord ſhall not ſee, neither ſhall the God of Jacob regard it.* But what ſaith the Pſalmiſt to him and ſuch as he (*Ver.* 8. 9.) *Underſtand ye brutiſh among the people, he that formed the eye, ſhall not he ſee?* Thoſe words of the Prophet to King *Aſa* (2 Chron. 16. 9.) *The eyes of the Lord run to and fro through the whole earth*, are an alluſion to a man who having a deſire to know much, or to ſee all in the world, runs up and down, travels from place to place, from Country to Country for information. The Lord would have us know that he knoweth every thing as exactly, as they who run from place to place to ſee what's done in every place. It is prophecyed of the latter times (*Dan.* 12. 4.) *Many ſhall run too and fro, and knowledg ſhall be increaſed*; That is, many ſhall be ſo graciouſly greedy of knowledg, that they will refuſe no labour nor travel to attain it. *They will run to and fro*, to inquire and ſearch for it, they will not think any time or labour loſt, if they may but gain that precious commodity by it, called true knowledg, or the knowledg of the truth. And that expreſſion of *running to and fro*, may well be expounded, they ſhall by diſcourſe and arguing beat out the truth; In diſcourſing the mind runs to and fro faſter then the feet can in travelling; In diſcourſe we run from point to point, from reaſon to reaſon, from objection to objection, from queſtion to queſtion, till we come to ſolid anſwers and concluſions, and ſo knowledg is increaſed. The Lord is ſurely a God of knowledg, whoſe *eyes run to and fro* without motion, and ſee the bottom of all things, without diſcourſe or argumentation.

Secondly, Note, *The Lords knowledg of man never abateth, he is always obſerving and alike obſerving what men do and what men are.*

The beſt the moſt waking men, have their ſlumbrings and ſleepings; but the Lord neither ſlumbreth nor ſleepeth, *his eyes are upon the ways of man.* And when the Scripture ſaith, *The Lord doth neither ſlumber nor ſleep*, we may underſtand it in a twofold reference. Firſt, as to the protection of his people (*Pſal.* 121. 4.) *Behold he that keepeth Iſrael, ſhall neither ſlumber nor ſleep*, that is, he watcheth over them ſo unceſſantly, ſo unweariedly, that no danger can approach them without his knowledg. Secondly, he never ſlumbereth nor ſleepeth as to the obſervation and conſideration of all people, he never takes his eye off from the ways of man.

Thirdly, Note, *The Lords knowledg or ſight of mans ways, is univerſal and everlaſting.*

The All-ſeeing God ſeeth all our ways, and he ſeeth them always. And he ſeeth them all always by one act. The Lords view or proſpect of things is not ſucceſſive one after another, but conjunctive, all at once. The Lord hath a large eye, and an everlaſting eye, yea is all eye. He knows all things; Firſt, paſt or that have been; Secondly, preſent or that are; Thirdly, future, poſſible or that ſhall be. Thus ſaith the Lord in the Prophet (*Iſa.* 46. 10.) *I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done.* And upon this read the Lords challenge of all the Idols in the world (*Iſa.* 41. 21, 22, 23.) *Let them ſhew the former things what they be, that we may conſider them and know the latter end of them, or declare us things to come; Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods.* As if the Lord had ſaid, if ye can tell us all that's paſt, or any thing that is to come, as I can, then ye may take the honour of God, otherwiſe ye are but lies and vanities. Again the Lord knows all things; Firſt, without diſtraction; and ſecondly, he knows all things with cleareſt diſtinction; it is no more trouble to the Lord to ſee all things then to ſee one, and he ſeeth all things as if he had but one thing to ſee.

From the conſideration of this knowledg of God, let me give four or five inferences for inſtruction.

Firſt, (which is moſt natural to the Text) *If the Lords eyes be upon the ways of man, if he ſeeth all his goings, then all the Lords Judgments are right.*

The Judges of this world, may have a principle of righteouſneſs in them, and we may call them juſt and righteous Judges, yet all their Judgments are not always right. For, as ſome men are ſo ignorant, that they know nothing at all, ſo there are none ſo knowing as to know all things; the cleareſt ſighted Judges do not ſee all that may concern them in giving Judgment; even among them ſome may be blind, and many blinded, ſome are blind and cannot ſee much, others are blinded and will not ſee all that they ſee, they are blinded poſſibly with bribes and gifts, with hopes or fears, with paſſions and prejudices. And how clear-ſighted and honeſt-hearted ſoever any are, yet they cannot ſee all, ſomewhat may lie out of their ſight. Hence it cometh to paſs, that a juſt Judg may do that which is unjuſt, he cannot ſee quite through every matter, though he ſet himſelf to ſearch the matter before he giveth Judgment. But as the Lord is all righteouſneſs in his principle, and bears an everlaſting love to righteouſneſs; ſo he hath a clear ſight of all things and perſons, and therefore he muſt needs give a righteous Judgment concerning all things, actions, and perſons; Though he overthrow nations he is righteous, though he overthrow Princes he is righteous, becauſe he ſeeth into all things, and proceedeth upon certain knowledg of every mans caſe and condition. He cannot erre in Judgment, who hath no error in his Judgment, nor any deviation in his will.

Secondly, *If the Lords eyes are upon all the ways of men,* then, *certainly ſinners, whoſe ways are evil, ſhall never go unpuniſhed.*

For if he have a principle of righteouſneſs in him, and an eye to ſee all their unrighteous ways, they cannot eſcape his juſtice; Say to the wicked, *wo to him, for he ſhall eat the fruit of his doings* (Iſa. 3.11.) The righteous God knoweth the unrighteouſneſs of man, and therefore wo to the unrighteous man.

Thirdly, Take this concluſion, Then *no godly man, no good man ſhall go unrewarded, or loſe the reward of that good which he hath done.*

The Lord is righteous, and he ſeeth every one that doth right, or the righteouſneſs of every mans way; and it is his promiſe to reward the righteous, therefore they ſhall be rewarded. This is matter of ſtrong conſolation, and great encouragement to all that are righteous; If the Lord ſeeth all they do, nothing which they have well done ſhall be loſt in the dark, or lie in the duſt. *God will bring forth their righteouſneſs as the light, and their juſt dealing as the noon day.* And as the knowledg which God hath of their ways, aſſureth the righteous that they ſhall be rewarded for, ſo that they ſhall be aſſiſted and protected in their doing righteouſneſs. The Prophet makes that inference in the place before-cited (2 *Chron.* 16.9.) *The eyes of the Lord run too and fro through the earth* (what followeth?) *to ſhew himſelf ſtrong in the behalf of them,* or (as we put in the Margin) *ſtrongly to hold with them whoſe heart is perfect towards him.* The Lord is always ſtrong, and alike in ſtrength, his hand is not ſhortned at any time, that he cannot ſave, yet he doth not always ſhew his ſtrength; but as he is ſtrong, ſo he will ſhew himſelf ſtrong for the perfect or upright in heart; That is, he will act his ſtrength to the utmoſt for the ſafety and aſſiſtance of thoſe whoſe hearts are perfect with him. So then, as they that are good, and do good, ſhall be rewarded for the good they have done, ſo they ſhall be protected in the dangers and evils they incur while they are doing good. Another Prophet ſpeaks both theſe inferences from this principle of the knowledg or ſight of God (*Jer.* 32.19.) *He is great in Counſel, and he is mighty in working, for his eyes are upon all the ways of the ſons of men, to give to every one according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.*

Fourthly, If the eyes of the Lord are upon all the ways of the Children of men, *then the Lord will call all men to an account for their ways.*

Why doth he take notice of their ways, but to bring them to a reckoning? That's the Apoſtles concluſion (*Rom.* 14.12.) *So then every one of us ſhall give an account of himſelf to God*; God would not take an account of our ways while we live, if he did not intend to bring us to an account when we die. As the omniſcience of God fits him to call every man to an account, ſo it is an evidence that he will. Why ſhould our ways and works be ſtrictly obſerved and recorded, if they were not to be judged?

Fifthly, This truth that the eyes of God are upon all the ways of man, ſhould awaken every man to take heed (as *David* reſolved he would, *Pſal.* 39.1.) to his ways. Did we walk as *remembring we are under his All-ſeeing eye,* O how circumſpectly ſhould we walk! Doth the Lord inſpect our ways, O how ſhould we inſpect our own ways! It argueth a great deal of Atheiſm in the heart, if not the groſſeſt Atheiſm, yet Atheiſm, (*quo ad hoc*) as to this or that thing: while that which ſome are afraid to do, if a man, yea if a child ſee them, they are not afraid to do though they hear that God ſeeth them. To fear to do a thing when the eye of a creature is upon us, and yet to do it notwithſtanding God ſeeth us, what is this but either an unbelief that the eye of God ſeeth us, or a contempt of his All-ſeeing eye? This Divine Attribute, the All-ſeeing eye of God, well wrought upon the heart by faith, is enough to over-aw the ſinfullneſs of our hearts. And though the people of God have a higher principle, upon which they forbear the doing of evil, then this, becauſe God will ſee it, and puniſh it, yet to keep the heart in a holy fear of doing evil upon that principle, is both needfull and our duty. The Apoſtle would not have ſervants do their Maſters commands *with eye-ſervice as men-pleaſers.* It is indeed a baſeneſs in a ſervant to do his duty meerly becauſe his Maſters eye is upon him, or to forbear to do what is againſt or beſide his duty, becauſe his Maſter ſeeth him; but how great is the impudence and wickedneſs of that ſervant who will not keep to his duty, when his Maſters eye is upon him! So, in this caſe, meerly to forbear doing evil, becauſe we hear God ſees us, is eye-ſervice, but how great is their wickedneſs, who will not forbear to do evil, though they hear and know that God ſeeth it? Which *Elihu* confirms yet further in the next words.

Verſ. 22. **There is no darkneſs nor ſhadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themſelves.**

This verſe holds out that truth negatively, which the former held out affirmatively. There Gods knowledg of mans ways, was aſſerted, here his ignorance or neſcience of the ways of man is denied.

There is no darkneſs, &c.] The words ſeem to be the prevention of an Objection. For ſome poſſibly might ſay, 'Tis true indeed, God hath a large knowledg, his eye ſeeth far, but we hope we may ſometime be under covert, or compaſſed about with ſuch darkneſs, that the Lord cannot ſee us. Therefore (ſaith *Elihu*) *there is no darkneſs nor ſhadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themſelves.* The Prophet gives a parallel proof and teſtimony of this knowledg of God both in the affirmative and negative part of it. (*Jer.* 16.17.) where he firſt aſſerts that God ſeeth all, *mine eyes are upon all their ways,* and then denyeth, that any thing is a ſecret unto him, *They are not hid from my face, neither is their iniquity hid from mine eyes.* Theſe latter words of the Prophet are of the ſame ſignification with theſe of *Elihu,*

There is no darkneſs, &c.] We may take darkneſs two ways; Firſt, for natural darkneſs, that darkneſs which ſpreads it ſelf over the face of the earth upon the going down of the Sun, 'tis the privation of Light. Secondly, there is artificial darkneſs, that darkneſs which men make to hide themſelves, and their actions in, from the eye of God or man; many are very skilful, yea and ſucceſsful in making ſhaddows to hide their actions from men: They cover the evil which they have done with ſuch cunning excuſes or flat denyals, and they cover what they purpoſe to do (how foul ſoever) under ſuch fair trappings of words, and ſpecious pretences, they gloſs their worſt actions and intentions with ſuch appearances of good, that the wiſeſt and beſt ſighted men cannot find them out. When *Abſalon* had a moſt unnatural as well as a moſt diſloyal purpoſe to raiſe a rebellion againſt his *King-father*, he coloured it with a devout profeſſion of performing a vow; This was artificial darkneſs. 'Tis reported by the natural Hiſtorian, of a little fiſh, which ſeeing its enemy near, caſts out a kind of blackneſs from it ſelf, which darkens the water, and ſo eſcapes the danger. Thus men indeed hide themſelves from man, and they would hide themſelves from God too; but *there is no darkneſs*, neither natural nor artificial, that can cover their ways from his eye; No,

Nor ſhadow of death.] The importance of this expreſſion hath been opened more then once in this Book, (*Chap.* 3. 5. *Chap.* 10. 21. *Chap.* 12. 22. *Chap.* 28. 3.) therefore I ſhall not ſtay upon it here; only conſider, when he ſaith, *There is no darkneſs nor ſhadow of death*, by *ſhadow of death*, he means extreameſt darkneſs. If there be any darkneſs (as *Job* ſpeaks *Chap.* 10. 22.) like darkneſs it ſelf, and whoſe light is as darkneſs, that is it. The metaphor is taken from the grave, where the dead being buried, have not the leaſt glympſe, ray, or ſhine of light coming in to them, death wraps us up in extreameſt darkneſs. And we find in Scripture, *the ſhadow of death* put, firſt, to expreſs the extreameſt of ſpiritual darkneſs, or the darkeſt ſpiritual ſtate, (*Iſa.* 9. 2.) *The people that walked in darkneſs, have ſeen a great light, they that dwell in the land of the ſhadow of death, upon them hath the light ſhined:* That is, they that were wrapped up in the ignorance and utter unbelief of God in Chriſt, to theſe is Chriſt, the true light of God, the Sun of righteouſneſs preached and openly revealed, and they preſſed to the receiving of him, that their ſouls may live. Further as the ſhadow of death is put for the worſt of ſpiritual evils, or to note man's natural ſtate before converſion, ſo likewiſe, it is uſed in Scripture to note the worſt of his ſpiritual evils, who (being converted) is in a ſpiritual ſtate; He that is in a ſpiritual ſtate, may be under great ſpiritual evils, great ſoul afflictions and troubles may fall upon him; which I conceive *David* intended while he ſhewed ſuch high confidence, (*Pſal.* 23. 4.) *Though I walk through the valley of the ſhadow of death, I will fear none evil:* as if he had ſaid, Though I were in the worſt of ſoul-afflictions, having no light of the favour of God ſhining upon me, nor any comfort in my ſpirit, though (as *Heman* bemoans his deſerted condition, *Pſal.* 88. 3.) *My ſoul is full of troubles, and my life draweth nigh unto the grave, though I am laid in the loweſt pit, in darkneſs, in the deep, yet I will fear no evil, for thou art with me, thy rod and thy ſtaff they comfort me.* Again, the ſhadow of death is often put in Scripture for the worſt of outward worldly evils, (*Jer.* 13. 16.) *Give glory to the Lord your God before he cauſe darkneſs*, &c. *And while ye look for light, he turn it into the ſhadow of death*; That is, while ye expect good times and things, ye fall into the worſt, or the worſt befal you. Now as theſe words, *the ſhadow of death*, ſignifie the worſt of, both in ſpirituals and temporals; ſo here they ſignifie the cloſeſt concealment of moral evils; ſome ſinners think themſelves as much out of ſight as a buried carcaſs, and they vail their wickedneſs with ſuch darkneſs as is like the very ſhadow of death. Sin is it ſelf a ſhadow of death, yea death it ſelf, and they who are dead in ſins and treſpaſſes, will do their beſt that their ſins may be no more ſeen then the dead are. But *there is no darkneſs nor ſhadow of death*,

Where the workers of iniquity may hide themſelves.

What it is to be *a worker of iniquity*, was opened at the 8. verſe of this chapter, and thither I refer the Reader. Only in general know, *Workers of iniquity* are more then ordinary ſinners, they are cunning at the committing, and cunning at the hiding of ſin. Some are but bunglers at ſin, they cannot ſin with ſuch an helliſh skill as others do, and when they have ſinned, they have not the art of hiding it; but others are (as we ſay) their crafts-maſters both ways, and they are properly called *workers of iniquity*. Yet (ſaith *Elihu*) the very *workers of iniquity*, they that make it their profeſſion, their ſtudy, and their buſineſs to do evil, and to hide the evil they have done, to work miſchief in the dark, and to keep their works in the dark, even they cannot be hid in any darkneſs. And when the Text ſaith, there is no darkneſs, *&c.* wherein the workers of iniquity may hide themſelves; the meaning of it is, they ſtand naked, and in the open light before the eyes of God.

For though *Elihu* doth not ſay from what they cannot *hide themſelves*, yet we may take it two ways; they cannot hide themſelves, firſt, from the ſight of God; he will diſcern them. The Prophet ſaith of God (*Iſa.* 45. 15.) *Thou art a God that hideſt thy ſelf*, (it is the word of the Text in another conſtruction) that is, as I conceive, it may be expounded, *Thou art an inviſible God.* God hides himſelf naturally, or in his own nature, for that is inviſible: likewiſe God ſometimes hideth himſelf voluntarily, as ſometimes he manifeſteth or ſheweth himſelf voluntarily; but he is a God always hid as to his nature, becauſe he is inviſible; and ſo he is called *a God that hideth himſelf*, in oppoſition to Idols or falſe gods, who are obvious to the eyes of men; Idols have eyes and ſee not, but themſelves are ſeen by every eye. Jehovah the true God ſeeth, but hath no eye, neither can any eye ſee him; Thus he is a God hiding himſelf in the ſpirituality of his own being, which groſs Idols cannot: the following words in that Text in the Prophet ſeem to make out this ſenſe, (*Verſ.* 16.) *They ſhall be aſhamed and confounded all of them*, (That is, all Idol-makers, and Idol-worſhippers, ſhall be aſhamed and confounded) *they ſhall go to confuſion together, that are makers of Idols.* Now, as God hideth himſelf both theſe ways, ſometimes voluntarily, or in his will, he reſolves to hide himſelf from his people, as *David* complain'd, (*Pſal.* 13. 1.) *How long wilt thou hide thy face from me?*) always in the ſpirituality of his own nature; ſo ſinful men would be hidden too: though they cannot be hidden as to their nature, that being corporeal, yet they would hide themſelves in their will, their wits are bent upon it, to make covers and ſhadows for themſelves, that they may keep out of the ſight of God, or that they may not be ſeen of him, who cannot be ſeen, but is, in that ſenſe, *a God that hideth himſelf.*

And as men cannot hide themſelves from the ſight of God, ſo not, Secondly, from the revenging power of God: This followeth the former; for he that would keep out of the ſight of another, doth it uſually that he may be hid from that danger and evil which he fears that other might bring upon him. Thus it is with the ſinner, he hath his hiding places, he wou'd withdraw himſelf from the revenging power of God, like a malefactor, who is unwilling to appear and come to the Bar before his Judg, but all in vain.

Meer natural or unregenerate men are much hidden from themſelves; That is, they ſee little what themſelves are, they know not their own condition, nor upon what terms they ſtand; even a godly man is much hidden from himſelf, *his life is hid with Chriſt in God*, (Col. 3. 3.) his life is not only hidden from the world, but in a great meaſure from himſelf: the excellency of his ſpiritual ſtate ſurpaſſeth his preſent ſight: but a wicked man is much more hid from himſelf, he doth not ſee the wickedneſs of his own heart, nor the danger, the deſperate danger he is in, he ſeeth not that he is within a ſtep of the pit, or that there is, as it were, but a wainſcot between him and hell fire; he ſeeth none of theſe things. Thus a wicked man is hidden from himſelf, and 'tis his work to prepare darkneſs and ſhadows of death to cover his dead works from God. But there is *no darkneſs* will ſerve his purpoſe, nor *ſhadow of death wherein he may hide himſelf.*

Hence Note, Firſt, *It is uſual for, and natural to ſinners, to ſeek hiding places.*

When *Elihu* ſaith, *There is no darkneſs*, &c. He plainly intimates, that it is the deſign and buſineſs of ſinners, to make darkneſs to hide themſelves; It is as much their buſineſs to hide themſelves when they have done evil, as it is their buſineſs to do evil. While the workers of iniquity confeſs in general the eyes of God behold their ways (they deny not in word that God is All-ſeeing) yet, as they often blear the eye of man, ſo they are not out of hope to put darkneſs and raiſe a miſt between themſelves and the eye of God; Or if they riſe not to this vain thought, that they can hide themſelves from God, yet they come to this, that God hideth himſelf (as not regarding what they do) from them. Hence *David* affirms of the wicked man, (*Pſal.* 10. 11.) *He hath ſaid in his heart, God hath forgotten, he hideth his face, he will never ſee it.* Many ſay in their hearts, God ſeeth them not, while with their tongues they confeſs he is an all-ſeeing God. The heart hath a tongue in it as well as the head, and theſe two tongues ſeldom ſpeak the ſame language: While the head-tongue ſaith, we cannot hide our ſelves from the ſight of God, the heart-tongue of wicked men will ſay, God will hide himſelf from us, he will not ſee. But if their heart ſpeak not thus, then as the Prophet ſaith, (*Iſa.*29.15.) *They dig deep to hide their counſels from God*; ſurely they have a hope to hide their counſels, elſe they would not dig deep to hide them. Their digging is not proper, but tropical; as men dig deep to hide what they would not have ſeen in the earth; ſo they by their wits, plots, and devices, do their beſt to hide their counſels from God, and *they ſay who ſeeth, who knoweth?* We, ſurely, are not ſeen either by God or man.

Now 'tis very natural for ſinners to endeavour the hiding of themſelves from God upon a two-fold account; Firſt, To avoid ſhame; All ſinners are not altogether deboiſt, all have not altogether baffled their own conſciences, they have a kind of modeſty, they would not be ſeen ſinning; it troubles them not to do evil, but a fear to be detected in doing it is their trouble. Secondly, Sinners hide themſelves for fear; ſo *Adam* did, he was afraid as well as aſhamed, *I was afraid* (ſaid he) *becauſe I was naked, and I hid my ſelf*, (Gen. 3. 10.) The Prophet tells us of ſuch (*Iſa.* 2. 21.) *They ſhall go into the clefts of the rock, and into the tops of the ragged rocks, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his Majeſty, when he ſhall ariſe to ſhake terribly the earth.* We find all ſorts call to *the hills to hide them, for fear of him that ſate on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb*, (Rev. 6.15,16.)

Secondly, Obſerve, *How much ſoever ſinners attempt, yet they cannot hide themſelves from God.*

Let them ſtudy never ſo long, and dig never ſo deep, they cannot be hid: Where can a ſinner be hid from him who is every where? Or, what thing can be our covering from him, in whoſe ſight all things are open? Then let none think they have made a good market in ſinning, when they have hid their ſins from the eyes of men; what will it avail to hide your ſelves from men, when you lie open and manifeſt to the eye of God? Read (*Pſal.* 139. 12. *Amos* 3. 2.) The Apoſtle ſaith (1 *Tim.*5.24,25.) *Some mens ſins are open before hand, going before to judgment*; (That is, other men quickly ſee what they are, and can judg what they have done) *and ſome men, they follow after*; though they were hidden at the firſt, yet they are afterward diſcovered unto men often, as always unto God: As they are not hid from God now, ſo he will bring them forth at laſt, in the ſight of men: that the Apoſtle adds in the next verſe, *Likewiſe alſo the good works of ſome are manifeſt before hand, and they that are otherwiſe cannot be hid.* The word *otherwiſe* may have a two-fold reference; Firſt to the word manifeſt: As if he had ſaid, though the good works of a man be not preſently manifeſt, yet they cannot be long hid, they ſhall be opened and revealed. Secondly, The word *otherwiſe* may refer to good works, and ſo it reaches the point fully; That is, thoſe works which are not good, or otherwiſe then good, cannot be hid, though men labour much to hide them. Sinners, leave off your hiding, leave off your hiding, for you ſhall not be hid. There is no way for ſinners to hide themſelves from God; they may hide themſelves in God, in the love, in the favour and mercy of God. Thus ſinners may hide themſelves in God, but from God they cannot be hid. Chriſt is a hiding place unto his people, and he is ſo in a double reſpect; Firſt, from trouble, or in time of trouble; thus *David* ſpake (*Pſal.* 32.7.) *Thou art my hiding place: The name of the Lord is a ſtrong Tower* (ſaith *Solomon*, Prov. 18 10) *the righteous runneth into it* (for ſhelter in time of trouble) *and is ſafe.* The Prophet is expreſs in this, (*Iſa.*32.2.) *A man* (that is Chriſt) *ſhall be for a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the Tempeſt:* Chriſt is truly ſo, as to the outward troubles and ſtorms which men raiſe againſt his people in the things of this life; he is ſo, eſpecially as to thoſe internal troubles and ſtorms which Satan, or our own unbelieving hearts raiſe againſt us about the things and concernments of the next life. *That man who is alſo God, who is God-man, is the hiding place of humbled ſinners,* againſt the aſſault of all evils, whether temporal or ſpiritual. Secondly, As Chriſt is a hiding place from thoſe troubles which men bring us unto for righteouſneſs ſake, or which Satan and our own hearts bring us into by raiſing queſtions about our intereſt in the righteouſneſs of Chriſt; So he is a hiding place for us againſt our own unrighteouſneſs. Sinners or unrighteous perſons cannot hide themſelves from Chriſt. And as Chriſt is the beſt hiding place from bodily dangers, ſo he is the only hiding place from ſoul-danger: Any ſinner may hide himſelf in Chriſt, as to the guilt of ſin, whoſe eyes are opened to ſee and acknowledg his ſin. Or more diſtinctly, ſinners under a fourfold conſideration may hide themſelves in Chriſt; Firſt, if humbled ſinners. Secondly, if confeſſing ſinners. Thirdly, if reforming ſinners. Fourthly, believing ſinners; Chriſt is a hiding place to all ſuch ſinners. And ſeeing no ſinner can hide himſelf from the wrath of God by any means of his own deviſing or contriving: Let all ſinners give over ſuch vain contrivements, and learn that Goſpel wiſdom, to hide themſelves in Chriſt from that wrath which is to come. When we labour to hide our ſelves any other way, we loſe our labour, and do not hide our ſelves from God, but God from our ſelves; that is, we hide the favour and mercy of God from our ſelves.

Cum videri nos non credimus, in ſole clauſos oculos tenemus. Illum à nobis abſcondimus, non nos illi. Greg. l. 25. c 6.

Laſtly Obſerve, *Men are not eaſily perſwaded that they cannot hide themſelves from the ſight of God.*

That hath much hold of us, which we are often warned to avoid. This is not the only place of the whole Scripture, no nor of this particular Book where this truth is held forth. There are many and many Scriptures wherein this common truth is preſſed upon us. And doth not this (if not ſtrongly infer, yet) intimate at leaſt that man doth not eaſily believe it? Yea, Is it not an argument that man is apt to nouriſh himſelf in thoſe vain hopes, that he can hide himſelf from God, or that he ſhall be hid from God? I may caſt the fooliſh preſumptions of men about this thing into four ſorts. Firſt, Some hope to be hid in the croud, or that they ſhall not be taken notice of among ſo many. Secondly, The eyes of others are ſo darkned, that their ſins are hid from themſelves, yea they take their vices for vertues, their evil acts for good; and becauſe they ſee no evil in what they do, they are perſwaded, or preſume God doth not. Thirdly, Many are never ſo well pleaſed as when they are flattered, or when others not only hide the ſinfulneſs of their ways from them, but commend and extol them as vertuous and praiſe-worthy. And becauſe their evil ways appear good to ſome men, they cannot be convinced that there is any evil in them appearing to God. Laſtly, As all impenitent ſinners put their ſins out of their own ſight, ſo nothing pleaſeth them more then this imagination, that they ſhall never come into the ſight of God.

Surely the Lord would never urge this matter ſo often upon the children of men if it were not ſo. But let ſinners conſider what they will do, and what will become of them, ſeeing, as it is impoſſible that they ſhould be hid, ſo it will be moſt intolerable for them to appear and ſtand before God in the day of judgment, (*Pſal.*1.5.) All muſt come to judgment, and appear at the Bar, but it will be an inexpreſſible grief to appear, and not be approved, or to appear and then be condemned. Therefore be wiſe, and hide your ſelves where you may be hid; do not attempt to hide your ſelves (which is the attempt of moſt ſinners) where you cannot be hid: They who will needs hide themſelves in that darkneſs and ſhadow of death, here ſpoken of, ſhall be caſt into utter darkneſs, and abide for ever in that infernal valley of the ſhadow of death, in which there is no eaſe to be had, and from which there is no releaſe to be got. Darkneſs and death will be the portion of thoſe ſinners in the next world, who have ſtudied to ſhadow their ſins with any kind of darkneſs in this.

VERS. 23, 24, 25.

For he will not lay upon man more then right, that he ſhould enter into judgment with God.

He ſhall break in pieces mighty men without number, and ſet others in their ſtead.

Therefore he knoweth their works, and he over-turneth them in the night, ſo that they are deſtroyed.

IN the 23. Verſ, being the firſt of the context, *Elihu* further juſtifieth the ſevereſt proceedings of God with man; He that layeth upon man no more then is right, may be juſtified in whatſoever he layeth upon him; But God layeth upon man no more then is right, Therefore, *&c.* The Aſſumption is expreſs in the Text.

Verſ. 23. **For he will not lay upon man more then is right.**

The Text ſtrictly rendred, is, *He will not lay upon man more.* Our tranſlaters ſupply the words, *then is right* to determin what that *more* is which God will not lay upon man.

The words have a two-fold ſenſe.

Quia non ultra unquam ponet Deus ſuper virum. i. e. poteſtatem homini nunquam faciet, ut de ſe ille queri poſſit. Merc. *Neq; enim ultra in hominis poteſtate eſt, ut veniat cum Deo in judicio,* Vulg.

Firſt, Some interpreters render them as a direct denial of any power ſeated in or liberty given unto man, to plead, capitulate, or to come in judgment with God; *Elihu* charging it upon *Job*, that he had not done well in taking or uſing ſuch a liberty to complain about his condition; addeth here (according to this interpretation) God neither hath nor will indulg man a liberty (as he hath not given him a juſt cauſe) to complain as if he had done him wrong. And if man when God hath once declared his mind, and publiſhed his ſentence, ſhould make his defence or offer to produce his reaſonings againſt it, the Lord will not ſuffer it, he will not permit man to proceed in ſuch a way, ſeeing the ſentence of God and what he doth upon it is always juſt, and the right ſtands ever on his ſide, as well as the ſoveraignty is ever veſted in him. Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates the whole verſe to this ſenſe, *Therefore it is not for man ever to purpoſe to enter into judgment before the Omnipotent*; there is no appeal from God, nor will he admit ſinners by any artifices, or delays, to interrupt the progreſs of his juſtice.

Secondly, The words (as we render them) carry both an aſſertion, that God is juſt, and a demonſtration of it; *For he will not lay upon man more then is right, that he ſhould enter into judgment with God*; That is, man hath no cauſe to enter into judgment with God, if God ſhould give him leave, and let him be at his liberty in that point; *for God will not lay upon man more then is right.*

Non imponet ei amplius quam ferro poſſit. Druſ.

There is another ſupply of a word which alſo beareth a good ſenſe, and ſuites well with this expoſition; thus, *God will not lay upon man more then he can bear, (or hath ſtrength to bear) that he ſhould enter into judgment with him*; if we read the Text ſo, then that of the Apoſtle (1 *Cor.* 10. 13.) is a clear expoſition of it, *There hath no temptation taken you, but ſuch as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not ſuffer you to be tempted, above that you are able, but will with the temptation alſo make a way to eſcape, that ye may be able to bear it.* A temptation or affliction common to man, is but ſuch as man may bear; God will not overburden his people, he knoweth what fleſh and blood, as alſo what Grace can bear. As a man would not lay ſuch a weight upon a child, as would burthen a man, (we lay a childs burthen upon a child, and a mans burthen upon a man) ſo the Lord meaſures and weighs out his judgments in proportion to every mans ſtrength, he will not lay upon him more then he is able to bear. That's a good ſenſe, and hath a clear reaſon in it, why man ſhould not complain of what God layeth upon him, it being only proportionate to his ſtrength.

But I ſhall rather proſecute the Text according to the ſupply given in our tranſlation, which makes the reaſon why all ſuch complaints ſhould be forborn and ſilenced, to be this, becauſe the ſufferings of man are never proportion'd beyond his deſert.

He will not lay upon man more then right.] That is, more then he hath deſerved, or is equitable in his caſe; whatſoever is laid, or impoſed upon man beyond right, he hath cauſe to complain of, and may traverſe the Judgment, or deſire another hearing, yea he may appeal to ſome higher Judg if there be any; But if what is awarded againſt him be right according to Law, and ſutable to Juſtice, let the ſentence be what it will (let him be able to bear it or no, much more if he be able alſo to bear it, as in this caſe it is) he hath no cauſe at all to deſire a review of it. Thus it is (ſaith *Elihu*) in all the dealings of God with man, *He will not lay upon man more then is right,*

That he ſhould enter into judgment with God.

To enter (*or go*) *into judgment* (as the word is) is either to begin or renew a ſute, and to deſire the hearing of the cauſe again. God makes no faulty Judgments, why then ſhould any cauſe determin'd by him come to a ſecond hearing? There may be reaſon enough among men to hear a cauſe again, but what God reſolves, needs not be reviewed much leſs reverſed. Here then *Elihu* meets with thoſe frequent complaints of *Job* under his afflictions, and likewiſe with thoſe his ſeveral motions, and earneſt petitions, to have his cauſe heard afreſh, as if God had preſt him too ſore, or, at leaſt, had not done him right in ſuffering him to be ſo ſorely preſt by men. Thus *Elihu* ſeems to ſay; *God never gave any man any juſt cauſe, to plead his cauſe over again with him, nor hath he given thee* (*O Job*) *any cauſe to deſire it of him.* 'Tis true, carnal men, yea and ſometimes godly men, when (as *Job* here) they are greatly afflicted, are ready to think and ſay they are overſeverely dealt with; But the reaſon of *Elihu* ſtands good and firm againſt all theſe thoughts and ſayings. *For he will not lay upon man more then is right.*

Hence Note, *God never wronged, nor will wrong any man.*

There are two ſpecial caſes, in which God never did, nor ever will wrong man; Firſt, he will not wrong man by denying him that reward, which he hath freely promiſed, no man ſhall ſerve God for nought; he ſhall not ſay, God hath promiſed, but he hath not performed. The experience of his people ſeal to the truth of his promiſes, as well as their faith imbraceth it. That hope of man which is anchored in a promiſe of God, never miſcarried nor made any man aſhamed. Secondly, God will not wrong man, by laying upon him a greater puniſhment then he hath threatned. The Magiſtrate cannot be charged with laying more puniſhment upon an offender, then is right, if he puniſheth him not more then the Law alloweth. There may be a great deal of ſeverity (I grant) in puniſhing up to the rigor of the Law, but there is no unrighteouſneſs in it. The Moſaical law allowed of forty ſtripes; now if they had laid forty-one upon any offender, they had laid upon him more then was right, becauſe they exceeded the Law; and to have laid full forty ſtripes, which was the utmoſt they could by Law, had been ſevere, therefore they uſually abated one ſtripe at leaſt; Hence the Apoſtle *Paul* ſaith (2 *Cor.* 11.24.) *Of the Jews five times received I forty ſtripes ſave one*; if they had given *Paul* forty ſtripes they had done no wrong as to the Law, though one had been too many for and a wrong to him who had not broken their Law. Seeing the Lord lays no more upon the worſt of ſinners, then the law alloweth, he doth not lay upon man more then right. Yea not only the chaſtiſements which the Lord layeth upon his own ſervants, but the greateſt puniſhments which he layeth upon the worſt of the wicked, in this world, are much leſs then might with Juſtice be inflicted. This was *Ezra's* humble acknowledgment before the Lord (*Ezra* 9. 13.) *And after all that is come upon us, for our evil deeds, and for our great treſpaſs, ſeeing that thou our God haſt puniſhed us leſs then our iniquities deſerve.* The puniſhment that was upon the people of *Iſrael*, was exceeding great, in ſo much that *Daniel* ſaith in his prayer (*Chap.* 9. 11, 12.) *Under the whole heavens, hath not been done, as hath been done upon Jeruſalem*, yet *Ezra* ſpeaking of that very diſpenſation, ſaith, *Thou haſt puniſhed us leſs, then our iniquities deſerve: In this life the greateſt of our puniſhments, are leſs then the leaſt of our ſins.* Every ſin, or tranſgreſſion of the Law, deſerves eternal death; therefore in this life the greateſt puniſhments that fall upon ſinners, are leſs then their ſins: As the leaſt mercies which God beſtoweth upon them, are greater then the greateſt of their deſervings. (That was *Jacobs* free confeſſion (*Gen.* 32.10.) *I am not worthy of the leaſt of* (or I am leſs then) *all the mercies, and of all the truth which thou haſt ſhewed unto thy ſervant*) So the greateſt puniſhments that fall upon them in this life, are leſs then the leaſt of their ſins: And in the next life, where ſinners ſhall have full meaſure, heaped up, preſſed down, running over, and that for ever, yet then they ſhall not have one grain more, either of weight or meaſure, then they have deſerved: *The Lord layeth upon no man in this life ſo much, nor in that to come more then is right.*

Hence it followeth, Secondly, *Man hath no cauſe to complain of God, or God hath not given any man any cauſe to complain, whatſoever his ſufferings are.*

Why ſhould he complain who hath but his right? As God hath not given any man a liberty to complain, ſo he hath not given any man juſt occaſion, or a true reaſon to complain. If the burden of puniſhment be heavy upon any man, let him thank his own ſin, or ſelf for it, he hath but his due from God. We are often cruel to and wrong our ſelves, God is uſually merciful, and never but juſt to us; yea how great ſoever any affliction is, 'tis a mercy that 'tis no greater; and God can quickly make it greater, how great ſoever it is, and ſtill be juſt. *As he never doth more then he may, ſo he never doth ſo much as he can in puniſhing us.* The Lord hath more in the treaſures of his wrath, then yet he hath poured upon the worſt of ſinners. Nor indeed can the moſt capacious veſſels of wrath, hold all his wrath; 'tis, as himſelf is, infinite. *Cain* ſaid, *My puniſhment is greater then I can bear* (Gen.4.13.) yet God could have made his puniſhment greater then it was. Therefore *Jeremy* confeſſed (*Lam.* 3.22.) *It is of the Lords mercies that we are not conſumed, becauſe his compaſſions fail not.* Whatſoever is leſs then utter conſumption, hath ſome mixture of compaſſion in it, every puniſhment hath ſomewhat of compaſſion in it, except that of everlaſting damnation. O then let all fleſh fear and tremble to enter into Judgment with God, to complain or take offence at any of his proceedings with them.

There are four things conſiderable in God, which ſhould ſtop all mens mouths, from daring to do ſo.

Firſt, He is moſt powerful; there is no eſcaping out of his hands.

Secondly, He is moſt wiſe and ſeeth quite through all that man hath done with his hand, yea all that hath been contrived in his heart.

Thirdly, He is moſt juſt, and will not be taken off from doing leſs, neither can he be provoked to do more then is right to any man.

Fourthly, How ſhould man fear to enter into Judgment with God, ſeeing his judgments are paſt finding out; they are, as the Scripture ſaith, *a great deep*, we are not able to fathom them; therefore wo unto thoſe that complain of, or murmure againſt them: we ſhould always pray with *David*, (*Pſal.* 143.2.) *Lord, enter not into judgment with thy ſervant, for in thy ſight ſhall no man living be juſtified:* and we ſhould always be afraid to enter into judgment with God, for he will not only juſtifie, but magnifie himſelf and his works in the ſight of all men living. We ſhould be ſo far from entring into judgment with God (which many do when they think they do it not) that we ſhould continually beg him, not to enter into judgment with us; for we are not only unable to ſtand before him, but muſt certainly be broken before him; as it followeth,

Verſ. 24. **He ſhall break in pieces mighty men without number, and ſet others in their ſtead.**

As *Job* had often complained of his own troubles, ſo he had ſometimes of the proſperity of wicked men, or that God ſuffered them who were not worthy to live, yet to live in pomp, power, and pleaſure. Thus he expoſtulated the matter, (*Chap.* 21.7.) *Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea, are mighty in power?* &c. We may conceive *Elihu* removing that ſtumbling ſtone, and anſwering him in theſe words, while he telleth us what work the Lord often maketh in the world in thoſe his leſſer and particular days of judgment, among the mighty of the world. He not only ſtriketh and woundeth, troubleth and vexeth them, but breaketh them, yea, *breaketh them in pieces.* The words are a compariſon between the mighty, and a potters veſſel, of whom *David* ſaith (*Pſal.* 2.9.) *Thou ſhalt break them with a rod of Iron, thou ſhalt* (not only give them a knock, or a crack, but) *daſh them in pieces as a potters veſſel*; and he can break them ſo ſmall, that there ſhall not be *found in the burſting of them* (as the Prophet ſpeaks, *Iſa.* 30.14.) *a ſherd to take fire from the hearth, or to take water withal out of the pit.* Thus the Lord ſhall break in pieces, not the poor, and weak, and mean, but

ירע *Eſt ictibus ſubigere & mollire.*

Mighty men.] Or as ſome render, *He ſhall break in pieces many men*; the Hebrew word refers to both quantities, to great in bigneſs, and great in number; but becauſe we have their innumerableneſs mentioned diſtinctly in the next clauſe, it is beſt to render the word by greatneſs in power or might here. For leaſt any ſhould think God could break only a few mighty men, therefore it is ſaid, he ſhall break in pieces mighty men, in all the notions of might the mighty in corporal ſtrength, the mighty in civil ſtrength, power, or authority, yea martial mighty men, if they ſtand in his way, and hinder his work.

Hieronymus *interpretatur multos.*

כביר *Ad utramque quantitatem refertur, ſed malè fortes.* Merc.

Without number.] All theſe God breaketh in pieces like a Potters veſſel, as if they were but a ſwarm of flies, and ſweeps them away in a moment: As if he had ſaid, God will give innumerable examples of his infinite power and unbyaſs'd juſtice in deſtroying the wicked, he hath and will deſtroy ſo many of them, that no man knoweth how many he hath deſtroyed, or will deſtroy.

There is another reading of the words, Our Tranſlaters put it in the margin of our Bibles, *He ſhall break in pieces mighty men without ſearching out*, which may have a twofold interpretation.

First, He ſhall break them in pieces, and no man ought to ſearch or enquire into his doings, or *ſay unto him* (as that mighty Monarch confeſſed, *Dan.* 4.35.) *What doſt thou?* And thus it anſwers what was ſaid in the former verſe, *They ſhall not enter into judgment with God.* Some have a priviledg at Sea to paſs without ſearching, no man muſt inquire what they carry, or what their lading is; ſurely when the Lord breaketh mighty men, no man may ſearch into his doings, or inquire into his actions, further then for his own inſtruction and admonition, that he may anſwer the purpoſe of God in them, and give him glory.

לאחקר *pro* חקרכל

Ita ut numerus eorùm inveſtigari non poſſit, Piſc.

Certo numero contineri non poſſunt, quos propter peccata Dei juſtitia conteret. Aqui.

Secondly, He will break them in pieces *without ſearching*; that is, without any formal examination or uſual ways of Proceſs, at leaſt without any known to us. The Lord needs not to ſtand ſearching as men do, to find out matters againſt the mighty, to frame Articles, or to bring in his Bill of Attainder againſt them; God needeth not ſearch to know, becauſe he knoweth all things without ſearching, and therefore may juſtly break men in pieces without this kind of ſearching; or, *He will break them in pieces without inquiſition*; That is, without ſhewing cauſe why. God doth not always publiſh the reaſons of his proceedings, his judgments are often ſecret, though never unjuſt. We render well, *He will break in pieces mighty men.*

Deus cui omnia nota ſunt, non opus habet, in facta hominum inquirere, Druſ.

Without number.] That is, how many ſoever they are, or though they are innumerable, yet he will break them in pieces as one man: Thus the word is uſed (*Chap.* 5.9. *Chap.* 9.11. In both which places the Reader may find the extent and emphaſis of this expreſſion, *without number*, further explained) only conſider, that theſe mighty men without number, may be taken two ways.

Firſt, Collectively, as combined by leagues, or as marſhall'd by orders into an Hoſt: as if he had ſaid, though an Army of them be gathered together, even a numberleſs Army, yet the Lord can break them in pieces, (*Iſa.* 8.9.) *Aſſociate your ſelves, and ye ſhall be broken in pieces; gird your ſelves, and ye ſhall be broken in pieces.*

Secondly, We may take theſe mighty men ſingly or perſonally; Thus the Lord breaketh in pieces *mighty men without number*, one after another, one at this time, and another at that time; how many of them ſoever ariſe up one after another to oppoſe him, to oppreſs his people, or to do wickedly, they ſhall ſurely be broken. Mr. *Broughton* renders to this ſenſe, *He bruiſeth mighty men without end*, he doth not break them without end, as having no end in breaking them, but as without end, notes his breaking them endleſly, or for ever. If men will ſin without end, he can break them without end; he can renew deſtruction, as faſt as they renew tranſgreſſion.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *God can eaſily ruin the mightieſt men of the world.*

He can break them in pieces, as an earthen veſſel, with an iron rod, and how ſoon is that done? Both the holy Scriptures, and human Hiſtories abound with ſuch examples. What a number of mighty men inhabited the old world? *There were Giants in the earth in thoſe days*, (Gen.6.4.) yet God overthrow them all by a flood, they ſank like lead in thoſe mighty waters. What mighty men inhabited *Canaan*, before the Children of *Iſrael* came to poſſeſs it? The ſearchers of the land brought in a report, that they were but as Graſhoppers to them, and they had Cities walled up to Heaven, yet the Lord broke in pieces all thoſe mighty men, *Sihon the King of the Amorites, and Og the King of Baſhan*; and when *David* came to the Crown, he (in Gods ſtrength) deſtroyed the reſt of them. What mighty men were they that ſate upon the Throne of the four Monarchies? They had in their days the rule of the whole world, yet the Lord brake them in pieces. Firſt, the Aſſyrian, then the Perſian; the Grecian, and the Roman Monarchs were alſo broken in pieces: This was revealed to the golden head in a dream, (*Dan.* 2. 35.) *Then was the Iron, the Clay, the Braſs, the Silver, and the Gold broken in pieces, and became like the chaff of the Summer threſhing floor.* The mighty men of Iſrael, (when they ſinned mightily) the mighty men of the ten Tribes, yea the mighty men of the two Tribes of *Judah* and *Benjamin*, God brake in pieces; his own mighty people could not ſtand before him, when they corrupted themſelves, and would not be made clean. God breaketh mighty men, as eaſily as they break his commandments: And uſually when mighty men come to that height of ſinning, to ſin, or break his Commandments with eaſe, he commands them (for his own eaſe, as he is pleaſed to ſpeak, *Iſa.* 1. 24.) to be broken in pieces. To ſin with eaſe, is a ſure ſign of a hard heart, yea of a prophane heart. He was a mighty man of this temper, whoſe breaking in pieces the Lord threatned in ſuch wrathful Rhetorick by his holy Prophet, (*Ezek.* 21. 25, 26, 27.) *And thou prophane wicked Prince of Iſrael, whoſe day is come, when iniquity ſhall have an end; thus ſaith the Lord God, Remove the Diadem, and take off the Crown: this ſhall not be the ſame, Exalt him that is low, and abaſe him that is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn, and it ſhall be no more, until he come whoſe right it is, and I give it him.* What breaking words are here! Even a treble overturn denounc'd againſt the mighty. Thus ſaid the bleſſed Virgin while her Soul was magnifying the Lord, and her Spirit rejoycing in God her Saviour, (*Luke* 1. 52.) *He hath put down the mighty from their ſeats, and exalted them of low degree.*

Secondly, *In that, he breaketh in pieces the mighty without number,*

Obſerve, *'Tis no matter to God either how mighty or how many the wicked are.*

I have heretofore ſpoken of the multiplied acts of Divine Juſtice, and of the unwearied out-goings of his powerful providence to abate the pride of man, and therefore I ſhall not ſtay upon it, but only caution the mighty ones of the earth, in the words of the Pſalmiſt upon this point, expreſt in the very words of this Text; for, God having ſaid to his Son, to whom he had given the Nations for an inheritance, (*Pſal.* 2. 9.) Thou ſhalt break them with a rod of iron, and (in caſe of their non ſubmiſſion to his Scepter) daſh them in pieces like a Potters veſſel, he preſently adds, (*Ver.* 10.) *Be wiſe now therefore, O ye Kings, be inſtructed ye Judges of the earth; ſerve the Lord with fear, and rejoyce with trembling; Kiſs the Son, leſt he be angry, and ye periſh from the way.*

Yet though God be often at breaking work, he is not always at it; for when he hath broken in pieces mighty men without number, he (as it followeth in the Text) will

Set others in their ſtead.] We may ſuppoſe theſe words given in upon a two-fold account.

Firſt, To ſhew the abſoluteneſs of the power of God, as well in ſetting up, as in caſting down.

Secondly, To ſhew that we need not be diſmayed nor diſcouraged, when we ſee God breaking in pieces ſome or many mighty men, for he can find out others to ſupply their room, and fill up the breaches which he hath made. *He ſets others in their ſtead.* The force of the Hebrew is, *He ſhall make others to ſtand*; and that's more then barely to ſet another in the ſtead or place of thoſe that are removed and broken. God is able not only when many fall to raiſe up others, but he can alſo eſtabliſh and ſettle thoſe whom he raiſeth up. That's the meaning of *Elihu*, when he ſaith,

Ne ex hoc credatur deperire humani generis ſtatus, addit & ſtare facit alios, Aquin.

And ſet others in their ſtead.] *Elihu* doth not determin who or what theſe others are; God may make his choice where and of whom he pleaſeth, in what family or tribe he pleaſeth, to ſet up in the place of thoſe mighty men, whom he, at any time, is provoked to break in pieces. The words are plain; Note only two things from them.

Firſt, *God hath as abſolute a power to ſet up, as to pull down when and whom he pleaſeth.*

(*Pſal.* 75. 6, 7.) *Promotion cometh neither from the Eaſt, nor from the Weſt, Nor from the South, but God is the Judg, he putteth down one, and ſetteth up another.* The ſame Soveraignty of God is aſſerted (*Dan.* 4. 17.) *To the intent that the living may know, that the moſt high ruleth in the Kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomſoever he will, and ſetteth up over it the baſeſt of men.* God ſometimes ſetteth up thoſe that are baſe in their conditions or manners for a ſcourge or puniſhment; ſometimes he ſetteth up thoſe that are baſe in their ſtate or condition, being either men of meaneſt birth, or men laid loweſt by affliction, (*Pſal.* 113. 7, 8.) *He raiſeth up the poor out of the duſt, and lifteth the needy out of the dunghil; that he may ſet him with Princes, even with the Princes of his people.* No man is ſo poor, but the Lord can enrich him; no man ſo low, but he can raiſe him up He can bring a man from a dunghil to a Palace, and from the duſt to a Throne. *Saul* was caſt down, God broke him in pieces, though a mighty man, and ſet up *David* in his ſtead; *He choſe David his ſervant, and took him from the ſheepfolds, from following the Ewes great with young, he brought him to feed Jacob his people, and Iſrael his Inheritance:* (*Pſal.* 78. 70, 71.) When God pull'd down *Haman* (the great favourite of *Ahaſuerus*) who had plotted to advance *Mordecai* to the gallows, and ruin the whole ſeed of the Jews, God did not only break him and his plot, but really advanced *Mordecai* into greater favour and confidence with his Prince then ever *Haman* had before.

Secondly, Note, from the force of the word, *to make to ſtand,*

The Lord can eſtabliſh thoſe whom he ſetteth up.

The Lord doth not only ſet up, but keep up whom he pleaſeth. Though they are weak whom he ſetteth up, yet he can keep them up; though they whom he ſetteth up, are oppoſed by the ſtrong, yet he can keep them up. He can make a ſhrub ſtand faſt, though oppoſed by a Cedar; and a reed to ſtand firm like a rock, though oppoſed by an Oak.

Thirdly, Note, *The Lord taketh care of the Government of the world.*

He is not for breaking work only, he is for ſetting and ſettling too. God will not let the body of a people periſh for want of a head; but when in judgment he hath broken one in pieces, he in mercy ſets up another. Mighty men are like pillars, which bear the weight of a whole Common-wealth or Kingdom. God rarely deals with Nations, as *Sampſon* did with the houſe wherein the Philiſtims were aſſembled, who at once pull'd away the pillar, and pull'd down the houſe; but if he pulleth away one pillar, he puts in another, that the houſe may ſtand. God will not leave the world without rule or rulers; when he takes with one hand, he gives with another; when *Judas* the Traytor was broken, Chriſt found out (a better man) *Matthias* to ſet in his ſtead. And when the whole Nation or Church of the Jews was broken and rejected, God called in the Gentiles, and ſet them up for a Church and people to himſelf in their ſtead; and (which is the greateſt inſtance of all) when Jeſus Chriſt was taken from the earth, when he left the world, who was the mighty one (he was firſt broken in pieces for our ſins, and afterwards taken away) yet he gave a ſupply, and left us another in his ſtead; *I will not leave you comfortleſs,* (ſaith he *John* 14. 18.) *I will come unto you,* though not till the great day in perſon, yet every day in the gifts and graces of my Spirit. *I will pray the Father and he ſhall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;* (John 14. 16.) Again, (*John* 16. 13.) *When he the Spirit of Truth is come, he will guide you into all Truth.* God ſent the Spirit in Chriſt's ſtead; he doth that for us which Chriſt did for us while he abode on the Earth: and therefore the holy Spirit is not unfitly call'd Vicar of Chriſt here on earth, he feeds the flock of Chriſt, he looks to his people, he teacheth, he comforteth them in Chriſt's ſtead. And thus in Nations, when God breaketh one Governour, he ſets up another in his ſtead; he will not leave Nations without guides and leaders, nor ſuffer the ſtaff of Government to be utterly broken, which is the greateſt plague that can come upon any people. From the whole verſe take theſe three deductions.

First, *There is a vanity and an uncertainty, at leaſt the vanity of uncertainty in all worldly greatneſs and powers.*

God blaſts and breaks them as he pleaſeth: The moſt ſubſtantial things on earth are but as a ſhadow; or like the Land-ſea's continually flowing and ebbing. One is caſt down, and another is exalted; one is broken, and another is ſet up; Yea, the ſame man who was lately exalted and ſet up, may quickly be caſt down and broken. There is no aſſurance to be had of the beſt things here below, but only this, that we cannot be ſure of them: and 'tis good for us, that we cannot be ſure of the beſt things here below, both becauſe we are ſo apt to ſay, *It is good for us to be here,* where yet our beſt things are not to be had, as alſo becauſe by this conſideration we may be provoked to look after, and make ſure of better things then any are here enjoyed, even thoſe beſt things which are under hope.

Secondly, *Great examples of God*'s *judgments, are to be eyed and marked.*

Why doth *Elihu* call *Job* to this conſideration, but that he might be humbled, and give God glory; it is not for nought that God breaks in pieces the mighty ones of the Earth, (1 *Cor.* 10. 11.) *All theſe things have hapned unto them for enſamples; and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.* As all thoſe things among the Jews were Types; ſo all that God doth to this day upon the Princes, and powers of the world, are but as types and enſamples; they are for admonition, that we ſhould conſider thoſe ſins which have brought ſuch judgments upon men, ſuch breaking judgments, and avoid them. Some will never ſee ſin in it ſelf, but in the judgments of God all may ſee what ſin is; when mighty men are broken in pieces, what will God do with the reſt, if they ſin againſt him, and provoke the eyes of his glory? *Senacherib*, that proud Prince, who invaded the land of Iſrael in the time of *Hezekiah*, being broken in pieces by his own bowels (his ſons ſlew him) it was ordered to be writ upon his Tomb, *Let every one that ſeeth me, learn to fear God, and not to defie him, as I have done.* The breaking of the powers of the earth, ſhould exceedingly exalt the fear of God in our hearts. *It is better to learn wiſdom by the puniſhment of others, then by our own.*

Nunquam culpam ſuam reprobi niſi in pœna agnoſcunt. Greg. lib. 25. Moral. cap. 9.

In me intuens pius eſto. Herod. lib. 2.

Thirdly, If God will break the mighty, though many, yea though innumerable; This is comfort to the people of God when they are oppreſt, and broken by oppreſſors, let them remember God is able to break their oppreſſors, though they riſe up like Hydra's heads one after another; read the whole fifty and ſecond Pſalm, as alſo the 39. and 40. verſes of the 107. Pſalm, as a clear proof of this. *Elihu* having ſhewed what ſad breaches God makes upon mighty men, makes a fourth inference in the words following.

Quicunque celſa dominatur aula me videat & te Troja, nunquam documenta dedit ſors majora, quam fragili loco ſtarent ſuperbi. Senec. in Troad. de Hecuba, Act. 1. Sc. 1.

Verſ. 25. **Therefore he knoweth their works, and he overturneth them in the night, ſo that they are deſtroyed.**

For as much as God breaketh them, it is an argument that he knoweth what they are, and what they have been doing; There is a threefold reading of theſe words.

Propterea facit ut nota ſint facta ipſorum. Bez.

First, Some read them as implying God's making others to know their works, God maketh the ſecret ſins of men viſible, by his viſible judgments. Wrath ſeen, may give us a ſight of ſin. Some inſiſt much upon this expoſition; and 'tis a truth, the Lord by his judgments brings to light, and doth as it were ſpread open, as in the face of the Sun, the wickedneſs and wicked deeds of mighty men: that all may know his judgments are deſerved by their works, he makes their works known.

יכיר *Cognoſcit aliqui exponunt facit cognoſcere, ſc. facit ut ab omnibus eorum ſcelera cognoſcantur.* Merc.

Secondly, Others render, *He maketh them know or acknowledg their works*; The Lord at laſt by ſore, and ſevere judgments, will extort confeſſions from the worſt of them, he will make the mighty acknowledg that their works have been naught, and their ways perverſe. In Scripture the ſame word ſignifies to know, or to confeſs and acknowledg. Thus here, he makes them to know or to acknowledg what their works have been.

Thirdly, Rather take it, as we render, of Gods act in taking notice of all they had done; *Therefore he knoweth their works:* As if *Elihu* had ſaid, theſe mighty men of the earth, thought themſelves under covert, or that the Lord took no notice of them, nor of their works, their works were done in the dark, and they ſuppoſed the Lord could not pierce into them; but he will make it appear, that he knew their works, when he maketh his juſtice appear in puniſhing them for their works.

הכיר *non ſignificat notum facio quod ſciam, ſed tantum cognoſco, ideo tranſtuli cognoſcit.* Druſ.

Hence Note, *We have an aſſurance that God knoweth the works of all men, becauſe he puniſheth all wicked works, or the works of the wicked ſo punctually and exactly.*

He puniſheth many of them here, and will puniſh them all hereafter: when we ſee him breaking the mighty men of the world, 'tis a proof that God was in their Cabinet counſels, and ſaw what was done there, we may conclude he knew their works, though men knew them not; he could never lay his judgments ſo exactly upon them as he doth, if he did not know their works: That God knows the works of all men, is a point I have met with before, and therefore paſs from it here.

And he overturneth them in the night.] There are ſeveral readings of this clauſe.

First, Some thus, *Therefore the Lord knoweth their works, and turneth into night*; That is, he turneth their proſperity into adverſity, he bringeth trouble and affliction upon them; they lived before in a day of proſperity, in a day of power and worldly greatneſs, but he turneth them into night.

Secondly, Or, as others thus, *He turneth the night*, that is, he changeth the night into day, he takes away the dark and cloſe covers of their ſins, and makes them as manifeſt as the light; Now, as the Apoſtle ſaith (*Eph.* 5. 13.) *That which maketh manifeſt, is light*; If God were not light, he could not *bring to light the hidden things of darkneſs, nor manifeſt the counſels of the heart.*

Simul atque mutavit noctem &c. Jun. *i. e. Lucem protulit, qua revelantur omnia in judicio ejus.* Id.

Thirdly thus, *Therefore he knoweth their works, and when the night is turned, he deſtroyeth them*; That is, they are deſtroyed and periſh as ſoon and as eaſily as the day takes place of the night: or as ſoon as the night is turned into day, ſo ſoon doth the Lord deſtroy them, he can quickly make an end of them, he can deſtroy them with the morning Light.

We render, and I judg that beſt, *He overturneth them* (their perſons) *in the night*; and ſo *Elihu* points at the ſeaſon, or time, of Gods breaking and overthrowing them, he doth it *in the night.* We make take it ſtrictly, as in the caſe of *Pharaoh* and the Egyptians, (*Exod.* 12. 29.) as alſo in that of *Belſhazzar, Dan.* 5. 30.) or, *in the night*, that is, ſuddenly, unexpectedly; Though a man be deſtroyed in the day, yet if it be done ſuddenly, he looking for no ſuch matter, we may ſay it was done in the night; becauſe then men are moſt ſecure: This way of expreſſing an unlookt for evil, the coming of in the night, was opened at the twentieth verſe, therefore I ſhall not ſtay upon it, *He overturneth them in the night.*

So that they are deſtroyed.] *Elihu* ſaid before, *He ſhall break in pieces mighty men*; Here he ſaith, *they are deſtroyed*; That is, they ſhall be broken to purpoſe, or throughly; God doth not break them in pieces for correction, but for deſtruction; there are great breakings upon the perſons and eſtates of ſome men, and yet it is but for correction, others the Lord breaketh for utter ruin, (as here) *ſo that they are deſtroyed.* The Original word ſignifieth to deſtroy as it were by pounding in a Morter; and the ſame word is uſed to ſignifie *a contrite heart, a heart broken by godly ſorrow under the ſenſe of ſin. They are deſtroyed*, or, as it were ground to powder; you may break a thing into many pieces, yet not grind it to powder or duſt, as corn in a Mill, or ſpice in a Morter; but theſe (ſaith *Elihu*) are not only broken to pieces, but beaten to duſt, that's the ſtrength of the word which we render, *they are deſtroyed.*

דכא *contrivit, attrivit, contudit.*

Hence Note, *What God hath a mind to do, he can do it certainly, and will do it throughly.*

He breaks men in pieces, *ſo that they are deſtroyed and brought to duſt*; When the Prophet declares the breaking of the four Monarchies, it is ſaid (*Dan.* 2. 35.) *They ſhall be as the chaff of the Summer threſhing upon the Mountains*; if the Lord will deſtroy the mightieſt, they ſhall certainly be deſtroyed; as *Balak* ſaid to *Balaam*; *I wot that whom thou curſeſt are curſed*; as if he had ſaid, thou canſt curſe effectually, if thou wilt ſet thy ſelf to it; 'tis not in the power of all the *Balaams* in the world to effect a curſe, though they pronounce a curſe, 'tis only in the power of the Lord to curſe effectually; he can bleſs whom he pleaſeth, and they are bleſſed; he can curſe whom he pleaſeth, and they are curſed. Thus as *Ephraim* lamenting his ſin and ſorrow confeſſed, (*Jer.* 31. 18.) *Lord, thou haſt chaſtiſed me, and I was chaſtiſed*; God paid him home (as we ſpeak) if we chaſtiſe a child, he is chaſtiſed, but when *Ephraim* ſaith, *thou haſt chaſtiſed me, and I was chaſtiſed*; his meaning is, I was greatly and effectually chaſtiſed; that is, Firſt, In a literal ſenſe, I found thy hand heavy upon me, it was a ſore affliction that I was under. Secondly, In a ſpiritual ſenſe; *Thou haſt chaſtiſed me, and I was chaſtiſed*; that is, my heart was humbled and broken under thy chaſtiſements; in either notion we ſee the effectualneſs of the Lord's work; *Thou haſt chaſtiſed me, and I was chaſtiſed.* And therefore *Ephraim* invited the Lord to another work; *Turn me, O Lord, and I ſhall be turned*; if thou wilt but turn thy Spirit upon this hard heart of mine, it will be effectually turned, it will be not only broken for ſin, but from ſin: As if he had ſaid, I have received reproofs and counſels from men, and they have not turned me, but Lord, if thou wilt reprove and counſel me, I ſhall be turned; thus the Lord carrieth his work home to converſion, in his ſpiritual dealings with ſome, and to confuſion in his temporal puniſhments upon others. Thus he threatned his own people for their confidence in *Egypt*, and contempt of his holy Word (*Iſa.* 30. 13.) *This iniquity ſhall be unto you as a breach ready to fall, ſwelling out in a high wall, whoſe breaking cometh ſuddenly at an inſtant. And he ſhall break it as the breaking of a potters veſſel, that is broken in pieces, he ſhall not ſpare; ſo that there ſhall not be found in the burſting of it, a ſherd to take fire from the hearth, or to take water withal out of the pit*; that is, ye ſhall be made utterly uſeleſs and unſerviceable. That piece of a veſſel is of no uſe, which will not ſerve for either of thoſe little uſes, the taking of a little fire from the hearth, or a little water out of the pit. And if God ſometime break his own profeſſing people thus ſmall for their ſins, how ſmall will he break his profeſſed enemies! Read for this the laſt breaking and down-fall of *Babylon* (Rev. 18. 21, 22, 23.) Therefore take heed how you fall into the Lords hand; for he can not only break you in pieces, but break you to powder, he can break you to deſtruction: *The Lords purpoſes, and the effects of them, his works, are never without effect, for good or evil, for the better or for the worſe.*

VERS. 26, 27, 28.

He ſtriketh them as wicked men, in the open ſight of others:

Becauſe they turned back from him, and would not conſider any of his ways.

So that they cauſe the cry of the poor to come unto him, and he heareth the cry of the afflicted.

Elihu having in the former words ſhewed the impartial vengeance of God upon the wicked, proceedeth to ſhew two things further about it in theſe words;

Firſt, The manner of it, *verſ.* 26. *He ſtriketh them as wicked men in the open ſight of others.*

Secondly, The cauſes, grounds, or reaſons of it in the 27. and 28. verſes; why doth God ſtrike them? it is *becauſe they turned back from him, and would not conſider any of his ways; So that they cauſe the cry of the poor to come unto him*; their impiety in turning from God, and their iniquity in oppreſſing the poor, provoked the Lord to *ſtrike them as wicked men in the open ſight of others.*

ספק *percuſſit volam ad volam, adverſas manus colliſit. Significat aliquid cum ſono deijcere vel complodere; unde aliqui de ejectione*

Verſ. 26. **He ſtriketh them as wicked men.**

The word which we render *ſtrike*, ſpecially notes the ſtriking of one hand againſt the other; our hands claſht, or ſtruck together, make a ſound, or noiſe: Thus ſome Interpret the word here, *He ſtrikes them with an ignominious ſound.* Many rejoyce and clap their hands when they fall; They are deſtroyed with ſhouting. Others take the Metaphor from a bladder filled with wind, which being caſt on the ground, and ſtampt upon with the foot, breaks with a noiſe, or gives a crack in the breaking: Wicked men, in all they think, and purpoſe, and do, are but wind, and when they break, they break like bladders, which have nothing of ſolidity, only breath and fume in them. Such an Elegancy there is in this word, hitting the vanity and vacuity or emptineſs of wicked men, all their filling being but like that of a bladder, which puffs them up, but never makes them wiſe or ſolid men.

ignominioſa cum ſibilis exponunt. Alij volunt peti metaphoram à veſica vento turgente, quæ pede compreſſa cum ſonitu rumpitur. Scult. *Pro improbis complosit eos.* Tharg. *In loco improborum complodit eos.* Jun.

Further, I find this word uſed for ſtriking in a threefold ſenſe.

Firſt, For ſtriking with ſorrow and ſhame; ſuch was that of repenting *Ephraim* (Jer. 31. 19.) *Who when he thought on his ways, was aſhamed and ſmote upon his thigh.*

Secondly, For ſtriking with ſcorn and deriſion (*Lam.* 2. 15.) *All that paſs by clap their hands at thee, they hiſs and wag their head at the daughter of* Jeruſalem.

Thirdly, There is alſo a ſtriking with anger and indignation; Thus *Balak* being vext, becauſe he could not have his purpoſe to bribe *Balaam* to curſe the people of God, *Smote his hands together* (Numb. 24. 10.) and the Lord himſelf is expreſt expreſſing his angry indignation againſt his own people the Jews by this geſture (*Ezek.* 22. 13.) *Behold therefore I have ſmitten my hands at thy diſhoneſt gain*, &c. There is then a ſpecial Emphaſis in the ſmiting or ſtriking here intended, beſides the general meaning of it. The Lord deſtroys wicked men in ſuch a manner, that all who behold it are filled with the admiration of his righteouſneſs, and with a deteſtation of their lewdneſs. The Septuagint ſay, *He hath extinguiſhed wicked men*; As if they were but ſmoaking firebrands, or the ſtinking ſnuff of a candle. Another renders it, *He binds them*, the word ſignifying alſo to bind or ſtraighten; The Lord brings forth evil men, as it were, bound hand and foot to Judgment. We ſay clearly, *He ſtriketh them*, and that in no ordinary way, but

*Ἔσβεσε δὲ ἀσεβεῖς; *Extinxit autem impios.* Sept. Pro impijs ſtrinxit eos. Bold. *i. e. vinculis funibuſq; ligare fecit eos tanquam impios atq; ita ſpectandos palam deduci & proponi.* Bold.

As wicked men.] So we tranſlate; yet the particle which we render, *as*, may (here according to its frequent uſe elſewhere) carry in it a reaſon, *He ſtrikes them becauſe they are wicked*; ſo ſome read the Text, not as we by way of ſimilitude, how God ſtriketh them, but as giving an account why God ſtriketh them, even becauſe they are *wicked men.* Mr. *Broughton* ſaith, *For the wicked, he maketh plentiful riddance of them*, which hath a good ſenſe in it, but takes ſomewhat too great a liberty with the original Text; And becauſe the reaſon of this ſtriking is held forth in the verſes following, it is more diſtinct to ſay he ſtrikes them (not becauſe they are wicked men, but) *as wicked men*; that is, as wicked men uſe to be ſtrucken, or as they uſe to be proceeded againſt in a way of Juſtice. God ſtriketh the *mighty men* (of whom he ſpake before) as common offenders or malefactors; Though they are great on earth, yea though they are (in title) Gods upon earth, yet God ſtrikes them as the baſeſt of wicked men, they ſhall not only *dye* (as 'tis ſaid, *Pſal.* 82. 7.) *or fall like one of the Princes*, but they ſhall dye like the worſt of men, like wicked men.

תחת *cauſalis eſt, propterea quod impij ſunt. Illud* quaſi *ſæpe non ſimilitudinem ſed veritatem ſignificat; & idem valet quod utpote*, &c.

Hence note, Firſt, *They that do like the wicked, ſhall be dealt with by God as the wicked, how high, or mighty ſoever they are in this world.*

And as they who are openly wicked ſhall be dealt with as wicked men, though they be high in the world; ſo they that are really wicked ſhall be dealt with as wicked men, though they make a high profeſſion of godlineſs in the Church, even them will God ſtrike alſo as wicked men. Chriſt ſpeaks of ſome (*Matth.* 7. 22.) who made a loud profeſſion of religion, with whom yet he dealt as with wicked men: *Depart from me* (ſaith he) *I know ye not, ye workers of iniquity.* Though God doth not deal alike with all wicked men, yet he deals with them all like wicked men. There is not one wicked man in the world, but he ſhall be dealt with according to his kind, that is, as a wicked man, and ſhall have that for his portion which is the portion of their Cup, who are wicked. As the Godly, ſo the wicked, whether prophane or falſe and hypocritical, ſhall be eſteemed and handled by God like themſelves, or as they are.

Secondly, From the firſt word, as it is taken cauſally, (upon which many inſiſt) Note,

The reaſon why wicked men are ſtricken is becauſe they are wicked.

Were not men wicked they ſhould never feel ſuch ſtroaks from the hand or rather iron rod of God. If any ſmart and are ruin'd, they may thank themſelves for it, that is, their ſins for it; their ſufferings are the fruits of their ſin. The Prophet told the ſinful Jews ſo (*Jer.* 4. 18.) they had an affliction upon them, which *did reach even to the heart*, God made their hearts ake, he ſtruck them to the heart; but why did he ſo? the anſwer is, *Thy ſin and thy doings have procured theſe things to thee*, &c. *He ſtriketh them as wicked men*,

In the open ſight of others.] Theſe words are a further deſcription of the manner how God ſtrikes the wicked, he doth it openly, or (as we put in the margin) *In the place of beholders*, that is, in ſuch a place, and in ſuch a manner that all may behold it: we ſay, *He ſtrikes them in the open ſight of others*; that is, he puniſheth them in an exemplary way, or that they may be an example of warning unto others. For, *The place of ſeers*, or *of beholders*, is ſome open and eminent place oppoſed to a Corner; as *Paul* ſaid pleading his cauſe before King *Agrippa* (Acts 26. 26.) *This thing was not done in a Corner*; no, it was done, as upon the houſe-top, even in the place of beholders. The Lord will not have to do with wicked men only in a Corner. He will have witneſſes of his doings with them. There ſhall be enow to take notice how he handles them, therefore he often takes open vengeance on them, in the frequent aſſembly and concourſe of many beholders, both approving and reverencing, yea adoring the impartial equity of the ſupream Judg, and his care of humane affairs. So then, the words are an alluſion to the execution of common maleſactors, who dye by the Judgment of the Magiſtrate, ſuch being condemned and ſentenced by the Judg, are not put to death in the priſon, or in a hole, but are taken out and carried to ſome noted place of execution, or a Scaffold is purpoſely erected, where a multitude of ſpectators are admitted to come and behold the Tragedy. When our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who (to deliver us from our tranſgreſſions) *was numbred with tranſgreſſors*, when he (I ſay) was crucified, The Evangeliſt ſaith (*Luke* 23. 35.) *The people ſtood beholding, and the Rulers alſo with them derided him.* Chriſt himſelf was ſtrucken as a wicked man in the place of Beholders. And ſo have many thouſands of his faithful witneſſes. The wicked deal with them often, as the Lord dealeth ſometimes with wicked men, they are brought forth from priſon to death, and executed in the open ſight of others. *All things* (in this world) *come alike to all, no man knoweth love or hatred by all that is before them* (Eccl. 9. 1, 2.) The Apoſtle *Paul* ſpeaking of himſelf and his fellow-Apoſtles (to ſhew the publick diſgrace which they were put to) ſaith, *We are made a ſpectacle to the world, to Angels, and to men* (1 Cor. 4. 9.) The Greek is, we are a *Theatre to the world*, &c. As if he had ſaid, all ſee how we are uſed; And as bloody perſecuters make the faithful ſervants of Chriſt a ſpectacle, ſo Chriſt will at laſt make wicked men a ſpectacle to the world, to Angels, and to men. Thus it is propheciced (*Iſa.* 66. 24.) that *all fleſh who come to worſhip before the Lord, ſhall go forth and look upon the carcaſſes of the men that have tranſgreſſed againſt him*, &c. They ſhall be *ſtricken in the place of Beholders or Seers.*

Locus videntium, locus patens, frequens, celebris, omnium oculis expoſitus. Par. *Importat viſionem paradigmaticam & exemplarem.* Merc.

Some expound that word *Seers*, as implying more than ordinary *ſeers*, or more than barely ſuch as ſee what is done; namely, ſuch as are delighted and pleaſed with what is done, yet not as it is a ſuffering of pain by man, but as it is an act of Juſtice from God.

Videre ſæpe ſignificat cum voluptate aliquid ſpectare. Scult.

Hence note, *God oftentimes doth Juſtice upon ſinners openly.*

The Judgments of God are of two ſorts: Some are ſecret, others are manifeſt; he can do execution upon men when none ſee it; nay he doth the ſevereſt executions upon ſome men when they themſelves do not ſee it (that's the ſting and ſeverity of the Judgment, that) they have not ſo much as any ſenſe of the wrath of God, when the full vials of his wrath are pouring out upon them. But many of the Judgments of God are open; As he ſtriketh ſome ſo ſecretly, that none can ſee it, ſo others ſo viſibly that all may ſee it. Thus the Lord commanded *Moſes* (Numb. 25. 4.) when *Iſrael* had joyned themſelves unto *Baal-peor*, *Take all the heads of the people and hang them up before the Lord againſt the Sun.* By *the heads of the people*, we may underſtand either the capital offenders, thoſe who were moſt active and ready in that wickedneſs; or their principal Rulers, who in ſtead of ſtopping them from or puniſhing them for thoſe offences, gave way to them or at leaſt winked at them: Theſe muſt be hanged againſt the Sun, that is, as *Elihu* ſpeaks here, *in the open ſight of others*, or, *in the place of ſeers.* Thus they were made an example of caution that all might ſee and fear and do no more preſumptuouſly. Read the like executions of divine Judgment threatned (2 *Sam.* 12. 11, 12. *Iſa.* 26. 11.) *John* in the *Revelation* (Chap. 15. 4.) prophecyeth of the Saints triumphing at the fall of *Babylon*, and ſinging the ſong of *Moſes*, and the ſong of the Lamb, ſaying, *Great and marvellous are thy works*, &c. *for thy Judgments are made manifeſt*: God hath now ſtricken *Babylon* his great enemy in the open ſight of others; his Judgments were right before, (they are always right) but till then not manifeſt. *David* ſaith (*Pſal.* 9. 16.) *The Lord is known by the Judgment which he executeth*: now if the Lord be known by the Judgment which he executeth; then the Judgment which he executeth muſt be known; it muſt be an open Judgment; and ſuch are very many of the Judgments of God, they are acted as upon a ſtage. And I may give you an account in three particulars why the Lord will ſometimes do Juſtice, *in the place of beholders, or in the open ſight of others.*

Firſt, That there may be witneſſes enow of what he doth, and ſo a record of it kept, at leaſt in the minds and memories of faithful men for the generations to come.

Secondly, The Lord doth it not only that he may have witneſſes of his Juſtice, but alſo that his Juſtice and the proceedings of it, may have an effect and a fruit upon thoſe who did not feel it, nor fall under it. This was the reaſon why the Lord threatned to puniſh *Jeruſalem* in the ſight of the nations (*Ezek.* 5. 5, 6, 7, 8, 14, 15.) *Thus ſaith the Lord God, this is Jeruſalem, I have ſet it in the midſt of the nations and Countries that are round about her.* God is ſaid (*Pſal.* 74. 12.) *To work ſalvation in the midſt of the Earth*; that is, in *Jeruſalem*, or among his people, who were placed as it were in the Center, and middle part of the world: not that *Jeruſalem* ſtood exactly in the midſt of the world, but becauſe many Nations ſtood about it, that might well be called a City ſtanding in the midſt of the nations; and therefore it is added (*verſ.* 8.) *Thus ſaith the Lord God, Behold I, even I am againſt thee, and will execute Judgment in the midſt of thee, in the ſight of the nations.* God would execute Judgment in *Jeruſalem* a City placed in the midſt of the nations, that as the nations had taken notice of the extraordinary favours, benefits, deliverances, and ſalvations which God wrought for *Jeruſalem*; ſo they might alſo take notice of his judgments and ſore diſpleaſure againſt them. *Jeruſalem* was not ſeated in ſome nook, corner, or by-place of the world, but in the midſt of the nations, that both the goodneſs and ſeverity of God towards them might be conſpicuous; And that the nations round about ſeeing the ſufferings of that people for their ſin, might fear and tremble to ſin as they had done; for if *Jeruſalem* the ſeat of inſtituted worſhip and God's peculiar people were not ſpared when they provoked God, their neighbours might well conclude, ſurely we ſhall not be ſpared: As the Lord himſelf argued it againſt thoſe uncircumciſed nations (*Jer.* 25. 20.) *Behold I will bring evil upon the City that is called by my name, and ſhould ye go utterly unpuniſhed?* Certainly no! If God puniſh his own people in the ſight of the heatheniſh nations when they do wickedly, what then are heathen nations to expect, who do nothing but wickedneſs?

Jeruſalem dicitur medium terræ, utpote quæ ſit in quarto climate ideo autem urbem in medio mundi conſtitutam & quaſi in loco videntium elegit deus, ut ſicut beneficia ita & ſupplicia eorum omnibus eſſent conſpicua. Pined.

And this (by the way) may give the Alarm, and be a very awakening conſideration to all the Churches and people of God at this day throughout the world. If God did ſtrike *Jeruſalem* of old, that is, his people there, *as wicked men* even in the open ſight of others; if the Lord was ſo *wrath with his people, that he polluted his inheritance, and gave them into the hand of the Chaldeans* (Iſa. 47. 6.) *If he forſook his houſe and left his heritage, and gave the dearly beloved of his ſoul into the hands of her enemies* (Jer. 12. 7.) and ſaid (*verſ.* 9.) *Mine heritage is to me as a ſpeckled bird, the birds round about her are againſt her*; yea if he (in the he (in the cloſe of that verſe) invited the worſt of men under the name of beaſts to ſpoil them, *Come ye, aſſemble all the beaſts of the field come to devour*; Now (I ſay) If God ſtruck his ancient people, the Jewiſh Church, as wicked men, by wicked men, in the open ſight of others, O let the Gentile Churches take heed, leſt they alſo be ſtricken after the ſame manner. Many Churches in *Germany* and elſewhere have been ſtricken ſo already in this laſt age, let the remnant both there and elſewhere remember themſelves and give glory to God, before he cauſe ſuch darkneſs to come upon them, and ſtrike them alſo *as wicked men in the open ſight of others.*

God lets ſome ſinners ſuffer or puniſheth them openly, both becauſe he would have all others take notice that he diſlikes what they have done, as alſo becauſe he would not have others do the like, leſt they be made like them, both in the matter and manner of their ſufferings. *'Tis a favour (as well as our duty) to be taught by other mens harms, and to be inſtructed by their ſtroaks, to prevent our own.*

And as the Lord ſtrikes ſome wicked men openly, that others may fear and not do the like, ſo, that they who have done the like may be humbled for, and repent of what they have done. God doth not always pour out the ſame Judgments upon all thoſe that have done the ſame wickedneſs, (the whole world would be in blood if he did ſo) but he takes here and there one that the reſt bethinking themſelves, and (with repenting *Ephraim*) ſmiting upon their thigh, may prevent the Lord from ſmiting them at all, eſpecially from ſtriking them as wicked men in the open ſight of others. It is ſaid (*Rev.* 11. 13.) *that, after by a great earthquake the tenth part of the City fell, and in the earthquake were ſlain of men ſeven thouſand, the remnant were affrighted and gave glory to the God of heaven.* And ſurely the reaſon why after one man hath been chaſtiſed or ſtricken, others take their turns too, is becauſe they did not take warning by his chaſtiſements and ſufferings. Did we but mind the ſcope of God in puniſhing any openly, the ſtriking of one might ſave hundreds, or thouſands from being ſtricken; but becauſe men are ſo ſecure and ſo ſlow to take warning by what God doth to others, therefore they are called forth one after another, to ſuffer and feel his heavy hand in their own perſons.

Thirdly, God ſtrikes ſome wicked men in open view, or in the place of beholders for the comfort of his own people, and for their encouragement (*Pſal.* 58. 10, 11.) *The righteous ſhall be glad when he ſeeth the vengeance*; not that he ſhall be glad of the vengeance, purely as it is a hurt, or a ſuffering to the creature, but the righteous ſhall be glad when he ſeeth the vengeance of God, as it is a fulfilling of the threatning of God againſt the ſin of man, and an evidence of his own holineſs (*Pſal.* 64. 9, 10.) *God ſhall ſhoot ſuddenly at the wicked, all that ſee them ſhall flee away*; that is, they that ſee how God deals with them, ſhall get away, leſt ruine overtake them, or they ſhall flee away (which is their beſt courſe) from ſuch courſes and practices as procured them that ruine. Thus the righteous rejoyce when they ſee the vengeance, yea, *they waſh their feet in the blood of the ungodly*; that is, they get comfort and encouragement by ſeeing the Lord avenge their cauſe againſt their adverſaries. It is ſaid (*Exod.* 14. 30, 31.) that God having overwhelmed the *Egyptians* in the red Sea, *the Iſraelites ſaw the Egyptians dead upon the ſhore*; God did not ſuffer the carcaſſes of the *Egyptians* to ſink to the bottom of the Sea, but cauſed them to lie upon the ſhore, that the *Iſraelites* might ſee them: And when *Iſrael* ſaw that dreadful ſtroak of the Lord upon the *Egyptians*, It is ſaid, *The poeple feared the Lord, and believed the Lord and his ſervant Moſes:* Thus they were confirmed in their faith by God's open Judgments upon the *Egyptians*; They were ſmitten *ia the place of beholders, or in the open ſight of others.*

There are yet two other interpretations of theſe words, which I ſhall touch.

He ſtriketh them in the *place of beholders*, that is (ſaith my Author) in ſuch an eſtate or condition wherein themſelves might ſee, both by that natural light which every man hath, and eſpecially by the light of doctrine and inſtruction, what they ought to do, and what to ſhun or avoid. In this ſenſe to be ſmitten in the place of Seers, is, to ſee and behold, to have light and underſtanding what to do or forbear doing, and yet to act againſt that light, and ſo provoke the Lord to ſtrike us; which is a great aggravation both of the ſin, and puniſhment of man.

In loco videntium. i.e. *exiſtentes in ſtatu in quo videre poterant tum per naturalem rationem tum per ſacram doctrinam quid eſſet faciendum & quid eſſet vitandum.* Aquin.

A ſecond gives it thus, *He ſtriketh them in the place of ſeers*, or where they ſaw; that is, he ſtriketh them in the eye of their underſtanding, or in their Judgment, he ſtriketh them with ſpiritual blindneſs, as the *Sodomites* were with corporal, ſo that they are not able to ſee their way, or what becomes them to do. This is a moſt ſevere ſtroak. There are many who when they have abuſed the light, and would not do what they ſaw they ought, God hath ſtruck them with ſuch blindneſs, that they ſhould not ſee what they ought to do. Both theſe are rather tropological Expoſitions than literal, yet they may have their uſe and improvement by way of alluſion. In this place *Elihu* having thus held out the openneſs and exemplarineſs of the judgments of God upon wicked men, proceeds in the following words, to ſhew the equity and righteouſneſs of them.

Verſ. 27. **Becauſe they have turned back from him, and would not conſider any of his ways.**

Here, I ſay, leſt any ſhould ſurmiſe that God takes vengeance without cauſe, the cauſe is named and aſſigned why God takes vengeance; 'tis *becauſe they turned back from him*, they in the pride and ſtoutneſs of their hearts (which great men eſpecially are much ſubject to) refuſed to obey and follow God, and therefore his wrath followed and brake them.

They turned back from him.] There is a twofold turning back; Firſt, Corporal; Secondly, Moral or Spiritual, none can corporally turn back from God, though ſome attempt it; to what hiding-place ſoever we turn our ſelves, we cannot be hid from him who filleth every place? But there are many who morally turn back and depart from the living God. Sinners would turn their perſons back from God, and hide their heads, they would get quite out of his ſight and reach, though they cannot; but all of them turn back from God in their hearts.

כאחריו *Verbum è verbo; de poſt eum ſic alibi, ſcortati ſunt, de poſt dominum.* i. e. *deſerto domino.*

In two reſpects ſinners in general, may be ſaid to turn back from God; Firſt, when he commands and they will not obey him, or withdraw their obedience from his commandments; Secondly, when he intreats and invites them, and they will not come to him, nor accept his tendred reſpects and favours. Thus the Lord complained of his own people (*Pſal.* 81. 11.) *Iſrael would none of me*; God wooed them, but they had other lovers, and after them they would go; even *Iſrael* lightly regarded the God of *Iſrael*, yea they made a defection from him. More diſtinctly.

There is a threefold turning back from God, or they who turn back from God are of three ſorts.

Firſt, There is a turning back from God, by thoſe who have openly followed him, or made profeſſion of his name; Thus hypocrites and formaliſts turn back from God. This the Scripture calls back-ſliding, revolting, and going a whoring from God. Such as theſe, are like perfidious Souldiers, who enter and liſt themſelves in an Army, marching with them for a while, and taking their pay, yet ſoon after forſake their colours, and turn to the enemy: Thus many apoſtatize from God to the Devil, and to the creature, or (as *Paul* ſaid of *Demas*) *they forſake Chriſt and embrace this preſent world. Luther* was charged by his enemies that he was an Apoſtate, and he acknowledged, he was, but he thanked God for it, he indeed turned back from what he did once profeſs, but it was to a better profeſſion; he did not turn from God to the world, but he turned from the world to God, and that's a bleſſed Apoſtacy; he did not turn from truth to error, but from error to truth; he did not turn from pure worſhip to Idolatry and ſuperſtition, but from Idolatry and ſuperſtition to pure worſhip. How wretched is their condition who are indeed Apoſtates! who turn from God to the world, from truth to error, from pure worſhip to Idolatry and ſuperſtition, from a holy converſation to prophaneneſs, looſneſs and libertiniſm, to a compliance with the world, and a ſymbolizing with them in their luſts and wickedneſs. This abominable apoſtacy is a fruit of hypocriſie, *Hypocrites turn only their faces to God, and Apoſtates turn their backs upon him*, or, *turn back from him.* And all they *who turn only their faces unto God, will for* *their own advantage, or to ſave themſelves turn their backs upon him. Hypocrites when put to it, when the ſtorm comes, ever prove Apoſtates.*

Secondly, There is a turning from God found even in the beſt followers of God; who is there among the Saints on earth that keeps conſtant uninterrupted communion with God? The leaſt degree of inordinate letting down or turning the heart to the creature, is, a degree of turning back from God. As holineſs is our motion toward God, and to act holily is to keep the eye of the ſoul always upon God; ſo, unholineſs is an averſion from God. *David* did not ſay, nor could he ſay (though as holy a man as lived) that he had never turned from God; he could only ſay that he had not *wickedly departed from God* (Pſal. 18. 21.)

Thirdly, There is a turning back from God, proper to all unregenerate perſons, whether they be ſuch as are civilly honeſt and poſſibly ſuch as do not decline the outſide of that religion wherein they were born and bred; or ſuch as are flagitious in their lives and ways, ſcorning to own religion, and being even aſhamed of the ways of God. Theſe may be ſaid *to turn back from God*, becauſe they have many calls to God, and are invited to come unto him; which yet they either neglect and mind not at all, or refuſe and reject, and ſo thruſt away God from them; and when the light comes, they *love darkneſs rather then light, becauſe their deeds are evil* (Joh. 3. 19.) Such were they of whom *Job* ſpake (*Chap.* 21. 14.) *They ſay to God, depart from us*: he doth not intend it of Apoſtates in a ſtrict notion, who once made profeſſion of godlineſs; but he ſpeaks of common and prophane perſons, who have no mind at all to obey or walk with God, but mind only the fulfilling of their luſts, or the affairs of this preſent life; and ſo their whole life is nothing elſe but a turning from God. Thus the vulgar tranſlation renders the Text with a good ſignificancy, though not with a clearneſs to the Hebrew; *who have purpoſely turned from God*; diſtinguiſhing them from thoſe who through daily Infirmity turn from God, as the beſt of his people do; whereas, theſe ſin willingly, yea wilfully and reſolvedly againſt God. I conceive, the words of *Elihu* in this Text are to be underſtood of turning from God in this third ſenſe; For he is not here ſpeaking of thoſe who were eminent profeſſors before, and did Apoſtatize; much leſs of thoſe that turn from God by daily failings in duty, or ſome neglect of duty, but he is ſpeaking of ſuch, whoſe whole courſe of life is as a continued turning from God, themſelves never having been wrought upon by the grace of converſion, or ſavingly turned to him. This third ſort of turners back from God are moſt proper to the preſent Text, though ſuch alſo are within the reach and compaſs of it, who do wickedly after they have made fair pretenſions to the beſt things. This is the reaſon why God ſtriketh the mighty to deſtruction; *They have turned back from God.* The reaſon being thus explicite and expreſs, teacheth us,

Qui quaſi de induſtria receſſerunt ab eo vulg. i. à deo peccantes ex certa malitia Aquin.

First, *God never puniſheth any man without cauſe.*

God doth not always ſhew the cauſe why he puniſheth this or that man, but he never puniſheth any man without cauſe; if he ſtriketh, 'tis becauſe men turn back from him, either by a plain apoſtacy from what they once profeſſed, or by a notorious courſe of impiety, refuſing ſo much as to own his ways or make profeſſion. God electeth ſome, and paſſeth by others without reſpect to any thing in them; *Jacob have I loved, and Eſau have I hated*; *God hath mercy on whom he will have mercy* (Rom. 9. 13. 15.) thus, I ſay, God electeth us without reſpect to any good in us; but God never ſtriketh or puniſheth us, but with reſpect to ſome evil in us or done by us.

Secondly, Note, *It is the duty of all men to follow after God.*

To follow God in his way, and to propoſe God as our end, contain the ſum of all duty. That, God hath made man & given him a being, that, he placed man in the higheſt form of his viſible creation, ſhould draw man after him. We ought to follow God becauſe we are his creatures, becauſe we have our all from him, or becauſe *in him we live, and move and have our being*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks of mankind in general, even of the heathens (*Acts* 17. 28.) And foraſmuch as *we are his off-ſpring* (*verſ.* 29.) our hearts ſhould ſpring, or riſe up to him in love and thankfulneſs; as the rivers, becauſe they come from the Sea, go back thither: ſo we being the offſpring of God, and derived from him, ſhould be always returning to him. This nature tells us; And therefore the Apoſtle ſaith (*Acts* 17. 27.) *God hath made of one blood all nations of men, that they ſhould ſeek after him*, &c. The light of nature, though dim and dark, ſhews that a man ſhould feel after God, as a man in the dark doth after his way. And if all men ought to follow God, becauſe they have their natural life and breath from him; much more ſhould believers, who have a new, a ſpiritual life breathed into them, and beſtowed upon them, be always following after God; And the truth is, where true faith, or the life of grace is, that ſoul cannot live without daily returnings back to and breathings after God, even as meer carnal men, who are alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, are daily turning back from him.

Hence thirdly, Note, *The whole life of every unconverted ſoul, and notorious ſinner, is a turning from God.*

They who ſet their faces ſin-ward, turn their backs Godward. They who purſue their luſts, their covetous, their ambitious purpoſes, they who gratifie the fleſh, their pride, their luxury, their wantonneſs, their malice, what do any of them, what do all of them, but turn back from God? The beſt of Saints have their turnings from God, but they do not make it their buſineſs to turn from him; their buſineſs is, to draw near, to keep cloſe to God, to keep as it were in his eye; but as for the natural man and groſs ſinner, his buſineſs is a departing from God (*Heb.* 3. 12.) *Take heed* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *leſt there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God.* He gives Caution to the Church, ſearch your ſelves, leſt there be found in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, *&c.* Where unbelief remains in any meaſure unmortified, it may quickly do a great deal of miſchief. And where it remains in full power or altogether unmortified, it doth all manner of miſchief. All which is wrapt up in that one word, *a departure from the living God.* Unbelief is the root of Apoſtacy; The reaſon why ſinners turn from God, is, becauſe they give no Credit to the word of God; they are not perſwaded God is ſuch a one as he hath declared himſelf to be, and will either do that for the obedient which he hath promiſed, or that againſt the rebellious which he hath threatned. They who believe not in God cannot but depart from God; And therefore the life of an unbeliever is a continual departure from God. He ſets out with his back upon God; the very firſt ſtep he takes into the world is from God. As ſoon as we are born we naturally go aſtray ſpeaking lyes; we are ever out of our way, till we look toward God, and aim at him; which we never do, till he by his mighty power changeth our hearts; turneth our courſe, and bringeth us home to himſelf.

Further, Conſider, how did theſe mighty men turn back from God? they might ſay, where did we ſee God? where did God appear to us? that we are thus charged with turning back from him?

I anſwer; Firſt, God manifeſts himſelf to man in his works, or in his providences. Secondly, He manifeſts himſelf in every part of his word, eſpecially in his Commands, in his promiſes, and in his threatnings; in his Commands, he manifeſts himſelf a holy God; in his promiſes, a gracious and bountiful God; in his threatnings, a juſt and righteous God, who will neither do wrong nor ſuffer himſelf to be wronged. The Septuagint make this Expoſition the Text, tranſlating theſe words of *Elihu*, thus; *Becauſe they have turned from the Law of God.*

Ὅτι ἐξέκλιναν ἐκ νόμου Θεοῦ. *Quia declinaverunt de lege Dei.* Sept.

Hence note, *They who turn from the word of God, turn back from God.*

When a commad comes, if you ſlight the authority and obligation of it, you turn back from God; when a promiſe comes, if you do not believe the truth of it, and hope for the good of it, you turn back from God; look what of the mind of God is manifeſted to you in the diſpenſation of the word, if you do not obedientially cloſe with it, you neglect to cloſe with God himſelf, and while you turn from it, you turn from God himſelf. Thus the Apoſtle ſpeaks concerning back-ſliders (2 *Pet.* 2. 20, 21.) *If after they have eſcaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledg of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt they are again entangled therein and overcome, the latter end is worſe with them*

them then the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of God, then after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them; ſo that, a turning from the Commandment of God, is a turning from God himſelf; He turneth back from the holy commanding God, who turneth back from the holy Commandment of God, and he turneth back from the God of the promiſe, who turneth back from the promiſe of God.

Fifthly, Note, *As it is exceeding ſinful to turn back from God, ſo they who do ſo, grow every day more and more ſinful.*

If a man be once upon a courſe of back-ſliding and Apoſtatizing from the commands and promiſes of God, he will find himſelf worſe and worſe day after day; for ſtill the further from God any man goeth, the more vain he groweth; and the more doth luſt get a hand over him. As unbelief is the root of Apoſtacy from God, ſo Apoſtacy increaſeth all that wickedneſs which is in man. As the cauſe of all evil, whether of puniſhment or of ſin, is our departure and turning from God; ſo the very nature of ſin is a turning from God; and therefore the more we turn from God, the more ſinful and the fuller of ſin we are. As the nearer we come to God, the more holy and ſpiritual and heavenly we are (*while we with open face as in a glaſs* (ſaith the Apoſtle, 2 *Cor.* 3. 18.) *Behold the glory of God* (that is, while we draw near to him in his holy ordinances) *we are changed into the ſame image*, that is, we become more like to God) ſo the more we keep at a diſtance from God, the more unlike we are to him, that is, the more unholy we are. And as perſons unconverted, or in an unholy ſtate, are wholly alienated from the life of God, and cannot endure to come near him; ſo it is in a degree by any of our withdrawings or turnings from him: we are made more unholy, and are changed more into the image of thoſe carnal and earthly things which we behold, and with which we over-intimately converſe in the time of thoſe withdrawings.

Laſtly, Note, *A holy life conſiſts in following of and keeping cloſe to God.*

To keep cloſe to God is both a holy and a comfortable life; 'Tis the perfection of Saints to walk with God: *Enoch* walked with God, and that was his holineſs (*Gen.* 5. 24.) *Caleb* followed God fully, and that was his holineſs. A ſpiritual life, is nothing elſe but our following God. *The moſt religious worſhip of God is to imitate whom we worſhip.* And our imitation of God is our following of God, no man can imitate any thing but when his eye is upon its pattern, or the Idea of it abides in his mind. And therefore it is ſaid of the ungodly man (*Pſal.* 10. 4.) *God is not in all his thoughts* (then followeth, *verſ.* 5.) *his ways are always grievous.* If God be not in the thoughts of a man, nothing of God is ſtampt upon the ways of that man. In vain are we called Chriſtians, unleſs we keep cloſe to Chriſt, and in vain do any pretend to godlineſs, unleſs they walk with God. Jeſus Chriſt hath called himſelf *the way* (Joh. 14. 6.) chiefly upon this account, becauſe by him we go to the Father, and have acceptance with God by the grace of Juſtification; but Jeſus Chriſt is the way alſo, of our Sanctification; we muſt walk in him, and as he walked (1 *John* 2. 6.) that we may be holy: every departure from God lets the heart looſe to ſin. That which ſhall maintain the Saints holineſs to Eternity, is, *They ſhall always behold the face of God*; they ſhall never turn back from God, they ſhall never be taken off one moment from the actual viſion, enjoyment and contemplation of God in glory; therefore they ſhall never be taken off from actual holineſs and purity; now in proportion, as we keep our hearts and ſpirits ſteady upon God, and do not turn back from him, ſuch is our holineſs in this life; and as our holineſs is, ſuch will our comfort and peace and joy be in this life. For as becauſe when we arrive at glory, we ſhall never turn back from God, much leſs turn our backs upon him, therefore in glory there is fulneſs of Joy, and pleaſure for evermore; ſo the nearer we keep to God, and the cloſer we walk with him in this life, the fuller and more laſting will our joys and pleaſures be.

Optima vivendi ratio eſt deum ſequi. Religioſiſſimus dei cultus eſt imitari quem colis. Lact. lib. 5. Inſtit. cap. 10.

As in this former part of the 27. verſe, we have had the firſt cauſe opened why God ſtriketh the mighty as wicked men in the open ſight of others, namely, their apoſtacy from God, *Becauſe they turned back from him.* So in the latter part of this verſe we have another reaſon aſſigned why God doth it, and that is, becauſe

They would not conſider any of his ways.

The word which we render *Conſider*, ſignifies alſo to *underſtand* or *know*, which is an act precedent to conſideration; Conſideration is a contemplative act; by conſideration we become more knowing, but we cannot conſider any thing till we have ſome underſtanding or knowledg of it. And this word is often (in another Conjugation) uſed in the title of ſome ſpecial Pſalms. The 32. Pſalm, as alſo the 42. Pſalm, is called *Maſchil*, as much as to ſay, *a teaching, or an inſtructing Pſalm, a Pſalm giving underſtanding and requiring deep and ſerious conſideration.* Thus in the Text, they would *not conſider, nor underſtand, nor know, nor contemplate*

שכל *Intellexit, cognovit, contemplatus eſt. Hinc* Maſchil. *carmen erudiens, ode didaſcalica.* Tit. Pſa. 32.

Any of his ways.] The Hebrew is, *all his ways*; that is, none at all of them. The ways of God in Scripture are taken in a twofold notion; Firſt, for thoſe wherein he would have us walk; ſuch are the ways of his commandments: they are called the ways of God, becauſe he directs us to walk in them. A holy life conſiſts in our walking with God; and we cannot walk with God any further, or any longer, than we keep in the ways of his commandments. It is ſaid of the children of *Iſrael*, after the death of *Joſhua* (*Judg.* 2. 17.) *they turned quickly out of the way, which their fathers walked in, obeying the commandments of the Lord; but they did not ſo.* To obey the commandments, is to walk in the way of them. Taking the ways of God in this ſenſe, when *Elihu* ſaith, *They would not conſider any of his ways*, his meaning is, they did not intend nor had any heart to ſet themſelves to learn the mind of God revealed in his word concerning their duty, or what they ought to do; they know not the ways of God practically. The word properly denotes the wiſdom and prudence, which ſtayeth not in notion, but proceeds to action. Theſe men lived as if they had never heard of, at leaſt never underſtood the Law of God, which is the rule of life. They conſidered not the ways of God to walk in them, as *Moſes* exhorted the people of *Iſrael* (Deut. 29. 9.) *Keep therefore the words of this covenant to do them.*

שכל *Ad prudentiam & ſapientiam practicam rerum agendarum pertinet.*

Secondly, The ways of God are thoſe wherein himſelf walketh, the works of God are the ways of God; the works of his providence either in mercy or in judgment, either in doing good or in doing evil (that is, pœnal evil) theſe are the ways of God; in theſe God ſhews himſelf as in a way, in theſe he goeth forth in his power and goodneſs, in his mercy and juſtice. All theſe divine glories and perfections are diſcovered in the works of God. Thus *David* is to be underſtood when he ſaith (*Pſal.* 25. 10.) *All the ways of God are mercy and truth, to them that fear him, and keep his Covenant*; that is, all the providential works of God are mercy and truth; though all of them are not mercy in the matter, or preciſely taken as works done, though none of them are mercy, reſpecting ſome perſons to whom they are done, for many of them are materially chaſtiſements, afflictions and croſſes to good men, and all of them are wrath and judgment to evil and impenitently wicked men; yet they are all mercy in the iſſue or reſult of them to good men, or to thoſe who fear God, and keep his covenants. For whether he do good, or whether he do evil, whether he wounds, or whether he heals, all theſe providential ways of God, are as truth in themſelves, ſo mercy to his people; or, as the Apoſtle concludes (*Rom.* 8. 28.) *They work together for good to them that love God, and are the called according to his purpoſe.* In both theſe ſenſes we may expound this Text, *They would not conſider any of his ways*; that is, they would neither conſider the Laws of God, which were the way wherein they ſhould walk towards him, nor would they conſider the works of God, which are the ways wherein himſelf walketh towards them. This was the ſpirit of that evil generation intended in this Scripture; they had not much underſtanding in, and leſs conſideration of the ways of God.

Hence, firſt we may take notice, *Elihu* doth not ſay, *they did not conſider his ways*; but, *they would not*; It was not ſo much an act of careleſneſs and negligence as of contempt and rebellious reſolution.

Hence Obſerve, *Evil men have no will to conſider or underſtand the good ways of God; yea, their will is againſt ſuch an underſtanding.*

A natural man *liketh not to retain God in his knowledg,* (Rom. 1. 28.) Now, he that doth not like to retain God in his knowledg, or had rather think of any thing than of God, he can never (while ſuch) like to retain the ways of God in his knowledg, he that layeth God out of his thoughts, will much more lay the law of God out of his thoughts. The natural man hath not only a blindneſs in his mind, which hinders him from diſcerning the things of God, (they being diſcernable only by a ſpiritual eye) but he hath an obſtinacy in his Will; or, he hath not only an inability to know, but an enmity againſt the knowledg of that which is ſpiritual: He ſhuts his eyes, and draws a curtain between himſelf and the light which is ready to dart in upon him; *away with this light,* ſaith he; Thus he rebelleth againſt the light, and as his underſtanding is dark, ſo his affections are corrupt. *Solomon* gives us all this in the expoſtulations of wiſdom with wicked men, (*Prov.* 1. 20, 21, 22.) *Wiſdom cryeth,* &c. *How long ye ſimple ones will ye love ſimplicity, and the ſcorners delight in their ſcorning, and fools hate knowledg?* That which a man hateth, he hath no will, no mind to know. An impotency or inability unto good, argues a very ſad condition, but a rebellion, a frowardneſs, a wilfulneſs againſt it, demonſtrates a condition much more ſad; not to know becauſe we have no means of knowledg, will make us miſerable enough, but not to know becauſe unwilling to receive, or becauſe wilfully ſet againſt the means of knowledg, renders any mans condition moſt miſerable. Such were theſe in the Text, *They would not conſider any of his ways.*

Secondly, *Elihu* ſaith not, *they did not know any of his ways,* or they knew not which way to go; but they would not conſider them. There is no man but knows ſome, yea many of the ways of God, that is, of thoſe ways wherein God would have him to walk; theſe ways of God are written in the heart by nature, there is an impreſſion of the Will of God upon every ſoul, though not ſuch an impreſſion or writing as grace maketh there (that's another kind or manner of work) for, when once through grace the Law of God is written in and impreſſed upon the heart, then the heart is ſuited to the Law, yea, the heart is not only conformed unto, but transformed into the Law of God, whereas by nature the Law is written only ſo far as to give us the knowledg of the Law, and a conviction of that duty or conformity which we owe to it. The men here intended by *Elihu,* knew the Law or ways of God, by the light of a natural conſcience, but not by the light of a renewed conſcience, and therefore they *would not conſider any of his ways,* which is a farther deſcription of the heart of man in a ſtate of Nature.

Hence Note, *That which a natural man knoweth of the will of God, he will not conſider, unleſs it be to reject and turn from it.*

I (ſaith Wiſdom, *Prov.* 1. 24, 25.) *have ſtretched out my hand,* (as a Teacher doth to his hearers or diſciples) *and no man,* (that is, no meer natural man) *regarded, they ſet at nought my counſel, and would none of my reproof.* Let me ſay what I would, they would at moſt but give me the hearing, they would not conſider it; though the light ſhined in upon them and they could not chuſe but ſee ſomething, yet they would not ſit down and rowl it in their thoughts, and work it upon their hearts, to find out the excellency of what they ſaw. It is a very great meaſure of ſinfulneſs not to know the ways of God, but not to conſider what we know, but lightly to paſs it by, that is a greater meaſure of ſinfulneſs.

Thirdly, comparing this aſſertion concerning wicked men, *they would not conſider any of his ways,* with their practice in the former part of the verſe, *they turned back from God,* and with the effect of it in the verſe following, *they made the cry of the poor to come up to him,* &c.

Obſerve, *The reaſon why men are ſo wicked, and act ſo wickedly, is, becauſe they mind not the Word of God.*

They who conſider not the rule of the Word, are far both from righteouſneſs towards man, and holineſs towards God. If once a man through aſide the Word of God, where will he ſtay? He will neither abide in any ways of holineſs, nor will he abide in any ways of righteouſneſs; they cannot make conſcience of the ways of God, who will not conſider the ways of God. We have this clear character of a wicked man, (*Pſal.* 50.) he is one that will poſſibly take the covenant of God in his mouth, he will be talking of it, his tongue may be tipt with it, but (*verſ.* 17.) *he hateth inſtruction, and caſteth the words of God behind his back.* He that would conſider a thing, holds it before his eye, and keeps it, as much as he can in ſight; therefore the Lord, when he would aſſure *Zion* how much he did conſider her caſe, though ſhe had ſaid a little before, *God hath forſaken me, and my God hath forgotten me,* yet preſently the Lord ſaith, (*Iſa.* 49. 15, 16.) *Can a woman forget her ſucking child, that ſhe ſhould not have compaſſion on the ſon of her womb? Yea, they may, yet will not I forget thee;* (what follows?) *Behold I have graven thee upon the Palms of my hands, thy walls are continually before me.* As if the Lord had ſaid, you may be ſure I will conſider your caſe, for I have you here pourtrayed upon the palms of my hands, and am always viewing your walls, either as ruin'd and demoliſhed, to move me to pity, or in that ſtrong and beautiful model according to which I purpoſe to raiſe them up again, or rebuild them. Thus I ſay, both God and man intending to conſider any thing, have it always before them, but what a man hath no mind to conſider, he caſts it behind his back; *thou caſteſt my words behind thy back,* ſaith God to the hypocrite, and when once the hypocrite hath got the word behind him, then he is ready for any wickedneſs (*verſ.* 18, 19, 20.) *When thou ſaweſt a thief, thou conſentedſt with him, and haſt been partaker with the adulterer,* &c. Whence was all this? he had caſt the word behind his back. It is *David*'s queſtion, (*Pſal.* 119. 6.) *Wherewithal ſhall a young man cleanſe his way?* The anſwer is, *By taking heed thereto according to thy word;* that is, by continual eying of the word, and of his way, and by comparing them together. They that will make right work, muſt be always eying the rule; if once you lay by the rule, you will make but crooked, or bungling work: When the rule of righteouſneſs is laid by, righteouſneſs is laid by too. Theſe mighty men of whom *Elihu* ſpeaketh would not conſider any the holy ways of God, and you ſee what ill-favour'd work they made, what foul ways they walked in.

Fourthly, The Text doth not ſay they would not conſider ſome, or ſuch and ſuch of his ways, but *any of his ways.*

Hence Note, *A wicked man liketh, delighteth in, or loveth no one way of God better or more than another.*

He is as much out with all as with any, they are all alike to him, that is, he likes none of them; *they would not conſider any of his ways.* He that hateth one truth of God, hateth all truth, though poſſibly his hatred is not called out or acted againſt ſome truths; and he that hateth one law of God, hateth all his laws, though poſſibly his luſts are not drawn out againſt ſome of them. The reaſon why the Apoſtle *James* ſaith, (*Chap.* 2. 10.) *Whoſoever ſhall keep the whole Law, and yet offend in one point, is guilty of all,* is, becauſe if a man hath a mind to ſin againſt one branch of the law, that evil principle will carry him to ſin againſt any branch of it: If he be not ſtopt from without, he finds no ſtop within againſt the worſt of ſins, as it is a ſin.

Fifthly, We tranſlate *any,* the Original word is [*all*] his ways, which imports a refuſing of every one of his ways; there are ſeveral Scriptures of a like ſenſe (*Pſal.* 103. 1, 2.) *O praiſe the Lord, and forget not all his benefits;* that is, forget not any one of his benefits; not that a man ſhall be excuſed, though he forget many of the benefits of God, or half his benefits, if ſo be he forget not all, or remember ſome: but when that Scripture ſaith, *forget not all his benefits,* the meaning is, forget not any one at all. Thus here, *they conſidered not all his ways,* (that's the letter of the Text, and ſo Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates,) that is, none of them. Taking that reading, and the Scripture ſenſe given of it, it gives us this uſeful Obſervation.

That unleſs all the ways of God be conſidered and obeyed, there is not any one of them conſidered or obeyed.

God will not be obeyed by halves; he muſt have entire obedience, univerſal obedience, or he owneth none; there is a band or tye between all the commandments of God, and unleſs you keep them all, you break them all; they that ſubmit not to all, ſubmit to none of his laws. It is not enough for a man to ſay he is no adulterer, if he be a thief, or to ſay he is not a murderer, if he bears falſe witneſs. He that doth the one in act, doth the other in his heart; nothing hinders him but the abſence of a temptation, or of an opportunity, the Law doth not.

Further, [*they*] *would not conſider any of his ways.* Who were they? No fools I dare ſay, either in their own opinion, or in the opinion of men. Doubtleſs thoſe mighty men ſpoken of by *Elihu*, were worldly wiſe men; they were the mighty, the great men of the world, and they are commonly very conſidering men, as well as very conſiderable men; they are knowing men, as well as men much known; they are men of counſel, and ſit in council to debate difficult matters, and of greateſt outward concernment; theſe things they could conſider exactly, and weigh them to a grain; but they would not conſider any of God's ways.

Hence Note, *There is nothing ſo little regarded by ungodly men, as the ways of God are.*

Though they have wiſdom and ability to underſtand and conſider earthly things, yet they will beſtow none of it upon the things of heaven. Chriſt rebuked *Martha* when he ſaw her ſo buſie about worldly buſineſs, (*Luke* 10. 41.) *Martha, Martha, thou art* careful and *troubled about many things, one thing is needful*; *Martha* had ſome care about the one thing needful, but becauſe not ſo much as ſhe ſhould, Chriſt gave her a gracious check and reproof for it: How much more may Chriſt come and rebuke the men of the world, ye are careful about many things, ye are wiſe conſidering men about your profits and preferments, thoſe ye can think of all night long; but there is one thing needful, my ways, my word, my commandments are to be conſidered, what account can ye give of or concerning them?

Farther, this *non-conſideration* of the ways of God is brought as a charge, as a high charge againſt thoſe mighty men; not only were they bad men who did not conſider the ways of God, but this was a part, yea I may ſay the whole of their badneſs, that they did not conſider the ways of God.

Hence Note, *Not to conſider the ways of God, is in it ſelf a very great ſin.*

The omiſſion, or non-performance of what is good, is as ſinful as the commiſſion or doing of that which is evil. Not to do good is to do evil; eſpecially when it is the not doing of ſuch a good duty as opens a way to the doing of all evil. Should we ſuppoſe a man not chargeable with the breaking of any commandment of God, yet if we could charge him that he did not conſider the commandments of God, this were the breaking of all the commandments. For as they are all to be conſidered that we may keep them, ſo if we conſider them not, we cannot keep them. 'Tis the deſcription of a godly man, (*Pſal.* 1. 2.) *His delight is in the Law of the Lord, and in his Law doth he meditate day and night.* Meditation is nothing elſe but conſideration. A godly man meditates or conſiders day and night what the Law or Word of God is; not that he thinks of nothing elſe but the Law of God day and night, for then he muſt throw off his Calling; but the meaning is this, he is very ſedulous and watchful of all opportunities both night and day, to get and keep his heart up in holy meditation; and why is he ſo much in holy meditation? 'Tis ſurely, that he may be much, yea always in holy action; and when it may be ſaid of a man, that his meditation is not in the Law of God, neither day nor night, or that he never conſiders the ways of God, this is an undeniable evidence that he neither keeps in the way, or obſerves any one line or letter of the Law at any time. It is our ſin, and that no ſmall one, not to conſider our own ways, how much more is it ſinful not to conſider the ways of God! To conſider our own ways, is a great part of our work: If we conſider not our own ways, they will ſoon be crooked ways. The Prophet adviſeth the Jews, (*Hag.* 1. 5.) *Conſider your ways*; the Text is, *Set your heart upon your ways*; that is, ponder your ways; as if he had ſaid, the reaſon why your feet are ſo often in bad ways, is, becauſe your hearts are ſo ſeldom upon your ways. Now, if not to conſider our own ways be ſo ſinful, and ſubjects us to every ſin, then much more is it ſinful not to conſider the ways, the word and truths of God, and much more doth the neglect of this lead or lay us open and obnoxious to every ſin. This neglect is not only a ſpecial ſin in it ſelf, and an effect of ſin, but the general cauſe of all other ſins: What ſin is not, or may not be found in the ways of thoſe men, who conſider not the ways of God?

Laſtly Obſerve, *Sin makes men ſtupid, and transforms them into fools.*

He that is not a conſidering man, is a weak and a fooliſh man; every wiſe man is a conſidering man; and the more a man is verſed in conſideration, the more wiſe he is, and the wiſer he grows. The wicked man is often called a fool in Scripture, and he deſerves no better a title; when he is called ſo, he is both ſerved and called in his kind (*Pſal.* 14. 1.) *The fool hath ſaid in his heart, there is no God.* The thoughts of the heart are the ſayings of the heart; and ſin hath made a wicked man ſo much a fool, that as he knows not how to ſay any thing of God, which is honourable, with his tongue, ſo all that his heart can ſay, that is, think of God, is, that God is not; which as it is the higheſt blaſphemy, ſo the deepeſt piece of folly and irrationality that ever was hatcht in the heart of man. Sin makes dull heads, it ſtupifies the ſoul; ſinners conſider not that, at any time, which is their intereſt as much as their duty to conſider of at all times, the ways of God, as taken for the ways wherein man ought to walk towards God.

Again, If we take the ways of God in the ſecond notion, for the ways wherein himſelf walks towards man, uſually called his works, or the ways of his providence.

Note, *It is the mark of an ungodly man, not to conſider the works and providences of God, how God walketh towards him, or what he doth in the world.*

(Iſa. 1. 3.) *I have nouriſhed and brought up children*, that is, I have done for my people as a father for his children; but what follows? *My people doth not know, Iſrael doth not conſider:* They conſider not what I have done for them, as well as not what I have ſpoken to them; they conſider not how I have nouriſhed and brought them up, as well as not how I have inſtructed and given them counſel; and from this neglect God infers, (*verſ.* 4.) *Ah ſinful Nation, a people laden with iniquity, a ſeed of evil doers*, &c. they quickly proceed to the doing of all evil againſt God, who conſider not of the good which God doth or hath done to them. Read this ſin, the not conſidering of the works of God, with the ſinfulneſs of all the works of thoſe unconſidering men, (*Pſal.* 28. 4, 5. *Iſa.* 5. 11, 12.) The Scripture makes frequent mention how extreamly ill the Lord takes it at the hands of men, when his works are not conſidered by them, when they regard not the operation of his hands. Indeed God doth much in the world, he walketh in many dark and hidden ways, which though we conſider, we cannot fully underſtand; *Thy way* (ſaith *Aſaph*, Pſal 77. 19.) *is in the ſea, and thy path in the great waters, and thy footſteps are not known.* God hath many inviſible works both of mercy and of judgment; yet we ſhould be, though not curiouſly, yet ſeriouſly ſearching, as much as poſſibly we can, even into thoſe ways of God which are unſearchable; we ſhould conſider, though we cannot ſearch them out. But as for thoſe works of God that are viſible and plain, which are written as it were with the beams of the Sun, which are ſo plain and obvious, that he who runs may read them, to neglect the conſideration of theſe, or lightly to paſs them by, how ſinful is it! Thoſe works of God which are moſt plain, have wonders in them, if we could find them out. As in the plaineſt Text of Scripture there is a world of holineſs and ſpiritualneſs; and if we in prayer and dependance upon God did ſit down and conſider it, we might behold much more of thoſe wonders than yet appear to us: It may be at once reading or looking we ſee little or nothing, as *Elijah's* ſervant, when he went once, he ſaw nothing,

Arcana imperii.

therefore he was commanded to look ſeven times; What now, ſaith the Prophet? O now I ſee a cloud riſing *like a mans hand*; and by and by the whole ſurface of the heavens was covered with clouds. So you may look lightly upon a Scripture, and ſee nothing, and look again, and ſee little, but look ſeven times upon it, meditate often upon it, and then you ſhall ſee a light like the light of the Sun. 'Tis thus alſo with the works of God, we paſs many of them by as ſmall matters, but when throughly conſidered, there is a wonderful depth in them; now not to conſider thoſe ways of God wherein he is ſo viſible, and which are the actings and exerciſing of his power, goodneſs, wiſdom and faithfulneſs, this muſt needs be a very great ſin, (*Iſa.* 26. 11) *Lord, when thy hand is lifted up, they will not ſee,* (they take no notice of it, much leſs lay it to heart) *but they ſhall ſee,* (they ſhall be made to ſee one way or other,) *and be aſhamed for their envy at the people,* or (as the margin hath it,) *towards thy people.* As godly men ſee the hand of God, and are both confirmed and comforted for his mercy to his people, ſo wicked men ſhall ſee, and be both aſhamed and confounded, becauſe they both envyed the people of God that mercy, and oppoſed it. They who will not ſee the works of God to give him glory, ſhall ſee them to their own ſhame. God hath given us his works of Creation, that we ſhould conſider them daily, as *David* did (*Pſal.* 8. 3.) *When I conſider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the Moon, and the Stars which thou haſt ordained; What is man!* &c. How was the Pſalmiſt raviſht with that contemplation? And ſo may we, while we conſider the works of Providence, whether works of judgment, or works of mercy; whether vengeance upon the wicked, or deliverance for the godly.

Let us therefore ſet our ſelves to this ſoul-raviſhing, and God exalting work, the conſideration of the works of God: And we are the more engaged to do it, becauſe God hath fitted man, among all creatures in this lower world, (and he hath only fitted man) to give him glory by conſidering his works. The beaſts of the earth cannot glorifie God by conſidering his works: 'tis true, both they and the fowls of the air, with the fiſh of the ſea, according to their kind, praiſe God; but man only is fitted and furniſhed with an intellect or underſtanding faculty to conſider, and ſo to draw out from all the works of God, thoſe peculiar excellencies which make his Name glorious: Now, for man to leave ſuch a faculty unexerciſed and unacted, (as they who conſider not the works of God do) is not only a diſhonour to God, but a degradation of himſelf. *As it is the priviledg and happineſs of a man to enjoy the benefit of the works of God, ſo it is his holineſs and his duty to conſider the beauty of them.* And to all who brutiſhly lay by the works of God without conſideration, let me add this conſideration; God conſiders all your works or ways, and will not you conſider the works, the ways of God! Of this be ſure, whether you conſider the ways of God, his *Word-ways*, or *Work ways* (of this be ſure) God will conſider your ways, certainly he will; thoſe ways of yours which in themſelves are not worth the conſidering or looking upon, your ſinful ways, though they are ſo vile, ſo abominable, that if your ſelves did but look upon them and conſider them, you would be utterly aſhamed of them, yea though they are an abomination to God while he beholds them, yet he will behold and conſider them. The Lord who is of purer eyes than to behold any the leaſt iniquity, to approve it, will yet behold the greateſt of your iniquities, and your impureſt ways to conſider them. Thou (ſaith *David*, Pſal. 10. 14.) *beholdeſt miſchief and ſpite, to requite it:* God beholdeth the fouleſt dirtieſt ways of men, their ways of oppreſſion and unrighteouſneſs, their ways of intemperance and laſciviouſneſs, their ways of wrath and maliciouſneſs, at once to deteſt, detect and requite them. If the Lord thus conſidereth the ways of men, even theſe filthy and crooked ways of men; ſhould not men conſider the holy, the juſt and righteous ways of God? And that God conſiders all the ways, the worſt of ways of the ſons of men appears further in the next verſe.

Verſ. 28. **So that they cauſe the cry of the poor to come up to him, and he heareth the cry of the afflicted.**

If the ways of men come up to God, then ſurely God conſiders the ways of men, even their vile and baſe ways, their wicked and unworthy ways; how can he but conſider thoſe ways, the cry of which cometh up to him?

So that they cauſe the cry of the poor to come up to him.

Here *Elihu* expounds to us or gives us more particularly what thoſe ways of God were which thoſe men would not conſider, as alſo what the ſin of thoſe mighty ones was, which provoked God, *to ſtrike them as wicked men in the open ſight of others.* The ways of God which they would not conſider, were the ways of his righteouſneſs and juſtice, of his compaſſion to and care for the poor, they went quite croſs to thoſe ways of God. *For they cauſed the cry of the poor to come up to him.* But do ungodly men bring the cry of the poor up to God? Certainly they have no ſuch purpoſe, and therefore thoſe words, *So that they cauſe the cry of the poor to come up unto him*; note only a conſequent, of what thoſe men did, not the intent of thoſe men; they aimed at no ſuch thing by their oppreſſing the poor, as that God ſhould hear the cry of the poor, yea, they hoped the cry of the poor ſhould never come up to God. They would willingly have ſtopt the mouths of the poor, that they ſhould not have cryed to God, and preſumed the ears of God would be ſtopt againſt their cry, let them cry as long as they would: they do not ſay to the poor, go and appeal to God, go make your moan to God, (yet ſome have been thus impudently blaſphemous, when they have oppreſt the poor, to bid them, go cry to their God) but here we are to underſtand it as the iſſue of the oppreſſion, not as the deſire of the oppreſſors. Their cruel and unrighteous dealing with the poor (like that of *Pharaoh* with the *Iſraelites*) *cauſed the cry of the poor to come up unto him.*

Effectum hujus malitiæ affectatæ oſtendit. Aquin.

Further, Some render the Text, not as expreſſing (though ſuppoſing) the cry of the poor coming up to God, but as reflecting or turning back in ſad effects upon their oppreſſors; *So that they cauſe the cry of the poor to come upon him*; that is, upon every one of them, meaning the wicked themſelves; they cauſe the cry of the poor to come upon them, or pull down vengeance upon their own heads. Several learned Interpreters give that reading, taking the relative *Him* as a ſingular put for a plural diſtributively, *upon him,* that is, upon every one of them; taking alſo *the cry of the poor* by a metonymie of the effect, for that puniſhment which they deſerved by their oppreſſion, who cauſed the poor to cry. As if he had ſaid; *By this their wickedneſs they draw down the wrath of God upon themſelves.*

Inducendo ſuper eorum quemq; clamorem, tenuis, quum clamorem pauperis exaudit. Jun.

But I ſhall only purſue our reading, and give the ſenſe accordingly. *They cauſe the cry of the poor to come unto* [*him*] that is, unto God. The cry of the poor is their mournful cry, their pitiful lamenting cry; yet this cry may poſſibly be, not ſo much vocal as real, not ſo much what the poor did make formally or directly to God about their wrongs, but the very wrongs and evils which they ſuffered cryed to the righteous Judg of all the earth. Their affliction had a cry, a voice, a tongue, a thouſand tongues in it. *They cauſe the cry*

Of the poor.] The word properly ſignifieth thoſe who are exhauſted, and drawn dry; oppreſſors will ſqueeze and ſuck ſuch as they get into their power, till they have drawn out every drop; they will empty them from veſſel to veſſel, till they become empty veſſels, and then like empty veſſels the poor ſound moſt and make the greateſt cry. When oppreſſors have got all the money out of the purſes of the poor, when they have pull'd the bread out of their mouths, and even drawn the blood out of their veins, then they (poor ſouls!) ſound out and ſend up their cryes to purpoſe. *So that they cauſe the cry of the poor to come up unto him.*

Hence note, Firſt, *One ſin makes way for another.*

Turning back from God, brings in the non-conſideration of the word and works of God; the word and works of God, not being conſidered, brings in the works of unrighteouſneſs towards men, or oppreſſion of the poor. One ſin given way to, makes way for many more. No man knows where he ſhall end in doing evil, when once he begins to do evil. *David* having defiled the wife is led to murder of her husband. *Peter* having firſt diſowned or denied his Maſter, proceeded to forſwear him. If good men are thus hurried from ſin to ſin before they come to repentance, whither will ſin carry wicked men, who go on and on impenitently?

Secondly, Note, *They are the worſt ſort of wicked who make poor men cry.*

Oppreſſion is a ſin againſt the light and law of nature, as well as againſt the light and law of God; every ſin is the more ſinful, by how much it is committed againſt more light of any kind, or againſt more kinds of light; And thoſe ſins are extreamly high, which are committed againſt the loweſt and moſt common light, that of Nature. They who ſin againſt the light of grace, againſt the light of the Spirit, ſin (as the Prophet ſpeaks, *Hoſ.* 6.7.) *like men*, but they who ſin againſt the light of nature, ſin as if they were not ſo much as men but very beaſts, yea worſe than many beaſts, there being ſcarce any of them who (as oppreſſors do) devour thoſe of their own kind, though of ſome of them it be ſaid and experienced (eſpecially of the fiſhes in the Sea) that the greater devour the leſs, as the mighty men of whom *Elihu* ſpake, did the poor, *cauſing their cry to come up unto God.*

Thirdly, Note, *Oppreſſion will quickly cauſe a Cry.*

(Iſa. 5.7.) *I looked for Judgment, but behold oppreſſion, and for righteouſneſs, and behold a cry*; that is, the cry of the oppreſſed. As the act of oppreſſion is a crying ſin, ſo the effect of it is crying; Oppreſſion cryeth loud, though the oppreſſed ſhut their mouths in ſilence and ſay nothing, yet uſually the oppreſſed cannot forbear crying. The Apoſtle *James* (Chap. 5. 3.) ſchools the wicked rich men of the world with, *a Go to now, weep and howl*, &c. *Your riches are corrupt, and your garments moth-eaten; Behold the hire of the labourers which have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, cryeth; and the crys of them which have reaped are entred into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth.* As the poor labourers cryed, ſo their hire that was detained cryed alſo. The loud cry both of the oppreſſed and of oppreſſion is often reported and recorded in Scripture, read (*Exod.* 2.23. *Lam.* 1. 17. *Chap.* 2. 18. *Pſal.* 86.14.) The oppreſſed who cry are in a ſad condition, but the condition of oppreſſors who make the poor cry is much more ſad; For, as the Text hath it,

The cry of the poor cometh up to God.

Though God ſhould not come down to that, yet that cometh up to God. And when it is ſaid the cry cometh up to him, and not he at the cry; This intimates the cry of oppreſſion, a very loud cry, that's a loud cry that aſcends up to heaven; *Cities walled up to heaven*, are high-walled Cities, and crys reaching up to heaven, are high-ſtrained crys. The breach of a commandment makes a great crack, eſpecially when it is ſuch a breach as makes the poor cry too. If a great houſe, or a Tower fall ſuddenly, what a noiſe doth it make? Certainly the unjuſt pulling down of any poor man, is like the fall of a great houſe, or of a tower, it makes a noiſe that reacheth up to heaven; he doth not ſpeak of God's coming down. When *Cain* had ſlain his brother *Abel*, the Lord ſaid (*Gen.* 4.10.) *The voice of thy brothers blood cryeth unto me from the ground*; and ſo the cry of *Sodom* came up to God, (*Gen.* 18.21.) The fall of a poor man makes a report as far as heaven. Among men the fall of Princes and mighty men, makes a huge noiſe, all the world is filled with the fall of a Prince, 'tis told every where, A great Prince is fallen. But I tell you the fall of a poor godly man, of the meaneſt of the ſervants of God, makes a greater cry than the fall of the greateſt Prince in the world who is not ſo. The fall of a poor man by the oppreſſion of the wicked, poſſibly is not heard a mile from the place where it was done on earth, yet it reacheth up to heaven; oppreſſion hath not only a voice, but a very loud voice. To wrong a rich man, who can bear the wrong and be a rich man ſtill, is a ſin which hath a voice in it; but the ſin which the Scripture ſaith hath a cry in it, is the oppreſſing of a poor man. There is no liberty given to wrong a rich man, and that would be conſidered; Some take a kind of liberty, if he be a rich man that they are to put a reckoning upon, they think they may do it ſomewhat largely, and ſay, *he is able to bear it.* But be the man never ſo rich and able to bear it, yet to wrong him is a ſin, and a ſin that God will take notice of to puniſh. And though he can bear the wrong done, yet the wrong-doer will hardly be able to bear it when he comes to reckon with God for it. Thus (I ſay) to wrong the rich offends God; but to wrong the poor cryeth to God; and as it followeth in the Text.

He heareth the cry of the afflicted.

Many cryes come up to God which he doth not hear, he doth not regard them, and 'tis poſſible for a poor man to cry to God and God not hear him, in the ſenſe here ſpoken of; Some poor men cry (as we ſay) before they are hurt; they cry rather out of diſcontent than want, they cry becauſe they have not what they deſire, not becauſe they have not what they need. God will not hear the cry of ſuch, though poor: but when a poor man is afflicted, when a poor man that is humbled (as the word here ſignifies) and laid low in his ſtate, is low alſo in ſpirit, and lowly in mind, God heareth the cry of ſuch a poor man. If a poor man have a proud ſpirit, or is humorous, God will not hear him, though he cry. The word here rendred, *afflicted*, ſignifies not only a man deſtitute of help, of ſtrength, of friends, of aſſiſtance, (ſuch is the reach and ſtrength of that word) but he is one of a ſubmitting patient ſpirit, or it noteth a man not only firſt, unable to reſiſt his oppreſſor, but, ſecondly, unwilling at leaſt not forward to make reſiſtance, but ſitting down by the loſs quietly, or poſſeſſing his ſoul in patience when he hath loſt all that he poſſeſſed by oppreſſion. The Lord hears the cry of this afflicted man; he will not reject his cry, nor ſtop his ears againſt it. And when *Elihu* ſaith, *He heareth the cry of the afflicted*, his meaning is, he yields or grants him the thing he cryes for.

עניים *inopes, id eſt, deſtituti opi, nec valentes reſiſtere, ſed malum potius tolerantes & ſubjicientes ſe Deo.* Coc.

Hence note, Firſt, *God graciouſly hears the cry of humble oppreſſed ones.*

Whoſoever cry to him upon juſt cauſe, being indeed oppreſt, though they are not godly, yet God will take notice of their cry; for he will right the oppreſſed as oppreſſed, and therefore the *Jews* had thoſe cautions (*Exod.* 22. 23. *Deut.* 24. 15.) not to wrong any ſervant or ſtranger, let him be who or whence he would, *leſt he cry to me* (ſaith God) *and it be ſin to thee.* But when any are not only oppreſt and ſuffer wrong, but are alſo godly, of humble and lowly ſpirits, they are heard much more; when it is not only a cry of nature, but a cry of grace; not only a complaining cry, but a praying cry, God will certainly hear, (*Luke* 18. 12.) *Shall not God avenge his own elect that cry to him day and night?* when it is not only a complaining cry that they are under oppreſſion, but a believing cry to be, or that they ſhall be delivered from oppreſſion, when it is a holy cry, the cry of the elect, God cannot but hear their cry. He heareth other cryes, he heareth the cry of the Ravens when they call upon him, and provides for them, much more will he hear the cry of Saints, the cry of believers, the cry of the humbled and humble.

Secondly, as hearing notes granting,

Obſerve, *The cry of the oppreſſed brings vengeance upon oppreſſors.*

Read *Pſal.* 12.6. *Eccleſ.* 10.26. *Iſa.* 33.1. *Jer.* 22.16. All theſe Scriptures teach this truth, that the cry of the oppreſſed brings vengeance on oppreſſors: Let the mighty remember, *'Tis dangerous medling with Gods poor*; 'tis dangerous medling with any poor, but moſt dangerous medling with God's poor. Some will ſay, there is ſuch a great man, it is dangerous medling with him, and they are afraid to wrong him, they dare not do it; if ever (ſay they) he ſhould come to know it, he may break our backs, ſit on our skirts, and cruſh us with his power; but if they can get an underling, a man below them, they preſume there is no great danger in oppreſſing him; what can he do? if he bark, he cannot bite; if he hath a tongue, he hath no teeth; we can deal with him well enough. Thus, I ſay, men think it dangerous to wrong great men, but conclude they may do what they pleaſe with the poor, and thoſe that are underlings; but we ſhould more fear to wrong a poor man, than to wrong a rich man, though we ought not to do either; yet, I ſay, we ſhould more fear to wrong the poor than the rich, becauſe the poor are under the ſpecial protection of the great God; they are under more promiſes of protection than the great men of the world are. Therefore *Solomon* gives that ſerious caution, (*Prov.* 23. 10,11.) *Enter not into the Vineyard of the fatherleſs*; (do not oppreſs the poor fatherleſs,) *for his avenger is mighty, and God will plead his cauſe for him.* You think you may do any thing with the poor and fatherleſs; O ſaith wiſe *Solomon*, take heed, do not invade the heritage of the fatherleſs, (we are not to take the fatherleſs there in a ſtrict ſenſe, for thoſe whoſe parents are dead, but any that are poor and low, are fatherleſs, as the Prophet calls them, *Hoſ.* 14. 3.) *In thee the fatherleſs findeth mercy*; beware ſaith he how you deal with the fatherleſs, *for his Redeemer is mighty*: though he hath no might, yet he hath *a mighty Redeemer, and he will plead his cauſe for him.* Poſſibly the poor man cannot plead with thee, he cannot try it out with thee in Law, he cannot fee an Advocate, but God can and will be his Advocate. Therefore you that dare not wrong the mighty for fear they ſhould cruſh you, be much more afraid to wrong the poor, for God is their avenger, and how eaſily can he cruſh you?

Laſtly, This is matter of comfort to the godly poor, to the humble and meek; they may look for help from God in all their afflictions and hard uſages they meet with in this world from the hands of men; when men even eat them up as bread, and ride over their heads as if they were but dirt, they may appeal to heaven and there have audience, they may refer their cauſe to God and be righted, *He that is their Redeemer is mighty, and he will plead their cauſe*; *The expectations of the poor ſhall not periſh for ever,* (Pſal. 9. 18.) that is, it ſhall never periſh.

VERS. 29.

When he giveth quietneſs, who can make trouble? and when he hideth his face, who then can behold him? whether it be done againſt a Nation, or againſt a man only.

THis verſe is an argument or proof of what *Elihu* affirmed in the former, that, *God heareth the cry of the poor:* He doubtleſs heareth the cry of the poor, when he ſtops or takes away the cry of the poor, when he ſets the poor in a quiet ſtate, or ſettles them in peace, in ſuch a peace, as their proud and wrathful oppreſſors ſhall not be able to diſturb. Thus the Lord dealeth graciouſly in reference both to perſons, and Nations, that cry unto him; and that's an undeniable argument, that he heareth their cry, the cry of diſtreſſed perſons, the cry of diſtreſſed Nations.

Verſ. 29. **When he giveth quietneſs, who then can make trouble? and when he hideth his face, who then can behold him? whether it be done againſt a Nation, or againſt a man only.**

The firſt part of the ſentence, rendred, **When he giveth quietneſs**, is but one word in the Hebrew, we had it before (*Chap.* 3.13.) where *Job* ſuppoſeth if he had died in his infancy, *then ſhould he have been ſtill, and been quiet, he ſhould have ſlept, and been at reſt.* The grave is a ſilent and quiet abiding place, the dead are quitted of all worldly unquietneſs. And at the 26. verſe of the ſame Chapter, *Job* ſaith, *I was not in ſafety, neither was I quiet*: (that is, ſecure) *yet trouble came.* So then, as this word notes, the quietneſs of the dead who have no ſenſe of trouble, ſo it notes ſuch a quietneſs of the living as hath no fear of trouble. *When he giveth quietneſs*, or as Maſter *Broughton* tranſlates, *when he maketh reſt, who,* &c. The Italian verſion is, *if he ſendeth home in peace*, &c. As if it had been ſaid, *If he by his ſoveraign ſentence freeth out of ſlavery and oppreſſion, as he did the children of Iſrael out of the bondage of Egypt*, &c. *If he commandeth reſt and quiet*, then, as it followeth,

שׁקט
Quievit in Hiphil, quieſcere fecit.

Who can make trouble?] Or, as Maſter *Broughton* renders, *who can diſturb?* Who can diſeaſe thoſe to whom God gives eaſe, or oppreſs thoſe to whom God gives protection? The words bear the ſignification of a divine challenge, like that, (*Rom* 8.31.) *If God be for us, who can be againſt us?* or like that (*verſ.* 34.) *Who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of Gods elect?* Let us ſee the man, or the devil, that can charge the elect and prevail. Such is the Emphaſis of the preſent Text, *When he giveth quietneſs, who then can make trouble?* Where is the man, high or low, great or ſmall that can do it?

Further, the word which we tranſlate *make trouble*, hath a threefold eminent ſignification in Scripture.

Firſt, It ſignifieth to *be wicked*, or to do wickedly; thus we read it at the 12. verſe of this Chapter, *Surely God will not do wickedly.* He that is altogether holy and righteous, doth all things holily and righteouſly. The ſame word ſignifieth to do wickedly, and to make trouble, becauſe to do wickedly bringeth trouble often upon others, always upon the doers.

Secondly, it ſignifieth *to condemn*; thus we tranſlate, at the 17. verſe of this Chapter, *Wilt thou condemn him* (as one that hath done wickedly) *who is moſt juſt?* The ſame word may well ſignifie to do wickedly, and to condemn, becauſe they who do ſo, are worthy to be condemned. In this ſenſe alſo we tranſlate it, in that famous Propheſie of Chriſt, (*Iſa.* 50. 9.) *He is near that juſtifieth me, who ſhall condemn me?* or make me wicked and unrighteous. Thus ſome render the mind of *Elihu* in this place, if *he giveth peace or quietneſs, who can condemn?*

Ipſo enim concedente pacem, quis eſt qui condemnat. Vulg.

Thirdly, The word ſignifieth, as we render, to *trouble*, moleſt, or vex; ſo we tranſlate (1 *Sam.*14.47.) where 'tis ſaid of *Saul*, that he *fought againſt all his enemies on every ſide, againſt* Moab, *and againſt the children of* Ammon, *and againſt* Edom, *and againſt the Kings of* Zobah, *and againſt the Philiſtines*; *and whither ſoever he turned himſelf, he vexed, or troubled them.* The word may be taken in theſe three ſignifications with a ſubſerviency one to another; for he that is wicked, or doth wickedly, deſerveth to be condemned, or men are condemned becauſe they do wickedly: and he that is condemned by a righteous ſentence is puniſhed, and cannot but be troubled; a legal ſentence of condemnation, brings a legal penalty upon the perſon condemned; we tranſlate clearly to the ſenſe of the Text, *who can make trouble*, when God giveth quietneſs? for here the word is not oppoſed to well doing, or acquitting, but to quieting and pacifying; *when he giveth quietneſs, who can make trouble?*

And when he hideth his face, who then can behold him?

The face of God, by a well known Hebraiſm (very frequent in Scripture) ſignifieth the favour of God; Maſter *Broughton* reads, *when he hideth favour.* The favour which we bear to others is moſt viſible in the face, and therefore the face may well ſignifie favour. *David* over looking all the good things of this world, prayed for a good look from God in this expreſſion, (*Pſal.* 4. 6.) *There be many that ſay, who will ſhew us any good? Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance* (or *of thy face*) *upon us:* that is, ſhew us favour, or be favourable to us. And as the greateſt good of Saints in this world, ſo all the good of the next world is comprehended in this one word (*Pſal.* 16. 11.) *In thy preſence* (the Text is, *in thy face*, that is, in the full enjoyment of thy benign and gracious preſence) *is fulneſs of joy.* In like ſenſe the word is uſed *Pſal.* 21. 6. *Pſal.* 67. 1. So then, *to hide the face*, is to withdraw favour, and kindneſs, love, and reſpect; more diſtinctly, this phraſe of *hiding the face*, hath a threefold importance, or may hold out theſe three things.

Firſt, a diſtaſte either againſt perſons or things; we turn away our face from him, or that which we do not like, or is diſpleaſing to us. The hiding of God's face is a manifeſtation of his diſpleaſure; *In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment*, ſaith God to the Church, (*Iſa.* 54. 8.) This form of ſpeaking is borrowed from their uſage or practice, who refuſe to admit into their preſence, or ſo much as look upon ſuch, whom they either really hate, or would ſeem at leaſt to be much diſpleaſed with; As *David* gave command concerning *Abſalom* (2 Sam. 14. 24.) *Let him turn to his own houſe, and let him not ſee my face.* When God withdraweth the wonted expreſſions of his love and kindneſs from a perſon or a people; then (according to Scripture ſenſe and language, he is ſaid to *hide his face* from them, *Deut.* 30. 20. *Pſal.* 30. 7.)

Secondly, The hiding of God's face, notes a refuſal to help thoſe who in ſtraits cry to him for relief and deliverance: For if we will not give a man our eye, we will hardly give him our hand; if we will not ſo much as look upon him, we will hardly aſſiſt him. When God hides his face, 'tis as much as his denial of ſuccour; Thus *David* bemoaned himſelf, (*Pſal.*13.1.) *Why hideſt thou thy face?* that is, Lord, why withdraweſt thou thy help from me? That he was ſenſible of ſuch *withdraws*, is plain by the prayer which he made, (*verſ.* 3.) *Conſider, and hear me, O Lord my God*; and by the reaſon of it given (*verſ.* 4.) *Leſt mine enemies ſay, I have prevailed againſt him.* We find *David* deprecating the hiding of God's face upon the ſame ground, (*Pſal.* 44. 24. *Pſal.* 69. 17.) The Prophet is very expreſs in this point, (*Iſa.* 59. 1, 2.) *The Lords hand is not ſhortned that it cannot ſave, neither his ear heavy that it cannot hear; but your iniquities have ſeparated between you and your God, and your ſins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear:* that is, as he diſtaſteth, and is diſpleaſed with you, ſo he denyeth you his uſual help and aſſiſtance, becauſe ye have greatly ſinned againſt him.

Thirdly, The hiding of God's face, notes not only ſome diſtaſte, and a denyal of help; but a total ſlight, or refuſal of any care concerning us, (*Iſa.* 40. 27.) *Why ſayeſt thou, O Jacob, and ſpeakeſt, O Iſrael, my way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is paſſed over from my God*; that is, Why ſayeſt thou, the Lord takes no care at all of me, and in that ſenſe *Job* ſpake, (*Chap.* 24. 1.) *Why ſeeing times are not hidden from the Almighty, do they that know him not, ſee his days?* that is, why ſeeing God doth not neglect times, and ſeaſons, and how things go in the world, (there time is put for things done in time, why (I ſay) ſeeing God hath not caſt off the care of the things of this world) is it thus with me? Why am I as a man forlorn, and utterly caſt off? We may expound *Elihu* in all or any of theſe ſenſes; *when he hideth his face*, or withdraweth his favour, that is, when God is diſpleaſed and refuſeth to help, when God throweth up the care of a mans perſon, or condition, it cannot but go and be ill enough with him; for as it followeth,

Who then can behold him?] The face of God as taken for his eſſential being, cannot at all be ſeen, nor can we at all behold him; *There ſhall no man* (ſaith the Lord, *Exod.* 33. 20.) *ſee my face, and live*; But, as the face of God is taken for any manifeſtation of his being, whether in wrath or in love, in judgment or in mercy, ſo it may be ſeen: Now when God hideth his face, that is, his favour, and will not give out any pleaſing manifeſtations of himſelf, *who can behold him?* that is, who can behold him with comfort? who can ſtand before an angry God? or abide his preſence? As the gracious preſence of God is the ſweeteſt, ſo the wrathful preſence of God is the moſt bitter thing in the world. *When he hideth his face, who can behold him?*

Some expound thus; if God will not ſhew his face, if he is not pleaſed to reveal himſelf, no man can know, or ſee any thing of him; that's a truth. We can know no more of God, than himſelf will reveal of himſelf to us; 'tis *in his light* (Pſal. 36. 9.) that is, in the light which he cauſeth to ſhine from himſelf, that *we ſee light*, or what and who himſelf is, *who is light, and in whom there is no darkneſs at all.* If God will hide his power, or his wiſdom, or his truth, or his mercy from us, who can ſee any thing of them? though all theſe perfections be always more glorious in him than the beams of the Sun, yet unleſs God ſhew them us, we cannot perceive them. We ſee the light of God in God's light; if God hath a mind to conceal himſelf, or draweth (as it were) a curtain between the creature and himſelf, *who can behold him?* we cannot by any ſtudy, or skill, or art, or endeavour of ours come to any ſight or knowledg of God, further than himſelf makes himſelf known. This expoſition is both true and uſeful; yet I conceive, when *Elihu* ſaith, *Who then can behold him?* his meaning rather points at theſe two things.

Firſt, Who can have any comfortable enjoyment of him; to behold a man whoſe diſpleaſure we ſuſpected, and find acceptance and freedom with him, is compared to our beholding the face of God. *I have ſeen thy face as though I had ſeen the face of God, and thou waſt pleaſed with me,* ſaid *Jacob* to *Eſau* (Gen. 33. 10.) when his brother treated him ſo lovingly contrary to his expectation, he looked upon it as an evidence of the favour of God to him. Or *Jacob* being much affected with the countenance and kindneſs of *Eſau*, compared his face to the face of God, becauſe in his reconciled face he ſaw (as it were) the face of God ſmiling upon him. This was *David*'s argument, that God favoured him (*Pſal.* 41. 11.) *becauſe his enemies did not triumph over him*; much more is it an argument of God's favour, when they ſpeak and act friendly towards us, or when we behold their face and are accepted. *Joſeph* threatned his brethren, *ye ſhall not ſee my face* (or behold me) *except your brother be with you* (Gen. 43. 3.) if you come without him, either I will not admit you at all into my preſence, or I will look ſowrly upon you. Thus to *behold God*, is to *ſee his face* (as 'tis ſaid (*Chap.* 33. 26.) the repenting ſick man ſhould) *with joy*.

Secondly, Who can have any confidence in him, or boldneſs with him; *David* ſpeaking of godly and upright men, ſaith (*Pſal.* 34. 5.) *They looked* (or, *ſhall look*) *unto him, and were lightned, and their faces were not aſhamed*; that is, they beheld God or came to him, with much aſſurance of his favour. Some dare not ſo much as look another in the face, for ſhame or fear; but when we look a man in the face, it ſheweth we have either confidence in him, and freedom with him, or courage enough againſt him. Now, if God hide his pleaſed face, or withdraw his favour, *who can behold him* confidently, or come to him with hopes to ſpeed. Fierce *Abner* ſaid to *Aſahel* (2 *Sam.* 2. 22.) *Turn thee aſide from following me, wherefore ſhould I ſmite thee to the ground* (I could eaſily do it, and he did it preſently) *how then ſhould I hold up my face to* Joab *thy brother?* As if he had ſaid, I can have no confidence to come to *Joab*, thy General, if I ſhould kill thee. Guilt of evil done to others, draws a jealouſie that others will do evil to us, eſpecially they who are nearly concern'd in the evil which we have done; we cannot hold up our face to or behold them with expectation of acceptance and favour, to whoſe near relations we have been unkind or injurious. Thus, *If God hide his face, who can behold him?* either with confidence or with comfort.

Some refer the relative *him* (*who can behold him?*) to man, not to God; as if the meaning of *Elihu* were this; *if God hide his face from any man, all men will hide their faces from him too; no man will look kindly upon ſuch a deſerted perſon, or give him a good look; he ſhall have but frowns from men, from whom God withdraweth his favour*; that's a truth; He that is out with God cannot keep in long with men. Uſually all ſorts diſown him that is forlorn and forſaken of God, As *when a mans ways pleaſe God* (becauſe then God is pleaſed with him) *his enemies ſhall be at peace with him* (Prov. 16. 7.) ſo when God is diſpleaſed with a man, his very beſt friends ſhall turn enemies to him. Yet I conceive the Text carrieth it rather the other way, referring to God himſelf; *If God hide his face, who can behold him?* that is, who can confidently behold God, or draw near to him with comfort? And ſo it generally comes to paſs, or thus it is,

Quis faciem ei exhibebit, à quo deus vultum averterit. Druſ.

Whether it be done againſt a nation, or againſt a man only.

As if *Elihu* had ſaid; What I have affirmed, that, *when God giveth quietneſs, no man can make trouble, or when he hideth his face no man can behold him*, is appliable to whole nations, as well as to particular perſons. This is an extenſive truth, a truth of large concernment, and therefore a truth of neceſſary and important conſideration. That which may be any mans or all mens caſe, ſhould be ſtudied by every man.

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Whether it be done againſt a nation, &c.] The particle which we render *againſt*, ſignifieth alſo *for*. We find it ſo tranſlated *Pſal.* 32. 6. and at the 36. verſe of this Chapter. Now, to do a thing for a nation or for a perſon, notes the doing of it with reſpect to or in favour of either. Thus we commonly ſpeak in our language, *pray do ſuch or ſuch a thing for me.* To this ſenſe ſome render here, *whether it be done for a nation, or for a man only.* So Mr. *Broughton*, *whether it be done for a nation, or for an earthly man alone.* But, whether we read *for*, or *againſt*, the general truth is the ſame. The word and power of God in ſending good or evil upon nations or perſons, in acting for or againſt them, is uncontroulable and irreſiſtible.

Further, to clear the Text, that word in the cloſe of the verſe, rendred *only*, ſignifieth, ſometimes *together* (Ezra 4. 3.) ſometimes *alike* (Pſal. 34. 15.) and ſometimes as we underſtand it *alone*, or *only*, whether it be done againſt a nation or a man together, or againſt a man only or alone, the matter is alike or the ſame to God. Many or one make a great difference among men in any matter, but they make no difference with God, he can deal with whole nations (in ways of Judgment or mercy) as well as with ſingle

יחד *tria ſignificat ſimul, pariter, ſolum.*

perſons; yet becauſe of the oppoſition which the Text makes between *one man* and a *nation*, it is moſt ſutable to tranſlate it either *only* or *alike* not *together*.

Thus we ſee, how the Spirit of God by *Elihu* hath made a double application of the former part of the Text (*when he giveth quietneſs, who can make trouble,* &c.) in this latter, firſt, to a nation; ſecondly, to a perſon. If the Text were not thus expreſt, it might be thus expounded and improved without any ſtrein at all to it. But foraſmuch as the Spirit of God hath told us diſtinctly, that this great truth concerns nations as well as perſons, therefore we have a clear ground (beſides the great uſefulneſs of it) to ſpeak to the words in both their references. And this preſent *memorable day* (as alſo their native order) leads me ſpecially to ſpeak of them, firſt, under a National conſideration.

This Lecture was Preached upon the Fifth of *November*, 1658.

When he giveth quietneſs to a nation, who can make trouble or diſturb the peace of it? And the Text may well reſpect that national bleſſing, *peace*, becauſe the word tranſlated *giveth quietneſs*, ſignifies ſuch quietneſs primarily, as is oppoſite unto war, ſedition and tumult in a nation (*Joſh.* 11. 23.) *And the land reſted from war*, it is this word, ſo. (*Judg.* 3. 11.) *The land had reſt forty years.* (Judg. 3. 30.) *And the land had reſt fourſcore years.* (2 Chron. 14. 1.) *In his days the land was quiet ten years.* (Zech. 1. 11.) *And behold all the earth ſitteth ſtill, and is at reſt*; in all theſe places we have the word here rendred *quietneſs*, in oppoſition to war; who knows not how great an unquietneſs war makes whereſoever it comes? and by a like analogy, the word is ſometimes rendred *to be ſilent*. War is full of clamour (*Iſa.* 9. 5.) *Every battel of the warrier is with confuſed noiſe.* Not only is it ſo in ſome battels, but (ſaith that Scripture) 'tis ſo in all battels, *Every battel of the warrier is with confuſed noiſe.* What a noiſe is there in an Army, eſpecially when joyning battel with another Army? what beating of drums? what ſounding of trumpets? what neighing of horſes? what claſhing of armour? what groanings of the wounded? When God gives quietneſs or peace, there is none of this noiſe, none of this confuſed noiſe of the warrier. *Hannah* ſaith in her ſong (1 *Sam.* 2. 9.) *The wicked ſhall be ſilent in darkneſs*; that is, either they ſhall be deſtroyed and thruſt into their graves, where there's nothing but rottenneſs and ſtench, darkneſs and ſilence; or they ſhall be ſo affrighted and confounded with the horror and darkneſs of thoſe miſeries which ſhall come upon them while they live, that they ſhall not have a word to ſay, the mouth of iniquity ſhall be ſtopt. In this manner the wicked are ſilent in darkneſs; but the Lord can make his people ſilent in light, that is, he can give ſuch quietneſs as ſhall at once ſilence the noiſe of war and all their own complaints. *When he giveth quietneſs* (this bleſſed ſilence to nations) *who then can make trouble?*

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *The quietneſs or peace of nations is the peculiar gift of God.*

Whoſoever hath or enjoyeth quietneſs, 'tis God's work, but moſt eminently when nations enjoy it. Of national quietneſs the Lord ſpake by his Prophet (*Iſa.* 45. 7.) *I form the light,* &c. *I make peace, I the Lord do all theſe things.* As natural ſo civil light is of God's forming; as ſpiritual, ſo temporal peace is of God's making. And the Church was confident he would be their *peace-maker* (*Iſa.* 26. 12.) *Lord thou wilt ordain peace for us.* Some read it as a prayer, *Lord do thou ordain* (or command) *peace for us*; we as a profeſſion of their faith, and hopeful, if not full aſſurance that the Lord would ordain peace for them. The Lord gives out an order, or makes an ordinance in heaven, when he pleaſeth for the peace both of Churches and Nations here on earth. And the Church there had this good ground of their aſſurance, that he would do it, even their former experiences of his great power and goodneſs in doing much for them, as it followeth, *for thou haſt wrought all our works for us*; As if they had ſaid, Lord thoſe gracious preſervations which thou haſt heretofore given us in trouble, and deliverances out of trouble, ſtrengthen our faith both in praying that thou wouldſt, and in believing that thou wilt, now at this pinch ordain peace for us. To do ſo is a mighty and a merciful work of God, and we may conſider it two ways.

Firſt, As the giving of quietneſs to a nation is the reſtoring of peace, o- the ſetling of them in a quiet ſtate, after they have been torn and troubled with wars, and toſſed with continual tempeſts of trouble (poſſibly) for many years together. To bring peace out of war, and quietneſs out of unſetledneſs, is a work worthy of God. (*Pſal.* 46. 9.) *He maketh wars to ceaſe to the ends of the earth*; that is, all the world over. The end or ceaſing of war is quietneſs. And to aſſure us that the Lord can make an end of wars, the Pſalmiſt in that place ſheweth us the Lord ſpoiling all the implements, or inſtruments of war, *He breaketh the bow, and cuts the ſpear aſunder, he burneth the chariots in the fire*; Here are three great inſtruments of war, the bow, the ſpear, the chariot, all which are ſometimes comprehended under that one word the *ſword*, which is the moſt known and univerſal inſtrument of war. Now, when neither ſword, nor bow, nor ſpear, nor chariot, are to be had, we need not fear war. And therefore that great promiſe of peace runs in this tenour (*Mic.* 4. 2.) *They ſhall beat their ſwords into plough-ſhares, and their ſpears into pruning hooks* (then preſently followeth) *nation ſhall not lift up a ſword, againſt nation, neither ſhall they learn war any more*; There muſt needs be peace when the art of war is laid by as uſeleſs, and ſhall be learned no more. That will be a bleſſed time indeed when the art military ſhall be out of date, and (being it ſelf the greateſt interrupter of learning) ſhall be learned no more. When Souldiers ſhall turn Husbandmen and Vine-dreſſers, *beating their ſwords into plough-ſhares, and their ſpears into pruning hooks*, then we ſhall have peace, and put away the remoteſt fears of war. When a man caſteth away his ſword, we may very well conclude he intends to be quiet. Thus the Lord gives quietneſs, to nations, which have been engaged in war, by cauſing wars to ceaſe.

Secondly, He gives quietneſs to nations by continuing their peace, when wars are ceaſed; for unleſs the Lord give a check to the luſts and paſſions, to the wrath and rage of men, plough-ſhares are quickly turned into ſwords, and pruning hooks into ſpears. To preſerve peace is the Lords work, as much as to give peace. It requires the ſame or as great a power to keep our peace as to make it; to keep it out of the hand of the ſword, as to get it out of the hand of the ſword. When the King of *Aſſyria* threatned *Jeruſalem* with a ſiege, the Lord preſerved their peace, and ſent *Hezekiah* word (*Iſa.* 37. 33.) *He ſhall not come into this City, nor ſhoot an arrow there, nor come before it with ſhields, nor caſt a bank againſt it, for I will defend this City to ſave it.* The continuance of peace, and quietneſs, is a continual giving of it. Wars return after peace, as clouds return after rain, unleſs the Lord prevent and forbid them.

Non minor eſt virtus quam quærere, parta tueri.

And have not we of this nation reaſon to acknowledg this double mercy?

Firſt, Was not the end of our late unnatural wars, the gift of God? was it not he that made our troubles to ceaſe from one end of the nation to the other, yea throughout the three nations? If the Lord had not given the ſword a check, or counter-mand, if the Lord had not called in the commiſſion which he once gave the ſword, it had been devouring fleſh, and drinking blood to this very day. We read (as it were) a dialogue between the Prophet and himſelf concerning the ſword (*Jer.* 47. 6, 7.) *O thou ſword of the Lord,* (ſaid the Prophet being grieved for the ſlaughter and deſolation which the ſword had made even in a ſtrange land) *how long will it be ere thou be quiet? put up thy ſelf into thy ſcabbard; reſt and be ſtill*; Himſelf anſwers himſelf, *how can it be quiet ſeeing the Lord hath given it a charge againſt Aſhkelon, and againſt the Sea-ſhore? there hath he appointed it.* I ſpake to the ſword of quietneſs (ſaith the Prophet) But alas! how can it be quiet, how can that ſheath it ſelf in its ſcabbard, and not in the bowels of men, ſeeing the Lord hath given it a charge againſt *Aſhkelon?* As if he had ſaid, I ſee no intreaties can perſwade the ſword to reſt and quietneſs, till it hath fully executed the command of God, and done his work, though it be very bloody work, even the making of it ſelf drunk with blood. The Lord can make the ſword quiet; and it will hearken to no voice but his; if the Lord give a charge for the ſword to return into the ſheath, then it will, and if not, it will not. The ſword raged in theſe nations till the Lords work and will was done, and then that had done. And as we have reaſon to acknowledge, that the Lord hath commanded the Sword back into its ſheath, and given us peace out of war, ſo

Secondly, That he hath continued our peace ſince the war, *When he giveth quietneſs, who then can make trouble?*

Note, *If God will give thoſe Nations quietneſs, where it was not, or continue it where it is, there is no power on Earth can ſtop, or interrupt it.*

Who can make trouble, where he ordaineth peace? *Balaam* was forced to this confeſſion (when he would have troubled the people of *Iſrael*, and went from mountain to mountain to ſeek divination) *I cannot curſe whom the Lord hath bleſſed*, why not, ſaid *Balak*? I will give thee a good fee if thou wilt, no, ſaith *Balaam* (Numb.23.20.) *The Lord hath bleſſed and I cannot reverſe it.* We may put this query, *When he giveth quietneſs, who can make trouble?* Eſpecially to three ſorts of perſons.

Firſt, To politick men; ſome preſume they can trouble Nations and ſhake the ſureſt foundations of peace, with the engine of their brain, with their wit and ſubtlety. Yet this engine proves uſeleſs and unſerviceable to that end, where the Lord gives quietneſs. *Ahitophel* was as an Oracle of God for wiſdom in his time, and he ſtretcht his brains upon the tenters to make trouble, but God ſaid there ſhould be peace, and therefore (as *David* prayed) *his wiſdom was turned into fooliſhneſs: There is no wiſdom* (ſaith *Solomon* the wiſe, *Prov.* 21. 30.) *nor underſtanding nor counſel againſt the Lord.*

Secondly, We may put the queſtion (who can make trouble?) to mighty men; their power (the ſtrength of their Armies, and arm) cannot do it? *Senacharib* came with a mighty Hoſt to diſturb *Iſrael*, but he could not make trouble, he could not ſo much as ſhoot an Arrow againſt *Jeruſalem*, when the Lord forbad it.

Thirdly, We may put the queſtion (who can make trouble?) to magical men or ſorcerers; they cannot do it by their witcheries and enchantments, by their cloſeſt correſpondencies with the Devil himſelf. This was *Balaam's* concluſion, who (it ſeems) traded that way to do miſchief (*Numb.*23.23.) *Surely there is no inchantment againſt* Jacob, *neither is there any divination againſt* Iſrael: *according to this time it ſhall be ſaid of* Jacob, *and of* Iſrael, *what hath God wrought?* When God is reſolved to give a people quietneſs, though the Devil would, he cannot diſturb them. We need not fear witches or magicians (who correſpond with Hell to trouble the Earth) if God ſay there ſhall be peace; neither policy, nor power, nor witchery, can prevail againſt the purpoſe of God.

Then happy are that people, who *have the Lord for their God* (*Pſal.*144.15.) what can a people deſire more to make them happy, then *to have the Lord for their God*, if we conſider theſe two things?

Firſt, God hath a negative voice upon all the counſels of the wiſeſt men in the World; if he ſaith it ſhall not be, it cannot be, whoſoever ſaith this or that ſhall be (*Lam.*3.37.) *Who is he that ſaith and it cometh to paſs, when the Lord commandeth it not?* If he gives not his aſſent, nothing can paſs into a Law. The Lords ſingle negative ſtops the affirmative votes of all men joined in one.

Secondly, The Lords power is paramount; he can effect what he willeth, whether men will or no. That's plain in the Text. *If he give quietneſs, who can make trouble?*

To come a little nearer; this day, this *fifth of November*, which we ſolemnize in a thankful remembrance of our deliverance from the *Gun-powder Treaſon*, is a very great confirmation of this truth.

Who is there that was alive at that day (as ſeveral here I know were) yea who is there that hath heard of that day, of the ſubſtance and circumſtances, of the matter and manner of the *Gun-powder Treaſon*, but can tell us, that a Popiſh party at home with their correſpondents abroad, intended to make trouble in this Nation; ſurely there was a purpoſe to make trouble in the Nation that day, if ever there were a purpoſe to make trouble in any Nation. What did they leave unattempted, to promote the trouble of this Nation? Counſels were joined for a conjunction of Forces to trouble this Nation. The men ingaged in that plot, may properly be called *Trouble-makers*; it was their buſineſs or their deſign to trouble the waters, that themſelves might fiſh in thoſe waters of trouble. We may with reſpect to their purpoſe, (though God prevented it graciouſly) truly ſay to them what *Ahab* ſaid falſely to *Elijah*, *Theſe were the men that would have troubled our* Iſrael; they would have made trouble in every way, and in every thing, wherein trouble could be made by men.

Would it not have made trouble, to deſtroy the King, the chief Governour of theſe three Nations, with his Royal iſſue in one day?

Would it not have made trouble, to blow up the repreſentative of the Nation, the Parliament, in one day?

Would it not have made trouble, to put the whole body of the people into a confuſed heap, without a head, in one day?

Would it not have made trouble in the Nation, to have ſeen Papal power, with Popiſh Doctrine and Worſhip brought in again upon us within a few days?

Would it not have made troule, to have ſeen poor Souls impriſon'd, perſecuted, and conſumed to aſhes for their conſcientious witneſs-bearing to the truths of the Goſpel?

Would it not have made trouble, to have loſt our Civil liberties, and to have had a yoke of ſpiritual Bondage laid upon our necks by worſe then *Egyptian* task-makers?

Would it not have made trouble, to ſpil the blood of Thouſands? Was it not an attempt to make trouble, to attempt all theſe things which would probably, that I ſay not certainly, have been the iſſue of that plot, if it had ſucceeded? Let us therefore praiſe the Lord, who was pleaſed to prevent it, and ſaid it ſhall not be. They did every thing to make trouble, but make trouble; they did every thing, but proſper in their deſign: They took ſecret counſel, they took oaths, yea they took the Sacrament to aſſure the ſecrecy of thoſe counſels and oaths. All this they did towards the making of trouble, yet they could not; God ſaid at that time, let *England* be in quietneſs, and therefore, only, thoſe *Romiſh* Emiſſaries and Incendiaries could not make trouble.

Again, If we conſider the preſent ſeaſon wherein we live, 'tis a confirmation of this truth, God hath given us quietneſs for ſome years; and hath he not preſerved this quietneſs hitherto, againſt all thoſe both perſons and things that would have made trouble? If God had not confirmed our peace, we had been in trouble long before this time, but yet our peace continueth, yet it continueth; and is it not wonderful that it ſhould continue, if we conſider.

Firſt, The ſins of the Nation which are the ſeed of trouble, eſpecially thoſe two general ſins, firſt, unthankfulneſs for our peace; ſecondly, our ill improvement of it. How have many abuſed their peace to nurſe up their pride, wantonneſs and vanity! and being delivered from the fear of men, have even caſt off the fear of God! what juſt cauſe is there, that we ſhould loſe that peace which we have uſed ſo ill, and have almoſt turned into a war with God himſelf! yet hitherto the Lord hath given *England* quietneſs, and none could make trouble.

Secondly, If we look upon the diviſions, both in opinion, and affection, that are found among us, is it not a wonder that yet we have peace! if God had not *given quietneſs*, doubtleſs theſe differences, of which we are ſo ſadly full, had filled us with trouble long before this time.

Thirdly, While we conſider the different intereſts which have been abetted and hotly purſued by too many in this Nation, is it not marvellous in our eyes, that our peace is continued! divided intereſts make greateſt diſtances, and open thoſe breaches through which trouble uſually enters upon a Nation. When a people are of one mind, of one heart and way, trouble can ſcarce find any way to come in among them. But only God (who peremptorily gives quietneſs) can give quietneſs to and prevent the trouble of a people who are divided in opinions, affections, and intereſts. As therefore it is the moſt deſireable mercy that a people may be all united as one man, in one mind, heart, and way, according to the mind, heart, and way of God; ſo it is a moſt admirable mercy, to ſee their peace continued while any conſiderable part among them are diſunited in any of, eſpecially if in all theſe.

Fourthly, Conſider, that ſince the time of our peace, we have had many changes, we have been emptied from veſſel to veſſel, from hand to hand, from government to government, and from governour to governour; and is it not matter of aſtoniſhment as well as of thanks giving, that yet we have quietneſs! How many have waited and hoped, yea deſired and longed for our day of trouble, by theſe changes, revolutions and viciſſitudes, but yet we have peace. Muſt we not then conclude, *If God giveth quietneſs, none can make trouble*; neither our ſins, nor our diviſions, nor our animoſities, nor our changes ſhall put it into any mans power (though they put an advantage into many mens hands) to make trouble where the Lord our God is graciouſly and freely pleaſed to give us quietneſs. Yet let us be in a holy fear, leſt we at laſt provoke God, and ſin away our quietneſs, and make trouble for our ſelves. The condition of a people who do ſo is very woful; for ſurely (as it followeth in the Text)

If he hideth his face, who then can behold him?

This latter part of the verſe is applicable to a Nation as well as the former, and therefore before I begin to ſpeak of either with reſpect to a ſingle perſon, or *a man only*,

> Obſerve, *God ſometimes hideth his face from whole Nations, even from thoſe Nations that have the outward profeſſion of his name.*

As there are National mercies, ſo National calamities, as his people in common may have the ſhinings of Gods face upon them, ſo the hidings of his face from them. Did not God hide his face from the people of *Iſrael*, his peculiar people, when they were though a profeſſing people, yet a very ſinful and provoking people? (*Iſa.* 59.2.) Is it not ſaid (*Jer.* 7.12, 14, 15.) *Go ye now unto my place which was in* Shiloh, *where I ſet my name at the firſt, and ſee what I did to it, for the wickedneſs of my people* Iſrael; God would not always own that place which he ſignally called his *own*, and had ſet his name there, and that, at *firſt* (which was a great endearment of it to him) but when they ſinned much againſt him, he would not ſo much as give them a look of favour, no nor of pity, till they turned from their wickedneſs; yea he made his ſevere proceeding with them a preſident to his people in another Generation, as it followeth in the ſame place. *Therefore will I do unto this Houſe which is called by my name, wherein ye truſt, and unto the place which I gave to you, and to your fathers, as I have done to* Shiloh. *And I will caſt you out of my ſight, as I have caſt out all your Brethren, even the whole ſeed of* Ephraim. There's a Nation caſt out of the ſight of God. To be caſt out of Gods ſight is more, if more can be, then Gods hiding his face from a people. The Church complained bitterly of this latter (*Pſal.* 44.24.) *Wherefore hideth thou thy face, and forgetteſt our affliction, and our oppreſſion?* We uſe to ſay, *Out of ſight, out of mind*; and when God leaves a Nation under affliction, as if he did not mind them nor cared what became of them, then the Scripture ſaith, *he hideth his face from them*, or, *caſteth them out of his ſight*. I ſhall only add three things about this hiding of the face of God from a Nation.

Firſt, This hiding of his face, is not a ſudden act of God, he doth not preſently nor eaſily hide his face from a people. He tells them often he will do it, before he doth it once. The Lord warned the old World long, before he brought the flood (*Gen.* 6.3.) *And the Lord ſaid, my Spirit ſhall not always ſtrive with man, for that he alſo is fleſh: Yet his days* (wherein I will ſpare him and wait for his repentance) *ſhall be an Hundred and Twenty Years.* Of this patience the Apoſtle ſpake, telling us (1 *Pet.* 3. 19, 20.) That Chriſt by the Spirit which quickned him, *went and Preached to the Spirits in Priſon* (not in Priſon when he Preached to them, but in Priſon ever ſince for not obeying what he Preached, as the Text ſaith) *which ſometime were diſobedient, when once the long ſuffering of God waited in the days of* Noah, *while the Ark was a preparing: Wherein few, that is, eight Souls were ſaved by water*; God did not preſently hide his face from that debauched Generation, who had corrupted all their ways, but gave them long warning, even an Hundred and Twenty Years. And how often did God give warning before he withdrew or hid his face from the people of *Iſrael*, his ſpecial people? He ſent his Prophets riſing early, and ſending them, ſaying, *Oh do not this abominable thing that I hate*, (Jer. 44.4.) And in another place, *O* Jeruſalem, *be inſtructed, leſt my Soul depart* (*or be diſjointed*) *from thee*; (Jer. 6. 8.) as if he had ſaid, I am loth to depart, yea I will not depart, if thou wilt but now at length hearken to my voice, and receive inſtruction.

Secondly, As God is long before he begins to hide his face from a Nation, ſo he doth it not at all at once, but gradually or by ſeveral ſteps: We read (*Ezek* 9.3.) how *the glory of the God of* Iſrael *was gone up from the Cherub whereupon he was, to the threſhold of the Houſe*: Then (*Chap.* 10. 18.) *The glory of the Lord departed from off the threſhold of the Houſe, and ſtood over the Cherubims*: And then (*Chap.* 11.23.) *The glory of the Lord went up from the midſt of the City, and ſtood upon the Mountain, which is on the Eaſt ſide of the City.* When the Lord was departing from them, he did it by degrees, he withdrew and hid himſelf by little and little, as in the Eclipſe of the Sun, whether partial or total, we obſerve the light gradually ſhut in and hidden from us,

Thirdly, As God is long before he hideth his face, and long in hiding it from a Nation, ſo (which makes it dreadful) his face being once hid, continueth long hid from Nations. He doth not return preſently to them, as he often doth to particular perſons. The Eclipſes of Divine favour abide long upon Nations and Churches. We commonly ſay, *Great* Bodies move ſlowly; and God is uſually ſlow in his motions both from and towards great Bodies; as he doth not quickly remove from them, ſo he doth not quickly return to them. He ſtayeth long before he hideth his face, and he makes them ſtay long before he cauſeth his face to ſhine upon them again. When for the ſin of *Iſrael* God gave up both them and the Ark into the hands of the *Philiſtines* (though the *Philiſtines* vexed with the hand of God upon them, ſent it back ſhortly after, yet) it was long before it was fully ſetled among them, (1 *Sam.* 7. 2.) *And it came to paſs while the Ark abode in* Kirjath jerim, *that the time was long, for it was twenty years, and all the Houſe of* Iſrael *lamented after the Lord.* The Ark (which was a ſign of God's preſence with them) being removed, was not ſoon reſtor'd to its proper place; yea it was twenty years more after that, before it was ſet in its place by *David*, (2 *Sam.* 6.17.) And whereas it is ſaid, that in thoſe firſt twenty years, *they lamented after the Lord*, this ſignifieth, that all thoſe years God was (comparatively to what he had ſometimes been) but as a ſtranger in the Land, leaving them under the cruel oppreſſions of the *Philiſtines*: Nor did they recover his favourable preſence, till they ſolemny repented and reformed, putting away their ſtrange gods, and *Aſhteroth*, preparing their hearts unto the Lord to ſerve him only, as *Samuel* exhorted them to do at the third verſe of that Chapter. The Jewiſh Nation in after ages had ſad experience of this in the Babyloniſh captivity; when God hid his face from them, it was ſeventy years before he lookt upon them again: And ſince that Nation provoked him (by their rejection of the Goſpel) to lay them aſide, God hath hid his face from them above theſe ſixteenhundred years, and they are to this day a ſcattered unſettled people, and wanderers among the Nations, having their hearts hardned, and their eyes ſhut againſt the light of the glorious Goſpel. And as the *Jews*, ſo many Chriſtian Churches have for a long time felt the ſad effects of theſe Divine hidings and withdrawings. Thoſe ſeven famous Churches in *Aſia*, mentioned in the ſecond and third Chapters of the *Revelation*, *Epheſus*, *Smyrna*, &c. have been under this woful Eclipſe many Hundred Years; nor have thoſe ancient Churches in *Africa*, where *Tertullian* and *Auguſtine* once flouriſhed, recovered the preſence of the Lord to this day. Let the Nations and Churches abroad remember this, and tremble to provoke the Lord to ſuch departures and deſertions. God hath long hid his face from the Bohemian Churches, and ſubjected them again to the Papal yoke; ſeveral parts of *Germany* are under the ſame hidings: the light is departed from them, and they are left in much darkneſs, their ſtate is very deplorable, and their former purity, both as to doctrines of faith and practice of worſhip (as to humane help) irrecoverable. And ſhould not the dealings of God with them, awaken us in theſe Nations and Churches, to remember and conſider the wonderful patience of God in continuing our peace, notwithſtanding all our provocations, leſt at laſt he hide his face from us alſo, and then who can behold him? A throng of evils and miſchiefs will ſoon appear to us with open face, if once God hide his face. And it will not be unuſeful to inſtance a little in this place, what thoſe evils and miſchiefs are which throng and croud in upon Nations and Churches, when God hideth his face from them.

Firſt, When God hideth his face from a Nation, he layeth down his former care of them, and watchfulneſs over them, he takes little or no notice of their caſe and condition, of their troubles and ſtreights, (as was toucht in opening the Text) he regards not how it is with them, nor what becomes of them. Such apprehenſions the Prophet had in reference unto the people of *Iſrael*, (*Jer.* 14. 8.) where he humbly expoſtulated with the Lord, *Why art thou as a ſtranger in the Land, and as a wayfaring man that turneth aſide to tarry for a night*; a ſtranger or a wayfaring man, intending to ſtay but a night in a place, thinks not himſelf concerned with the ſtate of that place; if he can but get a ſupper and a lodging for his money that night, he troubles himſelf no further: Whether it be well or ill with the place, whether it be ſickneſs or health, if he can make ſhift for a night, he is ſatisfied. Thus the Prophet conceived the Lord even as a ſtranger among his people, little minding what became of them, whether they did ſink or ſwim, whether it were peace or trouble, joy or ſorrow with them. And, further, he repreſents the Lord not only as a ſtranger, but as a man aſtoniſhed, not only as a man who cares not to help, but as a man who cannot. An aſtoniſhed man, how mighty ſoever he is, hath no uſe of his might. He that can do little with his reaſon (that's the caſe of an aſtoniſh'd affrighted man) can do leſs with his hands. Now ſuch a one is God to his people (that is, he will do no more for them then ſuch a one) when once he hideth his face from them.

Secondly, When the Lord hideth his face from a Nation, he hath no regard to their prayers and ſupplications, no not to their faſts and humiliations; that ſpeaks ſadly. Prayer is *our beſt ſtrength*, it engageth the ſtrength of God; by prayer we have our reſort to God, and fetch all our help and ſuccour in a day of trouble from his all-ſufficiency. If once God ſay to a people, I will not hear nor anſwer your prayers, they are in a moſt forlorn condition. Thus God reſolved againſt the people of *Iſrael*, (Jer. 14. 12.) *When they faſt I will not hear their cry*: And as he would not regard their own prayers, ſo he forbad the Prophet to pray for them, (*verſ.* 12.) *The Lord ſaid unto me, pray not for this people for their good*; yea, he tells them, he would not regard the prayers and interceſſions of any others for them, (*Jer.* 15. 1.) *Though* Moſes *and* Samuel *ſtood before me*, (that is, ſhould become Advocates in their behalf) *yet my heart could not be towards this people*, (that's a ſure and a dreadful prognoſtick of ruine, as it followeth) *caſt them out of my ſight, and let them go forth.*

Thirdly, When the Lord hides his face from a Nation, he refuſeth to give them counſel, or to direct their way. We need the counſel of God as much as his ſtrength; as we cannot do what we know unleſs he ſtrengthen us, ſo we know not what to do unleſs he counſel us. And when ever God hideth his face from a people, he hideth counſel from a people. When God hid his face from *Saul*, who was in a publick capacity, and in a publick caſe, his War with the *Philiſtines*, O how he complained that he could get no counſel, (1 *Sam.* 28. 6, 15.) *The Lord anſwers me no more, neither by Urim, nor by Thummim, nor by Prophet, nor by Dreams*; at if he had ſaid, I cannot get a word of direction from God, what to do in this calamitous and intricate condition, wherein my ſelf and my Kingdom are plung'd, by reaſon of this Invaſion; I know not what to do, and God will not at all give me any intimation what to do, nor how to do, what is ſafeſt, or moſt conducing to my own ſafety and preſervation. The Prophet brings in the Church lamenting this effect of Gods hiding his face (*Pſ.* 74. 9.) *We ſee not our tokens, there is not any Prophet, nor any that can tell how long*; as if they had ſaid, heretofore God was wont to give us ſigns and tokens, he would even work miracles for us, or he would ſend a Prophet to inſtruct and adviſe us what to do, we had thoſe who could tell us *how long*, that is, how long our troubles ſhould laſt, and when we ſhould have our expected end of them; but now we are in trouble, and no man can tell us how long, now we are left to the wide World, to ſhift for our ſelves as well as we can; the Lord will not adviſe us what to do, nor give us his mind what's beſt to be done, or how to proceed; thus deplorable was their condition upon the hiding of Gods face from them.

Fourthly, (which is yet worſe) when the Lord hides his face from a people, he doth not only with-hold his counſels, but gives them up to their own counſels, and that is, to their own hearts luſts, (*Pſ.* 81. 12.) *Iſrael would none of me* (ſaith God) *they would not hearken to my voice*: What then? *So I gave them up to their own hearts luſts, and they walked in their own counſels*: And that was to give them up to a Spirit of diviſion, to a Spirit of diſcontent, to a Spirit of envy and jealouſie, to a Spirit of ambition, of ſelf-ſeeking and emulation, and ſo to a Spirit of diſtraction and confuſion, and ſo to ruine and deſtruction: Such and no better is the iſſue, when God gives a people up to their own counſels; then they ſoon become a very Chaos, and run themſelves into a ruinous heap. *As good have no counſel from man, as none but man's.*

Fifthly, When God hides his face from a Nation, he is ready to declare his diſpleaſure, and the soreſt teſtimonies of his fierce anger, formally, againſt them; God looks upon a ſinfully ſinning people as a burthen upon his heart; he is preſt, and even oppreſt with them, he loaths them, his ſtomach turns at the thought of them, (*Iſa.* 1. 24.) *Ah! I will eaſe me* (the Hebrew is, I will be comforted, or I will comfort my ſelf, that is, I will unburden my Soul, and ſatisfie my ſelf by taking vengeance) *of my adverſaries*, that is, of my people who have rebelled againſt my command, and have been diſobedient to my word. Theſe the Lord counts no more as his children and friends, but as his enemies, and numbers them among his adverſaries; *Ah*, ſaith he, *I will eaſe me of my adverſaries, and avenge me of mine enemies*: I am grieved to do it, yet I muſt do it, I am reſolved to do it. As ſoon as the Lord had declared that he would receive no interceſſion for *Iſrael*, he adds, (*Jer.* 15. 1, 2.) *Caſt them out of my ſight, let them go forth, and it ſhall come to paſs, if they ſay unto thee, whither ſhall we go forth? Then thou ſhalt ſay unto them, thus ſaith the Lord, ſuch as are for death, to death, and ſuch as are for the ſword, to the ſword; and ſuch as are for the famine, to the famine; ſuch as are for captivity, to captivity; I will cauſe them to be removed into all Kingdoms of the Earth*, (verſ. 4.) *and as I will not pity them, ſo none ſhall*, (verſ. 5.) All theſe tokens of diſpleaſure fall upon a people when once the Lord hides his face from them. Yea then the Lord himſelf will go forth againſt them as a *fierce Lion*, (*Hoſ.* 5. 14, 15.) He was to *Iſrael as a moth, and as rottenneſs*, (verſ. 12.) that is, a ſecret conſumption, he would alſo be an open deſtruction to them *as a Lion*, yea as a *Leopard by the way would he obſerve them*, or lie in wait for them, *and meet them as a Bear that is bereaved of her whelps, and rent the very caul of their heart*. (Hoſ. 13. 7, 8.) The Lord God takes upon him the actings of the moſt ſavage Beaſts, in righteouſneſs to ſhew how much he is provoked, when he ſeeth his people act like Beaſts in unrighteouſneſs, filthineſs, cruelties, ſenſual pleaſures; when men behave themſelves unlike men, *God will not meet them* (as he told *Babylon* he would not, *Iſa.* 47. 3.) *as a man*, that is, either in the weakneſs of a man, or in the compaſſions of a man; but he will meet them either as a Beaſt of prey, who hath no compaſſion, or as God in the fulneſs of his power, not drawing forth, but quite reſtraining his compaſſions. Yea, the Spirit of God will ſtrive no more in ways of mercy with ſuch a people, but *turning their enemy* (Iſa. 63. 10.) will fight againſt them. He not only forbeareth to aſſiſt them againſt, and deliver them from their enemies, but even aſſiſteth their enemies againſt them, or delivereth them up into their enemies hand.

Sixthly, When God hideth himſelf from a people, he removes their ſpiritual enjoyments; he takes away his holy Ordinances, his Worſhip, the light and power of his Goſpel, or leaves them nothing but the ſhells and out-ſide forms of them; they ſhall be fed with husks, becauſe they have not improved ſweet kernels and wholſome food; they ſhall have long ſhadows, but little true light or Sun-ſhine. Viſion ſhall ceaſe; God will take away his Miniſters and be gone, and then they are preſently over-run with errour and ſuperſtition upon one hand, or with ignorance and prophaneneſs on the other.

Seventhly, He will ſpoil them alſo in their Civil enjoyments, he will take away good Magiſtrates, who are as a ſtaff and a ſtay, as a ſhield and a ſhelter to a Nation; he will break the ſtay and ſtaff of Government, as he threatned (*Iſa.* 3. 1, 2.) and then (as it followeth *verſe* 5.) *The Child* *ſhall behave himſelf proudly againſt the ancient, and the baſe againſt the honourable*; he will leave them to the corruption of Juſtice, Judgment ſhall *be turned away backward, and juſtice ſhall ſtand afar off, and then truth falleth in the ſtreets, and equity cannot enter* (Iſa. 59.14.) And after all this what will he do with them? He will either leave them to the worſt of National evils, total Anarchy, or, *He will give children to be their Princes, and babes ſhall rule over them.* When God hid his face from the Jewiſh Nation, he broke their Government by taking away ten Tribes out of *Rehoboam*'s hand, and putting them under *Jeroboam*; and out of his hand they fell into the hand of ſeveral other wicked Princes, till at laſt they were carried into captivity by the common enemy. Theſe and the like are the woful effects of Gods hiding his face from a Nation; from all which we may well conclude with *Elihu* in the Text, who then can behold him? Who can bear his wrathful preſence, when his face or favourable preſence is hidden from us? To ſhut up this point, I ſhall only add, that becauſe theſe hidings of Gods face are gradual (as was ſhewed before) therefore they are little taken notice of; as the Prophet complained (*Hoſ.* 7.9.) *Gray hairs are here and there upon them, and they know it not*; that is, they are in a declining condition (gray hairs are the ſigns of old age, which is the declenſion of mans life, he alludes from the body Natural, to the body Civil or Politick, they are, I ſay, in a declining, weakning, ſpending condition) yet they lay it not to heart. And that's a ſore, if not the chiefeſt judgment of God upon a Nation, when hiding his face, he hides his judgments from them, and gives them up to hardneſs of heart, to blindneſs of mind, and a ſpirit of ſtupidity, that they ſee not nor take notice of their own danger, nor the departure of God from them, which is the cauſe of it. And ſtill the more God hideth his face from a Nation, the more miſerable they are, and withal, the more inſenſible of their miſery. So much from that conſideration of the Text, as to a Nation, *When he giveth quietneſs, who can make trouble? And when he hideth his face, who then can behold him? Whether it be againſt a Nation,*

Eorum mihi videtur idoneus ſenſus & omnino germanus qui hanc libertatem Dei, ſive pacem concedendi ſive condemnandi (vel turbandi) ad tyrannos tantum coarctat & eos qui impiè vivunt. Sanct.

Or againſt a man only.] As this verſe reſpects a man only, or a ſingle perſon, it is expounded two or three wayes.

Firſt, Of Oppreſſors and wicked men: As if he had ſaid, *When God will give a wicked man quietneſs or proſperity in his ſinful way, who can make his eſtate troublous, or trouble him in his eſtate? He ſhall be quiet while the will of God is to ſuffer him to be ſo; and if God once hide his face from him*, that is, *declareth diſpleaſure againſt him, who can behold him?* That is, *Who among the mightieſt of wicked Oppreſſors can lift himſelf up againſt, or ſtand before God?*

Secondly, The words are expounded of the oppreſſed, or of godly men: As if he had ſaid, When God is minded or reſolved to give peace and quietneſs to any of his faithful Servants, who can hinder him, or trouble them? And when he is pleaſed for reaſons beſt known to himſelf, to leave any of his faithful Servants in darkneſs, and withdraw the light of his countenance from them, who among them can behold him? That is, bear or endure his angry appearances.

Si Deus pacem tribuat impiis, quis illius providentiam & arcana judicia condemnare audebit? Greg Philip.

A third expounds the former part of the verſe according to the ſecond Expoſition of the whole verſe concerning the oppreſſed or afflicted godly, *If God will give them quietneſs, who can give them trouble?* And the latter part of the verſe, of Oppreſſors, *If he hideth his face from wicked and unjuſt men, who can behold him?*

Further, Some who take this ſenſe, do not underſtand it as an act of God hiding his own face, but as an act of God hiding the face of the wicked Oppreſſor: As if it had been ſaid, *When God hideth a wicked mans face, and wraps him up as a condemned man*; or when, by the command of the Magiſtrate, after his legal tryal his face is covered, being ready to ſeal the warrant for his execution; (*Haman*'s face was covered as ſoon as the Kings word went out againſt him) then *Who can behold him?* Some inſiſt much upon this interpretation, in alluſion to the cuſtom of thoſe times, when condemned Malefactors had their faces covered; and indeed, when God wraps up the Oppreſſors face as a condemned man, *Who can behold him?* That is, Who can hold up his face againſt God, or reſiſt him in this work of juſtice. But I intend not to proſecute the perſonal conſideration of the Text under theſe diſtinct notions, but ſhall only take up the general ſenſe; *When he giveth quietneſs to a man, who can make trouble? And when he hideth his face from a man, who can behold him?* I ſhall only add Maſter *Broughton*'s gloſs upon the whole verſe, *When for the poor he kills the mighty, none can ſtay him; and when he hideth his favour, none can find it.*

Quum ipſe tranquillat (*ſc. miſeros afflictos*) quis inquietabit? *Et cum abſcondit faciem (ſc. ab improbis)* quis contemplabitur eum? *i. e. quis improborum averſanti Deo auſit obſiſtere?* Jun.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *The quietneſs or peace of any man, of every man, is of the Lord.*

If God will have a wicked man live in quietneſs, ſo it ſhall be, and God hath given, and doth often give them quietneſs. *I have ſeen the wicked in great power, and ſpreading himſelf like a green Bay-tree* (Pſal 37.35.) *David* ſpake this from a good witneſs, the ſight of his eye; I (ſaith he) have ſeen the wicked in much outward pomp and ſplendour; and as the outward peace and quietneſs, pomp and ſplendour of the wicked is from God, ſo alſo is both the outward and inward peace of any godly man.

Firſt, The outward peace, or the peace of a godly man in his outward eſtate, is of the Lord (*Pſal.* 4.8.) *I will both lay me down in peace and ſleep, for thou only makeſt me to dwell in ſafety:* That is, Thou, O Lord, wilt watch over me in the night, and not ſuffer me to be ſurprized by any ſudden danger, and therefore I will quietly repoſe my ſelf upon thy gracious Promiſes, and throw off thoſe cares and fears, which as thorns in the pillow, would not ſuffer me to reſt, when I lye down in my bed; the Lord is my ſafety, even the reſt of my body. In *Chap.* 5. of this Book (*v.*23, 24.) *Eliphaz* telleth us, how the Lord ſecures the outward condition of a good man, and gives him ſuch quietneſs, that even *the very beaſts of the earth ſhall be in league, and the ſtones of the field at peace with him, and he ſhall know* (or be aſſured) *that his tabernacle ſhall be in peace.*

Secondly, The inward peace, the ſoul peace, the ſpiritual peace of a godly man is much more from the Lord (*John* 14.27.) *Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth, ſo give I unto you:* As if Chriſt had ſaid, I will not deal with you after the rate of the world; that is, either deceitfully and falſly, or rigorouſly and unjuſtly; I will not give you ſuch meaſure as the world gives you, nor in ſuch a manner; *I give you my peace*, therefore *let not your hearts be troubled, neither be you afraid:* Whatever outward trouble the world can give you, be not afraid of it before it cometh, nor troubled at it when 'tis come, I will give you inward peace in the midſt of all your troubles. Chriſt invites the weary and the heavy laden to come to him, with this Promiſe, *I will give you reſt* (Mat.11.29.) ſoul-reſt he meaneth; that title or name of Chriſt, *Shiloh* (Gen. 49.10. *The Scepter ſhall not depart from* Judah, *until* Shiloh *come*) ſignifies tranquillity, peace and reſt: As Jeſus Chriſt hath bought our peace and reſt with his blood, ſo he bears it in his name. The fountain of our ſoul-peace is the heart of the Father, *Grace and Peace from God the Father*, &c. (*Col.* 1.1,2. 1 *Theſſ.* 1.1.) The purchaſe or price of this peace, is the blood of the Son (*Col.*1.22.) *He hath made our peace through the blood of his Croſs:* Our peace coſt dear, it coſt blood, and that the blood of the Son of God. The conveyance of this peace is made by the holy Spirit; he is ſent to bring the good tidings of peace unto Believers: The Spirit ſpeaks peace from God, and witneſſeth with our ſpirits, that we are at peace with God. And as this peace is at firſt from God the Father as the Fountain of it, and from God the Son as the Purchaſer of it, and from God the holy Ghoſt as the Speaker of it; ſo the continuing and renewing of this peace is from the ſame God. He eſtabliſheth and ſetleth the heart in that peace which he hath given, and he reſtoreth that peace when at any time we have loſt it, and the heart is unſetled. *David*'s ſoul being unquiet, and his peace ravell'd after his ſin, he addreſſed to God for the renewing of it (*Pſal.* 51.12.) *Reſtore to me the joy of thy ſalvation. David* petitioned the reſtoring of his peace, while he petitioned the reſtoring of his joy: 'Tis poſſible to have peace without joy; but there can be no joy in that ſoul, which hath not firſt attained to peace. We muſt wait upon God both for the reſtoring of our peace when it is departed, and for the continuance of it when it is enjoyed. *When he giveth quietneſs to a man*, either as to ſoul, or body, or both, *Who can make trouble?*

Note, Secondly, *The quietneſs or peace which God beſtows upon any perſon is an invincible, an inſuperable peace and quietneſs, as to all that this world can do, or he ſuffer in this world.*

If God will give a quiet outward eſtate, no man can diſturb it; when God gave *Job* outward quietneſs, what a mighty man was he? How did he flouriſh? Nor could any break his outward peace: Satan confeſt it in the firſt Chapter, *Thou haſt made a hedge about him, and about his houſe, and about all that he hath, on every ſide*; there is not the leaſt gap open, no nor ſtake looſened in his hedge, who can touch him? Who can come at him? I cannot touch him; *Sabeans* and *Chaldeans* cannot touch him. While the Lord giveth and guardeth our outward peace, it is inviolable. And as to our ſpiritual peace, if the Lord ſpeak it, who or what can trouble the ſoul?

Firſt, The afflictions, tribulations, and vexations which we meet with in the world, cannot trouble this inward peace; while ſtorms are without, there will be a calm within; the ſoul may be at peace, and the conſcience quiet, in the greateſt viſible confuſions. Let the world turn about and overturn, let it ſhake and break into a thouſand pieces, this peace abides unſhaken, unbroken: Let the world rage in the heat either of war or perſecution, yet the heart is ſerene, fixt, and quiet, like Mount *Zion*, that cannot be removed. Chriſt tells his Diſciples (*John* 16. 33.) *Theſe things have I ſpoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace*; (and in the ſame verſe he foretels them) *In the world you ſhall have tribulation*: As if he had ſaid, You ſhall have a peace concurrent and contemporary with your tribulation; trouble from the world ſhall not hinder the peace you have from me; yea, my peace ſhall conquer the troubles you have in the world. Thus the Prophet triumphed in believing (*Hab.* 3. 17.) *Though the labour of the Olive ſhould fail, and the Vine yield no fruit; though there be no Calves in the ſtall, nor Sheep in the fold*, &c. *yet I will joy in the Lord, and rejoyce in the God of my ſalvation.* To rejoyce in the Lord, is more then to be quiet, or to have peace in the Lord. *Joy is the exaltation of peace, it is the moſt delicious fruit of peace*: The worſt of worldly evils cannot deſpoil us of the leaſt purely ſpiritual good, much leſs of the greateſt. *Him wilt thou keep in perfect peace, whoſe mind is ſtayed on thee* (*Iſai.* 26. 3.) That's perfectly perfect to which nothing can be added, and from which nothing can be taken away; yet that is truly perfect, to which though ſomething may be added, yet it cannot be either totally or finally taken away. Such is the ſoul-peace of true Believers in this life, and therefore a perfect peace.

Secondly, As outward tribulation cannot hinder the ſoul-peace of a godly man; ſo the policy, plots, and temptations of Satan our arch-enemy cannot, yea, his charges and moſt ſpiteful accuſations ſhall not. The great deſign of the Devil, is, to deſtroy and devour ſouls, his own condition being moſt miſerable, he at once envies all thoſe who are not in the ſame condition, and attempts to make them ſo; and when he fails in that attempt, the deſtruction of ſouls, yet he will not ceaſe to attempt their moleſtation, and to trouble thoſe whom he cannot utterly devour. Now, as Satan cannot at all prevail in the former attempt, the deſtroying of ſouls; ſo he cannot wholly prevail in the latter, the troubling of ſouls. Hence that gallant challenge of the Apoſtle (*Rom.* 8. 33, 34.) *Who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of Gods elect? It is God that juſtifieth; who is he that condemneth? It is Chriſt that dyed, yea rather, that is riſen again*, &c. As if he had ſaid, Let all the enemies of our ſpiritual peace riſe up and combine together, they ſhall not be able to condemn; that is, wholly to diſcourage or diſquiet the heart of a Believer, he having received (his *quietus eſt*) reſt and peace from God, in the juſtification of his perſon, and the pardon of his ſins. Satan can do much, and would do more (if his chain were lengthned, and he not reſtrained) to the trouble and moleſtation of our ſouls; there's not a godly man living ſhould reſt an hour in quiet for him, if he might have his wiſh or his will; but becauſe God gives quietneſs to ſome Believers, and will not have it ſo much as ſtirr'd, therefore Satan cannot make any trouble at all in their ſouls, but they live in the conſtant light of Gods countenance, and in the joy of the holy Ghoſt. And becauſe the quietneſs which every Believer hath is the gift of God through Jeſus Chriſt, who hath made their atonement, and eſtabliſhed their peace, through the blood of his Croſs, therefore Satan cannot make any ſuch trouble in any of their ſouls, as ſhall for ever deſtroy their peace, or diſſolve their quietneſs, though for many reaſons, all ſerving his glory, and their good, God ſuffereth Satan many times, poſſibly for a long time, to entangle and interrupt it. Temptations to the committing of ſin, and accuſations or charges about ſin committed, may exceedingly hinder and ſhake the peace of a Believer; but, as the ſins to which he is tempted cannot hurt his peace, when he reſiſts and overcomes them; ſo the ſins into which he falleth through temptation, cannot deſtroy his peace, becauſe thoſe ſins ſhall certainly be deſtroyed both by repentance and pardon.

Thirdly, The thunders of the Law cannot take away the peace of that ſoul, to whom God giveth quietneſs. Chriſt having in his own perſon fulfilled the Law for Believers, both doing the duty, and induring the penalty of it, he hath delivered them from the terror and curſe of the Law, himſelf having been made a curſe for them (*Gal.* 3. 13.) So then if neither tribulations, nor temptations, nor the terrors of the Law can make trouble, where God giveth quietneſs, we may conclude, nothing can.

There is a double Conſideration upon both, which we may demonſtrate, that if God giveth quietneſs, either outward or inward, none can make trouble.

Firſt, Becauſe as God is Soveraign and ſo may diſpoſe peace and quietneſs, to whom he pleaſeth, or at his pleaſure, when he will, or to whom he will; ſo he hath an all-ſufficiency to maintain and confirm, to preſerve and protect the outward peace of any man againſt all the powers of this world; and the inward peace of a godly man againſt all the powers of Hell, againſt the terrors of the Law, and the accuſations whether of Satan or of his own Conſcience.

Secondly, None can deſtroy the peace of a godly man, becauſe it is a perfect peace, as was ſhewed before from that Promiſe in the Prophet (*Iſa.* 26. 3.) *Him wilt thou keep in perfect peace whoſe mind is ſtayed on thee.* For being a perfect peace it will not decay of it ſelf; and becauſe tis perfect God will neither deſtroy it himſelf, nor ſuffer any elſe to deſtroy it. *Mark the perfect man* (ſaith *David*, Pſal. 37. 37.) *and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace.* He is a perfect man whoſe end is peace; and that is perfect peace which holds to the end, or which ſhall never end. The peace which God giveth is perfect; Firſt, Becauſe 'tis eſtabliſhed upon perfect righteouſneſs, *The righteouſneſs of God.* That righteouſneſs which is the root of our peace is called the righteouſneſs of God, both becauſe God hath appointed it, and becauſe God hath wrought it. Jeſus Chriſt, *God-man*, is the Lord our righteouſneſs, and the Prince of our peace; or as the Apoſtle expreſſeth it (*Heb.* 7. 1, 2.) *He is* Melchiſedec, *being by interpretation King of Righteouſneſs, and after that alſo King of* Salem, *which is King of peace.* (Iſa. 32. 17.) *The work of righteouſneſs is peace, and the fruit of it is quietneſs and aſſurance for ever.* Righteouſneſs is ſuch a foundation of peace, as cannot be ſhaken, and therefore that peace which is built upon it cannot be utterly overthrown, how much ſoever it may be ſhaken.

Secondly, 'Tis a perfect peace, becauſe it was obtained by an abſolute victory over all the enemies of it. That people muſt needs be in perfect peace who have got a perfect conqueſt over all their enemies, and have got their oppoſers under their feet. Now the ſpiritual peace which God giveth his people, ariſeth from a perfect conqueſt over all their enemies. Firſt, The world is perfectly conquered by Chriſt (*John* 16. 33.) *Be of good chear, I have overcome the world.* Secondly, The Devil is perfectly conquered by Chriſt (*Heb.* 2. 14.) *He hath deſtroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the Devil.* He is more then conquered who is deſtroyed; Chriſt hath deſtroyed the Devil, who is the deſtroyer, though not as to his being, though not as to his will to deſtroy, yet as to his power to deſtroy thoſe whom he hath redeemed, and will eternally ſave. Thirdly, Chriſt hath alſo perfectly conquered the Law (not by deſtroying, but) by fulfilling it. Chriſt was above all that the Law required or commanded, and ſo he did at once freely ſubmit to it, and fully (as to any hindrance of a

Believers peace) ſubdue it, he holdeth it under him as well as he was made under it. And he was contented for that very reaſon to be made under the Law, that he might hold it under him, and that we might not be under (the dread of) the Law (though we muſt walk and work by the rule of it) but under grace.

'Tis matter of ſtrong conſolation to poor ſouls, that when the Lord *giveth quietneſs none can make trouble.* And hence we alſo learn, that all the breaches which are made upon the peace of the people of God, are from God himſelf. As thoſe breaches are meritoriouſly from themſelves, ſo efficiently from God himſelf; till he breaks their peace none can.

Thirdly, From the ſecond branch, *When he hideth his face, who then can behold him?* This being applicable to a ſingle perſon as well as the former.

Obſerve, *God ſometimes clouds his face from his own Servants, and Children.*

Theſe words, *When he hideth his face,* ſuppoſe that God ſometimes doth ſo, and the Scripture elſewhere teſtifies that God hath often done ſo; *God hath love alwayes in his heart towards his Children, but he hath not alwayes favour in his face towards them*; his appearances are not alwayes the appearances of a friend, he may appear angry, and turn away his face as if he would not be ſpoken with. Of this we find frequent complaints in Scripture; and I might ſpeak much to this point, but I have already met with it (*Chap.* 13. 24.) and therefore I paſs from it.

Only from the connexion of theſe words, *When he hideth his face, who can behold him?*

Note, *The hiding of Gods face, or the vailing of his favour is exceeding grievous unto any perſon.*

When he doth it, *Who can behold him?* This manner of ſpeaking doth not only hold out, that if God will hide his face no man can ſee him, or know him; for God is a ſecret to all men until he is pleaſed to reveal himſelf; yea, all the truths of the Goſpel are ſecrets, and myſteries, till God is pleaſed to reveal them and make them known (*Matth.* 11. 25.) *Father, I thank thee* (ſaith Chriſt) *that thou haſt hid theſe things from the wiſe and prudent, and haſt revealed them unto babes*; that is, thou haſt not opened them to the wiſeſt, &c. (there needs no other hiding of them from the wiſeſt of men, then a forbearance to open them) but to the babes, who are (though weak, yet) humble and teachable, thou haſt opened them, and opened their eyes and hearts to ſee and receive them. This ſpeech holds out not only this truth, that when God doth not reveal himſelf, no man can know him or any thing of his mind, or that neither his nature, or his will are known but by ſome way of revelation; but this form of ſpeaking (*Who can behold him?*) plainly tells us, that if God hideth his favour, he is ſo terrible, that none can have the boldneſs or courage to behold him. For the hiding of his face, implieth an appearance of anger and diſpleaſure; and when he is angry, who can behold him? *If the Children of* Iſrael *could not ſtedfaſtly behold the face of* Moſes *for the glory of his countenance,* as the Apoſtle ſpeaks (2 *Cor.* 3. 7.) ſurely then no man can ſtedfaſtly behold the face of God when his countenance is filled with wrath. Some ſaid to Chriſt (*John* 14. 8.) *Shew us the Father and it ſufficeth*; that is, reveal to us the love and good will of the Father, and that will ſatisfie us, that will fill up all the deſires and longings of our ſouls; we ſhall have nothing more to wiſh for, nothing more to look after, if thou wilt but ſhew us the Father. Now, on the other ſide, if the Father will not ſhew himſelf, if the Father will hide himſelf from the ſoul, what then can ſuffice? What can comfort? Where is our refuge or reſt? *As when God is quiet and favourable to us, he can make all things favourable and quiet to us:* So, if God be diſpleaſed, nothing can be pleaſing to a ſoul that is ſenſible of his diſpleaſure. A Believer loſes not only the joy and triumph of his faith, but his very peace, he is not only in a dark, but in a diſturbed condition, not knowing where to repoſe himſelf, or reſt his head, when God hideth his face.

Take this Inference from it, *If the hiding of Gods face be ſo terrible, then take heed of provoking him to hide his face.*

For though we are not tenants at will for our peace in reference unto the world, in reference to men, in reference to devils; yet we are only tenants at will for our peace in reference unto God. He can take away our peace; and he doth uſually continue our peace, only ſo long as we behave our ſelves well. As ſome have *Letters Patents* for great Offices which run in that tenour, *They ſhall enjoy them* (quamdiu ſe bene geſſerint) *as long as they carry themſelves well*; but upon default or maladminiſtration they may be turned out of all; ſo I ſay, though we are not at the will of the world, nor of any creature, for the holding of our peace, yet we are at the will of God for it. And as he ſometimes meerly out of prerogative hideth his face (as was ſhewed *Job* 13. 24.) that he may try what a ſoul will do in a dark condition, and that he may declare what the ſtrength of his inviſible Grace can do when nothing is viſible, no not any the leaſt ray or ſhine of favour from himſelf to ſupport and comfort the ſoul, I ſay, though God doth thus in a prerogative way ſometimes hide his face, yet uſually he doth it not, but upon ſome default in us, eſpecially our neglect of him; when we regard not the face of God, and grow ſlight as to our valuations of his preſence, then he withdraweth his preſence and vails his face towards us; and when we fall into any groſs ſin (ſuch was the caſe of *David, Pſal.* 51.) God takes us upon default, and leaves us in a ſad condition, as he did *David*, who complained that even his bones were broken, and that he had loſt the joy of his ſalvation, which upon the renewing of his faith and repentance, he begg'd earneſtly might be reſtored to him, and it was. Therefore *if you would keep the light of Gods Countenance, keep cloſe to the light of Gods Commandment.* No marvail if we be under the hidings of the face of God, when we are turning our backs upon God! Sin is a turning from God, a turning our backs upon God; and is it any wonder if God turn his face from ſinners? To turn our back upon God is the worſt of a ſinful condition; and to find God turning his back upon us, or hiding his face from us, is the worſt of a miſerable condition. What can comfort us, when the God of all conſolation will not look upon us, unleſs in diſpleaſure? What pleaſure (but the pleaſure of ſin for a ſeaſon, which ends, without repentance, in endleſs torment, what pleaſure, I ſay) can that ſoul take, in whom God taketh no pleaſure, or with whom he is not pleaſed? It is very ſad with the ſoul, when we loſe the ſight of our own graces (ſometimes a gracious heart cannot ſee any work of grace, nor perceive any workings of grace in him, but thinks he hath no faith in God, no love to God, no ſorrow for ſin, this is ſad) but it is much more ſad to loſe the ſight of the face of God, to have the favour of God withdrawn from us. This made *Jonah* complain (*Chap.* 2. 4.) *I am caſt out of the ſight of thine eyes*; he lookt upon himſelf as an outcaſt, and then *Jonah* thought himſelf as caſt into the belly of Hell (*ver.* 2.) When God hides his face from us, or will not vouchſafe us a ſight of his pleaſed face, we are as in the belly of Hell, as *Jonah* bemoaned himſelf. What is the glory and happineſs of Heaven? Is it not the ſight of the face of God? Is it not the clear viſion and manifeſtation of God? Glory is that eſtate wherein God will never once hide his face, nor look off from his glorified Saints, no not one moment to all eternity. Now the happineſs which we have here, the Heaven which we have upon Earth conſiſts in this alſo; when we live near God by believing, and behold his face by faith; when God lifts up the light of his countenance upon us, we are (as it were) lifted up from Earth to Heaven. *As viſion in Heaven will make us happy for ever; ſo hidings on Earth make us miſerable for the time.* And that which is the very Hell of a godly man upon Earth, the worſt Hell, he can or ſhall have, is this, when God hideth his face from him: Therefore take heed you do not put the Lord upon withdrawing from you through your default: This favour, the ſhine or light of Gods face is continued or denied to us, uſually upon theſe terms, as we behave our ſelves well or ill towards him.

VERS.

VERS. 30.

That the Hypocrite reign not, leſt the people be inſnared.

These words are the concluſion of *Elihu*'s diſcourſe, about the executions of divine Juſtice, upon the ſons of men; and in them we have two things, Firſt, The Power; Secondly, The impartiality of divine Juſtice. God is ſo powerful, that he can pull down the Mighty, and he is ſo impartial that if there be cauſe, he will not ſpare to do it.

Or in the words we have to conſider theſe three things.

Firſt, The character of the perſon upon whom the Juſtice of God is executed, The *Hypocrite*.

Secondly, The judgment it ſelf, 'tis a ſtop to his greatneſs, *that he reign not*.

Thirdly, We have the grounds of this Judgment, which are two-fold.

Firſt, His wicked purpoſe, againſt the people; He, if ſuffered, would lay ſnares for the people.

Secondly, Gods gracious protection of the people; He will not have the people enſnared.

That the Hypocrite reign not, leſt the people be enſnared.

חנפ *ſignificat ſceleratum, profanum, plerunq; autem vertitur hypocrita.*

What a Hypocrite is, and what the importance of the original word is, here tranſlated *Hypocrite*, hath been opened from ſome other paſſages in this Book. I ſhall only ſay thus much further, that the word imports, Firſt, a filthy thing diſguiſed or covered; For a hypocrite is a filthy prophane perſon, under the cover or diſguiſe of holineſs. Our Engliſh word *knave* is neer in ſound to this Hebrew word *chanaph*, and ſome conceive 'tis derived or taken from it. And to be ſure, every hypocrite is a prophane perſon, though all prophane perſons are not hypocrites; Some wicked and prophane ones care not who knoweth they are ſo; yet very many who are indeed prophane and wicked cover it, what they can, and ſhew that only whereof they have only a ſhew, ſomewhat of godlineſs or of goodneſs.

Again, There are Hypocrites of two makes or ſtrains; Firſt, Religious, or Church-hypocrites. Secondly, State, or civil hypocrites, and ſometimes theſe two are combined in one. 'Tis poſſible for a man who pretends not to Religion, yet to be a hypocrite; a Magiſtrate, whether ſupream or ſubordinate, may offer very fair for the profit and liberty of the people whom he governeth, when he minds no ſuch thing; yea, he may not only offer fair for the good of a people, as to their outward profits and liberties, but as to the good of Religion, and the benefit of their Souls, and yet mind no ſuch thing; we may take the Hypocrite in this Text, as twiſted up, or compounded of both theſe; *The State-hypocrite and the Religious are ſometimes bound up together. That the Hypocrite*

In ממלוך *ne regnat* Mem *Negationem includit juxta linguæ morem, & in* ממקשי *ab offendiculis ſimiliter ut dei magis extolletur juſtitia ſimul & potentia, qui regis de throno ſuo dejicit ut populum ejus laqueis irretitum liberet ab illius tyrannide.* Merc.

Reign not.] To reign is the priviledge of Supream powers; *By me Kings reign*, ſaith Wiſdom, that is Chriſt (*Prov.* 8. 15.) and when *Paul* ſaw how high the Corinthians carryed it in ſpirituals, he by way of alluſion tells them (1 *Cor.* 4. 8.) *ye have reigned like Kings without us*; ye are got (as ye ſuppoſe) to the top, and into the very Throne of Religion, and you think your ſelves able to mannage all difficulties, and can do well enough there without our help; but to the Text.

This *not reigning* of the hypocrite may be taken two wayes.

Firſt, As a ſtop given him by the providence of God, from getting up into the Throne, or from getting the power of a Nation into his hands; Thus ſometimes God ſaith to the hypocrite, *Thou ſhalt not reign*, that is, thou ſhalt not exalt thy ſelf, though thou attempt it.

Secondly, This *not reigning* may be taken for a ſtop to the progreſs of his power, when he hath both attempted and attained it; and that two wayes, either firſt by taking him away from his power; or ſecondly, by taking away his power from him, as *Daniel* told *Belſhazzar*, while he minded him of the greatneſs of his Father *Nebuchadnezzar* (who had all the world (upon the matter) at his command) as alſo of his fall from that greatneſs (*Dan.* 5. 19, 20.) *Whom he would, he ſet up; and whom he would, he put down; but when his heart was lifted up, and his mind hardned in pride, he was depoſed from his Kingly Throne, and they took his glory from him:* He was depoſed, or as the Chaldee hath it (ſo we put in the Margin) *He was made to come down from his Princely Throne*; either of theſe wayes doth God (who is *the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords*) when he pleaſeth, put a ſtop to, or check the progreſs of falſe hearted Princes, that have either got their power by flatteries and pretenſions to that good which they intended not, or who exerciſe their power ſo. *That the hypocrite reign not,*

Leſt the people be enſnared.] The root of the word here rendred *to enſnare*, ſignifieth the ſpreading of a Net, or the ſetting of a Grin, ſuch as Fowlers and Hunters make uſe of, to take Beaſts or Birds with; and thus God himſelf ſpake concerning his dealing with *Babylon* (*Jer.* 50. 24.) *I have laid a ſnare for thee, and thou art alſo taken,* O Babylon, *and thou waſt not aware*; literal *Babylon* was a ſnare to the people of God of old, and ſo is myſtical *Babylon* at this day. *The great Hypocrite, or Snare-ſetter, reigns in or over* Babylon; therefore ſaith God, thou who haſt ſet ſnares for my people, ſhall be enſnared, thou ſhalt be taken unawares, I have ſet a ſnare to catch and hold thee faſt. When *Elihu* ſaith, *leſt the people be enſnared*, it ſeems to intimate, that God will prevent the enſnaring of a people by the Hypocrite; He ſhall not reign, *leſt the people be enſnared*, or leſt they ſhould come into ſnares. There is another reading, which gives the reaſon from the ſnares which the people have already been entangled with, *becauſe of the ſnare*, or *becauſe the people have been enſnared* (therefore ſaith the Lord) *let not the Hypocrite reign*; thus God revengeth the peoples wrong, and doth juſtice upon thoſe that had ſet ſnares for them. So much for the general ſenſe of theſe words, and the opening of them.

There is a ſecond reading of the whole verſe, which carryeth the ſenſe ſomewhat another way, and yet may be of uſe, and yield us ſome profitable conſiderations, but I ſhall not meddle with that, till I have proſecuted thoſe obſervations which ariſe clearly from our own reading.

The words in general hold forth the heart of God towards falſe hearted men, he cannot abide them, nor will he ſuffer them long to abide, eſpecially not to abide in power and greatneſs; *That the hypocrite reign not, leſt the people be enſnared.*

Hence Note, Firſt, *A Hypocrite is a perſon hated of God, and hurtful to men.*

He is therefore hated of God, becauſe hurtful to men. And therefore God is not pleaſed he ſhould reign, either as to reign is taken ſtrictly, for the exerciſing of Soveraign Power; or, as to reign may be taken largely, for the exerciſing of any power, and living in the height of proſperity. For the clearing of this truth, that a hypocrite is hated of God, I ſhall ſhew, firſt the nature of an hypocrite; ſecondly, give the diſtinctions of Hypocrites; thirdly, make ſome diſcoveries who is an hypocrite. To the

Firſt, An hypocrite in his general ſtate or nature, *is* (as I may ſay) *a wicked man in a godly mans Cloths*; he hath an appearance of holineſs, when there's nothing but wickedneſs at the bottom. There are two great parts of the hypocrites work, firſt, to ſhew himſelf good, which he is not; this is properly the work of ſimulation or feigning: Secondly, To cover that real evil which he is or doth: This is properly the work of diſſimulation or cloaking. The hypocrite ſtrives as much to appear what he is not, as not to appear what he is; he makes a ſemblance of that purity which he loves not, and he diſſembleth that impurity which he loves and lives in.

Secondly, We may conſider hypocrites under this diſtinction. Firſt, There is *a ſimple Hypocrite*, who hath not the good which he thinks and believes he hath; thus every one that profeſſeth or nameth the name of Chriſt, and is not really converted, is an hypocrite; becauſe he hath not that which he ſeems to have, yea, which poſſibly he verily believes he hath, I may call ſuch a one (though it may ſeem a very ſtrange expreſſion) *a ſincere hypocrite*; he doth not intend to deceive others, but is deceived himſelf, becauſe he hath not the root of the matter in him, nor the power of godlineſs, though he brings forth ſome ſeeming fruits of godlineſs, and is much in the form of it. Such we may conceive ſhadowed out to us by the fooliſh Virgins; they made a profeſſion, they had their Lamps, yea, they had Oyl in their Lamps, they did ſomewhat which was conſiderable in the outward duties of Chriſtian Religion, and they hoped to be accepted with Chriſt, but they had *no Oyl in their Veſſels with their Lamps, as the wiſe Virgins had* (Matth. 25. 4.) that is, they had no grace in their hearts, nor did they mind the getting of that till it was too late (*ver.* 10.) but ſatisfied themſelves with that little Oyl in their Lamps to make the blaze of an external profeſſion. Such as theſe are ſimple hypocrites, being pleaſed with a ſhell inſtead of a kernel, and with a ſhadow, neglecting the ſubſtance. Theſe hypocrites are in a very deplorable condition; yet theſe are not the hypocrites which I intend in this point, or have here to do with.

There are a ſecond ſort of hypocrites, commonly called *groſs hypocrites*, ſuch as hold that out which they know they have not, ſuch as know they have nothing in or of Religion, but the ſhew of it; ſuch as work by art, or with a kind of force upon themſelves in all the good they do, and duties they perform towards God, and about the things of God. They do nothing as the Apoſtle ſaith *Timothy* did (*Phil.* 2. 20.) *naturally, I have no man like-minded, who will naturally care for your ſtate.* The word *naturally* is not there oppoſed to *ſpiritually*, but to artificially, or to forcedly. What a ſincere heart doth in the things of God, he doth it naturally, that is, it floweth from an inward principle, it is not forced from him, but the hypocrite doth all as it were by a kind of art or force upon himſelf. The Lord chargeth the Jews with this kind of hypocriſie (*Iſa.* 58. 2.) *They ſeek me dayly, and delight to know my ways, as a Nation that did righteouſneſs*; that is, they acted with an appearing forwardneſs, like thoſe who truely delight to know my wayes; yet all this was but as a piece of art, for as the Lord upbraided them (*verſ.* 3, 4.) they really kept their ſins, and walkt in their own wayes of oppreſſion, ſtriſe, and debate; yea they made all that noiſe about humbling themſelves, that they might the more undiſcernedly *ſmite others with the fiſt of wickedneſs*: And therefore ſaith the Lord (*ver.* 5.) *Is it ſuch a faſt that I have choſen, a day for a man to afflict his ſoul*, &c. And then for many dayes to afflict both the Souls and Bodies of his Brethren? Or to abſtain a day from meat, and glut himſelf with ſin? That's the ſtrain of the hypocrite, he (as I may ſay) maintains and drives two trades, he hath a trade for God, and the wayes of God, and he hath a trade for ſin, and the wayes of wickedneſs, this is his courſe (*Jer.* 12. 2.) *Thou art neer in their mouth, but far from their reins*; they ſpeak of thee, but they have no deſires to thee, no affections for thee, thou art far enough from their reins; they act a part in Religion, but they neither partake of Religion, nor with it.

Thirdly, There are others, who beſides that they are groſs Hypocrites, may alſo be called *deſigning or plotting Hypocrites*; for they that ſerve God *with a reſerve*, as to any ſin or by-way, uſually ſerve him with a deſign, or for an end of their own. Chriſt (*Matth.* 23. 14.) ſpeaking of groſs Hypocrites, ſuch as the Phariſees were, ſaith, *they devour widows houſes, and in a pretence make long prayers*; they pray long in a pretence, or under a pretence; that is, they have a plot or a deſign in prayer, they pray, not purely to enjoy communion with God, nor purely to honour God; but they make uſe of prayer, and under pretence of that, do others work. Chriſt doth not there ſpeak againſt, nor diſparage long prayers, as ſome do, to the great reproach of the Spirit and grace of God, but he chargeth them with praying long in *a pretence*; pray heartily, and then pray as long as you will; other due circumſtances being obſerved, the more you pray, the more is God pleaſed. But whether prayers are long or ſhort, if done in a pretence, or with a deſign to do miſchief to others, or only to get ſome worldly profit and advantage to our ſelves (as thoſe Phariſees prayed) they are an abomination to the Lord. *'Tis not the length of prayer, but the end of prayer which diſcovers Hypocriſie.* The Prophet *Iſaiah* (*Chap.* 32. 6.) gives us a deſcription of this groſs deſigning hypocrite, *The vile perſon will ſpeak villany, and his heart will work iniquity, to practiſe hypocriſie, and to utter error before the Lord*: While the hypocrites heart worketh iniquity, his tongue ſpeaks villany; not that all his words are villanous words, for then he were not an hypocrite, but a profeſt prophane perſon; but he is ſaid to *ſpeak villany*, becauſe how pious, and ſpecious, and godly ſoever his diſcourſe is, yet he hath a villanous intent in ſpeaking, and his heart at the ſame time is working iniquity, to practiſe hypocriſie.

Now that I may a little more unmask this plotting hypocrite, I will ſhew you a fourfold plot or deſign, which ſuch Hypocrites have in their moſt zealous profeſſions of, and pretendings to Religion.

Firſt, They deſign their own praiſe or eſtimation among men; Chriſt makes this diſcovery in his Sermon upon the Mount (*Matth.* 6. 2. 5.) *Do not as the Hypocrites, for all they do* (whether they give Alms, or pray, or faſt,) is not for the glory of God, but that they may have glory of men, and be pointed at for charitable and holy perſons; *Praiſe or glory with men is the food of hypocriſie*, If the hypocrite have but an applauſe from, and acceptance with men, he doth not look after acceptance with God, which above all things a ſincere heart looketh after, and laboureth for, *In this we labour* (ſaith the Apoſtle, 2 *Cor.* 5. 9.) *that whether preſent or abſent, we may be accepted of him*; that's the higheſt ambition of a ſincere heart: But the Hypocrites ambition is to be accepted of, and to have praiſe among men; and therefore hypocrites are more troubled, if at any time they fail in expreſſing themſelves to men, then becauſe (which they do at all times) they fail and faulter in their affections to God; whereas he that is ſincere and honeſt with God, can bear it well enough though he hath not ſuch plauſible expreſſions towards men, becauſe he knoweth his affections ſtand right with God. That great Macedonian *Alexander* having run many hazards in War, turned himſelf to his Souldiers, and ſaid, *What pains have I taken, what dangers have I undergone, only to be praiſed and cryed up by you?* As many in their worldly actings aim only at their own praiſe, ſo do this ſort of Hypocrites in their ſpiritual and holy actings; they pray, and hear, and deal about their Alms for applauſe with men. What the Hiſtorian writes of the Camelion, is moſt true of them, they live by the air, and are fed with the Vapours of an earthly praiſe.

Secondly, Others (moſt of all the mighty, of whom *Elihu* is diſcourſing) act for God in the out-ſide of Religion, to get an opportunity of revenge upon men; they put on a fair ſhew of godlineſs, that they may have a fairer advantage to let out their malice, and vent their ſpleen. When either a real or ſuppoſed injury, falls upon an impotent and impatient ſpirit; malice will provoke to give that back which Charity teatheth to forgive. The tyranny of this paſſion gives no reſt to the diſcontented ſoul; all methods ſhall be ſtudied, and ſtratagems deviſed to content hatred by the compaſſing of revenge; and when common projects fail, the habit of zeal and Religion ſhall be put on, that the conceived malice may be let out: Such a man will cloath himſelf with the garments of piety, that he may cover the Inſtruments of cruelty, and do a miſchief unſuſpected. *Saul* was a hypocrite, and falſe with God, yet how did he encourage *David* to follow the War, and *fight the Lord's Battels* againſt the uncircumciſed Philiſtines; (1 *Sam.* 18. 17.) whereas *Saul* ſought not the honour of God at all, nor the overthrow of the Philiſtines, ſo much, as the overthrow of *David*; his intent was to take his own revenge upon *David*, rather then Gods revenge on them: For he hoped *David* would one time or other over-act his valour againſt the Philiſtines, and loſe his life, to win honour and reputation. How religiouſly did *Abner* (who was a great Prince as *David* called him) urge the promiſe of God to make *David* King (2 *Sam.* 3. 18.) and yet 'tis plain in the Text, that his deſign was to revenge himſelf upon *Iſhboſheth*, who had put (as he thought) an affront upon him, rather then to be inſtrumental for the fulfilling of the promiſe of God to *David*. *Jezebel* a great Queen proclamed a Faſt (which is one of the higheſt acts of Religion) while her purpoſe was only to get an opportunity to feaſt her ſelf upon the deſtruction of *Naboth*, and to drink his innocent blood. *Herod* a King (*Matth.* 2. 8.) deſired to have the young Child Chriſt, *that he might come and worſhip him*, but his deſign was to murder him; and becauſe he could not have his will to kill him alone, he reſolved to kill him in the multitude, commanding all the infants of ſuch an age to be ſlain, leſt he ſhould eſcape. We have a ſad inſtance of this in two of the Patriarchs, (*Gen.* 34.) I do not ſay they were hypocrites, but, I ſay, they acted a high ſtrain of hypocriſie, and put on a religious pretence for the compaſſing of revenge. *Dinah*, *Jacob*'s Daughter being deflowred by *Schechem*, he ſued to have her for his wife, and would wipe off the ſtain of his luſt by a legal marriage; old *Hamor* pleaded for his Son, and *Jacob* was willing enough ('tis like) to ſalve the credit of his Daughter; but the Sons of *Jacob* anſwered *Shechem* and *Hamor* his Father deceitfully (*verſ.* 13.) and they ſaid we cannot match with you, except you be circumciſed, and ſo become Proſelytes to our Religion. If *Shechem* will be of their family, he muſt be of their faith; they ſtood not upon their Siſters joynture, the matter ſtuck only upon a ſcruple of Conſcience. What argument of greater zeal for God could they have given then this? Yet while theſe religious words were in their mouths, they had bloody Swords in their hearts: And all this pretence for circumciſion, was only that they might have an advantage, to come upon them in their ſoreneſs and deſtroy them; which (as the holy ſtory tells us) they ſoon after effected.

Thirdly, Hypocrites often deſign worldly gain, and aim at the purſe more then at God in all their holy ſervices. Many take up a profeſſion of Religion, as all men take up a Trade, *that they may get a living by it*; the Apoſtle ſpeaks of ſuch (1 *Tim.* 6. 5.) who ſuppoſe *that gain is godlineſs*; whereas he ſaith (*verſe* 6.) *Godlineſs with contentment is great gain*, they ſay, *Gain is godlineſs*; And all they look at by their profeſſion of godlineſs, is worldly gain. Religion is often made (as the Apoſtles word is, 1 *Theſ.* 2, 5.) *a cloak of covetouſneſs*; and he profeſſeth in the ſame place, that in the diſpenſation of the Goſpel, he had not uſed his Miniſtry as ſuch a cloak, God was his witneſs; but there are many againſt whom (though men cannot) yet their own Conſciences do, and God will witneſs, that their appearance in Religion is but the hiding of, or a cloak for their covetouſneſs. *Hamor* and *Shechem* uſed no other argument to perſwade their Citizens to take upon them the ſeal of the Covenant, but only this, *Shall not their Cattel, and their Subſtance, and every Beaſt of theirs, be ours?* (Gen. 34. 27.) And it ſeems the very mention of their own emolument overcame them; they thought it a bargain well made, to ſell a little of their blood at ſo high a rate, and to exchange their foreskins for ſo many head of Cattel. And hence it is, that among thoſe ſeven ſorts of Phariſees collected out of the Talmud, the firſt are called *Phariſæi Shechemitæ*, receiving (it ſeems) both their Order and Denomination from theſe Shechemites, becauſe as they turned Hebrews, ſo theſe became Phariſees upon the hopes of worldly benefit. And ſuch were thoſe Phariſees in truth, whatſoever their Title was, *who* (as was touched before) *devoured widows houſes, and in a pretence made long prayers*. As it is a very great point of ungodlineſs (prophaneneſs indeed) to ſay, *What profit is there in ſerving the Lord?* So it is groſs hypocriſie to take up Religion meerly for profit; there is profit, even worldly profit in Religion; *Godlineſs is profitable for all things*, (1 Tim. 4. 8.) *and hath the promiſe of this life as well as of that to come*; but wo to thoſe that take it up deſigning profit, and the filling either of their purſes, or their bellies. Our Saviours Divine Spirit quickly diſcovered this carnal Spirit in his followers, (*John* 6. 26.) *Ye ſeek me not becauſe ye ſaw the miracles, but becauſe ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled*; *Judas* followed Chriſt, but the motive of it, was in the bag, (*John* 12. 6.) The zeal of *Demetrius* to his Idol *Diana*, was kindled by as pure a fire as the zeal of theſe hypocrites to Jeſus Chriſt, (*Acts* 19. 24.) *By this we get our living.* They know nothing of the life of Religion, who are Religious only that they may live: If profit be the Loadſtone of our profeſſion, our profeſſion will never profit us; for what ſhall it profit a man to gain the whole world by a profeſſion of the name of Chriſt, if he loſe his own Soul? Satan charged *Job* with this groſs hypocriſie, (*Chap.* 1. 9.) *Doth* Job *fear God for nought?* As if he had ſaid, *Job* finds 'tis no lean buſineſs to be Religious, and therefore no wonder if he be found ſo Religious. Who would not do and be as much as he in Religion, to have his Fields full of Cattel, and his Folds full of Sheep, and his Houſe full of Riches? He knows well enough which ſide his bread is buttered on, what makes for his profit; all the account that he makes of Religion is, that he perceives by his Books, and the inventory of his goods, that it turns every Year to a good account: *Job*'s ſlander is the juſt charge of many, they uſe Religion but as a ſtalking Horſe, to catch worldly riches.

Fourthly, The groſs hypocrite often deſigns, that which is higher in the eſteem, and more taking upon the Spirits of many then worldly riches, even then worldly power, or to get very high, if not uppermoſt in the World. 'Tis no new thing for men to make Religion a ſtair to aſcend the higheſt Rooms among men, or the ſtirrup to get into the ſaddle of honour, and when they have got high enough, then down with the ſtairs, or 'tis no matter for the ſtirrup by which they aſcended. *Jehu* was very zealous in the cauſe of God, and for reformation, but his deſign was for a Kingdom, or his own exaltation (2 *Kings* 10. 16.) he made a noiſe of much piety, *Come ſee my zeal for the Lord*, yet all was but a piece of State-hypocriſie. His care in deſtroying *Ahab*'s Houſe and *Baals* Prieſts (according to the command of God) was but to pave the way to the Throne. The ſame way *Abſolom* was taken to his fathers Crown; he told the people he was troubled that they were no better governed, that they had no quicker diſpatch in their ſuits and buſineſſes; he told his father he had made a vow, and deſired the liberty of his abſence from Court, that he might go and perform it; all he pretended was righteouſneſs and Religion, yet he intended only to get an advantage to make his party ſtrong, that ſo he might thruſt his father out of the Throne, and get up himſelf. He ſeemed a Saint while he meant to be a Traytor. The Hiſtory of the Church reports of *Julian* the *Apoſtate*, that when his predeceſſor (being a Chriſtian) held the Empire, he highly pretended the profeſſion of Chriſt, and read a Goſpel-Lecture in the Church of *Nicomedia*, yet while he was in ſhew a Chriſtian, and in hope an Emperour, he was in heart a Pagan. He ſaw the times ſerved him not to act the Pagan openly, and therefore he ſubtlely betook himſelf to his diſguiſe, and perſonated the Chriſtian, even in the mortified way of a monaſtick life, that he might ſmooth his way to the Empire. To which having once attained, he preſently put off his diſguiſe, and, to his utmoſt, diſgraced and oppoſed the name and faith of Chriſt which he had formerly owned and profeſſed.

Socrates Hiſt. Eccleſiaſt. Lib. 3. *C.* 1.

Τότε δὴ καὶ τὴν ὑπόκρισιν τοῦ χριστιανίζειν φανερῶς ἀπεδύσατο. *Tandem ſimulationem profeſſionis Chriſtianæ penitus depoſuit.* Socrat. ubi ſupra.

Thus I have touch't upon the four grand deſigns of the groſs hypocrite: Firſt, praiſe among all men; Secondly, revenge upon ſome men; Thirdly, the gain of worldly riches; Fourthly, the attainment of power, dominion, and greatneſs in the World. Theſe are the four wheels of Satans Chariot, wherein he hurrieth Thouſands to the land of darkneſs, while they would be eſteemed Children of the light. Or ſome one of theſe is as the (*primum mobile*) firſt mover (of which Philoſophers ſpeak in their doctrine of the Heavens) carrying many with a rapt and violent motion in the ſphere of Religion, while they have in the interim a ſecret undiſcerned natural motion of their own directly oppoſite to this, by which they hope at laſt to ſteal on fair and ſoftly to their wiſhed periods.

Having thus far ſhewed the cloſe purpoſes of the deſigning hypocrite, who is ſo hateful to God and hurtful to man, I ſhall a little diſcover and unmask his hypocriſie, by ſhewing how we may know him, how we may look through theſe vails and ſee his ugly face.

Deſigning hypocrites are uſually diſcovered theſe four ways.

Firſt, By their affectation to be ſeen and taken notice of; they that will have praiſe and glory with men, muſt needs affect to be ſeen of men; for no glory comes to man, from men, but by what falls under the eye and obſervation of man. *Job* ſaith of *murderers* (Chap. 24. 13.) *They are of thoſe that rebel againſt the light, they know not the ways thereof, nor abide in the paths thereof.* The murderer cannot endure the light either natural or moral, becauſe that tells who he is, or what he hath been about. The contrary, in one ſence, is true of the hypocrite, he loveth the light, and will do nothing willingly, but as he may be taken notice of, and ſeen of men; as for thoſe acts or exerciſes of Religion, which are private retirements between God and his own Soul, he is a great ſtranger to them, he cannot delight in them, but any thing that may fall under publick obſervation, he can be forward enough in, Chriſt (*Math.* 6. 5.) gives us this plain diſcovery of the hypocritcial Phariſees ; *They love to pray ſtanding in the Synagogues, and in the corners of the ſtreets, that they may be ſeen of men.* This was ſo much in *Jehu*'s heart, that he could not but blab it out with his tongue (2 *Kings* 10.) *Come ſee my zeal* ; a falſe fire kindled his zeal, elſe he had not made ſuch a blaze. It was, inſincere rotten-hearted *Saul* that ſaid (1*Sam.*15.13.) *Come thou bleſſed of the Lord, I have performed the commandment of the Lord* ; he was his own trumpeter, and would needs tell the ſtory of his doings himſelf, though he had done his buſineſs to halves ; *Come thou bleſſed of the Lord, I have performed the commandment of the Lord* ; as if it would not ſerve him to do his duty, unleſs *Samuel* had ſeen and taken notice of him. *Abraham* gave proof of the higheſt act of faith that ever was in the world, yet did *Abraham* ſay, *Come ſee my faith ?* *Moſes* led the people of *Iſrael* forty years in the wilderneſs through a ſeries of wonderful tryals and temptations, to the very borders of *Canaan* (which was one of the higheſt ſervices that ever man undertook) *and was faithful in all his Houſe* (Heb. 4. 2.) yet did he ſay, *Come ſee my fidelity?* *Joſhua* victoriouſly expelled the *Canaanites*, and divided their land by lot among the Tribes of *Iſrael*, yet did he ſay, *Come ſee my fortitude ?* We hear not a word of any of their doings from thoſe who were ſincere. When we ſee men forward to invite the approbation of others by making reports of their good deeds, it gives a ſtrong argument of ſuſpicion, that they have done what they have done with a bad heart, or, that (as is ſaid of *Jehu*) *they have not ſought God with all their hearts.*

But ſome may object, did not *Samuel* proclaim his own integrity before all the people (1*Sam.*12. 3.) *Whoſe Oxe have I taken ? Or whoſe Aſs have I taken ? Or whom have I defrauded ? Whom have I oppreſſed ? Or of whoſe hand have I received any bribe, to blind mine eyes therewith ?*

I anſwer ; *Samuel* ſpake this to upbraid their ingratitude and diſcontent, not to extol his own juſtice ; yea ſome conceive that he made this challenge, to give *Saul* a pattern how he ought to govern, rather then to commend his own government. I find the Apoſtle *Paul* making large reports of his own both doings and ſufferings (2 *Cor.* 11.) But if we peruſe that Chapter, we ſhall find him hovering in a ſuſpence of doubts and fears, whether or no it were convenient or comely for him to do ſo. How many Preambles and Apologies did he make before he fell directly upon that unpleaſing ſubject ? *Would to God ye could bear with me in my folly* (ſaith he) *and indeed bear with me.* And again, *I ſpeak* (as it were) *fooliſhly in this confidence of boaſting.* And yet all that he ſpake was not to make a boaſt of himſelf, but to vindicate his Apoſtleſhip from unjuſt and envious calumniations.

'Tis moſt certain, he that is ſincere deſires not to be open, but ſilently ſatisfieth his Soul with the Conſcience of doing his duty, and takes more content, in knowing his own integrity, then in knowing that others know it. Vertue loſeth nothing of her value, in his eſteem, no nor of her luſtre in his eye, becauſe ſhe is hidden from the eyes of men. Like the Earth (in this point) he keeps his richeſt minerals, and moſt precious gems of grace and goodneſs below in his bowels, or at the center of his heart, and will not let them be ſeen, till a kind of neceſſity digs them out. When *Moſes* after his forty days near acceſs to and communion with God in the Mount, perceived that his face did ſhine (*Exod.* 34 33.) he put a vail upon it ; every true *Moſes* whoſe acquaintance and fiducial familiarity with God, hath ſtampt upon him the impreſſions of divine light, is ſo far from affecting to dazzle the eyes of others with it, that he rather puts a vail of gracious modeſty upon it ; and will not let ſo much as the light of his good works be ſeen, but as thereby (in which caſe Chriſt commands it (*Matth.* 5. 16.) *He may glorifie his father which is in Heaven.* And herein a Chriſtian followeth the example of Chriſt, in whom though the Godhead dwelt bodily . yet he rarely ſhewed his divine power. And when once by a miracle, he had made the blind ſee, he alſo by command made them dumb concerning that miracle (*Matth.* 9. 30.) *See that no man know it.* It was our Saviours counſel to all his followers (*Matth.* 6. 5.) *Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doth*, and it was his conſolation to them in the next words ; *Tour father which ſeeth in ſecret, himſelf ſhall reward you openly* ; yea (which is a higher conſolation then that) *Himſelf will be your reward.*

Secondly, As the deſigning hypocrite deſires to be ſeen in doing good, or to have the good which he hath done ſeen ; ſo he is exceeding cenſorious and rigid towards thoſe whom he ſees falling into evil. Chriſt gives this diſcovery alſo (*Matth.* 7. 3.) *Why beholdeſt thou the mote that is in thy brothers eye, but conſidereſt not the beam that is in thine own eye* ; concluding at verſe 5. *Thou hypocrite* ; why doth Chriſt call him hypocrite ? Surely becauſe he was ſo quick-ſighted to ſee a mote, that is, a ſmaller fault in his brothers eye, but took no notice of the beam that was in his own eye ; a ſpot upon his brothers Coat, was cenſured more by him, then his own wallowing in the mire. I do not ſay that the Patriarch *Judah* was an hypocrite, but, as thoſe two other *Patriarchs*, ſo he acted one very groſs part of hypocriſie (*Gen.* 38. 24.) For he no ſooner heard that *Tamar* was with Child, but he cenſured, yea condemn'd her preſently to death ; *Bring her forth* (ſaid he) *and let her be burnt* ; and yet himſelf was more faulty then ſhe. How hard a Judg was he of that crime in another, which was principally his own? *Saul* had ſinned greatly (1 *Sam.* 13. 9.) in offering ſacrifice before *Samuel* came, which was an uſurpation of the Prieſts office, and ſo great a ſin that *Samuel* told him preſently, *God would therefore rend the Kingdome from him* ; yet he thought to put it off with a ſlight excuſe. But in Chapter 14. when *Jonathan* only offended againſt a raſh command of his (putting a Curſe upon that people if any did eat before the going down of the Sun) he ſentenced him to death for it. In the 8. of *John*, how ſevere were the Phariſees to the woman taken in Adultery, they haled her before Chriſt, and preſſed the Law that ſhe ſhould be ſtoned to death ; yet, when Chriſt ſaid (*verſ.*7.) *He that is without ſin among you, let him firſt caſt a ſtone at her, they being convicted by their own Conſcience, went out one by one.* We ought to reprove and not flatter ſin in others; yet they who are extreamly ſevere againſt a ſin in others, uſually favour either the ſame or a worſe in themſelves. He that is ſincere, pittieth others, as much as reproves them, and he reproves them, though with ſharpneſs, yet with meekneſs, at once *conſidering himſelf, leſt he alſo be tempted* (Gal. 6. 1.) and bleſſing God who hath kept him in or from theſe temptations.

Thirdly, The deſigning hypocrite diſcovers himſelf by laying down or departing from the profeſſion of Religion, when his worldly ends are attained. Feined zeal cools or abates, is leſs and leſs towards the things of God, as ſuch zelots grow warmer and warmer in their neſts, and find their carnal intereſts more and more ſerved or ſecured. 'Tis reported by a Popiſh Author, that a Fryar or Monk was obſerved very preciſe, and circumſpect in all his ways , hanging down his head to the Earth, very humbly and devoutly, as if he meditated continually upon his mortality, or return to the Earth ; who afterwards being choſen Abbot or Governour of the Covent, grew very proud, high and inſolent. Some, wondring at this change of behaviour, took the boldneſs to ask him the reaſon of it ; *O*, ſaid he, *I was but ſeeking the Keys of the Abby, and now I have found them.* Having gotten what he ſought for, he laid aſide his ſtrictneſs in Religion, and threw off his vail, When *Jehu* that hypocrite was in his way to the Kingdom, how zealous was he ? Yet no ſooner ſetled in it, but he was unſetled in Religion, and turned Idolater, worſhipping the Calves that were in *Dan* and *Bethel*. When *Julian* had obtained the Empire, he had done with Chriſt, and gave all the world a full argument againſt himſelf, that he was but a hypocrite in his former profeſſion of Chriſtianity. *David* was as zealous for God and as holy when he was upon the Throne, as when he kept Sheep upon the Mountains, as good when a princely train followed him, as when he followed the Ews great with young. *Moſes* was as faithful when he was the Ruler of *Iſrael*, as when he was an exile in *Midian*. *Joſeph* was as gracious when he wore a chain of Gold, and had the power of all *Egypt* put into his hand, as when himſelf was a priſoner in *Potiphers* Houſe, and the iron (chains) entred into his Soul. *I fear God* (ſaid he, *Gen.* 42. 18.) when he had no man to fear. And when after his fathers death, his Brethren feared he would reckon with them for their old faults, or at leaſt be careleſs of and unkind to them, who had been ſo unkind and cruel to him, yet he would do them nothing but kindneſſes and courteſies, and thereof bid them be confident, (*Gen.*50.21.)

Fourthly, As ſucceſs diſcovereth ſome hypocrites, ſo the croſs diſcovereth many more. The hypocrite will run from his colours when he comes to the Battel, or ſeeth he muſt either quit the truths of God. or his own peace. If once he findeth that he cannot thrive by Religion, he will meddle no more with it. There is a generation who will appear no further for truth, then ſerves their own turn; and when they ſee they cannot ſerve that, by holding the truth, they will neither hold nor profeſs it any longer. They will venter no further in ſuch matters, then they may make a fair retreat, if they ſee themſelves in danger, or cannot carry on their own intereſts. Thus the ſecond ground is deſcribed (*Matth.*13.20,21.) *He that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; yet hath he not root in himſelf, but dureth for a while, for when tribulation or perſecution ariſeth becauſe of the word, by and by he is offended.* He hath enough of the word, when he ſeeth he cannot have that, and enough of the World too. Many will get abroad the Ship of the true Church in a calm, who if they ſee the Clouds gather, the Air darken, the Winds riſing, the Storm coming, they dare not ride it out in an angry Sea, but will be calling for the Boat, and row to the next ſhoar. Theſe never purpoſed to endure all winds and weather, with the Church of God, but hoped to be tranſported to the *cape of their worldly good hope, and wiſhed for Earthly Haven.* Their flight interprets their intents, and liſts them among deſigning hypocrites. The Houſe founded on the Sand, ſheweth as fair in a fair day, as that founded on a Rock; but when the rain deſcends, and the floods come, and the winds blow, you may diſtinguiſh it, by the down-fall. He was never more nor better then a meer out-ſide profeſſor, who doth not hold faſt his profeſſion in a day of trouble as well as in a day of peace; in the greateſt diſtreſs, as well as in the higheſt ſucceſs and triumph of the people of God in this World.

To ſhut up this point and obſervation, I ſhall only give three or four conſiderations, which may move all to take heed of hypocriſie. Chriſt ſaith (*Luke* 12. 1.) *Beware of the Leven of the Phariſees which is hypocriſie.* As Leven ſowres the whole Lump of Bread, ſo doth hypocriſie both the perſons and converſations of thoſe who are infected with it.

Firſt, Beware of hypocriſie, or of hiding what you are, for what you are, doth always appear to God, though not to men; *All things are naked and manifeſt unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do* (Heb. 4. 13.) though we are painted over, though we are cloaked, and hooded, and vizarded with pretences, yet we are naked before the eye of God. And that was the argument with which God preſſed *Abraham* to beware of hypocriſie (*Gen.* 17. 1.) *Walk before me and be thou perfect*; that is, remember thou art always in my eye and ſight, therefore take heed of falſeneſs and inſincerity. We uſe to ſay, *There is no halting before a Cripple*; Cripples know whether yours be a fained or real lameneſs. O take heed of halting before God, he knoweth how it is with you, he knoweth the temper of your Souls, as well as the Body of your converſations; he doth not only know what you do, but with what aims, with what heart and purpoſe you do it, *Paul* ſaid (1 *Theſ.* 2. 5.) *We have not uſed a Cloak of covetouſneſs, God is witneſs.* As if he had ſaid, God will quickly ſee through us, and find out our covetouſneſs, though we cover it with never ſo thick or fair a cloak of devotional profeſſions.

Secondly, Conſider, as the Lord ſeeth through you, ſo he will make you throughly ſeen, he will make you known or unmask you before men one time or other. As he will *bring forth the righteouſneſs of a godly man as the light* (after it hath been long hid under the darkneſs of uncharitable ſuſpitions or falſe accuſations) *and his juſt dealing as the noon day,* (Pſal. 37.6.) ſo he will bring forth the unrighteouſneſs of a hypocrite as the light, and his falſe dealing as the noon-day, though it have lain hid a while under the cloak and fair colours of the moſt pious ſemblances and proteſtations. God loves to uncaſe hypocrites, becauſe he is a God of truth; and becauſe it magnifieth his truth, juſtice, and omniſcience to do ſo. And he doth it many times, by letting them fall into foul ſins; they make fair ſhews in Religion, through reſtraining grace, and as ſoon as that bridle of reſtraining grace is let looſe. that very ſhew is gone, and they ſhew plainly what they are. *The cloſeſt deſigning hypocrites, often prove open Apoſtates*; and though ſome may abide long, (poſſibly as long as they live) in this vain ſhew or form of Godlineſs, without diſcovering their rottenneſs, yet at laſt their rottenneſs ſhall be diſcovered: For as *Solomon* aſſureth us (*Eccleſ.* 12. 14.) *God will bring every work to Judgment, and every ſecret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil.* Or as the Apoſtle hath it (1 *Cor.* 4. 5.) *He will diſcover the ſecrets of the heart, and bring to light the hidden things of darkneſs*; which, what are they, but the hypocritical deſignings of men? We ſay, *murder will out*, and 'tis as true, *Hypocriſie will out.* The Lord many times brings it out to the ſhame of hypocrites in this life, and he will bring it out to the confuſion of all their faces, in that great day, when the ſecrets of all hearts ſhall be revealed.

Thirdly, Take heed of this deſigning hypocriſie; for as all who continue in it ſhall be diſcovered, ſo uſually they continue in it; your plotting cunning hypocrites, are very rarely converted. Simple hypocrites (in the notion toucht before) are often converted; all unconverted perſons that make any profeſſion in Religion are hypocrites, and many of them are ſimple ones they hope all is well with them, and that they have grace, though they have it not, theſe are often converted, but groſs deſigning hypocrites, of what rank or degree ſoever, are rarely converted. This is it which Chriſt ſaid to the Phariſees, (*Matth.*21.31.) *Publicans and Harlots enter the Kingdom of Heaven before you*; Publicans were the worſt ſort of men, and Harlots were the worſt ſort of women, yet theſe repented and received the Goſpel ſooner then the hypocritical Phariſees. The Evangeliſt made a like report of them (*Luke* 7.29,30.) *All the people* (that is, the common ſort of people) *that heard him, and the Publicans, juſtified God, being baptized with the baptiſm of* John, *but the Phariſees and Lawyers rejected the counſel of God againſt themſelves, being not baptized of him*; yea, as Chriſt ſpeaks in the next words, they were piped to, but they would not dance; they were wept to, but they would not mourn. All thoſe various diſpenſations of the Goſpel were fruitleſs to them; neither a more pleaſing nor a more ſevere Miniſtery won any thing upon that generation of deſigning hypocrites.

Fourthly, Conſider, as hypocrites are hateful to God, ſo God will deal with them accordingly; he will for ever ſeparate them from his preſence, and caſt them out of his ſight. A hypocrite hath a double mind, a divided heart; he is not half enough for God, (indeed he is nothing at all for God) and he is too much, yea altogether for himſelf, and therefore he ſhall have nothing at all of God, not ſo much as a ſight of him. It is ſaid in the 13 of *Job, The hypocrite ſhall not come before him*: Such as we hate, we cannot endure they ſhould come in our ſight: 'Tis a ſutable judgment, that they who have ſo often come before God with falſe hearts, and mocked him with a ſeeming deſire of being in his preſence, ſhould at laſt be thruſt for ever out of his preſence. 'Tis the portion of an hypocrite to have no portion in God, of whom he hath made ſuch a boaſting profeſſion. When the worſt of puniſhments is ſpoken of, it is called the hypocrites portion (*Matth.* 24. 51.) *Give them their portion with hypocrites in the Lake that burns with fire and brimſtone.* Hypocrites are ſpoken of as if they were the *free-holders of Hell*, or as if all other ſinners that ſhall go to Hell were but as inmates, and they the grand tenants of Hell. Conſider how miſerable a thing it is to be an hypocrite, if this be the portion of hypocrites, to have no portion in God. And as they ſhall not reign at all in the glory of the next World, ſo they are ſometimes checkt (ſaith the Text) from reigning in the glory of this World.

That the hypocrite reign not.] Reigning, as was ſhewed before, being ſtrictly taken, is the exerciſe of ſupream power, and in a large ſenſe may ſignifie the exerciſe of any power, or a ſtate of great proſperity.

Hence Note. Secondly, *Hypocrites are high minded, and look after great things.*

David was a King, he reigned over *Iſrael*, but it was not his own ambition, but the election of God, and his anointing, which brought him to the Throne. He could ſay of himſelf (*Pſal.* 131.1.) *Lord my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty: Neither do I exerciſe my ſelf in great matters, or in things too high for me.* Though *David* was high in his perſon and ſtate, yet his Spirit was not high; nor was his Spirit for high things, only God placed him on high. But here we ſee the hypocrite is climbing and getting to the top of the ſtairs, he is aſcending even to the Throne. *Hypocrites are proud of that nothing which they have and are in ſpirituals, and they would have all, they would get high, they would be higheſt in temporals.* There are two luſts which uſually reign in hypocrites, and both of them reſpect the World.

Firſt, The luſt of covetouſneſs, which is an inordinate deſire of getting and keeping the riches of this World. The Phariſees all the Goſpel over are taxed for hypocrites; and when Chriſt had preached that parable of the unjuſt Steward, concluding with this ſentence, *Ye cannot ſerve God and Mammon*; the Evangeliſt telleth us (*Luke* 16.14.) *The Phariſees alſo who were covetous, heard all theſe things, and they derided him.* Covetouſneſs and hypocriſie go together; they who have no true hungrings and thirſtings after the things of Heaven, are moſt hungry and thirſty after earthly things. We find *Job* in the 27. Chapter of this Book (*verſ.* 8.) ſpeaking of the hypocrites gain; *What is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God taketh away his Soul?* which implyeth that the hypocrite is a great aimer at worldly gain,

The ſecond predominant luſt of the hypocrite is, ambition, or deſire of getting to the upper end of the World. Chriſt chargeth the hypocritical Phariſees with this luſt alſo (*Matth.* 23. 6. *Mark* 12. 39.) *They love the uppermoſt rooms at feaſts, and the higheſt ſeats in Synagogues.* They are all to be uppermoſt, they muſt have the uppermoſt rooms at feaſts, and the higheſt ſeats in the Synagogue, both in Civil and Church meetings, hypocrites affected ſuperiority, or, *Diotrephes*-like, to have the preheminence, *and* (which was another ſymptome of ambition) *they* (ſaith Chriſt) *love greetings in the market-place, and to be called Rabbi, Rabbi*, which is a title of greatneſs and maſterſhip. Yea many hypocrites would not only have the uppermoſt ſeats at feaſts, and in the Synagogues, but the very uppermoſt ſeats in Nations and Common-wealths; *They ſometimes affect to the head, who are worſe then the tail of all the people.* There are hypocrites of all ranks, and among all degrees of men, ſome of low degree are in a very high degree of hypocriſie; there are hypocrites in rags and in ruſſet; there are hypocrites alſo in ſcarlet and in purple; hypocriſie may reign in and among thoſe that reign. It is a maxime which ſome Princes have held out to all the World, as the rule of their reigning; *He that knoweth not how to diſſemble, knows not how to reign.* Diſſimulation is a great part of hypocriſie, there is diſſimulation both as to the things of God, and the things of men; ſome if they know not how to diſſemble in both (at leaſt) with men, would not believe that they know how to rule over, or govern men. Now as many who are great, and in power, make little conſcience to diſſemble, or make uſe of hypocriſie, to carry on their government, and ſecure themſelves; ſo moſt hypocrites have a mind, and will uſe all means (not forbearing thoſe which are bad enough) to get into power, and make themſelves great. The ſpirit of hypocriſie is an aſpiring ſpirit.

Qui neſcit diſſimulare neſcit regnare.

Again, *Elihu* ſaith, *That the hypocrite reign not, leſt the people be enſnared*; here's not one word of the good government or protection of the people, which ſhould be the main buſineſs of thoſe that reign; the Text ſpeaks only of ſnares; *That the hypocrite reign not, leſt the people be enſnared.*

Hence Obſerve, Thirdly, *Hypocrites getting into power, do either ſecretly or openly wrong and oppreſs the people.*

They lay ſnares for them in ſtead of being ſhields to them. Hypocrites in power, enſnare chiefly two ways.

First, By their ill example, there is a great ſnare in that; Inferiors are very apt to be formed up according to their mould and manners who are above them; the example of Kings and Princes are ſeldome unconformed to by their Subjects. There is a great power in example, what is done perſwades, as well as what is ſpoken. And *the errors of thoſe that rule, become rules of error*; men ſin with a kind of authority. through the ſins of thoſe who are in authority. *Jeroboam made* Iſrael *to ſin*, not only by commanding them to worſhip the Calves at *Dan* and *Bethel*, but by commending that Idolatrous worſhip to them in his own practice and example.

Regis ad exemplum totus componitur orbis.

Secondly, They enſnare the people by ſinful and bad Laws; the Prophet denounceth a woe diſtinctly unto men of ſeveral ranks and places (*Hoſ.* 5.1.) *Hear ye this, O Prieſts, and hearken ye houſe of* Iſrael, *and give ye ear, O houſe of the King*; he directs his ſpeech, in that three-fold diviſion; firſt, to the Prieſts; ſecondly, to the body of the people; thirdly, and chiefly to the houſe of the King, why to the houſe of the King? *Becauſe ye have been a ſnare on* Mizpah, *and a net ſpread upon* Tabor. That Scripture may be interpreted; firſt, as an alluſion to ſuch as were wont to hunt upon thoſe mountains; *Mizpah* and *Tabor* were famous places for hunting, there they were wont to ſet nets, and lay ſnares to catch their game; now, ſaith the Prophet, ye have been even like hunters ſpreading nets and laying ſnares. *Nimrod* is called a *mighty hunter before God*; he was a hunter of men more then of wild beaſts. Now, look what nets and ſnares are to wild beaſts, the ſame are ſinful Laws to the conſciences of honeſt and upright-hearted men. And it is well conceived that the Prophet there refers to thoſe enſnaring Laws made by *Jeroboam* and the ſucceeding Princes in Kingdom of *Iſrael*, whereby they endeavoured to draw off the people of God from his true worſhip, and vexed thoſe who kept cloſe to it. Secondly, ſome expound thoſe words, *Ye have been a ſnare on* Mizpah, *and a net ſpread upon* Tabor, to ſignifie their ſetting ſpies upon thoſe mountains to watch and ſo to give information, who went to the ſolemn feaſts, that ſo they might be proceeded againſt according to thoſe enſnaring Laws. Which way ſoever we take it, 'tis clear, that Scripture reproves and threatens Judgment againſt the Prieſts and Apoſtatizing people of *Iſrael*, complying with, if not provoking the ruling powers to trouble thoſe who could not digeſt the Idolatrous worſhip ſet up by *Jeroboam* at *Dan* and *Bethel*, upon a politique conſideration, leſt the people going to *Jeruſalem*, ſhould fall off from him, and weaken the Kingdom of *Iſrael* in his hand. Another Prophet complained (*Mic* 6.16.) *The Statutes of* Omri *are kept. Omri* was a King of *Iſrael*, a ſucceſſor of *Jeroboam* both in his power and hypocriſie, he alſo pretended a zeal for the worſhip of God after his own deviſing, and therefore made enſnaring Statutes to entangle thoſe that were ſincere, and perſevered in the true worſhip which the Statutes of God appointed. The Prophet ſpeaks of a ſtrange kind of bridle, or of a bridle uſed for an unuſual purpoſe (*Iſa.* 30. 28.) *There ſhall be a bridle in the jaws of the people cauſing them to err.* A bridle is put upon the head of a Horſe or Mule, as *David* ſpeaks (*Pſal.* 32. 9.) not to bither them to err or go out of the way, but to keep them in the way. 'Tis evident by the context of this Chapter, as alſo by the expreſs Text of the 37. Chapter (*verſ.* 29.) that this bridle was the Lords power againſt *Senacharib* and his Hoſt, whereby as with a bridle in their jaws he diverted them from their purpoſe of beſieging *Jeruſalem.* 'Tis a truth alſo (to which we may warrantably enough apply thoſe words of the Prophet in a way of alluſion) that good Laws are like a bridle in the jaws of a people, the multitude or the moſt would elſe be like head ſtrong Horſes, if authority did not keep them in. 'Tis a great mercy when Laws are as a bridle to keep us from erring, but 'tis ſad when *any Laws are a bridle in the jaws of the people cauſing them to err*, or go out of the way of the Laws of God; ſuch Laws are not (which all Laws ſhould be) rules, but ſnares. Such were the Laws of *Jeroboam*, and the Statutes of *Omri* in *Iſrael* of old; and what Nation is there that hath not had experience in one age, or other, of ſuch Laws as have been a bridle in their jaws cauſing them to err, or a ſnare to their Souls and Conſciences?

Fourthly, When *Elihu* ſaith, *That the hypocrite reign not, leſt the people be enſnared*, he intends an act of divine wrath, upon hypocrites, abuſing their power to the hurt of the people.

Hence Note, *God is highly diſpleaſed with Princes and Magiſtrates when they enſnare the people.*

We read (*Iſa.* 3.12.) how the people of Iſrael were enſnared, and how the Lord was highly diſpleaſed with thoſe who did enſnare them. *O my people, they which lead thee, cauſe thee to erre, and deſtroy the way of thy paths.* Thy Leaders miſlead thee. There are two ſorts of Leaders, Firſt, Spiritual Leaders; the Miniſters and Preachers of the Word now, as of old the Prieſts, Levites, and Prophets, were Leaders of the people (and ſometimes proved their miſleaders, *Jer.* 23.13.) in Spirituals. Secondly, There are Leaders of the people in Civil things; ſuch are all Princes and Magiſtrates. We may underſtand that Text in the Prophet *Iſaiah*, of both theſe Leaders; as if he had ſaid, *Thy Prophets and thy Princes miſlead thee, and cauſe thee to erre*; And therefore at *Ver.* 14. of the ſame Chapter, God declareth his diſpleaſure againſt them, profeſſing that he would *enter into judgment with the Ancients of his people, and the Princes thereof.* The ſame Prophet *Iſaiah* (Chap. 9. 16.) complains of the ſame thing again; *The Leaders of this people cauſe them to erre, and they that are led of them are deſtroyed.* The Hebrew is, *they that bleſs this people*, (ſo we put it in the margin,) The Leaders of the people were ſo called, either becauſe it was a part of their office, to pronounce the bleſſing upon the people; or becauſe the falſe Prophets uſed to ſooth up the people in their ſins; and (as another Prophet hath it) to ſow pillows under their elbows, as if they were in a very bleſſed condition, and ſhould do well enough, notwithſtanding all the clamours of the true Prophets againſt them. And ſo the latter words, *they that are led of them*, are ſutable to the former in the Hebrew, being thus read in the margin, *they that are called bleſſed of them*; That is, declared or aſſured by them to be in the right way, and ſo ſuch as ſhould come to a bleſſed end, though indeed their end proved deſtruction. And if they who are miſled (or called bleſſed) fall into deſtruction, ſurely their miſleaders (who call them bleſſed) ſhall not eſcape. *If the blind lead the blind, both fall into the ditch*, (Matth. 15. 14.) only the blind leader, or miſleader, ſhall fall deepeſt into it.

Fifthly, Obſerve, *As God is diſpleaſed with the hypocrite when he uſeth his power to enſnare the people, ſo the Lord ſometimes puts him beſides his power, or takes his power from him, that he may no longer enſnare the people.*

The ultimate ſcope of the place, is not only to ſhew the Lord diſpleaſed with the hypocrite, but diſplacing him. When the Prophet had ſummon'd all ſorts, Prieſts, and People, and the houſe of the King, he adds, *Judgment is towards you, becauſe ye have been a ſnare upon Mizpah*, (Hoſ. 5.1.) Thus as God pulls down hypocrites, becauſe they are hateful to himſelf, ſo becauſe they are hurtful to others; hurtful to their Civil Liberties, and worldly Intereſts, over which God is tender; hurtful alſo to their ſpiritual Liberties, and ſoul Intereſts, over which God is more tender. The Kings of Iſrael (who were very wicked, and did much enſnare the people) went off their Governments, moſt of them, very ſpeedily, God did not let them reign long; yea, the whole Kingdom of Iſrael (which had not one good King, was diſſolved long before the Kingdom of Judah, which had many good Kings. God did not ſuffer the hypocritical Kings of Iſrael to hold their power, but gave them into the hand of the King of Aſſyria, (2 *Kings* 17.6.) becauſe (*Verſ.* 8.) *they walked in the ſtatutes of the heathen, and of the Kings of Iſrael, which they had made.*

From the whole verſe I would give one Note by way of Corollary.

A hypocrite is of all perſons moſt unfit for publick ſervice.

How unfit is he to have power in his hand, who can uſe it no better, then for the enſnaring of the people? A hypocrite is of a private ſpirit, he is all for himſelf, and therefore moſt unfit for publick truſt. We may ſay of the hypocrite, as the Prophet (*Ezek.* 15. 3.) of the Vine, *Shall wood be taken thereof to do any work? Or, will men take a pin of it, to hang a veſſel thereon?* No, it is not fit for that mean purpoſe or ſervice, much leſs would a man take a Vine to hew a beam or a pillar for a houſe out of it. Magiſtrates are as pillars of the houſe, or like great beams, to hold up and faſten all the hypocrite is ſo far from being fit Timber to make a pillar of the houſe, that he is not fit to make a pin to hang a veſſel on upon the wall. *Power is never ſo improperly employed as in making ſnares*, and yet that's the uſual imployment or improvement which hypocrites, high or low, put it to.

I have thus far opened the Text, and given theſe Notes from it, according to our reading; yet before I paſs from it, I ſhall mind you of another reading or verſion of this whole verſe, which carryeth the ſenſe quite into another channel. Thus

Who meaning God *maketh* (or ſuffereth at leaſt) *the hypocrite to reign, becauſe of the offences or ſins of the people.* The *Chaldee Paraphraſe*, the *Septuagint*, and *Vulgar Latine* agree in this, and the dependance (for clearing of it) may be made out thus.

Elihu having ſhewed in the 29. verſe, that if *God giveth quietneſs, none can make trouble*; and that *if he hideth his face, none can behold him, whether it be done againſt a Nation, or againſt a man only*, proceeds in this verſe to ſhew the juſtice of God in puniſhing the people, by putting power into the hypocrites hand.

The learned *Mercer*, I grant, is not ſatisfied with this rendring, as not being ſo ſutable to the Grammatical conſtruction of the Hebrew Text; yet, holding the firſt, he makes this as a conſequent of it; confeſſing that it may be taken in this ſenſe; *That the hypocrite reign not who did once reign, becauſe of the ſins of the people*; and ſo it intimates the ſins both of the Prince and People. Thus both readings correſpond, and are not repugnant but ſubſervient to each other. For if God ſuffer not the hypocrite to reign any longer, 'tis an argument that for a time he ſuffered him to reign for the ſins of the people, that is, to be an inſtrument of his wrath and vengeance upon them for their ſins. The ſame word ſignifies both *a ſnare*, and ſin; a ſnare ſet by others, and an offence or ſin committed by our ſelves; and well it may, ſeeing nothing doth more enſnare us then our own ſins. And as ſome are led into ſin by the ſnares which others lay for them; ſo very many by ſinning bring themſelves into ſnares: and uſually when a people have entangled themſelves in the ſnares of ſin, God ſets evil men at once to rule over them and entangle them with the ſnares of thoſe ſufferings which are moſt proper to their ſins.

And thus 'tis conceived *Elihu* anſwers thoſe expoſtulating demands which *Job* puts (*Chap.* 21.7.) *Wherefore do the wicked live? Become old? Yea, are mighty in power?* Here are three queſtions, Firſt, *Why do they live?* They are not worthy to breath. Secondly, *Why become they old?* They deſerve to be cut off in their youth, and not to live out half their days. Thirdly, *Why are they mighty?* Why do they command all, who uſe their might only to do miſchief? *Elihu* anſwers theſe queſtions in a word, God giveth power into the hands of evil men, becauſe of the ſins of the people. As if he had ſaid, if at any time you ſee the wicked in great power and proſperity, 'tis a ſign the people are very wicked, and God will puniſh and ſcourge them by the hands of ſuch for their wickedneſs.

This is a truth, and much is ſaid by ſome Interpreters for the making of it out from the Text; but taking it as 'tis given, I ſhall only give you two Notes from it.

Firſt, *Bad Princes are ſet up by the permiſſion, yea diſpoſition of God.*

He makes evil men to reign. The ſame power which brings wicked men into the world, ſets wicked men high in the world. It is of God that any wicked man hath a place in the world, and it is of God that any wicked man gets into the high places of the world. All the Kings of Iſrael from firſt to laſt were ſtark naught, and very wicked, yet they were all of God's ſetting up, though their own ambition or the ſatisfying of ſome luſt, put moſt of them upon aſpiring to get up. In the firſt Book of the Kings (*Chap.* 11. 29, 30, 31.) *Abijah the Prophet finding Jeroboam* (the firſt and worſt of them) *in the way, caught the new Garment that was on him, and rent it into twelve pieces, and he ſaid unto Jeroboam, take thee ten pieces; for thus ſaith the Lord, the God of Iſrael, behold, I will rend the Kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and will give ten Tribes to thee.* This *Jeroboam* was ſo bad a man, that he was not content to ſin alone, *but made Iſrael to ſin*; yet even him did God ſet up,

Qui regnare facit hominem hypocritam propter offendicula populi. Vulg.

Conſtituens regem hominem delatorem propter ſcandala quæ in populo. Chald.

Non ſunt ita repugnantes hæ interpretationes, quin una ex altero conſequatur. Nam ſi non ſinit Deus diutius regnare hypocritam; certe aliquandiu ſinit; dat enim reges in iram. Merl.

Βασιλεύων ἄνθρωπον ὑποκριτὴν ἀπὸ δυσκολίας λαοῦ. *Forte interpretes pro* ממלך *cum puncta olim vocalia deeſſent legerunt* ממלך *regnare faciens.* Druſ. ממוקשי *Ne ſint offendicula, quidam,* propter offendicula populi. *Nam* מן *etiam propter ſignificat.* Druſ. *Poſſit & ita accipi,* ne regnet homo hypocrita; *qui quidem regnabat ob offendicula populi, ut utriuſque & Regis & populi delictum noetur.* Merc.

Cujus juſſu homines naſcuntur hujus juſſu ſa reges conſtituuntur, apti his qui in illo tempore ab ipſis regnantur. Iren. l. 5. c. 24.

and ſent a Prophet to him to tell him ſo. How unholy ſoever men are in their place, and how unjuſt ſoever in the exerciſe of their power, yet the holy and juſt God (for reaſons known to himſelf) placeth them in power.

Secondly, Obſerve, *God permits wicked Princes to reign, as a puniſhment of the reigning ſins and wickedneſſes of the people.*

Quidam reges ad utilitatem ſubjectorum dantur & conſervationem juſtitiæ quidam autem ad pœnam Dei juſto judicio in omnibus æqualiter ſuperveniente. Iren. l. 5. c. 25.

The power of wicked Princes is the puniſhment of a wicked people. Some Princes and Magiſtrates are given as a bleſſing, for the protection, peace, and profit of a Nation, and for the exaltation of righteouſneſs in it. Others are given as a curſe, for the vexation, trouble, and impoveriſhing of a Nation. The Lord takes this fully upon himſelf, (*Hoſ.* 13.11.) *I gave them a King in mine anger*, &c. Angry providences are the fruit of ſin. God gave *Saul* in anger, he gave *Jeroboam* and the reſt of the Iſraelitiſh Kings in anger; and as he gave them in anger, ſo he took them away in wrath. The ſins both of Princes and people, produce mutual ill effects towards one another.

Firſt, The ſins of the people are the cauſe ſomtimes why good Princes are immaturely or ſuddenly taken away from them. *Joſiah* that good King was removed very early for the ſin of *Judah*; *Pharaoh Necho* had never ſlain him, had not the people been unworthy of him. Hence that of *Solomon*, (Prov. 28.2.) *for the tranſgreſſion of a land, many are the Princes thereof:* He means not (as I conceive) many together, but many ſucceſſively, that is, good Princes go quickly off the ſtage one after another for the tranſgreſſion of the people of the land; *But* (as it followeth in the ſame verſe) *by a man of underſtanding and knowledg the ſtate thereof ſhall be prolonged.* Our Tranſlaters render theſe latter words in the plural number (as the margin hath it) *by men of underſtanding and wiſdom ſhall they likewiſe be prolonged*; that is, when there are many godly, wiſe, and underſtanding men in a Nation, God bleſſeth them with long-lived and aged good Kings or Governours.

Regum lapſus pœna populorum eſt; ſicut enim eorum virtute ſervamur; ita eorum errore periclitamur. Quid enim poſſit habere corpus reipublicæ capite languido.

Secondly, Whole Nations or a people are ſometimes puniſhed for the ſins of their Princes, (*Jer.* 15.4.) the Lord tells the Jewiſh-ſtate, he would bring all that evil upon them for the ſin of *Manaſſeh*. The ſins of Princes prove oftentimes the ſufferings of the people. As both by and for their goodneſs and vertues a people are bleſſed, ſo by and for their evils, errors, and vices, a people are endangered, yea ſometimes ruined: When the Head of a Kingdom or Common-wealth is ſick, the Body is ſeldom well.

Thirdly, The ſins of a people bring deſtruction both upon their Princes and themſelves together, and wrap all up in one ruinous heap, as *Samuel* threatned the people of *Iſrael* (1 *Sam.* 12.25.) *If ye ſtill do wickedly, ye ſhall be deſtroyed both you and your King.* He ſpeaks not a word of any ſin in their King, but tells them that their wickedneſs may bring deſtruction not only upon themſelves, but upon him alſo.

Uterum fert civitas hæc, timeo autem ne pariat, virum Correctorem malæ inſolentiæ veſtræ. Theog. *Cur Domine Phocam imperatorem conſtituiſti? reſponſum datum, quia non inveni pejorem. Cur ſuperbis? non es creatus Epiſcopus, quod dignus ſacerdotio ſis, ſed quod civitas tali digna erat Epiſcopo.* Anaſt.

Fourthly, (which is the point in hand) the ſins of a people cauſe the Lord to ſet evil Princes over them. When once a people refuſe the ſweet and eaſie yoke of Chriſt, or ſay, *we will not have this man to rule over us*, he in Judgment ſends ſuch to rule over them, as ſhall lay heavy yokes upon them indeed. God uſeth ſome Princes as his ſtaff to ſupport a people, and as his ſhield to defend a people, yea as his Sun to cheriſh and influence them with abundance of mercies. He uſeth others only as his ſword to wound them, or as his ſcourge to correct them for their ſin. Some are a bleſſing, others are an affliction to the people. An ancient Poet obſerving the City wherein he lived, ſwoln with vanity, and bringing forth dayly many monſtrous births of pride, luxury, and oppreſſion, he could not forbear to give his apprehenſion of the iſſue in this elegant fancy; *This City* (ſaid he) *is with child, and I am afraid it will bring forth ſhortly* (and what will it bring forth?) *Some ſevere corrector of your evil inſolencies.* When *Phocas* (a cruel tyrant) had got the Empire, and reigned, there was a good man, who prayed much, about him, and did even expoſtulate with God, why he would ſet ſuch a wretch as he was over the Empire; the ſtory ſaith, he received this anſwer from God; *I therefore ſet him to govern, becauſe I could not find a worſe.* And I find a like report of another, though in a lower degree of power, yet in great power, wherein carrying himſelf very inſolently, one ſaid to him; *Why are you thus haughty and high-minded, why ſo proud of your power, God did not put you into the goverment of this place, becauſe you were worthy of it, but becauſe we were worthy to have a man of your worthleſneſs ſet over us.* The learned Moraliſt treating of the righteous, though late vengeance of God upon men, hath this paſſage; *God* (ſaith he) *uſeth ſome men as tormentors to afflict and puniſh others. Which is verified in moſt tyrants. Such a bitter medicine was* Phalaris *in his time to the* Argentines, *and* Marius *to the* Romans. St. *Auguſtine* ſpeaking of *Nero*, maketh this concluſion; *The power of Government is not given, no not to ſuch, but by the providence of the moſt high God, when he judgeth the affairs or manners of mankind juſtly deſerve and call for ſuch Lords and Maſters.*

Deus quibuſdam malis tanquam carnificibus uſus eſt, ad ſumendum de aliis pænas; quod verum eſſe de pleriſq; tyrannis arbitror; Tale medicamentum fuit Argentinis Phalaris, Marius Romanis. Plutarch. de ſera Num. Vindicta. *Etiam talibus (Neroni ſcilicet) dominandi poteſtas non datur niſi ſummi Dei providētia, quando res humanas judicat talibus Dominis dignas.* Aug. lib. 5. de Civ. Dei. Cap. 19.

O let nations take heed; The ſins of a people, are the worſt ſnares of a people; ſin provokes God to ſet up Princes for a ſnare. As therefore the Pſalmiſt admoniſheth Princes, *Be wiſe now therefore, O ye Kings, and learned, ye Judges of the earth*; ſo I may ſay, *Be wiſe, O ye people, and obedient, all you that are inhabitants of the earth, ſerve the Lord with fear, and rejoyce before him with trembling, kiſs the Son* (ſubmit to Jeſus Chriſt) *leſt he be angry*, and give you ſuch Princes and Powers, or put you into ſuch hands as ſhall break and vex you to purpoſe, and make you know what it is to ſerve men in rigour, having refuſed to ſerve God in love. Many in all nations are apt to complain much, when they have any burdens upon them by Governours, but few complain of their own ſins, which cauſe God to burden nations with ſuch Governours; let all leave off complaining of evil Governours, and complain more of their own evil government, both of their hearts and lives.

Thus we ſee how this Text according to theſe diſtinct tranſlations, Firſt, gives warning to Princes, *That the hypocrite reign not, leſt the people be enſnared*; and, Secondly, gives warning to people, that they provoke not God by their ſcandalous offences, to ſet wicked Princes and powers over them.

VERS. 31, 32.

Surely it is meet to be ſaid unto God, I have born chaſtiſement, I will not offend any more.

That which I ſee not, teach thou me: If I have done iniquity, I will do no more.

Elihu having convinced *Job*, both of the power of God, to do what he pleaſeth, and alſo of his righteouſneſs, that he is juſt in whatſoever he pleaſeth to do, proceedeth to give him counſel, how to carry himſelf better towards God, then by his former ſpeeches and expoſtulations (hinted at the 5. verſe of this Chapter) he ſeemed to have done. In theſe two verſes he gives him (according to our tranſlation) counſel conſiſting of three branches.

Firſt, He counſels him to a due ſubmiſſion, to the hand of God. In the former part of the 31. verſe; *Surely it is meet to be ſaid unto God, I have born chaſtiſement.*

Secondly, He counſels him to reformation, or to a gracious reſolution of laying down every ſinful thing, or what ever was a provocation to God. This he doth once and again, twice in theſe two verſes; Firſt, in the cloſe of the 31. verſe; *It is meet to be ſaid unto God, I will not offend any more*; Secondly, in the cloſe of the 32. verſe; *If I have done iniquity, I will do no more.*

Thirdly, *Elihu* counſels *Job*, to pray for further diſcoveries, both of his ſins, and ſinfulneſs, as alſo of his duty, at the beginning of the 32. verſe; *That which I ſee not teach thou me.* Thus you have the diſtinct points of that counſel which *Elihu* gives *Job*, according to our reading of theſe words. There is another reading, which I ſhall touch, when I have firſt opened and proſecuted the words as they ſtand in ours.

Verſ. 31. **Surely it is meet to be ſaid unto God, I have born chaſtiſement; I will not offend any more.**

Theſe are child-like words, ſuch words as a faulty, but ſubmitting repenting child, ſpeaks to a diſpleaſed Father, when he is under his rod, (yet ſuch as become the moſt aged and grown men in grace) *I have born chaſtiſement*, I have been under thy correcting hand, forgive me O my Father, I will do ſo no more. Thus *Elihu* adviſeth *Job*, to beſpeak God his Father while he was afflicting him.

Some render the former part of this verſe, by way of interrogation, or queſtion, *Hath he ſaid unto God, I have born*

born chaſtiſement, I will offend no more? Hath *Job* ſpoken thus to God? As if *Elihu* (making his appeal to the by-ſtanders) had ſaid, *Ye all are witneſſes that Job hath not yet humbled himſelf under the correcting hand of God, but rather charged God with ſeverity, in dealing with him, and over-boldly enquired into the reaſon of his dealings.* Our affirmative Tranſlation carrieth the ſame ſenſe with this interrogative, and queſtioning Tranſlation; for when *Elihu* ſaith to *Job*, *It is meet to be ſaid unto God, I have born chaſtiſement*; he ſuppoſeth, that *Job* had not ſaid ſo.

Surely it is meet to be ſaid unto God.] The Hebrew particle which we render **ſurely**, commonly ſignifieth, *for*, as giving an account or reaſon, of ſomewhat that went before; yet we render it well both here, and elſewhere, *ſurely*, according to the ſcope of the place; eſpecially ſeeing *Elihu* ſpeaking thus, is not giving a reaſon of what was ſaid before, but inferring a duty from it.

Again, The word *meet*, is not expreſly in the Hebrew Text, yet it is clearly implyed in it, and therefore added by our tranſlators to fill up, and clear the ſence; the Original is, *It is to be ſaid unto God*, we ſay, *It is meet to be ſaid unto God*,

I have born chaſtiſement.] The word *chaſtiſement* alſo is not expreſly in the Original, there it is only, *I have born*, but becauſe *bearing* muſt needs import, that ſomewhat is born as a burthen, and ſeeing according unto the ſubject matter that *Elihu* is upon with *Job*, it muſt refer to ſome affliction or chaſtiſement laid upon him, therefore we fitly ſupply this word *chaſtiſement*, *It is to be ſaid unto God, I have born*; what? (It cannot be meant of any outward corporal burthen, or viſible load laid upon his back; but, *I have born*) chaſtiſement, affliction, or correction; *It is meet to be ſaid unto God, I have born chaſtiſement*; That is, I both have and will bear, whatſoever thou haſt, or ſhalt be pleaſed to lay upon me; I will not diſpute thy burthens, but take them up. So then, this firſt part of the verſe is a direction miniſtred to *Job*, ſhewing him how to behave himſelf in the bearing of affliction; He muſt not ſtrive or ſtruggle with them, nor with God about them, but ſuſtain them. And this direction is not peculiar to *Job*'s perſon, or to his caſe alone, but it belongs to all that are in affliction, let their caſe be what it will; all ſuch ought to bear quietly or patiently to abide under the burden which God layeth upon them. I ſhall not ſtay upon the opening of the ſpecial ſignification of that word *chaſtiſement*, becauſe it is not in the Hebrew Text, only thus, chaſtiſements are uſually taken for thoſe afflictions, or afflicting providences, which God layeth upon his own children; he layeth judgments upon the wicked, and puniſhments upon the ungodly, but properly, and ſtrictly, that which falls upon his own people is called *chaſtiſement*. For though in Scripture, there are diſpenſations of God towards his own people, ſpoken of under the notion of judgment, yet they have not a proper ſenſe of judgment, as proceeding from wrath, and intended for revenge. Wrath is the ſpring from whence judgments flow, and as to their iſſue, they tend to the ſatisfaction of Juſtice. This God doth not expect, at the hands of his own children, and therefore their afflictions are moſt properly called chaſtiſements, *Surely it is meet to be ſaid unto God, I have born chaſtiſement.*

Hence Note, *It is our duty when the hand of God is upon us, or when we are under chaſtiſements to ſpeak humbly, meekly, and ſubmiſſively to God.*

We ought always to be humble, and carry it humbly towards God, but then eſpecially when God by any afflicting providence is humbling us. The Prophet (*Hoſ.* 14. 2.) calling that people to return unto the Lord, adviſeth thus; *Take with you words, and turn to the Lord, ſay unto him, take away all iniquity, and receive us graciouſly, ſo will we render the calves of our lips.* As *Elihu* here makes a kind of directory, what a perſon in affliction ſhould ſay unto God, *It is meet to ſay unto God,* that is, for a man in thy caſe, to ſay thus unto God; ſo that Prophet, by the Spirit, ſaith, *Take unto you words, and turn to the Lord*, and ſay or ſpeak thus unto him; though not ſtrictly, ſyllabically, in ſo many words, yet to this ſenſe, and purpoſe, or according to this tenour, ſpeak thus, *Take away iniquity, and receive us graciouſly.* And when the Prophet ſaith, *Take unto you words*, his meaning is not that they ſhould affectedly ſtudy a form of words for God, much leſs that they ſhould artificially counterfeit words which their hearts had not conceived, or were not correſpondent to their hearts, (many ſpeak words, even to God, which never come near but are meer ſtrangers to the intents of their hearts) but ſincere words, humble words, words of ſupplication, not expoſtulating words, not quarrelling words, not murmuring words, not meer complaining words, but take to you words of confeſſion, and ſubmiſſion, and ſo preſent your ſelves and your condition before the Lord. The Preacher (*Eccleſ.* 12. 10.) *Sought to find out acceptable words*, and ſo ſhould we when we ſpeak unto men; Preachers of the word ſhould ſeek to find out acceptable words; not fine words, not ſwelling words of vanity, not flattering ſoothing words, but *acceptable words,* that is, ſuch as may find eaſie paſſage into the heart; or ſuch words as may make their paſſage into the heart, through the power of the Spirit of God. Now if the Preacher ſought to find out acceptable words, when he ſpake to the people, much more ſhould we when we ſpeak to God. O how ſhould we labour then to find out acceptable words! All words are not fit to be ſpoken unto God; the words that are (in ſuch caſes as the Text ſpeaks of) may be reduced to theſe two heads.

Firſt, They muſt be *God juſtifying words*, that is, words by which we acquit the Juſtice of God, how ſore, and how heavy ſoever his hand is upon us. When *Daniel* (Chap. 9. 7, 14.) was laying before the Lord the calamitous ſtate of that people (they were under as ſore judgments as ever nation was, *For under the whole Heavens* (ſaith he there) *hath not been done, as God hath done unto Jeruſalem*) yet all the words he ſpake unto God, tended unto the juſtification of God; *O Lord* (ſaid he) *righteouſneſs belongeth unto thee, but unto us confuſion of faces, as at this day, to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jeruſalem,* &c. We have not had one ſtroak more, then we have deſerved, there hath not been a grain of weight more in our burthen, then we have brought upon our ſelves, there hath not been a drop in our cup more then we have given juſt cauſe for, *Therefore hath the Lord watched upon the evil, and brought it upon us, for the Lord our God is righteous in all his works, which he doth, for we obeyed not his voice*; theſe are words fit to be ſpoken unto God.

Secondly, We are to take to our ſelves *ſelf-condemning, ſelf-abaſing, ſelf-emptying words.* Such we find in that Chapter, (*Verſ.* 5. 6, 7.) *To us belong ſhame, and confuſion of face,* &c. Theſe are the words we ſhould take to our ſelves, and thus it is meet to be ſaid unto God, whenſoever his chaſtiſements are upon us.

Secondly, Obſerve, *It is our duty to acknowledg it to God, that he hath chaſtened us, when he hath.*

We muſt own his hand in afflicting us, as much as in proſpering us, in caſting us down, as much as in lifting us up, in wounding us, as much as in healing us; It is meet to be ſaid unto God, we have born chaſtiſement, thy hand hath been upon us. The neglect of, or rather obſtinacy againſt this, is charged as a great ſin (*Iſa.* 26. 17.) *Lord, when thy hand is lifted up, they will not ſee*; that is, they will not acknowledg thy moſt eminent appearances in anger againſt them. 'Tis ſo with many at this day, though there be a hand of God (as it were) viſibly afflicting their bodies, and eſtates, their children and families; yet they will not ſee, that it is a hand of God; but ſay as the Philiſtines, *it is a chance*, or, it is our ill fortune; it is from the negligence of this man, or from the malice of that other man. All this while there is no acknowledgment of the hand of God. They ſay not with *Eli*, (1 Sam. 3.18.) *It is the Lord*; nor with *David*, (*Pſal.* 39. 9, 10.) *I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, becauſe thou didſt it*; *Remove thy ſtroke away from me, I am conſumed by the blow of thine hand. It is as much our duty, and for the glory of God, to confeſs that our afflictions are of God, as our mercies and favours.*

Thirdly, Obſerve, *The chaſtenings of God muſt be born, they muſt be endured.*

Many are chaſtiſed who cannot ſay they have born chaſtiſements; It's an ordinary thing to be under chaſtiſement, but its a great thing and requires much holy skill and ſpiritualneſs to bear a chaſtiſement; the duty of a Chriſtian lies moſt in two points.

Firſt in doing, or in active obedience.

Secondly in ſuffering, or in paſſive obedience, and there is as much of God, as much of grace, as much of holineſs, yea I may ſay much more held out in bearing and in ſuffering, then there is in acting or in doing.

But you will ſay, what is it *to bear*, that you make it ſo difficult a matter to bear chaſtiſements? How muſt chaſtiſements be born? Or what is it to bear them?

I will anſwer the queſtion under two heads. Firſt, Negatively, To bear chaſtiſement is not,

Firſt, meerly to find or feel it upon our ſhoulders as a burthen which pincheth or preſſeth us; ſo a beaſt may bear.

Secondly, It is not a bearing meerly becauſe we cannot help it, or be rid of our burden, for ſo the worſt of men may bear; they bear the greateſt burthens that God layeth upon them, becauſe they cannot avoid them, nor eaſe themſelves of them.

Thirdly, It is not a bearing ſtoutly, or ſlightingly, to make nothing of it; ſo proud men bear, men of unſubdued ſpirits unto God, and his word, regard not what they bear, nor what God doth to them.

Fourthly, It is not a bearing them ſowrly or ſullenly; for ſo diſcontented perſons bear; yea, ſo the Devil beareth the burthen which the hand of God hath laid upon him.

Fifthly, Nor is it a bearing chaſtiſement faintly or diſpondingly; ſo weak believers bear. *To bear and faint, is not the bearing of faith.* Neither of theſe are the bearing of chaſtiſement which *Elihu* intends in this counſel, when he ſaith, *It is meet to be ſaid unto God, I have born chaſtiſement.* Thus ye ſee the Negative, what the bearing of it is not?

Secondly, I anſwer affirmatively, To bear a chaſtiſement as an act or work of grace, is

Firſt to bear it *ſenſibly*; that is, feeling the weight of the hand of God, and taſting the bitterneſs of that cup of ſorrow which he giveth us to drink.

Secondly, 'Tis a bearing of it ſubmittingly, humbly, patiently, laying our ſelves down at the foot of God, and ſaying, as *Eli* did, *Let him do what ſeemeth him good*; or as *David*, (2 Sam. 15. 26.) *Behold, here I am, let him do to me as ſeemeth good unto him.* We never bear any evil of affliction well, till we can ſay (with a ſweet reſignation of our ſelves) to God, do with us what ſeemeth to thee good. And (for our encouragement I may ſay) nothing can hurt a godly man which ſeemeth good to God.

Thirdly, 'Tis a contentful bearing, or a bearing contentedly; Thus Chriſt ſpake (*Pſal.* 40. and 'tis cited by the Apoſtle *Heb.* 10.) *Lo, I come to do thy will, I am content to do it*; what was that? It was to bear or ſuffer; the greateſt part of what Chriſt was to do, was to bear or ſuffer *the chaſtiſement of our peace*, (Iſa. 53. 5.) and in ſuffering to be made a ſacrifice for us; his contentment to do the will of God, was a contentment to ſuffer. Of ſuch a ſpirit ſhould the people of God be; bearing chaſtiſement not only patiently, but contentedly; this is hard, but this cannot be left out in the full exerciſe of that grace.

Fourthly, 'Tis to bear it (more then contentedly) willingly; how free was Chriſt to bear, when he ſaid (*John* 18. 11.) *The cup which my Father hath given me, ſhall I not drink it?* Surely I will, I am willing to drink it, though it be a bitter cup. We are not to will our ſufferings, but to ſuffer them willingly; there is a vaſt difference between theſe two; I do not ſay we are to will our ſufferings, but we are to ſuffer them willingly; we muſt ſuffer what, and how, and when, and how long God will; and when God willeth our ſufferings, we muſt ſuffer with our wills, or be willing to ſuffer.

Fifthly, To bear chaſtiſement in the ſenſe here intended, is not only to bear it with our will, but with our affections, not only willingly, but acceptably, and embracingly; 'tis to ſay *welcom croſs*, becauſe it is the will of God. There is no chaſtiſement that we can rejoyce in, or have any affection to, conſidered in it ſelf, but to bear chaſtiſement in contemplation of the will of God, ſhould work our hearts to an accepting, to an embracing, to a welcoming of it; we ſhould ſay to all our ſufferings, welcom, by the will of God.

Sixthly, 'Tis to bear it prayerfully; we muſt bear ſilently in oppoſition to complaining; but we muſt not bear ſilently in oppoſition to praying. While chaſtiſement is upon our backs, ſupplications muſt be in our mouths; and we muſt pray, firſt, That we may ſee the reaſon why or for what cauſe God chaſteneth us: Secondly, We muſt pray, that we may anſwer the ends which God aimeth at in chaſtening us. Thirdly, That we may have freſh power to bear his chaſtenings. Fourthly, That God would be pleaſed to remove our chaſtenings. While we bear chaſtenings, we may pray, and pray hard that God would take them away. *David* had no ſooner ſaid, *I opened not my mouth*, (that is, complainingly) *becauſe thou didſt it* (Pſal. 39. 9.) but preſently he opened his mouth in prayer (*Verſ.* 10.) *Remove thy ſtroke away from me.* While we bear our croſs patiently and willingly, it would be our ſin not to pray for deliverance from it. To ſay I am under a chaſtiſement, and let the Lord keep it upon me as long as he will, I will never ask him to take it off, were a moſt unbecoming frame of ſpirit. They that bear affliction moſt cheerfully, ſhould pray moſt earneſtly to be eaſed of it; we muſt be willing to bear them always, yet we muſt pray that we may not bear them long. If a child under the rod of a parent, ſhould not ſay, *pray Father ſtay your hand, it is enough*, but let him go on ſtriking, and never intimate a deſire of his forbearance, this were a ſign of ſtubbornneſs, not of patience and ſubmiſſion. 'Tis as bad not to ask releaſe from our troubles, as to murmure at them, or to be unquiet under them. Remember then, you muſt be as much in the exerciſe of prayer as of patience under the croſs, and that in theſe four reſpects. Thus you have the anſwer to that queſtion; by which it appears, that 'tis no eaſie matter to ſay what *Elihu* ſaith, *It is meet to be ſaid unto God, I have born chaſtiſement?*

There is yet another queſtion, (for ſome may demand) why ſhould chaſtiſements be thus born? I anſwer,

Firſt, We muſt bear them according to all the rules before given, becauſe they come from God. Our afflictions are Gods allotment, we muſt bear what he appoints: therefore old *Eli*, though he had failed, and ſinned greatly, and ſo brought a cloud of calamity upon himſelf and his family (the very report whereof, as *Samuel* told him, would make both ears of every one that heard it, to tingle) yet he compoſed his ſpirit to a ſubmiſſive hearing of it, upon this ſingle conſideration, *It is the Lord*, and there is enough in that conſideration to make all men ſubmit. For firſt, The Lord is ſupream, and therefore what he doth muſt be born. Secondly, He is a *Father*, a child muſt bear what a Father layeth upon him; and as the Lord is a Father, ſo he is not a haſty, imprudent, or paſſionate Father, but a moſt wiſe and judicious Father; therefore 'tis our intereſt as well as our duty to bear his chaſtiſements. Yea, he is a gracious, tender, and compaſſionate Father, and when we know he that layeth a hand of affliction upon us, hath alſo a heart full of compaſſion towards us, we ſhould willingly bear his hand.

Secondly, Chaſtiſements are to be born in the manner directed, becauſe they are for our good, and ſhall we not bear what is good for us? *It is good for me* (ſaid *David*, Pſal. 119. 71.) *that I have been afflicted*; and ſo the Apoſtle (*Heb.* 12. 10.) *For they verily for a few days, chaſtened us after their own pleaſure, but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holineſs.* Chaſtiſements are for our profit, and ſhall not we bear that which is for our profit? If God ſhould lay chaſtiſements on us for our hurt, meerly to vex us, and to put us to pain, or meerly becauſe he delights in our ſufferings, who could bear them? But it is meet to bear what God lays upon us, becauſe he doth it for our good and profit.

Thirdly, We muſt bear chaſtiſements in the manner ſhewed, becauſe unleſs we bear them ſo, they will do us no good, or we ſhall have no profit by them, and that's a miſery indeed. To bear ſmart, and find no advantage coming in by it; to drink gall, and to have no ſweetneſs come out of it; to endure loſs, and to have no kind of profit by it is very grievous. Now what ever chaſtiſement is laid upon any, it doth them no good, and they can have no profit by it, unleſs they bear it as was before deſcribed; it is not the bare being afflicted, that doth us good, but it is the wiſe management, or the ſkilful bearing of it that doth us good;

and therefore we find, that the Apoſtle (*Heb.* 12.11.) when he had ſaid, *There is no affliction joyous for the preſent, but grievous*, adds, *Nevertheleſs afterwards it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteouſneſs*, (but to whom? What to every one that is afflicted, have they theſe ſweet fruits? No, but) *to them that are exerciſed thereby.* Afflictions bring no ſweet fruits to them that have them, unleſs they be exerciſed by them, How exerciſed? Afflictions exerciſe every one that hath them; they are to all a paſſive exerciſe, but to be exerciſed, notes here an active exerciſe; they who graciouſly exerciſe themſelves in affliction, ſhall without doubt find benefit and fruit by affliction.

But ſome may ſay, what is it to be thus exerciſed by affliction?

I anſwer (for the opening of that Scripture) to be exerciſed, is,

Firſt, To be much in ſearching our own hearts, and ways, or how 'tis with us, and what hath been done by us, (*Eccl.* 7.14.) *In the day of adverſity conſider*, that is, bethink your ſelves, Firſt, What God is doing. Secondly, What you have been doing. Thirdly, What becomes you to do in ſuch a day. The Prophet points us to the two latter Duties of ſuch a day in one verſe, (*Lam.* 3.40.) *Let us ſearch and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord. To ſearch our ways*, is to conſider what we have been doing; *to turn to the Lord*, is the great thing to be done, in a day of adverſity.

Secondly, As this exerciſe of the Soul conſiſts in ſearching our own hearts; ſo in ſearching the heart of God (if I may ſo ſpeak) that is, in an humble enquiry to the utmoſt, what God meaneth by any affliction, what hath moved him to afflict us, and we have as much cauſe to ſearch Gods heart, as our own in this caſe. Thus in that National affliction (2*Sam.* 21.1.) when the famine continued three years, year after year, it is ſaid, *David enquired of the Lord, why is it thus?* He ſearcht Gods heart by deſiring an anſwer from the Lord, what ſin it was which provoked him to that ſad diſpenſation. And thus we ſhould be enquiring of God by prayer what ſin he ſtriketh at, or what grace he ſpecially calleth us to act, by any affliction which he ſendeth either upon our families or perſons.

Thirdly, There is an exerciſing of our ſelves in ſearching the affliction it ſelf; firſt, into the nature of it. Secondly, into the circumſtances of it, how timed, and meaſured, by what hand, and in what way the Lord deals with us; this is a great exerciſe, and unleſs we are thus exerciſed under affliction, we get ſmart, and loſs, and bitterneſs, but no good at all by it. So much for the firſt counſel given *Job* by *Elihu*, *It is meet to be ſaid unto God, I have born chaſtiſement.*

His ſecond counſel as it lies here in the order of the Text, is about the reformation, or the amendment of what is amiſs.

לא אחבל *à radice* חבל *ſignificat magna nocendi cupiditate ardere ſicut mulieres ardent deſiderio concipiendi fœtum; transfertur in ſecunda conjugatione, vel ad parturientium dolores, vel ad concupiſcendi libidinem.* Moller *in* Pſal. 7.14. *Non tantum in* Piel, *ſed & in* Kal *videtur uſurpari pro corrumpere*, Zech.11.7.14. Job 34.31. *De Dieu in loc.*

I will not offend any more.] It is fit the afflicted ſhould ſay unto God, *I will not offend.* The root of the word here uſed, ſignifieth ſometimes the pains of travel in Child-bearing, (*Cant.* 8.5.) *I raiſed thee up under the Apple-tree, there thy mother brought thee forth, there ſhe brought thee forth that bare thee.* And again (*Pſal.* 7.14.) *Behold he travelleth with iniquity, and hath conceived miſchief, and brought forth falſhood:* It ſignifieth alſo in Scripture to corrupt, or to pollute, (*Neh.* 1.7.) *We have dealt very corruptly againſt thee, and have not kept the Commandments, nor the Statutes, nor the Judgments which thou commandeſt thy ſervant* Moſes. To deal corruptly, or to do corruptly, what is it but to ſin againſt or offend God? Every offence or ſin, ſprings from the corruption of our own hearts, and is a corruption of our ways and manners. Both theſe readings, *I will not offend*, or, *I will not corrupt*, meet in the ſame ſence; for to corrupt our ways is to offend, and to offend is to corrupt our ways; to do any evil is to corrupt our ſelves, or others. So then the meaning is plainly this, I will corrupt my way no more; the man in affliction muſt ſay to God in a deep ſenſe of, and ſorrow for his former ſins, offences, and corruptions, *I will offend, I will corrupt no more.* Now, comparing the former counſel with this;

Obſerve, Firſt, *Chaſtiſement is for amendment.*

The evil of affliction is brought upon us, that we may take heed of, and turn from the evil of ſin; (that's intimated by the connexion) therefore to go on offending, while God is chaſtening, is to add rebellion to our ſin. It was the brand of *Ahaz* (2Chron.28.22.) *in the time of his diſtreſs, he treſpaſſed yet more againſt the Lord*; whereas being in diſtreſs, he ſhould have ſaid to the Lord, *I will treſpaſs no more.*

Note, Secondly, *When God chaſtens us, we ſhould promiſe amendment.*

We ſhould tell God, we will offend him no more, we will grieve him no more, we will provoke him no more, we will diſhonour him no more; the leaſt ſin once committed is too much, therefore we ſhould engage to ſin no more.

But it may be queſtion'd, can any man make ſuch a promiſe, or take ſuch an engagement upon himſelf, when under chaſtiſement, that he will offend no more? Is that degree of perfection attainable in this life, to offend no more? How then is this *meet to be ſaid unto God, I will offend no more?* Muſt we promiſe things that we cannot perform? Is there any man chaſtened that offends not again? Saith not the Apoſtle *James, In many things we offend all?* Is it then meet to ſay this unto God, *I will offend no more?* Is it not ſinful to make a promiſe not to ſin? I anſwer,

Firſt, By way of conceſſion. No man may promiſe, what ever his chaſtiſements are, that he never will ſin at all any more, no man can make any ſuch promiſe, neither is that the meaning here; but he that is under the chaſtening hand of God, may and muſt, promiſe that he will not commit ſuch, or ſuch a ſin any more; eſpecially not ſuch a ſin as he moſt ſuſpects to have brought the chaſtiſement upon his back; we may make promiſes againſt particular ſins; though we cannot promiſe we will never ſin.

Secondly, We may promiſe, when we are under the chaſtening hand of God, that we will offend no more, in ſuch a manner as we have offended formerly, ſo fooliſhly, ſo vainly, ſo negligently; we may and muſt promiſe to be more watchful, that we ſin not the ſame ſin again either for matter or manner.

Thirdly, When chaſtened, we may ſay unto God abſolutely, we will offend no more, with reſpect to the purpoſe of our Souls; that is, we muſt lay aſide all purpoſes of committing any ſin; yea we may, we muſt tell the Lord, 'tis the deſire and purpoſe of our Souls, 'tis our aim, and ſhall be our endeavour to offend no more. The aim of every true believer is not to ſin, though (in this world) it be not the attainment of any (1*Joh.* 2.1.) *My little Children theſe things I write unto you, that ye ſin not:* As if the Apoſtle had ſaid, I would fain wind up your hearts to ſuch a pitch, that you may not ſin at all; *But if any man ſin, we have an Advocate with the Father*; I know you cannot but ſin, yet let it be your care not to ſin, and your prayers to offend no more. And how ſhould we bleſs the Lord, if we could live without ſin, and be for ever rid of it! We ſhould wiſh a thouſand times more to be quit of ſin, then affliction; thus we muſt ſay unto God, we will offend no more.

Fourthly, Though we cannot promiſe, or take up ſuch a reſolution abſolutely, nor in our own ſtrength, yet we may and ought in the ſtrength of Chriſt, or to the utmoſt of that ſtrength and grace, which he gives out, and beſtoweth upon us.

I ſhall have occaſion to ſpeak further to this point, from thoſe words of the 32. or next verſe, (which are of neer alliance both as to matter and form with theſe here) *If I have done iniquity, I will do no more.*

Only before I paſs from this rendring of the Text in hand, take two Notes more; in that *Elihu* telleth the penitent perſon, he ought to ſay unto God, *I will not offend any more.*

Note, Firſt, *A truly humbled and repenting Soul, is as careful to avoid the act of ſin for the time to come, as to be freed from the guilt of ſin paſt.*

This holy care is a ſure argument of a good Conſcience. A wicked wretch may be deſirous to have former offences pardoned, but he hath not any unfeigned purpoſe not to offend any more; and uſually he hath no ſooner caſt up his ſin by a ſeeming penitent confeſſion, but he returns with the Dog to his Vomit by a freſh commiſſion of his ſin. Sorrow for ſin yields no comfort, if not accompanied with a care not to ſin. Chriſt was not ſo rigid to the woman taken in Adultery as her accuſers were, yet he ſaith to her, (*John.* 8. 11.) *Go and ſin no more*; as if he had ſaid, thy caſe will be ſad, though now thou haſt eſcaped or got rid of thy accuſers, if thou tradeſt on in this wicked way. And when *David* prayed for purging the ſin paſt, he alſo prayed for eſtabliſhed by the free Spirit of God, againſt ſuch-like temptations in time to come, (*Pſal.* 51.) as if he had ſaid, Lord, I do not ask pardon that I might take liberty to offend again, but I deſire thy confirming and preventing grace, that I may offend no more.

Secondly, From the extenſiveneſs of this engagement, to which *Elihu* directs the penitent perſon, *I will not offend any more*, neither in one kind nor other.

Note, *He that is truly humbled for any one ſin, will to his utmoſt avoid every ſin.*

He ſaith, I will not offend any more. He that loves God, cannot live in the doing of any one thing which God hates; but as he expects good out of all the promiſes, ſo he hath reſpect to all the commandments; whoſoever hath ſo, would not offend in any thing any more.

Further, as this latter clauſe is Tranſlated, *I will corrupt no more.*

Note, Firſt, *Sin is a corruption.*

We ſhall do well to look upon ſin in all its notions, to make it loathſom to us; this is one notion of it, ſin corrupts every thing and perſon it hath to do with.

Firſt, Sin is the corruption of our nature, the whole maſs of mankind, and the whole of every man is leavened by it.

Secondly, Sin is the corruption of our converſation, and of our way, (*Gen.* 6. 11, 12.) *God looked upon the earth, and behold it was corrupt, for all fleſh had corrupted his way upon the earth.* *Moſes* warns the people of Iſrael againſt ſin upon this ground, (*Deut.* 4. 16.) *Leſt ye corrupt your ſelves, and make you a graven image*, Read *Pſal.* 53. 1. *Hoſ.* 9. 9. *Zeph.* 3. 7. *Zech.* 3. 7.

Thirdly, Sinning is the corrupting of the Commandments of God, a ſinner as much as in him lieth makes void the Law.

Fourthly, Sinning is a corrupting of the Covenant of God; yea ſome kind of ſinning is a corrupting the blood of the Covenant, or a counting the blood of the Covenant as an unholy thing (*Heb.* 10. 29.) though the blood of the Covenant be in it ſelf infinitely above all corruption, yet ſin doth what it can to corrupt it.

Laſtly, Some render, *it is meet to be ſaid unto God, I have born chaſtiſement, I will not break*; which we may underſtand two ways. Firſt, *I will not again break* the Commandment; ſo it falls in with our Tranſlation, *I will not offend.* Secondly, *I will not break*; that is, thoſe rods, or bonds of chaſtiſement that thou haſt laid upon me; as if he ſhould ſay, Lord, thou haſt bound me in theſe fetters of affliction, and I will abide thy pleaſure under them, I will not ſtrive, but ſubmit, I will not break priſon, but wait thy time for my deliverance.

Ideo ad Deum dici debet perfero, non diſrumpam. Bez.

Hence Note, *We muſt bear, not break the bonds of our affliction.*

Some (like ſtubborn children under the chaſtening hand of a Parent) would even break away from God; or like malefactors, when under the hand of Juſtice, they would break priſon, knock off their irons, and get away. As the wicked do, and ſpeak concerning the bands and cords of Gods Commandments, (*Pſal.* 2. 3.) *Let us break their bands aſunder, and caſt away their cords from us*; ſo ſome ſpeak and do about the bands and cords of divine chaſtiſements, they will break from them, or break them, if poſſibly they can. Let ſuch remember, 'tis beſt when they are in Gods bands, to let him unty them, and when they are in his priſon, 'tis good to abide there, till he is pleaſed to diſcharge and let them out. The Apoſtles being in priſon, the Magiſtrates ſent the Sergeants, ſaying, *Let theſe men go*, but *Paul* ſaid unto them, *they have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans, and have caſt us into priſon, and now do they thruſt us out privily, nay verily, but let them come themſelves and fetch us out.* A godly man when under reſtraint by the illegal or rigorous dealings of the Magiſtrate, will not accept his liberty, upon unworthy terms; ſurely then he will not make an eſcape out of the hand of God unwarrantably, He is ready to accept his liberty with much thankfulneſs, but he will not force it with violence. A godly man would free himſelf from ſin, and get Heaven by a kind of force (as Chriſt ſpeaks in the Goſpel) but he would not free himſelf from ſuffering by force, nor get his eaſe by violence. When God binds him, he ſaith (according to this Reading) *I will not break.*

But you will ſay, who may be ſaid to break or get by force out of the chaſtning hand of God?

I anſwer; Firſt, they do it, by way of interpretation, who are impatient and unquiet in their afflictions. A child that ſtrives and ſtruggles under his fathers rod, breaks away from him as much as he can.

Secondly, They actually break from under the hand of God, who by any ſinful way help themſelves out of their afflictions. Such, when God hath bound them with the cords of affliction, go to the Devil to looſe and let them out. 'Tis ſad when God impriſons a man, But O how ſad is it to go to the Devil for a releaſe; yet ſo do all they who being under affliction, endeavour to free themſelves by any ſinful way; eſpecially when they who are perſecuted for the faith and truth of Chriſt, break their faith with Chriſt, and quit the truth before profeſſed, that they may quit themſelves from perſecution. O take heed of ſuch deliverances, rather die under the afflicting hand of God, or the perſecuting hand of man, then free your ſelves from either by putting your hand or ſuffering your mouth to ſin. Better be utterly broken by affliction, then ſo to break the bands of affliction; better die in affliction, then ſin your ſelves out of affliction. Let God who hath laid the burthen upon you, take it off, or elſe lie under it ſtill. Thus much for theſe two counſels given *Job* by *Elihu*; *It is meet to be ſaid unto God, I have born chaſtiſement*, and, *it is meet to be ſaid unto God, I will offend no more*; there is yet a third thing to be ſaid unto God, which *Elihu* gives alſo in Counſel, *that which I ſee not teach thou me*; But, before I proceed to that, I ſhall a while conſider another Tranſlation of the verſe already opened, very Conſiſtent with the Original Text, and much Inſiſted upon by ſome learned Interpreters, as being full of Goſpel ſenſe, and very ſpiritual matter. According to this ſecond reading the words run thus:

Sed ad Deum fortem, qui dicit condono, non deſtruam, dicendum eſt præterquam quod video tu doce me, ſi iniquitatem operatus ſum non pergam. Merl.

Verſ. 31. **But to the Almighty God who ſaith, I forgive, I will not deſtroy; It ought to be ſaid, beſide what I ſee teach thou me, if I have done Iniquity, I will not proceed to do it.**

The difference of the Tranſlation is very evident and eminent; we read thus; *Surely it is meet to be ſaid to God, I have born chaſtiſement, I will not offend any more.* This Tranſlation ſaith, *But to God who ſaith I forgive*, &c. *It ought to be ſaid*, &c. Mr. *Broughton*, is expreſs for this Tranſlation, rendring the Text in theſe words; *Now unto the omnipotent which ſaith, I pardon, I will not deſtroy, this ſhall be ſaid, what I ſee not teach thou me*, &c.

As the words according to our Tranſlation contain an humble and a very gracious acknowledgment of the Chaſtening hand of God, and mans promiſe of reformation; ſo according to this they contain a moſt precious deſcription of the moſt gracious diſpoſition of God, ſpeaking two things of himſelf to man.

Firſt, As pardoning.

Secondly, As not deſtroying. From this double diſcovery of God, a double duty is inferr'd, incumbent upon man. For God having thus declared himſelf ready to forgive ſin, and loth to deſtroy ſinners, every ſinner ſhould be induced to ſay thus to God; *I ſee many of my ſins, and I believe I have many ſins more which I ſee not; therefore, firſt, I beg of thee, O God, that thou wouldeſt ſhew me what I ſee not, and, ſecondly, that thou wouldeſt keep me for ever from doing or committing again that evil which thou ſhalt ſhew me or cauſe me to ſee.* Thus the 32. verſe is an Inference of a two-fold duty in man, upon that two fold manifeſtation of the goodneſs of God, as a God that willingly pardoneth ſin, and as a God that is unwilling to deſtroy ſinners.

Or we may give the ſum of theſe two verſes (according unto this ſecond Tranſlation) thus; We have firſt an Exhortation to repentance from the moſt merciful nature of God, both as ready to forgive, and as loth to deſtroy

his

1 *Condono, in quo eſt remiſſio culpæ.*
2 *Non deſtruam in quo eſt remiſſio pœnæ.*

his creatures. The former act importing the taking away of the guilt of ſin; the latter the remittal and removal of the puniſhment.

Secondly, We have here a direction about repentance, or to the penitent, ſhewing, how an humbled Soul ſhould behave himſelf towards God; He ought to ſay thus; *What I ſee not teach thou me, and if I have done iniquity, I will do no more.* Where we ſee the humbled Soul in the exerciſe of a fourfold duty; Firſt, He confeſſeth what ſins he knoweth; Secondly, He confeſſeth or ſuppoſeth, that he hath many ſins which he doth not know. Thirdly, He intreateth the Lord to ſhew him every ſin, whether of heart or life, which he knoweth not of. Fourthly, He engageth that he will not continue in any ſin which the Lord ſhall diſcover to him, or give him the knowledg of. You have thus the general ſcope of theſe two verſes according to the ſecond Reading.

I ſhall now a little open the words, and give Notes from them according to this Tranſlation.

But unto God who ſaith, I forgive.

It may here be juſtly queſtioned, how the Original can be render'd into ſuch variety; one Tranſlation ſaith, *It is meet to be ſaid to God, I have born chaſtiſement*; this other ſaith, *To God who ſaith, I forgive, I will not deſtroy; It ought to be ſaid*, &c. The firſt reading makes the words to be ſpoken by man; this ſecond reading gives the words as ſpoken both by God and man, or they are a direction given by the Spirit of God to man, what to ſay to God, *Who ſaith, I forgive, I will not deſtroy?*

Verbum נשא *latiſſimè patet ſi quid aliud Hebraicum, inter alios tolerandi, parcendi, condonandi remittendi ſignificatum habet etiam ſolitariè poſitum ut hic.*

I anſwer, for the clearing of that doubt, the difference of the readings ariſeth from the copious ſignification of one Hebrew word, which is rendred many ways in Scripture, eſpecially two.

Firſt, *To bear*, in which ſenſe we Tranſlate, *I have born chaſtiſement.* The word *chaſtiſement*, as was ſhewed before, is not expreſly in the Text, but ſupplyed, to make out the ſenſe, by our Tranſlaters: *I have born*, what? Thy hand, thy chaſtiſement.

Secondly, It ſignifies alſo *to pardon*, or *to forgive*; I ſhall refer you to one Scripture, in which that word is uſed in both theſe ſenſes (*Gen.* 4. 13.) *And Cain ſaid unto the Lord, my puniſhment is greater then I can bear*; that's the Text, but if you read the margin of our larger Bibles, that ſaith, *My iniquity is greater then that it may be forgiven, or pardoned*; the Text ſaith, *my puniſhment*; the margin ſaith, *my iniquity*; the ſame word ſignifieth both ſin the cauſe, and puniſhment the fruit. Again, there the Text ſaith, *My puniſhment is greater then I can bear*; and the margin ſaith, *my iniquity is greater then that it can be forgiven*: So that according to the Text, the words are *Cains* complaint againſt the juſtice of God; that he dealt over-rigorouſly with him, *My puniſhment is greater then I can bear.* And according to the margin, they are a deſcription of his deſpair of the mercy of God, *my ſin is greater then that it may be forgiven.* And as we find the word uſed in that place, both for bearing, and for pardoning; So in ſeveral other places it is Tranſlated by pardoning; take but one Inſtance in the Pſalms, where we find it Tranſlated twice in the ſpace of a few verſes to forgive or pardon (*Pſal.* 32. 1.) *Bleſſed is the man whoſe iniquity is forgiven.* And again, *Verſ.* 5. *I ſaid I will confeſs my iniquity, and thou forgaveſt the iniquity of my ſin*; So that, though there be a different verſion and Tranſlation of the word in this Text of Scripture, yet it is ſuch as is conſonant to the uſe of the word in other Scriptures, and alſo to the truth of the whole Scripture.

Yea, we know that in our Engliſh tongue, to *bear with a man*, ſignifies to forgive him his preſent fault, or not to puniſh him and uſe extremity againſt him for it. And therefore according to the exigence of any place, the word may be Tranſlated either way, and here it may be ſafely taken in both.

But to God who ſaith, I forgive, I will not deſtroy, it ought (or, it is meet) to be ſaid, what I ſee not teach thou me.

Elihu according to the reading now before us, brings in God thus ſpeaking, yea even boaſting thus of himſelf, *I forgive, or I pardon.*

Hence Note, Firſt, *It is Gods own profeſſion of his own ſelf, that he is a ſinpardoning God.*

And God doth ſay ſo much or profeſs this of himſelf, that when he was intreated by *Moſes* to ſhew him his glory, this was the chief thing which he ſaid of himſelf (*Exod.* 34. 6, 7.) *And the Lord paſſed before him, and proclaimed the Lord, the Lord God merciful and gracious, long-ſuffering and abundant in goodneſs and truth, keeping mercy for thouſands, forgiving iniquity, tranſgreſſion and ſin.* Here's my name (ſaith God) if you would know how I am called, or what I would call my ſelf, this is it, *I am a God forgiving iniquity*, &c.

And as God pardoneth ſin, ſo there is none in Heaven or in earth that pardoneth like him, that hath ſuch a name for pardon as God hath (*Mic.* 7. 18.) *Who is a God like unto thee, pardoning iniquity*, &c. The gods of the Earth, that is, Kings and Princes give pardons, and to do ſo is the ſweeteſt and choiceſt flower in the Crown of Princes, and they uſually ſhew their greatneſs by this act of grace when they come firſt to their Crown and exerciſe of their ſoveraign power. The Princes or gods of the Earth can pardon, but ('tis no diſparagement to put that queſtion) *Can they pardon like God?* No; their pardon is no pardon in compariſon of Gods pardon; yea their pardoning is a kind of condemning compared with the pardoning grace of God. The pardons which Kings give are but the ſhadow of his pardon, who is King of Kings (*Iſa.* 43. 25.) *I, even I am he that blotteth out thy tranſgreſſion.* As if he had ſaid, I am he, and there is none elſe; this glory is proper to me, and none can partake with me in it, nor will I give this glory to another. All ſins are committed againſt God, and (in a ſenſe) againſt him only, therefore only to be pardoned by him. Who can remit the debt but the Creditor? (*Pſal.* 51. 1.) *Againſt thee, thee only have I ſinned.* What debt ſoever we run into by any ſin committed againſt man, God only is the Creditor. All that men can do, is but to forgive the treſpaſs againſt themſelves; ſo far as man is wronged, he may, yea he ought to forgive, as Chriſt teacheth us to pray (*Matth.* 6. 12.) *Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.* All that we can forgive is only the treſpaſs done to our ſelves, and ſo forbear perſonal and private revenge. We cannot forgive the offence againſt God. For when Chriſt ſaith (*John* 21. 20.) *Whoſoever ſins ye remit, they are remitted*; that remiſſion is but the declaring of a pardon, it is not the beſtowing of a pardon, or it is only a miniſterial forgiveneſs, not an authoritative forgiveneſs; ſo to forgive is Gods Royalty; He ſaith, *I forgive.*

Secondly, *To God who ſaith, I forgive*, &c. Forgive! What? Forgive! Whom? Here's neither what nor whom, neither things nor perſons named, God barely ſaith, *I forgive.*

Hence Obſerve, *The pardoning mercy of God is boundleſs and unlimited.*

Here's no ſin named, therefore all are included, no ſinner ſpecified, therefore all are intended. *I forgive, I pardon*; the pardoning mercy of God knows no limits; it is not limited; Firſt, to any ſort of ſins or ſinners; Secondly, it is not limited to any degree of ſins or ſinners; let ſins or ſinners be of what ſort they will, let ſins or ſinners be of what degree they will, they are within the compaſs of Gods pardoning mercy. And as this Text intimates, that the pardoning mercy of God is boundleſs, becauſe it expreſſeth no bounds; So other Scriptures tell us expreſly that it is boundleſs, extending it ſelf to all ſorts and degrees of ſins and ſinners (*Matth.* 12. 31.) *Every ſin and blaſphemy ſhall be forgiven.* That a ſin is great, that it is extremely aggravated, is no bar at all to the pardoning mercy of God; he can as eaſily pardon great ſins as little ſins; even ſins that are as Crimſon and Scarlet, as well as thoſe of the lighteſt tincture. The die or colour of ſome cloaths or ſtuffs, is ſo fading, that (as we ſay) the next wind will blow it off, or cauſe it to die away, but Scarlet and Crimſon in grain never change their colour; yet the pardoning grace of God cauſeth Crimſon and Scarlet ſins to change colour, and makes them as white as the natural wool or ſnow, that is, takes them quite and clean away. Yea the greatneſs of ſin is ſo far from being a ſtop to pardon, that it is uſed as an argument to move God to pardon. *David* prayeth (*Pſal.* 25. 11.) *For thy names ſake O Lord, pardon mine iniquity*, why? Doth he ſay? Becauſe it is little, or only a ſmall ſin, a ſin committed raſhly, unadviſedly, or but once; no; he uſeth none of theſe excuſatory pleas for pardon, but ſaith, *pardon my ſin for it is great.* *Moſes* was not afraid to ſpeak for pardon upon this ground alſo (*Exod.* 32. 31.) *Lord* (ſaith he) *this people have committed a great ſin, and have made them gods of Gold, yet now if thou wilt forgive their ſin*, &c. There's a great deal of divine Rhetorick in that ſpeech; *Moſes* was not doubtful, whether God would forgive them their ſin, becauſe it was great, but he urged the Lord to forgive their ſin becauſe it was great. *Where ſin aboundeth, Grace doth much more abound* (*Rom.* 5.20.) and therefore God is ſaid *to pardon abundantly*, or to multiply to pardon (*Iſa.* 55. 7.) and whom doth he promiſe to pardon there? Even *the man of iniquity*, ſo that Scripture hath it; *Let the wicked forſake his way, and the unrighteous man (or the man of iniquity) his thoughts*, &c. If you who have ſinned abundantly, repent, I will pardon abundantly. The heart of God in pardoning ſin is infinitely larger then the heart of man can be in committing ſin: and as the leaſt ſin needs pardon, ſo the greateſt may have it; nothing hinders the pardon of ſin, but the ſinners not coming for it, or his not asking it. The ſin againſt the holy Ghoſt cannot be forgiven; but the reaſon is, becauſe ſuch as commit that ſin utterly reject the grace of God, and tread the blood of the Covenant under their feet, as an unholy thing.

Thirdly, The Text ſpeaks in the preſent tenſe; God ſaith not, *I will pardon*, or, poſſibly, *I may pardon*, but ſheweth what he both actually doth, and what he always doth, *To God who ſaith I pardon.*

Hence Note, *God pardoneth preſently, he pardoneth continually.*

I pardon, is a preſent, it is a continued act. To pardon is Gods work to day, and Gods work to morrow. As every Soul may ſay of himſelf, *Lord, I ſin*; not only I have ſinned, or I ſhall ſin hereafter, but *I ſin:* ſo ſaith God, *I pardon*; as men ſtand always in need of pardon, ſo God ſtands always prepared to pardon. *He is* (*Pſal.* 86.5.) *plenteous in mercy, ready to forgive*; The heart of God is never out of frame for that work, never indiſpoſed to it. *David* found him ſo (*Pſal.* 32.5.) *I ſaid I will confeſs mine iniquity*; he did not ſay, *I have confeſſed mine iniquity*; he was not come to a formal Confeſſion; only he had it upon his heart to humble himſelf before God, and confeſs his ſin; yet it follows; *and thou forgaveſt the iniquity of my ſin.* While there was but a holy reſolve upon his heart to confeſs his ſin, the pardon of it was given him. The holy Hiſtory of his ſin and of Gods mercy aſſureth us, that the word was no ſooner out of his mouth (2 *Sam.* 12.13.) *I have ſinned*, but inſtantly *Nathan* ſaid, *The Lord hath put away thy ſin.* Though God doth not pardon of courſe, yet he is in a continual courſe of pardon; therefore *Moſes* prayed (*Num.* 14. 19.) That God would *pardon the people according to the greatneſs of his mercy, and as he had forgiven them from Egypt until then.* As if he had ſaid, *Lord, thou haſt been pardoning all along from the very firſt ſtep we took out of Egypt to this day, thou haſt exerciſed abundance of patience, long-ſuffering and mercy in pardoning this people, now Lord pardon us, as thou haſt done from Egypt to this day; do not ſtop thy acts of Grace.* The very firſt act of pardon ſtands for ever, he that is once pardon'd, is always pardon'd: yet there are dayly renewings of pardon, and freſh acts of it every day.

Fourthly, The word render'd *to pardon*, ſignifies *to take away*; as to bear a burden upon our ſelves (according to the former tranſlation) ſo to bear, or lift it off from another.

Hence Note, *Pardon is the taking away, or the bearing of ſin off from us.*

An unpardoned Soul hath a burden of ſin upon him ready to break his back, yea enough to break his heart, were he ſenſible of it; the Lord by pardon takes this burden off from him. *David* ſpeaks of his ſins under this notion of a burden, (*Pſal.* 38 4.) *My ſins are gone over my head, they are a burden too heavy for me to bear.* Yea ſin is a burden too heavy for the ſtrongeſt Angel in Heaven to bear. But pardon eaſeth the Soul of that burden, or 'tis the unburdening of the Soul: Hence alſo pardon is called *the removing of ſin*, (Pſal. 103. 12.) *Thou removeſt our ſins from us, as far as the Eaſt is from the Weſt.* Pardon removes ſin even to the utmoſt diſtance, ſuch is that of the Eaſt from the Weſt. Pardon is called in another Scripture, the caſting of ſin behind Gods back (*Iſa.* 38.17.) *Thou haſt caſt all my ſins behind thy back.* Yea when God by pardon takes ſin from off our backs, he doth not only caſt it behind his own back, but he layeth it upon the back of his Son. Sin muſt lie ſomewhere till it is ſatisfied for; therefore pardon takes ſin off from us, and layeth it upon Chriſt, (*Iſa.* 53. 6.) *He hath laid on him the iniquities of us all.* While ſin is unpardoned, we bear it; and that it might be pardoned, Chriſt hath born it, (1 *Pet.* 2. 24.) *He bare our ſins in his body on the tree.* Pardoned ſin is taken off from the ſinner, and laid upon Chriſt; and he can do well enough with it, he can bear it, and diſcharge it fully, none elſe can: Indeed heaps of ſin lie on the Souls of ſome ſinners, and they feel them no more then a fly: what's the reaſon of it? Becauſe they are dead in their ſins, and nothing is a burden to a dead man, throw a thouſand Milſtones upon him, he feels none of them: but a Soul that is awakened, that hath but ſo much life put into it, as to feel a conviction of ſin, O how is that Soul preſt and burden'd with the weight of ſin! Yet till pardon take ſin off from the Soul, there it muſt lie, there it muſt abide; therefore Chriſt ſaith, (*John* 9. 41.) *Becauſe ye ſay ye ſee, your ſin remains*; What's that? You are unpardoned, your ſin is upon you ſtill; you think your ſelves very wiſe and underſtanding, you think you can do well enough without me, therefore your ſin remaineth; That is, it ſtands in full power and force againſt you.

Fifthly, Here are no conditions; God ſaith not, I pardon upon ſuch and ſuch terms, but *I pardon.*

Hence Note, *God pardons freely, he doth not clog pardon with hard terms.*

'Tis the glory of God that he pardons freely. The pardon of ſin may be conſidered, Firſt, In the Decree of God from everlaſting. Secondly, In the Execution of his Decree; which is, when any are effectually called and converted. Thirdly, As to the manifeſtation and Declaration of it to the perſon pardoned. A poor ſinner may be unpardoned in his own ſenſe, or in the Court of Conſcience, when he is pardoned in the Court of Heaven. Now as pardon is free in the Decree of it, ſo in the Execution of it, as alſo in the Declaration of it to the Soul; for though ſomething, yea much muſt be done in the Soul before pardon is declared, yet nothing is deſerved, all is of free grace. God doth not manifeſt pardon till man repents and believes; yet he doth not pardon him becauſe he repents and believes.

It may be objected, Surely there is ſomething in us which moves God to pardon, for ſaith not Chriſt of *Mary* (Luke 7.47.) *Many ſins are forgiven her, for ſhe loved much.* Hence Papiſts argue, that, pardon of ſin is from ſomething in us, ſhe repented much, believed much, loved much, therefore much was forgiven her?

I anſwer, That Scripture declares her great love to be the effect of great pardoning mercy, not the cauſe of it. Chriſt ſaith to *Peter*, much is forgiven her; this woman was a noted ſinner, and it appears plainly, that much hath been forgiven her, for ſhe loved much. That her many ſins are forgiven her, this is the teſtimony, *ſhe loved much:* The love of God to us, not our love to him, is the reaſon and original of pardon, (*Iſa.* 43. 25.) *I am he that blotteth out thy tranſgreſſions for my own ſake.* God pardoneth ſin for his own ſake, and for Chriſts ſake, not for ours. In one Scripture God ſaith (*Exod.* 34. 6, 7.) *I will by no means clear the guilty.* In another (*John* 6. 37.) Chriſt ſaith, *He that comes to me, I will in no wiſe caſt out.* Till the ſinner cometh to Chriſt, his ſins are upon his own account; that is, he ſtands guilty, and God ſaith, *I will by no means clear the guilty*; no man ſhall ever be clear'd of the puniſhment due to his ſin, while the guilt of his ſin is untaken off by the blood of Jeſus Chriſt: but beſides reſpect to the blood of Chriſt (which is the ranſom paid for us) God reſpects nothing out of himſelf as the reaſon why he pardoneth us. *I forgive.*

I will not deſtroy.] Our Tranſlation reads it, *I will not offend.* The word ſignifies firſt to offend or ſin; it ſignifies alſo to deſtroy; and becauſe deſtruction is a fruit or effect of ſin, one word may well ſerve for both; ſo we render it

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(*Micah* 2.10.) *This is not your reſt, becauſe it is polluted, it ſhall deſtroy you, even with a ſore deſtruction.* Canaan was the reſting place of God himſelf, (*Pſal.* 132. 14.) and it was the reſting place of the Jews after their travel through the wilderneſs, (*Jer.* 31. 2.) but when once they had polluted the land by ſin, the land gave them no reſt, but deſtroyed them; that is, they were deſtroyed out of the land. Here God declaring himſelf gracious in pardoning penitent ſinners, promiſeth reſt to them, and freedom from deſtruction. *I forgive, I will not deſtroy.*

Hence Obſerve Firſt, *God is able to deſtroy.*

Thus God reported himſelf by *Moſes*, (Deut. 32. 39.) *See now, that I, even I am he, and there is no God with me; I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal; neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand.* God doth not ſay *I cannot*, but *I will not deſtroy*; (James 4. 12.) *There is one Law-giver who is able to ſave and to deſtroy:* There is but one ſupream Law-giver, and that's God: and this one Law-giver is able to ſave and to deſtroy. There are many Law-givers that are neither able to ſave nor to deſtroy; or if they be able to deſtroy, they are not able to ſave. Men in authority, or worldly Powers, have not power always to act their authority, but there is one Law-giver that's able to ſave and to deſtroy; he can ſave thoſe that obey his Laws, and deſtroy all thoſe tranſgreſs them; he is too ſtrong for the ſtrongeſt ſinner, there is no making peace with him by oppoſing or overcoming his ſtrength, *but by taking hold of his ſtrength*, that is, by ſubmitting to it, (*Iſa.* 27. 5.)

Secondly Note, *To forgive ſin, or to ſhew mercy to ſinners, is an act to which God declares himſelf more inclin'd, or better pleaſed with, then to deſtroy ſinners.*

Every one that ſinneth deſerves to be deſtroyed; yet ſaith the Lord, *I pardon, I will not deſtroy*; I could deſtroy, and any one ſin committed by any man would juſtifie me againſt all the world in his deſtruction: *Every mouth muſt be ſtopped, and all the world become guilty before God* upon that account, (*Rom.* 3.19.) yet God doth not deſtroy. And that he hath no content in deſtroying, he binds it with an Oath (*Ezek.* 33. 11.) *As I live ſaith the Lord, I have no pleaſure in the death of the wicked,* &c. As if he had ſaid, I am not bent upon your deſtruction, I had rather be taken off, and ſave you, *I pardon, I will not deſtroy.*

If any ſhall ſay, Hath God no pleaſure in deſtruction? Hath he not a will to deſtroy as well as to ſave?

I anſwer, God hath pleaſure in deſtroying, but it is in the deſtruction of thoſe who obſtinately reſiſt his Will, who refuſe both his counſel and his Covenant; to ſuch indeed he ſaith (*Prov.* 1.26.) *I will laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear* (that is, the thing you feared) *cometh, as deſolation,* &c. That, the men in whoſe calamity God laugheth are ſuch, is evident by the character given of them at the 25. verſe, *Ye have ſet at nought all my counſel, and would none of my reproof.* As if God had ſaid, you have laughed at my counſel, therefore I will laugh at your calamity. The Lord will declare himſelf delighted in their deſtruction who have deſpiſed inſtruction; and he will glorifie himſelf in the actings of his Juſtice upon them, who have ſlighted and put by the tenders and intreaties of his mercy. Yet ſtill God declareth himſelf more pleaſed in acting and putting forth his ſaving power, then his deſtroying power. The Prophet (*Hoſ.* 11.8,9.) moſt pathetically repreſents, as it were, a debate in the breſt of God himſelf between his Juſtice and his Mercy; *How ſhall I give thee up,* Ephraim? *How ſhall I deliver thee, Iſrael? How ſhall I make thee as Admah? How ſhall I ſet thee as Zeboim? Mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together;* (Ver. 9.) *I will not execute the fierceneſs of mine anger, I will not return to deſtroy Ephraim.* We ſee after the debate, the Lord determins for ſparing, not for deſtroying. So then, though he can, and will not only deſtroy, but laugh at the deſtruction of obſtinate ſinners, yet he loves to ſpare rather then to deſtroy.

Thirdly, From the connexion of theſe two, pardoning and ſparing mercy, God ſaith firſt, *I pardon,* and then ſecondly, *I will not deſtroy*; who are they whom God will not deſtroy? They are ſuch as he pardons.

Hence Note, *Pardoned perſons ſhall never be deſtroyed.*

As ſoon as *Nathan* had ſaid to *David*, *the Lord hath put away thy ſin,* the very next word is this, *thou ſhalt not die,* (2Sam. 12. 13.) if *Davids* ſin had not been pardoned, *David* muſt have dyed for it. 'Tis a Logical Maxim, *When the Cauſe is taken away, the Effect is taken away*; Sin is the cauſe of deſtruction, therefore when God takes away ſin, which is the cauſe, deſtruction the effect muſt needs be taken away too; pardon deſtroyeth ſin, therefore how can they that are pardoned be deſtroyed? Pardon ſwallows up ſin. As the Apoſtle ſpeaks of life, (2 *Cor.* 5.4.) *That mortality might be ſwallowed up of life*; Here, mortality ſwallows up our lives by degrees, but hereafter mortality ſhall be ſwallowed up at once of life; Now, as life ſhall then ſwallow up mortality, ſo pardon at preſent ſwalloweth up ſin; for as in our glorified ſtate there ſhall never any thing of mortality appear, ſo in a pardon'd eſtate, nothing of ſin ſhall appear as to hurt us. Sin pardoned cannot be found, (*Jer.* 50. 20) *In thoſe days, and in that time ſaith the Lord, the iniquity of Jacob ſhall be ſought for, and there ſhall be none, and the ſins of Judah, and they ſhall not be found*; why not? The Lord anſwers, *for I will pardon them whom I reſerve:* And if their ſins ſhall not be found, ſurely they ſhall not be found guilty, and therefore not deſtroyed: God may chaſten them whom he hath pardoned, but he will not deſtroy thoſe whom he hath pardoned; pardoned perſons may ſmart, and ſmart greatly for ſin, but they ſhall not die eternally for it, they ſhall not be deſtroyed for it. *David* was pardoned, yet God told him, *the ſword ſhall never depart from thy houſe*; and the Lord told him particularly of a ſore deſtruction upon a part of his houſe preſently; *becauſe by this deed thou haſt given great occaſion to the enemies of God to blaſpheme,* (thou being a Profeſſor, haſt opened the mouths of the wicked againſt profeſſion) therefore (though thou ſhalt not die, yet) *the child alſo that is born unto thee ſhall ſurely die.*

Sublata cauſa tollitur effectus.

There are two things which the pardon of ſin takes away. Firſt, the power or reign of ſin; where-ever ſin is pardoned, the ſtrength of it is ſubdued. God doth not pardon ſin as Princes do; they may pardon an evil doer, and yet he ſtill remain as evil and as ready to do evil as ever; they may pardon a thief, and yet he continue to be a thief ſtill; but if God pardons a drunkard, an adulterer, or a thief, he doth not remain a drunkard, or an adulterer, or a thief ſtill; God takes away the power of that ſin which he pardoneth. Secondly, The pardon of ſin takes away the puniſhment of ſin; it may leave ſome chaſtiſement, but it wholly takes away the puniſhment. The Popiſh doctrin ſaith, the fault is taken away by pardon, but there is a commutation of the puniſhment, eternal puniſhment is changed into temporal, either in this life, or that to come; hence their doctrins of Purgatory, and of Prayer for the dead, &c. all which ſtuff comes in upon this account. They caſt all men into three ſorts, ſome are Apoſtles and Martyrs, men very eminently godly, and they go immediately to Heaven: there are another ſort, and theſe are Apoſtates from, or perſecuters of the faith, notorious ſinners, theſe go immediately to Hell: there are a third or middle ſort of ordinary ſinners, and they go immediately after death; neither to Heaven nor Hell, but to Purgatory, where they muſt bear the puniſhment of their ſins till they can be prayed out: Chriſt hath only got ſo much favour for them (ſay they) to change their eternal puniſhment into a temporal. The grace of the Goſpel knows nothing of this Doctrin; that tells us when ſin is pardoned, all is pardoned, both guilt and puniſhment, both temporal and eternal, nothing remains but only chaſtiſement; how ſorely ſoever a believer ſuffers in this life, yet ſtrictly taken, it is but a chaſtiſement, and there remaineth nothing for him to ſuffer in the life which is to come. And if ſo, then

Pardon of ſin is a precious mercy. 'Tis ſo, Firſt, Becauſe it proceeds from the precious mercies of God. Secondly, Becauſe it comes thorow the precious blood of Chriſt, (*Col.* 1.14.) Thirdly, Becauſe it opens a door to all precious mercies; as ſin unpardoned with-holds all good things from us (*Jer.* 5.25.) ſo ſin pardoned opens the door for all mercy to flow in upon us. Chriſt ſaid to the ſick man (*Mat.* 9.2.) *Be of good cheer, thy ſins are forgiven thee.* Fourthly, It is a precious mercy, becauſe it ſtops and keeps off all evils and judgments ſtrictly ſo called, *I forgive, I will not deſtroy.* Our comforts cannot ſtand before the guilt of ſin, and our troubles cannot ſtand long before the pardon of ſin; (*Iſa.* 33.24.) The higheſt wrath of God appears in this, when he will not pardon; and it argues the greateſt diſpleaſure of man againſt man, when he prayeth that he may not be pardoned. That was a moſt dreadful prayer of the Prophet, (*Iſa.* 2.9.) *The mean man is bowed down, and the mighty man humbles himſelf, therefore forgive them not*; here was a prayer that they might not be forgiven; and the ground why he prayed ſo, ſeems to be a ſtrange, as the matter of it was dreadful. Is it a ſin to be excepted from pardon, to ſee a mean man bow down, and a mighty man humble himſelf? The meaning is, they bowed themſelves not to God, but to idols; all bowing and humbling our ſelves either to worſhip an idol, or in idol worſhip, is rebelling againſt God. We have a like prayer (*Jer.* 18.23.) the Prophet having ſpoken of the plots and deviſings of the people againſt him, turns himſelf thus to God, *Thou knoweſt all their counſel to ſlay me, forgive not their iniquity, neither blot their ſin from thy ſight.* Nothing can be wiſht worſe to any man then this, that his ſin may never be pardoned. And here it may be queſtioned, how the Prophet could make ſuch a prayer, which ſeems to have the height of all uncharitableneſs in it. I anſwer, firſt, The Prophet was led by an extraordinary Spirit to do this. Secondly, We are not to conceive that the Prophet prayed for their eternal condemnation, but that God would call them to a reckoning, and make them feel the evil of their own doings. There is a ſin unto death, for the pardon of which we are not to pray, (1 *John* 5.16.) yet there is no ſin about which we are to pray that it may never be pardoned. The worſt prayer that can be made againſt any man, is, that he may not be pardoned; and there is nothing better to be prayed for then pardon. It ſhewed the height of Chriſts love, when hanging on the Croſs, he prayed thus for his enemies, (*Luke* 23.34.) *Father, forgive them, they know not what they do*; And the *Protomartyr Stephen* breathed out a like ſpirit of charity, while he was breathing out his life (in a ſhower of ſtones poured upon him from more ſtony hearts, *Acts* 7.60.) with this prayer, *Lord, lay not this ſin to their charge.*

Thus, I have finiſhed this 31. verſe, both according to our own Tranſlation, and that other inſiſted upon by many of the learned; only from the connexion of this verſe with the next, according to the latter reading, *To God who ſaith I pardon, I will not deſtroy; it ſhould be ſaid, that which I ſee not teach thou me, if I have done iniquity, I will do no more.*

> Obſerve, *The very conſideration that God is ready to pardon ſin, ſhould make us reſolved againſt the committing of ſin.*

The ſin-pardoning mercy of God, is one of the higheſt and moſt ſpiritual arguments by which the ſoul is kept from ſin. *There is forgiveneſs with thee* (ſaith *David*, Pſal. 130.4.) *that thou mayſt be feared*; That is, becauſe thou art ſo merciful as to forgive ſinners, therefore they ought to fear thee, in doing what thy will is, and in avoiding whatſoever is contrary to thy will. 'Tis propheſied, that frame of ſpirit ſhall dwell upon the people of God in the latter days, (*Hoſ.* 3.5.) *They ſhall fear the Lord and his goodneſs*; That is, they ſhall fear to offend the Lord becauſe he is ſo good, and ready to pardon. It was ſaid by a Heathen (and it may ſhame many who profeſs themſelves Chriſtians, that a Heathen ſaid ſo) *if I did know that men ſhould never know the evil which I do, and that the gods* (ſo he ſpeaks in their language) *would pardon and forgive the evil which I do, yet I would not do it.* Surely, the ſpirit of a true believer muſt needs riſe thus high, and higher, upon the clear grounds of Goſpel grace, and diſcoveries of the free love of God. Cannot a true believer ſay, though I know that God will pardon my ſin, though he hath declared that my ſin is pardoned, and though I could be aſſured that men ſhould never know of this ſin, if I commit it, yet I will not do it. *To God who ſaith I pardon, it ſhould be ſaid, I will ſin no more.*

Si ſcirem homines ignoraturos & Deos ignoſcituros tamen non facerem. Sen.

I ſhall now proceed to the 32. verſe, which ſtands fair to either reading.

Verſ. 32. **That which I ſee not, teach thou me; if I have done iniquity, I will do no more.**

Some carry the general ſenſe of theſe words, as if ſpoken by God himſelf to *Job*, and ſpoken by an irony, or in ſcorn, as if he had thus beſpoken him; *If I have afflicted thee beyond thy deſert, or have overthrown thy judgment* (that *Job* had more then once complained of) *if I have not kept to the true rules of reaſon and righteouſneſs in chaſtening thee; if in my dealings with thee I have done amiſs, or have not done thee right? Shew me wherein* (O Job) *and I will afflict thee ſo no more,* I ſhall net ſtay upon this, but take the words according to our Tranſlation, as the whole verſe intends a further deſcription of a perſon deeply humbled under, and ſenſible of the hand, the chaſtening, the afflicting hand of God; who having ſaid (with reſpect to all known ſins) in the former verſe, *I will offend no more*, ſaith here in this verſe concerning all unknown ſins, *That which I ſee not, teach thou me; and if I have done iniquity, I will do no more.*

Si quid me fugit in te affligendo, vel ſi quid errarem tu me doceas. Si te vexando perperam egi vel injuſtè me habui, non ultra, id fecero, σαρκασμὸς, Merc.

That which I ſee not.] There is a two-fold ſight; Firſt, Corporal, the ſight of the bodily eye. Secondly, Intellectual, the ſight of the eye of the mind, or of the underſtanding; when *Elihu* repreſents the penitent afflicted perſon ſpeaking thus, *What I ſee not*, &c. he intends not a corporal ſight but an intellectual. Seeing is here (as often elſewhere in Scripture) put for knowing: *the underſtanding is the eye of the Soul.* How blind and dark are thoſe men, who have no underſtanding in the things of God! (*Eph.* 4.18.) When Chriſt had ſaid, *For judgment am I come into the world, that they which ſee not might ſee, and that they which ſee might be made blind*; ſome of the Phariſees ſaid unto him (*John* 9.41.) *are we blind alſo?* (Have we no eyes?) *Jeſus ſaid unto them, If ye were blind, ye ſhould have no ſin, but now ye ſay, we ſee, therefore your ſin remaineth*; That is, your ſin remaineth upon you in the power and guilt of it. In that ſenſe alſo Chriſt uſeth the word (*Matth.* 13.14.) *Hearing ye ſhall hear, and not underſtand, and ſeeing ye ſhall ſee, and not perceive*; ye ſhall have only ſuch a knowledg of God, and of the things of God, of his word, and of his works, as will be of no other uſe to you, then to leave you without excuſe. *Seeing ye ſhall ſee but not perceive*; ye ſhall have a fruitleſs and an unprofitable ſight.

That which I ſee not (or have no underſtanding of) *teach thou me*, is the prayer of the humble Soul. But what were thoſe things, which he feared or ſuppoſed he did not ſee? Thoſe unſeen things might be of three ſorts.

Firſt, Thoſe ſins which he did not ſee; and thoſe in a double notion, either corruptions dwelling in him, or evils acted by him. What corruptions, or what tranſgreſſions I ſee not, acquaint me with, anoint mine eyes that I may ſee them.

Secondly, Thoſe favours and mercies which he did not ſee (we have many mercies which are not known to us, or of which we take little, yea no notice at all) thoſe good turns, which I have received and have not been thankful, or have not improved and made ſutable returns for them, ſhew thou me.

Thirdly, Among the things not ſeen we may number the purpoſes, aims, and ends of God, in laying thoſe chaſtiſements upon him. As if he had ſaid, *If I have not yet apprehended what thou driveſt at in my affliction, ſhew it me, I beg and heartily deſire a diſcovery of it. And if I have acted unduely with reſpect to thy aims in chaſtiſing me, I will do ſo no more.* The acts of God are plain, but his aims lie cloſe and are not perceived, but by an enlightned, yea and a very attentive eye. *That which I ſee not*, &c.

> Hence Obſerve; Firſt, *The choyceſt ſervants of God may be much in the dark about and ſhort in the knowledg of many things which it much concerns them to know.*

Though every believer hath an eye, and an eye open to ſee the things of God, the things which concern his peace, yet the cleareſt-ſighted among believers know but in part (*1Cor.*13.9.) We all know, but we do not know all. Thoſe words of the Apoſtle may have a twofold underſtanding. Firſt, we know, but a little of any thing, that which we know we have but a part of it in our knowledg; in this life we know nothing throughly, nothing to the bottom, no not common principles. *David* ſaith (*Pſal.* 119. 96.) *I have ſeen an end of all perfection, but thy commandment is exceeding broad*; There is ſuch a perfection in thy commandment, that I cannot ſee, nor can any man come to the out ſide of it in this world. And as the holineſs of God in the Law is exceeding broad, ſo there is a height, a depth, a length, and a breadth in the love of God revealed in the Goſpel, which exceedeth all our knowledg. (*Eph.* 3. 19.) *That ye may know the love of Chriſt which paſſeth knowledg*, &c. We know but a part of that love of God, the fruits and effects whereof are all our portion. We are not able to comprehend, though we labour to comprehend the breadth and length and depth and height of it. Our meaſure of loving God is to love him out of meaſure; but 'tis a very ſmall meaſure of the love of God to us which we can know. Thus we know but little of that we know. Secondly, *We know in part*, that is, there are many things which we know not at all, we have no knowledg of ſome things, which may be fully known. Though we know many of our ſins and corruptions, yet we have ſins and corruptions which we know not of (*Pſal.* 19. 12.) *Who can underſtand his errors?* Who can underſtand the errors of his underſtanding? Who can underſtand the errors of his will? Who can underſtand the errors of his affections? Who can underſtand the errors of his actions? Who can underſtand them all? Yet they are all underſtandable. There are many errors in all theſe, which we know not to be errors, therefore we have need every one of us to pray as *David* there did, *Cleanſe thou me from my ſecret faults.* From ſecret faults in my underſtanding, from ſecret faults in my will and affections, in my practice and converſation. The ſecret faults which he asked pardon for were not thoſe faults which he had committed in ſecret, or which other men know not of; but thoſe faults which were ſecrets to himſelf, or which himſelf knew not of. Further, we know not our faults; Firſt, either in reference to the doing of evil, or ſins of commiſſion; nor Secondly, in reference to the not doing of good or ſins of omiſſion; nor Thirdly, do we know our faults in reference to the manner of doing that which is good. Though we do not quite omit a duty, yet we fail many times in the doing of it. *We do little of the good which we ought, and little of the good which we do is done as it ought.* We have ſecret ſins not only of commiſſion in doing that which is evil, and of omiſſion in not doing that which is good, but alſo in doing good. There are many flaws and errors in our doing of that which is good, which, though we perceive not, yet the pure eyes of God perceive. So then, as we ſee not all our errors in omitting duties, ſo we ſee not all our errors in performing duties; to ſee them requireth a ſpiritual ſight indeed. Many can ſee when they omit a duty altogether, and charge themſelves with a fault for it, but our faults in performance of duty, in prayer, in hearing none take notice of them, but they who have a ſpiritual eye, nor do they always take notice of all of them, nor fully of any of them at any time. We are much in the dark about theſe errors which accompany our holy duties. The iniquities of our holy things are many, and they lie very cloſe. We may quickly and eaſily fall into them, but we cannot eaſily diſcern them.

For, Firſt, though we perform an act of worſhip, of Church-worſhip, of inſtituted worſhip, right for the ſubſtance, yet we may miſs and erre in ſeveral circumſtances, and not come up exactly to the outward performance of it. Secondly, much more may we run into errors and faults in the performance of duty, as to the internal part of it, or that frame of heart with which a duty is to be performed. We ſeldom, I may ſafely ſay, we never come up to that zeal, to that ſelf-abaſement, to that faith, to that love and delight which ſhould be in us when we approach to and appear before God in the duties of his holy worſhip, whether publick or private. The beſt of Saints come far ſhort of knowing all the evil and faylings of their evil and deceitful hearts, while they are engaged about that which is good, how much more are they ſhort in the knowledg of God; and therefore what reaſon have we to ſay, as *Elihu* here directs the penitent ſoul to ſay; *That which I know not teach thou me.*

Secondly, Note, *It is the duty of the moſt knowing ſervants of God to confeſs their ignorance.*

When *Elihu* would have *Job* ſay, *That which I ſee not teach thou me*, he would have him confeſs, that there was ſome good or evil which he did not ſee. He that deſireth God to teach him, what he doth not ſee, doth therein acknowledg that he doth not ſee all that he ought. Our underſtandings are imperfect as well as our wills and affections; and our ſins or imperfections, whereſoever they are, muſt be confeſſed. The deficiency of our knowledg, or the imperfection of our underſtanding muſt be confeſſed as well as the imperfection of our will to do good, and of our doing good. *David* layeth load upon himſelf in confeſſing the faultineſs of his underſtanding, or inability to judg aright of what he ſaw before him (*Pſal.* 73.22.) *So ignorant was I and fooliſh, even as a beaſt before thee.* And the ſpecial point wherein he confeſſed his ignorance, was about the outward diſpenſations of God, in ſuffering wicked men to flouriſh. He had ignorant apprehenſions, and was quite out in that matter; and therefore befools himſelf and calls himſelf a beaſt, ſo far was he from ſeeing the mind and deſign of God as became a Saint. Such an acknowledgment *Agur* made (*Pro.* 30.2.) *I am more brutiſh then any man, I have not the underſtanding of a man, I neither learned wiſdom, nor have the knowledg of the holy.* This worthy man confeſſed his ignorance; and as the more we know, the more we ſee our ignorance, ſo the more we know, the more we confeſs our ignorance. They that have but little knowledg, are eſpecially defective in this point of knowledg to ſee their ignorance; and are therefore but little troubled with their ignorance. Many think they know enough; ſome, poſſibly, think they know all. They who have leaſt knowledg, are leaſt conſcious of their own ignorance. And as there are many ſins of ignorance, ſo ignorance it ſelf is a ſin, and therefore to be confeſſed and bewailed before God.

Thirdly, When *Elihu* brings in the penitent perſon confeſſing his ignorance, and begging inſtruction,

It teacheth us, *Sins of ignorance need pardon.*

As our ignorance needs pardon, ſo do our ſins of ignorance. The law of *Moſes* teacheth this (*Levit.*4.2.) *If a Soul ſhall ſin through ignorance*, &c. *he ſhall bring his ſacrifice.* He muſt make an attonement for his ſin of ignorance. And we have further directions about offerings for ſins of ignorance, when they are diſcovered and made known to the ſinner himſelf. (*Lev.* 5.2,3,4,5,6.) *Then* (ſaith the Law) *he ſhall be guilty*, that is, if when he knoweth his ſin, he do not perform what the Law requireth in ſuch caſes, then he is not only ceremonially but morally guilty, as a neglecter if not as a deſpiſer of the ordinance and appointment of God for his cleanſing. *That which I ſee not,*

Teach thou me.] The words are a prayer for divine teaching. The teaching of God is two-fold; Firſt, Immediate by his Spirit (*John* 14. 26.) *The Spirit which is the comforter ſhall come and teach you all things.* And again (1 *John* 2. 27.) *The anointing* (that is, the Spirit) *which ye have received of him, abideth in you: and ye need not that any man teach you*; That is, ye need not reſt in, or pin your faith upon the teachings of man; as you muſt not deſpiſe, ſo ye need not depend upon the inſtruction of man. Secondly, There is a mediate teaching, God teacheth by means, inſtruments, and ordinances. Firſt, by the miniſtery of his word; Secondly, by the works of his hands. He teacheth, Firſt, by his works of creation; Secondly, by his works of providence, they are our maſters, tutors and inſtructers. Now when this penitent perſon prayeth, *Teach thou me*; we may underſtand him of both theſe teachings. Firſt, of immediate teaching by the Spirit, who is the anoynting. Secondly, of teaching by means, by the preaching of the word of God, and by his providences; in what way ſoever God is pleaſed to teach us, our hearts ſhould ſtand open to receive inſtructions. And what way ſoever we receive inſtruction, it is God that teacheth us. Though men be the inſtruments, yet the effect is of him.

Hence Note, Firſt, *God only is able to teach or ſhew us the things which we know not.*

Men alone cannot. Chriſt ſaid to his Diſciples, when he commiſſioned them, (*Matth.* 28.19.) *Go teach all Nations.* And (*Eph.*4.11.) *When he aſcended up on high, he gave ſome Apoſtles, and ſome Prophets, and ſome Evangeliſts, and ſome Paſtors and Teachers*; yet no Teachers can bring home inſtruction without the teachings of God. The tenour of the new Covenant runs thus, (*Iſa.* 54. 13.) *All thy children ſhall be taught of the Lord.* And again (*Jer.*31.34.) *They ſhall teach no more every one his neighbour*, &c. That is, they ſhall not be left to the teachings of man: or the teaching of God ſhall be ſo glorious, that all ſhall acknowledg it; though there be inſtruments, yet the flowing forth of the ſpirit ſhall be ſuch, that inſtruments and means ſhall be little taken notice of. For when he ſaith, *they ſhall not teach every one his neighbour*, it is not an abſolute Negative, but ſhews that there ſhall be a more excellent teaching; as when the Apoſtle ſaith (2*Cor.*3.6.) *Chriſt hath made us able Miniſters, not of the letter, but of the Spirit*; This Negative is not abſolute, for the Apoſtles did teach the Letter, and the Spirit is uſually conveyed by the Miniſtery of the Letter, or of the external word; the word is (as it were) the chariot wherein the Spirit rideth, and cometh by the ear to the heart. So that, when *Paul* ſaith, *We are Miniſters not of the Letter*, &c. his meaning is, we are rather, or we are more the Miniſters of the Spirit then of the Letter. The inward teaching accompanying our Miniſtery, carryeth the matter, both for conviction and converſion, both for illumination and conſolation, not the outward teaching (*John* 6. 45.) *Every man therefore that hath heard and learned of the Father, cometh unto me.* And how long ſoever we go to School to men, how long ſoever we ſit under the Miniſtery of the ableſt Goſpel Preachers in the world, we come not to Chriſt till the Father teacheth; till he joyn his inward teaching to the outward teaching of the Miniſter, the light and life of grace is not received. It is God who teacheth effectually, men teach but inſtrumentally. Thus it was propheſied of the Goſpel times (*Iſa.*2.3. and *Micah* 4.2.) *Many Nations ſhall come and ſay, Come and let us go up to the Mountain of the Lord, and to the Houſe of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths*, that is, he will accompany the Miniſters and meſſengers of his word with his Spirit, he will impower them from on high, and ſo we ſhall learn his Statutes and underſtand his ways. *David* aſcribes even his skil in Military affairs to Gods teaching, (*Pſal.*144.1.) *Bleſſed be the Lord, my ſtrength, who teacheth my hands to war, and my fingers to fight.* God only teacheth a man powerfully to be a good Souldier. Surely then, it is God only who teacheth us to be good Chriſtians, to be Believers, to be holy. *He hath his ſeat in Heaven, who teacheth hearts on earth.*

Secondly, As theſe words hold out to us the temper of an humble ſinner;

> Note, *A gracious humble Soul is teachable, or is willing to be taught.*

As it is the duty of the Miniſters of the Goſpel *to be apt to teach*, that's their ſpecial gift, or characteriſtical properly; ſo 'tis the peoples duty and grace to be apt to be taught, to be willing to be led, and inſtructed; naturally we are unteachable and untractable. As we know nothing of God ſavingly by nature, ſo we are not willing to know; we would ſit down in our ignorance, or at moſt in a form of knowledg. To be willing to learn, is the firſt, or rather the ſecond ſtep to learning. The firſt is a ſight of our ignorance; and the ſecond, a readineſs to be taught, and entertain the means of knowledg.

Thirdly, The words being the form of a Prayer;

> Note, *It is our duty to intreat the Lord earneſtly that he would teach us what we know not.*

It is a great favour and a mercy, that God will teach us, that he will be our maſter, our Tutor. Now, as we are to ask and pray for every mercy, ſo for this, that God would vouchſafe to be our Teacher, (*Pſal.* 25.4,5.) *Shew me thy ways, O Lord, teach me thy paths*; *Lead me in thy truth, and teach me*; *David* ſpake it twice in prayer, *Lead me*, and *Teach me*: Lead me on in the truth which I know, and teach me the truths which I know not. So he prayeth again, (*Pſal.* 119. 26.) *Teach me thy Statutes, make me to underſtand the way of thy precepts.* *David* was convinced that he could not underſtand the Statutes of God, unleſs God would be his Teacher; though he could read the Statutes of God, and underſtand the language of them, yet he did not underſtand the Spirit of them till he was taught (and taught) of God, and therefore he prayed ſo earneſtly, once and again, for his teaching. When *Philip* put that queſtion to the Eunuch (*Acts* 8. 30.) *Underſtandeſt thou what thou readeſt? He ſaid, how can I, except ſome man ſhould guide me?* Or, unleſs I am taught. Though we read the Statutes of God, and read them every day, yet we ſhall know little unleſs the Lord teach us. *Solomon* made it his requeſt for all Iſrael at the ſolemn Dedication of the Temple, (1 *Kings* 8. 37.) *Teach them the good way wherein they ſhould walk.* God who is our Commander is alſo our Counſeller.

Fourthly, From the ſpecial matter wherein this penitent perſon would be taught, which is plain from part of the latter verſe, *If I have done iniquity*;

> Note, *A gracious heart is willing to know and ſee the worſt of himſelf.*

He would have God teach him what iniquity he hath done. *David* was often upon that prayer, (*Pſal.*139,24.) *Search me, O God, and know my heart, and ſee if there be any wicked way in me.* Lord, ſhew me my ſin; as I would not conceal my ſin from thee, ſo I would not have my ſin concealed from my ſelf. A carnal man who lives in ſin (though poſſibly he may pray for knowledg in ſome things, and would be a knowing man, yet he) hath no mind that either God or man ſhould ſhew him his ſin; He loves not to ſee the worſt of himſelf, his dark part; he as little loves to ſee his ſin, as to have it ſeen. But a godly man never thinks he ſeeth his ſin enough; *how little ſoever he ſins, he thinks he ſins too much*, (that's the general bent of a gracious mans heart) *and how much ſoever he ſees his ſin, he thinks he ſees it too little.* And therefore as he tells God what he knows of his ſin, ſo he would have God tell him that of his ſin which he doth not know. *That which I know not, teach thou me.*

If I have done iniquity, I will do no more.

There are two ſpecial parts of repentance. Firſt, Confeſſion of ſin, whether known or unknown. This we have in the former part of the verſe, *That which I ſee not, teach thou me.* There is the confeſſion of ſin, even of unknown ſin. The ſecond part of repentance is reformation or amendment a turning from ſin, a forſaking of that iniquity which we deſire God would ſhew us, we have this Second part of repentance in this latter part of the verſe.

If I have done iniquity, I will do no more. But why doth he ſay, *If I have?* &c. Had he any any doubt whether he had done iniquity or no? Every man muſt confeſs, downright, that he hath ſinned, and done iniquity, without ifs or an's. *Solomon* having made ſuch a ſuppoſition in his prayer at the Dedication of the Temple, (1 *Kings* 8. 46. *If they ſin againſt thee*) preſently puts it into this poſition, *for there is no man that ſinneth not.* The Apoſtle concludes, (1 *John* 1.8.) *If we ſay we have no ſin, we deceive our ſelves, and the truth is not in us.* Therefore, this, *If I have done iniquity*, is not to be underſtood as if this or that man, as if he or any man might be without ſin; but when the penitent is brought in, ſaying, *If I have done iniquity*; his meaning is, Firſt, Whatever iniquity I have done, I am willing to leave it, to abandon it, I will do ſo no more. Secondly, Thus, *If I have done iniquity*, that is, if I have done any great iniquity, if I have acted perverſeneſs, or perverſly, as the word ſignifieth, I will do ſo no more; to do iniquity is more then barely to ſin. As if he had ſaid, *though I cannot promiſe that I will ſin no more, yet, Lord, if thou doſt diſcover to me any iniquity, any groſs ſin or perverſeneſs, I will do that no more*, I will engage my ſelf againſt that ſin with all my might; and to the utmoſt of my power, by grace received, I will keep my ſelf pure from every ſin. *If I have done iniquity.*

עול
Perverſe agere.

> Hence Note, Firſt, *A godly man hath a gracious ſuſpition of himſelf that he hath done evil, yea ſome great evil, that he hath done amiſs, yea greatly amiſs, though he be not able to charge himſelf with this or that particular iniquity.*

He knoweth he hath ſinned and done evil, though he knoweth not every evil he hath done, nor how ſinfully he may have ſinned; he doubts it may be worſe with him then he ſeeth. Poſſibly *he hath done iniquity. Job* in reference to his children (*Chap.* 1. 5.) had an holy ſuſpition that in their feaſting they might ſin againſt God; he knew no ſin they had run into, nor could charge them with any exceſs; but he was jealous they had ſinned; nor did *Job* ſpeak thus, as if his meaning were, that poſſibly in their feaſting ſome corruption might work in them, (he knew there is no man in the beſt duties of his life wholly freed from the workings of ſin) but he had this jealouſie, that they might have faln into ſome great ſin, and ſo provoked God greatly againſt them, therefore he did (as it were) way-lay ſuch guilt, and early ſought reconciliation with God. As *Job* was thus jealous of his children, ſo a gracious heart, though he cannot charge himſelf with this or that evil, yet he is apt to ſuſpect his own heart, and fears it may be worſe with him, than poſſibly it is.

Secondly, When he ſaith, *If I have done iniquity*; This humble man, though he doth ſuppoſe that he might have done iniquity, yet he doth but ſuppoſe it.

Hence Note, *A godly man may live free from the doing of any groſs ſin.*

He doth not put an *if* upon it whether he had ſinned or no, but, whether he had done iniquity. *Zachariah* and *Elizabeth* were not without ſin, but they did no iniquity; for, ſaith the Text (*Luke* 1. 6.) *They were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameleſs.* It cannot be imagined but that the people of *Iſrael* ſinned, yet (*Num.* 23. 21.) *God ſaw no iniquity in Jacob, nor perverſeneſs in Iſrael.* There may be ſuch a time in the Church when the people of God have no iniquity, no provocation to be ſeen or found among them. Though a godly man cannot deny but he hath ſinned, yet he can affirm that he hath not indulged himſelf in any ſin. *If I have done iniquity,*

I will do no more.] The Hebrew is, *I will not add.* We render, *I will do no more.* As if he had ſaid; If upon tryal, it be found that I have done iniquity, yet I will not add iniquity to iniquity. I will not go on, I will not perſiſt, nor proceed in iniquity. I will not take a ſtep more in any way which God ſhall diſcover to me to be an evil way. If I am out of the way, I will not go on in my way.

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *A godly penitent perſon is reſolute againſt ſin.*

His will is ſet againſt it; *I will do no more.* I ſhewed in opening the former verſe (*It is meet to be ſaid unto God, I have borne chaſtiſement, I will offend no more*) in what ſenſe a godly man may make ſuch a promiſe, or ſay, *I will ſin no more*; here I ſay, *A godly man is reſolute againſt ſin, eſpecially againſt great ſins.* As a carnal man hath but very weak reſolves for the doing of good, he hath (as ſome expreſs it) but a *velleity*, ſomewhat like a will to do that which is good; ſo a carnal man makes but weak reſolves againſt evil, he hath not a ſetled will, but a kind of *noleity* againſt it. He makes ſome flouriſhes of profeſſion againſt it, but he is not reſolvedly ingaged againſt it; whereas a godly man is reſolute both as to the doing of good, and the not doing of evil. If a godly man might have his will, he would never ſin more; And as a godly man waiteth joyfully for that ſtate of glory wherein he ſhall ſin no more; ſo a reſolution to ſin no more, hath, as I may ſay, ſomewhat of glory in it. In glory we ſhall ſin no more, and where grace is in truth, that ſoul would gladly be rid of ſin, and ſin no more. A godly man is reſolved againſt all ungodlineſs; and this is a kind of entrance into glory.

Again, Whereas the penitent man ſaith, *I will do no more.*

Note, *Continuance in any known ſin* (for, ſaith he, *what I know not teach thou me*) *or in that which is made known to us to be ſinful, is inconſiſtent with true repentance.*

Repentance for and continuance in ſin, cannot conſiſt in the ſame ſubject. This is the voice of every gracious ſoul, I would not ſin any more, or I would not continue any longer in ſin. To ſin is common to man, but to continue in ſin is proper to a wicked man. To err and fail that's humane, but to perſevere in error is diabolical. Sin will continue in us while we continue in this world; but they that are not of the world, do not, will not continue in ſin, how long ſoever they are in the world. Sin may be conſidered three ways. Firſt, as remaining in us; Secondly, as reſerved; Thirdly, as preſerved by us. There is ſin remaining in the beſt of Saints on this ſide heaven (*Rom.* 7. 20, 21, 22, 23, 24.) Sin is reſerved only in carnal men, they ſave their ſins, and would be ſaved, not from but in their ſins. Sin is preſerved or maintained and defended in the worſt of wicked men. Sin is heightned to the utmoſt, where 'tis not only retained, but maintained and preſerved. The Apoſtle having cloſed the fifth Chapter of his Epiſtle to the *Romans*, in the triumph of Goſpel grace, *That as ſin hath reigned unto death, ſo grace might reign through righteouſneſs unto eternal life by Jeſus Chriſt our Lord*, begins the next with a prevention of the abuſe of this Grace; *What ſhall we ſay then, ſhall we continue in ſin that grace may abound? God forbid. How ſhall we that are dead to ſin, live any longer therein?* How can we continue in ſin, that are partakers of Goſpel-grace? Sin will continue in us, but we cannot continue in it. The queſtion implieth a kind of impoſſibility. We were once dead in ſin, but now we are dead to ſin, how then can we live or continue in it? *Perſeverance is either our beſt or our worſt.* To perſevere is beſt when we perſevere in good, and to perſevere is worſt when we perſevere in evil. It is bad to be or do evil, but it is worſe to abide in evil. The firſt beſt is not to ſin, the next beſt is not to continue, nor lodg in ſin, no not for an hour. *Paul* ſaid in another caſe (*Gal.* 2. 5.) *To whom we gave place by ſubjection, no not for an hour*; We ſhould not give place to ſin, no not for a minute, but reſiſt it to the utmoſt, and totally diſplace it, if we can.

Laſtly, From the Hebrew elegancy, which ſaith, *I will not add.*

Note, *A godly man may commit ſin after ſin, but he doth not add ſin to ſin.*

When he hath committed any one ſin, he breaks it off and deſtroyeth it by repentance. He doth not add ſin to ſin, becauſe the ſin formerly committed is deſtroyed by repentance. His former ſin is taken off the file before he acts a ſecond, who heartily repenteth of the firſt, and as heartily reſolveth not to commit a ſecond. Such a man doth not run a round of ſinning and repenting, though he ſinneth after he hath repented. *Daniel* gave that advice to *Nebuchadnezzar* (Dan. 4. 27.) *Break off thy ſins by righteouſneſs, and thine iniquities by ſhewing mercy to the poor.* If thou repenteſt indeed, the ſin that cometh after will not be added to thy former, becauſe that is done away through Grace. A godly man (according to the former point) would not add or commit another act of ſin to his former; as it is ſaid of *Judah* (Gen. 38. 26.) who had committed folly with *Tamar*, *He knew her again no more.* Though his ſin was great, yet doubtleſs his heart was humbled, and he returned not to his former ſin. But the wicked man continues in his wickedneſs, yea, he *bleſſeth himſelf in his heart, ſaying, I ſhall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of mine heart, to add drunkenneſs to thirſt* (Deut. 29. 19.) Every new ſin is an addition to his former ſins, becauſe he always liveth in ſin. They who would not have the captives brought into the City, gave this reaſon (2 *Chron.* 28. 13.) *For whereas we have offended againſt the Lord already, ye intend to add more to our ſins*, &c. O take heed of ſinning ſo, as to joyn ſins together. As in Arithmetick when we add ſum to ſum, what an huge ſum may we quickly make. Therefore break off ſin by repentance, that if thou ſinneſt again, it may not be an adding of ſin to ſin. That's a dreadful propheſie and threatning (*Pſal.* 69. 27.) *Add iniquity to their iniquity, and let them not come into thy righteouſneſs.* How doth the Lord add iniquity to iniquity? will he cauſe any to ſin more? or will he do any iniquity? No; the meaning is (as our margin intimates) the Lord will add the puniſhment of their iniquity to their iniquity; or he will give them up to the power of their own luſts and vile affections, ſo that they cannot but renew the acts of ſin, and add one iniquity to another. It is a bleſſed work when we are much in the additions of grace to grace, and of good works to good. 'Tis the deſign and buſineſs of a gracious heart to add grace to grace, that is, the exerciſe of one grace to another, till every grace be exerciſed (2 *Pet.* 1. 5.) *Give diligence to add to your faith vertue, and to vertue knowledg, and to knowledg temperance, and to temperance patience.* Here is a bleſſed addition. When a good man hath done well once, he adds to do more, he adds more acts of the ſame kind, and he adds to do good acts of any other kind; He adds patience to godlineſs, and to godlineſs brotherly kindneſs, and to brotherly kindneſs charity; thus he is buſied in a bleſſed way of addition. But the addition of ſin to ſin, is the bitter fruit of rebellion againſt God (*Iſa.* 30. 1.) *Wo to the rebellious children---- that cover, but not with a covering of my Spirit, that they may add ſin to ſin.* They that make excuſes for ſin committed, add ſin to ſin; yet by theſe coverings, we may underſtand not only excuſes and pretences, for ſin acted, but our own good acts; for to cover ſin with any thing of our own, is to add ſin to ſin. Yet I conceive, the adding of one kind of ſin to another, is the addition there meant. The *Iſraelites* ſaid to *Samuel*, when they were brought to a ſight of their ſin (1 *Sam.* 12. 19.) *We have added unto all our ſins this evil to ask us a King.* They refuſed the Lords government, and asked a King in the pride of their hearts, and ſo added ſin to ſin. Thus 'tis ſaid of *Herod* (Luke 3. 20.) *That to all his evil deeds, he added this, that he ſhut up John in priſon.* And as there is an adding of ſeveral kinds of ſin, ſo of ſeveral acts of the ſame kind of ſin, oath to oath, and adultery to adultery, and wrong-dealing to wrong-dealing; this day ſome oppreſs their brethren, and the next day they do the ſame. O let ſuch remember what additions the Lord will make to them, he will add puniſhment to puniſhment, he will add the ſame kind of puniſhment ſeveral times, he will add ſword to ſword, and famine to famine, and peſtilence to peſtilence, and he will add puniſhments of various kinds. The Prophet reports what various or (if I may ſo ſpeak) heterogeneal kinds of ſin men added and ſtrung up together. (*Hoſ.* 4. 2.) *By ſwearing, and lying, and killing, and ſtealing, and committing adultery, they break out and blood toucheth blood.* Surely, God will make blood touch blood in a way of puniſhment, as men make blood touch blood in a way of ſin. The adding of ſins makes an addition of plagues. *When Jehoiakim the King heard the roll read, he threw it into the fire and burnt it* (Jer. 36.) but could he burn or make an end of the threatnings? no (*verſ.* 32.) *And there were added beſides unto them many like words.* It is ſaid (*Rev.* 22. 18.) *If any man ſhall add unto theſe things, God ſhall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book.* To add any thing to the holy Word of God, is as ſinful as to take from the Word, or act againſt it. God can add plagues as faſt as men add ſins. When ſin is added to ſin, then guilt is added to guilt, and puniſhment to puniſhment. Take heed of this addition, reſolve with the penitent ſoul in the Text; *If I have done iniquity, I will add no more.*

VERS. 33, 34, 35.

Should it be according to thy mind? he will recompence it whether thou refuſe, or whether thou chuſe, and not I: therefore ſpeak what thou knoweſt.

Let men of underſtanding tell me, and let a wiſe man hearken unto me.

Job hath ſpoken without knowledg, and his words were without wiſdom.

In the Context of theſe three verſes *Elihu* doth chiefly theſe two things. Firſt, he appeals to the Conſcience of *Job* (verſ. 33.) *Should it be according to thy mind?* ask thy ſelf whether it ſhould be ſo, yea or no. Secondly, he appeals to the judgment of *Job*'s friends, yea of all wiſe and underſtanding men, concerning what *Job* had ſpoken, or whether he had not ſpoken unwiſely, in the 33. and 34. verſes; *Let men of underſtanding tell me, and let a wiſe man hearken unto me. Job hath ſpoken without knowledg, and his words were without wiſdom.*

The ſcope of *Elihu* in theſe words is yet further to humble *Job*, and to provoke him to repentance for his inconſiderate ſpeeches. Yet *Elihu* doth not call *Job* to repentance upon the ſame grounds or terms as his three friends had done. They moved him to repentance upon the Conſideration of his former wicked life, as they ſuppoſed; but *Elihu* moves him to repentance upon the Conſideration of his imprudent and raſh ſpeeches under the afflicting hand of God.

Verſ. 33. **Should it be according to thy mind?**

This verſe is delivered in as much variety as any Text throughout the whole Book; and as a learned Writer upon it concludes; *If we ſhould ſtay upon all the various readings, tranſlations, and interpretations of it, we ſhould rather darken then enlighten, rather entangle both hearers and readers, then unfold the Text.* There are at leaſt ſix diſtinct tranſlations of this verſe, which I ſhall paſs only with the naming of them, and then proceed to open the words as they ſtand in our own; which comprehends the ſum and ſubſtance of what is held out in moſt of them.

Si omnes lectiones, verſiones, interpretationes perſequeremur, plus tenebrarum quam lucis afferemus. Pined.

Firſt, Some give it thus; *Should he reward it according to thy mind, though thou haſt deſpiſed the one, and choſen the other, yet will not I, therefore ſpeak what thou knoweſt.* As if he had ſaid, *Why ſhould God reward him, as thou wouldſt have him do it? Though thou haſt refuſed to ſubmit to Gods mercy, and haſt called for juſtice, yet I dare not do ſo. If thou know better teach me.*

Secondly, Another thus; *Should it come from thee, how he ſhould recompence it, when thou haſt refuſed his correction? but thou ſhalt chooſe and not I, therefore ſpeak what thou knoweſt.* The ſenſe of which tranſlation may be thus repreſented; *Shouldeſt thou who haſt ſinned, and refuſeſt to be corrected, teach God how he ſhould correct thee? Thou mayſt think ſo, but I do not, ſhew me better if thou canſt.*

Thirdly, *Should that come from thee, which he will puniſh? I ſpeak it, becauſe thou haſt refuſed Gods correction, becauſe thou haſt choſen that which I would not. Now ſpeak what thou knoweſt.* As if he had ſaid; *Why ſhouldſt thou ſpeak againſt Gods proceedings, to bring farther trouble upon thee? my deſire of eaſing thee is the cauſe, why I ſpeak thus; I ſhould never have accuſed God as thou haſt done, if I had been ſo handled by him. But if thou haſt any thing to except againſt what I ſay, ſpeak freely.*

Fourthly, *Did ſuch a ſpeech come from thee? He will recompence it, that thou haſt rejected him; But thou chooſeſt this way and not I: now ſpeak what thou knoweſt.* As if *Elihu* had thus expreſſed himſelf to *Job*; *I never heard thee ſpeak ſo humbly, as I have taught thee* (verſ. 31, 32.) *Surely God will puniſh thee, becauſe thou haſt ſpoken proudly againſt his proceedings with thee. But this is nothing to me, who like not of ſuch courſes. If thou canſt defend thy ſelf, ſo do.*

Thus *Junius* connecting this verſe with the former, wherein is ſhewed what a penitent perſon ſhould ſay to God, tranſlates and expounds the whole to this ſenſe; *Now therefore conſider, haſt thou ſpoken in ſuch a manner, ſurely God will recompence it to thee, if thou refuſeſt to ſpeak ſo,* (thus he deterreth him by the conſideration of the event, or of what might follow upon his refuſal, and then he deterreth him by his own example) *but if thou chooſeſt to do otherwiſe, truly I will not.* (Thou ſhalt go alone for me) *Now then ſpeak what thou thinkeſt.*

An ergo (hæc oratio profecta eſt) à te? rependet illud ſi ſpreveris (ſc. hac oratione uti, &c. Jun.

Fifthly, *Should therefore God recompence that which man hath done according to thine opinion, ſaying, becauſe thou diſlikeſt this, it is but equal, that thou ſhouldſt chooſe another and not I. And what doſt thou know? ſpeak man.*

An igitur ex tua opinione rependet Deus illud quod homo fecerit dicendo, &c? Piſc.

Sixthly, Mr. *Broughton* renders thus; *Should that come from thee which he will puniſh; as thou doſt loath, as thou likeſt, where I would not? Now ſpeak what thou thinkeſt.*

All theſe rendrings may be reduced to this one common ſenſe; *O Job, whatſoever thou ſuffereſt, or by what means ſoever thou art fallen into this miſery, is it fit that God ſhould be ordered by thy opinion and Judgment? And ſurely, O Job, I muſt tell thee plainly, nor canſt thou deny it, that thou haſt not reſted nor ſat down quietly in the determination and decree of God concerning thee; But thou wouldſt rather be chuſing and preſcribing to God, how and in what way he ſhould deal with thee, and diſpence his providences to thee, then ſatisfie thy ſelf in his appointments and pleaſure. Far be it from me, that I ſhould follow thy example, or tread in thy ſteps as to this matter; yet if thou haſt any thing to reply to what I have urged, ſay on, bring it forth, let me and all in thy preſence, hear and judg of it.*

Thus *Elihu* points *Job* to his grand error, that he did not readily approve, nor quietly ſubmit to the Judgment of God in his own caſe. And ſo had not ſpoken reverently enough of God, nor humbly enough of himſelf.

The reaſon of theſe various readings and rendrings mentioned, is the conciſeneſs of the Hebrew Text, which leaves ſome words to be underſtood and ſupplied for the compleating of the ſenſe. And becauſe the moſt skilful Interpreters are not perfectly acquainted with the dialect or manner of ſpeech uſed in thoſe more remote and ancient times, therefore they muſt needs differ both in their tranſlations and expoſitions, yet (which may free the Reader from all prejudices againſt the holy Scriptures, either as obſcure or dubious) they all center and agree in that which is true in it ſelf, as alſo in the principal ſcope and drift of *Elihu* in this diſcourſe with *Job*.

Having thus given ſome account of the various tranſlations of this verſe, I ſhall now cloſe with the explication of our own.

העמך

Num ex tuo conſilio & arbitratu rependet illud ſc. bonum vel malum, ſed de malo proprie accipio. Merc.

Should it be according to thy mind?] Thus *Elihu* beſpeaks *Job*; *Should it be?* he doth not ſay what, but leaves us to the whole matter; ſhould this, or that, or t'other thing, or any thing be according to thy mind? the Hebrew Text is but one word, which we tranſlate, *according to thy mind*, or, *as thou wouldſt have it?* ſhould it be from thee? that is, ſhould God take counſel or direction from thee? or go to thee as an Oracle to be taught which way to deal with thee, or with any man elſe; ſhould it be from thee? The matter which *Elihu* inſiſts upon, reſpects the diſpenſations of God; So his meaning is, ſhould God cut out the works of his providence according to thy order? ſhould God reward, or ſhould God puniſh? ſhould God ſet up, or ſhould God pull down? ſhould God bring trouble, or ſhould God cauſe peace according to thy mind? muſt he needs ask counſel of thee, before he proceed to any of theſe reſolutions? no!

> *He will recompence it whether thou refuſe, or whether thou chuſe.*

The former part of the verſe, is a queſtion or Interrogation, *Should it be according to thy mind? He will recompence*, &c. That's the anſwer; and it contains both a negative and an affirmative, he will not do according to thy mind, but he will do according to his own; *He will recompence it.*

ישלמנה *à radice* שלם

The verb ſignifies to pay, or appeaſe, and make quiet, and the reaſon why the ſame word ſignifieth paying, or recompencing, and peace, is becauſe where payment is made, peace is obtained, where recompence is given, there quietneſs is ſetled; *He will recompence, or he will pay*, that is, give out and diſtribute in his providences as he pleaſeth.

Whether thou chuſe, or whether thou refuſe.

מאס *denotat rejicere cum faſtidio tanquam vile & contemptum quid.*

There are two ſpecial acts of the will, chuſing and refuſing; and theſe two are Intrinſecal and Eſſential to the will; as the proper act of the underſtanding is to apprehend, and then to aſſent; ſo upon thoſe repreſentations which the underſtanding makes to the will, the will doth either refuſe or chuſe. Further, the word which we here tranſlate to *refuſe*, ſignifies more than that ſimple act of the will, it ſignifies to refuſe with a kind of diſdain and great diſguſt; to refuſe a thing as altogether unworthy to be received; or to refuſe a thing as being much diſpleaſed and burdened with it. *Eliphaz* uſeth this word (*Chap.* 5. 17.) *Deſpiſe thou not the chaſtening of the Lord*; that is, do not refuſe it with a diſlike, or as a thing that is grievous and nauſeous to thee. That which is contrary to our appetite, the ſtomach refuſeth and vomits it up again; ſuch a force there is in this word, he will recompence it, *whether* and how much ſoever *thou refuſe*

Or whether thou chuſe.] He puts that in, to ſhew that it is neither the refuſal of man that ſtops God, nor is it the choice of man that brings God on to his work, he will proceed purely from himſelf; he will recompence whether thou refuſeſt, or whether thou chuſe, *and not I.*

As if he had ſaid, it is God that will do it, it is God that will bring this upon thee, *and not I*; that's the ſenſe of our reading; But according to other readings, *and not I*, refers, to *thou*; do thou refuſe or chuſe whether thou wilt obey the diſpenſation or no, for my part I will not ſtand upon thoſe terms with God, but refer my ſelf wholly to his diſpoſe.

From the words thus opened (*Should it be according to thy mind?* &c.

Obſerve, Firſt, *Man would have every thing go according to his mind.*

He would have his mind the meaſure both of all that he is to do for God; and of all that God doth to him. We love to do all things according to our own minds, and we love to have all things done according to our minds. Man naturally would do nothing according to God's mind; nor would he have any thing done to him according to God's mind, unleſs it accord with his own too. The Apoſtle (*Rom.* 8. 7.) proclaims that Innate Enmity that is in the heart of all men naturally againſt the mind and will of God; *The wiſdom of the fleſh is Enmity againſt God: It is not ſubject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be*; that is, while a man remains fleſh, or in an unregenerate ſtate, he is altogether at enmity againſt the Law of God; both againſt what God appoints him to do, and againſt what he appoints him to ſuffer. Man equally riſeth up in his thoughts, and rebels againſt both. And as this enmity doth remain whole and unbroken in all men by nature, till they are renewed by grace and born again; ſo there are remainders of it, even in thoſe who are renewed by grace; there is ſomewhat of this oppoſition againſt God in every godly man; he would fain have things go according to his mind; and he hath much of this mind in him; I do not ſay, a godly man would do nothing according to God's mind, that's the natural man's frame; but a godly man would very fain have God do things according to his mind, as may appear, eſpecially in four things.

Firſt, He would have God reward, or do good both to himſelf and others, according to his mind; He would have God lift up thoſe whom he would have lifted up, and prefer thoſe whom he would have preferr'd; he would fain have God ſhew favour to or beſtow favours upon thoſe whom he favours.

Secondly, As to puniſhment and Judgment, he would have God puniſh according to his mind; ſuch a man is proud, he is an oppreſſor, he is an oppoſer of goodneſs and good men, therefore he would have the hand of God heavy upon him, to caſt him down out of hand, or without delay.

Thirdly, He would have God go according to his mind in chaſtning and afflicting himſelf; though he would not be totally uncorrected, yet he would have God correct him only in ſuch a kind, in ſuch a manner and meaſure as he would chuſe; he doth not refuſe chaſtening, but he would be chaſtened in what himſelf pleaſeth, or in his own way. He ſaith in his heart, if God would correct me in this or that, I could bear it, but I do not like to be corrected in ſuch a thing, or in ſuch a way; one ſaith, if God would ſmite me in my Eſtate I could bear it, but not in my body; Another ſaith, if God ſhould ſmite me with ſickneſs, I could bear it, but not in my Children; or let the affliction be what God pleaſeth, if God would afflict me but thus much, or thus far, in ſuch a degree, I could ſubmit, but my heart can hardly yield to this meaſure of affliction. Thus we would have it according to our minds, as to the meaſure, as alſo for the continuance of our afflictions. We would be corrected for ſo long, for ſo many days, but to have months of vanity, and years of trouble, this is not according to our mind.

Admonendus eſt Philippus ut deſinat mundum regere.

Fourthly, He would have God govern (not only himſelf but) the whole world according to his mind: Man hath much of this in him, he would have God order nations as himſelf and other men like himſelf deſire. Some one man would preſcribe and direct what God ſhould do, and how he ſhould do to all men. *Luther* writ to *Melancthon* when he was ſo exceedingly troubled at the providences of God in the world; *Our Brother Philip is to be admoniſht, that he would forbear governing the world*; we can hardly let God alone to rule that world which himſelf alone hath made; *Should it be according to thy mind?* to this man's mind, or that man's mind? it muſt not be as it is; if every man might have his mind, he would govern and rule the world in another way than God doth. There is ſcarce any good man that is ſatisfied in the government of particular nations, if he might have his mind, he would caſt things into another mould and method than the providence of God hath caſt them in at this day. Yea, 'tis ſeldom, that it either rains or ſhines according to our mind; The weather which God is pleaſed to ſend, whether wet or dry, fair or foul, rarely pleaſeth us.

Secondly, When *Elihu* ſaith, *Should it be according to thy mind?* This queſtion implieth a ſtrong Negation; certainly, it ſhould not.

Hence note, *'Tis beſide the duty and above the line of man to deſire that things ſhould be according to his mind, either with himſelf or with others.*

There's nothing more againſt the mind of God, nor againſt our own good, than that all things ſhould be according to our mind; we may quickly undo our ſelves and diſhonour God by having our own deſires. And that it is ſinful, very ſinful to deſire to have our own deſires, may appear, by conſidering the ſpring or root of ſuch deſires, I ſhall ſhew a threefold very evil root from whence thoſe deſires ſpring.

Firſt, They ſpring from pride and an over-weening conceit of our ſelves; and that upon a double account; Firſt, from pride as to our deſerts; for if God do ſuch men good, they are apt to think they have deſerved more good, than God hath done them; and if God afflict them, they are ready to ſay, ſurely they have not deſerved ſo much affliction. We think we have deſerved greater kindneſs than God exhibits; and that we have not deſerved ſo great a croſs as he inflicts. Is not this a great piece of pride?

Again, Theſe deſires ſpring from pride in our own wiſdom and underſtanding; as if we knew how to order matters more equally than God. Is it not a huge piece of pride, of Luciferian pride, to think that there might be a better meaſure of things than the mind of God is? doth not ſuch a man make himſelf wiſer than God? and more prudent than God? doth not he ſuppoſe, that he ſees further into things than God? when as alas we cannot ſee an hour before us, but God hath the proſpect of all things, He ſeeth *the end from the beginning*, and hath all in his eye from all Eternity. When we thus make our ſelves wiſer than God, is not this a high point of pride? Here's the firſt evil root of deſiring to have things according to our mind, *pride*, or an opinion that we deſerve better, or could order things better.

Secondly, Theſe deſires proceed as from pride, ſo from diſcontent with the dealings of God, and 'tis pride that fills us with diſcontent; he that would have things according to his mind, muſt needs be diſſatisfied when they are not.

Thirdly, When they ſpring not from direct diſcontent, yet they do from ſome degree of impatience. There is not ſuch a quietneſs of ſpirit or acquieſcence as ſhould be in the heart of man, otherwiſe he would let things be according unto God's mind, and never be troubled, when they are not according to his own. Now conſider what can ſpring from theſe three roots, Pride, Diſcontent, and Impatience, but very evil and bitter fruit; therefore, to deſire to have things according to our mind is very ſinful, exceeding ſinful.

Thirdly, This queſtion, *Should it be according to thy mind?* implieth a ſharp rebuke and a reproof upon *Job*, as deſiring a thing which was altogether againſt rule and reaſon.

Hence note, *It is moſt unreaſonable and abſurd, to deſire that things ſhould be ordered as we would have them, and not as God would have them.*

Is it not unreaſonable in a family that things ſhould be as the children would have them, and not as the Father would have them? Or, that things ſhould be done according to the mind of the ſervants, and not according to the mind of the Maſter? Do not the Magiſtrates and Governours of the world think it an unreaſonable thing that Nations ſhould be governed according to the mind of Subjects, and not according to the mind of the Prince, regulated according to the known Laws of the Nation? Who doth not think it an unreaſonable thing, that a journey ſhould be diſpoſed according to the mind of the Horſe, and not according to the mind of the Rider? Should the Horſe guide the Rider, or the Rider his Horſe? Is it not an unreaſonable thing that a man's ſenſe ſhould guide his underſtanding, when his underſtanding is given on purpoſe to guide his ſenſe? Is it not an unreaſonable thing that paſſion ſhould order reaſon, when as reaſon ſhould be the bridle of our paſſion? Is it not an unreaſonable thing that unlearned ignorant men ſhould teach the knowing, when the learned and knowing are ſet up to teach the ignorant? and is it not much more abſurd and unreaſonable for us, to deſire that things ſhould be according to our mind, either with our ſelves or others, Families or Nations, and not according to the mind of God? Should things be as the beſt, as the wiſeſt, as the holieſt men in the world would have them, and not as God would have them; it were more abſurd and unreaſonable than that things ſhould go in a family according to the mind of the ſervants and children, rather than according to the mind of the Maſter and Father; yea it were more abſurd than any of thoſe fore-mentioned abſurdities. *Should it be according to thy mind, O Job?* how unreaſonable a thing were that!

Fourthly, From thoſe words, *He will recompence it, whether thou refuſe, or whether thou chuſe.*

Note, *God will not yield to men, nor be ſubject to their pleaſure.*

God will do what he pleaſeth, as I may ſay, in ſpight of any man's teeth. Things muſt paſs in ſuch a way as God hath appointed, and ſees meet to diſpoſe of them; and not as we would have them. *He will recompence:* God is reſolute for the doing of his own will, and men are uſually over-reſolute for the doing of theirs; and indeed ſome are as it were wholly changed into will, or rather wilſulneſs; *they will do this, and they will do that; they will have this, and they will have that.* Men may quickly, but God can never act too highly, too ſtrongly, too confidently upon his own will; the reaſon is, becauſe his will is an holy will, and the rule of righteouſneſs. Only conſider from the whole.

Man is never diſpleaſed with what God doth, till he forgetteth what himſelf is.

Man forgets that he is a worm, and no man, he forgets that he is a creature, he forgets himſelf to be duſt and aſhes, elſe his ſpirit would not be wrought up to ſuch a height, to have things go according to his mind, and not according to the mind and will of God.

And ſeeing God will have every thing go according to his mind and will, know there's no ſtriving nor ſtrugling with God; if man will not bow to the will of God, he ſhall be broken by the will of God: if he will not ſubmit to it, he muſt fall by it. There's no avoiding one of theſe two, *for he will recompence.* Therefore let us yield up our ſelves freely to God, to be ruled by him, and not ſet him the rule, no nor ſo much as give him advice; let us receive the Law, and take advice from him. *God is our Commander, but we muſt not be ſo much as his Counſellors.* The Apoſtle ſpeaking of the eternal purpoſes and decrees of God, ſaith (*Rom.* 11. 34.) *Who hath been his Counſellor?* As God had none to counſel him concerning his eternal purpoſes, ſo we muſt not adventure to counſel him as to his daily providences or diſpenſations, either toward our ſelves, or others; the true rule of our life is, to yield our ſelves to be ruled by God. *He will recompence it, whether we chuſe, or whether we refuſe.*

And not I.] As if he had ſaid, If thou wilt ſtruggle with the will of God, thou mayſt, but I will not. God will go his own way, and do as he ſees good, ſay thou what thou canſt, or howſoever it pleaſe or diſpleaſe thee. And for mine own part, I dare not entertain or give way to a thought of preſcribing to him in any of theſe things, what he ſhould do; no nor be unſatisfied with, much leſs cenſure, what he hath done. Therefore, if thou canſt acquit thy ſelf of this crime and accuſation which I have laid to thy charge, as thou didſt theirs who ſpake before, do it, ſay what thou canſt for thy ſelf.

Hence note, *He that ſees another do amiſs, ought to take heed of doing the like himſelf.*

Again, As theſe words, *and not I*, refer to the word *recompence, He will recompence, whether thou chuſe, or whether thou refuſe*; the meaning of them may be conceived, as if *Elihu* had thus beſpoken *Job, If thou doſt ſmart for thy pride, and the height of thy ſpirit, if God pay thee home for it, do not lay the fault upon me; I have given thee counſel to direct thee better, I deſire not thou ſhouldeſt come under ſuch a handling, but certainly God will do it.* When we have declar'd the mind and will of God, in the ſeverity of his judgments upon ſinners, it is good for us to ſay God will do it, and not we. The Prophet *Jeremiah* (Chap. 17. 16.) having warned them of an evil day, adds, *Nor have I deſired the woful day, Lord thou knoweſt it : Jeremy* had ſpoken woful things againſt that people, but (ſaith he) I have not deſired that woful day, though I have propheſied of it. So *Elihu* ſeems to ſpeak, he will recompence, and *not I*; though it be not in my mind, yet I aſſure thee 'tis the mind of God.

Yet further, Some read theſe words with the former as an Interrogation or rebuking queſtion made by God himſelf; *What ? Should you chuſe, and not I ? Election or choice is my priviledg, not thine, thou muſt not think to preſcribe to me. I will chaſten and afflict, as I think fit, or according to my own will, not according to thine. Thus he brings in God ſpeaking to Job; thou findeſt thy ſelf much aggrieved, and complaineſt that thou art afflicted more then is meet; It ſhould ſeem then, that I muſt do what thou thinkeſt fit, not what I think fit my ſelf. Surely thou muſt give me the rule, how much, how long, and in what manner I muſt correct both thy ſelf and others.* Should you chuſe, and not I : How uncomely !

Verba Dei per Mimeſin eſſe puto. Merc.

Therefore ſpeak what thou knoweſt.

Here *Elihu* gives *Job* time to reply, as he had done (at the thirty third chap. verſ. 5.) as if he had ſaid, *If thou knoweſt any thing againſt what I have ſpoken, or art able to make any objection againſt it, ſpeak*; if thou thinkeſt I have not ſpoken right, ſhew me my error, and ſpare not.

Hence note, Firſt, *When we have declar'd what we judg to be the mind of God in any caſe, we ſhould give others liberty of ſpeaking their minds alſo.*

This is my opinion, ſpeak what thou canſt againſt it; we ſhould ſpeak (2 *Cor*. 1. 24.) *Not as having Dominion over the faith of others, but as helpers of their joy*; The Miniſters of Chriſt muſt ſpeak as Servants to, not as Lords of the faith of others. *Elihu* did not carry it as a Lord over the faith of *Job*; but left him to make good his own opinion and practice if he could.

Secondly Note, *Knowledg is the fountain of Speech.*

We need no other light to ſpeak by than that of reaſon, the underſtanding ſhould feed the Tongue; we muſt not ſpeak at a venture, but keep to rule and take our aim. The Apoſtle *Paul* tells us of ſome who make a great noiſe, but know not what they ſay, nor whereof they affirm (1 *Tim*. 1. 7.) they ſpeak they underſtand not what, and vent what they can give no account of; *Speak what thou knoweſt.*

Thirdly Note, *We ſhould ſpeak (when called) what we know.*

Knowledg is a Talent, and muſt not be hid in a Napkin; if thou know better than I ſpeak, pray ſpeak, do not hide thy knowledg. As *Elihu* would have *Job* ſpeak in his own caſe, ſo he inviteth others to ſpeak about his caſe, as it followeth in the next verſe.

Verſ. 34. **Let men of underſtanding tell me, &c.**

In this 34. verſe *Elihu* turns his ſpeech to *Job*'s friends again, preſuming of, or not queſtioning their conſent to what he had ſaid, being confident that himſelf was in the right, and that they were wiſe enough to apprehend it. He was perſwaded that all wiſe men either were, or (upon hearing the matter) would be of his mind, and that therefore what *Job* had ſpoken, was very defective of wiſdom, as he concludes in the 35. verſe.

Let men of underſtanding tell me, &c.] He appeals to *Job*'s friends, or any other *men of underſtanding* : let them (ſaith he) conſider what I and he have ſpoken, and give their judgment impartially concerning the whole matter in debate between me & *Job*. *Let men of underſtanding tell me*, &c.

The Hebrew is, *men of heart* : the heart is the ſeat of underſtanding, according to Scripture language, there we read of a wiſe heart, and of an underſtanding heart; and it ſaith of a fooliſh or indiſcreet perſon, *he hath no heart*; he is a man without a heart. *Ephraim is a ſilly dove without a heart* (Hoſ. 7. 11.) that is, he doth not underſtand. Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates; *Sad men of heart will ſpeak as I, and the wiſe perſon that hears me.* As in the former part of the verſe *Elihu* called for ſpeakers; ſo in the latter he calleth for hearers; *Let men of underſtanding tell me,*

Viri cordis. i. e. *cordati; cor notat ſapientiam & carere cor dicitur qui deſipit. Cum Jobo non putat amplius producendum eſſe colloquium. Quare viros vocat intelligentes.* Sanct.

And let a wiſe man hearken to me;] or as ſome render, *a wiſe man will hearken to me.* The word rendred *hearken*, ſignifies more than to hear, even to ſubmit, to obey, a wiſe man will hearken to me; that is, he will aſſent to, and conſent with me, he will vote with me, and declare himſelf to be of my mind. In that *Elihu* appealed to wiſe and underſtanding men,

Et vir ſapiens audit, i. e. *audiet me, & mihi acquieſcet in hoc.* Merc.

Note, Firſt, *It is not good to ſtand to our own Judgments altogether, in dealing with the Conſciences of others.*

Let wiſe men, let men of underſtanding, hear and conſider the matter, let them ſpeak their minds; we ſhould not lean to nor rely upon our own underſtanding in the things which concern our ſelves only, much leſs in thoſe, wherein others are concerned more than our ſelves. *Eyes ſee more then an eye.* And though it be an argument of too much weakneſs to ſee with other mens eyes; yet it is an argument of much goodneſs and humility, to call in the help of other mens eyes.

Secondly Note, *The more wiſe men agree in any matter, the greater is the conviction.*

One man may ſpeak to conviction, but if many ſpeak the ſame, it is a very ſtrong conviction. Many (I confeſs) may center and agree in a wrong Judgment; yet we ought to have a reverend eſteem of, and not eaſily differ from that Judgment wherein many wiſe and underſtanding men agree. Chriſt ſpeaking of Church proceedings and cenſures, ſaith (*Matth*. 18. 19) *If two of you* (who conſtitute the leaſt number, much more if a greater number of godly wiſe men) *ſhall agree on earth as touching any thing that they ſhall ask, it ſhall be done for them*, &c. So ſtill the more wiſe, holy, and learned men agree in any point, the greater is our conviction, and the ſtronger our obligation to ſubmit to it. He that doth not hear a ſingle brother, his fault is great; much more if he hear not two or three; moſt of all when he doth not hear the Church ſpeaking to him, and teſtifying againſt him in the name of Jeſus Chriſt.

Thirdly, *Elihu* having made a long diſcourſe, appeals to wiſe men.

Hence note, *He that believeth he hath ſpoken truth, is not afraid to have it conſidered by thoſe who are beſt able to judg what is true.*

Truth fears not any teſt, or tryal. He that offers pure gold and ſilver, cares not who toucheth it, or takes the aſſay. *Wiſdom is* (ſure enough to be) *juſtified of her children.* They who underſtand truth, and love it, can do nothing againſt the truth, but for it.

Fourthly, *Elihu* having diſcourſed long, is willing to refer it to men, and to let them judg of it.

Hence note, *He that hath ſpoken truth in his uprightneſs, hath reaſon to believe that he ſhall have the conſent of the upright with him.*

There is a ſameneſs of ſpirit in all wiſe and godly men for the main, and for the moſt part it is ſo in particulars. If a godly man conſcienciouſly judg ſuch an opinion to be truth, he may be much aſſured, that other wiſe and godly men will be of his opinion too. He dares ſay, as *Elihu*, *Let wiſe men hearken unto me.*

Fifthly, and laſtly, In that *Elihu* makes his appeal to wiſe men, to men of heart,

Note, *All men are not fit to give their judgment in a caſe.*

All are not competent Judges, nor prepared to give an opinion; and if they do 'tis not much to be regarded; wiſe men, ſpecially godly wiſe men, men of a holy underſtanding, are the men whoſe judgment and opinion is to be regarded. *Elihu* having beſpoken the thoughts and opinion of wiſe men, ſeems to give his own in the next words.

Verſ. 35. **Job hath ſpoken without knowledg, and his words were without wiſdom.**

When *Elihu* had offered it to the Conſideration of wiſe and underſtanding men, whether *Job* had ſpoken right about that great point, *Submiſſion to the abſolute Soveraignty of God*, he forbare not firſt, and plainly to declare his own underſtanding of it.

Job hath ſpoken without knowledg.] The Hebrew is, *not in* *knowledg*, or, *not knowingly*; that is, ignorantly, fooliſhly; a very high charge; *Job hath ſpoken without knowledg*; yet we are not to underſtand it, as if *Elihu* thought *Job* an ignorant, or an unknowing man, he could not but know otherwiſe; but as to this particular caſe, he reports him as a man that had ſpoken without knowledg, and declared himſelf both beſide his duty, and the rule.

Hence note, *They who are very wiſe and knowing in many things, yet may be out in ſome.*

The beſt of men are not perfect, either in grace, or knowledg. We may know much, and yet come ſhort in what we ought to know. A man may ſpeak ſome things very underſtandingly, and yet ſpeak other things very erroneouſly; A *Job* may be out ſometimes. *Job hath ſpoken without knowledg.*

And his words were without wiſdom.] When the Lord comes to decide this great Controverſie in the laſt Chapter of this Book, he tells *Job*'s three friends, that their words had not been right, as the words of *Job*; and yet here *Elihu* ſaith, *Job's words were without wiſdom*, or, *not in wiſdom*. When God ſaid, the words of *Job* were right; we may underſtand it, that they were ſo according to their general tenor, or they were ſo comparatively to what his friends, *Eliphaz*, *Zophar*, and *Bildad* had ſaid in his caſe, or at leaſt his laſt words (after God had throughly convinced and humbled him) were ſo, though in many things he had failed in ſpeech, or ſpoken thoſe things which were not right before. Yet here *Elihu* ſpake truth, while he ſaid, *his words were without wiſdom* in the ſpecial point he had to do with him about; and ſo much *Job* himſelf acknowledged, *I have ſpoken once, yea twice, but I will ſpeak no more*; I will no more ſet my wiſdom againſt the wiſdom of God, nor preſume to have things go according to my mind, let God do what he will with me hereafter.

Conſider, how well this good man took the plain-dealing of *Elihu*; It might be expected that *Job* would quickly have riſen up in paſſion, eſpecially when he heard himſelf thus urged; But being convinced, with what *Elihu* ſpake, he gave him not a word, much leſs an angry word.

Hence note, *A good man where he is faulty, will hear reproof with patience.*

A gracious heart, will ſoon be angry with himſelf for ſpeaking or doing amiſs, but he can take it well to hear himſelf reproved, when he hath indeed either ſpoken or done amiſs. Nor are there many greater and clearer arguments of a gracious heart than this. To bear a reproof well is a high point of commendation. Grace may be ſhewed as eminently by our patience when we are rebuked for doing that which is evil, as by our forwardneſs and zeal in doing that which is good. When *Nathan* the Prophet applied the parable home to *David* after he had not only committed but continued long impenitently in his grievous ſins of adultery and murder, telling him to his face, *Thou art the man* (2 Sam. 12.7.) and not only telling him ſo, but at once upbraiding him with all the former benefits and kindneſſes of God to him, and threatning him with many dreadful future judgments (*verſ.* 8, 9, 10, 11, 12.) when (I ſay) he was thus ſharply dealt with, it might have been feared, that this great King would have riſen up in paſſion, and roared like a fierce Lion upon the Prophet; yet we hear nothing from him but words of ſorrowful confeſſion, and humble ſubmiſſion (*verſ.* 13.) *I have ſinned againſt the Lord.* The boldneſs of *Paul* was great in blaming *Peter* openly, and *Peter*'s meekneſs was as great in bearing that blame (*Gal.* 2. 14.) Nor do I know whether the patience of *Job* were greater in bearing the great afflictions that God laid upon him, or in bearing the great reproofs which this man laid upon him. I grant, he complained often of thoſe bitter reproaches which his three friends caſt upon him, charging him for a wicked man or a hypocrite, and then he replied and replied home: but here *Elihu* reproved him ſharply for his raſh ſpeeches and intemperate carriage under his affliction, and he took it both meekly and ſilently. A good man will not ſtorm, nor rage, nor revile, nor threaten, when he is juſtly reprehended, but lies down under it, and takes it quietly, yea thankfully, and goes home and bleſſeth God that he hath met with a knock; Theſe are very hard words, *Thou haſt ſpoken words without wiſdom*; But *Job* ſeems to confeſs and patiently bear them: *It is beſt for us not to do or ſpeak any thing that deſerves a reproof: and 'tis the next beſt, to receive a reproof well for what we have either done or ſpoken ill.*

VERS. 36, 37.

My deſire is that Job may be tryed unto the end, becauſe of his anſwers for wicked men.

For he addeth rebellion unto his ſin, he clappeth his hands amongſt us, and multiplieth his words againſt God.

IN theſe two verſes *Elihu* winds up his ſecond ſpeech to *Job*, and in them we have two things conſiderable; Firſt, his motion made in reference to *Job* at the beginning of the 36. verſe; *My deſire is (or this is the thing that I move for) that Job may be tryed to the end.* Secondly, we have the reaſon of this motion, which ſome make three-fold, others fourfold, taking the latter part of the 36. verſe for one of the four; *My deſire is that Job may be tryed to the end*, why?

Firſt, Becauſe *of his anſwers for wicked men.*

Secondly, *I deſire he may be tryed unto the end*, why? *for he addeth rebellion unto his ſin.*

Thirdly, *I deſire he may be tryed unto the end?* why? *he clappeth his hands amongſt us,* and

Fourthly, *I deſire he may be tryed to the end,* why? *he multiplyeth his words againſt God.* Others take the latter words of the 36. verſe, only as the ſubject matter about which *Elihu* deſires *Job* may be tryed, that is, concerning his anſwers for wicked men. And ſo the 37. verſe contains three reaſons why he deſires he may be brought to that tryal.

Verſ. 36. **My deſire is that Job may be tryed.**

So we tranſlate, and we put in the margin, *O my father*, moſt or many tranſlaters put that into the Text, *O my father, Let Job be tryed unto the end.* The firſt word of the Text hath a twofold ſignification; ſome taking it as an application to God by the name or title *father*. The reaſon of this difference is, becauſe the root of that Hebrew word which ſignifies a *father*, ſignifies to *deſire*, to *will or wiſh*. Mr. *Broughton* renders, *O my father* (and he adds, *O my father which art in heaven) Let Job be tryed unto victory.* As if *Elihu* (ſaith he) looking up to heaven, by *O father*, meant what followeth, *O father which art in heaven.* And he quotes *Abraham Peritzol* (a learned Rabbin) expounding the words ſo tranſlated, at large.

אבה *voluit, cupiit, unde* אב *pater, quaſi benevolus dictus. Pater mi probetur Job uſq; ad victoriam.* Jun.

Father is one of the ſweeteſt and moſt honourable compellations of God. (*Iſa.* 63. 16.) the whole Church of the *Jews* is brought in beſpeaking God in that relation; *Thou art our father, though Abraham be ignorant of us*, &c. And God ſpeaking of himſelf, ſaith (*Mal.* 1.6.) *A ſon honoureth his father, if I be a father, where is my honour?* It was uſual even among the Heathens to add the name *father* to their Idol gods, thereby to expreſs their reverence, or veneration of them.

Apud Gentiles pater commune nomen erat Deorum; unde Dieſpiter, Merſpiter, Jupiter.

O my father.] They who embrace this tranſlation take ſpecial notice of that Pronoun *My*, *O my father.* He doth not ſay only or barely, *O father*, but *O my father.* Thoſe appropriating poſſeſſive Pronouns, *mine, thine,* have a kind of deliciouſneſs in them, and breath abundance of affection. *Luther* ſaid the ſweetneſs of the Goſpel lyeth in *Pronouns*; when a believer can ſay (with believing *Thomas*) *My Lord, and my God.* Thoſe things or perſons which we love moſt we call ours; we ſay of a ſingle ſpecial friend, *he is mine*; and to ſay, ſuch a one is mine, is as much as to ſay, he is much beloved, much prized or eſteemed by me, he, as it were lies next my heart; property raiſeth the price of all good things. We rejoyce in God moſt, when we can call him ours; and ſo doth God in us, when he takes us for his own. We have a meeting or union of ſeveral poſſeſſive Pronouns in one verſe (*Cant.* 8.12.) *My vineyard which is mine is before me: My, mine, before me*; implying how much Jeſus Chriſt did appropriate the Church unto himſelf, or how much he thought himſelf concerned in the proſperity of the Church. And as the Title *Father* is ſweet and comfortable, ſo glorious and honourable; God is the father of all, and all fatherhood is derived from God. That of the Apoſtle (*Eph.* 3. 15.) which we tranſlate, *of whom the*

Ἐξ ȣ̃ πᾶσα πατριά. *Ex quo omnis paternitas.* Vulg. *Paternitatis nomen ex ſemetipſo largitur omnibus; ſicut enim ſolus bonus dicitur quia bonitatem aliis communicat,* &c. Hieron. in Epiſt. ad Epheſ. c.3.

the whole family, &c. Others render, *the whole fatherhood, in heaven and earth is named.* For as God only is good, and other things are good only by communication from him, ſo God only is a father, and all other fatherhood is by derivation and communication from him. *O my father, let Job be tryed unto the end.* We ſay,

My deſire is.] The Hebrew Text is as clear for that; and whether we ſay, *O my father, let Job be tryed*, or, *my deſire is that Job may be tryed to the end*, the general ſenſe is the ſame. We render the word by *deſire* (Chap. 9 26.) where *Job* tells us, that his life or the life of man is like *the ſwift ſhips*; we put in the margin, *ſhips of deſire* (it is this word) that is, like thoſe ſhips which being moſt deſirable (as being laden with the richeſt and moſt precious commodities) make moſt haſt home to their Harbour, or proper Port. Thus here, *My deſire*, or the thing that I ſtrongly wiſh is, &c. The Chaldee Paraphraſe renders, *My will is, or I will*

Volo ego ut probetur Job, &c. Targ.

That Job may be tryed.] But had not *Job* been tryed already? was there any need to call him to a farther tryal? had he not been in the furnace a long time? why then doth *Elihu* ſo earneſtly importune that *Job* might be brought to tryal?

I anſwer; The word ſignifies a twofold tryal; Firſt, a tryal by way of examination, or argumentation; we try a man when we examine him, and argue with him, when we ſcan and ſearch out what he hath ſpoken, or what he hath done. In this ſenſe the word is uſed (*Chap.* 12. 11.) and at the third verſe of this Chapter, *the ear tryeth words*; that is, the ear examineth the ſenſe and meaning of thoſe things which are ſpoken; and by the ear, he means not only the ſenſitive faculty taken abſtractly, but the ſenſitive faculty joyned with the intellectual. A beaſt hath an ear and can hear, but a beaſt cannot try or examine that which is ſpoken and heard; only they that have rational faculties joyned with the ſenſitive are able to try words, and matter delivered by them. *I deſire Job may be tryed to the utmoſt*, that the words and ſpeeches which have paſt from him, may be fully conſidered, or conſidered to the end, that it may, at laſt, appear what he hath aſſerted and maintained.

Sunt qui intelligant probari pro exagitari *diſputatione, ſed præſtat ut ad tentationem referatur per afflictiones.* Merc.

Secondly, It ſignifies a tryal by affliction (*Zech.* 13. 9.) *One third ſhall be brought through the fire and tryed.* As metal gold or ſilver is tryed and refined in the fire, ſo ſhall they in the fire of affliction. Jeſus Chriſt is called *a tryed ſtone* (*Iſa.* 28. 16.) and he was ſo in both theſe accounts; he was examined and argued with to the end, and he was afflicted, and grieved to the end, he was a man of ſorrows, and acquainted with griefs all his days; *Behold I lay in Zion a tryed ſtone, a ſure corner ſtone*; that which is tryed is ſure; we may truſt that which hath been tryed. We ſay, *try me and truſt me*; we may underſtand *Elihu* in both, or in either of theſe ſenſes. My deſire is that *Job* may be tryed, that what he hath ſaid may be further examined, or that his affliction may be continued, till he be brought to a ſight of his errors and miſtakes. I would have him corrected till he ſubmits to God as a conqueror, and recanteth his raſh and inconſiderate anſwers. *My deſire is that Job may be tryed*

Optatum ut tantiſper flagelletur Job, donec deo vincenti cedat & reſponſis vanis renunciet. Jun.

Unto the end.] He doth not ſay barely, *tryed*, but, *tryed unto the end*; that is, *fully* and *throughly* tryed, not by halves, overly and ſlightly; If he be indeed juſt and ſincere, the fire of this tryal, how long ſoever he continueth in it, will do him no hurt, it will only purge and refine him from his remaining droſs; but if he be unſound and naught, he will evaporate and fume away into vain complaints and murmurings; Therefore *let him be tryed to the end.*

עד נצח *verbum* נצח *ſignificat inſtare & urgere opus, donec ad finem perductum fuerit.*

Some of the Latines tranſlate, *I would have him tryed to death*, which is the end or period of man in this world. The word ſignifies *ſempiternity*, as alſo *victory*, becauſe that which continueth ever, muſt needs be victorious (1 *Sam.* 15. 29.) *The ſtrength of Iſrael will not lie*; we put in the Margin, *The eternity or victory of Iſrael* (that is, the eternal God, who is victor over all) *will not lie.* Thus ſome render here, *I deſire Job may be tryed unto victory*, that is, that God would never give over trying him, till he hath overcome him and brought down his ſpirit, for ſtill the man is too high, too ſtout, his ſpirit is ſtill too big, too unbroken; my deſire is therefore that God would try him to victory, till he hath brought him upon his knees, and made him eat his words, or till he give glory to God by humbling himſelf and confeſſing his ſin: I would have him fully convinced by argument and throughly humbled by chaſtiſement, till he at laſt reſigneth up himſelf to the will of God. The *Italian* gloſs puts it in the form of a Prayer; *Withdraw not thy viſitation from Job, until thou haſt brought him to the duty of a child*; Further, this word, *unto the end*, doth not imply a deſire of the everlaſtingneſs of his tryal, but of the profitableneſs of it. He would not have him always kept upon the rack, or under the rod, but he would have him effectually dealt with, that the matter might iſſue well with him.

Pleriq; Latini, ad mortem uſque reddunt quod in Originali habetur, uſq; in ſæculum vel in ſempiternum. *Vatablus*, Longo Tempore; *Gregorius*, Ad huc, *Philippus*, Jugiter.

From the words thus opened, Note firſt, *Affliction is a tryal.*

It makes us appear what we are; moſt have but an appearance till they are tryed; and being tryed, what they are doth really appear. Afflictions try our graces what they are; and afflictions try our corruptions what they are. Afflictions draw forth the ſpirit of a man, they turn his inſide outward, and ſet him (as it were) in the open light. Take tryal in the ſecond ſenſe by way of examination, and it yields us the ſame truth. He that is throughly ſifted will appear in his own likeneſs. Let a man be fully dealt and argued with, let his ſpeeches and his actions be brought to the rule of the word, what he is, and what they are, will ſoon be ſeen. That's the tryal which the Apoſtle means (1 *Theſ.* 5. 2.) *Prove all things*; prove what men ſay and hold, prove their aſſertions and opinions, and you ſhall come to a clear underſtanding of them. The rule of the word is a ſtraight or right rule, and that which is right will ſhew you both it ſelf, and that which is crooked, or any way ſwerving and departing from it.

Rectum eſt index ſui & obliqui.

Secondly, As tryal is taken in the former notion for affliction, *My deſire is that Job may be tryed unto the end.*

Note, *It is lawful to pray or wiſh for afflictions upon others in ſome caſes.*

We may pray for and wiſh afflictions upon others for their good, or for the glory of God. It is not good to wiſh evil as evil upon any man, no not upon the worſt of men. *Job* profeſſed againſt that (*Chap.* 31. 29, 30.) *If I have rejoyced at the deſtruction of him that hated me, or have ſuffered my mouth to ſin by wiſhing a curſe to his ſoul, then*, &c. As if he had ſaid, If I have prayed or wiſhed that any evil might befall mine enemy as evil, I ſhould have done very ill, and deſerved to ſuffer ill. For that had been an evil wiſh. Yet, as we our ſelves ought to chuſe affliction rather than ſin; ſo we may pray for affliction upon others, rather than that they ſhould go on in ſin. As in that caſe of the Churches proceeding to the ſentence of excommunication; which is the delivering of a perſon up to Satan, or a putting him into the very power of the devil for a time (1 *Cor.* 5. 4, 5.) it is the end or deſign which makes this lawful: our buſineſs in the Miniſtry and in all Church-adminiſtrations, is to put ſouls out of the power of Satan, to reſcue them out of the hand of the devil, to recover thoſe that are led Captive by him at his will; yet ſaith the Apoſtle, *Deliver ſuch a one unto Satan*, put him into the devils hands, for what end? *For the deſtruction of the fleſh, that the ſpirit may be ſaved in the day of the Lord Jeſus.* This makes the prayer or act of the Church lawful, becauſe the intendment is the deſtroying of that which ought to be deſtroyed, or to deſtroy that in man which will be the deſtruction of man, *his fleſh*, his luſt, his pride, his covetouſneſs, his wantonneſs; *For the deſtruction of this fleſh deliver him to Satan, that the ſpirit may be ſaved in the day of the Lord Jeſus.* Thus we may pray and wiſh for affliction upon others; but 'tis a prayer which muſt be managed with a great deal of caution, leſt our prayers to God in that kind, be found ill wiſhes to men. That which *Elihu* had in his thoughts, when he deſired *Job* might be tryed to the very end, was, that he might be prevented from going on in the way wherein he was to end. Yea, I conceive a man may pray for afflictions upon himſelf, rather than he ſhould go on in a courſe of ſin, or, when he finds that other ways and means which God hath uſed with him, have not been effectual to ſubdue his corrupt heart, to mortifie his luſts, and to bring him off from a courſe of ſin, but that (as it is ſaid in the next verſe) he is in danger of *adding rebellion to his ſin.* A godly man had much rather that God ſhould make him poor, ſick, weak, and nothing in this world, then let his corruptions have dominion over him; He deſires rather God ſhould take the world quite out of his hand, than that the world ſhould get into his heart, or be as fuel to feed and inflame his luſts.

Bono ipſius optat hoc, non odio aut malevolentia. Druſ.

Thus *Elihu* deſired that *Job* might be tryed, becauſe tryals by affliction are for our purging, refining, and bettering. Love was the root of this wiſh, not hatred or ill will. *Let Job be tryed to the end.* Why? we may take the latter part of the verſe for a reaſon why, as well as for the matter about which he would have him tryed.

Propter reſponſiones (communes) cum hominibus improbis. Bez. *Tanquam unus è numero virorum vanorum.* Piſc.

Becauſe of his anſwers for wicked men.] Let him be tryed concerning thoſe words which he hath ſpoken in common with or after the manner of vain men. He hath ſpoken words wherein he ſeems to comply with wicked men, to ſay as they ſay, to conſent with them, and to be of their opinion, this was charged upon him directly by *Elihu* at the 8. verſe of this Chapter; *What man is like Job, who drinketh up ſcorning like water, which goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, and walketh with wicked men*; that is, though *Job* in his converſation or carriage of his life hath not, yet in this diſcourſe, he hath ſtengthened the hands of wicked men, or confirmed them in their opinion, ſpeaking ſo much of the heavy preſſures of God upon him, and deſiring ſo often to come to a hearing, as if he had ſome wrong done him. We are not to underſtand theſe words of *Elihu*, *Becauſe of his anſwers for wicked men*; As if he charged *Job* to do ſo directly, or as if he had formally taken upon him to plead or advocate the cauſe of wicked men; we are not (I ſay) to underſtand him ſo groſly, nor had it been true to ſay, that *Job* opened his mouth, or ſpake thus for wicked men; but his meaning is, he hath ſpoken ſuch things as in common apprehenſion ſeem to comply with the opinions of wicked men; or with the ſpeeches which they uſe when they are (like him) in a troubled condition.

Or again, *Becauſe of his anſwers for wicked men*; that is, that he may acknowledg the anſwers he hath given, are not ſuch as do become a godly man, but rather ſavour of ſuch a ſpirit as unbroken proud perſons hold forth in the time of their affliction; who are never pleaſed with, but always complaining at divine diſpenſations.

Laſtly, Theſe words, *Becauſe of his anſwers for wicked men*, may, poſſibly, have this ſenſe; Becauſe he hath ſpoken ſuch things as may ſerve the turn of wicked men for anſwers, or, as if he would inſtruct them what to anſwer, when at any time they are under the hand of God. He may be ſaid to anſwer for another man, who any way prompts him how or what to anſwer. And while a good man ſpeaks amiſs, in any caſe, he teacheth, yea and encourageth bad men to ſpeak ſo too. Yet I rather incline to the firſt interpretation, that *Elihu* would have *Job* tryed, becauſe his anſwers were ſuch as it might be judged he had taken wicked men for his pattern in giving them, and not as if in them he had given a pattern to wicked men.

Hence Note, Firſt, *A good man may ſometimes act the part of a wicked man, or he may ſpeak like wicked men, as if he were one of them.*

Though his ſtate be as different from the ſtate of wicked men, as light is from darkneſs, or as ſweet from ſour, or white from black, yet as to ſome actions or ſpeeches, he may bear a reſemblance to them. Good men and bad men do, as I may ſay, enter-common in many things; a wicked man whoſe heart is naught, who is yet in an unregenerate eſtate (for I mean not by a wicked man, him only that is flagitious, a murderer, a whoremonger, a drunkard, but a wicked man is any one that is unregenerate, whoſe heart is not yet changed; Now I ſay, a wicked man) may ſpeak and do many things like a godly man; he may hear the word, and pray, and perform outward duties, which are like and are (take them materially) the ſame which godly men perform. Thus he enter-commons with godly men; and this is the caſe of all hypocrites, who make a pretence of Religion, when they have no acquaintance with the power of it. And thus through temptation, and in ſome very burthenſom afflictions, a godly man may ſpeak as a wicked man; ſuch haſty raſh provoking ſpeeches may paſs from him as proceed from the ungodly, only here is the difference, thoſe evil ſpeeches or actions proceed from the ſtate of the one, and only from the temptation of the other.

Secondly; From the phraſe or form of ſpeech, in which the original expreſſeth wicked men; The words are, *Men of wickedneſs, or iniquity*; As if it had been ſaid, the worſt of wicked men. This ſhews us what man naturally is; *he is a man of wickedneſs*; nothing but wickedneſs, altogether wicked. The Lord looking down from heaven upon all the children of men (in a ſtate of nature:) ſaid, *There is not one that doth good, no not one.* Take any wicked man he hath no good in him, no not one good thought in him; he is a man of iniquity, he is meer wickedneſs, till he be changed, till his heart be broken by godly ſorrow, till he be united unto Chriſt by faith, and through the Spirit. I know this expreſſion is uſed ſeveral times in Scripture, to note thoſe men who are ſinners of the firſt form, being not only ſinners in their ſtate, but in the higheſt degree of activity. Thus Antichriſt is called, *The man of ſin* (2 Theſſ. 2.) And when the Prophet ſaith (*Iſa.* 55.7.) *Let the man of iniquity turn from his evil way*; he means the worſt of men. Yet this is a truth, every man in an unconverted eſtate *is a man of iniquity*; he hath no goodneſs, nothing of God in him, he bears only the Image and impreſs of the devil upon him. Chriſt told the Phariſees, who were high in reputation with the world for good men (*Joh.*8.44.) *Ye are of your father the devil, and the luſts of your father ye will do.* The natural man is ſo ſinful, that he is meerly ſin. And ſometimes a godly man ſpeaks and doth as if he were ſo too. *Job* ſpake like men *of iniquity*.

Elihu proceedeth more fully to declare both the reaſon why he would have *Job* further tryed, and likewiſe what he meant by *his anſwers for wicked men.*

Verſ. 37. **For he addeth rebellion** (or treſpaſs) **to his ſin.**

Nomine חטאת *intelligitur peccatum ex errore commiſſum*; *Nomine vero* פשע *ſcelus propriè rebellio.*

Here are two words, *ſin* and *rebellion*; the firſt which we render *ſin*, ſignifies ſin in common; the leaſt tranſgreſſion of the Law it is ſin; the leaſt vain thought of the heart, the leaſt idle word of the tongue is ſin; but every ſin is not rebellion; to that hath many ſpecial marks or brands rather upon it. To rebel is to ſin with a high hand, to rebel is to ſin with a ſtiff neck, to rebel is to ſin with obſtinacy and reſolvedneſs of will; *he addeth rebellion to his ſin.* But did *Job* rebel indeed? I conceive the rebellion which *Elihu* chargeth *Job* with, is not rebellion in a ſtrict but in a qualified and comparative ſenſe; As if he had ſaid, *Job* ſinned before, but now his ſin is heightned, we ſee him now (in words) riſing up againſt God, complaining of his juſtice, or as if he had dealt unjuſtly with him. What he did in the time of his proſperity, thoſe ſlips and falls which he had then, weighed nothing as laid in the ballance with the intemperate ſpeeches which he hath uttered in the day of his trouble. *He addeth rebellion unto his ſin.* So we render as reſpecting what he was and had done before. Others render it potentially not indicatively; *Let Job be tryed unto the end, becauſe of his anſwers for wicked men, for otherwiſe he may add rebellion to his ſin*; we know not whither his corruptions may carry him if ſuffered to go on. This is a more favourable reading of the Text, not as a charge of natural but feared rebellion againſt God; As if he had ſaid, *I ſee the mans ſpirit is ſo entangled, that if he be not well and wiſely dealt with, poſſibly he may come to add even rebellion unto his ſin*; and whereas he ſinned before out of ignorance or imprudence, he may ſhortly ſin out of contumacy and perverſeneſs.

Hence Note, Firſt, *There are ſins of ſeveral degrees.*

Every man ſinneth, he that ſaith he hath no ſin, or doth not ſin, there is no truth in him (1 *John* 1.8.) But every mans ſin is not rebellion, every man doth not riſe up to that height and degree of ſinning. If any ſhall enquire, when is a mans ſin rebellion? I anſwer.

Firſt, That mans ſin grows to be rebellion, whoſe will is much in it. He that will ſin rebels. The Apoſtle *Paul* ſaith (*Rom.* 7.19.) *The evil which I would not, that I do.* This is the caſe of every godly man at his beſt, he doth thoſe evils which he would not; this is not rebellion, becauſe the will of a godly man is changed and turned off from ſin; he can ſay, the evil which I would not do, that do I. Rebellion is the doing of that evil which we would.

Secondly, In rebellion, or in rebellious acts of ſin, there is much of the underſtanding as well as of the will; that is, a man ſeeth clearly what he doth is ſin, or that the rule is againſt him; to rebel is to ſin againſt the light. It is ſaid in the 24. Chapter of this book, *The wicked are of them that rebel againſt the light*; that is, they cannot abide the light; he means it there of the natural light; the adulterer and the thief cannot indure Sun or day-light: it is much more true of myſtical light, if he hath any light of knowledg, he reſiſts and rebels againſt it. It's great rebellion to reſiſt the receiving of light offered, but 'tis greater rebellion to reſiſt light received; ſins againſt knowledg are rebellious ſins.

Thirdly, A rebellious ſin is a ſin againſt reproof, admonition and warning; when we have been often told of ſuch a ſin, and admoniſhed of ſuch an evil courſe, and yet we will go on in it, here is rebellion; ſuch a man hath not only light in his underſtanding, that what he doth is ſinful, but this hath been brought home to him and wrought upon him by reproof, counſel, and admonition; here is ſtill greater rebellion. Therefore in the proceeding of the Church, ſpoken of (*Matth.* 18.) when an offending brother hath been reproved and told of his fault, firſt in private by a particular brother, then by two or three, then by the whole Church; if after all theſe admonitions and reproofs, he doth not repent, he is to be caſt out as a rebel, and accounted as a Heathen or a Publican.

Laſtly, As 'tis rebellion when we ſin as againſt the reproofs of man, ſo againſt the providences of God; and thoſe of two ſorts.

Firſt, When we ſin againſt the favourable providences of God, I mean thoſe which are outward; when God beſtows many mercies and comforts upon us, when he gives us health and riches in the world, and fulneſs of all things, then to ſin againſt him is rebellion. (*Deut.* 32. 15.) *Jeſurun waxed fat and kicked, and rebelled againſt the Lord, and lightly regarded the rock of his ſalvation.* When we have received many and great mercies, then to grow vain and wanton, and nouriſh our ſelves as in the day of ſlaughter, this is rebellion againſt God.

Secondly, When the providences of God have broken us by this evil or that evil, when we are broken in our eſtates, broken in our names, broken in our relations, broken with ſickneſs after ſickneſs, and yet perſiſt in a ſinful way, this is rebellion, this is ſin in the very height of it. This was the rebellion of *Ahaz*, (2 Chron. 28. 22.) *Who in the time of his diſtreſs, treſpaſſed yet more againſt the Lord.* And this was the rebellion of *Judah* (Iſa. 1. 5.) *Why ſhould ye be ſtricken any more? ye will revolt more and more.* Take heed of this; 'tis too much that we ſin at all, let us not be found adding rebellion to our ſin. I may ſay theſe two things concerning the habit or any act of ſin.

Firſt, It is a burthen to a godly man; *O wretched man that I am* (ſaid *Paul*) *who ſhall deliver me from this body of death?*

Secondly, As it is a godly man's burthen when he ſins, ſo it is his care and ſtudy not to ſin; he would not ſin at all; he watcheth himſelf that he may not ſin in the leaſt degree. That was the Apoſtle *John*'s deſire and care for all the Churches (1 *Joh.* 2. 1.) *My little children, theſe things I write unto you, that ye ſin not.* I would have you watch over your hearts and ways ſo narrowly, that no ſin might ſlip you; that ye might not have a wrong thought, nor ſpeak an idle word; how much more ſhould we take heed, that we add not rebellion to our ſin? There is ſomewhat of rebellion in every ſin, even in the ſins of good men; but 'tis ſad when they add rebellion to their ſin. *Samuel* gives a dreadful deſcription of that ſin which is rebellion (1 *Sam.* 15. 23.) *Rebellion is as the ſin of witch-craft, and ſtubbornneſs is as Iniquity and Idolatry.* Witch-craft is that ſin wherein men have much converſe and compliance with the devil; The devil and the witch, or the devil and the Diviner (as our Margin hath it) act as loving companions; they have mutual converſe, yea commerce, they trade together. Rebellion is that ſin, or we ſin rebelliouſly, when we declare our ſelves moſt averſe to God. The witch declares himſelf a friend to the devil; the rebellious ſoul defieth and deſpiſeth God; now thoſe ſins that have moſt compliance with the devil, and moſt defiance againſt God, are put together; if a man doth much ſet himſelf to oppoſe God, by ſinning againſt light, againſt reproofs, and againſt providences, whether the gracious or afflicting providences of God (If a man (I ſay) rebel thus againſt God) it is like the ſin of witch-craft, which is compliance and converſe with the devil. Here is an extream on the one ſide, and an extream on the other ſide, yet both meet, *rebellion is as the ſin of witch-craft, and ſtubbornneſs is as Iniquity and Idolatry.* Theſe latter words are exegetical; *ſtubbornneſs* (that is, when a man is ſtout and will go on his way) *is as Iniquity and Idolatry.* We may conſider a great elegancy in thoſe words; *Stubbornneſs is as Idolatry.* What is Idolatry? it is worſhipping or giving honour to a falſe god, which is indeed worſhipping the devil; all Idolatry is devil-worſhip; the witch worſhippeth the devil intentionally, and ſo doth the Idolater, though he intend it not (1 *Cor.* 10. 20.) *The things which the Gentiles ſacrifice, they ſacrifice to devils and not to God.* I do not ſay, every error or failing in worſhip is devil-worſhip, but that which is Idolatry indeed, or the ſetting up of a worſhip of our own deviſing is Idolatry, and devil-worſhip. Thus ſtubbornneſs is as Idolatry, and rebellion is as witch-craft. What is witch-craft? compliance with the devil. What is Idolatry? devil-worſhip, a falling down to the devil. Let the wicked conſider what they do when they rebel; and let the people of God take heed of any ſin, or way of ſinning, which may be accounted rebellion. To ſin with much will againſt much light, againſt many reproofs from men, and againſt the reproving, or againſt the inviting providences of God, hath rebellion in it; *He addeth rebellion to his ſin.*

Secondly, Taking the words in the mildeſt ſenſe,

Note, *Sometimes a good man may go backward, he may be worſe and worſe, and do worſe and worſe.*

We ſhould be always growing in grace, that's the condition of believers and their duty, yet under ſome diſpenſations they may decline for a time and grow worſe and worſe, adding that which is like rebellion to their ſin.

Thirdly, If we conſider theſe words in connection with the former; *Elihu* having prayed for further tryal upon *Job*, as fearing, that elſe he might add rebellion to his ſin.

Note, *He that is not throughly convinced and chaſtned, may quickly grow worſe and worſe.*

He may, or he will add rebellion to his ſin. I do not know where a mans ſin will end, if the Lord ſhould let him alone. 'Tis a mercy that any man, eſpecially that God hath a continual inſpection over us; if ſome mens ways were not tryed and queſtioned, they might add rebellion to their ſin; who knows were they would ſtop? it is a mercy to have both words and actions examined by brethren and Churches, how ſadly elſe would many wander? yea, it is a mercy to be tryed by affliction. When God keeps us from a foul way by building a wall againſt us, it is a mercy, elſe we might add rebellion to ſin. No man knows the meaſure of his own evil heart, or what it would do; for though believers have a general promiſe *to be kept by the power of God to ſalvation*; yet how lamentably have good men fallen, though kept from falling away? *Elihu* aggravates this yet further by the example of *Job* in the latter and laſt part of the verſe.

He clappeth his hands amongſt us, and multiplieth his words againſt God.

He clappeth his hands, or, *maketh a noiſe amongſt us*, as Mr. *Broughton* reads it; clapping of the hands in Scripture hath a threefold ſignification.

Firſt, It implyeth paſſion or ſorrow. A man under affliction claps or wrings his hands for grief. Both thoſe geſtures are of the ſame ſignificancy.

Secondly, There is a clapping of the hands with indignation; when we are very angry, then we clap our hands.

Thirdly, There is a clapping of the hands for joy, or in a way of triumph; when a man thinks he has conquered and got the day, he claps his hands, and ſo do they who are on his ſide. (*Pſal.* 47. 1.) *O clap your hands (all ye people) ſhout unto God with the voice of triumph.* I conceive *Elihu* intends *Job* clapping his hands in this third ſenſe; he clappeth his hands amongſt us, or inſults over us, as if he had conquered and won the Garland; and therefore *Elihu* prayed that he might be further tryed.

Exploſurus eſſet nos, ut qui viciſſet nos diſputando. Piſc.

This is another aggravation of that ill frame which *Elihu* conceived *Job* to be in. And indeed to clap our hands when we have done or ſpoken evil, is worſe than the evil, which we have either done or ſpoken; *He clappeth his hands*;

And multiplieth his words (or, *may multiply words*) **againſt God.**] *Solomon* ſaith (*Prov.* 10. 19) *in the multitude of words there doth not want ſin*; that is, there is ſtore of ſin in the multitude of words. They that will be ſpeaking much, ſlip much. *Job* (ſaith he) *multiplyeth words againſt God.* There is a multiplying of words againſt God two ways; Firſt, directly; Secondly, by way of reflection or rebound; *Elihu* could not ſay, *Job* had ſpoken, nor could he preſume he would ſpeak one word, much leſs multiply words againſt God directly. He knew *Job* was a godly man, but he aſſerts he had, or feared he might multiply words againſt God reflectively, that is, ſpeak ſuch words as might caſt diſhonour upon God, ſuch words as God might take very ill at his hands, and interpret as ſpoken againſt himſelf.

Hence note, *They who ſpeak unduely of the ways and proceedings of God with them in this world, ſpeak againſt God himſelf.*

The buſineſs of *Elihu* in all this diſcourſe, was to hold forth the evil frame of *Job*'s heart, ſignified by the intemperance of his language under the dealings of God. God had afflicted and chaſtned *Job*, he had multiplyed wounds upon him, and *Job* in the heat of his ſpirit and bitterneſs of his ſoul, making many complaints about the workings of God with him, is charged with multiplying words againſt God. We may ſpeak againſt God before we are aware; yea we may ſpeak many words againſt God when we think we have not ſpoke one word againſt him. While we ſpeak impatiently of the proceedings of God in the world, and murmur at his diſpenſations to our families or perſons, what do we but multiply words againſt God? we ſpeak much for our ſelves to God, yea (I may ſay) we highly commend our ſelves to God when we ſubmit to his doings, and ſay nothing, but in a ſilent admiration adore his dealings, and wait for a good iſſue of them. *Aaron* proclaimed both his humility and his faith *in holding his peace*, when the Lord ſlew his two ſons *Nadab* and *Abihu*, ſtrangely with fire, for offering ſtrange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not (*Lev.* 10. 1, 2, 3.) But how many are there who proclaim their pride and unbelief, by not being able to hold their peace under the afflicting hand of God, when his hand ſcarce toucheth them, or when he doth but lay the weight of his little finger upon them, in compariſon of that heavy ſtroke which fell upon *Aaron*. We are in much danger of ſinning, when at any time we ſpeak many words, or (as *Elihu* ſpeaketh) multiply words, he is a rare man that ſpeaketh many words, and but ſome amiſs, Now, if to multiply words at any time (even when we are moſt compoſed) expoſeth us to error in our words, how much more when our tongues utter many words in the bitterneſs and diſcompoſure of our ſpirits? And as to ſpeak amiſs in any matter is to ſin againſt God, ſo to ſpeak much amiſs of our ſufferings, or of the ſevereſt providences of God towards us, is to ſpeak much, or to multiply words (though not intentionally) yet really and indeed againſt God. O then forbear this multiplication of words, leſt you multiply ſins. Speak but little, unleſs in the praiſe of God; take heed how you ſpeak of what God is doing to others, or doing to your ſelves. Let your words be few, and let them be weighed, for God will weigh your words; and you may hear from him in blows, what he heareth from you in words. 'Tis a dangerous thing to be found ſpeaking words againſt God; yet this may be the caſe of a good man, whoſe heart is with God, and whoſe heart is for God: even while he hath a general bent of heart to lay himſelf out in ſpeaking and doing for God, he through paſſion and temptation may be found ſpeaking againſt God. What we ſpeak diſcontentedly of the ways or works of God, is a multiplying of words againſt God himſelf.

Thus I have given out and finiſhed my thoughts upon the Preface which *Elihu* made to lead in his diſcourſe with *Job*, as alſo upon two ſtages of his diſcourſe with him. *Job* ſits ſilent and anſwers him not a word, which *Elihu* perceiving takes liberty to urge him further with two diſtinct diſcourſes more, contained in the three Chapters following; which, if the Lord give life and leave, may be opened and offered to the Readers uſe and acceptance in convenient ſeaſon.

AN
EXPOSITION
WITH
Practical Obſervations
UPON THE
THIRTY-FIFTH, THIRTY-SIXTH,
AND THIRTY-SEVENTH
CHAPTERS
Of the Book of
JOB.

TO THE
CHRISTIAN READER;
TO
Thoſe eſpecially of this CITY, who yet continue helpful towards this
WORK.

SIRS,

H*Aving, in the Prefatory Epiſtle to the former part ſet forth the ſtate of theſe three Chapters here preſented and expounded, together with the general ſcope of* Elihu *(the ſpeaker) in them; be pleaſed to look back thither for ſome help towards your ſatisfaction in thoſe points. All that I ſhall entertain you with in this Addreſs, is only to tell you, that, as I have now, through the good hand of God with me, finiſhed my promiſed Commentary upon the whole Diſcourſe of* Elihu *with* Job, *divided into a Preface and four diſtinct Speeches, contained and continued in ſix entire Chapters; ſo, I purpoſe, through the ſame aſſiſtance, to proceed (with convenient ſpeed) in drawing up and ſending out (in one Volume more) my ſlender apprehenſions and meditations upon the remaining five Chapters of this Book: In which it will appear, how (when* Elihu *(doubtleſs with good ſucceſs) had acted the part of a wiſe and learned Moderator, in that grand Controverſie of Providence between* Job *and his three Friends,* Eliphaz, Bildad *and* Zophar, *and had done both with him and them, it will appear, I ſay, how) God himſelf was pleaſed to come forth and undertake the matter in difference, giving, as the Supream Moderator of that Noble Diſputation, an unerring and an irrefragable Determination of it, to the full conviction, and in the iſſue, to the full conſolation of* Job, *as alſo to the high content of all that heard it, even of his three Friends; who, though they were ſeverely reproved and cenſured by God, as having over-ſeverely reproved and cenſured* Job, *yet he graciouſly directed them a way to make their attonement, and was not only reconciled unto them himſelf, but reconciled them to his ſervant* Job; *winding all up in Peace and Love, in mutual rejoycings and embracings. Now the God of Peace, Truth and Love, lead us all into the love of Truth and Peace, and teach us to profit always by what hath at any time been written (according to Truth) upon thoſe things, which himſelf afore-time cauſed to be written for our learning; that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. That, what is here written may be uſeful to all, eſpecially to thoſe who are (as* Job *was) in a ſtate of ſuffering, till they come to be (as* Job *is) paſt all ſufferings, is the hearts deſire and prayer of,*

SIRS,

YOUR AFFECTIONATE FRIEND

to ſerve you

September 7th.
1664.

JOSEPH CARYL.

AN

AN EXPOSITION WITH Practical Obſervations UPON THE THIRTY-FIFTH, THIRTY-SIXTH, AND THIRTY-SEVENTH CHAPTERS Of the Book of JOB.

CHAP. XXXV. Verſ. 1, 2, 3,

Elihu *ſpake moreover, and ſaid.*

Thinkeſt thou this to be right, that thou ſaidſt, My righteouſneſs is more than Gods?

For thou ſaidſt, What advantage will it be unto thee, and, What profit ſhall I have, if I be cleanſed from my ſin?

THis Chapter containeth the third Oration, Speech or Addreſs, which *Elihu* made to *Job*; in which he giveth anſwer to, confutes, and reproves, three aſſertions, or complaints, we may call them complaining aſſertions, with which he chargeth *Job*.

The Firſt is laid down in the Second and Third verſes; *Thinkeſt thou this to be right, that thou ſaidſt, my righteouſneſs is more than Gods? For thou ſaidſt, What advantage will it be?* &c. The anſwer of *Elihu* to this both complaining and (as propoſed) proud aſſertion, is found in the 4. 5, 6, 7, and 8. verſes of this Chapter.

The Second uncomely complaint is charged on *Job* at the 9. verſe; *By reaſon of the multitude of oppreſſions, they make the oppreſſed to cry: they cry out by reaſon of the arm of the mighty.* To this *Elihu* gives anſwer in the 10, 11, 12, and 13. Verſes.

The Third is expreſt in the former part of the 14. verſe; *Although thou ſayeſt, thou ſhalt not ſee him.* To this *Elihu* begins to make anſwer in the latter part of the ſame verſe, and continueth his anſwer to the end of the Chapter; *Yet judgment is before him, therefore truſt thou in him,* &c. Theſe are the general Parts of the whole Chapter. I ſhall now proceed to the explication of particulars.

Verſ. 1. Elihu ſpake moreover, and ſaid.

Who this *Elihu* was, I have ſhewed heretofore, as alſo the ſpirit and temper of the man; and it may well be ſaid here, *Moreover, he ſaid*; for we have already heard many of his ſayings in the 32, 33, and 34. Chapters of this Book.

This firſt verſe is a connecting Preface to that which followeth; for when *Elihu* had given *Job* liberty of ſpeech, or of anſwering for himſelf, at the latter end of the former Chapter, and had, as we may ſuppoſe, pauſed a while, expecting what anſwer *Job* would make, he perceiving that *Job* either had nothing to offer, or would offer no more, began again; as if the Author of this Book had ſaid, when *Elihu* ſaw that *Job* would not reply, or had nothing more to ſay for his own vindication, he let him underſtand, that he had more to ſay for his conviction.

Elihu **ſpake moreover, and ſaid.**] And he ſaid many things, and thoſe very ſharp things, his words were indeed as goads, and as nails, yea as ſwords, and ſpears, in the heart of *Job*; he objected againſt him ſuch things, as were in the matter very bad, and ſuch for the manner, as a godly, yea an ingenious man, ought not only to be aſhamed of, but to abhor: And thus he undertakes him,

Verſ 2. **Thinkeſt thou this to be right, that thou ſaidſt, my righteouſneſs is more than Gods?**

In this verſe *Elihu* enters his renewed ſuit againſt *Job*, or here he propoſeth what he had to charge *Job* with; *Thinkeſt thou this to be right?* And in the next or third verſe, he indeavours to make good this charge, or to prove that *Job* had ſaid ſo; *for thou haſt ſaid*, &c. As if he had ſaid, I will prove it to thy face, that thou haſt ſaid, *My righteouſneſs is more than Gods*; for thou haſt ſaid, *What advantage will it be unto thee, and what profit ſhall I have, if I be cleanſed from my ſin?* So then in the ſecond verſe you have the charge, and in the third the proof of the charge.

Thinkeſt thou this to be right?] The word which we render *to think*, notes more than a bare thinking, even the deviſing, or curious contriving of a matter in the brain; haſt thou formed this in thy Imagination, and concluded it in thy Underſtanding for right, for ſound, and wholſome Doctrin, for a very truth? There may be a threefold expoſition of theſe words:

חשב. *An hoc cogitaſti in jus.* Heb.

Firſt, As an appeal to *Job*'s own breaſt; *Thinkeſt thou this to be right?* Let me ask thee the queſtion, Haſt thou ſaid well in this? Doſt thou believe thou haſt? Let thy Conſcience judg, and make anſwer. I doubt not but thou wilt be ſelf-condemned: And indeed no guilty perſon can be abſolved, himſelf (if himſelf) being judg.

Secondly, We may look upon the words, not only as an appeal, but as a reproof, or objurgation; *Thinkeſt thou this to be right?* What man in his right mind would think ſo! Thou toldeſt thy wife in the ſecond Chapter, *Thou ſpeakeſt like one of the fooliſh women*; and may it not be told thee, *Thou ſpeakeſt like one of the fooliſh men?* Would any man in his wits utter a word of this import, a word of ſo groſs a ſavour, of ſo dangerous a reflection upon the Juſtice of God, or ſo much as intimate himſelf by any the remoteſt conſequences, more juſt, more righteous than God? Why hath ſuch a word dropt from thy mouth? Thus he chides, checks, and reproves him.

Thirdly, Theſe words may have the ſenſe of a denying queſtion; *Thinkeſt thou this to be right?* Surely *Job* thou doſt not think this to be right, I cannot believe that thou thinkeſt this to be right, thou are not ſurely ſo far left of Reaſon, and of Grace, as to think this to be right. This ſenſe gives ſome allay to, or abatement of the former; ſurely thou doſt not think ſo, though thou haſt ſpoken ſo; though thy words may have this meaning, yet I hope this is not thy meaning; I am unwilling to take up thy opinion from thy expreſſion; *Thinkeſt thou this to be right?* From the firſt Expoſition,

Note, *It is a ſtrong way of conviction, to put or refer a matter to his Judgment and Conſcience, againſt whom we make oppoſition.*

Thinkeſt thou this to be right? I refer it to thy own Conſcience, whether this be right yea or no; and thus the Scripture ſpeaks often. When God would ſtop the mouth from all contradiction, and not leave oppoſers a word to ſay, he leaves it upon them to ſay all. *Moſes* intending to prove that none could prevail againſt *Iſrael*, unleſs (God provoked by ſin) delivered *Iſrael* up into their hands, gives this demonſtration of it (*Deut.* 32. 31.) *Their Rock is not as our Rock even our enemies themſelves being Judges*; I refer this to our enemies opinion, whether the Dunghil gods, the Idols whom they ſerve and truſt to, be like *Jehovah*, the living God, whom we have (and ought) to ſerve and truſt to. You that are our enemies, do you think your Rock is like our Rock? I know you do not. The Apoſtles, *Peter*, and *John*, referred it back to the judgment of their Judges, whether it were fit for them, to obey their commands, yea or no, when they called them, and charged them to preach no more in that name, the name of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, (*Acts* 4. 19.) *Whether it be right in the ſight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judg ye.* We have received a command from God to preach; *Go teach all Nations* (Matth. 28. 19.) and we have received a command from you not to preach; now we leave it with you, whether it be fit for us to obey God or you. So the Apoſtle having admoniſhed the *Corinthians* to flee from Idolatry, preſently adds (1 *Cor.* 10. 14, 15.) *I ſpeak as to wiſe men, judg ye what I ſay*; I have given you the rule, and I leave it to your conſideration, what's beſt and ſafeſt for you to do. *I ſpeak as to wiſe men*, that's a holy inſinuation; As if he had ſaid, *I know you are wiſe men, men of underſtanding, and therefore I do not ſo much command you to obey what I ſay, as to judg what I ſay; I am much perſwaded you cannot judg otherwiſe in this thing than I do; There is ſo much truth and reaſon in what I ſay, that you cannot but ſay ſo too.* The ſame Apoſtle ſpeaks again in a like form about womens praying uncovered; *Judg in your ſelves, is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered* (1 Cor. 11. 13.) As if he had ſaid, *I do not ſtand wholly to my own judgment in this caſe of conſcience, I dare refer it to you, and ſtand to yours.* Thus in many things we may appeal unto the Conſciences of thoſe we deal with; and no doubt the Conſcience is often ſatisfied while the Will ſtands out. Men of much underſtanding will diſpute, when Conſcience hath nothing to ſay; *Yea ſome will for their own ends argue that to be right, which* (in their Conſciences) *they do not think to be ſo. Thinkeſt thou this to be right?* Thou haſt ſaid it, but doſt thou think it? I trow not.

Obſerve, Secondly, *There is a Light within us that will ſhew us what's amiſs, or not right.*

Elihu doth not direct *Job* immediately to the Word, (though that's the authoritative and authentick Rule) but to his heart; thou haſt a Light in thy ſelf, whereby thou mayeſt ſee that this is not right. Thus the Apoſtle, (1 *Cor.* 11. 14, 15.) *Doth not even Nature it ſelf teach you, that if a man have long hair, it is a ſhame unto him? But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her, for her hair is given her for a covering.* The Light which every man hath in him will ſhew this. Again, the Apoſtle (*Rom.* 2. 14, 15.) proveth that the old Gentiles had a light of Nature in them, which ſhewed them many things amiſs. Thus he argueth; *For when the Gentiles that have not the Law, do by nature the things contained in the Law,* (they do them by Nature, that is, by the Light of Nature, which ſhews them to do theſe things, that is, it ſheweth them that they ought to be done, and they do them, as to the outward action, by that Light;) *theſe having not the Law* (that is, the written Word, publiſhed to them in that formality, which the people of God have, *theſe having not the Law*) *are a Law unto themſelves; which ſhew the work of the Law written in their hearts, their Conſcience alſo bearing witneſs, and their thoughts the mean while accuſing, or elſe excuſing one another.* This Light ſhewed thoſe Gentiles ſo far what to do according to the Law, as left them without excuſe, for not doing what it ſhewed. Goſpel Miſteries and matters of Faith are purely of Divine Revelation, but what the moral Law commands or forbids, the light of Nature leads us to do and to forbear.

There is a generation of people grown up and ſpreading amongſt us, who cry up *the light within them*, with neglect of, if not in oppoſition to the Word written and preached to them. Theſe make a very ill uſe of this notion; For whoſoever bids us look to the light within us, to draw us off from the Word or light without us, erre greatly, and may quickly draw us into the greateſt errors both in Faith and Practice. 'Tis dangerous to go or act againſt the light within us, yet if we go or act always by that light alone, we ſhall be in darkneſs before we are aware. Natural light without Scripture-light, proves a falſe light, and may quickly lead us out of the way, and beſides our duty.

Therefore the Prophet, when any ſhould ſay, *Seek unto them that have familiar Spirits*, &c. doth not ſay, look to the light within you for reſolution, whether ye ſhould hearken to ſuch or no, but *to the Law, and to the Teſtimony: if they ſpeak not according to this word, it is becauſe there is no light in them*, (Iſa.8.20.) If that which is called light within us, ſpeak not according to the light of the Law and Teſtimony without us, there is no true light (or as the Margin hath it) *no morning in us*; the Day-ſtar hath not riſen in ſuch hearts, nor do they ſpeak like children of the light. Take heed of ſtriking and ſo ſplitting againſt that Rock; yet certainly there is a light within us that muſt not be reſiſted. The Apoſtle reports *that* as the ſin of the old Gentiles (*Rom.* 1.28.) *They did not like to retain God in their knowledg*; they had a light of God by nature, God was in their knowledg, but they liked not to think of God, but rather thought of the world, and of any vanity, than of God, rather of the creature, than of the Creator; for this cauſe God gave them up *to a reprobate mind, to do thoſe things which are not convenient*. They who obey not, who anſwer not the light of Nature in doing good, ſhall be left to the doing of thoſe evils which are againſt the light of Nature. Such were thoſe things which the Apoſtle calls (by a modeſt word) *not convenient*, or not fitting that duty and decorum, which man as man ſhould carefully and religiouſly obſerve. By which negative expreſſion, *Not convenient*, he poſitively intends the vileſt evils and debaucheries of Nature, not to be named. And if God were ſo wroth with the *Gentiles* for not anſwering the common Light of Nature, no marvel if he ſpake ſo dreadfully againſt thoſe that refuſe and oppoſe the Light of the moſt glorious Goſpel (*John* 3.19.) *This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkneſs rather than light, becauſe their deeds were evil.* Not to anſwer the Light of Conſcience within us rightly informed, much more not to obey the Light of the Goſpel without us, leaves us under condemnation. The Light within man will ſhew him very much what he ought to do, and judg him for not doing it. *Thinkeſt thou this to be right?* Doth the Principle planted in thee comply with this Poſition?

Τὰ μὴ καθήκοντα.

But what was it that *Elihu* puts the Queſtion about? You have it in the cloſe of the verſe;

That thou ſaidſt, My righteouſneſs is more than Gods;

Or according to the ſtrictneſs of the Hebrew, *My righteouſneſs is before Gods*. The Prepoſition here uſed is often taken comparatively, and hath the ſame ſignification with that (*Matth.*11.19) where Chriſt ſaith (as we tranſlate) *Wiſdom is juſtified of her Children*; that is, Chriſt, or the Doctrin of the Goſpel, the Divine Light that ſhines there, is juſtified, that is approved and declared juſt, by all who are her Children indeed, *born not of blood, nor of the will of the fleſh, nor of the will of man, but of God*. This is a good and profitable ſenſe. Though ſtrangers do not, will not juſtifie Wiſdom, yet her Children do and will. Nevertheleſs that comparative tranſlation, and reading, which ſome contend for, carrieth in it a clear truth alſo, and ſerves to illuſtrate this Text in *Job*, now under hand. *Wiſdom is juſtified more than her children, or rather than her children, or before her children*. That is, more, rather, and before the Scribes and Phariſees, who pretended highly, that they were the children, yea the chief, if not the only children of Wiſdom; and while they made this boaſt, they really reſiſted and oppoſed Jeſus Chriſt, who is wiſdom, and in whom are hid all the treaſures of wiſdom: And therefore how much ſoever the Scribes and Phariſees flattered themſelves in their own opinion, or were applauded, and preferred by others, as children of wiſdom, or as very wiſe men; yet Jeſus Chriſt the true Wiſdom, was juſtified by God, and all good men, more than they, or before, yea infinitely before them; he was juſtified fully, but they not at all. Such a negative ſenſe Chriſt intends, in that comparative determination, between the Publican and the Phariſee (Luke 18. 14.) *I tell you, this man went down to his houſe juſtified rather than the other*: That is, the Publican went home juſtified rather, or righteous rather, or more righteous then the Phariſee; the proud Phariſee, not being at all juſtified, nor righteous, but in his own eyes. Some Comparatives imply a perfect Negative to the oppoſite party, others only a partial. Such a comparative ſenſe *Elihu* intimates in *Job*'s aſſertion of his righteouſneſs. *Thou ſaidſt, my righteouſneſs is more than Gods*; Or I am to be juſtified rather than God.

But ſome may ſay, where ſpake *Job* this? where's the Chapter and Verſe? Did *Job*, or could *Job* overſhoot himſelf to ſuch a height of blaſphemy?

I anſwer, Firſt, Some indeed charge *Elihu* deeply, as if he had feigned all theſe things againſt *Job*, or formed them up in his own Imagination, rather than grounded them upon any of his aſſertions; but we need not thus wound *Elihu*, to get a ſalve for *Job*'s ſore.

Therefore Secondly, I anſwer, that although *Job* had not ſpoken this in ſo many words, or ſyllabically, yet he had ſpoken that from which *Elihu* might gather ſuch a ſenſe, or of which he might make ſuch an interpretation. And therefore he ſeems to ſay at the third verſe, If thou thinkeſt this a falſhood, or too hard a charge, and ſhouldſt deny that thou *haſt ſaid, My righteouſneſs is more than Gods*; I'le tell thee what thou haſt ſaid, which hath given me ground (I think juſt and ſufficient ground) for this accuſation: Thou haſt ſaid, *What advantage will it be unto me? and what profit ſhall I have, if I be cleanſed from my ſin?* And is not this to make thy righteouſneſs more than Gods?

But what righteouſneſs is here meant?

I anſwer, There is a twofold righteouſneſs.

Firſt, There is the righteouſneſs of our perſons, which is either imputed in juſtification, or imparted in ſanctification, (as hath been ſhewed upon ſome other paſſages of *Elihu*'s diſcourſe with *Job*) This is the righteouſneſs of our perſons; as juſtified we are righteous, as ſanctified we are alſo righteous. Now when *Elihu* chargeth *Job* to ſay that his righteouſneſs was more than Gods, we are not to underſtand it as if he had ſaid, his perſonal righteouſneſs, in either notion, was more than Gods; for that righteouſneſs which is imputed to our perſons, is indeed the righteouſneſs of God, (*Rom.* 10. 3.) but 'tis not a righteouſneſs more than Gods. And as for that righteouſneſs planted in our perſons, how imperfect and mixt with corruption is that, at beſt, in this life? And therefore had *Job* ſpoken any ſuch words, or had harboured ſuch a thought, it had been blaſphemy at the higheſt rate; and (as one expreſſeth it well) *If Job had ſpoken theſe horrible blaſphemies, though extorted from him by utmoſt extremity, and in the greateſt anguiſh of his ſpirit, ſurely Satan had got the day, and triumphed as Victor in this great conflict, not Job.* Should the moſt righteous man on Earth, or Angel in Heaven, ſay in ſtrict ſenſe, *My righteouſneſs is more than Gods,* this ſaying were a charging of God with unrighteouſneſs, yea (which Satan promiſed himſelf and told God *Job* would do, if tryed to the utmoſt) *a curſing of God to his face*. But as *Job* abhorred to ſpeak irreverently (though he ſometimes ſpake paſſionately) of God, ſo, that he utterly diſclaimed ſuch thoughts of his own righteouſneſs, hath appeared fully by his frequent proteſtations againſt all dependance upon, and truſt in any ſelf-righteouſneſs or perfection, in divers paſſages of this Book.

Si hæc horrenda blaſphemia fuiſſet ab eo extorta, Satan certè, non autem Jobus, *in hoc certamine victoriam obtinuiſſet.* Bez.

Secondly, There is a righteouſneſs of our Cauſe, or of the ſpecial matter in controverſie: In which ſenſe (I conceive) *Judah* ſaid of *Tamar*, (Gen.38.26.) *She hath been more righteous than I.* That is, She hath carried this buſineſs better, and more according to right. And thus we may underſtand *Elihu* charging *Job* for ſaying, *My righteouſneſs is more than Gods*; that is, my Cauſe is more righteous than his; and to ſay that (which is the moſt moderate ſenſe) was too great a boldneſs for any creature, yea a blaſphemy againſt the Creator. Shall man preſume to ſay that God doth not carry things righteouſly with him, or that there is no reaſon why God ſhould deal ſo or ſo with him! But did *Job* ever affirm his Cauſe more righteous than Gods? I anſwer, not categorically, or directly; But *Elihu* hearing *Job* make ſo many complaints, might ſuppoſe he thought there was no reaſon why God ſhould deal with him as he had done, and then he had been more righteous in his Cauſe than God.

The *Septuagint* read it without any compariſon at all, which makes the meaning much more eaſie; they ſay not, *My righteouſneſs is more than Gods*, but, *I ſhall be found righteous before God*, or *in the ſight of God*. This *Job* had ſaid, and therefore made ſo many appeals to God. *I am juſt before*

Juſtus ſum ante conſpectum Domini. Sept.

God, that is, *My cauſe will be found right and juſt in the ſight of God.* And as *Job* had ſaid this often equivalently, ſo once in terms, (*Chap.*23.10.) *When he hath tryed me, I ſhall come forth as Gold*, or appear innocent before God; which he ſpake eſpecially with an eye to thoſe heavy accuſations which his Friends brought againſt him, and laid upon him: And even for this *Job* might well be condemned of raſhneſs by *Elihu*, who aimed at the throwing down of all ſelf-righteouſneſs, at the ſtopping of every mouth, at the eclipſing of all human glory, in the preſence, and before the brightneſs of the Moſt Glorious, High and Holy God.

Præpoſitio illa Mem *verti poteſt à vel ab, in hunc ſenſum juſtus ſum à Deo, vel juſtificabo cauſam meam apud Deum.* Cajet.

So then, even, this other more favorable reading, which ſpeaketh not comparatively, but poſitively, *I am juſt before God*, that is, I ſhall be juſtified by God, or I doubt not but I ſhall be acquitted, and found right before God, this cannot every way be juſtified: It was *Job*'s fault and failing, that he was ſo confident God would not (he was far from ſaying God could not) find fault with him. We may ſee (if we have ſpiritual eyes, or eyes enlightned by the Spirit) ſo many faults in our beſt ſervices, as may make us aſhamed to own them, rather than to boaſt of them before men, much more to bear up our ſelves before God upon them: For (as *Eliphaz* told *Job* in the 4. Chapter) *God chargeth his Angels with folly*, and the beſt of his Saints are unclean before him; therefore that was too much for *Job* to ſay of himſelf, though that's the eaſieſt and moſt charitable Interpretation of what he ſaid, when he ſaid (as the Septuagint render) *I ſhall be found righteous before God*, or *in the ſight of God.*

Our Tranſlation is very hard, hardeſt of all, *Thou haſt ſaid, my righteouſneſs is more than Gods*; yet this *Elihu* might gather up conſequentially from what he ſpake in the 19. Chapter, Verſ. 6, 7. *Behold I cry out of wrong, but I am not heard, I cry aloud, but there is no judgment.* As alſo from the paſſage, Chap. 23. Verſ. 2. *Even to day is my complaint bitter, my ſtroke is heavier than my groaning:* In both places *Job* ſpeaks as if God had not dealt rightly with him, as if God had been over-ſevere in afflicting him, or as if his complainings were ſhort of his ſufferings. In both or either of which, *Job* exceeds the bounds both of truth and duty; ſuch extravagant expreſſions, have no apology but his pain, nor can any thing be an Advocate for him, but this, That Satan who was his Tempter, was alſo his Tormenter, and held him ſo long upon the Rack, that he uttered (as himſelf confeſſed, *Chap.*42.3) *that which he underſtood not*, yea words by which *Elihu* underſtood that he ſaid in effect, *My righteouſneſs is more than Gods.*

Note Hence, Firſt, *There is no thought of man further from right, than to think there is any unrighteouſneſs in the dealings of God with man.*

Man can hardly do any thing that is juſt, and it is impoſſible God ſhould do any thing that is unjuſt. Let God do what he will, it is right, and he is righteous in doing it: Yea, whatſoever evil God doth to a *Job*, to any of his good people, he is good to them in doing it (*Pſal.*73.1.) *Truly God is good to Iſrael, even to ſuch as are of a clean heart*, or *clean of heart.* Not only is God Righteous and Juſt, but good and gracious in what he doth: though his diſpenſations are often very ſad, yet they are never unequal; and as the worſt of men ſhall at laſt acknowledg that he is juſt; ſo the beſt of men, a *Job*, a *David*, ſhall find and ſee at laſt with joy and thankſgivings, that God hath been good, yea beſt to them (conſidering their ſtate) in his soreſt and ſevereſt dealings: For *all the paths of the Lord* (as well hard as ſoft, as well thoſe that are ſet with Bryars and Thorns, as thoſe that are ſet with Roſes) *are mercy and truth*, (mercy as much as truth) *unto ſuch as keep his Covenant, and his Teſtimonies*, Pſal.25.10. He that ſhews mercy cannot but ſhew righteouſneſs to his in all his ways. *As he that doth righteouſneſs, is righteous*, (1 John3.7.) ſo he that is righteouſneſs, cannot but do righteous things. God is not only righteous, but righteouſneſs; he is eſſentially righteous, his righteouſneſs is himſelf. A mans being, and his righteouſneſs are two things. The man may ſubſiſt without righteouſneſs (all men by nature, and while nothing but nature, though much ſublimated and refined, if not converted, are unrighteous) but it is as impoſſible for God not to be righteous, as not to be. How can he who is righteous, yea righteouſneſs it ſelf, but do righteous things in all he doth, in every cauſe, in every proceeding, whether with Perſons, Families, or Nations? Is it not then a moſt unrighteous thing to think or ſay God hath, or can do any unrighteous thing?

Secondly Note, *He that complains that God deals over-ſeverely with him, or otherwiſe than is fit, or otherwiſe than he hath deſerved, makes himſelf as to his Cauſe, more righteous than God.*

If we ſay a man deals otherwiſe with us then we have deſerved at his hands, we judg him, as to that action, uneven and unjuſt in his dealings. Surely then, if we think or ſpeak hardly of the hardeſt ways of God, we ſpeak and think hardly of God himſelf. We cannot think well of God, unleſs we ſay all that he doth is well done. A thought, that there is but one twig in our rod more than is meet, or fit, or more than is good for us, or to think it abides one minute longer upon our backs, than is meet, or fit, or good for us, is to ſay, *Our righteouſneſs is more than Gods*; Yea, 'tis to ſay, Our wiſdom is more than Gods, and our mercies are more than the mercies of God. Therefore take heed of ſuch thoughts. Though we cannot ſee the righteouſneſs of God in his works, yet we muſt ſay his works are righteous. It can never be right, not only to ſay, *Our righteouſneſs is more than Gods*, but ſo much as to ſay, *Our righteouſneſs is any thing to Gods.*

Thirdly Note, *What we ſpeak raſhly, may at any time be preſt upon us hardly, and is ſometimes very uncharitably.*

In diſputando cavendum, ne ex dictis adverſarii per falſam conſequentiam abſurda deducamus, quibus illum gravemus, qua in re hic peccavit Elihu. Piſc.

It is very uſual with thoſe who accuſe, or oppoſe others, to take things doubtful for certainties, their own conjectures for the aſſertions of their adverſary, and every thing which hath a likeneſs to an errour, to be errour. *Elihu* might have ſpoken more favourably to *Job*, he might have conſtrued his ſayings more candidly then he did: Had he taken *Job*'s words with a grain of Salt (as we ſpeak) he needed not to have put ſo much Gall and wormwood into his own: Had he not interpreted *Job*'s complaints ſtrictly, according to the ſound, or letter, but conſidered them with the ſcope, his aim, and purpoſe in ſpeaking ſo, together with the extream pain of his body, and anguiſh of his ſoul, when he ſpake ſo, he had never given him ſuch cutting anſwers.

But God juſtly, and in much wiſdom, ſharpned the ſpirit of *Elihu*, to ſpeak cutting words to *Job*, that *Job* feeling the ſmart, might be made ſenſible of his errour, and at laſt be brought low, and broken under his hand. Mild words may skin a ſore before 'tis ſearcht to the bottom, and ſo not only retard the Cure, but endanger the Patient. The holy Apoſtle fore-ſeeing the murmurings, quarrels and diſputes which fleſh and blood would make about Election or Predeſtination, doth not go about ſo much to anſwer them by Reaſon, as to repreſs them by a ſtrong Reproof, and vehement Objurgation, (*Rom.* 9.20.) *Nay, but O man, who art thou that replyeſt againſt God! ſhall the thing formed, ſay to him that formed it, why haſt thou made me thus? Hath not the Potter power over the Clay?* &c. Now as about that unſearchable depth of eternal Election, ſo about preſent dreadful diſpenſations, and providences, our undue reaſonings and tumultuating thoughts of heart, concerning God, breaking our bounds, and forgetting with whom we have to do, or who hath to do with us, call for and deſerve ſharpeſt reproofs; *Who are you that reply againſt God! Who are you that think this to be right which you do, or any thing wrong which God doth? Who are you, that you ſhould preſume to ſay* (ſo much as by inference) *that your righteouſneſs is more than Gods*, or, *that it is any thing compared with the righteouſneſs of God!*

Thou haſt ſaid, my righteouſneſs is more than Gods.

What *Job* had ſaid, which might give colour for this accuſation, hath been touched before, in the mention of thoſe Speeches, or Paſſages, forced from him by the greatneſs of his ſuffering. But *Elihu* gives it us yet more expreſly in the next verſe.

Verſ. 3. **For thou ſaidſt, What advantage will it be unto thee, and what profit ſhall I have, if I be cleanſed from my ſin?**

As if he had ſaid, O *Job*, If thou ſhouldeſt ask me, when or where thou haſt ſaid, *My righteouſneſs is more than Gods?* or how can I prove that thou haſt ſaid ſo? I may ſoon anſwer thee, and eaſily prove it thus, thou haſt ſaid, *What advantage will it be unto thee?* &c. Thou haſt ſpoken as if no good were to be gotten by turning from evil; or that thou ſuffereſt evil, being thy ſelf free, at leaſt turned from doing evil; and that therefore it availeth thee no more that thou art righteous, than if thou wert the greateſt ſinner in the world. *So* thou haſt ſaid, and in ſaying ſo, thou haſt ſaid what I have charged thee with.

But here the Queſtion may ariſe again, as much about the Proof, as about the Charge. When did *Job* ſay, *What advantage will it be unto me? And what profit ſhall I have, if I be cleanſed from my ſin?*

I anſwer, as he ſaid not the former words contained in the Charge directly, they were only a collection raiſed conſequentially by *Elihu*, ſo he ſaid not theſe words which are the proof of the charge expreſly, but by conſequences.

For the clearing of this, we muſt diſtinguiſh of what is meant by *profit* and *advantage*, when *Elihu* ſaith, *Thou ſaidſt, What advantage ſhall it be unto thee, and what profit ſhall I have, if I be cleanſed from my ſin?* This advantage and profit may be conſidered.

Firſt, As to his eternal well-being and ſalvation; Secondly, as to his preſent eaſe and conſolation. We are not to underſtand it as if *Elihu* accuſed *Job* for ſaying, That to be cleanſed from his ſin, would be no advantage, no profit as to his eternal eſtate; that had been impious, and an Atheiſtical Speech, croſſing the whole current of Scripture, and overthrowing the very foundation of godlineſs. Take away eternal reward and puniſhment, and where's Religion? Where's either the love or fear of God? His meaning then is, that *Job* had ſaid, it would be no profit, no boot to him for the preſent, or as to his then condition, if he were cleanſed from his ſin. This *Elihu* might gather from thoſe two places (*Chap* 9.22,23.) *This is one thing, therefore I ſaid it, He deſtroyeth the perfect and the wicked. If the ſcourge ſlay ſuddenly, he will laugh at the tryal of the innocent.* As if *Elihu* had ſaid, Thou canſt not avoid this proof of my firſt Charge; for he that ſaith, *God deſtroyeth the perfect and the wicked*, that is, the perfect as well as the wicked, ſaith alſo in effect, *What profit is it, that I am cleanſed from my ſin?* But thou haſt ſaid the former, therefore the latter alſo. Again thou haſt ſaid (*Chap.* 10. 15.) *If I be wicked, wo unto me, and if I be righteous, yet will I not lift up my head. I am full of confuſion, therefore ſee thou mine affliction*; weigh thy words, Thou haſt ſaid, *Wo to me, if I be wicked; and if I be righteous*, (it will not be much better with me) I will not, I dare not lift up my head, my confuſion is ſo great. How great ſoever my innocency is, I have little comfort, or 'tis much what alike with me, whether I be righteous, or wicked. In theſe places, and by theſe ſpeeches *Job* ſeems to put little or no difference between the dealings of God with the wicked and the righteous. Once more. Thoſe words (*Chap.* 9.28,29,30.) are of a like import, *I am afraid of all my ſorrows, I know that thou wilt not hold me innocent. If I be wicked, why then labour I in vain? If I waſh my ſelf with ſnow water, and make my hands never ſo clean; yet ſhalt thou plung me in the ditch, and mine own cloaths ſhall abhor me.* Saying this, thou haſt ſaid, how innocent ſoever I am, I ſhall not be dealt with as an innocent; if I make my ſelf never ſo clean, God will throw me into the ditch, that is, into affliction. From theſe ſpeeches *Elihu* might charge *Job* with ſaying, *What profit is it* (as to my temporal good) *that I am cleanſed from* ſpiritual evil, *my ſin?* As for his eternal eſtate, that's not the matter controverted in this Book. The ſum of all amounts to this, If I am cleanſed from my ſin, I may be as great a ſufferer and as hardly dealt with in this world, as if I were altogether unclean. And hence it might be inferred, Surely *Job* was more righteous than God, becauſe while he laboured to pleaſe God as becometh his people and good ſervants to do, God was pleaſed (inſtead of rewarding him, as he had done many, and promiſed all who do ſo) to afflict him, as he uſeth to do and hath threatned to do to the worſt of evil men, the wicked. Thus thou haſt ſaid, *What advantage*, &c.

סכן
Profuit, contulit, utilis, commodus fuit.

The word here rendred *advantage*, ſignifieth *gain* any way, or any thing that is commodious and gainful to us; thou haſt ſaid, *What advantage will it be unto thee?* Thus he brings in *Job* putting the queſtion to himſelf, what advantage ſhould he get to himſelf in this life by living a religious or a holy life? As if he had ſaid, Doubtleſs 'tis concluded in thy breſt, thou ſhalt get none; And to ſtrengthen this thy unbelief, at leaſt to ſhew that thy unbelief in this point is very ſtrong, thou haſt ſaid the ſame thing in another dreſs of words a ſecond time; For I have heard thee ſaying thus alſo.

What profit ſhall I have, if I be cleanſed from my ſin?

Job was taxed for a ſaying of the ſame ſcandalous ſenſe (*Chap.* 34.9) *He hath ſaid, it profiteth a man nothing, that he ſhould delight himſelf with God.* There *Elihu* accuſeth him for affirming in a third perſon, *it profiteth a man nothing*; and here for queſtioning in his own perſon;

What profit ſhall I have?] Some derive the word *Belial* from this root, ſignifying *an unprofitable one*, or *an unthrift*, a man that doth no good, either to himſelf, or others; *What profit ſhall I have?* What ſhall I get? All the good I ſhall get I may put in my eye, and ſee never the worſe: In a word, I ſhall not mend my condition, if I mend my converſation; ſo it followeth;

מה אעיל
A radice
יעל
profuit, utilitatem attulit; hinc Belial inutilis.

If I be cleanſed from my ſin.] The words, **If I be cleanſed**, are not expreſt in the Hebrew Text, but are clearly implyed and underſtood; For *Job* cannot be ſuppoſed to ask this queſtion; *What profit ſhall I get by, or from my ſin?* That queſtion were nothing to the preſent purpoſe or diſputation. And therefore though all Interpreters do not make this ſupplement, yet all agree, that a ſupplement is to be made: Moſt concur in this, *What profit ſhall I have, if I depart from, or forſake my ſin?* We ſay, *If I be cleanſed from my ſin?* As if theſe were *Job*'s thoughts, this his ſaying, *Let me keep my ſin, or not keep my ſin, I ſee I am like to ſuffer. I ſhall ſtill be kept under the rod.* That's the plain ſenſe of the words; *Elihu* chargeth *Job* with complaining of God, that it would be no advantage to him, as to the caſe of himſelf from any outward affliction and calamity, how much ſoever he forſook or were cleanſed from his ſin. There are two other readings of this verſe, which I ſhall only name, and then give two or three Notes from our own.

First, Thus; *Thou haſt ſaid, What profit ſhall I have more by it* (that is, by my righteouſneſs) *than by my ſins:* As if his meaning were (which is a very groſs one) *What good ſhall I get by well-doing more than by ill-doing?* One of the Rabbins takes in ſtrongly with this comparative expoſition, between thoſe remoteſt moral extreams *good* and *evil*, as to his caſe; But I dare not joyn either with the one or other in this interpretation.

Nam dixiſti, quid profutura (ſc. juſtitia tua) ſit tibi? (Item) quid proficiam (ex ea) magis quam ex peccato meo. Piſc. Rab. Selom.

A ſecond gives it thus; *If thou demandeſt what may it profit thee, ſaying, What good ſhall I get by further puniſhment or ſuffering?*

Si roges, quid profuturum ſit tibi, dicens, quid proficerem à ſupplicio meo. Jun.

It hath been ſaid before, that thoſe words, *If I be cleanſed*, are not found expreſly in the Hebrew Text; And the word in our Tranſlation rendred *ſin*, ſignifieth alſo *puniſhment* or *ſuffering*, which is the fruit or effect of ſin. So that according to this reading, *Elihu* in theſe words prevents an objection, which *Job* might take occaſion to make from what he had ſaid, or wiſhed rather, at the 36. verſe of the former Chapter. *My deſire is that Job may be tryed unto the end*; That is, further afflicted, or afflicted to the utmoſt. Againſt this deſire of *Elihu*, *Job* is by him ſuppoſed making his exception, or objection, in this verſe; As if he had ſaid, Why doeſt thou, or what reaſon haſt thou to deſire that I ſhould be yet again tryed by affliction? What, I pray, would that profit me, if I were afflicted yet more and more? Can the ſuffering of evil do me good, or make me better? To this objection, *Elihu* gives anſwer in the next verſe, and thoſe which follow to the ninth; and he doth it (as the Aſſerter of this Interpretation judgeth) by this Dilemma. Thy afflictions would profit either God or thy ſelf (ſeeing God doth nothing in vain;) but neither thy ſufferings, how grievous ſoever, nor thy doings, how righteous ſoever, can profit God, no more than thy ſins or evil doings can damage God; therefore it remains, that if God afflict thee further, it will be (if thou haſt a heart to improve it) for thy profit.

This reading, and the ſenſe ariſing from it, is much inſiſted on; but as the former is very harſh, ſo I conceive, this latter is very dark and intricate, and grounded upon the ſuppoſition of an objection very remote, or not eaſily to be ſuggeſted in this diſcourſe. And therefore to avoid both my own and the readers unneceſſary trouble, I ſhall take the Text, as it ſtands in our Tranſlation, and offer ſomewhat for inſtruction from it.

How great ſinfulneſs there is in ſaying, *There is no profit in the ways of God*, I have ſhewed at the 21. *Chap.Verſ.*11. and *Chap.*34. *Verſ.*9. So that referring the Reader thither, I ſhall here give only this Note.

It is very ſinful to ſay, we ſhall get no advantage by leaving ſin.

We may well put the Apoſtles queſtion (*Rom.*6.21.) to our ſelves, *What fruit have we in thoſe things whereof we are now aſhamed?* What benefit have we got by polluting our ſelves with ſin? But how vain a queſtion is it to ſay, *What profit ſhall I have, if I be cleanſed from my ſin? Elihu* chargeth *Job* with this; yet ſtill remember, he refers not to his eternal, but temporal condition. And this was *Aſaphs* or *Davids* temptation alſo, as to his temporal condition; even he, the one or the other, *David* or *Aſaphs* ſpake as much in expreſs terms, as *Job* is here charged with, (*Pſal.* 73.13.) where complaining of the great tryals and troubles he had been under, and of the proſperity of the wicked; *Behold* (ſaith he) *theſe are the ungodly, who proſper in the world, they increaſe in riches.* But how is it with me? *Verily I have cleanſed my heart in vain, and waſhed my hands in innocency; for all the day long have I been plagued, and chaſtned every moment.* As if he had ſaid, What have I got by my holineſs, and forſaking of ſin? What have I gained by my ſtricteſt walkings, and abſtainings from the very appearance of evil? Have I not reaſon to conclude, in good earneſt, that *I have cleanſed my heart and hands in vain,* ſeeing my ſufferings are not leſned, though my ſins are, ſeeing my puniſhments are renewed every morning, though I am every morning upon the renewal of my repentance? Thus ſpake the *Pſalmiſt* in the day of his temptation; and doubtleſs, this day of his Temption had been a day of temptation and provocation to the Lord, (like that of *Iſraels* in the Wilderneſs, *Pſal.* 95.7.) had not the Lord come in by his grace, and helped him to bite in his words at the very next verſe; *If I ſay, I will ſpeak thus,* (if I uſe ſuch, not only uncomely, but wicked language as this, *I have cleanſed my heart and hands in vain*) *Behold, I ſhould offend againſt the generation of thy children.* And *when I thought to know this, it was too wonderful for me*; that is, it was beyond my skill to reconcile theſe works, theſe providences of God towards me, with his word and promiſes; nor was I any whit leſs at a loſs, how to reconcile the proſperity and flouriſhing condition of wicked men, with thoſe terrible threatnings which the Lord in his Word every where thunders out againſt them. Theſe croſs and intricate diſpenſations puzzel'd me greatly, put my Soul into a maze; nor could I ſpell their meaning, nor make out the ſenſe of them, *Until I went into the Sanctuary of God, then underſtood I their end*; the woful Cataſtrophe, the miſerable end of wicked men, their ſlippery ſtanding, and their ſudden falling, as both are deſcribed (*Verſ.*18.19,20.) Then alſo I underſtood the bleſſedneſs of a godly mans eſtate, both now and for ever, in having God his guide and his portion (*Verſ.* 24.25,26.) then I underſtood what profit and advantage comes by cleanſing our ſelves from ſin, though to the eye it appear not, yea though all appearances ſpeak the contrary. To be cleanſed from, or to remove ſin is profitable and advantagious:

Firſt, As to the removal of Judgment. When we begin cleanſing work, the Lord uſually makes an end of afflicting work. For as one great end of ſending affliction, is to cleanſe us from ſin, (*Iſa.*27.9.) *By this ſhall the iniquity of Jacob be purged, and this is all the fruit, to take away his ſin*; ſo our being cleanſed from ſin is uſually the end of our afflictions. When we are cleanſed from ſin, we are troubled no more, we ſmart no more: ſpeak then, Is it no profit to be cleanſed from ſin, when ſo many, not only perſons, but Nations have been ruin'd, becauſe not cleanſed from ſin? God gave his own people cleanneſs of teeth, (*Amos* 4.6.) that is, famine or want of bread, becauſe of the uncleanneſs of their hearts, and lives; and is it no profit to be cleanſed from ſin, when for our ſinful uncleanneſſes God will cleanſe us of all our comforts, even to a morſel of bread? 'Tis therefore a ſpeech both falſe in it ſelf, and highly diſhonourable unto God, to ſay, I ſhall have no profit, for ſtill I ſhall ſuffer, though I be cleanſed from my ſin; whereas firſt, there is more profit in being cleanſed from ſin than in being delivered from ſufferings; and, ſecondly, when once we are cleanſed from ſin, we are in the faireſt way to be cleared from, and ſee an end of all our ſufferings.

Secondly, The more we are cleanſed from ſin, the more communion we have with God, and the more peace from God. Is not this a great profit? A profit beſides the eternal reward? A profit far better than any temporal reward? Will not communion with God ſatisfie us for the loſs of friends, of eſtate, or health? Will not peace with God anſwer all the tribulations we can meet with in this world? If therefore being cleanſed from ſin, we have cloſer communion and ſweeter peace with God, let no man ſay, *What profit ſhall I have, if I be cleanſed from my ſin?* And, although there ſhould be no profit, or advantage, though no viſible, no nor ſpiritual income, as to preſent comfort, ſhould redound to us in this world, by being cleanſed from ſin, yet remember, it is our profit, and our beſt profit to be cleanſed from ſin, to be emptied of ſin, to mortifie ſin, to deſtroy ſin; if we ſhould have no profit in hand by leaving ſin, yet there is a profit promiſed, that infinitely exceeds all the profits and pleaſures which we can have or hope for by retaining our ſin; ſuch profit and pleaſure, as will abundantly recompence us for all the worldly loſſes we are at, and penitential ſorrows which we paſs thorow in keeping or cleanſing our ſelves from ſin. The Apoſtle rejoyced at the ſorrow of the *Corinthians* (2*Cor.*7.9.) But is it good to rejoyce at the ſorrow of others? Should we not mourn with thoſe that mourn? 'Tis true, we ſhould; yet 'tis good to rejoyce in that ſorrow which doth others good; ſuch was the ſorrow of thoſe *Corinthians.* The Text is expreſs; *Now* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *I rejoyce not that ye were made ſorry, but that ye ſorrowed to repentance, for ye were made ſorry after a godly manner* (*or according to God*) *that ye might receive damage by us in nothing.* There is then no damage, no hurt by ſuch ſorrow; But comes there any good, any profit by it? Yes, much every way; *for* (as it followeth, *Verſ.*10.) *godly ſorrow worketh repentance of Salvation, not to be repented of*; that is, greatly to be rejoyced in. What is matter of joy, if Salvation be not? True repentance for ſin, is repentance to Salvation: And is there not profit, is there not all profit in that? As there is a *Fountain opened* (the blood of Chriſt) *for ſin and for uncleanneſs* (Zech.13.1.) that is, for waſhing away the uncleanneſs of ſin; ſo there are abundance of bleſſings flowing from that Fountain, to all ſuch as by the actings of Faith and Repentance waſh and are clean.

Thus far of *Elihu*'s firſt charge, and the proof of it, taken from *Job*'s own ſayings. How he anſwers and refutes thoſe ſayings of *Job*, will appear in opening the next words.

VERS. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.

I will anſwer thee, and thy Companions with thee.

Look unto the Heavens, and ſee, and behold the Clouds which are higher than thou.

If thou ſinneſt, what doſt thou againſt him? Or if thy tranſgreſſions be multiplyed, what doſt thou unto him?

If thou be righteous, what giveſt thou him? Or what receiveth he of thine hand?

Thy wickedneſs may hurt a man as thou art, and thy righteouſneſs may profit the ſon of man.

THe former Context contained the charge which *Elihu* brought againſt *Job*, that he ſhould ſay, *His righteouſneſs was more than Gods*, and that *it would be no profit to him, if he were cleanſed from his ſin.*

In the Context of theſe five Verſes, *Elihu* gives anſwer to thoſe (had *Job* poſitively and purpoſely ſaid, or aſſerted them) blaſphemous ſayings, or aſſertions. And we have here

Firſt, The promiſe or overture of an anſwer, at the 4. verſe, *I will anſwer thee, and thy Companions with thee.*

Secondly, We have the anſwer it ſelf laid down in the 5.6.7. and 8. verſes; which anſwer conſiſts in three particulars.

First, That God cannot be hurt or endammag'd by our ſin; at the 6. verſe.

Secondly, That God can have no benefit or advantage by our righteouſneſs; at the 7. verſe.

Thirdly, That both *Job* himſelf, and other men like himſelf may, yea ſhall certainly have hurt and dammage by their ſin, as alſo benefit or advantage by their righteouſneſs, Verſ. 8.

Thus *Elihu*'s anſwer obviates *Job*'s paſſionate queſtion at the 3. verſe, *What profit ſhall I have, if I be cleanſed from my ſin?* As if *Elihu* had ſaid, *I know that neither thy ſins can do any hurt to God, nor can thy righteouſneſs do him any good; but thy ſins may hurt thee, and thy righteouſneſs advantage thy ſelf; therefore lay down ſuch wicked and deſperate thoughts as theſe, ſay not, What profit will redound to me if I be cleanſed from my ſin?* &c. That's his anſwer, according to our Tranſlation. Other readings preſent us with other forms of anſwer; but I ſhall not ſtay upon them.

Verſ. 4. **I will anſwer thee, and thy Companions with thee.**

Elihu makes overture of anſwering before he anſwers, and tells him he will, before he doth it; *I will anſwer thee*, or *I will return thee words.* Anſwering is the returning of words to words; yet not of empty words, but of words fill'd with Reaſon and Authority to reſolve him that is doubting, or to convince him that is gain-ſaying. *I will anſwer thee*,

And thy Companions with thee.] I will ſpeak that which ſhall not only take off thy Objections, but theirs alſo who are of thy mind, or joyn in Opinion with thee: *I will anſwer thee, and thy Companions with thee:* I will do both at once; when I have anſwered thee, they alſo will be anſwered; one anſwer will ſerve thee and them. One Line will mark and meaſure both Walls.

Una fidelia duos parietes dealbabo. Druſ.

The word which we render *Companions*, ſignifies any Friends or Familiars, with whom we uſually converſe, with whom we eat, or who eat bread with us, (2 *Sam.* 13. 3.) (Prov. 17.17.) We may take it either more ſtrictly for a ſpecial intimate boſom friend, who is to a man as his own ſoul, as *Moſes* ſpeaks (*Deut.* 13.6.) or for a friend at large, ſuch as is called a *Neighbour*, (Exod. 20.16. Levit. 19.18.)

רעה *Socius, amicus, familiaris qui ſimul paſcitur convictor.*

Yet the queſtion may be, Whom doth *Elihu* mean by *Job*'s Companions, when he ſaith, *I will anſwer thee, and thy Companions with thee?*

Some by *his Companions* underſtand thoſe who came to viſit him in his affliction, and maintained that long Diſcourſe with him, thoſe three friends of whom we read (*Chap.* 2.11.) *Eliphaz* the *Temanite*, *Bildad* the *Shuite*, and *Zophar* the *Naamathite*. The Septuagint conclude *Elihu* meant them only, for thus they render, *I will anſwer thee, and thy three friends.*

Καὶ τοῖς τρισι φίλοις σȣ. Sept.

But why ſhould *Elihu* joyn them with *Job*, ſeeing they held Opinions contrary to *Job*? True, they did, yet they were not able to make good their Arguments, or convince *Job*; they had condemned *Job*, but not anſwered him, they did their buſineſs imperfectly, and to halves, or impertinently, and to no purpoſe; ſo that all their anſwerings were called *no anſwer*, Chap. 32. 3. And therefore *Elihu* might ſee reaſon to undertake the ſatisfaction, not only of *Job*, but of his three friends, who had not given *Job* a ſatisfactory anſwer unto that hour.

Others take the word *Companions* in a more large ſenſe, for all that were of his Opinion. As if *Elihu* had ſaid, I challenge all the world, whoſoever accompanies thee, or takes thy part in juſtifying ſuch ſayings or aſſertions, as I have heard from thee, I will anſwer them all, how many ſoever they be; I will undertake thee, and all thy Party, *Thee, and thy Companions with thee.*

> Hence Note, *He who hath truth on his ſide, needs not fear the oppoſition of many, no nor the oppoſition of all men.*

To oppoſe two is a very great diſadvantage; but if a man have the truth on his ſide, he may oppoſe all, though he be alone: He may be an *Antipas* (Revel. 2.13.) a man againſt all men; as that name of Chriſts *faithful Martyr*, there mentioned, doth import. If there be a thouſand of them, he may undertake them all, for in anſwering one, he anſwers all. *Elijah* ſaid of himſelf (1 *Kings* 18.22.) *I, even I only, remain a Prophet of the Lord*; yet he ſtood up againſt all the Idolatrous Prophets of *Baal*, who were no fewer than *four hundred and fifty men:* That we have many with us, is little advantage, and leſs honour many a time. A long train of Followers will do us no good, if our Cauſe be bad. Truth is ſtrong and will prevail; 'tis vain to fight againſt it, though our partakers are many. The ancient Fathers obſerved, how ſome were wont to cry up thoſe that had the multitude on their ſide, and to boaſt that moſt were of their Opinion. It was the ſaying of a Worthy in thoſe times, *By my being alone, the word of truth, and the truth of the word, is not at all diminiſhed.* One man and the truth are ſtrong enough to oppoſe a multitude in error, and a multitude of errors. The more any men, and the more men appear in oppoſing truth, the more is God engaged in faithfulneſs to appear for it. When one boaſted to St. *Hierome* that he had a multitude of Followers in his Opinion; he anſwered, *That the number of his Companions did not prove him a Catholick, but a Heretick.*

Non mea ſolitudine minuitur verbum veritatis. Dictum Liberii ad Conſtantium Arrianum. Theod, lib. 2. Hiſtor. Eccl. c. 16. *Multitudo ſociorum te nequaquam Catholicum, ſed Hæreticum monſtrabit.* Hieron. l. 3. adverſ. Pelag.

But how did *Elihu* anſwer *Job* and his Companions? The next verſe tells us how.

Verſ. 5. **Look unto the Heavens, and ſee, behold the Clouds which are higher than thou.**

As if he had ſaid, *Look to the Heavens, and they'l anſwer thee; behold the Clouds, and they will confute thee: Thy very ſenſes may convince thee, that thou haſt ſpoken theſe things againſt Reaſon. And the Heavens will tell thee, that thy miſtake in this matter is Heavenly wide. If thou turn thy eyes upward, and conſidereſt that diſtance which is between God, who hath Heaven for the Habitation of his Holineſs, and of his Glory, and thee, who dwelleſt in thy houſe of Clay here on Earth, thou mayeſt ſee that thy ſins cannot hurt him, nor thy goodneſs extend to him.* The diſtance between Heaven and man is very great; but the diſtance between God and man is far greater; the one is immenſurable, but the other is unimaginable, unconceiveable. Therefore if the Heavens be ſo high, that thou canſt not annoy them with thine Arrows, much leſs art thou able to annoy God, who is higher, and infinitely more out of Bow-ſhot and Gun-ſhot than the Heavens: That's the ſcope of his Argumentation here, to prove that *Job* could not, or that no man can hurt God by his ſin.

נבט *Aſpexit aliquando ab oculis ad intellectum transfertur. Toto cœlo erras.*

Look to thee Heavens, and ſee.] Both words are applyed to the ſenſe or ſight of the eye, yet they have a reference alſo to an intellectual ſight, to the eye of the mind: *Look, and ſee*; that is, Take ſpecial notice of, and contemplate the Heavens. We may look, and not ſee; that is, look and not conſider, look and not obſerve: To look and ſee, is to give earneſt attention to the thing looked upon; look curiouſly, critically, how high the Heavens are, *Look and ſee.*

We may apply the firſt word *Look* (as ſome do) to the truth of the thing, look how high the Heavens are; it may be ſeen by the eye, that they are very high, though we cannot ſee how high they are. The latter word *See*, may refer to the admirable contrivance and contexture of the thing ſeen, as the former to the truth and reality of it: Look and ſee how wonderful, how full of wonders the Heavens are; ſee with admiration what a vaſtneſs, what an exactneſs there is in the Heavens above thee. Thus the word is uſed by the Prophet, (*Iſa.* 42.18.) *Look ye blind, that ye may ſee.* It is a Propheſie of Goſpel times: that is, Conſider the Meſſages and Myſteries of the Goſpel exactly, view them well, that ye who are blind may behold the glorious light that ſhines forth in them. There were many blind ones in Chriſts time, that looked upon the things of the Goſpel, and did not ſee; the Phariſees lookt upon them, and they were among the blind ones; they indeed had better thoughts of themſelves, and therefore put that queſtion to Chriſt in ſcorn, (*John* 9.40.) *Are we blind alſo?* They did not look ſo as to ſee; they were blind when they looked, and blind after they looked: The holy Prophet exhorts poor blind Souls to whom the Goſpel ſhould come, to look better, to look again and again, till they ſaw, *Look ye blind, that ye may ſee*; That is, be diligent and humble, that ye may ſee the light ſhining in the Goſpel. The proud Phariſees who would not ſee the light which Chriſt offered to them, were the worſt of blind ones.

ראה *Significat curioſe inſpicere, intueri viſu, contemplari mente.* Aqui.

This is the *Look* which the word in the Text calls for. *Look unto the Heavens, and ſee*; it cannot be underſtood of the outward ſight only, for he that looks upon the Heavens cannot but ſee them; but a man may look a great while upon the Heavens, and not ſee them conſiderately, nor underſtand what he ſeeth. The words import attention and conſideration: And ſo they are uſed and placed (2 *Kings* 3. 14.) *Were it not that I regard the preſence of Jehoſhaphat the*

שור *Intentis oculis intuitus eſt.*

Nomen hoc שחקים *non poteſt ſignificare Nubes, quæ ſunt ſubſtantiæ denſæ, nempe Aer condenſatus: At Shebhakim dicti ſunt à ſubſtantiæ tenuitate, qualis eſt ſubſtantia cœli; ergo verto tenues cœlos* Piſc.

King of Judah, I would not look unto thee, nor ſee thee; ſaid *Eliſha* to *Jehoram* King of *Iſrael*; that is, I would give thee no reſpect, nor take notice of thee. In this ſenſe the Prophet repreſents the Church beſpeaking the incompaſſionate Spectators of her calamity, (*Lam.* 1. 12.) *Is it nothing to you, all ye that paſs by? Behold and ſee* (that is, weigh it well, and conſider) *if there be any ſorrow like unto my ſorrow. Look unto the Heavens and ſee.*

שחקים *Ut plurimum Æthera & nubes ſignificat.* Bold.

And **Behold** (with like attention) **the Clouds.**] There is ſome difference among Interpreters, about this word which we render *Clouds*. The Hebrew properly ſignifies *Thinnes*; but a Cloud, is thick, and conſiſts of many Aerial vapors, condenſed into a body; and therefore this word cannot well be tranſlated a *Cloud*, (ſaith this Author) but the *thin Heavens*, that is, the higher Heavens, thoſe above the Airy Heaven.

Again, The *Clouds* are lower than the Heavens, they are neereſt to us, they are ingendred in the middle Region, nor do they at any time riſe higher than that Region. Foraſmuch then as *Elihu* is endeavouring by the conſideration of the highneſs of Gods royal ſeat, or of the vaſt diſtance (as the Prophet ſpeaks) of the habitation of his Holineſs and of his Glory from us, to prove, that neither any good we do can profit him, nor any evil we do, reach to his diſadvantage; therefore it may ſeem not to make much for the purpoſe of *Elihu*, to call *Job* to behold the Clouds, which are neer us, comparatively, though their diſtance from us be really very great: but I conceive, notwithſtanding that Criticiſme of the word, and this reaſon, we may well enough abide by the Tranſlation, which ſaith, *Behold the Clouds*; for though the Clouds are thicker than the Air, yet they are but thin, and are ſoon diſperſed by wind and rarified by heat.

Again, Suppoſing (as indeed they do) that the Clouds move in the lower part of the Heavens, it increaſeth and heightens the ſenſe of the words to the purpoſe, for which *Elihu* makes uſe of them. As if he had ſaid, Behold and ſee the Heavens, the upper Heavens, the Starry Heavens, they are higher than thou, yea, behold the Clouds which are neereſt to us, and much, very much below the Stars, thoſe eſpecially which Aſtronomers call the *fixed Stars*; yet do but behold the Clouds, which at the top of ſome hills one may touch with his hand, (ſome deſcribe great men hiding their heads among the Clouds) Behold, I ſay, the Clouds which are loweſt, yet they are higher than thou, they are beyond thy reach; much more the Heavens, moſt of all God, who is higher than the higheſt Heavens. Thou canſt neither add to, nor diminiſh or blemiſh the beauty of the Heavens, thou canſt not make a cloud better or worſe; What then canſt thou do to or againſt the God of Heaven? To convince *Job* of this, is the purpoſe of *Elihu* in calling him to the view of the Heavens. Now foraſmuch as *Elihu* invites *Job* to the view and Contemplation of the Heavens;

> Note, Firſt, *It is our duty to ſtudy and meditate the natural works of God, or his works in Nature; Eſpecially the Heavens, which are ſo eminent a part of his works.*

The Scripture calls ſome, *Star-gazers*, ſuch are they, who ſtudy the Heavens to a very evil purpoſe, drawing men off from their ſole dependence upon God, by foretelling the events of things, and deſtinies of perſons, from the poſitions and motions of the heavenly Bodies or Luminaries. This kind of Studying and Contemplating the Heavens, is one of the greateſt vanities under Heaven, a vanity often reproved in the Scriptures of the holy Prophets; thus to be *Star-gazers*, or *Heaven-beholders* is our ſin: but there is a Contemplation of the Stars which is our duty and commendation, (*Pſal.* 8. 3, 4.) *When I conſider* (in that great volum of the works of God) *the Heavens, the work of thy fingers, the Moon and the Stars which thou haſt ordained; What is man that thou art mindful of him,* &c. *David* did both look and ſee, he beheld the Heavens for a good purpoſe, a godly purpoſe, his own abaſement, and the advancement of the glory and goodneſs, or of the glorious goodneſs of God, in ſpreading ſuch a Canopy, ſparkling with perpetual fires for him to walk under, and do his work by. And doubtleſs, did we with enlightned eyes behold and ſee the natural Heavens, we ſhould become more ſpiritual and Heavenly.

Secondly, In that we have here three words, *look, ſee,* and *behold*. Note,

> *The works of God, Eſpecially the Heavens, are diligently to be Conſidered.*

We may look to the Heavens and not ſee, we may ſee the Heavens and not behold them. Let me here again mind the Reader of the Emphaſis of that word; it notes a looking unto, or upon the Object, as a Hunter looks for a Hare, or a Fowler for a Bird; how doth he pry and look into every tuft and buſh? So the word is uſed (*Jer.* 5. 26.) *Among my people are found wicked men: they lay wait* (or they eye and behold) *as one that ſetteth ſnares, they ſet a trap, they catch men.* All the viſible works of God, much more the Heavens ſhould be diligently conſidered, *lookt into, ſeen, and beheld.* It was a good Concluſion of one of the Ancients, who ſaid, *That man hath not looked unto Heaven, that hath only looked upon Heaven.* A bare look is not ſufficient, he muſt look with admiration, or till he cannot forbear to admire, as the firſt Latine word in that ſentence ſignifies properly. A man may look upon a Picture, and yet not behold it diſcerningly; he may ſay, that's the picture of a man, yet not conſider the Art of the workman in drawing it; he may ſee it is the picture of a man, not of a beaſt, at a look, but he muſt ſee it exactly, if he would find out the worth and workmanſhip of it. A man in paſſage (as ſome ſpeak) may ſee a houſe, yet not apprehend the Symmetry of the Plat-form, the skill of the Architect, nor the commodiouſneſs of its Situation; to diſcern theſe calls for ſerious conſideration, and ſetled reviews. As in the Natural works of God, the Heavens made for man, ſo much more in his Spiritual works, the making of a Heaven in man, or man Heavenly, require our deepeſt thoughts, and moſt ſtudious re-ſearches. O how many are there who look tranſiently upon thoſe works of God, who never ſee nor behold them, never enter into the ſecrets of them! many know ſome Truths, yet never looked into any, nor laboured to *comprehend with all Saints* (or as all Saints ought to do) *what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height* of them; and therefore attain not to that *riches of the full aſſurance of underſtanding, to the acknowledgment of the myſtery of God, and of the Father, and of Chriſt*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks (*Col.* 2. 2.) but are *like children toſſed to and fro, and carryed about with every wind of Doctrin*, as the ſame Apoſtle deſcribes them, *Eph.* 4. 14. Remember, we are to *look* and *ſee*, and *behold* the Natural works of God, how much more the Spiritual Myſteries of the Goſpel, and the works of grace? theſe indeed are to be looked upon, and ſeen, and beheld, thoſe other are not to be left unlooked upon.

In cœlum non ſuſpicit, qui cœlum tantum aſpicit. Origen.

> Note, Thirdly, *The Heavens are a Divine Glaſs, wherein we may ſee much of God; they are a Natural Alphabet, the Letters whereof being well placed, and rightly put together, we may ſpell the name of God, his Wiſdom, Power, and Goodneſs.*

Thus the Apoſtle argues (*Rom.* 1. 19, 20.) *That which may be known of God is manifeſt in them,* or *to them*; that is, to the very Heathens. His proof for this, is taken from the point now propoſed: For *the inviſible things of him from the Creation of the world are cleerly ſeen, being underſtood by the things that are made, even his eternal Power and God-head.* The Apoſtle layes it down in general, Whatſoever is made, whatſoever is part of the Creation, holds out ſomewhat of God: The very Clods of the Earth declare his Power; how much more the Clouds and Stars of Heaven? Therefore *look to the Heavens, Behold the Clouds,* conſider them, (*Pſal.* 19. 2.) *They declare the glory of God, and the Firmament ſheweth his handy-work.* If you ask more particularly, what do they declare? I anſwer, Firſt, That God is; every Creature doth ſo; if there be a Creature, there muſt needs be a Creator; If there be Effects, there muſt be an Efficient; the made Heavens declare their Maker. Secondly, The Heavens declare, not only that God is, but that he is above. Chriſt hath taught us to pray, *Our Father, which art in Heaven*; God is every where, yet there eſpecially; Heaven is the Habitation of his Holineſs, and of his Glory. Thirdly, In the purity of the Heavens, we may ſee the Holineſs and purity of God; and they being ſo incorruptible and unchangeable, declare, Fourthly, The incorruptibility and unchangeableneſs of God: He that made them ſuch, is much more ſuch himſelf. The very unchangeableneſs of the Heavens, is changeable, compared with the unchangeableneſs of God. *The Heavens* (ſaith *David*, Pſal.102.25,26.) *are the work of thy hands; they ſhall periſh, but thou ſhalt endure* (or *ſtand*,) *yea all of them ſhall wax old like a Garment: as a Veſture ſhalt thou change them, and they ſhall be changed; but thou art the ſame, and thy years ſhall have no end.* Fifthly, The Heavens which God hath built as a Houſe for himſelf, being ſo high above the touch of the Creature, ſhew us that God is infinitely exalted above the reach and moleſtation of ſinful man; that's the thing which *Elihu* aims at, as appears by what followeth in the next words. *Look to the Heavens, and ſee, behold the Clouds which are higher than thou.*

Verſ. 6. **If thou ſinneſt, what doſt thou againſt him? or if thy tranſgreſſions be multiplied, what doſt thou unto him?**

As if he had ſaid, *When thou lookeſt to the Heavens, thou plainly ſeeſt thou canſt do nothing againſt them; it would be a vain thing for thee to attempt the Heavens, to clamber up to the Clouds; ſurely then, thy ſinnings, thy frettings, thy diſcontents, and complaints cannot hurt God; therefore be quiet.*

חטא *Erravit.*

If thou ſinneſt.] The word here uſed, notes ſin in the leaſt degree, any error or deviation from the Rule; but it comprehends ſins of the higheſt degree, even ſuch as the Prophet calls (*Amos* 5.12.) *Mighty ſins.* If thou ſinneſt at the greateſt rate, at the height of blaſphemy,

מעל *Non tam nocere, quam operare & laborare ſignificat. q. d. Laborando & adnitendo quid tandem efficies quo illum lædas.* Pined.

What doſt thou againſt him?] The Hebrew is, *What workeſt thou againſt him?* Properly the word ſignifieth only to work; we render it *by working againſt*, that is, to the hurt and diſadvantage of another, to his miſchief and undoing. As if he had ſaid, *If thou ſhouldeſt ſet thy ſhoulder to the work, if thou ſhouldeſt do evil with both hands greedily, yet thou canſt make no work of it in this matter, what doſt thou againſt him? What hurt hath he by it?* And to aſſure *Job* that he hath none, nor can have any, *Elihu* ſerves him up the ſame Meſs in another Diſh of words, in the cloſe of the Verſe.

Or if thy tranſgreſſions be multiplyed.] Here *Elihu* ſpeaks as high, as he meant before. Tranſgreſſing is more than ordinary ſinning, though (as was toucht upon the word) under ſinning he comprehended any, the moſt extraordinary tranſgreſſings. If thy ſins be tranſgreſſions, rebellions, or prevarications, and they be multiplyed, if thou ſinneſt out of malice and wrathful purpoſe againſt God himſelf; and doſt not only commit ſome one of theſe, but many, and heapeſt them up together, Yet, *&c.*

רבו *Et ad molem & numerum communis eſt.*

If thy tranſgreſſions be multiplyed.] The word ſignifies both magnitude and multitude; hence ſome render, *If thy tranſgreſſions be great*; we ſay, *If they be many.* Sin as much as thou wilt, and ſin as often as thou wilt; ſin as much as thou canſt, what hurt hath God by it? Some by ſin in the former part of the verſe, underſtand that evil which is committed immediately againſt God; and by *tranſgreſſions* in this latter clauſe, ſuch evils as are done againſt our neighbour: But I ſee no need at all to be ſo diſtinct, we may take it reſpecting God, or man, or both; for thoſe ſins which we commit againſt man, are alſo againſt God; he is the perſon offended, his Law is broken, againſt whomſoever the ſin is committed. *If thou multiply thy tranſgreſſions,*

מה תעשה לו

What doſt thou unto him?] That word, *What doſt thou?* Signifies not only, or not ſo much, ſtrong labour and endeavour, as the former did, but cunning in labour, and skill in labour. As if he had ſaid, *Though a man ſet all his wits awork to do evil, what can he do to him? Neither pains nor skill, neither induſtry nor policy, neither open force nor ſecret ſtratagems, can do him any, the leaſt annoyance.* Some Creatures are weak and inconſiderable, as to any thing they can do by outward power, yet they can do much by their ſubtilty, and cunning; but neither the one, nor the other can do any thing unto God. Scrue up thy wits to the higheſt pin, or peg, yet thou canſt do nothing really prejudicial unto him. The words are plain; from them

Obſerve, Firſt, *God receives no damage by the ſin of man, how great, or how many ſoever his ſins are.*

A man may quickly vex and undo himſelf by ſin. Wiſdom ſaith (*Prov.* 8.36.) *He that ſinneth againſt me, wrongeth his own Soul: All they that hate me, love death.* But the ſinner cannot hurt God, he is far above us; man can no more hurt God by ſin, than he can hurt the Clouds, or the higheſt Heavens. Had we an enemy above the Clouds, were it not a madneſs to ſhoot arrows, or bend our forces againſt him? What is man to God! The School-man concludes, *Nothing can be added to, nothing can be diminiſhed, nothing taken from God by any act of man: Yet man, as much as in him lies, takes away from, and gives or brings to God, when he either keeps, or doth not keep that order which God hath appointed.* Sinners ſhall be judged and dealt with, as they that have greatly annoyed and diſadvantaged God, as they that have rob'd and ſpoyl'd him, as they that have ſmitten and wounded him, as they that have abaſed him, and laid him low: And there is reaſon they ſhould be judged as having done ſo, foraſmuch as they do their utmoſt to do ſo. Thus they are deſcribed (*Pſal.* 2.1,2.) *The Heathen rage, and the People imagin a vain thing. The Kings of the Earth ſet themſelves, and the Rulers,* &c. And why all this? What was it for? *It was againſt the Lord, and againſt his Anointed.* This was done by the Princes and great Ones of the world; yet they were ſo far from being able to prejudice the Lord, either in his Perſon, or in his Intereſt, that he did but laugh at them for it. And 'tis conſiderable that God is deſcribed there, (according to the notion uſed by *Elihu* in the Text) ſitting in the Heavens, (Verſ.4.) *He that ſitteth in the Heavens ſhall laugh, the Lord ſhall have them in deriſion.* And why doth the Lord laugh? ſurely becauſe he ſees they can no more hurt or hinder him in his purpoſes, by any of, or all their ſinful adviſings, and attemptings, than if they ſhould hope to batter down the Heavens by diſcharging a Pot-gun againſt them. And therefore he concludes with a triumphant *Yet*, (Ver.6.) *Yet have I ſet my King* (after you have done your worſt) *upon my holy Hill of Sion.* The ſins of men do turn to the glory of God, but to their own ſhame. The ſins of Gods own children turn to the glory of his mercy; thoſe huge heaps, and numberleſs numbers of ſins committed by his Children before Converſion, what do they in the iſſue, but lift up the glory of his Grace in the pardon of them? And the rebellions committed by impenitent ſinners, going on in obſtinacy to the end, without Converſion, what do they but lift up the glory of God in his Juſtice, and wonderful judgments, which he will bring upon them? The ſins of the old world (which was a world of ſin, all fleſh having corrupted their way before God, and there being but one righteous Family found in it) all thoſe ſins (I ſay) did not damage God at all, but indeed they glorified both his Patience and his Juſtice; his Patience, in ſparing them ſo long, even an hundred and twenty years after warning given; his Juſtice, in ſending the Flood at laſt, which brought ſwift deſtruction upon them, and ſwept them all away. The unnatural, crying ſins of *Sodom*, did not hurt the God of Heaven, but God took advantage thereby, to glorifie his Juſtice, in raining Fire and Brimſtone upon them from Heaven, (*Gen.* 19.24.) *Pharaoh* by all his oppoſition againſt the *Iſrael* of God, did not diſadvantage God, but gave him an advantage to make his Power known, by ſwallowing up him and his *Egyptian* Hoſt in the waters of the Red Sea. That which is done againſt the Will of God, fulfills the Will of God. The ſins of men are ſo far from hurting the God of Heaven, that they glorifie him among men on Earth; while they behold him either turning the evil which is done into good, or puniſhing them for their evil doings. That which men ſpeak or do againſt God, like an Arrow ſhot up into the Air, falls down upon their own heads. *David* (*Pſal.* 111.2.) breaks out wonderfully into the praiſe of God upon this conſideration. *The works of the Lord are great, ſought out of all them that have pleaſure in them.* Theſe works of God wherein we ſhould take pleaſure, are not only works of mercy to the Godly, (*Verſ.* 3 4, 5.) but of vengeance upon the wicked, (*Verſ.* 6.) *He hath ſhewed his people the*

Per actum hominis Deo nihil poteſt accreſcere vel deperire; Sed tamen homo in quantum in ſe eſt, aliquid ſubtrahit Deo, vel ei exhibet, cum ſervat vel non ſervat ordinem quem Deus Inſtituit. Aquin. 1. 2dæ. q. 21. Art. 4. *Ad primum.*

power of his works, that he may give them the heritage of the Heathen. The works of his hands are Verity and Judgment, (Verſ. 7.) That is, judgment for Saints in ſaving them, and upon ſinners in conſuming them. We ſhould much contemplate the works of God, in bringing glory to himſelf out of the ſins of men. The Angels ſinned and fell; man ſinned as ſoon almoſt as he was ſet up: Theſe Creatures did that which God would not have done, yet God brought about that which he would. And thus it is to this day among all the Children of men; while they break holy Commandments, God fulfills his holy Counſels; no thanks to them, yea woe to them. So then, the Lord hath no hurt by ſin; which way ſoever ſinners turn themſelves, they cannot turn away his Counſels, nor turn from his Counſels: When they are diſobeying his revealed will, he is doing his ſecret will, in which God is moſt righteous, and in his ſeaſon will lift up his Righteouſneſs and Holineſs, his righteous and holy Will, in the face of all the ſinners in the world, and they ſhall know and confeſs that he hath ſerved his own wiſe and holy purpoſes, even in thoſe Providences wherein they have had no purpoſe, but to ſerve their fooliſh and unholy luſts and pleaſures. We have an illuſtrious proof of this, in that extreamly evil and unnatural practice of men good in the main, the holy Patriarchs, againſt their own Brother (*Gen.* 50.20.) who told them plainly, when he meant them no evil, but good, *But as for you, ye thought evil againſt me, but God meant it for good; to bring to paſs, as it is this day, to ſave much people alive.*

De eo quod agitur contra Dei voluntatem, voluntas ipſius vel mala in bonum convertentis vel mala punientis impletur. Auguſt Enchirid. c. 100.

Miro & ineffabili modo, non fit præter ejus voluntatem, quod etiam contra ejus voluntatem fit; quia non fieret, ſi non ſineret: nec utiq; nolens ſinit ſed volens. Nec ſineret bonus fieri male, niſi omnipotens etiam de malo facere poſſet bene. Auguſt. in Pſal. 111.

Further, To clear the Point in general, we may diſtinguiſh of ſin, as having a threefold oppoſition; Firſt, Againſt our ſelves. Secondly, Againſt our Neighbour. Thirdly, Againſt God. This diviſion or diſtinction of ſins, muſt be ſo underſtood that the two former, namely, ſin againſt our ſelves, and againſt our Neighbour, brings a real detriment, and diſadvantage to our ſelves, and to our Neighbour. But as ſin hath reſpect to God, it doth not bring any real detriment to him: Only it may be ſaid, Firſt, The will of many ſinners is raiſed up to that height of wickedneſs, as purpoſely to ſet themſelves to diſhonor God, to blaſpheme his name, and *do deſpight to the Spirit of Grace*, Heb. 10. 29. which is the utmoſt length that ſin or luſt can go. Secondly, The nature of every ſin, or every ſin conſidered in its nature, is a wrong or a hurt to God; for it is an unconformity to his Will, and a breach of his Law: Yet as to himſelf God receives no hurt, nor poſſibly can receive hurt by any, the fouleſt, moſt ſinful ſin.

But ſome may ſay, *Doth not ſin damage God at all; could* Elihu *ſay in Truth, What doſt thou againſt him, or unto him, if thou ſinneſt?* Is ſin nothing to God? The Church complained, and cryed out to thoſe that paſſed by her, (*Lam.* 1.12.) *Is it nothing to you, all ye that paſs by?* Are all my afflictions nothing to you? May not God ſay much more, Are all your tranſgreſſions nothing unto me? Are our ſins nothing to him? Is he unconcerned in them? How can this be? There are ſeveral Scripture-Expreſſions which ſhew clearly that we do much againſt God when we ſin, and much for him when we ſin not, or abſtain from ſin.

Firſt, When a People, eſpecially when a profeſſing People, ſin, *The name of God is prophaned*; and is that nothing to God? Is it not againſt God, to have his name prophaned? We find the Lord charging this upon his People (*Ezek.* 36.20,21.) *They prophaned my name among the Heathen*, &c. To prophane the name of God, is to make it as an unholy, as a common, yea, as a corrupt thing; and is this nothing to God?

Secondly, To ſin is to *diſhonour God*, 'tis called, *A deſpiſing of God*, (1 *Sam.* 2. 30.) *Them that honour me, I will honour; and they that deſpiſe me, ſhall be lightly eſteemed.* Is it nothing to be deſpiſed, to be diſhonoured? If a man be deſpiſed, he thinks himſelf wronged; loſs of honour is a great loſs.

Thirdly, We find in Scripture, that ſome kind of ſinning is *blaſpheming*. The Apoſtle tells the *Jews* (Rom. 2. 24.) *The name of God is blaſphemed among the Gentiles, through you:* That is, his name is evil ſpoken of, a bad report is brought upon his name, he hears ill among evil men, *among the Gentiles, through you*, that is, through the unanſwerableneſs of your doings, to your ſayings, or through the unlikeneſs of your practices, to your profeſſion. To blaſpheme the name of God is to ſtrike through, to wound the name of God; it is ſomewhat to a man to have his name ſtruck through with the poyſoned Arrows and Darts of reproach. An ill tongue falls heavy, and cuts deep. A blaſphemed name is a tongue-beaten name: And is this nothing to God?

Fourthly, Some ſins are not only in themſelves a contempt of God, but they are committed in contempt of God. When men ſin preſumptuouſly, and with a high hand; when they ſin with a command ſhining in their eye, with a threat ſounding in their ear, they even ſend a defiance to Heaven, and bid God do his worſt: And is this nothing againſt God? Nothing unto God? One of the Ancients writing at large of two Cities, calleth one of them, *The earthly and unholy City, made by the love of our ſelves, even to the loathing and contempt of God.* (Love to our ſelves, riſing up to the contempt of God, doth all the miſchief in the world) The other City he calleth *holy and heavenly, and that* (ſaith he) *is built by the love of God, or when we love God even to a loathing and contempt of our ſelves, and of all our own concernments, intereſts and advantages.* When a man comes to love God with a loathing of himſelf, then he is indeed a builder of the holy City: And when ſinners act with an inordinate love to themſelves, they at once caſt contempt upon God, and build that bad City; and is this nothing to God?

Auguſtinus, l. 14. *De Civitate Dei.*cap.28.

Fifthly, The Scripture ſaith, *God is angry with ſin.* A wiſe man will not be angry with that which is nothing to him, or which doth nothing againſt him; a wiſe man will not be angry for nothing, much leſs will the only wiſe God.

Sixthly, The Scripture ſaith, *God is grieved for the ſins of men.* Surely God will not be grieved for that which is nothing unto him. Himſelf ſaith, ſinners *fret him*, (Ezek. 16.43.) *Thou haſt fretted me in all theſe things.* A well tempered man will not fret for that which doth not ſome way or other afflict him. We read (*Iſa.* 63. 10.) That *Iſrael vexed his holy Spirit ſo much, that he was turned to be their enemy, and fought againſt them.* And had they done nothing againſt him? Yea, it is ſaid (*Gen.* 6. 6.) God was ſo much afflicted with the ſins of the old world, that *he repented that he had made man upon the Earth, and it grieved him at his heart.* Doubtleſs that is ſomewhat to God, which grieves him thus, and goes to his very heart. And let us take heed of thinking ſin is nothing to God; though *Elihu* ſaith here to *Job, What doſt thou unto him, if thou ſinneſt?* Sin hath done all the miſchief to man that ever was done him, nor can any thing do him a miſchief, but his ſin. And though God, as *Elihu* argueth truly, be above the reach of any miſchief that ſin or ſinners can do him, yet upon tryal they will be found guilty of, and caſt for doing much, and that very miſchievouſly againſt God. And therefore

For anſwer to the Objection, know, The glory of God may be conſidered two ways; Firſt, In it ſelf. Secondly, In its manifeſtations: Or, we may conſider God, Firſt, In his Eſſential glory and bleſſedneſs; Secondly, In his manifeſtative glory and bleſſedneſs. The glory and Majeſty of God in it ſelf, or his Eſſential glory is always the ſame, and receives neither increaſe nor diminution; for 'tis infinite and perfect, or infinitely perfect; and that's the definition of *Perfection*, or defined perfection, to which nothing can be added, and from which nothing can be taken. So then, Conſider God in himſelf, and 'tis true, our ſins are nothing to him, they hurt him no more than the Stars are hurt by throwing ſtones into the Air at them, or the Sun is hurt by caſting Darts up at it, or the Moon is hurt by the barking of Dogs at it; we can no more hurt or hinder that good or glory of God by our ſins, than Sun, Moon and Stars in Heaven, are hurt or hindred in their Courſe, by ſuch angry aſſaults from Earth. But

Secondly, Conſider the manifeſtations of the glory of God, and this is hindred, or damaged by ſin. That's the meaning of all thoſe Scriptures, where 'tis ſaid, *his name is prophaned, diſhonoured, blaſphemed*; the preſent manifeſtations of his glory, which ſhould break out every where, are clouded and eclipſed by ſin. And this, their ſins do eſpecially who profeſs his name. Profeſſors are obliged where-ever they come, to hold out the ſavour and excellency of his name: And therefore God will deal with knowing ſinners, as with thoſe that hurt and wound him, as with thoſe that have grieved and broken him, as with thoſe who have burdened and troubled him, yea, as with thoſe who would deſtroy him. Sin is an enemy to God, and would dethrone and thruſt him out of the world; therefore ſinners ſhall be dealt with as ſuch as have highly hurt and wronged God. Sinners have ſometimes riſen up to ſuch expreſſions of wickedneſs that they would even pull God out of Heaven; it is in the nature of every ſin, and in the ſpirit of many ſinners to do ſo, they carry a dayly enmity in their hearts.

Peccatum vocatur Deicidium appetens ſc. Deum deſtruer.

Therefore woe to thoſe who ſay of God, God is not hurt by our ſins? Why then ſhould we trouble our ſelves about them? Yes, the Lord will at laſt let all ſinners know he hath been concerned in their ſins; though they have not at all toucht his Eſſential Glory, yet they have darkned and ſlurr'd the manifeſtations of his Glory. And therefore I anſwer,

Secondly, All thoſe Scriptures before alledged, importing that ſin grieves God, vexes him, and is very burthenſome to him; all thoſe are ſpoken either of *God-man, Jeſus Chriſt*, who was made like unto us in all things, except ſin, and is ſpoken of in the Hiſtories and Propheſies of the Old Teſtament, before he took fleſh, as having thoſe (in him) ſinleſs paſſions of anger, and ſorrow, and grief, which were found in him after he appeared in the fleſh: Or if expounded of God, ſtrictly conſidered, then what is in thoſe Scriptures ſpoken of God, muſt be underſtood after the manner of men, yet as becomes God, who is without all paſſions and repentings: Or they are to be underſtood, not as importing Affections in God, but Effects upon men. When men ſin, God doth ſuch things as angry men uſe to do, ſuch things as men do that are grieved with what others have done, and repent of what themſelves have done. If grief, anger, repentance, were properly wrought in God, when we ſin, our ſins muſt needs be ſome, yea much annoyance to him. But while man ſees and feels ſuch Effects as theſe paſſions produce, the Lord is infinitely exalted above the leaſt feeling of theſe paſſions, he remains ever the ſame: That's it which *Elihu* ſignifieth, and holds out to *Job*; we may trouble one another, and trouble our ſelves by ſin, but we cannot at all trouble God. *If thou ſinneſt, what doſt thou againſt him, what unto him?* I ſhall conclude, and gather up the ſenſe of this Context in theſe four brief Deductions. Take two of them Negatively, and two Affirmatively.

Hæc de Deo dicuntur ἀνθρωποπαθῶς, & intelligenda ſunt θεοπρεπῶς.

Firſt, *God doth not puniſh ſinners in anger, only, though he be angry only with ſin.*

Secondly, *God doth not puniſh ſinners, at all, for fear.* He fears none, whom none can hurt.

The two Affirmatives take thus:

Firſt, When God puniſheth ſin, he doth it out of pure love to Juſtice, or purely out of love to Juſtice.

Secondly, God afflicts the godly in mercy; 'tis not becauſe they have done him hurt, but for their good.

Elihu proceeds further to prove, that as *Job* could not hurt God by his ſins, ſo his righteouſneſs and innocency were no advantage to him; and therefore it muſt needs follow, that his ſins could only hurt, and his righteouſneſs only profit himſelf, and ſuch as were like himſelf.

Verſ. 7. **If thou be righteous, what giveſt thou him? and what receiveth he at thy hands?**

Verſ. 8. **Thy wickedneſs may hurt a man, as thou art; and thy righteouſneſs may profit the ſon of man.**

Elihu having ſhewed in the former verſe, that the ſin of man cannot detract any thing from, nor in the leaſt hinder the happineſs of God; proceeds in the 7. verſe to ſhew, that the ſinleſneſs, ye that the righteouſneſs of man cannot advantage, nor advance the happineſs of God: And therefore leſt he ſhould ſeem to make both the ſin and the righteouſneſs of man to be of no uſe, he ſtates the matter in the 8. verſe, and tells us both to whom the wickedneſs of man is hurtful, and to whom the righteouſneſs of man is profitable; *Thy wickedneſs may hurt a man as thou art, and thy righteouſneſs may profit the ſon of man*; but neither can thy wickedneſs hurt, nor thy righteouſneſs help or advantage God. That's the ſum of theſe two verſes.

If thou be righteous, what giveſt thou him?] As if he had ſaid; *There is no reaſon* (O Job) *that thou ſhouldeſt at any time (as thou oftentimes haſt) proclaim thy own righteouſneſs, as if that added any thing to God. Job* was not ignorant of that; But the ſpeech of *Elihu* had this ſcope in it, to reprove him for complaining that his goodneſs profited himſelf nothing, becauſe though he was far from wickedneſs, yet he was afflicted, whereas many wicked men proſpered and lived in full content; to which point his other friends had not anſwered. And further, *Elihu* urgeth *Job* with this, becauſe he had ſo induſtriouſly defended his own righteouſneſs, as if he would intimate that God was a gainer by it; whereas if God at any time rewardeth our good deeds, that proceedeth from his own goodneſs and Free Grace, not from any obligation which we have put upon him, by what we have done, how well ſoever we have done it. *If thou be righteous, what giveſt thou him?* This ſuppoſition, *if thou be righteous*, hath in it a grant, if not an affirmation, that a man may be righteous; For though all men naturally, or in nature, are unrighteous, yet thorough grace all men, that is, all men who receive grace are righteous: And they who receive grace are righteous under a threefold notion. Firſt, they are righteous by an imputed righteouſneſs, or by the righteouſneſs of another accounted to them; and thus every godly man is righteous, becauſe freely juſtified. Secondly, they that have grace are righteous by an Inherent Righteouſneſs, by a ſtock or a principle of Righteouſneſs planted in them at their Converſion. In Converſion, not only the acts, but the ſtate and nature of a man is changed. He who before was nothing but a bundle of unrighteouſneſs, becomes a righteous man; that is, he hath a righteous principle planted in him and abiding with him. Thus a godly man is righteous, becauſe he is ſanctified. Thirdly, every man that hath grace, is a Righteous man by a righteouſneſs flowing out from him, or by a practical righteouſneſs; he is righteous by the doing of Righteouſneſs; The former is Righteouſneſs by Converſion, this is Righteouſneſs by Converſation; and this flows from the former, as the Apoſtle *John* ſpeaks in his firſt Epiſtle (*Chap.* 3. 5.) *He that doth Righteouſneſs, is righteous*; That is, he is in a righteous ſtate through Juſtification; And hath righteouſneſs planted in him through Sanctification; And he that is thus righteous in his ſtate, is alſo a practiſer of Righteouſneſs in his way. As it is ſaid of that worthy pair *Zachary* and *Elizabeth*, (Luke 1.6.) *They were both Righteous, walking in all the Ordinances and Commandments of God blameleſs.* Here was practical Righteouſneſs, they were righteous workers, their courſe was a courſe of Righteouſneſs, as themſelves were in a ſtate of Righteouſneſs. And thus, I conceive, *Elihu* is chiefly to be underſtood here; becauſe righteouſneſs in this place is oppoſed to unrighteous actions. *If thou wert Righteous*; That is, if thy ways or thy courſes were as righteous, as thou haſt often reported and aſſerted them to be (for *Job* in the 27. *Chap.* ſaid, *He would not let go his Righteouſneſs, he would hold it till he dyed*; he would never give up his Integrity, how much ſoever his friends accuſed him; he would no more give it up, than give it off, Now ſaith *Elihu, If thou art righteous*, as thou ſayeſt, and ſtandeſt ſo much upon it, let it be granted, ſeeing thou wilt needs have it ſo, *that thou art righteous*, The Septuagint render ſo, *Seeing thou art righteous*, or *for as much as thou art Righteous*, that is, according to thy own affirmation, yea though God hath ſaid ſo of thee, and born that witneſs of thee) yet what is that to God?

What giveſt thou unto him?] If thy converſation were ſuch as no blame could be laid upon it; though no ſpot could be ſeen upon thy garments, after all thy walkings thorough the affairs of this world, yet *what giveſt thou unto him?* Surely nothing at all. Some conceive this was a famous proverbial Speech amongſt the godly in thoſe times, full of Reverence and high Eſtimation, or rather Admiration of God; *If we are Righteous, what is it to God? or what give we to God? (What giveſt thou him?)* The meaning is, thou giveſt him nothing. *A gift is the beſtowing of ſome good thing where there is no obligation*; that's a gift which a man is not bound to beſtow by any Law of Righteouſneſs; A gift is beſtowed out of meer liberality, or from a free and bountiful ſpirit. Now, ſaith he, *What giveſt thou unto God?* What ſervice is there in all thy righteous ways and works, which

Juſtitia tua nihil Deum juveris, ne igitur tuam vendites juſtitiam. Chryſoſt.

Donum eſt rei licitæ nullo jure cogente mera liberalitate facta collatio. Hoſtien.

which thou art not obliged to tender unto God, or which thou art not bound to do? Thy Righteouſneſs doth not at all oblige God, for whatſoever good thou doeſt, thou art under a command to do it; there is a Law commanding, yea, compelling thee, if thou ſhouldeſt refuſe; doeſt thou perform any duty to God or man, which thou art not bound or ingaged to perform? Surely thou doeſt not, yea thou can'ſt not. Therefore, what giveſt thou unto God?

Or what receiveth he at thy hand?] The words are plain, giving and receiving are Correlatives; where there is giving, there is uſually receiving; and where there is receiving, there muſt be giving. Sometimes there is giving, where there is no receiving. When *Belſhazzar* promiſed *Daniel* great things, if he could Interpret the hand-writing on the wall, (*Chap.* 5. 17.) He anſwered, *Let thy gifts be to thy ſelf, and thy rewards unto another. Daniel* would not receive his offer: There was giving in promiſe on *Belſhazzar*'s ſide, but no receiving on *Daniels* ſide. Moſt are ſo much for receiving, that they love the word *give*, as the Prophet taxed and reproved the Rulers of *Iſrael*, (*Hoſ.*4. 18.) *Her Rulers with ſhame* (that is, ſhameleſly, or of which they ſhould be aſhamed, or for which all cry ſhame on them) *do love, Give ye*; that word ſounded well, even like ſweet muſick in their ears: And if others did not offer bribes to corrupt Juſtice, they invited them, *give ye*, we are ready to receive. The Apoſtle puts both theſe together in a good way, (*Phil.*4.15.) *No Church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only*: And he would have the Church at *Epheſus* to remember thoſe words of the Lord Jeſus, how he ſaid, *It is more bleſſed to give, then to receive*, (Acts 20. 35.) *Artaxerxes*, one of the Perſian Monarchs, was ſurnamed, *Long-hand*; his right hand, or giving hand, being longer then the left; ſhewing, as ſome conjecture, that the Honour of great Kings is ſeen more in giving than in receiving. But as we have nothing of our own to give unto God, ſo he hath no need to receive any thing of us. Thus *Elihu* here, *What giveſt thou him? Or what receiveth he at thine hand?*

Artaxerxes longimanus dextram manum habebat longiorem; Rege dignius eſt dare quam accipere.

Of thine hand.] He expreſſeth it not barely, *What receiveth he of thee*, but *of thine hand*; becauſe as the hand is the great Inſtrument of working, ſo alſo of giving; we give and beſtow with the hand, (what hath he received *of thy hand,*) there is a ſpeciality in that. Conſider thy hand, what can the hand of God take out of thy hand? Thy hand is, Firſt, *a weak hand*; Secondly, *a narrow ſcanty hand*; Thirdly, thy hand is an *ineffectual hand* to thy ſelf, it cannot bring any work about to the iſſue, to the full end and accompliſhment; therefore what is thy hand, thy weak, thy narrow, thy ineffectual hand, that God ſhould receive any thing out of thy hand? And then conſider what the hand of God is; His is, Firſt, a ſtrong hand; Secondly, a large, a wide hand; Thirdly, a hand full already; and, Fourthly, as his hand is full already, ſo it is a hand filling all things; *He openeth his hand, and fills all things with good.* Now God having ſuch a hand, how canſt thou fill his hand with thy hand? *What receiveth he at thine hand?* I need not labour further in the explication of the words; Take one general Obſervation from them, which I ſhall draw down into ſome particulars.

The Righteouſneſs or Righteous Actions of men, contribute nothing to God;

They are no advantage to God: The beſt things that we can do, cannot at all better God, or God is never the better for them: That is the meaning of *David*, (Pſal. 16.3.) ſpeaking as a tipe of Chriſt; *My goodneſs extendeth not to thee, but to the Saints which are on the Earth, and to the Excellent, in whom is all my delight. Jerome* was of opinion, that theſe words of the Pſalm were taken out of this place of *Job*. (*My goodneſs*) that is, my good deeds *extend* not to thee; the good deeds of Chriſt did not add any thing to God, they did not give any thing to God; for it is impoſſible that any good, or any goodneſs ſhould ſo be made an addition to him, who is all, and hath all: but (ſaith he) *to the Saints*, to them my goodneſs extendeth, I can and will do good to them. Thus Saint *Paul* ſpake to the *Athenians*, (Acts 17.25.) *God is not worſhipped with mens hands, as though he needed any thing*: God calls for worſhip, but he is not worſhipped, becauſe he needs our worſhip, or becauſe he would receive ſome benefit at the hand of worſhippers. The ſame Apoſtle puts the queſtion, (*Rom.* 11. 35.) *Who hath given unto him, and it ſhall be recompenced unto him again?* As much as to ſay, no man hath given any thing to God, he is above and beyond all the gifts and givings of the creature.

There is a three-fold ground of it, why nothing can be given to God, either to oblige him, or to add any thing to him.

Firſt, All is due to him, what-ever we do is a debt to him; we cannot make the payment of a debt a gift. Be as holy and as righteous as you will, as exact in your walkings as you can, it is all of debt, and therefore not a gift. (*Luke* 17. 10.) *When you have done all*, (when you have run your whole Courſe of obedience, both as to firſt and ſecond Table duties,) *ſay you are unprofitable ſervants, we have done no more than was our duty to do.* There is no gift, where all is due.

Secondly, What-ever we do in a way of Righteouſneſs, is not a gift, nor an advantage to God; for it was all firſt given us by God, we and all that we have came firſt from him; whatſoever we have, we have had it of God. It is ſaid in that place before noted (*Acts* 17.25.) *He is not worſhipped of mens hands, as if he needed any thing*, (why?) *For he giveth to all men life and breath, and all things*; he gives all things, and therefore he needs nothing, nor can any thing properly be ſaid to be given to him, who giveth all things. We have that remarkable Scripture (1 *Chron.* 29. 10.) where *David* praiſeth the Lord for the offering and gift which he himſelf and his people had brought towards the building of the Temple; And he deſired that his offerings might be accepted of the Lord, not ſo much as they were given by his hand, as becauſe they and the heart to give them, were received from the hand of God. *Wherefore David bleſſed the Lord before all the Congregation, and ſaid, Bleſſed be thou Lord God of Iſrael our Father, for ever and ever, for all that is in Heaven and in Earth is thine; thine is the Kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all. And, now therefore, O God, we thank thee, and praiſe thy glorious Name; But who am I, and what is my people, that we ſhould be able to offer ſo willingly after this ſort; for all things come of thee, and of thy own have we given thee.* And again at the 16. verſe; *All this ſtore cometh of thee, and all is thine own.* We cannot be ſaid properly to give another that which is his own already; whatever God receives of us, came from himſelf: And as whatſoever we give comes from God, ſo every action or duty which we perform to God, comes from God; he beſtows the power to do upon us, before we can do any thing, and therefore it cannot be any addition unto him. There are two graces, which we exerciſe, very pleaſing to God; Firſt, Faith; Secondly, Charity; yet neither of theſe contribute any thing to God. Faith is ſo far from giving God any thing, that its whole work lyeth in receiving; And though charity be a giving grace, yet it gives to man only, not to God. So then, what doth God receive of man? Surely nothing but his own. *David* inquires (*Pſal.* 116. 12.) *What ſhall I return to the Lord for all his benefits?* Mark that word, *return*; the Hebrew Text may be thus rendred; *What ſhall I make to return to the Lord of all his rendrings, or contributions unto me*; As if he had ſaid, Lord I have received abundance from thee, thou haſt paid or recompenced me fully for all my pains, and I am looking over it all, and conſidering what of it I ſhall return to thee; it is all thine own, and now Lord what ſhall I return of it back again to thee? What he received was returned, if not in kind, yet in effect, and the return of that was but his duty, it could not be his deſert. Chriſt indeed merited and ſatisfied, becauſe he gave of his own, and as God-man wrought all righteouſneſs for us in his own ſtrength.

Nihil accreſcit ei noſtra juſtitia, quæ tota gratuitum eſt illius donum.

Scitum eſt illud ſapientis Hebræi: da illi de ſuo, quia tu & omnia tua illius ſunt. Tua ex tuis offerimus tibi domine. Druſ.

Etiamſi quod debemus reddere Deo cupiamus, tamen de ſuo reddimus. Salv. de Ec. Cathol.

Thirdly, The Lord receives nothing at our hands, for *he is full already*. We can put no more into a full veſſel; if there be any empty ſpace, you may put ſomewhat more into a Veſſel, but when it is as full as it can hold, what can you put into it? Who can make the Ocean fuller, which hath in it the fulneſs of all waters? All that we can give to God is not ſo much an increaſe to him, as a drop of the Bucket is to the whole Ocean. Who can make the Sun brighter? All we do to, or for God, is not ſo much as a Candle to the Sun. What can he receive, who hath all things in himſelf? God is infinitely full, therefore there is no giving to him, nor receiving by him at our hands. That word which is one of the Titles of God holds forth as much, he is *Elſhaddai*, that is, *A God every way full, every way ſufficient, he is all-ſufficient for us, and he is ſelf-ſufficient*. Some of the Heathens had ſuch notions and glimmering apprehenſions of God. *Plato* ſaith, *The exerciſe of Godlineſs, or of Worſhip, is acceptable to God, but is not at all profitable to God. It is manifeſt*, ſaith *Ariſtotle*, *that God needs no friends, nor any thing to help him*. The Sacrifices of the *Jews* were great and royal Offerings, they brought their Sheep, and Oxen, and Bullocks, and Goats in abundance, yet the Lord would have them know he had no need of them, (*Pſal.* 50. 8.) *I will not reprove thee for thy Sacrifices, and burnt offerings to have been continually before me; I will take no Bullock out of thy Houſe, nor he-Goat out of thy Folds, for every Beaſt of the Forreſt is mine, and the Cattel upon a Thouſand Hills: I know all the fowls of the Mountains, and the wild Beaſts of the Field are mine. If I were an hungry, I would not tell thee, for the World is mine, and the fulneſs thereof.* Some conceive that *Elihu* aims eſpecially at thoſe gifts. If thou bringeſt or giveſt many Sacrifices, what receiveth he at thy hand? The Lord doth not call for Sacrifices *becauſe he is hungry*; that is, hath need of them. The Lord (*Zeph.*2. 11.) threatens the gods of the Heathen, that he would ſtarve or famiſh them; that is, he would deſtroy the means of their Worſhip: But who can famiſh the Lord, whoſe the World is, and the fulneſs of it?

Eſt quidem pietas illis grata, non autem utilis. Plato in Euthyphra. *Manifeſtum eſt quod nulla re Deus, nec amicis egebit.* Ariſt.lib.7. Eth. c. 12.

Now if God receives nothing at our hands by way of ſupply, or addition, then

Firſt, *No Creature is neceſſary unto God.* We all depend on him, he is altogether neceſſary to us, but we are not neceſſary to him; we are and ought to be his Servants, but he doth not need our ſervice; we need ſuch a Maſter, ſuch a Lord, we need to have ſuch a one over us, but he needs not ſuch as we are under him. Earthly Maſters and Servants have need of one another; Maſters keep and maintain their Servants, and Servants are very helpful and profitable to their Maſters. As a Servant needs a Maſter to give him meat and drink, apparel, and the conveniences of this life; ſo the Maſter needs the Servant, he needs his work, his labour, his hand, he cannot tell how to do his buſineſs without him; Maſters cannot live comfortably without their Servants, much leſs honourably, they cannot keep their State and Degree amongſt men without Servants; and Servants need their Maſters, they cannot ſubſiſt, they cannot live, but by wages, or the reward of their labour. God hath made ſuch a tie, knit ſuch a knot among the Creatures, that one, though a Superiour, ſhould not deſpiſe the other, though much his Inferiour, for both concur as parts, to the conſtitution of the whole, or general conſtitution of the World. But God is not a part, but the Principle, or Conſtituter of the Univerſe, not at all depending upon any part of it. If a Servant ſhould have need of his Maſter, and not the Maſter of the Servant, the Maſter would deſpiſe his Servant; but God hath ſo ordered it, that as the Servant needs the Maſter, ſo the Maſter needs the Servant, while himſelf hath no need of either. God hath no need of our ſervice, but we need his ſervice, or him as our Lord and Maſter. *It is an honour to God that he hath ſo many to ſerve him, but it is his greateſt honour that he needs none to ſerve him.* Before there were either men or Angels, God had the ſame honour and happineſs that now he ſaith, he is ſelf-ſufficient; *It were a ſhame and a diſhonour to us, ſhould we own him for God, who needed our good*; he cannot be our God, who needs our good. All Creatures need the help and good of one another, and the help or good of all Creatures comes from God; but God himſelf is ſtrong enough to help himſelf, and good enough to make himſelf everlaſtingly happy. There is nothing without him, but he can be happy without it; there's no Creature, whether thing or perſon, in Heaven or Earth, neceſſary to God, either as to his Being, or well-being: And therefore we may ſay, not only to the beſt man on Earth, but to the moſt glorious Angel in Heaven, (as *Elihu* to *Job*) *What receiveth he of thine hand?*

Secondly, If what we do, adds nothing to God, if he receive nothing by our moſt righteous ſervices! Then ſurely God ſhews wonderful goodneſs towards us, in that he is pleaſed to make ſo great an account of, and ſet ſuch ſtore by our ſervices and righteouſneſs, even of any, the leaſt good we do in uprightneſs. Is it not a ſingular comfort that the Lord puts ſo much worth upon what we do, though what we do be of no worth to him? And that God ſhould bind himſelf to us, when he is not all beholden to us? The Lord doth not ſay, *What do you give me?* Or, *What do I receive at your hands?* Thereby to put a ſlight upon our performances and ſervices; tis far from the Lord, that becauſe he hath no need of us, therefore to contemn us; no, he declares a great acceptance of any, the leaſt faithful ſervice to himſelf, or to our brethren, which we do at his command. Though, ſhould we ſtretch our endeavours, and ſtrain our wits to the utmoſt, to do him good we cannot, yet he doth not undervalue what we do, but takes what is well done, well at our hands, and puts all our good deeds into his Book of remembrance, and we ſhall one way or other hear of them again to our comfort. Hence,

Thirdly, We may infer, *How good is God, who highly rewards us for the good we do, though it do him no good!* Man will ſcarce thank a man for any good that he doth, unleſs it redound ſomewhat to himſelf, much leſs will he pay or reward another for that ſervice which ſtands him in little or no ſtead. If a man make a bargain with a man, he comes hardly off with him, if he gets no benefit by it: Seeing then the Lord rewards us for thoſe ſervices by which he gets no good at all, how wonderfully doth this declare his goodneſs!

Fourthly, How doth the goodneſs of God appear; ſeeing though we can add nothing to his glory, yet if we do good and righteous things, he tells us that we glorifie him, which is the higheſt commendation imaginable of what we do. 'Tis the command of Chriſt (*Matth.*5.16.) *Let your light ſo ſhine before men, that they ſeeing your good works, may glorifie your father which is in Heaven.* The Apoſtles Caution is, *Whatſoever ye do, do all to the glory of God*, 1 Cor. 10. 31. Now though (according to this and the other charge) we, in all we do, ſincerely aim at the holding forth and manifeſting of that glory and goodneſs that is in God, yet he receives no increaſe of glory; is it not therefore wonderful goodneſs, that he is pleaſed to ſay, we glorifie him? which is the higheſt attainment of the Creature, and the nobleſt improvement of our pains and labours. Theſe and many other inferences, may be made for our inſtruction, from this humbling queſtion, *If thou be righteous, what giveſt thou to him, or what receiveth he at thy hands?*

Elihu having told *Job* that neither his ſin did hurt God, nor his righteouſneſs advantage him, leſt any ſhould thence infer, ſurely then it is no great matter whether we be righteous or wicked, whether we do good or evil; to prevent this miſchief, he ſhews that though your ſin cannot hurt God, yet it will do hurt enough, and though your righteouſneſs add no good to God, yet it may do much good. This he doth in the next verſe.

VERS. 8.

Thy wickedneſs may hurt a man as thou art, and thy righteouſneſs may profit the ſon of man.

As if he had ſaid, *I will tell thee what will become of the good and evil thou doeſt, as to advantage or diſadvantage; foraſmuch as thou canſt not advantage God by thy righteouſneſs, nor hurt him by thy wickedneſs, it muſt needs follow, that the one may be helpful, and the other hurtful to thy ſelf, and to ſuch as thou thy ſelf art: If it were otherwiſe, or not ſo, there would be no difference between the doing of good or evil, as to the event, how greatly ſoever they differ in their Nature.*

Si bona agerimus, noſtro bono; ſi malo, noſtro malo.

Thy wickedneſs may hurt a man as thou art, only it cannot hurt God. God is as great and as happy as ever he was, and he will ever be as great and as happy as now he is, let men do their worſt, and be as wicked as they can.

Thy wickedneſs.] The word **Wickedneſs** notes ſin in the higheſt degree, at leaſt of a high degree; every wickedneſs is ſin, but every ſin is not wickedneſs; yet we are not to underſtand *Elihu*'s meaning, as if great ſins only did miſchief and hurt. The truth is, every ſin doth hurt and miſchief; as a little poiſon, and the leaſt poiſon may do hurt, unleſs it be corrected. We uſe to ſay of ſome things, *A little doth not hurt*; but we cannot ſay a little poiſon doth no hurt, *unleſs you do not take it*, or unleſs it be corrected; a little poiſon uncorrected will do hurt. So then, when *Elihu* ſaith here, *Thy wickedneſs may hurt*, we are not to underſtand it only of great ſins, as Whoredom, Murder, Perjury, Drunkenneſs, and Witchcraft, *&c.* but even of idle thoughts, of vain words, or undue paſſions; theſe hurt as well as greater ſins, commonly called *wickedneſs*.

Modicum non nocet.

Thy wickedneſs

May hurt a man as thou art.] Theſe words (*may hurt*) are not expreſſed in the Original Text, but they are plainly intended and implyed: Yet if we ſhould leave them out of the reading, the ſence would be the ſame (*Thy wickedneſs is to a man as thou art*) That is, thy wickedneſs is to the hurt or damage of a man as thou art; it may hurt thee or thy brother, it may hurt thy ſelf, or any like thy ſelf.

Hence Note, Firſt, *That ſin is a hurtful thing.*

Whereſoever ſin is, it doth miſchief. Sin is ſo bad in the nature of it, that we have reaſon enough to avoid it and fly from it, and ſin is ſo dangerous in the Effects of it, that we have further, though not more reaſon to avoid it, and fly from it; indeed we ſhould rather (and that is our ſpiritualneſs in avoiding of ſin) avoid it becauſe of the evil that is in the Nature of it, becauſe it riſeth up againſt the Will, and breaks the holy Commands of God; we have greateſt reaſon to depart from ſin, becauſe it is a departure from God, becauſe of the blackneſs and filthineſs of it; yet not only the blackneſs of this Coal, but the fire, the eternal fire that is in it, gives us cauſe enough to depart from it. 'Tis true, a truly gracious heart would not ſin, though he might eſcape all the ſad effects of ſin, but when he hears it is as hot as fire, and as deadly as poiſon, and as killing as the plague; when he hears that it is the ruine of Perſons, and of Families, of Churches and Nations, when he hears that 'tis ſin which hath done all the hurt and miſchief that ever was in the World, he ſees he hath further reaſon to dread it, and depart from it.

Note, Secondly, *Sin doth miſchief to man, and to man eſpecially.*

Sin doth miſchief all the World over; the whole Creation groans under the miſchief and vanity, which ſin hath brought upon it, (*Rom.* 8. 22.) Sin hath done damage to the whole Creation; but the great damage which ſin doth, is to man, to him that acts it to others before whom it is acted, or towards whom it is acted. Sin is diſtributed into two ſorts, as to its hurtfulneſs. Sin either reſpects our ſelves in the hurt it doth, or others, and thoſe others are either God or our Neighbour; ſin hurts our ſelves moſt, yet ſin as it is a wrong to God, may be ſaid to hurt his honour, and diminiſh the manifeſtation of his glory in the World, (as hath been ſhewed before). And ſin is really a wrong to our Neighbour. There are a number of ſins committed againſt our ſelves, yea, every ſin, though committed againſt our Neighbour, hits and hurts our ſelves; no man can hurt his Neighbour, but he hurts himſelf moſt. So that, although there are many ſins which reſpect others, yet all are againſt our ſelves. Some ſins (unbelief eſpecially, and the neglect of holy duties) hurt our ſelves only; there are ſins which more properly hurt others, as oppreſſion and uncharitableneſs; there are ſeveral ſins which at once hurt others and our ſelves. Adultery hurts ſelf and others too; evil words hurt our ſelves and others too, as the Apoſtle tells us out of a Poet, (1 *Cor.* 15. 33.) *Evil communication corrupteth good manners*; that is, you corrupt the good manners of others, you debauch others by unſavory ſpeeches; our ill example hurts our ſelves and others. Our Neighbour is hurt by our ſin. Firſt, By any thing that is a wrong to him, as to his Eſtate, or as to his Perſon, or as to his Credit: Secondly, By the ſcandal of it, when we do that which is evil, it hardens the wicked, and makes them go on more ſecurely in their ſin, and keeps them off from the ways of God; it endangers good men alſo, and diſcourageth them in the duties they owe both to God and man in the profeſſion of the Goſpel. Thus ſin may hurt our ſelves and our Neighbours.

Thy wickedneſs may hurt a man as thou art.

But why ſaith he *a man as thou art?* What, a man juſt of thy Complexion, or juſt of thy height, ſtature, and pitch? What, a man of thy State and Degree, a man juſt of thy eminency in the World? Certainly no; but when he ſaith, *A man as thou art*, his meaning is, *any man*, becauſe all men are in many things alike, they are all mortal, and ſinful, and weak, and apt to receive hurt by the ſins of others. Thus every man is *a man as thou art*.

Hence Note, *All men are alike.*

Though the faces of men are very different, and we know one man from another, becauſe they are unlike in face, yet as to their conſtitution and natural condition, they are alike; he that is greateſt, is ſuch a man as the leaſt; and the ſtrongeſt is ſuch a man as the weakeſt, the richeſt as the pooreſt, the learnedeſt as the moſt ignorant, and the godlieſt man is as the wickedeſt man, as to his natural compoſition. All men are alike in theſe four things; Firſt, all men need that which is good. Secondly, all men are ſenſible of that which is hurtful and afflictive to them. Thirdly, all men are apt to take hurt, and to run into danger by the ſin and ill examples of others, or to receive good by their good deeds, and profitable examples, all men being aſſociated in the ſame common Nature, and familiar each to other. Fourthly, all men are alike in this, that they are not ſelf-ſufficient, but ſtand in need of the help of one another; he that is helpful to a man like himſelf, helpeth himſelf, and doth acknowledge that (conſidering humane frailty) he may have occaſion to call for and deſire the help of another; and therefore (ſay ſome) man hath two hands, two arms, that he may underſtand himſelf born as much to need and receive help, as to give it. Thus every man is a man as thou art; and upon theſe and many other Conſiderations thou mayeſt hurt a man as thou art. There is an excellent paradox, handled by ſome of the Ancients; *No man is hurt, but by himſelf*; for unleſs a mans Soul be hurt, he is not hurt; which is much confirmed by, and appeareth clearly in the example of *Job*. For the Devil planted all thoſe engines, and made all thoſe aſſaults upon and againſt him, not becauſe he had a deſign to make him poor, childleſs, and diſeaſed, (all which, he knew, could not hurt him) but to make him impatient, and to extort one evil and blaſphemous word againſt God from him. But though it be true, that no man is hurt but by himſelf, yet it is true alſo, that the ſin of one man may hurt another. Oppreſſion hurts other men, (as to civils) whether they will or no; but no ſin can hurt another (as to morals) unleſs he will; no man is infected by vice, if himſelf refuſe, and be againſt it; yea the oppreſſions and afflictions which other men thruſt violently upon us, cannot hurt us, unleſs we by our impatience under them bring hurt to our ſelves. The cruel uſage of Tyrants, did not hurt the Martyrs; when they burnt them, and impriſoned them, and hanged them, they did not hurt them, becauſe they were patient under thoſe oppreſſions, and took their ſufferings for Chriſts ſake with joyſulneſs. What hurt did the poverty and ulcers of *Lazarus* do him? What hurt had *Abel* by that inhumane cruelty of his Brother *Cain?* What hurt had *Paul* by all his ſufferings? What any of the Saints, by impriſonment, or baniſhment, by being ſawn aſunder, or ſlain with the Sword? Properly no hurt at all. It is out of the power and reach of wicked perſecuters, to hurt the witneſſes of Chriſt, though they have power to ſlay them. *Stephen* was not hurt when he was ſtoned, becauſe he freely gave up himſelf. In a word, take it thus; Firſt, no man is hurt by the ſin of another, but as himſelf is pleaſed with, or practiſeth the ſame ſin; Secondly, no man is hurt by the temptations of the Devil, but as he conſents and yields to them;

Nemo poteſt ab alio lædi niſi à ſeipſo, niſi enim quis lædatur animo non læditur.

them; Thirdly, no man is hurt by the oppoſitions and perſecutions of others, but as he is impatient under them. *Thy wickedneſs may hurt a man as thou art,*

And thy righteouſneſs may profit the ſon of man.

That is, thy righteous actions or deeds, may profit the *ſon of man*; that is, thy ſelf, or any man, good or bad. Thoſe words, *may profit*, are not expreſſed, but are clearly implyed in the ſenſe of the Text. Righteouſneſs tends to every mans benefit, it may help and profit thy ſelf, it may be helpful or profitable to thoſe who are about thee, or with whom thou haſt to do.

Hence Note, Firſt, *Righteouſneſs, or righteous actions, have profit in them.*

Wickedneſs turns to mans hurt of it ſelf, but righteouſneſs doth profit. Although there be a vaſt and wide difference betweens mans righteouſneſs and unrighteouſneſs; this latter of it ſelf deſerving all manner of evil; and the former, becauſe imperfect at the beſt, deſerving no good at all; yet through the bounty and benignity of God it comes to paſs, that the ſmalleſt (if ſincere) endeavour after righteouſneſs ſhall profit a man as much as his greateſt unrighteouſneſs can hurt or damage him. For God who doth not reward us according to our iniquities, (*Pſal.* 103. 10) will moſt amply reward us according to our righteouſneſs. The Apoſtle gave command, *Exerciſe thy ſelf unto godlineſs*, (follow that trade well; why?) *for godlineſs is profitable unto all things*, (1 Tim. 4. 8.) it profits by vertue of the promiſe, and it hath *the promiſe of this life as well as of that which is to come.* (Titus 3. 8.) *This is a faithful ſaying, and this I will that thou conſtantly affirm, that they which have believed in God, might be careful to maintain good works*, (why? for) *theſe things are good and profitable unto men.* Some expound theſe words, *good and profitable unto men*, chiefly of doctrine; to teach men to follow works, that indeed is good and profitable doctrine; now if it be a good and profitable doctrine to preſs men to good works, to works of righteouſneſs, then righteouſneſs it ſelf, and good works, muſt needs be profitable. There is ſuch an excellency in the Nature of righteouſneſs, it is ſuch an hononreble, amiable, and beautiful thing in its own Nature, that it is enough draw us to the doing of it (as ſome have ſaid in Vertue in general, *If vertue could be ſeen, it would draw all to the admiration of it*; ſo I ſay of righteouſneſs in ſpecial, *If it could be ſeen, it would draw all eyes and hearts after it*) But beſides that, here is an excellent Loadſtone, here is profit, thy righteouſneſs may profit another; profit draws much, it draws on all men in the World; where there is any profit and benefit to be had, how do men ſtrive to trade there, as if Heaven were to be had there? Now righteouſneſs is profitable; the exerciſe of righteouſneſs is no poor trade, there is a great deal of advantage in it; and I might ſhew you how every work, good for the matter, done in a right manner, and for right ends, is profitable to others, and to our ſelves. To ſpeak a good word, may be a means to miniſter grace unto the hearers; and to do a good work, of any ſort, miniſters a gracious example to the beholders: By doing good, you may draw others to do good; to ſee one walking in ways of righteouſneſs, invites and allures others into ways of righteouſneſs; as bad examples corrupt, ſo good examples inſtruct as bad examples build up for Hell, ſo good examples build up for Heaven; to be built or helpt on Heaven-ward, is the beſt profit in the World, greater profit than the gain of the whole World. And as every good work miniſters a good example to the beholders, ſo works of Charity miniſter comfort and relief to the receivers, as alſo an occaſion of bleſſing God for their benefactors; yea works of Charity to others are profitable alſo to our ſelves, for there is a promiſe of reward to thoſe who miniſter the leaſt charities to ſuch as deſerve the greateſt charity: though uſually they find the leaſt, (*Matth.* 10. 42.) *Whoſoever ſhall give to drink unto one of theſe little ones, a cup of cold water only* (and how cold is their charity who will not give that!) *in the name of a Diſciple, ſhall in no wiſe loſe his reward*; that is, he ſhall ſurely have it. Thus we ſee how profit and advantage, even great profit and advantage comes by righteouſneſs; yet take heed of thinking that your righteouſneſs deſerves any the leaſt profit at the hand of God. Though we preſs you to righteouſneſs as profitable, yet it becomes you to ſay, *we are unprofitable ſervants*, and therefore cannot challenge any profit as our due, how righteous ſoever we are. It doth not at all follow, becauſe we affirm righteouſneſs will profit us, that therefore righteouſneſs can juſtifie us, or that, becauſe it is profitable to us, therefore it can ſave us. *All our righteouſneſſes are but as a filthy garment*, ſaith the Prophet, and therefore unprofitable for this thing. The Apoſtle *counted all things loſs* (not gain) *dung* (not profit) *that he might win Chriſt, and be found in him, not having his own righteouſneſs*, (Phil. 3. 8, 9.) Righteouſneſs is profitable, if you keep it in its proper place, and apply it to its proper uſe; it is profitable to what God hath appointed it; he helps us to work righteouſneſs, and then rewards us for our righteous working: *God is not unrighteous to forget our work and labour of love*, (*Heb.* 6. 10.) Let us be found in our duty, and then in due time and place we ſhall find our profit. Our experience will teach us at laſt, that while we have been doing good to others, we have done good to our ſelves; *Righteouſneſs is profitable unto all things*, and to all men, as well as to thoſe who do it, as to thoſe for whom it is done.

VERS. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13.

By reaſon of the multitude of oppreſſions they make the oppreſſed to cry: They cry out by reaſon of the arm of the mighty.

But none ſaith, Where is God my maker, who giveth ſongs in the night?

Who teacheth us more than the Beaſts of the Earth, and maketh us wiſer than the fowls of Heaven.

There they cry (but none giveth anſwer) becauſe of the pride of evil men.

Surely God will not hear vanity, neither will the Almighty regard it.

I Have diſpatched the firſt of thoſe great Objections which *Elihu* made afreſh againſt *Job* in this Chapter, his ſpeaking unduly of God. This context contains a ſecond, with the anſwer to it.

The Connection is given by ſome thus; whereas *Elihu* told *Job* at *verſ.* 8. That *his wickedneſs might hurt a man like himſelf*; He here reproves that the wickedneſs of man is very hurtful to men, ſo hurtful, *that by reaſon of the multitude of oppreſſions they make the oppreſſed to cry: They cry out by reaſon of the arm of the mighty.* Yet I ſhall not proſecute the words in that dependance, but as they are matter of a ſecond complaint or charge brought by *Elihu* againſt *Job*. The charge is laid down in the 9 *verſe*, and his anſwer is proſecuted in the 10, 11, 12, and 13. *verſes.*

Verſe 9. **By reaſon of the multitude of oppreſſions they make the oppreſſed to cry.**

This offended *Job*; the poor cryed, and they had no helper, no deliverer. We may conceive, that *Elihu* gathered up this complaint from the words of *Job*, (*Chap.* 24. 12.) *Men groan from out of the City, and the Soul of the wounded cryeth out, yet God layeth not folly to them*: As if he had ſaid, The Lord lightly paſſeth by, and takes little notice of the greateſt afflictions, the oppreſſions of the poor, though righteous men.

Elihu grants theſe general truths; Firſt, that many are oppreſſed; Secondly, that many cry out in their oppreſſions; Thirdly, that many remain undelivered from, and unrelieved in their oppreſſions. God ſometimes ſeemeth not to regard the groans and crys of the afflicted, nor doth he always preſently take vengeance of oppreſſors according to their folly. *Elihu* grants all this, he grants that many poor men are ſo mightily oppreſſed by the mighty, that they are forced to cry mightily; yet he ſtrongly acquits God from any ſuch imputation, as thoſe words of *Job* ſeem to admit or inſinuate. And in the proſecution of his anſwer (as will appear in opening the 10. and 11. verſes) he ſheweth, that the reaſon why the oppreſſed are not delivered, or anſwered when they cry, is in themſelves, and not in God, (and he would have *Job* conſider, whether he were not of that number) *they cry* (ſaith

Elihu) but they do not cry with ſuch a frame of heart, with ſuch a diſpoſition of Spirit, as they ought; they cry as men preſſed rather with the weight of their own ſufferings, than toucht with any ſenſe of their ſins, or reverence of the ſoveraignty of God, giving them up to the power of oppreſſors; or as having any faith in him for their deliverance, or quiet ſubmiſſion to him, who is ready to help all thoſe who religiouſly fly to him for refuge, and is able to bring them out of their darkeſt and moſt deplorable condition. Theſe may be ſaid either not to pray at all, or they pray not with ſuch holy aims and deſigns, with ſuch integrity and uprightneſs of heart, as becometh the people of God: They pray under the power of impatience, or moved with envy at the power of their adverſaries, or with a deſire of utmoſt revenge, which nothing ſtops them from, but their own want of power, or becauſe they cannot; and therefore God takes no notice of their prayers, (*v.* 12,13.) *There they cry, but none giveth anſwer; ſurely God will not hear vanity, neither will the Almighty regard it.* Thats the ſum and ſcope of the Context. I ſhall now open the words in order.

By reaſon of the multitude of oppreſſions.

מרוב

Here are oppreſſions, and a multitude of oppreſſions. The word ſignifieth *magnitude* as well as *multitude*, the *muchneſs* as well as the *manyneſs* (if I may ſo ſpeak) of the oppreſſions which were upon them. Any one great oppreſſion will make men cry, how much more many great ones? We render it as a word of number, *By reaſon of the multitude*

עשק *Oppreſſit, vim fecit, quavis injuria affecit.*

Of oppreſſions.] The Original notes *oppreſſion* of all ſorts: Firſt, oppreſſion upon the credit and good name of another, by ſlander and falſe accuſation; ſo the Septuagint render it, *By reaſon of calumnies*, or *unrighteous charges*, or *Sycophantiſms*, (that's the word in the Greek Tranſlation) *they cry*. Falſe accuſers undermine others, and bring them into danger by burdening them which lies. Secondly, it notes uſually oppreſſion upon a mans eſtate, (1 *Sam.* 12.4. *Iſa.* 33.15. *Ezek.* 18.7. *Mal.* 3.5.) Thirdly, upon his perſon, (*Iſa.* 52 4.) Now when a man is oppreſſed all over, when his credit or good name is oppreſſed by calumniation, his eſtate by wrongful ſeiſure, and his perſon by violent reſtraint, here's a troop, a multitude of oppreſſions. *By reaſon of the multitude of oppreſſions*

They make the oppreſſed to cry.

That is, the oppreſſed do not only complain a little, but are forced to open lamentations; the load upon them is ſo heavy, that they cannot contain, *they cry*; yea as the next clauſe hath it, *they cry out*, as a woman in travel, when her pains comes upon her.

They make the oppreſſed to cry.] they make them cry upon a double conſideration; firſt, becauſe of the miſery which they feel, and are burdened with; ſecondly, for the mercy which they deſire, expect, and think long a coming; men cry for eaſe, for help, for aſſiſtance, for deliverance: We may ſuppoſe the oppreſſed ones in the Text crying in all theſe reſpects; the burden was ſo heavy upon them, that it made them cry out for the very weight of it, and they cryed and called for ſome charitable, or tender heart, to come and eaſe them of it, and deliver them from it. *Elihu* doth not reſt in ſpeaking this once, but repeats it again; *By reaſon of the multitude of oppreſſions they make the oppreſſed to cry.*

They cry out by reaſon of the arm of the mighty.

Theſe words point us expreſly to the cauſe of their cry, or out-cry; it was *the arm of the mighty*; which may be taken either properly, or figuratively. Properly, the arm is a well known and moſt uſeful member of the Body: And becauſe there is a great deal of ſtrength and power in the arm, therefore by a figure, the *arm* ſignifieth *ſtrength*, *might*, or *power*; and to ſay, *they cry out by reaſon of the arm of the mighty*, is as much as to ſay, they cry out by reaſon of the *power* of the *mighty*. The *arm* is frequently in Scripture for *power*; the powerful wrath of God is called *the arm of God*. The Prophet (*Iſa.* 30. 30.) ſpeaks of the *lighting down of his arm*. When the Lord lets his arm fall, or light down upon a Man, a Family, or a Nation, in wrath, it cruſheth either or all of them to pieces. And as the powerful wrath, ſo the powerful grace of God is called *his arm*, (*Iſa.* 53. 1.) *Who hath believed our report? To whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?* That is, his mighty power, working by and manifeſting it ſelf in Chriſt, and in the miniſtry of the Goſpel, for the conviction, converſion, and ſalvation of ſinners. Thus alſo the arm of man, is the power of man, (*Dan.* 11.6) *She ſhall not retain the power of the arm; neither ſhall he ſtand, nor his arm:* That is, his power ſhall fall, or both he and ſhe (*Bernire* and *Antiochus Theas*) ſhall fall and be powerleſs. (*Pſal.* 37. 16.) *The arm of the wicked* (that is, their power) *ſhall be broken, but the Lord upholdeth the righteous. They cry out by reaſon of the arm*

Severiſſimum Dei ſupplicium immiſſione aut deſcenſione Brachii ſignificatur.

רבים

Of the mighty.] The ſame word which in the firſt part of the verſe is tranſlated *multitude*, is here tranſlated, *The mighty*. But what was the mightineſs of theſe men? There is a four-fold mightineſs. Firſt, there is mightineſs of body, that is natural might, and 'tis properly the might of the arm. Secondly, there is a mightineſs in valour and in Arms: Thus Souldiers and Warriers are mighty men; they who having courage in their hearts, have alſo weapons in their hands, and Swords by their ſides, are the mighty. Such a one was *Gideon*, to whom the Angel ſaid, (*Judg.* 6. 12.) *The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour.* Thirdly, there is a mightineſs of Authority: And thus the Magiſtrate is a mighty man; ſuppoſe he be weak in body, yet he is mighty in power, and can do great things. Fourthly, there is a mightineſs of wealth and riches: Thus *Boaz* is called *a mighty man of wealth*, (Ruth 2. 1.) Riches have ſo much might in them, that in the Hebrew one word ſerves to ſignifie both *might* and *riches*. We may underſtand the mighty man here in any or all theſe four ſenſes. *The oppreſſed cry out by reaſon of the arm of the mighty.* They who have much bodily ſtrength, often oppreſs the weaker, and ſo do the mighty in Arms, and ſo do the mighty in Authority, and ſo the mighty in Riches have often done, making the poor and the oppreſſed cry; *They cry out by reaſon of the arm of the mighty.* From the former part of the verſe;

Obſerve, *Oppreſſion is a common ſin.*

Not only was *Babylon* ſtained with it, but *Jeruſalem.* That's an amazing paſſage (*Jer.* 6.6.) *Thus hath the Lord of Hoſts ſaid; hew ye down Trees, and caſt a Mount againſt* Jeruſalem. *This is the City to be viſited, ſhe is wholly oppreſſion in the midſt of her.* Not only was *Jeruſalem* a City, but, The City, a City above all Cities, to be viſited by an oppreſſing enemy; and why? Even becauſe ſhe not only had oppreſſors in her, but was oppreſſion. O how oppreſſive was that City, which was oppreſſion, and that not only in ſome parts of her, but *wholly*, and that not in her skirts and Suburbs, but in the midſt of her! The Lord to ſhew that the *Jews* were ſuperlatively rebellious, or moſt rebellious againſt him, calleth them (in the abſtract) *rebellion*, as the Margin hath it, (*Ezek.* 2.7.) and to ſhew how ſuperlatively oppreſſive they were one againſt another, he calls *Jeruſalem oppreſſion.* Here in the Text we have a *multitude of oppreſſions*, ſurely then, there were a multitude of oppreſſors. To hear of a multitude of ſins of all ſorts, is very ſad, but when there is a multitude of one ſort, and that one of the worſt ſort, and ſuch a ſin as cannot go alone, but draws after it a heap of almoſt all ſorts of ſin: what a multitude of ſins are there! It cannot be denied, but that oppreſſion is a very common epidemical ſin, if we take and conſider it in the full latitude of it. For there is a two-fold oppreſſion. Firſt, there is a ſecret oppreſſion. To deceive, defraud, or go beyond another, in the Apoſtles ſenſe, is to oppreſs him. And thus 'tis ſaid, (*Hoſ.* 12.7.) *He is a Merchant, the balances of deceit are in his hand, he loveth to oppreſs.* He doth not oppreſs by violence, with a Sword in his hand; but by craft with balances in his hand; he oppreſſeth while he over-reacheth in dealing and trading. This ſort of oppreſſion runs up and down every where; and though this kind of oppreſſion make not a great cry, yet it is a great ſin, a crying ſin. There is alſo a ſecret oppreſſion under colour of Law; many turn the very Rules of Juſtice into Rods of Oppreſſion: And this is by ſo much the worſe, by how much it hath the better cover. Secondly, there is an open oppreſſion, the *Nimrods* of the World, the mighty hunters tear and vex and trouble all they can, and would make all tremble before them, or run from them, as the Hare and Hart from their merry, but mercileſs purſuers. Now if both ſecret and open oppreſſions are ſo commonly practiſed, oppreſſion may juſtly bear the title of a common ſin.

Secondly, Note, *Oppreſſion is a very crying ſin.*

That cannot but be a crying ſin, which makes ſo many cry. Oppreſſion then is a crying ſin. Firſt, as to the nature of it: Secondly, as to the effect of it. Oppreſſion cryeth, and it makes thoſe cry who are oppreſſed. *Solomon* ſaith, (*Eccleſ.*7.7.) *Oppreſſion maketh a wiſe man mad.* That which puts a man even out of his wits, or beſides the right uſe of his reaſon, will put him much to the uſe of his tongue, cauſing him to complain, cry out, and clamour. But who are they that are moſt given to, and deepeſt drencht in this ſin of oppreſſion? The Text anſwers, *They cryed out by reaſon of the arm of the mighty.*

Hence Note, Thirdly, *Power is commonly abuſed to oppreſſion.*

We read indeed of a poor man oppreſſing the poor, (*Prov.* 28. 3.) And *Solomon* tells us, that ſuch a mans oppreſſion is the ſoreſt oppreſſion; for he compares it (in the ſame verſe) *to a ſweeping rain, which leaveth no food.* They who have nothing, will take all when they can come by it, and get it. If all men in power ſhould be as hard to their inferiors, as ſome are who have little or no power, there were no living in the world. Neceſſity may drive the poor to be more oppreſſive, then Ability draws the rich. Tis a ſad encounter when the poor contend with the poor; the neceſſity of the one knows no mercy, and the imbecillity of the other, can give him no help. Nothing hardens the heart ſo much as want or hunger, (*Lam.*4.10.) They have little or no ſenſe of anothers miſery, who are under the extream ſmart, and feel the biting of their own. But though poor men oppreſs ſoreſt, yet they oppreſt ſeldomeſt and feweſt. They can oppreſs none, but ſuch as are poorer or weaker than themſelves, and cannot do that often. There muſt be an over-matching power in all who oppreſs; and uſually, they who oppreſs, are great and mighty in power. (*Pſ.*52. 1.) *Why boaſteſt thou thy ſelf in miſchief, O mighty man?* The man was mighty, and what did this might ſerve him for? What uſe did he put it to? Even to do miſchief. Many have a mind and will enough to do miſchief, who want both power and opportunity to do it: But they who have power and opportunity to do miſchief, ſeldom want a mind or will to do it. Power is of great uſe to do good, and 'tis a great temptation to do bad things. As *Laban* brag'd to *Jacob*, and crowed over him as his underling (*Gen.* 31.29.) *It is in the power of my hand to do you hurt*; And what hindred him then, or what hath hindred many in all Ages of the World, from doing that hurt to others, which they had power to do? Not a diſlike or abhorrence of the fact (which through grace ſtops every good man from hurting others, how great ſoever his power is) but a ſecret reſtraint upon their heart, like that, which *Laban* had in a dream, or viſion to his ear; *Take heed thou ſpeak not to* Jacob *good or bad*; that is, meddle not with him in any caſe to ſtop his journey. The Prophet (*Ezek.*22.6.) deſcribing the ſinfulneſs of thoſe times, ſaith; *Behold the Princes of* Iſrael, *every one were in thee, to their power, to ſhed blood.* They did it, *to their power*; we put in the Margin, *to their arm*; that is, they uſed and improved their arm or power to the utmoſt length and ſtretch for the oppreſſion of others. The Prophet *Jeremy* chargeth that people with ſinning in general at that rate, (*Chap.* 3. 5.) *Behold thou haſt ſpoken and done evil things, as thou couldeſt.* Some men ſin (as all men ſhould love and ſerve God) with all their might, with all their ſtrength; they do evil with both hands greedily; that they ſin no more, is not for want of will, but ability. As the people were thus ſet upon all manner of ſin, ſo the Princes upon that ſpecial ſin, oppreſſion. They were to their power, for ſhedding blood; yea many deſire to get power into their hand, that they may avenge themſelves by their own hand, and be ready to hurt whom and where they do not love. 'Tis not ſo much ambition which provokes ſome men to affect power and greatneſs, as malice and a deſire of having their ends upon whomſoever ſtands in their way. Theſe like the great Fiſhes of the Sea, delight to ſwallow up and feed upon the leſſer; or like the great and ſtrong Beaſts of the Forreſt, they tear and devour the Lambs or Sheep of the paſture. They uſe (that is, indeed abuſe) their power, not ſo much for their own good, as in wronging their neighbours, whoſe hurt they ſhould never ſeek, and whoſe good they ought to ſeek and promote next their own. Power ſhould be uſed and put forth, for help, not hurt, for protection, not ruine; and therefore Magiſtrates, who are the chief mighty men of the Earth, who are called *Powers*, (Tit.3 1.) are alſo called *the Shields of the Earth*; implying, they are to uſe their power for a defence (a Shield is for defence) of the oppreſſed, not to oppreſs. The Scripture calls Magiſtrates *Shields*, but it never calls the Magiſtrate a *Sword.* It ſaith indeed the Magiſtrate hath a *Sword*, and that he *beareth not the Sword in vain*, (*Rom.*13.4.) that is, he doth not bear it ſo as to bear with evil doers, and never draw it, nor uſe it. But the Scripture doth not ſay, the Magiſtrate is a *Sword*, as it ſaith, he is a *Shield*; hereby intimating, that the Power of the Magiſtrate ſhould rather be exerciſed in protecting than in puniſhing, rather in ſaving than deſtroying. What the Apoſtle ſaith concerning the deſign or purpoſe of his miniſterial office, *We have this power to edification, and not to deſtruction*, (2 *Cor.* 13. 10.) is true of all power; the primary deſign of it is for protection, rather than for deſtruction and not at all for oppreſſion or vexation. Magiſtrates have Swords, but they are Shields, not Swords; they have a Sword to cut off evil doers, and by that the good are preſerved and defended. Such mighty ones, who delight to be Swords, but care not to be Shields, who are all for cutting and deſtroying, not at all for ſaving, relieving, and protecting, (ſuch mighty ones, I ſay) cauſed the oppreſſed to cry, yea to cry out in *Job's* time; and in what times ſoever they are, they make the oppreſſed cry out. And the matter, that *Elihu* ſuppoſed *Job* was offended at, was, that God did not hear the cry of theſe oppreſſed ones, nor appear for their deliverance; which yet he hath declared himſelf ready to, as *David* afterward deſcribeth him, (*Pſal.* 12. 5.) *For the oppreſſion of the poor, for the ſighing of the needy, now will I ariſe (ſaith the Lord) I will ſet him in ſafety from him that puffeth at him.* But *Job* hearing this cry of the oppreſſed, or crying out of his own oppreſſion, and God ſeeming not to regard it, was ſtumbled at the matter. To remove this, *Elihu* anſwers in the next verſe.

Paratiores ad nocendum.

Verſe 10. **But none ſaith, where is God my maker, who giveth ſongs in the night?**

There is a two-fold Expoſition of theſe words, ariſing from a doubt about the Antecedent to *none*, or who is meant by thoſe that ſay not, *Where is God my maker?* Who are thoſe?

The firſt Interpretation gives it to the oppreſſors, to the mighty men before ſpoken of; *They make the oppreſſed to cry by reaſon of the multitude of oppreſſions*; but none of *theſe mighty oppreſſors ſay, where is God my maker, that giveth ſongs in the night?* Thus the verſe is tranſlated quite through, with reſpect to wicked oppreſſors, who caſt God out of their thoughts, never ſaying, *Where is God my maker*, who hath ſet me up, who hath given me this power, and given me ſongs, (that is, occaſions of joy) in the night? The wicked have abundance, they can feaſt it and ſing it day and night, yet mind not God the fountain and beſtower of all. This is a truth in it ſelf; and becauſe the interpretation is inſiſted upon by ſome as the truth intended in the preſent Text, take this Note from it,

Oppreſſors put away the thoughts of God, or mind not God, when they do, or are about to do, miſchief.

They make the oppreſſed cry, but they ſay not, *Where is God?* They neither ſpeak nor think of God, who hath clothed them with power, and made their arm mighty. We find this frame frequently aſcribed in Scripture to oppreſſors; *Elihu* chargeth *Job* with it, (*Chap.*22.) where having told him to his face, of many acts of oppreſſion; *Thou haſt ſtripped the naked of their clothing*, (verſ.6.) *Thou haſt withholden bread from the hungry*, (verſ.7.) *And the arms of the fatherleſs have been broken*, (verſ. 9.) Having (I ſay) reckoned up theſe his ſuppoſed oppreſſions, he concludes, (*verſ.*13.) *And thou ſayeſt, how doth God know? Can he judg through the dark Cloud? David* in prayer, ſpeaks the ſame of his oppreſſors, (*Pſ.*86.14.) *O God, the proud are riſen againſt me, and the aſſemblies of violent men have ſought* *after my Soul, and have not ſet thee before them.* (Pſal. 94. 5,6.) *They break in pieces, O Lord, thy people, and afflict thine heritage; they ſlay the widow, and the ſtranger, and murder the fatherleſs: Yet they ſay, the Lord doth not ſee it, neither ſhall the God of* Jacob *regard it.* All theſe Scriptures may be reſolved into the Text; *They ſay not, Where is God my maker?* They who do all they can to unmake and undo their fellow-Creatures, care not to remember him, who is the maker and creator of us all. But

Secondly, I conceive thoſe words, *None ſaith, Where is God my maker?* Are rather to be referred to the oppreſſed, than to the oppreſſors: The oppreſſed cry indeed, but not unto God their maker. As *Job* ſaid, (*Job* 24. 12.) *Men groan from out of the City, and the Soul of the wounded cryeth out, yet God layeth it not to heart*; ſo here *Elihu* ſaith, *men groan and cry*, yet themſelves lay not God to heart; *None ſaith, Where is God my maker?* Thus our tranſlation ſeems to carry it, and thus 'tis moſt generally underſtood; *None of the oppreſſed ſay*, &c.

Taking this ſence, *Elihu* here begins to aſſign the reaſon why the oppreſſed are not delivered. As if he had ſaid, 'Tis true there are a multitude of preſſures and oppreſſions, and they tranſport all manner of men with paſſion; the oppreſſed cry, they make much ado, when they ſuffer, againſt them, under whom they ſuffer: But few or none are ſo wiſe, in ſuch a caſe, as to recollect themſelves, and make ſerious application to God, putting him in mind of his own gracious nature towards the work of his hands, to have mercy upon it, and in faith to ſeek to him for remedy and comfort, as being only able to relieve and glad the heart in great extremities; they look not to the hand of God, *when they cry out by reaſon of the arm of the mighty*: They only toil and tear themſelves with complaints, they cry out of this and that man, of this and that inſtrument; but, alas, they find neither, redreſs nor deliverance, becauſe they ſay not, *Where is God my maker?* That is, they are more forward to complain of wrong done them by men, than to remember what good, or what favours God hath done them; they do not particularly and ſpecially apply themſelves to God in their trouble, they do not ſeek nor enquire early after God, nor humble themſelves before him, or under his mighty hand, neither do they conſider what God is to them, nor whether he be with them, and in them; and if they find not God near them, nor in them, they conſider not how they may be united to him, or get him near them. We find God, when we hear his voice ſpeaking to us by his Word and Spirit, and hearken to his voice; we find God when we are at peace with him, truſt upon him confidently, and rejoice in him comfortably. The oppreſſed conſidered not theſe things.

Non habet cogitationem, deliberationem, propoſitum quærendi Deum, neque agnitionem æſtimationemq; beneficiorum ejus; ſunt ἀσύνετοι. Coc.

None ſaith.] Here is an univerſal Negative, *none*, that is, not ſo much as one; yet we may underſtand it with an allay, *none*, that is, few or none (as we commonly ſpeak) *ſay, Where is God my maker?* Poſſibly many ſay it is with their mouths, but few or none ſay it; either firſt, heartily; or ſecondly, ſpiritually; or thirdly, humbly; or fourthly, repentingly; or fiftly, believingly; or ſixthly, ſubmittingly; and therefore no wonder, if they are not heard and helped when they cry. It is a common thing for men in diſtreſs, or under oppreſſion, to cry out, *O God, O Lord*; the name of God is taken by many in vain, when any thing afflicts or hurts them, but few call upon his name. It is no eaſie matter to cry out, in deed, *O God my maker*, or to ſay with a ſerious holy and gracious frame of ſpirit, *Where is God my maker?*

There is a twofold underſtanding of theſe words.

Sunt verba optantis.

Firſt, Some look upon them, as an earneſt wiſh or prayer for help; *None ſaith, Where is God my maker?* That is, none ſaith, O that God my maker would appear in the preſent manifeſtations of his power to ſuccour and deliver me. In which ſenſe *Eliſha* is conceived to ſpeak when he ſmote the waters with *Eliahs* Mantle, (2 *Kings* 2. 14.) *And ſaid, Where is the Lord God of* Elijah*?* As if he had ſaid, O thou God of *Elijah* come, ſhew thy glorious power, and divide theſe waters.

Sunt verba gratulantis.

Secondly, Others expound them as an expreſſion of praiſe, or as the words of a man looking up to God in thankfulneſs for former benefits, in preſent ſtraights. *Where is God my maker?* Where's he that made me, and hath preſerved me hitherto? As if *Elihu* had ſaid, none of theſe oppreſſed ones have recourſe to God in the day of their calamity, confeſſing and acknowledging his great goodneſs to them in their Creation and further preſervation, which might much comfort and encourage their hearts under preſent grievances and preſſures; none ſaith, *Where is God my maker?*

The word **Maker**, may be taken in a threefold notion; Firſt, for him that hath given us our being. As God is the maker of Heaven and of Earth, ſo he is our maker, (*Gen.* 1. 26, 27.) Secondly, for him that hath continued us in and preſerved our being; for providence is a renewed Creation. Thirdly, for him who hath raiſed us up, or preferred us, and done us good all our days. In which ſence the word is uſed (1 *Sam.* 12. 6) *And* Samuel *ſaid unto the people, it is the Lord that advanced* Moſes *and* Aaron. We put in the Margin, *made* Moſes, *&c.* it is this word, he made them great, and put them in thoſe high places of Government and Truſt. The Lord is he that maketh men in this ſence. We ſay commonly of a man that is advanced to ſome great place, *He is a made man*; and on the contrary, of a man that is thrown down, *He is an undone man.* God giveth us a being, and a bodily fabrick, he protects us in our being, he advanceth us to a well-being, in all we may call him, and call upon him as our Maker. And when men would unmake us, that is, oppreſs and undo us, then we ſhould ſay in faith, *Where is God our maker?* Who once gave us life, and hath ſince lifted us up from the gates of death, and put us into a good condition. Many are crying out upon, and poſſibly, ſome railing and raging at men, but who ſaith (in the ſence opened) *Where is God my maker?*

Eloah nomen ſingulare עשי *participium plurale. Factores mei; ſic uſu obtinuit: de Deo loquuntur promiſcue modo ſingulariter modo pluraliter. Senſus autem ubiq; ſingularis eſt. Idea nomen* אלהים *Elohim quando de vero Deo dicitur interpretes reddunt ſemper* Deus, *ubi ratio habetur ſenſus, non terminationis.* Druſ.

vid. Merc. *Ubi eſt Deus qui fecerunt me.* Heb.

ברא
אלהים
אלהים
קדשים
הוא

Deus ſanctus eſt. Ad verbum. Dii ſancti ipſe. Mont.

There is one thing further conſiderable in the Grammar of the Text. The Hebrew is plural, or a plural with a ſingular; as (*Gen.* 1. 1.) *In the beginning God Created:* The word *Elohim*, rendred *God*, is plural; the word *Bara, Created*, ſingular. Thus here, *Where is God my maker?* Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates, *Where is the puiſſant my makers?* I might ſpend much time in ſhewing the conſent of ſeveral Scriptures in that point. *Joſhua ſaid to the people*, (who promiſed and engaged to ſerve the Lord) *ye cannot ſerve the Load*, Why could they not? The reaſon follows; *For he is an Holy God*, (*Joſh.* 24. 19.) The Hebrew ſtrictly is, *God holies he.* Thus the Prophet expreſſeth it, (*Iſa.* 54. 5.) *Thy makers is thy Husband. Solomons* admonition runs in the ſame plural ſtile, (*Eccl.* 12. 1.) *Remember now thy Creators in the days of thy youth.* But though the Scripture ſpeaks of God ſometimes in the ſingular, ſometimes in the plural number, yet the ſenſe is always ſingular. The true God being but *One*, and the onemoſt one, and therefore the plural word (*Elohim*) is always rendred in the ſingular number *God*, where mention is made of the true God; they having regard to the true meaning or Divinity of the Text, not to the Grammar, or termination of the word. There are uſually two reaſons given by learned tranſlaters and interpreters, why the true God who is but one in eſſence and being, is ſo often expreſſed in the Hebrew Text plurally. Firſt, to inſinuate or intimate unto us that great and glorious myſtery of the bleſſed Trinity of perſons in the Godhead; I ſay, to intimate it, we cannot make a full or convincing proof from it againſt any Antitrinitarian Adverſary; becauſe though the word *Elohim* notes a plurality, yet we cannot by any force of the word, determine that plurality preciſely to a Trinity, that muſt be done by other Scriptures, of which we have an abundant ſtore to ſtop the mouth of all gainſayers. Secondly, they tell us, this plural word is uſed to ſet forth the honour of God, according to the uſage of Kings and Soveraign Princes (called Gods) who ſpeak of themſelves (though ſingle perſons) in a plural ſtile, *We* and *Us.* But I conceive, neither is this cogent, though both this and the former may be piouſly improved. So much for the opening of theſe words, *No man ſaith, Where is God my maker?*

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *Many cry and complain in affliction, but look not to God in affliction.*

(*Deut.* 32. 18) *Of the Rock that begat thee thou art unmindful, and haſt forgotten God that formed thee.* Which as it is often verified in times of peace, plenty, and proſperity, ſo not ſeldom in times of trouble, preſſure, and affliction. Yea, there are ſome who cry and complain in affliction, yet turn away from God in affliction, (*Hoſ.* 7. 14.) *They have*

have not cryed unto me with their heart, when they houled upon their Beds; they aſſemble themſelves for corn and wine, and they rebel againſt me. Theſe are ſo far from ſeeking God indeed, or ſaying, *Where is our maker*, with their heart, that they rebel againſt him, while they would be relieved and fed by him. How frequently, even at this day, do ſome men ſtorm, and fret, and rage, little minding God in their afflictions, though formally or vocally calling on him. 'Tis eaſie to complain, but hard to pray in a day of trouble. The *Jews* are reproved for their regardleſneſs of God, while they made great preparations in a time of danger and War, or of a feared Siege, (*Iſa.*22.8.&c.) *Thou didſt look in that day to the armour of the Houſe of the Forreſt; ye have ſeen alſo the breaches of the City of* David, *that they are many*, &c. *And the Houſes have ye broken down to fortiſie the wall: Ye made alſo a ditch between the two walls for the water of the old pool*, &c. Here were politick warlike preparations, yet God was little thought upon in all this; as it followeth, (*verſ.* 11.) *But ye have not looked unto the maker thereof, neither had reſpect unto him that faſhioned it long ago.* 'Tis thus with the moſt of men; when outward miſery comes upon them, what crying? What working is there? yet little returning to God, little turning into their own hearts.

Secondly, Note, *When men oppreſs and vex us, it is beſt to have our recourſe to God, and apply to him.*

That counſel, *Look to me and be ſaved*, (*Iſa.*45.22.) is true of temporal as well as of eternal ſalvation. God is our beſt friend at all times, even in the beſt times, and it is beſt to look on him in the worſt times. *David* could ſay, (*Pſal.*73.28.) when fleſh, and ſtrength, and heart, when all failed him; *It is good for me to draw near to God.* Let our condition be what it will, but eſpecially if we are in a bad condition, it is good, yea beſt to go to him who hath our times, that is, all the changes of our condition in his hand, to him, in whoſe hand the arm of the mighty is, and in whoſe hand alone there is might to help and deliver us from the arm of the mighty. Is it not beſt to look to him in affliction, who can either ſupport us in, or bring us out of our affliction as pleaſeth him? He that made us can protect and ſave us; therefore in every pinching ſtrait, in every preſſing danger, let us go to God in faith and hope, and he will either give us enlargements, or do us good by and in our worſt and greateſt ſtraits.

Thirdly, Note, *As it is good, when at any time we are in trouble to look to God, ſo we ſhould then look to God, ſpecially under this relation, as he is our Maker.*

It is good then to ſay, God is my maker, and I am the work of his hands, and therefore he will take care of me, and deliver me out of the hand of my oppreſſors. There are five duties which ariſe from this conſideration, that God is our Maker. Firſt, We ſhou'd highly eſteem and be thankful for this benefit, our making. Secondly, We ſhould be confident that he who hath made us will preſerve us. Thirdly, We ſhould patiently ſubmit to him, when he afflicts us himſelf, or ſuffers others to afflict us. Fourthly, We ſhould give him glory, by believing that he will take care of us in, or deliver us out of all our ſufferings and afflictions. Fifthly, We ſhould not think nor ſpeak hardly of God, becauſe he hath made us ſubject to tryals, and the exerciſe of patience; neither ſhould we take it ill, that he hath made others ſo high or great, that they have power to oppreſs us. In all theſe reſpects, we ſhould look to God our maker, and neither murmur at, nor be afraid in a day of affliction. The Lord himſelf points us to that, (*Iſa.* 51.12, 13.) *Who art thou that thou ſhouldeſt be afraid of a man that ſhall die, and of the Son of man which ſhall be made as graſs, and forgetteſt the Lord thy maker?* It is good in time of affliction to remember God in all our relations, and in this, as our *maker*, in a three-fold making of us. Firſt, As our maker in a natural capacity, that is, as he hath made theſe Bodies of ours; we may plead with and urge the Lord to take care of and preſerve our Bodies, becauſe he hath made them; preſervation is an act of providence, and providence followeth Creation. Secondly, As our maker in a civil capacity, that is, as he hath made us rich or poor, high or low in the World, or in any worldly enjoyments, *Pharaoh* that great Dragon, lying in the midſt of the Rivers, ſaid, (*Ezek.* 29.3.) *My River is mine own, and I have made it for my ſelf.* But grace teacheth us to ſay otherwiſe; if we are rich or ſtrong, God hath made us ſo; if our River be broad and deep, full and over-flowing, God hath made it ſo; and if we are poor, and weak, if our River be narrow and ſhallow, empty and dry, God hath made it ſo; and who ſhall ſay to him, Why haſt thou made it ſo? That God is the maker of our croſs, ſhould make us quiet under it. Thirdly, A godly man ſhould look to God in affliction, as his maker in a ſpiritual capacity; I do not mean as he hath made our Spirits, but as he hath made us ſpiritual, or as we are his *workmanſhip*, (that's the Apoſtles word) *Created in Chriſt Jeſus unto good works*, (Eph. 2. 10.) That we are thus wrought, works much upon the heart of God in the day of our affliction. That God hath made us men, that we are his Creatures, is a good argument, a fair plea, and moves much; but that he hath made us new men, or new Creatures, his Sons by grace, and Temples of his Spirit, that he hath made us holy, believing, righteous, is a far ſtronger argument, a fuller plea, and moves much more. A Soul that can go to God thus, and tell him he is his maker; a Soul that can ſay, (as 'tis ſaid of the Church, *Iſa.*54.5.) *My maker is my Husband*; he that made me, hath married me to himſelf; a Soul that can ſay this, may indeed triumph in and over all his tribulations. How ſweet is it to have an intereſt in Chriſt, and by a relation to God as our maker in this reſpect. When the Lord rejects a people to the utmoſt, he ſaith he will not be ſtaid, no not by this relation as their maker, from doing it, (*Iſa.*27.11.) *This is a people of no underſtanding; therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will ſhew them no favour.* As if the Prophet had ſaid, if any argument could move the Lord to ſhew mercy, this would do it, to tell him, *he hath made ſuch a people*, or, *he is their maker.* But there are none whom the Lord hath made in the third ſenſe, as to a new Creation, but he will have mercy on them, and ſhew them favour; his making of them ſuch, is a greater mercy and an higher favour, than any they can ask of him; nor are there any of that making, who are of no underſtanding. So then, he that is made of God ſpiritually, needs not care for all the unmaking or undoing he can receive from men, nor fear that he ſhall ever be unmade or unmercy'd by God. All he can loſe in this World, doth not, cannot make him miſerable, who is made fit for the World to come: He knoweth he hath an eſtate ſetled upon him by his Maker, which cannot be taken away. A man thus made, may ſay to his ſpoilers, Ye have taken nothing from me but the ſcraps and ſweepings, the parings and chippings of my eſtate: The Archers indeed have ſorely grieved me, and ſhot at me, but my Bow abides in ſtrength, and the arms of my hands are made ſtrong by the hands of the mighty God of *Jacob*. He that is ſpiritually made, or made a new Creature, is made for ever, and in every ſtrait he may look to God his Maker, as a helper and reſtorer. He that made us when we were nothing, can help us when we are reduced to a very nothing. It is an encouragement to go to God for healing, becauſe he hath wounded us; *Come, and let us return unto the Lord*, (ſaith the Church) *for he hath torn, and he will heal us, he hath ſmitten, and he will bind us up*, (Hoſ.6.1.) Much more is it an encouragement to go unto God to be our healer, becauſe he hath been our maker. He that hath made us, can mend us; he that built us, can repair us, if we ſay, as we ought, and have been taught, *Where is God our maker?*

Who giveth ſongs in the night.

Thoſe words contain a ſecond conſideration, why the oppreſſed ſhould ſeek to God; he *giveth ſongs*, that is, matter of ſongs, or cauſe of ſinging, joy and comfort, even in the night. There are ſeveal opinions about the meaning of theſe words. Some (as I ſhewed before) interpret this verſe of the oppreſſors; *None* (*of them*) *ſay, Where is God my maker, who giveth ſongs in the night?* So the words are a deſcription, as of the great worldly ſecurity, ſo of the great worldly felicity of thoſe oppreſſors. Poor men labour all day hard, and being wearied out with their labours, when night cometh they go to bed; but prophane great and rich men, idle away the day, and ſport and play and ſing away the night. As good men have holy ſongs in the night, (*Iſa.* 30. 29.) *Ye ſhall have a ſong as in the night, when a holy*

Solemnity is kept, &c. So the wicked have their wanton, vain, revelling ſongs in the night, when their ſenſual Solemnities are kept. *Belſhazer* was drinking in the night, and doubtleſs, he had his muſick and ſongs that night: And as he had his ſongs, mirth, and muſick in the night; ſo he ſaid not *Where is God my maker, who giveth me ſongs in the night*: He inſtead of minding God his maker in his mirth, minded only the gods which himſelf had made (as the Text ſpeaks, *Dan.* 5.4.) *They drank wine, and praiſed the gods of gold and ſilver*, &c. And thus 'tis in proportion with all the wicked to whom God gives ſongs in the night, they ſay not, *Where is God my maker*? This interpretation which carrieth the ſongs to the oppreſſors before ſpoken of, contains a truth, yet I ſhall not ſtay upon it, but take the words as referring to the oppreſſed.

How it may be queried, how doth God give them ſongs in the night? I ſhall not inſiſt upon thoſe conjectures, which ſome have made about this *giving ſongs in the night*. As Firſt, implying God ſo gracious, that he giveth us not only in the day, but in the night, occaſion of joy in ſorrow, namely, the view and contemplation of the Heavens and Stars, which are very pleaſant and refreſhing, (*Pſal.* 19.1.)

Others, Secondly, conjecture, that God may be ſaid to give the ſorrowful and oppreſſed ones ſongs in the night, by the ſinging of Birds in the night, of that Bird eſpecially which hath its name from ſinging in the night, the *Nightingale*. Some inſiſt much upon theſe interpretations. It is, I grant, a great mercy of God that when the Sun is down, we have Moon-light and Star-light, and that in the night we have the innocent harmleſs Birds to ſing and make us pleaſant melody. But leaving theſe, we may take the words in a double notion; firſt, Properly; ſecondly, Metaphorically.

Firſt, Properly, and ſo *to give ſongs in the night*, as the night is taken for night time, imports the goodneſs of God to man, not only in the day time, but in the night.

Hence Note, *God in the night ſeaſon, as well as in the day, gives his people matter of joy.*

Night-mercies deſerve and call for day praiſes; eſpecially two ſorts of night mercies; firſt, Night preſervation, (*Pſal.* 3.6.) *I laid me down and ſlept, for thou Lord makeſt me to dwell in ſafety.* The night is ſubject to many dangers; the Septuagint render fully to this ſenſe; *Who giveth watch or preſervation in the night*; that's matter of praiſe and thankſgiving to God. Secondly, he gives us cauſe of praiſe and ſinging, not only for preſerving our lives while we ſleep in the night, but for refreſhing us with ſleep in the night, (*Pſal.* 127.2.) *So he giveth his beloved ſleep.* The Lord gives us not only ſafety, but ſleep. Sweet ſleep is a great mercy, (*Eccl.* 5.12.) *The ſleep of a labouring man is ſweet, whether he eat little or much*; and they who ſleep ſweetly get refreſhing and renewings of ſtrength after all their former labours, for new labours. So that, if we take *night* properly for the night time, there is much occaſion of rejoycing given by God to mankind in general, and more peculiarly to his faithful Servants, in reference to thoſe common mercies of bodily ſafety, and the return of natural ſtrength and ſpirits.

Qui diſtribuit nocturnas cuſtodias. Sept.

Secondly, Take night properly; and then this aſſertion, *He giveth ſongs in the night*, may have this meaning; *The Lord gives his people a praiſing frame of heart in the night ſeaſon!* When they are wrapped up and compaſſed about with outward darkneſs, when they are ſolitary and alone, when no worldly object holds out any occaſion of comfort to them, yet then the Lord lets in a light, or ſhines into their Souls by his good Spirit. The Lord may well be ſaid to give ſongs even in the night, when by the immediate work of his Spirit, he filleth our Spirits with joys unſpeakable and glorious. Theſe are the moſt raviſhing *ſongs of the night*.

Etiam cum nulla ad eum laudandum documenta circumfulgent, intus ſpiritu excitat ad laudes. Jun.

Hence Note, *God by his good Spirit doth often ſuggeſt ſweet meditations and comfortable thoughts to his people in the night.*

In the night the Lord minds his ſervants either of ſuch mercies as they have already received, or of ſuch, as according to his promiſe, he is ready to, or will ſurely beſtow, that ſo they may be buſied in that heavenly work of praiſing him, and rejoycing in him, when they awake or cannot ſleep. This was *David*'s experience, (*Pſal.* 17.3.) *Thou haſt viſited me in the night.* Men uſe to viſit us in the day when we are up or awake. But (ſaith *David*) God gives me viſits in the night, when I am in Bed he gives me many a ſong, or makes me to rejoyce. When we are in our retirements, or freeſt from the hurry of worldly buſineſſes and enjoyments, then we are in the fitteſt poſture for the entertainment and enjoyment of God. The Lord viſits his ſervants in the night, not only (as *David* there) to try them, or as elſewhere to inſtruct them, but to comfort them, as *David* was aſſured, (*Pſal.* 42.8.) *The Lord will command his loving kindneſs in the day time, and in the night his ſong ſhall be with me.* That is, a ſong concerning him. I will ſing and rejoyce, even in the night time, becauſe of the goodneſs and kindneſs of God to me in the day. The experience of *Aſaph*, or of *David*, communicated in that Pſalm to *Aſaph*, gives further proof of this, (*Pſal.* 77.6.) where having ſaid, (*verſ.* 1.) *I cryed unto God with my voyce, and he gave ear unto me*: He adds. (*verſ.* 6.) *I call to remembrance my ſong in the night*; that is, thoſe occaſions of joy and ſinging which God hath heretofore given me. Theſe ſongs were ſweeter to me than ſleep. As it ſheweth an excellent frame of Spirit to remember the commandments of God in the night, which *David* alſo profeſſed as his practice, (*Pſal.* 119.55.) *I have remembred thy Name, O Lord, in the night, and have kept thy Law.* The name of God is any manifeſtation of God, either in his word or works. And again, (*Pſal.* 119.62.) *At midnight I will riſe to give thanks to thee, becauſe of thy righteous judgments.* Some watch in the night to give thanks, (*Pſal.* 134.1.) others give thanks when they wake at any time in the night; both are acts of pureſt love to God, and proceed from pureſt conſolation in God. (*Cant.* 3.1.) *By night on my Bed I ſought him.* The Spouſe doth not ſay only, *by night I ſought him*, but *by night on my Bed*, I ſpend not the night in ſleeping, but in ſeeking him whom my Soul loveth. (*Pſal.* 16.7.) *My reins inſtruct me in the night ſeaſon*; that is, I have as it were diſcourſes and ſoliloquies, ſecret debates about, and ſtrong deſires after the things of God, even in the night. *That Soul is indeed awake to God, which is acquainted with and uſed to theſe divine ſongs in the night, the time of ſleep.*

Further, Take the word *Night* in a metaphorical notion, as night ſignifieth a troubleſome ſtate; God may be ſaid *to give ſongs in the night*, when he comforts us in or at any time of affliction. I need not ſtay to prove that in Scripture the night is put for affliction, nor need I prove, that, to give inward joy in a day of outward ſorrow, is to give ſongs in the night. The Obſervation riſing from this metaphorical underſtanding of night, is this, which the Scripture and experience are full of.

God ſends comfort to his people, or cauſeth them to rejoyce in the midſt of their afflictions.

It is the Apoſtles deſcription of God, (2 *Cor.* 1.3,4.) *The God of all comfort, who comforteth us in all our tribulation.* What ſweet ſongs have ſuffering Saints found in the darkeſt midnight of their affliction! What inward peace in outward troubles! What Soul freedom in bodily reſtraint! One of the Ancients hath put the queſtion, and anſwered it. *What's a ſong in the night? 'Tis joy in time of trouble.* When ever God gives a Soul joy in time of trouble, he gives a ſong in the night. *Paul* and *Silas* ſang in the night, in both notions of night. If we take night in a proper ſenſe, they ſang in the night, and in an improper ſenſe, they were in priſon, that was a night of affliction to them, yea it was midnight with them, the power of darkneſs, or the darkeſt outward affliction to them, yet, ſaith the Text, *At midnight* Paul *and* Silas *ſang*: They had ſongs in their mouths, and in their hearts too; they ſang ſo loud that all heard them. And hence we may collect the ſtrength of the argument or reaſon upon which *Elihu* here ſaith, God doth not regard the cry of many under oppreſſion, they make a noiſe, but none ſaith, *Where is God my maker, who giveth ſongs in the night*, who is able to comfort us in all our afflictions, who is able to make darkneſs light to us, and turn our ſorrows into ſongs of joy; they had not theſe high thoughts of God, nor theſe holy confidences in God, while they lay under the oppreſſions of men, and therefore God did not regard their cry, nor ſave them from the

Carmen in nocte eſt lætitia in tribulatione. Greg.

the arm of the mighty. This is the firſt part of the anſwer which *Elihu* made to *Job's* complaint that the oppreſſed were not delivered, though being preſſed ſo ſorely they could not forbear to cry, yea to cry out in their miſery. The next words give us a fuller and more expreſs anſwer to that complaint,

VERS. 11, 12, 13.

Who teacheth us more than the Beaſts of the Earth, and maketh us wiſer than the fowls of Heaven.

There they cry (but none giveth anſwer) becauſe of the pride of evil men.

Surely God will not hear vanity, neither will the Almighty regard it.

ELihu proceeds in aſſigning a ſecond reaſon to heighten their ſin, who being in diſtreſs, ſay not, *Where is God my maker?* Or he giveth a further account, why the Lord doth not preſently attend to the prayers and crys of ſome men under great oppreſſion. He had ſhewed in the former verſe one reaſon of the Lords forbearance to help them in ſuch diſtreſſes, they did not ſay heartily, *Where is God our maker?* Nor did they remember him according the ſpecial benefits which they ſometimes had received from God, even *ſongs in the night*.

In this verſe 11. *Elihu* aggravates the ſin of ſuch oppreſſed perſons by the conſideration of that light, and underſtanding wherewith God hath indued, and inriched man above the irrational Creatures, and which he hath therefore furniſhed man with, that he might know what to do in a time of diſtreſs, in the day of affliction; *they ſay not, Where is God my maker?*

Who, not only *gives us ſongs in the night*, (matter of praiſe, but) **teacheth us more than the Beaſts of the Earth.**

Some of the Jewiſh Interpreters read theſe words poſitively, not (as we) comparatively, or they render them, to ſhew that God hath appointed the very Beaſts to be our Tutors, not (as we) that himſelf tutors us beyond the Beaſts: Thus; *Who teacheth us by the Beaſts of the Earth, and maketh us wiſe by the fowls of Heaven.* This anſwers what *Job* ſpake in Chapter 12. of this Book, (*v.*7.) *Ask now the Beaſts, and they ſhall teach thee: And the fowls of the Air, and they ſhall tell thee.* 'Tis a truth that God doth teach us by the Beaſts of the Earth, and makes us wiſe by the very fowls of the Air. We may learn much in the School of thoſe Creatures who have not only no learning, but no underſtanding, and may be ſtirred up to the exerciſe of excellent vertues, by thoſe which have not the exerciſe of reaſon. The Scripture ſendeth man, the higheſt of viſible Creatures, to the loweſt of viſible Creatures, to Creatures ſo little, that they are ſcarce viſible, for inſtruction; *Go to the Ant, thou ſluggard, conſider her ways, and be wiſe,* (Prov.6.6.) There are ſeveral obſervable qualities, and, as I may call them, vertues, not only in the Beaſts of the Earth, and fowls of the Air, but in the meaneſt creeping things, which are very imitable by man; and thus God doth teach us by the Beaſts of the Earth, and by the fowls of the Air, vertually, though not formally, by their practice and example, though not by their precepts or rules; for ſuch teachings neither the Beaſts of the Earth nor the fowls of the Air have any competency at all. Man alone cannot teach man effectually to converſion and ſalvation, all that are ſo taught, are and muſt be taught of God, (1 *Cor.*3.5,6,7.) yet the Beaſts of the Earth, and the fowls of the Air, may and do teach us inſtrumentally to conviction, and if we learn not by them, their teachings (as rude as they are) will be to our ſhame, confuſion, and condemnation.

But I rather take the words, as we tranſlate them, comparatively; *Who teacheth us more than the Beaſts of the Earth*: As if he had ſaid, *God teacheth the Beaſts ſomewhat, but he teacheth man much more.*

They who expound this context of the wicked man, who oppreſſeth the poor, give the ſenſe thus; *God teacheth us more than the Beaſts of the Earth, and maketh us wiſer than the fowls of Heaven*; that is, he teacheth us that we ſhould not like Beaſts, vex, tear and rend one the other, that we ſhould not like the Bear of the Wood, and the Lyon of the Forreſt, nor like the Vulturs and ravenous Birds of the Air, prey one upon another; they who are fierce againſt, and unmerciful to their Brethren, degenerate into Beaſts, whom God hath taught no better, but left them to live by rapine and ſpoil: Whereas he hath laid more noble principles into the heart of man, and taught him to be kind and charitable, loving, and compaſſionate, not to devour and vex thoſe of his kind, how much ſoever inferior and below him in degree. And therefore what a ſhame is it for men to be more oppreſſive and cruel to men like themſelves, than Beaſts are to Beaſts, or fowls to fowls? This is a truth: yet I conceive the context is rather to be underſtood of the oppreſſed, (as hath been touched before) than of the oppreſſor, and therefore our reading runs moſt clearly;

Quidam Hebræorum ſpecialiter eo referunt, ne beſtiarum aut avium more invicem rapiamur. Merc.

Who teacheth us more than the Beaſts of the Earth.

That is, though the very Beaſts of the Earth, are taught ſomewhat by God, and have a kind of knowledg, yet men are taught of God in a more eminent, tranſcendent, and noble way, than they, whether wild, or tame, one or other. God doth not ſet up ſuch a School for Beaſts, as he doth for man, nor provide ſuch inſtructions for them, as he doth for man; he gives men more means of inſtruction, he gives them more time for inſtruction, he takes (as I may ſay) more pains to inſtruct them, riſing early, and ſending his Miniſters now, as the Prophets of old, to teach his people. He every way *teacheth us more than he teacheth the Beaſts of the Earth*;

אפּל *In kal diſcere, in piel docere ſignificat. Deus nos majori familiaritate & conſuetudine dignatur, quam beſtias.*

And maketh us wiſer than the fowls of Heaven.

But what? Are the fowls of the Air indued with wiſdom? I anſwer, firſt, wiſdom is is put ſometime for that inbred ſubtlety, which is no more than an inclination to avoid that which is hurtful to Nature, and to follow that which is ſuitable to it. That which is wiſdom indeed is the proper and peculiar gift of God to men and Angels only. God hath given ſomewhat like wiſdom to the fowls of Heaven, they have a natural forecaſt; but what is the wiſdom, with which the fowls of Heaven are indued, to that wiſdom with which man is indued, thoſe men eſpecially, who (through grace) are heirs of Heaven? What is the wiſdom which Beaſts have by a common inſtinct, to the wiſdom which man hath by divine inſtruction, yea ſometimes by divine inſpiration. Beaſts and Birds are wiſe, they are taught by God what is convenient for their ſtate, yet the beſt of their knowledg is ignorance, and the top of their underſtanding folly, compared with man. And hence it is that when men act fooliſhly or uncomely, they are ſaid in Scripture to be like Beaſts, to corrupt themſelves like brute Beaſts, to be brutiſh in their knowledg. We may eaſily conclude the wiſdom of Birds and Beaſts extreamly below mans, ſeeing whenſoever man acts below himſelf, or doth any thing unwiſely, he is ſaid to be and do like a Beaſt. The Hebrew word which we tranſlate *wiſer*, being applyed in Scripture to Emmets or Ants, to Conies, to Locuſts, to Spiders, (*Prov.* 30. 24.) doth not imply, that they truly know either what or why they do ſuch or ſuch a work, it ſheweth that the work which they do, hath an order, uſefulneſs, and reaſon in it, according to knowledg. *Solomon* ſaith indeed, thoſe four little Creatures are *exceeding wiſe*, not that they exceed the wiſdom of man, but among brutes they exceed, or are among them of the firſt form for wiſdom. *He maketh us wiſer than the fowls of the Air.*

חכם *De formicis, cuniculis, locuſtis, araneis dicitur; non quod ſciant quid & cur agant, ſed quod ipſum opus habeat ordinem, utilitatem & rationem.* Coc.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *The Beaſts of the Earth, and fowls of the Air, have a kind of knowledg, and wiſdom.*

They have ſomewhat which is Analogous to or like knowledg and wiſdom, yet neither knowledg nor wiſdom ſtrictly taken. Some of the Ancients have reported to us, the opinion of the *Manichees*, and *Marcionites*, who maintained, that the Beaſts of the Earth, and fowls of the Air, were indued with reaſon, properly ſo called; which opinion was by them juſtly numbred among hereſies, and indeed a little reaſon may ſerve for the refutation of that opinion, which aſſerts Beaſts and fowls indued with reaſon; though ſome other learned men in their time, and great Philoſophers have aſſerted as much as the *Manichees* or *Marcionites* in this point. *Quintilian* ſaid, that Beaſts did rather want an ability of ſpeaking, than of underſtanding: And *Plutarch* endeavoured to prove the ſame in his Dialogue about that Queſtion, *Whether brute Beaſts have or are endued with*

*Auguſtinus lib.*6. *contra Fauſtum Manichæum.* Epiph. lib. 1. Hær. 42.

with Reaſon? But we affirm the wiſdom of Brutes is only brutiſh, and at moſt, but ſimilitudinary to the rational actings of man and a ſimilitude of, or ſomewhat like wiſdom and reaſon cannot with reaſon be denied them. It's ſaid of the Serpent (*Gen.*3.1.) that he *was more ſubtil than any Beaſt of the Field, which the Lord God had made.* And when Chriſt ſaith, (*Math.*10.16.) *Be ye wiſe as Serpents,* he implyeth, according to that in *Geneſis,*that Serpents have ſome ſhadow of wiſdom, ſomewhat like wiſdom. And when the Prophet *Jeremiah* (Chap.8.7.) ſaith, *The Stork, the Turtle, the Crane, and the Swallow,know the time of their coming,* he affirms that thoſe Fowls have a kind of knowledg. Another Prophet upbraids men with the knowledg of Beaſts, (*Iſa.*1.3.) *The Ox knoweth his Owner, and the Aſs his Maſters Crib,* &c. Here in the Text, to learn or be taught is aſcribed to Beaſts, becauſe they are tamed,broken, brought to hand, and made uſeful for the ſervice of man. And wiſdom is aſcribed to the Fowls of the Air, becauſe they keep their ſeaſons duly, make their Neſts ſafely and fitly, and bring up their young ones tenderly, with pains and diligence. There are very ſtrange inſtances, ſcarce credible, given by *Pliny* and others, concerning the ſagacity and docibility of ſome Beaſts of the Earth, and Fowls of the Air; we are told how they have acted more like rational Creatures, than Brutes: And daily experience gives proof enough, that they have a kind of knowledg, reaſon and wiſdom, only we cannot allow them reaſon, wiſdom,or knowledg in kind: They do works of Reaſon and Underſtanding, only (which is mans excellency) they underſtand not the reaſon of their works,

Secondly, Note, *The knowledg or wiſdom* (*ſuch as it is*) *that the Beaſts of the Earth, and Fowls of the Air have, is of God.*

If he *teacheth men more than the Beaſts of the Earth, and maketh them wiſer than the Fowls of the Air,* then in ſome way and meaſure he teacheth them, and maketh them wiſe. That wiſdom and knowledg, whatſoever it is, which Beaſts and Fowls have, is planted in them by God; they have that which ſerves their turn, and anſwers their ſtate by a common inſtinct of Nature, which man hath anſwerable to his ſtate, either by immediate Revelation, or by means of inſtruction from God. So then, Beaſts and Birds receive their peculiar qualities and abilities from God, as well as their Being: And God hath beſtowed thoſe qualities, which are ſhadows of wiſdom and underſtanding, upon Beaſts and Birds, not only for their own preſervation, but for the benefit of man, that they may be more uſeful to him, and fitter for his ſervice. As God hath made both Man and Beaſt for himſelf, ſo he hath made the Beaſts of the Earth, and Fowls of the Air for Man, either to ſerve mans neceſſity, or to procure his honeſt delight: And that they might teach both theſe ends, he hath furniſhed them accordingly. A Creature which hath not ſomewhat in it like Reaſon, could be little made uſe of by the Reaſon of Man.

Thirdly, Note, *Man is far better taught, than either the Beaſts of the Earth, or Fowls of the Air.*

Man, as Man, hath that in him, which wonderfully exceeds the Beaſts of the Earth and Fowls of the Air; he hath reaſon in him; which they have not; he is a reaſonable Creature, which they are not, and ſo can do that which they cannot. Man, by the power of Reaſon is able, firſt, to propoſe to himſelf an end in what he doth; ſecondly, to chuſe fit means for the attaining that end; neither of which Beaſts can do. And if any man be without wiſdom to propoſe to himſelf a right end, and to chuſe due means leading thereunto, there's little difference between that man and a Beaſt, ſurely all his wiſdom is but brutiſh. Further, God hath not only given Man a ſenſe of thoſe things which are hurtful to him, as he hath to the Beaſts of the Earth and Fowls of the Air; but God hath given Man an Underſtanding, by which, he knowing God, may worſhip him, by which alſo he may ſee into and foreſee the cauſes of things, and likewiſe rightly apply known means, either to prevent or remedy evils, and to bring about that which is good. Again, as God hath beſtowed that wonderful bleſſing of Reaſon upon Man, above Beaſts and Fowls, which makes him capable of higher inſtructions and fruitions, than either of them; ſo God hath provided higher and better means for the inſtruction of Man, than he hath for the inſtruction of Beaſts. *He teacheth us more.* For,

Firſt, He hath given his Word to Man, not to Beaſts; he hath not made a Bible for the Beaſts of the Earth, and the Fowls of the Air; but for Man he hath, that he might both know his will and do it, know his favour or good will to him, and enjoy it. Secondly, He hath given ſome men his Spirit, he hath not beſtowed his Spirit upon any Beaſts, nor upon any Fowls of the Air: And becauſe his Spirit teacheth us, we are ſaid to be taught of God, eminently taught of God. Thirdly, He hath given us his Ordinances, and appointed Officers, or ſet perſons in Office, to mannage and hold out thoſe Ordinances, wherein himſelf is both honoured and enjoyed. *He* (ſaith the Apoſtle, *Eph.*4.11,12.) *gave ſome Apoſtles, and ſome Prophets, and ſome Evangeliſts, and ſome Paſtors and Teachers; for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the Miniſtry, for the edifying of the Body of Chriſt,* for the bringing in, and building up of Souls. *He ſheweth his Word unto* Jacob, *his Statutes and Judgments unto* Iſrael, (*Pſal.* 147.19.) and as it follows in the next verſe of the ſame *Pſalm, He hath not dealt ſo with any Nation,* as with his *Iſrael,* his Church, to be ſure he hath not dealt ſo with the Beaſts of the Earth, nor with the Fowls of the Air, as was ſhewed alſo in the Text.

Further as to the matter in queſtion about the Providences and dealings of God with man; God hath taught Man much more than Beaſts: As Firſt, That all things which befal us, come from, and are ordered by himſelf. Secondly, That we ought to receive the Rule and take inſtruction from God, how to behave our ſelves under his various dealings. Thirdly, He hath taught us at all times, and in all turns of Providence, to ſtay our ſelves in waiting upon him, (*Pſal.* 37.7.) Fourthly, He hath taught us in times of trouble and affliction, to cry to him, and call upon him as his Children in faith, not barely to complain, much leſs to be impatiently outragious like Beaſts.

Now if God hath taught us more than the Beaſts, then, we ſhould not live by ſenſe, nor purſue ſenſible things, as Beaſts do, but aſpire to and ſeek after union and communion with God, whom the Beaſts of the Earth know not. How greatly will this aggravate the ſin of Man, if having beed taught more than Beaſts, any Man ſhould be found to have learned leſs than Beaſts; as will appear yet more in the next Obſervation but one.

Fourthly, *Elihu* at leaſt intimates this Note,

Men ſometimes act but as, or indeed below, the very Beaſts of the Earth, and the Fowls of the Air.

For (ſaith he) they ſay not, *Where is God our maker, who gives us ſongs in the night? Who teacheth us better,* or more, *than the Beaſts of the Earth.* As if he had ſaid, The Beaſts of the Earth anſwer the inſtinct of Nature, (which is all the coſt God beſtows in teaching them) better than men do thoſe coſtly teachings and inſtructions which God beſtows upon them by his Word, by his Spirit, by his Miniſters, by his Ordinances, and by his Providences; for all theſe ways doth the Lord teach and inſtruct men from day to day; yet men often act, not only beſide and below, but quite contrary to all theſe teachings. The Beaſts of the Earth keep up to the inſtruction which they have received, the inſtinct of Nature, they move according to that; but man who hath an underſtanding, doth not always move ſuitable to his underſtanding; man hath reaſon, yet he doth not always regulate his motions by reaſon, but is hurried by paſſion, or led by ſenſe, as a Beaſt. (*Pſal.* 49.20.) *Man that is in honour, and underſtandeth not, is like the Beaſts that periſh;* that is, though his ſtate and ſphere be higher than a Beaſt, yet he moves by as low a principle as a Beaſt, even by ſenſe, or ſenſual appetite, either by iraſcible, or concupiſcible, as a Beaſt doth. By the man in honour, that underſtandeth not, the Pſalmiſt intends not a fool that hath no underſtanding, nor an Idiot that hath no uſe of reaſon, but he is ſaid not to underſtand, becauſe he doth not uſe his underſtanding; as he in the Parable that did not uſe his Talent, is ſaid to have none (*Math.*25.29.) Underſtanding is a Talent, and a great one, a choice one too. A man that hath the greateſt Natural underſtanding and reaſon, yea poſſibly the greateſt learning, and experience, may be ſaid, *not to underſtand,* when he doth not behave himſelf underſtandingly, or according to the Laws and Rules of reaſon.

In extremã ſtultitiæ lineam incidimus, ſi ſapientiores nos eo putemus, qui ſapientes nos facit.

reaſon. Men of the beſt underſtanding and greateſt honour are like the Beaſts that periſh, as to their frailty, that is, they die; which may be the meaning of the Pſalmiſt at the 12. verſe, where he ſaith, *Man being in honour abideth not, he is like the Beaſts that periſh.* But all men that are in honour and underſtand not their duty, or do not what they underſtand, are like the Beaſts that periſh, as to their inability, that is, they live as if they had nothing, but (what Beaſts have) ſenſe and appetite to govern their lives by. He that doth not practiſe according to knowledge what he knows, is like, and worſe than a Beaſt that hath no knowledge. For when a Beaſt doth any thing abſurdly, he doth like a Beaſt; but when man doth any thing abſurdly, he degenerates or falleth from his own form, he doth not like a man, and therefore is worſe than a Beaſt. And that's it, I conceive, which the Apoſtle *Jude* aims at in *verſe* 10. of his Epiſtle, where rebuking a very vile generation of men, *Revilers, who ſpeak evil of thoſe things which they know not*; he preſently adds, *But what they know naturally as brute Beaſts, in thoſe things they corrupt themſelves.* When he ſaith, *what they know naturally as brute Beaſts*, his meaning is, what they know in common with Beaſts, that is, by ſenſe and appetite, which are common to man and Beaſt, (as reaſon and underſtanding are common to Man and Angels). Now (ſaith the Apoſtle) *what they know naturally as brute Beaſts, in thoſe things they corrupt themſelves*, which brute Beaſts do not. For theſe words, *as brute Beaſts*, are to be taken in conſtruction and interpretation, with the former part of the ſentence, *What they know naturally*, not with the latter, *they corrupt themſelves.* Their knowledge indeed is no better than the knowledge of brute Beaſts, natural, but in corrupting themſelves they are unlike to, and do worſe than brute Beaſts, who run not to ſuch exceſſes; yet there is nothing more common in Scripture, than to ſay that men act the Beaſt, when they ſin, and put off thoſe manners which become and are worthy of an ingenuous and rational man. For as man is partaker both of a ſpiritual and ſenſitive Nature, ſo he takes his denomination from that part to which in his diſpoſition and converſation he moſt inclines: Hence he is ſometimes called *God*, or an *Angel of God*, and ſometimes he is compared to the moſt hurtful of Beaſts, a Lyon, ſometimes to the worſt of Beaſts to a Fox, to a Wolf, to a Dog, to a Swine, to a generation of Vipers, to what not, which may put a mark of diſhonour and reproach upon him.

Fifthly, Note, *It's a great ſhame, reproof, and reproach to man, when he acts unanſwerably to the teachings of God.*

It is better to be a Beaſt in or by Nature, than to be a Beaſt (and continue ſo) in qualities and conditions. O what a reproach is it, that they who have a far better Nature than Beaſts, ſhould lead no better lives than a Beaſt, yea poſſibly much worſe! The Pſalmiſt cries ſhame upon ſuch (*Pſal.*32.9.) *Be ye not as the Horſe, or as the Mule, which have no underſtanding, whoſe mouth muſt be held in with bit and bridle, leſt they come near unto thee.* The Horſe and Mule are unruly Creatures, if left to their own rule, they have no underſtanding how to mannage and order themſelves; they muſt be mannaged and order'd by bit and bridle in the hand of a skilful rider, elſe they do more hurt than good ſervice to thoſe that come near them: Now, ſaith the Lord to man, Be not you like the untaught or unmannag'd Horſe and Mule; as ye are better taught, ſo ye ſhould have better manners. We ſay of ſome men, they are better fed than taught; and we may ſay of many men, they are better taught than manner'd; they mend not their manners, though daily taught, yea urged to mend them. For this neglect the Lord reproves the ſluggard, (*Prov.* 6.6.) *Go to the Ant, thou ſluggard, conſider her ways, and be wiſe*; thou doeſt not anſwer natural, much leſs ſpiritual light, thou doeſt not learn by any teachings; one of the leaſt of my Creatures may teach thee more than thou haſt yet learned of all the teachers which I have ſent thee. The little Ant that dwels upon a Mole-hil, that creeps upon the ground, may teach thee better manners, and make thee wiſer. Art thou not aſhamed to need ſuch a teacher, having had ſo many teachers? That's alſo the ſence of thoſe rebukes which the Prophet pours out (with a ſtrong conteſtation) upon the people of *Iſrael*, calling Heaven and Earth to witneſs againſt them, (*Iſa.*1.2.) *Hear O Heavens, and give ear O Earth, I have nouriſhed, and brought up Children, and they have rebelled againſt me.* But how doth the Lord convict them of rebellion, and by whom? Even by the teachableneſs and tractableneſs of the dulleſt brutes, *The Ox knoweth his owner, and the Aſs his Maſters crib: But Iſrael doth not know, my people doth not conſider.* As if he had ſaid, The Ox and the Aſs out-do you, the Ox knoweth his owner that feeds him, and the very Aſs knows the crib where he is fed, Theſe Beaſts take notice of, regard and ſubmit to their Maſter and Benefactor: But *Iſrael* doth neither obſerve nor ſubmit to me, who have tenderly nurſed and plentifully nouriſhed them; who have (as the Lord ſpake by his Prophet, *Hoſ.*11.4.) *been to them, as one that taketh the yoke off their jaws, and layeth them meat*, the fat and the ſweet, the fineſt of the wheat, and honey out of the Rock to feed upon; and, which is more than this, who have not only fed them better, but taught them better than the Ox or Aſs; O ye Heavens, be aſtoniſhed at this! Further, as in this Scripture the Lord conteſted with, and reproved his people by the Beaſts of the Earth, ſo he doth it in another by the fowls of the Air, (*Jer.*8.6,7.) *I* (ſaith the Lord) *hearkned and heard, but they ſpake not aright*, &c. *every one turned to his courſe*, (his ſinful courſe, or his courſe in ſin) *as the Horſe ruſheth into the Battle*; that is, fiercely, fearleſly, preſumptuouſly, at once ſlighting, at leaſt forgetting, both their own danger, and my command. As the Lord thus rebukes the head-ſtrong obſtinacy and wilfulneſs of that people, by their likeneſs to the Horſe; ſo in the next verſe he reproves their blindneſs and blockiſhneſs, by their unlikeneſs to the Stork, &c. *Yea the Stork in the Heaven knoweth her appointed time, and the Turtle, and the Crane, and the Swallow obſerve the time of their coming, but my people know not the Judgments of the Lord.* Then followeth, (*verſ.*8.) *How do ye ſay, we are wiſe, and the Law of the Lord is with us? Lo certainly in vain made he it, the pen of the Scribe is in vain:* As if he had ſaid; You have been taught, you have had the Law of the Lord, and you are ready to boaſt of it, as the Apoſtle obſerved (*Rom.* 2.23.) but with what face can ye take it upon your ſelves to be wiſe men, or arrogate wiſdom to your ſelves, or ſo much as own the Law, when you are ſo unready to pay that obedience which you owe to it. The Crane, the Turtle, and Swallow, the very fowls of Heaven, follow the light of Nature better than you have done the light of Scripture and daily inſtruction. Theſe reaſonleſs Creatures, reaſon with themſelves more rationally than you have done; they ſay thus in themſelves, It is beſt for us to change our quarters, and take our flight to ſome more benign or milder Region, for here the ſeaſon grows ſharp, and the weather tempeſtuous, if we abide here we ſtarve, we periſh with cold and hunger: But you my people are ſo ſottiſh, that you change neither your minds nor manners, you mend neither your ways nor your works; what changes ſoever I bring upon you, or how much ſoever I vary my ways and workings towards you, you apply not your ſelves to my courſe and dealings with you, but ſtill take your own courſe, ſay I or do I what I will; you neither embrace ſeaſons of grace and offers of mercy, nor do ye labour either to prevent or to avoid thoſe ſtorms of wrath and divine vengeance, with which you have been often threatned, and which hang in the Clouds ready to drop down and overwhelm you. And will ye ſay after all this, *we are wiſe*, when the fowls of the Air appear wiſer than you? And will you ſay, *the Law of the Lord is with us*, when they guide themſelves better by the Law of Nature? And foraſmuch as it is thus with you, have I not reaſon to conclude, that, *Lo, certainly in vain made he it, the pen of the Scribe is in vain*; that is, it was to little or no purpoſe that God at firſt enacted and publiſhed his Law, (*Exod.* 20.) or appointed Scribes to write it out, that Copies of it might be transferred to and read by his people, (*Deut.*17.18. *Chap.*31.9.) Is not both the making and writing of the Law vain, (as to you) ſeeing you are thus vain and fooliſh, even much more vain and fooliſh than the Stork in the Heaven, than the Turtle, Crane, and Swallow, notwithſtanding the making and writing out of the Law for you?

This will fill the faces of the wicked, that is, both of the prophane and and formal profeſſors of the Lords name, with ſhame and confuſion for ever, when they ſhall be made to ſee and confeſs, that the Beaſts of the Earth have followed their light, better than they, though God hath taught them more than the Beaſts of the Earth, and that the Fowls of the Air have carried themſelves more wiſely than they, though God hath *made them wiſer than the fowls of the Air.*

Verſe 12. There they cry (but none giveth anſwer) becauſe of the pride of evil men.

When *Elihu* had thus cloſely hinted the ſin of thoſe perſons that acted below Beaſts and Birds in their afflictions, he proceeds to tell us, what they do in their affliction; *There they cry (but none giveth anſwer).* We tranſlate theſe words, *But none giveth anſwer*, in a parentheſis; we may read the verſe without it, and transfer thoſe words to the end of the verſe, *There they cry, becauſe of the pride of evil men, but none giveth anſwer.* That is, (as ſome give the meaning) they being oppreſſed by the pride of evil men, cry out of their inſolencies, and their own miſeries, and yet can get no anſwer; for the reaſons given in the two former verſes, that is, becauſe they do not heartily and believingly apply themſelves to God their Maker. Mr. *Broughton* underſtands it thus of the pride of oppreſſors; *There* (ſaith he) *they cry, but he anſwers not concerning the wrongdoers pride.* Others take it for the pride of the oppreſſed; *There they cry.* The word rendred *there*, is an Adverb of place, but here it notes the time or eſtate rather in which theſe perſons lived; they were in an oppreſſed eſtate or condition, when they cryed, yet ſaith the Text, *None giveth anſwer*; that is, they have no help when they cry; they cry to men, yea they cry to God for help, but have none, help is far from them. God doth not anſwer them immediately by himſelf, neither doth he ſend them anſwer by the hand of any other. Now, what is the reaſon of this? The Text gives it partly (yet ſomewhat obſcurely) in this verſe, more fully and clearly in the verſe following. The reaſon given here is their pride, *Becauſe of the pride of evil men*; that is, becauſe themſelves are ſo proud, they are at once poor and proud, humbled but not humble; they are oppreſſed and ſubdued under the power of men, yet their pride remains unſubdued and in full power; they are laid low in eſtate, but they are not lowly in Spirit: Proud men oppreſs them, and they, though oppreſſed, are ſtill proud; their hearts are not brought down, though they are come down *wonderfully*, as the Prophet ſpake of the captivated *Jews*, Lam. 1. 9. They are fallen before men in miſery, but they are not fallen before God in humility; they cry of wrong, but themſelves are not right, and that's the reaſon why they are not righted; *There they cry (but none giveth anſwer) becauſe of the pride of evil men.* This alſo is a good ſenſe, and may yield us profitable inſtruction; I leave the Reader to his choice, both being ſafe and uſeful. *There they cry*, &c.

מפני גאון רעים
A faciebus ſuperbiæ mulorum. Mont.
Propter ſuperbiam malorum. Pagn.
Ibi vel tunc, Adverbia loci pro adverbiis temporis paſſim ſumuntur. Merc.

Hence Note, Firſt, *They that are oppreſſed, and brought low, will be crying and complaining.*

Both God and Men ſhall hear of them: *There they cry.* An afflicted condition, is a complaining condition; Nature being pinch't will ſpeak. *I* (ſaith *Job*, Chap. 7. 11.) *will not refrain my mouth, I will ſpeak in the anguiſh of my heart, I will complain in the bitterneſs of my Soul. I mourn in my complaint*, ſaid *David*, (*Pſal.* 55. 2.) The title of the 102. Pſalm runs thus; *A prayer of the afflicted when he is overwhelmed, and poureth out his complaint before God.*

Note, Secondly, *Some in their afflictions do nothing but cry, nothing but complain.*

Elihu doth not ſay, There they repent, and there they humble themſelves, and there they turn to God, but *there they cry*; that they are troubled is the all, the only thing that troubles them. 'Tis ſaid before, *God teacheth man more than the Beaſts of the Earth*; but many in a day of affliction, do no more than the Beaſts of the Earth. A Beaſt, when hurt, will cry, he will rage and roar; and that's as much as many men do when they are hurt, though God hath taught them more, many leſſons more, which they ſhould be practiſing under ſorrowful diſpenſations. The Ox loweth, and is taught no more, when he wants fodder; the Aſs brayeth, and is taught no more, when he wants graſs; but man is taught to act repentance, and faith, and patience, and ſubmiſſion to the will of God in want. How ſad is it when we hear nothing but fleſh cry in man, or when nothing is cryed for by man but fleſh, that is, the ſupplies of Nature, in the day of his diſtreſs. As 'tis ſaid of thoſe (*Hoſea* 7. 14.) *They have not cryed unto me with their heart, when they howled upon their Beds; they aſſemble themſelves for corn, and for wine, and they rebel againſt me.* How miſerable are they in their miſeries, whoſe tongues cry to God, but not their hearts, or their hearts being ſilent; who cry for corn and wine, not for grace and repentance, or not for grace to repent; who cry much becauſe they ſuffer evil, but not at all becauſe they have done evil, yea who are doing evil at the very time when they are crying out becauſe of the evils which they ſuffer: Such was the wretched frame of thoſe in the Prophet; *They aſſembled themſelves for corn and for wine, and rebelled againſt God.* 'Tis bad enough, when there is crying, and nothing but crying, this is to cry but as Beaſts cry; but to cry and rebel againſt God, is to be worſe than Beaſts, for Beaſts do not rebel againſt God when they are pinched with want, and cry. It is ſad to be in afflictions; to be put to cry in afflictions is more ſad; only to cry for the affliction is yet more ſad; when nothing comes from a man but a cry, there is nothing in the cryer, but what is meerly of man; but to be found ſinning againſt God, while we are crying out in our affliction is moſt ſad, that's the ſaddeſt and worſt condition of man in affliction. The Lord teacheth his people better, let us ſhew our ſelves better taught, than only to cry in our afflictions; and let it be the abhorrence of our Souls for ever to ſin at all, much more to ſin up to rebellion againſt God in our affliction, that it ſhould be ſaid of any of us as of that wicked King *Ahaz*, (2 *Chron.* 28. 22.) that in the time of any diſtreſs, we have treſpaſſed more againſt the Lord.

Thirdly, Whereas thoſe oppreſſed ones cryed, yet (according to the ſecond interpretation) continued proud and naught.

Obſerve, *The greateſt oppreſſion and worldly trouble, cannot break the power of ſin, nor bring down the proud heart of man.*

Neither oppreſſion from man, nor affliction from God, can break the pride of mans Spirit. Theſe were oppreſſed, yet proud ſtill. Our eſtates may be broken, our relations broken, our comforts broken, yet our hearts remain unbroken. The oppreſſed are many times, as proud as their oppreſſors, and they who are unjuſtly dealt with, are as bad as they that deal unjuſtly with them. Oppreſſors (though not all who oppreſs) are always bad, and the oppreſſed are many times ſo too, even as bad as their oppreſſors. There is no proof of any mans grace or goodneſs by this, that he is oppreſſed, or wronged; for he may be wronged, and ground to powder with oppreſſion, yet his heard as hard as a neather Milſtone, and his Spirit as high, and as much lifted up as *Lucifers*. There is nothing in affliction, trouble, or oppreſſion, that can humble the heart of man; the Spirit of God, God himſelf muſt do it. Outward changes work no inward change; we may be emptied from Veſſel to Veſſel, from one condition to another, yet have our ſin-ſent remaining in us. It was, indeed, ſaid of *Moab*, (*Jer.* 48. 11.) *He hath not been emptied from Veſſel to Veſſel, neither hath he gon into Captivity*, (that is, he hath not been troubled much in his own Land, nor carried into ſtrange Lands, as *Iſrael* hath been) *therefore his taſt remained in him, and his ſent is not changed*; that is, as he ſtill retains his civil ſtate and ſtrength, ſo his ſpiritual vanity, impiety, and impurity, even as Wines that have not been drawn off the Lees, and put into other Cask, (to that the Scripture there alludes) retain their firſt taſt and ſent or ſmell, and are not meliorated or made more fit for the palat and ſtomach of thoſe that drink them. Now (I ſay) as many for want of changes or afflictions, are not mended, ſo ſome mend not though they have many changes and afflictions; nor can any thing or affliction mends us, or work a change of heart and life in us, unleſs grace work with it.

Fourthly, Whereas it is ſaid, *they cry, but none giveth anſwer*, God doth not hear and anſwer them.

Note, *The crys of proud, or bad men, how much ſoever they are oppreſſed, do not move God, nor will he anſwer them.*

There is no reaſon he ſhould anſwer their cry, (though they have reaſon enough to cry) who will not anſwer his call, his command; let ſuch cry and cry, tear the air, and rend their throats with crying, they ſhall not be anſwered. *Job* ſaith of the hypocrite, (*Chap.* 27. 9.) *Will God hear his cry when trouble cometh upon him*? No, he will not. *Solomon* leaves the contemners of wiſdoms counſel under the ſame doom, (*Prov.* 1. 28.) *Then ſhall they call, but I will not anſwer; they ſhall ſeek me early, but they ſhall not find me.* But when was this *Then* in which they called, and the Lord would not anſwer? The 27. verſe tells us, The *when* or time of this rejection, it was when they had moſt need of hearing and acceptation, even when their fear (that is, the thing feared, or at leaſt which made them afraid) came upon them, as deſolation, and *their deſtruction as a whirlwind*; when thoſe ſad Meſſengers came they ſought God *early*, that is, earneſtly and diligently, but could not find him: But what was the reaſon of this refuſal? *They hated knowledge, and did not chuſe the fear of the Lord*, (v. 29.) They had been wicked, and naught, before trouble came, and when trouble was come they were no better, therefore the Lord regarded not either their perſons or their cries. *The Lord* (ſaith the Apoſtle preaching to the *Athenians*, *Acts* 17. 27.) *is not far from every one of us*; yet 'tis ſaid (*Prov.* 15. 29.) *The Lord is far from the wicked, but he heareth the prayer of the righteous*: He is far, that is, far from hearing and anſwering, far from helping and relieving the wicked when they pray. The Lord is not far from any of us as men, *for in him we live, move, and have our being*, (verſ. 28.) *and he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things*, for the ſupport of life and natural being; but he is far from all proud men, as to any complacency in their perſons, and as to the hearing of their prayers. He is far from hearing them, and he knows them afar off, (*Pſal.* 138. 6.) that is, he deals with them as with men at a diſtance. Thus the Lord told the impenitents among his own people by the Prophet, (*Iſa.* 1. 15.) *Though you make many prayers, I will not hear, for your hands are full of blood.* Ye are full of bloody ſins, and ye have not humbled your ſelves, nor cleanſed your hearts and hands by the blood of the Covenant to this day; and being in that caſe, you may cry and pray till your hearts ake, and your tongues ake too, yet no prevailing with God, no grant, no hearing. Another Prophet tells them as ſad news from the Lord, (*Jer.* 11. 11.) *Behold, I will bring evil upon them, which they ſhall not be able to eſcape*, (or, *go forth of*) *and though they ſhall cry unto me, I will not hearken unto them.* Though the Lord threatned, *I will bring ſuch evil upon them, that they ſhall not eſcape*; they might ſay, well, but when the evil hath taken hold of us, we hope God will hear us, and deliver us. No, ſaith God, when the evil hath overtaken and arreſted you, yet your prayers ſhall not overtake me; *Though you cry, yet I will not hearken unto you.* That's a dreadful Scripture of the ſame import, (*Pſal.* 18. 41.) *They cryed, but there was none to ſave them: even unto the Lord, but he anſwered them not.* They cried being in great diſtreſs, and they cried to the Lord; he brings in that, leſt any ſhould ſay, they cried indeed, but poſſibly 'twas to falſe gods, to idols, poſſibly they knockt at a wrong door, and ſo were not heard: No, they cried to the Lord, to the Lord by name; they were right as to the object of prayer, but their hearts were not right; they were not right ſubjects of prayer. That once blind man ſaw this truth, when anſwering the Phariſees about the perſon by whoſe power he received his ſight, he told them plainly, (*Joh.* 9. 31.) *We know that God heareth not ſinners*; that is, *Such as love and live in ſin, ſuch as go on impenitently in their ſins.* By this anſwer he cloſely, but ſtrongly confuted that blaſphemous opinion and cenſure of the Phariſees, who reputed and reported the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who came into the world to ſave ſinners, as one of the vileſt ſinners in the world, and upon that account got him crucified at laſt. As if the man had ſaid, Were he that cured me of my blindneſs ſuch a ſinner as you reckon him to be, he could never have obtained power from God to cure me of my blindneſs, *for we know God heareth not ſinners.* When men ſin and pray as it were by turns, their prayers are turned into ſin, and therefore will not be returned in mercy. God ſometimes hears ſinners in wrath and judgment, and he ſometimes will not hear Saints, as to the grant of the thing in hand prayed for, in love and mercy; but he never denies praying Saints in wrath, nor he ever hear a ſinner (ſuch a one as is here intended) in mercy when he prayeth.

Now, as when the Diſciples heard Chriſts anſwer to the Phariſees queſtion about Divorce, they preſently ſaid, (*Matth.* 19. 10.) *If the caſe of the man be ſo with his wife, it is not good to marry*; ſo ſome hearing this doctrine, that God heareth not proud ſinners when they cry or pray, may poſſibly ſay, if the caſe of the proud be thus with God, it is not good for them to pray at all. To ſuch I anſwer, this doctrine is not urged to make proud or impenitent ſinners to leave praying, but to leave their pride, 'tis urged to make them humble under their oppreſſions and afflictions, not to make them prophane. They who (as they are) cannot get by prayer, certainly they cannot get by caſting off prayer. What anſwer can they have who cry not at all to God, when ſome may cry and get no anſwer! as *Elihu* here ſpeaks, *There they cry, but none giveth anſwer, becauſe of the pride of wicked men.* This ſenſe or interpretation moſt inſiſted upon in this 12. verſe, will appear more full and fair in opening the 13. in which *Elihu* brings down what he ſaid here into a ſtrong and peremptory concluſion; or the next verſe renders another reaſon why God would not relieve thoſe oppreſſed ones, It was not only for the pride of their ſpirits, (*verſ.* 12.) but alſo for the emptineſs and heartleſneſs of their prayers; or becauſe the prayers of proud and evil men are heartleſs or empty.

Ad dicti ſuperioris confirmationem Epiphonematis vice ſubjicit.

Verſ. 13. **Surely God will not hear vanity, neither will the Almighty regard it.**

They cry, but God will not hear: why will he not hear? what hinders? He tells us both why and what.

Surely God will not hear vanity.] What is vanity? What ſaith vanity? hath vanity a tongue? can vanity ſpeak? the Text ſaith, *God will not hear vanity.* 'Tis frequent in Scripture, to aſcribe a tongue, and a voyce to ſin of any kind; though ſome ſins are more vocal, and ſpeak louder than others, yet all ſpeak. But when he ſaith, *Surely*, (or, without all Queſtion) *the Lord will not hear vanity*, by *vanity* we are to underſtand vain men praying; or *vanity* is put for the prayers and crys of thoſe perſons who are as vain as vanity it ſelf. The word rendred *vanity*, ſignifieth a *lie*, as alſo *raſhneſs*, *temerity*; God will neither hear raſh-headed, nor falſe-hearted prayers, he will not hear vain prayers, or the prayers of vain men. The Abſtract is often put for the Concrete in Scripture, (*Pſ.* 107. 42.) *All iniquity ſhall ſtop her mouth.* When the Lord brings about that mighty work, the bringing down of the mighty, and ſets the poor on high, (thoſe that are at once poor and humble the Lord will ſet on high,) then *Iniquity*, that is, wicked men, men of iniquity, ſhall ſtop their mouths, or have their mouths ſtopt, they ſhall not have a word to ſay, as gain-ſaying that righteous and glorious work of God. So here, *God will not hear vanity*, that is, vain men, or men that pray vainly; all that, which men ſpeak or act, is vain or vanity, if it be not good, if it be not anſwerable to the will and ends of God; yea whatſoever prayer doth not proceed from faith, and flow from a pure heart, is vanity, 'tis but ſtraw, and ſtubble, droſs, and dung. *God will not hear vanity*,

שוא *Temeritas, falſitas, mendacium; dicitur de re falſa, vana, levi & inutili.*

Neither will the Almighty regard it.] He that will not hear, will much leſs regard vanity. The ſenſe is gradual, regarding is more than hearing, we may put both together, he will not hear with regard, not regard what he hears from ſuch. *The ſtrong God*, who hath all power in his hand, the power of Authority, or the power of a Judge, will not hear vanity. *The Almighty*, *The All-ſufficient*, who hath all power of efficiency in his hand, the nouriſher, and preſerver, the puniſher and correcter of all men; this *Shaddai* will not regard vanity, he will not give it a look with reſpect, no not one good look. The word ſignifies to fix, or ſet the eye with ſtrong intention upon any thing or perſon. The Prophet *Eliſha* ſpake to this ſenſe, though he uſed another word, when he ſaid to the King of *Iſrael*, (2 King. 3. 14.) *Were it not that I regard the preſence of the King of Judah, I would not look to thee, nor ſee thee.* The Lord will not regard, he will not look to vanity, to the prayers of vain men, he will as it were ſhut his eyes, he will not ſee though he doth ſee; *The Almighty will not regard it.*

שור *intendit oculos & viſum, intentis & fixis oculis intuitus eſt, ſolicitè obſervavit.*

Hence Note, Firſt, *The prayers of vain and evil perſons, are vain things.*

The Text doth not ſay, their oaths are vain, and their lies are vain, and their idle words are vain, but their cry, their cries in prayer to God are vain, yea vanity. *There may be vanity in the prayer of a good man, but his prayer is not vanity.* That's a juſt reproof upon the good works of many, which Chriſt gave the Angel of the Church of *Sardis*, (Rev. 3. 3.) *I have not found thy works perfect*, or, *I have not found thy works full.* Though that Angel had done good works, and poſſibly was full of good works, yet his works were not full. A man may be full of prayer, pray often, yet his prayer not full, his prayers may be empty, vain prayers; that's a vain thing which is an empty thing. How vain are they whoſe beſt things are vanity! If the prayers of a man are vanity, then certainly all is vanity; and we may ſay of him in the whole bulk of all, he is *vanity of vanities, all is vanity.* When once God calls a mans prayer, and hearing, vanity; when he calls thoſe works, which are good for the matter of them, vanity, then the man is indeed altogether vanity. You will ſay, when is prayer vanity, or a vain thing? I ſhall anſwer it in a few particulars.

Firſt, That prayer is vain, or vanity, which is not put up in faith. A faithleſs prayer is a fruitleſs prayer. All the prayers of an unbeliever, or of him who is in a ſtate of unbelief are vain; and the prayers of a believer, that is, who is in his ſtate a believer, are vain, if he hath not faith about that thing for which he prayeth. Now if the prayer of a believer is vain, when he hath not actual faith, then the prayer of an unbeliever muſt needs be vain, who hath no habitual faith.

Secondly, All the prayers that are for our luſts, or when we reſolve to continue in the practice of any luſt, are vain prayers. When we do not pray with a purpoſe to glorifie God, with what we ſhall obtain by prayer, but only to ſerve our own turns, and ſo beſtow it upon our luſts, that's a vain prayer, (*Jam.* 4. 3.) Such praying is rather a mocking than a worſhipping of God, a ſerving of our ſelves rather than a ſerving of God. How do they abuſe God in prayer, who cry to him for help, whom they have no mind to honour? who would fain be heard of God, yet have no heart to hear God?

Tales clamores non fides, ſed malorum ſenſus extorquet.

Thirdly, That's a vain prayer, when we pray meerly to get eaſe, or deliverance from an affliction, not at all minding our profiting by, or the improvement of an affliction. 'Tis not faith in God, but ſenſe of our own ſmart, which moves to pray, when we rather look how to get off our burdens, than out of our ſins, or to get out of the fire, than to get out our droſs; when we pray more to have the plague taken away, than our hard and proud hearts, that is a vain prayer; 'tis like the prayer of *Pharaoh*, who begged that he might be delivered; but it was the plague of God for his ſin, for his hard heart, that troubled him; his hard heart, his ſinning againſt God never troubled him. *Pharaoh*-like prayers, are vain prayers.

Fourthly, Thoſe prayers are vain which we make in our own ſtrength. What can thoſe prayers be, which go forth in our ſtrength, ſeeing we are told that we know not what to pray, much leſs then how to pray, but as the Spirit of God helpeth our infirmities, (*Rom.* 8. 26.) Unleſs the Spirit make interceſſion for us, that is, make our interceſſions for us in our hearts, as Chriſt maketh interceſſion for us in heaven, we pray in vain.

Fifthly, Thoſe are vain prayers, which we make in our own name, not in the name of Chriſt. And remember, though it be an eaſie matter to name Chriſt in prayer, yet 'tis no eaſie matter to pray in the name of Chriſt. 'Tis as common as that which is commoneſt, for all ſorts of people, yea for children, to name Chriſt in prayer; but to pray in the name of Chriſt, is the peculiar work of the Spirit in the heart of a true believer. If the Reader deſire to know more diſtinctly what it is to pray in the name of Chriſt, I refer him for ſome help towards it to the 27 verſe of the 16 Chapter, where alſo the requiſites of pure and powerful prayer, are more fully held out.

Sixthly, Angry paſſionate prayers are vain prayers. The Lord loves zeal and much warmth of affection in prayer, but he cannot abide wrath, or any the leaſt ſparks of paſſion in prayer. The Apoſtles Rule is, (1 *Tim.* 2. 8.) *I will that men pray every where, lifting up pure hands, without wrath, and without doubting.* A peaceable heart is as neceſſary in prayer, as a pure hand. When a ſoul coming to God in prayer, hath I know not what wrathful and angry diſputes within himſelf againſt his Brethren, how can he look for a gracious acceptance with God? Will the Lord be pleaſed with us, while we nouriſh ſecret diſpleaſure againſt our Neighbour? Now be ſure when you go to God for mercy and favour, that ye carry no wrath in your ſpirits towards man, one or other; therefore Chriſt hath taught us in that moſt perfect model of prayer, which he hath left us, (when we ask the forgiveneſs of our own treſpaſſes) *to forgive thoſe that treſpaſs againſt us.* We muſt lay down our unquiet thoughts of revenge, if we would have favour with, and compaſſion from God.

Seventhly, Thoſe are vain prayers, which are not both formed and matter'd according to the Will of God, (1 *John* 5. 14.) which are not grounded upon a juſt cauſe, and which are not directed to a right end. Beſides all theſe I may add all cold Prayers, ſleepy Prayers, ſlight-ſpirited or heartleſs Prayers, meer formal Prayers, tongue-wording Prayers, which are not ſoul-working and ſelf-affecting Prayers, are, to them who pray ſo, but vain Prayers, or as the Text ſpeaks, vanity.

Theſe Rules muſt be obſerved in all our prayer-addreſſes to God, elſe prayer is vain, or vanity; and when the prayer it ſelf is vain, the perſon praying hath no hearing: *God will not hear vanity, neither will the Almighty regard it.* Conſider that, *Elihu* doth not only ſay, God will not hear, but he adds, *neither will the Almighty regard it.* The doubling of the matter in higher Language intimates ſomthing to us; and we may note this from it;

As the Prayers of evil men are vain, ſo they have not any, the leaſt regard from God:

He will neither hear, nor regard. *David* ſaith (*Pſal.* 66. 18.) *If I regard iniquity in my heart, God will not hear my Prayer.* God will not hear a *David*, a good man, as to that particular prayer, if he regard iniquity in his heart, that is, if he hold any, the leaſt compliance or ſecret correſpondence with any ſin, yea, if he hath not repented of, and laboured to mortifie every known ſin: Doubtleſs then he will not regard the prayers of evil men, when they pray alſo with an evil mind. And when this, and other Scriptures ſay, he doth neither hear nor regard them; there is more intended than expreſſed, even that he doth reject and abhor them, that they are a burden and an abomination to him. The Scripture is much in ſhewing how much God makes of holy prayers. For firſt, God hath not only promiſed to hear, but regard ſuch prayers, (*Pſal.* 102. 17.) *He will regard the prayer of the deſtitute, and not deſpiſe their prayers*; that is, he highly prizeth and eſteemeth them. Secondly, The Scripture telleth us, God delighteth to hear ſuch prayers, they are ſweet to him, they are the beſt muſick in his ears: *Let me hear thy voice, for ſweet is thy voice* (her prayer-voice he means chiefly) ſaith Chriſt to his Spouſe, (*Cant.* 2. 14.) Thirdly, The Scripture aſſureth us, that God looks upon or reckoneth prayer as an honour done to him, 'tis an eminent part of worſhip, 'tis the giving of him glory; certainly therefore (take prayer purely) God doth regard it very much; he will have regard to that which he hath promiſed regard to, he will have regard to that which is ſweet and delightful to him, which is an honour and brings glory to him; therefore there muſt needs be a great matter in it, when he ſaith, *He will not regard a prayer*; ſuch a prayer muſt needs be very vile, impure, and ſtark naught in it ſelf, which he thus thruſteth from him, or cannot away with.

It muſt be confeſſed, that God ſometimes defers to hear (that is, to anſwer) the prayers of thoſe that call upon him in faith, and even their prayers who call upon him humbly and ſincerely. Holy prayers are not alwaies preſently anſwered, but holy prayers are never unregarded, never rejected. 'Tis never ſaid in Scripture, God doth not regard the prayers of a godly man. God may let him ſtay long for the anſwer of his prayer, to try his faith, and patience; but he will not ſlight his prayer. As it is the duty of all men to pray, and the deſire or delight of a godly man, (when his heart is in a right frame) to pray, ſo it is the priviledge of every godly man, that his prayer is heard and regarded. And as it is ſin of moſt wicked men that they pray not at all, (*Pſal.* 14. 4. *Jer.* 10. 25.) ſo it is the miſery of all wicked men that their prayers, though they make many and long prayers, are not heard, are not regarded. They are far from the grace and fear of God, who regard not to pray unto him; and they are as far from the mercy and favour of God, whoſe prayers are not regarded. And if a man be upon ſuch bad terms with God, that he is not regarded, when he is at his beſt work, his praying-work, O how little is ſuch a one regarded when he is at his worſt work, his ſinning work! If ſome men are not regarded, when they are praying to God, what are they when they are ſwearing, and blaſpheming God, when they are cauſleſly vexing or oppreſſing their brethren? If ſome men are not regarded when they are praying, what are they when they are revelling and reviling! The Lords indignation breaketh out the utmoſt againſt wicked men, when he tells them, the beſt of their duties, their prayer is vanity, and though they cry much to him, he will not hear nor regard them. *The Lord hath not ſaid to the ſeed of Jacob, ſeek ye me in vain,* (Iſa. 55. 19.) that is, ye ſhall not ſeek me in vain, no, as your prayers are honourable and acceptable unto me, ſo they ſhall be profitable and beneficial unto you; you that go forth weeping, bearing, and ſcattering this precious ſeed, ſhall doubtleſs come again and bring your ſheaves with you, your prayers ſhall be returned with bleſſings upon your ſouls, upon your bodies, upon your eſtates, upon your families, in which you live, as alſo upon the Nations and upon the Churches among whom you live. Thus the ſeed of *Jacob* have found and ſhall further find by the bleſſed experiences of all theſe bleſſings, that God hath not ſaid to them, *Seek ye me in vain.* He hath only ſaid of them who are vain, your ſeekings of me are vain in themſelves, and will be vain, fruitleſs, anſwerleſs unto you; for *I the Lord will not hear vanity, neither will I the Almighty regard it.*

VERS. 14.

Although thou ſayeſt thou ſhalt not ſee him, yet Judgment is before him, therefore truſt thou in him.

There is a two-fold rendring or tranſlation of this 14. verſe; Firſt, Some connecting it with the former, and taking it in a dependance upon what *Elihu* had laſt affirmed concerning God, *He heareth not vanity, neither doth the Almighty regard it,* tranſlate thus, *Much leſs will he hear thee, if thou ſayeſt thou doeſt not look to, or regard this; judge thy ſelf therefore before him, and wait for him.* As if *Elihu* ſhould bring an argument from the leſs to the greater; *God will not hear vanity, nor will the Almighty regard it, how much leſs will he hear thee, who ſayeſt,* (upon the matter) *that thou regardeſt not him, or what he ſaith and doth.* That word, which in the cloſe of the 13. verſe, we render *regard,* is the ſame with that in this 14. verſe, rendered, *ſee*; as if the whole were a rebuke, or a conviction of *Job* for his ſtoutneſs, in not viewing and contemplating the power and prerogative of God as he ought, in laying his hand upon him; and therefore ſaith *Elihu,* if God will not hear thoſe that pray vainly, how much leſs will he regard thee, who ſeemeſt not to regard him? that is, not to humble thy ſelf before him as becomes thee to thy Soveraign Lord: And thereupon *Elihu* gives him counſel in the cloſe of the verſe; *Judge thy ſelf before him, and then wait for him, or truſt him,* as we render it. Mr. *Broughton* ſeems to ſpeak in his tranſlation much to this ſenſe, giving it thus; *So, when thou ſayeſt thou wilt not mark it, judge before him, and wait for him.* As God will not regard vain prayer, ſo when thou ſayeſt to him, *thou wilt not mark it,* that is, attend to providences as thou oughteſt, he will not regard thee. There is a truth in this, and the Original word may fairly bear this tranſlation; yet I ſhall not ſtay upon it: but rather take this Context as the beginning of a new argument, than as the inforcement of the former; underſtanding it ſo, the words have yet a reading different from ours.

Multo minus ſi dicas, non contemplaris iſtud (exauditurus eſt) judica coram eo & expecta eum. Jun.

Another modern tranſlater diſliking the former reading only in the firſt part of the verſe, gives his own, thus; *In this alſo* (thou haſt ſinned.) Thoſe words are ſupplied to make up the ſenſe, as being the bringing of a further charge againſt *Job*; *In this alſo (thou haſt ſinned) that thou haſt ſaid, thou ſhalt not ſee him; judge therefore thy ſelf before him, and look for him.* This is the matter of his new charge, *Thou haſt ſaid, thou ſhalt not ſee him, this is thy ſin.* And having given him this charge, *Elihu* gives him counſel according to this tranſlation in the cloſe of the verſe, *Judge therefore thy ſelf before him, and look for him.* We ſay in our tranſlation, *Judgment is before him,* that is, before God; this tranſlation ſaith, *Judge thy ſelf before him*; and the reaſon of it is becauſe ſome take the word here as a Noun, others as a Verb of the Imperative mood; *Judge thy ſelf before him, and then look to him, or truſt in him*; that is, thou haſt failed greatly, and ſinned in taking up ſuch a Concluſion as this, that thou ſhalt not ſee God, (the ſenſe of which I ſhall open when I come to our own tranſlation) therefore I adviſe thee to judge thy ſelf thoroughly, and humbly to acknowledge thy fault. This tranſlation is much inſiſted upon, and becauſe it hath a profitable ſenſe, I ſhall note two or three points from the latter part of the verſe, where it differs from ours, and then proceed to our own Tranſlation. *Job* being charged with ſin for ſaying, that *he ſhould not ſee God,* is here adviſed to judge himſelf, *Judge thy ſelf, and look to, or truſt in him.*

Etiam (in hoc peccaſti) quod dixiſti te non contemplaturum eum; Judica (te) coram eo, & expecta eum. Piſc.

Aliqui דין *pro nomine exponunt, Judicium alii pro* הדין *verbo imperativi modi; Judica.* Merc.

Hence Note, *It is our duty to judge our ſelves.*

And 'tis a great Goſpel duty: The Apoſtle gives it in plain words, (1 *Cor.* 11. 31.) *If we would judge our ſelves, we ſhould not be judged of the Lord.* We are very apt to judge one another, but very backward to judge our ſelves. It is a great work to erect a Tribunal (as I may ſay) in our own Souls and Conſciences, to ſit in Judgment upon our ſelves; which that we may do, we muſt do theſe three things. Firſt, we muſt ſend Summons to our ſelves, we muſt cite our ſelves to our own Tribunal; for always before Judgment, Summons muſt go out and be ſent to the party offending: Here we are to ſend Summons to our ſelves, that is, to call together all the powers of our ſouls to appear in this Judgment, and anſwer what is or may be alledged againſt us. And when we have Summoned our ſelves, then Secondly, we are to examin, ſearch, and try our ſelves, (*Lam.* 3. 41.) *Let us ſearch and try our ways, and turn again unto the Lord.* Thirdly, having tried and examined our ſelves, before we can come to Judgment (that Judgment which is here intended) we muſt humble our ſelves under a Conviction of our own vileneſs and ſinfulneſs, whether of our nature or of our actions, whether of our ſtate or of our way; for whereas there are two parts of Judgment, Abſolution and Condemnation, we can never come to that part of Judgment, the judging of our ſelves, as perſons worthy to be condemned by the Lord for our ſins, unleſs we are firſt convinced of our ſins. Now when we have ſummoned, examined, and convicted our ſelves, then we are ready to judge our ſelves, to judge our ſelves even with the judgment of condemnation, reſpecting what we have done, yet we ſhould do it (with hopes of abſolution) acting our faith upon the free grace and mercy of God through the ſatisfaction which Jeſus Chriſt hath made for us.

Again, The ſcope of this counſel, or the reaſon why *Elihu* adviſeth *Job* to judge himſelf, was to ſhew, that he had raſhly judged of the ways of God, becauſe he had not duly judged himſelf.

Hence Note, *Self-judging, or judging our own doings, will preſerve us from raſh judging the doings and dealings of God with us.*

We ſhall never think God deals harſhly, or rigorouſly with us, if we do but enter into and paſs a right judgment upon our own ſouls. As they that judge themſelves ſhall not be judged of the Lord; (1 *Cor.* 11. 31.) ſo, they that judge themſelves will never judge the Lord; no, they will acquit and juſtifie the Lord under all his proceedings, even in his foreſt and ſevereſt ones. Thus did *Ezra* in reference to thoſe great and unparallel'd ſufferings of the *Jews* in the *Babylonian* war and captivity, (Chap. 9. 13.) *Thou our God haſt puniſhed us leſs then our iniquities deſerve.* And ſo did *Daniel* (Chap. 9. 7.) *O Lord, righteouſneſs belongeth unto thee, but unto us confuſion of faces, as at this day.*

Further, *Elihu* concluded *Job* very much affected with, or highly conceited of himſelf, becauſe he pleaded his own innocency or integrity ſo much, and was ſo deſirous to come to a hearing, and have his matter tried before God; and therefore ſaith he, *Judge thy ſelf.*

Hence Note, *Self-judging will keep us from proud or high thoughts of our ſelves, of our own ways or works, how good ſoever they are.*

Suppoſe our ways and our works pure and good, as *Jobs* indeed were for the main, (he was a man of the higheſt elevation in holineſs and of greateſt integrity) yet if we would throughly examine and judge our ſelves, conſider our ſhort comings in duty, our ſinnings againſt duty, and the ſins that cleave to our beſt duties, we ſhould find our very innocency to be guilty, and our righteouſneſs to be unrighteous; and ſurely ſuch a diſcovery would lay us very low in our own thoughts, and go very far towards the ſubduing of that pride of our hearts, which often ariſeth from the contemplation of our own well-doing.

Laſtly, Conſider this counſel was given *Job* (according to this tranſlation) with reſpect to that which follows; *Judge thy ſelf, and truſt in or wait for him.*

Hence Note, *We are never fit to truſt, nor to wait upon God in any of his providences, till we judge our ſelves*; or, *Judging of our ſelves-will diſpoſe and prepare our hearts for truſting and reſting upon the power, goodneſs and mercy of God.*

The more we judge and humble our ſelves, the readier hath God declared himſelf to help us in our extremities, (1 *Pet.* 5.6.) we alſo then are the readier to truſt and wait on him, both becauſe we then ſee more clearly what need we have to truſt on him for help, and may have the more aſſurance of his help, while we truſt him.

I ſhall now proceed to our own tranſlation, which fairly accommodates the ſcope of *Elihu*'s dealing with *Job* in this place.

Although thou ſayeſt, thou ſhalt not ſee him.

Elihu had reprehended two of *Jobs* ſayings before in this Chapter; here he reprehends a third; *Although thou ſayeſt this, thou ſhalt not ſee him*; although thou ſayeſt it, either ſecretly in thy heart (the fool ſaith in his heart, there is no God) or although thou ſayeſt it with thy mouth, and haſt openly declared thy deſpair of ſeeing him. Some paſſages in the diſcourſe of *Job* do more than intimate and imply, that he had ſaid, *he ſhould not ſee God.* And we may conceive that *Elihu* aimeth at that paſſage ſpecially (*Chap.*23.8,9.) where *Job* ſeems to ſay this thing: *Behold, I go forward, but he is not there, and backward, but I cannot perceive him*; *on the left hand where he doth work, but I cannot behold him*; *he hideth himſelf on the right hand, that I cannot ſee him.* Now, *Elihu* gives anſwer in this 14. verſe, ſhewing that although God would not give him a preſent hearing upon his importunate call for it, yet he might reſt aſſured, that God would do him juſtice, and therefore adviſeth him quietly to reſt upon him. *Although thou ſayeſt thou ſhalt not ſee him, or canſt not ſee him, yet Judgment is before him, therefore truſt thou in him.* In that 23. Chapter, *Job* made a ſad complaint, that though he much ſolicited and deſired to ſee God (in what ſenſe I ſhall open preſently) yet he could not be admitted, he could not find him, nor come near him; *I* (ſaith he) *cannot perceive him, I cannot behold him, I cannot ſee him*; we have all theſe words negatively expreſſed there; as here, *Although thou ſayeſt thou ſhalt not ſee,* (or *contemplate*) *him.*

There is a two fold ſight of God; Firſt, immediate, or in himſelf; and thus God is ſeen only by himſelf, and of him ſelf, to all others he is inviſible, *No eye hath ſeen him, nor can ſee him,* (1 *Tim.* 6. 16.) The Lord told *Moſes*, *No man can ſee my face and live*; that is, no man can ſee me immediately, no man can have any ocular ſight of me, as we ſee thoſe things that are before us; *God is a Spirit*, and therefore inviſible. *Job* doth not complain, (in this ſenſe) that he could not ſee God, for he knew God was not to be ſeen, nor did he wait for any ſuch corporal view or ſight, or preſence of God. Secondly, there is a mediate ſight of God, and that by a three-fold means; Firſt, in or by his Word; for that is one glaſs wherein we behold him. Secondly, there is a ſight of God in his Works, they are another glaſs wherein we ſee and behold him; and thoſe works are two-fold; Firſt, the works of Creation, *in them we may ſee* or contemplate God all the world over, in his power, wiſdom, and goodneſs, (*Rom.* 1.19,20.) Secondly, his works of providence, ordering and diſpoſing all the motions of the creatures, as himſelf pleaſeth, how much ſoever any of their motions are diſpleaſing unto him. Thus we may ſee God in his works, that is, it is ſeen by his works, not only that he is, but what he is, or that he is Eternal and Infinite, that he is Moſt Wiſe and Omnipotent, that he can do all things, or that nothing is too hard for him, he having brought all things out of nothing. There is a Third Medium or Means by which we may ſee God, and that is, *His Son, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, (2Cor. 4.6.) *The light of the knowledge of the Glory of God ſhineth to us in the face of Jeſus Chriſt*; that is, in the perſon of Chriſt, God-Man, we may behold the glorious Grace of God unto poor ſinful loſt man. All the beams of Divine Love are collected in, and iſſue forth from the face of Jeſus Chriſt. He that would ſee how good, how gracious, how merciful the Lord is to ſinners, let him by an eye of Faith, or ſpiritual Contemplation look Chriſt in the face, and there he ſhall find the expreſs Characters of all that Glory. By theſe Means, or mediately in all theſe ways, God may be ſeen, and is ſeen by his People. This threefold ſight of God, is the ſight of Faith; it is by Faith that we ſee him in his Word; it is by Faith that we ſee him in his Works; it is by Faith that we ſee him in his Son. Thus we are to underſtand that of the Apoſtle concerning *Moſes*, (Heb. 11. 27.) *He endured, as ſeeing him that is inviſible.*

We may alſo diſtinguiſh of this ſight of God two ways; there is a ſight of God firſt in grace, which is, though a true and real, yet an imperfect ſight, of which the Apoſtle ſpeaks (1 *Cor.* 13.12.) *Now we ſee as in a glaſs, darkly.* Secondly, There is a ſeeing of God in glory, which is there called *A ſeeing of him face to face*: Of that ſight Chriſt ſpeaks (*Matth.* 5. 8.) *Bleſſed are the pure in heart, for they ſhall ſee God.* As they now ſee him in the diſpenſations of his Grace here, ſo they ſhall ſee him in the givings forth, or manifeſtations of his Glory to them hereafter. Now when *Job* complaineth, or *Elihu* brings him in complaining, *That he ſhould not ſee God*, we are not to underſtand it, as if he deſpaired of ever ſeeing God in Glory, or had concluded in his own breaſt, that he ſhould never ſee him in his ways of Grace, or profeſſed that at preſent he had no ſight at all of God by faith; for, though I conceive *Jobs* ſight of God by faith, or in the actings of his Grace, at that time was very low and dim, yet ſome ſight he had of him by faith, enough I am ſure to preſerve and keep him from making any ſuch negative Concluſion againſt himſelf, that he ſhould not ſee God in Glory. But that which he chiefly intendeth, is, that he feared he ſhould not come to ſee him in ſuch a day and way of tryal, as he before deſired in the 23. Chapter, (*verſ.* 8, 9.) or that God would never manifeſt himſelf ſo clearly in his Providences and dealings about his caſe in this world, as might acquit him, and bring the matter in queſtion to a full ſtate, that all might take notice of his wronged integrity. *Job* was under a great Cloud at that time, and feared that God had covered himſelf with a Cloud alſo, (as the Church bemoaned her ſelf, *Lam.* 3. 44.) and therefore ſaid, *I ſhall not ſee him*; I ſhall not ſee him as a Judge acquitting me, and giving ſentence for me. Some conceive, that the Hebrew word rendred *Seeing*, refers to a perſon brought before a Judge, for the trial of his Cauſe, and ſtanding before him, not as a guilty Malefactor, with a heavy heart, and a down look, but as a man conſcious of his own innocency, with much honeſt boldneſs, and well tempered confidence. The words following intimate ſuch a ſenſe of that word, *Although thou ſayeſt, thou ſhalt not ſee him,* (that is, be brought to tryal,) *yet Judgment is before him,* he will certainly try thee. This I take to be the moſt proper Explication of theſe words, *Although thou ſayeſt thou ſhalt not ſee him.*

שור *Intendit oculos. Verbum videndi forenſe eſt, pro aſtare coram aliquo cum magna cauſa fiduciæ, ita ut non demiſſo in terram vultu, ſed elato capite ad interrogantem reſpicientemq; judicem oculos intrepide dirigere quis audeat.* Bold.

Job ſpake this as the worſt of his caſe, as that which was a greater grief and miſery to him, than all his other miſeries and griefs, that God would not ſet him in a clear light before others, or that himſelf ſhould not have a clear light from God concerning his condition.

Hence Note; *The ſight of God, or Gods diſcovery of himſelf in any dark caſe, is very ſweet to an upright and gracious ſoul.*

Job had begged for this once and again, though poſſibly, as *Elihu* would here convince him he was ſomething too forward in it, and did not enough reflect upon himſelf; yet as he had often deſired it, ſo doubtleſs it was exceeding much upon his heart, that he might have a clear diſcovery from God. The Apoſtle, in ſomewhat a like caſe, in being aſperſed in his Miniſtry, ſaith, *We are made manifeſt unto God,* (2 Cor. 5. 11.) It pleaſed him that he was manifeſt unto God: But when God is pleaſed to manifeſt himſelf unto a Soul, how pleaſing is that? When we can ſay, now we ſee God, we ſee him clearing up our way, clearing up our integrity, clearing up our ſtate, how ſatisfying is it! And as it is moſt ſweet and ſatisfying to ſee God clearing up our ſtate to our own conſciences, ſo it is exceeding ſweet to ſee him clearing up our actions to the eye of the world; as the Apoſtle ſpake in the ſame place, *We are manifeſt unto God, and I truſt alſo are made manifeſt in your conſciences.* As if he had ſaid, we hope, God hath diſcovered us to you, and your conſciences do alſo atteſt with us and for us what we are. *Light is ſweet* (the light of the air, ſaith *Solomon*) *and it is a pleaſant to behold the Sun,* the Sun in the firmament; how much more ſweet is the light of divine favour, as alſo of our own faithfulneſs, ſhining into our hearts, and upon our ways, ſo that we are able to ſay, now we ſee the Lord graciouſly rolling away our reproach, owning us, and taking our part before and againſt all the oppoſing contradicting world!

Secondly, Note, *A godly man may loſe the ſight and preſent apprehenſion of God, as owning of him, and taking care of him.*

It is ſo often as to our ſpiritual eſtate, and it may be ſo, as to our outward ſtate; hence thoſe many complainings which we find in the *Pſalms*, and thoſe many deprecations, as to the hiding of Gods face; *David* would fain have kept ſight of God, O how he deſired to ſee him, to behold him! yet many times he did not, neither as to the aſſurance of his ſpiritual intereſt, nor as to the comforts of his outward condition, (*Pſal.* 13. 1. *Pſal.* 27. 9. *Pſal.* 30. 7.) As God ſometimes ſheweth himſelf in a kind of cloud or darkneſs, in fire and tempeſt, which is very terrible to the ſoul; ſo he at other times diſcovers himſelf only a little, or gives but a glimpſe of himſelf clearly, to ſtir up further deſires of ſeeing him, and to make us weary of all we ſee in this world: in theſe caſes we may be ſaid not to ſee God when we ſee him. Many godly men are in ſuch a dark condition, that they think God hideth his face from them in diſpleaſure, when indeed he doth not, but only tryeth them, to ſee what is in them, and whether they will obey him in hope and patience, and keep cloſe to him in holy walkings even when he ſeemeth to depart from them, and withdraw his preſence.

Sæpe deus oſtendit faciem ſuam, ſed non ita ut cupiunt homines, ideoque non vident ſe videre, ut ita dicam. Coc.

Thirdly, Obſerve, *Good men are apt ſometimes to make over-ſad concluſions againſt themſelves,*

As evil men are apt to make over-good concluſions for themſelves, they doubt not but they ſhall ſee and enjoy God. O what preſumptuous thoughts have men, and what peremptory, though groundleſs, concluſions do they make for themſelves upon falſe and rotten premiſes! they will ſay, they know God, and are known of God, they ſee God, and enjoy God, when they know not the meaning, much leſs have taſted the comfort of knowing God, or of being known by him, of ſeeing God, or of enjoying him. Theſe myſterious experiences are not every man's meat, nor every man's matters, who makes title to the knowledge of God. The Apoſtle ſaith expreſly, (1 *John* 2. 4.) *He that ſaith, I know him, and keepeth not his Commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.* And again, (*Chap.* 3. 6.) *Whoſoever ſinneth* (that is, loves and lives in ſin) *hath not ſeen him, neither known him.* Yet how many are there, far from keeping the Commandments of God, far from a holy life, yea far from a holy ſtate, ſo far from ſuch a holy life, as of which it may be ſaid in a Goſpel ſenſe, that they ſin not, that indeed they do nothing elſe but ſin! yet theſe are apt to conclude, they ſee God, they ſee him by faith, they know him, they donbt not but he is their God. Now as many carnal men are apt to make falſe concluſions to themſelves of an intereſt in God, when there is no ſuch matter, kindling a fire, and compaſſing themſelves about with their own ſparks, as the Prophet ſpeaks, (*Iſa.* 50. 11.) that is, with vain conceits of their own blowing up, that all is well with them; when all that they, who do ſo, ſhall have at Gods hand, is, *they ſhall lie down in ſorrow.* So on the other ſide, godly men oftentimes make ſad concluſions againſt themſelves, they ſay (as *Job* in the Text) *they ſhall not ſee him*; who though (as was ſhewed in opening the Text) he did not conclude againſt his ſight of God by grace, or that he had no ſight of him by faith, yet he had not a comfortable ſight as to his preſent enjoyment, and he doubted whether ever he ſhould in this world. *Jonah* made ſuch a concluſion (*Chap.* 2. 4.) *Then I ſaid, I am caſt out of thy ſight.* As *Hezekiah* ſaid in his ſickneſs, (*Iſa.* 38. 11.) *I ſhall not ſee the Lord, even the Lord in the Land of the living*; that is, I ſhall die, and ſhall no more go into the houſe of the Lord, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his Temple, which was the one thing, even the only thing (in this life) which *David* deſired and reſolved to ſeek after, (*Pſal.* 27. 4.) So many, while they live, are apt to make ſuch concluſions, they ſhall ſee God no more, they ſhall not ſee him as long as they live, they are afraid they ſhall never have comfort more, nor peace more, while they are in this world, while they are on this ſide heaven; yet whether ever they ſhall come to ſee him in heaven, is their greateſt, their ſaddeſt, their moſt heart diſquieting and heart breaking doubt and fear. And indeed as we cannot ſee God, until he gives us eyes, ſo we cannot believe we ſhall ſee him, until he gives us hearts. Many times his dealings, both as to outward terrible providences, and inward terrors, are ſo dark, that we can ſee nothing but darkneſs, nor ſay any thing but as *Job* is here charged to ſay, that *we ſhall not ſee him.* Yea, God doth often hide himſelf from his people on purpoſe to try whether they will truſt him and wait upon him under ſuch withdrawings, for ſalvation, whether temporal or eternal, (*Pſal.* 45. 15.) *Thou art a God, that hideſt thy ſelf, O God of Iſrael, the Saviour:* Let us therefore take heed of ſaying, he will be for ever hidden, or that we ſhall never ſee, nor behold him as a Saviour; ſay not it is ſo dark with us, that as now we ſee no light, ſo our night ſhall never have a morning.

Fourthly, From theſe words, *Although thou ſayeſt, thou ſhalt not ſee him,*

Note, *A good man is apt to give his heart and tongue too much liberty.*

We ſhould watch our hearts, to keep out or caſt out vain thoughts we ſhould ſtrangle diſtruſtful and unbeliving thoughts in the very birth, that ſo our tongues may never bring them forth, nor publiſh them to the offence of others. *Thou haſt ſaid, thou ſhalt not ſee him.* But when our unbridled tongues have run at random, and ſpoken what is not right, yet God will do what is right, as the next words aſſure us.

Yet Judgment is before him.] Theſe words plainly intimate, that *Jobs* ſcope, when he ſaid he ſhould not *ſee God*, was, that he ſhould not ſee him as a Judge clearing up his cauſe, or appearing to vindicate the wrong done him, and to do him right. As if *Elihu* had ſaid, Whatever thy opinion is concerning God, that he will never appear in thy cauſe to do thee right, yet know this (O *Job*) *Judgment is before him,* and therefore I adviſe thee, be thou better perſwaded both of his preſence with thee, and of his providence over thee. The word rendred *Judgment*, is that from which one of Patriarchs had his name, and it is a great elegancy, (*Gen.* 49. 16.) Dan *ſhall judge his people.* The proper name *Dan*, is the ſame with the Verb which follows, *ſhall judge.*

When *Judgment is ſaid to be before the Lord,* it may be taken three ways, (ſo we find it in the Scripture) Firſt, we read there of Judgment as it is oppoſed to mercy. Theſe terrible and dreadful Judgments of God are every where ſpoken of. Secondly, Judgment is oppoſed to imprudence and want of underſtanding or diſcretion; Judgment is a wiſe and clear ſight or apprehenſion of things; as we ſay ſuch a one is a Judicious man, or a man of great Judgment. Thirdly, Judgment is oppoſed to injuſtice or to unrighteouſneſs; thus we do judgment and juſtice. Many have a great ſtock of judgment or underſtanding, who yet will do little judgment, that is, little juſtice, they have a right underſtanding of things, yet will do little or nothing right.

Here, when it is ſaid, *Judgment is before him*, we are to underſtand it in the two latter ſenſes; for though it be a great truth that judgment as oppoſed to mercy, is before the Lord, *And he ſhall have judgment without mercy, that hath ſhewed no mercy*, though (as the Apoſtle adds in the ſame place, *James* 2.13.) *Mercy rejoyceth* (or *glorieth*) *againſt Judgment*; The Lord hath judgments, all manner of judgments about him, yet that notion of judgment doth not belong to this place, but the two latter. *Judgment is before him*; that is, he is a God of infinite underſtanding and wiſdom, he ſeeth every thing to the utmoſt, he goes to the bottom of every mans caſe, yea, to the very bottom of every mans heart; he ſees every action quite through, and every perſon: And as he knows the truth of every mans cauſe and caſe, ſo he will do every man right, according to the merit of his cauſe and caſe. *Juſtice and Judgment are the habitation of his throne, while clouds and darkneſs are round about him*, (Pſal. 97.2.) that is, though preſent diſpenſations are obſcure (as in *Jobs* caſe) yet both the procedure and dealings of God, as alſo the iſſue or determination which he gives in every matter, is juſt and righteous to all men, as well as gracious and comfortable to good and upright-hearted men. Thus, Judgment, or this judgment is always *before him*, that is, he hath a clear ſight of it, and he is ready to do it.

Hence Note, Firſt, *God hath a right and clear apprehenſion of all perſons and actions*;

His underſtanding is infinite. *The Lord is* (as *Hannah* ſpake in her Thankſgiving-Song, 1 *Sam.* 2.3.) *a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed*: That is, he knoweth them exactly, to a grain, as we do the weight of thoſe things which we have laid in an even Balance. It is required of Judges (in that advice which *Jethro* gave to *Moſes*, Exod. 18.21.) That they ſhould be *able men*, that is, (not ſo much men of able purſes, as) of able parts, men of able judgment, and of more than common underſtanding, even ſuch as were able to look through every mans Cauſe that came before them. Such is the ability of the Lords underſtanding to the full, he is Omniſcient, *He is light, and in him is no darkneſs at all.* And as in him there is no darkneſs, ſo nothing is dark to him; the moſt intricate and knotty Caſe, the moſt ravell'd and vext Cauſe that ever was, is plain and evident before his eyes, with whom we have to do, and who hath to do with us. *Judgment is before him*; neither is there any Judgment before any other in compariſon of him; God hath ſo much light, that Men and Angels are to him but darkneſs, God ſeeth ſo much, that all others may be ſaid not to ſee, or to be ſtark blind; even thoſe Judges may be called blind, who are not blinded, we may ſay they have no eyes, whoſe eyes are not put out with gifts, compared with God. How blind then are thoſe Judges, who are blinded? and whoſe eyes are put out, either by prejudice or paſſion, by hopes or fears! it cannot be, but Judgment muſt be before God, becauſe as he clearly ſees, and fully underſtands whatſoever comes before him, ſo nothing can divert or biaſs him from doing every man right, according to his ſight and underſtanding. *Judgment is before him.*

Hence Note, Secondly, *God will do right to every man, as ſure as he knows the right of every man.*

There are many who know what is right, we know whoſe Cauſe is right, yet will not do right. But as ſure as God knows every mans right, ſo certainly he will do him right. *Abraham* pleaded thus with God, *Shall not the Judge of all the Earth do right?* (Gen. 18.25.) Certainly, he will do right, he cannot but do right; *Judgement is before him.* The Scripture is expreſs, *He will reward every man* (and award to every man) *according to his works.* Every man ſhall have as he is; for (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, 1 *Cor.* 4. 6.) *He ſhall bring to light the hidden things of darkneſs, and make manifeſt the counſels of the heart; and then ſhall every man have praiſe of God*; that is, every man ſhall have it, who is fit for it; every man ſhall have praiſe, who is (as we ſay) praiſe-worthy, how much ſoever he hath been diſpraiſed, ſlurr'd in his credit, unworthily dealt with, and accuſed in this world. God will not hold, or detain the truth of men in unrighteouſneſs, though men hold both the truth of God, and the truth of men (the truth of their Cauſes) in unrighteouſneſs. *Judgment is before the Lord.*

Further, That Particle which we render *yet*, gives us this Note;

God is never a whit the leſs Righteous, because it doth not appear to us that he is ſo.

Although thou ſayeſt, thou ſhalt not ſee him, yet Judgment is before him. The ways of God are often ſecret, but none of them are unjuſt; *Judgment is before him*, even then, when we think it is fartheſt off from him. Therefore, if we will give God the glory of governing the world, and of ordering all our perſonal conditions, we muſt not meaſure him by the things we ſee, or which appear; for we cannot ſee the meaſure of his Judgment by what appears, that which appears to us is not his Judgment, ſomething elſe is his judgment, and he in the cloſe will make his judgment clear to all men, he will make it appear that judgment is his, though what his judgment is doth not appear. The miſapprehenſions, or miſ-conſtructions of men do not at all retard or ſtop the righteouſneſs of God, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks in another caſe (*Rom.* 3.3.) *Shall the unbelief of man make the Faith of God* (that is, the Faithfulneſs of God) *of none effect? God forbid*; God will be Faithful and True, though all the world be Unbelievers and Lyars. Now, as the unbelief of man cannot make the Faithfulneſs of God of none effect; ſo our not believing that Judgment proceeds, or our ſaying it is delayed, does not at all take off God from righteouſneſs in doing Judgment; he is doing Judgment righteouſly, whatever apprehenſions men have of his doings. *Judgment is before him*;

Therefore truſt thou in him.] *Elihu* according to the firſt reading of the former words, exhorts *Job* to Repentance, *Judge thy ſelf*; and here he exhorts him to Faith, *Truſt thou in him. Judgment is before him, therefore truſt thou in him*, or *wait and hope in him*; for ſeeing God is a Juſt and Righteous Judge, he will not neglect or ſlight the Cauſe of any of his People; therefore they have all the reaſon in the world to truſt in him, and wait upon him. It is unbelief which makes haſte, Faith is content to wait and tarry.

The Original word hath ſeveral ſignifications. Firſt, More general, to *grieve*, or *be in pain and trouble.* Secondly, In ſpecial, to bring forth, or the pain of a woman in travel to bring forth; there is much pain in that travel. Thus ſome tranſlate here, *Wait for him*, as a woman in travel waits for deliverance. Thirdly, As it ſignifies to have pain, and to have that pain in bringing forth children, ſo to attend, to wait, to ſtay quietly, and expect. *Reſt in the Lord* (ſaith *David*, Pſal. 37. 7.) *and wait patiently for him.* We may give the reaſon of this ſignification from that alluſion. The woman though ſhe be in pain, yet ſhe patiently bears it, becauſe ſhe hath hope a man ſhall be born into the world, (*John* 16. 21.) A woman in that pain, hath not only patience but comfort under it, becauſe ſhe hopes a child ſhall ſhortly be born, who will recompence all her ſorrows, in bearing and bringing him forth into the world. That's the force of this word, *Truſt in him.* Thou art in pain, in trouble, in travel for the preſent, yet thou ſhalt have a bleſſed deliverance, thou ſhalt certainly find, that it is not in vain to truſt upon God. Thus *Elihu* adviſeth *Job* to ſuch a patience as a woman in travel with child hath, who bears her pains comfortably, being refreſhed and ſupported with an aſſurance, and fore-ſenſe of that joy which ſhe ſhall have, being once delivered. *Truſt thou in him.* I have in ſome other places of this Book, met with this Point of truſting in God, *Job* ſaid in the 13. Chapter of this Book, (*verſ.* 15.) *Though he ſlay me, yet will I truſt in him*; And therefore I ſhall not ſtay to open that general duty, or the exerciſe of that Grace, which here *Elihu* exhorts *Job* to, *Truſting in, or waiting upon God.* Only from the Connexion,

חילל
à ליל
Notat 1. *Dolere.* 2. *Parturire.* 3. *Manere, Perſeverare.* 4. *Sperare. Forte per metaphoram, quia animus ſperans futuram gaudium cum dolore parturit.* Coc.

Note, Firſt, *It is our duty to wait and truſt upon God.*

And 'tis ſuch a duty as will keep us cloſe to all other duties; a mind ſtaid on God, is a mind fit to move about any good work whatſoever, which God calleth us unto.

Secondly, Put all together, *Thou ſayeſt, thou ſhalt not ſee him*, (thou art doubtful whether ever things will mend,) *yet Judgment is before him, therefore truſt.*

Hence note, *When things are not clear to us, when we have no light about what God is doing, or what he will do, yet it is our duty to truſt and wait upon God.*

We muſt wait upon God, and truſt in him, though we do not ſee him, yea, though we cannot ſee him, *for Judgment is before him.* That of the Prophet (*Iſa.* 50. 10.) is a clear proof of this duty, (and ſome expound this Scripture ſpecially reſpecting outward dark providences, as others of inward darkneſs, or darkneſs of ſpirit) *Who is among you that feareth the Lord, and obeyeth that voyce of his ſervants, that walketh in darkneſs, and hath no light* (as *Job* ſaith here, *I ſhall not ſee him*) What ſhall a poor benighted ſoul do in that caſe? The anſwer or advice followeth, *Let him truſt in the name of the Lord, and ſtay upon his God.* How dark ſoever our condition is, yet it is our duty to truſt upon God; and if once we are enabled to give God the glory due to his name, in confeſſing, that *Judgement is before him,* we ſhall readily truſt upon him, to order all things for us, though all things ſeem out of order, even to amazement; though we ſee heaven and earth, as it were, confounded, yet we ſhall readily truſt upon him, becauſe we believe, that even then *Judgment is before him.* How ſoon can he turn our darkneſs into light, who in the firſt Creation, when all lay together in a confuſed heap, and darkneſs over all, brought forth light and ſet all in order? The Lord can command light out of darkneſs, good out of evil, order out of confuſion, and he can do all this eaſily, and at an inſtant; therefore whatever the appearances of things are, let not us judge according to appearance, but hope and wait, and ſtick to what God hath promiſed. Though providences appear croſs to promiſes and propheſies, yet they never fruſtrate either. Let us alſo be ſure to ſtick to the commandments of God, for we may reſt aſſured, God will ſtick to his promiſes. To keep Commandments is our work, to keep promiſes is Gods work; though we fail much in our work, God will not fail at all in his work: To believe this, is the higheſt and trueſt work of faith. But if we are faithful in our work, the keeping of Commandments, we have a further evidence, that God will be faithful in his work, the keeping or fulfilling of promiſes, (a great part, the moſt ſpiritual part of Gods fulfilling promiſes, being his enabling of us to keep Commandments) and then we ſhall be able to ſay, not only in faith, but from experience, *that Judgment is before him.* And until we come to this concluſion of faith in dark times, when we cannot ſee him, the ſoul never ſits down in reſt. Nothing fixes the ſoul but truſt in God; we are unquiet, yea we boyl with unquietneſs, and toſs as the angry Sea with the winds, till we truſt fully upon God, upon his wiſdom and power, upon his goodneſs and faithfulneſs, and can ſay, let him do as ſeems good in his eyes; we know he is and will be *good to Iſrael, even to ſuch as are of a clean heart.* When we can once ſtay our minds on God, we are quiet; but when we muſt bring God to our mind, and muſt have God go our pace, or come at our time, and work in our way, (none of which he will do, what a do ſoever we make to have it ſo) O how reſtleſs and troubled are we, even like the troubled Sea when it cannot reſt! And O how much of this reſtleſs trouble diſcovers it ſelf in the minds of many (that I ſay not the moſt of) men, and all becauſe they cannot truſt God when they do not ſee him, or becauſe when they do not ſee him (which was *Jobs* failing) they ſay, *they ſhall not ſee him.* If matters come not to paſs according to their platform, and model, or hit not the dates and days, the times and ſeaſons which they have fixt in their unſcriptural Kalendar, or by a miſtake of the Scripture Kalendar, they are ready to ſay, *they ſhall not ſee him,* their hopes are as the giving up of the ghoſt, that is, they give all for loſt, and paſt recovery. *Many truſt God* (as they do ſome men) *no farther than they ſee him*; they are the worſt and coarſeſt ſort of men, whom we truſt no otherwiſe. How diſhonourable then, how infinitely below God is ſuch a truſt? *Elihu* would have *Job* (and ſo ſhould we) truſt God, though he could not ſee him, and ſaid he ſhould not. *Thou haſt ſaid, thou ſhalt not ſee him, yet truſt in him.*

Laſtly, From the illative particle, *therefore* (that is, *becauſe Judgment is before him*) *truſt thou in him,* Note hence, *The conſideration of the Righteouſneſs and Juſtice of God, is a mighty argument to provoke us to truſt him, and wait upon him.*

Truſt is not every bodies due; ſome (as we ſpeak proverbially) are to be truſted no farther than a man can throw a Milſtone, that is, they are not to be truſted at all: Truſt (I ſay) is not every bodies due: but to truſt God is every bodies duty, yea and intereſt too, for he is clothed as much with righteouſneſs and juſtice, as he is with ſtrength and power. Will you not truſt an honeſt man, will you not truſt a wiſe man? We can come to a height of confidence in man ſometimes, if we think him a man of judgment and wiſdom, of honeſty and faithfulneſs, we can truſt all we have in ſuch a mans hand; how much more ſhould we ſay to God, ſeeing *Judgment is before him, therefore will we truſt in him!* We have an eminent Scripture, urging this duty upon this ground, (*Iſa.* 30. 18.) *The Lord is a God of Judgment* (Judgment is there taken in the ſame notion as here in the Text, he is a wiſe and juſt God, the Lord is a God of judgment, what followeth) *Bleſſed are they that wait for him.* There can be nothing ſaid, more urging, more encouraging to wait and truſt on God, to do us right, then this, *He is a God of Judgment, a righteous God, Judgment is before him.*

Thus far of the good counſel which *Elihu* gave *Job* in this his dark and deſerted ſtate; and counſel it was worthy to be embraced with both arms, and with an open breaſt; and that *Job* had need of it, he ſhews in the next words, while he tells *Job* and us, it was not ſo with him yet, as appeared by the ſad hand of God upon him, and his own diſtemper under it.

VERS. 15, 16.

But now becauſe it is not ſo, he hath viſited in his anger, yet he knoweth it not in great extremity.

Therefore doth Job **open his mouth in vain: he multiplieth words without knowledge.**

IN the cloſe of the former verſe, *Elihu* called upon and exhorted *Job* to a patient reliance, and truſt on God, *Judgment is before him, therefore truſt thou in him*; here in the 15. verſe he ſhews, that the reaſon why God viſited him ſo ſorely, and yet continued his viſitation upon him, was becauſe he did not, as he ought, patiently truſt in, and rely upon him.

There are ſeveral readings of this verſe, but I ſhall only mention one, beſides our own, and having ſtayed a little about that, go on to the explication of the Text, as it lies in order before us. Some render thus;

But know now, his anger hath viſited thee but a little, (Hebr. *nothing*) *neither hath he made any great inquiſition,* The ſenſe of the verſe, according to his rendring, riſeth thus; As if *Elihu* had ſaid, *God hath dealt with thee, O Job, far better than thou haſt dealt with him, or then thou haſt cauſe to expect; he hath not laid his hand ſo heavy upon thee, as thy iniquity hath deſerved, and yet thou complaineſt much of his ſeverity; whereas indeed he hath not ſtrictly inquired into the multitude of thy ſins, which if he had done, he would certainly have brought upon thee, a greater multitude of afflictions, he would have afflicted thee much more: Thou art too well uſed to complain thus*; That's the ſum of this rendring, which the learned Authors of it make fairly out from the Original, to whom I refer the Reader, and ſhall only offer two notes from it, for inſtruction.

Nunc autem ſcito quod paululum te viſitavit ira ipſius, neque inquiſivit multum admodum. Merc. *Scito perexiguum eſſe, quo te deus iratus plectit, niſi leviter in te inquirere maluiſſet.* Bez.

First, *The ſoreſt afflictions that fall upon ſinners in this life are little or nothing to what God might lay upon them.*

There is no condition here actually ſo bad, but poſſibly it might be worſe; though the darkneſs of night be upon us, yet it may be darker with us; God can make a night ſo dark, that the former darkneſs may be called light; God can add ſo much bitterneſs to that which is very bitter, ſo much weight to that burden of affliction, which is already very heavy, that the former bitter may be called ſweet, and that former weight of affliction, light. Are any poor, ſick, or pained, God can make them poorer, ſicker, and ſo increaſe their pain, that former poverty, ſickneſs, pain, may go for riches, health, and eaſe. And as preſent ſufferings of one kind or other, are but little to what they may be, ſo they are but little to what we have deſerved they ſhould be: The leaſt mercy is more than we deſerve, and the greateſt affliction is leſs than we deſerve. *He hath viſited thee little or nothing*, (ſo the word is) ſaith *Elihu*, according to this reading of the Text. The Lord hath not only not viſited thee too much O *Job*, but he may be ſaid, not to have viſited thee at all, or the All of thy viſitation is nothing to that which the Lord could have brought upon thee. *David* gives a general aſſertion near this concerning the dealings of the Lord, in his angry diſpenſations, (*Pſal.* 103. 10.) *He hath not dealt with us after our ſins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities*; that is, our ſins and our iniquities might have born out the Juſtice of God in laying heavier evils and troubles upon us, than yet he hath done. Sinners never have their full puniſhment till they come to hell. As the ſweeteſt joys and ſtrongeſt conſolations which the godly find and feel on earth, are only taſts and firſt-fruits of that they ſhall have in heaven; ſo all the ſorrows and ſufferings of the wicked in this world, are but taſts, light touches and beginnings of ſorrow, compared with the pains and ſorrows of the next world, where ſinners ſhall be paid their wages in full.

Et nunc quia nihil eſt quod viſitavit ira ejus. Druſ.

Secondly, From the latter part of the verſe thus tranſlated, *Neither hath he made any great inquiſition*; that is, he hath not taken ſtrict knowledge of thy ſins, though a multitude, though even paſt number; though there be abundance of them, and they abounding in ſinfulneſs, yet he hath not made any great inquiſition after them;

Utrumque viſitandi & recenſendi vel cognoſcendi verbum in hoc loco judicis vel magiſtratus in peccatores animadverſionem, inquiſitionem punitioni conjunctam importat. Bold.

Hence Note, *The Lord doth not ſeverely mark the ſins of his people, no not the multitude nor magnitude of their ſins, to puniſh them.*

(*Pſal.* 130. 3.) *If thou Lord ſhouldeſt mark iniquity*, implying that the Lord doth not mark (in the ſenſe here intended) *if thou ſhouldeſt mark iniquity, O Lord, who ſhall ſtand?* The word in that *Pſalm* rendred to *mark*, notes, firſt, to watch, or to obſerve with exacteſt diligence, and is therefore in the Noun rendred a *watchTower*, upon which a man is placed to take obſervation of all things that are done, and of all perſons that paſs by, or approach and come near. A Watch-man placed upon a high Tower, is bound induſtriouſly and critically to obſerve all Paſſengers, and paſſages all that his eye can reach: So ſaith the Text, If thou ſhouldeſt mark as a Watch-man, and eye with rigour every thing that paſſeth from us, *Who could ſtand?* That is, make good his Cauſe in the day of his judgment and trial before thee? Secondly, The word ſignifieth to keep in mind, to lay up, to have, as it were, a ſtore and ſtock, a memorial or record, of ſuch and ſuch things by us. In that notion it is ſaid (*Gen.* 37. 11.) *Joſephs Brethren envied him, but his Father obſerved the ſaying*; he marked what *Joſeph* ſpake about his Dreams, he laid it up, and did not let it paſs away as a Dream, or a viſion of the night: Thus in the *Pſalm*, *If the Lord ſhould mark iniquity*, if he ſhould treaſure up our ſins in his memory, and keep them by him, *who were able to ſtand when accounted with?* The Lord in a way of grace, ſeeth as if he ſaw not, and winks at us oftentimes when we do amiſs, as he is ſaid to have done at thoſe times, the times of ignorance, when not only many things, but even every thing was done amiſs, and out of order, in the dark *Gentile* world, before the approach of Goſpel light, (*Acts* 17. 30.) *And the times of this ignorance God winked at, but now commandeth all men every where to repent.* That is, the Lord took little notice of thoſe untaught times, in compariſon of that ſtrict notice which he will take of theſe times; concerning which, he gave command to his Apoſtles, *Go and teach all Nations*; and yet the ſtricteſt notice which he takes of our ſins in theſe times, is but little to what he might.

שמר

So much from that Tranſlation of the Text; our own runs thus:

Verſ. 15. **But now becauſe it is not ſo, he hath viſited in his anger; yet he knoweth it not in great extremity.**

We muſt expound this Verſe in Connexion with the latter part of the former.

But now becauſe it is not ſo.] What is not ſo? what is miſſing? what is wanting? What had *Job* done amiſs? or what had he miſt to do? *Elihu* ſeems to anſwer, he hath miſt the doing of that duty which he was moved in the cloſe of the foregoing Verſe, expreſſed in thoſe words, *Truſt thou in him*, or *wait upon him: But now becauſe it is not ſo*; that is, Becauſe thou doſt not put forth ſuch acts of holy confidence, and patient waiting upon God as thou oughteſt, and as I admoniſhed thee to do, therefore God is engaged, and even compelled to treat thee thus roughly and ſeverely, *He hath viſited in his anger.* As if he had ſaid, Though thou haſt profeſſed a truſt in God, yet thou doſt not truſt in him fully, as becomes thee, yea, thou ſeemeſt ſometimes (as a man forlorn) to caſt up thy hopes; therefore, becauſe thou doſt not truſt in him, becauſe it is not ſo as I have exhorted and directed thee, the Lord hath viſited in anger. Mr. *Broughton* renders, *But now for miſſing, his anger doth viſit. For miſſing*; that is, for miſſing of duty, or for not acting up to duty, for not truſting fully in the Lord, the Lord hath viſited thee in his anger. This ſenſe is obvious and commodious according to our reading. *But now becauſe it is not ſo,*

He hath viſited in his anger,] or ſtrictly, *his anger hath viſited*; That is, God hath heavily afflicted thee. God is far from all paſſion and perturbation of mind, only he is ſaid to be angry, or to viſit in his anger, when he doth that which anger produceth among men; when he caſts down and puniſheth, when he lays his hand ſorely upon the Creature, then he is ſaid to be angry, then *His anger hath viſited.* The word notes quick breathing in the Noſtrils; anger appears, or vents it ſelf there; as it is ſaid of *Paul*, when *Saul* (Acts 9. 1.) *And Saul yet breathing out threatnings, and ſlaughter againſt the Diſciples of the Lord, went unto the High Prieſt.* You might ſee anger, as it were foam, yea flame out of his mouth, and evaporate at his noſtrils. Thus ſaith *Elihu*, *Becauſe it is not ſo, his anger*

Homo tentatur & in examen vocatur ut probetur ejus ſpes & patientia; quandoquidem igitur illa non extat, invaſit ira ejus, qua odit, & amolitur peccatum, etiam in iis quos diligit, & ſalvos vult maxime. Coc.

Hath viſited.] To *viſit*, is properly to go, and ſee any perſon whom we reſpect and love; thus we viſit friends in civility and courteſie. Secondly, To *viſit* is an act of pity and mercy; and thus we *viſit* the ſick, the widow, and the fatherleſs (*James* 1. 27.) *Pure Religion, and undefiled before God, and the Father, is to viſit the fatherleſs and widows in their affliction*; that is, to go to them in pity, either for the ſupply of their wants by our purſe, or for the comforting of their hearts by our counſel. Thirdly, We *viſit* in care, as well as in kindneſs, that is, when we go to our Families or Flocks, or places of charge, whereſoever they are, and ſee that, or whether, all things are well and right with them, or well, and rightly done towards them, according to the rules that ſuch perſons under our charge ought to act, and live by: Thus in Colledges and Hoſpitals, there is a viſitation of care, to make enquiry of perſons in truſt, about perſons and things under their truſt.

פקד אפו *Ira ejus viſitavit.*

To the point in hand; there is a twofold viſitation of God.

Firſt, He viſits in love and mercy, (*Ruth* 1. 6.) *Then ſhe* (that is *Naomi*) *aroſe with her Daughter in Law, that ſhe might return from the Country of* Moab, *for ſhe had heard in the Country of* Moab, *how that the Lord had viſited his people in giving them bread.* That is, God had ſhewed them kindneſs and mercy in relieving them from that devouring famine. Again, (*Gen.* 21. 6.) *And the Lord viſited* Sarah, *as he ſaid*; that is, he gave her the promiſed mercy of a Son. Once more, (*Luke* 1. 68.) *Bleſſed be the Lord God of Iſrael, for he hath viſited, and redeemed his People*; and that's a bleſſed viſitation indeed, which brings redemption. Thus the Scripture often ſpeaks of Gods viſitation in mercy.

Secondly, There is a viſitation of God in anger, wrath and judgment. The Law ſaith (*Exod.* 20. 4, 5.) *Thou ſhalt not make to thy ſelf any graven Image*, &c. *Thou ſhalt not bow down thy ſelf to them, nor ſerve them; for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, viſiting the iniquity of the Fathers upon the Children, unto the third and fourth Generation of them that hate me:* That is puniſhing the iniquity of the Fathers upon the Children theſe Children continuing in their Fathers ways, to do ſinfully; ſuch Children as take up the evil examples, or tread in the bad ſteps of their fore-Fathers, ſhall ſuffer for it. The Prophet at once upbraided the impudent *Jews*, and threatned them in this Language, (*Jer.* 6. 15.) *Were they aſhamed when they had committed abominations? nay, they were not aſhamed, neither could they bluſh; therefore they ſhall fall among them that fall at the time* *that I viſit them, they ſhall be caſt down, ſaith the Lord.* Again, (*Iſa.* 26. 14.) *Therefore haſt thou viſited and deſtroyed them.* There is a viſitation for deſtruction, that's a ſad viſitation. In this ſenſe we read of a time of viſitation (*Jer.* 8. 12. *Jer.* 10. 15.) We read of days of viſitation, (*Hoſea* 9. 7.) *The days of viſitation are come, the days of recompence are come.* We read alſo of a year of viſitation, (*Jer.* 23. 12.) *For I will bring evil upon them, even the year of their viſitation, ſaith the Lord.* As alſo (*Chap.* 11. 23.) *I will bring evil upon the men of Anathoth, even the year of their viſitation.* This is the viſitation here ſpoken of; it is a time, a day, a year of ſore viſitation with thee, O *Job. Becauſe it is not ſo, he hath viſited in his anger.*

Hence note, Firſt, *God expects the work of Faith and Patience, when his afflicting hand is upon us.*

Faith hath much work to do at all times, but moſt in times of affliction. There is alſo a uſe of two ſorts of patience in our beſt days; the patience of labouring in Gods work, and the patience of waiting for the reward of our work, after all our labours: But in ſad days the Lord expects we ſhould exerciſe both patience in ſuffering, and in waiting for deliverance out of all our ſufferings; then 'tis that both Faith and Patience, truſting and waiting muſt have their perfect work.

Secondly Note, *When the Lord doth not find or ſee, as he expects, the work of Faith and Patience in a time of affliction, he will afflict more and more until he finds or works it.*

This is it which *Elihu* ſaith in the Text, *Becauſe it is not ſo, he hath viſited in his anger. Job* was ſorely afflicted before, but now he is viſited in anger, becauſe he did not manifeſt ſuch truſt in God as he expected in that condition. As when the wicked repent not of their ſins under the puniſhing hand of God, he will puniſh them more and more, even ſeven times more for their ſins, (*Levit.* 26. 41.) So when good men act not their Graces, believe not, truſt not under the afflicting hand of God, he uſually afflicts them more and more, gives them ſorer ſtripes, and layeth yet heavier burdens on them. When God miſſeth what he look'd for, we may quickly feel what we looked not for. Mr. *Broughtons* Tranſlation ſpeaks the Point fully, *But now for miſſing, his anger doth viſit.* Man ſeldom miſſeth trouble from God, when God miſſeth duty from man; and 'tis a mercy that he doth not: 'tis mans mercy when God minds him of his deficiencies in duty, though by a ſmart viſiting rod. Thus the Lord ſpake of *Davids* Seed, (and 'tis to be underſtood of all the Seed of Chriſt, whom *David* typed, *Pſal.* 89.) *If his children forſake my Law,* (verſ. 30, 31.) *Then* (verſ. 32.) *will I viſit their tranſgreſſions with the Rod,* &c. How true this charge of *Elihu* was, as to *Jobs* omiſſion of duty, I ſhall not ſtay to enquire; only this we know, *Job* had profeſſed truſt in God, yet becauſe it was mingled with ſo much complaint, with ſo many unbelieving expoſtulations, *Elihu* might ſay the Lord miſſed the patience, truſt and confidence, which he expected from *Job.* Doubtleſs, more of all theſe ſhould have appeared in him, and they ſhould have appeared more in that time of affliction. There are two things which God looketh for, and aims at in the time of our affliction; firſt, the mortifying of corruptions, that they work no more, at leaſt no more ſo ſtrongly as they have done; Secondly, The ſtirring up, and acting of our Graces, that they may be more working, and work more ſtrongly than ever they have done. Where the Lord ſees not theſe effects of affliction, that our ſins grow leſs, and our graces more, that we complain leſs, and truſt or believe more, we are like to be afflicted more, and he will diſcover his anger more. *Becauſe it is not ſo, he hath viſited in his anger.* And thence,

Note, Thirdly, *Diſtruſt or impatience under the afflicting hand of God, or our not truſting God in our worſt condition patiently, is a very provoking ſin.*

We provoke the Lord to viſit us in his anger, when we do not truſt in his mercy. Our not-truſting God muſt needs provoke him to anger; for when we do not truſt him, we queſtion him; diſtruſt or unbelief queſtions all that God is, and all that God hath promiſed, it queſtions his Truth, and his Faithfulneſs, his Power, his Mercy, and his Goodneſs; all theſe, which are the glory of God, and in all which the ſons of men ought to glorifie him, theſe are all queſtioned and darkned, when we put not forth acts of truſt and reliance upon God, in times of greateſt affliction and extremity. Is it not then a provoking ſin, I ſay not to withdraw truſt from God, and give it to an arm of fleſh, but not to put freſh and full acts of truſt upon God, let our affliction or extremity be what it will! The Children of *Iſrael* were in great extremity at the Red Sea, a mighty Army purſuing them at the heels to deſtroy them, and mighty waters being before them, ready to ſwallow them up; in theſe ſtraits (whileſt they ſhould have done their utmoſt to get, and aſſure God to be their Friend) the Pſalmiſt tells us, *They provoked him,* (Pſal. 106. 7.) But wherein lay their provocation? that Scripture ſaith, *They remembred not the multitude of his mercies:* The former mercies of the Lord did not ſtrengthen their truſt in preſent troubles; that was one provocation. And as former mercies did not ſtrengthen their truſt, ſo the preſent trouble drew out their diſtruſt, as another Scripture aſſures, reporting their behaviour in it (*Exod.* 14. 11.) *And they ſaid to Moſes, Becauſe there were no Graves in* Egypt, *haſt thou taken us away to die in the Wilderneſs? Wherefore haſt thou dealt thus with us, to carry us forth out of* Egypt? What were theſe fearful fore-caſts, theſe amazing bodements of an unavoidable (as they apprehended) ruine, but the overflowings of unbelief, or diſtruſt in God; and this was another provocation. Former mercies are forgotten, yea eaten up by unbelief, as the ſeven lean Kine in *Pharaohs* dream, eat up the fat ones, and preſent difficulties are aggravated by unbelief, as if all the power of God could not remove and overcome them. And will not the Lord (think you) viſit in anger for ſuch a ſin as this?

Again, As *Elihu* doth not ſay barely, he hath viſited, but *he hath viſited in his anger,* or *his anger hath viſited,* ſo conſider, who was it that was thus viſited in anger? It was *Job,* a godly man perfect and upright.

Hence note, Fourthly, *God viſits or afflicts, even his own people, his elect, and choiceſt ſervants, with fatherly anger, when they diſpleaſe and provoke him.*

We find the Scripture ſpeaking expreſly of the anger of God towards the beſt of his ſervants, even towards a *Moſes,* (as himſelf made confeſſion, *Deut.* 1. 37.) when they diſpleaſe him; *Alſo the Lord was angry with me for your ſakes, ſaying, thou alſo ſhalt not go in thither. Moſes* was a moſt meek man, the meekeſt man upon the face of the earth, nor was he an inferiour in any other grace, yet the Lord was angry with him, and angry with him upon that ſpecial occaſion, his unbelief, (*Numb.* 20. 12.) *And the Lord ſpake unto Moſes and Aaron, becauſe ye believe me not, to ſanctifie me in the eyes of the children of* Iſrael, *therefore* &c. We read of the Lords anger breaking out againſt *Aaron* for another ſin, (*Numb.* 12. 9.) *The anger of the Lord, was kindled againſt them,* that is, againſt *Aaron and Miriam, becauſe they had ſpoken againſt Moſes,* (verſ. 1. 8.) *Aaron* was the High Prieſt, and as he was high in office, ſo eminent in grace; and doubtleſs *Miriam* was a very gracious woman, yet the Lord was not only angry with them, but exceeding angry; his anger waxed hot againſt them and kindled, when they forgot their duty to *Moſes,* and remembred not their diſtance with reverence. *Solomon* in his prayer at the Dedication of the Temple, ſpeaks of the people of God collectively; *If they ſin againſt thee, and thou be angry with them.* The Lord is not only angry with the world, but angry with his Church, not only angry with *Babylon,* but with *Jeruſalem.* And as *Solomon* ſpake that of the whole Nation of the *Jews,* ſuppoſing they might fall under the Lords anger all together as a body, ſo he did experience it ſadly in his own perſon, (1 *Kings* 9. 11.) *And the Lord was angry with Solomon becauſe his heart was turned from the Lord God of Iſrael, which had appeared unto him twice.* Wiſe *Solomon* departed from God through an evil heart of unbelief and vanity, after the Lord had come and appeared to him more than once in grace and favour; and the bitter effects or fruits of that departure, appeared to him ſhortly after, *the Lord* (ſaith that Scripture) *was angry with Solomon;* and the ſequel of his Hiſtory tells us, there went out very hot diſpleaſure againſt him.

As theſe Scriptures are a proof of the Lords anger kindling againſt his people when they ſin; ſo we find the Church repreſented praiſing the Lord for quenching the fire of his anger, (*Iſa.* 12. 1.) *And in that day thou ſhalt ſay, O Lord, I will praiſe thee: though thou waſt angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comforteſt me.* When we turn from God, his anger is turned againſt us, and when we turn to God, his anger is turned away from us. When the Lord is angry, what can comfort us, but the turning away of his anger? And by the very act of turning away his anger, he comforts us, though all the world be angry with us.

But ſome may ſay, How doth the Lord, who is ſaid to love his people with an everlaſting love, viſit them in anger? To clear that, we may diſtinguiſh of anger.

Firſt, There is correcting anger: Secondly, there is conſuming or deſtroying anger. Deſtroying anger is inconſiſtent with everlaſting love, but not correcting anger: correcting anger may be very grievous, therefore the Prophet deprecates it, (*Jer.* 10.24.) *Correct me, O Lord, in Judgment, not in thy anger.* The Lord doth often exerciſe (that is as often as there is cauſe, and we give him cauſe too often to exerciſe) a ſmart and ſevere anger towards his own people; but his conſuming and deſtroying anger is the lot and portion of the wicked; *If his anger be kindled but a little* (namely againſt his enemies) *bleſſed are they that truſt in him*; bleſſed are they that believe, when the anger of the Lord breaks forth againſt unbelievers. Or we may ſtate it thus;

Firſt, God is angry with ſinful perſons; thus he is angry with the world, or with wicked men.

Secondly, God is angry with perſons for ſinning, (there is a great difference between theſe two; anger with ſinful perſons, and anger with perſons for their ſin, or for ſinning) and thus he is angry with his own people, even with the godly when they ſin, though not for every ſin.

Further, We may diſtinguiſh of anger thus; There is anger mixed with a deſire of taking revenge upon thoſe that we are angry with, a revengeful anger: thus the Lord is angry only with the wicked. Of this anger *Moſes* ſpeaks, having deſcribed a preſumptuous ſinner, who believes not only without a word, but againſt the word, who *when he heareth the word of the curſe, bleſſeth himſelf in his heart, ſaying, I ſhall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of mine heart, to add drunkenneſs unto thirſt; then the anger of the Lord and his jealouſie ſhall ſmoak againſt that man,* &c. (*Deut.* 29. 19, 20.) Read more of this revengeful anger of the Lord, (*Deut.* 32. 22, 41, 42.) Secondly, there is anger with a deſire to reform, and reclaim thoſe that we are angry with: Thus a loving and indulgent father is angry with his child, when he hath committed a fault; he is angry, not with an anger of deſire to revenge, but with an anger of deſire to reform. And thus the Lord is angry with his own people, with his choiceſt ſervants, and deareſt children, when they forget their duty and play the wantons.

Laſtly, We may diſtinguiſh of anger thus; There is Firſt, a temporary anger: As there is a temporary faith in hypocrites, ſo (we may ſay) there is a temporary anger in God againſt the faithful when offending; that is, he is angry with them for a while, for a ſeaſon: *Sing unto the Lord, O ye Saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his Holineſs,* (ſaith *David*, Pſal. 30. 4.) But why doth he call them to ſinging? we have the reaſon of it given at the 5. verſe, *For his anger endureth but a moment*; he ſpeaks there of the Lords anger againſt his Saints and peculiar people: while they indeed have cauſe to mourn for provoking the Lord to anger, they may alſo ſing, both becauſe his anger endureth but for a moment, that is, becauſe (if that be all) it endureth not at all, (a moment is of no endurance) as alſo becauſe *in his favour is life; weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning*, Once more, hear the Prophets report of the Lords anger, (*Micah* 7. 18.) *Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and paſſeth by the tranſgreſſion of the remnant of his heritage; he retaineth not his anger for ever, becauſe he delighteth in mercy.* God doth not *retain his anger for ever*; that is, not long; yea, that *not for ever*, is but a little while, a moment, and that but a ſmall *moment*, as the Prophet *Iſaiah* ſpake, (*Chap.* 54. 7.) As if he had ſaid, The Lords anger is not retained ſo long, as if it ſhould be always retained; his anger towards you is ſoon blown over, and gone, upon the matter (like a moment) as ſoon as come. Such is the anger which God diſcovers towards his own people.

Secondly, There is anger for ever, an abiding wrath, a fire of anger which never goeth out, nor can be put out, which is kindled in the breaſt of God againſt ungodly men, and againſt them only as living and dying without repentance, in their ungodlineſs. *Job* a godly man, was viſited in the former, not in this latter anger.

Yet for the fuller anſwer to this query, as it concerns *Jobs* caſe, I conceive *Elihu* ſpeaks with the higheſt and hardeſt towards him. For though it be a truth, that the Lord diſcovers, as was ſhewed before, a fatherly anger towards his children when he chaſteneth them for their ſin, yet he chaſteneth them more, or rather, in love than in anger; *As whom he loves, he rebukes and chaſtens,* (*Rev.* 3.19.) ſo he chaſtens and rebukes them in love. And as for *Job*, whom God dearly loved, it is clear from the firſt and ſecond Chapters of this Book, that God afflicted him not for any ſpecial ſin, or way of ſinning, but for his tryal, and to ſet him up as a great pattern of patience to all ſucceeding generations. Or we may ſay that God afflicted *Job*, not becauſe of any provocation which he had given him, but as Satans inſtance and provocation, (*Chap.* 2. 3.) All that can be ſaid for *Elihu's* help in ſaying that God viſited him in anger, is only this, That though *Job* had not provoked the Lord to viſit him in anger when he began to viſit him, yet ſome impatient and over-bold ſpeeches of his, or that liberty of ſpeech which he took in expoſtulating and almoſt conteſting with God about his afflictions, might cauſe him to viſit him in ſuch anger as hath been ſet forth in anſwer to the query. *And now becauſe it is not ſo*, becauſe the Lord miſſeth thoſe acts of grace, truſt and patience, which thy caſe calleth thee to the exerciſe of, *He hath viſited in his anger*; and what followeth?

Yet he knoweth it not in great extremity.] *Elihu* ſeems to have ſpoken this turning himſelf to the company, and complaining to them of *Jobs* inſenſibleneſs, *Yet he knoweth not*, &c.

Some refer this clauſe of the verſe to God alſo, *He hath viſited in his anger, and taketh no notice of the great increaſe, or of that which is greatly increaſed*; that is, God hath ſpared nothing from his viſitation, although the party viſited were never ſo much grieved or damnified in the loſs and ſpoil of his all. There was a neceſſity (ſaith this Author) that he who was viſited ſhould be ſo toucht as to be ſenſible of the ſtroke; which could not be, unleſs the greateſt of his increaſe, and thoſe things which were moſt dear to him were taken away from him, or he were ſtript naked and bereaved of them.

Et non advertit ad auctum valde (i.e.) *Nihil diſcrevit:* (ſc. *deus*) *quod non viſitaret etiamſi ea re viſitatus magis doleret. Nam neceſſe erat viſitatum ita tangi ut ſentiret: quod fieri non poterat, ſi non & pleraq; & chariſſima quoque bona adimerentur.* Coc.

Our tranſlation refers theſe words to the perſon viſited, as if he, though reduced to the greateſt extremities, yet was not ſenſible of it, or took no notice of what he ſuffered, or was done to him; *Yet he knoweth it not in great extremity.* Who knoweth not? the Antecedent to *he* is *Job*, according to this tranſlation; *becauſe he knoweth not.* But what did not *Job* know? Firſt, He knew not the dealings of God with him, to ſubmit to them as he ſhould. Secondly, He knew not that there was ſuch a miſs or deficiency in the acting of his graces, he perceived not how weak a ſoul he had in that weak body; his truſt, his faith, did not act, *and yet he knew it not*, or took no notice of his failing in thoſe duties. Thirdly, *He hath viſited in his anger, yet he knoweth it not*, that is, he knoweth not the anger of God, who viſiteth him. To know may be taken three ways.

Firſt, For the bare notion or apprehenſion of a thing; thus; certainly *Job* did know that he was viſited, for he ſpake often and enough of it.

Secondly, To know, is to conſider, to lay a thing to heart, (*Iſa.* 1. 3.) *My people doth not know, Iſrael doth not conſider*, the latter part is exegetical, and expounds the former, *My people doth not know*, that is, *doth not conſider*. So (*Hoſ.* 2. 8.) *She did not know that I gave her corn*, &c. (*Pſal.* 90. 11.) *Who knoweth the power of thy anger?* that is, who conſiders it? who weighs what the anger of the Lord is? we have ſweet thoughts, about the mercy, and love, and goodneſs of God, yet 'tis little, very little of any of theſe that we know. The love of God, which we delight to know, paſſeth knowledge, (*Eph.* 3. 19.) But for the anger of God, which is ſo dreadful, we ſeldom ſet our ſelves to the ſtudy of it; none can know it comhenſively, and few ſeek or labor to know it induſtriouſly, conſiderately.

Thirdly, To know, is to be under a due ſenſe of what we know: We may know a thing, and conſider it, yet not have a feeling of it. I conceive we are to underſtand the word *know* here, in theſe two latter ſenſes; *He knoweth it not*; that is, he doth not conſider, nor hath he a due ſenſe, either of the defect of his own graces, that his faith acts not as it ought, that his truſt performs not its part as it ſhould; nor doth he know the anger of God in this viſitation; that is, he knoweth not, nor conſidereth, the ſcope and meaning of God in this angry diſpenſation. *Yet he knoweth it not*

רוב eſt פש *Multitudo, multum paſſim occurrit in* Targ. *Interdum in Hebraiſmo.* Merc.

In great extremity.] The word ſignifieth any kind of increaſe (*Mal.* 4. 2.) *They ſhall go forth, and grow up as the Calves of the Stall.* So 'tis uſed (*Jen.* 50. 11.) *Becauſe ye are grown fat*, we put in the Margin, *big or corpulent.* (Lev. 13. 5.) *If the Plague* (of Leproſie he means) *increaſe*, grow great, and ſpread it ſelf, *then* &c. *Jobs* affliction was a great one at firſt, and it grew greater afterwards: He was *in great extremity*, or in extremities; of what? in great extremity, Firſt, of loſs and poverty in his Eſtate; Secondly, of pain and torment in his Body; Thirdly, of grief and anguiſh in his Soul: In all theſe he ſuffered, and ſuffered extreamly, or in great extremity. Mr. *Broughton* renders, *Becauſe Job knoweth not this great plenty*, namely, of ſorrows, which compaſs him about.

This was the cenſure of *Elihu* upon *Job*, and *Job* had given *Elihu* too much ground for this cenſure. Though *Jobs* Faith and truſt were ſtrongly at work ſomtimes, yet they did not always continue their in the ſame degree or ſtrength: and while he often complained in his extremity, that God dealt with him as with an enemy, he did not well conſider what that anger of God was, in which he viſited him, during the time of that great extremity: *Yet he knoweth it not in great extremity.*

As *this not knowing* is referred to his weakneſs in acting his Graces; *now, it is not ſo*, yet he knoweth it not;

Note, *A godly man is not always ſenſible of his defects and failings in grace.*

As ſome have little or no grace, who yet conceit they have much (*Rev.* 3. 17.) *Thou ſayeſt, I am rich, and increaſed in goods, and have need of nothing, and knoweſt not that thou art wretched and miſerable, and poor and naked.* So others who have grace, yea, much grace in the habit (as *Job* had) may be very inſenſible how little it acts, yea they may ſuppoſe it acts much, when the actings of it are intermitted or extreamly ſuppreſſed by paſſion, and corruption: They may think their Faith ſtrong, or that they truſt fully in God, they may think themſelves patient and humble under the hand of God, and yet be greatly defective in the working of all theſe Graces; I mean not ſuch a deficiency only, as is common to all believers (the beſt come ſhort in the exerciſe of grace) but ſome great deficiency may be, and yet the ſoul not ſenſible of it. As ſome are over-ſenſible of their failings, complaining that they have no Faith, no Patience, when they not only have Faith and Patience, as to their Being, but as to their working alſo, and poſſibly, working well. (It is a different work of the Spirit, to act and ſtir up Grace in us, and to diſcover to us the actings and ſtirrings of Grace) Now as ſome godly men act Grace, and know it not, ſo in others that are godly Grace acts not, and they know it not; Faith is down, and they know it not; they can bear little or nothing patiently, yet they take no notice of it. Thus the words of *Elihu* concerning *Job, he knoweth it not*, refer to the former part of the verſe, *It is not ſo*; that is, his Graces act not, yet he takes no notice of it, but thinks Faith and Patience, with other Graces, work well enough.

Secondly, As *not knowing* refers to the viſitation of God, *He hath viſited him in his anger, and he knoweth it not* (yea, though) *in great extremely*, though he have a very hard time of it.

Hence Note, Firſt, *A good man may not only be viſited, but extremity viſited by the hand of God*;

He may be under many extremities at once; extreamly viſited in Body, extreamly in Mind, extreamly in his Relations, extreamly in his Name, extreamly in all his worldly concernments. As there is no outward evil, for the matter, ſo none for the degree; but a good man may be in it. Let us be moderate in judging thoſe, who are in the extreameſt extremities of ſuffering.

Secondly, Note, *Some good men, or good men ſometimes under very great afflictions, are not ſenſible of the hand of the Lord upon them.*

As a good man may receive many mercies, and yet not not obſerve (at preſent) how, or from whom he receives them, ſo he may be under angry viſitations or diſpenſations in great extremity, and not mind the dealing of God with him in it, nor what he intendeth by it; yea, he may complain of the burthen, and cry out under the preſſure, yet not know it at that time for his own good, for his humbling or purging. The Prophet ſaith concerning *Ephraim*, (*Hoſ.* 7. 9.) *Strangers have devoured his ſtrength, and he knoweth it not*: That is, Enemies have ſwallowed up, or taken away that wealth; thoſe riches, they have ſubdued thoſe Armies, thoſe Forces, which he looked upon, and boaſted of, as his ſtrength; they have broken him quite with Wars and Invaſions, yet *Ephraim* knew it not: and not only ſo, but as it followeth, *Yea, Gray hairs are here and there upon him*; that is, he hath many Symptoms or Signs of ruin and deſtruction, *yet he knoweth it not*. Grief of heart for great changes in our Eſtate, change the hair; many grow gray with ſorrow. So that, when 'tis ſaid gray hairs are upon him, 'tis an alluſion taken from the Body Natural to the Body Politick; for as when the natural Body of a man hath gray hairs appearing, or (as *Solomon* allegorizeth, *Eccl.* 12. 5.) *when the Almond-Tree flouriſheth*, it is an argument that old Age and infirmities are coming upon him (Gray hairs tell us that Death and the Grave are not far off, they ſignifie ſome decay of nature.) Now as the natural Body hath its gray hairs, ſo a Politick Body, the body of a State hath its gray hairs too; that is, ſomething may come upon a State, which ſheweth that it is declining and waxing old, that it is ready to break, and go to the Grave. I ſhall not ſtay to enquire what are the gray hairs of a Nation; I only bring that Scripture, to prove that many are inſenſible of the hand of God; *he viſiteth in his anger, yet* man, poſſibly a good man, *knoweth it not*, as *Ephraim* knew not of his gray hairs.

But did not *Ephraim* know his affliction? or did not *Job* know his? what is it to know, or who may be ſaid to know an affliction?

I anſwer, they only know their afflictions, or that God is viſiting in his anger,

Firſt, who labour to find out the cauſe of Gods viſitation. If we feel the afflicting hand of God upon us, and enquire not, whence is this? why is it ſo? what hath moved or provoked the Lord to this manner of proceeding with us? If, I ſay, we make not ſuch enquiries, we are viſited in anger, and know it not. And therefore in that caſe, the Prophet *Jeremy* exhorts the afflicted, captivated Church of the *Jews* in *Babylon*, *to ſearch and try their ways*, (Lam. 3. 41.) that is, to conſider why it was ſo with them, what was the cauſe of their capacity. Till we ſit down and make diligent ſearch, why we are viſited, why any affliction or calamity is upon our Perſons and Families, or upon the Kingdoms and Nations reſpectively where we live, we know neither the day of our viſitation, nor what our viſitation is. Then only we know Gods viſitation, when we are ſtudying the cauſes of it; *To know a thing is to know it in the cauſes of it.*

Scire eſt per cauſas ſcire.

Secondly, They may be ſaid to know the viſitation of the Lord, that are ſtudying, as the cauſe which they have given, ſo the ends and purpoſes which God hath in viſiting them; for how much ſoever we find and ſee the cauſes of an affliction, yet till our hearts are drawn out to anſwer the ends of it, we do not truly know it.

But you will ſay, what are the uſual ends which the Lord hath in afflicting his people?

I anſwer, Firſt, to turn them from ſin; Secondly, to unglew and wean them from the world; Thirdly, that they may live nearer to, or more with him; Fourthly, that they may live more unto him, or (which takes in both the latter ends) that they may enjoy him more while they live, and honour him more with their lives. Now (I ſay) till we are upon this kind of ſtudy, both the cauſes of our viſitation, and the ends of it, and beg that we may both remove thoſe cauſes, and comply with or anſwer thoſe ends, we may be ſaid not to know the viſitation of the Lord, though it be, and we are, in great extremity. And if this be to know the viſitation of God, ſurely many are periſhing and ſinking under the hand of his viſitation; who yet know it not. How many are there, who neither endeavour to ſearch out the cauſes, nor to fulfil the ends for which the Lord viſiteth them in his anger! I conceive this aſſertion, or ſuppoſition at leaſt of *Elihu's* concerning *Job*, both as to his not truſting God in his affliction, and not knowing his viſitation, was, though in part true, and occaſion'd on *Jobs* part, yet over-harſh and ſevere: nor was the inference which he made from it in the next verſe, leſs ſevere and harſh.

Verſ. 16. **Therefore doth Job open his mouth in vain, he multiplyeth words without knowledge.**

Here's the concluſion of *Elihu's* third Diſcourſe with *Job*,

Therefore doth Job open his mouth in vain.

Some connect this verſe with the former, according to the firſt reading of it, before mentioned, that giving a reaſon of this; But now his anger (or he in anger) hath viſited thee but a little, or nothing, *&c. Therefore thou, O Job, openeſt thy mouth in vain.* As if he had ſaid, *Becauſe the anger of God hath not puniſhed Job ſharply enough, nor in proportion to the multitude and greatneſs of his ſins, therefore he ſpeaks thus boldly and raſhly. Therefore doth* Job *open his mouth in vain.*

To open the mouth] is a Periphraſis of ſpeaking; As if he had ſaid, therefore *Job* ſpeaks in vain. To ſpeak in vain, or to uſe vain words, is to ſpeak to little or no purpoſe, as I have had occaſion to ſhew upon other places of this Bonk (*Chap.* 15. 2. *Chap.* 16. 3.) and therefore ſhall not ſtay upon it here. *Job* was no vain ſpeaker, he uſed to ſpeak words of weight, words of ſoberneſs and truth, yet was overborn by paſſion, though not to ſpeak vain words in the matter, yet to ſpeak or open his mouth in vain.

Therefore Job openeth his mouth in vain.] Conſider the Inference, *therefore*, that is, Firſt, Becauſe he doth not humble himſelf in a patient dependence upon God; Secondly, becauſe he doth not, as he ought, duly take notice of the purpoſe of God in viſiting him; Thirdly, becauſe he ſeems more ſollicitous and zealous in defending his own right and credit, than the honour and righteouſneſs of God; for all theſe Reaſons *he openeth his mouth in vain*, that is, he loſeth his labour, in all this diſcourſe, and might (as we ſpeak proverbially) have ſaved his breath to cool his broth: *Therefore doth Job open his mouth in vain.* Taking the Charge which *Elihu* brought againſt *Job* in the former verſe, to be well grounded and true, we may Note,

Oratio vana ſenſus atque ſapientiæ inops, tantum ſonitu verborum & querimoniarum clamoſa.

> *All our complaints to, and debates with God, as alſo our Apologies for our ſelves in affliction, and fruitleſs and ſucceſleſs, till we give Glory to God, and anſwer his purpoſes, in laying his hand upon us.*

Unleſs our hearts bow to God, he will not bow his ear to us. We only fill the air with words, we are but ſounding braſs and tinkling Cimbals in all we ſay to God, unleſs we do what God ſaith. *Elihu* ſuppoſing *Jobs* ſpirit yet unſubdued or not wrought and brought into a right frame under his affliction, might well ſay, *he openeth his mouth in vain*; and as it followeth to the ſame effect in the cloſe of this verſe and Chapter,

He multiplieth words without knowledge.

Here is another hard cenſure, upon this good, this holy, and wiſe man *Job*. Some Expoſitors fall heavy upon *Elihu*, as charging *Job* too far; he ſpake (ſay they) many things that were right, but not rightly; he ſpake many things that were true, but he did not ſpeak truly in fixing them upon *Job*; he ſpake all uprightly, but ſomewhat too rigorouſly: And indeed, if he had charged him ſo far, as to ſay, he had no knowledge at all, and had not opened his mouth at all to purpoſe, he had charged him beyond both truth and modeſty. But *Elihu*, who was ſet up by God for this very end to humble *Job*, had ground to tell him, that as to ſome things, he had both *opened his mouth in vain, and multiplied words without knowledge*; that is, he had ſpoken many words which ſeemed not to proceed from any ſound or well grounded knowledge; and I may give a fourfold ground of it.

Firſt, Becauſe he had not ſufficiently attended and magnified the Soveraignty of God, in laying thoſe afflictions upon him.

Secondly, Becauſe he had not, as he ought, ſate down quietly under the hand of God; but often called to know the cauſe, and that God would plainly tell him the reaſon, or give him an account why he ſuffered: Whereas he ſhould have remembred, that as many of the judgments of God are unſearchable, and his ways paſt finding out by man, ſo he hath reſerved ſome of them as ſecrets in his own breaſt, and will no more give any man an account of them, than any man ought to deſire an account of them.

Thirdly, Becauſe he had not more conſidered his ſin, or had not been ſo much in conſidering the greatneſs of his ſin, as he had been in ſetting forth the greatneſs of his integrity. For though it were true which *Job* ſpake, *that his way was upright*, and though God had given teſtimony to his uprightneſs and integrity in all his ways, yet he ſhould not have inſiſted ſo much upon that point, which had ſo much affinity with ſelf-boaſting, though he intended it only for ſelf clearing, or for the righting of himſelf. It had been more becoming him to have been aggravating his ſin, than ſetting forth his righteouſneſs; this was the point that *Elihu* ſtruck at, that he had juſtified himſelf too much, and judged himſelf too little. Yea *Job* was convinced of this at laſt, *Once have I ſpoken, but I will ſpeak no more*, that is, *of my own integrity*, or righteouſneſs.

Fourthly, He may be ſaid to have multiplied words without knowledge, becauſe he had ſpoken ſo much in the aggravation of his afflictions: 'Tis true, his afflictions were very great; yet *Elihu* cenſures him deſervedly, becauſe he took too much notice of them, complaining often and often, how heavy the hand of God was upon him, yea that God was an enemy to him; whereas he ſhould rather have lookt upon the viſitation of God, as light and eaſie, or (at leaſt) as but little comparatively, to what the Lord was able to lay upon him, or what his ſin might juſtifie God in laying upon him. *Elihu* having obſerved *Job* often and long ſtriking upon that ſtring, hightning his ſufferings and troubles, had reaſon enough not only to call him off from it, but to check him for it. And therefore let us remember and be admoniſhed, that in all our afflictions we ſhould not ſo much ſet forth the greatneſs of our ſuffering, as the greatneſs of the mercy of God; we ſhould look upon little mercies as great, (it ſhews an excellent ſpirit, when we heighten and greaten the mercy and goodneſs of God, even in little things) but we ſhould ſpeak of, and look upon our greateſt chaſtenings and afflictions as light, and little, *Job* failed ſomewhat in all theſe things, and in ſome of them his failings were great; and upon ſome of, if not upon all theſe grounds, I judge *Elihu* gave this judgment upon *Job*; *He openeth his mouth in vain, and multiplieth words without knowledge.*

Inſcitiam objicit quod pugnantia, ſaltem non ſatis inter ſe cohærentia conjunxit. Merl.

Job alſo yielded himſef thus faulty at laſt (*Chap.* 42. 3.) *Who is he* (there he ſpeaks of himſelf in a third perſon, *Who is he*) *that hideth counſel without knowledge; therefore have I uttered that I underſtood not, things too wonderful for me, which I knew not.*

I ſhall cloſe my thoughts upon this Chapter, with minding the Reader: Firſt, of *Elihu* his candidneſs towards *Job*, beyond what he found from his other friends; for *Elihu* chargeth *Job* here, only with vanity and inadvertency, not with any premeditated wickedneſs or blaſphemy, as *Eliphaz* had done, (*Chap.* 22. 13, 14.) Secondly, let me mind the Reader, of that liberty and plainneſs of ſpeech which *Elihu* uſed towards *Job*, in telling him of, and cenſuring him for his failings; as alſo of that patience, meekneſs, and equanimity, with which *Job* heard, received, and bare his ſharpeſt cenſures, not replying one word in paſſion, nor ſo much as pleading the leaſt excuſe for his former paſſionateneſs, but taking all in good part, and doubtleſs, improving all for his ſpiritual profit.

CHAP. XXXVI. Verſ. 1, 2, 3, 4.

1. *Elihu alſo proceeded and ſaid,*

2. *Suffer me a little, and I will ſhew thee, that I have yet to ſpeak on Gods behalf.*

3. *I will fetch my knowledg from afar, and will aſcribe righteouſneſs to my Maker.*

4. *For truly my words ſhall not be falſe: he that is perfect in knowledg is with thee.*

Elihu hath already made three addreſſes or ſpeeches to *Job*, and here he begins a fourth; this and the next Chapter are wholly ſpent in it, and are the iſſue of his whole diſcourſe with this ſorrowful man. In which we may conſider three parts.

Firſt, the Preface, or rather the Prefaces of his Speech.

Secondly, The Body or Subſtance of his Speech.

Thirdly, the Concluſion of it.

The Preface or Prefaces, the Introductions of this Diſcourſe of *Elihu* with *Job*, are contained in the four verſes of this Text under hand.

The Body of his Diſcourſe, is begun at the fifth verſe incluſively, and continued to the twenty third verſe of the next Chapter excluſively.

The Concluſion of all, is laid down in the two laſt verſes of the 37. Chapter.

In this copious Diſcourſe or long Oration, *Elihu* brings not any new aſſertion, or ſaying of *Job*, to be proved againſt him, nor doth he reprove *Job* for any new fault, but inſiſts upon the proof of what himſelf had aſſerted before, to ſhew that God is righteous, or to maintain the righteouſneſs of God; which he doth variouſly by looking through the various works of God, thoſe eſpecially which are wrought on high, the Meteors of the aiery region, the rain, the ſnow, the lightning, and the thunder, in and by all which, report is made, as of the Wiſdom and Power, ſo of the Juſtice and Righteouſneſs of God, who often declareth his mind to Mankind by thoſe Teachers, and proclaims by their mouths (as it were by ſound of Trumpet) how terrible he is, and will be to wilful and impenitent ſinners. That's the ſum of his Argumentation, or the Scope of this his laſt undertaking with *Job*.

Verſ. 1. **Elihu alſo proceeded, and ſaid.**

This is the Pen-man's Preface, he makes the connexion thus between the former and this diſcourſe; *Elihu alſo proceeded, and ſaid:* The Hebrew is, *Elihu added*, that is, to his former ſpeeches he added this. We render the word *he continued*, (Chap. 23. 1.) *Elihu alſo proceeded*, or *continued his ſpeech, and ſaid*; and what ſaid he? that begins at the next verſe.

Verſ. 2. **Suffer me a little, and I will ſhew thee, that I have yet to ſpeak on Gods behalf.**

Here begins *Elihu*'s own Preface, the aim or tendency of which is to gain *Job*'s attention and ſubſcription to what he had to ſay, and he ſuggeſteth four Arguments or Motives in theſe three verſes, to draw out the attention of *Job*, and likewiſe to gain his ſubmiſſion to what he ſhould lay before him.

כתר *Hoc ſignificatu Chaldaicum eſt.* Druſ.

Firſt, He gives him an Argument from his intended brevity, I'le be ſhort, I mean not to be tedious, I will not tire thee, nor wear out thy patience with a long Diſcourſe: *Suffer me a little.*

His ſecond Argument is taken from the greatneſs of the Perſon, in whoſe name and behalf he was about to ſpeak: As if he had ſaid, Hear me, for it is not my own cauſe, nor the cauſe of any man that I have in hand, I ſpeak for God, *Suffer me a little, and I will ſhew thee, what I have yet to ſay for God.*

His third Argument is taken from the Authority in which he would ſpeak. Hear me diligently, for what I have to ſay, is not only for God, but from God; *I will fetch my knowledg from afar, and aſcribe righteouſneſs to my Maker*, verſ. 3.

Nihil vulgare nihil non magnum dicam. Sanct.

Fourthly, Which is a neceſſary conſequent of the former two, he would be heard, becauſe he reſolved (and hoped he ſhould make good that reſolution) to ſpeak the truth, and nothing but the truth; he offers this at the fourth verſe, *For truly my words ſhall not be falſe, he that is perfect in knowledg is with thee.* Theſe are the four arguments contained in this Preface, by which *Elihu* like a wiſe perſwaſive Orator would draw on the attention of *Job* in hearing, and gain his approbation in receiving what he had to ſay. We may gather up the ſpirit and ſubſtance of all his arguments into this one.

> *He is to be patiently heard, and readily aſſented to, who intends to ſpeak but a little, and that little for God, and that little from God, and that in truth, and nothing but the truth.*
>
> *But what I am now about to ſpeak ſhall be but little, and that for God, and from God, and that in truth and nothing but the truth;*
>
> *Therefore I am to be heard patiently*, &c.

Suffer me a little.] Some render, *ſtand*, or *ſtay about me*; that is, have patience awhile, be not haſty. Impatient perſons will be gone, they will not abide by it, to hear another out. Our tranſlation reaches this ſenſe fully (according to the Idiom of our Language) *Suffer me a little.* The word which we render *little*, may refer either to the littleneſs or brevity of his Speech, or to the littleneſs of the ſpace or time which he would ſpend in ſpeaking; we joyn both here; as if he had ſaid, *I will not ſpeak much, and therefore I ſhall not take up much of your time.* The word is uſed by the Prophet with an addition, (*Iſa.* 10. 25.) *Yet a very little while, and the indignation ſhall ceaſe, and mine anger in their deſtruction*; that is, in the deſtruction of the enemies of my People. As if he had ſaid, *My wrath ſhall not abide, it ſhall not laſt long, nor continue upon my People; and when I have done with them, it ſhall be turned upon their enemies and oppreſſors, the Aſſyrians, and towards them it ſhall not ceaſe, till they are utterly overturned.* Take one inſtance more in the ſame Prophet, nearer the buſineſs of the Text in *Job.* (*Iſa.* 28. 10, 11.) *Line upon Line, Precept upon Precept, here a little, and there a little*, or, *now a little, and then a little.* They ſhall not be over burdened, they ſhall have it by drops, by inches, by little and little, as they are able to bear; juſt as Children and young Novices are taught, who cannot receive much at once but now a letter and then a letter, now a rule, and then a rule. Poſſibly *Elihu* perceived *Job* was not in a caſe to hear much, and therefore condeſcending to his weak condition by reaſon of his long ſufferings, he ſaith to him, *Suffer me a little.*

Sta circa me paululum. Mont.

זעיר *Parum modicum eſt temporis & quantitatis diſcretæ.*

Yet further, I conceive, when *Elihu* ſaith to *Job*, *Suffer me a little*, it may ſignifie one of theſe two things, or both of them. Firſt, That *Job* had given him ſome interruption as he was ſpeaking before. It is uſual with us, if when a man is ſpeaking, any interpoſe, to ſay, *Pray ſuffer me a while*, you ſhall have your liberty to object or reply what you pleaſe when I have done. Secondly, That he had ſhewed ſome diſſatisfaction with what *Elihu* had ſpoken fully out, or when he had done ſpeaking, and therefore he deſired that he might further clear the matter, and ſpeak out his mind, yet, at leaſt, a little more, if it might be to his full ſatisfaction, and the removal of all his doubts. *Suffer me a little.*

Lay all theſe things together, and they will teach us a point of prudence, ſo to compoſe and compact what we have to ſay, that it may not be grievous or burthenſom to thoſe that hear us, eſpecially not to thoſe who (as *Job* was) are already grieved in mind, or body, or both. As the Spirit of God, leſt the Faith and Patience of his People ſhould fail in ſufferings, telleth, yea aſſureth them, it is but a little while that they ſhall ſuffer; relief, or deliverance, and which is more, the Reliever, the Deliverer, is making haſt towards them, (*Heb.* 10. 27.) *Yet a little while, and he that ſhall come, will come, and will not tarry*; as the Spirit of God (I ſay) doth thus nurſe up the Faith of his People in ſuffering times: ſo we had need to nurſe up the attentions of our Hearers at all times, but then chiefly when they are under any kind of ſuffering, and ſay, yet a little, ſuffer us a little, we will not burthen you much. There are two things of admirable uſe in ſpeaking. Firſt, Brevity. Secondly, Perſpicuity. 'Tis true, that they that ſtrive to be ſhort, prove very obſcure; yet doubtleſs, 'tis no very hard thing, in moſt matters, to joyn perſpicuity with brevity, and to give a clear ſenſe in a few words. And though it be a truth, That when we have ſaid much of God, and of the things of God, we have ſaid but little, yea, that when we have ſpoken our all, there remains infinitely more to be ſpoken, yet we ſhould as much as may be, aim at brevity, eſpecially where the Perſon ſpoken to is weak, and unfitted by bodily indiſpoſitions to hear much. *Suffer me a little,*

רךח *Amplam & fuſiorem rei elucidationem & declarationem importat.* Bold.

And I will ſhew thee, &c.] That is, I will make all plain to thee, I will give thee a full declaration of my mind, and I hope of the truth, I will ſet all before thee, that ſo upon a review thou mayſt the eaſier apprehend my ſenſe, and give thy ſentence about it. *Day unto day uttereth ſpeech,* (ſaith *David,* Pſal. 19. 2.) *and night unto night ſheweth knowledg.* 'Tis this word, and it notes a very plain and evident manifeſtation of that which is offered to be known; the very night carrieth a light in it concerning the glory of God; *I will ſhew thee*

Dativus verbis additus indicat honorem & cultum, loqui Deo, *eſt non ſolum pro Deo defendendo, ſed etiam honorificando ſermonem aſſumere.* Bold. *Quia ſæpe arrogantes ſibi ſentiunt ſilentii reverentiam non deberi, Domini nonnunquam potentiam, de quo quaſi loquuntur inſinuant,* &c. Greg. in Loc.

That I have yet to ſpeak on Gods behalf.] Some read *for God,* or *to* God; that is for the glory of God, or to the honour of God, in the clearing up of his righteouſneſs, againſt thoſe blemiſhes which thy ſpeech, if not intentionally, yet conſequentially, hath caſt upon it; I will ſpeak that which may both convince thee, and juſtifie God. The Original Text ſtrictly is thus, *I will ſhew thee that there are yet words for God*; that is, I will make it appear that many things more may be ſaid and proved in purſuance of this Point, for thy further humiliation under the mighty hand of God, and for the Lord's vindication in all his dealings with thee. *I ſpeak for God:* Nor was this a meer pretence, or a vain boaſt, as I find ſome Expoſitors (I conceive very cauſeleſly) charging *Elihu,* as if here he publiſhed a zeal to ſpeak for God, that he might gain applauſe, or draw a reverence upon himſelf, in what he had to ſpeak. Some ('tis granted) have cryed up the Name of God, when they cloſely aimed at their own: But doubtleſs, *Elihu* was honeſt and plain hearted, when he ſaid, that what he had to ſay was for God; as he pretended, ſo he was really for God; *I have yet to ſpeak on Gods behalf,*

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *It is a mans honour, as well as his duty, to be an Advocate for God.*

As it is mans comfort, his choiceſt comfort, that God hath provided an Advocate for him, that he hath found out one to ſpeak to himſelf in our behalf, namely, Jeſus Chriſt; ſo it is both the duty and honour of man, to be an Advocate for God.

For if, Firſt, it be a great honour to know God, and to have God made known to us; *He hath not dealt ſo with any Nation* (as he dealt with the *Jews,* in giving them the knowledg of his mind) *and as for his Judgments they have not known them,* (Pſal. 147. 20.)

Secondly, If it be a greater honour to believe, and obey according to what we know, then

Thirdly, When we know, when we believe and obey, our greateſt honour of all is to plead for, and ſtand up in God's behalf, to undertake (being called) the defence of his truth and of his ways, to *contend earneſtly for the Faith, once* (by God) *delivered to the Saints,* which is indeed the only good contention. *Paul* ſaith (*Phil.* 1. 17.) *I am ſet for the defence of the Goſpel. Paul* was a Champion ready to cope and buckle with all comers for Chriſt or the Goſpel; and therefore at the 20. verſe of the ſame Chapter, he ſaith, the great thing he lookt after was, *That Jeſus Chriſt might be magnified in his body, whether by life, or by death.* There are three ways whereby we appear as Advocates on God's behalf; Firſt, By ſaying, or arguing; Secondly, By doing or practiſing; Thirdly, By enduring and ſuffering; and by all Chriſt is *magnified in our body*; the two former ways, by life, the latter by death, or by that which bears the Image of it. There's nothing needs a fuller meaſure of defence for God, than the Truth of God; and we never ſtand up ſo fully on God's behalf, as when we ſtand for his Truth, though our ſelves fall. To ſpeak and do on God's behalf, is moſt for our own behoof, though we get but ſmall fees or wages, yea though we loſe our all in this world for ſuch ſpeaking and doing. I could wiſh there were not too much cauſe of complaint, that God hath not many to ſpeak on his behalf, and that Chriſt Jeſus, our great, our only Advocate with God, hath few Advocates among men. When God as it were calls to us, *Who is on my ſide? who?* Truly there are but few that will appear for him, that is, for Truth, for Holineſs, for holy Worſhip; few appear for theſe things when differences ariſe about them. The corrupt part of the world in any Age will not, and the better part are not ſo free as they ought, to ſpeak and appear in ſuch caſes, on God's behalf. *The world* (ſaith St. *John* in the *Revelation*) *wondred after the beaſt*; and he cannot want Advocates, who hath ſo many Admirers. But as the Admirers, ſo the Advocates of the Lamb are not many, they are only a ſealed, a ſelected Company. We can be very warm in ſpeaking in our own cauſe, and on our own behalf; but how cold and dead-hearted are we when we come to ſpeak in the behalf of God! what a ſad withdrawing is there from that duty! God ſtands up often on the behalf of his People, and owns them in their need, yet few own God, or the Truth of God, when there is moſt need. Remember, as it is our honour, ſo our duty to ſpeak on God's behalf; and they will come to a bad reckoning at laſt both for their doings and ſpeakings, for the work both of hand and tongue, who have done and ſpoken much in their own behalf, and little or nothing on Gods.

Again, As *Elihu* makes this an Argument to provoke *Job* to hear him patiently,

Note, *They that ſpeak for God, ought to have audience.*

It is an Argument commanding attention, to ſay, I ſpeak from God, or for God. As when the Lord himſelf ſpeaks, all ought to bear; even thoſe things that have no ears, are call'd upon to hear him ſpeaking, or what is ſpoken from him, *Hear O Heavens, and hearken O Earth,* ſaith the Lord (*Iſa.* 1. 2.) Now, as when the Lord ſpeaks, all ſhould hear, ſo all ſhould hear when any thing is ſpoken on the Lords behalf; they that ſpeak for the Lord in truth, ſpeak alſo from the Lord. As truth bears the ſtamp and Image of God, ſo it tends to the glory of God. To reſiſt the truth of God, ſpoken by a true Meſſenger, is to refuſe the God of truth (*Luke* 10. 16.) *He that heareth you, heareth me, and he that deſpiſeth you, deſpiſeth me.* Not to hear thoſe that ſpeak for the Lord, and from the Lord, is indeed not to hear the Lord, and ſo they will be judged in the great day.

Thirdly, In that *Elihu* gathers up his ſpirits, girds up the loins of his mind upon this conſideration, that he was to ſpeak on God's behalf,

Note, *They who ſpeak for God, may ſpeak with courage, and be bold.*

If any thing can encourage us to, and in a work, 'tis this, that we engage for God. That which puts ſpirit and life into us, is our end and deſign in doing or ſpeaking; now this is the higheſt end or deſign, to argue for God; and therefore it may put the higheſt life, and livelieſt ſpirits into man, it may make him that is weak, ſtrong as a Gyant, and him that is fearful, bold as a Lion, when he can ſpeak in truth, that he is ſpeaking truth on God's behalf.

I will ſhew thee that I have yet to ſpeak.

That word (*yet*) hath a great Emphaſis in it; he had been ſpeaking in Gods behalf before, & ſays he, *I have yet to ſpeak.*

Obſerve, *They that truly begin to ſpeak for God, will perſevere in ſpeaking for God.*

As when we have ſpoken our all of God, and for God, there is yet more to be ſpoken of him, and for him (God is an everlaſting argument, a ſubject that can never be finiſhed) ſo they who have begun (with an honeſt heart and right aims) to ſpeak for God, will hold on and never give over to ſpeak for him, while they have a call to it. A ſoul toucht with true zeal, finds it hard to make an end, when once he hath begun ſo good, and ſo honourable a ſervice, as to ſpeak for God. So much of the ſecond Argument uſed by *Elihu* to gain attention: *Suffer me a little, and I will ſhew thee what I have yet to ſpeak on Gods behalf.* He ſpake for God. The third followeth.

Verſ. 3. **I will fetch my knowledg from afar, and will aſcribe Righteouſneſs to my Maker.**

This (I ſay) is *Elihu*'s third Argument brought to the ſame purpoſe as before.

I will fetch my knowledg from afar,] Or a great way off. From how far? There are four notions under which knowledg may be ſaid to be fetcht from afar.

למר־חוק *è longinquo, ex abundanti, ex linguæ idiomate adjicitur.* Merc. *Utar ſcientia quadam longe petita.* Vatab.

Firſt, That's knowledg *from afar*, which is of things out of ſight, or inviſible, of things which not only are not, but cannot be ſeen. As if *Elihu* had ſaid, *I will not diſcourſe about ſuch things as fall under common ſenſitive obſervation, I will not ſpeak of eye-objects, but of that and ſuch things, as no eye hath ſeen, nor can ſee, of God, and of divine things, the things of God.*

Secondly, *From afar*, may imply this, I will not treat about matters of a late date or Edition, but of things done long ſince. Thus *David* prefac'd his ſpeech, (*Pſ.* 68.2,3.) *I open my mouth in a Parable, I will utter dark ſayings of old, which we have heard, and known, and our fathers have told us.* Such things are far off from us, which were tranſacted and done a great while ago, or in former Ages, or in the firſt Age. As if *Elihu* had ſaid, *I'le fetch my knowledg, not from yeſterday, but from ancient times, from the very beginning of the Creation, or from the foundation of the world*; ſuch things are truly afar off; or, *I will fetch my knowledg from thoſe things which were before the beginning*; that's more truly afar off. Thus a learned Tranſlater gloſſeth upon the Text, *I will ſpeak even of thoſe things which were before any thing viſible was, even from Eternity.* The things of Eternity are moſt proper to ſet forth and illuſtrate the honour of God, and moſt lively expreſs his power and divine perfections.

Prout res fuit non tantum inde à ſeculis, ſed etiam ante omnia ſecula. Jun.

Thirdly, When he ſaith, *I will fetch my knowledg from afar*; the meaning may be this, It ſhall be of admirable and ſublime things, the reaſon of which could not eaſily be given, nor preſently found out. Thoſe things are far from us, which we cannot dive into, nor reach, nor fathom the bottom of, by the line of our underſtanding: Such are the ſecret counſels of God before the world was, and ſome ways of his providence in dealing with men ever ſince the world was, which are therefore ſaid to be unſearchable, and paſt finding out; and of theſe *Elihu* ſpeaks at large in this Chapter, to the 26. verſe.

Ex operibus Dei admirandis & ſublimibus. Merc.

Fourthly, *I will fetch my knowledg from afar*, may be thus underſtood, I will ſpeak to thee of things which I have much ſtudied for; I will not ſpeak what comes next, nor what lyes uppermoſt, but will beat my brains for what I ſay, in moſt ſerious meditation; I will not offer thee any raw or undigeſted ſentiments, but ſhall well and maturely conſider before I ſpeak; nor will I ſpeak what my weak reaſon only tells me is true, but what by light from above, and I hope by the ſpecial teachings of God, I know to be true: I will fetch my knowledg, or that which I make known from the depths of my heart, not from ſudden flaſhes and conceits of my head. In all theſe ſenſes poſſibly *Elihu* was reſolved to fetch his knowledg from afar, he would not take up, nor trouble *Job* with things that were obvious, common, or eaſie to be had, but bring what he had to ſay out of the cloſeſt Cabinets, and utter conceptions, which were moſt remote from the common road.

Ex remotis ſed neceſſariis principiis agam, non noviter excogitata ſed à principio cognita, & accuratè, præmeditata proferam. Scult.

There is yet another apprehenſion concerning *Elihu*'s purpoſe, when he ſaith, *I will fetch my knowledg from afar*, with which I rather cloſe than any of the former; that his meaning was to ſpeak to *Job* of thoſe things, which as they are not eaſily comprehended, becauſe the ſublimeſt works of God in nature, ſo becauſe they might ſeem far from the preſent matter; As if he had ſaid, We have been arguing all this while about God's diſpenſations here below, but now I'le ſpeak of things that are wrought above, of thoſe both uſeful and dreadful or terrible Meteors, the ſnow and rain, the winds, the lightning and the thunder; theſe things may be thought very foreign and heterogeneal, very far off from the buſineſs in hand, but I will ſpeak to thee of theſe things, even of the works of God in the Heavens, in the Air, in the Chambers of the Clouds, and I will convince thee by what God doth there above, of his righteouſneſs, in what he doth here below. The wiſdom and power of God, in ordering thoſe natural works in the Clouds, and in the Air prove that man hath no cauſe to complain about his providential works on earth: For as thoſe wonderful viſible works of God are real demonſtrations of thoſe inviſible things of God, his eternal power and Godhead, ſo they declare both his righteouſneſs and goodneſs, his wrath and mercy towards the children of men in the various diſpenſations of them. And ſo although thoſe things might be thought far from the point which *Elihu* ſuppoſed *Job* queſtioned, at leaſt by conſequences, the righteouſneſs of God in his ſevere dealings with him, yet indeed they contained principles or general grounds, by which that which *Elihu* had engaged to maintain might be fully confirmed and unanſwerably concluded. This, I conceive, is the ſpecial *afar off*, that *Elihu* intended to fetch his knowledg from, as may appear in the cloſe of this Chapter, and in the next, quite thorow. *I will fetch my knowledg from afar.*

Hence Note, Firſt, *The natural works of God, or the works of God in nature, are to be ſtudied and ſearched out.*

As the works of grace are afar off from all men, in a ſtate of nature; ſo the works of God in nature, are very far off from the moſt of men; they know little of God's works in the Heavens, or in the Earth, in the Sea, or in the Air, yet all theſe are to be ſearched out with diligence by the ſons of men.

Secondly, Note, *The works of Creation and Providence, ſhew that God is, and what he is.*

We may ſee who God is, in what he hath done; we ſay *things are in their working, as they are in their being.* God hath done like himſelf in all that he hath done; his own works (as well as his own Word) ſpeak him beſt, (*Pſal.* 19. 1.) *The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament ſheweth his handy-work*, &c. The rain and ſnow declare the power of God, thunder and lightning ſhew what he can do.

Thirdly, Note, *Knowledg is worth our longeſt travel, it will quit coſt to go far for it.*

We ſay, Some things are *far fetcht, and dear bought*; true knowledg, eſpecially the knowledg of Jeſus Chriſt deſerves to be far fetcht, and it cannot be too dear bought; we muſt drive a ſtrange kind of trade with the truths of God; we muſt be always buying, and never ſelling, yet that's a commodity will never lye upon our hands, never brayd. If we were to fetch our knowledg from afar, as to the diſtance of place, we ſhould not think much of it. The Queen of the South fetcht her knowledg from afar, ſhe came a very great way, undertook a long journey to hear the wiſdom of *Solomon*; in that ſenſe we ſhould be willing to fetch our knowledg from afar; yet ſome will ſcarce ſtep over the threſhold to fetch in knowledg. It is propheſied (*Dan.* 12. 4.) *Many ſhall run to and fro, and knowledg ſhall be increaſed.* Knowledg ought to be travell'd for as much as any thing in the world. We fetch our gold and ſilver, and rich commodities afar off, we go to the ends of the Earth for them, through a thouſand deaths and dangers; we ſail within three inches of death for many months together, to fetch worldly riches from afar off; and ſhall we not fetch knowledg afar off, how far ſoever it is from us in diſtance of place, and what labour or coſt ſoever we beſtow to fetch it in? *I will fetch my knowledg from afar.*

I will aſcribe righteouſneſs to my Maker.

Theſe words contain the ground, purpoſe or deſign of *Elihu* in this whole diſcourſe, which was to maintain the righteouſneſs of God; *I* (ſaith he) *will aſcribe* (the Hebrew ſtrictly is *give*) *righteouſneſs to my Maker*; here's a very great undertaking, to give righteouſneſs to God; God gives and imputes righteouſneſs to us; 'Tis the ſum of the Goſpel, that God imputes or aſcribes righteouſneſs to ſinners: Now as God in a Goſpel ſenſe, gives righteouſneſs to us, both the righteouſneſs of juſtification, which is lodged in the perſon of Chriſt, and the righteouſneſs of ſancti-

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ſanctification, which is lodged in our own perſons, though the ſpring and principle of that alſo be in Chriſt ſtill; ſo we muſt give righteouſneſs to God; that is, both believe and declare or publiſh to all the world, that God is juſt, and give him the praiſe of his juſtice, which is the beſt and nobleſt work we can do on God's behalf in this world. There are two moſt excellent works, which indeed contain all our work in this world.

Firſt, To do righteouſly, or act righteouſneſs our ſelves. Secondly, To aſcribe righteouſneſs unto God.

But you will ſay, what is it to give or aſcribe righteouſneſs to God?

I anſwer, It is to acknowledg, that God is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works. 'Tis man's duty to juſtifie God, to aſcribe that righteouſneſs to him, which is properly his own. 'Tis God's grace, his free-grace to juſtifie man, to aſcribe that righteouſneſs to him which is properly anothers. *David* made profeſſion of the former as his duty, (*Pſal.* 51. 3, 4.) *I acknowledg my tranſgreſſions, and my ſin is ever before me; that thou mighteſt be juſtified in thy ſayings, and clear when thou judgeſt:* That is, I'le confeſs my ſin, that all the world may ſee the righteouſneſs of thy dealings with me, though thou ſhouldſt deal never ſo ſeverely with me, though thou ſhouldſt ſpeak the bittereſt things againſt me, and pronounce a ſentence of heavieſt judgment upon me. The Apoſtle referring to this place in the *Pſalms*, quotes the words in a paſſive form and ſenſe, not of God judging man, but of God judged by man, (*Rom.* 3. 4.) *Let God be true, but every man a lyar; as it is written, that thou mighteſt be juſtified in thy ſayings, and mighteſt overcome when thou art judged.* As if *David* had ſaid, according to the Apoſtles reading out of the Septuagint, (which yet as learned *Beza* in his Annotations affirmeth, ought to be expounded actively, as if, I ſay, *David* had thus expreſſed himſelf) Lord, I know ſome men will take the boldneſs to queſtion thee, yea and to condemn thee of rigour, when they ſee thy afflicting hand heavy upon me; therefore, either to prevent ſuch raſh judgments of man, or that thou mayſt gain the day, and have the better in the opinion of all good and wiſe men, over thy Judges; Behold, I here freely confeſs my great ſin, with all the aggravating circumſtances of it, and ſurely they who know, or ſhall hear how greatly I have ſinned againſt thee, cannot but juſtifie thee, how great ſoever my ſufferings may be. To ſpeak thus is to aſcribe righteouſneſs unto God, in all that he doth, whether with reſpect to his publick judgments upon Nations, or particular, upon perſons, in any way of affliction he is pleaſed, and ſeeth need, to exerciſe them with.

Is qui peccat & confitetur Deo peccatum juſtificat Deum, cedens et vincenti & ob eo gratiam ſperans. Ambroſ. l. 6. in Luc.

Iſtud ἐν τῷ κρίνεσθαί σε, active meo quidem judicio neceſſario explicandum eſt, ut Græca Hebræis reſpondeant. Bez. in Rom. 3. 4.

And the reaſon why *Job* was here charged by *Elihu* as a perſon not giving righteouſneſs to God, was, becauſe he did not ſit down quietly and patiently under his hand in ſufferings, but muttered and complained as a man unſatisfied with, though he did not openly murmur againſt the dealings of God with him. To give righteouſneſs to God, is not only, not to accuſe him as unrighteous and unjuſt, but to thank him for, and honour him in all that he doth, or to ſpeak good of his Name, under all our ſufferings of evil. Further, to aſcribe righteouſneſs to God, is to juſtifie him, though he give never ſo much proſperity to unjuſt and wicked men (*Jer.* 12. 1.) *Righteous art thou, O Lord, when I plead with thee; yet let me talk with thee of thy judgments. Wherefore doth the way of the wicked proſper? wherefore are all they happy that deal very treacherouſly?* Some begin to think, ſurely God is not righteous, when they ſee the unrighteous proſper, and at reſt, while righteous ones are afflicted with continual hurries and troubles; but whatſoever God doth with us or ours, whatſoever peace he gives to wicked men, whatſoever trouble to good men, he is ſtill righteous; and to acknowledg this ſincerely, is actually to do what *Elihu* undertakes to do, even to aſcribe righteouſneſs to *our Maker*. And ſurely that knowledg will quit the coſt, though we have fetcht it very far, by which we are taught, and have learn'd to aſcribe righteouſneſs (for that's the aſcribing of glory) to our Maker. *I* (ſaith *Elihu*) *will aſcribe righteouſneſs*

To my Maker.] There's ſomething in that expreſſion very conſiderable; *Elihu* doth not ſay, I will aſcribe righteouſneſs to God, but ſpeaks of God under that relation, *His Maker*. The word ſignifies not only in general to make or create, of which work *Moſes* treats in the firſt of *Geneſis*, but it notes the doing of a thing, firſt, with diligence, ſecondly, with skill and great intention of mind, 'tis to draw all our ſpirits together in a work, as Artiſts do; This divine art or skill did chiefly appear and ſhine forth in the creation or formation of man. Not that God ſtrains himſelf in any work, but he ſpeaks thus, to ſhew that the higheſt perfections and exactneſs imaginable, yea beyond all imagination, were centred and laid into the works of God, or the things that he hath made, *will aſcribe righteouſneſs to*

פעל *importat facere aliquid cum intentione, diligentia, energia, quæ valde enitet in formatione hominis.* Bold.

My Maker.] He doth not ſay, *to the Maker of man*, or to the Maker of Heaven and Earth, but to *my Maker*; he appropriates that common work of God to himſelf. God is the maker of every creature, the leaſt worm, the leaſt fly is of his making, yet *Elihu* ſpeaks of it as his peculiar priviledg, *my Maker*.

There's a great Emphaſis of affection in thoſe Pronouns, *Mine, Thine, His*. *Elihu* in this *my* intimates a friendly ſweetneſs and cloſeneſs of relation between God and him. To call another *Mine*, is more than to call him a friend of mine; And to ſay, God is *my Maker*, is more than to ſay, He is the maker of me, or the maker of my ſoul and body. 'Tis the Dialect of lovers: whom we love we call *Ours*. It is ſo in the writings of Heathen Poets and Orators. One of them ſaid, *I muſt do this with the gifts of mine*, that is, of my friends; and another, *I only am my to mine*. Much love reigns in this language of faith up and down the Scriptures, chiefly in thoſe raptures of divine delight between Chriſt and the Spouſe in the Book of *Canticles*. *Elihu* is here greatly affected, as with the righteouſneſs of God in all his works, ſo in the workmanſhip beſtowed on him: *I* (ſaith he) *will aſcribe righteouſneſs to my Maker*.

Delicata ſunt hæc pronomina Meum, Tuum, Suum, *& plena affectionis; pronomen hoc ſubſtantive ponitur pro amico. Dulciſq; meorum reliquias.* Virg. Æneid. 4. *Ego meorum ſolus ſum meus.* Terent.

Hence note, Firſt, *God is the Maker of man.*

I ſhall not ſtay upon that.

Secondly, In that he holds himſelf engag'd to ſtand up for God as his Maker,

Note, *The common benefits of God to man, ſhould be acknowledged, and he honoured for them.*

God hath made man and beaſt, and he preſerves man and beaſt. A godly man ſees peculiar mercy to him in both, though they be common mercies. *General mercies ſhould have, they highly deſerve, ſpecial remembrances.* All the works of God are to be lookt to as perſonal engagements. God hath made others as well as thee, yet ſo remember him to be *thy Maker, as if he had made none but thee*; and indeed every one that is made, is as much beholden to God, as if he alone had been made. As ſome things which are made in common for all men (the Sun, the Air, *&c.*) are ſo made, that no man could have more of them than he hath, if they had been made for him only: So though it be common to all men, that God is their Maker, yet no man could have more in his making, if none had been made but he. One of the Ancients repreſents all the creatures offering themſelves to man, in general, and ſpeaking theſe three words: Firſt, *Receive us cheerfully*, for we were made for thee; Secondly, *Render thanks for us daily*, for we are all made uſeful unto thee; Thirdly, *Take heed you do not abuſe us*, for you muſt give an account to our Maker and yours, how you have uſed us. And ſurely, as we ſhould ſtrive to honour God for all things which he hath made, ſo moſtly for our own making. The Lord is often (in the Old Teſtament eſpecially) ſpoken of under this Relation (*Pſal.* 121. 2.) *Our help ſtandeth in the Name of the Lord, who made Heaven and Earth.* (So *Pſal.* 124. 8. *Pſal.* 95. 6. *Pſal.* 146. 6.) Still God is remembred as the Maker of all things; and he is thus remembred, not only in oppoſition to Idols, or falſe gods, who are gods made by man, not the makers of man, but God is thus remembred and recorded in Scripture, to preſerve a grateful memory of God in man, as he is the Maker of man. He that forgets God as his Maker, will never remember, much leſs anſwer and accompliſh the ends for which he was made.

Accipe, Redde, Cave.

Thirdly, *I will aſcribe righteouſneſs to* [**My Maker.**]

Note, *A godly man takes God as his own, and appropriates him by Faith in all his Relations.*

Faith takes not only a ſhare in God, but all of God; *My God, my Father, my Maker, my Redeemer, are ſtrains of Faith.*

A Believer doth as it were ingroſs God to himſelf, yet deſires and endeavours, that all, as well as himſelf, may have their part and portion in God, yea God for their portion. *Job* ſaid (*Chap.* 19. 25.) *I know that my Redeemer liveth:* He ſpake as if he had got a Redeemer, not only to, but by himſelf. Thus alſo holy *Paul* of Chriſt, (*Gal.* 2. 22.) *Who loved me, and gave himſelf for me*; as if he had been given for him alone, and loved none but him. This is the higheſt work of Faith, and 'tis the ſignification of our hotteſt love to God, it ſhews endearedneſs of affection to him, as well as nearneſs and clearneſs of intereſt in him, when we thus take him as our own Saviour, Father, *Maker. I will aſcribe righteouſneſs to my Maker.*

Obſerve, Fourthly, *He who is the Maker of all men, can be unrighteous to no man, nor is liable to the cenſure of any man, whatever he doth.*

'Tis impoſſible that he who made us ſhould wrong or injure us, and that upon a twofold Principle; Firſt, Of the reſpect he hath for juſtice towards all thoſe whom he hath made. God is ſo tender, that he doth not *willingly*, (or with his heart) *afflict, nor grieve the children of men, to cruſh under his feet all the Priſoners of the earth* (Lam. 3. 33, 34.) much leſs will he (as it followeth, *verſ.* 35, 36.) *turn away the right of a man before the face of the moſt High*, that is, before his own face, who is the Moſt High: As if it had been ſaid, The Lord will not pervert Judgment in any man's caſe that comes before him. Or, if we take thoſe words *before the face of the Moſt High*, as denoting the higheſt Judicatory on Earth, as our Margin intimates, putting there, for *Moſt High, A Superiour*; then the meaning is, The Lord doth not approve, that any earthly Judg, though Supream, or moſt Superiour, ſhould turn aſide the right of a man, how inferiour ſoever; for, as the 36. verſe hath it, *To ſubvert a man in his cauſe, the Lord approveth not*; or, as the Hebrew is rendred, *ſeeth not*, that is, he ſeeth it not with approbation, but indeed with deteſtation, and will ſeverely puniſh ſuch ſubverters of Juſtice. Secondly, It is impoſſible that he who hath made us ſhould wrong or injure us, upon the principle of his Soveraignty over all thoſe whom he hath made. He that gives all men their being, he that gives all to all men that are in being, can be unrighteous to no man, whatſoever he taketh from him, or doth with him. We have *Job* in the beginning of this Book (*Chap.* 1. 21.) aſcribing righteouſneſs to God his Maker upon this reaſon, or principle, *The Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken away; bleſſed be the Name of the Lord.* It is he that made me a man, 'tis he who once made me a rich man, a great man, *the greateſt man of all the men of the Eaſt*, (Chap. 1. 3.) What if now he hath leſſened me, and left me little or nothing? what if he hath now made me a mean man, a poor man (in account) a no man? what if God hath now ſtript me naked, and taken all from me? He hath taken nothing but what he gave; why then ſhould I take it ill at his hands, or have ſo much as an ill thought of him? The Lord gives, and the Lord takes; there's no unrighteouſneſs in all this. If God ſhould utterly undo us, he doth us no wrong; if he ſhould as it were, unmake us, let us conſider he is our Maker, and then we muſt ſay, there is no unrighteouſneſs in him, yea we ſhall be ready (with *Elihu* in the Text) to aſcribe righteouſneſs unto him. And therefore, as a Corollary from the whole.

Note, Fifthly, *Whatſoever God doth with us, or others, we ought to maintain the honour of God, and retain good thoughts of him, both as righteous and good.*

Though Heaven and Earth be moved, though the World be full of confuſion and unrighteouſneſs, yet we muſt aſcribe righteouſneſs to God. Whatſoever or whoſoever falls to the duſt, the Honour and Juſtice of God muſt not. Thus far of *Elihu*'s third Argument for attention; the fourth is at hand in the next verſe.

Verſ. 4. **For truly my words ſhall not be falſe; he that is perfect in knowledg is with thee.**

As if he had ſaid, *I am purpoſed to ſpeak the truth, and nothing but the truth; therefore hear me. Truly my words ſhall not be falſe.* He gives aſſurance for, or warrants the truth of his words, while he ſaith, they ſhall not be falſe. Negatives in Scripture often carry a ſtrong affirmation. *The father of a fool hath no joy*, ſaith *Solomon* (Prov. 17. 21.) that is, he ſhall have a great deal of ſorrow. When the Scripture denieth forgiveneſs to any ſort of impenitent ſinners, or ſaith, their ſin ſhall not be forgiven, the ſenſe is, they ſhall be puniſhed. When we ſay proverbially, *Goods ill gotten ſhall not proſper*, the meaning is, they ſhall periſh, and do him miſchief that hath gotten them; not only ſhall he not thrive with them, but they ſhall ruine and undo him; his goods ill gotten ſhall do him no good when the evil day is come, much leſs ſhall they be able, or he by them, to prevent the coming of an evil day. Once more: When we ſay, *Such a thing is not ill done*, our intendment is, 'tis very well done, excellently done. So here, when *Elihu* ſaith, *Truly my words ſhall not be falſe*, his meaning is, I will ſpeak truth, and truth to the higheſt, I will ſpeak nothing but what ſhall endure the Touchſtone and the Teſt; I will not offer thee a ſyllable of falſhood; what I alledg and urge either for God, or againſt thee, ſhall not be fetcht or hammer'd out of my own brain, and ſo ſubject to error and miſtake, but ſuch as God, who cannot err (by whoſe Spirit, and in whoſe ſtead, I ſpeak unto thee) hath inſpired me with, or taught me for thy conviction and inſtruction.

Non eſt bonum, pro piſſimum eſt; ſic non remittetur ei, i. e. punietur. Druſ.

Further, When he ſaith, *Truly, my words ſhall not be falſe*, we may take it two ways: Firſt, As to the matter ſpoken; Secondly, As to the mind of the Speaker: when truth is thus ſpoken, 'tis truly ſpoken; thus much *Elihu* engag'd for: As if he had ſaid, *The matter that I ſpeak, ſhall be true, and I will ſpeak it in truth, or with a true mind and heart; I will not ſpeak any thing to flatter thee, nor for my own ends, to trouble thee; my words ſhall be candid and ſincere, as well as ſound and orthodox: I will ſpeak the truth, and ſpeak it in truth.* Some ſpeak that which is falſe (as I may ſay) in the ſincerity of their heart, thinking it to be true; and others ſpeak truth in the falſeneſs of their heart, that is, they have ſome by-ends in ſpeaking it, from both thoſe *Elihu* here clears himſelf, and with both theſe *Job* had taxed his Friends, *Chap.* 13. 7. *Chap.* 17. 5.

Hence obſerve, *It is the higheſt Commendation of a Speaker to ſpeak truth, and the higher the Truth, the higher the Commendation of the Speaker.*

Words can have no greater beauty, nor richer ornament than Truth; and Truth is never more adorn'd than by plainneſs of Speech, nor more beautiful than when (like our firſt Parents in innocency) 'tis naked. To ſpeak *truly*, is much more honourable, than to ſpeak *eloquently*; one plain word of plain truth, is better than a long painted Oration, tinctured with the leaſt error. What then are long Orations, and large Volumes, which have upon the matter, as many errors as words, as many lies and flatteries, as Periods and Sentences! at beſt, ſome in putting off their words, do as others in putting off their wares, mingle good and bad together. 'Tis dangerous to make ſuch medlies. As we muſt not put bad for good, darkneſs for light, bitter for ſweet, falſhood for Truth, ſo we muſt not blend or put bad among the good, nor mix darkneſs with light, nor falſhood with Truth. And as 'tis dangerous to mix any falſhood of Doctrine with Truth, ſo to mix falſhood of Heart with Truth of Doctrine, or to ſpeak Truth, but not in truth. The Apoſtle is zealous in proteſting againſt falſhood, and profeſſing for the Truth in both theſe reſpects; Firſt, as to the truth of the Doctrine, or of the matter ſpoken (2 *Cor.* 2. 17.) *We are not as many, which corrupt* (or deal deceitfully with) *the Word of God*; we do not adulterate or mix it with our own imaginations or inventions; which he further confirms (*Chap.* 4. 2.) *We have renounced the hidden things of diſhoneſty, &c.* Secondly, As he ſpake truth of Doctrine, ſo he ſpake it in the truth of his heart, as he aſſured the *Corinthians*, in both the places laſt mentioned; we are, not only no corrupters of the Word of God, *but as of ſincerity* (there's truth of heart) *as of God, in the ſight of God, ſpeak we in Chriſt.* And again, *We walk not in craftineſs, nor handle the Word of God deceitfully, but by manifeſtation of the truth, commend our ſelves to every mans Conſcience, in the ſight of God.* He makes a proteſt yet once more in the ſame tenour, and ſomewhat higher, (2 *Cor.* 13. 8.) *We can do nothing againſt the Truth*; O bleſſed Impotency! *but for the Truth*; O bleſſed Ability! Who would not be weak againſt the Truth? who would not be ſtrong for the Truth, which is ſtrongeſt of all, and will prevail? And as we ſhould ſpeak nothing againſt the Truth, ſo nothing but the Truth, nothing beſide the Truth, nothing that may be any blemiſh, or turn to the leaſt diſſervice of the Truth; yea, though it ſhould be (as we hope) for the ſervice of that excellent and amiable thing called *Peace*; a thing ſo excellent, that we cannot over-bid, nor pay too much for it, unleſs we part with, and pay away truth for it: and if ever we do ſo, we over-bid for it, and over-buy it indeed, and ſhall have cauſe at laſt to repent of our bargain, and cry out, *we have burnt our Fingers*, and it would be well if that were all. Therefore let us remember the Lord's admonition by his Prophet (*Zech.* 8. 19.) *Love the Truth and Peace*: Firſt, Truth, then Peace. Nor was there ever any true Lover of Truth, that was not alſo a Lover of Peace; nor any true Lover of Peace, but was ſuch a Lover of Truth, that he could lay down or let go, his Peace for it. One of the Ancients tells us, There ought to be ſo great a love of Truth in us, that, whatſoever we ſay to be true, ſhould be as much as if we had ſworn it to be true, or had delivered it upon Oath. There is no more goodneſs in what we ſay, than there is Truth in what we ſay. A Lye in report of Diſcourſe, and a Lye in Doctrine or Diſpute, are both abominable to God, and ſhould be ſo to man; therefore *Elihu* heartily diſclaims it, *Truly my words ſhall not be falſe.*

Tantus ſit in te veritatis amor, ut quicquid dixeris, juratum putes. Hieron.

He that is perfect in knowledg is with thee.

This Aſſertion ſuits well with the fore-going Proteſtation: He that is perfect in knowledg, will not, cannot utter words of falſhood. But who is that? and where to be found? Some underſtand it of God; *He that is perfect in knowledg is with thee*, that is, *God is with thee* in this buſineſs; and without all controverſie, it may be ſaid of God, in the higheſt and ſtricteſt ſenſe of Perfection, *He is perfect in knowledg. The Lord is a God of knowledg* (1 Sam. 2. 3.) as well as a God of mercy; he is as knowing, as he is merciful, perfect in both. Taking the Text ſo; 'tis as if *Elihu* had ſaid, *Thou hadſt need, O Job, look to thy ſelf, and diligently attend to what is ſpoken, for thou haſt not to do with man, with one like thy ſelf only, but thou haſt to do with God.* Some inſiſt much, yea, altogether upon this Interpretation of the word; *God is with thee*, therefore receive truth; God cannot be deceiv'd, nor doth he deceive, therefore hearken and obey. Yet *Elihu* might ſpeak thus with reſpect to the meſſage brought by himſelf; for when man ſpeaking in the Name of God ſpeaks the mind of God to us, it may be ſaid, God is with us, and ſpeaks to us by him. The Apoſtle ſaith (2 *Cor.* 13. 5.) *If any require a Sign or Token of Chriſt ſpeaking in me.* Chriſt ſpeaks, while his Meſſengers and Miniſters ſpeak truth. The ſame Apoſtle teſtified of the *Theſſalonians*, that they took his ſpeaking as God's ſpeaking, (1 *Theſſ.* 2. 13.) *When ye received the Word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of man, but (as it is in truth) the Word of God.* And therefore I conceive we are to underſtand the words of *Elihu* concerning *Elihu* himſelf, yet not as in himſelf, but as fitted for, and aſſiſted in the work by God, *He that is perfect in knowledg is with thee*; As if he had ſaid, *Though I am but a young man, yet thou haſt not to deal with an ignorant man, with one who is but a novice or ſmatterer in the things of God, with one that is yet in the Elements of Divine knowledg and learning; He that is perfect in knowledg is with thee.* And it is conceiv'd that *Elihu* ſpeaks thus in the third perſon for Modeſties ſake, as the Apoſtle *Paul* alſo did (2 *Cor.* 12. 2, 3.) *I knew a man in Chriſt, &c.* He doth not ſay, I *Paul* was *caught up to the third Heaven, and heard unſpeakable words, &c.* but I knew ſuch a man. Thus *Elihu* here; and doubtleſs he had been liable to cenſure, as arrogating too much to himſelf, had he ſpoken in the firſt perſon, *I that am perfect in knowledg am with thee*: Therefore he covers and conceals himſelf by expreſſing it in the third perſon, *He that is perfect in knowledg is with thee*; that is, He that is with thee to convince thee of thy former errour, and to give thee better counſel, *is perfect in knowledg.*

תמים דעות *Integer ſcientiarum, vel integer ſcientiis.* Heb.

But is that true? was *Elihu*, or is any man perfect in *knowledg*, or (as the Hebrew hath it plurally) in *knowledges*, that is, in all kinds of knowledg, or in all the degrees of knowledg of any kind? Surely, No man is perfect in the knowledg of any one thing, much leſs of all things, (1 *Cor.* 13. 9, 12.) *We know in part, and propheſie in part, we ſee but darkly, &c.* How then can it be ſaid of *Elihu, He is perfect in knowledg*? I anſwer, There is a twofold perfection. Firſt, Abſolute. Secondly, Comparative. There's no man living here below hath abſolute perfection of knowledg; yet one man being compar'd with another, may be ſaid to be perfect in knowledg, another not: There are various degrees of knowledg in man; the higheſt degree of knowledg compar'd with the loweſt, may be call'd perfect knowledg. Thus we are to underſtand *Elihu* ſpeaking at the rate of a creature, not of God, or as becomes and is commenſurable with the ſtate of man in this life, whoſe beſt perfection in knowledg, is to know his own imperfections.

Secondly, *Elihu* ſpeaks not of any perfection of knowledg, but of being perfect, that is, ſincere, in knowledg. As if he had ſaid, What I know, I know with an honeſt upright heart and intention: I do not know to abuſe thee or others, I make not uſe of my knowledg to deceive the ſimple, but to inform them. Some are crafty and cunning in knowledg, not perfect in it; they are knowing as the Devil is knowing, who takes his name *Dæmon* from his knowledg, yet he is not perfect, but corrupt in his knowledg, he is ſubtil, and full of devices to do miſchief with his knowledg. That's perfect knowledg, which is ſincerely imployed for the glory of God, and the good of thoſe with whom we have to do. So then, the meaning of *Elihu* may be ſumm'd up thus in ſhort; *He that is with thee* (that is my ſelf) *will deal with thee to the beſt of my underſtanding, and in the Integrity of my heart.* This alſo ſuits well with the former part of the verſe, *Truly my words ſhall not be falſe.*

Hence note, Firſt, *Though no man knoweth all things, yet ſome know much more than others.*

One is a Babe, and needs milk; another is a grown Chriſtian, and can, not only receive, but give the ſtrong meat of inſtruction, (*Heb.* 5. 13, 14.) Some cannot underſtand wiſdom, when ſpoken by the perfect, they know not how to learn, yea, ſome (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, 2 *Tim.* 3. 7.) *are ever learning, but never able to come to the knowledg of the truth.* Others can *ſpeak wiſdom among them that are perfect* (2 Cor. 2. 6.) that is, they are got to the higheſt Form of Goſpel-knowledg, and are fit to be Teachers.

Secondly, Note, *Whether we know little or much, this is the perfection of our knowledg, honeſtly to imploy and improve it, for the information of the ignorant, and the conviction of thoſe who are in errour.*

If we have but one Talent of knowledg, yet if we uſe it well, we are perfect in knowledg. They who have digged (as they think to the heart, and dived to the bottom of all Sciences, yea into the heart of the Scriptures too, yet if they keep their knowledg to themſelves, or know only for themſelves, if they have baſe ends and by-reſpects, in vending their knowledg, if they trade with their knowledg for ſelf only, or to do miſchief to others, their knowledg is not only utterly imperfect, but, as to any good account, nothing, or none at all. As he that ſlothfully hides his Talent, ſo he, who either vain-gloriouſly ſhews it, or deceitfully uſeth it, ſhall be numbred among thoſe who have none, (*Matth.* 25. 29. *Luke* 8. 18.)

Laſtly, *Elihu* ſpeaking of himſelf in a third perſon,

Note, *Modeſty is a great vertue, and the grace of all our Graces.*

He that ſaith, I am perfect in knowledg, knoweth not what is neareſt him, himſelf. We ſhould uſe our knowledg as much as we can, but ſhew it as little as we can, unleſs in the uſing of it. 'Tis beſt for us to take little notice of our own goodneſs, and not to know our own knowledg. Uſually they have but little, who are much in ſhewing (unleſs much called to it) what they have. Empty veſſels ſound moſt, and ſhallow brooks make the loudeſt noiſe in paſſage. *Moſes* put a veil upon his face, as unwilling to have that Divine beauty ſeen. While we are provoked, and even neceſſitated to diſcover our knowledg, we ſhould cover our ſelves. It is our duty to impart our knowledg, but our folly to proclaim it.

Thus far *Elihu* hath been preparing his Patient *Job*, to receive his Medicinal inſtructions; he is now ready to adminiſter them, for the cure and quieting of his diſtempered mind.

VERS. 5, 6.

Behold, God is mighty, and deſpiſeth not any: he is mighty in ſtrength and wiſdom.

He preſerveth not the life of the wicked: but giveth right to the poor.

ELihu having done prefacing, proceeds to the matter of his diſcourſe, wherein he giveth a large deſcription, of the power, wiſdom, and juſtice of God, in his diſpoſure and government of the world; Firſt, In things Civil, which he proſecutes to the 26. verſe of this Chapter. Secondly, In things Natural, which he handles to the 23. verſe of the following Chapter. He begins in theſe two verſes, with an excellent *Elogium*, or with the high praiſe of God in his divine perfections, into which he leads us with a command of attention, or ſerious conſideration, yea of wonder and admiration.

Verſ. 5. **Behold, God is mighty.**

אל כביר *Magnus, grandis, potens, id eſt potentiſſimus.*

I have ſeveral times opened the ſenſe and intendment of this word *Behold*, and therefore will not ſtay upon it here; But what are we to behold? what is the ſight which *Elihu* repreſents to our faith? it is God in his might; *Behold, God is mighty.* God is ſtrong, potent, omnipotent, God is mighty, yea Almighty: The words are a plain aſſertion of that royal Attribute, the Mightineſs or Almightineſs, the Potency or Omnipotency of God. *Elihu* promiſed to aſcribe righteouſneſs unto God *his Maker*, yet here he begins with his *Mightineſs*; and this we find often both aſcribed to God, and aſſerted by him. When God made a Covenant with *Abraham*, he thus offers himſelf to his faith, though by another word in the Original, (*Gen.* 17. 1.) *I am the Almighty God, walk before me, and be thou perfect*, or upright, or ſincere, (as our Margin reads it) The ſame title is again repeated by *Iſaac*, when he diſpatcht his ſon *Jacob* with a bleſſing to *Padan-Aram*, to avoid the fury of his brother *Eſau*, (Gen. 28. 3.) Thus alſo ſpake the bleſſed Virgin, (*Luke* 1. 49.) *He that is mighty hath done to me great things, and holy is his Name.* The holy Scriptures every where exalt the name of God by this glorious Attribute; *The mighty God, even the Lord hath ſpoken*, (Pſal. 50. 1.) And he ſeems even to delight in this title, *The mighty God of Jacob. Jacob* was mighty with God in prayer, as a Prince he had power with God and prevailed; and God loved and loves to put forth his might for *Jacob*, his Church and people, in anſwer of their prayers. But I ſhall not ſtay in general upon this title, only opening it a little, ſhall make ſome inferences from it. *God is mighty* in a two-fold notion.

Firſt, In authority, or in command; he commands in chief; God is Soveraign and Supream; the Legiſlative power is in his hand, he gives Laws, and he gives the Law to all the world, (*Pſal.* 62. 11.) *Once hath he ſpoken, and I heard it twice, that power* (Soveraignty, Law-giving power) *belongs to God*; He is ſo mighty in this governing power, that he doth not only give Laws to rule Nations, but he diſpoſeth of all the Rulers in Nations, (*Daniel* Chap. 2. 21. Chap. 4. 17.) And again, (*Pſal.* 22. 28.) *The Kingdom is the Lords, and he is the Governour among the Nations.*

Secondly, Beſides this power of Authority, which the Lord exerciſeth paramount over all the world, he hath alſo another power or might; he hath the might of Strength, as well as the might of Authority. Some have a great, a mighty Authority, but they have little or no might to make good that Authority; they cannot effect or carry on what they command, how much right ſoever they have to command, yea how juſt and right ſoever that is which they command: they have Authoritative might, yet want Executive might, they cannot bring about, nor iſſue what they determine. But when *Elihu* aſſerts, *Behold, God is mighty,* we are to take it under both notions, he is mighty, as he hath the whole Legiſlative power in his hand, and he is mighty, as having alſo the whole Executive power in his hand. The ſons of men are jealous about theſe two Powers, and labour to keep them in diſtinct hands, that they who have the Legiſlative power, may not have the Executive power alſo, as fearing what they would do were they veſted with both: But God (beyond all diſpute) hath both powers in himſelf, and it is impoſſible they ſhould be taken from him, or devolved upon any others, otherwiſe than himſelf pleaſeth, or permitteth: behold and wonder, God is mighty, (and O how mighty is God!) in the union of theſe two powers; and to ſet forth yet further the wonder of his might, I ſhall give you ſeven brief propoſitions or aſſertions, concerning the might of God, as it is twiſted and made up of theſe two mights or powers.

Firſt, He is ſo mighty both in ſtrength and power, that all the might which is in the creature, all the Legiſlative might, and all the Executive might, all the Authority, and all the ability which is in any man, is from him, and by him; that's it which is ſaid (*Prov.* 8. 15.) *By me Kings reign, and Princes decree Juſtice*; they have both their Authority, and their power to execute that Authority from me; every kind and degree of might (whatſoever it is) is but a derivation, a rivolet, from the Might and Power of God, that's the fountain, the ſpring of all.

Secondly, Behold the mightineſs of God, as in giving, ſo in taking away power, whether the power of authority or of ſtrength, from the ſons of men; He taketh away might from the mighty. Sometimes ſuch power, ſuch authority, ſuch command is put into the hands of others, that they who put it there, know not how to get it out again, but are maſtered and over-power'd with the very power which they truſt others with; but ſuch is the might of God, that whatever might of authority or ſtrength he hath truſted or cloathed any of the Princes or Powers of this world with; he can preſently take it out of their hands again (*Pſal.* 75. 7.) *God is the Judg, he putteth down one, and ſetteth up another*, and it is as eaſie with him to put down, as it is to ſet up; as he can make the weak ſtrong, ſo he can preſently make the ſtrong weak; this is the glory of the might of God, he can take away power, as well as give it.

Thirdly, *Behold, God is mighty*, for, *he can do whatſoever pleaſeth him*; Certainly, he is Almighty that can do ſo; He whoſe power runs parallel with his will, he who can act as far as he deſires, how mighty is he! none of the mighty ones of this world can do this. Oh, what work would ſome men make in the world, if they could do as much as they deſire, if their power ſhould always extend as far as or be commenſurate with their Will; yet thus it is with God. The Scriptures of truth are clear in it (*Pſal.* 115. 3.) where, when ſome prophane wretches had ſcoffed and jeered the people of God, with *where is your God?* they preſently anſwer, *Our God is in heaven, and he hath done whatſoever pleaſeth him.* It is not what this man pleaſeth, or what that man pleaſeth, or what this ſort or gang of men pleaſe, but what the Lord pleaſeth, that is done (and that he doth well, how ill ſoever men do it) both in heaven and in earth. The Lord will not do all that he can, for he could by his power reduce this world to its firſt principles, a Chaos, or into a nothing, as it was before that, but he can do whatſoever he will; all things are poſſible to God, yea all things are eaſie, nothing hard or difficult to God: And we may very well put a *behold* of admiration upon his might (and ſuch is the might of God) who can do whatſoever he willeth.

Fourthly, The Lord is ſo mighty, that *he can do all, without the help of any.* Some men are very mighty, but it is with other mens hands, with other mens ſtrength; let them alone, let them ſtand by themſelves, do but deſert and leave them, and what can they do? juſt nothing. But ſuch is the mightineſs of God, the Almightineſs of God, that if all ſecond cauſes, if all perſons, powers and Nations ſhould leave him, in that which he intends ſhould be done, he can do it himſelf without them. The Prophet ſetting forth the victory of Chriſt over his enemies, repreſents him ſpeaking thus, (*Iſa.* 63. 3.) *I have trodden the wine-preſs alone, and of the people there was none with me.* Which though many interpret of his paſſive conqueſt by ſuffering as a Prieſt, yet moſt, of his active conqueſt as a King, which he uſually atchieveth by himſelf alone, without any appearance of help from man. And though *Deborah* in her Song (*Judg.* 5.) pronounceth a curſe upon thoſe that came not out to help the Lord againſt the Mighty, yet it was not becauſe the mighty God needed their help or ſervice, but becauſe they did owe it him, and in duty ſhould have given it him. For, that the Lord wants no help, is further clear from the Prophet, (*Iſa.* 59. 16.) *He ſaw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no Interceſſor,* (none ſo much as to ſpeak a word) *therefore his arm wrought ſalvation, and his righteouſneſs it ſuſtained him.* Not only, no arm was put forth to help, but no tongue ſo much as move or intercede for help to do it, yet his own arm did it. Thus the Prophet, (*Iſa.* 44. 24.) *He ſtretcheth forth the Heavens alone, and laid the Foundations of the Earth by himſelf.* Now as it was with the Lord in the work of Creation, he had no helper, no aſſiſtant, he did it alone by himſelf; ſo it is as true, as to all works of providence. Let all men forſake him (as the Apoſtle *Paul* complained they did him, 2 *Tim.* 4. 16.) and no man ſtand by him, yet the Lord (what his purpoſe and counſel is) can bring to paſs alone: O behold this might! he can do all things without the help of any; and not only ſo, but

Fifthly, God is ſo mighty, that he can bring all things to paſs, or do what he pleaſeth, though all creatures ſhould be diſpleaſed, though all men and Angels, though all ſecond cauſes ſtand up to hinder and to ſtop him. The Lord can work his will againſt every will, againſt all contradictions and oppoſitions. Thus the Prophet extols the power of God, (*Iſa.* 14. 27.) *The Lord of Hoſts hath purpoſed, and who ſhall diſanul it? His hand is ſtretched out, and who ſhall turn it back?* Where we have, firſt, the purpoſe of God, *none can diſanul* that; Secondly, the execution of that purpoſe, *He ſtretched out his hand* (to do ſuch or ſuch a thing) *who ſhall turn it back?* Let all men and Devils joyn forces and counſels, let them ſtrive to do it, they ſhall not be able to do it. We have a like confeſſion, (*Dan.* 4. 35.) *He doth according to his will in the Armies of Heaven, and among the Inhabitants of the Earth, and none can ſtay his hand, or ſay to him, what doſt thou?* Such is the mightineſs of God, that he can work, not only when the creature doth not help him, or when they apoſtatize from and deſert him or his intereſt, but though they ſet their hearts and heads, their hands, and their all againſt him, they cannot ſtay him, nor hinder his work; *I* (ſaith the Lord, *Iſa.* 43. 13.) *will work, and who ſhall let it?*

Sixthly, Behold, how mighty the Lord is, he is ſo mighty, that he can do all theſe things, and never trouble himſelf in doing of them; he can do all things, and not be weary. We ſee the mightieſt among men, the Powers of this world, how they are toyled and moyled, how they are worn out, how they ſweat and labour, and are ready to faint and tire, in bringing ſome poor buſineſs, ſome petty project about, or to its iſſue. But the greateſt deſigns which the Lord hath in his heart to do, he can do them, without any wearisomneſs or trouble at all, (*Iſa.* 40. 28.) *Doſt not thou know that the Lord is not weary, neither doth he faint?* and when the Prophet ſaith, *the Lord is not weary, neither doth he faint*; the meaning is not this, the Lord is ſomewhat weary, only he doth not faint, but the meaning is this, he hath not the leaſt weariſomneſs upon him, no more than a man hath in turning his hand; not only are all things poſſible to God, or ſuch as he can do, if he put forth the utmoſt of his power and ſtrength, if he make (as we ſay) much ado, if he lay himſelf out to the full; not only are things thus poſſible to God, (which yet argueth wonderful might) but behold, the Lord is ſo mighty, that there is nothing difficult unto him. Not only can he poſſibly do great things, but he can eaſily do them, he can do them without the leaſt trouble to himſelf: *There is nothing hard to him, who can do every thing.* Mighty men have done great things, but they will tell you they could hardly do them, they were forced to turn every ſtone, to ſtrain every vein of their hearts to do them; whereas the mighty God can do his work with as much eaſe, as deſire to have it done.

Seventhly, Behold, God is mighty, ſo mighty that he can do any thing, but that which will argue that he is not Almighty. The Scripture ſpeaks of ſomething which the Lord cannot do, (*Tit.* 1. 2.) *In hope of eternal life, which God who cannot lye hath promiſed.* And again, the Apoſtle ſaith of God, not only making promiſe but oath to *Abraham,* (*Heb.* 6. 18.) *That by two Immutable things, in which it is impoſſible for God to lye, the heirs of promiſe might have ſtrong conſolation,* Once more, (2 *Tim.* 2. 13.) *If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful, he cannot deny himſelf.* We have theſe and ſuch like negative Propoſitions concerning God, telling us what he cannot do. Now the only reaſon why it is ſaid, the Mighty God cannot do theſe things, is becauſe the doing of them would argue him not to be Almighty. To lye is to be weak; to deny himſelf would affirm his impotency, therefore he cannot do theſe things; the Lord is ſo mighty, ſo ſtrong, that it is impoſſible for him to do any thing, which ſhould declare any weakneſs or impotency in him. Thus I have given you ſeven aſſertions concerning the might of God, all which may very well call for a *behold* of admiration and aſtoniſhment at the mightineſs of God. Take a few Inferences from this grand Aſſertion.

Firſt, For Comfort.

Secondly, For Terror. *Behold,* the Lord is Mighty, Almighty; this ſpeaks comfort to the people of God.

Firſt, Surely then he can do whatſoever he hath promiſed to do, and if ſo, then look through the promiſes and ſee, whether God hath not promiſed, to do good things for his people in general, and for every believer in particular; Behold, the Lord is mighty, theſe are not vain words, he can fill up, and fulfil all his promiſes. As he hath made promiſes, ſo he can create performances. *Abraham* was fully perſwaded that what he had promiſed he was able to perform, (*Rom.* 4. 21.)

Secondly, If the Lord be mighty in all thoſe notions foreſhewed, then certainly he can do whatſoever we deſire him to do according to his will. As God hath not out-promiſed his power, ſo we cannot out-pray the power, nor out-ask the arm of God; we may quickly out-pray the power of man, and ask what he cannot do; he may ſay, I cannot do this for you, it is not in my power; but here is our comfort, if what we pray and ask be good for us to have, if it be juſt and righteous for him to do, let it be what it will, it is within the compaſs of the power of God, who is alſo ready to perform it for us. The Apoſtle aſſureth us of this, (*Eph.* 3. 20.) *He is able to do for us abundantly, above what we ask or think*; he cannot only do what we ask, but he can do above what we ask, yea, abundantly above what we ask. How narrow, and ſhort, and poor, are our words and prayers, compared with the power of God! He can do abundantly for us above what we ask, and not only ſo, but above what we think. If a man ſhould have ſomewhat in his mind, that he is not able to expreſs, (as the mind is far larger than the tongue,) if a man think what he cannot ſpeak or utter, yet the Lord is of ſuch power, that he can do not only what we think, but abundantly above what we are able to think. How many requeſts do we put up daily to God in prayer for our perſons, for our families, for the Church of God, and about the Kingdoms of men, our own Kingdom eſpecially, is it not matter of ſingular comfort, that all theſe requeſts are before a Mighty God, a God who can quickly ſend down all our prayers in performances, and give us the fruit of all our askings? 'Tis an everlaſting Spring of comfort and encouragement unto the people of God, both in prayer and unto prayer; they pray to him who is *mighty,* mighty to do what they pray for.

Thirdly, If God be ſo mighty in himſelf that he can do all things, then he is able to give us might to do what he requireth of us; if he be mighty enough to do what we ask, then he is mighty enough to enable us to do what he commands. We ask many things of God, God commands many things at our hands; when we ask, God is mighty to help us to what we ask; and if what we ask be what he commands us, he will ſurely help us to do what we ask, even whatſoever he commands us to do; he ſtrengthens his people with might by his Spirit in the inner man, (*Eph.* 3. 16.) *Paul* could ſay, (*Phil.* 4. 18.) *I can do all things, through Chriſt ſtrengthening me*; Chriſt hath ſtrength to do all things, and Chriſt can make me ſtrong (ſaith the Apoſtle) to do all things; Chriſt hath ſtrength to do all things that he hath a mind to do, and he is ſtrong to ſtrengthen us in and for the doing of all things, that are according to his mind.

Fourthly, If God be thus mighty to do all things, if he hath all ſtrength, both commanding and executing ſtrength, then as he can give us ſtrength to do all things that he calls us to do, ſo he hath ſtrength enough to reward us for all we do for him; this is comfortable. Sometimes we work and labour for men who are not able, they have little power, or if power enough, yet no will at all to reward us for it. Bnt as the Lord is not unrighteous, to forget our labour, (*Heb.* 6. 10.) ſo he is not unable, that is, he is infinitely able to reward us. We find the ſtrength of God ſpoken of to this point, (*Jer.* 32. 18, 19.) *Thou ſheweſt loving kindneſs unto thouſands*, &c. *The great the mighty God, the Lord of Hoſts is his Name; Great in counſel, and mighty in working, for thine eyes are open upon all the ways of the ſons of men, to give every one according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.* When the Prophet had aſſerted, *God is mighty in working*, he brings it down to this, he is mighty in rewarding us for all our works. Do not think (what labour ſoever you have taken for the Lord) that you ſhall want a reward, for the Lord hath treaſure and ſtore, ſtrength and power enough, to give you a ſufficient recompence for all your labours.

Fifthly, This truth is matter of comfort and encouragement in doing good, not only as 'tis a ſervice to God, but as it is a kindneſs to men, eſpecially to the poor, and more eſpecially to God's poor. The mightineſs of God ſhould move us to be charitable, yea, liberal and bountiful in our charity. The Apoſtle uſeth this argument, (2 *Cor.* 9. 8.) for having ſaid, *God loveth a chearful giver*, he preſently adds, *God is able to make all grace abound towards you, that ye always having All-ſufficiency in all things, may abound in every good work.* As if he had ſaid, Be not afraid to give, nor ſparing in giving, for God (to whom you lend, when you give to the poor) is a good debter, a ſufficient pay-maſter, and he will pay you, not only in your own, but in better coin, than you lent: he will pny you in Spirituals for your Temporals, in Grace for your Gold, and that abundantly, both in the grace of his favour ſhining upon you, as alſo in the graces of his Spirit working in you; yea, ye ſhall have, not only an All-ſufficiency in ſpiritual things, but in all things, which muſt needs include temporal things; even your Gold and Silver will multiply as Seed, by ſowing and ſcattering it abroad (as he alludes in the 9. verſe) ſo that ye ſhall (through this ability of God) be enabled to abound in every good work, that is, every good work of Grace, in general; and if you are called to that ſpecial good work of Charity again and again, you ſhall be able to abound in every one of them. Some are doubtful, if they ſhould give freely and liberally, they ſhould loſe by it, and be ſtraitned themſelves: No, ſaith the Apoſtle, I avouch and engage the Almightineſs of God for it, if you be chearful givers, God will ſhew his All-ſufficiency in giving you an All-ſufficiency in all things. Here are three or four *Alls*, promiſed to thoſe, who give but *ſomewhat* in a due manner. Here is, Firſt, *all grace*; Secondly, *All-ſufficiency*; Thirdly, in *all things*; and, Fourthly, *always*; and all theſe grounded upon the mightineſs of God: *God is able.*

Sixthly, *God is mighty:* Then he can protect us from, ſupport us under, or deliver us out of all thoſe dangers, which we incur for his Names ſake, (*Dan.* 3. 17.)

Secondly, Hence we may infer matter of terrour to the wicked world, the ſons of *Belial*, the mightieſt enemies of God. What is the might of ſinful man, to the mightineſs of God! *The weakneſs of God is ſtronger than man*; what then is his mightineſs! We read (*Rev.* 6. 15.) how, *the* (Heathen) *Kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief Captains, and* (which may be the recapitulation of all theſe) *the mighty men, hid themſelves in Dens, and ſaid to the Mountains fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that ſitteth upon the Throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.* The Apoſtle checks the madneſs of the *Corinthians* in ſinning, by an intimation of the mightineſs of God, againſt whom they ſinned (1 *Cor.* 10. 22.) *Do we provoke the Lord to jealouſie? Are we ſtronger than he?* As if he had ſaid, What do ye mean? (he ſpeaks to thoſe that would venture to go to the Table of Devils, that is, who cared not how they mingled themſelves, and held Communion, in the things of God, with thoſe who worſhipped Devil-gods, or (as all Idolaters do) Devils rather than God; what mean you (ſaith he to theſe) conſider your ſelves, *Will you provoke the Lord? are you ſtronger than he?* are you his match? are you able to grapple with him? not ſo well as a Child with a mighty Giant, or a Lamb with a Lion. The mightineſs of the Lord, his Almightineſs ſhould make ſinners tremble, and fear to provoke him; he can cruſh them as a Moth, and break the[illegible] pieces like a Potter's Veſſel. As 'tis the joy of all true [illegible]ievers, that God *hath laid help for them* (as 'tis ſaid, *Pſal.* 89. 19.) *upon one that is mighty*, that is, Chriſt, of whom *David* was but a ſhadow; and as 'tis the comfort of the *Fatherleſs*, (how weak ſoever) that *their Redeemer is mighty* (Prov. 23. 11.) So it may fill the faces of the wicked and preſumptuous with confuſion, and their hearts with deſpairing ſorrow, to hear, that God, who is ready to take vengeance on them, is mighty. *Behold, God is mighty*; that's a glorious ſight; and yet behold a ſight more glorious, if more glorious may be,

And deſpiſeth not any.

What a temperament is here? God is ſo mighty that he feareth none, no, not the mightieſt, yet ſo meek, that *he deſpiſeth not any*, no, not the meaneſt. *Elihu* having aſſerted the mightineſs of God, amplifieth it, Firſt, by his gracious condeſcenſion and moderation in the uſe of his mightineſs; he is mighty, yet he doth not exerciſe his might in a proud vaunting or contemning way, *he deſpiſeth not any*; that's the firſt thing, in which he amplifies the excellency of God in his mightineſs. Secondly, As God is thus mighty, and moderate in the exerciſe of his might, not *deſpiſing any*; ſo behold another excellency of this might of God, He is mighty, not only in ſtrength of arm and authority, but (as the laſt words of the verſe ſet him forth)

In ſtrength and wiſdom;] Or, he is as wiſe as he is ſtrong. Some men have a great deal of might, and they preſently ſwell proudly, this ſpoils all; others have a great deal of might, but not a bit of wit, or wiſdom, or underſtanding, how to diſpoſe or make the beſt of it: But what a mighty God have we to do with! who is mighty and deſpiſeth no man; who hath not only might of ſtrength, but might of wiſdom too. Thus we ſee how *Elihu*, in this latter part of the verſe, advanceth or extolleth the mightineſs of God, in theſe two things, the infinite Moderation and Wiſdom, that go along with it and act it. I ſhall a little open both. Firſt, his wonderful moderation in the exerciſe of his mightineſs; *He is mighty*,

And deſpiſeth not any.] To deſpiſe is an act of Pride; Pride is a bad Mother of many bad Children, theſe three eſpecially. Firſt, boaſting of our ſelves. Secondly, contending with others. Thirdly, deſpiſing of others. The word here uſed ſignifies to deſpiſe with abhorrence or loathing, as the Stomach doth meat which is offenſive to it; ill ſavoured meat is loathſom, and any thing which the mind nauſeates, is an abhorrence to us. The *Lord deſpiſeth not*, he doth not nauſeate *any*. The word *any* is not expreſt in the Original Text, that ſaith only, *The Lord is mighty, and deſpiſeth not*; we put that ſupplement in our Tranſlation, *any*; *He is mighty, and deſpiſeth not any*. Others render more ſtrictly, thus, *Behold, God is mighty, and deſpiſeth not his own people.* The Chaldee Paraphraſe ſpeaks exegetically, *The Lord is mighty, and deſpiſeth not the righteous man.* The Greek Verſion hath a fourth ſupplement, to the ſame purpoſe, *God is mighty, and deſpiſeth not the innocent perſon*, the man free from evil or wickedneſs; a man of integrity, a man of ſimplicity, the Lord will not deſpiſe: ſuch are often afflicted, but never deſpiſed, eſpecially not as ſuch. Laſtly, thus, *God is mighty, and deſpiſeth not the mean, the afflicted, the poor*, or thoſe of low eſtate, (*Pſal.* 22. 24.) *He hath not deſpiſed, nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted, neither hath he hid his face from him, but when he cryed unto him, he heard.* And this ſeems moſt proper to the ſcope and meaning of *Elihu* here; God is mighty, and deſpiſeth not thoſe who have no might. Thus the words reflect chiefly upon *Job*, who at leaſt ſeem'd to charge God, that he did not conſider him in his affliction, or in his low eſtate, when he complained and cryed to him. We have two Texts in this Book of *Job*, which might very well move *Elihu* to ſpeak thus unto him; *though God be mighty, yet he deſpiſeth not the afflicted, or the poor.* *Job* ſaid (Chap. 10. 3.) *Is it good to thee that thou ſhouldſt oppreſs, that thou ſhouldſt deſpiſe the work of thy hands, and ſhine upon the counſel of the wicked?* As if he had ſaid to God, *Thou ſeemeſt to deſpiſe me, the work of thy hand, now that I am poor, low, and reduced as it were to duſt.* Again (Chap. 19. 7.) we have near the ſame language, *Behold, I cry out of wrong, but I am not heard, I cry aloud, but there is no Judgment.*

ולא ימאם

*Ἄκακον, *Innocentem, ſimplicem, integrum.* Sept.

Etſi, affligantur juſti, tamen non ideo quia juſti. Merc.

ment. As [illegible] as to ſay, I am deſpiſed and neglected, I am not [illegible] when I cry. This *Elihu* takes off in the preſent Text, *Behold, God is mighty, and deſpiſeth not any*; he deſpiſeth not the afflicted, nor the poor, when they cry unto, and call upon him; and therefore in this, O *Job*, thou haſt misbehaved thy ſelf, or ſpoken amiſs.

But whichſoever of theſe ſupplements we take, the ſenſe is good, and the Propoſition true, *he deſpiſeth not*; what will he not deſpiſe? we ſay, not *any*; a ſecond, *his own*; a third, *the juſt*; a fourth, *the innocent*; a fifth, *the afflicted* (there is a ſixth, which I ſhall offer before I part with theſe words) All theſe are true, *God deſpiſeth not*.

> Hence note, Firſt, *Though the Lord be infinitely more mighty than the mightieſt of men, yet he doth not deſpiſe any man*;

He doth not deſpiſe man in general, who is the work of his hand; yea, *Job* ſaid once (*Chap*. 14. 15.) *Thou wilt have a deſire to the work of thy hand*. The Lord doth not deſpiſe any of his works, as they are his works, or as they come out of his hand; and therefore when *Jonah* ſeemed to ſet ſo low a rate upon the *Ninevites*, who were the work of his hand, his Creatures, the Lord reproved him for it, by the Gourd, which when the Lord ſmote, *Jonah* was angry; but ſaid the Lord, *Doſt thou well to be angry for thy Gourd?* Haſt thou mercy upon a Gourd, and ſhould not I ſpare this City, wherein are more than ſix ſcore thouſand perſons, that know not their right hand from their left, and alſo much Cattle? The Lord did not deſpiſe, but pity them. Go through all the ſorts of men, the Lord deſpiſeth none; the Lord deſpiſeth not great men, becauſe great (which will come to a further conſideration, upon another Tranſlation of the Text) nor mean men, becauſe mean; he deſpiſeth not men in proſperity, becauſe they are rich and proſperous, nor doth he deſpiſe men in adverſity, becauſe poor and unproſperous. He deſpiſeth not any upon any of theſe accounts; the Lord deſpiſeth none but the wicked, and the ungodly, the unbeliever, and the impenitent, and all them he deſpiſeth, and them he ever will deſpiſe, how great, how high, how mighty, how rich ſoever they are; the Lord deſpiſeth them, and he will always deſpiſe them. He doth not deſpiſe any man becauſe a great man, if he be not a wicked great man; and let men be never ſo poor or low, the Lord looks not diſdainfully upon them becauſe they are ſo; God doth not deſpiſe any man becauſe he is in a bad caſe, he only deſpiſeth men, becauſe their caſe or cauſe is bad, and then he will deſpiſe them, let them be who or what they will. Such is the goodneſs of God, and this goodneſs is his glory, That although the higheſt and greateſt of men, are but as worms to him, or not ſo much to him as the duſt of the ballance, or the drop of the bucket, yet he deſpiſeth not any, no, not the loweſt and leaſt of men.

Secondly, When the Text ſaith, *he deſpiſeth not*, there is more in it than is expreſt. We may take it affirmatively, God gives all ſorts of men due regard and favour, he takes care of them, and beſtows ſuitable mercies upon them, even upon the meaneſt and pooreſt of them: if they be his, if they be faithful and godly, how doth the Lord own them! how doth the Lord honour them! how doth the Lord embrace and lay them in his boſom, though they lye upon the Dunghil, as *Job* did! As *when we are warned not to deſpiſe the chaſtnings of the Lord* (Heb. 12. 5.) we are taught to take them in good part; and as when the Apoſtle admoniſheth us (1 *Theſſ*. 5. 20.) *not to deſpiſe Propheſie*, his meaning is not only this, that he would not have us ſlight it, and throw it at our heels, but he would have us give it due eſteem, and honour it as one of our choiceſt mercies, he would have us ſet a great price upon it, and bleſs God heartily for it. So here, when *Elihu* ſaith, *The Lord deſpiſeth not any*, his purpoſe is to ſhew, that he reſpects and favours men according to their condition, but moſt his own faithful and obedient Servants. This Interpretation may give us another Inſtruction:

> *God hath a due regard and reſpect to all ſorts and conditions of men.*

Having made all men, he doth not throw them up to the wide world, much leſs trample upon them himſelf; but owns them, preſerveth them, watcheth over them all. And as for his ſpecial people, he tends them as a Nurſe her infant, or as a Father tenders his children; he counſels them, he guides them, he directs and leads them, he ſupports and comforts them, he carries them through this world, as it were in his own arms, as the Eagle carries her young ones upon her wings. The Lord is a conſuming fire to burn up the wicked, thoſe that are unlike him, and like him not; but he is a warm Sun, to cheriſh, and a ſafe-guarding Shield, to protect thoſe that fear him and truſt in his Name: He indeed will be as a refining fire, to fetch out and conſume the droſs that he ſees in his people, and as a trying fire (by affliction) to their graces (as *Job*'s caſe was) But when he is ſo, and doth ſo, he is ſo far from deſpiſing them, that he honours them, and makes them more honourable. And therefore having made Promiſe of being with his people when they ſhould be called to walk through the fire (*Iſa*. 43. 2.) he preſently ſubjoins, (*verſ*. 4.) *Since thou waſt precious in my ſight, thou haſt been honourable*. As if he had ſaid, Since thou haſt given a proof that thou art good Metal, and that thou haſt loſt and left nothing in the fire of affliction, but thy droſs, I both honour thee my ſelf, and will cauſe others to honour thee alſo.

Dicitur Deus ignis conſumens, quoniam univerſa ſibi diſſimilia devoret ac conſumat; ſed ſibi ſimilia complectitur. Brent.

Again, *He deſpiſeth not any*. *Elihu* in this ſets out the honour of God, he puts this as a Crown of Glory upon the head of his Power. *God is mighty, yet he deſpiſeth not any.*

> Hence Note, *To be mighty in Power, and meek in Spirit, ſhews an excellent God-like Spirit.*

As God is great, ſo good; both are equally eſſential to him: goodneſs, gentleneſs, and meekneſs, meet together and are matcht with greatneſs and mightineſs in God, (*Nahum* 1. 8.) *The Lord is great in Power, and ſlow to anger*; he is not preſently in a flame with ſinners, but waiteth to be gracious. *Fury is not in me*, (ſaith the Lord, *Iſa*. 27. 4, 5.) I do not preſently execute my power, becauſe great in power. *Who would ſet the Bryars and Thorns againſt me in battel? I would go through them, and burn them together; or let him take hold of my ſtrength, and make peace with me, and he ſhall make peace with me.* As if he had ſaid, If ſinners, of one ſort or other, who are to me, or to my people, like briars and thorns, vexing and troubling both me and them, ſhould take the boldneſs to contend with me, I could quickly rid my hands of them, even as ſoon as fire can conſume briars and thorns fully dry; yet I rather adviſe them to humble themſelves, and humbly make ſuit for peace, and they ſhall not find me inexorable, though I am invincible; they may have Peace for the asking, though I fear not at all the iſſue of the War. O that the mighty men of the world, would ſtrive to imitate this overture of the mighty God: But O how unlike are the moſt of the mighty men of this world to God!

Firſt, Some mighty men of this world rather pride themſelves that they can do hurt, than pleaſe themſelves, that they may do good with their might. (*Pſal*. 52. 1.) *Why boaſteſt thou, O mighty man, that thou canſt do miſchief?* that thou canſt tread and trample upon others? this thy boaſt ſhould be thy ſhame. Mighty men are apt to deſpiſe all men (upon the matter) that are below them, that are their underlings; but why doſt thou boaſt, O thou mighty man, ſeeing (as it followeth in the Pſalm) *the goodneſs of God* (who is mightier than thou) *endureth continually*.

Secondly, How unlike are they to God, who having might and power in their hand, deſpiſe the mean, and the oppreſſed, who come to them for Juſtice! Such are not like God, the Judg of all men, but like that Judg, whoſe Character was (*Luke* 18. 2.) *He feared not God, nor regarded man*; he deſpiſed all; what cared he for them, or their tears, ſo he might ſerve his own turn, and carry on his own ends? Wo to the mighty, who deſpiſe the cauſe, much more who deſpiſe the crys of the oppreſſed.

Thirdly, The mighty men of the earth uſually deſpiſe thoſe whom God honoureth moſt. God deſpiſeth not any, but he highly eſteemeth his own; whereas the mighty men of the world are apt to deſpiſe all, eſpecially his, that is, the generation of the righteous; they that are neareſt to God's heart, are fartheſt from theirs. The affections and eſtimations of the mighty, ſeldom fall in with, but run croſs to Gods, (*Pſal*. 10. 3.) *He bleſſeth the covetous, whom God abhors*; that is, he hath a high eſteem of thoſe, whom God cannot abide; and he that doth ſo, will never abide thoſe whom God highly eſteems, and thoſe leaſt whom

God eſteems moſt highly; away (ſaith he) with thoſe that are ſo ſtrict in their way, away with them (ſaith he) that walk in the narrow way. O let ſuch mighty ones as deſpiſe theſe, conſider how unlike they are to the mighty God, who deſpiſeth not any, who greatly honoureth theſe. *Michal*, *David*'s Wife, *Saul*'s Daughter, had a piece of this ſpirit in her; though *David* was a mighty King, ſhe deſpiſed him, only becauſe he was a holy and a zealous King: When ſhe ſaw how he danced before the Ark, when ſhe ſaw how he was taken with the things of God, ſhe deſpiſed him in her heart, and for that was puniſhed with a barren womb, as long as ſhe lived (2 *Sam.* 6. 23.) They who act higheſt in holineſs, are always loweſt in the thoughts of the unholy.

Fourthly, They that are mighty in Parts and Gifts of ſpeech and knowledg, they who are got a Form higher than their Brethren, how apt are they to deſpiſe all that are below them! Nor is this the ſin of carnal vain men only, but of many (for the main) good men alſo, who taking too much notice of their own great Abilities, will ſcarce take any notice of them who have but little. This dead Fly hath corrupted many a Box of precious Ointment; this Weed hath been found growing in the richeſt grounds; and the richer any ground is, the more apt it is to bring forth this Weed, unleſs the Lord, with thoſe other Gifts, give alſo that which is more excellent than all Gifts, even than the tongue, yea head of Men and Angels, an humble and ſelf-denying heart. St. *Paul* himſelf was in danger to be lifted up (and certainly had, if God had not given him preventing Phyſick) with this diſtemper, through the abundance of *Revelations*; now, he that is lifted up in himſelf, is within a ſtep of deſpiſing others. And O how unlike are theſe in this alſo to God, who is mighty, not only in ſtrength, but in wiſdom, yet deſpiſeth not any! And, that God who is mighty and deſpiſeth not any, is mighty, not only in ſtrength, but in wiſdom, is *Elihu*'s aſſertion alſo concerning God, in the cloſe of this verſe, and comes next to be opened and handled.

He is mighty in ſtrength and wiſdom.

The Original may be thus rendred ſtrictly; *He is mighty, the ſtrength of heart:* Now, the ſtrength of the heart conſiſts, firſt, in courage; ſecondly, in wiſdom; and hence we tranſlate diſtinctly, *He is mighty in ſtrength and wiſdom.* Here are two points of God's might according to our reading: He is mighty, Firſt, in ſtrength; Secondly, in wiſdom. As before we had that noble combination of mightineſs and meekneſs in God, he is mighty and deſpiſeth not any; ſo here we have another noble combination, in his mightineſs, of ſtrength and wiſdom; *He is mighty in ſtrength and in wiſdom.* Some men are mighty in ſtrength, who are weak in wiſdom; others are mighty in wiſdom, but not in ſtrength; both meet and are joyned in God (in whom all things are but one, he being but an infinite ſimplicity, though they are acted diverſly towards man, both theſe (I ſay) meet in God) and he equally excels in both.

Yet becauſe, if theſe two be taken diſtinctly, we can underſtand nothing in God by ſtrength, but what was comprehended in mightineſs before ſpoken of, therefore I conceive, theſe words, *He is mighty in ſtrength and wiſdom,* ſignifie no more in this place than this, That God is mighty in the ſtrength of wiſdom, or that he is mighty ſtrong in wiſdom. And ſo I ſhall proceed with the Text.

This ſtrength of the wiſdom of God, or his ſtrong wiſdom, is of two ſorts, or conſiſts in a twofold wiſdom. Firſt, there is his knowing and diſcerning wiſdom. Secondly, there is his governing and diſpoſing wiſdom.

Firſt, There is a ſtrength of wiſdom in knowing and diſcerning: God is mighty ſtrong in this wiſdom, in this knowing, this diſcerning wiſdom, (1 *Sam.* 2. 3.) *The Lord is a God of knowledg, by him actions are weighed*; He knoweth our actions exactly, and he will weigh them to a grain, he knoweth our actions to the utmoſt. And as he knoweth our actions, ſo our intentions; he knoweth our inſide as well as our outſide, (*Heb.* 4. 13.) *All things are naked and manifeſt before him, with whom we have to do*; and they are not only naked to the skin, but unbowelled, and anatomized to every vein and bone, (*Acts* 15. 18.) *Known to God are all his works from the beginning of the world*; he knoweth all his own works, much more ours. Thus God is ſtrong in wiſdom, as wiſdom conſiſts in knowledg; and thus ſtrong he is, he knoweth all things; Firſt, the leaſt things, as well as the greateſt; 'tis no burden, no diſtraction to God, to take notice of the ſmalleſt matters, even to the numbering of the hairs of our head. That's true greatneſs of knowledg, to know the leaſt things and motions of the meaneſt creature. Secondly, he knoweth the moſt ſecret things; *Secret things belong to God*, (*Deut.* 29. 29.) that is, God hath ſecrets which he reſerves to himſelf, man cannot know them, man muſt not attempt to know them, ſuch an attempt were inſufferable intruſion. Now as God hath ſecrets of his own, which no man muſt meddle with, ſo he meddles with all our ſecrets, our ſecrets belong to God as well as his own; he knows the ſecrets of our hearts, he hath a key to that Cabinet, and can unlock it, and look into it; we may lock men, one and other, out of our hearts, but we cannot lock out God, he ſeeth what's there, ſuch is the ſtrength of his knowing wiſdom. Thirdly, He knows things future, or what ſhall be; he knoweth what as yet is not, as clearly as what is; *He declareth the end from the beginning*, (*Iſa.* 46. 10.) Upon this ground the Prophet challengeth all the Idols of the world, (*Iſa.* 41. 23.) *Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are Gods*; tell us what ſhall be next, tell us what will be to morrow; that will be a demonſtration of your Divinity; the Lord declareth things to come, and he only declares them. We know little of that which is, he, and he only, knoweth that which will be. All futures unrevealed, are ſecrets, and among them our thoughts are the greateſt ſecrets, yet them the Lord knoweth, (*Pſal.* 139. 2.) *Thou* (ſaith *David*) *underſtandeſt my thoughts afar off*, that is, before I think them; Is not this ſtrength of knowing wiſdom? Fourthly, God knoweth all things always, or everlaſtingly, there is not one of them ſlips out of his knowledg, they are at all times alike, that is, perfectly before him; Is not this alſo ſtrength of knowing wiſdom? Fifthly, The Lord knoweth all theſe things as diſtinctly as if he had but one thing to know. Sixthly, He knoweth all things by one act of ſingle and ſimple intuition, he doth not know (as we) by report from others, nor by comparing one thing with another, nor by inferring one thing from another, that is, he doth not know by diſcourſe, argument, or demonſtration, but all things are before the eye of his knowledg nakedly and immediately, as they are. Theſe two laſt as well as any of, or all the former, are a clear proof, not only, that God is knowing and wiſe, but that he is mighty in ſtrength of knowing wiſdom.

Secondly, Conſider wiſdom, as it is applied in working. Some have much of that wiſdom which we call Theoretical, knowing, diſcerning wiſdom; but as for practical, working wiſdom, how to put things together, how to order them as to the buſineſſes and affairs of this life, they are very far to ſeek. We ſay, *Great Scholars are not always the wiſeſt men:* many are knowing, they know almoſt all things, they will diſpute (*de omni ſcibili*) of all things knowable, yet are very weak when they come to lay things together for practice or government; if it be but the government of a family, or of their private eſtate, they know not how to mannage it, much leſs can they mannage the government of great Societies or Corporations, leaſt of all of Kingdoms and Nations. But as for the Lord, he hath not only a knowing wiſdom, but a diſpoſing, a governing, a working, practical wiſdom, in ordering all affairs, which we properly call prudence or diſcretion, (*Pſal.* 112. 5.) We have ſeen knowing learned men do things very fooliſhly, imprudently, indiſcreetly. But all the works of the Lord are contrived and model'd, as alſo effected and perfected with infinite wiſdom. Hence that holy exclamation, (*Pſal.* 104. 24.) *O Lord, how manifold are thy works, in wiſdom haſt thou made them all?* Which as it is true of all the works of Creation, ſo likewiſe of the works of Providence, the former of which are ſpoken of in the beginning of the Pſalm, and the latter in the following parts of it. The Lord in wiſdom made the world, *He made the heavens by his wiſdom*, (Pſal. 136. 5.) *and by wiſdom hath he founded the earth*, (Prov. 3. 19.) If in both thoſe places we underſtand Chriſt by wiſdom, it doth not hinder, but advance this truth; now as the Lord made the world both heaven and earth in wiſdom, ſo in and by the ſame wiſdom he governs heaven and earth, and all his works in both are full of wiſdom. Thus it appears that the Lord is mighty in ſtrength of wiſdom, both as to the knowing and ordering of all things: yea, the Lord is ſo mighty in both theſe kinds of wiſdom, that there is indeed none wiſe but he. And therefore the Scripture not only calls him, *The wiſe God*, but *God only wiſe*, (Rom. 16. 27. Jude *verſ.* 25.) And ſurely he is mighty ſtrong in wiſdom, who hath all the wiſdom, or is only wiſe. Some may ſay, How are we to underſtand that? is not wiſdom one of thoſe communicable attributes of God? ſo we diſtinguiſh the divine attributes, ſome are communicable, others are incommunicable. The infiniteneſs, the omniſcience, the unchangeableneſs, the ſimplicity of God are incommunicable, but the holineſs, the juſtice, the mercy and wiſdom of God, are communicable; that is, God doth communicate unto man his holineſs, his juſtice and wiſdom. Why then is it ſaid, *That God is only wiſe*, ſeeing God hath endowed many with a ſpirit of wiſdom, or hath made many wiſe men in the world?

I anſwer, Firſt, God is ſaid to be only wiſe, becauſe there is none ſo wiſe as he; his wiſdom is ſo much beyond the wiſdom of all men, that no man may be called wiſe but God. Thus alſo God is called *the only Potentate*, (1 Tim. 6. 15.) becauſe though there are many Potentates in the world, yet God's potency is beyond them all. His life alſo is ſuch, that at the 16. verſe of the ſame Chapter it is ſaid, *He only hath immortality*, yet both the Angels and the ſouls of men are immortal; but God hath immortality in a way of ſuch eminency, that the very Angels and ſouls of men are mortal in compariſon of him. *David* ſaid of his life, (*Pſal.* 39. 5.) *My age is nothing to thee*; I ſcarce live at all, when I conſider the life of God; ſo the wiſeſt man in the world may ſay of his wiſdom, my wiſdom is nothing unto thee, I have no wiſdom when I conſider how wiſe God is.

Secondly, God is ſaid to be only wiſe, becauſe there are none originally wiſe but he; his wiſdom is of himſelf, yea his wiſdom is himſelf; the wiſdom of God is not a ſeparable quality from him, as the wiſdom of a man is. Many are men, but not wiſe men; but it is impoſſible for God to be God, and not to be wiſe; his wiſdom is eſſential to him. The wiſdom of man is like gilding upon an earthen veſſel; but the wiſdom of God is like a golden veſſel. The wiſeſt men are gilded over with wiſdom, they are adorned and beautified with it, but no man, how wiſe ſoever is wiſdom, only God is. God is (if I may ſo ſpeak) an immenſe and immeaſurable veſſel of gold, he is all gold, you cannot diſtinguiſh the gold from the veſſel, 'tis gold quite through, he is maſſy gold, maſſy wiſdom. The wiſdom of man is another thing from himſelf. The wiſdom of God is himſelf; and thus God alone is wiſe.

Thirdly, God *is only wiſe*, becauſe all wiſdom is from him; as he hath his wiſdom from himſelf, ſo all others have wiſdom from him; all the wiſdom of men and Angels, is but a ray from his light, but a ſtream, yea, but a drop from his Ocean. *Bezaleel*'s artificial wiſdom was from the Lord, *Solomon*'s political wiſdom was from the Lord; *Solomon* asked wiſdom from the Lord to govern. And not only is the wiſdom of Princes, Stateſmen and Politicians, but the very Ploughman's wiſdom is from the Lord, (*Iſa.* 28. 26.) where the Prophet having ſhewed how the Ploughman tills the ground, how he harrows and caſts in the ſeed, how he threſheth and gets out the grain, he addeth (*verſ.* 29.) *This comes from the Lord, who is wonderful in counſel, and excellent in working*. The Ploughman knoweth not how to till his ground, to ſow his ſeed, to harrow his land, to threſh his corn, if the Lord did not give him wiſdom for it. Thus common wiſdom as well as political and ſpiritual wiſdom is of God, as *Daniel* confeſſed when the ſecret was revealed to him, (*Dan.* 2. 21.) *He giveth wiſdom unto the wiſe, and knowledg to them that know underſtanding.* Seeing then all wiſdom is from God, we muſt confeſs, *He is only wiſe.*

Fourthly, The Lord may be ſaid to be only wiſe, becauſe he is victoriouſly wiſe, his wiſdom is a conquering wiſdom, he conquers by his wiſdom as well as by his power; his wiſdom overthrows the wiſe men of the world, (*Prov.* 21. 30.) *There is no wiſdom, nor underſtanding, nor counſel againſt the Lord.* Many men will be taking and giving counſel againſt the Lord, but it ſhall not ſtand (*Iſa.* 8. 9.) He is only wiſe, who deſtroyeth the wiſdom of the wiſe, (1 *Cor.* 1. 19. 1 *Cor.* 3. 19, 20.) Thus the Lord is *mighty in ſtrength of wiſdom*, in knowing and diſpoſing wiſdom, diſcerning all things moſt clearly, and ordering all things moſt wiſely, according to the pleaſure of his holy and righteous will: and he is ſo wiſe in all theſe things, that he ought to be acknowledged and reverenced, as *the only wiſe God, or as God only wiſe.* Hence take theſe Inferences.

Firſt, If the Lord be mighty in ſtrength of wiſdom as well as in ſtrength of power, *then fear to do any thing amiſs* before him; he will ſpy out every fault; and the more you cover the faults, cracks and flaws in what you do, the more the Lord ſets himſelf to find them out; you cannot hide what you do from him, therefore take heed what you do.

Secondly, Is God mighty in ſtrength of wiſdom? *then do not find fault with any thing he doth, for he can do nothing amiſs.* The works of providence, whether they regard perſons or Nations, are done with as much exactneſs as the works of Creation were. In what beauty and order was the fabrick of this world ſet up at firſt in ſix days! It is called *Coſmos* in Greek, from the beautiful order viſible quite through it; and certainly, the works of providence are as orderly and perfect as the work of Creation, and ſo will appear at laſt, though now we ſee ſo many appearing confuſions, diſturbances, and toſſings up and down: The Lord keeps order, how diſorderly ſoever men are. The Lord doth all things in number, weight and meaſure. There is not one, the leaſt, ſlip, error or miſtake in what himſelf doth, nor in what he ſuffers men to do as to his own ends, how many errors and miſtakes ſoever there are in the ways of men, or in the means which they uſe. Then take heed of picking holes in God's work, much more of picking quarrels with his work. We are apt to find fault (where there is none) with what God doth, but how ſlow are we to find faults (where there are many) in our own doings!

Thirdly, Is the Lord mighty in ſtrength of wiſdom? then never be troubled, though you have mighty wiſe men againſt you; be not afraid, only labour to aſſure the mighty wiſe God for you. If you can but aſſure God, who is mighty in wiſdom for you, you need not be troubled, though mighty wiſe men are againſt you, though *Achitophels*, though *Machiavels*, though the Conclave of *Babylon* be againſt you: if the wiſdom of God be with us and for us, we are well enough, and ſhall do well enough, notwithſtanding the wiſdom of the world againſt us.

Fourthly, If God be mighty in ſtrength of wiſdom, then, when we want wiſdom, and know not what to do, or how to ſuffer, let us go to God; if we want wiſdom to mannage a proſperous eſtate, or to bear an afflicted eſtate, let us go to God. The Apoſtle gives this direction (*James* 1. 5.) *If any man lack wiſdom*, (he ſpeaks of a man in a troublous condition, in a time of temptation) *let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not.* God hath wiſdom enough for us, and can make us wiſe enough; apply to him, and you may be ſupplied for all occaſions.

Fifthly, If God be mighty in ſtrength of wiſdom, then confidently caſt your care on him, put your all into his hand, (Pſal. 37. 5.) *Commit thy way to the Lord, truſt alſo in him, and he ſhall bring it to paſs.* (Prov. 16. 3.) *Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts ſhall be eſtabliſhed*; that is, thy thoughts about thy works, and uſually our thoughts are more unſetled than our works. When we have left a matter in the hand of a wiſe man, how confident are we, and how compoſed are our thoughts, as to the well-iſſuing of it! how much more may we be confident, and compoſed, when we have believingly left our matters in the hand of the only wiſe God!

Sixthly, If the Lord be ſo mighty in wiſdom, that he only is wiſe, then beware of truſting to your own wiſdom, or of being wiſe in your own eyes. That's the counſel of *Solomon* the wiſe, (*Prov.* 3. 5.) *Lean not to thy own underſtanding.* We are apt to lean too much to the underſtanding of others; if we have ſuch a wiſe man to counſel us, we think all's ſafe, we are *Cock-ſure* (as we ſay) the work cannot miſcarry. 'Tis dangerous to lean to the underſtanding of others, but much more to lean to our own. Remember God is only wiſe, and we never ſhew our ſelves more fools, than when we lean to our own wiſdom, or think to carry it by our own wit, and ſo depart from the wiſdom of

God. Therefore be fools, be nothing in your own wiſdom, and you ſhall be wiſe with the wiſdom of God.

Thus I have proſecuted the Text according to our Tranſlation.

There is yet another reading as to both the parts of this 5. verſe, which I ſhall touch a little, becauſe they are much inſiſted upon by Learned Interpreters.

The former part of this verſe, which we render *Behold God is mighty, and deſpiſeth not any*, is thus rendred, *Behold God is mighty, and deſpiſeth not the mighty*. The vulgar Latine, thus, *God doth not caſt away the mighty, ſeeing he himſelf alſo is mighty*. The ſcope of this Tranſlation, is thus conceived. *Job* in the 29. Chapter of this Book, having ſet forth his own mightineſs or greatneſs, complained in the 30. that notwithſtanding all his former power and might, yet God had caſt him down, and laid him in the duſt. Here *Elihu* tells him, though God be mighty, yet he doth not deſpiſe the mighty; he doth not reject any man how high ſoever, becauſe he is high, nor the great, how great ſoever, becauſe great. God himſelf is great and mighty, *and they that are like, (uſually) rejoyce in thoſe that are like them*. Therefore God being mighty himſelf, doth not deſpiſe or reject thoſe that are mighty, becauſe they are ſo; there muſt be ſome other reaſon (it is not their mightineſs) why God deſpiſes and caſts down the mighty. *God is mighty, and deſpiſeth not the mighty*.

Ecce Deus potens, & non faſtidit potentes, robore cordis. Scult. *Deus potentes non abjicit, cum & ipſe ſit potens.* Vulg. *Ut hæc explicatio verbis Hebræis conveniat, vau, quod ſæpe fit, redundante verti poteſt.* Ecce deus potentem non faſtidit, *vel* Ecce Deus potens non faſtidit. *ſc.* potentem. *Cum enim verbo illo accuſativus addendus ſit, ſatius eſt ex præcedenti.* רביר *Potentem repetere, quam objectum ex mente fingere.* Scult. *Non potentia juſta ſed actio prava damnatur.* Greg. l. 26. c. 24.

Hence Note, *The great God is no enemy to greatneſs.*

God doth not deſpiſe the mighty, the Kings and Princes of the Earth, as they are ſuch; he hath no antipathy in him againſt greatneſs, nor doth he reject any man becauſe he is great; if he doth at any time reject a great man, it is becauſe of the abuſe of his greatneſs: God diſlikes no mans juſt power, but the unjuſt exerciſe of that power. The Authority and Power of man over man is of God, therefore God doth not deſpiſe men becauſe they are in power. He ordaineth Powers, *There is no Power but of God, the Powers that be, are ordained* (or as our Margin hath it, *ordered*) *of God*. He puts power into the hands of men, and diſpoſeth of their power. God cannot deſpiſe his own Ordination. 'Tis the abuſe of Power, and not the Power it ſelf, which the Lord ſets himſelf againſt, and that indeed he doth ſet himſelf againſt; he deſpiſeth the moſt mighty and powerful Princes of the World, when they inſtead of governing, are only vexing others with their Power: This cauſeth him to *pour contempt upon Princes* (Pſal. 107. 40.) and renders *him terrible to the Kings of the Earth* (Pſal. 76. 12.) Yet the Lord is never ſo angry with, nor doth he ſo aggravate the faults of thoſe that are in Power, as to make Power it ſelf faulty. Indeed, when great and mighty men turn their Power into oppreſſion, then the Lord ſpeaks as if he had conceived a diſpleaſure againſt all great and mighty men, yet he is not diſpleaſed with their greatneſs, but with the miſ-improvement of their greatneſs, and mal-adminiſtration of their Power. The Prophet puts the Queſtion (*Hab.* 3. 8.) *Was the Lord diſpleaſed againſt the Rivers? was thine anger againſt the Rivers? was thy wrath againſt the Sea?* What was the reaſon why God turned the River of *Nilus* in *Egypt*, into blood? What was the reaſon why God divided the Red Sea? Was he wroth with the River, or with the Sea? No, he was wroth with the great Ones of *Egypt*, his wrath was againſt *Pharaoh* and the *Egyptians*. Such an expreſſion we have (*Nahum* 1. 4.) *He rebuketh the Sea, and maketh it dry, and dryeth up all the Rivers: Baſhan languiſheth, and Carmel, and the Flower of Lebanon languiſheth.* What was the meaning of all this? it only ſignified that the Lord was highly diſpleaſed with the great and mighty Ones of the world, who were to others, as the Sea is to a River, and as *Carmel* and *Lebanon* were to the Plains and low Valleys of the Earth, exceeding them in height and greatneſs; I ſay, he was highly diſpleaſed with them, becauſe theſe carried it amiſs in the exerciſe of their high Power; it was not becauſe they were high and great, but becauſe they had not exalted God in their highneſs, nor acted towards man as became thoſe who were advanced above, and over other men. Thus all along the Lord ſpeaks againſt, and rebukes the high and mighty, upon no other account but the unrighteous adminiſtration of their might and highneſs. God quarrels with no man meerly for his might.

The Hiſtories of all Ages have reported the great and mighty men of the World, oppoſing the mighty, purely becauſe they were ſo. Some ſay they did it out of Reaſon of State, but the true Reaſon of it, uſually was their own pride, or envy, becauſe they could not bear thoſe that were equal with them, as *Pompey*, much leſs a Superiour, as *Cæſar* could not. Or it was out of fear that the great would undermine their greatneſs, or bring them down. Thus mighty men oppoſe the mighty, as mighty; but the Lord is infinitely above theſe thoughts, *He is mighty, and he deſpiſeth not the mighty*, nor doth he ſet himſelf againſt them, becauſe they are mighty. *The liberal* (Iſa. 32. 8.) *deviſeth liberal things, and by liberal things ſhall he ſtand. David* a great Prince, prayed (*Pſal.* 51. 12.) that God would *eſtabliſh him by his free* (or Princely) *Spirit*, that being a mighty King, he might never any more entertain low and unworthy thoughts of any man, nor do any thing unworthy of God, or of himſelf.

Superbia parem non fert.

Magnificus magnificentias cogitabit. Heb.

Again, Our Tranſlation diſtributes the latter part of the verſe into two Branches of the mightineſs of God. *He is mighty*, firſt, *in ſtrength*; and ſecondly, *In wiſdom*. This, by others, is rendred a ſingle Propoſition. *He is mighty in ſtrength of heart.* Strength of heart may be taken three ways: Firſt, For courage in dangers. Secondly, For patience in troubles. Thirdly, For nobleneſs and greatneſs of mind, in all we do. In this third or laſt ſenſe, we are to underſtand it here; as if *Elihu* had ſaid, *The Reaſon why the Lord being mighty, doth not deſpiſe the mighty, is this, Becauſe he excels all others, not only in mightineſs and power, but in the nobleneſs of his Spirit.* The Lord hath ſuch an heroical Spirit, that he can do nothing below or unbecoming himſelf. This is an excellent reading of the words. Take two Notes from it. Firſt, By way of Aſſertion. Secondly, By way of Illation. By way of Aſſertion, thus,

Maximus virtute cordis. Coc. כביר כחלב *Potens eſt robore cordis,* (i. e.) *valet animi præſtantia, eſt magni animi, ergo opera manuum ſuarum non contemnit.* Merc.

The Lord hath a wonderful noble heart, and magnificent Spirit.

He hath not only an outward power (as many have) but an inward power; he is not only *Maſter of others*, but, as I may ſay, he is *Maſter of himſelf*. Many are Maſters of others, who are not at all Maſters of themſelves; they are mighty in the ſtrength of hand, yet weak as to ſtrength of heart. The inward excellency and mightineſs of the heart of God, may be ſeen eminently in a threefold reſpect.

Firſt, The Lord is mighty of heart, as to patience and long-ſufferance, in bearing with thoſe that are evil. The Lord is infinitely above that patience which conſiſts in the bearing of evil, (though that as was toucht before, ſhews much ſtrength of heart) but he is continually in the exerciſe of that patience, which conſiſts in bearing with thoſe that are evil. And O how great is the ſtrength and might of Gods heart in this! Some of the Rabbies tranſlate the Original Text, *long-ſuffering*. The Prophet *Nahum* ſpeaks of God, *as ſlow to anger, and great in power*, (Chap. 1. 3.) It argueth ſtrength of heart indeed, when we can ſtop and bridle our boiſterous and angry paſſions, towards thoſe that have offended us. The Lord ſaith unto, or concerning *Pharaoh* (Exod. 9. 16.) *And in very deed, for this cauſe have I raiſed thee up, for to ſhew in thee my power*, &c. What power? The Lord ſhewed forth a twofold power in the raiſing up of *Pharaoh*: Firſt, the power of his Arm, that he was able to caſt down ſuch a mighty Prince. Secondly, The power of his Patience, that he ſpared him from ruin till he had ſent ten meſſages to him, and poured ten Plagues upon him. The Lord was ſo provoked by *Pharaoh*, that he might have cruſhed him upon the firſt denial, but he forbare him long; the Lord might well ſay, *I have ſet thee up that I might ſhew forth my power, my power in forbearing thee long, as well as in deſtroying thee at laſt.* The Apoſtle ſpeaks of this power (Rom. 9. 22.) *What if God willing to ſhew his wrath, and make his power known* (the Lord will not only ſhew his wrath hereafter in breaking thoſe veſſels of deſtruction, but he ſhews his power now in ſuffering them long, and therefore he to make his power known) *endured with much long-ſuffering the Veſſels of wrath fitted to deſtruction.* Here's the ſtrength of the Lords heart, he bears long with wicked men.

חכ לב *μακροθυμία.*

Secondly, There is a mighty power or ſtrength of heart in God, as in long-ſuffering towards impenitent ſinners, ſo in pardoning ſinners who repent. Who, but the Lord hath

Magni animi eſt ignoſcere. Sola ſublimis & excelſa virtus eſt, nec quicquam magnum, niſi quod ſimul placidum. Sen.

ſuch a ſtrength of Spirit, to pardon and paſs by offences! After the people of *Iſrael* had mutined, and murmured, and ſo provoked rhe Lord to the height, *Moſes* begs and beſpeaks the power of the Lords pardoning mercy (*Numb.* 14. 17.) *And now I beſeech thee, let the power of my Lord be great, according as thou haſt ſpoken, ſaying, The Lord is long-ſuffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity,* &c. As if *Moſes* had ſaid, *Lord, thou muſt put forth as much power in pardoning the ſins of this People, as ever thou didſt in delivering them from their bondage-ſufferings in Egypt.* Or thus, *O Lord, thou mighteſt magnifie the power of thine anger in puniſhing this rebellious People, but rather magnifie the power of thy patience and long-ſufferance in ſparing and pardoning them.* O what ſtrength of heart is in God, who paſſeth by the great tranſgreſſions of his People!

Thirdly, The Lord hath a mightineſs of heart in executing his wrath upon his incorrigible enemies, (*Pſal.* 90. 11) *Who knoweth the power of thine anger?* The anger of God is ſuch a thing as no man can go to the bottom of it in his thoughts. The Lords wrath is powerful, beyond all imagination and apprehenſion; his anger, as well as his love, paſſeth knowledge. In all theſe reſpects the Lord hath ſtrength of heart, or he is mighty in ſtrength of heart, as well as in hand or arm. The greateſt diſcoveries of Gods power, are in the ways of his mercy. His Judgments are called his ſtrange work, but his mercy in his ſtrength, as the Prophet calls it, (*Iſa.* 27. 5.) where warning *the Bryars and Thorns* to take heed of warring with God, he gives a ſinner this counſel, *Let him take hold of my ſtrength, that he may make peace with me, and he ſhall make peace with me.* But what is meant by the ſtrength of God? Some render, *Let him take hold of my Tower.* A *Tower* is a place of ſtrength, but here put for that which God glories in moſt, as his chiefeſt ſtrength, even his goodneſs, mercy, patience, and long-ſufferance, yea Chriſt himſelf; as if he had ſaid, *Let not the ſinner ſtruggle with my ſtrength, let him not think by ſtrong hand to overcome my ſtrength, but let him take hold of my Chriſt, through whom all thoſe glorious perfections of mine, my Goodneſs, Mercy, Patience,* &c. *are given out to the children of men, and he ſhall make peace with me.* This is the true ſtrength of God; nor doth any thing more ſet forth the ſtrength of man, than this, that he is ready to pardon, to forgive, and paſs by; only impotent ſpirits are much for revenge. 'Tis our weakneſs not to paſs by wrongs and injuries done to us. To bear wrongs is to be like the high and mighty God, to bear them in mind, is to be like the loweſt and weakeſt ſpirited men. He is ſtrong indeed, who is ſtrong in patience againſt Offenders, and as ſtrong in mercy to pardon humble ones, as in power to puniſh ſtubborn and rebellious ones.

Apprehendet arcem meam, i.e. Chriſtum. Coc.

Secondly, By way of Illation,

Note, *'Tis the greatneſs of Gods Spirit, or the ſtrength of his heart and mind, which moderates him towards ſinful man.*

That which keeps men in a moderate frame towards men, is true greatneſs of ſpirit: They that are of ſuch a ſpirit, will neither deſpiſe thoſe that are below them, nor envy thoſe that are above them, nor willingly oppoſe thoſe that are equal to them. The envy and oppoſition of others greatneſs, ariſeth from the meanneſs and weakneſs of our own ſpirits. The reaſon why one man is afraid that another ſhould be high, is becauſe himſelf hath not a real highneſs of ſpirit; or the reaſon why moſt oppoſe the greatneſs of others, is the littleneſs of their own ſpirits. Whence ſpring contentions and ſtrifes, envyings at, and underminings of one another? come they not from the narrowneſs of our hearts, that we cannot rejoyce in the good of others, or from the impotent jealouſies of our hearts, that we fear others will do us hurt? If ſuch a one get up, he will pull me down: if ſuch a one be high, 'tis dangerous to me, therefore I muſt pull him down, if I can; whence comes this, but from lowneſs and poorneſs of ſpirit, from that pitiful thing in man, called *Puſillanimity.* The Lord hath ſo great a Spirit, that as he envieth no mans greatneſs, ſo he feareth no mans greatneſs, and therefore doth that which is juſt and equal to all ſorts of men, bad and good, as is further ſhewed in the next verſe.

Verſ. 6. **He preſerveth not the life of the wicked, but giveth right to the poor.**

As if *Elihu* had ſaid, *Though the Lord doth not deſpiſe any that are great, yet he doth not reſpect any thus art bad; he preſerveth not the life of the wicked. And as the Lord will not do any wrong to the rich, ſo, to be ſure, he will give right to the poor.* What *Elihu* had affirmed of God, he now proveth by inſtances or particulars, and that both in reſpect of the wicked and the godly. That the Lord is moſt juſt and righteous he proveth thus,

לא יחיה *Non vivificat.*

He preſerveth not the life of the wicked.] That's the firſt inſtance, and he expreſſeth it negatively, *He preſerveth not the life of the wicked, he maketh not, or ſuffereth not the wicked to live.* The Hebrew ſtrictly is, *He doth not enliven the wicked:* So the word is uſed concerning the Midwives that feared God, (*Exod.* 1. 17.) *They did not obey the word of the King, but ſaved the Male Children alive,* or, *they enlivened the Male Children. They who preſerve, do, upon the matter, give a new life.* The like expreſſion we have (*Exod.* 18. 22.) *Thou ſhall not ſuffer a Witch to live:* The Hebrew is, thou ſhalt not vivifie or enliven a Witch. They who have commerce with the Devil, the *Prince of the Air,* they who Trade with Hell, to ſatisfie the luſts and curioſities of evil men on Earth, are not worthy to breath in the Air, or live upon the face of the Earth. *He preſerved not the life of the wicked.* There are two things in this negative ſpeech of *Elihu.*

Firſt, God doth not ſhew any favour to, nor indulge wicked men in their evil ways. He that will not ſo much as preſerve their lives, doth not give them favour while they live. Life and favour are two diſtinct things, (*Job* 10. 12.) *Thou haſt granted me life and favour.* Favour with life is the priviledge of the living; favour is better than life. The Lord doth but ſeldom reprieve, much leſs doth he at any time favour or pardon impenitently wicked men.

Non vivificat λιτότης, *pro interficit, & omni vita ſpoliat.* Coc.

Secondly, When *Elihu* ſaith, *he preſerveth not the life of the wicked,* we are to underſtand it by an ordinary Figure, wherein leſs is expreſſed, then is to be underſtood; *He preſerveth not,* that is, firſt, he is not ſolicitous about their preſervation, he cares not much what becomes of them; and not only ſo, but Secondly, he deſtroyeth the life of the wicked; the Lord will certainly ruin and utterly undo them, one time or other, one way or other; he will do it either immediately, by his own Arm, by ſome notable ſtroke of vengeance from himſelf: or he will do it by means, he will find out, and impower inſtruments, that ſhall deſtroy the very life of the wicked, And I conceive *Elihu* brings in this Propoſition concerning God, in anſwer to what *Job* had obſerved and complainingly alledged about the Proſperity of the wicked, (*Chap.* 21. 7.) *Wherefore doth the wicked live, become old, yea are mighty in power?* As if *Job* had intimated, that the Lord ſurely did ſhew, not only ſome, but much reſpect unto wicked men; they did not only live, but they lived a long time, and not only a long time a bare life, but were mighty in power, and overpowered, yea, oppreſſed many with their might. *Elihu* replyeth here, notwithſtanding this Allegation (which ſeemed to reflect upon the Juſtice of God) that *the Lord preſerveth not the Life of the wicked.* Mark, firſt, he doth not ſay, *he preſerveth not the Life of a man that ſinneth,* for then whoſe life ſhould be preſerved? but, *he preſerveth not the life of the wicked;* that is, of a man who ſinneth preſumptuouſly, and goeth on impenitently, who is incorrigible. Secondly, he doth not ſay, God ſuffereth not a wicked man to live, for then (moſt men being wicked in all Ages of the world) the world would be very thin, and almoſt naked, of Inhabitants: Bnt *he preſerveth not* (ſaith he) *the life of the wicked;* that is, he ſet no ſtore by them, as we do of thoſe things, which we carefully preſerve. We may compare this verſe with that of *Job* (Chap. 34. 26, 27, 28.) where 'tis ſaid of mighty oppreſſors, the Lord *ſtriketh them wicked men* (that is, as he uſeth to ſtrike wicked men) *in the open ſight of others; becauſe they turned back from him, and would not conſider any of his ways: So that they cauſe the cry of the poor to come up to him, and he heareth the cry of the afflicted.* Now, as there *Elihu* ſpeaks affirmatively, *he ſtriketh wicked men,* ſo here he ſpeaks negatively (which is the ſame in effect) *God doth not preſerve the life of the wicked;* and as there he ſaid, *God heareth the cry of the afflicted, or poor,* ſo here, *he giveth right to the poor.* Theſe Texts are of the ſame ſence, and expound each other. From the former part

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part of this ſixth verſe already opened, *he preſerveth not the life of the wicked*,

Obſerve Firſt, *Wicked men are out of Gods Protection, they can expect no favour from him*;

They are out-lawed. Some perſons are out-lawed by men, and then if any man injure them, or kill them, they can have no remedy by the Law; they have their amends (as we ſay) in their own hands, the Law gives them none. Wicked men are out of Gods love, and therefore out of his care; he turns them up (as we ſay) to the wide World to ſhift for themſelves: whether they ſink or ſwim, 'tis all one to him. He is neither Sun nor Shield to the wicked, he is both to the godly, (*Pſal.* 84. 11.) *The Lord is a Sun and a Shield, the Lord will give Grace and Glory; no good thing will he with-hold from them that walk uprightly.* As a Sun he giveth out the warm Beams of his favour, to refreſh and revive them, when the World leaves them cold and comfortleſs: And as a Shield he defends and ſaves them, when the World ſtrikes at them and vexes them; he will keep them ſafe from evil, as with a Shield. The wicked have no ſhare in this, nor in any ſuch like promiſe; the Lord is rather Fire and Sword, than Sun or Shield to them; he neither comforts them while they live, nor preſerves their lives from death.

But ſome may ſay, Doth not God preſerve the lives of the wicked? Is it not ſaid (*Job.* 7. 20.) *He is the preſerver of men?* Which indefinite ſeems to carry it for all men: And (*Pſal.* 36. 6.) *Thou preſerveſt man and beaſt.* Yea, wicked men not only live, but proſper and flouriſh in the World, as *Job* complained, (*Chap.* 21. 7.) *Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea, are mighty in power?* Sure then they are preſerved, as if God do not preſerve them, who doth? Man hath no more power to preſerve his own life, than to give himſelf life; how is it then that the Text ſaith, God doth not preſerve them? or that they are out of Gods Protection?

I anſwer, Firſt, It cannot be denyed, but that the wicked hold their lives, and all the good things they have (poſſibly they have many good things) of God. But the wicked, and their lives, or the lives of the wicked, are preſerved only by that common Providence of God, which extends even to the Beaſts of the field; they are not preſerved by any ſpecial Providence or Promiſe of preſervation made to them: their *Souls are not bound in the bundle of life with the Lord their God*, as *Abigail* aſſured *David* his ſhould be (1 *Sam.* 25. 29.) nor are they, as one very well expreſſeth it in the Language of the Prophet *Iſaiah* (Chap. 4. 3.) *written* (or reckoned) *among the living in Jeruſalem.* Neither their life, nor their death, is precious in the Lords ſight, as both of the meaneſt Saints are (*Pſal.* 116. 15.) The ſpecial Promiſes of preſervation are made to the godly; the common Providences of preſervation extend to the wicked. God preſerves many wicked men, but not one of them can plead a Promiſe for his preſervation, or ſay, Lord, thou haſt undertaken to preſerve me, I have thy Word or Warrant for my preſervation. So then, the Lord doth not preſerve the life of any wicked man upon a word of Promiſe.

Secondly, I anſwer, When the lives of the wicked are preſerved, they are not preſerved for any love which God bears to their perſons as ſuch, but either, Firſt, to bring them into a better ſtate, that is, to turn from their wickedneſs, that being converted, they may be ſaved at laſt, according to his purpoſe: Or, Secondly, they are preſerved, to ſerve ſome ends and purpoſes of his in this World. For though God hath no pleaſure in them, yet he makes ſome uſe of them, and doth his pleaſure by them; Or, I may ſay, they are preſerved to be Executioners of his diſpleaſure, in chaſtening and correcting his own people. The King of *Aſſyria* was preſerved in great Power; and to what end? *I will ſend him againſt an hypocritical Nation*, (Iſa. 10. 6.) He muſt go on my errand, though *he meaneth not ſo, nor doth his heart think ſo*, (as the Lord ſpake, ver. 7.) He hath other matters and deſign in his head, but I have this uſe of him, and of his power, even to puniſh *the people of my wrath.* The Lord made uſe alſo of *Nebuchadnezar*, and his Army, to ſerve him in the deſtroying of *Tyrus*, and of him and his Army he ſaith, *They wrought for me*, (Ezek. 29. 20.) Thus the Lord doth ſome of his work, his ſtrange work eſpecially, his work of Judgment, by the hands of wicked men; and therefore he preſerves their lives. Yea, he preſerve them many a time to be a help and a defence to his people. A Thorn Hedge keeps the Paſture, that ſtrange Cattle break not in, and eat it up. Wicked men are as Bryars and Thorns, and they are ſuffered to live, becauſe the Lord can make uſe of them as a Fence to his people. When *the Serpent caſt out of his mouth water as a Flood after the woman* (the Church) *that he might cauſe her to be carryed away of the Flood*, then *the Earth* (that is, earthly, carnal men) *helped the Woman* (Rev. 12. 15, 16.) The Lord uſed bad men to do that good work, the preſervation of his diſtreſſed and perſecuted Church.

Thirdly, As the Lord ſuffers many wicked men to live, that they may be brought out of their ſins, ſo he ſuffers others to live that they may fill up the meaſure of their ſins. Why did the Lord preſerve the *Amorites*? was it becauſe he loved or liked them? no, but becauſe they were not then ripe for Judgment, (*Gen.* 15. 16.) *The Iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.* Some wicked men are to fill up their days, that they may fill up the meaſure of their Fathers ſins, by their own, as Chriſt threatned the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, (Matth. 23. 32.) Such a grant of life, though for a thouſand years, is worſe than a thouſand Deaths.

Fourthly, we may anſwer, The wicked are not ſo much preſerved from, as reſerved unto further wrath, (2 *Pet.* 2. 9.) *The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reſerve the unjuſt unto the day of Judgment, to be puniſhed.* God doth not preſently puniſh all the wicked, nor take away their lives; there is a day of Judgment coming, and till that day come, their lives are preſerved, as perſons reſerved unto Judgment.

Fifthly, When wicked men are ſaid to be out of the Lords Protection, conſider, There is a twofold Protection; Firſt, ordinary; Secondly, extraordinary. The Lord doth preſerve and protect wicked men in an ordinary, not in an extraordinary way; he doth not work wonders, much leſs miracles, to preſerve them, as he often doth for the preſervation of his own people. God will not be at ſuch coſt in preſerving of wicked men, as he is at in the preſerving the lives and liberties of his eminent Servants; rather than they ſhall periſh, or not be preſerved, he will ſometimes work a miracle and put Nature out of its courſe, to ſave their lives. When thoſe three Worthies were caſt into the midſt of the burning fiery Furnace, God ſtopt the rage of that furious Element, that *the Fire had no power upon their bodies, nor was an hair of their head ſinged, neither were their Coats changed, nor the ſmell of fire had paſſed on them*, (Dan. 3. 27.) Did we ever hear that the Lord reſtrained the power of the fire, to preſerve wicked men? When *Daniel*, a man precious in the ſight of God, was caſt into the Lions Den, the Lord preſerved his life alſo, by ſtopping the Mouths of the Lyons, (*Dan.* 6. 22.) Did we ever hear that God preſerved the lives of wicked men in ſuch a way? No ſooner were *Daniels* accuſers caſt into the Lyons Den, but the Lyons had the Maſtery of them, and brake all their bones in pieces, e're ever they came to the bottom of the Den, (*ver.* 24.) The Lord doth not preſerve the lives of the wicked, by miraculous manifeſtations of his Power and Glory.

Sixthly, I anſwer, Though ſome wicked men are commonly preſerved, as other men, yet many by their wickedneſs, haſten their ruin, and ſhorten the number of their days. We may diſtinguiſh of wicked men; Firſt, wicked men may be taken in a general notion, for all that are unconverted, and unregenerate. Many perſons paſs for honeſt and good men in the world, who yet are wicked, being carnal, and abiding in a ſtate of nature: wicked men of this ſort, are ordinarily preſerved. Secondly, Take wicked men (and ſuch I conceive the Text eſpecially intends) for notorious wicked men, ſuch as are murderers, blaſphemers, *&c.* the Lord doth not preſerve the lives of ſuch, but lets mans Juſtice ſeize upon them, or divine vengeance overtake them (*Pſal.* 55. 23.) *The blood-thirſty and deceitful man ſhall not live out half his days*; that is, he ſhall not live half ſo long as he might, according to the courſe of Nature, becauſe of his nefarious ſinful courſes. Hiſtories are full of dreadful Tragedies, ſealing to this Truth, with the blood and untimely death of groſs offenders. How often have we ſeen or heard of the Vengeance of God following and falling upon thoſe that were (*ſignanter*) notoriouſly wicked; and of theſe we are eſpecially to underſtand the Point and Text, *He preſerveth not the life of the wicked.* Take this Inference from all that hath been ſaid about this awakening Obſervation,

How ſad is the life of a wicked man ! indeed of any man on this ſide the Line of grace, but eſpecially of any very wicked man ! He can ſcarce be ſaid to live, whoſe life is not preſerved by God ; a wicked man is always in death, ſeeing God doth not preſerve his life. The Apoſtle *Paul* ſaid he was *in Deaths often*, but God had as often preſerved his life ; but they are in Deaths always, whoſe life God never preſerveth. What preſervation of life can he have, who hath not God for his preſerver ? God in Creation or Propagation giveth us our life as to being ; but Preſervation gives us our life as to well-being. Can it be well with them that are not under the preſervation of God ? To be redeemed by Chriſt would be but a ſmall comfort, unleſs we were alſo preſerved by him. (*Jude* 1.) *To them that are ſanctified by God the Father, and preſerved in Jeſus Chriſt, and called.* If we were only redeemed from death, and not preſerved in life, what were our ſpiritual life to us ? So I may ſay in reſpect of the life of the body ; to be meerly created or propagated, what is it, if we are not preſerved ? 'Tis a high Priviledge, when a man can, not only ſay, he hath received life from God, but his life is preſerved by God. That's the firſt point. *He preſerveth not the Life of the wicked.*

Again, From that other Interpretation of the words, as not to preſerve is as much as to deſtroy and ruine,

> Note, *As God utterly diſowneth, ſo he will at laſt utterly ruine all wicked men.*

He not only doth not favour them, but *pours out fury upon them*, (Jer. 10. 25.) *Pour out thy fury upon the Heathen that know thee not, and upon the Families that call not on thy Name.* The Propheſie of *Iſaiah* ſpeaks no better concerning them than that prayer of *Jeremy.* (*Iſa.* 3. 11.) *Wo unto the wicked, it ſhall be ill with him, for the reward of his hand ſhall be given him.* And what can the hand of a wicked man earn ? the wages of ſin is death ; he can get nothing but wrath, and death, nothing but tribulation and anguiſh here, and eternal miſery hereafter, by the work of his hands. Wo to the wicked, for the reward of his hands ſhall be given him, that is, eternal deſtruction and ſorrow ſhall be given him, according to the iniquity of his hand. A godly man is rewarded according to the cleanneſs of his hands (*Pſal.* 18. 20, 24.) He labours to keep his hands, (much more his heart clean, whatever the World judge of him) But wo to the wicked men ! God giveth them the reward of their hands, of their unclean, foul and filthy hands ; for what can ſuch hands get or procure by all their labour, but their own miſchief and ſorrow ? *There is no peace, ſaith my God, to the wicked*, (Iſa. 57. 21.) No peace is to them becauſe no good is done by them : their portion lies in promiſes, who keep Commandments, ſo theirs muſt needs lie in threatnings, who do nothing but break them, or break them in all they do. *My meditation of him ſhall be ſweet, I will be glad in the Lord*, (ſaid *David*, Pſal. 104. 34.) As if he had ſaid, I know that I and every godly man, ſhall receive ſo much good from the Lord, that it doth me good at the heart to think of it: But as for the wicked, I can fore-ſee (as we ſay) with half an eye, how ill it will be with them, and ſo let it be ; I muſt ſubſcribe to, and vote with the righteous judgment of the Lord againſt them (*ver.* 35.) *Let the ſinners be conſumed out of the Earth, and let the wicked be no more.*

Laſtly, Conſider theſe words, *He preſerveth not the life of the wicked*, with reſpect to the wicked, ſpecially intended and treated of in this Context, *The Lord is mighty, and deſpiſeth not the mighty* (becauſe they are mighty) *he preſerveth not the wicked.*

> Hence Note, *Wicked men, how mighty ſoever, cannot preſerve themſelves, nor doth the Lord undertake for their preſervation.*

The ſtrongeſt of wicked men, cannot ſtand by their own ſtrength, they cannot protect nor preſerve themſelves, and the Lord will not put forth his ſtrength to preſerve them from falling. As no mightineſs, no power can bear man up, or maintain him againſt the Lord, ſo not without the Lord ; if he preſerveth not the life of the wicked, they cannot eſcape death and deſtruction, though high as Cedars, and ſtrong as Oaks. They cannot but periſh, whom God preſerveth not. *He preſerveth not the life of the wicked*,

But giveth right to the poor.

עניים *Pauperes afflicti.*

Or *to the afflicted.* Poverty it ſelf is a great affliction, and uſually the poor are afflicted by others. Here is a ſecond inſtance of Gods goodneſs in the exerciſe of his power and might. As *He preſerveth not the life of the wicked*, So *he giveth right to the poor* ; as he deſtroyeth wrong-doers, ſo he will do right to thoſe that ſuffer wrong. Every word is conſiderable, Firſt, *He giveth* ; that's an act of bounty. Secondly, *He giveth right* ; that's an act of equity. And that Thirdly, *To the poor* ; that's an act of pity and charity.

Further, When 'tis ſaid, *He giveth*, that implies, Firſt, a preſent or ſpeedy act : Secondly, a conſtant and ſetled courſe of acting. As the word *giveth* imports, that the Lord doth it now, and doth not put it off to hereafter only ; ſo it likewiſe importeth that the Lord will do it hereafter, as well as now. *He giveth*

משפט

Right to the poor.] The poor ſuffer wrong, but the Lord comes, and gives them *right*, or rights them, and that in a twofold notion. Firſt, He gives them that right which is due to them, according to his own righteous Laws, or the righteous Laws of men. That's right done, which is done according to a righteous Law. Secondly, He giveth them that right which is due to them according to the integrity of their own hearts and ways. We may ſay, Thirdly, The Lord giveth them right, not according to the ſtrictneſs of the Law, but according to the integrity of their hearts. Thus *David* prayed (*Pſal.* 7. 3.) *Judge me, O Lord, according to my righteouſneſs, and according to mine integrity that is in me* ; that is, according to my honeſt meaning, and the ſimplicity of my Soul. As if he had ſaid, *O Lord, do me right* ; *men have done me wrong, they have falſe and wrong apprehenſions of me, they raiſe falſe reports concerning me* ; *but thou, O Lord, who knoweſt my integrity wilt judge me accordingly, and 'tis my humble and earneſt Prayer that thou wouldeſt. He giveth right*

To the poor.] The poor in Scripture are taken two ways ; Firſt, as they ſtand in oppoſition to the rich ; Secondly, as they are oppoſed to the proud ; thus here, he giveth right to the poor, as well as to the rich ; and he will eſpecially give right to the humble poor, to the righteous poor, to the poor in ſpirit. Such the Prophet ſpeaks of (*Iſa.* 66. 2.) *To this man will I look, even to him that is poor.* He means not the poor in purſe (as ſuch) he means not thoſe (as ſuch) who wear poor cloaths, the Lord doth not always look to, or reſpect ſuch poor, for many ſuch are both proud and wicked ; but he looks to him that is poor in ſpirit, or of a *contrite ſpirit* ; let ſuch be in Rags, and lie upon the Dunghil, the Lord will look to them ; and he hath a threefold look for them. Firſt, A look of honour, as reſpecting their Perſons. Secondly, A look of care, to ſupply their wants. Thirdly, A look of juſtice, to deliver them from wrong. And if they that are poor in ſpirit, be rich alſo in the world, they ſhall not fail to receive right from the hand of the Lord. The Lord giveth right to all ſorts of men againſt their wicked oppreſſors ; but his poor, the godly poor, believing poor, thoſe that are poor not only in purſe, but in ſpirit, are more peculiarly under this priviledge, of being righted by the Lord. And uſually in Scripture, the word *poor* is taken in a good ſence, for good men, as the word *rich*, in an ill ſence for evil men (*Jam.* 5. 1.) *Go to now ye rich men, weep and howl for the miſeries that ſhall come upon you.* The Apoſtle ſpeaks as if that were the caſe of all rich, or as if he called all rich men to weeping and howling, &c. Yet ſome poor men are wicked, and ſome rich men are righteous ; and therefore I conceive the word *poor* may be taken here for any wronged or oppreſſed poor, yet eſpecially for the godly poor. For though God giveth right to all men, even the worſt of men, yet here the ſcope of *Elihu* is to ſhew that God takes moſt care of thoſe whom the wicked do moſt, not only neglect, but injure and oppreſs, *He giveth right to the poor.*

Nomen pauperis in bonum ſumitur, pauperes ſunt populus Dei.

> Hence Note, *The poor, eſpecially the godly poor, are often wronged, and go by the worſt in the world.* Or thus : *The poor, as poor, uſually ſuffer from, and by the world.*

As the world is apt to oppreſs any poor, ſo moſtly the Godly poor, (*Pſal.*12.5.) *For the oppreſſion of the poor I will ariſe.* 'Tis poſſible a rich man may be oppreſſed, a mighty man may be oppreſſed by one mightier than he; but uſually the poor are oppreſſed, and they trampled on, who are already underfoot. And therefore the Lord ſaith, *For the oppreſſion of the poor, for the ſighing of the needy, now will I ariſe, and ſet him at ſafety from him that puffeth at him.* This is not excluſive, the Lord will ariſe for the help of the rich and great, when any ſuch are wronged; but he is ſaid to ariſe for the help of the poor, as intimating that the poor ſeldom come by their right, or find help in the world, unleſs God ariſe to help them, or help them to it; and becauſe he hath ſaid he will help them to their right, we may be ſure he will. *David*'s Faith was ſtrong upon this promiſe, (*Pſal.* 18.27.) *Thou wilt ſave the afflicted people.* (Pſal. 72. 4.) *He ſhall judge the poor of the People.* (Pſal. 140. 12.) *I know that the Lord will maintain the cauſe of the afflicted.* And his Experience was as clear, as his Faith was ſtrong. (*Pſal.* 37.25.) *I have been young, and now am old, yet have I not ſeen the righteous forſaken*; that is, I have often, yea always ſeen him helped one way or other; and ſometimes *ſet on high from affliction*, (Pſal. 107.41.) The Lord careth ſo for the poor, as if he cared for none elſe; and the beſt of the poor are little cared for by any, but the Lord. (*Zeph.* 3.12.) *I will alſo leave in the midſt of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they ſhall truſt in the Name of the Lord.* The rich of this world truſt to creature helps, but as the Lord's poor know they ought not to truſt in creature help, ſo they have it not to truſt to, and therefore they truſt in the Name of the Lord, not only out of choice (which is their grace and duty) but out of neceſſity. And what will the Lord do for them that truſt in him, not only out of neceſſity but choice? he will ſurely take care of them, and do them right.

Secondly, Note; *God rights the poor freely.*

He giveth them right, he doth not ſell it. What freer than gift? They need not bribe for it. As he freely giveth them the Righteouſneſs of his Son to juſtifie them, ſo they have common right of free gift to relieve them.

Note Thirdly, *The Lord relieves, or rights the poor ſpeedily.*

He giveth, implyeth a preſent act, and that doubles the mercy.

Note Fourthly, *God will always right the wronged poor.*

He giveth, imports even a continued act; as he did it in former times, in the days of old, ſo he doth it at this day, and will do it always. As the Lord giveth right ſpeedily, ſo conſtantly, with him is no variableneſs or ſhadow of turning. Moſt men do right only by fits, but the Lord is ever giving right.

Laſtly, *He giveth right to the poor*, not to this, or to that poor man, but to the poor.

Hence Note, *The Lord diſtributes right to all that are wronged.*

As his Mercy, ſo his Juſtice is not confined to a few, but floweth out to all.

But it may be objected, *Why then are ſo many poor without their right? If the Lord giveth right, and giveth it continually, and impartially, why do the poor cry, and ſigh, and groan, and mourn? why ſee we ſo many tears of the poor? If they have right, why do they complain?*

I anſwer, Firſt, The Lord giveth right to the poor, ſometimes, when the poor perceive it not. (*Pſal.* 97.2.) *Clouds and darkneſs are round about him, Righteouſneſs and Judgment are the habitation of his Throne.* When a man cannot ſee the Lord doing right, yet the Lord doth right. The Sun ſhineth when eclipſed or covered with a Cloud. The Lord never ceaſeth to right the poor, though neither poor nor rich perceive how, or which way he doth it.

Secondly, I anſwer, He giveth right to the poor, even when they want right, or when they are under the ſoreſt oppreſſions, by ſupporting their hearts in this perſwaſion, that he will give them right. The poor have right when their minds are ſatisfied that they ſhall have right. There is no true Godly poor man in the world, how much ſoever afflicted, but his heart is, or may be ſatisfied, that he ſhall have right. That's a ſure word (*Pſal.* 9. 18.) *The needy ſhall not always be forgotten, the expectation of the poor ſhall not periſh for ever.* And therefore we may pray with confidence, *Forget not, O Lord, the Congregation of thy poor for ever*, (Pſal. 74.19.) The poor may reſt in this aſſurance, while their troubles reſt upon them, that God will *bring forth their Righteouſneſs as the Light, and their Judgment as the Noon-day*, (Pſal. 37.6.) He hath right, who believes he ſhall have it; as he that believeth, hath everlaſting life in hope, long before he attains the poſſeſſion of it, (*John* 3.36.)

Thirdly, Though we ſay, The Lord giveth right to the poor, both ſpeedily and conſtantly, yet he reſerveth to himſelf a liberty as to time, and means, and manner; as in all his outward Adminiſtrations, ſo in miniſtring or giving out this right; the Lord waits to be gracious, till we are ready for his grace, and he waits (in the ſame ſence) to be righteous, till the poor are ready for their right; they ſhall not ſtay for it, when once they are ready for it; and it would be a wrong to them to have their right, before they are ready for it.

Laſtly, There is a day ſpoken of, wherein the Lord will do all his poor right in the view of all the world (*Acts* 17. 31.) *He hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the World in righteouſneſs, by that man whom he hath ordained.* The day approacheth, wherein the Lord will judge the world in righteouſneſs. Right is prepared and deſigned for them. The time till right ſhall be done to all, as is deſired, or to the utmoſt of their deſires, maketh haſt: *He that ſhall come, will come, and will not tarry; Behold* (ſaith he) *I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his works ſhall be*, (Rev. 22. 12.) And if the Lord come with a reward in his hand for thoſe who have done well, he will undoubtedly come with right in his hand to give all thoſe who have ſuffered wrongfully.

VERS. 7.

He withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous: but with Kings are they on the throne, yea, he doth eſtabliſh them for ever, and they are exalted.

THis verſe contains a further confirmation of Gods righteous and gracious dealing with the righteous and gracious poor, yea, with all that are righteous and gracious. The words may be taken, either in a ſtricter or in a larger ſenſe.

Firſt, Strictly, as an Expoſition of the latter part of the former verſe, *He giveth right to the poor*, that is, *He withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous:* We may put both together, *He is ſo ſet to give right to the righteous poor, he takes ſuch care of them, that he cannot take his eye off from them.*

Secondly, In a larger and more general ſenſe, as a Concluſion upon the whole matter, that, *God will not deſert any righteous perſon, whether poor or rich, high or low, God will take notice of piety and godlineſs, whereſoever he finds it.*

He withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous.

The word which we tranſlate *withdraweth*, and is here uſed negatively, *He withdraweth not*, ſignifies, ſtrictly in the Noun, any kind of abatement or diminution, and in the Verb, to diminiſh, or abate, or take ſhort in any kind that which was before. When *Pharaoh* (Exod. 5.8.) gave out a freſh Charge for burdening, or indeed oppreſſing the Children of *Iſrael* in their bondage, the Order ran in this ſtile; *The tale of bricks which they did make heretofore you ſhall lay upon them, you ſhall not diminiſh* or withdraw any, you ſhall not abate them a brick. And *Moſes* ſhewing how ſacred a thing the Word of God is, (*Deut.* 9.2.) gives a double check or prohibition to all medlers with it: Firſt, to medlers by way of addition, *Ye ſhall not add unto the Word:* Secondly, by way of abatement, or abſtraction, *Ye ſhall not diminiſh*, or *withdraw from it*: it is this word; As if the Lord had ſaid, *Every tittle of my word ſhall ſtand by it ſelf, and every Iota be eſtabliſht*; be ſure

גרע: *minuit, diminuit, ademit, ſubſtraxit.*

that ye put nothing to it, that you withdraw nothing from it. Further, this word which we tranſlate *withdraw*, is rendred alſo *to clip*, as the hair of the head or beard is *clipt*, (*Jer.* 48. 37.) It is indeed high Treaſon againſt the King of Heaven, to clip his coyn, his word which bears the royal ſtamp and ſuperſcription of his truth and holineſs. Thus here, *he withdraweth not*, that is, the Lord doth not abate, leſſen, diminiſh, or take off his *eyes from the righteous*, his eyes are fixed on them for good always, and they are always fixed in the ſame ſtrength and vertue; *He withdraweth not*

His eyes.] God is a Spirit without parts and paſſions, yet often in Scripture parts and paſſions are aſcribed to him in alluſion to man, here eyes, *He withdraweth not his eyes*, that is, his ſight, or his providence. And we may take notice, that in Scripture, where this expreſſion is uſed without any further addition, it is always taken in a good ſenſe. When we read either of Gods keeping his eyes upon his people, or of his not withdrawing his eyes from his people, it always reſpects their priviledge, benefit and comfort; *He withdraweth not his eyes*

Oculos domini eſſe ſuper aliquem, niſi aliquid additur ſemper in bonum ſumitur & peculiarem ejus favorem & curam importat. Lorin.

From the righteous.] He doth not ſay, from this or that righteous man, but from *the righteous*, implying the whole kind or generation of the righteous, The indefinite is univerſal; we may render it thus; he withdraweth not his eyes from any that are righteous. The righteous here may be taken in a twofold notion, Firſt, for the righteous, as to their ſtate, or who are in a ſtate of righteouſneſs. Man wanting a righteouſneſs of his own, hath the righteouſneſs of another aſſigned and imputed to him. Juſtified perſons through faith in our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, are righteous perſons, as hath been ſhewed heretofore. Secondly, We may take *righteous* here, with reſpect to the righteouſneſs of their ways and actions: *They who do righteouſneſs are righteous*, ſaith the Apoſtle *John*. To a righteous ſtate, there belongs a righteous way, a righteous walk, righteous acting; not that the righteous do not ſin, but they would not, nor do they ſin at all as the unrighteous. It is a high blemiſh or ſtain to the Goſpel, when any that pretend to a righteous ſtate, or to righteouſneſs by Jeſus Chriſt, are not righteous as to their ways and courſe, as to their walkings and workings, whether towards God or man. 'Tis true, in a ſtrict legal ſenſe, none are righteous, no not one; but in a Goſpel ſenſe all juſtified and ſanctified perſons are righteous; and they are called ſo, not only poſitively as to what themſelves are, but comparatively, as to what the men of the world are, who live in a ſtate or walk in a courſe of ſin and unrighteouſneſs. *The Lord withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous.*

But ſome may here object or queſtion, Is this true only of the righteous? Doth the Lord at any time withdraw his eyes from the unrighteous? truly that would be very good news to many unrighteous perſons, they would be glad that they and their way might be hid from God, or that God would not look upon them.

I anſwer, This Scripture is not to be ſo underſtood, as if God did behold the righteous and not the wicked, for (*Prov.* 15. 3.) *The eyes of the Lord are every where, beholding the evil and the good*, whether things done or perſons doing them. The Lord doth not withdraw his eyes from the moſt unrighteous perſons, nor from any of their acts or ways of unrighteouſneſs. And when it is ſaid here, *The Lord withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous*, it is meant of a peculiar eye, which the Lord hath upon the righteous; he beholds both the righteous and the unrighteous, yet he doth not behold the unrighteous, as he beholds the righteous; which I ſhall clear further by giving in a five-fold diſcovery, what that eye of the Lord is which is upon the righteous, four of which are diſtinct and totally differing from that eye with which he beholdeth unrighteous men, and from every one of them I ſhall give you an obſervation for our further profiting by this general aſſertion, that *the Lord withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous.* There is a five-fold eye of God ſpoken of in Scripture.

Firſt, There is a diſcerning eye, that eye by which he unerringly knoweth what every man is, and what every man doth.

Hence note, *The Lord taketh exact and full notice of, he clearly diſcerns the righteous in every condition.*

This is true alſo of the unrighteous; therefore *David* puts it univerſally, (*Pſal.* 11. 4.) *His eyes behold, his eyelids try the children of men*, that is, his ſight diſcovers and diſcerns what they are, of what ſort ſoever they are. We may ſee many men, yet not diſcover what they are, they may have a fair outſide to our view, whileſt within they are foul and full of rottenneſs; they may appear in Sheepscloathing, yet inwardly be ravening Wolves. But the Lords eye is a trying eye, he doth not only know who men are, but he knows what they are. Such is the importance of that Scripture, (*Heb.* 4. 13.) *All things are naked and manifeſt to his eyes, with whom we have to do*; that is, the Lord doth ſo behold things and perſons, that he hath a clear underſtanding of them. And though the Lords eye be thus upon all men, yet this is ſpecially affirmed of righteous men, (*Pſal.* 33. 18.) *Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, and hope in his mercy.* Again, (*Pſal.* 34. 15.) *His eye is over the righteous.* Both Texts teach us, that God conſiders not only *what they do*, but as I may ſay, *how they do*, whether it be peace with them, or whether it be trouble with them, or whether it be joy with them, or whether it be ſorrow with them, the Lords eye is over them, to diſcern, not only whether, and how they go, but how things go with them.

Secondly, The Lord hath a directing or a counſelling eye.

Hence Note, *The Lord with his eye favourably guides, directs, and counſels righteous men.*

This eye of the Lord, as it denotes favour, is peculiar to the righteous. We have that expreſly, (*Pſal.* 32. 8.) *I will inſtruct thee, and teach thee*, (how?) *I will guide thee with mine eye.* We put in the Margin, *I will counſel thee*, that is, thee a godly man, a *David*, ſpoken of (*verſ.* 6. 7.) mine eye ſhall give thee counſel. Men can give direction by the eye, and they that are acquainted with them, underſtand what they mean when they look this way or that way, thus or ſo. *Solomon* ſaith, *A naughty perſon winketh with his eyes, he ſpeaketh with his feet, he teacheth with his fingers*, (*Prov.* 6. 12, 13.) that is, all the poſtures and geſtures of his body, ſhew what he is, ſtark naught, and ſilently teach others to be naught. The holy God alſo teacheth by his feet and fingers, his goings and doings, his works and ways teach us the work which we ſhould do, and the way wherein we ſhould go; he hath a providential eye; the looks of providence give counſel to thoſe who know how to look upon them, and interpret them. The Lord hath a providential eye upon the righteous, not only to foreſee their dangers, but to direct their courſe; he ſheweth them their way, and their work by this eye; he tells them what pleaſeth him, and what diſpleaſeth him, by this eye; this eye the Lord doth not withdraw from the righteous; *He will guide the feet of his Saints*, (1 *Sam.* 2. 9.) 'Tis poſſible for a righteous man ſometime to be without counſel, he may neither know what counſel to give himſelf, nor what to take from others; as *Jehoſhaphat* ſaid in his ſtreight (2 *Chron.* 20. 12.) *He knoweth not what to do*; yet (as *Jehoſhaphat* ſaid then) *his eyes are towards the Lord*, and the Lords eyes are towards him. When he is thus counſelleſs, there is a counſelling, a directing eye of God upon him; though he at that preſent know not his way, yea, be out of his way, yet he is not out of Gods eye, and that will in due time ſhew him his way, or bring him into his way again: though God ſuffer him to go out of the way, yet the eye of God is upon him, even when he is out of his way, and that eye will reduce and bring him back to his right way. There is a directing a counſelling eye of God.

Thirdly, The Scripture ſpeaks of a pitying and a compaſſionating eye of God. It is ordinary with us to hear thoſe that are in diſtreſs cry out to thoſe who paſs by, *caſt an eye upon us, look upon us*, and that is as much as to ſay, pity us, have compaſſion upon us;

this eye of pity the Lord doth not withdraw from the righteous.

Hence note. *The righteous are under the compaſſionating, the pitying eye of God.*

When the people of *Iſrael* were in *Egypt*, the Lord ſaid to *Moſes*, (Exod. 3. 7.) *I have ſurely ſeen the affliction of my people*; and what kind of ſight was that? what eye of God was it which was upon them? The words following, and the whole ſeries of Gods dealings alſo clear it, that it was an eye of compaſſion; *I have ſurely ſeen*, or *ſeeing I have ſeen the affliction of my people that are in Egypt*, &c. *and I am come down to deliver them.* We read in that notable place, (*Gen.* 16. 14.) when *Hagar* was in a very ſad and diſtreſſed condition, being caſt out of *Abrahams* family, God had compaſſion on her, and ſhewed her a Well, where ſhe might have water for her ſelf and child, and the Text ſaith, *She called the name of the Well Beer-la-hai-roi*, that is, *the Well of him that liveth and ſeeth me*: As if ſhe had ſaid, *God hath ſeen me in my afflicted condition, and he hath alſo had compaſſion on me.* That's another great priviledge, the righteous are under this pitying and compaſſionating eye of God; and from thence follows,

The fourth eye of God, *his providing eye, his caring eye.*

Hence note, *The Lord doth ſo eye the righteous in their ſtraits and afflictions with compaſſion, that he alſo provides to deliver them out of their affliction, out of their ſtraits.*

There is a providing eye of God continually beholding his people: Of this providing eye *Abraham* ſpake, (*Gen.* 22. 14.) when he was put upon that hard task, the ſacrificing of his own ſon, his *Iſaac*, the Lord had compaſſion on him, and provided another ſacrifice, and therefore he called the name of that place, *Jehovah Jireh, the Lord will ſee or provide*; that is, as the Lord hath ſeen and provided for me, ſo he will ſee and provide for all his in their greateſt exigents and extremities. What *Abraham* ſaid, all the ſeed of *Abraham* may ſay in the day of their diſtreſs, *Jehovah Jireh, the Lord will ſee and provide.* And as the Lord hath a ſeeing and a providing eye for his in times of diſtreſs, ſo at all times. *Moſes* ſaid of the Land of *Iſrael*, (Deut. 11. 12.) *It is a Land of hills and of vallies, a Land which the Lord thy God careth for: The eyes of the Lord thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year, even unto the end of the year.* The eyes of the Lord are upon that land, that is, upon the people of the land, or upon the land for the peoples ſake who dwell in it: What to do? the Text anſwers, *to care for it*, that is, to provide all things for their good, to give rain in ſeaſon, and the fruits of the earth, not only for the ſupport, but comfort of his people. We read of the ſame eye promiſed to the people of *Iſrael* in the Land of their captivity, (*Jer.* 29. 6.) *I will ſet mine eyes upon them for good, and I will bring them again into this Land*; I will not only give them a look, or a glance, but fix or *ſet mine eyes upon them for good*, that is, to do them good. It is a proverbial ſaying amongſt us, *The Maſters eye fattens the Horſe*: The Maſters eye is a caring, a providing eye, he will take care that the Horſe ſhall be well fed. Certainly, Gods eye is a fattening eye; they ſhall be fat and flouriſh, from whom God will not withdraw his providing eye, at leaſt they ſhall have neceſſaries, or food convenient, both for ſoul and body.

Fifthly, The Scripture ſpeaks of a delighting eye, or of an eye of complacency; and thus alſo the Lords eye is upon the righteous, he beholdeth them with high content, he is, as I may ſay, taken with them, *Iſa.* 66. 1.) *To him will I look that is poor.* Among all objects, none ſo pleaſant or pleaſing to God as the poor. What poor doth he mean? ſurely the righteous poor, or the poor in ſpirit, (as was ſhewed upon the former verſe) let ſuch a one be whom he will, *to him will I look*, mine eye is greatly pleaſed to behold ſuch a one. The word uſed by *Elihu* in this Text, doth further clear it, while he ſaith, *He withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous.* How pleaſant is any object to our eyes from which we cannot withdraw or take them off, but muſt be continually feeding them upon it! Some cannot take off their eyes from unlawful wanton objects, becauſe they are ſo delighted in them, they have as the Apoſtle *Peter* ſpeaks, *eyes full of adultery*, and ſuch can never glut their eyes with adulterous objects. Now certainly the Lord is exceedingly taken with the beauty, the ſpiritual beauty of a righteous perſon, with the comlineſs, the ſpiritual comlineſs of thoſe that are godly, when the Text ſaith, *He withdraweth not his eyes from them*, but carries them (as it were) always in his eye. Among the Latines, to carry one in our eye is an expreſſion of ſingular high content, delight and pleaſure taken in ſuch a perſon. We may ſay of all the righteous, the Lord carrieth them in his eye, and therefore he is highly pleaſed and delighted with them.

In oculis aliquem geſtare, eſt eum vehementer amplecti & diligere.

Thus you have this five-fold eye, which the Lord doth *not withdraw from the righteous*; and in that the Text ſaith, he doth not withdraw or abate or diminiſh his eye from them, but looks fully upon them, it give us this ſixth note;

The inſpection of God upon, his compaſſion towards, his care of, his delight in the righteous is perpetual.

Though God doth afflict, yet he never ceaſeth to love or care for his people. *Elihu* was much upon that, induſtriouſly to remove the ſcandal of the Croſs, which 'tis like then did and ſtill doth offend many, and cauſeth them to ſtumble, when they ſee the righteous afflicted; therefore he would aſſure us, that God never withdraweth his eye from them: but his care of, and pity to, yea pleaſure in them is everlaſting. That eye of his which carries all this in it, is never ſhut towards them. The Lord ſaith of the Church, (*Iſa.* 49. 16. *Thy walls are continually before me.* As the walls of *Sion*, ſo the walls of every righteous perſon in *Zion*, or of every true Sioniſt, are continually before the Lord, *he withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous*; *He that keepeth Iſrael ſhall neither ſlumber nor ſleep*, (Pſal. 121. 4.) he that neither ſlumbers nor ſleeps, needs not withdraw his eyes from us, and he that hath a render regard to us, will not. The Prophet (*Iſa.* 27. 3.) ſpeaking of the Church under the Allegory of a Vineyard, brings in the Lord giving this aſſurance, *I will water it every moment, I will keep it night and day.* He that waters a Vineyard every moment, never withdraws his eyes from it; now by watering is meant the ſupply of whatſoever good the Vineyard or Church of God ſtood in need of; to be ſo ſupplyed is to be well watered. The providence of God, as to our ſpiritual and temporal eſtate, watcheth over us continually to water us.

Non ſolum ſatagentem attentamque curam denotat hæc phraſis, ſed perſerverantim, continuam minimeque deflectentem. Bold.

But ſome may queſtion here, Doth not the Lord withdraw his eyes from the righteous? are his eyes continually upon them? what then is the meaning of that Scripture, (*Pſal.* 44. 23.) and of ſeveral others of like importance; *Awake Lord; why ſleepeſt thou?* That was at once the voice of the Church, and her complaint; ſurely the Lords eyes were withdrawn from the Church when he was aſleep. I anſwer, The Lord ſleeps, with reſpect to his Church, as the Church ſleeps with reſpect to the Lord, (*Cant.* 5. 2.) *I ſleep* (ſaith the Spouſe) *but my heart waketh.* Indeed the Lord doth act ſometimes ſo towards the righteous, or lets things go ſo with the righteous, as if he were aſleep, as if he took no notice of them, yet ſtill his heart waketh towards them: So that his ſleeping doth not imply an intermiſſion of his care, but only a ſuſpenſion of the effects of his care. For while the Lord lets things go ſo as if he were aſleep, he then wakes and watches as much over the righteous, over his Church and people, as at any other time, when they have the higheſt actings of his providence for their outward peace and preſervation.

And if that other ſort of Scriptures ſhould be objected againſt his perpetual watching over the righteous, or that he never withdraws his eyes, which ſay, *he hideth his face*, and turns himſelf away from them. I anſwer, Thoſe Scriptures are all of them to be underſtood according to the former interpretation, the Lord hideth himſelf, as to ſenſe and preſent appearance, but he never hideth himſelf, as to the real continuance of his love and care towards his Church or People. This Objection ſome made to one of the Ancients; the Lord (ſaid they) may ſeem to withdraw his eyes from the righteous, becauſe he ſuffers them to fall under the oppreſſed of the unrighteous. No, ſaith he, *Famulos ſuos nunc magis reſpicit, nam jam prævidet, quid eis miſericorditer recompenſet.* Greg. in loc.

The Lord beholds the righteous, though they periſh by the hand of the unrighteous; yea, when it is worſt with them, the Lords Eye is upon them for good, both to ſee how they carry it, or behave themſelves in their Sufferings, and likewiſe to provide a full reward and recompence for them after all their ſufferings.

Before I paſs from this part of the verſe, let me make theſe two Inferences.

Firſt, *If the Lord never withdraweth his Eyes from the righteous, then let the righteous know their own Priviledge and Mercy.* How happy are they upon whom the eyes of the Lord abide always for good! The Lord cannot endure to have good men out of his Eye, as Parents ſay of their darlings, and Princes of their Favourites. If we were aſſured, that the Eye of a great man, who loveth us, were always upon us, if he ſhould promiſe to have an eye to us, (That's an ordinary Promiſe among men, *I will have an Eye to you*, that is, I will take care of you; if we have (I ſay) but ſuch a word from a man in Power, we think we have got a great revenue; *ſuch a great Lord will have an eye to us, we have his word, he will not take off his care from us.* How much then ſhould we boaſt and rejoyce in ſpirit, that the Lord hath ſaid, *I will always have a care of you, I will never withdraw mine eyes from you, I will never leave you, nor forſake you* (Heb. 13.5.) As it will be the eternal happineſs of Believers in Glory, always to behold, or ſee God, *Bleſſed are the pure in heart for they ſhall ſee God*; they have ſome ſight of him here in a Glaſs, but they ſhall ſee him face to face; that is, they ſhall ſee him clearly, as clearly as the creature is capable of ſeeing or enjoying him; now (I ſay) as *it is the happineſs of the Saints in Heaven always to behold God, ſo it is the happineſs of Saints here on earth, that the Lord doth always behold them, that his eye is never withdrawn from them.*

Conſider therefore, you that are in a righteous ſtate, whoſe acts and words, and walkings, are alſo righteous, conſider your Priviledge, conſider what it is to have the Lord Jeſus always ſetting his eye upon you, to have the Lords directing and counſelling eye always upon you, to have the Lords pitying and compaſſionating eye always upon you, to have the Lords providing and caring eye always upon you, to have the Lords delighting and well-pleaſed eye always upon you; to have the eyes of the Lord thus upon you, and to have them always upon you, what can ye deſire more! Thus 'tis promiſed, (*2 Chron.* 16.9.) *The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to ſhew himſelf ſtrong in the behalf of them, whoſe heart is perfect with him.* And whoſe hearts are perfect with him, but the hearts of the righteous? this is their priviledge. Jeſus Chriſt (*Zech.* 3.9.) is called, *The ſtone*, and ſaith the Text, *upon one ſtone ſhall be ſeven eyes.* There are two interpretations given of that Propheſie, Firſt, thus, *upon one ſtone ſhall be ſeven eyes*, that is, the eyes of all men ſhall be upon that ſtone, upon Chriſt. Seven is a perfect definite Number, put for all numbers; the eyes of all ſhall be upon the ſtone, upon Chriſt; although he be to the wicked, or to them *that believe not, a ſtumbling ſtone, and a rock of offence*, (1 Pet. 2.8.) yet to them that believe he is a moſt precious ſtone; and as they are always beholding the beauty of that precious ſtone, ſo Jeſus Chriſt doth indeed invite all eyes to behold him (*Iſa.* 65.1.) *Behold me, behold me*; he would have us take off our eyes from all others, and look ſteddily on him. Let all eyes be upon the ſtone; that's a good interpretation. There is a ſecond, which ſuits the preſent point I am upon fully; *Seven eyes ſhall be upon one ſtone*; that is, the eyes of God ſhall be upon Jeſus Chriſt. This is a promiſe made unto him as Mediator, when he came in the fleſh, or in our nature, to do that great work for us; *Then*, ſaith the Prophet, *upon one ſtone ſhall be ſeven eyes*; which ſeven eyes note the perfect knowledge of God, and ſo the perfect care that God would have of Chriſt, to bear him up through that work of our Redemption: *Upon one ſtone ſhall be ſeven eyes*; I will take care of him, I will provide for him, and I will delight in him. As Jeſus Chriſt is all eye, and Jeſus Chriſt doth enlighten all eyes, that is, all that ſee, are enlightened by Jeſus Chriſt; ſo the eyes of God, the eyes of the Father were always upon him, in favour, in love, in care, when he was here in this world about that great work of our ſalvation, and he had abundant experience of the eyes of his Father upon him. Now, mark it, this was the great promiſe made to *Chriſt, the Stone*, that upon him *ſhould be ſeven eyes*, the eyes of the Lord ſhould be alway and fully upon him. And this is the priviledge of every one that hath part and intereſt in this ſtone Jeſus Chriſt, every righteous perſon hath *ſeven eyes* upon him, the Lord God beholds him exactly, perfectly, and always; *He withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous.*

A ſecond inference is this; If the Lord never withdraweth his eyes from the righteous, *Then let the righteous know their duty*; What's that? *Never to withdraw their eyes from the Lord.* There is a threefold eye which a righteous man ſhould never withdraw from God. Firſt, An eye of faith: Secondly, An eye of hope: Thirdly, An eye of dependance: and that, Firſt, for direction in all his ways; Secondly, for protection in all his danger. *I will lift up mine eyes* (ſaith *David*, Pſa. 121.1.) *unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.* And again, (*Pſal.* 123.1,2.) *Unto thee lift I up mine eyes, O thou that dwelleſt in the heavens. Behold, as the eyes of ſervants look unto the hand of their Maſters, and as the eyes of a Maiden unto the hand of her Miſtreſs, ſo our eyes wait upon the Lord our God, until he have mercy on us*; that is, we never withdraw our eyes from him, while we have need of his mercy, and that is always. *Walk before me*, that is, with an eye of faith, hope, and dependance, was the Lords charge to the father of the faithful, (*Gen.* 17.1.) *I have ſet the Lord always before me*, that is, I keep a conſtant eye upon the Lord, was the profeſſion of *David*, as the type of Chriſt, (*Pſal.* 16.8.) And as to keep an eye on God is beſt and ſafeſt for us, ſo 'tis extreamly pleaſing and contentful to Chriſt, as he tells the Church, (*Cant.* 9.9.) *Thou haſt raviſhed my heart, my Siſter, my Spouſe, thou haſt raviſhed my heart with one of thine eyes*, that is, with a believing, a hoping, a depending look on me for all that good which thou wanteſt and wouldſt have, or with a delighting look on me as thy chiefeſt good. Let not the righteous withdraw their eyes from God, *for he withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous.*

But (which is yet more) with Kings are they on the Throne.

Theſe words fully clear up the ſenſe, which I have given of that negative promiſe, *he withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous*, namely, that the eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous for good. His is not a bare beholding of them, favours flow from his eyes. When *the eyes of God are upon the righteous*, they find the ſweet and benefit of it. In the former verſe *Elihu* ſaid, God will give the poor right, here he ſaith more, he will give the poor, the righteous poor, a reward, and that no ſmall one, *With Kings are they on the Throne.*

Et reges in ſolio collocat in perpetuum. Vulg.

The Latine tranſlation reads this part of the verſe, not of the righteous poor, but of righteous Kings; *He withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous, and he placeth Kings upon the Throne for ever.* That's a truth, the Lord placeth Kings upon their Thrones, and eſtabliſheth them there; but that is not the meaning or truth of this place; nor will the Hebrew (with any tolerable convenience) bear ſuch a tranſlation.

Quaſi מלאכים *ſcriberetur pro* מלכים Merc.

Secondly, There are others, who, a little miſtaking the word which we tranſlate *Kings*, render it *Angels, They are with Angels on the Throne.* There is but very little difference in the Hebrew between thoſe two words that ſignifie *Kings* and *Angels*, (the former is *Melachim*, the latter *Maleachim*) which hath given occaſion for this reading, *He placeth them with Angels on the Throne*; and ſo the words are interpreted of the glorious exaltation of the righteous in Heaven, (when indeed they ſhall *be like Angels*, Angels Fellows, (*Mat.* 22.30.) and walk hand in hand with Angels.) Mr. *Broughton* though he tranſlate (*with Kings*) yet ſeems to carry it in that ſenſe, giving his gloſs in the Margin, thus; *They ſhall be made fit for light with the living, with the Angels of God, his ſervants, in their degree, and be placed for ever in honour, and be high in honour and dignity: ſo ye ſhall ſit upon twelve Thrones, judging the twelve Tribes of Iſrael.* But this Text will not ſerve that purpoſe neither; and therefore I ſhall take it plainly as we render it, *They ſhall be with Kings upon the Throne.* There is a two-fold interpretation of the words according to this tranſlation.

Firſt,

Cum regibus tantum valet, ac ſi eſſent reges. Bold. *Ut* את *ſit* עם *cum; ut numerus mutetur, ut paſſim fit in hoc libro.* Merc. את *articulus accuſativi caſus quem verba tranſitiva ſive activa regunt; accipitur tamen non raro pro à, ex, de, & cum præpoſitionibus.* Druſ. Obſer. ſacræ l.9.c.7.

Firſt, The Lord will exalt the righteous to great dignity, they ſhall be like Kings and Princes in this world, or they ſhall be in great favour with Kings, even Kings Favourites.

Secondly, *They ſhall be with Kings upon the Throne*, that is, they themſelves ſhall be Kings. The Hebrew ſtrictly read, is, *and Kings on the Throne*; they ſhall not only be like Kings, but they themſelves ſhall be Kings, *and ſit upon Thrones*: either of theſe interpretations reach the ſcope of *Elihu* fully. As if he had ſaid, The righteous ſhall be greatly advanced or exalted by Kings, whoſe priviledge it is to ſit on Thrones, or *they ſhall be Kings upon the Throne*. Some experiences and examples have confirmed this. The Lord hath not only given righteous perſons great advancement, and great favour with Kings, who ſit on Thrones, but hath even advanced them to Kingly dignity, and given them Thrones to ſit upon.

A Throne is a Seat Royal, the Seat of Majeſty; A Throne is a ſeat exalted above other ſeats, as the perſon ſitting upon it is exalted above other perſons. *Solomon made him a great Throne of Ivory, and the Throne had ſix ſteps*, (1 Kings 10.18.) God is repreſented ſitting upon a Throne, and there receiving honour from all that were before him, (*Rev.* 4.2,9) The whole Heaven is called the *Throne of God, and the earth his footſtool*, (Iſa. 66.1.) becauſe as Heaven is high above all, ſo there are the fulleſt manifeſtations of the greatneſs and glory of God. And becauſe Thrones note power and dignity, therefore the *Angels* (who among all meer creatures excell in power and dignity,) are called *Thrones*, (*Col.* 1.16.) So then, *to be with Kings on the Throne*, that is, to be near them, and much accepted by them is a very great honour; and that is the leaſt here intended. But to be Kings on the Throne, is the greateſt worldly honour; and poſſibly ſo much is here intended the righteous, while *Elihu* ſaith, *But with Kings are they upon the Throne.*

In that the righteous are ſaid here to be *with Kings upon the Throne*, we learn,

Righteous perſons are in high eſteem with God:

He would not thus, in love, ſet them high, if he did not highly eſteem them; he would not thus prefer them, if he did not know their worth. The world uſually judges righteous perſons, as if they were fit only for the dunghill, as if they were the filth of the world, and the off-ſcouring of all things, (1 *Cor.* 4.13.) but God hath another opinion of them, he thinks them fit to ſerve Princes, and ſo to be near the Throne. Take heed of judging them unworthy to be at the footſtool, whom God thinks worthy to be with Kings on the Throne.

Secondly, Note, *God hath exalted, and will exalt righteous perſons.*

Whom he highly eſteems, he ſometimes advanceth highly in this world, they ſhall be with Kings on the Throne, (*Pſal.* 107.40,41.) *He poureth contempt upon Princes*, that is, upon unrighteous Princes; yet (as it followeth) *He ſetteth the poor on high from affliction*, ſo we tranſlate and put in the Margin, *He ſetteth the poor on high after affliction*. He afflicts the righteous to purge them, and ſo to prepare and fit them for greateſt enjoyments. We have a like affirmation, (*Pſal.* 113.7,8.) *He raiſeth up the poor out of the duſt, and lifteth up the needy out of the dunghill, that he may ſet them with Princes, even the Princes of his people.* Thus ſpake *Hannah* in her Song, (1 *Sam.* 2.8.) and thus, in effect, ſpake the bleſſed Virgin in hers, (*Luke* 1.52.) *He hath brought down the mighty from their ſeats, and hath exalted the lowly and meek.* We have ſome Scripture-inſtances of ſuch exaltations, *Joſeph*, a righteous perſon, was caſt into bonds, yet God ſets him, not only at liberty, but on high, he was with the King on the Throne, *Only in the Throne*, (ſaid *Pharaoh*, Gen. 42.40.) *will I be greater than thou*; and all were commanded to bow the knee to him. *David*, a righteous perſon, followed the Ewes great with young, and the Lord ſet him upon the Throne, upon the Throne of *Iſrael*. *Valentinian* was committed to priſon by the command of *Julian* the Apoſtate, becauſe he ſtruck an Idolatrous Prieſt, that would have ſprinkled him (*aqua luſtrali*) with their unholy holy water, as he ſtood in the gate of the Temple, where *Julian* was ſacrificing to his Idol-gods; yet he eſcaped that danger, and afterwards aſcended the Throne of that Great Empire. The Lord knows both how to deliver the righteous out of trouble, and to bring them to honour.

Laſtly, We may hence infer, *If the righteous are with Kings on the Throne, then righteouſneſs hath a reward. Them that honour me* (ſaith the Lord, 1 *Sam.* 2.30.) *I will honour.* It is no vain thing to ſerve the Lord; to be righteous, and to do righteouſly, cannot but iſſue well. The Lord hath all promotions at his diſpoſe, (*Pſal.* 75.6,7.) And therefore he ſaith, *Say ye to the righteous, that it ſhall be well with him; for they ſhall eat the fruit of their doings*, (Iſa. 3.10.) *With Kings are they on the Throne.*

Yet, let me add, by way of Caution, that neither this Text, nor the notes given from it, are ſo to be underſtood, as if all righteous perſons might hence expect great advancements in this world, or to be the ſpecial Favourites of Kings and Princes: The word of God doth not feed ſuch humours, but mortifies them; nor doth it cheriſh any ſuch aſpiring expectations in righteous men, but teaches them quiet ſubmiſſion in their own private ſtations and callings, to thoſe who are upon the Throne. So that while *Elihu* ſaith of the righteous, *With Kings they are on the Throne*, his meaning muſt be taken ſoberly, and may be taken diſtinctly, thus;

Firſt, That God hath great reſpect to, and high favours for righteous men.

Secondly, That he brings ſome of them (as it is ſaid of *Daniel* with the Prince of the Eunuchs, *Chap.* 1.9.) *into favour and tender love with Kings and Princes.*

Etiamſi id externè non fiat ſemper, tamen omnium fides & pietas quorundam piorum exaltatione honoratur. Coc.

Thirdly, That the Lord hath often advanced righteous perſons to Thrones and Kingly Dignities. And when ever the Lord advanceth any of the righteous, he makes good this promiſe, becauſe in the exaltation of one, the faith and piety of all righteous perſons, or the whole kind of them, is honoured and exalted.

Fourthly, To be ſure, all the righteous ſhall be with Kings on the Throne hereafter. Chriſt hath purchaſed, and is gone to prepare a Kingdom for the righteous, and will give them a better Crown, than any this world affords, an incorruptible one. As now the righteous are ſpiritual Kings, or Kings in a ſpiritual ſenſe, (*Rev.* 1.6.) that is, they rule over and keep in ſubjection, their own luſts and corruptions, pride, ambition, love of the world, wrath, envy, and whatever elſe in them doth rebell and exalt it ſelf againſt the knowledge of God; yea, they as Kings (in this world) conquer the world by faith, (1 *John* 5.4.) and the Prince of this world, the devil, through the power of Jeſus Chriſt (as I ſay all the righteous are now ſpiritual Kings (in the ſenſe given) through grace here on earth) ſo they ſhall be glorious Kings and reign with Chriſt for ever in Heaven; and then ſhall this word of God by *Elihu*, be fulfilled to the utmoſt, *With Kings are they upon the Throne.*

Yea, he doth eſtabliſh them for ever, and they are exalted.

Elihu proceeds to ſhew the happineſs of the righteous yet further; The Lord doth not only advance them, but eſtabliſh them; nor doth he only eſtabliſh them for a while, but even perpetuateth their eſtabliſhment, *He eſtabliſheth them for ever.* The word is, *He makes them ſit.* We render fully to the ſenſe, *He eſtabliſheth them.* The Lord ſets them up on high, and then ſettles them on high. Some get on high, but they cannot keep on high, they find no eſtabliſhment there; but God can eſtabliſh

וישיבם *a radice* ישב *ſedere, & in hoc conjugatione, ſedere fecit.*

For ever.] The *for ever* of this world is a long time. The Lord ſaith of *Sion*, (*Pſal.* 132.14.) *Here will I dwell for ever*, that is, long. Thus in the text, *He will eſtabliſh them for ever*, that is, they ſhall have long eſtabliſhment. And if we take it as to their exaltation in the other world, there God will eſtabliſh them to the utmoſt latitude of *for ever*, that is, to eternity. The Septuagint tranſlate, *He will eſtabliſh them to victory.* The ſame word in the Hebrew, ſignifies *eternity*, and alſo *victory*, becauſe eternity overcomes and triumphs over all: The Lord ſhall ſettle them to victory; and that may have a good interpretation, with reſpect to the power of God in ſetling them; *He ſhall ſettle them to victory*, that is, they ſhall (in his power) overcome all difficulties that ſtand in the way of their eſtabliſhment.

Εἰς νῖκος *in victoriam.* Sept. *Sic* 2 Sam. 2.26. Μὴ εἰς νῖκος καταφάγεται ἡ ῥομφαία.

Hence note, *As preferment, ſo eſtabliſhment is from God.*

Firſt, He eſtabliſheth all things, whether they be, Firſt, natural things, the heavens and the earth, times and ſeaſons, (*Gen* 8.22.) or Secondly, Civil things, States and Nations; or Thirdly, Spiritual things; Firſt, the Goſpel, and the Church of the Goſpel, that he eſtabliſheth as a Rock, againſt which the Gates of hell ſhall not prevail, (*Mat.*16.18. ſo *Iſa.*44.28. *Pſal.*87.5.) Secondly, Grace in the hearts of his people, (1 *Pet.*5.10.) and them in the ways of grace, (2 *Theſ.* 2. 17. *Chap.* 3. 3.) Thus God eſtabliſheth all things.

Secondly, He eſtabliſheth, counſels and actions, (*Iſa.* 44. 26.) *He confirmeth the word of his ſervants, and performeth the counſel of his Meſſengers*; that is, he makes good, and brings to effect that word which they have given in counſel. And as for actions, *Moſes* prayeth (*Pſal.* 90. 17.) *Eſtabliſh thou the work of our hands upon us, yea the work of our hands eſtabliſh thou it.* Whatever is in our hands quickly molders away, and (as the enemies ſaid when the *Jews* built the walls of *Jeruſalem*, Neh.4.3.) *If a Fox go up upon it, it will fall, unleſs the Lord eſtabliſh it*; but neither the Foxes with their ſubtilty, nor the Lyons with their power and cruelty, ſhall be able to overthrow that wall, or thoſe actions, which the Lord is pleaſed to eſtabliſh; for *he doth eſtabliſh them for ever.*

Hence Note, *The Lord can eſtabliſh, not only for a time, but for always; he can give a perpetuity of eſtabliſhment, not only a laſting, but an everlaſting eſtabliſhment; he can give an eternity of eſtabliſhment.*

Here is compleat happineſs. What can we deſire more, than, Firſt, to be in a great and good eſtate; Secondly, to be eſtabliſhed there; Thirdly, to be eſtabliſhed for ever? They that are ſet high are ſet in ſlippery places, unleſs the Lord be with them; how much more if the Lord be againſt them? (*Pſal* 73.18.) But the Lord can ſet us as high as the higheſt Rock, and yet make us as firm as the firmeſt Rock. *He doth eſtabliſh them for ever,*

And they are exalted.] Some read thus, *He eſtabliſheth them for ever, when they are exalted,* which makes a very clear ſenſe; when they are got high, the Lord doth eſtabliſh them fully and finally. We render it as a diſtinct act of God, *They are eſtabliſhed for ever, and they are exalted*; probably intending thus much; that the Lord when he will do a thing, can do it, notwithſtanding all oppoſition, that either is or can be made againſt it; he ſets them with Kings on the Throne, and doth eſtabliſh them for ever, yea, they riſe in power and dignity more and more, *They are exalted.*

Hence Note, *What God will do, ſhall be done:*

If he ſaith to a perſon, be exalted, he ſhall be exalted; if he ſaith to *Jeruſalem, thou ſhalt be built, and to the Temple, thy foundation ſhall be laid,* (*Iſa.*44. 28.) it is done; if he ſaith, pull down *Babylon*, down it muſt come, even to the very foundation. *Ephraim* ſaid, (*Jer.* 30. 18.) *Thou haſt chaſtiſed me, and I was chaſtiſed*; I found the effects of thy chaſtiſement, it came home to me. What God will work, no man can lett or put a ſtop to.

Further, From the other reading, Note;

Whom God ſets up, no man can pull down, till himſelf pleaſeth;

He doth eſtabliſh them for ever, when they are exalted. God is able to maintain his own acts, whether in caſting any down, or exalting them. When God laid *the mountains and heritage of Eſau waſt for the Dragons of the Wilderneſs,* (Mal. 1. 3.) *Edom* ſaid at the next verſe, (well, I ſee) *we are impoveriſhed, but we will return, and build the deſolate places.* As if *Edom* had ſaid, Though the Lord hath brought us thus low, yet we doubt not to recover our former glory. But what ſaith the Lord? hear what in the next line; *Thus ſaith the Lord of Hoſts, They ſhall build,* (or let them build) *but I will throw down.* Now (I ſay) as when the Lord pulls down, none can build without his leave, ſo whom the Lord exalteth, none can pull down; *He eſtabliſheth them for ever, when they are exalted.* Thus *Elihu* ſets forth the exceeding kindneſs of God to, and his care over the righteous, not only his provident care as to their preſent condition, but as to the abiding of their exaltation and the eſtabliſhment of it for ever.

VERS. 8, 9, 10.

And if they be bound in fetters, and be holden in cords of affliction:
Then he ſheweth them their work, and their tranſgreſſions, that they have exceeded:
He openeth alſo their ear to diſcipline, and commandeth that they return from iniquity.

These three verſes hold forth three things in particular, all which concern the righteous, of whom *Elihu* ſaid in the former verſe, not only, that *God doth not withdraw his eyes from them,* but eſtabliſh them on high, or advanceth them highly in this world.

Firſt, That poſſibly they may be caſt into ſore afflictions, even after their exaltation, and the newly promiſed laſtingneſs of it, (*verſ.* 8.)

Secondly, That the procuring cauſe of theſe afflictions, is their own ſin; for we find mention of their tranſgreſſion in the ninth verſe, and of their iniquity in the tenth.

Thirdly, That the purpoſe and deſign of God towards them, when they have brought themſelves into ſtreights, and are caſt into an afflicted condition, is very gracious, and tends to their everlaſting good. And this deſign is threefold.

Firſt, To diſcover their ſin to them; that's laid down at the ninth verſe, *Then he ſheweth them their work, and their tranſgreſſions.*

Secondly, To prepare them for a better receiving of faithful counſel and inſtruction, at the tenth verſe, *He openeth alſo their ear to diſcipline.*

Thirdly, To bring them quite off from their ſin; that's expreſſed in the cloſe of the tenth verſe, *and commandeth that they return from iniquity.* Theſe are the parts, this the purpoſe of the Context under hand;

Verſ. 8. **And if they be bound in fetters.**

There is ſome queſtion who are to be underſtood as the as the Antecedent to this, *they, if they,* who are they? Some, becauſe the words following ſpeak of *tranſgreſſion* and *iniquity,* conceive, that ſurely it muſt be meant of wicked men, or of the ungodly; but *Elihu* comes not upon that ſubject till the 13 verſe; there he turns his ſpeech to ſuch, *but the hypocrites in heart heap up wrath,* &c. Therefore here he doth not ſpeak of, or to, wicked, but righteous men, falling into trouble and affliction; *they*, that is, *the righteous,* &c.

Again, Taking righteous men to be the Antecedent (as the text plainly carries it) yet there is a difference in opinion, whether we are to underſtand *Elihu* ſpeaking of righteous men in that ſpecial dignity deſcribed at the 7 verſe, ſuch as are *with Kings on the Throne,* or of righteous men in general: I conceive we may underſtand the text of either. And therefore,

Firſt, When *Elihu* ſaith, *If they be bound in fetters,* he may intend thoſe righteous men who were ſo highly exalted in the former verſe, ſuch a change may come upon them; even they who were *with Kings on the Throne,* may come to be *bound in fetters, and holden in the cords of affliction.*

Secondly, He may intend it of righteous men in any other condition; for *Elihu* having ſhewed how graciouſly God dealeth in exalting ſome righteous men, ſheweth that God is gracious alſo unto thoſe that are not exalted, even unto thoſe that are greatly afflicted, and brought very low. Briefly, as in the former verſe he ſpake of righteous men lifted up, ſo here of righteous men caſt down: As if he had ſaid, *If any of the righteous are at any time ſo far from being exalted with Kings on the Throne, that they are caſt upon the dunghill, and are brought into great ſtreights, yet it is not becauſe God takes no care of them, or becauſe he hath caſt them out of his favour; but it is thus with righteous men for many bleſſed ends and purpoſes, which God hath upon them, or towards them, to ſhew them their ſin, to fit them for inſtruction, and to bring them off from their iniquity.* Thus the words prevent an objection; for *Elihu* having ſaid, *he withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous, but with Kings are they on the Throne,* ſome might ſay, You can ſhew us very few ſuch ſights, you can ſhew us few righteous men with Kings on the Throne, or exalted highly in this world; and we can ſhew you many righteous men in great trouble, in fetters and cords of affliction. Well, ſaith *Elihu*, ſuppoſe it be ſo, ſuppoſe you find many righteous men in ſuch a low condition, yet God withdraweth not his eyes from them, no not then; yea, he is doing them good by all the evils that they ſuffer. So then, if this relative *they* refer to righteous men in either capacity, either to ſuch as were before exalted, and are now afflicted, or to ſuch righteous men as were never ſo exalted, yea as are depreſſed and caſt into an afflicted condition, yet God withdraweth not his eyes from them, but ſtill continues his care of them, and tenderneſs towards them.

If they be bound in fetters, and holden by the cords of affliction.

Here are two hard words, *bound and holden*, bound as captives, bound as priſoners, *bound* in fetters, yea, and *holden in cords*, *holden* or *caught* as a poor bird in a net or ſnare, or as a wild beaſt in a toyl. *Bound in fetters, and holden in cords.* Theſe *fetters* and *cords* may be underſtood two ways.

Firſt, Literally and properly, it is poſſible for a righteous man to be bound in fetters, and holden in cords, plainly ſo called. *Joſeph* was caſt into priſon, *and the Iron entred into his ſoul,* and his feet were hurt in the Stocks, in material Stocks.

Secondly, We may expound theſe *fetters and cords* figuratively, or metaphorically, and ſo any trouble or ſtreight is as a fetter, and as a cord: Thus to be *bound in fetters*, and *holden in cords*, is but an expreſſion ſignifying any afflicted condition. Fetters and cords are Emblems of ſlavery and captivity. The Prophet foreſhewing the willing contribution of divers ſtrange Nations towards the help of the *Jews* in their return from the *Babyloniſh* captivity, as alſo, beyond that, their ſubjection to Chriſt and the power of the Goſpel, gives it under this ſhadow, (*Iſa.* 45. 14.) *Thus ſaith the Lord, the labour of Egypt, and merchandiſe of Ethiopia, and of the Sabeans, men of ſtature ſhall come over unto thee, and they ſhall be thine,* (that is, they ſhall yield themſelves to thee as thy ſubjects, and more) *they ſhall come after thee in chains, they ſhall come over*; that is, they ſhall follow thee as captives do a conquering enemy, in chains. In what chains? the meaning is not, that they ſhall come with chains of Iron upon their bodies; but even the ſtouteſt, greateſt, and richeſt of them ſhall humbly ſubmit, they ſhall come even as priſoners, with their chains about them, ſupplicating and intreating thy favour. We read in the holy Hiſtory of the Kings, that the ſervants of *Benhadad* came with ropes about their necks to *Ahab*, they came with material ropes about their necks in token of their abaſement and readineſs to ſubmit unto what ſentence ſoever the King of *Iſrael* ſhould lay upon them. To come with ropes and chains, is, in Scripture Language, to come in deepeſt humiliation; and *to be bound in chains and fetters*, is to be in greateſt affliction. That's the ſenſe of the Prophet (*Iſa.* 28. 22.) *Now therefore be ye not mockers* (there were ſome that derided him, threatning judgment in the name of the Lord, take heed of that) *leſt your bands be made ſtrong*; that is, leſt God bring you into ſuch great afflictions, that you ſhall find and feel your ſelves (as it were) in bands, or (as *Elihu* expreſſeth it in the Text) *bound in fetters, and holden in the cords of affliction*. So then, this notes in general any ſtate of trouble or ſorrow, of miſery or calamity that befalls us here below, (*Pſal.* 107. 10.) *They that ſit in darkneſs, and in the ſhadow of death, being bound in affliction and iron*; that is, as faſt bound in affliction, as if they were bound in iron. Thus here

Vincula ſunt ſervitutis Symbola.

Holden in cords of affliction.] Some tranſlate, *cords of poverty*; the ſame word ſignifying both *affliction and poverty*, becauſe poverty is ſo great an affliction. Here's the caſe, this is the condition in which *Elihu* ſuppoſeth righteous men may fall; *They may be bound in fetters, and holden in cords of affliction.* Taking the words as they refer to the righteous men in general, obſerve,

חבל עני *Funibus paupertatis.* Vulg.

חבל *Dicitur quicquid premit & conſtringit; quare appellatione* Funis *comprehenditur pignus, quo obligatur homo, & dolor præſertim parturientium.*

The beſt of men may fall into the worſt outward condition;

They may be in a condition of captivity, they may be in real fetters and cords, or they may be in a ſtate of affliction, as bad to them as fetters and cords. I have heretofore, more than once, ſpoken of the afflictions of the righteous in the opening of this Book, therefore I ſhall not ſtay upon it here. Only take notice that the righteous may come into fetters, *&c.* not only for trial of their graces, but for the puniſhment of their iniquities; they poſſibly have not kept cloſe to the bands of duty, and therefore God brings them into the bands of calamity. As wicked men ſay in the pride and ſtoutneſs of their heart, (*Pſal.* 2. 3.) *Come, let us break their bands, and caſt their cords from us*; that is, thoſe bands of duty and cords of obedience which the Goſpel layeth upon them; So, in a degree, good men, righteous men, may throw off the cords of obedience, and the bands of duty, through the violence of corruption and temptation, walking looſely and vainly for a ſeaſon, they may break the bands of the Goſpel Covenant, and the cords of the Commandment, and when they do ſo, God will not ſpare them, but will throw them even into the bands of trouble and into the cords of affliction; they ſhall know the fetters and bands of affliction, threatned in the Law, when they have not carefully kept to the rule of the Law.

Secondly, Taking the righteous in that ſpecial capacity, for ſuch as were once exalted, and in high place, or as 'tis ſaid in the former verſe, *With Kings on the Throne*, and finding them here in fetters and bands, Note,

The worldly ſtate of good, of righteous men, as well as others, is ſubject to change.

For though that Text ſaith, *He eſtabliſheth them*, yet it is not to be underſtood that God ſo eſtabliſh righteous men in their places, that they can never be put out of them, or ſo exalt them, that they ſhall never be pulled down; that text ſheweth what God can do, he can exalt them ſo, that they ſhall not be removed for ever, and he often exalts them ſo, but he doth not ſo always; for the outward eſtates of good men may have as great changes, as the outward eſtate of wicked men have: they may come from thrones to priſons, and from chains of gold to fetters of Iron. There have been many ſuch changes as to the things of the world, even to thoſe that are not of the world: And as Heathen Princes and Kings have often found ſuch changes, ſo alſo did ſeveral of the Kings of *Judah*, they were brought from the throne to the priſon. *Zedekiah* and *Jechoniah* and *Manaſſeh*, had ſuch ſad changes; when they highly provoked God, they came from their Thrones to the priſon, from a Crown to the cords of affliction; yea this hath been the lot of many other righteous men exalted, they have been brought to the priſon, and laid very low in this world. *Solomon* ſaith of one, (*Eccleſ.* 4. 14.) *Out of priſon he cometh to reign*, and of another he ſaith in the ſame verſe, *He alſo that is born in his Kingdom becometh poor*; ſuch viciſſitudes and revolutions come over the heads of the children of men, yea good men are not exempted from ſuch changes and revolutions. Therefore be not offended if at any time you ſee good men in chains and fetters, in a condition of great affliction.

Thirdly, From the manner of expreſſion, *When they are bound in fetters, and holden in cords.* Affliction is ſet forth and deſcribed by *cords* and *fetters*.

Hence Note, *Afflictions are grievous to the fleſh.*

Are not fetters ſo? are not cords ſo? The word here tranſlated *cords*, is ſeveral times in Scripture applied to ſignifie the pains of a woman in travel, thoſe are moſt dolorous pains; ſuch are ſome afflictions. The Apoſtle ſpeaking of affliction in general, (*Heb.* 12. 11.) ſaith, *No chaſtning for the preſent ſeemeth to be joyous, but grievous.* 'Tis no eaſie thing to be in fetters and cords, to be bound in chains. Afflictions ſtreighten, and preſs, pinch and gall like fetters, they burthen the fleſh, they are no light matters. Though the Apoſtle, comparatively to the weight of glory, calleth the heavieſt outward afflictions *light*; (2 *Cor.* 14. 17.) yet firſt, in themſelves; and ſecondly, to our fleſh, they are very heavy. Therefore we ſhould pity thoſe that are in affliction, as thoſe that are in fetters and cords, and we ſhould pray for thoſe that are in affliction, as for thoſe that are bound. Every affliction is a kind of captivity: *If they be bound in fetters, and holden in cords of affliction*; thus it may be with the righteous. But is not this an argument that God hates them? ſurely no; we read the mind of God towards them notwithſtanding this in the next verſe.

Verſ. 9. **Then he ſheweth them their work;**

That is, when they are in cords and fetters. But did he never ſhew them their work before? yes, doubtleſs he did; but then eſpecially and effectually, then he ſheweth, he declareth, he makes manifeſt to them, or he cauſeth them to ſee and know their work. The word in that conjugation ſignifieth, not barely to *ſhew*, but to make them *ſee*, *underſtand* and *conſider* their work; he brings them to a review of what they have done, and to ſee that they have done amiſs. *Then he ſheweth*; it is a ſhewing with power, an *efficacious ſhewing*, *he ſheweth them their work*. What work? this their work may be conſidered two ways.

Firſt, As to the matter of it, what they had done. Till we ſee what we have done, we repent not of what we have done, how much ſoever it ought to be repented of; as the Lord complained of *Iſrael* by the Prophet (*Jer.* 8.6.) *No man repented of his wickedneſs, ſaying, What have I done?*

Secondly, As to the vitiouſneſs or falſeneſs of it, *He ſheweth them their work*, that is, either what they had done which was evil in the matter of it, or what they had done in an evil manner, though in it ſelf good; he ſheweth them the evil of their work, the irregularity, the crookedneſs, and ſinfulneſs of their work. That this is the meaning, appeareth plainly in the words that follow, *Then he ſheweth them their work, and their tranſgreſſion*; that is, that there is ſome tranſgreſſion or fault, poſſibly many faults and tranſgreſſions, in their work. *Then he ſheweth them their work.*

Hence Note, Firſt, *Sin is properly the work of man*;

That is, of the fleſh in man (*Gal.* 5. 19.) *The works of the fleſh are manifeſt, which are theſe, Adultery*, &c. Good is Gods work in us, evil is our work againſt the mind of God. Sin is often called the work of our hands, (*Pſal.* 28. 4.) *Give them after the work of their hands, render to them their deſert*; that is, what they have deſerved by their ſins. *Moſes* declared his fear and holy jealouſie concerning the children of *Iſrael* in this Language, (*Deut.* 31. 29.) *I know that after my departure, ye will utterly corrupt your ſelves, becauſe ye will do evil in the ſight of the Lord, to provoke him to anger by the work of your hands.* Idolatry is ſpecially called the work of mans hands, becauſe Idolaters either worſhip that as a god, or God by that, which their hands have wrought (*Rev.* 9. 20.) *They repented not of the work of their hands, that they ſhould not worſhip Devils, and Idol of Gold, and Silver, and Braſs*, &c. Yet Idolatry is much more the work of the heart, than of the hand. And as Idolatry, ſo any other ſin, whether of heart or tongue, may be called the work of our hand, it being that which is moſt properly our work, though originally the Devils work. As to pardon ſin, is properly the work of God, ſo to commit ſin, is properly the work of man. There is no work ſo much ours, as that; no work properly ours, but bad work; all the good we do, is the work of God in us, or by us.

Secondly, Note, *Man doth not ſee the falſeneſs and faultineſs of his own work, till God ſheweth it him.*

There may be many cracks and flaws in our good works, which we perceive not, we are ready to think and ſay, *All's well*, we have done very well, until God lets us ſee our work in his light, in the light of his Word and Spirit; and then we ſhall ſee cauſe to be humbled for thoſe works which we were proud of, and ſometimes boaſted in. The Prophet (*Haggai* 1. 5.) called the *Jews* to *conſider their ways*; they ſaw their ways, but they conſidered not their ways, and therefore they ſaw not the evil and error of their ways. As we ſee many of the works of God, yet ſee not the excellency or admirable contrivance of them, till himſelf ſheweth it; ſo we ſee many of our own works, yet we ſee not the ſinfulneſs, vanity, and folly that is in them, till God ſhew it unto us; *he maketh us ſee our work as it is.*

Thirdly, From the circumſtance of time, when it is that the Lord ſheweth unto man his work, the falſeneſs of his work; the Text ſaith, *Then he ſheweth them their work*, that is, when they *are bound in fetters, and holden in cords of affliction.*

Hence Note, *The badneſs or fulneſs of our works, is moſt uſually, and moſt clearly diſcovered to us in times of affliction; then ſheweth he them their work.*

Joſephs Brethren did a very ill work in ſelling him into *Egypt*, and in putting off their Father with a lie; yet they took little notice of this work for many years; but when they were bound in fetters, and holden in the cords of affliction, when they came down to *Egypt* for Corn, and were in great ſtreights, through the policy of their Brother to diſcover them, not out of any deſign to hurt them, *Then they ſaid one to another, we are verily guilty concerning our Brother* (Gen. 42. 21.) And (*verſ.* 22.) Reuben *anſwered them, ſaying, Spake I not unto you, ſaying, Do not ſin againſt the child, and ye would not hear? therefore behold alſo his blood is required:* Then their ſin appeared to them in bloudy colours, then that ſinfulneſs of their work appeared to them, which they ſaw not before. *Affliction is a dark condition, yet it brings much light into the ſoul:* Affliction brings light to diſcover our works of darkneſs, that is, the ſinfulneſs of our works; troubles make Comments upon our works, afflictions expound our actions, and ſhew where the error of them is. We are uſually very blind to ſee or diſcern a fault in our ſelves, or in what we have done, until God openeth our eyes, by laying a croſs upon our backs; *Then he ſheweth them their work.*

And their tranſgreſſions that they have exceeded.

Here we ſee (as was toucht before) what kind of works they are which God ſheweth them in affliction; works of tranſgreſſion, or the tranſgreſſion of their works. The Vulgar Latine renders the Text by a harder word, *Their wickedneſs*, or *villanies*. Others by a word of no leſs, if not of a more hard and harſh ſignification, *He ſheweth them their prevarication*; as if they had dealt cunningly and treacherouſly with God, not plainly, clearly, and above board, as if they had uſed tricks and policies very much unbecoming righteous perſons. Moſt give it a more eaſie title (as we) tranſlating by a word that will comply with any ſin, *tranſgreſſion*; every ſin, the leaſt ſin is a tranſgreſſion. *Sin is a tranſgreſſion of the Law* in the very nature of it; and taking the word in this loweſt, and moſt favourable notion,

Scelera eorum. Vulg.

Nomen hoc uſurpatur etiam de levioribus vitiis. Druſ.

Obſerve, *God will not ſpare, he will not ſpare the righteous for their tranſgreſſions, or leſſer faults, if they do not judge and humble themſelves*;

If their ſins be but ſlips, the Lord will make them know what they have done.

But there ſeemeth to be a great aggravation in the Text, upon theſe tranſgreſſions, which more than intimates that they are no ſmall ones; for 'tis added, *And their tranſgreſſions,*

That they exceeded.] Some read the words in the Preſent Tenſe, or time, *He ſheweth them their tranſgreſſions, when they exceed or prevail:* As if the meaning were, God doth not ſuffer the ſins of righteous perſons to grow too potent and prevalent upon them, but takes them in time, and nips their ſins in the bud, when he ſees they begin to grow ſtrong upon them, leſt if let alone, they might be foyled by them, and ſo fall into open ſcandal, or be hardly withdrawn from them. It is no eaſie thing to maſter and mortifie a luſt, when once it hath got head, and therefore it is a very gracious work of God, to ſhew a man his ſin convincingly, and humble him for it, when he perceives it riſing in ſtrength. This is a pious ſenſe and profitable.

We read it in the paſt time, *When they have exceeded.* That is, when theſe righteous perſons have exceeded much in their tranſgreſſions. As much as to ſay, when they have ſinned exceedingly, or when their ſins are many and great, when (according to the Hebrew) they are waxen mighty, then the Lord ſees it high time to deal with them.

The word which we render *exceeded*, comes from a root that ſignifieth a *ſtrong, or mighty man*, and in the Verb, *to act ſtrongly and mightily*; as if *Elihu* had ſaid, He ſheweth them that they have ſinned like Giants and mighty men, they have ſinned greatly, grievouſly. And 'tis poſſible for thoſe that are righteous in their ſtate to ſin greatly; not only to tranſgreſs, but to exceed in their tranſgreſſions, *that they have exceeded.*

יתגברו

Hence Note, Firſt, *There is an exceſſiveneſs, or an exceedingneſs in ſome ſins.*

All men ſin, but the ſins of all men, at leaſt all the ſins of all good men, do not exceed; they are not all of a high ſtature, they are not all ſtrong and *mighty ſins*, as the Lord by his Prophet called thoſe of *Iſrael* (Amos 5. 12.) We uſually diſtinguiſh of ſins; ſome are ſins in the exceſs, and ſome in the defect; Prodigality is a ſin in the exceſs, and Parſimony is a ſin in the defect; Superſtition is a ſin in the exceſs, when men will worſhip God more than he requires, or in what he requires not; Prophaneneſs, or neglect of Worſhip, as alſo negligence in Worſhip, are ſins in defect. Thus ſome ſins are in the exceſs, others in the defect, yet every tranſgreſſion hath a kind of exceſs in it, and ſome are exceedingly exceſſive. And becauſe when any exceedingly exceed in ſinning, their ſins may be ſaid to reign; therefore (I ſuppoſe) Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates this Text ſo, *And that their treſpaſſes reigned.* For, though as to a courſe of ſin, it is inconſiſtent with the ſtate of a righteous man, that ſin ſhould reign in him, yet as to this or that act it may reign; ſin may reign over, and bring under a godly man by the violence of a preſent temptation, though it cannot reign over him (as it doth over the wicked) by a willing ſubmiſſion. As the beſt ſin always, ſo ſometimes they have ſinned greatly, they have exceeded. *Davids* ſin exceeded, his ſin, as to that act, maſter'd and reigned over him. *Solomons* ſin exceeded, when in his old age his wives turned away his heart to other gods, (1 *Kings* 11.4.) And *Peters* ſin exceeded, when he denied his Maſter. The righteous are not exempt from a particular reign of ſin, though through grace, they are delivered from the reign of any the leaſt particular ſin. As there is no kind, ſo no degree of ſin, but a godly man may fall into it, except that againſt the holy Ghoſt, and total Apoſtaſie from his profeſſion.

Secondly, God ſheweth them *that they have exceeded*, that's it which God ſheweth them in their affliction.

> Hence Obſerve; *Many ſee their ſin, that do not ſee the exceedingneſs of their ſin, or that they have exceeded in ſin.*

Not only natural and carnal men, who ſee that they have ſinned, do not at all ſee the exceedingneſs of their ſin, but ſome good men ſee that they have ſinned, but ſee not preſently the exceeding, no nor half, the evil of their ſin; therefore, ſaith *Elihu*, *He ſheweth them their tranſgreſſion, that they have exceeded. Paul* before his converſion, knew that he had ſinned, but he knew not the ſinfulneſs of his ſin, which yet afterwards was to him exceeding ſinful, (*Rom.*7. 13.) As it is the height of our corruption to commit ſins exceeding ſinful, ſo it is a very high point of grace, to ſee the exceeding ſinfulneſs of our ſin.

You will ſay, how is it that ſin doth exceed, or wherein conſiſts the exceedingneſs of it? I anſwer,

Firſt, There is an exceedingneſs of ſin, in the ſtrength that it hath over us, when it doth eaſily command and prevail, then we ſin exceedingly, or then ſin is exceeding ſinful, it hath got a mighty hand over us. O how ſadly do the ſins of many exceed thus! They are held down by their corruptions as ſlaves and captives, they cannot get themſelves out from under the power of a baſe luſt. As the Devil leads ſome, ſo luſts and corruptions lead others captive at their will, they are at the beck and command of ſin. Thus ſin exceeds in the wicked, who either know not God, or who walk daily contrary to their knowledg.

Secondly, That man doth exceed in his tranſgreſſion, or his tranſgreſſion doth exceed, who ſins with, or hath a very ill frame of heart in ſinning. Many a good man falls into ſin, and yet he hath not, as I may ſay, a baſe or wicked frame of heart in ſinning, but his very ſinning is, upon the matter, againſt his own heart, and the bent of his ſpirit, his heart goeth not with it. The more of the heart or will is mingled with any ſin, the more exceeding ſinful it is. I may ſay of ſome men (I would not be miſtaken) *That they do evil with a better frame of heart, than others do good*; there are ſome that do good with very bad, yea with baſe hearts; *The ſacrifice of the wicked is an abomination; how much more when he brings it with a wicked mind*, or (as we put in the Margin) *with wickedneſs*, (Pro. 21.27.) That is, either for applauſe, to be ſeen of men, or for profit, to gain by men, or in malice, the better to compaſs revenge upon any man, or ſort of men; under all which covers, wicked men have brought their ſacrifices, that is, have appeared in the outward worſhip of God, or have taken up the form of godlineſs. And whoſoever doth thus, hath a far worſe frame of heart in doing good, than a good man hath in doing evil: who though he doth evil, yet he delights not in it, and cloſes not with it. By how much any mans heart is more taken with ſin, by ſo much the more ſinful it is.

Thirdly, The exceedingneſs of a ſin may be meaſured by the circumſtances of ſinning; then a man may be ſaid to tranſgreſs, and exceed in tranſgreſſion, when he ſinneth, Firſt, againſt light, againſt the checks of his own conſcience within; as alſo, Secondly, when he ſins againſt reproofs, warnings, and admonitions from without; that man exceeds in ſin, who hath been told of it, and yet goeth on. Thirdly, that man exceeds in ſin, who ſins in the midſt of much mercy, and daily received or renewed favours; as alſo he, Fourthly, who ſins in the midſt of many afflictions and judgments, whether upon his perſon and family, or upon the Nation where he liveth: ſuch as theſe not only ſin or tranſgreſs, but exceed in tranſgreſſion. Now the Lord in times of affliction ſheweth men theſe and the like exceedings of their tranſgreſſion, and cauſeth them to confeſs, not only that they are ſinners, and have tranſgreſſed, but they are brought upon their knees to confeſs, that they have exceeded in tranſgreſſion. And when this is done, the Lord goeth on yet further to perfect the work of humiliation and repentance, while they are *bound in fetters, and holden in the cords of affliction* for then, as it followeth,

Verſ. 10. **He openeth alſo their ear to diſcipline, and commandeth that they return from iniquity.**

Still 'tis Gods work, *he ſheweth* before, and here, *he openeth*: as in the former verſe he openeth their eyes to ſee, ſo in this he openeth their ear to hear.

He openeth their ear.] This latter is more than the former, this opening the *ear to diſcipline*, is more than a *ſhewing of ſin*, and the exceeding ſinfulneſs of it: Opening the ear, imports a cloſe and home-diſcovery of a mans condition to him, (*Pſal.* 51.6.) *David*, after his great ſin, perceived the Lord ſhewing him, or making him to underſtand wiſdom ſecretly.

גלה *Revelavit occulta & abſcondita: revelatio auris notat intimam inſinuationem.*

He openeth alſo their ear.] The word which we tranſlate, *to open*, properly ſignifieth *to reveal*; and, in Scripture phraſe, the ear is ſaid to be *revealed*, or *uncovered*, when a ſecret is brought to us, (1*Sam.* 20. 2.) *Jonathan* ſaid to *David, God forbid, thou ſhalt not die; behold my Father will do nothing, either great or ſmall, but that he will ſhew it me,*(or *uncover my ear*)*and why ſhould my Father hide this thing from me? Saul* alſo uſed the ſame Hebraiſm, or form of ſpeech, when he upbraided his ſervants with their unfaithfulneſs to him; What, ſaith he, hath the ſon of *Jeſſe* ſuch preferments for you? And are you all ſo corrupted in your loyalty to me, *that all of you have conſpired againſt me, and there is none that ſheweth me*, (or *uncovereth my ear*) *that my ſon hath made a League with the ſon of Jeſſe*, (*Sam.* 22. 8.) Will none of you *uncover my ear*? That is, diſcover the plot that is contrived for my ruin? Then the ear is ſaid to be opened or uncovered, when any ſecret is made known to the mind; as was further ſhewed at the 16. verſe of the 33. Chapter, where *Elihu* uſed this expreſſion; and therefore I ſhall not return to that matter, but refer the Reader thither. Only conſider to what, or for what the Lord is ſaid to open the ear. In the 33. Chapter *Elihu* told us, that when the eyes of men are ſhut (deep ſleep being fallen upon them) *he openeth the ears of men, and ſealeth their inſtruction.* Here *Elihu* ſaith, God having men under the rod, *he openeth alſo their ear,*

Loquitur de aure cordis & mentis. Scitum illud; Mens audit, mens vidit, cætera ſurda & cæca ſunt. Druſ.

To diſcipline.] The Hebrew word is of the ſame extraction in both places; Inſtruction is for diſcipline, and diſcipline tends unto inſtruction. It is often rendred, *chaſtiſement*, and generally ſignifies any ſeverer courſe of inſtruction or education, whereby we are drawn off from evil and unto good. When Elihu ſaith, *He openeth their ear to diſcipline*, we may underſtand it two ways.

למוסר *Ad caſtigationem,* i. e. *Ne caſtigatio ſit eis abſq; fructu, vel ut iſta diſciplina ſeu correctione emendentur.* Piſc.

Firſt, To fit them for inſtruction, and counſel; they heard (poſſibly) before, but not with an *open*, that is, a ready and obedient ear. The ear is ſhut, though we hear much, unleſs we ſubmit and conform to what we hear. The ear ſeldom opens fully till the Lord ſmites, as well as ſpeaks, and gives us both a word and a blow.

Secondly, *He openeth their ear to diſcipline*, That is, to hearken what Gods chaſtening or correction ſpeaks, or what he ſpeaks by his chaſtning. The Lord would not have his chaſtnings unprofitable, nor his rods without fruit to us, and therefore *he openeth the ear to diſcipline*, and ſheweth us the meaning of ſuch a croſs or ſickneſs, of ſuch a loſs or affliction; *He openeth their ear to diſcipline.*

Hence Note; Firſt, *It is a ſpecial power of God which helps us to underſtand his mind, either in his Word or in his Works.*

We neither underſtand the dealings nor ſayings of God, if left to our ſelves: the heart of man is ſhut, his ear is deaf, the ear of his heart (that's the ear here intended) till God ſay (as in the Goſpel to the bodily ear) *Ephatha, Be thou opened*, (Pro. 20. 12.) *The hearing ear, and the ſeeing eye, the Lord is the maker of them both:* That's a great truth; Firſt, of the ſenſitive ear and eye; 'tis the Lord who hath made the one to hear, and the other to ſee, as he told *Moſes* (Exod. 4. 11.) and as 'tis ſaid, (*Pſal.* 94. 19.) Secondly, 'tis as true if underſtood of the intellectual eye and ear; the hearing ear and ſeeing eye, that is, the ear that heareth obediently and practically, that ear is of Gods forming and making; ſuch an ear did God create (*Acts* 16. 14.) where it is ſaid, *A certain woman named Lydia, a ſeller of purple of the City of Thyatira, which worſhipped God, heard us, whoſe heart the Lord opened, that ſhe attended to the things that were ſpoken by Paul.*

Further, what was the ſeaſon of opening the ear? It was a day of affliction, when they were bound in fetters, and holden in cords of affliction.

Hence Learn; *God uſeth afflictions as medicines or means to reſtore ſpiritual hearing.*

Man is often cured of his ſpiritual deafneſs, both as to the voice of the word and works of God, by ſickneſs. A good man in health, peace, and proſperity, may have his ears ſo ſtopped that the Lord ſees it needful to ſend ſome ſharp correction to get out the ear-wax and unlock them. *Proſperity* (ſaith one of the Ancients) *is the gift of God comforting us; adverſity is the gift of God admoniſhing us; why then doſt thou complain that thou ſuffereſt, thy ſuffering is a medicament, not a puniſhment; 'tis for thy bettering, not for thy undoing.* 'Tis a favour to feel God ſtriking, when we have not heard him ſpeaking, and he therefore ſtrikes that we may attend what he ſpeaks; When words do not prevail to open the ear, fetters and cords ſhall. That's the ſecond deſign of God when he brings the righteous into ſtreights, *Then he openeth their ear to diſcipline:* The third is given in the cloſe of this Verſe;

Res proſpera donum eſt Dei conſolantis. res adverſa eſt donum Dei admonentis; quid igitur pateris, unde plangis; medicina eſt, non pœna; caſtigatio non damnatio. Auguſt. in Pſal. 102.

And commandeth that they return from iniquity.

Here's the iſſue of the former two: The ſhewing them their tranſgreſſions, the opening their ear, are that they may *return from iniquity*; and here is a command that they muſt; *And commandeth that they return*, &c. The Hebrew Text may be rendred, *He ſpeaketh, or ſaith, that they return from iniquity*; and this ſpeaking may be expounded two ways; Firſt, *by perſwading*; He ſpeaks perſwadingly. The Lords afflictions are perſwaſions, his ſtroaks are intreaties, he beſeecheth us by our ſorrows, and ſickneſſes, and weakneſſes, and pains, that we would *return from our iniquity.* Secondly, we take ſpeaking or ſaying in the higheſt ſtrain, He ſpeaks by commanding, he ſpeaks authoritatively; Thus we render, *He commandeth.* The command of God is twofold; Firſt, formal or expreſs, when God gives the rule in ſo many words. Secondly, vertual. The command of God (I conceive) is here to be underſtood in this latter ſenſe. When the Lord afflicteth the righteous, he vertually commands, or ſends out his Edict, that they *return from their iniquity.* The word *return*, implies them formerly following ſome iniquity, and gone far from the Lord: This returning is repenting all the Scripture over. I need ſay no more of that. As by ſin we turn from God, ſo by repentance, we return from iniquity; and as the Lord at all times commands the righteous by his word, ſo they even force him ſometimes to command them by his rod, which is called diſcipline in the former part of the verſe, becauſe ſinners feel pain, and find matter to learn, all at once. *He commandeth that they return*

Qui jubentis verba non audiunt, ferientis verberibus admonentur; ut ad bona æterna pœnæ trahant, quos præmia non invitant. Greg. l. 26. Mor. c. 26.

ויאמר *& dicit.*

From iniquity.] The word rendred *iniquity*, ſignifies a vain, empty thing, a thing of nought: ſo the Chaldee paraphraſeth it here, *He commands that they return from their evil works, which are like to vanity, and a thing of nought.* What is ſin, but a kind of nothing? We look for great matters from ſin, but it is a vanity, it is (like an Idol) *nothing in the world*, that is, it is not ſuch a thing as it doth import, or as it promiſeth, or as the opinion of men make it to be; Iniquity is no ſuch thing as it pretendeth, or as is pretended. *The Lord commandeth that they return from iniquity*; That is, from doing that which will profit them nothing at all, or no more than a vain thing, a thing of nothing can. And yet though iniquity be nothing good or profitable, yet 'tis all things evil and hurtful, nor had any thing ever hurt us or been evil to us, had it not been for iniquity. *He commandeth that they return from iniquity.*

און *Habet ſignificationem nihili. --Ab operibus ſuis malis, quæ ſimilia ſunt vanitati & nihilo.* Chald.

Hence Note; Firſt, *Affliction hath a voice; God ſpeaks loudly to us by affliction;*

He ſpeaks to us as loud in his works, as he doth in his word; he trumpets to us, he thunders to us in his works: God ſpeaks aloud, but ſweetly, to us in his works of mercy, he ſpeaks aloud, but terribly, to us in his works of judgment.

Secondly, Seeing, as was touched in opening the words, this command is not to be taken for a ſtanding Law, for ſo God always commands men to return from iniquity, but the command here is a renewed act or a ſpecial diſpenſation, there is, as it were, a freſh command iſſued, when a man is under the afflicting hand of God.

Hence Note; *God reinforceth or reneweth his command to return from ſin, as often as he reneweth our afflictions.*

That we return from iniquity, is a ſtanding, an everlaſting Law, but when we are in affliction, then there is, as it were, a freſh Edition of the command, 'tis, as I may ſay, new Printed and proclaimed, the fetters Print this command upon our heels, and the cords upon our hands, that we *return from iniquity.*

Thirdly, Note; *Iniquity is a vain thing, it is a nothing.*

Shall we not then return from it? One would think a little perſwaſion might ſerve the turn to haſten our return from a nothing, and ſhall not a command do it? When I ſay a nothing, remember, (as was ſhewed) ſin is no ſuch thing as you look upon it to be: where are the profits that you have reaped by ſin? Where are the contents and pleaſures that you have taken by ſin? The profit, the pleaſure, and content of ſin are nothing, there is no advantage to be had by ſin. Sin is ſomething in the ill effects of it; if you would have pain, and diſhonour, and reproach, you may have enough of it in ſin, and you will find ſin a ſomething in that ſenſe; but ſin is a nothing, that is, no ſuch thing as you expect and look for, and therefore be perſwaded to return from it.

Laſtly, From the whole Text take notice of the purpoſe of God, what he hath in his heart, when he afflicteth his people, the righteous, for their iniquities and faylings, for their faults and uneven walkings. The ſcope of God in all this, is not their hurt; but good; it is not to deſtroy them for their ſin, but to deſtroy their ſin; it is not to withdraw himſelf from them, but to draw them nearer to himſelf; all the hurt that the Lord intends us by any affliction, is but to get out our droſs, and to fetch out our filth, to bring us off from thoſe things that will undo and ruin us for ever. And how great an argument of the goodneſs of God is it, that he deſigneth the evils which we ſuffer in theſe dying bodies, to heal the evils, and help on the good of our immortal Souls! That's all the hurt that the Lord means us. And the Lords heart is ſo much in this deſign (the return of thoſe he afflicts from their iniquity) that he ſeems confident of it, that when any are in affliction, ſurely they will return, (*Hoſea* 5.15.) *In their affliction they will ſeek me early,* ſurely they will. And therefore the Prophet ſpeaks of the Lord as defeated and diſappointed of his purpoſe, when he ſeeth ſuch as he hath afflicted continuing in their ſin, (*Iſa.* 9.13.) *The people turneth not unto him that ſmiteth them, neither do they ſeek the Lord of Hoſts:* As if he had ſaid, 'Tis a wonder, that being ſmitten they have not returned; what a ſtrange, what a croſs-grain'd people are theſe! What? Doth the Lord ſmite you that you ſhould run farther from him, and follow your iniquity cloſer, or hold it faſter? You may be aſhamed that you turn not unto him that ſpeaks to you; but when you are ſmitten will you not return from iniquity? Remember, the Lord therefore ſuffers you to be bound in fetters, that you may be looſed from your ſins; he therefore ſuffers you to be holden in the cords of affliction, that you might let go your tranſgreſſions. Take heed you be not found diſappointing him of his purpoſe. How well it will be with thoſe who do not diſappoint him, and how ill 'tis like to be with ſuch as do, will appear further and fully in the two next verſes.

VERS. 11, 12.

If they obey and ſerve him, they ſhall ſpend their days in proſperity, and their years in pleaſures.

But if they obey not, they ſhall periſh by the ſword, and they ſhall die without knowledg.

IN the former Context we heard, what the bleſſed deſigns of God are upon the righteous, when they are bound in fetters, and holden in the Cords of affliction, namely, to convince them of their ſin, to fit them for the receiving of Inſtruction, and to bring them clear off from iniquity.

In theſe two verſes *Elihu* proceedeth to ſhew what the iſſue of thoſe afflictions will be, in a double reſpect or caſe.

Firſt, In caſe the afflicted come up to and anſwer the forementioned deſigns of God; that is, if they take knowledg of their ſin, if their ears be opened to Inſtruction, if they return from iniquity; what then? He tells us (*Verſ.* 11.) *If they obey and ſerve him, they ſhall ſpend their days in proſperity, and their years in pleaſures;* that ſhall be the iſſue, the bleſſed iſſue of all the afflictions with which they were exerciſed.

Secondly, He ſhews us how thoſe afflictions will iſſue in caſe the afflicted come not up to thoſe deſigns of God, in caſe they are not brought to a knowledg of ſin, nor receive inſtruction, nor return from iniquity; what then? He tells us that (*Verſ.* 12.) *If they obey not* (this will be the conſequent of their obſtinacy) *they ſhall periſh by the ſword, and they ſhall die without knowledg.* We have a parallel Scripture to this almoſt in terms, (*Iſa.* 19.20.) *If ye hear and obey, ye ſhall eat the good of the Land, but if ye refuſe and rebell, ye ſhall be devoured with the ſword.* This Text not only carries the ſenſe, but almoſt the words, by which *Elihu* expreſſeth both the Lords pleaſure and diſpleaſure in this place to *Job*.

Verſ. 11. **If they obey,** or *hear,*

That is, take out the leſſon taught them; if they do that which the affliction teacheth them, or which God teacheth by their affliction, by their cords and fetters, *then,* &c. The ſame word is frequently in Scripture uſed for *obeying* and *hearing,* (Pſal. 81.8,11.13.. Pſal. 95.7.) To what purpoſe is our hearing the will of God without obedience to it? When young *Samuel* ſaid at the Lord's call, *Speak, for thy ſervant heareth,* (1Sam.3.10.) his meaning was, Lord, I am ready to do what thou ſpeakeſt. We hear no more than we obey, and therefore obeying and hearing may well be expreſt by the ſame word. The Text is plain, I ſhall only give this Note, and paſs on;

It is our duty to hear and obey when-ever God calls or ſpeaks, either in his word or in his works.

That which this Text holds out ſpecially is the voice of God in his works, what God ſpeaks by Fetters, what he ſpeaks by Cords. If ever we hear and obey the voice of the Lord, it ſhould be when he teacheth us (as *Gideon* taught the men of *Succoth, Judg.* 8.16.) *with thorns and briars of the wilderneſs.* O let us take care of hearing and obeying this voice. For Firſt, God is the Lord, and therefore to be obeyed. Secondly, God is a Soveraign Lord, and therefore much more to be obeyed. Thirdly, As all the Commands, ſo all the Chaſtiſements of God are juſt and righteous, therefore they are moſt of all to be obeyed. Fourthly, To obey the Commands of God, whether taught us in his Word or by his Rod, is good, yea beſt for us, therefore we ſhould obey for our own good.
If they obey

And ſerve him, or *worſhip him.*] The word which here we render *to ſerve,* is very often in Scripture rendred *to worſhip,* and ſometimes worſhipping is expounded by ſerving, (*Matth.* 4.10.) *Thou ſhalt worſhip the Lord thy God, and him only ſhalt thou ſerve;* that alſo is the mind of the Text, *If they obey and ſerve him.*

עבד *Religio & numinis cultus eſt ſervitus quædam.*

Hence Note; *The Lord expects our ſervice, and then eſpecially, when we ſuffer.*

Religion and the Worſhip of God, in the whole compaſs of it, is nothing elſe but ſervice, a bleſſed ſervice, a free ſervice, a ſervice infinitely more free than any thing the world calls freedom. (*Exod.* 4.23.) *Let my Son go that he may ſerve me,* that is, *worſhip me.* All the Sons of God are his Servants, and they have moſt of the Son in them who have moſt of the Servant in them. If any deny him ſervice they deny their ſonſhip, or rather (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks of *Non-ſufferers* in one kind or other, *Heb.*12.8.) *They are baſtards, not ſons;* Yea, God expects whole and all ſervice from us, or that we ſhould ſerve him with our all, (*Deut.*10.12.) *Thou ſhalt ſerve the Lord thy God with all thy heart.* We muſt ſerve the Lord, not only with the beſt we have, but with all the beſt, with the heart, and all the heart. We ſerve God no further than we obey him, and we worſhip him no further than we ſerve him, and that heartily.

To ſerve God, (as to love God) is a very comprehenſive word, 'tis the ſum of all the duty of Man. To ſerve God is to ſubmit both to what he commands us, and to what he layeth upon us. To ſerve God is to ſubmit to what he would have us do, and to whatſoever he is pleaſed to do with us? and ſo we ſerve him particularly under ſufferings: We ſhould always ſerve him actively, and we are called ſometimes to ſerve him paſſively. All Believers are free, and yet they muſt ſerve; and they are made free on purpoſe to ſerve: We are purchaſed by the blood of Chriſt, that we might ſerve him. *Becauſe we are bought with a price, we muſt not be the ſervants of men,* ſaith the Apoſtle, (*1Cor.* 7.23.) Whoſe ſervants then? Surely the ſervants of God. We are conquered that we might ſerve. The *Latines* ſay, that a *Servant is one that is ſaved in War, taken and ſaved.* So it is with all the people of God, they are taken in the holy war, they are taken priſoners, and ſo made ſervants to Jeſus Chriſt. Yet Believers are ſervants, not only by conqueſt, but compact and covenant; every godly man hath, as it were, ſealed Indentures with God, he hath (upon the matter) put his ear to the Lords poſt to be boared thorow, (as you read, *Exod.* 21.6.) that he may be his ſervant for ever. The Lord expects ſervice.

Servus tanquam in bello ſervatus.

But what is it to ſerve him?

Firſt, To ſerve him is to do his Will.

Secondly, To ſerve him is to do his whole Will. It is not the doing of this or that piece of the Will of God, or this or that patch of the Will of God, which renders us his ſervants; but the doing his whole Will.

Thirdly, To ſerve him is to do his Will only; ſo ſaith the Scripture, *Him only ſhalt thou ſerve.* If it may be ſuppoſed, that we could do the whole Will of God, and yet do the will of any other, or do our own will too, in any thing contrary to his, we were not his ſervants; if we ſerve him not alone, or if we ſerve him not only, that is, if in ſerving man we aim not chiefly at the ſerving of him, or if all our ſervices to men are not ſubſervient, or not in ſubordination to the ſervice of God, we ſerve him not at all.

Fourthly, I may add this alſo, To ſerve God is to do every thing under this contemplation, that, what we do is the Will of God. 'Tis very poſſible for a man to do that which is the Will of God, and yet not to ſerve him in doing it; which we never do till we do it becauſe it is the Will of God. His Will muſt be not only the Rule of what we do, but the very Reaſon why we do it, elſe our doings are not his ſervings. They that do not attend this, ſerve God but as a beaſt may ſerve him, a beaſt may do that which is the Will of God; the inanimate creatures ſerve him ſo; We hear of *ſtormy winds and tempeſts fulfilling his Will*, (*Pſal.* 148.) All living, yea liveleſs creatures do that which is his Will, but they do not attend this, that it is his Will which they do. So that, I ſay, to do his Will, not conſidering that it is his Will, is to ſerve him no otherwiſe then beaſts, or than the winds or ſtorms ſerve him: And to do his Will, aiming, at our own wills or ends, is to ſerve him but as a hypocrite ſerves him. A hypocrite doth not ſerve God in what he doth, though he doth many things which are materially the Will of God, becauſe in all he minds his own Will more then the Will of God.

Laſtly, We muſt ſerve God as Sons, (*Mal.* 3.17.) A Son ſerveth no leſs then a Servant, yea much more, though not as a ſervant; for he knoweth more of his Fathers mind then a meer ſervant doth (*Joh.* 15.15.) and he knoweth, that he ſhall have alſo, though not Wages at the end of every day, yet the inheritance in the end. *Obadiah* was the proper name of one good man, and it is a name common to all good men; they are (as that word imports) *Servants of the Lord*. It is a common Theam to urge men *to ſerve God*, but it is a rare thing to be indeed a ſervant of God. To ſerve God is the Sum and Marrow of all knowledg in divinity, and the great end why we came into this World and for which we are here detained. Nor is it an eaſie matter to come up to, or attain the holy skill of ſerving ſuch a Lord and Maſter as he: There muſt be a doing of his Will, and of his whole Will, and of his Will only, and that under this preciſe contemplation, that it is his Will, to denominate us his ſervants, or to make a proof that we ſerve him.

Now whether God teacheth us by his Word, or by his Rod (which is the teaching of this context) O how readily ſhould we obey and ſerve him! To ſerve him is not only the deſign of our being made free, that is, we were not only made free to ſerve him, but to ſerve him is our freedom (as was toucht before) yea, to ſerve him is not only to be free, but to ſerve him is to reign and rule. They that ſerve God to purpoſe reign over the luſts of the evil World without, and over their own luſts within; nor can any reign over the luſts of the world without, or their own within, but only they who ſerve him, and only ſo far as they ſerve him. Every gracious act of ſervice to God is the ſubjugation or bringing under of ſome luſt or other in man.

Now if any ſhould ſay, ſurely this is a very ſad Life, to be always ſerving, or to lead only the life of a ſervant.

I anſwer, To ſerve God, or the ſervice of God is ſweet, pleaſant and eaſie in a twofold reſpect. Firſt, comparatively, to the ſervice of ſin and the world, of luſt and the Devil; that's a wearineſs indeed as well as a baſeneſs. Secondly, It is eaſie alſo if we conſider the help we have in it. The people of God ſerve him in a Covenant of Grace, which, as it calls them to work, ſo it gives them help to work. The New Covenant doth not call us (as *Pharaoh* did the children of *Iſrael*) to make brick and deny us ſtraw; yea, under that Covenant, we have not only ſtraw afforded us to make our brick, but we have ſtrength afforded us to make our brick; that is, the very power by which we ſerve our Maſter is given in by our Maſter. The Maſters of this world ſet us a work, but they give us no ſtrength, but what work ſoever God ſets his Covenant-ſervants about, he gives them ſtrength to do it. Then, O how ſweet is it to ſerve him, and how readily ſhould our hearts come off in his ſervice! Let me add one thing more (which brings us to the next words) ſerve him, for his is not a lean ſervice, not an unprofitable ſervice, there is a reward promiſed to thoſe who ſerve him; yea, his very ſervice is a reward, his work is wages. Therefore what calls ſoever we have from him let us anſwer and ſerve him. There are two things which ſhould be the daily meditation of Saints, or they ſhould be continually acquainting themſelves with them. Firſt, *The Croſs of Chriſt*, that they may know how, and be willing to ſuffer for him. Secondly, *The Yoak of Chriſt*, that they may know how, and be willing to ſerve him. *If they obey and ſerve him*, What then? Even that which was the laſt conſideration provoking us to his ſervice, there is a reward in it, *If they obey and ſerve him*,

They ſhall ſpend their days in proſperity, and their years in pleaſures.

Here's good wages; who would not ſerve that Maſter who will pay him for his work in that deſireable coin, Pleaſure and Proſperity! *They ſhall ſpend their days in proſperity*, that is, they ſhall run out their days in proſperity, their days and their proſperity ſhall be like two parallel lines, one as long as the other. The word which we tranſlate *to ſpend*, ſignifies to *finiſh*, and that in a double reſpect; Firſt, in a way of Conſumption: Secondly, in a way of Perfection or Conſummation. That which is conſumed is finiſhed, or ended. So the word is uſed (*Pſal.* 90. 7. *Num.* 16. 45.) The Lord ſaith to *Moſes*, *Go you up from this Congregation, that I may conſume them in a moment*; I will diſpatch them and make an end of them preſently. The Lord can ſoon rid his hand of ſinners. And as it notes a conſuming by ſuddain judgments, by diſeaſes or age, ſo by longing or deſire, (2 *Sam.* 23. 15.) *And David longed* ('tis this word, he was even ſpent and conſumed with a longing deſire) *and ſaid, O that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate*. Now as that which is conſumed or ſpent, ſo that which is perfected is finiſhed. Thus, *Moſes* having ſet down the particulars of the whole work of Creation ſums all up in this word, (*Gen.* 2.1,2.) *Thus the Heavens and the Earth were finiſhed, and all the hoſt of them*; That is, God compleated or brought that great work of Creation to its utmoſt perfection, he put (as we may ſpeak) his laſt hand to it, there was nothing more to be added. Here in the Text we are to take this word *ſpend* not only as it often ſignifies, to ſpend in a way of Conſumption, but alſo to ſpend in a way of Perfection, they ſhall perfect, not barely wear out their days. A godly man hath not ſo much conſumed as perfected the days of his life, when he is come to and hath ended the laſt day of his life. *They ſhall ſpend their days*

כלה *Significat tum conſumere, tum conſummare, ſignificat etiam conſumi deſiderio, quod dicitur aliquem deperire amore.*

In proſperity, or *in good* (ſaith the Original)

Proſperity is a good thing, a good bleſſing of God. They ſhall ſpend their days in good, we tranſlate it in the 21. Chapter Verſ. 15. *in wealth*. Wealth alſo is a good bleſſing of God to thoſe that are good, and proſperity takes that in; proſperity is a large word comprehending all good, health and wealth, honour and peace: what-ever we can imagin to render our lives comfortable comes under the name of Proſperity, *They ſhall ſpend their days in proſperity, or in good*; this reward *they* ſhall have from the Lord who ſerve him. Is not this good wages? The carnal rich man pleaſed himſelf and ſaid, (*Luke* 12. 19.) *Soul, take thine eaſe thou haſt goods laid up for many years.* The godly do not pleaſe themſelves, that they have goods laid up for many years in their own Stock, in their Lands, in their Houſes, in their Purſes, in their Shops, but they pleaſe themſelves that they have good laid up for many years, yea, for eternity, in the Promiſes of God. They who ſerve him, they ſhall ſpend their days in good, they ſhall have good for every day, and ſo finiſh their days with good; yet this is not all, *They ſhall ſpend their days in proſperity*,

בטוב *In bono, i. e. in omni jucunditate.*

And their years in Pleaſures.] In the former words he promiſed days of good, here years of Pleaſure; as if he had ſaid, they ſhall enjoy their proſperity long, they ſhall not only have Days but Years filled up with it. One year contains many days, how many days of pleaſure are there in years of pleaſure! Our life is meaſured by days to ſhew the ſhortneſs of it; the longeſt meaſure of it is by years; *They ſhall ſpend their years*

In Pleaſures, or (as we may read it) *in ſweetneſſes, in pleaſantneſſes, in deliciousneſſes, in beauties.*

The word is uſed (2 *Sam.* 1. 23.) to ſhew the lovelineſs of *Jonathan* and *Saul*, they were a pleaſant pair, a couple of goodly perſons. *They ſhall ſpend their days in pleaſantneſs, or in pleaſures.*

בנעימים *In jucundis.*
נעם *Affert jucunditatem, delectationem, pulchritudinem, rei nobis gratiſſima.* In *Canticis.* Targ. *in Epithalamiis.* Munſt.
ἐν εὐπρεπείαις, Sept. *in delectationibus.* Pag.

Further, Take notice, the word is plural; he doth not ſay, they ſhall *ſpend their days in pleaſure*, but *in pleaſures*. implying all ſorts and varieties of pleaſure; in *Songs*, ſaith one; in *Marriage Songs*, ſaith a ſecond; in *graceful Beauties*, ſaith a third; and, which may be all or any of theſe; in *delights*, ſaith a fourth.

But here are two Queſtions that I muſt give anſwer to, for the clearing of this Scripture.

Firſt, The Queſtion may be, *Is this a mercy much to be reckoned upon, to ſpend our years in pleaſure?* ſaith not the Apoſtle (1 *Tim.* 5. 6.) *The widow that lives in pleaſure is dead while ſhe lives?* If it be a dead life to live in pleaſure, how then is it here promiſed as a favour, as a mercy, to them that obey and ſerve God, that they ſhall ſpend their years in pleaſures?

I anſwer by diſtinguiſhing of pleaſure; pleaſures are of two ſorts. Firſt, lawful and honeſt delights; of ſuch we read (*Gen.* 49. 20.) where dying *Jacob* bleſſing of *Aſher* ſaith, *He ſhall yield royal dainties*, or *pleaſures for a King*; meaning, he ſhall give, not only honeſt, but honourable pleaſures and contentments, ſuch as befit Kings. Secondly, There are unlawful and diſhoneſt pleaſures, which the Apoſtle calleth (*Heb.* 11. 25.) *the pleaſures of ſin for a ſeaſon*. A wo will be their portion who live in ſuch pleaſures. *Go to now ye rich men, weep and howl* (ſaith the Apoſtle *James*, *Chap.* 5. 1.) why ſo? Among other Reaſons this is given for one (*Verſ* 5.) *Ye have lived in pleaſure*, wantonizing, and gluttonizing, and Epicurizing: in ſuch baſe pleaſures you have lived, therefore wo to you. To live in ſinful or unlawful pleaſures is death and miſery, or a life worſe then death; but to live a life of lawful and honeſt pleaſure is a mercy, the mercy here promiſed, and the very life of our lives.

Dabit delicias regis. Heb. Mont.

Secondly, We may diſtinguiſh of pleaſures thus; they are either, firſt, Corporal pleaſures, pleaſures of the body, of which we read (*Job* 21. 25.) *One dieth in his full ſtrength, and another dieth in the bitterneſs of his Soul, and never eateth in pleaſure*; That is, he hath had no contentment in the body, or no bodily contentment, but was always ſickly, crazy, pining, languiſhing, and ill at eaſe, his life was tedious, even a burden to him, for he could never eat in pleaſure, ſcarce taſt what he did eat. Secondly, There are Spiritual pleaſures (*Pſal.* 36. 8.) *They ſhall drink of the Rivers of thy pleaſures. David* ſpeaks there of Saints, what enjoyments and Joys they have in the Church or Houſe of, God, attending upon him in holy Ordinances. Thirdly, There are eternal pleaſures (*Pſal.* 16. 11.) *In thy preſence is fulneſs of joy, and at thy right hand are pleaſures for evermore.* Such are all the joys of Heaven, or of a glorified ſtate. Now when *Elihu* ſaith, *they ſhall ſpend their years in pleaſures*, we are not to take it meerly for honeſt corporal pleaſures, for ſuch a life, at beſt, is but the life of a Beaſt; but we are to take theſe corporal pleaſures, either as heightned by better, that is, as ſpiritualiz'd by the ſenſe of the love of God, and mixed with ſpiritual pleaſures; or, for thoſe purely ſpiritual pleaſures which the Soul finds in communion with God alone (having nothing to do, or no intercourſe with creatures) drinking at the River of his pleaſures in Prayer, in Hearing, in Meditation, in breaking Bread, in Singing. Now to ſpend our days, either in theſe purely ſpiritual pleaſures, taking in alſo thoſe corporal pleaſures ſo qualified as before, and duly circumſtantiated, is a high, a very high bleſſing and mercy indeed. So then, here is nothing to feed the fancy of Epicures, here is no promiſe of ſenſual, though of ſenſitive pleaſures, theſe only are pleaſures fit for the Servants of God, theſe pleaſures only become Saints; as for thoſe other pleaſures, Chriſt ſaith of them in the Parable of the Sower (*Luke* 8. 14.) *They choak the Word of God*; and God will not feed his people with ſuch pleaſures, as a reward of ſerving him, as ſhall choak the Word, and unfit them for his ſervice. No, we are to watch againſt, and deny our ſelves ſuch pleaſures, as our Lord Jeſus caution'd his Diſciples (*Luke* 21. 34.) *Take heed, leaſt at any time your hearts be overcharged with ſurfetting, drunkenneſs, and the cares of this life, and ſo that day come upon you unawares.* As if he had ſaid, Take heed of carnal pleaſures, as much as of worldly cares, for as they are alike deſtructive to the preſent purity of the Soul, ſo they alike indanger our future peace, and lay us open to the ſurprize of Judgment. And as ſuch pleaſures ruin the ſtate of the Soul, ſo of the body too, with which they have neareſt cognation. Hence that of *Solomon* (Prov. 21. 17.) *He that loveth pleaſure ſhall be a poor man.* There, pleaſure is oppoſed to work or labour: He that is all for taking his pleaſure, and will not follow his Calling, this man comes quickly to poverty, and will die a Beggar. Suppoſe the pleaſure be lawful, yet if he loves pleaſure, and is at his pleaſure when he ſhould be at his labour, he will ſoon be reduced to a morſel of bread, and become a poor man: But he that loveth unlawful pleaſures, ſhall not only be a poor man, but will prove a wicked man. *Thou that art given to pleaſures* (Iſa. 47. 8.) is the Character of *Babylon*. God gives good men pleaſure, but 'tis the mark of an evil man to be given to pleaſure. They that *love pleaſure, are lovers of pleaſure more then lovers of God* (2 Tim. 3. 4.) and ſuch muſt needs be the worſt of men.

And therefore we are not to underſtand this Text of any ſinful pleaſure, nor of a life meerly led in lawful pleaſure, that a man ſhould be all upon his pleaſure, and lay aſide his Calling; *Elihu* doth not oppoſe pleaſure to work, labour or buſineſs, but to trouble, ſorrow, and affliction. They that obey and ſerve the Lord ſhall ſpend their years in pleaſures, in honeſt pleaſures, that is, they ſhall live, not only contentedly, but joyfully. The Lord alloweth us to take any honeſt pleaſure while we live, but not to live in pleaſure; he alloweth us to take our delights, but our delights muſt not take us.

There is yet another Query, for it may be ſaid, Is this a truth, that they who obey and ſerve the Lord *ſhall ſpend their days in proſperity, and their years in pleaſures?* I anſwer to that,

Firſt, If we take it abſolutely and univerſally, we cannot affirm that every one who ſerveth and obeyeth God, ſhall always have pleaſure, that is, outward comforts and contentments in this world; many of the Lords faithful ſervants have lived in pain and ſorrow; ſo that *if* (as *David* ſpake in this caſe, *Pſal.* 73. 5.) *we ſhould ſpeak thus, we ſhould offend againſt the generation of his ſervants.* Some flouriſh in grace, who wither in worldly comforts. There is no certain connexion between theſe two, Grace and outward peace or pleaſure; the providences of God vary in this point as himſelf pleaſeth. Neither is it true, that the true ſervants of God do uninterruptedly or always injoy inward pleaſures, comforts and contentments; for he that feareth the Lord, and obeyeth the voice of his ſervants, may walk in darkneſs, and trouble of ſpirit, *and ſee no light*, (Iſa. 50. 10.) We are therefore to underſtand this Scripture as others of like nature, of that which is commonly done, or of that which we may upon good ground expect from God, and in faith wait for, that if we ſerve and obey him, he will make our lives comfortable to us. I anſwer,

Secondly, This promiſe, or promiſes of a like nature were fitted to the time wherein *Elihu* ſpake; he ſpake of the times long before Chriſts appearing in the fleſh, when the Lord did, as it were, lead on his people very much by promiſes, of temporal and outward proſperity, of which the Scripture is more ſparing in the new Teſtament, where we are come to the fulneſs of Chriſt, and the riches of the grace of God to us in him; of which there is but little (comparatively) ſpoken in the old Teſtament: And therefore under that darker diſpenſation of ſpirituals, the Lord ſaw it good to incourage that people to obedience by a multitude of very particular outward promiſes, as we may read (*Deut.* 28.) He would bleſs their basket and their ſtore, the fruit of the field, *&c.* Theſe promiſes were ſuted to the ſtate of that under-age people, who were led on and inticed by viſible and ſenſible bleſſings, as we do children with toyes and gaudies; and indeed all viſible injoyments are but ſuch in compariſon of ſpirituals. Believers under the Goſpel being come to a higher ſtate, to fuller attainments, the promiſes made to them run not much in that channel; yet it cannot be denied, that the Goſpel alſo holds out promiſes for temporals, as well as the Law; and this latter diſpenſation of the Covenant as well as the former, hath provided ſufficiently for our outward comforts.

Thirdly, For anſwer, let us conſider the drift of the Spirit of God in this promiſe of pleaſure. *Job* had often complained of his own ſorrowful condition, and concluded himſelf a man of ſorrow for all the remainder of his days: though his faith was ſtrong for the reſurrection of his body after death, yet he had little, if any faith at all, that he ſhould be raiſed out of that miſerable eſtate wherein he was in this life. He alſo had ſpoken ſomewhat raſhly and amiſs concerning the dealings of God with his ſervants in general, as if nothing but trouble and ſorrow, did attend them, and that the wicked went away with all the ſweet and good of this world. Now *Elihu* to take him off from theſe ſad, and almoſt deſpairing thoughts, as to the return of his own comforts, and to rectifie his judgment in the general point, as to the dealings of God with others; he aſſureth *Job*, that if righteous men being bound in fetters, *&c.* Hear and obey, God will break thoſe bonds, and cut the cords of their affliction, *and they ſhall ſpend* (the remainder of) *their days in proſperity, and* (the reſt of) *their years in pleaſures.* So that *Elihu* in holding out this promiſe to *Job*, would rather clear his judgment from an error concerning the laſtingneſs or continuance of his pains and ſorrows, than heat his affections in the expectation of joys and pleaſures in this world.

Fourthly, I anſwer, Though the people of God have not always days of ſuch outward proſperity, nor years of ſuch ſenſitive pleaſures, yet they have that which is better, and if they have no pleaſures, they do not want them. The Apoſtle could ſay (*Phil.*4.11.) *I have learned in what ſtate ſoever I am, therewith to be content.* What is pleaſure if content be not? We may have outward pleaſures, yet no content, but he that hath content within, cannot miſs of pleaſure. A man may have riches, but no contentment, but he that hath contentment is very rich, (1 *Tim.* 6. 6.) *Godlineſs with contentment is great gain*, and great gain is proſperity: this great gain, this heart-pleaſure, or ſoul-reſt, contentment, is the aſſured portion of thoſe who obey and ſerve the Lord, what ever their outward portion be in this world. And he may be ſaid to ſpend his days in good, and his years in pleaſure, who hath theſe pure gains of gracious contentment, reſting the Soul in God in all conditions. *The life of man* (that is, the comfort of his life) doth not conſiſt in the abundance of that which he poſſeſſeth, (*Luke* 12.15.) or in ſenſe-pleaſures; but in that ſweet compoſure and ſedateneſs of his Soul, reſting by faith in the promiſes of God, or rather in the God of the promiſes, and ſo ſucking ſweetneſs from them.

Laſtly, As though a ſervant of God ſhould be exerciſed with ſorrows all the days of his life, yet he cannot be ſaid to ſpend his days in ſorrow, becauſe he meets with many refreſhing intervals and ſhines of favour from the face of God in the midſt of thoſe clouds; ſo he may be ſaid to ſpend his days in pleaſure, becauſe at leaſt, when his days here are ſpent, he conſummates his days (which is one ſignification of the word) by an intrance into everlaſting pleaſures.

So much for the anſwer of theſe queſtions, concerning this promiſe, *They ſhall ſpend their days in proſperity, and their years in pleaſure.*

From the promiſe it ſelf, Note; Firſt, *Obedience to God is profitable to man.*

God hath no profit by our Obedience, but we have. God doth not call us to ſerve him in his work, as we call ſervants to do our work, to get his living by us, or better himſelf; no, the Lord calls us to ſerve him and obey him, for our own good. *They conſult their own good beſt, who do moſt good.* I may ſay theſe three things of thoſe who do good (and what is ſerving God, but doing of good? Or what is doing good but ſerving God?) Firſt, they ſhall receive true good; Secondly, they ſhall for ever hold the beſt good, the chief good, they ſhall not only ſpend their days and years in good, but when their days and years are ſpent, they ſhall have good, and a greater good than any they had, in ſpending the days and years of this life; they ſhall have good in death, they ſhall come to a fuller injoyment of God, *the chief Good*, when they have left and let fall the poſſeſſion of all earthly goods. Thirdly, they that do good ſhall find all things working together for their good; if they have a loſs, they ſhall receive good by it; if they bear a Croſs, that ſhall bear good. Outward troubles cannot diſturb, much leſs pollute our ſpiritual good; for, *All things work together for good to them that love God, who are the called according to his purpoſe* (Rom. 8.28.) Surely then the ſervice of God is a gainful ſervice, a profitable ſervice; though the work may be hard, and the way painful, yet the wages will be ſweet, and the end pleaſant. The contemplation of this put *David* upon putting that queſtion (*Pſal.* 34. 12, 13.) *What man is he that deſireth life, and loveth many days, that he may ſee good* (That is, *that he may enjoy good*) *keep thy tongue from evil, and thy mouth, that it ſpeak no guile; depart from evil, and do good.* The Pſalmiſt makes Proclamation, What man is he that would have good? Let him do good, let him obey and ſerve God, and he ſhall have good.

Again, Conſider the Promiſe in relation to the Perſons deſcribed, (*Verſ.* 8, 9, 10.) *They were bound in Fetters, and holden in Cords of affliction:* Now ſaith *Elihu* here, *they ſhall ſpend their days in proſperity, and their years in pleaſures.*

Hence Note; *There is no condition ſo low and forlorn, but the Lord is able to bring us out of it, and into the enjoyments of fulleſt comforts;*

He can change our Iron Fetters, and Cords, into Rings of Gold, and Bracelets; he can Tranſlate our days of trouble, and our years of pain, into days of proſperity, and years of pleaſure; it was ſo with *Job* in the iſſue, and he was the man that *Elihu* here intended. *Job* was long bound in fetters, and holden in the cords of affliction, yet as *Elihu* told him he ſhould, ſo he did afterwards, ſpend his days in proſperity, and his years in pleaſure; the Lord doubled his Cattel to him, his friends fill'd his Coffers, and his Cabinets, *Every man gave him a piece of mony, and every one an Ear-ring of Gold*; his children alſo were the ſame for number, his daughters the faireſt in the Land; himſelf alſo lived in the fulneſs of this outward Proſperity, till he was full of days, and he fed upon the delicious fruits of this Promiſe all his after-days. *Manaſſeh* having run a courſe of unparallel'd wickedneſs, was at laſt *taken by the Captains of the hoſt of the King of Aſſyria, among the Thorns, and they bound him with fetters, and carryed him to Babylon* (2 Chron.33.11.) yet when in his affliction he beſought the Lord his God, and humbled himſelf greatly before the God of his Fathers, he was intreated of him, and brought again to *Jeruſalem*, where he ſpent his days in proſperity, and his years in pleaſure. If we turn to the Lord in affliction, the Lord is ready to turn away our affliction, or (as the Church prayed in the half-turn of her affliction, *Pſal.*126.4.) *to turn our captivity, as the ſtreams in the South*; That is, to make both a moſt admirable and a moſt comfortable turn of our condition. Streams in the hot Southern Countries are rare; the Rain of thoſe Lands uſually is duſt. Streams in the South are alſo very welcome: How glad are they of a cooling Shower from a Cloud, who daily feel, and are fainted with the ſcorching Beams of the Sun! Such a turn ſhall they have (ſaith *Elihu*) who being holden in the cords of affliction, turn from iniquity, obey and ſerve the Lord.

Thirdly, From the matter of the Promiſe,

Note; *A comfortable paſſage through this life, is a very great mercy, as well as the hope of happineſs for ever in the other life.*

'Tis proſperity and pleaſure in this world, though not meer worldly proſperity and pleaſure, which is here promiſed; and we are not to ſlight any thing that comes by promiſe, yea, we ſhould highly eſteem thoſe things, which, conſidered in themſelves, are little worth, as they come to us through the Promiſe. We may quickly over-rate and over-reckon outward things in themſelves, and we ever do ſo, if we rate or reckon them any better than vanity; but as they are promiſed and beſtowed in a way of favour from God, and as they are a part of the purchaſe of Chriſt, and handed to us by him (ſo are even outward things to believers) thus they are very valuable. Upon theſe terms to live and ſpend our days in good, and our years in honeſt lawful pleaſures, is a great mercy.

From the whole take two Corollaries.

Firſt, *How blaſphemous then is their Opinion, who ſay it is a vain thing to ſerve the Lord, or, that there is no profit in calling upon him!* which blaſphemy was refuted *Ch.*21.14.

Secondly, Would we have a good end of, or out-gate from our afflictions, then let us hear and obey. Thus much of the firſt caſe, what the iſſue of their afflictions ſhall be, who obey: The Second iſſue upon the contrary caſe, followeth in the 12. Verſe.

Verſ. 12. **But if they obey not, they ſhall periſh by the Sword, and die without knowledg.**

Here contraries are ſet one over againſt another, for their fuller illuſtration. *If they obey not*; that is, if thoſe righteous men ſpoken of before (*Verſ.* 7.) *obey not.* What it is not to obey, is clear by what I ſaid was to obey, in opening the former verſe. I ſhall only take notice, that in this latter part it is not ſaid, *If they obey not, and ſerve him not*, but only, *if they obey not*; and I conceive, *Elihu* ſaith no more, or proceeds no further, becauſe they who deny obedience, will certainly deny ſervice; therefore he ſtops at that.

If they obey not.] They who are good in their ſtate, may often fail in doing that which is good; for of thoſe this Text yet ſpeaks, and is generally interpreted. The Hypocrite in heart is ſpoken of in the next verſe, but here *Elihu* is ſpeaking of the righteous, and becauſe he is ſo, therefore by this diſobedience cannot be meant an obſtinate rebellion, but a ſloth or careleſneſs in attending to the Call of God, for the amendment of ſome evil in their lives. *If they obey not:*

> Hence Note; *The calls and commands of God are not always obeyed, no not by good men, not by the righteous.*

The call and command of God is not at all obeyed by the wicked, and it is not always obeyed by the righteous. The righteous ſometimes hear the word, but do not anſwer it, and ſometimes they feel the rod, and do not attend it; they cry out of the ſmart of the rod, and of the ſores which the laſhes of the rod have made upon them, they weep over, or becauſe of their ſores, yet they do not preſently give glory to God by obeying him, and leaving their ſins, I mean as to that ſpecial point of duty in which God would have them obey him, and as to thoſe ſpecial ſins which God by that affliction calls upon them to leave. Many good men do not preſently underſtand the purpoſe of God in this or that affliction; and while it is ſo with them, they muſt needs fail in anſwerableneſs to it. I know every godly man hath a general bent to obey God and ſerve him. It is not with the godly in their afflictions as with the wicked under theirs, of whom the Prophet ſpeaks, (*Iſa.* 9. 13.) *They did not turn to him that ſmote them*; yet even ſuch Scriptures are in a degree applicable to many of the people of God, *they do not always turn to him that ſmiteth them*; when they are exerciſed with variety of calamities, they mind not the Lord as they ought. And hence it is (I ſay) that though the righteous have a general bent to obedience, yet they ſometimes come ſhort of that obedience which a ſpecial affliction or correction calleth them to; yea, they may be ſo ſhort in anſwering it, that the Lord may proceed to lay heavier and greater afflictions upon them, even to the taking of them out of the world, as it followeth in this Verſe, *If they obey not*,

They ſhall periſh by the Sword.

De carcere educentur ad occiſionem gladii. Aquin. *Per gladium tranſire dicitur qui gladio occiditur*, Druſ.

Before they were bound in fetters and held in cords, but now the ſword ſhall overtake them, and they ſhall *periſh or be taken away by the ſword:* The Hebrew is, *they ſhall paſs away by the ſword,* That is, they ſhall die. Man is ſaid to paſs away by the ſword, when the ſword doth not paſs by him, but ſmites and kills him, which is a temporal periſhing. It is ſaid (*Iſa.* 57. 1.) *The righteous periſh*, &c. As the righteous periſh by a natural death, ſo they may periſh by a violent death, and poſſibly that may fall upon them when they attend not the providential diſpenſations of God.

בשלח *Proprie eſt miſſile, aut jaculum.*

They ſhall periſh by the ſword, or by the drawn weapon. The word notes any weapon that is drawn or caſt forth, hence ſome tranſlate it a Dart or Javelin, which is ſhot out of the hand; but it may alſo be applied to the Sword, which being drawn forth out of the ſheath is often ſent upon deadly meſſages, and may be numbered among miſſive weapons: Now when *Elihu* ſaith, *they ſhall periſh by the ſword*, we may take the word *ſword* properly or tropically. Properly two ways; Firſt, for the ſword of the Warrier; Secondly, for the ſword of the Magiſtrate, either juſtly puniſhing or grievouſly afflicting. Some good men have acknowledged in great trials and ſufferings under the hand of man, that God hath met with them for their neglect or non-attendance to more immediate afflictions under his own hand. Again, take the ſword tropically or improperly, and ſo any ſore affliction that greatly annoyeth, eſpecally if to death, is called *a Sword* in Scripture; *They ſhall periſh by the Sword*, (under one notion or other) *if they do not obey.*

> Hence Learn; *God will not ſpare, no not his own People, if they do not obey him.*

God is full of ſparing mercy, but the righteous may provoke him ſo, that he will not ſpare, no not them. Judgment begins often at the houſe of God (1 *Pet.*4.17.) *And if Judgment begin at the houſe of God, what ſhall the end be of thoſe that obey not the Goſpel?* This is a terrible word. The righteous may periſh by the ſword; how dreadfully then ſhall the unrighteous, the wicked, the ſcorners of godlineſs, periſh! If God will make his own people ſmart in his anger, when they provoke him, how will he *ſpeak to his enemies in his wrath, and vex them in his ſore diſpleaſure* (Pſal.2.5.)

Secondly, From the gradation of their troubles; Firſt, they were *bound in fetters and holden in cords*, but now here's a Sword, a devouring ſword, a killing deadly weapon.

> Hence Learn; *They who give not glory to God in leſſer or in lighter afflictions draw greater upon themſelves*;

They may come from a cord to a ſword, from being bound to be ſlain. God hath ſeveral ſorts of Inſtruments to chaſten his people with, and as the beſt of outward good things may be the portion of evil wicked men, ſo the worſt of outward evils may be the portion of good men; they may at any time, and ſometimes *ſhall periſh by the Sword*, and as it followes,

They ſhall die without knowledg.

בבליעת

The Sword is death, a deadly Sword; *they ſhall die*,

Without knowledg, or, as the Text may be Read, *becauſe they were without knowledg.*

ב

But is any righteous man without knowledg? *That the Soul be without knowledg is not good*, (ſaith *Solomon*, Prov. 19. 2.) How then can he be good whoſe Soul is without knowledg? And ſeeing we interpret this Text of the righteous, how can it be ſaid, *they die without knowledg?*

I anſwer, Knowledg may be taken in a more general ſenſe, and ſo no righteous man either lives or dies without knowledg? He neither lives nor dies without the knowledg of God in Jeſus Chriſt, *whom to know is eternal life*, (*John* 17.3.) and without the knowledg of whom, all (who are actually capable of ſuch knowledg) muſt die eternally; he neither lives nor dies without the knowledg of himſelf as a ſinner, and of Chriſt who ſaveth him from his ſins. Such ignorances are inconſiſtent with the ſtate of a godly man; he may do fooliſhly, but he is not a fool; he may be wanting in ſome kind of knowledg, but he doth not want knowledg; he cannot be without ſaving knowledg, though he may periſh (temporally) *without knowledg*. The firſt thing that God makes in the new creation is light, the light of knowledg, there he begins his work; therefore we cannot take knowledg generally, ſimply and abſolutely, in this Text; but as knowledg may be taken reſtrictively, for knowledg in or about this or that particular, ſo a good man may want knowledg, there may be ſomewhat which the Lord would acquaint the righteous with, and teach them by their fetters and afflictions, which they do not learn; and therefore *they die without knowledg*, or, becauſe they are without knowledg; yet that want of knowledg, together with all their other wants and ignorances, are pardoned to them.

Dei monita per caſtigationes ſcire & intelligere noluerunt. Druſ.

Further we may expound the words thus; *They ſhall die without knowledg*, that is, without the knowledg or conſideration of that ſpecial affliction or judgment which is coming upon them, they ſhall die unawares, not thinking, nor ſo much as dreaming of ſuch a judgment, or that ſuch a hand of God was ſo near them. According to this interpretation, *Elihu* intends either their inadvertency of that approaching ſcourge or calamity with which they are overtaken, or their not underſtanding the reaſon of it. Chriſt ſaith in the Goſpel (*Luke* 12.46.) *The maſter of that ſervant (the evil ſervant) ſhall come in a day which he knows not of, and in a time when he looked not for him.* Now, as the laſt Judgment, the great Judgment ſhall come upon the wicked in a time when they look not for it, ſo the Lord may bring a ſpecial particular Judgment upon ſome one or more of his own people, when they do not think of it, or never ſuſpected that they ſhould fall under it. Good men are ſometimes ſurprized; and ſo, *they ſhall die without knowledg*, is no more then this, they ſhall be taken unawares by a ſuddain unexpected judgment. Though every godly man hath a preparation for the general judgment, yet as to a particular one, he may be much unprepared.

Non eſt oratio affirmativa ſtultitiæ vel negativa ſcientiæ, ſed ſimpliciter negat advertentiam. Bold.

Laſtly, Some expound the words of more than inadvertency, or bare neſcience, even of folly, and ſome degree of affected ignorance, which poſſibly may prevail upon a righteous man in ſome caſes and for a time; but I rather adhere to the former interpretation, becauſe (as was ſhewed before) the whole context ſeems to intend a more ordinary caſe of a righteous man. So then, this Scripture holds out the ſad iſſues which the neglect of giving God the glory of his corrections and chaſtenings may bring upon the righteous.

Hence Note; *Diſobedience, or neglect of duty, is dangerous, whereſoever it is found.*

The Church of *Corinth* felt this; many of them died (in the ſenſe given) without knowledg, or not having a due ſpiritual knowledg of Chriſt in the holy ſupper, which the Apoſtle calls, their *not diſcerning the Lords body*, (1 Cor.11.29.) and preſently tells them (*Verſ.* 30.) *For this cauſe many are weak and ſickly among you, and many ſleep*; That is, are taken away by death. *Any kind or degree of ſin is dangerous*; not to obey a hint of providence, not to obey an intimation of the mind of God in an affliction, may be very dangerous; afflictions may end in deſtructions, and fetters in death, if the purpoſe of God in them be not attended and anſwered by us.

Secondly, Note; *Not to obey when God calls and commands, is folly and ignorance.*

Such do as if they had no knowledg at all what or how to do.

Laſtly in that he ſaith, *they ſhall die without knowledg*, we may learn this from it;

The ignorance and heedleſneſs of men undo them, and bring deſtruction upon them.

Many die becauſe they have no knowledg, others not heeding or minding what they know. Holy *David* confeſſed that in one point he was *ignorant and fooliſh, even as a beaſt*, (*Pſal.* 73.22.) and when good men act like beaſts, without a due improvement of reaſon and underſtanding, they may periſh (as to this temporal life) like beaſts, (*Iſa.* 5.13.) *Therefore my people are gone into captivity, becauſe they have no knowledg.* The Prophet (I conceive) is to be underſtood (as this Text) not that they had no knowledg at all, or were utterly ignorant, but they had no knowledg as to that ſpecial diſpenſation of God, how to make uſe of it or improve it, at leaſt they took no heed, no care to uſe or improve it; and (ſaith he) *they therefore are gone into captivity*, they are brought under bondage to their enemies, they are ſcattered, ruin'd, and (as to this world) quite loſt and undone. Wicked men are undone by acting againſt their knowledg; good men may be undone by acting below their knowledg, or by not acting according to what they know or ſhould have known and ſo (through their ignorance or heedleſneſs) *they die without knowledg.*

VERS. 13, 14.

But the hypocrites in heart heap up wrath, they cry not when he bindeth them.

They die in Youth, and their Life is among the unclean.

ELihu having put the caſe of the righteous in theſe two conditional propoſitions laſt opened, as ſomewhat doubtful, what at leaſt ſome of them may do, as to a right improvement of outward afflictions; he proceeds in theſe two verſes to ſhew the caſe of the wicked wholly deſperate, in their affliction. There is an **If** put upon the righteous, but he is concluſive upon the hypocrite; to be ſure he will neither hear nor obey, neither ſubmit nor conform to the voice of the rod.

So that in theſe words he ſets forth the common yea conſtant iſſue of the hand of God upon *hypocrites in heart.* Poſſibly good men, righteous men may not always anſwer the expectation of God, when affliction is upon them; but as for *hypocrites, they* (always) *heap up wrath.* And in this we may conceive *Elihu* hath a reſpect to *Job*; For though he did not conclude him to be an *hypocrite in heart*, yet he put it home upon him to conſider the matter, whether he himſelf had not, at leaſt, acted and carried it like an *hypocrite in heart*, under the afflicting hand of God, foraſmuch as he was no more humbled and ſubdued under it. And indeed *Elihu* turns every ſtone, and tryeth every way, to bring down the ſpirit of *Job.* And therefore as he had ſhewed, what the uſual effects of the hand of God upon the righteous are, ſo he tells him how it is with the wicked in that caſe, thereby to put him upon the trial, whether he had not reaſon to ſuſpect himſelf to be an hypocrite, becauſe his carriage, was ſo like theirs.

Verſ. 13. **But the hypocrites in heart, &c.**

חנפי לב

That adverſative particle ſhews that he is dealing upon another ſubject: *hypocrites in heart* are far from righteouſneſs. I have diſcourſed ſomewhat largely concerning the hypocrite in *Chap.* 34. *Verſ.* 30. upon theſe words, *That the hypocrite reign not, leſt the people be ſnared*; Therefore I intend not here to revive that ſubject, but ſhall only a little open the additional term or amplification which is here put upon the hypocrite. *Elihu* doth not ſay barely, *hypocrites heap up wrath*, but, *The hypocrites in heart heap up wrath*; as implying ſome ſpecial Character and brand of hypocriſie upon the perſons here aimed at. *An hypocrite in heart* is no more but this, nor is it any thing leſs than *an hearty hypocrite*; he is one that is not to the halves, but wholly hypocritical; he that is but half with God (ſuch is the hypocrite) is wholly profane, wholly wicked. The ſame word which ſignifyeth an hypocrite ſignifyeth a profane perſon, and ſo we put it in the margin of this Text, *The hypocrite*, or *the profane in heart.* This expreſſion is very parallel with that of the Apoſtle *Paul* (*Col.* 1.21.) *Ye that were ſometimes alienated and enemies in your mind, by wicked works. yet now hath he reconciled.* He doth not only call natural men *enemies* to God, as indeed they all are, (*the wiſdom of the fleſh is enmity againſt God*) But he calls them *enemies in their minds*, that is, ſuch as have a mind to be enemies, or ſuch as have a good will to do evil. So here, *an hypocrite in heart* is a man heartily hypocritical; whoſoever is an hypocrite is an hypocrite in heart; Hypocriſie is that which lieth at the bottom, it is an heart-ſin: though hypocriſie act and vent it ſelf at the tongue, and by the hand, yet all hypocriſie lieth at the heart; nevertheleſs, every hypocrite is not (ſtrictly taken) an *hypocrite in heart.* The hypocrite in heart is oppoſed to the upright in heart, (*Pſal.* 92.11.) The hypocrite in heart hath a heart as full of hypocriſie, as the upright in heart would have hearts full of uprightneſs. Yet further to characterize the hypocrite in heart,

Take theſe three conſiderations to clear it;

Data opera impius eſt.

Firſt, an hypocrite in heart is one who doth evil, not out of miſtake, but out of deſign; not becauſe he cannot do otherwiſe, but becauſe he will not, and is reſolved on it; ſuch a ſinful piece or ſuch a piece of ſinfulneſs is the *hypocrite in heart*; he ſins as he ſhould love and ſerve and obey God, with all his heart.

Secondly, as this hypocrite doth evil upon deſign, ſo alſo he doth good with a wicked mind. It is poſſible for a man to do good unſincerely, or not to be ſincere in the doing of it, and yet not to do it with a wicked mind and purpoſe, or with a baſe deſign. There are many who do good, who come to duty, whether in family or congregation, who mind not what they do, nor have any love to it, or zeal for it; here is hypocritical attendance, in that they ſet not themſelves to meet with God or find God in the duty; yet poſſibly ſuch come not with a wicked purpoſe, nor with a plot in their heads in doing theſe duties, that's proper to the hypocrite in heart. Thus we may underſtand that of *Solomon*, lately opened upon another occaſion, (*Prov.* 21. 27.) *The ſacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord; how much more when he bringeth it with a wicked mind!* A man may be wicked as to his ſtate, yet not do a thing with a wicked mind, not bring a ſacrifice (which includeth all holy ſervices) with an unholy purpoſe: but the hypocrite in heart when-ever he doth any good, hath a plot in it; as he always ſerves God with a reſerve, he hath ſomewhat that he doth with-hold, he cometh by halves, ſo he always ſerves God with a deſign. He may make a fair ſhew, and a great noiſe in profeſſion, but ever he hath ſome end of his own in it. *Jehu* ſaid, *Come ſee my zeal for God.* He was about a good work, the deſtroying of *Ahabs* Houſe, and *Baals* Prieſts, this he called zeal for the Lord; but he did all this with a wicked mind; for the great thing upon his heart was to get into the Throne, to be a King, he made uſe of all thoſe ſpecious acts of zeal only as a ſtirrup to raiſe himſelf into the ſaddle, the matter he aimed at was to eſtabliſh the Kingdom of *Iſrael* to himſelf and his poſterity. That's a ſecond thing; as the hypocrite doth evil purpoſely, ſo when he doth good he hath a purpoſe, a plot in it, more than is good; he doth it not, either for the honour of God, or for the injoyment of God, which are the beſt ends of every good action, and without a pure eye, without which no action, how good ſoever in it ſelf, is good to, or turns to the good of the actor.

Thirdly, The *hypocrite in heart*, I conceive, is ſuch a one as knows himſelf to be an hypocrite. There are many hypocrites, who little think that they are hypocrites, yea, they may think themſelves very upright and honeſt in what they do; ignorant deluded ſouls, underſtand not their own caſe. *Laodicea* was wretched and miſerable, theſe are falſe and hypocritical, but know it not. As ſome judg, or rather miſ-judg themſelves hypocrites, who are upright in the main with God, and honeſt at heart, (How frequent are ſuch complaints, and ſelf-wronging accuſations?) So many are hypocrites, or rotten at heart, who know it not. *The heart is deceitful above all things,* (ſaith the Prophet *Jer.* 17. 9.) *and deſperately wicked, who can know it?* And among all men, common hypocrites know leaſt of their own hearts. But the hypocrites in heart know their hearts are rotten and falſe, to what they profeſs. The politick hypocrite knoweth that all he doth is but in ſhew, and that he doth but act a part in Religion, as a Player upon the Stage, when he is moſt religious; he doth but take a colour, or die, or paint himſelf with Religion, (which is the ſignification of the word here uſed in the Hebrew) but is not religious, he doth but put a fair gloſs, or diſguiſe upon himſelf, that he may appear what he is not, or what he knows himſelf not to be; He knoweth in himſelf that he is naught, while he would be known by and to others as good. The Apoſtle ſpeaking of the grievous ſufferings of ſome primitive Chriſtians, ſaith (*Heb.* 10. 34.) *They took joyfully the ſpoyling of their goods, knowing in themſelves that they have a better and a more induring ſubſtance;* That is, they knew they were in a preſent gracious ſtate, and that there remained for them an eternal happy ſtate. Thus alſo an hypocrite in heart, is one that *knoweth in himſelf,* or in his heart, that he doth but pretend to be good, and that whatſoever good he doth, it is only in pretence, and is therefore (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks of the Heretick, *Tit.* 3. 11.) *condemned of himſelf,* while he acquits or commends himſelf never ſo well to others. Thus it appears how bad, how baſe the hypocrite in heart is in his beſt appearances, and how much he excels and bears away the Bell for baſeneſs and badneſs, I may ſay, for madneſs too, from all common hypocrites. Now as they exceed in ſin, ſo they ſhall in miſery, the next words aſſure us of that; *But the hypocrites in heart*

Induunt pallium pietatis & colorem ſanctitatis; hæc enim eſt proprietas radicis חנף, ſc. *inficere rem alieno colore, vel obnubere & velare alieno pallio.*

Heap up wrath.] *Elihu* having deſcribed the perſons that he dealeth with, or about, he alſo ſets forth both their woful and ſinful condition: And he doth it three ways:

Firſt, By what they do; *They heap up wrath.* For a man to be labouring continually only to make heaps of wrath for himſelf, in what a woful condition is that man!

Secondly, He ſhews their bad, both ſinful and woful condition, by what they will not do; that we have at the latter end of the 13. verſe, *They cry not when he bindeth them.* They heap up wrath, that they do: *They cry not when he bindeth them;* That they do not.

Thirdly, He ſets forth their woful condition by that which is an inevitable conſequent and fruit of ſuch doing, and not doing, the evil which they ſuffer; that we have (*Verſ.* 14.) *They die in youth, and their life is among the unclean.* Theſe are the parts of the woful condition of hypocrites in heart. I ſhall give a touch upon each of them.

First, Conſider what they are doing: If you would know their trade, 'tis this; *They are heaping up wrath;* they add wrath to wrath, till they make a mighty maſs or heap of it. There is a difference among ſome interpreters what wrath is here intended. *They heap up wrath.*

ישימו אף *Ponunt iram.*

Firſt, Some conceive that *Elihu* meaneth their own wrath. Hypocrites in heart heap up wrath, that is, when God doth at any time bind them in fetters, and holdeth them in the cords of affliction, as he ſpake in the former context, theſe hypocrites in heart, what do they? Do they obey? Do they turn from iniquity? Do they amend their hearts or lives? No; *They heap up wrath,* they grow angry, they vex and rage inſtead of repenting; that's all theſe hypocrites do; when the Lord hath bound them in fetters, and holds them in the cords of affliction, they are all in a flame, they are mad with rage and fury. Some both of the Ancients and Moderns, inſiſt upon this opinion, and it is a very great truth, that when the hypocrite in heart is under the hand of God, when God hath him faſt in his fetters, his wrath doth boil, his fury comes up in his face, as it is ſaid (*Ezek.* 38. 18.) concerning the wrath of God towards his enemies: this fully anſwers that aſſertion of *Eliphaz*, (Job 5. 2.) *Wrath killeth the fooliſh man.* What wrath? His own wrath; he kills himſelf with vexing and fretting. The hypocrite in heart is a wrathful man, when things go not right with him. Some have ſo expounded that (*Eph.* 2. 3.) *Ye were by nature children of wrath, even as others. Children of wrath,* that is, *wrathful children;* we are full of wrath, full of anger by nature. Though I do not take that to be the ſenſe of the Apoſtle; but that by *Children of wrath,* he means all men as born under the wrath of God, nor do I conceive this the proper meaning here, though not unuſeful. *They heap up wrath;* That is, they grow angry, vexed, and troubled; But

Aliqui, ponunt iram, intelligunt, excandeſcunt in Deum. Merc.

Secondly, Rather the wrath heaped up, is the wrath of God, which is the moſt dreadful thing in the world; and ſo theſe words may be expounded by thoſe of the Apoſtle to an impenitent ſinner (*Rom.* 2. 4, 5.) *Deſpiſeſt thou the riches of his goodneſs, and forbearance, and long-ſuffering, not knowing that the goodneſs of God leadeth thee to repentance: But after thy hardneſs and impenitent heart treaſureſt up unto thy ſelf wrath againſt the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God. To heap up wrath,* and, *to treaſure up wrath,* are the ſame. The abuſers of the patience and long-ſuffering of God, are treaſuring up wrath againſt themſelves from day to day; and ſo do the hypocrites in heart, *They heap up wrath.*

Hence Note, Firſt, *The wicked or hypocrites in heart, grow more wicked while the hand of God, his afflicting hand, is upon them.*

The more they are under the rod, the more they rebel. I ground it upon this; If they did not heap up ſin, they ſhould not heap up wrath; were they not more vile and wicked under their affliction, there would not be more anger againſt them. It was ſaid of thoſe that would have brought in the captives (which was a very oppreſſing purpoſe, 2 *Chro.* 28. 13.) ye ſhall not; for *Whereas we have offended againſt the Lord already, ye intend to add more to our ſins and to our treſpaſs.* Then preſently followeth, *For our treſpaſs is great, and there is fierce wrath againſt Iſrael.* As if it had been ſaid, If ye do this thing ye will increaſe the wrath of God (which is very fierce already) and blow it up into a conſuming flame. While men grow more and more wicked and vile, God groweth (as to the manifeſtations of wrath) more wrathful. When we hear of the increaſe of wrath, we may be ſure there hath been a proportionable increaſe of ſin. It is ſaid of *Ahaz*, who was a hypocrite in heart, a very prophane perſon, (2 *Chron.* 28. 22.) that *in the time of his diſtreſs he treſpaſſed yet more againſt the Lord*, and treſpaſſing more againſt the Lord, he heaped up more of the Lords wrath againſt himſelf: For 'tis added, (*Verſ.* 23.) *He ſacrificed to the gods of Damaſcus which ſmote him*; he got nothing but blows, for his pains, or impious piety in ſerving them: *And he ſaid, becauſe the gods of the Kings of Syria help them, therefore will I ſacrifice to them, that they may help me.* But what got he by this increaſe of his ſin? Surely nothing, but an increaſe of wrath; for, it followeth in the ſame verſe, *They were the ruin of him and of all Iſrael.* God makes new rods, when men make new ſins; and he multiplyeth ſwords, while men multiply tranſgreſſions. The more men draw iniquity with cords of vanity, the more they draw miſery upon themſelves, and are held the faſter in the cords of affliction.

Secondly, When 'tis ſaid, *The hypocrites in heart heap up wrath.* We know hypocrites are cunning gameſters, they hope to ſin ſo cloſely and artificially, that no hurt ſhall ever come to them by it, yet *The hypocrites in heart heap up wrath.*

Hence Note; *The wiles and policies of hypocrites will avail them nothing*;

They ſhall not avoid wrath, do what they can; the Lord will find them out. The Apoſtle ſaith (*Gal.* 6 7.) *God is not mocked; for whatſoever a man ſoweth, that ſhall he alſo reap; for he that ſoweth to his fleſh, ſhall of the fleſh reap corruption; but he that ſoweth to the Spirit, ſhall of the Spirit reap life everlaſting.* Let hypocrites *in heart* ſow as cunningly as they can, though they ſeem to ſow only good ſeed, yet they ſhall reap bad fruit, becauſe they ſowed with a bad heart. Hypocrites may deceive men, and heap up their favours to themſelves, but they cannot deceive God, who knows their hearts, and will therefore conſume them in his wrath, which they have heaped up to themſelves.

Thirdly, *Elihu* puts it upon hypocrites in heart to be at this work of heaping up wrath. All impenitent ſinners do it, but he puts it upon them eſpecially. All ſinners, open profeſſed ſinners, that ſin and hide it not, that throw up even the very name and profeſſion of Religion, theſe all heap up wrath; yet they heap up moſt, and are here ſpoken of, as the only heapers up of wrath, who are *hypocrites in heart.*

Hence Note; *God is extreamly angry with hypocrites, or the wrath of God doth burn extreamly hot againſt hypocrites*;

He heats the Furnace of his wrath ſeven times hotter for *hypocrites in heart*, than for ordinary ſinners. The Lord (*Iſa.* 10. 5.) ſpeaking of the *Aſſyrian* ſaith, *The ſtaff in their hand is mine indignation: I will ſend him againſt an hypocritical Nation, and againſt the people of my wrath will I give him a charge, to take the ſpoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down, like the mire in the ſtreets.* The Lord put a ſtaff in the hand of that great King of *Aſſyria*, and he called it *his indignation*; it was the *Lords indignation* which was a ſtaff in the *Aſſyrians* hand. But againſt whom will he ſend it? That Text anſwers *againſt an hypocritical Nation*; Who are they? *The people of his wrath.* God hath wrath for all ſinners, but the generation of hypocrites are the people of his wrath beyond all other people. None abuſe God like hypocrites: For, firſt, hypocrites carry it towards God, as if he were like the Idols of the Heathen, that have eyes and ſee not, ears, and hear not, hands, and handle not; feet, and cannot walk: That is, they carry it towards God as if he were but an Idol, ſatisfied with meer outward ſhews and ſervices. An Idol finds no fault, nor troubles any for their hypocriſie and falſeheartedneſs: All that is required in the Idols ſervice, is but outſide and bodily exerciſe. Thus the hypocrites deal with God, as if he alſo would be ſatisfied and taken up with a little outſide ſervice; or as if ſacrifice would pleaſe him, when his word is diſobeyed, (1 *Sam.* 15. 23.) *Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and Sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord?* *Saul* had been very careful to bring home ſacrifices; He had not obeyed the command of God, yet hoped to put him off with a ſacrifice. But what were heards and flocks of cattle to be ſacrificed, when *Saul* rebelled againſt God? Nothing provokes God more then outward ſervices of worſhip, when they are not accompanied with inward, and univerſal ſubmiſſion to his will; for that's *no better* a ſacrifice, no purer worſhip, then a Heathen pays to his Idol-god. Hypocrites offer God only *the blind, and the lame*, (Mal. 1. 14.) that is, maimed and imperfect ſervices: there is imperfection in the ſervices of the beſt, but theirs are imperfect ſervices, ſo imperfect, blind and lame, that they are fit only for *the blind, and the lame*; ſo Idol-gods are called, (2 *Sam.* 5. 8.) And do not they heap the wrath of the true God, who ſerve him no better then falſe gods are ſerved, by their Idolatrous Devotioniſts!

Secondly, There muſt needs be a continual heaping up of wrath by Hypocrites; for, if not to ſet the heart right provokes God to wrath, (*Pſal.* 78. 8.) The Lord was exceedingly diſpleaſed with the *Iſraelites*, becauſe *they ſet not their heart aright.* Now if the Lord be ſo angry when the heart is not ſet aright, much more muſt it provoke the Lord, when men do purpoſely ſet their hearts wrong, when they do evil knowingly, adviſedly, when, as it were, they ſtudy to do evil. To do good only in ſhew, doth more diſpleaſe the Lord, then the doing of that which in ſhew is evil, or which is evil above-board, known to be ſo by all beholders. As Hypocrites often deceive men, ſo they attempt to deceive God himſelf. This cannot but heap up wrath, being it ſelf ſo great a heap of ſin. They who think God will be pleaſ'd with outward Services alone, or have no care to give him inward, are alike diſpleaſing to him. Therefore, among all ſorts of ſinners, the Lord declares his wrath, and thunders wo upon wo, in the Goſpel, againſt Hypocrites: They have heaped up wrath, and it ſhall be heaped upon them, *They ſhall have their Portion in the Lake that burneth with fire and brimſtone.* That's the firſt thing, what they do, *They heap up wrath.* When the hand of God is upon them, they are ſo far from coming forth humbly and penitentially to turn away his wrath, or to ſeek his face, that they provoke him more and more, and dreadfully inflame the reckoning againſt themſelves; *They heap up wrath.*

Secondly, *Elihu* tells us what the *Hypocrite in heart* do not;

They cry not when he bindeth them.

But is it a fault, or ſo great a fault, not to cry when God bindeth us? Are we commanded or bound to cry, when we are bound in fetters, and holden in cords of affliction? wherein lyeth this ſin? That will appear while I ſhew what crying is here intended.

אסר *Vincire pro caſtigare, ſpecies pro genere. Licet hanc doctrinam in communi* Elihu *proponat, veriſimile tamen eſt* Jobum *dicendo pungere.*

To cry, is, Firſt, to complain and make a noiſe; this is the cry of impatience. Secondly, to mourn and be ſorrowful; this is the cry of Repentance. Thirdly, to pray, to ſupplicate, yea, to pray mightily, to pray ſtrongly; and this is the cry of Faith. (*Luke* 18. 7.) *Shall not God avenge his own Elect, which cry day and night unto him?* That is, which pray mightily to him night and day. The hypocrite in heart often makes the firſt cry when God bindeth him, the cry of impatience, but never the two latter; he makes not, either the cry of Repentance, or the cry of Faith in Prayer, when God bindeth him. This lets us ſee the ſecond Part of the wickedneſs of theſe Hypocrites, 'tis the omiſſion of a moſt neceſſary duty, yea of two: They act very ſinfully, for *they heap up wrath*; they act not holily, for they do not cry when God binds them; That is, they neither repent nor pray, or they repent not heartily, they pray not earneſtly, in the day of their affliction.

Hence Note; Firſt, *Hypocrites humble not themſelves, when God humbleth them*;

When he binds them as it were hand and foot, they are tongue-tyed and heart-tyed. The Lord ſaid of ſuch (*Hoſ.* 7.14.) *They cryed not unto me with their heart, when they howled upon their beds; they aſſemble themſelves for Corn and Wine, and rebel againſt me.* They howled and made a noiſe, but (ſaith the Lord) all the while they cryed not to me. There was no Repentance, no Prayer in their cry, they cryed not with their heart. Hypocrites will, firſt, complain much when God binds them; Secondly, they murmure much when God binds them; Thirdly, they will vex themſelves like a Bull in a Net, when God binds them; Fourthly, they will rail and curſe when God binds them: but repent, or pray they do not. (*Iſa.*8.21.) *They ſhall paſs through it hardly beſted and hungry; and it ſhall come to paſs, that when they ſhall be hungry, they ſhall fret themſelves, and curſe their King and their God, and look upward.* Here was blaſpheming, but no crying, no repenting, no praying, no deprecating the hand of God, or the Judgment felt, in an humble and ſpiritual way. Hypocrites cry not to the Lord. though he makes them cry; they are readier to find fault with God, than with themſelves, in the day of adverſity: they neither cry the cry of godly ſorrow for their ſin, nor the cry of godly Prayers, for help out of their affliction. *They who are falſe with God in times of Peace, ſeldom, if at all, repent, or duly apply themſelves to God for help in times of trouble*; the reaſon is, The Conſcience of the *hypocrite in heart*, tells him, he hath dealt baſely with God; and therefore, when he is in ſtreights or bound, what face, what faith, what liberty of ſpirit, can he have to cry to God? Such hypocrites often cry out deſpairingly, but O how rarely are they brought to cry, either believingly or repentingly, when God *bindeth them.*

Anteactæ turpis vitæ memoria animum enervat.

* Secondly, Conſider this cry a little further, as a Prayer-cry. Hypocrites in heart may be much for prayer in time of proſperity, they were not hypocrites elſe; if they did not pray, they were openly prophane, not hypocrites. Chriſt ſpeaking of hypocrites, (*Matth.* 6.) tells us, they pray much, and (*Matth.*7.) they *cry Lord, Lord.* Hypocrites are much in praying, eſpecially in times of proſperity, yet here he ſaith, *They cry not when he bindeth them*, that is, in the day of adverſity.

Hence Obſerve, *That which is not done uprightly, will not be done conſtantly.*

Hypocrites cry to God only in ſhew at beſt, and when 'tis beſt with them; but when they fall into a troubled condition, they cry not, they even lay down their ſhew; they throw up their duties, when they miſs their deſires. They who have prayed often in a time of proſperity, not throwing away their ſins, coming into affliction they throw away their prayers. Prayer will forſake them, who forſake God while they pray. Such as want Faith, will not have a heart to pray in their wants. If holy duties cauſe us not to leave our ſins, ſinning will at laſt cauſe us to throw off our holy Duties. *Will*, or doth, *the hypocrite pray always?* Was *Job*'s denying queſtion, at the 27. Chapter of this Book. They who do not love prayer, cannot hold out in prayer: They who do not find a ſweetneſs in drawing near to God in good Times, will ſoon withdraw from him in evil Times.

Thirdly, *They cry not when he binds them.*

Note; *Hypocrites, when they have moſt need of prayer, are leaſt in the uſe of it.*

When more need of Prayer, than in time of affliction? Yet the hypocrite bound in affliction is bound in ſpirit from ſupplication.

Fourthly, They are ſaid not to cry, though (in ſome ſenſe, as hath been ſhewed) they do cry when God bindeth them.

Hence Note; *That holy Duty, which is not rightly and holily done, is reckoned by God as not done at all.*

What almoſt is more common among hypocrites, Yea, among ſome prophane ones, than to pray, and deſire others to pray for them in time of affliction? *Pharaoh* will needs have *Moſes* pray for him; and when *Ahab* was threatned with a binding he humbled himſelf; yet this goes for nothing, and gets nothing, at moſt, but what *Ahab* got a reprieve from ſome preſent or temporal puniſhment.

Fifthly, Thoſe words are brought in as an aggravation of the ſinfulneſs of the hypocrite; he doth not *cry when God binds him*, he prayeth not when God afflicts him.

Hence Note; *It is an heightning of our ſin to neglect prayer in time of affliction.*

It is a ſin to neglect prayer at any time, but their ſin is exceeding ſinful, who neglect it then, who cry not to God, when God binds them. Is it not extreamly evil, that they ſhould not pray at all, or but little, when they ſhould be all and always in prayer? Affliction doth, as it were, naturally draw us, yea, forcibly drive us to God. *In their affliction they will ſeek me early* (Hoſ. 5.14.) As if the Lord had ſaid, If ever they will ſeek me, ſurely they will ſeek me then, and then they will ſeek me *early*, that is, earneſtly, and with all their hearts. Therefore how unnaturally ſinful are they, who in their affliction will not ſeek God! The Prophet ſaith (*Iſa.* 26.16.) *Lord, in trouble have they viſited thee, they poured out a prayer when thy chaſtening was upon them:* Yet the hypocrite will not pray when chaſtened. How ſinful it is, not to pray when God binds us, appears upon many accounts.

Firſt, To neglect prayer in time of affliction, is very ſinful, becauſe then we have moſt occaſion for it.

Secondly, In time of affliction God eſpecially calls us to prayer; he commands us at all times, but chiefly then. *Is any among you afflicted?* (Is that any mans caſe?) *Let him pray* (Jam. 5. 14.) What ſhould an afflicted man do elſe? What is he ſo much ingag'd to do by his own neceſſity, what ſo much by the will of God, as to pray? Affliction, which takes us off from many other works, ſets us upon and about this.

Thirdly, Prayer in time of affliction is under moſt promiſes to be heard: Now not to pray, not to cry to God, when we have ſo many promiſes to aſſure us of hearing, increaſeth our ſin in the neglect of prayer. Though I do not ſay, the hypocrites prayer is under theſe promiſes of hearing, yet it ſhall be reckoned as a ſin that he hath not prayed in affliction, becauſe there are ſo many promiſes of hearing prayer in affliction. The Lord is very gracious to thoſe that cry in affliction, and the hypocrite hath often heard that he will be ſo; how wretchedly ſinful is he then againſt God, as well as regardleſs of his own good, if God hear not of him, or from him, in his affliction! (*Pſal.*102. 17.) *He will regard the prayer of the deſtitute, and not deſpiſe their prayer*, that is, graciouſly accept and anſwer it. Again (*Pſal.*69.33.) *The Lord heareth the poor, and deſpiſeth not his Priſoners*; That is, any who are bound in affliction: For I ſuppoſe that Text is not to be reſtrained to thoſe only, who are ſhut up in priſons, but takes in all thoſe that are bound in any trouble. In which ſenſe the word is uſed (*Lam.*3.34.) *The Lord doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men, to cruſh under his feet all the Priſoners of the earth:* The Hebrew is, *All the bound of the earth*; by whom, he means, as chiefly the *Jews* gone into Captivity, who were more properly bound, ſo any detained under any calamity whatſoever; to all, or any of them, that Scripture is applyable, *The Lord doth not willingly afflict.* Seeing then there are ſo many promiſes made to thoſe that cry in affliction, this will be urged upon the hypocrite as an heightning of his neglect, that he hath not cryed when God bound him. Thus we ſee the ſecond part of theſe hypocrites miſery, by what they do not, *They cry not when he bindeth them.*

The third thing by which the woful miſery of hypocrites *in heart* is ſet forth, is by what they ſuffer.

Verſ. 14. **They dye in youth, and their life is among the unclean.**

They dye in Youth.] The Hebrew is, *their Soul dyeth.* The Soul, ſtrictly taken, is immortal, and dyeth not; yet 'tis often ſaid in Scripture, *the Soul dyeth*; the Soul being taken, either, Firſt, for the Life; Or, Secondly, for the Perſon. To ſay, *their Soul dyeth in youth*, is no more than to ſay (as we tranſlate) *they dye in youth.* The word rendred *Youth*, ſignifies in the Root of it, *to ſhake* and *trouble*, or to make ſome great concuſſion; hence ſome render the Text, *They die in a Tempeſt, or in a Storm.*

One

בנער *In tempeſtate:* Vulg. *In excuſſione* Rab. Sal. *q. d. Excuſſione & vi afflictionum in quibus ſunt peribunt.*

One of the *Jewiſh* Doctors gives it thus, *They ſhall die with a ſtroak or ſhaking*; that is, they ſhall periſh by the force and violence of that affliction, which hath arreſted and taken hold of them.

But I conceive our reading is clear, *They die in Youth*, becauſe Youth is the moſt ſtirring time of our life, or that time of life, wherein we uſe the moſt violent motions without, and are ſubject to the moſt violent paſſions within; therefore the Hebrew expreſſeth both by one word. Now when we ſay, *They die in Youth*, the meaning is, they die in the prime, in the beſt, in the moſt flouriſhing time of their life, in the ſpring of their days.

But is it true, that all hypocrites in heart die in youth? Do not many, who diſcover themſelves to be but hypocrites, die in old age?

I anſwer, Such-like Scriptures do not intend an univerſality, as to every individual; but only ſhew that 'tis ſo for the moſt part, or often ſo. Hypocrites in heart, men of prophane ſpirits, uſually die in their youth, and are cut off in the Flower of their Age. They who multiply their ſins, ſubtract from their days; and they have leaſt ground of hope to live long, who live ill. As bloody, ſo *deceitful men* (ſuch are hypocrites in heart) *ſhall not live out half their days.* They who live not out half their days, die in youth. That alſo is the meaning of *Eliphaz* (*Chap.* 15. 32.) where he ſaith, The wicked man ſhall have his recompence *before his time*; as alſo when he ſaith (*Chap.* 22. 16.) *They were cut down out of time*; that is, before the ordinary time of cutting man down by Death was come. And therefore, I anſwer,

Secondly, *they die in youth*, needs not be taken in that ſtrictneſs, as importing that they die before they come to mens eſtate, but only that they die before the common time of dying. To die in youth ſignifieth any immature death; or when death cometh ſuddainly upon any, they may be ſaid to die in youth. Thus here; *they die in youth*, that is, ſome immature or ſuddain death overtakes them, they come to an haſty or untimely end, they prolong not their days on earth.

Thirdly, this dying in youth may refer to the hypocrites unpreparedneſs or unfitneſs to die. Unprepared perſons may be ſaid to die in youth, becauſe youths or younger men are uſually unprepared to die. Hence that ſerious *Memento* or warning given them (*Eccleſ.* 12. 1.) *Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth.* Young men are commonly ſo unprepared to die, that whoſoever die unprepared, may be ſaid to die in youth; Yea, though they die in old age, *they die infants.* I may ſay at leaſt in alluſion to that of the Prophet (poſſibly it may be a proof of what I ſay (*Iſa.* 65.20.) *An old man that hath not filled his days* (by being good and doing good) *dieth a Child.* As a *Child may be ſaid to die an hundred years old*, when he dies full of grace, ſo a man of an hundred years old, may be ſaid to die a child, an infant, when he hath no grace; for though he hath been long in the world, yet he can hardly be ſaid to have lived at all. So then, how long ſoever the hypocrite in heart hath had a being on the earth, and a breathing in the air, he always dieth in youth, or before his time, becauſe he hath not yet learned the way to eternal life.

Moritur cum Juventa. Jun. *Ponitur* ב *pro* עם *ut* Cap. 9. 26. Pſal. 143. 7. Piſc. *Æque morientur & pari judicio Dei conterentur atque juveniles illi animi qui proterve obnituntur Deo, & palam ad omne flagitium projecti ſunt* Jun.

There is yet another reading of the words; we ſay, *they die in youth*, that ſaith, *they die with youth*, or *young men*; that is, as diſſolute, deboiſt, vitious and riotous young men die, ſo hypocrites die. The hypocrite is oppoſed to the outwardly profane in his life, but he ſhall be like him in his death: As if *Elihu* had ſaid, look as vain voluptuous youths, carnal youths, or young men, who give themſelves up to their pleaſures, look as or how they die, look what wrath is upon them when they die, even ſo ſhall *the hypocrites in heart die, they die with the youth.* I ſhall touch this further upon the laſt clauſe, where *Elihu* gives us this ſenſe in other words, and in words that more full[illegible]each this ſenſe; for having ſaid, *they die in* (*or with*) *youth*, he thus concludes,

And their life is among the unclean.

Here it may be Queried; foraſmuch as he ſaid before, they *die in youth*, how doth he here ſay, *Their life is among the unclean?* What life have they when dead? I anſwer, By *their life*, we may underſtand that life which *hypocrites in heart* ſhall have after death; which may be taken two ways. Firſt, for the life of the Soul, while the body remains a conſuming or conſumed carkaſs in the grave, that life (after death) the life of their Souls is among the unclean. Secondly, for the life which they ſhall have after the reſurrection of their bodies, that will be among the unclean too. Some tranſlate the words thus, *Their life is taken away among the unclean*; we ſay, *their life is among the unclean.* The word (*is*) is not in the original Text, and we may make the ſupply by a word ſignifying *to take away*; Their life, is taken away among the unclean, that is, they ſhall die like the worſt of ſinners, they ſhall make no better an end, than the unclean and profane, no better than the moſt foul and filthy Sodomites, as the original imports. For

Ut hic vita mori dicitur, ſic Authores Latini dicunt vita vivere & vitam vivere; vita moritur, cum homo vitam cum morte commutat. Druſ. *Vita eorum* (*ſuppleo*) *aufertur.* Piſc. Cum meritoriis. Piſc. *Latini vocant cinædos & pathicos qui in concubitu libidinoſo vice mulieris funguntur.* Id.

The word which we render *unclean*, hath a double, yea, a contrary ſignification, holy and unholy, clean and unclean. *They who are holy only in name, are moſt unholy in heart and life.* The Scripture often by the ſame word expreſſeth things of utmoſt oppoſition; ſo here he calleth thoſe who are moſt unholy, by a word which ſignifieth holineſs; the Hebrew ſaith, *their life is among the Sodomites.* Mr. *Broughton* Tranſlates, *and their life with fornicators.* Sodomites, who are the moſt unclean and filthy ſinners, worſe then fornicators, are expreſſed by a word, by this word which alſo ſignifieth *holy*, or *holy ones* (*Deut.* 23. 17.) *There ſhall not be a Sodomite*, or, *an holy one among you*; and therefore as we read of Sodomites in the land, who are ſinners againſt the law of nature, (1 *Kings* 14. 24.) ſo according to that law of *Moſes*, we Read, 1 *Kings* 15. 12. and *Chapter* 22. 46. as alſo 2 *Kings* 23. 7. of the deſtroying of the houſes of the Sodomites, and of the removing of Sodomites out of the land. Sodomites being the moſt abominable of all unclean ones, how unclean are they whoſe life is among them, or whoſe life is taken away with them! The Spirit of God doth rightly compare hypocrites to Sodomites and filthy perſons, becauſe it proceeds from the heat of ſome baſe luſt or other that any are hypocrites. 'Tis proper to thoſe who are magnanimous, or of noble ſpirits, to be open, clear-hearted and ingenuous.

בקודשום *Duo contraria ſignificat ſanctum & profanum pollutum, ſcortatorem. Recte ſimulatores effœminatis comparat, quia ex pravitate animi contingit quod homines ſint ſimulatores; eſt enim proprium magnanimi eſſe manifeſtum.* Aquin.

Their life is with the unclean.] Hypocrites have a great affectation to be numbered among the clean and holy, and poſſibly they have been, or may be, high in the opinion of men, for holineſs, for very Saints; *But their life ſhall be among the Sodomites*, or the unclean. It being a ſhame to expreſs the abomination of that ſort of ſinners by a word proper to them, the Scripture (by an Euphemiſm) calls them *holy*; we Tranſlate the Scripture ſenſe, and call them *unholy or unclean*; *Their life is among the unclean, among Sodomites.* Thus as the death of the hypocrite here is fully expreſſed in the former words, *He ſhall die with the youth*, that is, like thoſe ſinful Sodomitiſh youths, like thoſe youths who live in the heat of abominable luſts, though he ſeemed to have an heat of holineſs; ſo their life hereafter is fully expreſſed in theſe latter words, *Their life is with the unclean.* This clearly ſets forth hypocrites, they are ſpiritual adulterers, they pretend love to Chriſt as their husband, but their hearts go a whoring after the world. And therefore as their life was really in this world, though they pretended otherwiſe, ſo it ſhall be viſible in the world to come, *among the unclean.*

Hence Note; Firſt, *They who are like the unclean in this life, ſhall be wrapped up with them in the next life after death, or in the ſecond death.*

They who live like the wicked ſhall die like the wicked, and live with them, if theirs may be called a life, for evermore. The hypocrite, with all his varniſh and fair colours, ſhall not die like a godly man, nor live with him after death; though he hath lived the life of a godly man, as to appearance, yet he ſhall not die ſo, nor live ſo when the dead riſe: he ſhall die and live like and among his own company, the unclean. He was ſecretly unclean in his life, and he ſhall openly live among the unclean, when he dies. *Balaam* a Sorcerer, a witch, a falſe-Prophet, how did he beg, *that he might die the death of the righteous, and that his laſt end*

end might be like his! (*Numb.*23.14.) The hypocrite would fain die like thoſe whom he hath imitated and made a ſhew of all the days of his life; but did *Balaam* die like the righteous? No, he died, as he lived, like one that had loved the wages of unrighteouſneſs. Though hypocrites have lived in reputation with godly and good men, yea, have been reputed godly and good men, yet when they die they ſhall go down among the unclean, even among the debauched and filthy Sodomites, they ſhall go to their own place and to their own company. It is ſaid of *Judas* when he hanged himſelf (*Acts* 1.25.) *He went to his own place*, his proper place. All things naturally tend to that which is congenial or like to them; heavy things downward, light things upward. What place is congenial to, what place is the center of wicked men? Surely Hell, the bottomleſs pit is their own place, and that's the meaning of the Text there. *Judas* was a great while among the Apoſtles in an high place, in a very excellent place, he went like an Apoſtle, or for an Apoſtle; but that was not his *own place*; he was an hypocrite, and when he died then he went to his own place, to that place which was proper to him. In this life good and bad are mingled together in the ſame place; the hypocrites and the ſincere may be in one Houſe, in one Congregation, in one Church, in the pureſt Church on Earth there may be hypocrites in heart as well as ſincere; but when hypocrites die they ſhall be divided from all thoſe with whom they were never truly, or in heart, united. If it were poſſible, all the godly or ſincere ſhould be in one place as to ſpirituals here (that's moſt comely and deſirable, though not attainable) yet we cannot make the ſeparation perfect in this life; but at death it will be done perfectly; death will not leave one hypocrite among the ſincere, not a weed among the herbs, nor a chaff in the floor; death will make perfect ſeparation; after death all the holy ſhall be gathered together into one ſociety, and all the unholy into another ſociety by themſelves. It is ſaid of *Abraham he was gathered to his people* (*Gen.*25.8.) Not only to his kindred, in the fleſh, but to all thoſe that were of his faith. Death will gather all to their proper place and company. Godly *Joſiah* was gathered to his fathers (2*Chron.*34.28.) and the wicked are ſaid (*Pſ.*49.19.) *to go to the generations of their fathers, where they ſhall never ſee light*. Death will ſend every one to his own. The hypocrite ſhall no more ſhuffle himſelf among the righteous, nor Satan himſelf, nor any of his Sons, among the Sons of God; every man ſhall be for ever among his like.

Further Note, *The ſmootheſt-faced and cloſeſt hypocrite in the World ſhall fare as bad and no better then the fouleſt and deboyſteſt ſinner.*

They ſhall die with the vile, and be taken away among the unclean. The faireſt hypocrite, ſhall have no more eſteem with God, then the fouleſt *Sodomite* that ever was in the World. Chriſt ſaith, if any refuſe to receive the Goſpel, it ſhall be worſe with them then with *Sodom*, the cry of whoſe ſins went up to Heaven; nor ſhall it be any whit better, but rather worſe, with them who receive the Goſpel of Chriſt only in ſhew, their hearts not being right with him. How woful is their preſent condition, who daily heap up wrath, who (in the ſenſe opened) die in or with youth, and whoſe life (after death) is among the unclean!

VERS. 15, 16, 17.

He delivereth the poor in his affliction, and openeth their ear in oppreſſion.

Even ſo would he have removed thee out of the ſtrait into a broad place, where there is no ſtraitneſs, and that which ſhould be ſet on thy Table, ſhould be full of fatneſs.

But thou haſt fulfilled the Judgment of the wicked: Judgment and Juſtice take hold on thee.

Elihu having ſhewed how terrible God will be, how dreadfully he will deal with ſubtile hypocrites; *The hypocrites in heart heap up wrath*; proceeds in this context to do two things.

Firſt, That he might raiſe ſome hope in *Job*, if he did at laſt humble himſelf, he repeats the gracious dealings of God with humble and upright-hearted ones at verſe 15. I ſay he repeats it, becauſe he had ſpoken of it before (*verſ.*6,7.) and this is a very uſeful and profitable repetition, by which *Job* is doubly admoniſhed to raiſe himſelf from his deſpair of a better condition; foraſmuch as God doth not afflict with a purpoſe to deſtroy, but that he may heal and help the afflicted. The greateſt deſign of God in chaſtening us ſhould be always remembred, that he intends only our good, eſpecially to make us thereby better or more partakers of his holineſs.

Secondly, He makes application of the whole doctrine to *Job*; and that two ways; Firſt, by way of conſolation, aſſuring him he had been delivered in caſe he had humbled himſelf duly and deeply before the Lord (*verſ.*16.) *Even ſo would he have removed thee out of the ſtrait into a large place*, &c. Secondly, he applies it by way of conviction, that as yet ſurely he was unhumbled, becauſe ſtill under the afflicting hand of God, *verſ.*17. *But thou haſt fulfilled the Judgment of the wicked, Judgment and Juſtice take hold on thee.* So much concerning the ſtate of theſe three verſes in general; I ſhall now go on to open them in order.

Verſe 15. **He delivereth the poor in his affliction, or he pulls the poor out of affliction.**

That is the ſenſe of the word, and the work of God. We find the word uſed to ſignifie the pulling or drawing off of the ſhoo, (*Deut.*25.19.) As the ſhoo is tied or buckled to the foot, and muſt be looſed before it can with any eaſe be drawn off; ſo afflictions are tied to us, till the Lord unlooſeth and draweth them off from us, or us from them. To draw out of trouble, or to draw us out of trouble, is deliverance. *David* expreſſeth himſelf by that word (*Pſ.*6.4.) *Return, O Lord, deliver* (or draw) *my Soul* (that is *me*) out of the enemies hand, or out of the trouble which compaſſeth me about and is ready, like deep waters, to ſwallow me up. *He delivereth*

חלץ *Traxit, extraxit, detraxit, extraxit ex ærumna, miſeria, periculo.* Chalatz *and* Lachatz *two contraries,* ſave *and* undo, *are ſweetly uſed by* Elihu *in this verſe.* Brough.

The poor in his affliction.] Who are meant by the poor, hath been ſhewed before, I ſhall not ſtay upon it here, only conſider, there are poor as to their outward ſtate, and poor as to their inward ſtate, that is, firſt, *poor in Spirit*, which is a bleſſed poverty; and ſecondly, *poor in Spirituals*, which is a miſerable poverty. The two former ſorts of poor eſpecially, when joined in one, are here intended; *He delivereth the poor*

In his affliction, or, *in his poverty*.] There is a great elegancy in the Hebrew Text; 'tis a word of the ſame root which ſignifieth the poor who are delivered, and the affliction in which or out of which he or they are delivered. We may tranſlate the Text thus; *he delivereth the poor in his poverty*; that is, when he is in his poverty or affliction, the Lord delivereth him out of his poverty, or affliction; if poverty be his affliction, or whatſoever affliction comes under the name of poverty, the Lord delivereth him out of it. I have upon other paſſages of this Book ſpoken of this deliverance, yet ſhall touch it here again, becauſe we ought always to remember it; we are often in affliction, often in trouble, and therefore we have need often to be put in mind, and continually to bear in mind, that God is a deliverer, the deliverer of his people from, or out of afflictions; *He delivereth the poor in his affliction.*

עני בעניו *Eſt vox conjugata, pauperum à paupertate, miſerum à miſeria.* Pined. *Hic* ב *redditur per* בו *de, ex.*

Hence Note, *Deliverance is the work of God.*

As the poor cannot deliver themſelves in affliction, ſo neither can the rich deliver the poor by his riches, nor the ſtrong by his power, nor the wiſe man by his wiſdom, craft or policy. The Lord often uſeth the help of man. Creature help, in delivering the poor out of afflictions; yet the whole effect is here, and every where in Scripture attributed to God, *He delivereth the poor.* Deliverance of any ſort is of God, yet more eſpecially ſome ſorts of deliverances are; as *Nebuchadnezzar* confeſſed (*Dan.* 3.29.) who, when thoſe three Worthies were delivered out of the fiery furnace, *made a decree, that every People, Nation and Language which ſpake any thing amiſs, againſt the God of* Shadrach, Meſhach *and* Abednego, *ſhould be cut in pieces*, &c. and he did it upon this ground, *becauſe* (ſaith he) *there is no other God that can deliver after this ſort.* He had an opinion that his god could deliver, but he appropriated the glory of that deliverance to their God; there is no god can deliver *after this ſort*; no god but the God of *Shadrach*, *Meſhach* and *Abednego* can check and ſtop the rage of fire, and bring out thoſe unburnt, who are caſt into the burning. That's the firſt thing, *Deliverance is of the Lord.*

Secondly, Note, *The loweſt and meaneſt are the objects of deliverance.*

When it's worſt with us, then uſually God cometh in. *He will be ſeen in the Mount*, and provide at a pinch; he loves to do for us when we can do nothing for our ſelves. Take the poor in any notion, but eſpecially for ſuch as being deſtitute of all help and means of deliverance, are alſo poor in Spirit, not truſting to any help or humane arm, theſe, theſe are the perſons whom the Lord delights to deliver; and therefore God is ſo often ſpoken of in Scripture, as eſpouſing the cauſe and quarrel of the *Widow* and the *Fatherleſs.*

Thirdly, From the manner of expreſſion, *He delivereth the poor in affliction,*

Note, *They who are not delivered from affliction, may yet be delivered in affliction.*

God doth not always deliver his people from affliction (either ther not ſuffering affliction to fall upon them, or preſently bringing them out of affliction) *but he is engaged* (by promiſe) *to deliver them in affliction*; and this he doth ſometimes by checking the affliction, that it ſhall not hurt them; ſometimes by enabling them to bear, yea, to conquer the affliction, how much ſoever it hurts them. He delivered thoſe in the third of *Daniel,* in the fiery furnace, by checking the fire that it ſhould not hurt them; and *Daniel* in the Lions den, by checking the hungry Lions that they did not devour him. He delivered *Job*, and *David*, and *Jeremie*, and the Apoſtles, and all the Martyrs, who loved not their lives to the death for the teſtimony of Jeſus, by cauſing them to glory in, and triumph over all their tribulations. *He delivereth the poor in his affliction,*

And openeth their ears in oppreſſion.] What's meant by *opening the ear*, was ſhewed at the 10. *verſe* of this *Chapter*, and at the 16. *verſe* of the thirty third; yet conſider ſomewhat in the words anew.

And openeth their ear.] The Hebrew copulative particle, which we render, *and*, is often in that language uſed to denote a ſeaſon, or ſpecial time, and then it is rendred by *when*; thus here he delivereth the poor in affliction, *when he hath opened their ears, by or in oppreſſion.* Thus alſo (*Pſ.*139.16.) *Thine eyes did ſee my ſubſtance, yet being imperfect, and in thy Book all my members were written, which in continuance were faſhioned, when as yet there was none of them.* The Hebrew is, *and not one in them*; as if he had ſaid, God had a full Idea or platform of *David*'s Body before it was framed; ſo here, *he delivereth the poor in affliction, and openeth; or when he hath opened their ears in oppreſſion*; that is, taught them effectually to make a good uſe of their afflictions. We may alſo render it, *after*; ſo the copulative (*Vau*) is expounded (*Lev.*17.15. *Jer.*10.13.) Thus here; *He delivereth the poor in affliction after he hath opened their ears*; that is, after he hath made them underſtand that ſin hath cauſed their ſufferings, and hath alſo made them obedient and ready to receive counſel from him, as that phraſe of *opening the ear* hath been opened. *He openeth,* or *when* or *after he hath opened their ears*

Faciet eum intelligere quod pro peccatis punitur. Aquin.

In oppreſſion, or by oppreſſion,] The word notes extream oppreſſion; we read it (*Numb.*22.25.) in the ſtory of *Balaam*, where 'tis ſaid, his Aſs cruſhed (or preſſed, or oppreſſed) his foot againſt the wall, while he was going to curſe the people of *Iſrael*, that ſo *Balack* might oppreſs them. This word is uſed alſo *Judg.*4.3. 1*Sam.*10.18. and by it *Eliſha* ſhewed how he would have *Jehoram*'s meſſenger handled (2*Kings* 6.32.) Oppreſſion takes faſt hold. The Lord takes faſt hold of ſinners by oppreſſion, and will not let them go till he hath opened their ears; but as ſoon as he hath opened their ears in or by their oppreſſions, then (out of hand) he delivereth them in, if not out of their afflictions. From the connection of this with the former part of the *verſe*,

בלחצ *à radice* לחצ *Coarctavit, preſſit, compreſſit, vim intulit Præpoſitio in ſæpe valet,* per.

Obſerve, *The evil of oppreſſion or trouble is preparatory to, or a uſual means to fit us for our receiving of good.*

He delivereth them in affliction, when he hath opened their ears in or by oppreſſion. When once the Soul by hearing the cry of the oppreſſor is made obedient to the call of God, then God comes and works deliverance. Good men, while free from evil, are oftentimes like the wild Aſs deſcribed in the 39. Chapter of this Book, ſuch as will not hear nor regard the crying of the driver, though he be not an exactor, (as the word there ſignifies and we put in the Margin) but a fair and gentle driver. Few hear when ſpoken to, till they feel as well as hear; and therefore the Lord firſt ſends them into trouble, that they may hear, and having by that means opened their ears to hear, he brings them out of trouble. *When we are truly humbled by affliction, we are near deliverance from affliction.* The plaiſter muſt be kept on till the wound be healed. The Lord will not leave off ſcourging or correcting his people till he hath brought them to ſuch a poſture, that they are fit for mercy. The Lord helps and heals thoſe who ſubmit; and if they whom he hath bound with the cords of affliction, call humbly for releaſe and relief, he will not forſake them, but reſtore them in due time to their former felicity; *He delivereth the poor in affliction, when he hath opened their ears in or by oppreſſion.*

Elihu having laid down this general Doctrine, makes Application of it in the two verſes following.

Verſe 16. **Even ſo would he have removed thee out of the ſtrait into a broad place.**

Thus *Elihu* proceeds from the general *Theſis* or aſſertion of Gods deliverance, to the *Hypotheſis*, accommodating the Doctrine to *Job*'s Caſe and Perſon, *Even ſo he would have removed thee*, &c.

This verſe 16. contains the firſt part of the Application made to *Job*, where *Elihu* informs him what the iſſue would undoubtedly have been, if he had ſubmitted (which he did not) as he ought, to the afflicting hand of God, and hath not (which he did and ought not) filled his mouth and the ear of God with bitter complaints, nor ſtood ſo ſtiffly upon his own defence and vindication. This *Elihu* doth by a double alluſion.

Firſt, To the bringing of a man out of cloſe priſon into a ſtate of freedom, or into an open air. This he gives us in the part of the verſe, *Even ſo would he have removed thee out of the ſtrait into a broad place.*

Secondly, He doth it by alluding to the furniſhing of a mans Table with ſtore, not only of wholeſome but of delicious meats, who before fared very hardly. This he doth in the cloſe of the verſe, *And that which ſhould be ſet on thy Table, ſhould be full of fatneſs.* As if he had ſaid, *if thou had'ſt hearkned to the voice of God, thou ſhould'ſt have had both liberty, and plenty, had'ſt thou been bettered by thy troubles, it had been better for thee, and much better with thee; thou hadſt been enlarged fully, thou hadſt been ſupplied abundantly with all manner of good things deſirable, even to the utmoſt of thy deſire:* That's the general ſcope of this verſe; more particularly.

Even ſo would he have removed thee out of a ſtrait into a broad place.

Some read the verſe with a retro-reſpect, or as looking back to the time paſt; as if *Elihu* had bid *Job* remember his former experiences, whether God heretofore dealt not bountifully with him. To this ſenſe (beſides others) Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates, *which hath turned thee from diſtreſſes mouth, to largeneſs, where there is no ſtraitneſs, and that which was laid upon thy Table was full of fatneſs:* And he gives the gloſs upon his own tranſlation thus; *God once made the wealthy, and would again*; thou haſt had experience how good a Maſter, and how liberal the Lord is to thoſe that ſerve him, thou thy ſelf didſt enjoy proſperity a long time far from all trouble, or touch of affliction. Thus (I ſay) ſome refer the words to the time paſt; but I rather keep to our own tranſlation, which expreſſes the Original Text, as an aſſurance of what *Job* ſhould have had, and might have expected in time, had he complied as he ought, with the purpoſe of God in his afflictions.

Sic etiam averterat te ab ore anguſtiæ in latitudinem, cui non ſuberat preſſura & ferculum menſæ tuæ plenum erat pinguedine. Jun.

Even ſo would he have removed thee out of a ſtrait into a broad place. As if he had ſaid, *God who uſeth and loveth to deliver the poor out of affliction, which alſo have delivered thee out of thy affliction had'ſt thou been humbled under thy affliction, had'ſt thou fallen down before him, hadſt thou ſubmitted the matter to him, and not diſputed it with him as thou haſt done, hadſt thou confeſſed his Juſtice, and not accuſed it or complained*

הסא *Eſt proprie incitare, ferre ad malum, à radice* סות

complained about it, even ſo would he have removed thee, &c. The word which we tranſlate *to remove*, ſignifieth alſo,

Ex eadem radice variæ lectiones & interpretationes pullularant Pined.

To move or to perſwade; becauſe he that perſwades another, moveth or removeth him from his opinion or intendment, or from what his practice was before, and brings him to be or do ſomewhat that he did not, or was not, before. To be perſwaded is to be inwardly moved, to be moved in mind: And therefore they who perſwade or entice others to evil, are ſaid to turn them from the Lord, and to thruſt them out of the way which the Lord commandeth them to walk in (*Deut.* 13. 5.) To perſwade in any degree, is to move (*Joſh.* 15. 18.) and ſome perſwade ſo ſtrongly, that they make in others great removes.

Further, It ſignifies to deceive, as will appear if you compare Text and Margin; 2 *Kings* 18. 32. and thoſe Texts, 2 *Chron.* 32. 11, 15. all concerning one matter. He that is deceived, is uſually deceived by perſwaſion, and is drawn away by ſome enticements.

Now, becauſe he that perſwadeth or deceiveth another, endeavoureth to turn or remove him from what he holdeth or intendeth, to the contrary, therefore (as we render) this word ſignifies alſo *to remove*, to bring from one place to another, or from one ſtate to another. *He would have removed, or tranſlated thee*

Out of a ſtreight into a broad place.

צר *Anguſtia & adverſarius. Hinc* Septuaginta *reddunt*,

Gehenna eſt ampla ad recipiendum, & anguſta ad emittendum. De puteo peccati & pravæ conſuetudinis cujus ingreſſus facilis, exitus præ anguſtus Gregor.

Os anguſtiæ eſt ingens calamitas, abyſſus malorum, in quam demerſus homo, neque ſubſiſtere, neque emergere poteſt.

Here are two ſorts of places, a ſtreight, and a broad place: What a ſtreight place, properly taken, is, all know. The Hebrew is, *He would have removed thee out of the mouth of the ſtreight.* The *Septuagint* render, *He would have removed thee out of the mouth of the enemy.* An enemy puts us to ſtreights; and therefore the ſame word ſignifies a ſtreight and an enemy: *He would have removed thee out of a ſtreight place*; the hand of an enemy is ſo. But more generally, by the *ſtreight place*, we are to underſtand any kind of tribulation or trouble whatſoever. Troubles of any ſort are juſtly called ſtreights, for they incloſe and impriſon us, they abridge us of our liberty, they tie us ſhort up, where we can ſcarce ſtir or breath. A man in trouble, is a man in ſtreights. Some expound theſe words allegorically, taking the *mouth of the ſtreight* for Hells mouth; they that deſcend thither, are indeed in everlaſting ſtreights; for, though *Tophet be deep and large*, as the Prophet ſpeaks (*Iſa.* 30. 33.) yet all that are there, are in ſtreights. Hell is large to take in, but ſtreight to let out, ſo ſtreight, that it will not let one out for ever. Others expound it tropologically, or with reſpect to manners; *He would have delivered thee out of the mouth of the ſtreight*, that is, from the power of thy ſins and corruptions, for they indeed are ſtreights; and though we eaſily fall into them, yet we hardly get out, or free of them again. But we need not take up, either Allegories, or Tropologies; the words are plain. That which *Elihu* here intends by *ſtreights*, is great trouble, deep miſery, into which a man being caſt, knows neither how to ſubſiſt, nor how to eſcape: Yet out of that *ſtreight place* he promiſeth deliverance; *He would have removed thee out of a ſtreight*

Into a broad place.] That is, to liberty and proſperity, which are in Scripture compared to a broad place, where a man hath room enough. *Thou haſt known my Soul in adverſity* (ſaith *David*, Pſal. 31. 7, 8.) *and haſt not ſhut me up in the hand of the enemy; thou haſt ſet my feet in a large Room*, that is, in a proſperous condition. Thus *Elihu* here promiſeth on Gods behalf, *He would have removed thee out of a ſtreight, into a large place*,

Spatium latum eſt, uno latiſſimum, ubi nulla anguſtia eſt.

Where no ſtreightneſs is.] That's a broad place indeed. *No ſtreightneſs* implyeth greateſt enlargement, or enlargement to the uttermoſt, not only of need, but deſire. *A broad place, where there is no ſtreightneſs*, is full liberty, or full of liberty. A man may be in a very good, in a very free condition, and yet have ſome ſtreights. To be in ſo good a condition, as to have no ſtreights at all, is the top and perfection of freedom. And ſurely, The full attainment of ſuch an enlargedneſs, is the reward of the next life, not the enjoyment of this life. The way of the wicked, in this life, is moſt ſtreightly broad; the way of the righteous, in this life, is broadly ſtreight, and endeth in a broadneſs of everlaſting bleſſedneſs. God at laſt will *remove all his out of a ſtreight, into a broad place, where there is no ſtreightneſs.* Hence,

Via impiorum eſt lata anguſtiſſima; via juſtorum eſt anguſta latiſſimo, & deſinit in latitudinem jucundiſſimam.

Firſt, See, the Author of our deliverance is again here remembred, *He would have removed* &c. As before, *he delivereth the poor in afflictions*, ſo here again, *He would have removed thee out of a ſtreight, into a broad place.* As all our mercies are of the Lord, ſo let us acknowledg him in all.

Secondly, From the Alluſion,

Note, *Troubles are ſtreights*,

He is in a ſtreight, that knows not what to do; thus 'tis often with us in our troubles. It was ſo with good *Jehoſhaphat* (2 Chron. 20. 12.) when a mighty Enemy came up againſt him, *Lord* (ſaid he) *we know not what to do, but our eyes are towards thee*; he was in a ſtreight, what to do here on Earth, but he had a broad place to look to, even to Heaven, to the Lord of Heaven and Earth, *our eyes are towards thee.* As if he had ſaid, *Lord we are in a ſtreight, but thou art never in ſtreights; Lord counſel us what to do, Lord help us to do it.* The afflicted, many a time, *know not what to do*, and many times, they cannot do what they know; they know this thing would do them good, but they cannot do it, they know that might be helpful to them, but they cannot reach it.

He is in a ſtreight that doubts what good to chuſe, much more is he in a ſtreight who ſeeth that what-ever he chuſeth, he muſt chuſe ſome evil. *Paul* was in the former ſtreight, and *David* in the latter; *Paul* was in a ſtreight, it was a trouble to him, being doubtful, which good to chuſe, (*Phil.* 1. 23.) *I am in a ſtreight betwixt two*; betwixt what two? Betwixt two very good things, namely, living here in doing good, and going to Heaven to receive his reward; he was in a ſtreight whether to live here to do more work, or to go to Heaven to receive the reward of his work. 'Tis ſome trouble, but a bleſſed trouble, when we are in a doubt which good to chuſe. But they are in very great trouble, who are in ſuch a ſtreight, that whatſoever they chuſe, they muſt chuſe evil: That was *David*'s ſtreight, (2 *Sam.* 24. 14.) the Lord gave him a choice, and a very ſad one, of three evils, either of famine, or of peſtilence, or of flying and falling before his Enemies; hereupon *David* ſaid, *I am in a great ſtreight*; ſomewhat he muſt chuſe, and what-ever he choſe, it was evil, that is, penal evil; but ſeeing it was ſo, and could not be otherwiſe, (*e malis* [illegible]*nimum*) he would chuſe the leaſt, he choſe to fall into the hand of God, rather than into the hands of men. Into ſuch kind of ſtreights are the people of God ſometimes caſt, they have ſomewhat before them to chuſe, but what-ever they chuſe it is very hard, and troubleſome; troubleſome to ſtay, and troubleſome to go, troubleſome to abide by it, and troubleſome to flie from it, every way it is a trouble; and how many of the precious people of God have been brought into theſe troubles! Only this is their comfort as well as their duty, that though they may be in ſuch ſtreights as neceſſitate them to chuſe a leſs good, or a penal evil, yet as God will not, ſo man cannot bring them into any ſuch ſtreights as neceſſitate them to chuſe a moral or ſinful evil. Troubles are ſtreights. *He would have removed thee out of a ſtreight into a broad place.*

Hence Note, Thirdly, *What-ever ſtreights we are in, God is able to inlarge us.*

The hand of the Lord is not ſhortned that it cannot ſave? (Iſa. 59. 1.) There is no ſtreight ſo ſtrict, but the Lord can open it, and remove us out of it, or it from us. When the Children of *Iſrael* were in that great ſtreight, having the Sea before them, and *Pharaoh* with his Hoſt behind them, the Lord removed them out of that ſtreight, and brought them into a large place. There are a Thouſand inſtances and experiences of this. *David* ſaith, (*Pſal.* 130. 1.) *Out of the depths have I cryed unto thee O Lord:* The depth there, and ſtreight here, are the ſame under ſeveral Alluſions. *David* cryed out of the depth of miſery: When he was at the bottom of the pit, he cryed unto God, and was delivered. We can be in no depth, but the power and mercy of God can reach a hand to us, and draw us out; we can be in no ſtreight, but the power of God can, and his love will make room for us, that we may eſcape. *Seeing then* (as one of the Ancients ſpeaks fully to this point) *God will help becauſe he is ſo merciful, and can becauſe he is ſo powerful, that man ſhuts the door of hope againſt himſelf, who*

Dum Deus velit miſereri qui bonus eſt, & poſſit quia omni-

potens eſt; ipſe contra ſe divinæ pietatis januam claudit, qui Deum ſibi aut non velle aut non poſſe miſereri credit. Auguſt. Ser. 88. de Tempt.

thinks, or through unbelief fears, that either God will not or cannot help him. And therefore when at any time we are in a ſtreight, let the greatneſs of our ſtreights, be the exerciſe of our faith, not a diſcouragement to it. Some make their ſtreights a ſtop to their faith, they cannot believe they ſhall be delivered out of great ſtreights; but the greatneſs of our ſtreights, ſhould quicken, not deaden our faith, it ſhould increaſe our faith, not weaken it; and ſo it will, if we conſider who it is that undertakes to remove his people out of their ſtreights; it is the great God; and the more their ſtreights are, the greater their difficulties are, the greater is his glory in removing any of them into a large place. 'Tis ſaid in the *Pſalm*, *The Lord makes a way for his anger*; he doth ſo ſometimes, he makes a broad way for his anger; yet remember he makes a way for his love and mercy too, that his great power may be ſeen in opening our greateſt ſtreights.

Fourthly, Whereas, 'tis not only ſaid, *He would remove thee into a large place*, but, *into a large place, where there is no ſtreightneſs*.

Obſerve, *God can bring his afflicted people perfectly out of ſtreights, and ſet them out of the reach of danger.*

Our comforts in this World are uſually mixed with ſorrows, our enlargements with ſtreights; yet the Lord is able to give us ſorrowleſs comforts, and ſuch enlargements as ſhall not have the leaſt ſhadow of a ſtreight in them. As Jeſus Chriſt ſaveth us to the uttermoſt of Soul-ſtreights, or we are ſaved through Chriſt to the uttermoſt of our ſins, that is, of our guilt and danger of condemnation by ſin; ſo he can ſave us alſo to the uttermoſt of outward troubles, he can give a perfect temporal ſalvation, ſuch a ſalvation as ſhall have nothing of fear or danger in this life: *Elihu* ſpeaks of ſuch a ſalvation. The Lord can ſave us to the uttermoſt of preſent perils, and ſet us beyond the reach of peril, even in ſuch a place, where there ſhall be no fear, no ſuſpicion of annoiance. 'Tis ſaid (*Prov.* 10.22.) *The bleſſing of the Lord maketh rich, and he giveth no ſorrow with it.* The Lord makes ſome men rich, or gives them a great eſtate, yet they find ſorrow enough with it; but the Lord, through his bleſſing, can give riches, and add no ſorrow with it, put no gravel in our bread, nor gall in our cup, but all ſhall be ſweet to us; that's bringing us into a large place, where there is no preſent ſtreightneſs, no, nor appearing cauſe to fear any. Thus the Nations are brought in rejoycing at the fall of *Babylon*, (Iſa. 14.7,8.) *The whole Earth is at reſt, and is quiet, they break forth into ſinging, yea the Fir-Trees rejoyce at thee, and the Cedars of* Lebanon, *ſaying, ſince thou art laid down, no feller is come up againſt us.* The Lord will work full deliverance for his people by *Babylons* fall; when that falls, *Sion* ſhall not fear the coming of any more *fellers*, Chriſt will then give his faithful people ſuch enlargement as ſhall know no ſtreights.

Poſitio vel requies. Heb. *à radice* נוח *quod eſt requieſcere Metonymia adjuncti.* Piſc.

This is the firſt alluſion; *He would have removed thee out of the ſtreight into a broad place, where there is no ſtreightneſs*; it followeth,

Eſt abſtractum pro concreto, poſitio & requies, pro iis quæ ſuper menſam deponuntur à fercularis; Quemadmodum jumenta vocantur, ſervitus hominum, quia hominibus ſerviunt. Bold.

And that which ſhould be ſet on thy Table, ſhould be full of fatneſs.

Here's the ſecond mercy. As if he had ſaid, *The Lord would not have given thee a bare deliverance out of evil, but thou ſhould'ſt have received abundance of good*; thou ſhouldſt not only have room enough, but comfort enough;

That which ſhould be ſet on thy Table, ſhould be full of fatneſs.

Some render, *That which reſteth, or abideth on thy Table*; that is, thy meat, and thy drink, thy wine, and thy oyl, that which thou feedeſt upon, ſhould be of the beſt and moſt nouriſhing, not bare commons, not ordinary fare, but

Vicinæ ſunt radices נוח *quievit &* ינח *poſuit; quod enim ponitur in aliquo loco, ponitur ut requieſcat.* Merc.

Full of fatneſs.] Fatneſs is put in Scripture to expreſs the beſt of things; it often ſignifieth the beſt of ſpiritual things, (*Pſ.* 36 8.) *They ſhall be abundantly ſatisfied with the fatneſs of thy Houſe.* The Houſe of God is the Church of God, and, *God keeps a good Houſe*, there are fat things, and they who worſhip and wait upon him, they ſhall have abundance of them, their full ſatisfaction: The fatneſs of Gods Houſe, is the riches of Grace, the beſt of Goſpel-Ordinances and promiſes, the beſt of Goſpel comforts and mercies, theſe are the fatneſs of the Houſe of God; theſe are the things which the Apoſtle intended while he told the Gentiles, (*Rom.* 11.17.) *That they were partakers of the root and fatneſs of the Olive Tree.* Thus alſo ſpake the Prophet, (*Iſa.* 25 6.) *In this Mountain ſhall the Lord of Hoſts make a feaſt of fat things*: What, of ſuch fat things as the Epicures of the World ſurfet upon, Sheep, and Oxen, *&c*? No; the *feaſt of fat things* which the Lord will make to his people is, of ſpiritual things, they ſhall have much of Chriſt, much of grace here, and an aſſurance of glory for hereafter; *This is the feaſt of fat things.* And though the Lord give to any of his ſervants the bread of adverſity, and the water of affliction; though the fig-tree ſhould not bloſſom to them; though they ſhould have neither Sheep in the fold, nor Calves in the ſtall, yet they may daily ſit at this feaſt of fat things, and be filled with joy in the Lord, (*Hab.* 3.17, &c.)

And as fatneſs is uſed in Scripture to expreſs the beſt of ſpiritual things, ſo fatneſs expreſſeth the beſt of natural and outward good things, (*Pſal.* 65.11.) *Thou crowneſt the Year with thy goodneſs, and thy paths drop fatneſs*; that is, plenty, and plenty of the beſt things, which grow out of the Earth by the bleſſing and benign influences of Heaven. I conceive ſpiritual good things, the beſt of them, are alſo ſhadowed under thoſe expreſſions of Temporal.

Lautiſſimè ſuaviſſiméq; vives.

Further, *Elihu* doth not only ſay, *That which ſhall be ſet upon thy Table ſhall be fat*, but, *full of fatneſs*; which implyeth thus much. Thou ſhalt have whatſoever may make thy life comfortable, and happy; for as by bread, our *daily bread*, we are to underſtand all the neceſſaries of this life (though bread be the meaneſt part of our ſuſtenance, yet it is called the *ſtaff of life*, becauſe the moſt neceſſary part of it) ſo by *fatneſs*, we are to underſtand all things delicate and delicious; and thoſe things which are moſt delicate and delicious, are ſaid to be *full of fatneſs*.

Hence Note, Firſt, *God, who delivereth his people from trouble, or out of ſtreights, can alſo fill and furniſh them with comforts.*

The mercy of God doth not only take away evil, and ſo leave us, it doth not only bring us out of our ſtreights, and there ſet us down: but mercy proceeds to the beſtowing of good upon us. As we in obedience ſhould not put off the Lord with abſtaining from evil, but ought to do good, even abundance of good, and not only bring forth good, but much good fruit; that's our duty; ſo the Lords mercy ſtayeth not in delivering us from evil, but beſtoweth good things, the beſt things upon us, and them in abundance.

Secondly, In that thoſe good things are expreſt *by fatneſs*, or *by being full of fatneſs*,

Note, *The Lord thinks nothing too good for his good people.*

When once a people, or a perſon are accepted of God, he ſpares no coſt, nor thinks any too coſtly for them, the moſt delicious things in the World are not too good for them, (*Pſ.* 81.16.) *He would have fed them alſo with the fineſt of the wheat, and with honey out of the Rocks ſhould I have ſatisfied thee.* I would not have fed them with wheat only, that's good, but with the fineſt wheat, that's the beſt; we put in the Margin, *with the fat of wheat*; they ſhould not have had the bran, but the flour and the fineſt of the flour! They ſhould have had not only honey, but honey out of the Rock, which, as Naturaliſts obſerve, is the beſt and pureſt honey. Surely God cannot think any thing of this World too good for them; certainly God cannot think any of theſe outward enjoyments too good for his people, who hath not thought his Son too good for his people; that's the Apoſtles argument, (*Rom.* 8.32.) *He that ſpared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how ſhall he not with him alſo freely give us all things?* Even the beſt of outward good things, when he ſeeth it good for us.

In this ſee the difference of the ſpirit of the World, and of God, to his people. The World thinks nothing bad enough for thoſe that are the choiceſt ſervants of God, they are ſorry to ſee that they have any thing that is good; that they have a morſel of bread, or a penny in their purſes, is thought too much for them by the World; and if any trouble befall them, it's good enough for them, will the World ſay. The World thinks any thing too good for the choiceſt ſervants of God, how much more the choiceſt things! But God hath other thoughts towards them, he thinks nothing too good for them, they *ſhall be filled with fatneſs.*

Thirdly, In that *Elihu* makes promiſe of theſe outward things, to the choyce ſervants of God, whoſe ears are open to attend unto him;

Note, *Even outward mercies, and a full portion of outward mercies, fall ſometimes to the ſhare of the faithful ſervants of God in this World.*

Though ſuch are not of this World, much leſs are ſervants to the World, yet God can make the World ſerve them with its beſt, and give them a full portion of the World, though the World be not their portion. The ſervants of God would not take all the World, if it were offered them, for their portion, no not a thouſand Worlds, conſidering what a periſhing thing this World is, and that at beſt it is but a finite thing; I ſay, a ſervant of God would not take all the World, at the hand of God, for his portion, though he is thankful for any thing, for a little of it, and unworthy of any, the leaſt part of it. Howbeit, many times God gives a large portion of this World to his people, and that which he ſets upon their Table, that is, outward good, is *full of fatneſs*. Indeed ſome of the choice ſervants of God have been afraid when they have ſeen much of the World come in, leſt God ſhould put them off with ſuch worldly things; when their Table hath been full of fatneſs and dainties, when they have had Houſes and Lands, Gold and Silver plenty, they have been troubled, leſt God ſhould ſay to them, There is your All. It is ſaid of *Luther*, when he had a conſiderable preſent ſent him from a great Prince (the Duke of *Saxony*, as I remember) this came upon his heart, *I hope God will not put me off with theſe things*, with gifts from Princes; I ſhall be hungry as long as I live, if I have nothing to feed upon but what is of the World, and poor as long as I live, if I have no other treaſure, but what is earthly; and thereupon *proteſted he would not be ſatisfied with the beſt things of this World, though content with any thing*. Thus, I ſay, God deals bountifully, with a liberal hand, to ſome of his people eſpecially. This was made good in the former, or Old Teſtament times, when the promiſes went more upon externals (as hath been ſhewed) whereas now they go more upon ſpiritual and heavenly things; yet there wants not examples of Gods dealing bountifully in outwards with his faithful ſervants under the Goſpel, he hath cauſed that which was ſet upon their Table, to be full of fatneſs.

This is the firſt part of the Application, wherein *Elihu* acquaints *Job* what God would have done for him, if he had carried it humbly (as he ſhould) under his afflicting hand, he had been out of his fetters and bonds before that time, and ſet in a large place, he had not fed ſo long upon aſhes, his Table had *been full of fatneſs*.

As in this verſe *Elihu* applyed the matter to *Job*, by ſhewing him how it ſhould have fared with him, or how graciouſly and bountifully God would have dealt with him, if he had humbled himſelf, as he ought, and been duly affected with the afflicting hand then upon him, ſo in the following verſe, he applyeth the Doctrine to him, by telling him, that the reaſon why he was at the preſent in ſuch an afflicted condition, was, becauſe he had not ſo humbled himſelf in his affliction.

Verſe 17. **But thou haſt fulfilled the Judgment of the wicked, therefore Judgment and Juſtice take hold on thee.**

This is a home Application indeed, he ſpeaks to his face, *Thou haſt done it; thou haſt fulfilled the Judgment of the wicked*; which is, as a home, ſo a very hard and heavy charge. Take a twofold Interpretation of it.

Firſt, Some expound it (I think not rightly) of *Job*'s ill carriage in the time of his proſperity; as if *Elihu* had reflected upon that: Thou haſt heretofore *fulfilled the Judgment of the wicked*, and that, firſt, by a general ill courſe of life. As Chriſt ſaith to the *Phariſees* (Matth. 23. 32.) *Fill ye up the meaſure of your fathers*; ſome conceive *Elihu* ſpeaking to *Job* in that ſence, *Thou haſt filled up the meaſure of the wicked*, following them in their evil ways. Secondly, That in his Magiſtratical capacity, or that being a Magiſtrate, he *had fulfilled the Judgment of the wicked*; that is, what wicked men, and their bad Cauſes wanted of weight and truth, of righteouſneſs and goodneſs, that he filled up by favour, by accepting their perſons, and giving countenance to their wickedneſs. Some charge him thus directly, *Thou haſt done the part or Office of an unjuſt Judg*; when thou hadſt power in thy hand, thou waſt defective, ſhort, or wanting, in diſcharging the duty of an upright Judg, but didſt the work of a corrupt Judg (corrupting Judgment) to the full; therefore now *Juſtice and Judgment take hold on thee*. But (as I ſaid before) this is not a right Expoſition of the Text; for *Elihu* never charged *Job* with a ſinful courſe of life in former times, or before his affliction (as his friends had done) though he charged him with much ſin in his carriage under his afflictions; and it may be conceived, that *Job* heard *Elihu* more patiently and equally than he heard his friends, becauſe *Elihu* dealt more equally and candidly with him, than his friends did; he did not lay it upon him, as if in the foregoing part of his life he had traded in wickedneſs; but only reproved him for his boldneſs, in dealing with, and appealing ſo often unto God, in his ſores and ſickneſs; or, becauſe his ſpirit was not broken enough, notwithſtanding thoſe ſore breakings and ſickneſſes, with which he was afflicted. So then, *Elihu* in ſaying this, intended not that *Job had fulfilled the Judgment of the wicked*, either by a wicked converſation, or by perverting Juſtice in favour of the wicked: Such a charge had been utterly inconſiſtent with the Teſtimony which God gave of him in the firſt Chapter of this Book.

Officium impii implevisti, q. d. *Optimi & incorrupti judic Officio defuisti, impii munus & partes obiisti.* Cajet. *Sed receptiſſima vocis Originalis ſententia eſt Judicium, non Officium.* Pined.

Therefore Secondly, *Thou haſt fulfilled the Judgment of the wicked*, may be underſtood, firſt, that *Job* had gone near, in his behaviour under his affliction, to do even almoſt as Satan boaſted, and preſumed to God he would do, in the ſecond Chapter, that if God did but lay his hand home or cloſer upon him, and touch his bone and his fleſh, then (ſaid Satan) *he will curſe thee to thy face.* Now, though *Job* did never, in the height, fulfil his wicked opinion or judgment of the Devil concerning him, yet by his often complaining of, and murmurings about the ſevere dealings of God with him, and his not pitying him in his diſtreſs, he verged upon it, he came ſomewhat towards, and much too near the fulfilling of that Judgment of the wicked one; and *Elihu* might ſay, *Thou haſt fulfilled the Judgment of the wicked*, thou haſt done (in a degree or ſhew) as the Devil ſaid thou wouldſt, if the hand of God were heavy upon thy Body.

Secondly, Theſe words. *Thou haſt fulfilled the Judgment of the wicked*, may have this meaning, Thou haſt rendred thy ſelf guilty of, or obnoxious to, that Judgment which God uſeth to pronounce and execute upon wicked men.

Thirdly, *Thou haſt fulfilled the Judgment of the wicked*; that is, thou under the hand of God hath carried thy ſelf as wicked men uſually do, thou haſt imitated them in a great meaſure. What do wicked men when the hand of God is upon them? They rage and murmur, they toil themſelves and are full of the fury of the Lord, as a wild Bull in a net; thou ſeemeſt to have fulfilled this Judgment of the wicked, for thou haſt been ſo far from humbling thy ſelf, as thou oughteſt, that thou haſt ſtood it out and ſtouted it with God, and deſired a day of hearing; haſt thou not in all this *fulfilled the Judgment of the wicked?* In the 34. Chapter of this Book at the 8. verſe, *Elihu* told *Job*, *that he had gone in company with the wicked*, that is, that he had taken the ſame courſe with the wicked, and as they uſe to do in the day of their calamity. And that's the meaning of *Elihu*'s charge here, *Thou haſt fulfilled the Judgment of the wicked*, that is, thou haſt carried thy ſelf too too like wicked men in the day of thy trouble. Thus *Job* is here cenſured not ſtrictly, as if he had done like wicked men, but becauſe he did not ſuffer ſo patiently as became a good man; this was in him a *fulfilling of the judgment of the wicked.*

More impiorum cauſam tuam egiſti impatienter contra Deum murmurando. Sanct.

Hence Note. *Not to ſubmit heartily, and humble our ſelves freely, when the afflicting hand of God is upon us, is to do very ſinfully, even like the wicked.*

I ſhall not ſtay upon this, having ſpoken of the extream ſinfulneſs of murmuring and impatience under the hand of God heretofore.

Secondly, Note, *If we give way to any corruption, or paſſion, it will quickly carry us a very great way in ſin, and from our duty.*

They that are good in their ſtate, may ſometimes in their acts, (as *Job* here) *fulfil the judgment of the wicked.* As Hypocrites fulfil, in appearance, the judgment of the upright, that is, do like upright men; ſo the upright may, in appearance, do like Hypocrites, and then they alſo fulfil the judgment of the wicked. *Job* ſaid to his wife, in the ſecond Chapter, *Thou ſpeakeſt like a fooliſh woman*; and now *Elihu* tells him, thou haſt ſpoken and done *as a wicked man.*

Thirdly, Note, *They who do like the wicked, muſt not think much if they be numbred with the wicked, and involved in the ſame outward evils and judgments which uſually fall upon wicked men.*

Though we may not judg ſuch a mans eternal eſtate like that of the wicked, yet as to this or that act, we may (without breach of charity) number him among the wicked, and he may quickly feel the ſame ſmart which the wicked feel. They that are godly ſhould act like godly men, and not do any thing that repreſents the luſts or practices, the judgment or converſation of the ungodly; leſt it be ſaid (in one ſence or other) of them, as here *Elihu* of *Job*, you alſo have *fulfilled the judgment of the wicked.*

Therefore Juſtice and Judgment take hold of thee.

דין
ומשפט

As if he had ſaid, I told thee before, if thou had'ſt humbled thy ſelf, thou ſhouldeſt have had a large place, and full Table, ſtore of mercies and favours; but *now Judgment and Juſtice take hold of thee.* Here are two words which ſometimes are uſed diſtinctly, but here they ſignifie the ſame thing, or the one is but an explanation of the other. *Juſtice and Judgment*; ſome take *Juſtice* for the habit, and *Judgment* for the act, exerciſe or decree; as if he had ſaid, *Juſtice hath ſent forth Judgment upon thee, and now both take hold of thee*; God hath noted thy ſin in thy ſad condition. Yet the Original doth not determine it upon *Job's* perſon expreſly, it doth not ſay, *Juſtice and Judgment take hold of thee*, but *Juſtice and Judgment take hold*; we ſupply *they take hold of thee*, for that's it which *Elihu* intends; *Juſtice and Judgment* take hold of thee, *O Job*, nor will they let thee go. We find the word ſo uſed in ſeveral places, (*Prov.* 3.18.) *Wiſdom is a Tree of life to them that lay hold upon her.* And as the believers cloſing with and hold faſt upon Chriſt is expreſſed by this word, ſo alſo is the hold which ſin takes of an unbeliever (*Prov.* 5.22.) *His own iniquities ſhall take the wicked himſelf, and he ſhall be holden with the cords of his ſin. Judgment and Juſtice take hold of thee.*

Hence Note, Firſt, *God will not indulge ſin in any, no not in his own ſervants.*

If a *Job* do like wicked men, he ſhall ſmart like the wicked. Though God will not caſt any of his ſervants to Hell for ever, yet they may be caſt into a temporary Hell. The Lord told *David* as much, in caſe his Children ſhould diſobey him, and break covenant with him, though he would not caſt them off, yet they ſhould pay dearly for it; *He would viſit their tranſgreſſions with a rod, and their iniquities with ſtripes*, (Pſal. 89. 32.) The Hiſtory of *David's* Children makes good that Propheſie, and ſo hath the dealings of God with believers in all ages, who are the ſeed, the Children of *David* myſtical, that is, of Chriſt, whom and whoſe ſpiritual Children the Spirit of God chiefly pointed at in that Pſalm. They that do like evil men, ſhall ſuffer like evil men. Juſtice and Judgment properly and ſtrictly take hold of the wicked and diſobedient only, as the Apoſtle ſaith (1 *Tim.* 1.9.) *The Law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawleſs and diſobedient*, &c. Yet when they that are righteous are found doing like the *lawleſs and diſobedient, the Law*, that is Juſtice and Judgment will take hold of them.

Tygurina legit intranſitive; **Cauſa &**

Again, Some read the words intranſitively, *Juſtice and Judgment ſhall hold*, *or hold on ſtill*, that is, *they will hold on their courſe or way in puniſhing*, as long as thou hold'ſt on thy courſe or way in ſinning.

judicium retinebunt, i. e. *ſuſtentabunt vigorem ſuum quamdiu impius fuerit.*

Hence Note, *So long as any man lives in any ſinful way, he ſhall find Juſtice and Judgment taking hold of him. Juſtice will not leave ſinners till they have left their ſins.*

Again, *Juſtice and Judgment take hold of thee*, that is, they hold thee faſt.

Hence Note, *There's no getting out of the hand of divine Juſtice.*

Men oftentimes get out of the hand of man's Juſtice, they can break Priſon, they can file off their Fetters and caſt their Cords from them; but none can break Gods Priſon, none can get out of the hands of divine Juſtice. As Juſtice and Judgment ſhall take hold of, attach and arreſt ſinners, ſo they will hold them faſt, they cannot make an eſcape, nor can any reſcue them till God ſigns a warrant for their releaſe. We cannot hinder God in the exerciſe or execution of Juſtice, nor turn him aſide from his purpoſe, either by our power or policies. God can eaſily hinder men of their purpoſes, and can undo what-ever they have done, but none can make the Juſtice and Judgment of God let go their hold. Therefore let us take heed, while we hold ſin and iniquity, nothing can deliver us from the hand, or hold off the ſin-chaſtning and avenging hand of God. However men fail, the Juſtice and Judgment of God are everlaſting; they hold on their courſe ſtill though men do not. Though we could pluck the Sun out of the Firmament, yet not Juſtice out of the hand of God. We can neither put God beſides his rule, nor force him from his purpoſe. Theſe are the two great Prerogatives of God, he hath firſt a righteouſneſs which cannot be perverted; ſecondly, a Juſtice which cannot be interrupted.

VERS. 18, 19, 20.

Becauſe there is wrath, beware leſt he take thee away with his ſtroke: Then a great ranſom cannot deliver thee.

Will he eſteem thy riches? No, not Gold, nor all the forces of ſtrength.

Deſire not the night, when people are cut off in their place.

In theſe three verſes *Elihu* preſſeth the Application of the former Doctrine upon *Job*, by way of admonition and counſel: Foraſmuch as he had done amiſs before, and carried himſelf unduly under the hand of God, even ſo far as to *fulfil the counſel of the wicked*, and therefore he would now, and for the time to come, take heed and be more wary.

And leſt *Job* ſhould ſlight this admonition or counſel, *Elihu* adds a powerful motive to urge that duty upon him, even the wrath of God; *Beware*, why?

Becauſe there is wrath.] Beware, and beware *leſt* (this wrath breaking forth) *he take thee away with a ſtroke.* And how dreadful the wrath of God is, *Elihu* ſhews in theſe three verſes by a threefold conſideration.

Firſt, Becauſe if we fall into the Lords hand, when he is in wrath there is no means under Heaven that can deliver or bring us off. This he aſſerteth at the latter end of verſe 18. *Then a great ranſom cannot deliver thee.* It is dangerous coming under that wrath, from which a ranſom, eſpecially a great ranſom, cannot deliver. What that ranſom is which cannot deliver us is expreſſed in verſe 19. *Will he eſteem thy riches? No, not Gold.*

A Second motive to beware of this dreadful wrath, is this, becauſe if once the wrath of God be up, as there is no ranſom, ſo no power in the Creature that can deliver. That we have at the latter part of verſe 19. *Nor all the forces of ſtrength*; though thou haſt Armies, Millions of men in Arms, yea though thou haſt Legions of Angels in pay, yet they cannot prevail, all *the forces of ſtrength* cannot deliver thee,

There is alſo a third conſideration, to ſhew the unavoidableneſs of the wrath of God, namely, becauſe there is no fleeing no making an eſcape from it. Some indeed are ſo angry that you cannot ſatisfie them with a ranſom, and ſo powerful that no ſtrength can deliver you from their power, yet poſſibly you may make an eſcape and hide from them, you may get out of the way and lie out of ſight; but ſaith *Elihu*, that will not do neither in this caſe, (*verſe* 20.) *Deſire not the night when people are cut off in their place*; the night or darkneſs will be no cover to thee from the wrath of an angry God. Thus you have the ſum and ſubſtance of this admonition to *Job*, *Beware, becauſe there is wrath*, and that wrath of God ſo terrible that nothing can deliver from it, no ranſom, no power, nor can we deliver our ſelves by flight, or by darkneſs.

I ſhall now open the words more diſtinctly.

Verſe 18. **Becauſe there is wrath, beware**, &c.

חמה *Calor, ira, à* יחם *Caluit, incaluit, quod iracundi incaleſcunt.*

The word which we tranſlate **Wrath**, comes from a root that ſignifies *heat*, or to *be hot*; and we know they that are angry and in wrath are very hot, their mind and Spirit are enflamed, we uſe to ſay to an angry man, *why are you ſo hot*: the wrath of man is hot: the wrath of God, is certainly much hotter.

Becauſe there is wrath.] But where is it? I anſwer, Firſt, there is wrath, in the breaſt or heart of God, there his anger is kindled againſt ſinners. Secondly, there is wrath in the decree of God, againſt ſinners (*Zeph.*2. 2.) Thirdly, there is wrath in the threatnings of God, there it firſt appears and breaketh forth (*Deut.* 29. 20.) So the Apoſtle (*Rom.*1.18.) *The wrath of God is revealed from Heaven.* How is it revealed? As his love is revealed in promiſes, ſo his wrath in threatnings. Fourthly, there is wrath in the works of God, in his Judgments acted upon the Children of men. As there is wrath hidden in his breaſt and decreed, ſo wrath is heard from his mouth in terrible threatnings, and ſeen in his hand by terrible Judgments executed upon his enemies, We may ſee wrath in the dealings of God; his works tell us he is angry. Therefore fear to perſiſt, leſt in his anger he take thee quite away. We ſhould beware of ſinful works, leſt we provoke and ſtir up the Lords anger to make bloody work. *There is wrath*, (particularly as to the dealings of God with thee, *O Job*, ſaith *Elihu*) therefore,

Beware.] The word **Beware**, is not expreſly in the Hebrew Text, but it is plainly intended, and ſupplied by Interpreters, in general, to make up and clear the ſence of this verſe. We have a like reading in the 36. of *Iſaiah*, *verſ.* 18. *Beware leſt* Hezekiah *perſwade you*, &c. The word *Beware*, is a ſupplement added there in a different character, to ſhew that it is not expreſſed in the Hebrew. As if *Rabſhakeh* had ſaid, if *Hezekiah* perſwade you to ſtand out againſt my Maſter *Senacherib*, you will provoke his wrath to your utter ruine and deſtruction, therefore *beware*. There, as here, *beware*, beſpeaks our caution; becauſe there is wrath, take heed what you do or ſay.

Hence Note, Firſt, *There is a wrath of God againſt ſin, or, God will appear in wrath againſt ſinners.*

The Apoſtle *John* in his firſt Epiſtle (*Chap.*4 8.) tells us in a direct predication, *God is love*; and 'tis as true, *God is wrath.* The wrath of God is a divine perfection, it is the perfection of God, as his love is. God is one and the ſame, he is not divided into ſeveral paſſions, perturbations or affections; but thus the Scripture ſpeaks of him, to denote what we may expect from him, and what he is and will be in his actings towards them who obey him not.

Note, Secondly, *The wrath of God appears and is put forth in his works of Judgment.*

As the goodneſs of God is his love acted, or as the good things which God doth for us are love-actions, ſo the evils that are upon us are wrath-actions. I do not ſay that every evil which we endure in this World is the acting of wrath upon us, but I ſay, there is wrath in the actings of evil upon us; *Moſes* ſaid to *Aaron*, (Numb.16.46.) *Go quickly, take a Cenſer* (haſt, haſt) *and make an atonement, there is wrath gone out.* How did he know wrath was gone out? He tells us in the next words, *The plague is begun*: He ſaw wrath in that diſpenſation of God; the plague begun argued that God was angry. *Becauſe there is wrath, beware.*

Hence Note, Thirdly, *We ſhould by all means take heed and beware of the wrath of God.*

The wrath of man is a ſmall matter to the wrath of God, yet we are very careful to beware of the wrath of man, eſpecially of great men. The wrath of the Kings and Princes of the World, is like the roaring of the Lion, ſaith *Solomon*, and we are ready to tremble at that; but O how ſhould we tremble at, and beware of the wrath of God! *Who knoweth the power of thine anger?* (*Pſal.*90.11.) We may take ſome ſcantling, ſome meaſure of the wrath of man, and know how far it can go, and what it can do; but we can take no meaſure of the wrath of God, for it is immeaſurable, and therefore we ſhould avoid every thing that procures his wrath. That's the meaning of this caveat; do nothing that blows up or incenſes the wrath of God. But what is it that blows up wrath? It is ſin, every ſin hath that in it which may blow up wrath. The Apoſtle ſaith, *The wrath of God is revealed from Heaven, againſt all ungodlineſs and unrighteouſneſs of men*, not only againſt this or that ungodlineſs, nor only againſt this or that degree of ungodlineſs, ('tis neither againſt ungodlineſs of ſome ſpecial kind, nor of ſome ſpecial degree) but againſt all ungodlineſs, therefore all ungodlineſs and all unrighteouſneſs is to be avoided.

And as we ſhould do nothing to provoke wrath, ſo we ſhould do every thing which may prevent wrath (*Pſal.* 2. 12.) *Kiſs the Son*, why? *leſt he be angry, and his wrath kindle.* Who is the Son, and what's this kiſſing of the Son which prevents wrath? The Son is Chriſt, he is the Son of God; this kiſſing is a kiſs of homage, and humble ſubmiſſion to Jeſus Chriſt by faith and obedience; it is a Goſpel receiving of Chriſt: to kiſs the Son is to receive Chriſt as our King, as our Prieſt, as our Prophet, to receive Chriſt in the whole maniſeſtation of his Mediatorſhip. Do this to prevent wrath, kiſs the Son. And conſider how terrible he reports that wrath to be; *If his wrath be kindled but a little, bleſſed are they that put their truſt in him.* O then take heed that you do not provoke the wrath of God, and do your utmoſt to prevent it; which nothing can do but kiſſing the Son, that will and that only can do it; ſubmit to Jeſus Chriſt, receive Jeſus Chriſt, without him it is impoſſible to prevent wrath. He that believes not, *the wrath of God abideth on him*, (*John* 3.36.) Jeſus Chriſt alone is he which delivereth us from the wrath to come, (1 *Theſ.*1.10.) And if we further conſider this wrath from the expreſſion, both of the Pſalm and of the Text, it ſhould make us (who are ſo fearful of, and who ſo ſhift from the wrath of men) exceedingly afraid of the wrath of God. The word, as was ſhewed before, comes from a root which ſignifieth the heat of fire, implying that the wrath of God is fire, and (*Heb.* 10.27.) it is called *fiery indignation*; yea, God himſelf (*Heb.*12.29.) is called *a conſuming fire.* Why doth the Scripture expreſs him and his wrath, by fire? Surely becauſe fire is well known to us, and we are well able to conceive how dreadful a thing fire is, when it is in its rage and fury, when it hath got the Maſtery: *Fire is a comfortable Servant, but a dreadful Maſter.* Now as fire is the moſt dreadful element, ſo wrath is the moſt dreadful attribute of God; yet I may ſay, that elementary fire which (as to our ſence) is ſo dreadful, is but a Sun-ſhine compared to the wrath of God; as will appear if we conſider it in two things.

Firſt, It burns internally. The viſible fire burns but viſible things, outward things, but this fire burns within, ſcorches the Conſcience, burns the Soul, burns that which all the fires in the World cannot reach, cannot touch. God is a Spirit, and the wrath of God is a fire that burns the Spirits, and will for ever afflict and torment the Conſciences of wicked men. The hotteſt fires which the moſt enraged malitious Perſecuters kindle, cannot touch the Spirit; the Conſcience is quiet, the Soul triumphs while the fleſh fries in the fire. 'Tis the fire of divine wrath alone which hath power upon the Soul; and a burning there is ten thouſand times more painful than the burning of our fleſh.

Secondly, The wrath of God burns eternally. Your fires here though they are dreadful, yet they go out, they conſume themſelves by conſuming the matter or fuel caſt into them; they cannot continue always, becauſe they eat up and devour that which maintains them: But the wrath of God burns continually. God is called a conſuming fire, not becauſe the fire of his wrath conſumes, but becauſe he conſumeth ſinners in the fire of wrath; and when we ſay, he conſumeth ſinners in his wrath, or his wrath conſumeth ſinners, we are not to underſtand it of a conſumption as to *being*, but only as to a *well or comfortable being*; for not only the Souls, but the very Bodies of ſinners ſhall remain in this fire of the wrath of God for ever unconſumed. The Bodies of the damned ſhall be raiſed again at the great day, and being re-united to their Souls, both ſhall abide unconſumed in the fire of this conſuming wrath eternally. The great dread of ordinary fire is, that it conſumes what it burns, but the greateſt dread of this fire is, that it conſumes not that which it burns. O therefore take heed of the wrath of God, the wrath of God is terrible as to corporal and temporal Judgments, much more as to ſpiritual and eternal Judgments; that is, as the fire of his wrath burns both internally and eternally. *Becauſe there is wrath, beware*,

Leſt he take thee away with his ſtroke.

Here the danger is expreſt. If the Lord be angry, he can ſoon take thee away with a ſtroke, he can remove, yea *hurry* thee away out of all thy preſent joys and enjoyments, to everlaſting ſorrows. The word imports a violent remove. The ſtroke here ſpoken of is like that (*Chap.* 34.26.) He *ſtriketh them as wicked men, in the open ſight of others*; that is, he ſhames them as well as puniſheth them; as he ſtrikes them with his hand to their confuſion, ſo he ſtrikes or claps his own hands together in deriſion, as 'tis ſaid (*Chap.* 27. 23.) *Men ſhall clap their hands at him, and ſhall hiſs him out of his place*; we may take it in both theſe ſignifications; *Leſt he take thee away with a ſtroke*; that is, leſt he ſtrike thee ſo as to make an utter end of thee, or leſt he take thee away with deriſion, clapping his hands at thee, and pouring contempt upon thee. Have we not reaſon to beware of that wrath, which in either ſenſe can take us away with his ſtroke? Yet I conceive a third ſenſe may be given of theſe words, *Leſt he take thee away with his ſtroke*, that is, leſt he take thee away ſuddenly, even as ſuddenly as a ſtroke can be given.

34.26

נשפק *Cum complo-ſione.*

Hence Note, Firſt, *God can preſently ſtrike to deſtruction.*

He can take the ſtrongeſt away with a ſtroke, he can do it with one ſtroke. The Lord needs not ſtand cutting and ſlaſhing, hacking and hewing (as we ſay) all day long; one ſtroke of his will do it. He took away *Herod* at one ſtroke (*Acts* 12.23.) He took away *Ananias* and *Saphira* at one ſtroke (*Acts* 5.5.) *Nadab* and *Abihu* were taken away with one ſtroke (*Lev.* 10.1.) All theſe periſhed, and ſo have thouſands more, as with a ſtroke, ſo ſuddenly, at one ſtroke. The Lord can ſtrike home; as *Abiſhai* ſaid to *David* in the caſe of *Saul*, when he found him in the Trench, *Let me ſtrike him at once, and I will not ſtrike him a ſecond time.* The Lord threatned (*Nah.* 1.9.) to bring deſtruction upon thoſe at once, when he told them *Affliction ſhould not riſe a ſecond time*; as if he had ſaid, I will not ſtrike another blow at them, I'le hit them home, and do my work with one blow. We need not fear how many, or how mighty his enemies are, he can rid himſelf of them with one ſtroke. The Lord ſtrikes ſome to take away their ſin; thus he ſtrikes his own people: Others he ſtrikes to take away their perſons; thus he ſtrikes the wicked, eſpecially thoſe who enemy-like, deſignedly ſtrike at him, his Name, his Truth, his Glory. *Elihu* doth not ſay, *Beware leſt he ſtrike thee*, but *leſt he take thee away with a ſtroke.* The Lord often ſtrikes his own faithful Servants, they receive many a ſtroke, many a laſh, many a blow, many a chaſtiſement at his hands, but he doth not take them away with a ſtroke, as he doth the wicked. The Lord ſtrikes his Servants to take away their ſins, and he ſtrikes wicked men to take away their lives, to deſtroy them utterly.

Secondly, As the word ſignifieth taking away with clapping of the hands or with deriſion,

Note, *God will even laugh at the ruine of wicked men.*

He will clap his hands at their fall. We read (*Prov.* 1. 26,27.) how Wiſdom called and cried, and none would anſwer, all ſet her calls and counſels at naught; what followed? *I* (ſaid wiſdom, that is, Chriſt) *will laugh at their calamity, and mock when their fear cometh*; as much as is ſaid in the Text, I will take them away with a ſtroke, or with clapping my hands, with a kind of deriding *plaudite* at their going off, or rather at their being thruſt off the Stage of this World. They are in the moſt ſad condition, whom God not only deſtroys, but derides; they have moſt cauſe to mourn in their affliction, at whoſe affliction God laughs. It is ſaid (*Job* 9.23.) *God will laugh at the tryal* of the innocent, and why, was ſhewed in opening that place; I only touch it now upon this occaſion: The Lord knows the innocent will come off with honour, will ſtand it out in their tryal bravely, he ſees what Courage and Faith and Patience they will manifeſt in and under their ſufferings. Now as the Lord even claps his hands, and laughs, when his choſen noble ones go forth to the tryal, knowing they will honour him in their tryal; ſo the Lord laughs at the deſtruction of the wicked, knowing that his Juſtice and Righteouſneſs ſhall have a full ſtroke at them, and lay both their ſhame and ſin open to all the World.

That the Lord in his wrath takes away with a ſtroke, ſhould make us all *beware*, fear and tremble; but that which followeth, may make us wary, fear and tremble much more; for, ſaith *Elihu* in the cloſe of the verſe,

Then a great Ranſom cannot deliver thee.

The word rendred **Ranſom** ſignifies that which is paid as a price for the deliverance of a Captive out of bondage: Thus Chriſt gave himſelf a Ranſom for ſinners. But here is a Caſe wherein no Ranſom will be taken, no, though it be, not a ſmall, petty Ranſom, but a *great Ranſom*, of that (ſaith *Elihu*) *it cannot deliver thee.* As if he had ſaid, When once God is ſo far provoked, that the Decree is gone forth to deſtroy thee, then it will be in vain to think of getting off by Ranſom.

רב כפר *Redemptionis Pretium, quod* λυτρον *Græci appellant.*

Here it may be queried, What is this great Ranſom that will not deliver? There is a twofold Ranſom, by one of which the people of God are ſometimes delivered, and always by the other.

Firſt, The people of God are ſometimes ranſomed or delivered by the deſtruction and ruine of the wicked; that's their Ranſom, and that not ſeldom, proves a great Ranſom. It is ſaid expreſly (*Prov.* 21.18.) *The wicked ſhall be a Ranſom for the righteous*; how, a Ranſom for the righteous! will a wicked man pay a Ranſom for the righteous? Or will the wicked man offer himſelf a Ranſom for him, and ſay, I'le die inſtead of the righteous man? Surely there's no ſuch thing to be expected from him. *Peradventure for a good man* (ſaith the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 5.7,8.) *one would even dare to die*; that is, one good man may poſſibly be willing to lay down his life for another good man. *Scarcely for a righteous man would one die*; that is, for a man, who only gives every man his due, or doth every man right: But for a good man, that is, for a man that hath been very kind and bountiful to others, ſome *would even dare to die*; yet he that doth ſo, muſt be ſuppoſed to be a righteous and a good man himſelf. For it cannot be thought that a wicked man would give himſelf a Ranſom for the righteous, that he would die for him whom he doth not love, yea, whom he uſually hates to the death. How then is it affirmed by *Solomon*, that the wicked ſhall be a Ranſom for the righteous? The meaning is, God will deſtroy the wicked, to ſave the righteous, or he will ſave the righteous, even through the blood and deſtruction of the wicked: In that ſence the wicked are many times a Ranſom for the righteous, rather than the righteous ſhall periſh, the Lord will deſtroy the wicked, Thus the Lord ſpake by his Prophet of old (*Iſa.* 43.3.) *I gave* Egypt *for thy Ranſom*, Ethiopia *and* Sheba *for thee.* How was *Egypt* a Ranſom for *Iſrael*? Had they any mind to deliver the people of God? No; but rather than God would not have *Iſrael* ſaved, he deſtroyed *Pharaoh* and the *Egyptians* in the Red Sea. Thus the Lord makes the wicked a Ranſom for the righteous. Though *Egypt* were a very goodly Country, yet God deſtroyed it by ten Plagues, that he might deliver *Iſrael.* Though *Pharaoh* was a great Prince, he drowned him in the Sea, rather than his people ſhould go back into Captivity. *Solomon* gives us this ſenſe of the Prophets words fully in his own (*Prov.* 11.8.) *The righteous is delivered out of trouble, and the wicked cometh in his ſtead.*

Secondly, There is another, a more excellent Ranſom for the people of God, and that is *the Blood of Jeſus Chriſt*: *We are bought with a price*, dearly bought, and that's the Price with which we are bought (1 *Cor.*6.20.) that's a ranſom which ſets ſinners free, and make them free indeed (*John* 8.36.) free from ſin, and free unto righteouſneſs (*Matth.* 20.28.) *He gave himſelf a ranſom for many*; for a great many, for all who believe and take hold of his name. When *Elihu* ſaith, *A great ranſom cannot deliver*, 'tis not to be underſtood of the ranſom which Chriſt hath paid; that's a ranſom ſo great, ſo precious, that it hath, and doth, and will for ever deliver the greateſt, the worſt of ſinners, who run to it from the wrath of God.

What then is the ranſom that is invalid and uſeleſs, which will not be accepted, which cannot deliver?

I anſwer, Firſt, in general; it is any thing on this ſide Chriſt, be it what it will. The greateſt ranſom that men can deviſe or heap up together, or that men can make, whatſoever it is, beſides the ranſom of Gods own appointment, will not deliver a ſinner when once wrath hath ſeized upon him.

I anſwer, Secondly, as to particulars: It is not, Firſt, Riches, no not Gold. Secondly, Is it not our own prayers, no not tears. Thirdly, Is it not our own good works, no not our own righteouſneſs. Fourthly, It is not any of the good works or righteouſneſs of any other, the holieſt men on Earth, no not the righteouſneſs of the Saints and holy Angels in Heaven, that can deliver us from the wrath of God. The firſt of theſe particulars *Elihu* gives for inſtance in verſe 19. (of which I ſhall there ſpeak further) and we may underſtand this verſe of all the reſt. *Then a great ranſom cannot deliver thee.*

Hence Note, *There is nothing but the blood of Chriſt can ranſom ſinners from the wrath of God, nor will that deliver ſome ſinners.*

(I ſuppoſe *Elihu* might have reſpect to that, in urging *Job* to humble himſelf and repent.) There are Caſes, wherein even the Blood of Chriſt will not deliver; though that hath an intrinſecal vertue, power, and value, to deliver any ſinner, yet, I ſay, there are caſes, wherein even that great ranſom, the Blood of Chriſt, will not deliver ſinners; or thus, there are many ſinners in ſuch a caſe, that Chriſt will not ranſom them by his Blood. But who are they?

Firſt, All that are impenitent, and perſiſt obſtinately in their ſins. If any man reſolve to go on in ſin, the Blood of Chriſt is no ranſom for him. Jeſus Chriſt came to ſave us from our ſins, not to ſave us in our ſins.

Secondly, All that are unbelievers; though they have a great meaſure of ſorrow (ſuch as it is) for ſin, yea, ſuppoſe they have left off the outward practice of thoſe ſins, for which they have ſorrowed, yet if they do not lay hold on Chriſt by faith, his Blood is no ranſom for them. As Chriſt will not ſave preſumptuous ſinners, who believe without repenting, ſo neither will he ſave incredulous ſinners, who repent without believing. Thirdly, That great price of the Blood of Chriſt is not a ranſom for apoſtatizing ſinners, who having pretended to repentance, and made profeſſion of faith, yet go back from Chriſt and his ways, at once building what they ſeemed to have deſtroyed by repentance, and deſtroying what they ſeem'd to be built up in by faith. The Apoſtle declares the doom of all ſuch (*Heb.* 10.26.) *For if we ſin wilfully after we have received the knowledg of the truth, there remains no more Sacrifice for ſin.* Wilful ſinners againſt received light caſt off the Sacrifice of Chriſt (which is our ranſom, and) with which they ſeemed to cloſe; and having caſt that off, God will never be at the coſt to provide them another Sacrifice: *There remains* (ſaith the Text) *no more Sacrifice for ſin.* They would have no more to do with that Sacrifice for ſin (that's the caſe of thoſe who ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt) and there is no other Sacrifice for them. Such Apoſtates *crucifie to themſelves the Son of God afreſh, and* (by their being aſhamed of him, and turning from him, as much as in them lies) *put him to open ſhame*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks (*Heb.* 6.6.) but God will never crucifie his Son afreſh, nor put him again to open ſhame, for the ranſoming of wilful Apoſtates. It is the ground of our hope, that God once gave up his Son to be crucified for us, but they are of all men moſt hopeleſs, who crucifie to themſelves the Son of God afreſh. The Son of God, Jeſus Chriſt, will not ſave *thoſe that tread him under foot*, nor ſhall *the Blood of the Covenant* be a ranſom for *thoſe who count it an unholy thing*; as 'tis ſaid at the 29. verſe. They who refuſe the Goſpel, that is, Goſpel-Grace, ſhall never have any benefit by the Goſpel; theſe Apoſtates do not only refuſe to chuſe the grace of the Goſpel, but refuſe it after a ſeeming choice of it, and are therefore ſaid in the cloſe of that verſe, *to have done deſpight to the Spirit of Grace*; and ſhall they who deſpiſe, and, which is more, do deſpight to the Spirit of grace, be ranſom'd through Grace? Thus we ſee, that as nothing but the Blood of Chriſt can be a ranſom, ſo ſome ſhall have no ſhare in nor benefit by that great ranſom. They who repent not, they who believe not, they who ſin wilfully after a profeſſion made, both of Faith and Repentance, can have no deliverance by that *great ranſom, the Blood of Jeſus Chriſt.*

Elihu having told *Job* in general, that if he provoked God to wrath, then a great ranſom could not deliver him, proceeds to give him one particular inſtance of what cannot; and he gives it in that which is the moſt uſual ranſom, which hath ranſomed Thouſands from the wrath of man, that is, *Riches, Gold.*

Verſe 19. **Will he eſteem thy riches? No, not Gold, nor all the forces of ſtrength.**

As if he had ſaid, Poſſibly, O *Job*, thou having been a great man, a rich man, the richeſt, the greateſt man in all the Eaſt, mayſt think thou couldſt buy off thy offence with Gold, and get out from under his wrath by thy wealth and riches; but ſuppoſe thou wert as great and rich as ever, or greater and richer then any are, or ever were,

Will he eſteem thy riches?

The word rendred **Eſteem**, ſignifies to put in order, becauſe things which are of eſteem and value, are laid up handſomely and orderly. As no man eſteems traſh, ſo he will not lay it up among his treaſures. *Will he eſteem, or lay up thy riches*, as ſome precious thing, as his treaſure: ſurely no. The queſtion (as frequently in Scripture) is a ſtrong denial; will he? He will not value thy riches, no more then a ruſh; what doſt tell him of thy riches, he makes no account of all that thou haſt to give, yea, though thou hadſt all the World to give: Men will eſteem thy riches, money anſwers all things among men, but alaſs, it will anſwer nothing with God, *will he eſteem*

ערך *Ordinavit; & quia res æſtimandæ ordinantur aliæ juxta alias, ideo pro æſtimare ſumitur.* Merc.

Thy riches?] Some tranſlate the word which we render **Riches**, by *nobleneſs* or *greatneſs*; ſo Mr. *Broughton*, *Will he eſteem thy nobleneſs?* The word ſignifies both, and *Job* was both, he was a great man, and a Nobleman, the chief Magiſtrate, a Prince among the people where he dwelt, as appears fully in Chapter 29. *Will he eſteem either thy riches, or thy nobleneſs?* Shalt thou be accepted becauſe thou art a great Lord, a mighty man, doſt thou think the Lord will eſteem thee for this? Certainly no. We may take in both ſenſes of the word, *Will he eſteem thy riches, or nobleneſs?*

Hence Note, Firſt, *Greatneſs without goodneſs, is of little or no eſteem with God.*

Note, Secondly, *God will not be taken off by any outward reſpect whatſoever, from bringing vengeance upon evil men.*

God will not be ſtopt in his courſe of Juſtice with riches or great titles, with honour or nobleneſs: The riches of one man cannot ranſom another, (*Pſal.* 49.7, 8, 9.) *They that truſt in their wealth, and boaſt themſelves in the multitude of their riches, none of them can by any means redeem his Brother, nor give to God a ranſom for him.* Nor can any mans riches ranſom himſelf, (*Prov.* 10.2.) *Treaſures of wickedneſs* (that is, treaſures gotten wickedly) *profit nothing.* Nor will the treaſures of the wicked (though well gotten) profit them, (*Prov.* 11.4.) *Riches avail not in the day of wrath*, (Zeph. 1.7.) *Their Gold and Silver ſhall not profit them in the day of my wrath.* If you preſent your ſelves before God with Titles of Honour, and Bags of Gold, neither the one nor the other will do it, he will not regard thy Riches, or Nobleneſs. When *Iſhmael* came treacherouſly upon thoſe *Jews*, ten of them ſaid, *Slay us not*, (Jer 4.8.) *for we have great treaſures in the Field, of Wheat, and of Barley, and Oil, and of Wine; ſo he forbare, and ſlew them not among their Brethren.* But this will not do in the day of the Lords anger.

Will he eſteem thy riches?] Some tranſlate thus, *Will he regard thy crying or clamor?* As if *Elihu* had ſaid, *Cry as much as thou wilt, the Lord will not regard it.* This goes higher. Many poſſibly will not be taken off from the proceſs of juſtice, by greatneſs or riches, who yet by our humble ſupplication and cry may be taken off; *But will the Lord regard thy cry?* Or as the Septuagint read it, *Will he have regard to thy prayer?* Wicked men that have rejected the Lords commands, will yet hope, or rather preſume, the Lord will hear their cry, and therefore they will be at their prayers in times of trouble, when the wrath of God breaks out; this is their laſt reſort and refuge. They who never made the Lord their choice in good times, will yet make him their refuge in evil times,, or in days of trouble; they think ſurely to be ſheltered, and ſaved, and ſpared, when they pray: But this will not do neither; *Will he eſteem thy prayers?* The Hebrew Text, at leaſt, allows, if not clearly holds out this reading, and it can be no hurt to take in as much profitable ſenſe, as the words, without undue ſtraining, may hold out to us. So then, when the Lords wrath appears, neither riches, nor honour, nor prayers, nor tears can give ſinners any relief. The cryes and prayers of the wicked are no more regarded by God, than their riches or greatneſs. *Then they ſhall call upon me,* (ſaith *Wiſdom,* Prov.1.28.) that is, *When their fear cometh as deſolation, and their deſtruction cometh as a Whirlwind, when diſtreſs and anguiſh cometh upon them,* (v. 27.) when 'tis thus with them, *then they ſhall call upon me, but I will not anſwer;* that is, I will not eſteem their cry. That's a very remarkable Scripture, (*Pſal.*18.41.) where *David* ſpeaking of his enemies, how the Lord had given him their necks, and a power to deſtroy them that hated him, preſently adds, *They cryed, but there was none to ſave them,* (but it may be they cryed where they ſhould not for help; no, ſaith the Text, *they cryed*) *even to the Lord, but he anſwered them not: Then did I beat them as ſmall as the duſt before the wind,* &c. The Lord having declared how reſolv'd he was to proceed in a way of wrath againſt the *Jewiſh* Nation, adds (*Jer.* 14. 12.) *When they faſt I will not hear their cry.* That people had been very obſtinate and rebellious, they had withſtood the call of God by the Prophet; yet when they ſaw wrath appearing and approaching, then they betook themſelves to faſting and prayer; but ſaith the Lord, it ſhall not advantage them, though they faſt and in their faſting cry, yet I will not regard them, nor be intreated: I know they will be praying to me, but I will take no notice of them. See how dreadful a thing it is to refuſe the offers and tenders of grace, to go on in a way of ſin; for then, no ranſom will do it, riches and honours, yea prayers and crys and tears, ſhall not be regarded. *Will he eſteem thy riches?*

שוע *Clamavit. Septuaginta idin mente habuiſſe videntur, nam vertunt* δεήσεως שוע *opulentus, dives* (Iſa.32.5.) שוע *per* ſcurec *ſignificat opes, cap.* 30. 24. *cap.* 34. 20. *Non æſtimabit clamorem tuum, nihil ducit quantumvis clames, non eo movebitur, ſed pro divitiis malo.* Merc.

No not Gold.] This is to be joyned (according to our tranſlation) with the former words, and it ſuits fully with our tranſlation of theſe words; Gold being the beſt of worldly riches, and having the greateſt power with and command over men; yet ſaith *Elihu, Will he eſteem thy riches, no not Gold.* He mentions that, becauſe (I ſay) it is the choiceſt part of riches, the worſt ſort of Gold is of higher eſteem and worth, than any other metal; Gold bears the greateſt price among metals, and hath the greateſt prevalency among men, but none with God. The word rendred *Gold,* ſignifies *defending,* but Gold is no defence againſt God. *Will he eſteem thy riches? No not Gold.* The Note is the ſame in ſubſtance with the former.

The Lord regards not men for their riches, no not for the beſt of riches.

Not only will he not eſteem your Copper, and Braſs, and Iron and Tin, but not your Gold, (1*Pet.*1.18.) Gold doth much with men, but nothing with God. I ſhall not ſtay upon this clauſe, it being only an hightning of the ſame thing before aſſerted. But

There are two other readings of the latter part of this verſe, upon which I ſhall ſtay a little: First, thus;

Will he eſteem thy riches? *No not in affliction.*

The word which we render as one, ſignifying *the beſt Gold, refined Gold,* other Interpreters render as two words, which ſignifie to be perplexed or in ſtreights; *Will be eſteem thy riches? No though thou art in the greateſt ſtreights, and knoweſt not what to do.*

Ne quidem in anguſtia בצר *ego nomen* בצר *verto in angustia; alii reddunt in ſignificatione auri, in qua reperitur, cap.*22, 24. *ſed ibi ſcribitur.* כצר *in accentu diſtinguente pro* בצר Piſc. בצר *In piel, contra rapinas munivit, hinc* בצר *aurum lectiſſimum, quaſi ab igne munitum aut quod ſit hominis munimentum.*

Hence Note, *The Lord will not regard rich wicked men, when they are in ſtreights.*

The Lord who eſteems not the wicked rich at any time, will leaſt eſteem them in an evil time. The Lord who hath an eſteem of, and a regard to the godly at all times, hath it eſpecially in a time of ſtreights and trouble. But as the Lord never regards wicked men, ſo then leaſt when they have moſt need of it. Will he eſteem them? *No not in affliction.*

There is a third reading of theſe words: *Will he eſteem thy riches? No not any defence.* As our tranſlation, *no not Gold,* falls in plainly with the firſt words of the Text; ſo this with the latter. *Will he eſteem thy riches, no not Gold,* ſay we, anſwering the word *riches* in the firſt part of the verſe. *Will he eſteem thy riches? No not defence,* ſay others, which anſwers thoſe words, *nor all the forces of ſtrength,* in the latter part of the verſe. So then, as our reading complies with the former part of the verſe, ſo this hath as fair a compliance with the latter; *No not any defence.* The word ſignifies *to fortify,* to fence, to make ſtrong, and hence, *Gold,* becauſe Gold is mans ſtrength and defence. Riches are a great ſtrength; to be rich in Gold is a mans ſtrong tower. *Will he eſteem thy riches? No, not Gold, or defence,*

Nor all the forces of ſtrength] Theſe words, in the cloſe of the verſe, being the ſame with the middle part, as laſt rendred, may very well be drawn up into one, and conceived of, as if *Elihu* had ſaid, *Suppoſe thou art a mighty man and haſt ſtrong forces, he will not eſteem thee for all that; the very weakneſs of God is ſtronger than man* (1Cor.1.25.) that is, than the ſtrongeſt man, or than any ſtrength which man can procure, either to oppoſe God, or to protect himſelf againſt him. The Prophet to ſhew the great power of the *Caldeans,* ſaith (*Hab.*1.10.) *They ſhall ſcoff at Kings, and deride every ſtrong hold.* Surely the Lord is ſo far from eſteeming the defences and forces of ſtrength, which men make to, and for themſelves, that he ſcoffs at and derides them. The Lord will deride all the ſtrong holds of man, even the forces of ſtrength. Some get internal carnal ſtrong holds, to fortifie themſelves in, of which the Apoſtle ſpeaks (2*Cor.* 10. 4.) *The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty, through God, to the caſting down of ſtrong holds.* Moſt ſinners are men of wit, they provide themſelves ſtrong holds to ſave their ſins in, and have their excuſes and reaſonings to defend their ſins or themſelves in their ſins by. Others are men of might, they get external ſtrong holds, they have Armies and Cities of defence, to ſecure themſelves by; but *will the Lord regard either?* Not the ſtrong holds, ſet up and maintained by force of wit, *no, nor all the forces of ſtrength.* Though thou haſt Army upon Army, and City upon City, though thou doſt add Caſtle to Caſtle, and Fort to Fort, they are no more than paper walls before the Lord. As neither riches nor nobleneſs, ſo no power of man can ſecure man from the hand of God. Mr. *Broughton* varieth a little from our reading, yet concurs fully in ſenſe; *No Gold, nor any other thing ſhould be able to give ſound ſtrength;* which himſelf expounds by this ſhort gloſs. *If now thou deſpiſeſt repentance, thou ſhalt utterly be caſt off.* As if he had ſaid to *Job,* it is not thy, or any mans ſtanding out againſt God, that will help you, your only help is in repentance and ſelf-humbling before God. *Will he eſteem thy riches? No, not Gold, nor all the forces of ſtrength.*

Hence Note, *There is no ſtrength againſt the Lord.*

As *there is no counſel, ſo no force of ſtrength againſt the Lord. Hannah* ſang this truth (1*Sam.*2.9.) *By ſtrength ſhall no man prevail,* that is, againſt man, if God be with him; much more is it true that by ſtrength ſhall no man prevail againſt God (*Iſa.*1.31.) *The ſtrong ſhall be tow, and the maker thereof as a ſpark;* that is, as ſome expound, their Idols, whom they made their ſtrength, ſhall be as tow, that is, as the moſt combuſtible matter, eaſily conſumed, *and the maker of it,* that is, the Idol-maker, ſhall be *as a ſpark.* Do but blow a ſpark among tow, and what will become of it? Such are the ſtrongeſt Idols, in which men truſt, and ſuch are the mightieſt and ſtrongeſt men before the Lord, who truſt in them. Tow or Flax or Hemp (after the dreſſing) is as tinder, that the leaſt ſpark will give fire to. The ſtrong (Idol) ſhall be as tow, and the maker of it as a ſpark; or, which is in effect the ſame, *The ſtrong* (man) *ſhall be tow, and that which he hath made, or* (as we put in the Margin) *his work*, that is, his Idol, *ſhall be as a ſpark*, and they ſhall both burn, or periſh together. This is the ſentence of the Lord againſt the ſtrong, a ſpark ſhall ſet them on fire and burn them; how then ſhall the ſtrong be able to ſtand before the Lord who is not a ſpark, but a fire, and that a conſuming fire! And therefore I may urge *Elihu's* counſel to *Job*, upon all ſorts of men, upon thoſe eſpecially who perſiſt in any ſin, take heed, *becauſe there is wrath, beware*, &c. Or I may urge them with the Prophets dehortation (*Jer.*9.23.) *Let not the wiſe man glory in his wiſdom, nor the mighty man in his ſtrength, nor the rich man in his riches*, for, none of theſe can help or deliver from wrath, only Jeſus Chriſt can, and it hath been ſhewed who they are to whom he will not be a delivering ranſom. It may be very uſeful to conſider what negatives *Elihu* puts upon ſinners as to deliverance from kindled wrath; not riches, not honour, not crying, not praying, not ſtrength, not defence can deliver without turning from ſin to God, and all in Chriſt.

Elihu having urged two arguments to make *Job* beware of wrath, firſt, becauſe nothing could ranſom him, God regards not riches, no not Gold; ſecondly, becauſe nothing could reſcue him, all the *forces of ſtrength* could not defend him againſt, nor fetch him out from under the hand of God; *Elihu* (I ſay) having diſpatched theſe two arguments, he in the 20. *verſe* gives a further, and that a third argument to move *Job* to take heed of wrath, becauſe, as he could neither be ranſomed nor reſcued, ſo neither could he be hid or ſheltred from the wrath of God. That is the general ſenſe of the next verſe.

Verſe 20. **Deſire not the night; when people are cut off in their place.**

The root of that word which we render **Deſire**, ſignifies a very earneſt breathing or longing after a thing, as conceiving and believing the enjoyment thereof would be an exceeding comfort and refreſhment to us. So 'tis uſed in the ſeventh Chapter of this Book at the ſecond verſe; *as the ſervant earneſtly deſireth the ſhadow*, &c. When a Labourer is hot and ſweltered almoſt (as we ſay) at his work in the Sun, how earneſtly doth he deſire the ſhadow! We ſay (in the Margin of that place) *he gapeth after the ſhadow*. A man, when he is hot, gapes to ſuck in freſh Air. Such an intendment and force there is in this word, *deſire not*, long not for, gape not after

שאפ *Significat reſpirare, anhelare, ad aliquid vel rei alicujus ſummo deſiderio teneri.* Merc.

The night.] The night ſeems not to be a thing, or a ſeaſon ſo deſireable, that we ſhould gape for it or long after it. *Solomon* ſaith (*Eccl.*11.7.) *Surely light is pleaſant, and it is a comfortable thing for the eyes to behold the Sun*; but who hath a deſire after the night? What is the beauty or comlineſs of the night that any ſhould ſo much deſire it? why then doth *Elihu* here forbid *Job* (as ſuppoſing he did) to deſire it? *Deſire not the night.*

I anſwer, the night may be taken two ways, or under a twofo'd notion. Firſt properly, as that which caſteth a vail or mantle of darkneſs over both perſons and things, and covers them from our ſight; in alluſion to which, the ſenſe is this; do not hope to hide or conceal thy ſelf from the eye or knowledg of God. As thou canſt be not ranſomed, as thou canſt not be reſcued from his power (which was ſhewed before) ſo deſire not the night, for thou canſt not be obſcured from his knowledg under the covert of it, there is no hiding from God. Though I judg that interpretation too groſs, which ſuppoſeth *Elihu* counſelling *Job* not to deſire the night, as Robbers and Adulterers, to cover him while doing wickedly, yet poſſibly he might think *Job* was not ſo free to confeſs the evils which he had done, and therefore rather deſired the concealment of them.

Secondly, The night in Scripture, as alſo in humane Authors, is put improperly for death. All the dead are wrapt up in a night of darkneſs. Hence that counſel (*John* 9.4.) *Work while you have the day, the night cometh when no man can work.* We may work, yea, much work is done in the natural light. It is ſaid of the vertuous woman (*Prov.* 31. 18.) *Her candle goes not out by night*; ſhe and her maids are at work in the night; therefore it cannot be ſtrictly meant, that no man can work in the night. The night there is the night of death, or of an extream troublous life; in theſe nights, eſpecially in the former, no man can work, for there *is no wiſdom, nor device, nor labour in the grave whither we are going*, (*Eccl.*9.10.) According to this Scripture Interpretation, *deſire not the night*, is deſire not death. *Job* had put forth ſuch deſires more than once (*Chap.*7.15.) *My Soul chooſeth ſtrangling and death rather than life.* Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates, *Breath not unto that night: For peoples paſſage to their place:* That is, (ſaith he) *deſire not death, the common paſſage of all men, as thou haſt done.* Therefore *Elihu* ſeems to call *Job* off from thoſe deſires; do not thou peeviſhly or impatiently (becauſe of the trouble of thy life) call for death, leſt it come too ſoon, and it do by thee as it hath done by many others, whom it hath cut off in judgment. So it follows here, *Deſire not the night,*

Ne aſpires ad illam noctem (ſc. *mortis*)

qua abeunt populi ad locum ſuum. Jun. *Qua è medio tolluntur populi in loco ipſorum.* Piſc.

When people are cut off in their place.

Death is a cutting off. As many die in the night, ſo whenever any die they are cut off from this World, and all the imployments of it. They are cut off from their deareſt friends and relations, Death cuts off the thread of life, and us from the comforts of this life.

The Hebrew is, *when people aſcend*. The Original Scripture expreſſeth *dying by aſcending*, though the death of the wicked is rather a *deſcending*. It is ſaid by a late Writer concerning the Heathen profane and wicked Emperors of *Rome*, *Such a one deſcended* (that is, died) *in ſuch a Year of his abomination.* Now though the wicked deſcend when they die, yet there is a ſenſe alſo wherein all men may be ſaid to aſcend when they die; and there is no doubt but the godly, as to their more noble part, aſcend to God when they die. Thus the word is uſed in the fifth Chapter of this Book, at verſe 16. where *Eliphaz* ſpeaking of the death of a godly man, ſaith to *Job*, *Thou ſhalt come to thy grave in a full age, like as a ſhock of Corn cometh* (or *aſcendeth*) *in his ſeaſon.* *David* deprecated an immature death under this Metaphor (*Pſal.*102.14.) *Take me not away in the midſt of mine age.* The word is, *let me not aſcend in the midſt of mine age*, that is, before I have meaſured the uſual courſe of life. Thus to *aſcend*, is the ſame with to be *cut off*; death cuts off the beſt from this World, and then they aſcend to a better. This ſenſe of the words ſuits well with the latter expoſition of the *night*, as taken for the night of death. The word *aſcend*, is conceived to have in it a double alluſion; firſt, to Corn which is taken up by the hand of the reaper, and then laid down on the ſtubble. Secondly, unto the light of a Candle, which as the Candle ſpends, or as that which is the food of the fire is ſpending, aſcends, and at laſt goes out and vaniſheth.

Verbum ילת [illegible] *dere præ- cidi & tolli ſumitur.*

Tranſlatio à candelis, quarum lumen aſcendit, atque ita paulatim conſumuntur ipſa.

There is yet a further ſenſe of the whole verſe thus; *deſire not the night*, &c. That is, do not curiouſly enquire the cauſe of that divine judgment by which God ſometimes ſweeps away whole Nations, good and bad together, in the night, or ſuddenly. Or thus, diſquiet not thy mind in the night, but rather reſt in the will of God, when thou ſeeſt or heareſt of thoſe great deſtructions which come upon Perſons or Nations. *Deſire not the night, when people are cut off in their place*, that is, when they die in, or are removed from the place where they formerly lived and had their abode; in which ſenſe it is ſaid of the dead, *their place ſhall know them no more* (Pſal.103.16.) How well ſoever any are ſetled, death cuts them *off in their place*.

תחת *Sub, ſubter ſæpe ſignificat in loco.*

Firſt, Foraſmuch as *Elihu* ſpeaking to *Job* in this diſtreſſed eſtate, wiſhes him *not to deſire the night*,

> Obſerve, *In times of diſtreſs and trouble we are apt to make many ſtrange wiſhes, or to expreſs uncouth requeſts and deſires.*

The Prophet *Jeremiah* quits himſelf from this in one point (*Chap.*17.16.) *I have not deſired the woful day* (*Lord*) *thou knoweſt.* He was ſo far from deſiring it, that he prayed for the peace and proſperity of that people, but though *Jeremy* did not deſire the evil day to come on others, yet when the evil day was come upon himſelf we find him venting ſtrange and ſtrong deſires of that kind (*Chap.*9.2.) *O that my head were a fountain, and mine eyes rivers of tears, that I might weep night and day for the ſlain of the Daughter of my People.* He had viſions of ſlaughter, and he did even beg a head melted into water for abundant mourning over that day. But what were his other, what were his further wiſhes, with reſpect to himſelf at that time? We have them in the next verſe. *O that I had in the Wilderneſs a* *lodging place of a wayfaring man, that I might leave my people, and go from them, for they be all Adulterers, a company of treacherous men.* What uncomfortable deſires had *Jeremiah* as to that day of diſtreſs! O how did he covet to have a retiring place, any hole in the Wilderneſs, like a wayfaring man, that he might leave his people and ſee them no more, becauſe they were ſo wicked, and their wickedneſs he foreſaw would bring down ſuch dreadful evils upon them. And as he wiſht this ſad retirement upon the foreſight of evils to come, ſo we find him in another place (*Chap.*20.14,15,16, *&c.*) wiſhing that he had never been born to ſee ſuch preſent evils. We have the like plain wiſh of *David*, in the day of his trouble (*Pſal.*55.2.) *Attend unto me (O God) and hear me, I mourn in my complaint, and make a noiſe; becauſe the voice of the enemy, becauſe of the oppreſſion of the wicked: For they caſt iniquity upon me, and in wrath they hate me (they charged him with evils that he had not done) my heart is ſore pained within me, the terrors of death are fallen upon me, fearfulneſs and trouble are come upon me, and horror hath overwhelmed me,* or *covered me. David* was at that time in a very ſad day, you ſee; and what was his wiſh that day? We have it in verſe 6. *And I ſaid, O that I had wings like a Dove, for then would I flee away and be at reſt; lo then would I wander far off and remain in the Wilderneſs.* Holy *David* could not keep his heart (in thoſe diſtreſſes) from extravagant wiſhes. *David* had the integrity of a Dove (as he often pleaded before the Lord) and being diſtreſt, he wiſhed alſo for the wings of a Dove, that he might flee away, and get out of the reach of all thoſe impendent calamities. How uſually is it for good men in bad days to breath out ſuch wiſhes? One wiſhes that he had never been born, rather than to ſee ſuch a day; another wiſhes he may die preſently, rather than live in ſuch a day. When the Apoſtle *John* had given the propheſie of dreadful Judgments to come upon the wicked World, or the World of wicked men, he preſently tells us what their wiſhes or deſires will be (*Rev.*9.6.) *And in thoſe days ſhall men ſeek death, and ſhall not find it, and ſhall deſire to die, and death ſhall flee from them.* Moſt men flee death, that's a miſery; but death fleeth from ſome men, and that's a greater miſery. They are in the worſt of conditions who would have death when death will not be had. Their lives are worſe than death who only wiſh to die. What non-ſenſe wiſhes and deſires had they alſo in the day of the Lords anger, mentioned in the ſame Book (*Chap.*6.16.) *Who ſaid to the Mountains and to the Rocks, fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that ſitteſt on the Throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.* It is poſſible for good men ſometimes to have ſtrange wiſhes; but O how lamentable are the wiſhes of wicked men and unbelievers, who have no part nor intereſt in Jeſus Chriſt, in thoſe times when Conſcience is wounded and awakened, or when a day of the Lords wrath or Judgment from the Lord appeareth! When Chriſt the Lamb ſhall ſit upon the Throne, and call them to give an account, O then they will wiſh for Rocks and Mountains to fall upon them, that they might not appear; how glad will they then be to be hidden with an everlaſting night! They cannot but *deſire the night, who have ſinned againſt light.* Holy *Job* could not forbear to deſire the night of death in the day of his diſtreſs; what deſires then muſt the wicked have, who have no hope beyond this life!

Again, as to the vanity of that deſign of ſome in deſiring the night for ſhelter,

Note, *There is nothing can cover us from the eye, or ſecure us from the hand of God.*

What is darkneſs to God, *who is light, and in whom there is no darkneſs at all* (1 John 1.5.) *Deſire not the night.* As Gold and Silver cannot ranſom ſinners, as great forces, (all the Armies on Earth) forces of ſtrength cannot help ſinners, ſo the night cannot hide them; they that are in the groſſeſt darkneſs, are never the more out of Gods ſight; *The darkneſs is not darkneſs to him, the darkneſs and the light to him are both alike* (Pſal.139.11,12.) and therefore he ſaid before (*verſ.*7.) *Whither ſhall I go from thy Spirit?* or *whither ſhall I flee from thy preſence? If I aſcend up to Heaven thou art there,* &c. Whereſoever we are, God is, who is every where; nothing can keep us off from, or keep us out of eye of God.

Laſtly, as *the night*, is taken for death; *Deſire not the night,*

Hence Note, *It is a vain wiſh to deſire death for our reſcue, or eſcape from the evils of this life.*

Death is it ſelf an evil, the worſt of natural evils. How can that help us out of our evils of trouble, which is it ſelf the moſt troubleſom evil? The Lord promiſeth ſome of his people that they ſhould die before the evil day; *Joſiah* and *Hezekiah* had ſuch promiſes: 'Tis a favour to die (as they did) in the aſſurance of eternal life, before we feel the evils of this life. But death, conſidered in it ſelf, is no relief againſt evil; and as it is the worſt of natural evils in it ſelf, ſo it carrieth thoſe who are unprepared and unprovided for it; to worſer evils than any they can meet with in this life. Some deſire death to eſcape the evils of this life, when, as ſoon as they die, they go to the evils of another life, which are the *ſecond death,* ſuch a death as hath *no ſecond,* and deſcend not only to the grave, but to Hell. And what hath any one got by leaving the troubles of this life, to fall into the dolors of that ſecond ſecondleſs death! They only dream of ſecurity by death, who are unprepared to die. Death is good for none but thoſe that are fitted for, and have by faith laid hold upon eternal life.

VERS. 21.

Take heed, regard not iniquity, for this thou haſt choſen rather than affliction.

IN this verſe *Elihu* gives *Job* another ſerious admonition, or re-enforceth the former, warning him to take heed of ſpeaking or uttering any thing raſhly, unduly, or unbecomingly of God, in reſpect of his troubles and ſufferings; and this he urgeth upon him by two ſorts of arguments, as will appear when I come to handle the two following verſes.

שמר *Cuſtodivit, ſervavit.*

Take heed, regard not iniquity.] As if he had ſaid, *beware, be well adviſed what thou doſt, and what thou ſayeſt.* The word which we render *take heed,* ſignifies to keep and preſerve, but moſt properly, to prevent and keep off any evil, that it fall not upon us. The noun, from this root, ſignifies *a watch tower,* upon which a perſon ſtands to obſerve and give warning of any danger, or to deſcry any approaching enemy. 'Tis tranſlated, *take heed,* as here, ſo (1 *Kings* 2.4.) where *David* upon his death-bed, gives counſel to *Solomon* his Son and Succeſſor what to do, and how to walk in the way of the Lord, that (ſaith he) *The Lord may continue his word which he ſpake concerning me, ſaying, if thy Children take heed to their ways,* that is, if they are very watchful over their ways, both as to their perſonal and princely walkings, if they walk in my Statutes, then I will do thus and thus for them. Thus ſaith *Elihu, take heed, look about you,* have your eyes in your head, be careful. Theſe *take heeds* are frequent in Scripture. From whence (before I come to the matter about which *Elihu* would have *Job* take heed)

Obſerve, *It is our duty to be heedful.*

We cannot be dutiful unleſs we are heedful; a heedleſs perſon cannot be a faultleſs perſon. This duty runs quite through all we have to do; *take heed,* firſt, to the inward motions of the Soul, take heed how and what you think (*Pro.*4.23.) *keep thy heart with all diligence (with all keepings, with all heedings,* it is this word in the Text) heed thy heart, that is, thy firſt ſtirrings and motions unto any work. Secondly, take heed, as to the firſt motions of the Soul, ſo to the affections of the Soul, which are Soul-motions formed up and ſtated; take heed of your affections, how and what you deſire, how and what you love, how & what you hate. Thirdly, take heed to the tongue, how you ſpeak, & what you ſpeak, where you ſpeak, and why or for what ends you ſpeak, there is a great deal of *take heed* belonging to the tongue. Fourthly, take heed to the ear, when you hear others ſpeak, take heed how you hear, and when ye hear, and what you hear; infection may ſoon come in at thoſe ports. Fifthly, take heed to the eyes, what you behold; the eyes are Windows which often let in vanity, yea, I may ſay, venom and poiſon into the Soul. In a word take heed of all your actions, or of your whole converſation; take heed what you do, and how you do it; ſee that ye walk circumſpectly, take heed in and about all theſe things, that ye ſin not, eſpecially, that ye neither have, nor carry on any deſign or work that is ſinful; take heed that ye be not found falling into that error, to avoid which, *Elihu* calleth or awakeneth *Job* to this watchfulneſs, *take heed*.

אל־תפן *A verbo* פנה *quod ſæpe animi intentionem, vel contemplationem valet ad aliquem finem, utpote ad miſerandum, vel interrogandum, vel adjudicandum.* Bold.

Regard not iniquity.] Here is the ſpecial matter in the Text, about which *Elihu* adviſes *Job* to be heedful, *regard not iniquity*. The word rendred *regard*, ſignifies the turning of the face to look upon any object; that which we much regard, we turn about to look upon it, as that which we ſlight, we turn away from it and will not look upon it, we turn our face to a perſon or thing, ſignifying our approbation, and we turn away our face to ſhew our diſlike; and therefore we do well expreſs this word, which ſignifies *to turn the face, by regarding; turn not thy face to iniquity*, look not to it, give it not any reſpect or countenance, *regard not*

און *Iniquitas, vanitas.* Ἄτοπα, *Abſurda, indecentia.* Sept.

Iniquity.] The word ſignifies *vanity* properly. All iniquity is vanity, ſin is vanity, and ſin hath brought vanity into the whole creation, yea ſin makes all things a vexation to us. The *Chaldee* ſaith, *regard not a lie*, the Septuagint, *regard not things abſurd or uncomly*.

But what iniquity doth *Elihu* here chiefly intend? I anſwer, It is a truth of iniquity in general, regard not any iniquity; yet here *Elihu* ſpeaks not in that compaſs; as if he ſhould ſay, regard not robbery, regard not murder, regard not adultery and wantonneſs, regard not any of theſe foul and groſs ſins; but there was a ſpecial ſin which *Elihu* had an aim at, and which he thought *Job* gave too much regard unto; *regard not iniquity*, that is, undue ſpeeches and heart-grudgings, or impatient complainings againſt the proceedings of God with thee; that is, do not ſtand ſo much complaining about what thou ſuffereſt, and juſtifying thy ſelf in what thou haſt done, expoſtulate the matter no more with God, wiſh not for the night of death, &c. This *is to regard or turn thy face to iniquity*; take heed of theſe things, do not regard theſe evils, this kind of iniquity.

Further, when *Elihu* ſaith *regard not iniquity*, we are to expound him by theſe affirmatives; *ſlight it, turn from it, abhor it, loath it, deſpiſe it, reject it*; all theſe affirmatives are contained in that negative, *regard not*. Frequently in Scripture, negatives intend their contrary affirmatives. When that Scripture ſaith, *deſpiſe not propheſying* (1 *Theſ.* 5.) the meaning is, *ye ſhall regard it*, love it, follow it, delight in it; ſo on the other hand, when this Scripture ſaith, *regard not iniquity*, the meaning is, *deſpiſe* and oppoſe iniquity to the utmoſt; *Take heed, regard not iniquity.* From this part of the verſe thus opened,

Obſerve, Firſt, *It is no eaſie matter to keep our ſelves right when things ſeem to go wrong with us.*

It is a hard thing to forbear iniquity when we are pinched with adverſity; not to ſpeak unduely and uncomly, not to ſpeak amiſs of God, not to ſpeak unbecoming our ſelves, require great caution in a day of diſtreſs. We have need to take heed of this iniquity, to be watchful in an evil day, that we neither do nor ſay that which is evil. *When things are amiſs with us, we are very apt to ſpeak and do amiſs.* As ſoon as ever the hand of God toucheth us, how do we grieve! how do we complain! how do we murmur! how do we repine! O regard not this, 'tis an iniquity to be taken heed of, in a dark day, in a day of trouble, ſuch as was upon *Job*; as black a day was upon him, as ever upon any in the world, as to his perſonal condition. If ſuch a Cedar failed, have not we, poor ſhrubs, reaſon to look about in ſuch a day? When an affliction is very great, they that are for reputation great and ſtrong in faith, very choice believers, experienced ſoldiers in the wars of Jeſus Chriſt (when an affliction (I ſay) grows very great) how apt are they to be diſmayed, to be out of heart, to deſpond, to look upon themſelves as undone, and all undone! O regard not, turn from this iniquity. It ſhould not ſatisfie any ſervant of God that he avoids groſs iniquities in practice, he muſt make conſcience of an impatient word, and order his ſpeech aright under the rod, as well as his converſation.

Secondly, Foraſmuch as *Elihu* calls this an iniquity,

Obſerve, *Impatient ſpeeches render us guilty, let our afflictions and troubles be never ſo great.*

Job's affliction was as heavy as the ſand, yet *Elihu* tells him, your complainings are your iniquity. I have had occaſion ſeveral times in this book to ſpeak of the evil of complaining, under the worſt and soreſt of afflictions, and therefore I only name it here.

Thirdly, taking iniquity in the largeſt notion,

Obſerve, *Sin deſerves no reſpect from us.*

Sinners deſerve no reſpect, much leſs doth ſin. 'Tis one part of the character which *David* gives of a Citizen of *Sion*, (*Pſal.* 15.4) He is one, *in whoſe eyes a vile perſon* (that is, a wicked perſon, a perſon given up to his luſts) *is contemned*. That which makes a perſon vile and contemptible, is worſe than a vile perſon, and therefore ſhould have leſs reſpect, or more contempt from us. Remember, ſin is the only thing which makes any perſon vile; ſhould we then give any reſpect to ſin? ſhould we give reſpect to that which brings utter diſreſpect upon us? have we any reaſon to honour that which brings us to ſhame? to regard that which makes us regardleſs both with God and all good men? However ſome men are regarded with men for their wickedneſs, I mean with wicked men (they regard their like the more, when they are moſt like them) yet (I ſay) ſin makes every man regardleſs with God and every good man: Therefore regard it not, yea, ſlight it, trample upon it. Take that

For a fourth note in the affirmative;

Iniquity is utterly to be diſregarded and abominated;

We ſhould abhor it and caſt it out of our ſouls, we ſhould throw it out of our converſation.

Note, Fifthly, *To regard iniquity is the mark of a wicked man.*

As 'tis his property to diſregard all good (*Pſal.* 36.4.) *he ſetteth not his heart to that which is good, he abhorreth not evil*; that is, he hath no regard to the good of duty, and he hath a great regard to the evil of iniquity. His not abhorring evil is to be interpreted in the affirmative, he regards, reſpects evil, he prizes and values his very baſeſt luſts before the Law and Will of God. *David* diſclaimeth this baſe ſpirit (*Pſal.* 66. 18.) *If I regard iniquity in my heart, God will not hear my prayers.* Now who are they whoſe prayers God will not hear? We have the anſwer made by the blind man (*Joh.* 9.) *God heareth not ſinners:* whom will he hear then, ſeeing all are ſinners? His meaning is, he hears not *impenitent ſinners*, unbelieving ſinners, ſuch as trade on in a way of ſin. Thus *David* concluded, *if I regard iniquity in my heart, God will not hear me*; for if I regard iniquity, I am of thoſe ſinners whoſe prayers God will not hear. Though *David* had done great iniquities, and had much iniquity in his heart, yet he regarded no iniquity in his heart, *If I have looked to any iniquity in my heart* (ſaith he) as the word is, that is, if iniquity in my heart be ſmiled upon, if I have pleaſed my ſelf with it, if I have given it a good look, I were a wicked man, and God heareth not ſuch.

Laſtly, from theſe words, *Elihu* ſpeaking thus to *Job*, a godly man, *take heed, regard not iniquity.*

Note, *A godly man ſhould take heed of doing any thing which may ſignifie the leaſt reſpect or regard unto ſin, the leaſt reſpect to the leaſt ſin.*

Indulge not thy ſelf in complainings and impatience, leſt thou be found to *regard iniquity*, as *Job* is here charged in the next words.

For this thou haſt choſen rather than affliction.

Here *Elihu* applieth the matter yet cloſer to *Job*; I have adviſed thee, *to take heed, not to regard iniquity*, and my admonition is not without cauſe; I do not ſpeak at random, for I tell thee plainly, *thou haſt choſen this rather than affliction*; that is, thou haſt regarded iniquity. To chooſe is to regard.

This thou haſt choſen rather than affliction. This, What? This ſin, impatient complaining and expoſtulating with God, this ſin thou haſt choſen. The word which we tranſlate

בחר *Elegit, ſelegit.*

to chooſe, denotes a very ſerious and exact work of the ſoul. Choice is a deliberate act; we chooſe upon diſcuſſion and debate; choice is made upon trial and proof. Thus the word is uſed (*Exod.*17. 9.) *Joſhua* was to take choſen, approved, experienced men, to go to the war againſt *Amalek. David gathered all the choſen men of Iſrael* (2 *Sam.* 6. 1.) And thus the Lord ſpake to the houſe of *Jacob* by the Prophet (*Iſa.* 48. 10.) *I have choſen thee*; Where? *I have choſen thee in the fire of affliction.* Affliction is a tryer, and either diſcovers who are fit to be choſen, or fits and prepares them to be choſen. *This thou haſt choſen*

Rather than affliction.] But may we ſay that *Job* ſat down, and putting his affliction in one ballance and ſin in another, choſe iniquity rather than affliction, or ſin rather than ſuffering? Surely the bent of *Job*'s ſpirit, the frame of his heart was far otherwiſe; nor is it conſiſtent with a gracious ſtate, or a ſtate of grace, to ſit down and make a perfect election of any ſin, upon any terms whatſoever. Therefore the word *chooſing* may be taken in a milder ſenſe, or in a more moderate intendment; as if *Elihu* had ſaid, *Thou haſt ſpoken and done ſuch things, thou haſt behaved thy ſelf ſo under thine afflictions, as that a man may ſay, ſurely thou haſt choſen iniquity rather than affliction; thou haſt given others great cauſe to judg thus of thee.* *Elihu* did not purpoſe to faſten this upon *Job*, that he had purpoſely concluded to chooſe ſin rather than affliction; but he had taken liberty (through the violence of his temptations and the extremity of his pains) to uſe ſuch impatient ſpeeches and actings as might be interpreted, in a ſenſe, a chooſing of iniquity (that is, impatience) rather than affliction; that is, a quiet ſufferance of affliction. *This thou haſt choſen rather than affliction*, or, (as ſome render it) *For this cauſe haſt thou choſen any thing rather than affliction*, thou haſt choſen what came next rather than affliction; or, *thou haſt choſen this becauſe of thine affliction*, ſo others read it; that is, thou haſt been ſo preſt with thine affliction and trouble, that thou careſt not what thou chuſeſt.

Præ afflictione. i. e. *magis quam afflictionem, hoc eſt tolerantiam afflictionis. Metonymia ſubjecti.* Piſc.

Mr. *Broughton* thus; *Beware thou look not to ſorrow, to chooſe that for thy affliction.* The ſum of all is, as if *Elihu* had thus beſpoken *Job* in this part of the verſe; *O Job, whereas God requires of thee to give him glory in the humble ſubmiſſion of thy ſoul unto him, and ſitting patiently under his mighty hand, thou haſt behaved thy ſelf quite otherwiſe, thou haſt carried it ſtoutly, and uttered very bitter complainings of thy condition, thou haſt not given God the glory of his ſoveraignty, of his holineſs, juſtice, purity and goodneſs, in thy affliction, thou haſt not ſet thy ſelf to do this as thou ſhouldſt, but thou haſt run out exceedingly, and overſhot thy ſelf; So that, I may even ſay of thee, thou haſt choſe this iniquity, rather than ſubmitted to thy affliction.*

Elihu ſpeaks reprovingly, *this thou haſt choſen*; Is this a good choice?

Hence note, Firſt, *Sin, or that which is ſinful, ought not to be choſen whatſoever we chooſe.*

As *Solomon* counſelleth in the book of *Proverbs*, *With all thy gettings get underſtanding*, he means ſpiritual underſtanding: as if he had ſaid, *Whatever thou art getting be ſure thou get wiſdom for thy ſoul, wiſdom to ſalvation, wiſdom for eternity; in all thy gettings get underſtanding:* So I may ſay in this place, *among all your chooſings be ſure you never chooſe ſin; that's not to be choſen, leave that out, or paſs that by in all your elections.* This is a point of very large compaſs; it ſuits not my work here, to inſiſt much upon it, yet I ſhall take leave a little; *What ever you chooſe, chooſe not ſin.* Why?

Firſt, Sin is evil in it ſelf, and that which is (*malum in ſe*) evil in it ſelf, or evil it ſelf, is not the object of choice; no man is to chooſe evil, nor properly can chooſe it.

Secondly, Chooſe not ſin, for ſin is an *evil forbidden*, the Law is againſt it, and the Goſpel too.

Thirdly, Chooſe not ſin, for ſin is a diſhonour to God, and we ſhould rather chooſe to die than diſhonour God.

Fourthly, Chooſe not ſin, for it brings deſtruction upon man. Sin ſtrictly and abſtractly conſidered, cannot properly be choſen. A rational creature cannot chooſe ſin properly, becauſe ſin is evil; and election being the office of the Will, whoſe adequate object is good, ſin, ſtrictly taken, cannot be choſen. But ſin is often choſen, and 'tis the choice of moſt men, they chooſe iniquity rather than affliction; iniquity is the choice and the beloved of many a man's ſoul. But how? It is under the pretence of ſomthing that is good; no man can chooſe it as 'tis evil. For though ſome love ſin and chooſe ſin for ſins ſake (ſuch come up higheſt and neareſt to the frame of the devil, as they that do good for goods ſake come neareſt to the holy Angels) yet, I ſay, ſin is always choſen under ſome conſideration or ſhadow of good; and if any man chooſe to ſin without reſpect to profit or gain, yet he hath ſome good in his eye, namely to pleaſe himſelf, he would have his will, and will not let God have his will; and this is good to him who is ſtark naught. But uſually ſin is choſen upon one of theſe three accounts.

Firſt, ſin is very often choſen (by a miſtake) for that which is good. They who (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Heb* 5.12.) *are unskilful in the word of righteouſneſs*, they who have not *ſenſes exerciſed to diſcern between good and evil*, are very apt to chooſe evil in ſtead of good, that is, thinking it to be good. Thus error in opinion is choſen, upon a miſtake, for truth; and iniquity in practice, is choſen upon a miſtake, for duty. Of ſuch the Prophet ſpeaks (*Iſa.* 5. 20.) *They call evil good, and good evil, they put darkneſs for light, and light for darkneſs:* which, as ſome do knowingly, out of perverſeneſs of ſpirit; ſo others ignorantly, out of unſoundneſs of judgment, imagining that to be good which is evil, and that to be light which is nothing elſe but darkneſs, that to be ſound doctrine which is error, and that holy worſhip which is ſuperſtition. So did *Paul* before he was converted, he choſe iniquity, and thought he had done very well; *I thought* (ſaith he) *I ought to do many things againſt the name of Jeſus Chriſt*, (Acts 26.) I thought it my duty, I verily thought I ought to perſecute and vex thoſe who believed in Jeſus, whereever I found them. And Jeſus Chriſt himſelf forewarns his Diſciples (*John* 16. 2.) that *the time was coming, that whoſoever killed them would think they did God ſervice.* Thus many do not underſtand what is right, and ſo chooſe what is wrong.

Secondly, Others chooſe that which is evil, hoping that ſome good will come of it, that God may have ſome glory by it, and men themſelves and others may have ſome advantage by it. This reproach was caſt upon the Apoſtles and their Doctrine, which St. *Paul* rejected with higheſt diſdain (*Rom.* 3. 8.) *Not as we are ſlanderouſly reported, and as ſome affirm, that we ſay, let us do evil that good may come thereof, whoſe damnation is juſt.* The glory of the free grace of God will be manifeſted in the pardoning of our ſin, come therefore (ſay ſome) let us ſin our fill, that ſo the immeaſurableneſs of the Lord's goodneſs and mercy may appear. Wo to thoſe who make ſuch inferences, their damnation is juſt. To do evil upon any hopes of good by it (though it be the glory of God) ſubjects to the worſt evil of ſuffering, damnation. Others chooſe ſin; Why? They look ſome good will come by it, that is, ſome profit. If we ſtrain our conſciences to do this, we may get or keep favour with men; if we do this evil, it may gain us acceptance in the world. Many chooſe evil, becauſe in doing ſo, they ſwim with the ſtream, and comply with the *many*, or as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, with *the courſe of this world*; theſe chooſe evil, becauſe they would be in the faſhion of the moſt, they conſider which way the world is like to go, and ſet themſelves to go that way.

Thirdly, Others do evil hoping to avoid and ſcape danger by it; they chooſe the evil of ſin, that they may eſcape the evil of puniſhment. As many ſin for a little advantage, ſo others to avoid loſs, and that they may ſleep in a whole skin. Some will deny what they have done, to ſave themſelves: No body can prove it againſt us, we will deny it, and ſo avoid trouble, and keep out of the reach of danger. Yea, for this cauſe many deny the truth and renounce the ways of God, in which they have walked. *Demas* forſook *Paul*, he left the Church of God, that he might keep in with, and cloſe to the world. Upon theſe pretences and hopes many chooſe evil, not meerly and barely in it ſelf, but as it comes thus clothed: As ſome chooſe it through ignorance, ſo others upon hopes of getting good, and not a few upon hopes of avoiding evil, and keeping out of hazzard and harms-way. But whatever worldly good any gain, or danger they eſcape, by chooſing iniquity, that choice brings them into greater danger, and ſubjects them to the loſs of a greater good.

This thou haſt choſen rather than affliction. The particular *iniquity* (as hath been ſhewed) was impatience.

> Hence note, *He that gives himſelf up to unquietneſs and impatience under the afflicting hand of God, chooſes ſin rather than affliction.*

The Lord by *Moſes* told his People when they ſhould be brought into great tribulation, becauſe of their ſin and uneven walkings, becauſe of their breaking the Lord's Statutes and Commandments (*Lev.* 26.41.) *If they ſhall accept of the puniſhment of their Iniquity, then it ſhall be well with them.* If at ſuch a time ye ſtand not complaining and murmuring againſt me, but ſhall well accept or take the puniſhment kindly, and kiſs the Rod, acknowledging how you have provoked me, and walked unworthy of former mercy; then I will ſhew you favour, and renew your mercies: But if in affliction you fall a murmuring, and ſay, ſurely the Lord hath caſt us quite off, there's no hope, you chuſe iniquity rather than affliction.

Thirdly, *Elihu* in this doth not only reprove *Job* for doing that which was very evil in it ſelf, but he reproves him for doing that which was very evil to himſelf; *this thou haſt choſe rather than affliction.* As if he had ſaid, Thou doſt not know thine own good, in making this choice. We ſay, *He is a wiſe man that underſtands his own good.*

> Hence note, *They make a very bad and miſerable choice for themſelves, who chuſe iniquity rather than affliction.*

Thus *Solomon* concludes for Wiſdom (*Prov.* 8. 36.) *He that ſinneth againſt me wrongeth his own ſoul.* He that ſinneth, wrongs Chriſt, but Chriſt paſſeth that over, and ſeemeth to ſay, I will bear your wrongs, but pray take heed to your ſelves, will you not love your ſelves? will you not abſtain from ſin out of love to your ſelves? *he that ſinneth againſt me wrongs his own ſoul; all that hate me* (that is, my ways) *they love death:* And ſurely there is no great beauty in death, that we ſhould love it and deſire it. *They chuſe very ill for themſelves, that chuſe ſin*, the wages whereof is death. I grant, to chuſe affliction is but a hard choice (affliction is not good in it ſelf) but affliction, if choſen, may prove good; it may be very good to us, it may bring in much good to us: and therefore there is wiſdom, not only in chuſing any affliction, rather than ſin, but in chuſing ſome one affliction rather than another. But what good doth he chuſe, that chuſes ſin? Happy is the man that endures correction, or affliction, ſaith the Scripture in many places; but doth it ſay any where, *Happy is the man that commits iniquity?* If you chuſe affliction rather than iniquity, you chuſe a great deal of good First, *David* could ſay upon tryal (*Pſal.* 119. 71.) *It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy ſtatutes.* Did ever *David* ſay, it is good for me that I have ſinned, which is to unlearn or break Statutes? did he ever pleaſe himſelf in thinking that he had ſinned? he did even pleaſe himſelf that he had been afflicted; that was good, becauſe he learned Commandments by it; he grew a better Scholar, than he was in that beſt learning of all, the knowledg of the Commandments of God.

Again, Secondly, It is good to be afflicted; why? afflictions are the exerciſes of our Graces, the exerciſe of our Faith, the exerciſe of our patience, the exerciſe of our ſelf-denyal. 'Tis a good thing to have our Graces exerciſed, for thereby they are encreaſed. If you chuſe affliction, you ſhall probably have that good by it, the encreaſe of your beſt things, your Graces.

Thirdly, Affliction purgeth out our corruptions, and that is good. Is it not good to have a diſeaſe, or an ill humour, purged out? this good comes by affliction. But doth the committing of ſin purge ſin? doth the Stock of ſin abate by ſinning? does the ill humour ſpend it ſelf? no, the ill humour rather increaſeth. When you chuſe ſin, you weaken your Graces, and cheriſh your corruptions; but when you refuſe ſin, your corruptions weaken or ſpend their ſtrength. Do you think when you have committed one ſin, that the ſoul is made more unable to, or more averſe from the ſame or another ſin? When you have ſatisfied the call of one luſt, will it now let you alone, and call no more? no, not at all; the more you ſin, the more you may; the more you ſin, the more doth the Stock of ſin increaſe and grow in you.

Fourthly, Affliction is a means to take us off or wean us from the world: O what a good is that! we being ſo apt to dote upon it. The ſin of the Age is, falling in love with the world; therefore it may be good for us to be ſoundly afflicted, that we may be weaned from the world, and from all things in the world, and be kept where our true intereſt is, in the boſom of Chriſt, or cloſe to him. But if you chuſe iniquity, will that take you off from the world? no; the more ſin, the more love of the world; for ſin and the world are akin, they are of a Blood; therefore the more you have to do with the one, the more you will have to do with the other.

Fifthly, Affliction brings us nearer to God. That which takes us off from the world, brings us nearer to God: this is an excellent advantage, a great good of affliction. But chuſe ſin, and will that bring us nearer to God? Sin is a departure from God: The Lord ſaith to ſinners, *Ye are departed and gone.* Sin is ſo far from bringing us nearer to God, that as all in a ſtate of ſin, are far off from God, ſo every act of ſin widens the diſtance, and puts us farther off from God.

Sixthly, Affliction is our conformity to Chriſt. If you chuſe affliction, you chuſe that which makes you look like Chriſt; for he was a man of ſorrows in this world, he was not in the ruff and jollity, in the power and pomp of this world, but low, and of no reputation, acquainted with grief all his days. If then you chuſe affliction rather than ſin, you chuſe conformity to Chriſt; but chuſing iniquity rather than affliction, you take up the utmoſt disformity to Chriſt, *who knew no ſin, nor was any guile found in his mouth.* He took all our afflictions upon him, but he would not touch our ſin, as a doer of it, only as (in our ſtead) a ſufferer for it.

How great is the good of affliction? But is there any good at all in ſin? Upon all theſe conſiderations the Apoſtle ſaith, When God, the Father of ſpirits afflicts his ſons and daughters, he doth it *for their profit, that they may be partakers of his holineſs* (Heb. 12. 10, 11.) The Lord afflicts us for our profit, but he doth not ſay I have let you ſin for your profit: For though the Lord is able to, and often doth, bring good out of ſin, yet not inſtrumentally, but occaſionally. Therefore the Scripture attributes no profit to ſin, but ſpeaking of ſin, it ſaith, *What fruit have ye of thoſe things whereof ye are now aſhamed* (Rom. 6. 21.) ſhew your gain; what are your advantages? what the revenues which your luſts have brought in? what have you got by your malice, by your wrath, by your conformity and compliance with the world? have theſe brought you in any advantage? are you bettered by them? what fruit have you of thoſe things, whereof you are now aſhamed? Let us therefore often conſider *Moſes*'s choice (*Heb.* 11. 25.) *Moſes* was a wiſe and a holy man; and what did he? He choſe *rather to ſuffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleaſures of ſin for a ſeaſon.* Herein try your ſpirits. Chriſt ſet two things before *Moſes*; Come, *Moſes*, here's affliction, you muſt be afflicted, and afflicted with the people of God (which are the greateſt afflictions, you ſhall be ſure to be laſhed with the ſmarteſt ſoreſt Rod in their Company) or here is *Egypt*, and all the contentments that ſin can give; which will you have, *Moſes?* O give me afflictions with the people of God (ſaid *Moſes*) Let the world ruffle and rant in the pleaſures of ſin for a ſeaſon, for my part I will have affliction. O give me affliction. In this choice *Moſes* approved himſelf a wiſe man, and underſtood his good. So did the Martyrs. Come, will you have a priſon, or deny Chriſt? a Halter, or forſake the Faith? will you into this fire, or will you commit that iniquity? O ſay they, give us Priſons, Halters, Fires, rather than conform to your wickedneſs. Remember this point, this is a needful point for us at all times. I would add theſe three things further about it. Chuſe affliction rather than ſin; why?

Firſt, Becauſe ſin is worſe than all affliction. Secondly, Becauſe ſin is the ſting of all affliction. If you are in an afflicted condition, and your conſciences tell you you have been baſe, vile, complying with the world, and diſſembling or falſe-hearted with God; if your hearts tell you, you have been rotten at the heart, this will be the ſting of your afflictions. What is the ſting of death? The Apoſtle anſwers (1 *Cor.* 15.56.) *The ſting of death is ſin.* Would a man chuſe a ſting ? Surely you chuſe a ſting when you chuſe ſin, and that which will afflict you beyond all your afflictions.

Thirdly, Sin is worſe than affliction, for when God would declare his ſevereſt wrath, and bring the greateſt affliction upon the children of men, when he reſolves to afflict a perſon or a people to the utmoſt, he doth not ſay, I will make this man a poor man, or I will ſend plague, or ſickneſs, or famine among this people, but he ſaith, I will deliver him or them up into the hands of their ſins, or to the power of their luſts. (*Pſal.* 81. 11.) *Iſrael would none of me* (ſaith the Lord) they were coy, they had other lovers, they would have the world, they choſe ſin, rather than God, and to go a whoring after the creature, rather than keep cloſe to him. What then ? *So I gave them up to their own hearts luſts.* As if the Lord had ſaid, *Pray take your courſe, you that love your own inventions, take your fill of them, you that love and would have the vanities of the world, take your fill of them.* The Lord doth not threaten them with famine and peſtilence, no nor with hell, but he threatens them with ſin, and leaves them to the power of iniquity. Thus he gave up the old Gentile *Romans to vile affections*, (*Rom.* 1. 26, 28.) Let them be victorious, let them be rich, let them ſubdue all Nations under their iron hands, let *Rome* be the Head and Miſtreſs of the world, and command all people, let all ſtoop to their power, but ſaith God, *I will give them up to vile affections*, they ſhall be baſely Idolatrous, and baſely wanton, and baſely gluttonous, and baſely drunken, and baſely ambitious, and baſely envious : As they were above all people of the world in outward glory and power, ſo God left them under the power of their luſts, and gave them up to glut themſelves with wickedneſs ; *He gave them up to a reprobate mind, to do things that are not convenient.* 'Tis the moſt terrible of all afflictions, when God makes a ſin an affliction, and gives men up to hardneſs of heart, to pride, to a ſpirit of looſneſs and wantonneſs ; here is a miſchief indeed, the miſchief of ſin.

> Laſtly, obſerve, *Our avoidance of, or eſcape from the greateſt affliction in the world, will not bear us out in the choice of any iniquity.*

We may underſtand and proſecute this point two ways.

Firſt, *As to guilt.* It will no way excuſe us before God, to ſay, I forbore to do duty when commanded by God, I did evil becauſe commanded by man, not out of any diſlike of my duty, or liking of iniquity, but only to avoid thoſe afflictions, which I ſaw inevitably falling upon me, in caſe I had either done the one, or not done the other. This plea will not hold before God, for any man's diſcharge from guilt upon either account. And though there may be ſome ſeaſons wherein a duty may be laid by or omitted, yet there is no ſeaſon wherein any iniquity may be choſen or committed.

Secondly, We cannot be excuſed, as to *Diſcretion.* We are fools, and act below, not only *gracious* but *rational* men, if we chuſe iniquity to avoid any affliction, whether that affliction or ſuffering, be, firſt, our own ; or ſecondly, the ſuffering of others. Firſt, though nearly related, and very near to us, wife, children, *&c.* Secondly, though many, never ſo many, a whole Nation, a whole world, the Church. I believe that aſſertion of St. *Auguſtine* will be found ſound and Orthodox Divinity ; *Better let the world periſh, than attempt to ſave it by telling an officious lye.*

The evil of ſin is ſo bad that if any good could come by it (which of it ſelf cannot) it were not worth the having : Some ſaid in the Apoſtles times, and they ſaid it of the Apoſtles, (*Rom.* 3. 8.) *Let us do evil that good may come of it.* God by his infinite power, wiſdom, and goodneſs, brought good out of evil, even ſalvation to man out of the fall of the firſt man ; but if any man, or ſort of men, ſhall project the obtainment of good by the doing of evil, the Apoſtle in the ſame place hath given them this doom, *Their damnation is juſt* ; nothing is more juſt or righteous, than their damnation, who hope to get good for themſelves or others by doing evil, which is it ſelf injuſtice and unrighteouſneſs.

VERS. 22, 23.

Behold, God exalteth by his power : who teacheth like him ? Who hath enjoyned him his way ? or who can ſay, thou haſt wrought iniquity ?

In theſe two verſes *Elihu* proſecuteth the admonition which he had given *Job* in the 21. verſe, to take heed of uttering any thing raſhly concerning God's dealings with him, or, of *chooſing iniquity rather than affliction* : And he preſſeth the admonition by two great arguments.

Firſt, From the power and wiſdom of God, in the 22. verſe ; *Behold, God exalteth by his power : who teacheth like him ?*

Secondly, He urgeth it by an argument taken from the ſoveraignty of God, as alſo from his moſt exact Juſtice, (*verſ.* 23.) *Who hath enjoyned him his way ? or who can ſay, thou haſt wrought iniquity ?* As if he had ſaid, *Take heed how thou accuſeſt the juſtice of God in any of his dealings with thee : If God be of ſuch power, of ſuch wiſdom, of ſuch ſoveraignty, of ſuch integrity, then conſider well what thou ſpeakeſt, yea, what thou thinkeſt of God ; beware thou ſpeakeſt not a word, nor conceiveſt a thought amiſs of him. Conſider, I ſay, God himſelf, his ways, and works, throughly, and thou wilt conclude with me, That though many in the world have great power, and have left the marks of it in many places, and upon many perſons ; yet none like God, either, firſt, in doing his own work, or ſecondly, in directing or teaching us how to do ours.*

So that *Elihu* by this report and commendation of the power and wiſdom of God, ſeems to comfort *Job* in the aſſurance or hope of better things, if he would hearken to and accept his counſel ; for as God had mightily afflicted and broken him, ſo he was as mighty to heal thoſe breaches, and deliver him ; he only waited to ſee him in a better frame, that he might be gracious, (*Iſa.* 30. 18.) That's the general ſum of the words.

Ecce, deus excelſus in fortitudine ſua. Vulg.

ישגיב *Excelſus eſt, intranſitive ſumi poteſt ; attollit robur ſuum,* i. e. *robore ſuo excelſus eſt.*

Verſ. 22. **Behold, God exalteth by his power.**

Some read, *God is high in his own power* ; that carrieth *Elihu*'s reaſon ſtrongly in it, God is exalted in his power above all others ; and therefore it is no way ſutable or conſentaneous unto reaſon, that the greater power ſhould be queſtioned, much leſs condemned of injuſtice by the leſſer power : There muſt be a parity, a co-ordination, or a coequality at leaſt, if not a ſuperiority, where judgment is given. That's a great truth, *God is exalted in his own power.*

David (Pſal. 21. 13.) turns it into a prayer, or wiſh, *Be thou exalted, O Lord, in thine own ſtrength.* He makes a like prayer, (*Pſal.* 108. 5.) The Lord in other places declareth himſelf peremptorily in it, (*Pſal.* 46. 10.) *Be ſtill, and know that I am God ; I will be exalted among the Heathen, I will be exalted in the Earth.* It ſhall be ſo whether men will or will not ; whether men will or no, God will be exalted, becauſe he is exalted in his own power, not in any derived power, or power given him from the creature, Men or Angels. The power which God puts forth in his works exalt him, or ſhew him to be a great, a mighty God. *Behold, God is exalted by his own power.*

But we tranſlate the Text (and ſo I conceive it more fitly ſutes the ſcope of *Elihu*) as expreſſing an act of God towards others ; *Behold, God exalteth by his power.* So Mr. *Broughton, Mark, the Omnipotent ſets up by his ſtrength.*

Behold] (As hath been ſhewed) is a note both of attention and admiration.

God] The ſtrong God, the potent, the omnipotent God, who is able to overcome all difficulties.

Exalteth ;] The word which we render *to exalt*, ſignifieth to ſet in an inacceſſible height, or to exalt very high ; and not only ſo, but to eſtabliſh in that exaltation, yea ſo to confirm and corroborate him that is ſet up in ſuch a height, that no power is able to moleſt, trouble, or afflict him ; and therefore a word coming from this root ſignifieth *a fortified Caſtle or Tower* ; ſuch places, if any, are exalted and lifted up on high. *Behold, God exalteth* ; As if *Elihu* had ſaid, *God is not only exalted in himſelf, he is not only lifted up beyond the reach of all creature-annoyances, but he is able to lift up others ; and he doth actually exalt his when he pleaſeth, beyond the reach of all danger, beyond the hurtful power of thoſe who hate them, and therefore have a mind to hurt them.* God is ſo exalted above others, that he can exalt others alſo. *He exalteth by*

שגב *Elevare, exaltare, corroborare, ſtabilem & inconcuſſum reddere.*

His Power;] He hath the power in himſelf. The word which we render *power*, ſignifieth,

Firſt, That might and ſtrength which is corporal, the might and ſtrength of the body.

Secondly, Inward might and ſtrength, whether acquired or infuſed, the might of the mind, wiſdom and policy.

Thirdly, Civil might and power, honour and riches. Whatever maketh a man ſtrong, comes under the notion of this word; and every way, in all the notions of power, God is exalted. *He exalteth by his power.*

But ſeeing 'tis barely aſſerted (*He exalteth by his power*) nothing being expreſſed, it may be queſtioned, whom doth he exalt? or what doth he exalt? I anſwer, Foraſmuch as the Scripture leaveth it at large, and undetermined, we may apply this aſſertion to any, either thing or perſon. God exalteth whom he pleaſeth, and what he pleaſeth. We may take it diſtinctly theſe five ways.

Firſt, He exalteth *Himſelf* by his power; that is, he exalteth his own Name and Glory, which is neareſt to him, yea, as himſelf.

Secondly, He exalteth every work which he will undertake and ingage upon: He doth not only lay the foundation of his work, and rear up the walls a little way, but he exalteth by his power till he hath ſet up the *Head-ſtone* of his work (as the Prophet *Zechariah* ſpeaketh, *Chap.* 4. 7.) all that love and fear him *ſhouting and crying, Grace, Grace, to it.* He exalteth his works of Providence, as once he did his work of Creation, to full perfection.

Thirdly, The Lord exalteth thoſe that fear him, for they are moſt properly his *Favourites*; and whom ſhould he exalt but thoſe whom he favoureth? All the worldly exaltations of evil men, are but depreſſions and abaſements, compared with thoſe exaltations and advancements which God intendeth for all that fear him; and ſome he exalteth much in this World.

Fourthly, and more ſpecially, He exalteth by his power (ſuch *Job* then was) thoſe that are caſt down by the oppreſſing power of men, even the poor, and thoſe that have no help. *Thou art he* (ſaith *David, Pſal.* 9. 13.) *that liftest me up* (or *exalteſt me*) *from the gates of death.* When I am periſhing, when I am ready to be ſwallowed up with death, when I am at the greateſt loſs, even as to life it ſelf, then thou lifteſt me up, thou lifteſt me up from the very gates of death. Again, (*Pſal.* 18. 48.) *He delivereth me from mine enemies, yea thou lifteſt me up above thoſe that riſe up againſt me:* When they are caſting me down, God is exalting and raiſing me up. And if God will raiſe up, who can keep down?

Fifthly, We may take the words in this general ſenſe; Whoſoever is exalted in this world, God exalteth him. The Sparrow cannot fall to the ground, nor the leaſt thing or perſon be lifted from the ground, but by the hand of God. As he exalteth ſome in a way of ſpecial favour, ſo he exalteth the worſt of men in a way of common providence: As none can be exalted if he ſay, no; God is able to put a bar or a ſtop to any mans exaltation; ſo he can exalt whom he will, and none are able to put a bar or a ſtop to their exaltation. *Behold, God exalteth by his power.*

Hence Note, *God is able to exalt any perſon, how low ſoever brought, how much ſoever deſpiſed.*

Elihu ſpake this purpoſely to *Job*, who was in a low condition brought (as it were) to the very gates of death; and he makes this large deſcription of the power of God in exalting thoſe that are caſt down, purpoſely to comfort *Job*, to erect his ſpirit, and chear his heart, with a bleſſed confidence, that how much ſoever he was at preſent underfoot, or under-hatches, yet he might hope for better things, even to be lifted up, if he humbled himſelf under the mighty hand of God. (*Pſal.* 9. 9.) *The Lord will be a refuge,* (the word in the Text anſwers this) *or an high place, for the oppreſſed.* Places of refuge are uſually high places, and therefore the ſame Hebrew word ſignifieth both an high place, and a place of refuge, (*Pſal.* 107. 41.) *He ſetteth the poor on high from affliction, and maketh him families like a flock.* The Prophet (*Iſa.* 33. 16.) Having ſpoken of the man that walketh in his integrity, tells us how it ſhall be with him, *He ſhall dwell on high*; The word is, *He ſhall dwell in the high places,* that is, he ſhall dwell in God, who is moſt high, for evermore, God will exalt him even to as much ſafety, as himſelf is in; *his place of defence ſhall be the munition of Rocks; bread ſhall be given him, his water ſhall be ſure;* He ſhall be houſed with God, yea houſed in God, he ſhall be fed by God, he ſhall lodg under his roof, and ſit (as it were) at his Table, he ſhall have bread enough, and water enough, and both ſure enough.

Particeps erit divinæ felicitatis, atq; conſors tecti ac menſæ.

And if the Lord exalteth thus by his power, let none be diſcouraged in their afflictions and caſtings down. The Lord alone is ſufficient, yea all-ſufficient; and he exalteth not only by his will, that is, he hath not only a will to exalt, but he exalteth by his power, that is, he hath power enough to exalt whom he will. What power ſoever is in the creature, 'tis the Lord's power; 'tis a ſtream from his Ocean, and when the Lord is pleaſed to remove all power from the creature, he hath a ſufficient reſerve of power in himſelf, or in his own hand, by which he can command deliverance, yea exaltation. Therefore do not ſpeak either deſpondingly or deſpairingly, as if all hope were gone, when at any time all humane power is gone; *for God exalteth by his* (own) *power*; and as it followeth in the Text,

Who teacheth like him?

As if *Elihu* had ſaid, God is not good only at acting, but he is good at inſtructing, and he is beſt at both. He is beſt or beyond all in power; He is beſt or beyond all in wiſdom and underſtanding, and therefore *who teacheth like him?*

At the 15. verſe of this Chapter, we have the ſubſtance of what is here aſſerted, and ſo upon the matter, 'tis but the ſame thing repeated; there it is, *He delivereth the poor*; here, *He exalteth by his power*; There 'tis ſaid, *He openeth their ear to inſtruction*; here, *Who teacheth like him?* The words are a divine challenge, *Who teacheth like him?* Bring forth the man, bring forth the Angel that can. The word which here we render, *to teach*, in its firſt ſenſe ſignifieth *to caſt a Dart, Javelin,* or *Stone.* It ſignifieth alſo to *rain*, and ſo the *rain* which falls from heaven, becauſe that is as it were, caſt from the clouds to the earth. Hence by a Metaphor it ſignifieth to *teach* or *inſtruct*, becauſe holy doctrine or inſtruction cometh down like rain from heaven upon the minds and hearts of thoſe that are taught. *My doctrine ſhall diſtill as the dew, and my ſpeech ſhall drop as the rain,* ſaid *Moſes* (Deut. 32. 1.) And hence the whole Law of God is expreſſed by a word in the Hebrew coming from this root, that being poured down from heaven in ſhowers of doctrine to make men fruitful in every good word and work. In anſwer to which, ſome tranſlate this latter part of the verſe, *There is no Law-giver like unto him.* Who is a Law-giver like him? or there is no Law-giver like him. To give Law, or to be a Law-giver, is more than barely to be a teacher, though he that teacheth, doth alſo (in a ſenſe) give Laws.

Verbum יורה *commune ad pluviam, & ad doctrinam, vel legem, qua perfunditur & excolitur animus ad fructus bonorum operum.*

תורה

Nullus ei ſimilis in Legiſlatoribus. Vulg.

Here, I conceive, we take the fitteſt and moſt ſuitable ſignification of the word, when we render it *by teaching, Who teacheth like him?* As if he had ſaid, None can teach like God, and therefore ſurely none can teach him how to govern the world, or to diſpoſe of any man's perſon or condition, as thou, O *Job*, haſt raſhly or overboldly done; for while thou haſt complained ſo much and ſo often of his dealings with thee, thou haſt (upon the matter) attempted to teach him. But, *Who teacheth like him?* Where ſhall we find any able to give inſtruction, and apply doctrine like God? God is exalted infinitely in power, and yet he condeſcends to be a teacher, or an inſtructer; God doth not ſtand upon his power only, he ſaith not, I have power to do what I will, I can force all men to my will, or break them if they will not, but he inſtructs and perſwades, he labours to allure the ſoul into a right underſtanding of his will, and ſubmiſſion to it. *Who teacheth like him?*

Hence note; Firſt, *The great goodneſs of God, that he who hath all power to command, ſhould yet vouchſafe to inſtruct; that he who is the Judg, will alſo be the Teacher of his People.*

This is the great Promiſe in the Covenant of grace, *They ſhall be all taught of God* (*John* 6. 45.) Some things may be known by the light of nature, of which knowledg God is the Author, in the ſame ſenſe, as he is of all natural Powers and faculties. But here *Elihu* intends a ſpiritual knowledg, both of God and of our ſelves, or a teaching of divine things by divine chaſtenings, both with reſpect to what we ſhould do and deſire, as alſo with reſpect to what we ſhould ſhun and avoid, which is the work of God alone by his grace and Spirit. Thus *David* ſhews how God is teaching while he is chaſtening (*Pſal.* 99. 12.) *Bleſſed is the man whom thou chaſteneſt, O Lord, and teacheſt out of thy Law.* God teacheth, Firſt, by his Word, (that's his ordinary way of teaching) Scondly, he teacheth by his Works; and thoſe both the works of Creation and of Providence, and by thoſe, whether works of Mercy or of Judgment: By all theſe means God teacheth. But that which *Elihu* chiefly aimeth at in this place (ſpeaking to afflicted *Job*) is his teaching by affliction, *Who teacheth like him?* As if he had ſaid, God doth not lay his hand upon thee by affliction, only to make thee ſmart, but to make thee wiſe; he is inſtructing thee while he is afflicting thee. Further, as God teacheth by his Word and by his Works, ſo he teacheth moſt eminently by his Spirit, who alone maketh the teaching both of his Word and of his Works effectual upon the hearts of the hearers and beholders. Many are taught, but none to purpoſe, without the Spirit. *Who teacheth like aim?*

Note Secondly, *God is no ordinary teacher; The teachings of God are above all other teachings; There is no teacher to be compared with God.*

Elihu doth not ſay, Who teacheth beſides God: There are many other teachers, but there is not one who teacheth like him. Some may ſay, wherein doth the excellency of divine teaching lye? how hath that the ſupereminence above all other teachings? Take the anſwer briefly in ſeven words.

Firſt, None teacheth ſo plainly and clearly as God. The teachings of men are but dark and obſcure to the teachings of God. Chriſt ſaid (*John* 16, 26.) *I ſhall no more ſpeak unto you in parables, but I ſhall ſhew you plainly of the Father.* God ſpeaks by his Word and Spirit to the loweſt and meaneſt underſtanding.

Secondly, None teacheth like God; that is, ſo mildly, ſo moderately, ſo condeſcendingly to the condition and capacity of thoſe with whom he hath to do. Chriſt ſaid (*John* 16. 12.) *I have many things to ſay unto you, but ye cannot bear them now*; and therefore I will not ſay them now, *I will not burden you beyond your ſtrength.* I know what leſſons, what inſtructions you are fit for, and I will give you only theſe and no more, till ye are better prepared to receive them; I will give you only milk becauſe ye are children, and ſo not able to digeſt ſtrong meat.

Thirdly, None teacheth like God, ſo patiently and meekly. There is nothing doth more provoke the paſſion of a teacher, than the untowardneſs and dulneſs of thoſe that are taught. It was a very good Rule given by one of the Ancients, *he that will teach children, muſt in a manner be a child*; He muſt conſider what they are, and form himſelf to their condition, elſe he will never have the patience to teach them. O with what patience doth the infinite and only wiſe God teach his children! (*Iſa.* 28. 9, 10.) *He giveth line upon line, and precept upon precept, here a little and there a little.* Here is the patience of God; He doth not ſay, if ye cannot take it now, I will teach you no more; No, ſaith God, I will give precept upon precept, and line upon line; though former precepts have not been received, yet I will give you more, *here a little and there a little*, ye ſhall have another little to the former little. God was forty years tutoring and teaching the *Iſraelites* in the wilderneſs, to fit them for the poſſeſſion of *Canaan. Theſe three years*, ſaith Chriſt, *have I come looking for fruit*, and all that while he was teaching them to make them fruitful; nor was he haſty then, but upon the interceſſion of the vineyard-dreſſer, waited one year more. O the patience of God in teaching!

Fourthly, None teacheth like him, that is, ſo conſtantly and continually; He teacheth, and he is always teaching; there is no hour, no moment, but one way or other God is teaching; By every thing we hear, or have to do with, in the ways of his providence, he is teaching us. Beſides, how conſtant is God in teaching us formally, as 'tis ſaid, in the Prophet (*Jer.* 35. 14, 15.) *I have ſent unto you all my ſervants the Prophets, riſing up early, and ſending them*: As if the Lord did beſtir himſelf in the morning, to ſend our teachers betimes. *He ſoweth his ſeed in the morning, and in the evening he doth not withhold his hand*, as he requireth us to do in all ſorts of duty, whether of charity and righteouſneſs towards our neighbour, or of piety and holy worſhip towards himſelf (*Eccl.* 11. 6.)

Fifthly, *None teacheth like* him; that is, ſo truly, ſo unerringly. While men teach, they ſometimes miſ-teach, while they lead, they often miſ-lead; they teach error for truth, and unſafe doctrine for ſound; they build wood, hay and ſtubble, in ſtead of gold, ſilver, precious ſtone, upon that ſure foundation Jeſus Chriſt (1 *Cor.* 3. 12.) The beſt, the wiſeſt, and moſt knowing men may err; only God knoweth the full compaſs of all myſteries, yea, he is Truth; therefore his teachings are moſt true.

Sixthly, *None teacheth like him*; that is, ſo *authoritatively*. Men teach in the name and authority of God; but God teacheth in his own name and authority. The Lord giveth Authentity to his own word. If the Lord hath ſaid it, that's warrant enough to receive it and believe it. When Chriſt preached, the people wondered at his doctrine (*Mat.* 7. 29.) *For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the Scribes*; that is, there went forth a mighty command with the word of Jeſus Chriſt; He did not, as I may ſay, beg attention and ſubmiſſion to his doctrine, but exact it upon them, and draw it from them. Where God teacheth, he commandeth, his word worketh mightily; when he ſpeaketh, all muſt hear at their peril. Where Princes give the rule and publiſh their Laws, ſubjects muſt hear and obey, or ſuffer for not obeying: How much more where God gives the Rule, and publiſheth his Law!

Seventhly, Who teacheth like him? that is, ſo *effectually*, ſo efficaciouſly. As God hath authority to charge his teachings upon us at our peril to receive them, ſo he hath a power to work our hearts to the receiving of them. Who teacheth thus like God? The Miniſters of Chriſt teach in the authority of God, and charge all to receive what they ſay in his Name, but they cannot give an effect to the charge (*Iſa.* 48. 17.) *He teacheth to profit.* One tranſlation ſaith, *He teacheth things profitable.* But that is a lean rendring, for ſo doth every Miniſter that teacheth as he ought; but our rendring carrieth the efficacy of the word of God in it, *He teacheth to profit*; that is, he can make the dulleſt Scholar learn, he can make the moſt ſtubborn heart to ſubmit. Chriſt ſpeaking of this great work of God in teaching, ſaith (*John* 6. 45.) *No man cometh unto me, except the Father draw him.* What is that drawing? It is this teaching, as ye may ſee (*verſ.* 45.) *Every one therefore that hath heard and learned of the Father, cometh unto me.* That is, every one whom the Father hath vouchſafed to teach and inſtruct, that man cometh to me, that is, he believeth and obeyeth the Goſpel, and ſubmitteth both in judgment and practice. *Every one that hath heard and learned of the Father cometh to me*: There is not one whom God hath undertaken to teach, that doth miſcarry. (*Iſa.* 32. 4.) *The heart of the raſh ſhall underſtand knowledg*; or, the heart of the haſty. Now haſty and raſh perſons, are heady and inconſiderate perſons, and therefore none of the wiſeſt; they uſually have little judgment or diſcretion, who are much in paſſion; but God can make the *heart of the raſh to underſtand knowledg*; that is, he can make them underſtand and know things aright, who ſeem moſt uncapable of, and are naturally at the greateſt diſtance from a rightneſs of knowledg and underſtanding.

To cloſe the Point, take theſe inferences from the whole.

Firſt, If God be ſuch a teacher, then *ſtay not in the bare teachings of men.* What are the teachings of men to the teachings of God? Though you ſhould have an Angel from heaven to ſpeak to you, yet ſtay not in his teachings, wait for the teachings of God. Till ye are taught of God ye never learn to purpoſe. Set your ſelves, not only as in God's preſence, but as under his Spirit, to be taught; wait for the moving of the Spirit in every ordinance, as they did for the Angels moving of the waters, who lay at the pool of *Betheſda* for healing (*Joh.* 5. 4.)

Secondly, Seeing God teacheth thus paramount, ſeeing *none teach like him*, then *ſubmit to his teaching.* Do not queſtion any of his rules of life or doctrines of faith, they are all righteous and full of divine truth; you cannot do amiſs if you do, nor believe amiſs if you believe, no, nor miſs of bleſſedneſs in doing and believing what he hath taught.

Thirdly, *Then appear as they who are taught of God.*

You will ſay, How, or when doth it appear, that we are or have been taught of God? I ſhall anſwer that query in four things.

Firſt, If you are or have been taught of God, *his teaching unteacheth* or emptieth you, and that in a threefold reſpect. Firſt, of your own carnal principles. The great buſineſs of divine teaching, is to unteach, to take men off from their own Will and Reaſon, from their own Rules, as alſo from thoſe Cuſtoms which they have received by tradition from their fathers. If you would appear as taught of God, you muſt lay down all theſe. The teachings of grace empty the ſoul of what it hath taken up by Nature. Secondly, the teachings of God empty the ſoul of all ſelf-righteouſneſs. If ye be taught of God ye will be nothing in your ſelves. *Paul*, before the teachings of God came, had confidence in the fleſh, and boaſted in his own righteouſneſs; but when he was taught of God, he threw off all thoſe. Thirdly, If ye are taught of God, that will certainly unteach and empty you of all unrighteouſneſs. The Apoſtle ſpeaks fully to that (*Epheſ.* 4. 20, 21.) *Ye have not ſo learned Chriſt, if ſo be that ye have been taught as the truth is in Jeſus.* If ye have been divinely taught, then this teaching hath emptied you of the old man; as of all ſelf-righteouſneſs ſo of all unrighteouſneſs towards others. It is impoſſible any ſhould take in the teachings of God, and yet hold any ſinful practiſings.

Secondly, Divine teachings, as they empty and unteach the ſoul, ſo they keep it very humble. Knowledg endangers us naturally to high thoughts of our ſelves, and hath a tendency in it to pride (1 *Cor.* 8. 1.) *Knowledg puffeth up, but charity edifieth.* Take knowledg barely as received of men, even the knowledg of divine things (for ye may have a humane knowledg of divine things) this uſually makes the heart ſwell; but the knowledg we have from the teachings of God, makes us humble, it will cauſe us to cry out (as the Prophet did, when the Lord appeared and let out a more than ordinary manifeſtation of his glory, *Iſa.* 6. 5.) *we are undone.* It was ſo with *Job*, when the Lord had ſchooled him, and made himſelf more fully known to him than ever before, he preſently cried out (*Chap.* 41. 5.) *I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye ſeeth thee; wherefore I abhor my ſelf in duſt and aſhes.* Nothing keeps the ſoul ſo humble as the teachings of God. Where we ſee any proud of what they have learned, it is an argument that either they were never taught of God, or, that as yet they have not underſtood his teachings.

Thirdly, The teachings of God do not only empty and humble the ſoul, but they transform the ſoul, and change it into another thing than it was, as to its ſtate and qualities. The teachings of God change not only our manners but our very natures; they not only give a light to the Underſtanding, but a newneſs to the Will, new Affections, new Deſires. This is it which the Apoſtle calls *the new creature* (2 *Cor.* 5. 17.) and that this creature is wrought to its higheſt perfection by the teachings of God, he ſheweth (2 *Cor.* 3. 18.) *We all with open face, beholding as in a glaſs, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the ſame image from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord.* The glaſs wherein we have this ſight of the glory of God, is chiefly the Word. The glory into which we are changed by thoſe ſights, is our conformity to that holineſs which ſhineth in the Word. And this change is twofold; Firſt, from ſin to grace, which is a degree of glory. Secondly, from glory to glory, that is, from a high to a higher, and at laſt to the higheſt degree of grace. Look what the Word is, and calleth us to be, that are we when taught according to the truth of the word, by the power and Spirit of God.

Fourthly, The teachings of God confirm the ſoul in that which is taught, or we have learned. If God teach any divine leſſon, that will ſtick. We receive many leſſons from men, and let them ſlip, as the Apoſtles word is (*Heb.* 2. 1.) Doctrine taught us of God ſettles upon us, we hold the ſubſtance of it, and hold forth the fruit or power of it in every ſeaſon of our lives: yea, if trouble or perſecution ariſe for the truth, they who are taught of God will hold it faſt, though they let go all they have in this world for it. If God teach us the doctrine of Free Grace, how we are juſtified by the righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt, without our own works; If God teach us the doctrine of pure Worſhip, how he is to be ſerved, and honoured according to his own will, without the Traditions of men, (as Chriſt ſpake (*Mat.* 15. 9.) If (I ſay) God teach us theſe, or any other ſaving truths, we cannot but hold them: whereas they who have received them from men will part with them on the account of man. Only that which God hath taught us abideth with us, and that no man can take from us. Men may take the life of ſuch a one from him, which God hath given him, but they cannot take the truth from him which God hath taught him. What God teacheth, is written, as it were, with a pen of iron and the point of a diamond, it is graven upon the tables of the heart for ever. Thus we may in ſome meaſure diſcern who are taught of God; and ſeeing they who are taught of him, are ſo taught, we may very well inſiſt upon *Elihu*'s challenge; *Who teacheth like him?* And as there is no teacher like God, ſo neither is there any ruler like God; this alſo is taught us by *Elihu*, as a matter out of queſtion, while in the next verſe he proceeds to make more queſtion, or two queſtions more.

Verſ. 23. **Who hath enjoyned him his way? or who can ſay, thou haſt wrought iniquity?**

פקד *Pro jubere.*

This verſe holds out two things. Firſt, the ſoveraignty; Secondly, the integrity of God. God is ſupream in power, and he is righteous in the uſe of his power, and therefore, O *Job*, thou haſt much forgotten both thy ſelf and him, in making ſo many complaints about thy condition, which is indeed to enjoyn God his way, or preſcribe to him how he ſhall govern the world. And ſeeing no man hath enjoyned God his way, who can queſtion him about it, what way ſoever he is pleaſed to take, either with whole Nations, or with any of the ſons of men.

Who hath enjoyned him his way, or, viſited him?] No man hath, no man can, *enjoyn him his way.* God hath no viſitors over him. Mr. *Broughton* renders, *Who gave him charge over his ways?* Like that, *Chap.* 34. 13.

The way of God is any courſe which himſelf taketh, either in governing the world in general, or any perſon in particular; who ſhall inſtruct him about either what or how he ſhall do, whom he ſhall ſpare, whom he ſhall puniſh, whoſe heart he ſhall ſoften, whoſe he ſhall harden, whom he ſhall ſave, whom he ſhall deſtroy, how he ſhall teach, which way he ſhall lead; in a word, how he ſhall adminiſter juſtice and order any of his matters? all muſt be bound to and by his Laws, he cannot be bound to or by the Laws and Preſcripts of any, either in works of Judgment or of Mercy, either in doing good to and for man, or in dealing out of evil. Further,

Who hath enjoyned him his way? By the way of God we may underſtand both the actions of God themſelves, as alſo the reaſons moving him to thoſe actions. As if *Elihu* had ſaid, *Who hath taught God what to do? Who hath, or who can direct him what to do? Who may be ſo bold with God, who is the ſoveraign Lord over all the earth, thus to enjoyn him his way?*

Hence note, *God is the firſt mover of all that himſelf doth;*

No man hath ſhewed him or enjoyned him his way. He is the fountain of light, he ſeeth what to do; who hath been his counſellor? (1 *Cor.* 2. 16.) that is, no man hath, or may inſtruct him (*Iſa.* 40. 13. *Rom.* 11. 34.) Again, he is the fountain of power; none hath authority to direct him, he is above all; as he needs not the counſel of any, ſo he receiveth the rule from none. I have had occaſion more than once in the proceſs of this Book, to ſay ſomewhat of the ſoveraignty of God over all creatures, and therefore only remind it here, *Who hath enjoyned him his way?*

Or who can ſay, thou haſt wrought iniquity?

The world is full of iniquity, but in God there is none at all. As God is not obliged to give any men an account of his works, ſo no man can find any, the leaſt, real fault or defect in any of them; and if his works do not appear ſo to us now, yet at laſt they will appear to all without any ſhadow of iniquity. *Samuel* called together the *Iſraelites*, and demanded (1 *Sam.* 12. 3.) *Whoſe oxe have I taken?* &c. *Whom have I defrauded?* &c. Come charge me, witneſs againſt me, who can ſay, I have wrought iniquity? It was much, and a rare thing for *Samuel* to carry it ſo juſtly, that note could challenge him; but when all the world ſhall be ſummoned before God, he will be able to put the queſtion, Who of all the ſons of men, can ſay, I have wrought iniquity? None can ſay it, but with utmoſt impudency and higheſt blaſphemy. It is impoſſible for God to work iniquity; not only is his Command, but his Will totally againſt it. Whatever God works is according to his own Will, and his Will is the rule of Righteouſneſs; therefore he *can do no iniquity.* There is no iniquity in acting or working according to the Law. If men act according to their will, they uſually act iniquity, becauſe their will is not a Law, and 'tis ſeldom conformed to the Law. The will of no man is ſo right, or ſo fixed in the right, as to be received for a Law. But ſeeing whatever God doth, he doth it according to his own Will, and his Will is the righteous Rule of all things, therefore all muſt be right which he doth: Who ever took him tripping in his dealings? *Who can ſay, he hath wrought iniquity?*

But why doth *Elihu* ſpeak thus to *Job?* Had he ever ſaid that God works iniquity?

I anſwer, He had not. Yet becauſe he thought God might have done better by good men, or have given out that which was more ſuitable to their eſtate, than ſuch continual ſorrows and afflictions as he endured, therefore this ſaying is deſervedly imputed to him. For, it would have become *Job*, and doth every man, to ſay, that is beſt done which God doth, and that he hath choſen or pitched upon the beſt, and moſt proper means of doing his own choiceſt ſervants good, even when 'tis worſt with them in the world, or, when he afflicts them with the greateſt evils; For, *Who can* (then) *ſay, he hath wrought iniqnity?*

Hence obſerve; Firſt, *The infinite purity of God, as alſo his love to righteouſneſs and juſtice*;

Who, though he be ſo abſolute in power, that none can call him in queſtion (*none can enjoyn him his way*, and therefore none can queſtion him for his way) yet he is ſo perfect in righteouſneſs, that no fault can be found in him, nor any error in his way. Though the Lord hath power to do what he will, yet he hath no will to do wrong with his power. The Lord neither doth nor can do wrong to thoſe who have, to their power, continually wronged him. And indeed, he that hath all power in his hand, can have nothing but right in his heart. How few are there in power (though their way be injoyned to them, though they have power meerly by commiſſion, from ſuperior powers, though their power be ſuch as they are to give an account of, yet, I ſay, how few are there in power, who do not much iniquity, who do not, either for want of better information, or, of a better conſcience, oppreſs, grieve and afflict thoſe that have to do with them, or are ſubject to them! God may do what he will, yet will do nothing but what is right. How infinitely then is God to be exalted in his truth and righteouſneſs! And thus the word of truth exalts him (*Deut.* 32.4. 2 *Chr.* 19.7. *Rom.* 9.14.) There is no unevenneſs, much leſs aberration in any of the ways of God, he never trod awry, nor took a falſe ſtep; *Who can ſay unto him* (without great iniquity) *thou haſt wrought iniquity?*

Hence we may infer;

If God works no iniquity in any of his ways, whether in his general or ſpecial providences, Then,

All ought to ſit down quietly under the works of God. Though he bring never ſo great judgments upon nations, he doth them no wrong; though *he break his people in the place of dragons, and cover them with the ſhadow of death*, he doth them no wrong; *Though he ſell his own people for nought*, yet *he doth them no wrong.* All which, and ſeveral other grievances, the Church ſadly bemoans (*Pſal.* 44.) yet without raiſing the leaſt duſt, concerning the juſtice of God, or giving the leaſt intimation of iniquity in thoſe ſeveral ſad and ſevere ways.

Secondly, We ſhould not only ſit down quietly under all the diſpenſations of God, as having no iniquity in them, *but exalt the righteouſneſs of God in all his diſpenſations, as mingled alſo, and ſprinkled with mercy.* Though we cannot ſee the righteouſneſs of God in ſome of them, yet we muſt believe he is not only ſo, but merciful in all of them; though the day be dark, and we cannot diſcern how this or that ſutes with the righteouſneſs, much leſs with the goodneſs and mercy of God, yet ſit down we ought in this faith, that both this and that is righteous, yea, that God is good to *Iſrael*, in the one and in the other. When the Prophet was about to touch upon that ſtring, he firſt laid down this principle as unqueſtionable (*Jer.* 12.1.) *Righteous art thou, O Lord, yet give me leave to plead with thee about thy Judgments: Why doth the way of the wicked proſper?* Why is it thus in the world? I take the boldneſs to put theſe queſtions, O Lord, yet I make no queſtion but thou art righteous, O Lord. It becomes all the ſons of men to reſt patiently under the darkeſt providences of God. And let us all, not only not charge God fooliſhly, but exalt him highly, and cry up both his righteouſneſs and kindneſs towards all his people; For *who can ſay to God, thou haſt wrought iniquity?* Having in ſeveral other paſſages of this book, met with this matter alſo, I here briefly paſs it over.

VERS. 24, 25.

Remember that thou magnifie his work, which men behold.

Every man may ſee it, man may behold it afar off.

These two verſes contain the third advice, counſel or exhortation given by *Elihu* to *Job*, ſtirring him up to give glory to God in his providential proceedings with him.

There are three things conſiderable in theſe two verſes,

Firſt, The general duty commanded, which is, to *magnifie the work of God.*

Secondly, We have here a ſpecial reaſon or ground of that duty; the viſibility and plainneſs, yea, more than ſo, the illuſtriouſneſs of his work. The work of God is not only ſuch as ſome men may ſee, but ſuch as *every man may ſee*, yea, *behold afar off.*

Thirdly, We have here an incentive to provoke to this duty, in the firſt words of the Text, *Remember.*

Verſ. 24. **Remember that thou magnifie his work, which men behold.**

To *Remember*, imports chiefly theſe two things.

Firſt, to call to mind what is paſt (*Mat.* 26.75.) *Then Peter remembred the words of Chriſt.*

Secondly, To remember, is to keep ſomewhat in mind againſt the time to come; in which ſence the Law runs (*Exod.* 20.8.) *Remember the reſt-day*; that is, keep it in mind, that whenever it cometh, or upon every return of that day, ye may be in a fit poſture and preparation for it; *Remember the reſt*, or *ſabbath-day to keep it holy.*

To remember in this place, is ſet (I conceive) in a double oppoſition: Firſt, To forgetfulneſs of the duty here called for; remember and do not forget it. Secondly, To the ſlight performance of the duty here called for; the magnifying of the work of God.

Remember that thou magnifie.] As if he had ſaid, *Be thou daily and duely affected with it*, do not put it off with a little, or a bare remembrance; the matter is weighty, conſider it fully. As if *Elihu* had ſaid to *Job*, *Thou haſt much forgotten thy ſelf, and gone off from that which is thy proper work. I have heard thee much complaining of the works of God, but thy work ſhould have been to magnifie the work of God. Though God hath caſt thee down and laid thee low, yet thy buſineſs ſhould have been to exalt the work of God; Remember, it would much better become thee to act another part than this; thou ſhouldſt have acted the part of a magnifier of the work of God, not the part of a complainer againſt it. Remember that thou*

Magnifie;] The root ſignifieth, to increaſe and extol. We may conſider a twofold magnifying of the work of God. There is an inward magnifying of the work of God; and there is an outward magnifying of the work of God.

תשגיא
i. e.
תגדיל
Augeas, extollas ejus opus, non accuſes ut nunc facis. Merc.

Firſt, There is an inward magnifying of the work of God, when we think highly of it; thus did the Virgin in her ſong (*Luke* 1.46.) *My ſoul doth magnifie the Lord.* Her heart was raiſed up, and ſtretched out in high thoughts of God.

Secondly, There is an outward magnifying of the work of God. To ſpeak highly of his work is to magnifie his work; to live holily and fruitfully is to magnifie his work.

We cannot make any addition to the work of God, there is no ſuch magnifying of it; but we muſt ſtrive to give the works of God their full dimenſion, and not leſſen them at all. As we muſt not diminiſh the number of his works, ſo we muſt not diminiſh the juſt weight and worth of them. There is ſuch a charge of God to the Prophet about his word (*Jer.* 26. 2.) *Go tell the people all the words that I command thee to ſpeak unto them; diminiſh not a word.* Deliver thy meſſage in words at length, or in the full length of thoſe words in which it was delivered unto thee. We then magnifie the work of God, when we diminiſh not a tittle. As we cannot add any thing to it, ſo we muſt neither abate nor conceal any thing of it. To magnifie, is not to make the works of God great, but to declare and ſet forth the greatneſs of them; that's the magnifying here eſpecially intended. *Remember that thou magnifie his works.*

I ſhall not ſtay upon that other reading, *Remember that thou art ignorant of his work.* The ſame word which we tranſlate, to *magnifie*, with the variation of a point, ſignifieth *to erre*; hence that tranſlation. There is a profitable ſenſe in it; for indeed the beſt knowledg which we have of the work of God may be call'd ignorance, and we ſaid to be ignorant of that work which we are moſt knowing in. Yet becauſe this is ſtraining of the Text, I paſs it by, and keep to our own rendring, *Remember that thou magnifie*

Memento quod ignores opus ejus. Vulg. Hieronymus confundit שׂנא *cum* שׁנא *quanquam* שׁנה *potius errare quam ignorare ſignificat.* Druſ.

His work.] What work? Here is no work ſpecified, therefore I anſwer;

Firſt, All the works of God are here included; Magnifie his work. Whatever is a work of God, whatever hath the ſtamp and inſcription of God upon it, ſee that thou magnifie it.

Secondly, and more ſpecially, we may underſtand this work of God to be the work of Creation, the goodly ſtructure and fabrick of this viſible world; and indeed that's a work ſo great and magnificent, that it ought to be continually remembred and magnified.

Hujus mundi opificium intelligo. Bold.

Thirdly, Others reſtrain it more narrowly, to that part of the work of God which is eminent in the heavenly Meteors, and wonderful changes in the air, together with the motions and influences of the ſtars, of which we ſhall find *Elihu* diſcourſing at large, like a divine Philoſopher, in the next Chapter. There are ſtrange works of God in theſe lower heavens, where thoſe Meteors are born and brought forth; *Remember to magnifie thoſe works.*

Fourthly, I rather conceive (though ſuch works of God are afterward ſpoken of) that *Elihu* intends the work of Providence in both the appearances of it, as it is a white or black work, as it is for good or for evil, as it is in judgment or in mercy. A modern Interpreter pitcheth upon the former, and upon one particular of the former; as if *Elihu* had directly led *Job's* thoughts back to the Deluge, that work of God in bringing the Flood upon the old world; and if we can but go back and honour God for his paſt works of Providence, we ſhall magnifie him for his preſent. As if *Elihu* had ſaid, *Thou complaineſt that thou art overflowed with a deluge of afflictions; but doeſt thou remember how God deſtroyed the whole world at once in the univerſal flood?* But though I think, that may be taken in among other works, yet to reſtrain it to that is a great deal too narrow for this Text. Therefore under this work of God, we may comprehend any great work of God, which is upon record, or which we have heard of, wherein he hath ſhewed his power, wiſdom, and juſtice.

Remember his work;] The work of providence. Thoſe works of providence which are afflictive, have a great place in this Text, becauſe the perſon ſpoken to was one in an afflicted condition. And I conceive *Elihu* directs *Job* not ſo much to magnifie God for the day of proſperity and Sunſhine which he once had, as for the day of adverſity and darkneſs, which then covered him. *Remember that thou magnifie his work,*

Which men behold,] Which *the ſons of Enoſh behold*, ſaith Mr. *Broughton.* But the word *Sons* is not in the Text, there 'tis only *men*, or *weak men.* The word which we tranſlate to *behold*, hath a double ſignification, and that hath cauſed a double tranſlation: It ſignifieth, firſt, to *ſing*; ſecondly, to *ſee* or *behold.* It is tranſlated by ſeveral in the former ſenſe, *Remember that thou magnifie his work, whereof men have ſang*; The Chaldee Paraphraſe ſaith, *For which juſt men have given praiſe* in Pſalms and Songs. Beholding fully a good thing, and praiſing it, or praiſing God for it, go together, as Mr. *Broughton's* gloſs expreſſeth it out of *Ramban.* Gracious and holy men do not only ſpeak, but ſing the wonderful works of God; And, that praiſes were in ſong or verſe, both the Scriptures and many ancient Authors teſtifie. God works, and men ſing the praiſes of God for his works, as *Moſes*, *David*, and *Deborah* did. And we find all the Saints (*Rev.* 15. 3.) ſinging praiſes to the Lord for the great work which he will do in bringing forth judgment to perfection upon *Babylon.* Thus it is a truth, the work of God is to be ſung and ſet forth in Meeter, or in verſe.

שיר

De quo cecinerunt viri.

Quod laudarunt juſti viri Chald.

We take the other tranſlation, *Which men behold*; which, with reſpect to that which followeth (*verſ.* 25.) where both expreſſions refer to the eye, is, I conceive, moſt proper. *Magnifie the work of God, which men behold*; As if *Elihu* had ſaid, O *Job*, I adviſe thee to leave off ſearching into the ſecrets of God, and ſet thy ſelf to conſider and magnifie thoſe works of God which are plain and lye open to every man's eye.

The word rendred *Behold*, may note, both a tranſient, and an intenſe or fixt beholding, to look wiſhly as we ſay, to look faſtning the eye ſolicitouſly, yea, it imports, not only to behold with the eye of the body, but with the eye of the mind.

Some Interpreters put an Emphaſis upon the word *men*, as noting excellent men, vertuous men, men of vertue in their qualities, and of excellency in their abilities; ſuch are men indeed, worthy men, worthy the name of man; as it hath been ſaid of old, *Where there are no men, do thou play the man*, act and ſpeak like a man. Some men have nothing but the outſide of a man. This is a good notion. For good men, holy men, men of divine excellency, are moſt quick-ſighted, and quick-ſented; Firſt, eſpying the appearances of God in any of his providences, and then making a due improvement of them. Therefore (ſaith *Elihu*) *magnifie his work, which men*, that is, holy and good men, *behold* and take notice of. *David* ſpeaking of the works of God in that notable place, (*Pſal.* 92. 6.) ſaith, *A bruitiſh man knoweth not, neither doth a fool underſtand this*; that is, ſuch a one as he, cannot behold the work of God. And therefore it is more than a criticiſm to reſtrain the word *men*, to men of this ſort; yet it muſt be granted that the word ſignifies not only excellent men, but any ſort of men, whether wiſe or fooliſh, rich or poor, and the weaker ſort of men more ſpecially than the ſtronger and more noble in any kind.

Quæ viderunt non homines ſed viri præſtantes, ut ſit nomen ἀρετῆς. Sic alibi, in loco ubi non ſunt viri, virum te præſta. Druſ.

אנשים *Non tam excellentes, quam miſeros & plebeios, vel omnes omnino homines ſignificat.*

And to take the word in that univerſality, as compaſſing and comprehending all ſorts of men, even thoſe who are dim ſighted, blear-eyed, that is, of weakeſt underſtanding, may be a good improvement of the Text, implying, that as ſome of the works of God are ſo myſterious, that the wiſeſt cannot ſee the meaning of them, ſo many, very many, of his works are ſo manifeſt, that common men may compaſs them. *Magnifie his works, which men behold.*

The works of God are of two ſorts, viſible and inviſible.

Firſt, Such as we ſee or know, by ſight: Thus the works of Creation, and the works of Providence, his preſent providences, are ſuch as we behold, they are viſible works.

Secondly, There are inviſible works of God, which we cannot behold, but muſt believe, and can know only by faith; ſuch are his ſpiritual works, or what he works upon or in the ſpirits of the children of men: Theſe are written in too ſmall a letter for the eye of Nature to behold; none can ſee them or behold them but by an eye of faith, or ſpiritual underſtanding. The works of regeneration and ſanctification (for which God is wonderfully to be magnified) may be ſeen or beheld in the fruits and effects of them, in thoſe they are very viſible, but they cannot be ſeen in themſelves. The paſt and future providences of God cannot now be ſeen by the eye, but by faith they may, and we ought to believe that ſuch things were wrought, and ſhall be wrought; we are to receive the teſtimony given by faithful Hiſtory, that ſuch things were done, though we never ſaw the doing of them, and we are to receive the ſure word of Prophecy that ſuch things ſhall be done, though we live not to ſee the doing of them. The work of God intended here by *Elihu* is a viſible work, therefore it muſt fall among his providences.

Verſ. 25. **Every man man may ſee it.**

כל ארם *Omnes homines in quibus eſt vel mica bonæ mentis.* Merc.

That is, ſay ſome, every wiſe and underſtanding man; but rather, any man, (as was touched at the former verſe) if he be but a man of common underſtanding, if he have any ſpark of Reaſon left in him unquencht, if he have his eyes in his head, he may ſee it; the eye of every one who will not ſhut his eyes againſt the light, muſt needs ſee it. We ſay, *Who ſo blind as they that will not ſee?*

שור חזה נבט

Man may behold it afar off.] The word here rendred **Behold**, is not the ſame which we tranſlate *Behold* in the former verſe, nor is it the ſame word which ſignifieth to *ſee* in the former part of this verſe. Some make a difference between *ſeeing* in the former part of the verſe, and *Beholding* in the latter. Holy and good men ſee the works of God clearly and diſtinctly, they look on them with delight and contentment; the common ſort of men only behold them, firſt, darkly, as at a diſtance; ſecondly, confuſedly and in groſs. *Man may behold it.*

מרחוק *A longe.* Mont. *Eminus*, i. e. *à formatione mundi huc uſq;* Rab. Solemoth. *Non planè perſpicit rationem ejus.* Piſc.

Afar off.] There is a fourfold conception about that *afar off.*

Firſt, Some expound it for *afar off in time,* The work of God doth not wear out; that firſt and great viſible work of Creation which was from the beginning, yet remaineth. Ages paſs away, but the work of God doth not paſs away, though done ſome hundreds, yea thouſands of years ago.

Secondly, *Afar off*, that is, imperfectly, not fully; he may have ſome diſcoveries of it, every man the weakeſt man may diſcern ſomewhat of it. Things that are high and afar off, are confuſedly ſeen, not clearly or fully diſcerned. A man that is afar off, cannot be diſtinguiſhingly known. When a man is a far off, we may ſee him to be a man, but what manner of man he is, or who he is, we cannot diſcern; though poſſibly it may be our own father, yet being afar off we cannot know him diſtinctly. Thus to ſee afar off notes only a confuſed knowledg. That's a good ſenſe; things afar off are not diſtinctly ſeen.

Et longinquo, i. e. *ex poſterioribus & effectis.* Merc.

Thirdly, *Afar off*, may be expounded of all the ſight we have on this ſide Heaven. In this world we ſee all that we ſee afar off, we have not a near intimate knowledg of things, eſpecially not of the beſt things, ſpiritual things, of all them we muſt ſay, *We know but in part, and ſee through a glaſs darkly*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks (1 *Cor.* 13. 12.) Such things as are not immediate to us, we are ſaid to ſee through a glaſs, or as repreſented in their effects, and iſſues, or in their *back parts*, as God himſelf is ſeen. (*Exod.* 33. 18, 23.) *Thou ſhalt ſee my back parts: but my face ſhall not be ſeen*, ſaid God to *Moſes* when he moved to ſee his glory.

Fourthly, This beholding *afar off*, may note the greatneſs of the work of God, the exceeding lightſomneſs and gloriouſneſs of it. Thoſe things that are great, may be ſeen a great way off. A high Tower is ſeen *afar off.* We hardly believe the doctrine and reports of Aſtronomers, how far off the Sun is, which every eye beholds. Though the Sun be ſo many thouſand miles diſtant, yet any man may ſee it, 'tis ſo great, ſo beautiful, ſo bright a body. Many of the works of God have ſuch a beauty, radiancy and luſtre in them, that any that are not ſtark blind may ſee them afar off. *Remember that thou magnifie his work, which men behold. Every man may ſee it, man may behold it afar off.* From the context of theſe two verſes, note,

> Firſt, *We are very apt to forget our duty in giving God the glory of his works.*

The *memento* or remember at the beginning of the verſe is no more than needs. We have bad memories for any thing that's good, eſpecially for the good word word and the good works of God. We are ſo far from magnifying his work, that we often forget his work. 'Tis ſaid of *Iſrael* (*Pſal.* 106. 13.) *They ſoon forgat his works.* If we ſoon forget the works of God, we ſhall ſooner forget to magnifie God for his work. Many remember the work of God, who do not magnifie it, nor him for it; but none can magnifie the work of God, nor God for his work, who do not remember it.

Secondly, In that the Text ſaith, *Remember that thou magnifie*, not only that thou ſpeak of, or declare his work, but *magnifie it*,

> Note, *We uſually have low apprehenſions of the work of God.*

While we remember it, we do not magnifie it; while we ſpeak of his work, we ſeldom praiſe his work. It is ſaid of the vertuous Woman, (*Prov.* 31. 31.) *Her own works praiſe her in the Gates*; that is, they like ſo many elegant Orators tell all that paſs by, how praiſe-worthy ſhe is. The works of God will praiſe him, whether men do or no. *All thy works ſhall praiſe thee*, (ſaith *David*, Pſal. 145. 10.) What then ſhould they do for whom they are wrought? The latter part of the verſe ſhews what they will do who know what God hath wrought for them; *Thy Saints* (ſaith he) *ſhall bleſs thee.* They who have (as moſt have) low thoughts, can never give high praiſes of the works of God.

Thirdly, In that this counſel and exhortation is given to *Job*, in that this ſpur is, as it were, put to his ſides, *Remember that thou magnifie*,

> Note, *The beſt men need Monitors and Remembrancers to quicken them about their duty of magnifying the works of God.*

The Lord, though he needed not, yet will have us to be his remembrancers, to do our works for us, if we would have our works done; the Lord would have us by prayer to mind him of our own, and of all his peoples condition (*Iſa.* 62. 6.) *Ye that are the Lords remembrancers* (ſo we put in the Margin, and in the Text) *ye that make mention of the Lord*, &c. The Lord will have us to be his remembrancers. And though he is ever mindful of his Covenant, yet he liketh it well to be put in mind of it. But O what need have we of a remembrancer, to put us in mind of the work of God, and to magnifie his work! We need a daily remembrancer to put us in mind of what we ſhould do, how much more of what God hath done! We need to be minded of that which 'tis a wonder how we can forget, our latter end, or how frail we are; how much more do we need to be minded of thoſe duties which fit us for our latter end, and lead us to thoſe enjoyments which never end!

> Fourthly, obſerve, *Such is the ſinfulneſs of mans heart, and his ſluggiſhneſs, that he hardly remembers to magnifie God for thoſe works which he cannot but ſee.*

Elihu urgeth *Job*, and with him all men, to remember that they magnifie even that work of his *which men behold*, and which every man may ſee. How ſlack are they in or to that great duty of magnifying God, who when they ſee, or may ſee, if they will, his mighty works, yet mind not the magnifying of him!

> Fifthly, obſerve, *Some works of providence are ſo plain, that every man, that doth not wilfully ſhut his eyes, may behold them.*

He is altogether ſtupid and blockiſh, that ſeeth not what all may ſee. Hence the Pſalmiſt, having ſaid, *O Lord, how great are thy works*, concludeth ſuch among brutes and fools, (*Pſal.* 92. 6.) *The brutiſh man knoweth not, neither doth a fool underſtand this.* It was the ſaying of *Plato* an Heathen; *That man is worthy his eyes ſhould be pulled out of his head, who doth not lift them up on high, that he may admire the wiſdom of the Creator in the wonderful fabrick of the world*; I may add, *and in the works of providence:* Are they not ſuch, that as the Prophet ſpeaks, *He that runs may read them?*

Sixthly, Conſider why doth *Elihu* thus charge it upon *Job?* ſurely to humble him for his ſin, in that he did not magnifie God for his works.

> Hence note, *It is a great aggravation of our neglect of praiſing God for his works, or of our not magnifying the works of God, ſeeing his works are obvious to every man, even to the weaker and ruder ſort of men.*

If the very blind may ſee them, how ſinfully blind are they, who ſee them not! The works of God ſhould be ſought out, (*Pſal.* 111. 2, 4.) If they lie in corners, yet they are to be ſought out, and they are ſought out *of them that have pleaſure therein.* If God ſhould hide his work under ground, if God ſhould put his Candle under a buſhel (as Chriſt ſaith men do not, *Mat.* 5.) yet 'tis our duty to ſeek it out, and ſet it upon a Candleſtick, that all may behold it, and praiſe him for it. Now if the moſt hidden works of God muſt be ſought out, that they may be magnified, ſurely then, when the works of God ſtand forth and offer themſelves to our view, and we cannot tell which way to draw our eyes from them, how great a ſin is it, not to behold them, not to give him the glory of them.

Seventhly, Obſerve, *To magnifie the works of God is mans duty, yea it is a moſt neceſſary and indiſpenſible duty.*

This is the point chiefly intended by *Elihu* in his preſent diſcourſe with *Job*; This containeth the ſum and ſubſtance of the whole Text. To magnifie the work of God is ſo neceſſary, ſo indiſpenſible a duty, that A *remember* is put upon it, leſt at any time it ſhould ſlip from us. The Lord knowing how great, how weighty, how comfortable, how profitable a duty it is to keep the *Reſt-day*, prefixeth this word, *Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy,* (Exod. 20. 8.) I might give inſtance from ſeveral other Scriptures, importing thoſe duties which have a *memento* put upon them to be of great neceſſity, and that the Lord will not bear with us if we lay them by, or neglect the conſtant performance of them. To forget any duty is very ſinful, how much more thoſe which we are ſpecially warned to remember that we do them! *David* was not ſatisfied in doing the duty of the Text alone, but muſt aſſociate others with him in it. (*Pſal.* 34. 3.) *O let us magnifie the Lord together*; that's a bleſſed conſort, the conſort of the bleſſed for ever. The whole work and reward too, of Saints in heaven is, and eternally will be, to magnifie God; and they have the beginnings of that work and reward, who are ſincerely magnifying his works here on earth. *God hath magnified his word* (in all things) *above his name* (*Pſal.* 138. 2.) and the reaſon is, becauſe his works anſwer or are the fulfilling of his word to the praiſe of his glorious name. Now if God hath magnified his word by his works, then we muſt magnifie his works, or him in his works, For wherein doth God magnifie his word but in his works? He hath magnified his work by bringing his word forth in his works: Surely then if God hath magnified his word by bringing it forth in his works, then 'tis our duty to magnifie the works of God, which are the product, effect and anſwer of his word.

But ſome may ſay, how is that done? I would give anſwer to this queſtion in five things.

Firſt, Then we magnifie the work of God, when we magnifie God for his work: we cannot magnifie the mercy of God, but by magnifying the God of our mercies; We cannot magnifie his work while we neglect himſelf. We magnifie God in his work, firſt, when we aſcribe the whole efficiency of what we ſee done in the world, to him, and ſay, *This is the finger of God*, Or when we ſay, according to this or that time, *What hath God wrought?* (*Numb.* 23. 23.) To magnifie the work of God is to give the whole of it to God. 'Tis the hand of God upon a work that ſets the price upon any work, and makes it worthy to be magnified. As in ſome Pictures, this ſets a price upon them, to ſay they are ſuch a man's work, the work of ſuch a famous Artiſt, the work of *Apelles*, or of *Michael Angelo*. So if we would magnifie any providential work, we muſt ſay, it is the work of the great God, it is he that hath done it; the eye of our mind muſt look directly at God in ruling and governing of the world. While we pore much upon, or ſtay our thoughts about ſecond cauſes, we cannot exalt the work of God; though we call it God's work, yet if our hearts hang about ſecond cauſes, the work cannot be exalted as his. 'Tis a depreſſion of the work of God to put any thing of man upon it. To honour the work of God is to give him the whole effect of the work. As we then magnifie God when we look to him alone, with a ſingle eye, as the end of all our works (There is nothing doth magnifie God in what we do, but our looking to God as the end of all we do; Let our work be what it will, never ſo glittering, never ſo gay and glorious in the eye of the world, yet if it be not conſigned over to God, it is a baſe and pitiful work; if any man dedicates his work to himſelf he diſhonours his work: Now (I ſay) as it magnifieth our work when we make God the end of our work) ſo that which magnifieth God's work, is; when we look upon him, not only as having an hand in it, but as being both the beginner and ender of it. If we take or give this to the creature, that is, ſit down in this or that Inſtrument, as the means by which we have attained our end, or as the end of what we have attained, we ſpoil the work as to God, or deſpoil God of his work. Remember, this, and this only, magnifyeth our work, when we with a ſingle eye look to God as the author and as the end of it. Every work we ſee done is magnified, and God in it, when we look to God as the *Alpha and Omega, as the Author and Ender* of it. Nor is this true only in thoſe works of God which he doth more immediately, but where men act moſt, and are very inſtrumental. Let us therefore aſcribe every work to God, and that firſt, in afflicting us; ſuch an eye *Joſeph* had (*Gen.* 45. 8.) *It was not you that ſent me hither, but God*; that is, not ſo much you, as God (ſaith *Joſeph* to his brethren) I do not ſay it was you (though you were unkind brethren) it was not you that ſent me hither, but God: I look at him more than at you in that great affliction, which was brought upon me by your envy and unbrotherly unkindneſs towards me. Such an eye *David* had when he was under a very grievous, black, dark providence, when his ſon roſe up againſt him, and when his ſubject *Shimei* curſed him, even then he magnified that work of God, by aſcribing it wholly unto him (2 *Sam.* 16. 10.) *The Lord hath ſaid unto him, curſe David.* He magnified God in that great affliction by looking at the hand of God alone in it, and paſſing by *Shimei*'s, both undutifulneſs and extream malignity. He ſaid as much, while he tells us he ſaid nothing, in a like or as bad a caſe (*Pſal.* 39. 9.) *I opened not my mouth, becauſe thou didſt it.* Hence that reproof in the Prophet (*Iſa.* 5. 12.) *They regard not the work of the Lord, nor conſider the operation of his hand.* Secondly, Let us aſcribe every work to God in exalting us; ſuch an eye had the Church to God (*Pſal.* 44. 1, 2, 3.) *Our fathers have told us what work thou didſt in their days*; Thou didſt drive out the heathen by thy hand, and plantedſt them, they got not the land in poſſeſſion by their own ſword, *&c.* but by thy right hand, and thine arm, *&c.* Here is no mention at all of *Joſhua*'s atchievements and famous victories in ſubduing the *Canaanites*, &c. All is given to God, and he alone exalted for that exalting work. That's the firſt anſwer: Then we magnifie the work of God, when we acknowledg him alone both in afflicting and exalting us.

Secondly, Then we magnifie the work of God, when we beat out, as it were, and ſift all the circumſtances of his work (as we ſay) to the bran, that ſo we may find out every perfection, every glory of it: when we do not only behold and ſee the work, but when (as direction is given, *Pſ.* 48.) *We walk about Zion, tell her towers, and conſider her palaces,* that is, when we do not look upon things only in the bulk, but make an exact ſcrutiny, or take a full view of every part. We cannot magnifie the work of God by a bare beholding of it, but by prying into every circumſtance of it, or by conſidering what excellencies and rarities are in it. As we magnifie our ſinful works (in one ſenſe we ſhould magnifie our ſins, that is, aggravate them, not magnifie them to applaud them, or glory in them, but to make our ſelves aſhamed of them, as (I ſay) we magnifie our ſinful works, or what we have done ſinfully, when we conſider all the circumſtances of our ſins, as committed againſt light and love, againſt mercy and goodneſs, againſt the patience and forbearance of God, againſt our own profeſſions and promiſes, againſt our experiences & priviledges, all which ſhould oblige us to holineſs, and engage us to a gracious circumſpection in all our ways and walkings, leſt at any time we ſhould ſin againſt God and grieve his Spirit) So we magnifie the works of God when we eye all the circumſtances of them, and conſider them as done for us when we could do nothing for our ſelves, as done for us when we muſt have periſhed and been undone, unleſs God had appeared for us; as done for us when we deſerved not the leaſt good to be done for us; as done for us when none would do any thing for us, none caring for our ſouls; as done for us when none could do any thing for us. Theſe and ſuch like circumſtantial conſiderations, exceedingly magnifie the work of God. A bare *behold*, a tranſient *look* may diſcover no great matter, but if we ſeriouſly weigh every particular, we ſhall then ſee cauſe enough to magnifie the work of God. *Eliah* (1 *Kings* 18. 43.) commanded his ſervant to look towards the ſea, and when he went firſt, he ſaw nothing, but being commanded to go ſeven times, he at the ſeventh *ſaw a little cloud riſing out of the ſea, as big as a mans hand*; but at the laſt, *heaven was black with* *clouds and wind, and there was a great rain.* If we would look again and again, if we would look ſeven times upon the work of God, that which at firſt ſeemed nothing, or afterwards no bigger than a man's hand, or no bigger than a man's hand could effect and bring about, will at laſt be magnified to ſuch a vaſtneſs, that all muſt confeſs, the hand of God hath done it.

Thirdly, We then magnifie the works of God, when we freely ſubmit to God in them, as juſt and righteous, when we accept and take them kindly at his hand, not only when they are outward kindneſſes, but croſſes. All the great words and rhetorick we can beſtow upon the works of God will not magnifie them, unleſs we freely ſubmit to them as juſt and righteous. They that would magnifie the works of God, muſt ſay, *Judgment and righteouſneſs are the habitation of his throne,* while they can ſee nothing but *clouds and darkneſs round about him* (*Pſal.* 97. 2.) I (ſaith the Pſalmiſt) am in the dark about all that God is doing at this day, yet of this I am as confident as confidence it ſelf, *Judgment and Righteouſneſs are the habitation of his throne*; I know God doth nothing amiſs, no not in the leaſt. Thus *John* in the *Revelation* (*Chap.* 15. 3.) ſaw them that *had gotten the victory over the beaſt, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name,* and they (ſaith he) ſing the Song of *Moſes,* &c. *ſaying, Great and marvelous are thy works, juſt and true are thy ways.* The works of God in Judgment upon *Babylon,* are full of juſtice, and we magnifie them by proclaiming and crying them up as juſt; yea, the work of God in Judgment upon *Zion,* is exceedingly magnified, when *Zion* ſubmits to it, and embraceth it as juſt and righteous. It was the great ſin of the houſe of *Iſrael,* when they ſaid (*Ezek.* 18. 25.) *The ways of God are not equal.* As if they had ſaid, are theſe the Lord's equal dealings, that we his People ſhould be given up to the hand of the enemy, and ſuffer ſuch things as theſe? yea, the houſe of *Iſrael* muſt ſay, all the works of God, not only his exalting works, but his humbling works, are equal, juſt and righteous, for we have ſinned. This is to magnifie the work of God.

Fourthly, To magnifie the work of God, is to look upon his work whatever it is, not only as having juſtice in it towards all men, but as good and being full of goodneſs to his People. Poſſibly it may be very hard work, yet we muſt bring our hearts to ſay it is good work, good to and for the *Iſrael* of God. Thus the holy man of old magnified the work of God (*Pſal.* 73. 1.) *Truly God is good to Iſrael.* This he ſpake while he was bemoaning himſelf under very afflicting providences. We magnifie the afflicting works of God, when we ſubmit to them as juſt, much more when we embrace them as good. And it was very much the deſign of *Elihu* to bring *Job* off from diſputing about the evils with which God had ſo long exerciſed him, to a ready yieldance that they were good for him, and that in all the Lord intended nothing but his good.

Fifthly, To magnifie the work of God, is to anſwer the end of it. Every work is magnified when it receiveth its end; if a work be done, yet if it have not its effect, if it bring not that about to which it was deſigned, the worker receives no honour from it, nor is the work honoured. To work in vain, is a debaſing, a leſſening of any work, not a magnifying of it. The Apoſtle was afraid to beſtow his labour in preaching the Goſpel in vain. When people ſtill continue in their blindneſs and unbelief, &c. this layeth the preaching of the Goſpel low; but when ſouls are convinced and converted, and come flocking in, then the Goſpel is magnified, *and the word of the Lord glorified,* as the Apoſtle prayed it might (2 *Theſſ.* 3. 1.) Now as the word of God is magnified when it attains its end, ſo the work of God is magnified when we give him, or come up to thoſe ends for which he wrought it: But if we let God loſe the end of his work, we do what we can to debaſe his work, as if he had done it in vain. We ſay, he works like a fool that hath not propoſed an end to every work he doth; and he appears not very wiſe, at leaſt not very powerful, who attaineth not the end or ends for which he began his work. The moſt wiſe God hath his end and aim in all his works in this world; and this is the honour we do his work, when we labour, firſt, to know, and ſecondly, to give him his end in every work.

But if any ask, VVhat are the ends of God in his work? I anſwer, They are very various.

Firſt, The chief end of all that God doth, is the advancement of his own Name and Glory. As he made all things for himſelf in Creation, ſo he doth all things for himſelf in Providence. That which is the ſin of man is the holineſs of God, to ſeek himſelf. It is moſt proper for God, who is the chief good, and whoſe glory is the ultimate end of all things, to ſet up himſelf in all things (*Prov.* 16. 4.) *The Lord hath made all things for himſelf,* ſaith *Solomon.* And the Apoſtle ſaith as much (*Rom.* 11. 36.) *Of him and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever, Amen.* All things are of him, therefore all things ſhou'd return unto him. If we would magnifie any work of God, we muſt be ſure to give him this end, the glory of it. Let it not ſatisfie us, that we are advanced, or get up by the works of God, unleſs we our ſelves advance his glory by them. Many advance themſelves, and are lifted up with pride, when God works for them or by them, not at all minding that which they ſhould chiefly mind, the glorifying of God in and by what he hath wrought, either for themſelves or others.

Secondly, God hath this in deſign, by all his works, to make us better. If it be a work of Judgment, it is to make us better, and then we exalt his works of Judgment, when we are bettered by them, when we are more humbled and weaned from the world by them. And as 'tis the deſign of God to make us better by his works of Judgment, ſo by all his works of mercy. The Apoſtle *beſeecheth us by the mercies of God, to preſent our bodies* (that is, our whole ſelves) *a living ſacrifice,* in all holy ſervice to himſelf (*Rom.* 12. 1.) What will it advantage us to be bettered in our outward enjoyments, by what God works or doth for us, unleſs we learn to be better, and do his work better? that is, unleſs our hearts be more holy, and we more fruitful in every good word and work. Some will magnifie the work of God by keeping a day of thankſgiving, becauſe they are richer or greater by what God hath wrought for them, who yet are not a whit more holy or ſpiritual by it. Wo to thoſe who magnifie the work of God becauſe they think it ſhall go better with them, when themſelves are not better. Enquire therefore what luſt hath the work of God moved you to mortifie, what grace hath the work of God put you upon the exerciſe of? They only indeed magnifie the work of God who have ſuch workings towards God. It were better not receive a mercy, than not to be bettered by a mercy. It is not our crying up the works of God in our words, but in our works, which is the magnifying of them. It is more ſafe for us to ſay nothing of what God hath wrought for us, than to publiſh it, or make our boaſt of it, when we our ſelves do nothing worthy of it, in a way of condecency, and proportion to it. 'Tis the deſign of God in giving promiſes to make us *cleanſe our ſelves from all filthineſs of fleſh and ſpirit, perfecting holineſs in the fear of God* (2 *Cor.* 7. 1.) Much more having given us any great performances of his promiſes, doth he expect that we ſhould be clean and holy. O then what a pitiful courſe do they take, who pretending to magnifie the works of God, do ſuch things as are a defilement both to fleſh and ſpirit!

A third deſign of God in working for us, is to make us truſt him more, or to be more in believing. 'Tis ſhewed (*Pſal.* 78. 4.) what great things God did for the Jewiſh Nation, and for their fathers; But what did God aim at in all? we have the anſwer (*verſ.* 8.) *That they might ſet their hope in him, and not forget his works.* The aim which God had in thoſe great works, was that their hope might be ſet upon him, that they might truſt in him more than ever they had done. The Lord, by the great works he doth, would gain upon our faith, or cauſe us to truſt him for the future. How diſhonorably do they carry it towards God, who believe not his word, much more they who believe not his works, that is, who believe him not, notwithſtanding his works, as 'tis ſaid of *Iſrael* (*Pſal.* 78. 32.) *For all this they ſinned ſtill; and believed not his wondrous works.* The Pſalmiſt doth not mean, that they did not believe ſuch works had been done; but the meaning is, they did not truſt God who had done thoſe works. Theſe and many more duties the Lord teacheth us by his word, and he teacheth them alſo by his works, as it is ſaid (*verſ.* 22.) *who teacheth like him?* The Lord teacheth us many excellent leſſons by his works, if we had hearts to learn thrm. Lay theſe things together in practice, and they will be the beſt, yea, they are the only way of magnifying the works of God done for us. And, if the works of God are to be magnified all theſe ways, then they fall ſhort of this duty.

Firſt, Who only make a report of the works of God, who tell the ſtory of what he hath done, and ſo have done. As we ought to adorn the Doctrin of God (*Tit.*2.) ſo likewiſe the doings of God, or what God hath done by our doings. Meer narratives about the work of God, is far below magnifying his work.

Secondly, They fail much more who extenuate and diminiſh the works of God, who obſcure or eclipſe his works. As in our confeſſions of repentance, it is a ſign of a bad heart barely to report our ſins before God, without aggravating them in their ſinfulneſs; but in confeſſion to extenuate our ſin ſheweth a very rotten and naughty heart: ſo in our confeſſions of praiſe, meerly to report what God hath done for us, without putting an accent or a due emphaſis upon his mercies, ſhews much coldneſs of ſpirit in the duty; but to clip and leſſen the works of God, to hide and darken them, to abate and detract from them, ſhews a baſe and a wicked ſpirit.

Thirdly, How do they fail in magnifying the works of God, who do not only conceal how good they are, but bring up an ill report upon them, as thoſe ſearchers did upon the land of *Canaan.* Thoſe works and diſpenſations of God, which (like that land) flow with milk and honey, may be looked upon and cenſured by ſome, as good for nothing but to eat up and conſume thoſe that are under them.

Fourthly, They who are impatient under any work of God, who murmur and repine at it, are far from magnifying the work of God.

Fifthly, They are far from magnifying the work of God, who think themſelves ſo wiſe that they could mend the work of God; had they the penſel in their hand, they would make fairer work of it: what hudling is here? Think ſome; what confuſion is here? Say others; what ſad work is here? Saith a third. If we had the ordering of things, what an orderly world would we make, if we had the ordering of things (as God hath) we would quickly cure and remedy all theſe diſorders. Though ſuch formal ſpeeches be not uttered, yet ſuch things are ſpoken in parables, the actions of ſome tell us ſuch are their thoughts, as if they could mend the work of God, and govern the world with greater moderation than tis; though indeed we need not ſcruple to call the wiſeſt man in the world a very dotard, if he thinks ſo, or that any thing can be done more equally than God hath done it. Let all fleſh adore, let none preſume to queſtion the work of God; let God alone with his work; as he will have no controler, ſo he needs no counſeller. Remember, tis mans duty to *magnifie his work,* not to mend it, to ſhew how good it is, not to attempt the making of it better. And indeed as it is the higheſt point of preſumption, ſo of ignorance, to meddle with the mending of it. *The Lord is a Rock* (ſaith *Moſes,* Deut.32.4.) *and his work is perfect.* Who but a fool, or who but by the over-working of his own folly would venture to mend that which is already, not only perfected, but perfect, were it only the work of a man, much more when it is the work of God, the only wiſe God?

And that we may be provoked humbly to magnify, and for ever deterred from that proud attempt of finding fault with, or mending the work of God, conſider theſe three things;

Firſt, Take the argument in the Text, the plainneſs of the work of God, it is ſuch as may be ſeen afar off, none can pretend ignorance of it, or if they do, that's a vain covert, or excuſe; every man may ſee it, man may behold it afar off, as moſt worthy to be magnified.

Secondly, If we do not magnifie the work of God, God will leſſen his own works of mercy and favour toward us.

Thirdly, He will do no more for us if we magnifie not what he hath done. It is ſaid (*Math.* 13. 58.) Chriſt *did not many mighty works there, becauſe of their unbelief.* God will do no more mighty works for them, who refuſe or neglect to pay him a tribute of praiſe and glory for what he hath done.

VERS. 26.

Behold, God is great, and we know him not, neither can the number of his years be ſearched out.

ELihu having called upon *Job* to magnifie the work of God in general, proceeds to draw him to the magnifying of the ſpecial works of God in naturals: Yet before he leads him to the conſideration of the greatneſs of thoſe works, he invites him to conſider God himſelf who is the Author and Diſpoſer of them, and he invites him to conſider God in three things, all which we find laid down in this 26. Verſe.

Firſt, In his greatneſs, *Behold God is great.*

Secondly, In his Incomprehenſibleneſs; *He is great, and we know him not.*

Thirdly, In his Eternity; *Neither can the number of his years be ſearched out.*

Surely he is moſt worthy our conſideration who is great, and ſo great that he cannot be comprehended, and who is eternally great, whoſe years are numberleſs.

Verſ. 26. **Behold God is great.**

שגיא Et multus, & magnus, multus robore. Druſ. Septuaginta legunt multus, i. e. omnibus numeris perfectus, atque omnibus perfectionibus cumulatus.

The word *Behold,* is here a note both of Attention and admiration; O mind, O admire the greatneſs of God. *God is great.* The word rendred *great,* properly ſignifies an encreaſing growing greatneſs; God is without all encreaſe or growth, being for ever the ſame, yet he may be ſaid to encreaſe, to be magnified and multiplied (as I may ſay) according to the apprehenſions which we have of him. This word bears the ſignification both of *much* and *many. God is but one and the one-moſt one,* yet (in this ſenſe) *many.* So the *Septuagint* renders it here, *he hath, or is many,* that is, he hath all perfections in him; the lines of all excellency and virtue, of all glory and perfection, center in God alone. Thus God is *much,* and God is *many;* the one God is many, he hath many, he hath all eminencies and excellencies bound up, boundleſly in him.

Again, *God is great,* in himſelf or in his being. Whatſoever is in God is God, and therefore whatſoever is in God is great. The power of God is the powerful God, and therefore his power muſt needs be great; the wiſdom of God is the wiſe God, and therefore his wiſdom muſt needs be very great; the mercy of God is the merciful God, and therefore his mercy muſt needs be very great: And thus we may proceed in our meditations quite through all the divine Attributes.

And as God is great in his being, ſo he is great in his working, he *doth great things.* The Pſalmiſt ſaith, *he is good, and doth good;* he is alſo *great, and doth great things;* he is the firſt, the chief, and the beſt being, and his doings are ſuch as he is, he doth like himſelf. God is great, and he hath *an excellent, an excelling greatneſs. Praiſe him* (ſaith *David, Pſal.*150. 2.) *according to his excellent greatneſs;* for when the Scripture ſaith, *God is great,* this poſitive is to be taken as a ſuperlative, *God is great,* that is, he is greateſt, he is greater than all, ſo great that all perſons and all things are little, yea, nothing before him *Iſa.*40.15. *Behold the nations are* (*to him but*) *as the drop of the bucket, and are counted but as the ſmall duſt of the balance: behold, he taketh up the Iſles as a very little thing, they are as nothing, and they are counted to him as leſs than nothing and vanity.* How great is God in compariſon of whom the greateſt things are little things, yea, the greateſt things are nothing!

Behold, God is great. From this excellent Attribute, *the greatneſs of God,* I have made ſeveral Inferences already, at the 12. verſe of the 33. chapter; yet I ſhall infer ſome things further here, both for our direction and conſolation.

Firſt, If God be great and greateſt, *then fear him greatly. Great is the Lord* (ſaid *David,* in his thankſgiving-ſong, 1 *Chron.* 16.25.) *he alſo is to be feared above all gods;* That is, above all the great powers on earth, and above all the imaginary powers of Heaven. Idols, who are the fancied powers of Heaven, are ſometimes called gods in Scripture; ſo likewiſe are Princes or Magiſtrates, who are real powers on earth. Now, ſaith *David* (who was one of thoſe gods, and a great one) *fear him above all gods:* Why? Becauſe he is above all gods, he is higher than the higheſt and he is greater than the greateſt; therefore fear him above all gods, yea, therefore *fear, or worſhip him all ye gods* (Pſal. 97. 7.) Many ſay with their mouths, God is great, yea, infinitely greater than man, yet they fear men, eſpecially great men, more than God.

Secondly, If God be great, *then love him greatly.* Shall this great God have but little love from us? The Law of love, with reſpect to God, is expreſt two ways in Scripture; Firſt, as to the truth of it; and Secondly, as to the meaſure or degree of it. The love which is given to God muſt be a true love, a ſincere love, yet not only ſo, but the love which is given to God muſt be the greateſt love; *Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy Soul, and with all thy might, and with all thy ſtrength;* with all thy heart ſincerely, with all thy might and ſtrength greatly.

Thirdly, If God be great, *then ſerve him greatly,* or do him great ſervice. Take heed of offering the lean and the lame, the halt and the blind to this great King. A great King muſt not be put off with little ſervices with ſmall pittances of duty.

Fourthly, If God be great, then *believe him greatly;* let us have great faith in the great God. Jeſus Chriſt rebukes his diſciples (*Matth.* 8. 26.) *O ye of little faith;* have you God to pitch your faith upon, who is great? Have you his power, and his mercy, and his truth, and his faithfulneſs, all which are great, to reſt upon? And have you but a little faith? That woman (*Matth.* 15. 28.) gave glory to God in believing, when ſhe believed greatly; and therefore Chriſt cryeth up and magnifyeth the greatneſs of her Faith, *O woman, great is thy Faith.*

Fifthly, *The great God is greatly to be praiſed;* he doth great things for us, therefore we muſt return great thanks to him. That alſo we have expreſly (1 *Chron.* 16. 25.) *Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praiſed.* The great God muſt have great praiſes, for he doth great things. As every ſin we commit againſt God hath a greatneſs in it upon this conſideration, becauſe he is a great God againſt whom we ſin (Take heed of the leaſt ſin, for that is great, being committed againſt the great God) ſo whatſoever duty (this of praiſe eſpecially) we perform to God, we ſhould ſtrive to raiſe it up to the greateſt, to the higheſt, becauſe the great God, the high God is concerned in it, or it is conſigned to the great, to the high God.

Sixthly, If God be great, *we ought to give him great ſubmiſſion,* or to ſubmit greatly to him. Great ſubmiſſion to God is the ſubſtance of all duty to God. We owe the full ſubmiſſion of our wills to the Will of God in a twofold reſpect. Firſt, to whatſoever he willeth us to do, or to his commanding will. Secondly, to whatſoever he will do with us, or to his diſpoſing Will. In theſe, and in all things, let us ſtrive to greaten all the actings of our Souls towards God, becauſe he is great.

Secondly, If God be great, then we may infer for conſolation.

Firſt, Be not diſcouraged in prayer when you have great things to ask, when your wants are great, and your neceſſities urgent, when you muſt have great ſupplies, when ſmall matters will not ſerve your turn (in many caſes, it is not a little help, it is not a ſmall matter which will do the thing which we ſue unto God for) now here is a mighty ground of comfort for us, if we want great things, we have a great God to go unto; and how great ſoever our wants are, they are all but ſmall to the greatneſs of that God unto whom we go (*Epheſ.* 3. 20.) *He is able to do exceeding abundantly above what we ask or think;* and not only above what we actually ask and think, but indeed, beyond what poſſibly we can ask or think, above what we are able to ask or think. Therefore let us never be diſcouraged in prayer, becauſe of the greatneſs of the things that we have to ask of God.

Secondly, Be not diſcouraged, though as your wants, ſo your dangers and your troubles are great. How great ſoever the danger is you would be delivered from, God is greater, to whom you come for deliverance: And therefore when a great Mountain ſtood in the way of the deliverance of the people of God (*Zech.* 4. 7.) the Prophet ſpeaks in this language, *Who art thou? O great Mountain, thou ſhalt become a Plain before Zerubbabel;* That is, before the power of that God in whom *Zerubbabel* truſts and whoſe work *Zerubbabel* carries on. Hence that holy confidence (*Pſal.* 66. 3.) *Through the greatneſs of thy power, thine enemies ſhall ſubmit themſelves to thee,* or, *they ſhall yield feigned obedience,* as we put in the margin, which ſome render thus, *though the greatneſs of thy power, thine enemies ſhall be found liars.* All the readings magnifie the greatneſs of God. Through the greatneſs of thy power thine enemies, the enemies of thy people, ſhall ſubmit, they ſhall be found liars, they ſhall yield feigned obedience, they ſhall not be able with all their greatneſs to ſtand it out againſt the great God. Therefore be not diſcouraged at any time at the greatneſs of danger. *Though you walk through the very valley of the ſhadow of death* (that's to be in the greateſt danger) yet as *David* did not, ſo do not you fear, no not that great danger, while the great God is with you.

Thirdly, *Be not diſcouraged though your ſins are great when you come to ask the pardon of them.* As the greatneſs of ſin puts a very great damp upon the ſpirit of man in asking pardon, ſo the greatneſs of God ſhould take off that damp. *My thoughts are not your thoughts* (ſaith the Lord *Iſa.* 55. 7, 8, 9.) in this matter. There is nothing wherein God doth more exceed man than in pardoning ſin (*Mic.* 7. 18.) If ſin be great, the mercy of God is great too, infinitely greater than the ſin of man; if ſin be great, remember we have *a great high Prieſt* (Heb. 4. 14.) not only a Prieſt, but a high Prieſt, and a great high Prieſt; therefore fear not to ask the pardon, even of the greateſt ſin, in his name and for his ſake. And this is true, if we reſpect either national or perſonal ſins; it may encourage us in asking pardon for nations, how great ſoever their ſins are. *Moſes,* when the People had greatly ſinned againſt God, had recourſe to this (*Numb.* 14. 18, 19.) *The Lord is of great mercy; pardon I beſeech thee the iniquity of this people, according to the greatneſs of thy mercy, as thou haſt forgiven this people from Egypt even until now.* Do thus alſo with reſpect to perſonal ſins. *David* made the greatneſs of his perſonal ſin an argument to go to God for mercy (*Pſal.* 25. 11.) *Pardon my ſin, O Lord, for it is great.* He was ſo far from being diſheartened by the greatneſs of his ſin, to ask the pardon of it, that (according to our reading) he had great hope of pardon, as well as ſaw he had great need of pardon; and all becauſe he knew God was great in mercy. Or, if we read that Text thus, *Pardon my ſin, O Lord, though it be great,* the ſenſe is much the ſame; for as the former makes the greatneſs of his ſin a reaſon provoking him to haſten unto God for pardon (as great diſeaſes haſten us in ſeeking remedies) ſo the latter ſhews that the greatneſs of ſin is no ſtop to the mercy and free grace of God in Chriſt, for the pardon of it. Chriſt in that Parable (*Mat.* 18. 24.) gives inſtance of the greateſt debt; he tells us of one that owed his Lord *ten thouſand talents,* a vaſt ſum, a very vaſt ſum; a talent being, according to the loweſt computation, three hundred pounds of money; ten thouſand times three hundred pounds is a huge ſum; ſo that here was a great debt, now (ſaith the Text) *When the debtor had nothing to pay, he came to his Lord, or Creditor, and he forgave him all.* He did not ſay, wouldeſt thou have me, or can I, forgive ſuch a debt as this? What, ten thouſand talents? He forgave it as if it had been a debt of two mites. Thus, and many other ways we may improve this firſt Attribute of God, mentioned in the Text, *his greatneſs,* both as to our direction in duty, and conſolation in every extremity. *Behold God is great,*

And we know him not.

That's the ſecond thing. The words are plain, but the ſenſe is difficult; for it may be objected, Do not we know God? *Elihu* ſaid but juſt now, in the very verſe before the Text, *Magnifie his works which men behold, every man may ſee it, man may behold it afar off?* Surely if the works of God may be known and ſeen by every one, God himſelf may be known, for he is known in his works, as the Apoſtle argues (*Rom.* 1. 20.) The things which he hath made make him known: how is this then ſaid, *That God is great and we know him not?* Doth not the Prophet in denouncing that dreadful curſe (*Jer.* 10.25.) *Pour out thy wrath upon the heathen that know thee not*, thereby intimate, that all the people of God know him? Doth not Chriſt tell us (*John* 17.3.) *This is eternal life, to know thee the only true God.* They who have eternal life, muſt have the knowledg of the true God. But all true believers have eternal life already in hope, and ſhall have it ſhortly in hand, therefore they know God. The Promiſe of the New Covenant is (*Heb.* 11.) *They ſhall all know me from the leaſt to the greateſt*; That is, all my Covenant-people ſhall know me. How is it then ſaid, *God is great, and we know him not?* When *Paul* was at *Athens*, he found an Altar with that Inſcription, *To the unknown God* (*Act.* 17.23.) They worſhipped a God whom they knew not, but certainly we muſt know whom we worſhip. *Ye worſhip ye know not what*, was Chriſt's reproof of the *Samaritans* (John 4.22.) *We know what we worſhip*; That is, whom we worſhip.

For anſwer to this, when the Text ſaith, *God is great and we know him not*; we may ſay, Firſt, That even heathens, the untaught, untutored, and uncatechized heathens do, or, may know God; That is, they may know him in ſome degree or other, they may, yea, they do know him (as the Apoſtle ſaith, *Rom.* 1.20.) ſo far as to leave them *without excuſe*; they have no plea, nor can they make any apologie for themſelves. Secondly, 'Tis certain, all believers, I mean all true believers, know God ſavingly, or ſo far as is ſufficient for their Salvation. Every believer knows God. There is no faith in God without the knowledg of God. Thirdly, Which ſhall be the point of Obſervation from this part, as well as an anſwer to the Queſtion;

None know God fully, perfectly, comprehenſively.

That's *Elihu*'s meaning when he ſaith, *God is great, and we know him not*; That is, we know not how great he is, or we know not the utmoſt of his greatneſs. God only knoweth himſelf fully and comprehenſively. There is no proportion between the greatneſs of God and the underſtanding of a man. The greatneſs of God is infinite, the underſtanding of a man is but finite and limited; the deepeſt underſtanding among men, yea, the underſtanding of Angels is but ſhallow, compared with God. Thus we are to underſtand this Text, *God is great, and we know him not.* There is a greatneſs in every thing of God, tranſcending the poſſibility of any created underſtanding. This ſome give for the reaſon, why the *Seraphims* ſpoken of (*Iſa.*6.) are ſaid *with two of their wings to cover their faces*, they were not able to bear the light of the knowledg of the glory of God. For, though Chriſt, in that admonition which he gave, to take heed of offending *and deſpiſing* the little ones, gives this reaſon for it, (*Matth.* 18.10.) *For in Heaven there Angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in Heaven*; though (I ſay) it be a truth, that the holy Angels, and bleſſed Saints above, do always behold the face of God, yet neither Saints nor Angels, not the Saints in glory, nor the glorious Angels, can fully comprehend the greatneſs and majeſty of God; and therefore the Prophet (as was ſaid) repreſented the Angels covering their faces with their wings. We have heard of King *Hiero* putting the queſtion to *Simonides*, a Philoſopher, *What God was?* who deſired (not being able to give a ſudden anſwer) that the King would reſpit him till next day; when next day came he deſired a ſecond, and when that came he deſired a third; and ſtill the more he ſearched, the farther he was from finding his anſwer. This is true, not only of Philoſophers, who ſee but by the dark light of Nature, but of thoſe who are enlightened divinely, or from above, they who receive much light from God, cannot comprehend the light of God; the more they ſearch into it, the more they ſee themſelves ſhort of it. The moſt we know of God is not ſo much as the leaſt part of that which we know not of him; and when we know as much of God as is knowable by man, yet it may be ſaid, as in the Text, *God is great, and we know him not.*

Hence take three brief Corollaries or Deductions.

Firſt, If God be great and *we know him not*; this is, we are not able to comprehend him; then we muſt reſt ſatisfied with what God hath manifeſted of himſelf and of his will. God hath manifeſted himſelf theſe four ways. Firſt, In his Word. Secondly, In his works of Creation and Providence. Thirdly, In his Son. Fourthly, By his Spirit. Theſe ways God is pleaſed to manifeſt himſelf, or make himſelf known unto his People; now what knowledg of God can be gathered up in theſe ways, what can be learned of him out of his word, out of his works, by conſidering him in his Son, and by waiting for the help of his bleſſed Spirit, we muſt labour to take in; but take heed of a bold preſſing into the ſecrets of God, or of a curious prying into the nature of God, which indeed will but dazle our eyes, and the more we think or look into it, the blinder we ſhall be.

Secondly, If God be ſo great that we know him not, *Then we ought not preſumptuouſly to inquire into a reaſon of the works and ways of God*; for that which is true of God himſelf, is true of his works and of his ways, we cannot know them in the ſenſe opened: Therefore the Apoſtle ſpeaking about that wonderful diſpenſation of God, the laying aſide of the *Jews* and calling of the *Gentiles* (*Rom.* 11.33.) cryeth out, *O the depth of the knowledg and wiſdom of God! how unſearchable are his Judgments, and his ways paſt finding out!* As God himſelf cannot be fully known, ſo neither can his ways nor works.

Thirdly, If God cannot be fully known, neither in himſelf, nor his works, *Then take heed of murmuring or complaining of the ways, works, and dealings of God.* Will you find fault with that which you neither do, nor can fully know? How little is it of any of the works of God, that we know! How little a way do we ſee into them! Let us not find fault with that thing, the perfections whereof cannot find out; ſay not, why is it thus? Why doth God let things go thus? Why are his providences ordered thus? There are many ſuch queryings in the hearts of men, and ſome ſuch are expreſt by the tongues of men. But remember, the Lord cannot be known in his works, therefore let us not complain of his works, but, ſitting down in ſilence, ſubmit to them; let us (as *David*) *Be dumb becauſe God hath done it*, (*Pſal.* 39.9.) *David* was ſilent, not only with reſpect to the ſoveraignty of God, who, he knew, had power and liberty to do whatſoever he pleaſed, but with reſpect to his incomprehenſibility, becauſe he knew he was not able to know or underſtand the bottom-reaſon of that which God had done. This ſome conceive, the ſpecial intendment of *Elihu* in this Text, as reproving *Job* for his many complaints, and murmurings, and diſputings about the dealings of God with him in the extremity of his ſufferings: Therefore, ſaid he, *Conſider God is great, and we know him not.*

Yet let none be diſcouraged in ſeeking after the knowledg of God, becauſe 'tis told us we cannot know God; yea let no man think to excuſe himſelf in his neglect of purſuing the knowledg of God, becauſe this Text ſaith we cannot know him. Some poſſibly will ſay, If God be ſo great, that we cannot know him, then why ſhould we labour after the knowledg of God? Or we hope this will excuſe us, if we do not know him, ſeeing we cannot. Take heed of ſuch reaſonings; for though God cannot be known to the utmoſt of what himſelf is, yet God may be known ſo far as is needful for us, and that is very far. We may know God ſo far as concerns our duty to him, and our happineſs by him; we may know God ſo far as to honour him, and to enjoy him: and we muſt labour to know him perfectly, though we cannot. The Apoſtle ſpeaking of the love of God (*Eph.* 3.17.) would have us *labour to comprehend with all Saints, the heighth, the bredth, the depth, the length, and to know the love of Chriſt that paſſeth knowledg.* That the love of Chriſt paſſeth knowledg, that it exceeds our underſtanding, ſhould not diſcourage us from labouring to know it; nor will it excuſe any that ſit down idly, and do not ſtudy the knowledg of God, though he paſſeth knowledg; we muſt labour to know the greatneſs of Gods love, and the greatneſs of Gods wiſdom, and the greatneſs of Gods power, though the greatneſs of God in all theſe is greater than our narrow hearts can comprehend. *Behold, God is great, and we know him not,*

Neither can the number of his years be ſearched out.

Numerus annorum ejus, & non eſt inveſtigatio.

The Text is, *Number of his years, no ſearch*; That is, as we well tranſlate it, *the number of his years is ſuch as cannot be ſearched*, we ſay, *ſearched out*; It is but one word in the Hebrew, properly ſignifying, *to ſearch a thing to the bottom*, that we may find out the utmoſt of it. *The number of Gods years cannot thus be ſearched out*, we cannot find them to the bottom. *Elihu* ſpeaks of God after the manner of men; years properly belong to man, and the things here below of this world: the life of man, and the continuance of the creature, are meaſured by hours, and days, and weeks, and months, and years, as theſe are meaſured by the motion of the Heavens. But God is far above any ſuch rule or meaſure of life, or of his being, all theſe meaſures are improper unto God; there's no meaſuring him by hours, days, weeks, months or years or ages. The word which we tranſlate *Years*, ſignifieth *Changes*. Years are changed or returned; there is a return of the ſame time every year, Spring and Summer, and Autumn and Winter; Thus the year changeth, and turns about continually. God is infinitely above all theſe changes and turnings of time (*Pſal.*102.25,26,27.) *The Heavens wax old, and as a veſture thou ſhalt change them, and they ſhall be changed, but thou art the ſame, and thy years fail not.* The years of God are not like the years of the world, which wear it out, and change it as a veſture, is changed by time; the Lord is for ever the ſame. Thus one of the Ancients gloſſeth thoſe words of the Pſalm, *Thy years fail not: Thy years* (ſaith he) *neither go nor come; thy years ſtand all together, for becauſe they ſtand, they that go are not excluded by them that come; thy years are one day, and thy day is not day by day, but to day; thy to day doth not give place to tomorrow, nor doth it ſucceed to yeſterday; thy to day is eternity, therefore thou haſt begot thy co-eternal, to whom thou ſaideſt, to day have I begotten thee.* So then this expreſſion, *Neither can the number of his years be ſearched out*, is, according to our apprehenſion and underſtanding, a deſcription not only of very old age, but of eternity. We would think that man very old, the hours, yea the minutes of whoſe life could not be ſearched out by a good Arithmetician, much more eaſily may we tell how many years the oldeſt man hath lived: What then ſhall we think of him the number of whoſe years cannot be ſearched out? This can ſpeak nothing leſs than everlaſtingneſs. And this eternity or everlaſtingneſs of God, though it be impartible, yet it hath, I may ſay, a double reſpect: Firſt, to what went before; Secondly, to what is to come. The eternity of God is ſuch as cannot be ſearched out, either as to what is paſt, or to what is to come; indeed unto God there is nothing paſt or to come; for eternity, properly taken, is an *everlaſting Now*, it is not that which paſſeth or moveth away; and therefore ſome of the Ancients elegantly deſcribe eternity, *to be the perfect enjoyment of bleſſed life all at once*; which becauſe it is all at once together and perfect, cannot be altered nor leſſned. In eternity that which is paſt is preſent, yea that which is to come is preſent in an eternal bleſſed life. 'Tis ſo with God, and ſo in proportion with all thoſe who are entred into eternity, whatſoever they have had is always preſent with them, nor are they in the expectation of any thing to come; they enjoy all in every moment, without the want of any thing. 'Tis much more ſo with God; though years have ſucceſſion, yet the years of God have no ſucceſſion of times or things.

Annus apud Hebræos (שנה) *Ex ſua proprietate & Etymologia nomen habet à mutatione, quaſi dicatur mutatorius. Ab hac radice veſtes dicuntur* מיונים, *nam mutantur veteraſcunt innovantur; & mutari idem quod veſtiri* (1 Reg. 14. 2.)

Auguſtinus in Pſal. 102. v. 28.

Æternitas tempora omnia ſine ulla ſucceſſione complectitur Æternitas eſt vitæ beatæ tota ſimul & perfecta poſſeſſio. Boetius. *Æternum eſt unum eſſe, & totum ſimul eſſe, & nihil deeſſe.* Greg. l. 16. Mor. c. 21. *Æternum eſt immutabile & totum impartibiliter.* Dionyſ. cap 10 de divinis Nom.

Further, The eternity of God, which lies under this deſcription, *The Number of his years cannot be ſearched out*, is not a particular attribute of God, but that which diffuſeth it ſelf through all his attributes; he is eternal in all; there is no ſearching out the Number of the years of any of the perfections of God; his Wiſdom is eternal, and his Power is eternal, and his goodneſs is eternal, and his Juſtice is eternal; there is no ſearching out *the Number of the years of God* in any of theſe perfections.

Hence Note; *God is an eternal being.*

His years come not under account, or number. God is eternal, not only without end, as created Spirits are, but without beginning, which no creature is, nor can be; He is eternal, not only without end or beginning, but without ſucceſſion or mutation. Some of the Ancients tell us, *Eternity ſtands faſt, but moves all other things.* The eternal God is the firſt Mover, himſelf being immoveable. If ſo, then

---Stabiliſq; manens dat cuncta moveri. Boet. de Conſol. Metro. 9.

Firſt, *All things are always preſent with or before God*: Things paſt, things to come are preſent with God, he were not eternal elſe. In that eternity or eternal eſtate of glory which believers ſhall at laſt arrive unto, even they ſhall enjoy all at once, becauſe all their enjoyments ſhall be in God, or God ſhall be their whole enjoyment.

Secondly, *God is infinitely happy and bleſſed.* He hath all that ever he had, or that ever he can have, all at once, or already, nothing of his bleſſedneſs is either to come to him or gone from him; therefore he muſt needs be infinitely bleſſed. Here in this world ſome men have had a kind of bleſſedneſs, they have been rich and great, they have been in power, they have had their fill of pleaſure, but now they have it not, all is periſhed and gone and paſt away. There are others in expectation of great matters, of great riches, of great honours, of great contentments in this world, but as yet they have them not; we ſay of many, *Their lands are not come into their hands*, their eſtate is but yet in reverſion and expectation. Thus it is with men; ſome have had it, and it is gone, and others though they may have it, yet it is not come. But now with the Lord all is preſent, and therefore how infinitely happy is he! A man would think himſelf very happy if he could have all the contentments that ever he had ſcattered through the ſeveral days and years of his life gathered into one moment; it is thus with God, and thus in proportion it ſhall be with us, when we come to that bleſſed ſtate of eternity.

Thirdly, If God be eternal, if there be no ſearching out of his years, then

Time is in the diſpoſe and ordering of God. He *that inhabiteth eternity, is the Lord of time.* God is ſaid to *inhabit eternity*, (*Iſa.* 57.15.) That is, he is eternal, and therefore he is the diſpoſer of all times; he that made time will order time: he ordereth time as to perſons, and he orders time as to Nations, he orders times, and all the changes of times, he ordereth, not only the duration of time, but the condition of times; all is from him, whoſe years cannot be ſcarched out. *David* ſaid (*Pſal.* 31.15.) *My times are in thy hands*, that is, my perſonal times in all the changes of them, troubleſome or comfortable, joyful or ſorrowful, are ordered at thy will, by thy power and wiſdom. And with reſpect to Nations *Daniel* ſaid (*Chap.* 2.21.) *He changeth times and ſeaſons.* The Lord puts a new face of things upon States and Kingdoms; what changes hath not, cannot the Lord make among the ſons of men? The reaſon of all is, he is eternal.

Fourthly, If there be no ſearching out the number of the years of God, if he be eternal, then

How ought we to reverence and adore God! We have a Command from God to reverence thoſe who have attained many years in this world, which alaſs are very few, none at all to the years of God; the aged, and gray-headed muſt be reverenced, (*Lev.*19.32.) And one reaſon of that Law may be, becauſe the aged have ſome ſhadow of Gods eternity upon them; they who have many years have ſome reſemblance of him, the number of whoſe years cannot be ſearched out; therefore God will have them reverenced. Now if the ancient are to be reverenced, how much more God himſelf, who is called (*Dan.*7.9.) *The ancient of days!*

Fifthly, If God be eternal, then, *we may truſt him, yea therefore we ought to truſt him*, (Pſal. 74,12.) *Thou art my King of old, commanding deliverances.* O how did *Davids* confidence ariſe upon this, that God who was King of old, is King now, and will be King for ever, (*Pſal.* 10.16.) *The Lord is King for ever and ever; the Heathen are periſhed out of his Land*, that is, they ſhall ſurely periſh. God will not always bear with evil men in his Land; For if becauſe God was King of all the Lands, he therefore drave the old Heathen out of *Canaan*, and planted his people there; doubtleſs, if they who bear the name of his people there, live ſo like the old Heathen that they may be called Heathen, he will alſo cauſe them to periſh out of his Land, and all becauſe *he is King for ever and ever*, and therefore can do it at one time as well as at another, and now as eaſily as at any time heretofore. *Truſt in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlaſting ſtrength*, (Iſa. 26. 4.) *David* a great Prince makes it an argument to draw off our truſt from men, from the greateſt men, from Princes, becauſe they are not for ever, (*Pſal.* 146. 3, 4.) *Truſt not in Princes, nor in any Children of men*; why not? many reaſons may be given why not; but the only reaſon there given is their frailty, and the conſequents of it; *His breath goeth forth*, &c. As if he had ſaid, Suppoſe Princes are never ſo good, and juſt, and gracious in the exerciſe of their Power, yet truſt not in them, for they die, *their breath goeth forth, and then all their thoughts periſh*: all the real purpoſes which they had, as alſo the promiſes which they made for your good, die with them, and can do you no good: The number of their years may be ſearched out, and run out, their years are not for ever. Now the contrary of that which is an argument uſed by the Spirit of God to draw off our truſt from the gods here on Earth, is an argument to draw on and engage our truſt ſtrongly to the God of Heaven; *His breath goeth not forth, none, not one of his thoughts ſhall periſh*; therefore truſt in him.

Sixthly, If there be no ſearching out the number of the years of God, then, *Be not troubled if God ſeem to ſtay and not to do the work which you expect this or that year*: If God doth it not this year, he hath another year to do it in, there is no ſearching out the number of his years. We may ſay of any man if he doth not his work this year, he may be gone before the next: but if God doth not his work this year, he may do it next year, or two or ten years hence; he hath time enough, even all time before him: therefore the Prophet, having ſaid (*Hab.* 2. 3.) *The viſion is for an appointed time, but at the end it ſhall ſpeak and not lie*, preſently adds, *Though it tarry, wait for it*: As if he had ſaid, The Lord who hath all times and ſeaſons in his power, will do his work in the beſt time and ſeaſon, he will do what he hath promiſed, when it is moſt fit to be done; if he doth it not at the time when we expect, yet let us wait, he is the Maſter of time. God who is eternal, cannot be ſcantied of time, *The number of his years cannot be ſearched out*. 'Tis a known maxim among the wiſe men of the World, *Take time, and you may do any thing*. What cannot God do, who knoweth all times, and can take what time he will!

Seventhly, Which followeth upon the former, *God will carry on his deſigns through all the world*: He will carry them through, againſt all, (*Pſal.* 92. 8, 9.) *Thou Lord art moſt high for evermore*; *Lo, thine enemies ſhall periſh*; thine enemies who would hinder thy work, they ſhall certainly fall. Chriſt is called *The firſt and the laſt*; *He* (ſaith St. *John*, Rev. 1. 17.) *laid his right hand upon me, and ſaid, fear not, I am the firſt and the laſt*: Why ſhould he not fear? What did Chriſt offer to cure him of his fear? Chriſt doth not give him a bare diſſwaſive, *Fear not*, but a rational ground why he ſhould not fear. Fear will not be blown away with a breath: Our paſſions are never truly quieted nor attempered but by reaſon. Upon what ground then would Chriſt take off *Johns* fear, even upon this in the Text, *I am the firſt and the laſt*. As if he had ſaid, *John* why doeſt thou fear? Knoweſt thou not who I am, what a Lord and Maſter thou ſerveſt? Why, *John*, I tell thee, I am *the firſt and the laſt*; and therefore thou mayeſt be ſure, I will do my work, and none ſhall let me. *John* had wonderful things in viſion; ſhall all theſe be done thought he? Yea, ſaith Chriſt, *Fear not*, I will carry on my deſigns (all the deſigns that Chriſt had in the world were then in viſion) Eternity triumphs over all difficulties; The Eternal will ſee the laſt man born, (as we ſay) he will have the laſt word, and the laſt blow. *I am the firſt and the laſt*.

Laſtly, From this Conſideration of God, let us take a proſpect of our ſelves, what poor ſhort-lived ſhort-breathed Creatures we are. There is no ſearching out the number of the years of God, but we may quickly ſearch out the number of our own years? Our life is but a ſpan long, (*Pſal.* 39. 5.) yea our age is nothing before God. Did we conſider the eternity of God, what ſhould we judg of our ſpan-long life? We are ſaid to be of *yeſterday*. Some expreſs man thus; *He is yeſterday*; as if he were not to day, but were already paſt while he is. The beſt that can be ſaid of him is this; he is *but of yeſterday*, and poſſibly he ſhall not have a to morrow: but the Lord is for ever and ever the ſame.

And though we are ſhort-lived as to this world, though our years may ſoon be told over, yet let us remember that God hath called us to the participation of eternity; though we have not the eternity of God, which is without beginning, yet we ſhall have an eternity from God without end; every man is everlaſting as to his ſoul. The godly ſhall be bleſſed for ever; and there is an eternal eſtate of wo and miſery to the wicked, the number of the years of their ſorrows and ſufferings, who live and die without Chriſt, cannot be ſearched out. The number of the years of the joy and bleſſedneſs, and reſt and happineſs, and tranquility of thoſe that believe, of thoſe that are faithful, of thoſe that are godly, of thoſe that walk with and fear God, I ſay the number of the years of their joy and happineſs cannot be ſearched out neither. No man can number or tell how long-laſting the felicity of Saints ſhall be. As the number of the years of God cannot at all be ſearched out, ſo he hath given man as to his future eſtate a numberleſs number of years: And it were well if we who enjoy this life, and are dying every moment, would often conſider there is a life coming which will never die, the number of our years alſo in that ſenſe cannot be ſearched out.

The thoughts of eternity ſhould ſwallow up all our time; yet alaſs, how doth time, or the things which are but temporary, ſwallow up, in moſt men, the thoughts of eternity! What-ever we do in time, ſhould be to fit us for eternity; yet alaſs, moſt uſe their time ſo, as if they did not believe, or at leaſt hoped, there would not be, any ſuch thing as eternity. Did we but ſpend two or three minutes of time every day in the ſerious remembrance of our eternal eſtate, it would be an effectual means, to make us both holy in and contented with what-ever temporal eſtate we meet with in this world. We ſhould be earneſtly ſearching after God all our days, did we conſider what it imports to us, *that the number of his years cannot be ſearched out*.

Thus *Elihu* labours to draw *Job* to the conſideration of God himſelf, who is the Author of thoſe great providential works, both of thoſe he had ſpoken of before, the works of providence, ordering men here in civils, as alſo of thoſe works of providence in natural things, of which he comes to treat largely, both in the latter part of this Chapter, and in moſt of the next. Where we ſhall find *Elihu* giving us as it were a Syſtem, or body of natural Philoſophy in his diſcourſe about the wonderful works of God, which he is calling *Job* to conſider.

VERS. 27, 28.

For he maketh ſmall the drops of water: they pour down rain according to the vapour thereof;
Which the clouds do drop, and diſtil upon man abundantly.

ELihu having ſhewed the greatneſs of God himſelf, in the former verſe, proceeds to ſhew the greatneſs of his works; he had done it before as to Civil Adminiſtrations, and the ordering of human affaires, in caſting down and lifting up the ſons of men; he doth it now in natural things, or in ordering the motions of nature, ſtill in reference unto man. He deſcribes the greatneſs of the works of God aloft or above in the Air and in the Clouds, as he had before deſcribed the greatneſs of his works here below on the Earth.

The whole remainder of *Elihu*'s ſpeech in this Chapter and to the end of the 37. is ſpent in a philoſophical diſcourſe about the Meteors, and thoſe various operations and changes that are wrought in the Air; he diſcourſeth of Rain, of Thunder and Lightning, of Snow and Winds; from all which works of God in Nature, *Elihu* would convince *Job* of the Juſtice and Righteouſneſs of God (as well as of his power) which was his chief purpoſe. He begins this philoſophical Lecture or Lecture of divine

Philoſophy with the Rain, in the two verſes now read; and he mingles much of that matter in this and the following Chapter. He ſpeaks here, I ſay, of the Rain, which is a diſpenſation of God uſually both very profitable and comfortable; what more profitable or more comfortable than the rain? It is alſo a diſpenſation of God ſometimes very dreadful and hurtful: The Lord ſends the very ſame Creature upon contrary ſervices, ſometimes for good, ſometimes for evil; at one time as a bleſſing, and at another as a curſe, to the inhabitants of the earth.

What *Elihu* ſpeaks of the Rain in this Chapter, may be reduced to five heads.

Firſt, He ſheweth the manner of it's formation and generation, *Verſ.* 27, 28.

Secondly, The vaſtneſs or huge extent of the veſſels containing it, which are the clouds of the air, ſpreading themſelves all the Heavens over, *Verſ.* 29.

Thirdly, He tells us of the ſudden changes and ſucceſſions of rain and fair weather, of a cloudy and ſerene sky, *Verſ.* 30.

Fourthly, He ſets forth the different purpoſes of God in diſpenſing the rain, which are ſometimes for judgment, ſometimes for mercy, *Verſ.* 31, 32.

Fifthly, He intimates the Prognoſticks of it, or what are the ſigns and forerunners or foretellers of it, *Verſ.* 33.

The two verſes under-hand, hold out the firſt point, the formation and generation of the rain.

Verſ. 27. **He maketh ſmall the drops of water.**

That is, God (as it were) coins and mints out the water into drops of rain: As a mighty maſs of gold or ſilver is minted out into ſmall pieces, ſo a huge body of water is minted out into ſmall drops; that's the ſum of theſe words according to our rendring. The Hebrew word rendred, *He maketh ſmall*, hath a twofold ſignification, and that hath cauſed a three-fold tranſlation of theſe words.

גרע *Ademit, ſubtraxit.*

Subtraxit Deus ſtillas aquarum, ſc. *ex mari, fluminibus & locis humidis, quæ fundunt pluviam ad nubem ejus. Hauſtus vapor. ex aqua cogitur in nubem, quæ deinde fundit pluviam* Merl.

Qui aufert ſtillas pluvia. Vulg.

Firſt, It ſignifieth *to take away*, or, *to withdraw*; according to this ſignification of the word, a two-fold power of God is held forth about the drops of water.

Firſt, The power of God in drawing the water up from the Earth to make rain, for that in Nature (as we ſhall ſee afterwards) is the cauſe of rain; God draws up the water from the Earth, which he ſends down upon the Earth: he draws up the vapours, and the vapours become a Cloud, and the Cloud is diſſolved into rain.

Secondly, The word may very well expreſs, according to other Texts of Scripture, the putting forth of the power of God in ſtopping, ſtaying, keeping back and withholding rain from the earth; when God hath drawn water from the earth, he can hold it from the earth as long as he pleaſeth. The *Chaldee* Paraphraſe ſaith, *He forbids the drops to water the earth,* or *he ſends forth a prohibition to the clouds that they give no water.* The vulgar Latin ſpeaks to the ſame ſenſe, *who takes away drops of rain*, that is, *from the earth.* Mr. *Broughton* renders, *he withdraws dropping of water.* In this ſenſe I find the word rendred expreſly (*Numb.* 9. 7.) where certain perſons are brought in by *Moſes* thus complaining, *Wherefore are we kept back that we may not offer an offering to the Lord with the children of Iſrael?* It is a caſe; there were ſome, it ſeems, ſuſpended from bringing their offerings to the Lord, and they demand a reaſon of it; to give which, *Moſes* ſaith, *ſtand ſtill, and I will hear what the Lord will command concerning you.* But I quote that Scripture only for the force of the word, *wherefore are we kept back, or with-held*, which was for ſome uncleanneſs. Thus you have the firſt ſignification of the Word, and a double Tranſlation upon it, both very pertinent to the nature of the rain, and the Lords dealing with man in it, which is the ſubject *Elihu* is inſiſting upon.

גרע *Minuit, diminuit.*

Secondly, The Original word ſignifies to diminiſh, or leſſen, or make a thing ſmall; ſo 'tis rendred (*Exod.* 5. 8.) when the children of *Iſrael* complained that they were oppreſſed in making brick. This commandment came from *Pharaoh*, *The tale of bricks which they did make heretofore, you ſhall lay upon them, you ſhall not diminiſh ought of it.* It is this word. Again (*Deut.* 4. 2.) *Ye ſhall not add to the word which I command you, neither ſhall you diminiſh ought from it.* Man muſt not make the word of God ſmaller or greater than it is. 'Tis high preſumption to uſe either ſubtraction from, or addition to the word of God. Thus alſo the word is uſed in the caſe of Second or double marriages (*Exod.* 21. 10.) *If he take him another wife, her food* (that is the food of the firſt wife) *her raiment, and her duty of marriage ſhall he not diminiſh.*

Our tranſlators take up this ſenſe of the word as noting the diminiſhing of a thing in the quantity of it. *He maketh ſmall the drops of water,* or, *he makes the water fall in ſmall drops*; whereas if the water were left to it ſelf, it would pour down like a ſea, or like a flood to ſweep all away. This is the work of God, and though it be a common, yet it is a wonderful work; *He maketh ſmall the drops of rain.* A drop is a ſmall thing, and therefore the Prophet when he would ſhew what a ſmall thing, or indeed, what a nothing man is, yea, all the nations of the earth are to God, ſaith (*Iſa.* 40. 15.) *The nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the ſmall duſt of the ballance. Behold, he taketh up the Iſles as a very little thing.* The Spirit of God pitcheth upon this compariſon, when he would ſet forth that great diſtance between God and man. Man is but a drop to God.

But are not all drops ſmall? Why then doth he ſay, *He maketh ſmall the drops?* The reaſon is becauſe, though all drops are ſmall, yet ſome drops are ſmaller than others, and we read of great drops in the Goſpel Hiſtory of Chriſts agony in the Garden, which was an immediate ſuffering in his ſoul, from the hand of his Father, preſſing him with that weight of wrath, which was due for our ſins (*Luke* 22. 44.) *He ſweat, as it were, great drops of blood.* As God made Chriſt ſweat great drops of blood for our ſins, ſo he makes the Clouds to ſweat ſmall drops of water for our comfort. *He maketh ſmall*

נטף *Guttavit, guttatim fluxit.*

The drops of rain.] The Verb of this Subſtantive is uſed (*Joel* 3. 18.) *In thoſe days it ſhall come to paſs, that the mountains ſhall drop down new wine*; by which we are to underſtand, the plentiful effuſion of the Spirit promiſed in the latter days. *David* deſcribing the Lords glorious march thorow the wilderneſs, ſaith (*Pſal.* 68. 8, 9.) *The earth ſhook, the heavens alſo dropped at the preſence of the Lord; thou, O God, didſt ſend a plentiful rain, whereby thou didſt confirm thine inheritance when it was weary.* Which Scripture principally intends the ſpiritual rain, which drops down upon believers, and refreſheth their wearied ſouls: And therefore by a Metaphor, this phraſe, to *drop*, ſignifies, to propheſie or preach the word of God; becauſe that, like rain, falls ſilently, and as it were in drops upon the hearers, it falls in at the ear, and ſoaks down to the heart, it ſoaks quite thorow, as *Moſes* ſpake (*Deut.* 32. 2.) *My doctrin ſhall drop as the rain, and my ſpeech ſhall deſtil as the dew.* And as the word is uſed in Propheſies of mercy and inſtruction, ſo of judgment and deſolation. Thus the Lord charged his Prophet (*Ezek.* 20. 46.) *Son of man, ſet thy face towards the ſouth, and drop thy words towards the ſouth, and propheſie againſt the foreſt of the ſouth field.* Again (*Ezek.* 21. 2.) *Son of man, ſet thy face towards Jeruſalem, and drop thy words towards the holy place, and propheſie againſt the land of Iſrael.* Once more (*Amos* 7. 16.) *Drop not thy word againſt the houſe of Iſaac.* So that, I ſay, this dropping is uſed frequently, as in a natural, ſo in a ſpiritual ſenſe. *He maketh ſmall the drops*

----Subinde Præceptum auriculis hoc inſtillare memento. Horat. Lib. 1. Ep. 8.

מים *Forma duali, ſignificantur aquæ duplices.*

Of water.] The word is of the *Dual* Number in the Hebrew, and ſo it ſignifies both ſorts of water; the waters of Heaven, and the waters of the earth, the upper and the nether waters, the upper waters in the Clouds, and the nether waters in the Springs. We find them ſpoken of together in the firſt of *Geneſis* at the 7. *verſe*; *God divided the waters which were under the firmament, from the waters which were above the firmament.* We find the upper waters ſpoken of ſingly (*Pſal.* 104. 3.) *Who layeth the beams of his Chambers in the waters*; Chambers are above. And in the firſt of *Geneſis* at the 9. *verſe*, we find the lower waters alone; *Let the waters be gathered together under the Heavens.* Under-heaven waters are the lower waters. One of the Rabbies renders the words thus; *He multiplieth the drops of rain*; and the reaſon of it is (which falls in with our tranſlation) becauſe the leſs any one thing is made the more is

Rabbi Selo *exponit,* יגרע *per* ירבה *Multiplicat quia dum ita guttatim aquæ decidunt multiplicantur.* Merc.

is the general maſs, out of which it is made, multiplied.

From the words thus far opened, we may note ſomewhat for our inſtruction.

Taking the former ſignification of the words, *He draweth up the drops of water,*

Obſerve; *The ordinary rain which watereth the earth, is firſt fetched from the earth.*

Pluvia eſt vapor calidus & humidus ex aquis & locis humidis virtute Solis & Stellarum, uſque ad mediam aeris regionem elevatus, & ibi propter loci frigiditatem in nubem condenſatus, &c. Garc. de Meteorol. part.2.cap. 25.

God raiſeth vapours from the earth, and then watereth the earth with them, All the rain which falls upon the earth was raiſed from the earth. If I were to anſwer that queſtion in nature, *What is Rain?* I might reſolve it thus; *Rain is the moiſture of the earth, drawn up by the heat of the Sun, into the middle Region of the Air, which being there condenſed into clouds, is afterwards at the will of God, diſſolved, and dropt down again in ſhowers.* The Clouds, at the command of God, hold faſt, and at his command they break and let out their waters upon the earth. This is, as was toucht before, a very ordinary, yet a very admirable work of God. As in ſpirituals, all thoſe acts of grace in faith, and love, and joy, &c. By which our hearts and ſouls are carried up to Heaven, come firſt from Heaven; ſo that rain which comes down upon us from Heaven, was firſt fetched from among us by the mighty power of God. Rain, according to natural Philoſophy, is thus generated: The water and moiſture of the earth being attenuated by the heat of the Sun-beams, become vapours, which being ſo rarified and reſolved into an airy ſubſtance, are by the ſame heat of the Sun drawn up to the middle region of the air, where being again condenſed or thickened into water, they melt down into rain, at the appointment of God.

We may conſider rain briefly in all the cauſes of it; thus:

Firſt, The efficient cauſe of rain is God.

Secondly, The inſtrumental cauſe is the heat of the Sun.

Thirdly, The material cauſe is the moiſture of the Sea and watery Land.

Fourthly, The final cauſe of it, is, 1. Supream; the glory of God. 2. Subordinate; and that threefold. Firſt, the benefit. Secondly, the puniſhment. Thirdly, the inſtruction of man.

Secondly, From that other ſignification of the word, as it notes withdrawing or keeping back, upon which ſome inſiſt much,

Obſerve; *God when he pleaſeth can with-hold the water or the Rain.*

He can give a ſtop to the rain, and then the clouds yield us no more water than a ſtone; *He with-holds the drops of water.* The Lord threateneth the Vineyard with this ſtop (*Iſa.* 5.6.) *I will command the clouds, that they rain no rain upon it*; which is true of a natural and proper Vineyard, and of proper natural rain, though it be meant there of the people of God, whom he metaphorically, or improperly, calleth his Vineyard; and the rain there intended, is the rain of inſtruction uſually falling upon them. Now as God doth often forbid the ſhowers of the word, that they fall no more upon a people, as he ſends forth a prohibition to ſtop the ſpiritual rain; ſo he alſo ſtops and prohibits the natural rain (*Amos* 4.7,8.) *I have with-holden the rain from you, when there was yet three moneths to the harveſt, and I cauſed it to rain upon one city, and cauſed it not to rain upon another city; one piece was rained upon, and the piece whereupon it rained not withered: ſo two or three cities wandered unto one city to drink water, but were not ſatisfied.* Thus in caſe of diſobedience to his divine Law, the Lord threatened to ſtop the common Law of nature, and to *make the heavens braſs, and the earth iron* (*Deut.* 28.23.) And when the heavens are braſs, that is, when they yield no more moiſture than braſs, then the earth is as iron, that is, it yeelds no more food for the ſuſtentation of man or beaſt, than a bar of iron doth. Such ſtops the Lord hath often put upon the courſes of nature, and can do again when he pleaſeth; though I believe he never did, nor ever will do ſo, but when highly diſpleaſed and provoked by the ſin of man.

Take two or three inferences from it.

Firſt, *If the rain or drops of water come not in their ſeaſon, let us acknowledg the hand of God.* It is God that hath lockt up the clouds when-ever they are lockt up; God hath forbidden the clouds to let down their rain when-ever they with-hold it. Men and Devils can no more ſtop the rain than make it.

Secondly, *When we want rain, let us go to God for it.* 'Tis the prerogative of God alone to help us in that ſtreight; and therefore the holy prophet ſends a chalenge to all other powers, or declares them diſabled for this help (*Jer.* 14.22.) *Are there any among the vanities of the Gentiles that can cauſe rain, or can the heavens give ſhowers?* Neither the one nor the other can. The heavens cannot diſpoſe of a drop, though they poſſeſs a ſea of water. God muſt *hear the heaven, before the heavens can hear the earth*, that is, anſwer the neceſſities of the earth. And as the heavens cannot give man rain, ſo neither can the gods of mans making and placing there, ſuch are all the vanities or vain Idols of the Gentiles. The prophet having ſhewed us that theſe cannot, ſheweth us who can give rain in the next words, *Art not thou he, O Lord, our God* (ſurely thou art he) *therefore we will wait upon thee, for thou haſt made all theſe things. Solomon*, at the dedication of the Temple, puts this as one ſpecial caſe wherein they were to apply to God by prayer (1 *Kings* 8.35.) *When heaven is ſhut up and there is no rain, becauſe they have ſinned againſt thee, If they pray, &c. then hear thou in heaven.* The prophet ſends the people in that exigent to God (*Zec.*10.1.) *Ask ye of the Lord rain, in the time of the later rain.* As if he had ſaid, if ye would have rain, you muſt ask for it, and be ſure ye ask it of none but him; *ask of the Lord.* As it is God that gives out or with-holds the rain, ſo he gives it out or with-holds it at the voice of prayer. The Apoſtle ſaith of *Elias* (*Jam.* 5.17.) *he was a man ſubject to the like paſſions that we are, and he prayed earneſtly that it might not rain, and it rained not on the earth, by the ſpace of three years and ſix months; and he prayed again, and the heavens gave rain.* At his word the Lord ſtopt rain, and at his word he gave rain. Let us therefore confeſs that God is the Author or Father of the rain; *He cauſeth vapours to aſcend from the ends of the earth, he maketh lightnings for the rain* (*Pſal.* 135.7.) *He covereth the heaven with clouds, he prepareth rain for the earth* (*Pſal.* 147.8.) God covereth the heaven with clouds, by drawing up vapours from the earth, which are the matter of theſe clouds, and in thoſe clouds he prepares the rain, and by the rain ſent down makes the graſs to grow upon the mountains. The increaſe of vegetables is the effect of rain; God hath the rain in his power, and to acknowledg him in it is our duty. *'Tis a great part of our ſpiritualneſs to acknowledg God in naturals as well as ſpirituals*; Or, that the key of the clouds, as well as the key of the heart, is in the hand of God, and in his only. One of the Antients ſpeaking to this point, ſaid, *Let us not aſcribe rain to the Saints, much leſs to Witches.* Papiſts have their Saints to whom they pray for rain, and Atheiſts go to Witches for rain. The modeſt and moderate Heathen will riſe up againſt ſuch in judgment; they aſcribed rain to their gods though falſe gods; they had Epithetes or Titles of Honour for their Idols, teſtifying their faith in them and dependance upon them for the ſhowers of heaven, they called them *ſhower-bringing gods*, and *fair weather-making gods.* If heathens would yet aſcribe the rain to their gods, not to men, not to any inferiour powers, how abominable are they, who profeſſing the knowledg of *Jehovah*, the only true God, do not acknowledg him alone in this! In times of drought many will ſay, we hope we ſhall have rain when *the Moon changeth*, or, when the *Wind turns*; now though there be ſomewhat in nature, both in the change of the Moon and turn of the Winds, as to the change of weather, yet to ſpeak much of, or expect any thing from either, argues ſome withdrawing of the heart from God; and God to ſhew the folly of ſuch, hath often with-held the rain, though the Moon hath changed more than once, and the Wind turned to all quarters, and paſſed through all points of the Compaſs.

Deus ſibi Soli clavem pluviæ reſervat. Trag Hieroſol. in Cap. 3. Gen.

Imbriferi, ſerenatores.

Thirdly, *Let us take heed of provoking the Lord*; *he can quickly ſtop our Comforts, thoſe common outward comforts*, the rain and ſhowrs of heaven, and then (as to this Life) in how ſad a caſe are we! As the Lord hath not *left himſelf without witneſs* (namely of his goodneſs) *in ſending rain and fruitful ſeaſons*, ſo he can quickly leave a witneſs of his Juſtice, and diſpleaſure, or of his juſt diſpleaſure, by with-holding rain and (as a conſequent of that) fruitful ſeaſons from us.

Were it only to have rain and fruitful ſeaſons, we ſhould take heed of diſpleaſing God. If a man had ſuch power as to with-hold rain from your land, you would take heed of diſpleaſing him. How dangerous then is it to provoke God, who cannot only with-hold the rain from your land, but can, as the Scripture ſaith, make the rain of your land *to be powder and duſt* (*Deut.*28.24.) that is, give you powder and duſt inſtead of rain! When the rain is long withholden the earth grows hard, and being much trodden or traveled on, duſty; this duſt being raiſed up by the wind, ſhall come down in ſtead of rain, or that's all the rain which I will give you. The Lord hath our natural comforts in his hand, as well as our ſpiritual and eternal.

Further, As this with-holding of the rain ſometimes, ſo the holding up of the rain at any time, ſhews the great power of God; to hold the water in the air is the work of God as much as to with-hold it from the earth. The water is a heavy body, and all heavy things tend downward; is it not a wonder that ſuch a mighty weight of water ſhould hang in the air, and be there held up? If it were not held there, it would not ſtay there, but come down and drown all. What holds it up? the Cloud is a thin ſubſtance, yet it holds the water as well as the ſtrongeſt veſſel bound with hoops of Iron; But by what power? Doubtleſs by the power of God. The water hath no conſiſtence in it ſelf, it is a fluid ſlippery body, now what can hold the water that none of it leaks out, but the power of God? There are many millions of drops in one little cloud, and every drop is of it ſelf ready to ſlip away, yet the whole cloud yields no more water then a rock till God orders it. Let us contemplate the Almightineſs of God, who can hold ſuch a mighty body of water in the air, or who (as *Job* ſpake, *Chap.*26.8.) *bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds, and the cloud is not rent under them.*

Theſe notes ariſe from that tranſlation, which imports the Lords power in drawing the water from the earth, as alſo in with-holding it from the earth when there is need, and in holding it when there is no need.

We tranſlate, *He maketh ſmall the drops of water.* Not only hath God made the body of the water, which is one of the four general Elements, of which all bodies are compounded and made, but he makes the water into *ſmall drops, or maketh ſmall the drops of water.*

> Hence Note; *That the water falls from heaven by drops, comes to paſs by the eſpecial power, wiſdom and goodneſs of God.*

The water, if left to it ſelf, would fall whole like a Sea upon us, or like a mighty floud, in ſuch quantities as would, inſtead of refreſhing, overwhelm the earth. When God drowned the world, it is ſaid (*Gen.*7.11.) *The ſame day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows or flood-gates of heaven were opened.* We are not to imagin that heaven hath windows or flood-gates; but God did not put forth his mighty power to make ſmall the drops of rain, but let it come all at once: thoſe waters which were before bound up in the clouds, by the decree of God, were now, by his decree, let looſe in a wonderful manner and meaſure, and came down, not in drops, but in ſtreams and ſpouts; the clouds did not (as formerly) deſtil their burden, but eaſe themſelves of it at once, or altogether. Rain ordinarily (as ſweat through the Pores of the skin) paſſeth by degrees through the Pores of the Clouds, yet God can let it out all at once. Sea-men, who take long Voyages tell us, they meet with ſpouts of water, indangering great ſhips. So then, this *making ſmall the drops of water*, is to be aſcribed to a threeſold Attribute of God.

Pluvia in nubibus, velut in linteo continetur, atque in illis velut compreſſa guttatim diſtillatur.

Firſt, It is a work of his power, nor is it done without a kind of Miracle, that the water comes down, as it were, through a ſive, or watering-pot.

Secondly, It is a work of divine Wiſdom. The Lord knowing that the earth cannot digeſt huge portions of water at once, divides it into little portions, that the earth may gradually receive and let it ſoak into its boſom, for the feeding of Plants, and the ſupply of all creatures that live upon it.

Thirdly, 'Tis a work alſo of divine goodneſs; for if God did not make ſmall the drops of water, if it ſhould come down whole it would drown the earth, inſtead of comforting and fattening it. Behold then, the Power, Wiſdom and goodneſs of God *in making ſmall the drops of water!*

Though Philoſophers have attempted to find out and aſſign a reaſon in Nature, about this falling of the rain in drops, yet they have not fully attained the reaſon why, nor the manner how, God doth this; we muſt aſcribe it chiefly to the power, wiſdom, and goodneſs of God, in ordering it for the benefit of man, yea of all living creatures. And ſurely *Elihu* leads us to conſider the wonders of thoſe things which are common and natural, to convince us, that foraſmuch as we cannot clearly ſee the reaſon of thoſe leſſer things, we ſhould take heed of prying into greater and remoter ſecrets; and he would have *Job* particularly know, that ſeeing he could not find out the way of God in theſe natural things; much leſs could he find out the way and whole deſign of God in thoſe his providential dealings with him: *He maketh ſmall the drops of water*; and then as it followeth in this verſe,

Plane admirabilem & tremendum in illis & per illa ſeſe exhibet Deus. Merc.

They pour down rain according to the vapour thereof.

Though the water be made into ſmall drops, yet he doth not ſay, they drop down but *they pour down rain*; that is, the drops fall plentifully; that frequent expreſſion, in Scripture, *of pouring down*, every where implyeth plenty or abundance. The promiſe of *pouring out the Spirit in the latter days*, notes the abundance of the Spirit that ſhall then be given. The word ſignifies alſo to *ſtrain*, implying that the rain is contained in the Clouds, as it were in a linnen cloath, which being preſſed, diſtills the water in ſmall ſtreams or drops, as it were through a ſtrainer. *They pour down*

זקק *Fundit, fundendo purgavit active, item percolatus excolatus, defæcatus fuit. Imber, nimbus pluvia.*

Rain.] There are three words in the Latin, the firſt of which notes a ſhowr or gentle rain; the ſecond, a ſtormy or fierce rain; the third, rain in general. Rain, in this place, may be taken in all or either of theſe notions, for at one time or other the Clouds pour down drops into all ſorts of rain. Rain (as I ſaid) is made of vapours drawn up, and here he ſaith, *They pour down rain*

מטר *Pluvia, hinc* המטיר *Verbum tranſitivum in Hiphil ſignificat, fecit pluere, quo certe innuitur Deum eſſe Authorem pluviæ.* Fagius in Gen.

According to the vapour thereof.] There are two ſorts of vapours; there are dry vapours, and moiſt vapours; dry vapours (ſay Naturaliſts) are the matter of the wind, and the moiſt are the matter of the rain; Now ſaith *Elihu, they pour down rain according to the vapour thereof*; That is, look in what proportion the Sun draweth the vapours into the Air, in that proportion doth the rain fall upon the Earth; or, in the ſame proportion that the vapour is drawn up, in that proportion is the rain let down.

Pluviæ quaſi fluviæ, eo quod fluant. Iſidor. *Quæ fundunt pluviam poſt nebulam ejus.* Piſc.

Some render the word which we Tranſlate *vapour, a Cloud*, that is, after the water is drawn up into a Cloud, it pours down rain proportionably. Another Tranſlation renders it, *Affliction* or *trouble*, and give the whole verſe thus; *He draweth up the drops of water, which poured down rain to their Calamity.* This the learned Author applyeth particularly to the Flood in *Noahs* time; but I ſhall not ſtay upon that. Our reading is clear; *They pour down rain according to the vapour thereof*; That is, in the ſame proportion that vapours come up, the rain falls down.

אר *Significat vaporem & nubem, ſignificat etiam calamitatem; hinc verſus ita vertitur, nam ſubtrahit ſtillas aquarum, quæ fundebant pluviam ad calamitatem ejus.* Jun.

Firſt, In that, as the rain is made of the vapour, ſo according to the vapour, or in proportion to the vapour, ſuch are the ſhowrs of rain; Note;

According to what is naturally received, returns are naturally made.

And if the Clouds of Heaven return to man naturally according to that they receive from the Earth; how is man on earth bound morally, or in duty, to return according to what he receives from Heaven. Let us mind our *accordings and proportions* to the dealings and diſpenſations of God. The Clouds of the air will condemn us, at leaſt witneſs againſt us, if we receive much, and return little. I paſs this. Only here we may take notice of ſix things in Concatenation one with another: Firſt, vapours are drawn up from the Earth: Secondly, they are made into watery Clouds: Thirdly, from thence they are ſent back to moiſten the Earth: Fourthly, the rain ſent down is proportionable to the vapour that went up: Fifthly, according to that proportion, the Earth is made more or leſs fruitful; plentiful rains cauſe or produce plentiful fruits ordinarily from the Earth, and little rains little fruits: Sixthly, and laſtly, man is nouriſhed and hath his outward Comforts encreaſed or leſſened in proportion to the fruits which the Earth bringeth forth, or to the fruitfulneſs of the Earth. All theſe things attend and depend upon one another. *They pour down according to the vapour thereof,* and God draws up in proportion to what himſelf purpoſeth they ſhall pour down. Thus we ſee, how God by the Sun draws out the moiſter and ſap of the Earth, to return it back with advantage. Drawing up the moiſture makes the Earth languiſh, and her fruits wither; ſending it down again, makes the Earth green, flouriſhing and fruitful. *They pour down rain,* &c. And what more? *Elihu* anſwers

Verſ. 28. **Which the Clouds do drop.**

שחקים *Nunc cœlum, nunc nubis denotat; à tenuiſſima earum Subſtantia.* Druſ.

Here he ſpeaks more expreſly, and tells us more clearly than before, what the vapours are made up into, *According to the vapour thereof, which the Clouds do drop,* As Clouds are made of vapours, ſo they are the receptacles or veſſels of rain, which they hold (as was ſhewed before) as long as God pleaſeth, and when he gives the word, then they *drop*

And diſtil upon man abundantly.] That's another elegant word, implying the manner in which the rain comes or falls, it is as by a diſtillation. Here alſo 'tis expreſſed for whoſe uſe or ſake principally the rain is ſent. *The Clouds* (ſaith the Text) *drop and diſtil upon man,* yet we know men get themſelves out of the rain as ſoon and as faſt as they can. The rain falls upon the earth, and abides there; yet 'tis ſaid to diſtil upon man, becauſe the rain diſtils at mans requeſt; and for mans ſake: That other creatures are cheriſhed by the rain, is not for themſelves, but for man, as man is not cheriſhed and maintained by thoſe creatures for himſelf, but for God. As the rain diſtils chiefly for the glory of God, ſo nextly for the relief and comfort of man; and for man it *diſtils*

עלי אדם רב *Super hominem multum, vel ſuper homines affluenter, ut* רב *ſit adverbium, quod eo minùs ſe probat mihi, quia* Rab. *hic ſcribitur cum Cametz.* Druſ.

Abundantly.] There is a double reading of this word. Some take it as an Adjective to the Subſtantive *man,* rendring thus, *it diſtils upon many men*; we take it adverbially, *Which diſtil upon man plentifully,* that is, in great plenty upon man. We may take in both readings without ſtrain to the Text, or departure from the matter in hand. For as the rain falls or *diſtils upon man abundantly,* ſo upon abundance of men; the rain, we know, falls ſometimes very plentifully, and at times, or one time or other all the world over, watering every mans ground, and ſerving every mans turn or occaſions. Therefore *Elihu* expreſſeth the bleſſing fully when he ſaith, *The Clouds diſtil upon man abundantly, or upon abundance of men.*

Hence Note; Firſt, *The Lord hath rain enough in ſtore;*

He hath veſſels plentifully filled for the watering of the Earth; and, *The Lord is ſo free in his diſpenſation of the rain,* that as he gives it to many in number, ſo to many in kind, he maketh his rain to fall, (as well as his Sun to ſhine) *upon the juſt, and on the unjuſt,* (Matth. 5.45.) It ſhews the exceeding goodneſs, as well as the bounty of God, that the evil partake of his benefits as well as the good.

And, for our further improvement of this bounty of God, remember, that if God be ſo abundant and liberal in bleſſings to us, we ought in proportion to abound in duty towards him, or (as the Apoſtle exhorts, 1 *Cor.* 15. 58.) we ſhould be *ſtedfaſt and immoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.* Some do only a little, I may ſay) only here a ſtitch and there a ſtitch of work for God, but we ſhould abound in it; and that not only now and then by fits, but be always fixed in it, eſpecially we ſhould do ſo, with reſpect to that, which the rain is a Symbol of, the word of God. When God drops and diſtils the rain of Goſpel truths and holy ſoul-ſaving inſtructions abundantly upon us, how ſhould we abound in every good word and work! It was propheſied of Chriſt (*Pſal.* 72.6.) *He ſhall come down as rain upon the mown graſs, as ſhowers that water the earth.* Some of the Ancients expound that place of the coming down of Chriſt in his Incarnation; then indeed he came down like rain upon the mown graſs, he came down ſweetly and powerfully. 'Tis true alſo that Chriſt, who is God, the Word, the ſubſtantial Word, comes down as rain in and with the declarative word of God preached and faithfully diſpenced to the Souls of men: and when Chriſt comes down thus to us, we ſhould riſe up to him, and return fruits of grace, according to the ſhowers of grace, which we have received. The Prophet gives us an elegant compariſon of the natural and ſpiritual rain in their effects and iſſues, (*Iſa.* 55. 10, 11.) *For as the rain cometh down and the ſnow from Heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give ſeed to the ſower, and bread to the eater; ſo ſhall my word be, that goeth forth out of my mouth; it ſhall not return unto me void, but it ſhall accompliſh that which I pleaſe, and it ſhall proſper in the thing whereto I ſend it.* Now what is the pleaſure of God in giving his Word? What is the arrand upon which he ſends it? 'Tis I grant, ſometimes to harden, deafen and blind a people, (*Iſa.* 6. 9. 10.) 'tis ſometimes to be a ſavour of death unto death, (2 *Cor.* 2. 16.) Theſe are dreadful judiciary purpoſes of God in ſending his Word; nor doth it ever pleaſe the Lord to ſend his Word upon this arrand, but when he is ſorely diſpleaſed by a peoples ſlighting and contempt of his Word. The thing which primarily pleaſeth him, the purpoſe which he chiefly purſueth in ſending his Word, is, that his people may have (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks) *Their fruit unto holineſs in this life, and in the end everlaſting life.* For theſe ends, the Lord is daily diſtilling upon us the rain of his Word, both in commands and promiſes, and in both abundantly. Therefore let us labour to abound in returns of faith, of love, of hope, of ſelf-denial, of zeal for God, and of fruit-bearing unto God. If when God diſtils the natural rain, that ſhould provoke us to fruitfulneſs in ſpirituals, how much more when he pours down ſo much ſpiritual rain upon us! For the cloſe of this meditation, conſider, That

As the natural rain, Firſt, ſoftens the earth, and mollifies it; Secondly, cleanſeth the earth, and waſheth it; Thirdly, enricheth the earth, and makes it fruitful; Fourthly, comforts the earth, and makes every thing that moves upon it, and grows out of it, to rejoyce; Fifthly, ſometimes drowns the earth, and deſtroys the Inhabitants of it: As I ſay, the natural rain doth all theſe things, ſo alſo doth the ſpiritual rain, the word of God. That, Firſt, mollifieth; Secondly, cleanſeth; Thirdly, fructifieth; Fourthly, comforteth the hearts of all thoſe that receive it; and Fifthly, The rain of the word drowns and deſtroys all thoſe that riſe up againſt it, or will not receive it.

VERS. 29, 30, 31.

Alſo, can any underſtand the ſpreadings of the Clouds, or the noiſe of his Tabernacle?

Behold, he ſpreadeth his light upon it, and covereth the bottom of the Sea.

For by them he judgeth the People, he giveth meat in abundance.

Elihu having ſpoken of the wonderful work of God in forming and ſending rain in the two former verſes, ſpeaks next of the Clouds, which are as veſſels containing the rain, and in which the rain is carried and conveighed up and down the world for the uſe of man, or for thoſe ſervices, to which God hath appointed it. He begins with a denying Queſtion:

Verſ. 29. **Alſo, can any underſtand the ſpreading of the Clouds?**

As if he had ſaid, To what I ſaid before, I add this, Here is another ſecret in nature, *Can any underſtand the ſpreading of the Clouds?* He doth not ſay, can vulgar ignorant and unlearned perſons underſtand, but can any? Can the wiſeſt? Can the moſt learned? Can the beſt ſtudied Philoſophers *underſtand the ſpreading of the Clouds? Can they underſtand?* That is, they cannot underſtand.

But have not men, eſpecially learned men, underſtanding enough to aſcend the clouds, and diſcover the nature of them? Surely their underſtandings are very mean, or very much clouded, who underſtand not what the ſpreading of the clouds meaneth.

I anſwer, though *Elihu's* queſtion hath a negation in it, yet not a total negation, he doth not exclude the underſtanding of men wholly out of the clouds; he only denieth man a full underſtanding of all things which concern either the nature or motion of the clouds. Wiſe men underſtand much about the ſpreading of the clouds, but they cannot underſtand all. The beſt of godly men underſtand not much, or ſee but a little way into ſpiritual things: And the wiſeſt of worldly men do not, cannot, ſee all in natural things. *Can any underſtand*

מפרשי עב *Expanſiones vel differentias nubium cum aliæ ſteriles ſint, aliæ pluviam, aliæ grandinem mittant; Sed rectius expanſiones vertitur.* Merc.

The ſpreading of the Clouds?] Here are, Firſt, the Clouds; Secondly, the ſpreading of them. The word which we tranſlate, *ſpreading*, hath a twofold ſignification: Firſt, (with the alteration only of a point upon one letter) it ſignifieth *The difference of things in any kind:* And then the Text is read, *Can any underſtand the difference of the Clouds*, that is, the variety that is among the clouds. The clouds are not all of a likeneſs, nor all of a bigneſs; there are clouds of many ſorts and ſizes: there are clouds which breed ſnow, and clouds which breed hail, clouds which breed rain, and clouds which breed thunder and lightning. Some clouds are empty, called clouds *without rain* or *water*, (Pro. 25. 14. Jude, verſ. 12.) and other clouds are full of water: There is a difference alſo of clouds as to our ſight and view, ſome are black, ſome white, ſome red, ſome are greeniſh, others paliſh clouds, from which various colours and appearances, Prognoſticks are made of the change of weather, as Chriſt told the Phariſees (*Mat.* 16. 2, 3.) Naturaliſts obſerve very many differences in the clouds, nor is it without wonder, that the clouds which are made all of one matter (vapours drawn from below) ſhould produce ſuch and ſo many different effects, that (according to this reading) we have reaſon to put the Queſtion, *Who can underſtand the differences of the Clouds?*

We read and that well and full to the Hebrew Text, *Who can underſtand the ſpreadings of the Clouds*, or their *expanſion?* The moſt cunning and knowing men in the myſteries of nature, cannot either tell how far the Clouds will ſpread, or to what point and part of the world they will convey their water, and (as I may ſay) unburden themſelves. Thus the words refer back to the two former verſes. The Clouds are ſpread as a Curtain, or as a piece of Tapeſtry, or as a mighty Canopy, *Who can underſtand the ſpreading of them?* The ſpreading of them; Firſt, as they carry rain; or, Secondly, the ſpreading of them (as ſome expound the place) as they convey the Lightening, which the Scripture ſaith, (*Math.* 24. 27.) *Paſſeth from one end of Heaven to the other*, from the Eaſt to the Weſt; who knoweth how far the Lightning will ſpread in the Clouds? Thus ſome connect it with the following verſe. *Who can underſtand the ſpreading*

עב *nubes à denſitate eſt craſſamentum aeris.* νεφέλη *vel a* נטף *ſtillare, vel à* נפל *cadere.*

Of the Clouds?] There is a ſpecial derivation of the word rendred *Clouds*, from the Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, all pretending to the nature of the Clouds: The Hebrew word properly noteth the thickneſs or groſneſs of the Clouds; the Greek word noteth the dropping nature of the Clouds, being derived from a root which ſignifieth *to drop*, or (which is near the ſame) *to deſcend*, the root word ſignifying *to fall*; the Latin word is taken from covering, becauſe the Clouds mask or cover the face of Heaven, and often hide and ſcreen the ſhining of the Sun from us.

Now becauſe *Elihu* is upon a work of nature, and inſiſts upon it all along in the next Chapter; I ſhall therefore to clear the matter, propoſe and anſwer three Queſtions concerning the Clouds.

Firſt, What is a Cloud, or what is the nature of the Clouds? *A cloud is a moiſt vapour drawn up from the earth or water by the heat of the Sun into the middle region of the Air* (as Naturaliſts divide the Air) *where being by the coldneſs of the place congealed, and as it were knit together, it hangeth and continueth there, till it be broken up at the diſpoſe of God, and ſent down for the comfort or correction of man in rain, ſnow, hail,* &c. The Clouds of Heaven, derive their pedigree from the moiſture found on earth, and to the earth they return their moiſture.

Secondly, Seeing the Clouds are ſuch mighty bodies, and contain (as I may ſay) whole ſeas of water in them, and water, being a heavy body, naturally deſcends or leads downward (as all heavy things do) it may be queſtioned (indeed it is a wonder) how thoſe Clouds are kept aloft in the Air? How comes it to paſs that ſuch heavy bodies, ſuch floods of water do not preſently fall violently, and at once ſhed themſelves down upon, and overwhelm the Earth? To that I anſwer,

Firſt, Some ſay the Clouds are kept up by that natural inbred heat or warmth which is included in them; or that they are kept up by the ſuperiour heat of the Sun, and Stars, which firſt drew them up.

Secondly, Others ſay, theſe mighty Clouds are held up by the wind; which keeping them in perpetual motion, they fall not, they deſcend not, but according to a divine Order, by which they are diſpoſed of to ſeveral uſes.

Thirdly, Others aſcribe it to the hollowneſs or ſpungineſs of their nature, which receiving and taking in the thin air, they are more eaſily kept up.

But when we have ſearched to the utmoſt for reaſons in nature, we muſt riſe higher, and reſolve the queſtion according to Scripture and divine Philoſophy, into the power and will of God. The holding up of the Clouds is Gods work as well as the raiſing of them up; He gave this law or command unto the Clouds in the day of their creation, that they ſhould not fall down nor diſtil a drop, but by his own commandment and appointment. Thus we find it expreſſed by *Moſes* in his deſcription of the creation, (*Gen.* 1. 6.) *Let the firmament* (that is, the air, the inferiour air next to the middle region) *divide the waters from the waters.* Here is a divine ſanction; there are waters above, and waters below; And ſaith God, *Let the firmament divide the waters from the waters*; That is, thoſe waters that are drawn up into Clouds in the air, a proviſion for Rain, *&c.* Let them be kept above, and divided from the Sea and waters that dwell below. Thus there was a Law at firſt to keep quarter, as I may ſay, between thoſe waters. And *Solomon* ſpeaking of the eternal Son of God, of his co-eternity with the Father, brings him (under the name of Wiſdom) ſpeaking thus of himſelf; *I was with him* (when he did this and that, and among the reſt, *Prov.* 8. 28.) *When he eſtabliſhed the Clouds above*; That is, when God made a Decree that the Clouds ſhould ſtay above, and not come down but at his call. So 'tis expreſſed (*Job.* 26. 8.) *God bindeth up the waters in the thick Cloud, and the Cloud is not rent under them.* 'Tis not of it ſelf that the Cloud (having ſuch a weight in it) doth not rent and break, but, ſaith God, it ſhall not. (*Pro.* 30. 4.) *He hath bound the waters in a garment.* But what is the garment? His own decree and purpoſe is the garment which bindeth up the waters. For as the waters of the Sea are bounded by the Decree of God (*Job* 38. 11.) So likewiſe the waters in the air are bound up by his Decree (*Pſal.* 148. 4, 6.) *Praiſe him ye Heaven of Heavens, and ye waters which are above the Heavens, he hath eſtabliſhed them for ever, and hath made a decree which ſhall not paſs.* He hath eſtabliſhed the waters which are above the Heavens, aſwel as the waters below the Heavens; he hath eſtabliſhed them by a decree (like that of the *Medes* and *Perſians*) which ſhall not be diſanulled. So then, here's the anſwer to this ſecond queſtion, How it comes to paſs, that the Clouds containing ſuch floods of water (which is an heavy body) do not deſcend and overwhelm the earth? This is by the power and decree, or by the powerful decree of God, who hath cauſed ſuch a weak and thin ſubſtance, as the Clouds, made up only of Vapours, to hold thoſe mighty waters cloſe, and keep them priſoners, that not a ſpoonful ſhall ſhed forth till himſelf pleaſeth. The Clouds, as ſome have well expreſſed it, are like ſpunges filled with water, and till God layeth his hand upon the Clouds (that is, till he gives a word) and as I may ſay, ſqueezeth or preſſeth them by his providence (as we ſqueez a ſpunge full of water) the waters fall not. Thus we ſee the reaſon, why *Elihu* makes ſo great a matter of the ſpreading of the Clouds, and why the waters fall not preſently together, nor preſently drop out of them, but in their ſeaſon.

Zanch. *de operibus Dei* l. 2. c. 1.

A third Query concerning the Clouds may be this; *Why are they placed above? What is their uſe?*

I anſwer, The uſe of the Clouds may be conſidered two ways; Firſt, there is a natural, Secondly, a ſpiritual uſe of them.

Firſt, There is a natural uſe of them, and that is twofold.

Firſt, That they may contain water in a readineſs to moiſten and fatten the earth: Stores and treaſures of rain are kept in them to ſupply the neceſſities of all earthly Creatures.

Secondly, The natural uſe of the Clouds is, to attemper the heat of the air, and to be as a Curtain, or Screen between us and the Sun. If the Sun ſhould always ſhine fully upon the earth, we were not able to abide it; but the Clouds coming between, do exceedingly qualifie and moderate the heat and fierceneſs of the Sun. Theſe, beſides others, are their natural uſes.

And if we look into the Scripture, we ſhall find many ſpiritual and gracious uſes, for which God hath made the Clouds.

Firſt, God hath ſet his Bow in the Clouds, as a token of his favour unto mankind, as a token of his general favour, that he will not drown the world again (*Gen.* 9. 14, 15.) *And it ſhall come to paſs, when I bring a Cloud over the Earth, that the Bow ſhall be ſeen in the Cloud; and I will remember my Covenant which is between me and you, and every living creature of all fleſh; and the waters ſhall no more become a flood, to deſtroy all fleſh.* This is alluded to by the Prophet (*Iſa.*54.9.) as a token of the ſpecial favour of God to his People, that he will never break Covenant with them. When Believers ſee his Bow in the Cloud, they may be as well aſſured, that they ſhall be freed from a deluge of wrath, as that the world ſhall not be overwhelmed again with a deluge of waters.

Secondly, We find the Lord making uſe of a Cloud, or uſing the miniſtery of a Cloud, in a gracious way, for the conducting of his People out of *Egypt* quite through the Wilderneſs unto *Canaan.* That I grant was more than an ordinary Cloud, and lower and nearer the earth than uſually Clouds are, yet it was doubtleſs of the ſame nature with other Clouds (*Exod.* 13.21. *Neh.*9.19.) And therefore, when the Prophet would aſſure the Church of guidance and protection, he tells them (*Iſa.* 3.5.) *The Lord will create upon every dwelling place of mount Sion, and upon her aſſemblies, a Cloud and Smoak by day, and the ſhining of the flaming Fire by night: for upon all the glory ſhall be a defence.* And we at this day, may make this ſpiritual uſe (according to Scripture) of the Clouds, which we behold, as to mind us how the Lord both protected and guided the People of *Iſrael* through the wilderneſs, ſo to aſſure us that he will protect and guide us through the World. Chriſt is this Cloud, a covering protecting Cloud unto his Church; and we may ſweetly meditate upon him, not only when we behold the Sun, but as often as we behold the Clouds.

Further, As Chriſt ſerves his Church like a Cloud, ſo the Clouds have done and ſhall do many ſervices to Chriſt. A bright Cloud overſhadowed Chriſt in his transfiguration (*Mat.* 17.5.) A Cloud received him out of the Apoſtles ſight at his aſcenſion (*Act.* 1. 9.) and he ſhall come again in the Clouds to judgment (*Mat.* 24. 30. *Luke* 21.27.) He is alſo repreſented ſitting upon a white Cloud (*Rev.* 14. 14.)

Thirdly, The ſpirit of God gives us another gracious uſe of, and meditation upon the Clouds; that as often as we ſee thick and black Clouds, which threaten a grievous ſtorm, ſcattered, and the air cleared, this ſhould put us in mind of the abundant grace of God pardoning our ſin (*Iſa.*44.22.) *I have blotted, as a thick Cloud, thy tranſgreſſion, and as a Cloud thy ſins.* Falſe and faithleſs Miniſters are called *Clouds without water* (Jude *Verſ.* 12.) And the faithful Miniſters of the Goſpel, *flee as a Cloud* to water Souls, as the converted Gentiles are ſaid, *to flee as Doves to the windows* (Iſa. 60. 8.) There are not only natural but ſpiritual uſes and improvements to be made of the Clouds, as often as we behold them; and the Scripture in many places, leads and points us to ſuch meditations. It is ſaid of *Luther,* that once beholding a great Cloud, that promiſed, or had a great appearance of rain, in a time of drought, blown away and diſpelled, without yielding one drop of rain to refreſh the earth; he turned to ſome of his friends, and ſaid, *Such are the Promiſes of the world.* Men, ſaid he, make great and fair promiſes, pretending much good, and good-will to thoſe to whom they are made, which yet vaniſh and come to nothing; and concluding his obſervation upon the deceitful appearance of the cloud, added the words of *Solomon* (Prov.25.14.) *Who ſo boaſteth himſelf of a falſe gift, is like clouds without rain.* Such eſpecially are all falſe teachers, they, if any, boaſt themſelves of a falſe gift, that is, they either pretend to a gift which they have not, or they pretend their gift is of Chriſt, when it is not; theſe are *like Clouds without rain,* or (as the Text in the Epiſtle of *Jude,* even now mentioned) calls them, they are *Clouds without water, carried about of winds,* that is, which way ſo ever the wind of outward reſpects and advantages bloweth, they are carried.

Tales ſunt promiſſiones mundi.

So much for anſwer to thoſe three queſtions about the Clouds. *Who can underſtand the ſpreading of the Clouds?*

Hence Note; Firſt, *Even natural things exceed the reach of mans underſtanding.*

How much more do ſpiritual things, the myſteries of Grace! *Nicodemus* was a knowing man, a Maſter in *Iſrael,* yet how ſimply did he ſpeak when Chriſt propoſed to him, and preſented him with the neceſſity of a new-birth! Nor hath a natural man a clearer inſight in any other Goſpel myſtery (1 *Cor.* 2.14.) *The natural man receiveth not the things of God, neither can he know them, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned. But he that is ſpiritual judgeth* (or *diſcerneth*) *all things;* That is, he hath a principle of ſpiritual underſtanding, whereby he is able to make a right judgment of all things neceſſary to his own edification and Salvation.

Again; *If the natural things which God hath made* (*the ſpreading of the Clouds*) *exceed our underſtanding, then how much more doth God himſelf who made them!*

Who can underſtand the ſpreadings of God? The immenſity of God? The eternity, the omnipotency, the infinity of God? That's the thing *Elihu* chiefly aims at in all this diſcourſe. While he poſeth *Job,* and all men, in the natural works of God, he would convince *Job,* and all men, that neither he was, nor any man is able to comprehend the equity and righteouſneſs of his proceeding in the darker ways of Providence. And this he did, becauſe *Job* had too often (upon the matter) called God to anſwer, asking why it was ſo? Inſtead of a ſilent ſubmiſſion to what he did not underſtand, nor could ſee the reaſon of.

Further, conſider this particular in nature, *The ſpreading of the Clouds.* We ſee the Clouds every day, and we ſee their ſpreadings, that's common and obvious to the eye; yet (ſaith *Elihu*) who can underſtand theſe *Spreadings?* There is a greater latitude in the Clouds than we imagin; and if we cannot fully underſtand the things which we ſee, how can we underſtand what we ſee not? Who apprehends the true greatneſs of the Clouds, the greatneſs of the Moon, the greatneſs of the Stars, the greatneſs of the Sun; all which our eyes behold? We can neither underſtand by our eye, nor by the rules and reports of the greateſt Aſtronomers, the true magnitude or greatneſs of thoſe heavenly viſible bodies; who then can take the true dimenſion (if I may ſo ſpeak) of things inviſible? *Who can underſtand the ſpreading of the Clouds?*

Or the noiſe (*or noiſes*) of his Tabernacle.

The word notes a dreadful noiſe, a noiſe with a tumult, ſuch a noiſe as is made when ruin and deſolation cometh upon a place, ſuch a noiſe as the Prophet deſcribeth in a time of War. *Moab ſhall die with a tumult* (Amos 2. 2.) *Who can underſtand the noiſe of his Tabernacle?*

תשאות a שאה *Sonuit, perſtrepuit, denotat ſonitum tumultus bellici* Rab.Shelo.

This noiſe may be expounded two ways;

Firſt, Of thunder-claps. When Clouds are diſcharged, their thunder-bolts, like cannon bullets, rattle through the air: *Who can underſtand this noiſe of his Tabernacle?* As no man can at all *underſtand the thunder of his power* (Ch. 26. 14.) ſo not the All of his powerful thunder. This is a truth, and the Text may well take in that noiſe, the noiſe of the thunder. But becauſe *Elihu* ſpeaks profeſſedly and expreſly of thunder in the next Chapter (*Verſ.* 4.) therefore (I conceive) *the noiſe of his Tabernacle*, here may be ſome-what elſe, or leſs than that of thunder, that is, *the noiſe of the winds*, breaking out from the Tabernacle of God. What a buſtling noiſe, what an out-cry (as I may ſay) the winds make we all know, eſpecially when they become ſtorms, and are not only winds but tempeſts. There are ſweet gentle gales of wind, which make but a little murmur, or whiſper in the air, we can ſcarce hear their voice; but ſome winds roar, ſome winds come little ſhort of thunder, for noiſe and loudneſs, and I ſuppoſe *Elihu* chiefly intends this noiſe, by *The noiſe*

Of his Tabernacle.] But what is the Tabernacle of God? I anſwer; That word *Tabernacle* is often uſed in the Old Teſtament; properly it ſignifieth a Tent in War, a military manſion, a flitting habitation, or portable houſe, having no fixed or ſetled ſeat. The Tabernacle under the Law was the place appointed by God for publick worſhip. We read alſo of the *Feaſt of Tabernacles* (Lev. 23. 34.) at which ſolemn Feaſt, the *Jews* dwelt ſeven days in Tents, to put them in remembrance, that God made their fore-fathers dwell in Tents when he brought them out of *Egypt*, as alſo to mind them, that here they had no abiding place, but were to ſeek one to come. And as this place of publick worſhip, ſo any place for private dwelling was called a Tabernacle. *Surely I will not come into the Tabernacle of my houſe, until*, &c. (Said *David*, Pſal. 132. 3.) That is, into my houſe, which though it be a royal Palace, yet I look upon it, but as a movable Tabernacle. But doth God dwell in a movable houſe? God is immovable, he makes no removes, yet whereſoever God is pleaſed to ſhew himſelf in his power and marvelous works, there we may ſay his Tabernacle is. The Tabernacle of God, where this noiſe, this mighty noiſe is made, is nothing elſe but the Clouds before ſpoken of. The Clouds are Gods Tabernacle; they are called ſo expreſly by a word of very near cognation unto this (*Pſal.* 18. 11.) *He maketh the Clouds his pavilion.* A pavilion is an extraordinary Tabernacle; a pavilion is that Tabernacle which is proper to a King or to the General of an Army. Now ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *He maketh the Clouds his pavilion*; In them he ſhews his power and glory. They are alſo called the chariots of God (*Pſal.* 104. 3. Deut. 32. 6.) and he is ſaid to come in the Clouds, as a Prince in his chariot. He came *in a thick Cloud* (Exod. 19. 9.) and he *deſended in a Cloud* (Exod. 34. 5.) which here is called his Tabernacle. So then, the Clouds, together with all that middle region of the air, where the rain now, and fiery meteors, are generated, are in Scripture allegorically called, the Tabernacle of God; becauſe there he ſeems often to dwell or reſide, for the producing of many wonderful works upon this inferiour World. We may take the word here in a double alluſion unto a Tabernacle, or unto two ſorts of Tabernacles.

Tabernaculum hic סכה *diccitur unde Feſtum Succoth* i. e. *Tabernaculorum.*

Firſt, There were ordinary Tabernacles, wherein men dwelt. The ancient Hebrews dwelt in tents or Tabernacles; theſe were Tabernacles for civil uſe, or for habitation; in alluſion unto which, the Apoſtle ſpeaks of the body, wherein the Soul dwels (2 *Cor.* 5.) *When the earthly houſe of this Tabernacle ſhall be diſſolved, we know, that we have a building of God, an houſe not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens.*

Secondly, There were Tabernacles for military uſe, Souldiers Tents, or Tabernacles. As the whole Heavens, ſo the clouds eſpecially may be called the Tabernacle of God in both reſpects; they are his houſe, wherein he ſits unſeen, and doth wonders all the world over; in them he ſheweth his power, and appears gloriouſly, and as a great Prince or mighty General he ſends out his edicts and orders from the clouds, he commands winds, ſtorms, tempeſts, ſnow and hail for ſeveral diſpenſations to go from thence, according as his own infinite wiſdom ſeeth fit, and the caſes of men require, whether in ways of Judgment or of mercy; as *Elihu* tells us, yet more diſtinctly, at the 31. Verſe, *For by them* (ſaith he) *judgeth he the people, he giveth meat in abundance.* The clouds are very fit and commodious for Gods uſe in any of theſe reſpects; either for the terrifying and puniſhing of the wicked, or, for the helping and feeding of them that fear him. Now foraſmuch as the clouds are called the Tabernacle of God upon theſe accounts,

> **Learn Firſt**; *There God is ſaid to be eſpecially, where he eſpecially works.*

God is no more in one place of the world than in another, as to his being and exiſtence; for he is every where, he filleth heaven and earth. We muſt not think that God is ſhut up in the clouds as a man in his Tabernacle; but becauſe God works much in the clouds, and doth great things by the rain, thunder and lightening, therefore the clouds, whence theſe Meteors iſſue, are called his Tabernacle. Where-ever God works much, he is ſaid to dwell. Why is God ſaid to dwell with them that are of an humble and contrite heart? Even becauſe he works much in them, and much by them. So becauſe many great works of God are done in the Clouds, as we ſhall ſee more particularly hereafter, therefore the Lord is ſaid to dwell there as in his Tabernacle.

Secondly, When 'tis ſaid, *Who can underſtand the noiſe of his Tabernacle?*

> Obſerve; *The moſt dreadful ſtorms and tempeſts, the roaring winds which we hear at any time, are ſent out by God, they are the noiſe of his Tabernacle*;

They go when he ſaith **Go**, (*Pſal.* 148. 8.) *Stormy winds and tempeſts fulfilling his will.* We may think, ſtorms, of all things, leaſt under command and order, yet they are under an exact order. The moſt ſtormy winds go not an hairs breadth beſides, or beyond the commiſſion which God gives them. As often as we hear the roaring noiſe of the wind, much more, of thunder, let us remember, 'tis *the noiſe of the Tabernacle.*

Verſ. 30. **Behold, he ſpreadeth his light upon it, and covereth the bottom of the Sea.**

Elihu inſiſts ſtill upon the works of God, **He ſpreadeth his light.** Some underſtand by this *light*, the *lightening*; and it is a great truth, God wonderfully ſpreads the lightening upon the dark clouds, as if they were all in a flame, That's clear to the eye when it lighteneth; and God is ſaid (*Pſal.* 144. 6.) *To caſt forth his lightening*; which comes neer this word in the Text, *he ſpreadeth it*. But becauſe in the next chapter *Elihu* ſpeaks purpoſely of the lightening, therefore I ſhall not ſtay upon that ſenſe here, but decline it.

Rather take light in the common notion; *He ſpreadeth his light*, that is, *the light of the Sun*, which is eminently called Gods Light, *upon it*, that is, upon the cloud ſpoken of in the former verſe; and ſo the two parts of this verſe, yield us a deſcription (as I conceive) of the weather-changes made by God. When we have had much rain and ſtorms, God can preſently ſpread his light upon the cloud, that is, cauſe the light and heat of the Sun to conquer the clouds and ſcatter them.

And (he alſo) **covereth the bottom of the Sea.** That is, by and by, he makes it very dark by the gathering of thick clouds, even as dark as the bottom of the Sea, whither the light cannot come, or dark to the bottom of the Sea. The original is, *the roots of the Sea*, that is, the loweſt parts of the Sea, which we ſignificantly tranſlate, *the bottom of the Sea*. Some explicate the whole verſe, *He ſpreads his light upon the face of the whole Heavens, and ſpreads the waters over the Ocean, ſo that no bottom can be ſeen, ſcarcely found.* Mr. *Broughton*, by the *roots* of the Sea, underſtands the *Earth*. Another ſaith, he makes mention *of the roots of the Sea*, becauſe the waters of the Sea, are as it were the roots of the Clouds, they chiefly ſupplying the matter of which they are made. Vapours drawn from the waters of the Sea, by the heat of the Sun, become Clouds, and theſe Clouds cover both Earth and Sea, far and near. Thus 'tis matter of wonder to ſee ſuch great and ſudden changes in the air; that the ſame Sun with its beams ſhould exhale thoſe vapours which are condenſed into Clouds, and that ſoon after, thoſe Sun-beams ſhould ſcatter and diſſolve thoſe Clouds; or that now the Heavens ſhould be ſo masked with Clouds as to make all dark, and in a little ſpace, all return to its former brightneſs and beauty.

שרשי

Radices maris ſunt profundiſſimæ infimæq; illius partes.

He ſpreadeth his Light. What is there in the world that is not Gods? Here he calleth Light his.

Hence note, *God loves to entitle himſelf to Light in an eſpecial manner.*

He cauſeth his Sun to ſhine, &c. (Mat.5 44.) The Moon is his as well as the Sun, and the Stars are his as much as either; but becauſe the Sun is the greater Veſſel and conveigher of Light; therefore ſaith Chriſt, *He cauſeth his Sun to ſhine on the evil and the good*, &c. God himſelf is *Light*, and *the Father of Lights* (*Jam.* 1. 17.) which is true not only of ſpiritual Light, by which the things of God are diſcovered to us; but alſo of natural Light, the light of the Sun, that's Gods Light too, he is the Father of it.

Secondly note, *The changes which we ſee in the air, from fair to fowl weather, from calms to tempeſts, are from God.*

It is not in the creature to make one day or hour fair or foul. As Chriſt gives the reaſon why no man ſhould ſwear by his head, becauſe he cannot *make a hair white or black*, he cannot change the colour of an hair, nor make a hair of any colour: So, it is not in the power of any man, to make one day fair or foul, that's Gods peculiar; *He ſpreadeth his Light upon the Clouds, and covereth the bottom of the Sea.*

Verſ. 31. **For by them he judgeth the People, he giveth meat in abundance.**

This 31. Verſe give us the effect of all that which *Elihu* had ſpoken before, of the rain, of ſtorms and tempeſts and we may add, of lightening, and of thunder; *By them he judgeth the people and giveth meat in abundance.* Here are two effects; Firſt, an effect grievous; Secondly, an effect gracious: The former proceeds from the juſtice, the latter from the mercy and goodneſs of God.

By them, that is, by the rain, by the winds, &c. **he judgeth the people.**

To judge is taken three ways in Scripture.

Firſt, To judge, is to rule or govern. When it is ſaid, ſuch a man judged *Iſrael*, the meaning is, he ruled and governed *Iſrael*: That's the language of the book of *Judges* every where, when their Governours are ſpoken of.

Secondly, To *Judge*, is to determine, or give ſentence in a ſpecial caſe (*Deut.* 25. 1.)

Thirdly, To judge is to puniſh or afflict, and thus often in Scripture, when God puniſheth any perſon or people, he is ſaid to judge them (*Pſal.* 51. 4.) *That thou mayeſt be cleared when thou judgeſt*, that is, when thou afflicteſt, or layeſt thine hand upon me (ſaith *David*) as God had threatened by *Nathan*, that the ſword ſhould not depart from his houſe; this moved *David* to make confeſſion, *Againſt thee, thee only, have I ſinned: ——that thou mighteſt be juſtified when thou ſpeakeſt, and cleared when thou judgeſt.* As if he had ſaid, my confeſſion, O Lord, will be thy juſtification; all may ſee I have given thee abundant cauſe to lay thy chaſtening hand upon me (*Heb.* 13. 4.) *Whoremongers and Adulterers God will judge*; though men let them paſs, yet God will not, he will puniſh them. Again in that notable place (1 *Cor.* 11. 31, 32.) *If we would judge our ſelves we ſhould not be judged of the Lord.* What it is to be judged, the Apoſtle ſheweth in the next words; *But when we are judged, we are chaſtened of the Lord.* The Apoſtle warns the Church to take heed how they come to the ſolemn aſſemblies, leſt coming raſhly and unpreparedly, the hand of God ſhould fall heavy upon them, by weakneſs, ſickneſs and death. When *Elihu* ſaith, *By them he judgeth the People.* We are to take judging in this third ſence; *He judgeth*, that is, he afflicteth and puniſheth men by theſe things. Thus the Alluſion is elegantly followed. The Lord from his Tabernacle, or throne in the Clouds, ſends forth Edicts, and ſigns his Warrants, for the puniſhment both of nations and perſons; windy ſtorms, rain and thunder, going forth as executioners of his orders and appointments: *By them he judgeth the people.*

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *God can make a ſcourge of any of the creatures.*

By them, that is, by the rain and by the wind, *he judgeth the people.* He can uſe what inſtrument he pleaſeth to afflict and chaſten us with. Read the holy Scriptures, read the Hiſtories of the Church, and you will find all ſorts of creatures ſummoned one time or other, and ſent forth as Gods meſſengers, to puniſh the pride and ſtubbornneſs, the impenitency and perverſneſs of mens hearts and ways. How many creatures did God make uſe of to puniſh *Pharaoh* with, and many of them very contemptible ones; among the reſt, the hail, rain, and thunder ſpoken of in this place, were his inſtruments of vengeance in plaguing that hardned King. Whenſoever God afflicts a people by the creatures, he judgeth them by the creatures. Let us take heed, that we provoke not God to turn thoſe things which were given for our good, to our hurt; that he make not what was made our ſervant, our puniſhment. God made all creatures ſerviceable and uſeful to man, but through ſin they become grievous and deſtructive to man; *By them he judgeth the people.*

He giveth meat in abundance.] Here is the ſecond effect wrought or produced by theſe Creatures: *He giveth*, that is, God giveth, *meat*, that is, all kind of food and proviſion, for the life both of man and Beaſt; and he giveth it *in abundance*: He doth not give it ſcantly or niggardly, in ſmall portions and pittances, but in full meaſure, preſſed down, heaped up, and running over. *By them*, that is, by the rain and by the wind, *&c.* God gives us our meat in abundance. One tranſlation ſaith, *He giveth meat to many*, that is, to all.

Eſcam ad copiam. Heb. i. e. *copioſam.*

Dat eſcam multis mortalibus. Hieron.

Hence Note, Firſt, *Our daily food is the gift of God.*

He giveth meat. No man gets his own bread unleſs God giveth it; God muſt give it before we can get it.

Note, Secondly, *God is a free, bountiful and liberal Houſe-keeper.*

He giveth meat in abundance; he giveth to very many, yea, to all, and he giveth very much; he giveth meat to all the Fowls of the Air, and to all the Fiſhes of the Sea, to all men and Beaſts living on the Earth, they all receive food from God: He giveth food to all fleſh (*Pſ.* 136. 25.) *He filleth every living thing.* (Pſ. 147. 9.) *He giveth to the Beaſt his food, and feedeth the young Ravens when they cry.* Chriſt makes this an argument of faith in God for food and clothing (*Matth.* 6. 26.) *Behold the Fowls of the Air, for they ſow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into Barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them: Are not ye much better than they?* How little faith have you, who knowing that God feeds the Fowls of the Air, yet cannot truſt him for your food! *He giveth food in abundance.*

Note, Thirdly, *Plenty and ſcarcity are at the diſpoſe of God.*

He can give meat in ſcarcity, as well as meat in abundance; he can give cleanneſs of teeth as well as fulneſs of bread: And as he can ſtrengthen the ſtaff of bread, ſo break it, and *cauſe us to eat bread by weight and with care, and to drink water by meaſure and with aſtoniſhment* (Ezek. 4. 16.) To eat by weight and drink by meaſure, is to eat and drink in the want of bread and water, as is expreſſed (*verſ.* 17.) And as theſe changes of our natural, ſo of our ſpiritual food are from the Lord (*Amos* 8. 11.) *I will ſend a famine* (What famine?) *not of bread, but of hearing the word of the Lord.* 'Tis the Lord who ſends plenty and ſcarcity of bread, whether for the Soul or for the Body.

Fourthly, In that he ſaith, by them he giveth meat in abundance,

Note, *God uſeth natural means as the cauſe either of plenty or ſcarcity.*

The Lord could give us abundance, if he pleaſed, without rain, but he rarely gives abundance but by rain; he ſends rain out of the Clouds to water the Earth, and make it fruitful. The Lord could make our Souls fruitful in every good work, without the preaching of the word, but he ſeldom doth it (I believe never when the word may be had) without the preaching of the word. And therefore the Lord by his Prophet makes a compariſon between, or a parallel of theſe two (*Iſa.* 55. 10, 11.) *As the rain cometh down, and the ſnow from Heaven, and returneth not thither,* *but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give ſeed to the ſower, and bread to the eater; ſo ſhall my word be, that goeth out of my mouth,* &c. The Lord uſeth rain and ſnow, yea, wind and thunder, to fit the earth, as he uſeth his Word and holy Ordinances to fit the ſoul, to bring forth fruit to himſelf. He could do both alone, but he improveth that order of nature and grace which himſelf at firſt ſet up and inſtituted to bring about theſe excellent ends. *By them he giveth meat in abundance.*

Παρέξει τροφὴν πάμπολλην. *Præbebit eſcam permultam.* Sept.

The Greek Tranſlation renders *all manner of muchneſs.* From the whole learn, what cauſe we have to acknowledge the goodneſs of God in every ſhower of rain, and fleet of ſnow; for by them he giveth us our meat.

We ſhould hence alſo be minded to fear the Lord, and to take heed of his diſpleaſure. It is ſaid (*Acts* 12. 20.) when *Herod was highly diſpleaſed with them of Tyre and Sidon, they came with one accord to him, and having made Blaſtus the Kings Chamberlain their friend, deſired peace, becauſe their Country was nouriſhed by the Kings Country.* O how much more ſhould we labour to avoid the diſpleaſure of God, and haſten to make our peace with him, ſeeing our Country is nouriſhed by his Country! The heavens nouriſh the earth, elſe the earth could not afford any thing for our nouriſhment. We are fed rather from the heavens than from the earth. The clouds drop down and make the earth fat, to give graſs for cattel and corn for man. *Elihu* ſpeaks nothing of the Earth, but of the Clouds, from them we are fed.

Laſtly conſider, *Elihu* joyns both effects expreſly, *By them he judgeth the people, he giveth meat,* &c.

Hence note, *The Lord can make the ſame creature either beneficial or hurtful to us.*

That which is an inſtrument in his hand for good to his ſervants, is often a plague and a ſcourge to his enemies. The rain which at one time moiſtens the earth, at another time drowns it; the rain which at one time cheriſheth the creatures, at another time choaks them. The winds which at one time fan the air and cool it, at another time enrage and vex it; the winds which at one time ſweeten and cleanſe the air, at another time corrupt and infect it. The Lord can with the ſame creatures, furniſh himſelf for any diſpenſation: *By them he judgeth the people, and by them he giveth meat in abundance.*

VERS. 32, 33.

With clouds he covereth the light, and commandeth it not to ſhine, by the cloud that cometh betwéen.

The noiſe whereof ſheweth concerning it, the cattel alſo concerning the vapour.

Hujus & ſequentis verſus difficultas & obſcuritas tanta ſemper ab omnibus enarratoribus habita eſt ut vix alius in toto hoc libro, ne dicam in toto ſacro codice locus iſto impenetrabilior eſſe videatur. Bold.

These two verſes have a Character of difficulty and obſcurity put upon them by ſeveral interpreters; and ſome have concluded them the moſt difficult and darkeſt portion of the whole Book of *Job*, yea, of the whole Book of God. And ſhould I reckon up all the various Grammatical conſtructions of theſe words, together with the diſtinct interpretations given upon them, I ſhould weary my ſelf, and rather perplex than advantage the Reader.

And therefore I ſhall ſpeak to theſe two verſes, Firſt, as they are laid down plainly in our Tranſlation, according to which (with ſubmiſſion to the judgment of thoſe learned Authors) I ſee neither any great difficulty nor obſcurity in them, and ſhall afterwards give a brief account at leaſt, of ſome of thoſe different readings and tranſlations which I find upon them.

The words (as I conceive) according to the mind of our tranſlators, and as the Text clearly beareth, hold out two things concerning the rain, of which *Elihu* had ſpoken before.

Firſt, What is naturally preparatory to rain or foul weather, that we have in the 32. verſe, *With clouds he covereth the light, and commandeth it not to ſhine by the Cloud that cometh between.*

Secondly, We have that which is declaratory of rain, or (as ſome call them) *the Prognoſticks* and ſigns of rain; theſe are laid down in the 33. verſe, *The noiſe thereof ſheweth concerning it, the Cattel alſo concerning the vapour.*

Verſ. 32. **With clouds he covereth the light.**

Vox כפים *ambigua eſt ad manus & nubes, proprie volas denotat; ad nubes refero quia de iis hactenus actum, & quia proprie curvaturas ſignificat, quales in unaquaque nube duæ ſunt, convexa & concava.* De Dieu in loc.

He, that is, God covereth the light with Clouds. We heard of the Clouds at the 29. verſe, but the word there uſed is not that which is uſed in this 32. verſe. The word here made uſe of by *Elihu,* ſignifies generally any thing that is *hollow* or *concave,* as a ſpoon, platter, or boul, or ſuch like utenſils, which are bowed with a convex and concave ſuperficies; it hath alſo particularly two eminent ſignifications, both of which are made uſe of in this place by Interpreters. Firſt, it ſignifieth the *hand*; ſo we tranſlate it (*Job* 16. 17.) *There is no injuſtice in my hand.* The word which here we tranſlate a *Cloud*; is there tranſlated, a *hand*: Now, the hand, we know, hath a hollowneſs or cavity in it, unleſs when it is purpoſely held forth plain. The ſecond ſignification is that of the Text, *a Cloud,* which is alſo hollow, and (as moſt conclude) the ſame word is put to ſignifie a *hand,* and a *Cloud,* becauſe *Clouds* uſually at the firſt appearance are but ſmall, or like a hand, as *Elijahs* ſervant reported to him, after his ſeventh going to view the Heavens (1 *King.* 18. 44.). *Behold, a little Cloud, like a mans hand.* In this ſence we take it here in our tranſlation: Some render *With his hand he covereth the light,* we ſay, *With Clouds*

כסה *Texit, abſcondit, imponendo aliquid quo tegas tanquam operculo vel veſte.*

He covereth the light.] He covereth or hideth the light, that is, from our eyes, he cauſeth it to diſappear, or not appear to us: The word notes covering as with a garment, or covering with any thing that intercepts and ſtops the ſight; and hence by a Trope it is applied to the pardon of ſin (*Pſal.* 32. 1.) *Bleſſed is the man whoſe ſin is covered.* When the Lord pardons ſin, he is ſaid to cover it, becauſe he will not ſuffer it to appear againſt the ſinner, nor be charged upon him to condemnation. As pardon covers ſins, ſo Clouds cover the Heavens, and when they are covered the light is covered. *With Clouds he covereth the light.* The Prophet *Jeremy* in his *Lamentations* (Chap. 3. 44.) complained ſadly, becauſe God (who is light) had covered himſelf, *Thou haſt covered thy ſelf with a Cloud, that our prayers ſhould not paſs through.* As God doth ſometimes cover himſelf, or hide the light of his Countenance from his people, as with a cloud, that their prayers cannot paſs through; ſo he often hides or covers the light of the air with natural or proper Clouds, that the Sun-beams for a time cannot pierce nor paſs through; *With Clouds he covereth.*

אור *tum lucem, tum ſolem, à quo lux, vel quia eſt fons lucis ſignificat.*

The light.] The word uſed by *Elihu,* ſignifies both *light* and the *Sun,* which is the fountain, from whence *light* flows and iſſues; yea, the word ſignifies alſo *fire.* The Sun, Moon, and Stars, are called (*ignes*) *the fires of heaven,* becauſe like ſo many fires or mighty torches they give light to us on earth. And by a metaphor the word ſignifies *Joy, Comfort,* all ſorts of good things; as on the other ſide, by darkneſs, troubles and calamities of all ſorts are metaphorically expreſt in Scripture. *With Clouds he covereth the light,*

And commandeth it not to ſhine by the Cloud that cometh betwéen.

As if he had ſaid. When a Cloud covereth the light, 'tis the command of God which puts the Cloud as a covering upon it. Thoſe words [*not to ſhine.*] are not expreſly in the Hebrew Text; there it is only thus; *With Clouds he covereth the light, and commandeth it by that which cometh between:* nor is the word *Cloud* expreſt in the latter part of the verſe, we put it in as a ſupplement in another Character, more fully to expreſs the ſence of the Text.

And commandeth it not to ſhine.

Verbum צוה *quod ſignificat præcipere, quum regit præpoſitionem* על *ſignificat interdicere.* Piſc.

The word which we tranſlate *to command,* properly ſignifies, to bid or command a thing to be done; but when it ſtands in conſtruction, as here, with *Gnal,* it ſignifieth to forbid or ſtay a thing that it be not done. (*Gen.* 2. 16.) *God commanded the man, or concerning the man,* &c. As that command expreſſed a liberty to eat of every other tree in the Garden, so it included a prohibition of eating the fruit of the tree of knowledge, which is alſo expreſſed at the 17. verſe. We have a like conſtruction of the word (*Gen.* 28. 6. 1 *Kings* 2. 43.) *He commandeth it not to ſhine*

By

פגע *occurit irruit, aggreſſus eſt, per Metaphoram interceſſit occurrit deprecandi cauſa. Hinc* במפגיע *per occurrens,* ſc. *per occurrentem nubem, quæ interveniente lucem ſolis tegit.* Druſ Merc.

By the Cloud that cometh between.] By that which cometh between, or by that which meets it, that is, as we ſupply it, by the thick and dark Cloud which meets and intercepts the bright beams of the Sun. The root of the word ſignifies to meet with force (not only *occurrere* but *irruere*) to ruſh upon, to invade, to aſſault, or to charge, as an enemy is charged in battel; and it ſignifies, by a Metaphor, to intercede, to make prayer or ſupplication for another, which is as it were a coming between man and man. An Interceſſor cometh between two parties, the party offending, and the party offended, he interpoſeth himſelf to make up the breach, or to take up the difference, that if poſſible a reconciliation may be made. The Latine word which we tranſlate Latinely to *intercede*, is of the ſame ſignificancy; and this Hebrew word is often ſo rendred (*Jer.* 7: 16.) *Pray not for this people, nor make interceſſion to me*; that is, thou ſhalt not come between me and this people to ſtop or ſtay me, that I break not out into wrath, or from pouring out my wrath upon them. In other Scriptures it is uſed to note an act of interceſſion between man and man (*Gen.* 23. 8.) as alſo an act of addreſs by prayer and intreaty, whether towards God or man, (*Job* 21. 15. *Ruth* 1. 16) And becauſe the word properly notes meeting another with a kind of violence, it intimates with what a holy violence, with what ſtrength, earneſtneſs, and fervency of ſpirit, we ought to meet God, either in prayer for our ſelves, or when we come as interceſſors, and ſtand before him in the behalf of others, whether Perſons, Nations, or Churches.

Many Interpreters (as I ſhall ſhew afterward) take the word in this ſence here for an Interceſſor, or for a perſon that prayeth and intercedeth for another. We, in our tranſlation, expound it of a thing, and that thing of a Cloud that interpoſeth or cometh between us and the Light. He commandeth the light not to ſhine, *by the Cloud that cometh between*, or, *by the Cloud that paſſeth between us* and the light of the Sun.

Hence note, Firſt, *The beſt and ſweeteſt mercies we have in this world, may quickly meet with a ſtop.*

When we have the Light, a Cloud may ſoon come between the Light and us: Which as it is true of the natural Light and Clouds, ſo of that which is Light in a figure, our moſt comfortable enjoyments; and that which is a Cloud in a figure, troubleſom and afflictive Providences. There is no light, of what kind ſoever it is, but there may be a Cloud to intercept it, and come between us and that; even the light of the favour of God, the light of his countenance, which is the moſt bleſſed light of all, even that light hath many a Cloud. The clouds of our ſins cauſe the Lord to cloud his face with anger and diſpleaſure, and hinder the light of his favour and loving-kindneſs from ſhining upon our ſouls.

Secondly, In that *Elihu* ſaith, *He commandeth it not to ſhine*,

Note, *The Lord hath a ſoveraign power over all creatures*;

He ſends forth his commanding word, not only to Angels and Men, but to Beaſts, yea, to inanimates, he ſends out his orders and edicts to the Clouds of the Air, to the Light of the Sun, to things without life, and they ſubmit preſently and obey; he ſpeaketh to the light as if it were a reaſonable creature, he commandeth it not to ſhine, and it ſhineth not. The hoſts of heaven and the inhabitants of the earth are at the diſpoſe of God; the whole courſe of nature moves and ſtands ſtill at his word and pleaſure. The Sun ſtood ſtill in the days of *Joſhua* at his command; and by the ſame command, the Sun went backward in the days of *Hezekiah*; and 'tis by his command that the Sun withdraws its light, and is muffled up with Clouds at any time. *He commandeth it not to ſhine.*

Take theſe Inferences from it.

Firſt, *Then, what cannot God do?* He that commands the light not to ſhine, and it ſhineth not; Is any thing too hard for him? who but God can ſtop the Sun from ſhining? If all the Princes and Potentates of this world ſhould joyn their forces, their counſels together, and ſend a prohibition to the Sun, to ſtay its light, and forbear its ſhining one moment, they were not able to do it; yet if the Lord do but ſpeak the word, the Sun ſhineth not; he can give it a prohibition, and ſuperſede the going forth of its light to us: yea, he hath power enough, not only to cover the Sun with Clouds, but to turn it into a Cloud, and to blot it out of the heavens.

Secondly, learn hence, *In what dependance we are upon God for every thing.* God can keep the light from us every day if he pleaſeth, and wrap us up in perpetual darkneſs, as he plagued the Land of *Egypt* with thick darkneſs for three days together. 'Tis true, the Sun riſeth and goeth down in a natural courſe, yet ſtill by a divine order and commiſſion. As God can forbid the Light by interpoſing Clouds, ſo he can forbid the Clouds to give us ſhowers, and bind up all the ſweet influences of heaven from diſtilling upon the earth to make it fruitful. He can ſpeak to our garments that they warm us not, to our food that it nouriſh us not, to our phyſick that it cure and heal us not, to all our relations that they comfort us not, to all our poſſeſſions and riches that they content us not. O let us remember that we depend upon God, for Rain, for Light, for Sunſhine, for all; it is at his word that they all put themſelves forth to do us good, and at his word they are all ſtaid and ſtopt in their motion, from doing or bringing us any good.

Let us remember alſo God can command another light not to ſhine; he can by a word ſtop the progreſs of the Word, and ſtay that bleſſed and moſt beautiful light, the light of the Goſpel, from ſhining to us, by ſome Cloud or other coming between. To how many nations of people, where that light ſometimes ſhined, hath God long ſince ſent a command, and it ſhineth not! It ſhined brightly in former Ages upon the *African* Churches, but now, for a long time, God hath ſaid to the light of the Goſpel, ſhine not upon them; there's ſcarce any light at all, at moſt but a glimering of Goſpel-Light in all that vaſt continent, a quarter part of the world. What mighty Dominions are now poſſeſſed by the followers of *Mahomet*, both in *Europe* and *Aſia*, where the light of the Goſpel did once ſhine very brightly and gloriouſly! How famous were thoſe ſeven *Aſian* Churches, mentioned and writ to by the command of Chriſt, and the miniſtry of his ſervant and Secretary *John* (*Rev.* 1. 2, 3.) yet now darkneſs poſſeſſeth all thoſe places, and the *Alcoran* hath thruſt out the Goſpel; and whence is all this? Surely God commanded, and that light ſhined not, nor hath it ſhined with any brightneſs for many hundred years. Jeſus Chriſt, who threatned *Epheſus* with the removal of her Candleſtick, hath removed all thoſe Candleſticks, and put out their lights. The ſame ſtop can God give to the Goſpel-Light which hath ſhined among us (bleſſed be his Name) for many years together: Let us take heed that we forfeit not that bleſſed light, that we provoke not the Lord by our abuſe of it and unthankfulneſs for it, to ſend out a command, that it ſhine not among us any more. We read in the Prophets how divine light was prohibited both to the People and to the Prophets: The ſtop of it to the People, we have (*Amos* 8. 9.) *I will cauſe the Sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day.* The Prophet ſpeaks not here at all of the ſtop of natural light, nor doth he only intend the ſtop of that metaphorical light, Proſperity in outward things, which the Lord doth often eclipſe and darken, when men dream leaſt of it, or have no more fear about it, than they have that the Sun will go down at noon day; but he, at leaſt, intends, if it be not his principal intendment, to ſhew that a grievous judgment was haſtning upon them, as to their ſpiritual enjoyments; that the light of divine knowledge, what to believe, and what to practiſe, was declining, and ready to go down, though they thought it was but noon with them, and the day very clear. For as the famine threatned (*verſ.* 11.) is expounded upon the place, by the Prophet himſelf, not to be *a famine of bread, and a thirſt for water, but of hearing the word of the Lord*; ſo the darkneſs threatened in this 9. verſe, is not to be reſtrained to the loſs of their worldly liberties and comforts, but extended to thoſe which were ſpiritual and divine, the failing of viſion, and the removing of the light of the Word. And as in this Prophet we find the light departing from the People, ſo in the third of *Micah* (*verſ.* 6, 7.) we find God commanding the light not to ſhine to the Prophets (the falſe prophets he means there, for ſo he deſcribeth them, *verſ.* 5.) *Therefore ſhall night be unto you* (the prophets who deceive my people, who teach them vanity, and lead them to

Idolatry and ſuperſtition; *therefore,* I ſay, *ſhall night be unto you) that ye ſhall have no viſion, and it ſhall be dark to you that you ſhall not divine and the Sun ſhall go down over the Prophets, and the day ſhall be dark over them.* What the Lord means by all this, you have expreſt in the cloſe of the 7. verſe, *There is no anſwer of God,* that is, God doth not now any more manifeſt his mind and will by the Prophets, that they might manifeſt his will unto the People. I cloſe this point with the renewal of my former admonition; Let us therefore take heed we provoke not the Lord to command this light not to ſhine, either to Prophets or People, in our Horizon.

Thirdly, *He commandeth it not to ſhine by the Cloud that cometh between.* Though (as I ſaid) the word *Cloud,* be not expreſt in the Text, yet we know 'tis a Cloud that uſually cometh between the light and us.

> Hence note, *Though God can do all things by his bare word, yet he ordinarily uſeth means to bring about his purpoſes, whether for good or evil, whether in mercy or in judgement, to the children of men.*

τὸ κατέχον
Verſ. 6.

ὁ κατέχων,
Verſ. 7.

There is ſomething comes between. God hath a Cloud, or ſomewhat like it, to put between us and the light. The Apoſtle (2 *Theſ.* 2. 6, 7.) treating of Antichriſt, the man of ſin, intimates, that he would have filled the world with the darkneſs of errour and ſuperſtition very quickly, by a full diſcovery of himſelf, had not ſomething with-held him, had not ſomething come between him and his deſign for a time. What was that? 'Tis generally conceived, that which did with-hold or come between the man of ſin, and his purpoſe of filling the world with the darkneſs of his wicked errours and abominable worſhip, was the power of the *Roman* Empire at that time; Antichriſt could not put forth his power while that power ſtood in its ſtrength. God could have with-held Antichriſt immediately from putting forth of himſelf, but he ſaw it beſt to put a block in his way, the power of the *Roman* Empire, and until that was thruſt out of the way, *the man of ſin* could never ſhew himſelf fully, in that unlimited exerciſe of his ſinful power. Now, I ſay, as there was then a with-holder of Antichriſtian darkneſs, ſomwhat that came between and hindred its effectual working; ſo uſually, I may ſay univerſally, ſomewhat comes between to check and ſtop the courſe of the Goſpel-light, or of any other mercy. Sin is a Cloud of our making, and God in judgment makes that as a Cloud coming between us and our mercies. He did ſo of old to *Iſrael,* and he told them ſo by his Prophet (*Jer.* 5. 25.) *Your ſins have with-holden good things from you.* Sin withholds good things, not formally, but meritoriouſly, that is, ſin is the meriting or deſerving cauſe of their with-holding. This one Cloud of our ſins, brings all the Clouds of trouble between us and our mercies; and the Lord hath always ſome Cloud or other of trouble at hand, in readineſs to cover the light, that it ſhine not to us, when we trouble and grieve him by thoſe foggy and filthy clouds of our ſins. Thus far of that which is preparatory to rain, *Clouds covering the light.* It followeth,

Verſ. 33. The noiſe thereof ſheweth concerning it, the cattel alſo concerning the vapour.

Hic verſus difficillimus eſt ſi quis in toto Jobo, *in quo quot ſunt expoſitores tot fere ſenſus afferuntur.* Merc.

רעו
Strepitus ejus quidam deducunt à
רוע
ſonavit, clamavit, vociferatus eſt, alii à
רעה
amicus, ſocius.

This Verſe, according to our Tranſlation, as I touched before, carrieth on the ſame thing. There we had the preparation as it were, for rain, Clouds gathered and covering the Sun, ſo making dark weather: Now, ſaith he, that the rain is coming, *the noiſe thereof ſheweth concerning it.* The word which we render *noiſe,* taken from one root ſignifieth any troubleſom clamour; and as derived from another root, it ſignifieth a friend or companion (as I ſhall touch afterward) But at preſent leaving that, I ſhall open it according to our own reading, as it ſignifieth a *noiſe.* Some read *his noiſe,* that is, Gods noiſe, he maketh a noiſe in the air: And this noiſe of God in the air, is either, firſt, the noiſe of the wind; winds often fore-run great rains; or ſecondly, the noiſe of thunderclaps, that ratling noiſe heard from the clouds, which come between us and the light; this noiſe *ſheweth concerning it,* that is, this ſheweth foul weather is coming, or that rain (as we ſpeak) is brewing in the Clouds. Both the bluſtering winds and the ratling roaring thunder tells us as afore-hand, and give warning, that the weather will ſuddenly change, or that rain is at hand.

> Hence note, *God by natural ſigns give warning of a change in natural things.*

When God is about to ſend rain, the noiſe that is in the Clouds tells the world that 'tis coming. Some are very skilful in obſerving theſe thing; ſuch we call, *weatherwiſe.* From this I would only infer, If God doth fore-ſhew or give ſigns of the change that he makes in natural things, then ſurely he doth much more give his people warning of the changes he is about to make in civil things, in the States and Kingdoms of this world. There are ſome things which do, as it were, predict or foreſhew ſuch and ſuch changes near, if we were wiſe to obſerve them. The *Jews* were very inquiſitive to know of Chriſt the ſigns of the times; Theſe ſigns they enquired of him, not ſo much out of curioſity (which had been bad enough) as out of treachery, to intrap him in his words, yet mark what Chriſt ſaid to them (*Matth.* 16. 1, 2, 3.) *He anſwered and ſaid unto them, when it is evening, ye ſay it will be fair weather, for the skie is red* (a red skie ſhews concerning fair weather) *and in the morning it will be foul weather, for the skie is red and lowring.* When the skie lowrs; or, as here in *Job,* when the Cloud cometh between us and the light, that tells us it will be foul weather. Now, ſaith Chriſt, do you think that God hath given us ſuch warnings about changes in natural things, and hath he not given ſigns which may fore-ſhew changes in other things, which more concerns us? Therefore Chriſt checks them in the 3. verſ. *O ye hypocrites, ye can diſcern the face of the skie, and can ye not diſcern the Signs of the times,* that is, what changes God will make in the times? As if he had ſaid, if you were wiſe ye might diſcern the ſigns of ruine approaching to you and your City. A dreadful black Cloud of deſtruction hung over the City of *Jeruſalem* at that time, as Chriſt had foretold them in ſeveral places of the Goſpel: the time is coming (ſaith he) when *there ſhall not be left one ſtone upon another;* yet you cannot ſee the ſigns of theſe things; you are very skilful to diſcern a fair day and a foul day (there are natural prognoſticks of theſe things) but ye hypocrites cannot diſcern the ſigns of the times: Do ye not think God hath given you warning, hath he not fore-ſhewed what he will do with you and with this City? if ye were wiſe ye might underſtand that ſhortly it will be overthrown, and ſo it was by *Titus Veſpaſian* not long after. God gives as clear ſigns of the changes that ſhall be in times, as he doth concerning the change of the weather: And that's one thing which doth very much fore-ſhew it, when God puts it into the hearts of his Miniſters unanimouſly to forewarn approaching troubles. Such warnings were given to *Hieruſalem,* not only by Chriſt, but afterwards by others. *Joſephus* in his Hiſtory reports of one that could not by any puniſhment be ſtopt from crying up and down the City, for ſeveral years, after this manner, *A voyce from the Eaſt, a voyce from the Weſt, a voyce from the four Winds, a voyce againſt Jeruſalem, and a voyce againſt the Temple.* There was alſo (as the ſame Author reports) a voyce heard in the Temple, *Let us depart hence.* The *Jews* generally would not believe theſe voyces, but went on and were angry when any told them of a Cloud coming over their day, yet they found them all verified in the ſubverſion of their city, by the *Romans.* Such fore-warnings were give the *Palatinate,* and other parts of *Germany,* before thoſe great evils came upon them. Some way or other God hath always ſhewed when theſe ſhowers were coming; and when a people grow weary of their warnings, when they grow more prophane and wicked under them, this is a ſure ſign, a fatal prognoſtick, that God is coming with a ſhower of wrath, and is ready to pour down a ſtorm of vengeance upon them. And ſurely theſe warnings, both with reſpect to natural changes in the Air, and civil changes in the affairs of this World, argue the wonderful goodneſs of God, that he would have us prepare for all diſpenſations: He will not ſend a ſhower of rain, but would have us prepared for it: and when he is about to ſend to ſend thoſe great ſhowrs of Judgment upon the world, he would have his people ready and prepared, and therefore by ſome means or other he tells them before hand what is at hand.

Joſephus, lib. 7. c. 12. *de Bello Judaico.*

מקנה
Pecus.

Thus, the noiſe thereof ſheweth concerning it, or telleth us the ſtorm is coming. But is there nothing elſe that foretels this? Yes, it followeth,

The

עַל־עולה

The cattel alſo concerning the vapour.] The very beaſts of the field give notice of the vapour. The Hebrew is *that which goeth up*, ſo we read in the Margin. The rain comes down, and the vapours go up; and the going up of the vapour is an argument of the coming down of the rain. As the noiſe of thunder in the Clouds fore-ſheweth a ſtorm, ſo *the cattel concerning the vapour*, they tell us the rain is coming down by their apprehenſion of the vapour which goeth up.

Some render, not *vapour*, but *plants* or *herbs*, *trees* or *graſs*, theſe go up or aſcend out of the earth, as well as vapours. Our Tranſlation is plain. *The cattel alſo*, the very ſheep and oxen, yea the fowls of the air will tell when we ſhall have foul weather; before ſuch ſtorms come uſually they run to ſhelter, hiding and ſhifting for themſelves as as well as they can, againſt the ſtorm. *Cattel preſage rain. Pliny* in his Natural Hiſtory ſpeaks much of the natural ſagacity that is in beaſts, ſwine, ſheep and oxen, whereby they perceive change of weather. The Poet *Virgil* alſo verifies largely and accurately of theſe things; reporting how husbandmen that keep cattel will gather by what they ſee in the cattel what the weather will be. *The Cattel alſo concerning the vapour.*

Plinius, lib. 18. c. 35. *Natural Hiſtory.* Virgilius, in Georg. l. 1.

Hence Note, *Brute Creatures, by a natural inſtinct, perceive the approaching changes of the weather.*

And why hath God given them that natural inſtinct? Why are they quick-ſented and quick-ſighted, yea many times more quick-ſighted than men are? Surely, it is firſt, that thoſe poor Creatures may provide themſelves of ſhelter, and not be abroad in the ſtorm, rain or wind, in a time of danger, or inconvenient to them. This may be of uſe to us. God would teach us by the very dumb Creatures, the Bruits, what our duty is; the Cattel, the Swine, the Sheep will witneſs againſt us, if we do not take notice of, nor obſerve, the ſigns of the various diſpenſations of God, or when he is about to vary his diſpenſations. Can the Cattel tell when it will be foul weather, and are men ſo ſtupid (are they eſpecially that profeſs the Goſpel ſo ſtupid) that they underſtand none of theſe things? The Prophet *Jeremiah* (*Chap.* 8.7.) reproves the people of *Iſrael* upon this account, by the fowls of heaven (as was ſhewed upon another occaſion, at the 11.*ver.* of the 35.*Chap*) *The Stork in the heavens knoweth his appointed time, and the Turtle, and the Crane, and the Swallow know the times of their coming*; that is, they will not ſtay in any place, where it is not fit nor ſafe for them to ſtay, and they will not come to any place till they know all things are ſuitable and ready for them: *But my people knoweth not the judgment of their God*, they are more ſenſeleſs than the very fowls of heaven in this. And therefore the Prophets checks them (*Verſ.* 8.) *How do ye ſay, we are wiſe, and the Law of the Lord is with us?* You count your ſelves very wiſe, yet ye are not ſo wiſe in this matter as the Stork and the Crane, and the Swallow, for they obſerve their times, but you do not. It is a great part of our wiſdom to ſee what God is doing, or what he is about to do before he doth it. It is ſaid (*Prov.* 22. 3.) *A prudent man foreſeeth an evil.* When evil is come every one can ſee it (though ſome will ſcarce ſee it then, as the Prophet complained (*Iſa.* 26. 11.) *When thy hand is lifted up they will not ſee it*) but uſually that which is done or doing we can ſee; when we feel an evil we can ſee it; but the prudent, that is the godly man, foreſeeth the evil. How comes he to foreſee it? not by any helliſh divination, not by ſtar-gazing, nor by asking the Devil what ſhall be hereafter, as *Saul* did; he would foreſee the evil, but he went to the Devil, to a Witch for it (1 *Sam.* 28) Now a godly man doth not foreſee the evil by any ſuch ways or means, but by a diligent collection of things, comparing one with the other, or by the connection of cauſes with their effects, and of antecedents with their conſequents; by theſe he plainly foreſeeth that ſuch or ſuch an evil is coming, even as the beaſt foreſees the ſtorm is coming by the vapor, or that which goeth up. The prudent man foreſeeth an evil approaching by way of argument. For thus he reaſons, if God be an unchangeable God, if he be as holy, as juſt, as powerful, as zealous, as jealous now, as ever he was, and if ſin be the ſame as ever it was, if ſin be as fowl in it ſelf, if it be as loathſom and as burdenſom to God, if it be as pernicious and hurtful to man now, as ever it was, then ſurely when men run ſuch and ſuch ſinful courſes, ſuch and ſuch will be the effects, ſuch and ſuch the fruits. Thus a prudent man ſeeth the effect in the cauſe, the conſequent in the antecedent. This was *Solomons* purpoſe, when he ſaid (*Eccleſ.* 2. 14.) *The wiſe mans eyes are in his head.* You may ſay, ſo are the fools eyes too; Where are his eyes elſe? But when *Solomon* ſaith, *The wiſe mans eyes are in his head*, his meaning is, they are there to purpoſe; the wiſe man well obſerves and marks how things go, and whither things tend, he conſiders how things go, and whither things are going: *but the fool walketh in darkneſs*, that is, he walketh as if he had no eyes in his head, as if his eyes were in his heels, not in his head. It is ſaid, (1 *Chron.* 12. 32.) concerning the men of *Iſſachar*, *They were wiſe concerning the times, and to know what Iſrael ought to do*: They knew what the times required, and what God required in thoſe times, what ſpecial duties were incumbent upon them, from the diſpenſations of God. It is a great mercy, and a great part of our wiſdom to be thus wiſe, and if we are not, we ſhall be found and judged more brutiſh than the brute beaſt, for the Cattel alſo give *warning concerning the vapour*, they give notice when rain and ſtorms are coming.

Thus I have held out the ſence of the words, as they are laid down plainly in our Tranſlation.

But there are very many differences among Interpreters (as was hinted before) in the reading and rendring of theſe words, all which ariſe from ſome difficulty in the Grammatical conſtruction and copious ſignification of the Hebrew Text. I might give you more than three and three ſeveral interpretations of theſe words, but, as I ſaid before, I ſhould rather perplex the Reader than confirm him; yet I ſhall name three, when I have only ſhewed which words in the Text occaſion this variety in Tranſlation. Firſt, the word rendred by us *Clouds*, ſignifieth alſo the *hands*. Secondly, the word rendred *cometh between*, ſignifieth *an Interceſſor*, or *one that prayeth*, as alſo an *oppoſer*, who ſtands up againſt and reſiſts the force of another. Thirdly, The word rendred *noiſe* ſignifieth (when derived from another root) a friend or familiar. Fourthly, the word rendred *cattel*, ſignifieth alſo *poſſeſſion*, or that which is poſſeſſed, and taken from another root, *emulation*, or *ſtrife*. Fifthly, the word which we Tranſlate as an Adverb, *alſo* ſignifieth likewiſe *anger*. Sixthly, the word rendred *vapour*, ſignifieth *an aſcenſion*, or going up; and ſo *plants* or *herbs*, which grow out of the ground and aſcend into the air according to their growth are elegantly expreſſed by it.

All theſe differences found in the ſingle terms, are made uſe of by Interpreters, as will appear while I give you a taſte of three different Tranſlations.

Firſt, The common Latin Tranſlator renders thus, *In his hands he hideth the Light, and commands it to come again; he ſpeaks of it, or declares it to his friend, that it is his poſſeſſion, and that he may aſcend or come to it.* This rendring is marvelous different from ours, yet there is ſome footing for it in the Original, and it may receive a uſeful ſenſe.

The whole Text being accordingly expounded as an argument of Gods great favour to godly men; from whom, though he at any time hideth the light, yet, tis but for a time, he commands it to return again, and tells them as his friends light is their poſſeſſion, and that at laſt they ſhall aſcend up into light.

There is a ſecond Claſſis of Interpreters, who expound theſe two Verſes wholly as a deſcription of the Clouds meeting together and aſſaulting one another, like two great Champions and Warriors in battel. The learned *Beza* Tranſlates the firſt part of the 32 Verſe conformable to the Vulgar Latine laſt ſpoken of, *He hideth the light in either hand, or both hands*; and the latter part of that Verſe, together with the whole 33 Verſe, in conformity to the ſenſe now given; *He gives it* (namely the light or Lightening) *command concerning that which meets or comes againſt it* (namely where and how to receive the force or charge of the other cloud that is ready to aſſault it) *the noiſe, the ſtrife, the anger of it againſt the aſcender* (or cloud coming up) *plainly declareth this.* Some of the Jewiſh Doctors inſiſt much in the deſcription of this conflict between the Clouds above, and the aſcending Clouds, concerning which the reader may conſult them for further information; but the difficulties of this Tranſlation noted by Modern Expoſiters, eſpecially by *Mercer* and *Merlin*, are ſo many that it may ſuffice to name it.

In utraque vola occultat lucem, & præcipit ei ſuper occurrentem. Indicat hoc tumultus ejus, æmulatio & ira adverſus aſcendentem. Bez.

Thirdly, Mr. *Broughton*, thus, *By hands he covereth the light, and chargeth it as man doth pray, declaring his favour towards him, the cattel and alſo plants.* The meaning is (which ſeveral others follow in tranſlating and opening this context) That when God covereth the light or cauſeth darkneſs, yet at the interceſſion or prayer of this people he makes a change and cauſeth great ſerenity, giving comfortable times, and thereby declaring his favour towards them, yea, and towards the cattel and the plants, which feed upon, aſcend or grow up out of the earth. *Junius* conſents fully with this ſenſe, whoſe Tranſlation and gloſs upon it I ſhall preſent the reader, and ſubmit all to his judgment and conſideration; *with his hands he hideth the light* (that is, he makes it dark as laying his hand upon it) *and he forbids it* (namely his hand to hide the light any longer) *becauſe of him that intercedeth* (that is, *Noah* in the time of the general flood, and the godly, who according to the example of *Noah* come to God, *Jam.* 5. 16.) *declaring towards him* (that is, the godly man praying and worſhiping God) *his good will, yea, towards the cattel and fruits of the earth.*

Theſe are the moſt eminent conceptions which I find upon the Text, all of them containing Truths, and ſuch as may occaſion uſeful meditations. But I rather adhere to our own verſion, in which, as the power of God in changing the weather is held out, ſo his goodneſs in giving ſigns and warnings of it, both by the noiſes which we hear in the air, and by ſome unuſual actions and motions, which we may ſee among Cattel here upon the earth.

CHAP. XXXVII. Verſ. 1, 2.

1. *At this alſo my heart trembled, and is moved out of its place.*

2. *Hear attentively the noiſe of his voice, and the ſound that goeth out of his mouth.*

This Chapter concludes the Conference of *Elihu* with *Job*, and it conſiſts of three parts.

Firſt, In it we have an enumeration, together with a deſcription of divers Meteors, or wonderful works of God in the Air, Thunder and Lightning, Snow and Rain; yet before *Elihu* ſpeaks of them, he doth two things by way of Preface, to lead us with more reverence towards God, into that diſcourſe of Nature, in which much of God appeareth.

Firſt, *Elihu* tells us, how himſelf was affected, either with the preſent ſenſe, or with the fore-apprehenſion of thoſe things concerning which he was about to ſpeak; *At this alſo my heart trembled, and it moved out of its place.*

Secondly, He ſtirs up the whole Auditory then preſent, and all others, to a diligent attention and ſerious conſideration of them. Verſ. 2. *Hear attentively the noiſe of his voice, and the ſound that goeth out of his mouth.*

Having ſpoken thus in way of Preface, *Elihu* proceeds, firſt, to a deſcription of Thunder, with its immediate forerunner, as to our ſence (the eye being quicker to receive its object than the ear) though in truth, and according to reaſon, its companion, *the Lightning*, in the three Verſes following (3, 4, 5.) concerning both which he ſhews,

Firſt, That they go not at random, but have a guide, *he directeth it*, that is, the Thunder and Lightning.

Secondly, He ſhews the extent of their motion and Gods direction, they are not confined to this or that part, *He directeth it under the whole heaven*, and his *lightnings unto the ends of the earth*, in the ſame Verſe.

Thirdly, He ſpeaks of the irrevocableneſs of Gods decrees and orders about them, at the 4th Verſe, *After it a voice roareth*, &c. *and he will not ſtay them when his voice is heard.*

Fourthly, He concludes about theſe and many other works of God, with an Elogie of all his works. Firſt, In their greatneſs; Secondly, In their incomprehenſibleneſs; or he concludes them, not only great, but wonderful and incomprehenſible (Verſ. 5.) *God thundereth marvelouſly with his voice, he doth great things which we cannot comprehend.*

Having thus ſpoken of Thunder and Lightning, he proceeds,

Secondly, To ſhew the power of God, which he deſcribes in Snow and Rain.

Firſt, From their efficient cauſe, at the 6th Verſe:

Secondly, By their effects. Firſt, Towards men, in the 7th Verſe. Secondly, Upon or towards irrational Creatures, the Beaſts of the earth, at the 8th Verſe.

Thirdly, He ſets forth the Power of God in the Winds, concerning which we have,

Firſt, Their original, whence they come (Verſ. 9.)

Secondly, Their effects, or what they produce, cold and froſt, in the latter part of the 9th and 10th Verſes.

Fourthly, He treats of the Clouds, and about them he declares four things.

Firſt, The melting or diſſolving of them into Rain, at the 11. Verſe.

Secondly, The ſcattering and diſperſing of them by the wind, in the latter part of that Verſe.

Thirdly, The diſpoſing and ordering of them by the counſel and command of God, at the 12. Verſe.

Fourthly, Their uſes, ends and operations, at the thirteenth Verſe.

Thus we have the firſt general part of the Chapter opened, containing a deſcription of the Meteors, or manifold works of God in the Air, all which hold forth and advance his mighty power and righteous adminiſtrations in this world, towards the children of men; which was the point that *Elihu* had laboured in all along, and undertaken to demonſtrate.

In the ſecond part of this Chapter, *Elihu* (upon the whole matter) gives *Job* ſerious counſel and admonition, wherein,

Firſt, He ſtirs him up to conſider theſe wonderful works of God, at the 14. Verſe.

Secondly, He aſſerts and urgeth the weakneſs and inability of *Job* (or indeed of any man) to underſtand them fully; this he doth,

Firſt, In general, at the beginning of the 15. Verſe, *Doſt thou know when God diſpoſed them?* &c.

Secondly, More particularly, in their ſeveral kinds.

Firſt, *Of the Rainbow*, at the latter end of that 15. Verſe, *and cauſed the light of his Clouds to ſhine.*

Secondly, Of the Clouds and their various motions, at the 16 Verſe.

Thirdly, Of the heat according to the wind, Verſe 17.

Fourthly, Of the Heaven or Skie, Verſe 18.

All which were ſuch as he could not give a clear account of, and therefore at the 19. Verſe, *Elihu* bids *Job* do it if he could, as for himſelf he durſt not venture upon it, Verſe 20. nor can any (ſaith he, Verſe 21, 22.) ſee far into theſe natural things, or into the nature of theſe things. Theſe are the ſpecial points of his admonition to *Job*; and from theſe he paſſeth to the

Third Part, or Concluſion of the Chapter, and of his whole diſcourſe with *Job*; wherein,

Firſt, He makes a recapitulation of, or ſums up all that he had ſaid of the unſearchableneſs of God in his works; this he doth in the former part of the 23. Verſe.

Secondly, He ſets down poſitively what God is, in a threefold Excellency.

First, Of Power.

Secondly, Of Judgment.

Thirdly, Of plentiful Juſtice, at the middle of the 23d Verſe.

Thirdly, He tells us what God will not do, at the end of the 23. Verſe, *He will not afflict*; and from all, makes two inferences at the 24. Verſe.

Firſt, That *therefore men ought to honour and to fear him.*

Secondly, That therefore God is not in the reverence nor fear of any man, in the cloſe of that 24. Verſe; *He reſpecteth not any that are wiſe of heart.*

Thus I have given a proſpect of the whole Chapter. Now to particulars, beginning with thoſe two Verſes by which *Elihu* leads in his diſcourſe of thoſe wonderful works of God.

Firſt, By ſhewing how himſelf was affected with them.

Secondly, By calling upon others to be affected as himſelf was.

לזאת *Propter hoc.*

Verſ. 1. At this alſo my heart trembled.

At this, that is, by reaſon of this, or for this cauſe, or becauſe of this; ſo the word is rendred (*Gen.* 2. 23.) *She* (ſaid *Adam* of his wife, or *Second-ſelf*) *ſhall be called woman, becauſe ſhe was taken out of man.* So here, at this, or for this cauſe, *my heart trembleth.* It may here be queſtioned, what it was at which the heart of *Elihu* trembled? I ſhall give a double anſwer to that querie.

Firſt, Some conceive that while *Elihu* was ſpeaking about, or about to ſpeak further of that marvelous work of God, *the Thunder*, God, to confirm what he had ſaid, or ſhould ſay, at that very inſtant cauſed it to thunder, that ſo *Job* might be in a more humble reverential frame, and ſo the better prepared to receive what *Elihu* had further to ſay unto him. That there was a ſtorm at or about that that time, may appear from the firſt Verſe of the 38. Chapter; *then the Lord anſwered Job out of the whirlwind, and ſaid*; and we find that God hath often giving great diſcoveries of himſelf in or by Thunder and Lightning. In Thunder and Lightning the Law was delivered to *Moſes* on mount *Sinai* (*Exod.* 19. 6.) And to affect the people of *Iſrael*, when they had provoked God by their peremptory and diſcontented way of asking a King, *Samuel* coming to deal with them about it (1 *Sam.* 12. 16, 17, 18.) ſaid, *Stand and ſee this great thing, which the Lord will do before your eyes. Is it not wheat-harveſt to day? I will call unto the Lord, and he ſhall ſend Thunder and Rain, that ye may perceive and ſee that your wickedneſs is great. And the Lord ſent Thunder and Rain that day*, even while *Samuel* was ſpeaking, for their conviction and humiliation, as the next words ſhew, *and all the people greatly feared the Lord and Samuel.* Thus poſſibly while *Elihu* was about to ſpeak of Thunder, for the humbling of *Job* God commanded it to Thunder for his deeper humiliation: and if ſo, the cauſe why *Elihu* trembled is apparent enough; The terrible Thunder-claps which then rent the Clouds and even ſhook the earth, might well cauſe him to tremble.

Secondly, We may underſtand theſe words (*at this my heart trembleth*) with reference to the whole matter which *Elihu* had before him; what he had begun to ſpeak, and was further to ſpeak of Gods dreadful power, might ſhake his heart with aſtoniſhment. The due apprehenſions of the greatneſs of God, may ſoon ſtrike man into a fit of trembling; it did *Job*, as himſelf confeſſed at the 21. Chapter of this Book (Verſ. 5, 6.) *Mark ye, and be aſtoniſhed, and lay your hand upon your mouth; for when I remember, I am afraid, and trembling takes hold of my fleſh*: As if he had ſaid, while I duly conſider the great things that I have ſpoken, and thoſe greater things (if greater may be) that I am about to ſpeak, I cannot but tremble, and ſtand as one filled with aſtoniſhment. How was the Apoſtle *Paul* amazed at that moſt myſterious diſpenſation of God in caſting off his ancient people the *Jews*, the ſeed of *Abraham* his friend, for ſo long a time! (*Rom.* 11. 33.) *O the Depth!* &c. *At this my heart trembleth*, that is, I am heartily afraid.

Quoties mihi divinæ majeſtatis abyſſus in mentem venerit, expaveſcit cor meum, &c. Brent.

חרד *Motus, commotus fuit corpore aut anima, ex cura aut motu mali.* Ἐταράχθη. Sept.

The *heart* is here put for the whole inner man, or for all the powers of the ſoul; and the word rendered to *tremble*, notes a diſturbance of the whole man, both of ſoul and body. The Septuagint render it by the ſame Greek word uſed (*Mat.* 2. 3.) where (upon the wiſe mens coming from the Eaſt, to inquire concerning the King of the *Jews*) it is ſaid, *When Herod heard this, he was troubled, and all Jeruſalem with him.* That news of a new King put them into a grievous fright, they knew not what to make of it, nor which way to turn themſelves, in ſuch a turn of affairs, in ſuch a new world as that new-born King might make. This word is elſe-where in Scripture uſed to note the ſuddeneſt ſurprize and the ſtrongeſt poſſeſſion of fear. Thus when *Iſaac*, through the ſubtilty of *Rebekah*, had given the bleſſing to *Jacob* which he intended for *Eſau*, 'tis ſaid, that upon the appearance of his miſtake, *he trembled exceedingly* (*Gen.* 27. 33.) Doubtleſs it did wonderfully aſtoniſh the good old man, to think, that God ſhould carry him beyond and beſide his own purpoſe, to bleſs the younger brother inſtead of the elder. This ſtrange diſappointment by the over-ruling providence of God, put him to a ſtand, and troubled his thoughts more than a little; eſpecially, becauſe he was now taught, that by his carnal affections to *Eſau*, he was running quite croſs to the mind of God, revealed (Chap. 25. 23.) Read the ſame force of the word, (*Exod.* 19. 16.) to which the Apoſtle referring, ſaith (*Heb.* 12. 21.) *So terrible was the ſight, that Moſes ſaid. I exceedingly fear and quake.* Read alſo the ſame importance of the word 1 *Sam.* 4. 13. Chap. 14. 15. Such was the condition of *Elihu*, he was deeply affected, trembling took hold of him. The Spirits run to the heart in a time of fear, or upon a ſudden fright, as Citizens to the Caſtle in a day of danger; and then the outward members (being deſerted by the ſpirits) grow cold and tremble. There is a natural infirmity called, *The palpitation or trembling of the heart*; But this of *Elihu* was ſupernatural, at leaſt, ſome-what more then natural, as ariſing either from the conſideration of what God had done, or of what himſelf was about to ſpeak; and not only did his heart tremble, *but*

Cordis palpitatio & totius animæ concurſus ad cor in pavoribus evidens eſt. Galen.

Was moved out of its place.

Ἀπεῤῥύη, *Effluxit.* Sept. *Evulſum eſt.* Auguſt. *Emotum eſt.* Hieron. *Salit ſeu ſubſilit.* Tharg. *His verbis exceſſum quem Græci* Ἔκστασιν *vocant, puto denotari, quæ (ut affectus cauſam) admirationem cum pavore ſubſequi ſolet.* Bold.

—Et humanas motura tonitrua mentes. Ovid. 1. Met.

Which is added to ſet forth the exceeding greatneſs of that fear which ſeized upon him. The Text ſpeaks as if his heart *were indeed removed* or taken out of his body. It is uſual in Scripture to affirm that as done which is like to be done. The ſhip is ſaid to be broken (*John* 1. 4.) and the net (Luke 5. 6.) becauſe both were in eminent danger of breaking. We ſay of a man in great fear, his heart is ready to leap out of or out at his mouth. One of the Ancients renders here, *my heart is pluckt out*; the Septuagint, *It floweth out*; the *Chaldee* paraphraſe, takes up the former expreſſion; *my heart leaps or jumps*, which as it doth ſometimes for joy, ſo often for fear, or at the unexpected appearance of danger. Some conceive by this moving of his heart out of his place, that *Elihu* was in a kind of extaſie, that he was, as it were, carried out of himſelf, upon the hearing of that dreadful voice of God, the Thunder; taking it ſo,

Note, *Thunder is a terrible thing*;

It hath made and may make the ſtouteſt heart to tremble. One of Chriſts Apoſtles was called *Lebbeus* (*Mat.* 10. 3.) as much as to ſay the *hearty-man*, or *all-heart*; Now he that is *Lebbeus* a man of the greateſt courage, the moſt hearty man, may be put to a tremble at this, when he hears it Thunder. Heathens have ſpoken much of this, and by a a peculiar word have called thoſe who are much amazed *men Thunderſtruck*, men being ſo much amazed at the ſound of Thunder. The *Roman* Hiſtorian reports of that great Emperour, who commanded all the world, and made the nations to tremble, that yet he himſelf trembled *at this.* *Auguſtus Cæſar*, was ſo afraid of Thunder, that whenever he travelled abroad, he cauſed the skin of a Sea-Calf to be carried about with him, becauſe it was in their ſuperſtition believed to be an Amulet or preſervative againſt any hurt by Thunder. And the ſame Author tells us of another of that rank, a heathen *Roman* Emperour, that was ſo afraid of Thunder, that he would hide his head when he heard it, and ſometimes ran under a bed for ſhelter. I ſhall have further occaſion to ſpeak of the terribleneſs of

Hos Latinus, Attonitos vocat. Attonitus eſt, cui caſus vicini fulminis & ſonitus tonitruum dant ſtuporem. Serv. in tertium Æneid.

Tonitrus dici videtur à terrendo, quod conterreat hominem. Aliqui, à tono & ruendo, quia magno cum ſonitu fiat & irruat.

Suetonius de Auguſto & Caligula.

Thunder, at the 4. and 5. Verſes; I touch it here, becauſe, according to our interpretation, this was it at which the heart of *Elihu trembled*

Secondly. Taking the words more generally, as this trembling might ariſe from the conſideration of any other of the wonderful works of God,

Note, *The great appearances of God in his power may and ſhould affect us even with fear and trembling.*

The heart of man may well move out of his place when he conſiders how dreadful God is in his place, and what wonders he both doth and can do. *David* caſting his eye up to the heavens and the hoſt of them (*Pſal.* 8.) concludes with admiration (verſ. 8.) *O Lord our God, how excellent is thy Name in all the world*! they who have but little knowledge of the works of God, cannot be much affected with them; they who know them deeply cannot but be deeply affected with them. Fools and ignorant perſons ſlight or lightly paſs by any thing that God doth or ſpeaks; but they who are wiſe hearted will lay both his Word and Works to heart, their hearts will tremble and be moved out of their place. Holy King *David* adviſeth the Kings and Judges of the earth to *ſerve the Lord with fear and to rejoyce with trembling* (Pſal. 2. 11.) And the holy Apoſtle *Paul* exhorteth all Chriſtians *to work out their ſalvation with fear and trembling* (Philip. 2. 12.) Now if we are to tremble in our dayly ſervice, how much more under dreadful providences!

For the cloſe of this point, remember there is a four-fold trembling or moving of the heart at the appearances of God, or at the diſcoveries of his Power and Glory in his Word and in his Works.

Firſt, That which is natural. (*Iſa.* 7. 2.) *When it was old the houſe of David, ſaying, Syria is confederate with Ephraim*; his heart (that is, the heart of *Ahaz*) *was moved, and the heart of his people, as the trees of the Wood are moved with the wind.* And when *Felix* heard *Paul reaſoning of righteouſneſs, temperance, and the judgment to come, he trembled:* The Judge trembled at the voice of the priſoner. 'Tis natural for man to fear and tremble at the report of any truth which renders him guilty, or of any trouble which over-maſters his ability to withſtand or avoid it.

Secondly, There is a legal trembling, proceeding from a ſpirit of bondage, or the dreadful apprehenſions of the wrath of God againſt ſin (*Rom.* 8. 15.) This in many is precedaneous to their true converſion, and, as a needle, makes way for the ſpirit of grace and adoption, by which thread they are united and faſtned unto God through faith, and walk in a child-like fear before him all their days.

Thirdly, There is a penal or judiciary fear and trembling: God in judgment ſometimes fills the heart of ſinful man with fear, as the puniſhment of his ſin. They who have no fear of God in their hearts to keep or over-aw them graciouſly from ſinning and living in a courſe of ſin, are delivered up to a ſpirit of fear, which continually purſueth them with dreadful apprehenſions of the wrath of God, and of ſome imminent and impendent evils; ready to fall upon them for their ſins; *A dreadful ſound is in their ears* (as *Eliphaz* told *Job*, *Chap.* 15. 21.) yea, as he ſpeaks there (*verſ.* 24.) *trouble and anguiſh make him afraid*; *they prevail againſt him, as a King ready to battel.* The Lord threaten'd it as one of the four Judgments that he would bring upon his People the Jews, for their diſobedience (*Deut.* 28. 65) *I will give thee a trembling heart*; yea, he threaten'd (*Iſa.* 52. 17.) to give them the *dregs of the Cup of trembling.* *Ezekiel* (*Chap.* 12. 18.) was commanded *to tremble*, as a ſign to the People of that penal fear and trembling which God would ſend upon them. Such was that trembling ſpoken of (*Ezek.* 26. 16.) *Then all the Princes of the Sea ſhall come down from their Thrones, and lay away their Robes, and put off their broidered garments, and ſhall cloath themſelves with tremblings.* Doubtleſs they had little mind to ſuch change of rayment, they had rather have been cloathed with raggs; but the Lord would make them do it. And as thoſe confederate Princes or friends of *Tyrus* ſhould cloath themſelves with trembling, ſo 'tis propheſied (*Zech.* 15. 2.) that *Jeruſalem ſhould be, not only a burthenſome ſtone, but a cup of trembling to all her enemies.* As if the Lord had ſaid, This ſhall be their puniſhment who would make my *Jeruſalem* tremble, I will make them tremble at the remembrance of *Jeruſalem*, or at the ſight of thoſe great things which I will do againſt them, and for *Jeruſalem.*

Fourthly, There is a ſpiritual, a gracious trembling and moving of the heart; that's it which this point calls us to, and to which, in thoſe places lately mentioned, both *David* (*Pſal.* 2. 11.) and the Apoſtle (*Phil.* 2. 12.) call us to. It was well with *Ephraim*, when it was thus with him (*Hoſ.* 13. 1.) *When Ephraim ſpake trembling he was exalted*, that is, when he was in a trembling, humble, ſelf denying frame, he proſpered, and all things ſucceeded well with him. The Lord is never better pleaſed with us, than when he ſees us in theſe tremblings (*Iſa.* 66. 2.) *To him will I look that is poor, and of a contrite ſpirit, and trembleth at my word*; Theſe trembling ones are the men that God hath an eye upon and reſpect unto. The prophet *Habakkuk* ſpake of himſelf (*Chap.* 3. 16.) much like *Elihu* in the Text, *When I heard, my belly trembled, my lips quivered at the voice*, &c. The prophet fore-ſaw a day of trouble, and trembled at it, and this gave him aſſurance that he ſhould not tremble, when he ſaw it, for (ſaid he in the next words) *I trembled in my ſelf that I might reſt in the day of trouble.* The more we tremble in our ſelves, the more reſt we have in God. None have ſo little fear when trouble comes, as they who fear before it comes. *Noah, by faith moved by fear, prepared an Ark to the ſaving of his houſe* (*Heb.* 11. 7.) Thus to fear a flood is the beſt way to eſcape it. 'Tis not courage, but ſtupidity, not to fear and tremble, when we hear of the judgments of God. They who tremble graciouſly ſhall never tremble deſpairingly. *At this my heart trembleth*, &c.

Elihu having thus ſhewed how himſelf was affected, with a gracious fear and trembling, labours to affect others alſo with the ſame fear, in the next verſe.

Verſ. 2. **Hear attentively the noiſe of his voice, and the ſound that goeth out of his mouth.**

We have here a doubling of the word in an unuſual way. That Hebraiſm is ordinarily read, *hearing hear*, but in this place, 'tis *hear in hearing*; which one of the Jewiſh Doctors ſaith, hath a greater emphaſis than the ordinary Hebraiſm *hearing hear*. Others find nothing of ſuch a difference in thoſe differing Hebraiſms: however both call for greateſt heed in hearing what is ſpoken, when 'tis either ſaid *hear in hearing*, or *hearing hear*; we ſhould, as our tranſlation gives the ſenſe fully,

Plus eſt, inquit. Rab. David, *quam audi*endo audite, *nam infinitum poſtponitur; ego nihil aut parum referre puto, hoc an illo modo efferas.* Druſ.

Hear attentively.

There is a two-fold hearing.

Firſt, A hearing with the ear of the body; there needs little ſtirring up of that ear to attend the voice of thunder here ſpoken of; that ſpeaks ſo loud that men cannot (if they would not) but hear, that commands audience and attention, that boreth the ear and makes its own way. The deafeſt adders can hardly ſtop their ears ſo, as not to hear the voyce of that (not muttering charmer, but) but rouzing ſpeaker, Thunder.

Secondly, There is a hearing with the ear of the mind, a ſpiritual hearing, ſuch as the Prophet ſpake of (*Hab.* 3. 2) *O Lord, I have heard thy ſpeech*, &c. that is, I have heard it fully, clearly, underſtandingly, affectionately, obedientially. *Elihu* is here ſtirring up, not ſo much the outward ſence, as the affections, with all the powers of the inner man, to attend and take notice of that which was then to be heard; what was that? *Hear attentively*

Non ſolum auditum excitat, ſed intelligentiam poſtulat.

The noiſe of his voyce.] The word here rendred *noiſe*, ſignifies both an angry noiſe, and an awful fear (*Pſal.* 4. 4.) ſuch a noiſe as cauſes fear, or ſuch a fear as is cauſed by a dreadful noiſe; Hence ſome read the words, *Hear his voyce with trembling*; we ſay, *hear the noiſe of his voyce.*

רגז *Commotio, perturbatio animi præ metu vel præ ira.* *Audite audiendo cum tremore vocem ejus.* Merc.

According to the former interpretation *the noiſe of his voice*] is the noiſe of thunder; that, if any thing, makes a noiſe, a dreadful noiſe, as was toucht before, a noiſe like the roaring of a Lion. *Hear the noiſe*

Of his voyce.] The word *voyce* is taken in general for any ſound, articulate or inarticulate (*Ezek.* 1. 24.) and it may very well ſignifie Thunder, becauſe Thunder in ſeveral Scriptures is called abſolutely, *A voice*, the voice of God, and whole vollies of Thunder are called *voices of God* (*Exod.* 9. 28.) *Pharaoh* entreated *Moſes*, that he would entreat the Lord that there might be *no more mighty*

קול *Omnem ſonitum articulatum aut inarticulatum ſignificat, & in generis quemcumque ſtrepitum.*

Thunderings, we in the margin, *voyces of God*. It is ſaid (*Exod.* 20. 18.) the people ſaw the *Thunderings*, the *Hebrew* is, *voyces*; the meaning is, they heard the Thunderings, as if they had been ſo many voices, or they heard as it were voyces when it Thundered. Thus 'tis ſaid (*Rev.* 4. 5.) *Out of the Throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings, and voyces.* Again (Chap. 10. 3.) *ſeven thunders uttered their voyces. Hear attentively the noiſe of his voyce*, that is, the noiſe of his Thunder ſpeaking aloud and aloft in the air.

And the ſound that goeth out of his mouth.

The word imports ſecret, ſilent meditation, as alſo an audible ſound by voice or words ſpoken; and it may be applied particularly to that more gentle, quiet, or whiſpering ſound of Thunder, of which I ſhall have occaſion to ſpeak further at the 4. Verſe. Some Thunders ſpeak very loud, others give a kind of a gentle ſound. Philoſophy tells us, that this difference in thunder ariſeth from the different conſtitution of the clouds in which it is bred, and through which it breaks. The greater may more properly be expreſſed by the words in the firſt part of this Verſe. *The noiſe of his voyce*, and the leſſer by theſe in the latter part, *The ſound that goeth out of his mouth.*

הגה *Sermo meditatus, proprie meditatio. Sermonem etiam ſignificat ore prolatum.*

Now, Whether it be *the noiſe of his voyce*, or *a whiſpering ſoft ſound*, both or either muſt be attended; *Hear attentively the ſound*

That goeth out of his mouth.] Thunder is ſaid to go out of the mouth of God, as words go out of the mouth of man; and as men, eſpecially the minds of honeſt men, are known by the words which go out of their mouths, ſo God maketh himſelf known to the world, or makes the world both know him and fear him in his power and greatneſs by the noiſe and ſound of thunder.

Elihu chargeth *Job* to attend diligently *this noiſe, this ſound*, and he calleth it the noiſe of Gods voice, the ſound that goeth out of his mouth.

Tonitruorum unum genus eſt cujus ſit grave murmur, aliud genus eſt acre, quod crepitum magis dixerim quam ſonum, aliud fragor eſt ſubitus & vehemens quo edito concidunt homines, &c. Sen. l.6. Nat.q.c.27.

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *God ſpeaks to man in Thunder*, or, *Thunder is the voice of God to man*:

And ſo 'tis often called in Scripture; the 29. *Pſalm*, almoſt throughout, is a proof of it, Thunder being there ſeven times called, *The Voice of the Lord*. The very Heathens had that apprehenſion of Thunder, calling it, the Voice of the Gods. *Jupiter* was ſurnamed, *Thundring Jove*. Here we have *Jehovah*, the true God, the living God, ſending out his Voice in Thunder. That Voice ſpoken of by *David* (*Pſal.* 68. 33.) is uſually interpreted of Thunder. *Lo, he doth ſend out his Voice, and that a mighty Voice.* Thunder may be called the Voice of God in a double reſpect.

Poetæ Jovem tonantem, & tonitruum vocem Jovis vocare ſolent.

Firſt, Becauſe it is a great and mighty voice; and then thoſe words (*of God*) have only the force of an Epithete. As the *Cedars of God, the Rivers of God*, are great Cedars and Rivers, ſo a great Voice is called the Voice of God. God is great, and therefore great things are aſcribed to him.

Quod magnum eſt divinum eſſe dicitur.

Secondly, Thunder is called the Voice of God, becauſe God forms, and puts it forth by his power, as a man doth his voice. God may be ſaid to utter his Voice when he ſends out the Thunder: And as Thunder is put forth by, or ſpeaks from God, ſo it puts forth, or ſpeaks much of God, it ſpeaks and puts forth much of the Power and Majeſty of God. When it thunders, we ſhould think we hear God, the God of glory ſpeaking to us. Some will excuſe themſelves, they are ignorant, they have never been taught to know God: But did ſuch never hear it thunder? that teacheth much of God, ſo much as will make them inexcuſable, who obey him not, who tremble not at his Power and Majeſty. Thunder calls for, and more, it commands, our fear of, our reverence and ſubmiſſion unto God, eſpecially when God, together with this voice, ſends his arrows, bolts or bullets, to do great things againſt his enemies, as he did againſt *Pharaoh* (*Exod.* 9. 23.) and againſt the *Philiſtines* (1 *Sam.* 7. 10.) Yea, the Lord threatned to diſtreſs *Jeruſalem* with *Thunder, and with Earth-quake, and with great noiſe* (*Iſa.* 29. 6.) Now, if Thunder be the Voice of God, or the noiſe of his Voice, then take theſe brief Inferences from it.

Firſt, Let us ſee what a powerful and mighty God we have! When it thunders, every believing ſoul may ſay, *This is the Voice of my Father*; what cannot he do for me that can ſpeak thus?

Secondly, If God hath ſuch a dreadful Voice, if he thunder with his Voice, we ſhould learn to ſecure, arm, and fence our ſelves againſt the dread and danger of Thunder, by the actings of Faith in him, and of Repentance and godly Sorrow for our ſinnings againſt him. Some of the Heathens have given pittiful counſel what to do in time of thunder. *Seneca* was a wiſe man, yet he directs to poor ſhifts, in ſuch extremities; *The remedies* (ſaith he) *againſt Thunder and the Batteries of the heavens, are under-ground houſes, caves or holes of the earth, to hide our ſelves in.* Theſe were the beſt helps he could adviſe his *Roman* Gallants to, when God uttered his mighty voice in Thunder. But Chriſtians know better how to hide themſelves, even in the goodneſs of God, againſt thoſe terrible appearances of his Power.

Adverſus tonitrua & cœlorum minas ſubterraneæ domus, & defoſſi in altum ſpecus remedia ſunt. Sen. lib 6. Natur. quæſt. c. 4.

Thirdly, If God ſpeak with ſuch a Voice as this in the Air, take heed of ſlighting his Voice whenſoever he ſpeaks in the Church, as Atheiſts and Epicures do. He who ſpeaks ſo loud in Thunder can thunder upon us at any time. The Word preached, if not obeyed, will at laſt come upon all thoſe who obey it not, with as great a terror as Thunder.

Fourthly, Let us not be amazed and frighted at Thunder as Heathens or Unbelievers.

Fifthly, Let us not think lightly of it, as if it either came by chance, or meerly from natural cauſes.

Sixthly, Let us fear the God of Thunder, not fear Thunder as a God.

Some have ſuperſtitiouſly thought Thunder was a God, and adored it: ſo 'tis reported of the *Lithuanians* anciently, and poſſibly ſome of them do ſo to this day.

Lithuani fulmen deum eſſe putabant, & propterea illud adorabant. Cromerus, l. 15. Hiſt. Pol.

Secondly, In that *Elihu* calls ſo earneſtly for attention to this voice, *Hear attentively the noiſe of his voice*,

Learn; *Thoſe things which are moſt eaſie to be heard, poſſibly may not all be underſtood.*

Who doth not hear when it thunders? but how few are there who attend or underſtand the Thunder, or hear Thunder attentively? God ſpeaks to us, not only with a ſtill voice, few hearing or attending him, but though he thunders few attend him; yea, thoſe works of providence which ſpeak louder than Thunder, and ſhine clearer than the Lightning, yet are neither heard nor ſeen. As *When his hand is lifted up ſome will not ſee* (*Iſa.* 26. 11.) So when his Voice is lifted up, when 'tis lifted up, not only like a Trumpet, but like Thunder, when he ſpeaks moſt audibly, yea moſt terribly, ſome will not hear; and he is not heard by many, much leſs diligently attended to, how loudly, how terribly ſoever he ſpeaketh. The Lord often thunders by the voice of his Word; what are his terrible threats but loud thunder-claps? yet few hear, or though they hear, yet they attend not. Not to hear the voice of God in his Word, is as if you did not attend to the voice of Thunder. Every word of God, though ſpoken with a ſtill voice, hath a greater force in it than Thunder from the Clouds. As the terrible works of God are ſignified by Thunder (*Rev.* 10. 3, 4.) So the terrible words of God, his threatning words againſt impenitent ſinners, are reſembled to Thunder. And therefore ſuch as the Lord fitted among his own Apoſtles for that diſpenſation, are called in Scripture *Sons of Thunder* (*Mark* 3. 17.) And they who diſpence the Word with a ſtrong voice and fiery zeal, are truly ſo called to this day, and may be ſaid both to *Thunder in their Exhortation, and to Lighten in their Converſation.* And indeed the Word of God truly and faithfully diſpenſed by any is like Thunder. For,

Firſt, As Thunder, ſo the Word ſpoken is the Voice of God, and a more excellent and diſtinct Voice than Thunder; that only ſhewing in general that God is, or that he is great and powerful; this ſhewing us diſtinctly, who and what God is, and what he requireth of us.

Secondly, Thunder throws down and diſſipates high things; So doth the Word of God (2 *Cor.* 10. 5.)

Thirdly, Thunder is irreſiſtable by any power of man, it will make its way through all oppoſition; ſo is and doth the Word of God.

Fourthly, Thunder pierceth very ſubtilly, it reacheth the bones quite through the fleſh; the Word of God doth more, it *divideth ſoul and ſpirit, and the joynts and marrow, and is a diſcerner of the thoughts, and intents of the heart* (Heb. 4 12.)

Fifthly, Thunder breaketh the hardeſt things which reſiſt it, but not ſoft things; ſo the Word of God breaks the ſtout, but binds up the contrite ſpirit; it *reſiſts the proud, but giveth grace to the humble* (Jam. 4. 6.)

Now if the Word of God be in all theſe reſpects like Thunder, Let us not only hear, but attend, or as the Text ſaith, *hear attentively the ſound of his voice.*

If any ask, when do we both hear and attend with the inward and outward ear, the Thunder of God, or his voice both in his works and in his word? I anſwer,

Firſt, When we are ſtirred up to high and holy thoughts of God. We are never rightly affected with the Word of, till our hearts are wrought up to, and deeply, at leaſt truly, affected with the God of the Word.

Secondly, When our hearts are raiſed up in thankfulneſs for any diſcoveries of God in his goodneſs and mercy to us, who can ſo eaſily deſtroy us by his power. He that trembles at this voice of God, and hath no ſenſe nor taſt of his goodneſs, nor is moved to praiſe and ſerve him, trembles only like a brute beaſt.

Thirdly, When we learn to depend and hang upon him for all, as he that can do all things graciouſly for us, as well as ſpeak ſo terribly to us; then *we hear diligently the noiſe of his voice, and the ſound that goeth out of his mouth.*

For the cloſe of this matter I ſhall only add; That though we ought to be affected with the voice of God in his Word, as with his voice in Thunder, yet let us not ſtay in that, which notes chiefly, if not only, that dread of God which the word leaves upon our ſpirits; but let us look after and labour for that effect of the Word, which like the beams and light of the Sun, may warm our hearts with joy, and leave ſtrongeſt impreſſions of the kindneſs and favour of God upon them. Mr. *Forbes*, opening that Scripture (*Rev.* 14. 2.) where St. *John* ſaith, *He heard a voice from heaven,* and that of three ſorts.

Firſt, *He heard a voice, as the voice of many Waters.*

Secondly, As the *voice of a great Thunder.*

Thirdly, He heard *the voice of many harpers harping with their harps.* Upon conſideration of this threefold voice, which St. *John* heard, the fore-named worthy Author, takes up a meditation to this purpoſe. The word of God (ſaith he) hath three degrees of operation in the hearts of men.

Firſt, It comes into mens ears, *as the ſound of many waters*, which is a kind of confuſed noiſe and commonly bringeth neither terror nor joy, but a wondering acknowledgment of a ſtrange force, and more than human power; as we read of thoſe (*Mark* 1.) who having heard the word of Chriſt *were aſtoniſhed at his doctrine* (v. 22.) and were all amazed (v. 27.) *inſomuch that they queſtioned among themſelves, what thing is this? what new doctrin is this?* But knew not what to make of it.

The ſecond degree is, that the Word of God cometh to the ear of man like Thunder, which cauſeth not only wonder, but greater aſtoniſhment and amazement. Both theſe may be in a wicked prophane perſon, and are often found upon common profeſſors.

But there is a third degree or effect of the Word operation, which (ſtrictly taken) is proper and peculiar to the Elect, and that is, when the Word heard is *as the voice of harpers harping with their harps*; that is, when the Word doth not only affect us with admiration, or ſtrike the heart with aſtoniſhment and terror, like *the ſound of many waters*, and *the voice of Thunder*; but alſo filleth it with ſweet peace, and joy in the Holy Ghoſt, when the Word is like melodious muſick to the ſoul, raviſhing us with divine delights, and raiſing us up to a heavenly life, while we are here ſojourning on this earth.

VERS. 3, 4, 5.

He directeth it under the whole heaven, and his Lightening unto the ends of the earth.

After it a voice roareth: he thundereth with the voice of his excellency, and he will not ſtay them when his voice is heard.

God thundereth marvellouſly with his voice: great things doth he, which we cannot comprehend.

ELihu having ſhewed in the two former Verſes, how much himſelf was affected with what God then did, or with what himſelf was about to ſay concerning the doings of God; having alſo called upon others for due attention, and laboured to make the ſame impreſſion upon their ſpirits that he found upon his own; he proceeds to ſpeak to the ſpecial matter.

Firſt, To the works of God in thoſe terrible fiery Meteors, Thunder, and Lightning, which he doth in the three Verſes now under diſcuſſion; and then goeth on to ſpeak of other wonderful works of the wonder-working God, in the following part of this Chapter, as was before ſhewed in laying open the whole.

Verſ. 3. **He directeth it under the whole heaven.**

This verſe holds forth the divine guidance of thoſe things which ſeem moſt remote from any guidance; *He directeth it under the whole heaven.* Here we may conſider,

Firſt, In whoſe hand this guiding power is; *He*, that is, *God directeth it.*

Secondly, how far he guideth, or the extent of his guiding power; 'tis not limited, but univerſal, far and near, even *under the heaven, and to the ends of the earth.*

There is ſome variety, as of reading, ſo of interpretation, about this verſe, ariſing from the various ſignifications of that word which we render *directeth*; there is a threefold ſence given of it.

Firſt, As taken from a root which ſignifieth to *preſs or ſqueeze*, and ſo tis applied to the preſſing of grapes, which cauſeth the juice or liquor of them to flow out: And upon that conſideration the ſeventh month of the year, our *September*, hath its name among the Jews from this word; becauſe then the Vintage being ready, the ripe Grapes are gathered and preſt into Wine. From this notion of the word, ſome render the Text thus, *he preſſeth or diſſolveth it under the whole heaven*; that is, God preſſeth the Cloud as a bunch of Grapes is preſſed (theſe Interpreters make that the antecedent to *it*, *he preſſeth it*, that is, the Cloud) and ſo cauſeth it to rain. 'Tis God who preſſeth and (as I may ſay) ſqueezeth the Clouds by his power, and then ſhowers fall down and diſtill upon the earth *under the whole Heaven.* That's a truth, and ſome where elſe ſpoken of in this book, where we read of Gods melting or preſſing the Clouds as we do a bunch of Grapes or a ſpung, ſo cauſing them to give forth rain.

Aliqui à Rabinica שרה *quod eſt reſolvere, humectare, exprimere. Hinc & September ab illis* תשר *Tiſhri dictus, quaſi expreſſorius, quod eo menſe fiat Vindemia.* Merc.

Secondly, Others derive the word from a root that ſignifieth to *behold attentively*, to behold and conſider: Thus the Latine tranſlator renders it, *he conſidereth under the whole heaven*; that is (according to this interpretation) there is a Providence of God, a wiſe and an unerring Providence of God at work in all places, he conſiders and takes notice of all things under heaven, the leaſt motion of the Creature falls under his inſpection, *He beholdeth, or conſidereth under the whole heavens*; that's a truth alſo; yet, I conceive (with others) the Grammar of the Text will not well comply with this reading: Therefore

Alii à שור *intueri, reſpicere, conſiderare, quaſi Deus omnia ſub cœlo conſideret. Sed nec Grammatica convenit (tum enim* שורחו *dicendum fuerat) nec ſenſus admodum, propter affixum.* Merc.

Thirdly, I conclude our own tranſlation moſt ſuitable both to the Original Text, and to the ſcope of this whole Chapter. Now, according to our rendring, the word comes from a root which ſignifieth *to ſet a thing right* or ſtrait, and from that a perſon who is right, a man of a right ſpirit, who ſquares and orders his actions by a right rule, and to a right end, is expreſſed (*Chap.* 1. 1.) where *Jobs* character is given by this word, *A man perfect and right*, we ſay, upright, that is, a man that hath right aims, and walks by a right rule. *Moſes* (*Deut.* 32. 15.) calls the people of God (collectively as one man) *Jeſhurun*, that is, a people that are or ſhould be right and upright with God. Thus here, *he directeth it*, that is, God doth, as it were, by a ſtrait line,

Subter omnes cœlos ipſe conſiderat. Vulg.

ישרהו *à radice* ישר *quod eſt dirigere, rectificare.*

level or take his aim, when he diſchargeth the Thunder in the Cloud: As he that diſchargeth his gun, ſmall or great, or ſhoots an arrow, levels and directs it at a mark, ſo *the Lord directeth it*. What is this *it*? 'Tis plain, by what followeth in the latter part of the verſe, where the Lightning is expreſly mentioned, that he means the Thunder or the Thunder-bolt, for the Clouds are, in that caſe, charged with bolts: we have had many dreadful inſtances, as well in ancient Hiſtories, as in our own time, of Thunder-bolts like Bullets ſhot from the Clouds. As if *Elihu* had ſaid, whither-ſoever the Thunder-bolt goeth, to what quarter of the world ſoever, 'tis deſigned, it receives commiſſion and direction from God, what to do, and where to fall, whom it ſhall ſmite, or what mark it ſhall hit; *He that directeth it under the whole heaven,*

And his Lightning to the ends of the earth.

Naturaliſts define or deſcribe Lightning thus; *'Tis a bright ſhining, cauſed by exhalations fired in and violently breaking out of the Clouds.* The Hebrew is, *his light*. The Sun is the fountain of Light, and that is eminently Gods Light; but the Light here ſpoken of, is not the ordinary Light ſhining in the Air, by the riſing of the Sun; this Light is Lightning, which is a ſudden flaſhing or breaking forth of light from the Clouds; as when a gun is fired or diſcharged, a light flaſheth from it; ſuch is that which Authors of all ſorts call *Lightning*, and here the Scripture calls *his Lightning*. At the 3. Verſe the Thunder was called *his Voice*, the Voice of God; and in this, the Lightning is called *his Lightning*; *Elihu* appropriates it unto God himſelf, *his Lightning*. This Lightning hath more than light in it, it hath heat and fire in it; though we do not always feel it, yet many have, the effects of heat and fire appearing ſadly upon them. And this is ſuch a fire as water cannot quench; and therefore we often read in Scripture, of Lightning joyned with the Rain (*Pſal.* 135. 7. *Jer.* 10. 13. *Jer.* 51.16.) which may be remark't as one of the wonders of it. There is a ſecond, that the Lightning is ſaid to fall from heaven. When the diſciples brought a report back to Chriſt what great things they had done, what conqueſts they had got over evil ſpirits, Chriſt anſwered (*Luke* 10. 18.) *I ſaw Satan like Lightning fall from heaven.* Lightning falls from heaven; for though Lightning of its own nature (being fiery) ſhould aſcend, yet it deſcends through the power of God. Naturaliſts obſerve it, as a wonder, that the Lightning ſhould deſcend: *Seneca* demonſtrates, *it could not be, unleſs there were a divine power in it, that the Lightning ſhould come down from heaven*; and as *Elihu* ſaid before, *he directeth it, or the Thunder, under the whole heaven*; ſo we are here to take up that word again, and ſay, *He directeth his Lightning*

Fulgur ſeu coruſcatio eſt flammæ micatio ab exhalationibus accenſis, & è nubibus erumpentibus exorta. Ariſt. 2. Meteor. cap. 9.

Ignis ſua natura in verticem ſurgit; & ſi nihil illi prohibeat, aſcendet; fulmen autem cadit eadem neceſſitate, qua excutitur; nihil itaque dubii relinquitur, quin divina illi virtus inſit. Seneca.

To the ends of the earth.

Here is the act, and the extention of the act, *to the ends of the earth*; the Hebrew is *the wings of the earth*, ſo the word is uſed (*Gen.* 1. 21.) *God created great whales*, &c. *and every winged fowl.* The ends of the earth are called *the wings of the earth*, becauſe they are the fartheſt outſtretchings of the earth; as a bird when ſhe flies ſtretcheth out her wings to the utmoſt. They are alſo called, *The corners of the earth* (Ezek. 7. 2.) *Thou ſon of man, thus ſaith the Lord God unto the land of Iſrael: an end, the end is come upon the four corners of the land*; the Hebrew is, *upon the four wings (or ends) of the earth*; as if he had ſaid, an end is come upon the Eaſt and Weſt, North and South. Theſe *four wings*, or extreams of the earth, are the ſame which Chriſt called the *four winds* (*Mat.* 24. 31.) where ſpeaking of the Reſurrection at the laſt Judgment, he ſhews how all that are raiſed ſhall be brought to one place or general Seſſion, *and he ſhall ſend his angels with a great ſound of a trumpet, and they ſhall gather together his Elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other*, that is, from the four ends, corners, ſkirts, or wings of the earth. The utmoſt extremity of a garment or of a land, according to the Hebrew, is called, the wing of it. Now foraſmuch as *Elihu* repreſents God, thus directing both the Thunder and Lightning,

כנפ *Ala, proprie avium eſt.* Ἐπὶ πτερύγων τῆς γῆς. Sept.

Obſerve Firſt, *All the motions of the Creature, even the moſt violent, and, to appearance, contingent motions of the Creature, are under the direction, yea, under the dominion of God.*

Thunder and Lightning go the way which God appointeth and chalketh out to them; they move not of themſelves, they move not whither men or devils would have them, but whither God would have them. The Devils, I grant, have great power in the Air, yet 'tis limited by, and wholly ſubordinate to the will and power of God. As the reaſonable creatures and their motions, that is, the motions of Men and Angels, are under the direction of God, as *Jeremiah* ſpeaks (*Chap.* 10. 23.) *It is not in him that goeth to direct his own ſteps.* The Hebrew uſeth a word there which may be rendred to prepare, to eſtabliſh or to confirm, neither of which are in him that goeth; we render it according to the preſent Text, *it is not in him that goeth to direct his own ſteps*; who directs them then? It is God that directs the ſteps of man. It is not in the power of man to direct his own ſteps, he is not able to do it; and beſides that, he hath not the liberty or priviledge to do it, he may not do it, he ought not to do it; 'tis the duty as well as the ſafety of man to leave the direction of his ways and ſteps to God. 'Tis God that directs the ſteps of man, yea, the *indirect ſteps of man are under the mighty power of God*; the very wandrings of men are under the guidance of God; the motions, yea commotions, the actions, and the moſt diſturbed actions of man are under a moſt certain diſpoſure and diſpoſition of God: *When men do they know not what, God knows and orders what they do.* Now (I ſay) as God directs reaſonable creatures, men or angels, ſo unreaſonable creatures in their motions; the motions of the beaſts of the earth, and the motions of the birds of the air, are all directed by God; yea, the motions of the very inanimate creatures, of thoſe that have no motion in or of themſelves, but whoſe motion is by ſome outward violence and preſſure put upon them, even their motion alſo is directed by the hand of God. Thunder and Lightning are inanimate liveleſs creatures, they have no motion of their own, but by impreſſion and violence, yet God directs their motion as truly, as he doth the motions of thoſe creatures which move by the moſt deliberate actings of their own will, reaſon, and underſtanding. What is there ſo violent in its motion as Thunder? What is there ſo ſwift in its motion as the Lightning? of which Chriſt being about to give his people warning, not to believe thoſe deceivers, who ſay, *Lo here is Chriſt*, &c. ſaith (Mat. 24. 27.) *For as the Lightning cometh out of the Eaſt, and ſhineth even unto the Weſt, ſo ſhall alſo the coming of the Son of man be*; that is, as the Lightning inſtantly paſſeth from one part of the heaven to the other viſibly, ſo ſhall the coming of the Son of man be, a ſudden, ſwift, and viſible coming; Ye ſhall not need to go into corners to ſhew or ſee him, for he ſhall come as the Lightning diſcovering himſelf to all by the brightneſs of his coming. There was ſuch an apprehenſion of the ſwiftneſs of the Lightning among the Ancients, that though the Latine word ſignifying *to Lighten*, is accented long, yet becauſe Lightning is ſo ſwift in motion they were wont to pronounce it ſhort; Lightning being ſo quick and active, they thought it was not ſuitable to draw it out in ſpeaking by a long pronunciation. But though Lightning have ſuch a violent and ſwift motion, yet 'tis under Gods command and direction, and it ſhall make no more haſte than God will. An arrow flies with a very violent and ſwift motion, yet it is God that directeth the arrow, he directs it more than the man that ſhoots it; and when a ſhot is made, as we ſay, at random, God then directs it; as in that notable hiſtory of *Ahab*, when he, againſt the counſel God given him by *Michaiah*, would needs go up to the battel at *Ramoth Gilead* (1 *Kings* 22. 34.) the Text ſaith, *There was a man who drew a bow at a venture*, we put in the Margin, *He drew a bow in his ſimplicity*, he had no ſpecial intention againſt *Ahab*, he did not aim at *Ahab* when he ſhot his arrow, but God carried it to the right mark, to fulfil that which he had determined and ſpoken concerning *Ahab*; yea, he directed it not only to the right man, but to the right place, the joint of his armour. When in battel, arrows, and darts, and bullets are ſent forth, as ſo many thunder-bolts, the Lord directs them and hands them whither they ſhall

Chirſtus non venit clam aut inviſibiliter ut illi volunt, qui jactant ſe habere Chriſtum in deſerto, in urbe in clauſtro, in conditorio, ſed palam, ut fulmen editum per omnia lucet. Coc. *Ad ſignificandam hanc è nubibus ſubitæ lucis eruptionem moverat antiquis media ſyllaba correpta ut dicerent fulgere.* Sen. lib. 2. Nat. quæſt. cap. 56.

go, whom they ſhall hit, and where. God alſo directeth the thunder-bolts of his Word, where and whom they ſhall hit. And (to the point in general) that the Lord hath a guidance over thoſe things that are moſt contingent, we may ſee in that of *Moſes*, when he gave a Law from the Lord about the man that goeth with his Neighbour to cut VVood; *If* (ſaith he) *the head ſlippeth from the helve, and lighteth upon his neighbour that he die, he ſhall flee into one of thoſe cities and live* (Deut. 19. 5.) The reaſon of this Law is expreſſed (*Exod.*21.13.) becauſe in ſuch contingent caſes *God delivers him into his hand*; the man had no intent to hit his Neighbour, but fetching a blow, the head flieth from the helve, and both hits and kills him; and to ſhew that this contingency was ordered by God, the Text ſaith, *God delivered him into his hand*.

Providentia non eſt incerta aut vaga.

And foraſmuch as God hath ſuch a power over the motions of the creature, it may be matter of comfort and incouragement to us, not only with reſpect to Thunder and Lightning, that we ſhould not fear them, as the heathen, who neither know nor fear God; but we may take comfort from hence alſo, with reſpect to the moſt violent and hurried motions that we ſee here below. When we find men acting like Thunder and Lightning, without deliberation, when they are all in paſſions and perturbations, yet let us know, theſe violent motions ſhall not fall any where by chance or hap hazard, nor by their own ſway, but as God appoints and over-rules them; they ſhall either fall quite beſides the mark which men aimed at, and ſo do no hurt to any, or if they do, God orders what hurt they ſhall do. *He directeth it under the whole heaven.* Let us carry this conſideration always with us, and it will be a great ſtay to our minds in all the violent motions of the creature.

Again, from the extent of this divine direction or providence of God, as to theſe things; *He directeth it under the whole heaven, and unto the ends of the earth*, that is, every where.

Note, *The providence of God reacheth to all places.*

His orders go forth into all lands, his dominion is under the whole heavens and unto the ends of the earth (*Pſal.* 65 5.) *He is the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of them that are afar off upon the Sea.* God is not helpful to his people in one place of the earth, and not in another, or helpful to them upon the earth and not upon the Sea, but to the ends of the earth, and upon the broad Sea *he is their confidence*, that is, they may confide and truſt in him whereſoever they are. Hence that expoſtulation in the Prophet (*Jer.*23. 23.) *Am I* (ſaith the Lord) *a God at hand, and not a God afar off?* Some would circumſcribe and limit the Power of God, as if being a God near at hand he could not be a God afar off too, or to thoſe who are ſcattered to the ends of the earth. But while he puts the queſtion, *am I a God at hand and not afar off?* he puts it out of queſtion, that *he is a God afar off as well as at hand.* The *Syrians* ſaid and pleaſed themſelves in their conceit (1 *Kings* 20. 28.) The Lord is God *of the hills, but he is not God of the vallies*; therefore they would change the battel, as if he could order things here, and not there; but all ſhall find and feel him (as they did) a God both of the hills and of the vallies, a God both of the Land and of the Sea, a God both at hand, and afar off. It is ſaid of the Empire of the Sun (*Pſal.*19. 6.) *his going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it, and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof:* much more may I ſay of the Empire of God, his going forth is from one end of the earth to the other, and there is nothing hid from his wiſdom and government. One of the Ancients gives his ſentence clearly with this truth; *He* (ſaith he) *that ruleth in the higheſt heavens doth not forſake the ends of the earth, he is every where preſent, and every where alike preſent; though the places are unlike, yet the preſence of the Lord is alike when need requires it.* That's further matter of comfort, that under the whole heaven and unto the ends of the earth we may find the Lord ready for us, and diſpoſing all things, not only for good, but for the beſt. *He directeth it*, &c.

Qui ſumma regit extrema non deſerit, & qui utique præſens & æqualis eſt, etiam in diſſimilibus, ſibi ipſi diſſimilis non eſt. Gregor.

Verſ. 4. **After it a voice roareth**, or, **after it he roareth with a voice.**

There is another reading of theſe words, ſome give it thus: *after him a voice roareth*, That is, after his command; God willing and giving forth an order for it, *a voice roareth*, that is, at his command or word the voice roareth, or followeth. As if the ſcope of *Elihu* in this Text, were to ſhew, that neither Thunder nor Lightning ſtir a foot or hairs breadth, till they have a word from God, as indeed they do not. For, though Thunder and Lightning may be called God's *Vſhers or Heralds* that go before him and proclaim his approach (*Pſal.* 18. 12, 13, 14.) yet they follow and come after him; They go before him as to action, yet they come after him as to commiſſion, they go not till he ſaith go, or hath given them commiſſion to go. That's a profitable reading of the words.

קול Pro בקול *Ellipſis præpoſitionis* ב *Poſt eum.* Vulg. *Pro volente ac jubente illo: ut poſt Deum ſit poſt ille præceperit.* Druſ. *Anteambulones & prænuncii ſupremi regis advenrantis.*

Our tranſlation ſaith, *after it a voice roareth*, that is, after the Lightning, or as ſoon as it hath Lightned a voice roareth. Our experience teacheth us that Thunder followeth the Lightning; which we are not to underſtand according to the nature of the thing, for ſo Thunder and Lightning are, as it were, born and brought forth together; there is no difference between them at all in time, but there is a difference as to order, at leaſt as to order in our apprehenſion; and ſo the one may be ſaid to come after the other, the Thunder after the Lightning; as when a gun, leſſer or greater, is diſcharged, if you are at a diſtance you may ſee the fire a conſiderable time before you hear the report, and poſſibly the bullet hits the mark before the ſound hits to the ear, though the diſcharge be made in a moment; which ſome ſay is becauſe the eye is a quicker ſenſe than the ear, but rather, becauſe light doth in a moment ſtrike through the air, but the ſound comes by certain circuits, and fetcheth a longer compaſs before it comes at the ear, as hath been toucht lately before, as alſo at the 26. Verſe of the 28. Chapter. And beſides this, or any other reaſon of the thing in nature, conſtant experience teacheth us that we ſee the light firſt and then hear the voice; and therefore *Elihu* ſpeaks here very congruouſly to both, *After it a voice roareth.* And as the reaſon of this in nature (as was ſhewed) is that more ſpeedy paſſage of the light through the air than of the ſound, ſo a moral reaſon may be given of it, which take in this obſervation:

Segnius irritant animos demiſſa per aurem quam quæ ſunt oculis ſubjecta fidelibus. Horat.

God minds or warns us of his Judgments before he ſends them.

When you ſee Lightning you ſay there will be Thunder by and by; as natural Lightning gives warning of Thunder, ſo God gives warning from his Word, and Providences, when a Thunder-clap of judgment, in any kind, is coming. God never ſends a judgment, but we hear of it before we feel it; God ſpeaks before he ſtrikes (*Matth.*24.) *Behold, I have told you before.* Lightning tells us Thunder is at hand. God doth not uſe to ſtrike his people with a Thunder-bolt, before he hath given them notice by a flaſh of Lightning; indeed judgments always ſurprize the wicked; how much Lightning ſoever hath been daſhed in their eyes, yet the Thunder comes unawares. The day of the Lord will at leaſt come as a ſnare upon all carnal men, though they have had frequent calls to prepare for it. God in the courſe of nature teacheth us the courſe of his providence, Lightning gives warning that Thunder is coming, and happy are they who take warning by his Lightning, and ſo eſcape the ſtroke of his Thunder: *After it a voice*

Fulguratio oſtendit ignem, fulminatio emitit, illa (ut ita dicam) comminatio eſt, & conatio ſine ictu, iſta jaculatio cum ictu. Sen. lib. 2. Nat. Quæſt. cap. 12.

Roareth.] It hath been already ſhewed that Thunder is the voice of God; here *Elihu* tells us what kind of voice it is, *it roareth.* The word ſignifieth the roaring of a lion, 'tis alſo applyed to the roaring of the Sea, that's a dreadful roaring. Naturaliſts tell us there are ſeveral ſorts of Thunder; every Thunder is not a roaring Thunder, they give five or ſix gradual denominations of Thunder.

שאג *Rugivit, proprium leonis.*

First, There is a *ſhreeking or craſhing* Thunder. — 1. *Stridens.*

Secondly, There is a *hiſſing* Thunder, as when red hot iron is put into water. — 2. *Sibilans.*

Thirdly, There is a *cracking Thunder*, as when a bladder is broken, or a cheſnut in the fire. — 3. *Crepans.*

Fourthly, There is *a rumbling* Thunder. We ſometimes hear only a ruſhing in the clouds, no crack of Thunder breaking out. — 4. *Tumultuans.*

Fifthly,

ſ Rugiens, &c. Garcæus Meteorolog.

Fifthly, There is *a roaring* Thunder, as this Text ſpeaks, *a voice roareth.*

Sixthly, There is *a whiſpering* **Thunder**, I may call it a kind of ſilent or ſtill-voiced **Thunder**; poſſibly that was ſuch ſpoken of (1 *Kings* 19. 12.) *After the fire, a ſtill ſmall voice.* As alſo that when Jeſus Chriſt was baptized by *John* in *Jordan* (*Matth.* 3. 17.) *And lo, a voice from heaven, ſaying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleaſed*; 'Tis conceived, that voice came in a ſtill whiſpering Thunder. Such doubtleſs was that Thunder (*John* 12. 28, 29.) when Chriſt prayed, *Father, glorifie thy Name*; *then came there a voice from heaven, ſaying, I have both glorified it, and will glorifie it again.* At the hearing of this voice, *the people that ſtood by, ſaid that it thundred, others ſaid, that an Angel ſpake to him.* This voice was an articulate ſound coming with the Thunder; and the Hebrew word which we commonly tranſlate *voices*, ſignifieth thunder. The Jewiſh Writers tell us that (*Bath col*) *the daughter of voice* (which they reckon the only way of divine revelation, leſt them after the *Babyloniſh* Captivity) was the will of God made known to them immediately from heaven by this ſort of Thunder. *Thunders and voices* are often joyned in the Book of the *Revelations* (*Chap.* 4. 5. *Chap.* 8. 5.) implying, the revelation of thoſe prophetick wonders, was made by Voices accompanied with Thunder. And thus thoſe two Texts which ſeem contradictory may be reconciled, (*Act.* 9. 7.) it is ſaid, *They who journied with Paul, ſtood ſpeechleſs hearing a voice.* But (*Act.* 22. 9.) *Paul* ſaith, *They ſaw indeed the light and were afraid, but they heard not the voice of him that ſpake to me.* The voice which they heard in the 9. Chapter was the voice of Thunder, and the voice which they did not hear the 22. was the diſtinct articulate voice of Chriſt, ſaying, *Saul, Saul, Why perſecuteſt thou me?*

From this conſideration of God's gradual ſpeaking to us in the Clouds, we may be led to conſider how gradually he ſpeaks to us in the Miniſtry of his Word; there he ſpeaks ſometimes whiſperingly, gently, he at firſt awakens the ear a little, but at laſt *he roareth with his voice.* If we will not hear, he hath louder and louder voices, which we ſhall hear whether we will or no. At the giving of the Law (*Exod.* 19. 19.) *The voice of the trumpet ſounded long, and waxed louder and louder.* There are different degrees in the loudneſs of the voice when God ſpeaks to his people. We ſhould take warning by the light that ſhineth, we ſhould hear the ſmalleſt voice, the firſt whiſperings of God, and not put him to his roaring voice. God is ſaid *to roar out of Zion* (*Joel* 3. 16.) yea, many times he roareth upon *Zion*, becauſe of the diſobedience and negligence of the Citizens of *Zion*. *After it a voice roareth*, the words that follow ſpeak the ſame thing,

He thundereth with the voice of his excellency.

רעם *Tonuit, intonuit, commotus fuit præ indignatione. Tonitru eſt fragor editus ex plaga compactorum ignium è nube erumpentium.* Plin. *Tonitru eſt horrendus ſonus in nube ſpiſſa, qui excitatur ab exhalatione calida & ſicca, concluſa intra nubem, quæ cum fremitu quærens exitum, magna violentia erumpit & undique nubem concutit.* Garcæ.

This is the firſt time that we have the word *Thunder* expreſt in the Text, though the ſenſe of the whole place ſpeaks thunder. The word which ſignifieth Thunder, ſignifieth any great noiſe or dreadful cry (*Ezek.* 27. 35.) (*Pſal.* 96. 11.) it ſignifieth alſo the voice of any one that complaineth or bemoaneth his or her condition, or that is troubled or fretted at the croſneſs of relations: It is ſaid of *Peninnah, ſhe provoked her* (that is, *Hannah*) *ſore* (or, as the Margin reads it, *angred her*) *for to make her fret, becauſe the Lord had ſhut up her womb*: The word is that of the Text, *to make her thunder*, or to cauſe a tumultuation in her ſpirit, like that in the Clouds, when heat and cold contend for the maſteries.

Thunder is ſo unquiet and tumultuous, that any thing which is ſo, may by a figure be called Thunder. The Text ſpeaks of proper Thunder, and if we enquire among Philoſophers about the nature and generation of Thunder, ſome tell us briefly, *Thunder is a craſhing or cracking noiſe made by the ſtroke of encloſed fires breaking through the Clouds.* Or thus, *Thunder is a dreadful ſound in a thick Cloud, cauſed by the hot and dry exhalation ſhut up in the bowels of it, which ſeeking paſſage out, makes its own way with mighty violence.*

But though the matter here treated upon by *Elihu* be Philoſophical, yet I muſt remember that mine is a Divinity, not a Philoſophy Lecture, and therefore it may ſuffice me to touch theſe things, and leave the Reader, who deſires to know more of them, or of other myſteries in Nature, to ſeek his ſatisfaction in thoſe learned Authors who profeſſedly handle this ſubject of Thunder; and ſhall here only take notice that *Elihu* doth not only ſay, *He thundereth*, but *He thundereth*

Meteorolog. ex Ariſtot. lib. 2. Meteor c. 9.

With the voice of his excellency.] That's an explication of *he roareth.* The voice of *his excellency*, is *his high voice.* The word ſignifieth *pride*, becauſe they that are in high places are ſo apt to be proud, or becauſe high-mindedneſs is the ſame with pride. Proud men think themſelves higher than their brethren, as *Saul* was above the people by head and ſhoulders; therefore the ſame word ſignifieth pride and light. The *Lord thundereth with the voice of his highneſs or excellency of his greatneſs.*

גאון *Excellentia, elatio, ſuperbia verbum medium eſt.*

The Septuagint ſaith, *He thundereth with the voice of his reproach*, or *with his reproaching voice.* A man that is angry pours out his diſpleaſure in reproaches upon ſuch as have provoked him. God knows how to Thunder juſt and deſerved reproaches upon provoking ſinners. The Scholiaſts explain that tranſlation of the ſeventy, *with the voice of his reproach*, thus, *with or by a voice full of threatning*; and 'tis a truth, the mouth of God is full of threatnings, and his heart of indignation, againſt preſuming ſinners. We may put all theſe together, yet I conceive our own reading moſt ſuitable; *He thundereth with the voice of his excellency*, like a great Commander in war, of whom God ſpeaks (*Job* 39. 25.) in that moſt high-ſtrained rhetorical deſcription of the ſtrength and courage of the horſe; *He ſmelleth the Battel afar off, the thunder of the Captain, and the Shoutings.* When an Army is engaged in Battel, there is not only a thundering of the Guns, but of the Captains and Commanders, they ſpeak highly, they thunder with a voice of their high courage and excellency; much more doth God in the day of his Battel *thunder with the voice of his excellency.*

Ἐν φωνῇ ὕβρεως αὐτοῦ. *In voce contumeliæ ſuæ.* Sept. *Scholia explicant in voce minarum plena.*

> Hence note, *God works like himſelf, he makes his excellency and his highneſs appear to the children of men in the very works of nature.*

And doth he not often ſo in his works of Providence, whether for the Salvation of his people, or for the Deſtruction of his enemies? I ſhall not ſtay upon this point, having met with matter of the ſame purport more than once before. *He thundereth with the voice of his excellency,*

And he will not ſtay them when his voice is heard.

עקב *Calcaneum tenuit. Aliqui exponunt retardabuntur impersonaliter, vel retardabit aliquis fulmen vel fulgur, cum Deus emittere petit.* Scult. *Neq; differt illa cum audienda eſt vox ejus.* Jun. i. e. *fulgetra tonitruum prænunbia exhibet.* μειώσεις καὶ *differt?* i. e. *præmittit.* Jun.

'Tis queſtion'd, who are meant by *them, He will not ſtay them*; Some underſtand the rain and ſhowers, which uſually follow upon, or after a great thunder; and we commonly call them *thunder ſhowers.* Others underſtand the Lightning and the Thunder; as if he had ſaid, When God's purpoſe is declared, that there ſhall be lightning and thunder, *he will not ſtay them*, or take them by the heel, as the word properly ſignifieth: whence *Jacob* had his name, becauſe when *Eſau* was coming into the world, *Jacob* took him by the heel, as if he would have ſtayed or ſtopped his birth, at leaſt have got into the world before him; and therefore *Eſau* ſaid (*Gen.* 27. 36) *Is he not rightly called Jacob? for he hath ſupplanted me theſe two times.* Which ſome render according to the letter of the Text, *My brother may well be called an Heeler, for he hath heeled me theſe two times.* In this ſenſe the Lord will not ſtay the birth and breaking forth of theſe terrible twins, Thunder and Lightning. Laſtly, learned *Junius* refers *them* to the Lightnings only, rendring, *He doth not defer them when his voice is to be heard*; which he thus expounds, He ſends lightning before, foretelling thunder will follow. But I conceive the former expoſition more clear, which refers this not ſtaying, *or he will not ſtay*, both to thunder and lightning, in conſort or together.

> Hence note, *When once God ſpeaks the word, and is reſolved upon the doing of a thing, there is no ſtopping of him, nor will he ſtay his work.*

He will not take thunder & lightning by the heel, when he hath bid them go. We have a parallel ſenſe to this concerning the thunder and lightning of divine Judgments (*Zeph.* 2. 1, 2.) *Gather your ſelves together, O gather your ſelves together, before the decree bring forth.* As if he had ſaid, If once the decree bring forth, if once God declare that wrath ſhall come, there is no recalling of it, *He will not ſtay it* *when his voice is heard*; for then (*Iſa.* 43. 13.) *The Lord will work, and none ſhall let him*; he will not ſtop it himſelf, and none elſe can. Thunder and lightning ſhall come; whoſoever ſtand in their way muſt down. And as none can lett God by power, ſo none ſhall lett him by prayer, if once he be reſolved, and hath ſent forth his decree; therefore do not provoke the Lord to give out the word, for then your caſe is deſperate. There's no oppoſing the work of God, or God in his working. *He will not ſtay them when his voice is heard.*

Verſ. 5. **God thundreth marvellouſly with his voice; great things doth he that we cannot comprehend.**

Conſider how often this word is repeated, *He roareth with his voice, He thundereth with the voice of his excellency*, and here, *He thundereth marvellouſly.* This may teach us, Firſt, (which hath been noted before) that *the works of God in nature are to be heeded.* Secondly, that *we are very backward to heed them.* Thirdly, *this is ſo often aſcribed to God, leſt we ſhould think that thunder is only a work of nature.*

Tonat mirabilia. Hebr. *Numerus pluralis indicat ingentem admirationem & ſtuporem mortalium ad vocem tonitrui.* Pined.

God thundereth marvellouſly.] The words may be read, *God thundereth marvels*; 'tis in the plural number: We render well, *God thundereth marvellouſly*; but there is a greater Emphaſis, taking it in the plural number, *God thundereth marvels.* Conſider thunder and lightning in a proper, or in a metaphorical ſenſe, there are many marvels or wonders in them. Naturaliſts obſerve many marvels in natural thunder and lightnings; theſe ſometimes melt the ſword without hurt to the ſcabbard; diſſolve the metal, not conſuming the purſe; break the bones, and not the fleſh; theſe ſpoil the Wine without ſtaving or breaking the cask; kill or ſtifle the child in the womb, and not the mother. God thunders marvellouſly in theſe things.

Again, how many marvellous Judgments hath God wrought by thunder! how often hath he deſtroyed the enemies of his people, and the blaſphemers of his great Name, by thunder and lightning from Heaven! *Anaſtaſius* the Emperor, an Eutychian perſecutor of the Orthodox Chriſtians, was ſlain by thunder. *The Hiſtory of the Church* ſpeaks of a Chriſtian-Legion or Brigade of Chriſtians in the Army of *Aurelius* the Emperor, who earneſtly prayed (the whole Army being in a great ſtrait) that God would appear for their help, and the defeating of the enemy; whereupon the Lord ſent rain for their relief, as alſo thunder and lightning, by which the enemy was diſcomfited and deſtroyed: whereupon that *Legion* was called, *The thundering Legion.* When *Julian* the Apoſtate, meerly to deſpite the propheſie of Chriſt (*Mat.* 24.) who had ſaid of the Temple at *Jeruſalem, there ſhould not be left one ſtone upon another*; *Julian*, I ſay, in deſpite of this propheſie, yea, to deſpite it, gave command for the building of the Temple at *Jeruſalem*, and upon his command there was a great quantity of materials brought together for that purpoſe; but the Lord ſeeing the pride of this enemy, ſent a marvellous thunder, with an Earthquake, which not only amazed the workmen, but ſcattered thoſe materials, and put a ſtop to the work.

Now as there are many marvels wrought by natural thunder and lightning, ſo alſo by that which is ſpiritual. Nor will it be unuſeful for us to conſider them upon occaſion of what is ſaid of natural thunder in this Scripture.

God thundereth marvellouſly in the diſpenſation of his Word, or in his dealings with the ſouls of ſinners, to bring them home to himſelf, and to turn them from their ſins. We may (not excluding the proper ſenſe) profitably expound the whole 29. *Pſalm* in this ſpiritual ſenſe; wherein the Lord under the Allegory of a terrible thunder-tempeſt, ſeems to give a prophetical deſcription of his mighty power in propagating the Goſpel to the ends of the earth; which goeth not out as an empty ſound beating the air, but with wonderful efficacy, convincing the world of ſin, and of their need of Chriſt to ſave them from their ſins. And to ſhew that this is the ſcope of the Pſalm, *David* begins it with a ſtrong exhortation, (*verſ.* 1, 2.) *Give unto the Lord, O ye mighty, give ye unto the Lord glory and ſtrength: Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his Name; worſhip the Lord in the beauty of holineſs.* As if *David* had ſaid, *O ye, the mighty Princes and Potentates of the world, who in moſt places and times have contemned God and his holy worſhip; and being your ſelves either irreligious, or engaged in a falſe religion, have uſed your power againſt, and hindered the progreſs of the Goſpel, and the advancement of true religion; I adviſe and admoniſh you to lay down that ſpirit, to embrace the Goſpel, to love the power of godlineſs, to propagate the true knawledg of Jeſus Chriſt, and to encourage the faithful diſpenſers and profeſſors of it, both by your favour and example, worſhipping the Lord in the beauty of holineſs.*

If any ſhould ask, Why is the Lord to be ſo worſhipped? why muſt he have ſuch high honours from thoſe that are high? what doth he in the World which calls for ſuch adoration? *David* anſwers Meteorologically as well as Theologically, he anſwers from the Clouds (*verſ.* 3.) *The Voice of the Lord is upon the Waters, the God of glory thundreth; the Lord is upon many Waters; The voice of the Lord is powerful, the voice of the Lord is full of Majeſty.* As if he had ſaid, Although the Lord Jeſus Chriſt will not ſet up an outward, pompous, political Kingdom, ſuch as that of *Cyrus* or *Alexander*, &c. yet by the Miniſtry of the Goſpel he will erect a ſpiritual Kingdom, and gather to himſelf a Church, that ſhall abide for ever, out of all the Nations of the earth: For the Goſpel ſhall be carried and preached to, not only the people of *Iſrael*, the *Jews*, but to the *Gentiles* all the world over, that the minds of men may be awakened, enlightned, and moved with that unheard of Doctrine of Salvation by Chriſt, which had been hid from Ages and Generations.

And though many ſhall be hardned againſt, and oppoſe that glad-tydings, yet becauſe the *God of glory thundereth*, that is, *becauſe the voice of the Lord is powerful and full of Majeſty*; he accompanying the Miniſtry of the Goſpel with power and terror like that of Thunder, home to the Conſciences of men, for their conviction and converſion, therefore it ſhall do great and glorious things, ſubduing the greateſt and ſtouteſt ſinners to the obedience of his Will. *This Thunder will caſt down the ſtrong holds of ſin, and every thing that exalteth it ſelf againſt the knowledg of God, and bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Chriſt* (2 Cor. 10. 4, 5.) This is it which the Prophet *David* intendeth (according to this allegorical interpretation) by the effects of Thunder, elegantly expreſſed (*verſ.* 5, 6, 7, 8, 9.) *The Voyce of the Lord breaketh the Cedars, yea, the Lord breaketh the Cedars of Lebanon*; that is, proud and high-minded men, who are (in their own conceit) as tall as Cedars, theſe he will make to ſee that they are but ſhrubs, theſe he will humble and break their hearts by true repentance, for the pride of their hearts, and all the abominations of their lives. Further, (*verſ.* 6.) *He maketh them alſo to skip like a Calf, Lebanon and Syrion like a young Unicorn*; that is, the Lord by his thundering powerful voice, firſt, will make them skip as frighted with fear, and ſecondly, as revived with joy. Yet more (*verſ.* 7.) *The Voice of the Lord divideth the flames of fire*; that is, will ſend and divide to every one as they need (1 *Cor.* 12. 11.) the holy Spirit, who is compared to and called Fire (*Mat.* 3. 11.) and who came as with a Thunder-ſtorm *of a mighty ruſhing wind, and with the appearance of cloven Tongues, like as of fire, and ſate upon each one of the Apoſtles*, (Acts 2. 2, 3.) Nor did this voice of Thunder, accompanied with divided flames of fire, reach *Jeruſalem* only; for, as it follows (*verſ.* 8.) *The voice of the Lord ſhaketh the wilderneſs, the wilderneſs of Kadeſh*; that is, the Lord by the voice of the Goſpel ſhall go forth with power to thoſe *Gentiles*, who are like a wilderneſs, barren of goodneſs, and unmanur'd in ſpirituals, though they dwell in well govern'd Cities, and are well furniſhed with Morals. It ſhall go forth alſo to thoſe *Gentiles* who inhabit waſt wilderneſſes, and are not ſo much as reduced to civility: Theſe wilderneſſes the thundering voice of the Lord hath ſhaken heretofore, and doth ſhake at this day, and will yet further ſhake, that the fulneſs of the *Gentiles* may come in. Many of theſe wilderneſſes hath the Lord turned into fruitful fields, and pleaſant lands, by the voice of the Goſpel ſounding among them. For in theſe wilderneſſes (as it followeth *verſ.* 9.) *The voice of the Lord maketh the hinds to calve*; that is, they that were as wild, as untaught and untamed as the hind or any beaſt in the forreſt, he brings to the ſorrows of their new-birth, to Repentance and Goſpel-humiliation: And in doing this *He* (as the

Pſalmiſt goes on) *diſcovereth the forreſts*, that is, opens the hearts of men, which are as thick ſet and full grown with vanity, pride, hypocriſie, ſelf love, and ſelf-ſufficiency, as alſo with wantonneſs and ſenſuality, as any forreſt is over-grown with thickets of trees and buſhes, which deny all paſſage through, till cleared away by cutting down or burning up; Such an opening, ſuch a diſcovery doth the Lord make in the forreſts of mens hearts, by the Sword and Fire, that is, by the Word and Spirit of the Goſpel; and when all this is done, the forreſt becomes a Temple, and as that verſe concludes, *In his temple doth every one ſpeak of his glory.* And if the floods of ungodlineſs riſe up againſt this people, whom the thunder and lightning of the Goſpel have ſubdued to Chriſt and framed into a holy Temple, then the Pſalmiſt aſſureth us (*verſ.* 10.) *The Lord ſitteth upon the flood*, that is, 'tis under his power, he ruleth and over-ruleth it: yea, *The Lord ſitteth King for ever*, and (*verſ.* 11.) *The Lord will give ſtrength to his people, the Lord will bleſs his people with peace.* Thus the Lord *thundereth marvellouſly* and theſe are glorious marvels which he thundereth; he converts ſinners. The thunder of the Goſpel frights them out of ſin, and the grace of it gives them peace.

Thus, though I like not their way who are given to allegorize the Scriptures, yet, I doubt not but we may make a profitable uſe both of this and many other Scriptures by way of allegory. This being an undeniable truth, which is the ground of it, That the Lord puts forth, as it were, the power of Thunder and Lightning in the preaching of his Word, theſe two things are to be marked.

Firſt, That Thunder and Lightning are a kind of Word of God to us, they tell us (though confuſedly, yet plainly enough, for the conviction and condemnation of gainſayers) there is a God; the greateſt Princes of the world have taken notice by Thunder and Tempeſt that there is a God over all, governing all; nor needs there any more teaching than that to condemn Atheiſts and Mockers at Religion. We ſay proverbially of ſome men, who make a rude noiſe, they are ſo loud that we cannot *hear God Thunder for them*; yet know there's no noiſe can ſo drown the voice of God's Thunder in the Clouds, but it will condemn all that hear it not, ſo as to acknowledg God in it.

Secondly, We ſhould mark, that as Thunder and Lightning are a kind of Voice or Word of God to us, ſo the Word of God, or the Voice of God, ſpeaking in his Word, is a kind of Thunder and Lightning to us, very mighty, very powerful, even clothed with an irreſiſtible power and might. And therefore if we take the Prophet *David* in 29. Pſalm before mentioned, ſpeaking, in the former part of it, of the effects of Natural Thunder only; yet toward the cloſe of the Pſalm, he applieth it to the Word of God, while he ſaith (verſ. 9.) *And in his Temple doth every one ſpeak of his glory*; that is, the Word and Ordinances of God, miniſtred in his Church, or Temple, will put every one to acknowledg and ſpeak of the glorious Power of God, even much more than the mighty Thunder which ſoundeth in our ears, or the ſubtil Lightning which flaſheth in our eyes. There is a far more royal power in the Thunder of the Word, than in the word of Thunder; This terrifieth only to Conviction, but that terrifieth to Salvation; for after God ſpeaks terror there in his Threatnings, he ſpeaks comfort in the Promiſes; and when he hath affrighted us with a ſenſe of our ſins, and of his wrath due to us for our ſins, as with an horrible tempeſt, he preſently refreſheth us with the gentle gales of revealed grace, and with the pleaſant amiable Sun ſhine of his favour by Jeſus Chriſt. And therefore in reſpect both of the Natural and Spiritual Thunder, conſidered in the circumſtances and conſequences of it, *Elihu* might well conclude, as he doth, in the laſt words of this Verſe and matter,

Great things doth he, which we cannot comprehend.

We may take theſe words, not only as intending the great things of the Thunder, which indeed are ſuch as we cannot comprehend; but as a tranſition from Thunder, to thoſe other great things that God doth, ſet forth in the latter part of the Chapter.

Great things doth he.] God doth the leaſt things, but he can do great things, he doth great things

Which we cannot comprehend.] The Hebrew is, *He doth great things, and we know not*; which may be expounded two ways.

Facit magna & non cognoſcimus. Heb.

Firſt, *We know not*, that is, we take no notice of them. God doth great things, and we are very backward to conſider them.

Secondly, *We know not*, that is, he doth ſuch great things, that let us conſider and ſtudy them as long as we will, let us break our brains to find out the greatneſs of them, yet we ſhall never find it out; *He doth great things, that we cannot comprehend.* The Text is clear, and the ſenſe profitable in either Interpretation; he doth great things which we do not conſider, or he doth great things, that when we have conſidered them, and done the moſt we can, we cannot come to the full knowledg of them. Naturaliſts ſpeak much of the cauſes of theſe things, yet the cleareſt ſighted among them, could not ſee the bottom of them, nor reach the utmoſt reaſon of them. *Great things doth he, which we cannot comprehend.*

> Hence note, *It is both proper and eaſie to God to do great things.*

He is the great God, ſo great that doing great things is no wearineſs to him. The Text doth not ſay, *he hath done great things*, or, *he will do great things*, but, *he doth great things*, he is always doing great things; and that is a point improveable for the comfort of the people of God. When a great matter is to be done, we ſay, who ſhall do it? when we are in great troubles and dangers, we ſay, who ſhall deliver us? If ſmall matters be to be done, we think we or other men like our ſelves can do them; but when great matters are to be done, we hardly believe, that God can do them for us; yet 'tis all one with God whether the thing be great or little that is to be done, if he pleaſe to undertake the doing of it. It is queſtioned (*Amos* 7.2.) *By whom ſhall Jacob ariſe, for he is ſmall?* They looked to this and that creature, and ſaw *Jacob* ſo ſmall and low, that they thought he could never riſe again; but remember *Jacobs God is great, and he doth great things*, this great thing eſpecially, to raiſe them that are low and ſmall. Whatever your condition is, remember God is great, and can as well do great things as little, as eaſily make a world as give you a morſel of bread; there is nothing hard to God; *He doth great things*, and (according to the ſtrictneſs of the Hebrew Text) *we know not*, that is, we conſider them not, we take little notice of them.

> Hence obſerve, *The ſons of men are commonly very ſlight thoughted about the great works of God.*

When God thunders marvels, we know them not, we lay them not to heart. The Prophet (*Iſa.* 5. 12.) ſheweth how buſie the careleſs Jews were in their mirth and jollity, *but they regarded not the work of the Lord, neither conſidered the operation of his hands.* When God is doing great things, one man is getting wealth, another taking his pleaſure, but they regard not at all, or have very little regard to what God is doing.

Again, from our reading, *Great things doth he, which we cannot comprehend.*

> Note, *God doth great things that are beyond the greateſt of our apprehenſions, ſuch things, as after all our ſtudy we are ſhort in, and ſhort of.*

As it is our ſin that we take not pains enough to know the great things that God doth; ſo God doth things ſo great, that when we have done our beſt, or, after all our pains, we cannot know them fully: though we know their outſide, yet little of their inſide, though we know their effects, yet little of their cauſes and contrivances. *To know a thing, is to know it in the cauſes of it*, to ſee the reaſon of it. A man knoweth not the things that he knows, till he ſeeth the reaſon of what he knows. How little doth man know of, or ſee into the reaſon of the great things that God doth? How little do we ſee of the marvels that are in the works of God? *The love of God paſſeth knowledg* (*Eph.* 3. 19.) Though we labour to know it (and 'tis our ſin that we labour not more to know it) yet we cannot, it ſurpaſſeth all our knowledg. And as that love of God, which is the firſt mover of all the good and great things that he doth for his people, paſſeth our knowledg, ſo the things that are the effects of that love to his people are ſo great,

Scire eſt per cauſas ſcire.

that they paſs our knowledg. Hence we may infer theſe two duties.

Firſt, Let us be much in the admiration of the great things that God doth. Where knowledg ends, there admiration ſhould begin. It was a ſhame for a Philoſopher to admire, becauſe he was ſuppoſed to know the whole compaſs of nature; but 'tis no ſhame for a Chriſtian to admire, there being many things, not only in the ſpecial diſpenſations of grace, but in the common diſpenſations of providence, which he cannot know comprehenſively, the whole compaſs of which he cannot graſp or take in with the beſt of his underſtanding.

Secondly, *Let us take heed of cenſuring the works of God.* Some are very bold in paſſing their Verdicts upon the great things that God doth; this, and that is not ſo well done, this and that might have been otherwiſe done. The great things which God doth pleaſe not many men if they hit not their intereſt, how apt are they to find fault; But ſeeing God doth great things that we cannot comprehend, let us take heed of cenſuring any of the great things that God doth; no man ſhould judg or cenſure that which he doth not, cannot know, and fully underſtand: But uſually *they who underſtand things leaſt, cenſure them moſt, and they are moſt apt to judg, who have the weakeſt judgments.*

VERS. 6, 7, 8.

For he ſaith to the ſnow, be thou on the earth: likewiſe to the ſmall rain, and to the great rain of his ſtrength.

He ſealeth up the hand of every man, that all men may know his work.

Then the beaſts go into dens, and remain in their places.

Elihu having ſet forth the wonders of divine power in Thunder and Lightning, gives us other inſtances, to the ſame purpoſe, in this context.

Firſt, In the Snow.

Secondly, In the Rain. And he deſcribes the Snow and Rain three ways.

Firſt, By pointing at their Author or producer, in the 6. verſe [*He*] that is, God, of whom he ſpake in the cloſe of the former verſe.

Secondly, He ſheweth the way or manner of their production [*he ſaith*] 'tis done by a word, or command, that is, by a word of command; *he ſaith to the Snow, he likewiſe ſaith to the ſmall Rain, and to the great Rain of his ſtrength, be ye on the earth.*

Thirdly, He deſcribes the effects, or conſequences, at leaſt, of Snow and Rain; and thoſe are of two ſorts.

Firſt, What reſpects man, at the 7. verſe, *He ſealeth up the hand of every man, that all men may know his work.* There we have the firſt effect, the ſealing of mans hand, together with the deſign or intent of God in it, *that all men may know his work.*

The ſecond effect reſpects the beaſts of the earth, at the 8. verſe; *then*, that is, when God hath commanded the Snow and the Rain to *be on the earth, then the beaſts go into dens and remain in their places.* Thus we may conceive the parts and general ſcope of theſe three verſes.

Verſ. 6. **For, he ſaith to the Snow.**

That cauſal particle [*for*] in the front of this verſe, imports a reaſon, or an account given in theſe words, of what was ſaid before at the 5. verſe, *God doth great things which we cannot comprehend*; then preſently followeth, *for he ſaith to the Snow*, &c. As if *Elihu* had ſaid, not only are Thunder and Lightning, but Snow and Rain to be numbred and reckoned among the great and marvellous works of God; *for he ſaith to the Snow.*

He ſaith;] That is, as hath been ſhewed already, he commandeth. What God ſaith, ſhall be, muſt be, his words are Laws, *he ſaith to, or commandeth the Snow* Not only doth God give commands to rational creatures, men & Angels, but to meer ſenſitive creatures, the beaſts, & to ſenſleſs creatures, vegetatives or plants, yea, to inanimates, to things without any life at all, ſuch are Snow & Rain; yet, as if Snow & Rain had an ear to hear, and an underſtanding to mind a command from God, the Text repreſents God ſpeaking to theſe,

He ſaith to the Snow, &c.] The Snow falls in ſilver ſhowers every year, and covers the face of the earth; All men behold it, but few underſtand either what it is, or why it is ſent. Take this brief deſcription of it from the School of Nature:

Snow is a moiſt vapour, drawn up from the earth, to, or near the middle region of the Air, where it is condenſed or thickned into a Cloud, and falls down again like carded wool, ſometimes in greater, ſometimes in leſſer flakes.

Nix eſt vapor humidus in mediam aeris regionem ſubvectus, ubi in nubem condenſatur & congelatus, inſtar lanæ carminatæ deſcendit per partes, interdum magnas, interdum exiguas, antequam in guttas reſolvatur. Garcæ Meteor. c 29.

Snow and Rain, are made of the ſame matter, and have their breeding in the ſame place, only they differ in their outward form, as is obvious to the eye, and their ſeaſon; Rain falleth in the warmer ſeaſons, the Clouds being diſſolved into Rain by heat, or when the cold is more remiſs; Snow falleth in the ſharper ſeaſons, the cloud being thickned by the cold. Hence *Solomon's* compariſon (*Prov.* 26. 1.) *As Snow in Summer, ſo honour is not comely for a fool.* Snow is a goodly white robe upon the Winter-body of the earth, or upon the body of the earth in Winter; yet how unſeemly is it upon the body of the earth in Summer, hiding and obſcuring, as well as hurting that which is the natural beauty and ornament of it; Thus honour is a precious robe, yet no way fitting the back of a fooliſh or undeſerving perſon. Snow is very improper and unnatural in Summer, becauſe the coldneſs of it hinders the ripening of the corn, and other fruits of the earth: And therefore when *Solomon* ſaith (*Chap.* 25. 13.) *As the cold of ſnow in the time of Summer, ſo is a faithful meſſenger to him that ſendeth him.* His meaning is not, that the falling of Snow is either comfortable or ſeaſonable in the time of Summer, but that Snow gathered in Winter, and reſerved (as the cuſtom is in hot Countries) till Summer, being put into drink doth exceedingly cool it, and ſo refreſheth thoſe who are ready to faint with heat.

But not to go further from the Text in hand; we ſee that Snow and Rain have the ſame original, both being formed out of vapours. As in man's body (who is a little world) from the Stomach there riſe up vapours to the Head, which by the coldneſs of the brain are changed into, and ſent back again in Rheums and Catarrhs: So vapours drawn up from the Earth into the Air, are ſent back in Snow and Rain. *Solomon* deſcribing the infirmities of old age, alludes to this, while he warns the young man, that thus the *Clouds will return after the Rain* (Eccl. 12. 2.) which may be underſtood either more generally of that ſucceſſion of troubles to which old age is ſubject, or more particularly of Rheum and Flegm wherewith old age is moleſted; the defluxion of the Rheum being as the Rain, and the gathering of new matter, which continually diſtilleth from the Head upon the Lungs, being as the *returning of the Clouds after the Rain. He ſaith to the Snow*

גשם מטר וגשם מטרות *Et imbri pluviæ & imbri pluviarum potentiæ ejus.* Heb.

Be thou on the earth.] The place where Snow is generated is in the Air, from thence it receives a command to diſpatch it ſelf to the Earth, and there to abide; He ſaith to the Snow, *be thou on the Earth*, that is, cover the face of the earth, be thou as a mantle upon the earth, or as a white ſheet ſpread over the whole face of it, until I call or take thee off and diſſolve thee into water. The ſame command which is here expreſt concerning the Snow, is alſo ſent forth to the Rain; *He ſaith to the Snow, be thou on the earth,*

Imber eſt agmen cœleſtium aquarum & pluviarum. Nonius.

Likewiſe to the ſmall rain, &c.] That is, he ſaith to the *ſmall Rain*, do thou deſcend upon the earth. By *ſmall Rain* is meant any gentle Rain, ſoftly and ſweetly dropping and diſtilling out of the Clouds. Now as God orders this *ſmall Rain*, ſo likewiſe, as it followeth,

Coacervatio hæc nominũ & genitivus ille pluralis vehementiſſimum & proccelloſum imbrem ſignificat. Merc.

The great Rain of his ſtrength.] The whole Original Text, which we render the *ſmall Rain and the great Rain of his ſtrength*, hath a great elegancy in it, word for word thus, *He ſaith to the ſhower of Rain, and to the ſhower of Rains of his ſtrength.* The word *Rain* in both is the ſame, only the former is in the ſingular, and the latter in the plural number, which heightens or increaſeth the ſenſe, as Criticks and Grammarians tell us, and therefore we render *ſmall Rain and great Rain*; to which *Elihu* gives this further addition in the cloſe of the verſe, *The great Rain*

Cum duo nomina copulantur idem fere ſignificantia quorum poſterius ponitur loco adjectivi alterũ determinantis, ſi fuerit pluralis numeri erit ſuperlativæ ſignificationis. Bold.

Of his ſtrength.] Of whoſe ſtrength? ſurely of the ſtrength of God; as if God did in ſome rain put forth his mighty ſtrength, and make bare his own Arm in the ſhowers which he ſends upon the earth. *The great rain of his ſtrength* is that violent rain which comes forth from God and ſhews forth to us the great ſtrength of God: For neither of thoſe two Epithetes *ſmall and great* are expreſly in the Text, yet both the

Imber pluviarum, quaſi ex multis pluviis conſtans. Druſ.

ſcope and Grammatical conſtruction of the words juſtifie that Tranſlation, *A ſhower of Rain* in the ſingular number implying a mild gentle Rain, or, as we call it, a *ſmall Rain*; and a *ſhower of Rains* in the plural number implying a continued, vehement, fierce Rain, or as we call it, *a great Rain*, eſpecially having that remarkable adjunct following, *of his ſtrength.* When the Lord promiſed to give *ſhowers of Rain* for the King (*Zach.* 10.1.) He meant a plentiful ſtrong Rain; by which alſo he intended to ſignifie the abundance of ſpiritual gifts and graces, which he would pour down upon the Church. So much for the opening of this Verſe, *For he ſaith to the Snow, be thou on the Earth, likewiſe to the ſmall Rain, and to the great Rain of his ſtrength.*

Firſt, From the cauſal Particle, *for*, which referreth to the former words, *God doth marvelous things which we cannot comprehend, for, he ſaith to the Snow, and to the ſmall Rain,* &c.

Obſerve, *The Snow and Rain are to be written in the Catalogue of Gods wonderful works.*

What more common than Snow and Rain? And yet, as common as they are, that have wonders in them. Some of the Ancients have obſerved many wonders in the Snow, ſuch as theſe:

Firſt, That being in its own nature ſo extremely cold, yet it is formed in that part of the Air which is comparatively near the earth, and ſo hath more heat in it.

Secondly, That Snow being ſo exceeding cold, doth yet by God's command fall in ſome very hot Countries, even in the hotteſt of Summer. Geographers tell us of Snow in many places of *Tartary*, which are extremely hot.

Plin. lib. 6. cap. 32. Nat. Hiſtor.

Thirdly, They give this as a wonder, That whereas it never ſnows at all upon the Main Ocean, yet there is an Iſland ſpoken of by *Pliny*, called (*Nivaria* from *Nix*) *the Snow Iſle*, which though compaſſed with the Sea, is always covered with Snow.

Fourthly, This is given as a wonder, That the Snow being ſo apt to melt by heat, yet Mount *Ætna*, which is full of *Sulphur*, and caſts out flames of fire continually, hath the head of it hidden continually under or covered with a Cap of *Snow*.

Fiftly, That in ſome places Worms are bred and live in the Snow of a fiery colour.

Sixthly, That the Snow, thoug it be very cold and chilling, hath in it a fecundating or fatning power, as to the earth, is alſo wonderful. Snow is a great cheriſher and nouriſher of Plants and Trees, of Corn and Graſs; and therefore *David* ſaith (*Pſal.* 147. 15, 16.) *He giveth Snow like Wool, and hoary Froſt like aſhes.* There are three things conſiderable in Snow, for which it is compared to Wool. Firſt, for the whiteneſs of it, Snow is white as Wool; Snow is ſo exceeding white, that the whiteneſs of a Soul cleanſed by pardoning Grace, in the blood of Chriſt, is likened to it (*Iſa.* 1. 18.) and the latter part of the ſame Verſe intimates, that the whiteneſs of Snow bears reſemblance to that of Wool. The Whiteneſs of Snow is cauſed by the abundance of Air and Spirits that are in that pellucid Body, as the Naturaliſts ſpeak: Any thing that is of a watery ſubſtance being frozen or much wrought upon by cold, appears more white. And hence it is that all perſons inhabiting cold Climates or Countries, are of a whiter complexion than they who inhabit hot.

Cauſa albedinis eſt Spiritus aeriſque copia in corpore diaphano. Ariſt. lib. 2 de Mundo.

Secondly, Snow is like Wool for ſoftneſs, 'tis as plyable to the hand, as a Lock or Fleece of Wool.

Thirdly Snow is like Wool (which may ſeem ſtrange) with reſpect to the warmneſs of it. Though Snow be cold in it ſelf, as I ſaid before, yet it is to the earth as Wool, or as a woolen cloth or blanket, that keeps the Body warm. Snow is not warm formally, yet it is warm effectively and virtually, and therefore is it compared to Wool; and for that reſpect alſo the hoary Froſt is ſaid to be like aſhes, in the ſame place of the *Pſalm*: Aſhes are warm, Froſt is cold, yet that is a known expreſſion, *burning cold*, that is, there is an effect in Froſt, in the hoary Froſt, of heat; things are kept warm by that which is contrary to warmth, *Froſt and Snow.* Naturaliſts have beat their Brains, but can aſſign no ſatisfying reaſon of theſe things, and therefore we muſt aſcribe them eſpecially to the power and wiſdom of God. Theſe particulars laid together are a ſufficient witneſs, that even Snow and Rain are to reckoned with, and numbred among the wonderful works of God.

Urins frigus. Pruinâ dici volunt Grammatici quaſi urinâ, quod urat arbores & flores.

Hence Note, Secondly *God can do what he will by a word ſpeaking.*

And as himſelf can do what he will by his word, ſo he can make the creature do what he will by his word. This goodly Fabrick of the World was made by his word, and all the creatures in the World will preſently act upon a word from God (*Pſal.* 33. 9.) *He ſpake and it was done, he commanded and it ſtood faſt*; God's ſaying is doing. This is a point of high conſolation to all the people of God; whatever their affliction is, God can command them out of it; whatever their wants are, God can command a ſupply for them. He that ſaith to the natural Snow and to the Rain, to Storms and Tempeſts, be ye upon the earth, can alſo ſay to the Snow and Rain, to the Storms and Tempeſts of trouble, be ye not upon the earth; he can do or undo, by his word, as himſelf pleaſeth. 'Tis alſo matter of great terror to all that riſe up againſt, and diſobey the word of the great God; for though they ſee nothing at hand to interrupt them, nothing to check them in the way of their luſts, though they look upon themſelves beyond the reach of danger, yet 'tis but a word ſpeaking from God, and they are wrapt up in Snow, and hurrican'd with a Storm and Tempeſt; *He ſaith to the Snow*, &c. This irreſiſtible force of a word from God, was noted alſo upon thoſe words in the Ninth Chapter (*Verſ.* 7.) *He commandeth the Sun and it riſeth not.* The Sun will not appear, or it will hide it ſelf in an Eclipſe, or Cloud, and darken the whole earth, if God do but give a command.

Thirdly, Take the point yet more ſtrictly and reſtrainedly, as here in the Text, *He ſaith to the Snow and to the Rain,*

Snow and Rain are at the command of God.

* (Pſal. 147. 15, 16.) *He ſendeth forth his commandment upon earth, his word runneth very ſwiftly*; that word refers to the particular matter in hand, as appeareth in the very next Verſe, and the two which follow; *He giveth Snow like Wool, he ſcattereth the haor Froſt like aſhes, he caſteth forth his Ice like morſels,* &c. *David* applies the ſwift running of God's word to theſe things; and how ſwiftly theſe run on his errants we may ſee (1 *Kings* 18. 44.) For whereas there had been no Rain for three Years and a half, according to the word of *Elijah* the Prophet, God did but ſay to the Rain, come, and it came; and though *Elijah's* Servant, at firſt, ſaw a very ſmall appearance of it, only *a Cloud like a mans hand,* yet preſently the whole Heavens were masked over with Clouds, and there was a mighty Rain. *The great Rain of his ſtrength. Rain, and Snow, and Vapours quickly fulfil his word* (Pſal. 148. 8.) God is *the Lord of Hoſts*, and theſe creatures are his Hoſt, theſe as well as men and Angels are his Hoſts (*Pſalm.* 24. 10.) *Who is this King of glory? The Lord of Hoſts is the King of glory*; and 'tis the great glory of God, that he hath ſuch Hoſts at his command: None of the Princes or Powers of this World have any ſuch; how long may they ſend their commands to the Snow before it will come, or to the Rain before they can get a drop of it! Neither the one nor the other will ſtir at the command of man, but at the command of God they haſte away.

Non tibi videantur caſibus moveri qui verbo Dei in omni motu ſuo deſerviunt. Quo vult Deus illuc fertur nubes ſive pluviam ſive nivem ſive grandinem portat. Auguſt. in Pſal. 148.

And if when the Lord ſaith to the Snow and to the Rain, come, and they come, abide upon the earth, and they abide there, how will this reprove and condemn Thouſands of the children of men, to whom the Lord ſpeaks and ſpeaks again and again, he ſends out his commandment, and his word runs very ſwiftly to them, yet they ſtir not, they move not! Surely Snow and Rain will riſe up in judgment againſt thoſe, to whom the Lord hath ſaid, *Do this,* and they did it not, to whom the Lord hath ſaid, *Do not this*, yet they did it. The word repreſents all ſorts of Creatures below man, as well as the Angels above man, readily obeying the command of God, to teach man how readily he ſhould obey his commands, and how greatly he ſhall be comdemned if he do not, and that not only by the Angels in Heaven, but by the Snow and Rain that fall upon the earth.

Fourthly, From the diſtinction which is here made of the Rain, the *ſmall Rain, and the great Rain of his ſtrength,*

Note, *In what degree or quantity ſoever the Rain falls, it is by the ſpecial appointment of God.*

If it be a ſmall, gentle, ſoaking Rain, it is becauſe God hath ſpoken to the ſmall Rain to go; if it be a great, a violent, a ſmoaking rain, a rain of his ſtrength, it is becauſe God hath ſaid to the great rain, go: We are not to ſtick in ſecond cauſes, but to have our hearts raiſed higher, both as to the rain it ſelf, and to the proportions of it. *He maketh ſmall the drops of rain,* as 'tis ſaid at the 27. verſe of the former Chapter, and he can make great the drops of rain, or the drops of rain great; he can caſt the rain into what mold he pleaſeth, great or ſmall; it ſhall be a ſweetly-diſtilling rain, or it ſhall be, as *Solomon* ſpeaks, a fiercely *ſweeping rain*, (Prov. 28. 3.) where he compares the poor man that oppreſſeth to a ſweeping rain. God hath ſweeping rains, and as 'tis ſaid (*Ezek.* 13. 13.) *overflowing ſhowers* in his hand; and he ſometimes ſends, not a watering ſhower, not a refreſhing or comforting ſhower in mercy, not a ſhower to enrich and fatten the earth, but an overflowing ſhower to drown the earth and deſtroy the fruits of it in his anger; and this is true, whether you take the ſhower properly, or metaphorically. If you take the ſhower properly for that which falls from heaven, he ſends the refreſhing, and he ſends the overflowing ſhower; or if you take it metaphorically (a ſhower may ſignifie any kind or degree of judgment) he can ſend one judgment which ſhall be as a ſmall rain, and he can ſend another which ſhall be as great rain, as the rain of his ſtrength, an overflowing ſhower: He can ſend forth (as that alluſion is uſed, *Jer.* 12. 5.) *his footmen*, and he can ſend forth *his horſemen*, greater or leſſer Judgments, as himſelf pleaſeth; he proportions and cuts them out according to his own infinite wiſdom and righteous will.

Laſtly, From theſe words, *He ſaith to the ſnow, abide on the earth, or be thou on the earth,* ſtay there; and ſo to the rain,

> Obſerve, *Snow or Rain continue or ſtay upon the face of the earth till God calls them off.*

When he ſaith, be ye upon the earth, upon the earth they will be, until the ſame power that ſent them, fetch them back again. Theſe hoſts are like a well-ordered and well-diſciplined army, wherein Soldiers ſent out by the order of their General or ſuperior Officers, muſt ſtay at their poſt where they are appointed, they muſt abide, till called off, upon pain of death: Be thou there, ſaith the Commander to his Soldier, be thou there till I fetch thee off; and when, after ſignal given, the battel begins, the Soldier never leaves charging or purſuing the enemy, till the Trumpet ſound a retreat. So 'tis in this caſe, God ſaith to the Rain, be upon the earth till thou haſt wrought my purpoſe and done all my pleaſure, and there it is.

Thus we ſee the efficacy of God's command upon theſe Meteors, the Snow and the Rain; now follow the effects, or what comes of it.

Firſt, We have that effect which reſpects man;

Verſ. 7. **He ſealeth up the hand of every man.**

He,] That is, God,

Sealeth up the hand;] Sealing, in Scripture, hath a threefold ſignification.

חתם *Proprie claudere, occultare.*

Firſt, It notes the hiding of a thing, or the keeping of it ſecret and cloſe; that which is ſealed, is alſo concealed (*Iſa.* 8. 16.) *Bind up the Teſtimony, ſeal the Law among my diſciples.* There is a time wherein God commands the Law to be ſealed, and the Teſtimony to be bound up, and that is a very ſad time; for though there are various apprehenſions about the meaning of this command given the Prophet, yet the moſt probable intendment of it is, that God would not have him loſe any more time in dealing with thoſe faithleſs and prophane ſcoffers of his meſſage, but reſerve thoſe ſacred myſteries, as ſecrets, to be communicated only to the faithful, who would with due reverence and faith religiouſly receive them. *Seal the Law among, or for my diſciples*, that is, ſuch as deſire to learn, or have been taught and learned of me, and by learning are become ſpiritually skilful and learned, as the word is rendred (*Iſa.* 50. 4.) Wo to ſinners when the Teſtimony is bound and the Law ſealed; which is the import (I conceive) of that place in the ſame Prophet (*Iſa.* 29. 11.) And when in the *Revelation* (*Chap.* 4. 1.) a Book ſealed with ſeven ſeals was ſhewed to *John*, he wept (*verſ.* 4.) becauſe *no man was found worthy to open, and to read the Book*, &c. implying, that the Book was full of divine ſecrets, hidden from the eyes or underſtandings of men, and ſo muſt have continued, *if the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, the Root of David,* that is, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, *had not prevailed to open the Book, and to looſe the ſeven ſeals thereof.* Sealed things are hidden things. *Is not this* (ſaid the Lord, *Deut.* 32. 34.) *laid up in ſtore with me, and ſealed up among my treaſures?* That is, is it not kept cloſe and hidden there? are not their curſed treaſures of ſin laid up among my righteous treaſures of wrath? The Church (*Cant.* 4. 12.) is called, *a Fountain ſealed*, becauſe the waters by which ſhe is refreſhed and made fruitful are a hidden thing to the world, or becauſe the Church muſt keep her ſelf apart and diſtinct from the prophane and unbelieving world. That's one thing, we ſeal what we would hide or keep cloſe.

Secondly, The word importeth ſometimes, to finiſh or compleat a thing. When a Writing is perfected then we ſeal it, when a Letter is made up we ſeal it; to that purpoſe the word is uſed (*Dan.* 9. 24.) Where the Prophet ſpeaking of Chriſt's coming in the fleſh, and what he ſhould then do, ſaith, *He ſhall finiſh tranſgreſſion,* that is, he ſhall compleat, by the ſacrifice of himſelf, all the ſacrifices for tranſgreſſion. Chriſt had no hand in any tranſgreſſion, as to the doing of it, but in this ſenſe he finiſhed all tranſgreſſion; that is, he finiſhed the ſacrifices of attonement for tranſgreſſion, that ſo our tranſgreſſions might not be charged upon us. Further, that word, as there uſed, may very well bear the firſt ſenſe of ſealing; *He ſhall ſeal tranſgreſſion*, that is, he ſhall cover or hide our tranſgreſſions, for that is the effect of the Mediatorſhip of Jeſus Chriſt.

Thirdly, To ſeal a thing is (in common ſenſe) to confirm it (*Jer.* 32. 10. 11.) *I* (ſaid the Prophet) *ſubſcribed the Evidence and ſealed it*; that is, I confirmed it and made it good in Law. Now when 'tis ſaid here, *He ſealeth up the hand of every man*, I conceive we are to take it in the firſt ſenſe, that is, he hideth or ſhuts up every man's hand. The hand is the chief inſtrument of working, and therefore to ſay, God ſhuts up or ſeals the hand, is an elegant Metaphor, ſignifying that God puts a ſtop or ſtay to, or that he takes men off from their work. If a man's hands be bound or ſealed up he cannot uſe them.

But how doth God ſeal up the hand of every man, of every working man or labourer? By the Snow and by the Rain, ſaith *Elihu*; becauſe when God ſends abundance of Snow upon the earth, or when he ſends the great Rain of his ſtrength, men cannot work; in a deep ſnow, or in a great rain without doors, Labourers are hindered from their labour: And hence anciently, Winter had this title given it, *dull or ſluggiſh Winter*; becauſe in the extremity of winter weather, many men are forced to ſit (as we ſay) with their hands in their pockets, or folded under their arms. *He ſealeth up the hand of every man*, that is, by tempeſtuous and foul weather, he binds their hands and preſſeth them together as with a Seal.

Hyems iners dicitur quod homines cogat deſidere inertes & complicatis manibus.

The Hebrew is, *In the hand he will ſeal,* or, *ſealeth every man.* From which strict reading, ſome have made a very impious interpretation of this Text, thereupon grounding that (as moſt uſe it) moſt unwarrantable Art of *Chiromancy*, as if God did put certain Lines, Prints, or Seals upon the hand of every man, from whence it may be collected and concluded, what (as ſome call it) his Fortune or Deſtiny will be in the world. Which, as it is an opinion wicked in it ſelf, ſo altogether heterogeneal to this place, the tendency whereof is not to ſhew how things ſhall work with men hereafter, but how they are often hindered or ſtopt in, or from their preſent work.

In manu omnes homines obſignabit. Mont.

There is yet another reading of the place, thus, *He ſealeth up every man with ſtrength.* The word which we tranſlate *hand*, they tranſlate *ſtrength*, and refer it to God; he with ſtrength, or by his mighty power ſhuts up every man. The word *hand* may be rendred *ſtrength*, becauſe by the hand men act violently and put forth their ſtrength. And God may be ſaid to ſhew his ſtrength in ſo ſoft and fluid a thing as ſnow and rain, that thereby he may give proof, how eaſily, or with how ſmall a matter, in appearance, he can ſtop any any man from his work and purpoſe. There is a truth in this reading, but I rather take the words as they ſtand in our tranſlation, not as noting the hand or power of God ſealing men, but God's ſealing the hands of men, putting them off from or beſides their labour. Thus by Snow and Rain he ſealeth or ſhutteth up the hand of every man; and why ſo? the reaſon is given in the next words,

ביד *Vehementia omnem hominem recludit.* Merc. pagn.

That all men might know his work.

God by extraordinary Snows and Rains ſtops men from their work. But what, Is it that they ſhould be idle? No, but that *they may know his work.* Whoſe work?

Some underſtand it of mans own work; As if the meaning were this; God ſtops men a while from further or preſent work, that they may take a view of their paſt works; or he takes them off from their civil works and employments, that they may employ themſelves in conſidering their moral works; as the Prophet admoniſhed the Jews (*Iſa.* 1. 5.) *Now therefore, thus ſaith the Lord of hoſts, conſider your ways.* Another Prophet reproved them for the neglect of this duty (*Jer.* 8. 6.) *No man ſaith, what have I done?* The Lord often brings his people to hard ſufferings that they may know their own doings or works. This is a profitable ſenſe; yet I rather conceive that the work here intended is Gods work, and ſo I ſhall proſecute the words, *That all men may know his work.*

This work of God may be taken two ways.

Firſt, More ſtrictly; thus God by rain ſhuts up the hands of men from their work, that they may know, thoſe extraordinary ſtorms of Snow and Rain, which drive them in from their labour, and ſhut up their hands from working, are his ſpecial work. Great Snows and Rains declare to all men the great power of God, who doth not only aſtoniſh men by terrible thunder and lightning, but can by Snow and Rain (his much weaker weapons) put them beſide their purpoſe, and ſtop their work.

Secondly, Take his work more largely; God ſealeth up the hands of men, that they having a vacancy from their own work may conſider his; he doth as it were force them from what they were doing or intended to do, that ſo they may have leiſure to take notice of what he hath done, *That all men may know his work.*

Hence note; Firſt, *God can hinder or ſtop any man or all men in their work.*

He, when, and as he pleaſeth, can ſeal up the hand of every man. If God hath a mind to work, none can lett him (*Iſa.* 43. 13.) Who can ſeal the hand of God? I may ſay alſo, whoſe hand cannot God ſeal? How eaſily did the Lord ſeal up the hand of the builders of *Babel* (*Gen.* 11.7.) They were hot upon a mighty work; but God by confounding their tongues, ſealed their hands, and they (as 'tis ſaid, *verſ.* 8.) *Left off to build the City.*

Secondly, When the Text ſaith, *God ſealeth up the hand of every man, that all men may know his work.*

Obſerve, *How diligent ſoever men are about their own works, yet they are ſlow enough, too too ſlow to take notice of the works of God.*

When the hand of God is lifted up ſome will not ſee it, they are not only backward to ſee it, but oppoſite to the ſeeing of it; and though others do not ſet themſelves againſt, yet they do not ſet themſelves to the knowledg of his works. 'Tis a great and common ſin, our not ſtudying to know the works of God; we ſhould ſtudy the works of God as much as we do the word of God; we ſhould ſtudy both his work of Creation, and his works of Providence, whether works of Mercy, or of Judgment; we ſhould endeavour to know all his works.

From the univerſality of the expreſſion, *that all men may know his work,*

Note, *God would have all ſtudy this Book, the book of his works.*

They whoſe buſineſs and labours lie in fields, the Ploughmen and the Vine-dreſſers, he would have them know his works, as thoſe ſpecial works of his, the Snow and the Rain, ſo his works in general. The meaneſt of men cannot excuſe their ignorance of the works of God, ſeeing the Text and Point tell us, God drives them many times out of the field, home to their houſes, and will not let them do a ſtroak of work more abroad, on purpoſe that they might know his work.

Hence note, Thirdly, *The aim and intendment of God in keeping us at any time from our work, is that we may know more of his works.*

It is a great part of our wiſdom to anſwer the deſigns of God in all his providences to us. We ſeldom think what God intends by a wet day, by a rainy day, by a tempeſtuous day, we little think the aim of God in calling us from our works, is to call us to the conſideration of his work. Some men would never find a time to beſtow their thoughts upon the works of God, if God did not take them off from their own work; they would never be at leiſure, if he did not give them a leiſure, a vacation time, and as here in this Text, ſeal up their hand. God hath various ways to take men off from the hotteſt purſuits of their own works; he takes many off from them by ſickneſs, he binds them as Priſoners to their beds; others are taken off from their own buſineſs by proper impriſonment, and reſtraint of liberty; and why? what is the reaſon of this? is it not that they may know his work, that they may well conſider the dealings of God with them? A ſick bed is a School, and ſo is a Priſon, where we ſhould ſtudy both the Word and Works of God. Let us remember, whenever God takes us off from our Callings by ſickneſs, or reſtraineth our liberty by impriſonment, his gracious purpoſe is, that we may know his work. Poſſibly when we had liberty to go about our own work, we could find little, or would not find much leiſure to meditate upon the works of God. Well, ſaith God, I ſee I muſt take you off from your works, elſe you will never be Students in mine. That's the effect of Snow and Rain, with reference to man, *He ſealeth up the hand of every man, that all men may know his work.*

But here we have another effect, with reſpect to beaſts.

Verſ. 8. **Then the beaſts go into dens, and remain in their places.**

There are two words in the Hebrew which ſignifie brutes, or beaſts. The word here uſed properly ſignifies *wild beaſts,* the other tame beaſts, ſuch as are for our uſe, and brought up to our hand. The Text intends the wild beaſts, the beaſts of the forreſt, the beaſts of prey, *they go into dens,* theſe ſeek ſhelter in ſnow time, or when the great rain of the ſtrength of God falleth upon the earth. The Pſalmiſt (*Pſal.* 104. 20.) deſcribes the beaſts ordinarily going out of their dens when the night comes; *Then* (ſaith he) *all the beaſts of the forreſt go forth.* Here we have the beaſts, whether night or day, driven to their dens by a ſtorm, or by the Snow; then they go to their dens and places of ſhelter, or, as we ſpeak, to *Covert.* The word rendred *Dens,* ſignifies a place of ambuſh, or of lying in wait; ſuch are the dens of wild beaſts; as it is ſaid of the wicked (*Pſal.* 10.9.) *He lieth in wait ſecretly, as a Lion in his den, to catch the poor,* &c. It is this word. Such kind of retreats have the wild beaſts, they have their dens, which are alſo places to watch for their prey: And as they often go to their dens upon choice, or of their own accord, ſo they are ſometimes driven to them (as in the Text) for ſhelter againſt a ſtorm. *Then the beaſts go into dens,*

חיה *Potius fera quam beſtia, à vivacitate, nam eadem vox vitam ſignificat.* Druſ.

ארב *Ereb, a verbo Arab, inſidiari. Et ingreditur beſtia in inſidias,* i. e. *in latibula unde inſidiatur.* Merc.

And remain in their places.] They not only *go into dens,* but there *they remain,* they keep home, the ſtorm keeps them in. As when the flood of waters, the great rain of God's ſtrength, was upon the earth, *Noah* was ſhut into the Ark, and there he remained (*Gen.* 7.) he did not only go in, but ſtayed in till the flood was aſſwaged; ſo it is ſaid here of the beaſts, they remain in their places, they will not budg nor peep out till the ſtorm be over.

Hence Note, Firſt, *The Providences of God in various ſeaſons, affect the very beaſts of the earth.*

Thoſe creatures which live only a life of ſenſe, yet partake ſomewhat of reaſon, at leaſt, they act according to reaſon; they are ſenſible of what God doth, though they know not that he doth it. And is not this a great reproof to thoſe, who are not only not ſenſible of, but ſlight thoſe ſeverer diſpenſations of God? how beaſt-like are thoſe men, who have not ſo much ſenſe of the dealings of God as the beaſts have! who though they have a knowledg beyond brutes, yet they uſe their knowledg no better, no not ſo well as brutes; and ſo they are either (as the Prophet ſaith) *bruetiſh in their knowledg,* or as the Apoſtle *Peter* (2 *Pet.* 2. 12.) *They are as brute beaſts* (in humane ſhape) *made to be taken and deſtroyed.* How can they avoid being taken and deſtroyed by the judgments of God, or as *Elihu* expreſſeth it, by the great *rain of his ſtrength,* who take not ſo much notice of them, as to ſee their danger and get into a hiding place? For,

Secondly, When the beaſts go into dens and remain in their places, what is it that moves them to it? Surely 'tis to be (as we ſay) out of harms way.

Hence note, *Every creature by the light of nature would get out of danger.*

Great ſnows and rains of ſtrength are dangerous or grievous to beaſts, therefore they avoid them; they will not ſtand in the open Air while a ſtorm laſts, if they can help it. Beaſts will ſave themſelves as well as they can; and if ſo, then take theſe two inferences from it.

Firſt, *For our inſtruction. We are ſent to School by God himſelf more than once to the Beaſts and creeping things of the Earth. Solomon* ſends us to the Ant, a creeping thing, he bids us *conſider her ways, and be wiſe. Elihu*, in this Text, ſends us to the wild Beaſts of the Earth, to Lions and Bears, to Tigers and Wolves, and bids us conſider their ways and be wiſe. Here is matter of inſtruction for us; What is that? *Get out of harms way*, make haſte out of danger; when the cold Snow comes, and the great Rain of the ſtrength of God, take heed you be not found abroad without a ſhelter. Surely God who hath provided dens for the beaſts, and places for thoſe wild creatures to hide themſelves in, hath not left us without a hiding-place, when the great rains of trouble fall, or threaten to fall. God invited his people of old, where to look for and whither to go for ſhelter in ſuch a rainy day (*Iſa.*26.20.) *Come my people, enter thou into thy Chambers, and ſhut thy door about thee; hide thy ſelf as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be over paſt.* For, *Behold, the Lord cometh out of his place to puniſh the Inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity.* As if he had ſaid, *Hide your ſelves till the ſtorm be over*, till the great rain of my ſtrength be gone. God, who hath put an inſtinct into the creatures to go to their dens, to their places in a ſtormy ſeaſon, doth ſpecially call to men, and among men, ſpecially to his own people, when 'tis a time of indignation, to go into their Chambers and hide themſelves till it be overblown. Do not ſtand out in the rain, do not ſtand in the ſtorm, get into your chambers; what are theſe Chambers? ſurely not the chambers of our houſes, they are poor refuges, the rain of his ſtrength will break or ſoak into thoſe chambers, how well ſoever roofed or cieled. The chambers in which the people of God are called to hide themſelves, are God himſelf; the Power of God, the Faithfulneſs of God, the Truth of God, the Goodneſs of God, in theſe Chambers he calls his people to hide themſelves. *Solomon* aſſureth us (*Prov.* 81. 10.) *The Name of the Lord is a ſtrong tower, the righteous runneth into it and is ſafe.* As God hath taught the beaſts to run into their dens, ſo he inſtructs us in his Word to run into his Name, as to a ſtrong tower, where we may be ſafe. *David* ſaid (*Pſal.*57. 1.) *Under the ſhadow of thy Wings ſhall be my refuge until this calamity be overpaſt*; That is, I will put my ſelf under thy protection, while the ſtormy ſhowers laſt. The Hen gathereth her *young ones* under her wings; ſo would Chriſt the Jewiſh Nation, both for comfort and ſafety, and they refuſed him; What followed? The next verſe tells us, *Deſolation.* What could ſave them when the *Roman Eagle* ſpread her wings againſt them, who would not come under the wing of Jeſus Chriſt! (*Matth.* 23. 37.) 'Tis not any worldly refuge, not any arm of fleſh, but the ſhadow of the Lord's wings that can hide us in an evil day from the evil of the day. They who get and keep cloſe to God by Faith, need not fear the worſt ſtorms which this world can raiſe againſt them.

And hence, let ſinners in general take warning; ſuppoſe you ſhould live all your days in this world without a ſtorm, I mean, without any outward trouble, yet remember, there will be a ſtormy day, the day of the great rain of the ſtrength of God will come, he will rain down vengeance upon all the ungodly in that day; *Upon the wicked he ſhall rain ſnares, fire and brimſtone, and an horrible tempeſt in that day* (*Pſal.* 11. 6.) Therefore ſee that you have a refuge againſt that day, when many ſhall (as it is ſaid, *Rev.* 6.) *Call to the rocks, hide us, and to the mountains, fall upon us, cover us from the preſence of him that ſits on the Throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.* Although we ſhould have proſperity or fair weather as long as we live in this world, yet there is a day of wrath coming; be not then to ſeek of a hiding place, which is only to be had in and by Jeſus Chriſt; He is the man chiefly intended by the Prophet (*Iſa.* 32. 2.) *That ſhall be a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempeſt.* If you are without him in that day, you ſtand naked to the wrath of God, and that will quickly ſoak into you, or ſink you for ever.

Secondly, As the beaſts going to their dens for ſhelter, may inſtruct us, ſo it may reprove and upbraid us, and it will be at laſt a dreadful reproof, upon all that are backward in this thing, to provide themſelves of a Covert againſt the Storm. The *Jews* (as hath been formerly toucht) were upbraided with the *Crane, the Turtle, and the Swallow*, becauſe they knew the time of their coming (*Jer.*8.7.) They knew when ſuch a Countrey would be unfit, or unſafe for their ſtay, and therefore they removed to places more comfortable to, and commodious for them: *But* (ſaith he) *my people know not the judgment of the Lord.* As if he had ſaid, my people have not ſo much wit or fore-caſt as the Crane, and the Swallow, they know not what is good and ſafe, much leſs, what is beſt and ſafeſt for themſelves; let it ſnow and rain never ſo faſt, either they ſtand it out and out-dare it, or they ſeek ſuch coverts from it, as cannot be a covering to them.

'Tis ſaid, the very Vermine, Mice and Rats, will (by a natural preſage) come out of a houſe that is ready to fall. They are more ſenſleſs than Mice or Rats, who haſten not to a place of ſafety, when they perceive the foundation of that ſinful State wherein they ſtand, ſinking, and the walls cracking on every hand. How faithleſs then are they, how preſumptuous and ſenſleſs who haſten not out of *Babylon*, when they hear the Scriptures of truth ſaying not only that *Babylon* ſhall fall, or is falling, but, as of a thing already done and paſt, *Babylon is fallen, is fallen!* Is it not dangerous to ſtay in a falling houſe, in a houſe which ſhall ſo certainly fall, that 'tis ſaid, and ſaid again, *'tis fallen, 'tis fallen.* O take heed of a hard heart when you hear of a falling houſe, or of a ſtorm ready to fall upon your heads. When God threatned *Pharaoh* to bring a ſtorm of hail upon the land of *Egypt* (that was indeed a rain of his ſtrength) a mighty rain of hail, the Text ſaith (*Exod.* 9. 20.) *He that feared the word of the Lord amongſt the ſervants of Pharaoh, made his ſervants and his cattle flee into the houſes*; but they whoſe hearts were hardned, let them ſtay abroad, and ſo they periſhed. Sinners, you hear of a worſe ſtorm of hail threatned than that which fell upon *Egypt*, even the great rain of the ſtrength of the Lord's wrath, revealed from heaven againſt you; ſhall the beaſts in ſuch a day of diſtreſs go into dens, and remain in their places, and do you think to abide the day of the Lord's terrible coming? Do you think to ſtand it out when he appeareth? The Prophet foreſhewing the day of Chriſt's firſt coming in frail fleſh, ſaid (*Mal.* 3. 2.) *Who may abide the day of his coming: and who ſhall ſtand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiners fire, and like fullers ſope.* Now if the day of Chriſt's firſt coming was ſuch as ſinners could not abide, when he came only with *refining fire* to fetch out the droſs of their ſins, and purge away their corruptions, ſhall ſinners (impenitent and unbelieving ſinners I mean) preſume that they ſhall be able to abide or endure that day of his ſecond coming, when he ſhall come with conſuming fire to puniſh and take vengeance on them for their ſins! Away with theſe vain confidences, which (as the Prophet told the *Jews*, *Jer.* 2. 37.) *the Lord will certainly reject, and in which you can never proſper*, and go into thoſe *holes of the rock*, the wounds of a crucified Saviour, in which, and in which only, you may be ſafe and ſaved for ever, from the Snow and great Rain of God's ſtrength, the power of his anger, which none know at preſent (*Pſal.* 90. 11.) but all muſt feel, who are not ſheltred from it by *Jeſus Chriſt, who delivereth us from the wrath to come* (1 Theſ. 1. 10.)

VERS. 9, 10, 11.

Out of the South cometh the Whirlwind, and cold out of the North.

By the breath of God Froſt is given; and the breadth of the Waters is ſtraitned.

Alſo by watering he wearieth the thick Cloud: he ſcattereth his bright Cloud.

E*lihu* having ſpoken of Thunder and Lightning, as alſo of Snow and Rain, with their effects upon man and beaſt, at the 6, 7, and 8. verſes laſt opened, he in the 9. and 10. verſes ſpeaks of the Winds, with their effects; Firſt, Cold; Secondly, Froſt: or, firſt, of the Wind; ſecondly, of the Cold; and thirdly, of the Froſt; and then at the 11. verſe, of the wonderful works of God in diſpoſing and diſperſing the water in the Clouds, for the refreſhing of the earth by Rain in its ſeaſon.

In the 9. and 10. verſes (I ſay) he diſcourſeth of the Winds; and though there be four Cardinal or principal Winds, the Eaſt, Weſt, North and South, which are ſubdivided into thirty two Winds according to the Mariners Compaſs, yet here *Elihu* treats by name of two Winds only, the South Wind, and the North-Wind; which two are often and eminently ſpoken of in Scripture; which two, as they come from directly contrary Points in the Heavens, ſo they produce contrary effects, famouſly known among men, on earth. And therefore, I conceive, *Elihu* gives inſtance only about them, as being more generally taken notice of.

Verſ. 9. **Out of the South cometh the Whirlwind**, &c.

The word which we render **the South**, properly ſignifieth a *Chamber*, an inner Room, or ſecret place, *a Chamber within a Chamber*, which is the moſt private, retiring Room or Chamber. *Gen.* 43. 30. *Judg.* 16. 9. 2 *Sam.* 13. 10. 1 *Kings* 20. 30. *Cant.* 3. 4. We ſay, *Out of the South*, &c. And the reaſon why the South is expreſſed by that word which ſignifieth a ſecret Chamber, is, becauſe the South Pole is ſcituate or placed in the moſt ſecret part of the world, as to them who inhabit Northern Climates; they who live neareſt the North Pole, are fartheſt removed from the South. And as the ſame word in the Hebrew Tongue ſignifieth the South and an inner Chamber, ſo at the 9. Chapter of this Book (*verſ.* 9.) we read of *the Chambers of the South*. The Septuagint render, *He bringeth the Wind, or Whirlwind, out of his Cellar*. Cellars or Store-houſes being ſecret places, and removed out of ſight, for the keeping of Goods and Wares that are laid up there; and it is elegantly expreſſed, that Winds come out of Store-houſes, as if God did lay them up, till he hath occaſion to draw them forth and uſe them.

חדר *Cubiculum interius, penetrale; omne quod in intimis partibus eſt.*

Polus Antarcticus occultatur à nobis, utpote depreſſus ſub noſtro Horizonte, ſecundum quantitatem quo Polus Arcticus ſuper Horizontem elevatur. Aquin.

Some render it by a general word, *Out of a ſecret place cometh the Whirl-wind.*

ἐκ ταμιείων ἐπέρχονται ὀδύναι. *E promptuariis ſuperveniunt dolores.* Sept.

We ſay beſt, *Out of the South*; Firſt, becauſe it is expreſly oppoſed to the North in the Text; Secondly, becauſe Southern Winds are the ſtrongeſt and moſt vehement Winds, as the Northern are the coldeſt. For though we find by experience, that ſtrong Winds blow from all Quarters of Heaven, yet uſually the South brings forth the ſtrongeſt Winds; and therefore in Scripture a ſudden and violent Wind is called a Whirl-wind out of the South. When the Prophet would deſcribe an unavoidable coming of Judgment, he ſaith (*Iſa.* 21. 1.) *As Whirl-winds in the South paſs through, ſo it cometh*, &c. And again (*Zech.* 9. 14.) *The Lord God ſhall blow the Trumpet, and ſhall go with Whirlwinds of the South.* Both places expreſſing it, according to what was moſt uſually and commonly known, great Winds coming out of the South. That place (*Pſal.* 126. 4.) is rendred by ſome (not as we, *Turn again our Captivity, O Lord, as the Streams in the South*, but) *Turn again our Captivity, as Storms or Whirlwinds in the South.* The Church prayed that God would make ſome ſudden change of things, like that made by the Southern Storms and Whirlwinds. Yet we are not to underſtand it, as if all Southern Winds were Whirlwinds or tempeſtuous, favourable refreſhing Winds come from thence ſometimes, as may be collected from the 17. verſe of this Chapter, and from *Canticles* 4. verſe 16. and and as is expreſſed (*Acts* 27. 13.) *The South Wind blew ſoftly*. So that *Elihu* ſpeaks of what is often and uſually done, not of what is always done, when he ſaith, *Out of the South cometh*

Redeamus tua benignitate ab exilio & captivitate, ea celeritate, qua turbo & procella erumpunt ab auſtrali plaga. Bold.

The Whirlwind] That's wind with an addition a *Whirlwind* is more than an ordinary wind. Wind is one of thoſe Meteors, which God the Author of Nature hath provided for the uſe of man: It is called by one of the Ancients, the *agitation or flux of the Air*. Much might be ſpoken about the natural cauſes and matter of winds, but I ſhall not inſiſt upon that. A Whirlwind is a tempeſtuous wind; the Greeks have a ſpecial word for it, and ſo have the Latines, both importing violence, or that which troubles and turns all upſide down, and throweth every thing out of its place: Such a boiſterous thing is the Whirlwind, 'tis a toſſing, tumbling, breaking, diſturbing wind; this *Whirlwind cometh out of the South.*

סופה

Turbo, à Græcis τύφων à Plinio vortex vocatur. Ventus eſt Aëris fluxus ſeu agitatio Damaſc. l. 2. *de Orthod. fide. c.* 8.

It cometh.] A like or the ſame expreſſion is applied to the Sun, (*Pſal.* 19. 3.) *He hath ſet a Tabernacle for the Sun, which is as a Bridegroom coming out of his Chamber, and rejoyceth as a ſtrong man to run a Race.* As the Sun cometh every morning out of his Chamber by God's appointment; ſo doth the Whirlwind at ſpecial times appointed by God. 'Tis fitly ſaid ſuch fierce and unruly winds *come forth*, for they are as it were kept faſt in Priſon till God takes off their Bonds, and opens their Priſon-door, and then out they come furiouſly and boiſterouſly, to do the work God hath commanded and deſigned them to. *Out of the South cometh the Whirlwind.*

When *Elihu* ſaith, The Whirlwind, the great Wind cometh out of the South, he doth not expreſs, yet intimates, who it is that brings the Whirlwind out of the South; The Whirlwind cometh, but it doth not come before it is ſent. The ſcope of *Elihu* all along is, to ſhew the mighty power of God in ordering and diſpoſing the Meteors, and among them theſe mighty winds.

Hence Note, *Winds come at Gods appointment.*

He is the Author of them, he is the diſpoſer of them, he rules their moſt unruly motions. The Heathen Poets feigned a god of the winds, whom they called *Æolus*, who was Pictur'd or Statued puffing the winds out of his mouth. But 'tis *Jehovah* who hath the winds in his power, the winds and the Whirlwind. Neither the Heathen god *Æolus*, nor the God of this World the Devil, nor the Devils of this World, Witches and Conjurers, have any power of their own over the leaſt breath of wind, either to raiſe or lay it. *Agur* deſcribing the excellency of God, both in himſelf and in his working, ſaith among other things (*Prov.* 30. 4.) *He gathereth the Wind in his Fiſt*; implying, that God hath the winds in his hand, even as a man carrieth a thing in his hand, or holdeth it in his Fiſt, keeping it there, or letting it out at pleaſure, or as he liſteth. (*Pſal.* 135. 7.) *He bringeth the Wind out of his Treaſure.* We read the ſame in the Prophet (*Jer.* 10. 13. *Jer.* 5. 1, 16.) Theſe Treaſures out of which God brings the wind, ſome call the Secrets of Nature, or ſecret natural Cauſes; but I conceive 'tis an alluſion to the Cuſtoms of men, who lay up things uſeful in private places, that they may have them at hand when occaſion calls: Chriſt teacheth us, in imitation of them, to get and keep by us ſuch Treaſuries of ſaving Truth (*Mat.* 13. 52.) To be ſure, God hath the winds ready, he hath a ſtore and ſtock of them, which upon any occaſion he can bring forth.

God makes a twofold uſe of the winds, or there are two general purpoſes, for which he brings them out of his Treaſures. Firſt, for good; Secondly, for hurt to the World: Firſt, in Mercy; Secondly, in Judgment.

Firſt, God brings them forth out of his Treaſures in a way of Mercy, and for good to Mankind. And there is a ſixfold good or good uſe, for which God brings the winds out of his Treaſure.

Firſt, to cleanſe and purge the Air; therefore, by ſome the winds are called, *The Brooms of Heaven.* When the Air is corrupt and foul, God ſweepeth it by theſe Brooms. And we find, when Judgment is threatned, a negative is put upon the wind as to this uſe, (*Jer.* 4. 11.) *A dry wind of the High-Places of the Wilderneſs, toward the Daughter of my people, not to fan or to cleanſe, &c.* Implying that one merciful uſe of the winds, is to fan and to cleanſe the Air, as Corn is fanned and cleanſed.

Venti Aquilonares dicuntur ſcopæ cœli, quod reddunt aërem mundum. Vatabl.

Secondly, God brings the winds out of his treaſure to temper the Air. When the Air is cooled by a gentle Brieze, we count it a mercy in hot ſeaſons. And ſuch is the goodneſs of God, that in thoſe places where the heat is moſt troubleſome, there are many cool Briezes. We read (*Gen.* 3. 8.) *of the cool of the day*, or (as the Margin hath it) *the wind of the day*, implying that the extream heat of the day is uſually aſſwaged and cooled by the wind. The Prophet (*Jer.* 14. 6.) deſcribing a time of drought, ſaith, *The wild Aſſes did ſtand in the high places, they ſnuffed up the wind like Dragons.* To ſnuff the wind in time of drought, is a great refreſhing; wind refreſheth the body as well as food, and 'tis ſome refreſhing in famine, or want of food.

Thirdly, The wind is a *Rain-bringer*. We ſay when the wind riſeth there will be rain. Thus (1 *Kings* 18. 45.) before the mighty rain which *Elijah* foretold, we read of a wind; *The Heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain.* When *Eliſha* told thoſe three Kings diſtreſſed for want of water, *Ye ſhall not ſee wind, neither ſhall ye ſee rain, yet that valley ſhall be filled with water* (2 Kings 3. 17.) he thereby implyed, that wind is the ordinary forerunner of rain. We, indeed, tranſlate (*Prov.* 25. 23.) *The North wind driveth away the rain*; yet we put in the Margin, *The North wind bringeth forth the rain.* It is true of both, the wind ſcattereth and driveth away the rain, the wind alſo bringeth rain.

Fourthly, The wind cauſeth vegetables to flouriſh. A ſweet gale of wind is not only good for man and beaſt, but for the graſs, and for the herbs, for plants and trees, the blowing of the winds maketh them flouriſh; in alluſion unto which the Church ſpeaks (*Cant.* 4. 16.) *Awake, O North wind, and come thou South, blow upon my garden, that the ſpices thereof may flow out*; that is, that my Graces, my faith in thee, my love to thee, &c. may put forth and appear. The ſpiritual wind, the breathings of the Spirit, draw forth ſpiritual fruit from the heart, and in the life of believers, as the natural draws forth the natural fruits of the Earth.

Fifthly, The winds are beneficial and helpful for the drying up of the waters, they make the earth clean as well as the air. It is ſaid (*Gen.* 8. 1.) after the whole world was drowned, *God made a wind to paſs over the earth, and the waters aſſwaged.* The wind is a dryer as well us the Sun.

Sixthly, There is a great uſe of the winds, as to artificials. What mighty things are done by the wind? By it, Mills are turn'd to grind Corn at Land, and Ships are moved to carry both Men and Merchandize at Sea, there were hardly any paſſing from Nation to Nation, far disjoyned by water, but by the advantage or help of winds; by the help of winds Merchants bring treaſure and precious things from one end of the earth to the other. Theſe and many more are the common benefits of the winds, for which the Lord brings them out of his treaſures.

Secondly, The winds have their evil effects, God ſends them ſometimes for a plague, or in a way of Judgment.

Firſt, Winds often infect the air; the Lord can ſend, as a cleanſing, ſo a corrupting wind.

Secondly, As wind brings rain, ſo it hinders or blows away the rain.

Thirdly, The Lord ſends the wind to break and overthrow all that ſtands before it. What doth not the whirlwind overthrow? Houſes and Trees at Land are blown down; goodly Ships at Sea, richly laden, have been ſunk and overſet by tempeſtuous winds. God ſent a whirlwind out of his treaſure, which cauſed the Mariners in *Jonah* to caſt their Merchandize into the Sea, and *Jonah* himſelf too. What croſs and tempeſtuous winds did the Apoſtle *Paul* meet with in his voyage to *Rome* (Acts 27.)

Further, That the Lord bringeth the winds out of his treaſure, is matter of great comfort to all that have an intereſt in the Lord; He can command the winds for them, and againſt their enemies; the wind cometh out of his Chamber, and it ſhall do as he commandeth. It is ſaid (*Nahum.* 1. 3.) *The Lord hath his way in the whirlwind, and in the ſtorm, and the clouds are the duſt of his feet:* That is, he ruleth whirlwinds, he walks in and works by the whirlwind, and by ſtorms. And as we may take it properly, ſo metaphorically; that is, in the moſt tempeſtuous diſpenſations and providences, when the world is, as it were, in an Hurricane, as boiſterous winds in ſome places are called. In the greateſt concuſſions and confuſions, whether of things or perſons, the Lord carrieth on his work in a regular courſe. As the great toſſings of the air by natural winds, ſo the greateſt toſſings of affairs by the ſtrong and various paſſions of mens ſpirits in the world (which we may call civil winds, yea whirlwinds) are under the ordering of divine power and wiſdom. The Prophet (*Iſa.* 17. 13.) admoniſheth the wicked to take heed and give glory to God: *For* (ſaith he) *the Nations ſhall ruſh like the ruſhing of many waters; But God ſhall rebuke them, and they ſhall flee far off, and ſhall be chaſed as the chaff of the mountains before the wind, and like a rolling thing before the whirlwind. A rolling thing* is unſtedfaſt at all times, and a whirlwind will make that roul and tumble which is very ſtedfaſt; it maketh Trees to ſhake, it maketh ſtrong Towers tremble: Now if the whirlwind cauſeth things that are fixed and ſtrong to ſhake and move, what will it do to thoſe that are light and unfixed, *rolling things!* That which is (as men judg) fixt and ſteady as a Rock, *ſhall be as a rolling thing before the whirlwind* of the Lord's diſpleaſure, The Margin of our Bibles calls this *rolling thing, Thiſtle-down.* We know what the down of a Thiſtle is, which at ſome ſeaſons of the year falls off, and is the lighteſt thing imaginable. When there is not a breath of wind ſtirring, the Thiſtle-down will ſtir, roll, and move from place to place; what then, think you, will become of Thiſtle-down before a mighty wind, a whirlwind? The wicked ſhall be as Thiſtle-down before the whirlwind; but the people of God need not fear, for (as 'tis ſaid of the Sea, ſo of the wind) *his way is in it*, he rules the proper, and he rules the metaphorical whirlwinds, which toſs and tumble the ſtate and affairs of this world. To cloſe this matter,

We may take notice of ſeveral wonderful things in and about the wind; and becauſe *Elihu* ranks this among the great works of God, who *doth marvellous things which we comprehend not*, not only in Thunder and Lightning, in Snow and Rain, but in the winds, therefore I will reckon up ſeven wonders which peculiarly concern the winds.

Firſt, This is conſiderable, That there is ſcarce any Country but breeds ſome wind or other, which blows moſt there, and exerciſeth a peculiar force upon it; theſe are called *Provincial Winds.* The North-weſt wind (ſaith *Pliny*) is proper to the *Athenians*, other parts of *Greece* having little acquaintance with it. The North-eaſt wind afflicts *Calabria.* And that ſeveral other winds, are congenial to other Countries, whereof ſome are benign and favourable, others vexatious and uncomfortable to them, may be ſeen in the Authors quoted in the Margin.

Secondly, 'Tis a wonder that the ſame wind in one Country cauſeth fair weather, in another rain and ſtorms.

Thirdly, That the ſame wind is in one place very healthy, and in another cauſeth ſickneſs by corrupting the air, and ſo the blood and ſpirits of men. A learned Author ſaith, when*ever the South wind bloweth in ſuch a Country or City, the people fall ſick.*

Nulla propemodum regio eſt, quæ aliquem ventum ex ſe naſcentem, & circa ſe cadentem non habeat. Sen. l. 5. Natur. quæſt. c. 17. Plin. *l.* 1. *cap.* 47. *In inſula Lesbo Oppidum Mytilene magnificè ædificatum eſt, ſed imprudenter poſitum, quod in ea civitate cū Auſter flat, homines ægrotant.* Vitru. *l.* 1. *c.* 9.

Fourthly, That's alſo obſervable, that ſome winds are hot and dry, others cold and moiſt, according to the temperature of the places from whence they come, and through which they paſs to us.

Fifthly, 'Tis marvellous that in ſome parts of the world, the wind blows conſtantly one way; ſuch are called *trade winds.* Expert Sea-men know where to fetch a wind, when once they get to ſuch a point they never miſs it. The *Eteſian* winds are famouſly known in Hiſtory, blowing out of the Eaſt or North-eaſt yearly at one time, for the ſpace of forty days together; theſe *Cicero* called *Anniverſary winds.*

Sixthly, Yet in moſt places nothing is more unconſtant than the wind; inconſtancy it ſelf is Emblemed by the winds. No man knoweth when or where to have them certain for an hour; Hence we ſay, *Take the wind while it ſerveth; Wind and Tide tarry for no man.*

Seventhly, That's alſo wonderful, That winds blow at once from contrary points, North and South, &c. at the ſame time. *Daniel* (Chap. 7. 2.) ſaw in a viſion the *four Winds ſtriving together upon the Sea*; All the winds were let looſe together, contending (as it were) for victory. Naturaliſts diſpute and queſtion whether contrary winds can blow at once; *Ariſtotle*, the great Philoſopher, affirms they cannot, becauſe (ſaith he) the one muſt needs beat back the other. That's true; yet, what hinders but that for a time there may be ſuch a conflict or battel fought between them, as may extreamly trouble both the air and waters, and ſhake vehemently ſuch things as ſtand in their way on earth? The Natural Hiſtorian reports, That two conſiderable Cities in the *Corinthian Bay*, were ſuddenly ſwallowed up by the Sea, which inundation was cauſed by the fierce blowing of the North and South wind at one and the ſame time. *Out of the South cometh the whirlwind,*

And cold out of the North.

מִמְזָרִים *A radice* זרה *eventilare, diſpergere. Per ventos diſpergentes intelliguntur venti aquilonares, qui diſpergunt nubes, & aerem ventilent. Boreas αἰθρηγενέτης dicitur quia gignit αἰθρίαν ſerenitatem.* Homer. Odyſſ.

The Hebrew is out of the *ſcattering* or *fanning Winds cometh cold*; Mr. *Broughton* renders, *And cold from the fair weather-Winds.* Our tranſlation determines it,

Cold out of the North.] Common experience teacheth us, that the Northern coaſts are cold, yea the coldeſt coaſts: The coldeſt freezing winds come out of the North, as the ſtrongeſt out of the South. Here is North and South, and here are the ſeveral effects of them; the South breaths warmth, and the North cold.

Hence note, *Cold comes at Gods call.*

Now the South wind bloweth, and then 'tis warm, anon the North wind blows, and then 'tis cold. God hath his ſpecial ſtore-houſes for heat and cold, he brings cold out of his Northern ſtore-houſe, and not only heat but whirlwinds out of his ſtore-houſe in the South. Cold is diſpoſed of by God as heat is, ſometimes for the good, ſometimes for the hurt of the creature. Cold is both needful and hurtful; cold is needful to the body of man, and cold is needful to the body of the earth; therefore God hath that in his treaſure to ſerve the uſes of man with. Changes from heat to cold, ſet forth, Firſt, God's power; Secondly, His care: If the air were kept always at one rate, or in the ſame temper, neither windy nor ſtormy, neither very hot nor very cold, we poſſibly would like it better, but it would be worſe for us. Changes in the air are ſo uſeful, that nature could not be well preſerved without them; we would have all things alike, we would have it always warm weather, always fair, but God ſeeth 'tis beſt for us, there ſhould be changes in natural things for our natural good. It is alſo beſt for our ſpiritual good to have providential changes. God ſeeth it needful to leave us ſometimes under clouds and darkneſs, to bring cold as well as heat out of his treaſures, to ſend us chilling times as well as ſpringing times; cold is as good for our inner man as heat, ſtorms as calms, foul weather as fair. *Now for a ſeaſon* (ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 *Pet.* 1.6.) *if need be ye are in heavineſs through manifold temptations.* The coldneſs of the air kills the weeds in our grounds, ſo doth the cold of affliction and tribulation the weeds of corruption in our ſouls. Seaſonable cold makes trees and plants more fruitful in their ſeaſons: The cold nipping froſts of affliction, diſpoſe our ſouls) (through the bleſſing of God) to a gracious fruitfulneſs in every good word and work. We would always have it ſpring and Sun-ſhine, peace and ſafety, but God knows it muſt be otherwiſe; perpetual ſhining and fair ſeaſons are reſerved for Heaven. While we are on Earth the cold of adverſity is as advantagious to our ſpiritual condition, as the coldneſs of the air is to our natural. *Out of the South cometh the whirlwind, and cold out of the North.*

Frigora tempeſtivo arborum & plantarum conferunt fœcunditati Garc. Meteor.

Verſ. 10. By the breath of God froſt is given, and the breadth of the waters is ſtraitened.

In the former part of this verſe, we have the ſupream cauſe of the froſt, and in the latter an effect of it. *By the breath of the Lord froſt is given*, or, *he giveth froſt by his breath.* The Hebrew is active, we tranſlate paſſively.

Flante Deo, i. e. *Deo ipſum flatum cauſante.*

By the breath of the Lord.] That is, God breathing or blowing; not that the Lord uſeth breathing or blowing properly, he is a Spirit: But the Lord is ſaid to breath or blow when he commands the wind to blow or breathe. The winds are called Gods breath, or ſpirit. Some of the Hebrew Doctors, underſtand nothing elſe but his bare will and command, or the intimation of his mind to have it ſo; but I rather take it for the froſt-making winds which are ſent by God. *By the breath of the Lord*, that is, when the Lord appoints and orders cold winds to come out of his treaſure, when the Lord gives out the word of command, cold winds iſſue forth, and then froſt appears. *David* affirms in general, (*Pſal.* 33.6.) *By the word of the Lord were the Heavens made, and all the Hoſt of them by the breath of his mouth.* The Heavens and their Hoſts, all the powers and vertues of them, all the influences and efficacies of them are given out by the breath of the Lord. And among other things that are given *by the breath of the Lord*

A verbo Dei dat Gelu, Chald. pro à voluntate Dei dat gelu, ſc. Arcturus.

Froſt is given.] Froſt is cold in exceſs, froſt is great cold; every cold is not freezing cold. The word which we render *froſt*, is often rendred *ice*, and it cometh from a root which ſignifieth *to make bald*; becauſe froſt and ice cover the graſs (which is to the ground as hair to the head of man) and ſo make the ſurface of the Earth ſmooth like a bald head. Froſt alſo makes the ſurface of the Earth, not only ſmooth, but bright and ſhining like a bald head. *By the breath of the Lord froſt is given.*

Hence note, *Froſt is the gift or diſpenſation of God.*

Changes, in the air, as well as changes in the eſtates, lives or hearts of men, are from the Lord (*Pſal.* 147.17.) *He giveth ſnow like wool: he ſcattereth the hoar froſt like aſhes: He caſteth forth his ice like morſels; who can ſtand before his cold?* It is God's ice and his cold as well as his rain or his Sun-ſhine. When the Pſalmiſt ſaith, *He ſcattereth the froſt, he caſteth forth his ice*, he ſaith the ſame thing in ſubſtance which *Elihu* doth here, *By the breath of the Lord froſt is given:* There is a continual dependance of all creatures in their motions and operations, as well as in their beings, upon the will of God, 'tis by his word that froſt is given. Some deny the working of the firſt cauſe with the ſecond cauſes, any otherwiſe than as God once gave them a working power, and conſerveth that power once given them. Whereas indeed God hath not only given a general power to the creature, not only hath he ſaid, *There ſhall be froſt ſometimes, and heat ſometimes, and fair weather ſometimes*, but when-ever the heat, or cold, or froſt come, they come by a particular order from him. As all things, men eſpecially, have their being in him, ſo their working and moving from him; and that not only becauſe he makes us in general, working, moving creatures, but as to every ſpecial work and motion. This the Prophet aſſerts, while he puts thoſe reproving queſtions (*Iſa.* 10.15.) *Shall the axe boaſt it ſelf againſt him that heweth therewith? or ſhall the ſaw magnifie it ſelf againſt him that ſhaketh it? as if the rod ſhould ſhake it ſelf againſt them that lift it up, or as if the ſtaff ſhould lift up it ſelf, as if it were no wood.* Living and natural creatures move no more without God, than artificial and liveleſs inſtruments (ſuch as the axe and ſaw, the rod and ſtaff) can move themſelves without the hand or help of man. *By the breath of the Lord froſt is given,*

And the breath of the water is ſtraitned.

Glacies eſt copia aquæ in anguſto.

This is an effect of the former. Froſt drinks up the waters, and ſo ſtraitens them: ſome define ice, which is made by the froſt, *to be ſtore of water in a little room, or narrow compaſs.* Every years experience tells us, that the waters are pinched with the froſt. Waters which were out before a froſt, are fetcht in or contracted by the froſt; hence 'tis ſaid (*Chap.* 38.30.) *The waters are hid as with a ſtone*, which is of the ſame ſenſe with this expreſſion, *The breadth of the water is ſtraitned*; God brings the waters into their old bounds, or into narrower bounds than before, by froſt. From this effect of froſt, that the breath of the water is ſtraitned by it,

Note, *Cold is a ſtraitner.*

'Tis ſo in natural things, 'tis ſo alſo (to mind the reader of that occaſion'd this note) in ſpirituals and morals. Take coldneſs as it is an ill diſpoſition, or an indiſpoſition upon the heart, it ſtraitens us, as to the doing of any good; for, as Chriſt hath foretold us (*Mat.* 24.12.) that *becauſe iniquity ſhall abound* (in the latter days) *the love of many ſhall wax cold:* So whenever love or zeal, or any grace in us waxeth cold, piety, in all the acts or whole compaſs of it, will certainly decline and be ſtraitned. He that before had a large heart, becomes narrow-hearted, and is pinched in his ſpirit by this ſinful coldneſs. Warmth enlargeth, Cold ſtraiteneth. God ſends the cold of affliction upon many bad men, to ſtraiten their Luſts, elſe they would keep no bounds, they would overflow all, and it is the great deſign of Satan to ſend a cold upon, or to frieze the ſpirits of all good men, that they may be ſtraitened and made unfit for the ſervice of God. Take heed of a coldneſs in your diſpoſition, for that will be a ſtraitner of your graces; but welcom the froſt of affliction, that may be a ſtraitner of your corruptions. There is nothing we ſhould fear more (except the loſs of them, and the favour of God with them) than to feel our graces ſtraitened; nor is there any thing (except the favour of God) which we ſhould more deſire, than to feel our luſts and corruptions weakned and abated.

Some render this latter part of the verſe not as we, *The breadth of the waters is ſtraitned*; but, *The waters are diſſolved into their breadth.* As if *Elihu* had ſaid, the ice or froſt being diſſolved, the waters return to their wonted latitude. The word rendred *ſtraitened*, may be derived from a root which ſignifieth to *diſſolve*, to melt and pour out. Thus, as according to our tranſlation, we take the latter part of the verſe as an effect of the firſt, froſt being that whereby the breadth of the waters is ſtraitned; ſo according to this tranſlation, it ſtands in oppoſition to the former, *By the breath of the Lord froſt is given, and he again* (by his breath) *diſſolveth the water.* Thawing as well as freezing is from God. Thawing is the melting of the ice; as metal is melted in the fire, ſo ice is melted by the heat of the Sun. Thus the North makes ice, and the South unmakes or melts it. The power of God is to be ſeen in diſſolving thoſe huge rocks and mountains of ice into water, as well as in congealing thoſe mighty floods of water into icy rocks. *David* celebrateth the power of God in this alſo (*Pſal.* 147. 18.) *He ſendeth out his word, and melteth them* (that is, the morſels of ice ſpoken of *verſ.* 17.) *He cauſeth the wind* (a warm thawing wind) *to blow, and the waters flow*, that is, thoſe waters which were bound up by the cold, flow away by heat. Some inſiſt much upon this tranſlation. It is of the Lord that the waters are enlarged or ſtraitned, frozen or diſſolved. I leave it with the Reader which to pitch upon (both are ſafe and honourable to God) and proceed to the next verſe.

Et rurſum latiſſime funduntur aquæ. Vulg. *Ego conſenſerim illis qui participium* מוצק *non arctum vel anguſtum, ſed fuſum aut ſolutum potius reddunt. Sic aquiloni facultatem efficiendi gelu, Auſtro liquandi & fundendi attribuit.* Bold.

Verſ. 11. Alſo by watering he wearieth the thick cloud, he ſcattereth his bright cloud.

There is a fourfold reading or expoſition of the former part of this verſe; *By watering he wearieth the thick cloud.*

First, thus, *For watering*, or, *that he may water the earth, he wearieth the thick cloud*, that is, he calleth up ſo much vapour as burdens or wearieth the thick cloud, that he may have ſufficient for the watering of the earth by rain. God cauſeth his vapour to aſcend, ſaith the Prophet (*Jer.* 10. 13.) that is, he draws up much water by vapors, as the matter of clouds, or as the matter out of which clouds are made, and he fills the cloud ſo full of water, that it can ſcarce bear the weight; and all this he doth for the plentiful watering of the earth.

Secondly thus, *He cauſeth the cloud to give out, or ſpend its water till it be weary.* We ſay of any thing that is ſpent to the laſt, it is tired and wearied. Thus the Lord by watering wearies the thick cloud, commanding the clouds to pour rain upon the earth, till they are tired, till they have ſpent all their ſtore, and cannot yield a drop more. Yet becauſe to water the earth is the moſt proper and natural buſineſs of the cloud, therefore,

Vox ברי *compoſita eſt præpoſitione* ב *& nomine* רי *quo ſignificatur irrigatio, à verbo* רוה *irrigare.* Piſc. *Cum tempus irrigandi terram eſt cogit & condenſat nubes illaſq; magna aquarum copia gravidas efficit.* Inde apud Homerum. Νεφεληγερέτα ζεὺς, i. e. *nubium congregator Jupiter.* Bold. Mercerus.

Thirdly, A learned Expoſitor conceives, that the cloud is not wearied by watering or raining upon the earth; but that on the contrary the cloud is ſaid to be wearied or troubled, when while is is about that work, it is ſcattered or diſperſed by the Sun or Wind.

Fourthly, Others refer this wearying of the cloud, to the command which it receives for the watering of very remote parts of the earth. The Lord ſaith to this or that cloud, remove far off, go and water ſuch a Countrey (it may be a hundred, yea, many hundred miles off the place from whence the vapours were exhaled) and there diſburden thy ſelf, or fall down in ſhowers. When the Lord ſends the cloud a long journey, we may ſay, 'tis even wearied, as a man or beaſt is that hath gone a long journey.

I ſhall not trouble the reader with that wide interpretation of the Latine tranſlator, rendring thus, *The cloud deſires corn*, or *the cloud labours for corn*, that is, to make the earth fruitful, and bring forth abundance of corn. Some of the Ancients have taught that there is a kind of natural marriage, between the earth and the clouds, or between the clouds and the corn, or any other fruits of the earth. Rain is the food of the earth, that is, of Fruits and Plants; to which the Prophet (*Hoſ.* 2. 22.) makes an elegant alluſion. But I paſs this.

Frumentum deſiderat nubes. Vulg. *Cibus arborum imber eſt.* Plin. l. 17. cap. 2.

The ſecond interpretation I judg moſt congruous to the ſcope of the Text, which ſaith clearly, *Alſo by watering he wearieth the thick cloud.*

Whence note, *Thoſe creatures which have greateſt ſtores to give, may quickly have none left to give.*

Here is a cloud and a thick cloud (*Elihu* doth not ſpeak of an ordinary, but of a thick cloud) yet upon the Lord's command to give ſhowers the cloud is quite ſpent and wearied. Though men have the greateſt affluence, the largeſt ſtores and ſtocks, of wealth or riches, yea of gifts and graces, yet they may be wearied, and even drawn dry. The thickeſt clouds, that is, they who have the greateſt treaſures of ſtrength, of wit, of learning and knowledg, are ſoon wearied, exhauſted and emptied, unleſs they live in dependance upon God; Only, *God himſelf can never be wearied by watering.* How much ſoever God giveth out to us, he is not at all emptied, but remains everlaſtingly equally full. And if God will ſpeak to the meaneſt creature, even to that which ſeemeth moſt empty, it ſhall water others and not be wearied. The thick clouds, they who have much, may be ſpent, while he that hath but a little ſhall not be ſpent. The Prophet ſaid to the poor woman (1 *King.* 17. 14.) *The oyl in the cruſe, and the meal in the barrel ſhall not waſte.* The woman might draw out of the oyl as long as ſhe would, and ſtill there would be a ſupply of oyl, nor would the barrel be weary in yielding meal. The Lord can make the creature unwearied, and eſtabliſh it to us for good. A full cloud will ſoon drop away, if the Lord forbear ſupplies; and a few drops ſhall be as an everlaſting ſpring where the Lord gives out ſupplies. We may alſo allude to that (2 *King.* 4. 2.) There was a poor widow, and the creditors were ready to ſeize her two ſons for bondmen, and, ſaith ſhe, I have nothing but a little pot of oyl, and what will that do towards payment? Well, ſaith the Prophet, *Go borrow thee veſſels abroad of all thy neighbours, even empty veſſels, borrow not a few*, and thou ſhalt draw out of the pot, and the pot of oyl ſhall not be wearied by giving oyl into the veſſels. God ſpeaking to the pot of oyl it yielded a continued ſupply; the oyl never ceaſed till the woman had not a veſſel to receive it. If God ſaith to the leaſt pittance of temporals, which a man hath in this world, hold out, it ſhall not fail nor be weary; 'tis ſo likewiſe in ſpirituals, the Lord can make a little grace hold out, the thinneſt cloud ſhall not be wearied by watering.

Again, *By watering he wearieth the thick cloud*, that is, God giveth out ſhowers to water the earth abundantly.

Hence note, *God is very free and liberal.*

He will empty the thick cloud upon the earth to make it fruitful; He gives not only a few drops, but abundance; and this is moſt true in ſpirituals. How doth the Lord ſhower down and empty even whole clouds of good things upon the ſoul! as he hath promiſed, ſo he once did, and ſtill doth ſometimes (and will more in the laſt times) *pour out the Spirit*, which is an alluſion to thoſe ſhowers of rain poured from the clouds: And as the Lord pours out his Spirit, which can never be wearied or drawn dry; ſo the Lord makes uſe of many thick clouds (which hold much ſpiritual rain) even to wearineſs, for the refreſhing of wearied ſouls; I mean ſuch Miniſters as he hath furniſhed with great gifts and graces, ſuch as are not (as the Apoſtle *Jude* compareth ſome Teachers) *Clouds without water*, but (as true and faithful Teachers ſhould be) full of water. The waterings of any *Apollo* are at the Lord's diſpoſe: He ſaith, drop thy word here, drop thy word there, and thou ſhalt not drop thy word any more here or there. The Lord hath often been ſo bountiful to Nations and Churches, that he hath even wearied many thick clouds to water them with the rain of his word. That of the Pſalmiſt (though it be true of the rain properly taken, falling upon the earth) is moſt true of ſpiritual rain falling upon the Churches (*Pſal.* 65. 10.) *Thou watereſt the ridges thereof abundantly, thou ſetleſt the furrows thereof.* And ſo is that alſo to be underſtood (*Pſal.* 68. 9.) *Thou, O God, didſt ſend a plentiful rain* (or *rain of liberalities*) *whereby thou didſt confirm thine inheritance when it was weary.* Thou didſt even weary the thick cloud, to confirm, that is, to refreſh thy weary people.

And ſeeing they who carry and diſpence the Word are in Scripture emblematically expreſſed by Clouds (*Iſa.* 60. 8.) *Who are theſe that flee as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows?* The Preachers of the Goſpel come as ſo many clouds, and the Prophet tells us, the Word cometh *down as rain and ſnow from heaven* (*Iſa.* 55. 10.) which ſuppoſeth a cloud from whence it cometh; for, ſaith the Lord, *So ſhall my word be that goeth out of my mouth, it ſhall not return unto me void, but it ſhall accompliſh that which I pleaſe*;

Seeing, I ſay, the diſpenſers of the Word are compared to clouds) let them that ſit under the droppings of theſe clouds take heed they be not unfruitful, or like that ground which drinketh in the rain, yet beareth nothing but briars and thorns, whoſe end is to be burned. God hath wearied and quite ſpent many of theſe thick clouds by continual dropping upon, and watering the Souls of men, yet how barren, how fruitleſs are they! If but one of the clouds of Heaven be wearied in watering the earth, we ſoon after diſcern the face of the earth refreſhed and renewed by it: And ſhall God weary thoſe heavenly clouds by watering men on earth, and men remain unrefreſhed, unrenewed! Clouds of ſorrow and darkneſs will at laſt weary all thoſe with their waterings and droppings upon them, who, when God hath wearied his Clouds by watering them with the word of life from Heaven, yet remain altogether barren and unfruitful. *By watering he wearieth the thick Cloud.*

He ſcattereth his bright Cloud.

Nubes ex cujus diſcuſſione lucem reſtituit. Hanc appellat nubem lucis Dei, quâ diſpulſa lux & ſerenitas inducitur. Merc.

The former part of the verſe ſpake of *a thick Cloud*, this latter ſpeaks of *a bright Cloud:* The Hebrew is, *The Cloud of this light*; which I conceive is here added; Firſt, to ſhew that Clouds of all ſorts ſerve the purpoſes of God; the thick Cloud, and the bright Cloud, the dark Cloud, and the light Cloud, are made uſe of by him. And as he doth weary the Cloud, that is full of water, ſo he ſcattereth the Cloud that is full of light, or, *he ſcattereth his bright Cloud.*

Nubem lucis, *non dicit lucidam, ſed quæ lucem abſcondit.* Coc.

Yet ſome conſidering it is not ſaid in the letter of the Text, *A light Cloud*, but *a Cloud of light*, underſtand by *a Cloud of light*, ſuch a Cloud as hides and hinders the light, and which being ſcattered, light and fair weather ſucceed. Yet rather as before. But why is it here ſaid, that *he ſcattereth his bright Cloud?* Poſſibly, becauſe he hath no uſe of his bright Cloud, but of his thick Cloud only, when he would water the earth. And indeed Clouds which are only bright, or which have much light, but no water, are of little uſe. Some have much light of knowledg, but no water of inſtruction to drop upon others; ſuch Clouds God diſperſeth and ſcatters. It is not an outward fair appearance, which can bring us into acceptance with God, *The bright Cloud ſhall be ſcattered*, if it have no rain in it, to water the earth.

Again, Some Tranſlate, *His light ſcattereth the Cloud.* So the Text may be read according to the letter of the Hebrew; as if the meaning were this, God by the Sun-beams diſpels or diſperſeth the Cloud; for Clouds are ſcattered ſometimes by the wind, ſometimes by the Sun. That which gathered the Cloud, may alſo ſcatter it. The Sun draweth up the vapours, of which Clouds are formed or compacted, and ſoon after the Sun diſſolveth the clouds, which it had gathered. The ſame power makes and unmakes the Cloud, gives it a body, and takes it away; *His light ſcattereth the Cloud.* That's a truth alſo: For as brightneſs or light is ſcattered among the Clouds, and makes the Clouds appear bright, ſo brightneſs or light ſcatters Clouds, or cauſeth them to diſappear.

Elihu having thus diſcourſed of wind and cold, of freezing and thawing, of working ſome Clouds to wearineſs, and of ſcattering others, proceeds in the two following verſes, to ſhew the ſpecial uſes which the Lord makes of all thoſe motions in the air, and impreſſions upon the Earth, with the Inhabitants of it, whether in a way of Judgment or of Mercy.

VERS. 12, 13.

And it is turned about by his counſel: that they may do whatſoever he commandeth them upon the face of the world in the earth.

He cauſeth it to come, whether for correction, or for his land, or for mercy.

IN the former verſe *Elihu* ſpake of the Clouds, of the thick Cloud wearied with watering, and of the bright Cloud, ſcattered by the Wind or Sun. In theſe two verſes he further ſets down two things more generally concerning the Clouds.

Firſt, He ſhews whence the motion of the Cloud is, and by what or whom directed; *It is turned about by his counſel*, in the beginning of the 12. verſe, and *he cauſeth it to come*, at the beginning of the 13. verſe. There we have the Spring of the Clouds motion.

Secondly, *Elihu* ſhews the purpoſe, or the deſign of the Lord in turning about the Clouds by his counſel; which deſign is laid down two ways.

Firſt, In general, *That they may do whatſoever he commandeth them upon the face of the world in the earth*; that's the firſt purpoſe of God in moving the Clouds, they are to execute his Commands; and that's his general purpoſe.

Secondly, We have his ſpecial purpoſes or deſigns laid down in the cloſe of the 13. verſe, and they are three-fold. *He turneth about the Cloud, and cauſeth it to come,*

Firſt, For Correction.
Secondly, For his Land.
Thirdly, For Mercy.

He cauſeth it to come (ſaith *Elihu*) *whether for Correction, for Land, or for Mercy*; all theſe purpoſes and deſigns God hath in moving and ordering theſe vaſt and mighty bodies of the Clouds, which hang like Mountains in the Air. Thus you have the parts of theſe words, with their ſcope and tendency. More diſtinctly.

Verſ. 12. And it is turned by his counſel.

Firſt, Vapours are raiſed and condenſed into Clouds by the counſel of God, he cauſeth the vapours to aſcend from the ends of the earth, (*Pſal.* 135.7.) Which vapours (as was ſhewed before) are the material cauſe or matter of the Clouds.

Secondly, As by the counſel of God the vapours are raiſed, of which Clouds are made; ſo this Text tells us, that by his counſel the Clouds are moved, and order'd in their motion; which motion of the Clouds is very various; ſometimes one way, ſometimes another, ſometimes forward, ſometimes backward, or retrograde; ſometimes their motion is circular, as the word here uſed by *Elihu* ſeemeth to imply, *It is turned or whirled about*; according to that of *Solomon* (Eccl. 1.6.) *The wind goeth toward the South, and turneth about unto the North; it whirleth about continually, and the wind returneth again according to his Circuit.* We have here three words expreſſing the motion of the wind; Firſt, it goeth; Secondly, whirleth about; Thirdly, returneth again; and all this according to its circuits. It is ſaid of *Samuel* (1 *Sam.* 7.16.) *He went from year to year in circuit, to Bethel and Gilgal, and Mizpeh, and judged Iſrael in all thoſe places.* Thus the winds according to the Commiſſion they receive from God, ride every year in circuit, now they are in one quarter, and anon in another, and whereſoever they come they may be ſaid to do judgment in a way of favour to ſome, and in a way of diſpleaſure unto others. The wind hath his Circuits, and as the Circuit of the wind is, ſuch is the Circuit of the Clouds; the motion of the Clouds is from the wind, ſome ſay from the Starrs, but moſt generally, as to the natural cauſe, it is from the wind, which way the wind moves, that way the clouds move. And though the motion of the clouds and Winds ſeems exceeding unſteady and changeable, up and down, without any certain rule in Nature, yet they Obſerve their Circuits, and run their compaſs as God appoints them. Mr. *Broughton* renders, *And for varieties, he turneth himſelf in his wiſe Counſels for their operation, for whatſoever he Commandeth them; It is turned about* (ſay we)

מסבות ו

By his Counſel.

It ſhould ſeem that God even calls a Council, which way the clouds ſhall be directed, they go by his Counſel: The word in the Hebrew is a very ſignificant one (that I mean) which we render his *Counſel*, others his *skill, his art or cunning*, and there are not a few who render it, they are turned about by *his Engines*, as if God did uſe (as it were) artificial Engines to turn about thoſe mighty bodies of the clouds; Properly the Word ſignifieth *the Ropes and Tackling of a Ship*, in ordering which Ropes and Tackling the whole management of the Ship doth conſiſt. The Mariner

תחבולת *Propriè rei nauticæ peritia, quæ in tractandis funibus potiſſimum conſiſtit, unde nominis appellatio.* Druſ.

ſhews

Convertuntur artificio ipſius. Lev. *Ipſa quoq; incircuitibus volvitur machinis ejus.* Merc. *Vertitur ſolertius ejus.* Druſ.

ſhews his skill and art in ſteering his Ship a right courſe, which he doth, not only by guiding the Rudder, but by ordering the Ropes and Tackling this way and that way, to compaſs or avoid the wind. And the Hebrew word (*Tachbuloth*) here uſed, hath a very great nearneſs in ſound, to the Tackling of a Ship. This is a moſt elegant Metaphor, ſhewing how the Lord doth, as it were, ſteer the courſe of the Clouds, or guide the Clouds, as the Sea-man doth his Ship; his Counſels may be compared to the Tackling and the Ropes, or rather to the Helm, by which the Ship is guided; God is as the great Pilot ſitting at the Stern, and he turns theſe Clouds as his Ship, he turns them about as a Ship tacks this way and that way, to reach her Port and there unlade. The Rain, Snow, and Hail, are the Lading which theſe ſwift Ships, the clouds, carry from place to place, to ſerve the providences of God towards man. This divine conduct of the Clouds is very admirable! The Lord knowing what parts of the Earth need thoſe Commodities, Rain, Snow, &c. Which thoſe aerial Veſſels are laden with, for the enriching of the world. We render it *by his Counſel*, That is, by thoſe means which he in his Wiſdom and Counſel uſeth to turn the Clouds about, they are turned: we tranſlate the word (*Pro.*1.5.) *Wiſe Counſels*, and (*Pro.*20.18.) *Good advice*, there *Solomon* ſaith, *With good advice make war*. And indeed good advice is the beſt tackling for Ships in a war at Sea, and the beſt ammunition for a war at Land: Councel is a noble, a notable Engin: The greateſt things on Earth are turned about by it, and ſo are thoſe great things in the air, the Clouds, *They are turned about by his Counſel*,

That they may do whatſoever he Commandeth them.

Here's the general deſign and purpoſe of God, in turning about the Clouds witherſoever he pleaſe, it is that they may do whatſoever he Commandeth them; where we have the Clouds ſet forth,

Firſt, In their obedience, *They do the Commands of God*.

Secondly, In the univerſality of their obedience, *They do whatſoever he Commandeth*. *Elihu* compares the Clouds and Meteors to good ſervants, who are ready to do what God their Maſter requireth of them; and not only ſo, but they do his Commands every where, or whereſoever he requires them, they do all his Commands, and that in all places, as the Text ſpeaks in the next words,

Upon the face of the world in the Earth.

תכל *Orbis pars terra habitabilis, Græce,* οἰκουμένη.

That is, whereſoever there is Earth, or a World, habitable or unhabitable, thither, or ſo far doth God ſend the Clouds in his ſervice, or for the executing of his will.

Further, when he ſaith, *Upon the face of the World*. his meaning is, upon the outſide or uppermoſt part of the World; and becauſe the Heavens, even the uppermoſt Heavens are a part of the world, with which the Clouds have nothing to do, their buſineſs lying here below, therefore (I conceive) *Elihu* determines it expreſly, *in the Earth*. The Clouds are not raiſed or made for the uſe and ſervice of the world above, but of the world below. *They do whatſoever he Commandeth them upon the face of the world in the Earth*.

Hence Obſerve; Firſt, *The motion of the Clouds is not of themſelves, nor meerly from any natural cauſe or power, but of God*;

He as it were by certain Engins and weights, turns them about; they move not unawares, nor by the uncertain changes of the Air, but according to his direction and unchangeable purpoſe; *It is turned about by his Counſel*. The creatures do not govern themſelves, nor are they Maſters of their own motions; *The way of man is not in himſelf*, ſurely then the way of the Cloud is not in it ſelf. Clouds take their courſe according to the order and command which they receive from God.

Again, The *Clouds are thus turned about by the Counſel of God, that they may do whatſoever he commandeth them*.

Hence Note; *Clouds are ſent about work; there's ſomewhat to be done by every cloud.*

God will not have a Vapour ariſe, nor a Cloud ſtir for nothing, he commands them to be doing. And if God ſend Clouds abroad to work, much more doth he ſend man forth into the world to do work, and appoints him what work to do. The firſt Man was no ſooner made, and ſet up in a ſtate of created perfection, but he was preſently ſet to work, he muſt be doing, (*Gen.*2.15.) *And the Lord God took the man* (or *Adam*) *and put him into the Garden of Eden, to dreſs and to till it*. From the Angels in Heaven to the worms that creep upon the earth, there's no creature but hath ſomewhat to do; yea, not only the living and rational creatures, but (as here in the Text) the very inanimate creatures, the ſenſeleſs creatures, the Clouds, have ſomewhat to do, God ſends them forth upon his buſineſs. Every creature hath a ſervice, hath ſomewhat to do: And therefore, *it will be ill with thoſe whom God finds idle, or doing nothing, or nothing to any good purpoſe*. That ſervant had been doing, to whom Chriſt in the Parable is repreſented thus ſpeaking at the laſt day, *Well done good and faithful Servant*.

Thirdly Obſerve; *The clouds are faithful and ready Servants, they do whatſoever the Lord commands them*.

They are Gods Meſſengers, and they will do any or every Errand, which he ſends them about, and truſts them with. Tis the duty and commendation of a Servant, to do whatſoever he is commanded. A mans ſervant muſt do all his Maſters juſt and lawful commands; he muſt not take up this or that command to do it, and paſs by the reſt. The Rule is plain (*Col.*3.22.) *Servants obey your Maſters in all things:* Much more muſt a Servant of God obey him in all things. (*Acts* 13.22.) *I have found David a man after mine own heart; he ſhall fulfil all my Will.* *David* was a truſty ſervant; he was not like *Saul*, who did the Lords work to halves. The Clouds are truſty Servants, they do whatſoever God commands them; and we may diſtribute the commands which God gives the Clouds, into two Ranks.

Firſt, The command of God to the Clouds is ſometimes for the hurt or puniſhment of man. God threatens and he executes vengeance by the Clouds (*Ezek.* 13. 13.) Winds conveigh the Clouds, and the Clouds pour down overflowing ſhowrs in the anger of God, and great hail-ſtones in his fury, to conſume and ruin all before them.

Secondly, Clouds execute the command of God in a way of favour; as they execute his threatnings, ſo they fulfil his promiſes (*Hoſ.*2.21,22.) Both theſe commands to the Clouds are expreſly mentioned in the next verſe, I only touch them here.

Now foraſmuch as the Clouds are here deſcribed under the notion of the preſt and faithful Servants of God, doing whatſoever he commands, take theſe Inferences from it.

Firſt, If Clouds do whatſoever God commands them, then ſurely Chriſtians ought to do whatſoever Chriſt commands them: Shall the clouds of God out-do the children of God in obedience? We find that admonition often urged in the Scripture of the New Teſtament, eſpecially in the 13. of *Matthew*, and in the 1, 2, and 3. Chapters of the *Revelation*, *He that hath ears to hear, let him hear*. But behold a wonder, they that have no ears hear! The clouds have no ears, and yet they hear, and more than hear, they do the commands of God. What ſhall we ſay, when clouds hear and obey, and men do neither? Let us learn Duty from the clouds. We are ſent to the School of Nature in holy Scripture, almoſt throughout. *Elihu* ſeems to ſay, *Go to the clouds, O ye that are either ſlothful or diſobedient, conſider their work and be wiſe; they are continually doing whatſoever the Lord commands them*.

Secondly, If the clouds do whatſoever God commands them, then here's matter of comfort to all who do what God commands them; ſurely God will not command the clouds to do them any hurt who are doing his commands. If you can ſay that you do the commands of God, you may reſt aſſured God will never give the clouds a command to do you hurt. I do not ſay but an affliction may drop out of the clouds upon a man that is doing the commands of God; or, the Clouds may have a command to drop affliction upon him that is doing the commands of God: but the clouds drop no hurt upon any that do the commands of God. And therefore ſeeing the clouds, even thoſe clouds that carry Storms and Tempeſts, Thunder and Lightning, Snow, Hail, and Rain, the great Rain of his ſtrength, ſeeing I ſay, theſe clouds, that are the Treaſuries and Magazines of ſuch terrible things, are at the command of God, let not his faithful people fear; for when the Winds are Stormy, when the clouds are black, and carry, as we think, nothing but wrath and death in them, God will take care of them, and charge his clouds to do them no harm. Clouds, whatſoever they are doing, are doing Gods commands, and doubtleſs he will not give them any commands for their hurt who keep and do his commands.

And as 'tis matter of comfort to the faithful Servants of God, that he commandeth the clouds in the Air, ſo that he alſo commands thoſe clouds which are raiſed in the hearts of men, or that ſit and appear in their faces and foreheads. We often ſee clouds gather in the Brows of diſpleaſed mortals. As ſome are clouded with ſorrow, ſo others are clouded with anger and wrath. Thoſe black clouds in the faces of men are as dreadful as the blackeſt clouds in the Air; yet the Lord who commands the clouds in the Air, commands the clouds of anger and choler, of wrath and indignation, riſing out of the hearts, and appearing in the faces of men, and can blow them over, or blot them out, whenſoever he pleaſeth.

Thirdly, If the Lord by his commands orders the clouds, and the clouds are ready to execute his commands, then let us have high thoughts of the power of God, and of his commands. If men refuſe the commands of God, if the ſtout and hard hearts of men will not ſtoop to them, the clouds of Heaven, yea, the clods of the earth will. Whatſoever God commands, he will have it done; not one title, not one *Iota* (as Chriſt ſpake of the Law) ſhall fall ſhort, or fail, or be unfulfilled. If ſuch and ſuch will not, others ſhall; if *Jews* will not, *Gentiles* ſhall; if the *Jews* will not carry it like the children of *Abraham*, God can and will raiſe up children unto *Abraham* of the Stones of the ſtreet; he will not want inſtruments to anſwer his Counſels, nor to execute his commands. God will ſhake Heaven and Earth, but he will have his Will done, and his decrees perfected, yea, he will diſſolve and ruin them rather then not have his Word fulfilled. That of *David* (*Pſal.* 136. 2.) *Thou haſt magnified thy Word above all thy Name*, is true of the word of command, as well as of the word of promiſe. God will magnifie the word of his promiſe above all his Name, and he will alſo magnifie the word of his command above all his Name; that is, his Word is as a glaſs, wherein *his Name*, that is, his Holineſs, his Power, his Goodneſs, his Faithfulneſs, his Mercy, his Juſtice, and his Wrath, are to be ſeen, and ſhall be ſeen in the accompliſhments of it towards the Children of Men. Therefore fear and admire this mighty God, who will find means for the executing of his Word, for the doing of all that he hath ſpoken; *The clouds ſhall do whatſoever he commandeth them, upon the face of the World in the Earth.*

Fourthly, If the clouds are turned about by his Counſel, if he doth, as it were, hale the Ropes to turn the clouds which way ſoever he pleaſeth, then, *Whenſoever you ſee the Clouds gathered by the wind, remember God hath ſomewhat to do*, there's ſomewhat to be done; theſe clouds are the Servants of God, there's ſome command or word of God or other to be fulfilled. We do not, as we ought, conſider the Counſel of God in the motion of the clouds; Yea, ſome when the clouds gather, and the ſtorms of Wind or Rain, of Thunder and Lightning, break forth, are more ready to think of the Counſel of the Devil, than of God, they are apt to ſay, ſurely, *There's Conjuring abroad:* What's that, but the executing of the Devils Counſel? Whereas we ſhould ſay, God doth it by his Counſel. Take heed of neglecting God when you ſee the clouds; do not attribute their motion, or the moſt dreadful Storms that proceed from them, to any thing beſide the Counſel of God; for there is not the leaſt vapour can riſe out of the earth, for the making of a cloud, but he cauſeth it to aſcend; there are not any materials gathered toward the conſtituting of a cloud, but they are under Gods hand, he cauſeth the vapours to aſcend: and there is not the leaſt breath of wind can ſtir to move the clouds (clouds are moved with the wind) but as God hath appointed; neither bad Angel, nor good, can ſtir a cloud, but as God willeth. And therefore look to the hand and counſel of God in all theſe things, take heed of ſtaying in any work of Nature, do not aſcribe theſe impreſſions and perturbations in the Air to the power of the Devil and wicked Arts; all is of the Lord, whatſoever is done. One of the Ancients ſaid concerning the Devils, when they deſired leave to enter the Swine, *Why ſhould any of the ſheep of God be afarid of the Devil, when the Devils cannot have power over the Swine without leave from God?* The Devil cannot move a breath of wind, but according to the will of God; though he be the Prince of the Air, yet there is a Prince above him, to whoſe commands all are ſubject, both in Heaven and in Earth.

Fifthly, If it be ſo, that God commands the clouds whenſoever they come with their ſtorms or ſhowers, then aſcribe the praiſe of all the good you receive from the clouds to God, and be humbled under the hand of God, whenſoever you receive outward dammage from the clouds do not ſay it is a chance.

Sixthly, Learn hence the greatneſs and the Soveraignty of God, ſay as they did admiringly (*Matth.* 8 27.) *Who is this, that both the Winds, and Seas, and clouds obey him!* None of the words of the Lord ſhall fall to the ground, as an Arrow or Dart that miſſeth the Mark, or as water ſpilt, that cannot be gathered up again; which latter alluſion is ſpecially intimated (1 *Sam.* 3. 12, 19.) Here in the Text *Elihu* ſets forth the Power and Soveraignty of God, having all creatures at his beck and command, as hath been ſhewed already from other paſſages in this Book, and more will occur hereafter. The Soveraignty of God over men can never be duly acknowledged, till we acknowledge, his Soveraignty over Winds and Rain, Hail and Snow, which lie in the Bowels and boſom of the clouds, and from thence are diſpenſed to the earth, at the will of God.

Seventhly and laſtly, If the clouds do whatſoever God commands them, if they be ſuch faithful ſervants to God, then ſurely the clouds will one day riſe up, or come forth as witneſſes againſt all that reſiſt the commands of God: Not to obey them is bad enough, but to reſiſt them is far worſe. Chriſt would awaken the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, by telling them (*Matth.* 12. 41.) *The men of Nineveh ſhall riſe up in the Judgment againſt this Generation, and ſhall condemn it, becauſe they repented at the preaching of Jonah*; as alſo *the Queen of the South, becauſe ſhe came from far to hear the wiſdom of Solomon.* If Jeſus Chriſt urged thoſe inſtances of the men of *Niniveh*, and of the Queen of the South, to terrifie that Generation for not obeying his commands, or for not receiving the Promiſes of the Goſpel; doubtleſs then in the great Day, the very clouds and winds ſhall come in as witneſſes againſt all thoſe that have reſiſted the will of God in any of his commands. Have the clouds (will he ſay) done whatſoever I commanded them? And have you reſiſted? Have you caſt my words behind your back, when the very clouds have taken up, embrac'd, and fulfilled them? The clouds will be a ſwift witneſs againſt all thoſe that rebel againſt the commands of God: The Snow and Rain, the Winds and Storms fulfilling his word, will bring in a caſting Evid[illegible] againſt all thoſe who have caſt his word behind their backs. All this we may read and ſee in the commanding power of God over the clouds, and in their readineſs to obey.

Elihu proceeds.

Verſ. 13. **He cauſeth it to come, whether for Correction, or for his Land, or for Mercy.**

He, that is, *God cauſeth*, *It*, that is, *the cloud*; *He cauſeth the cloud to find* (ſo the Hebrew) to find every place and every perſon, concerning whom it hath received command and commiſſion from God. Thus the word is uſed by *Moſes* (Numb. 32. 23.) *If ye will not [illegible] ſo, behold, ye have ſinned againſt the Lord, and be ſure your ſin will find you out*; That is, the puniſhment of your ſin, and that Judgment which God will pour out upon you for your ſin, will find you out whereſoever ye are. In this ſenſe the cloud will find us out; we render well, *He cauſeth it to come*, that is, to come to that place or perſon, to that Nation or People, to which himſelf hath appointed it: *He cauſeth it to come,*

Whether for Correction, or for his Land, or for Mercy.

Here are three ends or purpoſes of God, in communicating and commanding forth the clouds, and we may take thoſe three ends two ways.

The firſt of theſe and the laſt concern Man more ſpecially; the ſecond concerns all other creatures, both Plants and Beaſts of the earth; it concerns all, from the Cedar in *Lebanon* to the Hyſop on the wall, among the Plants, and from the Lion to the Mouſe, or to the leaſt of living or ſenſible creatures among the Beaſts; all which God, according to his Soveraign Power, and Juſtice, doth either comfort or afflict as he pleaſeth.

Again, The ends which God aimeth at reſpecting Man, are either for Correction or for Mercy.

אם־לשבט *Sive ad virgam,* ἐάν τε εἰς παιδείαν. *Sive in diſciplinam.*

Firſt, *He cauſeth* the cloud, with whatſoever is its burden, Hail, or Rain, or Snow, to unlade and diſburden it ſelf, *for correction,* The Hebrew is, *for a Rod,* ſo we put in the Margin. A Rod is for correction; therefore we tranſlate for correction, for diſcipline. God ſends the clouds to whip or diſcipline a people. Further, the word ſignifies a Rod under a twofold Notion.

Firſt, A Rod or a Staff to ſmite or ſtrike with, in which ſenſe it is called (*Prov.* 22. 15.) *The Rod of correction*; and at the 8. Verſe of the ſame Chapter, *The Rod of anger*; as alſo (*Iſa.* 10. 5.) *O Aſſyrian, the Rod of mine anger* (ſaith God) Here's a Rod to ſmite with.

Secondly, It ſignifies a Rod to govern with, or to rule with; and hence this word denotes the Scepter of a Prince. The two great *Emblems of Magiſtracy* are *a Sword and a Scepter.* The Scepter is in the faſhion of a Rod or Wand, which imports chaſtening and correction; and from hence it was that the chief of the Tribes of the Children of *Iſrael* (*Numb.* 17.2.) were commanded *to take every one of them a Rod, according to the houſe of their Fathers, twelve Rods, and to write every mans Name upon his Rod, and lay them up in the Tabernacle of the Congregation,* &c. Now thoſe Rods given in by the Princes of the Tribes, were as ſo many Emblems of their Power and Authority, becauſe to the chief Magiſtrate the puniſhment of the faults and miſcarriages of all under his government did belong. And hence the ſame word ſignifies a Magiſtratical Rod or Scepter of Government, and a Tribe or whole Family under the Rod or Scepter of a Governour, becauſe as Rods or Branches grow from one Root, ſo many Tribes or Families from one Father; thus the Twelve Tribes of *Iſrael* ſprung from *Jacob.* And that's the reaſon why the Latin Tranſlator renders this place, not as we, (*whether* for correction) but, *Whether for a Tribe*; the meaning of which reading, *Whether for a Tribe, or for his Land,* is thus given, Whether it be for one particular place, or for the whole Country or earth in general, as will further appear in opening thoſe words, *For his Land.* This Tranſlation of the Vulgar Latin, and the Interpretation given upon it, ſutes well with that of the Prophet (*Amos* 4. 7.) where the Lord ſaith, *I cauſed it to Rain upon one City, and not upon another:* Here was Rain for a Tribe, and not for his Land, not an univerſal Rain all the Land over; he cauſeth it to rain upon one City, not upon another, upon one Tribe, not upon another; that's a good ſenſe, and the word will bear it.

Yet I rather take it here for Rod, which imports chaſtening or correcting, as we Tranſlate, *Whether it be for Correction.* They that carryed the Rod or the Scepter, had alſo the power of correction in their hand, as was toucht before: and that may be one reaſon why when God ſent *Moſes* to *Pharaoh* (Exod. 4. 17.) upon that great Meſſage, the deliverance of the Children of *Iſrael* out of *Egypt,* he commanded him *to take his rod in his hand*; which rod held out theſe two things. Firſt, that *Moſes* came not as a private man to him, but like a Prince, like an Embaſſador from the great King, or like one whom he had appointed to take upon him the government of that people, with a Scepter in his hand. Secondly, to let *Pharaoh* know, that as God ſent him with a power, or cloathed him with a Commiſſion to treat with him, ſo with a power to ſcourge or plague him, even with ten Plagues. As if the Lord had ſaid. O *Pharaoh,* Seeſt thou this rod in the hand of my ſervant *Moſes*; aſſure thy ſelf, thou ſhalt have ſtroke upon ſtroke, plague upon plague, if thou wilt not let my people go. But of that by the way. *He cauſeth it to come for correction, or for a rod.*

Hence Note; *God can correct us by any of his Creatures.*

He can make any thing a rod; he can make neareſt Relations a rod. A Son is ſometimes a rod to his Father; how often have miſcarrying and undutiful Children been made a Rod of correction to their Parents; And they are uſually ſo, when Parents have not duly corrected their Children for their undutifulneſs and miſcarriages. What are cruel men but rods to other men? Some men have been the ſcourges of Mankind. *Attila,* once a great Commander in War, and King of the *Hunnes,* was called *The rod or the ſcourge of God.* And ſo God himſelf called the *Aſſyrian* the rod of his anger (*Iſa.* 10. 5.) *David* called all wicked men in general the Sword of God, in his prayer for deliverance from them (*Pſal.* 17. 13, 14.) *Deliver my Soul from the wicked, thy ſword, from men which are thy hand, O Lord* (*thy correcting hand,* men ordain'd *for Judgment, and eſtabliſht for Correction,* as the Prophet ſpake of the *Chaldeans,* (Hab. 1. 12.) *Who have their portion in this life.* And as the Lord makes men, ſo the Beaſts of the earth, a Rod for the correction of Man. Thus the Lord theatned by his Prophet, *I will ſend among them, Sword, and Peſtilence, and noiſome Beaſts.*

Flagellum Dei.

Here in the Text we have a rod made of a Cloud, a ſtrange kind of rod; I'le ſend it for a rod, it ſhall come for correction. Parents correct their Children with rods, God corrects the world with Floods; Firſt, with unſeaſonable, Secondly, with ſuperfluous rains. O what ſevere corrections hath God laid upon the world by the Clouds! The Clouds have been terrifying, deſtroying rods (*Exod.* 9. 18, 23.) Clouds have deſtroyed the Fruits of the earth for the ſin of Man, and taken away the hopes of the Harveſt. Rain from the Clouds hath ruined the dwellings of men, and ſpoyled both Corn and Cattel; Rain from the clouds was that overflowing ſcourge, which deſtroyed the whole earth in the days of *Noah*; then God cauſed the cloud to come, I cannot ſay for correction, but for ruin, for an univerſal ruin and devaſtation. And as God then made the clouds a ruin to the world, ſo he often makes them a correction (1 *Sam.* 12. 18, 19. *Ezra* 10. 9.) we have had many examples, both of ſweeping Rains, and dreadful Thunders, Lightning and Tempeſt, coming forth from the clouds.

The Apoſtle ſaith (*Rom.* 1. 18.) *The wrath of God is revealed from Heaven againſt all ungodlineſs,* &c. God hath revealed his wrath from Heaven chiefly in and by the Miniſtry of his Word; he may be ſaid alſo to reveal his wrath from Heaven againſt ſinful man in and by the Miniſtry of the clouds; they have often lifted up their Voyce like a loud Trumpet, and louder than a Trumpet, to tell the ſons of men of their tranſgreſſion, and to reprove them for their ſin. And therefore when we ſee extraordinary gatherings of the clouds, we ſhould take inſtruction, leſt we provoke the Lord to ſend, or cauſe them to come for correction. The clouds drop down many good Leſſons and admonitions, and if they are not attended to, the next thing they drop is a rod or Correction; *He cauſeth it to come, whether for correction,*

Or for his Land.

For whoſe Land? Some refer it to the cloud, that is, for the Land out of which the cloud was made; for the Vapours which ariſe out of the Land by the attractive power of the Heavens make clouds. As if the meaning were, he cauſeth the cloud to fall down upon that Land out of which it was raiſed: whereas oftentimes a cloud is made of Vapours raiſed from one Land or Country, and by the command of God is carryed to another Land or Country very far off.

Pronomen (ſua) *alii ad nubem referant, ut dicat, pro terra in qua genita fuit.* Druſ.

But I rather take the Antecedent to *his* to be God himſelf; *His Land,* that is, *Gods Land,* or the Land of God. But then the Queſtion is, what are we to underſtand by *his Land?* Hath God a Land diſtinct from others, as the Princes of the World have? Are not all Lands his? I anſwer, Firſt, The truth is, all the World is Gods Land; ſo that whereſoever the Clouds fall they fall upon his Land (*Pſal.* 50.12.) *The World is mine, and the fulneſs of it,* ſaith the Lord. God is the great Land-lord of all the World.

Secondly, Sometimes in ſpecial the habitable part of the World is called the Land of God (*Pſal.* 24.1.) there being a part of the World ſuppoſed uninhabitable, or wherein no man dwels.

Thirdly, *His Land,* that is, the Land which God doth peculiarly own (*Exod.* 19.5.) *You are a peculiar Treaſure unto me above all people, for all the Earth is mine.* As the *Iſraelites* were the Lords peculiar people, ſo ſome Lands are his peculiars, he ſpecially calls them his Land, and Entitles himſelf to them beyond all other Lands, The Land of *Canaan* was called *The Lords Land,* becauſe he was known and worſhipped there (*Hoſ.* 9.3.) We may ſay in general, Look in whatſoever Country or place God is truly known, honour'd, and worſhipped, that is his Land, and that's the Land here chiefly intended (ſay ſome) by *his Land. He cauſeth it to come, whether for correction,*

Peculiariter terra Dei vocatur terra ſancta in qua Dei cultus exercetur. Sic nominat unamquamq; gentem cui bene vult.

Or for his Land.] That is, for the good and benefit of that Land wherein his Name is profeſſed, and himſelf truly worſhipped. That's a good ſenſe; For doubtleſs the Lord takes more care of ſuch a Land, than of any other Land. The eyes of the Lord were upon the Land of *Canaan,* he took care of it from the beginning of the Year to the end thereof, even to water it with the Rain of Heaven (*Deut.* 11.12.) Thus 'tis ſaid (*Pſal.* 68.9, 10.) *Thou O God didſt ſend* (or ſhake out) *a plentiful Rain* (a Rain of munificences or liberalities) *whereby thou didſt confirm thine Inheritance when it was weary: Thy Congregation hath dwelt therein.* Every Land to which God bears ſpecial reſpect and good-will (which whenſoever he doth, he doth it with reſpect to the people inhabiting there) may be emphatically called *His Land.* Yet,

Fourthly, Foraſmuch as the latter word *for mercy,* ſeems to imply that ſpecial favour which God beſtows upon his own people, in ſending forth the Clouds with Rain; therefore by *His land* I rather conceive the earth in general is meant; or yet, to take it more particularly, that part of the earth which no man claims, which is ſcarce habitable by man, that which is a waſt Wilderneſs or Deſart for wild beaſts, that Land which is overgrown with Trees and Buſhes, a Land which no man dreſſeth or beſtoweth any culture or husbandry upon, even for that Land doth God take care, as his Land, thither he ſends Rain, that the Beaſts may have Paſture, and Plants moiſture, that it may be watered and provided for, as well as thoſe Lands that men by their care and induſtry manure as their own peculiars. 'Tis ſaid (*Chap.* 38.26.) *He* (that is, God) *cauſeth it to rain on the earth, where no man is, on the Wilderneſs, wherein there is no man.* Thus in the Text, *He cauſeth it to come for his Land,* a Land which hath no owner but himſelf.

Hence Obſerve; *God hath an univerſal reſpect to, and care over all his Creatures.*

Whereſoever God hath a foot of Land in the World (though no foot of man comes there) he ſends the Clouds to do it ſervice, for the ſake only of wild Beaſts living there, and of Trees and Plants growing there. (*Pſal.* 36.6.) *Lord, thou preſerveſt man and beaſt:* Not only doth God preſerve men, but beaſts; and where no men are God provides for beaſts, that they may have food and live. We may hence argue as the Apoſtle did in another caſe, (*1 Cor.* 9.9.) *Doth God take care for Oxen?* Hath he reſpect to the waſt Lands, to the wild Beaſts of the Wilderneſs? Surely then he will take care of inhabited Lands, he will cauſe the Cloud to come and water the Land where men dwell, eſpecially where good men dwell; to them he cauſeth it to come (as it followeth in the Text)

For Mercy.] The third Meſſage about which the Clouds are ſent or cauſed to come, is for favour. God diſpenceth mercy by the Cloud, *he cauſeth it to come for mercy.* The Original word rendred *mercy* hath a great ſignificancy in it, this eſpecially, a bountiful good-will towards others, without reſpect to merit, or any antecedent obligation. When here 'tis ſaid *He cauſeth it to come for Mercy,* we are to underſtand much more than was meant before, when 'tis ſaid, *He cauſeth it to come for his land,* to feed the beaſts, and nouriſh the Plants; and I conceive we may give a twofold interpretation of it.

חסד *Dei propenſam omnibus benefaciendi voluntatem denotat.*

Firſt, *For Mercy,* that is, for ſome eminent uſes, beſides thoſe that are for meer neceſſity, to water the earth. Rain is ſent,

Firſt, To purge; Secondly, to cool the air; Thirdly, to cheriſh and comfort the fruits of the Earth. But beſides theſe common and ordinary ends of ſending rain, ſomewhat extraordinary ſeems to be intended, when the Text ſaith, *He cauſeth it to come for mercy,* or favour. What's the favour or ſpecial mercy that comes by rain? Surely it is the ſending of ſuch a rain and ſuch a bleſſing with it, as cauſeth the earth to bring forth abundantly. The Lord can more than ſupply wants, he can give plenty, he can give as much in one year as may ſerve for two or three. Thus he promiſed (*Levit.* 25.21.) *Then I will Command my bleſſing upon you in the ſixth year, and it ſhall bring forth fruit for three years;* the ſixth year was the year before the *Sabbath-year,* for then they were not to till the ground; Now if you carefully obſerve my Sabbath-year (ſaith God) you ſhall have no want, though you do not ſow. This is a mercy, when God ſends in a double or treble Crop, when he not only ſends enough to ſerve the turn or to keep us alive, but abundance and plenty, ſo that *the floors ſhall be full of wheat, and the fats ſhall overflow with wine and oyl,* as the promiſe is expreſſed, *Joel* 2.24.

Sive ad Benignitatem, *ſc. ut benigna fiat terra citra neceſſitatem, ut cum pluvia deſcendit ſummo æſtu ad aerem refrigerandum.* Druſ.

Hence Note; *God is not only a juſt, but a bountiful Maſter.*

He doth not only give us enough for neceſſity, but for delight and contentment; if we uſe his bounty well, and turn not his bleſſings to his diſhonour, plenty will be our mercy. The Clouds come ſometimes for Correction, God ſweeps away even our neceſſaries, *by rains* which are therefore in Scripture called *ſweeping rains;* at other times the Clouds come for mercy, and empty themſelves to fill us with the bleſſings of the earth; that we, both by corrections and favours may be led to repentance, and receive further mercy, not only mercy from the Clouds, but mercy above the Clouds. Thus the words ſtand in a fair oppoſition, and one part of the verſe illuſtrates the other.

Yet I conceive there is ſomewhat further in theſe words, *for mercy,* or *in mercy and free benignity;* which may intimate thus much to us,

That even the Rain from the Clouds, and fruits of the Earth, are not given us of deſert, but of free favour and mercy.

They come for mercy, or as a mercy. God doth not feed the World becauſe he owes them any thing, but becauſe he is merciful: we do not oblige him to give us a drop of rain, or a morſel of bread; ſweet ſhowrs from Heaven, and plentiful harveſts on Earth, are acts of grace, mercy, favour, and good-will unto man. God payeth men wages in nothing but in puniſhment; when God puniſheth, he pays wages, that which is deſerv'd; if God ſend the Clouds for Correction, we have what our ſins have procured and brought upon us; but if he ſend plenty, we have mercy, a gracious bounty or largeſs from the hand of God; our daily bread is not pay nor wages, but reward and mercy, much leſs is that which is more or beyond our daily bread. We by ſin deſerve that the Heavens ſhould be (as the Lord threaten'd his ancient people in caſe of diſobedience) as braſs, and the Earth as iron; but we have not deſerv'd that the Heavens ſhould drop fatneſs, and the Earth yield her increaſe; this is mercy. Not only are we to look upon the Pardon of ſin as a mercy, and Redemption by the blood of Chriſt as a mercy, and Juſtification through his Righteouſneſs as mercy, and eternal life as a mercy, or coming from mercy, and free grace; but we are to receive every bit of bread as coming to us through mercy, freely, and not upon any account of our own workings or deſervings. And if we cannot deſerve a ſhower, no not a drop of rain from the Clouds, if we cannot deſerve a Crop of Corn from the earth, then ſurely we cannot deſerve grace or peace from God, or eternal life and happineſs with God.

Therefore how ſhould we magnifie and admire the mercy and free grace of God for ſpiritual things, when we ſee ſuch caſe of magnifying him, even for temporal good things! If the clouds are favourable to us, it is of mercy.

Further, That notion may be well improv'd, which ſome give of this word, reading the Abſtract by the Concrete; we ſay, *For mercy*, they ſay for the *merciful*, that is, for the *liberal*, *benign*, and *merciful man*, the *man of a large heart to do good:* God cauſeth the cloud to come ſometimes *for Correction*, uſually *for his Land*, to conveigh common comforts, and he hath his times wherein he cauſeth it to come for *the merciful*, That is, in ſpecial favour to thoſe that are merciful, and good, and gracious, both as they have received grace from God, and as they have done good things for and among men: He that *watereth, ſhall be watered alſo himſelf*, (Pro. 11. 24.) Thus you ſee the three-fold Meſſage that God ſends the Clouds upon, either *to Correct* men for their ſin, or *for his Land*, that the Creature in general may have ſubſiſtence, or *for ſpecial favour and mercy* to his peculiar people, and for thoſe above the reſt, of good men, who are merciful and ready to do good.

VERS. 14, 15, 16.

Hearken unto this, O Job, ſtand ſtill and conſider the wondrous works of God.
Doſt thou know when God diſpoſed them and cauſed the light of his cloud to ſhine?
Doſt thou know the ballancings of the Clouds, the wonderous works of him which is perfect in knowledg?

THis context begins the ſecond part of the Chapter, wherein *Elihu*,

Firſt, Exciteth *Job* to a ſerious contemplation of the wonderful works of God; this is expreſſed in the 14. Verſe.

Secondly, He urgeth the weakneſs and inability of *Job*, and indeed of any man, to underſtand the full compaſs of thoſe works: And this he doth,

Firſt, In general, as to them all, in the beginning of the 15. Verſe, *Doſt thou know when God diſpoſed them?*

Secondly, He ſheweth his inability as to particulars, or the ſeveral kinds of the works of God:

Firſt, As to his *cauſing of the Light to ſhine*, in the cloſe of the 15. Verſe.

Secondly, As to *his weighing or ballancing of the Clouds*, Verſe 16.

The ſum of theſe three verſes, together with the two next which follow, make up an earneſt exhortation, that *Job* conſidering, and comparing that great power and wiſdom of God, which appear and ſhine in thoſe forementioned works, with his own weakneſs and inſufficiency, would therefore humble himſelf, and not venture any further to conteſt or plead with God.

And becauſe many of the Lords providential works are unſearchable, as well as theſe which are natural, therefore *Elihu* would not have *Job* buſie himſelf in any curious prying into thoſe which concerned his preſent condition. For, if there be infinite and unerring wiſdom tempered with mercy, and juſtice with goodneſs, in all the outward diſpenſations of God, ordering the motions and Meteors of the Heavens, the Clouds, the Rain, the Snow and Hail, the Lightning and the Thunder; then ſurely *Job* ought to ſit down convinced, that there is a like temperament of equity with ſeverity, and of goodneſs with ſharpneſs in all his dealings with men, and was with him in particular. That's the ſcope and purpoſe of *Elihu* all along, in reading *Job* this Philoſophical Lecture, or in putting queſtions to him about the things of Nature, and the regiment of God in theſe inferiour Heavens, the Air, where all things ſeem to move without rule, or by no rule other than what Nature alone impoſeth.

Verſ. 14. **Hearken unto this, O Job.**

We have more than once met with this awakening exhortation, which calleth for ſuch an harkening, as if a man were to be all ear in attending what is ſpoken. We may well render it, *Ear this, O Job*, take it, drink it in at thine ear; *Hearken*,

Unto this;] *Elihu* doth not exhort him to attention in general, but draws it down to ſome ſpecial matter, *Hearken unto this, O Job*. Which words may have a double reference, either

Firſt, To what he had before ſaid (*Ver.* 13.) telling him how God ſends the Rain and cauſeth the Cloud to come, *either for correction, or for his Land, or for mercy*; *Hearken unto this, O Job*, here's a leſſon for thee, remember it well, God ſends forth theſe ſervants of his, the Clouds to do his work, either for correction or for mercy, either in favour or in judgment; *Hearken unto this, O Job:* Or,

Secondly, The words may refer to that which followeth, and ſo, as one calls them, they are an *Exordium*, a brief *Exordinm*, or ſhort preface to what *Elihu* had further to ſay; as if he would a little relieve the ſpirits and quicken the attention of *Job*, by acquainting him, that he had ſome new matter to lay before him. As if he had ſaid, I have not yet uttered all my mind, I have ſomewhat more upon my heart, which I cannot hold in, both for thy conviction and inſtruction; *Hearken unto this, O Job*.

Yet it may be queſtioned, why *Elihu* ſhould thus ſtir up his attention, either to conſider what he had ſpoken, or what he was now about to ſpeak? Was *Job* a heedleſs, an un-attentive hearer? We may conceive he was occaſioned to give him this ſpur, or excitation, for theſe three reaſons, or at leaſt ſome of them.

Firſt, We may ſuppoſe, that *Job* having been entertained with a long diſcourſe, began to grow weary and ſlacken his attention, and therefore, as when we ſee one in a congregation remiſs in hearing, or ſleeping out a weighty point, we jog him, or ſay, *Hearken to this*; ſo *Elihu* here.

Hence Note; Firſt, *A good hearer of the Word, may ſometimes want an awakening word.*

He that is not (as *Job* was not) a *firſt*, nor *ſecond*, nor *third-ground-hearer*, but (as *Job* was) a *fourth-ground-hearer*, one that heareth with a good and honeſt heart, yet, even he may a little let down his watch, and give juſt occaſion to the ſpeaker for ſuch a ſhort diverſion as *Elihu* here uſed, *Hearken (I pray) to this.* There is a willingneſs of ſpirit in all *fourth-ground*, or *right-hearted-hearers*, yet, there is alſo, even in them, a weakneſs of the fleſh; corruption may be ſtirring, temptation may be working, therefore 'tis no unneceſſary jealouſie in the Miniſters of the Goſpel, ſometimes to mingle or interweave ſuch paſſages as theſe, in ſpeaking to them, pray hearken, ſtir up and awaken your ſelves: There may be need of this (I ſay) where there is a general good bent of heart. Some pretending hearers are like the Idols of the heathen, *who have eyes and ſee not, ears and hear not*; who, when they are hearing, ſet themſelves, at leaſt give way, to ſleep, and willingly yield to the drowſineſs of their ſpirits; this ſheweth an evil heart: but a good man may be overtaken with drowſineſs, and find much indiſpoſition to duty, while he is in duty, and then he will Count it a Favour, to hear ſuch a word as this caſt in, *Pray hearken*.

Secondly, *Elihu* might afreſh provoke him to more ſerious attention, becauſe the matter he had to deliver, was of more importance, or did more nearly concern him, than what he had ſaid before.

Hence Note; *Though the whole truth of God is to be attended to, yet there are ſome truths that call for ſpecial attention.*

Here is an accent put upon the point in hand, *Hearken to this*. We ſhould not let any truth fall to the ground, truth is precious quite through, and we may ſay of truth as of Gold, the very filings of it are precious. We ſave the leaſt duſt of Gold, every grain of it is of worth, and ſo is every grain, or the leaſt duſt of Divine truth. *One jot, one tittle of the Law* (ſaith Chriſt, *Matth.* 5. 18.) *Shall in no wiſe paſs till all be fulfilled*; Surely then, no jot, no tittle of it ſhould be lightly paſſed by, by us. Yet there are ſome Divine truth like ſtuds of maſſie Gold, or as Jewels, which ought to be more carefully attended to, and laid up in the cabinet of the heart; Some truths have an emphaſis, a Selah ſet upon them, *O hearken to theſe.* Chriſt ſaith in the Goſpel, about the tithing of mint, anniſe and cummin, *Theſe things ye ought to do*, but be ſure ye do not leave the weightier matters of the Law, *Judgment, Mercy and Faith undone* (Matth. 23.23.) ſo ſay I, attend to the leaſt truths, but be ſure ye attend to fundamental truths, to thoſe truths upon which the whole weight of the Soul ſtands; Such is, *The great Myſtery of Godlineſs, God manifeſt in the fleſh*; and the great Grace of Faith in that Myſtery: Theſe, with ſeveral others are the fundamentals, the very vitals of Religion; all falls and dies, unleſs ye ſtand faſt and live in theſe: *O hearken unto them.*

Thirdly, *Elihu* may be conceived to ſpeak thus to *Job*, becauſe he ſaw him about to interrupt him; poſſibly he might perceive a little paſſion ſtirring in him, therefore, not only to keep up his attention, or to wind up his watch, but to repreſs and keep down ſome ſtormy troubled motions riſing in his ſpirit, *Elihu* made this ſhort interlocution or digreſſion, *Hearken to this, O Job*, ſuffer me to ſpeak out, do not take me off, I have not yet done.

Hence Note; *Patience is neceſſary in a good hearer*;

And that not only for the doing what is heard, but for the hearing of it. As we can never bring forth the fruit of that which we hear without patience, ſo neither can we without patience hear that which ſhould make us fruitful. The great grace to be exerciſed in hearing the Word, is Faith; yet we have need of Patience in hearing the Word, and that in a double reſpect.

Firſt, We have need of Patience, as to continuance in hearing. Some would fain have done preſently, they cannot ſit it out, an hour is a year to them, the word is a wearineſs to them, they ſoon think they have enough.

Secondly, There is need of patience for ſubmiſſion to what is heard. How ſhort ſoever the Sermon is, yet when it pincheth the conſcience and pricketh the heart, it is not eaſily born. They who hear quietly ſome words of truth, will not endure ſome other; we hardly continue hearing with any patience, when to us, the word heard, is a hard ſaying, and bears hard upon either, our conſciences or our practiſes; when the finger is, as it were, laid upon, and preſſeth the ſore, few can endure it. 'Tis eaſie to hear pleaſing things, but that which croſſeth our ſpirits or our ways calls for patience. When *Stephen*, the *Proto-martyr*, preached to the *Jews*, and brought the word home to their conſciences, by that cloſe application (*Acts* 7. 51.) *Ye ſtiff-necked and uncircumciſed in heart and ear, ye do always reſiſt the Holy Ghoſt; as your Fathers did, ſo do ye. At this word*, or, *when they heard theſe things, they were cut to the heart* (ſaith the Text) *and they gnaſhed on them with their teeth*; their patience was quite ſpent, they could hear no longer. And when St. *Paul* ſpake to that great Aſſembly (*Acts* 22. 1,—22, 23.) *They gave him audience unto this word (I will ſend thee to the Gentiles) and then liſt up their voices and ſaid, away with ſuch a fellow from the earth, for it is not fit that he ſhould live: Then they cryed out, and caſt off their cloths, and threw duſt in the air.* Thus they raved and were enraged, like angry, yea like mad dogs, when once their Title was queſtioned, or (as we ſpeak) *their coppy-hold toucht*, by the mention of the *Gentiles*, whom they greatly deſpiſed, and judged themſelves ſo much above. *Hearken to this*, to this pinching word, to the word that ſtrikes upon your luſts. *The length of a Sermon ſpoils the patience of ſome, but the ſtrength and ſearching power of it, ſpoils the patience of more.* A ſincere heart is willing to hear all, and is moſt pleaſed to hear that word, which gives deepeſt wounds to any corruption of heart or tranſgreſſion of life. Such words are wholeſome, though bitter or ſharp, and the more they make us ſmart, the more medicinal and healing they are. *Hearken unto this, O Job*,

עמר *Stat. ſc. per mentis rectitudinem.* Aquin.

Stand ſtill and conſider the wonderous works of God.

Elihu not only deſires *Job* to hearken, but to *ſtand ſtill and conſider.*

There is a twofold *ſtanding ſtill.*

Firſt, Bodily. I do not conceive *Elihu* impoſing any ſuch geſture or compoſure upon *Job*, as to ſtand ſtill and not ſtir his body. The Hebrew is but one word, *ſtand up.* There is a liberty as to any comely geſture of the body in hearing; a man may lawfully ſit as well as ſtand and hear, yet to ſtand up and hear, ſheweth a readineſs of the mind, and a hungring deſire after the Word.

Secondly, There is a *ſtanding ſtill* of the mind. The body may ſtand as ſtill as a ſtake or ſtone, while the mind is in ſtrong motion, yea, while there are moſt vehement commotions and perturbations in the mind. This ſtill-ſtanding of the mind in hearing what is ſpoken may be taken in a double oppoſition.

Firſt, To any impatience, unquietneſs or uncompoſedneſs of the mind when the word is ſpoken.

Secondly, To any irreverence, ſlighting or diſregarding of the word ſpoken. To ſtand ſtill is to get the ſpirit quiet, to hear patiently; or to ſtand ſtill is to get the heart into a reverential frame, to hear affectionately. So then, to ſtand ſtill implieth both patience and reverence. We have like admonitions in the 30. Chapter of this Book (*Verſ.* 20.) and Chapter 32. (*Verſ.* 16.) Yea, that admonition of *Balaam* was of like ſenſe with this (*Num.* 23. 18.) *Riſe up Balak, and hear.* When *Balaam* was about to deliver his parable, and declare the mind of God concerning *Iſrael*, he called upon *Balak* to riſe and ſtand up, that is, to entertain the meſſage with reſpect. *Hearken unto this, O Job, ſtand ſtill.*

Hence Note; *We ought to be in a gracious quietneſs and compoſure of ſpirit when we are called to hear and mind what God hath done or ſpoken.*

Further, We ought to have a quiet, ſedate, compoſed ſpirit, not only when we hear doctrinal truths delivered from the word of God, but alſo when we hear of the providences and various works of God. As this word, *ſtand ſtill*, may refer to the words going before, *Hearken unto this*, ſo to thoſe which follow, *Conſider the wonderful works of God:* And then the duty required in them reaches both his Word and Works. It is a great power of grace which cauſeth the heart to *ſtand ſtill* in this ſenſe, that is, to be in a quiet frame when the works of God trouble us, or are troubleſome to us. Thus *Moſes* beſpake the *Iſraelites* (Exod. 14. 12.) *Stand ſtill, and ſee the Salvation of God.* It was a very troubleſome time with the *Iſraelites*, they were ready to give themſelves and all they had for loſt, when *Moſes* exhorted them to *ſtand ſtill.* Nothing but faith in God can make us ſtand ſtill when we are ready to fall, and that will certainly do it. Unbelief makes the heart as unquiet as their's was upon the report of a War againſt *Judah* (Iſa. 7.2.) *And his heart* (that is, the heart of *Ahaz*) *was moved, and the heart of his people as the trees of the wood are moved with the wind. 'Tis hard travel of ſoul to ſtand ſtill and ſee the ſalvation of God, when every thing ſeen threatens deſolation.* The Lord is repreſented requiring us to do ſo (*Pſal.* 46. 10.) *Be ſtill, and know that I am God.* When the Pſalmiſt had ſpoken of the deſolating works of God, he added this word from the Lord, *be ſtill*; as if he had ſaid, the Lord commandeth you to be of a quiet and compoſed ſpirit, when all things ſeem to be in a hurry or confuſion; for, he had ſaid before (*Verſ.* 8.) *Come, behold the works of the Lord, what deſolations he hath made in the Earth!* Yet even now (ſaith the Lord) *Be ſtill, and know that I am God. David* at the beginning of the Pſalm had profeſſed a firm purpoſe in himſelf and in all the faithful with him, for ſuch a ſtill-ſtanding, how-ever things moved or matters ſhould go, yea tumble in this world (*Verſ.* 1. 2.) *Though the Earth be moved, and though the mountains be carried into the midſt of the Sea, though the waters thereof roar*, &c. *We will not fear, God is our refuge and ſtrength.* How comely is it for man thus to ſtand ſtill in a ſilent and believing conſideration of what God hath done or is doing; to which *Elihu* calleth *Job* expreſly, in the next words, *ſtand ſtill*;

Conſider the wonderous works of God.

Here is, Firſt, Conſideration.

Secondly, Conſideration of the works of God.

Thirdly, Conſideration of the wonderous works of God.

ההתבובנ בות • *Intelligere.*

To conſider, is the ſpecial work of the Underſtanding, or of the intellectual Powers. To conſider, is the moſt proper work of a rational creature. It is no eaſie matter to conſider our ſelves, what we are, and what we have done, or what we are doing (*Hag.* 1.7.) *Conſider your ways:* But 'tis a harder matter to conſider God, as good in his being and nature, and as good in his workings and operations. That's the buſineſs of this Text, *Conſider the wonderous works of God*; conſider them in the fullneſs of them, and conſider them fully. In which ſenſe the Prophet reproves the *Jews* for their non-conſideration, *Iſrael doth not know, my people do not conſider* (Iſa. 1.3.) They do not conſider what I have done, nor what I am doing; they are an inconſiderate and regardleſs people, and therefore a people not to be regarded. There's nothing worth the taking notice of in a people or perſon, who take no notice of the works of God. They who will not conſider his doings will quickly be inconſiderable, and of no account with him. *Conſider the wonderful works of God.*

Conſideration is oppoſed to two things;

Firſt, To ſlightneſs of Spirit, or the light paſſing over, of what we hear or ſee.

Secondly, to unquietneſs and paſſionateneſs of ſpirit, becauſe of what we hear or ſee. Some lightly paſs things by, others think of the works of God in a paſſion, or with a kind of rage; they are rather vexing themſelves about the wonderous works of God, then conſidering them. Conſideration is a work that ſtands between theſe two extreams, ſlightneſs and unquietneſs of ſpirit. Conſideration requires a ſerious Soul, and if right, it makes the Soul patient. They who once conſider the works of God rightly, will reſt in them ſatisfiedly. *Conſider the wonderful works of God.*

Elihu was ſpeaking of thoſe works of God in the Air, the Meteors, Clouds and Rain, *&c.* As under the rule of his providence; now ſaith he, *Conſider*

The wonderful works of God.

This informs us, that the works of God are very conſiderable.

Firſt, In natural things; That is, what God doth in diſpoſing the courſe of nature, muſt be duely conſidered by man.

Secondly, In civil things, that is, in what he doth in ordering the affairs of men; and theſe either publick in Nations, or private in Families: In all theſe God hath his workings, and his works in all muſt be conſidered.

Thirdly, In ſpiritual things, what he doth in ways of grace upon the Souls of men, in convincing and converting them, in humbling and comforting them, which are his choiceſt and moſt excellent works of all. Now, though all theſe works of God are to be conſidered, the laſt eſpecially; yet the works of God here ſet before *Job*, are thoſe in Nature, and the providential diſpoſure of them: theſe are no ſmall matters; *Elihu* calls them, and ſo they are, *wonderful*;

Conſider the wonderful works of God.] Theſe works of God in and about natural things, may be diſtributed into thoſe that are common and ordinary, or thoſe that are rare and extraordinary. *Elihu* is not treating here about the rare, extraordinary works of God, but about the common and ordinary works of God in the Clouds, the Rain and Winds, *&c.* Yet he calls them *wonderful*; *Conſider* (ſaith he) *the wonderful works of God.*

From the connexion, in that *Elihu* bids *Job ſtand ſtill, and then conſider the wonderful works of God*;

> Obſerve, Firſt; *We can never conſider things aright, till our minds come to a reſt and are quiet.*

We cannot make a true uſe of our reaſon, when we are much moved with paſſion; we muſt *ſtand ſtill* before we can *conſider*. *Moſes* when the buſh burned and did not conſume, *ſaid, I will now turn aſide and ſee this great ſight, why the buſh is not burnt*, (Exod. 3.3.) *He went near and ſtood*, conſidering that wonderful work of God; He was not in a fright, he was not ſcared to ſee a burning buſh, but he ſtood in a well compoſed frame of mind, to conſider what his eyes beheld, or the meaning of that ſtrange ſight.

> Secondly, Note; *The works of God are matter of great conſideration.*

As the word of God is to be conſidered, ſo his works, and none can profitably conſider the word of God, unleſs they conſider the works of God too; His works are a Comment upon his word, the word of God is exemplified in his works; what God ſpeaketh that he doth. We may find the word of God tranſcribed in his works, *I* (ſaith *David*, Pſal. 77.12.) *will meditate alſo of all thy works, and talk of thy doings.* The Character given of a godly man (*Pſal.* 1.2.) is, *He meditates in the Law of God night and day:* and (*Pſal.* 119.148.) *Mine eyes prevent the night watches, that I might meditate in thy word.* Now as a godly man ſhould meditate the word, ſo the works of God night and day. *David* was reſolved to do ſo in the place before-mentioned; as alſo (*Pſal.* 143.5.) *I* (ſaith he) *remember the days of old, I meditate on all thy works: I muſe on the work of thy hands.* Did we rightly conſider the works of God, how juſt, how good they are, we would be more in doing good works, and we ſhould do our good works better. If any ask, How are we to conſider the works of God? I anſwer,

Firſt, Conſider them in their number, that they are many. The wonderful works of God are innumerable; he doth not only one, not only two or three, but many, very many wonderful works: *Many, O Lord my God* (ſaith *David*, Pſal. 40.5.) *are the wonderful works which thou haſt done.*

Secondly, Conſider the wonderful works of God in their kinds or ſorts, works of Creation, or works of Providence. The works of God in Providence are very various; His works in the Heavens, and his works on the Earth, his works of judgment, and his works of mercy, his works of patience, and his works of vengeance, his works in delivering us from evil, and his works for the continuance of our good, are very various; and 'tis our duty to conſider them all. Whatſoever or howſoever God is pleaſed to work, the thoughts of man ſhould work upon it, and give him the glory of it.

Thirdly, The works of God are to be conſidered, as in their number and kinds or ſorts, ſo in their circumſtances. As we are to conſider our ſins, not only in their kind, but circumſtances, which exceedingly aggravate and heighten ſin; ſo circumſtances in the works of God muſt be conſidered, for they exceedingly heighten the works of God: As the circumſtances of a ſin may make a ſin, little for the matter, very great and exceeding ſinful; ſo a circumſtance in any work of God may make it (though little in it ſelf) great and wonderful. We leave out the very ſtrength of a work of mercy, when we paſs by the circumſtances of it: A work of mercy done in ſuch a time, in ſuch a way, a work done for ſuch a people, for a people ſo undeſerving, renders the work much more conſiderable, and valuable. *The Lord* (ſaith *David*, Pſal. 111.4.) *hath made his wonderful works to be remembred.* The old tranſlation ſaith, *The merciful and gracious Lord hath ſo done his marveilous works*, that puts a *ſo* upon his works, he hath not only done them, but, *he hath done them ſo*, in ſuch a way, with ſuch circumſtances, he hath put ſuch marks, ſuch accents upon them, that *they are to be remembred*, that they cannot but be remembred. It is but an half conſideration of the works of God, to conſider them abſtractly and nakedly, without their cloathings, that is, their circumſtances of time, place, perſons, when, where, how, for whom, and by whom they were done.

Fourthly, We ſhould conſider the works of God, in their aims, ends, and tendencies; not only what they are, but what they lead to, what the purpoſe of God may be in them, with reſpect to our ſelves, with reſpect to the Church, with reſpect to the world, is very conſiderable. There is not a drop of rain that falls from Heaven, but it hath a purpoſe in it, and that not only to feed and nouriſh man by making the earth fruithful, but to make our hearts and lives fruitful.

Or thus, We are to conſider the works of God in their aims, Firſt, as to God, to ſet forth his power, wiſdom, goodneſs. Secondly, as to man; Firſt, to draw man nearer to God; Secondly, to raiſe him up in thankfulneſs; Thirdly, in holineſs and conformity to the will of God.

Now, if this be to conſider the works of God; then we may infer;

Though there be many who ſee the works of God, yet there are but few who conſider them.

It is an eaſie thing to ſee the works of God, that's only eye-work, but to conſider them is difficult, that's head-work and heart-work too. Though I conceive, that word rendred *to ſee*, is ſometimes uſed in the ſenſe of this Text, for conſideration (*Iſa.* 26. 11.) *When thy hand is lifted up they will not ſee.* They could not chooſe but ſee with their eyes, that ſuch things were done, but they did not ſee, or rather would not ſee, as ſeeing notes conſidering, the hand and aim of God in doing them: They who have no mind to anſwer and ſubmit to, to profit by, and conform to the works of God, have no care, nor will they take the pains, to get ſuch a ſight of them. So that while moſt ſee the works of God ocularly, while they ſee the outſide, the bulk and body of them, they ſee not the works of God ſpiritually, no nor ſo much as rationally. 'Tis not a glance of the eye, but the ſtudy of the mind which is required in ſeeing the works of God. And hence it is that though there are ſtore of ſpectators and talkers of the works of God, yet there are few conſiderers of them. Every one almoſt will be ſpeaking of the great things which God doth, ſaying, What do you hear? Or do you not hear what is done, what is come to paſs? But where is the conſideration of what is done, or of what hath paſſed? Who ſtayeth his thoughts, and breathes wiſely upon the works of God? They are wiſe indeed who do ſo, as *David* concluded, after a long and moſt excellent diſcourſe of the works of God, (*Pſal.* 107. 43.) *Who is wiſe and will obſerve theſe things* (as if he had ſaid, None but the wiſe will nor can obſerve them) *even they ſhall underſtand the loving kindneſs of the Lord.*

Thirdly, What are thoſe works which *Elihu* here calls the wonderful works of God? Surely thoſe deſcribed both in the foregoing and ſubſequent part of this Chapter are (which are no prodigies in Nature) the Winds, Rain, Froſt, Snow, Thunder and Lightning: Theſe are the matter of his diſcourſe, and of theſe he ſaith, *Conſider the wonderful works of God.*

Hence Obſerve; *The common, conſtant, and ordinary works of God, are full of wonders.*

Though we rightly diſtinguiſh the works of God (as was touched before) into ordinary and extraordinary, common and wonderful, yet did we fully underſtand them, there is a kind of wonder and miraculouſneſs in all the works of God, even in his moſt common, ordinary, or every days works. What is more ordinary and common than the generation and formation of man, *Yet* (ſaith *David*, Pſal. 139. 15.) *I will praiſe thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvellous are thy works, and that my ſoul knoweth right well.* And the reaſon why we do not look out the wonders of that and of many other common works of God, is, becauſe they are ſo common. The very falling of the Rain hath a wonder in it, the blowing of the Wind hath a wonder in it, the motion of the clouds hath a wonder in it, the growing of every ſpire of graſs out of the earth hath a wonder in it, the budding out of every leaf and bloſſom on the tree hath a wonder in it; yet becauſe theſe things are common, we do not think nor call them wonderful. Every one would think it a wonder to ſee a dry rod, a rod cut off from the tree, bloſſom, as *Aarons* did (*Numb.* 17. 8.) but who thinks it a wonder, to ſee a tree well rooted in the earth bloſſom every Spring? Yet there is a wonder, a wonderful work of God in that alſo. A Heathen Philoſopher could ſay from his own obſervation of things and perſons, *Cuſtom takes away admiration.* Such is the genius or ſpirit of mankind, that we never admire what we often ſee or meet with, though in it ſelf it be never ſo admirable. Who admires the motion of the Sun every day? Yet the Suns motion every day is as miraculous and ſtupendious, as its ſtanding ſtill was in that day of *Joſhua*'s battel with the Kings, or as its retrograde motion or going back was in that day of King *Hezekiah*'s recovery from a mortal diſeaſe. That ſuch a vaſt body as the Sun, ſhould take and fulfil ſuch a journey, ſhould paſs ſuch an unconceivable ſpace in twenty-four hours, is an amazing wonder, yet no man wonders at it. It hath been ſaid, *The Sun and Moon have hardly any beholders* (they can ſcarcely get a look from us) *unleſs when Eclipſed*, and then all men ſtand gazing and wondering at them, every one will be looking towards them with hands lifted up, and ſay, *O ſtrange!* yet the Eclipſes of the Sun and Moon are far eaſier to the conceptions of Reaſon, then the motion of the Sun and Moon is, conſidering the vaſt courſe they run and perform every day. We admire things out of courſe, or when their courſe is diſturbed, yet the conſtant courſe of things is much more admirable; every time the Sun riſeth, every time the rain falleth, every time the wind bloweth, every time the tide turneth, we have a wonderful work of God preſented to our contemplation. Though Aſtronomers and Philoſophers have ſpoken much of the reaſon or cauſe of theſe things, yet they cannot reach the bottom of them. The *Stoicks* differ from the *Peripateticks*, each having probable and plauſible arguments for their opinion about natural things; yet none of them hit the matter fully, becauſe there is a wonderfulneſs in them which God is pleaſed to hide from man, as alſo becauſe they were not at all guided by a divine Light in the diſquiſition of them, but meerly by human Reaſon and natural underſtanding.

Magnitudine rerum conſuetudo ſubducit: ita enim compoſiti ſumus, ut nos, quotidiana etiamſi admiratione digna ſint, tranſeant. Sen. l. 7. Nat. quæſt. c. 11.

Sol ſpectatorem, niſi cum deficit, non habet; nemo obſervat lunam, niſi laborantem.

Let this be remember'd, The ordinary works of God have wonders in them. I ſhall conclude this point with paralleling the extraordinary and ordinary works of God, as to the real wonderfulneſs of them, by two Scripture miracles. The ſtopping of the fire from burning the *three Children*, was a wonderful work of God; ſo alſo is the making of ſuch a creature *as burning Fire*, yet who wonders at it? It was a wonderful work of God to ſtop the mouths of thoſe hungry Lions from devouring *Daniel*; ſo alſo is the making of a devouring Lion, yet who wonders at it? Now, ſeeing there are wonders even in the ordinary works of God,

We may take much comfort in our ſtraits, for 'tis no hard matter with God to work wonders; he works ſome for us every day, they are his daily works. If we need a miracle to ſave us in an eminent danger, God can do it; when we ſee no means in the World to produce ſuch an effect, yet we are never the further from it. Gods ordinary works are full of wonder; He doth the hardeſt things with as much eaſe, as thoſe which we call and count the eaſieſt.

Elihu having thus awakened the attention of *Job*, and called him in general to that internal work of conſideration about the external works of God, he (I ſay) having done this, deſcends to particulars in the next verſe, and thoſe which follow.

Verſ. 15. **Doſt thou know when God diſpoſed them, and cauſed the Light of his Cloud to ſhine?**

Here *Elihu* begins to come upon *Job* thick and threefold (as we ſay) with his Queſtions, he puts him many Queſtions, and hard ones; and ſo doth God alſo, *Chapter* 38, 39, and 40. And as here *Elihu*, ſo there God poſeth or examineth *Job* in the things of Nature. If we look from this verſe to the end of Gods diſcourſe with *Job*, we may find this Queſtion, *Doſt thou know?* Put more than twenty times to *Job*. But why are theſe poſing Queſtions put ſo often? I anſwer, to humble *Job* and ſilence him from Queſtioning the dealings of God with him; why did God alter my condition? Why have I been thus afflicted? Why emptied from veſſel to veſſel, ſaid *Job*? I would fain know the Reaſon of my ſufferings. Well, ſaith God, anſwer my Queſtions firſt; I would know this or that of thee; and ſo ſaith *Elihu* in the behalf of God,

Doſt thou know when God diſpoſed them?

The word rendred *diſpoſe*, ſignifieth to order, direct, appoint, and determine; to diſpoſe is all theſe. *Doſt thou know when God diſpoſed*

שום *Ordinare, ſtatuere, decernere.*

Them?] What? Some refer the *them*, to all that had been ſpoken of before, to the Clouds, the Rain, the Thunder, the Lightning, the light; Doſt thou know when God did order the clouds to Thunder and Rain, or the Sun to ſhine? As if he had ſaid, *God diſpoſed of theſe without asking thy advice*; did he acquaint thee with the orders he ſent to the clouds, or with the commands which he gave to the Lightning and the Thunder? Canſt thou tell when God will work, or what he will work in the clouds? He may be making preparation for fair weather or foul weather there, and thou never the wiſer, but altogether uncertain of what he is about. Thus he humbleth *Job*, and labours to take him off from his murmurings and complainings, as alſo from over-bold queryings and queſtionings about the providential workings of God with, and towards him, by bringing him under a full conviction of his great inability to underſtand or comprehend the natural works of God, or when God ſet the Law and gave the Rule to or about theſe things; *Doſt thou know when God diſpoſed them?*

Hence Note; Firſt, *God did not only make the world, and all the furniture of it, but he diſpoſeth the motions of every creature in it:*

All things move as they are influenced by his power, and directed by his wiſdom. The date of Gods order for diſpoſing the creature is from the beginning, yea from everlaſting. As the model of the Creation, what things ſhould be, was with him from everlaſting, ſo was the model of Providence, how all things ſhould be governed and diſpoſed of. The government of the world is as much of God as the Creation or giving of it a being. From the Stars in Heaven, to the Worms creeping upon the Earth, all creatures were and are guided in their courſe by him; he hath ſet them bounds which they cannot paſs, and ſent out his word to them which they fail not to obſerve. Heathens, generally, did not acknowledg God to be the Maker of the world, nor did they acknowledg him the diſpoſer of it, but aſcribed all the viciſſitudes here below to blind Fortune, or to uncertain Chance. *Ariſtotle*, the fore-man, the wiſeſt of that rank, thought *the World was eternal*; he could not find how it had a beginning, and therefore concluded it had none: yet others of the wiſe Heathen had a notion that there was a beginning, that there was a firſt-worker, but when or how he wrought they could not tell. And as the wiſeſt men, who had but the light of nature and reaſon to teach them, were very dark about the beginning of all things, ſo alſo about their motion, they thought that all things either moved of themſelves, or that the ſupream Power having put Nature into a courſe, it acted alone, ſo that God never medled about particulars. Whereas we are taught and aſſured, by this Scripture-Text, and many more, that God not only made all things, but diſpoſeth all things, even to the fall of a Sparrow upon the ground, or to the loſs of an hair of the head (*Matth.*10.20.) Chriſt ſaith alſo (*John* 5.17.) *My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.* Creation was a work ended in ſix days, but Providence is a work that never ends; thus God always worketh, though always at reſt. That's the leſſon here intended.

It may be matter of much comfort to us, that all things are ordered by God, that he diſpoſeth of Thunder and Lightning, of Rain and Wind, of Snow and Froſt; much more may it comfort us, that he diſpoſeth the affairs of men, of his Church and People. *Known unto God are all his works, from the beginning of the world* (Acts 15.18) and therefore the Prophet brings in the Lord thus ſpeaking of himſelf (*Iſa.*46.9,10.) *I am God and there is none elſe, I am God and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done.* He that knoweth what the end of all things will be, muſt needs diſpoſe of all ſecond cauſes, and intermediate acts leading thereunto. The reaſon why men often miſ-reckon and fail of their expectation about the ends and iſſues of things, is, becauſe they have not all the means in their power, yea, I may ſay, they have not any of the means fully, no nor at all in their own power. *The way of man is not in himſelf*, how then can his ends be? Only God knoweth what ſhall be the concluſion, becauſe he hath the full diſpoſure of all the premiſes, means, and ways, by which the concluſion is brought about. Let us adore and conſider the power of God, as well in diſpoſing of the creature, as in making of it.

Again, *Doſt thou know?* &c. Surely thou doſt not. The queſtion here, as often elſewhere, carrieth in it a ſtrong denial.

Hence Note; *Men know little of the works and ways of God.*

Some men are called *knowing*, and others *ignorant*, but all men are deficient in their knowledg both of the nature and works of God. *Doſt thou know?* But was *Job* ſome ignorant ſimple perſon? Surely no, *Job* was one of the wiſeſt as well as greateſt men of that age, he was as well verſed as any in the ſtudy and knowledg both of natural and ſpiritual things; Nor is he charged by *Elihu* here with ignorance ſimply, but with ignorance *as to this*, this was too high and too hard for him. *We may with reverence enough queſtion their knowledg in ſome things, who are very knowing men in moſt things.*

There are ſome things which 'tis a ſhame for a man not to know. The Apoſtle ſpeaks often in that language (*Rom.* 2.4.) *Deſpiſeſt thou the riches of his goodneſs, and forbearance, and long-ſuffering, not knowing that the goodneſs of God leadeth thee to repentance?* What a ſhame is it that any who know any thing ſhould not know and underſtand the ſcope of the mercy of God to ſinners; What! knoweſt thou not, that forbearance leads to repentance? Again, the ſame Apoſtle in the ſame Epiſtle puts the like upbrayding queſtion (*Rom.* 7.1.) *Know ye not* (*for I ſpeak to them that know the Law*) *how that the Law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth.* He is not worthy to be reckoned as a piece of mankind, who is altogether unknowing; nor is he worthy to be reckoned among the men of his profeſſion, who knows not the common principles of it. While the Apoſtle ſpake to thoſe who knew the Law, he preſumed they were not ignorant of that Rule in Law, that the Law which hath or ſhould have dominion over all men living, hath no dominion over any man beyond this life. Now (I ſay) as it is a ſhame for any man not to know thoſe things which are required of him, and ſpecially concern him; ſo 'tis a preſumption for any man to ſeek the knowledg of thoſe things which are purpoſely reſerved and hidden from him, (*Deut.* 29.29.) *Secret things belong to God, revealed things to us and to our Children.* Chriſt ſaith of the latter day, of the day of Judgment, (*Matth.* 24.36.) *Of that day and hour knoweth no man, no not the Angels of Heaven, but my Father only:* and he reproved the curioſity of his Apoſtles immediately before his aſcenſion, for enquiring after that kind of knowledg (*Acts* 1.7.) *It is not for you to know the times or the ſeaſons which the Father hath put in his own power.* As it is not profitable, ſo not lawful for us to look after the knowledg of thoſe things, which God hath lockt up and kept ſecret. Let us take heed we be neither found unknowing in thoſe things which it is a ſhame for us not to know, nor curiouſly prying into the knowledg of thoſe things which are reſtrained from our knowledg. But (to the preſent point) it may be much matter of humiliation to us, that of thoſe things which we have a liberty, and 'tis our duty to know, we know ſo little. *Job* had free liberty to know, and ſearch after the knowledg of thoſe things about which *Elihu* put his queſtions, the Meteors of the Air, and the motions of thoſe ſuperiour bodies; yet *Elihu* knew he could ſay little in anſwer to theſe queſtions, when he asked him, *Doſt thou know?* &c. And therefore his purpoſe was to humble *Job*, while he made him ſee and know his own ignorance. And did the moſt knowing man in the world know his own ignorance, that would (I am ſure it might) make him very humble. We are apt to be very proud of a very ſmall portion of knowledg, a little puffs us up; whereas the ſenſe of our defects in knowledg may both make and keep us little in our own eyes: *We ſhould be thank-ful for that little which we know, and humble becauſe we know ſo little.*

Elihu having by the Queſtion now opened, convinced *Job* in general that he knew but little of the works of God, proceeds in the cloſe of this verſe, and further forwards, to convince him further of his defectiveneſs in knowledg, by putting the ſame queſtion about many other particulars: And the firſt particular about which he puts the ſame queſtion, is the Light of the Cloud; *Doſt thou know when God diſpoſed them,*

And cauſed the light of his Cloud to ſhine?

He queſtions *Job* again about another point, the weighing the clouds (*Verſ.*16.) *Doeſt thou know the ballancing of the clouds, the wonderful works of him that is perfect in knowledg?* As if he had ſaid, *Gods cauſing the light of his cloud to ſhine, and his ballancing the clouds, are wonderful works, even the wonderful works of him who is perfect in knowledg; and tell me Job, Doeſt thou know theſe things? Doeſt thou know when God diſpoſed them,*

And cauſed the light of his Cloud to ſhine? We muſt here repeat the former queſtion; and, *Doeſt thou know when God cauſed the light of his Cloud to ſhine?* Yea, ſome read this latter part of the verſe in dependance upon the former; *Doeſt thou know when God diſpoſed them, that he might cauſe the light of his Cloud to ſhine?* But I rather take it as a diſtinct Queſtion. In which, conſider, he doth not ſay, *That he may cauſe the light of his Sun, but of his Cloud, to ſhine.* 'Tis the Sun properly that ſhineth, clouds do not: The Sun is the Candle of the World, the receptacle and veſſel of light. Clouds are but veſſels or receptacles of water, they are not properly diaphanous, but opacous, or groſs, thick bodies: How then is it here ſaid, *He cauſeth the light of his Cloud to ſhine?* I anſwer, The cloud doth not ſhine by any connatural or intrinſick light, but by that which is adventitious, and accidental to it. And,

יפעהופיע *Splenduit inclaruit.*

There is more in that word *ſhine*, than the ordinary ſhining of the Sun; the Hebrew root ſignifies not only to ſhine, but to break forth with ſhining in ſome very illuſtrious manner (*Deut.*33.2.) *The Lord came from Sinai, and roſe up from Seir unto them, he ſhined forth from Mount Paran. Moſes* carrieth a metaphor or borrowed ſpeech quite through the verſe, repreſenting God as the Sun ſhining forth and ſhewing himſelf to the people of *Iſrael*, in three ſeveral places, and as it were in as many diſtinct degrees of glorious manifeſtation. His glory ſhined firſt from Mount *Sinai*, where he gave the Law. Secondly, from Mount *Seir* or *Edom*, where (as I may ſay) he gave the Goſpel, commanding *Moſes* to make a Brazen Serpent, that they who looked on it might be cured of the poyſonous wounds given them by the fiery Serpents, (*Numb.* 21.) An illuſtrious tipe of Chriſt (*Joh.*3.14.) Thirdly, the glory of the Lord ſhined from Mount *Paran*, where *Moſes*, by command from the Lord, made repetition of the Law, adding ſundry Evangelical explications of it. In all which the Lord ſhined forth with a glorious brightneſs, infinitely exceeding that of the Sun. *David* in three of his *Pſalms* ſpeaking of the wonderful appearances and diſcoveries of God, Firſt, to ſave his people; Secondly, to judg and deſtroy his enemies, uſeth this word which here we tranſlate *ſhine*, (Pſal.50.1.) *The mighty God, even the Lord, hath ſpoken and called the Earth from the riſing of the Sun, to the going down of the ſame; out of Zion the perfection of beauty God hath ſhined.* That beauty with which God ſhines out of *Zion* in the divine ſplendor and holineſs of his worſhip and ordinances is very glorious. Again, (*Pſal.*80.1.) *Give ear, O Shepherd of Iſrael, thou that leadeſt Joſeph like a flock, thou that dwelleſt between the Cherubims, ſhine forth;* That is, declare thy ſelf in thy mighty power, as it followeth (*Verſ.* 2.) *Before Ephraim Benjamin and Manaſſeh, ſtir up thy ſelf, and come and ſave us.* And as the gracious appearances of God for the ſaving of his people, ſo likewiſe the dreadful appearances of God for the deſtruction of his enemies, are expreſſed by this word (*Pſal.*94.1.) *O Lord God, to whom vengeance belongeth, O God, to whom vengeance belongeth, ſhew thy ſelf:* The Hebrew is (and ſo we put it in the Margin) *ſhine forth.* Thus the word notes no ordinary ſhining, but ſhining both with vengeance, and with Salvation, which latter falls in well with the Interpretation of the light ſhining in the cloud which I ſhall open a little further.

And cauſeth the light of his Cloud to ſhine.

There are three Interpretations of theſe words.

Firſt, Some by the *light of the Cloud*, underſtand the lightning, which (all know) breaks through the Cloud, and ſhines out wonderfully before it Thunders. The light of lightning is a wonderful light.

Secondly, Others underſtand, by *the light of his Cloud*, the light of the Sun ſcattering the cloud, and as it were, turning the cloud into light, making light where none was, or nothing but a thick dark cloud.

Thirdly, Several learned Interpreters expound the *light of his Cloud*, by *the Rainbow*, which is alſo a very illuſtrious light, and that is eminently the *light of Gods Cloud*, 'tis his light in the cloud. We may alſo call it a light of the cloud; for though the light of the Sun falleth upon the clouds, yet the light of the Sun at other times is not ſo properly called the light of the cloud, as the light of the Rainbow is, or as when the light of the Sun, reflecting from or upon the cloud, cauſeth that Meteor, which we call the Rainbow; and therefore 'tis emphatically expreſt by this circumlocution, *the ſhining of the light of his cloud.* The ſhining light of the Rainbow hath in it a great appearance of God, for the help, Salvation, and deliverance of his people, 'tis a token of the good-will of God to man. And that we ſhould rather expound this place of the Rain-bow, than either of the Lightning, or the Sun-ſhine, I ſhall briefly give theſe four Reaſons, upon which I ground the Expoſition.

Sciſne quod Deus nubem eſſet diſcuſſurus ac ea diſcuſſa ſerenitatem invecturus. Merc.

Iris eſt lux in nube rorida & egregium opus Dei; de illa maluimus exponere, cum ante fulguris mentionem fecerit. Scult.

Firſt, *Elihu* had ſpoken of the Lightning and of the Sun-ſhine in the former parts of his diſcourſe, and therefore it is not probable that he ſhould return to either ſo ſoon.

Secondly, In this whole philoſophical Lecture of *Elihu*, wherein he enters into the treaſures of theſe lower Heavens, there is no mention at all of the Rain-bow, unleſs we fix it upon this place; therefore ſeeing he had ſpoken of the Lightning and of the Sun-ſhine, in the former parts of his diſcourſe, and ſpeaks not at all afterward of the Rain-bow, it is moſt probable that he intends it here.

Thirdly, He is ſpeaking of the wonders of God in the clouds; and ſurely his diſcourſe would have been imperfect, if he had omitted this, which as ſome expreſs it, is the moſt wonderful of wonderful things among the clouds, and one of the great ſecrets in Nature; I ſay he ſhould have omitted a great part of that which belongs to the doctrin of the Meteors (all Meteorological Writers particularly handling this doctrin of the Rain-bow) if it be not found here.

Mirabilium mirabiliſſimum; Naturæ arcanum. Græci vocant iridem Thaumantias, ἀπὸ τοῦ θαύματος *ab admiratione, cum admirabilem figuram in aere exprimat.*

We may take a fourth Reaſon of this Expoſition, becauſe this light is ſaid to ſhine *in his Cloud:* 'Tis true, all Clouds are his, that is, Gods clouds; but the cloud in which the Rain-bow doth at any time appear, is in a way of peculiarity and higher ſignificancy called *the cloud of God, or Gods cloud.* All the clouds are as Gods Bow, out of which he ſhoots his Arrows and Bolts; they are alſo called the *Seat of God*, on them he ſitteth as upon his Throne. Again, they are called *his Chariot*, upon them he rideth in his Majeſty; but the Rain-bow-cloud, is, as it were, the *Royal Robe or Diadem of God*, the ſpecial clothing of God. The Lord ſaith at the 13. *Verſe* of the 9. of *Geneſis*, where we have the firſt mention of the Rainbow, *I do ſet my Bow in the cloud;* the Bow is Gods, and the cloud is Gods, he is entitled to them both in a very eminent and ſpecial manner. God calleth it *his cloud*, and *his Bow;* Not only, Firſt, becauſe he made the cloud, and the Sun-beams by which the Bow is made. But, Secondly, and chiefly, becauſe he hath put it to a ſpecial uſe, and given it a myſtical ſignification.

And therefore here we may take notice, that whereas the Rain-bow is naturally a ſign of Rain, for it is always accompanied with clouds, or at leaſt with a cloud ready to diſſolve and melt into Rain, and is therefore called by the Poet (*Nuncia Junonis, Virg. Æneid.*4.) the *Harbingreſs of Juno:* Yet on the contrary God appoints it as a ſign of fair weather. And indeed God often works by contrary means, leſt we ſhould ſtick in means, and aſcribe the effect, more then is due, to them. So then the Rain-bow hath two different ſignifications, the firſt natural, of Rain, nor doth God promiſe to hinder or alter this courſe of nature. Secondly, preternatural or inſtituted, of fair weather; which Philoſophy, and the world, is altogether ignorant of; only the Church and people of God underſtand it by faith upon the teſtimony or revealed will of God, that as often as the Bow appeareth in the cloud, they have a renewed aſſurance that God will remember the Earth, and moderate the Rain: nor doth this depend upon the nature of, or various colours appearing in the Rain-bow, but purely upon the will and inſtitution of God. And therefore we ought by a firm faith to embrace the word of promiſe, to which this ſign is annexed; without that, the Rain-bow is nothing elſe to us, but the image or repreſentation of the raies of the Sun or Moon, impreſſed upon the clouds.

I ſhall not inſiſt upon any large diſcourſe of the Rain-bow, only take two or three things. This Meteor hath three Attributes above the reſt; Firſt, it is the moſt Illuſtrious and beautiful; Secondly, the moſt deſirable and comfortable; Thirdly, the moſt ſtrange and wonderful of all the impreſſions viſible in the air. This is properly expreſſed by a Bow, becauſe the form of it uſually is ſemicircular. *Luther* ſaith he ſaw a Rain-bow in the form of a perfect Circle; and others report they have ſeen it in the form of a ſtrait line: But in what-ever form it appears the natural cauſe of it is the reflection of the Sun or of the Moon (for there are Rain-bows in the night as well as in the day) it is cauſed; I ſay, by the reflection of the light (of the Sun or Moon) upon or from a watery or dewey cloud oppoſite to either. The Latin word *Iris*, is derived from a greek word, which ſignifieth to ſpeak or to relate ſomething: The Rain-bow is elegantly ſo called, becauſe it foreſhews ſometimes rain, ſometimes fair weather. A Rain-bow in the morning is a ſign of ſhowers, in the afternoon it betokens ſerenity, and always it proclaims to us the promiſe of God for the moderation of rain; or it ſpeaks thus much to all the world, that God will ſo meaſure out the Rain from the clouds, that it ſhall never ſwell to an univerſal Deluge, or to a drowning of the whole world again. Thus the Rain-bow hath a ſpeech, a language of mercy in it towards the preſent world. It ſpeaks alſo the Juſtice of God upon the old world, minding us of that Deluge of water that drowned them for their ſin; they had ſo defiled the Earth by their evil manners and prophaneſs, by their will-worſhip, Superſtition and Idolatry, that God in wrath ſent a Flood of water, not to waſh, or refreſh, but to deſtroy them: The Rain-bow minds us of that dreadful Judgment of God upon a corrupt World. And although the Rain-bow gives us aſſurance that the World ſhall not be drowned again, how ſinfull-ſoever it is, yet ſome, from the various colours of the Rain bow, whereof one is red and fiery, tell us, it proclaims that the World ſhall at laſt be conſumed by Fire. The Apoſtle *Peter* is plain that it ſhall be ſo, (*2 Ep.* 3.10.) *The Elements ſhall melt with fervent heat*; nor is it meerly a phancy, to ſay, that the fiery colours in the Rain-bow are ſet there by God, to mind us of it.

Iris ab εἴρω quod eſt dicere ſive loqui. Iris eſt arcus, qui ex reflexione luminis, cum ſolaris tum lunaris, in nubem roridam oppoſitam gignitur. Garcæ.

Some have queſtioned whether the Rain-bow were before the Flood or no? The reaſon or ground of the queſtion is given from that ſaying of God (*Gen.*9.13.) *I will ſet my Bow in the Cloud:* it ſeems then there was no Rain-bow before the Flood.

I anſwer, The Rain-bow may be conſidered two ways; Firſt, as to its natural being; Secondly, as to its myſtical uſe. If we conſider the Rain-bow as to its natural being, it was before the Flood, for the cauſes of it were before the Flood, which are watery clouds and the ſhining of the Sun: *Now when ſufficient cauſes appear in act, the effect doth certainly follow.* But as to its myſtical uſe, it was not before the Flood. Water had its natural elementary being and uſe, before Baptiſm was inſtituted, but it had not a ſpiritual uſe till then: we may ſay the ſame of the Rain-bow. Some I know of the Moderns, *Luther* and *Melancthon* aſſert, it was not in being till then; but we have reaſon to vary from that opinion, with reverence to thoſe worthy men: For God did not ſay in the 9. of *Geneſis*, I will make or create my Bow in the cloud, but, *I do ſet my Bow in the cloud, and it ſhall be there for a token of a Covenant between me and the Earth.* The Rain-bow had no ſuch ſignification, nor was it ſet in the cloud for any ſuch purpoſe, before that time. So then,

Take the Rain-bow as to its myſtical uſe, ſo I grant, it was not before the Flood; till then God had never cauſed the light of his cloud to ſhine as a Covenant-token. The Rain-bow, had always a natural ſignification in it, but that is not all, it hath now alſo a Theological, divine and myſtical ſignification, and is become as the Seal of that Covenant with mankind; for God inſtituted the Rain-bow as a Sacramental ſign (ſo we may expreſs it for our better underſtanding) both between himſelf and the whole World in general, and in ſpecial between himſelf and his Covenant people (*Gen.* 9. *Verſ.*12,13,14,15.) It was given (I ſay) on purpoſe to Seal the truth of the Promiſe, that the whole Earth ſhould no more be overwhelm'd with a Deluge or Flood of water: Which though it be ſuch a promiſe as the whole Creation hath the benefit of, yet the faithful only underſtand the myſtery of it, and have their faith exerciſed upon it, and ſtrengthened by it. So that while the Rain-bow is the ſign of a temporal Covenant to all creatures, the godly may look upon it, with reference to all ſpiritual and eternal mercies by Chriſt, in whom all the promiſes of mercy are *Yea and Amen*, (*2Cor.*1.20.) And there is a great fitneſs in it to hold forth mercy both temporal and ſpiritual, in ſeveral particulars.

Firſt, This Rain-bow is in the cloud, and God placed it in the cloud, becauſe out of the cloud came the Rain which drowned the old world. God could have drowned the world only by letting out, or breaking up the Springs of water from the earth, but he opened the Cataracts of Heaven alſo to do it. And therefore God, to ſecure the world againſt ſuch another vengeance from the clouds, put his Bow in the cloud.

A ſecond ſignificancy of mercy in the Rain-bow, is, becauſe the Bow is bended upwards, or Heaven-ward, the Bow doth not ſtand bent to the Earth, or downward, the ſtring of the Bow is towards us, not the back of it. He that would ſhoot hath the bottom or back of the Bow in his hand, and the ſtring is towards himſelf; but God, that he might ſhew he doth not intend to ſhoot that Arrow any more, holds the ſtring of the Bow downwards, which no man doth that hath a mind to ſhoot. The Lord by this Bow in the cloud ſhoots no man, unleſs it be (as one well expreſſeth it) with admiration and love; or I may ſay, the Lord having ſhot his Arrows of immoderate Rain from the Region of the air for mans chaſtning, ſeems to return to Heaven with his Bow reverſed, as a token of peace and ſerenity to the world, or that in Judgment he remembers his Covenant-mercy. The wicked are ſaid to *bend their Bow, they make ready their arrow upon the ſtring, that they may privily ſhoot at the upright in heart*, (Pſal. 11.2.) But he that turns the ſtring of his Bow downwards, is not ready, nor ſeems minded to ſhoot at all.

Thirdly, This bow ſhews mercy, becauſe there is no Arrow ſeen at it, or with it.

Fourthly, It ſheweth or ſignifieth mercy, becauſe the Rain-bow uſually appears when Rain is ready to come, implying that the Rain ſhall not hurt us; and ſo we have a ſupport of our faith, as ſoon as we have any appearance of fear.

Concipit iris aquas alimentaq; nubibus affert. Ovid. 1. Metam.

Fifthly, When-ever the Rain-bow appears, there is clearneſs in ſome part of the air; for it cannot be but when the Sun ſhines. In the time of the Flood the light of the Sun was wholly obſcured. All the days which the world had during that dreadful Rain, were (like the day deſcribed, *Joel* 2.2. *Zeph.*1.15.) *days of darkneſs, and of gloominess, days of Clouds and of thick darkneſs.* Therefore 'tis ſaid, (*Gen.*8.22.) *Day and night ſhall continue for ever:* Intimating that in the time of the Flood the day was ſo obſcured, ſo black, that it could ſcarcely be known to be day, or diſtinguiſhed from night. But now when the Rain-bow is ſeen, the Sun ſhines, to give aſſurance that though there be an appearance of Rain, yet the light of the day ſhall not ceaſe.

Sixthly, The various colours of the Rainbow are very ſignificant for our comfort, making (as ſome Naturaliſts have told us) a thouſand ſweet delights for the eye, by the admirable mixtures and ſhadowings of colours therein diſcernable.

Seventhly, The Natural Hiſtorians aſſureth us, that where the Rain-bow at any time toucheth the Earth (as we may often obſerve it doth) it leaveth a fragrant ſmell upon the graſs, ſhrubs and buſhes. Thus you ſee how properly and fitly the Rain-bow is called *The ſhining of the light of his Cloud*, as alſo what ſignifications of favour are diſcernable in it. From this explication of the words, we may note;

Lux in nube rorida mille efficit colores & varias & pulcherrimas lucis temperationes. Plin. Nat. Hiſt. l. 12. c. 24.

First, *After troubles and ſtorms, God will give his people comforts and calms.*

He cauſeth the light of his Cloud to ſhine.] Clouds are dark things, but while the Cloud ſhews Rain, Gods light in the Cloud ſhews fair weather. That's matter of rejoyceing to all that fear God, as with reſpect unto that particular Judgment of the Deluge, ſo of all evils and troubles which fall upon them in this world. This light ſhining in the Cloud may comfort and refreſh us in the darkeſt night of ſorrow. It is ſaid (*Pſal.* 97. 11.) *Light is ſown for the righteous, and joy for the upright in heart*: And in the 4. of the *Revelations* (which is as it were a Prologue or Preface to all the Propheſies of the dark times that ſhould come upon the world, and over the Church of God in this world) we find Jeſus Chriſt is preſent with a Rainbow about him (*verſ.* 3.) *I was in the ſpirit, and behold a Throne ſet in Heaven, and one ſat on the Throne, and he that ſat was to look upon like a Jaſper and Sardix ſtone, and there was a Rainbow round about the Throne, in ſight like to an Emrald.* From this Throne it is that Jeſus Chriſt doth, as I may ſay, diſpence all the affairs of his Churches and people. Now though Jeſus Chriſt in the providential or mediatorial government of his Churches, doth often ſend Clouds upon them, and though Clouds and darkneſs are round about him, yet the Throne hath a Rainbow about it: And why a Rainbow? to ſhew that Jeſus Chriſt is mindful of his Churches and people, to ſave them when the Serpent caſts out Floods to drown them. 'Tis ſaid (*Rev.* 12.15.) *The Serpent caſt out of his mouth water as a Flood after the Woman, that he might cauſe her to be carried away of the Flood*; but Jeſus Chriſt that ſitteth upon the Throne, hath a Rainbow about him, which gives aſſurance that the Floods ſhall not quite overwhelm the Church, ſhe ſhall be delivered, though it be in a Wilderneſs, from thoſe mighty water floods of perſecution raiſed and cauſed by the Serpent and his ſeed againſt the ſeed of the Woman, or againſt the Woman and her ſeed. Though Chriſt may ſuffer great Floods of ſorrow and tribulation to be poured upon them, yet there is a Rainbow about the Throne to which we may look, and get our faith confirmed, that the Woman and her Seed ſhall not be ſwallowed up.

Take one place more (*Rev.* 10. 1.) *I ſaw another mighty Angel coming down from heaven* (that was Jeſus Chriſt) *cloathed with a cloud* (that is, with dark diſpenſations, ſuch as his people ſhould not well know what to make of; but what follows?) *and a Rainbow was on his head.* That Propheſie leads into a deſcription of the greateſt preſſures and troubles that ever the Church of God was to ſuffer in this world. Jeſus Chriſt was cloathed with a Cloud, but, for the comfort of his Church, there was a Rain-bow on his head, there was light ſhining in this Cloud, to bear up the ſpirits of his people, that the miſchief ſhould not be to their deſtruction, though it might be very much not only to their tryal, but Correction. And we find the Church ſupported, though not directly under this notion of a Rain-bow, yet by a promiſe plainly hinting, if not referring to it (*Iſa.* 54. 9.) In the 8. verſe the Prophets tells us, that the poor Church was in very great trouble: Why? Surely becauſe of ſome cloudy providences, which interrupted the light of Gods countenance from ſhining upon them, at leaſt to their apprehenſion; thus he beſpake the Church, *In a little wrath have I hid my face from thee, for a moment* (there was the Cloud) *but with everlaſting loving kindneſs will I have mercy on thee, ſaith the Lord thy Redeemer* (there's the Rainbow) *for this is as the waters of Noah; for as I have ſworn the waters of Noah ſhall no more go over the earth* (which was ſignified by the Rainbow) *ſo have I ſworn that I will be no more wrath with thee, nor rebuke thee: For the mountains ſhall depart, and the hills ſhall be removed, but my kindneſs ſhall not depart from thee, neither ſhall the Covenant of my peace be removed any more, ſaith the Lord that hath mercy on thee.* Then follows, *O thou afflicted and toſſed with tempeſt, and not comforted,* behold, *I will lay thy ſtones with fair colours, and thy foundations with ſapphyrs, and I will make thy windows of agats, and thy gates of carbuncles.* As if he had ſaid, though I have hid my face yet I will return, for this is as the waters of *Noah*, that is, I have as certainly reſolved in my ſelf that this unnatural flood ſhall not drown thee, as I once promiſed, and am ſo reſolved ſtill, that the natural flood ſhall never drown the world again; and mark how he expreſſeth it, *as I have ſworn.* When we read the hiſtory in *Geneſis*, it is not ſaid, that the Lord ſwore; but the Lord to ſhew that his word is as good as his oath, tells us that what he ſpake to *Noah*, was as if he had ſworn it, eſpecially ſeeing he gave ſuch a ſign for the performance of it. I might ſhew from other Scriptures, that God is ſometimes repreſented ſwearing, when yet we read of no oath formally given: It is ſaid (*Exod.* 32.13.) God ſware to *Abraham* and his Seed; to which the Apoſtle refers (*Heb.* 6.13,17.) *God confirmed it by an oath*; yet if we look thoſe Scriptures, (*Gen.* 12. 2, 3. *Ch.* 15. 7. *Ch.* 17.7.) we find only the *Lord ſaid*, &c. The Lords ſaying is as good that is, as ſure as his ſwearing, and ſhall as certainly be performed.

For a concluſion of this matter; let it be remembred, that the Lord by *cauſing the light of his Cloud to ſhine*, at firſt gave, and ſtill gives a ſign, or a ſeal to ſtrengthen faith. Signs and ſeals are appendices to the Covenant, or great Charter of all our mercies. Signs and ſeals are viſible words. God ſpeaks by them to the eye. *I will ſet my Bow in the Cloud*; God ſaith, the Bow ſhall be a ſign, he alſo hath made Water a ſign in the holy Sacrament of Baptiſm, and he hath made Bread and Wine ſigns in the holy Sacrament of the Supper; God hath been pleaſed, from the beginning ſo far to condeſcend to mans weakneſs, as to give him, not only his Word or Promiſe, but Signs to confirm it. And therefore did the Lord give a ſign, becauſe, as himſelf hath both an all-ſufficient power, and full purpoſe to perform his promiſe, ſo he would have the faith of all that are under the Covenant well aſſured of his faithfulneſs in performing it.

Thus we ſee the ſpiritual uſefulneſs of this interpretation, taking, *the light of his Cloud*, for that illuſtrious ſign the Rainbow ſet by God in the Cloud, and moſt fitly called *the light ſhining in his Cloud*; which he doth not cauſe to ſhine ordinarily or every day as the Sun doth, but at ſpecial times teſtifying his eminent favour to ſome, and his care over all mankind. *Knoweſt thou when he cauſed the light of his Cloud to ſhine? Elihu* proceeds further with *Job* upon *interrogatories.*

Verſ. 16. **Doſt thou know the ballancing of the Clouds, the wonderful work of him that is perfect in knowledge.**

Here's another queſtion. The general ſcope of all theſe queſtions was handled before, I ſhall now only point at that which this queſtion ſpecially aims at. Mr. *Broughton* reads, *Doſt thou know the poyſing of the thick vapours?* This is a wonderful work of God. The Clouds are huge ponderous bodies; who is able to gueſs how much a Cloud weighs? yet God ballanceth the Clouds, he, as it were, puts them into ſcales, and knows what they weigh; he ſo orders them, that one part doth not over-power the other, but both hang with an even poiſe in the air; this is a wonderful work of God. *Doſt thou know how God doth this?* or, how he makes the Clouds bigger or leſſer, how he placeth them higher or lower, according to the ſervice and uſe to which he hath appointed them? Can any man do this? Can any man fully underſtand how ſuch vaſt bodies as the Clouds ſhould be poiſed or ballanced? how they hover over our heads, and are kept from falling upon us? We muſt have recourſe to the wiſdom and power of God for this. *Doſt thou know the ballancing of the Clouds?*

Librationes nubis appellat eleganter meo quidem judicio, cum in aere appenſæ velut liberantur à Domino. Merc. מפלשי *Vertitur libramenta, à* פלס *ponderavit, ad trutinam direxit mutato* ס *in* ש.

Hence we may infer, Firſt, *If man knoweth not the ballancing of the Clouds, then much leſs can he ballance them.*

And Secondly, Note, *'Tis by a divine power that the Clouds are upheld and ballanced.*

All heavy things tend downward; what then but God keeps the Clouds up, which are ſo heavy? 'Tis a wonder that we have not Seas of waters rather than ſhowers poured upon us from the Clouds. They that travel far at Sea, ſee the Rain coming down by ſpots, or like a flood in ſome places; and certainly the Clouds would come down every where like a flood if God did not hold them up. From which particular inſtance *Elihu* would have us take up this general truth, *that,*

All things are kept in an even ballance by the wiſdom and power of God. The things of the world, if God did not ballance them, how would they tumble and fall awry, yea, run to ruine! were there not a ballancing operation in the arm of God, over all the affairs and buſineſs of men, what a huddle and confuſion would all be in? We read in Scripture of four things which God is ſaid to weigh or to ballance, they are all very conſiderable.

Firſt, It is ſaid, God weigheth the Waters (*Job* 28. 25.) which may be underſtood, not only of the waters above in the Clouds, but of the waters alſo in the Sea; he knows to a dram, to a grain, how much all the waters weigh.

Secondly, Which are alſo vaſt things, It is ſaid (*Iſa.*40. 12.) *He weigheth the mountains in ſcales, and the hills in a ballance.* And as both theſe are true taken litterally, ſo they are true alſo if you take them myſtically or metaphorically. St. *John* was ſhewed *the judgment of the great whore*; in a viſion, who *ſitteth upon many waters* (Rev. 17. 1.) Who are meant by waters is explained there (verſ. 15.) even *Peoples, and Multitudes, Nations, and Tongues.* The people of the world are compared to waters, and well they may, for their inſtability; *Unſtable they are as water* (Gen. 49. 4.) and for their aptneſs to ſwell and riſe up into floods. Now the Lord weigheth theſe myſtical Waters, Multitudes, and Nations: he knows exactly what they are, what they would be, and what they would do. And as by waters common people or nations, ſo by mountains and hills the great and mighty ones of the nations are expreſt; Princes and honourable men are as great mountains. Thus ſpake the Prophet, *The day of the Lord ſhall be againſt the mountains* (*Iſa.* 2.) that is, againſt the mighty men of this world; Hence that deriding queſtion *Who art thou O great mountain before Zerubbabel?* (Zac. 4 7.) That is, O thou great man, who art thou? ſurely, thou art not ſo much as a mole-hill before the God of *Zerubbabel*, who when he *comes down, the mountains melt down at his preſence* (Iſa. 64. 1.) who, *if he doth but touch the mountains they ſmoak* (Pſal. 144. 5.) as if ſtruck with Thunder. God weighs theſe mountains of the earth, that is, he conſiders and underſtands them exactly. God weighed him who was the greateſt mountain, of a man, in his time; *Belſhazzar* was the ſole Monarch of the earth, he had almoſt the whole known world at his command, yet the Lord ſaid of him (*Dan.* 5. 22.) *Thou art numbred, thou art weighed, and thou art found too light.*

Thirdly, As God weigheth men of all ſorts, ſo he weigheth the actions of all ſorts of men (1 *Sam.* 2. 3.) *By him actions are weighed*, that is, all actions are weighed by him; the leaſt actions are weighed by the mighty God, and ſo are the greateſt, he knoweth how to poiſe them, and ſo make uſe of them, that they may effect what is anſwerable to his own counſel and purpoſe. This is it which the Prophet intended, when he ſaid of the Lord, *Thou moſt upright doſt weigh the path of the Juſt* (*Iſa:* 26 7.) that is, the motions, and goings, or doings of the Juſt. The paths of the Juſt come often into very uneven ballances in this world, every one will be weighing them, one gives this judgement of them, and another that, few hit right, the moſt of men being either blinded with ignorance of them, or prejudiced with malice againſt them: But the comfort of the juſt is, the *moſt upright weigheth their path*, and will give the juſt weight of them.

Fourthly and laſtly, God weigheth the very ſpirits of men. *All the ways of man are clean in his own eyes, but the Lord weigheth the ſpirits* (ſaith *Solomon*, *Prov.* 16.2.) The Lord doth not only weigh actions and paths, that is, the whole outward courſe and tenour of our lives, but he weighs our ſpirits, that is, the principles from which our actions flow, and by which we are carried on in our pathes; he finds one man to be of a light, of a vain ſpirit, and another man to be of a proud high ſpirit; a third to be of a covetous, having, holding ſpirit; a fourth of an envious ſpirit, that cannot bear the good of another; and a fifth to be of a revengeful ſpirit, that will do another as much hurt as he can. Again, the Lord by weighing finds out them, whoſoever they are that have a weighty, ſerious ſpirit, that have an upright ſincere ſpirit, that have a heavenly gracious ſpirit; God knows who they are that have a ſpirit for the things and ways of God in the midſt of all contradictions of men; and having thus weighed the ſpirits of men, he diſpoſeth of them and deals with them accordingly. And I may add this to the queſtion in the Text, Doſt thou know the ballancing of ſpirits? Surely no, for *thou knoweſt not the ballancing of the Clouds* (which may be known much eaſier)

The wondrous work of him which is perfect in knowledge.

Mr. *Broughton* renders, *The miracles of the perfect in knowledge.* As if he had ſaid; the ſhining of the light in his Cloud, and the ballancing of the Clouds, are to be numbred among the wonderous works of him *that is perfect in knowledge. The wonderouſneſs of Gods works* was touched at the 14. verſe, I ſhall not ſtay upon that here; only mark how *Elihu* deſcribes God by a periphraſis or circumlocution; he doth not ſay the wonderful works of God, but, *the wonderful works of him*

That is perfect in knowledge.] This is a deſcription of God, and ſuch a deſcription as will fit none but God; who hath and who only hath, not only knowledge, but the perfection of it. We need not name God, when we ſpeak of him that is perfect in knowledge, it can be meant of none but him. *Elihu*, at the 4. verſe of the former Chapter, ſaid to *Job*, *He that is perfect in knowledge*, (meaning himſelf, as that Text was expounded) *is with thee.* In what ſenſe *Elihu* might ſay of himſelf, that he was *perfect in knowledge*, was there ſhewed; and here it muſt be ſhewed and confeſſed, that neither *Elihu* was, nor any, the moſt knowing, are perfect in knowledge like God, or as God is. The Apoſtle ſaith of the beſt knowers in this world (1 *Cor.* 13. 9.) *We know in part, and we propheſie in part; we behold darkly, as in a glaſs.* They that have the cleareſt eye-ſight, the pureſt intellectuals, know but in part, and ſee but darkly, which is far from perfectly; therefore, I ſay, this deſcription *of perfect in knowledge*, hath a peculiar meaning here, proper only to God, as will appear more particularly in opening this Obſervation from it.

God is not only full of knowledge, but perfect in knowledge;
or, *The knowledge of God is perfectly perfect.*

That's perfectly perfect to which nothing can be added, and from which nothing can be taken. Such is the knowledge of God; it is impoſſible to add any thing to it, and it is as impoſſible to diminiſh it: God cannot forget or unlearn any thing already known, nor can he know any more things, no nor any thing more, than he already knoweth; therefore he is perfect in knowledge. More diſtinctly, the knowledge of God is perfect; For,

Firſt, *He knoweth all things*; what-ever is knowable he knoweth. He knows.

Firſt, All things paſt.

Secondly, He knows all things preſent.

Thirdly, He knows all things to come (*Iſa.* 46. 10.) *He declareth the end from the beginning.* Now he that knows all things paſt, preſent, or to come, is perfect in knowledge.

Secondly, He is perfect in knowledge, for he knows all things at once, in one proſect or by one aſpect; he doth not know one thing after another, nor one thing by another, he knows all at once.

Thirdly, He is perfect in knowledge, for he knows all things as they are, he doth not know things according to appearance only, or as they are held forth to be. Many will make fair ſhews, and offer both themſelves and their actions as very good, holy, righteous, religious, yet the Lord who ſeeth through them, ſeeth them ſtark naught quite through (*Heb.* 4. 12.) *All things are naked and maniſeſt to him*: He ſeeth to the skin and all, he ſeeth through cloaks and vizards, yea, he ſeeth through skin and all, he looks into the breaſt; the breaſts of men are to him, as if they were cut open, as the word there imports.

Fourthly, He is perfect in knowledge, *For he knoweth all things in himſelf.* God doth not go out of himſelf to ſearch here and there for knowledge and information. We run to this and that book, to this and that man, to fetch in knowledge and yet we know but little when we have done all; but the Lord knows all things in himſelf, without ſearch or ſtudy.

Fifthly, He knows all things unerringly; he knoweth them ſo as there is not the leaſt miſtake in his knowledge; that's perfect knowledge. How many errors are there in our knowledge? how much darkneſs in our light? But *God is light, and in him is no darkneſs at all.*

Sixthly, He knows all things everlaſtingly; all things are before him always. Some men quite loſe the knowledge of many things which they have known, but all that God knoweth (which is all) abideth the ſame clearneſs and fulneſs with him for ever.

Seventhly, He knows all things as perfectly as if he had but one thing to know, therefore he is perfect in knowledge. We uſe to ſay of a man that hath a knowledge ſcattered upon many matters, or that is knowing in many Arts, and Trades, and buſineſſes, we ſay, this man is *ſomething in every thing, and nothing in any thing*; he hath no full knowledge of any one thing, his knowledge being divided upon or among ſo many things. But ſuch is the perfection of Gods knowledge, that he knows all things as perfectly as if he had but one thing to know. *To him that is infinite, one and all, is all one.* And from hence (to cloſe up the whole point and this verſe) take theſe five Inferences.

Aliquis in omnibus, nullus in ſingulis.

Firſt then, *To know, is to be like God, for God is a God of knowledge.* O how unlike God are ignorant perſons!

Secondly, *The more perfect our knowledge is, the more like we are to God*, for he is abſolutely perfect in knowledge.

Thirdly, If God be perfect in his knowledge, then, *We need not fear any good which we do, unſeen of men, ſhall be loſt*, for God ſees and knows it. Though your left hand know not what your right hand doth, yet never fear what you have done ſhall be buried, for God is perfect in knowledge.

Fourthly, If God be perfect in knowledge, *No evil doer hath any ground of hope, that any evil he doth can be hid, though done never ſo much hiddenly, or in the dark.* God is ſo perfect in knowledge that to him, darkneſs is no darkneſs; the darkneſs and the light to him are both alike.

Fifthly, If God be perfect in knowledge, *Then he fully knows the needs of his people all the world over*; he knows the ſtate of every one for ſoul and body. This Chriſt makes an argument of ſupport in our greateſt needs (*Math.* 6. 32.) *Be not careful what ye ſhall eat*, &c. be not deſpondently careful or fearful about any thing, *for your heavenly father knoweth that ye have need of all theſe things.* Men in ſtraits uſe to ſay, if ſuch a friend did but know of our wants, he would help us. Here is comfort to the people of God, he knows their ſtate in general, and their ſtraits in particular, for he is perfect in knowledge. We may reſt aſſured, that he who hath ſo perfect a knowledge, mingled with perfect compaſſions, will in due time give us perfect help out of all our ſtraits, and a perfect ſupply of all our wants.

VERS. 17, 18.

Doſt thou know, &c.

How thy garments are warm, when he quieteth the earth by the ſouth wind?

Haſt thou with him ſpread out the ſkie which is ſtrong, and as a molten looking-glaſs?

THis context ſheweth yet further, the utter inſufficiency of man to comprehend thoſe wonderful works of God, concerning which *Elihu* ſpake in the cloſe of the 15. verſe. And here we have a conviction of mans inſufficiency two ways.

Firſt, In reference to his ignorance of what God doth upon him, *verſ.* 17. *Doſt thou know how thy garments are warm?* &c.

Secondly, To his weakneſs, in giving God any aſſiſtance about what he hath done, *verſ.* 18. *Haſt thou, with him, ſpread out the ſkie which is ſtrong?* &c.

Thus *Elihu* cometh nearer to *Job* than before, not only convincing him of his ignorance in thoſe things which were far above him, but even in thoſe that were about him; not only with reſpect to the Clouds of heaven, but to the Clothes upon his back. And it hath troubled ſome Interpreters upon theſe words, while they conſidered the ſeeming lowneſs and meanneſs of the matter in queſtion, which their *Elihu* puts to *Job*, as alſo, how *Elihu* (having diſcourſed of ſo many wonderful works of God, in the former part of the Chapter, his wonderful works in Lightning, in Thunder, in Rain and Snow, in the motion of the Winds, in ballancing of the Clouds, and in the admirable aſpect and appearances of the Rain-bow; It troubles ſome Interpreters, I ſay, to conſider how *Elihu*, after a large diſcourſe of theſe greater matters) ſhould come at laſt to ſpeak of *Jobs* garments, and the warmth received by them. What cognation or proportion is there between thoſe high and great things above, and the garments which he daily wore? Do theſe deſerve to be reckoned up among the ſecrets of Nature? or, was *Job* ſo ſtupid, that he could not give a reaſon of their warmth? *Knoweſt thou*

Verſ. 17. **How thy garments are warm, when he quieteth the earth by the South wind?**

So we are to reſume that part of the queſtion out of the former verſe, though not expreſſed here. As there he ſaid expreſly, *Doſt thou know when God diſpoſed them? Doſt thou know the ballancing of the Clouds?* So here he ſaith impliedly, *Doſt thou know how thy garments are warm?*

Some make this and the former verſe one entire ſentence, quite leaving out thoſe words, *Doſt thou know*, in the latter part; *Doſt thou know the ballancing of the Clouds, O thou whoſe garments are warm upon thee, when the earth is quieted by the South-wind? Haſt thou, with him, ſpread out the Skie, which is ſtrong, and as a molten looking glaſs?* The meaning of which reading is briefly this: *O thou, who canſt not bear thy clothes in a hot day, but art forced to leave thy labour, and retire to thy reſt, when the earth is quieted, the Sun being far aſcended to the South* (that's the time of heat) *Didſt thou, with him, ſpread out the Skie, which is ſtrong as a molten looking-glaſs?* Didſt thou work in the Furnace, or in that fiery heat with God, when he did, as it were, like a mighty Founder, caſt the whole Heavens into that glorious mould, or form, in which they appear and ſeem to move? The words are an alluſion to thoſe Artiſts who work in Mettals, and caſt them into Veſſels of one ſort and ſize or another, for the ſeveral uſes and ſervices of man: Such a thing is the Skie over us, which is therefore here compared to *a molten looking-glaſs*, that is, to a glaſs made of molten mettal. Thus, I ſay, ſome read the context as one entire ſentence, and there is a clearneſs in it.

But I ſhall keep to our own reading, and ſo we have two diſtinct queſtions; *Doſt thou know how thy garments are warm? Haſt thou, with him, ſpread out the Skie?*

אשר *Pro* כאשר *Ut* Exod. 34. 18.

I begin with the firſt, *Doſt thou know*

How thy garments are warm?] Canſt thou give an account of that ſudden change, whence it is that the South wind ceaſing to raiſe ſtorms in the earth, there ſhould preſently ſucceed ſuch fervent heat, that thou art not able to bear thy own ordinary clothes? The Text is, *that*, or *how it cometh to paſs, that thy garments are warm.* As if *Elihu* had ſaid, I have dealt with thee about higher and greater matters; I will now put a queſtion to thee which is more familiar, *Canſt thou tell me how thy garments are warm?* Surely if thou art not able to give me a clear reaſon about that, how thou art able to enter into the more reſerved ſecrets of God? tell me, if thou canſt, *How thy*

Garments are warm?] The word which we Tranſlate *garments*, hath a very conſiderable ſignificancy in it, coming from a root rendred deceit, falſhood, and a lie. The garments which we wear are both a tegument or covering of our nakedneſs, and a teſtimony of our perfidiouſneſs and falſeneſs with the great God. Before man ſinned he wore no garments, nor had he need to to wear any, innocency was his cloathing; nor was the natural man ever ſo gloriouſly adorned, deckt and dreſt, as when he had no garments beſides his innocency. When man prevaricated and dealt falſly with God, when he ſinned and broke the commandment (his nakedneſs appearing and his ſhame) he then got a ſimple covering, ſuch as he could make for himſelf of fig leaves, till God provided him a covering of skins. Garments began with

בגד *Perfidia, falſitas, mendacium, item veſtis forte quod veſtimentum ſit primi hominis contra Deum perfidiæ tegumentum & teſtimonium.* Brix.

our ſin *till then* (ſaith *Moſes, Gen.* 2.) *the man and the woman were both naked, and were not aſhamed*; but when once man had ſinned, then ſhame came into the world and then both God and Nature provided garments to cover his ſhame. All this the word imports, that we, through ſin, having loſt our natural garments, our robe of created innocency and integrity, we are conſtrained by ſhame to take up theſe artificial garments or coverings to hide our nakedneſs. It is not unprofitable for us to remember, that the Spirit of God in the Original language hath expreſſed our garments by ſuch a word, as leads us to the original of them, our dealing falſly with God and ſinning againſt him. *Doſt thou know how thy garments*

חמם *Incaluit, calidus fuit; itaque Chami nomen vel à colore, vel à nigredine factum; Neque ut videtur ſine numine, cum quæ Chamo contingit Aphrica immodico æſtu laboret.* Bochart. *Aphrica Ammonia dicta, cum ob cultum Ammonis* i. e. *Solis, tum præcipue ob æſtus ſolares quibus expoſita eſt.* Fuller Miſc.

Are warm?] The word which ſignifieth to heat, or make warm (I note that by the way alſo) was the name of one of the ſons of *Noah*; he had three, called *Sem, Ham, and Japheth. Ham* or *Cham* was that ſon who *ſaw his fathers nakedneſs, and told his two brethren without*, not grievingly, but deridingly, which brought a curſe upon him. This *Cham* had his name from heat; and that portion and part of the world which, according to the opinion of the learned, was aſſigned to the poſterity of *Cham*, is one of the hotteſt climates in the world; the inhabitants of thoſe Countries by reaſon of the extream heat of the Sun, being *black*, are called *Blackmores*. And all *Affrica* was called *Ammonia*, either becauſe the Idol of the Sun was worſhipped there, or becauſe the Sun-beams are always hot and fiery upon it. Yet as the word notes that extream heat which cauſeth blackneſs, ſo any moderate heat; *Doſt thou know how thy garments are warm?*

From the notation of the word rendred garments,

> Obſerve firſt, *When we put on our clothes we ſhould remember our ſin*, or, *Our garments are memorials of our ſin.*

The covering of our natural nakedneſs is a diſcovery of our ſpiritual; and therefore when we cover our natural nakedneſs we ſhould think of our ſpiritual. 'Tis ſin alone which makes us ſhamefully naked. *Moſes* ſaw the people were naked, when they had made the golden Calf (*Exod.* 32. 25.) not that they had no clothes on them, but they had got a new ſin upon them, and had loſt their former integrity, which was a better ornament than clothing, as alſo the protection of God, which was a better guard or defence than armour. Our garments, which are an occaſion of pride to many, ſhould be an occaſion of humiliation to all. Let us take heed of ſinning in the uſe of garments, ſeeing it was ſin that brought in the uſe of garments. I only mind the reader of it from the notation of the word.

Secondly, what is here ſaid of garments? *Knoweſt thou how thy garments are warm?* That is, warm thee, or, keep thee warm.

> Hence Note, *Garments are given for warmth.*

That's one uſe or ſervice of garments. There is a fourfold uſe of garments.

Firſt, To cover our nakedneſs and hide our ſhame.

Secondly, To diſtinguiſh our ſex, man from woman. The law of *Moſes* forbad the man to wear the womans apparel, or the woman the mans (*Deut. chap.* 22. *verſ.* 5.)

Thirdly, Garments are uſeful for ornament. There are garments of glory and honour, garments to ſet forth the ſtate and condition, as well as the ſex of the perſon wearing them. *Aaron* and his ſons had garments made them by Gods own appointment, *for glory and for beauty* (*Exod.* 28. 2, 40.) The Kings and Princes of the world wear garments becoming their ſtate and Majeſty; and inferior Magiſtrates have their proper garments, ſuiting their offices and dignity.

Fourthly, (Which is the common uſe of garments, and that which the Text ſpeaks of) they are for warmth, to keep out the cold, and to defend us from the injuries and violence of the weather; yet we ſcarce know, or do not fully know, how that comes to paſs.

> Hence obſerve, Thirdly, *How our garments warm us is a ſecret, and that they warm us is from the bleſſing of God.*

Though there be a natural cauſe of this warmth, yet there is ſome-what of God, yea, much of God in it. The effect of that natural cauſe dependeth wholly upon the concurrence and power of God. That Speech of the Prophet to the *Jews* newly returned from *Babylon*, and neglecting the Lords houſe, while they too much attended the building of their own, doth fully evince this for truth (*Haggai* 1. 6.) *Ye have ſown much, but bring in little* (naturally they that ſow much, ſhould bring in much; but God can ſtop the influences of the heavens, and the increaſe of the earth, and though the ſeed-time be great, the harveſt ſhall be ſmall) again, *ye eat* (*and then* ſure they were ſatisfied; no, ſaith the Prophet, ye eat) *but ye have not enough*; which not only implyeth that they had not enough to eat (though that might be a truth) but, that though they did eat enough, yet there was not a nutritive vertue in the meat, it did not content or ſatisfie the ſtomach and renew their ſtrength: He adds, *ye drink but are not filled with drink*, which alſo implyeth, not only that they had but a little to drink was not comfortable or thirſt-quenching to them. Laſtly (which is the inſtance of the Text) *Ye cloath you, but there is no warmth.* What was the reaſon of all this, That they did eat and had not enough, drink and were not filled, put on cloathing and were not warm? The Text gives anſwer (verſ. 9.) *Becauſe I did not blow upon it*, or *blow it away*; that is, I ſent out a curſe which blaſted all your creature injoyments, and blowed away the comforts and uſual efficacy of them; ſo that ye had only a ſhell without a kernel, or only ſkin and bones without the marrow and fatneſs of all, my favour and bleſſing. *That our cloaths warm us, as well as that our meat and drink nouriſh us, is from the bleſſing of God.*

Fourthly, When he ſaith, *Knoweſt thou how thy garments are warm?*

> Note, *Man cannot give a full account or reaſon of common things, or of his dayly comforts and enjoyments.*

What's more common than for a man to wear garments? what then to find his garments warm upon him, or himſelf warm in his garments? and why a mans cloaths warm him we need not go to enquire of a great Philoſopher, any man, any common man can give or aſſign a cauſe of it. Yet there is ſomewhat in it beyond natural cauſes, which few take any notice of, and none can ſufficiently or fully apprehend. Secondly, cauſes produce their effects, the temperature of the air is a cauſe of warmth, and the garments we wear, warm us by exciting and drawing out the congenial warmth within us; yet *Elihu* puts on the queſtion further than that, *Knoweſt thou how thy garments are warm,*

When he quieteth the earth with the South-wind?

Quum tranquilla eſt terra. השקט *pleruma; intranſitivè uſurpatur.* Piſc. *A meridie.* דרם *Meridies quaſi* דר רום *habitatio alta, quod Sol in iſta plaga altius incedat. Quieſcit ab auſtro dum non flagellatur ab auſtro procelloſo.* Loc. vide cum.

Or as ſome tranſlate, *When the earth is quiet by the South-Wind.* Mr. *Broughton* reads, *when the land is ſtill.* The original is only *the South, When he quieteth the earth, or when the earth is quiet by the South*; that is, when gentle winds or briezes blow from the Southern parts. The word rendred South or South wind, comes from a root ſignifying an high habitation, becauſe the Sun is higheſt when 'tis in the South, that's its Meridian or high both elevation and habitation. And as when the Sun cometh into the South, 'tis in its higheſt elevation above us, ſo 'tis hotteſt in operation upon us.

So that, *by the South*, he meaneth the Spring and Summer time, when the Sun makes his Southern progreſs. And becauſe uſually our garments are warmeſt upon us, when the South wind bloweth, therefore we render it *by the South wind*. The South wind ſometimes bringeth ſtorms, as was ſhewed at the ninth verſe, *Out of the South cometh the whirlwind*; but moſtly the South wind bringeth a calm and heat (*Luke* 12. 55.) *When ye ſee* (ſaith Chriſt) *the South wind blow, ye ſay, there will be heat, and it cometh* *to paſs.* As the North wind uſually blows cold, ſo the South wind uſually blows hot, or bringeth heat. Here's a natural cauſe of warmth, *the quieting of the earth by the South wind.*

But is the earth at any time unquiet? If not, why is it ſaid, *he quieteth the earth?* Here by the earth we are to underſtand that part of the Air which is neareſt to the Earth. The Earth taken ſtrictly is not unquiet, but the Air, in which we (who are upon the Earth) breath, the wind blowing, is unquiet and ſtormy, and when God commands down the ſtorm and ſends a calm he is ſaid to quiet the Earth. So then, by the Earth, we are to underſtand the Air immediately compaſſing us, who dwell and move upon the Earth; and God *quieteth the earth with the South, or South wind,* when we on Earth are quiet and quit from troubleſom or tempeſtuous weather.

Terra eſt aer propinqua terra.

Hence Note, *The natural quietneſs of the Air which we have on Earth, is of God.*

When there are no ſtorms nor bluſtring winds in the Air, God ſhews both his power and goodneſs, he then quieteth the Earth; we are to acknowledge God in it, and bleſs him for it, when the Earth is quiet. The diſciples (*Math.* 8. 26.) being in a great ſtorm at Sea, and fearing the Veſſel would be over-ſet, and that they ſhould periſh in the Waters, Chriſt ſaid to the Sea, *Peace, be ſtill, and preſently there was a great calm.* He that quiets the Sea, quiets the Earth too. Chriſt hath calms or peaceable winds, as well as ſtorms and ſtormy winds at his diſpoſe.

And if the natural quietneſs of the Earth be the work of God, then much more is the civil quietneſs of it. God alone giveth quietneſs among men, he maketh them of one Houſe, and them of one Nation to live quiet. VVhen there are no winds, no tempeſtuous winds blowing in the sky, there may be ſtorms and tempeſts in the Spirits of men; and when there is a tempeſt within, only he *who forms the ſpirit of man within him* (*Zech.* 12. 1.) can keep it from breaking out. There are civil ſtorms as well as natural, and the former are much more troubleſom and dangerous than the latter: God raiſeth thoſe ſtorms in judgment. *He ſent an evil Spirit between Abimelech and the men of Sichem* (Judg. 9. 23.) That is, he either gave Satan (the great maſter of miſrule) leave to kindle jealouſies and animoſities between them, or he gave them up to their own evil, envious and malicious ſpirits, which hurried them on to their mutual vexation and deſtruction: now, as God raiſeth theſe ſtorms in judgment, ſo he either prevents or rebukes them in mercy. It is God who quiets both the ſpirits of Princes in governing, and the ſpirits of people in ſubmitting and obeying. He hath a South wind, ſome benign and favourable wind, which he breathes upon the children of men, and then they are quiet, and then all's quiet: God being quiet towards, that is well-pleaſed with, and favorable unto man, he quiets all things. If the Lord do but ſay the word, what ſtorm, what tempeſt, what wrath, what rage, what outrage ſoever there is in the earth, all's huſht and ſtill. *Elihu* affirmed this ſtrongly when he put that challenging queſtion (*Chap.* 34. 29.) *When he giveth quietneſs, who then can make trouble; whether againſt a nation or a man only?* Natural quietneſs, much more civil, but above all, ſpiritual quietneſs is of the Lord.

Tranquillus Deus tranquillat omnia.

When there is the greateſt unquietneſs in the Air, and in the affairs of this world, (when as it is ſaid of thoſe times, 2 *Chron.* 15. 5.) *There is no peace to him that goeth out, nor to him that comes in, but great vexations are upon all the inhabitants of the countreys,* men contending with and (like beaſts) tearing one another, yet even then there may be ſpiritual quietneſs in the ſoul of a believer; he may ſit ſtill and unmoveable, in the favour and love of God, though the earth be moved (yea removed) and the hills carried into the midſt of the Sea. This is eminently the work of God; he can give quietneſs to the ſoul in the midſt of all worldly unquietneſs. Chriſt ſaid to his diſciples, and in them to all believers (*John* 16. 33.) *Theſe things have I ſpoken to you that ye might have peace; in the world ye ſhall have tribulation.* The meaning of Chriſt is not to aſſure his diſciples, that they ſhall have peace in him after they have had tribulation in the world, but that their inward ſpiritual peace ſhall Synchronize or be contemporary with their outward worldly tribulations. To have trouble without, and peace within, at the ſame time, *This is the ſpecial gift of God.* The Text tells us, God *quieteth the earth;* and as that gift of natural quietneſs is a mercy, ſo civil quietneſs is a great mercy, and ſpiritual quietneſs, quietneſs of heart and tranquillity of mind, eſpecially in the midſt of tribulations, is the greateſt mercy of all. We ſhould pray earneſtly, that God would keep the earth quiet, or quiet the earth, whenever we find it unquiet, by ſome gracious South wind, but above all, that he would quiet our ſpirits by the ſweet breathings of his bleſſed Spirit, that though at any time there ſhould be nothing (which God forbid) but unquietneſs on the earth, yet we have much quietneſs in our hearts.

Again conſider, the former context told us of ſtorms and tempeſts, of thunder and lightning, of ſnow and rain, driving men from their labour in the field, to their homes and houſes, and the wild beaſts of the fields to their dens and coverts: Now this Text ſpeaks of warmth, of calms, and quietneſs, *He quieteth the earth by the South wind.*

Hence obſerve, *There is a continual viciſſitude in natural things.*

As no day of the year is of the ſame continuance or length as to light, ſo very few are of the ſame complexion or temper as to heat and cold, fair or foul weather, ſtorms or calms. Now if there be ſuch a viciſſitude in natural things, then do not wonder that there is a viciſſitude in civil things, or in the affairs and conditions of men in this world. If after the fair weather of health and peace, the foul weather of ſickneſs and trouble come upon us, if after calms we meet with ſtorms, let us not be troubled. A heathen Poet ſaid, We ſhould not be diffident in a ſtormy day, that we ſhall never have quietneſs, nor ſhould we be confident in a quiet day, that we ſhall never have a ſtorm. *David,* a holy man, was once exceedingly out in both; in his adverſity he ſaid, I ſhall never be eſtabliſhed; that was the ſenſe of his ſaying, when in *his haſte he ſaid, all men are liars* (Pſal. 116. 11.) *In his proſperity he ſaid, I ſhall never be moved.* The Lord's favour had made his mountain ſtand ſtrong, and he began not only to think but conclude it would always ſtand in the ſame ſtrength, till his experience confuted that fancy, *Thou didſt hide thy face, and I was troubled* (*Pſal.* 30. 6, 7.) 'Tis good for us to be in expectation of, and preparation for all ſorts of changes, ſeeing all things here below are changeable. That great Monarch ſaid (*Dan.* 4. 4.) *I Nebuchadnezar was at reſt in mine houſe, and flouriſhing in my palace,* yet preſently he ſaw in a dream, that all his flouriſhing proſperity was but like a dream that paſſeth away; and while thoſe boaſts of an earthly greatneſs and ſettlement were in his mouth (*v.* 30.) *Is not this great Babylon that I have built for the houſe of the Kingdom,* &c. *There fell a voice from Heaven* (verſ. 31.) *ſaying, O King Nebuchadnezar, to thee it is ſpoken, the Kingdom is departed from thee.* All ſublunary things, the ſureſt and beſt ſetled eſtates, not only of the men of this world, or of worldly men, but of all men, even of good men, in this world, are as ſubject to changes, as the Moon is, or as the wind and weather.

Nemo confidat nimium ſecundis, nemo deſperet meliora lapſis: Res Deus noſtras celeri rotatas turbine verſat. Sen. in Thyeſte.

Laſtly, Whereas, when *Elihu* to the queſtion, *Knoweſt thou how thy garments are warm,* puts this addition, *when he quieteth the earth with the South wind?* *Job* might ſay, that's an anſwer to the queſtion. If you aſk me, how my garments are warm? I anſwer, *By Gods quieting the earth with the South wind.* But here is ſomething more intended, though this be a cauſe of warmth, yet not all the cauſe. It is poſſible for the weather to be warm, and our garments not warm. It was ſhewed before, that God is able to ſuſpend the working or effects of nature: as, through his power a man may be in the fire and yet the fire not burn him (it was ſo with the three Children in *Daniel*) ſo a man may be in the Sun-ſhine, and his clothes not warm him. God can ſtay or ſtop the influences and effects of the Sun. The ſhining of the Sun and the quietneſs of the Air are true reaſons of the warmth we feel in our garments, yet not all the reaſon. And therefore *Elihu* would convince *Job* by this queſtion, that if he could not give the whole reaſon of Naturals, much leſs could he of Providentials. And as he convinceth him of his inſufficiency, and incompetency to deal and debate with God, by his ignorance about the warmth of his garments that covered him: So in the next Verſe, he convinceth him of weakneſs and inability, by calling him to conſider the mighty power and ſelf-ſufficiency of God, who alone, without any of his or of any man's aſſiſtance, made and ſpread out the mighty garment, the Sky, which enwraps and covers all men and all things on earth. That's the general import of the following queſtion.

Verſ. 18. **Haſt thou with him ſpread out the Sky, which is ſtrong, and as a molten looking-Glaſs?**

תרקיע *Ponitur pro præterito; hoc ex ipſa ſententia liquet. Deus enim ſemel expandit cœlos cum eos crearet, non expendit eos amplius.* Piſc.

The word which we render, and is here uſed as a Verb, *to ſpread*, beareth an alluſion to Metals, which are beaten out by an hammer into plates. The Noun ſignifies the Firmament (*Gen.* 1.) becauſe it is an *expanſion*, or thing ſpread out. I find the Verb is applied to the work of God upon the Earth (*Pſal.* 136. 6.) where the Pſalmiſt puts this among the praiſes of God, or the things for which God is to be praiſed, *To him who ſtretched out the earth.* The ſtretching or ſpreading out of the earth is the work of God, as well as the ſpreading out of the Heaven. The earth is a ſolid opacous and globous body, yet it is ſaid to be ſtretched out, becauſe as there is a roundneſs in the Earth, ſo a mighty extent and vaſtneſs. *To him that ſtretched out the earth above the waters, to him give thanks.* But though the Earth be alſo ſtretched out, yet more properly (of which *Elihu* here ſpeaks) *the Sky. Haſt thou with him ſpread out*

לשחקים *Cœlum vel nubes vel aerem ſignificat, unde aliqui conjunctim de omnibus accipiunt.* Scult. *Cœli ſic dicti à tenuitate ſubſtantiæ, &* ל *valet articulum accuſativi caſus.* Piſc. *Apud Hebræos idem ſignificant Shamaim & Schthhkim; ita apud Latinos cœlum & Æther; interdum aer mediæ regionis ubi ſunt nubes hoc nomine ſignificatur.* Merc.

The ſky?] The word rendred *Sky*, is put ſometimes for the Air, ſometimes for the Clouds, as alſo for the Heavens above both the Clouds and Air. Several of the learned expound it here of the Air, that is, of all below the Moon; others of the Heavens which are above. *Haſt thou with him ſpread out the Sky, or the Heaven?*

This ſpreading forth of the *Skie* may have a three-fold reference.

Firſt, To the eternal Counſel of God before time. As if he had ſaid, *Waſt thou with God when he decreed or purpoſed to ſpread out the Heavens?*

Secondly, To the work of God in the beginning of time. Waſt thou with God, when he did actually ſpread out the Sky or Firmament in the ſecond days work of Creation? (*Gen.* 1. 6.)

Thirdly, (which ſome inſiſt much upon) to the daily or frequently renewed work of God in ordering and altering the face and motion of the Heavens. As if he had ſaid, *Haſt thou with him, when the Skie ſeeming to be wrapped up in darkneſs, and rent with thunder and ſtorms; haſt thou then with him ſcattered the darkneſs, and cleared up the air, making all ſtrong or whole again?* Thus he is ſuppoſed ſpeaking of a thing often done, even after every ſtorm, not of ſpreading the Sky at firſt.

Tu forſitan cum illo fabricatus es cœlos. Vulg.

The Vulgar Latine renders it ironically, in the ſecond ſenſe; *Thou perhaps didſt joyn with him in making the Heavens!* As if *Elihu* had ſaid, *'Tis like, or belike thou waſt with him when he made the Heavens; Thou ſurely waſt the Giant or Mighty man who aſſiſted at the ſpreading out of that vaſt Canopy. Didſt thou poor worm, contribute thy help, or lend thy hand to God in the creation of the World? are we beholden to thee that the Heavens which we behold, compaſs in all things with their embraces? you ſpeak of your ſelf at ſuch a rate, as if you had been a partner or a coadjutor with God in the Creation, and had with him ſpread out the Heavens.* Thus the words are as a ſtrong Negation; *Thou hadſt nothing to do with God when he ſpread out the Heavens in the work of Creation; why then art thou ſo buſie with God about the works of his Providence, and particularly about his dealing with thy ſelf?* The ſum of *Elihu*'s argument in this matter may be thus conceived; *If God call not man in other things as a Counſellor or Judge of his actions, nor can be required of any man to do ſo, nor may any man preſume to ſpeak againſt his ordering the Heavens and Meteors, which yet concern the great good or hurt of thouſands; then it muſt needs be a very unequal thing that any one man ſhould expect of God a reaſon of his particular dealing with him, but patiently ſubmit unto it, not at all queſtioning, either his juſtice or his goodneſs, how greatly and grievouſly ſoever he is afflicted.*

Firſt, Taking the Heavens, either ſtrictly, or, as many do, ſynecdochically, a part being put for the whole work of Creation,

Note, *God made the world;*

He ſpread the Heavens, and ſtretched out the Earth, Heaven and Earth are the work of his hands.

Secondly, *God hath no partner in his work. Haſt thou with him ſpread out the Skie?* The Scripture is much in exalting the honour of God, as the ſole Agent and Efficient in ſetting up the frame of the World, (*Iſa.* 44. 24.) *Thus ſaith the Lord, I am the Lord that maketh all things, that ſtretcheth forth the Heavens alone, that ſpreadeth abroad the Earth by my ſelf.* The Prophet brings in God ſpeaking thus, to comfort his ancient people when they ſaw none to help them. *What cannot God do alone, who ſtretcheth out the Heavens alone? Cannot he bring back the Church of the* Jews *out of* Babylon *alone, who ſtretcheth out the Heavens alone? cannot he raiſe up* Cyrus *for his Shepherd, and move him to make Proclamation for their return, when there was none to move him about it? He fruſtrateth the tokens of the liars, and maketh Diviners mad.* Thoſe lying Diviners ſaid, the *Jews* were faſt enough for coming out, but God fruſtrated their tokens, and made them mad at their diſappointments. Now as this may exceedingly comfort and encourage the people of God all the world over in their greateſt ſtraits, that God made the world, and ſpread out the Sky alone, ſo it doth exceedingly advance the power and glory of God. If a man have but a great Carpet or Coverlet to unfold, he muſt call in the help of two or three to ſpread it and hold it up, one man cannot do it alone: But God ſpread out the Heaven, that mighty Canopy of the Heavens alone. And his ſpreading of it was the making of it; The mighty God by one act gave the Sky both its being and its form: And all this he did without either Counſellor or Coadjutor. No man ever did any very great thing in the world, but it was either by the help of other mens heads in contriving, or by the help of their hands in effecting. To be a ſole-Agent of Great things, is the ſole-priviledge of the Great God. And ſurely if the Lord God had no aſſiſtant in the great work of Creation, he needs no aſſiſtance in his greateſt works of Providence. He who made the world without help, can do what he pleaſeth in the world without help. *Our help* (ſaith the Pſalmiſt 124. 8.) *is in the name of the Lord, who made Heaven and Earth;* but the Maker of Heaven and of Earth, fetcheth all his help from his own Name.

Elihu having magnified the power of God in ſpreading out the Sky, takes occaſion to give us a deſcription of the Sky, *Haſt thou with him ſpread out the Sky*

Which is ſtrong, and as a molten Looking-Glaſs?

We have here two things conſiderable in the Sky; Firſt, the ſtrength of it; Secondly, the clearneſs of it. But is the Sky ſtrong? that may be thought an improper and incongruous Epithete: The Sky ſeemeth to be a weak thing, and the Air will ſcarce bear a feather; yet ſaith he, *Haſt thou with him ſpread out the Sky which is ſtrong?* How are the Heavens or Sky ſtrong? Philoſophers and Interpreters upon this place, have largely diſcourſed the matter of the Heavens, which to our ſenſe are a very thin ſubſtance, and therefore ſeem to have little ſtrength in them.

I anſwer, Though to ſenſe and view the Sky or Heavens ſeem to have little ſtrength in them, yet indeed their ſtrength is beyond that of Rocks and Mountains. The learned Languages, both Greek and Latine, expreſs the Sky by words which properly ſignifie *ſtrength* and *firmneſs*; and we following the Latine word commonly call it in our Engliſh Tongue, *The Firmament*, as much as to ſay, *a firm thing*. When the Apoſtle would ſet forth the ſteadineſs (or as we tranſlate) the ſtedfaſtneſs of the faith of the *Coloſſians*, he makes uſe of this word (στερέωμα *Chap.* 2. 5.) As if he had ſaid, I rejoyce to behold *the firmament*

Firmitas tribuitur cœlo propter immutabilitatem unde Septuaginta dicunt στερέωμα, Latini Firmamentum.

mament of your faith, or that your faith is as firm as the Firmament. Surely then the Sky or Firmament is very ſtrong, elſe the ſtrength of faith (which being ſtrong, is the ſtrongeſt thing, both actively and paſſively, in the world) had never been expreſſed by it. The Heavens are ſaid to be ſtrong (as faith is) becauſe of their laſtingneſs and duration. The Angels are pure Spirits, they are purer and of a more ſpiritual ſubſtance than the Sky or Heavens, yet they are ſtrong, ſo ſtrong and powerful, that they are called *Powers*; their ſtrength is not a corporal ſtrength of fleſh and bone, as ours, and that of beaſts is, nor is it a ſtrength by compactneſs of earthy parts, as that of Stones and Metals is, but 'tis a ſtrength of laſtingneſs and activity ariſing from their ſpiritualneſs. Thus the Sky, eſpecially taking it for the Heavens above the air, is pure, there is a ſpiritualneſs in its nature, and ſo a ſtrength of laſtingneſs in it, beyond that of any earthly or elementary body. The Heavens are not made up of contrary qualities, as elementary bodies are: In them heat and coldneſs, moiſture and drineſs, are mingled together, and theſe contending with each other, at laſt ſubdue each other; whence all elementary bodies become weak and corruptible. The Heavens have ſome cognation with elementary bodies, yet without the contrariety of active qualities. Heaven is like the Element of the Earth, in regard of firmneſs and ſolidity; it is like the water, in regard of its moveableneſs; it is like the air, in regard of its pellucidneſs or clearneſs; it is like the fire, with reſpect to its activeneſs. Heaven ſhines, yet 'tis without heat; 'tis ſolid, yet without drineſs; 'tis compact, yet without moiſtneſs; 'tis diaphanous and pellucid, yet without pores, or thoſe ſmall and unſenſible holes, whereby ſweat and vapours paſs out of the body. So then the Scripture calls Heaven ſtrong or firm, not as groſs bodies are called firm and ſtrong, but becauſe of its perpetual conſiſtency and (as to nature) indiſſolubility; which doth the more highly advance and commend the power of God, who hath given it a ſtrength and firmneſs, beyond that of Rocks and Adamants: For how fluid and moveable ſoever the Heavens are to view, yet they are the moſt ſtrong and durable part of the whole Creation. *Haſt thou with him ſpread out the Sky which is ſtrong,*

מוצק *fuſile à* יצק *fundere liquefacere, non à* צוק *coarctare.* Merc.

And as a molten Looking-Glaſs?

Some read theſe words as an entire ſentence, *Which is ſtrong as a molten Looking-Glaſs.* So Mr. *Broughton, Couldſt thou make a Firmament with him of the Air, ſetled as Glaſs molten?* We put it diſtinctly in two parts, *which is ſtrong, and as a molten Looking-Glaſs.* Some of the old Poets uſed a like Epithete concerning Heaven, they called it, *The Brazen Heaven.* What the Lord threatens as a judicial affliction (*Deut.* 28. 23.) *The Heaven that is over thine head ſhall be Braſs,* that Heaven reſembles in its natural conſtitution, 'tis like Braſs, or like a molten Looking-Glaſs, by reaſon of its ſhining brightneſs. That which we commonly call Glaſs, or a Looking-Glaſs is molten: of which we read (*Exod.* 38. 8.) *Moſes made the Brazen Laver of the Looking-Glaſſes of the Women.* The godly women among the *Jews* made a better uſe of their Looking-Glaſſes, than to dreſs themſelves by, they offered them to the ſervice of God in the Tabernacle.

Poetæ veteres χαλκὲον ὤρανον appellarunt.

One of the Jewiſh Doctors warns us to conſider that the wonder which we render a *Looking-Glaſs*, may be taken for a *look*, or for the *appearance of a thing*: As if he had ſaid, The Heavens are not only ſtrong, but clear, looking like, or being, to look on, like a thing that is molten. Glaſs is a diaphanous ſplendid body, we may ſee through it, or ſee the repreſentation of objects in it. Thus the Heavens are ſtrong as ſteel, and clear *as a molten-Looking Glaſs.*

ראה *Eſt videre; inde viſus & ſpeculum.* Fab. Kimhi in lib. rad.

Hence obſerve, Firſt; *The Heavens are durable, they are ſtrong.*

Secondly, *The Heavens are tranſparent, they are as a Looking-Glaſs.*

From this latter we may infer,

There is much to be ſeen in the Heavens;

They are a Looking-Glaſs which repreſent many things to us. It hath been ſaid, The whole world is a Looking-Glaſs, every Age we live in is a Looking-Glaſs, in which many, both things and perſons, are diſcovered: I may ſay much more, the Heavens are a Looking-Glaſs, wherein we may behold much of God, and much of our ſelves. And becauſe the Heavens are called a Looking-Glaſs, it ſhould mind us to look upon the Heavens; they may mind us,

Sæculum ſpeculum.

Firſt, What God is, who hath made the Heavens (*Pſal.* 19. 1.) *The Heavens declare the glory of God, and the Firmament ſheweth his handy work.* We may ſee God by the Heavens;

Firſt, In his nature, that he is pure and holy. He that hath made ſuch a pure thing as the Heaven is, how pure is he! There is no dirt in the Sky, no filth in the Heavens, no uncleanneſs there; the duſt or filth of this world can get but a little into the air, it cannot reach the Heavens. The purity of God is ſuch as may ſhame the purity of the Heavens, and make them bluſh; though the Heavens are the pureſt part of the world, yet comparatively to God they are impure. This *Eliphaz* aſſerts expreſly (*Chap.* 15. 15.) *Behold he putteth no truſt in his Saints: yea, the Heavens are not clean in his ſight. Bildad* puts it yet further (*Chap.* 26. 5.) *Yea, the Stars* (which are the moſt pure and reſplendent part of the Heavens) *are not pure in his ſight.*

Secondly, The Heavens are a Glaſs, wherein we may behold the power of God. How unconceiveable is his power, who hath made ſuch a Canopy, and ſpread it over the heads of all Creatures! And if the viſible Heavens are ſo glorious, what is the Heaven of Heavens! The Heaven which we ſee, is but the pavement of that which is unſeen. God hath made ſuch a Cieling for this Houſe below, as never needed mending, or repair, he hath ſet ſuch a Roof upon it as abides all weathers.

Thirdly, We may ſee in this Glaſs the wiſdom of God, his wonderful wiſdom in contriving and fitting ſuch a beautiful Roof for this great Houſe, the World. We admire the skill and wiſdom of Architects in ſome pieces of their work. O the wiſdom of God in this!

Fourthly, We may ſee in the Heavens the unchangeableneſs of God. If he hath made the Heavens of ſuch a laſting nature, that they have continued many thouſand years without alteration; ſurely then he himſelf hath continued and will continue for ever without change, as he is at this day. The unchangeableneſs of God infinitely exceeds that of the Heavens. We find the Spirit of God by holy *David* infinitely preferring the God of Heaven, before the Heavens of God, in his unchangeableneſs (*Pſal.* 102. 26, 27.) *Of old haſt thou laid the foundation of the Earth, and the Heavens are the work of thy hands; they ſhall periſh, but thou ſhalt endure; yea, all of them ſhall wax old like a garment, and as a veſture ſhalt thou change them, and they ſhall be changed: but thou art the ſame.* The Heavens have but a ſhadow of unchangeableneſs, compared with God, *With whom is no variableneſs nor ſhadow of changing.*

Fifthly, In this Glaſs of the Heavens we may look upon or contemplate the wonderful goodneſs of God to the ſons of men, (*Pſal.* 8. 3.) *When I conſider the Heavens, the work of thy fingers, the Moon, and the Stars, which thou haſt ordained: What is man that thou art mindful of him? and the ſon of man that thou viſiteſt him?* Whenever we behold the Heavens, it ſhould mind us of the mercy and goodneſs of God to man two ways. Firſt, in making the Heavens for his uſe, while he dwels on the Earth. Secondly, that he hath prepared and provided him ſuch a dwelling houſe, when he ſhall leave this Earth (2 *Cor.* 5. 1.) *We know that when the earthly houſe of this Tabernacle ſhall be diſſolved, we have a building of God, an houſe not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens.*

Again, The Heavens are a Looking Glaſs, wherein we may behold our ſelves.

Firſt, We may behold our weakneſs and impurity, and ſo our unlikeneſs to the Heavens, much more to the God of Heaven. When oppoſites are ſet one by or over againſt the other, they illuſtrate each other. In the ſpotleſs Heavens, we may ſee our ſpots; The pure Heavens may ſhew us our impurity.

Secondly, As in the Heavens we may ſee what we are, ſo what we ſhou'd be. The purity of the Heavens tell us we ſhould be pure, they tell us we ſhould be heavenly-minded, that is, ſet our minds chiefly upon heavenly things; yea, that our minds ſhould be like the Heavens, pure and ſpotleſs. It is ſaid of the Church (*Cant.* 6. 10.) *Who is this that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the Moon, clear as the Sun?* Such, in a qualified ſenſe, are all the parts and true members of the Church. Shall a man ſay, he hopes for an inheritance in the Heavens, when his mind is earthly, or when he minds only earthly things? Worldly men are not only earthly-minded, but their minds are earth, and themſelves are called earth (*Jer.* 22. 29. and *Rev.* 12. 16.) Surely then they are earthly. On the other hand, godly men ſhould not only mind heavenly things, but be a Heaven before they come to Heaven. The Church on Earth is called Heaven (*Heb.* 12. 26.) *Yet once more I ſhake not the Earth only, but alſo Heaven*; that is, the Church ſtate. St. *John* ſaith (*Rev.* 12. 7.) *There was war in Heaven*: But is there war in Heaven? is it not all peace and joy there? How then ſaith that Scripture, *There was war in Heaven*? By Heaven there he means the Church on earth, which is called Heaven: Firſt, becauſe there is not a more lively repreſentation or reſemblance of the higheſt Heavens (which is the habitation of Gods holineſs, and of his glory) than the Church here below, which is a company of Saints and faithful ones. Secondly, becauſe the Church, while on Earth, hath more to do in Heaven, and for Heaven, then in or for the Earth; and that in three reſpects.

Firſt, Her birth is from Heaven, being born of God.

Secondly, Her traffick is in and for Heaven. The Apoſtle ſaith of himſelf, and of all ſuch as are truly the Church of God (*Phil.* 3. 20.) *Our Converſation is in Heaven*; our Trade is in Heaven. Though we have buſineſs on Earth, yet that which is our buſineſs indeed is in Heaven. The Church hath more to do in Heaven than on Earth; her pains and labours, her cares and endeavours are more for heavenly than for earthly things. They that beſtow moſt of their labour upon earthly things, are earthly. In all things we ought to be heavenly, and in every thing we do, we ought to be doing for Heaven.

Thirdly, Becauſe her Head and her Inheritance is in Heaven. Here ſhe is a ſtranger, there is her home; nor is ſhe ever truly at home, till ſhe comes thither.

Thus as Heaven is a Glaſs, wherein we may ſee what we ought to be now; we ſhould labour to be pure, conſtant and of an unvariable temper, as the Heavens are; ſo what we ſhall be, and ſhall have hereafter: 'Tis ſuch a Glaſs as God hath made for us to behold our ſelves in, and above all to behold himſelf, his bleſſed ſelf in. Let us dreſs our ſelves by this Glaſs every day.

Let it not ſatisfie us to look upon the Heavens, that we may ſee and be taken with their own beauty and excellency, as Philoſophers do in their diſcourſes of Heaven; but let us ſee God in them, let us ſee Grace and Glory in them. There is ſo little of God in the diſcourſes of Philoſophers (ſaith one) that they are colder than the Froſt and Snow, of which they often diſcourſe. But let us ſee God in this Looking-Glaſs of the Heavens, and therein alſo let us ſee our ſelves, and learn to be fitting and preparing our ſelves for heavenly joys and enjoyments. We have never looked well upon or in this Glaſs, till we have mended our dreſs, and are become better and more beautiful by looking in it.

VERS. 19, 20.

Teach us what we ſhall ſay unto him, for we cannot order our ſpeech by reaſon of darkneſs.
Shall it be told him that I ſpeak? if a man ſpeak, ſurely he ſhall be ſwallowed up.

ELihu having (in the former part of the Chapter) rehearſed many of the wonderful works of God in natural things, beyond his reach, bids *Job* reach them if he could, or, he invites *Job*, if he could, to give him ſome direction, what account to give unto God about them, profeſſing that he himſelf knew not, could not tell what to ſay; telling him alſo, that he was much aſſured no man elſe could; *If a man ſpeak, ſurely he ſhall be ſwallowed up.*

As if *Elihu* had ſaid, *Now thou haſt heard the works of God thus at large diſcourſed, I appeal to thee, if any man know how to diſpute or fault his doings; as for our parts, we cannot tell what to alledge or reply againſt them, becauſe we cannot ſee the depth of his wiſdom, nor reach the bottom of his adminiſtrations.* And ſo the whole context may contain an argument from the leſs to the greater. If we are ignorant of, or can hardly apprehend theſe natural things, how much more muſt we be ignorant of, and unable to ſearch into the ſecrets and reſerved caſes of divine Providence? *We know little of our ſelves, how much leſs of God!* That's the general ſcope and intendment of theſe two verſes.

Verſe 19. **Teach us what we ſhall ſay, for we cannot order our ſpeech by reaſon of darkneſs.**

There is a twofold interpretation of the former part of this nineteenth verſe; ſome expounding it as a ſerious motion, or a motion in good earneſt made by *Elihu* in his own name, or in the name of thoſe about him, that *Job* would give them counſel in that matter, *Teach us, ſhew us what we ſhall ſay unto him*; as for our parts, we are compaſſed about with ſo much darkneſs, that we know not to ſay further, or more than we have already, about theſe matters; from whence he would infer or intimate, that much leſs did he or they about him, know what to ſay more of *Job*'s matters, or of the dealings of God with him. Thus, according to this interpretation, *Elihu* ſeemeth to proſecute what he ſpake formerly; *I deſire to juſtifie thee*, I would gladly undertake the patronage of thy cauſe, or find out a way how to acquit thee of all thoſe raſh ſpeeches, and impatient complaints, that proceed from thee; but as yet, for my part, I ſee not how to do it, and therefore, if thou doſt, pray ſhew me.

Secondly, And that more generally, theſe words are expounded, as if in them *Elihu* had put kind of ſlight or ſcorn upon *Job*, triumphing and inſulting over him, as his inferiour in diſputation. As if he had ſaid, *Go to now, O Job, ſeeing thou thinkeſt thy ſelf ſo wiſe and juſt, that thou art able to plead and debate thy cauſe with God himſelf; teach us, who are nothing to thee, and who ingenuouſly confeſs our ſelves ignorant, how to reſolve thoſe queſtions lately propoſed to thy conſideration: We are overwhelmed with deep darkneſs, and have no hope to diſpel it, or get out of it, unleſs thou canſt give us light.* Thus, I ſay, the words are generally expounded, as ſpoken with a kind of ſtomach, or carrying in them the ſenſe of a ſecret ſubſannation? as if *Job* were more able to ſee than they all that were about him, as if they were dull and blind, and he alone had the wit. Now you that are ſo great a Maſter, and ſo ready a Teacher, come ſhew us, play the Maſter, and act the Tutors part, teach us what we ſhall ſay to him.

Irriſoriè ſubdit dicens, oſtende nobis, &c. Aquin.

Age magiſtrum.

But I rather adhere to the former expoſition, taking the words as a plain motion, though not altogether without a mixture of reproof. *Teach us what we ſhall ſay*; If thou wouldeſt have us ſay any thing in thy cauſe, give us inſtruction. An Advocate, when his Client comes for counſel, tells him, if you would have me plead your cauſe give me inſtructions, open your caſe to me, that I may plead it for you; thus here, *teach us, ſhew us what we ſhall ſay*, give us directions if thou art able. *Job* had ſaid (*Chap.* 23. 4.) *He would order his cauſe before God, and fill his mouth with arguments*; pray, ſaith *Elihu*, give us ſome of thoſe arguments now, as for me, and thoſe that are with me, we are utterly unprovided what arguments to uſe, how to argue, how to plead any thing for the juſtification of thy ſpeeches and behaviour in thy affliction; *Therefore teach us what we ſhall ſay unto him.*

The Text is, *make us to know*. Teaching makes men knowing; he that teacheth another endeavours to conveigh knowledge into him; and therefore the ſame word may very well ſignifie, *to teach and make to know*, foraſmuch as the tendency of teaching is for the beginning or for the increaſing of knowledge. *Teach us*

What we ſhall ſay unto him:

That is, *to the Almighty*. God is the Antecedent to this Relative *he*, what ſhall we ſay to God in thy defence? we would do our beſt, our utmoſt, if we knew how. There are two ſorts of perſons who call for teaching.

Firſt, Uſually they deſire others to teach them, who are convinced or ſenſible of their own ignorance, and would be delivered from or brought out of it. Thus *David* prayed that God would teach him, that he would *teach him his Statutes* (*Pſal.* 119. 33, 66.) The ſick man in the 34th Chapter of this Book is repreſented humbly craving this favour (*verſ.* 32.) *That which I ſee not teach thou me.* Here's the true genius and deſire of a learner, he would be taught, he is convinced that he wants knowledge very much or is very ignorant, and therefore he would be taught. But,

Secondly, Some call upon others to teach them, meerly to convince them of their ignorance and inability to teach them, or to ſhew that it is a great preſumption in them to pretend to the knowledge of ſuch things as they call upon them to teach. In this latter ſenſe we are to underſtand this deſire or motion of *Elihu*, ſaying to *Job*, *Teach us what we ſhall ſay unto him*, that is, what defence we ſhall make for thee, or what for our ſelves, if we were in thy caſe, or had ſuch a mind to plead with God, as thou haſt expreſt more than once. *Elihu* moves *Job* to teach them, knowing that he was not able to teach them, or to let him know that he had not knowledge enough to teach them in that matter. *Teach us what we ſhall ſay unto him*,

For we cannot order our ſpeech by reaſon of darkneſs.

A facie tenebrarum. Heb.

In this latter part of the verſe *Elihu* gives *Job* a reaſon why he and his fellows would (though they knew he could not teach them) be taught by him. As if he had ſaid, we plainly and clearly acknowledge *that we are in the dark* about theſe matters, and *cannot order our ſpeech by reaſon of darkneſs*.

The word here rendred to *order*, may have a double alluſion;

First, To a Military;

Secondly, To a Judiciary ordering.

It is an alluſion to the Military ordering of an Army or Camp, becauſe words in ſpeech ought to be put into good order, to be duly ranked and drawn out as ſouldiers to battel.

They alſo that have to do in Cauſes and Courts of Juſtice ought to order their words aright, they muſt not ſpeak at random, or what comes next, but they muſt weigh the plea they make, and put every thing in its due place. Thus ſaith *Elihu* here, *We cannot order our ſpeech*, we cannot tell how to draw up our reaſons, we are overmatcht in this buſineſs, we know not how to plead before God in thy caſe, nor what defence to make for thee; thou pretendeſt to be able to contend with him, but we are not *we cannot order our ſpeech*. Why not?

By reaſon of darkneſs.

It is darkneſs that uſually hinders the putting of things in order: Darkneſs in the Air doth ſo, much more darkneſs of the Underſtanding. There muſt be light of one kind or other for the ordering of every matter. Where darkneſs is there muſt needs be confuſion: and therefore *Elihu* gives a very good account, why they could not order their ſpeech, when he ſaith, *We cannot do it by reaſon of darkneſs*. What darkneſs? there is a twofold darkneſs,

Firſt, There is darkneſs proper, or natural. Once there was darkneſs, becauſe light was not come or created; of that *Moſes* ſpeaks (*Gen.* 1. 3, 4.) *Darkneſs was upon the face of the deep.* Now there is darkneſs every night, cauſed by the departure of light, or the going down of the Sun; as alſo ſometimes by the Eclipſe of the Sun (*Matth.* 27. 45.) *There was darkneſs over all the land*, when Chriſt was crucified. It was not this kind of darkneſs, that hindred *Elihu* from ordering his ſpeech; for a man may order his ſpeech though he have neither Sun-light nor Candle-light; a man needs no other light, but that of Reaſon and Underſtanding to order his ſpeech by.

Secondly, Darkneſs in Scripture is taken improperly and metaphorically; and ſo we are to underſtand it here, *We cannot order our ſpeech by reaſon of darkneſs* And this darkneſs, which I call improper or metaphorical, is of ſeveral kinds.

Firſt, Trouble and ſorrow in Scripture language are called darkneſs (*Pſal.* 18. 28.) *Thou, O Lord, wilt lighten my darkneſs*, that is, thou wilt bring me out of a ſorrowful, into a joyful ſtate. (*Joel* 2. 2.) *It is a day of darkneſs*; what is that? *a day of trouble and affliction.* Hence the ſtate of the damned in Hell is called *darkneſs*, yea, *utter darkneſs* (*Matth.* 22. 13.) becauſe it is a ſtate of ſorrow, even of everlaſting ſorrows. This darkneſs of ſorrow and trouble will hinder a man very much from ordering his ſpeech. He that is compaſſed about with, eſpecially if diſcompoſed by ſorrow, is unfit to ſpeak before men of underſtanding; yet, I conceive, this was not the darkneſs here meant.

Secondly, Darkneſs in Scripture notes the ſtate of a natural man, as unregenerate and without faith. *Ye were ſometimes darkneſs*, ſaith the Apoſtle (*Eph.* 5. 8.) that is, ye were ſometimes unconverted, or in a ſtate of nature, which is called darkneſs, not only there, but often elſewhere (1 *Theſ.* 5. 4.) *Brethren, ye are not in darkneſs*, that is, ye are not in a ſinful condition, grace hath ſhined unto you, yea, it hath ſhined into you, or as the Apoſtle ſpeaks (2 *Cor.* 4. 6.) *it hath ſhined in your hearts, to give you the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jeſus Chriſt*; he it was who came on purpoſe into the world, as to give life to them that were dead, ſo *to give light to them that ſit in darkneſs* (Luke 7.9.) 'Tis a truth alſo that this kind of darkneſs doth exceedingly hinder a man in ſpeaking, eſpecially when ſome things are to be ſpoken. He that is in the darkneſs of a natural condition, will be to ſeek (as we ſay) or knoweth not how to order his ſpeech before God, in any ſpiritual matter. Yet, neither is this here meant; for *Elihu* was not a man in this kind of darkneſs, he was doubtleſs a godly man, a man that had much acquaintance with, and in the things of God: Therefore it was not becauſe of this darkneſs that he could not order his ſpeech before God.

Thirdly, Darkneſs is put for the deſerted eſtate of a godly man (*Iſaiah* 50. 10.) *Who is among you that feareth the Lord, and obeyed the voyce of his ſervant?* he that doth ſo is ſurely a godly man, or in the ſtate of grace; who is there of this ſort among you *that walketh in darkneſs, and hath no light*, God having with-drawn the light of his countenance from him? Now 'tis a very great truth (and ſadly experienced by ſome) that this kind of darkneſs doth exceedingly hinder a man *from ordering his ſpeech before God*. A poor ſoul, that is walking in the darkneſs of a ſpiritual, troubled, deſerted ſtate, that is bewildred with fear and doubt about the favour of God to him, and his acceptance with him, knoweth not what to do or ſay before God, he knoweth not how to order his ſpeech in prayer or diſcourſe.

This darkneſs hindereth us mightily in ordering our ſpeech before God. Yet I conclude, that neither is this the darkneſs here underſtood, which is a darkneſs following upon the preſent going down or ſetting of the *Sun of Righteouſneſs* upon the ſoul, who was himſelf once thus grievouſly benighted, when nailed to the Croſs, he cryed out, *my God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me.*

Fourthly, Darkneſs is taken for that remaining ignorance or imperfection of knowledg, which abides even in the beſt, in the holieſt of men after their converſion, while on this ſide Heaven. This ignorance is darkneſs (1 *Cor.* 13 9.) and this is that darkneſs which *Elihu* here intends, when he ſaith, *we cannot order our ſpeech by reaſon of darkneſs.* As if he had ſaid, Though I, and they with me, are not altogether rude nor ignorant of God and his ways; though we have received (through grace) a competency of divine light, to guide us through this world, yet we are ſenſible of ſo much dimneſs and darkneſs, that we cannot *order our ſpeech before God*, nor direct our ſelves what to ſay for thee, as thou haſt handled the matter.

Further, The darkneſs that (as *Elihu* ſaith) hindereth man in ordering his ſpeech before God, may be taken, not only for the darkneſs of the man, or of the perſon ſpeaking, as hath been ſhewed already, but alſo for the darkneſs of the matter, or of the things about which he is called or occaſioned to ſpeak. As there is a darkneſs of the Subject, ſo a darkneſs of the object, which *David* thus expreſſeth (*Pſal.* 49. 4.) *I will utter dark ſayings upon the harp:* And again (*Pſal.* 78. 2.) *I will open my mouth in a parable, I will utter dark ſayings of old.* A parable is a dark ſaying, that is, a myſterious ſaying, a ſentence not obvious to every underſtanding; there is a ſecret in parables (*Prov.* 1. 5, 6.) *A man of underſtanding ſhall attain unto wiſe counſels, to underſtand a proverb* (or parable) *and the interpretation, the words of the wiſe and their dark ſayings.* When *Elihu* ſaith, *We cannot order our ſpeech by reaſon of darkneſs*, we may take it in this latter ſenſe, as well as in the former; for as there is, and will be, ſome mixture of darkneſs with light in our minds, till we come to that *inheritance of the Saints in light* (*Col.* 1. 12.) ſo there may be a darkneſs in the matter to be ſpoken of. Some truths are ſo myſterious, ſecret and hidden, they are ſo obſcure, or lye ſo deep, that they are, by us, even unſearchable and unperceivable; and then we cannot order our ſpeech about them by reaſon of their darkneſs, though poſſibly our ſelves may have attained ſome good meaſure of light. And as there are many things in the doctrine of Faith very dark to us, ſo alſo in thoſe dealings of God with us, which reach our ſenſe; we ſee and feel that which we know not how to give a reaſon or an account of. The light of the Sun is clear and ſhines into our eyes, yet there is a difficulty to underſtand the nature of Light. We are in the dark, even about Light it ſelf; how much more are we in the dark about the hidden and dark works of God, in many of his diſpenſations towards the children of men! And ſurely then, *we cannot order our ſpeech* (concerning them) *by reaſon of darkneſs.*

Hence note, Firſt, (taking darkneſs in the improper ſenſe) *Ignorance is darkneſs.*

If that ignorance which remaineth after converſion be darkneſs, then ſurely much more is that which dwelleth in a natural man unconverted. Knowledg is the light of the mind: The underſtanding, if furniſhed with knowledg, is as the Sun in the Firmament; but a man who hath no knowledg nor underſtanding, is like the Air without the Sun, nothing but darkneſs; and ſo much ignorance as abideth in any man, ſo much darkneſs abideth in him. The natural man is altogether ignorant, as to the underſtanding of ſpiritual things ſpiritually, that is, ſavingly, and therefore he (as to them) is altogether darkneſs, he is (as *Job* ſpake in another caſe of a land, *Chap.* 10. 22.) *a man of darkneſs, as darkneſs it ſelf, and in him the light is as darkneſs*; he cannot ſee by reaſon of darkneſs, nor can he ſpeak, to purpoſe, of the things of God, though he may ſpeak very wiſely about the things of the world, *by reaſon of darkneſs*, or becauſe his very Reaſon (which is the natural light of man) is darkened.

There are ſix things, which a natural man, by reaſon of this darkneſs, cannot ſee to order, neither his ſpeech nor his perſon about.

Firſt, He cannot ſee what he ſhould be, and what he is commanded to be, holy, juſt and righteous.

Secondly, He cannot ſee what he ſhould do, or is commanded to do, juſt and righteous things.

Thirdly, By reaſon of this darkneſs he cannot ſee, what he ought not to do, or is commanded not to do, unjuſt, evil and unrighteous things. He hath not a diſcerning about either the affirmative or the negative part of divine commandments; and hence it comes to paſs, that as he doth not what he ought, ſo he doth what he ought not.

Fourthly, By reaſon of this darkneſs, it muſt needs be, that he cannot ſee what he hath done againſt the commandment, his ſins of commiſſion, nor what he hath neglected to do according to the commandment, his ſins of Omiſſion.

Fifthly, If ſo, he cannot ſee what he ought to repent of, and turn from. Some repent not of that which they ſee to be evil, but no man can repent of that, in particular, which he ſeeth not to be evil. I grant every godly man makes it his daily work, to repent of his unknown ſins, as well as of thoſe which he knows (*Pſal.* 19. 12.) *Who can underſtand his errors?* that is, all the errors, wandrings and miſtakes of his life; and therefore *David* prayed in the cloſe of the verſe, *cleanſe thou me from ſecret faults*, that is, from thoſe faults and failings which are ſecrets to me, or which I know not of. But though a man may truly repent of his unknown ſins, yet no man repents of ſin, who doth not know ſin.

Sixthly, By reaſon of darkneſs a man doth not ſee, nor knows he the things that he hopes for; he poſſibly hath great hopes of heaven, or of eternal life, yet knows not in any meaſure what they are indeed, nor how to order his ſpeech about either, becauſe he is in darkneſs. So then, the ſtate of an unregenerate perſon is darkneſs, and therefore he cannot ſee at all, and much darkneſs may remain in a perſon regenerate, and therefore he cannot ſee all (1 *John* 1. 5.) *God is light, and in him there is no darkneſs at all*; but though the people of God have light and are light, yet in them there is darkneſs. And becauſe whereſoever ignorance is, there is darkneſs, according to the degree of that ignorance, we may take theſe Inferences from it.

Firſt, *To be in an ignorant condition is to be in a very uncertain condition*, for ſuch are in darkneſs. Now, as Chriſt ſpeaketh (*John* 12. 35.) *He that walketh in darkneſs knoweth not whither he goeth.* In what an uncertain condition is that man who is daily going, yet knows not whither he goeth? whether he be going right or wrong, whether he be going for his good or for his hurt, whether he be going homeward or from home, whether he be going to a Palace or a Priſon, whether to Life or Death, to Heaven or Hell. Thus 'tis with a man in darkneſs, and proportionable to the darkneſs that is in any man, is the uncertainty of that man's condition; and therefore till a man be got out of this darkneſs of ignorance, he is in a very uncertain condition, he knoweth not whither he is going, though he be certainly going downward, and that to deſtruction.

Secondly, If ignorance be darkneſs, in what degree ſoever it is, then, *ignorance is very dangerous.* Darkneſs ſubjects us to danger. As a man is in an uncertain condition while he is in darkneſs, ſo in a dangerous condition. *If the blind lead the blind, both fall into the ditch.* O how dangerous is the ſtate of that man who is altogether in darkneſs! We find theſe two put together (*Iſa.* 9. 2. repeated *Matth.* 4. 16.) *To them that ſate in darkneſs, and in the valley of the ſhadow of death, is light riſen up.* How near are they to danger, who are even in the valley of the ſhadow of death? Thus 'tis with thoſe that are in a ſtate of darkneſs; and ſo far as darkneſs is in any man, he is in danger to be miſled, and to erre both in opinion and practice. Woe to thoſe who, when light is come into the world ſhall be found loving darkneſs rather than light (*Joh.* 3. 19.) theſe are in the greateſt danger, the danger of condemnation, yea, this is *the condemnation.*

Thirdly, To be in an ignorant condition, is to be in a *very uncomfortable condition*; darkneſs is uncomfortable. And though ſuch as are in ſpiritual darkneſs are not ſenſible of their danger (and therefore take up their comforts, rejoyce in the creature, and ſing care away) yet their danger is not the leſs, but more; and when once a man is made ſenſible of his darkneſs, he is compaſt about with many fears, doubts and ſorrows, *&c.* The darkneſs of the night is very uncomfortable, in compariſon of the light of the day; what then is the darkneſs of ſin and ignorance, in compariſon of the light of grace and of the knowledge of God! And therefore we ſhould,

Firſt, Pity the ignorant, thoſe eſpecially who are totally ignorant *and alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them,* as the Apoſtle deſcribes them (*Eph.* 4. 18.) We pity thoſe that are bodily blind, becauſe (as we ſay) they are dark, they cannot ſee the Sun; ſurely, if bodily darkneſs or the darkneſs of the bodily eye, be to be pittied, if ſuch are to be prayed for that they may receive light, how much more is the darkneſs of the ſoul to be pittied, and the blindneſs of the mind! and therefore are others to pity them the more, becauſe they (not ſeeing their danger, nor their miſery by it) do not at all pity themſelves.

Secondly, If ignoronce be darkneſs, and that an uncertain, a dangerous and an uncomfortable condition, then we ſhould uſe and improve all the means we can, or, within our compaſs, for the curing of our own ſouls and others of this evil; how ſhould they that are in a ſtate of ignorance deſire knowledge! The great end of ſending the miniſtry of the Goſpel to any people, is to open their eyes, and turn them from this darkneſs to light (*Acts* 26. 18.) Chriſt ſaith to the Church of *Laodicea,* in that caſe (*Rev.* 3. 18.) *I counſel thee to anoint thy eyes with eye-ſalve that thou mayſt ſee;* that is, uſe thoſe means that are proper for the gaining of true knowledge in the things of God. Thou pretendeſt to have knowledge, but thy darkneſs is more than thy light, and thy ignorance more than thy knowledge; therefore I counſel thee to buy of me eye-ſalve, that thou mayeſt ſee.

Secondly, Foraſmuch as *Elihu* ſaith, *We cannot order our ſpeech by reaſon of darkneſs;* we, though knowing men, know not what to ſay;

> Note, *There is much darkneſs remaining in thoſe that have moſt light in this world.*

They that know much and have the cleareſt ſight, are yet dark in many things; what they ſee is but little to what they ſee not (1 *Cor.* 13. 9.) *We know but in part,* and (*verſ.* 12.) *We ſee through a glaſs darkly.* The ſight that we have of things, though in a Goſpel-way, is but a kind of dark ſight, *we ſee through a glaſs darkly. Elihu* ſaw himſelf compaſt about with much darkneſs; and who may not find darkneſs yet abiding in him? What-ever our light or knowledge is, all that we know is not half ſo much as that which we know not; this ſhould humble us. We are very apt to be proud of that knowledge we have (*Knowledge puffs up*) but did we remember how much ignorance is mixed and amaſſed with our knowledge, how much darkneſs with our light, we ſhould ſee little reaſon to be proud of it, or puſt up with it.

Take theſe Inferences of duty from this ſecond Note.

Firſt, *We ſhould always be praying for Light. Every good gift, and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of Lights:* If we would have light from the Father of lights we muſt ask it.

Secondly, *Let the moſt ſeeing take heed of preſuming that they ſee all.* Some think they know enough, yea, that they have all knowledge, what is it that they know not? But *Elihu* and his friends ſaid well, *We cannot order our ſpeech by reaſon of darkneſs.* Do not ſay you know all, how much ſoever you know. It is an old rule and a true one, whether you take it with reſpect to actions or propoſitions, *The wiſeſt man ſeeth not all.* And one of the Ancients hath rightly taught us, *That the beſt and higheſt point of our knowledge, is to confeſs our ignorance in the things of God.*

Bernardus non vidit omnia. In his quæ dicuntur de Deo maxima ſcientia eſt ignorantiam fateri. Cyril. Cat. 6.

Thirdly, If the darkneſs of ignorance be not quite diſpelled from the moſt enlightened and knowing ſouls, Then, *As they who have received moſt light of knowledge, have cauſe enough to be humbled in themſelves, ſo to beware of deſpiſing others.*

Thirdly, When *Elihu* ſaith, *We cannot order our ſpeech by reaſon of darkneſs,*

> Obſerve, *Ignorance is a very great hinderance in our approaches and addreſſes to God.*

As God himſelf is light, ſo they who come to God, need much light: They need light,

Firſt, About their own condition.

Secondly, About the diſpenſations of God under which they are.

Thirdly, About the nature and tenour of the Covenant.

Fourthly, About the nature and divine properties of God, with whom they have to do.

Fifthly, About the excellency, faithfulneſs and all-ſufficiency of Chriſt, who hath done all for them.

Sixtnly, About the freeneſs of the grace of God towards them.

Seventhly, About the power and working of grace in them, eſpecially of that grace of Faith.

If we want the grace of Faith, we know not how to order our ſpeech before God, nor can we come to God without faith (*Heb.* 11. 6.) and if we want the knowledge of theſe things, we muſt needs want faith in them, or rather in God concerning them. A dark ſoul is a confuſed ſoul; how then is it poſſible that he ſhould order his ſpeech before God, who is himſelf confuſed and out of order? Perſons muſt be well compoſed, before their actions, ſpeeches or addreſſes can. Therefore if you would have free acceſs to God, and order your ſpeech before him aright, labour for a clear light, or as the Apoſtle ſpeaks (*Col.* 2. 3.) for *the full aſſurance of underſtanding, to the acknowledgment of the myſtery of God, and of the Father, and of Chriſt;* that is (as I conceive) of God the Father, in and through his Son, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. That's the great ſtudy, and glory of Chriſtians; they have the moſt excellent ſubject in the world to ſtudy upon, and grow up in the knowledge of. Other Sciences conſider and contemplate the Creature, and the things of this Life; but Chriſtianity winds up the ſoul to the meditation of the *Creator in the Mediator, whom to know is Eternal Life.*

Fourthly, As darkneſs is conſidered in the Object,

> Note, *The things of God are ſo myſterious, that we know not how to ſpeak of them as we ought:* Or, *There is a darkneſs in the Word, Ways and Works of God, which we cannot overcome.*

The beſt have not light enough to look through all the darkneſs and obſcurity that is in the Works and Word of God. I do not affirm this, to caſt that reproach of obſcurity upon the Word of God, which the *Papiſts* do: The Word of God hath in it abundance of light, yea, 'tis a light; there is enough in it ſo plain, that any who have any true light, may ſee much of it, and be able to order their ſpeech, comfortably and competently, that is, acceptably, before God about it. Yet there is a myſterious darkneſs in many parts of the Word and Works of God, which our light is not clear enough to maſter and get through. God hath purpoſely done and ſpoken ſome things, which ſtand as ſecrets which our eye cannot pierce into, that he might keep us low and little in our own eyes. As there is enough in the Word, which the ſimpleſt may underſtand and ſpeak of to ſalvation, ſo there are ſome things there to poſe the wiſeſt, and hold them in a ſilent admiration. The Apoſtle *Peter* (2 *Epiſt.* 3. 16.) ſpeaking about the Epiſtles of *Paul,* ſaith, *In them there are ſome things hard to be underſtood:* He doth not ſay, all things in the Epiſtles of *Paul* are hard to be underſtood, but ſome things are, and they are ſo for our exerciſe and tryal. As thoſe things are altogether ſecrets to us, which God hath not revealed, ſo ſome things are in a great degree ſecrets to us, though God hath revealed them; and if ſo,

Then, Firſt, Let us *believe when we cannot underſtand.* Faith hath a knowledge about all general Principles; yet he that hath no more Faith in ſome ſpecial Scripture-Principles and Myſteries than he hath knowledge, will have but little Faith in them. Though we muſt have a knowledge about every thing we believe, yet we may be much more in believing many things, than we are in knowing them; we may have much Faith in that, of which we have but little knowledge. As Faith is the evidence of thoſe things which cannot be ſeen at all by the eye of ſence, ſo it is the evidence of ſome things to us, which are very little ſeen by the eye of the underſtanding. The bleſſed Virgin ſaid, *How ſhall this be?* When ſhe was told ſhe ſhould have a Son, ſhe could not underſtand the thing, there was a darkneſs in it, yet ſhe believed it.

Secondly, When we find darkneſs in the Works or Truths of God, which are the Object of our Faith, Let us adore what we cannot ſee, and admire where we cannot apprehend.

Thirdly, When we find darkneſs in any of the works of God, Let us be ſure to forbear to cenſure or queſtion thoſe works. How vain a thing is it to judge, when we do not underſtand, or to ſay that is not done well, which we know not how it is done! Doubtleſs, *We cannot order our ſpeech* (about ſuch things) *before God, by reaſon of darkneſs*; and therefore we ſhould tremble to ſpeak raſhly or hardly of them. *Elihu* heightens the point yet further in the next words.

Verſ. 20. **Shall it be told him that I ſpeak? if a man ſpeak, ſurely he ſhall be ſwallowed up.**

I find another rendring of theſe words, in ſuch a tenor as this; *Is there any need that he ſhould be told what I ſpeak?* As if *Elihu*'s meaning were, that God, being omniſcient and every were preſent, needeth not any to bring him a report what men ſay or do; he knows our doings, and hears all our ſayings, though none tell him. *I hearkned and heard* (ſaith the Lord, *Jer.* 8. 6.) *He that planted the ear, ſhall he not hear? he that formed the eye, ſhall he not ſee?* If any man behave himſelf amiſs, or ſpeak amiſs, God ſeeth it, God heareth it. The *Omnipotent* needs no helper, the *Omniſcient* needs no informer, no intelligencer, to bring him an account of what is done or ſpoken: *Is there any need* (ſaith *Elihu*, according to this reading) *that he ſhould be told what I ſpeak?* We render

Shall it be told him that I ſpeak?] Here ſome, inſtead of the word *told* tranſlate *record*; ſhall it be recorded, regiſtred or written in a book, *that I ſpeak*, that is, that I have undertaken thy cauſe as thou haſt ſtated it? Shall this be recorded, and the record ſent to God, that I intended to be thy Advocate? Surely no; neither I, nor any man of wiſdom or diſcretion will undertake to ſpeak in this matter, after thy manner. *Shall it be told him that I ſpeak?* I dare not, I would not have it told him that I will, for a World.

Verbo forenſi videtur uſus eſſe initio verſus. An narrabibitur, vel in acta referretur. Merl. *An aliquis audibit ei narrare quum locutus fuero ſic; nempe ut tu locutus es de gubernatione Dei.* Piſc.

Hence Note, Firſt, *No man who underſtand himſelf, will venture upon the doing or ſpeaking of any thing that may provoke God, or be diſpleaſing to him.*

Will any wiſe man be an Advocate to plead a Cauſe, which he knows will, upon juſt grounds, offend and diſtaſte an earthly Judge? The Preacher (ſaith *Solomon*, meaning himſelf, *Eccleſ.* 12. 10.) *ſought to find out acceptable words*; the Hebrew is, *words of delight*, or, *words of the will*: He meaneth not flattering words, or men-pleaſing words, but ſuch words as may profit men, or pleaſe men for their profit, that is (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Rom.* 15. 2.) *for their good to edification.* Now, if we ſhould not provoke men, but ſeek to find out (in the ſence given) words acceptable to them, ſhould we not much more take heed of ſpeaking any thing to the provocation of God? ſhould we not ſeek to find out words of delight and acceptation with him, *words of his Will*, that is, words every way agreeable to his holy will?

Secondly, As *Elihu* feared ſuch a report ſhould be made to God,

Note, *It is high preſumption to do or ſpeak amiſs, not fearing God ſhould know of it.*

We are afraid to do that evil which may be reported to great perſons, who have power to puniſh us: If ſuch a man be told (ſay ſome) what we have done, what will become of us; Many are not afraid to do evil, who yet are afraid ſhould be told their betters what evil they have done. Servants will ſometimes thus check children in a Family, when they have done amiſs, *We will tell your Father, we will do your errand to your Mother:* that's a dreadful word to a child that hath any reverence of Father or Mother, to ſay, *I will tell your Father and Mother of you.* The Lord knoweth all that we do amiſs (as was ſaid before) though no man tell him; but ſhall it be told to God what ſuch and ſuch men ſpeak or do, and will they ſpeak or do it ſtill? ſhall it be told God what they ſpeak, and againſt whom they ſpeak? ſhall it be told God whom they reproach, whom they revile? and will they venture it? 'Tis dangerous when ſuch Tales are truly told in the ears of God againſt the men of the World; they were better have Tales told, and reports made againſt them to all the Princes of the earth, than to have reports made to God againſt them. To have a poor ſoul, upon juſt grounds, telling God what evil men have done againſt him, how they have ſlandred and reproached him, how they have oppreſt and vext him, will come at laſt to a ſad account againſt them. *Shall it be told God that I ſpeak?* ſaith *Elihu*) And ſhall it be told God that we do evil, and we regard it not? Shall we anſwer thoſe that tell us, they have told, or will tell God of our evil doings, as impudent children and ſervants do ſuch as threaten them with telling their Parents and Maſters of their evil doings, *What care we? do if you will.* O let us take heed how we do or ſpeak that, which, if told in the ears of God, may cauſe blame, and brings his diſpleaſure upon us. There are a ſort of Tale-bearers very odious in the ſight of God and all good men; ſuch are ſpoken of, (*Prov.* 11. 13. *Prov.* 18. 8.) But they who bring reports to God (as *Joſeph* did to his Father *Jacob*, concerning his brethren, *Gen.* 37. 2.) of the evils done by men, ſuch Tale bearers (if I may ſo call them) do but their duty; and as their reports are accepted with God, ſo they haſten wrath upon evil men (*Luke* 18. 7.) *Shall it be told him that I ſpeak?*

If a man ſpeak, ſurely he ſhall be ſwallowed up.

That is, if any man ſpeak, if a wiſe man ſpeak, and if he ſpeak as wiſely as he can, and place his words in the beſt order he can, yet if he ſhall deſire (as *Job* hath done) to come near unto God, and plead with him, *ſurely he ſhall be ſwallowed up.* *Job*, in the hotteſt of thoſe deſires to plead with God, did not (as hath formerly been noted in favour of him) challenge God; he did not think himſelf a Match for God in pleading his cauſe before him, he (good man) was far from ſuch a preſumptuous ſpirit: yet becauſe he inſiſted ſo much upon that deſire of pleading his cauſe with God, *Elihu* had reaſon to check him in ſuch language as this, *If a man ſpeak, ſurely he ſhall be ſwallowed up.* We that are duſt and aſhes may not be ſo bold with God, 'tis beſt for us to lie at his foot, and let him do what he will with us, only beg of him that we may improve his dealings, and profit by his corrections; if the wiſeſt and holieſt of men ſhall ſpeak otherwiſe, *Surely they ſhall be*

Si dixerit, Heb. *ſcil. apud ſe, illud nempe, ſe velle talem ſermonem Deo narrare.* Piſc.

Swallowed up.] The word implies, that a man ſo ſpeaking ſhall be ruined and brought to nought. Mr. *Broughton* renders, *Would any man plead when he ſhall be undone?* No man but a mad man would ſpeak in a buſineſs wherein he muſt needs be ruined. We ſay well, *ſwallowed up*, that is, both he and his underſtanding ſhall be utterly confounded. This phraſe of ſpeech is often uſed in Scripture when a greater power undertakes a leſſer: thus fire ſwalloweth up ſtubble, and oppreſſors their poor underlings. *David* ſaith of his enemies with reſpect to the greatneſs of their malice (*Pſal.* 56. 1. *Pſal.* 57. 3.) *They would ſwallow me up.* Poſſibly they had not power enough to do it, but they wanted no will to do it, *They would ſwallow me up* if they could, that is, they would make an utter end of me, or diſpatch me quite. So this word is uſed in ſeveral other places (*Iſa.* 28. 7.) *They are ſwallowed up of wine.* Some ſwallow down the wine ſo long, till the wine ſwallows them up, the wine gets the maſtery over them, and *they are no longer* (as we ſpeak proverbially) *their own men.* The Apoſtle gives order concerning the inceſtuous perſon that had been caſt out of the Church (2 *Cor.* 2. 5.) *receive him* (ſaith he) *leſt he be ſwallowed up of over-much ſorrow*, that is, leſt ſorrow get the maſtery of him. It is not good that the floods of ſorrow (though it be a ſorrow for ſin) ſhould prevail over us, ſo as to ſwallow us up in the gulph of deſpair. Again, while the Apoſtle aſſure us, and would have us triumph in that aſſurance, that death ſhall never do a godly man any hurt, he thus expreſſeth it (1 *Cor.* 15. 54.) *Death is ſwallowed up in victory*, that is, in and by the victory of

Jeſus Chriſt: He, by dying, quite overcame death; he did not only wound it, and worſt it, or get the better of it, or rout it, but totally ruin'd it, as to any power of hurting us; all which, and whatſoever elſe concerns the death of death, and the deſtruction of the grave, is wrapt up in that one word, *Death is ſwallowed up in victory*. And therefore alſo it is ſaid by the ſame Apoſtle, (2Cor.5.4) *Mortality ſhall be ſwallowed up of Life*. Jeſus Chriſt hath brought in ſuch a life through the Goſpel, as ſhall at laſt put an utter end to Mortality. Our Mortality now by degrees puts an end to, or ſwalloweth up our Lives, but then Life will quite ſwallow up, or put an end to our Mortality; that is, our Mortality ſhall be quite removed and taken out of the way, by that Life which Chriſt hath purchaſed for his people by his own death. All theſe Scriptures ſhew the force of the word, here uſed by *Elihu*, when he ſaith, *If a man ſpeak, ſurely he ſhall be ſwallowed up*.

If a man ſpeak.] How? Or to whom? The anſwer is, *If a man ſpeak to God, he ſhall be ſwallowed up*. But ſhall every one that ſpeaks to God be ſwallowed up? Not ſo; therefore we muſt go to the manner of ſpeaking. If a man ſpeak to God, not keeping his diſtance, if a man ſpeak to God without a Mediatour, he ſhall be ſwallowed up, as a drop of water is ſwallowed up of the Ocean, or as a ſpark of fire is ſwallowed up with a great flame, or as the light of a Candle, or Glow-worm is ſwallowed up by the Sun; there is no ſtanding for the Creature before God, in ſuch a nearneſs of acceſs, but by faith in a mediator; *If a man ſpeak, he ſhall be ſwallowed up*. Man is no match for God, or he is a moſt unequal match.

Perdetur vir ille fulgore celſitudinis & Majeſtatis ejus perſtrictus.

Yet further, theſe words may note the conqueſt of the mind or underſtanding of man, by an object which is too high and excellent for it; for then his thoughts, yea and his Reaſon too, are ſwallowed up, and he is carried out of himſelf, as a man in an extaſie or trance. When St. *Paul was caught up to the third Heavens, and heard unſpeakable words*, he was ſwallowed up with the greatneſs of the matter, and was in a divine extaſie, whether *in the Body he could not tell, or whether out of the Body he could not tell* (2Cor.12.2,3,4.) Thus (ſaith *Elihu*) ſhall that man be ſwallowed up, who overboldly ſpeaks to God about the great myſteries of providence, or about any matter too high for him. And therefore, O *Job*, thou haſt not done well to ſpeak ſo often of pleading with God; and ſurely, if any man after thy example, ſpeak complainingly of what God hath done, or himſelf hath ſuffered at the hand of God, he is ſure to be undone, *He ſhall be ſwallowed up*.

Hence Obſerve, *Man is not able to bear the Glory and Majeſty of God.*

God dwells in the light which no man can approach unto (1Tim.6.16.) Mans darkneſs is not able to comprehend Gods light; if he venture too near it, he will ſoon be ſwallowed up. The Vulgar Latine renders that place (*Prov.* 25.27.) *He that is a ſearcher of Majeſty ſhall be oppreſſed by the Glory*; that is, whoſoever ſearcheth boldly into the Majeſty of God, ſhall be ſwallowed up by the Glory of God. We tranſlate that Text in the *Proverbs* thus, *For men to ſearch their own Glory, is no Glory*. There is a truth in the former tranſlation, though it be not a true tranſlation, for, a man that *ſearcheth into the Majeſty of God, ſhall be over-powred with his Glory*. And as man is ſoon over-powered, or ſwallowed up by the Majeſty of God, ſo alſo by and in the myſteries of God. Chriſt told his Diſciples (*John* 16.12.) *That he had many things to ſay unto them, which they were not able to bear*. If they who had received ſo much grace, could not bear the deeper myſteries of the Goſpel, ſpoken to them by Chriſt clothed with frail fleſh, how much leſs can any man bear the Majeſty of God in ſpeaking to him, or, God ſpeaking to him in his Majeſty! And ſo ſome tranſlate and read the words of *Elihu* in the Text under hand, *For if he ſpeak, man ſhall be devoured or ſwallowed up*, that is, if God ſpeak, man (who before thought himſelf *Somebody*, or that he was able to reaſon with him) will be quite confounded in himſelf by the infinite wiſdom of God, his tongue will faulter or cleave to the roof of his mouth, and he rendred unable to ſpeak one word in his own defence. *Moſes* (*Exod.*19.12.) was commanded to ſet bounds about Mount *Horeb*, that the people might not come too near; the reaſon was, that the people might by thoſe bounds be warned, not to be curious or over bold in their approaches to the Majeſty of God, nor over-buſie in prying into his Secrets. As if it had been ſaid, if you come too near, you will be even ſwallowed up. *Moſes* repeating to the *Iſraelites* the terrible Majeſty of God in giving the Law at Mount *Horeb*, minds them in what a trembling frame they then were (*Deut.*5. 24,25,26.) *And ye ſaid, Behold the Lord our God hath ſhewed us his Glory, and his greatneſs, and we have heard his voice out of the midſt of the fire; we have ſeen this day that God doth talk with man, and he liveth* (which implieth, that man, in this life, cannot bear the fuller manifeſtation of God, and live) *Now therefore, why ſhould we die? For this great fire will conſume us: If we hear the voice of God any more, then we ſhall die.* What was that great fire? It is God himſelf, that is, an extraordinary appearance of God, who is ſeveral times in Scripture expreſt by fire. As if they had ſaid, We acknowledg that we have had wonderful condeſcenſion and mercy from God, that we have heard ſome ſpeak and live; but, that we live, is not only a mercy but a miracle; therefore we poor worms dare not run the hazzard a ſecond time, if we hear him ſpeak any more, we ſhall die: Therefore they deſired *Moſes* (who in that was a type of Chriſt, *Gal.* 3. 19.) to go near, and be as a Mediator between them and God, that they might not have to do with God immediately, but receive the Law by his hand. Such is the infinite Majeſty of God (though it will be our bleſſedneſs, in the next life, for ever to enjoy it) that here in this life we are not able to receive it. The Glory of God is ſo pure, that man clothed with corruptible fleſh and blood cannot ſtand before it; the very glimpſes of it aſtoniſh, and leave us for dead, *Rev.* 1. 16, 17. Man muſt die before he can ſee God and live; his Body muſt be glorified before, he can bear that weight of Glory, which conſiſts in beholding the face of God, or, *in knowing him* (in our proportion) *as we are known* (1Cor.13. 12.)

Qui perſcrutator eſt Majeſtatis opprimetur à gloria. Vulg.

But though (as the *Iſraelites* there ſaid of themſelves) we cannot hear God ſpeak and live, yet cannot we ſpeak to God and live, or, and not be ſwallowed up?

I anſwer it in theſe three things. Firſt, If a man ſpeak to God, as queſtioning his dealings with him, or, as calling God to an account (which in ſome ſence *Job* did, and therein went beyond his line) he ſhall be ſwallowed up.

Secondly, If any man ſpeak to God, as preſuming that he can compaſs, fathom, and underſtand God, or all the dealings of God with man, that man ſhall ſurely be ſwallowed up. *The thoughts of God are above our thoughts, and his ways above our ways, as high as the Heaven is above the Earth*, Iſa.55.9.

Thirdly, If we ſpeak to God in our own name, or in a ſelf-righteouſneſs, then alſo we ſhall ſurely be ſwallowed up. *Job* (as we have acquitted him before, never attempted to ſpeak to God in his own righteouſneſs, though he often magnified his own righteouſneſs both before and towards men. Woe to all the righteouſneſs of man before the moſt righteous God. But *Job* was too bold (according to the firſt anſwer) in asking an account, or a reaſon of God, concerning his ſufferings; there was his failing, and for that he received this check by *Elihu*, *If a man ſpeak, he ſhall be ſwallowed up*.

The meaneſt, the pooreſt believing Soul may come and ſpeak, and ſpeak boldly to God in the name of Jeſus Chriſt (*Heb.*4.16.) Thus we may come and welcome, coming thus we ſhall not be ſwallowed up with the Majeſty, much leſs with the wrath or diſpleaſure of God. If coming thus we are ſwallowed up, it will be only with the love and favour of God, with the goodneſs and kindneſs of God: And to be ſwallowed up thus, will be the ſweeteſt morſel that ever we ſwallowed, even perfect bleſſedneſs and life [illegible] evermore. When once death is ſwallowed up in victory, and mortality of life, then ſhall we be ſwallowed up in glory. And therefore whatſoever the Lord doth with us or ours in this World, let us be ſilent before him, humbly adoring his Soveraignty and Wiſdom, not in the leaſt queſtioning either his Righteouſneſs or his Goodneſs; for if a man ſpeak ſo, *Surely he ſhall be dreadfully ſwallowed up*.

VERS. 21, 22.

And now men ſee not the bright light which is in the Clouds: But the wind paſſeth and cleanſeth them.
Fair weather cometh out of the North: With God is terrible Majeſty.

THE two verſes laſt opened, may be taken as a Parentheſis to the former diſcourſe concerning Gods wonderful works in Nature forming thoſe dreadful impreſſions of Thunder and Lightening, Storms and Tempeſt, in the Air; whereby *Elihu* having repreſt (as he ſuppoſed) the ſwelling of *Job*'s Spirit, by calling him to teach them what to ſay to God in his cauſe, for they (as he had handled it) *could not order their ſpeech, by reaſon of darkneſs*, nor durſt *Elihu* venture that it ſhould be told God, he intended to ſpeak, knowing, or foreſeeing that he made ſuch an attempt, he might ſoon be ſwallowed up by the incomprehenſible greatneſs and glory of God.

Elihu, I ſay, having made this little diverſion, or digreſſion (as he had done ſometimes before) to cool and calm the Spirit of *Job*, he returns to his former matter, in theſe words, and conſider further the works of God, in thoſe higher Regions, the Aerial Heavens, how he muffles up, and covers the light, and how he unvails and opens it again by his own power, and according to the pleaſure of his will. The words are plain, according to our tranſlation; I ſhall open them briefly as they are here ſet down; and then give out a further reading of them, which raiſes the ſcope and intendment of *Elihu* yet higher.

Verſe 21. **And now men ſee not the bright light which is in the Clouds.**

And now.] Some have conjectured, that at this very inſtant of time while *Elihu* was diſcourſing, there hapned a ſudden change in the Air, or in the face of the Heavens; therefore he ſaith, *and now*, do not the Heavens grow dark, ſo that men cannot ſee the bright light which is in the Clouds? As if here were a preparation to that *Whirlwind* or Tempeſt, out of which God himſelf is ſaid to ſpeak to *Job*, at the beginning of the next Chapter.

Yet, I apprehend, we need not expound the word [*now*] ſo ſtrictly, with reſpect to the preſent ſeaſon or moment of time, but rather to the preſent matter; as we often uſe that particle *Now*, both in ſpeech and writing, not ſo much to denote the direct inſtant, or preſent time, as for a leading word to the matter which is to follow.

And, now men ſee not (or they cannot ſee) **the bright light which is in the Clouds.**

Light is the moſt viſible thing in the World; though indeed we are not ſo properly ſaid to ſee the Light at all, as to ſee all things by the light; for it is *Light which maketh manifeſt*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks (*Epheſ.* 5. 13.) But though light be (in Vulgar ſenſe) ſo viſible in its own Nature, and (in ſtricteſt ſenſe) that which maketh all things viſible, yet by accident, or by ſome providential interpoſition, light it ſelf is not always to be ſeen. Light is often hidden from our eyes, and then (as *Elihu* ſpeaks here) *men ſee not the bright light*. The word which we tranſlate *bright light*, ſignifies the *whiteneſs of Snow*, and I find it applied (*Levit.* 13. 2.) to the whiteneſs of Leproſie; *if there ſhall appear in the fleſh a bright* (or ſhining) *ſpot, a ſpot like Snow, then*, &c. And hence it is ſaid of *Gehazi* (2 *Kings* 5. 27.) that when his Maſter called him to an account about his going after *Naaman*, and found him faltering and faulty, he laid that ſore Judgment upon him, *The Leproſie therefore of* Naaman *ſhall cleave unto thee and unto thy ſeed for ever; and he went out of his preſenc*[illegible] *Leper as white as Snow*. It is this word, which ſignifies, as any extraordinary whiteneſs and clearneſs, ſo the clearneſs and whiteneſs of Snow in particular, which hath a kind of tranſparency in it, and is full of light: Yet the light which is in the Clouds when the Sun ſhineth, is much more bright than Snow. *Now, men ſee not the bright light*

Which is in the Clouds.] Or, in the Skie; for the word here uſed (as hath been ſhewed before) ſignifies the Skie, the Firmament, and ſometimes the Air, as well as the Clouds, and it imports the natural thinneſs of thoſe Cœleſtial Bodies, in that higher and upper Region of the World. *Men ſee not the bright light which is in the Clouds.* Light is properly in the Sun; the Sun is the Veſſel, the Vehicle, the Seat, the Chariot of Light; but as Light is in the Sun ſubjectively, ſo Light is in the Clouds objectively, and alſo as they are a Medium through which the Light is conveighed and paſſeth to us. Yet ſometimes men ſee not that bright Light which is in the Clouds, for Clouds being very thick or thickened, they become to us as an opacous Body, through which the Light can neither find nor make its way, and then there's no beholding the Light of the Sun ſhining upon them in its greateſt brightneſs; while the Air is thus Clouded, *Men ſee not the bright light which is in the Clouds.*

בהיר *Proprie candidus, unde* בהרת *Candens lepra.* Druſ. *Propriè denotat nivis inſtar egregie ſplendidum & candidum eſſe.* Rab. Kimhi.

שחק *Æthera tenui ejus ſubſtantia, nam* שחק *ſignificat comminuere.* Druſ.

Hence Note, *God can make that which is moſt viſible in it ſelf, inviſible unto us.*

There is always bright Light in the Air, when and where the Sun is up, and gotten above the Horizon. The Sun ſhines continually, how dark ſoever the weather be; but God can draw ſuch a Curtain of Clouds, Vapours and Miſts, in the day time, between us and the bright face of the Sun, that we cannot behold it. Light always is, but Light is not always to be ſeen; when Clouds come between, the Sun is darkened in the clear day.

We may infer as a further improvement of natural things, to thoſe which are ſpiritual, that the light of God's face or countenance, that is, the light of his favour, ſhines ever towards his faithful Servants, though it be not always ſeen. Clouds coming between may ſhadow them from that bleſſed Light (*Pſal.* 97. 2.) *Clouds and darkneſs are round about him*, that is, his diſpenſations are dark and cloudy; yet, as then, *Righteouſneſs and Judgment are the habitation of his Throne*, that is, as then he doth right to all ſorts of men, ſo, then alſo Mercies and Loving-kindneſs ſtand round about his Throne, or, as the Apoſtle expreſſeth it (*Heb.* 4. 16.) his Throne is then, *A Throne of Grace*, that is, he hath Grace or Favour in his heart, to beſtow upon all his People, who come to him, not with a preſuming, but a believing *boldneſs*. Our ſins and tranſgreſſions are called, *a Cloud, a thick Cloud* (*Iſa.* 44. 22.) *I have blotted out as a thick Cloud thy tranſgreſſions, and as a Cloud thy ſins.* Sins are Clouds, and thoſe Clouds often hinder us from ſeeing the bright light of the face of God ſhining upon us; and as our ſins uſually hinder us from ſeeing that bright light which is in the face of God, ſo God ſometimes to try the graces, the faith, the patience of his people, or to ſee what they will do, how they will behave themſelves in a dark and deſerted ſtate (God I ſay, ſometimes for theſe and ſuch like ends) with-draws himſelf, and will not ſuffer them to ſee the bright light of his pleaſed face. As the light of the things of this World, ſo of that other and better World, is often hid, or the comfort of them is concealed from us. *Light is ſown for the Righteous*; it doth not always ſpring up and appear to the righteous. *Luther* chiefly inſiſts upon this myſtical interpretation or application of the Text, giving it out by way of ſimilitude; *As* (ſaith he) *the light of the Sun is many times covered with a Cloud, and ſometimes hindred by Eclipſes, ſo the light of comfort, or peace and joy in this World, is hidden from the eyes of the people of God; yet by and by he ſends a comfortable and powerful gale, to blow away or diſperſe thoſe Clouds, and then the light of his countenance and favour ſhines freely upon them again.* And let this be remembred, that when their day is a day of darkneſs and gloomineſs, yet the Light ſhines ſtill, the favour of God is towards them ſtill, though it appears not; and when they have been a while exerciſed under this darkneſs, light will return as it followeth in the Text, *Men ſee not the bright light which is in the Clouds*,

But the wind paſſeth and cleanſeth them.

The wind paſſeth.] *Queſt.* But what is the wind?

Anſw. The wind is a hot and dry exhalation, raiſed from the Earth by the power of the Heavenly Bodies, which being repell'd or forced back by the coldneſs of the middle Region, moves obliquely or ſlantingly, ſometimes very violently through the Air. The Latine word (*ventus*) ſignifying *the wind*, is derived by ſome Grammarians from a word (*vehementia*) noting the vehement or forcible motion of it, or as others (*a veniendo*) from a word ſignifying *to come*, becauſe it comes this way and that way, at times every way; or as our bleſſed Saviour expreſſeth it (*John* 3. 8.) *The wind bloweth where it liſteth, and thou heareſt the ſound thereof, but canſt not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth.*

The ſupream or ſupernatural cauſe, both making and moderating or governing the wind, is God himſelf: For though that Text in the Holy Goſpel laſt mentioned ſaith, *The wind bloweth where it liſteth,* yet is to be underſtood only in reference to man; it bloweth where it liſteth, for all man, man can neither direct it, nor controul or check it. But as to God, the wind bloweth where he liſteth, not where it ſelf liſteth; 'tis he *who gathereth the wind in his fiſts* (Prov.30.4.) 'Tis he *who bringeth them out of his treaſures* (Pſal.135.7.)

The natural remote cauſe of the wind, is the power of the Sun and Stars (as Philoſophers well agreeing with reaſon tell us) drawing up theſe exhalations, and attenuating them into a fitneſs for that purpoſe.

The natural, near, or next cauſe (ſay they) of the winds, is the coldneſs of the middle Region, which will not ſuffer the aſpiring exhalation to riſe higher, but thruſts it back, and ſo it moves hither or thither, ſide-wiſe, or along this lower Region of the Air towards the Earth, doing thoſe ſervices, and ſometimes ſtrange exploits, with which experience acquaints us daily.

By this Meteor, the wind, the life of man is in a great meaſure maintained. For though it be a truth, that *no man can live* (as we ſay) *by the Air*; yet it is as true, that no man can live without the Air: Did not the Lungs inſpire and expire, draw in and ſend out freſh Air, man would ſoon be ſuffocated and die; and tis moſt certain, that the heart, and blood, and whole Body of man, are very much affected, according to the nature of the Wind or Air, in which they breath. *Pliny* tells us, that *man may live without food ſeven days,* but no man can live one hour, being wholy intercluded from Wind and Air. And hence the Latine word (*anima*) which ſignifies the Soul, not only as to the ſubſtance of it, (which is immortal) but as to the ſubſiſtence of it in the Body (in which reſpect 'tis mortal, being no more than life, this word I ſay in the Latine) is ſuppoſed to come from that Greek word (ἄνεμος) which properly ſignifies the wind. The ſame notion of life may be collected from the Hebrew word *Nepheſh,* wnich is indifferently tranſlated, *Soul, Life, Wind.* And ſo the life of man is not only called *Wind,* (as *Job* called his, *Chap.*7.7.) becauſe of the frailty or ſpeedy paſſing of it away; but becauſe the continuance or abiding of it in the Body, is by the taking in and ſending out of Wind.

I have already at the 9. verſe of this Chapter, ſhewed the ſeveral uſes which God hath appointed the winds unto, both in a way of Mercy, and of Judgment: They purge the Air, they gather the Clouds for Rain, they ſcatter them, and ſo make fair weather, they move the waters, which otherwiſe by ſtanding ſtill would putrifie, corrupt, and grow unwholſome, yea infectious both to man and Beaſt, they refreſh the Earth, and cauſe all ſorts of Vegetables to flouriſh, they are alſo, as it were, the food and nouriſhment, the meat and drink of mans life; there's no living without them.

I ſhall not ſtay further to diſcourſe or diſcover the nature and the wonders, or the wonderful nature of the wind, having done ſomwhat towards it (as was ſaid) before at the ninth verſe. Only take notice of this uſe of the wind, with reſpect to the Clouds, mentioned expreſly in this Text, *The wind paſſeth*

And cleanſeth them.] It was ſaid in that former part of this Chapter (where *Elihu* ſpake of the wind) *That the Winds are the brooms of Heaven,* they ſweep the Heavens, they drive away the Clouds, the Miſts and Foggs which dull and obfuſcate the Air. The expreſſion here in the Text ſorts well with that Metaphor, *The wind paſſeth and cleanſeth them,* that is, the wind paſſing through the Air, cleanſeth it from thoſe Clouds, and ſo cauſeth the light of the Sun to ſhine forth freely and fully to us again. The wind at one time gathers the Clouds, and the wind at another time ſcatters them: *The wind is a cleanſer.* So much is ſuppoſed in that Negative expreſſion (*Jer.* 4. 11.) where the Lord threatens to ſend a *high wind from the Wilderneſs, but not to fan nor to cleanſe. I* (ſaith the Lord) *will ſend a high wind*; but to what purpoſe? Not for thoſe profitable and comfortable purpoſes, to fan, cool, and cleanſe the Air, but rather to wither and blaſt the fruits of the Earth, or to overthrow and bear down all before it. The Text in hand ſpeaks of a comfortable purpoſe of God in letting the wind out of his Treaſures, it bloweth away the Clouds which obſtruct the paſſage of the light to us: *The wind paſſeth and cleanſeth them.*

Hence Note, *What-ever ſtands in the way of our comforts, God can quickly remove it.*

When Clouds cover the light from us, God hath his wind ready to chaſe them away, and clear up the weather. Never did any ſuch thick and dark Cloud of ſorrow and trouble hang over the heads, or fill the hearts of the people of God, but he had means at hand to diſpel and ſcatter it, or he could ſcatter it himſelf without means. When dreadful Clouds of danger looked black upon and threatned the Church of God during the Reign of *Julian* the Apoſtate, *Athanaſius* ſaid, *It is but a little Cloud, a wind will ſhortly cleanſe it away.* His meaning was, now we are compaſſed about with fear and trouble, but peace and proſperity will not ſtay long before they return.

Nubecula eſt, cito tranſibit.

This is true alſo if we carry it yet in a more ſpiritual way, as to thoſe Clouds of ſorrow which often darken and afflict our minds in the midſt of outward proſperity, or in the cleareſt Sun-ſhine-day of peace that ever was in this World; when theſe inward Clouds dwell, as it were, upon the Soul, the Lord hath a wind which paſſeth and cleanſeth them away too. What is that wind? It is his holy Spirit. The word in the Text, is uſed often to ſignifie, not only the natural wind in the Air, but that Divine wind the Holy Ghoſt, who is compared unto the wind in many places of Scripture, and his operations are like thoſe of the wind: For *as the wind bloweth where it liſteth, we hear the ſound thereof, but know not whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth; ſo* (ſaith Chriſt) *is every one that is born of the Spirit* (John 3.8.) And as our Regeneration is wrought by that ſecret, yet ſtrong and powerful wind, ſo likewiſe is our conſolation. The Spirit of God doth thoſe offices in our hearts which the winds do in the Air: As the wind diſpels and ſweeps away the Clouds which are gathered there; ſo the Spirit of God cleanſeth our Souls from thoſe Clouds and foggs of ignorance and unbelief, of ſin and luſt, which are gathered in, and would, elſe, abide for ever upon our hearts. From all theſe Clouds the holy Spirit of God cleanſeth us in the work of Regeneration: And from all thoſe Clouds which trouble our Conſciences, the holy Spirit cleanſeth us in the work of Conſolation.

Bolduc.

Some Interpreters expound the words only in this myſtical ſenſe, quite rejecting the proper. But though, by alluſion, we may improve the words to this ſpiritual ſenſe, yet doubtleſs *Elihu* ſpeaks here of the winds properly taken, or of the natural winds, and their ſenſible effects; and ſo, according to our reading, this Text, as it hath been opened, teacheth us what ſudden changes God makes in the Air. Now the light is ſhut up, or ſhut in, and anon it is let out again, and all by the powerful hand of God, who doth adminiſter theſe things to us interchangeably, as himſelf pleaſeth.

Secondly, The Text, according to another reading (which others inſiſt much upon, and conceive pertinent to the ſcope of *Elihu*) runs thus; *For now men cannot ſee the bright light in the Clouds, when the wind paſſeth and cleanſeth them.* Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates clearly ſo, his words are theſe; *And now men cannot look upon the light, when it is bright in the Air, then a wind paſſeth and cleanſeth it.* And then the ſence of the whole verſe is plainly a ſetting forth of the excellency, or ſuperexcellency rather, of the light of the Sun, which is ſo clear and ſplendid, that if the Air be but cleanſed from Clouds, if it be but a pure Air, no man is able to face it, nor his eye directly to behold it. We behold all things by the light of the Sun, but no man can ſtedfaſtly behold the light in the Sun; no man can look right up to the Sun, when it caſts forth its fiery rays, and ſhineth bright upon us. And this ſome conceive ſo genuine and clear an expoſition of the Text, that the light of it may ſeem to obſcure and darken all others. Now, according to this ſecond reading, the whole verſe, with that which followeth, contains an argument to confirm the former propoſition, laid down at the 20. verſe: *If a man ſpeak, he ſhall be ſwallowed up,*

Jam enim non reſpiciciunt (homines) lucem (quum) nitida eſt in ſuperioribus nutibus, quas ventus tranſiens purgavit. Tranſlatio Jun.

Nemo poteſt adverſis oculis nitidum ſolem contueri, quis ergo ferat præſentiam Majeſtatis Dei. Jun.

that is, if a man come too nigh unto God, and be over-bold with him, he ſhall even be ſwallowed up of his brightneſs and that it is ſo, I prove thus (ſaith *Elihu*) The very light of the Sun, which ſhines in the Air, is ſo bright and ſo powerful, that no man is able to hold up his eyes againſt it: And if ſo, then from the leſſer to the greater, his argument riſeth thus; *If when the Sun ſhineth brightly, no man is able to look upon it, then much leſs are we able to behold the bright Majeſty of God, or to comprehend his greatneſs.* This rendring hath a very profitable ſenſe in it, leading *Job* to reaſon thus with himſelf, *I plainly ſee by all that hath been diſcourſed, that for as much as I am not able to bear the brightneſs, which breaks through the Clouds, nor the noiſe of Thunder (of which* Elihu *ſpake before) for as much as I am not able to bear the fierceneſs of a great Rain, nor the coldneſs of the Froſt, nor the impetuouſneſs of the Wind, nor the violence of a Tempeſt, for as much as I am not able to bear the clear light of the Sun ſhining in my face, therefore ſurely I am much leſs able to bear the Majeſty and Glory of God, if he would unvail or open himſelf unto me.* Thus I ſay, *Elihu* leads *Job* to an humbling conviction, that he could not ſtand before the glorious Majeſty of God, becauſe he was not able to endure the brightneſs of the Sun ſhining upon him. *If the light of the Sun, the Created light, be too excellent for mortal eyes, then what is God the Created light? What is God, who dwelleth in light, who is light, and in whom there is no darkneſs at all?* 'Tis a Maxim in Nature, *A viſible object exceeding bright, dazles the eye, and even deſtroys the ſight.* And why was all this ſpoken to *Job?* Surely to bring him upon his knees (as afterwards it did) to humble him, to take him off from his frequent appeals or deſires of approach to God for the debate and determination of his cauſe. The ſum of all in a word is as if *Elihu* had ſaid, *O* Job, *thou canſt not ſee the bright light of the Air, if the Wind do but fan it and cleanſe the Clouds, how then ſhalt thou be able to diſpute thy cauſe before God, to whom the moſt glorious light of the Sun, is but a Cloud, yea but as a clod of Earth?* The next words carry on this conviction yet further.

Excellens viſibile viſum deſtruit.

Verſe 22. Fair weather cometh out of the North: with God is terrible Majeſty.

The former part of this verſe hath a reſpect to the latter part of the former; *The wind paſſeth and cleanſeth them, fair (or bright) weather cometh out of the North.* It hath been ſhewed before in opening the 9. verſe of this Chapter, that the South wind ingenders the Rain, and cauſeth foul weather, here (ſaith *Elihu*) *fair weather cometh out of the North. The North wind* (ſaith *Solomon,* Prov. 25. 22.) *driveth away Rain, ſo doth an angry countenance a backbiting tongue. The North wind blows coldly, yet it blows clearly,* it clears the Air from Clouds. We render, *Fair weather cometh out of the North.* The word tranſlated *fair weather,* ſignifieth *Gold; Gold cometh out of the North.* Fair weather in its ſeaſon, is worth much Gold, and may be called *Golden weather;* the Sun in ſuch ſeaſons gilds both the Air and Earth with his precious beams. And I find an ancient Interpreter ſticking much upon the ſtrict ſignification of the Hebrew word, maintaining that *Gold* is to be taken here properly; *Out of the North cometh Gold,* becauſe (ſaith he) in the Northern Countries, through the greatneſs of Cold, the heat in thoſe parts is ſo pent in the bowels of the Earth, that it more fully concocts and refines the Gold, than in other places: *Out of the North comes Gold,* that is, the pureſt Gold. But, I conceive, that was not all the buſineſs of *Elihu* here; and I find the Scripture in another place expreſſing that which is ſhining, beautiful, and precious, by *Gold.* (*Zach.* 4. 12.) The oil with the *two Olive-branches emptied out of themſelves through the two Golden pipes,* is called *Gold,* or *Golden oil,* that is, bright oil, pure oil; and ſo becauſe the light of the Sun ſhining in fair weather is purer and more defecate than the pureſt Gold, therefore this Scripture expreſſeth it by *Gold; through the North a Golden cometh,* ſaith Mr. *Broughton.*

זהב *Aurum.*

Lux quovis auro ſplendidior. Bez.

Again, Some take the word *Gold* here metaphorically for any *precious thing,* take the word *North* metaphorically alſo for any *evil thing,* that is, for any affliction, trouble, or ſorrow which we meet with in this World; theſe are indeed as a cold chilling North-wind, and ſo they will needs give the ſence of this Scripture myſtically thus, *Out of the North cometh precious things;* that is, afflictions (which are as a chilling North-wind) make us more precious; or, through cold chilling afflictions, we are made more and more precious. *Job* ſaith, and this Text may have ſuch an alluſion (and I give it no further) to that (*Chap.* 23.10.) *When he hath tried me, I ſhall come forth Gold;* that is, I ſhall come forth precious. Whether God doth try us by the North or by the South, whether by the heat of proſperity, or by the cold of adverſity, if we are under his tryal, and are faithful, we come out Gold, we come out more precious from our tryals, than we came in. The Apoſtle hath a like alluſion (1 *Pet.*1.6,7.) *Ye are now for a ſeaſon in heavineſs (if need be) through manifold temptations,* (that is, troubles, tribulations and afflictions) *That the tryal of your faith, being much more precious than of Gold that periſheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found to praiſe,* &c. Thus *Out of the North comes Gold, or this precious thing,* a tried faith. That's a truth from the allegorical ſenſe of this place; but I ſhall not ſtay upon it.

The proper meaning is, *Elihu* would have *Job,* and all men know, God hath his ſeveral Climates or places, out of which he ſends and diſpenſeth fair atd foul weather; foul weather cometh out of the South, and fair out of the North.

Out of the North cometh fair weather.

צפן *Abſcondit, occultavit, hinc* צפון *ſeptentrio, aquilo, quaſi abſcondita, quia ſol ibi multo per annum tempore non conſpiciatur.*

The Hebrew word rendred North, ſignifieth *hiding,* becauſe the remote parts of the *North* are much hidden from the Sun, a great part of the year being quite dark; and therefore the Northern Climate may well be called the *hidden part* of the World. Some put a Queſtion upon thoſe words of *David* (Pſal.75.6.) *Promotion cometh neither out of the Eaſt, nor out of the Weſt, nor from the South:* Here are three of the four Winds ſpecified, and it is ſaid, *Promotion* comes from neither of them. But why is it not alſo ſaid, that *Promotion* comes not from the *North?* That's the Queſtion. I anſwer, It were anſwer enough to ſay, that we ought not to put queſtions curiouſly about ſuch things; it ſhou'd ſatisfie us that the Spirit of God is pleaſed to ſay it is ſo, and no more. Yet ſome tell us, the reaſon why it is not ſaid, *Promotion* cometh not from the *North,* is, becauſe indeed it cometh out of the *North,* which, ſay they, is intimated in the Hebrew word for the *North,* which ſignifieth *hidden* or *ſecret. Promotion* comes not from the *Eaſt,* nor *Weſt,* nor *South,* but from the *North,* (ſaith this Author) it comes from the *North* in a figure or myſtery, that is, it comes from ſome hidden providence or ſecret hand, which many take no more notice of, than we do of the furtheſt part of the *North.* God promotes many in this World to power, and ſends them great proſperity, we ſee not how or which way: The cauſes and contrivances of it are hidden cloſe, and in the breaſt of God. This alſo is a truth; in that ſence we may ſay, *Fair weather cometh from the North.* Promotion is viſible, but the manner of it is a ſecret, we ſee not the cauſes for which, nor the ways in which it cometh. It is enough to touch theſe niceties, and to touch them can do no hurt, while the matter ariſing from them, hath the clear conſent of, and is harmonious with other plain places of Scripture. *Fair weather cometh out of the North,* and (as it followeth)

With God is terrible Majeſty.

This is the *Epiphonema,* the exulting concluſion of both theſe verſes, yea, of *Elihu*'s large diſcourſe concerning the works of God in Naturals. As if *Elihu* had ſaid, *All theſe things God doth;* and tell me then, *is not terrible Majeſty with God?* In God, or with God is *terrible Majeſty.* The word which we render *Majeſty,* comes (ſay Grammarians) from a root which ſignifies *to confeſs, to acknowledg, to celebrate,* becauſe Majeſty, Greatneſs, or Excellency is and ought to be much acknowledged, confeſt, and celebrated: The word notes in general, any laudable or praiſe-worthy thing. With God all that is, which is worthy to be and ought to be commended, praiſed, honoured by men and Angels. We tranſlate well, *With God is Majeſty:* Others, *With God is praiſe. Jacob* ſaith of *Judah,* the Kingly Tribe (*Gen.* 49. 8.) *Thou art he whom thy Brethren ſhall praiſe.* The Vulgar Latine expreſſeth it thus;

הוד *Celſitudo, Majeſtas; à* ידה *quidem deducunt, quod eſt confiteri, celebrare, laudare.* ἐπὶ τῷ θεῷ μεγάλη ἡ δόξα. Theod. ἐπὶ δὲ θεῷ φοβερὸς αἶνος. Symmach.

With God is fearful praiſe. Some read the words as a Doxology, or giving of glory unto God, not as we, *with God is terrible Majeſty*, but, *unto God be reverent or terrible Majeſty*; that is, let the Glory and Majeſty of God be acknowledged in all theſe things, which have been ſpoken of, in all thoſe ſtrange changes and impreſſions which he works in the Air, and which are obvious unto the eyes of the Children of men. *With God is Majeſty*; *with God is praiſe*, or *unto God be praiſe* for all his works; and not only praiſe and Majeſty, but

Ad Deum formidoloſa laudatio. Vulg.

Terrible Majeſty.] Majeſty to be feared, to be reverenced, to be dreaded, to be trembled at. *With God is terrible Majeſty.*

Hence Note, Firſt, *Majeſty belongs eminently unto God.*

With God is Majeſty. As the Scripture, ſpeaking of power, ſaith, *Power belongeth unto God* (Pſal. 62. 11.) that is, properly, and fundamentally all power is in God; whatever power is in the Creature, it is but a derivative from Gods power. So Majeſty is originally and fundamentally in God, what-ever the Majeſty of the Kings and Princes of this World is, it is but a ſtream, a ray iſſuing from the Majeſty of God, or, as the Greek verſion hath it, from his *Magnificence*. We may diſcern the Majeſty of God in every thing that he is, or is ſpoken of him; the Majeſty of God is in his Greatneſs, his is a *Great Majeſty*: the Majeſty of God is in his Highneſs, *his is a High Majeſty*, the Majeſty of God is in his Honour, his is a *moſt Honourable Majeſty*, the Majeſty of God is in his Word, he ſpeaks with Majeſty, *his is a moſt Majeſtical Word*; the Majeſty of God is in his Works, Majeſty is ſtampt and printed upon all that he doth. What ſhall I ſay? There is Majeſty in the Wiſdom of God, and Majeſty in the Juſtice of God, and Majeſty in the Goodneſs of God, and Majeſty in the Power of God, there is Majeſty in the Love of God, and there is Majeſty in the Wrath of God, there is Majeſty in the Truth and Faithfulneſs of God; every thing God hath, hath a Majeſty in it; therefore he is ſaid (*Pſal.* 93. 1.) *to be clothed with Majeſty*, (*Pſal.* 96. 6.) *Honour and Majeſty are before him. I*, ſaith *David* (*Pſal.* 145. 5.) *will ſpeak of the Glorious Honour of thy Majeſty, and of thy wondrous works.* Every where the Scripture ſets forth the Majeſty, the wonderful Majeſty of God.

Μεγαλοπρέπεια. Magnificentia.

Note, Secondly, *Gods Majeſty is a terrible Majeſty.*

The Majeſty of Kings is dreadful and terrible; but I may ſay, the Majeſty of Kings, the Majeſty of *Solomon*, and of *Ahaſhuerus*, the Majeſty of *Nebuchadnezzar*, and of *Alexander*, either, firſt, in their Robes; or, ſecondly, in their Buildings; or, thirdly, in their Feaſtings; or, fourthly, in their Followers and Attendants (which four do chiefly hold out the Majeſty of Princes) is but a mean thing, a very little thing, a nothing, in compariſon of the Majeſty, the Glorious Majeſty, the terrible Majeſty of God: His is a terrible Majeſty indeed. And therefore they are rebuked (*Iſa.* 26. 10.) *Who will not behold the Majeſty of the Lord.* What? Not behold ſuch a dreadful Majeſty! Such a terrible Majeſty! The Scripture ſets forth not only the Majeſty, but the terribleneſs of the Majeſty of God; read at leiſure, (*Deut.* 7. 21. *Nehem.* 9. 32. *Pſal.* 47. 2.) *Therefore ſay unto God, how terrible art thou in thy works!* (Pſal. 66. 3.) Say this unto God, for (*verſ.* 5.) *He is terrible in his doings towards the Children of men*, even to all ſorts of men, to the great as well as to the ſmall, to the high as well as to the low, to Princes as well as to the People (*Pſal.* 76. 12.) *He is terrible to the Kings of the Earth.* God is terrible in his Majeſty to thoſe who have the moſt terrible Majeſty. And as the Lord can appear terrible out of all places, ſo he is moſt *terrible out of his holy places* (*Pſal.* 68. 35.) that is, terrible Judgments are ſent by God out of his Sanctuaries or holy places, upon all them who prophane or deſpiſe, who pollute or abuſe his holy things. Take theſe two Inferences from the conſideration of the terrible Majeſty of God.

Firſt, *We need not fear the terribleneſs of any Creature, while we have the terrible Majeſty of God with us.* As he hath been, ſo ſtill he is (as the Prophet ſpake, *Iſa.* 25. 4, 5.) *A ſtrength to the poor, a ſtrength to the needy in his diſtreſs, a refuge from the ſtorm, a ſhadow from the heat, when the blaſt of the terrible ones is as a ſtorm againſt the wall.* And therefore the Prophet concluded in the latter end of verſe 5. *The branch of the terribles one ſhall be brought low.*

Secondly, If God hath ſuch terrible Majeſty, then, as it is a comfort to his people againſt the terrible ones, ſo what a terrour ſhould this to be to thoſe who are not his people, eſpecially to thoſe who are openly rebellious, who kick againſt his Majeſty, and will not behold with reverence the Majeſty of the Lord! Let them remember, *With God is terrible Majeſty.* The Prophet foretels a day, wherein the Majeſty of the Lord will teſtifie the moſt potent ſinners, and make them at their wits end (*Iſa.* 2. 10, 12, 19, 21.) *Enter into the Rock, and hide thee in the duſt, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his Majeſty. For the day of the Lord of Hoſts ſhall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up, and he ſhall be brought low; it ſhall be upon the Cedars of* Lebanon, *&c.* that is upon thoſe that are high like the Cedars of *Lebanon*, and ſtrong like the Oaks of *Baſhan*: *And they ſhall go into the holes of the Rocks, and into the Caves of the Earth*, &c. And why all this? The Text anſwers (*verſe* 19.) *For fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his Majeſty, when he ſhall ariſe to ſhake terribly the Earth.* O the terribleneſs of Gods Majeſty, to all thoſe who tremble not at his Majeſty! To the proud, who are lifted up in their own thoughts, who are high in their own imaginations! Yea, the Majeſty of the Lord will be terrible to all impenitent ſinners in that day, I may ſay, more diſtinctly, in theſe four days.

Firſt, In the day of Conſcience, or when their own Conſciences are a terrour to them. How ſad is it for a man to have God and his own Conſcience terrible to him at once! When ſinners are awakened, When God ſets their ſins in order before them, they are a terrour to themſelves, as it is ſaid of *Paſhur* (Jer. 20. 3.) *The Lord hath not called thy name* Paſhur, *but* Magor Miſſabib, that is, *fear round about*; *I will make thee a terror to thy ſelf*, thy own Conſcience ſhall be terrible to thee. A man had better fall into the hands of the moſt cruel Tyrants in the World, than into the hands of his own Conſcience. But when a man is a terror to himſelf, then to have the Lord a terror to him likewiſe, to have God appearing in terrible Majeſty, how dreadful is it! *The awakened Conſcience of a ſinner carrieth in it, as a thouſand witneſſes, ſo a thouſand terrors; and God in his anger is more terrible than a thouſand Conſciences.*

Secondly, *God is terrible to ſinners*, in the day of outward trouble, when, as *David* ſpeaks (*Pſal.* 65. 5.) *By terrible things in righteouſneſs he anſwereth the prayers of his People.* When God is doing terrible things in the World, how miſerable is their caſe, to whom God alſo is a terror in that day! A godly man when God is doing the moſt terrible things, *ſhaking Heaven and Earth*, and (as it were) pulling the World about our ears, yet, becauſe he finds God at peace with him, he is well enough. But as for impenitent ſinners, when God is doing terrible things, what will become of them? I may beſpeak them in the words of the Prophet (*Iſa.* 10. 3.) *What will ye do in the day of your viſitation, and in the deſolation which ſhall come from far? To whom will ye flee for help, and where will ye leave your glory?* As if he had ſaid, who, or what can be a comfort to you, when God is a terror to you? And therefore, another Prophet fore-ſeeing ſuch a terrible day coming, makes this earneſt deprecating prayer (*Jer.* 17. 13.) *O Lord, be not thou a terror to me in the evil day.* I know an evil, a terrible day is at hand, but Lord I beg this of thee, that thou wilt not be a terror to me in that day; if men ſhould be a terror to me, and God a terror too, it would be inſupportable. Yet thus it will be with the unrighteous, when God doth terrible things in righteouſneſs, and ſuch things he will do in the latter days. Take heed, leſt God appear *with terrible Majeſty to you*, in ſuch a day.

Thirdly, How terrible is God to impenitent ſinners (when awakened) in the day of Death! What is Death? In this Book Death is called *The King of Terrors.* Now, if when Death is making its approaches to a perſon, who lives in a contempt of the ways and word of God, if when his breath ſits upon his lips, ready to depart, and the King of

Terrors is ready to tear his caul, and to rend his heart-ſtrings aſunder, if then, I ſay, God appears in terrible Majeſty, what condition will ſuch a one be in? To have Death the King of Terrors, and the Living, the ever-living God in terrible Maieſty falling upon a poor Creature at once, is a thouſand deaths at once.

Fourthly, What will ſinners do in the day of Judgment: That will be a terrible day indeed. The Apoſtle (2*Cor.*5. 10.) having ſaid, *We muſt all appear before the Judgment ſeat of Chriſt, to receive according to what we have done in the Body, whether good or bad*; preſently adds, *knowing therefore the terrour of the Lord, we perſwade men*; that is, knowing how terrible the Lord will be to impenitent ſinners, to all whom he finds in their ſins, knowing this terror of the Lord, and how terrible the Majeſty of the Lord will be to ſuch, in that day, *we perſwade men*, we do all we can to pluck them out of their ſins, and turn them to God in Chriſt Jeſus, who ſaves his people from their ſins; for, to be ſure, that will be a moſt dreadful day to ſinners. Thus the Majeſty of God will be terrible to the wicked and ungodly, eſpecially in theſe four days. Only they who fear the Lord and take hold of his name by faith, ſhall be able to ſtand before his terrible Majeſty. God will not be a terror, but a comfort, to them that fear him in every evil day.

Further, The word (as was ſhewed before) ſignifies not only *Majeſty*, but *Praiſe*, *With God is terrible praiſe, dreadful praiſe.*

Hence Note, Firſt, *The Lord is moſt praiſe-worthy.*

With the Lord is praiſe. The Pſalmiſt every where ſets forth the praiſe-worthineſs of God, and preſſes this duty upon us. I ſhall not ſtay upon it, only remember, *with the Lord is praiſe*, that is, he is to be praiſed. And from the attribute of his praiſe, or that, *with the Lord is terrible praiſe*,

Note, Secondly, *Even in thoſe things which the Lord doth moſt graciouſly for us, and is to be highly praiſed by us* (even in thoſe) *he is to be feared, dreaded, and reverenced.*

God is to be praiſed, not only with joy and thankfulneſs, but with fear and reverence; *for with him is terrible praiſe.* It is the expreſs word of *Moſes*, in his ſong after the deſtruction of the *Egyptians* in the Red Sea (*Exod.* 15.11.) *Who is a God like unto thee, glorious in holineſs, fearful in praiſes?* We ſhould not be afraid to praiſe God, no, we ſhould be moſt forward to praiſe him, but we ſhould have a holy fear upon our hearts, when we praiſe him. Praiſe is the work of Heaven, from whence fear ſhall for ever be baniſhed; there will be *perfect love*, and *perfect love caſts out fear*, (1 *John* 4.18.) What-ever fear hath torment in it (as all fear out of Chriſt hath) we ſhall have nothing to do with in that bleſſed life: And even in this life, praiſe, which is the work of Heaven on Earth, ſhould be performed with ſuch a Spirit of love, and joy as is without all baſe, tormenting fear; we ſhould have ſo much love to God in, and for all the good things he doth, for our Souls eſpecially, yea and for our Bodies too, in dealing out daily mercies, that it ſhould caſt out all that fear which hath torment in it. Yet there is a fear which ſhould poſſeſs our Spirits while we are praiſing God, a fear of reverence I mean, which fear (I doubt not) will remain in Heaven for ever; glorified Saints ſhall praiſe God with that fear, that is, having an everlaſting awe of the Majeſty of God upon their hearts. *He is fearful in praiſes*; and therefore let us ſo praiſe him, as remembering our diſtance, ſo praiſe him, as to be afraid of miſcarrying in the duty, and ſo inſtead of praiſing, diſpleaſe him, in ſtead of honouring, grieve him. This duty of praiſe is very dreadful. The Pſalmiſt ſaith, *there is mercy; or forgiveneſs, with thee, O Lord, that thou mayeſt be feared* (Pſal. 130.4.) Not only is the Lord to be feared in his wrath and in the executions of his Juſtice, but he is to be feared in his mercy, and in that greateſt expreſſion of his favour towards us, the forgiveneſs of our ſins. When we are in the higheſt exaltations of the mercy of God, and of the God of our mercies, yet then ſhould our hearts be affected with his fear. It is both our duty and our commendation ſo to fear God, as not to ſin againſt him, or to be kept from ſinning againſt God by the fear of God, that is, leſt God ſhould puniſh us for our ſins, and give us to eat the bitter fruit of our own evil doings: But to fear God, becauſe we hear, and are aſſured, that he is ready to pardon our ſins, eſpecially, to fear him when he hath given us a comfortable aſſurance, that our ſins are pardoned; or, even then to be filled with the fear of his great and reverend Name, when we are actually praiſing him, and magnifying his free grace in Chriſt, for the pardon of them; this ſhews a truly gracious Spirit indeed. *With God is terrible Majeſty, and with God is terrible praiſe*; he is at once to be praiſed and feared. All this *Elihu* would fix upon the heart of *Job*, from the conſideration of the works of God, his providential works, in the Air; how much more ſhould this fear affect us, when we behold his terrible works of providence upon the Earth? Turning the World, as it were, upſide down, by the wonderful viciſſitudes and revolutions which his hand brings to paſs, reſpecting either Perſons and private Families, or whole Kingdoms and Nations. *With God is terrible Majeſty.*

VERS. 23, 24.

Touching the Almighty, we cannot find him out; he is excellent in Power, and in Judgment, and in plenty of Juſtice: He will not afflict.

Men do therefore fear him: He reſpecteth not any that are wiſe of heart.

These two verſes conclude the whole diſcourſe of *Elihu* with *Job*. The verſe 23. is Doctrinal, the 24. is the Uſe or Application of the Doctrine.

In the verſe 23. we have a four-fold Doctrine held out concerning God.

Firſt, The Doctrine of his Incomprehenſibleneſs, *We cannot find him out.*

Secondly, Of his Power, *He is the Almighty, he is excellent in Power.*

Thirdly, Of his Righteouſneſs, he excells *in Judgment, and plenty of Juſtice.* But though he is thus full of Juſtice, yet he is alſo very Gracious, and therefore,

Fourthly, We have the Doctrine of his Mercy and Tenderneſs towards the Creature in the laſt words of the Verſe, *He will not afflict.* God is infinitely above man in Power and in Wiſdom, yet he never uſeth either the one or the other to the oppreſſion or wrong of any man; *He will not afflict.* This is a very ſuitable peroration of the whole Narrative or matter declared, which *Elihu* had ſo long inſiſted upon.

And having laid down this four-fold Doctrine concerning God, he ſhews us the uſe of it in verſe 24. where we have a practical Inference from what was before aſſerted concerning God; *Men do therefore fear him*, or, *therefore men ought to fear him.* As if he had ſaid, Seeing God is thus incomprehenſible, thus powerful, ſeeing he is thus excellent in Judgment, and in plenty of Juſtice, as alſo in Goodneſs and Mercy; *therefore good men do, and all men ſhould fear him.* This is a very natural and undeniable Inference, yet *Elihu* doth not leave it bare, but adds a ſtrong inforcement in the cloſe of the verſe, why all men, the greateſt of men, the wiſeſt of men ſhould fear God, *For he reſpecteth not any that are wiſe in heart.* The wiſeſt, the greateſt of men cannot carry it with God, by their wiſdom or policy, by their greatneſs or power, therefore let them fear him. This is the ſum and ſcope of theſe of theſe two verſes.

Verſe 23. **Touching the Almighty, we cannot find him out.**

That is, He is unſearchable and incomprehenſible. The Original ſtrictly read is, *The Almighty, we cannot find him out. The Almighty*, is a *Nominative abſolute*, as Grammarians ſpeak; we ſupply that word (*Touching*) As if he had ſaid, ſhould we enter upon a diſcourſe of the Almighty, we cannot find him out. *Touching the Almighty.* That, God is Almighty, and what the word *Shaddai*, here rendred Almighty, doth import, hath been ſhewed and opened already in other places of this Book, eſpecially in the fifth Chapter at verſe 17. and in the eight Chapter at the 3. and 5. verſes; thither I refer the Reader for further ſatisfaction in that matter, and paſs from it here; *Touching the Almighty*

שדי
Omnipotens nominativus abſolutè poſitus. Piſc.

We cannot find him out.] This alſo I ſhall paſs over in a word, having ſpoken to it more fully (*Chap.*11.7.) where *Zophar* puts this Queſtion, *Canſt thou by ſearching find out God? Canſt thou find him out unto perfection?* In which Queſtions, *Zophar* challenged *Job*, or any man elſe, to ſet their underſtandings upon the tenters, to put all their abilities to the utmoſt ſtretch, to find out God if they could, being aſſured they could not find him out unto perfection. So then, this aſſertion in the Text, *We cannot find him out*, bearing the ſame ſence with thoſe Queſtions, I ſhall not ſtay upon it. Only,

Note, *God cannot be compaſt by the enquiries of man.*

Touching the Almighty, we have but this to ſay of him, *We cannot ſay much of him*, or, *how much ſoever we ſay of him, we ſay but a little of what he is*, or *of what may be ſaid of him, for we cannot find him out.* We may find God, but we cannot find him out. God is to be found by every humble, faithful ſeeker of him. The Prophet (*Iſa.*55.6.) calls us to that duty of ſeeking with an aſſurance of finding, *Seek ye the Lord whilſt he may be found*; and ſo doth *David* (Pſ. 32.5.) *For this*, that is, for pardon of ſin, for grace and mercy, or, *for this*, that is, upon the experience which I have had of thy readineſs, O Lord, to pardon my ſins, even as ſoon as I confeſſed and acknowledged them, *for this* (I ſay) *ſhall every one that is godly pray unto thee, in a time when thou mayeſt be found.* God may be found to do us good, and ſhew us mercy, when we ſeek him rightly; there is a finding time, or a time when God may be found. Some give no other limit to this *while*, or finding time, than the limit of this life; and to be ſure if he be not found while we are in this Life, he can neither be ſought nor found after this Life. Yet more ſtrictly, to *ſeek him while he may be found* (as one of the Rabbins ſloſſeth that place) is to ſeek him before the Decree comes forth, as the Prophet *Zephany* ſpeaks (*Chap.*2.2.) It is poſſible we may ſeek God, and ſeek him too late, and then there's no finding of him; only they ſhall ſeek and find him, who ſeek him in the finding time, and they who do ſo ſhall certainly find, as was ſaid before, God ready to do them good, and ſhew them mercy.

Dum adhuc in hac vita eſtis. **Rab.** Jonath.
Deus invenire poteſt ubique & quovis tempore ante obſignata decreta. Aben-ezra.

But how much ſoever, or how early ſoever we ſeek him, we cannot find him out, that is, we cannot find out how good, how merciful God is, or the utmoſt extent of his goodneſs and mercy, which *Zophar* in the place before cited, calleth a *finding of him out to perfection.* I may give you a five fold Negative to ſhew wherein God cannot be found out.

Firſt, We cannot find him out as to the infiniteneſs of his Eſſence and Being, that's beyond the line of a created Underſtanding.

Secondly, We cannot find him out, as to the excellency of his Attributes, or the manner of his Being; who can tell how wiſe God is, how holy, how juſt, how powerful, how good! We may eaſily find his divine perfections all the World over, we may find them in every leaf of the Book of the Scripture, yea, in every leaf of the Book of the Creature, but we cannot find them out any where to perfection.

Thirdly, We cannot find out the depth of his Counſels. God hath ſome (*Arcana*) ſecrets which he hath reſerved in his own power, as Chriſt told his Diſciples in the firſt of the *Acts* (*verſ.* 6) when they would needs be prying into that ſecret of his counſel, *the time of reſtoring the Kingdom to* Iſrael. There are many counſels of God lockt up in his own boſom, which we cannot find out, nor muſt we be bold and curious in ſearching into them.

Fourthly, The Lord cannot be found out, no not in his works of Providence, which are acted outwardly, or by which he brings forth his counſels to act (*Pſ.*77.19.) *His foot-ſteps are not known*; not only are not any of his ſecret counſels known, but ſome of his very foot-ſteps, his treadings, his goings are not fully known. God goeth ſo that we cannot find where he goeth, he leaves no track (as we ſay) behind him (*Rom.*11.33.) *How unſearchable are his Judgments* (not only his counſels, but, *how unſearchable are his Judgments*) *and his ways paſt finding out.* That's the very expreſſion of the Text. There are many providences of God, which we find and feel, which we ſee, and cannot but ſee, yet we cannot find them out, that is, we are not able to give a direct anſwer why God doth this or that, nor how this or that was done. Conſider that Scripture (2*Chron.*31.20,21.) where we have a moſt ſingular character of *Hezekiah*, and of his government; *Thus did* Hezekiah *throughout all* Judah, *and wrought that which was good, and right, and truth, before the Lord his God; and in every work that he began in the ſervice of the Houſe of God, he did it with all his heart, and proſpered.* So the 31. Chapter concludes; yet the 32. begins thus, *After theſe things, and the eſtabliſhment thereof,* Sennacherib *King of* Aſſyria *came and entred into* Judah, *and encamped againſt the fenced Cities.* One would have thought, *Hezekiah* being thus zealous for the Reformation of the Church of God, in *Judah* and *Jeruſalem*, and having done all that concerned it with a perfect heart, that ſurely ſuch a Prince ſhould have lived in peace and proſpered all his days; yet, preſently his Kingdom was invaded by a potent enemy, *Sennacherib* comes againſt him, and fills him, and all his people, with fear of utter ſubverſion. This was a ſecret of providence, very hard to find out, a depth, which who can fathom? That when a good King with his Counſel, had been indeavouring a true Reformation, and that with a perfect heart, he ſhould preſently ſee War at his Gates. *Solomon* ſaith (*Prov.*16.7.) *When a mans ways pleaſe the Lord, he makes his enemies to be at peace with him*: Yet it was no ſooner ſaid of King *Hezekiah* that his ways pleaſed the Lord, but the very next paragraph of his Chronicle reports an enemy making War upon him.

Fifthly, Take this alſo; we cannot find out God in the diſpenſations of his Free Grace in the Goſpel; there are ſuch mazes, ſuch myſteries of love, and goodneſs, and kindneſs in Jeſus Chriſt, as (though it be our duty to be ſearching after them, and in them, all our days, though we ought to be continually digging in thoſe Golden Mines to find out the treaſures hidden there, yet) we can never find them out. Therefore the Apoſtle (*Epeſ.*3.8.) calls them, *The unſearchable riches of Chriſt*; not, *unſearchable*, becauſe it is unlawful to ſearch after them, but, *unſearchable*, becauſe when we have ſearched to the utmoſt we cannot find them out; as he ſpeaks in the cloſe of that Chapter; *that we may be able to comprehend with all Saints, the height and depth, and length, and breadth, and to know the love of Chriſt that paſſeth knowledg.* Under all theſe conſiderations (and many, many more) God is paſt finding out. Whence take three brief Inferences.

Firſt, *Do not ſearch too far* (that is, beyond what is written) *into the counſels of God, no nor into the works of God.* For though, as it is ſaid (*Pſal.*111.2.) *the works of God are great, ſought out by all them that have pleaſure therein*; yet they that have the greateſt pleaſure in them, cannot in all points find them out. It is our duty to ſearch the works of God, but to think we can find out the bottom of his works would be our ſin.

Secondly, If the Almighty cannot be found out, no not in his works of providence, then, *Take heed of cenſuring or finding fault with his works.* Shall we cenſure what we cannot know, and find fault with that which we cannot find? He that cenſures what another doth, ſhould firſt have the full compaſs of what he doth, and be able to look quite through it, which the moſt eagle-eyed Soul in the World cannot, as to what God doth in this World. And therefore though you ſee no reaſon for what is done, do not complain, for there may be a reaſon for the doing of it, which you do not ſee; and the reaſon is often ſuch, and lies ſo deep, that you cannot ſee it. And know this is reaſon enough, why you ſhould forbear cenſuring what is done, becauſe God doth it, though you can give no other reaſon why it is done.

Thirdly, *If God be paſt finding out in his works, and much more in himſelf then be not ſo much as diſcontented with his works.* You are not yet come to the bottom, you have not ſeen the laſt man born (as we ſay) you know not what God will make of it, till he hath done all; therefore take heed of murmuring and diſcontent, (*Zech.* 2.13.) *Be ſilent, O all fleſh, before the Lord, for he is riſen out of his holy habitation.* Though his riſing be viſible, yet we cannot ſee all the concernments and intendments of his riſing; therefore be ſilent altogether from fear and diſcontents, and though not from all enquiries about it, yet from a preſumption of finding out all by enquiries: For, *As touching the Almighty, we cannot find him out.* That's the firſt.

He is excellent in power.] That's the ſecond. Mr. *Broughton* reads, *He is huge of ſtrength.* The word rendred *excellent*, שגיא כח

lent, properly ſignifies, *to increaſe.* There is no increaſe of the ſtrength of God; what he is, he ever was, and ever will be; there is neither increaſe nor diminution of his ſtrength. But becauſe things which are always increaſing grow to a huge bigneſs and ſtrength, therefore he is ſaid to *increaſe in ſtrength*, or (as our tranſlation imports) to *excel in power.* He that excels in power is excellent in power. The word rendred *power*, implieth the power of doing (the Greeks call it δύναμις) or, of activity, a power put forth in working; he is excellent in power, that is, in ability to do whatſoever he pleaſeth; and when 'tis ſaid *he is excellent in power*, in this kind of power, it notes, that the power of God in doing, doth wonderfully excel all that ever he hath done. The effects or acts of the power of God are nothing, as I may ſay, to the faculty of his Power; he can do more than he hath done: He is ſo far from having over-acted himſelf, I mean from having done more than he can do again (which hath been the caſe of many mighty men, and may be the caſe of any man, how mighty a doer ſoever he is) that he can do infinitely more than he hath done, if he himſelf pleaſeth; he is excellent in power, or of excelling power. I have (as was lately ſaid) opened this point, of the power of God, in other places of this Book, whither I refer the Reader; yet taking the power of God (as the word is properly here intended) for his working power,

Ejus virtus in infinitum excedit omnes effectus ſuos. Aquin.

Note, *The working power of God is excellent, ſo excellent that it exceeds the apprehenſion of man.*

There is a two-fold power of God, and in both he is excellent.

Firſt, His commanding power, his power of Soveraignty, or Authority; that's a moſt excellent power, 'tis a power over all, whether things or perſons.

Secondly, His power of working or effecting that which he commands. Some have a power of commanding, yet want a power of working, they want a power to effect that which they command: But whatſoever God hath a mind to command, he hath an hand to effect and bring it about; he can carry on his work through all the difficulties and deficiencies which it meets with in or by the Creature; he can do his work though there be none to help him in it, though all forſake him, and with-draw from his work; yea, he often worketh though there be not ſo much as an Interceſſor to move him to work (*Iſa.*59.16.) *He ſaw that there was no man* (to do any thing) *and wondred that there was no Interceſſor* to intreat him to do ſomewhat for them. Things were in a great exigency, and there was not only no man that would put forth a hand, but there was no man that would beſtow a word for redreſs, no man would beſpeak either God or men for help: What then? Muſt the work ſtand ſtill or miſcarry? No, ſaith the Text, *His own arm brought ſalvation unto him*, that is, ſet it ready at hand for him to beſtow upon his people; or, his own arm brought that ſalvation to his people, which they greatly needed, and he graciouſly intended, though he had not the contribution of a word towards it from any Creature here below, one or other. God alone is ſelf-ſufficient, and to man All-ſufficient. Such is the working power of God, that he can work, not only when he hath but a little help, but when he hath no help at all.

Secondly, The excellency of the working power of God appears in this, that he can and will produce the deſired effect, and bring his work to paſs, though many, though all men oppoſe it and riſe up againſt it, though they ſet both heart and hand, wit and will, power and policy, to croſs, yea to cruſh it. The Lord is ſo excellent in power, that he both can and will do his work through all oppoſition; though Mountains ſtand in his way, though Rocks ſtand in his way, he will remove them, or work through them. (*Iſa.* 43.13.) *I will work, and who ſhall lett it?* Neither ſtrength nor craft, neither multitude nor magnitude, neither the many nor the mighty can lett it, if the Load undertake it. Take a double Inference from this.

Firſt, 'Tis matter of great comfort to all that fear God in their weakeſt condition and loweſt reducements, when they are fatherleſs, and have none to help them. As the Lord is excellent in his working power, ſo he uſually takes that time, yea ſtays that time, till his Servants are under the greateſt diſadvantages, till they are at worſt, before he will put forth his power and work. The Apoſtle ſaith of himſelf (2 *Cor.* 12.10.) *When am I weak, then I am ſtrong*, that is, then have I the ſtrength of the Lord coming into my help. And as it with reſpect to particular perſons, ſo to the whole *generation of his Children, when they are weak, then are they ſtrong*, that is, then they have the ſtrong God, the God *excellent in power*, appearing and working for them.

Secondly, This alſo is a ſad word to all that ſtand in the way of Gods working power; his working power quickly works through all power, and can work it down. *Babylon* is a mighty powerful enemy, but (*Rev.* 18.8.) we read of the downfal of *Babylon*, and that her ruine ſhall come as in one day: But, how ſhall this be effected? The anſwer is given in the cloſe of the verſe, *For ſtrong is the Lord God which Judgeth her.* Suppoſe there ſhould be no power in the World ſtrong enough to pull down *Babylon*, yea, ſuppoſe all the powers in the World ſhould ſtand up for *Babylon*; 'tis otherwiſe propheſied, for, *the Kings of the Earth ſhall hate the Whore and ſhall make her deſolate, and naked, and eat her fleſh, and burn her with fire*; but ſuppoſe, I ſay, all Earthly power ſhall appear for, rather than againſt *Babylon*, yet this is enough for us to reſt in, *ſtrong is the Lord which Judgeth her. He is excellent in power*, and as it followeth,

In Judgment.] This comes in, leſt any ſhould think, becauſe God is ſo excellent in power, ſo mighty in ſtrength, that therefore he would carry things by violence or by meer force, as the Sons of men, the mighty *Nimrods* of the World ſometimes do: If they have ſtrength and power to do ſuch or ſuch things, they regard not Judgment nor Juſtice, they look not whether right or wrong; therefore *Elihu*, when he had ſaid, God *is excellent in power*, preſently adds, *and in Judgment.* As if he had ſaid, *Though the Lord excel all in power, and is able to cruſh the mightieſt as a moth, yet he will not oppreſs any by his power; the worſt of men ſhall find the Lord as much in Judgment and righteouſneſs, as he is in ſtrength and power. And therefore,* O Job, *be aſſured, God hath not done thee any wrong, nor ever will.* This I conceive to be the ſcope of *Elihu* in the connexion of theſe two, the excellency of God in *Judgment*, as well as *in Power.*

But what are we to underſtand by *Judgment*, in which *Elihu* ſaith God excels? In anſwer to this Querie I ſhall firſt ſhew that *Judgment* is taken four ways in Scripture, and then prove that God is excellent in Judgment, with reſpect to every one of them.

Firſt, Judgment *is an ability of judging.* A man of Judgment, and a wiſe man are the ſame. When we ſay, ſuch a man, is a man of Judgment, or a judicious man, we mean, he is a prudent man, he is able to diſcern things that differ, he knows how to order, ſtate and determine doubtful things aright. In this ſenſe we are to underſtand it here, the Lord *is excellent in Judgment*, that is, in wiſdom and prudence to ſet things right, and to give every one his right, he ſees clearly how to mannage all his affairs and purpoſes by righteous means to right ends. The Prophet gives God the glory of this title expreſly (*Iſa.* 30.18.) *The Lord is a God of Judgment: Bleſſed are they that wait for him.* That is, the Lord is infinitely furniſhed with wiſdom, he knows exactly, not only what ought to be done, but how and when to do it; therefore wait for him. And 'tis encouragement to wait, when we have a perſon of judgment and underſtanding, a diſcreet and prudent perſon to wait upon. God is a God of Judgment, in this ſenſe, *therefore bleſſed are they that wait for him.*

Secondly, Judgment in Scripture is taken for that moderation, or due meaſure, which is obſerved in any thing that is done. This follows the former; for unleſs a man have a Judgment or true underſtanding in the thing it ſelf, he can never hit a right meaſure of it. Thus, I conceive, that Scripture is to be underſtood (*Matth.*23.23.) where Chriſt denouncing or thundering out woes thick and threefold againſt the proud hypocritical Phariſees, he tells them, *Ye pay tythe of Aniſe and Cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the Law, Judgment, Mercy*; that is, either they did not give a right judgment according to Law, or their legal Judgments were given with rigour, not at all attemper'd, mixt, and moderated with mercy. Or ſuch the Apoſtle *James* ſpeaketh (*Chap.* 2.13.)

He ſhall have Judgment without mercy that hath ſhewed no mercy, and mercy rejoyceth againſt Judgment. In this ſence the Lord *is excellent in Judgment*; for as he hath wiſdom and underſtanding to ſee what is juſt and right, ſo in Judgment he remembers Mercy: His patience is great before he gives Judgment; and his moderation is great when he gives it. *He dealeth not with us according to our ſins, nor rewardeth us according to our iniquities,* (Pſal. 103. 10.) that is, his Judgments are not proportion'd to the greatneſs of our ſins and iniquities; *For* (as it follows in that *Pſalm verſe* 11.) *as high as the Heaven is above the Earth, ſo great is his mercy towards them that fear him.* Therefore the Prophet brings in the Church praying thus (*Jer.* 10. 24.) *O Lord, Correct me* (I conceive it is not a direct prayer for Correction, but a ſubmiſſion to it: As if he had ſaid, I will not murmur, nor rebel againſt thy Correction; *O Lord, Correct me*) *but with Judgment*, that is, with due moderation: It cannot be meant of Judgment, as it notes the effect of divine diſpleaſure, but, Correct me moderately, or, as another Text hath it, *in meaſure*, as thou uſeſt to correct thy people. This meaning, is plain from the oppoſition in the next words, *Not in thine anger, leſt thou bring me to nothing.* Anger tranſports men to do things undecently and without moderation; we quickly exceed our limits, if carried out in paſſion; and though, that anger which the Scripture attributes often to God, never tranſports him beyond the due bounds of his Wiſdom and Juſtice, yet when God is ſaid to do a thing in anger, it notes his going, as it were, to the utmoſt bounds of Juſtice; this cauſed the Church to pray, O Lord, if the cup may not paſs from me, if it cannot be, but I muſt be corrected, then I humbly and earneſtly beg, thou wouldſt be pleaſed *to correct me in Judgment, not in anger, leſt thou bring me to nothing.* What the Church prayed for here, the Lord promiſed elſewhere (*Jer.* 30. 11.) *I will not make a full end of thee, but I will correct thee in meaſure, and will not leave thee altogether unpuniſhed.* Thus God is excellent in Judgment; He abates the ſeverity of his proceedings, and allays the bitterneſs of the cup by ſome ingredients of mercy.

Thirdly, Judgment in Scripture is put for the reformation of things when they are out of order. In this ſence it is uſed (*John* 12. 31.) *Now is the Judgment of this World.* Our late Annotators tell us, that by Judgment is meant reformation: As if Chriſt had ſaid, *I am come to ſet all things in order, that have been out of order and disjointed in the* Jewiſh *Church, and every where elſe*; *Now is the Judgment of this World.* In this ſenſe God is excellent in Judgment, or he excells in his Judgment, that is, he is for reformation, he will ſet all things right, he will make crooked things ſtrait, he will make the rough places plain. *John* the Baptiſt came before Chriſt in this work, yet in this work Chriſt is before or exceeds *John* the Baptiſt. *The Lord* (Iſa. 4. 4.) *will purge away the iniquity of the Daughter of* Zion *with a Spirit of Judgment, and with a Spirit of burning*, that is, with a reforming and a refining Spirit: And the Lord will *ſent forth his Judgment unto victory* (Matth. 12. 20.) that is, he will do it throughly, he will overcome all the difficulties, and put by all the obſtacles which hinder the perfect reformation of things as well as of perſons. That's the importance alſo of that great promiſe (*Iſa.* 1. 25, 26.) *I* (ſaith the Lord) *will turn my hand upon thee* (or take thee in hand) *and purely purge away thy droſs, and take away all thy Tin,* (that is, all thoſe corruptions which have crept in upon thee) *and I will reſtore thy Judges as at the firſt, and thy Counſellors as at the beginning.* Things and perſons are uſually beſt at firſt. *The new broom* (ſay we) *ſweeps clean.* As time conſumes all things here below, ſo it corrupts moſt things; and therefore when the Lord promiſeth to reſtore them to a primitive purity, he promiſeth the pureſt reſtauration; all which is ſumm'd up in verſe 27. *Sion ſhall be redeemed with Judgment*; which is not only, if at all, intended of a redemption by Judgment on her enemies, but by that reformation which God would work upon themſelves, in taking away their droſs and Tin, *Reſtoring their Judges as at the firſt, and their Counſellers as at the beginning.* Such a Judgment is ſpoken of (*Iſa.* 30. 22.) *Te ſhall defile alſo* (that is, utterly diſgrace and deface) *the Covering of thy graven Images of Silver, and the Ornament of thy molten Images of Gold; thou ſhalt caſt them away as a menſtruous cloth, thou ſhalt ſay unto it, get thee hence.* This is the Judgment of reformation, which God hath and will further work among his people, till *Sion be built up in perfect beauty, and* Jeruſalem *become the praiſe of the whole Earth.* Thus alſo God is excellent both *in Power* and *in Judgment*.

Fourthly, Judgment ſignifies thoſe evils which God brings upon impenitent ſinners; that's a very frequent notion of *Judgment* in Scripture, as the Lord is excellent in this Judgment; and that

Firſt, Upon his own people, when they provoke him and ſin againſt him (1 *Pet.* 4. 17.) *If Judgment begin at the Houſe of God, what ſhall the end be of them that obey not the Goſpel.* There's Judgment beginning at the Houſe of God, that is, God will bring evil upon his own Houſe, the Church, even ſore troubles and perſecutions. The Lord will not ſpare them, who have been ſlight with him, forgetful of him, formal in profeſſion, or wanton and vain in converſation. This is a great part of the Lords excellency in Judgment, he brings Judgment upon his own Houſe. *The Lord*, ſaith the Prophet (*Iſa.* 5. 16.) *ſhall be exalted in Judgment, and God that is Holy ſhall be ſanctified in righteouſneſs*, that is, in bringing his righteous Judgments upon *Iſrael*, his peculiar people. We find that Goſpel-Prophet *Iſaiah* often interweaving the wyre and whipcord of corporal bondage, with the ſilk and ſcarlet thread of *Sions* deliverances,

Secondly, In Judgment towards his enemies (*Pſal.* 149. 9.) *He will execute on them the Judgment that is written*, and that is no inconſiderable, nor eaſie Judgment. The ſervants of God may ſmart ſorely under theſe Judgments, but the wicked and rebellious ſhall periſh, and ſink under them. How dreadful is that profeſſion or proteſtation which the Lord made by *Moſes* (*Deut.* 32. 41.) *If I whet my glittering Sword, and my hand take hold of Judgment, I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and will reward them that hate me.*

Some, poſſibly, may object, Surely there is no ſuch appearance of Gods excellency in Judgment upon the wicked of the World, the enemies of his name and ways. It grew to a Proverb (*Mal.* 2. 17.) *Ye ſay, every one that doth evil is good in the ſight of the Lord, and he delighteth in them, or where is the God of Judgment?* Evil men ſeem to be good in the eyes of the Lord when they enjoy good; and if it be ſo, (ſaid ſome) *Where is the God of Judgment?*

I anſwer, Firſt, the Lord hath left teſtimony enough upon Record, and written it in the blood of many thouſands, to juſtifie himſelf, that *he is excellent in Judgment*, by taking vengeance on the wicked. Did he not excel in Judgment upon the ſinning Angels? (2 *Pet.* 2. 8. *Jude* 6.) Was he not excellent in Judgment, when he deſtroyed the whole World for ſin? When he burnt *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* with fire for ſin? How many inſtances might I give of this from Scripture? God hath ſufficiently declared himſelf excellent in this punitive Judgment.

I anſwer, Secondly, God indeed doth not preſently execute Judgment upon all the wicked; we ſhould rather be led by ſence than by faith, if he ſhould do ſo, if he ſhould ſmite ſinners as ſoon as they provoke him; yea, if God ſhould take that courſe, he muſt even break the World to pieces, and deſtroy whole generations at once.

Thirdly, God ſuffers ſinners a while, that his counſels may be fulfilled; for though the wicked obey not the command of God, yet they fulfil the counſel of God (*Acts* 4. 28.) and they do it chiefly when he with-holdeth Judgment from them.

Fourthly, Unleſs the Lord did a little give ſtop to the execution of Judgment in this kind, it would neither appear how good, nor how bad ſome men are. Let ſome have but a little power in their hands, and the World at will, then you ſhall ſee whither they will go, and what they will do. And when bad men are ſuffered to go on unpuniſhed, and to be a puniſhment to others, then it appears more fully how good ſome are, and that in a twofold reſpect. Firſt, becauſe they refrain from evil, though they ſee that they alſo poſſibly might do it (*impune*) and not ſuffer in this World. Secondly, becauſe they hold faſt both their profeſſion and practice of Godlineſs, how much ſoever they ſuffer for it in this World from evil men.

Fifthly, God is executing Judgments upon wicked men, while he ſeems to ſpare them from Judgment (*Prov.* 1.32.) *The proſperity of fools ſlayeth them.* Some think a wicked man is mightily favoured when he is in proſperity, no, that proſperity is his deſtruction, and deſtruction is Judgment in perfection. The Table of a wicked man is made his ſnare, his full Table fattens his heart, which is the ſoreſt of all Judgments. To be unſenſible is worſe than any puniſhment of ſenſe; to be hardned or heartned in doing evil, is more penal than the ſuffering of any evil. Now while wicked men eſcape the ſuffering of evil, they grow reſolved, that is, hardned and heartned in doing it, or to do it. Take *Solomon*'s Obſervation or experience in the caſe (*Eccleſ.*8.11.) *Becauſe ſentence againſt an evil work is not ſpeedily executed* (upon themſelves or others) *therefore the heart of the Sons of men is fully ſet in them to do miſchief.* So then, there are many inviſible Judgments upon wicked men, when we ſee no hand touch them, nor Judgment near them; God gives them up to vile affections, and to a reprobate mind (*Rom.* 1.26,28.) to their own counſels (*Pſal.* 81.12.) and to ſtrong deluſions by others (2 *Theſ.* 2.11.) Theſe heavy loads of Judgment may be on their hearts, upon whoſe backs we ſee not ſo much as a grain weight of Judgment. Thus the Lord is excellent in Judgment in all the notions of it; I have inſtanced four.

Now, leſt any ſhould think that God at any time breaks the rule of Juſtice in his zeal, for this latter ſort of Judgment, or while he is pouring out vengeance upon the wicked, therefore it followeth in the next place;

ורב צדקה
Juſtitia eſt conſtans & perpetua voluntas ſuum cuiq; tribuendi. Juſtin.

And in plenty of Juſtice.] God executes great wrath upon ſinners, but there is great Juſtice, plenty of Juſtice in it. There is ſtore and abundance of Juſtice and righteouſneſs in his moſt rigorous Judgments. A little Juſtice is a moſt precious thing; how precious then is plenty of Juſtice! *Juſtice in it ſelf is the giving of every one his due*; and where Juſtice is in any man, it conſtantly bends and inclines his heart to do ſo, his eſpecially with whom there is (as in God) plenty of Juſtice. And indeed, what-ever God hath, he hath plenty of it; he hath mercy, and plenty of it, he is *plenteous in mercy* (Pſal.103.8.) *And with him is plenteous redemption,* (Pſal.130.7.) There is alſo plenty of Juſtice in him.

Some men have no Juſtice at all in them; though their office and place be to do Juſtice, yet they have nothing of Juſtice, no tincture of it in them; *They neither fear God nor regard man*, to do him any Juſtice, as the unjuſt Judg is deſcribed (*Luk.* 18.2.) and with moſt Juſtice is a very ſcarce Commodity, they have but a very little of it, and they diſtribute it very poorly and ſparingly. Where almoſt is the man to be found that hath plenty of Juſtice in himſelf, and diſtributes it plentifully to others? There was ſurely a great ſcarcity of Juſtice in the Juſticers of *Jeruſalem*, when the Lord by his Prophet (*Jer.*5.1.) offered to pardon the whole City, if upon the ſending forth of his Writ of Enquiry, the name of any one man could be returned that executed Judgment. O that Dearth of Juſtice! And in what place may we hope to find plenty of Juſtice among men, when ſo little of it was to be found in *Jeruſalem*, the City of God? Yet this may comfort us, that though there be little of it in or among men, there is plenty of it in God. And that there is plenty of Juſtice in God, I would demonſtrate theſe five ways.

Firſt, He hath plenty of Juſtice, who deals juſtly with every man. God giveth every man his due, all his due, and nothing but his due. More diſtinctly, take this in two branches. Firſt, he that rewards all that are good, with good, not this or that man, not his kinſman, or his friend only, but every man that is good, with good; he hath plenty of Juſtice: Thus doth God. The reſpect which God hath to the perſons of good men, is like the reſpect which good men have to the commands of God, it is *univerſal,* he reſpects them all. As they give him plentiful obedience, having a reſpect to all his Commandments, ſo he gives them plentiful Juſtice, he hath reſpect to all their perſons, to all their workings, to all their ways, which are holy, juſt, and good. Again, Secondly, He hath *plenty of Juſtice,* who puniſheth all that do evil, not winking at, nor ſparing friends or kindred. Surely then there is plenty of Juſtice in God; for as he rewards all the good with good, ſo he rewards all evil men with evil; that's all the reward they ſhall have, and they ſhall have plenty of it (*Pſal.*31.23.) *He plenteouſly rewardeth the proud doer.* The proud ſhall have and drink up the laſt, the reſidue, the remainder, the very dregs of the bitter cup, of the cup of trembling, as the Hebrew elegancy uſed by the Pſalmiſt intimates. *Tribulation and anguiſh upon every Soul of man that doth evil; for there is no reſpect of perſons with God,* (*Rom.*2.9,11.) As he will puniſh none but evil-doers, ſo he will puniſh them every one, except they repent.

Secondly, With the Lord is plenty of Juſtice, for he knows the whole Compaſs of Juſtice, he hath the clear Idea of it in his underſtanding, he knows all the rules of it, or rather is the rule of it. All the rules of Juſtice came out from him, and are but the ſignification of his own mind, therefore he muſt needs know them, and be well skilled in them. Some men have a good mind to do Juſtice, yet have no plenty of it, becauſe they are unskilful in the rule of it, the Laws both of God and man. A Judg that is blind through ignorance, and hath not a gift of knowledg and underſtanding in the Law, faulters in doing, or is unfit to do Juſtice, as much as he that is blinded with gifts, or byas'd by relations and private paſſions; he that is blind the former way cannot have, and he that is blinded by any of the latter ways will never do *plenty of Juſtice.* But as the Lord hath an infinitely clear eye as to the rule, ſo no gift can blind him, nor can any relation put out his eyes from ſeeing a fault, nor divert him from puniſhing it (*Iſa.*27.11.) *It is a people of no underſtanding* (either to do good, or to depart from evil) *therefore he that made them* (that's a near relation) *will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them* (that's the ſame) *will ſhew them no favour.* As if the Lord had ſaid, *Juſtice ſhall be done, though the work of my own hands be undone by it*; there's plenty of Juſtice. And as God knows the rule of the Law perfectly, and will not be turned aſide from it; ſo he knows the matter of fact perfectly, and cannot be miſlead about that; upon which miſtake ſome, who have great knowledg of the rule of the Law, yet do not plenty of Juſtice: They often condemn the innocent, and acquit the nocent, becauſe they find not out the truth of their cauſe, but are miſinformed about it. But, *the Lord is a God of knowledg, by him actions are weighed*; he knows not only the matter of Law, but the matter of fact too, and therefore with him *there is plenty of Juſtice.*

Thirdly, There muſt needs be plenty of Juſtice with God, becauſe he knows the Spirit and heart with which every man acts, he knoweth whether a thing be done maliciouſly, or meerly by a ſurpriſe of paſſion (Juſtice is guided much by that conſideration in ſome caſes) the Lord knows the heart, wherewith every thing is done, and the deſign or aim of every man in doing it. As he will make manifeſt the Counſels of the heart, at laſt to all, ſo now the Counſels of the heart are manifeſt to him; therefore he muſt needs be plentiful in Juſtice.

Fourthly, God is clothed with ſufficient power to execute Juſtice, therefore with him there is plenty of it. Some have a good mind to do Juſtice, they know the Law and the fact too, yet are ſhortned and ſtraitned in doing Juſtice, becauſe they have not power, or are not able to carry it out againſt potent offenders, but are forced to forbear the doing of Juſtice, becauſe at preſent they cannot. The doing of Juſtice requireth ſtrength of hand, as well as ſtrength of Law, and integrity of heart. *David* had a good mind to do Juſtice upon *Joab* (though nearly related to him) when he had, under a pretence of friendſhip, ſlain *Abner*; but he ſaw himſelf under a neceſſity of forbearance at that time, and therefore ſaid, *I am this day weak* (though annointed King) *and theſe Sons of* Zerviah *be too hard for me.* But there are no Sons of *Zerviah* too hard for the Lord, he can call them to an account at any time: *David* knew that very well, and therefore he referred *Joab* to Gods Juſtice in the cloſe of that verſe (2 *Sam.*2.39.) *The Lord ſhall reward the doer of evil according to his wickedneſs. Can thine heart endure, or can thine hands be ſtrong in the days that I ſhall deal with thee?* Saith the Lord by his Prophet (*Ezek.* 22.14.) They cannot, therefore *with him is plenty of Juſtice.*

Fifthly, The Lord cannot but have plenty of Juſtice, for his very Nature is Juſtice. Man doth that readily and plentifully which it doth naturally; it is as impoſſible for God not to do Juſtice, as it is for him not to be. A man may be unjuſt, and yet be a man, but God cannot be God, and not do juſtly. Seeing then it is his Nature to do Juſtice, there muſt needs be plenty of Juſtice with him: And how ſevere ſoever the Judgments of God are, there is nothing but Juſtice in them. *Juſtice, Juſtice, ſhalt thou follow*, was the command to the Judges of *Iſrael* by *Moſes*, that is, as we tranſlate, *that which is altogether juſt ſhalt thou follow* (Deut. 16.20.) As that promiſe of *peace, peace*, notes plenty of peace (*Iſa.* 26.3.) ſo this command of doing *Juſtice, Juſtice*, notes plenty of Juſtice. Certainly then the Lord himſelf will do Juſtice plentifully. Juſtice, Juſtice will he do. Take two Inferences from this aſſertion.

Firſt, This truth is matter of comfort to, and ſweetly ſmiles upon the Juſt, that the Lord hath plenty of Juſtice in him; for then, doubtleſs, he will perform all his good words of promiſe to them. 'Tis the part of a juſt man to perform his word; God is faithful to his word, what-ever men are. It hath been ſaid, *If you would know what ſome men mean never to do, then look to their promiſes.* It was a very diſhonorable Character which *Suidas* gave of the *Roman* Emperour *Tiberius*; *He never made ſhew of having what he deſired, or had a mind to, nor ever minded to do what he had promiſed.* But God, the great God, is ſo true and juſt to his word or promiſe, that his people may take ſtrong conſolation from every word of promiſe. (*Tit.* 1.2.) *In hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie hath promiſed.* No man could ever challenge God of any failure in promiſe. There are four things aſcribed to God in Scripture, which may aſſure us that he will be juſt in performing all his promiſes. Firſt, He remembers them all (*Pſal.* 111. 5. *Pſal.* 115. 12.) Secondly, He is unchangeable and in one mind, (*Job* 23.13, 14.) Thirdly, He is the Almighty, and ever furniſht with power to perform them. Fourthly, He is moſt faithful, and will not deny nor falſifie them (*Heb.* 10. 23.)

Eorum quæ appetebat ne quicquam præ ſe ferebat, & eorum quæ dicebat ne quicquam facere volebat. Suidas de Tiberio.

Secondly, This truth hath a moſt dreadful aſpect and frowns terribly upon the ungodly and unjuſt. That *God hath plenty of Juſtice*, Juſtice enough to beſtow among them all, is enough to confound them all; though they make a Covenant with Death, and with Hell are at agreement, yet their Covenant and agreement ſhall be diſſolved, (*Iſa.* 28. 15, 16.) The Scripture ſpeaks Juſtice often to ſinners, ſpecially to thoſe unjuſt ones, who *weigh the violence of their hands* (Pſal. 58. 1, 2.) that is, who oppreſs with a kind of exactneſs, who do not tumble it out palpably, or in a lump, but weigh it out, now a little, and then a little: The Lord knoweth how to deal with ſuch cunning perverters of Juſtice, and will at laſt make them acknowledg, both that themſelves had no Juſtice in them, and that himſelf had plenty of it. And who now, laying theſe five conſiderations together, will not acknowledg, that the Lord hath plenty of Juſtice? But the inference which *Elihu* makes from it in the cloſe of the verſe, ſeems, if not a kind of denial, yet a great abatement of it, for having ſaid, *He is excellent in plenty of Juſtice*, the next words are,

He will not afflict.] This may ſeem at firſt hearing, a ſtrange connection; will he not afflict? How then hath he plenty of Juſtice? Doth not God afflict? Who afflicts then? Have men the power of affliction in their hands? Or hath Satan the power of affliction in his hand? *Affliction cometh not forth of the duſt, neither doth trouble ſpring out of the ground*, ſaid *Eliphaz* (Chap. 5. 6.) Saith not the Scripture every where, affliction comes down from Heaven, or that 'tis of God? Did not *Job* ſay (*Chap.* 1. 21.) *The Lord hath taken*, that is, afflicted me, by taking away my all of this World? And doth not God himſelf ſay (*Pſal.* 89. 30, 31, 32.) *If his Children forget my Law, I will puniſh their tranſgreſſions with a rod, and their iniquity with ſtripes?* How then ſaith *Elihu, God will not afflict?*

I anſwer, Firſt, In general, *Elihu* ſpeaks thus in anſwer to a doubt, or to remove a fear ariſing upon the whole, of what had been ſaid of God. For if God be ſuch a God, *ſo excellent in Power, and in Judgment, and in plenty of Juſtice*, then ſurely our caſe is very ſad, may ſome ſay, who can abide to be near or ſtand before ſuch a God? O, ſaith *Elihu*, fear not, *He will not afflict*. More particularly, I anſwer,

Firſt, Though God be excellent in Judgment, and plenty of Juſtice, yet it may be ſaid, *he will not afflict*, becauſe in ſome ſenſe, he hath a will to afflict, or he doth not afflict with his will, that is, he delights not to afflict, he hath declared himſelf more ready to ſhew mercy, then to execute Judgment. In one Prophet he ſaith, *I have no pleaſure in the death of him that dieth* (Ezek. 18. 32.) and another Prophet ſaith of him, *He doth not willingly afflict, nor grieve the Children of men* (Lam. 3. 33.) This Prophet was there bemoaning the greateſt affliction that ever befell the people of God, yet, ſaith he, *God doth not afflict willingly*, he doth not afflict with his heart, as the word there is expreſſed in the Margin; when he afflicts, it is as it were a work of his hand, not of his heart, yea a work that he would gladly rid his hands of. When once that cruel Tyrant *Nero* ſaid when he was to ſign a Warrant for the Execution of an offender, *How glad ſhould I be if I could not write my name!* (This ſpake he, poſſibly, when his heart was as full of blood as it could hold) yet thus he ſpake to ſignifie a great unwillingneſs to afflict. This is moſt true of the great God; though he be a God of excellent Power and Judgment, and plenty of Juſtice, yet he doth not afflict willingly; he could be glad, that he might never have an occaſion to afflict, that he might never be provoked to draw his Sword, no not ſo much as to uſe his rod in this World.

Ex corde. Heb. *ex animo libens.* Vatabl.

O quam vellem neſcire literas.

Secondly, It may be ſaid, *God will not afflict*, becauſe he never afflicteth without a juſt cauſe; his unlimited power never tempts him, nor doth any paſſion tranſport him to a deſire of taking undue revenge upon any; he hath plenty of Juſtice, and therefore cannot afflict, but when he ſees great reaſon for it. Did not our ſin call for our affliction, were there not ſome great provocation on our part, or ſome profit to come to us by it, we ſhould never hear of, nor feel his rod. The Apoſtle ſaith (*Heb.* 12. 9, 10.) *We have had Fathers of our fleſh, who for a few days chaſtened us after their own pleaſure*, they to eaſe themſelves, have put us to pain, but *the Lord doth it for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holineſs*. There is juſt cauſe we ſhould be afflicted, when we provoke God by ſin, or when he would purge us from our ſin, or make us more holy. And as it may be ſaid, *God will not afflict*, becauſe he doth not afflict us but when there is cauſe for it, ſo

Thirdly, Becauſe he doth not afflict us but when there is need (1 *Pet.* 1. 6.) nor more *than there is need*; we ſhall not be afflicted an hour longer, nor have a grain more of weight in the burden of our croſs, nor a drop more of gall and wormwood in the cup of our ſorrows than we have need of (*Iſa.* 27. 7, 8, 9.) *Hath he ſmitten him, as he ſmote thoſe that ſmote him? In meaſure, when it ſhooteth forth thou wilt debate with him.* As if it had been ſaid, he ſhall have no greater a meaſure than is both uſeful and needful; firſt, to humble him for his ſin; ſecondly, to ſubdue and mortifie his ſin; thirdly, he ſhall have no more than is needful to exerciſe his graces, his faith and patience; no more, fourthly, than is needful to make him thankful for deliverance, and ſenſible of mercy when it comes. Thus, as God, who hath plenty of Juſtice, will not afflict us, but when there is need, ſo not more than is need.

Fourthly, It may be ſaid, He will not afflict, becauſe he doth not afflict us more than we can bear; he tenderly conſiders our ſtrength, what we are able to ſtand under, and how long we are able to ſtand under it; he will not break our backs nor our hearts (unleſs by godly ſorrow for, or from ſin) by affliction. *God* (ſaith the Apoſtle 1 *Cor.* 10. 13.) *is faithful, who will not ſuffer you to be tempted above what you are able, but will with the temptation alſo make a way to eſcape, that ye may be able to bear it.* Hence when it is ſaid (*Lam.* 3. 33.) *He doth not afflict willingly*, &c. it followeth (*verſ.* 34.) *to cruſh under his feet all the priſoners of the Earth.* The Lord makes many his priſoners, yet then his bowels are opened towards them, he will not cruſh, nor tread them down, as mire in the ſtreets. *I* (ſaith the Lord, *Iſa.* 57. 16.) *will not contend for ever*, &c. For (if I ſhould) *the Spirit ſhould fail before me, and the Souls which I have made.* I know what your Spirits can bear, and I will contend no longer than I know you are able to bear it. Hence that promiſe (*Pſal.* 125. 3.) *The rod of the wicked ſhall not reſt upon the lot of the righteous, leſt he put forth his hands to evil.* The Lord knows the rod may prevail over us ſo, as to put us upon the doing of evil, and therefore he will take order that it ſhall not.

Thus we may ſafely underſtand this aſſertion, *He will not afflict*, that is, he afflicts not willingly; he afflicts not till there is need, nor will he afflict more than needs, nor more than we are able, or himſelf will enable us to bear; he will either ſupport us under, or give us deliverance out of all our afflictions in due time.

I might hence, or from the whole, infer a double duty.

Firſt, Be Patient under affliction.

Secondly, Be Comforted in affliction.

For God doth ſo afflict, that he may be truly ſaid not to afflict, but having met with occaſions for the miniſtring of ſuch like counſels to the afflicted, from other paſſages in this Book, it may ſuffice only to mind the Reader of them here.

This ſpake *Elihu* in the cloſe or peroration of his diſcourſe, to ſtir up *Job* to conſider all the dealings of God with him; he would have him ſit down with theſe four Doctrinal Concluſions upon his heart, that God is *Excellent in Power, and in Judgment, and in plenty of Juſtice, he will not afflict.* Surely he will not afflict more in meaſure, nor longer in time than is need, as *Job* ſeemed in his paſſion, to intimate and charge God, for which he had ſeveral reproofs before.

Thus far I have opened theſe words, as they ſtand in our tranſlation. There are two or three different readings, eſpecially of the latter part of the verſe, which would not be altogether omitted, and therefore I ſhall touch at them, and then proceed to the next and laſt verſe of this Chapter, which is alſo *Elihu*'s parting word, or the concluſion of his large and cloſe diſcourſe with *Job*.

Omnipotens quem non aſſequimur amplus eſt virtute, ſed judicio & magnitudine juſtitiæ non affliget. Merc.

The firſt different reading is much inſiſted upon by ſome Interpreters. Take it thus; *The Almighty, whom we cannot find out, is great in power, but he will not afflict in Judgment and plenty of Juſtice.* This tranſlation tranſpoſeth thoſe words which we place in the end of the verſe, *he will not afflict*, to the middle of it, and it renders the copulative particle *And*, by the adverſative *But*: This makes the ſence of the whole verſe more plain and eaſie than the former, as alſo to riſe up more fully to the purpoſe of *Elihu*. As if he had thus ſummed up all that he ſpoke before, or had contracted it into this ſum.

Which things, ſeeing they are ſo, as I have declared, we may certainly conclude, that the Almighty is ſo full of Majeſty and Power, that we are no way able to reach, compaſs and find him out: Yet notwithſtanding he is ſo full of goodneſs and mercy, that he is very ſparing towards men, and will not afflict them according to their demerits, nor up to the extremity of Juſtice. This expoſition holds out clearly that temperament of the Power and Juſtice, with the Goodneſs and Mercy of God, which *Elihu* undertook to demonſtrate, at the fifth verſe of the thirty ſixth Chapter, and ſo forwards; *He is great in Power, but he will not afflict in Judgment.*

Quamvis ſit potentiſſimus, tamen homines ante creatos tanti facit ut non utatur omnipotentia ſua ad eos ſummo jure & pro meritis eorum affligendes. Jun.

Take this Note from it, *How great ſoever the power of God is, yet he doth not afflict ſinful man according to the greatneſs of his power, nor the utmoſt line of his Juſtice.*

The Lord is full of mercy, full of ſparing mercy, he ſpareth his people, *as a man ſpareth his own Son that ſerveth him* (*Mal.* 3.17.) And indeed if God ſhould afflict in *plenty*, that is, in extremity of Juſtice, what would become of the beſt, of the holieſt of men? Who can withſtand the power of the great God? Who can ſtand in Judgment before him, if he ſhould *mark iniquities*? (*Pſal.* 130.3.) Woe to the moſt innocent man alive, if God ſhould mark iniquities, and not forgive iniquities. And therefore it follows in the next or fourth verſe of that Pſalm, *But with thee is forgiveneſs*. As God is moſt bountiful in giving, ſo is he moſt merciful in forgiving. This holds the head of believing and repenting ſinners above water, and keeps them from ſinking into the bottomleſs Gulf of deſpair, that they have a forgiving God to go unto, and that there is none like him in forgiving (*Mich.* 7.18.) None forgiving ſo *freely* (*Iſa.* 42.25.) ſo *abundantly* (*Iſa.* 55.7.) none ſo conſtantly and continually as he. There is *forgiveneſs with thee*; 'tis a continued a perpetual act. Now becauſe God pardons ſo freely, he doth not, he will not, he cannot becauſe he will not, puniſh extreamly. *God dealeth with ſinners in meaſure, becauſe he dealeth with them in a Mediator.* Though he be great in power, yet he will not afflict according to the greatneſs of his power or the plenty of his Juſtice.

Secondly, Some of the *Jewiſh* Doctors render the latter part of the verſe thus; whereas we ſay, *He is excellent in Judgment, and in plenty of Juſtice, he will not afflict*, they ſay, *He will not afflict Judgment and plenty of Juſtice*; that is, as they give the gloſs, *Though he be great in power, yet he will not pervert Juſtice*. We may well ſay Juſtice is afflicted, when it is perverted; and then Juſtice is perverted, when any man is wronged, or when at any time the wronged, or wrongfully afflicted, are not righted and relieved. Thus God will not afflict Juſtice. Theſe tranſlators do not join the word *afflict* (as we) to the perſon of man, but to the *Juſtice* of God, or the actings of his Juſtice. He is great in power, but he will not afflict, he will not oppreſs Judgment and Juſtice. This is doubtleſs a great truth in it ſelf, yet, I doubt whether it be the truth intended by *Elihu* in this place. Certainly, God will not do any man wrong, though he hath power enough, all power in his hand, yea, God will do all men right; though he be great in power, yet whatſoever he layeth upon the Creature ſhall be no affliction to Juſtice or Judgment, to that Juſtice or Judgment with which God is clothed, and will declare by executing it among the Children of men. But I paſs this as over-nice.

Judicium & copiam juſtitiæ non affliget i.e. *jus non pervertet.* Merc. ex Rabbinis.

Thirdly, Others render thus, *He is excellent in power, and in Judgment, and plenty in Juſtice, he will not anſwer.* The word which we tranſlate, *to afflict*, with ſome alteration in the Hebrew pointing, ſignifie alſo *to anſwer*; and ſo the words carry a ſence of the abſolute ſoveraignty of God, who is ſo great *in power, and in Judgment, and plenty of Juſtice*, that he will not anſwer; that is, though men complain of his Juſtice, or think he hath done them wrong, or at leaſt is over ſevere towards them, yet he will not come to anſwer, he will give no man a reaſon of his ways. Of this *Elihu* ſpake expreſly (*Chap.* 33.13.) *He giveth not account of any of his matters. God is ſo powerful that no man can call him to an account, and ſo juſt in the uſe or exerciſe of his power, that there is no reaſon why any ſhould.* But though this alſo be a great truth, yet becauſe *Elihu* had aſſerted it fully before, as alſo becauſe this tranſlation is grounded upon the change in the ordinary pointing of the Hebrew word, from which I conceive, with others, we ought not eaſily to recede, therefore I ſhall not ſtay upon it.

Non reſpondebit. Tygur. *Probarem ſi eſſet* יענה *in fonte nunc cum ſit* יענה *non poteſt aliter legi, quam affligit, vexat.* Druſ. Merc.

Nor ſhall I more than mention that apprehenſion of ſome Rabbins, who thus give out a fourth ſence or interpretation of the words; whereas we ſay, *As touching the Almighty we cannot find him out, he is excellent in power, and in Judgment*, &c. They ſay thus, *although the Almighty be great in power and in Judgment, and plenty of Juſtice, yet we find him not ſo*; That is, we do not find him putting out the greatneſs of his power, or the exactneſs of his Juſtice, in the commands which he hath laid upon us, or in the duties which he hath required of us; he doth not over-burthen us, nor exact hard things of us. And they inſtance the rules which God gave about offerings and Sacrifices; he required (ſay they) of ſome only a turtle Dove, or a pair of young Pigeons, of others but a Lamb, or a Bullock, ſuch things he required for ſacrifice as were of eaſie price, and might eaſily be obtained, he did not put us upon the getting of ſtrange and rare Beaſts, as Buffs, or Unicorns, or any ſort of Creature which may put us to much pains in getting them, or to much expence in buying them. And as in theſe, ſo in other things God hath graciouſly condeſcended to our weakneſs, as appears every where in the Law. Thus the *Jewiſh* Writers make out their tranſlation: And though it be a truth, that in one ſenſe the Ceremonial Law was (as St. *Peter*, in that Council at *Jeruſalem* declared *Acts* 15.10.) *A Yoak, which neither they nor their fathers were able to bear*, yet there was much favour mixed with it, which cauſed the Lord to appeal in that point to their own Conſciences, or to make themſelves the Judges (*Mich.* 6.3.) *O my people what have I done unto thee, or wherein have I wearied thee? Teſtifie againſt me.* And as God, though great in power, did not over-lay the *Jews*, ſo much leſs hath he over-laid us Chriſtians with duty (1 *John* 5.3.) *His Commandments are not grievous.* And Chriſt ſaid of his yoke and burden (*Math.* 11.10.) *My yoke is eaſie, and my burden is light.* Chriſt may lay what burdens he pleaſeth upon us, but he is not pleaſed to lay any grievous burdens upon us. This therefore is a truth, both

Omnipotentem non invenimus multum robore & judicio; & tali ſit, tamen talem eum non experimur in mandatis ſuis ut immodice nos oneret, aut immodicam à nobis exiget juſtitiam, &c. RabbiSelemoth & Rambam.

as to them and us, yet I conceive it beſide the deſign of *Elihu* in this place, and I only mind the Reader of theſe different Interpretations, of all which ſome good improvement may be made. So much of this Verſe: The whole diſcourſe of *Elihu* concludes in the next.

Verſ. 24. **Men do therefore fear him: He reſpecteth not any that are wiſe in heart.**

This Verſe containeth two things.

Firſt, A practical inference, by way of uſe, from that fourfold Doctrine held forth in the former Verſe, concerning God. As if *Elihu* had ſaid, *For as much as the Almighty is incomprehenſible, ſo that we cannot find him out; for as much as he is mighty in power, and judgment, and plenty of juſtice, ſo that we can neither avoid him nor delude him, therefore men do fear him.*

Secondly, We have an enforcement of this Inference, by a cogent reaſon, *For he reſpecteth not any that are wiſe in heart*, Who theſe wiſe-hearted ones are, whom God reſpecteth not, will appear in the opening thoſe words.

Men do therefore fear him.] The word rendered *Men*, properly ſignifieth, *weak or feeble men*, as alſo men in affliction, men under the afflicting hand, or rod of God. This ſtrict acception of the word, renders the oppoſition more clear, ſetting the loweſt of humane frailty, againſt the higheſt divine power. Yet we need not ſtand ſtrictly upon the Grammatical ſignification of the word, but may take men, in all their diviſions and forms; men, be they high or low, afflicted or in proſperity, ought therefore to fear him.

אנש *Vir miſer & imbecillus.*

Only, It may ſeem moſt ſutable, in way of application, to *Job*, for *Elihu* to uſe this word in that reſtrained ſence; *Afflicted feeble men do fear him*, As if he had ſaid. O Job, *thou art a weak man, a man greatly afflicted, thou haſt been long under the rod and chaſtning hand of God, therefore thou oughteſt to fear him, and not expoſtulate the matter with him, as thou haſt done. Men do*

Therefore fear him.] This illative, *Therefore*, hath reference (as was intimated) to all that was ſaid in the former Verſe, yet we may take it ſpecially in theſe two particulars. *Therefore men do fear him*; Why?

Firſt, Becauſe he is ſo great, ſo immenſe, ſo incomprehenſible, ſo powerful, ſo juſt, becauſe he hath ſuch plenty of juſtice, *Therefore men do fear him.*

Secondly, *Therefore men do fear him*; Why? Becauſe, though he be clothed with power, juſtice and judgment, ye *he will not afflict*, that is, he will not afflict extreamly. in any of thoſe four ſences before given; he moderates his power by compaſſion in his ſharpeſt diſpenſations towards his people; there is a great mixture of love and mercy with his juſtice, therefore men do fear him. As if *Elihu* had thus beſpoken *Job*; *Others fear God becauſe they experience or find him kind and good to them, even in affliction, how then cometh it to paſs, that thou haſt from the beginning carried it, as if God mixt no kindneſs nor ſhewed any tenderneſs in his afflicting of thee? Why is it that thou haſt curſed thy day? That thou haſt complained that ever thou waſt born, that thou haſt ſo often wiſhed for death? Why haſt thou ſaid that thou art not only preſſed, but even oppreſſed, that though thy cauſe be good, yet thou haſt born the heavieſt loads of evil? Why doſt thou ſtrive with him? Theſe are no arguments of thy fear, but of an impatient and fretful ſpirit, if not of a kind of rage and fury againſt God himſelf; Theſe are no proofs that thou doeſt acknowledg his goodneſs in afflicting thee, and ſo fear him, for by theſe thou doſt rather charge and accuſe him of harſhneſs and ſeverity.*

Now though it may be ſaid (as it hath often in the opening this Book) that *Job* ſpake ſuch words partly in the heat of his paſſion, partly through the greatneſs of his pain, partly through the infirmity of his fleſh, as alſo being much moved and provoked by the grievous cenſures of his friends: yet notwithſtanding all this, his words were ſuch as neither could, nor ought to be wholly excuſed; ſo that *Elihu* might ſay, *Men do therefore fear him.* But, O Job, *thou haſt carried it, as if thou didſt not fear him*, thou haſt not behaved thy ſelf like other men, under the ſame, or a like afflicting hand of God. For though *Job* is to be reckoned among men that feared God, yea, in the higheſt form of thoſe that feared him, yet he failed much in his affliction, as to the expreſſion of this holy fear.

Thus we have that two-fold reference, in which *Elihu* ſaith, *Therefore do men fear him.*

Firſt, Becauſe of his great power.

Secondly, Becauſe of that great tenderneſs which he uſeth in the exerciſe of his power: Which yet *Job* did ſcarce acknowledg, as appeared by his complainings and murmurings about the dealings of God.

Men do therefore fear him.] So we render, yet 'tis conſiderable, that the Hebrew runs in the future time, *Men will therefore fear him*, that is, *men ſhould therefore fear him*, or men therefore ought to fear him. Words in the Hebrew of a future ſignification, bear the importance of a preſent duty; what good 'tis ſaid men will do, is as if it had been ſaid, they do, or ought to do. And as to the duty here ſpoken of, *the fear of God*, we may make this concluſion, *All good men do fear God upon thoſe accounts, and all men ſhould, or ought to fear him.* The thing is to be done, whether men do it or no. Where an expreſs command is given, every man concerned is bound to obey; and where, or who is the man that is not concern'd in this command, *fear the great and gracious God? Men do therefore*

Ideo timebunt tum homines. Mont. *Verbum futuri temporis ſolet denotari id quod debet, quod expedit fieri, quare timebunt idem erit, quod timere debent, timere jubentur*

Fear him.] What it is to fear God, was ſhewed largely at the Twenty-eighth Chapter of this Book and the laſt Verſe, therefore I ſhall not ſtay upon it here: Only remember the word ſignifieth, a gracious, a child-like fear, not a ſervile ſlaviſh fear. There are two words, by which the fear of God is expreſſed in the Latine tongue, which we may expreſs thus, *to fear God*, or, *to be afraid of God.* Good men fear God, but wicked men are afraid of God. Now though the words are often uſed promiſcuouſly, and to fear, is ſometimes taken in the worſer, ſometimes in the better ſence, yet, here we are to take it in the beſt ſence, *Therefore do men fear him*, that is, they ought to ſtand in awe and not ſin againſt him, they ſhould ſubmit to, not diſpute his dealings. The fear of God, in the general notion of it, is nothing elſe, but Piety and Religion, or the whole worſhip of God. To ſay a man is godly or religious, is all one as to ſay, he is a man fearing God. Now, whereas uſually a general rule is urged to lead in a general practice, here a general practice is urged as leading to a general rule. *Men do therefore fear him.*

Deum vereri. Deum timere. Proprie veretur Deum pius, timet ſuperſtitioſus. Tamen hanc differentiam interpretes non obſervant; nam paſſim timere uſurpant pro vereri. Druſ.

Whence we may take this general Obſervation; *It is the duty of all men, of every man, to fear God.*

Men, one or other, ought to have high and honourable thoughts of God, they ought to have holy and reverential thoughts of God, they ought to put far away from them all ſlightneſs, and vanity of ſpirit, when they think or ſpeak of God, they ought to put far from them all boldneſs and preſumption, when they have to do with God. To put away all ſlight and bold thoughts of God, to take up high and reverential thoughts of God, this is to fear God. Yet a little further, and more diſtinctly, I conceive here in this place, to fear God, ſtands in a four-fold oppoſition.

Firſt, Men ſhould fear him, and not murmure at what he doth.

Secondly, They ſhould fear him, and not lightly paſs by what he doth.

Thirdly, They ſhould fear him, and not queſtion him about what he doth.

Fourthly, They ſhould fear him, and not curiouſly ſearch or pry into what he doth.

The Lord having ſuch power to do, ſuch wiſdom in doing, ſuch a mixture of mercy with juſtice in all that he doth, men ſhould only admire and improve his doings, nor murmure at, nor lightly paſs by, nor queſtion nor curiouſly pry into what he doth. Thus to fear God as faithful in all his works, and to fear offending him in any of our own works, is the ſum of Godlineſs. *Hear the concluſion of all* (ſaith *Solomon*, Eccl. 12.13.) *Fear God, and keep his Commandments: This is the whole of man*, that is (as we tranſlate) the whole duty of man.

Secondly, Taking the word *Men* more ſtrictly, as ſignifying, not ſtrong, or mighty men, but weak, afflicted men;

Note, *When God is afflicting us, we ought to be much in the fear of God.*

What? When the hand of God is upon us, ſhall our hearts be lifted up againſt him? Or in our ſelves? What! Shall not our hearts ſtoop when our backs are burdened with ſorrows, and bowed down with a croſs? Not to fear God when we are at furtheſt remove from fear, or trouble in the world, is an argument of a very bad heart; but not to fear him when fear is round about us, or, when himſelf is chaſtening and correcting of us, argueth a much worſe frame of heart. Holy *David* gave this Character of his Enemies (*Pſal.*55.19.) *Becauſe they have no changes, therefore they fear not God.* What ſhall we ſay of them who fear not God though they have many changes? Such changes, I mean, as *Job* felt, and cryed out of the bitterneſs of his ſoul (*Chap.*10.17.) *Changes and war are againſt me:* And 'tis conceived, that *Elihu* aimed particularly at *Job* in this paſſage, as if he were the man, who, though under great changes, and in great troubles, yet behaved himſelf unlike thoſe who truly fear the Lord.

Thirdly, Note; *It is ſo much the duty of man to fear God, that it may well be ſuppoſed of all men, that they fear him.*

He can ſcarce be looked upon as a man, who doth not fear God. Doth he know himſelf to be a weak man, who doth not tremble at the remembrance of the Almighty God? Doth he know himſelf to be a ſinful man who doth not tremble at the remembrance of the holy, of the moſt holy God? This duty of fear is due to God upon ſo many accounts (even common accounts) from man, that we may conclude, ſurely, every man feareth God. Shall we not fear him who is incomprehenſibly great in power and in judgment, and in plenty of juſtice? What! not fear him who made us, and preſerveth us, who feeds and cloaths us? What! nor fear him in whoſe hand our breath is, and all our ways? Theſe, and many more, are common accounts, upon which all men may ſee both reaſon and their own engagement to fear God. So then, as becauſe it is ſo much the, duty of a Son to honour his Father, and of a Servant to fear his Maſter, therefore the Scripture ſuppoſeth all Sons and Servants doing it (*Mal.*1.6.) *A Son honoureth his Father, and a Servant his Maſter.* He doth not ſay, a Son ought to honour his Father, and a Servant his Maſter, but, *he honoureth, or doth honour.* That perſon deſerveth not the name of a *Son* that doth not honour his Father, nor is he worthy the name of a Servant that doth not honour his Maſter. Now, I ſay, as the Scripture takes it for granted, upon this ground, the naturalneſs of the duty, that every Son honours his Father, and every Servant his Maſter, ſo it doth, and ſo may we, that every man feareth God. And doubtleſs, if a Son or Servant deſerves not to bear the name of theſe relations, unleſs they honour and fear Father and Maſter, how much leſs do they deſerve to be called Men, who do not fear God, the Almighty God,

Again, From thoſe two particular heads, upon which this fear is grounded; Firſt, *Therefore,* with reſpect to the power and juſtice of God; Secondly, *Therefore,* with reſpect to the mercy and tenderneſs of God.

Note, Firſt; *God is to be feared becauſe he is ſo full of power and juſtice, then eſpecially, when by ſome eminent and ſpecial act of providence, he declares his power, and is doing juſtice.*

By how much the more God puts himſelf forth in his power and juſtice, by ſo much the more he is to be feared. 'Tis propheſied (*Rev.*15.3.) that when God ſhall ſhew forth his great power, and execute the ſeverity of his juſtice upon Antichriſt, then, *they who ſhall get the victory over the beaſt, and over his image,* &c. *Shall ſing the Song of Moſes, the ſervant of God, and the ſong of the Lamb, ſaying, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty, juſt and true are thy ways, thou King of Saints.* What followeth? *Who ſhall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorifie thy Name?* The vengeance to be poured upon *Babylon* will be ſo great a demonſtration of Gods power and juſtice, that it will give occaſion to all men, the faithful eſpecially, yea, it will call upon them aloud to fear God: *Who ſhall not fear thee?* As if he had ſaid, ſurely there is no man ſo ſtupid, ſo ſtout-hearted, or ſo hard hearted, but if he ſee God in, or at this work, he will have dreadful apprehenſions of him, and fear before him. Yet this is not ſpoken of ſuch a fear as Chriſt hath fore told ſhall ſeize upon and poſſeſs the hearts of men before his glorions appearing (*Luke* 21.25,26.) *There ſhall be ſigns in the Sun, and in the Moon, and in the Stars, and upon the Earth, diſtreſs of Nations with perplexity, the Sea and the Waters roaring, mens hearts failing them for fear,* &c. It ſhall not be (I ſay) ſuch a fear, a heart-failing, but a heart-enlarging fear; not ſuch a fear as they have, or rather, as hath them, who have their hope only in this life (theſe ſhall fear with an amazing, deſponding, deſpairing fear) but ſuch a fear as they have, who, through grace, have riſen up to *a full aſſurance of hope,* or, *are begotten again unto a lively hope, by the reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reſerved in heaven for them.*

The ſecond ground of this fear, is the mercy and goodneſs of God, who though he be thus powerful and juſt, yet he will not afflict, that is, he will not afflict without mercy and tenderneſs to his people.

Hence Obſerve; *God is to be feared becauſe he is ſo gracious and full of compaſſion, even while he doth afflict.*

There is mercy with God not to afflict, that's ſparing mercy, and therefore he is to be feared; there is mercy alſo with God in moderating our afflictions, that's ſparing mercy too, and *therefore he is to be feared.* The graciouſneſs of God manifeſted ſomtimes in ſparing to afflict us, and often in afflicting us ſparingly, ſhould move us to fear him both greatly and always: and if ſparing mercy ſhould move us to fear him, then much more ſhould forgiving and pardoning mercy. When the Lord (*Exod.*34.6,7.) *Paſſed by before Moſes, and proclaimed, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long ſuffering, and abundant in goodneſs and truth, keeping mercy for thouſands, forgiving iniquity, tranſgreſſion and ſin,* &c. At this proclamation of grace, *Moſes* (Verſ.8.) *made haſt, and bowed his head towards the earth and worſhipped.* How graceleſs then are they, who when they hear that God is gracious, merciful, and abundant in goodneſs, fear him not, but grow wanton and abuſe his kindneſs!

Now they who fear God, upon the due conſideration, either of his power or goodneſs, find their hearts,

Firſt, Much enlarged in the ſervice of God, or in doing the work, and walking in the ways of God (*Iſa.* 60. 5.)

Secondly, This fear keeps their hearts to a cloſe communion with God (*Jer.*32.32.) *I will put my fear in their heart, and they ſhall not depart from me.* We uſually not only depart, but run from thoſe whom we fear; but the true fear of God, Covenant-fear makes us cling about, and keep cloſe to him.

Thirdly, This fear keeps up good thoughts, and high eſtimations of God in the worſt times, or when he is pleaſed to bring the greateſt troubles upon us. An *Iſraelite* indeed, who *feareth the Lord and his goodneſs* (Hoſ.3.5.) will ſay (let God do what he will with him) *Truly God is good to Iſrael* (Pſal.73.1.) Let us conſider whether we have theſe effects of a gracious fear working in our hearts upon the remembrance both of the power and mercy of God. *Men do therefore fear him:*

He reſpecteth not any that are wiſe in heart.

Theſe words (as was touched before) preſs the former duty of fearing God, inferred from the greatneſs and excellency of his power, judgment, juſtice, and mercy, yet further upon us. As if he had ſaid, *men do therefore fear him;* Why? Becauſe, *He reſpecteth not any that are wiſe in heart,* that is, in general, he reſpects none who are ſo wiſe, or wiſe in ſuch a way, as not to fear him upon thoſe fore-mentioned grounds.

ראה *Videre.*
ירא *Timere.*

He reſpecteth not.] The word is, *ſeeth not.* There is an elegant paranomaſie in this verſe, the words which ſignifie to *fear* and to *reſpect* or *ſee,* being very near in ſound. God doth not ſee them with reſpect, who do not ſee him with fear: *He ſeeth not any that are wiſe in heart.* It cannot be meant of the ordinary ſight of the eye, that, *he ſeeth not the wiſe in heart;* God ſeeth clearly who they are: Nor can it be meant of the common apprehenſion of the mind, that, *he knoweth not the wiſe in heart;* God underſtands fully what they are; It muſt be meant then of a ſeeing with liking, or ſpecial approbation: God ſeeth not the wiſe in heart ſo, as to like or approve them. Our tranſlation is full and clear to that ſenſe, *He reſpecteth not*, or *he regardeth not any that are wiſe in heart*, that is, he takes no notice of them, they are not pleaſing to him. Or thus, *He reſpecteth not any that are wiſe in heart*, that is, as they fear not him, ſo he is not afraid of them. *He reſpecteth not any that are,*

Wiſe in heart.] Or, *wiſe of heart*. But ſome may ſay, Doth not God reſpect nor regard, doth not he take notice of thoſe that are wiſe of heart? Whom then doth he reſpect or regard? Of whom will he take notice, if not of the wiſe in heart? Hath the Lord any reſpect for fools, for ignorant men, for ideots, for ſotts? Surely men that are wiſe in heart, are not only very amiable but honourable in the eyes of God; Why then is it ſaid, *He reſpecteth not any that are wiſe in heart?*

I anſwer, *The wiſe in heart*, are of two ſorts.

Firſt, there are ſome wiſe in heart, who are ſo only in their own opinion, in their own conceits or eyes; they have great thoughts of their own wiſdom, and therefore as they are apt to deſpiſe men, ſo they are far from the fear of God. There is a wiſdom in ſome men oppoſed to the fear of God, whereas true wiſdom in any man is the beginning of that fear, as that fear is called the *beginning of wiſdom* (Pſal. 111.10.) The vulgar Latin varieth the former part of the verſe, yet renders this latter part by way of gloſs, rather than tranſlation, *They that ſeem to themſelves to be wiſe*; and indeed the wiſe in heart, whom God reſpecteth not, are the proudly wiſe, the ſelfiſhly wiſe, ſuch as are wiſe only in themſelves and to themſelves, ſuch as have only that wiſdom which the Apoſtle calleth, *the wiſdom of the fleſh*, or, *the carnal mind* (Rom. 8.7.) *which is not ſubject to the Law of God, nor indeed* (till mortified) *can be.* He that is carnally wiſe diſputes the commands of God, and takes the boldneſs to cenſure his works; ſuch wiſe men God reſpecteth not, yea, they are under his greateſt diſreſpect.

Qui ſibi videntur eſſe ſapientes. Vulg.

Secondly, Others are truly wiſe, graciouſly wiſe, wiſe for their ſouls, wiſe for Heaven, wiſe for happineſs, ſubmitting their wiſdom to the will of God, and doing his will: They that are thus wiſe in heart, the Lord reſpects, and highly reſpects; how can he do otherwiſe? Seeing this is the character of God himſelf (*Job* 9.4.) *He is wiſe in heart, and mighty in ſtrength*. And as God is wiſe in heart, ſo according to their line and meaſure, they that are godly, *are wiſe in heart* too. Therefore taking our tranſlation, the wiſe in heart intended by *Elihu*, muſt needs be thoſe that are only carnally wiſe, politickly wiſe, naturally wiſe, that is, wickedly wiſe, or at beſt vainly, or vain-gloriouſly wiſe.

Further, ſhould we take the *wiſe in heart*, for thoſe that are truly wiſe, graciouſly wiſe, yet it muſt be acknowledged, that even they may ſo miſ-behave themſelves, as to miſs preſent reſpect from God. And doubtleſs, *Elihu* obſerving that *Job* had ſpoken ſomewhat highly of himſelf, and did not carry it humbly enough under the hand of God (though his ſpirit was broken and brought down at laſt) checks him here, by telling him, *God reſpecteth not any that are wiſe in heart*, no not him, in that caſe and frame of ſpirit, as lifted up in his own wiſdom.

Yea, Taking *wiſe in heart*, in this beſt ſenſe, for the graciouſly wiſe, it is not for their wiſdom and holineſs that God reſpecteth or favoureth them. As he will not chaſtiſe them without cauſe, nor correct them but for their good; ſo when he doth them good or raiſeth them up, when he ſheweth them any favour, or giveth them any mercy, he doth it not for their wiſdom-ſake, or holineſs-ſake, but for his Sons ſake, or for his own Name ſake. *Acts of favour from God, are purely from his free grace*, not from any deſert in man; ſo that every way his mercy is from himſelf, and undeſerved by us. *He reſpecteth not any that are wiſe in heart.*

Firſt, As the *wiſe in heart* ſtand in oppoſition to thoſe that fear God, ſpoken of before, being ſo ſtout that they do not humble themſelves in his fear,

Note; *True wiſdom is always joyned with the fear of God.*

Yea, as *Job* concluded (*Chap.* 28.28.) *The fear of the Lord, that is wiſdom, and to depart from evil* (which none do but they who fear the Lord) *is underſtanding.*

Secondly, Note; *God regardeth no man for his wiſdom, who doth not fear him.*

Let men be never ſo learned and wiſe, never ſo prudent and politick, if they have not the true fear of God before their eyes, he values them not, he will not caſt an eye of favour upon them, they ſhall have no countenance with him, no honour from him. The moſt wiſe, the only wiſe God cares not for the wiſeſt of men, who ſtand ſo much upon their own underſtanding, as to ſtout it out with him. He is not at all moved (unleſs to diſpleaſure) by their wiſdom, who are puffed up with a conceit of their wiſdom.

Thirdly, When 'tis ſaid, *He reſpecteth not any that are wiſe in heart,*

Note; *Wiſdom, without the fear of God, will do no man good at laſt, nor can it keep him off from evil.*

Let no man think by his wiſdom, policy, or ſubtilty, to keep himſelf out of the reach of God. If men will not fear and honour him, he knoweth well enough how to deal with them, and to recover his honour upon them.

Note Fourthly; *Let men be as wiſe and crafty as they will, God is not afraid of them, as if they could do him any hurt, or ſpoil his deſigns, as if they could out-wit him, and over-throw his counſels.*

Some take upon them, as if they by their wiſdom could hinder Gods purpoſes, and counter-work him, as if they could over-reach or undermine him. We are much afraid of wiſe men; If ſuch a wiſe man, if ſuch *a head-piece*, be againſt us, we think ſurely he will work us a great deal of miſchief. When *David* found his ſon *Abſolom* rebelling againſt him, and *Achitophel* joyning with him, he prayed that God would *turn his counſel into fooliſhneſs* (2 Sam. 15. 31.) *David* feared that *Achitophels* going over to *Abſalom*, might have carryed the whole buſineſs againſt him: *But God doth not regard a whole conclave of Achitophels*, he cares not a ſtraw for their plottings and contrivings. The Lord is ſo far from fearing the counſels of the wiſe in heart, that he can deſtroy them by their own wiſdom, and not only undo their counſels, but undo them by their counſels: The pit which they have digged, they ſhall fall into it themſelves, and be entangled in the lime-twiggs which they have ſet up for others. All this the holy Prophet intended when he ſaid of God (*Iſa.* 44.25.) *He fruſtrateth the tokens of the lyers, and maketh the diviners mad: He turneth wiſe men backward, and maketh their knowledg fooliſh.* Diviners grow mad when they ſee things iſſuing quite contrary to their predictions and expectations. He that can deſtroy the wiſe with their own wiſdom, needs not fear the wiſdom of the wiſeſt. 'Tis the nobleſt way of vanquiſhing an enemy, when we wound him with his own weapons, and turn his own Artillery upon him. Thus God dealeth with the wiſe in heart; they are nothing in his hands, they cannot put the leaſt ſtop to what he hath a purpoſe to do; but he can put a ſtop to all their purpoſes. *The fooliſhneſs of God* (ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 1.25.) *is wiſer than men.* He ſaith alſo in the third Chapter of the ſame Epiſtle (*Verſ.* 19.) *The wiſdom of this world is fooliſhneſs with God*; for it is written (and that writing is taken out of this Book of *Job*, Chap. 5.13.) *He taketh the wiſe in their own craftineſs.* And again, *The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wiſe, that they are vain*; and vain he knoweth them to be in a twofold reſpect: Firſt, becauſe ſinful or evil in themſelves; Secondly, becauſe he knows how to make them barren or abortive, ſucceſleſs and ineffectual unto the wiſe: So that they all become like moſt Adventurers at a Lottery, *going out with their hearts full of hopes, but returning with their hands full of blanks*, Diſappointment, Diſappointment, being written upon all their counſels and undertakings.

Again, Taking *the wiſe in heart* for thoſe who are truly wiſe, godly wiſe,

Learn, Fifthly; *God will not forbear, when he ſeeth cauſe to afflict thoſe who are indeed the wiſeſt and holieſt of men.*

Let no man think, that becauſe he is wiſe or holy, he muſt not therefore be touched or medled with. Some conceive the chief deſign of writing this Book, was to let us ſee this truth, That let men be never ſo holy, never ſo upright, or godly, yet they muſt not claime priviledge from the croſs, nor complain when they are under it, that God deals not well with them. In this *Job* over-acted, ſuppoſing there was no cauſe why ſuch a man as he, ſhould have ſuch ſevere chaſtenings and rebukes;. but let men be never ſo wiſe, never ſo good, God may ſee cauſe to lay his chaſtening rods upon them; and had the Lord nothing elſe to ſay for it, his Soveraignty will bear him out in it againſt the beſt of men. The clay muſt neither ſay to the Potter, why haſt thou made me ſo? Nor why haſt thou marr'd me ſo? *Be ſilent O all fleſh* (good as well as bad) *before the Lord.*

Laſtly, Obſerve; *What-ever favour, what-ever mercy God beſtoweth upon the holieſt and wiſeſt of men, he doth it not with reſpect to any wiſdom, holineſs, or goodneſs in them, but for his own Name ſake, or becauſe he will.*

He reſpecteth not the wiſe in heart. No man can merit the leaſt favour from God; his is free grace. All good cometh to us through the Son of his love, and it was meerly of his love, that ever his Son came to us and dyed for us. Therefore let us not ſay, ſuch a one was a good man, ſuch a one was an holy man, therefore it was ſo and ſo with him. As what we are or can do cannot oblige him (when he ſees cauſe) from giving us correction, ſo he is unobliged as to what we are or can do, in giving us Salvation, whether temporal or eternal. *He reſpecteth not the wiſe in heart.*

There are yet two other readings of the words, which I ſhall ſet before the Reader, and then conclude all.

The word which we tranſlate *reſpecteth*, ſignifying properly *to ſee*, ſome keep to that propriety of it, and render the Text thus; *He ſeeth not all wiſe in heart*; That is, when the Lord looketh among the Children of Men, he doth not find many, yea ſcarce any of them wiſe. Thus the ſenſe runs in connection with the former part of the verſe, *Men ſhould be ſo wiſe as to fear God, and not diſpute any of his proceedings*; But he ſeeth or knoweth that all are not ſo; yea he findeth that a great many, even the moſt of men by much are very fools. The truth is, all men naturally are no better (*Pſal.* 14.2.) *The Lord looked down from Heaven upon the Children of Men, to ſee if there were any that did underſtand and ſeek God*; but he did not find one wiſe in heart among all the Children of Men, as Deſcendants from the firſt *Adam*. And when he cometh among the beſt of men, men of a ſecond birth, the ſeed and Deſcendants of the ſecond *Adam*, he doth not ſee them ſo wiſe as to give him glory in every condition, nor under every diſpenſation, yea, he finds a great deal of folly in their hearts. Taking this ſenſe of the words, *Elihu* ſeems here again to give *Job* a cloſe rebuke, as not having behaved himſelf ſo wiſely under his ſufferings, as became a man profeſſing the fear of God. 'Tis rare to find a man wiſe throughout, a man having true wiſdom of heart, and ordering himſelf according to the rules of that wiſdom, in all the turns and changes of his life.

Is certe non invenit ſapientes, quoſcunq; intuetur. Bez.

Secondly, The latter part of the verſe is Tranſlated thus; *Men, though never ſo wiſe in heart, cannot ſee him.* This reading runs the conſtruction of the words quite another way: The former ſaid, *He ſeeth not all wiſe in heart*; this ſaith, *Men wiſe in heart cannot ſee him.* The ſenſe of which reading may be thus conceived; The wiſeſt men cannot ſee God, he is both inviſible and incomprehenſible. As men cannot ſee him at all by ſenſe, ſo neither can they comprehend him by reaſon; As the eye cannot take him in who is inviſible, ſo neither can a finite underſtanding take him in, who is infinite in underſtanding. We have a ſight of God through faith in this life: Thus *Moſes ſaw him who is inviſible* (Heb.11.27.) We *ſee him here darkly, through a glaſs*, the glaſs of his word and works, of his ordinances and providences (1 *Cor.*13.12.) But the clear ſight of him *face to face*, the ſight of him *as he is*, is reſerved to hereafter (1 *Cor.* 13.12. 1 *John* 3.2.) Theſe two latter readings of this latter part of the verſe, hold out uſeful truths for further meditation; but I adhere to our own as more clear in the original, as alſo more ſutable to the ſcope and intendment of the foregoing diſcourſe.

Non videbit eum omnis ſapiens corde, vel non videbunt eum ſc. *Deum, omnes ſapientes corde.* q. d. *nullus eorum ipſum videbit.* Druſ.

Elihu having ſaid this, ſits down and is ſilent, leaving *Job* to meditate upon and conſider what he had ſaid.

And now, no ſooner had *Elihu* wound up his bottom, and made an end, but behold, God began and took *Job* in hand; he ſpake to him out of the whirlwind, at the beginning of the next Chapter, and brought him upon his knees before he had done with him, as will appear further, if the patience of God give time and opportunity to go ſo far. To him be all the praiſe and glory, who hath helped thus far. *Amen.*

AN

AN EXPOSITION WITH Practical Obſervations

UPON THE

THIRTY-EIGHTH, THIRTY-NINTH,
FORTYETH, FORTY-FISRT AND FORTY-
SECOND (being the Laſt)

CHAPTERS

Of the Book of

JOB.

TO THE
CHRISTIAN READER;
TO
Thoſe eſpecially of this CITY of *LONDON*, who have been the PROMOTERS of this
WORK.

SIRS,

THE end of a thing (*ſaith* Solomon, *Eccl.* 7.8.) is better than the beginning thereof. *Not that all things end better than they begin: ſome perſons begin well, and ſome things are begun well, which end, and are ended not ſo well, that I ſay not very ill.*

Through the All-diſpoſing providence of God; and the importunate call of not a few worthy friends, I began this Work; and now, after twenty-four years travel, making twelve Stages (in ſo many parts, the whole is come forth) I am come to the end of it; And truly, I might juſtly be reproved, at leaſt, for dulneſs and indiligence, or counted a very ſlow-paced Traveller, had I ſpent that twenty-four years (the beſt of my time and Strength) in meaſuring ſo ſhort a journey. But, as I have this to ſay towards an Apology for my over-long Stay in this Work, that I have had frequent diverſions, for a conſiderable part of that time, quite from it; ſo the whole time which I have ſpent in it, hath been but a diverſion, or time (I hope, honeſtly) Stoln, either from my reſt, or from that which was my more proper Work.

And, now that I have, at laſt, ended what I began, all that I ſhall ſay of it, is, that I have ended it. Whether I began it well, or have ended it well, and whether or no the end be better then the beginning, is not for me to ſay. Should I ſay, that I began it well, and have ended it well, or that the end is better than the beginning, it were a piece of moſt immodeſt pride; and ſhould I ſay the contrary of both, or of either, it might deſervedly be called more than a piece of proudeſt modeſty. Such as it is, from the beginning to the end, 'tis what my weakneſs, with the Strength of Chriſt given in; what my ſmall induſtriouſneſs, with the bleſſing given down from above, could attain unto. And I humbly give thanks to the Father of lights, from whom every good gift, and every perfect gift cometh, for any light received or held out towards the underſtanding of this Book; in which (who ſees not?) there are many things (as the Apoſtle Peter *ſaith of St.* Pauls Epiſtles) hard to be underſtood, *ſo hard to be underſtood, that, though I am confident (through the grace of God with me) I have not* wreſted *them to my own hurt, or the hurt (much leſs deſtruction) of others, (as 'tis there ſaid,* the ignorant and unſtable do the other Scriptures, to their own deſtruction) *yet I am not aſhamed to acknowledg, that I fear I have not attained ſo clear an underſtanding about ſome of them, as to clear them (which hath been my deſire) with ſatisfaction to the underſtanding of others. However, if what I have attained to, may be in any meaſure ſerviceable to the Church of God, or helpful to any poor ſoul in an afflicted condition (ſuch was* Job*'s) I have reached one great end aimed at; and if God have any glory by it, I have reached the greateſt end which can be aimed at. And though the work ſhould be found to have many defects, poſſibly miſtakes, in it, yet the ingenuous Reader will candidly interpret them, or charitably cover them, knowing that failings are common to human frailty, in the beſt of men, how much more in the meaneſt of them! And I ſhall account it a great kindneſs, if I may be friendly minded of thoſe defects; that ſo, if ever any of theſe Pieces ſhall be admitted to come out again, an amendment may be made, and the Work grow up to more perfection.*

This laſt Part, now coming forth, contains the whole tranſaction (from firſt to laſt) between God and Job, *none ſpeaking but they two, and* Job *but very little.* Elihu *having finiſht his ſpeech in the cloſe of the thirty ſeventh Chapter, the Lord himſelf appeared at the entrance of the thirty eighth, in a Majeſtick and tremendous manner, beſpeaking* Job *out of a vehement and tempeſtuous whirlwind; and taking up the ſame argument which* Elihu *had ſo much inſiſted upon before, for the conviction of* Job, *carrieth him in diſcourſe, quite through the univerſe, thereby farther to convince him,* *by the view and conſideration of his mighty and admirable works of creation and providence, how ignorant and weak he was in himſelf, how altogether unable and incompetent to contend with God, and therefore how raſh and inconſiderate he had been, in not ſubmitting (how great ſoever his ſufferings were) more quietly to him. And, as* Elihu *ſaid* (Chap.35 11.) That God teacheth us more than the beaſts of the Earth, and maketh us wiſer than the fowls of Heaven : *ſo doubtleſs, one great ſcope which the Lord had in his eye throughout that diſcourſe, was to teach* Job, *and with him us, that his care was much more over him, and is over us, than over the beaſts of the earth, or the fowls of Heaven. And hereupon having ſhewed his own infinite power and wiſdom, as alſo his goodneſs and tender compaſſions, in providing for all ſorts of irrational living creatures, he left* Job, *and leaves us to make the Inference, how watchful he is over, how reſpectful to man, a rational as well as a living creature. Our bleſſed Saviour Preaching upon the ſame ſubject to his Diſciples, expreſſeth the Inference* (Matth.6.26.) Behold the fowls of the air, for they ſow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns, yet your heavenly father feedeth them : are ye not much better than they ? *And again* (Verſ.30.) Wherefore if God ſo cloath the graſs of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is caſt into the oven : ſhall he not much more cloath you, O ye of little faith ? *Jeſus Chriſt ſaw it neceſſary to make theſe expreſs applications to his Diſciples, who, at that time, were both of little faith, and of little underſtanding. But here the Lord left* Job *(a wiſe and knowing man) to pick or ſpell out his meaning, and make application to himſelf, while he told him ſo particularly, how his providence at once over-ruled and maintained,* The roaring Lion, the wild Goat, the wild Aſs, the ſtubborn Unicorn, the ſtrong Horſe, the mighty Behemoth *among the beaſts of the Earth ;* the devouring Raven, the proud Peacock, the fooliſh Oſtrich, the ſwift winged Hawk, and the high-ſoaring Eagle, *among the fowls of the air ; as alſo,* the formidable Leviathan, *among, or rather repreſenting all the fiſhes of the Sea.*

Job *having with ſteddy, yet trembling attention, heard all theſe words ſpoken to him, with irrefragable authority, by the Lord himſelf out of the whirlwind, ſate down convinced, that ſurely the great God, the Creator of the ends of the earth, who had ſo exact an eye upon all thoſe creatures, both for the continuance of their ſpecies or kinds, and the preſervation of their individuals or particulars, could not poſſibly caſt off the care of man-kind, nor of him in particular, no nor put any man to any hardſhip or ſuffering, but for ſome great end or ends, glorious always to himſelf, and in the iſſue good for the wiſe and patient ſufferer. He was alſo convinced, that himſelf not well underſtanding the miſteries of providence (nor indeed could any more fully underſtand them, than he did the miſteries of creation, or the manner how God laid the foundations of the Earth, and ſhut up the Sea with doors ; he, I ſay, not well underſtanding the miſteries of providence, was convinced that he) had done very ill, to make ſuch long and loud complaints about it, that is, about the ſeverity of Gods dealings with him ; as if like an enemy he intended him nothing but pain and ſorrow, by the pains and ſorrows which he endured.*

Thus, at laſt, Job *began to ſee, that as being himſelf Gods creature, God might do with him what he pleaſed ; and, that God, being his abſolute Soveraign, could not wrong him, whatever he was pleaſed to do with him : ſo that, foraſmuch as God was ſo careful of, and kind to thoſe inferior, reaſonleſs creatures, there was no ſhadow of a reaſon, why he ſhould have the leaſt jealouſie of Gods kindneſs to him and regard of him, much leſs make ſuch an out-cry, that God was unkind to, and regardleſs of* Him, *whom he had not only ennobled, as the reſt of mankind, with reaſon, but renewed by grace, and filled with the holy fear of his great and glorious name.*

The impreſſions being made upon Job, *by the mighty power of God ſpeaking to him out of the whirlwind, he preſently cryed out as faſt againſt himſelf, and againſt his own ignorance and raſhneſs, as he had done before concerning the harſhneſs of his ſufferings under the hand of God ; confeſſing* (Chap.40.4.) Behold, I am vile, what ſhall I anſwer thee ? *And* (Chap 42.3,6.) I have uttered that I underſtood not, things too wonderful for me, which I knew not ; wherefore, I abhor my ſelf and repent in duſt and aſhes.

Job *being thus humbled and melted down,* Job *who was lately in the duſt of diſhonour and almoſt in the duſt of death, being thus brought to the duſt of repentance ; the Lord ſuffered him not to lie long there, but quickly raiſed him up out of all his ſufferings ; and, paſſing by all his miſpeakings, while ſufferings lay heavy upon him, he (the Lord) paſſed ſentence upon, or gave judgment againſt* Eliphaz *and his two friends, as not having* ſpoken of him the thing that was right, as his ſervant *Job : and not only ſo, but commanded them to* do him right, *by acknowledging that they had wronged him ; why elſe were they Ordered by the Lord to go unto him as a mediator for their peace ? why elſe were they Ordered by the Lord to bring their ſacrifice unto him, that he Offering it up, and praying* *for them, the wrath of God which was kindled againſt them, might be quenched, and they received into favour? All theſe offices of love* Job *freely did for them; and no ſooner had he done them, but God heaped favours upon him, doubling his former ſubſtance, and cauſing all his former friends, who had carried it unfriendly, unhandſomely towards him, and would not own him in the day of his diſtreſs, to haſten their addreſſes, to bring him honourable preſents, and redintegrate their broken friendſhip with him. In all theſe things God* bleſſed the latter end of *Job* more than his beginning, *and he found by comfortable experience (which was mentioned at the beginning of this prefatory Epiſtle out of* Solomon*'s* Eccleſiaſtes) that the end of a thing is better than the beginning of it; *the latter end of his life being fuller of peace, riches, and honour, than the former; and he not ending his life in this world, till he was full of days, fuller of grace, and fully fitted for an endleſs life in glory.*

Thus, as in the foregoing parts of this Book, we have heard of the patience of *Job, ſo in this* we may ſee (*as the Apoſtle* James *ſaith,* Chap. 5. 11.) the end of the Lord. *But what was that end of the Lord? Any man of ordinary capacity, reading the holy ſtory, may reſolve it in the common way, that,* The Lord gave *Job* twice as much as he had before, *that (being reſtored) his ſeven thouſand ſheep were multiplyed to fourteen thouſand, his three thouſand camels to ſix thouſand, his five hundred yoke of Oxen to a thouſand, and his five hundred ſhe-aſſes to as many. This end of the Lord with* Job *is obvious, and runs in ſight to every Reader; nor can it be denied, but that this was a very good and an honourable end: yet, behold, the Lord made a much better, and more honourable end for* Job *than this. This was the end of* Job*'s croſs; that, was not only ſo, but alſo of his controverſie. Satan charged* Job *as an* Hypocrite, *his friends joyned with Satan in that, yet ſtayed not there, they charged him likewiſe as* Heterodox, *as a man not only unſincere in his profeſſion of religion, but unſound in the principles of it. The Lord made an end for* Job *in this matter alſo, abetting his opinion in that great and difficult problem of providence rather than theirs, giving him the day, and putting the crown of victory upon his head in that diſpute, while he ſaid to* Eliphaz *and his two friends,* Ye have not ſpoken of me the thing that is right, as my ſervant *Job.* This, this *was* the end of the Lord. *To bear this gracious determination from the mouth of the ſupream and infallible moderator of all controverſies, was (without controverſie) a thouſand times more pleaſing and ſatisfactory to* Job*'s ſpirit, not only than the double cattle, which the Lord gave him, but, than if the Lord had given him all the cattle upon a thouſand hills; or than if all the fowls of the Air, and fiſhes of the Sea, had been given to him.*

In this end of the Lord for Job, *we may ſee not only that the Lord is infinitely* wiſe and juſt, *but (as it followeth in that place of the Apoſtle* James) very pitiful and of tender mercy. *The Lord ſhews himſelf very pitiful and of tender mercy, when he puts an end to the croſſes of his ſervants, by doubling their outward comforts; he doth ſo too, when he puts an end to the controverſies of his ſervants, by vindicating their credit, and making it appear, that they have ſpoken of him, and of his ways, the thing that is right, or more rightly than their oppoſers and reproachers. This example of the Lords pity and tender mercy in doing both for* Job, *may ſtrengthen our faith in believing that he will, and lengthen out our patience in waiting, till he doth make both theſe deſirable ends for all thoſe, who like* Job *have lay'n long under the preſſing burdens of hard afflictions, and harſh conſtructions.*

Now, that the Lord would finiſh this work of mercy, and cut it ſhort in righteouſneſs, wiping tears from off all faces, and taking away the rebuke of his people from off the earth, *by a timely reſtitution of them to their loſt enjoyments, and blaſted credits (which yet will not be fully done, until* the times of the reſtitution of all things, which God hath ſpoken by the mouth of all his holy Prophets ſince the world began; that the Lord (I ſay) would finiſh this work) *ſhould be our unceſſant cry to God in prayer, for all his ſorrowing* Job*'s, even for all thoſe, who are any where* companions in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jeſus Chriſt. *To his bleſſing, and the effectual working of his holy Spirit, I commend you in the peruſal of this enſuing commentary, that, reading ye may underſtand, believe, and profit to ſanctification, conſolation, and ſalvation, according to the will of God, and the hearts deſire of,*

YOUR AFFECTIONATE FRIEND
AND SERVANT,

May 10.
1666.

JOSEPH CARYL.

AN EXPOSITION WITH Practical Obſervations UPON THE THIRTY-EIGHTH, THIRTY-NINTH, FORTYETH, FORTY-FISRT AND FORTY-SECOND (being the Laſt) CHAPTERS Of the Book of JOB.

CHAP. XXXVIII. Verſ. 1, 2, 3.

Then the Lord anſwered Job *out of the whirlwind, and ſaid,*

Who is this that darkeneth counſel by words without knowledg?

Gird up now thy loins like a man: for I will demand of thee, and anſwer thou me.

This Chapter begins the laſt Act, or Concluſion of that great Diſputation between *Job* and his three Friends, held forth in this Book. We have heard *Job*'s three Friends ſtrongly charging him: We have heard *Job* ſtiffly defending himſelf: We have heard *Elihu*, though moderating the matter between them, yet ſharply reproving him. *Elihu* was indeed a quick, but a neceſſary reprover, provided and ſent by God:

Firſt, To calm and cool *Job*'s ſpirit diſquieted by enduring ſharp afflictions from the hand of God, and heated by hearing thoſe ſharper accuſations from the tongues of men.

Secondly, To reclaim him from thoſe over-eager defences of his own integrity, and likewiſe from thoſe over-paſſionate complaints about the dealings of God, to a better and more ſubmiſſive temper of ſpirit towards him, as alſo to lower thoughts of himſelf.

Elihu fell upon the uſeful point, and hit (as I may ſay) the Nail on the head, he ſtruck the right Vein, and met with the peccant Humour: yet being young, and wanting gravity to ſet all home, and make it work; or, to make the impreſſion deep enough upon *Job*, it was but need that God himſelf ſhould ſecond him, and he did it to purpoſe, or with full effect; preſſing the ſame Arguments, for the main, which *Elihu* had begun; yet ſo, that we may manifeſtly diſcern a wide difference, whether we reſpect words or things, matter or manner, between men, how much ſoever aſſiſted by the ſpirit of God, and God himſelf in ſpeaking.

Here *the Eternal God Jehovah*, having ſeen his faithful ſervant, and ſtout Champion *Job*, contending and wraſtling long with Satan, his profeſſed enemy, and with his harſh and cenſorious, though both profeſſed and real Friends, foreſeeing alſo that if *Job* and his Friends (who had alſo been provoked by *Elihu*) ſhould have proceeded to anſwer him, a new broil muſt needs begin; God (I ſay) who never fails, nor forſakes his in their extreamity, or in time of their greateſt need, ſeeing and fore-ſeeing all this, ſtept in moſt ſeaſonably, and moſt graciouſly to undertake the deciſion of this great Controverſie between *Job* and his Friends, in perſon, raiſing a ſtormy Wind, as a witneſs of his mighty preſence, or to teſtifie who was there, as alſo (though with a Fatherly love and affection, yet) impartially and plainly to convince *Job* of his errour, ſhewing him wherein he had offended, and bringing him at laſt upon his knees, in a ſelf-abhorrence and repentance in duſt and aſhes.

Thus God the chief Judg, the great Arbitrator, and Determiner of all doubts and queſtions, and of all matters and things; the great God (I ſay) declared himſelf, to whom *Job* had made ſo many appeals, whom he ſo earneſtly deſired to take further and fuller cogniſance of his Cauſe, He, even He comes forth as a juſt and righteous Judg, and lets him and his Friends know his mind and judgment in the caſe. So then,

The Queſtion ventilated in this Book, is not ſtated according to the judgment of a man, who is ſubject to error, but according to the infinite wiſdom and underſtanding of the great God, who ſearcheth the heart, and knoweth all ſecrets, who is light, and in whom there is no darkneſs at all.

And indeed, in the latter part of this Book, we may well conceive God himſelf ſpeaking, he ſpeaks ſo like himſelf: For here the underſtanding Reader may perceive a wonderful copiouſneſs of ſpeech, and largeneſs of diſcourſe, ſtrengthened with the exacteſt and weightieſt reaſons, ſet forth with ſuch variety of matter, with ſuch gravity of expreſſions, with ſuch preſſing queries and interrogations, that it very much excels all that had been ſpoken either by the Diſputants or the Moderator.

And ſuch was the condeſcenſion of God, that he ſeems to take the words out of *Elihu*'s mouth, and urge over his Arguments anew, before he would give the final ſentence in this caſe; from which, as there could be no appeal, ſo, in which, there could be no miſtake. All this the Lord contracts into two Orations, or Speeches, to each of which *Job* Anſwers, and ſubſcribes by an humble ſubmiſſion.

The firſt of theſe Speeches, is contained in this thirty-eighth Chapter, and to the end of the thirty-ninth: To which God calls for an Anſwer in the two firſt verſes of the fortieth Chapter; and *Job* gives his Anſwer in the third, fourth, and fifth verſes of that Chapter.

The ſecond Speech or Diſcourſe of God with *Job* begins at the ſixth verſe of the fortieth Chapter, and is continued to the end of the one and fortieth Chapter; to which we have *Job*'s Anſwer at the beginning of the forty ſecond Chapter, to the end of the ſixth verſe; and then the Chapter cloſeth with Gods ſpecial and irrefragable Judgment upon, or determination of the Queſtion between *Job* and his Friends, as alſo with a deſcription of *Job*'s bleſſed reſtauration after his fall, to a higher condition of outward proſperity and tranquility then ever he enjoyed before. Thus you have the ſum of what's behind of the whole Book.

This Chapter with the next hold out the Lords firſt Argumentation or diſcourſe with *Job*, and in it we may conſider three things.

Firſt, The Preface or Introduction, in the firſt, ſecond, and third verſes of this Chapter.

Secondly, The Speech it ſelf, to the end of the thirty-ninth Chapter.

Thirdly, Gods demand of an Anſwer, or that *Job* ſhould give him an account of himſelf, or of what he had ſaid at the beginning of the fortieth Chapter.

The words under preſent conſideration are a Preface or Introduction, leading to the whole buſineſs, and in them we may conſider three things.

Firſt, The Hiſtorians tranſition, or, an Hiſtorical tranſition, (*Verſ.* 1.) *Then the Lord anſwered* Job *out of the Whirl-wind, and ſaid.* This the Hiſtorian or Pen-man of this Book inſerts to connect the matter of this Chapter with that which went before; he connects the diſcourſe of *Elihu*, which ended at the thirty-ſeventh Chapter, with the diſcourſe of God at the beginning of this: *Then the Lord anſwered* Job *out of the Whirl-wind, and ſaid.*

Secondly, We have here what the Lord ſaid, in form of Preface, leading in the intended matter; and that,

Firſt, By way of reprehenſion, or by a chiding Queſtion about what *Job* had ſaid (*Verſ.* 2.) *Who is this that darkeneth counſel by words without knowledg?* This is it which the Lord ſaid, when he began with *Job*; *Who is this that darkeneth counſel, by words without knowledg?* As if he had ſaid, let me ſee the man, or, who is the man that ſpeaketh thus? I know there is a Queſtion (and I ſhall ſpeak ſomewhat to it afterwards) Whether theſe words were directed to *Job* or *Elihu*; yea, ſome Queſtion, whether this whole Chapter be not intended to *Elihu* rather than to *Job*, (I ſhall anſwer that Queſtion alſo afterwards) but I give it now in the analyſis of the context, as I purpoſe, God willing, to ſtate it when I come to the Anſwer of that queſtion: And therefore I ſay the reproof falls upon *Job*, whom God thus beſpake, beginning with a chiding, *Who is this that darkeneth counſel, by words without knowledg.*

Secondly, by way of provocation to anſwer; or, we have here the Lords command given *Job* to prepare himſelf for an Anſwer, as well as he could, to what himſelf ſhould ſay (*Verſ.* 3.) *Gird up now thy loins like a man, for I will demand of thee, and anſwer thou me.* As the Lord reproved and chid him for what he had ſaid, ſo the Lord exhorted and encouraged him to ſet and fit himſelf the beſt he was able, to anſwer what himſelf had to ſay unto him.

Thus we have the intendment of theſe three verſes; and if you would have in one word, a Proſpect of the whole following Diſcourſe, of God with *Job*, the Sum of it may be given and taken thus:

That as *Elihu* before, ſo now the Lord would have *Job* know and confeſs, that no man muſt preſume to be ſo bold with him as to queſtion his doings; that's the great mark at which God aimed in all he ſaid to *Job*. And the confirmation or proof of it is taken up from this unqueſtionable ground; *No man muſt Queſtion any thing which God doth to him or with him, for this very reaſon, Becauſe God doth it*; or, *becauſe God often alone, always in chief, hath done and doth all things.* God is the alone Creator of all things, he hath given all things their Being, he hath put all things into the Order in which they ſtand, and he preſerves them in their ſtanding; and if any evil befal man, the hand of God hath done it much more then the hand of any man: what then hath any man to do to Queſtion his doings?

Now that God alone hath Created and doth order all things, he himſelf proves, by calling *Job* to ſhew where he was *When the Foundation of the Earth was laid, and Bounds were ſet to the Sea*, &c. And ſo proceeds to aſſert and hold forth his ſole Power in furniſhing the Earth with Beaſts, the Air with Fowls, and the Sea with Fiſh.

The Lord having thus given *Job* to underſtand, that the whole World is his Work, and that he gave Being to all the Creatures in the World for the help of man, without the help of man, would have him thereby alſo underſtand and be convinced, that he and all men ought to adore, and quietly ſubmit to his providential workings, or the products of his Providence all the World over.

That's (as was ſaid) the general Point carried through this whole Diſcourſe of God with *Job*, the particulars whereof yield much matter both of Meditation and Admiration. I begin with the Preface:

Verſ. 1. **Then the Lord anſwered Job out of the Whirlwind, and ſaid.**

In this Verſe we have three things.

Firſt, The Perſon anſwering.

Secondly, The Perſon anſwered.

Thirdly, The manner of his Anſwer.

The Perſon anſwering is, *the Lord*; the Perſon anſwered, is *Job*; the manner of the Anſwer is, *out of a Whirl-wind*; *Then the Lord anſwered* Job *out of the Whirl-wind.*

In the firſt word of the Text, we have (that which our Tranſlation makes emphatical) an intimation of the time or ſeaſon of this Divine interpoſition; *then the Lord anſwered,* &c. The Hebrew Text doth not expreſs this Adverb of time, there 'tis only, *the Lord anſwered*, but we well ſupply it, rendering, *then the Lord anſwered*; as if the Penman had ſaid, at that very nick, inſtant or juncture of time, the Lord came in; the words were no ſooner out of the mouth of *Elihu*, he had no ſooner concluded his ſpeech with *Job*, but the Lord began, and anſwered *Job*; and if the Lord had not juſt then interpoſed, poſſibly *Job* might have replyed, and a new heat might have riſen, to the increaſing of his troubles, and the inflaming of all their Spirits (as was hinted before) therefore the Lord to ſtop all further proceedings, or ſpeech between them two, began preſently to ſpeak himſelf. *Then the Lord anſwered.* Take this Obſervation from it;

The Lord will appear in the fitteſt ſeaſon.

It was time for the Lord to appear, leſt this poor man ſhould have been utterly ſwallowed up with ſorrows, and over-whelmed with his affliction, or leſt he ſhould have been drawn out too long and too far in his bitter complainings and impatiency. *The Lord is a God of judgment; bleſſed are they that wait for him* (Iſa.30.18.) He is a wiſe God, and knows how to time every action; he knows when to appear, when to ſhew himſelf. As he himſelf *will not contend for ever* (Iſa.57.16.) ſo neither will he let others contend overlong, leſt the Spirit ſhould fail before him, and the ſouls which he hath made. This is a comfortable truth with reſpect both to Nations, and Perſons, both to the caſe of the Church of God in general, and of every believer in particular. The Apoſtle *Peter* having counſelled the afflicted to *humble themſelves under the mighty hand of God* (1Pet.5.6.) adds this encouragement (in the next words) to do ſo, *that he may exalt you in due time:* though not in your time, nor at your day, the day when you would have him do it; yet he will do it in time, and *in due time*, that is, when it ſhall be moſt fit and beſt for you. Thus he appeared to and for *Job* in the Text, when the ſorrows of his heart were enlarged, and when he had moſt need of ſuch an appearance. The Lord knows how at any time, and when 'tis the moſt proper time, to relieve his ſervants. *Then*

The Lord anſwered Job.

The word here uſed is *Jehovah*; and ſeveral of the Learned take notice, that it is here uſed with a ſpecial ſignificancy: for in the diſcourſes of *Job* and his friends throughout this Book, other names of God are, if not univerſally, yet moſtly uſed, as *Elſhaddai*, *Eloah*, &c. In the firſt Chapter indeed, where God is ſpoken of by the divine Hiſtorian or ſacred Penman of this Hiſtory, he is named *Jehovah*, as alſo in ſome other ſuch like places; but in the body of the diſpute not ſo: And two reaſons may be given of it.

Firſt, The name *Jehovah* imports the Being of God; and therefore God himſelf, being about to ſpeak of his giving a Being to the whole Creation, and to ſeveral ſorts of creatures, he is moſt properly repreſented by his name *Jehovah*, which, as it implyeth that he is the Firſt Being, the Fountain of his own Being, or that he is of himſelf, ſo, that he gives a Being to all things, and that *in him* (as the Apoſtle told the great Philoſophers of *Athens*, Acts 17.) *we live, and move, and have our being.*

Secondly, The Lord (though he came in a Whirl-wind, yet) maniſeſted himſelf in a clearer light to *Job*, than ever he had done before. Now, as in the third of *Exodus*, when the Lord ſent *Moſes* to the people of *Iſrael* to bring them up out of *Egypt*, to *Canaan* (which was a great work, one of the greateſt that was ever done in the world, and in which the Lord made the moſt glorious diſcovery of his Power, Juſtice, and Mercy; when God I ſay, ſent *Moſes* upon this ſervice) *he ſaid unto him* (Exod. 6.2,3.) *I am the Lord, I am Jehovah, and I appeared unto Abraham, unto Iſaac, and unto Jacob by the Name of God Almighty; but by my name Jehovah was I not known to them.* God being about to make himſelf more known in the world, then he had been to that day, by his dreadful plagues upon *Pharaoh*, and the miraculous deliverance of his people out of *Egypt* (as he ſaid *Chap.*9.16.) *And in very deed, for this cauſe have I raiſed thee up, for to ſhew in thee my power, and that my name may be declared in all the earth.* The Lord, I ſay, (being about to do theſe great things for the manifeſtation of his own greatneſs) gave this charge to *Moſes* at the ſixth verſe of the ſixth chapter before mentioned; *Wherefore ſay unto the Children of Iſrael, I am Jehovah, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians,* &c. Thus in this latter part of the Book of *Job*, the Lord being about to looſen the bonds of *Job*'s affliction, and to eaſe him of his burden, as alſo to declare and manifeſt himſelf more clearly to him than formerly (as he confeſſed *Chap.*42.5. *I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eyes have ſeen thee*) he therefore aſſumed his great name *Jehovah*. *Then the Lord*

Anſwered Job, *&c.*] But ſome may ſay, *Job* had not ſpoken lately, much leſs laſt. *Elihu* ſpake out ſix whoſe Chapters ſince *Job* ſpake a word; and though *Elihu* gave him the liberty, yea almoſt provoked him to ſpeak, yet he laid his hand upon his mouth, he ſpake not a word: How then can it be ſaid *The Lord anſwered* Job? To avoid this difficulty,

Some render, *Then the Lord anſwered concerning, or about* Job; And theſe turn the whole diſcourſe of God in this and the next Chapter upon *Elihu*, in favour of *Job*. I ſhall touch upon that opinion and interpretation (as was ſaid) afterwards: but at preſent affirm, that *Job* was the perſon to whom the Lord here directed his Anſwer; and to take off this doubt, how the Lord could be ſaid to anſwer *Job*, when *Job* had not ſpoken laſt, but *Elihu*,

I anſwer (as upon a like occaſion it hath been elſewhere ſhewed in this Book *Chap.*3.2.) that ſometimes in Scripture, a Speech begun is called an Anſwer, where nothing had been ſpoken before, to which that ſpeech could be applied in way of anſwer, *Matth.*11.25. *Matth.*17.4. The reaſon of this Hebraiſm, is becauſe ſuch as begin to ſpeak, do either anſwer the neceſſity of the matter, or the deſire of the hearers; and ſo they give a real and vertual, though not a formal Anſwer. Yet there are two conſiderations, in which we may apply the word Anſwer, formally and ſtrictly taken, to *Job*.

Firſt, If we conſider *Job*'s wiſhes and requeſts.

Secondly, If we conſider *Job*'s complaints, and (though the word be ſomewhat hard) his murmurings: The Lord may be ſaid to anſwer *Job*, as to his wiſh, deſire, or requeſt; becauſe *Job* had earneſtly deſired and requeſted more than once, that God would take his Cauſe in hand, or that he would have the hearing of it. Thus he ſpake at the third verſe of the three and twentieth Chapter: *O that I knew where I might find him, that I might come even to his Seat: I would order my Cauſe before him, and fill my mouth with arguments.* *Zophar* alſo, one of *Job*'s friends, made the ſame requeſt concerning *Job* (*Chap.*11.2.) *O that God would ſpeak, and open his lips againſt thee:* As if he had ſaid, *Eliphaz* hath been ſpeaking, and *Bildad* hath been ſpeaking, and I am now about to ſpeak, but O that God would ſpeak. It was the wiſh of *Job* that God would ſpeak, and it was the wiſh of this his friend, and now behold God appears, poſſibly beyond their expectation, though not beſide their wiſh; for 'tis like they had not faith enough to believe that God would anſwer thoſe wiſhes. So then, God may be ſaid here to anſwer, becauſe (as it was prayed) he now took the matter into his own hand, and in perſon (as I may ſay) argued the Caſe with *Job*, and finally determined his Cauſe.

Hence Note; *The wiſhes, requeſts, and prayers of good men have ſometimes been heard, though they were over-bold in making them, or had no clear ground to make them.*

Job had no rule for ſuch a Petition, that he might preſently have a trial at the Tribunal of God; yet God was ſo gracious as to anſwer him in it, not only to his reproof, but to his comfort. The Name of God is, *O thou that heareſt prayer*, (Pſalm 65. 2.) If carnal men have their extravagant prayers and wiſhes granted, 'tis in wrath; but if the Lord grant the paſſionate prayers and wiſhes of a godly man, it proves, though ſometimes a preſent affliction, yet alwayes, upon one account or other, a mercy in the iſſue. When the luſting *Iſraelites* wiſht for fleſh, the Lord heard their wiſhes; take Quails your bellies full, till they come out at your Noſtrils; *but while the meat was in their mouths, the wrath of God fell upon them.* If the Lord grants what luſt asketh, ſuch pay dear for what they have for the asking. It hath been anciently ſaid, *many have their prayers heard in meer anger*; ſo are all theirs who pray for what they have not, in meer diſcontent with what they have. The Lord heard *Job*, and not in anger, but in favour and condeſcenſion to him. Now if ſome not well grounded nor warranted requeſts of good men may be granted and anſwered (the Lord pitying their weakneſs, and eyeing their uprightneſs) in favour; how much more may the be confident, that their gracious and humble requeſts, ſuch requeſts as are every way ſutable to the Word and Will of God, ſhall be graciouſly anſwered!

Multi irato Deo exaudiuntur.

Secondly, The Lord anſwered, as the Prayer and Wiſh, ſo the Complaints of *Job*; he had complained ſometimes (though he were a mirror of patience) impatiently. Theſe complaints the Lord anſwered, but it was with ſevere and ſharp reproofs, as we find in the next Verſe.

To conclude this Query, we may ſay, God had two great ends or deſigns in anſwering both the wiſhes and complaints of *Job*.

Firſt, That he might humble and convince him, that he might ſtop his mouth and ſilence his complainings for ever, as he did moſt effectually.

Secondly, That after his humiliation, and repentance, he might juſtifie and acquit him, and alſo reſtore him to his former comforts and enjoyments, as he did moſt mercifully. This being the deſign of the Lord in ſpeaking to *Job*, what he ſaid, may well be called an Anſwer.

But how or in what mannner did the Lord anſwer him? Surely in ſuch a manner, as never man was anſwered. *The Lord anſwered* Job

Out of the Whirlwind.

He anſwered him (as we ſay) to ſome Tune. A Whirlwind makes ſtrange kind of Muſick. A Whirlwind is a ſudden mighty loud-bluſtring Wind, taking away, or bearing down all before it. A Whirlwind is a Wind which moves whirling, and gyring about all the points of the compaſs, no man knows where to have it, nor how to ſhelter himſelf from it. I have had occaſion to ſpeak of the Wind, and of the Natural ordinary Whirlwind in the former Chapter. But here's a Whirlwind extraordinary, if not ſupernatural. There's much queſtioning among ſome Interpreters how we are to conceive of this Whirlwind. I would anſwer that point a little, and then give ſome account, why the Lord ſpake to *Job* out of ſuch a Whirlwind.

Firſt, Some affirm that it was only a Viſional Whirlwind: As if the Lord appeared (as it were) in a Tempeſt or Whirlwind to *Job* in a deep ſleep, ſuch as was upon *Adam* (Gen. 2. 21.) when the Lord took one of his Ribs, and made the Woman. In ſuch a deep ſleep, ſay they, *Job* ſaw a Whirlwind, and heard the Lord ſpeaking to him out of it: As *Ezekiel*, who in a Viſion *looked, and behold a Whirlwind came* out of the North; as we read in the firſt Chapter of that Propheſie, (*Verſ.* 4.)

Secondly, Others conceive that it was not a Viſional, but a Metaphorical Whirlwind, or a Whirlwind in a figure; and we may give you a threefold Metaphor, or three things, to which this paſſage of Providence may allude to a ſpeaking out of a Whirlwind.

Firſt, God *anſwered* Job *of the Whirlwind*; that is, when there was a great buſle or a ſtorm amomg the Diſputants, conflicting about *Job*'s caſe; one moving this way, another that, all being toſſed about (as it were) with the wind of their ſeveral opinions in ventilating his condition. Out of this Whirlwind it was (ſay ſome) or while all were thus diſcompoſed in their ſpirits, and could not compoſe the matter in difference between them and *Job*, during this hurry or troubleſome ſtate of things and minds, the Lord aroſe and anſwered *Job*.

Secondly, The Lord may be ſaid to anſwer *Job* out of the Whirlwind, becauſe he ſpake to him angrily, diſpleaſedly, and reprovingly. Anger, eſpecially the Lords anger or Diſpleaſure, is often in Scripture compared to a Storm or Tempeſt: As if this Whirlwind were nothing elſe but a ſharp angry chiding. When a man chides, we ſay, *The man's in a ſtorm*; and we may ſay with reverence, when the Lord ſpeaks chidingly (as he did to *Job*) he is in a ſtorm, or (according to the Text) ſpeaks out of a ſtormy Whirlwind: Thus alſo, when the Lord ſpeaks pleaſingly, and gently, then he may be ſaid to ſpeak in a calm. There's a truth in that.

Thirdly, The Lord anſwered in a Whirlwind; that is, while *Job*, both as to his outward condition and inward diſpoſition, or the frame of his ſpirit, was evidently in a great ſtorm or toſs. For doubtleſs, his ſpirit was very ſtormy and toſſed up and down at that time, that is, much troubled and diſquieted, upon the with-drawings of God, and the unkindneſs of his friends. Now when *Job* had this Storm, this Whirlwind in his ſpirit, the Lord appeared and anſwered him. Thus ſome conceive it, though not a Viſional Whirlwind, yet a Metaphorical Whirlwind in thoſe three ſences opened. But

Thirdly, (with others) I take the Whirlwind here in proper ſence, that is, for ſuch a Whirlwind as is often heard and felt, ſounding, bluſtering, and making great diſturbance in the Air, blowing up Trees by the roots, and overthrowing Houſes to the very foundation. One of the Rabbins calls it *a dark Cloud*; ſeveral of the Moderns expreſs it by a Rainy or watry Cloud, out of which iſſued that dreadful Storm, called a Whirlwind. Doubtleſs, ſome ſudden extraordinary Wind, exceeding the conſtant order and common courſe of Nature, gathered the Clouds at that time. Thus God at once hid the glory of his Majeſty, and teſtified it (much after the ſame manner as he did at the promulgation of the Law upon Mount *Sinai*) *when he anſwered* Job *out of the Whirlwind.*

Ex nube obſcura. Rab. Levi. *Ex Nimbo.* Bez. *Ex procella & venti turbine horrifico. E turbine*, i. e. *à nube è qua erupit turba ſeu ventus turbineus.* Piſc. *Et nube aliqua præter naturæ ordinem facta.* Grot. *De ipſa caligine, in qua ſc. videtur nobis Deus deliteſcere.* Vatabl.

But it may be queſtioned, why did God *anſwer* Job *out of a Whirlwind?*

Firſt, Such a way of anſwering was moſt proper to the diſpenſation of thoſe Old Teſtament Times, when the Covenant of Grace lay covered with Legal ſhadows, and was uſually adminiſtred in a clothing or ſhew of terror; eſpecially (as was ſaid before) at the giving of the Law on Mount *Sinai* (*Exod.* 19. *Deut.* 4. 12.) when, *ſo terrible was the ſight*, that *Moſes* ſaid, *I exceedingly fear and quake* (Heb. 12. 21.) And ſurely the Lord appeared and ſpake very dreadfully to ſome of the Prophets in thoſe Elder times; eſpecially to the Prophet *Habakkuk*, who thus reports the conſternation of his mind (Chap, 3. 16.) *When I heard, my belly trembled, my lips quivered at the voice, rottenneſs entred into my bones, and I trembled in my ſelf, that I might reſt in the day of trouble.* Now, Goſpel times being more clear and calm, Chriſt ſpeaks more clearly and calmly; as it was propheſied (*Iſa.* 42. 2, 3.) *He ſhall not cry nor lift up his voice in the ſtreet:* (Chriſt did not ſpeak out of a Whirlwind) *A bruiſed reed he ſhall not break, and the ſmoking Flax ſhall he not quench; he ſhall bring forth Judgment unto Victory:* That is, he ſhall with all tenderneſs condeſcend to the weakeſt Souls, and deal with them moſt ſweetly, gently, and compaſſionately.

Secondly, The Lord ſpake in a Whirlwind, that he might ſhew the greater State and Majeſty, to awaken *Job* yet more, or to make him more attentive; as alſo to affect him yet more deeply with the apprehenſion of his Power and Glory; and to leave a greater impreſſion upon his ſpirit of his own vileneſs, weakneſs; and nothingneſs. *Job* was yet too big in his own eyes, the Lord would annihilate or make him nothing; the Lord would beat him out of all conceit with himſelf, out of an opinion of his own integrity and righteouſneſs, that he might ſee and confeſs there was no way but to lie at his foot, abhorring himſelf, and repenting in duſt and aſhes. Such to this day is the pride and ſtupidneſs of mans fleſh, that he hardly attends the Word or Works of God; unleſs awed by ſome extraordinary Miniſtration.

Ærumnoſo homini conformem exhibens aſpectum. Munſt.

Thirdly, We may conceive the Lord appeared and ſpake in this Whirlwind, that he might therein ſuit his appearance to the ſtate and condition of *Job* at that time, or that he might (as it were) ſymbolize with *Job's* troubled eſtate. *Job*, as I toucht before, was in a Storm, and now God declares himſelf in a Storm: And that is the reaſon, which ſome give, why the Lord appeared to *Moſes* (Exod. 3. 2.) in a burning buſh; it was (ſay they) that his apparition might anſwer their preſent condition. The Children of *Iſrael* were then in the fire of affliction, and entangled in the buſh of cruel bondage, they were ſcratcht and torn with briars and thorns; and the Lord ſpake out of a burning buſh to *Moſes*, as here to *Job* out of the Whirlwind.

De turbine indignationis indice.

Fourthly, and laſtly; I conceive the reaſon why the Lord ſpake to him in a Storm, or Whirlwind, was to let him know that he was not well pleaſed with him, but purpoſed to reprove and chide him. Though *Job* was a precious Servant of God, yet God was not well pleaſed with many paſſages under his affliction, and therefore he would not flatter but humble him: For though *Job* ſpake from an honeſt heart, and what he ſaid was truth, yet God did not like his manner of defence and pleading for himſelf: He was not pleaſed to ſee him hold up the Bucklers ſo long, when he ſhould have laid them down rather, and ſubmitted. *David* to ſhew how greatly the Lord was diſpleaſed with his enemies, tells us what dreadful effects followed the hearing and granting of his prayer againſt them, (*Pſal.* 18. 7, 8, 9, &c.) *Then the Earth ſhook and trembled, the foundations alſo of the Hills moved and were ſhaken, becauſe he was wroth; there went a ſmoke out of his noſtrils, and fire out of his mouth devoured, coals alſo were kindled by it: He bowed the Heavens alſo and came down, and darkneſs was under his feet,* &c. Thus the Lord appeared in an Earthquake, in ſmoke, in fire, and darkneſs, to make the proud oppoſers of his faithful Servant *David*, know how much his anger was kindled againſt them. Thus alſo when the Lord revealed himſelf to *Elijah* (1 Kings 19. 11.) its ſaid, *a great and ſtrong wind rent the Mountains and brake the Rocks; and after the wind, an Earthquake; and after the Earthquake, a fire,* before the *ſtill voice was heard:* And why all this, but to ſhew that the Lord was highly diſpleaſed with the doings of the Kings of *Iſrael* at that time, and with that Idolatrous generation; therefore he appeared in ſuch a dreadful manner, while he purpoſed to conclude all in a ſtill voice. Though the Lord was not in the Wind, in the Earthquake, nor in the Fire, yet theſe were fore-runners of his appearance, and ſignified that the Lord would ſhake that people with a mighty Wind and Earthquake of Judgment, yea even conſume them with the fire of his wrathful jealouſie, for their ſuperſtitious following after *Baal*, and deſerting his appointed worſhip. When the Luſts of wicked men grow fiery and ſtormy, God will convince them with fire and ſtorms; and if his own Servants grow too bold with him, he will make them ſenſible of it, as here he did *Job*, by ſpeaking to them out of a Whirlwind; though he be intended to ſpeak to them at laſt as he did to *Elijah*, in a *ſtill voice*, and to *Job*, with favour and approbation.

Thus much for the opening of theſe words, *Then the Lord anſwered* Job *out of the Whirlwind, and ſaid.*

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *The great goodneſs of God, who condeſcends or lets himſelf down to ſpeak and treat with duſt and aſhes!*

What a wonder is it, that the Lord of Heaven and Earth, ſhould admit, and enter into a parly with man, who is but a well ſhaped clod of Earth! *Solomon* was in a kind of amazement at the mercy, when he ſaid at the Dedication of the Temple (1 *Kings* 8. 22.) *But will God indeed dwell on Earth!* And may not we, that God ſhould come down to confer with an afflicted Bed-rid man on Earth! I know ſome are of opinion, that the Lord ſpake by an Angel to *Job*; however, here was the Lords preſence, it was *Jehovah*, who manifeſted himſelf to *Job*, what Miniſtry ſoever he uſed: Thus the Lord is pleaſed often to interpoſe in the caſe and cauſe of his afflicted Servants, though we ſee him not, nor have ſuch formal apparitions, as here in the Text. *The Lord, the high and lofty One, who dwelleth in the high and holy Place, dwelleth alſo with him that is of a contrite and humble Spirit;* and he dwelleth with him *to revive him*, (*Iſa.* 57. 15.) Therefore ſurely he manifeſts himſelf to him in his loving-kindneſs, which is better than life, and the very life of our lives. *The Lord who hath Heaven for his Throne, and the Earth his foot-ſtool*, ſaith by the ſame Prophet (*Iſa.* 66. 1, 2.) *To this man will I look*, (and leſt any ſhould take this man to be one of the mighty ones of this World, he giveth us both a ſignal ſpecification, and clear character of this man to whom he looketh) *even to him that is poor, and of a contrite Spirit, and that trembleth at my Word.* And if the Lord look to ſuch a man, if he vouchſafe him him his gracious eye, doubleſs he alſo reveals himſelf graciouſly and freely to him.

Secondly, The Lord came here to inſtruct and teach *Job*. Several perſons had dealt with him before, and they very worthy, good, and learned perſons, and they came with a purpoſe to do him good; yet all would not do: All that his three friends ſaid, who undertook him firſt in their turns, was to little purpoſe in appearance. And though *Elihu*, a ſpritely young man, diſcours'd him with much life and heat, yet neither could he do the buſineſs: *Job's* Spirit began indeed to yield upon the laſt engagement of *Elihu* with him; yet he did not convince him fully. God came at laſt, and he prevailed, he did the deed; *Then the Lord anſwered* Job.

Hence Note, *We need the teachings of God, beſides all the teachings of men, that we may rightly know him, and our ſelves, together with the intendment of his dealings with us, and our own duty under them.*

'Tis the mercy of the New Covenant, that we ſhall be taught of God, and not by man only nor alone. As here *Job* had three or four, ſo we may have thrice three men toiling with us a long time in vain. The work is never well done, till God comes; and though we have not ſuch appearances of God now, yet he doth the ſame thing in effect to this day. This and that man, a thouſand men, yea a man who is an Interpreter, one of a thouſand (as *Elihu* ſpake) may be labouring upon the Conſcience of a ſinner, and never bring things home either to convince or comfort him, till God is pleaſed to come in by the power of his bleſſed Spirit, and then who can but be convinced and comforted! Hence our Lord Chriſt had no ſooner reported the Covenant Promiſe out of the Prophet, *They ſhall be all taught of God* (John. 6. 45.) but preſently he makes this inference from it, *Every man therefore that hath heard and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.* We may ſay to all who are ſavingly wrought upon, as Chriſt to *Peter*, upon that Confeſſion which he made (*Matth.* 16. 16. *Thou art Chriſt, the Son of the Living God*) *Fleſh and blood hath not revealed this to you, but your Father which is in Heaven.*

Impoſſibile eſt Deum diſcere ſine Deo. Iren. *l.* 4. adverſus Hæret. *c.* 10. *A Deo diſcendum quicquid de Deo intelligendum.* Hilar. *l.* 5. de Trin.

It was ſaid by one of the Ancients, *it is impoſſible to know God without God.* And ſo ſaid another, *We muſt learn all that from God which we underſtand of God.* Unleſs God be our Tutor, we ſhall never be good Scholars. We know neither God nor our ſelves, any further than God teacheth us. Chriſt ſaith, *Be not called Maſters, for one is your Maſter, even Chriſt* (Matth. 23. 8.) There are two ſorts of Maſters. Firſt, Ruling or Commanding Maſters. Secondly, Teaching Maſters. To the former we are Servants, to the latter we are Scholars. In the eight verſe Chriſt ſpeaks of Teaching Maſters, as of Ruling Maſters at the tenth verſe. Now, when Chriſt would not have any man take upon him, or own the Title of Maſter or Teacher, his meaning is, that no man ſhould arrogate to himſelf the honour of principal Teacher, which is the peculiar of God: But to acknowledge that all mans teaching is nothing without Gods; as the Apoſtle alſo ſaith (1 *Cor.* 3.) We muſt learn from God whatever we know aright, either of God, or of our ſelves. *Eliphaz, Bildad,* and *Zophar* ſpake much of God to *Job*, but *Job* was never effectually humbled, till God ſpake.

Thirdly, Note, *As God here by his Word, ſo always the Word of God is the true determiner of controverſies, and reſolver of doubts.*

Rectum eſt index ſui & obliqui.

No queſtion can be truly ſtated, but by the Word of God. As *the Statutes of the Lord are right* (Pſal. 19. 8.)

So they ſhew what is right, and what is not. A ſtrait Rule declares it ſelf to be ſtrait, and detects the crookedneſs of whatſoever is crooked. The laſt appeal in all things doubtful is to the Law, (*Iſa.* 8. 20.) *To the Law, and to the Teſtimony; if they ſpeak not according to this Word, it is becauſe there is no light*, or (as the Margin hath it) *no morning in them*. The Sun of righteouſneſs hath not riſen upon them who ſpeak and hold unrighteous things, *Search the Scriptures*, ſaith Chriſt (*John* 5. 39.) or, as 'tis well rendred in the Indicative Mood, *Ye ſearch the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life.* Nor did they think amiſs in thinking ſo; but that which Chriſt ſecretly reproved, while he ſaid ſo, was, that they did amiſs, or contradicted the Scripture in their lives, while they boaſtingly thought ſo. Not what this or that man ſaith, but what God ſaith, is the true ground of mans faith. It was a worthy ſpeech of *Conſtantine* in the *Nicene Council*, *Let us take out of that Book divinely inſpired, the ſolution of our Queſtions.* It is not what the Fathers ſay, nor what the Pope ſaith, nor what Councils ſay; but what the Word of God ſaith, that muſt be heard and relied upon for Salvation. The Word is the Judg, that is the rule of Judgment. As here, God was the perſonal Judg of this, ſo his Word ever be the Normal Judg of all controverſies.

Sumamus ex libris divinitus inſpiratis ſolutionem quæſtionum. Theod. *l.* 1. Hiſt. Eccleſ. *c.* 7.

Fourthly, Note; *The Day of Judgment is like to be a terrible Day.*

Here was a little day of Judgment, here God came to determine a matter between *Job* and his three friends, and that was a terrible day; in it we have an image or repreſentation of the laſt Judgment Day; God appeared in a Storm, in a Whirl-wind: what think you will be the Lords appearance, when he comes to Judg the whole World! The Pſalmiſt ſpeaking of ſome particular day of Judgment which ſhould fore-run the general Judgment, ſets it forth in dreadful Metaphors (*Pſal.* 50. 3, 4.) *Our God* (Theſe are the words of Gods faithful ſervants, aſſuring themſelves of a gracious deliverance from the cruelty of wicked men, by the goodneſs and mighty arm of God; *Our God*, ſay they) *ſhall come*, that is, he ſhall certainly come, though he ſeem for a while to defer and put off his coming; *and ſhall not keep ſilence* (as he hath been thought to do, either in not anſwering the prayers of his people, or in not puniſhing the preſumption of his and their enemies, as he alſo ſaid he did at the 21. Verſe of this Pſalm) and then wo to the wicked, for, *A fire ſhall devour before him* (God will then appear as a conſuming fire) *and a mighty tempeſt* (of wrath and indignation) *round about him*; (ſo that there can be no eſcape either before or behind, on one ſide or the other: And then (*Verſ.* 4.) *He ſhall call to the Heavens from above, and to the Earth*; That is, to the heavenly and earthly Powers, as witneſſes againſt the ungodly, and as aids and aſſiſtants, *that they may judg his people*, that is, aſſert their integrity and maintain them in it. Now (I ſay) if there have been or ſhall be ſuch dreadful appearances of God in this world, for the vindication of his people, and the avenging of them upon their enemies; what will his appearance be, when in the end of the world *he ſhall come* (as the Apoſtle *Jude* ſpeaks, *Verſ.* 14, 15. of his Epiſtle) *with ten thouſand of his ſaints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them, of all their ungodly deeds, which they have ungodlily committed, and of all their hard ſpeeches, which ungodly ſinners have ſpoken againſt him*; That is, either directly, or reflexively, in letting their tongues looſe to ſpeak againſt them. The Apoſtle *Paul* having ſaid (2 *Cor.* 5. 10.) *We muſt all appear before the Judgment Seat of Chriſt, that every one may receive the things*, (that is, the fruit of the things) *done in his body*, (that is, while he was in the body) *whether it be good or bad*; he adds at the eleventh verſe, *Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we perſwade men.* As if he had ſaid, We know that will be a terrible day, Chriſt will come and anſwer ſinners out of a Whirl-wind, when he comes to Judgment; and therefore *We* (being fully perſwaded of this our ſelves) *perſwade men* by all means to believe and repent, and get the peace of their Souls well and ſurely ſetled upon good Goſpel terms in this world, that ſo they may find peace in the great Day of Judgment, which will be the commencement or beginning of another world. They who know the terror of the Lord will both perſwade others, and be perſwaded themſelves to look after reconciliation with God, that when Chriſt cometh terribly, they may appear before him comfortably, or that he may not be a terrour unto them in that day.

Fifthly, Foraſmuch as the Lord anſwered *Job* out of the Whirl-wind (as was ſaid) to affect him with the awe and reverence of his great Name, while he was ſpeaking,

Obſerve; *The Word of God is to be heard with reverence, with fear and trembling, or with an holy awe of God upon our hearts.*

Why did the Lord ſpeak out of a Whirl-wind? Surely, that *Job* might ſee his diſtance, or that he was but as a feather, even *like a rolling thing, or thiſtle-down, before the Whirl-wind*, which the Lord could ſcatter and blow away with the leaſt breath of his mouth, as that alluſion in the Prophet intimates (*Iſa.* 17. 13.) And queſtionleſs all the wicked in the world, who contemn the Word of God preached by his Miniſters, will be blown away by it as thiſtle-down or a rolling thing before the Whirl-wind of the Lords fierce anger and diſpleaſure; All ſuch ſhall be carried away with a ſtrong irreſiſtable wind, and caſt into the bottomleſs pit of perdition for ever. The Lord who ſometimes ſpeaks out of a whirl-wind, hath a whirl-wind always at his command to ſcatter thoſe like chaff, who obey not what is ſpoken, as he threatned the enemies of *Jacob* (Iſa. 41. 16.)

Locutione domini blanda dulcedo ejus oſtenditur, per tempeſtatem vero poteſtas ejus metuenda monſtratur. Greg. l. 28. c. 2.

Sixthly, From *Gods ſpeaking out of the Whirl-wind*,

Note; *God is preſent with his in troublous diſpenſations.*

'Tis no argument, that God is not with us, when ſtorms and whirl-winds are up, whether with reſpect to Nations and Churches, or particular Perſons. Do not think God is gone becauſe there is a ſtorm. Read (*Pſal.* 18. *Verſ.* 6, 7, 8. *Pſal.* 23. 4. *Pſal.* 91. 15. *Iſa.* 43. 2, 3.) and you ſhall find that in the worſt appearances the Lord is preſent. The Prophet ſpeaks it expreſly (*Nahum* 1. 3.) *The Lord hath his way in the Whirl-wind, and in the ſtorm, and the Clouds are the duſt of his feet.* When and where it's dark and troubleſome the Lord is there, and there he is moſt; that's the Prophets meaning alſo, when he ſaith, *The Clouds are the duſt of his feet.* By Clouds we may underſtand, not ſo much the Clouds of the Air, as cloudy Providences; theſe are round about him, while Judgment and Juſtice, yea while Mercy and Goodneſs are the habitation of his Throne. And theſe Clouds may be called *the duſt of his feet* in a Figure; we know where Travellers paſs often, their feet make a duſt; now it ſhews that the Lord doth act much in the Clouds, that is in dark Providences, becauſe 'tis ſaid, *They are the duſt of his feet*, as if he moved ſo much and ſo long in them, that he raiſed a duſt with his motion. Do not think the Lord is gone, when whirl-winds and ſtorms, that is outward troubles, come. The Lord anſwers out of the whirl-wind as often as he anſwers us *by terrible things in Righteouſneſs*; and thus he often anſwers us (*Pſal.* 65. 5.)

Seventhly, And Laſtly, comparing the manner of Gods coming and ſpeaking to *Job*, with his intent in coming and ſpeaking to him. The manner in which God came and ſpake *was in a Whirl-wind*; but what was his purpoſe? Was it to blow the poor man away? No; it was but to humble him, and then to comfort and reſtore him.

Obſerve; *The outward appearances of God are often very terrible, when he intends nothing but mercy and love to his people.*

What more dreadful than a Whirl-wind? yet *Job* found this ſtorm uſhering in a ſweet calm and a moſt comfortable ſunſhine. *Job* ſaid (*Chap.* 9. 16, 17.) *If I had called, and he had anſwered me, yet would I not have believed that he had hearkened to my voice, for he breaketh me with a tempeſt, or a Whirl-wind.* Now the Lord came in a Whirl-wind, and *Job* finds the quite contrary: God came in a whirl-wind, not to break him, but to bind him up; not to condemn him, but to convince him; not to diſcourage him, but to comfort him; *comfort comes out of a ſtorm.* Thus comfort hath come to many a poor ſoul, and it comes thus ſometimes to the whole Church of God. When *Jacob* was in a ſtormy condition, becauſe of his brother *Eſau*, then the Lord came to him (*Gen.* 32.) but how came he to him? One would have thought, that *Jacob* being in ſuch a condition, the Lord who came to comfort him, would have taken him by the hand and embraced him, or walkt aſide with him, and told him, I am come to help thee, and deliver thee; be of good cheer, let not thy heart be troubled at the approach of thy bloody brother, for I am with thee. One would have thought (I ſay) the Lord ſhould have treated him in ſome ſuch manner; but what ſaith the Text? (*Verſ.* 24.) *there wreſtled a man with him until the breaking of the day.* Poor *Jacob* was tugging, and ſweating all night, as if he would ſweat his heart out; here was a ſtrange kind of greeting; 'tis not ſaid the man ſaluted him, or ſpake a kind word to him, much leſs complemented with him, he only wreſtled with him; and when he had toiled a great while, he *put his thigh out of joint* (which was very coarſe uſage) and only ſaid *Let me go* (which was very coarſe Language) yet the Lord came at that time with a full purpoſe to bleſs him, and deliver him out of the hand of *Eſau*. Then be not afraid of ſtorms, for the Lord hath ſunſhine in his heart, when there's nothing but a ſtorm in his face. The Lord may come to you in poverty, and ſickneſs, he may chaſten you with pain upon your bed, and the multitude of your bones with ſtrong pains, till you ſay as *Hezekiah* in his ſickneſs (*Iſa.*38.13.) *I reckoned till morning, that as a Lion, ſo will he break all my bones*; and yet intend ſo much mercy, that you ſhall ſay (as *David*, Pſal. 35. 10.) *All my bones ſhall ſay, Lord, who is like unto thee, which delivereſt the poor from him that is too ſtrong for him, yea, the poor and needy, from him that ſpoileth him. The Lord hath gracious purpoſes towards his people in ſaddeſt appearances. Then the Lord anſwered Job out of the Whirl-wind, and ſaid*; What ſaid he? His ſaying was as ſtormy as his appearing.

Perpetuum Deo eſt vulnerare quos vult ſanare, percellere quos vult conſolari, oſtendere ſe maximum cum vult & optimum demonſtrare.

Verſ. 2. **Who is this that darkeneth counſel by words without knowledg?**

This Verſe and the next are a Preface to what God had further to ſay unto his afflicted ſervant *Job*. The former verſe was the Hiſtorians Preface, theſe two are the Lords.

Who is this that darkeneth counſel by words without knowledge?

We have here, Firſt, A check lighting ſomewhere, *Who is this?*

Secondly, We have the matter for which this perſon is checkt, and that is *for darkening counſel.*

Thirdly, We have that by which he is charged to have darkned counſel, and that is, *By words without knowledg*; and his ignorance or want of knowledg is implied, as diſcovered in ſpeaking, or rather complaining ſo much concerning his own ſufferings, and the ſeverity of Gods dealings with him, whereby he had at once caſt a cloud upon the Juſtice, and reflected upon the goodneſs and mercy of God.

Who is this?] The words may be taken, Firſt, as a bare enquiry after the man, *Who is this?* What man is this? As *Saul* ſpake of *David* after the victory which he had got over *Goliah, Whoſe ſon is this youth?* (1Sam.17.55.) but that I conceive is too flat and lean a ſenſe in this place, as if the Lord did only make enquiry after the man. Therefore,

Secondly, Theſe words, *Who is this?* Carry in them a rebuke, who is it that hath done this? As if God pointing at *Job*, had ſaid, is it you? I could not have believed that my ſervant *Job* would have ſo much forgotten himſelf, or have been ſo bold with me, as to reflect upon my juſt, though ſevere proceedings, by his weak reaſonings, which faith only can make him underſtand aright. Such Queſtions in Scripture often carry a rebuke in them, Yea,

Thirdly, More than a rebuke, they carry a ſlight or contempt of the perſon about whom the queſtion is put. As when men preſume (as ſome blaſphemouſly have done) to ſay, *Who is the Lord? What is the Almighty that we ſhould ſerve him?* They ſpeak contemptuouſly and ſlightingly of God: So when God ſpeaks thus to man, who is this? He may be ſaid to ſpeak ſlightingly of man. Again, as when man, ſpeaking of himſelf, ſaith (as *Pſal.*8.4.) *What is man that thou art mindful of him!* he ſlights or vilifies himſelf; ſo when the Lord ſaith, who is this? Or who is the other? It carryeth the ſame ſenſe. Interrogations are quick ſharp ſpeeches, and uſually thoſe ſpeeches are quick and ſharp which begin with an Interrogation; and doubtleſs this Interrogation hath a double ſharpneſs, or two ſtings in it.

Firſt, Of rebuke or reprehenſion.

Secondly, Of a ſlight or diminution. *Job*, though indeed a man of an excellent ſpirit, had been too bold with God, and therefore no wonder if God ſpake (though he contemned him not) contemningly to him, *Who is this?*

Forma ipſa interrogationis, qua nullum exprimitur proprium nomen ſolet ad contemptum pertinere & exprobrationem.

Yet here it is queſtioned who the perſon was, whether *Job* or no, that is aimed at or intended in this rebuking or contemning Queſtion.

There are two opinions about it, and the matter is carried on both ſides (as one expreſſeth it) by no inconſiderable Arguments.

Firſt, Some conceive, *Elihu* was the perſon concerned in this Queſtion, *Who is this?* And they give ſeveral reaſons for it; I ſhall only mention two. Firſt, becauſe he was the man that ſpake laſt; we had him ſpeaking ſix Chapters quite through, while *Job* ſpake not a word; and therefore ſay they, it ſeems moſt probable, that when God came to ſpeak, he would undertake him that ſpake laſt. *Who is this?*

Secondly, Becauſe *Elihu* had not carryed the matter ſo clearly and fully with *Job* as he ſhould, but had failed, though not as *Job*'s three friends had done before; and that therefore as the Lord reproved and taxed them by name in the 42. Chapter, ſo here *Elihu* is taxed more covertly, for obſcuring his Counſel, *Who is this that darkeneth counſel by words without knowledg?* Theſe are the two chief Arguments which faſten the rebuke upon *Elihu*; and there are many learned Interpreters who carry it ſo, affirming that the whole diſcourſe from the beginning of this 38. Chapter to the end of the 39. is directed to *Elihu*; and that God ſpake not to *Job* till the 40. Chapter. Yet ſome others ſay God reproved *Elihu* in this ſecond Verſe only, and ſpake comfort to *Job* in the third; *Gird up thy loins like a man*; and theſe interpret the firſt words of the Chapter, *Then the Lord anſwered* Job *out of the Whirl-wind*, thus, he anſwered for *Job*, not to *Job*, as if the word *Job* were to be taken in the dative Caſe, ſignifying favour and reſpect from God to him.

But, by the favour of theſe learned Authors, who give this Interpretation, I ſhall rather adhere to thoſe who affirm (and they are not a few) that the perſon here concerned and ſpoken to was *Job* himſelf, and I ſhall give you three or four Reaſons of it, and ſo paſs to the opening of the words.

Firſt, Becauſe the firſt Verſe tells us expreſly, that the *Lord anſwered* Job *out of the whirlwind*; and that Interpretation which ſaith, he anſwered for, not to *Job*, is a little ſtrain to the Text. Now the Lord ſpeaking ſo expreſly to *Job* in the firſt Verſe, it is very congruous, that he ſhould ſpeak to him in the ſecond, and not divert his ſpeech from him to another perſon in the next words that he ſpake.

Secondly, *Job* himſelf took theſe words to himſelf in the forty ſecond Chapter, at the third Verſe, where he acknowledged that indeed he had ſpoken darkly, *I have uttered things that I underſtood not, things too wonderful for me, which I knew not*; he took (I ſay) the reproof contained or couched in thoſe words to himſelf, which is a clear argument, that they were directed to him.

Thirdly, If we conſider the whole frame of the Lords diſcourſe afterwards, beyond this preface, we ſhall find that he is not ſpeaking for *Job* againſt *Elihu*, but for *Elihu* againſt *Job*, that is to humble *Job*; and therefore the Lord doth joyn in with *Elihu*, and uſeth the very ſame Arguments in the main (as will appear in opening the Chapter) which *Elihu* had inſiſted upon, namely from the works of

God in the Creation, and his wonderful wiſdom in ordering thoſe works in Providence. So that the dealing of God with *Job* in theſe Chapters (as to the ſubject matter of it) is very conſentaneous or like to the matter which *Elihu* had handled and inſiſted upon, eſpecially in the later part of his ſpeech to *Job*; and therefore it doth not ſeem probable that God would reprove him for what he had ſpoken.

Fourthly, The manner of this rebuke ſeems to fit *Job* very fully, for therein he is not charged with any falſity or groſs miſtake (he indeed having ſpoken of God and the things of God, of his own innocency and piety, with the rewards of both, truly and worthily) but only with obſcuring and darkning the things which he had uttered. His ſpeech bearing much of the Image of his own troubled ſpirit and troubleſom condition, was ſomwhat troubled and confuſed. Therefore I conclude that the perſon ſpoken to and reproved in this ſecond verſe was *Job*, not *Elihu*; *Who is this that darkeneth counſel by words without knowledg?* and it being reſolved that he was the man, let me (before I proceed to the matter of this reproof) give out this brief Obſervation.

We have heard at the eighth Verſe of the firſt Chapter, how God ſpake of *Job*, and now conſider how God ſpeaks to *Job*; There the Lord approved him highly, as not having his like or ſecond on earth for well-doing; here the Lord reproved him ſharply, for undue-ſpeaking.

> Hence Note; *As God will not conceal the praiſes of his ſervants when they do well, ſo he will not conceal their faults, nor forbear to reprove them, when they either do or ſpeak amiſs.*

When Satan came upon that ſolemn day, and ſtood before the Lord, God ſaid unto him, *Haſt thou conſidered my ſervant* Job, *that there's none like him in all the earth, a man perfect and upright; ſo perfect and upright both in his walking with me, and in his dealing with man, that he hath not his fellow?* Thus God ſpake of him as to his former ſtate. But now after *Job* had ſpoken long in this diſpute, and had let fall ſome unwary and unbecoming ſpeeches, ſee how God ſpeaks to him, *Who is this?* As if he had been a man ſcarce worth the naming or ſpeaking to. God will not flatter his Servants; if they do or ſpeak what is not right, they are like to hear of it. Wherein he had ſpoken what was not right, or what his fault was appears in the next words, *Who is this,*

That darkeneth counſel by words without knowledg?

Words againſt knowledg are the worſt words that can be ſpoken; the Lord did not charge *Job* thus far: words without knowledg are very bad, and thus far the Lord charged the words of *Job*, as alſo with that which is an unavoidable effect of ſuch words,

The darkening of Counſel.] Counſel, in the general nature of it, is light deſired and held out: to give counſel is to give light in and about any matter. And therefore ſurely he that *darkeneth counſel*, commits a very great fault, yea, a ſoleciſm or abſurdity in morals. *Counſel is the election or choice of proper means to a good end*; or, *Counſel is good advice given, and* (ought to be) *received about things to be done.* Hence the whole directive part of the Word of God is called Counſel (*Pſal.* 73.24. *Prov.* 1.25,30.) The doctrin of Reconciliation unto God by Chriſt is called, *The Counſel of Peace* (Zech. 6. 13.) *David*, ſpeaking of wicked proud men ſaith (*Pſal.* 19.6.) *You have ſhamed the Counſel of the poor, becauſe the Lord is his refuge:* As if it were poor Counſel, and ſuch as we may be aſhamed of, to adviſe any to put their truſt in God. They darken Counſel indeed who are aſhamed of it, or who ſhame it.

It is queſtioned, whoſe counſel, or what counſel *Job* is charged by God with darkening? There are two opinions about that.

First, Some expound it of *Job*'s own counſel, of that counſel which he gave, or held forth about the matter under diſpute, that is, his ſenſe and judgment in it.

Quis eſt ille qui ſermonibus imperitis offundit tenebras conſilio divino. Tygur.

Secondly, The Counſel which he darkened, was (ſay others) the counſel of God, or his purpoſe and intendment in the ſufferings of the righteous, and in ſuffering the wicked to proſper for a ſeaſon. Theſe works of God are a great ſecret, and therefore may well be expreſſed by the word *Counſel*. And uſually when the word *Counſel* is put abſolutely and alone, it is to be underſtood of the Counſel of God. Yet I conceive we may very well joyn theſe two opinions together, and ſay, *Job* darkened his own counſel and the counſel of God too; he delivered his own mind and ſentiments ſo darkly (the delivering of a mans mind is his counſel) about the counſel of God, that he rather obſcured both, then cleared either. And there are ſeveral things wherein *Job* may be charged to have ſpoken obſcurely. Did he not darken the counſel of God, when he complained ſo very much and ſo often of his afflictions? Did he not darken his own counſel, and the counſel of God, when, as if the diſpenſations of God were every where alike to all, he ſaid (*Chap.* 9.22.) *God deſtroyeth the perfect and the wicked. If the ſcourge ſtay ſuddenly, he laugheth at the trial of the innocent?* Did he not darken counſel when he ſaid, God dealt with him as an enemy, or, as with an enemy? Surely he did not well attend the counſel of God in afflicting him, while he made ſuch conſtructions of his affliction. The things which *Job* ſpake were true, yet *Job* delivered himſelf ſo darkly that his friends miſ-underſtood him; they underſtood him, as if he meant that God dealt in his providences with the righteous as with the wicked, and were to the wicked as he is to the righteous, that is, as if he had no more regard to any godly man, than to a wicked man in afflicting him. In theſe (and ſome other things) *Job* did not ſufficiently explain himſelf and he exceedingly ſtumbled or offended his friends and hearers, and ſo might be ſaid to darken the counſel of God, that is the purpoſe of God, or what God hath in his counſels concerning his people, when under his afflicting hand. All ſuch like paſſages falling from *Job*, the Lord might call a darkening of his counſel, or the caſting of a Cloud upon his righteous dealings, and at leaſt an intimation that God had done him wrong. Words of ſuch a tenour and tendency are juſtly charged to be *Words*

Conſilium abſolute poſitum pro conſilium Dei, ut ſermo pro ſermo Dei. Druſ.

Without knowledg.] Not that *Job* ſpake altogether ignorantly, underſtanding neither what he ſaid, nor whereof he affirmed, as the Apoſtle charged ſome, who deſired to be teachers of the Law (1 *Tim.* 1. 7.) the Text cannot be ſo taken; but his words and affirmations were ſuch as did not hold out a clear light of knowledg, either in his own underſtanding, or at leaſt not to the underſtanding of his hearers. Thus *Elihu* charged *Job* (Chap. 35. 16.) *He openeth his mouth in vain, he multiplieth words without knowledg.* To ſpeak one word without knowledg is too many; what is it then to multiply words without knowledg? *He multiplieth words without knowledg,* that is, he hath not given his ſenſe and meaning in many things clearly, as he might and ſhould. Here the Lord ſeems to take up the ſame charge againſt *Job*; *Who is this that darkeneth counſel by words without knowledg?* God conſents with *Elihu*, as to the matter of his reproof; *Elihu* telling him, that *he had multiplied words without knowledg*; and God telling him, that *he had darkened counſel by words without knowledg.* Words ought to give light to the things we ſpeak of or about; what we ſpeak ſhould be for the clearing up both of our own counſel and the counſel of God. So that it was a very great failing in *Job*, to darken either his own counſel or the counſel of God, by words without knowledg. Our own counſel ſhould be delivered plainly, and ſo ſhould the counſel of God much more. It is ſad to gather clouds or raiſe a miſt about our hearers, when we are profeſſing to hold out the light. To puzzle and amuſe thoſe whom we undertake to teach, is one of the worſt accidents ('tis too too bad when 'tis the intent) of a Teacher. And therefore *Job* (though he had no intent to do it) is juſtly reproved for doing it; *Who is this that darkeneth counſel by words without knowledg?*

Theſe words (as was ſaid) being at beſt an enquiry after the man, or a citation to appear and anſwer,

> Note; *God will bring every man to a reckoning for what he hath done and ſaid.*

God would not let his ſervant *Job* paſs; he cenſured *Job* that *Job* might cenſure himſelf; and points at him, that he might even ſee himſelf pointed at. As if he had ſaid; *What! is this my ſervant* Job? *Is it he that I heard ſpeaking* *at ſuch a rate of impatience and obſcurity? I could not have thought that he would have uttered ſuch words about my ways and works, either towards himſelf or others. Every one of us* (ſaith the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 14.12.) *ſhall give an account of himſelf to God.* Some have more to account for then themſelves (*Heb.* 13. 17) but all muſt give account for themſelves; *Give an account of thy ſtewardſhip* (Luke 19. 2.) will be ſaid one day to every one. To be a Steward is the ſpecial office of ſome men in reference to men, but 'tis the general office of all men in reference to God. They cannot ſtand in the the day of account, who have not repented of the evil they have done, nor reſted on Chriſt by faith for the doing away of that evil. For the Lord will ſay to one, who is this that hath perverted my Truth? To another, who is this that hath diſobeyed my Commands? To a third, who is this that hath diſtruſted my Promiſes? To a fourth, who is this that hath been ſo unthankful for my Mercies and Favours? He will alſo ſay, who is this that hath oppreſſed his Neighbour? And, who is this that hath been ſelf proud and wanton? The offender muſt appear, and ſo will his offences. Yea, a citation will come out, as againſt all thoſe who have againſt knowledg refuſed to walk in the light of Gods counſel, ſo to all thoſe (as here to *Job*) who have darkened counſel any way for want of the light of knowledg. And who can ſtand in any of theſe accounts, either for not doing good, or for doing evil, without a Mediatour, upon whoſe accounts alone we are accepted. *Who is this that darkeneth counſel by words without knowledg?*

Secondly, Taking theſe words as an humbling rebuke upon *Job* for his over-boldneſs, in ſpeaking of God and his ways;

Note; *God will humble all men, his own people eſpecially, and make them know themſelves.*

God will make all men know who they are, who himſelf is, and what they have done or ſpoken. When the Scripture ſaith, who is this? And what is man? When the Scripture asketh what, or who we are? It is either to abaſe the pride of man, or to convince him of his baſe fear of the proudeſt men, as appears ſpecially in theſe two Scriptures. When good men are over-troubled at, or afraid of the power of man, then the Lord chides and ſhames them with this queſtion (*Iſa.* 51. 12.) *Who art thou that thou ſhouldeſt be afraid of a man?* As if he had ſaid, what a fool art thou, what an ignorant creature art thou; the Lord ſpake there to his own people, and to them altogether, as if they were but one man) *Who art thou that thou ſhouldeſt be afraid of a man that ſhall die, and of the ſon of man that ſhall be made as graſs, and forgetteſt the Lord thy Maker?* What a kind of creature art thou, to ſet ſo much by a man (let him be who he will) that thou ſhouldeſt be unduely afraid of him, who by nature is like thy ſelf, frail and mortal, as if thou hadſt not the immortal God thy Maker for thy helper and defender! They act below men, who over-fear men, while they are in a way of duty to God. *Who art thou,* &c.

Secondly, The Scripture uſeth ſuch queſtions when man is over-bold with, or not enough in the fear of God (which is the caſe here in the Text) If any man intrench upon the prerogative of God, he is like to hear of it, with a *who art thou?* The Apoſtle (*Rom.*9.20.) by way of prevention, repreſents man ſo bold with God, as to darken his counſel, even his eternal counſel, by words without knowledg; *Thou wilt ſay then unto me, why doth he yet find fault? who hath reſiſted his will?* When God, to ſhew his unqueſtionable Soveraignty, ſaith, *Jacob have I loved, and Eſau have I hated: I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy*; Then man begins to complain of God, and thinks he hath cauſe for it: But ſaith the Apoſtle, *Who art thou that repliest againſt God? Shall the thing formed ſay to him that formed it, why haſt thou made me thus?* When-ever man gives occaſion to ſay, that he fears man too much, or God too little; he is like to hear theſe rebuking and humbling queſtions, *Who is this,* or, *Who art thou?* Many have too high thoughts of others, and moſt of themſelves, as if they were (as we ſay) *ſome-body,* that is, more than *any-body,* as if they were of ſome greater worth, or had ſome greater worthineſs, than their neighbours. Now, whoſoever have too high thoughts either of others or of themſelves, they always have too low thoughts of God; and therefore God, to ſhew them their vanity, that all men are but emptineſs, yea very nothingneſs compared with him, makes the beſt of men ſtrike ſail, or, God ſhoots down their top-ſail, with ſuch queſtions as theſe, Who are you? and, who is this?

Thirdly, Note; *We may quickly darken the counſels of God while we think to explain them.*

Job had no intent to darken the Counſel of God, yet he did it. Some make it their buſineſs (when they ſpeak of the counſels of God) to darken them and raiſe a duſt; theſe are either angry with the light, or envious at it, and unwilling that others ſhould enjoy it. Some Patrons of Popery, the better to make their own excuſe for obſcuring or hiding the Scriptures in darkneſs from the People, have not feared to charge them with darkneſs and obſcurity. And others by their ill and unskilful handling of the Scriptures have brought darkneſs and obſcurity upon them. Though the Scriptures have many dark places in them, yet wo to thoſe who ſay the Scriptures are dark; and let all take heed of darkening them, for they are the counſel of God, It is an eaſie matter to paddle in a clear ſtream, till it runs muddily; but it will not be for any mans eaſe or peace to do ſo in the clear cryſtal ſtreams of the holy Scriptures. It is the unhappineſs of ſome that they cannot but ſpeak and write about the counſels of God obſcurely; and there are others who glory that they can. It was ſaid of a dark Pen, that *While he would have that read which he had written, he would not have that underſtood which was read*; and while ſome would have that heard which they ſpeak, they ſpeak as if they would not have that underſtood which is heard. It is a great ſin purpoſely and deſignedly to darken the Counſels of God; and 'tis a failing and an affliction to darken them, though we (as *Job* did not) deſign it not. We ſhould labour to deliver our minds plainly concerning the mind of God, that what we utter may not be found a darkning of his Counſel, but as much as in us is, a clearing of it. Counſel (as was toucht before) is the giving of light in dark caſes; and therefore we ſhould enlighten Counſel.

Dum legi voluit quæ ſcripſiſſet, intelligi noluit quæ legerentur.

T[illegible] things are the grace and excellency of a ſpeaker:

Firſt, To ſpeak boldly and freely, to ſpeak the truth out, not to clip nor ſtraiten it.

Secondly, To ſpeak plainly, to open the truth, and not to intricate nor involve it. Both theſe are compriſed in one word, by the Apoſtle (2 *Cor.*3.12.) where he ſaith (as we tranſlate) *therefore we uſe great plainneſs of ſpeech*; but the Margin hath *great boldneſs of ſpeech:* the ſame word in the Greek ſignifies both plainneſs of ſpeech and boldneſs of ſpeech; and theſe are the two great vertues and ornaments of him that ſpeaketh. Both theſe are again implied in that direction of the Apoſtle (1 *Pet.*4.11.) *If any man ſpeak* (about the things of God) *let him ſpeak as the Oracles of God*; That is, let him ſpeak as becomes him that hath to do with the Oracles of God, reverently, freely, and boldly; not as if he were ſpeaking the opinions of men, much leſs, *Old wives fables.* Or let him ſpeak as *the Oracles of God* (ſpeak) that is, plainly, clearly, not as the Oracles of of the Heathens (ſpake) darkly, doubtfully. Let us take heed of wrapping up the truth of God, or entangling it, in uncertain expreſſions, which may be interpreted either way, or to quite contrary purpoſes: there is a great danger in this. We may give our ſelves ſome ſcope, or take more liberty, when we are debating about worldly matters, or diſputing the ſubtil queſtions and curioſities of Schoolmen: But when we have to do with the Secrets and Counſels of God, then let us beware and be ſober. Some ſpeak as raſhly and inevidently of deepeſt Goſpel Myſteries, as they talk of other mens crotchets, or as of their own trifles.

Fifthly, Conſider, How did *Job* darken the Counſel of God? It was *by words without knowledg.*

Hence Note; *The ignorant are very apt to ſpeak amiſs of the things and Counſels of God.*

If *Job*, who had ſo great a meaſure of knowledg, darkened the Counſel of God by words without knowledg; what will they do that have upon the matter no knowledg at all? The Apoſtle ſpeaks of ſuch as more than darkening, even as wreſting the Counſel of God (2*Pet.*3.16.) In *Pauls* Epiſtles (ſaith he) *are ſome things hard to be underſtood, which they that are unlearned and unſtable wreſt, as they do alſo the other Scriptures, unto their own deſtruction.* Some things in the Word are hard to be known, and they are made harder by ſuch unlearned ones, as utter their own notions of them, by *words without knowledg.* 'Tis very true, that many learned men have wreſted and perverted the Word of God, and ſome of them have employed their learning on purpoſe to wreſt and pervert it; but they that have not a competent degree of learning and knowledg, what can they do elſe but wreſt and darken the Word of God? I intend not human learning meerly, in Arts and Sciences, though there be great uſe of them; but I mean eſpecially Holy and Divine Learning. They that are not taught of God, nor have the light of God in them, cannot but darken the things and Counſels of God, how much human learning ſoever they have. The Prophet foretels us of Chriſt ſpeaking thus of himſelf, as the great Prophet, (*Iſa.*50.4.) *The Lord hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I ſhould know how to ſpeak a word in ſeaſon to him that is weary*; that is, to thoſe who are wearied (not with bodily labours and travels, but) with ſoul-labours and travels, about the pardon of their ſins, and the favour of God to their ſouls. He that ſpeaks a word effectually for the refreſhing of ſuch weary ones, muſt open the Counſels of God to them; and he that doth ſo, muſt have the tongue of the learned, that is, a tongue taught of God how to ſpeak, elſe he will never be able to do it knowingly, but through the darkneſs of his own mind will darken the Counſel of God concerning thoſe dark ſouls, and ſo rather weary them more, than relieve them out of their wearineſs. *That the ſoul be without knowledg is not good* (Prov. 19. 2.) that is, 'tis very bad, (ſuch Negatives in Scripture intend their contrary Affirmatives) and as it is not good, or very bad for themſelves, whoſoever they are, ſo it is not good for them with reſpect to others, who are called to declare the Counſels of God to others. Souls without knowledg cannot open, but are apt to darken the Soul-counſels of God.

Sixthly, Inaſmuch as God reproved *Job* for this,

Note; *God will not take it well, if we ſpeak improperly, darkly and unſafely of his Matters and Counſels, though our minds be honeſt, and our meaning good in what we ſpeak.*

We had need be cautious what we ſay, and not talk at random about the things of God. *Job*, a holy and a wiſe man, had a peal rung in his ear, for ſpeaking words without knowledg, words not duly poized and placed. There are ſome who will catch at, and take hold of every ſlip of the tongue, they will *make a man an offender for a word*, which hath no real ground of offence in it; (as the Prophet ſpake, *Iſa.* 29. 11.) God may juſtly make a man an offender for a word, which he thought was without offence.

Laſtly, Conſider, when God came to reprove *Job*, he did not charge him with any ill intentions, but with ill expreſſions. He indeed had darkened his Counſel by words without knowledg, but God did not ſay he had a purpoſe and a mind to do it; nor did he ſay, that *Job* had ſpoken falſly, but that he had ſpoken truth obſcurely. The Lord did not object hypocriſie or impiety againſt him, but imbecillity; as not having handled the Judgments of God, nor delivered his own judgment clearly and prudently enough; but had hudled and put things ſo paſſionately and confuſedly together that ſome could not tell how to diſtinguiſh them from blaſphemy.

Hence Note; *God will not charge any man beyond his fault.*

If he did it in a heat of paſſion, God will not deal with him, as if he had done it in cold blood (as we ſay) or with a ſetled reſolution. The Lord will not call a ſlip of the tongue an errour of the mind, much leſs a minded error. God knows the intent and purpoſe of every man that ſpeaks; he weighs not only our actions, but words; he knows not only what we ſay, but why, and with what aims we ſay it: and therefore he never urgeth any mans ſin beyond it ſelf. *Job* had darkned the Counſel of God only *by words without knowledg*, therefore God would not charge him to have darkned his Counſel, knowingly, or againſt the light of knowledg. Yea, notwithſtanding this fault, the Lord having reproved him for it, proceeds preſently (as ſome interpret the next verſe) to comfort and encourage him.

Verſ. 3. **Gird up now thy loins like a man.**

As if the Lord had ſaid, thou haſt ſpoken thus and thus of my Counſels, now give me an account of what thou haſt ſpoken; *Gird up thy loins like a man.* To call a man to gird up his loins, is to bid him be in a readineſs, or to prepare himſelf for any work. The ſtrength of a man is in his loins, and they who are weak, are ſaid to be loinleſs. *To gird up the loins*, is a proverbial ſpeech, and may be uſed to a man who weareth the ſhorteſt garments, yea to him who is naked. Hence the Lord bid *Job* to gird up his loins, who poſſibly was ſo weak, that he could not ſtand upon his legs; or poſſibly had no long garments at all. There is a girding the loins with ſack-cloth, that is, with ſorrow, implying the work of repentance and mortification (*Iſa.* 22. 12.) *In that day did the Lord God of Hoſts call to weeping, and to mourning, and to baldneſs, and to girding with ſackcloth.* The two Witneſſes of Chriſt are ſaid *to propheſie in ſackcloth one thouſand two hundred and ſixty days* (Rev. 11. 3.) to note that they were in a ſad or ſorrowful condition all the days of their Propheſie: Thus *Job*'s loins had been girt a long time. Again, There is a girding of the loins with joy: *Thou haſt put off from me my ſackcloth, and girded me with gladneſs* (Pſal. 30. 11.) There is alſo a girding of the loins with ſtrength (*Pſal.* 17. 39.) Further, We may take notice of a fourfold uſe in Scripture, of girding up the loins.

Cinctus lumborum erit pro ἑτοιμασίᾳ: Coc.

Imbecilli dicuntur Latinis Elumbes.

Firſt, There is a girding up the loins for travel, or when a man is to take a journey. Thus *Eliſha* ſaid to *Gehazi* (2 Kings 4. 29.) *Gird up thy loins, and take thy ſtaff in thy hand, and go thy way*, &c. It was a faſhion in thoſe Eaſtern Countreys where they wore their garments long and ordinarily looſe, to gird them up in travel.

Cingulum ambulaturi.

Secondly, There is a girding up the loins for ſerving or waiting; ſo Chriſt expreſſeth it (*Luke* 12. 35.) *Let your loins be girded about, and your lamps burning, and ye your ſelves like unto men, that wait for their Lord.* And he ſaith at the 37. Verſe, *Bleſſed are thoſe ſervants, whom the Lord when he cometh, ſhall find watching: Verily, I ſay unto you, that he ſhall gird himſelf, and make them to ſit down to meat, and will come forth and ſerve them*; That is, he will be ready to do them offices of love, as it were, in perſon; which is an expreſſion of the greateſt condeſcenſion: For when Chriſt would ſet forth the common cuſtom among men, he ſaith (*Luke* 17. 7, 8.) *Which of you having a ſervant plowing or feeding Cattel, will ſay unto him by and by when he is come from the field; Go, and ſit down to meat, and will not rather ſay, Gird thy ſelf, and ſerve me*, &c. Girding is preparatory to ſerving or waiting.

Cingulum miniſtraturi

Thirdly, It notes in Scripture preparation for any labour or work that we are called to, whether of mind or body. He is always girt, that is ready for work, and induſtrious at it; whereas careleſs and idle perſons, are always ungirt, and ſo unbleſs'd. When *Jeremiah* was called to that great work of the mind or inner man, the Lord ſaid to him (*Chap.* 1. 17.) *Thou therefore gird up thy loins*, and ariſe, *and ſpeak unto them all that I command thee.* A Prophets work begins at his heart, and ends at his Tongue, Yet for that his loins muſt be girt.

Cingulum operaturi. Accinctus dicitur qui induſtrius & diſcinctus qui negligens eſt. Druſ. *Accingere ſe ad opus aliquod.*

Fourthly, Girding up the loins, notes a preparation for Battel and War: Thus *David* ſpake of Chriſt, (*Pſal.* 45. 3.) *Gird thy ſword upon thy thigh, O moſt mighty.* So ſpake that King to his proud Challenger, *Let not him that girdeth on his armour, boaſt as he that putteth it off* (1 Kings 20. 11.) That is, let not him that prepareth himſelf for battel, carry it as he that hath won the day and got the victory. When the Apoſtle deſcribing our ſpiritual warfare, minds us *to ſtand, having our loins girt about with truth* (Eph. 6. 14.) he would alſo have us ſtand with our loins girt for the truth; That is, as another Apoſtle

Cingulum pugnaturi. Antiquitas cingulum conſecravit. Mart.

Apoſtle ſpeaks, (*Jude* 3.) *to contend earneſtly for the faith once delivered to the Saints*; or to undertake the defence and maintenance of the truth againſt all comers or oppoſers.

Appara te ad futuram diſceptationem. Vatab. *Arma te nunc armis tuis, ſicut vir ſtrenuus ad committendum duellum mecum. Ecce veni ad literarum duellum tecum: Arma te ſcientiæ armis.* Cajet. *Signanter de præcinctione lumborum facit mentionem, quia per lumbos carnalis voluptas intelligitur, quæ præcipue impedit ſpiritualem auditum.* Aquin. *In arcano ſermone ſignificat libidinis in lumbis reſidentis compreſſionem.* כגבר *Sonat virtutem & fortitudinē & quod opponitur blanditiis, lenociniis & infirmitati fœmineæ.* Ut vir, *emphatice, animo virili, promptitudine virili.*

Girding in the Text is of this latter ſort: Diſputing is a kind of fighting and warring. Opponents and Reſpondents are like Combatants. Controverſial Divinity is called Polemical Divinity. Diſputes are *Word-Wars*. And there have been as hot Wars made by the Pen, as ever were by the Sword. Thus the Lord ſeems to ſend *Job* a challenge to the battle by a further debate. Arm thy ſelf like a mighty man, get ready for the duel, for I am purpoſed to try what a man thou art in arguing, or at an argument, I have heard thee too ſtiff in complaining, or at a complaint.

Laſtly, This *girding up of the loins* hath (as ſome conceive) a ſpiritual intendment in it, noting the mortification of luſt, or of the ſenſual appetite. They that go about any buſineſs for God, or with God, had need to have their luſts ſubdued. *Gird up thy loins*

Like a man.] That is, like a mighty man, a Giant, emphatically, *as a man*, with manly courage and activity; ſhew thy ſelf what a man thou art, let me ſee what thou canſt do, thou haſt heretofore braved it, and even challenged me, and deſired that thou mighteſt come to the battel; *O that I knew where I might find him! That I might come even to his ſeat* (Chap. 23. 3.) Now then, *Gird up thy loins like a man*, ſhew thy ſtrength, I mean to enter the liſt with thee, I have taken up the glove, as it were, and am reſolved to try it out with thee. *Gird up thy loins like a man*, Do not play the Child, do not trifle with me, do not think that I come to trifle with thee.

Some carry the oppoſition thus: *Gird up thy loins like a man*, not like a woman, who girds her ſelf often for ornament only, and ſometimes for oſtentation; but like a man, that reſolves to go about his work, and make a buſineſs of it; Thus, *Gird up thy loins like a man*. To do a thing ſtrenuouſly and with expedition, is the work of a man, who is neither retarded by difficulty, nor tired with labour, nor frighted with danger; therefore the Lord counſels *Job* to gird up his loins like as men do, when they ſet themſelves about or undertake any great buſineſs; he would not have him do it, as tender weak women, or as effeminate men.

Taking theſe words in the firſt notion, as an encouragement to *Job*, or as comforting words (which I conceive to be a good ſenſe)

Obſerve; *God is ready to revive poor and afflicted Souls when they are in any diſtreſs.*

He knows how it is with us, and he will not ſuffer any temptation to take hold of us, but ſuch as he will give ſtrength to bear, and encourage us in the bearing of it. He ſaith to fainting ones (as here) Come gird up your loins, or as (*Heb.* 12. 12.) *Lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees.*

Secondly, Take the words in that other general notion, God calling *Job* to a great buſineſs, ſaith, Gird up thy loins, prepare thy ſelf.

Whence, Note; *We need actual preparations before any duty, eſpecially before great duties.*

Never go about any work without your loins girt. A man whoſe mind is ungirt, is unready for any ſervice, though he may have much outward readineſs, and all manner of accommodations for it. When we pray, we ſhould gird up our loins to prayer. The Prophet complained (*Iſa.* 64. 7.) *There's none calls upon thy Name.* What none at all? Surely not ſo; they were not come to that height of Prophaneneſs, as to throw up, or to throw off prayer quite. Many among the Jews, I may ſay all of them prayed, but they did not gird up their loins to prayer: That's fully the Prophets meaning, and almoſt his language in the next words, *There is none that ſtirreth up himſelf to take hold of thee.* It is not enough to have a habit of grace, unleſs it be ſtirred up to duty, or unleſs we beſtir our ſelves in duty. The Apoſtle exhorts *Timothy* (2 Ep. 1. 6.) *Stir up the gift of God that is in thee.* If fire be not ſtirred up, it grows dead, and gives little or no heat; 'tis ſo with our gifts and graces. Therefore in prayer, in hearing the Word, *&c.* Gird up the loins of your mind, if you would either do any good in thoſe duties, or get any. He that lies upon a ſick-bed, muſt gird up the loins of his mind to bear his affliction; elſe he will never profit by it, nor anſwer the ends of God in it. No grace can be exerciſed by a ſoul ungirded: Therefore remember St. *Peters* counſel (1 *Ep.* 1. 13.) *Gird up the loins of your mind, be ſober and hope to the end* (hope perfectly) *for the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jeſus Chriſt.* As if the Apoſtle had ſaid, ye can never act your hope to purpoſe, nor your faith to purpoſe, unleſs you gird up your loins. Habits of grace are unprofitable to us, without this actual preparation and excitation of grace. It is our duty (*Heb.* 10. 24.) *to provoke* (or ſtir up) *others to love and good works*; much more is it our duty to provoke and ſtir up our ſelves.

Notat promptam & ab omni alia cupiditate vidullam ſpem. Coc.

Thirdly, In that he ſaith, *Gird up thy loins like a man*:

Note; *God would have us do our beſt, our utmoſt, in every thing we do; he would have us put our ſelves out in every duty.*

Solomon adviſeth (*Eccl.* 9. 10.) *Whatſoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might*; That is, *do it like a man*, vigorouſly, ſtrenuouſly, do it with both hands, *Quit you like men* in doing it, *be ſtrong*, as the Apoſtle exhorts (1 *Cor.* 16. 3.) To do the work of the Lord negligently and ſlightly, with half a heart or no heart, with half a hand or no hand, ſcarce with a little finger, with half ſtrength, or no ſtrength, this is not to do it *like a man*. We ſhould be in doing, like the Sun in moving, which, ſaith *David* (Pſal. 19. 5.) *As a Bridegroom cometh out of his Chamber, and rejoyceth as a ſtrong man to run a Race.* If we would run our race like a ſtrong man ſtrongly and prevailingly, we muſt be ſure to do two things:

Firſt, We muſt *lay aſide every weight, and the ſin that doth ſo eaſily beſet us* (Heb. 12. 1.)

Secondly, We muſt (as here the Lord directs *Job*) gird up our loins, and buckle to it.

Fourthly, As theſe words carry in them a kind of Irony, or divine ſcorn put upon *Job* by the Holy God; *Come let me ſee what a man thou art*; thou haſt ſpoken often what thou wouldſt do, and what thou wouldſt ſay, if thou couldſt have thy option, thy wiſh; now thou haſt thy wiſh, let me ſee what a man thou art, thou wilt ſurely appear a brave man by the time that I have done with thee.

Hence Note; *God will make men ſee how unable they are to deal with him, when 'tis beſt with them, or when they are at the beſt, even when their loins are girt.*

Every man at his beſt eſtate is altogether vanity: How vain then is man at his worſt! *Job* was low and in a bad condition, as to his outward man eſpecially, when God dealt with him, and how did he carry it, in the day when God dealt with him? *Did his heart endure, or were his hands ſtrong* (as the Prophet ſpake to thoſe, *Ezek.* 22. 14.) Did he carry it like a man? In one ſenſe not, but like a Child, he had not a word to ſpeak; *Once have I ſpoken, but I will ſpeak no more*; yet it muſt be confeſſed, he never carried it ſo like a godly man, as when, like a Child, he had not a word to ſpeak. God will make man ſee what a nothing he is in his beſt condition, when girt and prepared, when armed (*Cap-a-pe*) all over, for any ſervice for God; even then, man is a vain thing without the preſent aſſiſtance of God; what is he then when he is to contend or plead with God! If the whole world ſhould lay their forces, or, as we ſay, compare notes together, what could they do in diſpute with God? They that think they touch the clouds with their heads, would moulder as duſt at his feet.

That ſuch was the contention to which the Lord here calls *Job*, and bids him gird up his loins, or be in a readineſs for, appears plainly in the next words.

I will demand of thee, and anſwer thou me.

As if the Lord had ſaid, *Thou gaveſt me my choice* (So *Job* did Chap. 13. 22.) whether I would be Opponent or or Defendant; well then ſaith God, this is my choice, I will oppoſe, and do thou anſwer.

I will demand of thee.] That is, put queſtions to thee; and we ſhall ſee preſently how thick queſtions or demands came upon him like hail-ſhot, and he had not a word to anſwer, though God required it.

And anſwer thou me.] Mr. *Broughton* renders, *And let me ſee thy skill.* The word is, *Inſtruct me*, or *Make me to know, Wiſe me* (as we ſay) I would fain be informed by thee, teach thou me, notifie the matter to me, as the word may be tranſlated. *I will demand, and anſwer thou me.* The Lord did not call upon him for Anſwers, as to be informed by him, but only to convince him that he could not anſwer him, as he confeſſed at the fifth verſe of the fortieth Chapter; *Once have I ſpoken, but I will not anſwer:* nor indeed could he. To all the demands which the Lord made afterwards, he made no anſwer at all; ſo that theſe words, *Anſwer me*, or *Inſtruct and inform me*, are a gentle irony, whereby the Lord would make him know himſelf, or be ſenſible of his own ignorance or ſmall attainments in knowledg; and thereby convince him, that he had done raſhly, in deſiring and wiſhing for ſuch a debate or hearing of his cauſe. The Lord was pleaſed to rebuke him thus ſecretly, or in a figure, and not to fall upon him in plain downright terms. O thou weak and ignorant creature, who haſt preſumed to appear before me, and try thy cauſe with me: Now, Go to, Let me ſee what thou canſt do, ſhew thy beſt skill, put forth thy utmoſt ſtrength of argument, in reaſoning about or againſt my dealings with thee. Thus the Lord might have confounded him; but he was pleaſed to carry it in a milder way, yet in a way as effectual to humble and meeken *Job*'s ſpirit. God needs not preſs man by power, he can do it by reaſon or force of argument, and ſo ſtop his mouth for ever. The Apoſtle ſaith (*Rom.* 3. 19.) *All the world ſhall become guilty before God*; and in the ſame Chapter he ſaith, *God ſhall be juſtified in his ſayings, and overcome when he is judged.* The Lord always doth things with ſo much juſtice, and ſpeaks with ſo much reaſon, that no man is able to anſwer a word, or reply upon him. And though he might ſilence or ſtop any mans mouth, by his meer Command and Authority, yet he condeſcends to do it rather by reaſon and demonſtration, leſt any ſhould ſay, or complain, they were rather overpowered by the greatneſs of his Majeſty, than caſt by the right and equity of his Cauſe. Thus we ſee how the Lord in this Preface prepares *Job* to hearken to thoſe demands that he had to put to him, and to anſwer them if he could; but *Job* (alas poor man!) had not a word to anſwer any one of thoſe demands, which the Lord put to him, either in the following part of this Chapter, or in the next.

והודיעני *Et notifica mihi.*

Sunt quædam interrogationes, quæ non fiunt ut ſciatur veritas ab interrogante, ſed ut extorqueatur à reſpondente vel certè prodatur ignorantia reſpondentis cujuſmodi eſſe ſolent magiſtratuum & magiſtrorum interrogationes.

Ironia continuatur. Non enim eo interrogaturus erat ut diſceret, ſed ut doceret, vel ut Job *intelligeret & fateretur ſe ignorare.* Coc.

Ironia ſed amica, qua Jobum *vult in viam reducere.* Merc.

VERS. 4, 5, 6.

Where waſt thou, when I laid the foundations of the Earth? declare if thou haſt underſtanding.

Who hath laid the meaſures thereof, if thou knoweſt, or who hath ſtretched the line upon it?

Whereupon are the foundations thereof ſet, or who laid the corner-ſtone thereof?

In the former Verſe, God told *Job* what himſelf would do, or in what method he would proceed with him; *I will demand of thee* (ſaith the Lord) or I will put the Queſtion to thee: In this verſe the Lord begins to make his Demands, to put Queſtions to *Job*, and calls for his Anſwer; theſe Demands or Queſtions contain the confutation of *Job*'s former complaining ſpeeches againſt, or, at leaſt, about the dealings of God. The firſt Queſtion we have in this fourth verſe;

Where waſt thou, when I laid the foundations of the Earth?

For the clearing of this whole diſcourſe, in which the Lord puts Queſtions or Demands to *Job*, I ſhall firſt conſider the general ſcope of them all, and then the ſpecial matter contained and couched in the preſent context.

The ſcope which God ſeems to have in preſſing *Job* with theſe Demands or Queſtions, may be threefold.

Firſt, That by arguments from the leſs to the greater, he might ſhew *Job*, that he was not able to comprehend the reaſon of his myſterious providential workings towards the Children of Men, ſeeing he could not give a reaſon of his ſenſible and natural works.

Secondly, That *Job* being put to confeſs his ignorance about worldly or natural things, he might be brought to have low thoughts of himſelf, and (as he did indeed at laſt in Chapter 42.) *to abhor himſelf, repenting in duſt and aſhes:* Therefore, as one of the Ancients ſaith upon this place; *After God had a great while, as it were, debated* with him, and queſtioned him by his rod, he now debated with him by word, putting Queſtions to him.

Beatus Job *poſt interrogationem verberis diſcutitur interrogatione ſermonis.* Greg.

Thirdly, The Lord came thick and threefold (as we ſay) upon *Job*, with theſe ſearching Queſtions, thereby to convince him, that if by his own mighty power he had made, and by his wiſe providence had ordered the whole courſe of Nature, and all the parts of it, ſo exactly, ſurely then *Job* might collect and conclude that God in his adminiſtrations towards him, a particular ſingle perſon, muſt needs carry all things in wiſdom and with juſtice. And, that if God did ſhew forth ſo much wiſdom and faithfulneſs, in making, and in ordering the world, which was made for man, and for him among others of mankind; then much more was the providence of God rightly and duly adminiſtred unto all men, and him. If the Lord took ſuch care of the Earth, when he had ſhewed his power in making of it; if he took care about the bruit beaſts and other creatures of the Earth, which are the ſtock of it; then doubtleſs he took a due care of man, and of him in particular, man being the chief part of this lower creation, and *Job* being a principal one among the ſons of men.

Si propter tè mundus tanta fruitur providentia quanto magis ipſe.

More diſtinctly. In this Context, and thoſe which follow, about the works of God, the conviction ariſeth three ways upon *Job*, or God deals with him by a threefold argument; and all to humble him, and bring him upon his knees.

Firſt, By comparing the eternity of God with *Job*'s time, who was but of yeſterday; therefore ſaith he, *Where waſt thou when I laid the foundations of the Earth?* As if he had ſaid, pray how old are you, that you ſhould take upon you to contend with me, about my dealings with you? As the Jews ſaid ignorantly to Chriſt, whoſe day *Abraham* ſaw by faith, and was glad, *Thou art not yet fifty years old, and haſt thou ſeen Abraham?* (John 8. 57.) So the Lord might ſay in the fulneſs of his knowledg, to *Job*, Thou art not yet a hundred years old, ſure; *Where* (then) *waſt thou when I laid the foundations of the Earth?*

Secondly, The Lord ſets before *Job* his own Omniſcience and thereby convinceth *Job* of his ignorance, or of the little knowledg, as well as experience, that he had of things done long before: *Declare* (ſaith God) *if thou haſt underſtanding*, at the fourth Verſe; and *if thou knoweſt*, at the fifth verſe. As if the Lord had ſaid, I can declare theſe things, I know theſe things; what's thy knowledg about them, in compariſon of my knowledg? Thy light is but darkneſs, and thy knowledg ignorance compared with mine; therefore preſume not.

Thirdly, The Lord convinceth *Job* by his helpleſneſs to him, both in the Works of Creation and Providence; thereby ſetting forth his own Omnipotency, together with *Job*'s impotency; which was ſuch as contributed nothing either to the Creation, or to the Government of the World. *Where waſt thou, when I laid the foundations of the Earth*, and did all theſe things? Didſt thou come to give me either counſel how to do them, or lend me thy hand in the doing of them? Surely no; I did them alone, thou waſt not in being, thou art not from the beginning. Thy knowledg is very ſmall, and thy power and ſtrength ſmaller, as to the bringing about of any of theſe things; therefore ſee thy vanity, in ſpeaking thus complainingly, about my dealings with thee.

From and upon all theſe conſiderations, the Lord would have *Job* ſit down and acknowledg, that it muſt needs be extream raſhneſs in him to find fault with any of his Diſpenſations, or plead with him about them: The general argument may be fram'd thus;

He is blame-worthy, that finds fault with or complains about any thing in the Government of God, or will adventure to diſpute, and debate with him about it; unleſs we have ſomewhat like the Eternity, the Wiſdom, the Might, and Power of God.

But, Job, *thou haſt nothing like the Eternity of God, for thou art but of the other day; thou haſt nothing like the Omniſcience of God, for thou art ignorant of what God hath done, and deſtitute of counſel what to do thy ſelf: Thou haſt nothing like the Power of God, the Arm of God, thou art weak, thou canſt not make the leaſt worm, the leaſt fly; ſurely, then thou canſt do nothing towards the making of a world: Therefore thou art blame-worthy, for finding fault with, and complaining about what God hath done.*

The firſt Propoſition is fully implied, throughout the diſcourſe. The Aſſumption is expreſt in many ſharp and cutting queries, from the 4. *Verſ.* of this Chapter, *Where waſt thou,* &c. To the 34. of the next. The parts of this Aſſumption are many; whereof the firſt treats of Creation, from this fourth verſe to the 22; The ſecond of Providence in general, chiefly in the Meteors; from the 22. Verſe to the end of this Chapter; the third, of ſpecial Providence towards the Beaſt of the Earth, and the Fowls of the Air, from the firſt verſe of the 39. Chapter to the end.

So that, the proof of this Aſſumption, that *Job* had no hand, gave no counſel, no furtherance, no aſſiſtance, in the Works of Creation and Providence; I ſay this Aſſumption, contains the Hiſtory of the greateſt things in all the parts of Nature: for whatſoever belongs to true Philoſophy, may be reduced to it, or clearly diſcovered in it; and herein we are taught the true uſe of Philoſophy, even to raiſe the mind of man to the contemplation of the Eternity, Power, and Wiſdom of God; as alſo of our own frailty, weakneſs, nothingneſs, and ſo to ſit down in an humble ſubmiſſion, to whatſoever the Lord doth with us, or ours, in this world.

So much of the argument and general ſcope of this whole diſcourſe.

The Lord begins with the Work of Creation, thereby humbling *Job* to this Confeſſion, that he had nothing at all to do with it.

Verſ. 4. **Where waſt thou, when I laid the foundations of the Earth?**

Quando Deus interrogat ubi eras? Revocat in mentem Jobo *quis ſit, & ex quo, & quam brevis ævi.* Codur.

We have the Creation aſſerted in theſe words, and God is pleaſed to ſpeak of it metaphorically, by a compariſon drawn from Architecture, or the model of a Building: *Where waſt thou, when I laid the foundations of the Earth?*

Antelunares

Eliphaz put a queſtion of a near import with this (*Chap.* 15.7.) *Art thou the firſt man that was born? Or waſt thou made before the hills?* Here the Lord ſpeaks the ſame Language, *Where waſt thou, when I laid the foundations of the Earth?* Waſt thou made before the World? There was a ſort of men ſpoken of by the Ancients, called (*Proſelenes*) Men made before the Moon, who boaſted that they were a people before the Moon was made: others ſaid they were before the Earth. The Scripture tells us that man was made out of the Earth; well then might the Lord demand, *Where waſt thou, when I laid the foundations of the Earth?* Waſt thou before the Earth? Or before the Moon? Where waſt thou? Surely thou waſt no where, thou waſt not in being, when I laid the foundations of the Earth; foraſmuch as thy foundation is of the Earth, thou art but duſt of the Earth; therefore where waſt thou when I laid the foundations of the Earth? Thou hadſt no Being then, unleſs in my decree and purpoſe for the bringing of thee forth in thy ſeaſon and generation. We may ſay, every man was ſomewhere, when God laid the foundations of the Earth; he was in the Purpoſe, Decree, and Counſel of God; which was from Eternity. Every man had a being in the mind of God, when God laid the foundations of the Earth; but where waſt thou or any man, as to any exiſtence, when I laid the foundations of the Earth? Now if this be thy caſe, thou haſt no reaſon to be ſo high and big in thy own thoughts, or to ſpeak ſo diſcontentedly about my dealings with thee. Do I need thy counſel in governing the world, who needed it not in making the world? *Where waſt thou?* &c.

And here we may take notice of the difference of Scripture Language in this point, with reſpect to our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; and by conſidering the different language of the Scripture concerning Chriſt, we have a clear argument to prove the God-head of Chriſt, or that he is God by Nature; foraſmuch as he had his exiſtence, when God laid the foundation of the Earth. Hear what Wiſdom, ſubſtantial Wiſdom, that is Jeſus Chriſt, ſpake of himſelf (*Prov.* 8.22.) *The Lord poſſeſſed me in the beginning of his way* (that is, in the beginning of his ways of Creation) *before his works of old; I was ſet up from everlaſting, from the beginning, or ever the Earth was.* Where waſt thou, ſaith God to *Job*, when I laid the foundations of the Earth? But Jeſus Chriſt the true Wiſdom, ſaith, he was before the Earth was; *When there was no depth, I was brought forth; when there was no fountain abounding with water. While as yet he had not made the Earth, nor the fields, nor the higheſt parts of the duſt of the World: When he prepared the Heavens, I was there: When he ſet a compaſs upon the face of the depth: When he eſtabliſhed the Clouds above; when he ſtrengthened the fountains of the deep: When he gave to the Sea his decree, that the waters ſhould not paſs his commandments: When he appointed the foundations of the Earth: Then was I by him as one brought up with him; and I was daily his delight, rejoycing always before him,* &c.

You ſee how the Spirit ſpeaks concerning Chriſt, the true Wiſdom, the ſubſtantial Wiſdom, he was before God laid the foundations of the Earth; therefore he is God, he is eternal. But when God comes to ſpeak to *Job*, a man, he ſaith, *Where waſt thou when I laid the foundations of the Earth?* (John 1.1.) *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was God; and by him all things were made.* Jeſus Chriſt had a hand in making the World, in laying the foundations of it, the work is aſcribed to him. Here's the glory of Jeſus Chriſt above all creatures, and this is an unanſwerable proof of the God-head and Divinity of Jeſus Chriſt; as 'tis of mans frailty, when the Lord demands,

Where waſt thou, when I laid the foundations of the Earth? 'Tis as if the Lord had ſaid, Remember how ſhort a time thou haſt been, how little a while it is ſince thou cam'ſt into the World?

There are two things which men ſhould much conſider;

Firſt, How little a while they have been in this World.

Secondly, How little a time they have to ſtay in this World. *Where waſt thou,*

When I laid the foundations of the Earth?

בִיסְדִי *In fundare me, vel cum fundarem.*

The Hebrew is but one word, Where waſt thou, when *I founded the Earth?* we ſay, *When I laid the foundations of the Earth?* What's a foundation? There are four things to be noted about a foundation.

Firſt, A foundation is the loweſt part of a building. The *Top* or *Head-ſtone* (Zach. 4.7.) and the foundation-ſtone, are at utmoſt diſtance; the one higheſt, the other loweſt, the one firſt laid down, the other laſt ſet up.

Secondly, The foundation is an unſeen part of the building: we behold the ſuperſtructure, the walls and towers, when raiſed, we behold the battlements and pinnacles; but we cannot behold the foundation, that's an unſeen part of the building.

Thirdly, The foundation is the moſt neceſſary part of the building. There are ſome parts of a building, which are only for ornament and beauty; there are other parts of a building, which though they are ſomewhat neceſſary, yet not much neceſſary; the building might ſtand without them, but a foundation is of abſolute neceſſity: there cannot be a continuing Houſe without a Foundation.

Fourthly, The foundation is the ſupport of the whole building; that bears and upholds all the reſt.

But ſome may ſay, What are the foundations of the Earth?

I anſwer, A foundation may be taken either properly or metaphorically; formally, or alluſively.

The foundations of the Earth are not formal, but metaphorical foundations: 'Tis a ſpeech borrowed from men, who muſt have a proper foundation for their buildings. The Earth is not laid upon any formal, but it hath a vertual foundation. The Scripture ſaith ſometimes, that the Earth is founded upon the *Seas, and eſtabliſhed upon the floods* (Pſal. 24.2.) yet in a proper ſenſe, the Sea is not the foundation of the Earth. It's ſaid, alſo (*Job* 26.7.) *He hangeth the Earth upon nothing.* The whole bulk of Sea and Earth together, are one Globe, one Building, formed and compacted together.

But the Earth may be ſaid to have foundations, and that God hath laid the foundations of it; for this reaſon: Becauſe the Earth is ſet faſt and firm, it is like a Houſe that hath foundations, not only a fondation, but foundations; it ſtands moſt firm. A Houſe builded upon a rock (*Matth.* 7.25.) ſtands faſt and immoveably in all weathers, becauſe built upon a ſure foundation: A Houſe builded upon the ſands, falls, it hath no ſure foundation. The Earth is made firm, ſtrong, and ſure, as thoſe Houſes or buildings that are raiſed upon rocks; and is therefore ſaid to have foundations. Why is Heaven, or the ſtate of glory, called *a City having foundations* (Heb. 11.10.) but becauſe the ſtate of glory, or that glorious City, is a firm ſtate; or (as it is called in another place (*Chap.* 13. 14.) *a continuing City*: A City which ſhall it ſelf continue for ever, and whoſe Citizens (without ſucceſſion) continue for ever. Now though the Earth be but a moveable tent or weak cottage, in compariſon of Heaven or our Heavenly ſtate; yet God in his infinite wiſdom and Power, hath formed and eſtabliſhed it ſo firmly for the habitation of man and all inferiour creatures, upon its own center; that the Lord may truly be ſaid to have built it upon foundations, or to have appointed foundations for it: as 'tis often expreſſed elſewhere (*Pſal.* 102. 25. *Pſal.* 104. 5. *Prov.* 8.29.) as well as here. *Where waſt thou,*

When I laid the foundations of the Earth?

The form of the words is conſiderable, in oppoſition to that opinion of ſome of the Ancients, who attributed the ſite of the Earth, and of the other Elements, not to any divine ſupernatural Power of the Maker, but to the very Nature of the Earth, or the neceſſity of the Matter; according to which, heavy things tend downward, and light things riſe high; ſo according to that opinion, the Earth being a heavy body, falleth loweſt, or took its place of its ſelf. Now that this opinion may be confuted and ſhut out of doors, the Lord compares his making of the world, to the building of a Houſe; which is ordered according to the reaſon of the builder: ſo that though it be a truth in Nature, that heavy things fall loweſt, yet we are to aſcribe all to the wiſdom of God, the Diſpoſer of them; who hath done all things according to the pleaſure of his own will, and that with ſuch admirable contrivance, that man is not able to comprehend it; as the laſt words of the verſe intimate: Where waſt thou, when I laid the foundation of the Earth? *Declare if thou haſt underſtanding.*

Aquin. In *loc.*

But before I paſs to thoſe words in the latter part of the verſe, I ſhall gather up ſome obſervations from this former part of it; *Where waſt thou, when I laid the foundations of the Earth?* &c.

Hence Note; Firſt, *The time of man upon Earth, compared with the Eternity of God, is nothing.*

Where waſt thou? David (Pſal. 39.4.) prayed that God would teach him how frail he was, as to the duration of his life; and he adds in the next verſe, *Mine age is nothing before thee.* The age of man is nothing before God, if we conſider it as to its beginning, or if we conſider it as to its ending. When began the age of the moſt aged man? Are not all men of *Yeſterday?* God had an eternity of Being, before man was upon the face of the Earth. And what's the age of man as to its continuance? As it began but yeſterday, that is, a very little while ago, or but the day paſt; ſo it may end to morrow, that is within a few days to come, yea poſſibly before the next day or the morrow cometh. Boaſt not of to morrow (*Prov.* 27.1.) both becauſe thou knoweſt not what a day may bring forth, nor whether, as to thee, a to morrow ſhall be brought forth. Death ſweeps men ſuddenly from the face of the earth; only the Lord always is, and is always the ſame: All things change, but God is not changed: He is himſelf, and his years fail not: Then what's mans age compared to God?

Note, Secondly; *God is the firſt Being.*

Where waſt thou, when I laid the foundations of the Earth? God alone was before all things; yet he was not at all alone: For (as one of the Ancients ſaith) He *was to* himſelf a world, place, and time, and all things.

Ante omnia erat Deus ſolus, ipſe ſibi & mundus & locus & tempus & omnia. Tertul. *adverſus* Praxeam. *Cap.* 5.

Thirdly; *God is an Eternal Being.*

It's poſſible for one to be firſt, and not to be eternal. One man may have a Being before another, and not have a Being from eternity; but God had an eternal Being, before the world had a Being, or man any Being in the world.

There are Things of three ſorts:

Firſt, Such as have had a beginning, and ſhall have an end, and be no more. Thus it is with all meer ſenſitive Creatures, the Beaſts of the Earth, and Fowls of the Air; they periſh, there's an end of their being, when they die, or come to the end of their lives.

Secondly, There are other things which have had a beginning, yet ſhall have no end; As Spirits, Angels good or bad, and the ſouls of men: Yea, the bodies of men, though they are ſubject to, and are cut off by death, yet they ſhall return again; and having been ſown in corruption, ſhall be raiſed in incorruption; and be cloathed with immortality, which is a piece of Eternity.

Thirdly, There is a Being, which is without beginning, and without ending; and that is Gods Being only, or the Being of God; who thus expreſt himſelf to *Moſes, I am, and I am, that I am*; (Exod. 3. 14.) That word takes in all Time, paſt, preſent, and to come; yea, paſt, preſent, and to come, are all one in Gods Being (*Pſal.* 90.1.) *Thou haſt been our habitation, from generation to generation:* That is, We thy people, have always, or in all revolutions of time, dwelt or ſheltered our ſelves in thee: and then at the ſecond verſe, they confeſs not only their being in him throughout all generations, but his moſt bleſſed Being before all generations; *Before Mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadſt formed the Earth, and the World; even from everlaſting to everlaſting, thou art God.* The firſt Being is an eternal Being, and therefore the Prophet ſaith (*Iſa.* 57.15.) *God inhabiteth Eternity.* The Eternal dwells in Eternity. But what is Eternity? One of the Ancients calleth it, *The perfect poſſeſſion of a boundleſs or limitleſs life, whole, and all at once.* Eternity hath no terms, nor bounds of beginning or ending: 'Tis a poſſeſſion of all at once, there is nothing paſt, or to come; but all is always preſent to God.

Æternitas eſt interminabilis vita tota ſimul & perfecta poſſeſſio. Boeth. *de Conſol.* l. 6.

Note, Fourthly; *God is the fountain of all being, he hath given a being to all things.*

The Apoſtle *Paul* (Acts 17.28.) diſcourſing with the *Athenians*, having ſaid, *In him we live, and move, and have our being*: convinceth them further by that ſaying of their own Poets, *for we are alſo his off-ſpring*; We ſpring from him as from a root or fountain. *With him is the fountain of lives* (Pſal. 36.9.) even of natural life, as well as of ſpiritual and eternal: Every life, every being, is but a ſtream iſſuing from *Jehovah*. And as every life is from God, ſo alſo is the being of all things without life. The Lord gave the liveleſs Earth its being, its beginning. Some Naturaliſts have aſſerted the eternity of the World, and ſo the eternity of the Earth: They could not compaſs which way or how the World could have a beginning, and therefore ſaid it had none. Here we have the Founder of the World, God himſelf, teaching man this Divine Philoſophy about the beginning of the World, and taking it to himſelf, *I laid the foundations of the Earth.* When the *Heathen Philoſopher* read what *Moſes* had written concerning the Creation of the World; *Thus the Heavens and the Earth were finiſhed, and all the hoſt of them* (Gen. 2. 1.

He preſently ſaid, *The man ſpeaks wonders, but how doth he prove what he hath ſpoken?* Where are his demonſtrations? He would put *Moſes* to his proof: but *Moſes*'s proof was faith in the teſtimony of God. *Through faith we underſtand that the Worlds were framed by the Word of God; ſo that things which are ſeen, were not made of things which do appear* (Heb. 11. 3.) We underſtand the Work of Creation, yet not by the ſtrength of natural reaſon, but through faith; which gives credit to the Word of God, and perſwades the heart that the report therein made is a truth. For though ſome Philoſophers have evinced by arguments grounded upon reaſon, that the World was made; yet that it was made by the Word of God, either the Eſſential Word, *the Son of God* ſpoken of (*John* 1. 1.) who is the efficient cauſe of it; or by the Declarative Word, ſpoken of in this place of the *Hebrews*, which was the means or inſtrumental cauſe of making the World (*Gen.* 1. 3, 6.) This, I ſay, cannot at all be underſtood by reaſon, but purely and only by faith, becauſe it is ſo revealed in the Scriptures.

Plato in Timæo.

Fifthly, In that the Lord here ſaith, *I laid the foundations of the Earth:*

Obſerve; *God hath made the Earth firm and immoveable.*

The ſtability of the Earth is of God, as much as the being and exiſtence of it (*Pſal.* 104. 5.) *He laid the foundations of the Earth, that it ſhould not be removed for ever.* There have been many Earth-quakes or movings of the Earth in ſeveral parts of it, but the whole body of the Earth was never removed, ſo much as one hairs breadth out of its place, ſince the foundations thereof were laid. *Archimedes* the great Mathematician, ſaid, *If you will give me a place to ſet my Engin on, I will remove the Earth.* It was a great brag; but the Lord hath laid it faſt enough for mans removing. Himſelf can make it quake and ſhake, he can move it when he pleaſeth; but he never hath nor will remove it. He hath laid the foundations of the Earth that it ſhall not be removed, nor can it be at all moved, but at his pleaſure; and when it moves at any time, it is to mind the ſons of men that they by their ſins have moved him to diſpleaſure. There hath been or will be a ſhaking of the Earth in mercy, for we have it in a promiſe (*Heb.* 12. 26.) *Whoſe voice then* (namely at the giving of the Law) *ſhook the Earth; but now he hath promiſed, ſaying, yet once more I ſhake not the Earth only, but alſo Heaven.* Some underſtand this promiſe as fulfilled at the coming of Chriſt in the fleſh, at which time indeed there were notable and amazing motions and alterations both in Heaven and Earth. Others expound it of the Day of the ultimate Judgment; not a few of ſome great providential diſpenſations of God, which ſhall ſhake not the Earth only, but alſo the Heavens, as taken in a Metaphor for earthly and heavenly things, referring to the Church of God and the Kingdoms of Men. I ſhall not interpoſe in this matter about the ſenſe of that Text: but only ſay, whatever the Apoſtle meant by Earth or Heaven, and the ſhaking of it, yet this remains as an unſhaken Axiom, that the Fabrick of the Earth (properly taken) ſtands faſt: *The Lord hath laid the foundations of it, that it ſhould not be removed. David* to ſhew the ſtedfaſtneſs of his faith, put the ſuppoſition (*Pſal.* 46. 2.) *Therefore will not we fear, though the Earth be moved.* The Prophet alſo did the like, to aſſure us of the ſtability of the Covenant of Grace (*Iſa.* 54. 10.) yet we need not fear that either the Earth ſhall be removed; or the Mountains depart. Such ſuppoſitions ſhew indeed the immoveableneſs of the Word which God hath ſpoken, not the moveableneſs (by any natural power or natural decay) of the Earth, whoſe foundations he hath laid. And hence the Pſalmiſt argues the Lords faithfulneſs to his Word (*Pſal.* 119. 90.) All earthly things move, but the Earth wherein all theſe motions are made, *ſtands ſtill* (Eccl. 1. 4.) The Earth can no more move, than the Heavens can ſtand ſtill. Some modern Philoſophers have turned the ſcale of Nature, and would perſwade us that *the Heavens ſtand ſtill, and the Earth moves:* but 'tis good for us to ſtand to and abide by the Scripture, which tells us, the Earth *ſtands ſtill and abideth*; or it abideth, that is, *it ſtandeth*, as the Margin explains it (*Pſal.* 119. 90.) And that it ſtandeth ſtill or abideth, not only becauſe it hath ſtill a being (as things in motion have) but becauſe it is ſtill, or ſtands without moving, is ſo much my faith, as well as my ſenſe, that I ſee no reaſon to be moved from it.

Non magis movere naturaliter terra, quam quieſcere cœlum poteſt. Bold.

Sixthly, *The Power and Will of God are the only foundations of the Earth.* 'Tis ſaid by the Pſalmiſt, he hath founded it upon the waters (as was ſhewed before) yet that cannot be meant properly; for how can water, a fluid body, naturally bear up or ſuſtain the Earth, a heavy body, and not at all boyant? We all ſee it hangeth or ſtandeth in the air. But what foundation can the air be to the Earth, which will ſcarcely bear a feather. It remains then undeniable that the Will and Power of God are the foundations of the Earth: There's nothing can be given or aſſigned in reaſon, if you look not to the Will of God, for the foundation of the Earth. Beſides that, ther's no bottom for it. One of the Ancients giving a deſcription of the Creation, ſaith, *All things are laid upon his Power and Will; theſe are the foundations, the ſtay, and eſtabliſhment of all things.* And as it is ſo with reſpect to the ſtanding of the Earth, ſo, with reſpect to all thoſe great things which God hath promiſed to do in the Earth; the foundation of them all, is his own Power and Will, or his Powerful Will. The foundation laid in Election, and the foundation laid in Redemption by Jeſus Chriſt (other foundation can no man lay for all our ſpiritual comforts, preſent priviledges, and future hopes, 1 *Cor.* 3. 11.) Theſe foundations, I ſay, were laid in the Will of God, *Lo I come to do thy Will, O God,* (Heb. 10. 7, 9.) The Will of God is the foundation and eſtabliſhment of all things, whether Natural or Civil, Spiritual or Eternal.

Rationi nihil occurrit, cui innitatur terra, ſi divinam exceperis voluntatem. Nazian. Orat. 24.

Omnia repoſita exiſtimo in ejus poteſtate, quod voluntas ejus ſit fundamentum univerſorum Ambr. *l.* 1. Hexam. *c.* 6.

Seventhly, From the ſcope of theſe words we may

Obſerve; *God who hath made the Earth by his Power, doth alſo govern it, and man who inhabits it.*

And therefore man ought to be quiet, and ſit down in his governing as well as in his Creating Will. To convince and perſwade *Job* of this, is (as hath been toucht) the purpoſe of God in all that followeth. He that hath made the World, governs the World; and if ſo, ſhall poor creatures, you or I, or any other, though a *Job*, find fault with his government of it? Will a Maſter-Builder ſuffer any one to find fault with his work, who underſtands not how to lay a ſtone in it, much leſs to give the rule or direction for the whole work? Foraſmuch then as the Lord is not only the Maſter-Builder, but the ſole Maker of this great Houſe, the World, it becomes man, for whoſe uſe it was made, to acquieſce or reſt quietly in his Government of it. Surely, the Maker of all things, hath a right to diſpoſe of all things; and therefore all perſons are to be ſatisfied in his diſpoſal of them.

From the whole verſe and the obſervations given upon it, take theſe Scripture inferences.

Firſt, The Scripture makes this inference from it; *God is one, and there is none like to him* (Iſa. 40 26. Iſa. 46. 8.) *To whom will ye liken me? To whom will you compare me? I am he that ſtretched out the Heavens, and laid the foundation of the Earth.* There's none like to him in Wiſdom, none in Power, who laid the foundation of the Earth. There was never ſuch a viſible piece of work done in the World, as the making of the World; therefore there is none ſuch as the Maker of the World. The hypocrite is brought in dreaming that *God was altogether ſuch as himſelf* (Pſal. 50. 21.) And 'tis, as it hath been, the common guiſe of Idolaters, to think that God is no better than their Idol. But what the Lord by his Prophet (*Jer.* 10. 11, 12.) taught the captive Jews to ſay to their great Lords the Babylonians, the ſame hath he taught us to ſay to all Hypocrites and Idolaters: *The gods that have not made the Heavens and the earth, ſhall periſh from the earth, and from under theſe Heavens:* Then preſently followeth (as in *Job*) *He hath made the earth by his power, he hath eſtabliſhed the world by his wiſdom, and hath ſtretched out the Heavens by his diſcretion.* As if it had been ſaid, Will ye imagin that the Idols which you have made, are like him, who made you and all things?. And 'tis conſiderable, that whereas the whole Propheſie of *Jeremy* is written in the Hebrew Tongue, this eleventh verſe, which holds out at once a teſtimony and a threatning againſt thoſe Idolaters, is written in the Chaldean Language, with which the Jews by their long Captivity in *Babylon* were well acquainted; that ſo the Babylonians might hear of it, and know that the God of *Iſrael*, who made heaven and earth, was altogether unlike their gods, who did never ſo much as arrogate to themſelves any hand in, much leſs, the ſole power of making heaven and earth.

Secondly, Take this Scripture inference. Seeing the Lord hath laid the foundations of the earth, by his own Power and Wiſdom, then, *He is the Proprietor of the whole earth, or the whole earth is the Lords proper poſſeſſion* (Pſal.24.1.) *The earth is the Lords, and the fulneſs thereof*; the Lord made it, and it is his. He was not called, nor ſet a work to build this great Houſe for another; but he made it, as by his own power, ſo for his own pleaſure; all the inhabitants of the earth are his tenants: and not only the earth, but the whole ſtock and furniture of it is his: For as the Lord made the earth, ſo all that the earth is ſtored with. Thus ſpake *Abraham* (Gen.14.22.) to the King of *Sodom*, who *bid him take the goods to himſelf: I have lifted up my hand unto the Lord, the moſt high God, poſſeſſor of heaven and earth:* that *I will not take from a threed even to a ſhoo-latchet*, &c. As if he had ſaid, *The Lord who is poſſeſſor of heaven and earth, is my portion, my poſſeſſion; and he can give me enough of the earth, yea he will give me heaven alſo:* therefore, *I will not take any thing of thine, leſt thou ſhouldeſt ſay, I have made Abraham rich.* The Lord, who is poſſeſſor of the earth, can give his people what earthly portions, or poſſeſſions of the earth he pleaſeth. And let us remember, what earthly portions ſoever we have in this world, we have no reaſon to boaſt; ſeeing all is the Lords, and we are but his ſtewards and tenants at will. And becauſe 'tis the Lords earth which we poſſeſs, let us alſo remember to pay our rent, our quit-rent to him, that is, thanks duly and dayly; leſt we provoke him to diſtrain upon us, or to take the forfeiture, and turn us out of all. Many hold lands from great Lords, to pay only ſome ſmall rent or ſervice, in a way of acknowledgment; O let us remember to pay our rent to our Great Land-Lord, The Lord of the whole earth. They who acknowledg, what they have is his, or that they have and hold all they have of him; will honour him with what they have, *even with their ſubſtance, and with the firſt fruits of all their increaſe*, (Prov. 3. 9.)

Thirdly, We may infer; Seeing *God founded the earth, He is alſo the Ruler of it.* And that the Lord rules the earth, is a mercy to all men on the earth. *The Lord reigns, let the earth rejoyce* (Pſal. 97. 1.) That is, men of the earth have cauſe to rejoyce, becauſe they have God, who is infinitely both wiſe and good, to rule them. *The Lord is King over all the earth; ſing ye praiſes with underſtanding* (Pſal. 47. 7.) And ſurely they who underſtand what a King he is, will praiſe him.

Fourthly, We may be encouraged *to go unto God, or apply our ſelves to God, about all things here on earth, ſeeing he hath laid the foundations of the earth.* The Lord having invited his people to *ask him things to come concerning his ſons, and concerning the work of his hands, to command him* (Iſa.45. 11.) adds this in the next words, as an encouragement to do ſo; *I have made the earth, and created man upon it:* As if he had ſaid, *Ask of me whatever you would have me do, or would have done on earth; for I am he that created the earth.* It may help our faith much, when (as *David* expreſſeth it, *Pſal.* 11. 3.) the very *foundations* (of earthly things) are deſtroyed, to conſider that God laid the foundations of the earth: In ſuch a caſe it may be ſaid (as it followeth there in the Pſalm) *What can the Righteous do?* But may it not be ſaid even in that hard caſe, when foundations are deſtroyed, *What cannot the Lord do, who laid the foundations of the earth?* This argument the Pſalmiſt alſo uſeth (*Pſal.* 124. 8.) *Our help ſtands in the Name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth.* Though earth and heaven ſhake, and ſeem to be confounded or mingled together, yet he who made heaven and earth without help, can give us help, or be our helper. If our help ſtood in the beſt of men made of earth, they might fail us; but while our help ſtands in him that made the earth, he will never fail us, for he hath ſaid he will not (*Heb.* 13. 5.) and their experience who have truſted the Lord, hath ſaid it too (*Pſal.* 9. 10.) This is the great priviledg of all that believe, that may addreſs to God by Chriſt for any thing in this earth, becauſe he is the Maker of it; and having made it by a word ſpeaking, what cannot he do for them, if he ſpeak the word?

Fifthly, Let us be much in *praiſing the Lord for his wiſdom, power, and greatneſs, all which glorioustly appear and ſhine forth in his laying the foundations of the earth. David* makes this a ſpecial part of Divine praiſe (*Pſal.* 136. 6.) We ſhould not only praiſe the Lord for the great things he hath done on the earth, but for this, that he hath made the earth. The work of God in laying the foundations of the earth, calls as loudly for our praiſe, as any thing (except our Redemption from the earth, *Rev.* 5. 9.) (*Chap.* 14. 3.) which ever God wrought upon the face of the earth. The making of the earth calls us to praiſe the Lord:

Firſt, Becauſe he hath made ſo vaſt a body as this earth is, or becauſe he hath made ſuch a large Houſe for us.

Secondly, Becauſe he hath founded it ſo miraculouſly, hanging upon nothing that appears, but in the Air; yet ſtanding more firmly than any Houſe built upon a Rock.

Thirdly, We ſhould praiſe the wiſdom of God, that hath formed it ſo exactly, and adorned it ſo richly: It's not a houſe huddled and clapt up together, without skill or art, though it was made with a word ſpeaking in ſix days, yet it was made with infinite wiſdom, as is more particularly held out (*Verſ.* 5.) where the Lord ſpeaks of laying *the meaſures thereof, and ſtretching the line upon it*; as alſo of *faſtning the foundations and laying the corner-ſtone thereof*; all which ſhew it is not a houſe clapt up in haſte, but made with admirable exactneſs: ſo that (as 'tis uſual when great houſes are built) there were great acclamations made at the building of it; as we have it the ſeventh verſe of this Chapter, then *the morning ſtars ſang together, and all the ſons of God ſhouted for joy*, to ſee ſuch a magnificent pile reared up.

Laſtly, Take this inference; *If the viſible world be ſuch a building, what is the inviſible world*, the City *having foundations*, which God hath prepared for thoſe that love him?

Thus much of the firſt part of *Job*'s Conviction, he had nothing to do in laying the foundations of the earth, and he had as little in ſetting up and finiſhing that goodly ſtructure, as will appear in that which followeth.

Yet before the Lord proceeded any further to queſtion *Job* about this great work of Creation, he requires or calls for his anſwer in the cloſe of this fourth Verſe, to the Queſtion propounded in the former part of it; *Where waſt thou, when I laid the foundations of the Earth?*

Declare, if thou haſt underſtanding.

God challengeth *Job* to anſwer: The Hebrew is, *If thou knoweſt underſtanding.* And ſo the word is uſed (*Iſa.* 29. 24.) where we render, *They alſo that erred in ſpirit ſhall come to underſtanding*, or (as the Margin hath it) *ſhall know underſtanding.* Again, *Huram* ſaid (2*Chro.*2.12) *Bleſſed be the Lord God of Iſrael, that made heaven and earth; who hath given to David the King a wiſe ſon, endued with prudence and underſtanding*; The Original is thus ſtrictly read, *Knowing prudence and underſtanding. Daniel* ſpake in the ſame form (*Chap.* 2. 21.) *He giveth wiſdom to the wiſe, and knowledg to them that know underſtanding.* To know is a work of the underſtanding: No man knoweth any thing, but by the help of his underſtanding. The underſtanding is the firſt or Maſter-wheel in that noble engin the ſoul of man; and when rightly informed and inlightned, all the other wheels or faculties of the ſoul move aright, unleſs over-poized by paſſions and ſelf-ends. Every rational creature hath an underſtanding, yet every rational creature doth not *know underſtanding*, that is, doth not, is not able to ſpeak knowingly, or to uſe and act his underſtanding knowingly about every matter. The Lord ſuppoſeth *Job* might be defective here, and therefore beſpeaks him thus, *Declare, if thou haſt underſtanding*, or knoweſt underſtanding: As if he ſaid, *The things which I queſtion thee about, may poſſibly be too high or too big for thy underſtanding,*

ſuch

Si peritus ſis tantarum rerum. Vatab.

ſuch as poſſibly thou canſt not reach. And hence, ſome render, or rather paraphraſe the Text thus; *Declare, if thou art skilful in ſuch great things as I now ſpeak of: If thou art ſo wiſe as thou ſeemeſt to be by thy former conteſting with my Providences, declare thy wiſdom in this point, wherein I know thou wilt but declare thy ignorance, thy infancy*, or inability to ſpeak, as one ſpeaks: Thou wilt ſhew thy ſelf but a child, while thou goeſt about to reſolve this queſtion. An experienced Architect, is not to be corrected by a Novice, who never took Tool in hand, nor hath ever read line about that Art: Wilt thou therefore, who art made of the Earth, undertake to reprehend my Work, who made the Earth, in ordering and diſpoſing the condition of man on Earth? *Declare, if thou haſt underſtanding.*

Note, Firſt; *The right declaring of any thing, is a work of the underſtanding.*

A man muſt ſee into a matter, by the Eye of his Mind, before he can duly declare his mind, ſenſe, or ſentence about it. *A fools bolt* (we ſay) *is ſoon ſhot*; his tongue runs before his wit: but a wiſe man will not declare (no man can declare well) before he underſtands: His wit keeps pace at leaſt with his tongue; *He that anſwereth a matter* (ſaith *Solomon*, Prov. 18. 13.) *before he heareth it, it is folly and ſhame to him.* It is ſo alſo to him that heareth it, if he anſwereth it before he underſtands it. *Declare, if thou haſt underſtanding.*

Note, Secondly; *Some works of God are ſuch and ſo high, that no man hath underſtanding enough to reach or declare them.*

Declare, if thou haſt underſtanding, how the foundations of the Earth were laid. Man knoweth not where he was, nor what he was, before he was: how then ſhould he declare how any thing was done by God before he was? The great thing which God would inform *Job* in, is the ſame which the Apoſtle would inform us all in (*Rom.* 11. 33, 34.) while he brake out as a man amazed at the ſight of a tremendous Gulf in this paſſionate Exclamation, *O the depth of the riches both of the wiſdom and knowledge of God! how unſearchable are his Judgments, and his ways paſt finding out! for who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his Counſellor?*

The Lord having put this queſtion to *Job* about the Creation of the Earth in general, proceedeth more diſtinctly, to put him queſtions about that work, in alluſion to buildings.

And here are four things in theſe two Verſes which have a twofold reſpect to buildings: Here are two things which have reſpect to the form and ſymmetry of a building: And here are two things which have reſpect to the ſtrength and firmneſs of a building.

The form, ſymmetry, and right order of a building, is laid down in the fifth verſe, where the Lord ſpeaks of the meaſures of the earth, and of ſtretching out a line upon it. The meaſuring of a building, and the ſtretching out of the line upon it, reſpect the right ordering and modelling, or the due frame of the Fabrick.

The two other things that concern the ſtrength of a building, are the laying of the foundation and the faſtening of the Corner-ſtone; both theſe we have in the ſixth verſe: *Whereupon are the foundations thereof faſtened? or who laid the corner-ſtone thereof?* So then, we have here theſe two great and neceſſary concernments of a building:

First, The due form.

Secondly, The firmneſs of it.

When a Builder intends to raiſe a Fabrick, he firſt conſidereth and meaſureth the ground or plat where he intends to build: With reſpect to this, ſaith God, *Who hath laid the meaſures thereof?*

Ad amuſſim eriguntur parietes.

Secondly, When he is building, he uſeth his line to keep the work level and right: with reſpect to which, God ſaith, *Who hath ſtretched the line upon it?*

Thirdly, The Builder, that his work may be ſubſtantial, will be ſure to fix his foundation ſure: in reſpect of which, the Lord enquires of *Job*; *Whereupon are the foundations thereof faſtened?*

Fourthly, The Builder will be very careful to ſet right the corner-ſtone which holds the walls together: with reſpect to which, he demands an account in theſe words, *Who hath laid the corner-ſtone thereof?*

Verſe 5. **Who hath laid the meaſures thereof?**

That is, taken the meaſures of the earth: Theſe meaſures reſpect the quantity or dimenſions of the earth, its length, breadth, and thickneſs; theſe were laid meerly according to the good pleaſure of God, which no man is able to give a reaſon of; and therefore, he adds, *if thou knoweſt.* The word which we render *laid*, implies a laying with art, as alſo with care and diligence; in all keeping a due decorum or proportion, reſpecting the length, breadth, and deepneſs of the building. God uſed this word when he ſpake to *Moſes* about the Fabrick of mans body (which is a little world, a compendium of the greater world) (*Exod.* 4. 11.) *Who hath made mans mouth? or who hath* made *the deaf, or the ſeeing? &c.* The Text is, *Who hath laid mans mouth?* Who hath laid it in that due proportion, or ſo placed it, that it may fit with the whole, and every member, that it with the eyes, ears, *&c.* may ſtand in perfect order, both for uſe and ornament? Thus the Lord hath laid the meaſures of the earth; He meaſured out the ſeveral parts of it, where the Valleys ſhould be, and where the Plains; where the Hills and Mountains, and where the Rivers and Channels: He meaſured all theſe, that is, he diſpoſed them in a comely order. There is a great appearance of the Wiſdom of God in ſetling every thing in its proper place, that one may anſwer in proportion with another; the perfection and beauty of the whole ariſeth out of the ſymmetry and proportionableneſs of the parts; *Who hath laid the meaſures thereof?*

Further, This laying the meaſures, notes, as the exactneſs, ſo the greatneſs of the work. In Scripture language, *a building of meaſures, or an houſe of meaſures*, ſignifieth a great houſe or building (*Jer.* 22. 14.) *Woe to him that ſaith, I will build me a wide houſe, and large chambers:* The Hebrew is, *an houſe of meaſures*, that is, of a great meaſure. The Septuagint render it, *a meaſured houſe*, a houſe having a due proportion of longitude and latitude, of heighth and depth. When the Searchers ſent by *Moſes* came back and reported the ſtate of the Land which they had viewed, we ſaw (ſaid they) *men of a great ſtature*, (*Numb.* 13. 32.) The Text is, *men of meaſures*, vaſt and tall men. Little things have little need of meaſuring, and 'tis ſcarce worth while to do it: But as great things are greatly to be admired, ſo they are worthy to be meaſured. How great, how marvellous is that Myſtical City and Temple, whoſe meaſures were taken and ſhewed to *Ezekiel* in a Viſion (*Chap.* 40. 41, 42, 48. *v.* 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35.) Such is the Earth in greatneſs, that God only, who is himſelf altogether immeaſurable (and therefore greateſt of all) can lay, and hath laid the meaſures of it. *Who hath laid the meaſures thereof?*

Domum commenſuratam. Sept.

If thou knoweſt.] The Lord puts this ſuppoſition again to his queſtion; as before, *Declare, if thou haſt underſtanding*; ſo here, *if thou knoweſt.* Some read theſe words ironically, thus, *Declare, for thou* (doubtleſs) *knoweſt who hath laid the meaſures thereof.* Thou art ſo wiſe and skilful a man, that ſurely thou canſt declare this ſecret. Mr. *Broughton* hits the ſame ſenſe; *For thou wilt be skilful*, that is, thought skilful, and taken among men for (no Babe) a knowing man; and therefore canſt give me a good account of the meaſures of the earth, both as to its circumference and diameter; that is, what the compaſs of it is, and what the depth through the middle of the earth is. Thus the words carry in them a cutting Irony, the matter being ſo much beyond *Jobs* knowledge, of which the Lord ſaith to him, *For thou knoweſt*; which we render, *If thou knoweſt?* But the Hebrew Particle (כי) is rather and oftner (I ſuppoſe) uſed in a cauſal, than in a conditional ſignification.

Quandoquidem ſcitus es. Jun.

מדד *Menſurare ſumitur pro menſura activa, qua aliquid menſuramus, aut pro re ipſa menſurata.* Menſuras *ejus puta, circumferentiam ſeu latitudinem & diametrum ſive profunditatem.* Piſc.

Here it may be ſaid, what difficulty is there in this Queſtion, *Who laid the meaſures of the earth? Job* might eaſily anſwer, God laid them. Therefore I conceive, not only, yea not ſo much, who laid them, as how they were laid, or what they are, is here intended.

The moſt learned and ſtudied Mathematicians could never give a right meaſure of the Earth, nor yet agree about that matter. They meaſure it firſt as to the depth of it, what the diameter of the earth is from top to bottom; but they differ much in opinion what the depth or diameter of the earth is: Some have reckoned it three thouſand

and fifty miles: Others have ſaid it containeth ſix thouſand and ſeventy miles: And a third ſort have concluded, that it is ſeven thouſand one hundred and ſeventy miles. Thus they gueſs, but could never yet come to know the true meaſures of the Earth in deepneſs. And if we conſider the *Perimeter* or Circumference of the Earth, there hath been as much variety of conjecture about that. Some of the Learned have reckoned the Earth fifty thouſand miles in compaſs: Others make it thirty and four thouſand ſix hundred twenty five: A third computation gives it to be thirty one thouſand and five hundred miles. There are who have brought it down to twenty two thouſand five hundred; yea, to twenty thouſand and four hundred miles. And they who are judged moſt exact among the Moderns, have reduced the account of the compaſs of the whole Earth to nineteen thouſand and fourſcore miles. Thus the Learned and Wiſe Men of the World, after their greateſt ſtudies, know not what the meaſures, the juſt meaſures of the Earth are, nor how they were laid: And therefore God might well ſay to *Job*, *Who hath laid the meaſures thereof, if thou knoweſt?* Who ever could ſay to this day without miſtake, what the meaſures of it are? That is one thing: A ſecond followeth;

Or who hath ſtretched the line upon it?

קו *Sumitur pro filo, quod Latomi utrinque affixum extendunt in longitudinem muri: Appellatur linea, vel quia ex lino fit, vel quia figuram rectam efficit, quæ etiam linea dicitur.* Bold. *Artifices, ne quid indecenter fiat, aut ſine proportion, regulam adhibent ad omnia dirigenda.*

As if he had ſaid, Who hath made the Earth ſo exactly? To *do a thing in print*, and to do it *by line*, are Proverbials of the ſame ſignification.

The line is an inſtrument of great uſe in building. Carpenters and Maſons muſt have their Line and Plummet, elſe they cannot keep their work even. Now ſaith the Lord to *Job*, *Who hath ſtretched the line upon it?* The Lord ſtill purſues the alluſion to a building.

To ſtretch forth the line, ſignifies in Scripture:

Firſt, *The exerciſe of Power.* And then, Who hath ſtretched the line upon it, is, *Who hath ordered and governed the Earth?* The Apoſtle *Paul* ſpake of the line, and of ſtretching forth the line in this ſenſe (2 *Cor.* 10. 8.) where having ſaid, that he had Power from God, a Spiritual Power, not for *deſtruction, but for edification*; he preſently adds (*verſ.* 13.) *But we will not boaſt of things without our meaſure, but according to the meaſure of the Rule* (or *line*, as we put in the Margin) *which God hath diſtributed unto us; for we ſtretch not our ſelves beyond our meaſure:* That is, we are not greedy of, nor do we graſp more power than is given and allowed us of God; nor will we exerciſe our power further than Chriſt hath appointed and commanded us. This ſtretching forth of the line, is the exerciſe of Power, and that's a Metaphorical ſenſe of it.

Secondly, To *ſtretch the line*, is to build, or to make preparation for building (*Zech.* 1. 16.) *Thus ſaith the Lord, I am returned to* Jeruſalem *with mercies; my Houſe ſhall be built in it, and a line ſhall be ſtretched forth upon Jeruſalem.* Again (*Chap.* 4. 10.) *Who hath deſpiſed the day of ſmall things? for they ſhall rejoyce, and ſhall ſee the Plummet in the hand of* Zerubbabel. When the Lord would aſſure his People that *Jeruſalem* ſhould be reſtored, he doth it by promiſing the ſtretching forth of the Line, and the ſight of the Plummet in the hand of *Zerubbabel*, commanding, over-ſeeing, and directing the Work. The Line and Plummet being of much and moſt neceſſary uſe for the right ſetting of a building, ſignified that God was about to build.

Thirdly, The ſtretching forth of the line upon a place, with ſome addition, notes the deſtruction of it, or the pulling of it down (2 *Kings* 21. 13.) *I will ſtretch over* Jeruſalem *the line of* Samaria, *and the Plummet of the houſe of Ahab:* That is, I will make her deſolate, as *Ahab* and *Samaria* were; and ſo the latter part of the verſe expounds it; *And I will wipe* Jeruſalem *as a man wipeth a diſh, wiping and turning it upſide down.* Again (*Iſa.* 34. 11.) *I will ſtretch forth upon it the line of Confuſion, and the ſtones of emptineſs:* That is, it ſhall be utterly ruined. And (*Iſa.* 18. 2, 7.) *Woe to the Land ſhadowing with wings, &c.* that ſaith, *Go ye ſwift meſſengers to a Nation meted out, and trodden down.* The Hebrew is, Go to a Nation *of line*, (as you have it in the Margin) that is, to a Nation who have the line ſtretched out upon them for deſolation; not a line ſtretched upon them to build them, but to deſtroy them; a Nation who are or ſhall be broken down, as it were by line; they ſhall come to perfect ruine, or ruine ſhall come on them in full perfection. As when the Lord will build, he doth it by line, that is, exactly and fully, even with a Divine Skill; ſo when he will deſtroy fully, he is ſaid to mete out for deſtruction. We have the word uſed both with reſpect to deſtruction and edification, to building up, and pulling down, in that one place (2 *Sam.* 8. 2.) where it is ſaid, that David *ſmote* Moab, *and meaſured them with a line, caſting them down to the ground; even with two lines meaſured he, to put to death, and with one full line to keep alive; and ſo the* Moabites *became* David's *ſervants, and brought gifts.* Some underſtand this act of *David* in meaſuring the *Moabites* with a line, ſtrictly and litterally; that *David* having made a full Conqueſt of their Country, did cauſe it to be meaſured with a line, and then appointed or allotted two thirds of the Land, together with the Inhabitants, to ruine and deſtruction; receiving only the third of the people to mercy, and reſerving only a third part of the Land to be planted by them. Others take it only alluſively, that having conquered them, he uſed them and their Country at his own pleaſure, as we do that which we meaſure out by line. But whether we take *David's* meaſuring the *Moabites* with a line in the one ſenſe or in the other, it fully reaches this third Notion of it under hand.

Ad gentem quæ conculcatur & deſtruitur à Deo lineatim, i. e. *paulatim deſtruitur cum modo & ordine.*

Here in the Text when the Lord demanded of *Job*, *Who hath ſtretched the line upon it?* It is as if he had ſaid, Shew me, if thou canſt, who hath given this great Building, this Fabrick of the Earth ſuch ſymmetry, ſuch a proportion and evenneſs, that no fault or flaw can poſſibly be found in it. From theſe two figurative expreſſions in the fifth verſe, implying the exactneſs of the Earths frame,

> Note; *The frame of the world is every way, and in every reſpect proportionable and beautiful.*

'Tis done (as it were) by meaſure and line. The Lord is infinitely above the uſe of meaſures or lines, yet condeſcending to our underſtanding, he gives us to know that 'tis as perfect a piece, as if he had done it by meaſure and by line. Survey the whole World, or any part of it, is it not a moſt exact piece? The Heavens are as the Roof of the Houſe, the Earth as the Floor and Foundation of it; thoſe Elements, Air and Water, as the Walls and Sides of it: The lower parts of the Earth are as Pillars and Baſes, Hills and high Mountains appear like Imboſsments of the Earth to the eye of the beholder. What can be added, whether we conſider the compleatneſs of the whole, or the ſymmetry of the parts? Have we not reaſon to ſay admiringly, or to cry out (as *Pſal.* 104. 24.) *O Lord, how manifold are thy works, in wiſdom haſt thou made them all; the Earth is full of thy Riches; ſo is the great and wide Sea, &c.* Our hearts ſhould be drawn up by all the works of God to admire his workmanſhip. *That thy Name is near thy wondrous works declare* (ſaid *David*, Pſal. 65. 1.) ſpeaking of the Works of Providence; and that the Name of God is near his Works of Creation declare alſo, his Name is written upon them, that is, his Power, Wiſdom and Goodneſs. And therefore when we behold this Work of God in ſpecial, his *laying the meaſures of the Earth*, we ſhould admire both his Goodneſs, Wiſdom and Power. There are five things in this part of the Creation, the Earth, as expreſſed to be done by line and meaſure, which may raiſe up our admiration of God.

Firſt, The greatneſs of the work, It is a vaſt Piece, or Pile, a huge Fabrick, though but a Point to the Heavens. We admire great buildings; but what are the greateſt buildings upon Earth, to the Earth it ſelf, which the Lord hath built!

Secondly, The harmony or uniformity of the building, and ſo the beauty of it.

Thirdly, The compactneſs of the building, as knit cloſe together; and ſo the firmneſs of it.

Fourthly, That all was done in ſo ſhort a time. We ſay, *Rome was not built in a day. Solomon* was ſeven years in building the Temple (1 *Kings* 6. 38.) And he was thirteen years in building his own Houſe (1 *Kings* 7. 1.) And doubtleſs, *Solomon* laid out all the power and skill he had for the ſetting up of thoſe buildings: But behold a greater building than either the Temple which *Solomon* built for God, or the Houſe which he built for himſelf, ſet up (as we ſay) in a trice. The Lord finiſhed all his work in ſix days, and that part of it, the Earth, in one: Nor did the Lord take either ſix days to finiſh the whole work, or one to finiſh any one part of it, becauſe he needed ſo much time to do it in; but becauſe he would not do it in leſs.

Fifthly, The Lord did all this without the uſe of any Inſtrument, Rule or Compaſs, Axe or Hammer; though here is mention made of a meaſure, and of a line. The skilfulleſt Architect cannot raiſe up any conſiderable building without theſe; though he hath the Platform and Idea of it in his head, yet take away his Line, and his Rule, and he can do nothing. But ſuch is the glorious Skill and Power of God, that though he is pleaſed to ſpeak of a meaſure, and of a line; yet we muſt not be ſo groſs, as to think that he made uſe of any. The whole work was natural to God, and therefore he needed no Artificial helps; nor was any Inſtrument imployed in it, but only his own Creating Word and Will. Some faithleſs Atheiſts of old (and poſſibly there are ſuch at this day) asked in ſcorn with what Tools and Inſtruments, with what Ladders and Scaffolds, this building was ſet up? But let us at once pity ſuch in their unbelief and horrible prophaneneſs, and labour to edifie or build up our ſelves in Grace and Holineſs, in the Faith and Fear of his great Name, who built this World without Tools or Inſtruments, without Ladders or Scaffolds.

Secondly, As our hearts ſhould be drawn out in admiration, ſo in thankfulneſs, foraſmuch as God hath made ſuch a world for us: he hath laid the foundations of the Earth; he hath meaſured it out, and ſtretched the line upon it, that we might have the uſe of it, that we might tenant and inhabit this houſe. Man is the chief Inhabitant of the Earth; that other Creatures dwell there, is for the ſervice of man: then let us be thankful. Our greateſt cauſe of thankfulneſs is, that the Lord hath made another Houſe for us, of which the Apoſtle profeſſeth his aſſurance (2 *Cor.* 5. 1.) *We know, that when the earthly houſe of this Tabernacle* (whether of our body, or of the body of this world) *is diſſolved, we have a building of God, an houſe not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens.* O how ſhould we rejoyce in, and be thankful for that Houſe! But that we have this inferiour houſe built for us (which is alſo *a building of God, an houſe not made with hands*, but purely and immediately by the Power of God) is and ſhould be continual matter of great thankfulneſs.

Thirdly, Seeing the Lord hath thus laid the meaſures of the Earth, and ſtretched forth the line upon it: ſeeing he hath made ſuch an exact building for us, *this Earth*; let us walk exactly and orderly upon *this Earth* which he hath made. As he hath laid his meaſures in framing the Earth, ſo we ſhould keep our meaſures in living upon the Earth. He hath ſtretched out his line upon it, and we ſhould take heed that we do not exceed our line. God hath given a line, by which mans converſation ſhould be ſquared as exactly as any building is or can be by line. As the work of God for us is beautiful, ſo ſhould our works be. We (as to our ſpiritual ſtate) are a Creation, a new noble Creation: And certainly, he who made the Earth, this old outward Creation in ſuch exactneſs, hath alſo made the new Creation, our ſpiritual heavenly ſtate much more (if more may be) exactly; he hath made it by meaſure, and by line. Let us therefore walk, and ſpeak, yea, and think, by meaſure, and by line; let us appear and approve our ſelves as the building of God, as the work of Gods Holy Spirit, fair and beautiful. Many profeſs godlineſs; but do they appear as Gods Workmanſhip, as if God had ſtretched his line, and laid the meaſure of the new ſpiritual Creation upon them? Believers *are the Workmanſhip of God* (Eph. 2. 10.) (and ſo they ſhould appear as) *created in Chriſt Jeſus unto good works; which God hath before ordained, that we ſhould walk in them.* The Apoſtle ſaith (*Phil.* 1. 27.) *Let your converſation be as becometh the Goſpel of Chriſt*, whom ye believe in. The Goſpel is an exact thing, ordered in all things as *David* ſpake of it (2 *Sam.* 23. 5.) under the notion of the Everlaſting Covenant. Now, ſaith St. *Paul*, *Let your converſation be as becometh the Goſpel of Chriſt*; let it be an orderly converſation: I may ſay alſo, let your converſation be ſuch as becometh the Earth ye walk upon; that's an accurate frame, the Lord hath made it in meaſure, and ſtretched the line upon it: Let us take heed we be not found walking beſides that line, thoſe meaſures which he hath given us.

Ποίημα.

Fourthly, If God hath been thus exact in framing the Earth, as it were, by line and meaſure for us; if he hath given us ſo perfect a Piece to inhabit and dwell in while we are in this ſinful ſtate; What do you think is that Paradiſe which he hath prepared for us in our ſinleſs ſtate! What are the meaſures of our heavenly City! What the lines that have been ſtretched out upon thoſe Eternal Manſions! If viſible things which our eye ſeeth, are ſo taking; what are things inviſible! And if this Earth which we tread on be a Looking-glaſs (as indeed it is) wherein we may ſee the Wiſdom and Power of God; what will Heaven be! How will that reflect the Wiſdom, Power, and Goodneſs of God! If this world be a beauty, and is therefore expreſſed by a word in the Greek ſignifying beauty, comelineſs, decency; what will that world be which is to come! Thus much of the exactneſs of the building. The next verſe holds out the ſtrength and firmneſs of it.

Κόσμος.

Verſ. 6. Whereupon are the foundations thereof faſtened? Or who hath laid the Corner-ſtone thereof?

Two things make a building ſtrong and firm.

Firſt, The faſtening of the foundations.

Secondly, The right laying of the Corner-ſtone.

We had the laying of the foundations at the fourth verſe, here we have the faſtening of them. If a foundation be laid looſly, the building will not ſtand. Chriſt in the Parable (*Mat.* 7. 27.) ſpeaks of a foundation laid in the looſe Sand, that could not make a firm building. But the houſe which had its foundation laid on a compacted Rock, or had the Rock for a foundation, ſtood faſt in all winds and weathers. The Lord hath not only laid the foundations of the Earth, but hath faſtened the foundations; he hath built upon a Rock. You will ſay, what is that Rock-like thing upon which the foundations of the Earth are faſtened? I anſwer, it is nothing but the Power and Will of God. The Will and Power of God are the Pillars or Baſes upon which the Earth is faſtened, and made ſure for ever.

The word which we tranſlate *foundations*, is often in Scripture rendred *Sockets* (Exod. 26. 19. *Chap.* 35. 11. *Chap.* 38. 27. *Cant.* 5. 15.) Now Sockets are places cut in Timber and Stone, or caſt in Metal, in which the ſeveral ſtrengthning pieces of a building are faſtened; and ſuch is the foundation to a houſe, the faſtening of it. Foundations are laid in the ground, and beams are faſtened with Sockets. Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates, *Whereupon are the foundations thereof ſunk faſt.* We uſually ſay, we muſt *ſink a foundation:* Foundations are ſunk, and then the Superſtructure faſtened on it.

Further, take notice, The word which here we render *Foundations or Sockets*, is not that which properly ſignifieth a foundation: And from it the word *Adon* is derived, which ſignifieth a Lord, or Maſter, or chief among men; becauſe Lords and Princes are or ſhould be as the Sockets and Pillars of a Nation, to faſten and ſecure all in their places: and upon the fall of Princes often followeth the fall and ruine of Nations. The Spaniſh word *Don*, or *Lord*, is ſuppoſed a derivative from it. And from this Appellative, one of the proper Names of God is formed, by the addition of a letter in the end: Under which Royal Title he is repreſented to our Faith as the Lord and Upholder of all things. Some have obſerved, that God is called by this Name one hundred thirty and four times in Scripture. All which ſhew, that he who is the Creator, is alſo the Suſtainer and Supporter of the whole Fabrick of Nature; ſuch is the ſignificancy of this word. Now when the Lord asks, *Whereupon are the foundations thereof faſtened?* There's no anſwer can be given to this queſtion, but what was given to the former. God hath faſtened them upon himſelf, in his Power and Will they ſtand ſure.

Iis qui nos percunctantur cuinam corpori veluti ſubjecto fundamento tam immenſum hoc terræ pondus innitatur, dicamus oportet, quod in manu terræ ſunt omnes fines terræ. Baſil. in Pſal. 94.

טבע *Immerſus, infixus, impreſſus, hinc* טבעת *annulus quod digito vel potius digitus ei infigitur.*

ארן *Baſis columnæ cui aliquid innititur, imponitur, atque ab ea geſtatur. Per literam, in fine additam præcedente Camets.*

Or who hath laid the Corner-ſtone thereof? Or, Who hath caſt her Corner-ſtone?

As if he had ſaid, Who made the parts of the Earth to keep ſo cloſe together, and to keep up one another? This is another very conſiderable part in a building. As ſtrong buildings muſt have a ſure foundation to hold up the whole;

Videntur obſcure ſignificari poli terræ. Grot.

Lapis anguli; *i. e. qui poſitus eſt in angulo.* Piſc.

ſo they muſt have Corner-ſtones to hold the parts together. The Corner-ſtone bindeth and ſtrengtheneth the Fabrick, as well as gives Beauty and Ornament to it.

There are two ſorts of Corner-ſtones:

Firſt, There is a Corner-ſtone laid below, or beneath in the Earth, with the foundation. The Maſter-builder is very careful to ſet that right.

Secondly, There is a Corner-ſtone laid upon the foundation, or in the joyning of the walls, both below as ſoon as the building appears above ground, and up to the top or utmoſt height of the building. Our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is expreſſed in Scripture under the notion of a Corner-ſtone, as to both theſe uſes.

Firſt, He is the Corner-ſtone laid below in the Earth with the foundation (*Iſa.* 28. 16.) *Behold, I lay in* Zion *for a foundation, a Stone, a tryed Stone, a precious Corner-ſtone, a ſure foundation:* So we tranſlate this latter part of the verſe. Some others render it thus, *A Corner-ſtone founded upon a foundation*: implying, that Chriſt is the loweſt, the chiefeſt and firmeſt Foundation-ſtone, as well as a tryed precious Corner-ſtone. The Apoſtle affirms both theſe of Chriſt in one verſe (*Eph.* 2. 20.) *Ye are built upon the foundation of the Apoſtles and Prophets* (not upon their Perſon, but Doctrine, which is Chriſt) *Jeſus Chriſt himſelf being the chief Corner-ſtone: In whom all the building fitly framed together, groweth into an holy Temple in the Lord.* Again (1 Pet. 2. 4, 5.) *To whom coming, as unto a living Stone, diſallowed indeed of men, but choſen of God, and precious: Ye alſo as lively ſtones are built up a ſpiritual houſe,* &c.

In fundamentum fundatum. Quæ forte fundamenti repetitio ſignificat infimam fundamenti partem aut potiſſimam. Chriſtus dicitur caput anguli quod non ſolum ſit principium, ſed finis ſpiritualis ædificii. Nyſſen.

Some conceive, that in this place the Lord fore-ſhewed *Job* the Incarnation of Chriſt, who is the true Corner-ſtone, knitting all in one. For moſtly, when the Scripture would ſet forth the ſecurity of our ſalvation by Chriſt, it doth by this reſemblance: Upon him Believers are founded, and in him faſtened. If we had not Chriſt a Corner-ſtone for our Salvation, it were not poſſible that our Salvation ſhould be ſure to us: The building cannot be fixt without it. Chriſt is ſaid to be our Peace, who hath made both one (*Eph.* 2. 14.) where the Apoſtle ſpeaks firſt of taking away the middle wall of Partition, and then of making both (that is, *Jews* and *Gentiles*) one by Chriſt, the only Corner-ſtone. By one and the ſame Faith in Chriſt, two people, *Jews* and *Gentiles*, are joyned in one: As in the corner of a building, two walls always meet, and are cloſed together by the Corner-ſtone. And as Chriſt is a Corner-ſtone laid in with the foundation, ſo he is a Corner-ſtone upon the foundation in the continued riſing of the building, till raiſed to the top. As the Corner-ſtone hath its uſe in any part of the corner, from the Foundation to the Roof, ſo it is placed in the higheſt part of the building; there Chriſt is the chief Corner-ſtone. The Prophet ſpeaks thus of Chriſt (*Zach.* 4. 7.) *And he* (that is *Zerubbabel*) *ſhall bring forth the Head-ſtone thereof with ſhoutings, crying, Grace, Grace, unto it*; which ſeems to ſignifie, that Chriſt ſhould be manifeſted and brought publickly forth, like the chief or uppermoſt Corner-ſtone. The Corner-ſtone is called the Head-ſtone, becauſe 'tis ſet above in the building; and 'tis called alſo the Head-ſtone, becauſe it is poliſhed, and appeareth above the reſt, like an Head above the Body. Thus you ſee the uſe of the Corner-ſtone in Scripture, as applied to Chriſt, in alluſion to a building, for the ſecurity and firmneſs of it: the Corner-ſtone being that which bindeth the building, and faſtens the contiguous walls together. Here the Lord ſpeaking of his framing the Earth, tells us of a Corner-ſtone, to ſhew that the frame of the Earth ſhall ſtand and continue unſhaken, and undivided. In oppoſition to this phraſe, when the Prophet deſcribeth the irreparable deſtruction of *Babylon*, or that it ſhall be ruined without recovery; he expreſſeth it thus (*Jer.* 51. 26.) *And they ſhall not take of thee a ſtone for a corner, nor a ſtone for foundation; but thou ſhalt be deſolate for ever, ſaith the Lord.* *Babylon* ſhall have neither foundation nor Corner-ſtone; as much as to ſay, it ſhall never be built. Magiſtrates and chief Governours are alſo called Corner-ſtones (*Pſal.* 118. 22.) *The ſtone which the builders refuſed, is become the Head-ſtone of the corner.* Which words, as they relate to Chriſt chiefly, ſo alſo to King *David*, as a Type of Chriſt. The Scripture in ſeveral other places gives that Title to great men (1 *Sam.* 14. 38. *Judges* 20. 2. *Iſa.* 20. *Zeph.* 3. 6.) In all theſe Texts Princes and Great Men are called *Corners*, or *Corner-ſtones*; becauſe, as the Corner ſtone holdeth the wall together, ſo they hold Nations (in their civil capacity) together. *Who laid the Corner-ſtone thereof?* ſaith God to *Job*: Tell me who did it? Didſt thou do it? Did Angels do it? Conſider the greatneſs, the firmneſs of the work, and thou wilt be convinced, that it was I that laid the Corner-ſtone thereof. So then, the general ſenſe of this Verſe is, to ſhew the ſtability of the Work of God. Here are foundations, and foundations faſtened in the Wiſdom and Power of God, who is an Everlaſting Strength, *the Rock of Ages* (*Iſa.* 26. 4.) Here alſo the Corner-ſtone is laid, therefore all is ſure and firm.

Educet lapidem capitis. Heb. *Quod inſtar capitis promineat, aut quod emineat in ſupremo loco.*

Now what did the Lord aim at in all this? Surely, it was not barely to convince *Job*, that the Earth was a beautiful piece, and a ſtrong one: There was ſomewhat elſe in it; and what was that? Even to convince *Job*, that foraſmuch as he could not deny, but this admirable and well-ordered building was the work of God; that therefore he ſhould ſit down ſatisfied in all his other works. If God alone perfected this work by his Power, if he contrived it by his Wiſdom; ſhall man find fault with any of the works of God? Doth not he who put the world into this beautiful frame wherein we ſee it, carry on all his works on Earth in beauty and order, though we ſee it not? And is there not a firmneſs and ſtrength in all his works? Is there not a meaſure laid in all his Providences, and a line ſtretched out upon all his dealings with the Children of men? Hath he not faſtened the foundations, and laid the Corner-ſtone of all his Diſpenſations right? *Job* ſeemed to ſpeak ſometimes, as if the Lord had not dealt with him in meaſure, nor ſtretched an equal line upon his proceedings; he looked upon all as off the hooks, and out of courſe. Now, ſaith the Lord, have I *laid the meaſures of the Earth, and ſtretched the line upon it? Have I faſtened the foundations, and laid the corner-ſtone thereof? Have I done all theſe things; and doſt thou think that I will let the World in general, or any mans caſe in particular, run to ruine; as if my works of Providence had neither foundation nor Corner-ſtone? Remember,* O Job, *and well conſider, that as when in the beginning I ſaw the Earth without form, and void* (Gen. 1.) *I, by a Creating Word, commanded it into form and fulneſs: So when thou ſeeſt nothing but* (Tohu *and* Bohu) *confuſion and diſorder, voidneſs and darkneſs in the Earth, even then I am laying the meaſures of Juſtice, and ſtretching the line of Truth and Equity upon all that is done or ſuffered; and will bring forth my work in full perfection: Nothing ſhall be amiſs, or out of order, when my work is finiſhed, how much ſoever it may ſeem to be amiſs, as to beginnings, or preſent actings.* Therefore, O Job, *leave off thy complainings, and reſt quietly in my dealings.*

תהו ובהו

Some have queſtioned the Natural Works of God, yet 'tis impoſſible to mend any part, or the leaſt pin of them. And 'tis as impoſſible for the Wit and Underſtanding of Men or Angels to mend any thing in the Providential Works of God. That's the ſcope of this diſcourſe, even that the conſideration of Gods Power and Wiſdom in making the World, ſhould bridle our curioſity, and awe our ſpirits, when they begin to quarrel with, yea, but to query about any thing that God hath done; though it appear to us altogether irregular and confuſed, or as done without either line or meaſure. The Lords work is beautiful and glorious, 'tis alſo ſure and ſtrong. As his Promiſe or Covenant *is ordered in all things, and ſure* (2 Sam. 23. 5.) So are his Providences too (for they are the iſſues and accompliſhments of his Promiſes) ordered as to means, and ſure as to the end: They ſhall end or iſſue in bringing about the things which are laid in the foundation and Corner-ſtone of his Purpoſes, Counſels, and Decrees; *all which work together for good, to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpoſe* (Rom. 8. 28.)

And to convince *Job* from the Works of Creation, that he ought not only to acquieſce or reſt quietly under the Works of Providence, whatſoever they were, but to rejoyce in them; the Lord tells him in the next verſe, that there was great rejoycing, yea, ſhouting for joy, when the foundations of the Earth were faſtened, and the Corner-ſtone thereof laid.

VERS.

VERS. 7.

When the Morning-ſtars ſang together, and all the Sons of God ſhouted for joy.

THere are two Opinions among Learned Interpreters concerning the general ſtate of this Verſe:

Firſt, Some here reaſſuming the firſt words of theſe queſtions propoſed at the fourth verſe by God to *Job*, *Where waſt thou, when I laid the foundations of the Earth? &c.* make this the ſecond inſtance of Gods mighty Power in the Works of Creation; *Where waſt thou, when the Morning-ſtars ſang together, and all the Sons of God ſhouted for joy?* As if the Lord had ſaid, I have as yet queſtioned thee only where thou waſt when I made the Earth, which is the moſt inferiour part of the World: But now I purpoſe to riſe higher in my diſcourſe, and therefore I put theſe queſtions to thee; *Where waſt thou, when I ſet up the Morning-ſtars, thoſe ſparkling lights, which ſhine to the Earth, through the Firmament of Heaven; as alſo the Sons of God, thoſe bleſſed Spirits? All which ſang together, and ſhouted for joy, at the appearance of my Power and Wiſdom.*

Secondly, Others connect theſe words in a continued ſenſe and ſentence with the Verſe going before; *Where waſt thou, when I laid the foundations of the Earth?* &c. at which ſight, *the Morning-ſtars ſang together, and all the Sons of God ſhouted for joy.* Taking the words thus, they carry an alluſion to, or are a ſimilitude taken from Noble Buildings or Structures, whoſe foundations uſe to be laid with Solemnity, and their Corner-ſtones to be ſet up with ſhouting and acclamation. That it was anciently cuſtomary, to make ſuch Acclamations at the laying of the foundation of ſome eminent building, beſides what is clear out of Humane Authors and Hiſtories, we have ſeveral Scripture Evidences. The 87th *Pſalm* throughout, ſetting forth the Structure of the Goſpel Church, of the ſpiritual *Zion*, by way of Propheſie, begins thus; *His foundation is in the holy Mountains*; there's the foundation of *Zion* laid: Then followeth, as at the ſecond verſe, *The Lord loveth the gates of* Zion, *more than all the dwellings of* Jacob. *Glorious things are ſpoken of thee, O thou City of God! Selah.* As if he had ſaid, there was a great acclamation, high praiſes at the laying the foundation of *Zion*; with which the Pſalm cloſeth more expreſly (*v.* 7.) *As well the Singers as the Players on Inſtruments ſhall be there: All my Springs are in thee. Again* (*Pſal.* 118. 22, 23, 24.) there is no ſooner mention made of the Corner-ſtone (*the Stone which the Builders refuſed, is become the Head-ſtone of the Corner*) but preſently we have acclamations about it, *This is the Lords doing, it is marvellous in our eyes*: This is a bleſſed work indeed, *This is the day which the Lord hath made, we will rejoyce, and be glad in it.* That Corner-ſtone of Salvation, Jeſus Chriſt, being laid, as I may ſay, all the Stars ſang together, and the Sons of God ſhouted for joy; *This is the day which the Lord hath made.* If we go to thoſe material buildings which were figurative of the Church and Chriſt, we ſhall find the like (*Ezra* 3. 10.) When the *Jews* at the return of their Captivity, began to build the Temple, the Text ſaith at the tenth verſe; *And when the Builders laid the foundation of the Temple of the Lord, then they ſet the Prieſts in their Apparel; and with their Voices, with the* Levites, *and the Sons of* Aſaph, *to praiſe the Lord.* As ſoon as the foundation was laid, they were all in Song, and raiſed up in holy rejoycings; though ſome of the old men, who remembred the firſt Temple, wept when the foundation of this was laid. That Scripture (*Zach.* 4. 7.) ſpeaks of the ſame thing; where the Prophet, in the Spirit, fore-ſeeing the diſappointments of all the Enemies of the People of God, thus triumphs over them by Faith; *Who art thou, O great Mountain, before* Zerubbabel? *Thou ſhalt become a Plain; he ſhall bring forth the Head-ſtone thereof with ſhouting.* That is, the building of *Hieruſalem*, or the reſtoring of the Temple ſhall be brought to perfection; and then they ſhall cry, *Grace, grace, unto it.*

Now in alluſion to the practice both of men in common, and of the people of God in ſpecial, at the raiſing of great Structures; the Lord tells us here, that when he laid the foundations of the Earth, and when he faſtened the Corner-ſtone thereof, there was a Triumph made: Then *the Morning-ſtars ſang together, and all the Sons of God ſhouted for joy.* Thus we have the ſtate of this verſe, either taking it for another inſtance of the Power of God in Creating the Stars, and the Angels; or elſe ſubjoyning it as an acclamation to the former inſtance of the Power of God; the Stars and Angels rejoycing at the laying of the foundations of the Earth. And the general reaſon why the Lord brings in the Stars, and the Sons of God rejoycing at the laying the foundations of the Earth, and finiſhing that work, we may conceive to be this; that the Lord would thereby convince *Job* of his murmuring and complaining, or of the unquietneſs of his ſpirit under the works of his Providence. As if he had ſaid, *The Stars, and all the Sons of God rejoyced at the founding of the Earth, extolling the work, and congratulating the appearances of my Power and Glory in it. Now, who art thou, that when I have put forth my Power and Wiſdom in this work of my Providence towards thee, thou ſhouldſt complain, and find fault with what I have done, inſtead of reſting and rejoycing in it! Surely, O* Job, *thou thinkeſt my works of Providence are imperfect, though my work of Creation was not; but conſider, was the Creation in the very firſt part of it ſuch as cauſed all the Sons of God to rejoyce, and wilt thou, who ſayeſt thou art a Son of God, ſit unſatisfied with any of my works?* Thus the Lord handles *Job*, and from that teſtimony which the Stars and his Sons gave of the Works of Creation, reproves him for his unquietneſs under his Works of Providence.

Monetur Johus *ut exemplo angelorum, Dei opera miretur & laudet, non ſugillet.* Scult.

So much for the general ſtate of the words: Yet to clear them farther in general, before I come to the particulars, there are three veins of interpretation opened about them.

Firſt, Some interpret this whole Verſe concerning the Stars or the Heavenly Bodies; not only taking the firſt part of the verſe litterally for the Stars in Heaven; but by the Sons of God, in the latter part of the verſe, they underſtand the Stars in a figure; as I ſhall ſhew more fully, when I come to the opening of thoſe words. Thus they expound the whole verſe concerning the glory and praiſe which the Stars in Heaven gave to God, for the work of Creation at the laying of the foundations of the Earth.

A ſecond ſort of Interpreters expound the whole verſe of the Angels, and not of the Stars properly at all; they ſuppoſe the Morning-ſtars to be Angels in a Figure, and the Sons of God to be Angels in the Letter: and ſo expound the whole verſe of the Angels, as if the words were a deſcription only of that joy which the Angels of Heaven only expreſſed, when they ſaw God beginning the Work of Creation, or laying the foundations of the Earth.

Hieronymus. Gregorius. Beda.

The third ſort of Interpreters divide the ſenſe, expounding the firſt part of the verſe properly for the Stars, thoſe ſtuds of light, with which the Heavens are adorned, which (in their kind) are brought in ſinging at the Creation of the Earth; and by the Sons of God, in the latter part of the Verſe, they underſtand the Angels, thoſe ſpiritual ſubſtances, who are the Native Inhabitants of Heaven; they eſpecially are repreſented ſhouting for joy, when that work was begun.

I cannot adhere to the firſt ſort of Interpreters, giving all to the Stars, nor to the ſecond, giving all to the Angels (though that hath many learned Authors, who preſs it hard) but following the middle way, ſhall take the former part of this verſe, for the Stars of Heaven; and the latter, for the Angels in Heaven.

כוכבי בקר

When the Morning-ſtars ſang together.

There are ſingle Stars, and Stars (as I may ſay) in a combination, commonly called a *Conſtellation.* There is an Evening-ſtar, and a Morning-ſtar (which yet are but one) called by the Greeks φωσφόρος, and by the Latines *Lucifer, The Light-bringer*; becauſe that Star appears very bright immediately before day-break, or before the Sun riſeth; and the ſame Star which uſhered or led in the Sun in the Morning, comes behind the Sun in the Evening, and is then called *Heſperus, The Evening-ſtar.*

Sunt ſtellæ quædam ſingulares, quæ non aliis admiſtæ, ſolæ feruntur. Sydera vero quæ in aliquod ſignum ſtellarum plurium compoſita feruntur. Macrob. *l.* 1. *c.* 14.

Here the Lord ſpeaks in the plural number of the *Morning-*

Matutinas nominat meo judicio, quod ſub auroram magis ſplendere videntur. Merc. *Sydera ſummo mundi mane incentia, meque ſuo formoſo ſplendore laudantia.*

ing-ſtars, not in the ſingular, of a *Morning-ſtar.* And the Lord calls them *Morning-ſtars* (ſay ſome) becauſe the Stars appear more clearly, and ſhine moſt brightly, near the approach of the morning, or break of the day.

Secondly, Others conceive them ſo called, becauſe they were created or formed in the very Morning of the World; they were early made. For though (as I ſhall touch afterward) as to their perfection, the Stars were made the fourth day; yet their Creation is comprehended in the work of the firſt day, under thoſe general words (*Gen.* 1. 1.) *In the beginning God created the Heavens; and the Earth*; the Heavens contained all the Stars in their materiality, though not yet formally produced; for the Stars being but the thicker part of the Heavenly Orb, when the Heavens were made, the Stars were alſo made: and may therefore be called *Morning-ſtars*, as being made in the Morning of the World, early made.

Qui mane aliquod aggrediantur opus Matutini *dicuntur. Nec minus Æneas ſe matutinus agebat.* Virg. *l.* 8. *Idem eſt matutina aſtra laudant, atque mane laudant.* Sanct.

Thirdly, They may be called *Morning-ſtars*, becauſe they (according to their manner) expreſt their joy early or betimes in the Morning of the World, or as ſoon as the Lord had laid the foundations of the Earth. Thoſe things which are done early, are done in the Morning; and they who do things in the Morning, have the denomination of the Morning upon them. The Poet anciently ſaid *Æneas* was (*Matutinus*) *a Morning-man*, becauſe he was early at his work; ſo theſe may be called *Morning-ſtars*, becauſe they were early at work, ſinging the praiſe of God. Thus the reaſon why the Wolf hath this Epithete, *An Evening Wolf*, is becauſe he doth his work, he comes forth for his prey in the evening (*Hab.* 1. 8. *Zeph.* 3. 3.) In the former Prophet, the *Chaldean* Horſe men are compared to *Evening Wolves*, for fierceneſs; and in the latter, the Judges of *Iſrael* are ſet under the ſame compariſon, for blood-ſucking cruelty. And as thus, upon different accounts, ſome are called *Morning-men*, others *Evening-men*; ſo 'tis upon no good account, that any are called *Night-men*, though the general reaſon of it be the ſame with the former, becauſe they do their bad work, or works of darkneſs, under the ſhadow and favour of the Night. The Thief, the Murderer, the Adulterer, are *Night-men*, all theſe are wont to do their work in the Night (*Job* 24. 13, 14, 15, 16.) Thus there are men of the *Night*, men of the *Evening*, and men of the *Morning*, or *Morning-men*. In this ſenſe the Stars may be called *Morning-ſtars*, becauſe they were ſo early at that beſt work, the praiſes of God. *When the Morning-ſtars*

ברן *Gerundium eſt à* רנן *quod inter alia canere ſignificat, unde* רנה *cantus.* Druſ.

Sang together.] Singing is an act of the voice; and as there is a natural ſinging (that of Birds) ſo an artificial. But how could Stars ſing, either artificially, ſeeing they have no Reaſon; or naturally, ſeeing they have not ſo much as a life of Senſe?

I anſwer, 'Tis frequent in Scripture to attribute acts of life to liveleſs Creatures, and acts of reaſon to thoſe things which have no ſenſe. The Earth is ſomewhere ſaid to mourn (*Iſa.* 33. 9.) The Trees of the Forreſt, as alſo the Hills and the Valleys are ſaid to rejoyce, and ſing for joy (*Pſal.* 65. 12, 13.) And in the ſame ſenſe the Stars are here repreſented ſinging; and in what ſenſe they may be ſaid to ſing, will be further ſhewed afterwards: Nor did they only ſing, but they ſang

Simul unico concentu, unico conſenſu.

Together.] There was a kind of Concord and Harmony in their ſinging; they ſang, as I may ſay, with one conſent, or in Conſort. Some tranſlate, *They ſang alone*; That is, when there were no other Creatures to joyn with them, yet as ſoon as they were in being, they ſang alone. The word ſometimes ſignifies *only*, as well as *together* (*Chap.* 34. 29. *Ezra* 4. 3.) They did not ſing every one of them alone, but they all ſang alone without any other Creatures to joyn with them. Thus they ſang both alone, *and together.*

Hence Note, Firſt, *Singing is an act of Divine Worſhip and praiſe.*

They ſang to the glory of God.

Note, Secondly; *Singing is an expreſſion of joy.*

Is any one merry, ſaith the Apoſtle (*Jam.* 5. 13.) *let him ſing.* Though there are mournful Songs, and ſome ſing in the very heavineſs of their Souls, yet properly, ſinging imports rejoycing. When Chriſt told his Church (Cant. 2. 12.) *The time of the ſinging of Birds is come*; his meaning was, rejoycing time is come, ſorrow and mourning are fled away.

Thirdly, In that ſinging is attributed to the Stars,

Note; *Liveleſs Creatures rejoyce and ſet forth the praiſes of God, as they are able.*

David ſaith, *All thy works ſhall praiſe thee, O Lord* (Pſal. 145. 10.) *All thy works*, that is, the very loweſt and leaſt of thy works, even the Clods of the Earth, ſhall praiſe thee; how much more the Stars of Heaven! We find all the Creatures called to ſing the praiſe of the Lord quite through the 148th Pſalm; *Praiſe him Sun and Moon, praiſe him all ye Stars of light:* There's the ſpecial inſtance of the Text. *The Heavens declare the glory of God, and the Firmament ſheweth his handy-work* (Pſal. 19. 1.) There is a kind of dutiful conſpiration among all Creatures, even among the Inanimate Creatures, in their places to praiſe God. And if you ask how they praiſe God? or how they ſing? I anſwer in general, *after their manner*, as they are able, or as is ſuitable to their condition. The Stars ſing not formally (and yet ſome ſay, there is a harmony in the motions of the Heavens; which being ſo conſtant, concordant, and uniform, hath a kind of Muſick in it) but though they cannot praiſe God formally; yet,

More ſuo.

In cœleſtibus corporibus amplior occurrit Dei collaudandi materia; ideo & illis cantus ſeu lata proclamatio ſeu ovatio figurate tribuitur. Merc.

Firſt, They do it *Materially:* That is, they are that matter for which God is to be praiſed, they being ſuch excellent and noble Creatures. *The work praiſeth the Workman.* That which is well done, commends the Doer of it, though all tongues be ſilent. In this ſenſe, the Stars ſing the praiſe of God: They ſing the praiſe of God, as they are the objects of his praiſe; or, as they provoke Men and Angels to praiſe God for making them.

Secondly, They praiſe God vertually, or equivalently, they ſhew how praiſe-worthy God is.

Thirdly, When we ſay the Stars praiſe God, it intimates, there is ſo much excellency in the Works of God, that if the Stars could ſpeak, they would declare and ſhew forth his praiſe. When the Diſciples of Chriſt rejoyced, and praiſed God with a loud voice, for all the mighty works which they had ſeen; ſaying, *Bleſſed be the King that cometh in the Name of the Lord, peace in Heaven, and glory in the Higheſt* (Luke 19. 37, 38.) The envious *Phariſees* did not like the Muſick, and therefore ſaid to him from among the multitude, *Maſter, rebuke thy Diſciples* (verſ. 39.) To theſe moroſe Maſters, Chriſt anſwered (verſ. 40.) *I tell you, that if theſe ſhould hold their peace, the ſtones would immediately cry out.* As if he had ſaid, you labour in vain to ſuppreſs or hinder the teſtimony given me by my Diſciples; for if they ſhould be ſilent, the ſtones would cry ſhame on them for neglecting their duty; and God would rather cauſe ſenſleſs Creatures to proclaim his praiſe, in giving me an Honourable Teſtimony, than I ſhould want it. Now as there was ſuch a worth in the Work of Redemption, and in all the works of the Redeemer, while here on Earth, that the ſtones would have ſhewed forth his praiſe, if men had not: So there is ſuch a worth in that work of God, the Creation of the Earth, that rather than God ſhould not have the glory of it, the Stars would have done it by breaking out into joyful ſinging.

Laſtly, As Birds praiſe God by their ſinging, ſo Stars may be ſaid to ſing the high praiſes of God by their ſhining, by their brightneſs, by their motion, by their influence; for all which God is to be praiſed and glorified.

And hence we may infer, if not only irrational, but inanimate Creatures ſing the praiſes of God, at leaſt, by giving occaſion of his praiſe; then how much more ſhould men ſet forth his praiſe, who are not only living, but reaſonable Creatures! And if Creatures without life and reaſon ſhould provoke mankind in general, as having life and reaſon to praiſe God; how much more ſhould godly men be provoked by them to ſing his praiſe, they having not only life, which Stars have not; and reaſon, which Birds and Beaſts have not; but Grace, which the moſt of men have not! Among viſible Creatures, men have moſt reaſon (becauſe they have reaſon) to praiſe God, and among men, godly men have moſt reaſon to praiſe God, becauſe they have Grace. And therefore as ſoon as ever *David* had ſaid, *All thy works ſhall praiſe thee, O Lord* (Pſal. 145. 10, 11.) he adds in the next words, *And thy Saints ſhall bleſs thee; they ſhall ſpeak of the glory of thy Kingdom, and talk of thy Power.* As if he had ſaid, As all thy works, O Lord, praiſe thee, ſo Saints (who are the choiceſt pieces of thy Workmanſhip) have cauſe to do it, more than, and above all; they cannot but be ſpeaking and talking of thy Kingdom and Power, which are very glorious. Upon which account, the tongue of man, eſpecially the tongue of a godly man, is called *his glory*; *I will ſing and give praiſe* (ſaid *David*, Pſal. 108. 1.) *even with my glory.* What is that? his tongue, the chief bodily inſtrument of divine praiſes. The Stars in their courſes once fought againſt the Enemies of God (*Judg.* 5. 20.) and they always in their places ſing the praiſes of God: Let it not be ſaid that Saints are ſilent.

So much of theſe words, as the Stars are taken properly,

There are ſome (as I ſaid before) who take theſe Stars metaphorically or figuratively for the Angels, and then their ſinging is proper; and there are two reaſons given, why by the Stars, in this place, we ſhould underſtand the Angels.

Firſt, If we conſider the truth or courſe of the Hiſtory, becauſe the Earth being created the firſt day, the Stars were not in being till the fourth day; unleſs we comprehend them (as was ſaid before, as to their matter and reality) under thoſe words of *Moſes*, *In the beginning God created the Heaven, and the Earth*: but as to their appearance and formality, ſo they were not till the fourth day; and if ſo, how could they ſing the praiſes of God at the laying of the foundations of the Earth? A ſecond reaſon is given from this Chapter, becauſe God ſpeaks of the Stars afterwards (*verſ.* 31, 32.) *Canſt thou bind the ſweet influences of Pleiades* (the ſeven Stars ſo called) *or looſe the bands of Orion, &c.* Here the Lord treats with *Job* about the Stars in proper ſenſe; therefore probably the Morning-ſtars here mentioned, are not to be taken properly, but tropically, for the Angels.

And the Angels may very well be called Stars, or Morning-ſtars, by a Metaphor, becauſe of their ſpiritual beauty and excellency, in which they out-ſhine all the Morning-ſtars, yea that ſpecial Morning-ſtar, commonly known by the name of *Lucifer*, or *Light-bringer.* Though the Angels have not a viſible bodily beauty, yet they have a better beauty than any body. 'Tis ſaid of *Stephen* (Acts 6. 15.) when he ſtood before the Council, *They beheld his face as it had been the face of an Angel.* Angels (being Spirits) have no viſible faces; but becauſe Angels are, in their nature and qualities, beautiful Creatures, therefore *Stephen* having an extraordinary beauty ſtampt upon him, is ſaid to have the face of an Angel. And as beautiful perſons may be ſaid to look like, or reſemble Angels; ſo Angels may be ſaid to look like, or reſemble Stars. The Church for the luſtre of her Graces, is ſaid, *to look forth as the Morning, fair as the Moon, clear as the Sun* (Cant. 6. 10.) and ſo may the Angels as the Stars. The Apoſtle ſaith of thoſe falſe Apoſtles (who would needs be accounted Stars (faithful Miniſters of Chriſt) in the Firmament of the Church) they are transformed into Angels of light (2 *Cor.* 11. 14.) that is, they would appear like Angels of light. The holy Angels are Angels of light. The ſeven Stars are the ſeven Angels, ſaith Chriſt, expounding the Viſion to *John* (Revel. 1. 20.) This ſhews that Angels and Stars have a very great ſimilitude; ſo that, as there in one ſenſe, ſo here in another, the Stars may ſignifie the Angels. And the Angels may very well be called *Morning-ſtars*, becauſe they were the firſt of living Creatures, their Creation being ſuppoſed to be (though *Moſes* expreſſeth nothing of it) comprehended within that of the Heavens: *In the beginning God created the Heaven, and the Earth*, the Heaven, and the heavenly Inhabitants; the Angels. The evil Angel, the Devil, that fallen Angel, is alſo called a *Morning-ſtar.* That Title *Lucifer, Son of the Morning*, which the Prophet beſtows on the *Aſſyrian* (*Iſa* 14. 12.) for his Pomp and Pride, properly belongs to the Devil, the Arch-Devil, a fallen Angel, or the Primier of the fallen Angels: yea, Jeſus Chriſt himſelf is called the *Day-ſtar* (2 Pet. 1. 19.) and under another far different expreſſion) the *Morning-ſtar* (Rev. 2. 28.) and he ſaith of himſelf (*Rev.* 22. 19.) *I am the bright and Morning-ſtar.* Thus Chriſt, who is the Angel of the Covenant, the Lord of Angels, the Creator of Angels, is called the *Morning-ſtar.* All theſe Scriptures bear teſtimony that it is not ſtrange to expound Stars by Angels.

ἀστέρα τὸν πρωϊνόν.
ὁ ἀστὴρ ὁ λαμπρὸς ϗ ὀρθρινός.

And therefore, when the Lord ſaith, *The Stars ſang together*, according to this interpretation (upon which yet I ſhall not inſiſt, but leave the Reader to his own Opinion) it is but the ſame with that which follows in the cloſe of the verſe, to which I now proceed.

And all the Sons of God ſhouted for joy.

The *Chaldee* Paraphraſe is expreſs, that the Sons of God are the Angels, rendring, *The Armies of Angels ſhouted for joy.* And the Septuagint are as clear for it, ſaying, *When all my Angels ſung for joy*; both leave out our Tranſlation, *the Sons of God*, and put that which is the Expoſition into the Text, *the Angels of God.* That the Angels are called *Sons of God*, hath been ſhewed before (*Chap.* 1. 6.) *There was a day when the Sons of God came together* (that is, the Angels) *and Satan* (the evil Angel) *came alſo among them.* The Devil, or evil ſpirit, thruſt himſelf into the aſſembly of the good Spirits, or holy Angels, who are the Sons of God.

Acies Angelorum. Chald.
Angeli mei. Sept.

If any ask how the Angels are the Sons of God? I anſwer,

Firſt, Negatively, They are not the Sons of God, as Jeſus Chriſt is. Angels became the Sons of God in time; Jeſus Chriſt is the Son of God from Eternity. The Apoſtle (*Heb.* 1. 5.) puts the queſtion, *To which of the Angels ſaid he at any time, thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee?* The Angels are the created Sons of God; Jeſus Chriſt only is his only begotten Son. Angels are the Sons of God by meer grace and favour; the Lord accounting them as Sons, accepting them as Sons, uſing and reſpecting them as Sons, as he doth alſo all true Believers, who likewiſe are the Sons of God. But Jeſus Chriſt alone is the Son of God by Nature, or by an Eternal Generation, and was ſo declared in the fulneſs of time, both by his Incarnation and Reſurrection; which many conceive to be the Apoſtles intendment, in thoſe words, *This day have I begotten thee*; taken out of the ſecond Pſalm, and quoted (*Acts* 13. 33.) as alſo (*Heb.* 1. 5.)

Secondly, In the Negative, The Angels are not the Sons of God by Regeneration, nor by Adoption. Thus Believers only are the Sons of God (*John* 1.12.) *To as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the Sons of God, even to as many as believed on his Name.* Believers are the Sons of God, regenerated and adopted; Angels are not ſo. The holy Angels needed not Regeneration; for as they were created holy, ſo they fell not from that holineſs in which they were created: and therefore Chriſt is not to them a Redeemer for their reſtauration, but only a Head for their confirmation and eſtabliſhment (*Col.* 2. 10.) As for the Angels which fell, they *are reſerved in Chains of Darkneſs to the Judgment of the Great Day*; they have no ſhare in Redemption, their fall is irrecoverable. Thus we ſee how the Angels are not the *Sons of God.* But how then are they the *Sons of God?*

I anſwer affirmatively, The Angels may be called the Sons of God in a ſixfold ſenſe.

Firſt, As *Adam* is called the Son of God (*Luke* 3. 18.) in his Primary Conſtitution, or by Creation; ſo Angels are the Sons of God, as they are his Creatures.

Secondly, Angels are called the Sons of God, becauſe of Gods great affection to them, as well as his Creation of them, Such as we much affect, and love intrinſically, we are ready to call our Children, Sons or Daughters: The Lord bears abundance of love to the Angels, therefore he calls them his Sons.

Thirdly, If we conſider their Place or Station: The Angels wait upon God, they are near to him, they ſtand about his Throne as Sons, to receive his Bleſſing and Commands.

There are three things ſpecially conſiderable in the Angels:

Firſt, Their Nature, ſo they are Spirits, or ſpiritual ſubſtances.

Secondly, Their Offices, ſo they are the Meſſengers and Miniſters of God.

Thirdly, Their Dignity or nearneſs to God, ſo they are his Sons. *Chriſt the only begotten Son, is in the boſom of the Father,* (*John* 1. 18.) that is, he is neareſt him, and hath moſt intimate communion with him: The Angels are ſo near to God (that though they are not in his boſom, yet) *they always behold his face* (*Matth.* 18. 10.) that is, ſtand in his preſence, as being in high favour with him; and are therefore in that reſpect called his Sons.

Fourthly, Angels may be called the Sons of God, becauſe of that conſtant uniform obediential frame that is in them towards God. *A ſon honoureth his father* (*Mal.* 1. 6.) It ſhould be the diſpoſition, and in the heart of every Son to do ſo. And ſeeing it is not only fully the diſpoſition of Angels, and in their hearts to do ſo, but they have always actually done ſo, (the holy Angels may truly ſay unto God, as the Elder Brother is brought in ſaying to his Father (*Luke* 15. 29) Loe, theſe many years, even ever ſince the Creation, we do ſerve thee; neither have we tranſgreſt at any time thy Commandment, either by leaving undone what thou haſt bidden us do, or by doing what thou haſt forbidden us) therefore Angels having the genuine ſpirit of Sons towards God, may in that regard alſo be ſtiled the Sons of God.

Fifthly, They may be called the Sons of God, becauſe of their Eſſential likeneſs to God, or their likeneſs to him in Eſſence. God is a Spirit, he is Incorporeal; the Angels alſo are Incorporeal, they are Spirits; though the difference between God and Angels be as great as can be conceived, yea, unconceivable; God being the *Creating Spirit*, and they but created ſpirits; God being an Infinite Spirit, and they but finite Spirits; yet the Angels bear a reſemblance to God in their Eſſence, as well as in their Qualifications, and may upon that ground likewiſe be called the Sons of God.

Sixthly, Angels are called the Sons of God, becauſe they imitate him. *Do good to them that hate you* (ſaith Chriſt, *Matth.* 5. 44.) *that ye may be the children of your Father which is in Heaven:* that is, imitate God, carry it towards evil men, towards men that are evil to you, or do you evil, as God doth; and this will be both an Evidence that you are the Sons of God, and God will honour you with the Title of his Sons. The Angels imitate God in mercy, and love, and compaſſion, as alſo in their good works, their ways being all holy, juſt, and good, pure and righteous. Further, they ſhew much kindneſs and tenderneſs to the children of men; they doubtleſs, are patient towards the froward, and do good offices (as they are called and deputed) to thoſe who deſerve little good. Now being like God by imitation, they may be called the Sons of God. Thus we have ſome account in theſe particulars, why, or how the Angels are called the Sons of God. But what did theſe Sons of God, the Angels, when Spectators of the Worlds Creation? The Text tells us,

Signanter aſtris tanquam inferioribus laudem, Angelis tanquam ſuperioribus attribuit Jubilationem. Aquin. חרועה *Eſt* Ἀλαλαγμὸς *ſignificatur approbatio illius operis cum gaudio.*

They ſhouted for joy.] Some put a difference between that which is attributed to the Stars (taking the Stars properly) and the Angels; as if here it were ſpoken (*ſignanter*) by way of excellency; the Stars did *ſing*, but the Angels *ſhouted*. The word rendred *to ſhout for joy*, ſignifies in general to make any great or loud cry, ſometimes for ſorrow or conſternation of mind: When the Army of the *Midianites*, amazed with *Gideons* ſtratagem of the Pitchers and Lamps, ran and fled, 'tis ſaid they *cryed*, and their cry is expreſſed by this word (*Judges* 7. 21.) When an Army runs, they make only a confuſed noiſe or ſhout, for fear and ſorrow: But moſtly, and moſt properly, the word ſignifies to ſhout for joy, and in a way of triumph, as when an Army is victorious, and ready to divide the ſpoil; or as in the time of Harveſt or Vintage, when the Fruits and good things of the Earth are gathered in: and ſuch is the ſhouting here intended. The Angels, the Sons of God, did not only ſing as the Stars, when the foundations of the Earth were laid; but they *ſhouted for joy*. It is but one word in the Hebrew, which we render, *ſhouted for joy*. The Angels did not only approve, but applaud the Works of God.

Further, Conſider the generality of this Divine *Plaudite*, or Applauſe, *All the Sons of God ſhouted for joy.* As before the Lord ſaith, *The ſtars ſang together*; ſo here, *All the Sons of God*; not one of them was left out, every one bare a part in this triumph; they all with one accord, with one heart, and one voice, joyned in it: *All the Sons of God* (there was not one diſſenting voice) *ſhouted for joy.* Hence

Firſt, I might refute their Opinion who denied Angels and Spirits, as the Sadduces did (*Acts* 23. 8.) but I ſhall not ſtay upon that.

Further, It being ſaid, *All the Sons of God ſhouted for joy*,

Note; *The Sons of God, the holy Angels, are of one mind.*

It is a moſt bleſſed ſight, and hearing, when all the Sons of God joyn in one thing. It was not a part of the Sons of God, it was not here one, and there another, but all of them. *Behold* (ſaith *David*, *Pſal.* 133. 1.) *how good and how pleaſant a thing it is, for Brethren to dwell together in unity!* The Angels, who are Brethren, the Sons of one Father, did all joyn together in this duty. The Apoſtle ſpeaks concerning the work of the Miniſtry, (2 *Cor.* 6. 1.) *We as workers together*, thoſe words [*with him*] are put in by the Tranſlators, and the ſupply is to a very good ſenſe: We as workers together with him, that is, with God; for he is pleaſed to uſe his Miniſters as Workers together with himſelf. Yet it may well be underſtood concerning the Miniſters of the Goſpel, only joyning in this one thing, that is, with one voice, or one cry, beſeeching ſinners *to be reconciled unto God* (*Chap.* 5. 20.) and that, as it followeth in the cloſe of this firſt Verſe (*Chap.* 6.) *They receive not the Grace of God in vain.* All Miniſters ſhould be workers together: As *all the Angels were ſingers together, and ſhouters together*; ſo the Miniſters of Chriſt ſhould be workers together. That which is the work of one, is the work of them all, and they ſhould all joyn in it. And how ſad is it, to ſee thoſe who call themſelves, and would be accounted the Sons of God, divided in their work and way! when one rejoyceth in that which to another is cauſe of mourning; when *one mans meat is* (as we ſpeak proverbially) *another mans poyſon*; or one mans comfort, another mans grief? How many are there who cannot joyn in rejoycing and thankſgiving for works of God (I mean Providential works) as eminent in their kind as the Creation work, or the laying of the foundations of the Earth? That will be a bleſſed day, when we ſhall ſee the full effect of that Propheſie (*Zeph.* 3. 9.) *Then will I* (ſaith the Lord) *turn to the people a pure* (*Lip* or) *Language, that they may all call upon the Name of the Lord, with one conſent or ſhoulder.* Here's a promiſe of all as one, and of all with one conſent, ſhoulder, inward, outward man, aſſociated in prayer, or calling upon the Name of the Lord; which by a *Synecdoche*, includes all the parts, and takes in the whole compaſs of the worſhip of God. The accompliſhment of this Propheſie, was the ſcope of Apoſtolical Prayer (*Rom.* 15. 5, 6.) *Now the God of patience and conſolation, grant you to be like minded one towards another; according to*, or (as the Margin hath it) *after the example of Chriſt Jeſus; that ye may with one mind, and with one mouth, glorifie God, even the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* All the Sons of God in the Text were of one mind, and had (as it were) but one mouth, the joy of one was the joy of them all. All the Sons of God on Earth have this principle in them, to rejoyce in God, and to magnifie God for his mercy, only all have not the ſame light: They that have not an habitual principle in them, to praiſe God in and for his works, are not of his Family; they are not worthy to be reckoned Sons of God, who have not a readineſs, or preſent diſpoſition in them, to joyn with all, or with any of his true Sons, in ſhouting for joy at his gracious appearances in his mighty works of mercy; as alſo in humbling themſelves together with them, at the terrible appearances of his dreadful works of Judgment, or at the uſual Prognoſticks or Fore runners of them.

Again, Taking *the Stars for the Angels*, they were Morning-ſtars; the Angels ſang and ſhouted for joy, in the Morning.

Hence, obſerve; *The very firſt appearances of the Power and Wiſdom of God in his works, ſhould put us upon the work of praiſe and rejoycing.*

We ſay truly, better late than never; but 'tis beſt to be early, and with the firſt, in a good work. *David* did not only awake early, or in the morning, to praiſe God; but as the Hebrew may be rendred, *He awakened the morning* (Pſal. 57. 8.) David *was a morning-man in praiſing of God*; ſo were the Angels. 'Tis healthful both for ſoul and body to be morning-men, to be early, both in praiſing God, and praying to him. God requires, and he infinitely deſerves the firſt fruits of our time, our youth, which is the morning of our life, the firſt fruits of our age ſhould be dedicated to God (*Eccleſ.* 12. 1.) and ſo ſhould the morning, which is the youth (if I may ſo ſpeak) of every day. Our firſt thoughts ſhould be of God, and with God; as ſoon as we awake, we ſhould ſet open the door of our hearts, by Meditation, to let God in, and knock open the doors of Heaven by Prayer and Supplication to get in to God. It ſhould not be unlamented, that the courſe of moſt men runs ſo contrary to this; their ſenſes are no ſooner looſed from the bands of ſleep, but they let looſe their thoughts, and ſet the doors of their ſouls wide open to ſenſitive, ſometimes to wicked and ſenſual objects; and ſo ſhut out God, and matters of greateſt moment, to and about their Immortal Souls. How unworthy are ſuch of this bleſſed Relation, under which the Angels, thoſe early Praiſers of God, are here repreſented, *Sons of God*.

Thirdly, In that it is here ſaid, *All the Sons of God ſhouted for joy*; that is, all the Angels then created.

Obſerve; *They who have joyned in ſome outward Worſhips of God, may yet fall off and Apoſtatize.*

Here all the Angels of God joyned in this Thankſgiving at firſt, yet ſoon, very ſoon after, a great part of the Angels rebelled againſt God, and became Apoſtates; for preſently upon the Creation of Man, which was the ſixth day, there was a Devil, a Tempter, who overthrew Man; yet here we have all the Angels in a holy Quire. Hypocrites are forward to joyn in acts of praiſe, in acts of prayer, in acts of hearing, who yet in time of temptation fall away, and ſo fall into as bad a condition as the fallen Angels; of whom the Apoſtle *Jude* ſaith (*verſ.* 6.) that not *having kept their firſt eſtate (or principality) but leaving their own habitation* (appointed them of God) *he hath reſerved them in Everlaſting Chains* (both of Providence and Juſtice) *under darkneſs, unto the Judgment of the Great Day.*

Fourthly, obſerve; *The great buſineſs of Angels, and that which they are moſt bent to, is to praiſe God* (Pſal. 103. 20. Pſal. 148. 2. Iſa. 6. 3.)

And as at the Birth of the World the Angels ſhouted for joy, ſo at the Birth of Jeſus Chriſt (who was the Author of the ſecond Creation, as well as of the firſt) the Angels ſhouted for joy: *ſuddenly there was with the Angel a multitude of the Heavenly Hoſt* praiſing God (*Luke* 2. 13.) To praiſe God is heavenly work, 'tis Angelical work, the moſt proper work of the Sons of God. We ſhall not always have need of praying, but we ſhall always have cauſe to be praiſing, and ſhouting for joy: This ſhout will remain to all Eternity. Praiſe is the moſt ſpiritual work, and requires the moſt ſpiritual frame of heart; and therefore the chief of that work is reſerved to an Eſtate, wherein not only our ſouls, but our bodies too, ſhall be altogether ſpiritual.

Fifthly, Note; *The Work of Creation ſhould continually call up our thoughts to the praiſe of God, to ſing and ſhout his praiſes.*

Did the Stars (take them properly) and did the Sons of God (the Angels) rejoyce when the work firſt began? and is not the work to be rejoyced in now 'tis finiſhed? Though ſin hath ſullied the work, yet the glory of God is ſtill tranſparent in it; the Power, Goodneſs, and Wiſdom of God are glorioſly ſeen in the things that are made (*Rom.* 1. 20.) not only were they ſeen, but they are ſeen to this day. The Creatures are ſtill a Glaſs wherein we may behold the inviſible things of God, even his Eternal Power and God-head; ſo that they who glorifie him not in and for thoſe Works, will be found and left without excuſe: They are a Book, a Volum, conſiſting of as many leaves and lines as there are diſtinct ſorts of Creatures, wherein we may read the Great God plainly deſcribed to us: And if ſo, let us remember our fault this day. Is it not our ſin and ſhame, that we are ſo little in admiring God for this work, which ſet all the Angels in Heaven a ſinging, a ſhouting, a wondring? There are ſeveral things in the Works of Creation, which well conſidered, will ſoon provoke us to ſinging, and to ſhouting. Firſt, The multitude of Creatures. Secondly, The various kinds of Creatures. Thirdly, The Beauty and Excellency that is in the Creatures. Fourthly, The profit and the uſefulneſs of the Creatures. Theſe laid together, ſhould draw out our praiſes, and cauſe us to exalt the Power, Wiſdom and Goodneſs of God manifeſted in and by his Creatures.

Laſtly, Conſider what was it that cauſed the Angels to ſhout for joy, when they ſaw this work of God begun? Surely it was the appearance or manifeſtation of God, ſhining brightly in the Work of Creation.

Hence, obſerve; *The diſcoveries of the Power, Wiſdom, and Goodneſs of God, ſhould ſtir up, and ingage every man, and cannot but effectually ſtir up and ingage thoſe who are wiſe and good, to rejoyce in God.*

Somewhat of God is ſtamped, or there are certain lines of his tranſcendent Perfections drawn upon every Creature; here a line of Wiſdom, and there a line of Power; here a line of Goodneſs, and there a line of Mercy; the ſight of theſe ſhould cauſe us to ſhout for joy; eſpecially, that this God, the Creator of the ends of the Earth, is our God for ever and ever, and will be our Guide even unto death. How many lines have we of God in the World, which we have not read, much leſs ſtudied and commented upon! In how many things is God viſible, and yet we ſee him not, nor acknowledge him as we ought? Take only theſe two things, by way of Inference, from the whole.

Firſt, *To be of a praiſing, of a rejoycing ſpirit, is to be of an excellent ſpirit, of an Angelical ſpirit.* Let us imitate the Angels in praiſing God. The Angels are called the Sons of God, becauſe they imitate him; let us imitate the Angels in praiſing God, ſo ſhall we approve our ſelves the Sons of God too.

Secondly, Conſider, The Angels rejoyced at the laying of the foundations of the Earth. The Earth was made for Man; Heaven was the Angels Habitation, they were well provided for, if there had never been an Earth, they had been provided for; yet they ſhouted for joy, when God laid the foundations of the Earth for the uſe of Man and Beaſt.

Hence take this Inference; *It ſhews a good ſpirit, to rejoyce at the good of others, or to be pleaſed with that which is beneficial to others, though it be no benefit to us.*

This argues an excellent ſpirit, an Angelical ſpirit. Some if they are well houſed and provided for, care not whether others are houſed and provided for or no; nor can they rejoyce at the good of others, but as their own good is concern'd. In Glory we ſhall be like to the Angels, our very bodies ſhall be like to the Angels, living without food, without ſleep, without marriage; in Heaven we ſhall neither marry, nor be given in marriage; but ſhall be like the Angels. O let us ſtrive to be like the Angels in our minds now, as we hope to have our bodies like the Angels hereafter, even cloathed (as the School-men call them) with Angelical Endowments. Unleſs our ſpirits are like the Angels here, unleſs we have hearts like the hearts of Angels in this World, we ſhall never have bodies like them hereafter, or in the World to come.

VERS. 8, 9, 10, 11.

Or who ſhut up the Sea with doors, when it brake forth, as if it had iſſued out of the Womb?

When I made the Cloud the Garment thereof, and thick darkneſs a Swadling-band for it.

And brake up for it my decreed Place, and ſet Bars and Doors:

And ſaid, Hitherto ſhalt thou come, but no further; and here ſhall thy proud Waves be ſtayed.

THe Lord having queſtioned *Job* about the Fabrick of the Earth, and ſhewed the Triumph and Acclamations of Angels at it, in the former Context: He next leads him to the Waters, or carrieth him to the Sea, there to conſider his works of wonder. As *Moſes* in the beginning of *Geneſis* having ſummarily, and in general, ſpoken of the Creation of Heaven and Earth, deſcendeth to particulars; ſo here we have the Lord paſſing from one part of the Creation to another; from the Creation of the Earth, to that other great part of the Creation, the waters, or the Sea. Verſ. 8. *Who ſhut up the Sea with doors?* &c.

In theſe words, we have

Firſt, The Creation of the Sea.

Secondly, Its Conſtitution: both ſet forth by moſt Elegant Metaphors.

The Creation or Production of the Sea, is ſhadowed by alluſion to an Infant breaking forth out of the Womb (*Verſ.* 8.)

The Conſtitution or ſettlement of the Sea, is carried on in ſuitable Metaphors to the end of the eleventh Verſe.

Verſ. 8. Or who hath ſhut up the Sea with doors, when it brake forth? &c.

We have here,

Firſt, The Birth or Nativity of the Sea.

Secondly, What God did with the Sea, when it was born, and iſſued out of the Womb: Then God ſhut it in with doors, and prepared Garments and Swadling-bands for it; then he reſtrained the rage, force, and fury of it, and held it as his Priſoner or Captive in bonds. As ſoon as an Infant is born, it is bound up and ſwadled; and as ſoon as the Sea (as I may ſay) was born or come into the world, God took order with it; and to keep it in order, he provided doors to ſhut it in, and garments to bind it up with.

What the Scripture ſpeaks of Gods coercing the Sea, may be reduced to two Heads:

Firſt, To that reſtraint which he laid upon the Sea, preſently upon its Creation, ſome ſay the firſt, others the third day of the Creation; according to that (*Gen.* 1. 9.) *God ſaid, Let the waters under the Heaven be gathered together into one place, and let the dry Land appear; and it was ſo.* Thus the Lord reduced it to a certain place.

Secondly, To that reſtraint which God laid upon it after this reducement, that it ſhould no more return to overflow the Earth. Both theſe Reſtraints or Laws put upon the Sea, are contained in this Context; the former of them in the eighth and ninth verſes: As ſoon as the Sea iſſued out of the Earth, God ſet up its doors, and made it Bands. The latter of theſe, the giving of a ſpecial Law, that when it was ſhut in, it ſhould no more break forth, but according to his appointment, we have in the tenth and eleventh verſes, where it is ſaid, *I brake up for it my decreed place, and ſet bars and doors; and ſaid, hitherto ſhalt thou come, and no further; and here ſhall thy proud waves be ſtayed.*

So then, here we have;

Firſt, Bounds and limits aſſigned by God to that vaſt and unruly Element, the Water, that the Earth might be habitable and uſeful both for Man and Beaſt. And,

Secondly, We have the Lord reſtraining all power or liberty (which naturally it would have had and taken) to violate or break thoſe bounds: For had not God given the waters of the Sea ſuch a ſpecial Command (though bounds had been aſſigned them) they would quickly have broken their bounds.

Theſe two Orders of God differ much, though not in the time when they were given out, yet in the nature of the thing; and both ſuppoſe the Sea in being, when theſe Orders were given out: For when it is ſaid (*verſ.* 8.) *It brake forth, as if it iſſued out of the Womb*; this implieth its Birth and Nativity: and when God ſaith, *He ſhut it up with doors*; this ſuppoſeth, that it not only had a being, but that it was violent and furious, and would have overflowed all, and regained as large a Territory as it poſſeſſed at firſt, when it iſſued out of the Womb of the Earth, even the face of the whole Earth, if the Lord had not bridled and reſtrained it.

Yet further, and more diſtinctly to open the words in their Order.

Verſ. 8. Or, Who ſhut up the Sea with doors?

This disjunctive Particle *Or*, ſucceeds thoſe disjunctives (*verſ.* 5, 6.) who did this? or, who did that? or, who a third thing, concerning the Earths formation? Here again, *Or, Who ſhut up the Sea with doors?* The Hebrew is only, *Shut up the Sea with doors*; the word *who* is repeated out of the fifth and ſixth verſes. The Lord by this query or queſtion put to *Job*, would then have him, and now us know, that it was himſelf alone that did it: It was the Lord who bridled the Sea, and ſhut it up with doors: As if he ſaid, *Where waſt thou, O* Job, *when I did this great thing? As thou gaveſt no aſſiſtance towards the laying of the foundations of the Earth, and the faſtening of the Corner-ſtone thereof; ſo tell me what aſſiſtance didſt thou give me in bringing forth, and ſetling the vaſt Sea: Or at leaſt (if thou canſt) give me an account how theſe things were done, and how they continue as they were done by an Everlaſting Decree: who hath ſhut up the Sea with doors, was it I or thou, or any other Creature?* Thus the Lord ſtill brings *Job* upon his knees by humbling queſtions, knowing that he was not able to take any of that honour to himſelf. He poor man had no more to do in this great work, than he had in the former; and therefore he ought to ſubmit to the works of God in providence, whatſoever he was pleaſed to do, ſeeing all the works of Creation were done by God alone, without his counſel or aſſiſtance.

Quis. *Hæc vox rectè* ἀπὸ κοινοῦ *repetitur ex verſu* 5. & 6. Druſ.

Who hath Shut up the Sea with doors?] here is a two-fold rendring of that word tranſlated Shut up; we take it from a root which ſignifies to hedge in, or compaſs about, as alſo to protect; becauſe thoſe things which are compaſſed about with ſtrong hedges, are under protection, and ſafe from danger. VVater being a fluid body, ſpreads it ſelf over all, the water cannot contain it ſelf in its own bounds (fluids cannot) but it muſt be bound, it muſt be ſhut in, or ſhut up. The Lord ſhut up the Sea, as the waters of a great River are ſhut up by Flood-gates, or as the waters upon which a Mill is built (ſome carry the alluſion to that) are pent for the ſervice of it, and are cauſed by Art to run gradually, or by inches, as the Maſter of that uſeful Engine gives direction. Thus the Lord ſhut up the Sea.

סכך *Sæpe eſt protegere; aliqui legunt obſepſit vel circumſepſit, ac ſi eſſet à* שך *ſepio, cum ſit à* סכן *tego, obtego, operio.* סרך *autem per ſamech ſignificat ungere.* Druſ.

The Sea is a great Convention or Aſſembly of waters, as *Moſes* ſpake (*Gen.* 1. 10.) *The gathering together of waters, the Lord called Sea:* The Sea is a Confluence, or meeting of waters. There may be a great water, yet that not the Sea; the confluence of all, or many waters together, that is Sea. The waters being thus gathered or aſſembled by the Lords Summons or Command, he hedged them in, or ſhut them up.

Secondly, Others render, *Who anointed the doors of the Sea, when it brake forth, as if it had iſſued out of the Womb.* They who give this Tranſlation, derive the word from a Root, which ſignifies *to anoint.* Some Interpreters inſiſt much upon this ſenſe of the word, and I find one who aſſerts it as the only ſenſe of it in this place; *Who anointed the doors of the Sea*, that is, the paſſages by which the Sea iſſued forth. And (ſaith he) the reaſon why other Learned Interpreters pitch upon that Tranſlation of ſhutting up the Sea with doors, is becauſe they knew not what to make of anointing the doors of the Sea, nor to what practice ſuch an expreſſion ſhould allude, that the doors of the Sea were anointed: whereas indeed that notion of the word bears the faireſt alluſion and proportion to the Metaphor of Child-bearing, begun in this, and carried on (as it were) profeſſedly in the next verſe, under which the Spirit of God is pleaſed to expreſs the coming forth, and original of the Sea: Now, ſaith my Author, it is a thing commonly known both to Phyſitians and Midwives, that thoſe parts of the body by which the Infant comes into the world, uſe to be anointed, for its more eaſie paſſage. Thus ſaith God to Job, *Didſt thou anoint the doors of the Sea, when it brake forth, as if it had iſſued out of the Womb.* It was my Midwifery, my wiſdom and skill, not thine, that brought the Sea into the world, and gave it an eaſie birth, or delivered the Earth of it without hard labour. This makes the ſenſe of the whole Context run more clearly than our reading of it. And ſo we have Sea-doors of two ſorts

Quis valvas maris inunxit. Godur.

Quærit Dominus à Jobo, quæ Lucina præfuerit parentis naturæ puerperio quando eſt enixa mare. Id.

ſorts in this Context: In this eighth Verſe, the doors of the Sea are the doors by which the Sea came forth; and in the tenth verſe, we have the doors by which the Sea is kept in; whereas according to our rendring, the doors in both places are interpreted as keeping the Sea in; and ſo there would be a mention of the ſame doors twice; which though it may be admitted, yet this latter ſeems to be the cleareſt, as taking the firſt doors for thoſe by which the Sea was let out, or had its birth; and the latter, for thoſe doors by which the Sea is kept within its bounds. *Who ſhut up the Sea with doors,*

גוח
Exivit cum impetu.

When it brake forth.] The word which we tranſlate *to break forth*, ſignifies in other places of Scripture, the breaking forth of a Child in the birth: *David* uſeth it (*Pſal.* 22. 9.) *Thou art he that took me out of the Womb*; there it is taken (as Grammarians ſpeak) tranſitively, here intranſitively, *When it brake forth*, noting a kind of rupture, or violence; as when *Tamar* was in travel (*Gen.* 38. 27, 28.) *There were Twins in her Womb; and it came to paſs, when ſhe travelled, that the one put out his hand, and the Midwife took and bound upon his hand a Scarlet Thred, ſaying, this came out firſt; and it came to paſs, as he drew back his hand, that behold his Brother came forth; and ſhe ſaid, how haſt thou broken forth? this breach be upon thee; therefore his Name was called* Pharez. Thus the Sea brake forth violently, as if it had iſſued

Ex occulto divinæ providentiæ. Aquin. *Creavit Deus terram non inanem ſed gravidam aquis, quæ licet eodem temporis momento creata.*

Out of the Womb.] What Womb? Some ſay of the Providence of God; ſay others, of the Decree or Counſel of God; for that is the Womb out of which all things proceed: A third ſaith, out of the Power and Omnipotence of God: All theſe ſayings are true, either of theſe is as the Womb out of which all things iſſue; but theſe, the Providence, the Decree and Counſel, the Power and Omnipotence of God, are the common Womb out of which all things iſſue; whereas here the Lord ſeems to ſpeak of ſome ſpecial Womb out of which the Sea iſſued: And therefore I rather adhere to that Interpretation which ſaith plainly, that the Womb out of which the Sea is ſaid to iſſue, was the Abyſs or Bowels of the Earth. The Sea brake forth out of the Bowels of the Earth, as out of a Womb. The Earth is the common Parent, the Parent of the Sea; the Sea was created in the Bowels of the Earth, or the Earth was created big with the waters of the Sea, as a Woman big with child; and ſhortly after the Lord cauſed the Earth, like a Woman with child, to travel and bring forth the Sea. So that the Lord doth here more diſtinctly open to us the manner of the Creation of the Sea, than in the firſt of *Geneſis*. It is true, the Element of Water hath its ſeat naturally above the Earth, it being the lighter Element; but as to the firſt Conception of it, this Scripture implies, that its place was within the Earth, and that it iſſued forth from the Earth. The Bowels of the Earth were the Womb in which the Sea was conceived, and out of which, by the Word of the Lord, it iſſued. The Waters were not at firſt created above the Earth (as ſome have affirmed) but they being created with the Earth, and conceived within the Earth, brake out of the Earth, and inveſted or covered it all over; and ſo continued in that condition till the third day, and then the Lord commanded them to retire into certain vaſt Channels, now called Sea, that ſo the dry Land might appear. Thus the Lord, when the Waters were iſſued forth, diſpoſed of them in their proper place. According to this Interpretation, we are to take theſe words of the time paſt; *Who is he that ſhut up the Sea with doors, when it brake forth?* that is, after it had broken forth, after it had iſſued out, *Who was he that then ſhut it up with doors?* This deſcription of the Nativity of the Sea, may be drawn out into theſe Concluſions:

Firſt, *The Earth and Waters were created both together.*

Secondly, *The Waters were at firſt created within the Bowels of the Earth*; for, ſaith the Text, *They iſſued forth, they brake forth.*

Thirdly, *At the Command of God, the Waters were brought forth out of the Earth, as a Child out of the Mothers Womb* (Pſal. 33. 7.) *He gathereth the waters of the Sea together as an heap, he layeth up the deep in Store-houſes* (Pſal. 104. *verſ.* 5, 9.) *Bleſs the Lord,* &c. *who laid the foundations of the Earth, that it ſhould not be removed for ever; thou coveredſt it with the deep as with a garment; the Waters ſtood above the Mountains.*

Fourthly, *The Waters being thus brought forth, did at firſt cover the Earth, and ſo would have continued, if God had let them alone.*

In the Method of Nature things lie thus:

Firſt, The Earth is loweſt, being the groſſeſt Element.

Secondly, The Water riſeth above the Earth, as being more pure than that.

Thirdly, The Air is above the Water, as being much more pure than the Water.

Fourthly, The fire gets above all, as being the thinneſt and pureſt of all the Elements; and therefore the Water iſſuing out of the Earth, would have continually covered the face of the Earth, if the Lord by his Power had not ordered it off, and ſhut it up with doors, when come off, according to our reading the words in this verſe, and according to the general reading of the tenth verſe; where the whole Earth being covered with water, the Lord brake up for it his decreed place, and there kept it faſt. Thus *David* (*Pſal.* 104. 7, 8.) ſpeaking of the waters above the Mountains, and overflowing all; preſently adds, *At thy rebuke they fled, at the voice of thy thunder they haſted away; they go up by the Mountains, they go down by the Valleys, unto the place which thou haſt founded for them.* There the Lord by *David*, as here by himſelf, ſets forth his mighty Power, in the diſpoſal of the waters to a certain place.

But if we take that other reading of this verſe, *Who hath anointed the doors of the Sea?* then by *doors* we are not to underſtand that which ſtops the Sea from overflowing the Earth, as in the tenth verſe; but for thoſe paſſages at which the waters brake out of the Earth, as an Infant from the Womb; which ſeems moſt diſtinct and clear.

And becauſe the Sea is ſo huge a Body, ſo great a part of the World, (we may, not unprofitably, I hope, before I paſs from this verſe) conſider a three-fold repreſentation of the Sea, or the Sea as a Glaſs ſhewing us three things.

Firſt, The Sea hath in it a repreſentation of God himſelf in his Divine Perfections.

Secondly, Of the World in its various motions.

Thirdly, Of the heart of man in its vileſt corruptions.

The Sea carrieth in it; Firſt, A repreſentation of God himſelf; which may be taken in four things.

Firſt, In the hiddenneſs and unſearchableneſs of his Wiſdom (*Pſal.* 36. 6.) *Thy Judgments are a great deep, or a Sea*; (Rom. 11. 33.) *O the depth of the Wiſdom and Counſel of God! How unſearchable are his Judgments, and his ways paſt finding out!* None can fathom this Sea, there is not Line enough in the underſtanding of Men and Angels to reach the bottom of God; he is a Sea without banks or bottom.

Secondly, The Lord is as the Sea in his goodneſs, ſending out ſo many ſweet ſtreams, and feeding all the Springs of the Earth (*Pſal.* 65. 9, 10.) *Thou viſiteſt the Earth, and契 watereſt it; thou greatly inricheſt it with the River of God, which is full of water; thou prepareſt them Corn, when thou haſt ſo provided for it; thou watereſt the ridges thereof abundantly,* &c.

Thirdly, As all the Rivers come from the Sea, and return to it, ſo all good flows out and ſprings from God, and all the glory of his goodneſs ſhould return, or be returned to him in Praiſes and Thankſgivings.

Fourthly, The Sea is ſuch a vaſt Body, that though it ſends forth water to feed the Earth every where, and though all the Rivers flow back into the Sea, yet the Sea is not at all abated by the water that it ſends forth, nor increaſed by all the water that returns to it. So how much ſoever God gives out to the Creature (he gives out all) yet he is no more emptied by it than the Sea; and whatſoever returns the Creature makes to him, they no more increaſe nor add to him, than the Sea is increaſed by the Rivers falling into it: there is no ſenſible appearance of the heightning of the waters of the Sea, by the greateſt and vaſteſt Rivers that diſburden themſelves into it.

Secondly, As the Sea is an Emblem of the Living God, in whom we live, ſo of the World wherein we live.

Firſt, The Sea is a very unquiet part of the World. What Storms, what Tempeſts are there upon the Sea? What rage and fury in the Waves of it? Such an unquiet thing is this World, hurrying up and down, and inraged often by Storms and Tempeſts ariſing from the luſts and paſſions of men, even to the ſwallowing up of all.

Secondly, The Sea is very unconſtant, it is now ebbing, and anon flowing. It is ſo with this world, and all things in it; our comforts are ſometimes flowing, and ſometimes ebbing; our peace comes, and anon it goes; we have ſome good days, and more evil; the days of darkneſs are many, and the beſt meet with many of them in this world; the world is full of changes, the faſhion of it paſſeth away.

Thirdly, The Sea-water is a ſalt water, an unpleaſant water; and ſuch is the world, though many drink greedily of it, and would even draw it up, as the Scripture ſpeaks of *Behemoth*, drawing up *Jordan*. They who drink in worldly things, as if they could drink up the whole world, yet drink but ſalt and unſavoury water. One of the Ancients notes it as a great mercy to man, that God doth thus imbitter the world to us, making it brackiſh and diſtaſtful. And indeed God hath on purpoſe tempered the things of this world, that they ſhould not be too ſweet and luſcious for us, or leſt we ſhould diſtemper our ſelves by them, or ſurfeit upon them.

Auguſtine.

Thirdly, The Sea is an Emblem of the heart of man, eſpecially of a wicked mans heart. Man is a little World, and the heart of man hath a Sea of worldly vanities in it (*Iſaiah* 57.20.) *The wicked are like the troubled Sea*; and the heart of a wicked man is the moſt troubled and troubleſome part in him. The heart unchanged, is like the Sea:

Firſt, For turbulency or troubleſomneſs; what is more unquiet than the heart of man? no ſuch natural ſtorms upon the Sea; no ſuch civil ſtorms either at Sea or Land, as there are carnal ſtorms in the heart of man; what a ſtir, what broils, doth the heart of man make many times!

Secondly, The heart of man is like the Sea, as it is ſalt, brackiſh and bitter, through the haſtineſs and raſhneſs of our ſpirits. The Prophet *Habakkuk* calls the *Chaldeans* a bitter and haſty Nation (*Chap.* 1, 6.) Haſty perſons are bitter perſons; perverſeneſs, peeviſhneſs and paſſions lodge in them.

Thirdly, The heart of man hath Waves in it, full of pride, like the Sea; what Sea hath ſuch proud Waves as the heart of man hath! O how do many even Deifie themſelves, think and ſpeak of themſelves as if they were more than man! It is ſaid of the King of *Tyrus* (*Ezekiel* 28.2.) that *he ſet his heart as the heart of God*: How was that? not that his heart was faſhioned like the Heart of God, but he was lifted up in a ſelf-ſufficiency, as if he (like God) needed no Helper; and as he thought, he had no need of help from any, ſo he had no fear of hurt from any. How often do ſuch proud Waves appear upon the Sea of mans heart? and who is there among the Sons of men, but finds theſe proud waves of his heart lifting him up beyond his ſphere and condition? And who, but God, can *ſhut up this Sea with doors, when its ſinfulneſs breaks forth, as if it had iſſued out of the Womb?* But leaving theſe Metaphorical Seas, I return to conſider what the Lord ſaid further, concerning the Sea Natural.

Aer mari impendet Græci optime ὁμίχλη δὲ αὐτὴν ἐσπαργάνωσα multæ enim nebulæ ſolent oriri ſuper mare. Grot.

Cum mare aliis aquis tanquam veſtitu & faſciis circumtegerim. Jun.

Quis illa denſa vaporum caligine tanquam faſciis illud involvit. Bez.

Nubes paſſim à poetis dicuntur atræ, nigræ, ſpiceæ, imo interdum tenebræ & nox. Sanct.

Nomen חתלה *ortum eſt à verbo* חתל *quod ſignificat involvere faſciis ſeu linteolis, quemadmodum ſolent involvi recens nati infantes. Ezek.* 16.4. Piſc.

Verſ. 9. **When I made the Cloud the Garment thereof, and thick darkneſs a Swadling-band for it.**

As ſoon as the Child is born, and come into the World, the Mother or Midwife provides ſutable Garments for it, and a Swadling band. Thus the Lord continues the Metaphor of Child-birth; I, ſaith the Lord, provided a Garment and a Swadling-band for the new-born Sea. And as the Text tells us, that the Lord made the Sea a Garment, and a Swadling-band, ſo it tells us what they were: What was the Garment made for the Sea? The Cloud. When the Lord had ſeparated the Sea from the Earth, he made the Clouds to cover it, as Garments do a Child that comes naked into the world; and the Cloud is a fit Garment for the Sea. Clouds are water condenſed, and they diſſolve into water; and here the Lord having ſeparated the Sea from the Earth, made the Cloud, which is a kind of Sea, a Sea in the Air, as a Garment to cover and keep it warm. And becauſe a new-born Child, leſt the limbs ſhould not grow right, hath not the liberty of its arms and feet for a time, but is wrapt up with a Swadling-band: therefore, in purſuance of the Allegory, the Text ſpeaks of a Swadling-band prepared for the Sea, as ſoon as it was born. But what was the Swadling-band of the Sea? As the matter of its Garment is a Cloud, ſo its Swadling-band is *thick darkneſs*; that is, ſay ſome, very dark Clouds; making this latter part of the Verſe but a repetition of the former: becauſe Clouds are dark in themſelves, they are often expreſſed by darkneſs, they are called black Clouds, and dark Clouds, yea, ſometimes Clouds are called *darkneſs*. So that the Cloud, and the thick darkneſs may be the ſame; only it is here expreſt in different terms, to ſhew the exactneſs of the Lords proceeding, and the accurateneſs of his providing for the due ordering of the unruly Child, the Sea. And that the Sea had at firſt ſuch a Swadling-band, we find (*Gen.* 1.2.) *Darkneſs was upon the face of the Deep.*

Hence, Firſt, From the purpoſe of the Spirit of God, as we may well conceive, in repreſenting the Sea in ſuch a Dreſs, a Child in Swadling-bands:

> Note; *God can as eaſily rule and bind the Sea (a vaſt bulkie Body) as a Mother or a Nurſe can bind a little Infant in Swadling-bands.*

And ſurely the Spirit of God would have us to take notice, that though the Sea be indeed ſuch a Gyant, ſuch a Monſter as will make a Heart of Oak ſhake, or a Heart of Braſs melt, yet what is it to God, but an Infant? He can bind it, and lay it to ſleep, even as a little Child. And if the great Sea be in the Hand of God as a little Child, what is great to God! and how great is God! What is ſtrong to God! and how ſtrong is God! What, or who is too great, or too ſtrong for God to deal with? Cannot God who hath ſwadled the turbulent Sea, provide Swadling-bands to wrap up the ſtouteſt and moſt turbulent ſpirits of this world? *Job* ſpeaking of himſelf, wondered that God ſhould deal ſo with him (*Chap.* 7.12.) *Am I a Sea, or a Whale, that thou ſetteſt a watch over me?* The Sea is a boiſterous Creature, and had need be watched; *Am I a Sea, or a Whale,* ſaid *Job*? Though a man be as a Sea, or a Whale, God can watch him, and bind him from doing miſchief. Therefore fear not any power of the Creature, though a great Sea, while your behaviour is good; but fear the Lord, who binds the Sea to its good behaviour. *Nations are before him but as the drop of a Bucket* (*Iſa.* 40.15.) A Nation, conſidered in it ſelf, is a mighty Sea, much more *The Nations*; which indefinite is Univerſal, taking in all Nations; yet they are all but as the drop of a Bucket: And how eaſily can we diſpoſe of the drop of a Bucket? Even ſo eaſily can God diſpoſe of thoſe who are as the Sea in opinion and appearance.

Secondly, Conſider what the Lord makes the Swadling-band of the Sea; ſome ſtrong thing, no doubt: The Text tells us it is but a dark Cloud, or a Miſt ariſing from the Sea; theſe are the Bands with which God binds this Mighty Gyant the Sea.

> Hence obſerve, *The Lord can make weak and improbable means to do and effect the greateſt things.*

One would think we ſhould have heard of ſome other matter, even of Adamantine Chains, to bind the Sea with; but we ſee Miſts, and Fogs, and Clouds ſhall do it, if God will. Miſts are but Vapours gathered up, and thickened a little in the Air. Is it not a wonder, that they ſhould get the upper-hand of, and bind the Sea? ſo that as ſoon as a Miſt riſeth in the Air, by and by the Sea is ſtill. There is indeed a natural reaſon why, as Calms are ſeldom without Miſts, ſo Miſts can never be without Calms; becauſe Miſts cannot endure nor live in the Wind, much leſs in a Storm, but muſt preſently be diſperſed or blown away by it; yet 'tis much, that a Miſt, or a Fog, or a Cloud in the Air, ſhould have a binding force upon the Sea. This was the Lords work, to keep the Sea quiet in its place. And having conſidered this, we are called to conſider another Work of God, whereby he keeps the Sea from roving out of its place, in the two Verſes following.

Verſ. 10. **And brake up for it my decreed place, and ſet bars and doors, &c.**

Here the Lord ſpeaks of the ſecond ſtate of the Sea, according to one reading, though according to ours of the firſt.

When the Lord had ſaid, *Let the waters be gathered together into one place*, he prepared a place to receive the waters; as when a man would have a place to hold water, he digs or makes an Earthen Veſſel or receptacle for it. So when the waters iſſued out of the Earth in their Nativity, the Lord gathered them together into a Sea, and prepared a ſtupendious pit; or as ſome follow the alluſion here of a new-born infant wrapt in ſwadling-bands, he provided a great Bed or Cradle to put it into. That vaſt concave into which the waters are put, is ſomewhat like a Cradle; thoſe channels (I ſay) which God made for the Sea, are as the Cradle wherein it is laid. The Banks and Shores are thoſe Bars and Doors with which the Infant is kept in his Cradle. What can be ſpoken more ſignificantly than theſe ſimilitudes, to expreſs the greatneſs of God, who keeps in the Sea by his power, and leads it forth gently into ſeveral creeks and boſoms; for the ſafety of Navigation, and repreſſeth its fury and violence by the Sands and Shores? Thus ſaith the Lord, *I brake up for it my decreed place*, a hollow place, for the holding of the Sea.

Some tranſlate, *And eſtabliſhed my decree upon it*; for the word *place*, is not expreſſed in the Text, there it is only *and brake up my decree*, but it is more clear to the general ſenſe of the Text, and to the particular ſenſe of the Hebrew word, to interpret it, of breaking up a decreed place for the Sea, than of eſtabliſhing a decree for the Sea, which is a conſequent of the former: And therefore I underſtand it only of a fitting room for the Sea, here called *a decreed place*, or a place determined, a place not only found out as convenient, but determined and ſet; *I brake up for it my decreed place*, or my *ſtatuted place*, a place that I appointed by an ordinance of Heaven, that place did I break up for it; that is, I made a Veſſel or Channel like a Cradle, big enough, and broad enough, and deep enough, to hold the vaſt waters of the Sea. *I brake up for it my decreed place.*

ואשׁבור *Et fregi*, i. e. *decidi vel decrevi ſuper illud ſtatutum meum*, q. d. *de illi decretum meum conſtitui, cum ei limites ſunt à me præfiniti.* Merc. *Vocabulum* terræ *recte hic ſuppleri, tum ipſa hiſtoriæ veritas, tum propria ſignificatio verbi* שׁבר *evincit: Itaque alii non recte cum verbo illo conſtruunt vocem* חקי *in Hebræo deficit præpoſitio* ב חקי *pro* בחקי Piſc. *Cum diffregi pro eo* (*ſc. terram*) *decreto meo*, i. e. *Alveos velut canas exaravi & circummunivi.* Jun.

Note, Firſt, *The Lord who made the Sea, made alſo a place for it.*

The ordering and placing of all things is of God, as well as the making of them; God hath provided a place for every thing, and put every thing in its place. God is the God of Order. And how comely and orderly are all things, while they are kept in, and all perſons while they keep in the place which God hath decreed for them, and put them in! The Elements do not ponderate, are not burdenſom in their place. The Sea troubles us not while it keeps or breaks not out from that decreed place, which God at firſt brake up for it. There is not the leaſt worm, but hath a decreed place. And as God hath appointed men their time (there is a decreed time for their birth, and for their continuance in life, they die alſo, and go out of the World in a decreed time) ſo there is a decreed place for every man, and that two-fold.

Firſt, Of his habitation, in what part of the World he ſhall live (*Acts* 17. 26.)

Secondly, Of his ſtation, or vocation, what part he ſhall act in the World, to ſerve his Generation, or to get his living. He that abides within the bounds of his calling, abides in his place, though he every day move or remove from place to place. It is beſt for our ſelves and for others alſo to abide in our decreed places; as it is a mercy to us all, that the Sea abides where God placed it. If men break out of their places, they may quickly do miſchief like the breach of the Sea: To prevent which *God brake up for it his decreed place, and* not only ſo, but as it followeth in the cloſe of this tenth verſe,

Set Bars and Doors.] In the eight verſe we have only Doors; he hath ſhut up or annointed the Doors of the Sea; but here we have *Bars and Doors*. It is an alluſion to ſtrong Cities and Caſtles, or to great mens Houſes, which have not only Doors, but Doors barred and double lockt. Bars ſtrengthen Dorrs, and keep them faſt and ſure. A ſtrong Door, if not well lockt and barred, may quickly be broken open; therefore the Lord to make all faſt, tells us that when he had put the Sea into his decreed place, that it ſhould no more return to cover the Earth at its own pleaſure, or according to its natural bent (for there is a deſire, that is, a natural bent in the Sea to be overflowing all, and to repoſſeſs the place from which it was at firſt with drawn; the Lord I ſay tells us that) he then ſet *Doors and Bars to keep it in*, and ſhut it up faſt enough. And if you inquire what is meant by thoſe Doors and Bars, with which 'tis ſhut in? Some anſwer, The Sands of the Sea, others the Rocks Cliffs and Banks; theſe are Bars and Doors by which the Sea is ſhut in. But though theſe things are indeed as Bars and Doors to keep the Sea from returning again; yet that which is the great Bar and Door, is the word of command from God, as appears fully in the next verſe.

Verſe 11. **And ſaid, hitherto ſhalt thou come, and no further.**

Et dixi ei, ſc. *proſopopœia. Dicere Dei eſt jubere & conſtituere quid fiat.*

The Saying of God, is Gods Command and Law; *And ſaid*. To whom? To whom did the Lord ſpeak? He ſaid it to the Sea; though a ſenſeleſs Creature, a Creature without reaſon, yea without life; yet the Lord ſaid it, and he ſaid it to the Sea, and he ſpake it as angry with the Sea. As if he had ſaid, I ſee what a raging Creature thou art, what a froward ungovern'd Child thou art like to prove; therefore I ſay, *hitherto ſhalt thou come, and no further*. We may take this ſaying of the Lord, under theſe two notions.

Firſt, As expreſſing the firmneſs of what was done; *He ſaid*, that is, reſolved, determined, and concluded, made it a Law, a Law like that of the *Medes* and *Perſians*, not to be reverſed by any power.

Secondly, *He ſaid*, as noting the facility of the work. When the Lord took a courſe to ſhut up theſe Doors, and to put on theſe invincible Bars, what did he? He ſaid it, and it was as ſoon done as ſaid; ſo that this word *He ſaid*, notes the infinite ſoveraignty and power of God, that by a word ſpeaking the matter was done; *He ſaid*,

Hebræi פה *pro termino ponunt, ut apparet*, Ezek. 41. 15. *ideo recte* פה עד *vertitur hoc uſque.* Grot.

Hitherto ſhalt thou come.] The Lord gives the Sea line; He makes it a priſoner, but not a cloſe priſoner; he gives it a great ſcope, large room to roll and tumble its waves in; *Hitherto thou ſhalt come*, that is, hitherto thou maiſt come. It is not a Command that the Sea ſhould always come ſo far, but it is a diſpenſation or a permiſſion, that thus far the Sea may come, but no further. As if the Lord had ſaid, *I have drawn a line, and I have ſet a mark, I have given thee a bound*, ſo far to go, *hitherto ſhalt thou come*,

But no further.] The Hebrew is, *Thou ſhalt not add*; Thou ſhalt not go beyond the bound which I have ſet thee, to deſtroy the Earth. A Jewiſh writer gives a double expoſition of this, *But no further*.

Rabbi[illegible]

Firſt, Of the waves and of the waters in the midſt of the Sea. When waves riſe in the main Ocean, how high they may riſe and toſs the ſailing Ship, we cannot tell; but God knows.

Secondly, Of the ways roaring at the Sea ſhore. To both he ſaith, *Hitherto ſhall ye come, and no further*.

And here ſhall thy proud waves be ſtayed.

Why doth the Lord call them proud waves? It is not becauſe they are proud properly, but by a Metaphor; they lift up their heads as proud men do, and are therefore called *proud waves*. Thus *Jethro* ſpake of *Pharaoh* and his Hoſt (*Exod.* 18. 11.) *In the things wherein they dealt proudly, the Lord was above them. Pharaoh* and the *Egyptians*, like the proud waves of the Sea thought to have ſwallowed up all *Iſrael*; but God made the Sea to ſwallow them up Proud men, like mighty waves, think to ſwallow up all; but he is above them, that ſaith to the Sea, *Here ſhall thy proud waves*

Be ſtayed.] The Hebrew is, *And here it ſhall ſet it ſelf againſt the pride of thy waves*. As if the Lord had ſaid, if they come here, my Doors ſhall meet them, my Commands like Bars ſhall ſtop them, that they ſhall not be able to go a ſtep further; they ſhall not conquer my Commands, nor break down the Doors, nor diſſolve the Bars, which I have ſet up. The word rendred waves properly ſignifies a *heap*, becauſe waves roll in heaps one upon the neck of another.

גלים *Fluctus recte dicti, quia volvuntur ventis. Et magnos volvunt ad littora fluctus. Dicuntur etiam* משברים *a fragore vel quod franguntur in littora & ſcopulos, vel quod inter ſe colliduntur.*

Firſt, In that this Text makes ſo particular a deſcription of the proviſion which God made to keep the Sea in order; as ſoon as it was born, he bound it up in ſwadling-bands, and then brake up a decreed place for it, and there ſet up Bars and Doors, that it ſhould come no further. He put the Sea under confinement.

Hence, Note, *The Sea left to it ſelf, would miſchief all; the Sea would return and cover the Earth quickly.*

As ſoon as ever it brake forth out of the Earth, it covered the Earth; and ſo it would do again, if the Lord ſhould let it alone. *David* took ſpecial notice of this work of God (*Pſal.* 104. 9.) *Thou haſt ſet a bound that they* (the waters ſpoken of *verſ.* 6, 7, 8.) *cannot paſs over, that they turn not again to cover the Earth.* Which plainly implieth, that the waters would turn again to cover the Earth, and ſo recover their firſt liberty, even to over-ſpread the face of the whole Earth, did not God reſtrain and hold them in, as was ſhewed before in the general explication of this verſe.

Secondly, Note, *The Creature can go no further than God permits or ſuffers.*

Rational Creatures often go beyond the commands of God; but neither they, nor any Creature, can go beyond the counſel of God: They who tranſgreſs or paſs over the line of his revealed will, cannot paſs over the line of his ſecret will. The Lord ſecretly puts a ſtop to all Creatures, as here, to the Sea. How extravagant ſoever mens Spirits are, or their practices are, yet they are under an over-ruling power. The Sea hath continued under this command ever ſince God made it; it hath gone no further then the Lord would. Though it be a truth that the Sea hath broken viſible and natural, yea artificial banks, and bounds, and bars; yet it hath never broken thoſe ſpecial inviſible banks, bounds, and bars, which God hath made for it, his decree. When God gave the Sea viſible banks, and bounds and bars, he did not intend them for banks, and bounds, and bars to his own will; and therefore he ſometimes bids the Sea go beyond and break its viſible bounds and bars. He commanded a general deluge in *Noahs* time; then all was Sea, no dry land appeared: And though we have the Lords promiſe that he will never deſtroy the World, how ſinful ſoever, by an univerſal deluge any more (*Gen.* 9. 11.) yet Hiſtories and experiences have told us there have been many particular inundations of the Sea, breaking its anciently known bounds and bars; nevertheleſs it never did nor ever ſhall break the bars of this word, *hitherto ſhalt thou come, but no further.* The divine pillar of this (*Ne plus ultra*) *No further*, ſtands inviolable. If the Sea break bounds at any time, 'tis becauſe God hath given it a ſpecial commiſſion to do ſo, for the puniſhment of men, who break their bounds by ſin. The Sea is ſtill Gods priſoner, and goes not out of thoſe doors which God hath ſet up and barred, without his licence; it ſtirs not a foot from the decreed place which God broke up for it, but as he lengthens its chain.

Deus non ſibi eas rerum leges fixit quas nequeat ad tempus cum libet mutare.

Thirdly, Note, *To God alone that power belongs, which keeps the Sea within compaſs.*

It is not the Sands, nor the Banks, nor the Rocks, that can do it. The water is a very barbarous and head-ſtrong Element, none can put a bridle into the lips of it, but God himſelf. A late Hiſtorian, ſpeaking of the ſiege of *Rochel*, ſaith there was a ſtupendious dike made, which might be *called a bridle to the Sea*: But God alone can make a bridle for the Sea; his word in the Text, *Hitherto ſhalt thou come, and no further,* is the bridle. Some diſpute whether it be not a continued Miracle, that the Sea is kept within its compaſs. We ſay Miracles are diſcontinued; and I conceive 'tis beſide the Nature of a Miracle, to be continual; yet, without diſpute, 'tis a continued marvel or wonder, that the Sea is thus kept in; if the Lord ſhou'd let it looſe, if he ſhould remove the Bar and unlock the Door of that prohibition here given it, but one hour, no natural Doors nor Bars could hinder it from returning to cover the face of the Earth. Take a few inferences from the whole.

Firſt, *The Sea is Gods, and he hath made it.*

(*Pſal.* 95. 5.) And he made it, as to declare his own glory, ſo to promote our good (*Pſal.* 104. 25, 26.) *The Earth* (*O Lord*) *is full of thy riches; ſo is this great and wide Sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both ſmall and great Beaſts; there go the Ships; there is the Leviathan whom thou haſt made to play therein.* O magnifie God, who hath made the Sea ſo vaſt, ſo wide, ſo great, yet ſo uſeful and commodious. As the Sea is a terrible Creature, ſo a beneficial Creature, bringing forth and feeding an innumerable company of Beaſts, as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks. We may as ſoon number the Sands, as the ſhoals of Fiſh bred and nouriſhed in thoſe mighty waters.

Secondly, *As the Sea is the Lords, and he made it; ſo the Sea is the Lords, and he maſters it.*

(*Pſal.* 89. 9.) *Thou ruleſt the raging of the Sea; when the waves thereof ariſe, thou ſtilleſt them.* Glorifie the Lord in this. No Earthly potentate can coerce the Sea. *Xerxes* preſumed he could tame the *Helleſpont*, a little Brook comparatively to the Ocean, but it would not obey him; he diſciplined it with three hundred ſtroaks for attempting his bridge of Boats, but it would not mend; he caſt fetters into it, as if it had been his vaſſal, but it would not be bound. It is God who binds the Sea, that knows no Lord but him that made both it and the dry Land. It was proof enough of Chriſts Divinity, that *rebuking the Winds and the Sea, there was a great calm.* This made *the men marvel, ſaying, what manner of man is this* (ſurely he is more than man) *that even the Winds and the Sea obey him* (Matth. 8. 26, 27.) When ſome Courtiers would have flattered our Daniſh King *Canutus* into a belief that his power was more than humane, he commanded his Chair to be ſet on the Sea ſhore at the time of flood; and ſitting down, thus beſpake that Element; *I charge thee not to enter my Land, nor wet theſe Robes*: But the Sea keeping on its courſe, he roſe up, and ſpake in the hearing of all about him; *Let all the Inhabitants of the World know, that vain and weak is the power of Kings; and that none is indeed worthy of that Name, but he that keeps both Heaven, and Earth, and Sea in obedience.*

Thirdly, Then tremble at the power of God, who can let the Sea looſe upon us in a moment. We tremble at the Sea if it break looſe; then tremble at the power of God, who can let looſe the Sea. *It is he that calleth for the waters of the Sea, and poureth them out upon the face of the Earth: the Lord is his Name.* (Amos 9. 6.)

Fourthly, When the Sea break bounds in any degree, either when we ſee a ſtorm at Sea, or a deluge at Land, let us go only to the Lord, who only can ſtill the raging of the Sea, and put ſwadling-bands about it, even as if it were a Child. God alone is to be invocated, when the winds are tempeſtuous, and threaten either a deluge at Land, or a wrack at Sea. Heathens invoked *Neptune* and *Æolus*. Popiſh votaries call upon St. *Nicolas* and St. *Chriſtopher*. Let us learn of the Diſciples, who fearing to be ſwallowed up of a Tempeſt, went to Chriſt, and ſaid, *Maſter, ſave us, we periſh* (Matth. 8. 27.) The poor Mariners in *Jonah* called every one upon his God (*Jonah* 1. 5.) but none of them called upon the true God. It is *Jehovah* the Lord, the true God only, *that raiſeth the ſtormy wind, which lifteth up the waves of the Sea; and it is he that maketh the ſtorm a calm* (Pſal. 107. 24, 25, 29.)

Fifthly, If the Sea, ſo vaſt and violent a Creature receive the bridle from God, and is bound up by him, even as an Infant in ſwadling-bands; how much more ſhould man receive the bridle from him! The Lord ſaith to the Sons of men, hitherto ſhall ye come, and no further; hitherto your works and actions ſhall go, and no further: Yet how do the men of the World over-flow and break their bounds! The Prophet makes this application clearly (*Jer.* 5. 22, 23.) *Fear ye not me, ſaith the Lord? Will ye not tremble at my preſence: Which have placed the Sand for the bound of the Sea, by a perpetual decree, that it cannot paſs it; and though the waves thereof toſs themſelves, yet can they not prevail; though they roar, yet can they not paſs over it: But this people hath a revolting and a rebellious heart, they are revolted and gone.* As if he had ſaid, *The Sea doth not revolt againſt my command, but this people doth*; they are more unruly than the Sea. *All the wicked, at beſt, are like the troubled Sea, that cannot reſt* (as the Prophet ſpeaks, *Iſa.* 57. 20.) How much worſer then are they than the Sea, when they are at worſt?

Laſtly, we may hence infer for our comfort; if the Lord hath put bounds to the natural Sea, what unnatural Sea is there, to which the Lord cannot put bounds? There is a five-fold metaphorical Sea, to which the Lord hath ſaid, *hitherto ſhalt thou come, and no further*. Or, at leaſt, he hath ſaid, though thou come hither, thou ſhalt come no further. This the Lord hath ſaid, Firſt, To the Sea of mans wrath. The wrath of man is a grievous Sea, and of that *David* ſaith (*Pſal.* 76.10.) *The wrath of man ſhall praiſe thee, the remainder of wrath ſhalt thou reſtrain.* Let men be as angry as they will, let them be as ſtormy as a Sea; yet the Lord hath ſaid, hitherto ſhall ye come, and no further: For (*Pſal.* 65.7.) *He ſtilleth the noiſe of the Sea, the noiſe of their Waves, and the tumult of the People.* Yea, great men raging like the Sea, are ſometimes ſtopt by very ſmall matters, ſuch as the Sea-ſands. The Chief-Prieſt and Elders of the people, were offended at Chriſt, and therefore queſtioned his Authority; yet forbare to anſwer his queſtion, as they had moſt mind to do it, for fear of the people (*Matth.* 21. 23,26.)

Secondly, He bounds the Sea of the Devils rage. The Devil is a Sea in bonds. We read of a ſpecial thouſand years, wherein it is propheſied that Satan ſhould be bound (*Rev.* 20. 2.) yet indeed he is always bound, elſe no man could live a quiet hour for him, nor have any reſt from his furious temptations and vexations, but his profeſſed ſlaves and votaries.

Thirdly, There is a Sea of Affliction which we meet with in this World; the Lord bounds that alſo, and ſaith, hitherto it ſhall come and no further (*Cor.* 10. 13.) *There hath no temptation taken you, but ſuch as is common to man. But God is faithful, who will not ſuffer you to be tempted above that you are able; but will with the temptation alſo make a way to eſcape, that you may be able to bear it.*

Fourthly, The Lord ſets a bound to the Sea of prophaneneſs and ungodlineſs in the World; that's a Sea that would over-flow all; and that is a Sea, for whoſe over-flowing, we have cauſe to pour out floods of tears. Hence that prayer of *David* (Pſal. 7.9.) *O let the wickedneſs of the wicked come to an end!* Did not the Lord put an end to the prophaneneſs and ungodlineſs of men, they would be endleſs in prophaneneſs and ungodlineſs. *The unjuſt knoweth no ſhame* (Zeph. 3.5.) That is, he is never aſhamed of any injuſtice, but would go on to do unjuſtly and wickedly (*in infinitum*) who knows how long!

Fifthly, The Lord ſets a bound to the Sea of error and falſe Doctrine; the Lord ſaith, *Hitherto ſhalt thou come, and no further.* Error would be as extravagant and boundleſs as the Sea, if the Lord did not bound it. *Epiphanius* in his Treatiſe of Hereſies, alludes to this Scripture, for the comfort of himſelf and others, when he ſaw ſuch a high-grown Sea of error broken in upon the Church. *As* Jannes *and* Jambres *withſtood* Moſes, *ſo do ſuch ungodly men withſtand the truth of Chriſt*; but (ſaith the Apoſtle, 2 *Tim.* 3.9.) *They ſhall proceed no further.* Did not the Lord give a ſtop to the Spirit of ſeduction that goeth out from the Devil and the falſe Prophet, it would bring in a deluge of deluſions upon the whole World, and (as Chriſt himſelf hath fore-warned us, *Matth.* 24.24.) *deceive if it were poſſible, the very Elect.* But there is a bar and a bound for this Sea alſo; though they come hitherto, to this or that perſon with their errors, to this or that point of error, yet *they ſhall proceed no further; and here, even here, their proud and poiſonous Waves ſhall be ſtayed.*

VERS. 12, 13, 14, 15.

Haſt thou commanded the morning ſince thy days? And cauſed the day-ſpring to know his place,

That it might take hold of the ends of the Earth, that the wicked might be ſhaken out of it?

It is turned as Clay to the Seal, and they ſtand as a Garment.

And from the wicked their light is with-holden, and the high arm ſhall be broken.

THE Lord in dealing with *Job*, had already put ſundry Queſtions to him about the Earth, and about the Sea, as hath been ſhewed in the former part of this Chapter; here the Lord calls his thoughts up into the Air, or bids him look to the Heavens, and duly conſider the light of the Sun. In this the Lord intends the ſame thing which he had done before, while he was queſtioning *Job* about the Earth and the Sea, namely, to humble him, and bring him to a full ſubmiſſion, by ſhewing him his weakneſs, and utter inſufficiency, as alſo to ſet forth his own wiſdom, power, and greatneſs: *Haſt thou commanded the morning ſince thy day?* &c. We may gather up the general ſenſe of theſe four verſes into this brief ſum. As if the Lord had thus beſpoken *Job*; *If thou anſwereſt, that the things I have already queſtioned thee about, were before thy time, and therefore muſt needs be done, without either thy counſel or aſſiſtance; then I ask thee farther, Haſt thou ever haſtened or retarded, haſt thou quickened or ſtopt the riſing of the Sun, at any time ſince thou waſt born? Or haſt thou ever cauſed the morning light in any one of theſe few days, which thou haſt ſeen, to ſpread it ſelf far and near, even every where, to the uttermoſt parts of the Earth; that ſo thoſe evil doers and night-birds, who being Children of darkneſs, cannot but hate the light, and love the works of darkneſs, might by its riſing be at once diſcovered and affrighted?* This ſeems to be the purpoſe and ſcope of God in theſe words. More particularly,

Verſe 12. **Haſt thou commanded the morning ſince thy days?**

That's the firſt Queſtion; *Haſt thou ſince thy days, given the morning its charge*; ſo Mr. *Broughton* Tranſlates, implying, that every morning the Sun receives as it were freſh orders from ſome hand or other? Now, haſt thou given out orders for the morning light; doth the day-light obey thee? Doth the Sun ariſe at ſuch times and places as thou haſt appointed? *Haſt thou commanded it* (ſo we render) The word notes commanding with fulleſt authority, a command to appear and be ready upon duty, a command to ſtand forth and do what is enjoyned. This word of command is moſt proper unto God (*Pſal.* 33. 9.) *He ſpake the word, and it was done; he commanded, and it ſtood faſt.* The command of God is a creating command, it puts things into act; his ſaying gives them a being; his calling them to work, makes them work, or ſets them a work. Now, ſaith God, *Haſt thou commanded the morning?* Haſt thou, O *Job*, ſuch a word of command upon any Creature, for the producing of any effect, motion, or action? *Haſt thou commanded*

Verbum צוה *valet jubere, adeſſe, exhibere, ſiſtere, in actum & conſpectum educere. Imperium voluntatis efficax intelligitur, quod ſtatim ſequitur effectus.*

The morning?] By the morning, the Lord means the morning light. As if he had ſaid, *Haſt thou raiſed the Sun out of its Bed, and brought forth the morning? Haſt thou, like the Maſter or Lord of this great family, the World, called up thy Servants, and ſet up thy light for them to work by? Haſt thou commanded the morning, that is, cauſed the Sun to riſe, which is as a Bridegroom coming out of his Chamber, and rejoyceth as a ſtrong man to run a race* (Pſal. 19. 5.) No, ſaith the Lord, it was not, 'tis not thou that commandeſt the morning, it is I that command the morning. I commanded the firſt morning (*Gen.* 1. 5.) I ſaid, *Let there be light, and there was light; and the evening and morning were the firſt day.* It was I, who the fourth day, ſaid, *Let there be lights in the Firmament of the Heaven, to divide the day from the night; and let them be for ſigns and for ſeaſons, for days and for years. It was I that made two great lights (the Sun and Moon) the greater light to rule the day, and the leſſer light to rule the night,* (Gen. 1. 14, 15, 16.) The firſt morning, and all the mornings, the light bearer, or the light bringer, came forth and appeared at my command, not at thine. *Haſt thou commanded the morning*

A manando latine dicitur mane, quod cum ſole manat dies ab oriente.

Since thy days?] There is ſomewhat ſpecial in thoſe words, *Since thy days.* We may take them either of theſe two ways.

Firſt, As if the Lord had ſaid, *Was there no morning before thy days?* Or, Was there not a morning, before thou hadſt a morning in the World? Did the birth of the morning wait till thou waſt born? Did it not look forth, nor appear, till thou didſt appear? Surely, there were mornings, hundreds of years before thou hadſt a morning in the World. The morning did not ſtay for thee, nor for thy day.

Secondly, *Haſt thou commanded the morning ſince thy days?* That is, ſince thou cameſt into the World? Haſt thou had the honour, priviledge, and power to awaken and call up the morning, as thou doſt thy houſhold Servants? Know, O *Job*, that, as there was a morning before thou waſt born, or hadſt a day in the World; ſo *ſince thy day*, thou haſt neither made the morning nor raiſed

Cum dixit, A diebus tuis, *Oſtendit id antequam ille naſceretur factum eſſe, & perpetuum illum naturæ ordinem in manu dei eſſe non hominum.* Merc.

up the morning light; that power is now in my hand, as it was before thou waſt in being; thou art but of yeſterday, of a few days: There was a morning before thy days; and ſince thy days many have continued and come forth daily; yet not at thy command, but at mine. As I brought forth the light in the firſt day of the Creation, ſo the fourth day I Created the Sun, into which I gathered the light, and at whoſe riſing the morning ſhews it ſelf.

Haſt thou commanded the morning ſince thy days?

'Tis a bare Queſtion; thou haſt not, I have done it, and not thou.

Hence Note, Firſt, *What God will have done, he can command to be done, or it ſhall be done at his command.*

The Lords need not labour to produce the moſt difficult effects; he can produce them as a Lord, by a word ſpeaking; he needs not intreat, nor treat about the bringing forth of any matter, his will is enough to bring it forth. What God will have done, ſhall be done. Thus it was at the beginning, when God Created all things, and gave them a being; and thus it hath been ever ſince for the moving of all things to their ſeveral ends, and iſſues, to this day; all hath been done by a word of command. *David* (Pſal. 148.) calling the Sun, Moon, and Stars, to praiſe the Lord, gives that as the reaſon (*verſ.* 5.) *for he commanded, and they were Created.* Now, I ſay, as they were Created at the firſt by his command, ſo they ſhine forth every day by the ſame command (*Matth.* 5. 45.) *He maketh his Sun to riſe on the evil and on the good.* He that hath power, uſually ſaith to a perſon that is unwilling to do a thing, *I will make you to do it*; that is, you ſhall do it, whether you will or no. And 'tis ſaid by the Evangeliſt, *He maketh his Sun to riſe*, &c. which may ſeem to import a kind of unwillingneſs in the Sun to beſtow its light promiſcuouſly upon the evil as well as good (evil men are indeed unworthy that the Sun ſhould ſhine or the Rain fall upon them) but God (who is infinite in goodneſs, and to ſhew that our good deeds ſhould not be ſhut up or narrowed to thoſe only who are good) layeth an irreſiſtible and indiſpenſible charge upon the Sun, to riſe and ſhine with that indifferency to the good, and to the bad. The Sun would be aſhamed to ſhine upon wicked men, the Sun would even with-hold its beams, and rays, and deny them light or any comfort, it would not make the Earth fruitful for them, had it not a command from the Lord: But having a command from him, it cannot with-hold nor divert its light, no not from thoſe who are Children of darkneſs, and have conſtant fellowſhip with the unfruitful works of darkneſs.

'Tis no ſmall matter of conſolation, to remember, that our God is a commanding God, that he can command the morning: Which as it is a truth, with reſpect to the natural morning of every day, ſo to the myſtical or metaphorical morning. After a dark, black, and ſtormy night of ſorrow or trouble upon his Church or People, then the Lord can command the morning of joy and proſperity to ariſe upon them and comfort them. 'Tis comfortable living under and obeying his commands, who can command away our ſorrows, and by a word ſpeaking turn midnight into morning, and the ſhadows of death into the ſhining light of life; and therefore ſaith peremptorily without *ifs or ands* (Pſal. 30. 5.) *Weeping (or ſorrow) may endure for a night, but joy (or ſinging) cometh in the morning:* That's a morning in a morning. We may have a morning of Sun light, and no morning of joy-light, as the Lord threatned his people in caſe of diſobedience (*Deut.* 28. 6, 7.) *In the morning thou ſhalt ſay, would God it were even; and at even thou ſhalt ſay, would God it were morning, for the fear of thy heart, wherewith thou ſhalt fear*, &c. Only God can make a morning of joy or inward light, to riſe with the morning light of the Natural day: elſe we may have day without us, and darkneſs within us; Sun-light but no Soul-light. And ſuch was the intendment of that dreadful threatning againſt the wicked, laſt mentioned out of *Moſes*. Whereas the godly in their darkeſt outward condition, are under the ſweet influences of that gracious promiſe (*Pſal.* 97. 11.) *Light is ſown for the righteous, and gladneſs for the upright in heart.* And God can command that light to ſpring even in the hour and power of darkneſs, as Chriſt expreſſed his ſaddeſt day in this World (*Luke* 22. 53.) The light of every morning is called the day-ſpring, at the latter end of this verſe; and the Lord can make light and gladneſs, or the light of gladneſs to ſpring up in our hearts, when and where he pleaſeth.

Secondly, Obſerve, *The courſe of Nature in all its turns and changes, is moved by, and obedient to the command of God.*

As God commands the morning, ſo the morning fails not to come at his command. When did you ever know the morning ſtop or ſtay a moment beyond the time, that God commanded it to come forth. We could never ſay to the Chariot of the Sun, as the Mother of *Siſera* ſaid of his, *Why is his Chariot ſo long a coming? Why ſtay the wheels of his Chariot?* There was ſomewhat ſtopt *Siſera's* Chariot, that it could not come; and God took off the Chariot Wheels of the *Egyptians*, in the Red Sea, and they drew heavily; yea, the Lord can take off the Chariot Wheels of any, though they drive as furiouſly as *Jehu*, ſo that they ſhall not come at their time: But who ever knew the morning ſtopt a minute or a moment beyond the exact time at which it ſhould come, or was expected? And as the Sun, ſo all Natural things, keep their courſe, and ſlack not at the command of God. No Creature diſobeys the command of God but man, who of all Creatures hath moſt reaſon, and is moſt obliged to obey it. God never ſaid of the Sun, O that it had hearkned to my voice; but the Sons of men put him often to ſay ſo, as he once did to *Iſrael*, his ancient people (*Pſal.* 81. 13.) How ſeldom do we keep time with God! How ſeldom do we come or go, juſt at his call! *I have called* (ſaith Wiſdom, *Prov.* 1. 24, 25.) *and ye refuſed, I have ſtretched out my hand, and none regarded.* God never looked, one day of the year, for the morning, and it came not; but he hath come three years (as the Parable of the Fig-Tree ſhews, *Luke* 13.) to man, looking for fruit, and hath yet found none. Will it not ſhame us, that the morning is obedient to the command of God, if we are not?

And therefore as the former Note was matter of comfort to us, ſo this may be matter of conviction to us. that the morning, that the Sun in the Firmament (a liveleſs Creature) receiving a command, ſhould conſtantly appear at the time which the Lord appoints, and that we, who have living Creatures, that we, who are reaſonable Creatures, yea, that we, who have only Reaſon, but Grace (all believers have) ſhould not be obedient to, and obſervant of the Lords command, to come at his time, to appear at his call; how may it cauſe us to bluſh for ſhame! The Prophet ſaith, *The Stork in the Heavens, the Crane, the Turtle, and the Swallow, theſe know the time of their coming*, they come in their ſeaſon. I may ſay alſo, the Sun, Moon and Stars, thoſe lights in the Heavens, know their ſeaſon, and the time of their coming; they obey the command of the Lord, and ſhall not we know the Judgment of the Lord, and obſerve the appointed times of our duty! Which to obſerve, is as much our intereſt or benefit, as it is our duty. As often as we ſee the morning coming according to the command of God, let it provoke us to make haſt, and not delay, to keep his Commandments.

Thirdly, *Haſt thou commanded the morning?* That is, the morning light, to come forth? No, it's I that have done it.

Hence Note, *We are to acknowledg God as the Commander, yea, as the Former, Maker, and Author of the light.*

This command of God hath reſpect, not only to his bringing forth the light every morning, or to his bringing forth the morning light every day into the World; but to his giving the light its being the firſt day of the World. God is the Father not only of ſpiritual light (*James* 1. 17.) but of Natural (*Pſal.* 74. 16.) *The day is thine, the night alſo is thine; thou haſt prepared the light, and the Sun.* Thus Glory is aſcribed to God by his holy Prophet alſo (*Jer.* 31. 25.) *Thus ſaith the Lord, which giveth the Sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the Moon, and of the Stars, for a light by night.* The Lord gives theſe, as well as command theſe ; and who but God can do either? None can command the Creatures unto their daily motion, but God ; much leſs could any command the Creatures into their firſt being, but God. How wiſe, how great ſoever men are, or ſeem to be in their own eyes or ſight, they cannot make nor bring forth the leaſt ray of light ; much leſs can they make ſuch a World of light, as God hath made for the World. And ſurely there is no Creature wherein we may ſee and contemplate more of God than in the light, which he made the firſt day, and now commandeth to make the morning day by day. Nor is there any thing in the whole compaſs of Nature, either more comfortable or more admirable than the light. The commonneſs of it leſſens our eſteem of it ; and becauſe it comes ſo conſtantly, and never fails, we are apt to look upon it as no great matter, as no great mercy ; whereas indeed the light is not only uſeful and comfortable, but admirable ; and that it deſerves theſe three attributes, I ſhall briefly ſhew, by giving a touch at each of them.

That, light is an admirable Creature, muſt be confeſſed, if we conſider,

Firſt, Its original, or the way of its production. The Apoſtle treating about ſpiritual light, tells us whence the natural light came (2 *Cor.* 4. 6.) *God who commanded light to ſhine out of darkneſs*, &c. Light came, as it were, out of the womb of darkneſs. Now that, out of darkneſs, black darkneſs, ſuch a beautiful Child, ſuch a goodly Creature as light ſhould be brought forth, is it not marvellous? Yet thus it was, God *commanded light to ſhine out of darkneſs*. The Hiſtory of the Creation reports, *There was nothing but darkneſs upon the face of the Earth*, when the Lord ſaid, *Let there be Light*. Darkneſs is totally contrary to light, 'tis the privation of light: Now, that the habit ſhould come forth out of the privation, light out of darkneſs, or life out of death, joy out of ſorrow, peace out of of trouble, theſe are the wonderful works of God. And we may comfortably meditate upon this, when we want any kind of light: Whence did the Lord bring light at firſt? Even out of darkneſs ; therefore let us not think any darkneſs of trouble, a lett to the Lords production of light. When we are in ſpiritual darkneſs (the ſtate of Nature is a ſtate of darkneſs) that doth not hinder ; the Lord can eaſily bring the light of the new Creature out of it: And when we are in the darkneſs of any trouble, though it be thick darkneſs, *darkneſs* (as *Job* ſpake, *Chap.* 10. 22.) *like darkneſs it ſelf, and where the light is as darkneſs* ; yet this doth not hinder, the Lord can bring light out of it. There's the firſt wonder, the Lord brought light out of darkneſs.

Secondly, Light is wonderful, in its operation, power, and efficacy, in that it doth ſo ſuddenly chaſe away, conquer, and overcome darkneſs. Light gets victory over darkneſs in a moment. There's no darkneſs can abide the face of light. As ſoon as God commands the morning, let it be as dark as pitch, the darkneſs muſt away, and fly before it. Darkneſs cannot withſtand light, nor ſtand in the preſence of it ; there's no long diſpute, light inſtantly gets the hand, the day, of darkneſs.

Thirdly, If we conſider the pure Nature of light ; 'tis as pure as purity it ſelf. Light hath an inſeparable and an inſuperable purity ; though it may be a while obſcured, yet it cannot be at all polluted. Philoſophers have ſpoken much about the Nature of light, but none were ever able to comprehend it. Some ſaid, it is *a habit or quality of a lightſome Body* ; yet none of their definitions reach it fully. They make it a quality ; yet we may conceive it is rather to be ranked and reckoned among ſubſtances than accidents, it being a principal part of the Creation, and the expreſs ſubject of Gods work the firſt day of it.

Lux, aiunt Phyſici, eſt ἕξις ſeu qualitas corporis lucidi.

Fourthly, The light is very wonderful in the changes and viciſſitudes of it. How it paſſeth and repaſſeth, how it increaſeth and decreaſeth, how it comes and goes, is an amazing conſideration.

Fifthly, Though the light be in continual changes, yet there's nothing more conſtant than the light, to its appointed time. Light never fails to come in its ſeaſon.

Secondly, That light is a moſt uſeful and beneficial Creature, who can deny? Seeing without light the whole Creation were a nothing to us. What had the World been to us, if God had not made light, and ſet up lights in it? The eye of the Body (which is *the light of the Body*, Matth. 6. 22.) were of no uſe to us without outward light. Till the Sun (which is the eye of the great World) ſhines, the eye (which is the Sun of the little World) is no advantage to us. There muſt be light in the Air, as well as light in the eye, elſe the moſt beautiful objects have no appearing beauty ; and therefore the Lord made light the firſt day, that by it, the beauty of the whole Creation might be ſeen. Light diſcovers it ſelf and all other things: Light illuſtrates all the works of God, and ſets them in our ſight. And as all that God hath done, would be nothing to us without light, ſo we our ſelves could do nothing without light. We cannot work at all, or very hardly, or very badly, without light ; hence that of *David* (Pſal. 104. 22, 23.) *The Sun ariſeth ; man goeth forth to his work and to his labour, until the evening.* (John 9. 4.) *The night cometh, wherein no man can work.* Night of any ſort, is not for work, becauſe 'tis dark ; and therefore they who work in the night, get artificial light to ſupply the want of natural. When the plague of darkneſs was upon the *Egyptians*, they ſate ſtill, and no man moved from the place where he was, till that plague was removed (*Exod.* 10. 22, 23.) And as we cannot do the work of our Civil Callings without light, either natural or artificial ; ſo we cannot do the work of our Chriſtian calling, without ſpiritual light. When *Chriſt the Sun of righteouſneſs ariſeth with healing in his wings, then we go forth* (to our ſpiritual labour as Chriſtians) *and grow up as the Calves of the ſtall* (Mal. 4. 2.) How long ſoever we live in this World, we never go forth to that labour, till the Sun of righteouſneſs, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, ariſeth upon us. It was ſaid to thoſe in the parable, that were hired at the eleventh hour (*Matth.* 11. 6.) *Why ſtand ye all the day idle.* They of the eleventh hour were perſons, poſſibly, very buſie and laborious as to their Civil Callings in the World, but had ſtood idle all the day as to any ſpiritual work, as to any work of grace ; they had not done God, nor their poor Souls, one ſtroke of work all that while, until they were called, and the light of grace ſhined upon them. Jeſus Chriſt is *the light which lightned the* Gentiles, *and the glory of* Iſrael (*Luke* 2. 32.) And whereſoever he comes, *The people which ſat in darkneſs ſee a great light, and to them which ſat in the valley of the ſhadow of death, light ſprings up* (*Matth.* 4. 16.) And that a two-fold light ;

Firſt, Light to be ſaved by.

Secondly, Light to ſerve God, or to do the work of God by.

Thirdly, How comfortable is the light! 'Tis ſo comfortable, that light and comfort are often put for the ſame thing. *God is the Lord* (ſaith *David*, *Pſal.* 118. 27.) *which hath ſhewed us light* ; that is, the light of counſel what to do, and the light of comfort in what we do, or after all our ſufferings. Light is not only a Candle held to us, to do our work by, but it comforts and cheareth us in our work (*Eccleſ.* 11. 7.) *Light is ſweet, and a pleaſant thing it is for the eyes to behold the Sun.* Hence that of *David* (Pſal. 65. 8.) *Thou makeſt the out-goings of the evening and morning to rejoyce* ; that is, thou makeſt men to rejoyce, they are glad, they rejoyce in, or at the out-goings of the morning. Man takes comfort at the firſt appearance of the light ; light refreſheth him at its out-goings in the morning. And at the evening men rejoyce too, for then they go to their reſt, being weary with the labour of the day. Or we may thus expound that Pſalm, *Thou makeſt the out-goings of the morning and the evening to rejoyce* ; That is, thou makeſt men who live at the out-goings of the morning, and at the out-goings of the evening to rejoyce. As if it had been ſaid, thou makeſt the Eaſtern people and the Weſtern people, all people from Eaſt to Weſt rejoyce. And that which makes all people to rejoyce, naturally, is the riſing of light with them in the Eaſt, and the coming of light towards them in the Weſt.

Poſſunt exitus matutini & veſpertini ſumi pro hominibus qui habitant ubi exit nox, i. e. *pro Orientalibus & Occidentalibus.*

Thus we ſee what an excellent Creature light is, both as it hath a continually renewed riſing in the morning of every day, and as it had its firſt being in the morning of the World, and both from the command of God. Whence take theſe inferences.

Firſt, When we behold the morning coming forth by the command of God ; let us conſider who God is, and what the beauty, and purity, the majeſty, and excellency of God are, who is clothed with light, and dwelleth in light, yea, *who is light, and in whom there is no darkneſs at all.* There is not any one Creature, which God doth ſo formally predicate of himſelf, as this of light. *As God is love* (1 John 4 8.) *ſo God is light*, (1 John 1. 5.) yet the light which ſhines to us, the morning, which God hath commanded for us, is but darkneſs to God, who hath commanded it. Light it ſelf is darkneſs, compared with God; yet 'tis the cleareſt ſhadow, the beſt reſemblance of God in Nature.

Secondly, As we ſhould conſider the excellency and beauty of God in the appearance of the morning, ſo his goodneſs, who hath made ſuch a Creature for us, who hath alſo prepared ſo many Veſſels to hold it and hold it out, or to diſpence it to us. 'Tis God who hath made thoſe great lights, *the Sun to rule the day, and the Moon and Stars to rule the night* (Gen. 1. 16.) The day would be night to us, if God had not prepared the Sun (for though there were three days before the Sun was made, yet now 'tis the Sun which makes the day) and the night would be nothing but darkneſs to us, if God had not prepared the Moon and the Stars. How great then is the goodneſs of God to man, who hath made light for us, and who thus conveys and diſpenſeth it to us according to our need, both by day, and by night!

Thirdly, We ſhould hence be minded to pay our debt of thankfulneſs to God every day. Hiſtory tells us, that the ancient *Rhodians* or inhabitants of the Iſle called *Rhodes*, erected a mighty *Coloſſus* (according to their Heatheniſh ſuperſtition) in honour of the Sun, who once a day at leaſt opened his face upon their Iſland, though it were over-caſt with Clouds, muffled up, and vailed to all other parts of the World. Though, poſſibly, we do not ſee the face of the Sun every day, yet we enjoy the light and influences of it every day. God hath commanded the Sun in the Firmament to attend us, to be about us, to comfort us, every morning; and ſhall we be unthankful! If in a dark night a friend will but lend us a Candle and a Lanthorn, we thank him; what matter of thanks to God then ſhould it be, that he hath ſet up thoſe Candles, thoſe Torches, thoſe Lamps of light for our comfort and guidance continually.

Fourthly, If God hath command the light, ſo excellent a Creature to ſerve us, to be for our uſe, then *let us make uſe of the light to ſerve the Lord in and by*; let us make uſe of Natural light, that of the Sun in the Air; and of Spiritual light, that of Chriſt the Sun in the Goſpel, moſt of all. Let us make uſe of Natural light, as to Civil, and of Spiritual light, as to Holy ends and injoyments; let no Beam of light ſhine to us in vain. It is ſinful, not to make a good uſe of Natural light, 'tis very ſinful and dangerous not to make a good uſe of Spiritual, 'tis condemnation to refuſe Spiritual Goſpel light, and to love darkneſs rather than the light (*John* 3. 19.)

Fifthly, Seeing the Lord hath commanded the morning light for us, then by way of retribution, let us ſhine forth in obedience to his commands, and be as the morning light to glorifie God (*Matth.* 5.16.) We that have light made for us, ſhould carry our ſelves like lights. The Apoſtle either commends the Saints at *Philippi* for ſhining, or commands them to ſhine *as lights in the World* (Phil. 2, 15.) The Text runs in the Indicative Mood (by way of commendation) *Among whom ye ſhine.* The Margin hath it in the Imperative Mood (by way of command) *Among whom ſhine ye as lights in the World.* The Lord who hath commanded the Sun to riſe for our light, hath commanded us to riſe and ſhine as lights, and be as ſo many Suns of light in the Firmament of the Church, and in all places to which we come. Therefore (as our bleſſed Saviour, the light and life of the World, hath counſelled us) *Let our light ſhine* (and ſo ſhine) *before men, that they may ſee our good works, and glorifie our father which is in Heaven* (*Matth.* 5. 16.) We that have light commanded for us every day, how ſhould we be lights, and go forth as the Sun, caſting out our rays and beams, in a holy and godly converſation! And while we go forth and walk in ſuch a converſation, we go forth and walk as the Sun in its ſtrength, we enlighten all the World where we come, and dazle the eyes of the wicked World, or of the wicked in the World.

Sixthly, How ſhould we, who have light commanded for us, avoid all the works of darkneſs; yea, *We ſhould* (as the Apoſtle exhorts, *Rom*, 13. 12, 13.) *caſt off the works of darkneſs, and put on the armour of light; we ſhould walk honeſtly, as in the day*: As in the day which the light of the natural Sun makes, and as in the day, which the light of the myſtical Sun, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, hath made.

Seventhly, Remember, as God hath commanded a morning for us here; ſo he will command a light, or a morning, a morning light for all our actions hereafter. As God hath made the light, ſo he will bring all things to light. Many now live in the light of this World, whoſe works are in the dark as well as theirs are works of darkneſs. Now as the Lord hath commanded a morning to ſhine for us to work by, ſo he will have a morning wherein all our works ſhall be ſeen (1 *Cor.* 4. 5.) *He will bring to light the hidden things of darkneſs, and manifeſt the counſels of the heart.* Men may dig deep, to hide their counſels from God; but God knows how to bring them and their counſels to the morning, and will cauſe a light to ſhine upon them, though they have no light of truth or righteouſneſs in them. *God will bring every work into Judgment with every ſecret thing* (Eccleſ. 12. 14.) *We muſt all appear* (ſaith the Apoſtle, 2 *Cor.* 5. 10.) or we muſt all be manifeſt; we muſt appear, and ſo muſt our works too. Thoſe works of men ſhall be light, as to their diſcovery, which are nothing but darkneſs, as to their impurity. Thoſe deeds which have no light in them, ſhall come in the cleareſt light, and be plainly ſeen to the bottom, both by men and Angels. The Lord who hath commanded this morning light for us to do our work in, will command another morning light to Judg our works in, and to give us the reward of them. And let all the wicked of the Earth, to whom *the morning* of any day (becauſe they are in danger to be diſcovered by it) *is as the ſhadow of death* (Job 24. 17.) Let them (I ſay) conſider how many thouſand deaths that morning will be to them, which will actually, fully, and impartially diſcover all their wickedneſs, with all the ſecrets of it.

Laſtly, Conſider if the Lord hath beſtowed ſo great a mercy upon us, in commanding the morning, or in giving us light; the light of the Sun; then let us be minded, how great a mercy the Lord hath beſtowed upon us in commanding the light or morning of the Goſpel to come upon us. It was night with us, and ſo it would have been for ever, for any means we could have deviſed or uſed to help our ſelves out of it, till God commanded Chriſt, *the bright Morning Star* (Rev. 22. 16.) *and Sun of Righteouſneſs, to riſe and ſhine upon us.* How unſpeakable mercy is it, that ſuch a light ſhould appear to us, who not only were in darkneſs, but were darkneſs! If we account it a mercy, that God hath commanded a morning to ſhine to us; O what a mercy is it, that we have a Chriſt to ſhine upon us! That the Day-Star from on high hath viſited us! That he who is the true light, that enlightens every man that cometh into the World (*John* 1. 9.) hath riſen upon us, both to ſcatter the darkneſs of ſin and ignorance, and to chear our Souls with the ſweet beams of his healing wings.

So much of the firſt part of the verſe, *Haſt thou commanded the morning ſince thy day,*

ידעתה שחר *Scire feciſti auroram.* בקר *Mane &* שחר *aurora differunt: Nam prima diei tempeſtas mane dicitur, ejus vero initium aurora. Illud ab interviſendo, hoc à nigricante ſpecie ut videtur. Nam cum res ſub diluculo apparere incipiunt nigricare videntur.* Coc.

And cauſed the day-ſpring to know his place?

That is, when and where it ſhould break forth and appear every morning. The *day-ſpring* is expreſt by a different word in the Original from the *morning light*; it implieth the firſt of the morning, when the Air is darkiſh or duskiſh; we commonly call it the *gray of the morning.* The word ſignifies to be dark, or that darkneſs, which we call twilight. When the day-ſpring uſhers in the morning, there is a kind of dimneſs in the light. Now ſaith the Lord; *Haſt thou cauſed the day-ſpring to know its place? Haſt thou taught it*, where to ſhew it ſelf to the World? The Lord ſpeaks here of the *day-ſpring*, as if it were a rational Creature, that took inſtructions, or a word of direction, were to begin the morning light. God, not man, hath taught the day-ſpring to know its place. We have a like expreſſion (*Pſal.* 16. 11.) *Thou wilt ſhew me* (or *thou wilt cauſe me to know*) *the path of life.* Thus the Lord makes *the day-ſpring know* the path to its own place. The day never

ſprings

שחר
Eſt nigreſcere, hinc nigreſcentem lucem ſcil. *diluculum ſignificat. Sol varie nec uno loco oritur; quotidie ejus locus mutatur ut ſol aſcendit aut deſcendit in ſignis Zodiaci.* Merc.

ſprings twice immediately in one place, but is in a continual variation, as Aſtronomers with experience teach. The place of the light or Sun-riſing differeth every morning, and from thence we have the difference of the days. The Sun paſſing through the twelve ſigns of the Zodiack, beginning with *Aries*, &c. (I ſhall not trouble you with their names, which have been deviſed and are uſed only for learning ſake, the Sun, I ſay, paſſing every year through theſe twelve Signs, all which Aſtronomers preſent unto us under various forms or figures, ſuch as themſelves fancied moſt uſeful to ſubſerve the underſtanding of that Art) according to the ſituation of theſe Signs, through which the Sun runs his courſe in the Heavens, the day-ſpring to us on Earth changeth its place every day, appearing ſometimes more Southerly, and ſometimes more Eaſterly, as the Sun either aſcends to the Summer Solſtice, at which time the day is at longeſt, and the night at ſhorteſt, as about the eleventh of our Month called *June*; or when it deſcends to the Winter Solſtice, at which time the day is ſhorteſt, and the night longeſt, as about the eleventh of our *December*. To which we may add the Suns coming in its aſcending courſe to the middle point of the Heavens, which makes the *Vernal Equinox*, at which time the day and night are of an equal length, as about the eleventh of our *March*; as alſo the Suns coming, in its deſcending courſe, to the other middle point of the Heavens, which makes the *Autumnal Equinox*, at which time the day and night are again of an equal length, as about the eleventh of our *September*. Now according to all theſe variations of the Suns motion, the day-ſpring varieth its place day by day; and the Lord enquires of *Job*, how this comes to paſs; *Haſt thou cauſed the day-ſpring to know its place?* No, 'tis I that have made the day-ſpring to know its place, I have appointed it thoſe ſeveral ſtages where it ſhall riſe to day, and where to morrow, and where every day throughout the year; this is from my contrivement and appointment, not from thine. *Haſt thou cauſed the day-ſpring to know its place?*

Hence Note, Firſt, *It is the Lord, who appoints every Creature its proper place.*

The beauty of the World, is from the order of the World; and that every Creature knows its place, makes the whole Creation amiable. The World is expreſſed in Greek by a word noting the beauty, and order of it. And that which renders the Creatures not only beautiful but ſerviceable to man, is the order they are placed in. The Sun keeping its appointed courſe, makes Summer at one time, and winter at another. The Sun ever moves in (unleſs ſtayed by miracle, as in *Joſhua*'s time) but never moves out of its place. As no Creature is burdenſome, ſo there's no Creature unſerviceable, when kept in its place, as was further ſhewed (*verſ.* 10.)

Κόσμος.

Note Secondly, *The courſe of times and ſeaſons is firmly and inviolably ſetled by the command of God.*

This ſettlement was made in the Creation (*Gen.* 1.14.) And when the flood was made (as it were) a confuſion of the times, and ſeaſons, the Lord renewed this ſettlement (*Gen.* 8.22.) *While the Earth remaineth, Seed time, and Harveſt, and Cold, and Heat, and Summer and Winter, and Day and Night ſhall not ceaſe.* Read this fully (*Jer.* 31. 35, 36. & 33.20.) Sun and Moon know their time, and 'tis God, who hath taught them this knowledg, and given them this inſtruction. The light keeps its time, though it changeth its time every day (*Pſal.* 104.19.) *He appointeth the Moon for ſeaſons, the Sun knoweth his going down.* The Sun is inſtructed (as it were) where to riſe, and where to go down. The Sun follows the direction of God. There is no rational Creature that doth ſo exactly follow the conduct of God, as the Sun. The Sun forgets not its duty, it never miſtook the hour either of its riſing or going down,) as we more largely ſhewed a little before) it never miſtook a hairs breadth for place, nor a moment of its time. And as it moves according to the command of God; ſo nothing can ſtay its motion, but the command of God: And if He ſay, *Sun ſtand thou ſtill*, it will do ſo again, as in the days of *Joſhua*.

Now if all Creatures keep their ſtation, and obſerve their motion according to the inſtructions they receive from God, ſhould not this be our inſtruction? If God hath cauſed the day-ſpring to know its place and time; if the Sun riſe where and when he would have it; ſhall not we know our place and time? Shall not we be where and when God would have us? As every thing, ſo every perſon is moſt uſeful in his proper place and ſeaſon. The Sun is therefore ſo uſeful, becauſe it knows and keeps both, carrying and diſtributing its light up and down the World, to the Sons of men; anſwerably to its inſtructions, and that commiſſion given it from above.

The Lord having put queſtions to *Job* about the direction of the morning light, and by whom the day-ſpring is taught to know its place; proceeds to ſhew the work and effects of the day-ſpring and morning light. *Haſt thou cauſed the day-ſpring to know its place?*

Verſe 13. **That it might take hold of the ends of the Earth.**

In this verſe we have two things concerning the day-ſpring, or the light.

Firſt, the powerful extenſiveneſs of it. *The light takes hold*; there's its power: *It takes hold of the very ends of the Earth*; there's its extenſiveneſs.

Secondly, We have one part or point of the uſefulneſs or beneficialneſs of light, when it thus takes hold of the ends of the Earth; this good it doth, or this benefit comes by it, *the ſhaking of the wicked out of it.* As if it had been ſaid, The day-ſpring takes hold of the ends of the Earth, for this end and purpoſe, that the Earth may be freed from the wicked.

That it might take hold of the ends of the Earth.

That is, that the morning, or the day-ſpring might, *&c.* Some of the Rabbins refer thoſe words, *that it may take hold*, not to the *day-ſpring*, but to *Job*. As if the Lord had ſaid, *Canſt thou, O Job, make the day to know its place, that thou mighteſt take hold of the ends of the Earth, as I do, and ſhake the wicked out of it.*

לאחון
Ut apprehenderet. Kab. Sel. Jarchi.

But rather, as we, That the day-ſpring might take hold, apprehend, and hold faſt the ends of the Earth. Mr. *Beza* expreſſeth it in this elegancy, *The Sun ſends forth its rays as ſo many fingers, to take hold of the utmoſt verges or ends of the Earth.*

Ut extremas Terrarum oras radiis quaſi tottdem digitis injectis prehendet. Bez.

The Hebrew is, *The wings of the Earth*; and ſo Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates, *To hold the wings of the Earth.* By the wings of the Earth, according to an Hebraiſm very frequent in Scripture, we are to underſtand the extream or remoteſt parts of the Earth. And becauſe the wings of a Bird are ſtretched out to the very utmoſt, when ſhe flieth, the Hebrews call that which is the extream or utmoſt bound of any thing, the wings of it; and hence, in their language, the utmoſt part or hem of a Garment is the wing of a Garment, as here and elſewhere, the utmoſt parts of the Earth are the wings of the Earth (*Iſa.* 11.1, 2.) *He ſhall ſet up an enſign for the Nations, and ſhall aſſemble the out-caſts of* Iſrael, *and gather together the diſperſed of* Judah *from the four corners* (or, as the Margin hath it, *wings*) *of the Earth.* Thus the Lord ſpeaks of the light, Haſt thou cauſed the day-ſpring to know its place, *that it might take hold of the ends or wings of the Earth?*

כנפים
Non tam phraſi poetica quam Hebraiſmo alæ tribuuntur terræ. Pined.

Hence Note, Firſt, *The Suns light is wonderfully extenſive and diffuſive.*

The Sun hath large arms, or rather long wings. Some Hawks are called *long winged*: The ſame we may ſay of the Sun, that hath long wings indeed, reaching to the utmoſt ſtretch, ends or wings of the Earth. The Prophet *Malachi* comforts thoſe that fear the Name of the Lord, with this promiſe, *The Sun of Righteouſneſs ſhall ariſe* (to them) *with healing in his wings.* The Sun-beams, or the light that is conveyed in thoſe beams, are compared to wings, and they are ſpread to the very wings of the Earth, and extend themſelves over the whole Hemiſphere. The morning light like lightning, is diffuſed from Eaſt to Weſt in a moment. When it is day with one half of the World, 'tis night with the other; but where the Sun comes, it gives light all over that half-face of the Earth. The Sun is an univerſal benefit, and therefore the moſt excellent outward benefit. We ſay of every good thing, by how much 'tis the more common, communicative and extenſive, by ſo much the better it is. As evil, by how much it ſpreads itſelf the further, by ſo much the worſe it is; ſo good, by how much the more it ſpreads it ſelf, it is the better. As the natural light of the day, ſo the ſpiritual light of the Goſpel, is very diffuſive. When the Goſpel was firſt preacht by the Apoſtles of Chriſt (the *day-ſpring from on high* then viſiting the World) O how ſpeedily did that take hold of the ends of the Earth! *David* (*Pſal.* 22. 27.) ſpeaking of the prophetical Office of Chriſt, in ſending forth the light of his truth, ſaith, *All the ends of the Earth ſhall remember and turn to God.* What cauſed the ends of the Earth to remember? And what did they remember? Surely it was the light of the Goſpel, taking hold of the ends of the Earth, which cauſed the ends of the Earth to remember God and themſelves; they ſaw their danger and their duty, and ſo turned to God. By *the ends of the Earth* in that place of the Pſalm, we are to underſtand the inhabitants of the utmoſt parts of the Earth; who had never remembered themſelves, never conſidered themſelves, never awakened out of ſin, never turned to God, if the light of the Goſpel had not ſhined to them. The natural light is not only very extenſive, but powerful; and ſo is the light of the Goſpel, it goes to the ends of the Earth with wonderful effects. The Apoſtles had a Commiſſion from Chriſt, like that which God gives to the Sun; to carry their light, or to *preach the Goſpel to every Creature.* The Sun gives light and influence to every Creature (*Pſal.* 19. 6.) *His going forth is from the end of the Heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it; and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.* Nor ſhall any thing be hid from the light, heat, and influences of the Goſpel.

Secondly, *The light is exceeding ſwift, and ſpreads it ſelf far and near in a moment.*

Many can go far, if you give them time; but the light goes very far, even to the ends of the Earth (upon the matter) without time; it goes almoſt in an inſtant, in the twinkling of an eye, it immediately *takes hold of the ends of the Earth.* As ſoon as the Sun ariſeth, light appeareth, day breaks, and with an unconceivable ſpeed illuſtrates all places within its eye, or which lie open to it. The body of the Sun moves faſt, to a wonder, but the beams of the Sun move faſter. *David* (*Pſal.* 139. 9.) ſpeaks of the wings of the morning. *If I take* (ſaith he) *the wings of the morning* (that is, the morning light) *and flie to the utmoſt parts of the Earth, even there ſhall thy hand lead me,* &c. The morning light is winged, and moves with incredible ſwiftneſs. The Scripture ſpeaks of the morning light, with reſpect to its ſudden motion, as if it were a feathered or winged fowl, ſpreading its rayes as ſo many feathers or plumes, over all at an inſtant. Though darkneſs, thick darkneſs, hath got poſſeſſion of the Earth in the night, yet no ſooner doth the light glimmer above the Horizon, but darkneſs is ſuddenly ſcattered. One would think there ſhould be a great battel, a long conteſt, between light and darkneſs, before light could conquer darkneſs, and get it off the face of the Earth; whereas daily experience teacheth us that the morning having once opened its eye-lids, light gets an eaſie victory, and ſheddeth it ſelf abroad every where without controul. Darkneſs is ſoon diſpelled and driven out of the Field by light. Darkneſs cannot ſtand its ground before the Sun, who is *Lord of the day,* according to the appointment of God.

Thus the *day-ſpring takes hold of the ends of the Earth.* And if any ask, why doth it ſo?

I anſwer, The day-ſpring is a great and a faithful ſervant, to man. There are many uſes of light, many ſervices, which the light doth for us; I touch ſome of them in opening the former Context. We have one ſpecial uſe or ſervice of it expreſſed in the cloſe of this verſe; *It takes hold of the ends of the Earth,*

That the wicked may be ſhaken out of it.

This latter part of the verſe ſeems to have little cognation with, and to be of a very difficult connexion with the former; for it may be ſaid, what hath this *ſhaking of the wicked out of the Earth to do with the light taking hold of the ends of the Earth?* I anſwer, The light that takes hold of the ends of the Earth, is as a Serjeant to arreſt, and take hold of the wicked, and ſo is a means to ſhake them out of the Earth. The words may carry a double Metaphor,

Firſt, To the ſhaking of a Garment. When duſt or moths, or any thing hurtful to a Garment, is found upon it, we ſhake it out. Thus the Lord ſends forth the morning light, to take hold of the ends of the Earth, as of the ends of a great Garment, that the wicked, who are but as duſt and vermine, may be ſhaken out of it.

Lux oras terræ tanquam pallii apprehendit, & ita impios excutit. Rab. Solom.

Secondly, The metaphor or alluſion may be taken from a ſieve. As the ſieve is ſhaken when we would ſeparate the Chaff, or that which is vile and worthleſs from among the good Corn; ſo the Lord by the light takes hold of the ends of the Earth, and ſhakes the wicked like droſs or darnel, out of the company of honeſt men. *I,* ſaith the Lord (*Amos* 9. 9.) *will ſift the Houſe of* Iſrael *among all Nations, like as Corn is ſifted in a ſieve; yet ſhall not the leaſt grain fall upon the Earth, that is, be loſt or periſh.* But the wicked, who are as chaff, ſhall be ſcattered, and periſh for ever, when the Lord ſifts them.

Again, Theſe words, *That the wicked may be ſhaken out of it,* are by ſome expounded actively; *The day-ſpring taketh hold of the ends of the Earth, that the wicked may ſhake* (*ſc.* themſelves) *out of it.* For when the light cometh, wicked men do, as it were, ſhake themſelves out of the Earth; that is, they hide themſelves, and run their heads into a corner. They who in the night and darkneſs go abroad doing miſchief, following wicked purpoſes, when the light appears, diſ-appear, with-draw, and play (as we ſay) leaſt in ſight (*Job* 24. 13.) *The wicked are they that rebel againſt the light,* they hate it, cannot endure it, they are like the wild Beaſts of the Earth, that raven in the night, but in the day couch in their Dens and Coverts, no man can tell where to find them (*Pſal.* 104. 20, 21, 22.) *Thou makeſt darkneſs, and it is night, wherein all the Beaſts of the Forreſt do creep forth,* &c. *The Sun ariſeth, they gather themſelves together, and lay them down in their Dens.* Thus the wild Beaſts are ſhaken out of the Earth, when the light appears, and ſo are wicked Beaſt-like men (*John* 3. 20.) *Every one that doth evil, hateth the light.* And as ſuch hate the ſpiritual light of the Goſpel, ſo they do not very well like the natural light of the Day. Wicked men decline the light, and are called darkneſs, and their works are called the works of darkneſs; and therefore when the Sun ariſeth, Theeves, Robbers, and all of thoſe wicked Trades, may be ſaid to ſhake themſelves out of the Earth. He that doth evil hates the light, he looks upon light as an enemy.

Fourthly, Theſe words, *That the wicked might be ſhaken out of it,* are rather to be underſtood of the wicked, as often apprehended in the morning, for evil done in the night. When the day-ſpring appears, it diſcovers wicked men, who being taken, examined, and tried, are by the Sentence of the Judg and Decree of the Magiſtrate, ſhaken out of the Earth. God the ſupream Judg, ſeems to ſearch the whole Earth by the Candle of the Sun, as he once threatned to ſearch *Jeruſalem* with Candles.

Mane judicia exercebantur. Druſ. Grot. *Senſus horum verborum eſt, ut improbi die exorto trahantur ad judicia, ac ita terra excutiantur.* Piſc.

Hence Note, Firſt, *Light is a diſcoverer.*

Light makes all things manifeſt. As the light of the Word diſcovers the evil that is in the works of wicked men, and makes that manifeſt; ſo the light of the Sun diſcovers the perſons of wicked men, and makes them manifeſt. We cannot diſtinguiſh white from black, nor can we ſee where men are, nor what they are doing, till light befriend us. And as the natural light makes things manifeſt, ſo much more doth ſpiritual light, the light of Law and Goſpel. By the power of that light wicked men are ſhaken and driven out of their ſins; by that light they ſee, judg, and condemn themſelves. And thus the wicked are indeed ſhaken out of the Earth, that is, out of their Earthly ſtate of ſin and unbelief.

Secondly, Note, *Wicked men and light, are at no good agreement.*

He that will continue in any evil, bears no good will to any kind of light. There is nothing more uncouth and diſpleaſing to a man that reſolves to live in ſin, than the light of the Word, yea, many times, than the light which ſhines in the

Odit lucem qui turpiter agit.

Lux inimica propinquat. Vulg.

the Air. Such ſay (as he of old) when the day begins to break, *Our enemy is coming.* Common day-light (which is a great good) much more divine light (which is a far greater good) is counted an evil, by evil ones. *What communion hath light with darkneſs* (ſaid the Apoſtle, 2 *Cor.* 6. 14.) And as they who are light, ought not to have any complying communion with darkneſs; ſo they who are darkneſs, cannot have or hold any pleaſing communion with light.

Thirdly, If we take theſe words as holding out one main deſign of the Providence of God, in ſending the light every morning; namely, *that the wicked may be ſhaken out of the Earth.* This ſhews that wicked men ſhould be ſpeedily proceeded with, and the Earth unburdened of them. The ordinary uſe of the light is, that men may go forth to their labour (*Pſal.* 104. 23.) Now, as that is one great uſe of light, that man may ſee his honeſt labour, and be guided to, or in the works of his calling; ſo another great uſe of it is, to apprehend wicked men, who do diſhoneſt work, and bring them to Judgment. *David* ſaid (*Pſal.* 101. 8.) *I will early, or, in the morning, deſtroy all the wicked of the Land:* As ſoon as ever the light takes hold of the ends of the Earth, if I can, I will take hold of evil doers; that is, I will not delay, much leſs, ſtop the courſe of Juſtice againſt them that do wickedly. This was a Kingly reſolve, *Early will I deſtroy the wicked of the Land.* This was the Prophets counſel (*Jer.*21.3.) *Execute Judgment in the morning,* that is, with the firſt opportunity. It is not good to be raſh in Judgment, nor is it to be ſlack in Judgment. Wicked men are a burden to the Earth, therefore 'tis fit with the firſt (when there is no other remedy) to unburden the Earth of them.

Bolduc.

There is yet another reading and expoſition of this latter part of the verſe, taking the word rendred *wicked,* not for perſons, but for things; and then 'tis read in the Neuter-Gender, *The light takes hold of the ends of the Earth, to ſhake wicked or evil things (that is, thoſe things which are noxious to the Earth) out of it.* The heat of the Sun riſing upon the Earth, exhales and draws out hurtful vapours from the Earth, which, abiding in the bowels of it, would hinder its fruit-bearing, or make it barren. This ſenſe is proſecuted all along by ſome Interpreters, quite through the 14. and 15. verſes, but I ſhall not ſtay upon it.

The Lord having ſhewed this uſe of the light which he commands every morning, ſhews (in the next verſe) ſome other uſes or effects of it.

Verſe 14. **It is turned as clay to the ſeal, and they ſtand as a Garment.**

Locus difficilis eſt, & quo in extricando, ſi aliquis dixerit aliquid veriſimile, à benigno lectore reſpuendum non eſt. Sanct.

This verſe (ſaith a learned Expoſiter) is ſo difficult that that he is not to be refuſed, who offers any thing probable towards the opening of it. I conceive it may be beſt underſtood as an Expoſition of thoſe words in the former part of verſe 13. *That it might take hold of the ends of the Earth, it is turned as clay to the ſeal*; that is, the Earth is turned as clay to the ſeal: For when the light paſſeth through the Air, it ſets as it were a new ſtamp upon the Earth. And then the former part of verſe 15. may be taken as an Expoſition of the latter part of verſe 13. *That the wicked might be ſhaken out of it; and from the wicked light is with-holden*; that is, they are utterly deſtroyed, and ſo ſhaken out of the Earth.

It is turned as clay to the ſeal, and they ſtand as a Garment.

כחומר חותם

Sicut lutum ſigilli, i. e. cui ſigillum imponitur. Genitivus adjuncti. Piſc.

Here are two metaphors to ſet out the renewed face of the Earth, upon the riſing of the Sun, or the appearance of the morning light.

Firſt, From clay, altered by the ſeal.

Secondly, From mans putting freſh Garments and Ornaments upon his Body.

It is turned as clay to the ſeal.] That is, The approach of light makes a great change upon the face of the Earth, even as if it had received a new or freſh impreſſion as clay doth from a ſeal. A piece of clay is a rude lump, without form or figure; but if you take a ſeal and ſtamp it, that clay readily receives any figure or coat of arms engraven on the ſeal; and ſo it is turned from what it was in appearance. Thus the meaning ſeems to be this: The Earth before the Sun riſeth is like a rude piece of clay (in the night we ſee no more beauty in the Earth, than if it had no beauty at all; go to a well compoſed Garden, walk there in a dark night, you cannot diſcern the figure of any border, nor the rareſt beauty of any flower, nor the pleaſanteſt fruit of any Tree planted there, your eye cannot take in or feaſt it ſelf upon any of thoſe delights, while darkneſs covers the face of the face of the Earth) but when the light comes, then you ſee the form or figure of every thing before you, then the Earth is turned as clay to the ſeal; the Sun, as it were ſtamps and impreſſeth a new beauty and bravery upon it; and then the Earth, which lookt like a void or rude heap, appears in its form and figure, whether natural or artificial. This ſenſe is much inſiſted upon in opening this Scripture; and 'tis a good ſenſe, ſetting forth that benefit of the light, cauſing the Earth to appear in its proper ſhape, which night or darkneſs had hidden or obſcured.

Terra ad Solis exortum immutata, novas infinitas rerum aſpectabilium formas, inſtar luti, quod figuli arbitrio effingitur recipiet, quibus tanquam veſte verſicolori induatur.

Hence Note, *The ſhining of the light puts a new face, in appearance, upon the face of the Earth.*

Things that appear not, are as if they were not. Nothing appears, but by the light. This is moſt true of ſpiritual light; when that ariſeth upon any place or people, that place or people are turned as clay to the ſeal, only with this difference, the natural light of the Sun doth only manifeſt what figures or ſtamps are already impreſſed upon the Earth, it doth not make any there, which were not there before; but where the Sun-ſhine of the Goſpel comes, though it were a place as rude as Barbariſm it ſelf, 'tis turned into another ſhape, the people are quite another people in their manners and converſation. It was ſo with this Nation, we were once as rude Heathens as any in the World; but by the light of the Goſpel we were turned as clay to the ſeal; we received the figure of Grace, the figure of Chriſtianity. And at this day, in thoſe places among the *Indians,* where the Goſpel hath lately come, marvellous changes are wrought upon them; they have another ſtamp upon their tongues, another kind of language; another ſtamp both upon hand and foot, another kind of working and walking than before. As the light of the Goſpel diſcovers evil perſons to themſelves (a natural man knows not of what ſhape he is, till he ſees himſelf in that light) ſo it makes them good, and puts a new ſtamp, a new figure upon them; it makes them indeed new Creatures, new men; they are turned (through the mighty power of the Spirit accompanying that light) as clay to the ſeal. *Such* (that is, as bad as could be) *were ſome of you* (ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 6. 11.) *but ye are waſhed,* &c. that is, ye are now other manner of men than once ye were. *It is turned as clay to the ſeal,*

And they ſtand as a Garment.] *They ſtand*; Who ſtand as a Garment? The things of the Earth, they ſtand to look on as a Garment. All things preſent themſelves before us in a goodly hue, when the Sun riſeth; then they appear in their beauty, the whole Body of the Earth is then clothed to the eye of every beholder. As light it ſelf is like a Golden Robe, which the Earth puts off every night, and puts on again every morning; ſo light ſhews us all thoſe goodly things, which are the Earths Robes, or with which the Earth is clothed, as with a Garment. The Earth is, not only as a thing without form, but as a naked thing, as a Body without clothing to appearance, till the light appears; but as ſoon as the light appears, then whatſoever may be called the Earths clothing, and apparel, appears *alſo.*

Hoc hemiſtichium impersonaliter accipio. Siſtent ſe omnes res tanquam cum veſtimento, i. e. ornatiſſima beneficio apparent. Coc.

If any would know more diſtinctly, what the clothing; apparel, or Garment of the Earth is? I anſwer,

Firſt, That may be called the Earths Garment, which grows out of it; the Graſs, Corn, Herbs, Flowers, Trees, all theſe Vegetables are as a Garment upon the Earth.

Secondly, Not only Vegetables, but Animals, the Beaſts of the Earth, are as a Garment to the Earth (*Pſal.*65.13.) *The Paſtures are clothed with Flocks, the Valleys alſo are covered with Corn.* Corn is to the Valleys, what Flocks are to the Paſtures, their Clothing.

Thirdly, Artificial things, as well as Natural, are alſo the Earths Garment. All thoſe fair buildings, Towns and Cities, all thoſe goodly Edifices and Palaces any where raiſed upon the Earth, are they not as a Garment to the Earth? So when Fruits and Flowers growing out of the

Earth, Flocks and Herds living upon the Earth, Houſes and dwellings built on the Earth, are a clothing to the Earth; and they appear to be ſo, by the coming forth and appearance of the light; that ſhews the beauty and figure of the Earth, the trimmings and adornings of it: Thoſe things are to the Earth, as a rich embroidered Garment, and light manifeſts them to be ſo.

Ut ea mutata ſicut argilla ſigillari, ſiſtentur (illi) velut indumento (obducto) Jun. i. e. *ut cohiberentur improbi à pergendo & ſceleribus ſuis pronovendis, tanquam ſi obvolverentur panno vultus aut pedes ipſorum ut ſequens verſus amplius explicat.* Jun. *Ut mutetur ea ſicut lutum cum ſigillum imprimitur; & ſiſtentur (illi) tanquam (velati) indumento. Ut moris erat velari ſontes.* Piſc.

There is yet another Expoſition of this verſe 14. *They ſtand as a Garment,* that is, the wicked ſpoken of in the latter end of the former verſe, and are there ſaid, *to be ſhaken out of the Earth*; who are alſo ſpoken of, in the following verſe, where it is ſaid, *Their light is with-holden, and their high arm ſhall be broken.* Theſe wicked ones, when the light ſhines, *are made to ſtand forth, as in a Garment*; that is (ſaith one Author, noted in the Margin) the wicked are then with-held, from going on in their wickedneſs, or from proſecuting and promoting their evil deſigns and purpoſes, as if their faces were wrapt or muffled quite up with a Garment, and their feet faſt bound. Another gives the ſenſe thus; That they (namely the wicked) *may be made to ſtand as covered over with a Garment.* The cuſtom of old, was to cover the faces of malefactors, when found and declared guilty of horrid crimes.

Both theſe Interpretations correſpond clearly with the Context, both before and after; the Lord giving this as a ſpecial ſervice, that the day-ſpring or light doth to mankind, the diſcovery and deſtruction of evil men; as will be ſeen more fully, in opening the next verſe.

Verſe 15. **And from the wicked their light is with-holden.**

It was ſhewed before, that this verſe 15. ſeems to be an Expoſition of the latter part of verſe 13. There it was ſaid, The light *takes hold of the ends of the Earth, that the wicked might be ſhaken out of it*; here it followeth, *From the wicked, their light is with-holden*; that is, wicked men, when the light hath diſcovered them, are with-holden from their light, or their light is with-holden from them.

But it may be enquired, What is this light called *their* light, which is with-holden from them?

I anſwer, Firſt, The light of their proſperity and peace, the light of the good things of this World.

Secondly, The light of the Sun, even that ſhall be with-holden from them, they ſhall be ſhut up in cloſe and dark Priſons and Dungeons; they ſhall not have the light of the Sun, who have abuſed that light, or have done ſuch things in the dark, as the Sun would even bluſh to look on.

Deus lucem ſubducit impiis, i. e. *vita illos orbat; Frangitque eorum ſuperbiam & tyrannidem.* Codur.

Thirdly, The light of their life, or their life ſhall be with-holden from them; that is, they ſhall be put to death for their wickedneſs.

All theſe may be called their light, becauſe they ſometime enjoyed them; and their light in all or any of theſe notions, is ſaid to be with-holden from them, not as if they had a right to hold it longer, but becauſe they would fain have held it longer, if they might. Thus, *from the wicked their light is with-holden*; as if it had been ſaid, they are totally and finally deprived of all their good.

Now, whereas light in the ſenſe opened, is called *their light,* that is, the light of the wicked;

Note, *Even the wicked have a title to light, or to good things.*

God gives light or good things to the evil as well as to the good (*Matth.* 5.45.) *He maketh his Sun to riſe on the evil and on the good*; even they who are evil and are daily doing evil, enjoy the light of the Sun, and the light of all outward good things, through the patience and goodneſs of God. Much more may the godly when they ſee the light or good of this World, look upon it as theirs, as a part of their inheritance here below. As hereafter all the godly ſhall have an inheritance among the Saints in light, ſo many of them have an inheritance of light here, the Sun is a piece of their portion. God having adopted them to be his Children, the Sun is a debtor to them, and they may reckon it among their good things, though not as their good; God having provided better things for them than the light of this World, or of any good thing, which they hold only in common with the World. *From the wicked their light is with-holden.*

Secondly, Note, *Wicked men forfeit, and ſo are deprived of the good things which God gives to them.*

The wicked cannot long, ſhall not always enjoy the good things of this World. When wicked men abuſe the light, eſpecially when they reſiſt the light of Nature ſhining into their Conſciences, and refuſe the light of the Goſpel ſhining in the Scriptures and Ordinances, and reſolve to walk on in the darkneſs of their minds, then from them the light of comfort and proſperity is with-holden; yea, they are often thruſt out of the light of the Sun, and out of the light of this preſent life, into that inner darkneſs of the Grave, and into that *outer darkneſs* of Hell (*Matth.* 25. 30.) that is, into a darkneſs furtheſt remote, or at greateſt diſtance from light, even out of the reach of light. Doth God ſay to his own people when they ſin (*Jer.* 5. 25.) *Your ſins have with-holden good things from you?* Much more then ſhall the light and all good things, or all the good things of light be with-holden from the wicked, whoſe whole trade and buſineſs lies in works of darkneſs, or in ſinning againſt God. 'Tis bad with man, when God with-holds Natural light, the light of the Sun, the good things of this World from him; but 'tis infinitely worſe with man, when God with-holds the light of the Goſpel, and the light of his countenance, any ſpiritual light or good from him, and ſhuts any up in the contrary darkneſs. *From the wicked light is with-holden.*

And the high arm ſhall be broken.

Whoſe high arm? Surely the high arm of the wicked; they ſhall be deprived both of their light of comfort, and of their arm of ſtrength: Wherein,

First, They prided themſelves. And

Secondly, Wherewith they oppreſſed others.

The former is the effect of their ſtrength; the latter is the uſe which they uſually put their ſtrength to.

Cadunt impii à fælicitate ſua, & vires (id ſignificat brachium excelſum) debilitantur & redduntur infirmæ. Vatabl. *Brachium elatum eſt potentia & ſuperbia impiorum.* Piſc.

Strength is often expreſt in Scripture by the arm; read *Pſal.* 10. 15. & 37. 17. *Ezek.* 30.22. And a high arm notes great ſtrength. The Lord is ſaid to do his great things with a *ſtretched out* (*or a high arm*) Mans arm may here be called an *high arm*, becauſe the arm of man uſeth to be lifted up on high to ſtrike hard and home. The higher the arm is lifted up, the heavier it falls, and the deeper impreſſion it makes. To ſin with a high hand, is in Scripture language to ſin preſumptuouſly and audaciouſly. They ſin with a high hand, who ſin againſt light, or in the face of counſel and reproof. And as they ſin mightily, or with all their might, who ſin with a high hand; ſo they act mightily, or with all their might, they lay on load (as we ſay) who reſolving to do any thing, have a high arm to do it with. When the arms of wicked men are high, they muſt needs act highly in wickedneſs. Now when any act evil to the height, with heat and boldneſs, God will take a courſe with them; as it followeth in the cloſe of the verſe, *The high arm*, that is, ſuch *a high arm*

Shall be broken.] 'Tis an alluſion to the puniſhing of malefactors, by breaking their Bodies or Bones upon a Wheel. To be broken, is to be utterly ſpoiled. A broken heart is a great mercy (*Pſal.* 51. 17.) but a broken arm notes a great miſery.

Damnabitur ad mortem & quidem cruciabilem, qualis eſt in rota fractio. Grot.

This Scripture threatens *the high arm with breaking*, yet it leaves us unreſolved, or ſaith nothing expreſly, about theſe three Queries:

Firſt, Whoſe high arm is here threatned with breaking?

Secondly, By whom the high arm ſhall be broken?

Thirdly, How or by what means, or in what manner it ſhall be broken?

I anſwer to the firſt, Theſe terrible words are not level'd nor intended againſt any high arm (*eo nomine*) upon that account, becauſe it is high. God is not angry with the highneſs of men. They who are higheſt, and have the higheſt arm among men, may be highly pleaſing unto God. The higheſt powers on Earth, are of Gods ordaining and appointing; now, God cannot be againſt his own ordinances and appointments; therefore he never breaks the high arm, becauſe 'tis high in power, but becauſe 'tis high in wickedneſs. So then we may be confident, 'tis only the high arm of the wicked which is here threatned to be broken.

To the ſecond and third Queries, I anſwer in a word; it is God who breaks the high arm, and he breaks it in what manner, and by what means ſoever pleaſeth him.

In which we may ſee a ſignal work of divine Providence, which doth not ſuffer the difference of good and evil, of right and wrong, to paſs long unobſerved. And in this paſſage poſſibly, the Lord might intend a refutation of what *Job* ſaid (*Chap.* 10. 3.) That *God ſhined upon the Counſels of the wicked:* For ſeeing the very light or life of the wicked is with holden from them, and their high arm broken, doth not God declare and teſtifie that he loveth righteouſneſs, and hateth iniquity? And if the miniſtration of Divine Juſtice lie in the dark at any time, doth not the return of the light every day intimate, that a day of the revelation of the righteous Judgment of God is at hand? *The high arm ſhall be broken.*

Hence Note, Firſt, *Wicked men may grow high, and have a very high and ſtrong arm.*

Therefore be not ſcandalized when 'tis ſo. The moſt high God often ſuffers it to be ſo. The wicked man in the Text is he that hath the high arm.

Note, Secondly, *As all men by Nature are altogether wicked in their ſtate, ſo ſome of them are extreamly wicked in their lives;*

Obſerva in voce רשעים *hoc verſiculo & v.* 13. *literam* ע *in Bibliis magnis & exempla. emendatis ſuſpenſam eſſe, i. e. non eodem tenore cum aliis ſcriptam ſed ſupra cæteras ſurſum verſus pendere hoc modo* רשעים *quod forſan myſterio non caret, quaſi lux impiis & totus eorum ſplendor ſit in ſuſpenſo, non ſtabilis.* Merc.

They ſin with an high hand, or with an high arm; they ſin as if they would dare God himſelf. Not only have wicked men been high in power, and high in place; but there they have ſinned highly, and ſtretched forth their hand againſt Heaven it ſelf.

Note, Thirdly, *The wicked, how high or how ſtrong ſoever they are, they ſhall be broken.*

A learned Interpreter takes notice, that in the larger Bibles, and moſt correct Copies, the Hebrew word ſignifying *the wicked*, both in this 15. verſe, and in the 13. verſe, hath one letter raiſed up higher than the reſt, and exceeding the ordinary form of writing; as may be ſeen, if the Reader pleaſe to caſt his eye upon the quotation in the Margin. This (ſaith my Author) is not (poſſibly) without a myſtery; even to intimate thus much, that all the proſperity and outward ſplendor of the wicked hangs in ſuſpence, or is very tottering and unſtable. But whatever occaſioned that irregularity in the Hebrew writing, or whatever it may import, this is a ſure truth, that the higheſt eſtate of the wicked is very unſure.

The Lord (who as *Solomon* ſaith, (*Eccleſ.* 5.8.) *is higher than the higheſt* (on Earth) can quickly bring down the higheſt, and break or cruſh the ſtrong arm, as one would break a reed, or cruſh a moth. Thus the Lord beſpake *Edom* by his Prophet (*Jer* 49.16.) *O thou that dwelleſt in the clifts of the Rock, that holdeſt the height of the hill; though thou ſhouldeſt make thy neſt as high as the Eagle, I will bring thee down from thence, ſaith the Lord.* And thus the Lord ſpake by another Prophet concerning the *Amorite*, (*Amos* 2. 9.) *His height was like the height of the Cedars, and he was ſtrong as the Oaks; yet I deſtroyed his fruit from above, and his roots from beneath;* that is, I utterly deſtroyed him. Yea, the very being of the wicked high and ſtrong, is an argument that they ſhall be brought low, deſtroyed, and broken to pieces. When *Babylons* arm ſhall be in its higheſt height, *When ſhe ſhall ſay in her heart, I ſit as Queen* (that is, on high) *and am no Widow, and ſhall ſee no ſorrow.* When *Babylon* is thus propheſying all good of her ſelf, and promiſing all good to her ſelf, *then ſhall her plagues come in one day, death and famine, and mourning, and ſhe ſhall be utterly burnt with fire; for ſtrong is the Lord, who Judgeth her* (Rev. 18. 7, 8.) He will break her high arm, and break it when ſhe thinks it higheſt, and her ſelf ſafeſt. *David* whoſe arm God raiſed on high, affirmed all this of wicked high ones in general, or of all thoſe, who ſhould be found high in wickedneſs (*Pſal.* 92. 7, 8.) *When the wicked ſpring as graſs, and when all the workers of iniquity do flouriſh, it is that they ſhall be deſtroyed for ever.* As if he had ſaid, that's the meaning of their proſperity, you may ſpell that out of it, or make that interpretation of it, *they ſhall be deſtroyed for ever.* As the Lord *remembers his people in their low eſtate, becauſe his mercy endureth for ever* (Pſal. 136.23.) ſo he will take vengeance on the wicked in their high eſtate, *becauſe his Juſtice endureth for ever.*

The leaſt ſin deſerves a breaking; but when the arm of ſin is grown very high, we may ſay the Lords arm cannot hold, he muſt break ſuch high arms. The Prophet *Jeremy* (*Chap.* 6. 6.) ſpeaking of *Jeruſalem*, ſaith, *This City is to be viſited;* how viſited? There is a two-fold viſiting:

Firſt, In favour, care, and kindneſs.

Secondly, In wrath and judgment.

Uſually when the Scripture ſpeaks of viſiting a City or a Land, it is meant in Wrath and in Judgment. *Shall I not viſit for theſe things, ſaith the Lord?* (Jer. 5. 9.) Surely I ſhall, there is no avoiding my viſitation. What kind of viſitation is meant, the next words evidence, *Shall not my Soul be avenged on ſuch a Nation as this?* To be viſited with Vengeance and Wrath, is a ſad Viſitation, and ſo was *Jeruſalem* to be viſited. But why was the City *Jeruſalem* to be viſited in wrath? There's no City whoſe Inhabitants are ſo juſt and righteous, but the Lord may viſit them in wrath; but of this City the Lord ſaid, *it is wholly oppreſſion;* they are given up to oppreſſion, every one is oppreſſing and wronging his Brother; now when they ſinned at this rate, when their arm was thus high in wickedneſs, then it was to be broken. There is a righteous God that Judgeth the Earth; and therefore the high arm of unrighteouſneſs ſhall be broken.

VERS. 16, 17, 18.

Haſt thou entred the ſprings of the Sea? Or haſt thou walked in the ſearch of the depth?
Have the gates of Death been opened unto thee? Or haſt thou ſeen the doors of the ſhadow of Death?
Haſt thou perceived the breadth of the Earth? Declare, if thou knoweſt it all.

IN the former Context the Lord made a ſhort digreſſion from thoſe queſtionings with which he had begun with *Job*, concerning his works; the occaſion whereof was the mentioning of the wicked, who improved not, but abuſed his works.

In this Context the Lord returns to his former way of interrogating *Job*, and having queſtioned him about the birth or production of the Sea, the bands and bounds of the Sea, at the eighth, ninth, tenth, and eleventh verſes, he queſtions him here,

Firſt, About the depth of, the unſearchable depth of the Sea (*verſ.* 16, 17.)

Secondly, About the vaſt breadth of the Earth (*verſ.* 18.)

Thereby to convince *Job*, that he, not being able to reach the depth of thoſe mighty waters, nor to comprehend the breadth of the Earth, was much leſs able to comprehend the depth of thoſe counſels, or the breadth of thoſe ways of providence in which himſelf had been walking towards him. That's the general ſcope and ſum of theſe three verſes, as alſo of all that follow, as hath been ſhewed formerly.

The laſt thing about which the Lord put the queſtion, was the Light, whereby hidden and ſecret things are diſcovered; here the queſtion is about things that lie out of the light, about hidden and ſecret things; all which yet are more plain and obvious to, more open and naked before the eye of God, with whom we have to do, than the Noon-day light to us.

Verſe 16. **Haſt thou entred into the ſprings of the Sea?**

הֲבָאתָ *Numquid ingreſſus es, vel penetraſti?*

Haſt thou?] Doubtleſs thou haſt not, nor haſt thou any mind to enter into thoſe ſprings? Who hath? *Haſt thou entred or penetrated the ſprings of the Sea?* There is a two-fold entring into the ſprings of the Sea, or into any thing that lies remote from us.

Firſt, A Local.

Secondly, An Intellectual entring.

To be ſure, *Job* had not locally entred the ſprings of the Sea; and it was as ſure, that he was not able to make any perfect intellectual entrance thither. When therefore the Lord asked *Job* this queſtion, *Haſt thou entred into the ſprings of*

Oportet judicem noſſe ea de quibus judicaturus eſt: Tu vero judicas de operibus meis, cum ea non noris. Vatabl.

of the Sea? It is as if he had ſaid, *It becomes him that makes a Judgment upon any matter, to enter into it either locally to view it with the eye, or intellectually to view it with his underſtanding*; *but thou,* O Job, *haſt neither of theſe ways entred into the ſprings of the Sea, and there diſcovered how the waters flow or riſe up out of the Earth: How then canſt thou make up a Judgment about the waters? And if not, what Judgment canſt thou make up concerning my deep counſels, concerning the ſecret ſprings of my Judgments?*

Haſt thou entred into the ſprings of the Sea?

עי
דבכי־ים
Ad plorata, i. e. lacrymas maris. Druſ.
Aliqui נבכי *fluenta, non à flendo ſed à* ביך *perplexum eſſe deducunt. Et reddunt perplexitates maris. Senſus eodem recidit, ſed Grammatica magis quadrat ut à* בכה *flevit, defletatur.* Merc.

There is an elegancy in the word rendred **Springs**, which ſome derive from a root which ſignifies *to weep* or ſhed tears: Haſt thou entred among the tears or weeping places of the Sea? The ſame word in the Hebrew ſignifies an eye, as alſo a ſpring or fountain; becauſe as the eye drops, yea pours out tears (*David* ſaith, *Rivers of tears run down mine eyes*) ſo, ſprings pour out waters, and are, as it were, weeping continually. Others derive the word from a root, which ſignifieth to be infolden or intangled; and ſo they render it, *Haſt thou entred into the perplexities or intricacies of the Sea? Pharaoh* uſed that word in the Verb (*Exod.* 14. 3.) concerning the people of *Iſrael, They are intangled or perplexed in the Land:* He thought he had caught them in the briars, and ſhould have had his will, or ſatisfied his luſt on them. The ſenſe is much the ſame, whether we read *the ſprings* or the *perplexities and intricate places* of the Sea; both tending to the ſame purpoſe, to ſhew *Job* his utter incompetency and inability for ſuch an adventure. *Haſt thou entred into the ſprings*

Mare dicitur Jamim voce deducta Maiim tranſpoſitis quibuſdam literis.

Of the Sea?] The Sea is a confluence of many waters, the great Veſſel which God prepared to hold the multitude of waters, as was ſhewed before at the eighth verſe; only take notice, that the word which ſignifies the Sea, is compoſed of the ſame letters (a little tranſpoſed) with that which ſignifies the water. The Sea being the gathering together of waters, and water being the ſubſtance of the Sea, one word in ſubſtance ſerves them both in the Hebrew tongue. Yet others ſay it alludes, at leaſt, to a word ſignifying to make a noiſe, or to roar; Seas and Floods make a terrible noiſe and roaring. *David* aſcribes a voice to the Floods (*Pſal.* 93. 3.) *The floods have lifted up, O Lord, the floods have lifted up their voices.* Theſe Grammatical criticiſms about words have their uſe, giving ſome light about the nature and qualities of things. But to the Text, *Haſt thou entred into the Springs of the Sea?*

And haſt thou walked in the ſearch of the depth?

תהום *Abyſſus, vorago, altitudo, expers fundi.*

This latter part of the verſe is of the ſame importance with the former. The *ſprings of the Sea,* and the *ſearch of the depth,* have little, if any, difference, and walking follows upon entring; therefore the Lord having ſaid, *Haſt thou entred into the ſprings of the Sea?* Saith, *Haſt thou walked,* &c.

But more diſtinctly, what is *the ſearch* and what *the depth?* The depth, is the Sea, where 'tis deepeſt, ſo deep that no bottom can be found by ſounding. The word rendred here *ſearch,* notes the laſt or utmoſt of any thing, and ſo the deepeſt of the depth, which poſſibly may be called the ſearch of the depth, becauſe how much or how long ſoever it is ſearched for, it cannot be found out. Mr. *Broughton* renders it, *The border of the Sea*; the Vulgar Latine, *The laſt or utmoſt of the depth. Haſt thou walked there?* We walk on dry Land and in pleaſant Fields: Some artificial parts of the Earth are by way of eminence called *walks,* becauſe they are purpoſely fitted by art to walk in. But who can walk in the *ſearches of the depth?* Are there any under-water-walks?

Et in noviſſimis abyſſi deambulaſti Vulg. i. e. *in infimis ejus partibus.* Aquin. *Vox* חקר *ſignificat aliquid quærere & inveſtigare uſque ad fundum & noviſſimum.*

To clear theſe words a little further, we may conſider two other readings or tranſlations of them.

First, Thus, *Haſt thou walked in the depth by ſearch?* That is, Haſt thou found out a way to go to the bottom of the Sea by curious ſearch and diligent inquiry? Haſt thou by thy skill diſcovered how deep the Sea is? Haſt thou let down thy line and plummet to fathom it, and then deſcended into it? I know thou haſt not.

An ad dimetiendum abyſſum ambulaſti. Heb. *in inveſtigatione,* i. e. *ad inveſtigandum.* Codurc.

Secondly, *Haſt thou walked to ſearch the deep?* That is, Haſt thou gone down to the bottom of the Sea, and there diſcovered the ſecret and hidden paths of it? I know (thy anſwer muſt be) Thou haſt not. *Haſt thou entred into the ſprings of the Sea? Or haſt thou walked in the ſearch of the depth?*

Hence Note, Firſt, *There are ſecrets or depths in the Sea, beyond mens ſearching or finding out.*

The Sea in many parts of it may be ſearched. Some have been at the bottom of it, many have let down a line to the bottom of it; yet it is uſual in Scripture to ſpeak of the Sea as a thing unſearchable, or ſo deep, that none can find the depth of it. The Sea is ſo deep, that it is ſometimes called *the depth* (*Chap.* 28. 1.) *The depth ſaith* (that is, the Sea ſaith) *it* (that is, wiſdom) *is not in me.* 'Tis alſo called *the deep* (Luke 5. 4. *Chap.* 8. 31.) That is very deep, which is called *the deep*; and that's of an unſearchable depth, which is called *the depth.* Such a depth, ſo deep is the Sea, that no man knows how deep, or what the depth of it is?

Now, if we cannot reach the depth of the natural Sea, then (which is the ſcope of this place) ſurely there are depths and ſecrets in the ways and counſels of God, which no man can ſearch or find out. *David* (Pſal. 139. 9.) ſpeaking of the Omnipreſence of God, ſaith, *Whither ſhall I go from thy preſence? If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermoſt parts of the Sea; there ſhall thy hand find me.* There is no depth, no breadth, but God can find it out; but how little of the depth or breadth of God can we find out! (*Pſal.* 36. 6.) *Thy Judgments are a great deep*; that is, thou O Lord doſt terrible things in Judgment as angry, yet ſuch righteous things, as juſt and wiſe, that 'tis very hard for any, and impoſſible for *the many,* or moſt of men to ſee the reaſon of them. And doubtleſs, it was the deep of his own divine Judgments that God intended to lead *Job* to, when he ſpake here of the depth of the Sea. We read what the Apoſtle was forced to, when he was but, as it were, dipping his feet into this Sea of the Counſels and Judgments of God, even to cry out, *O the depth* (Rom. 11. 33.) As if he had ſaid, I dare not enter into the ſprings of the Sea, nor into the ſearch of this depth. *O the depth of the riches both of the wiſdom and knowledge of God! How unſearchable are his Judgments, and his ways paſt finding out!* This was *David*'s expreſs Confeſſion concerning the providential way of God, *His way is in the Sea, and his path in the great waters, and his foot-ſteps are not known* (Pſal. 77. 19.) Goings upon the water leave no print behind them, we cannot obſerve a track in the Sea. God walks ſometimes as upon the Land, we may eaſily diſcern his footſteps, and ſee where he hath gone: But he often walks as upon the Sea, where no man can ſee his paths, nor are his footſteps known. *The Lord is known by the Judgment which he executeth* (Pſal. 9. 16.) yet his Judgments are ſeldom known, they are a great deep, a Sea. The Sea is a clear emblem of all obſcure and unknown things, eſpecially of thoſe ways of God which are too deep for our diſcovery, and lie beyond the reach of our knowledg. And indeed, as ſoon may we hold the Sea in the hollow of our hand, or lade it dry with a Cockle-ſhell, as comprehend the deep counſels of God, and the myſteries of providence, by which they are acted and affected in our ſhallow underſtanding. Only what we cannot attain, either by ſenſe or reaſon, we may *underſtand by faith,* as the Apoſtle ſaith, we do that *the Worlds were* made by the Word of God (*Heb.* 11. 3.) Who is able, any other way than by believing, to enter into thoſe ſprings, or walk in the ſearch of thoſe depths?

Profunditas maris rei obſcuriſſimæ & ignotiſſimæ humanæ intelligentiæ ſoli Deo perſpectæ ſymbolum.

Secondly, Learn this from it, *There is nothing a ſecret unto God.*

That which is here denied unto *Job,* is to be affirmed of God. *Job* knew not thoſe ſecrets, but God knew them. *Job* himſelf ſaid (*Chap.* 9. 8.) *God treadeth upon the waves* (or as the Hebrew is, *the heights*) *of the Sea.* Here the Lord intimateth that he walketh in the depth of the Sea: Both ſet forth his glory. God commands from top to bottom, he treads upon the waves aloft; he walks in the depths below; nothing can eſcape either his Power or his Eye. It is the ſole priviledg of God to walk in the ſearch of the Sea, that is, to find out and plainly to diſcern the moſt ſecret things. And by him the moſt unſearchable depths are ſearched out, or rather, are known to him without ſearch. He knoweth even the depth of mans heart, which is the greateſt depth in the world, next to the depth of his own heart. God enters into the ſprings of that Sea, the Sea of mans heart, and walketh in the ſearch of that depth. There are innumerable ſprings in the heart of man, which bubble up, and ſend forth their ſtreams of good or evil continually; all which the Lord ſees more plainly than we ſee any thing that is done above ground, or in the open light. *Moſes* doth not onely report (*Gen.* 6. 5.) *That God ſaw the wickedneſs of man was great in the earth* (that is, that his outward practiſes or converſation was very wicked) but *that he ſaw every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was onely evil continually*. Conſider, God ſaw not onely the thoughts of man, but every imagination (which is the leaſt thing imaginable) of mans thoughts. He ſaw (as the word which we render imagination properly ſignifies) every figment, every little creature which the thoughts of mans heart was about to frame; and O how many, how exceeding many, or innumerable, are they! yet God ſaw not onely ſome, or many, but every one of them. It was ſaid by one of the Ancients upon this place, *God goes to the depth of the ſea, as often as he goeth into the depth of mans heart, and beholds what is there.* And there he beholds not onely the great but ſmall beaſts (as the Pſalmiſt calls the fiſh of the ſea) that is, not onely great but ſmall luſts and fooliſh imaginations: the huge multitudes and ſhoals of vain thoughts which ſwim and play in that wide ſea of mans heart, are diſtinctly ſeen, and as diſtinctly judged, as if but one were there.

Profundum maris deus ingreditur, quando viſitare mentes etiam preſſas ſceleribus non dedignatur. Greg. l. 29. c. 7.

Thirdly, From the ſcope of this place, Note, *That ſeeing we cannot ſearch into the depth of the ſea, it ſhould ſtay our curioſity in ſearching into, and ſtay us from diſcontent, when we cannot find the depth of Gods Counſels concerning us, and of his Providences towards us.*

There is a dutiful ſearch into the Works of God. *David* ſpeaks of it (*Pſal.* 11. 1. 12.) *The works of the Lord are great, ſought out of all thoſe that have pleaſure in them.* They are *ſought out*; that is, they who have pleaſure in them, do and will endeavour ſoberly to ſearch them out, as much as may be; but let all take heed of ſearching them wantonly or preſumptuouſly, that is, either to ſatisfie their curioſity, or with an opinion that they can teach the depth of them. The Lord would have us ſatisfie our ſelves in the ignorance, or rather neſcience of thoſe natural things which he hath not made known to us. Surely then (which is, as hath been ſaid, the ſcope of this Chapter) we ſhould be ſatisfied, though we in ſome caſes know not, nor can perceive the reaſon of Gods providential dealings, either towards particular perſons and families, or his Church in general. Will any wiſe or ſober man vex and diſquiet himſelf, will he be angry and pettiſh, becauſe he knows not all the ſecrets of the earth and ſea? (as ſome ſay *Ariſtotle* the Philoſopher was, to death and drowning, becauſe he could not find out the reaſon why the ſea in one place ebbed and flowed ſeven times in one day) Why then ſhould we be impatient, becauſe the reaſon of Gods proceedings with the ſons of men, or of the ſtrange ebbings and flowings of things in the ſea of this world, is ſecreted and hidden from us. And therefore when we are not able to enter into the ſprings of this ſea, nor to walk in the ſearch of this depth, let it not trouble us, but humble us, as it did *Job*, to whom the Lord put theſe queſtions, and proceeded to put more and more hard queſtions, if harder can be, in the next words.

Verſ. 17. **Have the gates of death been opened** (or revealed) **unto thee? Or haſt thou ſeen the doors of the ſhadow of death?**

Here is another ſtrange queſtion. Who among the living hath had the gates of death opened to him? Or hath viewed the doors of the ſhadow of death?

We read often in Scripture of *the gates of death* (Pſal. 9. 13. Pſal. 107. 18.) and which is all one, of *the gates of the grave,* (*Iſa.* 38. 10.) but who knows what theſe gates are? yet we may ſay ſomething towards the clearing of this queſtion. A gate in ſtrict ſenſe, is that by which we are admitted into any place: and ſo, the gates of death are,

Num illius profunda, quæ verè dixerim mortis regiam, &c. ſtimatus es. Bez.

That, whatſoever it is, by which we enter into death, or go into the black hall of the grave.

Again, The gates of death are any great and eminent danger. Then we may be ſaid to be at the gates of death, when our lives are in great hazard to be loſt, either by the violence of enemies, or by any violent ſickneſs.

In the former ſenſe *David* ſpake (in way of ſupplication, *Pſal.* 9. 13.) *Have mercy on me, O Lord, conſider my trouble, which I ſuffer of them that hate me, thou that liftest me up from the gates of death*; that is, from deadly danger. In the latter he ſpake by way of narration, in his elegant deſcription of the ſick, (*Pſal.* 107. 18.) *Their ſoul abhorreth all manner of meat, and they draw near unto the gates of death*; that is, they are ready to die, or ſick unto death. And thus ſaid King *Hezekiah* upon his *ſick-bed*, and as he thought (a little before) upon his *death-bed*; (*Iſa.* 38. 10.) *I ſhall go to the gates of the grave, I am deprived of the reſidue of my years*; that is, of thoſe years which I might have reckoned upon as mine, according to the common account of mans life, or the uſual courſe of nature.

Theſe are the more general gates of death, and about theſe all agree.

But there are ſeveral opinions, what ſhould be ſpecially intended by the *gates of death* in this place.

Firſt, One riſeth very high, ſaying, that by the *gates of death* we are to underſtand the viſible heavens; becauſe the heavenly bodies ſend down ſometimes malignant influences, which have a mighty power to corrupt the bodies of men here below, ſo cauſing death to carry them away. Thus he imagins death iſſuing out of the clouds, as out of opened gates, upon men on earth; But that's a far-fetcht interpretation.

Portæ mortis ſunt cauſæ corruptionis quantum ad virtutes corporum cœleſtium. Aquin. in loc.

Secondly, Others go to the utmoſt contrary point, and ſay, by the gates of death we are to underſtand *Hell*. The Papiſts give a deſcription of ſeveral receptacles for ſouls departed under the earth, they make at leaſt three diſtinctions:

Firſt, *Lumbus Patrum*, The place where they affirm the ſouls of the Fathers were before Chriſt came in the fleſh, and had accompliſhed the work of our redemption here on earth.

Secondly, *Purgatory*, the place where the ſouls of all that die in mortal ſin (as they diſtinguiſh) are reſerved to purged by temporary puniſhments, before they can get to heaven.

Thirdly, The loweſt of all, is that which we call Hell, the place of the damned, whither all go (ſay they, and we too) who die in ſin without repentance. This place of torment, ſome take for *the gates of death*. But ſeeing the Lord is here ſpeaking of natural things, not of moral actions, nor of the conſequences of them, rewards and puniſhments, therefore (though we may truly call Hell the gates or power of death, yet) that notion as well as the former is altogether heterogeneal in this Text.

Thirdly, Several expound *the gates of death*, in connection with the former verſe, for the depth or bottom of the ſea, where many dead carcaſes lie rotting; all ſuch as are caſt away by ſhipwracks, or die at ſea, being uſually thrown into the deep; and therefore at laſt the ſea ſhall give up her dead, as well as the earth.

Fourthly, *The gates of death* ſignifie ſay others, nothing elſe but the grave, or thoſe lower parts of the earth, in which mens bodies deceaſed are buried and laid up to reſt till the reſurrection. When we, that are earth in our conſtitution, go out of the world by diſſolution, our return is into the earth, into the lower parts of the earth, we ſleep in the duſt. According to this ſenſe it is as if the Lord had ſaid, *Haſt thou ſeen the ſtate of the dead, or how it fares with them that are gone to their graves? Haſt thou viſited the courts and palaces of the King of terrors?* Thus the gates of death are the gates of the dead.

Per portas mortis intelliguntur loca ſubterraneas, eò quod ibi mortui ſepeliuntur. Piſc.

Dicuntur portæ mortis, i. e. *mortuorum.*

Fifthly, We may underſtand by *the gates of death* in general, whatſoever is moſt remote and fartheſt off from our ſight and view. As if the Lord, who ſaid before, *Haſt thou entred into the ſprings of the ſea?* had ſaid here, *Haſt thou entred into the bowels or deepeſt abyſſes of the earth, which are dark and uncomfortable, as the grave, or like the very gates* of

An noſti quæ fiunt in viſceribus terræ. Vatabl.

of death? Knoweſt thou, or canſt thou tell me what is done, or how things go there?

Or haſt thou ſeen the doors of the ſhadow of death?

Portæ mortis & umbræ mortis ſunt ea loca, ad quæ vivus non penetrat, quæ nulla lux irradiat, &c. Coc.

Theſe words are of a like intendment with the former: The *gates of death, and the doors of the ſhadow of death,* are the ſame thing under a little difference of expreſſion. What the ſhadow of death is, hath been ſhewed (*chap.* 3. 5.) as alſo (*chap.* 10. 21.) thither I refer the Reader. *Haſt thou ſeen the doors of the ſhadow of death?* Surely thou haſt not? Thou neither deſireſt, nor dareſt viſit the doors leading to thoſe diſmal ſhadows, which no light can pierce, or where (as *Job* ſpake, *chap.* 10. 21.) *The light is as darkneſs.* The ſcope of both the queries in this verſe is the ſame alſo with thoſe in the former, even to repulſe *Jobs* curioſity in ſearching into the ſecrets of God, or to convince him that God had ſecrets which were no more opened to him than the gates of death, and which he could ſee no more than the doors of the ſhadow of death. *Haſt thou ſeen the doors of the ſhadow of death?* Taking death in a proper ſenſe,

Note, Firſt, *Bodily death hath gates and doors, paſſages and entrances into it.*

Deadly ſickneſſes and extream dangers are (as was ſhewed in opening the words) thoſe gates and doors. Many have been brought to thoſe gates, and have been ſtepping into thoſe ſhadows, who yet have been recalled and brought back again, as *David* and *Hezekiah* were, and as the Apoſtle *Paul* was, who had the ſentence of death in himſelf, yet was delivered, truſting in him who raiſed the dead (2 *Cor.* 1. 9, 10.)

And therefore in all ſuch caſes, whenever we are brought to the *gates of death, and to the doors of the ſhadow of death,* let us have recourſe to *the living God*; to that God, to *whom belong the iſſues from death* (Pſal. 68. 20.) *He that is our God, is the God of ſalvation,* of eternal ſalvation, and of temporal ſalvation, of ſalvation from death by ſickneſs, and of ſalvation from death by danger and trouble: our God is the God of ſalvation, to him belong the iſſues from death. As God openeth the gates of death to let man in, ſo he can open the gates of death to let man out. As there is a gate to go in unto, ſo there is a gate to go out from, or *an outgate* from death. As the ways to, ſo the iſſues from death belong to God. *Davids* heart was full of this, when having ſaid (*Pſal.* 141. 7.) *Our bones are ſcattered at the graves mouth, as when one cutteth and cleaveth wood upon the earth*; that is, we are ready to be cut in pieces and periſh by our enemies (having I ſay) ſaid this, he preſently adds, (*verſ.* 8, 9.) *But mine eyes are unto thee, O God the Lord, in thee is my truſt; leave not my ſoul deſtitute, keep me from the ſnare which they have laid for me, &c.* It is the royal priviledge of Jeſus Chriſt, to be key-keeper of the grave (*Rev.* 1. 18.) *I have the keys of hell and of death*; that is, I have power to deliver over to, and to deliver or keep from both hell and death. The keys are an emblem of power and authority. Stewards have the keys. He that hath the keys of death, can deliver from death.

Secondly, Taking death properly, Note; *No living man knoweth how or in what way he ſhall die.*

The gates of death are not revealed to any man; he hath no certainty by what means he ſhall paſs out of this world to the grave; he cannot tell through what gate he ſhall go, whether through the gate of a natural death, or of a violent death, as Chriſt ſpake to *Peter* (*John* 21. 18.) *When thou waſt young, thou girdeſt thy ſelf, and wenteſt whither thou wouldeſt; but when thou ſhalt be old, another ſhall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldſt not: this ſpake he, ſignifying by what death he ſhould glorifie God. Peter* did not know what death he ſhou'd die, whether a natural or a violent death, till Chriſt ſignified it to him. And if man knoweth not at what kind of gate he ſhall enter the houſe of death, that is, whether by ſickneſs or violence, then much leſs doth he know the particular ſickneſs or violence, by which, as a gate, he muſt paſs into the houſe of death; theſe things the Lord keeps in his own hand. And ſeeing we know not theſe gates of death, we ſhould always pray that we may know the path of life (*Pſal.* 16. 11.) *Thou wilt ſhew me the path of life,* was *Davids* aſſurance as a type of Chriſt. And though Chriſt ſhould not ſhew any man the gate of his own temporal death, yet he ſheweth every godly man the path of eternal life, and that's enough for us.

Thirdly, Note, *God onely knoweth when, how, and in what way we ſhall die, as alſo what the ſtate and condition of the dead is.*

Death is the darkeſt and obſcureſt thing in the world. The grave is a gloomy place, and filled not only with natural but metaphorical darkneſs; yet all is light to God, he knows the gates of death, and the ſtate of the dead (*Prov.* 15. 11.) *The grave and deſtruction are before the Lord, how much more the hearts of the children of men!*

Fourthly, Taking *the gates of death* generally, for any ſecret or hidden thing,

Note; *Man knoweth no more then God revealeth to him.*

When God puts the queſtion, *Have the gates of death been opened or revealed to thee?* it is as if he had ſaid, thou canſt not know them unleſs they are opened to thee. And who can open them, if I my ſelf do not? As all the myſteries of the Goſpel are hidden from us, till God is pleaſed to reveal them; ſo in nature there are many things which are myſteries and ſecrets to us, till God makes them known to us. And there are ſome things which God will no more open to us, than he hath the gates of death, or the doors of the ſhadow of death. And if ſo, then, as God will never blame us for not knowing thoſe things which he hath hidden, ſo we ſhould not buſie our ſelves with any enquiries about hidden things. *Though the ſecret of the Lord be with thoſe that fear him* (Pſal. 25. 14.) yet they that fear him, will not, dare not meddle with, nor ſearch into the Lords ſecret. Therefore,

Laſtly, Obſerve, *Whatſoever God is not pleaſed to reveal to us, or is pleaſed to hide from us, that we ſhould be content not to know, and be ſatisfied that it is hidden from us.*

(*Deut.* 29. 29.) *The ſecret things belong unto the Lord our God; but thoſe things which are revealed, belong unto us and our children for ever.* It is both our duty and our intereſt, to be content with our own ſhare, or to be ſatisfied with what belongs to us, and not to invade Gods peculiars or reſerves. It was *Jobs* fault, he would be entring into the ſecrets of God, but ſaith God, *Have the gates of death been opened unto thee, or haſt thou ſeen the doors of the ſhadow of death?* if not, then be not troubled that thoſe things are not opened to thee, which I have reſerved to my ſelf. God hath not ſtraitned us in any needful point of knowledge, there is enough opened to us, though the gates of death be not. Is it not enough for us, that in the glaſs of the Goſpel, God hath ſet before us, the myſteries of eternal ſalvation, unleſs he alſo acquaint us in the day of our trial (which was *Jobs* caſe) with all the whole myſtery of his temporal diſpenſations?

The Lord having urged *Job* with theſe hard queſtions about the depth of the Sea and the gates of death, ſeems now to offer him a more eaſie queſtion in the next verſe.

Verſ. 18. **Haſt thou perceived the breadth of the earth? Declare if thou knoweſt it all.**

Τῆς ὑπ᾽ οὐρανόν. Sept. *Sic terram eleganter circumloquuntur; nã quicquid ſub cœlo aereo, terra eſt, aer terram ambit.* Druſ.

The Septuagint render, *Haſt thou perceived the breadth of that which is under the heavens?* Under the Cope or Canopy of the heavens. Haſt thou perceived how broad that is which is ſpanned or compaſſed about by the heavens; that is, as we tranſlate, *the breadth of the earth.* That which is circled or ſurrounded by the aereal heavens is the earth: Haſt thou perceived the breadth of that. Though the earth be better known to man than the depth of the ſea; yet no man ever ſaw the whole earth. Many parts of the earth are deſerts and unpaſſable by man. The beſt Writers ſay the whole compaſs of the earth is 21600 miles; yet that is rather a ſuppoſition, than a demonſtration; no man having ever viſited or viewed the whole face of the earth. We find (*Job* 11. 9.) length aſcribed to the earth

Terræ latitudo hoc in loco, eſt univerſus terræ ambitus. רחבי *Pluralis à* רחב *latitudo. In qualibet re major dimenſio vocatur longitudo.* Aquin.

earth, and breadth to the ſea; but in this place the Lord having aſcribed depth to the ſea, gives breadth to the earth. We are not here to take the *breadth of the earth*, according to the rules of Geography; for ſo the length of the earth is from Eaſt to Weſt, and the breadth from North to South; but breadth is here put ſynecdochically for all the dimenſions, or the whole circumference of the Earth. As if the Lord had ſaid, *Doſt thou know how big how ſpacious the Earth is?* The breadth of the Earth import the largeneſs of it, oppoſed to ſtraitneſs or narrowneſs; and to ſhew that here the breadth contains all dimenſions, the word is in the Plural Number, *Haſt thou known the breadths of the Earth*, that is, the whole compaſs of it, how broad and how long, and ſo how big the Earth is? *Haſt thou perceived the breadth of the Earth?*

Hence Note, Firſt, *The Earth is a huge vaſt body.*

That is very big, whoſe bigneſs is not eaſily perceived, if at all perceivable; and ſuch is the breadth or bigneſs of the earth. Whence take this double Inference;

Firſt, If the earth be ſuch a great thing, that a man cannot perceive the breadth or dimenſions of it, then how great are the heavens! The earth in compariſon of the heavens is but as a point, 'tis as little as is imaginable. O what a broad thing is heaven, if the earth be ſuch, that we cannot reach the breadth of it.

Secondly, If the earth be ſo great, how great is God, who made the heavens and the earth too! That's it which God would lead *Job* to the conſideration of, even of his own infinite greatneſs. How great is God, who made this great earth! To him (as the prophet *Iſaiah* ſpeaks, *chap.* 40. 15, 16.) *The Nations, the people (of the earth) are but as the drop of a bucket, and as the duſt of the ballance: He weighs the mountains in ſcales, and the hills in a ballance:* He holds the duſt as one ſingle grain in his hand. What a nothing are all things to God, ſeeing the earth is a nothing to the heavens! God puts the queſtion to *Job*, *Haſt thou perceived the breadth of the earth?* and we may put that queſtion into this negative Propoſition, O *Job*, Thou haſt not perceived the breadth of the earth. The wiſeſt of men know not the breadth or bigneſs of the earth. Some have undertaken to tell us how great the circle of the earth is; but theirs are but gueſſes: though ſomewhat may be ſaid that way, yet no man can give it exactly; and therefore the *Roman* Orator attempting to write about the earth and the dimenſions of it, prefaceth or apologizeth thus for himſelf; *I will do my endeavour to ſatisfie thee about Geography, or the dimenſions of the earth, but I promiſe nothing of certainty, 'tis a great work. Haſt thou known the breadth of the earth?*

De Geographia dabo operam ut tibi ſatisfaciam, ſed nihil certi polliceor; magnum opus eſt. Cicero ad Atticum. l.2. ep. 4.

Declare if thou knoweſt it all.] As if the Lord had ſaid, *I have put the queſtion to thee; come now anſwer me, declare what thou knoweſt, let me know whether thou knoweſt it all.* God provokes or challenges *Job* to ſay his utmoſt. We may refer theſe laſt words either ſtrictly to the immediate queſtion only, or generally to all the queſtions before; yet I conceive they are rather to be reſtrained to the laſt queſtion concerning the breadth of the earth, becauſe they run in the ſingular number, *Declare if thou knoweſt it all*, that is, if thou knoweſt all of the earth. There were many parts of the earth, which *Job* knew not at all; therefore he could not know it all. We at this day after all the improvements which have been made by Navigation (little in uſe in *Jobs* days) for the diſcovery of the earth, are yet forced to write upon ſome places (as we may ſee in our beſt Maps of the World) *Terra incognita*, this part of the *earth is unknown*. If we *now* do not, ſurely *Job* then did not know it all.

Further, When the Lord ſaith, *Declare if thou knoweſt it all*, his meaning is not, *If thou haſt any knowledge at all about it all*; for there is no wiſe, no underſtanding man, but hath ſome meaſure or degree of knowledge as about the depth of the Sea, ſo about the breadth and meaſures of the Earth: but the meaning of theſe words, *Declare, if thou knoweſt it all*, is, if thou knoweſt the all of it, if thou knoweſt it throughly: For, as theſe words have reference to the object to be known, ſo to the manner of knowing. There are many that know ſomething, and ſome that know many things; yet none that know all things, no not the all of any one thing. The Apoſtle ſpeaking of ſpiritual things, ſaith, *We know in part*; and the truth is, we know but a part of natural things, of the ſea, of the earth, and we know them but in part. So then, when the Lord ſaith, *If thou knoweſt it all*, his meaning may be this, if thou haſt a diſtinct and demonſtrative knowledge of the thing, *Declare it*. I know thou mayeſt give conjectures, and propoſe probabilities; but I know alſo, that thou neither knoweſt it all, nor the all of it. God hath given us a certain knowledge about things that refer to eternity and to ſalvation, to them we muſt ſtick and abide by them; but as to theſe things, all that we know, is but little, and about that little we labour under many uncertainties. *Declare if thou knoweſt it all.*

Hence Obſerve, Firſt: *That God is willing that man ſhould make the beſt of himſelf.*

God was ready to hear *Job* what he could anſwer to his Queſtion. When God put the Queſtion to *Adam* (Gen. 3. 11.) *Haſt thou eaten of the Tree whereof I commanded thee, that thou ſhouldeſt not eat?* And when he put queſtions to *Cain* (Gen. 4. 6.) *Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen?* As alſo (*verſ.* 9.) *Where is Abel thy brother?* He was ready to hear what either the one or the other could ſay for themſelves; nor would he have cut them ſhort in their plea, if they could have pleaded any thing for their juſtification. Now, as God was willing to hear what they could anſwer to his queſtions about their evil works; ſo he is willing to hear what any can anſwer (which was *Jobs* caſe) to the queſtions which he propoſeth about his own works, and their behaviour under them.

Secondly, From the ſcope of the words, Note, *The moſt knowing men know but little of that which they know.*

As we know nothing at all of ſome things, ſo there is nothing of which we know the all, or of which we have a perfect knowledge, a knowledge, to which nothing can be added. They who know moſt of any thing, know almoſt nothing of it; How far then are they from knowing it all! *David* having ſpoken of the knowledge of God (*Pſal.* 139. 2, 3, 4, 5.) concludes (*verſ.* 6.) *Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it.* Man is ſo far from an ability to attain ſuch a knowledge as God hath, the knowledge of the moſt ſecret things of man, the knowledge *of his thoughts afar off*; that he is not able to attain the perfect knowledge of the plaineſt things. We muſt ſtay for perfect knowledge, till we come to another ſtate, when all clouds of ignorance ſhall be ſcattered, when we ſhall ſee no more *through a glaſs darkly*, but *face to face:* when we ſhall know all that is to be known of God, and of the Works of God; when we ſhall be enabled to declare all our knowledge about them, and to give proof that we know them all.

Truly to know God the onely true God, and Jeſus Chriſt, whom he hath ſent, is eternal life, while we live here in this world, but to know the true God, and Jeſus Chriſt, whom he hath ſent, fully, yea to know any thing fully, is reſerved for us in that eternal life which we wait for in the world to come.

There are three things, which make up the happineſs of our ſoul-ſtate in eternal life.

Firſt, The due order of the Affections, when they ſhall ever be ſet upon right objects, and upon them in a right meaſure.

Secondly, The due motion of the Will, when it ſhall ever chuſe that which is good, and nothing but good.

Thirdly, The clear and unerring light of the Underſtanding, The proper object of the Underſtanding is truth. The chief ornament and delight of the Underſtanding is the knowledge of the truth. And the Underſtanding is not more debaſed and diſhonoured by not endeavouring to know, than an underſtanding man is vexed and troubled, when he cannot compaſs the knowledge of that which he deſires and endeavours to know. Indeed *Solomon* (the moſt knowing man among all the ſons of men) hath concluded (*Eccl.* 1. 15.) *That in much wiſdom there is much grief, and that he that increaſeth knowledge, increaſeth ſorrow.* Yet this grief and ſorrow ariſe not from knowledg attained, but from the great pains, ſtudy, and travel, which we take in this world for the attainment of it; or from the doubts and uncertainties which remain in our minds about many things, when we have got the beſt and cleareſt knowledge of them attainable in this life: Whereas in our heavenly ſtate, we ſhall neither have any trouble in getting knowledge, nor ſhall any doubt or uncertainty remain in our minds about the things we know. For the beautiful face of truth, ſhall in a moment be unvailed to us, and the curtain drawn away by the hand of God, which interpoſed between us and the light; ſo that, there ſhall not any miſt or darkneſs, not any doubt or ſcruple hang in our minds about any truth.

And thus we may anſwer that of the Apoſtle (1 *Cor.* 13. 8,) ſaying, That in heaven, *Knowledge ſhall vaniſh away.* What, nothing but ignorance in heaven? Surely, nothing more unſutable to, nor unbecoming the glory of that ſtate. Ignorance may better be the Mother of Devotion here (as Papiſts with ignorance enough have affirmed) than in heaven the companion of our joy. The Apoſtle then means, that ſuch knowledge as now we have, ſhall vaniſh, that is, knowledge ſo gotten as now it is. In heaven there are no Schools, nor Univerſities, nor Tutors, nor Teachers. Again, Knowledge of ſo imperfect a degree as now it is of, ſhall vaniſh away; The knowledge which *Solomon* had on earth, will be but ignorance, compared to the knowledge which the Saints have and ſhall have in heaven; His largeneſs of heart (though like the ſand of the ſea) will be but narrowneſs of heart, compared with the enlargements which Saints ſhall have there. Glorified Saints ſhall be in natural things exact Philoſophers, able to anſwer all the queſtions here put to *Job.* In ſpiritual things they ſhall be exact Divines; all dark Scriptures ſhall be clear to them; Chriſt will be their Comment; all dark queſtions will be clear to them; Chriſt will be their light. Thoſe perplexed Caſes and fatal Controverſies which have troubled the peace of the Church, and have occaſioned the calling together of ſome hundreds of the ableſt Scholars to debate and determine them, ſhall at one view be underſtood, ſhall have all their knots untied, and their difficulties removed by the meaneſt (if among them there ſhall be found any meaner than others) of glorified underſtandings. What ſweetneſs the ſoul ſhall feel at this revelation of all knowledge, a little knowledge will ſerve to judge: For then not only to this challenge which the Lord made to *Job*, about thoſe ſpecial matters, *the gates of death, and the breadth of* the earth,; but alſo to any other, *Declare if thou knoweſt it all*, Every ſoul will readily and confidently anſwer, Lord, *in thy light I know it all.*

VERS. 19, 20, 21.

Where is the way where light dwelleth? and as for darkneſs, where is the place thereof?

That thou ſhouldeſt take it to the bound thereof, and that thou ſhouldeſt know the paths to the houſe thereof.

Knoweſt thou it, becauſe thou waſt then born? Or becauſe the number of thy days is great?

THe Lord having poſed *Job* in the former Context about the depth of the Sea, the darkneſs of Death, and the vaſtneſs of the Earth; here calleth him to an account about the light of the Sun, and the darkneſs of the Air, in theſe three verſes. As if he had ſaid, *If thou knoweſt the breadth of the whole earth, about which I enquired laſt of thee; then tell me in what part of the earth doth the light dwell, and where is the place of darkneſs?*

Verſe 19. **Where is the way where light dwelleth?**

The Septuagint Tranſlate, *In what land doth light dwell?* Or where is the land of light? We ſay, *Where is the way?* The Hebrew word notes a troden beaten way, or (as we ſpeak) a *high-way. Where is the way where light dwelleth?* That is, whither light retireth, and doth, as it were, betake it ſelf in the night, when it hath gone its journey, and is paſt thy Horizon. For every one knows where light dwells, while the Sun is up with us, and ſhines upon us: But what becomes of it, or whither it goes, when 'tis gone from us, that's a queſtion, and here (ſay ſome) *the queſtion,*

ποία δὲ γῆ, *In qua terra.* Sept.
דרך
Ubi via in qua habitat, ſcil. poſt via & itineris ſpatium emenſum.

The word which we Tranſlate *dwelleth*, implieth a retirement, a reſt after long labour and travel.

Verbum שכן *eſt ad quietem & noctem traducendam alicubi commorari.*

Where is the way where light dwelleth? and as for darkneſs where is the place of it?

Here are two great contraries (which cannot agree nor dwell together in any one ſubject, yet) met together in this Text, *Light and darkneſs*; and there is ſome, yea not a little darkneſs in this queſtion about the light. We need a great meaſure of Divine Light to anſwer this queſtion about the Light.

Where is the way where light dwelleth?] Tell me, O *Job*, if thou canſt, where light lodgeth, where it repoſeth it ſelf, when the Sun is gone down, and departed out of thy ſight? Tell me what way leadeth to the lodging of light? The words (as Interpreters give it) have in them a poetical tincture, as if the Sun ſetting, retired to his chamber, as we do, when the light and buſineſs of the day is ended. *David* ſpeaks of the Sun *as a Bridegroom coming out of his chamber* (Pſal. 19. 5.) And when his race (as to us) is run every day, he hath a chamber ready for him: not that the Sun doth at all end its motion, or ſit down to reſt, but becauſe it ſeems to reſt, when it goeth down to us. As if the Lord had ſaid, Haſt thou travelled to the place of the Suns riſing and ſetting? *Where is the way where light dwelleth?*

There may be a threefold anſwer given to theſe queſtions, as light is taken properly for the natural light, the light of the day, cauſed by the Suns approach; and as darkneſs is taken properly for natural darkneſs, cauſed by the withdrawing of the Sun.

Firſt, Some (becauſe the word *dwelleth* notes a ſtay or an abode, for ſuch is a dwelling place) anſwer the queſtion *geographically*, and ſay, *light dwelleth under the Poles.* There are two poles of the earth, the Northern and the Southern, under both which interchangeably light and darkneſs abide ſix months together; and becauſe of the long ſtay and abode of light and darkneſs there, Geographers reckon and conclude the dwelling of light and the place of darkneſs to be there, and that therefore the Sun hath two dwelling houſes, one in the North, the other in the South.

Secondly, When Aſtronomers anſwer theſe queſtions, *Where is the way where light dwelleth? and where is the place of darkneſs?* They ſay, *The Eaſt* is the place of light; and the *Weſt*, the dwelling of darkneſs: And the reaſon given is this, Becauſe the Sun riſes in the Eaſt, and goes down in the Weſt, leaving the World, that half of the World upon which it ſhined in the day, over-ſhadowed with darkneſs. It is by the acceſs and receſs, by the riſing and ſetting of the Sun, that we may enjoy light or are wrapped up in darkneſs. And ſo Eaſt and Weſt are called by the ancient Poets the houſes or dwellings of the Sun.

Fervide Titan obitus pariter tecum Alcides vidit & Ortus; novitque tuas utraſque domos. Sen. in Herc. Act. 4

Aſtronomers have found out, according to their doctrine, twelve houſes or dwelling places of the Sun; they imagine a girdle or bond paſſing quite through the heavens, which they call the *Zodiack*, and there a line which they call the *Ecliptick*, in which the Sun moveth, or which is the way of the light; and in this line, they place the *Twelve ſigns*: the firſt of which the Sun entreth the firſt month of the year, and is called *Aries*, the ſecond *Taurus*, the third *Gemini*, &c. Theſe are onely fictions by which they repreſent the gradual motions of the Sun in the ſeveral ſeaſons of the year, and they call them *Manſion Houſes* or *Dwellings of the Sun.*

Alludere videtur ad ſignorum Zodiaci *ſpatia, per quæ Sol curſum ſuum peragit, quæ ab aſtrologis* Manſiones vel Domus *ſolent appellari. Itaque Zona illa ſive faſcia* Zodiaci *in cujus medio protenditur ecliptica eſt via ſolis, qui in tot habitare domus dicitur, quot in illa ſunt ſigna.* Bold.

Thirdly, according to vulgar underſtanding we may anſwer theſe queſtions, *Where is the way where light dwelleth*, &c. Plainly thus, Light dwelleth in the Sun, there light abides, and from thence ſhines to us. The Sun is the Veſſel or Store-houſe of light, the Luminary of the World by day, as the Moon and Stars are by night. And as for darkneſs, that takes its place every where, as ſoon as the Sun leaves any place. As often as the Sun continuing his circular progreſs, viſits the other Hemiſphere, darkneſs takes poſſeſſion of this. Light and darkneſs take their turns; the one always going off, when and where the other enters upon the ſtage of the world.

Now though Philoſophers, with our own experience, tell us, that the reaſon of this, is, the acceſs and receſs of the

Sun; yet is unknown to us, how God hath thus tempered the courſe of nature, that day and night ſhould not be always alike in any part of the World, but vary in both the Hemiſpheres, and that in the ſame Hemiſphere there ſhould be ſuch a ſetled inequality in the length of the nights and days. This dependeth wholly upon the will of God, who thus ſtated the motions of the heavenly bodies from the very beginning.

If it be asked, Why doth the Lord put theſe queſtions to *Job, Where is the way where light dwelleth?* Seeing every one may anſwer, light is in the Sun, light ſhines in and fills the Air, while the Sun is up; and darkneſs filleth the air when the Sun is gone down, darkneſs being the privation or want of light; or darkneſs (according to the uſual definition of it) *being the ſhadow of the Earth coming between us and the Sun.* When the opacous or thick body of the Earth interpoſeth between us and the Sun, darkneſs followeth. And if this be all, there ſeemeth not to be much difficulty in knowing where the light dwelleth, and where the place of darkneſs is; therefore ſurely that was not the ſole intendment of God in putting theſe queſtions to *Job*. But when he ſaith, *Where is the way where light dwelleth?* &c. It is as if he had ſaid, *Doſt thou underſtand the ordering and methodizing of light and darkneſs? Or how it cometh to paſs, that one part of the World hath light while the other is covered with darkneſs, and how light returns to that other part? Haſt thou made this temperament and viciſſitude of light and darkneſs, or procured that the day ſhould be long in the ſame country, at one ſeaſon of the year, and ſhort at another? Haſt thou diſpoſed the Sun to make ſhort nights in Summer, and long in Winter?* This the underſtanding of man is not well able to comprehend, much leſs his power to effect. Onely the infinite wiſdom of God hath put light and darkneſs into this method, and given them their certain ſeaſons. And that this is the meaning of the Text, we may gather more clearly from the next verſe; for the Lord having ſaid, *Where is the way where light dwelleth? and as for darkneſs, where is the place thereof?* preſently adds,

Verſ. 20. **That ſhouldeſt take it to the bound thereof, and that thou ſhouldeſt know the paths to the houſe thereof?**

Theſe words ſhew that the former queſtions chiefly reſpect the order and diſpoſure of light and darkneſs.

That thou ſhouldſt take it,] The word ſignifieth the taking of a thing in ones hand. As if the Lord had ſaid, Doſt thou every morning take the light in thy hand, *and bring it to the bounds* or utmoſt limits thereof? Art thou able to direct the light where it ſhould abide, till ſuch time as it is to come forth again to thee?

לקח *Vim habet accipiendi quaſi manu.*

There is a manuduction, a divine manuduction of all the creatures by the wiſdom and power of God; he as it were leads the light, and leads the darkneſs whither he pleaſeth. The creature remaineth unmoved and ſluggiſh, it ſtirreth not till the Lord taketh it by the hand, or putteth forth his hand to diſpoſe of it as it pleaſeth him, to the uſe or place he hath appointed it; Or,

Nihil movetur quod non deducatur ipſa dei manu & poteſtate. Si ille manum non admoveat, immota, iners jacebit & ſqualebit natura. Potentiſſimus deus capit ſolem, accipit tenebras, ducit atque reducit.

To the bound thereof?] The Original Word ſignifieth a limit or utmoſt point; implying that the Lord brings the light to its due and proper place; and that, as he hath *determined the bounds of mans habitation* (Acts 17. 26.) ſo he hath alſo bounded the habitation of light and darkneſs, for the benefit and ſervice of man: As if the Lord had ſaid,

נבול.

Haſt thou done this, O Job? *ſurely no, that's my work; I am he that taketh the Sun in my hand, and bringeth it to the bounds thereof; I direct at what point it ſhall riſe and ſet; It is I that know the paths to the houſe thereof, and ſo can readily call for it, and cauſe it to appear in time and place appointed: Thou knoweſt not where to have the light, how to bring light forth; but I do.* From theſe two verſes laid and conſidered together,

Obſerve, Firſt, *Natural light and darkneſs have their ſpecial places, their dwelling places; yet they have no where any long abiding place.*

A Tabernacle (not a ſtanding houſe) *is ſet for the Sun* (Pſal. 19. 4.) A Tabernacle is a moveable houſe. The Sun hath a houſe every where, but it keeps houſe or abides no where. 'Tis not only always moving in its place, but daily removing to other places; and ſo, conſequentially is darkneſs. As it is thus with natural light and darkneſs, about which the queſtion is literally propoſed, ſo with civil light and darkneſs, about which the queſtion alſo is intended. Theſe have their places, their dwellings, and 'tis ſeldom that they dwell long in any one place. Light and darkneſs are not more interchangeable in the Air, than joy and ſorrow are in the ſtates and conditions of men.

We may likewiſe conclude, that ſpiritual light and darkneſs have their houſes and their dwellings. Spiritual light, both the light of knowledge, and the light of comfort, dwell,

Firſt; In Chriſt himſelf. In him as Mediator, *all fulneſs dwells, (Col.* 1. 19.) *and of his fulneſs we all receive grace for grace,* (*John* 1. 16.) I may ſay alſo light for light, light of every ſort, and light in every degree, needful for us, is received from him.

Secondly, Theſe lights dwell in the hearts of every true believer. Faith and light can never be ſeparated: Though ſome who have faith may be in the dark, yet light is not ſeparated; it is onely clouded, eclipſed or hidden from them. All believers are ſo much in a ſtate of light, that they are called light (*Eph.* 5. 8.) and many of them live in a plentiful enjoyment of light. A worthy man of the former generation, lying upon his death-bed, a friend asked him whether the light ſhining into the room did not offend him? he anſwered, putting his hand upon his heart, *Here I have light enough.* The heart of a godly man is the houſe of ſpiritual light, there he hath and holds the light of divine knowledge about the things of the Goſpel, and the light of divine comfort ariſing from that knowledge. It is alſo reported of Mr. *Deering* our Countrey man, that in his laſt ſickneſs, and towards his end, being ſet upright in his bed for his eaſe, a friend requeſted him, that he would ſpeak ſomething for the edification and comfort of thoſe about him: Whereupon, the Sun ſhining in his face, he took occaſion to ſpeak thus, *There is but one Sun in the world, and there is but one Sun of righteouſneſs which graciouſly ſhineth upon me*; ſpeaking further, he concluded thus, *I bleſs God, I have ſo much light of joy and comfort in my ſoul, that were it put to my wiſh or choice, I had rather a thouſand times die than live.* As the hearts of theſe worthies were the dwelling places of light, ſo is the heart of every godly perſon in his meaſure and degree; the light of knowledge and of joy abide there. The Apoſtle ſaith (2 *Cor.* 4. 6.) *God who commanded light to ſhine out of darkneſs, hath ſhined into our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jeſus Chriſt*: And where that ſhine of God gives the light of knowledge, the light of comfort cannot be with-held, unleſs it be for a ſeaſon, that the ſoul may rejoyce the more in the end, and at laſt without end. For,

Hic ſat lucis. Oecolampadius.

Laſtly, There is an eternal light, the light of Glory, and that hath a certain dwelling place; that light dwelleth always in heaven; and the Saints at reſt in heaven, dwell always in that light. Eternal glory is called *the inheritance of the ſaints in light,* (*Col.* 1. 12.)

Again, Spiritual darkneſs hath its place; and we ſhould labour to know the place of that darkneſs, to avoid it. Ignorance is ſpiritual darkneſs, and that dwells in the heart of every man by nature. All that continue in that ſad condition, *have their underſtanding darkned through the ignorance that is in them,* (Eph. 4. 18.) and they who now are in the light, were once in the dark, yea they were darkneſs (*Eph.* 5. 8.) Let it alſo be remembred, in whomſoever this darkneſs of ſin and ignorance abides, they muſt abide under the darkneſs of wrath and judgment for ever. The place where that darkneſs dwells *is hell,* and there *outer darkneſs* (as 'tis often called in the Goſpel) dwells, even ſuch darkneſs as wherein the damned are not only out of the poſſeſſion of the leaſt ray or glimmering of light, but without any hope or expectation of it. Hell is quite beyond the bound or boundaries of light; there's darkneſs and thick darkneſs, nothing but darkneſs. Thus we ſee light and darkneſs have their places, natural light and darkneſs have theirs, and ſo have ſpiritual and eternal light and darkneſs.

Secondly, From the ſcope of theſe two verſes,

Obſerve, *It is God who diſpoſeth and ordereth light and darkneſs.*

The queſtion was put to *Job*, whether he had diſpoſed of them; but he could not aſſume to himſelf, that he had *taken or laid the light to the bound thereof, or knew the paths to the houſe thereof.* Light and darkneſs are at the diſpoſe, and under the command of God alone. And as the work or power of God is wonderful in the diſpoſe of natural light and darkneſs, ſo 'tis much more wonderful; in the diſpoſe of civil, ſpiritual, and eternal light and darkneſs theſe the Lord *taketh to their bound, and knoweth the paths to their houſe. I form light and create darkneſs* (ſaith the Lord, *Iſa.* 45 7.) What light and darkneſs doth the Lord there ſpeak of? Surely of civil light and darkneſs, as the next words import, *I make peace and create evil*; I make and create them, I alſo direct and appoint them whither to go, whether to a Nation or to a man only, whether to this or that man or Nation. Darkneſs is of me as truly as light.

And that not only civil, but ſpiritual and eternal light and darkneſs are at Gods diſpoſe, is as evident from the Scriptures of truth. Some lands may be called *lands of light* (like *Goſhen*) others (like *Egypt* under that three days plague) may be called lands of darkneſs. Of ſuch lands that complaint is made (*Pſal.* 74. 20.) *The dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty.* All places of the earth full *of ignorance*, not knowing God, *of atheiſm*, not acknowledging God, *of idolatry*, worſhipping falſe gods, or the true God falſly, may be called lands of darkneſs, or the dark places of the earth. Now as the Lord maketh one land a place of ſpiritual light, ſo he leaveth another to be a place of darkneſs. And he often maketh changes from darkneſs to light, that's mercy, and from light to darkneſs, that's wrath, in the ſame lands. Some lands which had ſate in darkneſs for ages and generations, the Lord hath viſited with Goſpel light; and ſome lands, which for ages and generations had that light, are now laid in darkneſs. How ſad a witneſs of this are the anciently famous ſeats of the *Aſian* and *African* Churches, now under *Mahometan* power!

And further, as the Lord diſpoſeth that outward ſpiritual light and darkneſs, giving the knowledge of the Goſpel to, or taking it away from Nations, as he pleaſeth; ſo he diſpoſeth inward light or darkneſs to every ſoul. Some gracious ſouls walk in the light of Gods countenance, and under the ſweet ſhinings of his face every day; others, *who* alſo (as the Prophet ſpeaks, *Iſa.* 50. 10.) *Fear the Lord, and obey the voice of his ſervants, walk in darkneſs, and ſee no light.* Now, whence cometh this difference? Is it not of the Lord, who hath the command of our joys and of our ſorrows, and who appoints this kind of light and darkneſs their ſeveral and ſpecial places, according to the ſoveraignty of his own Will?

From all that hath been ſaid, we may draw down this concluſion, which the Lord did chiefly aim at in dealing with *Job*; *That we are to own and acknowledge the hand of God in every condition:* be it light, or be it darkneſs; be it joy, or be it ſorrow; 'tis all of God. There is nothing which concerns either the comfort or trouble of man, but comes forth from God, and is ordered by him; like as in all ages and revolutions of time, light and darkneſs have held their courſe, and kept their place, according to his inſtitution and direction. *Job* was in darkneſs, both as to his outward and inward eſtate; his body was pained, his ſoul was grieved, anguiſh filled his ſpirit; and God would have him ſee, know, and acknowledge his hand in all. As if he had ſaid, *Thou canſt no more diſpoſe the peace or trouble, the light or darkneſs of thy condition, than thou canſt diſpoſe of light or darkneſs in the air.* All our changes, from darkneſs to light, from light to darkneſs, proceed from the unchangeable God. And as light and darkneſs have their conſtant turns in the air, ſo they have very frequent turns in the life of every man.

Therefore, they who when God cauſeth darkneſs to cover and compaſs them abont, do not acquieſce and reſt in his good pleaſure, but murmur and are tumultuous; theſe (I ſay) do as if they would take upon them to order the courſe of light and darkneſs in the world; theſe do no otherwiſe, than as if at mid-night they ſhould call for day, or at mid-day for night. Diſcompoſed ſouls are like ſick bodies; they who are ſick or ill at eaſe, cannot bear either night or day; in the day they deſire night, and in the night day: ſo it is with them of ſickly ſouls. Such as are often heard ſaying in the morning, Would God it were evening, and in the evening, Would God it were morning: Nothing pleaſeth them. Did we acknowledge the hand of God in making it night, we ſhould ſit down quietly in our darkeſt night, as to impatience, even while we are moſt earneſtly praying for the return of morning light. Impatience was in a great meaſure *Jobs* failing, though he had a great meaſure of patience. He made (as we ſay) *an ado* in the night of his trouble, as if he would have made it day when God had made it night and darkneſs with him. O remember, the way of light, and the place of darkneſs, the bounds and paths of both are in the hand, or at the command of God.

Thirdly, In that the Lord put this among his own great works, and takes it out of the hand of *Job*, or of any other creature, to order light and darkneſs,

> Note, *The work of God in ordering light and darkneſs is wonderful.*

And we cannot but be convinced that it is ſo, if we conſider; Firſt, The conſtant ſucceſſion of day and night in all places. As ſure as the day cometh, the night will come; and as ſure the night is come, day is coming. There is an unchangeable change between light and darkneſs, they miſs not a moment in their comings or returnings. Secondly, If we conſider light and darkneſs as to their increaſe, or decreaſe in any place, thus, *Day unto day uttereth ſpeech, and night unto night ſheweth knowledge* (Pſal. 19. 2.) which ſome think was a well known Adage or Proverbial Speech among the *Jews*: importing the power of God over, and his guidance of them both. God brings the light to the bound of it, to day at this hour, or minute of the hour, to morrow at that. There is a conſtant inconſtancy, an uneven evenneſs between light and darkneſs upon the face of the earth. We never have light or darkneſs twice of the ſame length in the ſame place and ſeaſon; yet they ever keep their place and ſeaſon all the world over: where you had them the laſt year, upon ſuch a day, there you may have them this, without a moments variation, though they have varied their courſe many moments every day ſince. Thus exactly doth the Lord take or lead the light to its bound, and knows the paths to the houſe thereof.

And as there is a great glory coming to God, in ordering light and darkneſs, as to the outward face of things; ſo there is a greater, as to the inward ſtate of his people, their ſoul-ſtate. And though the Lord doth not keep ſuch a conſtant courſe in that, yet he obſerveth a rule in all the revolutions of it. We have ſometimes light and ſometimes darkneſs in our ſouls: Now the light of comfort increaſeth towards us, and anon the night of ſorrow darkeneth upon us. Our ſouls meet often with theſe turns and changes. Let us adore the wiſdom, and ſubmit to the holy will of God in all. For though ſoul-light be always deſirable, as well as comfortable, yet ſoul-darkneſs may ſometimes be uſeful; and this uſe it hath, as often as it comes, even to try how we can truſt God in the dark; as alſo to let the world know that we are reſolved through grace to keep cloſe to the light of commandments, how long ſoever we are kept from, or are at a loſs for the light of promiſes.

Laſtly, We may conſider from this Text, that as light hath its ſpecial houſes or dwellings, ſo it hath a ſpecial way to its dwelling chalked out (as it were) and appointed by God. And is there not a way, a path, to ſpiritual, to eternal light? The way to theſe lights is Chriſt, He is *the Way, the Truth, and the Life* (John 14. 6.) He is the true, the only way to life, to ſpiritual life and light; yea, he is the way to eternal light and life. Holineſs and faith in Chriſt are the paſſing way to this light, but Chriſt himſelf is the way procuring light. *Without faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe God, and without holineſs no man can ſee God.* Chriſt is the meriting way, faith and holineſs are the qualifying way, leading us to the houſe and dwelling of this light. As ſin and unbelief, or the ſin of Unbelief, is the way leading to eternal darkneſs (O how many go this way to the generation of their fathers, where they ſhall never ſee light, *Pſal* 49. 19.) ſo faith and holineſs, or holy Faith, is the way, the path to everlaſting light and life.

Thus much of the enquity made about *the way and path of light and darkneſs*, which as they are literally to be underſtood of natural light and darkneſs: ſo by them God led *Job*, and in him us, to conſider his diſpoſure of all ſorts of light and darkneſs.

Now, That *Job* might be convinced of his own ignorance in, and inſufficiency for an anſwer to theſe queſtions, God calls him to conſider the late beginning and ſhortneſs of his life, knowledge being gathered up by experience, and length of days affording both time and opportunity for the gathering up of experiences. *Job* was but of yeſterday, in compariſon of the day wherein the interchanges of light and darkneſs were appointed; and therefore (ſhould it be ſuppoſed that days could teach him how theſe things came to paſs, yet) he could not but be much unprepared for a ready and ſatisfying anſwer to theſe queſtions.

Verſ. 21. **Knoweſt thou it, becauſe thou waſt then born? Or becauſe the number of thy days is great?**

The queſtion ſtill proceeds about the natural light and darkneſs.

Knoweſt thou it?] That is, what I laſt put to thee. If thou knoweſt it, how cameſt thou by thy knowledge? *Knoweſt thou it,*

Habeſne cognitum tempus quo naſcebaris. Tygur.

Becauſe thou waſt then born?] The *Tygurine* Tranſlation renders the words thus; *Doſt thou know the time when thou waſt born?* As if the Lord had argued thus with *Job*; Thou doſt not know the hour of thy own Nativity, or when when thou waſt brought forth; how much leſs the way or manner either of their production or conſtitution, which were brought forth and eſtabliſhed many ages and generations before thine. *Doſt thou know when thou waſt born?*

But I rather adhere to our own reading, *Knoweſt thou it, becauſe thou waſt then born?* That is, becauſe thou livedſt then, and haſt lived ever ſince, and ſo haſt gathered up the knowledge of theſe things by obſervation. Surely when I put theſe things in order, when I diſpoſed the way, and the dwelling, the path and place of light and darkneſs, and took them to their bound, thou hadſt not ſo much as a being; how then cameſt thou to this knowledge! I know, and thou muſt needs confeſs, it is not *becauſe thou waſt then born*; waſt thou? The purpoſe of God in this queſtion, as to ſhew that he was before the Creation of the world, even from everlaſting, therefore knew all things; but that *Job* was of little ſtanding in the world, and therefore knew little, eſpecially not thoſe things propoſed. There is a double reading and underſtanding of this verſe.

Annoſiſſimus es. Triduo natus. Si harum rerum vias te noſſe dixeris, item dic te tunc extitiſſe. Chryſ. Olymp.

Some both of the ancients and moderns expound it *ironically*, as if the Lord to humble *Job*, put a ſcorn upon him in ſuch a tenour as this: *Doubtleſs thou knoweſt the dwelling of light, and the place of darkneſs, thou knoweſt when and how I ſetled the motions of the heavens, and the changes which they make here in this lower world; becauſe thou art as old as the heavens, or contemporary with the worlds creation: Thou waſt born ſure, when I did theſe things?* As if the Lord had ſaid plainly and reprovingly, *Wilt thou who (upon the matter) waſt born but three days ago, or yeſterday, wilt thou take upon thee to underſtand my matters, as if thou couldſt number as many years as the whole Creation?* Some holding the ſame ſenſe, render the Text cuttingly enough, thus; If thou ſayeſt thou knoweſt the way of theſe things, thou art beſt alſo to ſay, thou waſt born, or in being, when theſe things were done. *Knoweſt thou it, becauſe thou waſt then born?*

Or becauſe the number of thy days is great? Even as great as ever any ſince *Adam*.

We render both the parts of the Text as a plain Interrogation, *Knoweſt thou it, becauſe thou waſt then born?* yet carrying a cloſe rebuke. As if the Lord had ſaid, *Waſt thou born, when I diſpoſed of theſe things? Is the number of thy days ſo great, that thou art able to reach ſuch knowledge? Surely no; therefore ſit down ſilent, let thy mouth be ſtopt with this conviction, that thou knoweſt not theſe things; and if not theſe, which are before thee, and obvious to thy ſight, light and darkneſs; much leſs art thou able to underſtand my ſecret counſels and hidden purpoſes in the ways of my providence concerning thee: Therefore leave vexing thy ſelf, and commit all thy concernments unto me, reſt in my Will, ſubmit to my Power; for thou art no more able to reach my mind, than thou art able to tell what was done before thou waſt born. Knoweſt thou it, becauſe thou waſt then born? Or becauſe the number of thy days is great?*

Hence Note, Firſt, *God onely, who was before all things, knoweth the way and diſpoſition of all things.*

God, who made all things, was before any thing was made. How great is the number of his years who is eternal! The preſcience or fore-ſight of God paſſeth through the whole ſeries or through all the ſucceſſions of the creature, before it had a being. He who is without beginning, without end, knoweth and *declareth* (as he ſpake of himſelf by the Prophet, *Iſa.* 46. 10.) *the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done.* Man by report may have ſome underſtanding of things which were done before he was born; but till he was born he knew nothing of himſelf, or, of his own knowledge.

Secondly, Note, *Man by reaſon of his ſhort life, knoweth little.*

They who have been but a ſhort time in the world, muſt needs be ſhort in the knowledge of many things; nor can they know much of any thing. Much knowledge is got by much ſtudy and travel. And if the beſt improvers and redeemers of time know but little, at moſt, becauſe they were but lately born, and have had but little time; ſurely they who have trifled away their time ever ſince they were born, muſt needs know very little. We who came into the light ſo lately, cannot get much light about naturals, and how little is it then that we have or can about ſpirituals! But if we miſ-ſpend that inch of time that we have in this world, we may go out of it, knowing as little to purpoſe as we did at all (which was nothing at all) before we came into it.

Thirdly, Note, *They who have been longeſt in the world, have been but a little while in it, and poſſibly have lived much leſs.*

Knoweſt thou it, becauſe thou waſt then born? Waſt thou then born? Surely no, nor till many ages after. *They who number moſt days, number but a few days*; it was but the other day ſince we had not ſo much as a day in this world. *Waſt thou then born?*

Fourthly, Note, *As it is but a little while ſince any man was born into the world, ſo there is no man born, that hath long to ſtay in this world.*

As the number of our days paſt is not great, ſo neither can the number of our days to come be great. Here we have a Text, yea a Map of our Mortality, and a memorial of our ſhort ſtay or quick paſſage through this world. No man hath had many days ſince he came into this world; they that have had moſt, have had but few to eternity. As for the moſt of men, they go out of the world with a very few days upon their backs; and as none have many days, ſo none know how many days they ſhall have. Our life hath theſe two things in it, which ſhould continually humble us, and keep us not onely awake, but watchful:

Firſt, *Our days in this life are few, our life is ſhort in this world.*

Secondly, *Our days are unfixed, as to us, our life is uncertain.* They that reckon upon many days in this life, uſually fall ſhort of their reckoning. 'Tis or ſhould be matter of humiliation to us, that we are ſhort-liv'd, ſhort-breath'd creatures, we who were born into the world but the other day, ſhall in a few days (no man knows how few) paſs out of the world again.

Laſtly, The Lord, by this queſtion, would teach *Job*, that it is he who taketh care of us, and orders both our coming in, and our going out of this world. It is God, by whom the days are numbred, and the years appointed which we have had and are to have here below. And as the days of our life, ſo the condition which we ſhall live in, reſteth and dependeth upon the wiſdom and providence of God. As we took no care of our ſelves, nor could, before we were; ſo all the care we take for our ſelves, while we are, can avail us nothing without God. *Which of us by taking care, can add one cubit to his ſtature* (Matth. 6. 25.) and which of us by taking care, can add one moment to his life, all is in the hand of God. And 'tis our duty to live as free from all troubleſome cares while we are in the world, as we were free from any care at all before we came into the world. It is enough that God hath undertaken for us, and would have us ſit down in his care of us. Chriſt ſaid (*Matth.* 10. 29, 30.) with reſpect to ſufferings, *Fear not, for are not two ſparrows ſold for a farthing? and one of them falleth not to the ground, without your Father.* It is God, who orders and diſpoſeth the life of a ſilly bird, and by him the *very hairs of our head* (worthleſs excretions) *are numbred*; ſurely then, the days of your lives, and all the changes of them, are ordered, diſpoſed, and numbred by him. And if ſo, we ſhould in this ſenſe, be as quiet, and as much at eaſe in our ſpirits, concerning the things of this life, as we were before we lived. Light had its dwelling place appointed, and darkneſs was diſpoſed of without any care of ours; and all our care can neither create light for us, nor remove any darkneſs, that is upon us. Let us only be careful of that duty we are called to, and leave the burden of our cares to him who hath called for them, (*Pſal.* 55. 22.) and would have us reſt in this aſſurance, that *he careth for us* (1 Pet. 5 7.) what cannot he command for us in our places, who commands light and darkneſs to their places; therefore it will be our wiſdom, at once to take as much pains, and as little care as we can.

VERS. 22, 23.

Haſt thou entred into the treaſures of the ſnow? Or haſt thou ſeen the treaſures of the hail,

Which I have reſerved againſt the time of trouble, againſt the day of battel and war?

JOB was laſt queſtioned about the habitation and interchanges of light and darkneſs: Here the Lord queſtions him about thoſe two Meteors, the Snow, the Hail. As if he had ſaid; Poſſibly thou wilt confeſs thou knoweſt not how to anſwer the former queſtion, but perhaps, thou art better skill'd in and acquainted with the matter which I ſhall next propoſe; well then, I ask again,

Verſ. 22. **Haſt thou entred into the treaſures of the ſnow,** &c.

There is a two-fold entring into any place.

Firſt, In body.

Secondly, In mind.

The body of *Job*, nor of any man, never entred into the treaſures here ſpoken of; nor could *Jobs* mind, nor the mind of any man enter fully into them, that is, comprehend how vaſt, how great they are. We had this phraſe, *Haſt thou entred?* at the 16. verſe of this Chapter. There the queſtion was put about his entring into *the ſprings of the ſea*, here about his entring into

אוצר *Theſaurus, Apotheca, promptuarium.*

The treaſures or ſtore-houſes of the ſnow.] The word imports any place or repoſitory where ſtores of any kind are laid up and kept for uſe. The Poet calleth *Bee-hives*, the *Treaſuries of honey*; and ſo may Cellars be called, the Treaſuries of Wine and Oil, *&c.* The Clouds are the Treaſuries, which contain the ſtores or treaſures of Snow and Hail. Thoſe places out of which God is ſaid either to bring good for the uſe and comfort of man, or evil for his hurt and puniſhment, are uſually in Scripture expreſſed by this Word. Thus ſpake *Moſes*, encouraging the people of *Iſrael* to obedience (*Deut.* 28. 12.) *The Lord ſhall open unto thee his good treaſure, the heaven to give thee rain unto thy land in his ſeaſon*, &c. And God hath his juſt and righteous treaſures of wrath, even as men heap up and have their evil and unrighteous treaſures of ſin (*Deut.* 32. 34. *Rom.* 2. 5.) Thus the Apoſtle *James* tells ungodly rich men (*chap.* 5. 3.) *Ye have heaped treaſure together for the laſt days.* Which may be underſtood of their getting their treaſures of riches ſo unrighteouſly in their days, as would prove a heaping together of wrath againſt themſelves in the laſt days or day of the laſt Judgment.

Treaſures of good or evil imply three things:

Firſt, The ſecrecy of what is laid up.

Secondly, The ſafety of it, or that it is ſurely laid up.

Thirdly, That there is ſtore or great quantities of it laid up. A little is not a treaſure. The ſnow may well be called a treaſure in all theſe reſpects; for 'tis ſecretly laid up, no man can ſee it; and 'tis ſafely laid up, none can reach or take it way; there are alſo vaſt quantities or great abundance of it. *Haſt thou entred into the treaſures of the ſnow?*

As if the Lord had ſaid, *Thou O Job, haſt often ſeen the ſnow fall, and thou mayeſt eaſily perceive that it falls out of the clouds; but haſt thou aſcended, or can any aſcend unto thoſe airy regions, where ſnow is generated and laid up, as in a treaſure? If not, ſurely then no man can aſcend to heaven, and there ſearch out or diſcover the myſteries and ſecrets of Wiſdom and Juſtice in my works here below, unleſs by the wings of faith and the light of a ſpiritual underſtanding, which ſits down ſatisfied in this concluſion, that all is wiſely and juſtly done, which God doth, whether in heaven or earth.* To bring *Job* to this acknowledgment, was the deſign and purpoſe of God (as hath been toucht before) in all the queſtions propounded to him in this and the next Chapter.

Haſt thou entred into the treaſures of the ſnow?] What the ſnow is, the nature and the wonders of it, was ſpoken of and ſhewed, at the ſixth verſe of the 37. Chapter.

All that I ſhall further add for the opening of this queſtion, is, that when God ſpeaks here of the *treaſures of ſnow*, we are not to underſtand it, as if he had great heaps of ſnow formally amaſſed up together in any place of the air, as men lay up treaſures of money or corn, or of any other uſeful matter; but the words are an elegant Metaphor, the meaning onely this, God hath abundance of ſnow ready at his will and diſpoſe, at his call and command, whenſoever or whereſoever he is pleaſed to make uſe of it; for 'tis as eaſie with God at any time ro draw out and pour down abundance of ſnow, as if he had infinite ſtore of it kept always by him. He no ſooner ſpeaks the word, but the face of the earth is covered, and its boſom filled with ſilver ſhowers. *Or haſt thou entred into the treaſures of the ſnow?*

Or haſt thou ſeen the treaſures of the hail?] Theſe treaſures of hail are of the ſame nature with thoſe of ſnow, and ſo to be underſtood as the former; but there is a difference in the form of ſnow and hail, though not in the matter out of which ſnow and hail are formed. *Hail* (ſay Naturaliſts) *is a hot vapour, drawn up to the middle region of the air, whence falling, it is frozen in paſſage into leſſer or greater ſtones or grains of ice.* Theſe hail-ſtones are ſometimes poured down ſo great in quantity, and often in ſuch great quantities, that it may well be ſaid, there are treaſures of them. And when the Lord puts this queſtion to *Job*, *Haſt thou ſeen the treaſures of the hail?* he ſeems to allude to thoſe who inſpect the publick treaſure of any Kingdom or Common-wealth, receiving in and iſſuing out the revenues of it, as occaſion requires, and as they are required. As if the Lord had ſaid, *Haſt thou, O Job, like ſome great Lord Treaſurer, taken a view of theſe ſtores? I know thou wilt confeſs thou haſt not ſeen them with thy bodily eyes; I know alſo thou haſt not reacht them clearly with the eye of thy mind or underſtanding; even theſe treaſures are greater than thou canſt imagin.* All that which thou haſt any way ſeen, is leſs than the leaſt part of that which thou haſt not ſeen. *Haſt thou ſeen the treaſures of the hail?*

From both the parts of the verſe, Note Firſt, *God hath ſtore of ſnow and hail.*

Treaſures are not made up with a little. Chriſt ſaith (*Mat.* 12. 35.) *A good man hath a good treaſure in his heart, and an evil man an evil treaſure there*; becauſe the one bringeth forth good things, and the other evil things out of his heart; there both good and evil perſons keep their ſtore of good and evil things, and there good men ſhould have, and evil men always have a great deal in ſtore. For this reaſon alſo God is ſaid *to bring the wind out of his treaſures* (Pſal. 135. 7.) He hath much wind and mighty winds at his diſpoſe. God who hath made all things by his Word or Will, can have as much of every thing as he will.

Secondly, Note, *God hath ſnow and hail ready for his ſervice.*

He hath them as in a Storehouſe or Treaſury. *Pharaoh* built *Treaſure Cities* (Exod. 1. 11.) or *places of receit*, in which he kept either his publick treaſure of Gold and Silver, or his Artillery and Ammunition for War, or great quantities of Corn and Grain againſt a time of need. Chriſt ſaith, *Every ſcribe which is inſtructed unto the Kingdom of Heaven, is like unto a man that is an Houſholder, which bringeth forth out of his treaſure things both new and old* (Matth. 13. 52.) that is, he is not to ſeek, he hath them in a readineſs for uſe, and ſo is himſelf ready to every good word and work, when any have uſe of him for good. We may be ſure God is never to ſeek, nor (as we ſay) out of ſorts, for any kind of means or inſtruments to carry on his ſervice, and to effect any purpoſe of his, whether in wrath againſt the wicked, or in favour of ſuch as fear him.

Again, In that the Lord ſaith, *Haſt thou entred, &c. Haſt thou ſeen, &c.*

Thirdly, Note, *No man knoweth, nor can any man conceive, what treaſures and ſtores, what abundance either of good or evil, of wrath or love God hath.*

(*Pſal.* 90. 11.) *Who knoweth the power of thine anger?* I may ſay alſo, who knoweth the power of thy love? that is, it is not known, no nor knowable, what powers God can put forth either in anger or love. *Eye hath not ſeen* (ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 2. 9.) *nor ear heard, neither have entred into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.* And as the preparations of God for them that love him, ſo his preparations againſt them that hate him, are ſuch as no man hath ſo much as ſeen, much leſs entred into. If the treaſures of ſnow and hail exceed our conceptions, what do the treaſures of fire and brimſtone in the bottomleſs pit? what is the pile of fire and much wood in *Tophet*, which the breath of the Lord, like a ſtream of brimſtone kindleth? (*Iſa.* 30. 33.)

But ſome may ſay, why hath the Lord ſuch vaſt treaſures of ſnow and hail? what are they good for, or to what uſe do they ſerve? What the uſe or uſefulneſs of the ſnow is, as well as the nature of it, was ſhewed in ſome particulars at the ſixth verſe of the 37. Chapter. Here God himſelf declares what uſe he hath of ſnow and hail, or what ſervice he puts them to, in the next words.

Verſ. 23. **Which I have reſerved againſt the time of trouble, againſt the day of battel and war.**

As God hath made nothing in vain, ſo he doth not reſerve or lay up any thing in vain. *The Lord is a God of knowledge* (1 Sam. 2. 3.) *by him*, as our *actions*, ſo his own *are weighed.* This verſe ſhews one uſe or end of his *reſerving ſtores* of ſnow and hail, and that an extraordinary one. The ordinary uſe of ſnow and hail is for ſome good or benefit to men indifferently, as the Sun ſhines and the rain falls, whether good or bad. The uſe here ſpoken of is only for the hurt and puniſhment of bad men. Some reſtrain the antecedent of this relative *which*, in the beginning of the verſe, to the hail onely, becauſe no mention is made (ſay they) in Scripture of any hurt done by ſnow; but of hurt done by hail we read more than once there. Yet as ancient hiſtories ſo latter experiences have reported, that both men and beaſts have been, not only covered, but ſmothered with ſnow, and overwhelmed by floods and great inundations, cauſed by the ſudden melting of it. Therefore I conceive, we may take the word, *which*, referring unto both.

Fundi calamitas grando.

Which I have reſerved, &c.] There are other rendrings of the Hebrew Word by us rendred *reſerved*, all which may center in the ſame ſenſe.

Firſt, The Vulgar Latine ſaith, *Which I have prepared.*

Secondly, The Septuagint, Which I have *ſtored up*, or *which are ſtored up.*

Thirdly, Others thus, Which *I have prohibited or ſtayed*, retained, detained, or with-held; ſo the word is uſed (*Gen.* 20. 9.) *I alſo with-held thee from ſinning againſt me, ſaid God to Abimelech.* Such things as we prepare and ſtore up for ſome ſpecial uſe we detain, ſtop or with-hold from all other uſes, till our occaſions call for that. Thus we may ſay here, the Lord having as it were ſtored up ſnow and hail in his great Magazin or Arſenal, he there detains and reſerves them for the uſes he hath appointed them unto, that is, as it followeth in the Text,

חשך *Per ſin ſiniſtrum prohibere ſignificat.* Merc.

Againſt the time of trouble.] The Word in the Hebrew here tranſlated *time*, notes a ſpecial ſeaſon of time, that which we commonly call *opportunity*, rather than time in general, or as it is a ſpace of ſo many hours days or years. *David* (Pſal. 9. 9.) calls God *a refuge in time of trouble*; that is, the Lord marks and hits the fitteſt time to come in and help his out of trouble. Thus, as they who reſerve things, do it till a ſeaſon of uſing them preſents it ſelf; ſo God reſerves the ſnow and hail till he hath a ſeaſon, an opportunity to uſe them, what that is, himſelf (as we ſaid) expreſſeth in the Text, it is

עת *Tempus opportunum occaſio.*

The time of trouble, or *of ſtraits.*] When trouble comes, ſtraits come, and great troubles reduce us to great ſtraits, and compel us to ſay as that good King *Jehoſophat* did (2 *Chron.* 20.) *We know not what to do.* The Septuagint renders, *The time of the enemies*, that is, when I am reſolved to puniſh or deſtroy my enemies. The word ſignifies both trouble and an enemy, and both may well be comprehended under one word, ſeeing no trouble is more troubleſom, nor can put us to greater ſtraits than the appearance of a powerful enemy; which was *Jehoſophats* caſe, when in a time of trouble he cried out, *We know not what to do.* And this notion of the word, as taken for an enemy, falls in clearly with the latter clauſe of the verſe.

לעת צר *Ad tempus arctum vel Anguſtiæ.*

εἰς ὥραν ἐχθρῶν *in tempus hoſtis.* Sept.

Againſt the day of battle and war.] As if the Lord had ſaid, When my enemies come forth againſt me, theſe are the Weapons, this the Ammunition, which I at any time can, and often do make uſe of in the *day of battel and war.* The word rendred *battel*, ſignifies *to approach* becauſe in a day of battel, enemies or oppoſites approach one to another, and charge each other. The word rendred *war*, ſprings from a root ſignifying to *eat*, becauſe the ſword of war is a great eater, and devours the bodies of men. Now when God breaks forth in anger againſt obſtinate ſinners, his enemies, and brings any ſore and deſtroying judgment upon them, he is ſaid to have war with them, or to make war againſt them: *Who would ſet the briars and thorns in battel againſt me, ſaith the Lord* (Iſa. 27. 4.)

קרב *Prælium.*

מלחמה *à radice* לחם *Veſci.*

So then, Both the time of trouble and the day of battel and war ſpoken of in this Text, are the time and day of the Lords wrath and vengeance declared againſt his implacable and incorrigible enemies: Snow and hail are treaſured up and reſerved *againſt this time of trouble, againſt this day of battel and war.*

Hence Note, Firſt, *God hath a check upon all creatures.*

He reſerves or ſtops them as, and as long as himſelf pleaſeth. He can prohibit ſnow and hail and command them not to come. As they will ſurely come at any time, if he commands them to come, ſo if he commands them not to come till ſuch or ſuch a time, they will not come till then. The ſoveraignty of God is abſolute over the creature. When *Nebuchadnezzars* underſtanding returned to him, then *he praiſed and honoured him that liveth for ever* (Dan. 4. 34.) *whoſe dominion is an everlaſting dominion*, and confeſſed (*verſ.* 35.) that *he doth according to his will in the army of heaven*; that is, the Angels, the Sun, Moon, and Stars, as alſo the Meteors, Snow and Hail, *&c.* all, or any of theſe, are *the army of heaven*, an army raiſed in the heavens; in this army God doth according to his Will, as well as *among the inhabitants of the earth.*

Secondly, Obſerve; *God is very patient, he doth not preſently take vengeance, nor bring trouble, though he be always provided for it, and able to do it.*

As he *retaineth not his anger for ever*, ſo he reſtraineth it long, *becauſe he delighteth in mercy* (Mic. 7. 18.) As mercy moves the Lord ſpeedily to receive repenting ſinners into favour, ſo it prevails with him to be very ſlow in ſending judgments upon thoſe that are impenitent. The Lord reſerved or kept back the waters of the flood a hundred and twenty years from drowning the Old World; though, as they provoked and even dared him to do it every day by their preſumptious ſinnings againſt his warnings, ſo he was able to do it any hour or moment of the day.

Thirdly Note, *Trouble hath its time or ſeaſon.*

There is a time for every purpoſe under the Sun (*Eccl.* 3. 1.) Men have times for their purpoſes, and ſo hath God (much more) for his; he hath his times for quietneſs and times for trouble. And as ſin is the cauſe and ſource of all trouble, ſo when ſin is ripe, trouble is ready. When men have filled up the meaſure of their ſin, then God pours down trouble upon them, or makes it a time of trouble, that they may taſte and ſee, and be convinced how evil and how bitter a thing it is to ſin againſt the Lord. The *Amorites* were full of iniquity, when God ſpake to *Abraham* (Gen. 15. 16.) but their iniquity was not full, and therefore their time of trouble, the time when their Land ſpewed them out to make room for the Children of *Iſrael*, was not till a long time after.

Fourthly Note, *Times of trouble are ſpecially known to, and appointed by God.*

As he reſerves his ſtores of vengeance for thoſe times, ſo he knows thoſe times. Wiſe Princes reſerve ſtores againſt that evil time of war, *&c.* yet when that evil time will be they know not: but to God all times are known. *David* ſaid (*Pſal.* 31. 15.) *My times are in thy hands,* that is, my times of peace and trouble, of joy and ſorrow, are at thy diſpoſe; thou cutteſt out my times, not only as to the length or ſhortneſs of them, but as to the form and condition of them. Now if the Lord diſpoſeth and ordereth our times, what they ſhall be, whether troublous or proſperous, then he muſt needs know what times will be times of trouble.

Fifthly Note; *Preſent impunity is no aſſurance of future indemnity to ſinners.*

Judgment is but reſerved, and the inſtruments of it, *ſnow and hail,* &c. kept up for a while. Prodigals and ſpend-thrifts may boaſt, but the date of the bond will come out, and then an arreſt comes. Let ſinners remember the inſtruments of divine vengeance are only reſerved, they are not broken nor caſt away; and whoſoever are found in ſin, *their ſin* (that is the puniſhment of their ſin) ſooner or later *will find them out* (Numb. 32. 23.) As God ſometimes defers to give out mercy to his faithful people, but never denies it them; ſo he often defers the trouble of the wicked, but never (they continuing to do wickedly) acquits them from it. The Apoſtle *Peter* propheſying of *falſe teachers, who ſhall bring in damnable hereſies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and ſhall bring upon themſelves ſwift deſtruction* (2 Pet. 2. 1.) ſaith of them alſo (*verſ.* 3.) *Whoſe judgment now of a long time lingreth not, and their damnation ſlumbreth not.* Though all ſeems to be well with them at preſent, and hath been ſo a long time, yet their miſery is certain; it neither lingers nor ſlumbers, as to the Lords time, though it may ſeem to have done both, in theirs. The wicked, how long ſoever they eſcape judgment, are not preſerved from it, but only reſerved to it, as followeth in the fourth and ninth verſe of that Chapter. As the fallen angels are *reſerved in everlaſting chains of darkneſs,* (that is, in chains that will hold them faſt enough for ever) *unto the Judgment of the Great Day,* or to the Great Day of Judgment: Which intimates two things concerning the fallen Angels.

Firſt, That their torments are not yet at the greateſt, nor their ſufferings at the higheſt.

Secondly, That their puniſhment is unavoidable, for they can never break nor file off thoſe chains. As I ſay the fallen Angels are ſaid to be reſerved to judgment in chains of darkneſs, at the ſixth verſe of the Epiſtle of *Jude*; ſo at the 13. verſe of the ſame Epiſtle it is ſaid that to ſeducers and falſe teachers (who cauſe many to fall) *The blackneſs of darkneſs is reſerved for ever*; they have it not, but 'tis reſerved for them. Their preſent impunity is no aſſurance of their future indemnity.

From the latter part of the verſe, where the time of trouble is called, *The day of battel and war,*

Obſerve Firſt, *Obſtinate and impenitent ſinners make war (in a manner) with God himſelf.*

Though they ſend not a Herald formally to defie him, yet a reſolved progreſs in ſin (let God ſay what he will, and do what he will) is a real defiance of him, or a bidding him do his worſt. It was ſaid of the old Giants (men of great ſtature) *They were fighters againſt the Gods.* We may ſay, men of all ſtatures, even dwarfs and pigmies for bodily ſtature, raiſe war againſt the great God by preſumptuous ſinning. Did not men make a war upon God by doing evil, God would never make war upon them, by ſending evil. Men are vain when they fall into ſin, but they are worſe than vanity, when they ſtand out in ſinning. *Who* (ſaith the Lord, *Iſa.* 27. 4.) *would ſet briars and thorns againſt me in battel* (none but a mad-man will) *I would go thorow,* or (as the Margin hath it) *march againſt them, I would burn them together.* Can briars and thorns abide contending with God, who is *a conſuming fire*? If God ſend forth an army of his meaneſt and moſt contemptible ſouldiers, flies from the air, lice from the earth, even a mighty *Pharaoh* muſt call for a Treaty, and beg a parly. If he command ſnow and hail, much more lightning and thunder out of the clouds to fight againſt his enemies, how ſoon are they overwhelmed and confounded! 'Tis beſt therefore never to begin this war, and the next beſt is, ſpeedily to ſue for peace.

Gigantes θεομάχοι dicti.

Secondly, Obſerve, *A day of battel and war is eminently a time of trouble.*

There may be trouble where there is no war, but where war is, there cannot but be trouble. War or the ſword, is not only one of thoſe four ſore judgments, but the firſt of the four, with which God threatned *Jeruſalem*, to the cutting off or utter deſtruction of man and beaſt (*Ezek.* 14 8.) *Every battel of the warrier is with confuſed noiſe, and garments rolled in blood* (Iſa. 9 5.) Confuſed noiſes are the muſick of a battel, and bloody garments the bravery of it; then prize peace, pray for peace, *That* (as the Apoſtle directs, 2 *Theſ.* 3. 16.) *The Lord of Peace himſelf would give us peace always by all means.* For though that may be doubted and queried, which ſome have fully aſſerted, That the moſt unequal peace is to be preferred before the juſteſt war; yet the juſteſt war may bring, though peace and honour at laſt, yet in the mean time innumerable troubles and evils with it.

Thirdly, Note, *God can make any creature hurtful and afflictive to us.*

Snow is of great uſe, and ſerves much to advance the fruitfulneſs of the earth, and is joyned with rain in that effect, (*Iſa.* 55. 10.) *As the rain cometh down, and the ſnow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud,* &c. (by the concurrent bleſſing of God) *So, &c.* Snow as well as rain is a bleſſing to the earth, not an affliction; yea ſnow is uſed by ſome as a delicacy to cool their drink in hot Countries and ſeaſons; which uſe of it was firſt found out by that monſter of men *Nero,* ſaith *Pliny,* who thus declaims and proteſts againſt his intemperance; *O the prodigies of luxury! ſome drink ſnow, others ice, and ſo turn the puniſhments of the mountains* (ſo he calls ſnow and ice as to preſent ſenſe) *into their own pleaſure, or to ſerve their voluptuouſneſs.* Now though the ſnow, according to Gods appointment be profitable to the earth, and is uſed by ſome men to ſerve their pleaſures and pleaſe their ſenſual appetite, yet God can make a ſcourge of it, if he pleaſeth, and deſtroy both our profits and pleaſures by it. He can afflict us, not onely with ſtrong and ſtormy winds, not only with dreadful thunder and lightning, but with ſnow, which is ſoft as wool, and hail-ſtones, which uſually children ſport and play with. He hath deſtroyed ſinners not only by lions and bears, and ſuch like ravenous beaſts, but with frogs and mice, with lice and locuſts, as was toucht before. There are two things which ſhew the mighty power of God in the Creature.

Heu prodigia ventris! Hi nivem illi glaciem potant, pœnaſque montium in voluptatem gulæ vertunt. Plin. l. 19. c. 4. l. 31. c. 3.

Firſt, That he can make the moſt devouring and deſtructive creatures harmleſs and hurtleſs to us. Thus he ſtopt the fiery furnace from ſo much as ſcinging a hair, or impreſſing the leaſt ſmell of burning upon thoſe three worthies (*Dan.* 3. 27.) He alſo ſhut the mouths of thoſe hungry Lions, not only from tearing and totally devouring, but from touching *Daniel* to hurt him (*chap.* 6. 22.)

Secondly, That he can make the moſt harmleſs and hurtleſs creatures to hurt us. How powerful is God, who can cruſh the ſtrongeſt man on earth by the weakeſt of his creatures! There was much of God in it, that ſome of his people of old, *through faith, out of weakneſs were made ſtrong, waxed valiant* (being 'tis like before, of a fearful ſpirit) *in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens* (Heb. 11. 33, 34.) And is there not much of God in it, when any ſort of creatures weak, and inconſiderable in themſelves, are armed by him to conflict with and get the victory over his ſtrongeſt and proudeſt enemies!

Fourthly, Note, *God can make a time of trouble terrible.*

He hath a reſerve of ſnow and hail in his treaſury againſt the time of trouble, againſt the day of battel and war. As God can make a day of trouble comfortable to his ſervants; he can be *a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempeſt; as rivers of water in a dry place, and as the ſhadow of a great rock in a weary land* (Iſa. 32. 2.) All which metaphors ſignifie one and the ſame thing, that Chriſt will be comfortable to his people either immediately or by proviſion of means in the moſt troubleſome times, there intended by wind and tempeſt, by a dry place and a weary land. And that he had been all this to his in ſuch a day, the ſame prophet aſſures us (*chap.* 25. 4.) *Thou haſt been a ſtrength to the poor, a ſtrength to the needy in his diſtreſs, a refuge from the ſtorm, a ſhadow from the heat, when the blaſt of the terrible ones is as a ſtorm againſt the wall.* The Hiſtory of the taking of *Jeruſalem* by the *Babylonians*, ſet down by *Jeremy*, tells us, that he was fully heard and anſwered, when he prayed (*chap,* 17. 17.) *Be not thou a terror to me: thou art my hope in the day of evil. Jeremy* found the Lord very favourable to him, and giving him favour in the eyes of the enemy, when that evil day, the day of battel and war came upon *Jeruſalem.* Thus ſometimes God *ſtayeth his rough wind in the day of the Eaſt-wind* (Iſa. 27. 8.) that is, he forbeareth to ſhew himſelf rough, harſh or grievous to his people, when great troubles are otherwiſe upon them, noted by the Eaſt-wind, which naturally is a blaſting, bluſtring, and boiſterous wind; and therefore a day of great trouble is elegantly expreſſed or called, *a day of the Eaſt-wind.* When the Pſalmiſt had deſcribed the fained humiliations of the people of *Iſrael* in the Wilderneſs, which he calls their *flattering God with their lips, and lying unto him with their tongues*; This was enough to provoke God to make their day of trouble terrible unto them, yet (ſaith that Scripture) *He being full of compaſſion, forgave their iniquity, and deſtroyed them not*; *yea many a time turned he his anger away, and did not ſtir up all his wrath* (Pſal. 78. 38.) Though they all ſtirred him to wrath, yet he did not ſtir up all his wrath (when it was worſt with them) that would have made it a terrible day indeed. This is the Lords way with his people in an evil day.

But when it is a day of battel and war with the wicked world, or with the wicked of the world, he opens his treaſures of wrath, and will let them ſee and feel what ſtores of ſnow and hail he hath reſerved againſt that time. And hence it is, that ſuch are repreſented in the day of the Lord, *going into the clifts of the rocks and into the tops of the ragged rocks for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his Majeſty, when he ariſeth to ſhake terribly the earth* (Iſa. 3. 21.)

Laſtly, Note, *Snow and hail are Gods weapons and artillery, with which he ſometimes fights againſt ſinful man.*

The Lord of Hoſts hath ſuch inſtruments of war in his Armory, as no Prince can produce nor make uſe of, either to offend his enemies, or to defend himſelf. An ancient Poet ſaid of *Theodoſius* the Emperour, *O thou greatly beloved of God, for whom the heavens fight, and at the ſound of whoſe trumpets the winds, the confederate winds, preſent their ſervice and aſſiſtance.* The *Thundering Legion* in the Army of *Aurelius* the Emperor, is famous in the Church Hiſtory, and hath been mentioned before, upon other paſſages of this Book, together with the occaſion of that honourable Title beſtowed upon them in that age. The Scriptures give frequent inſtances of the Lords avenging himſelf upon his and his peoples enemies, by ſtorms of hail. This was one of the ten grievous plagues which God ſent upon *Pharaoh* and the Land of *Egypt* (Exod. 9. 17, 18.) *As yet exalteſt thou thy ſelf againſt my people, that thou wilt not let them go; behold, to morrow about this time I will cauſe it to rain a very grievous hail, ſuch as hath not been in Egypt ſince the foundation thereof, and until now.* It was with hail-ſtones that God fought againſt and diſcomfited the Army of five confederate Kings in the days of *Joſhua* (Joſh. 10. 11.) *The Lord caſt great ſtones from heaven upon them, and they died, they were more which died with the hail-ſtones, than they whom the children of Iſrael ſlew with the ſword.* There are two things ſingular and extraordinary, if not miraculous in this paſſage of providence: Firſt, The magnitude and weight of theſe hail ſtones, together with the violence of their motion was ſuch, that like bullets diſcharged from Canon or great Ordnance, they ſlew them out-right or dead on the place, upon whom they fell. Secondly, That the *Iſraelites,* being in purſuit of theſe *Canaanites*, and doubtleſs mixed with them (as in a battel, where they come to handy ſtroaks, it muſt needs be) that yet none of them were hurt by the hail ſtones, but the *Canaanites* onely. God, who, to ſhew his goodneſs, cauſeth his Sun to ſhine and his rain to fall indifferently upon the good and upon the bad, knows how, that he may ſhew his Juſtice, to cauſe his hail to fall diſtinctly upon the bad, and not upon the good. *Deborah* ſaith in her ſong (*Judg.* 5. 20.) *The ſtars in their courſes fought againſt Siſera.* It is reported by *Joſephus*, deſcribing this battel, that as ſoon as the armies joyned battel, God ſent a violent ſhower of hail, which (ſay ſome) being naturally cauſed by the influences of the ſtars or heavenly bodies, the ſtars may be ſaid to have fought in their courſes, like ſouldiers drawn up *in battalia* againſt *Siſera* and his army. And thus by great thunder the Lord diſcomfited the hoſt of the *Philiſtins* in the days of *Samuel*, (1 *Sam.* 7. 10.) The prophet gives out ſeveral threatnings under the notion of hail (*Iſa.* 28. 27. *chap.* 30. 30.) and ſo doth that laſt propheſie (*Rev.* 16. 21.) *And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every ſtone about the weight of a talent.* All which places, though not taken literally and properly, but metaphorically and ſymbolically for great and ſore judgments of one kind or other, yet are a clear proof that proper hail ſtones have ſometimes been the inſtruments of Gods foreſt revenge upon his hardned enemies.

O nimium dilecte dei, cui militat æther. Et conjurati veniunt ad claſſica venti. Claudian. Euſeb. Eccl. Hiſt. l. 5. c. 5.

Joſeph. l. 5. *Antiquit. Judaicarum.* c. 6.

So then, ſometimes God doth, as it were, pitch his Military Tent or Royal Pavilion in the Air, there he ſeems to muſter his Army, to bring forth his weapons, and from thence to confound his foes. God uſeth the clouds both as his ſhield to protect his people (*Exod.* 14. 19.) and as his bow to ſhoot at and wound the wicked. From thence (*Pſal.* 11. 6.) *He rains upon the wicked, ſnares, fire and brimſtone, and an horrible tempeſt: this ſhall be the portion of their cup*, That is, they ſhall have nothing elſe in their cup to drink but this, and of this they ſhall drink deep, even *the very dregs, and wring them out* (Pſal. 75. 8.) A heathen Poet called the Clouds the Amorites or Arcenals of Heaven; and the Scripture, both in this Text of *Job*, and in ſeveral other places, beſides thoſe which have been mentioned, ſheweth what Ammunition, what inſtruments, of the Lords fierce anger and fiery indignation are ſtored, laid up, or reſerved there *againſt the time of trouble, againſt the day of battel and war* with the rebellious world.

Armamentaria Cœli Juven. Satyr. 15.

Now, Foraſmuch as ſnow and hail, *&c.* are at once the Lords Hoſt and his Arms, by which he fights againſt the wicked, we may take notice of theſe five following inferences for the help of our meditations about this matter, and to make all that hath been already held forth from theſe two verſes, more profitable to us.

Firſt, *God needeth not borrow help from man on earth, when he would be avenged on his enemies.*

If he doth but ſpeak the word and declare his will, it is enough; The heavens, the clouds of heaven will bring him Armies and Arms without number. He that covers the earth a foot deep with ſnow, can cover all (as we ſay) over head and ears with it. He that pours down ſhowrs of hail, no bigger than a peaſe, can ſend it of a talent weight, as 'tis expreſſed, (*Rev.* 16. 21.) God cannot want Armies at any time, for his day of battel and war, who can make any thing ſerve him effectively as an Army; and therefore they who being in diſtreſs ſee no more help in man, than *David*, when he ſaid (*Pſal.* 142. 4.) *I looked on my right hand, and behold, but there was no man that would know me* (how well ſoever I was known to him) *refuge failed me, there was no man that cared for my ſoul*; that is, that regarded what became of me: I was left at ſix and ſevens, to ſink or ſwim, to ſhift for my ſelf as well as I could: they, I ſay, who are thus diſtreſſed, having an intereſt in God, need not deſpair nor deſpond, ſeeing the Lord can charge or preſs any creature for our aid and help, yea can help us without the aid of any creature.

Secondly, *Take heed of provoking God, who hath ſuch Arms and Armies always at command.*

'Tis dangerous medling with a prepared enemy. God can never be ſurpriſed nor taken unprovided. As *the wicked bend their bow, and make ready their arrow upon the ſtring, that they may privily ſhoot at the upright in heart* (Pſal. 11. 2.) So the Lord hath his bow always bent, and his arrow made ready upon the ſtring, openly to ſhoot at the falſe in heart. Though it be uſually long before he takes revenge, yet 'tis not becauſe he is unready and cannot, but becauſe patient, and will not take it ſooner. He is always able to avenge himſelf, not onely ſpeedily, but preſently. As he will do what he hath ſpoken, ſo he can do what he will with a word ſpeaking.

Thirdly, *Would we not fear ſnow or hail, or any miſſive weapon of heaven, then let us get God to be our friend, in whoſe hand, and at whoſe command they are.*

No creature moves but by direction from God; and ſurely he will never direct them to the hurt, though often to the affliction and correction of thoſe whom he loves. As ſuch are in league with the ſtones of the field, and the beaſts of the field are at peace with them; ſo alſo are the ſtars of heaven, and all the meteors (ſnow and hail, &c.) in the air.

Fourthly, *God will charge them with hardneſs of heart and impenitency, who humble not themſelves when he fights againſt them with theſe weapons.*

Every judiciary ſhower of hail, though it break not our heads, yet it ſhould break our hearts. That hail which doth any hurt to the works of our hands, ſhould work good upon our hearts. And therefore the Lord complained when his hail-ſtones left no more ſign or impreſſion upon his peoples hearts than they did upon a rock or ſtone (*Hag.* 2. 17.) *I ſmote you with blaſting and with mildew, and with hail, in all your labours, yet ye turned not to me, ſaith the Lord.* This Scripture teacheth us two uſeful leſſons,

Firſt, When God ſmites any thing that is ours, or belongs to us, he ſmites us. If our fields or gardens be ſmitten, we are ſmitten.

Secondly, God expects we ſhould, and even wonders, if we do not turn upon ſuch ſmitings. He looks upon them as hardned ſinners, who melt not by every afflictive fall of hail from heaven. They are even reſolved to be bad, who mind not being good or better, when evils fall upon either them or theirs.

Fifthly, *Haſten to make peace with God, when he gives ſigns and alarums of war.*

God had no ſooner ſaid to *Iſrael* (Amos 4. 12.) *Therefore*, (that is, becauſe thou haſt not taken the alarum by former judgment, therefore) *thus will I do unto thee, O Iſrael*, that is, I will bring ſome ſorer judgment upon thee than any of thoſe already brought) but he adds, *and becauſe I will do this unto thee* (unleſs prevented by ſpeedy repentance) *prepare to meet thy God, O Iſrael.* As if God had ſaid, Conſider (as Chriſt adviſeth on another occaſion, *Luke* 14. 31.) whether thou art able with thy ten thouſand to meet me with my twenty thouſand (all the power of man is not onely leſs by half, as ten thouſand to twenty thouſand, but indeed nothing at all to the power of God) and if not, as I know thou art not, then I counſel thee, while I onely tell thee *I will do thus unto thee*, but am yet a great way off (poſſibly from coming to do it) prepare to meet me, ſend an Embaſſage of prayers and tears, and deſire conditions of peace. It will be too late to call for a compoſition, or to think of a treaty, when the trumpets have ſounded, and the battel is joyned. If we get not (through Chriſt) our peace made before the day of battel and war in this world, I mean before temporal judgments are actually come upon us, and have taken hold of us, we may ſmart ſoundly before we have our peace, and pay dearly for it, before we have it: But if we prepare not to meet God, and get our peace made through Chriſt, before the day of battel and war in the next world, I mean before Death and the Eternal Judgment come upon us, we ſhall not onely ſmart ſoundly and pay dearly for that wretched neglect of our ſeaſon, but muſt periſh for ever, under an impoſſibility of having our peace made. The Day of Gods battel and war with the wicked in the next world, is Eternity. Here in this world God ſaith to the worſt of ſinners, to him that is but briars and thorns (*Iſa.* 27. 5.) *Let him take hold of my ſtrength* (that is, of my Grace, or of my Son, which are my ſtrength to ſave ſinners) *that he may make peace with me, and* (I aſſure him his aſſay ſhall not be in vain) *he ſhall make peace with me*; I am no inexorable God, yea, I am eaſie to be intreated, if treated with, when, and in whom, and in ſuch a way as I have offered my ſelf to ſinners, to be treated with for peace. But if any think to make peace with God in any other way than faith and repentance, by any other perſon than Chriſt Jeſus, at any other time than the time of this life, we muſt receive another Goſpel, before we can give them any (aſſurance ſhall I ſay, or) the leaſt ſhadow of a hope that they ſhall do ſo.

VERS. 24, 25, 26, 27.

By what way is the light parted? which ſcattereth the eaſt-wind upon the earth?
Who hath divided a water-courſe for the over-flowing of waters? or a way for the lightning of thunder?
To cauſe it to rain on the earth; where no man is; on the wilderneſs, wherein there is no man?
To ſatiſfie the deſolate and waſte ground, and to cauſe the bud of the tender herb to ſpring forth?

THE Lord ſtill proceeds by way of interrogatory with *Job*. In this Context he puts many queſtions,

Firſt, About the Light.
Secondly, The Wind.
Thirdly, The Waters.
Fourthly, The Thunder.

Verſ. 24. **By what way is the light parted?**

Job was queſtioned at the 19. verſe concerning the light, here the queſtion is renewed or repeated, yet ſurely no needleſs repetition.

There are many things conſiderable in the light, chiefly theſe four:

Firſt, The Nature of it.
Secondly, The Original or Spring of it.
Thirdly, The Communications or Effuſions of it.
Fourthly, The Effects of it, or what it works.

The former two were chiefly intended in the former queſtion at the 19. verſe, namely, the Nature of the Light and the Original of it; here the Lord enquires of *Job* about the Communications or Effuſions of light, as alſo about the Effects of it, which are the two latter.

As theſe things, both ſingly conſidered and laid together, are an argument of the divine power and providence, ſo of mans weakneſs and ignorance, who as he is not able to withſtand them, ſo not to underſtand fully what they are, or how cauſed, as this queſtion doth imply.

By what way is the light parted?

The word which we tranſlate *parted*, ſignifies to put things into diſtinct portions. As if the Lord did give out ſeveral portions of light to ſeveral parts of earth, or upon ſeveral occaſions. By what way or means (ſaith he) is this done? There is a twofold interpretation concerning the light:

Qua parte lux fulguris erumpat. Tygur. *Qua parte erumpat ignis.* Bez. Rab. Levi.

Firſt, Some underſtand it of the *lightning*, ſo the *Tygurine* Tranſlation, *In what part doth the light of the lightning break forth?* Mr. *Beza* renders, *By what way doth the fire break out?* Lightning breaks out like fire. One of the ancient Rabbins calls the light here intended, *A dry and hot exhalation, which* (ſaith he) *is therefore called light, or receives the name of light, becauſe it doth eaſily conceive light, or take fire as tinder and touchwood*; ſuch a kind of light is the lightning. And the lightnings come often from the Eaſt, Chriſt aſſures us, while he ſaith (*Matth.* 24. 27.) *As the lightning coming out of the Eaſt, and ſhineth even unto the Weſt, ſo ſhall the coming of the Son of man be.* Taking light for lightning, the ſenſe is, *Knoweſt thou how it comes to paſs that the lightning ſhould ſo forcibly break out of the cloud in a thunder-ſtorm and raiſing the Eaſtwind, make ſuch a hurry, ſuch a tempeſtuous confuſion in the air, by diverting the courſe of that ſtrong Wind, and ſuddenly ſcattering it all abroad into the ſeveral corners of the World? Knoweſt thou how theſe mighty commotions are made, unleſs by me, by my power and orders?* Some inſiſt much upon this Interpretation, taking the light for the lightning, of which the Lord ſpeaks expreſly afterwards, at the 35. verſe of this Chapter, and of which *Elihu* had ſpoken before in the 37. Chapter.

Qua ratione fiunt coruſcationes fulgura procellæ ventorum concertationes, niſi per me? Jun.

Our Tranſlators and many others take light here ſtrictly for the light of the Sun, *Knoweſt thou by what way the light is parted?* Either from the clouds, or from the darkneſs; Knoweſt thou how the light is parted into ſeveral Climates and Coaſts of the World? This parting of the light may be conſidered,

Firſt, As there is a new proportion of the light provided every day; for, as it was ſhewed before, we never have the light two days together in the ſame ſtate, but more or leſs, ſhorter or longer. The light is longer in one part of the year every day, and ſhorter in another part of the year every day. This change or parting of the light is a glorious work of God, who ſo divides the light according to the time of the year, that every day hath a portion, and yet no day hath the ſame portion.

Poteſt de luce proprie accipi quatenus illa ſic in tempeſtate dividitur ut in aliqua cœli nubes luceant, & lux ſolis emicet, in aliis denſis tegatur nubibus. Sculc.

Secondly, The light may be ſaid to be parted by the power of God at the ſame time, or upon the ſame day, while in one Coaſt it is cloudy and in another clear; yea within our own view we may behold the Sun ſhine in one place and not in another. Some judg this the moſt profitable ſenſe, becauſe ſo there is a clearing of this Text from what went before. Nor is it an eaſie thing, taking this meaning of the words, to anſwer the Queſtion here put to *Job*. How the Lord parts the light in the ſame day and at the ſame time in our view, making it ſhine in one place and not in another. But whether we underſtand the Text of parting light from darkneſs at the Sun riſing, or of parting the light at any time of the day after the Sun is riſen, the matter is not of much importance. *By what way is the light parted?*

Having obſerved ſeveral things about the light (*Verſ.* 12.) I ſhall only give theſe two brief notes from the words under hand.

> Firſt, *God diſpoſeth and diſpenſes the light where he willeth.*

The light is a moſt ſweet, pleaſant creature to behold, and the Lord takes the guidance of it into his own hand, he parts it, he proportions it out as himſelf pleaſeth. And as this is true of aerial light, ſo of a better light than that which ſhines in the air, (though that be an excellent light) the light of the Goſpel. The work of God is as wonderful, I may ſay, much more wonderful in parting and dividing, in diſtributing and proportioning the light of the Goſpel, then it is in diſtributing and giving forth the light of the Sun. Doth he not at the ſame time cauſe that light to ſhine upon one place, while it is darkneſs in another? As he made aereal darkneſs to be a plague in the Land of *Egypt*, while it was light in *Goſhen*, ſo he leaves many places under ſpiritual darkneſs, while others enjoy that bleſſed light, in a clear and conſtant ſhining. And as the *Egyptians* with all their learning, could not tell the way how God parted the light then, that it ſhould be light in *Goſhen*, and darkneſs to feeling, or darkneſs that might be felt in all the other parts of *Egypt*; ſo who can give a reaſon of that diſtribution of Goſpel light which God makes to ſome parts of the world, while other parts of it ſit in darkneſs and in the very ſhadow of death?

Secondly, In that the Lord puts the Queſtion to *Job*, *Knoweſt thou*, &c. (for we are ſtill to repeat thoſe words in theſe Queſtions, though not expreſt, *Knoweſt thou?*) That is, thou knoweſt not.

> Hence Note; *Man is much in the dark about the light, and how God diſtributeth, diſpoſeth, and diſpenſeth forth the light.*

Thoſe things that are clear to our ſenſe, are often very obſcure to our underſtanding. Nothing more clear to ſenſe, than that the light is parted; yet what is more obſcure than this, in what way, and how the light is parted. And as this parting of the light is marvellous, ſo alſo in the effect of it, held out in the latter part of the Verſe,

Which ſcattereth the Eaſt-wind upon the Earth.

קָדִים *Ventum Orientalem ſeu eurum ſubſolanum ſignificat & per ſynecdochen hic omnem ventum.* Sanct. *Eurum ventum vehementiſſimum loco omnium ponit.* Sculc. *Sol dicitur ventorum pater & eurus dicitur ſubſolanus & ἀπηλιώτης quod ſit ſub regimine ſolis.*

Some becauſe the relative [*Which*] is not expreſſed in the Original, take theſe words as a diſtinct Queſtion, *Knoweſt thou by what way the light is parted? And* (taking up that again) *by what way he ſcattereth the Eaſt-wind upon the Earth?* But I ſhall ſpeak of theſe words, as intending this effect of light, the *ſcattering the Eaſt-wind*. The Hebrew Word ſignifies ſtrictly the Eaſtern part of the World, the Sun-riſing, and ſo the *Eaſt-Wind*, which riſeth often with the Sun, or upon which the Sun hath a great command, and may be here put ſynecdochically for all the Winds. Naturaliſts tell us that lightning (which was the firſt interpretation) doth raiſe the Eaſt-wind, or cauſeth it to blow; and that the light of the Sun, or the Sun riſing, hath alſo an influence upon the wind, or raiſeth the Eaſt-wind, is both the obſervation of Naturaliſts and an aſſertion which hath ground in Scripture. The Sun is by ſome called, *The Father of the Winds*, and eſpecially of the Eaſt-wind; and the Eaſt-wind hath denominations both in the Greek and Latin Tongue (as the Margin ſhews) implying that it is much (as it were) under the dominion of the Sun. It is ſaid (*Jonah* 4. 8.) that, *The Lord at the Sun-riſing commanded or prepared a vehement Eaſt-wind to blow upon the head of* Jonah. As if the riſing of the Sun had ſome power in the bringing the Eaſt-wind; and without all doubt the Eaſt-wind (as one elegantly deſcribes it) at that time by Gods Call, fought under the banner of the Sun, and was confederate with him for the affliction of that angry Prophet *Jonah*. The Eaſt-wind is a vehement wind, a drying wind, a ſcorching wind. (*Exod.* 14. 21.) When the Lord led the people of *Iſrael* through the Red Sea, it is ſaid, *He commanded a ſtrong Eaſt wind to blow all night, and divided the Sea.* The Eaſt-wind it ſeems, was the moſt proper inſtrument to ſerve the Providence of God, in dividing or ſcattering, and then in gathering the waters of the Sea; as here the light is ſaid to ſcatter the Eaſt-wind upon the Earth. Mr. *Broughton* renders theſe words, as expreſſing the natural aptitude of the wind to ſpread it ſelf, thus, *And which way the Eaſt-wind ſcattereth it ſelf over the Earth?* That is, which way it will ſcatter, or in what Country it will blow? The winds are of a moſt diffuſive nature, they ſcatter themſelves, they diſperſe, and paſs through the air with much violence and vehemence. But I ſhall not ſtay upon that. The main ſcope and purpoſe of the Lord in putting this queſtion being only this, To ſhew, that as the light (take it either for the lightning, or for the light of the Sun) is in the hands of God; ſo alſo, that the wind, even the Eaſt-wind, is at his diſpoſe too.

> Hence Note; *Winds, the moſt vehement and violent winds, are under the power of God.*

He who commands the light, commands the winds (*Prov.* 30.4.) *He gathereth the winds in his fiſt*, he comprehends them all in his hand. 'Tis a wonderful expreſſion of the power of God, that he hath the loſe winds as faſt as a man hath that which he gripes in his fiſt, and 'tis at the opening of his hand that they paſs forth. Whatever natural cauſes there are of the winds, we muſt look beyond them all, at the power of God, as the cauſe reigning over all other cauſes. Chriſt (*John* 3.) treating with *Nicodemus* about that moſt ſpiritual Doctrin of Regeneration, or the New Birth, to ſhew how free an agent the Spirit of God is in it, compares his workings to that of the Wind, of which he ſaith, (*Verſ.* 8.) *The wind bloweth where it liſteth*; which yet we are not to underſtand, as if the winds did blow at random, or were carried out by their own power and impreſſion: Chriſt ſpeaks of the wind there, as if it had a will, or wilfulneſs, rather; but we are to underſtand it thus, *The wind bloweth where it liſteth*, for any thing man can do or ſay to it; let man ſay what he will, let man do what he can, the wind blows where it liſteth. The wind is not under the controul or command of any man, no not of the mightieſt Prince on Earth; yet it bloweth not abſolutely where it ſelf, but where God liſteth. The power and skill of all the men in the World, cannot alter or controul the wind. Some indeed have traded with Witches for winds, as if they had the command of them; yet know it is only the Lords chuſing their deluſions, or his giving them up to thoſe deluſions and wickedneſſes, which their hearts chuſe, if at any time any gain a breath of wind, by trading with them. We ſhould only look by faith, and trade with him by prayer, for the managing and diſpoſing of the winds; it is he that ſcattereth the Eaſt-wind over the Earth. *Knoweſt thou how the Eaſt-winds are ſcattered over the Earth*, or, *by what way the Lord ſcattereth the Eaſt-wind over the Earth?*

Hence Note; Secondly, *The way of the Wind is a ſecret to man, as well as the way of the Light.*

The Lord Chriſt ſheweth mans ignorance, with reſpect to the way of the wind (*John* 3.8.) *Thou heareſt the ſound thereof, but thou knoweſt not whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth.* Which we are not to underſtand, as if, when a man perceives the wind to blow, he did not know whence, or out of what part of the compaſs it comes, or towards what point it goes: We know when it comes from the Eaſt; and when it comes from thence, we know it goeth to the Weſt; and ſo when it comes from the North, and goes to the South: but we know not whence it comes, and whither it goes, as to the way of it; we know not how it comes to paſs, or is brought about. That's done by the ſole command of the Lord, who hath the whole Creation at his beck, and whoſe word every creature obeys, moving and going where and when he himſelf gives order. It is the Lord, who by the light (or by what means ſeems good unto him) ſcattereth the *Eaſt-wind* (or any other wind) *upon the Earth*. The next queſtion concerns the waters.

Verſ. 25. **Who hath divided a Water-courſe for the over-flowing of waters?**

The former Queſtion was about the parting of the Light; here we have a Queſtion about the Diviſion of the Waters.

Who hath divided, &c.] The Hebrew Word for a River, comes from this Root, and ſo alſo doth the Latin Word *Pelagus*, which ſignifieth the Sea, out of which Rivers are derived and divided into the Land. From this word alſo the Elder or Firſt-born Son of *Eber* was called *Peleg* (Gen. 10.25.) and the Text gives us the reaſon why he was ſo called, *For* (ſaith *Moſes*) *in his days the Earth was divided*; That is, it was diſtinguiſhed into ſeveral Coaſts and Countries, and by ſeveral Names, which before, lay all as it were in one Common. There have been too many hurtful diviſions in the Earth, that is, of men on Earth, ever ſince (in another ſenſe) and are at this day: It is ſad to ſee the ſpirits, opinions, and practices of men ſo much divided; but it was and is uſeful, to have both the ſoil of the Earth, and the body of the Water divided. Here we have the diviſion of the Waters.

Quis dedit imbri vehementiſſimo curſum. Vulg.

פלג *Rivus, Pelagus nomen habet quod ex illo dividantur & deriventur flumina.*

Who hath divided a Water-courſe for the over-flowing of Waters?

There is a two-fold diviſion of water. We read of the former in the deſcription of the Creation (*Gen.* 1.7.) where the Lord *divided the waters which were under the firmament, from the waters that were above the firmament, and it was ſo.* The diviſion here intended is of the waters above; there the Lord makes a diviſion of the waters, and gives them their courſes. The word rendred *Water-courſes* ſignifies to aſcend, or to be on high, becauſe the courſe of the water is from above, or from on high; Water moves always from a higher place. Water naturally floweth downward; 'Tis a heavy body, and cannot aſcend naturally; therefore the courſe of the water is from above. As men make Aqueducts, Water-courſes, or Conveyances for water by artificial pipes of Lead or Wood (as we ſee in this City) or by Channels cut in the Earth; ſo the Lord hath his Water-courſes above, he hath his Pipes, his Channels in the Clouds. *Who hath divided a Water-courſe*

תעלה *Ductus aquæ.*

Quis niſi ego curſum dat aquis è cælo defluentibus, veluti per canales ab hominibus manufactos? Homines ſuos Aquaductus per terram efficiunt, ſed Deus per aerem & nubem diſtribuit. Merc.

For the overflowing of waters?] The Word ſignifies a great inundation, or a pouring forth of water, a Chataract. *Moſes* deſcribing the Deluge, ſaith (*Gen.* 7.11.) *The windows of Heaven were opened.* And when at any time it rains, it may be ſaid, the Lord in ſome degree opens the windows of Heaven. We are not to underſtand (as was toucht before) this over-flowing of water, of the waters flowing upon the Earth, but of the waters flowing from Heaven down upon the Earth; for the Lord ſpeaks not of Floods on Earth to deſtroy, but of plentiful and ſeaſonable rain, to nouriſh the fruits of the Earth, as is clear from the 27. Verſe. Now ſaith the Lord, *Who hath divided a Water-courſe for theſe waters?* That they might not come down, as I may ſay, in a Full-Sea, but as by or in pipes and channels, to refreſh the Earth. The Lord hath his Water-works in Heaven, as men have theirs on Earth. This elegant Metaphor ſhadows out that certain Rule or Law of Nature which the Lord hath given thoſe waters above, when they are commanded to flow down for the uſe and ſervice of Man and Beaſt here below. The Lord enquires of *Job* for the Author of theſe upper Water-works, *Who hath divided a Water-courſe for the over-flowing of Waters?*

Inundationem aquarum non terreſtrium, ſed &c. Merc.

Hence Note; *God makes a diviſion of his Stores and treaſures of water in the Clouds, as himſelf pleaſeth; or the courſe of the water is directed by God, where to fall, and when.*

As God hath divided the Earth to the Sons of men (*Acts* 17.26.) as he hath determined their times, and the bounds of their habitation; ſo he hath alſo divided the waters for the Earth, the waters that are above; and he proportions them according to his own will (*Amos* 4.7.) *I cauſed it to rain upon one City, and I cauſed it not to rain upon another.* God is ſo good, that uſually he cauſeth his rain *to fall upon the juſt and upon the unjuſt* (Matth. 5.44.) But he can cauſe the rain to fall diſtinguiſhingly, and not promiſcuouſly. It was the ſaying of a Heathen in his fourth Book, concerning the beſtowing of benefits (*Chap.* 28.) *The gods give many benefits to unthankful perſons: they provided them for the good, but they fall to the ſhare of the bad, becauſe it is impoſſible to divide them.* And inſtancing in rain, he ſaith, *No law can be given to the falling ſhowers, or to the ſhowers when they fall, that they diſtil not upon the lands of wicked men.* Thus, what that Scripture in *Matthew* ſaith, God doth out of choice to ſhew his goodneſs, *that* this Heathen ſaid their Gods did but of neceſſity, becauſe they could do no otherwiſe. If they ſent rain upon the juſt, the unjuſt muſt have it too, he thought there was no avoiding of that; but this Text in *Job*, and many more up and down the Scripture, teach us, that God can put a law upon the ſhowers of rain; he hath his Water-courſes, and can direct the rain to what place and perſons he will, he can command it to fall by his law, when and where, and upon whom he appoints. God retains his ſoveraignty for a diſtinct diſtribution of the waters; though to declare his bounty and

Dii multa ingratis tribuunt; ſed illa bonis paraverant, contingunt autem etiam malis, quia ſeparari non poſſunt. Nec poterat lex caſuris imbribus dici, ne in malorum improborumque rura defluerent. Sen. de Benef. l. 4. c. 28.

and mercy, he uſually makes no difference, but diſtributes it alike to all. The Lord is ſo good, that he feeds his enemies, and nouriſheth a world of wicked ones, or the wicked world every day; yet he retains his Empire over the clouds ſtill, and he divides a Water-courſe for the over-flowing of water; it falls by his appointment, where-ever it falls.

There are four things, wherein the Lords Empire and Soveraignty over theſe waters doth and may appear. The Lord orders the courſe of theſe waters,

Firſt, When they ſhall fall. And,

Secondly, How long they ſhall fall.

Thirdly, Where, or upon what place, they ſhall fall. And,

Fourthly, He orders the courſe of theſe waters, in what quantity they ſhall fall, whether there ſhall be a greater or a leſſer rain; as the rain was diſtinguiſhed in the 37. Chapter, into the ſmall rain and the great rain of his ſtrength.

'Tis a very ſpiritual duty to give God the glory of ordering theſe natural rains. The rain falls not by fortune or by chance, but hath its courſes appointed by the Lord, as certainly as if he had it in a Conduit or Ciſtern, and drew out by pipes a portion for every one. *Who hath divided a Water-courſe for the over flowing of Waters?*

Or a way for the lightning of the Thunder?

Here is another Queſtion, Thunder and lightning have their way. Some read, *A way for the Tempeſt?* Becauſe Lightning and Thunder comes with Tempeſt. Others put it in the plural number, *Or a way for the Tempeſts?* We render fully, who hath made or divided,

Viam Tempeſtati. Complut. *Et viam Nimbo ſonoro.* Jun. Piſc. *Vox* חוק *hic tantum occurrit &* Zech. 10.1. *Ubi eſt numero plurali.*

A way for the lightning of the Thunder?] Who directs the lightning, which breaks forth of the Thunder-Cloud with ſuch ſwift violence, to go the way it takes, and do the thing it effects. Lightning is very fierce and ſubtile: Thunder is a very violent and furious Meteor; yet the Lord hath a way for them alſo, as well as for the gentleſt ſhowers of rain. The Lord can guide thunder-bolts, and teach lightning its way. I ſhall not ſtay upon this matter here, becauſe we had the very ſame expreſſion, *The way for the lightning of Thunder*, at the 26. Chapter, Verſe 2. Thither I refer the Reader:

Onely conſider,

First, How the Lord ſpeaks of rain and lightning together, and ſo (which is wonderful) mingles fire with water; the flaſhes of lightning with the over-flowings of water.

De pluvia & fulmine conjunctim agit, ea quaſi miſcens, quia mirabile eſt ignem inter aquam ardere. Scult. Rain or water puts out fire; but God can produce fire in the midſt of water.

Secondly, Conſider, Where the ſtrength and ſtreſs of the Queſtion lies, and what naturally floweth from it, namely, that *Thunder and Lightning go not their own way, but in the way that God appoints them.* The water moves Gods way, and ſo doth the Wind; the Light moves Gods way, and ſo doth the Lightning and the Thunder, or the Lightning of the Thunder. The Lord hath all theſe at more command, than we have the tameſt or moſt ſlow paced animals. Thunder and Lightning go to the mark God ſets them. As a piece of Ordnance, or great Gun, being levelled and fired carrieth the Bullet; ſo thoſe Cannons being diſcharged from the Clouds, carry their Bolts to a hairs breadth, and miſs not.

In the two next verſes the Lord ſhews the reaſon, why he thus *divides a water-courſe for the over-flowing of waters, and a way for the Lightning of Thunder*; It is,

להמטיר

Verſ. 26. **To cauſe it to rain on the Earth where no man is, on the Wilderneſs where there is no man.**

Rain is the uſual concomitant or ſpeedy ſubſequent of Lightning and Thunder; theſe give warning that rain is at hand, Thunder and Lightning break the Cloud, and ſo *cauſe it*, that is, the cloud, *to rain*

Upon the Earth where no man is, &c.

The Lord ſpeaks here of a ſpecial place, to which he deſigns the Rain: where ſhould that be? Surely the paſtures, and till'd grounds, gardens, and vineyards, places cultivated and inhabited by men; the Lord hath Rain for them, yet not all for them, or not for them all: Here the *Cargo* or lading of the clouds is conſigned to places uninhabited by man; *He cauſeth it to rain on the Earth where no man is.* Some Parts of the Earth are full of men, well inhabited; there are other parts of the Earth which are uninhabited, or where no man is. This Text tells us, there is an Earth where no man is. Travellers and Navigators have found ſome Parts of the Earth which were counted uninhabitable, not only habitable, but actually inhabited by many people. Yet there may be ſome Parts of the Earth habitable in their own nature, wherein no man dwells, or in which (as the Text ſpeaks) *no man is.* Yea poſſibly there are ſome Parts of the Earth uninhabitable, or wherein no man can dwell. Now is it not ſtrange that the Lord ſhould carry his rain to ſuch parts of the Earth, to places where no man is? Where there are neither Cities, nor Towns, nor Villages, no nor the meaneſt Cottages, nor a man breathing on the face of that Earth? *Or that*, as the latter part of the verſe ſpeaks, (which is but an explication of the ſame thing) *he ſhould cauſe it to rain on the Wilderneſs, where there is no man?* If we would know what the Lord intends by Earth where no man is, the Text anſwers, *The Wilderneſs where there is no man*, or, *where none of Adam dwelleth*, as Mr. *Broughton* Tranſlates. So then this latter clauſe of the verſe is but a repetition of the ſame thing, yet a repetition made not only for variety and elegancy, but alſo to ſignifie the certainty of the thing, that God gives rain even to ſuch places where no man is. There is a very elegant turn of the words in this Verſe. The former part ſaith, *To cauſe it to rain on the Earth where no man is*; The latter ſaith, *On the wilderneſs where there is no man.* There are ſome wilderneſſes which are inhabited, and therefore God tells us diſtinctly what wilderneſs he means.

There are two ſorts of wilderneſſes:

Firſt, Such as are inhabited. *John the Baptiſt* went and preached in a wilderneſs; there were Towns and many Dwellings in that wilderneſs.

Secondly, There are alſo wilderneſſes uninhabited. God ſpeaks here of a wilderneſs where there is no man. The Hebrew Word which ſignifies a Wilderneſs, ſignifieth alſo the Peſtilence, and ſo ſome Tranſlate here, *In peſtilent places, or in unhealthy places*, in places untilled or unmanured, becauſe of the unhealthfulneſs of them, even in theſe Wilderneſſes the Lord ſends Rain.

דבר *A peſte & morte.* q. d. *etiam in locis peſtiferis & incultis curandum præbet ſe Deus providentiſſimum.*

Again, Others conceive the wilderneſs here ſtands in direct oppoſition to *Egypt*, and that the Lord would intimate, that as *Egypt* was abundantly watered by the river *Nilus*, they making ſluces from that river (as hath been ſomewhere noted in this Book) to draw the water all the Country over; for *Egypt* is a flat Country, not a Country of Mountains or Hills. Now ſaith the Lord, even as *Egypt* by the drawing of Water courſes, is made fruitful, and abundantly ſupplied with moiſture, though no rain falls there; ſo I will water the Wilderneſs with rain from the Clouds, as well as they water *Egypt*, by ſluces from the river *Nilus*. *Egypt* grew very proud or atheiſtical rather, becauſe they had ſuch an advantage by the river; which cauſed one of the Ancients to ſay, *There is never a Plow-man in Egypt will ſo much as look up to Heaven.* They took not themſelves at all beholden to God, for the fertility of their land, they had it all from *Nilus*. Well, ſaith the Lord, I will moiſten the very barren Wilderneſs, it ſhall be ſatisfied with Rain, even as *Egypt* with the waters of the River. The Deſert ſhall be as well watered by Rivers from Heaven, as *Egypt* is by the River *Nilus*. But whether the Lord had any reſpect to that or no, I dare not aſſert; yet it is plain, that the Lord *waters the wilderneſs where no man is*, even as well as *Egypt* is watered.

Nemo aratorum in Egypto reſpicit cœlum Sen. *l.* 4. Natur. quæſt. *c.* 2. Plinius in Panegyr. *Te propter nullos tellus tua poſtulat imbres Arida, nec pluvio ſupplicat herba Jovi.* Tibul.

Now foraſmuch as the rain cometh upon the Wilderneſs, where 'tis very improbable to have rain, becauſe vapours, which are the matter of Rain, are raiſed uſually from moiſt places, from the Seas and Rivers; but from the Wilderneſs, and from heaths and deſerts, which are dry places, how

Vapores pluvioſi elevantur maximè ex locis humidis; unde ſi nubes & pluviæ non impellerentur à ventis ſequeretur, quod nunquam in locis ſiccis plueretur. Aquin.

how ſhould vapours riſe? Yet, ſaith God, though there is no rain begotten there, yet I will ſend rain thither; I will cauſe the wind to riſe and carry the clouds, and the thunder ſhall break the clouds, and they ſhall pour down waters upon the wilderneſs. Did not the Lord cauſe the winds to drive the clouds over wilderneſſes and deſert places, and there to unburthen themſelves, they would be altogether without rain.

Hence Note; *Where Nature denies, or natural cauſes produce no rain, God can give it.*

The clouds may deny rain to the wilderneſs, becauſe the wilderneſs yields no moiſture to make clouds, yet the Lord ſends rain thither.

Again, Conſider the wilderneſs and deſert places, as they are here held forth, together with the providence of God concerning them;

And ſo Note; *The care and providence of God extends it ſelf to all places, even to places uninhabited.*

It is no wonder that God ſhould provide rain for places that are inhabited; but where no man is, there to water the Earth, to what purpoſe is that, yet the Lord will water ſuch places (as it were) by his own hand, and (as 'tis ſaid, *Pſal.* 107. 35.) *Turn the wilderneſs into ſtanding water, and dry ground into Water-ſprings.* Though there be no man to eat the fruit, which the rain produceth from the Earth (of which the Text ſpeaks afterward) yet God will ſend rain to make that land fruitful, for the beaſts ſake, that they may have graſs and green things to feed upon. God will provide for the beaſts of the Earth, where there are no men to provide for them, nor to be provided for. *God is a great Houſe-keeper:* He nouriſheth all living creatures as well as men, as he preſerves, ſo he feeds the beaſts of the Earth, and the fiſhes of the Sea, as well as men (*Pſal.* 104. 27.) *Theſe all wait upon thee* (*O Lord*) *that thou maiſt give them their meat in due ſeaſon*; the very fiſhes in the Sea wait upon God for their meat, and ſo do fowls of the Air, together with all things moving upon the face of the Earth (*Pſal.* 145. 15.) *The eyes of all wait upon thee, and thou giveſt them meat in due ſeaſon*; and that he may do ſo, he gives them rain in due ſeaſon; *He cauſeth it to rain on the Earth where no man is, and upon the wilderneſs, where there is no man.* God hath beaſts to provide for, where men are not, and he will not let a beaſt that he hath made, want food; the very worms ſhall have a ſupport of Life.

Hence Chriſt argues away all undue care and thoughtfulneſs in man for the ſuccours of this life (*Mat.* 6. 25, 26.) *Take no thought for your life, what ye ſhall eat, or what ye ſhall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye ſhall put on. Behold, the fowls of the Air; for they ſow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into Barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them: are ye not much better than they?* Surely ye are, therefore ye ſhall be better provided for than they. Hath God a break-faſt ready for every little Bird that comes chirping out of her Neſt? Hath he a breakfaſt ready for every beaſt in the Wilderneſs that comes out of his den? And will he not much more provide for you, *O ye of little faith?* How encouraging an argument is this to our Faith, that the Lord will provide for all men, and eſpecially for his own; ſeeing he provides for the fowls of the Air, and the beaſts of the Earth, where there is no man to give them any food, or take any care of them!

This conſideration may ſtrengthen our dependance on God, though we are brought into a Wilderneſs condition, where there is no man to pity us, or give us a morſel of Bread. Surely the Lord that feeds the wild Beaſts where there is no man, can and will provide for his own people, when the hearts of all men are ſhut up againſt them; he can make the fowls of the Air and the Beaſts of the Earth to bring them food, as the Ravens did to *Elijah*.

Further, This is an inſtance of the inexhauſtible treaſure of the Lords goodneſs: For if he giveth rain in the wilderneſs for the Beaſts of the Earth, may we not thence infer, ſurely the Lord will take care even of thoſe who are unworthy. What have the Beaſts deſerved at the hand of God, that he ſhould provide for them? Yea, the Lord doth not only give food to thoſe that are of no deſert, as the beaſts, but to thoſe that are of ill deſert, he gives rain to thoſe who are but beaſts in the ſhape of men, men of beaſtly ſpirits. The Lord feeds the Lions and the Bears, the Tygers and the Swine of the World, that is, men like them; he cauſeth his rain to fall upon the juſt and unjuſt (*Matth.* 5. 45.) He will rather give good to the bad, for the goods ſake, than be wanting to the good, becauſe of the wickedneſs of the bad; and therefore the rain comes not only upon the juſt, but upon the unjuſt too.

Satius eſt prodeſſe malis propter bonos quam bonis deeſſe propter malos. Sen. de Benef. lib. 4. cap. 28.

This is true alſo in a ſpiritual way; The Lord ſends his rain upon the wilderneſs, he hath done ſo, and he hath promiſed to do ſo ſtill; That is, he hath ſent, and will ſend the rain of the Goſpel upon the Heathen. Some Nations are a wilderneſs; as they live in a wilderneſs, ſo they are themſelves a wilderneſs, a deſert; and we have a promiſe that the Lord will cauſe the rain, ſpiritual rain, to fall upon this wilderneſs (*Iſa.* 35. 1, 2.) *The wilderneſs and the ſolitary places ſhall be glad for them* (*for whom? for the Church.* and for the ſending forth of the Goſpel by them) *and the deſert ſhall rejoyce and bloſſom as the roſe; it ſhall bloſſom abundantly, and rejoyce even with joy and ſinging; the glory of Lebanon ſhall be given to it, the excellency of Carmel and of Sharon.* That is, it ſhall be fertile and fruitful in ſpirituals, as thoſe places, *Lebanon, Carmel*, and *Sharon* (which was the glory and excellency of them) were in temporals. But how ſhould the wilderneſs and ſolitary places attain this glory? That's ſhewed at the ſixth and ſeventh verſes; *for in the wilderneſs ſhall waters break out; and ſtreams in the deſert; and the parched ground ſhall become a pool, and the thirſty land ſprings of water.* This Propheſie contains a promiſe of ſending the Goſpel, and with that the Holy Spirit (who is often compared in Scripture to water) to thoſe who were or are in their ſoul-ſtate as a dry heath, or as a barren wilderneſs. This prophet doth not only hold out a like promiſe in the ſame Metaphors, but explains it thus (*Iſa.* 44. 3, 4, 5.) *I will pour water upon him that is thirſty, and floods upon the dry ground*; what is meant by water and floods we may learn from the next words; *I will pour my Spirit upon thy ſeed, and my bleſſing upon thine off-ſpring, and they ſhall ſpring up as among the graſs, as willows by the water-courſes*; That is, they ſhall grow and flouriſh internally in grace and knowledg, and not only ſo, but they ſhall openly profeſs it and avouch it, as it followeth in the fifth verſe: *One ſhall ſay, I am the Lords, and another ſhall call himſelf by the Name of Jacob, &c.* That is, they ſhall give up their Names to be enrolled and regiſtred (as our Annotators expreſs it) in Gods Church-Book, or among his faithful ſervants. It was the ſaying of one of the Ancients with reſpect to this Allegory, *To ſend rain upon the deſert, is, to preach the word of God unto the heathens.* And the Lord magnifies himſelf in the diſpenſation of this ſpiritual rain, when, as he ſends it upon his Garden the Church, ſo alſo upon the wilderneſs the Heathen, that the wilderneſs may become a garden, and the deſert a Paradiſe, that they knowing the Lord and believing on him, may be joyned to the Church. Thus alſo the Lord divides a water-courſe, *to cauſe it to rain on the Earth, where no* (believing) *man is; on the wilderneſs where there is no* (good) *man.* The reaſon of his ſo doing, is given expreſly in the next words.

In deſerto pluere eſt verbum Dei gentilitatim prædicare. Greg. l. 29. Moral. c. 16.

Verſ. 27. **To ſatisfie the deſolate and waſte ground, and to cauſe the bud of the tender herb to ſpring forth.**

Here is the reaſon of ſending rain upon the wilderneſs, it *is to ſatisfie the deſolate and waſt ground*, Mr. *Broughton* renders, *The waſt and vaſt ground.* The Vulgar Latin renders, *The unpaſſable ground*, or at leaſt, that which none paſſes, and ſo being diſuſed, lies waſt and deſolate. But in what ſenſe ſoever 'tis deſolate, or by what means ſoever it became deſolate, the Lord ſends rain *to ſatisfie it*, that is, to water it abundantly; ſatisfaction, is to have our fill. The very waſt ground ſhall have enough, enough to allay the heat and drought of it, enough to make it fruitful, and enough to fructifie the trees and plants that grow there, and ſo to feed and fatten the beaſts that live there.

Inviam & deſolatam. Vulg.

Ut riget ad ſatietatem uſque.

Ut impleret, &c. Vulg. *Satur dierum & plenus dierum ſynonyma ſunt.* Druſ.

there. The Vulgar Latin renders, That he *may fill the deſolate and waſt ground*; that which is filled, is or ſhould be ſatisfied. *To be full of days*, in Scripture, is to be ſatisfied with living. A man may have lived many days, yet not be full of days; but he who is full of days (as 'tis ſaid of ſome of the Patriarchs) is not hungry after more time or days in this world; therefore to be filled and ſatisfied, import the ſame thing. And to be ſure they who are not ſatisfied when they are full, will not be ſatisfied when they are empty. But however it is with man, we know the Earth ſpoken of in the Text is fully ſatisfied; it gapes for no more, when 'tis filled with rain. And this the Lord will ſend, *To ſatisfie the deſolate and waſt ground.*

But why is the Lord ſo careful *to ſatisfie the deſolate and waſt ground?* The ground is a ſenſeleſs thing, that feels not the want of rain. I anſwer, The Lord doth not ſatisfie the ground for the grounds ſake, but for their ſake who live upon, and are maintained by the ground. Fruit-bearing trees and graſs are maintained by the moiſture and fatneſs of the ground; beaſts are maintained by thoſe fruits and graſs: therefore the Lord ſatisfies the ground with rain, that it may ſatisfie the trees and graſs, and they the beaſts that live upon it. So then the Lord ſatisfieth the ground, that it may ſatisfie all ſorts of vegetables growing out of the ground, and that they may ſatisfie all kinds of animals living upon the ground. Such a gradation we find (*Hoſ.* 2.21,22.) *I will hear, ſaith the Lord, I will hear the Heavens, and they ſhall hear the Earth, and the Earth ſhall hear the corn, and the wine, and the oil, and they ſhall hear Jezrael*, that is, my people. We may run up the meaning of this promiſe backwards, thus, When my people (whom I now call *Jezrael* in a way of promiſe, as in a way of threatning, *Chap.* 1.4.) being preſſed with hunger and famin, cry to the corn, and the wine, and the oil, for food, they ſhall hear them; and when the corn and wine call to the Earth for moiſture to feed them, that ſhall hear; and when the Earth calls to the Heavens for rain, they ſhall hear; and when the Heavens call to God for orders to carry rain, he will hear them. It is for mans uſe that God makes the Earth fruitful; and where there are no men, 'tis for the beaſts ſake, that he ſatisfieth *the deſolate and waſt ground.*

Hence Note; Firſt, *God is not wanting to any of his Creatures, according to their ſtate.*

He will not let the ſenſeleſs ground ſuffer hunger and thirſt overlong, that ſhall have food after its kind, or proper for it.

Secondly, Note; *Even the Earth knows when it hath enough.*

It is ſatisfied. And this may be a great reproof upon the inſatiableneſs of many men; they in this are much worſe than the deſolate and waſt ground, that may be ſatisfied, that will crave no more. But whereas *Solomon* ſaith, there are *four things that ſay not it is enough* (Prov. 30.15,16.) Of all things, the deſires of man are moſt unſatiable, and *ſay not, it is enough.* It was a great word which *Eſau* ſpake, *I have enough my brother* (Gen. 33.9.) and I fear he hath but a few brethren in that ſaying. Among the four things which in *Solomons* Obſervation *ſay not, it is enough,* the Earth is one, in the place laſt mentioned. But mark, It is the Earth, *that is not filled with water.* For where God is pleaſed to fill the Earth with water, then as this Text in *Job* ſpeaks, it is ſatisfied. *He cauſeth it to rain on the wilderneſs, to ſatisfie the deſolate and waſt ground.*

Further, This may alſo comfort us in all our wants. For doubtleſs the Lord who takes care to ſatisfie the ſenſeleſs ground, will ſatisfie his believing people early with his mercy (*Pſal.* 90.14.) when they cry to him; yea he will ſatisfie them not only with good in this life, but *with long life will he ſatisfie them, and ſhew them his Salvation* (Pſal. 91.16.) *He will abundantly bleſs Sions proviſion* (What is that? The Word and Ordinances chiefly) *and ſatisfie her poor with bread*; with the *bread of life* eſpecially.

Laſtly, God ſends Rain *to ſatisfie the deſolate and waſt ground.*

Hence Note; *God hath rain enough for all places.*

He can ſpare it for *waſte ground and wilderneſſes.* And therefore, if he ſupplieth not our paſtures, corn-fields, and gardens with rain, it is not becauſe he cannot ſend it, or hath not enough to ſend, but it is to puniſh us for ſin. God doth not with-hold rain from any place, becauſe he is ſparing of his treaſures, is more for laying them up then giving them out; but becauſe he is provoked by the unthankfulneſs of man, for, or by his abuſe of his former bounties. The Lord forbids the clouds to drop down the rain upon inhabited places, and bids them convey it to waſte wilderneſſes, when inhabited places have not honoured him for it, nor brought forth fruits of righteouſneſs anſwerable to the fruits of the Earth by the bleſſing of rain.

Sic ſterilitas agrorum divitiæ & fertilitas eſt deſerti.

Thus alſo Chriſt will take the Kingdom, that is, the Kingdom of the Goſpel, the rain of holy doctrin, from an unthankful and unfruitful people, and give it to a Nation that will bring forth the fruits of it, as he threatned the Jews (*Matth.* 21.43.) and afterwards fulfilled that threatning upon them (*Acts* 13.46.) *Lo we turn to the Gentiles.* Ye having refuſed and abuſed the offers of Chriſt made to you by us; we will now go with our rain to the waſte and deſolate ground, or to the wilderneſs; That is, to the Gentiles, and they will receive it, and be thankful. The ſcarcity of Goſpel mercy which God brings upon any place, is a puniſhment of their barrenneſs under Goſpel means. And have not we cauſe to fear at this day, that foraſmuch as we are ſo like that earth ſpoken of (*Heb.* 6.8.) which drinketh in the Rain, yet (inſtead of fruit meet for his uſe by whom it is dreſſed) beareth briars and thorns; have not we cauſe I ſay to fear, that we are nigh to ſome curſe and burning, or that the Lord will carry away the rain to Heathens, who as yet are *a deſolate and waſte ground?*

To cauſe the bud of the tender herb to ſpring forth.

מוצא דשא *Exitum germinis*, דשא *Proprie herba tenera. Exitum herbæ vocat herbam primum è terra prodeuntem.* Druſ.

The natural effect of rain is growth, or to cauſe the bud of the tender herb to bring forth. If God denies water to manured and well husbanded lands, they wither; and even deſolate deſarts and waſte grounds flouriſh, when God waters them; then *the bud of the tender herb ſprings forth.*

Hence Note; *Natural cauſes produce proper natural effects.*

When God ſends rain on deſolate places, they bud and ſpring forth. When the rain falls, the herb flouriſhes; where the Sun ſhines, the graſs grows. And ſurely thus it is in ſpirituals, ſpiritual cauſes bring forth ſpiritual effects; if the Lord ſends the rain of the word upon deſolate Souls, the Soul receiving it will bud, and the tender herb will bring forth. *Moſes* (*Deut.* 32.1,2.) compared his *Doctrin to the ſmall rain upon the tender herb, and to the ſhowers upon the graſs.* How green are the herbs after rain, and the graſs after ſhowers! Herbs and graſs bear witneſs to the bounty and goodneſs of God, in giving ſweet ſhowers of rain: Natural rain is ſeen in their looks, and ſo ſhould ſpiritual in our lives. And if, where the rain of the word falleth, they that receive it, do not bud and bloſſom and bring forth fruit, the deſolate wilderneſs will riſe up in judgment againſt them, the waſte grounds will condemn them. They will ſay, Lord, you ſent rain upon us, and lo, here are our buds and our bloſſoms, yea, here's the fruit which we have brought forth. Will not this ſhame our barrenneſs? Hath the Lord divided the Water-courſe of the Goſpel, and cauſed it to rain on us from day to day, and ſhall not we ſhew our buds and bloſſoms of holineſs, our fruits of faith and repentance, that he may come into his garden, and eat of his pleaſant fruits! How dreadful! Shall the waſte wilderneſſes and deſolate grounds bring forth, when the rain falls upon them, and ſhall not the Church! It is not bare profeſſing, but fruit-bearing, which honours God (*John* 15.8.) It is uncomely if ſo much as a leaf of profeſſion withers (*Pſal.* 1.3.) But how green ſoever the leaves of our profeſſion are, yea, though they ſhould retain their greenneſs under the hotteſt and moſt ſcorching Sun of Perſecution, yet what would it advantage us, if our leaves are not accompanied with good fruits.

Now, If any ſhould ask, What mean you by good fruits? Or what fruits are good? I ſhall cloſe the point in hand with an Anſwer to theſe Queſtions.

Theſe good fruits conſidered in reference to their efficient cauſe, are called *fruits of the ſpirit* (Gal. 5.22.) and in reference to the matter of them, they are called *fruits of righteouſneſs* (Phil. 1.11.) but in reference to the beginning or occaſion of them, they are called *fruits meet for repentance* (Matth. 3.8.) In general, all that *is good fruit*, which is conformable to the Word of God; whether it be the conformity of our natures to it, in converſion; or the conformity of our ways to it, in our daily converſation.

More particularly, theſe good fruits are of two ſorts:

Firſt, Inward fruits, or thoſe which we bring forth within, that is, in our hearts; theſe are ſecrets, and only known to God.

Secondly, Outward fruits, which we bring forth in our lives; theſe are or may be ſeen of men; yet they muſt not be brought forth, that we may be ſeen in doing them, but, *that men ſeeing our good works, may glorifie our Father which is in Heaven* (Matth. 5.16.)

Our inward good fruits (which are indeed our choiceſt and moſt ſpiritual good fruits) are of three ſorts.

Firſt, *Good Thoughts.* To do good is beſt for others; but to think good, or to have many good thoughts, is the beſt proof, that we our ſelves are good. *Solomon* ſaith (*Prov.* 12.12.) *The root of the righteous yieldeth fruit.* The root of a righteous man is his heart, and the firſt-fruits of a good heart are good thoughts. He is a precious perſon, and hath a precious heart, that can ſay as holy *David* did (*Pſal.* 139.17.) *How precious are thy thoughts unto me, O God, how great is the ſum of them!* That is, the thoughts which I have of thee O God, are exceeding precious unto me; and I have many, very many of them, more than I am able to ſum or reckon up.

Secondly, Good affections are good inward fruits, ſuch are godly ſorrow, joy in God, love to God, longing after God (*Pſal.* 27.4. *Pſal.* 42.1,2. *Iſa.* 26.9.) hatred of evil; all theſe movings of the heart, are good and precious fruits.

Thirdly, (which are the iſſue and reſult of both the former) good purpoſes and holy reſolves to cleave faſt to God, to ſtick (as *David* expreſſeth it, *Pſal.* 119.31.) to his teſtimonies, ways, and truths, at all times, eſpecially in times of trial; or to continue with Chriſt in his temptation: theſe are very good inward fruits (*Pſal.* 17.3. *Dan.* 1.8.) *Acts* 11.23.

Outward good fruits are of two ſorts:

Firſt, Good words are good fruits. *The lips of the righteous feed many* (Prov. 10.21.) *Edifying words* (Eph. 4.29.) words of exhortation to good (*Heb.* 3.13.) words of reproof as to evil, (*Gal.* 6.1.) words of comfort to the ſad and ſorrowful (1 *Theſ.* 5.14.) all theſe words are good fruits.

Secondly, Good works, Firſt, of holineſs towards God, Secondly, of righteouſneſs and love towards all men, Thirdly, of charity to the poor; all theſe are outward good fruits; and all theſe the Lord looks for, where-ever, or upon whomſoever he ſends the rain of his word.

VERS. 28, 29, 30.

Hath the Rain a Father? Or who hath begotten the drops of Dew?
Out of whoſe Womb came the Ice? And the hoary froſt of Heaven, who hath gendred it?
The Waters are hid as with a ſtone, and the face of the deep is Frozen.

THe Lord having queſtioned *Job* in the former context about the courſe of the Rain, and the free diſpenſation of it, even to thoſe places where no man is, and to the Wilderneſs where there is no man; here he queſtions him about the cauſe and original of the Rain, and not only of the Rain, but of the Dew, the Ice, and the Froſt: So then, in theſe three verſes we have four Queſtions.

Firſt, About the Rain; and Secondly, about the Dew, in the 28. verſe: Thirdly, about the Ice; and Fourthly, about the Froſt, in the 29. verſe; together with the marvelous force and effects of it, Verſ. 30.

Verſ. 28. **Hath the Rain a Father?**

The Inquiry is, who is the *Father of the Rain?* That is, who is the Author? What is the cauſe of it? Not as if the cauſe of that or of the other Meteors here mentioned could not at all be known; but to ſhew,

Firſt, That much of them all is unknown. There are many things in this lower Sphear beyond mans Sphear; even theſe are not propagated altogether according to our underſtanding or apprehenſions of them.

Secondly, To ſhew that he muſt be plentifully ſtored with all ſorts of good, who as a Father begets, and as a Mother brings forth ſuch uſeful and neceſſary things, for the preſervation of living Creatures.

Thirdly, To ſhew that theſe creatures are not produced by cauſes which are conſtant and unvariable in nature, but proceed from and daily depend upon the power and will of God, who ſometimes checks and ſtops the courſe of Nature, and at other times impregnates it for the production of theſe effects, or brings them forth by the Midwifery and help of ſecond cauſes.

Fourthly, When the Lord propounds the Queſtion under this Relation of a Father, he would ſhew or teach us that he gives Rain, and Dew to the Earth, as a Father gives food and other requiſites to his Children.

Further, This ſeems to be the deſign of God in putting theſe Queſtions to *Job*, that foraſmuch as he could not fully comprehend the cauſation and production of theſe things, much leſs was able to cauſe or produce them himſelf, but muſt receive them from the power and according to the diſpoſe and providence of God; therefore he ſhould refer all his concernments to the ſame Providence, and ſo reſt ſatisfied whether God ſent him a ſweet and refreſhing Rain and Dew, or a grievous and afflictive ſeaſon of Ice and Froſt.

Thus we may conceive the general ſcope of this Context. Now to the particulars.

Hath the Rain a Father?] The Queſtion may be reſolved both negatively and affirmatively: Firſt, Negatively; the Rain hath no Father, that is, on Earth, or among men. There is no creature power that can produce a drop of Rain. Secondly, affirmatively: *Hath the Rain a Father?* Yes, it hath; God is the Father of the Rain. The Rain is not fatherleſs; there is one who will own the Rain as his Child, or iſſue. The cauſation of Rain is a great ſecret in nature, a ſecret about which though wiſe and learned men have diſcourſed much, and given out much light about it, yet they have not reached the utmoſt, nor attained the full knowledg of it; and the reaſon of that is, becauſe the Rain hath a Father whoſe ways and workings as in the firſt conſtitution of Nature, ſo in the daily motions of it, exceed our knowledg.

Hath the Rain a Father? Not on Earth. Nor are the Heavens the Father of the Rain; the God of Heaven is. As not a ſhower, no nor a drop of Rain falls on the Earth at the will or by the power of man; ſo not by the power of the Sun drawing up the vapours and diſſolving the Clouds, nor by the Winds ſcattering the Clouds. The Sun may ſhine, the Moon may change, the Winds may blow and turn long enough, yet no Rain till the Lord gives the Word. Some (and that not improperly) have called the Sun *The Father of the Rain.* The Sun draws up thoſe vapours from the Earth into the Air, which are the matter of Rain, and there thoſe vapours are condenſed into Clouds, and afterwards rarified and diſſolved into Rain; yet theſe natural cauſes produce theſe effects only as God ſets them on work, and he can ſuſpend their working as often as he will. And therefore the ſimple and plain meaning of this Queſtion is, the Rain owes its original to God, *and muſt call him Father:* And that's the obſervation which riſeth out of this Queſtion, *Hath the Rain a Father?*

Si quis alium præter Deum pluviæ patrem quærat, is erit vapor qui ex humidis locis extractus & elevatus à Sole concreſcit in nebulam aut nubem, & inde à Sole tepefactus liqueſcit & ſolvitur. Sanct.

God and God alone is the Father of the Rain.

Without him it had never been; and that it is continued is by his power and providence; that the frame of nature is ſo diſpoſed, that ſecond cauſes are ſo ordered and furniſhed as to produce Rain, proceeds from, or comes to paſs by the Lord alone. The Prophet ſpake this in a time of great drought (*Jer.* 14. 22.) both in the negative and in the affirmative; and he propoſed two Queſtions, or the Queſtion twice, intending the negative. Firſt, *Are there any among the Vanities of the Gentiles that can cauſe Rain?* (By the *vanities of the Gentiles* we are to underſtand their *Idol gods.* Idols are *vanities,* or *nothings*; and can they who are nothing do this great thing, give Rain? That's the firſt Queſtion, Can Idols cauſe Rain, ſurely they cannot: But will it not Rain of courſe? Will not the Heavens one time or other yield Rain? That's the ſecond Queſtion) *Can the Heavens give ſhowers?* No, As Idols, or falſe gods, cannot give Rain, ſo neither can the Heavens, if forbidden, give Rain; they act not their power in their own power. The Heavens cannot give Rain, if God gives them a command to the contrary; and the God of Nature can check and countermand the courſe of Nature, both on Earth, and in the Heavens, when he will. Though thoſe bottles the Clouds be never ſo pregnant and full of Rain, yet he can ſtop them. So then, neither the Idols, nor the Heavens can do it, if God ſay No; yea, if he give not forth a word of command, if he bids not the courſe of Nature proceed, the Heavens over our heads will be Braſs, and the Earth under us as Iron; and therefore the Prophet in the latter part of the verſe tells us expreſly, who is the Father of the Rain, *Art not thou he, O Lord our God? Therefore will we wait upon thee; for thou haſt made all theſe things.* As if he had ſaid, *O Lord, thou haſt made them; and therefore thou haſt both the right and the power to diſpoſe of them.* What can be ſaid more clear and full for the confirmation of this point? Many other Scriptures ſay the ſame thing. Read *Deut.* 28. 12. *Pſal.*147.8. *Jer.*5.24. *Amos* 4.7.

So then, though there are natural cauſes of Rain, yet God is the firſt cauſe, and it is at his pleaſure that theſe natural cauſes either produce their effects, or are ſtayed from producing them. It Rains not by accident, nor by any concatenation of ſecond cauſes, but according to the appointments and pleaſure of the great God. 'Tis no ſmall part of our duty to eye God in cauſing theſe common things; and 'tis a great piece of Atheiſm, or a diſowning of God, to tie them up to natural cauſes.

Now, If God be the Father of the Rain, we may hence infer,

Firſt, That *God is the Father of all Creatures, and the ſupream cauſe of all effects in the creatures.* As a Father is the ſecond or inſtrumental cauſe of his Sons Being, ſo God is the ſupream efficient cauſe of all Beings and Entities. Not only Animals and Rationals, but the very inanimates and ſenſleſs creatures are of a Divine extraction: God is the Fountain of their Being. And if God be, and muſt be acknowledged as the Father of all Creatures, even of the Rain, then,

Secondly, *God is much more the Father of Mankind.* The Apoſtle voucheth that to the ſuperſtitious *Athenians* as a Divine truth, out of their own Authors (*Acts* 17. 28.) *As certain alſo of your own Poets have ſaid, for we are alſo his off-ſpring*; we are ſprung from him as Branches from the Root, or as Streams from the Fountain: Not that we are, as the Streams with the Fountain, or the Branches with the Root, of the ſame Nature with him, (which to imagin were higheſt Blaſphemy) but we take or receive our Nature from him; That is, he hath made us to be what we are, and *in him,* that is, in dependance upon him, *we live and move, and have our Being.*

Thirdly, If God own himſelf as a Father to all things, and to all men, in a general way of Nature, then *much more doth he own himſelf a Father to all his people in a way of grace.* What the Apoſtle ſaith of his Title *Saviour* (1 Tim. 4. 10.) *He is the Saviour of all men, eſpecially of thoſe that believe*; ſo I may ſay of this Relation *Father, God is the Father of all men, but eſpecially of thoſe that believe.* The father-hood which ſtands in grace is the higheſt and moſt excellent father-hood which God beareth to any of his Creatures: As to this the Apoſtle (*Jam.* 1. 18.) ſaith, *Of his own will begat he us by the Word of Truth; that we ſhould be a kind of firſt fruits of his Creatures;* That is, as I conceive, that believers (they only are begotten with the word of truth) conſidered with all other creatures, to whom God is a Father in a common way, ſhould have the honour to be called the chief of his creatures. The firſt fruits were chief among the fruits of the Earth. The firſt born both of man and of beaſt were the Lords portion (*Exod.* 13. 1.) therefore *chief.* This honour have all the Saints; the Birth-right is theirs, and theirs is the Bleſſing; They, as all holy things, are dedicated to God, and graciouſly accepted with him, as a choſen Generation, as a peculiar people. He who is Lord over all, and Father of all, both things and perſons, as they ſtand in the whole compaſs of Nature, is eminently and with endeared affections, a Father to all them who believe and are actually in a ſtate of grace.

Fourthly, If God be a Father to all creatures, and to man more then to inferiour creatures, and to true Believers more then to other men; then as his fatherhood is extended, ſo is his fatherly care. God will not be wanting to any as a Father, to whom he is upon any account a Father. He takes care of the fruits of the Earth, and of the beaſt of the field, and of all mankind, he feeds them all, and cloaths them all, and protects them all; but they who are a kind of firſt-fruits of his creatures, and bears the image of his holineſs, or his Image in holineſs, have a ſpecial portion and proportion of his care over them, and love to them, and proviſion for them. *What can he deny to us as a Father, who hath vouchſafed to be our Father? Hath the Rain a Father?*

Or who hath begotten the drops of Dew?

This latter part of the verſe is of the ſame meaning with the former. The word which we tranſlate *hath begotten,* is applyable to either Parent, man or woman, in a different Conjugation, as Grammarians ſpeak: but in the Conjugation here uſed it is proper only to the man; and therefore they who tranſlate *who hath conceived,* wreſt this Text, and depart from the Original ſenſe of the word as here expreſſed, in which the Metaphor of, or the Alluſion to a Father is ſtill continued. *Who hath begotten*

Verbum ילד *In* Chal *& de viro & de muliere dicitur; &* הוליך *Generavit in* Hiphil *de viro tantum.* Merc.

The drops of Dew?] The Lord doth not ask *who hath begotten the Dew,* but the *drops of Dew?* Drops are very ſmall things; yet the great God who made the mighty waters of the Sea, makes alſo the ſmall drops of Dew. Some derive the Original word which we render *drops,* from a Root that ſignifies a *flood,* as implying, that though the Dew falleth in ſingle drops, yet being fallen there is much of it, even a flood of it. Others deriving the word from, at leaſt, judging it hath near alliance with a word ſignifying a drinking Cup, or a Vial, render, *who hath begotten the Cups or Vials of Dew?*

אגלי *Guttas tantum hic extat. Sunt qui* גלי *Exponunt quaſi fluctus; quod in magna abundantia fluctuum more ros effundatur.* &c. Merc.

We heard of the Dew at the 19. Verſe of the 29. Chapter, where *Job* (to ſet forth the proſperity of his former condition) ſaid, *The Dew lay all night upon my branches.* Vapours drawn up from the Earth in the day by the heat of the Sun, are returned in Dew by the moderate coolneſs and ſtilneſs of the night. The remote efficient cauſe of Dew is the heat of Heaven raiſing vapours from the Earth. The next efficient cauſe of Dew is the temperate coolneſs and quietneſs of the night; for if the night be windy the Dew falls not; and if the night be very cold, the vapours are congealed and hardened into a froſt. 'Tis only in temperate ſeaſons, that we find thoſe drops of Dew hanging like ſo many Orient Pearls upon the graſs, leaves and Flowers, at once adorning and refreſhing them. We may take notice of two things in the falling of the Dew.

Ros eſt vaporis terræ propinqui noctuq; refrigerati in aquam concretio.

First, It falls very ſilently; Secondly, very abundantly. No man hears the Dew fall, nor can any number the drops of Dew which fall. *Huſhai* uſed both theſe alluſions, in in that piece of loyal councel which he gave for the defeating of the counſel of *Achitophel* (2 Sam. 11. 12.) where he adviſed *Abſalom, to gather all Iſrael from Dan to Beer-ſheba, as the ſand which is by the Sea for multitude*; and ſo, ſaith he, *we will light upon him as the Dew falleth upon the ground*; That is, we will come ſo ſilently upon him, and in ſuch numbers (even as the drops of Dew upon the ground) that he ſhall not be able to avoid us, no more then he can avoid the Dew, which in one and the ſame inſtant

Vapores ſereno tempore mediam aeris regionem aſcendentes reſolvuntur frigore in guttas tenues. Ariſt. l. *de mund.* c. 1. Plin. l. 2. c. 60.

inſtant falls upon the field or Country all over. An Army comes with an intent to fall upon the enemy like a ſtorm, yet it may be ſaid to come and fall upon him like a Dew, both becauſe it comes always like a multitude, and becauſe it comes ſometimes very ſilently to ſurprize him at unawares. *Who hath begotten the drops of Dew?*

Hence Note; as before of the Rain, ſo here of the Dew, *God is the Father of the Dew, as well as of the Rain.*

The Dew differs not much from the Rain; both are of the ſame nature, and they have the ſame Father, and he will be own'd in the Dew as well as in the Rain. The Prophet *Haggai* reproving the returned *Jews* (Chap. 1.10.) for their neglect in not building the Lords Houſe, repreſents the Lord thus ſpeaking to them; *Becauſe of my houſe that is waſt, and ye run every man to his own houſe*; That is, you eagerly and violently (running is a violent exerciſe) purſue your private ends and intereſts, not minding nor promoting my honour and worſhip; *Therefore the Heaven over you is ſtayed from Dew, and the Earth is ſtayed from her fruit.* The want of Dew makes many wants. If we want but the Dew of Heaven we ſhall quickly want the fruits of the Earth. We uſually take notice of the want of Rain, but we ſeldom take notice of the want of Dew, or pray for the falling of it; nor do we give thanks for it (as for Rain) when we ſee it fallen, and ſweetly filling the boſom of the Earth. Yet the with-holding of Dew (though Dew be a leſs matter then Rain) is a greater Judgment then the with-holding of Rain; for 'tis a ſign that the Judgment of drought is at the height, or in the perfection of it, when the Lord doth not only with-hold the Rain which is the greater mercy, but the Dew too, which is the leſſer. O how dry muſt the earth be when it hath not only no plentiful ſhowers of Rain, but not ſo much as a drop of Dew! And therefore when the Prophet *Eliah* would ſhew the extremity of the Famin which was coming upon *Iſrael*, he made that high proteſt (1 Kings 1. 17.) *As the Lord God of Iſrael liveth before whom I ſtand, there ſhall not be Dew nor Rain theſe years, but according to my word.* Not only ſhall ye have no Rain, but no Dew; and when the Heaven is ſtayed from giving Rain or Dew, the Earth muſt needs be ſtayed from yielding fruit or food. And ſo great is the Lords care in diſpoſing the Dew of Heaven, that *Solomon* tells us (*Prov.* 3. 20.) *By his knowledg the depths are broken up, and the Clouds drop down Dew.* As if he had ſaid, The Dew doth not ſteal down upon the Earth without Gods knowledg; not a drop of it deſtils upon the Earth without his orders and privity. And when 'tis ſaid, *By his knowledg the Clouds drop down Dew*, it hath this in it; God knows what moyſture is meet for the Earth, whether little or much, Dew or Rain; though I conceive we may take the word Dew in this Text of the *Proverbs* ſynecdochically, for any, or all, the moyſture that falls from Heaven, as by *the breaking up of the depths* in the former part of the verſe, we are to underſtand all the moyſture which riſeth from, and is conveighed up and down in the leſſer or greater Channels of the Earth. The Lord doth ſo much know how uſeful and beneficial the Dew is to the Earth, that it is ſaid to drop down by his knowledg; as if the Lord did exerciſe a very ſpecial knowledg about it. The Clouds are Gods Veſſels, which being lockt up by him, keep in their precious liquor, and being opened by him, pour it down in Rain, drop and deſtil it down in Dew, whereof (*Solomon* in the place laſt cited) aſſureth us, there is not a drop that falleth but he takes notice of it, and therefore ſaith, by his knowledg the Clouds drop down Dew: And indeed ſuch and ſo wonderful is the deſtillation of the Dew, that it may well be ſaid to drop even through his divine fingers.

The Dew is very uſeful and beneficial to the Earth two ways or in two things chiefly.

Firſt, It moiſtens the Earth: Secondly, It cools the Earth. When *Iſaac* was giving the bleſſing to *Jacob*, he put this in particularly (*Gen.* 27. 28.) *God give thee of the Dew of Heaven, and the fatneſs of the Earth, and plenty of Corn and Wine*; implying that the fatneſs of the Earth cauſing plenty of Corn and Wine, is cauſed by the Dew of Heaven. Anſwerable to this bleſſing given by *Iſaac* to his ſon *Jacob*, is that promiſe or propheſie given out by *Moſes* (Deut. 33. 28.) *The Fountain of Jacob ſhall be upon a Land of Corn and Wine; alſo his Heavens ſhall drop down Dew.* By *the Fountain of Jacob* ſome underſtand the poſterity of *Jacob*, or the whole houſe of *Iſrael* ſpread abroad like the overflowing of a Fountain, to which *David* ſeems to allude (*Pſal.* 68. 26.) *Bleſs ye God in the Congregations, even the Lord from the Fountain of Iſrael*, or (as the words may be rendred) *Ye that are of the Fountain of Iſrael.* Now, ſaith *Moſes*, in that Propheſie, *The Fountain of Jacob ſhall be upon a land of Corn and Wine*; That is, upon a plentiful land: *alſo his Heavens ſhall drop down Dew*; That is, he ſhall have the beſt bleſſings of Heaven: Temporal bleſſings (as *Canaan* was of Heaven) being but a ſhadow of ſpiritual and eternal bleſſings. And when the Lord would ſhew how plentious in mercy (chiefly in ſpiritual mercies) he would be to his people, he ſaith (*Hoſea* 14. 5, 6.) *I will be as a Dew unto Iſrael and he ſhall grow as the Lilly, and caſt forth his roots as Lebanon; his branches ſhall ſpread, and his beauty ſhall be as the Olive tree, and his ſmell as Lebanon.* Thus the Lord ſpake by the Prophet, in alluſion to thoſe great effects which the natural Dew produceth on Earth. *Solomon* having ſaid (*Prov.* 19. 12.) that, *the* (juſt and deſerved) *wrath of a King is like the roaring of a Lion*, preſently adds, *but his favour is as the Dew upon the graſs*; That is, he exceedingly comforts and refreſheth the hearts of all upon whom his favour falls. And when the Prophet *Micah*, (*Chap.* 5. 7.) would ſhew how great a bleſſing the people of God would be to any place where they were caſt, he ſaith, *The remnant of Jacob ſhall be in the midſt of many people* (how?) *as Dew from the Lord, and as ſhowers upon the graſs.* By *the remnant of Jacob*, he means the choſen and faithful remainder of *Jacob* after many ſcatterings and trials; thoſe few of the people of God in the midſt of the World whereſoever they are, ſhall be as Dew upon the graſs; That is, they ſhall be a great bleſſing to them. The world will ſcarce let that remnant be any where, in ſome places of the world there are ſcarce any of them, yet ſee of what benefit they are to any place, *They are as Dew from the Lord.* The Apoſtle uſeth ſuch an expreſſion concerning himſelf and other faithful Miniſters of the Goſpel (2 *Cor.* 2. 15.) *We are unto God a ſweet ſavour of Chriſt in them that are ſaved, and in them that periſh*; That is, we are a means of ſalvation and eternal life to them that are ſaved, and we offer eternal life and ſalvation to them that periſh. So ſaith the Prophet concerning all the remnant of *Jacob*, *they ſhall be in the midſt of many people as a dew upon the graſs, that waiteth not for man, nor tarrieth for the ſon of man; they ſhall be as a Dew from the Lord*; That is, there ſhall be a great multitude of them, and they ſhall be as a Dew, that is, they ſhall diſtil ſweetly upon thoſe *many people as a Dew from the Lord, and as the ſhowers upon the graſs, that tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the ſons of men.* The graſs in the field is not watered by man, as herbs and flowers in a garden are, and therefore may be ſaid not to tarry, nor to depend upon man, nor upon the ſons of men, but upon God for the Dew and Showers of Heaven to water it. Thus thoſe many people ſhall have help and ſweet ſupplies; though men neglect them, yet God will take care of them, and ſend the remnant of *Jacob*, ſome or other that are faithful, to be as a Dew from him upon them, to make them grow and be fruitful.

Before I paſs from this verſe, we may conſider a threefold alluſion of the Dew.

First, To Chriſt himſelf. One of the Ancients expounding that place (*Judges* 6. 37, 40.) where *Gideon* deſired as a ſign from the Lord that he would ſave *Iſrael* by his hand, that the Dew might fall on the Fleece, the floor remaining dry; and afterward, that the Dew might fall upon the floor, the Fleece remaining dry; concludes, *The Dew in the Fleece, is Chriſt in the Virgin.* Jeſus Chriſt indeed came down from Heaven as the Dew, for the refreſhing and comforting of poor ſinners; he came down alſo as a Dew to make us fruitful and grow as the Lilly, and to caſt forth our roots as *Lebanon.*

Ros in vellere, Chriſtus in virgine. Rupertus in Hoſ. 14.

Secondly, In the Dew there is an alluſion to the word of God preached. The diſpenſers of the Goſpel are compared to Clouds; *Moſes* was a Cloud, and his *ſpeech diſtilled as the Dew*, (Deut. 32 2.) That is, it came down ſweetly and efficaciouſly. As *the manna and the Dew fell* *together* (Exod. 16. 12, 14.) ſo the graces, comforts, and powers of the Spirit come with the word; there's dew with the Manna, and Manna with the dew. When the dew of divine doctrin comes down, Chriſt the Manna comes down too.

Thirdly, It carries in it an alluſion to that ſweetneſs of affection that is among Brethren (*Pſal.* 133. 1.) *Behold how good and how pleaſant it is, for Brethren to dwell together in unity!* Then follows (*Verſ.* 3.) *As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that deſcended upon the mountains of Zion; for there the Lord commanded the bleſſing, even life for evermore.* Love and unity among brethren is like dew, it refreſheth them and makes them fruitful; *They who provoke one another to love, will alſo to good works* (Heb. 10. 24.) Unity makes a great increaſe. Small things grow great by concord, whereas diſcord dwindleth or reduceth great things to little things, and at laſt to nothing.

Concordia parvæ res creſcunt, diſcordia magnæ dilabuntur.

So much of Gods Father-hood or relation to the Rain and Dew: In the next words he is pleaſed to enquire of *Job* concerning the original of Ice and Froſt.

Verſ. 29. **Out of whoſe womb came the Ice?**

Theſe words are an elegant Metaphor taken from Child-bearing. What woman can the Ice call Mother? God is here compared to a Mother, for the ſame reaſon for which he was before compared to a Father. We are to note (ſaith *Aquinas* upon this place) that Cold is the cauſe of Ice, which is a feminine or womaniſh quality; but the cauſe of rain and dew is heat, which is a maſculine or manly quality. And therefore the Lord ſpeaking of the generation of rain and dew, uſeth the word Father; and about the generation of Ice and Froſt he uſeth a word moſt proper to the Mother; *Out of whoſe womb came the Ice?* The word rendred *womb* ſignifies the whole belly, yea the whole body. Thus (*Pſal.* 132. 11.) *Of the fruit of thy body, &c.* The Hebrew is *belly*, ſo the word is uſed (*Gen.* 15. 4. 2 *Chron.* 22. 21.) but according to our Tranſlation it ſtrictly relates to the Mother, as if God would take upon him both ſexes, and be, as, the Father of *the rain and dew*, ſo, the Mother of the *Ice* and *Froſt*. The Ancients inſiſt much upon this ſetting forth the glory of God in the former verſe as a Father, and here as a Mother, out of whoſe womb the Ice comes; and they tell us of ſome who never had Scripture light, that yet did ſpeak of God according to this Notion, calling him *Mother-Father*. They looked to God, and honoured him, as having not only the power of a Father, but the care of a Mother conceiving, nouriſhing, nurſing, and educating the Creature as a Mother doth her Children; and therefore called God *Mother-Father*, and ſo much this change of the word in the Text doth imply. *Out of whoſe womb*

Clemens Alexandrinus, l. 5. Strom. *Docet Deum μητροπάτορα ab* Orpheo *vocatum.*

Came the Ice?] Yet this manner of ſpeaking ſignifies no more than this, that Ice and Froſt are cauſed and brought forth by the power of God. The word rendred *Ice*, comes from a root which ſignifies to *make bald, or to pull off the hair*, becauſe when Froſt and Ice come, they quickly pull off the leaves from the trees, and the flowers from the herbs, they make all bare-headed, and ſo Ice hath its denomination from that effect; *Out of whoſe womb came the Ice?*

קרח *Gelu. Radix, evulſit pilos; quia gelu terram gramine, arboresplantaſquefoliis dejectis quaſi glabrat.*

And the hoary froſt of Heaven, who hath gendred it?

The word rendred *hoary* froſt, ſignifies *to cover over*, becauſe the hoary froſt covers all over. The trees and herbs, all things above ground, are covered with the hoary froſt, therefore it hath its name from *covering*; and here the Lord calls it, *The hoary Froſt*

כפר *Texit, operuit.*

Of Heaven.] Becauſe the cold which makes the hoary Froſt, comes from the Air, which is often in Scripture called *Heaven*.

Hence Note; *The Lord will be acknowledged as the Author of Ice and Froſt.*

They are the effects of his power and declaration of his glory; and therefore the Lord calls ſuch-like meteors to praiſe him, (*Pſal.* 148. 8.) as evidences or proofs of his power and wonderous works (*Pſal.* 147. 16, 17.) *He ſcattereth his hoar Froſt like aſhes, he caſteth forth his Ice like morſels; who can ſtand before his cold?* The Lord takes the Ice and Froſt and Cold to be his; it is not only *his Sun*, but *his Ice*, and *his Froſt*; he ſcatters *his hoar Froſt* like aſhes. The Froſt is compared to aſhes in a threefold reſpect: Firſt, Becauſe the hoar Froſt gives a little interruption to the ſight. If you ſcatter aſhes into the Air, it darkens the light, ſo doth the hoary Froſt. Secondly, *hoary Froſt is like aſhes*, becauſe near in colour to aſhes. Thirdly, 'Tis like aſhes, becauſe there is a kind of burning in it; Froſt burns the tender buds and bloſſoms, it nips them, and dries them up. The hoary Froſt, hath its denomination in the Latin Tongue from *burning*, and it differs but a very little from that word which is commonly uſed in Latin, for a coal of fire. The cold Froſt hath a kind of ſcorching in it, as well as the hot Sun: Unſeaſonable Froſts in the Spring, ſcorch the tender fruits, which bad effect of Froſt is uſually expreſt by *Carbunculation* or blaſting. Froſt is ſometimes a great benefit, and ſometimes a great ſcourge; when it comes opportunely and in ſeaſon, 'tis a great benefit; but if it comes in the ſpring of the year, if it comes when the youth of the ſpring, buds and bloſſomes, are put forth, it proves very detrimental, and kills that hopeful ſpring of the Earth, which the warmth of a benign Sun and wind had invited out. The Froſt of a few nights hath ſpoiled the hopes of Husbandmen and Vine-dreſſers, for the whole year. Froſt is both a benefit and a ſcourge; whether it proves the one or the other, it is God who gendreth it, and muſt therefore be acknowledged in it.

Unde pruinæ nomen, è perurendo, quod fruges perurit, & vocant carbunculationem.

As in this 29. verſe God declares himſelf the Author of the Froſt and of the Ice, and, in opening it, ſomewhat hath been ſaid of their effects, ſo in the next verſe one remarkable and very forcible effect of the Froſt is held forth, that we may learn (and 'tis no more then our experience and eye-ſight have often taught us) what cold or Froſt can do. Why, what can it do? It can turn water into ſtones. Such is the power of cold, that it hardens the liquid water like a ſtone. Ice in its very firſt appearance hath the reſemblance of a ſtone, and being very thick as in long Froſts) 'tis like a rock, like a mountain of ſtone: Thus the Text ſpeaks.

Verſ. 30. **The waters are hid as with a ſtone.**

That is, when extream cold freezes the waters into Ice, the waters are not ſeen, they are lockt up, and (as it were) paved over with a ſtone; or the waters ſeem to ſuffer a ſtrange metamorphoſis, and leaving their natural liquidity and ſoftneſs, are condenſed or hardened into rocks; ſuch is the force of cold. Some expreſs it actively, not as we, *The waters are hid*, but *the waters hide themſelves like a ſtone.* Thus Mr. *Broughton* expreſſeth it. Naturaliſts tell us that in ſome cold Countries, where there are great falls of ſnow and rain, the ſnow and rain grow into ſuch a hardneſs, that you cannot reduce them into water. Cryſtal (ſay they) is nothing but water hardened by cold: And thus water is more than hid as with a ſtone, for it becomes a ſtone.

Nives in Cryſtallum durantur. Plin. l. 37. c. 2. κρύσταλλος τὸ διὰ τοῦ κρύους συστελλόμενον ὕδωρ. i. e. *Aqua frigore concreta.*

Hence Note; *The Lord can make wonderful changes in Nature.*

What is more fluid than water, more moveable than water; it was of old grown into a divine Proverb (*Gen.* 49. 4.) *Unſtable as water*; yet this unſtable body can the Lord change into a ſtone, and make it hard as a rock. Hiſtories are full of ſtrange reports concerning the effects of cold. There have been ſuch Froſts and Freezings, that great waters, mighty rivers, yea ſome parts of the Sea have been turned into a ſtone: Houſes have been built upon theſe congealed waters, and Battels have been fought upon them. The Army of King *Mithridates* overcame the enemy in a pitcht Battle upon the Ice. And 'tis freſh in memory, how the late King of *Sweden* a few years ſince, paſſed his Army over an arm of the Sea, in his war with *Denmark*. So fierce and violent is the cold in ſome parts of *Muſcovia*, that a mans ſpittle is frozen (ſay ſome) in its paſſage from his lips to the ground; much more may it be ſo, with cold water ſprinkled in the Air.

Strabo l. 2.

Danubius ripas gelu jungit duratuſque glacie ingentia tergo bella tranſportat. Plin. in Panegy.

Now as the power of God is great in hardning that which is ſoft, ſo in ſoftning that which is hard. He that turns water into a ſtone, can turn ſtones into water. So the Pſalmiſt

Concreſcunt ſubitò currenti in flumine cruſtæ. Undaque jam tergo ferratos ſuſtinet orbes, puppibus illa prius patulis nunc hoſpita plauſtris. Virg. *l.* 3. Georg.

Pſalmiſt expreſſeth the miracle of bringing water out of the rock for *Iſrael* in the wilderneſs (*Pſal.* 114. 7, 8.) *Tremble thou Earth at the preſence of the Lord, at the preſence of the God of Jacob, which turned the rock into a ſtanding water; the flint into a fountain of Waters.* This is a glorious work, the turning of a viſible rock into water; but the work of God is more glorious in ſoftning a hard heart, or in turning the rocky heart of an impenitent ſinner, or the inviſible rock of an impenitent ſinners heart into the waters of godly ſorrow, working repentance not to be repented of. We ſhould much more magnifie the power of God, when we ſee hearts of ſtone melted and diſſolved into thoſe ſpiritual waters, then when (though that be a mighty work of God) we ſee the natural waters turned into, or (as the Text gives it) *hid as with a ſtone,* or when we ſee (as it followeth in the Text) that

The face of the deep is frozen.

That is, the uppermoſt part of the deep is frozen; and, I conceive, the Lord puts this in (*the face of the deep*) to ſhew that the cold hath not only power in the ſhallow ſtanding waters, but in that which is deep, and deep to amazement; ſo deep, that it is called, *The Deep*; as if all other waters were but ſhallows, compared with that. So then, not ponds only and rivers and ſhallow waters, but *the face of the deep,* where one would think the Froſt could have no power, is frozen.

Quaſi ligata & captivata eſſet.

The Hebrew is, *The face of the deep is taken.* The word notes taking, as a Captive or Priſoner is taken. The Lord takes the face of the deep Captive, and holds it as his Priſoner during pleaſure. They who inhabit or travel to the Northern Climes, have ſo much experience that *the face of the deep is frozen,* that I need not further inſiſt upon any proof of it; nor ſhall I further treat of theſe effects of Cold, Froſt and Ice, as conſidered in a natural way: Only for the cloſe of all, and a little improvement of them in a moral or ſpiritual way, we may conſider them in a twofold reſemblance.

Firſt, Ice and Froſt reſemble all humane things. The things of this World, are they not like a Sea of Ice? That is, Firſt, Very ſlippery. Secondly, Very Uncertain, how long they will laſt or continue. Some conceive, that, the Sea of glaſs like unto Cryſtal, which was repreſented unto St. *John* in Viſion (*Rev.* 4. 6, and 15, 2.) ſignified the ſtate of the world, which is like *a Sea,* becauſe of the tumultuouſneſs of it; and like *a Sea of glaſs,* becauſe of the brittleneſs of it; and *a Sea of glaſs like Cryſtal,* becauſe of the clearneſs and tranſparency of it to God; he ſees quite thorow it: to him all things are naked and and manifeſt. Such a thing is the world, 'tis a frozen Sea, eſpecially for the ſlipperineſs and uncertainty of it. For though the Sea be turned into a ſtone, yet no man knows how ſoon a Thaw may diſſolve it back again into water? The things of this world ſuffer ſudden changes. Though men have worldly eſtates, like to mountains of ſtone or rocks, yet the Lord can make theſe mountains, theſe rocks, melt at, and flow down at his preſence (*Iſa.* 64. 2.) The greateſt mountains of worldly power and riches, which ſeem to be as hard as rocks, as compact as mountains of Adamant, are yet but like mountains of Ice before the Lord; if he let forth but a little heat of his anger and diſpleaſure againſt them, they melt like wax before the fire, or like a heap of ſnow before the Sun, and flow down preſently like water. Should we ſee men building upon the Ice (as ſome have done in a proper ſenſe) we would preſently ſay, they build upon a very unſure foundation. They who build their hopes upon any perſon or thing in this word, are no wiſer, and do no better then they who build upon the Ice. All things here below are uncertain, they may, yea, they muſt ſoon melt and paſs away, from us, or we from them.

Secondly, Ice and Froſt, the cold ſeaſon, of which the Text ſpeaketh, reſembles a ſtate of affliction and adverſity; that's Ice, that's Froſt. As warm Sun-ſhine reſembles a ſtate of proſperity, ſo Cold and Froſt a ſtate of adverſity; and ſo it doth in a four-fold reſpect.

οὐ δοκεῖ χαρᾶς εἶναι ἀλλὰ λυπῆς.

Firſt, Becauſe Froſt or Cold is unpleaſant and pinching to the body, eſpecially to weak and tender bodies. *No chaſtening* (ſaith the Apoſtle, *Heb.*12.11.) *for the preſent ſeemeth* (to ſenſe and fleſh) *to be joyous, but grievous,* or (as the Greek ſtrictly) *ſeemeth to be of joy but grief.*

Heyl.Geog

Secondly, Ice and Froſt continue not, they are but for a ſeaſon, a Thaw will come. The afflicted ſtate of a godly man is unpleaſing, yet not laſting, to be ſure not everlaſting. Though ſome Froſts hold longer then others, yet none hold always, Summer will come; and uſually where winter is fierceſt, Summer, for a recompence, is pleaſanteſt. Our Modern Geographer having deſcribed the ſharpneſs of Winter in *Muſcovia,* concludes thus; *Such is their Winter, neither is their Summer leſs miraculous. For the huge Seas of Ice which in a manner covered the whole ſurface of the Country, are at firſt approach of the Sun ſuddenly diſſolved, the waters quickly dried up, and the Earth dreſſed in her Holy-day Apparel, ſuch a mature growth of fruits, ſuch flouriſhing of herbs, ſuch chirping of Birds, as if it were a perpetual ſpring.* And that the Church of God after a ſad and cold winter of affliction is relieved by a ſweet and comfortable ſummer of proſperity, is ſet forth in the higheſt ſtrains and moſt beautiful flowers of divine Rhetorick by Chriſt in that invitation to his Spouſe (*Cant.* 2. 10, 11, 12, 13.) *My beloved ſpake and ſaid unto me, Riſe up my love, my fair one, and come away; for lo, the winter is paſt, the rain is over and gone* (that is, thy afflictions are ended, thy Clouds of ſorrow, and thy tears are over-blown and wiped away, and now behold a ſucceſſion of better things, even of whatſoever may call out thy joys, and renew thy comforts; for) *the flowers appear on the Earth, the time of the ſinging of birds is come; the voice of the turtle is heard in our land: the figg-tree putteth forth her tender figgs, and the Vines with the tender grape, give a good ſmell.* Here's a new face of things indeed; what can be added to the felicity of that eſtate which is ſhadowed under theſe Metaphors? Such a Summer of ſpiritual felicity in temporal liberties, after a winter of temporal ſufferings in her ſpirituals, did Chriſt invite his Church in general unto: And this may relieve particular Chriſtians in their afflictions. The cold Froſt ſeldom laſts long, never always.

Thirdly, Though Cold and Froſt be pinching and troubleſome while they laſt, yet they have a very good effect upon the Earth while they laſt. Firſt, they mellow the Earth. After a laſting Froſt the clods of Earth crumble eaſily, whereas if it lie all the Winter without a Froſt, they are more ſtiff, and not ſo fit for husbandry: Thus afflictions mellow the heart of man, and make it more fit for Gods husbandry. As Froſt dries up the ill humours of the Earth, ſo doth affliction thoſe of the Soul; and thereby prepares it to receive the ſeed of the Word. When God afflicts his people, it is *for their profit, that they may be partakers of his holineſs*; That is, that they may profitably improve all thoſe means which he hath apointed to make them more holy. And hence,

Fourthly, As Froſt and Cold kill the weeds and worms which eat the roots and hinder the growth of Herbs, Corn, and Plants; ſo afflictions kill our luſts, thoſe worms and weeds that breed and grow in our hearts, always hindering the fruitfulneſs, ſometime to the utter unfruitfulneſs, of the ſeed of the word ſown among us and upon us (*Matth.* 13. 22.) The Froſt of affliction is a means to prevent the worm which breeds naturally out of the corruption of our hearts, even that terrible worm ſpoken of (*Iſa.* 66. 24.) the worm of conſcience. As there are Worms of Corruption, Pride, Covetouſneſs, Wrath, Wantonneſs, *&c.* In our hearts; ſo out of theſe that tormenting worm breeds, called the worm of Conſcience. Now, the Froſt of affliction which God ſends upon us, is very effectual, as to kill theſe worms of corruption which eat the roots of our graces, and hinder our fruitbearing; ſo to prevent the life of that worm of Conſcience, which (as the Prophet ſpeaks in the place laſt named) *never dyeth.*

Therefore, as when the Lord ſends Froſt, though it make us ſhake, and we have a hard time of it, yet no man riſeth up in paſſion and ſaith, I had rather die, and be out of the world, than live in ſuch a ſeaſon; No, men know that a Froſty ſeaſon is a wholeſome ſeaſon, and they know Summer will come and make amends. So when we are in the Winter of affliction, let us not be impatient nor unquiet; let us not think that the froſt will ruin and undo us.

Though Ice be upon every water, though Icicles hang upon every twig, do not think this will be at all for your undoing, it may be much for your bettering. Cold weather doth good as well as hot; and if we ſhould have all hot, and no cold, it might be very ill, very bad to us; therefore be not troubled at the cold, nor afraid of ice and froſt, they will not hurt you, unleſs you hurt your ſelves, by your impatience under them. And when 'tis coldeſt, you may warm your ſelves at the fire or Sunſhine of this hope, that ere long the weather will be warmer. As *Athanaſius* ſaid of the trouble given the Church by that Apoſtate *Julian*, *It is but a Cloud, it will ſoon be over*; ſo may I ſay, according to the alluſion in this Text, its but a Winters froſt, Summer will come: This ſhould be the comfort of all that fear God in a day of evil feared or felt. When Chriſt (*Matth.* 24. 32, 33.) had foretold the ſigns of his coming, he ſaid, *Learn a Parable of the Fig-tree, when his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that Summer is nigh: So likewiſe, ye, when ye ſhall ſee all theſe things, know that it is near, even at the door.* As when we ſhall ſee thoſe dreadful appearances, which are the fore-runners of Chriſt coming, ſo when we ſhall feel any chilling froſts of affliction, then we may know that Summer is at hand; when the night is darkeſt, the light is neareſt; when Winter is hardeſt, a thawing Sun leading in the Spring is approaching towards us.

There is but one kind of cold or froſt which we have cauſe to fear, and that is the froſt of unkindneſs, or the coldneſs of affection to God and one another; and I warn all to take heed of that, becauſe it is but too too probable, that this froſt and cold will hang about the hearts of many in the latter days; yea, is it not viſible, are we not ſenſible of that froſt begun, at leaſt, in theſe days? As Chriſt himſelf propheſied of thoſe latter days, (*Matth.* 24. 12.) *The love of many ſhall wax cold*; is not love to God very chill? Is not charity to man, among men, of a complexion, as cold as ice at this day? Take heed of this froſt, of this cold; let not your hearts be frozen in love to God or Man. It is ſad when the ſtreams of charitable bounty are frozen, and the waters of compaſſion hidden as with a ſtone, when the very bowels of men are Ice, and their hearts harder to one another, than the neither Mill-ſtone?

There are two things much to be lamented, whenever they are ſeen or felt among the Sons of men; eſpecially among thoſe who profeſs themſelves the Servants of God. The firſt is heat of anger and wrath. The ſecond is coldneſs of love and zeal. As that heat is apt to kindle unnatural fires, ſo this coldneſs may provoke the Lord to kindle judiciary fires, or fiery judgments. The coldneſs of the air will not hurt us, nor can the froſt of any affliction much annoy us, if our love wax not cold, if the froſt of uncharitableneſs to one another, and of unzealouſneſs (if I may ſo ſpeak) for God and his concerns, take not our affections.

VERS. 31, 32, 33.

Canſt thou bind the ſweet influences of Pleiades? or looſe the bands of Orion?

Canſt thou bring forth Mazzaroth in his ſeaſon? Or canſt thou guide Arcturus with his ſons?

Knoweſt thou the Ordinances of Heaven? Canſt thou ſet the dominions thereof in the Earth?

THe Lord having Queſtioned *Job* about his ſkill and knowledg in thoſe Meteors, the Rain, the Dew, the Ice and Froſt, all which were wrought in the Air; riſes yet higher, queſtioning him about the Stars of Heaven, and their ordinary effects upon the Earth, and all ſublunary bodies.

In theſe three Verſes, the Lord points at the four quarters or ſeaſons of the year; over which the four Stars or Conſtellations mentioned in this context have a predominance, according to the appointment of God in the courſe of nature: He points at Spring and Winter in the 31. Verſe; he points at Summer and Autumn in the 32. Verſe; and he ſpeaks of both more generally in the 33. Verſe.

The ſum of the 31. Verſe may be thus given; as if the Lord had ſaid, *O Job, Canſt thou alter the ſeaſons of the year?* Firſt, *Canſt thou retard, or keep back the Spring? Canſt thou hinder the riſing and appearance of the* Pleiades *or ſeven Stars, ſo called? Canſt thou ſtop the deſtillation of their influences, proper to the introduction of that ſeaſon?* Or, Secondly, *Canſt thou keep off the Winter, that it come not, or haſten it away when it is come, by diſſolving the colds and froſts with which the conſtellations of that ſeaſon bind up the Earth, and ſo ſhorten that unkind and comfortleſs quarter of the year?* This is the plain meaning of the Text, and of thoſe hard or ſtrange words, *Pleiades, Orion, Mazzaroth, Arcturus*, uſed in it; all which Conſtellations are conceived to have their ſpecial operations upon the four quarters of the year reſpectively: For, though the acceſs of the Sun hath the chief hand in making ſpring and Summer, and the receſs of the Sun in making Autumn and Winter; yet the Sun doth it not alone, but hath the aid of other adjuvant cauſes in nature, by which thoſe great changes are in part effected and produced.

Efficit quidem Sol acceſſu & receſſu ſuo iſtas anni tempeſtates, ſed habet præterea adjunctas & adjuvantes cauſas. Merl.

Further, the Reader may take notice, that three of theſe four Stars or Conſtellations, as expreſſed in our Tranſlation, *Pleiades, Orion, Arcturus*, are not literally in the Hebrew Text; nor were they known by thoſe names, when either *Job* or the Pen-man of this Book lived, but were long after brought into uſe by the learned *Grecians*, and from them derived unto us; and we make uſe of theſe names, according to the received opinion, expounding the Hebrew names by them.

I ſhall not ſtay here in opening their derivations or ſignifications in either language, having done it already at the ninth Verſe of the ninth Chapter of this Book, where *Job* himſelf ſpake of theſe conſtellations, attributing this glory to God, that he it is, who *makes Arcturus, Orion, Pleiades, and the Chambers of the South*, which laſt are ſuppoſed to be the ſame with *Mazzaroth* here in this Verſe.

Verſ. 31. **Canſt thou bind the ſweet influences of Pleiades?**

That is, canſt thou ſtop their riſing, or the giving forth of their influences, which open the Earth by a kindly warmth, and cauſe graſs and corn, herbs and flowers, plants and trees of all ſorts, to ſpring and put forth? Canſt thou bind them up from exerting their natural effects and proper operations? Certainly thou canſt not. He that is bound, cannot do what he would, nor what he could, nor what he daily did when at liberty. The *Philiſtims* had a great mind to bind *Sampſon*, ſuppoſing that then he could not put forth his mighty ſtrength to miſchief them. Priſoners, when bound and laid in chains can do nothing. As there is a binding to do, ſo a binding not to do; and that not only with material cords, but metaphorical vows, oaths and promiſes. We commonly ſay, He that is bound muſt obey: But can any bind the Stars to obedience? What, or who but God, can bind or ſtay, either the conſtant motions or miniſtrations of the Stars? *Sampſon* could not be bound by the *Philiſtims* till he betrayed himſelf, and diſcovered the ſecret where his ſtrength lay. Who knows where the ſtrength, force and vertues of the Stars lie? Or if any knew that ſecret, could they climb up to the Stars, and cut off that lock wherein their ſtrength lyeth? Or break the pipes by which their influences are conveyed down to the Earth? *Canſt thou bind*

Pleiades ſunt ſeptem ſtellæ, quæ ortu ſuo primæ navigationis tempus oſtendunt; unde Græcis dicuntur. Πλειάδες ἀπὸ τοῦ πλεῖν, *Quod eſt navigare, Vergiliæ Latinis à vere quo tempore oriuntur.*

The ſweet influences of Pleiades?

The word rendred *Influences*, ſignifies *Delights*, or delicacies, or delicate fruits; and therefore that Garden full of ſinleſs pleaſures, which God himſelf planted for man in his ſtate of primitive innocency and felicity, is called from this word, *the Garden of Eden*, (Gen. 2. 15.) That is, a place of delight, commonly known by the name of *Paradice*; and hence we well tranſlate *ſweet Influences*: the Hebrew is Delights. Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates *Delicacies*; and the interlineal, *Canſt thou bind the delicate fruits that Pleiades brings forth?* That is, the green herbs, the flowers, with other delicacies and delights which accompany the Spring: canſt thou hinder their budding or appearing at Spring-time? When the deformity and dirt of winter depart or paſs away, then their is a new face of things then

Fructus delicatos. Pagn.

עדן ·
עדנ ות
Quod eſt deliciari, aut voluptate & deliciis abundare.

then every buſh flouriſheth, then the trees and fields put on their ornaments, then the ſinging of Birds fills the Air, and makes it reſound with their harmony and melodious muſick. The word is rendred *Dainties* (Gen. 49. 20.) and an adverb coming from this, is uſed (*Lam.* 4. 5.) *They that did fare delicately, are deſolate in the ſtreets.* As alſo (1 *Sam.* 15. 32.) *Agag came unto him delicately. Canſt thou bind the ſweet Influences*

χεῖμα.

Of Pleiades?] The *Greeks* expreſs Winter by a word juſt of the ſame ſound with the Hebrew word *Chymah*, by us rendred *Pleiades*; as if this reſpected the Winter, or were a cold Conſtellation: but certainly here it relates to the Spring; and conſidering that in this place the *Pleiades* are ſaid to give out *ſweet Influences*, the delights and delicacies of the Earth, the word muſt needs be meant of, or intend a benign and favourable Star, a Spring-ſtar, rather than a Winter-ſtar; and therefore the Latines give this Conſtellation its name from the Spring, becauſe then it appears; of which ſee more *Chap.* 9. 9.

Vergiliæ, quaſi veris vigiles.

Further, When this Star, or company of Stars, (theſe *Pleiades*, or ſeven Stars) are ſpoken of by name, we by a *Synecdoche* may underſtand all the Stars: for, what influence ſoever any Star is impowered with, or putteth forth, who can hinder? *Canſt thou bind the ſweet influences of Pleiades?*

> Hence Obſerve; Firſt, *God hath planted a virtue in the Stars of Heaven, which they ſhed down upon the Earth.*

The creatures of the Earth, are (as I may ſay) fed and fattened from Heaven. All *Vegetatives*, graſs, herbs, plants, flowers, trees; all *Senſitives*, beaſts of the Earth, fowls of the Air; yea, and rational creatures too, all men who breath in the Air, and walk upon the Earth, are refreſhed and fed by the influences of Heaven, by the clouds and ſtars. Further, the Stars ſend down their influences, not only upon living creatures in their three ranks, but even upon inanimate creatures; the minerals, the ſtones that lie deep under the Earth, the precious gems, with thoſe of a coarſer grain, receive much from the influences of the Stars. So then, all earthly bodies receive and derive their vigor and beauty from the heavenly; the Sun and Moon have the greateſt power, and there is a very great power in the Stars and Conſtellations, in the *Pleiades*, *Orion*, and *Arcturus*, for the production of great effects.

Secondly, In that 'tis ſaid, *Canſt thou bind*, or ſtop the Influences of *Pleiades*?

> Obſerve, *It is not in the power of man, of any man, to hinder or ſtay the virtue of the Stars from falling down upon the Earth.*

What God will do by the creature, no man can undo. If God ſet thoſe heavenly bodies at liberty, and bids them ſend down their influences, man cannot lock them up, nor impriſon their powers, nor bind them from working?

And hence we may infer. Firſt, if none can bind the influences, nor ſtay the comfortable virtue of the ſtars, when God is pleaſed to let them out; Then much leſs can any bind or hinder the influences of the Spirit. When God is pleaſed to ſend his Spirit to work upon the heart of man, who can let him?

There is a threefold influence or work of the ſpirit of God upon the ſoul of man.

Firſt, To enlighten, or to give the light of the knowledg of his own glory in the face of Jeſus Chriſt. Who can hinder God, when he purpoſeth thus to inſtruct and teach the ignorant, and make them wiſe unto Salvation, wiſer then their teachers; who can hinder it?

Secondly, To convert, to work faith and repentance, together with love, humility, &c. Theſe graces are deſtilled, and drop down from the Spirit of God upon the ſoul; and who can hinder the Spirit from working them in the moſt hardened and unbelieving ſouls in the moſt vain, proud, and preſumptuous ſoul? The barren'ſt wilderneſs, dryeſt heath (ſuch are perſons unconverted) are made fruitful by the influences of the Spirit.

Thirdly, To refreſh and comfort. There are unſpeakable influences of joy deſtilled from the ſpirit upon believers; and when God will let them down from Heaven, who can let them? What can let them? All the troubles and ſorrows, all the pains and tortures, that men can invent or inflict upon a believer, cannot bind theſe influences of the Spirit, nor hinder joy in believing. The greateſt evils of this life, can neither ſhut up nor ſhut out, that comfort which the Spirit ſpeaketh. The moſt churliſh winds that can blow from the coldeſt quarters of the World cannot chill, much leſs kill or blaſt thoſe fruits of the Spirit, *Love, joy, peace, long-ſuffering, gentleneſs, goodneſs, faith, meekneſs, temperance*, mentioned by the Apoſtle (*Gal.* 5. 22, 23.) The ſoul grows green, like a Garden or Paſture, in the Spring; the ſoul buds, bloſſoms, and brings forth theſe bleſſed fruits abundantly, when fed with theſe dainties and delicacies of the Spirit. Thoſe great floods of trouble and perſecution, which the Serpent, any where, or at any time caſts out of his mouth, cannot prevail againſt the leaſt drop of Conſolation, wrought in the heart by the Spirits influence. *Paul* and *Silas* were bound in Priſon, but there their perſecutors could not bind the ſweet influences of the Spirit from comforting them, nor daunt them by any terror from triumphing in Chriſt; they could ſing in Priſon, yea, they ſung at Midnight.

Secondly, We may Infer; If God hath placed the ſtars in Heaven, to drop down ſweet influences upon us, then at every ſight of the ſtars our hearts ſhould be raiſed up, in the admiring thoughts of the Wiſdom, goodneſs, and power of God. We uſually look upon the Stars, as if they were only ſo many lights beſpangling the Canopy of Heaven, and ſparkling, as ſo many fires in the firmament; but we ſeldom conſider their virtues, their influences, or the wonderful effects which they produce, How few are there, who behold the Heavens with *Davids* eyes? (*Pſal.* 8. 3, 4.) *When I* (ſaith he) *conſider thy Heavens, the work of thy fingers; the Moon and the Stars which thou haſt made: What is man, that thou are mindful of him?* God is mindful of man, not only to give him light by the Moon and Stars, by the benefit whereof he ſees other things; but God gives many unſeen benefits by the Moon and Stars. The influences of the Stars are as beneficial to us, and as great a treaſure as their light. We indeed have great cauſe (as we are commanded, *Pſal.* 136. 7, 8, 9.) to pay the tribute of thanks to God for ſetting up the Sun, Moon, and Stars in the Heavens to give us light; *O give thanks to him that made great lights, the Sun to rule by day, the Moon and Stars to rule by night.* Yet we muſt not confine our thankfulneſs to God for them only as they give us light, for they give us heat as well as light, and wonder-working influences as well as either. *Moſes* (their civil Father) bleſſing the twelve Tribes, as *Jacob* their natural Father did before his departure out of the world, thus beſpake the bleſſing upon *Joſeph* (Deut. 33. 13, 14, 15.) *Bleſſed of the Lord be his land, for the precious things of Heaven, for the dew, and alſo for the deep that coucheth beneath, and for the precious fruits brought forth by the Sun, and for the precious things put forth by the Moon, and for the chief things of the ancient mountains, and for the precious things of the laſting Hills, and for the precious things of the Earth, and the fulneſs thereof,* &c. Here we have two ſorts of precious things. Firſt, *The precious things of Heaven.* Secondly, *The precious things of the Earth, of the hills and mountains.* The former precious things are the cauſe, the latter the effect: The precious things of Heaven, are the influences of the Sun and Moon, under which we are to comprehend the influences of the Stars, theſe cauſe or produce *the precious things of the Earth*; that is, Graſs, Herbs, with all ſorts of Vegetables growing upon the ſurface of the Earth, they produce alſo *the precious things of the ancient mountains and of the laſting hills*; That is, gems or precious ſtones, Gold and Silver, together with all ſorts of inferiour minerals. Now if the ſtars, by their influences, yield us all theſe precious things, have we not much cauſe to admire both the power of God, who hath implanted thoſe vertues and operations in them, as alſo his goodneſs, who hath ordained both thoſe cauſes, and their products or effects, for the benefit and comfort, Yea, for the contentment and delight of man?

Qui negat eſſe Deum ſpectet modo ſidera cœli. Sidera qui ſpectat non negat eſſe Deum.

What is man, that God ſhould be thus mindful of him; that for his ſake and uſe, or for the ſweetning of his paſſage through the wilderneſs of this troubleſome world, he ſhould impregnate the earth by the ſweet influences of Heaven? It hath been ſaid; *Let him look to the Stars of Heaven, who denies the God of Heaven; and doubtleſs he will not only not deny, but not ſo much as doubt that there is a God in Heaven, who duly conſiders the pure Nature, and the irreſiſtible operations of the Stars of Heaven? Canſt thou bind the ſweet influences of* Pleiades?

Or looſe the bands of Orion?] We can neither bind what God lets looſe, nor looſen what God binds. What Chriſt affirmed of himſelf in regard of ſpirituals (*Rev.* 3.7.) *Theſe things ſaith he that hath the Key of* David, *that openeth and no man ſhutteth, that ſhutteth and no man openeth*: the ſame is true alſo in regard of Naturals, and therefore the Lord had no ſooner ſaid to *Job*, *Canſt thou bind the ſweet influences of* Pleiades, but he adds, *or looſe the bands of* Orion?

Tunc cœli & naturæ ordinem immutabis, ut quod Aſtrum Pleiadum *ſolvit conſtringas, aut quod* Orion *conſtringit, ſolvas.* Merc.

There are ſeveral Opinions concerning theſe two Conſtellations of Heaven, yet all agree in this; that one of them is a benign Conſtellation, and very comfortable to the fruits of the Earth, and that the other is as ſharp and churliſh; that the one is very friendly and favourable to all living Creatures, but that the other is a bitter, and as it were a killing Conſtellation; and therefore the Lord ſaith, *Canſt thou looſe the bands of* Orion? When once *Orion* hath and holds the Earth, as it were in bands and chains; when *Orion* hath got the earth in his clutches, and hugs it, in appearance, to death, in his cold arms, who can reſcue it? The *Pleiades* open the earth, and ſet all free; they call up the quickning moiſture, and draw out the verdure of every growing thing: But *Orion* holds all in bands, *Orion* is a hard-natured Conſtellation; the Original word ſignifies to be unconſtant, vexatious, and unquiet; becauſe, under the Dominion of this Star, the air is uſually troubleſome and unquiet.

כסיל à כסל *quod eſt inconſtantem & varium eſſe, quaſi ſignum quod inconſtantiam & perturbationem aeris efficiat.*

Canſt thou looſe, &c.] The word imports opening what is faſt ſhut, or looſing what is faſt bound. When a man is in bands, we ſay, looſe him from his bands. Now ſaith the Lord, *Canſt thou looſe the bands of* Orion? that is, canſt thou free the air from thoſe colds and froſts which bind the body of the Earth, and all things growing out of the Earth in Winter ſeaſon? The word rendred bands, comes from a Root that ſignifies *to draw*: Hence ſome tranſlate, *The Traces of* Orion. Traces are thoſe bands by which Horſes being faſtned to Carts or Waggons, draw them after them: Which expreſſion alludes to that natural power planted in this Star, by which, according to Gods appointment, it draws Rain, Storms, and cold freezing winds after it, and ſo binds up the pores of the Earth. Now ſaith the Lord to *Job*, canſt thou with all thy skill and ſtrength *looſe thoſe bands*, and ſet the Earth at liberty? Thou canſt not. Of this *Orion*, ſee more at the ninth *Chapter* (*ver.* 9) I ſhall only ſay thus much further here, That theſe words ſtand in direct oppoſition to the former, ſhewing that as *Job* could not ſtop thoſe *benign Stars, the Pleiades*, from giving forth their vertues to the Earth; ſo he could not looſe the bands of that ſevere and harſh Star, nor divert the effects which it brings upon the Earth. *Canſt thou looſe the bands of* Orion? Hence learn, firſt, in general,

פתח *Aut attrahentia* Orionis *aperies?* Druſ. *Aut lora* Orionis *diſſolves?* Jun. *Vox Hebræa* מושכות *à verbo* משכ *traxit. Funes ejus ſunt operationes, quibus tempeſtates velut funibus attrahit, & frigore conſtringit terram,* Scult. *Sidus hoc oritur in principio hyemis & terram tanquam loris conſtringit,* Piſc. *Nimboſus Orion,* Virg.

Cold is a binder, a great and mighty binder.

Winter binds the Earth from bearing, and it binds the hands of men from working; when a man is extream cold, he can make little uſe of his hands.

And as Natural, ſo Spiritual Cold is a great binder. A cold heart is a bound heart. When the heart hath in it no heat of love to God, or hath not been heated with a ſenſe of the love of God: when the heart hath in it no heat of zeal for the glory of God, nor for the good of men; when theſe ſad colds are upon the heart, 'tis bound indeed. He that hath this cold upon him, can ſay but little to God; and will ſay, and do leſs for God: He is bound not only hand and foot, but tongue alſo. Take heed of cold upon your hearts, it will hinder you from holy activity, bind you up from duty both towards God and man. He that is only luke-warm will do God little ſervice, can do none that is pleaſing and acceptable unto God; but he that is key-cold, as we ſay, neither will, nor can do any thing at all, that may be called ſervice. The Apoſtle *Paul* (*Acts* 20.22.) *was bound in the ſpirit to go to Jeruſalem*, which was a great ſervice for Chriſt; that is, the heat of true affection, which the inſtinct of the holy Spirit cauſed in him, ingaged him beyond all power of revocation to undertake that hazardous journey. But when any are bound in ſpirit by the coldneſs of their affections to Chriſt, they always prove hand-bound and foot-bound; I may ſay (without affectation, according to the uſe of that word in our language) hide-bound alſo, as to any thing that is good; eſpecially, if it be (as it was in the Apoſtles caſe now mentioned) either dangerous or coſtly. And when a Soul is in thoſe bands of the *Myſtical Orion*, the evil ſpirit, ſurely none but God can looſe them, ſeeing none but he can looſe theſe in the Text. *Canſt thou looſe the bands of* Orion, *the Winter-bands?*

Hence note, Secondly, *It is not in the power of man to looſe what God binds.*

The Lord put the queſtion to *Job* about his works, that he might ſee his own weakneſs and utter inability to undo his Providential workings: When God had *Job* in bonds, it was not in his power to looſe his bonds by his ſtrength and ſtriving. The Providences of God were to him as *Orion* to the Earth, cold and ſharp, cauſing the froſt of adverſity to bind him ſo ſtrongly, that he could by no means looſe himſelf. Chriſt ſaith to his Diſciples about Church-cenſures rightly laid, and Church-approbation duly given (Mat. 18. 18.) *Whatſoever ye bind on Earth, ſhall be bound in Heaven; and whatſoever ye ſhall looſe on Earth, ſhall be looſed in Heaven.* Where man binds in Gods way, God binds too; and where man looſes in Gods way, God looſes too; but take it either in natural or ſpiritual things, it is not in the power of man to bind where God looſeth, nor to looſe where God bindeth: *Canſt thou looſe the bands of* Orion? If God appoint cold to bind the Earth, man cannot looſe it; and if God will bind man with the cords and cold iron of any affliction, man cannot free himſelf. In the hotteſt natural ſeaſon of the year, man may be in cold providential bands, and under them he muſt abide till the Lord breaks the froſt, and ſet him free. It is ſaid of *Joſeph* (Pſal. 105. 17, 18, 19.) *He was ſold for a ſervant, his feet were hurt with fetters, he was laid in iron*; or, (as the Margin reads it) *His ſoul came into iron.* But how came he out? did he himſelf looſe the bands of that *Orion* who caſt him into priſon? ſurely no, the Text tells us otherwiſe; he lay faſt enough in bands, *until* (ver. 19.) *the Word of the Lord came; the Word of the Lord tryed him.* But what was this Word of the Lord? ſome ſay, it was the Word of God to *Pharaoh* in a Dream, concerning the ſeven years of Plenty and Famine, which may be ſaid to try *Joſeph*, none but he could interpret it; and that may be ſaid to unlooſe his bands, becauſe it was the occaſion of his deliverance and advancement. But I rather conceive the word that came, was the word of Gods Decree and Promiſe made to *Joſeph* in a Dream, for his advancement above all his Brethren (*Gen.* 37. 6, 7, 8.) When once the time came that this Word of God muſt come to be fulfilled, then the bands of *Orion* were looſed; for then (ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*, ver. 20.) *The King ſent and looſed him, even the Ruler of the people, and let him go free.* And as it was with *Joſeph*, ſo with *Job*, and ſo will ever be. If the cold Winter blaſts of any adverſity bind up our comforts, either in our Callings or Relations, there is no unlooſing them until the word of the Lord come. *Solomon* giveth this counſel (*Eccleſ.* 7. 13, 14.) *Conſider the work of God*; that is, his working in the world. The reaſon of this counſel follows; *For, who can make that ſtrait which he hath made crooked? Solomon* intends this ſpecially of the dealings of God in the world; not that there is any crookedneſs or unrighteouſneſs, any iniquity or injuſtice in the ways of God; but he means by crooked, that which is troubleſom and grievous. Now if God himſelf make a thing crooked, till he himſelf make it ſtrait, it is not in the power of all the men in the world to do it. The moral ſenſe of that Text, is the very ſame with the point in hand; If God bind, who can looſe? There is no ſtriving, no contending with the Providences of God: we muſt deal with, and apply to God himſelf for the altering of them, we cannot alter them our ſelves; we muſt deſire him to mend his work, we cannot: This *Solomon* plainly intimates in the next, or 13. verſe; *In the day of proſperity be joyful, but in the day of adverſity conſider* (in a time of adverſity things grow crooked and awry from what we would have and deſire, or from what is comfortable to us) *for God hath ſet the one over againſt the other, to the end that man ſhould find nothing after him.* Sometimes he makes things crooked, ſometimes ſtrait; ſometimes he gives a day of proſperity, ſometimes of adverſity, that no man may be able to ſay directly, what ſhall be next. And ſeeing there is no looſing the bands of *Orion* till God himſelf looſe them; therefore let all who are Companions in tribulation, ſay one to another, as they in a like caſe are repreſented (*Hoſea* 6. 1.) *Come, and let us return unto the Lord, for he hath wounded, and he will heal; he hath torn, and he will bind us up:* Or, as this Text ſpeaks, *He hath bound us, and he will looſen us.*

Thirdly, From both the parts of the verſe conſidered together, theſe Negatives upon man muſt be reſolved into Affirmatives, as to God: *He can bind the ſweet influences of* Pleiades; *he can looſe the bands of* Orion,

Whence note; *God can both ſtop the ordinary courſe of our comforts, and deliver us from our troubles when he pleaſeth.*

God can ſtop thoſe things from comforting us, and thoſe perſons from ſhewing us any favour, whoſe diſpoſitions are as benign to us, as *Pleiades* are to the Earth; and he can give us favour in their eyes, who naturally are as churliſh as *Nabal*, and as ſharp as *Orion* to the Earth. He can make a Wolf a Shepherd, and thoſe a ſafety to his ſervants, whoſe hearts were to ſwallow them up. The Earth ſhall help the woman, that is, the worſt of the world, the Church. God made Ravens feed *Eliah* (1 *Kings* 17. 4.) And he ſaid of *Cyrus*, whom he calls a *Ravenous Bird* (*Iſa.* 46. 11.) *He is my Shepherd* (*Iſa.* 44. 28.) Thus the Lord looſed the bands of *Orion.* And when he hardens their hearts againſt us, who formerly were tender towards us, or when he turns their hearts to hate us, who formerly loved us, and ſhewed us favour, then the Lord may be ſaid to bind the ſweet influences of *Pleiades.* What ſweet influences of favour did the people of *Iſrael* receive from *Pharaoh* and the *Egyptians*, at their firſt coming thither, and long after? yet afterwards, what grievous Task-maſters were they to them? their favours were all reſtrained and changed into yokes and bands: whence was this? The *Pſalmiſt* anſwers fully (*Pſal.* 105. 25.) *He* (that is God) *turned their heart* (that is, the heart of the *Egyptians*) *to hate his people, to deal ſubtilly with his ſervants*, and cruelly too. Thus the Power and Name of God is both ways magnified. When as we have the moſt benign *Pleiades* dropping down ſweet influences upon us, God can ſtop them; and when we have the hardeſt bands of *Orion* upon us, the Lord is able to looſe them. This glory is due to God in all the changes which we meet with in this world, whether from good to bad, from the favours to the frowns of men; or from bad to good, from their frowns to their favours, from their bands to their imbraces; all is of God. And I conceive the ſcope of God in theſe queſtions, was chiefly to bring *Job* to that concluſion. The next verſe bears the ſame ſenſe.

Verſ. 32. **Canſt thou bring forth Mazzaroth in his ſeaſon? Or canſt thou guide Arcturus and his Sons?**

This alſo is a denying queſtion; Canſt thou? thou canſt not *bring forth* Mazzaroth *in his ſeaſon.* The word rendred *to bring forth*, is applyed, Firſt, to the birth or bringing forth of children (*Gen.* 15. 4.) Secondly, to the Earths bringing forth Flowers and Fruits (*Judg.* 13. 14.) Thirdly, to the riſing of the Sun or Stars (*Gen.* 19. 23.) (*Neh.* 4. 21.) Thus here, canſt thou cauſe *Mazzaroth* to riſe, and go forth? *Or canſt thou bring forth*

Mazzaroth?] What's that? Some Interpreters conceive, that by *Mazzaroth* we are to underſtand thoſe Conſtellations which Aſtronomers call the *twelve Signs of the Zodiack*, which are expreſſed for learning ſake, by the fancied names of living Creatures; ſo that according to this interpretation, the Suns appearance in, or paſſage through thoſe monthly Signs, is the *bringing forth of* Mazzaroth *in his ſeaſon.* But moſt generally they are taken for the Southern Stars, and thought to be the ſame with thoſe (*Chap.* 9. 9.) called *the Chambers of the South*; and ſeeing the other three are named there, it is not improbable that under this word the fourth is intended. Mr. *Broughton* calls them, *far Stars in the South*: The letter of the Hebrew imports that; and the Seventy derive it from a root, that ſignifies to ſeparate or diſperſe, becauſe thoſe Stars are far ſeparated, or are at a great diſtance from us, who lie under the Northern Pole. *Canſt thou bring forth* Mazzaroth *in his ſeaſon?* that is, canſt thou make that Conſtellation appear in its proper time? thou canſt not. Hence take theſe brief Notes.

Sunt collectiones ſyderum, quæ ujus obtinuit, ut vocentur ζωΐδια *quaſi parva animalia, alii vero dicunt ſignificare* τὸν ἀστρῷον κύνα *ſydereum canem.* Chryſoſt. *apud* Orus. *Colligunt quidam hic* Mazzaroth *eſſe quod ibi dicebatur penetralia Auſtri.* Merc. *Remotiora ſigna* Heb. *ſeparationes*, i. e. *ſidera à nobis qui ſub polo arctico degimus (ut Jobus) ſeparata; ſic autem vocantur ſidera meridionalia quæ oriuntur in principio æſtatis*, Piſc.

The Stars of Heaven are brought forth by ſpecial order and appointment.

As men are brought forth at ſuch a time, in ſuch a place, ſo are they by an order from God; the Stars of Heaven are not under any Law of man on earth, no nor of the Angels in Heaven, (*Pſal.* 19. 4, 5.) *In them* (ſpeaking of the Heavens) *hath he* (that is, the Lord) *ſet a Tabernacle for the Sun, which is as a Bridegroom coming out of his Chamber* (every morning to viſit his Spouſe the Earth) *and rejoyceth as a ſtrong man to run a race*; what is there ſpoken of the Sun, is true of *Mazzaroth* and of all the Stars, whether planted in the Northern or Southern, in the Eaſtern or Weſtern parts of Heaven? 'Tis the Lord who brings them all forth, and that *in their ſeaſon.*

Note Secondly: *The Stars of Heaven have their ſeaſons, and keep their ſeaſons.*

They keep them punctually to a minute, to a moment, they know their times, and they keep time; they have their ſeaſons of riſing, and their ſeaſons of ſetting. (*Pſal.* 65. 8.) *Thou makeſt the out-goings of Morning and Evening to rejoyce*; Some Stars go out in the Morning, others go out in the Evening, their times are various, but they all keep their time, (*Pſal.* 104. 19.) *The Sun knoweth its going down*, that is, the time of its going down, the place of its going down; In this we may ſee what we ſhould do, or our own duty.

Let us come forth in our ſeaſon. The Stars are brought forth in theirs, and ſhall not we! happy are they that *come forth, and bring forth* in their ſeaſon. To hit time is a mercy as well as a duty! *Paul* indeed ſaid of himſelf, (1 *Cor.* 15. 8.) that *he was an abortive*, or *born out of due time.* An abortive in nature, is one that comes into the world before the due time. *Paul*, as to his ſpiritual birth, or new birth through Grace, was not, nor can any one be new-born before the due time. We may rather ſay, that we are new-born too late than too ſoon, or before our time. *Paul* might ſay he had been too long a proud *Phariſee*, a formal Profeſſor, and at laſt, a Perſecutor of thoſe who profeſſed the truth of the Goſpel in truth; and therefore in that ſenſe *Paul* was not an abortive, or born out of due time; namely, before his time: But *Paul* might ſay of himſelf, that he was ſo; Firſt, Becauſe he was the laſt of the Apoſtles that was called. The other Apoſtles were called by Chriſt, while he lived here on Earth: *Paul* was called by Chriſt from Heaven, after his death and departure from the Earth. Secondly, He was born like an abortive, or thoſe that come out of due time, becauſe of the violence and grievous pangs which accompanied his new-birth: He was ſmitten from his horſe to the ground, and lay as one dead in his paſſage to his new life. Such was the ſuddenneſs and violence of his Converſion, that it was moſt like an abortion. Thirdly, The Apoſtle himſelf ſeems to give the reaſon in the next *Verſe*; we know abortives are uſually very weak and imperfect children, and leſs in body than thoſe born in due time. Now ſuch was Saint *Pauls* humility, ſo low was he in his own thoughts, that he calls himſelf (*verſ.* 9.) *the leaſt of the Apoſtles, not meet to be called an Apoſtle.* In all theſe, or in any of theſe notions, the Apoſtle *Paul* might ſay he was born out of due time; yet both as to the truth and ſeaſonableneſs of his Converſion, he was born in due time, and in his full time. Now as there is a due time, a ſeaſon for our ſpiritual birth, ſo for our fruit-bearing in ſpirituals. It is ſaid of every godly man (*Pſal.* 1. 3.) *He ſhall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his ſeaſon*; that is, ſeaſonable fruit. The Stars appear in their ſeaſon, and ſo ſhould the fruits of every

Goſpel profeſſor. If we ſhould ſee Winter-ſtars in Summer, and Summer-ſtars in Winter; if the Sun ſhould riſe at Mid-night, or go down at Mid-day, how prodigious would that appearance and diſappearance be! if the Sun ſhould not riſe, and ſet juſt at the time we look for him, it would breed horrour, and put all men into an amazement. But now the Lord brings forth *Mazzaroth*, and all the Stars in their ſeaſon. O therefore let us look to our ſeaſons; we ſhall be reproved elſe by the Stars of Heaven, *Mazzaroth* will be a witneſs againſt us. *Canſt thou bring forth* Mazzaroth *in his ſeaſon?*

Or canſt thou guide Arcturus **with his Sons.**

A radice נחה *duxit placidè & ſenſim ſicut paſtor oves.* Arcturus *eſt ſtella inſignis, quæ oritur in principio Autumni: Hebræi putant eſſe ſeptem ſtellas quæ ſemper apparent in noſtro hemiſphærio, à congregatione ſic dictas; nam* עיש *eſt congregatio,* Merc. עיש *Sive Cynoſura ſupra alias ſtellas in apice cœli, tanquam mater in alto ſupra filios ſuos ſedens cum iis certiſſima ratione circumducitur.* Coc.

Here's a fourth queſtion: *Canſt thou guide?* The word ſignifies to guide, or conduct gently, ſoftly; canſt thou guide them as a Shepherd guides his Flock? canſt thou guide them as a Father guides his Family, his Wife, Children, and Servants? canſt thou direct them their courſe, how or which way to go? Some think he uſeth the word Guide, becauſe this Conſtellation repreſents the form of a Wain or Wagon, and is by us commonly called *Charles Wain*, or *the greater Bear*. *Canſt thou guide*

Arcturus] That's another Conſtellation, ſeated in the Northern Pole, notably conſpicuous to us in a clear night. 'Tis the Sea-mans mark or guide. The Lord who guides that Star, hath made it a guide to the Seaman in the night; by looking to that, he knows how to make his courſe. *Canſt thou guide* Arcturus

With his Sons.] Some read *Arcturus, and her Daughters*; Maſter *Broughton*, and her Children: We render in the Maſculine Gender, *and his Sons*. There is one principal Star, and ſeveral other Stars that ſtand as Children about their Father or Mother; and therefore the Lord expreſſeth them by that familiar Alluſion, *Arcturus and his Sons, canſt thou guide them?*

Hence note, Firſt, *The Stars have a Guide, a Governour.*

The Stars move as directed: God himſelf is the guide of the Stars, not Man. As a Shepherd guides his Flock in the Field, ſo the Lord guides the Stars in that ſpacious Field of the Heavens; yea, he names and numbers them, as a Shepherd doth his Flock. (*Pſal.* 147.) *He telleth the number of the Stars, and calls them all by their names.* The Prophet exhorting the people *to lift up their eyes on high*, that is, to the Heavens, preſently adds, *and behold who hath created theſe things*, (*Iſa.* 40. 26.) that is, the Heavens, and the furniture of them, *he bringeth out their Hoſt by number* (that is, the Hoſt of the Stars) As an Army is inrolled and numbered, how many thouſands they are; ſo doth the Lord bring forth that Hoſt by number, *and calleth them all by names, by the greatneſs of his might, for that he is ſtrong in power; not one faileth.* There's not one of the Hoſt of Heaven, not one of the Stars that faileth, but comes forth at Gods Call, and appears as it were in Rank and File, when and where the Lord gives Command. Thus the Prophet ſpeaks of the Stars, as Gods Hoſt; and of the Lord, as a Commander or General of an Army, knowing their number, nature, place, and office, muſtering and marſhalling them, ordering them out upon ſervice as he pleaſeth. And whereas in the beſt diſciplin'd Armies of men, many fail when drawn out to ſervice, ſome for fear, others through unfaithfulneſs, not a few through weakneſs and ſickneſs; here's neither weak nor ſick, neither an unfaithful nor a fearful one in this Hoſt, *not one faileth*: Nor doth the Lords memory fail, for he calls them *all by their names*; which ſhews the perfect remembrance, and exact knowledge which the Lord hath of them all. It is reported, as a wonder, of *Cyrus* King of *Perſia*, that he having a vaſt Army, yet knew them by face, and was able to call every man by his name. What then ſhall we ſay of this wonder? The Lord who *guideth* Arcturus *and his Sons*, who leads out this innumerable Army of the Stars, knows every one of them by name, and ſends them forth by name, upon what enterprize or ſervice he pleaſeth.

Plin. *lib.* 7. *c.* 24. Valerius Maximus *lib.* 3. *c.* 7.

The Lord having queſtioned *Job* about thoſe four eminent and well-known Conſtellations, *Pleiades* in the Spring, *Orion* in the Winter, *Mazzaroth* in the Summer, and *Arcturus with his Sons* in the Autumn, to convince him, that as he was not able, nor any man elſe, to alter the natural motions or courſes of the Stars, ſo that neither he, nor any man elſe, was able to alter the courſe of his Providence.

The Lord (I ſay) having done queſtioning *Job* about theſe four notable Conſtellations of Heaven in ſpecial, proceeds to interrogate him more generally about the whole Heavens, in the next Verſe.

Verſ. 33. **Knoweſt thou the Ordinances of Heaven? canſt thou ſet the Dominions thereof in the Earth?**

Surely as thou knoweſt not the ſpecial Laws by which I govern the *Pleiades*, *Orion*, *Mazzaroth* and *Arcturus*, ſo not the general Laws by which the Heavens are governed. *Knoweſt thou the Ordinances of Heaven?* The word here rendred *Ordinances*, is often rendred in the Pſalms *Statutes, Laws, Decrees*: *Knoweſt thou the Laws or Statutes of Heaven?*

The word rendred *Heaven* is of the dual number, as Grammarians ſpeak, becauſe in what part ſoever of the Earth any man ſtands, the Heaven is cut in two parts (as to him) by the Horizon, whereof one part is over him, and the other under him: As there is a Heaven above us, ſo a Heaven below us, though wheresoever any man is on Earth, Heaven is above him. *Knoweſt thou*

The Ordinances of Heaven?] Now the Ordinances of Heaven may be of two ſorts.

שמים חקות

Firſt, Thoſe which God hath given to the Heavens. The Heavenly Bodies move according to his Conſtitutions who made Heaven and Earth.

Secondly, Thoſe which the Heavens give to the Earth, or to man on Earth. The Heavens may be ſaid to impoſe their Laws upon the Earth, men being guided and directed by the changes and motions of the Heavens, how to order many of their motions and actions on the Earth, thoſe eſpecially which concern the Earth. The Heavens give theſe common Laws (as I may ſay) to men concerning the Earth. Firſt, When to Till the Earth. Secondly, When to caſt their Seed into the Earth. Thirdly, When to reap and gather the fruit of the Earth; when to perform any part of Husbandry to the Earth, is known only by the Heavens; that is, the Heavens by their motions and viciſſitudes, ſhew men the ſeaſons of doing theſe and theſe works on Earth. And if men obey not theſe Laws of Heaven, nor obſerve their ſeaſons, they loſe all their labour and coſt beſtowed on the Earth.

Again, when he ſaith, *Knoweſt thou the Ordinances of Heaven?* the meaning may be this; *Are the Heavenly Bodies diſpoſed or impowred by thy wiſdom? haſt thou given them vertue to work upon inferiour Bodies? haſt thou made the Statutes by which they are governed, or by which they govern?* That's the Lords Prerogative.

Hence note; Firſt, *The Heavens are under a Law, they have their Statutes.*

They are under a Law in a threefold reſpect. Firſt, In reſpect of their motion, how and whither they ſhall move. Secondly, They are under a Law as to their influences, where and on whom they ſhall drop them down. Thirdly (Which neceſſarily follows the former) They are under a law as to their effects and operations upon the Creatures, whether for good, or for evil. The Heavens can neither hurt nor help us, but according to higher order. This threefold Law may be underſtood in that one Scripture (*Jer.* 31. 35.) *Thus ſaith the Lord, which giveth the Sun for a light by day, and the Ordinances of the Moon, and of the Stars, for a light by night.*

Note ſecondly; *What all the Laws and Ordinances of Heaven are, is a ſecret to man.*

Knoweſt thou them? ſaith God to *Job*. There are ſome Ordinances of Heaven, or ſome things for which Heaven is ordained, which are eaſily and commonly known; ſuch are the changes of ſeaſons, with the diviſion of night and day, of Winter and Summer. There are alſo ſecret Ordinances and Orders given to the Heavens, according to which they produce many unexpected and extraordinary effects here on Earth; as Drought, and the conſequent of it, Famine; Infection in the Air, and the conſequent of it, Peſtilential Diſeaſes and Mortality. Who knows theſe Ordinances of Heaven? and if theſe are ſo unknown; then we may conclude;

Firſt, If man know not ſuch like ſecret Ordinances of Heaven, ſurely he is much leſs able to underſtand the ſecret Counſels of Heaven. We know but little of thoſe things that are commonly ſeen and felt among us, but there are Reſerves which we cannot know at all.

Secondly, We may hence alſo conclude, If the Heavens have their Statutes and Ordinances, as to their motion, *&c.* then much more hath Man Statutes and Ordinances according to which he ſhould move. The Heavens never move but according to Ordinances. Let us be ſure, that whatever we do, we have an Ordinance or Word of God for it, either expreſs or conſequential. If the Heavens be under ſuch a Rule, ſhall we think God hath left man at random, or without a Rule, how to ſpeak, and think, and do in this world? It is dangerous to move without an Ordinance, much more to move againſt an Ordinance; we ſhould take heed of acting beſides a Law, much more of acting againſt a Law. *Knoweſt thou the Ordinances of Heaven?* (and as it followeth)

שטר à *unde* משטרן שוטר *præfectus, ideo non nemo præfecturam vertit.* Druſ. Τροπὰς οὐρανοῦ *quod* Auguſtinus *interpretatur commutationes cœli. Ponere dominium eſt facere ut dominetur, & quaſi dominum conſtituere. Homo non facit, ſed ſolus Deus.* Druſ. *Qui ſimpliciter judicat & ſententiam pronunciat dicitur* שפט *Sed executor, qui judicatum exequitur & cogit refractarios obedire ſententiæ judicis dicitur* שוטר

Canſt thou ſet the Dominion thereof in the Earth?

Canſt thou ſet his force upon the Earth? So Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates. *To ſet the Dominion*, is to make one have Dominion, and as it were, to appoint a Lord or Governour in the Earth: This is not mans work, but Gods. As if God had ſaid to *Job*, *Canſt thou give power to, or impower the Stars to rule day and night, to cauſe diverſity of weathers, and of ſeaſons, to which all things here below muſt ſubmit, or with which they muſt needs comply?* The word which we read *Dominion*, ſignifies an *under-dominion*, an inferiour Dominion; it ſignifies a Magiſtracy, or Power under a Power. The Hebrew language hath two words, the one ſignifying the power of a Judge, who gives the Rule of the Law; and the other, here uſed, ſignifying the power of a Sheriff, who ſees Execution done. A perſon may be in power, and have great Command, yet not the firſt or chief Command. The Heavens have not a Supream or an abſolute Command over the Earth, but a Dominion by way of Adminiſtration they have, and that a large and great one. Heaven hath a Dominion ſo far, as to execute and fulfil that which God the Supream Judge orders, determines, and gives forth, both concerning perſons and things here on Earth. The Heavens have a Miniſterial Dominion, reſpecting moſt changes wrought in this world. Their Miniſtry reſpects, not only the conſtant and uſual changes of times and ſeaſons barely conſidered, but they have alſo a Miniſtry with reſpect to thoſe uſual and rare changes, which (according to the appointment of God) befal the perſons and conditions of men in this world. *Canſt thou ſet the Dominion thereof in the Earth?* Thou canſt not; but I can and have; I have ſet and determined what Dominion the Heavens ſhall have upon the Earth, or how they ſhall exerciſe their Dominion.

Hence obſerve; *The Heavens have a power on the Earth.*

Some Aſtrologers give them a power of doing all on the Earth, as if both our lives and livelihoods depended wholly upon the Aſpects of Planets: It is not this mans endeavour (ſay they) nor that mans skill, but all flows from the Stars. Theſe make or put the Heavens, which are Gods work, into the place of God himſelf; they put the Heavens into the place of the God of Heaven. All things are in the hand of Heaven, ſay they. We ſay, all things, even the Planets themſelves, are in the hand, and at the diſpoſe of God. We grant, and this Text proves, that the Heavens have a great power upon the Earth; we cannot but ſee and feel what the Sun doth upon the Earth; we ſee it diſtributes the year into four ſeaſons, Summer and Winter, Spring and Autumn; we ſee it makes Equinoxes twice in the year, when days and nights are of an even length, and as many Solſtices, in one of which, days are of greateſt length, and nights in the other. We ſee how the Sun brings forth ſeveral effects in thoſe ſeveral ſeaſons, even the generation or corruption of natural things. We know alſo, that as the North draws the Magnete or Load ſtone, ſo the Sun, the *Heliotrope*, a Flower ſo called, becauſe it follows the motion of the Sun. It is ſaid alſo, that the Sun hath a great power upon the Cock, who therefore croweth about midnight, as if he did then congratulate or welcom the return of the Sun from the Antipodes to our Hemiſphear. Though theſe inſtances are not demonſtrative or concluding, yet they are probable Evidences of the Heavens Dominion in the Earth.

Further, 'tis generally agreed, that the Moon hath a great power upon the Waters, cauſing the Ebbing and Flowing of the Sea; as alſo upon thoſe Inhabitants of the Sea, *Shell-fiſh*, becauſe they are obſerved to increaſe with the increaſe of the Moon, and to decreaſe at the Wane of it.

Nor may we deny the Heavens have a dominion upon the bodies of men; for, though we ſubſcribe not to thoſe fancies of *Aſtronomers*, who have fixed a ſpecial Star as ruling the ſpecial parts of mans body, as you ſee in the Almanacks; who tell us alſo, that in the body of man, the *Sun* anſwers the heart, *Mars* the gall, *Jupiter* the liver, *Mercury* the mouth and tongue, *Saturn* the head; though (I ſay) we ſubſcribe not to theſe, no nor to thoſe other Sentiments of theirs, who aſcribe a ſpecial dominion to the ſeven Planets over the ſeven Ages or Stages into which the courſe of mans life is commonly divided; that is, Firſt, Infancy to the dominion of the *Moon*; Secondly, Childhood to *Mercury*; Thirdly, Youth to *Venus*; Fourthly, Adoleſcency, or the young mans ſtate to the *Sun*; Fifthly, Compleat manhood to *Mars*; Sixthly, Old age to *Jupiter*; Seventhly, Extream or decrepid old age to *Saturn*; yet doubtleſs the Stars have a great power upon the bodies of men, as well as upon Plants, and all ſorts of Vegetables, ſubordinately to the power and appointment of God, who ruleth all things and perſons according to the pleaſure and uncontroulable Soveraignty of his own will.

Again, Naturaliſts tell us (and many are not far from believing them) that the Planets have great power over Minerals and Metals: They ſay, Gold is under the dominion of the *Sun*, Silver of the *Moon*, Iron of *Mars*, Lead of *Saturn*; and that Tin and Copper are under the dominion of that Planet by them called *Jupiter*. Now whether or no God hath ſet theſe Metals under the peculiar dominion of theſe Stars, I will not diſpute; nor will I deny that there may be a natural ſympathy and congeniality between them, nor that their influences may be very operative and effectual towards their generation, production, and full concoction in the bowels of the earth.

Only let us take heed that we be not found giving that to the Heavens which God hath not given them. Remember, the dominion here intended of the Heavens over the Earth, is a Miniſterial, not a Supream dominion; 'tis not, I dare ſay, any ſuch dominion as thoſe Aſtrologers cry up, who would perſwade or make us believe,

Firſt, That the diſpoſitions and manners of all men are under the dominion of the Planets and Stars.

Secondly, That the very way and courſe of every mans life, is ordered by the dominion of Stars and Planets.

Thirdly, That all the ſucceſſes and events, good or bad, of mens actions and undertakings, depend upon the Stars and Planets.

Fourthly, (which ſome have adventured to affirm) That the riſe and fall of great Perſons and Families, together with the growths and declinings of whole Kingdoms and Commonwealths, are under the dominion of the Stars.

Fifthly, That the flouriſhings and decayings of Arts and Sciences depend upon them. Yea,

Sixthly, That the Stars operate much towards the planting and progreſs, towards the rooting up or going back of Religion.

But this Scripture intends not any ſuch dominion of Heaven over the Earth: *Moſes* hath told us long ſince what this dominion is (*Gen.* 1. 14.) *And God ſaid, let there be lights in the firmament of Heaven, to divide the day from the night; and let them be for ſigns, and for ſeaſons, and for days, and for years.* The ordinary lights or Stars of Heaven, are always for ordinary ſigns and ſeaſons; and ſometimes there are extraordinary lights ſeen in Heaven, or the ordinary are ſeen appearing in an extraordinary manner, to ſignifie that God is about to do extraordinary things, or to bring forth extraordinary times and ſeaſons.

So then, they who ſay the Heavenly Bodies have no power, or produce no effects upon the Earth or Earthly Bodies, oppoſe not only the teſtimony of ſenſe and daily experience, but this, and other expreſs teſtimonies of Scripture. And as for thoſe who aſcribe all thoſe things before-mentioned, or any one of them abſolutely to the dominion of the heavenly bodies or luminaries, they put them in the place of God himſelf, and overthrow the common foundations of Religion, which teacheth us to depend wholly upon God for all things; which teacheth us alſo to truſt in him alone, and to look upon his favour (not the favourable looks or aſpects of the Stars) as the fountain of all our good; as alſo to fear him and his diſpleaſure alone (not the diſpleaſed looks of the Stars) as the fountain of all penal evils.

Therefore let us in theſe things ſpeak and think according to ſobriety. All that I ſhall add for the concluſion of this Point is:

Firſt, Let us be warned and awakened by the Signs of Heaven; but let us not be diſmayed at them; let us leave that to the Heathen, who know not God (*Jer.* 10.2.) or rather, let us pray, that the Heathen may no longer be left under that blindneſs and bondage.

Secondly, If any would know what ſhall come to paſs, or would acquaint themſelves with future events, whether with reſpect to perſons or Nations, let them not go to, nor conſult Star-gazers, but the holy Scriptures, the Word of God; for he hath given us a written word, wherein as in a Glaſs we may ſee;

Firſt, What God would have us to do, and how to order the whole courſe of our lives.

Secondly, What good, what bleſſings, what ſucceſſes, we are like to have, or may expect through his free favour to us in Chriſt, we walking humbly, holily, believingly before him.

Thirdly, What evils, what croſſes, what curſes, what miſeries, what miſchances (as we ſpeak) we are ſubject to, and may fear, if we walk proudly, impenitently, frowardly, in the way of our own hearts. We need not go to the Stars, if we would know what is like to befal us in this life; let us conſult the Promiſes, and they will tell us what good we ſhall receive, if we believe and obey; let us go to the threatnings, and they will tell us what evils will be our portion, if we are unbelieving and diſobedient. Let us fear God, not the Stars; let our hope be in God, not in the Stars. If we are evil, and do evil, the moſt auſpicious Conjunctions, benign and promiſing appearances of the Stars in our Nativity, will never produce us any true good; and if we are good, and do good, their moſt inauſpicious, harſh and threatning appearances ſhall do us no hurt: It needs not trouble us under what Star we were born, if we are new born. One being told, that the Stars in power, or which had the dominion in his birth, bare him no good will, anſwered, *I care not for that, I have had a ſecond birth. Do not my words* (ſaith the Lord, *Mic.* 2.7.) *do good to him that walketh uprightly?* doubtleſs they do, and ſo they will, let the Stars do their worſt. Let us ſit down quietly in this aſſurance, That whatſoever Rule or Dominion Heaven hath in the Earth, the Dominion of God is over, and overruleth the Heavens.

VERS. 34, 35, 36, 37, 38.

Canſt thou lift up thy voice to the Clouds, that abundance of waters may cover thee?

Canſt thou ſend lightnings, that they may go, and ſay unto thee, Here we are?

Who hath put wiſdom into the inward parts? or who hath given underſtanding to the heart?

Who can number the Clouds in wiſdom? or who can ſtay the Bottles of Heaven?

When the duſt groweth into hardneſs, and the clods cleave faſt together?

IN the context of theſe five Verſes, return is made to the Meteors of Heavens. The Lord having queſtioned *Job* about the Stars, thoſe pure heavenly bodies, the *Pleiades, Orion, Mazzaroth, and Arcturus with his Sons*; here puts the queſtion afreſh about the aereal bodies, or the natural works of God in the Air. The firſt queſtion concerns the *Clouds*, and the effects or births of them, *the waters*.

Verſ. 34. **Canſt thou lift up thy voice to the Clouds?**

That is, canſt thou do it effectually? *Canſt thou ſpeak ſo loudly that the Clouds above may hear thee; and ſo powerfully, that they will obey thee?* Any man, the meaneſt man may lift up his voice towards the Clouds; but no man, no not the mightieſt man, can lift up his voice to the Clouds, and be heard; that is, be obeyed by them: *Thou canſt not command the Clouds.* Though a man ſpeak, and ſpeak aloud, though he lift up his voice (as God bid the Prophet to his people) like a Trumpet, to the Clouds, yet the Clouds will be deaf at his voice; as deaf as ſinners commonly are at the voice of a Prophet, though lifted up like a Trumpet. The voice here intended, is an effectual voice; ſuch a voice to the Clouds is proper and peculiar to God alone, whoſe power and Empire is ſo great and large, that he can ſtretch forth his voice to the Clouds far and near, all the Air over, and cauſe them both to appear at his call, and preſently to empty themſelves, and pour out their waters according to his direction, upon any Coaſt or quarter of the Earth. The Text is ſingular, *Canſt thou lift up thy voice to the Cloud?* Canſt thou lift up thy voice to any one of them, as it were by name? We render it plurally, *Canſt thou lift up thy voice to the Clouds,* to any one, or to all of them?

Numquid deſcendet ad te pluvia imperio tuo? Vatabl.

That (as it followeth) abundance of waters may cover thee.

As if the Lord had ſaid; If I lift up my voice to the Clouds, they preſently diſſolve and melt, and abundance of waters flow down to cover man and beaſt; to cover the fields, the corn, the graſs; nor is it any marvel, if the Clouds, thoſe thin, and, upon the matter, liquid bodies, melt and flow down at the voice of God, whenas at his voice the Mountains flow down, and the Rocks themſelves, even the hardeſt Rocks are melted into waters, or give forth abundance of water (*Num.*20.8.) *Eliphaz* ſaid to *Job* at the 22.*Chap.* of this Book, and the 11.*Verſ.* *Abundance of waters cover thee.* The words are the ſame there and here, but the ſenſe is very different; *Eliphaz* meant it there, of metaphorical waters, the waters of affliction, with which God covered, yea, almoſt overwhelmed and drowned *Job*; but the Lord ſpeaks here of natural waters. *Job* could not call to the Clouds, and get abundance of thoſe waters to cover him, nor was he able in a way of command to get one drop of water from the Clouds. The words are plain, and the ſcope of them obvious, even to convince *Job* yet further of his inability and frailty; or that he ought to leave God to the government of the world, to the government of Perſons, Families, and Nations, for as much as himſelf was not able to govern a Cloud, nor to order out the leaſt ſhower of Rain.

Hence note; *Man hath no abſolute or ſoveraign power over any Creature.*

Clouds will not be commanded, cannot be commanded by the greateſt and mightieſt of the Sons of men. *Job* was a great Prince himſelf, yet he could not, neither can the greateſt Princes of the world command a ſhower nor a drop of rain to fall from the heavens. Man cannot command the Clouds to rain, either when he will, or where he will, or how much he will; theſe powers belong to God alone. Yet in one ſenſe man may lift up his voice to the Clouds, and abundance of waters will cover him. There is a twofold voice of man: Firſt, A commanding voice; And ſecondly, A praying voice. Let man lift up his commanding voice to the Clouds, as long as he will he ſhall get down no rain, but if man by faith lift up his praying voice to the Clouds, that is, to God, in whoſe hand the Clouds are, he may get rain, yea abundance of waters to cover him. (*Zach.*10.1.) *Ask ye of the Lord rain, in the time of the latter rain, ſo the Lord ſhall make bright Clouds, and give them ſhowers of rain, to every one graſs in the field.* At the voice of man humbly praying, the Lord makes *bright Clouds*, or (as our Margin hath it) *Lightenings*, which forerun black Clouds, to thoſe God gives ſhowers of rain, and thoſe ſhowers of rain give every one graſs, that is, they cauſe all ſorts of Vegetables to ſpring and flouriſh in the fields, both for man and beaſt. This was one of the caſes which *Solomon* put in his prayer, at the dedication of the Temple for the Lords anſwering of prayer. (1 *Kings* 8. 35.) *When heaven is ſhut up, and there is no rain, becauſe they have ſinned againſt thee; if they pray towards this place, and confeſs thy name, and turn from their ſins when thou afflicteſt them; then hear thou in heaven, and forgive the ſin of thy ſervants,* &c. *and give rain upon thy Land.* When the

Clouds are lockt up, when they are as braſs over our heads, prayer moves the Lord to open them, or to melt them down into ſhowers, for the refreſhing and fructifying of the Earth. The Apoſtle *James* (*Chap.* 5. 17, 18.) tells us, that *Elias* covered the Earth with abundance of rain, by lifting up his voice in prayer. *Elias* (ſaith he) *was a man ſubject to like paſſions as we are, and he prayed earneſtly that it might not rain, and it rained not on the Earth by the ſpace of three years and ſix months: And he prayed again, and the Heavens gave rain, and the Earth brought forth her fruit.* The holy Hiſtory makes the ſame report (1 *Kings* 18. 45.) *And it came to paſs in the mean while, that the Heaven was black with Clouds and wind, and there was a great rain,* &c. If we would have rain, we muſt ask for it, and lift up a praying voice to God, who commands the Clouds; it is a vain thing for us to lift up a voice to the Clouds in our own name, to command them to give us rain in the ſeaſon of it.

And as this is true of the Clouds and Rain, ſo of all Creatures; their powers and vertues, their efficacies and influences are not at our command; but if we look up to God, and wait upon him in prayer, he can command them all to give out their vertues both to ſerve our neceſſities, and accommodate our delights. Now, as in this queſtion God ſhews *Job* his inſufficiency to command water, ſo in the next to command fire from the Clouds.

Verſ. 35. **Canſt thou ſend lightnings that they may go, and ſay unto thee, Here we are?**

What lightning is, hath been ſhewed once or twice already, in this and the former Chapter; and therefore I ſhall not ſtay here in any diſcourſe, either about the nature, or the wonderful effects of lightning.

But the Lords manner of ſpeaking, and his purpoſe in ſpeaking here about the lightning, is very conſiderable, and calls for further diſcourſe. *Canſt thou ſend lightnings that they may go,* &c. As if the Lord had ſaid, *If thou canſt not prevail with the Clouds to ſend Rain, canſt thou prevail with them to ſend lightning? haſt thou the command of thunder and lightning?* will the lightnings come forth at thy bidding?

The words may have a double alluſion. 1. To the General of an Army commanding his Souldiers, and they going at his word. 2. To the Maſter of a Family, who gives orders to his Servants, and they go at his word; *Canſt thou ſend lightnings that they may go,*

And ſay unto thee, Here we are? or, as the Hebrew is, **Behold us.**

That manner of ſpeech, *here we are,* or *behold us,* is a deſcription of the moſt ready obedience, either of Souldiers to their General, or of Servants to their Maſter. Will the lightnings obey thee thus, and ſay, here we are? Some expound theſe words, as ſuppoſed to be ſpoken by the lightnings, upon their return from ſome former ſervice given them in charge by God, as having diſpatcht what they were ſent for, and were ready to go again. Hence the Latine Tranſlator gives it thus; *That they being returned (or after their return) ſhould ſay unto thee with reverence, Here we are.* 1. Ready to go whitherſoever thou wilt ſend us. 2. Ready to do whatſoever thou wilt injoyn us. As if the Lord had ſaid; *Canſt thou ſend forth the lightnings, and will they return to thee, and ſay, we have done thy commands, and here we are again to receive freſh commands, or new orders from thee?* Surely, as the rain will not thus obey thee, ſo neither will the lightnings, neither the one nor the other will be thy ſervants, to go of thy Errand, or execute thy will.

Ut reverentia tibi dicent adſumus, Vulg.

The ſame note which I gave before concerning the rain, might be taken up here again concerning the lightnings, *They are not under the command of man,* &c.

Secondly, For as much as the Lord here denies this priviledge, both reſpecting the rain and lightning unto man, he would have us underſtand and know that both are in himſelf; though you cannot, yet I can command them, both are under my dominion. While the Lord ſhews *Job* his impotency to command theſe Meteors, he aſſerts his own Omnipotency; as he hath made them, ſo he can rule them.

Hence obſerve; *All Creatures, even thoſe which ſeem to be moſt out of command, are fully under the command of God.*

What, to appearance, is more out of command than the lightning, that quick, that piercing, that fierce and fiery Creature, yet that ſtirs no more than a ſtone, till the Lord commands; and at his command it ſtirs, and is gone in a moment. *The Lord God hath ſpoken* (ſaith the Prophet *Amos* 3. 8.) *who can but propheſie?* And as a faithful Prophet cannot but propheſie, ſo the not only faithleſs, but ſenſleſs Creatures cannot but do what God hath ſpoken. That of the *Pſalmiſt* (*Pſal.* 104. 4.) which we read, *who maketh his Angels Spirits, his Miniſters a flaming fire;* ſome render thus, *who maketh the winds his Meſſengers, and the flames of fire his Miniſters.* That is, he uſeth tempeſtuous winds and flames of fire as his Meſſengers and Miniſters. The ſame Hebrew word that ſignifieth *an Angel,* ſignifieth *a Meſſenger,* at large; and the ſame word that ſignifieth *a Spirit,* ſignifieth alſo *the Wind.* And as the words, ſo the truth will bear both Tranſlations or conſtructions; for as thoſe higher, or higheſt of Rational Creatures, the Angels; ſo thoſe high Inanimate Creatures, the winds and lightnings, which may properly be called *flames of fire,* are the Miniſters and Meſſengers of God; that is, they go forth and miniſter according to his Word; they ſay, *Here we are.* The Lord by a call, or word ſpeaking, can have whom and what he will to ſerve his purpoſe, and fulfil his Decrees. It is ſaid (2 *King.* 8. 1. as alſo, *Pſal.* 105. 16.) *The Lord called for a famine,* a famine of bread; and he no ſooner called, but the famine came, and ſaid, *Here am I;* the famine preſently brake the ſtaff of bread, and did eat up all the good of the Land. The Prophet *Haggai* (Chap. 1. 11.) repreſents the Lord, ſaying, I *called for a drought* (which is the uſual fore-runner of famine, and the drought ſaid, *Here am I;* it came preſently as ſoon as the Lord commanded. On the other hand, when the Lord made many promiſes under the new Covenant, among other things, he ſaid, *I will call for plenty* (Ezek. 36. 29.) *I will call for the corn, and will increaſe it, and lay no famine upon you.* As in thoſe other places he called for famine and drought, ſo here he ſaith, I will *call for plenty,* and it ſhall ſay, *Here am I;* abundance of corn and graſs, and fruits of the Earth came at that call. Lamenting *Jeremiah* ſpeaking of the woful captivity of the people of *Iſrael,* ſaith (*Lam.* 1. 15.) *The Lord called an Aſſembly againſt me;* that is, I conceive, an Aſſembly of the *Aſſyrians* and *Babylonians,* an Aſſembly of men, an Army of men; he cauſed them to aſſemble and come together; he did but call, and they ſaid, *Here we are,* and we will go vex *Judah* and *Jeruſalem.* Thus, if the Lord call for famine and drought, if he call for an Aſſembly of men, for men aſſembled with the Sword of War in their hand, to puniſh and chaſtiſe any people for their ſin, they will ſurely come and do his pleaſure: whatever the Lord calls for, cannot but come. Take this inference from it;

If the Lord have ſuch a command upon all Creatures, even the Inanimate Creatures; if the Lightnings anſwer him when he calls, Here we are. *Then how readily ſhould men, the beſt of viſible Creatures, anſwer his call, and ſay,* Here we are?

When the Lord ſaid to *Abraham* (*Gen.* 12. 1.) *Get thee out of thy Country, and from thy Kindred, and from thy Fathers houſe, unto a Land that I ſhall ſhew thee,* he never diſputed the caſe, but (ſaith the Apoſtle, *Heb.* 11. 8.) *Obeyed and went out, not knowing whither he went.* He never enquired what the place was to which he was to go, nor what accommodations he ſhould find when he came thither: *Abraham* knew he was to go whither God called him to go, though whither he was to go he knew not. And when long after this the Lord called to *Abraham* (*Gen.* 22. 1.) he ſaid, *Behold, here I am;* or, *Behold me;* as if he had ſaid, Lord, I am here ready to obey thy command, to go of thy Errand, to carry whatever Meſſage thou ſhalt put into my mouth, to do whatever work thou ſhalt put into my hand; and that *Abraham* did not complement with God, it appears in the ſame Chapter, for though when God commanded him to offer up *his Son, his only Son* Iſaac, *whom he loved,* every word was enough to wound his heart, and the laſt deepeſt (to part with a Son is hard, with an only Son harder, with a Son dearly beloved, is hardeſt of all, eſpecially when he muſt be not only paſſive but active in this loſs, and his own hand muſt give the parting blow) yet *Abraham* being called to this hard and hot ſervice, ſaid, *Here am I*, and readily obeyed. This readineſs at the call of God, *David* profeſſed from his own experience (*Pſal.* 27. 8.) *When thou ſaidſt, ſeek ye my face, my heart ſaid unto thee, thy face Lord will I ſeek.* That is, as thou haſt commanded that I ſhould worſhip thee, ſo I do; or, what thou O Lord ſayeſt, is my deſire; thy command is not only the reſolution, but the requeſt and ſupplication of my ſoul. We have the like readineſs of that holy Prophet *Iſaiah*, who (after the Angel with a coal from the Altar had touched his lips, and cleanſed him from his filthineſs) hearing the Lord enquire for a meſſenger, *Whom ſhall I ſend?* preſently anſwered (as the lightning in the Text) *Here am I, ſend me* (*Iſ.* 6. 8.) Lord, I am ready to go whitherſoever thou wilt ſend me. This ſhould be, and in ſome meaſure is the temper of all believers; though they may have, and to their ſorrow find many reluctancies and ſtops, yet this is in the heart of every true believer, to be ready at the call of God, and to ſay, *Here I am.* When the Apoſtle *Paul* had a call to preach the Goſpel of Chriſt, which once he perſeſecuted, *Immediately* (ſaith he, *Gal.* 1. 16.) *I conferred not with fleſh and blood*; he made no delays, much leſs any excuſes, leaſt of all any denials, but *was obedient to the heavenly Viſion.* As ſoon as he had that Viſion and call from God to go and preach the Goſpel, he never ſtood reaſoning and conferring with fleſh and blood, he put no queſtions, he asked not this or that mans Opinion, whether it were beſt for him to go or not; neither did he confer with the fleſh and blood in his own heart, he conferred not with himſelf, he conſulted not his own ſafety, nor any carnal intereſts, but did as he was commanded. And unleſs we do thus, not only will the ordinary practice of ſervants to Maſters riſe up in judgment againſt us (Mat. 8. 9.) *I am a man under Authority* (ſaid the Centurion) *having Souldiers under me*; I have a ſuperiour Officer, and I have inferiour Souldiers, *and I ſay to one, go, and he goeth*; *and to another, come, and he cometh:* Such is or ought to be the carriage of Souldidiers and Servants towards their Superiours. Now, I ſay, unleſs we readily obey the Voice of God, not only will the daily practice of Servants, but the practice (if I may ſo ſpeak) of the lightnings from the Clouds, will riſe up in judgment againſt us, and condemn us. Shall a ſervant ſay, *Here I am*, at the call of man? Shall the Lightning ſay, *Here I am*, at the call of God? and ſhall not man ſay ſo at Gods call? Shall men put queſtions to Gods commands? Shall they query, *Will the world bear it if I do this? or, will this ſtand with my eaſe and profit, with my credit or commodity, when God requires it?* If any do ſo, the lightning may flaſh in the face of their Conſciences, and not only blaſt them as ſtubborn and diſobedient, but brand them for fooliſh and unwiſe, or at leaſt for want of wiſdom; about which the queſtion is put to *Job* in the next verſe.

Verſ. 36. Who hath put wiſdom into the inward parts? and who hath given underſtanding to the heart?

Some Interpreters conceive, that at this verſe the Lord enters diſcourſe with, or begins to queſtion *Job* concerning living Creatures; and beginning here with man, the chiefeſt of viſible living Creatures, he proceeds to inferiour living Creatures, the beaſts of the Earth, and the fowls of the Air, as followeth in the 39*th* Chapter: Yet the very next verſe offers a great objection againſt this opinion; for there return is made to the former matter, the works of nature. Verſ. 37. *Who can number the Clouds in wiſdom? or who can ſtay the bottles of heaven?*

And therefore I rather conceive, that this 36th verſe is to be joyned with the two former already opened; as if here the Lord would convince man, that as he hath not power ſufficient to command, ſo not wiſdom enough to diſpoſe, either of the Rain, or of the Lightnings; under which, by a *Synecdoche*, all other Creatures may be comprehended. As if God had ſaid, *Whatever wiſdom man hath, is of my putting into him; now I have not given him wiſdom enough, nor taught him how to order and diſpoſe the Clouds and Lightnings; and if I have not given him wiſdom for theſe things, whence ſhould he have it?* So then, according to this way of interpretation, the 37th verſe which followeth, gives a reaſon why man cannot attain to this priviledge, the government of the Clouds, the diſpoſal of Rain and Lightnings, even becauſe God hath not given him any ſuch wiſdom. All the wiſdom which man hath, is the gift of God; but God hath not given man wiſdom to order the Clouds and Lightnings, therefore he hath no ſuch wiſdom.

Who hath put wiſdom into the inward parts?

Wiſdom may be taken either generally for Knowledge, which is the light of the mind, and may be called ſpeculative knowledge; or particularly for Prudence, which is practical knowledge, in the due ordering and manage of things before us. *Who hath put wiſdom*, of either ſort,

Into the inward parts?] The word which we tranſlate *inward parts*, ſignifies ſometimes the *Reins*, and ſometimes *the Heart.* The *Chaldee* paraphraſe renders, *Who hath put wiſdom into the heart?* The matter is not much to which of them we determine it; for, though *the heart* in Scripture is uſually put for the ſeat of wiſdom, and *the Reins* for the heat of the affections; yet *David* ſaith, *My Reins inſtruct me in the night ſeaſon* (*Pſal.* 16.7.) To inſtruct or teach, is properly the work of wiſdom. The word is well rendred by us, *the inward parts*, for that takes in all; wiſdom lieth within (*Pſal.* 51.6.) *Behold thou deſireſt truth in the inward parts, and in the hidden* (part) *thou ſhalt make me to know wiſdom.* The *inward parts*, in the former part of that verſe, and *the hidden* (part) in the latter, are the ſame; by both, or either, he means his Soul in all the faculties or operations of it. And indeed, neither *the Reins*, nor *the Heart*, nor any, nor all the members of the body, are properly or ſtrictly wiſdoms ſeat. Wiſdom is lodged in the Soul, *in the man of man*, as ſome call it; and therefore that muſt needs be intended here: but becauſe Naturaliſts ſpeak of wiſdom as lodged and exerciſed in bodily parts, ſome placing it in the heart, ſome in the head, others in the reins; therefore we may well place it (as our Tranſlation expreſſeth it) in *the inward parts.* The original word ſtrictly imports, *that which is covered over*, the root is rendred *to cover*; and Grammarians give this reaſon of it, becauſe the Reins and Kidneys are covered with fat. But ſeeing all the inward parts of man are in a ſenſe covered parts, that Notation of the word may very well ſort with our Tranſlation; as alſo with that which is the Expoſition of the inner parts, the mind or ſoul of man. So then, *Who hath put wiſdom into the inner parts*, is plainly this; Who hath planted it in the mind or ſoul of man? who hath rooted it there? who hath made man wiſe? ſome give the ſenſe thus, *Who hath made man a Reaſonable Creature?* or beſtowed that rational faculty upon man, whereby he is able to apprehend the truth of the works of God, and to enquire into, and find out many ſecrets in nature? Thus ſome (I ſay) expound it, ſpecially of that rational power with which man, as man, is naturally endowed, and not of wiſdom attained in Schools and Academies by ſtudy, or in the world by experience, which is but the lightning of reaſon, or of that natural wiſdom planted by God in man as a reaſonable Creature. Taking this ſenſe, *Who hath put wiſdom into the inward parts*, is no more but this; Who hath made man a Rational Creature? who among men, can take this honour to himſelf, and ſay, I have put this wiſdom, called reaſon, into my ſelf, or any man? ſurely none: 'Tis the ſole Prerogative of God to put wiſdom in the loweſt and commoneſt notion of it, reaſon into the mind of man. *Who hath put wiſdom into the inward parts?*

Sapientia non tantum in corde, ſed & in renibus aliquo modo poſita eſt. i. e. Quòd omnis hominis affectus à divina quadam ſapientia irradietur. Coc. *Renes* טוחות *vocantur, ut quidam volent quia ſunt oblitæ adipe.* Druſ.

Quis poſuit, *&c. inſinuans ſe de illa ſapientia loqui, quæ nec cooperante ratione, nec induſtria humana, nec per ullam diſciplinam acquiſita eſt.* Janſon.

Hence obſerve; *Mans natural reaſon is the gift of God.*

All wiſdom floweth from God, the Eternal and inexhauſtible Fountain of wiſdom; it is of God that all men have reaſon, as well as that any men have grace. Reaſon is a very great gift, take it barely, as unpoliſhed and unheightned by Study, by Arts, Sciences and Experiences: Wiſdom, as planted in Nature, is a high favour. As Grace ſets one man above another, ſo this natural wiſdom ſets every man above the beſt of brutes. And as this wiſdom in man (which is properly called wiſdom) ſo that Analogical wiſdom, or that appearance of wiſdom that is in many ſubtile brutes, is of Gods putting and planting too. And if ſo, then much more thoſe higher endowments, the poliſhings and the inrichings of mans reaſon, are of God. Reaſon is that ground or ſoyl, which being tilled and dreſs'd, manured and well wrought upon, brings forth thoſe excellent fruits of wiſdom which innoble the mind of man. (*James* 1. 17.) *Every good gift, and every perfect gift is from above. The good gift*, may be taken for natural wiſdom; that's of God: and the *perfect gift*, for infuſed wiſdom, eſpecially in ſpiritual things: that's more of God, that's chiefly *from above, and comes down from the Father of Lights, with whom there is no variableneſs nor ſhadow of turning.* From this point we may infer:

Firſt, Seeing Wiſdom, both that which is planted in man, as a Rational Creature, and that alſo which man acquires by induſtry, is of God, *Then God knoweth how wiſe any man is, and what any mans wiſdom amounts to.* God can eaſily compaſs the wiſeſt man in the world. The wiſdom of ſome men is beyond the compaſs of many men; but the wiſdom of all men, is infinitely within the compaſs of God. He that hath put wiſdom into man, is himſelf wiſer than all men. Thus *David* argued (*Pſal.* 94. 9.) *He that planted the ear, ſhall not he hear? and he that formed the eye, ſhall he not ſee?* doubtleſs he doth. God hath made ſight and hearing, and therefore the ſeeing and the hearing powers are tranſcendently in God. And as it followeth (*verſ.* 10.) *He that teacheth man knowledge, ſhall not he underſtand?* certainly he doth. He underſtands and knows, not only what men underſtand and know, but he underſtands how much underſtanding, and what knowledge any man hath; God looks through all.

Secondly, If God hath put wiſdom into man, *then he can take wiſdom from man, he can deſtroy the wiſdom of the wiſe*, he can turn the wiſdom of an *Achitophel* into fooliſhneſs. As he can make a fool wiſe; ſo he can make a wiſe man a fool, or beſool the wiſeſt men.

Thirdly, If all wiſdom be of the Lords putting in, *then let none be proud of their wiſdom.* There is nothing that we are ſo apt to be proud of as of our wiſdom. If we have but better natural parts than others, we are preſently lifted up above others; if we have better acquirements than others, we are apt to be proud of our ſelves. A little knowledge puffeth up, and indeed that which puffeth up is but a little. True wiſdom, though great, doth not puff up, for that leads us to him that gives us wiſdom, and that will keep us humble.

Fourthly, We may infer, *if the Lord hath put wiſdom into man, then man ought to be thankful to the Lord for the wiſdom he hath.* As man ſhould not be proud of his wiſdom, becauſe how much ſoever he hath, he hath received it; ſo man ought to be very thankful for wiſdom, becauſe how much or how little ſoever it is, he hath received it. If all receipts from God call for thanks, how much more this receipt of wiſdom? which, next to grace, is the moſt precious thing we receive from him, and is it ſelf ſometimes put for grace.

Fifthly, *If wiſdom be of Gods putting into man? then let men be careful to uſe their wiſdom for God.* That Stock which another man hath put into our hands, he expects we ſhould uſe it for him; eſpecially, that we ſhould not uſe it againſt him, or to his diſadvantage. How wicked are they, who are ſo far from uſing their wiſdom for God, that they uſe it againſt God, that is, againſt his intereſt, truth, and ſervants. *Pharaoh* ſaid (*Exod.* 1. 10.) *Come on, let us deal wiſely with them.* And what was it for, but to vex and inſlave Gods *firſt born*, the people of *Iſrael.* He that imploys his wiſdom to any evil purpoſe, imployeth it againſt God, and ſo arms himſelf with what he hath received from God to reſiſt God: Woe to thoſe who do ſo. Wiſdom is of Gods giving; uſe it then for him, and dedicate it to him; above all, take heed of uſing it againſt him. It had been better for that man that he had been a brute, than that he ſhould be ſo brutiſh, as to imploy his underſtanding and reaſon againſt God.

Sixthly, If the Lord hath put wiſdom into man, *then man muſt be accountable to God for his wiſdom*, as alſo for all the other Talents that he hath received. Wiſdom is a great Talent; they who are ſo wiſe as to know what that means, will uſe it tremblingly, that they may give their account rejoycingly. They are wiſe indeed who daily conſider, whence or from whom they had their wiſdom, and before whom they muſt come to a reckoning, what they have done with it, even before him who hath put all their wiſdom into them. *Who hath put wiſdom into the inward parts?*

Or who hath given underſtanding to the Heart?

This latter part of the *Verſe* is of the ſame ſenſe with the former, only it is doubled, to ſhew the certainty of thing; *underſtanding* in the heart, is the ſame thing with wiſdom in the inward parts.

Yet here is a word in the Original uſed for the *heart*, different from what is commonly uſed, and ſo occaſions a difference among Interpreters and Tranſlaters. Grammarians derive it from a word that ſignifieth *to look or behold, to ſee and foreſee*; and the Noun ſignifieth a *Picture*, becauſe Pictures are pieces of Art, which draw all mens eyes to behold and look upon them; and the heart is therefore expreſt by this word, becauſe it forms, and as it were (by its imaginative faculty) draws the picture of all things in it ſelf, or becauſe in the heart or mind of man the forms of all things are repreſented: Mans imagination delineates and ſhapes a thouſand varieties within it ſelf, or man hath the picture and proſpect of all matters in his heart, and therefore the ſame word ſignifies the heart and a picture, drawn and delineated to the life. That's the force of the word which here we render *heart*.

שכוי *Appellatio eſt cordis vel mentis, à* שכה *quod eſt proſpicere unde* משכיות *picturæ quæ proſpiciuntur dictæ, & metaphorice picturæ ſeu proſpectus cordis i.e. imaginationes ſeu ſpecies rerum, quæ veluti in corde pinguntur, vel à delineatione conceptuum animi*, Merc.

The *Latine* tranſlation renders at a great diſtance from us, yet the letter of the Text may bear that reading alſo. *Who hath given underſtanding to the Cock?* Interpreters following this tranſlation, conceive that here the Lord begins to queſtion *Job* about irrational living Creatures; Having ſaid, *who hath put wiſdom into the inward parts?* to wit, of man; he now adds, *who hath given underſtanding to the Cock?* The ſame word that ſignifieth the *heart*, ſignifies alſo a *Cock*; as the heart foreſeeth and looketh upon things afar off, ſo the Cock foreſeeth the riſing of the Sun, and the break of day; and therefore hath his name from his fore-ſight. They who follow this Tranſlation, ſpeak many things of the wonderful fore-ſight of the Cock: and ſurely God hath placed a natural wiſdom in that Creature conſtantly to underſtand the hours of the night. *A Cock is a natural Clock* to any Family, he hath his firſt, and ſecond, and third Crowings; and having a kind of natural inſtinct concerning the courſe and return of the Sun, he claps his wings and crows, as rejoycing at his coming, and willing to awaken all to entertain him, and prepare themſelves for labour, ſtudy and buſineſs, at his approach. But I ſhall not ſtay upon this; And the general ſtream of Interpreters keeps in the former Channel, expounding this latter part of the *Verſe* as the former, with reſpect to man. *Who hath given underſtanding to the heart?* It is a truth (I grant) which the *Jewiſh Talmudiſts* teach, that God is to be praiſed who hath given ſuch underſtanding to the Cock, that he is able to diſtinguiſh the hours of the night, and tell us of the approaching day, that it ſurprize us not like Sluggards unawares. The natural Hiſtorian reports the uſeful qualities of the Cock: And one of the Ancients wittily takes notice of the Cocks crowing in the Goſpel, which awakened *Peter*, according to Chriſts Prediction, *Before the Cock crow twice, thou ſhalt deny me thrice: The Cock* (ſaith he) *was a Preacher to call* Peter *to repentance.* Chriſt made uſe of a Cock to preſs that Eminent Diſciple into a conviction of, and ſorrow for his ſin; for at the crowing of the Cock, *he remembred the words of Chriſt, went out, and wept bitterly.*

לשכוית *Thargum interpretatur* ללבא *cordi, à* שכה *quod eſt proſpicere, ſic vocatur cor, quia ſpeculatur & conſiderat omnia*, Druſ. *Quis dedit gallo intelligentiam?* Vulg.

Talmudici in Judaicis precationibus dicunt at docent cum gallus canit dicendum eſſe, Laudetur qui gallo dat intelligentiam. *Gallus enim haud dubie non aliunde quam à Deo didicit noctis momenta diſcernere; proclivius tamen eſt ut pro corde exponamus*, Merc.

Plin. *l.* 10. *c.*21. *Cantavit Gallus non ut tempora diſtingueret, ſed ut Petrus pœniteret.* Ambroſ.

But that the queſtion propounded to *Job* in this *Verſe* concerns the wiſdom given to man, not to beaſts or birds, is plainly proved by the queſtions put him in the two *Verſes* following: Which ſhew, that though God hath given man wiſdom ſufficient for many great Purpoſes, yet not for the purpoſe there expreſſed, as not for ſeveral other purpoſes.

Verſ. 37, 38. **Who can number the Clouds in wiſdom? or who can ſtay the bottles of heaven, when the duſt groweth into hardneſs, and the Clouds cleave faſt together?**

In theſe two *Verſes* we have two queſtions more propounded by God to *Job*: The firſt whereof is about the numbring; the ſecond (though under another title) about the ſtopping of the Clouds.

שחקים

Who can number the Clouds in wiſdom?] The word rendred *Clouds* is ſometimes tranſlated *Heavens*, and ſo a

learned

Quis tam prudenter jecit cœlos eo numero quo ſunt? Vatabl.

learned Interpreter gives it here; to which he adds this gloſs, *Who hath made the Heavens with ſuch wiſdom in that number wherein they are? who can number them?* The word rendred *number*, ſignifieth both to number things Arithmetically, and to demonſtrate them Logically; and it may be taken in either or both ſenſes here, *who can number the Clouds in wiſdom?* that is, who hath wiſdom ſufficient to tell how many Clouds there are? Man hath not Arithmetick enough to number them. The Clouds are many in their ſorts or kinds, and they are many more in their ſingulars, or (if I may ſo ſpeak) individuals; there are many ſorts of Clouds, and there are many of every ſort; as there are many ſorts of living Creatures, and very many of every ſort, ſo of the Clouds; we may as well number the Waves of the Sea, or the Stars, as the Clouds of Heaven. If we look up to one part of Heaven, we may ſee more Clouds than we can number; how great then is the number of the Clouds in the whole circumference of the Heavens?

Again, taking the word as it ſignifieth to *demonſtrate* Logically, or to declare, the queſtion imports thus much; Who can clearly and perfectly ſet forth the nature of the Clouds, or the various effects which they produce, and ſervices which they are imployed in? *Who can*, either in the former ſenſe, or in this, *number the Stars of Heaven?*

Hence note; *The wiſeſt among men can neither exactly tell how many the Clouds are, nor fully demonſtrate what they are.*

As the number and nature of the Stars, ſo of the Clouds (which are beneath the Stars) *exceed mans wiſdom.* The leaſt and loweſt works of God are above mans reach, how much more his greateſt works, and thoſe which are far above?

Quis ſapphirinas effecit nubes ſapientia? Jun.

Yet further, from this word which we tranſlate *to number, to declare, or demonſtrate*, that precious ſtone *the Saphir*, mentioned often in Scriptures hath its name; and ſo the Text is rendred thus, *Who can make the Clouds Saphirine, or like a Saphir?* The meaning is, *Who can make the Clouds bright and clear like the Saphir-ſtone?* The Saphir is a moſt pleaſant reſplendent and beautiful Gem: That glorious Throne which was ſhewed the Prophet in Viſion (*Ezek.* 1.26.) had the *appearance of a Saphir-ſtone*, that is, it had a moſt excellent and illuſtrious appearance. Now ſaith the Lord, *who can make the Clouds* (dark of themſelves) *like a Saphir-ſtone?* that is, ſerene, pleaſant, beautiful, and delightful to the eye. God can make *bright Clouds* (*Zech.* 10. 1.) Clouds wonderful fair and pleaſant to behold, even as pleaſing to the eye as a precious Saphir. As this tranſlation holds out a truth in it ſelf, ſo 'tis very ſuitable to that which followeth,

Or who can ſtay the Bottles of Heaven?

Hunc interpretationem poſtulare videtur antitheſis quum additur, & lagenas cœli quis collocet, *q. d. quis cœlum nunc ſerenum ac ſudum, nunc verò nubilum reddat,* Piſc.

Clouds darken the Heavens, but when the Lord ſtayeth the Clouds from Rain, then the Heavens are clear like a Saphir; God can make the Heavens cloudy or clear.

Who can ſtay the Bottles of Heaven? that is, the Clouds, *who can ſtay them*; or (as the Hebrew ſtrictly) *who can cauſe them to lye down?* Mr. *Broughton* renders, *who can diſtil the barrels of heaven?* The word here uſed ſignifies a Bottle, or any Veſſel wherein Liquor is preſerved; and it may be taken either for a Bottle made of Skin, a Leathern Bottle, or for a Bottle made of Clay, an Earthen Bottle, a Potters Bottle, as 'tis called (*Iſa.* 30. 14.) The Clouds are like a Leathern or an Earthen Bottle, which as it holds the Liquor, ſo being unſtopped and held up, the Liquor runs out; *who can ſtay the bottles of heaven?* that is, if God once unſtop the Clouds, they preſently pour down Rain, and who can ſtay them from raining? no man can. That's a plain ſenſe; as if the Lord had ſaid, who can hinder the Clouds from giving down Rain, if once opened? who but I can reſtrain the rain (which is heavy of it ſelf, and tends naturally downwards) from falling out of the Clouds?

Concentum cœli quis dormire facit, Vulg.

נבל *per quinque puncta ſignificat Nablium, inſtrumentum muſicum utri ſimile, & habens chordas quæ pulſantur.*

There is another reading of this part of the verſe, *who can ſtay the harmony of heaven?* The *Vulgar Latine* renders, *who can make the Muſick of heaven ſleep*; that is, ceaſe, or be quiet. The reaſon of this tranſlation is this, becauſe the ſame word which ſignifieth a Bottle, ſignifies alſo a Muſical Inſtrument, ſomewhat reſembling the form of a Bottle (*Pſal.* 33.2.) Thus ſome take it here, as intending that Muſical or melodious harmony which ancient Philoſophers have affirmed is made by the motion of the Heavenly Sphears; yet by this they do not mean a proper muſical ſound or harmony, ſuch as the *Pythagoreans* dreamed of, which ſome other learned men have ſaid is ſo ſweet and raviſhing, that if we did but hear it, we could neither eat, nor drink, nor ſleep: Yea, they tell us, that *Moſes* while he did not eat, nor drink, nor ſleep thoſe forty days in the Mount, was all that while taken up, and raviſhed with that Muſick; but you may put that among *Jewiſh* Fables.

Sober men following this tranſlation, *who can ſtay the Muſick of Heaven?* underſtand by it only the harmonious concord and agreement, which all the Heavenly Orbs unfailably obſerve in their ſeveral courſes, without the leaſt jar or diſcord. That's a truth, ſhewing the great Wiſdom and Power of God, who hath put the Heavens into ſuch a ſweet order, that they move, not only conſtantly, but harmoniouſly. Though the motion of the Heavens makes no audible or proper Muſick, yet it makes an intelligible or metaphorical Muſick, that is, the Heavens move orderly, there is an agreement in their motion, which is the ſweeteſt Muſick in Heaven among Saints and Angels, and among good men on Earth. We ſay of men moving peaceably in their places, as becomes them, there is a harmony among them. And how bleſſed a thing would it be, to ſee all ſorts of men moving orderly in their ſpheres? what a harmony would it make, to ſee every one doing his duty, and doing it in his place? whereas to omit duty makes our lives uſeleſs; and to do it out of our place, makes us troubleſom and unharmonious. And therefore, though I inſiſt not upon this reading, yet it were well if all would inſiſt upon the moral of it, labouring to make harmony (as much as may be) in all their motions. But I paſs from it, and reſt in our own,

Who can ſtay the bottles of heaven, that is, who can make them leave raining? The Lord by a late queſtion convinced *Job*, that no man can make it rain (*verſ.* 34.) *Canſt thou lift up thy voice to the Clouds, that abundance of waters may cover thee?* and by this queſtion he would convince him, that no man can obſtruct or hinder the Rain. *Who can ſtay the bottles of heaven?*

Hence obſerve; *It is God who ſtayeth or reſtraineth the Clouds from raining.*

Should not the Lord put Stopples into thoſe Bottles? ſhould not he cloſe up thoſe Barrels, they would drop down continually? and inſtead of watering, drown the Earth. When in the days of *Noah* the Lord opened the Bottles of Heaven forty days together, who could ſtop or ſtay them? Did not the Clouds pour down till the whole world was overwhelmed? and unleſs the Lord did now ſtay the Clouds, and forbid them to give out their whole ſtock, they would again overwhelm the world. There are Seas of waters above our heads, God keeps them in from hurting the earth, and lets them out to help it. The next verſe intimates at leaſt this Power of God over the Clouds and the ſeaſon when he exerciſeth it: *who can ſtay the bottles of heaven?*

Verſ. 38. **When the duſt groweth (or is poured) into hardneſs, and the clods cleave faſt together?**

The Margin of our Bibles gives us the former part of the *verſe* in a very different tranſlation, thus, *When the duſt is turned into mire.* The Earth hath had its fill, if not too much Rain, when the duſt is turned into mire? And when 'tis ſo, who but God ſtayeth the Bottles of Heaven from pouring down over-much?

But I ſhall only open the reading in the Text, of which there are two interpretations.

Firſt, Some expound it of ſtaying the Rain when there is moſt need of Rain, or when the Earth wants it moſt, or in a time of drought: For then the Earth groweth hard like a molten Pillar, and the clods thereof cleaving one to another, make clefts in the body of the Earth. In a time of great drought, the Earth at once cleaves aſunder, and runs cloſer together, as it were to ſuccour it ſelf. Who ſtayeth the Bottles of Heaven, when the Earth is chapt and gapes for Rain to ſoften and cool it? Surely man doth it not, nor can he be ſaid to do it (unleſs *meritoriouſly*.) It is God alone who *efficiently* ſtays the Clouds from Rain in a time of drought, or when the neceſſities of the Earth call aloud for it. Taking the words in this ſenſe, Obſerve; *God can ſtop any of our mercies (as here the Rain) when we have moſt need of them.*

I (ſaith the Lord *Amos* 4. 7.) *have withholden the Rain from you when there were yet three months to the harveſt, and I cauſed it to rain upon one City, and cauſed it not to rain upon another City; one piece was rained upon, and the piece whereupon it rained not withered.* One months drought before harveſt threatens a ſcarcity or dearth of Corn; but two, yea three months drought, muſt needs uſher in a dreadful famine.

The ſecond interpretation of theſe words ſeems yet more clear, *Who can ſtay the Bottles of Heaven, when the duſt groweth into hardneſs, and the clods cleave faſt together?* that is, *who but God can ſtop rain when there is no farther need of rain?* As if the Lord had ſaid, *When the Bottles of Heaven have given out ſo much rain as may fit the Earth for fruit-bearing, or when the ground hath had its fill, ſo that the light duſt is turned into lumps of Earth, and that duſt which was raiſed and toſſed with every breath of wind, is clodded and agglutinated by water into a maſſie ſubſtance; when, I ſay, 'tis thus with the Earth, who can ſtay or ſtop the Bottles of Heaven from raining more, to the ſpoil of all, but my ſelf?* So then the true uſe of rain is held forth in this 38. *verſ.* namely, that the duſt of the Earth being moiſtened with rain, may coaleſce or be joyned cloſe together. This, I conceive, is the moſt natural and proper ſenſe of the Text: For the Earth, which by drought was crumbled into duſt, rain falling plentifully upon it, is knit again into one body, like Meal or Flower into which Leven is put, and ſo is made ready to receive, nouriſh, and bring forth whatever Grain is caſt into the boſom of it.

Vocem כצקת *verto fermentationem à verbo* בצק *quod ſignificat, fermentari atque intumeſcere,* E. Piſc.

Rain falling upon the duſt imbodies it. The ground moulders in a time of drought; but when rain comes, that hardens it. The duſt (as we commonly ſay) flies before, but as drought cleaves the Earth, ſo rain cauſeth the parts to unite; and then the Earth, which like a heap of Sand would not hang together, becomes ſolid and fit for Tillage. Now when ſo much rain hath fallen as prepares the Earth, and (as the word imports) fermentates or levens it to receive the ſeed caſt into it; then, *who ſtayeth the Bottles of Heaven?*

Hence note, Firſt, *Rain compacts the Earth.*

As moiſture looſens compacted things, ſo it compacts or knits together looſe things. The Earth is ſoon made duſt by droughts, and it would be a very duſt-heap, if it had no moiſture to reunite it. The Lord threatens his people, in caſe of diſobedience (*Deut* 28. 24.) to *make the rain of their Land powder and duſt*; that is, they ſhould have duſt and powder, inſtead of water. Long drought turns the Earth to duſt. In this learn, how great a mercy there is in rain.

Humore aquæ terræ partes continentur, & uniuntur quæ ante disjunctæ fuerant, Merc.

Ut perfuſio ſit fermentandæ terræ, ut conglutinentur glebæ, Jun. Tranſ.

i. e. ut terram quum pulverulenta eſt, ab ariditate immiſſis pluviis fermentet ad glebarum compagem & rerum ex ea naſcentium alimentum, Jun.

Secondly note, *The Lord knows when the Earth hath had ſufficient rain.*

And therefore (unleſs in judgment) he will not let the Clouds run waſte; he will ſtay his Bottles from letting down one drop more, when once the duſt (by rain falling upon it) *groweth into hardneſs, and the clods cleave faſt together.*

Note Thirdly, *'Tis a mercy, when the Earth hath enough, that God ſtops the Bottles.*

As it is a duty, when we have drank enough, *to ſtop the Bottle*, that is, to give over drinking; ſo 'tis a mercy, that the Lord ſtops the Bottles when the Earth hath drank enough. When the Earth hath enough, the Lord ſometimes will not ſtop the Bottles of Heaven, but lets them pour down rain, till the fruits of the Earth are utterly ſpoiled; and this he doth for the puniſhment of mans ſin always, and ſometimes for the puniſhment of thoſe ſpecial ſins, mans unthankfulneſs for, and abuſe of the fruits of the Earth; that is, becauſe he did not ſtay the bottle, when he had taken enough

Now, if the Lord knows when to give rain, and when to ſtop it, with reſpect to Husbandry, and the natural fruits of the Earth, then doubtleſs he knows and will take care to give rain for the ſouls of his people, when they have need. (*Pſal.* 68 2.) *Thou, O God, didſt ſend a plentiful rain, whereby thou didſt confirm thine Inheritance, when it was weary*; which is ſpecially meant of ſpiritual rain. There are Bottles of Heaven which water Souls. The Preachers of the Word are thoſe Bottles or Clouds, which hold and diſtil the myſtical rain; and the Lord will not ſtop them, till he ſees the hearts of men made fit to bring forth the fruits of righteouſneſs and holineſs; he will not ſtop (I ſay) that ſpiritual rain till this be effected, unleſs in Judgment to a people that have deſpiſed the rain, and ſlighted thoſe ſhowers of Divine Doctrine; againſt ſuch the Lord will ſtop the Bottles of Heaven, and then their Souls turn to duſt, and their hearts become hard as Rocks, or like the Mountains, upon which neither rain nor dew falls, fruitleſs and barren of every good word and work.

VERS. 39, 40, 41.

Wilt thou hunt the prey for the Lyon? or fill the appetite of the young Lyons,

When they couch in their Dens, and abide in the covert to lye in wait?

Who provideth for the Raven his food? when his young ones cry unto God, they wander for lack of meat.

THe Lord having by a multitude of Queſtions propoſed to *Job* concerning Inanimates, or Creatures without life, ſuch as are the Earth, the Sea, the Heavens, the Clouds and Meteors, (having, I ſay, by theſe Queſtions) convinced him of his weakneſs and inſufficiency; as alſo, of the tranſcendent power and wiſdom which abideth and reſideth everlaſtingly in himſelf; he now undertakes *Job* for the ſame ends, by putting him queſtions about the living Creatures, and thoſe of three forms or ſorts.

Firſt, About the Beaſts of the Earth.

Secondly, About the Fowls of the Air.

Thirdly, About the Fiſh of the Sea.

The Lord gives particular inſtance, or makes inquiry about thirteen kinds of living Creatures; whereof ſeven abide upon the Earth, five in the Air, one in the Waters.

The ſeven Creatures inquired about, which abide on the Earth, are; Firſt, The *Lyon*; Secondly, The *wild Goat*; Thirdly, The *Hind*; Fourthly, The *wild Aſs*; Fifthly, The *Unicorn*; Sixthly, The *Horſe*, and Seventhly, The *Elephant*, under the name of *Behemoth*, as is moſt generally conceived.

The five Creatures inquired about, that live in the Air, are, Firſt, The *Raven*; Secondly, The *Peacock*; Thirdly, The *Oſtrich*; Fourthly, The *Hawk*; and Fifthly, The *Eagle*.

Of the third ſort, namely, ſuch as live in the Water, or in the Sea, *Job* is queſtioned only about one, the *Leviathan*, or the *Whale*, a Creature of a vaſt magnitude; of ſo vaſt a magnitude, that take all the other twelve Creatures, and joyn them together, the *Leviathan* exceeds them all in magnitude; as will appear in the deſcription given of him at large, in the one and fortieth Chapter.

The Lord in this latter diſcourſe with, or queſtioning of *Job*, ſeems to deſcend, or to put matter of eaſier reſolution to him than he had done before, and doubtleſs he doth; yet he doth it for the greater and fuller conviction and humiliation of *Job*. As if the Lord had ſaid, *If (O* Job*) thou findeſt thy ſelf puzled and unable to give any tolerable anſwer and reſolution to the queſtions which I have propoſed, about the whole bulk or body of the Earth and Sea, or about thoſe great things which are wrought in the Heavens, and in the Air, then conſider, how thou art able to anſwer my queſtions about theſe leſſer things, which are alſo near unto thee, the Beaſts of the Earth, Fowls of the Air, and the Fiſh of the Sea.* The Lord even in theſe works, makes manifeſt his glorious perfections, far exceeding the reach and apprehenſion of man, as well as in, yea more than in, thoſe other works of his mentioned before.

There are two things eſpecially, of which the Lord would convince *Job*, with reſpect to theſe living Creatures:

Firſt, Of his care and providence in the proviſion that he daily makes for them.

Secondly, Of his power and wiſdom, in the extraordinary ſtrength and ſtrange qualities which he hath beſtowed upon them, and indued them with; in ſome of which they much ſurpaſs Man, the Maſter-piece, and Maſter of the whole inviſible Creation.

The general ſcope and aim of God, in putting Queſtions to *Job* about theſe living Creatures, ſeems to anſwer a ſecret doubt which ſome might have concerning his Providence. *True, the Lord governs the Heavens, the Stars, the Thunder, the Lightnings, the Rain; but doth he look after things below?* Yea, the Lords care and Providence about inferiour Creatures, is very great, condeſcending to the very wild beaſts of the Earth, to the Fowls of the Air; as alſo, to the Fiſh of the Sea: And hence the Lord would have *Job* underſtand, that ſurely he had a much greater care of him, and of the affairs of the Children of men. Who can but conclude, that if the Lord hath ſuch a reſpect to theſe irrational Creatures, which live only the life of ſenſe, then much more hath he a care of man, and among men, of good men, who are his Children, and of them moſt of all in their afflictions and troubles. So that the Lord by theſe queſtions, ſeems to beſpeak *Job* thus: *How comes it to paſs, that thou ſhouldſt ſo much as doubt, whether I take care of thee or no, when I take care of, and look to the wild beaſts of the earth, to the fowls that fly in the Air; yea, to the fiſh that ſwim unſeen in the Sea?* Or thus, *Am I thus ſolicitous to look after Lyons and Goats, Hinds and Unicorns, the Oſtrich and the Peacock?* &c. *Am I ſo careful to look after theſe Creatures, many of which are of very little uſe to man, and ſome of them a trouble to man? and doſt thou think I will not have a care of thee? Learn therefore from what I now queſtion thee about, that I can never be cruel to thee, or forgetful of my faithful ſervants, who am mindful of the brute beaſts, and ravenous birds.* This ſeems to be the general tendency of the Lords diſcourſe with *Job*, continued from the cloſe of this 38. Chapter, quite through the 39. a great part of the 40. and the whole 41. Chapter.

Ego qui omnia juſta diſpenſatione procuro, circa te tantum, O Job *videbor injuſtus.* Philip.

Ut diſcat Job *Deum non ſævum eſſe in ſuos, qui tam beneficus ſit in feras.* Chryſoſt.

Having thus given a proſpect of the whole, I ſhall now proceed to the particular Animals here named, and to that firſt which is not only named in the order of the Text, but is looked upon alſo as firſt in dignity, a King among beaſts, *the Lyon.*

Verſ. 39. **Wilt thou hunt the prey for the Lyon?**

The Lord ſpeaks thus, becauſe the Lyon is a Beaſt of Prey; he liveth by hunting, catching, and feeding upon other Beaſts; the Lyon is a *Nimrod* in the world, a *mighty Hunter*: Naturaliſts ſay, he is ſo curious in his Diet, that he ſcorns to feed upon any Carcaſe that he hath not hunted and killed himſelf, or that hath not been hunted by a Lion. He will not touch a Carcaſe that lies dead in the field; but what he feeds upon, is what he conquers and kills, and that therefore it is here ſaid, *Wilt thou hunt the prey for the Lion?* thou needſt not, he is able to hunt for himſelf.

Yet ſome Travellers report, that there is a little Beaſt called *Jackal*, ſomewhat bigger than a Fox, who uſually doth that ſervice for the Lion, to hunt the Prey for him, and may be called the Lions Hunter. Mr. *Purchas*, in that Book called his Pilgrimage, gives us this relation: *The Lion* (ſaith he) *hath the* Jackal *for his Uſher, which is a little black ſhag-haired Beaſt, about the bigneſs of a Spaniel, which when the evening comes, hunts for his Prey, and coming on the foot, follows the ſcent with open cry, to which the Lion as chief Hunter gives diligent ear, following for his advantage. If the* Jackal *ſet up his chaſe before the Lion comes in, he howls out mainly, and then the Lion ſeizeth on it, making a grumbling noiſe, whilſt his ſervant ſtands by barking; and when the Lion hath done, the* Jackal *feeds on the relicks.* Thus far that induſtrious Collector of Obſervations from moſt of the remote parts of the world. And though neither *Pliny*, nor any Natural Hiſtorian, no nor any Interpreter upon this Text (that ever I met with) have given any intimation that the Lion hath ſuch a ſervant to hunt the Prey for him; yet the teſtimony of thoſe ingenious Travellers or Navigators, upon whoſe report of what they have ſeen or heard in thoſe Countreys, the worthy Author above-named makes this relation (this teſtimony, I ſay) may be a probable ground for ſuch an Expoſition of the Text, that the Lord had in his wiſe Providence provided one *to hunt the prey for the Lion.* Though I conceive the ſenſe of the place to be more general, namely, that the Lord himſelf hath one way or other taken care, that even the Lion ſhould have his Prey, and that neither *Job* then, nor any one elſe needed take care in that matter. How great an Argument that might be, both for *Job*'s conviction and conſolation will appear afterwards, *Wilt thou hunt the prey*

Purchas Pilgr. p. 1575.

For the Lyon?] The word rendred *Lyon*, ſignifies *a ſtout Lyon*: Mr. *Broughton* renders, *the hardy Lyon*; others, *the old Lyon*; *Wilt thou hunt the prey for the old Lyon?* and there's a double interpretation with reſpect to that tranſlation, That either here is meant a Lyon come up to his full ſtrength, and ſo every way able to provide for himſelf; or, that by *the old Lyon*, is meant a Lyon grown ſo old and weak with old age, that he can no longer provide for, nor hunt the prey for himſelf; and therefore the Lord ſaith, *Wilt thou hunt the prey for the old Lyon*, that cannot hunt for himſelf? doſt thou provide for the Lyon, that cannot provide for himſelf? 'Tis I, who provide a prey for the old Lyon, that cannot hunt the prey for himſelf. This is a good ſenſe, and I ſhall touch it in the Obſervation.

ללביא *Leoni vetulo, qui viribus deficientibus non amplius poteſt venari; ſed à juvenibus capta præda, rugitu eum ad participationem prædæ vocantibus, alitur.* Ælian l. 9. Hiſtor. Animal. c. 1.

However, 'tis plain, that by *the Lyon*, in the firſt part of the verſe, is meant, an old Lyon; for he ſtands oppoſed to the *young Lyon*, in the latter part of the verſe: *Wilt thou hunt the prey for the Lyon?*

Naturaliſts ſpeak many things of the nature of the Lyon, to whom I refer the Reader; I ſhall have occaſion to touch ſome of them, while I mention what the Scripture ſaith of him. The Lyon bears a four-fold reſemblance in Scripture.

Firſt, The Lyon is the Emblem of a King. *Judah*, whoſe Tribe was the ſtock of Kings, or the Tribe-Royal, is called *a Lyons Whelp* (*Gen.* 49. 9.) Thus ſpake *Jacob*, *Judah is a Lyons Whelp; from the prey, my Son, thou art gone up; he ſtooped down, he couched as a Lyon, and as an old Lyon; who ſhall rouſe him up?* The Kings of the Earth are compared to Lyons, Firſt, Becauſe of their greatneſs and ſuperiority: What the Lyon is among beaſts, Kings are among men, their Chiefs. Secondly, Becauſe of their ſtoutneſs and courage. *Solomon* ſaith of the Lyon (*Prov*, 30. 30.) *He is ſtrongeſt among beaſts, and turneth not away for any*; That is, he is not afraid of any beaſt. To be *bold as a Lyon*, is a ſacred as well as a common Proverbial, noting greateſt boldneſs. *Ariſtotle* ſaith, the Lyon never flies or makes any haſty retreat, let the danger be what it will in open view, but goes off, keeping his own pace. A Modern Writer ſpeaks thus: *The Lyon in* Africk *is more fierce than in colder Climates; He ſhrinks not in danger, except ſome covert of Woods hides him from Witneſſes, and then he will take the benefit of a flight, which otherwiſe he ſeems to diſdain.* Such is the true ſpirit of Kings; they are much above ignoble fears. Thirdly, Lyons reſemble Kings, becauſe of their mildneſs and nobleneſs to them that ſubmit. Fourthly, Becauſe of the ſtatelineſs of their gate, and Majeſty of their aſpect. Fifthly, Becauſe of their vigilancy and watchfulneſs. The Lyon ſleeps (ſay Naturaliſts) with his eyes open, he ſleeps as if he were not aſleep; and as ſome obſerve, he often moves his tail while he ſleepeth, as giving notice, that he is not (as we ſpeak) faſt aſleep.

Nunquam in locis patentibus fugit aut metuit, pedetentimque diſcedit. Ariſt.

Leoni tantum ex feris clementia in ſupplices. Plin. l. 8. c. 16.

Satis eſt proſtraſſe Leoni. Vigilans oculus ſceptro impoſitus perpetuæ vigiliæ ſymbolum eſt.

And as the Lyon is an Emblem of Earthly Kings; ſo, Secondly, of the *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*; the King of Heaven and Earth, the *King of Kings*: To ſhew his ſupereminent Excellency, he is called a Lyon (*Rev.* 5. 5.) *There was found none worthy to open the Book, but the Lyon of the Tribe of Judah.* Now Jeſus Chriſt is compared to a Lyon upon all thoſe accounts before-named, for which worthy and Heroick Kings are ſo compared: for, Firſt, Jeſus Chriſt is King of Kings, and Lord of Lords (*Rev.* 19. 16.) *He is highly exalted; he hath a name given him above every name, that at the name of Jeſus every knee ſhould bow, of things in Heaven, and things in Earth, and things under the Earth* (*Phil.* 2. 9, 10.) And as Jeſus Chriſt is like the Lyon for his ſuperiority; ſo, Secondly, for his clemency and true nobleneſs of ſpirit towards thoſe who yield unto him. 'Tis enough indeed, to humble our ſelves before this Lyon. How ready muſt Chriſt be to receive and embrace humbled ſinners, who humbled himſelf to death, that he might ſave ſinners, even while they were proud and rebelled againſt him! Thirdly, Jeſus Chriſt is a Lion alſo, in reſpect of his watchfulneſs over his Church. This Lion that keeps *Iſrael*, *neither ſlumbers nor ſleeps* (*Pſal.* 121. 4.) and Fourthly, for his invincible courage and ſtrength, always ready to be put forth for his Church. The Prophet (*Iſa.* 31. 4.) compares Chriſt to a Lyon that will not be frighted; *Like as the Lyon* (ſaith he) *and the young Lyon roaring on his prey, when a multitude of Shepherds is called out againſt him, he will not be afraid of their voice, nor abaſe himſelf for* *the noiſe of them; ſo ſhall the Lord of Hoſts himſelf come down to fight for Mount* Sion, *and for the Hill thereof.* As if the Prophet had ſaid, God will protect *Jeruſalem* againſt all her Enemies (the *Aſſyrian* forces are there ſpecially intended) no more regarding or fearing them, than a fierce Lyon in the prime of his ſtrength, will regard or fear a company of ſimple Shepherds, that ſhall attempt to reſcue his Prey from between his teeth. And becauſe of this Lyon-like power and courage of Chriſt for his Church, another Prophet ſaith, that the Church her ſelf ſhall be as a Lyon (*Mic.* 5 8.) *And the remnant of Jacob* (that is, the true Church) *ſhall be among the Gentiles, in the midſt of many people* (who are Enemies, and unbelieving) *as a Lyon among the beaſts of the forreſt, as a young Lyon among the flocks of ſheep*; or rather (as the Margin hath it) *Goats, who if he go through, both treadeth down, and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver.* That is (as our late Annotators expreſs it) The faithful ſhall be endowed with an invincible force of the Spirit of God, to overcome and overthrow the Devil, the World, and all their Enemies.

Thirdly, the Lyon is the Emblem of Oppreſſors and Tyrants: They in evil qualities reſemble Lyons. Thus the Apoſtle *Paul* called *Nero* (as it is generally conceived) a Lyon. *I was* (ſaith he) *delivered out of the mouth of the Lyon* (2 *Tim.* 4. 15.) which though it may be taken in a general ſenſe, for deliverance out of any great danger, yet 'tis ſpecially and particularly applied to the perſon of *Nero*, who was cruel as a Lyon, and had the Apoſtle *Paul* in his Paws at that time. *David* ſpeaking of the multitude of his cruel oppreſſors, tells us, his ſoul was among Lyons (*Pſa.* 57 4.) that is, among thoſe that were cruel, as the next words explain it; *I lye among them that are ſet on fire* (with rage and malice) *even the ſons of men, whoſe teeth are ſpears and arrows, and their tongue a ſharp ſword.* The Lyon is (though in ſome caſes a clement, yet) moſtly a cruel, a devouring Creature. Naturaliſts ſay, he will ſwallow down whole gobbets of fleſh without chewing; yea, that he will ſwallow down ſuch a quantity at once, as will ſerve him two or three days without eating more. And as oppreſſors are ſhadowed out by the Lyon with reſpect to their cruelty, ſo likewiſe with reſpect to their ſubtilty and treachery (*Pſal.* 10 8,9,10.) *He* (that is, the wicked Enemy) *ſitteth in the lurking places of the Villages; in the ſecret places doth he murder the innocent; his eyes are privily ſet againſt the poor; He lieth in wait ſecretly as a Lyon in his Den; he lieth in wait to catch the poor, &c.* Evil men have as much of the Lyons craft, as of his cruelty, and both from him.

Leo eſt animal carnivorum & ſævum: eſt & voraciſſimum & repletus duos treſvè dies jejunat. Ariſt. Hiſtor. Animal. l. 4. c. 5. & l. 8. c. 16.

In the fourth place, The Lyon in ſome things reſembles the Devil himſelf, the worſt of all Creatures. The Apoſtle *Peter* gives it expreſly (1 Epiſt. 5. 8.) *Be ſober, be vigilant; for your adverſary the Devil goeth about like a roaring Lyon, ſeeking whom he may devour*, or ſwallow down at a draught, as the word ſignifies. The Devil is like a Lyon in his wrath, rage, malice and ſubtilty, to catch and inſnare poor ſouls, and to make a prey of them.

Chriſtus Leo propter fortitudinem, diabolus propter feritatem. Auguſt. *Ser.* 46. *de diverſis.*

Laſtly, The Lyon is an Emblem of a godly man, Firſt, For his boldneſs and gracious confidence in a good cauſe (*Prov.* 28. 1.) *The righteous is bold as a Lyon.* Secondly, For his gratefulneſs to them who have done him good. Some of the Ancients have related ſtrange things of the hoſpitality of a Lyon entertaining a man, and of the gratitude of a man healing a Lyon, with the conſequents of both. Thus by theſe Scripture-reſemblances, we may learn much what the Lyon is, and what his qualities are. *Wilt thou hunt the prey for the Lyon?*

De Leone hominis hoſpite, & homine medico Leonis. Vide Gellium, l. 5. c. 14. & Ælian. l. 7. cap. *ult.*

Or fill the appetite of the young Lyons?

Poſſibly the Lord ſpeaks of *filling the appetite of young Lyons*, becauſe young Lyons have appetites ſo ſtrong, that a ſmall matter will not fill them. Young ones of any kind, have ſtronger appetites than thoſe that are old; young Lyons eſpecially, whoſe conſtitution (ſay Naturaliſts) is very hot and dry; that being the temperament of Lyons; young Lyons muſt needs require a great proportion of food to ſatisfie their ſtomack, and find work for their quick concoction. 'Tis but a while that the Milk of the Lioneſs will ſerve their turn, they muſt have ſtronger meat; young Lyons are ſoon ready for prey; 'Tis ſaid (*Judg.* 14. 5.) that when *Sampſon* paſſed by, *a young Lyon roared againſt him*, or (as the Margin reads it) *a young Lyon meeting him roared*; And why did he roar? not ſo much for anger, as for hunger, deſiring to make a prey of *Sampſon*.

Wilt thou fill the appetite of the young Lyon? Some tranſlate it, *Wilt thou fill the company, or troop of young Lyons?* that is, all the Lyons that are in the Den. The word ſignifies a company or troop, ſo its rendered (*Pſal.* 68. 30.) *Rebukes the company of Spear-men*, or *of thoſe that carry the Cane.* But though the word may ſignifie *a company*, yet it is not ſo uſed, but where it refers (as in that *Pſalm*) to a company of men; and therefore, though that be a good ſenſe, and may well be included in our Tranſlation, which being (according to the Text) in the plural number, *young Lyons*, takes in the whole company, how many ſoever they are. *Wilt thou fill the company of the young Lyons?* canſt thou give all the Whelps in the Kennel their Dinner or Supper? yet I rather adhere to thoſe, who render the word *Appetite* as we do, than to thoſe who render it *Company*.

Verum eſt nomen חית *interdum ſignificare catervam, ſed quum de hominibus ſermo eſt Perde catervam arundinis,* i. e. *haſtatorum,* Piſc. *Anima pro appetendi facultate.*

Canſt thou fill the appetite (or ſoul) of the young Lyons. The word is tranſlated *Life* or *Soul*, in the 20. *Chap.* of this Book (*ver.* 22.) as alſo in the 33. *Chap.* of this Book (*ver.* 18.) 'Tis likewiſe tranſlated *appetite* (*Prov.* 23. 2.) and when we read *greedy dogs* (*Iſa.* 56. 11.) we put in the Margin, *ſtrong of appetite*; implying, that the perſons intended under that diſgraceful denomination *greedy dogs*, were ſuch, who though they had little appetite or ſtomack to their work, yet had even an inſatiable appetite or ſtomack after their wages or reward. The appetite being ſo quick and lively a faculty, is expreſt by the ſame word that ſignifies life or livelineſs, which is the Spring and Original of appetite. When life ceaſeth, appetite ceaſeth; and the more lively any are, the quicker is their appetite.

Wilt thou fill the life or appetite of the young Lyons? Theſe young Lyons are oppoſed to the old Lyon ſpoken of before; and we may take them either for Lyons ſo young, that they are not able to hunt or fetch their own prey, and therefore muſt have prey brought in to them; or we may take them for young Lyons that have ſtrength enough to go forth to ſeek their prey. So then, as *the Lyon* before may be taken for an old Lyon, for a Lyon ſo old, that he cannot go forth to catch his prey; and the *young Lyons*, for Lyons ſo young, that they never had ſtrength to go forth and catch their prey: So we may take the Text in general for old and young, whether able or unable to catch prey for themſelves. *Wilt thou hunt the prey for the Lyon? or fill the appetite of the young Lyons?*

Hence note, Firſt, The way how Lyons live, or get their livelihood.

Lyons are all for prey.

There is no work ſpoken of that the Lyon doth to get his living by, there's nothing ſpoken of any ſervice the Lyon doth, all his care is for his belly, *he hunts his prey:* Wicked men in this are like Lyons, they are like *Nimrod*, all for hunting, all for catching the prey. The Prophet *Nahum* (*Chap.* 2. 12.) deſcribes the oppreſſing power of *Nineveh*, by a Lyon *tearing in pieces enough for his Whelps, and ſtrangling for his Lioneſſes, and filling his holes with prey, and his dens with ravin.* Tearing and ſtrangling, filling all with prey and ravin, is all that Lyons do; nor is the work of oppreſſors and cruel men any other in their kind, nor any whit better. Some of the Ancients ſpeaking of the Lyon, ſay, that when he roareth, the poor Beaſts that are within hearing are ſo amazed and affrighted, that though they might eſcape by flight, yet they ſtand ſtill and yield themſelves up to him for a prey. Such frights are poor men often put to, by the roaring Throats of mercileſs oppreſſors.

Baſil. Hom. 9. *in* Hexam. Ambroſ. *Hex. l.* 6. *c.* 3.

Secondly, note; *God provides prey for Lyons.*

God feeds not only Sheep and Lambs, but Wolves and Lyons. This note gives us the chief ſcope of the whole Context, which is to ſhew the care of God over all. It is ſaid (*Pſal.* 104. 21.) *The young Lyons roar after their prey, and ſeek their meat from God.* It is a ſtrange expreſſion, that young Lyons when they roar after their prey, ſhould be ſaid to *ſeek their meat of God*; implying, that neither their own ſtrength nor craft could feed them without help from God. The ſtrongeſt Creatures left to themſelves cannot help themſelves. As they who fear God are fed by a ſpecial Providence of God, ſo all Creatures are fed and nouriſhed by a general Providence. The Lyon, though he be ſtrong and ſubtile, yet cannot get his own prey; we think, a Lion might ſhift for himſelf, no, 'tis the Lord that provides for him; the young Lions ſeek their meat of God: Surely then, the mightieſt of men cannot live upon themſelves; as it is of God that we receive life and breath, ſo all things needful for the maintenance of this life. The Prophet *Jeremiah* gives check to all fleſh (*Chap.* 9.23.) *Let not the wiſe man glory in his wiſdom, let not the mighty man glory in his might.* As if he had ſaid, neither a wiſe man by his wiſdom, nor a mighty man by his might, can bring any work to an effectual iſſue. That is alſo the concluſion which the Spirit of God made, by the wiſeſt and one of the mightieſt men that ever was in the World, King *Solomon* (*Eccleſ.* 9. 11.) *The race is not to the ſwift, nor the battel to the ſtrong, neither yet bread to the wiſe, nor yet riches to men of underſtanding, nor yet favour to men of skill, but time and chance happeneth to them all*: Though men have ſutable qualities and abilities for the attaining of their ends (what ſutes better the winning of a race than ſwiftneſs?) yet they cannot attain them, without the power and preſence of God in ſome kind and degree or other; the ſtrong Lions would ſtarve, did not the Lord help them to hunt their prey.

Thirdly, If we take the Lion in the firſt part of the *verſe* for the old decrepid Lion, and the young Lions for ſuch as are not able to go abroad for their prey, the Lord providing for Lions under both theſe conſiderations, yields us this Obſervation.

> *God takes care for thoſe Creatures, who through infirmities (being either too old or too young) are not able to provide for themſelves.*

There's a ſpecial providence of God over them that have ſpecial need. The old Lion, that once could, but now cannot, the young Lions that never could hunt the prey, are yet provided for. Old Lions that are ſtrong are taught by Natural inſtinct to get prey for their young ones while weak; and the Natural Hiſtorian tells us, that the younger Lions, which are ſtrong, are taught by a like inſtinct to hunt the prey for the old ones that are weak.

Leo vetulus qui viribus, deficientibus non amplius, Poteſt venari à juvenibus præda capta, rugitu eum ad participationem prædæ vocantibus, aliter, Ælian. l. 9. *de natura animal.* c.1.

Fourthly, From the latter words, *Wilt thou fill the appetite of the young Lions?*

Note, *God can and doth provide for the Creature to fulneſs or ſatisfaction*; he fills their appetite.

God, as I may ſay, keeps a good, a bountiful Houſe for all his Creatures; the young Lions that have ſuch ſtrong ſtomachs ſhall have their fill: Hence we may infer,

Firſt, If the Lord doth thus provide for Lions young or old, one or other, then much more will he provide, and hunt the prey for his faithful people. *David* (*Pſal.* 34. 10.) gives us the Lords word for it, *The young Lions do lack and ſuffer hunger, but they that ſeek the Lord ſhall not want any good thing.* That is, the young Lions may lack, or though the young Lions ſhould lack and ſuffer hunger, yet they that ſeek and ſerve the Lord ſhall not. Lions have a good aſſurance that they ſhall not lack, but the Servants of God have a far better aſſurance that they ſhall not. *Doth God take care for Oxen?* Was the Apoſtles queſtion (1 *Cor.* 9. 9.) *or ſaith he it altogether for our ſakes; for our ſakes* (ſpeaking of Goſpel Miniſters) *no doubt this is written*, (*verſ.* 10.) As if he had ſaid, if the Lord did not give that Law to the *Jews*, *Thou ſhalt not muzzle the mouth of the Ox that treadeth out the Corn*, altogether for our ſakes, yet queſtionleſs he gave it chiefly for our ſakes, and had a far greater reſpect to us in making that Law than to Oxen. Thus from the Text and point in hand, I may ſay, *Doth God take care for Lions?* Surely, he hath cauſed this to be written, that we may know, he will much more take care of his Sheep, of all that fear him and call upon his name. A Lion may come into a ſtarving condition, but thoſe that fear God ſhall not. Lions, though they are very ſtrong and ſubtle cannot always get their prey, but the Lord hath promiſed to miniſter to his people, at leaſt a ſupply of their neceſſities, as *David* ſpeaks, *I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not ſeen the righteous forſaken, nor his ſeed begging bread* (Pſal. 37. 25.)

Secondly, Doth the Lord provide to ſatisfaction for the young Lions? Doth he fill their Natural appetite? Then ſurely he will provide for the ſatisfying of his people in ſpiritual things (*Luke* 1. 53.) *He filleth the hungry with good things.* Who are the hungry? Doubtleſs the holy Virgin meant the ſpiritually hungry. And what are the good things he fills them with? Doubtleſs, ſpiritual good things: they ſhall have not only ſome taſts of theſe good things, but their fills of them; *he fills the hungry with good things.* (*Pſal.* 81.10.) *Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it.* God hath much reſpect to fill us with outward good things; but much more to fill us with ſpiritual good things, *open thy mouth wide*, and raiſe up thy deſires after the things of Heaven, growth in grace, increaſe in faith and love, in patience and holineſs, and I will fill it. He that fills the appetite of the young Lions with natural food, will fill the appetite of his Servants with ſpiritual food, which is beſt of all; *they ſhall be abundantly ſatisfied with the goodneſs of his Houſe, and he will make them drink of the River of his pleaſures:* (*Pſal.* 36.8.) He that fills the appetite of the young Lions, will not ſend hungry Souls away empty. We may reſt in much aſſurance that God will deal well with us, both for Soul and Body, while he queſtions *Job* whether he would do that which himſelf only doth; *Wilt thou hunt the prey for the Lion? Or fill the appetite of the young Lions?*

Verſe 40. **When they couch in their Dens, and abide in the covert to lie in wait.**

This Verſe gives a further deſcription of the Lion, whether young or old. Before we had them hunting abroad in the Fields, here we have them couching in their Dens, and abiding in their covert.

When they couch in their Dens.

This couching or bowing down in their Dens, may be upon a three-fold account, and ſo there is a three-fold interpretation of the words.

Firſt, Some taking the Lion for the old Lion and the young Lions for ſuch as are very young, interpret this couching as proceeding from weakneſs; they couch in their Dens, as not being able to go abroad.

Secondly, Others ſay, they couch in their Dens only for reſt and eaſe, having tired themſelves in hunting for their prey.

Thirdly, That they couch in their Dens upon deſign to catch their prey, thus the latter part of the *Verſe* ſeems to carry it; where 'tis ſaid, *they lie in wait.* So then, this couching in their Dens, is either from neceſſity, as not being able to go forth; or it is a couching in policy, which I rather pitch upon.

ישח *Deprimit geſtus hominis inſidiantis alicui,* Druſ.

They couch in their Dens.] As if they were aſleep, as if they minded nothing but their eaſe; yet even then they are buſily minding how to catch their prey. As if the Lord had ſaid, *Haſt thou* (O Job) *taught the Lion that art and cunning, to lie couchant in his Den, that he may ſteal upon Beaſts paſſant, and ſurprize them unawares. They couch in their Dens,*

And abide in the Covert to lie in wait.

The word rendred **Covert** ſignifieth a *Tabernacle* or Tent in which men abode for a time, and is therefore here oppoſed (as ſome conceive) to the Lions Dens or Houſes ſpoken of in the beginning of the *verſe*. Beaſts (ſay they) are aware of Lions Dens, and ſo avoid them; but they may paſs unawares by the Coverts and Thickets, where they lie in ambuſh. But I ſuppoſe we need not be thus critical in diſtinguiſhing between *Dens* and *Coverts*, both words may ſignifie the ſame place and thing; or at leaſt in both places Lions do the ſame thing, *Lie in wait.* It is ſaid of the Lord himſelf (*Jerem.* 25. 38.) *he hath forſaken his Covert as a Lion.* The meaning of the Prophet was to ſhew the Lords purpoſe to come forth, and tear and rend his enemies by ſome ſore Judgment, as a young Lion that rangeth about for his prey. We read a little before (at the 34. *verſe*) *of the howling of the Shepherds*, that is, of the Rulers and Governours, and of the *cry of the principal of the flock*, that is, of the wealthieſt among the people. When the Lion came forth of his Covert, there was a howling and a cry made; who ſo? The Lion came forth to deſtroy both Sheep and Shepherds. Thus the Lord comes forth, even as a young Lion, full of wrath and fury to deſtroy the wicked: He is ſometimes like a Lion couching in his Den, and abiding in his Covert, but he doth it as the Lion,

To lie in wait.] This expreſſion may have a twofold alluſion. Firſt, To Fowlers and Hunters, who (in ſome caſes) keep out of ſight, that they may with the more advantage take Birds or Beaſts in their ſnares and toils; *For in vain* (ſaith *Solomon*, Prov. 1. 17.) *the Net is ſpread in the ſight of any Bird.* Secondly, To Souldiers, who lie in ambuſh to ſurprize their enemy. Thus do Lions; *They* (ſaith the Text) *couch in their Dens, and abide in the Covert to lie in wait.* Here,

First, Taking that interpretation of the words, which ſuppoſeth, the Lion lying down in his Den through age and weakneſs,

> Obſerve, *The ſtrongeſt Creatures are tamed and weakened by age.*

The Lion is the ſtrongeſt among Beaſts, yet he cannot always range in the Fields and hunt for prey, he muſt come to his Den, and keep Houſe there. 'Tis ſo with men, how ſtrong ſoever they have been, yet old age neceſſitates them at laſt to keep Houſe and home. All muſt ſubmit to time, and yield to thoſe infirmities, which old age inevitably brings upon us. Time is called, *The eater of things*; 'Tis ſo alſo of perſons, that *great eater* will eat out the ſtrength of *the eater* himſelf, that is, the Lion, as *Sampſon* called him in his riddle propoſed to the *Philiſtines* (*Judg.* 14. 14.) Time reduceth our ſtrength to weakneſs, our life to death. Time confines us firſt to our Chambers, then to our Beds, and then to our Graves. The Lion muſt give over his hunting and couch in his Den.

Tempus edax rerum.

Secondly, Taking the Lion as politickly abiding in Covert, and waiting for his prey;

> Obſerve, *As the Lord gives much ſtrength, ſo much craft to ſome Creatures.*

There are Creatures of little ſtrength which have much craft, others have little craft but much ſtrength, in ſome both meet together; and among them we may number the Lion, he is a crafty one as well as a ſtrong one; he hath his Covert, there he waits for his prey. We may parallel men with Beaſts in this regard; among them ſome are ſtrong but not crafty, others are crafty but not ſtrong, and not a few are both. Such *David* compared to a Lion (*Pſal.* 10. 4, 8, 9.) *The wicked through the pride of his countenance will not ſeek after God:* What will he ſeek after then? The eighth and ninth *verſes* tell us, *He ſitteth in the lurking places of the Villages, in the ſecret places doth he murder the innocent, his eyes are privily ſet againſt the poor, he lieth in wait ſecretly, as a Lion in his Den, he lieth in wait to catch the poor, as he doth catch the poor when he draweth him into his Net: He croucheth and humbleth himſelf, that the poor may fall by his ſtrong ones.* Thus the ſubtle practices of a wicked man are ſet forth, by the ſubtlety of the Lion. He coucheth and croucheth, he waits for the innocent, he draws him into his Net; he firſts entangles him, and then devours him. *David* gives a like deſcription of evil men in another place (*Pſal.* 17. 11, 12.) *They have now compaſſed us in our ſteps, they have ſet their eyes bowing down to the Earth; like as a Lion that is greedy of his prey, and as it were a young Lion lurking in ſecret places.* Theſe Scriptures plainly ſhew the natural ſubtlety of the Lion, waiting in his Covert that he may do miſchief unawares; and that in this piece of miſchievous policy wicked men are not behind him, they ſhew as plainly.

Thirdly, Whereas in the former *verſe* the Lion is ſaid to hunt his prey in the Field, and in this *to abide in his Covert to lie in wait for it*;

> Obſerve, *What ſome cannot do by ſtrength they do by craft.*

We ſay, *of craft or power, 'tis hard to ſay which is moſt dangerous or undeſirable in an enemy.* Where theſe two meet, where craft and power, ability and ſubtlety are joined, what will they not do? We may ſay of men, in whom theſe are united, as the Lord ſaid concerning the men of the new World, ſoon after the Flood, who were united in heart and tongue (*the people are one, and they have all one language*) *nothing will be reſtrained from them, which they have imagined to do* (Gen. 11. 6.) The Devil is always like a Lion, both ſtrong and ſubtle: He is ſo ſtrong, that he ſometimes hunts his prey (as I may ſay) in open Field, and overcomes by fine force. He is ſo crafty, that at other times he knows 'tis beſt for him to abide in his Covert, and lie in wait to catch Souls. *He goeth about like a roaring Lion* (ſaith the Apoſtle *Peter*, 1 Epiſt. 5 8.) but he is craftier than to roar always like a Lion, when *he goeth about ſeeking whom he may devour*; he often fawns and flatters; he uſeth his wits, and puts tricks upon poor Souls whom he would devour. *We* (ſaith the Apoſtle, 2 *Cor.* 2.) *are not ignorant of his devices.* Chriſt adviſeth all his Diſciples to join the wiſdom of the Serpent, with the innocency of the Dove; ſubtlety and honeſty, craft and innocency, working together, work well, or make good work:- But where there is the ſtrength and craft of a Lion, without a Dove-like integrity, what ſad work do men make? Godly men, or men truly fearing God, ſometimes have the wiſdom of the Serpent, together with their Dove-like innocency; and when to both the former, the Lions ſtrength is joined, what good may they not do? They may do (as we ſay) a World of good in an evil World.

Fourthly, In that *the Lion coucheth in his Den*, and retireth ſometimes to his Covert; we may take notice of the good providence of God towards man. God hath ordered it, that the Lion coucheth all day in his Den, and is quiet, that men may go out quietly to their labour. The Pſamiſt commends the providence of God in this (*Pſalm.* 104. 20, 21, 22.) *Thou makeſt darkneſs, and it is night, wherein all the Beaſts of the Forreſt do creep forth: The young Lions roar after their prey, and ſeek their meat from God.* Thus they are roaring and raging for their prey all night; but how is it with them, or what do they in the day? The next words tell us, *The Sun riſeth, they gather themſelves together, and lay them down in their Dens.* (Then it follows) *Man goeth forth to his work, and to his labour until the evening.* Such is the care of God, that he clears Fields and Countries of theſe ravenous Beaſts, that man may go ſafely to his work, and not be troubled. When the Lion comes forth in the day, 'tis uſually to execute ſome Judgment of God; witneſs that of the Prophet, who going out of Gods way, God told him by another Prophet, a Lion ſhall meet thee and tear thee; and ſo it came to paſs, a Lion met him, and executed the Judgment of God upon him, becauſe he went beyond the command he had received from God (1 *Kings* 13. 24.) We read alſo, that God ſent Lions to vex the people continually, when they fell to Idolatry and falſe worſhip (2 *Kings* 17. 26.) It was of the Lord that Lions which uſed to keep their Covert in the day time, were ſo bold as to come by day to their Houſes and deſtroy them. And ſuch is the mighty power of God, that though hungry Lions are altogether for prey, yet God can ſtop their mouths, and check their appetite (*Dan.* 6. 8.) When *Daniel* was caſt into the Lions Den, amongſt a company of hungry Lions, yet not one touched him, but were as meek to him as ſo many Lambs; whereas no ſooner were his enemies and accuſers let down into that Den, but they brake their bones before they came to the ground. Thus much of the Lion, a King among the Beaſts of the Earth. The Lords next queſtion concerns the Raven, none of the beſt, if not one of the worſt among the Birds of the Air.

Verſe 41. **Who provideth for the Raven his food? When his young ones cry unto God, they wander for lack of meat.**

As the Lion is a devourer among Beaſts, ſo is the Raven among Birds. The Lion (as was ſaid) is ſo curious, that he will not feed upon a Carcaſe in the way, but the Raven feeds upon any dead or corrupted Body; and that is the reaſon why in many great Cities there's a Law or cuſtom that Ravens neer them, ſhall not be ſhot at nor terrified, becauſe they eat up the filth and Carrion, which might infect the Air, and breed peſtilential diſeaſes.

Now the Lord puts the queſtion, *Who provideth for the Raven?* As if he had ſaid, I provide not only for the *Kingly Lion*, but for the *Carrion-eating Raven.* The Lord made proviſion of food for Lions and Ravens, for all ſorts of Beaſts, and Birds, and creeping things, in the work of Creation; and in his works of providence, he makes all things ready, and brings them to hand for their uſe and ſuſtentation: He, as it were, dreſſeth and diſheth our meat for all his Creatures, and then ſets it before them, that they may eat and be ſatisfied.

Verbum כון *notat indulgentiſſimam Creatoris providentiam, non ſolum neceſſaria ſed etiam uſque ad delicias.*

Who provideth for the Raven?] The Hebrew word rendred **Provideth,** hath two ſignifications, which wonderfully ſet forth the care of God towards his Creature: Firſt, the certainty of their proviſion, for the word ſignifies to *eſtabliſh*; as if the Lord did give them a neceſſary, ſetled, or conſtant diet. Secondly, It notes the ſutableneſs and pleaſingneſs of their food to their nature and conſtitution, yea, to their guſt and appetite; as if the Lord fitted their food, as we ſay, to their tooth or palate, and gave them not only meat, but *ſavory meat* to them (like that which *Iſaac* beſpake of his Son *Eſau*) ſuch as they love; for though the food of Ravens be unpleaſant to us, yet it is pleaſing and toothſom and ſavory to them. What the Lord provides for Ravens, is to them dainties and delicacies; Carrion is ſo to them, becauſe 'tis ſutable to their nature, and ſuch as their ſtomach likes very well. The ſutableneſs of any food to our taſte and palate, makes it delightful to us: What makes ſin, which is as odious as a Carrion or corrupt thing to God and good men, pleaſant to carnal and wicked men, but the ſutableneſs of it to their Nature? They can feed upon ſin as heartily and hungrily, as a Raven doth upon a putrified Carcaſe. And what's the reaſon that the ways of God are ſo pleaſant to a godly man? Is it not becauſe his heart is made (through grace) ſutable to them? To do the will of God is meat and drink to a godly man; but his Soul (being in a right frame) can no more delightfully do, any thing that is ſinfully evil, than he can delight to feed Bodily upon putrefaction or poiſon.

Corvus in Hebræo ערב *dictus à colore nigro. Græcè* κόραξ ἀ κρώζειν, *crocitare.*

Who provideth his food for the Raven?] The Hebrew word for a **Raven** ſignifies *blackneſs, darkneſs*, or the *evening*. The *Raven* is the true *Black-bird*, a dark-coloured Creature; *black as a Raven*, is the Scripture language for perfect blackneſs. The Greek word for a *Raven*, intimates her hoarſe, harſh and unpleaſant cry, or croking. As the coat of the Raven is eminent for a beautiful blackneſs, ſo his note is well known by his unpleaſant and jarring hoarſneſs, The note of the Crow or Raven, ſounds like the Latine, *Cras, Cras*; in Engliſh, *To morrow, to morrow*, or *the day to come.* And hence men, who when called to preſent repentance and forſaking of their ſins, deſire time, and ſay, to morrow, to morrow, are ſaid to reſemble Crows and Ravens, whoſe only ſong is *Cras, Cras.* 'Tis reported concerning *Athanaſius*, that walking in the ſtreets of a Heatheniſh or Gentile City, a Raven flew over his head and croked; the Heathens that ſtood by, laught and ſmil'd to ſee the Raven flie and croke ſo near him; and they asked, *What ſaid the Raven to thee?* He anſwered, *The Raven cryed, to morrow, to morrow; for to morrow the Emperor will ſend out ſuch an Edict or Decree, as will put a ſtop to your ſuperſtitious obſervation of Heatheniſh Feaſts:* And though he knew nothing of the Emperors purpoſe at that time, to put forth ſuch a Decree, yet the next day there came a command from the Emperor, that they ſhould no more obſerve them: And then the Heathens cryed out againſt *Athanaſius*, and ſaid that he was a Witch.

Zorom. l. 4.

Further, The *Raven* is ſo called in our language, from her ravening; her name ſpeaks her nature, as *Nabals* did his (1 *Sam.* 25.25.) yet even Ravens are under the Lords inſpection. *Who provideth for the Raven his food?*

Hence Note, *The worſt and vileſt Creatures are under the care of God.*

The Lord doth not give *Job* an inſtance of his care in the people of *Iſrael*, for whom he provided a long time in *Egypt*, and whom he fed forty years in the Wilderneſs; nor in *Elias*, fed by Ravens, but in his feeding Ravens; nor among Fowls, doth he inſtance in the Hawk or Falcon, which are highly prized and fed by Princes; nor in the ſweet ſinging Nightingale, or ſuch like muſical pretty Birds, which men keep choicely and much delight in; but in that hateful and malicious Bird, the croking Raven, whom no man values, but as ſhe eats up the Carrion which might annoy him. Behold then, and wonder at the providence and kindneſs of God, that he ſhould provide food for the Raven, a Creature of ſo diſmal a hue, and of ſo untuneable a tone, a Creature that is ſo odious to moſt men, and ominous to ſome. There is a great providence of God ſeen, in providing for the Ant or Piſmire, who gathers her meat in Summer (*Prov.* 6.8.) but a greater in the Raven, who though he forgets, or is careleſs to provide for himſelf, yet God provides and layeth up for him. One would think the Lord ſhould ſay of Ravens, let them ſhift for themſelves or periſh; no, the Lord God doth not deſpiſe any work of his hands; the Raven hath his being from God, and therefore the Raven ſhall be provided for by him; not only the fair innocent Dove, but the ugly Raven hath his meat from God. As the Lord feeds not only Doves, but Ravens, in kind, ſo he feeds not only Doves, but Ravens, in a figure; that is, he feeds not only Dove-like or innocent men, but Raven-like or wicked men. (*Matth.* 5.45.) *He cauſeth his Sun to riſe on the evil and on the good, and ſendeth Rain on the juſt and on the unjuſt:* Thus he feeds Ravens in the likeneſs of men. Such men whoſe minds feed upon Carrion, the Lord feeds their Bodies with excellent dainties, they fare delicioſly every day, as the rich Glutton is ſaid to do, who was but a Raven. The Lord, I ſay, doth not only provide for his better and more excellent ones, but he provides for the bad, for the evil, for the wicked; ſuch an indulgent Father and Provider is God towards all his Creatures. We find this reported to the praiſe of God (*Pſal.* 104. 10,11.) *He ſendeth the Springs into the Valleys, which run among the Hills; they give drink to every Beaſt of the Field; the wild Aſſes quench their thirſt.* And again (*Pſal.* 145.15,16.) *The eyes of all wait upon* (or look unto) *thee, and thou giveſt them their meat in due ſeaſon: Thou openeſt thy hand, and ſatisfieſt the deſire* (that is, the hunger and thirſt) *of every living thing.* He that gives life to all, upholds the lives of all. As it ſhews the great power of God, that he hath made ſome living Creatures (the Angels and Souls of men) which need no meat, ſo it is a very great glory that he provides meat for all that need it. God hath a great Houſhold, and he keeps a plentiful Houſe; the meaneſt of his Houſhold have food convenient for them.

Now, *Doth the Lord provide a Table for the Ravens?* Remember Chriſts Inference from it; *Then much more will he provide a Table for his Children who fear him, and truſt upon him. Behold,* (ſaith Chriſt, *Matth.* 6.26.) *the Fowls of the Air; for they ſow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into Barns, yet your Heavenly Father feedeth them: Are ye not much better than they?* And that which Chriſt ſpake in general there concerning *the Fowls of the Air*, he in *Luke* 12. (*verſ.* 14.) ſpake particularly of the Raven; *Conſider the Ravens, for they neither ſow nor reap,* &c. *and God feedeth them; how much more are ye better* (as if the Lord had ſaid, *than the Fowls?*) *Ye are much better then the beſt of Fowls; then how much better than the worſt, the Ravens? and be ye aſſured, that as much as ye are better than the Ravens, by ſo much is my care for you, greater than for the Ravens. As God is the Saviour of all, eſpecially of thoſe that believe* (1 *Tim.* 4.10.) ſo he is a provider for all, but eſpecially for thoſe that believe. The Lord, who alike cares for all, doth not care for all alike, there would be much inequality in that equality. As Creatures vary in their kinds and degrees, ſo the Lord (who is a God of Judgment) varies both the kind and degree of his care towards the Creature. Therefore we may conclude; *Doth God put forth any kind or degree of care for Ravens? Doubtleſs then he will take care of his beloved Children and faithful Servants.*

There's no temptation with which the Children of God are more oppreſt, than with this; *What they ſhall eat? And what they ſhall drink? And wherewithal ſhall they and theirs be clothed?* Nor doth any thing caſt them upon more dangerous Rocks than theſe diſtruſtful Queries; *How ſhall we live? And who ſhall provide for us, eſpecially in a hard and dear year?* But may we not ſtand amazed to hear ſuch Queries proceed out of their mouths, who have heard of this word which once proceeded out of Chriſts mouth, that *God feedeth the Ravens?* Who believing that, can but believe that God will feed him! Nor doth the Lord provide for and feed the old Raven only, but his *young ones* alſo. As it follows,

Avis inauſpicata.

When his young ones cry unto God.

The Raven in the former part of the verſe, is the old one that hath young ones. How can that feed the young, that cannot feed himſelf, but by Gods providing? As if the Lord had ſaid, *As it is not by thy providence*, O Job, *but by mine, that the old Ravens are fed; ſo that the young ones being early forſaken of the old, and wanting skill to ſhift for themſelves, wandring here and there, have their cries (which Nature hath taught them to put up to God in their neceſſity) heard and anſwered with ſupply of food.*

The Hebrew is, *When his Children cry unto God*; Children are properly the *young ones* of men, yet the *young ones* of any Creature may be called Children.

The word rendred *to cry*, notes a very ſtrong cry for help for food. The young ones of the Raven being pincht with hunger, make a loud confuſed cry for food; but to whom do they cry? The Text ſaith, *They cry*

שוע *Eſt opem & ſalutem ingenti vociferatione poſtulare. Clamor ob neceſſitatem emiſſus, petitionem imitatur.* Theodoret.

Unto God.] No Creature can properly be ſaid to cry unto God, but the rational Creature; and there's none among the rational Creatures that indeed cry unto God, but thoſe that have faith: How then is it ſaid, the Ravens young ones *cry unto God?*

Non novit omnino invocare Deum niſi anima rationalis. Auguſt. *in* Pſal. 136.

I anſwer, Firſt, They are ſaid to cry to God, becauſe man hears them not, or if he do, he regards them not; what man regards the cry of a young Raven? Therefore they cry to God if to any, who alone takes notice of their cry.

Secondly, They cry to God, not properly, but equivalently; they cannot be imagined to make any formal or direct prayers to God in their neceſſities, but their neceſſities which force them to cry, have the force of a cry, or of a prayer unto God.

Ego haud ſecus exauditos paſco, quam ſi ad me vociferentur. Bez.

Thirdly, They may be ſaid to cry unto God, becauſe God takes or interprets their cry when hungry, as a prayer to himſelf: And God may be ſaid to hear their cry, becauſe he provides for them, and helps them, as he doth thoſe who put up powerful prayers to him. There is in all Creatures a deſire of that which is needful for them, or proper to them, and when that is wanting they cry, that is, make ſome ſignification of their want. And as all young ones are apt to cry (that being all they can do) for food; ſo the Scripture, as here ſo elſewhere repreſents young Ravens crying more than other Creatures (*Pſal.* 147. 9.) *He giveth to the Beaſt his food, and to the young Ravens which cry.* The Beaſts are not ſaid to cry for food when God gives it them, but the young Ravens are. Crying ſeems to be the property of young Ravens, as if the leaſt lack of food made them cry.

But how come young Ravens to be in ſuch want of food, that they ſhould cry for it? And when they cry, why are they not ſaid to cry to their Parents (if I may ſo ſpeak) or to the old ones, but to God for meat? In anſwer to theſe Queries;

Firſt, Some Naturaliſts ſay, the Raven is a forgetful Creature, and leaves her young ones altogether unprovided of food, and therefore (as the laſt reſort of all helpleſs ones) they are ſuppoſed to cry unto God.

Secondly, Say others, the Raven is not only a forgetful, but an unnatural Creature. Ravens have not thoſe bowels of Natural compaſſion to their young ones, which other Creatures have, who will preſently beſtir themſelves to get food for their young ones; therefore ſome ſay, that their young ones, as it were, cry to God of the impiety and unnaturalneſs of the old ones, in not providing for them, and in a manner accuſe them for it. The Apoſtle ſaith, *He that provides not for thoſe of his own Houſe, hath denied the faith, and is worſe than an Infidel.* A Beaſt will provide for his own, and moſt Birds provide for their young, but the Raven provides not for his own young ones; and therefore his young ones are brought in, as crying or complaining to the Lord of their Parents unnatural aſtorgy, or want of pity: And indeed Parents, who do not provide for their own Houſe, may juſtly be put among the Ravens. Remember (by the way) the power of God, who could make Ravens feed *Elias*, and be kind to him (1 *Kings* 17. 16.) though naturally they are cruel to their own kind, and refuſe to feed their young ones.

Chryſoſtomi *ſententia eſt, non ob ullam alboris ſpeciem, ſed ex ipſa parentum crudelitate pullos adhuc implumes negligi & deſeri. Illis natura author dignam vicem rependi imperat; nam filii genitores ſuos in ſenectute minime alunt. Ut* Ælianus *dixit* κακοῦ κόρακος κακὸν ᾠόν. *Dicitur quòd corvus pullos non paſcit, donec ſuos deprehendens plumis nigreſcere viderit, unde ſeptem diebus iis cibos non miniſtrat, ſed à Deo ſuſtentantur per naturalem vim iis inditam.* Aquin.

Thirdly, There's another reaſon given by Naturaliſts, why Ravens feed not their young ones: For when the Raven hath hatcht her young, they look whitiſh, which the old ones cannot abide, being themſelves black, and therefore the Raven forbears to feed his young ones for *ſeven days* (ſaith my Author) that is, till their feathers begin to grow black, whereby he knows them to be his own, being loth to bring up a ſpurious brood; ſo that all this time of their eſtrangement and forbearance, the Lord feeds their young ones, ſome ſay, with a dew from Heaven, or with little flies (ſay others) bred out of their dung. But I ſhall not ſtay upon theſe things, eſpecially conſidering that they who profeſſedly write of the nature and manners, both of Beaſts and Birds, are very ſilent, as to any ſuch obſervations concerning the Raven; yet becauſe ſo grave an Author as is noted in the Margin inſiſts upon this latter reaſon, take this Note from it.

Sed apud authores hiſtoriæ naturalis hujus rei teſtimonium vix invenitur. Lege Ariſt. l. 9. Hiſt. Animal. c. 31. Plin. l. 10. c. 12. Ælian. l. 15. c. 39. Hieronymus *ad illud* (Pſal. 147. 9.) *ex Philoſophorum ſententia ait, è cœli rore vivere corvorum pullos derelictos.*

Every one loves its like.

A Raven doth not love her young, till ſhe perceives them in her own likeneſs. It is ſaid alſo of the Eagle, that when her young are firſt hatcht, ſhe will not own them for hers, till having held them up to the Sun, ſhe finds they out-face it; and here 'tis ſaid, the Raven will not own her young till they are black. Now, if it be thus in Nature, if it be a truth, that the Raven is not delighted in her young till they grow black, 'tis doubtleſs true in Spirituals, *like to like*. God loves none with delight, but holy and pure ones, and the more holy and pure any are, the more he loves them; the reaſon is, becauſe himſelf is altogether infinitely pure and holy. Where God ſees moſt of his own image, which is purity and holineſs, there he loves moſt, and for ſuch he will certainly provide, ſuch he will ſurely feed.

But, which way ſoever the young ones of the Raven come to want food, whether it be through the forgetfulneſs, or the unnaturalneſs of the old Raven, or becauſe they are hatcht white, upon what account ſoever (I ſay) it is, that they come to want food, the Text ſaith they are in ſuch want, that they *cry to God*, yea, that

They wander for lack of meat.

This is a further evidence of their diſtreſs, they cry when they are in their neſt, and there God provides for them; and when *they wander* (from their neſt) *for lack of meat*, God feeds them too. Some reſtrain this wandring to a narrow compaſs, and ſay, 'tis only in their neſt, where they ſtruggle and are unquiet for want of meat; but this their wandring for want of meat, may be conceived to be out of the neſt, rather than in it; for a neſt being a ſtrait place, it cannot be congruouſly ſaid, that the yong ones wander while they are in it. And therefore, which clears the matter ſufficiently, Naturaliſts tell us, That when the Raven hath fed his young in the neſt, till they are well fledged and able to flie abroad, then he thruſts them out of the neſt, and will not let them abide there, but puts them to get their own living. Now when theſe young ones are upon their firſt flight from their neſt, and are little acquainted with means how to help themſelves with food, then the Lord provides food for them. 'Tis ſaid by credible Authorities, that the Raven is marvellous ſtrict and ſevere in this; for as ſoon as his young ones are able to provide for themſelves, he will not fetch any more food for them; yea, ſome affirm, the old one will not ſuffer them to ſtay in the ſame Country where they were bred; and if ſo, then they muſt needs wander. We ſay proverbially, *Need makes the old wife trot*; we may ſay, and *The young ones too.* It hath been, and poſſibly is, the practice of ſome Parents toward their Children, who as ſoon as they can ſhift for themſelves, and are fit in any competency to get their bread, they turn them out of doors, as the Raven doth his young ones out of the neſt. Now ſaith the Lord in the Text, When the young ones of the Raven are at this pinch, that they are turned off, and wander for lack of meat, who then provides for them? Do not I the Lord? Do not I who provide for the old Raven, provide for his young ones, both while they abide in the neſt, and when they wander for lack of meat?

Locis arctioribus, ubi non ſatis cibi pluribus ſit, duo tantum incolunt; & ſuos pullos cum jam poteſtas volandi eſt primum nido ejiciunt deinde regione tota expellunt. Ariſt. l. 9. de Hiſtor. animal. c. 31.

Hence Note, Firſt, (which was in part toucht before.) *The providence of God extends it ſelf to all, even the meaneſt of his Creatures.*

As ſome deny providence, ſo others reſtrain it to greater matters, or more eminent Creatures, as if it were true of *Jehovah*, which Heathens ſaid of their Idol *Jupiter*; *He is not at leiſure to mind little things.* But the Lord *Jehovah* diſdains not to look after the leaſt things, he *looks into*

Birds Neſts, to ſee they want nothing, or to ſupply their wants. Young Ravens are inconſiderable Creatures, yet the Lord remembers and conſiders them. And if God take care of young Ravens, then I may again infer, he will much more take care of their young ones or Children, who are themſelves heirs of the promiſe, the Spiritual ſeed of *Abraham*.

Secondly, In that young Ravens are here ſaid to cry unto God,

Obſerve, *Extream want or neceſſity will put meer Nature upon praying or crying to God.*

The worſt of men, yea, the very Beaſts will pray in their kind, or after their manner, when they are pinched with extremities, either of want or fear. The Heathen Mariners in *Jonah*, being [illegible]ly diſtreſſed, *cryed every one to his god.* There may be [illegible] cry of prayer to God in the mouth; where there is no grace in the heart. The Apoſtle ſaith, *Rom.* 10. *Whoſoever calleth upon the name of the Lord ſhall be ſaved*; but then it muſt be in faith, for ſo it follows there, *How ſhall they call on him on whom they have not believed?* Many call upon God, that ſhall not be ſaved (*Pſal.* 18. 41.) *They cryed, but there was none to ſave them, even to the Lord, but he anſwered them not.* The cry of graceleſs men is ſeldomer heard than the cry of reaſonleſs Beaſts or Birds.

Hence Note, Thirdly, *The Lord hears the cry of Nature when 'tis in want.*

He hears the cry of Beaſts, and he hears the cry of Ravens. Though wicked men ſtop their ears, and will not hear his commands, yet he ſometimes hears their crys in outward troubles, and doth them good many ways.

Hence alſo we may infer, *If the Lord hears the cry of Nature in Beaſts, and Birds, and bad men, how much more will he hear the cry of grace, and of the Spirit of Adoption, crying Abba father, in his Children?*

If he hears the croaking cry of young Ravens, who have no intention to pray to him, how much more will he hear the believing cry, the deep groans and ſighs of Saints, who *ſet their faces* purpoſely to pray unto him, and ſeek his face. *This poor man cryed* (a man rich in grace doubtleſs he was) *and the Lord heard him, and ſaved him out of all his troubles.*

Note, Fourthly, *If you would have any ſupply in your wants, you muſt ask it of God.*

When you are in want, whitherſoever you go, if you go not to God, you go to a wrong Door: The Ravens tell you whither to go when you are in want; it is not to this or that Creature, to this or that means, to this friend or that, but you muſt go to God for help; and if we have help any where elſe, and not in God, our help is worſe than our diſtreſs. Wants are an evil of affliction, but the help we get out of wants in any way, with neglect of God, is an evil of ſin, therefore cry to God. The Lions are ſaid to ſeek their meat from God, and here the Ravens are ſaid to cry unto God; the young Lions and the Ravens, will condemn thoſe, who in their diſtreſſes do not cry to God the fountain, but run to broken Ciſterns. It was the ſin of that good King *Aſa*, that *in his diſeaſe he ſought not to God, but to the Phyſicians* (2 Chron. 16. 12.) not that *Aſa* had caſt off prayer to God, or did not at all ſeek unto him (it cannot be that ſo good a man as the Scripture reports him, ſhould ſo much at once forget God and himſelf) but the meaning is, he was very cold and negligent in calling upon God for help, and over-confident of help by his Phyſicians.

Laſtly, Conſider, God provides for the young Ravens, when the old ones leave them, or put them out of their Neſt.

Hence Note, *When neareſt Relations in Nature leave us, God will not.*

When they whoſe duty it is to take care of us, prove unnatural, like the Raven to his young ones, then God will take care of us. *When my Father and Mother forſook me* (ſaith David, *Pſal.* 27. 9, 10.) *then the Lord took me up.* The Lord who feeds out-caſt Ravens, will give entertainment to his out-caſt Servants. (*Pſal.* 68. 5.) *A Father of the Fatherleſs, and a Judg of the Widows, is God in his holy habitation.* They that are fatherleſs by their Parents deſerting of them, or fatherleſs by the deceaſe of their Parents, God (they committing themſelves to him) will be a father unto them, he will do the office of a father to them, that is, provide for them. Thus much of the Lion, chief among the Beaſts of the Earth, and of the Raven, one of the worſt among the Fowls of the Air. The wiſdom of God hath choſen out theſe Creatures, that in teſtifying his care of them, he might convince *Job*, that he had not caſt off the care of him, but would provide for him, poſſibly in unknown ways of providence, as he did for the Lions and the Ravens.

CHAP. XXXIX. Verſ. 1, 2, 3, 4.

Knoweſt thou the time when the wild Goats of the Rock bring forth, or canſt thou mark when the Hinds do calve?

Canſt thou number the Months that they fulfil? Or knoweſt thou the time when they bring forth?

They bow themſelves, they bring forth their young ones, they caſt out their ſorrows.

Their young ones are in good liking, they grow up with Corn? They go forth, and return not unto them.

IN the former context, which was the cloſe of the thirty-eighth *Chapter*. The Lord gave *Job* an account of his care in providing food for the Lion, and the young Lions; for the Raven and his young ones. In this context and *Chapter* the Lord proceeds to ſhew his care and providence concerning both the production and ſuſtentation of ſeveral other Creatures, of whom men take no care nor make any proviſion for at all. *The wild Goats and the Hind, the wild Aſs and the Unicorn.*

There are ſome Creatures which live under mans inſpection, and are provided for by him, being tame and ſerviceable; there are others which have no commerce (as I may ſay) with man, but are ſavage, living at large in the Fields and Forreſts, upon Hills and Mountains, yet theſe are preſerved in their generations and increaſe, as well as thoſe that are under the eye and daily care of man. The wild Goats are preſerved as well as the Sheep, and the Hinds of the Forreſt as well as the Calves of the Stall. In and by all theſe examples the Lord would have *Job* take ſpecial notice, that his providence extendeth both to the feeding or nouriſhing of all kinds of Creatures, as alſo to their births and bringing forth, for the preſervation of their ſeveral kinds.

So then, the providence of God is here magnified in continuing and multiplying ſeveral ſorts of four footed Beaſts of the Earth and winged Fowls of the Air; ſome of which being tame are kept by the care of man; others being wild and avoiding the preſence of man (he ſcarce knowing the Nature of them, nor having any ſervice by them) are perpetuated in their kinds by the only care of God.

In theſe four *verſes* there are two things in general, about which the Lord holds forth his care of theſe ſavage Creatures. Firſt, About the bringing forth of their young ones. Secondly, About the bringing up of their young ones. The bringing forth of their young ones, we have in the three firſt *verſes* of this *Chapter*; the bringing up of their young ones, we have in *verſe* 4.

About the bringing forth of their young ones the Text ſpeaks two things. Firſt, The ſeaſon of it; and ſecondly, The painful manner of it.

The ſeaſon of it in the two firſt *verſes*. *Knoweſt thou the time when the wild Goats of the Rock bring forth?* (verſe 1.) and then of the Hinds (*verſe* 2.) *Canſt thou number the Months that they fulfil?*

The painful manner of bringing forth their young is expreſſed at verſe 3. *They bow down themſelves, they bring forth their young ones, they caſt out their ſorrows.*

The bringing up and growth of their young ones is given (*verſ.*4.) *Their young ones are in good liking, they grow up with Corn,*&c. Thus we have the general ſcope and parts of this context. I ſhall now deal with the particulars.

Hæc & ſequentia verba per Synecdochen intelligenda ſunt, pro eo quod eſt totam adminiſtrationem earum obtinere. Jun.

עת *Tempus opportunum ſeu idoneum.*

יעלה *Rupicapra à* עלה *ſcandit, aſcendit, quod montes & rupes aſcendit.*

Pendentem ſumma capream de rupe videbis. Caſuram ſperes, decipit illa canes. Martial.

Ibices quaſi avices, eo quod inſtar avium ardua & excelſa habitant.

Verſe 1. **Knoweſt thou the time when the wild Goats of the Rock bring forth?**

The firſt queſtion concerns the wild Goats, and the ſeaſon of their bringing forth.

Knoweſt thou the time?] Theſe words intend more than a bare naked knowledg of the time, they take in the knowledg of the whole diſpoſal or adminiſtration of God, concerning the wild Goats in their bringing forth.

Knoweſt thou the time? The word rendred time, ſignifies the opportune time, the fit time, the appointed time; *knoweſt thou the time* or *that time*,

When the wild Goats of the Rock bring forth?

What theſe Goats here called *wild Goats*, and *wild Goats of the Rock*, are, is commonly known. The word which we render *wild Goats*, ſignifies in the Hebrew *aſcending or clambering*, becauſe Goats are clambering Creatures, getting up the ſteepeſt Rocks, and aſcending the height of Hills and Mountains, which they do many times exceeding dangerouſly, ſeeming rather to hang by their feet than to go upon them. Thus the old Poet fancied them, when he ſaid, *You may ſee the wild Goats hanging upon the Rock, you may hope ſhe will tumble down preſently; but ſhe deceives the hunter and his hounds*; though ſhe ſeems to hang uncertainly, yet ſhe keeps her footing ſteddily. The Latines have a word ſignifying *wild Goats*, which criticks ſay, comes from another Latine word ſignifying *a Bird* or flying fowl, becauſe Goats may be ſaid rather to fly than go upon thoſe craggy places, or rather to uſe wings than feet. Such are the Creatures here called *wild Goats*, and that with an addition, *wild Goats*

Of the Rocks.] Becauſe they ſpecially delight in Rocky places, or becauſe they breed and bring forth in Rocks. It is ſaid (1 *Sam*.24.2.) that *Saul* in his purſuit of *David*, came with a ſelect Army of three thouſand men, to ſeek him and his men *upon the Rocks of the wild Goats*; which Scripture fitly anſwers this which calls them *wild Goats of the Rock*. *Saul* did not ſeek *David* only in the plains and valleys, where flocks of Sheep feed; but upon the craggy Rocks and Precipices, where wild Goats take up their Quarters or uſe to feed. This ſhewed his implacable rage, and revengful Spirit againſt an innocent perſon, that rather than not take him and have his will on him, he would undertake an expedition not only tedious but very hazardous to himſelf and his Army. *Wrathful men will not only not ſpare others, but not themſelves.* But to the Text, *Knoweſt thou the time when the wild Goats of the Rock*

Bring forth, that is, their young ones.

הולל *à* חול *Verbum ipſum quod dolere ſignificat ſumitur pro parturire.* Merc.

The word tranſlated **bring forth** ſignifies pain and ſorrow. There is ſo much pain in bringing forth, that bringing forth and pain may well be ſignified by one word. The pains of the wild Goats in bringing forth here implyed, are expreſly ſpoken of at the third *verſe*.

But why did the Lord enquire of *Job* here, whether he knew the time, the exact time of their bringing forth? Is that a ſecret? I anſwer, doubtleſs it is a ſecret, and ſuch a ſecret as few are acquainted with. Wild Goats come little under the eye or ſight of men in that work; they bringing forth upon inacceſſable places, craggy Rocks and Mountains, men cannot without difficulty reach that piece of knowledg. And therefore the Lord might well ask of *Job*, *Knoweſt thou the time when th*[illegible]*d Goats of the Rock bring forth?* I may ſay alſo, the Lo[illegible] puts this familiar queſtion to *Job*, that he might the more awaken him into the conſideration of his own weakneſs, and utter inability to find out the ſecret of the other works. As if the Lord had ſaid, *Thou canſt not diſcover ſo much as the birth of the wild Goats, how then canſt thou find out the births of my wonderful providences? My providences bring forth wonderful births, and how much more unknowable by thee than the birth and bringing forth of the wild Goats.* Thus the Lord would check his curioſity; he who was unable to give him an account concerning the ſtate of thoſe poor Creatures, muſt not think himſelf able to pry into the great and unſearchable works of God, in the amazing products of his providence towards the Children of men.

Gregor. l. 30. Mor. c. 16.

Before I paſs from theſe words it will not be unprofitable to mind the Reader, how (as one of the Ancients hath hinted) we may moralize or ſpiritualize this Text, there being much of the diſpoſition or condition of a godly man, eſpecially of a faithful Teacher, typed or fairly repreſented in the nature and qualities of theſe wild Goats.

Firſt, As theſe wild Goats ſeek both their food and reſt, their repaſt and refuge in Rocks; ſo the godly abide and dwell in the Rock, that is, in the *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, they look to him alone both for refuge and refreſhing, both for comfort and ſafety while they are in this World. Chriſt is the Rock upon which the Church is built, (*Matth*.16.18.) And as the ſtate of the true Church in general, ſo of every true believer, is built upon this unmoveable Rock the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

Secondly, As the Rocks ſo the Mountains are much deſired by the wild Goats (*Pſal*.104.18.) *The high Hills are a refuge for the wild Goats.* Thus *David* was eying the Hills for help (*Pſal*. 121.1.) *I will lift up mine eyes to the Hills, from whence cometh my help?* What were theſe Hills? Surely, neither the material nor metaphorical Hills of this World, of which latter the people of God ſpake (*Jer*. 3. 23.) diſclaimingly, *Truly in vain is ſalvation hoped for from the Hills, and from the multitude of Mountains*, that is, from the greateſt power of man or men. What the Hills were to which *David* lifted up his eyes for help, himſelf tells us at the ſecond *verſe* of that *Pſalm*, *My help commeth from the Lord, which made Heaven and Earth.* As the affections of a godly man are ſet upon the things above, not upon things below (*Col*. 3. 2.) ſo his confidences are ſet upon God who is above, not upon men here below.

Thirdly, Theſe wild Goats are very agil and active Creatures, much in motion, full of life, full of ſpirits; and ſo they reſemble a godly man, he is a man of motion, of ſpiritual motion; and he deſires his motions and ſpeed may be more and more ſpeedy in the ways of God. As *David* reſolved *to run the ways of Gods Commandments*, when God ſhould pleaſe to enlarge his heart; ſo doubtleſs he prayed, that God would enlarge his heart to run thoſe ways. And how often did he pray for quickening grace and livelineſs, that being delivered from a ſlow, dull, flegmatick Spirit, he might be active and full of holy fire about the things, and for the things of God.

Fourthly, Wild Goats of the Rocks, in thoſe Countries where they abound, are much purſued and diſquieted by hunt-men, as that paſſage which I before quoted from a Heathen Poet intimates; ſo good men, the beſt of men are often hunted and diſturbed in this World, there are hunters of men, as well as hunters of Beaſts. *Nimrod* was a mighty hunter (*Gen.*10.9.) he was a hunter of men. *Saul* hunted *David* even as a wild Goat on the Rocks, or as a Partridg on the Mountains.

Fifthly, They who hunt the wild Goats are at a very dangerous pleaſure, they often fall upon the Rocks, and ſometimes fall from the Rocks. Is it not ſo with thoſe who without cauſe purſue good men? Have they not a dangerous ſervice of it? Get they not many a fall? *The wicked* (ſaith *David*, Pſal. 37.12, 13.) *plotteth*, or (as the Margin hath it) *practiſeth againſt the righteous, he gnaſheth upon him with his teeth.* But ſhall it go well with him who doth this evil? The next words anſwer, *The Lord ſhall laugh at him, for he ſeeth that his day is coming.* What day? Surely a black day, even the day of his deſtruction; which is yet further confirmed in the 14. and 15. *verſes* of the ſame Pſalm. *The wicked have drawn out the Sword, and have bent their bow to caſt down the poor and needy, and to ſlay ſuch as be of upright converſation, or the upright of way.* But ſhall this end well with them? Or ſhall it be well with them in the end? The next words tell us what their end ſhall be, even this, which is a dreadful end, *Their Sword ſhall enter into their own heart, and their bows ſhall be broken.*

Sixthly, 'Tis obſerved of theſe wild Goats, that when they ſeem to be very near falling from the Rock and high places, yet they fall not. and that though they fall they take little or no hurt at all. Some ſay they have a natural art to ſave themſelves, they know how to fall upon their feet, and ſo eſcape without harm. This alſo is applicable to the caſe of godly men, they are often near falling, yet they do not fall, and when they fall they take no hurt; they have a divine art to preſerve themſelves; and 'tis a truth, that though they do receive hurt in the fleſh, yet their Spirit or better part takes no hurt. *Though a good man fall* (into affliction or temptation) *he ſhall not* (ſaith *David*, Pſal.37.24.) *be utterly caſt down, for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand.* Yea, though *he falleth* (ſaith *Solomon*, Prov. 24. 16.) *ſeven times* (that is, often, into affliction, 'tis true alſo of his falling into ſin) *yet he riſeth again*, out of affliction by deliverance, out of ſin by repentance. With reſpect to the former, the Church warned her inſulting enemy (*Mich.* 7.8.) *Rejoyce not againſt me, O mine enemy; when I fall, I ſhall ariſe. Babylon* ſhall fall and riſe no more; but though *Sion* may fall, yet ſhe ſhall aſſuredly riſe again.

Laſtly, It is ſaid of the wild Goats, that when they receive hurt, they, by a natural inſtinct, ſeek out the Herb *Betony*, growing among the Rocks and upon Mountains, which gives a preſent and perfect cure to their bruiſes or hurts. Thus when good men receive hurt in and from the evil World, they have ſome herb or other, ſome comfort or other for their cure; they go to the Word of God, to the Scriptures, there they find Medicine for all their ſickneſſes, Betony for all their bruiſes, and a Salve for every ſore. Thus we may ſpiritualize our meditations upon theſe wild Creatures the Goats of the Rocks, in alluſion to the ſtate of godly men in this life *Knoweſt thou the time when the wild Goats of the Rock bring forth?*

Or canſt thou mark when the Hinds do calve?

שמר *Solicitudinem & diligentiam connotat.*

Here's another ſort of wild ones, *the Hind. Canſt thou mark?* The word imports the moſt ſtrict and heedful *marking*; 'tis uſed by *Jacob* (Gen. 37. 11.) when *Joſeph* had told his dream, his Brethren envied him, *but his Father obſerved the ſaying*, that is, he marked what his Son had ſaid. The word is often uſed to note our dutiful keeping or heeding the commands of God, which ſhould be done with the greateſt ſtrictneſs, care and obſervation. Now ſaith the Lord to *Job*, *Canſt thou mark* (or obſerve) *when the Hinds do calve?* As if the Lord had ſaid, *Doſt thou keep their reckoning exactly?* Art thou able to tell the day and hour when they will calve? The word rendred *Hind* comes from a root ſignifying *ſtrength*. Hinds are ſtrong, though timorous and fearful Creatures; and for their fearfulneſs they have a help beſides their ſtrength, that is, their ſpeed or ſwiftneſs; and though their ſtrength doth not ſerve them ſufficiently to ſtand and make head againſt their purſuers, yet it ſerves them (as we may ſay) to ſhew their purſuers a fair pair of heels, or to run from them and eſcape their danger. *Canſt thou mark when the Hinds*

אילה *Cervus.*

Do calve?] It is the ſame word in the Original, which in the former part of the *verſe* is Tranſlated *to bring forth*; but becauſe that ſpecial word *calving* is more proper to Hinds, therefore we wave the general ſenſe *bringing forth*, which is applicable to any kind of Beaſts; and take this, not rendring as before, *when the Hinds bring forth*, but *when they calve.* The Hind is a wild Beaſt often ſpoken of in Scripture, and well known in Nature; the male we commonly call a *Stagg or Hart*, of which Naturaliſts obſerve two things.

Mas cum pinguerit, longè ſeceſſit, ut qui pondere ſuæ corpulentiæ capi ſe poſſe facile ſentiat. Ariſt. *l.9. c.5. de natura animalium.*

Firſt, That perceiving himſelf to grow fat in the latter end of Summer, and being conſcious of his own inability to help himſelf by flight, he retires naturally to covert in ſecret places, that ſo he may be free from the purſuit of hunters.

Secondly, (ſay they) When he hath caſt his horn, then alſo he retires and gets into the thicket, as far from ſight as he can, being ſenſible he hath loſt his arms, his defence, and is therefore unwilling to come abroad where danger is, till his head be grown again, and he furniſhed with weapons for his own defence.

Cum ſua amiſerit arma, cavit ne inermis reperiatur. Ariſt. *ubi ſupra.*

The *Hind* in the Text is the female; and the Scripture ſpeaks of the Hind in a two-fold alluſion. Firſt, In alluſion to Chriſt. Secondly, In alluſion to thoſe that are Chriſts.

Jeſus Chriſt himſelf is often alluded to under this name, and that in a three-fold reſpect.

Firſt, For his ſwiftneſs and ſpeedineſs in coming to the relief and help of his Church (*Cant.* 28.9.) *Behold, he cometh leaping upon the Mountains, and skipping upon the Hills; my beloved is like a Roe, or young Hart*, or Hind, 'tis the ſame word. *His leaping and skipping* notes firſt, His chearfulneſs. Secondly, His ſpeedineſs in coming. The Mountains and Hills upon which he leaps and skips, note the great obſtacles and difficulties, which ſtand in his way when he comes to help his Church, his beloved Spouſe. Again (*Cant.* 8.13.) *Be thou like the young Roe, or young Hart upon the Mountains of Spices*: The Church deſcribes the gracious haſt which ſhe deſires Jeſus Chriſt would make to help, comfort, and relieve her, by the ſpeedy running of the young Hart.

Secondly, Jeſus Chriſt is ſo compared with reſpect to his lovingneſs; that's the Epithete which *Solomon* gives the Hind (*Prov.* 5.19.) *Let her* (thy Wife) *be as the loving Hind and pleaſant Roe.* Now as the Wife ſhould be tendered by her Husband as a loving Hind, ſo Jeſus Chriſt is like the Hind for his exceeding lovingneſs to his Spouſe or Wife. Chriſt is ſo full of love, that he is called love it ſelf. One of the Ancients ſpeaking of Chriſt dying, ſaid *My love was crucified.*

Thirdly, Jeſus Chriſt is ſhadowed by the Hind, with reſpect to his ſufferings, for he was hunted as a Hind with Hounds, with blood-Hounds, with the Hell-Hounds of this World, the worſt of wicked men. Therefore it is remarkable, that in the 22. *Pſalm*, which is throughout a propheſie of Chriſt (the firſt words being the laſt he ſpake in this World, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?*) The title of that Pſalm is, *To the chief muſician, upon* Aijeleh Sahar; and if you would know what that ſignifies, look into the Margin of your larger Bibles, there you ſhall find, *The Hind of the morning.* Hunters uſe to ſingle out that ſpecial Deer, Hart or Hind, early in the morning, which they purpoſe for game that day; ſignifying that Jeſus Chriſt, who is ſo much ſpoke of in that Pſalm, was a Hind, not only ſorely and fiercely, but early hunted by wicked men to death.

Again, The Scripture ſpeaks of the Hind, with reſpect unto godly men.

Firſt, As to the freeneſs and chearfulneſs of their Spirits, in the ways and things of God. The Prophet (*Iſa.* 35. 6.) ſhews how it ſhall be with thoſe that receive the Goſpel, though they have been lame, impotent cripples before, not able to take one ſtep God-ward, yet, ſaith he, *The lame ſhall leap as a Hart*, or as a Hind; that is, they ſhall exceedingly rejoyce at the receiving of the Goſpel, and be very active in the obedience of it.

Secondly, As to that exceeding thirſt, ſtrong appetite or deſire, which true believers have to and after Jeſus Chriſt, who is the living water, the water of life. Thus *David* ſpake of himſelf (*Pſal.* 42. 1.) *As the Hart panteth after the water-brooks, ſo panteth my Soul after thee, O God.* Some render, as the *ſhe Hart*, that is, the Hind, *panteth after* *the water-brooks*, &c. When *David* would expreſs the exceeding ardency of his Souls thirſt after Chriſt, he compares it to the thirſt of a hunted Hart or Hind.

Thirdly, The Hind is very ſwift of foot; ſo are believers: As they have ſtrong deſires, ſo ſpeedy purſuits after Jeſus Chriſt. *David* had a holy confidence, that God would make him ſwift in Spirit, when he ſaid (*Pſal.* 18. 33.) *The Lord ſhall make my feet like Hinds feet*; that is, he will make me very active, agile, and nimble, not only for the avoiding of corporal evils, but alſo in following of ſpiritual good things.

Fourthly, The Hind loves high places, or to be and breath in the freſh Air. Thus the Prophet *Habakkuk* ſpeaks of himſelf (*Hab.* 3. 19.) *The Lord will make my feet like Hinds feet, he will make me walk upon my high places*. He means not the high places of worldly preferment or power, but of peace and ſafety; nor either of them, ſo much as thoſe truly high places of a holy life and joy, in ſpiritual meditation and converſation, to which we reſort by the wings of faith in, and love unto God. *Upon theſe high places thou wilt make me to walk.* As if the Prophet had ſaid, I ſhall go lightly and ſweetly on in my journey to Heaven, having my Soul ſupplied and ſuppled (as it were) with the oil of ſpiritual joy and gladneſs. As it is ſaid of *Jacob* (Gen. 29. 1. after that he had that bleſſed Viſion at *Bethel*, in the cloſe of the twenty-eighth Chapter) *He went on his journey*; or (as we put in the Margin) *He lift up his feet*; his feet were like Hinds feet, lith and nimble for his journey, going on in faith towards God, and in the light of his countenance.

Fifthly, It is obſerved by Naturaliſts, that Hinds are very charitable and helpful one to another; and they give that ſpecial inſtance, when ſwimming over any River or deep water, the ſecond is ſupported by the firſt, and the third by the ſecond, and ſo to the laſt they help one another over; which doth excellently ſhadow the uſefulneſs that ſhould be among Chriſtians, and their helpfulneſs mutual; they ſhould be as Harts and Hinds always in this reſpect, and then moſt when they come into the Rivers and deep waters of ſorrow and trouble, then they ſhould ſupport and bear up each one his Brother. The Apoſtles word is (*Gal.* 6. 2.) *Bear one anothers burdens, and ſo fulfil the Law of Chriſt.* The burdens which he there intends, are not only the infirmities which are in us, but the afflictions and troubles which poſſibly we may at any time be in. And again (*Phil.* 2. 4.) *Let not every man mind his own things, but let him mind the things which are anothers*; that is, let him be helpful to others in outward things, much more let him be helpful to others in ſpiritual things. Thus the Scripture ſpeaks, both of Jeſus Chriſt, and of thoſe that are his, under the ſimilitude of the Hind.

From both parts of the verſe, in that the Lord puts the queſtion here to *Job*, *Knoweſt thou the time when the wild Goats of the Rocks bring forth? Or canſt thou mark the time when the Hinds do calve?*

Note, Firſt, *The Lord himſelf takes ſpecial care of the wildeſt Creatures, even of thoſe which are moſt remote from the help and care of man.*

The care and tenderneſs of God toward Beaſts, turns to his praiſe, as well as the care which he hath of, and the tenderneſs which he ſhews to believers. And as it doth exceedingly advance the glory of God, that he takes care of wild Beaſts, ſo it may exceedingly ſtrengthen the faith of man, that he will take care of him. Doth the Lord take care of wild Goats and of Hinds, then certainly he takes care of thoſe that particularly belong to him; as hath been already ſhewed or inferred from ſuch like inſtances as we have here in the Text.

Secondly, From the particular Point, upon which the care of God is here intimated, with reſpect to the wild Goats and Hinds; namely, their bringing forth and calving, we learn, that

There is a ſpecial providence of God towards theſe and ſuch like Creatures, for the production of their young.

He (if I may ſo ſpeak with reverence) *ſhews his Midwifry, in helping theſe ſavage Beaſts when their pains come upon them.* As the Lord takes man (in an eminent manner) *out of the womb* (*Pſal.* 22. 9.) ſo in a manner, he takes Beaſts out of the womb too (*Pſal.* 29. 8, 9.) *The voice of the Lord ſhaketh the wilderneſs, it ſhaketh the wilderneſs of* Kadeſh. So we Tranſlate it; but the word which we render *ſhaketh*, is the ſame with this in the Text, which ſignifieth *to bring forth*: And hence ſome very learned in the Hebrew tongue, do not render as we, *The voice of the Lord ſhaketh the wilderneſs*, but, *The voice of the Lord maketh the wilderneſs to bring forth*; *The Lord maketh the wilderneſs of* Kadeſh *to bring forth*; which is not to be underſtood of the Vegetative Creatures (that's a truth, the Lord makes the Trees of the Forreſt to bring forth both leaves and fruit) but it is meant of Animals or living Creatures there: And then, when he ſaith, *The voice of the Lord maketh the wilderneſs to bring forth*, the meaning is, The Lord makes the wild Beaſts of the wilderneſs to bring forth; which ſeems to be the clear ſenſe of the place, by that which followeth; for the Pſalmiſt having ſaid this in general at the eighth verſe, *The voice of the Lord maketh the wilderneſs to bring forth*, he in the ninth verſe, gives the ſpecial inſtance of the Hind, *The voice of the Lord maketh the Hinds to calve.*

So much concerning the wild Goats bringing forth their young, and the Hinds calving. In the next verſe the Lord enquires of *Job*, the time how long they go with young before they bring forth and calve.

Verſe 2. **Canſt thou number the Months that they fulfil;**

As if the Lord had ſaid, Canſt thou tell how long they, that is the wild Goats or the Hinds, bear their Natural burdens? Canſt thou number their Months? The Hebrew is, *their Moons*. The *Jews* reckoned their Months by Moons; and we diſtinguiſh between *Lunary and Solary Months*. Moon-Months conſiſts of twenty eight days, Sun-Months of thirty. *Canſt thou reckon the Moons or Months that they fulfil?* To this the Prophet alludes (*Jer.* 2. 24.) ſpeaking of *the wild Aſs that ſnuffs up the wind at her pleaſure*; that is, who takes pleaſure, or (as the Margin reads it) *The deſire of whoſe heart is to ſnuff up the wind*; *in her occaſion* (ſaith he) *who can turn her away?* He compares wanton vain perſons, Idolatrous and Superſtitious perſons eſpecially, who of all others are the wantonneſt and vaineſt perſons, to an Aſs, when ſhe is in the heat of her luſt and pleaſure; *all they that ſeek her, will not weary themſelves*, that is, they will not weary themſelves to ſeek her, while ſhe is in that condition, but *in her Month they ſhall find her*, that is, when ſhe is burdened with young, when her ſorrows and pains are neer coming upon her, then ſhe may be dealt with. Thus the Lord would ſhew his people, that how-ever being ſo luſty, ſo wanton, there was no dealing with them, yet a Month of ſorrow was coming upon them, even as upon one with young, wherein they ſhould feel, and be under ſuch ſad pains, as would burden them to purpoſe (as we ſay) and then they would be found, and might be ſpoken with. Wild Aſſes have their Months, their Months of bearing, and their Month of bringing forth; about thoſe and this the Lord enquires of *Job*, *Canſt thou number the Months that they fulfil?* The Queſtion is not ſo to be underſtood, as if the number of the Months which they fulfil were ſo many that they could not be numbred; but the Lord ſpeaks thus, becauſe of the uncertainty of the time (as to man) when thoſe Months are fulfilled. *David* prayed (*Pſal.* 39. 4.) *Lord, ſhew me the number of my days*; not as if the number of his days were ſo many, that he could hardly find out the number of them Arithmetically, but being ſo uncertain, he needed the Lords inſtruction to teach him how to count the number of them ſpiritually. So here, *Canſt thou number the Months that they fulfil*; that's as great a ſecret as the number of any mans days in this World are.

Menſes qui hic ירחים *vocantur à Luna; Menſes enim Hebræorum Lunares erant.*

Yet it may be objected; ſurely it is no ſuch hard matter to number the Months which Hinds and wild Goats fulfil: For if the Queſtion be, what time of their age Goats firſt conceive, and how long they continue bearing? *Pliny* anſwers: Sometimes they conceive at a year old, always at two years old; and (ſaith he) they continue bearing eight years. Secondly, if the Queſtion be, about what time of the year they conceive and bring forth? The ſame Author anſwers, They conceive in *November*, and bring forth in *March*,

Aliquando annicula ſemper binæ & pariunt octonis annis. Plin. l. 8. c. 50.

March, ſo that they go burdened five Months. Again, if the queſtion be about the Hinds. he thus reſolves it ;, they conceive about the latter end of *September*, and bring forth about the middle of *April*, the whole time they go, being about eight Months ; ſo that there ſeems no ſuch difficulty in numbring the Months, which either wild Goats or Hinds fulfil, that is, how long they go with young.

Octon's menſibus ferunt partus. Plin. l. 8. c. 32.

I anſwer ; Though the general time which they fulfil may be known, or is known and ſet down by Writers, yet the preciſe particular time, the day of the Month, or hour of the day, or (which is the thing enquired) when their Months come out and are fulfilled. that's a ſecret. Though it be commonly known, that a Woman goes nine Months with Child, yet who knows, or can a Woman her ſelf know exactly to a day, or an hour, when her pains and travel will come upon her ? Many Women have been under great miſtakes in that caſe, and rarely do any hit the time right, but reckon a day or two or three over or under the juſt account. So then, though the general time is known, yet the exact particular time is not known. I may ſay in this caſe, as our Lord Jeſus Chriſt ſaid about the end of the World, *Of that day and hour knows no man* ; we may know the general time, we may know it will not be long before the World ſhall end. The time which the World ſhall go with its great birth, is commonly ſaid to be Six Thouſand Years ; but the day and hour of its travel, and the conſummation of all things according to the decree of God, no man, no nor Angel, knows. Here the Lord queſtions *Job* about the exact particular time, which himſelf keeps, as he doth all ſpecial ſeaſons, in his own hand *or power*, under his own lock and key, as Chriſt told his Diſciples, (*Acts* 1.7.) *Canſt thou number the Months that they fulfil ?* Doſt thou keep their reckoning ?

Or knoweſt thou the time when they bring forth ?

'Tis the ſame in effect that was ſpoken before, therefore I ſhall not ſtay upon it.

From the whole verſe Obſerve, *The Lord only can give timely ſuccour to all Creatures.*

The reaſon is implied in the Text, *Becauſe he only knows the certain time of their extremity.* None can give exact and timely help to the neceſſity of another, but he that knows the exact time of his extremity. The Lord can and will give deliverance to his people, in the very nick of time, when the Months of their ſorrow and burdens are fulfilled, for he knows the number of them. The Children of *Iſrael* had long and ſore bondage in *Egypt*, but no longer than the Months which were appointed ; for as ſoon as they were fulfilled, their bondage was ended, and they delivered ; mark how the Spirit of God Records it to a day (*Exod.* 12.41.) *And it came to paſs at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the ſelf-ſame day it came to paſs, that all the Hoſts of the Lord went out from the Land of* Egypt. Nor doth the ſacred Record leave it thus, but adds (*verſ.* 42.) *It is a night to be much obſerved* ; or (according to the letter of the Hebrew) *A night of obſervations unto the Lord, for bringing them out from the Land of* Egypt *: This is that night of the Lord, to be obſerved of all the Children of* Iſrael *in their Generations.* But *Moſes* ſaid in the former verſe, *It was the ſelf-ſame day.* Why doth he ſay here, *It is a night*, &c ? *And this is that night of the Lord*, &c. The reaſon I conceive was this ; the word *Day* may be taken largely, for a natural day conſiſting of twenty four hours ; now becauſe the four hundred and thirty years were fulfilled and ended at the beginning of that day, (the Jewiſh account of days beginning at evening) therefore their deliverance began then, and did not ſtay till the morning. Thus exact is the Lord, keeping his word not only to a day, but to a piece, yea, to the very hour of a day. And as the Lord gave that people deliverance juſt when thoſe years were fulfilled, according to that ancient prophecy ; ſo doubtleſs when the forty two Months, or (which is the ſame) the thouſand two hundred and threeſcore days for his witneſſes prophecying in ſack-cloth (*Rev.* 11. 2, 3.) ſhall be fulfilled, then they alſo ſhall come out of their bondage from under myſtical *Egypt* and *Babylon*. Men have been long gueſſing at the fulfilling of thoſe forty two Months, but may we not ſay to them concerning the birth of that prophecy, in the ſame ſenſe that the Lord doth here to *Job*, concerning the particular time when the wild Goats of the Rock, and the Hinds bring forth, *Canſt thou number the Months that they fulfil ?* As the particular time of the Hinds fulfilling her Months, ſo of *Sions* fulfilling her Months of ſorrow in this World, is a ſecret which the Lord hath reſerved to himſelf, and keeps faſt lockt up in the Cabinet of his eternal counſels. *Knoweſt thou the time when they bring forth ?*

The Lord having thus queſtioned *Job* about the time of the bringing forth of theſe two Creatures, in theſe two verſes, proceeds to queſtion him about the manner of their bringing forth, or the painfulneſs of it.

Verſe 3. **They bow themſelves**, &c.

Theſe words are a deſcription of the hard travel of the Hinds, not of the Goats, as Interpreters generally agree. Bowing of the Body is the poſture of any Creature in travel to bring forth. As if the Lord had ſaid, *It is thou, O* Job, *that haſt, or I, that have given them an inſtinct in Nature to put their Bodies (as wild as they are) conſiderately, into ſuch a poſture (when their pains come upon them) as may be moſt eaſeful for themſelves, and leaſt hurtful to their offſpring, by bowing their Bodies to dilate the paſſages of Nature, and ſo by a Natural Midwifry to deliver themſelves of their burdens ?* As followeth,

They bring forth their young ones.

The word rendred **Bring forth**. ſignifies *to cleave aſunder*, implying their extream pain in bringing forth ; or that it is to them as grievous as the rending and cleaving of their Bodies could be. So the word is Tranſlated (*Chap.* 16. 13.) where *Job* making a lamentable complaint about his ſufferings under the hand of God, expreſſeth it thus ; *His archers compaſs me round about, he cleaveth my reins aſunder.* Such torture have theſe poor Creatures in bringing forth their young ; which is more plainly ſet down in the cloſe of the verſe,

פלח *Proprie ſindo, diffindo, trajicio.*

They caſt out their ſorrows.] Which may be underſtood two ways ; Firſt, Bowing to free themſelves of their young ones, their ſorrows end, or there is an end of their ſorows, they are caſt out. Secondly, Thus they caſt out their ſorrows ; that is, their young ones are caſt out which have put them to much ſorrow and grievous throws, and ſo may well be called their ſorrows ; as *Rachel* called that Child with which ſhe had ſuch hard travel, *Ben-oni, The Son of her ſorrows* (*Gen.* 35. 18.)

The word which we render **Sorrows**, ſignifies *cords and bonds*, implying that theſe Creatures are girded and bound about with extream pain, until (by the power of God in Nature) they receive deliverance. Some are bound and girded with troubles, in and from the World, who yet are not ſorrowful ; we through faith may even *glory in tribulation* (Rom. 5.3.) but they who are ſorrowful, are always bound : and therefore the ſame word ſignifieth bonds and ſorrows. *They caſt out their ſorrows.*

Hence Note, Firſt, *Even wild and ſavage Creatures bring forth with pain.*

This is part of that vanity brought by mans ſin upon the Creature, of which the Apoſtle ſpeaks (*Rom.* 8.22.) *We know that the whole Creation* (or *every Creature*) *groaneth and travelleth in pain together until now.* The Creatures *groan*, as being laden with a heavy burden, and they travel in pain, as a Woman with Child, to be eaſed and delivered of her burden, even thoſe Creatures which in proper ſenſe, neither travel nor bring forth, yet are ſaid to groan and travel in pain, by reaſon of the ſin of man ; and therefore the Apoſtle ſaith, *They groan and travel in pain together* ; that is, all the Creatures join in this. They do not ſome groan, and others ſing, ſome travel in pain, and others travel in or take their pleaſure, but they are all (as it were) ſenſible of their ſad change, and bewail it ſadly ; and (ſaith the Apoſtle) they groan and travel *until now*, or *unto this now* ; not as if their groaning did then ceaſe when this was ſaid, but to ſhew that it had continued without ceaſing, until that *inſtant now* ; and ſo it will continue until the *manifeſtation of the Sons of God*, ſpoken of (*verſ.* 19.) As ſoon as man ſinned, the Lord laid that affliction on the Woman, *In ſorrow ſhalt thou bring forth* (Gen. 3. 16.) Now that which was firſt declared an affliction, with reſpect to the Woman,

Ἄχρι τοῦ νῦν.

is fallen upon all Creatures in their degree; they all are more or leſs pained in travel, or travel in pain. The ſin of man hath brought ſorrow upon the whole World, even upon ſinleſs Creatures; and therefore man ſhould pity poor Creatures in their ſorrows, his ſin having brought thoſe ſorrows upon them. How vile then are they, who meerly to ſatisfie their luſts, increaſe the ſorrows of the Creature, and cauſe them to travel more than needs, in pain every day?

Secondly, The Lord inſtanceth here in the Hinds for hard travel; and Naturaliſts obſerve, the Hind hath the ſoreſt travel in bringing forth of any Creature, Woman excepted. And, that the Hinds have very ſore travel in bringing forth, beſide what Naturaliſts ſpeak, may be collected from thoſe expreſſions in the Text, *They bow themſelves, they bring forth their young ones, they caſt out their ſorrows.* That Scripture alſo intimates as much (*Pſal.*29. 9.) when among other wonderful effects of thunder, *The breaking of Cedars,* &c. This is added, *The voice of the Lord maketh the Hinds to calve*; as if it did require the ſpecial help of God, to give the Hinds eaſe and deliverance in the time of their travel, *The voice* of God doth it; that is, either the Thunder, or ſome extraordinary power, ſent out for that purpoſe, doth it.

Tunc efficis ut cervæ quæ alioquin ægerrimè eſſent pariture commodius pariant? Dum ante partum purgantur herba quadam quæ Seſelis dicitur, faciliore ita utentes utero. Jun. Plin. l. 8. c. 32. Ariſt. l. 9. *de Hiſtor. animal.* c. 5. Cicero l. 2. *de nat. Deorum.* *A partu duas habent herbas quæ Aros & Seſelis appellantur.* Plin. l. 8. c. 32.

And here we may conſider the goodneſs of God, even to this wild Beaſt, in ordering her Natural helps, to eaſe her the more ſpeedily of her grievous pains in bringing forth her young ones.

The Natural Hiſtorian tells us concerning the Hind, that ſhe by common inſtinct, a little before ſhe calves, feeling her pains coming upon her, ſeeks out a certain Herb called *Seſelis,* feeding upon which doth exceedingly facilitate her pains in bringing forth. Women, who have underſtanding and reaſon, as alſo the aſſiſtance of friends about them, have many means for their eaſe in that hour of extremity; but the Lord hath made this poor Creature, both Phyſician and Midwife to her ſelf. Further, 'tis reported of them, that when they have brought forth, they uſe the ſame and other Herbs to help themſelves againſt their after-pains. Once more, Naturaliſts obſerve, that they uſually bring forth at that time of the year when there is much Thunder, according to that before mentioned (*Pſal.*29.) *The voice of the Lord (or Thunder) maketh the Hinds to calve.* For the Hind being of a fearful Nature, that dreadful noiſe doth ſo aſtoniſh her, that it either makes her put out all her ſtrength to bring forth, or makes her leſs ſenſible of her pains in bringing forth. That's the ſecond thing here conſiderable in Hinds, their painful bringing forth, *They bow themſelves, they bring forth their young ones, they caſt out their ſorrows.*

Hence take this inference, with reſpect to Women who come under the like pains. This ſhould be a ſtaff of conſolation to them, in the time of their travel. If the Lord directs theſe Creatures to the beſt poſture, and moſt proper means for their help and eaſe in that condition, how much more will he take care of them, eſpecially of them who call upon him, and truſt in him? We may well make that interpretation of the Apoſtles words (1 *Tim.* 2. 15.) *She ſhall be ſaved in Child-bearing, if they continue in faith, and charity, and holineſs, with ſobriety.* This early care of God for mankind, is deſcribed (*Pſal.*22.9,10.) *Thou art he that took me out of the womb; I was caſt upon thee from the womb; thou art my God from my mothers belly.* And again (*Pſal.*71. 6.) *By thee have I been holden up from the womb; thou art he that took me out of my mothers bowels; my praiſe ſhall be continually of thee.*

St. *Auguſtine* applies this matter of the Hinds bringing forth, to the ſpiritual birth; Firſt, Becauſe the time is unknown, or known only to God, when any Soul comes to the new birth. Secondly, Becauſe every Soul which travelleth with this new birth, boweth and humbleth himſelf greatly under the ſenſe of ſin before the Lord. Thirdly, Becauſe this new birth is uſually accompanied with great and grievous pangs, always with the truth of godly ſorrow.

The Lord, having ſpoken thus of the Hinds bringing forth their young ones, ſpeaks next, as I may ſay, of the education and bringing up of their young ones.

Verſe 4 **Their young ones are in good liking, they grow up with Corn, they go forth and return not unto them.**

This Verſe holds out three things:

Firſt, The good plight of their young ones, **They are in good liking.** As if it had been ſaid, Though the Hinds have much pain in bringing them forth, yet they are *ſlick and fat,* as ſoon as, or ſoon after they are brought forth. The word which we render **In good liking,** notes a growing into health and ſtrength, which we call *recovering* (*Iſa.* 38.9,16.) *The writing of* Hezekiah *King of* Judah, *when he had been ſick and was recovered,* &c. And 'tis ſaid of *Naaman* (2 Kings 5. 14.) *his fleſh came to him,* or *he recovered his fleſh, as the fleſh of a little Child.* The ſame word is uſed (*Pſal.* 126. 1.) *When the Lord turned the Captivity of* Sion, *we were like to them that dream*; which others Tranſlate thus, and conceive it nearer the Original Text, *When the Lord turned the Captivity of* Sion, *then we were like them that are* fed and grow fat at the dugg, and ſo are chearly or in a comfortable condition. Thus the Hinds young ones grow fat, luſty, and ſtrong; as the Lord takes care for their bringing forth, ſo of their bringing up; he that maketh the Hinds to calve, makes their calves of good liking too; as he makes the Babe thrive at the Mothers breaſt, ſo the Calf at the Hinds dugg. And when they have a while grown fat at the Dam's dugg, then

חלם *Significat aliquando valere & incolumem eſſe. Licet matres difficilem habent partum, filii tamen ſalvi & incolumes ſunt, beneq; valent, alii pingueſcunt.* Druſ. *Facti ſumus ſicut conſolati, melius quam ab aliis ſomniantes, &c.* Bold.

Secondly, **They grow up with Corn.**

They come to harder meat, they ſoon leave ſucking and feed upon Corn. Some read, they grow up in the Fields, or by the Field, that is, by that which groweth in the Field. Thus it is with our Children, they are fed firſt at the breaſt and ſpoon, afterwards with fleſh or any wholeſom food. According to every degree of life, God provides ſutable food; the Infant ſhall have milk, and when a little grown, ſtronger meat. As it is in ſpirituals, when we are new born Babes in Jeſus Chriſt, we are fed with milk, that is, with plain and eaſie truths, called by the Apoſtle, *The firſt principles of the doctrine of Chriſt*; afterwards we *go on* (as the Apoſtle there ſpeaks) *to perfection,* and then we can digeſt and profit by the deeper Myſteries of the Goſpel, Thus 'tis ſaid of the young Hinds, or of the Hinds young ones in the Text,

בּרא *ager unde* בּרא חית *fera agreſtis. Sed hic eſt* בּר *quod in lingua Chaldæorum* extra *denotat; unde Barbarus geminatis ſyllabis.* Druſ.

They grow up with Corn.] The word ſignifies to grow apace, to thrive much in ſtrength and ſtature, and being thus thriven and grown, their Dams hear no more of them. For as it followeth,

Mira eſt providentia Dei in ſubulonum & hinnulorum nutricatione, qui nullo cuſtode, nullo opilione reguntur ſicut vituli, hœdi vel agni, tamen pingueſcunt. Codrec.

Thirdly, **They go forth and return not unto them.**

Firſt, They had the duggs of the Dam to nouriſh them, ſoon after they fed upon Corn, at length *they go forth and return not unto them*; they trouble the old ones no further, they ſhift for themſelves. One of the Naturaliſts commending the qualities of the Hind, notes this chiefly; they are very diligent to inſtruct their young ones, how to get, or where to ſeek food for themſelves, before they put them out of their own care.

In hunc finem hæc allata ſunt ut oſtenderetur, hæc ex ſola Dei providentia fieri, non ulla humana induſtria. Merc.

Hence Note, Firſt, *The Lord hath taught the brute Creatures to provide for their young ones, till they are able to help themſelves.*

This intimates the duty of Parents, to take care of their Children till they are able to get their living.

Secondly, Foraſmuch as thoſe young ones go forth, and return not again when once they can live of themſelves,

Note, *It is the duty of Children, when Parents have beſtowed coſt in bringing them up, to go forth, and not return to be chargeable to their Parents.*

Children muſt not think to burthen their Parents always, but ſtick to their own labour; the very brute Beaſts will condemn thoſe Children who do not: When the Hind hath ſufficiently inſtructed her young ones by her example, where and how to get food, having alſo breathed them well, and taught them how to haſten away when in danger; having, laſtly, led them to precipices, and taught them to leap or jump, then they go forth and return no more. The Patriarch *Nephthali* was called (*Gen.*49.21.) *a Hind let looſe,* becauſe ſtrong and able to live alone. Thus we have here both the care of the Hind, to provide for her young ones as long as they need, which layeth a great obligation upon Parents to take care of their Children. He that provides not for his own, eſpecially, for thoſe of his Houſhold, for his own Children

Ariſt. l. 9. de Hiſt. Animal. c. 5. *Quod pulcher erat & nemine indigeret vocatur cervus emiſſus. Editos partus exercent curſu, & fugam meditari docent, ad præcipitia ducunt ſaltumque docent.* Plin. l. 8. c. 32.

Children and Servants, *is worſe than an Inſidel*; yea, he is worſe than a Hind. But then, let Children, when they have been well provided for, and taught how to get a living in the World, take heed of laſineſs and idleneſs, as if they were to live upon their Parents pains or proviſion always. Let them go forth and not return, but to ſhew kindneſs and thankfulneſs to their Parents, for their care and coſt beſtowed on them in their tender years, and while under their inſpection; yea, let them learn (as the Apoſtle gives them in charge, 1 *Tim.* 5. 4.) *To ſhew pity or kindneſs at home, and requite their Parents*; helping their Parents (if need be) in their old age, as their Parents helped and brought them up when they were young. Which dutifulneſs of Children the Greeks expreſs by a word alluding to Storks, who are ſo much noted for their tender care towards their aged Parents, that their name ſignifies the thing, not only in that famous Language, but in the ſacred Language, namely, Piety and Pity.

Ἀντιπελαργεῖν. חמרה

VERS. 5, 6, 7, 8.

Who hath ſent out the wild Aſs free? Or who hath looſed the bands of the wild Aſs?

Whoſe Houſe I have made the Wilderneſs, and the barren Land his dwellings.

He ſcorneth the multitude of the City, neither regardeth he the cry of the driver.

The range of the Mountains is his Paſture, and he ſearcheth after every green thing.

THE Lord continues his ſpeech with *Job*, to ſhew his provident care of, yea, and bounty towards the wildeſt Creatures.

The queſtion put in theſe four verſes concerns the wild Aſs, and there are three things conſiderable in the deſcription given him in theſe four verſes.

Firſt, His liberty and freedom (*verſ.* 5.) *Who hath ſent out the wild Aſs free?* &c.

Secondly, His dwelling and habitation (*verſ.* 6.) *Whoſe Houſe I have made the Wilderneſs, and the barren Land his dwelling. He ſcorneth*, &c.

Thirdly, His food or manner of feeding (*verſ.* 8.) *the range of the Mountains is his Paſture, and he ſearcheth out every green thing.* Thus the Lord propoſeth to *Job* the example of theſe wild and untamed Creatures, for whom no man provides or beſtows a thought upon towards their livelihood, yet God provides for them, and feeds them, and houſeth them, and preſerveth them in as good a condition, as thoſe which are tame, and under the daily care and inſpection of man.

Verſe 5. Who hath ſet the wild Aſs free?

The wild Aſs is at liberty, he is free; love of liberty is the property of the wild Aſs; and here it is queſtioned, whence he hath his liberty, or who made him *free?* That is, ſo ſtout, that he will not be taught ſubjection to the command of man, nor do him any work, as not only other Creatures, but other Aſſes do; who hath made him thus free? Surely, not any man, not any company, ſociety, or brotherhood of men; the wild Aſs hath not his manumiſſion by them, but by God, he hath beſtowed that priviledg (ſuch as it is) upon the wild Aſs, God hath ſet him free. Some Beaſts are, as it were, Apprentiz'd or bound to the ſervice of men, and men have ſpecial ſervices, uſes, and employments to which they appoint them; there are other Creatures, as it were, manumitted from mans ſervice, man hath no command of them, nor work done by them, they are free, and amongſt theſe *the wild Aſs* is eminent for freedom.

Liberum ſc. ab hominibus, ita ut in eorum poteſtate non ſit. Druſ.

The Hebrew Text which we render the wild Aſs, is but one word; and from thence ſome derive the Latine word which ſignifie *wild Beaſts* in general; conceiving alſo that the Hebrew word comes from a root ſignifying *to multiply and increaſe*, becauſe wild Beaſts (uſually) multiply and increaſe more than tame. Thus they underſtand this former part of the verſe, not as we of that ſpecial ſort of wild Beaſts *the wild Aſs*, but in common of all ſorts of wild Beaſts; and then (ſay they) in the latter part of the verſe, the wild Aſs is eſpecially ſpoken of under another *term*; for though we have the *wild Aſs*, according to our Tranſlation, in both parts of the Text, yet under different appellations, by which ſome underſtand two ſorts of wild Aſſes, but others take the firſt only in general for wild Beaſts of any ſort, and the latter for this particular ſort of wild Beaſts *the wild Aſs*. But I conceive, we need not be ſo curious, for though we take both the former and the latter word for the ſame, the ſenſe is clear, and the ſame: *Who hath ſent out the wild Aſs free?*

פרא *Unde ferus & fera.* פֶּרֶא *à* פרא *multiplicare, augere, fructificari, quòd fœcundiores ſolent eſſe feræ, quàm domeſticæ animantes.* ערד

Or who hath looſed the bands of the wild Aſs?

But was the wild Aſs, here ſpoken of, at any time in bonds, and now ſet free? I anſwer, The Lord ſpeaks thus figuratively, not that the wild Aſs was ever in bonds, but that becauſe he is ſo untractable, and will by no means be mannag'd, he ſeems to be as one looſed from bonds, even as Oxen and Horſes which ſerve man, and are under his power, ſeem bound to his ſervice. So then, as the former, ſo this latter part of the verſe is not to be expounded, as if the wild Aſs had ever been under reſtraint, and afterwards was ſent forth free and looſed from his bonds, but both expreſſions intend only, that as his diſpoſition is for freedom, ſo in his condition he is, and always hath been, free from bondage; for not only is he free from bondage, who having been in bondage is delivered, as Slaves and Captives oftentimes are; but he may be ſaid to be free from bondage, or to have his bonds looſed, who was never in bonds, who was either born free, or who by his wit, skill and policy, or the help of others, hath been preſerved from bondage. A man may be ſaid to be free from ſickneſs, that never was ſick, as well as he that is reſtored from ſickneſs to health; and ſo a man that never was in bonds, may be ſaid to be free from bonds, as well as he that is delivered from bondage. Thus the wild Aſs in the Text is ſaid to have his bonds looſed, though he never was in bonds. As the Lord hath made all Creatures, ſo he hath made ſome free, others ſervile; he hath ſet ſome at liberty, but holds others at hard labour all their days, in drawing, travelling, or bearing heavy burdens. The words are plain; the ſum and ſcope of them may be thus conceived: As if the Lord had asked *Job*, by whom this natural inclination was given to the wild Aſs, that he ſhould ſo earneſtly deſire liberty; as alſo, who gave him that force and ſtoutneſs, that he ſhould be able to live without Law, to follow his own luſt, not at all ſubmitting to, nor guided by the will of others. *Who hath ſent out the wild Aſs free?*

ערד *Quod ſpecie videtur aliud animal ab Onagro, non tamen multum differens,* Grot. *Aliqui vertunt Onagrum & Alcen, quæ ſunt equorum & aſinorum agreſtium genera. Diſtinguit inter Onagrum & Alcen.* Plinius. lib. 8. c. 15.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *That ſome Creatures are free from, and others bound to ſervice, is of Gods own appointment.*

It would be both a vanity and a high preſumption, to ask the reaſon why the Lord hath appointed ſome Creatures to ſpend the whole time of their lives in liberty, and that others ſhould be continually groaning under bondage, labouring and ſweating, tyring and wearying themſelves out in the ſervice of men, ſeeing we cannot change the orders of God. And as we muſt not buſie our ſelves with inquiring, while he hath not ſubjected the wild Aſs to the ſame bonds and burdens as he hath tame Aſſes? So we muſt not ſay unto God, why haſt thou made ſome men to ſerve, others to rule? No, nor why he handles ſome men more gently, others more grievouſly? We muſt reſolve all theſe queſtions into the will, dominion and ſoveraignty of God; and we may well conceive, that the Lord would in this queſtion about the wild Aſſes, intimate unto us, as well as unto *Job*, that he hath a power in himſelf, which no man ought to queſtion, to free ſome men from the bonds of ſervice, and to bind others, to free ſome men from the bonds of affliction, ſorrow and trouble in this World, while others are hamper'd and held faſt in them all their days. What *Job* ſpake in reference to the various diſpenſation of Bodily health (*Chap.* 21. 23, 24, 25) *One dieth in his full ſtrength, being wholly at eaſe and quiet, his Breaſts are full of milk, and his bones moiſtened with marrow; and another dieth in the bitterneſs of his Soul, and never eateth with pleaſure*; the ſame may be ſaid about the dealings of God with men, as to bodily liberty; one dieth free, he girded himſelf all the days of his life (as Chriſt ſaid to *Peter* of his younger days, *John* 21.) and went whither he pleaſed, no man asking, whither goeſt thou? Or why ſtayeſt thou here? Another is laid by the heels, or girded by others, and never enjoyeth the freedom of his own perſon or motions, he (poor man) *is bound in fetters, and holden in the Cords of affliction*, as *Elihu* ſpake in the 36. Chapter of this Book. This was *Job*'s caſe; he was in the bonds and cords of affliction, while others enjoyed peace and liberty. Now man ought no more to queſtion the Lord, why one man is afflicted and another free, than why the wild Aſs is free, and the tame a Servant. As the whole Creation (which was occaſionally ſhewed at the third verſe) is ſubject unto bondage, by reaſon of the ſin of man, and groaneth till it be delivered; ſo the ſoveraignty of God hath laid this bondage heavier upon ſome parts of the Creation, or upon ſome Creatures, than upon others. And as we ſhould daily and deeply bewail it, that our ſin hath brought bondage upon the Creature, ſo we ſhould humbly ſubmit to whatſoever bondage or hard travel the ſoveraignty of God hath deſigned us in one kind or other, while we are in this World.

Secondly, Conſider to whom 'tis granted to be free, and to have their bonds looſed; it is to wild Aſſes. Then

Obſerve, *To be free from labour and ſervice, is but a very low priviledg.*

It is but the priviledg of an Aſs; and as it is but a low priviledg to be free from ſervice, ſo it is a great ſin to caſt off ſervice. Some under pretence of liberty, caſt off obedience, and will not bear the yoak of duty or good government; this is indeed to be free as the wild Aſs is free. Such are ſpoken of (*Pſal.* 2.2,3.) *Come let us break their bonds, and caſt their cords from us.* They that would break the bonds and cords there ſpoken of, deſire only, and look after a ſinful liberty, a meaner liberty than that of the wild Aſs. The Prophet going to the great men (*Jer.* 5.5.) ſaid, *Theſe have altogether broken the yoak, and burſt the bonds*; that is, the yoak of duty which God hath laid upon them. They have no cauſe of boaſting, that are free from the bonds of ſervice; but they who caſt off the bonds of duty, have great cauſe to be ſhamed. Thus the Prophet reproves that people, as one man (*Hoſ.* 8.9.) *They are gone up to* Aſſyria, *a wild Aſs alone by himſelf.* As if the Prophet had ſaid, They look not up to the high God for help, but to *Aſſyria*, the high God was not ſo high in their eyes as *Aſſyria*: Doing thus, they were like a wild Aſs (ſaith the Prophet) and ſo they were in two things; Firſt, They were extream ſtubborn, reſolved to have their will, and ſatisfie their luſts. *Ephraim* was as violent in his way as a wild Aſs. Secondly, They were like a wild Aſs, they would be alone; *A wild Aſs alone by himſelf*; that is, they would be at liberty, free from all command, to do what they liſt; they had rather be in a barren Wilderneſs where none could controul them, that in good paſtures under any thing that looked like a reſtraint, or a rule. This is a very unworthy Spirit; this is liberty in a way of licentiouſneſs, this *liberty is libertiniſm.* They who ſubmit to no rule but that of their unruly head-ſtrong paſſions and affections, nor will be reclaimed nor tamed by any, whether fair or foul means, theſe in Scripture are compared to the wild Aſs for their folly and vanity. *Zophar* offered this rebuke to *Job*, in the 11. Chapter of this Book, verſe 12. and poſſibly he could not altogether free himſelf from it, *Vain man would be wiſe, though he be born like a wild Aſſes colt*; that is, though this be all his wiſdom to be free from that ſubjection which he oweth to God and man. The Prophet (*Jer.* 2. 24.) compares the whole people of *Iſrael*, when they caſt off the ſervice of God, to a *wild Aſs* (which Scripture was toucht at the ſecond verſe upon another occaſion) *that ſnuffeth up the wind at her pleaſure; in her occaſion who can turn her away? All they that ſeek her, will not weary themſelves, in her month they ſhall find her*: There is no bringing ſuch into compaſs, till they are compaſſed with pains. We may call all ſuch *nominal* Iſraelites *real* Iſhmaelites, it being ſaid of *Iſhmael* (*Gen.* 16. 12.) that he was (*pere* Adam) *a wild man*, having more of the wild Aſs than of the man in them. Thus it is with vain and unbridled Spirits, they cannot bear the yoak of ſervice; and therefore remember, though this be ſpoken of as a priviledg, yet it is a low priviledg to be free from any honeſt ſervice; and to be free from all ſervice, is worſe than the worſt of outward ſervitudes. 'Tis a mercy to be free from ſlavery to man, but to be free from ſervice to man, is to be unmanly; every man ſhould be a Servant in one kind or other, and therefore the Law ſaith, *To call a man a Servant*, diſtinguiſheth no man, ſeeing every man is ſuppoſed in the way of his life a Servant. The Apoſtle ſpeaking to thoſe whoſe very calling is to ſerve, and are therefore in ſtrict ſenſe called *Servants* (1 Cor. 7.21,22.) ſaith, *Art thou called, being a Servant, care not for it*, that is, be not troubled that thou art a Servant (ſervice to man is not inconſiſtent with the ſervice of God) *but if thou maiſt be made free, uſe it rather; for he that is called in the Lord, being a Servant, is the Lords freeman. Let every man* (verſ. 24.) *wherein he is called, therein abide with God*; that is, let him continue to ſerve man in all things, according to the will of God. To be wholly free from the ſervice of man, is no better than the freedom of the worſer ſort of Beaſts, the wild Aſs. Chriſt (*Matth.* 11.29,30.) calls his to the yoak; and Chriſts yoak implyeth all manner of dutiful ſervice, even ſervice to man as well as to God: *Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you reſt; take my yoak upon you, and learn of me,* &c. *for my yoak is eaſie, and my burden is light.* If we refuſe Chriſts eaſie yoak, we may quickly get a heavy one, yea, an Iron one, as the Prophet told him whom broke the wooden one (*Jer.* 28.13.) There are ſome yoaks, which to bear is our honour; 'tis ſurely ſo, to bear the yoak of Chriſt; to be under Chriſts bonds, is a favour; woe to thoſe who ſeek to be looſed from them. The Prophet *Jeremiah* tells us (*Lam.* 3. 37.) *It is good for a man to bear the yoak in his youth.*

There is a threefold bond or yoak, from which it is a favour to be wholly freed, and that freedom we ſhould ſeek after; but neither of the three is a freedom from duty and ſervice, or from due ſervice.

Firſt, To be free from the yoak of ſin, and to have the bonds of our iniquities looſed, that is a bleſſed priviledg (*John* 8. 36.) *If the Son make you free, you ſhall be free indeed.* The chief part of a Sons freedom, which we have by *Chriſt, the Son*, is freedom from ſin. Freedom from the condemning power of ſin, and freedom from the ruling power of ſin, is our Spiritual or Goſpel freedom. *Peter* ſaid to *Simon Magus* (Acts 8.23.) *I perceive thou art in the gall of bitterneſs, and in the bond of iniquity*; thou art ſtill a priſoner, a ſlave to ſin, the guilt of ſin holds thee faſt; nor art thou delivered from the filth of it. To have our ſin-bonds looſed, is to be free like Saints; to looſe our ſelves from duty-bonds, whether to God or man, is to be free like wild Aſſes.

Secondly, There is a great mercy in being looſed and made free from the curſe of the Law. Thus alſo the Son makes us free (*Gal.* 3.13.) *Chriſt hath redeemed us from the curſe of the Law, being made a curſe for us*; that is, enduring the curſe for us, or dying a curſed death for us, that we might have, and for ever enjoy a bleſſed life: This is a glorious liberty.

Thirdly, To be freed from the old legal Ceremonies, is the priviledg of all believers under the Goſpel; and 'tis ſuch a priviledg as the Apoſtle exhorted the *Galatians*, and us with them, to maintain with all our might (*Gal.* 5. 1.) *Stand faſt therefore in the liberty wherewith Chriſt hath made us free, and be not intangled again with the yoak of bondage*; that is, with the bondage of the Ceremonial Law, from which Chriſt hath made us free (*Gal.* 4.26.) *Jeruſalem which is above is free, which is the Mother of us all*; free, Firſt, From the ſlavery of ſin; free, Secondly, From the curſe of the Law; free, Thirdly, From the yoak of legal Ceremonies. All believers are made thus free by Chriſt, but Chriſt hath not made ſo much as one believer free from ſervice. Chriſt makes us free to ſerve, not free from ſerving. *To be free to ſerve, is infinitely better than to be free from ſervice*; nothing is more ingenuous, nothing ſhews a more noble Spirit in man, than to be free to ſerve, as all are, being once freed from ſpiritual or ſin-ſlavery (*Rom.* 6. 19.) *As ye have yielded your members ſervants to uncleanneſs, and to iniquity unto iniquity, even ſo now yield your ſelves ſervants to righteouſneſs unto holineſs*; *for* (as it follows) *when ye were the ſervants of ſin, ye were free from righteouſneſs*, or (as it is in the Margin) *free to righteouſneſs*; not free to do righteouſneſs, but free not to do it. Righteouſneſs had then no command (yielded to) no power (ſubmitted to) over you; whereas over a gracious heart, righteouſneſs hath the greateſt command A godly man is at the beck of God, in all the ways of righteouſneſs: and, as he is free to ſerve Maſters, ſo he is free to be ſubject to Magiſtrates, or higher powers, according to that rule of the Apoſtle (*Rom.*13.1.) And that all in their places may be mindful of this duty, they are upon all occaſions to be put in mind of it, as the ſame Apoſtle directed *Titus* in his Epiſtle to him (*Chap.*3.1.) The Lord having ſpoken of the freedom of the Aſs, proceeds to deſcribe his dwelling.

Verſ. 6. **Whoſe Houſe I have made the wilderneſs, and the barren land his dwellings.**

Theſe words contain the ſecond part of the care and providence of God towards the wild Aſs; he hath not only made them free, and looſed their bonds, but he hath provided a dwelling for them; and where? In the wilderneſs; a wild place, and therefore fit for wild beaſts. The wilderneſs; ſtrictly taken, is the dwelling of beaſts, not of men; we read (I grant) in Scripture not only of Houſes, but of Cities in the wilderneſs, yet take the wilderneſs ſtrictly, and 'tis a place un-inhabited by man; and that's the place where the Lord hath appointed the wild Aſs to dwell; 'tis his Houſe, there he abideth as men do in their Houſes. The wilderneſs is a place undreſſed, untilled, uncared for by man, yet by the care and goodneſs of God it affords ſufficient proviſion for the ſupport of theſe creatures, whom no man provides for.

Whoſe Houſe I have made the Wilderneſs.

The wild Aſs hath a large and open Houſe, ſome conceive the wilderneſs here intended was the wilderneſs of *Arabia*, which as (Hiſtorians tell us) was much ſtockt or abounded with wild Aſſes. The word *Arabia* ſignifies *a wilderneſs*; the whole country being ſo like a wilderneſs, is ſo called after its own likeneſs. The *Chaldee* Paraphraſt reads it, *whoſe houſe I have made a plain*, as if theſe *wild Aſſes* were in this oppoſed to the *wild Goats*, (*Verſ.* 1.) who live on high hills and craggy Rocks. The word is Tranſlated *a plain* (Deut. 1. 1.) yet rather, as we, *the Wilderneſs.*

And the barren land his dwellings; the *Hebrew* is, *and the ſalt place his dwellings.*

A barren place, and a ſalt place, are the ſame (*Judg.* 9.45.) *When* Abimelech *took that City, he ſowed it with ſalt*, in token that an everlaſting curſe of barrenneſs ſhould come upon it, according to that (*Pſal.*107.34.) *A fruitful land turned he into barrenneſs*, the margin ſaith *into ſaltneſs*. Once more (*Jer.* 17. 5, 6.) *Curſed be the man that truſteth in man, and maketh fleſh his arm, he ſhall be like the heath in the deſert, and ſhall not ſee when good cometh, but ſhall inhabit the parched places in the wilderneſs, in a ſalt land and not inhabited*, that is, in a barren land, unfit for any to inhabit. There is a reaſon in nature why ſalt land is barren; ſalt being hot and dry, draweth up the ſtrength and moiſture of the land that ſhould make it fruitful: This ſalt or barren land, which yields little graſs or herbage, the Lord hath appointed for the wild Aſs to dwell in.

Hence Note; Firſt, *God provides a place of dwelling for the meaneſt creatures.*

Where the wild Aſs ſhall dwell or inhabit, comes under a Divine appointment. How much more hath God appointed dwelling places for the Children of men. The Apoſtle tells us (*Acts* 12.26.) That he hath not only made *men to dwell on all the face of the Earth*, but *he hath alſo determined the bounds of their habitation*, that is, God hath not only made the whole Earth habitable for man-kind, but he hath by his providence diſpoſed every man to his ſpecial habitation in this or that part of the Earth.

Secondly; *The dwelling which God appoints to any creature is ſutable to its nature.*

This wild creature dwells in a wild place, in a wilderneſs. This barren creature (as to any benefit he brings to man) God appoints to dwell in a barren land. It is ſaid of *Nebuchadnezzar* (Dan. 5.21.) when for his pride he was put from his dominion, that he had his dwelling with *wild Aſſes*; he himſelf carried it like a beaſt, and he had a dwelling ſutable to his beſtial diſpoſition among the beaſts; he was proud, and would not bear the Lords yoke, he caſt off the bonds which God laid upon him, and thought it enough for him to lay bonds upon men, therefore the Lord (to humble him) thruſt him among the beaſts. As like will to like moſtly in way of election, ſo ſometimes like ſhall to like, though they like it not, in way of compulſion; and uſually like are put to like perſons or places, in way of gracious ordination. God himſelf appoints wild beaſts to the barren wilderneſs, tame beaſts to the fruitful encloſed paſtures; he placeth men in well built Houſes, Towns or Cities; and he hath appointed faithful men and women his Church to dwell in, which is therefore called (though in a wilderneſs) *the Houſe of God*, (1 Tim. 3. 15.) *David* found that Houſe more pleaſing to him then any of his Royal Palaces, and therefore made it his great requeſt, *The one thing of his deſires* (Pſal.27.7.) *That he might dwell in the Houſe of the Lord for ever:* Even as he bitterly complained (*Pſal.* 120. 5.) *Wo is me, that I ſojourn in* Meſech, *that I dwell in the tents of* Kedar. And as the Lord hath provided ſutable habitations for beaſts, wild and tame; for men, good and bad here on earth; ſo he hath provided ſutable habitations for all men, when they leave this Earth. He hath provided hell for their houſe and dwelling place for ever, who are diſobedient and unbelieving; and he hath provided Heaven for their Houſe and dwelling place for ever, who believe and obey. As now all godly men dwell in God by faith (*Pſal.* 90. 1.) ſo they ſhall hereafter dwell always with him by fruition. He that gives the wilderneſs for a Houſe, and the barren land for a dwelling to the wild Aſs, will provide a *Paradiſe* for the Houſe, and a *Spring-garden* of everlaſting joys and ſweetneſſes for his faithful ſervants.

Thirdly, From theſe words (*the barren land his dwelling.*)

Note; *As ſome lands are barren by a Divine Malediction, ſo ſome by Common Conſtitution.*

Some lands become barren by a curſe from God; Thus he *turns a fruitful land into barrenneſs, for the wickedneſs of thoſe that dwell therein* (Pſal. 107. 34.) Now as ſome lands are made barren (beſides the general curſe which beſel all lands upon the fall of man into ſin) by ſome ſpecial curſe, for ſpecial cauſes, ſo 'tis meerly an act of Divine Soveraignty, that ſome lands, as to their very ſoil and conſtitution are barren, while others are fruitful.

Fourthly, Conſider where do theſe Aſſes dwell? 'Tis *in a barren land.*

Hence Note; *They that do little work deſerve but little reward, a barren land may ſerve them who refuſe ſervice.*

As every land, the beſt land is barren and unprofitable to them who will not take pains to improve it; ſo 'tis pity they ſhould dwell in a fruitful land, who will not take pains in it.

Fifthly, Note; *There is no place ſo bad or barren, but it hath its uſe.*

God hath uſe for barren wilderneſſes, as well as for the richeſt paſtures.

Sixthly, The wild Aſs living according to nature, is ſatisfied with a barren Land.

Hence Note; *Nature is content with a little.*

They have always enough, who deſire no more. A cottage is as good as a Palace, and a barren Land as good as a fruitful one, to a contented mind. Yet I cannot approve either their principle or practice, who have a kind of ambition (poſſibly they call it ſelf-denial, and reckon it a high piece of their Religion) to dwell, as the wild Aſs, in the wilderneſs; ſuch are thoſe popiſh votaries, called *Hermites*, from the wilderneſs where they dwell: Theſe in devotion (ſuch as it is) make the wilderneſs their houſe, and the barren Land their dwelling, that they may be free from the cares and temptations of this world; theſe retire themſelves utterly from converſe with man, that they may more freely converſe with God (an excellent end, but that way to it is no where comanded by God) Let ſuch remember, that God hath not appointed the wilderneſs and deſert places for mans dwelling, but for the dwelling of wild beaſts: Let them alſo remember, that they who have the wilderneſs for their houſe, may yet have the City in their hearts. It was ſaid by one of the Ancients, concerning ſuch retirements, *What doth it advantage us to have a ſolitary place for our bodies, whilſt our ſouls are in the thickeſt throngs of the world.*

Quid prodeſt ſolitudo corporis, ſi defuerit ſolitudo cordis. Greg. lib. 30. cap. 23.

There are only two caſes wherein men ſhould deſire ſuch ſolitary places.

Firſt, In caſe of perſecution, to get out of the hands and reach of cruel men. Thus *David* deſired the wilderneſs (*Pſal.*55.3,4,5,6.) *Becauſe of the voice of the enemy, becauſe of the oppreſſion of the wicked; for they caſt iniquity upon me, and in wrath they hate me; my heart is ſore pained within me, and the terrors of death are fallen upon me*, &c. And what followeth? *O that I had wings like a Dove, for then would I flie away and be at reſt; Lo, then would I wander afar off, and remain in the wilderneſs.* Is is better to be in the wilderneſs among ſavage beaſts, than to live among beaſtly ſavage men. The Apoſtle (*Heb.*11.38.) tells us the reaſon why many worthy ones of the Jewiſh Church (of whom the world was not worthy) inhabited the wilderneſs; *They were ſtoned and ſawn aſunder, and were ſlain with the ſword*, &c. And what then? Then they who remained alive, to avoid thoſe extremities, avoided the ſociety of men, and wandred *in deſerts, and in mountains, and in dens, and caves of the Earth.* In ſuch a hot day we may chuſe the ſhadow of a deſolate wilderneſs, rather than a City to dwell in. And thus it is ſaid (*Rev.* 12. 13,14.) *When the Dragon* (That is, Heatheniſh *Rome*) *perſecuted the woman* (That is, the Church) *which brought forth the man-child; then to the woman were given two wings of a great Eagle* (That is, ſufficient means, ſtrength and opportunity to make her eſcape) *that ſhe might flee into the wilderneſs*; which as it hath been often verified in a metaphorical ſenſe, Profeſſors then lying cloſe and retired in their ſeveral places, ſo it hath been true in the letter, the Church hath fled into the wilderneſs for ſafety, and hath there been preſerved *from the face of the Serpent.*

Secondly, We may deſire ſuch retirements to, and a dwelling in ſolitary places, in caſe of the extream wickedneſs of thoſe among whom we dwell, though they break not out into open perſecution, yet their evil converſation makes their ſociety intolerable. This cauſed the Prophet *Jeremiah* to cry out (*Chap.*9.2.) *O that I had a place in the wilderneſs, that I might leave my people and go from them* (why?) *for they be all adulterers, an aſſembly of treacherous men.* For, as *it is better to dwell in the corner of the houſe top, than with a brawling woman in a wide houſe* (Prov.21.9.) ſo it is better to get into a corner, or into a wilderneſs, then to live in a City, or in the faireſt Palaces among men of wicked and ungodly ſpirits, ſuch as vexed *Lot* in *Sodom* (2Pet.2.8.)

In theſe two caſes we may imitate the wild Aſs, and dwell in the wilderneſs; but for any to make it their choice, let them conſider where they have a rule for it. Man is a ſociable creature, and ought to be helpful and uſeful to others, and not wholly to confine himſelf to himſelf, as they do, who are and are called *Anchorets* and *Hermites.* To ſerve our Country, and to obſerve the Law of Nations for the common good of mankind, is better than upon any pretence of devotion, or converſe with God, to ſeclude our ſelves totally from the company and converſe of men. And ſeeing God hath made us for the good of human ſociety, it is inhuman, voluntarily and electively to disjoyn and exempt our ſelves from the Laws of ſociety. *Ariſtotle* ſaid, concerning decliners of ſociety, *He that affects ſolitude, is either a God, or a beaſt*; he either lives above man as God doth, or below man as beaſts do. The Reader will eaſily pardon me this ſhort diverſion againſt unneceſſitated ſolitude, thus occaſioned by the ſolitary dwelling of the wild Aſs in the wilderneſs and barren Land. And I have the rather touch it, becauſe I find the Wits of ſome running ſomewhat wild in the Allegory of the wild Aſs in the Text, as if he were a very fitting reſemblance of a contemplative man.

Deus ſit aut bellua oportet, qui poſſet in ſolitudine vivere. Ariſtot.

I grant a godly man ſhould be, and the more godly any man is, the more he will be, I am ſure, the more he would or deſires to be free from the thoughts, and looſed from the bands both of love to, and cares about the things of this life, that he may be the more in the meditation of, and preparation for a better life. In thoſe meditations he retires from the throng of worldly deſires, as much as a man living alone in a wilderneſs withdraws from worldly buſineſſes; he is weaned from, and mortified to the plenty and pleaſures which a City life courts him with; nor is he afraid of the threatnings of any who would drive him from his duty. His Soul ſearcheth after, and he feeds upon the green things which every where grow upon the mountains of the holy Scriptures, both for his inſtruction and conſolation. All this I grant, as was ſaid before, is true of a godly man raiſed to any high degree of ſpiritualneſs, and walking much in the Spirit. He is in the World, yet ſits looſe and free from the bands and baits of it. Howbeit, this warrants no man to looſe himſelf from all bands of ſervice in the world, much leſs to be ſo groſs, as litterally to make that his Houſe, which God hath made the Houſe of the wild Aſs, *The wilderneſs, or to take the barren Land for his dwelling.*

As this verſe hath ſhewed us the houſe and dwelling of the wild Aſs, ſo the next ſhews us how he carries it in the wilderneſs.

Verſ. 7. **He ſcorneth the multitude of the City, neither regardeth he the crying of the driver.**

He ſcorneth;] The Hebrew is, *He laugheth at*, or *ſlighteth*, &c. The Lord ſpeaks of this wild Aſs after the manner of men, who laugh at thoſe things which they contemn, deſpiſe or ſcorn, as much below them or contrary to them: The word is rendred *by laughing* (Pſal.2.4. *Job* 5.22.) It is ſaid alſo of the good woman (*Prov.*31. 25.) *She ſhall rejoyce in time to come*; which others render thus, *She laughed at time to come*; That is, ſhe having ſo well and wiſely provided for time to come, is not at all burdened with cares about it. There may be a double reaſon, why this wild Aſs *ſcorns, or laughs at the multitude of the City.*

Inſignis metaphora ad notandum indomitam naturam.

Firſt, Becauſe it is no way pleaſing to his nature, he hath no deſire to a City, to a ſociable life.

Secondly, He may be ſaid *to ſcorn the multitude of the City*, becauſe though a multitude ſhould come out of a City to take him, Yea, as great a multitude as a City can make, yet he is not afraid, for he knows he can ſhew them a fair pair of heels, and by his ſwiftneſs of foot keep out of their hands, and maintain his liberty.

Farther, The words Tranſlated, **The multitude of the City**, may be rendred, *The abundance or plenty of the City.* If there be abundance any where, it is in Cities; and therefore Heaven is called a *City*, becauſe of the great abundance of all good there, and all in God. Thus the word is rendred (*Pſal.* 37. 16.) *A little that a righteous man hath, is better than the riches of many wicked*; That is, than all their large ſums of money, of Gold and Silver, as alſo then their large inheritances of Houſes and Lands. The word may bear that ſenſe in the Text, and 'tis a good ſenſe; the wild Aſs *ſcorns the abundance of the City*, he can content himſelf with the *barren Land*; he cares not though he fare hard, ſo he may live free from hard labour; he ſcorneth, both *the multitude and plenty of the City*;

המיד
Copia, i. e. *opes & divitiæ,* q. d. *nihil appetit ex abundantia exuperantiave civium. Malit in ſterilibus locis raram & malam herbam quærere, quam in urbe ſervire pro victu copioſo. Gerit ergo paupertatis imaginem,* cap. 24. 5.

Neither regardeth he the crying of the driver.

The word is, *He heareth not*, That is, *he obeyeth not the crying of the driver.* This is ſpoken in oppoſition to tame beaſts, for ſuch muſt *regard the crying of the driver*, elſe they muſt ſmart for it; if the driver ſpeaks, they underſtand his language, they muſt mend their pace, and follow their work more cloſely, or feel the drivers laſh. Here then is a farther deſcription of the liberty of the wild Aſs; he is not brought to work by any thing that the driver can ſay or do, he is not afraid either of his words or blows.

נוגש

μέμψιν φορολόγου. *Querelam ejus qui tributum colligit.* Sept. *Vocatur autem Exactor, non modo qui tributa exigit, ſed qui per vis urget.* Druſ.

The word which we Tranſlate *Driver*, ſignifies an Oppreſſor; ſo 'tis rendred (*Job* 3. 18.) It ſignifies alſo an *Exactor*. The ſeventy Tranſlate, *He regardeth not the haſty call or citation of the gatherer of Taxes or of Tribute.* There are two ſorts of Exactors; Firſt, thoſe that exact Tribute; Secondly, thoſe who exact Labour. Now he that drives cattel, urgeth them to work both by hand and tongue, and ſo exacts labour of them. Hence the word is uſed to expreſs the *Task-maſters* of the *Iſraelites* in *Egypt* (Exod. 5. 6.) who indeed exacted labour of them, and made them ſerve with rigor. From theſe Oppreſſors, with the Exactors of labour, the wild Aſs is free; he is at ſuch liberty, that he *regards not the cry of the driver*, Exactor or Oppreſſor; nor will he be brought to work by fair means nor by foul. As that was a proverbial ſpeech to ſhew the tranquility of thoſe times (*Iſa*. 14. 8.) *Since thou art laid down, no feller is come up againſt us*; So this ſeems to be a proverbial ſpeech, ſhewing the liberty of the wild Aſs at all times, *He regardeth not the crying of the Driver.*

From the former part of the Verſe,

When 'tis ſaid, *He laughs at, or ſcorns the multitude of the City.* Taking the word *City*, as oppoſed to the *wilderneſs or barren Land*,

> Note; *Cities as they are full of company, ſo they are accompanied with all manner of outward plenty and fulneſs.*

If good things are to be had any where for love or money, it is in Cities; and therefore they who dwell in great Cities, where there is ſuch a multitude of people, and abundance of all things, ſhould remember their priviledg; 'tis a mercy they are not in a wilderneſs, or in a barren Land.

Secondly, In that it is ſaid, *He ſcorns the multitude of the City.*

> Note; *No ſociety, no company pleaſeth, but that which is ſutable.*

What cares the wild Aſs for the company of men? He had rather be among the wild Aſſes, than among the beſt and wiſeſt men. Bad men, who are like wild beaſts, ſcorn the company of good men, and it is as true of good men, that they have no joy in the company of bad men, yea, they are often burdened with their company. The content of our lives doth very much conſiſt in our harmony with, and congeniality to thoſe whom we are engaged to converſe with.

Thirdly, Take the word in the other ſenſe, as noting the abundance or plenty that is in the City, the wild Aſs had rather be in his barren Land then there.

> Hence we learn; *Liberty is more pleaſing then plenty, and a wilderneſs with poor fare, then a City where there is oppreſſion.*

Better be ſometimes in a ſtarving condition, than always in a fearing condition, always hearing *the cry of the Driver*. The wild Aſs is content to fare hard, ſo he may be free: how much more then is he below a man, who parts with his true liberty, as *Eſau* did with his Birth-right, for a morſel of meat, or a meſs of broth?

> Fourthly, Note; *To be driven and forced, is grievous to beaſts, much more to men.*

The wild Aſs regards not the crying of the Driver, becauſe he knows the Driver cannot reach him with his cry, much leſs with his whip. The tame Aſs muſt regard and attend the cry of the Driver (though he hath no will to it) whether he will or no. It was ſaid by the Moraliſts, *Man would be led, not driven*; perſwaded, not compelled. The diſputes have been great what man may do, and how far he may go to that matter; but I ſhall not meddle with it any further, then to ſay, that when Chriſt in the Parable ſaid (*Luke* 14. 23.) *Compel them to come in*, The compulſion there intended, is only that of argumentation, exhortation and perſwaſion by his Miniſters, whoſe divine Rhetorick in beſeeching ſinners to come in, and to be reconciled unto God, hath ſuch a power in it, as amounts unto, and may be called a compulſion. I grant, many uſe their liberty, or rather abuſe it, as an occaſion to the fleſh, and turn it into wantonneſs, theſe are indeed no better then *wild Aſſes*; and though they are ſuch as regard not the cry of the Driver, yet they need it.

Thus the Lord hath ſhewed *Job* the houſe and dwelling, as alſo the liberties and priviledges of the wild Aſs; in the next verſe the Lord ſhews him the food or diet of the wild Aſs.

Verſ. 8. **The range of the mountains is his paſture, and he ſearcheth after every green thing.**

Inveſtigatio montium (*eſt*) *paſcuum ejus, i. e. quicquid in montibus inveſtigari poteſt, id ei pabuli loco eſt.* Bez.

This verſe tells us where the Lord hath made proviſion for the *wild Aſs*. *The Range* (or as ſome render, *the ſearch*) *of the mountains is his paſture*; That is, whatſoever he ſearcheth and findeth out upon the mountains, *is his paſture*. *Job* ſpeaketh of wicked men (*Chap*. 24. 5.) after the manner of theſe wild Aſſes, finding food in the wilderneſs for themſelves, and for their Children.

The range of the mountains is his paſture.

Some interpret it *choice things*, That is, the beſt things, or thoſe things that are moſt ſavoury to the pallat of that beaſt, thoſe he picks up for his food. Mr. *Broughton* Tranſlates, *Choſen places in the mountains are for his paſture:* As if it had been ſaid, *Though he be wild, yet he is prudent, he takes not what comes next*, but he chuſeth what is beſt for him; for as it followeth,

He ſearcheth after every green thing.

The word notes a very diligent ſearch, *after every green thing*. Green things are his delicacies, he lives upon them, and delights in them; he ſearcheth after all, and feeds upon that which is beſt for him; he looks not that man ſhould fodder him in winter, as they do tame, and working cattel, he looks out his own living, and picks up ſome green thing or other all the year long.

> Hence Note; *Where God gives dwelling, he gives feeding.*

God hath made the *wilderneſs and barren places* for the wild Aſs to dwell in, yet there is ſomething for him to feed on.

> Secondly, *His food is every green thing.*

> (Whence Learn; *God gives food to all creatures convenient to their nature.*)

He gives green things, graſs to the beaſts of the field; but he doth not feed man with graſs, he feedeth man with the fineſt of the wheat, and with honey out of the rock (*Pſal*. 81. 16.) And as the Lord provides ſutable food for the bodies of men, ſo for their Souls he hath ſpiritual green paſtures for them (*Pſal*. 23. 1, 2.) *The Lord is my Shepherd, I ſhall not want; he maketh me to lie down in green paſtures*; That is, in his Word and Ordinances. They are green paſtures for his people; he makes them lie down in the Promiſes and in the Commandments, in the holy Prophecies and Hiſtories of the written word; all which are written for our *inſtruction or learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope* (Rom. 15. 4.) That is, that our faith having the truth of the Word (eſpecially in the promiſes) to feed upon, our hope may be ſaid to wait for the good of the Word patiently. The holy Scriptures (I ſay) are the green paſtures which the Lord hath provided for the Souls of men to feed in, and grow fat upon. The Scriptures are a bare common, a dry heath to unbelievers they find nothing there which is food for them; but to believers they are fat paſtures, and full of ſuch green things as are moſt ſutable to their taſte, and nouriſhing to their Souls. Thus ſpake the Prophet (*Iſa*. 49. 9, 10.) *Their paſtures ſhall be in all high places; they ſhall not hunger nor thirſt, neither ſhall the heat nor the Sun ſmite them*; That is, they ſhall have ſafe paſſage, and ſufficient food, both for Soul and Body, for their Souls eſpecially, when delivered out of their ſoul-priſons, or ſpiritual captivity, there ſpoken or propheciced of, under the Goſpel.

Thirdly, Wild Aſſes ſearch *after every green thing*, they take pains for their living; if it be not neer, they will travel for it, and ſeek after it.

Hence Note; *Hunger makes irrational creatures, every living creature, induſtrious.*

They who love not labour, will yet take ſome pains, at leaſt ſo much as ſerves them to get food, and keep them alive. Thoſe beaſts which are moſt at liberty, are in a kind of bondage to their bellies. *The wild Aſſes* (ſaith the Prophet, *Jer.*14.6.) *did ſtand in the high places, they ſnuffed up the wind like Dragons, becauſe there was no graſs.* How will they ſearch after graſs, who are thus afflicted for want of graſs! And will not ſpiritual hunger make us as induſtrious as natural hunger doth? Hungry Souls will be ſeeking after every green thing, after every divine precept, after every precious promiſe; theſe are the green things which the Soul ſearcheth for, and is ſatisfied with. Naturaliſts ſay of the wild Aſs, that he utterly refuſeth to feed upon thoſe things that are dry and dead, he muſt have green. That's true of every believer, he cannot feed upon dead and dry things, upon what is chaffy and husky, he muſt have green, ſappy, juicy, lively food; ſuch hath God provided for him, and he will be ſatisfied with none but ſuch.

VERS. 9, 10, 11, 12.

Will the Unicorn be willing to ſerve thee? Or abide by thy Crib?
Canſt thou bind the Unicorn with his bands in the furrow? Or will he harrow the valleys after thee?
Wilt thou truſt him, becauſe his ſtrength is great? Or wilt thou leave thy labour with him?
Wilt thou believe him that he will bring home thy ſeed, and gather it into thy Barn?

THe Lord ſtill enquires after *Job*'s skill and knowledg in the Book of the creatures. In the former context, *Job* was interrogated about the wild Aſs, whoſe freedom was there ſet out, in oppoſition to the ſervitude of the home-bred or tame Aſs. Here the Lord puts the Queſtion about the Unicorn, and ſets forth his liberty, in oppoſition to the ſervile labour of the Oxe.

Verſ. 9. **Will the Unicorn be willing to ſerve thee? Or abide by thy Crib?**

The Unicorns liberty is here deſcribed, Firſt, more generally, in two things.

Firſt, He will do no work for man.

Secondly, He will receive no reward from man.

That he hath no mind to work for man, is ſhewed in the firſt words of the verſe: *Will he be willing to ſerve thee?* Will he be imployed in thy ſervice?

And that he cares not to be fed or provided for by man, that he looks for no reward from man, is ſet down in the latter part of the verſe; *Will he abide by thy crib?*

Secondly, The ſtubborn liberty of the Unicorn is deſcribed in this context, more particularly, by his refuſal of that ſpecial labour which is neceſſary in husbandry, or for the tillage of the ground, in the whole compaſs of it; and here are three parts of that labour ſet down, all refuſed by the Unicorn.

Firſt, The ploughing of the ground in the 10. Verſe; *Canſt thou bind the Unicorn with his band in the furrow?* He will not go to plough.

The ſecond labour with which beaſts are wrought in husbandry, is harrowing the ground; the Unicorn will not touch that, as 'tis ſaid in the cloſe of the 10. Verſe, *Will he harrow the valleys after thee?* No, he will neither plough nor harrow, he will do none of theſe works though he have ſtrength enough to do them, as appears (*Verſ.* 11.) *Wilt thou truſt him, becauſe his ſtrength is great? Or wilt thou leave thy labour to him?*

The third part of husbandry, about which beaſts are uſed, is the bringing of the Corn in, or the home-bringing of it; the Unicorn will lend no help to that work neither, as is ſhewed in the 12. Verſe, *Wilt thou believe him that he will bring home thy ſeed, and gather it into thy Barn?*

Thus the Unicorn will neither ſerve in general, nor do any of theſe particular ſervices; he will neither plough nor harrow, nor bring home the ſeed. The Unicorn is a beaſt unſubject to, and unſubduable by man, yet ſubject to God, and by him eaſily ſubduable; for (as the Apoſtle ſpake in another caſe, *Phil.* 3.21.) *He is able to ſubdue all things to himſelf.*

We may conceive, the ſcope and intendment of the Lord in putting theſe Queſtions to *Job* about the Unicorn, was to ſhew, that if he could not tame or reduce ſuch a creature as the Unicorn to his Plow and Harrow, then he muſt not think of bringing God to his bow, who made both the Unicorn and man too. Surely God will be at his liberty, to do with man what he pleaſeth, do man what he can, ſeeing the Unicorn will take liberty to do what he pleaſeth, notwithſtanding all that man can do. God will not be bound up to, nor tyed by any mans dictates, but remains ſoveraignly free for ever, in all his diſpenſations. Thus of the whole matter in general: I ſhall now open the particulars mentioned about this unſerviceable Creature the Unicorn.

Verſ. 9. **Will the Unicorn be willing to ſerve thee?**

The Original word Tranſlated *Unicorn*, denotes an animal, high and ſtately. It comes from a root which ſignifies to be exalted or lifted up; and hence *David* (Pſal. 92.10.) teſtifying his aſſurance that God would lift him up out of his troubles, and deliver him from his preſſures, compares his hoped for exaltation to that of the Unicorn: *My horn ſhalt thou exalt like the horn of an Unicorn, I ſhall be anointed with freſh oil*; That is, I ſhall have new and ſufficient ſupplies of grace, and gifts, of joy and conſolation.

רים & ראם *dicitur à* רום *quod altum eſſe ſignificat. Monoceros unicum habet cornu, ſed altum, unde appellatio ejus.*

This word (*Reem*) which in the Hebrew bears only that general ſignification *Highneſs*, is rendred by the Seventy in Greek *Monoceros*, and by the Latines *Unicornis*, both which anſwer our Engliſh term *Unicorn*; the notation of all theſe words in the Greek, Latin, and Engliſh imports a beaſt with one horn, whereas (I ſay) the Hebrew word imports only the highneſs or nobleneſs of that animal or beaſt intended under it.

μονόκερως. 70. *Unicornis.* Lat.

Natural Hiſtorians, in their deſcriptions of, and diſcourſes about the beaſts of the Earth, make report of an *Indian Aſs* with one horn, as alſo of *Indian Oxen* with one horn, which may therefore, according to the ſenſe of the word, be called *Unicorns*. Our late Annotators ſeem ſeem to incline, that by the word *Reem* here rendred *Unicorn*, is meant the wild Bull rather than the Unicorn, becauſe as the wild Aſs is here oppos'd to the tame, ſo the wild Bull ſeems to be oppos'd to the Oxe, which is a tame creature and fitted for the ſervice of man.

Ariſt. *l.*2. *de Hiſt. Animal. c.* 1. Plin. *l.*8. *c.* 21. *l.* 11. *c.* 37.

The Vulgar Latin Tranſlation reads it, the *Rhinoceros*, and ſo doth one of the Greek interpreters; and in our Engliſh Tranſlation (*Iſa.*34.7.) we put the word *Unicorns* in the Text, and *Rhinocerots* in the Margin. The notation of which word (Rhinocerot) imports a beaſt with a horn on his noſe or ſnout. The Rhinoceros is a large beaſt, near in bigneſs (ſay ſome) to the Elephant, only ſhorter in his legs. And the deſcription or character which one of the Ancients gives of the Rhinoceros, is very ſutable to, and doth fully correſpond with that which the Lord gives here in this Text of that ſavage beaſt (*Reem*) by us rendred the *Unicorn*: For (ſaith my Author) *The Rhinoceros is a proud imperious animal ſuch as will not be ſubject to man, nor be brought to obedience, living perpetually in deſart places, and ſecuring himſelf from danger by his Horn.*

Numquid volet Rhinoceros ſervire tibi? Vulg. *ῥινόκερως.* Aquil.

Baſil. *in* Pſal. 29. 6.

Further, It is ſaid of this Rhinoceros.

Firſt, That he is a mortal enemy to the Elephant, whom he aſſaults fiercely; and having ſharpen'd, or as it were whetted his horn at a ragged rock, that his weapon may be fit for the bloody battle, he wounds him under the belly, where he knows the Elephant is moſt in danger, that being his ſofteſt part.

Cornu ad ſaxa limato, præparat ſe pugnæ. Plin. *l.* 8. *c.* 20.

Secondly, Some to carry the ſenſe of the word *Unicorn* to this other creature, ſay, the Rhinoceros hath but one horn; whereas others affirm confidently, that the Rhinoceros hath two horns, one upon his Noſe, and another upon his Brow, though not ſo big as that other. One of the old Poets ſpeaking of the Roman ſports, deſcribes a Rhinoceros thus, *He toſſed the Bear that was brought before him with his double horn.* *Sanctius* (in his Comment upon this verſe) ſaith he ſaw a Rhinoceros which was, brought into *Spain*,

Namque gravem gemino cornu ſic extulit urſum, Jactat ut impoſitas taurus in aſtra pilas. Mart. in ſuo Amphitheatro Epigram. 22.

Spain, in whom he obſerved all things anſwering the deſcription given of him by the Ancients.

What the ſhape or form of the *Unicorn* is, as ordinarily painted and ſet up with the Lion, as a *ſupporter of the Royal Arms*, and as a ſign at many common mens doors, every one knows. Some Hiſtorians ſpeaking of the Unicorn, paint him out thus in their Books and writings. *Pliny* in his eighth Book, at the one and twentieth Chap. ſaith, the Monocerote or Unicorn (whom he there calls a moſt fierce ſavage beaſt) is in *the general make or bulk of his body like a Horſe, and in the ſhape of his head like a Hart or Stag, that in the faſhion of his feet he is much like an Elephant, his tail reſembling the tail of a Boar, that he hath a black horn in the midſt of his fore-head two cubits in length*, which ſay others, *is not ſmooth, but wreathed, and ſomewhat ragged, and at the very top or point exceeding ſharp*. He is of ſo fierce a nature, that he will not be taken alive, as the ſame Author affirms from hearſay.

Aſperrimam feram. Plin. *l.* 8. *c.* 21. Ælian. *l.* 7. *c.* 3. Scal. *Exercit.* 205. Geſner.

Hanc feram vivam negant capi. Id ubi ſupra.

Yet there want not thoſe who make doubt whether there be, yea who deny that there is any ſuch beaſt in the compaſs of nature, as commonly called an *Unicorn*, having ſuch a medicinal horn as is aſſerted; and therefore all thoſe Scriptures, wherein this word (*Reem*) in the Text Tranſlated *Unicorn*, is uſed, They who are of that opinion, Tranſlate *Rhinocerote*, as not being ſatisfied that there is ſuch a creature as that other in the World. One of the *Rabbins* collects an objection againſt him from that of *Moſes* (Deut. 33. 17.) where ſpeaking of this beaſt (*Reem*) he ſeems to ſay that he hath more horns than one, therefore no Unicorn; for there deſcribing the flouriſhing and powerful eſtate of the Tribe of *Joſeph*, he ſaith, *his horns are like the horns of an Unicorn*; as if that beaſt (whatſoever it is which is ſignified by that Hebrew word) had more horns than one. We indeed Tranſlate both words plurally, not *the horns of an Unicorn*, but *the horns of Unicorns*, yet the Hebrew is ſingular. However I conceive this objection is of no weight, to the denial of any ſuch creature as the Unicorn, it being frequent in Scripture to put the ſingular number for the plural, as there Unicorn for Unicorns; and therefore that Text hath little or no force in it to invalidate their opinion, who aſſert that there is ſuch an one horned animal.

Singularis numerus, ibi poſitus eſt pro numero multitudinis, ut ſit Unicornis pro Unicornium; ſic arbor ponitur pro arboribus, rana pro ranis, &c. Druſ. *Confuſio numerorum in hac lingua frequens eſt.* Merc.

Now as to the Text in hand, it may ſuffice my purpoſe (leaving farther ſearch of theſe things to Naturaliſts) to ſay, that the Hebrew word *Reem* ſignifies a wild beaſt, very fierce and furious, uſually called an Unicorn, or expreſſed by a word ſignifying a beaſt having but one horn in Greek, Latin, and Engliſh.

Cæſar Scaliger, *dicit ſe vidiſſe monocerotis cornu, & quidem diverſi coloris, unum ſuffulvum unum ſubluteum,* &c.

But though I ſhall not deliver any opinion of my own to the contrary, yet I ſuppoſe it will not be unpleaſing to the ingenuous and learned Reader, if before I proceed with my own meditations, upon what is ſaid in this *Chapter*, about this creature, I here inſert the diſcourſe and opinion of that learned Phyſitian, and Divine Critick, *Doctor Arnoldus Bootius*, in the third Book of his Sacred Animadverſions upon the Hebrew Text of the Old Teſtament, and the firſt *Chapter* of that Book: The ſubſtance of which I have gathered, and in moſt places Tranſlated word for word, as followeth.

‘That the word *Reem* (ſaith he) is the name of ſome certain Animal all Writers agree; but what this Animal is, is not agreed. *Hierome* renders it ſometimes a Rhinocerote, ſometimes an Unicorn; and ſo do ſome others in Tranſlating the Bible. *Pagnine* Tranſlates it only once a *Rhinocerote*, in all other places where it occurs, an *Unicorn*; yet in his Dictionary he ſeems to incline, that the word ſignifyeth a *Rhinocerote*, rather then an *Unicorn*. But the Greeks generally are more conſtant in rendring it an *Unicorn*, than a *Rhinocerote*; and in this almoſt all interpreters, both they who Tranſlate the Scriptures into the Latin tongue, and they who Tranſlate them into their Mother tongue, follow them, and do ſo too; the *Rabbins* alſo go the ſame way. And therefore one of them writing upon thoſe words of *Moſes* concerning *Joſeph* (Deut. 33. 17.) *His horns are like the horns of* (Reem) *an Unicorn* (which ſeems to oppoſe this opinion which makes Reem to be the Unicorn; a beaſt of one horn; he I ſay, to avoid this difficulty) ſaith that place is to be underſtood by an Enallage or change of the number, the word *Reem* Unicorn, being put for *Reemim*, Unicorns; with which anſwer ſeveral others wipe off that objection.

‘Nor doth it a little help this interpretation that moſt of thoſe marks, which the Scripture takes notice of in that beaſt called *Reem*, namely, his extream fierceneſs, great ſtrength, and the extraordinary magnitude of his horn, are all aſcribed by Authors to the Unicorn.

‘Yet to me this interpretation ſeem the leſs probable, becauſe Unicorns are found only in *India*, ſay they, who have written of them. Now it is not likely, that *Moſes*, *David*, and the Prophets ſhould ſpeak ſo often of, and take ſimilitudes from, and that God himſelf ſhould ſpend ſo much time in a diſcourſe with *Job* about a creature unknown in their Countries. And it muſt needs be, that he was there (and to them) unknown, if no Country nearer then *India* produced the Unicorn; for the world was not ſo diſcovered in thoſe times, by mutual commerce, that living creatures, and things proper to Nations, ſhould be familiarly or much known, in Nations far remote. Of this we have a clear inſtance in the Elephant, of which famous animal, ſo uſeful to man for various ſervices, and ſo abounding in many parts of *Africa* and *Aſia*, the *Iſraelites* ſeem to have had little or no knowledg at all; which we may well conjecture by that deep ſilence in Scripture concerning him, there being no mention made of the Elephant any where but in the Book of *Job*: And *Job* was not an *Iſraelite*, nor an inhabitant of *Canaan*, but of *Arabia*; whoſe neighbours on the other ſide of the Red-Sea, the *Æthiopians* and *Troglodites* abounded with Elephants. And this is the more to be marvelled at, becauſe Ivory, which is nothing elſe but an Elephants tooth, was ſo well known and common in *Judea*. Now, if the Elephant, of whoſe teeth they had plenty, and which were bred in great numbers in Countries much nearer then *Judea*, was ſo little known to the *Jews*, who can believe that the Unicorn, which was proper to *India*, ſhould be known to them?

‘But we have another, and that a ſtronger argument, againſt this interpretation; namely, that we account the report of this Unicorn to be a meer fable, and that no ſuch animal, as this is deſcribed and commonly believed to be, is at preſent in the World, or ever was. For *Cleſias*, a moſt vain man, and who, moved only with a love to lying, hath brought in very many, and thoſe moſt monſtrous figments in his Books of the *Indians*, is the Father of this ſtory, from whom *Pliny*, *Ælian*, and all who have written of the Unicorn, received and took it up.

‘And that *Cleſias* lied, as in many other things, ſo in this alſo, we may hence conjecture, becauſe this animal was never ſeen at *Rome*; in whoſe ſhews, all the rareſt animals which this half part of the World, containing *Aſia*, with *Europe* and *Africa*, ever produced, were wont to be preſented to publick view, and thoſe not only fetcht from within the bounds of the *Romane* power, but from the Empire of the *Parthians*, and from the furtheſt parts of *India* and *Æthiopia*. For to omit many other wild beaſts, Tigers, *&c.* (None of which were bred in the *Romane* Territories) *Rome* often ſaw Rhinocerotes, which are bred only in *India*. So that *Ariſtides* ſpake but the truth in his Encomium of *Rome*, when he ſaid, *All things meet here, whatſoever is bred or made; and whatſoever is not ſeen here, is to be reckoned among thoſe things which are not, nor ever were*. Seeing then, in thoſe many ages, wherein that cuſtom continued, of ſhewing the ſtrangeſt beaſts that could be found all the world over at *Rome*, the Unicorn, among all the ſtrange beaſts, was never ſeen there, it gives a ground of ſtrong ſuſpition, that there is no ſuch animal in the whole compaſs of nature.

‘Moreover, in theſe times, wherein no corner of the World hath been unſearcht, and all things in them as well known to us, as thoſe which are bred at our own homes; there is no man will ſay, that he ever ſaw this animal, except *Ludovicus Vartomannus*, who writes that he had ſeen two. But it weakens his credit in this report, both that he is found in other matters to tell fables for truths, as alſo, becauſe what he ſaith of the Unicorn, differs ſo much from what hath been ſaid by others.

'Certain it is, that *Garcias ab Horto*, in thoſe many years which he ſpent in *India*, as Phyſician to the Kings Vicegerent (in all which time, he had great acquaintance with very many learned men of that Country, and had the favour of their Kings, and was himſelf a moſt diligent ſearcher after ſuch like matters, He, I ſay) did not only not ſee any Unicorn there, but could not get any certain information concerning him; only he met with ſome perſons, who told him, that in the furtheſt parts of *Africa* they had ſeen a beaſt having but one horn. Yet, ſuppoſe theſe men told him the truth, it makes nothing as to the Unicorn ſo much ſpoken of, with which that, according to their obſervation, hath little agreement; that being an *Amphibion*, and having a horn not paſſing two handfuls in length. My own Country-man alſo, *Johannes Hugonis Linſchotius*, who was an induſtrious inquirer after Natural things, having reſided twelve whole years in the City *Goa*, one of the moſt famous among all the Cities of *India*, and to which is brought whatſoever is rare and of eſteem in thoſe Countries, did never ſee an Unicorn, nor yet hear by any worthy of credit, that their was any ſuch animal in all thoſe parts, and therefore accounts the report of an Unicorn to be meerly fabulous; as may appear by what he Writes in the 47. Chapter of his *Itinerary*; where ſpeaking of the *Rhinocerote* he ſaith, that is taken by many for the *Monocerote* or *Unicorn*: Foraſmuch as no other *Unicorn* is found or known, but only in reports and Pictures.

'We have ſhewed what moveth us not to aſſent to them, who ſay, that by the word *Reem*, we are to underſtand the *Unicorn*. And they who render it the *Rhinocerote*, may with no leſs eaſe be refuted. And the firſt argument brought againſt the former expoſition, may ſerve here; ſeeing the *Rhinocerote* is only bred in thoſe remoteſt parts of the Eaſt, *Bengala*, *Patane* and *Cambaya*, all which lie beyond the River *Ganges*, in the utmoſt *India*.

'But beſides this, there are two other unanſwerable arguments againſt that interpretation.

'Firſt, From their horns. Thoſe animals called *Reem* have very large horns, but the *Rhinocerots* have very ſmall ones: And though *Martial* the Poet ſeems to ſay the contrary, while ſpeaking of the *Rhinocerote*, he ſaith, *How powerful was he with his horn, who could toſs a Bull with it like a Ball!* And though *Nicolaus Contius* in his *Itinerary*, reports it as long as a mans arm, yet experience and eye-ſight have confuted them; to which it appears, that the horn of the *Rhinocerote* is very thick and ſtrong at the root, yet very ſhort: For *Geſner* tells us, that his horn planted upon his Noſe, riſeth no higher then his Ears, and therefore it cannot be long. *Bucer* makes uſe of this argument, in his Commentary upon the ſecond *Pſalm*, affirming that the height of the horn, aſcribed to that animal the *Reem*, will not agree with the *Rhinoceros*.

Quantus erat cornu cui pila taurus erat.

'The Second argument is grounded upon the unconquerable fierceneſs of that animal called *Reem*; whereas the *Rhinocerote*, though with ſome difficulty, may be in ſome meaſure tamed, as hath been ſeen in thoſe at ſeveral times brought into *Portugal*.

'Thus laying aſide (for the reaſons forementioned) that interpretation, which makes this *Reem* to be either the Unicorn or the Rhinocerote, we are now to conſider what animal this *Reem* ſhould be: And ſurely it cannot but be ſome beaſt (*Bubulo generi affinis*) of the race of Bulls or Bullocks; ſeeing in many places of Scripture, mention is made of the *Reemim* and Bullocks together, as intimating that they are animals of a near cognation or likeneſs, *Deut*.33.19. *Pſal*.27.6. *Iſa*.34.6,7. In this laſt place the Prophet having named three living Creatures of one kind (*Verſ*. 6.) to wit, *Lambs, and Goats, and Rams*; Reaſon may perſwade our belief, that in the 7. or following *Verſe* (which ſeems to run parallel with the former) the Prophet obſerves the ſame rule of ſpeaking; and to thoſe two *Bullocks and Bulls*, joyns this third called *Reemim*, being beaſts belonging, at leaſt, to the ſame kind with them.

'I find the ſame confirmed *Pſal*.22. by comparing thoſe words of the 12. Verſe, *Many Bulls have compaſſed me; ſtrong Bulls of* Baſhan *have beſet me round*; with thoſe of the 21. (which anſwer them) *Save me from the Lions mouth, hear me* (we read, *thou haſt heard me*) *from the horns of the Reemims* (we rendred Unicorns) as if the Pſalmiſt intended under the word *Reemim*, a ſort of beaſts much like in kind, if not of the ſame kind, with the Bullocks and ſtrong Bulls of *Baſhan*, ſpoken of before (as the learned Author endeavours there to make out more largely and diſtinctly) to whom I refer the Reader.

'By what hath been ſaid, I ſuppoſe we have made it appear plainly, that the beaſt meant by this word *Reem*, is an animal neer in kind to the Bull or Bullock, which can be no other then a wild Bull or Bullock, which is to other Bulls or Bullocks, as wild Swine, Boars or Sows, are to thoſe which are tame, or live and feed about our Houſes. But ſeeing there are ſeveral ſorts of theſe wild Bulls or Bullocks, we do not conceive the word *Reem*, to be a common appellation which may be given to them all, but that it ſignifies ſome one certain ſort among them. To find out which, will not be hard to thoſe who conſider what the Scripture holds out concerning the beaſt there called *Reem*; namely, the eminent greatneſs of his Horns, and the eminent greatneſs of his ſtrength; both which are aſcribed to him, not only *Deuteronomy* 33. 17. and *Pſal*. 22. but *Pſal*. 92. 10. *My horn ſhalt thou exalt, like to the horn of a Reem*; *i. e.* Thou ſhalt exalt it greatly and ſtrongly, even like the Horn of a *Reem*. This makes it evident, that this *Reem* cannot be that beaſt which *Ariſtotle* calls *Bonaſus*, nor that which later Writers call *Bubalus* or *Bufalus* (we in Engliſh, a *Buffe*) which is ſo far from being better fitted by his Horns, for fight and force, then our Bulls, that his Horns are indeed altogether unfit for either; as *Ariſtotle* ſhews (*Lib*. 3. *de part. Anim. cap*. 2.) his Horns being turned inward, and one againſt the other, and therefore (as he ſaith, *Lib*. 9. *Hiſt. Animal. cap*. 45.) are unuſeful for his own defence. The Horns indeed of ſome of thoſe beaſts, are of another faſhion, as *Geſner* deſcribes them, and alſo *Scaliger*, *Exerc*. 206. *Sect*. 3. but all conclude them unfit to fight with, becauſe they all are either turned one againſt another, or point downward.

'Now though this beaſt which *Ariſtotle* calls *Bonaſus*, others *Bubalus* or *Bufalus*, be of ſuch great ſtrength, as alſo of ſuch fierceneſs and untractableneſs, as may well ſuit the deſcription which the Scripture gives of the *Reem*; yet the form and faſhion of his Horns will by no means comply with it, notwithſtanding it muſt be granted, that they who have expounded *Reem* by that beaſt, have ſpoken more probably, and have come much neerer the truth, then they who underſtand by it, either the Unicorn or the *Rhinocerote*.

'There remains two ſorts of wild Oxen, Bulls or Bullocks, the *Urus* and *Biſons*; which latter is ſo like the *Bonaſus*, that by ſome he is taken for the ſame; yet between the *Biſons*, properly ſo called, and the *Bonaſus* or *Bufalus*, their Horns make a very remarkable difference. What the form of the Horns of the *Bufalus* is, hath been ſhewed; but the *Biſons* hath them a little bowing in the top or point, in which reſpect they are compared by *Oppianus* to brazen fiſh-hooks, but in the reſt or body of them they ſpread upward, or ſtand right up, and ſo not unfit to fight with, inſomuch that ſome have called them (*Lethiferos tauros*) deadly Bulls. And though we grant to *Geſner* (who denieth the *Bonaſi* and *Biſontes* to differ *in ſpecie*) that the difference which is between the Horns of theſe two beaſts, is not ſufficient to conſtitute a ſpecifical difference between them; yet when beſides the difference in their Horns, there are other conſtant differences, as namely, that the beaſt called *Bonaſus* doth not fight with his head, but with his heels, and runs away as ſoon as wounded (as *Ariſtotle* reports of him, *Lib*. 9. *Hiſt. cap*. 45.) whereas the beaſt called *Biſons*, uſeth his Horns only in fight, and is not at all diſcouraged by being wounded, but like a Boar or a Lion, aſſaults his purſuers the more fiercely (as is ſet forth at large by *Sigiſmundus Lib. in Muſcovieticis*) therefore we may well conclude, that there is a ſpecifical difference between theſe animals.

'Now though the beaſt called *Biſons*, conſidering the ‘greatneſs and ſtrength of his Horns, as alſo his fierceneſs, might be taken for the beaſt in *Job*, called *Reem*, yet he is not that beaſt, becauſe he may be tamed by the art of man, and made to put off his fierceneſs; as appears abundantly out of a good Author. But as for the beaſt called *Reem*, he never gives over the fierceneſs of his nature, nor can he be tamed or brought to hand; as appears fully, by what God ſaith of him in this 39. Chapter of the Book of *Job*. In which, when God had propoſed the more remarkable properties of ſeveral creatures to the conſideration of *Job*, he brings in this beaſt, called *Reem*, only to ſet forth this property, the unſubduable or untameable fierceneſs of his nature. So that all that God ſaith of him, may be reduced to this; That the *Reem* can neither by the skill nor power of man be brought to the yoak, nor made ſerviceable to man in any way, when as many other wild beaſts, no leſs eminent than he for ſtrength and fierceneſs, even Lions, Tygers, Elephants, Leopards, Bears, Rhinocerotes, have laid down their immanity, and become mild, and have ſuffered themſelves to be mannaged and governed by men, yea, and learn to acknowledg their Maſters, and ſerve them; whereas ſuch tractableneſs might rather be expected from the *Reem* (he being of the Bullocks kind, and living upon graſs) than from any of them; all which except the Elephant and Rhinocerote are ravenous, and delighting in blood and ſlaughter, live upon ſpoyl and prey.

Pauſanias in Phocicis.

‘And that we may the more wonder at the unſubduable nature of the *Reem*, the Lord ſhews the ſame to be in the wild Aſs, a weak and harmleſs animal, and which hath neither ſtrength nor inclination to do hurt; then which nothing can be ſaid or imagined more wonderful, that wild Aſſes, whole flocks of which, even a ſingle boy will put to flight and chaſe, yet will by no means be tamed, whereas Tygers and Lions, one of which will ſtand a band of armed men, and ſometimes put them to flight, ſhould notwithſtanding be tamed, even to yield ſervile obedience. No other reaſon can be given of this, but only, becauſe it hath ſeemed good to God, the Author of nature, to order it ſo.

‘Now in that God is pleaſed to diſcover the untameable nature of the *Reem* by theſe marks or ſigns, namely, that he ſcorns to plow the ground, or do any work that belongs to Husbandry. Hence it doth more clearly appear, which we have above confirmed by many Scriptures, that the *Reem* is an animal of the ſame kind with Bullocks; foraſmuch as the ſenſe of the diſcourſe of God about him, is as if he had ſaid, Seeing among thoſe beaſts which are prepared by men to help them in their work, and whoſe labour they eaſe in tilling and ſubduing the Earth, *the Oxe is chief*, as being mans moſt laborious helper in Husbandry, and which in moſt Countreys is more uſed in it then any other beaſt, according to that (*Prov.* 14. 4.) *Much increaſe is by the ſtrength of the Oxe.* How comes it to paſs, that men do not make uſe of the *Reem* for thoſe ſervices, ſeeing he is of the ſame kind with Oxen, and ſo may ſeem to be made by nature for that purpoſe as much as other Oxen, and is by ſo much the fitter for that ſervice, then any other Oxen or Bulls whatſoever, by how much his ſtrength is greater then theirs, yet no man attempts to uſe him in it; or if any did, it were to no purpoſe, foraſmuch as I the Lord of nature have created this beaſt, as alſo the wild Aſs before ſpoken of, altogether untameable. This ſeems to be the meaning of God in his diſcourſe about the *Reem*. And hence alſo it appears, that the *Reem* is not the *Biſons*, ſeeing he, as well as many other wild beaſts, being skilfully handled, proves tame and gentle, and may be formed to the uſe and obedience of man.

‘It remains therefore, that this *Reem* is the beaſt called *Vrus*, becauſe this property of untameableneſs is aſcribed to that beaſt. *Cæſar* in his ſixth Book of the *Gallican* War, ſaith, The *Vri*, no not the young ones, will not be tamed by men, wherefore being caught in pits, they are killed. *Pliny* alſo ſaith as much of them, *Lib.* 8. *Cap.* 21.

‘And as in this particular, his untameable wildneſs, there is a full agreement between the *Vrus* and *Reem*, ſo thoſe other things which the Scripture ſpeaks of the *Reem* agree to him alſo, as thoſe forreign Authors witneſs, who have written his Hiſtory. For *Cæſar* writes, that he is in bigneſs, little leſs than an Elephant, but of the kind, colour and figure, or ſhape of a Bull. And *Pliny* in two places (*Lib.* 8 *Cap.* 15. *Lib.* 28. *Cap.* 10) names wild Oxen as the *Genus*, with reſpect both to the *Vri* and *Biſontes*.

The learned Doctor adds many more proofs out of ancient Authors, which the Reader may peruſe, if he pleaſe, at his leiſure. And from all he concludeth.

‘It is not therefore to be doubted, but that the *Reems* are the *Vri*; and indeed ſo much the leſs, becauſe not only the Northern Regions (in divers parts of which, it is ſaid by Writers, that not only the *Biſontes*, but *Vri*, are found at this day) are the proper ſoil where theſe Animals are bred, but the Eaſtern parts alſo bring them forth. *Pliny* Writes, that the Indian woods are full of them, and ſo doth *Ariſtotle*, I collect alſo out of *Diodorus* (*Lib.*3.) that the Country of the *Trogloditicks*, which is ſeated at the boſom of the Red-Sea, oppoſite to *Africa*, hath theſe *Vri* in it.

‘And though no Author doth affirm, that *Syria* and *Paleſtine* yield theſe wild Oxen, yet this doth not hinder, but that in old times, when the *Iſraelites* firſt inhabited thoſe Countreys, they were there; ſince it is no new thing, that the whole kind of ſome wild creatures ſhould be utterly extinct in theſe Countreys, where formerly they have abounded, of which *England* gives us a plain teſtimony in Wolves. *Dion* alſo reports the ſame of Lions, which ſometimes were bred in ſome parts of *Europe*, but now for many ages have not appeared there. And the ſame witneſſeth *Ammianus* (*Lib.*22.) concerning the *Hippopotami* in *Egypt*, of which none are to be found now in that Country.

Thus far the learned Doctor, whoſe diſcourſe may be of much advantage and profit to the Reader, for the better underſtanding of this place.

Bochartus parte poſter. l. 3. *c.* 27.

But I find he hath a great Antagoniſt, who though he agreeth with him in the negative part of his opinion and diſcourſe, That the *Reem* here ſpoken of in *Job*, is neither the *Unicorn* nor the *Rhinocerote*, nor the *Bufalus*, nor the *Biſons*; yet he doth not agree with him in the affirmative part of his opinion, that the Reem is that ſavage beaſt or wild Ox called *Vrus*; but firſt gives a large account why the Reem cannot be that beaſt called *Vrus*, nor any of that kind; and then concludes, that it is a kind of Goat, or of the Goatiſh kind, by name the *Oryx*, being an animal in colour pure white, in ſtature tall, in diſpoſition fierce and untractable, in his gate ſtately, lifting up his head and horns on high. That this beaſt is the Reem here ſpoken of, he proves by various teſtimonies, taken eſpecially out of the ancient *Arabian*, *Chaldean*, and *Hebrew* Writers, and endeavours to remove ſeveral objections ariſing from the ſeeming incompetency of any beaſt of the *Goatiſh* rank or kind, to anſwer the deſcription given of that noble animal called Reem, both in the Text and in many other places of Scripture.

Thus the learned are much divided in opinion about this Creature, and upon which to determine is not eaſie.

Yet becauſe the word Reem is every where in Scripture rendred by our Tranſlators (as alſo by many others of great authority) *Unicorn*; I ſhall leave that matter of difference to the Readers judgment, and do that reverence to our Tranſlation, as to open the Text diſtinctly, in all that is here ſaid by the Lord concerning the Reem, under that name or title, *Unicorn*.

Will the Unicorn be willing to ſerve thee?

In theſe words, the Lord preſents man, as it were, inviting, wooing, hiring the Unicorn to ſerve him. But when he hath uſed all his skill and cunning, when he hath done his beſt and worſt too, That is, uſed all manner of means, the Unicorn will not by any means be wrought upon, to come under mans yoak, or do his work. *Will the Unicorn*

Be willing to ſerve thee?] To will, is an act of reaſon, and therefore to be willing, is not proper to irrational Animals; yet to will and to be willing, may alluſively be given to them: They have a kind of will, and an understanding befitting their kind. The Hebrew word ſignifies to will with much readineſs and propenſity of mind, it ſignifies willingneſs with delight; and thence comes the Hebrew word for *a Father*, becauſe a Father is willing and ready to take care of, and provide for his Children, though it coſt him much travel and pains. But,

אבח *Voluit propenſo animo fuit, unde* אב *pater, à propenſa voluntate erga liberos.*

Will the Unicorn be willing to ſerve thee? Will he be a ready ſervant to thee? He will not. As if it had been ſaid, *The Unicorn is an indocible, and an untractable animal; he will not be brought to hand, he will neither bear the yoak, nor wear the bridle, nor indure to be harneſſed like the Ox and Horſe; let man do what he will, what he can with him, he will neither go to Plow nor Cart, not he.*

Num acquieſcet aut conſentiet ex ſuapte natura, ut tibi ſubjiciatur?

Hence Note; Firſt, *Service ſhould be done with willingneſs, or with the will.*

It is the commendation of a ſervant, when he doth his Maſters work with his will, more then with his hand. Man ſhould be as willing to ſerve, as he is to be ſerved, as willing to obey, as to rule; nor doth any man know truly how to command, but he that knows how to obey, and when called, is willing to obey in the ſervice of God; nothing is done to him, unleſs it be done with the will, and therefore the full effect of the work of the grace of God upon the heart of man, is comprehended in this one word (*Pſal.* 110. 3.) *Thy people ſhall be willing in the day of thy power.* They were once like the Unicorn in the Text, that will not ſerve; but *in the day of thy power*, when the word comes upon them in the power of thy Spirit, they ſhall ſerve with all manner of dutiful readineſs and willingneſs. Some men are not at all wrought to the ſervice of God; others ſerve him but are not willing to ſerve, they do it *by conſtraint, not willingly*; for baſe fear of loſs, or for baſer hope *of filthy lucre, not of a ready mind*; upon which carnal terms the Apoſtle *Peter* warns the Miniſters of the Goſpel, to take heed they *feed not the flock of God* (1 Epiſt. 5. 2.) Nothing but a day of power conquering the will, renders us willing to ſerve Chriſt, willing to ſubmit to the yoak of Chriſt, to be bound in his furrow, and to harrow the valleys after him, That is, to do any work that he calls us to. Service ſhould be with the will, and 'tis ſo by grace. That's the firſt thing which the nature of the Unicorn is againſt, as to the ſervice of man. He hath no will to it.

Secondly, Note; *Some beaſts have a kind of willingneſs to ſerve man.*

That ſome beaſts have ſuch a willingneſs, is more then implied, while 'tis ſaid, that ſome have not. As the wild Aſs before was ſpoken of in oppoſition to the tame, ſo here the Unicorn is ſpoken of in oppoſition to the Ox or Horſe; who though they are not properly willing to ſerve, yet they will not always refuſe ſervice, but freely at laſt, or after a while, take the yoak and receive the bridle. The Apoſtle ſaith (*Rom.* 8.20.) *The creature is made ſubject to vanity, not willingly.* The creatures are not willing to ſerve the luſts of men, yet many of them are willing to ſerve the occaſions and neceſſities of men. 'Tis through the ſin of man that the creature is made ſubject to vanity; but it is through the appointment of God that the creature is made ſubject to duty, and that with a kind of willingneſs.

Thirdly, 'Tis ſaid here of the Unicorn, as of the wild Aſs before; Canſt thou make him willing? When thou haſt uſed fair means, foul means, one way or other, will he ſerve thee? He will not.

Hence Note; *It is hard to change nature.*

Naturam expellas furca licet uſque recurret. Lupus pilum non animum mutat.

Beaſts hold faſt their natural qualities. The Horſe, the Bullock, who are tame by nature, will come to hand; but the wild Aſs and the Unicorn, whoſe nature is quite oppoſite to ſervice, will never be broken nor brought to it: *Thruſt out nature with a fork it will return again.* Till nature is quite altered and changed, acts will not change. 'Tis thus with man, conſidered in nature, who as he is compared to a wild Aſſes Colt (*Chap.* 11.12.) ſo he may be compared to an Unicorn. Will man be willing to ſerve God? No, not by any moral perſwaſions: no, nor heartily, he may hypocritically, by any outward benefits, nor by any hard uſages. *Though* (as *Solomon* ſaith, *Prov.* 27.22.) *thou ſhouldſt bray a fool in a morter among wheat, with a peſtle, yet will not his fooliſhneſs depart from him.* A carnal man will never ſubmit quietly to duty, till God hath changed his nature, and made him a new man, or, till his mind is renewed after the image of God. Converſion is firſt a change of our nature, and then of our way. This makes converſion ſo difficult a work. Good education and human inſtructions, may change a mans way, but nothing leſs then the power of God can change his nature. Man is naturally as unwilling to ſerve God, as the wild beaſts are to ſerve man: He is as ſtout and as ſtiff as the Unicorn, as cruel and fierce as the Lion, as crafty as a Fox, as crooked and croſs as any creature; unleſs his heart be changed, he will never to purpoſe change his courſe. Man cannot change the courſe of the Unicorn, becauſe he cannot change his nature; and could not God change mans nature, he could never really change his courſe.

Fourthly, Obſerve; *That any of the creatures, eſpecially ſtrong ones, are brought to hand, or to the ſervice of man, muſt be aſcribed to the power and goodneſs of God.*

The Horſe would no more ſerve man than the Unicorn, nor would the Ox ſerve man more then the wild Aſs, unleſs the Lord had put another ſpirit or diſpoſition into them, then he hath done into the Unicorn.

Fifthly, Obſerve; *That any of the creatures are unſerviceable to man, is to be aſcribed to the ſin of man.*

At firſt, all creatures were ſubject to man; not only the Horſe and the Ox, and all the now tame creatures, but the fierceſt Lions, Tygers, Bears, Unicorns, were all in ſubjection to man, according to that ſoveraign power given man by God, in the day that God made him (*Gen.* 1. 27, 28.) *So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God bleſſed them, and ſaid to them, be fruitful, and multiply, and repleniſh the earth, and ſubdue it, and have dominion over the fiſhes of the Sea, and over the fowls of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.* The original grand Charter of mans Soveraignty, was extended over the Unicorn and the Lion, *&c.* And therefore when creatures are not willing to ſerve man, eſpecially when they riſe up againſt man, let man remember his ſin in not obeying the Soveraign command of God. Had not man been unwilling to ſubmit to and ſerve God, no creature had been unwilling to ſerve man. We may ſee our own neglect or refuſal to ſerve God, in the refuſal of any creature to ſerve us; we may ſee our own rebellion againſt God, by the rebellion of the creatures againſt us. Unleſs man had departed from God by ſin, none of the creatures had departed from their ſubjection to man. The ſin of man looſed the creatures from that bond of ſervice to man, in which, and to which they were created.

Quod non omnia animalia homini ſerviunt ſignum eſt & pœna peccati.

Obſerve, Sixthly; *Thoſe Creatures which will not do ſervice unto man, but live meerly to themſelves, are wild or fierce.*

Theſe clearly reſemble the condition of thoſe men who live only to themſelves, or who ſerve none but themſelves. Whatever ſome men do they ſerve themſelves only, they reſpect no mans good, either ſpiritual or temporal, beſides their own; were it not that they had a chief reſpect to their private ends and intereſts in ſerving, they would never ſerve. A gracious ſpirit is willing to ſerve his neighbour, to ſerve his brother, as well as or with himſelf. Chriſt tells us, his Diſciples ſhould be ſo far from ſerving themſelves only, that they ſhould not ſerve themſelves at all; he that will be my Diſciple (ſaith our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, *Mat.* 16. 24.) *Let him deny himſelf*, That is, not ſerve nor ſeek himſelf, either contrary to the good of others, or with a neglect of their good. Therefore they who in all they do, do all for themſelves, live upon no better terms, nor to any nobler ends, than the Unicorn or wild Aſs, who are not willing to ſerve any man. Let others ſink or ſwim (ſay ſuch) they care not, they will look to their own.

Seventhly and Laſtly, Though God hath made a ſort of creatures that (as the caſe ſtands) will not ſerve man, nor contribute any help to him; yet theſe creatures live not in vain to God, nor are they altogether unſerviceable to man, though they have no will to ſerve him. For,

Firſt, They declare the power and wiſdom of God, both in making and governing them, and in that they declare his praiſe. God would not give any creature a being, that did not one way or other, ſet forth his praiſe in the world; there's much of God ſhining in thoſe creatures, which man hath no ſervice by (*Pſal.* 148.) *Praiſe him ye Dragons, and all Deeps.* Dragons praiſe God, they raiſe up a revenue of glory to God, though man get no ſervice from them.

Secondly, Such creatures adorn the univerſe; the world is beautified with their variety.

Thirdly, Even ſuch creatures ſerve man when they are dead, though they will not while they live; ſome parts of them are Medicinal, and many uſeful to man. The Unicorn, who will ſerve no man living while he lives, yet his horn is accounted a great Antidote againſt Poiſon, and ſo is a means to prevent the death or prolong the life of many men. So then, there is no creature but is ſerviceable to God and man ſome way or other. And though it may be truly ſaid of ſome men, as of the Unicorn, with reſpect to man, *they will not ſerve God*, yet God hath ſervice by them. *Will the Unicorn be willing to ſerve thee?*

Or abide by thy Crib?

A Crib is that in which an Ox or an Aſs feeds, (*Iſa.* 1.3.) *The Oxe knoweth his Owner, and the Aſs his Maſters Crib*; That is, the veſſel in which he uſeth to be fed. *Solomon* ſaith (*Prov.* 14.4.) *Where no Oxen are, the Crib is clean*, That is, the Crib is not uſed, and ſo remains clean. If none come into a Room, the Room is clean. In one ſenſe, where Oxen are, the Crib is clean, that is, they eat up all the fodder put into it. But in *Solomons* ſenſe, where no Oxen are the Crib is clean, becauſe no fodder is put into it. The Lord having ſaid, the Unicorn will do no work, adds alſo, *he will not abide by thy Crib.* As he will do thee no ſervice, ſo he will put thee to no charge; that's a piece of ingenuity in the Unicorn, as he does no work for man, ſo he looks for no wages nor reward from man: which may be a reproof to thoſe men, who are very unwilling to ſerve others, yet are very willing to abide by their Crib; they like it well to eat and drink upon you, as long as you will, and poſſibly whether you will or no, but will not do a ſtroke of work; Such a one we call proverbially a *Lurdane*, from the lazy *Danes*, who long ſince Lording it in this Kingdom, would eat and drink in a good well-ſtored houſe, but refuſed all labour. The Unicorn is to be commended above ſuch idle drones, who uſe their teeth more than their hands, as if they were born only to feed their bellies, or to live upon the ſweat of other mens brows; for he hath a kind of honeſty in him, as he doth you no work, ſo he will not trouble your Crib.

Hence Note; *Some creatures will rather run the adventure of ſtarving, then work for their living.*

They will rather indure hunger and thirſt, then be put upon labour. There is much of this alſo in ſome mens ſpirits; 'tis ſo with all thoſe whom *Solomon* calls ſluggards; they prefer hunger and eaſe (which ſome call a dogs life) before plenty with induſtry, and a thred-bare back before a ſweating brow.

Secondly, From the connexion, in that the Text ſaith, *will he ſerve thee? will he abide by thy Crib?*

Note; *Whomſoever we call to our ſervice, we ſhould provide a Crib for him.*

We ought to feed thoſe that do our work. If the Unicorn would labour, he ſhould not want a Crib, nor ſhould any labouring man want a Table; It were a moſt unrighteous thing in the ſight of God and man if he ſhould. As the Apoſtle gives the rule (2 *Theſ.* 3.10.) *He that will not work, let him not eat*; ſo on the contrary, he that doth work, all the reaſon in the world he ſhould eat; therefore the Apoſtle *James* (*Chap.* 5.4.) denounceth a wo againſt rich men, for detaining or keeping back, either in whole or in part, the hire of the labourers who had cut down their harveſt. Hire kept back, crieth; for what? For wrath and vengeance upon them that detain or keep it back. The law of God given by *Moſes* (Deut. 24.15.) commanded that the labourers hire ſhould be paid him preſently; his hire was not to be kept from him, no not for a night. As if the Lord had ſaid, he hath been willing to ſerve thee all the day, therefore let him carry his wages home at night, to comfort his Wife and Children. The Lord is very jealous in this thing; if a beaſt ſerve he muſt have a Crib; and ſhall not man?

One of the Ancients applies this in a ſpiritual ſenſe, to hearing the Word of God: The wicked will not ſerve God, nor will they abide by his Crib; they will not come where their Souls may be fed to eternal life, where they may have clean Provender, as the Prophet ſpeaks (*Iſa.* 30. 24.) That is, ſound and wholeſome doctrin, directing them both what to believe, and how to live, that they may be ſaved and live for ever.

Moratur ad præſepe Domini, qui verbo Dei audiendo indeſinenter dat operam. August.

The Lord having in this 9. verſe ſet forth the lawleſs life of the Unicorn; Firſt, By his unwillingneſs to ſerve man; Secondly, By his independence upon man for his livelihood: Proceeds to confirm and illuſtrate the ſame thing, the ſtoutneſs or pride of the Unicorn, and ſo his utter unſerviceableneſs unto man, by his refuſal to be engaged in any of thoſe labours which are neceſſary to husbandry. Firſt, The Plowing. Secondly, The Harrowing of the ground. Thirdly, The Inning or Bringing home of the Corn.

His refuſal of the firſt of theſe ſervices, we have in the former part of the next or tenth Verſe.

Verſ. 10. **Canſt thou bind the Unicorn with his band in the furrow?** Thou canſt not.

Beaſts uſe to be bound with cords to their work, they will hardly elſe abide by their work. Neither reaſon nor religion binds beaſts to their work, therefore cords muſt. The word here rendred *to bind*, ſignifieth very faſt and ſtrong binding, and ſuch is binding with cords. *Moſes* uſeth the word (*Deut.* 11.18.) with reſpect to the Divine Law, which God commanded the people of *Iſrael*, *to bind as frontlets between their eyes*, and ſo to hold them faſt for ever. The word is uſed alſo (*Neh.* 4.6.) to note the fixing of ſtones in a Building or Wall, by Lime, Cement, or Morter, *And all the Wall was joyned together unto the half thereof*; That is, the Wall was faſtened and cemented half high. Now ſaith the Lord, *Canſt thou bind the Unicorn?* Canſt thou make him faſt with *his bands*: The word ſignifieth a thick and ſtrong band, which will hold pulling and not break; *A threefold cord* (ſaith *Solomon* Eccleſ. 4.12.) *is not eaſily broken. Canſt thou bind the Unicorn in his band?* Some make the Pronoune *his* in the *Hebrew* to be only *Paragogical*, without any neceſſary ſignification in the conſtruction; but I conceive there is ſomewhat peculiar in it, when he ſaith, canſt thou bind the Unicorn with *his band.* Every beaſt hath his ſpecial band or way of faſtning to his work; ſo that, when 'tis ſaid, *Canſt thou bind the Unicorn with his band?* It ſeems to ſound as if it had been ſaid, haſt thou a proper band for the Unicorn, as I know thou haſt for other beaſts, the Horſe, Oxe, and Aſs? Haſt thou a band which will hold him to his work? I know among all thy tackling, thou haſt none will do it; he will break thy bands, and caſt thy cords from him, as ſtubborn and proud men are ſaid to do the bands and cords, that is, the laws and commands of God (*Pſal.* 2.2.) Many beaſts have their bands, the Unicorn will have none, he will not be bound; or if he be, he breaks his bands, and refuſeth to obey; either he will not come to hand, nor admit bands or cords to be put upon him, or he ſtrives againſt them and caſts them off. In a word, 'tis as if the Lord had ſaid; *Thou canſt not get the Unicorn into his gears* (as the Husband-man ſpeaks) *thou canſt not harneſs him as thou doſt a Horſe, nor yoke him as thou doſt an Oxe, to Plow or Cart*; he will not touch thy work. *Canſt thou bind the Unicorn with his band,*

קשר

עבת *Propriè funis denſus, & craſſus cujuſmodi eſt lorum quo boves aut equi ad aratrum ligantur.* Druſ. *Fune ſuo forte vau in* עבתו *Partgogicum eſt, quale in* ברו *Filius, aut fune ſuo dicit, quia tunc ipſius erit, cum eo Vincietur.* Druſ.

In the Furrow, or *for the Furrow*, or *to the Furrow.*

The Plough makes Furrows, and Furrows laid together make Ridges: Both are expreſſed (*Pſal.* 65.10.) *Thou watereſt the Ridges thereof abundantly, thou ſetleſt the Furrows thereof. Canſt thou bind the Unicorn with his band in the Furrow?*

תלם *Porca, terra inter duos ſulcos elata porcam appellant, vel quod frumenta porrigat, vel quod aquam porro arceat* Druſ. *Sulcus, porca, & lira, ſunt arationis partes.*

Or will he Harrow the Valleys after thee?

When the Plough hath laid the Furrows, harrowing followeth. The Plow leaveth the clods too groſs, for the reception and growth of the ſeed; therefore the Harrow is imployed to break the Plowed ground yet more, and to crumble the clods yet finer. We find both theſe parts of Husbandry ſet down (*Iſa.*28.28,24.) *Doth the Plow-man Plow all day to Sow? Doth he open and break the clods of the ground? When he hath made plain the face thereof? Doth he not caſt abroad the fitches,* &c? Here's a deſcription of this work of the husbandman Plowing and Harrowing, or making plain the face of the ground, all in an allegory, intending a very ſpiritual work of God, in breaking and Harrowing the heart of man by affliction, and making it thereby fit to receive the ſeed of the Word. Thus alſo ſpake the Prophet (*Hoſ.* 10.11.) Judah *ſhall plow, and* Jacob *ſhall break his clods,* That is, *Jacob* ſhall Harrow. The Prophets meaning is, that the Lord would bring them into a labouring ſtate of life, even into captivity, where they muſt Plow, becauſe they had Plowed iniquity, and had not Plowed up the Fallow ground of their hearts by repenting of their iniquity. *Will the Unicorn Harrow*

The Vallies after thee?] Some render the word, *Furrows*, which lie like Vallies between the Ridges. But the word more properly ſignifieth *Vallies*; and they are moſt commonly Plowed and Sowed with Corn, as Hills are reſerved for Paſture. *Will he Harrow the Vallies*

After thee?] That is, will the Unicorn be led by thee? The Harrower goeth before the Horſe, or that which draweth the Harrow, and the beaſt followeth; or thus, will he Harrow the Valleys

After thee? That is, after thou haſt Ploughed them. As if the Lord had ſaid, will he either be driven or led? thou canſt not make him Harrow? Thou canſt not lead him on in that work. Thus we have the Unicorns refuſal of thoſe labours, in which other beaſts, the Oxe and the Horſe eſpecially, are very commonly uſed.

Now for as much as the Husband-mans work is deſcribed, by *Plowing and Harrowing*.

Note; Firſt, *We cannot get our ordinary food without much labour.*

The Husband-mans life, is a painful life; Plowing and Harrowing are hard labours; and what is all this for? But to bring forth the neceſſaries of mans life, bread to ſtrengthen mans heart, and by conſequence what ever elſe is food for man. *Adam* was commanded *to dreſs the Garden, and to keep it,* (Gen. 2.15.) *Adam* was not put into that pleaſant Garden, only to take his pleaſure and to eat the fruit of it; but he was put into the Garden to dreſs it, and to keep it. Even *Adam* was to eat upon his labour, though not ſuch labour as man now eateth upon; that came in by ſin after the fall; labour was impoſed upon man, not only as a duty, but as a penalty. It was impoſed upon man before the fall as a duty, but it was impoſed upon man after the fall as a penalty, (*Gen.* 3.17,18,19.) *Curſed is the ground for thy ſake; in ſorrow ſhalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. In the ſweat of thy face ſhalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground.* Our ordinary bread is not eaſily come by; remember the Husband-mans labour. Hence the Apoſtle, when he would ſhew what pains God taketh, either immediately by the work of his Spirit, or mediately by the labour of his Miniſters, to convert and build up Souls in the faith, he tells us (1 *Cor.*3.9.) That *we are Gods husbandry, and Gods building.* As if he had ſaid, great pains hath been or muſt be beſtowed upon you, that your Souls may be ſaved, and that ye may bring forth fruits of righteouſneſs unto eternal life. The Lord hath his ſpiritual Plow-men, his Labourers, his Oxen; by theſe the faithful and induſtrious Miniſters of the Goſpel are emblem'd, and ſet forth in the holy Scriptures, (1 *Cor.*9.10. Rev.4.7.)

Note, Secondly; *There is no Sowing without Plowing.*

You muſt ſtir up and break the ground, before you caſt the ſeed into it; 'tis not elſe fit to receive the ſeed, and improve it for a harveſt. The Scripture ſpeaks firſt of Plowing, then of Sowing (*Iſa.* 28.24, &c.) The Plowman opens the Earth, and breaks the clods before he caſts in his ſeed, the cumin, the fitches, and the principal wheat. He doth not Plow for Plowing ſake, but for Sowing; and when he hath Plowed he leaveth not his work, till he hath Sowed what he Plowed. This method doth the Lord uſe in his ſpiritual husbandry; the Plow of repentance muſt break up the Fallow ground of the heart, and the Harrow muſt ſmooth the face of the Soul, before it be fit to bring forth. The Spirit makes frequent uſe of theſe Metaphors (*Jer.* 4.6.) *Plow up the Fallow ground of your hearts*; read alſo (*Hoſea* 10.12.)

Further, Harrowing comes after Plowing, and either before or immediately after ſowing (there is ſome variety as to husbandry in this point) that the ſeed ſown may be preſerved from being devoured by the Fowls of the air, it muſt (unleſs ſowed under Furrows) be Harrowed. Harrowing helps the ſeed to ſpring more freely, and grow more thrivingly. And thus it is alſo in ſpiritual husbandry; *When the ſeed of the Word is Sown, the heart muſt be Harrowed,* elſe the Seed will miſcarry. In that Parable of the Sower (*Mat.* 13.) ſome ſeed fell upon the high-way, which was neither Plowed nor Harrowed. This High-way ground, ſignifieth thoſe careleſs hearers which receive the Word in a formality only; the Fowls of the air (evil ſpirits) quickly picked up that, becauſe it was not covered by Harrowing. Now there are two Harrows, by which the Seed of the Word caſt into the Vallies and Furrows of our Hearts, is covered and ſecured, that it may bring forth fruit to perfection; theſe are meditation and prayer. By meditation we hide the word in our hearts, and by prayer we obtain a bleſſing upon it from God, both for the ſecuring of it, and our fruit-bearing according to it. There are two reſemblances in Scripture, ſetting forth the uſe of meditation and prayer about the word received; The one, is *chewing of the cud*; the other, is *Harrowing*. Clean beaſts under the Law chewed the cud; and wiſe men, both under Law and Goſpel, Harrow their land; a godly man doth both in a ſpiritual way, while he meditates in the Word, and prays for a bleſſing upon it. Thus husbandry for our daily bread, teacheth us what courſe the Lord expects we ſhould take for our Souls, that we may bring forth fruit, and anſwer the end of receiving his Word. The Unicorn will not be brought to either of theſe parts of the Husband-mans labour, and his refuſal is aggravated in the next Verſe, by the ability which he hath for both.

Verſ. 11. **Wilt thou truſt him becauſe his ſtrength is great? Or wilt thou leave thy labour unto him?**

The Unicorn hath ſtrength ſufficient; he is a beaſt ſtronger (ſay Naturaliſts) than either the Oxe or the Horſe; but, *Wilt thou truſt him becauſe his ſtrength is great?* The word notes truſting with much confidence, and reſt of the mind; as 'tis ſaid (*Iſa.*12.2.) *I will truſt, and not be afraid.* Confidence, upon a good ground, leads us into a full, as well as a good ſecurity; *I will truſt, and not be afraid, for the Lord Jehovah is my ſtrength,* ſaith the believing Soul in that place. But ſaith the Lord here to *Job,* Wilt thou truſt this ſtrong beaſt without fear or jealouſie? *Wilt thou truſt him,*

Becauſe his ſtrength is great?] The ſtrength or force of his body is great, very great, but the force or ſtubborneſs of his will, That is, his wilfulneſs is far greater, even ſo great, that it will not ſuffer him to lay out the ſtrength of his body for the ſervice of man. We find ſtrength often attributed to the Unicorn in Scripture (*Numb.*23.22.) *He,* (That is, God, or *Iſrael,* through the preſence of God with him,) *hath as it were the ſtrength of an Unicorn.* 'Tis not ſaid, he hath as it were the ſtrength of an Horſe, or of an Oxe, which are very ſtrong creatures, but of an *Unicorn*; thereby implying, that the Unicorn is a creature of ſuch great ſtrength, that he knew not where to find a ſtronger. The Unicorn hath ſtrength enough for his work, but he hath no mind to his work; and therefore *wilt thou truſt him becauſe his ſtrength is great?*

כוח *Propriè ſignificat vigorem illum corporis animalis, qui conſiſtit in humido radicali.*

Hence Note; Firſt, *Great ſtrength is required for great work.*

There are ſome works that are done, not ſo much by ſtrength as by art, or as it were, by ſlight of hand, ſuch a work a feeble weak man may do: but there are other works which require great ſtrength; all the wit, and skill, and learning, and cunning of men, cannot do them, unleſs they have a ſutable, That is, a great portion of ſtrength for the doing of them. *David* (Pſal. 144.14.) deſcribing the temporal felicity of his people, makes this requeſt for them, *That our Oxen be ſtrong to labour.* The labour of the Oxe is great, and therefore he needs great ſtrength to do his work, and go through with his labour.

Note, Secondly; *They who have great ſtrength, may do great works.*

Great ſtrength is a great advantage for ſervice. If the Unicorn would imploy and put out his ſtrength, he might do much. Strength of body is a talent, much may be done by that; ſtrength of mind is an excellent talent, much more, very much more may be done by that. But when a man hath much ſtrength of body and mind together, what may not he do! Let thoſe who have much ſtrength, conſider how they uſe it. For a man to have the ſtrength of an Unicorn, much bodily ſtrength, and make no uſe of it, is to become more beaſtly then the Unicorn. *A ſtrong man rejoyceth to run a race* (Pſal. 19.5.) He that hath great ſtrength, may run a great race. A race requireth great ſtrength, and he that hath ſtrength, or is a ſtrong man, ſhould rejoyce to run it. A ſtrong man, if he have an heart and a will to his work, delighteth in his work more then in his reward.

Note, Thirdly; *Some have ſtrength enough to do much Work, to do great and good things, yet are not at all to be truſted with the doing of any thing that is great or good.*

Strength is not always to be truſted. There is a twofold truſt in ſtrength; Firſt, There is a truſt in ſtrength as to confidence in it for ſucceſs; and thus we are not to truſt any ſtrength in the world, neither our own nor others. *Curſed is the man that truſteth in man, and maketh fleſh his arm* (Jer. 17.5.) The arm of fleſh is too weak to be truſted in, though never ſo ſtrong; though it have the ſtrength of the Unicorn, it muſt not be truſted; no creatures ſtrength is to be truſted in, as to dependance upon it. Secondly, There is a truſting of ſtrength as to the uſing and imploying of it; thus ſtrength may be truſted. We may truſt the ſtrong that they will uſe their ſtrength for us, only we muſt not reſt in their ſtrength. They who (like the Unicorn in the Text) have great ſtrength, and yet are not to be truſted that they will uſe it, are in a much worſe condition than they who have no ſtrength to uſe, or to make them any way uſeful. There are three ſorts of men to be conſidered, in reſpect of ſtrength.

Firſt, Some have a will to do more then they have ſtrength to do; they have a will to do more in ordinary work, then they have ſtrength to do, and they have a will to do more in extraordinary work and duty, then they have ſtrength and ability to do. The Apoſtle ſpeaking of the labour of love or charity, in the miniſtration of the good things of this life, to thoſe that ſtand in need, thus commendeth the *Macedonians* (2 Cor. 8.5.) *For to their power, I bear them record, and beyond their power, they were willing,* &c. He meaneth, not the power of their bodies, but of their purſes and eſtates. Some are willing beyond the power of their eſtates, to relieve the neceſſities of others; and ſome are willing beyond the power of their bodies, to labour not only for the ſupply of their own neceſſities, but in any publick ſervice. To have a will to labour according to our ſtrength for labour, ſheweth an honeſt heart; but to have a will to labour beyond our ſtrength for labour, ſheweth an Heroick heart. But

Secondly, Moſt have ſtrength to do more then they have a will to do; they are like the Unicorn, and that upon a double ground: Firſt, Some are ſo lazy and idle, that they will not do what they have ſtrength to do. Thus *Solomon* deſcribeth the ſluggard (*Prov.* 21.5.) *His hands refuſe to labour.* He hath ſtrength enough in his hand, but for idleneſs he will do nothing. Secondly, Others are ſo proud, that though they have ſtrength enough to labour, yet they will not; they are ſo ſtout, ſo ſtubborn, ſo high minded, that they ſcorn to work or do ſervice; they think themſelves too good to take pains: I ſhall ſay too little, if I ſay, theſe are in a very bad frame. They are right Unicorns, who are ſo ſtout that they will not ſerve, nor be bound to attend any ſervice.

There is a third ſort, who have ſtrength to do ſervice, and they have alſo will to do it; they have will, and they have ſtrength, but they want an opportunity to do ſervice. This may be the caſe of a good man, who is like the labouring Ox; A good man hath always a will to work, and may have ſtrength for his work too, yet many times wants work. As they in the Parable (*Matth.* 20.6,7.) anſwered when queſtioned, *Why ſtand ye all the day idle?* It was not (ſo they excuſed themſelves) becauſe they had no will to work, or had no ſtrength to work; but (ſay they) *No man hath hired us*; we have not been called to work, we know not where to have a days work. Such there are, who have will and ſtrength, while they want a call. Thus the Apoſtle ſpake concerning the *Philippians* (Chap. 4. 10.) *Ye were careful, but ye lacked opportunity.* The door was not open, and ſo ye could not do what ye deſired, and had both a mind and an ability to do. The point in hand leadeth us to the middle ſort of perſons (truly ſhaddowed by the Unicorn) who though they have much ſtrength to do ſervice, yet they have no mind to ſerve, but hide their Talent in a Napkin, and put their Candle under a Buſhel: Theſe are not to be truſted, though they are well furniſhed. I may ſay to any man concerning ſuch men, as the Lord to *Job*, concerning the Unicorn; *Wilt thou truſt them, becauſe their ſtrength is great?* Becauſe their ſtrength of mind, their ſtrength of body, their ſtrength of eſtate is great? Can we truſt all rich men that they will do works of charity, becauſe their eſtate is great? Can we truſt all healthy men, who have ſound and able limbs, that they will take pains, becauſe their bodily ſtrength is great; Can we truſt all knowing men, who have quick parts, and excellent gifts, much knowledg, that they will go through with their work becauſe the ſtrength of their minds is great? We can hardly find any to truſt, what ſtrength ſoever they have, but thoſe who have received ſtrength of grace from God, and ſo have ſtrength of faith in God, ſtrength of love, ſtrength of affections to God, ſtrength of zeal for God. And even they who have ſtrength of grace, may fail their truſt very much (*Job* 4.18.) *Behold he put no truſt in his Servants, and his Angels he charged with folly.* The Lord could not be confident of Angels, who are mighty in ſtrength. If God ſhould leave Angels to themſelves, they would ſoon fail; it is becauſe Angels are confirmed by grace (Chriſt being the head of Angels) that they ſtand faſt to their work, and abide by their duty, elſe the Lord could not truſt Angels with all their created ſtrength; much leſs then could the Lord truſt the beſt of Saints with all the ſpiritual ſtrength he hath planted in them, did he not continually confirm them, and quicken them (to the work which he hath called them to) by his holy Spirit. No further than any man truſteth in Chriſt for ſtrength, or maketh Chriſt his ſtrength as well as his righteouſneſs, is he to be truſted with the doing of any work, any more then the Unicorn, how much ſoever his ſtrength is? Many are ſet a work, and do work, becauſe their ſtrength is great, but none (in a due ſenſe) can be truſted, but they who make Chriſt their ſtrength, and look daily to him for it. *Wilt thou truſt him, becauſe his ſtrength is great.*

Or wilt thou leave thy labour to him?] This latter part of the *Verſe* is of the ſame importance with the former, yet I ſhall touch a little upon it. *Wilt thou leave thy labour to him?* Labour is taken in Scripture two ways;

Firſt, For the very act of labour. *Jacob* ſaid (*Gen.* 31.42.) *God hath ſeen mine affliction, and the labour of my hands.* God knows (ſaid he to *Laban*) what pains I have taken, what hard work I have been at in thy ſervice; and how hard he had been at work, he told *Laban* (Verſ. 40.) *Thus I was in the day, the drought conſumed me; and the Froſt by night, and my ſleep departed from me.* To ſuch hard Work in ſpirituals the Apoſtle exhorts;

By

יגיע *Labor, à radice* יגע *Laboravit, defatigatus fuit.*

Be ſtedfaſt; and unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as you know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord (1 Cor.15.58) The word in the Text which we render *labour*, ſignifieth a labouring to wearineſs, or a labour which cauſeth wearineſs. *Strong labour*, diligent labour wearieth a ſtrong man; and though an induſtrious perſon is not weary of his labour, yet he may be wearied with his labour; yea, the more induſtrious he is in labouring, the ſooner he may be wearied with his labour.

Secondly, Labour is taken ſometimes for the fruit of labour, or for that which is got by labour; the reward, and wages given and received for work and ſervice done, is called labour (*Pſal.* 128.2.) *Thou ſhalt eat the labour of thy hands.* No man can eat the acts of his labour, but every man ſhould eat the fruit of his labour; labour brings in bread, and that bread is ſweeteſt which comes in by labour. The Lord threateneth his people (*Deut.*28.33.) *ſtrangers ſhall eat thy labour*, That is, the increaſe that comes in or hath been gotten by thy labour, even that which thou haſt laboured for. And it was a mercy beſtowed by the Lord upon his *Iſrael* (Pſal. 105.44.) *that they inherited the labour of the people*, that is, they dwelt in the Houſes, which they had built; and enjoyed the gardens, which they had planted; and reaped the fields, which they, the Heathen, had ſowed; In a word, they had the fruit of all their labours. Some underſtand the word here in this latter ſenſe, *Wilt thou leave thy labour unto him?* That is, wilt thou allow him any of the fruit of thy ground, ſeeing he refuſeth to work in thy ground? Surely, thou wilt not. Labouring cattel have ſomewhat for their labour, they ſhare in thoſe good things which are the product of their labour (1 *Cor.*9.9.) *Thou ſhalt not muzzel the Oxe that treadeth out the Corn.* But though it is a truth, that labouring cattel eat of, and are fed with the fruit of their labour; yet here, by labour, I underſtand the very act of labour, not the fruit of it. *Wilt thou leave thy labour to him?* That is, wilt thou leave thy buſineſs with him? Wilt thou truſt him with thy Plow or with thy Harrow? And (conſider the dependance) if thou dareſt not truſt him, then thou wilt not leave thy labour unto him.

Fruges tuas labore tuo partas. Piſc.

Note Hence; Firſt, *It is not Wiſdom to leave our work to ſuch as we cannot truſt.*

Our work will be ill done, or half done, or not done at all by thoſe that we cannot truſt. We truſt thoſe much, to whom we leave our buſineſs; and there are three things requiſite in thoſe to whom we leave it.

Firſt, That they have ſtrength and ability for it; there is a neceſſity of that: No wiſe man will truſt or leave his buſineſs with him that hath no ſtrength to do it, no ability for it.

Secondly, That they be ſubject and obedient to us. No wiſe man will leave his buſineſs in the hand of thoſe who acknowledg no obedience nor ſubjection to him, how much ſtrength ſoever they have. An unſubmitting ſtrength will work againſt us rather then for us.

Thirdly, That they be faithful. No man will leave his buſineſs to a perſon of ſtrength and in ſubjection to him, if he be not honeſt to him. *Solomon* hath ſufficiently caution d us againſt truſting ſuch, while he ſaith (*Prov.*25.19.) *Confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble* ('tis true alſo in time of peace) *is like a broken tooth, and a foot out of joint.* A broken tooth cannot chew our meat, and a foot out of joynt can worſe go a journey; an unfaithful man will prove a worſer ſervant to us, than the worſt of theſe. And as it is thus among men, they will not leave their buſineſs with an Unicorn, with one that hath ſtrength, but yields no ſubjection, nor ever ſhewed any faithfulneſs; ſo God will not leave his labour, his work and ſervice to ſuch as are like the Unicorn; he will not leave it in ſuch hand, as have great ability to carry it through, yet want obedience to his will, and faithfulneſs in his work. There muſt be a concurrence of theſe three, ſtrength, ſubjection, and faithfulneſs, in all thoſe to whom the Lord God, the God only wiſe, will leave his labour, or commit the doing of any ſervice for him. But where theſe three meet and center in any perſon, ſtrength of body and mind, ſubmiſſion of will, and faithfulneſs to a work; how great things may they do in the ſervice whether of God or Man?

Secondly, Obſerve; *A will, a mind to work, or a willing mind to work is better than great ſtrength.*

As the Unicorn with his great ſtrength, ſo they who are like the Unicorn in ſtrength may do little or nothing. But they that have only a little ſtrength, and a mind to be doing, have done, and may do much. Little ſtrength is a kind of weakneſs, yet where there is a willing mind, weakneſs will do more than great ſtrength without a willing mind. We have a common ſaying; *John is a good ſervant when Will is at home.* Willingneſs to work, works better then bare ſtrength: We have this concluſion (*Neh.* 4.6.) *So built we the wall* (*Nehemiah* ſpake there of the Jews return'd from *Babylon*) *And all the wall was joyned together unto the half thereof. For the people had a mind* (or as the *Hebrew* is, *an heart*) *to work.* The wall of a great City being ſoon raiſed half up, the reaſon given was, *becauſe they had a mind to work.* The Jews at that time, were a people under ſo much weakneſs, that the enemies jeer'd them with it (*Verſ.*2.) *What will theſe feeble Jews do? Will they fortifie themſelves? Will they ſacrifice? Will they make an end in a day? Will they revive the ſtones out of the heaps of rubbiſh?* &c. Will they work miracles? Remove mountains? But how feeble ſoever they were, the work went on amain, *For the people had a mind, a heart to Work.* Though they were no Unicorns, no people of great ſtrength; though they were feeble Jews, yet they attained to half their work quickly: *Strong hearts and feeble hands, will diſpatch a buſineſs better and ſooner, then ſtrong hands and feeble hearts.* 'Tis thus, as in corporal ſo in ſpiritual labour, where there is a mind to the work, though we have but a little ſtrength, we ſhall do great things. This was the high commendation of the Church of *Philadelphia* (Rev. 3.8.) *Thou haſt a little ſtrength and haſt kept my word, and haſt not denied my name. He doth a great deal of work for God, who keeps the Word of God.* But how unfit the Unicorn is, or any ſtrong one like the Unicorn, to be truſted, or have labour left with them, appears further in the next Verſe.

לב

Verſ. 12. **Wilt thou believe him that he will bring home thy Seed, and gather it into thy Barn.**

Here is another piece of ſervice which the Unicorn might not be truſted with; *Wilt thou believe him*, &c. The root-word ſignifieth that act of faith which we put forth upon God, for our free juſtification and eternal Salvation, as alſo for our ſuſtentation under, and deliverance from any trouble inward or outward, of Soul or Body; in and for all which the juſt live by faith. There is believing God, and believing in God, both which are expreſſions ſometimes of a like importance; *Wilt thou believe him, or in him*, ſaith God of the Unicorn? As if he had ſaid, Suppoſe thou couldſt get a promiſe from the Unicorn, that he *will bring home*, or *return thy ſeed* (ſo the Hebrew ſtrictly) that he will make thy ſeed to return; or (as we render fully) bring it home; *Wilt thou take his word, or believe him* that he will keep his word, *that he will indeed return or bring home*

אמן *In Hiphil* האמין *Credidit fiſus eſt. Credere in Deum, & credere Deo, ſynonyma ſunt, reperitur etiam credere in Deo.* Druſ.

ישב *Quod reddat.* Mont. *relaturum eſſe.* Jun.

Thy Seed?] Seed may be taken two ways.

First, For that which is to be ſowed; it is ordinary with the Husband-man, to call that *Seed-Corn* which he reſerveth for ſowing. The grain or corn intended to be ſowed on the Earth, is properly *Seed-Corn*; in alluſion whereunto the Pſalmiſt ſaith (*Pſal.*126.6.) *He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious ſeed, ſhall doubtleſs come again with rejoycing, bringing his ſheaves with him.* The people of God mourning and praying, ſow precious ſeed. Believing prayers and repenting tears never failed, nor ſhall ever fail, of a merciful, of a plentiful Harveſt, or of a plentiful Harveſt of mercy. Some underſtand this Text thus; *Wilt thou believe that he will return thy Seed?* will he do this ſervice for thee? Will he carry thy Seed, which is to be ſown, into the field? But though that be a piece of ſervice to carry the ſeed-corn into the field, yet the ſcope of the place doth not well comply with it here; and therefore leaving that interpretation, I ſhall rather.

Credeſnè quod relaturus ſit ſemen tuum ad terras tuas? Vatab.

Secondly, Take ſeed for ripe Corn, or for that which is reaped; as in *Haggai* (*Chap.*2.19.) *Is the ſeed yet in the Barn?* That is, is the Harveſt yet come in? No, the ſeed is not in the Barn. So, in this place, *ſeed* is that which hath been ſown and grow up, and ready to be gathered into the Barn. And that may be taken two ways;

First, Thus: Will the Unicorn by plowing and harrowing the ground, procure that thy ſeed ſhall return again to thee? Or that the ſeed which is ſown, ſhall come home to thy Barn, yielding a good Crop, ſo returning what was ſowed with advantage and increaſe? *Wilt thou believe him that he will cauſe thy ſeed thus to return home to thee?* Surely no; do not believe that he will do thee any ſuch ſervice, for he will deceive thy credulity if thou doſt.

Num credis ei, quod dum humum tuam ei arandam committis, ita aptè etiam arare poſſit ut tandem reddat tuam ſementem, vel ut ex ejus labore proveniat & creſcat ſeges ut tandem demetatur & in aream deportatur ad triturandum. Merc. *Sperandum non eſt ut ager à Monocerote ſubactus ſementem acceptam cum uſura reddat.* Sanct.

Secondly, Thus: Wilt thou believe that he will draw the Cart, and ſo help thee home with thy Corn at Harveſt? This Expoſition is moſt favoured, not only by our Tranſlation, but by the words following in the latter part of the verſe, both which intimate, that the ſeed here ſpoken of, is the ſeed reaped, rather than that to be ſowed. *Will he bring home thy ſeed,*

And gather it into thy Barn?] Seed to be ſowed, is carried into the Field, not into the Barn; Seed or Corn reaped, is carried into the Barn, not into the Field. As if it had been ſaid, The Unicorn will do thee no ſervice: As he would not go to plow, ſo neither will he go to Cart, for the gathering of thy ſeed into thy Barn. Sowing, reaping, and gathering into the Barn, are the three principal parts of the Husband-mans labour; and therefore our Lord Jeſus Chriſt ſhewing how the Fowls of the Air live purely upon the providence of God without labour, ſaith (*Matth.*6.26.) *They ſow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into Barns, yet your Heavenly Father feedeth them.*

The word which we Tranſlate **Barn**, is uſed (*Numb.* 18.27. 2*Sam.*6.6.) and in both places it is rendred, *Threſhing-floor*. The threſhing-floor is uſually in the Barn, and therefore the ſame word may well ſignifie both. *Wilt thou believe him that he will bring home thy ſeed, and gather it into thy Barn?*

Hence Note, First, *The labour of Beaſts is very profitable to man.*

The Ox and Horſe bring the ſeed home formally when 'tis reaped, and they bring it home or make it to return vertually when they labour and take pains about or for the ſowing of it. The Pſalmiſt having prayed (*Pſal.* 144. 13.) *That our Garners may be full, affording all manner of ſtore,* preſently adds (*verſ.* 14.) *That our Oxen may be ſtrong to labour; for* (*Prov.* 14. 4.) *where no Oxen are, the crib is clean.* Not only, Firſt, Becauſe there is no need to fill the crib, where no Oxen are to eat up the fodder, as was ſhewed a little before: But, Secondly, Becauſe where no Oxen are, there is nothing to fill it. The crib muſt needs be empty, when the Barn is empty; food faileth both for man and Beaſt, where there are no Oxen. Barns and Garners are full, when the Ox is ſtrong to labour, or becauſe the ſtrong Ox hath been in labour: For (as it followeth) *Much increaſe cometh by the ſtrength of the Ox.* Why doth *Solomon* impute increaſe to the ſtrength of the Ox? Surely, becauſe the Ox being ſtrong is alſo willing to labour and lay out his ſtrength, and ſo, much increaſe cometh by the ſtrength and labour of the Ox, though that alone will not to it. For that there may be an increaſe, theſe five things muſt concur.

Firſt, The skill and induſtry of the Husband-man.

Secondly, The ſtrength and labour of the Ox or Horſe.

Thirdly, The vertue and fatneſs of the Earth.

Fourthly, The ſhowers and influences of Heaven.

Fifthly, And above all, the bleſſing of God. Old *Iſaac* ſaid of his Son *Jacob* (Gen. 27. 27.) *See, the ſmell of my Son is as the ſmell of a Field, which the Lord hath bleſſed.* As there is no increaſe without the bleſſing of God, how much ſoever men or Oxen labour, ſo there is great increaſe (the Lord adding his bleſſing) by the labour of men and Oxen. Labour and increaſe uſually go together; and where no labour is, there (except by miracle) is no increaſe: Where no labour is, the Barn is empty, the Crib is empty, the Belly is empty, the Purſe is empty. *Of doing nothing comes nothing, but want and miſery.* 'Tis ſaid, when the Ox is wearieſt, he treads ſureſt: To be ſure, they who are moſt wearied by honeſt pains-taking, tread ſureſt upon honeſt profit.

Secondly, Obſerve, *Seed ſown is not loſt, but returns and comes home again.*

That which was ſcattered abroad in the Field, is gathered into the Barn. Some may think when they ſee the Husbandman caſt his ſeed into the ground, that he caſts it away; but by the labour of the Ox, by the skill of the Husbandman, and the bleſſing of God upon all, the ſeed cometh home again. Thus the Apoſtle ſpake in a ſpiritual ſenſe; *He that ploweth, ſhould plow in hope; and he that threſheth in hope, ſhould be partaker of his hope* (1 *Cor.* 9. 10.) It ſhould be ſo according to the ordination of God, as to the faithful Miniſters of God (of whoſe labour in plowing up Souls by the word, and ſowing thoſe Souls with the word, the Apoſtle there treats) And it is ſo through the benediction of God, as to laborious Husband men and their Cattel, in plowing and ſowing the ſoil of the Earth. Yea, thus it is in all we do, our actions (good or bad) are as ſeed ſown, which will certainly come again, they will not be loſt: Good done, will aſſuredly turn to good; and evil done (and not undone by repentance) will as ſurely turn to evil. The Apoſtle gives us this double aſſurance (*Gal.* 6. 7, 8.) *Whatſoever a man ſoweth, that* (not numerically, but ſpecifically) *ſhall he alſo reap:* For, *He that ſoweth to his fleſh, ſhall of the fleſh reap corruption; but he that ſoweth to the Spirit, ſhall of the Spirit reap life everlaſting.* And thus in ſpecial, works of charity, or our diſtributions to the neceſſities of others, are more ſignificantly called ſowing (*Pſal.* 112. 9.) *He hath diſperſed, he hath given to the poor* (That is, he hath ſowed his alms abundantly; what then? It followeth) *His righteouſneſs endureth for ever, his horn ſhall be exalted with honor.* To give to the poor, eſpecially to Gods poor, to the godly poor, or to thoſe that are made poor for Gods ſake, is ſowing good ſeed; and he that ſoweth thus, ſhall receive a fruitful crop. *Grain ſowed in the Field, may yield a good increaſe; but that which is rightly ſowed in the bowels of the poor, ſhall certainly yield a better.* What we give, is like ſeed ſowed in the Field, which increaſeth thirty, ſixty, an hundred fold: What we keep by us, is like Corn ſtored up in the Garner, which we bring forth and ſpend, and there's an end of it. Here's great encouragement to do good, yea to abound in doing good to others. What we ſo part with, is not loſt, but ſowed; it will come back to the Barn, it will come home again, and that with a great increaſe. And doubtleſs where there hath been a plowing up of the heart by a work of grace, there will be a free ſowing in every good work. And though we are not to do good works, meerly eying a return, or our perſonal advantage, yet we may have an eye to it, as *Moſes* had in his holy ſufferings and ſervices, *to the recompence of reward*: Yea, and take incouragement from the Lords bounty, to be more in duty, more in charity, even unto bounty. We may conſider the Harveſt while we are diligent in ſowing, yea, to make us more diligent in ſowing.

Having thus opened the ſeveral properties of this Creature, here called the *Unicorn*, properly taken, and given out ſome meditations upon them, it will not be (I conceive) either unuſeful or unacceptable to the Reader, if for the concluſion of the whole matter in hand, I ſhew how the holy Scriptures, together with ſome of the Ancients, make uſe of this Creature, tropically, or in a figure, to reſemble and repreſent,

Firſt, The ſtate of the Church and people of God. Thus *Moſes* reports *Balaam* ſhadowing the power and bleſſedneſs of *Iſrael*, when he came and was hired to curſe them (*Numb.* 23. 22.) *God* (ſaith he) *brought them* (that is, the Children of *Iſrael*) *out of* Egypt; *he hath, as it were, the ſtrength of an Unicorn.* Moſt expound the word, *He*, collectively, concerning that whole people, as one Body; *He*, that is, *Iſrael*, *hath as it were, the ſtrength of an Unicorn*; that is, he is exceeding ſtrong. Some expound it of God: *He*, that is, God, who brought them out of *Egypt*, the mighty God of *Jacob*, hath as it were, the ſtrength of an Unicorn. God is indeed infinitely ſtrong, ſtronger than the Unicorn. That which is moſt eminent in any Creature, or for which any Creature is moſt eminent, the Scripture often aſcribes in a way of ſuper-eminency, unto God.

The Lord hath ſtrength like the ſtrongeſt ; and how ſtrong ſoever he is, he is ſtrong for his *Iſrael*, yea, he is the ſtrength of his *Iſrael*. So that if we take the word in this latter ſenſe, it reacheth the ſame thing, ſetting forth the power and ſtrength of *Iſrael*, by the ſtrength of the Unicorn ; for the Lord, who is their ſtrength, will make them ſtrong like Unicorns. *Balaam* ſpake thus again (*Numb.* 24. 8.) *God brought him* (all *Iſrael* as one man) *out of* Egypt ; *he hath as it were, the ſtrength of an Unicorn, he ſhall eat up the Nations his enemies, and ſhall break their bones, and pierce them through with his arrows.* Thus alſo *Moſes* ſpake or prophecyed of the Tribe of *Joſeph* (Deut. 33. 17.) *His glory is like the firſtling of his Bullock, and his horns are like the horns of Unicorns, with them ſhall he puſh the people* (or peoples, the word is plural) *together, to the ends of the Earth, and they are the ten thouſands of* Ephraim, *and they are the thouſands of* Manaſſeh. *Moſes* ſets out the fruitfulneſs of *Ephraim*, beyond that of *Manaſſeh*, ten for one ; and in both, jointly ſhews how powerful, how prevailing they ſhall be ; even, as if they puſht their enemies with horns like thoſe of Unicorns. In all theſe Scriptures, the Lord foreſhewed the wonderful force of the Jewiſh Church of old, his portion and peculiar people, by that of the Unicorn. *David* alſo (as was ſaid before) expreſſeth his aſſurance of a proſperous condition and great ſucceſs, in the ſame language (*Pſal.* 92. 10.) *He ſhall exalt my horn, like the horn of an Unicorn.*

And we may affirm the *Iſrael* of God are like the Unicorn, chiefly upon this account ; becauſe their ſtrength and defence, or their ſtrong defence is in, and by their horn. And if any ask, what or who is that ? I anſwer, *Jeſus Chriſt :* Of whom, *Zacharias* filled with the Holy Ghoſt, propheſied, ſaying (*Luke* 1. 59.) *Bleſſed be the Lord God of* Iſrael, *for he hath viſited ond redeemed his people, and hath raiſed up an horn of ſalvation for us, in the Houſe of his ſervant* David. Jeſus Chriſt, is called an horn of ſalvation for his people,

Habes in Monocerote exemplum fidei robuſtæ & generoſæ omnem ſervitutem diaboli, & mundi aſpernantis, & utrique impavidè reſiſtentis. Coc.

Quod nullis hominum viribus in ſervitium redigi poteſt, ſignificatur populus nemini ſerviturus, quamdiu unicum Deum coleret. Theodoret. queſt. 44. in Numeros.

Firſt, Becauſe he is the Strength and Defence of his people.

Secondly, Becauſe he is the Glory and honour of his people: Thus the *Seventy* Tranſlate that (*Numb.* 23. 22.) he hath (as it were) *the glory of an Unicorn.* As *Jeſus Chriſt is called a light to lighten the* Gentiles, ſo *the glory of his people* Iſrael (*Luke* 2. 32.)

Thirdly, Jeſus Chriſt is *an horn of ſalvation* to his people, as he is (like the horn of an Unicorn, according to report, againſt bodily poiſon) the moſt Soveraign, yea, the only antidote againſt the poiſon of ſin, and the infection of the World (2 *Pet.* 1. 4.) *By him we eſcape the corruption that is in the World, through luſt,* that is, believing in him, we are preſerved from thoſe poiſonous luſts, which corrupt and infect this World.

Secondly, Some of the Ancients and Moderns too, make the Unicorns ſtoutneſs and ſtiffneſs of Spirit againſt doing any work for man ; an emblem of that gracious well-temper'd ſtoutneſs and reſolvedneſs of Spirit in the faithful ſervants of God, againſt doing any work at all for the Devil, as alſo in refuſing to do any ſinful work at the will or command of man : In which ſenſe, it is both their wiſdom and their duty not to ſerve nor pleaſe men (1 *Cor.* 7. 23. *Gal.* 1. 10.) Thus *Shadrach, Meſhach,* and *Abednego,* anſwered *Nebuchadnezzar* (*Dan.* 3. 18.) *We will not ſerve thy gods.* Theſe were no wilful men, though they ſaid, *We will not :* Their underſtanding was in the anſwer as well as their will, and their Conſcience for God, as well as either. And in this ſenſe the Apoſtle, who ſo often exhorts to faithfulneſs and diligence in the ſervice of man, admoniſheth us, *Not to be the ſervants of men,* (1 *Cor.* 7. 23.) And in this ſenſe, (though he had ſaid, *I pleaſe all men, in all things for their profit, that they might be ſaved* (1 *Cor.* 10. 33.) and counſelleth every man, *to pleaſe his Neighbour for his good to edification* (*Rom.* 15. 2.) yet) concludeth of himſelf, *If I yet pleaſed men, I ſhould not be the ſervant of Chriſt* (Gal. 1. 10.)

Thirdly, The Unicorn is ſpoken of in Scripture, as an Hieroglyphick of thoſe evil men, who are enemies to the Church of God (*Iſa.* 34. 7.) *And the Unicorns* (we put in the Margin the *Rhinoceros*) ('tis the *Hebrew* word) *ſhall come down with them, and the Bullocks with the Bulls,* &c. How ſhall the Unicorns *come down with them* ? Not as we come down from a Hill, or high place upon our feet, but they being deſtroyed ſhall be caſt or thrown down. Theſe Unicorns in the Prophet, are all thoſe proud and mighty men of the World, who oppoſe, oppreſs, and perſecute the Church of God, called out of the World to faith in Chriſt, and ſalvation by him, as appears fully (*verſ.* 8.) Theſe for their ſtubbornneſs againſt the will and ways of God, are juſtly compared to, or called Unicorns ; For, as Unicorns will not ſerve men, ſo theſe will not ſerve God ; they will neither Plow nor Harrow, they will neither go nor come at his command.

And as the enemies of the Church, ſo the enemies of Jeſus Chriſt himſelf, or they who proſecuted, purſued, and afflicted him to death, are ſet forth under this title, in that prayer of *David* a type of Chriſt (*Pſal.* 22. 21.) *Save me from the Lions mouth, for thou haſt heard me from the horns of the Unicorns.* Chriſt prayed, *Save me from the Lions mouth,* that is, from my greateſt enemies : *Thou haſt heard me from the horns of the Unicorn,* that is, of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees,* of *Herod* and *Pontius Pilate,* againſt whom Chriſt had help when he prayed, and got victory over them all, by his death and ſufferings.

Laſtly, The Unicorn (according to the deſcription here given of him) reſembles all refractory and rebellious ſinners, who will by no means be reclaimed to the ſervice of God, who will not receive the yoke of Chriſt though eaſie, nor bear his burden though light, but remaining obſtinate and obdurate in their ſins, will only do what they will, ſerving divers luſts and pleaſures, and being to every good work reprobate. And as Naturaliſts ſay of the Unicorn, he may be ſlain, he will not be taken ; ſo we may ſay of ſuch men, they will ſooner loſe their lives than their wills : They are like *natural brute Beaſts* (of whom the Apoſtle *Peter* ſpeaks, 1 *Eph.* 2. 12.) *made to be taken and deſtroyed.* Such Beaſts were the *Egyptians,* of whom it is ſaid (*Pſal.* 89. 10.) *Thou haſt broken* Rahab *in pieces, as one that is ſlain.* Some Beaſts are broken and tamed, but *Egypt* (called *Rahab* for ſtrength and pride, or for pride in ſtrength) was a Beaſt that would not be broken and tamed by all thoſe plagues of God poured upon it at Land, and was therefore broken and ſlain in the Red-Sea.

In arcano ſermone Monoceros ferus, jugi impatiens indomituſque peccator eſt. Franc. Joan in paraph. libri *Job.*

Interemi poteſt, capi non poteſt. Plin.

Thus we ſee how the Church and faithful people of God, reſemble the Unicorn in ſome things, as alſo, how the wicked of the World, or the World lying in wickedneſs, reſemble him in other things.

VERS. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18.

Gaveſt thou the goodly wings unto the Peacocks? or wings and feathers unto the Oſtrich ?

Which leaveth her eggs in the Earth, and warmeth them in duſt.

And forgetteth that the foot may cruſh them, or that the wild Beaſts may break them.

She is hardned againſt her young ones, as though they were not hers : Her labour is in vain without fear,

Becauſe God hath deprived her of wiſdom, neither hath he imparted to her underſtanding.

What time ſhe lifteth up her ſelf on high, ſhe ſcorneth the Horſe and his Rider.

THE Lord having put ſeveral queſtions to *Job,* about the wild Beaſts of the Earth, queſtions him in this context, according to our Tranſlation, about two, but according to ſome other Tranſlations and Readings, about three ſorts of Fowls of the Air. Our Tranſlation mentions only the Peacock and Oſtrich, others add the Stork.

Yet 'tis the opinion of a very late and learned Author, that the whole context of theſe ſix verſes contains the deſcription of one Fowl only, and that the Oſtrich. It cannot be denied, but that the firſt *verſe* of this context, or the thirteenth of the *Chapter,* hath as various Tranſlations, by all ſorts of Authors, as any (if not more than any) in this Book ; yet he grants, that moſt who have Tranſlated it into Latine, and all that ever he ſaw, who have Tranſlated it into the Mother Language, of any Country, render it, the *Peacock.* And therefore referring the Reader to the peruſal of his reaſons and authorities, which are many and cogent, while he Interprets the word *Renamim,* the *Oſtrich,* I ſhall only touch at ſome of them in paſſage,

Bochartus *de animalibus ſcripturæ, parte poſter.* lib. 2. cap. 16.

paſſage, as I proceed to open the Text, as 'tis expreſſed in our own Tranſlation.

Gaveſt thou the goodly wings unto the Peacocks ?

That the Hebrew word here uſed, ſignifies a Peacock, is clear in all thoſe Lexicographers that I have met with. Another word is uſed (1 *Kings* 10. 22.) which yet *Buxtorfius* ſaith is by ſome rendred *Parrats*, and they are often brought in Ships from far Countries. This I deſire the Reader to take notice of, that there is a wonderful variety and difference of opinion among Interpreters, about the proper names of Animals, Plants and Gemms; and therefore no wonder if ſome render the word *Chaſidah* in following part of this *verſe*, which is uſually taken for a *Stork*, the *Oſtrich*; and others, the word *Renanim* at the beginning of it, *Oſtriches*, which we and almoſt all others, render *Peacocks*.

The Peacock is deſcribed only by his wings, in the former part of *verſe* 13. *Gaveſt thou the goodly wings unto the Peacock?*

The Oſtrich is deſcribed, not only by her wings and feathers, in the ſame *verſe* 13. but by four diſtinct qualities, in the context of the five *verſes* following;

Firſt, By her careleſneſs and forgetfulneſs of that which ſhe ſhould be very tender of, her eggs, when ſhe hath laid them; this we have in the 14. and 15. *verſes*; *Which leaveth her eggs in the Earth, and warmeth them in the duſt, and forgetteth that the foot may cruſh them*, &c.

Secondly ſhe is deſcribed, by her unnaturalneſs to her young ones, when her eggs are hatched; this we have at *verſe* 16. *She is hardned againſt her young ones, as though they were not hers.*

Thirdly, She is deſcribed, by that which is the reaſon of both the former, her want of wiſdom and underſtanding, at *verſe* 17. which *verſe* tells us alſo whence it comes to paſs, that ſhe hath ſo little of theſe excellent endowments, even *Becauſe God hath deprived her of Wiſdom*, &c. As if he had ſaid, if you would know a reaſon, or have an account, why the Oſtrich is thus forgetful of her eggs, thus unnatural to her young ones, it is this, *God hath deprived her of wiſdom, neither hath he imparted unto her underſtanding.*

The Fourth thing which ſhe is deſcribed by, is her ſwiftneſs of foot or wing, for both are here to be taken in, teſtified by her ſcorn and contempt of her ſwifteſt purſuers; *When ſhe lifteth up her ſelf ſhe ſcorneth the Horſe and his Rider*, at *verſe* 18. Thus you have the parts of this context, with reſpect to theſe two winged Creatures or Fowls of the Air here (according to our reading) deſcribed *the Peacock and the Oſtrich.* Thus the Lord having ſhewed his unſearchable wiſdom, ſhadowed in thoſe other Creatures formerly enquired of, proceeds ſtill in the ſame argument, though upon a different ſubject. The power, wiſdom and providential care of God, is manifeſted in and about all his Creatures; as much in and about the feathered-fowls of the Air, as the four-footed Beaſts of the Earth, of one kind or other.

Verſe 13. **Gaveſt thou the goodly wings unto the Peacocks.**

Thoſe words **gaveſt thou**, are not expreſt in the *Hebrew* Text; that's marvellous conciſe, which hath occaſioned both differences and difficulties, in the explication of it. The Text is only this, *goodly wings to the Peacocks*, we ſay, *gaveſt thou the goodly wings unto the Peacocks?* The *Jewiſh* Doctors generally make the ſame ſupplement. Some Expoſitors expreſs it thus, *haſt thou made the goodly wings of the Peacocks?* I conceive the difference is not great, whether we read, *haſt thou given*, or *haſt thou made*? For doubtleſs, God in giving made, or in making gave,

Hebræi ſubaudiunt אם נתת *num dediſti?* Merc. *An feciſti?* Biſc.

The goodly wings unto the Peacocks.

Maſter *Broughton* Tranſlates *proud wings*. The Peacock is a beautiful Bird, and a proud one too: The Peacock is gorgeouſly clothed, as I may ſay, by the hand of God. *Gaveſt thou the goodly wings?* No, it was I the Lord, not thou, O *Job*, that gave the goodly wings unto the Peacocks. The word which we Tranſlate *goodly*, is very proper to the Peacock; the root of it ſignifies *to exult, to boaſt, to glory*, and therefore many Tranſlate, *gaveſt thou the exulting or the rejoycing wings unto the Peacock*. Though the Peacocks wings cannot properly exult or boaſt, yet becauſe they are an occaſion of exulting and boaſting to this Creature, therefore they may be ſaid to do ſo. Hence Maſter *Mercer* Tranſlates *The Peacock boaſts with his wings or of his wings*, he is filled as it were with joy, beholding his wings. And this gives one reaſon why the learned *Bochartus* is perſwaded that the Oſtrich is here intended, becauſe the Peacock hath not goodly wings as the Oſtrich hath, all the moſt beautiful feathers of the Peacock being placed in his tail or train, which is richly painted and adorned with various well-ſhadowed colours to the eye, when he ſpreads his tail, and prides himſelf in his plumes. But we need not ſtay upon this objection; the wing may well be taken for any feathered part. As *Moſes* ſaith (*Gen.* 7. 14.) *every Bird of every ſort*, or as the Hebrew is, *of every wing, came into the Ark.* And though the Peacock boaſteth chiefly in his train, as being moſt beautiful, yet he hath beauty in his wings too. *Gaveſt thou the goodly wings*

נעלסה *Ter tantum occurrit, ſemel in* Cal. cap. 20. 18. *ſemel in* Hiphtael. Prov. 7. 18. *& hic in* Niphal. *eſt autem laſcivire, exultare, gloriari. Alis pavo exultat.* Merc.

Unto the Peacock?] The Vulgar Latine Tranſlates, *the wing of the Oſtrich, is like the wing of the Hawk*; But that Tranſlation is ſo wide, that one ſaith, *Who reading this, wonders not at the ſtrangeneſs of the interpretation?* The Greek Tranſlation of the Septuagint is as wide and dark as that, I ſhall not trouble the Reader about either, nor about many more which he may find collected, not only by *Bochartus*, but by ſeveral others.

Penna ſtruthionis ſimilis eſt pennis herodie & accipitris. Vulg. *Quis hæc legens non miretur novitatem interpretationis?* Druſ.

The word which we Tranſlate *Peacocks* in the plural number, comes from a root which ſignifies *to cry, or to make a loud noiſe*, to make a cry in joy and triumph, and ſo it may be rendred, *The wings or feathers of rejoycers and triumphers.* The Peacock may well be ſo called, becauſe he is a loud-voiced ſhrieking Bird, glorying as it were, and triumphing in his wings and feathers. The very nature and qualities both of Beaſts and Birds, are often and elegantly expreſt in the Hebrew names. *Gaveſt thou the goodly wings to the Peacocks?*

רננים *Deducitur à radice* רנן *quod eſt cantare, gloriari, lætari, ovare. Quare propriè eſt penna, vel ala lætantium & ovantium. Pavo eſt animal glorioſum; Gemmantes quippe cum laudatur expandit colores adverſo maximè ſole quia ſic fulgentius radiant, quos ſpectari gaudet.* Plin. *Quem non gemmata volucris Junonia cauda Vinceret.*

Hence Note, Firſt, *God will be owned even in beſtowing feathers upon the Birds.*

Here the Lord takes off *Job* from having any hand in that gift, much more from having the ſole hand in it. The workmanſhip of God may be ſeen, and is to be acknowledged, even in this, the feathers of a Bird; and if the leaſt, the ſmalleſt things, among good things, are of God, how much more the greateſt! If it be of God, that the Peacock hath his feathers? How much more that man hath reaſon, that man hath wiſdom and underſtanding! How much more that man hath grace and holineſs! Every good gift, and every perfect gift cometh from above; God will be owned, even in a feather, in the wing of a Fowl. *Gaveſt thou?* not thou, but I.

Secondly, In that God takes it upon himſelf to have given feathers to the Peacock, or to have made her feathers,

Obſerve, *God hath a care to provide every way for the neceſſity of the Creature, even of the unreaſonable Creatures, whether thoſe that move upon the Earth, or thoſe that fly in the Air.*

We read before, how the Lord feeds the Lions, how he feeds the Ravens, how he feeds the wild Aſſes, how he provides food for Unicorns, and here he would have us take notice, how he provides clothing for the Birds; feathers, are to the Birds their clothing; they are to all Birds good and warm clothing, and to ſome beautiful and goodly clothing. While Chriſt (*Math.* 6. 26, 28.) ſpake of clothing the Lillies, and of feeding the Fowls of the Air, he would from thence infer an argument of the fatherly care of God over his people; now in that God gives a clothing of feathers to the Fowls, and doth not leave them naked, it holds forth theſe three things.

Firſt, It is an evidence or proof of the goodneſs and munificence of God, in providing ſufficiently for the comfortable ſubſiſtence of all his Creatures, and for the ornament of ſome of them.

Secondly, 'Tis a confirmation of his Childrens faith in, and dependance upon him for outward things, for meat and clothing, with all neceſſaries of this life.

Thirdly, 'Tis a reproof of their diſtruſt and unbelief, with reſpect to outward things. Certainly, the Lord who hath provided feathers for the Fowls of the Air, will provide clothing for his Children and faithful Servants.

Further, conſider; The Lord hath not only given wings or feathers to the Peacock, but the Text ſaith, he hath given *goodly wings.*

Hence Learn, Thirdly, *All Birds are not of a feather.*

That is, God doth not give alike, no, not to Birds: Some Fowls of the Air have feathers only for their uſe, or to ſerve their neceſſity; all Fowls of the Air have not gay feathers, nor goodly wings; all of them have not painted feathers, all of them have not (as *Plinies* word is, deſcribing the Peacock) *jewelly feathers, gemmy feathers*; ſome have but plain feathers to flie with, and to keep them from the cold, but here the Peacock hath *goodly wings.* And we read (*Ezek.* 17.3.) of an Eagle *full of feathers, which had divers colours*; we put in the Margin, *Embroydering colours.* God makes for ſome Fowls of the Air, ſuch coats as *Jacob* made for his Son *Joſeph*, whom he loved more than all his Children (*Gen.* 37.3.) even coats of many colours; and ſuch are his degrees of diſpenſation alſo, with reſpect to the Children of men. God gives clothing to all, but not goodly clothing, not rich clothing; to ſome he gives goodly clothing, he puts a glory upon their Garments; he cloths ſome with Scarlet, and puts ornaments upon their apparel, as *David* in his mourning ſong ſpake of *Saul*, adorning his ſubjects, the people of *Iſrael* (2 *Sam.*23,24.) When *Abraham* ſent his ſervant to woo for his Son *Iſaac*, or to fetch a Wife for him, he ſent *goodly clothing*; his Servant *brought forth Jewels of Silver, and Jewels of Gold, and Raiment and gave them to* Rebekah (*Gen.* 24. 53.) *Joſeph* (*Gen.* 45. 22.) gave all his Brethren *changes of Raiment*; *but to* Benjamin *he gave three hundred pieces of Silver, and five changes of Raiment.* Thus the Lord deals with men and women in this World; all have apparel to cover their nakedneſs, and defend them from the ſharpneſs of a Winter ſeaſon, but ſome have goodly apparel.

Producit harum avium pennas exempli loco ut oſtendat ſe non tantum neceſſarium victum ſed etiam ornatum dare animalibus. Aves pennarum varietate inſignes à poetis pictæ volucres dicuntur.

Fourthly, In that theſe goodly wings given to the Peacock, are by ſome rendred *proud wings*, and by others *boaſting wings.*

Note, *There is a temptation in gay worldly things, to puff up the mind with pride.*

The very Peacock having fine feathers, over-weens himſelf, and is proud of them. As we ſay, *Fine feathers, make fine Birds*, ſo we may ſay, *Fine feathers, make proud Birds.* And no wonder if it be ſo with ſilly Birds; for even wiſe men, if they receive any thing that is goodly from the hand of God, are very apt to be as proud of it, as the Peacock of his goodly wings. If the Lord doth but give us a few gay feathers, a little more richer than others, a little more honour than others (theſe are gay feathers) or if the Lord give us better and higher parts than others (theſe are gayer feathers) How hard is it for us to keep down high thoughts, or not to ſoar high upon theſe wings and feathers, in admiring thoughts and airy conceits of our ſelves, though the Holy Ghoſt every where way-layeth the pride of our hearts by many arguments, by this eſpecially, becauſe all we have is given us by God, and we have nothing of our own. The Lord hath given man many goodly feathers, beauty and ſtrength of Body to many, riches and honor to not a few, wit, learning, eloquence to ſome, and to others ſpiritual gifts and graces, which are the goodlieſt feathers of all. Now ſeeing, all theſe are given us, why ſhould we be proud of any one of them? Yea, how humble ſhould we be, though adorned with them all! Hence that Apoſtolical check to proud ones (1 *Cor.* 4. 7.) *What haſt thou that thou didſt not receive? And if thou haſt received it, why doſt thou glory and boaſt, as if thou hadſt not received it?* In theſe words he more than implieth two things; Firſt, That they who have received thoſe goodlier feathers of ſpiritual gifts and graces, are in danger of being lifted up by them. Secondly, That they ought not. The Angels who fell, had goodly feathers, and they were lifted up, not only in pride with what they had received, and were beholden to God for, but in pride to have more, or get higher, and not be beholden to God for it. There is a temptation in any good thing, a great temptation in goodly things, to pride; and therefore we had need to pray when we have any thing that is goodly, whether it be Natural, Civil, Moral, or Spiritual, to be kept humble and preſerved from pride. The Apoſtle *Paul* was in danger *to be exalted above meaſure, through the abundance of the revelations* which he had, *when caught up to the third Heaven* (2 *Cor.* 12. 3, 7.) The beſt men on Earth may be over-heated by what they have received from Heaven, and the fleſh may take occaſion, as, *by the Commandment to work in us all manner of concupiſcence* (*Rom.* 7. 8.) ſo, by our raptures in Spirit, to puff us up with that ſpecial concupiſcence called pride.

The Peacock here ſpoken of, is ſo far tranſported with his fine feathers, that he may be called the picture of pride. We have a common ſaying in our Language, *Such a one is as proud as a Peacock*; or, *he is a proud Peacock.* A Peacock and a proud perſon are alike in ſeveral things.

Firſt, As the Peacock is proud of his feathers, ſo is he of his cloths. One of the Ancients reproving pride in clothing, ſaid, in his time, *It is not ſo much the warmth of their clothing, but the curious dye or colour of the cloth which is regarded; and moſt inſiſt more upon the trimming of their veſtures, than upon the increaſe of their vertues.*

In habitu non calor ſed color requiritur, magiſq; veſtium quam virtutum cultui inſiſtitur. Bern.

Secondly, A Peacock, as he is proud of his feathers, ſo he loves they ſhould be ſeen, or he loves to ſhew his fine feathers. The Peacock ſpreads his plumes, ſo doth a proud perſon, Not only he that is proud of his apparel affects to be ſeen, but he that is proud of his gifts, knowledg, learning, eloquence, how doth he ſpread theſe plumes, and affect applauſe! As the vain-glorious Phariſees thought nothing they did in Religion worth the doing, unleſs they were ſeen in doing it; ſo vain-glorious perſons think nothing they have worth the having, unleſs they make others ſee they have it.

Thirdly, A proud man is like to the Peacock in his exulting clamorous voice or cry: Such love to talk high, and are very loud; they love to be heard as well as ſeen, and to hear themſelves ſpeak in the hearing of others.

Fourthly, The Peacock (ſay Naturaliſts) however he hath very goodly feathers, yet hath but a very weak head. 'Tis ſo with proud perſons; whatever fine ſhews they make, their intellectuals are but coarſe; and they that are proud of the ſtrength of their heads, of their wit and underſtandings, have indeed the weakeſt heads of all. There is much folly lodged in that mans head, where much knowledg lodgeth, if pride lodg in his heart too, And ſeeing God gives (in this ſenſe) fooliſh men (as this fooliſh Bird) fine feathers, we need not envy them; for their folly in being proud of their fine feathers, debaſeth them more in the ſight of God, than their fine feathers can honour them in the ſight of men. Uſually proud perſons have little that is good in them; but how much ſoever they have, it will be little more to them than a fine feather, becauſe they think it ſo much, that they are proud of it.

Pavo infirmum habet caput, ſuperbus imbecille judicium.

Fifthly, Naturaliſts ſay, the Peacock (and it is as true of a proud perſon) is *an Angel in aſpect*, or to look on (he makes a goodly ſhew) *a thief in his foot*, *i. e.* he goeth ſoftly without noiſe, yet *hath a voice like Hell*, crying out and ſhrieking very unharmoniouſly to the ear. A proud perſon may be an Angel in aſpect, but he is a thief in his feet, he goeth ſoftly, yet deceitfully; and there is a Hell in his voice. A loud boaſting tongue is as troubleſom and unpleaſant to the ear, as a brawling; and uſually boaſters are brawlers too: For, as *Solomon* hath concluded it (*Prov.* 13. 10.) *By pride cometh contention.*

Angelus aſpectu, pede latro, vo e Gehenna.

Laſtly, Proud ones are like the Peacock, becauſe *that which perſons are moſt commonly proud of, is of little worth.* The Peacock is proud of his feathers, which are worthleſs things, fit only for Children to play with. And though it is a truth, that ſome men (as was ſaid before) are proud of ſuch things as are excellent in themſelves, and of a great intrinſick value, yet (as was alſo ſaid before) whatſoever a man is proud of, will (to his account) be no better than a Peacocks feather. A man that is proud of his beauty and apparel, of his riches and outward ſplendor, may truly be ſaid to be proud of a feather; *Solomon*, the wiſeſt of Kings, and taught by the Spirit of God, hath written vanity and inſufficiency upon all worldly things. And if a man be proud of his underſtanding, knowledg, or any internal endowment (which are things of real excellency) they all become vain to him; yea, if a man be proud of his graces, though they ſhall never be utterly vain to him, yet ſo far as he is proud of them, they are vain to him, being hindred by the preſent prevailings of corruptions, from doing that which is one of the moſt proper works of them, the keeping him humble, empty, and nothing in his own eyes. *Gaveſt thou goodly wings to the Peacocks*;

And wings and feathers unto the Oſtrich?

Several Tranſlators (as was toucht before) find two diſtinct Fowls in this latter part of the Verſe. Mr. *Broughton* ſaith, *Gaveſt thou feathers to the Stork and Oſtrich?* And ſo others. Our Tranſlators put it thus in the Margin, *The feathers of the Stork and Oſtrich.* The occaſion of this difference in tranſlating, ariſes from the Original word uſed laſt in this Verſe, which commonly ſignifies *a feather* only, yet is ſometimes taken to ſignifie the Fowl it ſelf, or a feathered Fowl; and becauſe the Oſtrich hath the richeſt and moſt beautiful feathers, therefore it is here tranſlated, *the Oſtrich.* The feathers of the Oſtrich being that for which ſhe is moſt famous, the Oſtrich her ſelf may (not inelegantly) be expreſſed by a word, which properly and ſtrictly taken, ſignifies nothing but a feacher; but moſt Interpreters taking that word in its proper ſence to ſignifie a feather, take the former word, which firſtly and properly ſignifies a *Stork*, for *the Oſtrich. Gaveſt thou wings and feathers to the Oſtrich.* The reaſon, I conceive, why that word (*Chaſidah*) which properly ſignifieth a *Stork*, is here rendred *an Oſtrich*, is becauſe the deſcription given of the Bird here intended in the five Verſes following, doth no way agree with the Stork, but fairly with the Oſtrich; for the Stork (ſay Naturaliſts) is of a very good and pittiful Nature, and hath its name from a root in the Hebrew, which ſignifies *kindneſs, pitty and tenderneſs*, whereas the Creature here deſcribed, is void of all theſe, as will appear in opening this context. And therefore Grammarains tell us, that the Oſtrich is ſo called by the rule of contraries, merciful or kind, for unkind and cruel; which way of ſpeaking is uſual in the Hebrew, as alſo in other languages. Thus the Hebrew word for a *Harlot*, ſignifies one that *is Holy*; Harlots being moſt unholy, filthy, and unclean Women, proſtituting their bodies to the luſts of others, and inviting them to unlawful pleaſures.

An pennam Ciconiæ aut Struthiocamelo dares? Jun. נצה *Pluma pennæ vel juxta quoſdam Struthiocamelus, quaſi pennatus dictus.* Buxtorf. חסידה *Ciconia, ſic dicta a beneficētia quaſi beneficam dicas à nomine* חסד *hic ſignificat Struthiocamelum per antiphraſin, eò quòd avis illa minime ſit benefica, ut quæ laboret ſingulari* Ἀστοργίᾳ *fœtum ſuum Pia Ciconia pietatis cultrix Ciconia.* Petronius & Solinus.

And that we are not here to underſtand the Stork properly taken, but the Oſtrich, is plain for theſe three reaſons; the firſt of which hath been already intimated, the Bird here intended being of a quite contrary nature to the ſtork. Secondly, The Stork hath no ſuch beautiful feathers as ſeem to be given to the Bird here ſpoken of, yet we muſt not believe that all thoſe beautiful colours in which Oſtriches feathers are ſeen and worn, are natural to them; for ſhe hath no feathers of note, of any colour growing on her, but black and white, all others are died and Artificial. Thirdly, The Stork doth not lay her Eggs on the ground, but builds on high in Trees. (*Pſal.* 104. 17.) *As for the Stork, the Fir-Trees are her houſe*, whereas the Bird hear mentioned, goes upon the ground; though ſhe hath wings, yet not wings able to lift her up to a Tree, or take any lofty flight in the Air. Naturaliſts deſcribing the Oſtrich, tell us, that ſhe is ſuch a Bird as is alſo a kind of beaſt. Some creatures are of two kinds in one, living partly upon the earth, and partly in the watter; here the Oſtrich may upon another account be numbred among theſe, he uſing the wing to flutter a little in the Air like a Bird, yet moſtly like a beaſt moving upon the Earth. And hence a learned Author placed the Oſtrich between Fowls that fly in the Air, and things that breath or move upon the Earth. *Pliny* reports, the Oſtriches of *Africa* and *Arabia* to be very big bodied, as tall in ſtature as a Horſe and his rider, and more ſwift of foot than any Horſe, being helped by their wings, which yet are not ſtrong enough to raiſe their bulky bodies above the earth.

Struthio eſt avis quædam appropinquans ad genus beſtiarum, unde licet habeat pennas ad modum animalium: non tamen ſe poteſt in altum elevare. Aquin. *Struthio eſt eſt in confinio volucrum & reptilium, pennas quippe habet ut avis, ſed è terra non tollitur ut reptile. Mirum animal, alatum ut volucria neque tamen volucre.*

Upon theſe grounds and conſiderations it is, that all theſe Interpreters, who will have but one Fowl of the Air to be intended in this part of the Text, fix upon the *Oſtrich*, not upon the *Stork*; though the word *Chaſidah*, which they tranſlate *Oſtrich*, doth properly ſignifie the *Stork*.

Howbeit, ſome ſee no cogent reaſon why we may not expound the word *Chaſidah* properly by the *Stork*, and yet ſalve all the former objections, by rendring the word *Notſa* an *Oſtrich*. There is a neceſſity that we find the Oſtrich in this Verſe, becauſe (as was ſaid before) the deſcription given in the five following Verſes, is not applicable to the Stork, but Oſtrich; notwithſtanding, if while we apply the word *Chaſidah* to the Stork, the word *Notſa* may ſerve as well, if not better, to ſignifie the Oſtrich. Why may we not (ſay they) take in both, ſo render the Text thus, *Who gave wings to the Stork and the Oſtrich?* And ſo all difficulties will be removed, and the word *Renanim* reſerved free for the Peacock.

But foraſmuch as our Tranſlation puts the Oſtrice alone into the Text, I ſhall not add any thing concerning the Nature of the *Stork*, but only of the Oſtrich; *Gaveſt thou wings and feathers to the Oſtrich?*

The word rendred *Wings*, ſignifies *ſtrength*; the ſtrength of Birds is in their wings (as of man in his arms) and ſome Birds are exceeding *ſtrong of wing*.

The word rendred by us *feathers*, ſignifies in the root to *flie*, becauſe feathers are the inſtruments of flying; yet others derive it from a word, which ſignifies to grow or flouriſh, becauſe feathers grow and flouriſh upon Fowls, as Herbs and Flowers out of, and upon the ground. And the reaſon why ſome conceive the Oſtrich is meant by this word (*Notſa*) which we tranſlate *feathers*, is becauſe the feathers of the Oſtrich are ſo like beautiful Flowers, or a goodly Garland of flowers. Great Princes in all ages having adorned their Hats or Hair with the plumes of the Oſtrich, ſet in Ouches of Gold, and beſpangled with the rareſt Gems or precious Stones.

אביר *Robuſtus, fortis, hinc* אבר *penna, ala, quod in alis robur avium ſit.* נוצה *Pluma. Kimchi à* נצה *Volavit, deducit, ſed malim à* נוצ *effloruit, quod in avibus plumæ enaſcantur ut flores & herbæ è terra.* Mer.

What the Nature, the cuſtoms and qualities of the Oſtrich are, will appear in opening the latter part of this context. All that I ſhall add here, is,

Firſt, To ſet down more fully the deſcription which the Natural Hiſtorian gives of her. *The African and Ethiopian Oſtriches* (ſaith he) *are the greateſt of Birds, even as big as a Beaſt, in height they are taller than a Horſe and his Rider ſittnig on his back; they alſo exceed the Horſe in ſwiftneſs of foot, their wings ſeeming to be given them only to help them in running, for they can ſcarcely fly at all, or lift themſelves much above ground. They are cloven-footed, or hoof-forked like a Hart, their hoofs or claws ſerving them to gather up ſtones, which in their flight or retreat, they throw backward upon ſuch as hunt them. They have an admirable concoction, digeſting the hardeſt things which they ſwallow down; nor is their folly leſs admirable, thinking themſelves ſufficiently hid, when their heads are. Their Eggs ſerve for cups to drink in, and their feathers adorn the Creſts and Helmets of the Warrior.*

Plin. l. 10. c. 1.

And beſides the beauty of her feathers, their equality or evenneſs is ſo remarkable, that among the *Egyptians*, the feather of an Oſtrich was taken for the ſymbol of equity; ſo that when they would ſignifie a man of an equal ſpirit and converſation towards all men, and in all things, they uſed to paint the feather of an Oſtrich.

Secondly, I ſhall add this alſo; that as in the Peacock we had the repreſentation of a proud perſon, ſo in the Oſtrich the lively image or picture of an Hypocrite, which may be held out and made good in theſe five particulars.

Firſt, The Oſtrich is a kind of middle Creature (as was ſaid) between a Bird that flies in the Air, and a beaſt that goes upon the ground, having ſomewhat of both, yet is properly neither. Thus it is with the Hypocrite or falſe-hearted Chriſtian; he ſtands between a godly man and a profane man, he is neither; he is not profane, in ſtrict ſence (though really he be ſo, as the Hebrew word for a Hypocrite imports, yet (I ſay) in ſtrict ſence he is not profane) becauſe he makes a profeſſion, and appears to men in a form of godlineſs; yet he is not godly, becauſe he only makes a profeſſion, and appears in a form of godlineſs, either denying, or at leaſt, not having any power of godlineſs. A Hypocrite hangs, as I may ſay, between God and man, between the ways of holineſs, and the ways of ſin; he either halts between two Religions, as *Elijah* told the *Jews* (1 *King.* 18. 21.) or takes not one right ſtept in that one which he pretends to; he is (as it was ſaid of the Church of *Laodicea*) *neither hot nor cold*, but between both, *luke-warm*. As the Oſtrich is a creature between two, ſomething like a Fowl of the Air, and ſomething like a beaſt of the earth, or (as the Latine word for an Oſtrich implies) *a Camel winged, a winged Camel*; ſo is a Hypocrite, a kind of a middle-man, between a good man and a bad, in appearance very good, but in truth and reality ſtark

Sunt animalia amphibia quæ non facile ſtatuas an aquatilia ſint, an terreſtria, volatilia an terreſtria; ut veſpertilio, qui eſt mus pennatus; & Struthiocamelus, qui eſt quaſi Camelus alatus; utriuſq; naturæ participes & expertes. Sanct.

naught; and by ſo much, worſe than the worſt of profane ones, by how much he had a mind to appear better than the beſt, at leaſt among the beſt of holy ones.

Secondly, This Oſtrich, as he is deſcribed, is a Creature without natural affection; and ſo the Hypocrite and falſe-hearted profeſſor, is always without ſpiritual, Chriſtian, gracious affections, and very often without natural and meer humane affections. That's one part of the character which the Apoſtle gives of thoſe who have a form of godlineſs, but deny the power (2 *Tim.* 3.3.)

Cœleſtia ſe quærere ſimulantes, terrenis adhærent.

Thirdly, The Oſtrich hath feathers, but cannot flie; the Oſtrich ſpreads her wings as if ſhe would flie aloſt, yet cannot make a lofty flight; ſhe raiſeth her ſelf no higher above the Earth, than a man may hop or leap; her Body or Earthly part is ſo ponderous, that her wings cannot raiſe her far into the Air, much leſs bear her up long there. It is ſo with the Hypocrite, he hath wings, and he ſeems to ſpread them, as if he had ſtrong deſires, and great deſigns Heaven wards; he would make you believe he is both from and for above, yet he cannot get off the Earth; he is an *Earthly minded man*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks of ſuch, though as to an outward profeſſion, and ſome formal actions, he ſeems to ſoar aloft, and live above the World, yet he ever drives an Earthly trade, and hath ſome baſe carnal aim or other, in his higheſt ſervices. The Earth is every natural mans Center, and therefore though (as any heavy Body, a Stone or clod of Clay) he may be forced upward, yet when that impreſſion is ſpent, he falls down again to Earthly things, which only are connatural to him.

Omnia digerere poteſt Struthio.

Fourthly, The Oſtrich is a Creature of a mighty digeſtion, of a hot ſtomach; and therefore is painted and figured with a piece of Iron in her mouth, implying, ſhe digeſts Iron. Thus the Hypocrite can digeſt the hardeſt things, even that which is harder than Iron, ſin; that which lieth upon the ſtomach of a godly man as heavy as a ſtone, that is, which burdens his Conſcience, that the Hypocrite can ſwallow, it goes down eaſily with him, and is as eaſily digeſted; he can ſwallow this and that ſin without trouble, eſpecially, if he can but do it unſeen or in ſecret; he makes no bones (as we ſay) of any thing, which may but feed ſome luſt, he hath a Conſcience wide enough, and hot enough, and ſtrong enough to digeſt Iron, any unlawful deed if it ſerve his turn, or may turn to his worldly advantage. That which a man truly fearing God, and ſtrongly reſolved to do his known will, and nothing elſe knowingly, cannot, will not do, nor touch for a World, that he can do, and will do for ſome poor pittances, much more for the great things of the World.

Tanta eorum ſtoliditas, ut cum colla frutice occultaverint latere ſe exiſtimant. Plin. l. 10. c. 1.

Fifthly, *Pliny* ſaith, the Oſtrich being a very tall Creature, is yet ſo fooliſh, that if ſhe hide her head, ſhe thinks herſelf all hid and ſafe from danger; ſhe concludes no man ſees her, if ſhe ſees no man. Thus it is with the Hypocrite, if he can but be out of ſight himſelf, he thinks none ſee him, no not God himſelf (*Pſal.* 94. 6,7.) *They ſlay the widow and the ſtranger, and murther the fatherleſs; yet they ſay, the Lord ſhall not ſee, neither ſhall the God of* Jacob *regard it.* They think they do all in ſuch ſecrecy, that as men do not, ſo God ſhall not behold it.

Laſtly, The Oſtrich hath very gay feathers, of much more worth than the Peacock, yet the Oſtrich hath no more wit than the Peacock; one is the emblem of a proud man, the other of a Hypocrite, both bravely clothed, yet with nothing but feathers.

From both, I would infer theſe two or three things, which may hold out much of the mind of God in this diſcourſe with *Job*, and with ſome Interpreters conceive God chiefly aimed at in this place, by telling *Job* or minding him, that he had given goodly wings, and gay feathers to Peacocks and Oſtriches: We ſee thoſe Creatures which have little worth in themſelves, have very goodly Ornaments put upon them by the hand of God. Hence we may infer,

Firſt, *God oftentimes beſtoweth the gay and glitter of worldly things upon the worſt, the unworthieſt among the Sons of men*; upon ſuch as have no more wiſdom in them, than a Peacock or an Oſtrich. And if ſo, then

Secondly, Take this inference; *We ſhould not envy any ſort of men in the World their gay feathers.* Job ſtumbled at this, and ſo did *David*, who ſaid of himſelf, *I was envious at the fooliſh, when I ſaw the proſperity of the wicked* (*Pſal.* 73. 3.) *David* was troubled to ſee them garniſhed and trim'd like Peacocks and Oſtriches, flaunting with their feathers, while he poor man was chaſtened every morning; yet he quickly ſaw he had little reaſon for this trouble, when once he went into the *Sanctuary*; for there he learned in what a ſlippery place they ſtood, and therefore he called himſelf *ignorant fool and Beaſt*, for envying them their gayeſt feathers, their greateſt proſperity. (*verſ.* 22.) Let it not offend us to behold bad men in the beſt array. Is any man offended becauſe a Peacock or an Oſtrich hath ſuch goodly feathers? Surely, no man ought to complain of or find fault with the diſpenſations of God, becauſe he hath beſtowed a richer ſuit of feathers upon the proud Peacock and the fooliſh Oſtrich, than he hath upon the pious, kind-hearted, well-natur'd Stork, or the innocent Dove. Why then ſhould any be offended or murmur, if God give the good things of the World to thoſe that have no more goodneſs than Peacocks or Oſtriches, if he fills and adorns ſome bad men, with better things of this life, than many that are good? The Prophet (*Ezek.* 17. 4.) gives the deſcription of an Eagle, having *long wings, and embroidered feathers, or feathers of many colours.* Yet that Eagle was but a Heathen Prince, and he none of the beſt, though one of the greateſt of that ſort. *Bad men have their imbroiderers*, the paint of an Earthly Glory, and that is all the portion, all the good they are ever like to have; as *Abraham* told the rich man in the Parable (*Luke* 16.) *Who was clothed with purple and fine linnen, and fared deliciouſly every day while he lived; Son remember thou haſt had thy good things.* Fine cloths and delicious fare is the all of good (and how poor an all is that) which ſome men deſire, and which any ungodly man ſhall receive from the hand of God.

Argumentum videtur eſſe tale. Sicut quælibet avis ſuis plumis, ita tu, O Job, *& alii homines ſua ſorte contenti eſſe debent.* Scult.

Thirdly, We may infer; *Let all learn to be content with, and thankful for their own clothing or portion in this World, though it be but mean, coarſe or plain, and much inferiour to what they ſee others have.* Thoſe Birds which have but poor feathers are ſatisfied with them, as well as the Peacock and the Oſtrich with their gaudy ones. By this argument God would perſwade *Job*, to be quiet and patient, though his clothing at that time was very mean, yea, though all the gay feathers of his former proſperity were pluckt off and he ſtript naked, as he (poor man) ſaid at the twenty-firſt *verſe* of the firſt *Chapter*; *Naked came I out of my Mothers womb, and naked ſhall I return thither*, that is, to the womb of the Earth, man's common Parent. Though we *make not a fair ſhew* (as the Apoſtle ſaith ſome deſired to do, *Gal.* 6. 12.) *in the fleſh*; though we have not ſuch goodly feathers on our backs, in our outward robes as other have, let us be thankful for a dreſs of the meaneſt clothing, and patient though dreſſed in ſackcloth. God is a ſoveraign Lord, he is at his liberty to give goodly wings and glorious feathers to this Bird, and plain ones to another: And the ſame liberty he may and doth take and exerciſe when and where he pleaſeth, among the Children of men. *Gaveſt thou the goodly wings to the Peacocks? Or wings and feathers to the Oſtrich?*

The Lord having thus deſcribed the Oſtrich by her outſide, her wings and feathers, proceeds to ſhew her inſide, her diſpoſition and qualities. And we might expect, that a Creature clothed with ſuch lovely wings and feathers, would have had ſome lovely and rare qualities, whereas the Oſtrich hath not one that's commendable, all that is ſaid of her ſignifying an ignoble diſpoſition. For firſt, ſhe is forgetful and careleſs of that, which ſhe ſhould be very careful of.

Verſe 14. **Which leaveth her eggs in the Earth, and warmeth them in the duſt.**

15. **And forgetteth that the foot may cruſh them, or that the wild Beaſts may break them.**

Here's the folly, the careleſsneſs, and blockiſhneſs of this Creature.

She leaveth her eggs in the Earth.

The eggs of the Oſtrich are great, and the ſhell very hard; we often ſee them ſet curiouſly in Gold or Silver, and ſo uſed as Cups or drinking Veſſels. But of what worth or uſe ſoever her eggs are, ſhe uſeth them very coarſely, and carries it towards them as if they were little worth.

Other Birds, when they lay their eggs, do their utmoſt to put them out of danger, they ſit upon them themſelves, and hatch them; but the Oſtrich (ſay ſome) leaves them in the Earth and is gone, ſhe takes no further care of them; where once they are laid, there ſhe lets them lie. This (I ſay) is contrary to the nature of other Birds, who lay their eggs in Neſts, as much as they can from danger, but *ſhe leaveth them in the Earth,*

And warmeth them in the duſt.

Solis æſtu fovet ova (ſc. Deus) quæ ſtruthiocamelus in arena poſuerat, donec excludantur pulli. Jun.

Which is not to be underſtood, as if ſhe left them there on purpoſe or deſignedly to warm them in the duſt, for that were a piece of diſcretion, but ſhe is reproved for improvidence; and therefore where 'tis ſaid, ſhe leaves them, the meaning is, ſhe looks no more after them, they are little beholden to her, ſhe will not (as ſome intimate) take pains, nor hath ſhe the patience to ſit on them, and hatch them as other Fowls do. Several Authors affirm, that the eggs thus left, are hatcht by the heat or warmth of the Sun. This *Bochartus* rejects as a meer dream, affirming, that all her eggs ſo left in the ſands, are corrupted, not hatched; and tells us from others, that the Oſtrich having forgotten where ſhe left her own eggs, happening upon the eggs of ſome other Oſtrich, ſits upon and hatches them; according to which, the *Chaldee* ſaith, *She brings young ones which are not truly hers.* But I leave theſe things to the conſideration of the Reader.

Others give two reaſons, why the Oſtrich leaves her eggs in the duſt, and doth not ſit upon them; both which are very unſuitable to what God himſelf ſaith of the Oſtrich. Firſt, (They ſay) ſhe leaveth them and warms them in the duſt, leſt ſhe ſhould break them with the weight of her Body; but doubtleſs there is no Fowl ſo heavy, but may ſit on her eggs, and not break them. The leaſt Bird that ſits upon eggs may break them if ſhe be careleſs, and the greateſt may preſerve them by care. Beſides, an Oſtriches egg is a very hard egg, and not eaſily broken; therefore ſurely, that cannot be the reaſon. Secondly, That ſhe doth not ſit upon her eggs her ſelf, becauſe ſhe wanteth feathers; her under parts being bare and naked, and ſo very unfit to yield warmth. But if the Oſtrich did thus upon a natural inſtinct, there would be no reaſon to charge her with folly, or to ſay God hath deprived her of wiſdom; for as the former reaſon, ſo this ſhould prove her to be a wiſe and provident Creature, therefore we muſt lay the reaſon ſomewhere elſe. And God himſelf hath given us the true reaſon, her blockiſh forgetfulneſs and unnaturalneſs, having no conſideration how ſoon her eggs may be ſpoiled.

Verſe 15. **And forgetteth that the foot may cruſh them.**

Ita ſtolida eſt ut non cogitat fieri poſſe, ut ova ſua, quæ humi reliquit, pedibus ferarum aut hominum premantur. Merc.

That is, ſhe hath no thought that they may take hurt, and therefore takes no care, nor makes any proviſion to preſerve them from hurt; ſhe minds not, nor doth at all apprehend the danger which her eggs are in: *She forgetteth that the foot* (of man) *may cruſh them,*

Or that the wild Beaſt (that paſſeth along in thoſe wilderneſſes and deſart places) **may break them.**

The Hebrew is *threſh them,* which implyeth more than cracking, even breaking them all to pieces.

Thus we ſee what report God himſelf makes of the Oſtrich; but many other things are reported of the Oſtrich by natural Hiſtorians, which we have no reaſon to believe, becauſe they contradict the report which the Lord here makes of her, unleſs they mean ſome other ſort of Oſtrich than is here deſcribed. For *Ælian* tells us, The Oſtrich ſits diligently upon her eggs, till the young ones are hatcht, and then is very tender over them. Both which the Lord denies concerning the Oſtrich in the Text, while he ſaith, *She leaveth her eggs in the Earth, and warmeth them in the duſt, and forgetteth that the foot may cruſh them,* &c.

Ælianus *l.* 4. *c.* 6. 36.

Hence Note, Firſt, *Among unreaſonable Creatures Beaſts or Birds, there are ſome further from reaſon than others are.*

Though none of the Beaſts of the Earth, or Fowls of the Air, have Reaſon, properly ſo called (that's the priviledg of Angels and Men) yet there are ſome of them, that by a natural inſtinct, ſhew a great deal of reaſon in what they do, both as to their own preſervation, and the proviſion which they make for their young ones; in which latter reſpect, eſpecially this Scripture, takes notice of the deficiency of the Oſtrich.

Secondly, Foraſmuch as the Spirit of God reports this as the folly of the Oſtrich, that ſhe leaves her eggs to ſo much hazzard and danger.

Obſerve, *To leave any thing in danger, or not to provide againſt danger, is a great argument of folly.*

It is a great piece of wiſdom to foreſee danger, and a greater to provide well againſt it. *A prudent man* (ſaith *Solomon,* Prov. 22. 3.) *foreſeeth the evil, and hideth himſelf: But the ſimple paſs on, and are puniſhed. Noah* heard of the flood, and *being warned of God, moved with fear* (he both feared God, and was afraid of the danger) *prepared an Ark to the ſaving of his Houſe,* that is, his houſhold and family. In all caſes, as 'tis our wiſdom to foreſee danger, ſo 'tis our duty to provide againſt danger; not to leave our eggs, any thing we have, much leſs our lives, leaſt of all our own Souls, or the Souls of others, in danger. How many leave the Souls of their Children, the Souls of their Relations in the Earth, yea, to the Earth, or (as we ſay) to the wide World; and forget what ſnares, what temptations they may fall into, what foot may cruſh them, what wild Beaſt may tread upon them; yea, many that have the charge of Souls, as Miniſters, leave their Flocks, and forget the danger that may come to them, they forget that the foot may cruſh them, that Satan, and thoſe wild Beaſts, their luſts, may ruin and deſtroy them. We may ſay to ſuch, as *Eliab,* the elder Brother of *David,* ſaid to him (when he was ſent by his Father to viſit his Brethren in the Camp) (1 *Sam.* 17. 28.) *With whom haſt thou left thoſe few ſheep in the Wilderneſs?* Doſt thou know what will become of thy Sheep? Thou haſt left them for Lions and Bears to devour and to tear. So we may ſay to many (who are hardned like the Oſtrich againſt her eggs) with whom have you left your Flocks? With whom have you left thoſe few Sheep, thoſe poor Souls left under your charge? May not wild Beaſts, Bears and Lions deſtroy them? Not to foreſee danger, ſhews ſome want of prudence; but not to provide againſt danger foreſeen, is an argument of greateſt foolly.

Again, Conſider this fooliſh Creature the Oſtrich, leaves her eggs at (as we ſay) ſixes and ſevens, and is gone, ſhe never troubles her ſelf more with them, yet they are preſerved, and her kind is continued, though little thanks to her.

Hence we learn, Thirdly, *There is a wonderful providence of God the Creator, watching over thoſe things which are left in hazzard, by the folly of man or of any other Creature.*

Quanto ſtruthio-camelus ſtolidior, & ſuorum ovorum oblitior, tanto Dei providentia ſolertior & benignior.

By how much the Oſtrich is more neglectful, by ſo much the providence of God is more watchful. In the careleſneſs of the Creature, how doth the care of God ſhine forth! When they that are ingaged to, or ſhould provide for the good of others, or to prevent their evil, neglect that duty, how wonderful is the goodneſs and kindneſs of God in providing for them, and protecting them! *David* had this confidence (*Pſal.* 27. 10.) *When my Father and my Mother* (like the Oſtrich) *forſake me* (that is, though my Father and Mother ſhould prove ſo unnatural, as to forſake me, and expoſe me to the wide World,) *yet the Lord will take me up.* How good is God, who takes care for them, for whom neareſt Relations take none! The Prophet puts this queſtion, as if the negative anſwer were out of queſtion (*Iſa.* 49. 15.) *Can a Woman forget* (like the Oſtrich her eggs) *her ſucking Child, that ſhe ſhould not have compaſſion on the Son of her womb?* Surely, if the anſwer were to be made to this queſtion in the light of Nature, would it not be this? She cannot, 'tis impoſſible ſhe ſhould. But how doth the Spirit of God anſwer in the Text? Not abſolutely in the negative, ſhe cannot; nor abſolutely in the affirmative, ſhe will; but mixtly or comparatively; *Yea, they may forget; yet will I not forget thee;* that is, though it would be a very ſtrange thing if they ſhould, yet poſſibly they may, but 'tis impoſſible that I ſhould forget thee. Or thus, though Women ſhould turn Oſtriches, and forget their own iſſue, yet *will I not forget thee;* that is, I will have thee in everlaſting remembrance, as it followeth in the next words of the Prophet (*verſ.* 16.) *Behold! I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands, thy walls are continually before me.*

And as the Lord will not forget his *Sion*, the Church, nor leave her to the danger of being cruſht by every foot; ſo whatever is left to hazard or danger, whether, Firſt, by any unreaſonable Creature, as here in the Text; or Secondly, by unreaſonable and fooliſh men (from whom to be delivered the Apoſtle begged earneſtly, 2 *Theſ.*3.2.) or Thirdly, which the wiſeſt men, with all their care, and power, and diligence cannot ſecure from danger and hazard; there is a wakeful eye of providence, that will take care in all ſuch caſes, eſpecially, in the laſt. For, when men have done their utmoſt, to keep the foot from cruſhing us, and the wild Beaſts from deſtroying us, but cannot, then the care of God appears moſt in doing it. And in the caſe of that double neceſſity, when good men have done their beſt to keep us ſafe, but cannot; and bad men have done their worſt, to expoſe us unto, and leave us in danger, we may, and muſt leave all to God, who naturally takes care of all Creatures, and is the Saviour of all men (both as to temporal and eternal ſalvation, 1 *Tim.* 4. 10.) eſpecially of them that believe.

Thus we have the firſt part of the deſcription of the Oſtrich, who being ſo very fooliſh, not to diſcharge her duty to her eggs, God himſelf doth it, his providence orders the Sun to warm them, and the Sand to bring them forth. And as the Oſtrich, is careleſs of her eggs, before they are hatcht, ſo ſhe neglects her young ones as much when they are hatcht, as is ſhewed in the next *verſe*.

Verſe 16. **She is hardened againſt her young ones, as if they were not hers.**

This *verſe* gives us a farther deſcription of that *Bird-beaſt the Oſtrich*, by her unnaturalneſs to her off-ſpring; having left her eggs careleſly to hatch or periſh in the duſt, ſhe is as careleſs of her brood when they are hatched; when the heat of the Sun (ſay ſome) by the providence of God, hath done one part of her duty, to bring them forth, ſhe neglects the other part of her duty, which is, to bring them up; and ſo the pains which ſhe took in laying ſo many great eggs (one tells us, her neſt is uſually ſtored with fourſcore eggs, others ſay with twenty, the leaſt ſay with twelve or ten) ſeems to be in vain, ſhe taking no care of them, nor having any regard to them. This the Spirit of God expreſſeth in the beginning of *verſ.* 16. *She is hardned againſt her young ones*; ſhe is as forgetful of her chickens (if I may ſo call them) as ſhe was of her eggs. *Rabbi Abraham* reads thus, *God hath hardned her againſt her young ones*; and the reaſon that he gives for it, is, becauſe the word is in the Maſculine Gender, which cannot well agree with the Feminine *her*. And we find it in an active ſignification aſcribed to God (*Iſa.*63.17.) *O Lord* (ſaid the Church there) *why haſt thou hardened our hearts from thy fear?* Nor is it any where elſe found in the whole Bible, but in this place of *Job*; in this ſence the *Rabbin* expounds it here, nor is it either an impertinent or an unprofitable ſenſe. For as God ſometimes judicially hardens the hearts of men, ſo he doth alſo naturally harden the hearts of ſome Beaſts and Birds, and makes them of a cruel diſpoſition againſt their own kind, and then they let them ſink or ſwim, and expoſe them to the greateſt danger without any the leaſt proviſion for them.

Verbum קשח *non alibi quam hic* & Iſa. 63. 17. *occurrit, ac penè idem valet quod* הקשח *in* Hiphil. *obduravit.* Merc.

The Septuagint or Greek Interpreters, do not read as we, *She is hardned againſt her young ones*, but taking the ſame active ſignification of the verb, ſay thus; *She hardneth her young ones*; that is, ſhe doth not bring them up tenderly, nor delicately, but leaves them to ſhift for themſelves, and ſo hardneth them. And the reaſon of that rendring may be this, becauſe there is no particle in the Hebrew expreſſing the word, *againſt*; we ſay, *She is hardned againſt her young ones*, but the prepoſition commonly rendred *againſt*, is not in the Hebrew; that ſaith only, *She hardneth her young ones*, or, *ſhe is hardning her young ones*; but the ſenſe riſeth much to the ſame point, whether we read, *She hardneth her young ones*, or, *is hardned againſt her young ones*; for by being hardned againſt them, or by uſing them hardly, ſhe hardneth them. Many Parents harden their Children by being hard to them. If we put the ſenſe of both readings together, it will make the matter more compleat; ſhe hardneth her young ones, by hardning herſelf againſt them. Our reading is full and clear, *She hardneth her ſelf againſt her young ones*, or *Children*; ſo the word (ſtrictly taken) ſignifies,

על *Contra non habetur in fonte, ideo malui duriter habet aut tractat filios ſuos, potius quam indurat ſe contra filios ſuos.* Druſ.

As though they were not hers.

Implying, that the conſideration of them, as hers, ſhould have made her more tender of them; yet ſhe carrieth it as if ſhe had no relation to them. The Hebrew is, *For that they were not hers*; which here, as in other parallel Scriptures, is rightly ſenſed in our Tranſlation, *As though they were not hers*. As if it had been ſaid, ſhe could not do otherwiſe, nor worſe by them, if they were meer ſtrangers to her, or ſuch as ſhe had no title to. She deals no better with them, than as if *they either were not hers*, or as if they *were nothing to her*, and ſhe no way concerned in them, Such is that complaint of the Church (*Lam.* 1.) *Is it nothing to you, all ye that paſs by* (and ſee my ſorrow) is it nothing to you? Are you not at all concern'd? Am I to you meerly as a ſtranger, that you paſs by and take no notice of my ſufferings? Thus the holy Ghoſt deſcribes the Oſtrich, ſhe is hardned againſt her young ones, as though they were none of hers, or as if ſhe had nothing to do with them.

ללא לה *Videtur hic poſitum eſſe pro.* כלא *ut ſæpe alias,* Lamed *pro* Caph *uſurpatur; ſic erunt in carnem unam,* i. e. *quaſi caro una.* Druſ.

Hence Note, Firſt, *They that deal hardly with others, are hardned againſt them.*

When *Pharaoh* dealt ſo extream hardly with the people of *Iſrael*, when he increaſed their number of bricks, and denied them ſtraw, and made them ſerve with rigor, he was extreamly hardned againſt them. That ſpiritual Judgment, hardneſs of heart, was deeply upon *Pharaoh*, when he dealt ſo hardly with the choſen people of God, notwithſtanding all the corporal Judgments which God brought upon him. And as it was in that caſe between *Pharaoh* and the Children of *Iſrael*, ſo in any caſe whatſoever, he that dealeth hardly with others, hath a heart hardned againſt them; as this *Beaſt-bird*, the Oſtrich (upon that account) is ſaid to harden her ſelf againſt her young ones.

Note, Secondly, *'Tis an aggravation of hard-heartedneſs, to deal hardly with thoſe that are young and tender.*

They that are grown up, they that are hardned, can endure hardſhip. The Apoſtle *Paul* would have every believer, eſpecially a Miniſter of the Goſpel, to *endure hardſhip* (2*Tim.*2.3.) 'Tis both their duty and wiſdom to harden themſelves, who are like to endure hardſhip, and to find the World hardned againſt them. All ſuch ſhould inure themſelves to endure hard things, or to *ſuffer evil* (as the word there is) *as the good Souldiers of Jeſus Chriſt*. Good Souldiers, eſpecially old experienced Souldiers, will indure hardſhip; but your raw Souldiers, new liſted Souldiers, who never ſaw Battel or Siege, can hardly endure it. The Oſtrich puts her young ones to hardſhip. We ſhould be very careful, if we put hardſhip upon any, to put it upon thoſe only that are fit to endure it; we ſhould not put hardſhip upon young ones; 'tis the ſpirit of an Oſtrich, of a Beaſt-bird to do ſo. *Jacob* had a tender reſpect to his flocks, for this reaſon; when *Eſau* would have journied with him, no, ſaith he (*Gen.*33.13.) *My Lord knoweth that the Children are tender, and the Flocks and Herds with young are with me, and if men ſhould over-drive them one day, all the Flock would die.* As if he had ſaid, ſhould I uſe theſe young ones hardly, that are not fitted for hardſhip, I ſhould deſtroy all. *Jacob* had a tender care of thoſe that were tender. The Miniſters of the Goſpel ſhould take heed that they harden not themſelves againſt the young ones of the flock, ſuch as are newly come in to Jeſus Chriſt, late Converts, *Babes in Chriſt*, as the Apoſtle calls them (1 *Cor.* 3. 1.) theſe ſhould be dealt tenderly with. The Prophet deſcribes the tender care of Chriſt towards his people under this notion (*Iſa.*40.11.) *He ſhall feed his flock like a Shepherd, he ſhall gather the Lambs with his arms, and carry them in his boſom, and ſhall gently lead thoſe that are with young*; and ſhall his Miniſters hurry and over-drive them? When any do ſo, are they not as the Oſtrich in the Text, hardned againſt their young ones, yea againſt thoſe that are with young?

Σὺ οὖν κακοπάθησον. *Tu igitur perfer adverſa.* Bez.

Again, From that addition to her hard-heartedneſs; not only is ſhe hardned againſt her young ones, but ſhe is hardned *as if they were not hers,*

Hence Note, *It is moſt unnatural to be hardned againſt thoſe to whom we ſtand engaged by near relation or natural bonds.*

To look upon thoſe as not ours, that are ours, is an extremity of hardneſs. She is a hard Mother indeed, who deals with her Children as if they were not her Children. The Apoſtle concludes univerſally in the negative (*Eph.* 5.29.) *No man ever hated his own fleſh, but loved it and cheriſhed it, as the Lord doth the Church.* Now as it is an unnatural thing for a man to hate his own fleſh perſonal, ſo his own fleſh relational. Chriſt ſpeaking of the World, ſaith (*John* 15.19.) *The World loves its own.* The World doth not love you, ſaith Chriſt to his Diſciples; yea, *becauſe I have choſen you out of the World, therefore the World hates you.* The World and you are not of a piece, are not of a Pedigree, nor of the ſame extraction; you are of another World, and have had both a birth and a breeding, differing (*toto cœlo*) *heavenly wide* from theirs; and therefore 'tis no great wonder if the World hate you, who are not of it: But the World loves its own. They have a Nature more unnatural than the World, who are hardned againſt their own relations. Jeſus Chriſt (*John* 1.11.) *came to his own, and his own received him not.* Now, as not to be reſpected by our own, ſo not to reſpect our own, is unnatural. It was the ſin of the *Jewiſh* Nation, that they did not reſpect Chriſt, they being Chriſts own according to the fleſh. Their ſin is great, and they do ſhamefully, who will not do what good they ought and can for their own. The Prophet *Jeremiah* in his *Lamentations* (Chap.4 3.) ſpeaking of the women of *Jeruſalem* in that extremity of famine, ſaith, *Even the Sea-monſters draw out the breaſt, they give ſuck to their young ones; but the Daughter of my people is become cruel like the Oſtriches in the Wilderneſs.* The Prophet compares that people to the Oſtrich, though that cruelty of theirs, to their young ones proceeded not ſo much from the hardneſs of their hearts, as from the hardneſs of the times, and was to be charged rather upon their neceſſity, than their Nature. The famine upon them was ſo great, and preſſed them ſo ſore, that they were ſo far from having any thing to give their Children to eat, that they were forced to eat their Children; and yet this neceſſitous hard-heartedneſs of their towards their own, the Prophet upbraids them with, and reproves them for, while he ſaid, *The Daughter of my people is become cruel like the Oſtriches of the Wilderneſs.* Let all own relations to the utmoſt, and take heed of turning away from, and caſting off the care of theirs, as if they were not theirs. The Prophet (*Iſa.*58.7.) puts it among the duties of a faſt, *That thou hide not thy ſelf from thy own fleſh.* Then we keep a true faſt, a faſt that God hath choſen, when we break our bread to the hungry, and bring the poor that are caſt out to our Houſes; when we cloth the naked, and comfort the ſorrowful, not hiding our ſelves from our own fleſh; by which, though we are ſpecially to underſtand our kindred and neareſt relations in the fleſh, yet 'tis true of meer ſtrangers, of thoſe who are at furtheſt remove from us, as to either alliance or conſanguinity, if they need our help. God hath made all men *of one fleſh*, in the ſame ſenſe that he hath made all men *of one blood* (*Acts* 17.26.) and therefore to hide our ſelves from the help of any man in diſtreſs, is to hide our ſelves from our own fleſh. 'Tis much to be wondered, that a fooliſh Bird ſhould be forgetful *of her young ones, as though they were not hers*; but it is to be abhorred in men and women, eſpecially in thoſe that profeſs the faith of Chriſt, that they ſhould no more look to them that are theirs, than as if they were not theirs. The Apoſtle gives this cenſure of, or ſentence upon all ſuch (1 *Tim.*5. 8.) *If any man provide not for his own, and eſpecially for thoſe of his own Houſe*, or (as the Margin hath it) *kindred* (if any man carry it towards them, as if they were not his) *he hath denyed the faith, and* (in that point) *is worſe than an Infidel*; for the common light of Nature teacheth Infidels to take care of thoſe that are their own, and not to ſlight them, as if they were not theirs.

Farther Note, Fourthly, *The care of our relations (or of thoſe that are ours) doth not dwell in us meerly by Nature, it is the gift of God.*

The Apoſtle deſcribing the beſt of Heathens (*Rom.* 1.) ſaith, *They were without natural affection.* Nature hath not of it ſelf natural affections. That ſome Beaſts of the Earth, and Birds of the Air, are very full of natural affection, none can deny; but it muſt be granted alſo, that God hath planted thoſe affections in them. If, that which we call natural affection, were purely from Nature, then every Bird and Beaſt would have the ſame natural affections; but this Text tells us, the Oſtrich hath it not in her, ſhe hath no natural affection at all towards her young ones; therefore there is ſomewhat in it beyond Nature that any Creature hath it; though we call it a natural inſtinct to do ſo, yet Nature is not always furniſhed with it. In many Creatures it is eminent, in others it is not at all apparent. How great and tender is the care of a Hen over her chickens? How eagerly will ſhe fight in their defence? Yet the Oſtrich will do no more for hers, than as if they were not hers; ſo that, were it not for the care and providence of God, who is the Father of, and provider for all Creatures, many of them would be little cared or provided for.

Pro fœtu curare non eſt naturæ proprium, ſed Dei authoris. Si enim naturæ eſſet, cur non & in hac beſtia eluceret? Brent.

The Text proceeds to ſet forth the ill conditions of the Oſtrich.

Her labour is in vain without fear.

As if it had been ſaid, Through her careleſneſs, ſhe is in hazzard to loſe all that labour, which according to Natures courſe ſhe had taken in laying her eggs. In this ſenſe, that promiſe is made to the Church (*Iſa.* 65. 23.) *They ſhall not labour in vain, nor bring forth in trouble, for they are the bleſſed of the Lord, and their off-ſpring with them.* As there of them in the Negative, ſo here 'tis ſaid of the Oſtrich in the affirmative, *Her labour is in vain*; that is, it is likely to be in vain, and all but loſt labour, as to her eggs and young ones.

Labour is in vain, when it turns to very ſmall account. A Husbandman that plows & ſows his ground, if it ſcarce yield him his ſeed again, is ſaid to labour in vain, becauſe he hath got ſo little by his labour, though ſomewhat he hath got. A Student that hath applied himſelf to his Book, and gotten but little knowledg, may be ſaid to have ſtudied in vain; much more is that *labour in vain*, which turns to no account, or hath no good effect at all; ſuch as is the waſhing of the *Ethiopian* or Black-moor, whom how long ſoever you waſh, he is never a whit the whiter. But above all vain labour, that labour is in vain, which produceth an effect quite contrary to the intent and purpoſe of the labourer. Thus *Pharaoh* and the *Egyptians* laboured in vain, to diminiſh the *Iſraelites*; for (ſaith the Scripture, *Exod.*1.12.) *the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew.* Thus alſo the Heathen Emperors laboured in vain to aboliſh Chriſtianity; for the more they perſecuted the Chriſtians, the more they were confirmed in the faith of Chriſt.

The Oſtrich layeth eggs for the increaſe of her kind; therefore if her eggs be broken, or the young ones trodden under foot as ſoon as hatcht, here's labour in vain in the ſecond ſenſe at leaſt, becauſe no good comes of her labour.

Yet I may ſay, the labour of the Oſtrich is here ſaid to be in vain, not becauſe ſhe hath no effect of her labour, nor becauſe the effect runs croſs to her intent, no, nor becauſe ſhe hath but little fruit of her labour, but ſhe is ſaid to labour in vain, becauſe if God did not take more care of her eggs and young ones than ſhe doth, her labour would be altogether in vain; for her labour is (as it followeth)

Without fear.] What fear? There is a twofold fear; Firſt, There is a fear puzling us with diſtraction and amazement. Secondly, A fear urging us to activity and induſtry. The Oſtriches labour is *without fear,* that is, without ſuch fear as ſhould put her upon indeavour to preſerve her own eggs and young ones; ſhe fears no evil that may come to them, and ſo takes no care what becomes of them; ſhe is a fearleſs Creature of any danger, and ſo a careleſs Creature, as to the uſe of any means for the prevention of danger. The Oſtrich is not without all fear; for they that have had beſt knowledg of this Animal, have found her ſo fearful a Creature, that her fear, as well as her folly, is gone into a Proverb; a very fearful man being ſaid to be *more fearful than an Oſtrich.* The Oſtrich is here ſaid to be without fear, becauſe ſhe wants that provident fear which ſhould excite her to look after thoſe that are hers, as a Parent doth or ought, after the good of thoſe that depend upon him. The Oſtrich hath no love for her young ones, and therefore no fear about them. Though *Ælian* (as was toucht before) reports otherwiſe of her (*lib.* 14. *chap.* 7.) but in this he is alone, and may be ſuſpected as to the truth of this relation, as well as about the number of her eggs formerly mentioned, wherein others contradict him; and therefore, if God took no more care than ſhe (as was ſaid) *all her labour would be in vain.*

Hence Note, *We labour in vain to have, if we labour not to preſerve what we have.*

What is it to have eggs, if there be neglect of hatching them? What is it to have young ones, if there be a neglect of bringing them up? It is as great a vertue to preſerve what we have attained by labour, as to labour for the attaining of it; and how much ſoever we labour for the attaining of any thing, unleſs we labour for the preſervation of it, both labours are in vain. All labour is in vain that is not followed with a due care for the preſerving of what we labour for.

Non minor eſt virtus quam quærere parta tueri.

Note, Secondly, *A due fear puts us upon the uſe of means, for the preſervation of our ſelves and our relations.*

Res eſt ſoliciti plena timoris amor.

What's the reaſon why this Oſtrich takes no care to hatch her eggs, to preſerve her young ones? She is fearleſs; had ſhe a fear about them, ſhe would take care of them. As true *love is full of ſolicitous fear*, ſo due fear is full of ſolicitous endeavour. Fear makes us both conſultive what to do, and active in doing it. And as it makes us both conſultive and active about our outward preſervation, ſo much more for our inward and ſpiritual preſervation. It is ſaid of *Noah* (Heb. 11.7.) *That being warned of God of things not ſeen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an Ark for the ſaving of his Houſe. Noah* had never taken care to prepare an Ark againſt the deluge, but for theſe gracious impreſſions of fear, that God would bring a dreadful inundation upon the World. Fear moved him, and faith prevailed with him to prepare an Ark. The Apoſtle (*Phil.* 2.13.) calls upon all believers *to work out their ſalvation with fear and trembling*. If we have no fear about our ſalvation, we ſhall never work out our ſalvation. Yet 'tis a truth, that they who have moſt aſſurance of their ſalvation, are moſt in working out their ſalvation. Holy aſſurance is ſo far from making us careleſs, that then we are moſt careful, knowing that the Lord hath joined the end and means together; knowing alſo, that they *are in moſt ſafety, who have moſt ſenſe of danger; yea, that they who have moſt fear of danger, are fartheſt from feeling danger.* The labour of the Oſtrich is in vain, becauſe ſhe hath no fear; her fooliſhneſs, makes her fearleſs, and that makes her careleſs; therefore no thanks to her, that all her labour is not loſt or in vain, that both her eggs and young ones do not utterly miſcarry. Thus we may profitably meditate upon the improvidence of this Creature the Oſtrich, and learn wiſdom from her folly, to make us more provident. But whence is it, or how comes it to paſs, that ſhe is ſo fooliſh? The next words tell us.

Verſe 17. **Becauſe God hath deprived her of wiſdom, neither hath he imparted unto her underſtanding.**

In this Verſe, a reaſon or an account is given of this blockiſhneſs, careleſsneſs and fearleſsneſs of the Oſtrich; it is, *Becauſe God hath deprived her of wiſdom. More fooliſh than an Oſtrich*, is a proverb for the greateſt fool. The Hebrew Text may be read thus; *God hath made her to forget wiſdom.* Now, as one may be ſaid to forget that which he hath not, ſo that which he never had. In the deſcription that *Bildad* gives of a wicked man (*Chap.* 8.13.) he ſaith, *This is the portion of them that forget God*; And who are they? the words are a periphraſis of the wicked, *To forget God* is their character; they may be ſaid to forget God, who never had any true knowledg or remembrance of him. Thus (*Gen.* 41.30.) *There ſhall ariſe after them* (that is, *after the ſeven years of plenty*) *ſeven years of famine, and all the plenty ſhall be forgotten in the Land of* Egypt. In a time of famine, we are rather quickned to remember former years of plenty, together with the waſt that we then made of it, and our unthankfulneſs for it. When the *Iſraelites* had nothing but *Manna* in the Wilderneſs, they complained (*Numb.* 11.5.) *We remember the fiſh which we did eat in* Egypt *freely, the Cucumbers, and Melons, and the Leeks, and the Onions, and the Garlick.* Now, when 'tis ſaid, that in the ſeven years of famine, they ſhould forget the ſeven years of plenty, the meaning is, they ſhould have no plenty at all; the forgetting of it was not the not having of plenty in their memories, but the not having it in their hands. When a people are in a time of trouble, they remember their former peace; and when in ſtraights, they remember their former liberty; but they are ſaid in ſtraights, and trouble, and famine, not to remember their liberties, peace and plenty, becauſe they have none of them. Thus here *God hath made her to forget wiſdom*, that is, ſhe hath no wiſdom, nor knowledg, nor underſtanding; and when it is ſaid, according to our Tranſlation, *God hath deprived her of wiſdom*, we are not to take it, as if God had taken that ſtock of wiſdom from her which once ſhe had; but his depriving her of wiſdom, is his not communicating wiſdom *to her*, or his not truſting her with a ſtock of wiſdom; for ſo it followeth,

Obliviſci aliquis dicitur, cujus nullam unquam ſcientiam aut notitiam habuit. Druſ.

Neither hath he imparted to her underſtanding.

This latter part of the *verſe* explains the former, and ſhews that the Oſtriches want of wiſdom is not privative, but negative; God hath not taken it from her, but not given it her. But here it may be demanded, hath God given wiſdom, or imparted underſtanding to any Fowls of the Air? Are not theſe two words, *wiſdom and underſtanding*, too high for Beaſts or Birds, indeed, for the whole irrational part of the Creation? I anſwer, as the Oſtrich hath no true wiſdom nor underſtanding, ſo neither hath any Beaſt or Bird. Wiſdom and underſtanding taken ſtrictly, are proper only to rational Creatures, Men and Angels; there is no wiſdom where there is no reaſon: Yet wiſdom and underſtanding are aſcribed ſometimes to brutiſh Creatures, and here the Oſtrich, a brutiſh Creature, is ſaid to be deprived of them, or not to have them communicated to her, becauſe not ſo much as that ſhadow of wiſdom and underſtanding is given to her, which appears in ſome Beaſts and Birds. Brutes are ſaid to have wiſdom, becauſe they have that which ſerves their turn for their preſervation; and ſome of them are ſaid to have wiſdom, becauſe they are indeed wiſer, and more ſubtle than other brutes (*Gen.* 3.1.) yet all their wiſdom is nothing to the wiſdom of man. That Natural affection and forecaſt of Beaſts and Birds, in providing for, and bringing up their young ones, is their wiſdom; of this wiſdom God hath deprived the Oſtrich, *neither hath he imparted* unto her ſo much as this ſmall parcel of underſtanding, not ſo much as this ſhadow of underſtanding, which he hath beſtowed upon other, both Birds and Beaſts. And there appears ſomewhat in Nature, as a proof, that the Oſtrich is a fooliſh Bird, for her head is very little, and her brains (in proportion) much leſs. And that any one Oſtrich hath not much brains, may be collected from a piece of the *Roman* Hiſtory, which reports, that *Heliogabalus* the Emperour had the heads of ſix hundred Oſtriches prepared for him at one Supper, only for the brains ſake. 'Tis added alſo by the ſame Author, that the Oſtrich is Naturally deaf, and that there is no perfect Animal elſe, in the whole compaſs of Nature, that is deaf or wants the ſenſe of hearing. And needs muſt that Creature have little or no underſtanding, which hath no hearing, that being the ſenſe of diſcipline. All theſe conſiderations confirm what this Text in *Job* ſpeaks of her, that *God hath not imparted unto her underſtanding.*

Sapientia ſtruthioni non privativè ſed negativè deeſt. Eſt inferioris præſtantiæ non vitioſæ naturæ, vitium hominis natura eſt ceporis. Auguſt. *Sapientiam & intelligentiam nominat induſtriam naturalem.* Aquin. *Sapientiam dicit naturalem affectum in ſuos, aut artem conſervandi, quod ex ſe natum.* Druſ.

Bochartus.

Hence Note, Firſt, *Some Beaſts of the Earth, and Birds of the Air, have ſomewhat that may be called wiſdom*, ſo much at leaſt as ſerves their turn, and directs them to do what is beſt for themſelves and theirs.

Though the Oſtrich is ſhort of this ſhort pittance of underſtanding, yet moſt irrational Creatures have it.

Note, Secondly, *Whatſoever looks like wiſdom and underſtanding, in a brute Creature, Beaſt or Bird, is the gift of God.*

God is ſaid not to give or impart wiſdom and underſtanding to this brute Creature, therefore he gives it others. Wiſdom, ſuch as it is, in Beaſts and Birds, muſt be acknowledged to be gift of God. Not only every good gift in man, but every good gift in Beaſts, their ſtrength, their ſwiftneſs, their ſubtilty, and craft, their fore-caſt, are of the Lords plantation in them.

Thirdly, Note, *God hath not given a like portion or meaſure of wiſdom and underſtanding to all brute Creatures.*

Some have (in their capacity) a great deal, others very little, ſo little, that they may be ſaid to have none at all, as the Oſtrich in the Text; who (though in ſome things ſhe hath underſtanding, yet) as to her eggs and young ones, is a careleſs, witleſs animal. And there is a difference among men in wiſdom and underſtanding; ſome have a great portion given them of God, others have ſo little, that they may be ſaid to have none: The natural man hath no ſpiritual underſtanding (*Iſa.*27.11.) *This is a people of no underſtanding; therefore he that made them, will not have mercy upon them; and he that formed them, will ſhew them no favour.* What! Were they Brutes and Beaſts? No, poſſibly they were witty and ſubtle enough for the World, but they were a people of no ſpiritual underſtanding. Men full of Natural underſtanding may have none that is Spiritual. And as to Natural and Political wiſdom and underſtanding, there is a great difference among men: Some have enough to rule Kingdoms, others, not enough to govern a family, no, nor their perſonal affairs; yea, ſome men are ſo low in parts and underſtanding, that God may be ſaid to have deprived them of underſtanding, or not to have imparted wiſdom to them. And this offers us a ground of uſeful meditation. Let us bleſs God, that men have more wiſdom than brutes; and if any man have more wiſdom and underſtanding than his neighbour, let him acknowledg the goodneſs and bounty of God to him in it; for who hath made thee to differ in Natural wiſdom and underſtanding? As the Apoſtle ſpeaks of that great difference among men, grace and no grace, *Who hath made thee to differ?* How is it that one man hath grace, and an other hath no grace? Hath man made himſelf to differ in grace? No, it is of grace that any have grace: So who hath made thee to differ in common wiſdom and underſtanding? What, thy ſelf? ſurely no. You that ſeem to have as much wiſdom above other men, as men have above Beaſts, have not any of your ſelves; it is God who makes all men differ from Beaſts in underſtanding, and it is he that makes one man differ from another in underſtanding. He that hath almoſt as much underſtanding above other men, as men have commonly above Beaſts hath it all of God. Underſtanding is not of Nature, nor is it gotten (though it may be improved) by ſtudy and induſtry; Gold and Silver cannot purchaſe it, nor can our pains procure it. What man receives not, he hath not; nor hath any man more than he hath received. Now if common wiſdom be of God, and we owe him the glory of it; how much more is ſpiritual wiſdom, *which is to fear him*, and ſpiritual underſtanding, *which is to depart from evil* (Job 28. *ult.*) the gift of God!

What a mercy is it to have wiſdom,

Firſt, To know God in Chriſt, whom to know is eternal life.

Secondly, To know our ſelves loſt, miſerable and undone for ever without Chriſt.

Thirdly, To know the difference between good and evil, between light and darkneſs, truth and error, ſound doctrine and damnable, right worſhip and ſuperſtitious or Idolatrous.

Fourthly, To know our duty, what is incumbent upon us in this life. *The wiſdom of the prudent is to underſtand his way* (Prov. 14.8.) where to walk, what to do, that he may keep tite and cloſe to God, to know upon what bottom he is ſetled, and upon what ground he treads.

Fifthly, What a mercy is it for us, that live here on Earth, to ſee our way to that eternal life in Heaven!

Laſtly, What wiſdom and underſtanding hath God imparted to his people, and how thankful ſhould they be for it, that they are able while on Earth, to converſe and have communion with himſelf in Heaven! The Apoſtle ſaith (*Phil.*3.20.) *Our converſation is in Heaven*; with whom there? With God. True believers know how to converſe with God, and can ſay (in their meaſure, as the Apoſtle *John*, 1 *Epheſ.*1.3.) *Truly our fellowſhip is with the Father, and his Son Jeſus Chriſt.* This wiſdom hath God imparted to his faithful ſervants, and how thankful ſhould they be for it! The leaſt ray of wiſdom is from him; that in Beaſts, and that in common men, much more that in godly men. The wiſeſt in the World would have had no more wiſdom than an Oſtrich, hath not God provided better for them, and given them a richer furniture of internals or intellectuals,

Further, Conſider this Oſtrich as a goodly Bird, having beautiful feathers, yet not a dram of wiſdom or underſtanding.

Hence Note, Fourthly, *Many Creatures have a bodily beauty and ſtrength, yet little wit and underſtanding.*

The Oſtrich hath a bulky ſtrong Body, as well as beautiful feathers; but her brains are as light as her feathers. And is it not ſo with ſome men? Their gay feathers are viſible; but where is their underſtanding?

Note, Laſtly, *The ſame Creature may want wiſdom in one point, yet have it in another.*

The Oſtrich, who as to taking care of her young ones, hath no underſtanding, is yet reported by Naturaliſts to be very ſubtle in ſome things; for when ſhe is purſued by the Hunter, ſhe gathers up ſtones with her claws, and caſts them back to the hurt of her purſuers. 'Tis ſo likewiſe among men, ſome are wiſe enough in this or that matter. while miſerably blockiſh and defective in all things elſe; And of all wicked men the Prophet hath left this character, *They are wiſe to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledg.* And that the Oſtrich hath this piece of knowledg and cunning, to do a miſchief to thoſe who intend her one, may be collected from her confidence, in that caſe, ſpoken of the next *verſe.*

Verſe 18. **What time ſhe lifteth up her ſelf on high, ſhe ſcorneth the Horſe and his Rider.**

Before we heard of the folly of this Creature, now of her pride and confidence.

What time, or *at the time when* **ſhe lifts up her ſelf**, that is, her head, neck, and wings **on high**, that ſhe may run the ſwifter; **ſhe ſcorneth**, &c.

בעת *Juxta tempus.*

And this ſhe doth when beſet by thoſe who would take her, then ſhe lifteth up her ſelf *on high*, that is, as high as ſhe can, though (as was ſaid) very high ſhe cannot, and then ſhe caſts back ſtones upon her perſecuters. And hence ſome conceive theſe words give anſwer to a ſecret or unexpreſſed objection. For it might be ſaid, *If the Oſtrich, which is of ſo heavy a body, be likewiſe of ſo dull a wit, having no wiſdom nor underſtanding; ſurely, then ſhe may be eaſily taken and deſtroyed?* Not ſo neither; for God hath provided her a help againſt this time of danger, and therefore though ſhe be of a heavy body, and have little underſtanding in other things, yet ſhe underſtands how to ſhift for her ſelf; ſhe raiſeth up her ſelf as high as ſhe can, and fluttering with her wings (which ſhe holds up like ſails to the wind) ſhe drives on amain: Though ſhe keepeth ſtill upon her feet, or riſeth very little at any time above the ground, and is therefore ſaid *to fly running, or to run flying*, or, in a ſort, to ſail in the Air, very lightly touching the Earth, yet ſhe is ſomewhat lifted up, and being thus lifted up,

Ælian. l. 14. c. 20.
Plin. l. 10. c. 1.

Sublatis alis ut navigii velis curſu pernicíſſimo venatores deludit.

She ſcorneth the Horſe and his Rider.

As much as to ſay, ſhe can out-run them all, and ſo cares not a ſtraw for them, let them do their worſt; ſhe ſcorns them, not becauſe able to reſiſt them, or as if ſhe thought her ſelf ſtronger than they, but becauſe by help of her wings, though on her feet, ſhe is ſwifter than they. So that, in plain courſe they can never over-take her, and therefore not take her; only by ſome ſlights and ſtratagems, ſhe is intangled and taken; ſhe may be over-reacht, but ſhe cannot be over-run. And ſo ſwift is her courſe, that it hath long ſince grown into a Proverb among the *Arabians*, who thus ſignifie a man of great expedition in buſineſs, *He hath ridden upon the wings of the Oſtrich. What time ſhe lifteth up her ſelf on high, ſhe ſcorneth the Horſe and his Rider.*

Hence Note, Firſt, *Dangers put all Creatures to their utmoſt ſhifts.*

The Oſtrich being heavy bodied, hath no great mind to run, and being ſhort or weak-winged, hath little power to fly, yet when ſhe muſt, ſhe runs to purpoſe; ſhe will not loſe her life to ſpare her labour. Great dangers make us do great things. Fear adds wings to our feet; and makes a heavy Body mount and fly, rather than go. The Oſtrich (in that caſe) *lifteth up her ſelf on high.*

Note, Secondly, *Nature teacheth us to ſeek our ſafety above*, or on high.

Though the Oſtrich cannot ſore aloft in the Air as the Eagle, yet ſhe lifts up her ſelf as high as ſhe can above the Earth. Some ſeek for ſafety by creeping into the ground, and running into the holes of the Earth (*Iſa.* 2. 19. *Rev.* 6. 16.) But the beſt way for our ſafety, when we are purſued, is by lifting up our ſelves on high, and that to God; to get into his power, and mercy, and goodneſs; that's our way, and that's our wiſdom, when we are hunted and purſued by our enemies. *I* (ſaith *David*, Pſal. 121. 1.) *will lift up mine eyes to the Hills, from whence cometh my help*, that is, to God (*verſ.* 2.) When the Oſtrich is thus lifted up *ſhe ſcorneth the Horſe and his Rider.*

Hence Note, *They who think they are out of danger, deſpiſe danger.*

The Oſtrich looks upon her ſelf as out of danger, when ſhe is on high, and therefore ſcorns the Horſe and his Rider. Danger is not to be laughed, when we are under or within the reach of it; but we may laugh at it when we are out of the fear of it (*Job* 5. 22.) *At deſtruction and famine thou ſhalt laugh.* Why? Becauſe through the goodneſs of God thou ſhalt be provided againſt them, and prepared for them. A believer ſcorns the Horſe and his Rider, his ſwifteſt and moſt eager purſuers, becauſe he can lift up himſelf on high, or as the Prophet ſpeaks (*Iſa.* 33. 16.) *He dwels on high, his place of defence is the munition of Rocks, bread ſhall be given him, his waters ſhall be ſure*; he is ſafe from danger, and out of gun-ſhot: This makes him laugh at danger, at trouble, and the ſword. God who ſitteth in Heaven laughs at his enemies, and hath them in deriſion (*Pſal.* 2. 4.) why? Becauſe he knows, they who oppoſe him, can do nothing to annoy him; they cannot ruine his Kingdom, nor hurt his ſervants, how much ſoever they moleſt them; he ſits on high, he is above all his enemies. And as God lifted up in himſelf, ſo a godly man, lifted up on high in God, upon the wings of faith and love, ſcorns the Horſe and his Rider: For as the Apoſtle was (*Rom.* 8. 38, 39.) ſo he is *perſwaded, that neither death, nor life, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor Powers, nor things preſent, nor things to come, nor heighth, nor depth, nor any other Creature ſhall be able to ſeparate him from the love of God, which is in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord*, that is, they ſhall not be able to ſeparate him, either from that love that Chriſt bears to him, nor draw him off from that love which he bears to Chriſt. When once his Soul is drawn up to a due height in believing, he ſcorns all dangers, and in all theſe things is more than a Conqueror. A man that is a Conqueror, much more he that is more than a Conqueror, may ſcorn all dangers, and conquer them who think they have more than conquered him. From this whole *verſe* take theſe brief Inferences.

Firſt, *That which will not ſerve all turns, may yet ſerve many turns.*

Pennæ ſtruthionis currentem ſolum adjuvant, volatilem non reddunt.

We might think the wings of the Oſtrich were given her to no purpoſe, becauſe ſhe cannot fly aloft, nor make a lofty flight; yet they help her for another purpoſe, they help her much in running, though little or nothing in flying.

Secondly, *That which is very beautiful may not be very uſeful.*

The Oſtrich hath more beautiful wings than the Eagle, yet makes little uſe of them. We may in appearance be fit to do that which we cannot do. Thirdly,

God doth not uſually give all to one: He beſtows one thing upon this Creature, and that upon another.

The Oſtrich hath goodly feathers, yet bad wings; the Eagle hath no goodly feathers, yet good wings. One man excels in this gift, another in that, ſcarce any one hath all (1 *Cor.* 12. 8, 9, 10.) All have not the ſame gift, and none have all gifts, that all may be kept in dependance upon God, and be humble one towards another, ſeeing they muſt be beholden one to another. All men cannot do all things; And though all godly men *can do all things* (which are commanded of God as their duty) through Chriſt ſtrengthning of them; yet ſome godly men cannot do ſome things, which others can.

Laſtly, That which is conceived, and may well be the deſign of God in queſtioning *Job* about this Creature, was to teach him, and us in him, the wiſdom of God towards unwiſe Creatures, and the power of God in ſaving thoſe that are expoſed to danger; and ſo to quiet both *Job*'s Spirit and ours in ſtaying upon his providence, when we are in greateſt ſtreights. What though we have not Eagles wings, yet between wings and feet we ſhall make a ſhift to ſhuffle out of danger; and if we cannot out-fly, yet we may out-run the Horſe and his Rider.

VERS. 19, 20, 21.

Haſt thou given the Horſe ſtrength? Haſt thou clothed his neck with Thunder?

Canſt thou make him afraid as a Graſhopper? The glory of his noſtrils is terrible.

He paweth in the valley, and rejoyceth in his ſtrength; he goeth on to meet the armed men.

THE Lord having occaſionally mentioned the Horſe, the hunting Horſe, at verſe 18. of this Chapter, queſtions *Job*, and enters a large diſcourſe about the Horſe, the *War-Horſe*, or Horſe for War; and is pleaſed to give us a moſt elegant and rhetorical deſcription of that kind of Horſes, exceeding all the fancies of the old Poets, and the ſtrains of Orators. The divine eloquence of this context, exceeds all competition and compariſon.

Equi generoſiſſimi elegantiſſima deſcriptio.

The War-Horſe is deſcribed two ways in this context, or with reſpect to a two-fold qualification.

Firſt, With reſpect to his force, at verſe 19. *Haſt thou given the Horſe ſtrength? Haſt thou clothed his neck with Thunder?*

Robur ejus in collo, animus in naribus indicatur, quibus iras efflare dicitur.

Secondly, To his fearleſneſs or courage, which is deſcribed in the ſix verſes following.

Firſt, By his ſlighting of all danger; *Canſt thou make him afraid like a Graſhopper?* (verſ. 20.) *He mocketh at fear* (verſ. 22.)

Secondly, His courage appears, as by ſlighting danger, ſo by that which is a conſequent of it, his forwardneſs to run upon danger; for ſo doth he, that *goeth out to meet the armed men*, or armies of men, *verſ.* 21. and *turneth not away* (as he doth not) *from the Sword*, verſ. 22. And ſo doth he, that *ſwalloweth the ground with fierceneſs and rage*, that (for joy) *believeth not that it is the ſound of the Trumpet*; that *ſaith among the Trumpets, Ha, Ha,* &c. *verſ.* 24, 25.

If any ſhould ask a reaſon, why God beſtowed ſo much rhetorick upon a brute Beaſt, upon a Horſe? I anſwer; God, who is infinitely wiſe and holy, will not miſpend a word; he will not laviſh out lines vainly, as men often do; the Lord therefore had this deſign and ſcope in ſpeaking ſo largely and rhetorically of this generous Horſe, even thereby to ſet forth his own power, wiſdom and greatneſs in making him, and to convince *Job* yet farther of his own weakneſs and inability, as compared in ſome things with a Horſe.

Verſe 19. **Haſt thou given the Horſe ſtrength?**

The Hebrew word which we Tranſlate **Horſe**, is *Sus*, and thence the Latins have the word *Pegaſus* (as ſome conceive) which is as much as, *The Horſe of the Fountain*; and by the very ſame word, in ſound and letters, the Latines expreſs a Swine, and another Language, Silence. One of the Rabbins ſaith, he is ſo called from a word of the ſame, or a very neer ſound, in the Hebrew, though not in the ſame letters, ſignifying to rejoyce, becauſe the Horſe is a chearful Beaſt. Others from an *Arabick* word, ſignifying to govern or rule, becauſe he is a docile Creature, and ſoon ſubmits to government.

סוס *Equus, unde Pegaſus, quaſi fontis Equus.* Sus *Latinis* Porcum, *Hebræis* Equum, *Flandris* ſilentium *ſignificat.* Cornel. à Lap. סוס à שוש *lætari.* Rab. Becai.

Haſt thou given the Horſe ſtrength?] What Horſe? The word is indefinitely put in this 19. verſe, and may be taken for any horſe; yet the ſubſequent deſcription, reſtrains it to a particular ſort of horſes, horſes of war, or war-horſes. A horſe is a very uſeful creature, and there are ſix ſeveral uſes of the Horſe:

Firſt, For travel, which is the ordinary uſe: we ſay, this is a good *travelling horſe*.

Secondly, For burden, the *carrying horſe*.

Thirdly, For drawing Carts and Waggons, &c. the *draught horſe*.

Fourthly, For pleaſure, the *hunting horſe*.

Fifthly, For ſwiftneſs, the *race horſe*.

Sixthly, For war, the *valiant horſe*; that's the Horſe in the Text: *Haſt thou given the horſe*; that's the Horſe in the Text: *Haſt thou given the Horſe*

Strength?] Every horſe according to his uſefulneſs needs ſtrength, the war-horſe much more. Haſt thou given that horſe ſtrength which needs ſo much ſtrength? As if the Lord had ſaid, *Job, thou ſeeſt the horſe is a ſtrong and ſtately beaſt, a beaſt of great force; how came he by his ſtrength? haſt thou given it him, or I? ſurely not thou, but I: it is I, who have made him ſtrong; it is I, who have filled him with courage, and fitted him for the battel.* The Hebrew word, which we tranſlate *ſtrength*, doth not ſignifie ordinary ſtrength, but *manly noble ſtrength*; a ſtrength, not only of outward force, but vertue. The Root notes, a great, a potent man. It is not any kind of ſtrength which is here intended, but an *active ſtrength*; I may ſay, *a manly ſtrength*. Hiſtories report ſtrange things concerning the manly ſtrength of the Horſe; his is a generous ſtrength. *Alexanders* horſe, called *Bucephalus*, is famous for the greatneſs, both of his ſtrength and ſpirit. *Haſt thou given the Horſe ſtrength?*

גבורה *à nomine* גבר *quod eſt vir, non qualemcunq; ſtrenuitatem importat ſed virilem & nobilem.* Plin. l. 8. c. 24. Homer Iliad. 4.

Hence note, Firſt; *The ſtrength even of a horſe, is the gift of God.*

God is infinitely ſtrong and mighty; and whatſoever might or ſtrength is found in any creature, God is the Author of it: Strength in great proportion, is not the portion of every creature. *Solomon* (*Prov.* 30. 26.) ſpeaks of the Coneys as a feeble folk, they have little or no ſtrength; yet that they have little ſtrength, or that little ſtrength which they have is of God, as well as that the Horſe hath great ſtrength, or the great ſtrength of the horſe: The ſtrength of a beaſt is of God, as well as the ſtrength of man. The ſtrength of mans body is of God, as well as that more excellent ſtrength, the ſtrength of his mind, or the ſtrength of his underſtanding, judgment and memory. All ſtrength floweth from, and is to be aſcribed unto the *ſtrong God*. As no man gives it, ſo let no man take it to himſelf. Glory not in ſtrength; give God the glory of all ſtrength, even of the Horſes ſtrength.

Secondly, A Horſe having received ſuch mighty ſtrength, yet is ſerviceable to man, for very many, and very neceſſary uſes, as was toucht before, not only for pleaſure, for hunting and racing, but for burden and for travel, for draught and for war.

Hence Note, *The power and goodneſs of God is much ſeen, and much to be acknowledged, in making a creature ſo ſtrong, yet ſubject to, and uſeful for man.*

Some creatures have great ſtrength, yet are not, nor will be ſubject nor ſerviceable to man. It is ſaid at the 10. verſe of this Chapter, concerning the Unicorn, *Canſt thou bind the Unicorn with his band in the furrow? or will he harrow the valleys after thee?* The Unicorn hath great ſtrength, but man can get no ſervice from him; he cannot bind him in the furrow, nor make him do him any other work. Why is it that the Horſe, who is of great ſtrength, though poſſibly not of ſo great ſtrength as the Unicorn, is ſo ſerviceable? ſurely the reaſon is only this, Becauſe God by his power hath ſubdued the ſtrength of the Horſe to, and for the ſervice of man. Who could break the Horſe, who could handle and manage him, if God himſelf had not brought him to hand? The Elephant, greater in ſtrength than the Horſe or Unicorn, is yet made ſubject to the uſe of man, by the power and appointment of God. Take five Inferences from both theſe conſiderations: That the ſtrength of the Horſe, is of God; and that the Horſe, though mighty in ſtrength, is by God ſubdued to the uſe of man.

Firſt, If the ſtrength of horſes be the gift of God, then, do not glory in their ſtrength; though they are very ſtrong, yet rejoyce not in their ſtrength, but in God, who hath given them their ſtrength. *David* ſaith (*Pſal.* 147. 10.) *The Lord delights not in the ſtrength of the Horſe.* The Lord gives the Horſe ſtrength, but he delights not in it; *no, nor in the legs of a man; The Lords delight is in them that fear him.* The Lord tells us, he doth not delight in them, to teach us, that we ſhould not delight in them. The Lord delights not in the ſtrength of a horſe, much leſs in the ſtrength of thoſe men, who are like Horſes and Mules (of whom *David* ſpeaks, *Pſal.* 32. 9.) *whoſe mouth muſt be held, in with bit and bridle, leſt they come near unto us, to do us a miſchief.* Some men are ſtrong in body, and ſtrong in mind too; they have ſtrong underſtandings, and ſtrong memories; yet are but like ſtrong horſes, that muſt be held in with bit and bridle, elſe they will do more miſchief with their ſtrength, than the ſtrongeſt ungoverned horſes. In theſe the Lord delights not; he cannot delight in the ſtrength of any who are ſtrong to ſin, and to do wickedly; or to give it in the words of the Prophet, *Iſa.* 5. 22.) *Who are ſtrong to drink wine, and to mingle ſtrong drink:* ſuch a ſtrength ſome men glory in, but the Lord abhors all that ſtrength which is uſed and iſſued to the darkning of his glory.

Secondly, As we are not to delight in the ſtrength of horſes, but in God, who hath given them their ſtrength; ſo, whatever ſtrength we ſee in the horſe, or in any other creature, we ſhould give God the glory of it. Do not glory in the ſtrength of creatures, but in God, who gives them their ſtrength; that which he hath given, or cometh from him, ſhould return unto him in daily praiſe, or in the due acknowledgment of his power and goodneſs.

Thirdly, *Uſe the ſtrength of horſes* (I ſay alſo, your own ſtrength) *for God, and not againſt him.* We ſhould take heed of imploying the ſtrength which God hath given a beaſt, againſt God; much more ſhould we take heed of uſing our own ſtrength againſt him. When men imploy the ſtrength of a beaſt, or their own, againſt God, they imploy the gift againſt the giver, and ſo fight againſt God with his own weapons.

Fourthly, If the ſtrength of horſes be of God, or be his gift, *Then truſt not in the ſtrength of horſes:* Uſe the ſtrength of horſes, but do not truſt the ſtrength of horſes. If you truſt that ſtrength which God hath given to horſes, you make them your God. How often doth God forbid truſting in the ſtrength of horſes, as knowing that we are apt to truſt in any thing that is ſtrong, though but a beaſt (*Pſal.* 33. 17.) *A horſe is a vain thing for ſafety, neither ſhall he deliver any by his great ſtrength.* As if God had ſaid, you think a horſe can ſave you, but know, he is a vain thing. And when the Pſalmiſt ſaith, *A horſe is a vain thing*, he doth not mean it of a weak horſe, but of (ſuch a horſe as is here deſcribed) a horſe of the greateſt ſtrength imaginable, ſuch a horſe is a vain thing to ſave a man, neither can he deliver any by his ſtrength; and therefore the Lord, when he promiſed great deliverances to his people (leſt they ſhould expect it by the ſtrength of horſes) ſaith (*Hoſ.* 1. 7.) *I will ſave them by the Lord their God, and will not ſave them by bow, nor by ſword, nor by battel, by horſes, nor by horſe-men:* As if he had told them, do not look after creature ſtrength to be ſaved by; a horſe will be a vain thing to ſave you, and I can ſave you effectually without horſes; yea, I will. Hence the people of God (*Hoſ.* 14. 3.) when beaten off from all outward helps and truſts, are brought in, ſpeaking thus; *Aſhur ſhall not ſave us; we will not ride upon horſes, neither will we ſay any more to the work of our hands, ye are our gods:* Heretofore we thought to be ſaved by this and that, we thought, if we could have horſes enough they would ſave us; but now, *Aſhur ſhall not ſave us, nor will we ride upon horſes.* We may collect from (*Pſal.* 20. 7.) how the ſpirit of man runs out this way, *Some truſt in chariots, and ſome in horſes; but we will remember the name of the Lord our God.* The Law of *Moſes* gave great caution about this thing, limiting even the King in this caſe; and that Law was made for the King ſome hundred of years before they had a King (*Deut.* 17. 16.) *He ſhall not multiply horſes to himſelf, nor cauſe the people to return to Egypt, to the end that he ſhould multiply horſes:* As if it had been ſaid, take heed you do not put your confidence upon the ſtrength of horſes; though the Law deny not your King the uſe of Horſes, both for Civil and Military affairs, yet it limits him that he ſhall not multiply them, leſt, having many of them, he ſhould look upon them, as more than they are, or can be, his help, and ſo put confidence in them. Hence alſo is that reproof (*Iſa.*31.1.) *Woe to them that go down to* Egypt, *for help, and ſtay on Horſes, and truſt in Chariots, becauſe they are many, and in Horſemen, becauſe they are very ſtrong.* We ſee how the Spirit of man runs out to the Horſe which God hath made ſtrong, even forgetting God who hath made him ſtrong. That people thought themſelves ſtrong enough with Horſes without the ſtrong God, and therefore the Lord told them at the third verſe, *The* Egyptians *are men, and not God, and their Horſes are fleſh, and not ſpirit*; that is, they are weak and not ſtrong: Not that they were weak in themſelves, but weak to ſave and deliver them, or to give them victory in Battel; they are but fleſh, and not ſpirit: Fleſh notes weakneſs, and Spirit notes ſtrength; ſo that, though a Horſe hath a mighty ſtrength, yet if you truſt to him, he is but fleſh, that is, he is weak. And ſome conceive this was the reaſon why the Lord commanded *Joſhua*, in his War with the *Canaanites*, to hough their Horſes; as the rule is given (*Joſh.*11.6.) *Thou ſhalt hough their Horſes, and burn their Chariots with fire*; that is, cut their nerves, or as we ſay, their ham-ſtrings. Why did the Lord command him to hough their Horſes? Why might he not preſerve them for ſervice in his Wars? Doubtleſs it was, leſt he ſhould think that Horſes could do the work. And therefore according to this command of God, when *David took a thouſand Chariots, and ſeven hundred Horſe-men from the* Moabites, *he houghed all the Chariot Horſes but reſerved of them for an hundred Chariots* (2*Sam.*8.4.) He would not multiply Horſes to himſelf out of the ſpoils of the enemy, leſt he ſhould ſeem to truſt their ſtrength and numbers.

Fifthly, *Fear not the ſtrength of Horſes.* The Prophet ſaith to the fearful (*Jer.*12.5.) *If thou haſt run with footmen, and they have wearied thee, how canſt thou contend with Horſes?* When we have Horſes to contend with, 'tis a very dangerous conflict. The Prophet by *foot-men* and *horſemen*, intends leſſer or greater oppoſitions; when we have to deal with leſſer difficulties, we have to deal with *footmen*, but when with greater, then with *horſe-men*. If then you have to do with Horſes, either in the metaphor or in plain ſenſe, *fear them not*; why? For they are but Creatures; and God who hath given them their ſtrength, can take away their ſtrength, and make them uſeleſs (*Pſal.*76.6.) *At thy rebuke, O God of* Jacob, *both the Chariot and the Horſe are caſt into a deep ſleep.* Suppoſe a multitude of Chariots and Horſes ſhould come againſt us, yet at the Lords rebuke, if he doth but ſpeak the word, if the God of *Jacob* do but give a rebuke, the Chariot and Horſes are laid in a deep ſleep; that is, they are as nothing or as dead. Death is a deep ſleep; and therefore, though Horſes have a mighty ſtrength, yet be no more afraid of them than of that which is dead; the Lord God who hath given them their ſtrength, can defend us againſt their ſtrength, or diſable them, notwithſtanding their ſtrength, to offend us. *Haſt thou given the Horſe ſtrength?*

Haſt thou clothed his neck with Thunder?

To cloth with, or to be clothed with this or that, is a very common Scriptural phraſe, metaphorically applied to things, both corporeal and incorporeal. Of the firſt ſort are all thoſe places of Scripture, where man is ſaid *to be clothed with skin and fleſh* (*Job* 10.11.) *The fleſh with worms and clods of duſt.* (*Job* 7.5.) *The Fields with flocks* (*Pſal.*65.13.) *The Earth with Sea* (*Pſal.*104.6.) *The Sea with Clouds* (*Job*.38.6.) *The Heavens with blackneſs* (*Iſa.*50.3.) Of the ſecond ſort, are all thoſe Scriptures which ſay, *A perſon is clothed with righteouſneſs* (Job.39.14. Pſal.132.9.) *With ſalvation* (Pſal. 132. 16.) *With glory and beauty* (Job 40. 10.) *With power or ſtrength* (Pſal.93.1. Iſa.51.9.) *With the Spirit of God* (Judg.6.34. 2 Chron.24.20.) *With deſolation* (Ezek.7.27.) *With ſhame* (Pſal.71.13. & 109.29.) And as both things and perſons are ſaid to be clothed with theſe, ſo to be clothed with any thing, notes two things; either, Firſt, that ſuch have much of it. Thus to be clothed with glory, is to be exceeding glorious; and to be clothed with ſhame, is to be exceedingly aſhamed; and to be clothed with pride, is to be exceeding proud; and to be clothed with righteouſneſs and honour, is to be exceeding righteous and honourable; and to be clothed with humility, is to be exceeding humble; and laſtly, to be clothed with the Spirit, is to be exceeding ſpiritual, and full of the Spirit. Or, Secondly, to be clothed with any thing that is good, notes it to be very becoming and ornamental to us, as rich and ſutable Garments are; or if it be bad, that it is very diſgraceful and detrimental to us, as filthy and uncomely Garments are. Now, here in the Text, when the neck of the Horſe is ſoid to be clothed with Thunder, it muſt needs note ſomewhat, in which the Horſe exceeds, and which is both an honour and an ornament to the Horſe. *Haſt thou* (ſaith God to *Job*, or I) *clothed his neck with Thunder?*

There are various Interpretations of the word which we here Tranſlate *Thunder*.

Firſt, Some affirm, That the word by us rendred *Thunder*, ſignifies nothing leſs than Thunder, or that it doth not ſignifie Thunder at all, neither in a proper, nor in a metaphorical ſenſe; but that it ſignifies the Horſes mane. Nor can it be denied, but that this form of ſpeaking is very apt and elegant, to ſay, the neck of a Horſe is clothed with his mane; as Birds may be ſaid to be clothed with feathers, or Beaſts with hair. And here the mention of the Horſes mane is fitly brought in, becauſe the ſcope of the place is to ſet forth the chief ſigns and conditions of a generous ſtomachful War-Horſe. For though the meaneſt Horſes have manes, and that of an ancient Author be true, in part, of all Horſes. That *the mane is given them for an ornament*; yet generous Horſes have thickeſt and fulleſt manes hanging down, and covering their necks, as the old Poets often deſcribe noble and Warlike Horſes. And that in this place of *Job*, not an ordinary thin or ſhort mane, but a thick and a deep one is intended, we may collect from the word *clothed*, which will not agree with thoſe of ordinary Horſes. The only difficulty with which this Interpretation is attended, is how to make it out that the *Hebrew* word (*Ragnemah*) ſignifies the mane of a Horſe, it being never uſed in any place of Scripture but this; and it is much queſtioned, whether the word be to be found in the writings of any of the Jewiſh *Rabbins* in that ſenſe. The only anſwer is, that it is to be reckoned among thoſe words (of which there are ſeveral in Scripture) which are only once read or uſed; and ſo the ſenſe of them is to be given from the ſcope of the place where they are uſed, not from their uſage in other places, they not being uſed in any place but one. This is a fair interpretation, that being granted, that the word *Ragnemah* hath no communion with the word *Ragnam*, which properly ſignifies *Thunder*.

Hic tonitru eſt רעמה *cum tonitrus alias* רעם *dicitur. Veſtimenti nominè intelligo Jubas denſas & criſpantes.* Cajet.

Zenophon *in Comment. de re equeſtri.*

רעמה "Ἅπαξ λεγόμενον. Arnol. Bootius. *Animad. Sacræ.* l. 3. c. 6. *ſect.* 10.

But, almoſt all other Interpreters agree, that *Ragnemah* is the ſame with *Ragnam*; and take the *Hebrew* letter ה in the end of it, to be only Paragogical, and ſo not making any alteration at all in the ſenſe.

Now this being the moſt received opinion, and our Tranſlators pitching expreſly upon it, ſaying, *Haſt thou clothed his neck with Thunder?* It is is queſtioned what is here meant by the word *Thunder*. No man can imagine that it ſhould be underſtood of proper *Thunder*; and in what the metaphor is couched, or whence to take the alluſion, that's the doubt.

Firſt, I ſhall not ſtay upon that weak conjecture, that by Thunder we are to underſtand the ſound, noiſe or ratling, which is made by the armour, ornaments or trappings, which are ſometimes put upon the necks and breaſts of War-Horſes, when they go out to Battle. We read that the Camels of *Zeba* and *Zalmunna*, conquered by victorious *Joſhua*, had *ornaments upon their necks* (Judg. 8.21.) But ſurely, the word *Thunder* ſutes not with ſuch ſounds; Thunder muſt needs relate to ſomewhat that is terrible, not ornamental; and all the ſound which the ratling of a Horſes armes or ornaments can make, is much too low for any reſemblance of Thunder, or to be compared with it; nor will the general ſcope of the queſtion comply with any ſuch Interpretation. For when God ſaith to *Job*, *Haſt thou clothed his neck with Thunder?* The queſtion denies; and the meaning of it is, Thou haſt not, but I have. Whereas if it were underſtood of artificial Warlike arms of defence or ornaments, *Job* might have anſwered the queſtion affirmatively, and have ſaid, Yes, I, or

De ſtrepitu monilium intelligit Munſterus. *Inſtructos oſtro alipedes pictiſque tapetis. Aurea pectoribus demiſſe monilia pendent.* Virg. *l.* 5.

other men, have cloathed the neck of the horſe with them. And the Lord poſſibly put this queſtion, in oppoſition to all ſuch kind of defences and ornaments; As if he had ſaid, *Thou, O Job, haſt or mayſt cloath the neck of the horſe with rich ornaments, and ſtrong arms to defend him; but haſt thou, or canſt thou cloath his neck with thunder? That's my work alone.* Therefore ſomewhat is here intended by thunder, beyond what any man is able to cloath the neck of a Horſe withall.

Ἐνέδυσας δὲ τῷ τραχήλῳ αὐτοῦ φόβον. Sept.
Numquid indues collum ejus tremore Pagn.

Secondly, Some render thus, *Haſt thou cloathed his neck with fear?* another, *with trembling?* But ſome may ſay, how doth this ſerve to ſet forth the honour and commendation of the Horſe? yea, what can be ſaid more improperly of a brave Horſe, or more unſutable to the deſcription here given of him, than this, that *his neck is cloathed with fear and trembling?* I anſwer, 'tis true, if we take fear, as taking hold of or poſſeſſing the Horſe himſelf: But if we take it for that fear and trembling (which doubtleſs is the ſenſe of thoſe Tranſlations) with which the Horſe affects others, than to ſay his neck is cloathed with fear, that is, his appearance makes others afraid, is very proper to the diſcourſe in hand. And for as much as thunder makes the ſtouteſt Men fear and tremble, the Horſe, who doth ſo too, when he ruſheth fiercely into the battle, and chargeth the enemy, may ſignificantly enough, be ſaid, to have his neck cloathed with Thunder. How terrible a ſhock, even like a thunder-clap, doth a ſtout valiant Horſe make upon his adverſary, with the force of his neck and breaſt! And when Horſes come galloping upon us with their full ſpeed, 'tis uſual to ſay, they come *thundering upon us.*

Tonitru hic uſurpatur de fremitu, aut hinnitu equi. Druſ.
Num induiſti collum ejus fremitu? Bez.
Numquid adornas collum ejus ſonitu vehementi. i. e. *Hinnitu?* Vatabl.

Thirdly, Moſt Interpreters ſay confidently, that by *thunder cloathing the neck of the Horſe*, the *neighing of the Horſe* is intended. And ſome (who are not of this opinion) conceive, that if the *Hebrew* word (*Ragnemah*) ſignifying *thunder* properly, be here to be taken Metaphorically for *neighing*, then it were better to render the Text (nor as our laſt Tranſlators have done with *thunder*, but) as many have done, and among them our old *Engliſh* Tranſlators with *neighing*; to which effect they render this clauſe in our language thus, *Haſt thou learned him to neigh couragiouſly.* For (ſaith that learned Author, who oppoſeth this reading) it is uncomely, when a word hath two or more ſignifications, to retain that in the Tranſlation, which is leaſt commodious to hold out the meaning of the place in hand. And (ſaith he) it is moſt certain, that the word *Thunder*, is never uſed in the *Latine* Tongue; no, not by the boldeſt Poets, to ſignifie the neighing of a Horſe. Yet I ſee no cogent reaſon, ſeeing the *Latine* words which ſignifie to *Thunder*, are applied to ſeveral clamors and noiſes, much inferior to Thunder, why the word *Thunder* in the Noun may not be ſo applied; nor do I ſee any reaſon why the neighing of a mighty Horſe, being uſually accompanied (when he is in a rage) with fretting, chaſing, and ſnorting, may not be alluſively called thunder or thundering. I am ſure, the fretting and chaſing of a woman is ſo expreſſed by the Verb in the Holy Scripture (1 *Sam.* 1. 6.) where it is ſaid of *Hannah*, *Her adverſary provoked her ſore to make her fret*; the *Hebrew* is, *to make her thunder.* Now the fretting of a woman, though heightned to loud brawling, and (if I may uſe ſo coarſe a word) ſcolding, bears not ſo much proportion to the noiſe of thunder, as the neighing, ſnorting, and fretting of a great and generous Horſe. When a Horſe is enraged, we may ſay, ſparks leap out of his eyes like lightning, and a ſound out of his mouth like thunder, and a breath out of his noſtrils like ſmoke. And that the ſnorting and neighing of Horſes is dreadful, even like thunder, appears fully by that of the Prophet (*Jer.* 8. 16.) *The ſnorting of his Horſes was heard from Dan* (that is, from the utmoſt bounds of the Country) *the whole Land trembled at the ſound of the neighing of his ſtrong ones.* The neighing of Horſes, is a ſign of their courage and boldneſs, of their fearleſneſs and generoſity; which probably was the reaſon why the great Lords of *Perſia* agreed, that meeting all together in one place on Horſe-back, he ſhould be choſen Emperor whoſe horſe neighed firſt after they were met; they ſuppoſing it a good Omen or Sign, that the Rider would prove a perſon of great courage and ſpirit, whoſe Horſe firſt gave that token of it: Upon what occaſion the Horſe of *Darius* neighed firſt, and ſo got his Maſter the Empire, the *Perſian* Hiſtories will inform the Reader.

Arnold. Boot. *Animad. Sacr.* l. 3. c. 6. ſect. 3.
Tonare, intonare, l. 3. c. 11. ſect. 8

But to the point in hand. 'Tis evident from what hath been ſaid; that 'tis no uncoucht, nor far fetcht, much leſs forced metaphor, to expreſs the neighing of a furious fretting Horſe by thundering. And as the word rendred thunder, ſignifies (in the Verb) to be moved with choler and and indignation, ſo a noble-ſpirited Horſe, charging an enemy, ſhews a high ſtrain of rage and indignation, in which reſpect, together with his neighing, his neck may ſeem to be *cloathed with thunder.*

And though it be ſaid, that, as the neck is not reckoned among the inſtruments of ſpeaking in man, ſo it cannot be conveniently reckoned among the inſtruments of neighing in a Horſe, that properly belonging to the throat; and though I grant that when the Scripture ſaith (*Pſal.* 75. 5.) *Speak not with a ſtiff neck*; the word *neck* is not there to be taken, for the means or inſtrument of ſpeech, but notes only the manner of ſpeaking; namely, that there the Lord forbids wicked men to ſpeak ſcornfully, pertinaciouſly, or as *Hannah* expreſſeth it in her Song (1 *Sam.* 2. 3.) that they ſhould *talk no more ſo exceeding proudly, nor let arrogancy come out of their mouth*: Yet the throat being placed in and being a part of the neck, we may by a common ſynecdoche, of the whole for the part, avoid that difficulty. Nor doth the metaphor of *cloathing* (though, I confeſs it, moſt ſutable to the firſt interpretation, that of the *mane*) oppoſe this third of *neighing*; For when a Horſe neighs ſtrongly, the ſound coming out of his mouth compaſſeth him, his neck eſpecially, round about as with a garment. *David* deſcribing a wicked man, ſaith, *he cloathed himſelf with curſing* (*Pſal.* 109. 18.) Curſing goes out of the mouth of a wicked man, as neighing out of the mouth of a Horſe; and therefore, as when a man is much in curſing, he may be ſaid to cloath himſelf with curſing, as with a garment, ſo a Horſe which neigheth much, may (I conceive) be ſaid to have his neck cloathed with neighing.

Having thus far drawn out theſe expoſitions of this ſecond queſtion, which the Lord put to *Job* about the Horſe, *Haſt thou cloathed his neck with thunder?* I ſhall ſubmit them to the Readers judgment, and only ſay, that the firſt (if that word *Ragnemah* may ſignifie a Horſes-mane) is the cleareſt, and moſt literal of them all; and that among the ſecond ſort of expoſitions, the third is moſt received and approved.

From the firſt interpretation we learn,

> *God hath beſtowed not only ſtrength, but ornaments upon the Horſe.*

The mane of a Horſe is of little uſe (and therefore ſome cut it quite off) but it is a great ornament to the Horſe.

From the two laſt interpretations.

Obſerve, Firſt; *The Horſe in his heat and rage is very terrible.*

Thunder is ſo, and ſo muſt he needs be, whoſe neck is cloathed with any thing reſembling thunder.

Note, Secondly; *It is of God that the Horſe is terrible.*

The Horſe hath thunder about his neck, but it is God who hath cloathed his neck with it. If any Horſe, or any other creature be delightful to us, God hath made it ſo; and if any Horſe, or any other creature be thunder, dreadful and terrible to us, it is the Lord who hath made it ſo. This we find more clearly held out in the next *verſe.*

Verſ. 20. **Canſt thou make him afraid as the Graſhopper: the glory of his noſtrils is terrible.**

In the firſt part of this *verſe*, we have the courage of the Horſe ſet forth. That creature is full of courage, that cannot be made afraid: Thus the Lord ſpeaks to *Job* concerning the Horſe.

Canſt thou make him afraid as the Graſhopper?] The *Chaldee*, with whom one of the *Rabbins* joyns, rendereth, *Canſt thou cauſe him to make a noiſe like a Graſhopper.* Vehement motion cauſeth a ſound or noiſe in the air. When many Graſhoppers fly together, they make a kind of ruſhing noiſe. This expoſition agrees well enough with the word, which at ſecond hand ſignifieth to make a noiſe, that being cauſed by motion. Yet other conſiderations hinder

Abeneſe *ut ſonitu edat.*

from reſting in this interpretation. For ſeeing the whole diſcourſe here, inſiſts upon the deſcription of a generous Horſe and his qualifications, the noiſe or ſound which a Horſe makes in running, makes nothing to that purpoſe; for as much as it is common to all Horſes, even the baſeſt ſort of them, to make a ſound with their feet when they run. And if it ſhould be granted that great and generous horſes have ſomewhat peculiar in this, and make a greater ſound than common horſes in running, yet to take the compariſon from the ſound which Graſhoppers make in flying, doth eaſily refute this expoſition. We know indeed, what *Pliny* ſaith, *Graſhoppers make ſuch a ſound with their wings in flying, that they may be thought ſome other kind of fowls:* Yet we cannot therefore believe, that it is a proper ſimilitude, to compare the ſound which horſes make in running (who, as Poets uſe to phraſe it, make the earth tremble and groan) with that craſſing noiſe which Graſhoppers make while they fly in the air. For if the compariſon may at all be taken from flying-fowls, great fowls were much fitter for it, who uſe to fly in flocks together; Yet theſe greater fowls make no very great noiſe in flying, much leſs can Graſhoppers. And therefore the Poets, both Greek and Latine, though they affect to ſhaddow great ſounds and clamours, by a ſimilitude taken from flying-fowls, yet they do not take the reſemblance from the ſound which their flying makes with their wings, but from the ſound of chattering which they make with their bills while they fly; of which the Reader may find many inſtances given by the learned Author named in the Margin.

Lib. 11. *cap.* 29.

Bootius *animad. ſacra.*

Seeing then fowls do not make any noiſe in flying, as may ſerve for a ſutable reſemblance of any great ſound, ſurely that ſmall noiſe which Graſhoppers make in flying cannot be a proper reſemblance of it. Further, here is nothing ſaid of many, or of a troop and body of horſes, but of a ſingle horſe, or of horſes ſingly and apart conſidered. Now that ſome one horſe ſhould be compared with one Graſhopper, as to the ſound which the one and the other makes in their motion, were no ſmall abſurdity.

This therefore may ſuffice for the laying aſide of that firſt interpretation of the whole clauſe, though the focre of the word doth not oppoſe it.

Secondly, Others read the Text thus, *Canſt thou make him move leap or skip like the Graſhopper:* As if the Lord had ſaid, *It is not of thee, O* Job, *but of me, that the horſe hath this property to move himſelf like a Graſhopper.*

An commovebis eum in morem locuſtæ. Druſ.

The motion of a Horſe may be compared to that of a Graſhopper in two reſpects. Firſt, In reſpect of his ſwiftneſs. Secondly, Of his ſubſaltation, or bounding and leaping. I conceive God had reſpect only to the latter, in theſe words: for ſeeing this whole context doth not handle the nature of the horſe in general, but only the marks or qualities of valiant horſes; therefore the mention of this (namely, the ſubſaltation of horſes) is much more proper than that of their ſwiftneſs or ſpeed in runing: For ſwiftneſs or ſpeed in running, is not appropriate or peculiar to generous horſes; it being certain, that as they excel the common ſort of horſes, both in the ſwiftneſs of their courſe, and in the continuance or laſtingneſs of it, ſo it is as apparent, that ordinary horſes will often run very ſwiftly, or with great ſpeed for a time. But as for that other motion of their bodies in which they imitate the leaping or skipping of Graſhoppers, that is proper to them.

And there are two ſorts of this motion proper to generous horſes. The one, in which ſtanding upon two feet only, either the hinder or the forefeet, the other part of their body is lifted up on high from the ground; which motion (being very dangerous to the Rider) we call *bounding* or *to bound.* The other ſort of ſaltatory motion, is that, whereby the horſe lifts up himſelf, with his four feet quite off the ground, and goeth as it were leaping, or intermingles ſaltation or leaping with his going. There is a twofold leaping. Firſt, When a horſe raiſeth himſelf over a bar, hedge or ditch, this is of daily uſe. The other, is only for pomp, when a horſe raiſeth his body upon plain ground to ſhew his activity, this we call *curveting*, as the proud ſtately gate of a horſe is by us called *praunſing.* Now of theſe two motions, *bounding* and *curveting*, the latter is rather to be underſtood in this place; that being moſt like the ſaltation, the leaping or skipping motion of a Graſhopper; and the other to be reckoned rather among the ill qualities, than the commendations of a horſe, which are here only taken notice of. *Canſt thou make him leap or move like a Graſhopper?* The Graſhopper moves with a kind of a leap. Naturaliſts tell us, that the hinder legs of Graſhoppers are much longer than their fore legs, to fit them for leaping; the Horſe in his leaping and curveting motion, clearly repreſents the motion of a Graſhopper. According to this expoſition, the great agility and nimbleneſs of the horſe is ſet forth, as before his ſtrength and courage. Haſt thou made the horſe ſo agile or active, that like a Graſhopper he doth as it were, leaping fly, and flying leap. A Horſe will do ſtrange feats of activity if well managed. This interpretation is much urged by ſeveral of the learned; yet I conceive the purpoſe of theſe words, is rather to ſet forth the boldneſs, than the nimbleneſs of the Horſe. Our Tranſlation carries this ſenſe clearly.

Bootius *animad. ſacra.*

Poſteri ora locuſtæ crura medis longiora ſunt, ut ambulet melius & attollatur facilius de terra. Ariſt. l. 4. *de part. Animal.* c. 6.

Numquid effeciſti ut equus motitet ſeſe inſtar Locuſtæ? i. e. *Feciſtine equum agilem ſicut Locuſtam?* Vatabl.

Tunc illi agilitatem dare poſſis qualem oſtendit, cum Locuſtæ modo ſubſaltat. Grot.

Canſt thou make him afraid as the Graſhopper.] The Graſhopper is a weak and frightful creature, he is ſoon ſcared, and quickly flies away. The word rendred a *Graſhopper*, ſignifies a *multitude*, becauſe they uſually go by multitudes (*Prov.* 30. 27.) *The Locuſts have no King, yet go they forth all of them by bands*; they go, as it were, an Army of them together. The Latine word *Locuſta*, is from an ill effect of Locuſts or Graſhoppers, becauſe they conſume, and in a manner, burn up every green thing in the places where they come. Hence that alluſive prohibition (*Rev.* 9. 4.) *There came out of the ſmoak Locuſts; and it was commanded them that they ſhould not hurt the graſs of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any Tree,* &c. Now, though the Scripture compares theſe creatures to a great Army (*Joel* 2. 25.) becauſe they go out in great companies, and do a great deal of miſchief: And though (*Rev.* 9. 7.) *The ſhapes of the Locuſts* (there ſpoken of) *were like unto horſes prepared unto battle*, that is, compleatly armed; yet the Locuſts are but a weak kind of Warriers, they are quickly ſcared, they are fearful creatures. *Canſt thou make the Horſe afraid like the Graſhopper?* When the Lord ſaith, *Canſt thou make him afraid like the Graſhopper*, his meaning is, The Horſe is of ſo ſtout a ſpirit, that he will not only not be afraid like the Graſhopper, but no more afraid than a Lion. So then, I conclude this part of the verſe contains not a ſimilitude, but a diſſimilitude between the Horſe and the Graſhopper; not a likeneſs between the Horſe and the Graſhopper in nimbleneſs, but their unlikeneſs in fearfulneſs. *Canſt thou make him*

Tremefacere. Jun. Piſc.

Locuſtæ ſunt fugaciſſimæ, & facile aguntur ventis. Ad levem aliquem ſtrepitum aut motum aufugiunt. Sanct.

ארבה *Locuſta, quæ magna multitudine volitat.*

Latinis Locuſtæ videntur dictæ quod locos urant, nam ſegetes morſu erodunt & tactu adurunt. River.

Locuſtæ equi cataphracti ſpeciem habent.

Afraid?] The word notes ſuch fear as is cauſed by an Earth-quake, *Iſa.* 13. 13. *Joel* 2. 10. *Pſal.* 109. 23. *Neh.* 3. 17. As importing, that though the Horſe ſhould hear a craſhing or ruſhing ſound, like that of an Earth-quake, when the ground under us opens and ſhakes, yet he is not moved nor quakes, as Mr. *Broughton* renders. The Horſe is rather enraged, than ſcared like a Graſhopper, by any noiſe; His ſpirit is rather whetted and inflamed, than cowed (as we ſay) and cooled by the ſtrongeſt alarms; as will further appear in the latter part of this deſcription. Horſes are obſerved ſometimes (as alſo men) quaking before a battle, yet not for fear, but with indignation. *Canſt thou make him afraid?* &c.

רעש *timore & terræ motum indicat.*

Hence Note; Firſt, *The Horſe is a valiant and ſtout-hearted creature.*

Not to fear, is a ſign of valour; but not to be made afraid, is much more a ſign of it than not to fear. When any one hath ſuch a ſpirit, that he doth not only fear, but cannot be made afraid, there's courage to the height: Such is the courage of the Horſe, nothing can make him afraid.

Obſerve, Secondly; *The courage, as well as the ſtrength of the Horſe, is from God.*

As every creature is not ſtrong, ſo not couragious. Some are very fearful, ſo fearful, that they are grown into a Proverb for fearfulneſs: Such are Hares and Harts, and the Oſtrich before ſpoken of. Nor hath every Horſe courage and boldneſs. Horſes given to ſtart, are fearful. God puts ſuch courage into ſome Horſes, that nothing can make them ſtart or fear. Courage is a gift of God beſtowed upon ſome men, and not upon others; ſome are as couragious as Lions, and others as fearful as Hares and Harts or Graſhoppers. We cannot keep ſome from fear; we cannot make others afraid. *Canſt thou make him afraid as the Graſhopper?*

Note, Thirdly; *Where God gives courage, it is not in man to make afraid.*

The courage of the Horſe appears yet higher in the next verſe.

The glory of his noſtrils is terrible.

The noſtrils are very conſiderable in horſes, and the largeneſs or openneſs of them, is a ſign of their goodneſs and ſtoutneſs. *The glory of his noſtrils is terrible,* or *terror,* that is, very terrible, his breathings are meer terror. This expreſſion of the Horſe, is ſomewhat like that given of St *Paul*, while *Saul* (*Acts* 9. 1.) *Saul yet breathing out threatnings and ſlaughter. Paul*, before his converſion, breathed flames of fire, as it were, he breathed terror out of his mouth againſt the faithful people of God. Thus here, *The glory of his noſtrils is terrible.*

Meros terroris naribus ſpirat. Bez. *Efflat patentibus naribus ventum calentem iræ & audaciæ indicem, quo videtur ille gloriari. Numquid poſuiſti gloriam narium ejus ut ſit terror?* i.e. *num effeciſti ut terreat homines fremitu narium ſuarum.* Vatabl.

But, what is *this glory of his noſtrils?* Some ſay, theſe words are a deſcription of his neighing; and I grant, that ſound proceeding from his noſtrils, as from a trumpet, may well enough be called the glory of them; nor can it be denied, but that the neighing of great horſes is terrible. According to which reading, ſome ſay, the word which we tranſlate *Noſtrils*, ſignifieth in this place, that ſound of his noſtrils called *neighing*; and that the word by us rendred *glory*, doth rather ſignifie *excellency* or *vehemency*. And thus our old *Engliſh* Tranſlation gives it; *His ſtrong neighing is fearful*; or as others, *His vehement neighing is terrible..*

The *Hebrew* (as was toucht before) is *Terror*; nothing being more common in that language, than to uſe *ſubſtantive* words *adjectively*, or, as if they were *Adjectives*. Taking this ſenſe of the words, they deſcribe generous horſes *neighing*, when they go to battle, as if they would thereby at once proclaim and trumpet out their own courage, and terrifie or daunt the enemy; or, as if they would not only ſhew their own fearleſsneſs, but make their oppoſers afraid. This is a fair interpretation, yet becauſe (according to one Expoſition given, and much received, of the latter part of the former verſe, *Haſt thou cloathed his neck with thunder?* the neighing of the horſe hath been already ſpoken of, I rather conceive, that theſe words, *The glory of his noſtrils is terrible*, may be expounded either of theſe two ways.

First, That his wide, fuming, ſmoaking noſtrils (which are the glory and commendation of a horſe) ſtrike others with terror. Poets deſcribing the horſe, fancy him ſending fire out of his noſtrils, or breathing fire. And thus when God is angry, ſmoak and fire are ſaid to go out of his noſtrils (2 *Sam.* 22. 9.) Some underſtand that (*Iſa.* 2. 22.) of an angry furious man. As is if the Prophet had ſaid, fear not man, make no account of him, though enflamed with wrath and anger. *The glory of his noſtrils is terrible.*

—*Frænoq; teneri impatiens crebras expirat naribus ignes.* Sil. Ital. l. 6. *Igneſcunt patulæ nares.* Claud.

Secondly, Reading the words thus (as was ſaid) *The glory of his noſtrils is terror*; they may be expounded, not as implying the terror and fright which the horſe ſtrikes others with, but which others would fright the horſes with, while they brandiſh their ſwords, ſhake their ſpears, ſound their trumpets; from all which terror, the horſe is ſo far from running, that rather his courage is encreaſed, and his ſpirit hatred. Such noiſes, claſhings and clamors, will not ſcare the Horſe, as they do the Graſhopper; but the terror or matter of fear which is preſented before him, is the glory of his noſtrils, that is, it will but provoke him to anger and rage, or excite his courage, which makes his noſtrils ſmoak like fire, it cannot at all put him into a fear, and that's *his glory*.

Bellum quod eſt aliis ad terrorem, naribus ab equo perceptum, eſt ei ad gloriam, i.e. *ad quandam animi magnitudinem.* Aquin.

Hence Note, Firſt; *That which any creature excels in, is his glory.*

The horſe glorieth in his ſtrength; the courage and fierceneſs of the horſe appearing in his noſtrils, are his glory alſo. Whatever good man excels in, is his glory: if he excels in knowledge, or in ſtrength, or courage, or in holineſs, it is his glory; yea, men who excel in evil, count that their glory (*Phil.* 3. 19.) That which God excels in, is his glory; what is that? He (bleſſed be his name) excels in pardoning our ſins, in covering our iniquities, and therefore, *It is the glory of God to conceal a thing* (ſaith *Solomon*, *Prov.* 25. 2.) that is, ſin, by pardoning it. Kings muſt ſearch out the matter, but it is the glory of God to conceal a thing. That which any creature excels in, is his glory; that which the Scriptures declare God to excel in, is his glory, and that is moſtly his pardoning mercy.

Note, Secondly; *The greateſt glory which ſome creatures have, is to be terrible to others.*

To put others in fear, is all their glory, all that they glory in; their glory is not to ſave and to deliver, to comfort and to do good to others, but to vex and to terrifie.

From the ſecond interpretation, take this Note.

That which is very terrible to ſome, is a glory to others.

That is, *It occaſions them to ſhew their glory, or cauſeth their glory to appear the more.* Terror is the glory of the horſe; his noſtrils are never ſo glorious, as when you attempt to terrifie him. When that which is terrible is put to a true believer, then the glory of his ſoul breaks out, then he ſhews forth his faith in God, his integrity and faithfulneſs towards God; terror is the glory of his ſoul, as terror is the glory of the horſe, that is, it gives him occaſion to ſhew forth his glory.

Verſ. 21. **He paweth in the valley, and rejoyceth in his ſtrength; he goeth on to meet the armed men.**

Theſe words give a further proof of the courage of the horſe, or a ſign of it; for 'tis the property of the higheſt metal'd and beſt ſpirited horſes to do ſo, as impatient of a check by the bridle, and deſirous rather to be ſpurred upon an engagement with the enemy in battle. *He paweth*

In the valley.] Why in the valley? becauſe there battels, eſpecially horſe battels, uſed to be fought, rather than upon hills or uneven grounds.

There is another reading of the verſe; for the word tranſlated to *paw*, ſignifies alſo to *dig*: Hence ſome give it thus; *He diggeth in the valley.* The pawing of a horſe, is a kind of digging; for he hollows the earth, and makes a cavity in it by pawing. A mettl'd horſe cannot keep his feet, but will be traverſing his ground, and pawing with his feet, as vext at any delay or ſtopt of the battle; he cannot endure to be curb'd by the bit, having ſuch a mind (as was toucht before) to be upon the ſpur, in a full carreer againſt the enemy. Of ſuch pranſings, or (as the Margin hath it) tramplings or plungings of the horſe, *Deborah* ſpake in her triumphant ſong (*Judg.* 5. 22.) *He paweth in the valley.*

Terram ungula fodit Vulg. — *Cavatq; tellurem.* Virg. 3. Georg. *Nec pes officium ſtandi tenet; ungula terram, crebra ferit, virtuſq; artus animoſa fatigat.*

Hence Note; *What we would fain have, or be at, we are very unquiet, and think long till we are at it.*

This we may take in a ſpiritual ſenſe: A ſoul which hath a mind to do good, how impatient is he when he is ſtopt from doing it! A ſoul that hath a deſire to have communion with God on earth, how much troubled is he to be hindred! And a ſoul that hath a great mind to be with God in heaven, how doth he paw in the valley of this lower world, till he get higher and aſcend up to him! *Auſtin* ſaid, *My heart is unquiet, I can have no reſt till I am with thee again.* So the Apoſtle (*Phil.* 1. 23.) *I deſire to depart*, I would fain be out of this world; why am I thus wind-bound in the harbour? let me hoiſe ſail and be gone, the Sea-man is troubled to lie at an anchor, when he would be under ſail. Thus the generous horſe *paweth in the valley, and*

Rejoyceth in his ſtrength.] And becauſe of that he rejoyceth in the battle; and becauſe of that, would fain be at the battle. A horſe being confident of his ſtrength, goeth on chearfully.

Sibi placet in ſuo robore. Bez.

The word rendred *ſtrength*, ſignifieth not only bodily robuſtiouſneſs, but any other abilities or excellent endowments. In which larger notion it is uſed (*Dan.* 1. 4.) where it is ſaid, The children that were to be choſen and bred up for the King, were ſuch as *had ability to ſtand in the Kings Palace*; that is, ſuch as were well qualified for that ſervice and attendance. In ſtrength of both kinds, a well diſciplined horſe may be ſaid to *rejoyce*.

כח *Et vires denotat & alias præterea dotes.*

The word rendred *rejoyceth*, may rather (ſay ſome) be here tranſlated, ***Exulteth***, which imports ſomewhat more than rejoycing, or great rejoycing; and may not unfitly be attributed to beaſts, eſpecially to horſes, and chiefly to ſuch horſes as this Text ſpeaks of. Exultation is the expreſſion of any inward joy, by ſome outward act or geſture of the body; and to do that is very uſual with brave horſes, who being proud of, at leaſt much pleaſed with themſelves, are often ſeen pranſing and jetting as they go, and even artificially forming and compoſing their bodies, their heads and legs eſpecially, at every ſtep they take. So that theſe words, *He rejoyceth, or exulteth in his ſtrength*, ſeem to imply, that the horſe knoweth his own ſtrength and powers. It is commonly ſaid, *If a horſe knew his ſtrength, he were not to be dealt with*; but whether this be true or no, it appears by theſe words in the Text, that he hath ſome knowledge of his ſtrength, elſe he could not be ſaid to rejoyce in it. And this is very aptly inſerted here, becauſe hence it comes to paſs, that the horſe ruſheth ſo fiercely and fearleſly into the battle, which is the great ſcope of the whole deſcription given of him in this context. *He rejoyceth in his ſtrength.*

Hence Note, Firſt; *They have much ſtrength for any work or ſervice, are joyful to go on to it.*

David (*Pſal.* 19. 5.) compares the Sun *to a ſtrong man, that rejoyceth to run a race.* A ſtrong man is not afraid of, nor troubled at the race, but rejoyceth exceedingly in it.

Secondly, Note; *What we have much of, or excel in, we are apt to rejoyce in.*

The horſe hath much ſtrength, and he rejoyceth in it. This appears in all things; If we have much riches, how apt are we to rejoyce in them! If we have much wiſdom, or underſtanding, or parts, how apt are we to rejoyce in them! and therefore the Lord gives us that caveat (*Jer.* 9. 23.) *Let not the wiſe man glory in his wiſdom* (as if he had ſaid, If a man have a great deal of wiſdom, or but a little more than his neighbour, he will be glorying in it, as the horſe in his ſtrength) *and let not the mighty man glory in his might, nor the rich man glory in his riches.* All theſe ſtops upon glorying, ſhew, that what we have much of, we are apt to glory in.

Note, Thirdly; *To rejoyce in any ſtrength, or in any thing but in God and his favour, or as we enjoy God in any thing, is brutiſh, 'tis to the rejoyce as the horſe.*

The only rejoyce as Chriſtians, who rejoyce in their ſtrength, and in their riches, and in their graces, as they find God in them, and as they flow from God. The Goſpel way of rejoycing, is to rejoyce in the Lord, not in our graces, not in our wiſdom, not in our righteouſneſs, but in the Lord. The *horſe rejoyceth in his ſtrength.*

נשׁק *Arma ſignificat ſed propriè tela, atq; ea, quibus adorimur, congredimur.* נשׁק *eſt Græcè* Oπλον *omne teli & armorum genus.* Merc. *Hinc* נשק *oſculari ſalutare, quod ſalutantes dextra, petant atque occurrant invicem.* Codurc.

He goeth on to meet the armed men.] The Hebrew is, *He goeth on to meet the Armor*, or rather *Arms*; that is, offenſive weapons, pikes and ſpears, which gall horſes, rather than defenſive, ſuch as ſhields, bucklers, and helmets, which only preſerve men from hurt and wounds; or we may take it in both, and ſo the meaning is, *the armed men.* He goeth on to meet them; he needs not be beaten, nor whipt, nor ſpurred on to the battle. The courageous horſe goes on, he retreats not, he retires not, he is a volunteer in the War, he is preſt by nothing but the nobleneſs and height of his own ſpirit, he goes to meet the armed men; though they meet him with deadly arms, with ſword and ſpear, yet he goes to meet them. The word which we tranſlate, *Armed men*, properly ſignifies to *kiſs, or to ſalute*, becauſe they who come to battle, do as it were, joyn hands and ſalute one another, though very coarſely, rudely, and roughly. *He goeth on to meet the armed men.*

Hence obſerve, *The ſence of ability, much more confidence in ability, puts on to activity.*

The Horſe rejoyceth in his ſtrength, he is ſenſible of, or finds his ſtrength for the war, and therefore he puts on.

Secondly, Note; *What ever any man hath a mind or a delight to do, that he will go on in, or is free to do.*

The Horſe goes on to meet the armed men, he doth not ſtand to receive a charge, but he ſeeks it. What any have a great mind to, that they are very forward in; you need not preſs a volunteer, nor ſpur a free, a valiant horſe on to the battle, you can hardly hold him in with bit and bridle. 'Tis ſo in any ſervice, where there is a heart ſet to it! with a love to it, O how do we go forth to it! we need not be haled nor driven to it. So in ſpirituals, a heart of that temper, anſwers every call (*Pſal.* 27. 8.) *When thou ſaidſt, ſeek my face; my heart ſaid unto thee, thy face Lord will I ſeek.* He preſently anſwers the Lords call to any duty, who hath a heart for it. What zeal, what freedom, what forwardneſs have we, to that we have a will and a mind to! An up-hill way, is all down-hill to a willing mind.

VERS. 22, 23, 24, 25.

He mocketh at fear, and is not afraid, neither turneth he back from the ſword.

The quiver ratleth againſt him, the glittering ſpear and the ſhield,

He ſwalloweth the ground with fierceneſs and rage, neither believeth he that it is the ſound of the trumpet.

He ſayes among the trumpets, Ha, ha, and he ſmelleth the battle afar off; the thunder of the Captains and the ſhouting.

These four verſes continue and compleat the deſcription of the goodly valiant War-horſe, in his ſecond qualification of boldneſs and courage, of which this Text gives as many proofs as can be imagined or expected.

שׂחק *Spernit quod plenum eſt timore.* Vatabl. *Contemnit omnia metuenda. Elegans proſopopeia eſt; qua tribuitur experti rationis animali, quod hominis proprium eſt, ſc. videre arma.*

He mocketh at fear.] And what greater argument of valour than than that? *Fear*, the abſtract is here put for the concrete; he laughs at fear, that is, that is, at thoſe things which are moſt to be feared, or which carry the greateſt command of fear in them. It is uſual in Scripture, to expreſs things greatly to be feared, by fear. As things greatly hoped for are called our hope, and things rejoyced in greatly are called our joy, ſo things greatly to be feared are called our fear; and in that ſence, above all, God is called *the fear of his people*; he is ſo much the object of fear, that the Scripture calls him *fear*. *Jacob* in his treating and contract with his Uncle *Laban* (*Gen.* 31. 53.) *Sware by the fear of his father Iſaac*, that is, he ſware by God, who alone hath this high honour to be ſworn by in a ſacred way. To ſwear, is a great part of divine worſhip, and is ſometime put for the whole of worſhip, *Jacob ſware by the fear of Iſaac*, that is, by God, who his father *Iſaac* feared, and in whoſe fear he walked all his days. Thus ſpake the Prophet (*Iſa.* 8. 12, 13.) *Sanctifie the Lord of Hoſts in your hearts, and let him be your fear*, which is quoted by the Apoſtle (1 *Pet.* 3. 15) Now as God himſelf is called fear, becauſe he is ſo exceedingly to be feared; ſo thoſe things which carry in them much fear, or which are much feared, in Scripture ſenſe and eloquence, are called fear; *He ſcorneth or mocketh at fear.* Thoſe things which make others tremble, he, as it were, makes a ſport at and plays with them. So the words are an expoſition of what was ſpoken at the cloſe of the 21. verſ. *He goeth on to meet the armies*, or the armed men, who are much to be feared and dreaded.

Quæ non curant homines rident.

In general, whatſoever is or may be matter of fear, that the horſe mocks or laughs at, that is, he counts no more of it, than we do of thoſe things we laugh at. What men regard not, care not for, that they laugh at, mock at. We ſay of a valiant ſtout-hearted man, *he knows not what fear means.* When once a Noble perſon, in great danger, was admoniſhed not to be afraid; he laid his hand upon his breaſt, and ſaid, *Fear was never here yet, and I hope ſhall never enter.* Thus the Horſe is here repreſented, as one into whoſe heart fear never entred; he mocketh at fear,

חתת *dejectus, abjectus, ſtratus, metaphoricè conſternatus fuit, mente jacuit.*

And (as it followeth) **is not affrighted.**] The word which we render *affrighted*, imports the greateſt conſternation of mind, when the mind lies, as it were, proſtrate under utter deſpondency, breakings of ſpirit, and diſcouragements (*Deut.* 1. 21.) Neither any dreadful noiſe nor terrible ſight, neither the appearance nor the reallity of danger, abate the ſpirit or proweſs of the Horſe; *He is not affrighted.*

Hence, Note; *Danger is the element of courage.*

We ſee it in the Horſe, and it is much more ſeen in couragious men. You can no more caſt down true courage by repreſenting dangers, than you can drown a fiſh by caſting it into the water; it is in its element. It was the ſpeech of that great *Alexander*, being in a moſt hazardous undertaking, *Now I ſee a danger ſutable to my mind, a match for my courage. The Horſe mocketh at fear.*

Jam video animo meo par periculum.

Note, Secondly; *That which is not feared, is uſually derided.*

It is ſo with beaſts, and it is ſo with men; and what more uſual with ſome men, than to mock moſt at thoſe things which they ſhould be moſt afraid of? As there is a nobleneſs of courage in ſome men, which makes a mock of fear; ſo beſides that, there is a baſeneſs of ſpirit, a ſtupidneſs in other men, that make a mock at fear. Such was the ſpirit of *Lots* Sons-in-law (*Gen.* 19. 14.) who when *Lot* reported to them, the moſt dreadful thing that ever was in the world, a ſhower of fire and brimſtone, ready to fall down from heaven, upon the whole City to conſume it, *He was to them as one that mocked*; the meaning is, his Sons in-law mocked at what he reported, they laugh'd at his admonition. Such a kind of mocking at fear, we read in thoſe hardned and debauched ſpirits among the ten Tribes, when that good King ſent and admoniſhed them to return to the truee worſhip of God, and laid before them thoſe dreadful judgments that would ſurely overtake them if they did not (2 *Chron.* 30. 10.) *They laughed to ſcorn the meſſengers, and mockt them*: As if they had ſaid, *What do you tell us of the wrath of God, and of his judgments, if we perſiſt in our way and courſe; we ſcorn your admonition, we regard not your threatnings.* The character given of that people (2 *Chron.* 36. 16.) when wrath was breaking out upon them without remedy, was this, *They mockt the meſſengers of God, and deſpiſed his words.* To ſuch mockers at fear, I might take occaſion to ſay, as the Prophet in a like caſe (*Iſa.* 28. 22.) *Be ye not mockers, leſt your bands be made ſtrong.* There are ſome fears that it is our honour to mock at; but there are other fears that will be our ſhame and ruin to mock at: Of all ſuch,that will be true which the Lord ſpake by wiſdom (*Prov.* 1. 26.) *I will mock when their fear cometh.* They who mock when fear, that is, when fearful things are threatn'd in the name of the Lord; the Lord will mock at their fear when fearful evils fall upon them. *Sinners will have little mind to mock at laſt.* Such mockers at fear are propheſied of, before the coming of Chriſt, in thoſe two Epiſtles which are of a near complexion and conſtitution (2 *Pet.* 3. 4.) *Knowing this firſt, that there ſhall come in the laſt days (mockers, or) ſcoffers, walking after their own luſts, ſaying, where is the promiſe of his coming.* And in the Epiſtle of *Jude* (*ver.* 17, 18.) we have the ſame caution, *Beloved, remember ye the words that were ſpoken before, of the Apoſtles of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, how that they told you, there ſhould be mockers in the laſt time, who ſhould walk after their ungodly luſts.* Take heed you be not found thus like the Horſe mocking at fear, though there be many caſes wherein it is the honour of man, eſpecially, of the ſervants of God, to be in this point like the Horſe, *Who mocketh at fear*,

Neither turneth he back from the ſword.] This latter part of the *verſe* is only a confirmation of what was ſaid before, and therefore I ſhall briefly paſs it. Thoſe appearances or realities of danger, at which we are affrighted, cauſe us to turn back; but the horſe not being affrighted with, *turneth not back from the ſword.* The Hebrew is, *he turneth not back from the face of the ſword*; further, the Hebrew is plural, *from the face of the ſword.* The ſword hath a face, it hath (as it were) many faces, and they all look very terribly; therefore not to be afraid of the faces of the ſword, is a high expreſſion of fearleſneſs. *Not to turn back from the face of the ſword* may have this ſence, not to fear when the ſword is very near him; when the ſword looks the horſe in the face, and makes dreadful faces, then he turns not back from it, nor yields a foot of ground. The Horſe doth not only mock at fear, or at things which are to be fear'd, when they are afar off, but when they are near, even, when the ſword is drawn and brandiſhed before his face. To talk great words, when an enemy is far from us, is the cowards guize; but when we ſee his face, to ſtand to it, is the trial of courage The Lioneſs is a very fierce and ſtout creature, and yet it is reported, that when ſhe is fighting for her whelps (at which time ſhe is moſt fierce and furious) ſhe caſt her eyes down to the ground, as not being willing to behold the weapons or hunting arms of thoſe who purſue her. But though the natural Hiſtorian reports ſome kind of fear in the Lioneſs, yet *Solomon* reports the courage of the Lion altogether fearleſs and undaunted (*Prov.* 30. 30.) *He turneth not away for any*; The Hebrew ſaith, *from the face of any*; we may ſay, man or beaſt, that is, he takes not a ſtep back for any; neither man nor beaſt can make him afraid. An ancient Writer, deſcribing the Lion, tells us, He never feareth, nor flyeth, nor haſteth away in the ſight of any; but though oppreſſed with the multitude or number of his purſuers, he make his retreat ſoftly and gradually, or by ſeveral ſtands, to ſee who dares engage him, as was ſhewed before at the 38. *Chapter* (*ver.* 39, 40.) Thus the valiant horſe behaves himſelf at the appearance and face of the ſword; he doth not only not turn quite away from the ſword, but doth not ſo much as turn his eyes from it, but looks it full in the face, though it ſheweth a dreadful and bloody face. God, who hath made the horſe for the ſervice of man in war, hath given him a ſpirit ſutable, he is not afraid of the ſword, nor of any other weapon of war, as will further appear from the next *verſe*, when from theſe words, I have briefly Noted,

Plin. nat. hiſt. l. 6. c. 16.

First, *The face or appearance of the ſword is terrible.*

The ſword is one of the moſt terrible things, which the Lord at any time threatneth againſt a ſinful people; the face of the ſword makes many mens faces gather paleneſs, and puts a palſie into their hands.

Note, Secondly; *Where there is true courage, not only dangers afar off, but dangers at hand are not turned from.*

It is ſaid (*Pſal.* 78. 8.) that, *the children of* Ephraim *being armed, and carrying bows* (they had both offenſive and defenſive weapons, yet) *turned back in the day of battle.* They marcht on poſſibly a great while very valiantly, as well as any in the army, and poſſibly made great boaſts what they would do; but when it came to the day of battle, when they ſaw the face of the ſword, then ſaith the Text, *they turned back.* A man of right mettal turns not back, his courage fails not, no not at preſent danger; and that's it which we are to conſider our ſelves in, as to our ſpiritual courage. It is an eaſie matter to ſlight dangers when they are unſeen, and only talked of; but when it comes to the day of battle, when ſwords are drawn, and you ſee their terrible faces, then not to turn back, that's courage indeed. And ſo we may underſtand the words of the Apoſtle (*Heb.* 10. 38.) where he brings in the Lord, ſpeaking thus; *If any man draw back, my ſoul ſhall have no pleaſure in him*, If any man draw back as a coward, or takes his heels in the day of battle (for of that he ſpake in the 34. *verſe*, telling us of thoſe, *Who endured a great fight of affliction*, even of thoſe that *took joyfully the ſpoiling of their goods*, and doubtleſs were ready to take joyfully the ſpoiling of their lives too: If any man in their caſe turn back from the very face of the ſword) *My ſoul* (ſaith God) *ſhall have no pleaſure in him*; he is no ſouldier for me, he is not fit for the ſpiritual warfare.

As in this *verſe* we have the ſword, ſo in the next, there is an enumeration of ſeveral other terrible Armes, the fight whereof gives no trouble to the horſe.

Verſ. 23. **The quiver ratleth againſt him, the gliſtering ſpear and ſword.**

Yet he turns not back; ſo we are to connect it.

The quiver ratles againſt him.] It was uſual in thoſe times to make much uſe of bows and arrows in war; and not only did the foot-men uſe the bow, but the horſe-men too.Some underſtand this ratling of the quiver, to be either of foot or horſe that come to charge; but we are rather to underſtand the ratling of the horſe mans quivers. Moſt creatures take fright at ratling noiſes, but this ratling makes not the horſe either to ſtart or turn, he flincheth not, nor draweth he back at the ratling of the quiver.

אשפה eſt pharetra, unde ſagittæ vocantur בני אשפה filii pharetræ. Lam.3.

The quiver ratleth againſt him. There is a twofold interpretation of theſe words, ariſing from the ambiguity of the prepoſition (על) by us rendred *againſt*, which others tranſlate by (*ſuper*) *upon*, conceiving that here mention is made of thoſe weapons which the Horſe with his Rider bear; as if the meaning were, *The quivers which Archers on horſe-back, carry at their ſaddles or by their ſides, ratle upon him.* But moſt (as our tranſlation hath it) render that prepoſition by, *againſt*, and ſo underſtand the whole *verſe* of thoſe armes, which the enemy or contrary party uſe in conflict.

Pharetra à ſeſſore ſuo geſtata fragore non terretur. Bez.

conflict. And that this is the better and more proper expoſition, is clear from the ſeries and tendency of the words; for here the valour and generoſity of the horſe is painted to the life, towards which the mention of thoſe arms, which the horſe himſelf or the horſe-man managing him beareth, doth not contribute the leaſt line or ſhadow; but the mention of thoſe ratling arms or of the ratling of thoſe arms, which the adverſe party bear and brandiſh againſt him, tends to a notable demonſtration of his courage. 'Tis a great evidence of a horſes boldneſs, to ruſh upon or charge an enemy, whoſe arms ratle againſt him, and who hold out weapons purpoſely fitted to wound, kill, and ſlay all that come near him. So that, what is ſaid (*ver.* 21.) *He goeth on to meet the armed men*; and (*ver.* 22.) *He mocketh at fear, neither turneth he back from the ſword*, is here further illuſtrated and heightned, by recounting ſeveral other deadly weapons of which the horſe is as dreadleſs. When the horſe moves much, the *quiver ratles*, ſo alſo do both ſpears and ſhields (as it followeth in the Text.)

The glittering ſpear and the ſhield.] Well ſurbiſht ſpears and ſhields *glitter*, or (as the *Hebrew* hath it) *flame*. The heads and points of ſpears being burniſhed and brighten'd, ſeem like burning fire or flames; yet the horſe is not moved by them. We read of a *flaming ſword* in a higher ſenſe (*Gen.* 3. 24.) as here of flaming ſpears and ſhields. Now as the claſhing and ratling of arms, ſo the brightneſs of them is terrible; but neither the one nor the other, neither the ratling quiver, nor the glittering ſpear and ſhield trouble the couragious horſe. Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates, not ſhield but, *javelin*, which is an offenſive or miſſive weapon; the word is rendred ſpear (*Joſh.* 8. 18. 1 *Sam.* 17. 45.) as alſo at the 29. *verſe* of the 41. *Chapter* of this Book. Theſe things laid together bring in, or make up a fuller proof of the horſes courage; the quiver ratleth againſt him, the ſpear and ſhield ratle too, yet he is not diſcouraged.

כידון *ſæpe lancea redditur.*

> Hence note; Firſt, *The confuſed noiſe of weapons in war, wounds the ear and the heart, or the heart at the ear, as well as the ſharpneſs of their point or edge wounds the fleſh.*

It is matter of amazement to hear the ſounding, the ratling, and the claſhing of arms, and other dreadful noiſes that the field is filled with in a day of battle (*Iſa.* 9. 5.) *Every battle of the warrior is with confuſed noiſe*; and 'tis much that the confuſion of the noiſe, doth not make a confuſion in the ſpirits of thoſe that are ingag'd in battle.

> Note, Secondly; *Not to be terrified with noiſes and dreadful ſounds, ſhews ſtrength and ſtoutneſs of ſpirit.*

It is a piece of valour in the Horſe, not to be troubled with or at the ratling of the quiver. The Lord to ſhew that he would totally take away the ſpirit of courage from his own people for their ſins (who had been ſo valiant to ſin againſt him, and would run upon ſin, notwithſtanding the ratling of his quiver, his threatnings, denounced againſt them) telleth them (*Levit.* 26. 36.) *I will carry you into the land of your enemies.* What then? *And* (ſaith he) *upon them that are left alive of you, I will ſend a faintneſs into their hearts, in the land of their enemies, and the ſound of a ſhaken leaf ſhall chaſe them.* Now as it ſhews an extream cowardize and faintneſs of ſpirit, to ſhake and run at the ſhaking of a leaf; ſo to ſtand firm, to keep our ground and not be moved, when there is ſuch a noiſe and clattering, as even ſhakes the earth, and confounds all the elements (as it were) this ſhews a mighty courage.

Verſ. 24. **He ſwalloweth the ground with fierceneſs and rage,** &c.

Abſorbet terram, poetica locutio ſic vorare viam, vorare litteras. Druſ. *Helluones librorum.*

Still the expreſſions riſe higher and higher, the courage of the horſe tranſports him ſo far, that he even ſwalloweth the ground. We ſay of ſome hard and great ſtudents, they *ſwallow up books*, they make no bones of great books. So here, to ſhew the mighty courage and fierceneſs of the horſe, he is repreſented, as if he would eat up or ſwallow the very ground he treads on.

Facit foveam in terra. Tharg. Fodit. Pagn.

Yet many Expoſitors are not ſatiſfied, that the Hebrew word here uſed (גמא) ſhould be rendred to *ſwallow*; and therefore they tranſlate, *He diggeth the earth with fierceneſs and rage*; and expound it of his making holes in the ground, by pawing in the valley ſpoken of *verſe* 21. Mr. *Broughton* give it thus; *With ſhaking and ſtirring he beateth upon the earth*: The *Chaldee Paraphraſe* ſaith, *He makes a hole in the earth.* The authority of the *Chaldee* (ſaith *Bootius*) gives credit to this expoſition and ſtrengthens it; becauſe it ſhews, that the word in the *Syriack* tongue (many of which are uſed in this book of *Job*) may well ſignifie to dig or make a hole, ſeeing from this Verb a Noun is derived, which in that language ſignifies a hole or pit. And if we take this interpretation (ſaith he) the words would not be a bare, much leſs a needleſs repetition of what was ſaid (*ver.* 21.) *He paweth in the valley.* For though (according to this reading) the Text in both places ſpeaks of hollowing the earth, yet we may give this difference; the former being to be underſtood of thoſe lighter touches, which wanton luſty horſes with one foot give the earth; but this latter, of great and deep impreſſions which they make in the earth with all their feet, while heated with a deſire to charge the enemy, they are reſtrained and held in, till the ſignal be given.

Secondly, Others laying aſide the metaphorical ſenſe of the word *ſwalloweth*, expound it properly of his biting or gnawing the earth. A generous horſe, to ſhew how he would eat up the enemy when he comes at him, before he comes at him, doth not only paw in the earth with his foot, but gnaws the earth with his teeth, as if he would ſwallow it up. And to ſwallow up a thing imports in all languages, at leaſt a ſuppoſed or conceited eaſineſs of doing it. We, ſpeaking proverbially, uſe to ſay, we could do ſuch or ſuch a thing, as eaſily as we can eat or drink. The horſe when he cannot come preſently to wreck his rage upon the enemy, doth it upon the earth in gnawing of which he ſeems to tell his enemies, that he will tear their fleſh, and gnaw their bones as ſoon as he can come at them. And I find one, who by earth in this place, underſtands men (as all are) made of earth; but though it may bear a tolerable ſenſe, to ſay, that a horſe in his fierceneſs and rage, would even eat or ſwallow up the enemy; yet to expouud the *earth* by the enemy, *exceeds* (ſaith a learned Author) *all abſurdity*. But,

Morſu terram abſorbere videtur.

Thirdly, I rather conceive (as ſome of the *Rabbins*, and not a few of our Modern Writers do) that by ſwallowing the earth with fierceneſs and rage, we are to underſtand only the ſwiftneſs of his courſe or motion, when once he hath but the reins let looſe to the battle, he would run as if he would ſwallow the ground, and that ſhews his courage too, We ſay of a man that runs with ſpeed, *he doth not feel the ground*: The horſe is in ſuch extream haſt to be gone, and to be at the battle, that he runs, as if he neither felt nor left any earth under him. This interpretation is ſtrongly contended for, by learned *Bochartus*, in oppoſition to the former, and illuſtrated by many ancient teſtimonies concerning the fierceneſs and ſwiftneſs of the Horſe, which the Reader may conſult if he pleaſe. *He ſwalloweth the ground with fierceneſs and rage.*

Abſorbere terram dicitur phraſi Hebræa velociſſimè currere. Bold.

> Hence Note, *In ſtrong and outragious paſſions, we think we can do impoſſibilities,*

Even eat up the earth, and ſwallow the ground.

A verbo אמן *credere aut fidelem eſſe.*

Neither believeth he it is the ſound of the trumpet.] Beaſts have ſome kind of faith; they do ſomewhat which looks like believing. The Original word ſignifieth the proper work of faith.

But how can the horſe be ſaid, either to believe, or not to believe?

I ſhall give two interpretations of the words, in anſwer to this queſtion.

Firſt, thus: *He believes not that it is the ſound of the Trumpet*; that is, whereas it might be thought, that the ſound of the Trumpet ſhould terrifie him, he regards it no more than a man doth that which he doth not believe, he cares not for it, he is not at all troubled at it. Thus our *Engliſh* Tranſlation hath it; *He regardeth not the noiſe of the trumpets.*

Secondly, Thus: *He believes not that it is the ſound of the Trumpet*; that is, he hath ſo great a mind to the battle, that when the Trumpet ſounds indeed to the battle, he doubts it is not ſo, 'tis too good news to be true; he ſcarce believes his own ears; or, he deſireth the battle ſo much, that he believes the ſignal of it very little, and fears it is not ſo, but ſome falſe alarm. This is a good and probable interpretation, it being uſual among men (from whom in proportion to beaſts, eſpecially to gallant horſes, this affection may be transferred) hardly at firſt to believe or give credit to thoſe things which they extreamly deſire and wiſh, yea, long for. In this ſenſe it may well be ſaid of the Horſe, *He believes not that it is the ſound of the trumpet.*

Hence Note, *That which is much deſired, is in ſome caſes hardly believed.*

'Tis uſually ſaid, *We eaſily believe that which we would or deſire to have*; yet ſometimes we hardly believe that which we would have; that is, when we hear 'tis ſo, we are full of fears and doubts that the thing is not ſo, we are afraid that we ſhall not obtain ſo wiſhed and longed for an enjoyment; and do therefore not only queſtion the reports of others concerning it, as *Jacob* did the report of his other ſons concerning the life and high advancement of his ſon *Joſeph* in *Egypt* (*Gen.* 45. 26.) for as ſoon as he heard it, the Text ſaith, *His heart fainted, for he believed them not*, Now, not only do ſome (I ſay) in ſuch caſes hardly believe the reports of others) but even that which their own eyes behold. It is ſaid of the diſciples of Chriſt, when he appeared to them after his Reſurrection, and ſhewed them his hands and his feet (*Luke* 21. 41.) *They believed not for joy*; they were ſo glad of the thing, they could not believe their own eyes. In which ſenſe we are to underſtand that of *Job*, at the 24. verſe of the 29. Chapter; *If I laughed on them, they believed it not.* When the Angel told *Abraham* in the Tent (*Gen.* 18. 10.) *I will certainly return to thee according to the time of life; and loe,* Sarah *thy wife ſhall have a ſon.* *Sarah* over-hearing this good news, *Laughed within her ſelf* (verſ. 12.) Though it pleaſed her exceedingly, that ſhe ſhould have a ſon, yet ſhe laughed alſo in unbelief, and was therefore reproved (*verſ.* 15.) If ſhe had laught as *Abraham* did, at the day of Chriſt, *who ſaw Chriſts day and rejoyced* (John 8. 56.) that is, he laughed in faith, in aſſurance that it would come, ſhe had not been reproved; but *Sarah* laughed, as doubting, ſure this will never be; though might ſhe have had her wiſh, ſhe would of all things in the world, have deſired and wiſhed a ſon. Once more (*Acts* 12. 15.) when *Peter* was in priſon, and prayer made by the Church night and day, doubtleſs they prayed in faith for his delivery, yet when *Peter* was delivered, and knockt at the door, they ſaid to the Maid, who told them it was *Peter*, *Thou art mad* (ver. 15.) They could not believe it was ſo, while they heard it was ſo, and had been earneſtly praying it might be ſo. The valiant horſe deſires nothing more than an engagement in battle, but believes not it is the ſound of the trumpet.

Thus of the ſecond expoſition of theſe words, *Neither believeth he that it is the ſound of the Trumpet.* Yet ſome conceive, that though it be true, that generous and brave horſes are not only not affrighted at the ſound of the trumpet, but rather rejoyce (in their kind) at it, as is ſaid expreſly in the next verſe; yet it cannot be conveniently ſaid, that he hath ſo great a joy as to produce this diſ-belief: For ſo to rejoyce, as to be in a manner overcome with joy, and not to give credit to our eyes and ears, never happens, but as in extreamly great and extraordinary joys, ſo in unaccuſtomed and unexpected joys, which ſurely cannot well be affirmed of that joy which horſes are taken with at the ſound of a trumpet, ſignalizing a battle to enſue.

And therefore (becauſe it avoids this difficulty) I ſhall rather adhere to them, who render the words thus, *Neither doth he ſtand ſtill (or keep his ground) when the trumpet ſoundeth.* So Mr. *Broughton* renders expreſly; *Neither ſtands he ſtill when the ſound of the Trumpet is heard.* This interpretation ſuits beſt with the ſcope of the place; nor doth the force of the Hebrew Verb oppoſe it: for the Adjective which comes from the Participle of it, is often uſed to ſignifie firm, ſtable, ſure, durable; yea, and the Verb it ſelf is often taken in that ſenſe (*Pſal.* 78. 37.) They were not ſtedfaſt, or ſtood not faſt in his covenant, So (*Deut.* 28. 59.) the Lord threatned *Plagues of long continuance*, that is, *ſtanding Plagues*, or ſuch as ſhould hold long, and not ſtir from the place. Thus alſo it is ſaid (*Exod.* 17. 12.) *The hands of* Moſes *were ſteady until the going down of the Sun.* The ſame word doth elegantly ſignifie, both to believe and to be ſteady, or ſtand faſt; ſeeing it is faith or believing in God, which alone makes us ſteady or ſtand faſt, in all occaſions or temptations to the contrary; and therefore in this place we may moſt conveniently render, *He ſtandeth not firm*; he ſtands not ſtill, or keeps not his place at the ſound of the Trumpet, but is unquiet and in motion, as having an ardent deſire to be in the battle, as ſoon as ever he hears the Trumpet ſound. One of the ancient Poets expreſſeth this quality of a valiant horſe, almoſt in the ſame words, and altogether to the ſame ſenſe; *He knows not how to keep his place*; or, *he cannot* (as we ſay) *for his heart, ſtand ſtill.* So that as the eagerneſs of the horſe for the battle, even before the ſignal given, is ſet forth in thoſe words (*verſe* 21.) *He paweth in the valley*; and in the former part of this verſe, where 'tis ſaid, *He ſwalloweth the ground with fierceneſs and rage*; ſo the ſame height of ſpirit after the ſignal given, is further expreſſed in theſe words, thus tranſlated, *He ſtandeth not ſtill* (no ground will hold him, he will be gone if he can get head) *when once he hears the ſound of the Trumpet.*

Neq; conſiſtit firmus, cum ſonus tubæ editur. Jun. האמינ

Stare loco neſcit. Virg.

Hence Note, *What we have much mind to do, we are glad of an opportunity to do it, and readily embrace it.*

The Apoſtle ſaith of the old Patriarks (*Heb.* 11. 15.) *Truly if they had been mindful of* (that is, if they had had a mind to) *that Country from whence they came out, they might have had oportunity to have returned.* Now, as a man will not do that for which he hath an opportunity, when he hath no mind to it; ſo if a man hath a mind to do any thing, how ſoon doth he make uſe of the very firſt opportunity to do it. And doubtleſs it was a great trouble to the *Philippians*, who had a true deſire to ſhew their care of, and love to the Apoſtle *Paul*, that they lacked opportunity to ſhew it, and give a real proof of it (*Phil.* 4. 10) As opportunity is a gale to carry us on to action, ſo a willing mind is a gale to carry us to the improvement of any offered opportunity for action. *Let us do good* (ſaith the Apoſtle, *Gal.* 6. 10.) *as we have opportunity.* He that is ſlack to do good when he hath a fair gale of opportunity to it, declares plainly, that his mind is becalmed, and that he hath not the leaſt breath or gale of willingneſs in his mind to do good. It is our duty, not only to accept an opportunity to do good. when it falls right in our way but even to ſtep out of our way (ſo it be in a good way) to ſeek it. *Davids* enemies ſought occaſion, and ſo did *Daniels* (Chap. 6.) to do him a miſchief; and ſhall not we ſeek occaſions to ſhew mercy? *&c.* Let us (like the horſe in the Text) no ſooner hear the ſound of the Trumpet, a lawful call to any duty, for which we have alſo an open door, but (as he) rejoyce in it, ſtand ſtill no longer with a dull, *ſhall we, ſhall we*, in our mouths, but be gone, up and be doing.

Verſ. 25. **He ſaith among the Trumpets, ha, ha, and he ſmelleth the battel afar off, the Thunder of the Captains and the ſhouting.**

This verſe ſeems to give a reaſon of what was laſt ſaid in the former, eſpecially according to the latter Tranſlation of it. As if it had been ſaid, Therefore the generous horſe cannot ſtand ſtill, but is impatient of every moments delay, when he hears the Trumpet ſound, becauſe he is not only not aſtoniſhed at it, but rejoyceth, wiſhing for nothing more than the battle, of which he knows the ſounding of the Trumpet to be a ſignal.

He ſaith among the Trumpets, Ha, ha.] Some render theſe words, not barely as we, *among the Trum*[illegible] but thus; *At the full ſound of the Trumpet*; or, *When* [illegible]*pet hath ſounded long and ſufficiently, then he ſaith,* [illegible] *ha.* Reading the words thus, we may connect them with the latter part of the former verſe, *Neither believeth he that it is the ſound of the Trumpet*; that is, when the Trumpet begins to ſound, he doubts whether it be to the battle or no; but when the Trumpet ſounds long, when the ſufficiency of the Trumpet ſounds, or when it ſounds ſufficiently, ſo that it manifeſtly appears the battle is nigh, or at hand, then he ſaith, *Ha, ha.*

בדי שפר i.e. *Quando tubarum clangor validus intenditur; vox* בדי *conſtat præpoſitione* Beth *& particula* די *quæ non eſt tantum adjectitia & Euphonica ſed copiam etiam ſignificat.* Codurc.

That the word *de* in *Bede* is ſignificative, and imports *ſufficiency*, is the opinion of many interpreters, and that it is of the ſame ſenſe in this Text, as in that (*Iſa.* 40. 16.) *Lebanon is not ſufficient to burn, nor the beaſts thereof ſufficient for a burnt-offering.* Thus here, *at the ſufficiency of the Trumpet*, that is, when the Trumpet ſounds ſufficiently, abundantly, or clearly; or (as our old *Engliſh* Tranſlation hath it) *when the trumpets make moſt noiſe, he ſaith, Ha, ha.*

There are others of note, who judge that (די) *de* is only a ſyllabical addition of no ſignification, or adding nothing to the Prepoſition (ב) *Be*; and ſo render the words only thus: *At the ſound of the trumpet*; or as we, *Among the trumpets, he ſaith, ha, ha.* And that (די) *De*, is only expletive, not ſignificative, and ſo that word (בדי) *Bede* is no more than the Prepoſition (ב) *Be*, put alone, ſome would confirm by other Texts of Scripture, where it is conceived to be ſo uſed (*Hab.* 2. 13.) *Behold, is it not of the Lord that the people ſhall labour* (בדי אש) *in the fire; and the people ſhall weary themſelves* (בדיריק) *for vanity?* Theſe Words are found alſo (*Jer.* 51. 58.) in both which (ſaith a learned Author) that (די) *De* cannot ſignifie *ſufficiency*, both the ſenſe of the place ſhews, and almoſt all interpreters agree. And this alſo may be further confirmed by a like uſe of the ſame word, as it is put after כ *Judg.* 6. 5. and after מ *Iſa.* 66. 23. The Learned Reader conſulting the original, will eaſily obſerve (ſaith he) that in both thoſe places די hath no ſpecial ſignification.

Ad tubæ ſonitum. Trem. *Inter buccinas.* Pag.

Arnold. Boot. Animad. Sac. l. 3. c. 11.

Yet doubtleſs (conſidering that not one *Iota* or tittle in the Scripture is in vain) that additional word hath its uſe, and poſſibly is of more uſe than any have as yet well underſtood. For though it be granted, as Rabbi *David* ſaith in his Dictionary, that די in all thoſe places is paragogical; yet Paragoges may have more in them, than meerly the ornament of ſpeech. Our Tranſlators intimate as much (*Hab.* 2. 13.) where they do not render barely, *in the fire*, and *for vanity*, but *in the very fire*, and *for very vanity*. And therefore (with the good leave of that learned Author) I apprehend (with the Rabbin, whom he quotes, but likes not for this opinion) that in all places where this word is uſed, it hath a ſpecial force, declaring the greatneſs and continuance of the thing ſpoken of. And ſo in this place, we may take the meaning thus: As the generous horſe is always forward for the battle, ſo when the trumpet begins to ſound; but *when the trumpet ſoundeth long* (as the Lord ſpake to *Moſes* at the giving of the Law, *Exod.* 19. 13.) then the horſe (being fully aſſured that the battle will ſuddenly begin) is mightily affected with a kind of joy, which he expreſſeth as well and as fully as he can in his language, ſaying, *Ha, ha,* now 'tis as I would have it.

That this Interjection, *ha, ha,* imports joy and exultation, all agree; and it may note, not only that inward joy with which the horſe is affected at the ſound of the trumpet, but alſo that outward expreſſion which he makes of it by neighing, which may not improperly be called his *ha, ha*; the ſound which we hear in the air, when a horſe neigheth, ſymbolizing much with this Interjection, *ha, ha,* ſpoken by a man. And all men know (who know any thing of the qualities or cuſtoms of gallant horſes) that it is uſual with them to neigh when they are much pleaſed, and are upon a neer attainment of their deſire, or the injoyment of their pleaſures. Comparing the latter part of the former verſe, according to the ſecond expoſition of our Tranſlation, with this,

Emittit exultationis vocem. Aquin. *Alacriter ſe ad pugnam parat.* Scult. *Ad lituos hilarem intrepidumq; tubarum proſpiciebat Equum.* Statius l. 11 Theb.

> Obſerve, *Aſſurance of what we would have, breeds extream joy and triumph in his ſpirit that would have it.*

When the horſe finds it is the battle indeed, then he rejoyceth greatly. Men often break out into ſuch exclamatio[illegible]en having been long doubtful of a thing, and fearfu[illegible]t might iſſue, they at laſt ſee its iſſue anſwering the [illegible]moſt of their wiſhes and expectations (*Pſal.* 40. 15.) *Let them* (ſaith *David*) *be deſolate for a reward of their ſhame, that ſay, Ah, ha, Ah, ha*; that is, let them be rewarded with deſolation, for their ſhameful doings, in ſaying, Ah, ha, Ah, ha, becauſe they ſee me caſt down. To ſay, Ah, ha, at what is done, is as much as to ſay, it pleaſeth us well, it gives us high content. Thus alſo they cryed out (*Pſal.* 35. 21.) *Ah, ha, our eyes have ſeen it.* As the viſion we ſhall have in heaven, is faith perfected in the higheſt aſſurance imaginable; ſo in any caſe in this world, what of our deſires our eyes ſee, we take high content in. It is comfortable when we have ſome hope of what we deſire; but when we once ſee it, then we cry *Ah, ha*, if what our eyes ſee, be to us as theirs was to them in the ſame Pſalm, where they are again brought in ſaying, *Ah, ha, ſo would we have it* (ver. 25.) now it is as it ſhould be; we have been looking for ſuch a day a long time, but now it is come; Ah, ha, Ah, ha, *So would we have it.* And conſider it either in natural or ſpiritual things; there is a time as to ſpiritual things, when we do not believe the ſilver trumpet of the Goſpel ſounds mercy to us, that ſin is pardoned, that God is gracious; but when once there is a convincing ſufficiency of the trumpets ſound, when once our unbelief is fully overcome, and our hearts wound up to aſſurance, then the ſoul is in its triumph, and crys out (as the horſe, when he perceives the deſired battle approacheth) *Ah, ha, Ah, ha.*

This content of the horſe appears yet further in the next words.

He ſmells the battle afar off, the thunder of the Captains, and the ſhouting.

Theſe words hold out another matter, which doth much ſet forth and commend the honour of the horſe, and his deſire of the combat; *He ſmells the battle.* To be in battle pleaſeth him ſo well, that the ſmell of it is to him a delightful and pleaſant odour. The very ſtink of a Camp (as the Prophet calls it, *Amos* 4. 10.) is a ſweet perfume to his noſtrils. *He ſmells a battle.*

הריח *Odorari, Olfacere.*

He ſmelleth the battle afar off.] The *Hebrew* word ſignifieth properly to ſmell, or take the ſcent of any thing. And almoſt all interpreters, ancient and modern, retain that ſignification here; yet ſome there are who take ſmelling, in this place metaphorically, for perceiving, fore-apprehending, or preſaging. For the *Hebrew* (as ſome very well skilled in that language aſſure us) having no word which anſwers the *Greek* and *Latine* words (noted in the margin) ſignifying to perceive and feel, maketh uſe of this word in the Text for thoſe purpoſes. Thus 'tis ſaid (*Judg.* 16. 9.) *When it* (that is, the *threed*) toucheth (or as our old tranſlation hath it, *feeleth*) *the fire.* So (*Iſa.* 11. 3.) *He* (that is, Chriſt the *Meſſias*) *ſhall be quick of underſtanding in the fear of the Lord.* The *Hebrew* is, *He ſhall ſmell or be quick-ſcented in the fear of the Lord.* His very ſenſes ſhall be, as it were, toucht with or dipt in the fear of the Lord, that is, he ſhall religiouſly ſenſe or judge all things. The fear of the Lord ſhall be the rule or guide of all his ſenſes, as it follows in that verſe, *He ſhall not judge after the ſight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears*, that is, according to outward appearances and reports. Thus we may take the word in this paſſage; the horſe ſmelleth, that is, he perceiveth or apprehendeth the battle. Naturaliſts report wonders about the underſtand- of the horſes, and his ſagaciouſneſs in fore-ſeeing or preſaging battles: And this he doth, ſaith the Text,

Sentit aut præſentiſcit.

'Αισθάνεσθαι. *Sentire.*

Præſagiunt pugnam. Plin. l. 8. c. 42.

מרחוק

Afar off.] Our Tranſlation (with moſt others) take the *Hebrew* word as an Adverb of place; yet ſome conclude it to be an Adverb of time. So 'tis uſed (*Iſa.* 25. 1.) where the Prophet beſpeaks the Lord thus; *Thy counſels of old* (that is, thoſe counſels which thou, O Lord, haſt had a long time ago, or long before time) *are faithfulneſs and truth.* We alſo render the word, by *long ago* (1 *King* 19. 25.)

But it may be objected, Though the word in thoſe places notes time, yet it cannot do ſo in this place of *Job*; for in thoſe places alleadged, it ſignifies a vaſt ſpace of time before, whereas here in *Job*, if it denotes time, it is but a very ſhort ſpace of time, no more than the ſpace of time between giving the ſignal of a battle by ſound of trumpet, and the joyning of the battle. To this, the anſwer is; That this *Hebrew* word may be applied to a ſhort ſpace of time, as well as to a long one, ſeeing both the *Greek* and *Latine* words (ſet in the Margin) of the ſame ſignification, are uſed to note ſometimes, a very long, and ſometimes but a ſhort ſpace of time.

Πάλαι Olim.

Now according to this ſenſe of the word, this latter clauſe of the verſe is thus Tranſlated; *He ſmelleth*, or, *perceiveth the battle is near at hand, or will ſhortly be*: Which gives a very fair meaning of the Text, if that word, which all grant ſignifies time as well as place, doth alſo ſignifie a ſhort, as well as a long ſpace of time; for then the verſe runs clearly thus; *At the full ſound of the trumpet, he ſaith, Ha, ha, ſmelling (or perceiving) that the battle is at hand.* I leave this to the Readers judgment. Our own Tranſlation is an undoubted truth, both as to the ſignification of the word, and the experiences of the thing. A Gallant horſe trained up, and accuſtomed to War, when he ſees much ſtirring in an Army, and hears the trumpets ſounding, perceives a battle will be, though the armies be poſſibly a good diſtance of ground one from the other. Thus *he ſmells the battle afar off*, eſpecially when he hears that which follows in the cloſe of the verſe.

The thunder of the Captains and the ſhouting.

This is muſick to him. Here are two other antecedents of a battle, which the horſe takes notice of.

Firſt, *The thunder of the Captains or Princes*; that is, of the great Commanders and Generals of the field; who when they give out the word, they give it with a loud voice, they thunder it out. 'Tis no time to whiſper when armies are ready to joyn battle; and therefore Commanders lift up their voices like trumpets, or like thunder out of the clouds, that the Souldiers may hear them. And when Captains or Generals give exhortation to the Souldiers, they thunder out arguments to encourage them, and fire their ſpirits to the battle. The horſe doth as it were hear this thunder; oh! it pleaſes him when the military oration is made, and the Captain-general gives order for the battle.

Confuſus clamor exercitus præparantis ſe ad prælium. Aquin.

And the ſhouting.] What's that? Surely, the acclamation of the whole army: when the Captain, or Commander in chief, hath made his military Oration, then uſually the Souldiers ſhout and make an acclamation, in token of their willingneſs to fight, and readineſs for the battel: Thus the horſe ſmells the battel afar off, the thunder of the Captains and the ſhouting. The whole *verſe* may be read in this form; *At the ſufficient ſound of the trumpet, and the exhortation of the Captains, together with the acclamations of the Souldiers, he ſaith, Ah, ha, (or rejoyceth) perceiving that the battel (though the armies be not yet joyned, but keep their ground at a diſtance) is at hand, or will ſuddenly be.*

Having opened this whole context concerning the horſe, and given ſeveral obſervations from the parts of it; I ſhall for the cloſe of all ſhew how aptly this deſcription of the horſe repreſents, or is applicable unto two very different ſorts of men.

Firſt, The Horſe, as here deſcribed, is the embleme of a bold and hardned ſinner. The Spirit of God ſpeaks this expreſly (*Jer.* 8. 6.) *I harkened, and heard* (ſaith the Lord) *but they ſpake not aright, no man repented him of his wickedneſs, ſaying, what have I done; every one turned to his courſe* (what courſe? his ſinful courſe, how?) *as the horſe ruſheth into the battle*; as the horſe mocks at fear, and will not turn back from the ſword; As the horſe will not be affrighted at the ratling of the quiver, nor at the ſhaking of the ſpear; ſo hardned ſinners ruſh on, though you tell them there's deadly danger in it, and that the Sword of the Word points directly at them, and will cut them off: Yea, they will not turn back, though the Lord ſhould brandiſh a flaming ſword, as he did againſt *Adam*, to keep him from the tree of life, ſo to keep them from the tree of death; they, will for all this, ruſh on as the horſe to the battle. The wicked man is thus deſcribed in one place of this book of *Job* (*Chap.* 15. 25, 26.) where *Eliphaz* ſaith of him, *He ſtretcheth out his hand againſt God* (here's war with God) *and ſtrengthens himſelf againſt the Almighty* (that is, draws all his forces together; and what then? juſt as the horſe in the Text) *He runs upon the thick boſſes of his buckler, even upon his neck.* A wicked man, like the horſe, runs upon God, even upon the thick boſſes of his buckler. The Lord is there repreſented, by *Eliphaz*, as holding out a buckler againſt the ſinner; what's that? the Law, his Word of command, that's Gods buckler; and this buckler hath thick boſſes and ſharp points, eſpecially, in the middle, a great boſs with a pike, ſuch are all divine threatnings, yet the ſinner runs, as as a horſe, upon theſe thick boſſes of Gods buckler, his ſevereſt threatnings. Thus the horſe, and a bold ſinner are alike.

Secondly, The horſe is alſo the embleme of a bold Saint, or of a faithful ſervant of God. Such, ſpecially, were all the holy Martyrs; A chief among the Ancients ſaith expreſly, that in the Horſe, the Martyr may be ſeen; whom none account valiant but God himſelf, and they who are born of God. I may parallel a holy Martyr and the Horſe, in every particular mentioned in this context. Firſt, As the horſe is ſaid to receive his ſtrength from God (*haſt thou given ſtrength to the horſe?*) ſo it was with God who gave ſtrength to the Martyrs, to ſtand it out in the day of battle. Secondly, As God gives courage to the horſe, ſo it was God that gave courage to the Martyrs; and ſuch courage he hath ſometimes given, as hath made poor weak women as ſtrong and couragious, as the horſe in the Text: Perſecuters could not make the old Martyrs run like Graſhoppers; they have even mocked at fear, and would not turn back from the face of the ſword drawn out againſt them; no ratling of the quiver, nor claſhing of weapons could terrifie them; they have not been affrighted with Lions, Bears, Tygers ready to devour them; they have not been affrighted with the fiery furnace, nor with the moſt exquiſite torments that the wit or malice of man could invent. Jeſus Chriſt having inſtructed the Church his Spouſe (*Cant.* 1. 8.) what to do, he at the 9. *verſe* commends the Church in two things. Firſt, For her courage. Secondly, For her beauty. For her courage firſt, at the 9. *verſe*, and in that reſpect he compares her to a *Company of horſes in Pharaoh's Chariots*. But why doth he compare the Church to a Company of horſes in *Pharaohs* Chariots? I anſwer, it is well known, that the Kings of *Egypt* were called *Pharaoh*; and *Egypt* was very famous for horſes of war: therefore Chriſt makes this compariſon, to ſhew, that the Church being directed to keep cloſe to the ſhepherds tents, muſt expect that the world or the falſe Church, would vex and perſecute her; but ſaith Chriſt, my ſpouſe is like a company of horſes in *Pharaohs* Chariots, that is, ſhe will be as valiant in this war, in ſtanding for the truth againſt all falſe doctrine and idolatrous worſhip, as the moſt valiant horſes that ever were in *Egypt*, or in any part of the world have been in a day of battle. Experience (we know) hath made this good; for the true Spouſe of Chriſt, though poor, contemptible and weak, though women and even but children, though helpleſs ſheep and tender lambs, yet in battels of ſuffering for Chriſt, they have become as mighty as the mightieſt war-horſes, they have withſtood all the powers of the world undauntedly, and made them admire their courage, yea vexed and needed them with courage. Who but the Lord could arm his people with ſpiritual weapons, with power and courage, to overcome all their enemies, or to over-overcome them, as the word is (*Rom.* 8. 37.) which we render, *more than conquerors*; over what? over ſword, and nakedneſs, and perils, and danger, and death; we more then overcome all theſe (ſaith the Apoſtle there) *though we are killed all the day long, and counted as ſheep for the ſlaughter*, as he ſpeaks at the 36. *verſe*. And hence the Prophet ſaid (*Zach.* 10. 3, 5.) that though the Church, there called, *the houſe of* Judah, be weak like a flock, yet the Lord *makes them as his goodly horſe in the battel.* Our late Annotators give the ſenſe of the Prophet in thoſe words expreſly thus. Now that the Lord hath turned his favourable countenance towards his people, he hath endowed them with valour and ſtrength; ſo that of ſheep they are become a great war-horſe, with which the Lord will overcome and trample down his enemies; which may in part be underſtood of the *Maccabees* victory, but moſt perfectly of the whole Churches victories over the world and the devil. This victory the Church obtains over the devil by reſiſting, and over the world by ſuffering.

S. Auſtin.

Thus far of the valiant horſe. The Lords diſcourſe proceeds from this noble beaſt of the earth, to thoſe noble birds of the air, the Hawk and the Eagle.

VERS. 26, 27, 28, 29.

Doth the Hawk flie by thy wiſdom, and ſtretch out her wings towards the South?

Doth the Eagle mount up at thy command, and make her neſt on high?

She dwelleth and abideth on the rock, upon the crag of the rock, and the ſtrong place.

From thence ſhe ſéeketh the prey, and her eyes behold a far off.

Her young ones alſo ſuck up blood: and where the ſlain are, there is ſhe.

IN this Context the Lord paſſeth from the Beaſts of the Earth, to give a further demonſtration of his Power and Wiſdom appearing in the Fowls of Air; and here we have two inſtances, both in birds of prey, *The Hawk, and the Eagle.*

Job is firſt queſtioned about the Hawk in the 26th *verſe*, in which the Hawk is ſet forth two ways: Firſt, In general, by her flying, *Doth the Hawk fly by thy wiſdom?* Secondly, in ſpecial, by the courſe of her flight, *and ſtretch forth her wings toward the South?*

Secondly, *Job* is queſtioned about the Eagle, concerning which (Queen among birds) ſix things are here expreſly ſet forth, or diſtinctly expreſſed.

Firſt, Her high flying or mounting upwards, in the former part of the 27. verſe, *Doth the Eagle mount up at thy command?*

Secondly, Her high neſting or making her neſt on high, in the latter part of the ſame *verſe*; doth ſhe, at thy command, *make her neſt on high?*

Thirdly, She is here deſcribed by the choiſe of her abode, dwelling or habitation (ver. 28.) *ſhe dwelleth and abideth on the rock, on the crag of the rock, and in the ſtrong place.*

Fourthly, We have here the ſharpneſs of the Eagles appetite, and her quick endeavour to get food for the ſatisfying of it, in the former part of the 29. *verſe. When* ſhe is abiding upon the rock, upon the crag of the rock, and in her ſtrong place, *from thence ſhe ſeeks her prey*; ſhe is not idle there.

Fifthly, She is deſcribed by the ſharpneſs of her ſight, in the latter part of the 29. verſe, *her eyes behold afar off.* As if the Lord had ſaid, though ſhe dwells thus high upon the rock, and the crag of the rock, yet this doth not hinder her in the purſuit of her prey, *for her eyes behold afar off.*

Sixthly and Laſtly, We have here the matter, or nature of her own food and diet, together with the food of her young ones. We have here (as I may ſay) a Bill of the Eagles fare (*ver.* 30.) it is blood, and the fleſh of the ſlain, *Her young ones ſuck up blood; and where the ſlain are, there is ſhe:* That's her chief food and diet, the fleſh and blood of the ſlain. Theſe are the particulars which the ſpirit of God layeth down in the deſcriptions, both of the Hawk and Eagle.

From the whole I ſhall give only this general note, as to the Lords purpoſe in ſpeaking of theſe birds of prey, the Hawk and the Eagle, rather than of the Dove, or of any other fowl of a more harmleſs nature. I ſay, the Lord doth this to ſhew, that ſeeing his providence diſpoſeth of, and watcheth over theſe fowls of the air, which are ſo able to ſhift for themſelves, and are in their kind ſo little uſeful to man; then ſurely, he will not neglect man, nor any creature that is of neceſſary uſe to man.

Verſe 26. **Doth the Hawk flie by thy wiſdom?**

The word rendred *Hawk* comes from a root which ſignifies a *feather* or *plume of feathers*; becauſe, feathers are the inſtruments by which the Hawk flyeth. The ſame word ſignifies alſo to fly; the Hawk being a fowl of ſuch an excellent flight, may well be expreſt by a word which properly ſignifies flying.

The Hawk is numbred among the unclean birds in the Law of *Moſes*, which the Jews might not eat of (*Levit.* 11. 16. *Deut.* 14. 15.) The Hawk in its kind, or all kinds of the Hawk, are excepted out of their food, or not admitted at their table. Thoſe creatures which were uſeful to get man ſome kind of food, might not then be at all the food of man, in the Jewiſh Nation.

Nor will it be unprofitable, upon this occaſion, to take notice how the Lord then ſet bounds and limits to the appetite of man, which is ſo apt to exceed: He forbad ſeveral creatures to the Jews, for ſome of which, poſſibly, we can give no reaſon but his Soveraignty, he would have it ſo; and others were forbidden, becauſe poſſibly, feeding upon them was not ſo wholeſom for the body of man; and others God did except from the table of the *Iſraelites*, becauſe of ſome qualities which he did not like in them; and for that reaſon it is conceived the Hawk was excepted. The Jews might not feed upon the Hawk, becauſe ſhe is a bird of prey, and lives by ravening and killing other birds; ſuch was the law among the Jews: and though that law be now taken away, as the viſion ſhewed *Peter* (*Act.* 10. 15.) yet there are few that make Hawks their meat, or eat of them.

נץ accipiter à radice נצה quod plumam vel pennam ſignificat, quaſi nomen habeat in Hebr. à volando.

Dicitur Latinè accipiter ab accipiendo; propter inſitam & inſatiabilem rapacitatem. Accipiter avis regia, quæ plus animo quam ungulis eſt armata, & quod in quantitate corporis natura denegat, hoc ei in virtute & audacia animi rependit. Iſidor. l. 12.

The word by which the Hawk is expreſt in the Latine, ſignifies to take ~~or catch~~, whereby her ravening nature is denoted, becauſe ſhe catches and ſnatches all ſhe can for her living. Some of the Ancients tell us, that the Hawk is a very princely bird, who though ſhe hath not much in bulk of body, yet hath much in the generoſity of her mind, and is therefore joyned here with the Eagle, as if this were the Princeſs, and the Queen of birds. And ſome report, that there is no other among all the fowls of the air, that dares contend with the Eagle, but the Hawk. *Ariſtotle* reckons up ten ſorts of Hawks, and *Pliny* ſixteen: But I ſhall leave that diſcourſe to Falconers. It is enough for the opening of this Scripture, to intimate ſomewhat in general of the Hawk.

Noctua à cæteris avibus infeſtata auxiliatur accipiter, & bellum partitur. Plin. l. 10. c. 17.

Doth the Hawk flie.] The Hawk is deſcribed as flying. Some creatures are for going, ſome for running, but the excellency of the Hawk is in flying: And flying here is not to be taken in a general ſenſe, as oppoſed to running or going, for ſo it is common to all the birds of the air; there's not the leaſt, not any of the winged kind, but can fly little or much: But when he ſaith, *Doth the Hawk fly?* flying is to be underſtood ſpecially, of ſwift flying, and of long continued flying. The Hawk flies with wonderful ſwiftneſs. Hence among the *Egyptians*, the Hawk was a Hieroglyphick of the winds. And as the Hawk moves with wonderful ſwiftneſs, ſo with great perſeverance. Naturaliſts tell us, and it is the experience of many, that the Hawk will abide upon the wing, two, three, yea, four hours together in the purſute of, or in waiting for her prey; and hence ſome of the Ancients have made the flying of the Hawk, or the Hawk in his flying, an emblem of perſeverance. The Hawk moves in the air, as if he abode immoveably there.

Falco ſacer diutiſſimè volat, nec deſerit ad duarum triumvè, aut quatuor horarum ſpatium, ac ſi in aere immotus conſiſteret. Albert.

Doth the Hawk fly by thy wiſdom, or underſtanding?] Thou ſeeſt how perſeveringly the Hawk flies, and how cunningly or wiſely, to her beſt advantage: Doth the Hawk fly thus by thy wiſdom, or haſt thou taught the Hawk to fly thus? haſt thou inſtructed the Hawk to make this uſe of her wings? no, the Hawk flyeth by my wiſdom, I have given her this ſtrength, and taught her this skill, for God takes it unto himſelf; it is by my wiſdom and inſtruction that the Hawk flyeth.

The *Vulgar Latine* reads thus, *Doth the Hawk feather her ſelf, or get her feathers by thy wiſdom?* Our Tranſlation runs to the uſe of her feathers, this to the growth of her feathers; as if it had been ſaid, *Doth the Hawk get her feathers by thy wiſdom, or haſt thou ſet her feathers ſo exactly in her wings?* This reading may be taken two ways. Firſt, Doſt thou make the Hawks feathers grow at firſt, doth thou plant thoſe feathers in her wings? ſurely, no. Secondly, Doſt thou renew the Hawks feathers? When the Hawk hath mued or caſt her feathers (as they who are acquainted with Hawks know their natural cuſtom is) doſt thou cauſe them to grow again? Surely, no, thou didſt neither at firſt plant her wings with feathers, nor when ſhe hath caſt her feathers, doſt thou cauſe thoſe feathers to renew; that's a good reading: But I ſhall keep to our own. *Doth the Hawk fly by thy wiſdom?*

Numquid per ſapientiam tuam plumeſcit accipiter. Vulg.

Hence note; Firſt, *The Lord hath given man ſome creatures more to ſerve his pleaſure, than his neceſſities.*

Whatever ſervice the Hawk doth to man in catching the prey, the Partridge, or Pheſant, or other fowl, man might ſerve himſelf of them (as many do) ſome other and cheaper way, and not by Hawking. The Moraliſts could ſay (ſpeaking of ſuch like creatures) *Man was loved by the ſupream Maker of all things, even to his delight and content.* God hath given ſuch ſwift wings to the Hawk, not only to ſet forth his own power, but for mans pleaſure. Hawks are for the ſport and delight of Princes and great men; and ſeeing God hath made ſome creatures for the delight, more than for the neceſſity, for the pleaſure, more than for the need of man; O how ſhould man take heed of diſpleaſing God! Doth the great God of heaven and earth provide Hawks for mans pleaſure, and ſhall man take no care to pleaſe God! 'Tis lamentable to conſider, how moſt men diſpleaſe God by oaths and profanations of his Name, while they

Uſq; ad delicias hominis à ſupremo conditore amantur. Senec.

they are taking that kind of pleaſure. And I may ſay, there is no kind of ſport which the indulgence of God hath allowed man, wherein God is more provoked and diſhonoured, than in this: What ſwearing, what curſing, is there in following this Game; If Hawks and Spaniels pleaſe not men in the purſuit of their pleaſures, how is the Name of God rent and torn, to his high diſpleaſure! How vain is that man, who takes pleaſure in ſin, or who ſins in taking his pleaſure! He makes his ſhort pleaſure-time a ſeed-time (without repentance) of his everlaſting pains and ſorrows.

Secondly, Whereas the queſtion is put, *Doth the Hawk flie by thy wiſdom?*

Note; *It is by the wiſdom and teaching of God that the Hawk flieth.*

Not only hath the Lord put the general power of flying into the Hawk, as into other Birds; but that ſpecial Excellency to fly ſo ſwiftly and ſtrongly, ſo cunningly and artificially. 'Tis not ſo much the Faulconer, who teacheth the Hawk, as God; then let us admire the wiſdom of God in the properties of every Creature. It muſt be confeſſed, that Hawks do ſtrange things; but whence is it? it is of God. *Doth the Hawk fly by thy wiſdom?* canſt thou manage the Hawk, or bring her to thy Lure? canſt thou make her go off after her prey? canſt thou reclaim her at thy pleaſure? Thou canſt not; only God can. And hence we may infer, If the flying of the Hawk be from the wiſdom of God, then ſee the wiſdom of God in the goings and doings of man. *The way of man* (ſaith the Prophet, *Jer.* 10. 23.) *is not in himſelf, it is not in him that walketh to direct his ſteps*; the wiſdom of the Lord doth it. If the wiſdom of the Lord orders the flying of a Bird in the Air, ſurely then 'tis the wiſdom of the Lord which manageth the motions of men on earth; he orders both the courſe and diſcourſe of man: when he pleaſeth he can take wiſdom from the wiſeſt men, and make even Judges fools. Judges are ſuppoſed and accounted the wiſeſt among men, yet the Lord can befool them ſo, that they ſhall not be able to ſee the things that belong either to their own peace, or the peace of others. The Lord, who gives wiſdom to beaſts and birds, can take it from men. *Doth the Hawk fly by thy wiſdom?* That's the general; then follows a ſpecial inſtance concerning the courſe of the Hawk:

And ſtretch (or ſpread) her wings towards the South.

The word rendred *South*, ſignifies *the right hand*. The *South* is ſo called, becauſe when a man turns his face to the Eaſt, or Sun-riſing, then the South is on his right hand.

But why is the Hawk ſaid *to ſtretch forth her wings to the South?* we may expound it two ways:

First, Thus: *She ſtretcheth her wings to the South,* when ſhe is upon the change of her feathers; of which a touch was given before. As if the Lord had ſaid, *When the time cometh that the Hawk caſts her feathers, doth ſhe by thy wiſdom* (for that we are to take in) *ſtretch her wings towards the South,* (as Naturaliſts tell us ſhe doth) *for the cheriſhing of her new feathers?* The South-wind being a warm wind, opens the pores of the body, and then the old feathers eaſily fall off, and the new ones come on; therefore when the Hawk loſeth her feathers, ſhe ſtretches out her wings towards the South. And as the wild unmanaged Hawks, who are at their own liberty, turn themſelves to the South at ſuch times, ſo the places where Faulconers keep Hawks to train them for ſervice, are built towards the South, that the warmth of the Sun may help the growth of their feathers.

תימן *Auſter, meridies, à radice* ימן *dexter, dextra, quaſi plaga dextera, quia verſis ad orientom, ad dextram partem eſt meridies. Num edoctus à te accipiter, novis plumis, abjectarum veterum loco, receptis, alas Auſtro verſus calore ſolis, vegetandas expandit.* Bez. Ælian. l. 14. c. 12. *Accipiter tempore mutationis pennarum expandit alas ſuas ad Auſtrum, qui eſt ventus calidus: ut apertis poris veteres pennæ decidant, & novæ renaſcantur.* Aquin.

'Tis not unworthy our remembrance, which ſome teach Allegorically from this natural inſtinct of the Hawk, helping her ſelf more eaſily, both to caſt and recover her feathers. A ſinner in his natural ſtate, is ſo feathered as he comes from the old *Adam*, that he had need to caſt the old, and get new ones. Now if the ſinner would do thus, or when he doth thus, he is taught by the wiſdom of God (not by the wiſdom of the fleſh) to ſtretch himſelf towards the South; that is, towards the pleaſant wind, and warm Sun of the Spirit of God, by which his old feathers of ſin drop off, and thoſe new feathers of grace and holineſs, of faith and repentance, of meekneſs and humility, of patience and ſelf-denial come on. Thus man is feathered by the ſecond *Adam*, when he hath caſt thoſe of the firſt; He turns himſelf to the South, he applieth himſelf to Jeſus Chriſt, the Sun of Righteouſneſs, whoſe bleſſed warmth fetcheth off his old black feathers, and cloaths him with new and beautiful ones. The Lord who teacheth the Hawk to ſtretch her wings to the South, muſt teach us to ſtretch our ſelves to the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that our old feathers may fall away, and that we may be renewed by his Spirit.

Secondly, There is another account given about the Hawks ſtretching her wings to the South; for not only when the Hawk renews her feathers, doth ſhe return to the South; but wild Hawks that are at liberty, living in colder Climates, uſe in Winter to change their quarters, and turn to the South, that is, to thoſe Coaſts which are more favoured by the Sun, as they who write the nature of Beaſts and Birds make report. All kind of Hawks are tender, and cannot well abide the Winter cold, but get into the Sun, and ſometimes duſt themſelves in the Sand, when heated by the Sun, as in very hot ſeaſons they delight to bathe themſelves in water. It is ſaid, that the *Egyptians* uſed of old to picture, or repreſent the Sun in the ſhape of a Hawk: Firſt, becauſe the Hawk is a great lover of the Sun: Secondly, becauſe of the lively heat and ſpiritfulneſs of the Hawk, like that of the Sun; Thirdly, becauſe of the longevity of the Hawk (the Hawk is a long-lived Creature.) Fourthly, becauſe of the quick-ſightedneſs of the Hawk, whence they called the Hawk *All-eye.* And laſtly, becauſe of the ſwiftneſs of the Hawk. The Hawk flies with ſuch a ſpeed, as if he did emulate, or would imitate the Sun. The Hawk being thus like the Sun, and ſuch a lover of the Sun, they ſhadowed the Sun by the figure of a Hawk; all which may give us ſome intimation of the ground of what is here ſaid, *That ſhe ſtretcheth her wings towards the South.*

In auſtralem plagam avolat hiberno tempore. Plin. lib. 10. c. 8. Geſner. *de avibus. Arenis etiam ſole caleſcentibus accipitrem gaudere accepi, atque in illas ſe mergere.* Codurc. *Accipiter dictus παντόφθαλμος quaſi omnoculus.* Bold.

Hence note; *God hath given Irrational Creatures a knowledge of what is moſt convenient for their own preſervation.*

Why doth the Hawk ſpread forth her wings to the South? ſhe finds it beſt for her, and therefore doth (*Jer.* 8. 7.) *The Stork in the Heaven, and the Crane, and the Swallow know the time of their coming.* Whither? ſurely to ſome warmer Climate, when the weather is cold and offenſive to them in the place where they are; and when the heat returns to the Coaſts from whence they came, thither they return again; *They know the time of their coming*, they know when 'tis good for them to be in one Country, and when in another. And is not this a rebuke (as the Prophet there applieth it) unto a man, who many times knows not what's good for himſelf, knows not *the Judgment of the Lord*; that is, what God would have him to do, or what courſe to take in ſuch a time and ſeaſon, or under ſuch a Diſpenſation of Providence, knows not (as I may ſay) Winter and Summer, heat and cold, and ſo is not ſo wiſe as the Fowls of the Air generally are, or as the Hawk in particular is here ſaid to be, *Who ſtretcheth her wings to the South.* All the Children of men have, and the Children of God know they have a South to ſtretch their wings unto; that is, the goodneſs and power of God, as the Pſalmiſt ſpake, *Under the ſhadow of thy wings ſhall be my refuge, till theſe calamities be overpaſt.* I will ſtretch my ſelf to the South, to the love and favour of God; 'tis beſt for all men to ſtretch their wings toward thoſe wings of God in an evil day. All ſhould do as the Lord gives the invitation (*Iſa.* 26. 20.) *Come my people, enter thou into thy Chambers, and ſhut the doors about thee; hide thy ſelf, as it were, for a little moment, until the indignation be overpaſt.* Thus the Lord directs his people to ſtretch themſelves to the South, when 'tis cold and hard weather abroad in the world; and the Creatures ſpoken of by the Prophet, as well as the Hawk in the Text, will riſe up in judgment againſt us, if we ſtretch not our wings to the South, when we feel the Northern cold, and Winter-froſt taking hold of us.

I ſhall paſs from this part of the Verſe concerning the Hawk, when I have only minded the Reader, that ſome have found a two-fold reſemblance in the Hawk.

Firſt,

First, They reſemble the Devil and evil Spirits, to the Hawk, becauſe of their devouring nature. The old Poet ſaid, *We hate the Hawk, becauſe ſhe is always in arms.* And ſo is the Devil, he is always in arms, and at war with the Church of God, and with the ſouls of men; and we ought always to be in arms againſt the Devil, yea, to take to our ſelves *the whole Armour of God*, ſpoken of (*Eph.* 6.) to reſiſt him, and defend our ſelves.

Odimus accipitrem quia ſemper vivit in armis. Ovid.

Secondly, The Hawk is like wicked men, eſpecially in three things:

Firſt, For their ravenous nature, they love to deſtroy and live upon the ſpoil of others (*Iſa.* 33.1.)

Secondly, They are like the Hawk, preying moſtly upon thoſe that are moſt Innocent. The Pſalmiſt ſaith, *The wicked devours the man that is more righteous than he.* The Hawk purſues the Dove, and poor Partridge, harmleſs Creatures.

Thirdly, The Hawk is high priz'd when alive, but when dead, caſt out upon the dunghil, no man regarding her. He that took great delight in his Hawk while alive, will not call for it to his Table when dead. Thus wicked men may be in great eſteem while they live, but when once dead, they are as thrown upon the dunghil, their memorial rots, and is unſavoury. So much for the 26th verſe, wherein the Spirit of God calls *Job* to conſider the nature of the Hawk at any time flying, and ſometimes turning her flight to the South. And now the queſtion paſſeth from the Prince of Birds, to the Queen of Birds.

Verſ. 27. **Doth the Eagle mount up at thy command, and make her Neſt on high?**

The Eagle is a King or Queen, chief among the Fowls of the Air, as the Lyon is among the Beaſts of the Earth; and therefore the great King of *Babylon* is ſhadowed by *a great Eagle with great wings* (*Ezek.* 17.3.) And the *Romans*, who Lorded it long over the world, bare the Eagle in their Enſign.

The Hebrew word rendred *Eagle*, hath a double derivation. According to the firſt, it ſignifies *Behold.* The Eagle is ſo expreſt, becauſe ſhe hath (as the Hiſtorian deſcribes her) not only a quick and clear, but a ſtrong ſight, able to look full upon the Sun ſhining in its ſtrength, as if the name of the Eagle in Engliſh, were a *Looker*; the Eagle can look the Sun in the face. But according to a ſecond derivation given by Grammarians, it ſignifies *ſtrait*, or *right forth.* And the Eagle is ſo called, becauſe ſhe makes a direct courſe, as it were by a ſtrait line, in purſuit of her prey. *Doth the Eagle*

נשר *cum ſex punctis, aquila; ſic dicta, vel quod recto obtutu ſolem aſpiciat; & tunc congruentiam habet cum verbo* שור *vel quod volatum recta in prædam dirigat & tunc communicat cum verbo* ישר Plin. *l.* 10. *c.* 3. & *l.* 39. *c.* 6.

Mount up?] The word in the Hebrew, ſignifies to get high, very high, extream high, and is therefore uſed in the Noun, to ſet forth the highneſs of God (*Job* 11. 8. *Pſal.* 113. 6. *Iſa.* 5. 16. *Iſa.* 52. 13.) It notes alſo the highneſs of Heaven (*Iſa.* 55. 9. *Pſal.* 103. 11.) which is called the Throne of God, and the Habitation of his Holineſs, and of his Glory. 'Tis uſed alſo to denote the height of a proud mans ſpirit, which would fain riſe up to the height of Heaven, and be like to the moſt High, yea, higher than the moſt High (1 *Sam.* 2. 3. *Pſal.* 131. 1. *Iſa.* 2. 11. *Ezek.* 16. 15.) In all theſe places, and many more, the word is applied to the highneſs of a proud mans ſpirit, which though it be indeed the loweſt and baſeſt thing in the world, yet it puts man upon high thoughts of himſelf, and upon high deſigns for himſelf, he would be mounting like the Eagle. *Doth the Eagle*

נבה *Sublimis, elatus fuit, eminuit, per metaphoram ſupervivit.*

Mount up?] The Eagles flight, or mount, exceeds the Hawks, or any other of the winged Train, in three things:

Firſt, In the ſwiftneſs of it. The Eagle hath great and long wings (*Ezek.* 17. 3.) and ſhe can make great haſt with them; therefore *Solomon* calling upon us, not to ſet our eyes upon riches, gives the reaſon of his counſel (*Prov.* 23. 5.) *For riches certainly make themſelves wings, they fly away as an Eagle towards Heaven*; that is, they are ſuddenly gone, and will not return at thy call. The Eagle will not come to the Lure, like the Hawk. To fly away as an Eagle, notes two things concerning riches; Firſt, That they will fly away ſwiftly, ſpeedily, they are ſoon gone; ſuch is the Eagles flight. Secondly, That they (often) fly away irrecoverably, there's no recalling them. The Scripture often expreſſeth the more than ordinary ſwiftneſs of men, by the ſwiftneſs of the Eagle. *David* lamenting the death of *Saul* and *Jonathan*, gives them this character (2 *Sam.* 1. 23.) *They were ſtronger than Lyons, and ſwifter than Eagles*; that is, they were exceeding ſwift. *Our adverſaries were ſwifter than the Eagles*, ſaid the poor captivated Church, when the *Aſſyrian* came in againſt them (*Lam.* 4. 19.) Read alſo *Deut.* 28. 49. *Hoſ.* 8. 1. *Hab.* 1. 8. *Cicero* the Orator, in his ſecond Book of *Divination*, tells us, that when one was to run a Race, reported to an Interpreter, that he *dreamed he was turned into an Eagle*; the Interpreter preſently anſwered, *Then you ſhall overcome*, or get the Maſtery: For the Eagle is the ſtrongeſt and ſwifteſt of all flying fowls.

Viciſti; iſta enim ave volat nulla vehementior. Cicer. *l.* 2. *de divin.*

Secondly, The Eagle exceeds all, as in ſwiftneſs, ſo in the uprightneſs of her flying: She flies right up; that's it which the Text takes notice of, *She mounteth up*; ſhe mounts up like an Arrow out of a Bow, whereas other Fowls, when they fly high, they do it obliquely, or ſidelong, by gyration, or fetching a compaſs; but the Eagle aſcends directly, not (as I may ſay) by winding ſtairs, but in a right line.

Non obliquo tramite ut cæteræ aves vel per gyrum ut accipiter, ſed recto ſurſum fertur. Ælian. lib. 14. c. 10. *Aquila aerem volatu ſuperat, & ſublimius evadit.* Oppian. *Aquila in nubibus.*

Thirdly, As the ſwiftneſs and uprightneſs of the Eagles motion, ſo the highneſs of it is wonderful. The Eagle mounts till ſhe is quite out of ſight; no bodily Creature can reach the Eagles altitude. One of the Ancients ſaith, The Eagle ſoars above the Air (he means, I ſuppoſe the lower Region of the Air) as if ſhe would viſit the ſtarry Heavens: And hence it is ſaid proverbially of any thing which we cannot eaſily reach or come at, *'Tis an Eagle in the Clouds.* Her common attribute or Epithete is, The high-flying Eagle.

If it be queſtioned, why doth the Eagle mount up ſo high? theſe two reaſons may be given of it:

Firſt, That ſhe may come down, or ſtoop with greater force upon her prey; and that makes the Eagle ſo formidable to all the fowls of the Air. And hence the Poets call her a *Thunder-bringer*, becauſe ſhe mounts up on purpoſe to that amazing height, that ſhe may come down upon her prey more forcibly, even like a Thunder-bolt. And thus proud men deſire to get on high, that they may more eaſily make a prey of, and cruſh (as the Eagle doth) thoſe that are below them.

Aquila κεραυνοφόρος à Poetis dictus.

Secondly, The Eagle mounts thus high to pleaſe her ſelf, 'tis ſutable to her ſpirit. Every one would be in action, as he is in diſpoſition. The Eagle hath a high ſpirit, and ſhe muſt fly high, and at high things. *The Eagle will not catch flies*; ſhe ſcorns that game. *Doth the Eagle mount up*

At thy command?] The Hebrew is, *At thy mouth*; ſo the word is rendred in ſeveral other Scriptures (*Numb.* 13. 3.) *And* Moſes *by the commandment of the Lord ſent them from the Wilderneſs of Paran*; that is, he ſent the men that were to ſearch the Land; The Hebrew is, *Moſes by the mouth of the Lord ſent them to ſearch the Land.* Again (2 *Kings* 24. 3.) *Surely at the commandment of the Lord came this upon* Judah, *to remove them out of his ſight, for the ſins of Manaſſeh.* As if it had been ſaid, When the Enemy made Inrodes upon the Children of *Iſrael* and *Judah*, how came this to paſs? Surely at the command of the Lord, or *at the mouth of the Lord*, came this upon *Judah*. It is the word in the Text; *Doth the Eagle mount up at thy command?* or, *at thy mouth?* One would think, that it is only the Eagles nature to mount up; there is ſomewhat in that, but that's not all, it is at the Lords mouth, at his command, and that we are ſpecially to take notice of here. What means this diſcourſe about the Hawk and Eagle, but to make us mount up our hearts to God, and acknowledge him in the motion of every Creature? It is at Gods mouth that the Eagle mounts up; but what's the command that the Eagle receives from God? Doth not the Eagle mount up by a natural inſtinct, or according to the Law of Nature planted in her? I anſwer, ſhe doth. Yet becauſe that natural inſtinct of the Eagle is of God, therefore we are to look upon the Eagle mounting up, as by a ſpecial order and command of God. And thus we are to underſtand the motion of all the Creatures, as conſequential of a command given out by God (*Pſal.* 148. 8.) *Fire and hail, ſnow and vapour, ſtormy wind, fulfilling his word, or his command.* Though there be a natural cauſe of the Creatures motion, of the motion of the wind, of the vapour, of the ſnow and hail, yet we muſt not ſtop at the

Facit hoc aquila naturali inſtinctu. Omnis autem naturalis curſus rerum, eſt quædam motio creaturæ ad præceptum Dei. Aquin. *Dediſtine hanc naturam aquilæ ut attollat ſe in altum?* Vatabl.

natural cauſes, and look no farther, neither rain nor ſnow fall, nor winds blow, but at the command of the Lord: Nor doth the Eagle mount up at the bidding or teaching of man, but at the command of God, acting her natural inſtinct in doing ſo. *Doth the Eagle mount up at thy command?*

Hence note; *The ſpecial motions of the Creature are of God.*

Mans mouth or command, cannot make any Creature ſtir foot or wing. Who can make the Eagle mount, the wind blow, or the rain fall beſides God?

Secondly, As to the manner of this motion, its a mounting motion.

Note; *The motion of the Creature upward, hath much of the command of God in it.*

Some have (I know) mounting motions at the command of the Devil (the Lord hath the command of them, though they are not commanded by him) that is, the proud imaginations, the lofty thoughts of man, theſe mounting motions, are not at the command, but againſt the command of the Lord; the Lord ſuffers them, but they are from Satan, he puffs men up, he blows them up with pride. But both the natural mountings of the ſenſitive Creatures, and the gracious mountings of the new Creature on high, are by the command of God. True believers have loweſt or lowlieſt ſpirits, yet higheſt and nobleſt aims, not grovelling on, nor bowing to the Earth, but like an Eagle, mounting up on high: As this high flight of the ſoul is highly pleaſing unto God, ſo 'tis made by his ſtrength, and at his command: A believer flies high;

Firſt, In the Contemplation of divine things. What towring thoughts hath he concerning God, and the concernments of Salvation by Jeſus Chriſt! he is not mingling his ſoul with the duſt, nor mudding it upon the dunghils of this world: As his converſation or trade is for things above, ſo his mind and meditation is upon them.

Secondly, As he flies high in his contemplation about, ſo in his love to, and deſire of high things; he doth not nakedly contemplate things above, as a Philoſopher may do, but he hath ſtrong affections to, and longings after the injoyment and poſſeſſion of the things that are above; he is as much on high in his deſires and affections, as he is in his ſtudies and ſpeculations. And in both reſpects he mounts on high, in the power and at the command of God; who, as he hath taught the Eagle, ſo man much more, whither, and how far to aſcend. And he therefore mightily triumphs over this lower world, becauſe his ſoul is lifted up as an Eagle, by and upon the wings of Divine ſupport and acceptation. *Doth the Eagle mount up at thy command?*

Non ad præceptum hominis, aut ſuam ſolius voluntatem elevatur ſanctus, ſed dirigente & ſublevante Deo. Janſ.

And make her Neſt on high?] The Eagle doth not only mount on high (that may be from a ſudden overture or occaſion) but ſhe makes her Neſt on high. The word which we render *on high*, ſignifies *ſeparated*, becauſe high places are places ſeparated from ordinary concourſe. Eagles covet to make their Neſts in places furtheſt remote from all acceſs both of men and beaſts. The beſt of high things, ſpiritual things, are ſeparated from this world, they are above the wiſdom and way of the world, and that's the reaſon why the world cannot bear them. I touch that only from the Notation of the word.

The Eagle makes her Neſt on high.] But doth ſhe ſo, O *Job*, at thy command? doſt thou direct her where to make her Neſt, or how? It ſeems the Lord teacheth birds to make their Neſts. The leaſt bird is directed by God as well as the Eagle: It is by his counſel that ſome birds make their Neſts very low, and that others (among which the Eagle eſpecially) make their Neſts on high. *Pliny* ſaith, no man can reach or touch the Eagles Neſt. We look and find birds neſts in every buſh, but who ever found the Eagles Neſt, ſuch an Eagles Neſt as is here ſpoken of? There are (I grant) ſome Eagles that make Neſts in high Trees, but the Eagle here intended makes her Neſt upon inacceſſible Rocks. When the Lord would reach the height of mans wiſdom, in ſetting himſelf above the reach of danger, it ſpeaks thus (*Jerem.* 49. 16.) *Though thou ſhouldſt make thy Neſt as high as the Eagle, I will bring thee down from thence, ſaith the Lord.* 'Tis a proverbial ſpeech, and 'tis joyned with *ſetting our Neſt among the Stars*, in the 4th *verſ.* of the Prophecy of *Obadiah*. The *Idumeans*, with and about whom the Prophet there ſpake, dwelt in mountainous places, and flattered themſelves in the ſtrength and ſafety of the Country, as if it had all been an Eagles Neſt. The Eagle makes her Neſt ſo high, that 'tis, as it were, next to the Stars. But why doth the Eagle make her Neſt ſo high? there are two or three reaſons given of it, by the Searchers of Nature.

Nidos ejus nemo attigit, nidificat in excelſiſſimis rupibus. Plin. *l.*10. *c.* 6.

Firſt, For her ſafety, high things probably are moſt out of danger, there is a height which is very dangerous, and there is a height that is out of the reach of danger, ſuch is the height of the Eagles Neſt.

Secondly, Naturaliſts ſay, the Eagle makes her Neſt ſo high, becauſe ſhe cannot, without ſome difficulty, raiſe her ſelf from the Earth; if ſhe ſits low, ſhe cannot eaſily mount up, ſhe hath a heavy body, though a ſtrong wing: and therefore the wiſdom of God inſtructs her to make her Neſt on high, that ſhe may with that advantage riſe out of it, and mount up from it. The Eagle doth not as the Oſtrich, lay her Eggs in the duſt, or in the ſand, but ſhe makes her Neſt in high places, that ſo ſhe may be both ſafe in her Neſt, and the ſooner take her flight out of it.

Thirdly, The Eagle makes her Neſt on high, becauſe there the Air is pureſt, and ſhe is greatly delighted and pleaſed with the purity and ſweetneſs of the Air.

Fourthly, 'Tis ſaid alſo the Eagle makes her Neſt on high, becauſe ſhe loves from thence, as from a Watch-tower, to behold and feed her eyes upon the fair and beautiful face of the Heavens.

Gaudet ex hiſce ſpeculis cœlum contemplari. Oppian.

In theſe four reſpects we ſhould be like the Eagle, and make our Neſt on high. The Eagle doth not only mount high, but makes her Neſt on high. Some men mount high, that is, have high notions and ſpeculations, in which they ſeem to be rapt up (as the Apoſtle once truly was) to the third Heavens; yet they make not their Neſt on high, they do not abide there, their delights are here below, and ſo is their Neſt, the reſidence and reſt of their ſouls. The Neſt of the rich mans ſoul, in the Goſpel, was in his full Barns. O how many ſpeak high, diſcourſe high, profeſs highly, Heaven-high; yet, when all's done, their Neſt is upon the Earth: They talk as high as the Eagle mounts, yet their Neſt is as low as that of the Oſtrich, in the duſt. Let us remember, as to mount high, ſo to make our Neſt on high. The Apoſtle could ſay (1 *Phil.* 3. 20.) *Our converſation is in Heaven*; not only muſt we be ſpeaking high, but acting on high too; we muſt ſit and brood there, as the Eagle upon her Neſt. Let us ſay of God, as *Moſes* the man of God did in his prayer (*Pſal.* 90. 1.) *Lord, thou haſt been our dwelling place in all Generations*; thou art ſo, and thou ſhalt be ſo for ever. Thus we are taught, not to imitate the fooliſh Oſtrich, building our Neſt in the duſt, but like the noble Eagle (being lifted up by the mighty power of the holy Spirit) making our Neſt, or taking up our reſt in Heaven, which is, as the higheſt, ſo the ſafeſt place of all.

Thus far of the Eagle in two of her properties. Firſt, Her high flight. Secondly, Her high Neſt.

The third thing ſpoken of in this Context concerning the Eagle, is the choice of her abode or habitation.

Sicut aquila motum habet in altum, ita etiam in altis converſatur, quod pertinet ad nobilitatem naturæ ſuæ. Aquin.

Verſe 28. **She dwelleth and abideth on the Rock, upon the crag of the Rock, and the ſtrong place.**

As the Eagle flieth very high, ſo ſhe abideth on high places. Her abiding ſo high, ſhews the nobility and generoſity of her nature; ſhe doth not only mount up on high ſometimes, and make her Neſt on high in breeding time, but ſhe dwells on high, ſhe dwelleth and abideth there. The word which we render *abideth*, ſignifieth properly *tarrying for a night*, or taking up a nights-lodging; but we are not to confine the Eagles abode to a night, to this or that night, here the word notes conſtant, continued reſidence, *ſhe dwelleth and abideth on the Rock*, there's her place, her Palace, there this Queen of birds keeps Court, there ſhe abideth, excepting in two caſes. Firſt, When ſhe is minded to mount up and take her pleaſure. Secondly, When ſhe flies off to ſeek her prey, as will appear further in the next *verſe*, but take her generally, there ſhe abides. Naturaliſts deſcribe a ſort of Eagles, which chuſe, and love to dwell or inhabit woods, plains, and by the Sea-ſhore;

יתלונן *à radice* לון *manſit per noctem unam pernoctavit. Sola ſine clangore, ſine murmuratione converſatur in montibus.* Plin. *l.*10. *c.* 3. Ariſt. *l.*9. *c.* 32. *de natura animal.*

but the Eagle here deſcribed dwells on the Rock; and not only ſo, but

שׁנ סלע *Dentem vocat prominentiam, aut quod præruptum eſt in rupe.* Druſ.

Upon the crag of the Rock.] The Hebrew is, *upon the tooth of the Rock.* Mr. *Broughton* renders, *In the edge of a Rock.* The crag of a Rock doth much reſemble both a tooth and the edge of a thing; for 'tis ſharp like an edge, and appears in form like a tooth: Now upon that part of the Rock, which is moſt craggy and ſtands out like a tooth, there the Eagle abides, there ſhe pearcheth. And Naturaliſts tell us, though ſhe pearches upon a hard Rock, yet ſhe is very careful of her Talons, leſt they ſhould be blunted or receive any injury from the hardneſs of the Rock, ſhe is very curious of them, knowing of what uſe they are to her. Thus ſhe abides *upon the Rock, and upon the crag of the Rock*; or upon the tooth of the Rock. It doth not ſatisfie the Eagle to build or abide upon any part of the Rock, but ſhe chuſeth that part of it for her habitation which is moſt inacceſſible, leſt ſhe ſhould have any diſturbance by ill Neighbours, or the Air be infected with ill ſmells. Saint *Hierome* ſaith, the Eagle builds in this manner, leſt Adders or Snakes ſhould ſpoil her Eaglets, or young ones; and that the *Amethyſt-ſtone*, which is an Antidote or Preſervative againſt poyſon, is found in her Neſt. *She abides on the crag of the Rock.*

מצודה *Arx, propugnaculum, munitio, cognationem habet cum verbo* צוד *quod venari eſt Hebræis.* Moller. *in* Pſal. 91. *v.* 2.

And the ſtrong place.] We might well enough conceive, that when it is ſaid ſhe dwells on the Rock, that ſhe dwells on the ſtrong place, for the Rock is a ſtrong place; yet the Holy Ghoſt is pleaſed to ſet it out diſtinctly, *On the Rock, upon the crag of the Rock, and the ſtrong place.* Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates it, *On a Fortreſs*; ſhe dwells on the Rock, as on her Caſtle or Tower. The word ſignifies any place of defence, and Grammarians tell us, it comes from, or hath near cognation with a word that ſignifies *to hunt*, or purſue the Game; and the reaſon given for it is, becauſe when perſons are purſued in war, or troubled in peace (as weaker birds by birds of prey) they have their recourſe to ſtrong places for refuge and ſafety. The Eagle needs a ſtrong place, for ſhe hath Enemies, and therefore is taught to fortifie her ſelf, or to get into ſtrong places for her ſecurity againſt them. From all theſe expreſſions, that the Eagle dwelleth on the Rock, upon the crag of the Rock, and ſtrong place,

Note; *Nature teacheth the Creature in general, much more man, to provide for his own ſafety.*

That is, God hath put ſuch an inſtinct into the nature of all the Creatures, as to provide for their own ſafety: The Eagle will dwell on the Rock, ſhe will not venture her ſelf every where. And according to the ſtate and condition of Creatures, ſuch is the proviſion which they make for their ſafety (*Pſal.* 104. 18.) *The high hills are a refuge for the wild Goat, and the ſtony Rock for the Coney.* The wild Goats have their refuge, and the Coneys have their refuge, and they are taught whither to fly from the face of danger. There is no Creature but hath a refuge in time of danger; and therefore we commonly ſay, *Times of danger diſcover our refuge.*

Now if the Lord hath taught the fowls of the Air, and the beaſts of the Earth to look to their own ſafety, to get to the Rock, and the ſtrong place; then doubtleſs he hath taught his ſervants, all that are godly, to ſeek and haſten to a refuge, both for their ſpiritual and corporal ſafety. *David* often diſcovers his refuge in the *Pſalms* (*Pſal.* 18. 2.) When at the firſt verſe he had in plain language called the Lord his *ſtrength*, *I will love thee, O Lord, my ſtrength*; he preſently adds a number of Metaphors, to ſhadow out the ſame thing, *The Lord is my Fortreſs, my Rock, and my Deliverer, my God, my ſtrength, in whom I will truſt; my Buckler, and the horn of my Salvation, and my high Tower.* He calleth God his Rock twice in that verſe. God is not only a Rock, but the only Rock in which his faithful people find ſhelter. *Moſes* ſaid in his prayer (*Pſal.* 90. 1.) *Lord, thou haſt been our dwelling place in all Generations.* Where do believers dwell? in God himſelf; as the dwelling of the Eagle is in the Rock, ſo the dwelling of a believer is in God, his Rock. They may be ſure of ſafety who are ſo houſed, who are houſed in God (*Pſal.* 91. 1.) *He that dwells in the ſecret places of the moſt High, ſhall abide under the ſhadow of the Almighty: I will ſay of the Lord, he is my Refuge, and my Fortreſs, my God, in him will I truſt.* Thus as the Lord hath taught the Eagle to look out a ſtrong place for her ſelf, ſo he hath taught his people; and it will be as much their wiſdom, to learn of the Eagle to provide againſt danger, as to learn of the Ant to provide againſt hunger.

As in this 28th verſe we have had the dwelling of the Eagle deſcribed; ſo in the next, we have both the ſharpneſs of her appetite, and the quickneſs of her ſight.

Verſ. 29. **From thence ſhe ſeeks her prey, and her eyes behold afar off.**

The fourth thing conſiderable in the Eagle, is the ſharpneſs of her appetite; ſhe hath a great heat of ſtomach, and a ſtrong digeſtion, therefore ſhe muſt be ſeeking prey.

From thence.] That is, from the Rock her dwelling place, from the tooth of the Rock; *From thence ſhe ſeeks her prey.* And 'tis conceived, that the reaſon why ſhe builds ſo high is, that ſhe may from thence with more advantage ſpy out and ſeek her prey. The Hebrew is, *ſhe diggeth her prey* from thence. That an Eagle ſhould dig, and dig in the Air, is an elegant expreſſion. Diligent ſeeking or ſearching, is ſignified by digging in the Hebrew language. They that dig for a thing ſeek it earneſtly; and therefore to ſhew how earneſtly the Eagle ſeeks her prey, ſhe is ſaid to dig for it. The Lord to ſhew the open ſinfulneſs of *Iſrael* told them (*Jer.* 2. 34.) *In thy skirts is found the blood of the Souls of the poor Innocents.* That which is in a mans skirts is eaſily ſeen; and hence the Lord adds, *I have not found it by ſecret ſearch*, or as the Margin hath it, by *digging*; that's the force of the word, it notes a diligent ſearch or ſeeking; the Eagle ſeeks, as if ſhe were a digging for

Her prey.] What is her prey? The Eagle hath a ſtrong ſtomach, and the word here uſed ſignifies any thing eatable. Naturaliſts ſay ſhe feeds upon fowls of the Air, the Dove, *&c.* ſhe feeds alſo upon Sheep, Lambs, Hares; and 'tis ſaid, ſhe hath a great mind to Hares, they being not only meat, but medicine to her. Naturaliſts tell us alſo, that the Eagle feeds upon Fiſh, and that in her flight ſhe can diſcern the Fiſh in the Sea: and ſome tell us, that ſhe loves Shell-fiſh, the Crab-fiſh eſpecially very much; this is her prey: *from thence ſhe ſeeks her prey*, whether moving in the Air, or upon the Land, or in the Water; ſhe ſeeks her prey where ever 'tis to be had, and ſhe will have it if it be to be had above ground, yea, if it be to be had in the water.

Hence note; *Hunger makes active.*

We ſay hunger breaks thorough ſtone walls, or ſtrong holds. Whither will not the Eagle dig to ſatisfie her appetite? I need not ſtay upon the general truth; I would only add this, it is certainly ſo in ſpirituals. Soul-hunger, our hunger after Righteouſneſs, will make us active. Thoſe Eagles, the Saints, having a ſtrong appetite to the things of God, will dig for their ſatisfaction, they will ſeek after food for their Souls till they are ſatisfied. Sometimes poſſibly there is a glut of food, and then they will ſcarcely look after it; but if once they are pinched with famine, then they look after food. That of the Prophet (*Amos* 8. 11.) anſwers this of the Text, *I* (ſaith the Lord) *will ſend a famine among you: not a famine of bread, but of hearing the Word of the Lord.* And what then? *Why then they ſhall wander from Sea to Sea, and from the North even to the Eaſt, they ſhall run to and fro to ſeek the Word of the Lord, and ſhall not find it.* The Eagle here ſeeks her prey, and gets it; but they ſhall ſeek the Word of the Lord, and not have it, becauſe they were unthankful for it, and unprofitable under it, when they had it. 'Tis a ſad hunger to be pincht with the want of the Word, which is ſpiritual food; but that's a bleſſed hunger which is not from want of, but from a true and ſtrong deſire after the Word or ſpiritual food. True believers, abiding in a right frame, have a great deſire and hunger after ſpiritual food, even when there is greateſt plenty of it; when there is (as we ſay) a glut of it, they are not glutted with it; the more they are ſatisfied with it, the more they would have of it; their appetites and ſatisfaction are interchangeable; they are hungry, yet ſatisfied; they are ſatisfied, yet hungry; and therefore they are always ſeeking their ſpiritual prey. It is a ſore judgment when they that have had much of this ſpiritual food, and have not had a hunger after it, are cut ſhort and deprived of it. The Lord often lets thoſe hunger after it in want, who have not hungred after it in enjoyment.

As the Eagle hath an eager appetite, a ſharp ſtomack; ſo an excellent eye, a ſharp ſight, as it followeth.

Her eyes behold afar off.] To behold or ſee, is the work of the eye; and to behold afar off, is the excellency of the eye in that work. The Eagle ſeeks after her prey, and *her eyes behold afar off*. Some render *which her eyes behold afar off*, that's a good reading; rhe Conjunctive Particle *and* is not in the Original Text, and therefore we may ſupply it by the Relative (which) as well as by the Conjunction (and.) Naturaliſts tell us, that the Eagle hath ſo ſharp a ſight, that when ſhe is mounted quite out of our ſight, out of the ſight of any man, and is as it were in the Clouds, that even then ſhe doth perfectly behold her prey, and that is afar off indeed; even at that diſtance ſhe beholds the Hare in the buſh, and the Fiſh in the water. There are almoſt incredible things related, as to the acuteneſs of the Eagles ſight; and the reaſon given by ſome of her quick-ſightnedneſs, is this in nature, becauſe her eye lieth very deep in her head, and ſo hath a great advantage in ſeeing, the light being the more compaſſed by, and the rays the more ſtrongly gathered into her eye. I ſhall not diſcuſs the validity of this reaſon, all agreeing in the thing, that the Eagle ſees very exactly, and afar off: And as ſhe hath a very clear, ſo a very ſtrong ſight, ſo ſtrong that ſhe can ſteadily behold the Sun ſhining in its ſtrength (as it was toucht before) thoſe beams which blind us, and oppreſs our eyes, are pleaſing to hers. It hath been a torture which ſome Tyrants have uſed, to hold open a mans eye directly to the Sun beams, and ſo blind him, and quite extinguiſh the ſight of his eye. Now that which blinds us, and puts out our eyes is pleaſant, delightful, and as ſome expreſs it, healing and refreſhing to the eyes of the Eagle: And hence 'tis ſaid of her, that ſhe tries her young ones, whether they be of a right breed or no, in this manner; ſhe holds them up to the Sun, and if they can bear the beams of the Sun with open eyes, they are right, otherwiſe ſpurious. The Eagle is ſo ſharp-ſighted, that *an Eagles eye* is the Proverb for *a ſharp ſight*. *Her eyes behold afar-off*. Not in the ſenſe we find the phraſe uſed (*Pſal.* 138.6.) where it is ſaid, *Though the Lord be high, yet hath he reſpect unto the lowly, but the proud he knoweth afar off*, that is, he regards them not. We put a word of that ſignificancy in the Meeter, *He contemning, knows them afar off*, that is, as perſons that he cannot abide to have near him. The proud and lowly are alike near in place to God, yet not in reſpect. But of that only by the way. The Eagles beholding things afar off, is not (I ſay) like the Lords beholding perſons afar off; thoſe things which are afar off, in place from the Eagle, ſhe ſees them as if they were at hand: Thus ſhe beholdeth afar off.

Phœbæa dubios explorat lampade fætus. Silius Ital.

Hence, obſerve; *God hath given more excellent ſenſes to ſome ſenſitive Creatures than to others of that kind, yea, than to thoſe of a higher kind, the rational.*

Not only doth the Eagle exceed other Fowls of the air, but all the men on earth in eye-ſight. And as an Eagle hath a natural eye-ſight beyond man; ſo a godly man hath a ſpiritual eye-ſight beyond all other men, the eye-ſight of faith, by which he ſees not only things afar off, but things inviſible, yea, him that is inviſible, as *Moſes* did (*Heb.* 11. 27.) A believer hath an Eagles eye; his eyes, as hers, *behold afar off*.

Verſ. 30. **Her young ones alſo ſuck up blood, and where the ſlain are, there is ſhe.**

This verſe holds out the ſixth property of the Eagle; what kind of food ſhe and her young ones live upon is here expreſt.

אפרוחים *Pulli avium à flore, quod efflorescunt, & emergunt ex ovo.* Merc.

Her young ones.] Or *her putters forth*. By which we are to underſtand ſuch young ones as are ready to put forth feathers, but cannot yet fly abroad to ſhift for themſelves; or they are ſo called, becauſe young ones are put forth of the Eggs. What do they? *they ſuck up* blood. The word notes a very *greedy ſucking*, it is a double word, and ſo implies, as it were, a double drinking, a drinking with ſuch haſt, that they are ready to choak; and ſo Maſter *Broughton* tranſlates it expreſly, *Her young ones near choak ſwallowing blood*, they ſwallow it ſo greedily, that they are ready to choak themſelves with it; that's a good reading. The *Septuagint* ſay, *her young ones are ſprinkled with blood*, as they that feed upon raw fleſh, eſpecially when newly killed or torn, are ſpeckl'd or ſprinkled with blood: *Her young ones are rolled or wallowed in blood*, ſaith another. All readings ſhew what proviſion ſhe makes for her young ones while under her keeping, and how they keep themſelves when gone off from her hand; ſhe brings up her young ones to her own trade, feeding them with fleſh, and acquainting them with the ſweet of blood; ſhe and her young ones are all of a diet. 'Tis ſaid of the Eagle, that ſhe never drinks water, nor is at all thirſty; but both ſhe and *her young ones ſuck up blood*.

Φύρονται. *Conſperguntur.* Sept. *volutantur.* Auguſt.

Hence note; *What young ones are uſed to, that they will afterwards follow.*

Young Eagles are uſed to blood in the Neſt, and therefore delight in blood all their days afterwards (*Prov.* 22.6.) *Train up a Child in the way he ſhould go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.* If a Child be trained up in a good way, he will not depart from it when he is old; 'tis uſually ſo, or probably it will be ſo. Though the Golden Youth-age of ſome hath ended in a Leaden old age, yet it is moſt probable, if a Child be bred up in a good way, he will hold it; and if in an ill way, he will hardly leave or be beaten out of it: Uſually ſuch as the inſtitution and inſtruction of Youth is, ſuch will their after-converſation be. *Her young ones alſo ſuck up blood*; *and*, as it follows,

Progenies, ſtimulante fame feſtinat ad illam. Quam primum rupto prædam guſtaverit ovo. Juven. *Satyr.* 14.

Where the ſlain are, there is ſhe.] This ſhews us yet more fully, what the Eagle lives upon, *Where carcaſſes be, reſort they*, ſaith Mr. *Broughton*. Some interpret the Text, not of bodies ſlain, but of bodies to be ſlain; where Battles are to be fought, thither the Eagle reſorts. Natural Hiſtorians tell us, Eagles will preſage or ſmell a battle, ſome ſay, ſeven days before 'tis fought, others three, at leaſt two; ſo that not only where the carcaſſes are, but are like to be, thither the Eagles gather. Yet ſome contend very much, that there is a ſort or Race of Eagles ſo noble, that they will not feed upon a dead carcaſs, but live upon herbs; but that moſt Eagles feed upon bodies ſlain, none deny. This Scripture of *Job* is alluded to by Chriſt himſelf (*Mat.* 24. 28. *Luke* 17. 37.) and both upon the ſame accounts, the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, the glorious coming of Chriſt, and the end of the world. In *Matthew* he ſaith, *Whereſoever the carcaſs is, there will the Eagles be gathered together.* And in *Luke*, *Whereſoever the body is, thither will the Eagles be gathered together.* S. *Matthew* ſaith, *Where the carcaſs is*, and S. *Luke* ſaith, *Where the body is.* There are various interpretations of theſe two Scriptures, both quoted (as is generally conceived) from the Text under hand. Some expound them only of the deſtruction of the *Jews* by the *Romans*, and give the ſenſe thus; That whereas Chriſt had foretold the deſtruction of the *Jewiſh* State and Temple by the *Romans*, and that it ſhould fall upon all places, even at once like Lightning, ſo that it would be in vain for them to run from one City or Country to another, in hope to avoid the vengeance, becauſe whereſoever the *Jews* ſhould be, or whitherſoever they ſhould retire to hide and ſave themſelves, thither would the *Roman* Armies come (whoſe Enſign was the Eagle) and finding them out, ſlay and deſtroy them. As if the Lord Chriſt had ſaid, This threatned deſolation will be univerſal, and unavoidable; where ever any *Jews* are, there the *Romans* will be. Thus the whole body of the *Jewiſh* Nation is compared to a carcaſs or body, and the *Romans* to Eagles. That ancient Prophecy (*Deut.* 28. 49.) may be applicable to this final deſtruction of the *Jewiſh* Nation; *The Lord ſhall bring a Nation againſt thee from far, from the end of the earth* (as ſwift) *as the Eagle flieth, a Nation whoſe tongue thou ſhalt not underſtand.*

חללים *Non pro occiſis ſed mox occidendis accipio.* Bold. Ælian. l. 14. c. 13. *Una quæ Jovis appellatur carnes non attingit, ſed ad victum ei herba ſatis eſt.* Ælian. Ariſtot.

Dr. Hammond.

But though it be both very probable in it ſelf, and very ſuitable to the words of Chriſt in S. *Matthew*, that the deſtruction which the *Roman* Eagles brought upon the body of the *Jewiſh* Nation, is there implied; yet Chriſt ſpeaking of his own coming to judge the world (as well as of the *Romans* to deſtroy the *Jews*) there is (I conceive) more in it than that, when Chriſt ſaith, *Whereſoever the carcaſs is, there will the Eagles be gathered together.* And why may we not ſay, that Chriſt compares himſelf to the Carcaſs or Body, and Believers to the Eagles, who ſhall reſort and be gathered to him whereſoever he ſhall appear? Taking the words in this latter ſenſe.

Euthymius. Theophylactus. Ambroſius.

Some expound them of true Believers gathering to Chriſt, as the Carcaſs or Body, every day by faith. One of the Ancients ſaith, when Chriſt being laid in the grave, was firſt reſorted to by *Mary*, the Wife of *Cleophas*, and *Mary Magdalen*, and *Mary* the Mother of our Lord, and by the Apoſtles, then were the Eagles gathered about the Carcaſs: And ever ſince Chriſt aroſe from the dead, Believers have gathered together about him, and fed upon him as Crucified, or as that bleſſed Carcaſs who procured life for them by his death; whereſoever *Chriſt Crucified* is preached, thither true Believers gather, and many who believe not are added to the Church.

Again, others expound it of the Saints gathering to Chriſt at the laſt day. Our late Annotators dealing with theſe words, as reported (*Luk.* 17.37.) ſay, that by the flight of the Eagle is ſignified the ſudden aſſembling of the Saints unto Chriſt coming unto Judgment, anſwerable to that of the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 15.52. as alſo to that, 1 *Theſ.* 4.17.

Now though according to this Allegorical interpretation of the Texts in S. *Matthew* and *Luke*, Chriſt is the Carcaſs, and Believers the Eagles; yet I ſhall cloſe my interpretation of this Text in *Job*, to which both the Evangeliſts allude, by ſhewing that in other Scriptures, ſuch things are ſpoken of Chriſt himſelf, as hold out a likeneſs between him and the Eagle, in many reſpects.

Firſt, As the Eagle is the Royal Bird, the Princeſs or Queen of Birds, ſo Jeſus Chriſt is *the Prince of the Kings of the Earth* (*Rev.* 1.5.) And again (*Rev.* 19.16.) *King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.* As the Eagle among Birds, ſo Chriſt among both Man and Angels, hath the preheminence.

Secondly, As the Eagle mounts up, ſo alſo did Jeſus Chriſt (*Pſal.* 68.18.) *Thou haſt aſcended on high*; yea, ſo high hath Chriſt aſcended, that the Eagle cannot follow him: The Heaven to which natural Eagles mount, is (as I may ſay) but a Pavement to that which Jeſus Chriſt aſcended to. Chriſt had a high flight, he mounted up to the Heaven of Heavens, far above all viſible Heavens (*Eph.* 4.10.) he is made higher than the Heavens (*Heb.*7.26.)

Thirdly, Hath the Eagle a piercing eye? ſo hath Jeſus Chriſt; he (not only from the height of the Clouds, whither the Eagle mounts, but) from the higheſt Heavens, can look into the ſecret of every mans heart, even into the hell of a bad mans heart, and ſee what's doing there, what's lying there. It was ſaid of Chriſt while on Earth (*John* 2.25.) *He needed not that any ſhould teſtifie of man, for he knew what was in man*; and ſtill he looks quite through man, through the wiſeſt, cloſeſt, and moſt reſerved among the Sons of men. *All things are naked and open before the eyes of him* (this Eagle) *with whom we have to do*; *his eyes behold afar off.*

Fourthly, Hiſtorians tell us, the Eagle fights or wars with Dragons and Serpents, and overcomes them. Jeſus Chriſt, this Eagle, hath fought with that great Dragon the Devil, and bruiſed the head of the Serpent (*Gen.*3.15.)

Fifthly, The Eagle is very tender and careful of her young ones. Now, *as an Eagle* (ſaith *Moſes, Deut.* 32.11, 12.) *ſtirreth up her Neſt* (that is, thoſe in her Neſt) *fluttereth over her young, ſpreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings*; *ſo the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no ſtrange God with him. God bare the* Iſraelites *on Eagles wings* (out of *Egypt*) *and brought them to himſelf* (*Exod.* 19.5.) that is, he brought them ſpeedily and ſafely, and ſo he bore them all the years of their journeying in the Wilderneſs. The Eagle beareth her young ones upon her wings, that they may be ſafe (ſhe muſt be hurt before her young ones can, while ſhe bears them there.) Thus Chriſt bears his people on his wings, yea, in his boſom, *The Eternal God is their refuge, and underneath are the Everlaſting Arms* (*Deut.* 33.27.)

Ælian. l.14.c.14.

Sixthly, Naturaliſts tell us, the Eagle gives her young ones of her own blood, when ſhe cannot get other blood for them to drink or ſuck. This is moſt true of Chriſt; he ſuffered himſelf to be wounded for us; his hands and feet, yea, his very heart was pierced, that we might have his blood to drink in believing. *My blood* (ſaith he, *Joh.*6.) *is drink indeed.*

Aquila vocatur Ἀετὸς *propter longæ vitatem: vivit annos centum.* Epiphan.

Seventhly, The Eagle is long-lived. The Greek expreſſeth her by a word ſignifying Longevity; and ſome give the reaſon, not only from the excellent temperament and conſtitution of her body, but alſo becauſe ſhe lives in ſuch pure Air, free from ill vapours and noyſom ſmells. Jeſus Chriſt is not only long-lived, but he lives for ever, he was from Everlaſting, and will be to Everlaſting; he is *the King Eternal* (1 Tim. 1.17.) *the Eternal Father*, (*Iſa.*9.6.)

Thus we ſee how Chriſt is like the Eagle, in theſe ſeven particulars; I ſhall ſhew ſeven more, wherein true Chriſtians alſo are like the Eagle.

Firſt, Doth the Eagle fly high? ſo do they by the wings of faith; *They mount up* (ſaith the Prophet, *Iſa.* 40.31.) *with wings as the Eagle.*

Secondly, Hath the Eagle a clear ſight? doth ſhe ſee far off? ſo Saints by faith can ſee far off (*Iſa.* 33.17.) *Their eyes ſee the King in his beauty, they behold the Land that is very far off.* Which Scripture, though it be properly and litterally meant of beholding King *Hezekiah* in his Earthly Glory, yet it is much more verified of a Believers ſeeing his King, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt in his Heavenly Glory, and of his beholding Heaven, which may well be called the Land of *Farneſs and Diſtances*, or (as we tranſlate) *The Land very far off. Stephen* the Protomartyr, had a clear intellectual ſpiritual eye, when he ſaid (*Acts* 7.56.) *Behold, I ſee the Heavens opened, and the Son of Man ſtanding on the right hand of God.* Believers have a clear Eagle-eye here, and they ſhall have a much clearer eye hereafter, when they ſhall ſee Chriſt as he is (1 *John* 3.2.) All Saints will be more than Eagle-eyed in Glory.

Thirdly, Doth the Eagle dwell on a Rock? ſo doth every true Believer (*Iſa.* 33.16.) *His place of defence ſhall be the Munitions of Rocks*; *bread ſhall be given him, his water ſhall be ſure.* The Apoſtle tells us who the Rock is (1 *Cor.* 10.4.) *The Rock which followed them was Chriſt.*

Fourthly, Doth the Eagle renew her ſtrength? ſo do Believers when any oldneſs is coming upon the new Creature (as it doth ſometimes) then they renew their ſtrength by looking to Jeſus Chriſt, who is at once their Righteouſneſs and their Strength: *He ſatisfieth their mouth with good things, ſo that their youth is renewed as the Eagles* (*Pſal.* 103.5.) As the Lord often brings his people low by bodily ſickneſs and weakneſs, and then renews their natural health and ſtrength: So when there are decays and declinings upon their ſouls, he renews their ſpiritual health and ſtrength (*Iſa.* 40.31.) *They that wait upon the Lord ſhall renew their ſtrength*, and then (as was ſaid before) *they ſhall mount up with wings as Eagles.* The Eagles youth is renewed by the growth and ſucceſſion of new feathers (of the ſame kind) in the place of the old; but a believer reneweth his youth or ſtrength, by caſting off gradually the remainders of the old man which is corrupt, and by putting on more of the new man (who is quite of another kind) *created after God in righteouſneſs and true holineſs* (*Eph.*4.24.)

Fifthly, Can the Eagle look fully upon the Sun? Surely Believers have not only as clear, but as ſtrong a ſight as the Eagle; they can look upon Jeſus Chriſt the Son of Righteouſneſs with open face. For as this Son of Righteouſneſs hath ſaid, *Behold me, behold me* (Iſa. 65.1.) and again, *Look to me, and be ye ſaved, all the ends of the Earth* (Iſa. 45.22.) that is, all ye that dwell on Earth, even to the ends of it; ſo he gives a power, or a ſpiritual eye to behold and look upon him; and that beholding or looking is a healing to them, as the beholding of the Sun is to the natural eye of the Eagle (*Mal.* 4.2.) *To them that fear my Name ſhall the Son of Righteouſneſs ariſe with healing in his wings.*

Sixthly, Do Eagles ſuck blood, both young and old? ſo do Believers. The firſt living of the new Creature is upon blood; every godly man drinks the Blood of Jeſus Chriſt by Faith, as offered to him, both in the Promiſes, and in the Ordinances of the Goſpel. A Believer could not live a moment, nor have any ſubſiſtence in grace, if he had not (as the Eagle) blood to ſuck in and drink. A godly man is nouriſhed by a believing Contemplation upon the ſufferings of Chriſt, and the effuſion of his blood.

Seventhly, Doth the Eagle feed upon the ſlain? ſo Believers feed upon Chriſt as ſlain. Chriſt by his death is become our food to Eternal Life, (*Joh.* 6. 51,53.) Though the raiſed and glorified Body of Chriſt be entred into the full poſſeſſion of a Divine and Eternal life, and though we by faith look to Jeſus Chriſt, not according to the fleſh, nor as dead, but as living and ſitting for ever at the right hand of the Father, there making interceſſion for us; yet we muſt look to him as entring into the holy place *by the ſacrifice of himſelf*, and with his own blood, *not with the blood of others* (*Heb.* 9. 24, 25, 26.) The Apoſtle told the *Corinthians, I determined to know nothing among you, but Jeſus Chriſt and him crucified*; that is, ſo to know him, as to feed upon him my ſelf; and ſo to make him known to you, that you might feed upon him alſo.

Further, It is conſiderable, that as Believers in Scripture are compared to Eagles, and the Lord is ſaid to have born the old Church of the *Jews* upon Eagles wings; ſo under the Goſpel Eagles wings are ſaid to have been given to the Chriſtian Church, whereupon ſhe was born out of the reach of danger (*Rev.* 12. 13, 15.) *And when the Dragon ſaw that he was caſt to the Earth, he perſecuted the woman that brought forth the man-child. And to the woman were given two wings of a great Eagle, that ſhe might fly into the Wilderneſs*, (that is, convenient and ſufficient means to further her flight and retirement) *into her place*, whereſoever it is) *where ſhe is nouriſhed for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the Serpent*. All the means of the Churches eſcape from danger are ſhadowed by *two wings*; not but that God hath more means than two, by which his Providence works and procures the ſafety of the Church; but, becauſe it had been improper, ſpeaking of her flight, to expreſs more wings than two: For *the Seraphims*, which are deſcribed, having *each one ſix wings* (*Iſa.* 6. 2.) yet two of them only were put to that uſe of flying. And theſe two wings given to the Church, are ſaid to be the two wings of *an Eagle*, becauſe among all the winged Tribes, Eagles are ſtrongeſt and ſwifteſt of wing; they can fly faſteſt, and they can fly furtheſt, as in height, ſo in length. Nor are the wings given the Church, barely called the wings of an Eagle, but of a great Eagle, implying not only the beſt kind of wings, but the beſt wings of that kind; not only the wings of an Eagle, but of a great Eagle. By all which is meant, the wiſe and tender care of God over his Church in times of greateſt danger, when the Dragon becomes a Serpent, or the Serpentine Dragon ſeeks moſt to annoy her.

Thus far the Lord hath been interrogating *Job*, not only about the Inanimate Creatures, the Heavens, the Air, the Sea, the Earth, but alſo about ſeveral Animals; in the leaſt of which, becauſe they not only have a being, but life, ſenſe and motion, more of the power, wiſdom and goodneſs of God ſhines forth, than in the greateſt of the former. And all the queſtions propoſed to *Job* in theſe two Chapters have (as hath been hinted heretofore, and ſhould be conſtantly minded) this general ſcope to convince (as then *Job*, ſo now) all men, both of their own nothingneſs, and of the all-ſufficiency, wiſdom, care and power of God, who hath ſo wiſely made, and doth ſo wiſely diſpoſe of all the Creatures which he hath made. And therefore man who hath received more from God than they all, and of whom God is more tender than of them all, ſhould ſubmit to the diſpoſe of God in all things, without diſputing about, much more without murmuring at, or complaining of his Diſpenſations in one kind or other.

The Lord (though he had done much in the way of interrogating) hath not yet done interrogating *Job* concerning the works of his hands. Nevertheleſs, before he proceeded any further, to inquire of him about the Creatures, he ſaw it fit to feel his Pulſe a little, by a cloſe application of what he had already ſaid, mingled with high language and cutting reproofs, thereby to try what effect this forepaſſed diſcourſe had wrought upon him, or whether he were come to a more humble and ſubmitting frame than before, as will appear in opening the former part of the *Chapter* following.

CHAP. XL. Verſ. 1, 2.

Moreover, the Lord anſwered Job, *and ſaid,*

Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty, inſtruct him? he that reproveth God, let him anſwer it.

IN the two former Chapters we have heard what the Lord ſaid to *Job* out of the Whirlwind, with what queſtions he apposed him about the works of Creation and Providence: To all or any of which *Job* being unable to make Anſwer, eſpecially to give a preſent and perfect Anſwer, the Lord (it ſeems) gave him ſome little reſpite to recollect himſelf, in expectation of his Anſwer; but finding him ſilent, proceeds in this Chapter, to urge him yet further upon the whole matter for an Anſwer; yea, the Lord having ſaid all this to him, ſets it home upon him with this ſharp reprehenſion.

Moreover, the Lord anſwered Job, and ſaid, Shall he, &c.

As if he had ſaid, O Job, *hadſt thou diligently conſidered my work of Creation in making, and my work of Providence in governing this whole world, even the motions of the leaſt and moſt inferiour Creatures therein contained; ſurely thou hadſt never ventured to think what thou haſt uttered, and now thou canſt not but ſee how unduly thou haſt complained of my proceedings with thee; nor canſt thou be unconvinced how unable thou art to enter into the ſecrets of my Counſel, for as much as the cauſes of many leſſer and common things in the world are ſecrets unto thee, and ſuch as exceed the reach of thy underſtanding.* Thus we may conceive the Lord at once ſpeaking to, and ſeverely reprehending *Job*, in the words which follow.

Verſ. 2. **Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty, inſtruct him?**

Shall he, or *can he*, ſurely he ſhall not, ſurely he cannot. There are ſeverrl readings of this former part of the Verſe; I ſhall only name four, and then come to the Explication of the words, as they lye in our Tranſlation.

Firſt, The words are rendred thus, *Is it wiſdom or learning to contend with the Almighty?* This reading puts the latter words firſt. Is it wiſdom or inſtruction, or is that man well inſtructed, or well in his wits, who contends with the Almighty? The ſenſe of that reading is plain, and the improvement of it might be very uſeful: for indeed theſe two are utterly repugnant and contrariant, *To contend with God, and to be wiſe, to contend with God, and to ſhew our ſelves well taught.* That man hath not received inſtruction, either by or about Divine Correction, who mutters or quarrels at God correcting him: For how wiſe ſoever he is in his own eyes, he ſhews himſelf a very fool, at leaſt, as to that point, or attempt, very fooliſh. So then 'tis a great truth which this reading holds forth, *Is it wiſdom, is it learning, to contend with the Almighty?* Whoſoever doth ſo, errs in doing ſo, and will at laſt both ſee and feel his errour by ſad experiences.

Rabbi David.

Non eſt, ille eruditus, neque bene obſequens divinæ diſciplinæ, qui Deo caſtiganti obſtrepit & litem intendit. Vatab.

Secondly thus, *Should he be inſtructed who contends with the*

the Almighty? This Tranſlation may have a double interpretation. Firſt, *Surely that man deſerves not to be inſtructed, but corrected, who contends with the Almighty; he deſerves not to be taught, but to be puniſhed.* Should he be taught that contends with the Almighty? Doubtleſs only, as *Gideon* taught the men of *Succoth* (Judg 8.16.) *with bryars and thorns of the wilderneſs*; that is, with ſevereſt chaſtiſements. Secondly, *Should he be inſtructed that contends with the Almighty?* That is, is a Learner a competent match for God? is one that needs inſtruction and teaching, fit to take up the Bucklers, and enter the Field of diſpute with God? He had need to be a Maſter, not a Scholar; a Teacher, not a Learner, that undertakes to deal with God. That man had need be skilled and well furniſhed, he had need be (as we ſpeak) his Crafts-maſter (and all little enough, yea all too little) who contends with the Almighty.

Numquid contendet cum omnipotente, quem ille caſtigat? Lavat.

Thirdly, The word which we render to *inſtruct*, ſignifies alſo to correct: taking it ſo, the Text is thus rendred, *Shall he contend with the Almighty, whom he corrects?* or, *Shall a man corrected by or under the correcting hand of the Almighty, contend with him?* Shall any give God words for his blows, or expoſtulate the matter with him? No man may (with ſuch a ſpirit) ſay unto God, *What doſt thou?* whatſoever he ſuffers; nor may any man be diſpleaſed with what God doth, whatſoever he is pleaſed to do either with himſelf or others.

Nonne contentioni cum Deo caſtigatio, ſupple, debetur?

Laſtly (which was hinted in the ſecond) *Doth not contending with the Almighty* deſerve chaſtening? Certainly it doth; or, *Is not chaſtening due to contending* (that is, to contenders) *with God?* Doubtleſs it is. He that will contend with God, though but in words, is worthy of no anſwer nor ſatisfaction, but in blows. Every one of theſe Tranſlations hath a fairneſs in it, as alſo with the Hebrew Text; but I ſhall inſiſt upon our own reading only, and give you ſome few notes from that.

Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty, inſtruct him?

There is a twofold contending.

Θεόμαχοι.

Firſt, By force and ſtrength of arm, or ſtrength of arms. We cannot ſuppoſe the Lord ſpeaking here of ſuch a Contention. There were a ſort of robuſtious men, Gyants of old, called *Fighters with God*; and many profane Atheiſts have blaſphemouſly ſet themſelves againſt Heaven, as if they would pull God from his Throne. Such as theſe are not the Contenders with God here intended; *Job* was far from being a man of that ſpirit.

Qui offert ſe diſputaturum cum eo. Aqu.

Secondly, There is a contending with God by force of argument, or by reaſonings. This I conceive is here meant; *Job* was often found in theſe contendings with God. But ſhall any man think to *Logick* it with God? to enter a diſpute with God? to argue with or reply upon him, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks (*Rom.* 9.20.) *O man, who art thou that replieſt againſt God?* Arguing and replying are a kind of contending, and this is of two ſorts;

Firſt, With the Word of God, declaring what God would have us do, or what God would have us believe. Thus many contend with God, even as many as ſubmit not to his Word. This is a common quarrel, whether the Word of God or mans will ſhall ſtand, whether the Law of God, or the luſts of men ſhall carry it, and bear the ſway. The Apoſtle is expreſs in it (*Rom.* 8.7,8.) *The carnal mind is enmity againſt God*; and if ſo, then it contendeth with God, for enmity will be contending, and what kind of contending is there meant, appears in the next words; *it is not ſubject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be.* Every natural man, till ſubdued and conquered by Grace, is contending with the Word of God; he ſubmits not to what God would have him do, nor to what God would have him believe; he will not form either his faith or his life as God would have him. Infinite are the contentions of man with God in this notion; but neither is this the contending here aimed at, and I would ſpeak to no more than is directly to the ſcope of the Text. Therefore

Secondly, There is a contending with the works of God, or with what God himſelf hath done, or is doing. Thus alſo there are many Contenders with God in the world, and this is the contention here ſpoken of, a contention about the works of God, what God either hath done, or is doing. All the debate which *Job* had with God, was about his dealings with him. God had laid him low, and ſtript him naked; God had broken his Eſtate, and filled his body full of ſores and pains; God had wounded his ſpirit, and filled his ſoul with gall and wormwood; God had withdrawn himſelf or his comforts from him, and his friends were againſt him, or at beſt, but miſerable comforters were they all: Now though he was a patient man, yet under theſe preſſures he often broke out into impatient ſpeeches. Thus *Job* contended with the Almighty, *Moreover the Lord anſwered* Job, *and ſaid, ſhall he that contendeth with the Almighty* (about what he is doing)

Inſtruct him?] Shall he have the better of him, and be able to teach him, or put him in a better way than he is in? Shall he give God the Rule, the Law how to guide the world more equally in general, or him in particular. Whether the contention lieth about the Providence of God to the whole world, or any Nation, Family, or Perſon, it comes under the ſame queſtion, *Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty inſtruct him?* That is, Can he direct God to do and order things better, or put them into a righter or more equitable courſe than they are diſpoſed in? No, he cannot. *Who is the Pleader* (ſaith Mr. *Broughton*) *that will inſtruct the Omnipotent?* let him come forth, and try his skill. Thus the Lord (yet in a tender and fatherly way) derides the folly of *Job*, who would needs attempt (upon the matter) to teach him who is perfect in knowledge, and to over-rule his decrees and determinations, who is not only, *The Lord Chief Juſtice of all the World, but Juſtice it ſelf, and the ſole rule of it. Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty inſtruct him?*

Hence obſerve; Firſt, *There is a ſpirit in man, in weak ſinful man, ready to contend with the Almighty God.*

The queſtion in the Text may be reſolved into this Poſition, *There are Contenders with God.* There are Contenders with the Word of God (as was ſhewed before) There are Contenders alſo with the Works of God, or with God about his Works, as I ſhall ſhew further now; and this will ſoon appear, if we do but compare the 4th *verſe* of the 51th *Pſalm*, with the 4th *verſe* of *Rom.* 3. In the Pſalm *David* made Confeſſion of his ſin, of that ſpecial enormous ſin Adultery, with the Murder that followed it. *Againſt thee only have I ſinned, and done this evil in thy ſight, that thou mighteſt be juſtified when thou ſpeakeſt, and clear when thou judgeſt.* As if *David* had ſaid, *I humbly confeſs my ſin, my adultery, and my murder; that when-ever the Lord ſhall bring any chaſtiſement upon my perſon, or upon my family, when ever he ſhall afflict me or mine greatly, he may be juſtified in ſo doing; or that all the world may ſee that God had great reaſon to correct me, and* ſo juſtifie him in it. For ſome poſſibly may ſay, with wonder, at the hearing of it, *What! the Lord correct* David? *ſuch a man as* David? *ſo holy a man as* David? *ſo juſt and upright a man as* David? *Yes, and the Lord is juſt in doing it; and* David *confeſſed his ſin, that God might be juſtified when he ſhould ſpeak terrible things, and be cleared when he ſhould judge, that is correct and afflict him terribly*; as the word is uſed (1 *Cor.* 11.31.) *If we would judge our ſelves, we ſhould not be judged*; that is, we ſhould not be chaſtened, as 'tis expounded (*verſ.* 32.) *When we are judged* (ſaith the Apoſtle there) *we are chaſtened of the Lord, that we ſhould not be condemned with the world.* Now thoſe words ſpoken by *David*, are applied by the Apoſtle (*Rom.* 3.4.) to vindicate the Honour of God againſt all aſperſions whatſoever, in his proceeding with man; *Let God be true, and every man a lyar, as it is written, that thou mighteſt be juſtified in thy ſayings, and mighteſt overcome when thou art judged.* In the Pſalm the words are active, *That thou mayeſt be clear when thou judgeſt.* But S. *Paul* following, as I remember, the Septuagint, renders them paſſively, *That thou mayeſt overcome when thou art judged.* As if he had ſaid, Some take upon them to judge God (they who judge him, contend with him) that is, they judge and paſs ſentence upon his works; now (ſaith the Apoſtle) *Let God be true, and every man a lyar, that thou mighteſt be juſtified in thy ſayings, and mighteſt overcome when thou art judged*, that is, *that all men may ſee and ſay thou art righteous, though thou afflicteſt the godly (for they ſin) and though thou condemneſt the wicked, for they ſin and repent not of their ſins.*

Theſe two Scriptures conſidered either apart, or compared

red together (beſides many more which might be called into this ſervice) are a clear proof that there are Contenders with God about his works. Yet poſſibly ſome may ſay, ſurely there are none to be found ſo bold and preſumptuous; What contend with God?

I anſwer, Firſt, There are ſome who do it very openly, avowedly, and with a bare face; they ſtick not to ſpeak their diſſatisfaction concerning the works of God, and belch out blaſphemy againſt what he hath done, or is doing in the world. Such doubtleſs were they, of whom it is ſaid (Iſa 8.21.) *They ſhall paſs through it hardly beſtead and hungry; and it ſhall come to paſs, that when they be hungry, they ſhall fret themſelves, and curſe their King, and their God, and look upward*; not in faith and patience, as they who in ſuch extremities call earneſtly and humbly upon God, but in paſſion and vexation, as they who wickedly curſe God, and depart from him. Such alſo are they ſpoken of (*Rev.*16.9) who being *ſcorched with great heat at the pouring out of the fourth Vial upon the Sun, blaſphemed the Name of God, who had power over thoſe plagues, and repented not, to give him glory.*

Secondly, I anſwer, There are many who do this ſecretly, or within their teeth; they bite in their words, yet 'tis the language of their hearts in tumultuating thoughts, ariſing and working there about the works of God: and thus a good man, a *Job* (who was a good man of the firſt form) may be found contending with the works of God. Any diſcontent with the works of God, is a degree of contending with God about them. Any ſecret riſing of heart againſt what God doth, is in this ſenſe, a ſtriving with God; yea, our being not fully pleaſed and ſatisfied with what God doth, is in ſome ſenſe a contending with God: And if all this be to contend with God, how many are there that contend with God! and who almoſt is there that doth not? Who can ſay in this thing, my heart is clean? Who can ſay, but at one time or other, he hath contended with God. Remember, when we would have things after our mind and mode, when we are not free to comply with the will of God, this is to contend with God. There are two Caſes, as to the common ſtate of the world, in which the hearts even of good men, are very apt to riſe againſt the work of God.

Firſt, When they ſee the wicked proſper, and carry all before them in the world; then they are ready to ſay, Why doth God ſuffer this? *Jeremiah* had much ado to keep his heart from contending with God in this caſe (*Jer.* 12. 1.) And *David* could hardly keep his from it (*Pſal.* 73. 2, 3.) *As for me, my feet were almoſt gone, my ſteps had well nigh ſlipt; for I was envious at the fooliſh, when I ſaw the proſperity of the wicked.* And for this he befooled himſelf (*verſ.* 22.) *So fooliſh was I, and ignorant; I was as a beaſt before thee.* Thus *David* was, and many more have been offended at the work of God, in giving good to bad men; and that's the firſt Caſe.

Secondly, When good men are vexed, oppreſſed, and trodden under feet, as mire in the ſtreets; what riſings of heart, and what unſatisfiedneſs of ſpirit is there in many good men! In both theſe Caſes there is much contending with God, though in both, our hearts (upon many accounts) ſhould acquieſce and reſt in the will of God; who, in the former, doth not declare himſelf a friend to evil men; nor doth he in the latter, declare himſelf an Enemy to thoſe who are good.

But ſeeing there is a ſpirit in man, even to contend with God, let us watch our ſelves in this thing, that ſuch thoughts riſe not; or let us carefully ſuppreſs them as ſoon as they are riſen. It is good for us, and our duty, to keep down the Contendings of our hearts with men, for we are very apt to be out with one another. 'Tis ſad to ſee breaches, the fruit of heart-burnings, between man and man. But much more ſhould we keep down thoſe contendings, yea quench the firſt ſparks which may kindle heart-burnings about the works of God, for they may ſoon come to be Contendings with him. For the cloſe of this point, take theſe four Conſiderations, which may move all ſorts of men to watch their hearts againſt Contendings with God, whether as to his dealings in the world, or with themſelves.

Firſt, Remember, *Whatſoever the Lord doth, he may do*; for he is an abſolutely Sovereign Lord, and therefore not to be contended with about any thing he doth, becauſe no way accountable for any thing he doth, as hath been ſhewed upon ſeveral occaſions offered in opening this Book. He is Lord of our being, and *hath given to all life, breath, and all things*, as the Apoſtle told the ſuperſtitious *Athenians* (*Acts* 17. 25.) and may not he do what he will to all beings, in whom all have their being; and who hath given all things to all which concern that being? He is our Maker, *and hath not the Potter power over the Clay, to do what he will with it*? Hath not the Creator power over the Creature, to diſpoſe of it as he pleaſeth? (*Iſa.* 45. 9.) *Let the Potſheard ſtrive with the Potſheards of the Earth.* If any will be ſtriving, let them ſtrive with their like; Potſheards with Potſheards, not Potſheards with the Potter, to whom they are ſo unlike. The Lord uſed no other argument but this to quiet all (*Pſal.* 46.10.) *Be ſtill, and know that I am God*; remember that, and you will either not begin, or quickly have done contending with God: Yet in that Pſalm the Lord is repreſented making moſt dreadful work, *Come, behold the works of the Lord, what deſolations he hath made on the Earth.* Though God make that which was as a Garden, to become a deſolate Wilderneſs, yet contend not with him; be ſtill, and know that he is God.

Secondly, Remember *whatſoever work the Lord makes in the world, it is all righteous work*; there is nothing amiſs in it. *He is a Rock* (ſaid *Moſes*, Deut. 32. 4.) *His work is perfect, for all his ways are Judgments* (not as Judgments are oppoſed to Mercies, but to Injuſtice, as it followeth in that verſe) *a God of truth, and without iniquity, juſt and right is he.* To this *David* gives witneſs (*Pſal.* 145. 17.(*The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works.* Not only is he righteous and holy in this and that way or work, but in all his ways and works; in ways of Judgment, as well as in ways of Mercy; in ways of deſtruction, as well as in ways of Salvation. He is righteous in pulling down, as well as in building up, in rooting up, as well as in planting. Now if there be a righteouſneſs in all the ways and works of God, who ſhall contend with him about any of his ways or works?

Thirdly, *All the works of God have an infinite wiſdom in them*; they are done wiſely, even in exacteſt wiſdom; and ſhall we fools contend with him, who is not only a wiſe God, but *the God only wiſe* (Rom. 16. 27.) and all whoſe works are done in, and according to the Idea or Platform of his own Infinite and Eternal Wiſdom. *The fooliſhneſs of God* (ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 1. 25.) *is wiſer than men*; that is, the wiſeſt men are meer fools to God; or that work of God, which ſome men call fooliſhneſs, is infinitely more wiſely done, than the wiſeſt work that the wiſeſt men in the world ever did, or can do, with all their wiſdom.

Fourthly, Let all that fear and love God, eſpecially take heed of contending with God about any of his works; for God is good to all ſuch in all his works, and all his works are good to ſuch. Shall any contend with God about that which is for their own good? Not only are thoſe works of God good to ſuch which are good in themſelves, that is, which we call good, being *favourable Providences*, and for our comfort and ſupport in this world; but even thoſe works of God which we call *croſs Providences*, or Providences which bring the Croſs with them, are all good to ſuch, even to all them *that love God, and are the called according to his purpoſe* (Rom. 8. 28.) Shall they contend with God about any thing, who hear and may be aſſured, that he hath an intendment of good to them in all things? (*Pſal.* 73. 1.) *Truly God is good to Iſrael*; that is, though he afflicts them, and the Cup be very bitter which he gives them to drink, yet he is good to them. Or thus, Truly God, not the world (or though the world be not) is good to *Iſrael.* Once more, we may take the Pſalmiſt thus, *Truly God is good to Iſrael*, not ſo (as to them) to the world, though (as it followeth in the Pſalm) they enjoy never ſo much worldly good.

Theſe Conſiderations may perſwade all not to contend with God about his works, to which I ſhall add only this counſel: If the works of God are grievous to us at any time, let us go the right way to work in our Contendings with him. For I do not urge this point, as if we ſhould ſit ſtill, and let the *Lord alone* (as he ſeemingly ſaid to *Moſes*, *Exod.* 32. 10.) when he dealeth out hard and grievous things to us. There is a contending with God by ſupplication and prayer, by mourning and humiliation; this becomes us when the works of God are hard, when they are breaking, deſolating, ſcattering, and afflictive towards us. Take heed of diſcontent with Providence, yet wreſtle and contend earneſtly with God by prayer, when Providences go hard with you, or with the whole *Iſrael* of God. *Moſes* in a holy manner aſſaulted God, and contended with him in that caſe; and therefore the Lord ſaid to him (in the place laſt mentioned) *Let me alone*, as we ſay to a man that contends and ſtrives with us, *Let me alone*. *Moſes* was contending with the Lord about that Diſpenſation, but it was in a gracious way: and ſo may we, yea ſo muſt we. The Lord expects prayer in all ſuch caſes, which if it be (as it ought to be) earneſt and fervent, is a ſtriving, a contending with him, very pleaſing and acceptable to him. When the Providences of God were grievous to *Jacob*, and he feared they might be much more grievous to him, the Text ſaith he wreſtled with the *Angel*; but how was that? The Prophet *Hoſea* tells us (Chap. 12.4.) it was by *weeping and making ſupplication*. The Apoſtle uſeth the ſame expreſſion (*Rom.* 15.30.) *I beſeech you brethren, that you ſtrive together with me in your prayers to God for me*; that is, let you and I ſet our ſhoulders to it, wreſtling with God in the actings of faith for mercy. This is a dutiful contending with God, a bleſſed ſtriving with God; Let us ſtrive ſo, and we ſhall (as *Jacob* did) prevail with God, and obtain the bleſſing. We may warrantably and confidently venture upon this contention with God; as for any other, take heed of it, forbear it, why ſhould we *meddle to our hurt*, as the King of *Iſrael* cautioned the King of *Judah*, when he would needs be contending with him (2 *Kings* 14. 10.) The Lord may contend with us, and he will when we give him cauſe; yet he hath aſſured his people, that he will not contend for ever, nor be always wroth (*Iſa.* 57. 16.) But we muſt *humble our ſelves under his mighty hand always* (as the Apoſtle directs, 1 *Pet.* 5. 6.) and not contend with him at all, unleſs in the ſenſe and way laſt opened. It is as much our duty to let God do what he will, what he pleaſeth with us patiently, as to do readily whatſoever his will and pleaſure is.

Secondly, In that the Text ſaith, *Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty inſtruct him?*

Obſerve; *They who contend with God, or are diſcontent with the works of God, ſeem to themſelves able to inſtruct and teach God.*

That's the thing at the bottom which the Lord would convince *Job* of. Diſcontented perſons ſeem to ſay unto God, they could put things into a better way, if they had the handling of them; or that they could model the Government of the world more equally, if it were in their hands. Such is the pride and ſinfulneſs, or the ſinful pride of mans heart, that he thinks himſelf able to inſtruct God, and teach him to mend his work. Some have been ſo arrogant and preſumptuous, as to ſay, they could have mended ſome things in the natural Fabrick of the world, had they been the contrivers of it; and many have ſaid, at leaſt in their hearts (where the Fool ſaith there is no God) that they could mend the Providential Fabrick or courſe of it. Beware of theſe preſumptions. Remember, it is our duty to be inſtructed by God, to receive inſtruction from God. Woe to thoſe who would give him inſtruction (Job 22.22.) *Acquaint thy ſelf now with him, and receive the Law at his mouth*; that is, the rule of all thy actions, but do not give the Law to him. No man hath more need of inſtruction, than he who thinks he can give inſtruction to God. It is ſaid proverbially, when we ſee an inferiour, much more a ſmatterer in any Art or Science, offer to controul a perfect Artiſt; What, *A Sow or a Swine teach Minerva*! how much more may we ſay ſo of the moſt Learned, that controul God, or contend with him about his works! The works of God of every kind are ſo exact in every kind, that it is impoſſible to find any real defect or redundancy in them. To go about to mend them, is to mar them; to alter them, were to deface them. Thoſe things which men call or count the blemiſhes of Gods works, are the true beauty of them; and what they contend with him about, is the commendation of them, and the glory of his workmanſhip. And as at laſt Jeſus Chriſt will *preſent* the whole Body of Believers, or the perſons of all that believe, *to himſelf a glorious Church, not having ſpot or wrinkle, or any ſuch thing* (*Eph.* 5. 27.) ſo he will at laſt repreſent the Providences of God, or his works of Providence, both in the Church, and all over the world, without ſpot or wrinkle, or any ſuch thing. Only here will be the difference, the Church will be preſented not having ſpot or wrinkle, or any ſuch thing (ſhe hath had her ſpots and wrinkles, and many ſuch things) But the works of God ſhall then be repreſented, as never having had any ſpot or wrinkle, or any ſuch thing; that is, then it ſhall be made appear, that they were always without ſpot or wrinkle, altogether juſt, righteous and perfect.

Sus Minervam.

Further, From the whole ſentence, in that here we have an intimation of mans contending with God, and preſuming to inſtruct him, take theſe two Inferences from it.

Firſt; *There is much pride in the heart of man.*

There would never be any contending with God, were there not much pride in the heart of man; *For* (Prov. 13. 10.) *only by pride cometh contention*: If ſo, then where no pride is, there is no contention. There are indeed ſeveral other occaſions of contention; ſome out of covetouſneſs, others out of malice, contend with their Neighbours, yet all may be reſolved into this, the pride of mans heart; pride bears part with all the occaſions and cauſes of contention. It ſhould be matter of great humiliation to us, that our hearts are proud at all; but that they riſe even to ſuch a height of pride as produceth contention, and trying Maſteries (as it were) with God himſelf, how ſhould that humble us. And if to contend with man, our equal, be a ſymptome of pride, what is it to contend with God, who is infinitely above all men!

Secondly, Take this Inference from it. *There is a great deal of folly bound up in the heart of man.*

If man were not vain and fooliſh, he would not willingly do any thing that ſhould have the leaſt ſignification of a contention with God, much leſs that which can ſignifie nothing elſe. *Solomon* ſaith, *fools will be medling*; it is higheſt folly to be thus medling with Gods matters. Again, it is a ſufficient proof of our ignorance and folly, to attempt (in any way) to inſtruct God, or teach him, either what to do, or how to do; either when to do, or in what meaſure to do, or towards whom to do any of his works; but they who are unſatisfied with the works of God, and in that ſenſe contend with him about them, make an attempt always in ſome of theſe reſpects, ſometimes in all of them, to inſtruct and teach him: Is not their folly manifeſt to all men, who are not as fooliſh as themſelves? *Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty inſtruct him?*

He that reproveth God, let him anſwer it.

This ſecond part of the verſe is of near alliance to the former. Contending with God, is indeed a reproving of God: Theſe two Acts expound each other, yet more diſtinctly; *to reprove* ſuppoſeth:

Firſt, The finding of a fault.

Secondly, A rebuke given for that fault. There muſt be a fault found, elſe we cannot juſtly reprove; and a fault being found, we may juſtly rebuke the fault. So then, to reprove God, implies a finding of a fault with Gods works, and then a kind of rebuking God for that fault; and if all this be in a reproof, then to reprove God for any of his works, is a daring work indeed. I grant the word rendred *reprove* may be taken in a milder ſenſe, *He that argueth or pleadeth with God*: Our reading heightens the ſenſe of the Hebrew word, or takes it in the higheſt ſenſe, *He that reproveth God*,

Qui vult Deum arguere, aut cum Deo diſputare, reſpondeat ad unum aliquod eorum, quæ in medium attulit. Druſ.

Let him anſwer it.] That is;

Firſt, Let him anſwer the former queſtion, whether he be able to inſtruct God or no, or (according to the other reading) whether he doth not deſerve puniſhment for contending with God?

Secondly, *Let him anſwer it*, that is, let him anſwer all thoſe queſtions propoſed in the two former *Chapters*. As if God had ſaid, Job, *thou haſt reproved my works, yet canſt not anſwer my queſtions*. So Mr. *Broughton* carrieth the ſenſe; *Let the reprover* (ſaith he) *of the Puiſſant ſpeak to any one of theſe things.*

Thirdly, *Let him anſwer it*, that is, let him anſwer for ſo doing, let him bear his puniſhment. There is a twofold anſwering; Firſt, A Logical anſwering. Secondly, A Forinſecal anſwering. Or there is an anſwer in Schools, and an anſwer in Courts.

An anſwer in Logick is made three ways. Firſt, *By denying.* Secondly, *By granting.* Thirdly, *By diſtinguiſhing* or limiting the Propoſition and matter propoſed. Logicians in Schools anſwer by denying, or by granting, or by diſtinguiſhing. The diſtinguiſher grants ſomewhat, and denies the reſt.

An anſwer in Law, if the matter be criminal, is made by pleading guilty or not guilty to the Indictment. If the matter be civil, to anſwer, is to ſhew our right, to take off the charge, or defend our title. There is alſo an anſwering in Law by ſubmitting, and that two ways. Firſt, By ſubmitting to the mercy of the Court. Secondly, To the penalty of the Law.

Now, when the Lord ſaith in the Text, *Let him anſwer it*; I conceive we may take it not only in a *Logical ſenſe*, let him anſwer it (if he can) by reaſoning, but in a *Court ſenſe*, let him anſwer it by bearing the penalty of his raſhneſs and folly; as we ſay to one that hath wrong'd us, *It ſhall coſt you dear, you ſhall anſwer it*: I conceive (as was ſaid) we may underſtand it here both ways. *Let him that reproves God*, anſwer it, either as a Diſputant in Schools, or as a Defendant in Courts of Law; and if he cannot anſwer it as a Logician, by giving a reaſon for what he hath done, he ſhall certainly anſwer it in Court, by undergoing the penalty of the Law for what he hath done.

Some tranſlate thus, *He that argues with, or reproves God, ought to anſwer it*; that is, he muſt not think it enough to put in a charge, or to give a reproof, but he muſt make it good. He that reproveth a man ought to give a ground of his reproof; how much more he that reproveth God! The Text concludes it ſhould be ſo, yea, that it ſhall be ſo. *He that reproveth God, let him anſwer it.*

Hence note, Firſt; *'Tis dangerous, 'tis at our peril, to find fault with what God doth.*

He that doth ſo, muſt and ſhall anſwer it; there's no avoiding it. There are two ſorts of reproving which are our duty. Firſt, The reproving of other men, when we have an opportunity and a call (*Levit.* 19. 17. *Gal.* 6. 1.) As all they who reprove God ſhall anſwer it; ſo many ſhall anſwer it, becauſe they have not reproved men. Secondly, It is a duty to reprove our ſelves, and a great point of wiſdom to ſee what is reproveable in our ſelves. Many are quick-ſighted at finding faults in others, but very blind as to finding out their own. I may add, it is both a great duty, and a ſign of much Grace, meekly to take and receive a reproof from others. Now, as it is our duty to take a reproof from others, when we have failed, and to ſee our own faults, and reprove our ſelves for them; as alſo wiſely to reprove others for the faults we ſee in them, ſo it is our ſin, danger and peril, to reprove God, in whom there is no fault, nor can be. And if any ſay, we never had a thought of reproving God, know, if you find fault with the works of God, you reprove God, to find fault with what God hath done to you, or your Relations, is to reprove God, and this you muſt anſwer, or anſwer for it. Will a Maſter in any Art, endure that an ignorant perſon ſhould find fault with his work? how then will the Lord take it, if men ſhall come into his great Shop, the World, and find fault with this and that, and the other work of his? There is no temptation that Satan our great Enemy doth more follow us with, than this, even to make us find fault with the works of God. There are theſe two things about which Satan labours much: Firſt, to keep us from finding out the faults of our own works, which are almoſt nothing elſe but faults. Satan would perſwade us that we have done all well, when we have done that which is altogether evil, or ſtark naught for the matter of it; and how doth he hinder us from ſeeing our faults. in the manner of our doing good works! he would not ſuffer us to have the leaſt ſuſpition that we may have done evilly, while we have been doing good. Secondly, Satans great buſineſs is to put us upon finding faults (where none are) in Gods works. Almoſt all the murmurings of the Sons of men ariſe from this miſconceit in man, that there is ſomewhat amiſs in the works of God towards them, or that he hath not dealt well and wiſely with them. This falſe and blaſphemous principle Satan would plant and water in the hearts of all men, as he did (to the overthrow of mankind) in the heart of the firſt man: *This, this is his work*; and he hath got a great victory over that ſoul, who either ſees not the faults of his own works, or finds fault with the works of God.

Nemo in officina audet reprehendere fabrum; & audet homo in hoc mundo reprehendere Deum? August. *in* Pſal. 145.

Further, theſe words, *Let him anſwer it*, may imply the Lords gentleneſs and mildneſs in ſpeaking to *Job*. The Lord doth not thunder againſt him, but ſaith, come let me ſee what you can anſwer, let me hear what you can ſay in favour of your ſelf, either to ſhew the equity of what you have ſaid in reproving me, or any iniquity in what I have done in afflicting you; I give you free leave to ſpeak for your ſelf. Some inſiſt much upon this ſenſe, and it may yield us this note;

God is very gracious in condeſcending to man.

He is willing we ſhould anſwer for our ſelves, and do our beſt to clear our ſelves, when we have done our works amiſs, or have ſpoken amiſs of his.

VERS. 3, 4, 5.

Then Job anſwered the Lord, and ſaid,
Behold, I am vile, what ſhall I anſwer thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth.
Once have I ſpoken, but I will not anſwer; yea twice, but I will proceed no further.

IN the former verſe, the Lord urged *Job* to anſwer; *He that reproveth God, let him anſwer it.* *Job* being thus urged by the Lord to anſwer, gave his anſwer, and the anſwer which he gave was this in general, That he could not anſwer: Or, we have here,

Firſt, An humble confeſſion of his utter inability to anſwer.

Secondly, His ſetled reſolution not to anſwer. His inability to anſwer, appears at the 4th verſe; *Behold, I am vile, what ſhall I anſwer thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth.* His reſolution not to anſwer, or only to give this for an anſwer, That he could not anſwer, is expreſſed in the 5th verſe; *Once have I ſpoken, but I will not anſwer; yea twice, but I will proceed no further.*

Jobs ſpirit, it ſeems, was much appaled by the Lords appearance to him, and immediate parley with him; his underſtanding alſo was much puzled, yea non pluſt, with thoſe many and intricate queſtions which God had put to him; and therefore he ſubmits, at once acknowledging he had done amiſs in his over-free diſcourſes before, and promiſing that he would run that courſe no more.

Verſ. 3. **Then Job anſwered the Lord, and ſaid,**

What he ſaid by way of anſwer, followeth.

Verſ. 4. **Behold, I am vile, what ſhall I anſwer?**

Behold.] *Job* doth not conceal nor cover, but calls all eyes to the view of his own vileneſs. *Behold.* Let God behold, let Angels behold, let men behold, what now I my ſelf behold, that

I am vile.] The root of the word, which we tranſlate *vile*, ſignifies three things. Firſt, To be *light*, or of little weight; and becauſe light things are lightly eſteemed, therefore it ſignifies; Secondly, To *be contemned*, or that which is contemptible; and, Thirdly, Becauſe light things, and things contemptible, are alſo vile things; therefore, as we tranſlate, it ſignifies *vile*. As if *Job* had ſaid, *I am light, I have no ſubſtance, no ſolidity in me, I am but as chaff*, or, *as a feather, I bear no weight, I deſerve no eſteem, no reſpect, I am vile.* As the Hebrew word for *honour and glory*, is derived from a root which ſignifies *heavineſs or weightineſs*, whence the Apoſtles phraſe in the Greek tongue (2 *Cor.* 4. 17.) which we tranſlate, *an exceeding weight of glory.* Glory is ſuch a weighty thing, that we muſt have other manner of ſhoulders, other manner of ſtrength than now we have, before we can be able to bear the weight of it. *Fleſh and blood*, as it is unrefined, or meerly natural, would ſoon ſink under that weight. Now, I ſay, as glory and honour are expreſt by a word which ſignifies *weightineſs*; ſo that which is vile and contemptible, is expreſt by a word that ſignifies *lightneſs*, or *to be light*. Thus ſaith *Job*, *Behold, I am light*; or, *Behold, I am vile.*

קל *Et levem & vilem ac contemptum eſſe ſignificat.*

There are two other Tranſlations of theſe words, whereof the one refers to the ſpeeches, the other to the actions of *Job*.

Qui leviter loqutus ſum reſpondere quid poſſum. Vulg.

Firſt, The old Latine Tranſlation ſaith thus, *I have ſpoken lightly; how ſhall I anſwer thee?* Ours refers to his perſon, *I am light*, or, *I am vile*; that to his words, *I have ſpoken lightly.* To ſpeak lightly, or vainly, is to be vain and light. Some words have a great deal of weight in them: words of truth, words of ſoberneſs, holy words, gracious words, are weighty words; evil words, impertinent words, unprofitable words, ſpecially corrupt, filthy, ſinful words, are light words; how many words ſoever of thoſe ſorts any man ſpeaks, they are all light words, they have not a grain of goodneſs, and therefore not a grain of weightineſs in them. That's a good ſenſe.

Ἰδοὺ κούφως ἐποίησα. Ecce leviter feci. Aquila.

Secondly, One of the Greek Tranſlators renders, *Behold I have done*, or *acted lightly.* There is lightneſs in our actions, as well as in our ſpeeches. We ſay, ſuch a man is of *a light*, that is, *of a vain carriage*; and we ſay of another, he is a grave man, or there is gravity in his carriage. Thus ſome ſpeak and act gravely, or weightily; others ſpeak and act looſely, lightly. When *Job* ſaith, *Behold, I am vile*, it may take in both, *I have ſpoken lightly, I have done lightly*; and therefore I am light, therefore *I am vile*, or *contemptible.*

Cum nihil ſim. Sept.

Yet further; The Greek Septuagint tranſlates, *I am nothing*; they carry the ſenſe to the loweſt and leaſt imaginable: *There is nothing leſs than nothing. How ſhall I anſwer thee, ſeeing I am nothing?* All that I am is ſo light a thing, that I am nothing at all; that is, nothing of worth, nothing of value; I am of ſo little validity, that I have ſcarce any entity. From all theſe readings, we may fully gather up *Jobs* ſenſe in this ſelf-abaſing confeſſion, *Behold, I am vile.*

Laſtly, For the clearing of theſe words, conſider, we are not to underſtand *Job* when he ſaith, *I am vile*, as ſpeaking only with reference to his then preſent, ſad, ſorrowful, deplorable condition: ſometimes ſuch are accounted vile by men, who are low and mean in the eye of the world. *Job* did not count himſelf vile upon that conſideration, becauſe ſtript of all his worldly greatneſs, power and glory, health and ſtrength; he did not call himſelf vile, becauſe of the preſent Diſpenſation of God towards him, but he called himſelf *vile*, with reſpect to the common natural condition of mankind, or as he was a ſinful man, though his Providential condition had been never ſo good and proſperous. *Behold, I am vile.*

Hence obſerve; Firſt, *Man at his beſt eſtate is vile.*

David ſaith, he is even then *altogether vanity* (*Pſal.* 39. 5.) and what is vile if that be not? or what can he be viler than that which is *altogether vanity*? Man is vile;

Firſt, If we conſider the matter of his body: Was he not originally made of the duſt, and moulded out of the clay, which we tread upon, and trample under feet? In which ſenſe, among others, the Apoſtle (*Phil.* 3. 21.) calls our body *a vile body*; the materials of it being vile, it is alſo vile.

Secondly, Man is very vile, chiefly vile, through the ſinfulneſs both of his nature and life. Sin renders us vile indeed; corruption makes us of no reputation. Though man as to the matter of his body, might have been called vile in the day of his Creation, yet he had never deſerved that diminiſhing title, if he had not ſinned. Sin hath degraded man, and laid him low; ſin hath diſhonoured man, and made him vile, even viler than the duſt out of which he was made.

Thirdly, Man is vile, with reſpect to all thoſe evil conſequences and effects of ſin, which have poſſeſſed, or are ready to poſſeſs: Firſt, our bodies; ſuch are weakneſs, ſickneſs, pains, and all manner of diſeaſes. Secondly, our names; ſuch are reproach, infamy, and diſgrace. Thirdly, our eſtates; ſuch are poverty and want. Fourthly, our perſons; impriſonment and reſtraint. Fifthly, our ſouls; ſuch are blindneſs and ignorance in our minds, ſtubbornneſs in our wills, inordinacy in our affections. Theſe conſequences of ſin, as well as ſin it ſelf, eſpecially thoſe conſequences of ſin which are themſelves ſinful (as thoſe laſt mentioned are) render us vile.

From this firſt Obſervation, take theſe four inferences.

Firſt, If man be vile in that threefold reſpect before ſpoken of (he is ſo in many more) then *let not any man prize himſelf much.* We do not prize vile things without us; why then ſhould we much prize our ſelves who are vile? We are very apt to have thoughts of our ſelves beyond our ſelves, or to think of our ſelves beyond what is meet. Did we remember that we were vile, high thoughts of ſelf would ſoon down, and we would ceaſe from our ſelves, as well as from other men, ſaying, *Wherein are we* (men) *to be accounted of?* (*Iſa.* 2. 22.) The beſt man, of meer men, hath but a little breath in his Noſtrils, and he hath much ſin in his ſoul; wherein then, or for what (as a natural man) is any man to be accounted of? Did we know our ſelves more (underſtandingly) we ſhould know our ſelves leſs (valuingly.) In which ſenſe *Job* ſaid (*Chap.* 9. 21.) *Though I were perfect, I would not know my ſoul.* It is our ignorance, who and what we are, which cauſeth us to have high thoughts of our ſelves; as it is our ignorance, who and what Chriſt is, which cauſeth us to have ſuch low thoughts of him, and ſuch ſlow or ſlight deſires after him (*Joh.* 3. 10.)

Secondly, As becauſe we are vile, we ſhould take heed of prizing our ſelves much, ſo we ſhould more *take heed of being proud of our ſelves at all.* Indeed where the former is, where any perſon, man or woman ſets too high a price upon ſelf, it is very hard to abſtain from pride in ſelf; for, *pride in ſelf, ariſes from over-prizing of ſelf*: We firſt think too well of our ſelves, and then are lifted up in our ſelves. As it is through the power of faith, that our hearts are lifted up to God, and in God; ſo whenſoever our hearts are lifted up in our ſelves (glorying in our own attainments) or to our ſelves (gaping after our own ends) it proceeds from pride.

Thirdly, See the exceeding goodneſs of God, who hath put honour upon vile man. We have made our ſelves vile, and ſo we ſhould reckon our ſelves; yet the Lord is pleaſed to eſteem his people highly, and make them honourable (*Iſa.* 43. 4.) *Since thou waſt precious in my ſight, thou haſt been honourable. Job* was vile (as he confeſſeth) in his own ſight, yet he was precious in Gods ſight. And thus the Lord eſtimates all that are godly, all that are true believers, though vile and of no value in themſelves, nor in their own ſight, yet precious they are in his ſight; *Since thou waſt precious in my ſight, thou haſt been honourable.* We are never truly honourable, till precious in the ſight of God. There is a *Bubble* which the world calls *Honour*, a wind of fame, with which many are much affected, and with which ſome are inveſted, who are not at all precious in the ſight of God. The beſt, the trueſt honour, ariſeth from preciouſneſs in the ſight of God; they who are eſteemed by God, are indeed perſons of eſtimation. His Grace ſhewed favourably and freely to us, his Grace working mightily and effectually in us, puts a bleſſed worth upon us, though we are vile in our ſelves, and ſo accounted by the world.

Fourthly, See the goodneſs of God in this alſo, that though we are vile, yet he is pleaſed *to ſet his heart upon us, and to mind us.* We little mind *vile things*; light things, trifles, we ſlightly paſs by. We are but a light thing, a vile thing in our ſelves, yet God not only hath us in his heart, but ſets his heart upon us. Thus ſpake *Job* in the loweſt Ebb of his outward felicity, and he ſpake it admiringly as well as truly (*Chap.* 7. 17.) *What is man, that thou ſhouldſt magnifie, and that thou ſhouldſt ſet thine heart upon him?* When he ſaith, *What is man?* it is as if he had ſaid, *Man is but a vile thing*; yet the Lord is mindful of him, yea, magnifieth him. And though the Lord forbids us to ſet our hearts or affections on Earthly things, (*Col.* 3. 2.) on the beſt of Earthly things, all which are comprehended under that one word or title, *Riches* (*Pſal.* 62. 10.) And though the reaſon why he forbids us to ſet our hearts upon theſe things, is becauſe they are vile, yet he is pleaſed (O Infinite Goodneſs!) to ſet his heart upon us though we are vile, and conſidered as ſinful, much more vile than they, even than the vileſt of them. We have the like queſtion put again (*Pſal.* 144. 3.) *Lord, what is man that thou takeſt knowledge of him, or the ſon of man, that thou makeſt account of him?* What is man! 'Tis a diminiſhing queſtion, implying, *that man is a vile thing*, or a nothing. Is it not then a wonderful thing? is it not the fruit of rich and free grace, that God ſhould take an account, or make ſuch an account of man? And if God ſets his heart upon man; who is ſo vile, how ſhould man ſet his heart upon God, who is ſo infinitely excellent! God may be ſaid to deſcend, ſurely he condeſcends exceedingly, when he ſets his heart upon vile man. *The Lord humbleth himſelf* (ſaith *David, Pſal.* 113.6.) *to behold* (that is, to take any notice of, or to take into his conſideration) *the things that are in Heaven, and in the Earth*; how much more doth he deſcend, condeſcend and humble himſelf, when he ſets his heart upon vile man! Now, doth God ſet his heart upon vile man (which is an humbling to him) and ſhall not vile man ſet his heart upon the great and glorious God, which is not only his duty, but his felicity, his honour, and exaltation!

Again, *Job* ſaith, *I am vile.* What was *Job?* a godly man ſure, a holy man by Gods own teſtimony, yet even he ſpeaks at this low rate of himſelf, *Behold, I am vile.*

Hence note, Secondly; *The better we are, the leſs we eſteem our ſelves; and ſtill the better and better we grow, the lower are our thoughts of our ſelves.*

There is no greater argument of height in Grace, than low thoughts of ſelf. Next to Faith in Chriſt, Self-denial, or to deny our ſelves, is the great duty of the Goſpel (*Mat.* 16.24.) Now, as to *deny our ſelves* is to be very low in our own eyes, ſo it is one of the higheſt acts of Grace in us, and requires not only truth of Grace, but much ſtrength of Grace to act it. And hence it comes to paſs, that the higher and ſtronger any are in Grace, they are ſtill lower and leſſer in their own ſight, becauſe true height and ſtrength of Grace works the ſoul to more ſelf-denial. And therefore, as a godly man is vile, ſo he is made more ſenſible of his own vileneſs, the more he increaſeth in godlineſs; ſo that if any have low thoughts of him, he hath lower of himſelf. None can think him lower in truth, than he thinks himſelf; I am light, ſaith he, I am vile. Though he well underſtands his ſtate, his priviledge, and his intereſt in Chriſt through grace, and underſtands it ſo well, that he values it above all the world, and would not part with it for the whole world, yet he is ſtill vile in his own eyes, and low in his own rate-books. *Abraham* the chief of believers, ſaid (*Gen.* 18.27.) *Behold, now I have taken upon me to ſpeak unto the Lord, who am but duſt and aſhes.* So *David* (2 *Sam.*7.18.) *What am I? and what is my fathers houſe, that thou haſt brought me hitherto?* How ſenſible was he of his own vileneſs, who ſpake thus, who yet was a man after Gods own heart, and the beſt of Kings?

Further, Conſider the time when *Job* was brought to this humble confeſſion and acknowledgment of his own vileneſs; he had not ſpoken thus before, but was much in juſtifying himſelf, eſpecially as to the ſincerity of his heart and ways, and he did it even to offence; but the Lord having dealt roundly with him, he crys out, *I am vile.*

Hence, obſerve; *The dealings of God with man aim moſtly at this great mark, to humble him, and to make him ſee his own vileneſs.*

We quickly ſee, or are quick-ſighted to ſee and take notice of any good in us, or done by us, to make us proud inſtead of thankful; but we are dull of ſight to ſee or take notice of that in us, or done by us, which may humble and lay us low: And therefore we put God to it to ſhew us our vileneſs, by ſevere and humbling Diſpenſations. There are two great things which God would bring man to: Firſt, To make him know how vile he is: Secondly, To make him know how excellent, how glorious himſelf is. The Lord never left battering *Job* by afflictions, and following him with queſtions, till he brought him to both theſe points; *Behold, I am vile* (ſaith he in this place) *I know thou canſt do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee,* ſaid he afterwards (*Chap.* 42.2.) in which words he highly exalted God, in the glory both of his power and wiſdom. As one great purpoſe of the Goſpel is to exalt man, and lift him up unto a moſt glorious condition in and through Chriſt; ſo another great purpoſe of the Goſpel is, to lay man low in himſelf, or to take him quite off from his own bottom. The Apoſtle often inſiſts upon that, as one grand deſign of the Goſpel with reſpect to man (1 *Cor.* 1.26.) *Ye ſee your calling, Brethren, that not many wiſe men after the fleſh,* &c. *are called.* He tells us at the 29th verſe why it is ſo, *Even that no fleſh ſhould glory in his preſence.* But (*ver.* 31.) *that according as it is written, he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.* All the dealings of God, both in Law and Goſpel, both in his Providences, and in his Ordinances, tend to bring man off from, and out of himſelf; and till that be effected, neither Ordinances nor Providences have their due effect upon him. We muſt come to *Jobs* acknowledgment, *that we are vile,* that we are nothing, and that God is all to us in Chriſt, before we are Chriſtians indeed.

Fourthly, The former diſcourſe ſheweth, that God was come very near to *Job, he ſpake to him out of the Whirlwind,* his appearance was very dreadful: And then *Job* cryed out, *Behold, I am vile.*

Hence obſerve; *The more we have to do with God, and the nearer God comes to us, the more we ſee, and the more we are made ſenſible of our own vileneſs.*

Unuſqui que ſibi dum tactu veri luminis illuſtratur, oſtenditur. Greg.

Man is clearly diſcovered and known to himſelf, when he beholds God in the ſhinings of Divine Light, and not till then. *Job* was higher in his own thoughts than became him, till God came thus near to him; and when God came yet nearer to him, and diſcovered himſelf (as he afterwards did) yet more fully to him, then *Job* did not only ſay (as here) *I am vile,* but *I abhor my ſelf, and repent in duſt and aſhes.* This firſt approach of God in ſo eminent and illuſtrious a way or manner, wrought much upon him, but the ſecond more. The light of God ſhews us our darkneſs, the power of God our weakneſs, his wiſdom our folly, his purity our uncleanneſs, his Majeſty our vileneſs, and his Allneſs or All-ſufficiency being ſeen, gives us to ſee our utter deficiency and nothingneſs. Still in proportion to the nearneſs of God to us, or our nearer and clearer apprehenſions of him by Faith, we are carried further out of, and further off from our ſelves; and thus 'tis in our attendance upon God in the Ordinances of worſhip. The reaſon why many come to Ordinances with proud hearts, and go away proud is, becauſe they have little or no Communion with God in them by Faith, or God doth not manifeſt himſelf to them by his bleſſed Spirit. They who have *ſeen the power and glory of God in the Sanctuary* (as *David* profeſſed he had ſometimes done, and longed to ſee it again (*Pſal.* 63.1,2.) they will ſay with the ſame *David* (*Pſal.* 131.1,2.) *Lord, our heart is not haughty, nor our eyes lofty, our ſoul is like a weaned child.*

Laſtly, *Job* was waiting for the goodneſs of God to him, or for deliverance out of his ſad condition; and doubtleſs he was convinced, that the moſt probable way to it, was to leave off contending with God, and to be found humbling himſelf before him, in this or a like confeſſion, *Behold, I am vile.*

Hence note; *There is nothing that doth more ſweeten and mollifie God (or, I may ſay, any ingenuous Adverſary) towards us, then an humble acknowledgment of our own vileneſs and unworthineſs.*

Sciebat Jobus contra ſpiritum humilem inermem eſſe Dei manum

When our hearts are truly humbled, mercy and deliverance are at hand. *Job* was no ſooner made deeply ſenſible of his vileneſs, but mercy came in. The only skill of this *excellent Wreſtler* (as one calls him) was to caſt himſelf down at Gods foot. There is no way to get within God, and to prevail with him, but by ſubmitting to him. The Lord layeth down his Rod, when we lay down our Pride; and caſts his Sword out of his hand, when we caſt our ſelves at his feet. And in all our afflictions, whether Perſonal or National, till we acknowledge (not formally, but in a deep ſenſe of our own vileneſs) that we are vile, in vain do we cry for deliverance, or hope for mercy. When we are loweſt in our own eyes, we are neareſt to our Exaltation; when once we ſay in our hearts we are nothing, we deſerve nothing, we have ſpoken lightly, we have done lightly, Salvation will not tarry. (1 *Pet.* 5.7.) *Humble your ſelves under the mighty hand of God, and he will lift you up in due time.* If we would be lifted up out of any affliction, we muſt be at this humbling work. We ſhall never work (as I may ſay) upon the Heart of God, unleſs we are thus at work with our own hearts, or till this work be done upon our hearts. Our great work lies within, eſpecially in a day of tryal and tribulation, ſuch as *Job* was in. *Job* was ſpeedily reduced to his former honour and greatneſs, when once (through grace) he had wrought his heart to this confeſſion. *Behold, I am vile;*

What ſhall I anſwer thee?] As if *Job* had ſaid, *Truly I have nothing to anſwer thee; Thou, O Lord, haſt given ſuch demonſtrations of thy greatneſs, of thy power, of the excellency of thy wiſdom, of thy goodneſs, that I have nothing to ſay*, but this, that I can ſay nothing. *What ſhall I anſwer thee?* I know not what to anſwer, or I have nothing to anſwer. As in a great ſtrait, when we know not what to do, we uſually ſay, *What ſhall we do?* So here, it ſheweth that *Job* was no way able to anſwer, when he ſaid, *What ſhall I anſwer?* The Hebrew is, *What ſhall I return*, or *turn back?* We may exemplifie this paſſionate interrogation, by that of the Patriarch *Judah* (*Gen.* 44.16.) when *Joſeph* would have detained *Benjamin* (having found the Cup in his Sacks mouth) *Judah* ſaid, *What ſhall we ſay unto my Lord? what ſhall we ſpeak? or how ſhall we clear our ſelves?* Here are three queſtions to ſhew that he had nothing to anſwer. Firſt, *What ſhall we ſay to my Lord?* Secondly, *What ſhall we ſpeak?* Thirdly, *How ſhall we clear our ſelves?* Truly, we know not what to ſay, nor ſpeak, nor how to clear our ſelves. The plain truth is, we have nothing at all to anſwer for our ſelves, but to yield our ſelves to thy mercy. Thus *Job*, *I am vile, what ſhall I anſwer thee*, the great God, the holy God, the mighty God, the wiſe God? what ſhall I anſwer thee?

Hence note; *When God is Opponent, no man can be Reſpondent?*

God can put ſuch queſtions, and make ſuch objections, as no man is able to anſwer. Thus ſpake *Job* at the third verſe of the ninth *Chapter*; *If he* (that is, God) *will contend with him* (that is, with man) *he cannot anſwer him one of a thouſand*: Which implieth, that not only not one among very many men, but that not one among all men, or that not any man is able to anſwer, if God will contend. The Apoſtle ſaith of all men in a ſtate of ſin (*Rom.* 3. 19.) *We know, that what things ſoever the Law ſaith, it ſaith to them who are under the Law; that every mouth may be ſtopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.* If the Lord ſhould make objections againſt, or charge ſinners, according to the ſtrictneſs and ſeverity of the Law, the beſt, the holieſt of men could not find an anſwer, or no anſwer would be found in their mouths: how much leſs could any anſwer him, who not only were altogether *born in ſin*, as all are, and as the proud Phariſees told the poor man in the Goſpel he was (*Joh.* 9. 34.) but abide and continue in ſin? How will the mouths of all ſuch be ſtopt with a ſenſe of their ſelf-guiltineſs? how mute, how anſwerleſs will they ſtand before God? or ſay, as *Job* in the Text (but in a ten thouſand times ſadder plight than he) *What ſhall we anſwer?* It is the happineſs of humbled ſinners that they have Chriſt to anſwer for them, ſeeing in that caſe no ſinner can anſwer for himſelf. And ſuch is the Majeſty and glory of God, when it breaks forth in any caſe to a poor Creature, that it leaves him quite anſwerleſs, and takes away not only all matter of diſpute, but of ſpeech; and therefore *Job* reſolves upon ſilence, as appears by what he ſaith in the laſt clauſe of this verſe.

I will lay my hand upon my mouth.] As if he had ſaid, *That all may ſee I know not what to anſwer, I will ſtop up the conveyance of anſwers.* What this Scripture phraſe, *to lay the hand upon the mouth*, imports, hath been opened (*Chap.* 21. 5.) In brief, *Jobs* meaning in reſolving thus was, as if he had ſaid, *I will impoſe ſilence upon my ſelf.* Or thus, *Lord, thou ſhalt not need to ſilence me, or to ſtop my mouth, I will do it my ſelf; I know not what to anſwer thee; but if I did; if I could gather up ſomething that might look like an anſwer, yet I will not anſwer, I will lay my hand upon my mouth.*

Further, when he ſaith, *I will lay my hand upon my mouth*, it may imply, that he would fain have been anſwering, though he could not tell what to anſwer. The tongue, if left at liberty, if not checkt, will be making anſwers, when it cannot anſwer any thing to purpoſe; and therefore as *David* ſaid (*Pſal.* 39. 1.) *I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me.* So would *Job* here, while the *Holy One* was before him, fearing he might further give offence, while he went about to take off offences. The tongue of a good man needs a bridle; and the better any man is, the more he bridles his tongue.

Conſtituo linguæ licentiam perenniter coercere.

Job had offended with his tongue; though he had not ſpoken wickedly, yet he had ſpoken raſhly and inconſiderately, and now he ſaith, *I will lay my hand upon my mouth.*

Hence note; *We ſhould be very watchful over that which hath been an inſtrument or an occaſion of ſin.*

He that hath offended with his mouth, ſhould lay his hand upon his mouth, and take order with his tongue: It is better to be ſilent, than to offend in ſpeaking. *Pambo* (as the Church Hiſtorian reports) confeſſed, that in forty nine years he had ſcarcely learned the meaning of, or the duty contained in the firſt and ſecond verſes of the thirty ninth *Pſalm*, concerning the due reſtraint and government of the tongue.

Socrates *l.* 4. *Hiſt. Eccleſ. cap.* 18.

Secondly, Note; *It is neceſſary ſometimes to abridge our ſelves in what we may do, leſt we ſhould do what we may not.*

Hoc ſupplicii genus linguarium appellant. Sanct.

This is a holy revenge; and it is one of thoſe ſeven effects of *godly ſorrow which works repentance, not to be repented of* (2 *Cor.* 7. 11.) We ſhould (in ſome caſes) forbear to ſpeak at all, for fear we ſhould ſpeak amiſs. They who are truly wiſe, are much aſham'd to ſpeak, when once they ſee their errour in ſpeaking, or how apt they are to err in ſpeaking; and therefore lay that penalty upon their tongues, either to ſpare ſpeaking, or to ſpeak very ſparingly. 'Tis ſeldom that the tongue is left looſe, but it ſpeaks looſly, and it often ſpeaks thoſe things which give occaſion of offence both to God and man. As *all iniquity ſhall* (at laſt) *ſtop her mouth* (*Pſal.* 107.42.) that is, evil men (the Abſtract is put for the Concrete) ſhall be ſo aſhamed and confounded for their evil deeds, that when they are charged with them, or convinced of them, they ſhall hold their peace, as if their mouths were ſtopped, or like the man that came to the Feaſt in the Goſpel without his Wedding-garment, they ſhall be ſpeechleſs (Now, I ſay, as all iniquity ſhall ſtop her mouth for ſhame) ſo it is good for the beſt ſometimes to ſtop their own mouths, for fear they ſhould ſpeak any iniquity. This godly fear, as well as a gracious ſhame, for what he had ſpoken amiſs before, cauſed *Job* to ſay, *I will lay my hand upon my mouth*, which reſolve he further confirms in the next verſe.

Verſ. 5. **Once have I ſpoken, but I will not anſwer; yea, twice, but I will proceed no further.**

Agnoſcit ſe imparem eſſe ſuſtinendæ diſputationi cum Deo, illo ſummo & æterno bono. Pro unum & duo licet vertere ſemel & bis; ſic אחת בשנה *ſemel in anno intrabit Pontifex ſanctum ſanctorum.* Levit. 16. 34. Druſ.

Once have I ſpoken.] That is, once have I ſpoken amiſs: not that he never ſpoke but once, for he had ſpoken often; but once he had ſpoken amiſs, and been too forward with his tongue.

But I will not anſwer.] That is, I will not ſpeak ſo again. But had *Job* ſpoken amiſs but once? he confeſſeth more in the latter part of the verſe.

Yea, twice, but I will proceed no further.] Once, yea twice. Some Interpreters are much in ſhewing what that *once or twice* ſpeaking ſhould be.

Firſt, Some ſay it was that he ſo importunately deſired to plead with God. Secondly, Others, that he did ſo much juſtifie himſelf; for though he did well in maintaining his integrity, yet his over-doing it, or being ſo much in it, was not well. Others, That his *once* was his complaining of the afflictions of the godly, eſpecially of his own, as if they were too heavy, and he not weighed in an evil ballance, at leaſt afflicted more than needed. That his *twice*, was his heightning the proſperity of the wicked, as if God favoured them; at leaſt, that he did not puniſh them as they deſerved, nor ſhew diſpleaſure enough againſt them. But we need not ſtay upon ſuch particulars, nor take *once and twice* ſtrictly. This expreſſion, *once, yea twice*, implies only, that he had ſpoken often; I have ſpoken not only once, but twice; that is, I have ſpoken ſeveral times amiſs. The firſt ſtep beyond once is twice; and who knows how much beyond twice he had ſpake? when he ſaid, *once have I ſpoken, yea twice*, the meaning plainly is, I have ſeveral times ſpoken amiſs. We had this form of ſpeech (*Job* 33. 14.) where *Elihu* told *Job*, that the Lord *ſpeaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not*; that is, he ſpeaks often, *in a dream, in a viſion of the night*, and man underſtands not the meaning of it. So here, I (ſaith *Job*) have ſpoken once, yea twice, or many times.

But I will proceed no further, or *I will not add*, ſaith the Hebrew. I will no more Apologize for my ſelf, nor ſtand

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in my own defence (for in ſo doing, I ſhall ſtand in my own light) but lay my ſelf low in the preſence of God. As if he had ſaid, *My ſin is already too great, in that I have divers times ſpoken too boldly and freely, if not preſumptuouſly about thy proceedings, but I will refrain from offending in that kind any more.* The ſum of all that *Job* had ſpoken may be thus conceived. *Now Lord I confeſs to thee, and before all the world, my ſin and folly in queſtioning any of thy dealings with me, inſtead of ſubmitting to them, eſpecially in urging a hearing of my cauſe in thy preſence: Therefore I revoke my challenge, and caſt my ſelf at thy footſtool, acknowledging my ſelf (in compariſon of thee) every way vile and baſe, utterly unable to ſatisfie any of thy demands. And, as I my ſelf purpoſe, ſo I humbly beg leave of thee, that I may be ſilent. I grant all that thou haſt ſaid of thy own greatneſs, and of my vileneſs, and I bewail my over-daring raſhneſs: I will not defend pertinaciouſly, what I have ſaid unadviſedly; and to make ſure of that, I am reſolved to ſay no more; leſt carried out in heat of ſpeech, I ſhould heat my paſſions; leſt, multiplying words, I ſhould multiply my errours, and ſo daſh againſt the ſame Rock again.*

Firſt, In that *Job* confeſſeth *once have I ſpoken, yea twice.*

Note; *A good man may fall often.*

Once, and more than once, once and twice, yea, more than twice. We cannot limit the number, nor ſay to this or that number the failings or ſinnings of a good man may come, and no further. Though it be very ſad to multiply ſins, yet the beſt of men have multiplied them.

From the latter words, *I will proceed no further.*

Note, Secondly; *Though a good man may fall often, yet a good man will not take leave to ſin often, no nor once.*

He will not give himſelf a liberty to proceed or continue in ſin. When he hath ſinned once or twice, he does not ſay, poſſibly I may ſin again, therefore what ſhould I trouble my ſelf about it? who knows how often any man may ſin? no, though he knoweth not how often he may ſin, yet he will not give himſelf liberty to ſin, not only, not knowingly, but not at all, once more; but ſaith, in the ſtrength of Chriſt, *I will proceed no further*, I will do ſo no more, A gracious heart is ſo far from taking liberty to ſin often, that he takes up a reſolve not to ſin, and will to the utmoſt watch againſt, and keep himſelf pure from ſin, eſpecially from his ſpecial ſin; as *David* did, who ſaid (*Pſal.* 18. 21.) *I have kept my ſelf from mine iniquity.* As if he had ſaid, *There is an iniquity which dogs me, and follows me, a ſin which eaſily beſets me; but I have kept my ſelf, to the utmoſt of my power, from falling into that iniquity.* And, I ſay, though a good man may multiply iniquity, yet woe to thoſe who give themſelves ſcope to multiply iniquity, or to commit any one iniquity. The voice of true repentance is this, *I will ſin no more.* Though I deny not, but a man who hath truly repented of ſome particular ſin, and ſincerely purpoſed not to commit it any more, may (being over-powred by corruption and temptation) be overtaken with the ſame ſin again; yet the voice of true repentance is this, and thus the penitent ſoul ſpeaks in truth, *I will ſin no more, I will proceed no further.*

Again, *Job* had been confeſſing his fault, his failings, *Once have I ſpoken, yea twice.* The words are a penitent confeſſion, or the confeſſion of a Penitent. Now, ſaith he, *I will proceed no further.*

Hence note, Thirdly; *When ſins and failings are heartily and penitently confeſſed, they are not perſiſted nor perſevered in.*

He that hath really confeſt his ſin, will (to his utmoſt) put a ſtop to his ſin; he will be ſo far from renewing or continuing in it, that he ſets himſelf might and main (and prays in aid from God) againſt it. True confeſſion of ſin is always ſeconded and followed with forſaking of ſin. The Prophet calling the people of *Iſrael* to repentance, ſaid (*Iſa.* 1. 16.) *Ceaſe to do evil.* It will not avail us to ſay, we have done evil, unleſs *we ceaſe to do evil.* The promiſe of mercy is not to bare Confeſſors, but to thoſe who are alſo forſakers of ſin (*Prov.* 28. 13.) *He that confeſſeth and forſaketh his ſin, ſhall find mercy* (*Prov.* 30. 32.) *If thou haſt done fooliſhly, lifting up thy ſelf, or if thou haſt thought evil, lay thy hand upon thy mouth, do no more*; that is, do not open thy mouth to ſpeak a word in defence of it, do not put forth thy hand any more to act it. Every unfeigned confeſſion of any one ſin, is a real profeſſion againſt that, and againſt all other ſins. That man (let him be who he will) *is not a confeſſor of ſin to God*, but a mocker of God, who confeſſeth a ſin, and takes no care to keep himſelf pure, not only from that, but from every ſin. The Apoſtle *John* doth not only ſay, *Whoſoever is born of God, doth not commit ſin*; but, *he cannot ſin, becauſe he is born of God* (1 *Epiſt*. 3. 9.) Not that he hath not a natural power to ſin; but he hath not a will, a mind to ſin, or he ſins not with the full conſent or ſwinge of his will, or he hath a ſincere bent of will againſt every ſin, and would ſin no more. How wicked and bent to back-ſliding were thoſe *Jews*, to whom the Lord ſaid by his Prophet (*Iſa.* 1. 5.) *Why ſhould ye be ſtricken any more? ye will revolt more and more.* The will of a wicked man is wholly for ſin: the will of a godly man (as ſuch) is wholly againſt ſin; ſo that when he ſinneth, he may be ſaid to ſin againſt his own will, as well as againſt the will of God; and therefore, being convinced that he hath ſinned, though but in paſſion, or by impatient words (as *Jobs* caſe was) he gives his honeſt word for it (as *Job* here did) that he *will proceed no further.*

Confeſſio peccati eſt profeſſio deſinendi peccare. Hilar. *in Pſal.* 136. *Irriſor eſt non pœnitens, qui adhuc agit quod pœnitet.* Bernard.

In theſe three verſes, *Job* hath ſhewed his repentance for his unwary ſpeeches, and exceſſes in language; he hath confeſſed his own vileneſs, and ſits down as ſilenced by God, yea, as impoſing ſilence upon himſelf. Thus he is got a good way in the work of Humiliation; yet he was not come quite through, he had not yet made ſuch a confeſſion of his ſin, nor was his heart ſo humbled as it ought to be, before God would raiſe him up; and therefore in the following part of this Chapter, and in the next, God ſets upon him again, and ſpeaks to him a ſecond time out of the Whirlwind. The Lord had begun to humble him, and *Job* had begun to humble himſelf, yet the Lord deals further with him to humble him more, and ſpeaks to him again out of the Whirlwind: What again out of the Whirlwind? Yes; *Then anſwered the Lord unto* Job *out of the Whirlwind, and ſaid,* &c.

And not only ſo, but after the Lord had put many queſtions to him about himſelf, as before about ſeveral Creatures, he had a reſerve of two Creatures more to queſtion with him about, that would more aſtoniſh him than all the reſt, *Behemoth* and *Leviathan.*

Thus we ſee, when once the Lord begins to humble a ſoul, he will make through work of it, and never give it over, till he hath brought him to the duſt indeed. *Job* was ſo far humbled, that he had no more to ſay unto God; but God had much more to ſay unto *Job*, and all for this end, that he might humble him more, as will appear in opening that which followeth.

VERS. 6, 7, 8.

Then anſwered the Lord unto Job out of the Whirlwind, and ſaid,

Gird up thy loyns now like a man; I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.

Wilt thou alſo diſannul my judgment? wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayſt be righteous?

IN the former verſe *Job* gave out in the plain Field, confeſſing himſelf overcome, not by rigour and force of arms, but by reaſon and ſtrength of argument, or rather by that which is above all reaſons and arguments, the Soveraign Power and Authority of God; and thereupon he reſolved to meddle no more, to anſwer no further; and that, though he had ſpoken once, yea twice, yet he would not proceed, he would add no more, he had enough of it, he had already ſpoken too much, much more (with reſpect to God) than came to his ſhare. Hereupon the Lord, at this ſixth verſe, begins again to ſpeak and anſwer him; and his Anſwer is contained and continued quite through this fortieth Chapter, together with the whole one and fortieth, and in it we may conſider theſe four things diſtinctly.

Firſt, A Preface, at the ſixth verſe; *Then anſwered the Lord unto* Job *out of the Whirlwind, and ſaid.*

Secondly, We have here a Challenge, at the ſeventh verſe, *Gird up thy loyns now like a man; I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.*

Thirdly, We have in this Anſwer of God, a reproof of *Job*, or a vehement expoſtulation with *Job*, in the eighth and ninth verſes; *Wilt thou alſo diſannul my judgment? wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayſt be righteous? Haſt thou an arm like God? canſt thou thunder with a voice like him?* Thus he expoſtulates, thus he reproves.

Fourthly, We have here a large proof or demonſtration of the Greatneſs, Power, Wiſdom, and Soveraignty of God; for the further conviction and humiliation of *Job*. And this proof or demonſtration of the Power of God is laid down two ways.

Firſt, By his Providential actings, in deſtroying proud and wicked men. This we have in the 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14 verſes; *Deck thy ſelf now with Majeſty and Excellency, and array thy ſelf with Glory and Beauty; caſt abroad the rage of thy wrath, and behold every one that is proud, and abaſe him.* As if the Lord had ſaid, theſe things I do; I look on every one that is proud, and bring him low, *I tread down the wicked in their place*, &c. All this I can do, and do in my Providences daily; *Job*, canſt thou do ſo too? Thus we have a proof of the great Power and Soveraignty of God taken from his Judiciary proceedings with proud men.

Secondly, He gives a proof of his great Power by a double inſtance, from the work of Creation; as in the former Chapter by the works of *Providence* alone, ſo here by the works of *Creation* and Providence too. And this double inſtance is given in two great vaſt living Creatures; one of them the greateſt upon the Earth, the other the greateſt in the Waters.

The firſt is *Behemoth*, the vaſteſt Creature that breaths upon the Earth, who is deſcribed from the 15th *verſe* of this Chapter, to the end.

The ſecond is *Leviathan*, the vaſteſt Creature in the Water, who is deſcribed quite through the one and fortieth Chapter. The Lord having ſpoken of many other Creatures formerly, in the forming and ordering of which, his Power and Wiſdom ſhine forth; he reſerved theſe two to cloſe with, that *Job* by the conſideration of them, might ſee what a poor thing himſelf was, and how unable to grapple with the great God, who made thoſe great Creatures; for that is the general iſſue. If God hath made ſuch huge Creatures as theſe, then what a one is God! how mighty and powerful is God! what is the cauſe, if the effects are ſuch? what is the *fountain*, if we ſee ſuch *ſtreams?* Such is the drift of God in this his laſt anſwer to *Job*, and theſe are the parts of it. We may ſum up all in this brief; here *Humane Weakneſs* and *Divine Power* are compared together; *mans nothingneſs*, with *Gods Allneſs or All-ſufficiency*, that ſo man (*Job* in ſpecial) might be convinced, and conclude that he could no more charge God with any fault, than he was able to reſiſt his power.

So then, this whole Oration or Diſcourſe tends to the confirmation of *Job*, yet more, in believing the irreſiſtible Providence of God; which when he ſhould well underſtand, he would no more doubt of his Juſtice, nor accuſe his judgments of ſeverity, nor would he any more deſire to debate with God as he had done.

Nor can theſe things be preſſed too often upon the holieſt among men, man being not only by nature altogether unbelieving, but having ſo much unbelief mingled with his graces, as ſad experience teacheth him at all times, eſpecially in times of great affliction and temptation. So much of the whole anſwer, and the ſtate of it; now for the particulars.

Verſ. 6. **Then the Lord anſwered Job out of the Whirlwind, and ſaid.**

Then.] That is, when *Job* ſaid he could not, or he would not anſwer, or had no more to anſwer, *Then*, the Lord anſwered; or, to go a little further.

Then.] When *Job* had humbled himſelf, and ſaid he was vile, even *then* the Lord anſwered him, and he anſwered him out of the Whirlwind.

Then the Lord anſwered Job.] Not ſo much to his *ſpeech*, as to his *ſilence*; for *Job* reſolved to ſay no more, yet the Lord anſwered; and *the Lord anſwered him*

Out of the Whirlwind.] At the firſt verſe of the 38th Chapter, we read of this *Whirlwind*, and of the Lord anſwering out of it.

What a *Whirlwind* is, was there opened, and ſeveral points of obſervation given from it, which I ſhall not now at all touch upon, nor meddle with; and yet, though the words in this 6th verſe of the 40th Chapter, are the very ſame with thoſe in the firſt verſe of the 38th Chapter, yet from their placing and their repeating here, we may profitably take notice of ſome things for our inſtruction.

Then the Lord anſwered Job out of the Whirlwind, and ſaid.] The *Whirlwind* being here ſpoken of a ſecond time, 'tis queſtioned by ſome, whether this were a Whirlwind of greater force, or of leſs than the former, or the ſame. The ground of the Query is from a little variation which is in the Hebrew Text. In the 38th Chapter an Article is prefixt to the word *Whirlwind*, which (ſay ſome) intends the ſenſe, noting it to be a very *vehement* Whirlwind: But in the 40 Chapter, that Article is left out; upon which they collect, that this latter Whirlwind was not ſo fierce, nor ſo vehement as the former. But this is only a conjecture; nor can any thing be ſolidly grounded upon ſuch Grammatical differences; yea ſome, notwithſtanding that defect of the Article, conceive the *Whirlwind* here in this Chapter, was more vehement than that in the former Chapter. But I ſhall not ſtay about that Query, nor diſcourſe any thing concerning the nature of the *Whirlwind*, which was toucht before at the 38 Chapter, but ſhall

Obſerve, Firſt; *God hath terrible ways of revealing himſelf, as well as ſweet and gentle ways.*

To ſpeak out of a *Whirlwind*, is a dreadful manifeſtation. The Whirlwind, and ſpeaking out of it, notes a *legal* diſpenſation, or a miniſtration of terrour, ſuch as the Law was publiſhed in, of which we read in the 19th of *Exodus*, which was ſo terrible (ſaith the Apoſtle, *Heb.* 12.) that Moſes *himſelf ſaid*, *I exceedingly fear and quake.* The Lord hath his *Mount-Sinai* diſpenſations, in *thunder* and *lightning*, and with *a terrible voice*; and he hath alſo his *Mount-Sion* diſpenſations in ſweet and precious promiſes, and Goſpel-Ordinances; he hath his beſeechings, his intreatings, his wooings, his invitings. Divine diſpenſations vary. 'Tis ſaid (1 *King.* 1.6.) in the Hiſtory of *Eliah*, that when the Lord appeared, there was *an Earthquake, and the Lord was not in the Earthquake; there was a mighty wind, and the Lord was not in the wind; there was fire, and the Lord was not in the fire:* At laſt, *there came a ſtill ſmall voice, and there the Lord was.* The Lord waved the dreadful manifeſtation of himſelf, by Winds, Tempeſt, Thunder, Fire, Earthquake, and came only in a ſtill voice. The reaſon why the Lord doth thus variouſly diſpenſe himſelf, ſometimes in a Whirlwind, ſometimes in a gentle Gale, is to anſwer the ſeveral tempers and ſpirits of men; where the ſpirits of men will not bow, the Lord knows how to break and bring them down; and where the ſpirits of men are already bowed and broken, humbled and melted, the Lord knows how to comfort and confirm them: *He will not break the bruiſed reed, nor quench the ſmoaking flax.* And when it is ſaid, *He will not break*, the meaning is, he will bind up and ſtrengthen *the bruiſed reed*: And when it is ſaid, *He will not quench*, the meaning is, he will blow up and kindle *the ſmoaking flax*, that is, weak believers, or ſouls afflicted under the ſenſe of their own weakneſs and ſinfulneſs, or ſinful weakneſſes.

As 'tis a great part of the wiſdom of the Miniſters of the word, *to divide the word aright*, that is, to give every one a portion ſuitable to his condition (they muſt ſpeak to ſome, as it were, in a Whirlwind, in the Whirlwind of the Law; they muſt ſpeak to others in a ſtill voice, that of the Goſpel; they muſt threaten and terrifie ſome, comfort and refreſh others) So the Lord himſelf deals; he hath many ways of humbling the Creature, and as many ways of comforting the Creature; he ſpeaks in a Whirlwind (as I may ſay) when he threatens in the Law, he ſpeaks dreadfully, ſometimes by his Providences and Judgments (there's a voice in them) he ſpeaks terribly to us in our own perſonal afflictions, and when under ſad diſpenſations. All this is, as it were, a ſpeaking in the Whirlwind. And he ſpeaks graciouſly, winningly, and comfortably, or *to the hearts of his people*, even when he leads them into the Wilderneſs (*Hoſ.* 2. 14.) The Apoſtle ſaith, *Knowing the terrour of the Lord, we perſwade men*; that is, we perſwade men by the terrour of the Lord: and ſo, knowing

th:

the *goodneſs* and the *mercy* of the Lord, we perſwade men; that is, we perſwade them by the *goodneſs* and the *mercy* of the Lord. *I* (ſaith the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 12. 1.) *beſeech you by the mercies of God, preſent your bodies,* &c. *Of ſome we muſt have compaſſion, making a difference; and others ſave with fear* (Jude *verſ.* 22, 23.) that is, we muſt put them in fear, that they may be ſaved; or (as I may ſay) ſcare and fright them to heaven.

Secondly, Conſider, who it is that the Lord ſpake to in a Whirlwind; he ſpake to *Job.*: and who was *Job*? ſurely a very godly man, a man that feared God, a man that had a very noble teſtimony from God himſelf, and yet here God ſpake to *Job* himſelf in a Whirlwind.

> Hence note; *The beſt of men may ſometimes need the terrible appearances of God, to humble them, and to bring them to a due confeſſion of their ſins.*

Certainly God would not have ſpoken to *Job* in a Whirlwind, if there had not been cauſe for it; he would not have ſpoken twice in a Whirlwind, if there had not been double cauſe for it. The Apoſtle *Peter* ſaith (1 *Eph.* 1. 6.) *Te are in heavineſs through manifold temptations* (that is, afflictions and tryals) *if need be.* We ſhould never feel any affliction from the hand of God, never be in heavineſs, if there were not need. There is need that the holieſt in this world ſhould ſometimes be made heavy, or that heavineſs ſhould be upon them for a time. We ſhould always have calms and fair weather, never any ſtorms, nor tempeſts, nor whirlwinds from God, did not our needs call for it. As we every day need bread, which is therefore called by Chriſt *our daily bread*; ſo moſt days we need a Rod, either the Rod of his mouth to reprove us, or the Rod of his hand to chaſten us: And we do ſo, eſpecially for theſe reaſons.

Firſt, To bring us into a deep ſenſe of our own vileneſs, to humble us, to lay us low.

Secondly, To make greater impreſſions upon our hearts, of the Power and Soveraignty of God, of the Holineſs and Righteouſneſs of God. It is, that we might know our ſelves more, and that we might know God more, that God ſpeaks to us in whirlwinds, in terrible diſpenſations.

Further, As this is a *ſecond whirlwind*, as it is a ſecond ſpeaking to *Job*, a good man, in a whirlwind;

> **Obſerve**; *God will not give over terrible diſpenſations and appearances, till he hath brought man to his purpoſe.*

God hath an end, a purpoſe in every work, and every work of his goeth on, till he hath attained his purpoſe. As the word which goeth out of the Lords mouth ſhall not return unto him void, but ſhall accompliſh that which he pleaſeth, and proſper in the thing whereto he ſends it (*Iſa.* 55. 11.) So the work which God takes in hand, ſhall not be in vain, but ſhall proſper to the purpoſe for which he undertakes it. Now if any ask what is the purpoſe of God in Whirlwind Diſpenſations? that was ſhewed before, even to make us more humble, and to have higher thoughts of God in every reſpect.

But ſome may ſay, *Job* had very low thoughts of himſelf before he had ſaid, *I am vile*; doubtleſs *Job* ſpake this in great humility: why then doth the Lord ſpeak to *Job* in a whirlwind again, ſeeing he was truly humbled at his firſt ſpeaking?

I anſwer, Though *Job* was humbled, yet he was not humbled enough, he was not yet laid low enough, nor melted down enough; and therefore God ſpake to him in a whirlwind again. It would not ſerve his turn, barely to ſay *I am vile*, God muſt have more of him than that, he muſt make a fuller confeſſion of his fault than that; God brought him at laſt to ſay, *I abhor my ſelf, and repent in duſt and aſhes*, which is a deſcription of deepeſt humiliation. Now becauſe *Job* was not come to that, but had only ſaid, *I am vile* (though there was matter of great humiliation in that) the Lord queſtions with him again in a whirlwind. This ſhould be of great conſideration to us in any day of affliction.

For if God hath not his purpoſe in bringing the firſt affliction, we ſhall be ſpoken to in a whirlwind a ſecond time. We are apt to wonder and think it ſtrange, that God ſhould ſpeak terribly to us ſo often, that he ſhould renew our afflictions, and make us new croſſes. We think, if we do but make a light confeſſion of our ſins, and ſay, *we are vile*; preſently the ſtorm ſhould ceaſe, and the affliction be removed. Let us not deceive our ſelves, *Job* had ſaid he was vile, yet God continued the ſtorm, becauſe he was not yet low enough. 'Tis not enough for us that we are *truly humbled*. As there muſt be *truth* in our humiliation, ſo there muſt be *depth* in it; for queſtionleſs, when *Job* ſaid before, *I am vile*, he did not diſſemble with God, he was hearty in it, and ſpake his heart; what he ſpake was from his very ſoul, and in ſincerity, he did not complement with God, he did not *flatter God with his mouth, nor lye unto him with his tongue*, as the *Iſraelites* did (*Pſal.* 78. 36.) *his heart was right with God*, as theirs was not (*ver.* 37.) yet becauſe his ſpirit was not come down as it ſhould, therefore he muſt be awakened and humbled more with another whirlwind, he muſt be further ſchool'd, that he might give further glory to God in his own abaſement.

> And hence we may infer; *If the Lord ſpake thus to* Job, *and may ſpeak thus terribly to any good man, once and again? Then with what terrour, in how dreadful a whirlwind, will God at laſt ſpeak to all the wicked of the world?*

If he ſpake out of a whirlwind to a *Job*, a gracious godly man, what will that whirlwind be out of which he will ſpeak to a *Pharaoh*, to prophane and hard-hearted ſinners! As our Lord Jeſus Chriſt ſaid of himſelf in the Goſpel, *If it be thus done to a green tree, what ſhall be done to the dry?* If God hath whirlwinds for his *Jobs*, for his own people, who are as green flouriſhing trees in grace and holineſs; what will he do with the dry ſticks of the world? And I may argue it as the Apoſtle doth (1 *Pet.* 4. 13.) *If judgment begin at the Houſe of God, what ſhall the end be of them that obey not the Goſpel?* what ſhall *their* end be? no man is able to ſay, no nor to conceive how ſad it will be. Judgment begins at the *Houſe of God*; God will not ſpare his own Houſe, nor his own Houſhold, he will not ſpare his Servants and Children when they ſin; he is no cockering Father, he will correct his own Children; he will not only ſweep his houſe, but he will *ſhake* his houſe; and he ſhakes it, becauſe it is no better ſwept, nor kept more cleanly. And if for theſe, and ſuch like reaſons, we at any time ſee Judgment beginning at the Houſe of God, we may ſay with aſtoniſhment, *What will the end of thoſe be who obey not the Goſpel*! What will become of the wicked and ungodly, of thoſe who openly prophane and blaſpheme his Holy Name! O what appearances ſhall they have of God, and how ſhall they appear before God! We read in the 25th of *Jeremy*, of a Bowl of blood given him to carry about to the *Nations*. A terrible Meſſage he is ſent about; he carries a Cup of Blood about, and bids the Nations drink, they muſt drink it; and ſaith the Lord, *If they ſhall refuſe to take the Cup at thy hand to drink, then ſhalt thou ſay unto them, thus ſaith the Lord of Hoſts, ye ſhall certainly drink*: Why? *For loe, I begin to bring evil upon the City which is called by* My Name; *and ſhall ye be utterly unpuniſhed?* As if the Lord had ſaid, I have brought evil upon *Jeruſalem*, upon my own people, and they have drunk very deep of that bitter Cup; and do you, O ye Uncircumciſed Nations, think that you ſhall eſcape? We may conclude, the Lord hath a terrible ſtorm to bring upon the wicked and ungodly of the world, when we hear him ſpeaking to his own people in whirlwinds. *Conſider this ye that forget God* (as ſuch are admoniſhed, *Pſal.* 50. 22.) *leſt he tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver. For our God ſhall come, and ſhall not keep ſilence; a fire ſhall devour before him, and it ſhall be very tempeſtuous round about him*, as 'tis ſaid at the third verſe of that *Pſalm*. And *Then*, as 'tis threatned (*Pſal.* 2. 5.) *ſhall he ſpeak to them in his wrath, and vex them in his ſore diſpleaſure.* That ſpeaking will indeed be ſpeaking out of a whirlwind, which ſhall hurry them away into everlaſting darkneſs.

Thus far of the manner of Gods ſpeaking to *Job* the ſecond time; it was ſtill out of the whirlwind. Now followeth the matter ſpoken, or what he ſpake to him.

> Verſ. 7. **Gird up thy loyns now like a man: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.**

I ſhall add but little about this verſe, becauſe we have had it almoſt word for word (*Chap.* 38. 3.) where the Lord thus beſpake *Job*, *Gird up now thy loyns like a man, for I will demand of thee, and anſwer thou me.*

Theſe words this ſecond time ſpoken or repeated by God to *Job*, fall under various apprehenſions, theſe four eſpecially.

Firſt, Some look upon them meerly as a Challenge ſent of God; *Gird up now thy ſelf like a man*; come ſtand to thy work, or rather ſtand to thy word, do thy beſt.

Secondly, Others expound them as an irony or divine ſcorn, put upon *Job* to humble him. Come, *Gird up thy loyns like a man*; don't flinch for it, ſtand to it, thou wilt ſurely make good the day with me.

Thirdly, Many (in a milder ſenſe) look upon theſe words meerly as *Counſel* given to *Job*; as if the Lord had ſaid, *I mean to deal further with thee; therefore come now, prepare and addreſs thy ſelf to the buſineſs; I give thee leave to make the beſt thou canſt of thy cauſe.*

Eſto bono animo, &c.

Fourthly, We may take theſe words, as ſpoken to *Job* for his *comfort* and incouragement. The Lord ſeeing him as it were ſinking, and refuſing to ſpeak, ſaith to him, be not troubled, be of good chear man, *Gird up thy loyns like a man.* As the words are taken for a *Challenge*, and under the notion of a *ſcorn* put upon *Job*, I ſhall not ſtay upon them.

This phraſe (*Gird up thy loyns*) was opened at the 38th *Chap.* 'tis a metaphor taken from Travellers, or thoſe that go about any buſineſs; who wearing long garments, uſed to gird them up, that they might be more expeditious, whether for labour or for travel.

Thus the words are matter of *Counſel* and incouragement given to *Job*, and under that notion I ſhall note two things from them.

Firſt, As they are words of counſel, the Lord having further buſineſs with *Job*, or more to do with him, adviſeth him to gird up his loyns like a man.

Hence obſerve; *When we have to do with God, we ſhould put out our ſelves to the uttermoſt.*

To *gird up our loyns like a man*, imports our beſt preparation; and ſuch preparation we need for every holy duty. When we are to pray, we had need gird up our loyns like men, for then we are to wreſtle or ſtrive with God, we muſt work it out with God in the duty of prayer; and if our garments hang looſe, that is, our affections be upon the Earth, and our hearts in the corners of the world, how can we prevail with God in prayer? we muſt gird up our loyns like men, when we declare our deſires and requeſts to God in prayer, and expect that God ſhould anſwer us. The holy Prophet complained of the *Jews* failing in this (*Iſa.* 64. 7.) *There is none that calleth upon thy Name, that ſtirreth up himſelf to take hold of thee.* Doubtleſs many called upon God in thoſe days, but they did not ſtir up themſelves to take hold of God by Faith, and ſo their prayers went for no prayers. And when we go to *hear the word* (wherein God deals with us) we had need gird up the loyns of our minds, elſe we cannot mind the word while we hear it, nor remember, much leſs practiſe the word which we have heard. The Scripture often calls us to *preparation* for every duty: What can diſcompoſed perſons, looſe-ſpirited perſons, looſe-loyn'd perſons do *with* God, or *for God?* When we have any thing to do *with* God, any thing to do *for* God, we ſhould do our beſt, and be at our beſt, we ſhould play the men. Mr. *Broughton* expreſſeth it well, though not clear to the words in the Original, *Let me ſee thy skill*, or how skilfully thou canſt handle the matter with me. The Lord would have us ſhew our skill when we have any thing to do with him, or to do for him; we ſhould then *play the men, and not the children*, much leſs ſhould we play the *fools*, be ſlothful, ſluggiſh, and careleſs.

Eſpecially we ſhould do this with reſpect to the appearing of Jeſus Chriſt in the great day of our account: Chriſt himſelf gives the rule, *Stand with your loyns girt, and your lamps burning, as thoſe ſervants that wait for their Lords coming.* When Chriſt our Lord comes, all muſt come before him, but none ſhall be able to ſtand before him, but they who ſtand with loyns girt; that is, who are ready, and in that readineſs wait for his coming.

Secondly, Taking theſe words as words of incouragement; *Gird up thy loyns like a man*; Poor heart, do not faint.

Note; *When God intends and purpoſeth to humble his people moſt, he would not have them deſpair in the leaſt.*

When God lays them in the duſt, he would not have them ſink in deſpair, but be of good cheer. God loves to ſee his people humbled, but he doth not love to ſee them dejected. As God would have us ſenſible, ſo comfortable. *Comfort ye, comfort ye my people*, ſaid the Lord (*Iſa.* 40. 1.) when he ſaw they were ready to ſink, he commanded comfort to be ſpoken to them. He gives Cordials and Reſtoratives, when he is ſpeaking out of a *whirlwind*; and therefore he ſaid to *Job*, *Gird up thy loyns like a man.*

But however the Lord is either counſelling or comforting *Job* in theſe words, he checks and reproves him in the next.

Verſ. 8. **Wilt thou alſo diſannul my judgment? wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayſt be righteous?**

Theſe are words of reproof, and a very great reproof they are. Here the Lord begins to chide, and expoſtulate with *Job*.

Wilt thou.] 'Tis a quick kind of ſpeech; ſuch Queſtions have much ſpirit and life in them. How now *Job*, *Wilt thou diſannul my judgment?*

But what is meant by *diſannulling*, what by the *Judgment*, that God ſaith *Job* was about to *diſannul*?

To *diſannul*, is to make void, to fruſtrate, to break a thing, ſo as it ſhall not ſtand in any ſtead, or be of any force; it is applied to the breaking of an Oath, to the breaking of a Covenant, and to the diſappointment of counſels and purpoſes. Read *Num.* 30. 14, 15. 1 *Kings* 15. 19. *Jer.* 33. 20. *Pſal.* 33. 10, 11. *Iſa.* 8. 10. Thus ſaith the Lord, *Wilt thou diſannul*, or make void *my Judgment?*

Irritum facere eſt ſimplex verbum contrarium verbo confirmandi, aut ratum firmumque aliquid faciendi.

The Septuagint render it as a Negative Command, *Do not thou repel or reſiſt my Judgment.* An Ancient Greek Tranſlator renders it as we, by way of Queſtion, *What, wilt thou repel or oppoſe my Judgment?* The word is applied to great *ſinnings* (Ezra 9. 13.) *And after all this that is come upon us*, &c. *ſeeing our God hath given us ſuch deliverance as this, ſhould we again break thy Commandments*, &c. But did *Ezra* think, that after that they ſhould no more break the Commandments? Taking a breach of the Commandments barely for *ſinning*, he could not expreſs it ſo; therefore by *breaking the Commandments*, he means *diſannulling* the Commandments: What is that? 'Tis ſo to break the Commandments, as if we would reſcind and repeal them. There is ſuch a kind of ſinning, as if men would not only ſin againſt the Law, but ſin the Law away, or out of doors, as if men would ſin the Bible out of the world: that's the meaning of the word there, *If we ſhall again break thy Commandments*; for it followeth, *and joyn in affinity with the people of theſe abominations.* 'Tis not breaking the Commandments by any ſin, but to ſin ſo as if we would make them all void, and reverſe the Statutes of Heaven. Thus the word is uſed by *David* (*Pſal.* 119. 126.) which doth much clear the ſenſe of this Text, *Lord, it is time for thee to work*; Why? *for they have made void thy Law.* 'Tis the ſame word here in *Job*, They have *diſannulled* thy Law. 'Tis high time for God to awake, to beſtir himſelf, and look to men, when they come to this height of ſinning, to make void and diſannul his Law, by ſetting up their own luſts. Some would even enact their own luſts, and throw down the Law of God. That's the ſignificancy of the word here uſed; ſaith God to *Job*, *Wilt thou diſannul my Judgment?* Wilt thou make it void, or break the courſe of it? Wilt thou change it, and put or introduce ſomewhat of thine own in the room and place of it, as ſome gloſs the words? *Wilt thou diſannul*

Μὴ ἀποποιῦ μȣ̃ τὸ κρίμα. *Ne repellas judicium meum.* Sept.
Ἢ ἀποποιῇ μȣ̃ τὸ κρίμα. *Numquid repelles judicium meum?* Symmach.

An etiam mutabis judicium meum? Targ.

My Judgment?] *Judgment*, I conceive, in this place is taken for that courſe of adminiſtration which God uſes in the world, whether with particular perſons, or with Nations. As if the Lord had ſaid, *Thinkeſt thou thy ſelf not only able to comprehend the reaſon of all my adminiſtrations towards thy ſelf or others, but wilt thou alſo preſume to ſubject them to thy will and wiſdom; as if thou couldſt adminiſter them with more equality and righteouſneſs, or to better purpoſe than I have done?* The courſe or way of Gods diſpenſation, is Gods Judgment; and 'tis called his *Judgment*:

Firſt, Becauſe it proceeds upon the higheſt reaſon, upon the cleareſt acting of judgment and underſtanding; and in that ſenſe 'tis always Judgment. For *God is a God of Judgment* (Iſa. 30. 18.) That is, of the higheſt reaſon and underſtanding in all matters that he doth.

Secondly, 'Tis called *Judgment*, becauſe oftentimes theſe adminiſtrations are as a ſentence pronounced and given out by God, whether againſt particular perſons or Kingdoms, and ſo have Judgment in them, that is, wrath and *puniſhment*. *Judgment* is often put for puniſhment. In this ſenſe we are to underſtand it here. *Wilt thou diſannul my Judgment*? particularly with thy ſelf. I have taken this courſe with thee, I have brought all theſe afflictions upon thee, I have broken thy Eſtate, I have broken thy body, I have broken thy ſpirit; this is the courſe I have taken with thee: wilt thou diſannul this courſe that I have taken with thee? ſurely thou ſhouldeſt not, I know thou canſt not. So then, the Lord expoſtulates thus with *Job*, as if he would have croſſed all his proceedings and dealings with him, or would have reſcinded as it were the Sentence and Decree of God concerning him. Wouldeſt thou have me to change either the matter, manner, or meaſure of thy Chaſtnings? No, my will, not thine, ſhall be the rule of them. *Wilt thou diſannul my Judgment*? Now from this ſenſe of the words,

> Note, Firſt; *It is impoſſible to reverſe, reſcind, or diſannul the Judgment of God.*

The Lord ſpeaks to *Job* as attempting a thing beyond himſelf, or beyond his power. What, ſaith the Lord, wilt thou diſannul my Judgment? ſurely thou wilt not venture at that, thou wilt not offer that; 'tis more than thou or any man can do. The Lords Judgment, or the way which he will take with any man, no man can ſuperſede or ſtop; no man can hinder him in it. What the Lord determines, what he gives forth, it ſhall ſtand. *Balaam* could ſay (*Numb.* 23. 20.) *The Lord hath bleſſed, and I cannot reverſe it.* The Judgment of the Lord at that time towards *Iſrael*, was a Judgment or Sentence of Favour and Mercy; therefore ſaith *Balaam*, *The Lord hath bleſſed, and I cannot reverſe it.* And if the Lord gives out a Sentence of affliction, or commands a croſs upon any man, who ſhall reverſe it (*Pſal.*33.10.) *The Counſel of the Lord ſhall ſtand, and the thoughts of his heart to all Generations.* They ſhall ſtand; who then ſhall make them fall? The ſentences or judgments of men are often diſannulled by men, and they may always be diſannulled by God (*Lam.*3.38.) *Who is he that ſaith, and it cometh to paſs, when the Lord hath not commanded.* The Lord can diſannul all the judgments of men, of the wiſeſt men in the world; but none can diſannul the Lords Judgments, and make them void. There are but two ways by which the Judgment, that is, the Sentence, or the reſolution and purpoſe of a man is diſannulled.

Firſt, By the power of the party againſt whom the Judgment is given. Sometimes there is a Sentence given againſt a man, which comes to nought, 'tis made void; why? there's no power can execute it upon him: *David* ſpake much in that language, *Ye Sons of* Zerviah *are too hard for me.*

Secondly, Sometimes the Judgments of men are diſannulled by a Superiour Authority; one Court recals or takes off the Judgment of another: But neither of theſe ways can the Judgment of God be diſannulled. If God give out a Sentence againſt a perſon, his Power, how powerful ſoever he is, ſhall never hinder the execution of it; though he be (as it's ſpoken in *Amos*) as high as the Cedar, and as ſtrong as the Oak, yet he ſhall not hinder the Judgment of God. And as there is no man hath power of arm, or of arms, to hinder the Judgment of God; ſo there is no Authority Superiour to, or above Gods. There's no Court above the Court of Heaven, to which Appeal may be made, to get Gods Sentence diſannulled, or his Judgment reverſed; therefore the Judgment of God cannot be diſannulled.

And ſeeing the Judgments of God, as taken for the Sentence which he hath declared againſt ſinners, ſuch as that (*Rom.* 2. 9.) *Tribulation and anguiſh upon every ſoul that doth evil*, &c. cannot be diſannulled; what cauſe have we to bleſs God for Chriſt, who hath endured that Judgment in his own perſon, which could not be diſannulled nor made void; and hath alſo (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Col.* 2. 14.) *blotted out the hand-writing of Ordinances that was againſt us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his Croſs.* Yet

> Obſerve, Secondly; *The Judgments of God are by him accounted as diſannulled, or made void by us, when we do not ſubmit to them, nor humble our ſelves as we ought under them.*

This was *Jobs* caſe. Why doth God ask him whether he would diſannul his Judgment? ſurely, becauſe he had made many complaints (as hath been ſhewed in this Book) about the dealings of God with him: The Lord interpreted this as a diſannulling of his Judgment. If we are not ſatisfied with the Judgment of God, though it be a Judgment of anger and diſpleaſure towards us, we, as much as in us lies, diſannul the Judgment of God. Let us often remember this, The way of Gods proceeding with us, his way of adminiſtration towards us, is his Judgment; now if it be a way of affliction, if he ſpeak terribly to us, let us take heed of complaining, leſt we be found diſannulling his Judgment. We may come under the compaſs of this Charge before we are aware. As for inſtance;

If we ſhall ſay, we could bear any Judgment but this, any affliction but this; this is to diſannul the Judgment of God. Let us ſay, whatever the affliction is, it is beſt for us, and God hath moſt righteouſly brought it upon us.

Again; If we ſhall ſay, we could be patient even under this Judgment of God for the *matter* of it; but when we conſider the degree of it, that it goes ſo far, and wounds ſo deep, who can bear it? Thus *Job* complained (*Chap.*6.2.) *Oh that my grief were throughly weighed, and my calamity laid in the balances together; for now it would be heavier than the ſand of the Sea: therefore my words are ſwallowed up.* It was not ſo much the matter of his affliction, as the degree, or weight, or extremity of it, which put him to thoſe grievous complaints. Now if we are not patient and quiet under that very *degree* of the Judgment which God is pleaſed to heighten it unto, this is a diſannulling of his Judgment; therefore let us take heed of complainings upon that account.

Yet further, Others will ſay, If this Croſs had been for a ſhort time, we could have born it; but it hath been long upon us already, and we know not how long it may continue, we can ſee no end of it. Take heed of theſe complainings; for this alſo is to diſannul the Judgment of God, if we find fault with the length of the Croſs. Though we may cry with the ſouls under the Altar, *How long, Lord, how long*, yet we muſt not ſay it is too long.

Laſtly, There is this alſo at which many are much troubled, and ſo even diſannul the Judgment of God; for, ſay they, if it were but in ſome one thing that we were afflicted, we could bear it; but we are afflicted in body, and afflicted in mind, and afflicted in our children, and afflicted in our eſtate, we are afflicted in our credit, and in all our comforts; if it had been in ſome one thing, we could have ſat down quietly under it; but now it's affliction all over. Take heed, for this alſo is to diſannul the Judgment of God. And if any of theſe be to diſannul the Judgment of God, how ſoon may we do it? And if they are not, as to either, free from this charge, who ſhew ſome impatience and trouble of ſpirit under the ſeverer dealings of God, what ſhall we ſay of thoſe who openly murmure, and even rage againſt them?

Thirdly, *Wilt thou diſannul my Judgment*?

> Note; *God takes it as a high affront, and a diſhonour, when his Judgment is touched, or when his Judgment is not quietly ſubmitted to.*

Wilt thou, ſaith he, What! *diſannul my Judgment*! The Apoſtle ſaith, *Let God be true, and every man a lyar.* Let the Judgment of God ſtand, though we fall.

Fourthly, Conſider what a huge boldneſs it is in a Creature, to do or ſay any thing which may be interpreted a diſannulling of the Judgment of God.

Fifthly, Conſider how ſinful a thing it is for any to go about to croſs the adminiſtration of God. Somewhat we may do, in all the Judgments or ſad Diſpenſations of God; we may pray about them, and we may in an humble ſubmiſſion expoſtulate with God about them; but we muſt take heed of an unquiet ſpirit under them, or of any riſings of heart againſt them: Pray we may about them earneſtly, inſtantly, and importunately, and the more the better, yet ſtill quietly ſubmit; and the more quietly we ſubmit to them, the more fit we are to pray to, and wreſtle with him about them, that he in his own good time, and in his own way, would remove them from us. *Wilt thou diſannul my Judgment ?*

Wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayſt be righteous ?

Theſe words may be taken as an Expoſition of the former. As if the Lord had ſaid, *Either I muſt be condemned, that thou mayſt be righteous, or thou muſt be condemned, that I may be righteous; now whether it be meet that I or thou muſt be condemned, do thou judge. While thou inſiſteſt ſo much upon thine own Innocency, thou ſeemeſt to caſt blame upon my Juſtice. Either I have wronged thee by afflicting thee without juſt cauſe, or thou haſt wronged me by intimations that I have done ſo: One of theſe muſt needs be true, ſeeing there is no middle between them. Conſider then which is moſt probable, that I have wronged thee, or thou me. Theſe are immediate contraries; ſo that the one being granted, the other muſt be denied. Now wilt thou accuſe me of injuſtice in afflicting thee, that thy cauſe may be eſteemed juſt ?*

But did *Job* ever accuſe or condemn the Lord?

I anſwer, Not directly (as hath been ſhewed heretofore) It never came into *Jobs* heart to accuſe God of unrighteouſneſs: but becauſe by ſome miſunderſtood ſpeeches of his, they about him judged he had; therefore the Lord put this queſtion home to him, that he might exonerate and clear himſelf. The only matters in which he might ſeem to condemn God as unrighteous, was his ſpeaking ſo much of his afflicting the righteous, and proſpering the unrighteous; or his inſiſting ſo much upon the defence of his own righteouſneſs before men, ſeemed to derogate from, or intrench upon the righteouſneſs of God. So then *Job* did not intentionally caſt any aſperſion or blot upon the Juſtice of God; he only intended, in what he ſaid, to ſhew that the affliction that was upon him, was not for his ſin, but for his tryal, when he ſpake ſo much of his own righteouſneſs; and yet becauſe he was a little too laviſh in ſpeech, and too paſſionate, the Lord here puts this queſtion to him, *Wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayſt be righteous ?* 'Tis I that juſtifie thee, and wilt thou condemn me? The Lord is righteous, and all men are unrighteous; and ſhall any man do that which caſts a note of unrighteouſneſs upon God? *Wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayſt be righteous ?*

Hence note, Firſt; *He that is much in the juſtifying of himſelf, when he is under the Judgment or afflicting hand of God, doth upon the matter condemn God.*

Job was much in juſtifying himſelf, though not with an intention to condemn God, yet the very action ſpake this in the opinion of others, that he thought himſelf not righteouſly dealt with, or at leaſt rigorouſly dealt with. He that maintains his own right too much in affliction, chargeth God with wrong, though he never meant it: And therefore the Apoſtle ſaith, *Let God be true, and every man a lyar.* A godly man in a good frame, though he cannot charge himſelf with any crime, nor is conſcious of any way of wickedneſs, that he hath lived in, yet approves and juſtifies the Lord in all his dealings with him; and therefore we muſt take heed (it is a tender point) how we juſtifie our ſelves, eſpecially under the afflicting hand of God. If we juſtifie our ſelves, there is ſomewhat of condemnation caſt upon God; therefore ſtill you ſhall find that the holieſt ſervants of God in their Confeſſions charge all upon themſelves. *Righteouſneſs belongs to God, but to us ſhame and confuſion of face.* So ſpake *Ezra*, and ſo ſpake *Daniel*. It is very dangerous to, and we quickly may reflect upon the Juſtice of God, and derogate ſomewhat from him, by our juſtifying of our ſelves.

Deum injuſtitiæ accuſare videbatur qui juſtos affligeret. Merc.

Obſerve, Secondly; *'Tis our duty in all things whatſoever God doth, to juſtifie him.*

As it is the higheſt grace which God manifeſts to the Creature, to juſtifie man. *It's God that juſtifies, who ſhall condemn?* So it is one of the moſt excellent duties of man, to juſtifie God. It is a high grace of God to man, to juſtifie man; but it is only the duty of man to juſtifie God in all things. Let him do what he will with perſons or Nations, let him break them all to pieces, let him lay all waſt and deſolate; in all this we are to juſtifie God. We ſhould rather be willing to appear ſinful, and that we are puniſhed for our ſins and evil deeds, than ſo much as in appearance to queſtion or make the leaſt doubt of the Juſtice of God, or give others the leaſt ſhadow of an occaſion to queſtion or doubt it.

In dubio ſemper adverſum nos pro duo ſentiendum eſt. Merc.

That of the Schoolmen bears much weight in this caſe, *If* (ſaith he) *two are equal, and a fault is to be laid upon one of them, it is not reproveable if one of them purge himſelf of the fault charged, although he be blameable in the opinion of others; becauſe man naturally loveth himſelf more than another. But where there is ſo great a diſtance as between God and man, man ſhould rather take the blame to himſelf, though unjuſtly laid on him, than caſt it upon God; which he cannot do but unjuſtly. And therefore God in arguing with* Job, *propoſeth the ſuperlative excellency of himſelf above man.*

Aquinas.

Obſerve, Thirdly; *We ſhould be much in judging our ſelves.*

Wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayſt be righteous ? Thou ſhouldeſt condemn thy ſelf, and judge thy ſelf; thy judgment is upon a wrong object. Self-judgment is good, but judging of God, oh how ſinful is that (1 *Cor.* 11. 31.) *If we would judge our ſelves, we ſhould not be judged of the Lord.* Our buſineſs is to judge our ſelves, and for not judging of our ſelves, it is, that we meet with ſo many judgments from the hand of God. Therefore God judgeth us, becauſe we do not judge our ſelves. And therefore let every mouth be ſtopt; it ſhall be ſo at laſt as the Apoſtle concludes (*Rom.* 3. 18.) *Every mouth ſhall be ſtopt, and all the world ſhall become guilty before God.* We are ſelf-guilty, and therefore ſhould be ſelf-condemned. 'Tis a dreadful thing in one ſenſe to be ſelf-condemned, as it is ſpoken of the Heretick (*Tit.* 3. 11.) *He is condemned of himſelf*: He is condemned of himſelf, while he doth juſtifie himſelf. 'Tis the worſt of condemnations, to be condemned of our ſelves, by juſtifying of our ſelves; but it is good to condemn our ſelves, in judging or in humbling our ſelves. *David* was much in ſelf-cenſuring and ſelf-judging, when he found himſelf envying the proſperity of the wicked, and ſaid, he had *cleanſed his heart in vain*, he ſoon after cenſures himſelf for both (*Pſal.* 77. 22.) *So fooliſh was I and ignorant, even as a beaſt before thee.* As if he had ſaid, what a fooliſh Creature am I thus to condemn God in his proceedings, and to talk of my own Innocency? Let us not boaſt of, but (as Mr. *Calvin* expreſſeth it upon the Text) *let us win our ſpurs by condemning our ſelves:* For that is the only way to honour and exalt God. If we would get honour to our ſelves, it muſt not be by conteſting with God, but by humbling our ſelves before him; there's no obtaining with God, by contending with him, much leſs by condemning him.

VERS. 9.

Haſt thou an arm like God? or canſt thou thunder with a voice like him?

THe Lord at the ſixth verſe of this *Chapter*, entered upon a vehement expoſtulation with *Job*, to humble him, and bring down his ſpirit; and that *Job* might be thorowly humbled, here the Lord in this ninth verſe ſheweth what a diſparity there was between himſelf and *Job*, as before in his righteouſneſs, *Wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayſt be righteous?* art thou more righteous than I? So here in his power;

Verſ. 9. **Haſt thou an arm like God? canſt thou thunder with a voice like him?**

As if the Lord had ſaid, *Let me ſee what thou canſt do, or whether thou canſt do like God, ſeeing thou carrieſt thy ſelf ſo unlike a man?* That's the ſcope and tendency of this ninth verſe, as of thoſe that went immediately before.

The whole verſe conſiſts of two convincing queſtions. The firſt in thoſe words; *Haſt thou an arm like God?* The ſecond in theſe, *Canſt thou thunder with a voice like him?*

Haſt thou an arm like God?] The arm, properly taken, is a noble and an eminent limb, or member of mans body.

Nor hath any Creature, nor is any Creature ſo much as ſaid to have an arm but man. And ſome may ſay, ſeeing the arm is a bodily member, how can God, who hath no body, be ſaid to have an arm? I anſwer; 'tis true, God is a Spirit, without diſtinction of parts; yet frequently in Scripture, as humane paſſions, ſo bodily parts are aſcribed to God improperly, or by a figure. And becauſe the arm is a ſtrong and noble member of mans body, that member by which man puts forth the greatneſs of his ſtrength, that member by which he doth and atchieves great things; therefore the arm in Scripture ſignifies power, and is the Embleme of might and ſtrength. In this Language the Lord threatned old *Eli* the High-Prieſt (1 *Sam.* 2. 31.) *Behold the days come that I will cut off thine arm, and the arm of thy fathers houſe,&c.* that is, I will take away thy power, and the power of thy family. Thus (*Zech.*11.17.) *Woe to the Idol Shepherd that leaveth the Flock, the ſword ſhall be upon his arm*; that is, his power ſhall be broken, and he made uſeleſs, as that man is whoſe arm is wounded. And as the arm notes Miniſterial Power, ſo Magiſtratical Power, whether abuſed or rightly uſed (*Job* 35.9.) *They cry out by reaſon of the arm of the Mighty*; and (*Chap.* 38.15.) *The high arm ſhall be broken.*

Now as the arm is put for the power of man, ſo for the power of God (*Pſal.* 98. 1.) *O ſing unto the Lord a new ſong, for he hath done marvellous things; his right hand and his holy arm hath gotten him the victory.* Read alſo (*Iſa.* 59. 16. and *Iſa.* 63. 12.) and here in the Text, *Haſt thou an arm like God?* Is thy arm like Gods arm? that is, is thy power like Gods power?

Hence note; Firſt, *God hath a mighty power?* He hath an arm.

There are three Scripture expreſſions, which in a gradation hold forth the power of God.

Firſt, The Finger of God (*Exod.*18.9.) When the Magicians could not imitate *Moſes* in the Plague of Lice, then they ſaid unto *Pharaoh, This is the finger of God*; that is, the power of God is eminent in this Miracle, it exceeds our power, we not only cannot do the like, but nothing like it, as we did before in ſemblance of thoſe former Miracles. Thus Chriſt himſelf being blaſphemed by ſome of the *Jews*, who ſaid, *He caſteth out devils through* Beelzebub *the chief of devils*, anſwered (*Lu.*11.20.) *If I by the Finger of God caſt out devils*, &c. that is, if I by the power of God, or by *the holy Spirit* (ſo another Goſpel hath it (*Mat.* 12. 28.) *If I by the Spirit of God*) *caſt out devils*, &c.

Secondly, The power of God is expreſſed by the *hand*, which containeth all the fingers (*Iſa.* 59. 1.) *Behold, the Lords hand is not ſhortened that it cannot ſave*, that is, his power is not abated; he hath a long hand ſtill, his power to ſave is as great as ever it was. The ſame Prophet ſaith (*Chap.* 9. 17.) *The hand of the Lord is ſtretched out ſtill*, that is, his power is ſtill at work to puniſh impenitent ſinners. How much and how long ſoever God hath puniſhed ſinners, he can puniſh them longer and more; if they continue longer in ſin, or ſin more and more.

Thirdly, We have here in this Text, and in many others, the *arm of God* (that's more than his hand) ſignifying the fulneſs of his power. Not that there are any real gradations in the power of God; but there are gradations in the exerting and putting forth of his power. Sometimes God putteth forth his power (as it were) by a finger only, as *Rehoboam* ſaid (1 *Kings* 12. 10.) *My little finger ſhall be thicker than my fathers loyns*; that is, the leaſt that I will do in my government ſhall be more afflictive and burdenſome to you (if you call it a burden) than the moſt that my Father *Solomon* did in his. At another time God putteth forth his power by his hand, you may ſee his whole hand, that is, fuller and clearer evidences of his power, in what he doth or hath done, that is, in his works of Providence, whether in breaking down, or building up. And laſtly, he ſheweth *his arm*, his ſtretched-out arm, that is, the fulneſs of his power. God hath power, great power, mighty power, he hath an arm, an out-ſtretched arm; and this arm of God is ſpoken of in Scripture for a fourfold uſe.

Firſt, For the ſafe guarding of his people; 'tis a protecting arm. The arm of God with us ſignifieth our ſafety. The Prophet ſpeaking of the dealings of God with his ancient people, ſaith (*Iſa.* 63. 12.) *He led them by the right hand of* Moſes *with his glorious arm*, that is, his protecting arm, by which he ſaved that people from the wrath of *Pharaoh* in their firſt advance out of *Egypt*, and from the wrath of all their enemies, in all their incampings and marches to *Canaan*, was very glorious. This glorious arm of his, is a defence upon all his glory (*Iſa.* 4. 5.) that is, upon his whole Church, for there his truth, holineſs, and holy worſhip, which are his glory, are held up, and held out. The Church of God is ſo much for the glory of God, that 'tis called his glory.

Secondly, As the Lord hath a protecting arm from evil, ſo an arm delivering and pulling out of evil. The deliverance which God wrought for the *Iſraelites* in bringing them out of *Egypt* (*Exod.* 6. 16. *Deut.* 5. 15. and *Deut.* 7. 19.) is ſaid to be done by *an out-ſtretched arm*, that is, by his power viſibly put forth, and even to the utmoſt, in the wonderful effects of it. All the while God did not deliver *Iſrael* out of their bondage, he might be ſaid to draw in or hide his arm; but when he delivered them, then he was ſaid to ſtretch it out.

Thirdly, As the arm of God is for the protection and delivering of his people, ſo for the deſtroying of his and their Enemies. God hath a deſtroying arm, and of that *Moſes* ſpake (*Deut.*33.27.) *The Eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlaſting arms; and he ſhall thruſt out the Enemy from before thee* (that's ſometimes the work of the Everlaſting arms of God) *and ſhall ſay, deſtroy them.*

Fourthly, The Lord hath an aſſiſting, helping, ſtrengthning arm to carry us thorough any good work or duty, which he calleth us unto (*Iſa.*53.1.) *Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?* that is, who hath received power to believe, and do according to what the Lord hath revealed? The arm of God works powerfully, not only upon the outward man, but upon the heart of man, for the converting and ſaving of ſouls (*Pſal.* 110. 3.) *In the day of thy power thy people ſhall be willing.* The power of God put forth upon the inner man, for full conviction and ſound converſion is greater than any power that worketh upon, for, or againſt the body of man. *God hath a mighty arm* for all theſe purpoſes, and for many more, even for as many as he is pleaſed to make uſe of it, or imploy it in.

And if any ask, *How mighty is his arm?*

I anſwer, No man knoweth how mighty it is; only this we know, *It is Almighty.* What the might of Almightineſs is, who can underſtand! *Moſes* ſpake admiringly more than knowingly to this point (*Pſal.* 90. 11.) *Who knoweth the power of thine anger?* The anger of God is beyond comprehenſion, and ſo is his love; *Who knoweth the power of his love?* We are exhorted (*Eph.* 3. 19.) *To know the love of God, which paſſeth knowledge.* What the *heighth, depth, length and bredth of divine love are, and anger*, no man knoweth; nor doth any man know the dimenſions of Divine Power. The Apoſtle ſpeaking of God as a Spirit, ſaith (1 *Tim.* 6. 16.) *Whom no man hath ſeen, nor can ſee.* So we may ſay of God as powerful; no man knoweth, nor can know how powerful he is. He muſt be as powerful as God, who knoweth how powerful God is.

Only this we may ſay, Firſt, his power is ſo great, that he can do all things, and he can do all things with eaſe, *There is nothing hard to God.* Hard things are eaſie to God. Some things are hard, and others eaſie to men; but to God all things are alike. Not only is nothing too hard for the Lord, as he ſaid to *Abraham* (*Gen.* 18. 14.) but the truth is, nothing is hard to him.

Secondly, His power is ſo great, that he can do whatſoever he willeth, or hath a mind to do (*Job* 23. 13.) *He is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his ſoul deſireth, even that he doth.* And as the Lord can and will do whatever he hath a will to do, ſo to clear the point a little further, we may boldly ſay, he hath a will to do all things of theſe three ſorts:

Firſt, He hath a will to do whatſoever he hath promiſed, purpoſed, or determined to do. Now, if we duly weigh what great things theſe are in the Promiſes and Purpoſes, in the Counſels and Decrees of God to do in the world, we may ſoon conclude with truth and ſobriety, that great things will be done in their proper times and ſeaſons.

Secondly, The Lord doth aſſure us, he hath a will to do whatſoever we ask of him in faith, and according to his will. If we have a rule for our asking, or if we ask by rule, we have a Gods Word for it, that it ſhall be done and given to us according to our askings (1 *John* 5. 14.) *And this is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us.* What is that? is it only that he perceives or knows what we ask? No, his hearing is the granting and giving what we ask. God is ingaged by his gracious promiſe, that his arm ſhall do all that we pray for right for the matter, and aright for the manner, in faith and in ſincerity.

Thirdly, It is the will of God to do whatſoever is for the real good of his people, though (poſſibly) they ask it not. It is the will of God, not only to do what we ask, but many times, more than we ask. As *God is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think* (*Eph.* 3. 20.) ſo he actually doth for us much more than we ask or think. The Lord expects we ſhould pray for every good thing which he hath promiſed; and therefore he had no ſooner made many large and moſt gracious promiſes of doing great things for the Church, with this aſſurance (*Ezek.* 36. 36.) *I the Lord have ſpoken it, and I will do it.* But preſently he adds (*verſ.* 37.) *Thus ſaith the Lord God, I will yet for this be enquired of by the houſe of* Iſrael, *to do it for them.* We ſhould extend our prayers and our ſeekings to the utmoſt line of the Word, or our prayers ſhould be commenſurate both to Propheſies and Promiſes: Prayer helps them all to the birth, and they ſeldom bring forth alone. And indeed prayer is nothing elſe, in the matter of it, but a turning or putting the Promiſes into Petitions, 'tis a ſuing out the good of the Promiſe: Yet there are ſome good things in the Promiſes which we cannot reach, or at leaſt are not mindful of. There is a great latitude in the Promiſes; *The Commandments of God are exceeding broad* (*Pſal.* 119. 96.) Who can find out all the duty of them! And doubtleſs the Promiſes are exceeding broad; who can find out all the mercy in them! The Apoſtle *Peter* (2 *Epiſt.* 1. 4.) calls them *exceeding great and precious Promiſes*; they are exceeding good, and they are exceeding great, they are as great as they are good; and who hath a heart great and good enough to ſee and ſue out all the good and great things in them? Now, I ſay, though (poſſibly) we ask not all for the good of the Promiſe (at leaſt not expreſly) yet it is the will of God to do all that for us, and to beſtow all that good upon us which he hath promiſed. He hath preventing Grace; his firſt Grace he always giveth unmasked. When he begins to manifeſt himſelf to a poor ſoul to bring him out of a ſtate of darkneſs, is ſuch a ſoul begging this of God? no, he is running from, and rebelling againſt God. *I am found of them that ſought me not*, ſaith the Lord (*Iſa.* 65. 1.) Now, as they who are not the Lords, receive grace to become his unasked; ſo they that are the Lords, through grace, receive many mercies unasked. God will not fail in giving all that he hath promiſed, though we fail in asking ſome things promiſed: His arm is powerful enough to do what he willeth; and this is the will of God, to fulfil or make good all his Promiſes. Men often out-promiſe themſelves, but God doth not. *Haſt thou an arm like God?*

Hence take theſe inferences; Firſt, *If the Lord hath ſuch a mighty arm, then let us take heed we do not provoke the Lord to turn his arm againſt us.*

That's the uſe which the Apoſtle makes of this point, and which naturally floweth from it (1 *Cor.* 10. 22.) *Do ye provoke the Lord to anger? are ye ſtronger than he?* The Apoſtles ſenſe hits the language of the Text fully; as if he had ſaid, *Have you an arm like God?* There's no compariſon between yours and his; *He can cruſh you before the Moth* (*Job* 4. 19.) that is, as ſoon as, or before a Moth is cruſhed, which crumbleth to duſt with the leaſt or lighteſt touch of the hand, or little finger.

Secondly, *If the Lord have ſuch an arm, then let us labour to get and ingage the arm of the Lord for our help.*

Men love to be on the ſtronger ſide; and ſome reſolve to be on the ſtronger ſide, though it ſhould be, or not regarding whether or no it be the worſer ſide. Now ſeeing all have a natural deſire to intereſt themſelves where the greateſt ſtrength is, becauſe there probably and rationally the greateſt ſafety and beſt ſhelter is; then, how ſhould we labour to get and aſſure an intereſt in God, which cannot be done but by being on Gods ſide (that is, by keeping cloſe to him in all the duties of holineſs and righteouſneſs) for doubtleſs he is ſtrongeſt; his ſide is not only a good, but the beſt, not only a ſtrong, but the ſtrongeſt ſide. Hath any man an arm like God? Can all men, ſhould they joyn all their arms in one, make an arm like Gods? They cannot. Nor is there any arm ſtrong, but in or by the ſtrength of Gods arm. As old dying *Jacob* ſpake while he was bleſſing his Son *Joſeph* (*Gen.* 49. 24.) *The Archers have ſorely grieved him, and ſhot at him, and hated him; but his Bow abode in ſtrength, and the arms of his hands were made ſtrong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob.* How were his arms made ſtrong! How did his Bow abide in ſtrength! It was by the hands (that is, by the power) of the mighty God of *Jacob*. Nothing made him ſtrong, nor to abide in ſtrength, but the arm of the mighty God. In this arm of God, the Church triumphed of old (*Pſal.* 124. 1, 2, 3.) *If it had not been the Lord, who was on our ſide, now may* Iſrael *ſay, If it had not been the Lord, who was on our ſide, when men roſe up againſt us, then they had ſwallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled againſt us:* Their wrath was kindled into a burning flame, yet we were not burnt, much leſs utterly conſumed, becauſe the ſtrong God was with us; or becauſe, as the Pſalm concludeth, *Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made Heaven and Earth.* What help can we need at any time, which he cannot give us, who made Heaven and Earth without any help or helper? It is an impregnable Tower of comfort, that at what loſs ſoever we are, we may find help, or help is to be had in God.

Thirdly, *If God hath ſuch a mighty arm, then let us truſt him.*

We may truſt to his ſtrength; and when his ſtrength is indeed truſted to, our truſt is withdrawn from all other ſtrengths. We may uſe the arm or ſtrength of Creatures, while we truſt in the arm or ſtrength of God; but while we truſt in the ſtrength of God, we muſt truſt in no ſtrength but his, nor, if we really truſt him, can we. When *Senacherib* King of *Aſſyria* invaded *Judah* with a mighty Hoſt, *Hezekiah* thus incouraged his people (2 *Chron.* 32. 7, 8.) *Be ſtrong and couragious, be not afraid nor diſmayed for the King of* Aſſyria, *nor for all the multitude that is with him, for there be more with us than with him; with him is an arm of fleſh, but with us is the Lord our God to help us, and to fight our battles; and the people reſted themſelves upon the words of* Hezekiah *King of Judah.* They had an arm; what arm? not an arm of fleſh (like *Senacheribs*) but the arm of the Lord for their help, and that carried the day. Created power is too ſlight to be truſted, but the power of the Creator calls for all our truſt. We cannot truſt Creatures too little (as to ſucceſs) nor can we truſt God too much. Hath any man an arm like God?

A fourth Inference may be this; *If the Lord hath ſuch an arm, ſuch power, this ſhould incourage us to the duty of prayer.*

We are eaſily perſwaded to ſeek to him for help, who hath ſtrength to help, eſpecially when we know that he hath an inclinableneſs of will to help us. Hath not the Lord a ſtrong arm? hath he not an inclinable will? Let us then in all our needs pray as the Church did (*Iſa.* 51. 9.) *Awake, awake, put on ſtrength, O arm of the Lord* (the Lord and his arm are the ſame) *awake as in the ancient days, in the generations of old; art thou not it that hath cut* Rahab, *and wounded the Dragon?* The Lord hath a mighty arm, yet his arm or power ſeemeth to be ſometimes (as it were) aſleep; that is, not to act, or not to take notice how it is, or how matters go with the Church. Now, when at any time it is thus, our duty is to awaken the Lord by earneſt prayer; *Awake, put on ſtrength, O arm of the Lord.* It is a mercy when we have an heart to pray, and a God to pray unto, who can quickly *put on ſtrength*; that is, give undeniable Evidences that he hath a ſtrong arm, yea, infinitely the ſtrongeſt arm; which may be

A ſecond obſervation, taken or ariſing from theſe words, as ſpoken comparatively, *Haſt thou an arm like God?*

The arm or power of the Creature, is nothing to the arm or power of God; no Creature hath an arm like Gods.

There is nothing in the world conſidered in a gradual difference, ſo unlike another, as the arm of God, and the arm of man are. Mans arm is ſo ſmall a thing compared with Gods, that it is a very nothing, not ſo much as a Candle to the Sun, nor as a drop to the Ocean, nor as one ſingle duſt to the Globe or Body of the whole Earth. No Rhetorick can ſpeak diminutively enough of mans arm, compared with Gods, nor can any Divinity uttered by men or Angels: yet how apt is man to have too high thoughts of mans arm, and too low of Gods. Were it not that men are apt to have too high thoughts of mans arm, and too low of Gods, this queſtion had never been put to *Job*, *Haſt thou an arm like God?* *Job* had been a man of as big an arm, as moſt in his days. 'Tis ſaid of him, that he was *the greateſt of all the men of the Eaſt* (*Chap.* 1. 3.) And he ſaid of himſelf (*Chap.*29.25.) *That he ſate chief, and dwelt as King in the Army.* Now ſhould we look upon *Jobs* arm, not as (when God ſpake this to him) lean and thin, and extreamly fallen away, if not quite withered, but as it was at beſt, fulleſt, thickeſt, ſtrongeſt, before he fell into that affliction, or after his reſtauration out of it; yet what was *Jobs* arm or power, in his higheſt advancement, to the arm and power of God! might not God then have ſaid to him, as well as when he ſaid it, *Haſt thou an arm like God?* or hath any man at this day? *Surely* (ſaith *David*, *Pſal.* 62. 10.) *men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lye, to be laid in the ballance* (that is, if they are truly weighed, eſpecially if they are weighed with God) *they are altogether lighter than vanity.* For, Firſt, the power of man to help, is weak and vain (*Pſal.* 33. 16.) *There is no King ſaved by the multitude of an Hoſt; a mighty man is not delivered by much ſtrength.* And that's an unqueſtionable truth, whether we underſtand it of his own ſtrength, or of the ſtrength of any others, who come in and contribute their utmoſt to his aid and aſſiſtance. And this is one reaſon, why the Lord calls us off from truſting to the arm of man (*Pſal.* 146. 3.) *Put not your truſt in Princes, nor in the ſon of man, in whom there is no help.* True, may ſome ſay, it were a folly to truſt in weak Princes, to truſt in them for help, who have no power to help; but we will apply to mighty Princes, we hope there is help in them: No, thoſe words, *In whom there is no help*, are not a diſtinction of weak Princes from ſtrong, but a concluſion, that there is no help in the ſtrongeſt. That's ſtrange; what? no help in ſtrong Princes! If he had ſaid, no help in mean men, carnal reaſon would have conſented; but when he ſaith, *Truſt not in Princes, nor in any ſon of man*, one or other, who can believe this? yet, this is a Divine Truth, we may write *inſufficiency*, *inſufficiency*, and a third time *inſufficiency*, upon them all; the cloſe of that verſe in the Pſalm may be their Motto, *There is no help in them.* And if any ſhall truſt in man for help, ſome one of, if not all, theſe evils or ſad iſſues will follow.

Firſt, He will be deceived and diſappointed; what he looked upon as a Rock, will prove but a Sand; what he took for a Cedar, will prove but a Reed; and the more he leans upon it, the more it fails him, as the Scripture ſpeaks.

Secondly, He will be aſhamed and vexed (*Iſa.* 20. 5.) *They ſhall be afraid, and aſhamed of* Ethiopia, *their expectation, and of* Egypt, *their glory*; that is, which they gloried in, and believed would bring them in much glory, or into a very glorious condition. They probably expected help from *Ethiopia*, but they gloried in the fore-thoughts of that help which they preſumed *Egypt* would give them, but they gloried in that which ſoon proved their ſhame.

Thirdly, If any truſt in any arm of fleſh, it will bring a curſe upon him (*Jer.* 17. 5.) *Curſed be the man that maketh fleſh his arm, and whoſe heart departeth from the Lord.* Nor doth the Prophet only pronounce a curſe upon that man, but explains the curſe, or tells him plainly what it ſhall be, both in the negative, and in the affirmative; *He ſhall be like the heath in the deſert, and ſhall not ſee when good cometh, but ſhall inhabit the parched places of the wilderneſs, in a ſalt Land, and not inhabited.* Then, *ceaſe from man whoſe breath is in his Noſtrils, for wherein is he to be accounted of?* Whatſoever account is to be made of man, this is not, that he ſhould be truſted in. We may apply to men for help, but we muſt not truſt in them, as if they could carry the matter for us; *Have men an arm like God?* Mans is but a weak and withered arm; and as the arm of man is not to be truſted in for any help he can give us, ſo

Secondly, The arm of man is not to be feared for any hurt he can do us. Theſe two have a near relation to, and dependance upon each other; for they who are ſo ſtrong, that we are ready to truſt them if we can make them our friends, thoſe we are as ready to fear, if they turn our Enemies; and they who never truſt in man unduly, will not fear man but according to duty. And we have no reaſon, if we conſider that, and what the arm of man is in the hand of God, to fear the arm of man. The Scripture ſpeaks often of the Lords dealing with the ſtrongeſt arm of man (*Ezek.* 30. 21.) *Son of man, I have broken the arm of* Pharaoh, *King of* Egypt; *and loe, it ſhall not be bound up to be healed, to put a Roller to bind it, to make it ſtrong to hold the Sword.* *Pharaoh* had an hurting arm, an arm ſtretched out againſt the *Iſrael* of God; but God did more than hurt, he broke that arm. And conſider how the Spirit of God followeth the Metaphor, *It ſhall not be bound up.* *Pharaoh* would fain have got his broken arm ſet, hoping it might be ſtronger than ever: No, ſaith God, *It ſhall not be bound up to be healed, to put a Roller to bind it, to make it ſtrong.* As if the Lord had ſaid, *Pharaoh* may call for his *Chirurgions* to bind up his broken arm, yet it ſhall be without effect; all their skill and *Chirurgery* ſhall be in vain, his arm ſhall not be healed, not made ſtrong. Again (*Jer.* 48 25.) *The horn of* Moab *is cut off, and his arm is broken.* A ſavage beaſt cannot hurt us when his horn is cut off, nor can a cruel-hearted man with a broken arm. In theſe and many other Scriptures we ſee, both that mans arm is in the hand of God, and what God doth often to mans arm; upon which conſiderations he infers (*Iſa.* 51. 12.) *I am he that comforteth thee; Who art thou that art afraid of a man that ſhall die, and of the ſon of man that ſhall be made as the graſs, and forgetteſt the Lord thy Maker?* As if the Lord had ſaid, doſt thou hear and believe that I have a ſtronger arm than man? and art thou, who haſt an intereſt in me, afraid of a man? We have cauſe to fear man, when we do that which is evil; the Magiſtrates arm *beareth not the Sword in vain, for he is the Miniſter of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doth evil* (*Rom.* 13. 4.) But to all them who remain peaceably in their duty to God and man, Jeſus Chriſt hath ſaid, (*Luke* 12. 4, 5.) *Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that, have no more that they can do: But I will forewarn you whom you ſhall fear; fear him, which after he hath killed, hath power to caſt into hell; yea, I ſay unto you, fear him.* Chriſt, who gave but a ſingle prohibition of our fear of man, gave a double charge to fear God, knowing that to be the beſt cure of, and remedy againſt any undue or ſinful fear of man.

Further, ſeeing God hath ſuch an arm, let us be much in the conſideration of it, let us often meditate upon the ſtrength of his Arm, his Almighty Power. The mighty God is as a weak one to us, both for the doing us good, and the keeping us from evil, till we ſit down, and believingly meditate upon his Almighty Power and Greatneſs. As *David* called the faithful of old to view the ſtrength of *Sion* (*Pſal.* 48. 12.) *Walk about* Sion, *and go round her; mark well her Bull-warks, and tell her Towers.* So I may call upon all to view the ſtrength of the God of *Sion*, and to remember his arm, which is the only ſtrength, the Bull-wark, the Tower of *Sion*. *Be ſtill* (ſaith the Lord, *Pſal.* 46. 10.) *and know that I am God.* We never truly know either that God is, or what God is, we know him not to be God, but carry it as if he were but a man, till we *are ſtill*, that is, compoſed into a deep ſilent conſideration of his Eternal Power and Godhead, or that he is God. And the godly have done ſo, eſpecially in two caſes.

Firſt, When they ſaw little humane ſtrength, little of mans arm for them.

Secondly, When at any time they ſaw the arm of man great and ſtrong againſt them. In both which caſes we find *David* often in the *Pſalms*, and other good Kings wholly taken up in the thought of, and in acting their Faith upon the arm or power of God. Thus did King *Aſa* (2 *Chron.* 14. 11.) and thus did King *Jehoſaphat* (2 *Chron.* 20. 6, 12.) *O Lord God of our Fathers, art not thou*

God in Heaven? and in thy hand is there not power and might? ſo that none is able to withſtand thee? O our God, wilt thou not judge them? for we have no might againſt this great company that cometh againſt us; neither know we what to do, but our eyes are upon thee.

So much of the firſt humbling queſtion in this verſe, *Haſt thou an Arm like God?*

A ſecond followeth; *Or,*

Canſt thou thunder with a voice like him?

To thunder, may be taken either properly for the ſending out of that loud and terrible ſound or crack, which we ſometimes hear from the Clouds, and ſo we may underſtand it here, *Who can make a Thunder-clap like God?* Natural Thunder is a token of Gods Power, and 'tis a dreadful token. Should I expound and proſecute the Text in the letter, 'tis a great truth, and of uſeful conſideration. The voice of God in Thunder exceeds the voices of all men.

But in Scripture to *Thunder* is often taken improperly, and ſo it ſignifieth any mighty ſpeaking, or ſpeaking with mighty effect. Hence thoſe two Eminent Apoſtles (*James* and *John*) were called *Boanerges*, that is, *Sons of Thunder*, becauſe they preached ſo powerfully for the converſion and ſalvation of ſinners. And in the *Chapter* before the Text (*Job* 39. 25.) we read of the *Thunder of the Captains*, that is, of the Captains loud voice, giving Exhortations, Orders, and Commands to their Army ready for battle. The power that goeth forth with the Word of God, is the thunder of his voice. It was ſaid of *Pericles*, a great Orator among the *Grecians*, that he did thunder and lighten upon his Auditors; ſuch was the power of his Rhetorick, that he did ſhake, as it were, that whole Country with his voice.

Hoc inſtrumento efficax Dei juſſio ſiſtens atque exhibens quicquid vult ſignificatur. Lcc.

Pericles *Olympius (ſic enim propter vim eloquentiæ dictus eſt) fulminabat, intonabat, confundebat Græciam.* Plutarch.

Now, as in the former queſtion, the Lord ſet forth his mighty ſtrength, in acting, by his *arm*, *Haſt thou an arm like God?* So here he ſetteth forth his mighty power, in ſpeaking, by *Thunder*, *Canſt thou thunder with a voice like him?*

Hence, note; *The voice of the Lord is a powerful voice.*

To thunder is to ſpeak, but it is no ordinary ſpeaking that is intended by it. To thunder is to ſpeak, not only weightily, but powerfully, ſomewhat paſſionately, if not diſpleaſedly, and with a mighty impreſſing force, as alſo with an extenſion and intenſion of the voice. *To lift up the voice like a Trumpet* (as the Prophet was commanded, *Iſa.* 58. 1.) hath all this in it, much more to lift up the voice like thunder; and ſuch is the voice of God. The ſtrongeſt and moſt *Stentorean* voice of man is but a whiſper, and cannot ſtartle a Mouſe, or give me leave to ſay (as we proverbially ſay) the ſtrongeſt and moſt Muſical-mouthed man, ſpeaks but *like a Mouſe in a Cheeſe*, his voice is indeed a meer ſilence in compariſon of the thunder of Gods voice. The whole 29th *Pſalm* is a proof of it; which though it be true of the natural Thunder, yet 'tis chiefly to be underſtood (as hath been ſhewed) of the metaphorical or ſpiritual Thunder, the power that goeth forth with the ſpeakings of God. And that there is a Thunder, a mighty power, accompanying the Word of God, may appear in theſe particulars.

Firſt, The bare *ſaying voice of God* is exceeding powerful. To ſay a thing, is as little as may be towards the effecting of it. But if God do but ſay, let ſuch a thing be, it is ſo; yea, his ſaying (no more is expreſt) gave all things a being: He only ſaid, *Let there be light, and there was light*, &c. (*Gen.* 3. 3.) That ſaying was a commanding, as the Apoſtle expounds it (2 *Cor.* 4. 6.) *God who commanded light to ſhine out of darkneſs*, &c. The ſaying voice of God hath a commanding power in it, that is, every thing is done and cometh to paſs as he ſaith (*Pſal.* 33. 6.) *By the word of the Lord were the Heavens made, and all the Hoſt of them by the breath of his mouth.* And if the whole world was the product of a word from God, what cannot God produce in the world, by ſpeaking the word?

Secondly, How powerful is the expreſly or directly *commanding voice of God*, if his ſaying voice be ſo powerful! When the Lord gave the Law (*Exod.* 19. 16.) what *voices?* what *thunderings* were then heard! The ſaying of God is a virtual Command, but he gives formal Commands alſo. And when he gave the Law, or Ten Commandments, the Thunder of his voice made all *the people tremble, and ſtand afar off.* And if (as that notion hath often been well inforc'd) God thundered with ſuch a voice at the giving of the Law, with what a dreadful voice will he thunder when he comes to Judge thoſe who have broken, and impenitently continu'd in the breach of the Law.

Thirdly, There is a mighty power, as in the bidding, ſo in the *forbidding or reſtraining voice of God.* He by the voice of his word can put a ſtop to Creatures, when they are in their ſtrongeſt Career, and ſwifteſt motion. What is ſwifter in motion than the Sun? All Creatures on Earth, or in the Air, are but ſlugs to the Sun; the Eagle upon her wing is but a Snail to the Sun; yet God can forbid the Suns motion (*Job* 9.7.) *He commandeth the Sun, and it riſeth not*; That is, if he ſend forth a Prohibition to the Sun, it will not ſtir forwards one foot, till he takes off his Prohibition, and bids it fulfil its wonted courſe; as in *Joſhua*'s days (*Chap.* 10, 12.) and at his command it will go backward, as in the days of *Hezekiah* (2 *Kings* 20. 11.) Further, The Lords voice diſannuls and makes void the commands of any Creature (*Lam.* 3. 32.) *Who is he that ſaith it, and it cometh to paſs, if the Lord have not commanded it?* They reckon (as we ſay) without their Hoſt, who hope to carry on any work without Gods concurrence; for he can give a Negative to all our Affirmatives, and make all our Wheels, either ſtand ſtill, or go backward.

Fourthly, There is a Thunder in the *teaching voice* of God. His teaching voice is a very ſtill voice, yet 'tis a very ſtrong voice; the Soul falls down at the ſound of it. 'Tis promiſed (*Iſa.* 54. 13.) that *we ſhall be all taught of God*, that is, effectually taught; ſo taught, as to receive inſtruction. The teaching voice of God makes the ignorant knowing, and the fooliſh wiſe. *The Lord* (ſaith the Prophet, *Iſa.* 8. 11.) *ſpake unto me with a ſtrong hand, and inſtructed me, that I ſhould not walk in the way of this people.* There had need be a ſtrong hand in the voice of that inſtruction, which keeps us out of the common walks of the world. Yea, there is ſuch a power in the teaching voice of God, that like a Thunderbolt, it overthroweth and *ſo pulls down all the ſtrong holds of ſin, caſting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth it ſelf againſt the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Chriſt* (2 *Cor.* 10. 4, 5.) Thus God thunders againſt ſin, and batters ſinners; which is infinitely harder to do, than to batter and level the walls of a City to the ground with thundering Cannon. The weapons of our warfare, for the conqueſt of ſouls to Chriſt, are all laid up in, and fetcht out of the Arcenal of the holy Scriptures, or Word of God; and, O what work have they made in the world! How many have fallen, by ſubmitting to them, to their own Salvation! and how many more have fallen, by reſiſting them, to their own everlaſting deſtruction!

Fifthly, There is a mighty power in the *reproving voice of God.* When God deals verbal rebukes to ſinners, as well as verberal, he often *makes their beauty to conſume away like a Moth* (*Pſal.* 39. 11.) The Lord profeſſeth to all hardned ſinners, whoſe Conſciences now give them no reproofs, and who preſume God will give them none neither, that he hath thundering reproofs ready for them (*Pſa.* 50.21.) *I will reprove thee, and ſet them* (that is, thy ſins) *in order before thine eyes. O conſider this* (as 'tis adviſed in the next verſe of the ſame *Pſalm*) *ye that forget God, leſt he tear you in pieces* with the thunder of his reproof.

Sixthly, There is alſo a mighty power in *the comforting voice of God.* O what a vertue is there in thoſe ſecret whiſpers, wherein God ſpeaketh peace to his people (*Hoſea* 2. 14.) *I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderneſs, and ſpeak comfortably unto her*, or *to her heart.* A Thunder (as to power) goeth with this voice of God: This hath a power to ſettle a ſhaking or diſconſolate Soul, and nothing but the power of Gods voice can do that. When none can comfort, the Lord can. *To comfort the Conſcience, is* (ſaid *Luther*) *as great a work as to make a world.*

Seventhly, There is a mighty power, as *in the promiſing or comforting voice of God*, ſo alſo in his *threatning voice.* The Lord thunders reproofs againſt thoſe that have ſinned, and he thunders threatnings to keep all from ſinning; and how terrible that voice is the Apoſtle knew, who ſaid, *Knowing the terror of the Lord we perſwade men* (2 *Cor.* 5. 11.) And as the Apoſtle knew it by believing it, ſo all final unbelievers ſhall know it by their ſenſe and feeling of it.

Eighthly, There is a thunder of power in the *propheſying voice of God.* When the Lord fore-tells what ſhall come to paſs, who can withſtand it? We find thoſe propheſies, which hold forth the ruin of Chriſts enemies and of his Church, ſhewred in with thunder (*Rev.* 8. 15. and *Rev.* 11. 19.) which did not only ſhew that thoſe propheſies ſhould be certainly and ſolemnly fulfilled in their ſeaſon, but that they ſhould be terribly fulfilled, or fulfilled with a terror, like that of Thunder. All propheſies ſhall effectually come to be fulfilled; therefore power is in them.

Ninthly, What a power is there in the *ſwearing voice of God.* Firſt, God ſwears ſometimes in his wrath (he did ſo againſt that people of old; *I ſware to them in my wrath, that they ſhould not enter into my reſt:* And ſo powerful was that oath, that not a man of them could come into *Canaan, their Carcaſes fell into the wilderneſs.* And as when the Lord ſwears in his wrath; ſo, Secondly, When he ſwears in love and mercy, there's irreſiſtible power in that alſo. Thus God ſware and made oath to *Abraham* (Heb. 6. 17.) *Wherein God willing more abundantly to ſhew unto the heirs of promiſe, the immutability of his counſel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it was impoſſible for God to lie, we might have ſtrong conſolation,* &c. To *David* alſo God ſware in love (*Pſal.* 89. 35, 36.) *Once have I ſworn by my holineſs, that I will not lie unto* David. *His ſeed ſhall endure for ever, and his throne as the Sun before me,* &c. The oath or ſwearing voice of God is ſo ſtrong, that we have reaſon enough both of ſtrong fears, when he ſweareth in wrath, as he did againſt the children of *Iſrael*; and of ſtrong conſolation, when he ſweareth in love, as he did to *Abraham* and to *David.* And wo to thoſe who believe not when God ſwears either in wrath or in love.

Tenthly, There is a mighty power in the *Judging voice of God.* When he ſhall ſpeak from his Throne in that great day, what a Thunder will there be in his voice? When in that Judgment-day he ſhall acquit his elect, that voice will have a raviſhing power in it: And when his condemning ſentence ſhall be pronounced againſt the wicked, that voice will have an aſtoniſhing power in it, beyond that of Thunder. And it is to be conſidered, that in many places of Scripture, where the eminent judgments of God are mentioned, his voice or thunder is mentioned, as going before or accompanying, thoſe ſolemn and tremendous diſpenſations (*Pſal.* 18. 13. *Pſal.* 68. 33, 34, 35. *Iſa.* 30. 30. *Jer.* 25. 30. *Joel* 4. 16.)

To conclude this point, ſeeing there is a power, like that of Thunder, going forth with the voice of God, in the effectual miniſtrations of his Word; let us well conſider, whether God hath ſpoken to us effectually, yea or no; have we known the thunder of his Spirit? hath there come a mighty power upon us, with the voice of his Word? if the voice hath not reach't our hearts, and reformed our lives, we have not heard the thunder of Gods voice, but only the voice of man, or a ſound in the air beating the outward ear. Naturaliſts ſay from experience, that by the power of thunder and lightning, the ſword is ſometimes melted, while the ſcabbard is unhurt. And from experience, they that are ſpiritual can alſo ſay, that the thunder of Gods voice melteth the ſoul, while it only toucheth the ear. Therefore we have reaſon diligently to enquire, what power hath come with the word ſpoken; have we found the commanding, the promiſing, the threatning, the inſtructing, the comforting voices of God effectual upon our hearts? Bleſſed are they who have been thus Thunder-ſtruck. And all they who have been thus ſtrucken out of themſelves, and into Chriſt, may truly ſay, what that people ſaid flattering and blaſphemouſly, at the Oration of *Herod* (Acts 12. 22.) *It is the voice of God, and not of man.* Though the ſound of the words came in mans voice, yet the power of them came in Gods voice; for *who can thunder with a voice like him?* or who indeed hath any thing like ſuch thunder in his voice but he?

Further, the Lords deſign being to humble *Job*, in putting theſe queſtions, *Haſt thou an arm like God? or canſt thou thunder with a voice like him?*

Note, *Man is never convinced, either of his own weakneſs and unworthineſs, till he is taught to conſider the power, greatneſs, and mightineſs of God.*

Till God is great and high in our thoughts, we are great and high in our own: And when God is great in our eyes, we are little in our own, and ſo are all things elſe; then our power is nothing to the power of God, our holineſs nothing to the holineſs of God, our wiſdom nothing to the wiſdom of God. 'Tis good thus to compare to our ſelves with God, that we may ſee and be convinced, how infinitely below God we are in all that we have and are. *David* ſaid (*Pſal.* 39. 5.) *Mine age is as nothing before thee.* It is ſo in all other things; our wiſdom is nothing before God, our holineſs is nothing before God, our ſtrength is nothing before God. As thoſe ſearchers of *Canaan* ſaid (*Numb.* 13. 33.) *We ſaw the Giants there, and we were as Graſhoppers in their ſight.* We thought our ſelves tall men, before we ſaw thoſe high-ſtatur'd Giants; but having ſeen them, we were but Pigmies, yea, but as Graſhoppers. So we think we have a great deal of power, and wiſdom, and holineſs, till we look upon God, and then we are convinced of our own meanneſs and poverty. The Apoſtle ſaith in higheſt truth and honeſty, as well as modeſty (2 *Cor.* 10. 12.) *We dare not make our ſelves of the number, or compare our ſelves with ſome that commend themſelves; but they meaſuring themſelves by themſelves, and comparing themſelves amongſt themſelves are not wiſe.* And why not wiſe? becauſe they ſeem to be too wiſe, or think themſelves very wiſe. We get ſome opinion of our own wiſdom, and holineſs, and goodneſs, and righteouſneſs, comparing our ſelves with men like our ſelves; but if we would compare our ſelves with God, we ſhould ſoon ſee what poor things we are. What pittiful creatures do we appear when compared with our Creator! and we ſhall have profited well by this Scripture, if we make this uſe of it; and leave priding our ſelves as men, by comparing our ſelves with men. One man ſaith, I am as good as that man; and another ſaith, I am as wiſe as that man; and a third ſaith, I am as holy as ſuch a man. O that we would but think what the goodneſs, wiſdom, and holineſs of God are: ſuch holy thoughts wrought upon the heart, will free us from all high thoughts of our ſelves, and then we ſhall look for our all in Jeſus Chriſt; then, as the Prophet gives us the true form of Goſpel-ſpeaking (*Iſa.* 45. 24.) *Surely ſhall one ſay, in the Lord I have righteouſneſs and ſtrength.* And ſo will every one ſay who ſeeth (which is true of all men) that his own ſtrength is weakneſs, and his righteouſneſs a filthy rag, compared with the ſtrength and righteouſneſs of God: Our arm, our voice, our ſelf-all, or our all of ſelf, will vaniſh and diſappear, if once God appear to us in the glory of his arm and voice. *Haſt thou an arm like God? or canſt thou thunder with a voice like him?*

VERS. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14.

Deck thy ſelf now with majeſty and excellency, and array thy ſelf with glory and beauty.

Caſt abroad the rage of thy wrath: and behold every one that is proud, and abaſe him.

Look on every one that is proud, and bring him low: and tread down the wicked in their place.

Hide them in the duſt together, and bind their faces in ſecret.

Then will I alſo confeſs unto thee, that thine own right hand can ſave thee.

In the former verſe the Lord having queſtioned *Job* concerning his power (*haſt thou an arm like God? canſt thou thunder with a voice like him?*) ſeems now to put him to the uſe of his power. *If thou haſt ſuch an arm as I, and canſt thunder with ſuch a voice as I?* then come on, *Deck thy ſelf with majeſty and excellency,* &c. As if he had thus ſpoken to *Job, I who have ſuch an arm, I who thunder with ſuch a voice, can quickly deck my ſelf with ſuch majeſty and excellency, I can quickly caſt abroad ſuch rage and wrath, as will abaſe and utterly break all the proud ones of the earth, and deſtroy the wicked:* Job, *canſt thou do this? canſt thou deck thy ſelf with ſuch majeſty? canſt thou caſt abroad ſuch a rage of thy wrath, as will abaſe and bring down the proud, and deſtroy the wicked? if thou canſt do it, let me ſee thee do it.*

So then, as in the former verſe, we had a compariſon between *Jobs* power and the power of God, by way of interrogation, *Haſt thou an arm like God?* ſo here God doth the ſame thing with *Job*, by an ironical injunction, juſſion or command; *Deck thy ſelf with majeſty*, let us ſee what a man thou art, put thy ſelf into thy faireſt dreſs, and moſt tremendous appearance.

There are two things in this context, in which *Job* is called to ſhew himſelf like God, if he could.

Firſt, In the majeſty and excellency, in the glory and beauty of his perſon (*ver.* 10.) *Deck thy ſelf with majeſty*, &c.

Secondly, In the mighty effects of his anger and diſpleaſure, (*ver.* 11.) *Caſt abroad the rage of thy wrath*, &c. And this the Lord bids him do; Firſt, More particularly, *In abaſing the proud.* Secondly, More generally, *In deſtroying all the wicked of the earth.* (*ver.* 12, 13.) Now in caſe *Job* could approve himſelf thus powerful, and appear like God, either in the majeſty of his perſon, or in the mightineſs of his diſpleaſure againſt proud and wicked men, then ſaith the Lord *ver.* 14. *I will confeſs unto thee, that thine own right hand can ſave thee*, that is, I will yield thee the cauſe, I will acknowledge that thou, who canſt thus bring down the pride of men in the height of their iniquity, art alſo able to help thy ſelf out of all thy miſery; yea, that thou art able to contend with me, who often have done, and ſtill can do theſe great things with eaſe, with the turning of my hand, with a word of my mouth; yea, then I will confeſs that thou art as I am, that thou art God as I am: But alas poor worm, thou canſt do none of theſe things, therefore humble thy ſelf and be quiet under mine afflicting hand. This ſeems to be the general ſcope of the holy Ghoſt in theſe five verſes, even yet further to convince *Job*, that he had not an arm like God, nor could thunder with a voice like him, foraſmuch as he could not put forth ſuch acts, nor ſhew ſuch effects of power as God both had and could put forth and ſhew in the face of all the world.

Verſ. 10. **Deck thy ſelf now with majeſty**, &c.

Deck, or *adorn thy ſelf* the word ſignifieth *to adorn*, (to put on ornaments) make as a fair a ſhew of thy ſelf as thou canſt. The Apoſtle (*Gal.* 6. 12.) ſpeaks of ſome, who deſired *to make a fair ſhew in the fleſh.* The Lord bids *Job* make as fair a ſhew of himſelf as he could in fleſh;

Deck thy ſelf,] Let thy majeſty proceed from thy ſelf. Thus it is with God; he needs no hand to adorn and deck him, to apparel him, or put on his robes, as the Kings and Princes of the earth need, others deck them, others adorn them and put on their robes, but the Lord decks himſelf. Now ſaith the Lord to *Job*, *Deck thy ſelf* as I do,

With majeſty and excellency.] Kings and Princes are decked with majeſty and excellency at all times, a majeſtick excellency is inherent in their eſtate; and when they ſhew themſelves in ſtate, or ſhew their ſtate, they put on their Crowns and Robes. Thus ſaith the Lord to *Job*, *Put on majeſty and excellency.* Both words ſignifie highneſs, exaltation; and are often uſed to ſignifie *pride*, becauſe they that are high and exalted, are uſually proud, and are always under a temptation to be proud of their highneſs and greatneſs. And theſe words which here in the abſtract we tranſlate *majeſty and excellency*, are rendred in the concrete, *proud* (ver. 11, 12.) *Behold every one that is proud* (ver. 11.) *Look upon every one that is proud* (ver. 12.)

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Majeſty is proper to Kings, and therefore we ſpeak to them in that language, *Your Majeſty.*

Excellency belongs to perſons of great dignity; we ſay to Princes and great Commanders, *Your Excellency*, becauſe they excel and exceed others in honour and power. *Moſes* ſpake ſo of God (*Exod.* 15. 7.) *In the greatneſs of thy Excellency, thou haſt overthrown them that roſe up againſt thee.* In the greatneſs of thy Excellency, or in the greatneſs of thy lifting up and exaltation; the word notes both Gods high magnificence (*Pſal.* 68. 35.) and mans pride or haughtineſs (*Pſal.* 10. 2.) *The wicked in his pride* (or haughtineſs of ſpirit) *perſecutes the poor.* Deck thy ſelf with Majeſty as a King, and with Excellency as a Prince; put on thy Imperial robes, and thy Princely garments. Yea, further,

Array thy ſelf with glory and beauty.] Here are two other ornamental expreſſions, *Glory* and *Beauty*. *Glory* is man in his beſt array, or mans beſt array; yea, *Glory* is God in his beſt array, or Gods beſt array. The perfect happineſs of man in heaven is called *glory*; mans beſt ſuit, is his ſuit of glory. Grace, which is our beſt ſuit on earth, is ſometimes called glory (2 *Cor.* 3. 18.) *We are changed from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord*; that is, from grace to grace. Mans firſt change is from ſin to grace, his ſecond is from grace to grace, or from one degree of grace to another. Grace is glory begun, and glory is grace perfected. Now, as glory is mans beſt ſuit, ſo glory is, as I may ſay, Gods beſt ſuit. He is, as the *God of all grace* (1 *Pet.* 5. 10.) ſo *the God of all glory*; for all glory is to be given unto him, and his glory will he not give to any other. The glory of God is twofold. Firſt, Eſſential and internal, for ever unchangeaby abiding in himſelf; indeed the very Eſſence of God is glory. Of this we read (*Exod.* 33. 18.) *I will make all my goodneſs paſs before thee, I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee, and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will ſhew mercy to whom I will ſhew mercy*; this kind of glory I will ſhew thee, but *thou canſt not ſee my face and live*, that is, my eſſential glory.

Dicimus etiam nidui dedecori vel ignominia; nam quare ornamur vel dedecoramur ea eleganter nidui dicimur. Druſ. *Gloria eſt clara cum laude notitia.* Ambroſ. הוד *Notat ſpendorem & claritatem, quæ efficere poteſt aſſenſum & confeſſionem apud ſpectatores ad gloriam ipſius, quod omnia agit* θεοπρεπῶς *Deus non habet circundatum decorem, quaſi ſuper additum ejus eſſentiæ, Sed ipſa eſſentia ejus decor eſt.* Aquin.

Secondly, There is a providential or external glory of God; the manifeſtations of God in his greatneſs, goodneſs and power, are his glory. Thus 'tis ſaid at the dedication of *Solomons* Temple (1 *King.* 8. 11.) *The glory of the Lord filled the houſe of the Lord*; that is, there was a glorious and wonderful manifeſtation of the preſence of the Lord in his houſe. Whatever God manifeſts of himſelf, whether his power, or his goodneſs, or his mercy, or his grace, or his patience, or his juſtice, is his glory. The Lord often arrayeth himſelf with theſe glories; that is, he declares both by his word and by his works, that he is powerful, good, merciful, gracious, patient and juſt towards the children of men. The Scripture calleth God *the glory of his people* (*Pſal.* 106. 20.) that is, it is the glory of any people, or that which they ſhould glory in, that God is known to them, or that they are owned by God. But the idolatrizing *Jews changed their glory into the ſimilitude of an Ox that eateth graſs*; that is, they changed God, who was their glory, and in whom they ſhould have gloried, into the form of an inglorious beaſt, while they either worſhipped the image of a beaſt, or their God in that image.

And it is conſiderable, that the Apoſtle (*Rom.* 1. 23.) at leaſt alluding to (as the reference in our Bible intimates) if not quoting that place laſt mentioned in the *Pſalm*, whilſt he ſpeaks of the idolatrous Gentiles, doth not ſay (as there) *They changed their glory*, &c, for the true God was not the glory of the Gentiles in thoſe days, they owned him not as their only God (having many Idol-Gods) nor did he own them as his people; and therefore the Apoſtle did not, nor could he in truth ſay of the Gentiles, *They changed their glory*, &c. But thus he ſaith, *They changed the glory of the incorruptible God, into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beaſts, and creeping things.* The Gentiles did not change the incorruptible God, their glory into an image, but they changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image, &c. And in that reſpect the idolatry of the *Jews* (a people knowing the true God, yea, and glorying in him) was worſe than the idolatry of the Gentiles, who knew him not, nor ever gloried in him, nor accounted him their glory. But to the point in hand. As that is Gods glory which mainifeſts his glory,

So in general, any thing which maketh man ſhine forth commendably or honourably to others, or gives him a preheminence above many others (as neer relation to God ſpecially doth) may be called his glory. Whatſoever is beſt in us, or to us, is our glory. The ſoul of man is his glory, becauſe it is his beſt part. The body is a poor thing to the ſoul; the body is but a ſhell, the ſoul is the kernel; the body is but the ſheath (as the *Chaldee* calls it, *Deut.* 7. 15.) the ſoul is the ſword, though uſually we take more pains for the body than for the ſoul, as if we prized it more. When *Jacob* ſaid (*Gen.* 49. 6.) *O my ſoul, come thou not into their ſecret; unto their aſſembly, mine honour, be not thou united*; he meant (ſome ſay) the ſame thing by his ſoul, and by his honour or glory, becauſe the ſoul is the moſt glorious and honourable part in man, and that which men ſhould be moſt careful of. Thus likewiſe the tongue of man is called his glory (*Pſal.* 57. 8.) *Awake my glory*, that is, my tongue. The tongue being that organ or inſtrument whereby the wiſdom and prudence of man is held forth, and he made glorious in the world, 'tis thereſore called his glory. The tongue of man is alſo called his glory, becauſe with that he giveth glory to God, by praiſing him, and confeſſing his name, together with his truth, unto ſalvation. And as glory is the beſt of man, ſo of any other creature (1 *Cor.* 15. 16.) *There is one glory of the Sun, and another of the Moon, and another glory of the Stars; for one Star differs from another Star in glory*; that is, there is one excellency, uſe, or operation in this Star, and another in that: Or, *One Star differs from another Star in glory*; that is, their light, influences and effects differ, ſome being more, others leſs operative upon ſublunary bodies. When the Lord ſaid to *Job*, *Array thy ſelf with glory*, his meaning is, *ſhew thy beſt*; and he means the ſame, when he adds, *Array thy ſelf* (*with beauty.*)

הדר

Verba originalia fere ſunt ſynonyma.

Beauty is the natural ornament of the Body, of the face or countenance eſpecially. Theſe two words, *glory and beauty*, are often joined together in Scripture (*Pſal.*21.5. *Pſal.* 45. 3.) where we render them *honour and majeſty*. We may thus diſtinguiſh between them, taking the one for that which appears outwardly, in veſtures and geſtures, in actions and works; and the other as importing that reverence and veneration which is given to ſuch, as appear in that ſplendor and dignity, or which their ſplendor and dignity ſtirs up in others: But we need not ſtand to diſtinguiſh them, the words being often uſed promiſcuouſly. And here the Lord is pleaſed to imploy many words to the ſame purpoſe, to ſhew what great ſtate he had need be in that contends with him: As if he had ſaid, O Job, *although thou didſt not ſit upon a dunghil, or wert not bound to thy bed by the cords of thy affliction, but didſt ſit upon a Kingly throne, ſhining in robes of royalty, couldſt thou in all thoſe ornaments equal thy ſelf to me, in majeſty and excellency, in glory and beauty? Deck thy ſelf with majeſty and excellency*, &c.

Hence Note; Firſt, *God himſelf is full of Majeſty, of Excellency, of Glory, and of Beauty.*

I put them all together in one Obſervation, becauſe the tendency of them all is one. The Scripture often ſets forth the Lord thus adorned, thus decked (*Pſal.* 93. 1.) *The Lord reigneth, he is cloathed with majeſty, he is cloathed with ſtrength, wherewith he hath girded himſelf.* Again (*Pſal.* 69. 6.) *Honour and majeſty are before him, ſtrength and beauty are in his ſanctuary* (Pſal. 104. 1.) *Bleſs the Lord, O my ſoul; O Lord, my God, thou art very great, thou art cloathed with honour and majeſty.* This cloathing, this array, which the Lord called *Job* to put on, is properly his own; and though God will not give his glory to another, yet here he bids *Job* take his glory, and ſhew himſelf in it to the utmoſt if he could. Many have affected or invaded Gods glory, but none could ever attain or reach it. God calls man really to partake of glory with him, but man cannot take his glory upon him and be man. The humane nature of Chriſt could never have received nor born that glory, but as united to, and ſubſiſting in the perſon of the Son of God, according to that prayer of his (*John* 17. 5.)

More diſtinctly; If God be thus cloathed, Then

Firſt, We ſhould tremble before him. Majeſty is dreadful. The majeſty of Kings, who in nature are but men, is very dreadful; how much more the majeſty of God who is King of Kings, the King immortal, and reigns for ever. We have this trembling three times repeated, with reſpect to the majeſty of God (*Iſa.* 2. 10, 19, 21.) where the mightieſt and greateſt of the world, called there high Mountains and ſtrong Towers, Oaks and Cedars, are ſaid to *go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his Majeſty, when he ariſeth to ſhake terribly the earth.* And though the people of God have great cauſe to rejoyce at his majeſty, as 'tis propheſied they ſhall (*Iſa.* 24. 14.) *They ſhall lift up their voices, they ſhall ſing for the majeſty of the Lord* (nothing cauſeth the hearts of the righteous to rejoyce, more than the majeſty of God) yet they ought to rejoyce, and ſo they do, with trembling (*Pſal.* 2. 11.) or with a holy awe of God impreſſed upon their hearts; for the majeſty of God is a very dreadful, tremendous, awful majeſty. And the more we have truly taſted the goodneſs and mercy of God, the more ſhall we tremble at his majeſty; yea, the Lord will have his majeſty not only taken notice of, but trembled at; and therefore he reproves thoſe (*Iſa.* 26. 10.) *who would not behold his majeſty.* The majeſty of the Lord, like himſelf, cannot be ſeen or beheld in it ſelf, yet it ſheweth it ſelf many ways, though few behold it, or tremble at it; and the reaſon why they tremble not at it, is, becauſe they do not, or rather (as the Prophet there ſpeaks) *will not behold it*, no, not when it ſhines in the plaineſt demonſtrations, whether of wrath againſt wicked men, or of love and mercy to the godly, as clearly as the Sun at noon day.

Secondly, As we ſhould tremble at the majeſty of the Lord, ſo admire his excellency; they that excel others, eſpecially they who excel all others in any kind, are much admired. The Lord is cloathed with excellency, how then ſhould we admire him! and ſay, *Who is a God like unto thee? This God is our God.*

Thirdly, Seeing the Lord is cloathed with glory, we ſhould glorifie him; and that, Firſt, is his eſſential glory, Secondly, in the glory of his acts and operations. We ſhould glorifie him for the greatneſs of his power, eſpecially for the greatneſs of his grace, becauſe the grace and mercy of God are his glory; as the Apoſtle ſpake in that prayer (*Eph.* 3. 16.) *That he would grant you according to the riches of his glory* (that is, of his grace and favour towards you) *to be ſtrengthned with might by his Spirit in the inner man.* And as the grace and goodneſs of God is his glory, ſo alſo is his holineſs (*Exod.* 15. 11.) *Who is a God like unto thee, glorious in holineſs?* Let us glorifie God, in and for all his glories, in and for the glory of his power, mercy, grace and holineſs.

Fourthly, *God is arrayed with beauty.* Beauty is a taking thing; then how ſhould our ſouls delight in the Lord! We delight in things that are beautiful, we love beauty; how ſhould this draw forth our love, our affections to God! All the beauty of the world is but a blot, 'tis darkneſs, and a ſtained thing, in compariſon of the Lords beauty, the beauty of his holineſs; and therefore if we have a love to beauty, let us love the Lord, who is arrayed with beauty, even with the perfection of beauty.

Laſtly, In general; Seeing the Lord is *deckt with majeſty and excellency, arrayed with glory and beauty*, let us continually aſcribe all theſe to God. What God is, and hath ſhewed himſelf to be, we ſhould ſhew forth (1 *Chron.* 29. 11.) *Thine, O Lord* (ſaith *David*) *is the greatneſs, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majeſty; for all that is in heaven and earth is thine.* *David* aſcribed all to God there, as alſo (*Pſal.* 145. 10.) *All thy works praiſe thee, O Lord, and thy Saints ſhall bleſs thee; they ſhall ſpeak of the glory of thy Kingdom, and talk of thy power, to make known to the ſons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majeſty of his Kingdom: thy Kingdom is an everlaſting Kingdom, and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations.* Thus Saints are to blazon the name of God, and to make his praiſe glorious. The Apoſtle *Jude* concludes his Epiſtle with this Doxology: *To the only wiſe God our Saviour* (that is, Jeſus Chriſt) *be glory, and majeſty, and dominion, and power, now and ever, Amen.*

Further, to remember the majeſty and excellency of God, may and ſhould be,

Firſt, an incouragement to ſerve him. Who would not ſerve a Prince, who is decked with majeſty and excellency, who is arrayed with glory and beauty? who would not ſerve ſuch a King as this? How ambitious are men to ſerve thoſe who are deckt with worldly majeſty and excellency? ſhall not we have a holy ambition to ſerve the Lord, who is thus decked and arrayed!

Secondly, This may exceedingly hearten and embolden us againſt all the danger we may meet with in the Lords ſervice. If we encounter with hardſhips and hazards in Gods work, let us remember, he that is cloathed with majeſty and excellency, *&c.* can protect us in his ſervice, and reward us for it; we can loſe nothing by him, though we ſhould loſe all for him, life and all.

Thirdly, This ſhould fill our ſouls with reverential thoughts of God continually. Did we know the Lord in theſe divine diſcoveries of himſelf, in his *majeſty and excellency, in his glory and beauty*, how would our hearts be filled with high thoughts of him! we would neither ſpeak nor think of God, but with a gracious awe upon our ſpirits.

Fourthly, This ſhould provoke us in all holy duties to do our beſt. The Lord reproved the *Jews* (*Mal.* 1.8.) when they brought him a poor lean ſacrifice; *Offer it now unto thy Governour, will he be pleaſed with thee, or accept thy perſon?* Shall we put off God, who is full of majeſty and excellency, of glory and beauty, with poor, weak and ſickly ſervices, ſuch as our Governours, men in high place and power will not accept from our hands, but turn back with diſdain upon our hands. The worſhip and ſervice of God conſiſts not in a bodily exerciſe, nor in any outward beauty; he is a ſpirit, and *muſt be worſhipped in ſpirit and in truth*; that is, in truth of heart, according to the truth of his word, which the Apoſtle calls *the ſimplicity that is in Chriſt* (*2 Cor.* 11.3.) The glory and beauty of God is ſpiritual, and the beauty that he muſt be ſerved with, is, above all, the inward beauty of faith and love, and holy fear in our hearts.

Fifthly, If God be thus deckt with majeſty, *&c.* This may aſſure us in praying to him and calling upon him, that we ſhall not ſeek him in vain: It is worth the while to attend ſuch a God, and pour out our hearts before him. We may ſafely depend upon God for all, ſeeing majeſty and excellency are his. The Lords prayer by which we are to form, or unto which we ſhould conform all our prayers concludes with this, *thine is the kingdom, power and glory*; all is thine, and therefore we have great encouragement to ask all of *thee*. Men can give to thoſe that ask them, according to the extent of their power. There is a confluence or comprehenſion of all power in the majeſty, excellency, and glory of God, and therefore he can give whatſoever we ask.

Now, as, that God is thus deckt and arrayed with majeſty and excellency, is implied in this Text; ſo 'tis alſo implied, that he hath thus deckt himſelf, while he ſaith to *Job*, *Deck thy ſelf with majeſty and excellency.*

Hence obſerve, Secondly; *The majeſty and excellency, the glory and beauty of God, are all of and from himſelf.*

He is the fountain as of his own being, ſo of the majeſty and excellency, of the glory and beauty of his being; he decks and arrays himſelf, he is not decked by others. Moraliſts ſay, *honour is not or reſides not in him that is honoured, but in him that honoureth*; yet here honour is ſeated in him that is honoured. We honour God, and give glory to him, but we cannot add any honour to him, all is originally in himſelf; he is the beginning without beginning of his own majeſty. And as Gods majeſty is his own, ſo of his own putting on; he borroweth nothing from the creature, nor needs he any creature to deck him. He is not what others will make him or have him to be, but what he is, he is of and from himſelf.

Thirdly, Obſerve; *The majeſty and glory of the greateſt among men, is the gift of God.*

Deck thy ſelf with majeſty, ſaith God to *Job*; but *Job* could not deck himſelf; he could not put a clothing of majeſty, and excellency, of glory and beauty upon himſelf. All that man hath is received from God, and is but a ray from his unconceiveable light. As all our ſpiritual array, deckings and ornaments, are put on us by God (*Ezek.* 16. 10, 11.) *I cloathed thee with broidered work, I covered thee with ſilk, I decked thee alſo with ornaments, I put a jewel on thy forehead,* &c. So all civil ornaments are put on man by God. *I girded thee* (ſaid God of *Cyrus*, Iſa. 45. 5) *though thou haſt not known me*; that is, I gave thee all thy power and greatneſs, thy honour and dignity, though thou tookeſt no notice of me in doing it, nor that I did it. Thus it is ſaid of *Solomon* (1 *Chron.* 29. 25.) *The Lord magnified* Solomon *exceedingly in the ſight of all* Iſrael, *and beſtowed upon him ſuch royal majeſty, as had not been on any king before him in* Iſrael. And thus ſpake *Daniel* to *Belſhazzar*, concerning his father *Nebuchadnezzar* (*Dan.* 5.19.) *And for the majeſty that he* (that is, God) *gave him, all Nations, People and Languages, trembled and feared before him.* All the majeſty and excellency, all the glory and beauty of the greateſt Monarchs, is derived from God.

Fourthly, Obſerve; *The majeſty and excellency, the glory and beauty of man, is nothing to Gods.*

Chriſt ſaith (*Mat.* 6. 29.) Solomon *in all his glory was not arrayed like one of theſe. Solomon* was a King in the greateſt majeſty and excellency, glory and beauty of any that ever was in the world; yet ſaith Chriſt, he was not decked like one of theſe Lillies: then how far ſhort did his glory fall of the glory of God! how doth all the glory of the world vaniſh and diappear at the appearance of the glory of *God*, even as the luſtre of the moon and ſtars doth at the riſing of the thrice illuſtrious Sun! And as mans glory is nothing to Gods while it laſts or endures, ſo it is nothing to his in the laſtingneſs and duration of it. *Dominion and majeſty are Gods, and ſhall be aſcribed to God everlaſtingly.* It is ſaid of *Ahaſuerus* (*Eſther* 1.4.) that he ſhewed the riches of his glorious kingdom, and the honour of his excellent Majeſty *many days, even an hundred and fourſcore* days; but the Lord ſheweth his excellent Majeſty for ever and ever, for it abides for ever: and if ſo, what is the majeſty of man compared with the Lords (*Iſa.* 40. 6.) *All fleſh is graſs, and the goodlineſs of it is as the flower of the field.* The majeſty and excellency, the glory and beauty of man, is but the *goodlineſs of fleſh*, or the beſt of a fleſhly, earthly ſtate; and what is that, but the goodlineſs of a fading flower, or of the graſs that is cut down and withers, yea, which ſometimes withers before it is cut down, as *David* ſaith (*Pſal.* 129. 6, 7.) the graſs doth upon *the houſe tops, which withereth afore it groweth up; wherewith the mower filleth not his hand, nor he that bindeth ſheaves his boſom.*

Fourthly, Note, *The way to lay the creature low, is to conſider the Majeſty of God.*

Why doth the Lord call *Job* to deck himſelf with humane majeſty and excellency? was it not to bring him to a due conſideration of his own divine majeſty and excellency? *Job* muſt compare himſelf with God in his glory, that he might fall down convinced, that himſelf had no glory.

Thus the Lord ſhewed *Job* his own meanneſs and exility, by bidding him imitate the divine Majeſty and excellency.

Secondly, The Lord calls him further, to imitate him, if he could, in the mighty effects of his power or in his powerful works, againſt proud and wicked men.

Verſe 11. **Caſt abroad the rage of thy wrath.**

As if he had ſaid, let me ſee now what a man thou art, or rather, what a God thou art, when thou art enflamed with anger.

Caſt abroad.] That is, furiouſly diſperſe and ſcatter thy *rage or rages.* The word ſignifies a ſcattering after breaking to pieces (*Pſal.* 2. 9.) As a Potters veſſel, when it is broken, is ſcattered abroad, ſo ſaith the Lord, ſcatter abroad the (*rage*) *of thy wrath*; the *Hebrew* word is, *The paſſing of thy wrath.* Rage makes a ſpeedy paſſage, it hath a ſwift motion, and do thou caſt it abroad while 'tis ſtirring and in motion, let it not cool, caſt it abroad hot. The word notes a violent hurrying along, *Scatter abroad the rage*

נפצ *Notat confractionem cum diſperſione.* עברה *Indignatio d tranſeundo vel quod citò tranſeat. Ira furor brevis eſt.*

Of thy wrath.] Or as the *Hebrew* hath it, *of thy noſtrils.* Raging appears by breathing, or in the quick ſtirring of the noſtrils when we breath; but why would the Lord have *Job* ſhew his rage? The anſwers is, do it to the deſtruction of the proud.

Behold every one that is proud and abaſe him.

Go, look upon proud ones in thine anger, deal with them as they deſerve. The word implies more than bare beholding.

There is a twofold beholding of things or perſons.

Firſt, With favour, delight and pleaſure (*Pſa.* 33.18. and 34. 15.) In both places the Lord is repreſented, beholding or caſting an eye upon his people, with grace and favour, for their good and comfort.

Secondly, There is a beholding with anger and diſpleaſure; that is the meaning here: behold every one that is proud, behold them all, not only to take notice of them who they are, but behold them as I do, in wrath and anger, *Behold*.

Every one that is proud.] Be they few or many, great or ſmall, ſhew thy ſelf againſt *every one that is proud, and*

Abaſe him.] Every proud man is as a mountain. Go, ſhew thy ſelf like me, behold thoſe that are as mountains among men, and make them valleys, *abaſe them*; that's the Lords work, and the meaning of his word here; as if he had ſaid, *I have a power, that though* proud ones are as great mountains, yet I can make them as valleys. The Lord ſpeaks this again at the beginning of

Verſ. 12. **Look on every one that is proud, and bring him low.**

Here is an elegant repetition of the ſame thing, almoſt in the ſame words, meerly to inforce the matter. *Look on every on that is proud*, bend thy bows, look frowningly upon him, as if thou wouldſt look him through.

Ὑπερήφανον δὲ σβέσον. *Superbum extingue.* Sept.

And bring him low.] The *Septuagint* ſay, *quench him.* The proud man is all in a flame; now ſaith God, behold this proud man and *quench him*, extinguiſh him, put him out. Thus the Lord calls *Job* to expreſs his diſpleaſure in theſe effects againſt proud men, that he might appear in wrath like him: As if the Lord had ſaid, *I behold the proud man, and I abaſe him*; *I look upon the proud man, and bring him low*, now let me ſee you do ſo too. Canſt thou with a look only abate their pride, and bring down the pomp of man? *Caſt abroad the rage of thy wrath.*

Hence Note, Firſt; *There is wrath in God.*

Habet ira Domini ſuam energiam nunquam egreditur vana.

God knoweth how to caſt forth his wrath as well as to ſend forth his love, or *ſhed it abroad* (as the Apoſtles word is, *Rom.* 5. 5.) in the hearts of his juſtified ones, by the holy Ghoſt, which is given unto them. *The wrath of God* (ſaith the ſame Apoſtle, *Rom.* 1. 18.) *is revealed from heaven againſt all ungodlineſs and unrighteouſneſs of men, who hold the truth in unrighteouſneſs.* The wrath of God is ſuch as we can neither, Firſt, withſtand; nor, Secondly, avoid; there's, no out-running, no making an eſcape from it, but only by Jeſus Chriſt, and therefore the Apoſtle gives that glory to him alone (1 *Theſſ.* 1. 10.) *Even Jeſus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.* There is a wrath to come, which God will ſcatter over all this ſinful wicked world; bleſſed are they that are delivered from it. Yea, not only is there wrath in God, but a *fierceneſs of wrath*, terrible wrath, ſuch as will cauſe the wicked (as was ſaid before) *to run into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majeſty, when he ariſeth to ſhake terribly the earth* (*Iſa.* 2. 19.) Let us mind this wrath and the fierceneſs of it; and let us bleſs the Lord, who hath ſent Jeſus Chriſt to deliver us from this wrath, and from the fierceneſs of it. When wrath ſhall be caſt abroad upon the wicked world, that it falls not upon the godly, is the fruit of higheſt and freeſt love. And though they ſip of the cup, yet that they drink not the dregs of it is rich mercy (*Pſal.* 75. 98.) *In the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and the wine is red, it is full of mixture, and he poureth out the ſame* (in this pouring out (poſſibly) a godly man may drink ſomewhat of it, eſpecially in a time of common calamity) *but the dregs thereof all the wicked of the earth ſhall wring them out and drink them.* It is of the *Lords mercy, and becauſe his compaſſions fail not*, that we are delivered from the fierceneſs of his wrath, and from drinking the very dregs of the cup of his diſpleaſure.

Conſider further, upon whom this wrath will be exerciſed, *Caſt forth the rage of thy wrath, behold every one that is proud, and abaſe him:* This the Lord bids *Job* do, to ſhew what himſelf uſually doth.

Hence Note, Firſt; *The Lord takes ſpecial notice of proud perſons.*

He beholds them, he looks upon them. As it is ſaid *of Saul* (1 *Sam.* 18. 9.) *He eyed* David *from that day forward*, that is (which was his great ſin) he caſt a revengeful envious eye upon him: Thus when the holy God ſeeth wicked men grow lofty and proud, he eyeth and beholdeth them from that very day, with an eye of juſt revenge, or with a purpoſe to break them and be revenged on them. God beholds them, as I may ſay, with an evil eye, that is, with an intent to bring evil upon them. *He* (ſaith *David*, *Pſal.* 138. 6.) *knoweth the proud afar off.* As it is ſaid of the Father of the humbled Prodigal in the Parable, (*Luke* 15.) *When he was yet a great way off, his father ſaw him, and had compaſſion.* So God quickly ſpies out a proud man, even a great way off, and hath indignation againſt him; or, as we may rather expound the Pſalm, *He knoweth the proud afar off*; that is, a proud man ſhall never come near him, he will not admit him into his preſence, much leſs into his imbraces, To be known afar off, is to be far from the favourable or reſpectful knowledge of God; yea, to thoſe whom the Lord knows afar off in this world, he will ſay in the next, *I never knew you, depart from me, ye workers of iniquity* (Mat. 7. 23.)

Secondly, Note; *God is able to, and will caſt down proud men.*

That which he would have *Job* do, he himſelf (as was ſaid) uſually doth; *He beholdeth the proud, and abaſeth them*, he layeth them low. *Nebuchadnezzar*, that proud Monarch, was brought to that confeſſion (*Dan.* 4. 37.) *Now I* Nebuchadnezzar *praiſe, and honour, and extol the King of Heaven, all whoſe works are true, and his ways judgment, and thoſe that walk in pride he is able to abaſe.* If men will be proud and lofty, the Lord both knoweth very well how, and is able very eaſily to bring them down. And as he knows how, and is able to deal with proud men, ſo he deſires and delights to deal with them, above all ſorts of ſinners; his greateſt conteſts are with the proud (*Iſa.* 2. 12, 13, 14.) *The day of the Lord of Hoſts ſhall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up* (in his own conceit eſpecially) *and he ſhall be brought low, and upon all the Cedars of* Lebanon, *that are high and lifted up, and upon all the Oaks of* Baſhan, *and upon all the high mountains*, &c. What meaneth the Prophet by theſe? is the Lord angry with trees and mountains? Theſe are but the ſhadows of great and proud men; the day of the Lord ſhall be upon every one of them, and his hand will be heavy upon them in that day. Proud men look upon themſelves much above others; but as God is above them, ſo he loves to ſhew himſelf above them, eſpecially when they ſhew out their pride. As *Jethro* ſaid to *Moſes* (Exod. 18. 9, 11.) *Now I know that the Lord is greater than all gods, for in the thing wherein they dealt proudly he was above them.* God ſheweth himſelf above all, when he acts above proud men, and acts them down in their proudeſt actings.

And as the Lord delights to *bring proud men down*; ſo he will certainly do it, he is reſolved upon it, *He looketh upon every one that is proud to abaſe him.* The angels that fell were proud, *they kept not their firſt eſtate, but left their habitation*, they did not like the ſtate wherein God had placed them; and therefore God caſt them down, *and he hath reſerved them in everlaſting chains under darkneſs unto the judgment of the great day* (Jude 6.) When man in Paradiſe began to be proud and would be more than God made him (God made him above all earthly creatures, but he would be as God, as his Creator; he would be, as it were, the founder of his own happineſs; pride and unbelief at once took hold of him and lead him to his *ſin-fall*, and) then followed his fall, his *judgment-fall*, God caſt him down, God abaſed him, and not only that proud man, but mankind for his pride; they being in him, his pride was theirs. And to this day God hath all along ſet his face againſt all proud men, and the pride of all men, (*James* 4. 6.) *God reſiſteth the proud.* The proud contend with God, they, as it were, wage war with God, and therefore God will wage war and contend with them, he reſiſteth the proud (*Prov.* 3. 34.) *Surely he ſcorneth the ſcorner, but he giveth grace to the lowly.* The Lord hath two great works to do in the world. The firſt is, to lift up and exalt the humble. The ſecond is, to humble and pull down the proud. Theſe two are the daily products of divine providence. And the Lord is ſo much an enemy to pride, that if he ſee it in any of his own ſervants, he will abaſe them and lay them low for it; as we ſee in the caſe of that good King *Hezekiah*, *His heart being lifted up* (not in thankfulneſs, nor in zeal for the ways and things of God, as once it was, but in pride) *there was wrath upon him, and upon* Judah *and Jeruſalem* (2 *Chron.* 32. 35) The Lord will not bear it, when his own bear or behave themſelves proudly (*Prov.* 29. 23.) *A mans pride* (any mans pride) *ſhall bring him low*; that is, he ſhall be brought low for his pride, or his pride will bring him into ſuch extravagant ways as will be a means to bring him low.

Thirdly, Note, *God can eaſily abaſe and caſt down proud ones.*

If any ask, how eaſily can he do it? I anſwer, He can do it with a look; *Look upon every one that is proud, and bring him low*, ſaith God to *Job*, ſhew thy ſelf like me in this, *I can do it as eaſily as look upon him.* God by a caſt of his eye can caſt down all proud men; as the Lord can help his people with a look. *David* deſired no more for his portion, but that God would lift up the light of his countenance upon him (*Pſal.* 4. 6.) that is, that God would look upon him favourably: And that prayer is made three times (*Pſal.*80 4 7,19.) *Cauſe thy face to ſhine upon us, and* (we have enough) *we ſhall be ſaved*, we ſhall be delivered, we ſhall be protected. A good look from God is all good to man. God with a good look can ſave us; and if God withdraw his eye from any, and will not look upon them, if he turn his back upon them, or hide his face from them, his favour is withdrawn, and they are helpleſs. Now as God can ſave his people with a ſmiling look, ſo he can deſtroy his enemies with a frowning one. His look is as powerful and effectual to deſtroy, as it is to ſave; though to look ſavingly be much more the delight of God (if I may ſo ſpeak) than to look deſtroyingly. It is ſaid, God looked through the pillar of fire and the cloud, upon the Hoſts of *Pharaoh*, and troubled them, and took off the Chariot wheels (*Exod.* 14. 24.) Surely God abaſeth the proud men of the World eaſily, when he doth it with a look. He indeed (as the holy Virgin ſpake in her ſong, *Luke* 1. 51, 52.) *Sheweth ſtrength with his arm (or the ſtrength of his arm) when he ſcattereth the proud in the imaginations of their hearts, and puts down the mighty from their ſeats, and exalteth them of low degree*; yet all this the Lord can do with a look from Heaven, *The habitation of his Holineſs, and of his Glory.* Now,

If the Lord deal thus with proud men, take theſe inferences from it.

Firſt, Hath God ſuch an evil eye upon proud men, will he caſt them down? Will he certainly do it? And can he eaſily do it? Then *woe to proud men*; 'tis the word of the Prophet (*Iſa.*28.1.) *Woe to the crown of pride, to the drunkards of* Ephraim; that is, to thoſe who crown themſeves with pride, and make that their glory and their honour which will prove their ſhame and downfal: And theſe the Prophet calls *the drunkards of* Ephraim (I conceive) he means not thoſe that drink themſelves drunk with wine, but thoſe that are drunk with their own preſumptions, with the pride of their Spirits, or, as many alſo are, with vain hopes and expectation. We have vain confidents and expectants ſo expreſſed (*Nahum.* 1. 10.) *While they are folded together as thorns, and while they are drunken as drunkards, they ſhall be devoured as ſtubble fully dry*; that is, while they are drunken with pride and ſelf-confidence to carry all before them, while they are thus folded together like thorns, in their plots and contrivements, while they are drunken with falſe hopes, they ſhall be devoured as ſtubble fully dry; that is, they ſhall be utterly conſumed and devoured.

Secondly, If there be ſuch a woe to proud ones, if the Lord had ſuch a bad eye upon them, and is able to lay them low, and will certainly do it, and can eaſily do it, we had need conſider who are the proud ones. Pride is an evil weed, yet it groweth many times in the beſt ſoil, even in a good heart; and it is no eaſie matter to find out who are the proud men intended in this Text and Point; yet I anſwer,

In general, Firſt, All they are proud who value themſelves very highly, yea, they are proud who put any undue value upon themſelves; we can ſcarcely value our ſelves any thing at all, but we ſhall over-value our ſelves, *for we are worms and no men*, ſaith *David*: He ſaid alſo, *What is man, O Lord, that thou art mindful of him?* Man is ſo ſmall a thing, that the Pſalmiſt could hardly tell what he is, or what to make of him; ſure enough man is no ſuch thing as moſt men make of themſelves. Doubtleſs, if we have any high thoughts of our ſelves, we over-think our ſelves; and uſually they that have leaſt true worth, have greateſt thoughts of their own worthineſs. Man hath loſt all, is ſtript of all, as he cometh into the World, yet he is proud as if he had all. As they that have much are proud, or in great danger of pride, ſo it is a truth, that they who have nothing are often proud too. The Apoſtle bids *Timothy* (1 *Tim.*6.17.) *Charge them that be rich in this World, that they be not high-minded.* And among rich men, they who (as I may ſay, according to the phraſe of the World) have raiſed their own fortunes, are moſt apt to be proud; and there are two reaſons of it, Firſt, Becauſe of the change of their ſtate; they were low and empty, but now they are high and full, This change of their condition, changeth their diſpoſition; and (as we ſay) *Their blood riſeth with their good.* Secondly, That which they have is (ſay they) of their own getting; they think their skill and their diligence hath got it. Hence *Job* proteſted, *If I rejoiced becauſe my hand hath gotten much. Nebuchadnezzar* boaſted of his great Palace, becauſe he had built it; *Is not this great* Babel *that I have built?* Now, as they are apt to be proud who have much, eſpecially when it is of their own acquiſition (though indeed we have nothing meerly of our own acquiſition) ſo they who have little or nothing, are not out of the danger of pride; *poor and proud* is ſo common, that it is grown into a proverb. And they eſpecially, who are poor in ſpirituals, grow proud in Spirit, as it was with the *Laodicean* Angel (*Rev.*3.17.)

But further, they are proud who lift up themſelves in any thing of ſelf; as, Firſt, in their natural parts, wit, underſtanding, memory, elocution; Secondly, in their acquired parts, learning, knowledg, skill; Thirdly, in their moral vertues, ſobriety, temperance, juſtice; Fourthly, in their ſpiritual graces, faith, love, ſelf-denial ('tis poſſible to be proud for a fit of theſe, or to have a fit of pride come upon us upon the exerciſe of theſe) Fifthly, in their holy duties and performances, prayers, faſtings, *&c.* Sixthly, in their legal righteouſneſs and good deeds, alms, charities. We ſeldom do well, or any good, eſpecially (as we ought, and duty binds us) much good, but we think too well of our ſelves (that we are better than we are) or too much both of the good we have done, and of our own goodneſs. As the great goodneſs of God, or the greatneſs of his goodneſs appears chiefly in this, that he can make all things, even evil things, and thoſe not only the evils of trouble, but the evil of ſin, work together for our good (*Rom.* 8. 28.) ſo the great evil of mans heart, or the greatneſs of that evil, appears chiefly in this, that it cauſeth all things, even good things, and thoſe not only the good things of this natural life, but the good belonging to, and done in the power of a ſpiritual life, to work to our hurt, ſometimes for a time, and would to our ruine for ever, did not the Lord over-rule it. Seventhly, the ſavour which they have with men, whether they be *the mighty*, the Princes and Powers of the World, or *the many*, the common people of the World. How are ſome lifted up, becauſe they are the darlings of the people, becauſe the multitude eyes them, points at them, and applauds them! To be lifted up in any of theſe things, or in any thing elſe (and what is there, not only of an Earthly, but of an Heavenly pedigree and extraction, in which the vain heart of man is not ready to be lifted up unduly, forgetting God from whom all good comes; to be lifted up, I ſay, in any of theſe things) lays man open to the wrathful reſiſtance of God, and all ſuch God will bring down and abaſe; therefore let us be empty of our ſelves, and beware of being found among the proud, yea, of being in any kind or degree proud. It is dangerous to have any pride found in us, but woe to thoſe who are found proud.

Thirdly, If the Lord hath ſuch an eye to, and upon proud men, and will thus bring them low, Then *let us not be afraid of proud men*; why ſhould we be afraid of them who are falling (*Prov.*15.33.) *The fear of the Lord is the inſtruction of wiſdom, and before honour is humility.* But what ſaith the ſame *Solomon* (*Prov.*18 32.) *Before deſtruction the heart of man is haughty.* As ſoon as ever we ſee any man ſhewing a proud heart by pride of life, we may quickly conclude the Lord is about to pluck him down. One very great reaſon why the Lord hath laid many, who were once as Mountains, low as Valleys, was the pride of their hearts. When pride buds, the rod bloſſometh; that is, God is preparing for the correction, if not for the deſtruction of proud ones. And as it is ſad to ſee *pride bud* at any time, ſo then eſpecially, when the *rod bloſſometh*, that is, when God is correcting us with his rods.

Fourthly, Then do not envy proud ones. We are apt to envy thoſe that are high in place, though they are proud in Spirit; but, do not envy proud ones, how high, how great ſoever you ſee them, for they are in danger of falling, according to the truth of this Scripture, and many others. When proud men are in their fulleſt ruff, and higheſt aſcent, then they are neareſt a dreadful downfal; *Before deſtruction the heart of man is haughty* (ſaith *Solomon*, *Prov.* 18. 12.) *and before honour is humility*. And the Apoſtle *Peter* having given this counſel to thoſe who are humbled by affliction (1 *Epiſt.* 5. 6.) *humble your ſelves under the mighty hand of God*, ſubjoins this comfortable promiſe in the cloſe of the verſe, *That he may exalt you in due time*.

Fifthly, Then *pride is a very provoking ſin*. The Lord who declares himſelf againſt all ſorts of ſinners, declares himſelf moſt againſt proud ſinners (*Prov.* 16. 5.) *Every one that is proud in heart, is an abomination to the Lord*; and mark what followeth in the ſame verſe, *though hand join in hand, he* (that is, the proud man) *ſhall not be unpuniſhed*. Pride is the Devils ſin, the Devil is that *Myſtical Leviathan* ſpoken of in the forty-firſt Chapter of this Book, *who is a King over all the Children of pride*. They who are not ſubject to God (proud men above all men are not) are the Devils ſubjects; *He is a King over all the Children of pride*. There are four things in which the provocation of the ſin of pride conſiſts, any one of which may provoke God to pull down proud ones.

Firſt, Proud men ſet themſelves in the place of God, *Lucifer* (by whom the proud *Babylonian* is meant) ſaid (*Iſa.* 14.14.) *I will be like the Moſt High*. Thus the Lord ſaid of the Prince of *Tyrus* (*Ezek.* 28.2.) *Becauſe thine heart is lifted up, and thou haſt ſaid I am a God, I ſit in the ſeat of God, in the midſt of the Seas; yet thou art a man and not God, though thou ſett thy heart as the heart of God*. See how that proud Prince thought to carry it as God, as if he had been the founder of his own ſtrength. How can the Lord but be provoked with ſuch an affront as this? Proud *Babylon* ſpake this language, and at as high a rate (*Iſa.* 47.8.) *I am, and none elſe beſides me* (is not this to ſpeak juſt like God) *I ſhall not ſit as a widow, neither ſhall I know the loſs of Children*.

Secondly, As pride is an uſurpation of the place and power of God, ſo of the providence of God. A proud man knoweth not to acknowledg God in any mercy, nor how to be humbled under the hand of God in any affliction. He minds not God either in what he enjoyeth, or in what he ſuffereth; is not this a provocation?

Thirdly, Pride muſt needs provoke God, as a proud man ſets himſelf againſt all the Commands and Laws of God. God cannot but be provoked, to ſee all his Laws and Commands ſlighted by man. A proud man will keep no bounds, nor would he be kept in any.

Fourthly, Pride is a Mother ſin, it brings forth many other ſins. As Unbelief is a Mother ſin, ſo is Pride (*Hab.* 2.5.) *He is a proud man, neither keepeth at home, who enlargeth his deſire as Hell, and is as death, and cannot be ſatisfied, but gathereth unto him all Nations, and heapeth unto him all people*. The pride of the *Aſſyrian* put him upon other ſins, upon oppreſſion eſpecially; he could not keep at home, nor be contented with his own Dominion, though a very large and vaſt one; he muſt go abroad, and invade other mens Territories; his pride ſent him to do miſchief, and he enlarged his deſire as Hell. Proud men muſt oppreſs and wrong others, to bring in fewel for their own luſts. Pride calls in aid from many ſins to ſerve its turn.

Laſtly, If pride provokes God, if he looketh upon every one that is proud, to abaſe him and bring him low; then how ſhould we labour to be *humble ones*, that the Lord may look upon us with a favourable eye, and ſo he doth upon all them that walk humbly with him. As *God reſiſteth the proud, ſo he giveth grace to the humble*, that is, favour. The humble ſhall have his favour, and the proud his frowns. As to *do juſtly, and to love mercy*, is the ſum of all duty to man; ſo to walk humbly, is the ſum of all duty to God (*Mic.* 6.8.) They who walk humbly, walk not only holily, but ſafely. They who are low in their own eyes, are under the ſpecial protection of the high God.

The Lord having called upon *Job* to ſhew the effect of his wrath againſt one ſort of bad men, *the proud*, calleth upon him in the next words, to ſhew the effects of his wrath upon all ſorts of bad men, comprehended under this general word, *The wicked*.

And tread down the wicked in their place.

The Lord bids *Job* do this if he could (indeed he could not) that he might ſhew himſelf a competent match for God. As if the Lord had ſaid, *I tread down the wicked in their places, do thou ſo, too, if thou canſt*. God had ſaid before, *Abaſe every one that is proud, and bring him low*; now he ſaith, *Tread down the wicked*.

Tread them down.] As mire in the ſtreet: We tread upon vile and contemptible things. To tread upon any thing, a perſon eſpecially, notes utter contempt of him, and abſolute conqueſt over him; and therefore (*Joſh.* 10. 24.) to ſhew the compleat victory which the Lords people had got over the Kings of *Canaan*, *Joſhua called for all the men of* Iſrael, *and ſaid unto the Captains of the men of War which went with him, Come near, put your feet upon the necks of theſe Kings; and they came near, and put their feet upon the necks of them*. And that's it which the Apoſtle gives (in way of promiſe) as an aſſurance of our conqueſt over *the evil Spirit*, the Devil (*Rom.* 16.20.) *God ſhall bruiſe* (we put in the Margin, *tread*; the Greek word ſignifies, to bruiſe by treading; *God ſhall tread*) *Satan under your feet ſhortly*, that is, God will give you a full and final victory over the Devil. We have a like expreſſion or promiſe (*Pſal.* 91.13.) *Thou ſhalt tread upon the Lion and Adder; the young Lion and the Dragon ſhalt thou trample under feet*. God will give his people power, not only over hurtful Beaſts, but over men, which are hurtful as thoſe Beaſts, and over Satan, who is eminently ſhadowed by the Lion, the Adder, the young Lion, and the Dragon; in that evil Spirit all theſe evil Beaſts are trodden under feet, that is, ſubdued and conquered. When *David* would ſhew how he (in caſe he were faulty) was willing to be made a very ſlave to his enemies, he phraſes it thus (*Pſal.* 7.5.) *Let the enemy perſecute my Soul and take it, yea, let him tread down my life upon the Earth, and lay mine honour in the duſt*; that is, let him have full power over me, let me be at his mercy, though he be mercileſs. Once more (ſaith the Church, *Pſal.* 44 5.) *Through thee will we puſh down our enemies, through thy name will we tread them down that riſe up againſt us*. Thus the Lord beſpake *Job*, Come, ſaith he, *Let me ſee you tread down the wicked, get an abſolute conqueſt over them*, that they may riſe up no more in this World to do wickedly. *Tread down*

The wicked.] The word **wicked** is often taken largely, ſo every man in a ſinful ſtate, may be called a *wicked man*; every perſon unconverted or unregenerate, every perſon that hath no true grace, is wicked. There is no middle eſtate among men, between good and bad, converted and unconverted; yet here the wicked are not to be taken only in a large ſenſe, for ſinners in common, but ſtrictly,

Firſt, For the proud before ſpoken of, There the Lord ſaid, abaſe the proud, here he ſaith, *Tread down the wicked*; that is, the wicked who are proud. To be wicked and to be proud are the ſame: For as moſt wicked men are proud, ſo all proud men are wicked; for pride it ſelf is a great wickedneſs: And it is pride that cauſeth moſt men to do wickedly, even to rebel againſt God and his righteous Laws, to riſe up againſt his ways and truths. When we have ſaid of a man he is proud, if we have not ſaid all evil, we have ſaid one of the worſt evils of him; and that which lays him open, as to ſuffer the worſt penal evils, ſo to do the worſt ſinful evils.

Secondly, If we take the words diſtinctly (as we may) then by the wicked are meant groſs and flagitious ſinners, notorious ſinners; for though, as I ſaid before, any one that hath not grace, may be called wicked, yet properly, and in Scripture ſenſe, wicked ones are notorious, preſumptuous, and flagitious ſinners, ſuch a ſin with as high hand, and with a ſtiff neck.

Thirdly, By the wicked we may eſpecially underſtand oppreſſors, who are troubleſome and vexatious to others. As ſome are wicked in taking their own pleaſure, and in ſatisfying their vain deſires; ſo many are wicked in vexing, afflicting, and oppreſſing others. The Hebrew word for a wicked man, ſignifies ſuch a one as is both unquiet himſelf, and will not ſuffer others to be quiet. In any of, or in all theſe three notions, we may expound the word wicked here; the wicked are proud ones, or notorious evil ones, or oppreſſors to others. *Tread down the wicked*

In their place.] The Hebrew is *Under them*, The word alſo ſignifieth (as we render) a proper place; and that's conſiderable. *Tread them down in their place.* The Lord doth not ſay *in thy place*, but *in their place*; which may note theſe two things.

Firſt, Whereſoever thou findeſt them, tread them down.

Non eſt difficile ſuperbum hominem & potentem in alieno loco ſuperare, quia in eo minus habet potentiæ. Sanct.

Secondly, *In their place*, that is, where they flouriſh moſt, where they are beſt rooted, or moſt ſtrongly ſecured; where they have the greateſt advantages and ſtrengths to ſave them harmleſs. That is ſpecially *a mans place*, where he ſeateth and hopes to ſettle himſelf. Now ſaith God, *Tread them down in their place.* I do ſo, I deſtroy the wicked, when and where they think themſelves ſafeſt, where they think no hand can touch them, nor arm reach them, there my foot ſhall tread them down. O *Job*, canſt thou do thus? or do thou thus, *Tread down the wicked in their place.* And as it followeth in the next verſe to the ſame effect,

Verſ. 13. **Hide them in the duſt together, and bind their faces in ſecret.**

That is, Bring them to utter deſtruction, to condign puniſhment, even to death. Some expound *hiding in the duſt*, by laying in dungeons and filthy priſons. Secondly, Others ſay to hide in the duſt, notes death, or to lay them in their graves. *Duſt thou art* (ſaid God to *Adam*, Gen. 3. 19.) *and to duſt thou ſhalt return.* That is, thou ſhalt die, and be put in thy grave; which poſſibly, is called, the duſt of death (*Pſal.* 22. 15.) Hide them in the duſt of the earth, let them appear no more above ground to trouble thee or others. *Hide them in the duſt*

Together.] That is either,

Firſt, *All at a time.* Thus the Lord can do, he can deſtroy all the wicked at once, at one time, in one hour. Or,

Secondly, *Together*; that is, in one place. God can gather the wicked all together, and ſo make an end of them together, both as to time and place.

Yet I conceive neither of theſe are here intended; for God doth not uſually deſtroy the wicked all at one time, nor all in one place; he hath ſeveral times and ſtages to act his providences in and upon, ſo that, to hide them in the duſt *together*, is but this, to hide them *alike*, to put them all into the ſame condition, at one time or other, in one place or other, that they may be able to do no more miſchief.

Bind their faces in ſecret.] That's the laſt expreſſion, ſhewing what God doth, and what he bid *Job* do, *Bind their faces in ſecret.* There may be a twofold interpretati- of theſe words; either,

Firſt, In alluſion to men condemned, whoſe faces uſe to be covered; a Sentence of death being pronounced and paſſed upon them, they were as it were hid from the light of the living. Thus as ſoon as *Ahaſuerus* the King had paſſed ſentence againſt *Haman*, *they covered his face* (Eſther 7. 8.) or

Secondly, This covering their faces may be an alluſion to actually dead men, whoſe faces if they die among men, eſpecially among friends, are always bound up and decently covered. When Chriſt called *Lazarus* out of the grave, the Text ſaith (*John* 11. 44.) *He came forth, his face being bound about with a napkin.* So then, to bind their faces in ſecret, is as if it had been ſaid, bring them to death, or put them to death. Thus the Lord calls *Job* to that in three particulars, which himſelf will certainly do.

Firſt, To *Tread down the wicked.*

Secondly, To *Hide them in the duſt together.*

Thirdly, To *Bind their faces in ſecret.*

The Notes which I ſhall give from theſe words, will be grounded upon that three-fold interpretation of the word *wicked.* And

Firſt, As the wicked are taken for the ſame with the proud in the former verſe,

Obſerve, *Proud men are wicked men.*

Behold (ſaith the Prophet, *Mal.* 4. 1.) *The day of the Lord ſhall burn as an oven, and all the proud, and all that do wickedly ſhall be ſtubble.* The proud, and they that do wickedly go together. The proud do wickedly, and are therefore deſervedly numbred among the wicked. Pride is the firſt of thoſe ſeven things which are an abomination to the Lord (*Prov.* 6. 16, 17.) *There are ſix things that the Lord hates, yea, ſeven are abomination to him. A proud look*, that's firſt; and if *a proud look*, then certainly *a proud heart*, and a proud ſpirit. Proud perſons have not onely a chief, but the firſt place by name among thoſe whom the Lord abominates. And in that black Catalogue of eighteen ſorts of wicked ones, that ſhall trouble the world in the latter days, the proud are not the laſt nor the leaſt; (2 *Tim.* 3. 2, 3, 4, 5.) *In the laſt days perilous times ſhall come*, why? what ſhall make them ſo? The reaſon follows, *For men ſhall be lovers of their own ſelves, covetous, boaſters, proud.* Now though the proud man comes in the fourth place, by name, yet he is in the firſt place as to influence; for what is the reaſon why men over-love themſelves? is it not becauſe they are proud, and have too high thoughts of themſelves? *David* (*Pſal.* 119. 21.) ſheweth the wickedneſs of proud men, or that proud men are extreamly wicked, while he ſaith to and of God, *Thou haſt rebuked the proud that are curſed, which do erre from thy Commandments.* The proud are ſuch as continually wander out of the ways of truth and holineſs. Pride will not let us keep Commandments ('tis the humble ſoul which keeps them) and therefore pride may be called the breach of all the Commandments; and if ſo, proud men muſt needs be the very firſt-born of the wicked; and therefore *David* ſaith of them, that they are not only the rebuke of God, but under his curſe, which is the peculiar portion and puniſhment of the wicked. And what the way of proud men is, both in doing and ſpeaking, the ſame *David* tells us (*Pſal.* 75. 4, 5.) *I ſaid unto the fools, deal not fooliſhly; and to the wicked, lift not up the horn, lift not up your horn on high, ſpeak not with a ſtiff neck*, that is, be not proud. Wicked men lift up their horn and tongue, they cannot but ſhew their pride in word and deed. The Devil is *the wicked one* (Matt. 13. 19.) The high-way ground having received the ſeed, 'tis ſaid, *the wicked one* (that is, the Devil) *cometh and catcheth it away.* And when the world *is ſaid to lie in wickedneſs, or in the wicked one* (1 *John* 5. 19.) The meaning is, that the Devil over-rules the carnal world. Now, as the Devil is *the wicked one*, ſo he is *the proud one alſo.* Pride was that wickedneſs for which God trod him down, and his wickedneſs ſtill continueth in tempting men to, or in puffing them up with pride. It is the buſineſs of *the wicked one*, the Devil, to make men proud, becauſe he knows pride will make them wicked, and do wickedly. Pride hardneth the mind (as *Daniel* ſaith it did *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Chap.* 5. 20.) Now what wickedneſs is there, which a hardened mind will not attempt to do! Pride put *Herod* upon ſeeking the blood of Chriſt, who came to ſave and waſh ſinners with his blood.

Proud men are very wicked as they deſpiſe other men (a proud man thinks no man ſo good as himſelf, or himſelf too good for all other men) Some proud men are ſo wicked, that they deſpiſe even God himſelf. The proud man lifts up himſelf againſt the *Word of God*, ſlights the promiſes, regards not the threatnings of God; his heart is lifted up againſt the Commandments of God, nor doth he value the comforts of God; he neglects the Ordinances of God, nor doth he reverence the Providences of God. He that doth, or is ready to do all this, is ſurely a deſpiſer of God himſelf. How wicked a man is he, whoſe heart is lifted up both againſt God and man!

Secondly, Conſider the wicked proud man, as one whom God treadeth down.

Then, Obſerve; *God puniſheth ſinners with that which is moſt croſs to their luſts.*

What more croſs to a high-ſpirited man, than to be brought low; and who can be brought lower than he that is trodden down. As God ſometimes puniſheth Drunkards with thirſt, and Gluttons with hunger, and covetous perſons with poverty. *There is one* ſaith *Solomon*, (Prov. 11. 29.) *that with-holdeth more than is meet* (he doubtleſs is a covetous man that doth ſo) *and it tendeth to poverty.* So God puniſheth proud ones, by that which is moſt contrary to their nature, he abaſeth and layeth them low. The Prophet tells us (*Iſa.* 3. 16, 17.) how the Lord would puniſh wanton women, who were proud either of their natural beauty, or artificial dreſſes and ornaments. *The daughters of Zion* (ſaith he) *are haughty, and walk with ſtretched forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and making a tink-*

a tinkling with their feet; there's their pride: but what was their puniſhment? the next words reſolve us. *Therefore the Lord will ſmite with a ſcab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion, and the Lord will diſcover their ſecret parts*; they were proud of that which covered their skin, and therefore the Lord puniſht them with ſcabs, or covered their skin with ſcurf and ſcabs; and as there the Lord ſhews what he would bring upon, ſo what he would take from them. (Verſ. 18.) *In that day the Lord will take away the bravery of their tinckling ornaments about their feet, and their Cauls, and their round tyres like the Moon. And* (Verſ. 24.) *it ſhall come to paſs that inſtead of ſweet ſmell there ſhall be ſtink, and inſtead of a girdle a rent, and inſtead of well ſet hair baldneſs, and inſtead of a ſtomacher a girding of ſack-cloth, and burning inſtead of beauty.* What could be more contrary to the pride of theſe women, than that which the Lord brought upon them, or puniſhed them with. What do proud women more deſire than beauty and bravery? And what do proud men look after, but to be reſpected, honoured, and to have every one point the finger at them, or bow the knee to them? Now when the Lord blaſts proud women in their beauty and bravery, when he blaſts proud men in their honour and eſtimation, when he thus abaſeth and treads them down, he toucheth them in that which the ſpirit of pride prizeth moſt, and with greateſt regret parteth from. Pride is a baſe height of ſpirit, therefore the Lord abaſeth the proud. There are five words in the Text, all tending directly to croſs the ſpirit of a proud man.

Firſt, He ſhall *be abaſed.*

Secondly, He ſhall *be brought low.* A proud man would fain be high, he would ſit at the upper end of the Table, yea, he would ſit at the upper end of the World too; but, ſaith the Lord, he ſhall be brought low.

Thirdly, What would a proud man do? He would tread upon the necks of all others, but he ſhall be trodden under foot.

Fourthly, Where would the proud man be? He would be conſpicuous in high places, but he ſhall be hid in the duſt.

Fifthly, He would be lookt at by all men with admiration, but, ſaith God, his face ſhall be bound in ſecret; he loves to appear and make a fair ſhew in the fleſh, but he ſhall not appear at all. Proud ones cannot get ſo high, but God in his Juſtice will get above them, and ſtrip them of that wherein they have chiefly prided themſelves. Read (*Iſa.* 14.11,12, 13,14,24,25. and *Iſa.*23.9.) Thoſe Scriptures tell us how the Lord deals with proud men, according to their pride, or rather contrary to their pride, he gives them that which they moſt diſguſt, and takes that from them which they moſt paſſionately deſire.

Secondly, Take wicked men in the common notion, for thoſe that do evil at the higheſt rate, that draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and ſin as it were with cart-ropes. Then,

> Obſerve, Firſt; *Wicked men, that is, impenitent ſinners, high-handed ſinners, are in a very ſad condition, and ſhall come to a ſad concluſion.*

The Lord will tread them down (*Pſal.* 9. 16, 17.) *The wicked is ſnared in the work of his own hands, yea, the wicked ſhall be turned into hell.* That is, the utmoſt of ſorrow and ſuffering ſhall be their portion (*Iſa.* 3. 11.) *Wo to the wicked, for the reward of their doings ſhall be given them.* (Iſa. 57. 21.) *There is no peace, ſaith my God, to the wicked.* As the tumultuouſneſs of their own ſpirits will not let them be at peace, ſo neither will the righteouſneſs of God.

Secondly, From thoſe expreſſions, *Tread down the wicked in their place, hide them in the duſt together, bind their faces in ſecret.*

> Obſerve; *God will at laſt purge and rid the world of wicked men.*

As wicked men would fain purge and rid the world of godly men, they would deſtroy all the ſeed of the righteous; ſo certainly God will deſtroy the wicked of the world, and rid the world of them, though not at once of every wicked man, yet in their times and ſeaſons, that they ſhall not do the miſchief which their hearts are full of. The laſt of the Prophets ſpeaks as much of the Lords vengeance upon all the wicked (*Mal.* 4. 1.) *The day of the Lord* (ſpeaking of ſome great day of the Lords appearance) *ſhall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, ſhall be ſtubble; and the day that cometh ſhall burn them up, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts, that it ſhall leave them neither root nor branch.* 'Tis utter ruin to be deſtroyed *root and branch*; ſuch ſhall the ruin of the wicked be. Thus alſo the Prophet *Iſaiah* comforts the Church (*Chap.* 52. 1.) *Awake, awake, put on thy ſtrength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jeruſalem, the holy City; for henceforth there ſhall no more come into thee, the uncircumciſed and the unclean.* The wicked of the world are the uncircumciſed, they have not the ſpiritual circumciſion, the circumciſion of the heart; theſe ſhall no more trouble *Jeruſalem*, nor tread in *Zions* Courts. (*Nahum* 1. 15.) *Behold upon the mountains the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publiſheth peace; O Judah keep thy ſolemn feaſts, perform thy Vows, for the wicked ſhall no more paſs through thee, he is utterly cut off.* The Hebrew is, *Belial ſhall no more paſs through thee:* That is, ſuch as caſt off the yoke of Jeſus Chriſt, ſhall no more bring *Judah* under their yoke. This is alſo witneſſed by another holy Prophet (*Zech.* 14. 21.) *In that day there ſhall be no more the* Canaanite *in the houſe of the Lord of hoſts*, they ſhall no more mingle themſelves with the faithful ſervants of God, much leſs rule over them. *Canaanites* have often been in the houſe of the Lord, but the *Canaanite* ſhall not always be there; God will ſweep them out of his houſe. Anſwerable to theſe propheſies ſpeaks the laſt propheſie (*Rev.* 21. 27. *Chap.* 22. 15.) which ſome interpret of a glorious ſtate of the Church here, and 'tis undoubtedly true (as all agree) of the Church in glory: *No unclean thing ſhall enter; without ſhall be dogs.* Then indeed, God will *abaſe the proud, and tread down the wicked, in their place.*

> Hence Note, Thirdly; *No outward advantages (and except thoſe they have none) ſhall ſtand the wicked in ſtead, or keep them from falling.*

God will tread them down in *their place*; when they are where they would be, upon their own ground, they ſhall be worſted. The Scripture ſpeaks often of treading down the wicked, notwithſtanding their greateſt advantages. Union is a great advantage for preſervation, yet (*Iſa.* 8. 9.) *Aſſociate your ſelves, O ye people and ye ſhall be broken in pieces; and give ear all ye far Countreys, gird your ſelves, and you ſhall be broken in pieces; take counſel together, and it ſhall come to nought, ſpeak the word, and it ſhall not ſtand.* As if the Lord had ſaid, *I will not take you at an advantage, before you are gathered together, before you are girded; I will not ſurprize you unarmed and unprovided; do your beſt to ſave and ſecure your ſelves from my vengeance.* Aſſociate your ſelves, gird your ſelves, take counſel together, and then I will tread you down. Neither ſtrongeſt aſſociations, nor wiſeſt conſultations, nor higheſt reſolutions, nor compleateſt preparations for action (though ye have *ſpoken the word and are girt*) ſhall avail you in the day of my wrath. Thus the Lord beſpake *Jehoiakim* by his Prophet (*Jerem.* 22. 15.) *Shalt thou reign becauſe thou cloſeſt thy ſelf in Cedar?* As if he had ſaid, becauſe thou doſt make ſuch proviſion for thy own ſafety, doſt thou think to be ſafe? or canſt thou ſhelter thy ſelf againſt me? Again (verſ. 23.) *O Inhabitant of* Lebanon, *that makeſt thy neſt in the Cedars* (Cedars are high trees and ſtrong) *how gracious ſhalt thou be when pangs come upon thee, the pain of a woman in travel.* The Lord puts a ſcorn upon them, ſuch a kind of ſcorn (but not as hers, without cauſe) as *Michael* put upon *David* (2 *Sam.* 6. 20.) *how glorious was the King of* Iſrael *to day.* Were not you very glorious when you danced uncovered before the ark? Thus, I ſay, the Lord puts a holy ſcorn upon the wicked, when they are in their Cedar-neſts; *How gracious wilt thou be,* when pangs of ſorrow come upon thee? Take one Scripture more (*Jer.* 49. 16.) *Thy terribleneſs* ('tis ſpoken of *Edom*) *hath deceived thee,* (thou thoughteſt thy ſelf ſo terrible that none durſt touch thee, yet, *thy terribleneſs hath deceived thee*) *and the pride of thy heart, O thou that dwelleſt in the clefts of the rock, and holdeſt the height of the hill; though thou ſhouldſt make thy neſt as high as the Eagles, I will bring thee down from thence, ſaith the Lord.* Thou haſt all the advantages, thou haſt a rock for ſtrength; and thou art upon a hill for height, yea, upon the height of the hill; thou art above all; but though thy neſt were as the Eagles, *I will pluck thee thence*. Thus the Lord treads down the wicked in their place, in their fortifications, in their mounts and towers; when they have ſecured themſelves moſt by counſels, and friends and ſtrong-holds, then and there he treads them down, even *in their place*.

Fourthly, Note; *God is known to be God, or ſheweth himſelf to be God by abaſing the proud, and by treading down wicked men.*

I ground it thus. The Lord would have *Job* ſhew himſelf like God, or act as God doth, by treading down the wicked. God made himſelf known to be God, by the Plagues which he brought upon *Pharaoh*, as well as by the deliverance and ſalvation which he wrought for *Iſrael* (Exod. 8.22. Exod. 9.14.) *I will ſend all my plagues upon thy heart, and upon thy ſervants, and upon thy people, that thou mayſt know that there is none like me. In very deed for this cauſe have I raiſed thee up, for to ſhew in thee my power, and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth.* Thus alſo ſaid *David* (Pſal. 9.16.) *The Lord is known by the judgement that he executeth*, that is, by puniſhing the wicked he is known to be the Lord. God is known by his works, as well as in his word: power and greatneſs, and wiſdom and juſtice are viſible in his judgments.

There was a third ſort of *wicked* men named in opening the Text, which I ſhall but touch in this obſervation. Such they were deſcribed to be as are unquiet themſelves, nor will they ſuffer others to be quiet by their good wills; they are troubled that any live peaceably by them: The Lord will tread down theſe unquiet wicked ones alſo. The Scripture is full of this truth (*Iſa.* 33.1.) *Wo to thee that ſpoileſt, and thou waſt not ſpoiled; and dealeſt treacherouſly, and they dealt not treacherouſly with thee: when thou ſhalt ceaſe to ſpoil, thou ſhalt be ſpoiled; and when thou ſhalt make an end to deal treacherouſly, they ſhall deal treacherouſly with thee.*

Vexatio verba limata extorſit, mens pia & caſta permanſit.

Now the Lord having put *Job* to all theſe trials of his ſtrength (thereby to ſhew himſelf able to contend with him) tells him plainly, if thou canſt do theſe things, if canſt abaſe the proud, if thou canſt tread them down, hide them in the duſt, and bind their faces in ſecret; Then

Verſ. 14. **Will I confeſs that thine own right hand can ſave thee.**

Confeſſio pro laude & honorifico teſtimonio ſæpe ponitur in Scriptura. *Palmam tibi cedam, &c.* Bez. *Hoc ſolius Dei eſt qui quod eſt, per ſe eſt, & à quo omnis poteſtas & dignitas.*

Then will I confeſs.] That is, when thou haſt done all theſe things, I will give an honourable teſtimony of thee, I will not hide thy power; and then I will acknowledge, thou haſt ſome colour to conteſt with me, and art able to uphold thy ſelf. Theſe mighty acts are proper and peculiar to me; yet thou ſeemeſt to ſay, thou canſt do all theſe, elſe, ſurely thou hadſt never offered to contend with me. That's the ſcope of theſe words, *Then will I confeſs*

That thine own right hand can ſave thee.] Or that thou canſt be a *ſelf-ſaviour*, or that thou art *ſelf-ſufficient*, as I am, and haſt no dependance upon any; and then thou needeſt not complain that I do not help thee, for thou canſt help thy ſelf.

Thine own right hand can ſave thee.] The hand is an inſtrument of help, eſpecially the *right hand*; and then the right hand ſaves, when it either keeps us from danger, or delivers us out of it.

Queſt. But did *Job* ever ſay his own right hand could ſave him?

Anſw. *Job* never ſaid it, nor thought it, his mind was pure from ſuch blaſphemy; yet he ſometimes ſpake as if he had been ſomewhat more than a man, eſpecially, when he ſpake of debating his matters and arguing with God.

Firſt, In that the Lord ſaith, in caſe *Job* could do all thoſe things, he would confeſs *that his own right hand could ſave him*,

Note, *He that can deſtroy all others, can ſave himſelf.*

Illa facere poſſe, & ſeipſum ſalvare unius, & ejuſdem ſunt virtutis.

There goes no more to ſave our ſelves out of any trouble, than to deſtroy all others. The Apoſtle *James* ſaith (*Cap.* 4. 12.) *There is one Law-giver, who is able to ſave and deſtroy.* God is this law-giver, he is able to do both; and becauſe he can deſtroy all, he can ſave all, and will ſave all that truſt in him. The devil is called a *deſtroyer*, he is called *Abaddon* in Hebrew, and *Apollyon* in Greek, that is, a *deſtroyer* (*Rev.* 9.11.) but he cannot deſtroy all; if he could, he would ſoon make ſad work, none ſhould be ſaved. There is but one law-giver, who can ſave and deſtroy, take away life and give life; he can do the one as well as the other, and both as often as he will. The Lord hath an abſolutely ſupream power over men, and may diſpoſe of them for life or death as he pleaſeth; even, eternal life and death, ſalvation and damnation are in his hand; 'tis therefore *a fearful thing to fall into the hand* (the revenging hand) *of the living God* (*Heb.* 10.31.) upon the neglect, much more upon the deſpiſing and contempt of the covenant of life and peace by Jeſus Chriſt, as 'tis ſaid at the 29. *verſe* of that *Chapter*. Chriſt is the beſt friend and the worſt enemy; *To him belong the iſſues from death* (*Pſal.* 68.20.) and *he hath the keys of death and hell* (*Rev.* 1.18.) Let us rejoyce with trembling before him, *who is able to ſave and deſtroy.*

Secondly, Note; *Man cannot ſave himſelf by the beſt of his power.*

No, not by his own right hand. Man cannot ſave himſelf, Firſt, from temporal evils; he cannot ſave himſelf, from ſickneſs nor from poverty, he cannot ſave himſelf from any danger that is ready to fall upon him; nor can the ſtrongeſt creatures ſave him (*Pſal.* 33.17.) *A horſe is a vain thing to ſave a man*, and man is as vain a thing to ſave himſelf; a horſe cannot deliver us by his great ſtrength, or by the greatneſs of his skill and wiſdom. Secondly, much leſs can man ſave himſelf from ſpiritual and eternal evils. While we conſider, Firſt, out of what miſery we are ſaved. Secondly, from what mighty enemies we are ſaved. Thirdly, from whoſe wrath we are ſaved. Fourthly, what price was required, that we might be ſaved. Fifthly, what mercy and grace were needful to ſave us: we muſt needs confeſs, that our right hand cannot ſave us, ſpiritually and eternally. Who can ſave himſelf out of the hand of that great enemy the devil, and his legions of darkneſs? who can ſave himſelf from that gulf of miſery, into which ſin hath plunged us? who can deliver himſelf from the curſe of the Law, or from ſin, the ſting of death? who can deliver himſelf from the power of his luſts, from the pride, unbelief, covetouſneſs and hardneſs of his own heart? Our own right hand cannot ſave us from any of theſe evils. The devil and the world are too ſtrong for us, and ſo is every luſt and corruption of our own evil hearts. Can we by any power of our own convert our ſelves, or preſerve our ſelves after converſion? Can we get out of the Kingdom of darkneſs by our own power? or put our ſelves into the Kingdom of light by our own power? That we are either temporally, or ſpiritually, or eternally ſaved, is all from the power, from the right hand of God, not at all from our own. Unleſs we give all to God, we take all from him. *He that is our God, is the God of ſalvation, and unto God the Lord belong the iſſues from death* (*Pſal.* 68.20.) Salvation of every kind, and the iſſues from every kind of death, are of the Lord.

Thirdly, Note; *God can ſave alone, or by his own right hand.*

That the Lord would have *Job* underſtand; and this we underſtand from other Scriptures (*Pſal.* 17.7.) *Shew thy marvellous loving kindneſs, O thou that ſaveſt by thy right hand thoſe that put their truſt in thee.* This is one of Gods royal Titles, *Thou that ſaveſt by thy right hand* (Pſal. 98.1.) *O ſing unto the Lord a new ſong, for he hath done marvellous things, his right hand and his holy arm hath gotten him the victory* (Pſal. 44.4.) *Thou art my King of old, commanding deliverances for* Jacob. How eaſily can the Lord ſave with his hand, who can ſave with his tongue, and deliver by commanding deliverances? Nor is it one deliverance only which the Lord commands, but many, yea, any: That Pſalm gives it plurally, *commanding deliverances*. The Prophet ſpeaks of this ſole and ſolitary ſaving power of God (*Iſa.* 59.16.) *He ſaw that there was no man* (that is, no man that offered any help) *and wondred that there was no interceſſor* (that is, no man to ſpeak a good word for them) *therefore his arm brought ſalvation to him, and his righteouſneſs it ſuſtained him.* And again (*Iſa.* 63.5.) *I looked, and there was none to help, and I wondred that there was none to uphold; therefore mine own arm brought ſalvation to me.* This is it which was ſaid before (*verſ.* 3.) *I have* *trodden the wine-preſs alone, and of the people there was none with me.*

Hence we may infer; Firſt, *If the Lords right hand can ſave alone, then there can never be too few hands for God to ſave us by.*

There may be ſometimes too many for God to ſave us by, but never too few. Why? becauſe he can ſave by his own right hand. The Lord ſaid to *Gideon* (*Judg.* 7.2.) *The people that are with thee, are too many for me to give the* Midianites *into their hands* (they were ſo many, that the ſole ſalvation of God would not appear) *leſt* Iſrael *vaunt themſelves againſt me, ſaying, mine own hand hath ſaved me.* Though we have but little ſtrength, yet it may be too much for Gods purpoſe, we being apt to boaſt our ſelves, when we have any hands to ſave us, as if our own right hand had ſaved us.

Secondly, *If God can ſave by his own right hand, Then, when we ſee none, when we ſee nothing to ſave us by, let us truſt God alone.*

If God be with us we have ſtrength enough, and hands enough with us. It is all one with the Lord, to ſave by few or by many, yea, by few or by none at all, for his own right hand can do it.

Thirdly, *Then truſt in Gods right hand alone for ſalvation, how many hands ſoever you have at any time at work for your ſalvation.*

This is our ſin, that when we have many hands to ſave us, we truſt in them, rather than in the right hand of God. The Lord often and uſually makes uſe of mans hand to ſave us by (*Obad. ver. ult.*) *And Saviours ſhall come upon mount* Zion *to judge the mount of* Eſau, *and the Kingdom ſhall be the Lords.* Now, though the Lord uſeth other right hands to ſave us by, and to judge the wicked by, beſides his own, yet we muſt truſt in his alone; for 'tis he alone that ſaveth us, by what hand ſoever our ſalvation is wrought or brought to us.

Fourthly, Obſerve; *To ſave by a ſelf-power, is the ſole prerogative of God.*

Divinitatis gloriam ſibi arrogant, & (quaſi) Deum agere volunt.

Only he who ſtands upon his own bottom, or ſubſiſts in and of himſelf alone, can ſave or do any thing of himſelf alone. And as none can do any thing alone, or by a ſelf-power, but God; ſo none ſhould preſume that they can do, or undertake to do the leaſt thing alone. We may, yea, we muſt uſe our hands; that is, do our endeavour for the accompliſhment of every work (for God doth not work ſo as to let man ſtand ſtill and be idle) but we muſt not ſo much as have a thought, that we can effect any thing by our hands. That wiſe woman *Abigail* intimated to *David* (1 *Sam.* 25.31.) that, if he had gone on to avenge himſelf upon *Nabal* with his own hand, it might have proved grief to him, and offence of heart, that is, trouble of conſcience. Now, as we muſt not at all uſe our own hand in avenging our ſelves, nor think of avenging our ſelves by our own right hand (for ſaith God, *Vengeance is mine, and I will repay it:*) ſo it is exceeding ſinful to imagine that we can ſave our ſelves, or do any thing, effectually, towards it by our own hand. I may ſee theſe four things, to ſhew the ſinfulneſs of ſuch an imagination.

Arnold Bootius, *Animad. ſacr. in vetus teſt.* l. 3. c. 2.

Firſt, It is high preſumption to think ſo. It was the preſumption of the great *Aſſyrian* (*Iſa.* 10.13.) to ſay, *By the ſtrength of my hand have I done it, and by my wiſdom, for I am prudent; and I have removed the bounds of the people* (he had no mind to remove their bonds) *and have robbed their treaſures, and I have put down the inhabitants like a valiant man.* So we render the ſimilitude, *Like a valiant man,* and ſo do moſt interpreters, both ancient and modern; yet a late learned critick diſſenting from them all, renders, I have knockt them down, or ſlain them, *like a beaſt or bullock for ſlaughter or ſacrifice.* Which expoſition he confirms, as by the ſenſe of the word there uſed, ſo by the cuſtom of ſpeaking in all languages, it being uſual to compare great ſlaughters of men to the ſlaughtering of beaſts; but of this by the way. Now, whether we take our reading or this, either of them ſets out the preſumptuous boaſting of the *Aſſyrian* King, that the ſtrength of his own right hand had done all thoſe great things.

Secondly, 'Tis fleſhly confidence, ſuch a confidence as God will reject (*Jer.* 2.37.) to think we can do any thing by our own hand.

Thirdly, It is a ſlighting of, and departing from God to think ſo (*Jer.* 17.5.) *Curſed be the man that truſteth in man, and maketh fleſh his arm* (whether his own fleſh or other mens fleſh, what fleſh ſoever it is that he maketh his arm, curſed be he, and what follows) *and whoſe heart departeth from the Lord.* As if he had ſaid, every time we think to ſave our ſelves by our own right hand, we do curſedly depart from the Lord. The truth is, we can no more ſave our ſelves, than we can make our ſelves; we can no more preſerve our being, than we can give our ſelves a being; it is from the Lord that we have a being, or are preſerved from a miſerable being.

Faciunt vim ſuam, Deum ſuum.

Fourthly, They who think they can ſave themſelves by their own hand, put themſelves into the place of God, and take upon themſelves to be God. The King of *Iſrael* ſaid well (2 *King.* 5.7.) when the King of *Syria* ſent *Naaman* his ſervant to heal him of his Leproſie, *Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man doth ſend me to recover a man of his Leproſie?* Whoſoever thinks he can heal, or ſave by his own power, takes upon himſelf, as if he were God. *Many make their force their God.* That Heathen King (*Hab.* 1.11.) aſcribed *his power to his god.* So we render the words; yet ſome expound them, as if *Nebuchadnezzar,* in the pride of his heart, refuſing at that time to acknowledge any God but himſelf, aſcribed his power to himſelf. But ſuppoſing according to the ſupplement of our Tranſlation, and the expoſition of many more, that he aſcribed his power not to himſelf, but to his Idol-god; how great a rebuke will that acknowledgement of his be to any, who worſhipping the true God, ſhall yet aſcribe their power to themſelves, and ſo take upon themſelves to be God? *Jacob* ſaid to *Rachel,* when ſhe was ſo impatient for children, *Am I in the place of God?* To give effect, is the work of God; and therefore, for us to think we can give effect to what we do, is to take upon us to be God. The King of *Tyrus* is therefore ſaid, *To ſet his heart as the heart of God,* (*Ezek.* 28.6.) becauſe he thought he could defend and ſecure himſelf by a ſelf-power and ſtrength, or by a ſelf-wiſdom and policy. Let us renounce our own arm, and power, and ſtrength, and right hand, in all things; let us look upon our own right hand as weak and withered, unable to bring any thing to paſs, but as the Lord ſhall be pleaſed to put forth his right hand to ſtrengthen ours. And when we are thus ſenſible of our own weakneſs, and alſo humbled under a ſenſe of it, then the Lord gives out moſt ſtrength to us; yea, makes us able to do all things (which are our duty, and we have a call to do) *through Chriſt ſtrengthning us* (*Phil.* 4.13.) And as we ſhall find Chriſt ſtrengthning us to do, ſo to ſuffer all things when we are weak in our ſelves. The Apoſtles experience taught him to ſay ſo (2 *Cor.* 12.10.) *I take pleaſure in infirmities, in reproaches, in neceſſities, in perſecutions, in diſtreſſes for Chriſts ſake; for when I am weak* that is, in my ſelf) *there I am ſtrong;* that is, in the Lord.

Thus the Lord hath been dealing with *Job* to humble him, by putting him upon thoſe things which he himſelf alone can do; by which he taught *Job,* and teacheth us and all men, that no man can ſave himſelf by his own right hand. There is no ſalvation in any name, in any hand, but in Jeſus Chriſts; much leſs ſpiritual or eternal ſalvation.

VERS. 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24.

Behold now Behemoth, which I made with thee, he eateth graſs as an Ox.

Lo now is ſtrength is in his loins, and his force is in the navel of his belly.

He moveth his tail like a Cedar: the ſinews of his ſtones are wrapt together.

His bones are as ſtrong pieces of braſs: his bones are like bars of iron.

He is the chief of the ways of God: he that made him, can make his ſword to approach unto him.

Surely the mountains bring him forth food: where all the beaſts of the field play.

He lieth under the ſhady trees, in the covert of the reeds and fens.

The ſhady trees cover him with their ſhadow: the willows of the brook compaſs him about.

Behold, he drinketh up a river, and haſteth not: he truſteth that he can draw up Jordan into his mouth.

He taketh it with his eyes; his noſe pierceth through ſnares.

THe Lord having ſpoken in the former context concerning proud men, when he alone is able to abaſe, to lay low, to tread down, as 'tis there expreſt; he preſently ſubjoyns, not only the mention, but a very large and accurate deſcription of two huge, vaſt and (as to bigneſs) monſtrous creatures; the one belonging to the Land, the other to the Water. In the making and governing of both which, his mighty power and wonderful providence are clearly ſeen, and ought to be religiouſly, both acknowledged and adored, theſe being ſuch as man could not ſubdue, nor make any uſe of, unleſs God had ordered and over-ruled them for the ſervice and benefit of man; one of them he hath ſubdued to the ſervice of man, *Behemoth*, and the other to the benefit of man, even the *great Leviathan*.

Many of the Ancients draw this whole diſcourſe about *Behemoth* and *Leviathan*, into an Allegory, underſtanding by them. Firſt, The Devil; Secondly, Antichriſt, together with all the oppreſſive and afflictive powers of this world. But though we may make ſome uſe and improvement of the Allegory, yet doubtleſs theſe two creatures are here intended primarily in a proper and literal ſenſe; even as the Lord before in a proper and literal ſenſe diſcourſed with *Job* concerning the Lion, the wild Goat, the wild Aſs, the Unicorn, the Horſe, and ſeveral other creatures, mentioned in the 39. Chapter of this Book. And therefore it was well ſaid by an ancient Writer upon this place. *We are not ignorant that many have expounded this Scripture in an allegorical way, of the Devil; but we muſt firſt attend the Hiſtory, and then make ſome uſe, for the profit of the hearer, out of the Allegory.*

Nec illud nos fugit in diabolum hæc dicta eſſe nonnullos exiſtimaſſe; verum primo hiſtoria danda eſt opera deinde utilitati ſuccurrendum auditoris, nec contemnenda Anagogia. Chryſoſt.

The Lord in preſenting this and that other vaſt creature to *Job*, ſeems thus to beſpeak him, *That thou, (O* Job*) mayſt know the better how to take meaſure of thy ſelf, and how to keep thy due diſtance in ſpeaking to me (of which* Job *had not been ſo obſervant as he ſhould) I ſet before thee two ſtupendious creatures, both the work of my hands, both at my diſpoſe and command; and by thy inability to deal with them, thou mayſt learn how unable thou art to ſtrive or contend with me.* Or thus, *If thou (O* Job*) doſt not yet underſtand what a poor creature thou art, and how uncomely a thing it is for thee to murmur at, and find fault about my proceedings with, and providences towards thee, in laying thoſe ſore afflictions upon thee; or if thou doſt not yet underſtand how uncomely thou haſt carried it towards me, in calling me to account for my actions with thee, yet learn it, at leaſt, at the ſight, or upon conſideration of theſe beaſts. Canſt thou match either the Elephant or the Leviathan? Canſt thou find any error in their frame or conſtitution, when thou haſt viewed all their parts which I will particularly ſet out before thee? Art thou ſtrong as* Behemoth, *and mighty as* Leviathan? *Canſt thou withſtand their ſtrength or might? dareſt thou contend with them, or ſtand before them? If not, how dareſt thou contend with me? how dareſt thou ſpeak words which may bear ſo much as the ſhadow of any contention with me, or diſſatisfaction with what I have done?*

Thus the Lord who had exemplified his power and wiſdom to *Job* in divers creatures of a leſſer ſize and port, now gives inſtance in two of the greateſt, the Elephant and Leviathan, which may well be called *The chief patterns or pieces of divine power and skill*, that ſo, *Job* might be further convinced, and more deeply humbled by theſe viſible things, of the inviſible power of God, or might learn how mighty that God is that made them, how mighty that God is who rules and over-rules them. The one would trouble all at Land, and the other all at Sea, if God did not bind and bridle them. This doubtleſs, or ſomewhat like this, is the general ſcope of the Lords long diſcourſe about theſe two famous creatures, even to ſhew how much man is below God, ſeeing he is ſo much (in many things) below theſe beaſts; or, that man who in many things is no match for theſe creatures, cannot poſſibly be a match for God, who made them. Thus much in general.

Verſe 15. Behold now Behemoth.

We have a deſcription of *Behemoth* ſix ways in this context.

Firſt, He is deſcribed by his procreating or efficient cauſe, *God himſelf*; *Behold now* Behemoth *which I made: He is my work, my workmanſhip.*

Secondly, He is deſcribed by his conſerving cauſe, or that which is the matter of his nouriſhment and preſervation, in the cloſe of the 15. verſe, *He eateth graſs like an Ox.* And (*ver.* 20.) *Surely the mountains bring him forth food.*

Thirdly, He is deſcribed by his mighty ſtrength; by the ſtrength of his loins and belly (*ver.* 16.) by the ſtrength of his tail and genitals (*ver.* 17.) and by the ſtrength of his bones (*ver.* 18.) from all which, the Lord concludes in the 19. verſe (which are the words I ſhall chiefly inſiſt upon) his excellency above all other beaſts, *He is the chief of the ways of God*; and yet how great and vaſt ſoever he is, his ſtrength is weakneſs in compariſon of God; for as 'tis ſaid, God is able to tame him, and ſubdue him; in the latter end of the 19. verſe, *He that made him, can make his ſword to approach unto him.* The former part of this 19. verſe heightens all that hath been ſpoken before concerning the power of *Behemoth*, which is the third thing whereby he is deſcribed.

Fourthly, He is deſcribed by his harmleſsneſs towards other beaſts (*ver.* 20.) *Surely the mountains bring him forth food, where all the beaſts of the field play.* As if God had ſaid, this is no ravenous beaſt, though a great beaſt, for all the beaſts of the field; little or great, one and the other, play about him, they do not run away, they are not frighted at the ſight of him, as if they ſaw a Lion or a Tyger.

Fifthly, He is deſcribed by the place of his repoſe and ſhelter, where he delights to reſt himſelf, and take his eaſe (*ver.* 21, 22.) *He lieth under the ſhady trees, under the covert of the reeds and fens; the ſhady trees cover him with their ſhadow, the willows of the brook compaſs him about.*

Sixthly, He is deſcribed by his deep and dreadleſs drinking, in the two laſt verſes of the Chapter; *Behold he drinketh up a River, and haſteth not* (for fear) *he truſteth that he can draw up* Jordan *into his mouth* (not an ordinary River, but *Jordan*) a high expreſſion, to ſhew the extream thirſt of this creature (according to our reading) and how large a cask he hath to hold his liquor; *He truſteth that he can draw up* Jordan *with his mouth; he taketh it with his eyes* (he thruſts his head into the water up to the eyes) *and his noſe pierceth through ſnares.* By theſe ſix particulars this creature is deſcribed; upon all which, I ſhall add ſomewhat diſtinctly and briefly.

Behold now Behemoth, which I have made with thee.

God calls *Job* to a very attentive conſideration, being to enter upon a diſcourſe about the creature. *Behold*, is a uſual word of attention, it alſo is a word which carries admiration in it; it gives us warning, that the matter following is of no ordinary importance; and ſurely, that which followeth here is not. *Behold now Behemoth.*

Hence Note, *The works of God, eſpecially his great works, are very attentively to be conſidered.*

Let's not think it a matter of indifferency, whether we conſider theſe works of God, yea, or no. Here is a *Behold* prefixt, leſt we ſhould ſay, what ſhould we ſtay our minds upon beaſts, upon *Behemoth* or *Leviathan*, we have other more ſpiritual objects to think upon? 'Tis true, we have; but we muſt take heed of ſlighting theſe objects, eſpecially when God doth, as it were, travel by his Spirit, to ſet them forth before the eye of our mind, in their utmoſt grandure and excellency. We ſhould not paſs the leaſt works of God lightly by, much leſs ſhould we ſo paſs by the great works of God. We ſhould not lightly paſs by the leaſt mercy of God, but think much of little mercies; little mercies are great mercies to us, ſeeing we are leſs then the leaſt of them (as *Jacob* ſpake, *Gen.* 32. 10.) but we muſt eſpecially conſider great mercies, great deliverances, great ſalvations; upon them our minds muſt ſtay or make a ſtand, and our meditations dwell. We are alſo to conſider, and well to view all our ſins, our little ſins, our leaſt failings, ſeeing they have a greatneſs in them, as being committed againſt the great God, and as being able to do us great hurt, and to draw down great wrath upon us, if not repented of, and turned from; but our great ſins muſt much more be viewed and conſidered: And every godly man doth ſo, he holds the eye of his Soul upon the ugly face of great ſins, eſpecially, to diſcover the deformity and iniquity of them to the utmoſt, that he may be greatly humbled for them. Now, as we ſhould not lightly paſs by our leaſt mercies and ſins, but very deeply conſider our great mercies and ſins, ſo we ſhould not neglect the leaſt creature, the leaſt work of God (the great wiſdom and power of God are viſible in the leaſt) but we ſhou'd ſeriouſly conſider the more noble creatures, and the greater works of God, whether they be works of creation, or works of providence. I may ſay as Chriſt (*Matth.*23. 23.) about *tything mint, anniſe and cummin; theſe things ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.* Chriſt uſed a piece of rhetorick; when he ſaid, *You ſhould not leave them undone,* his meaning was, you ſhould do thoſe *greater things of the Law, judgment, righteouſneſs, and faith,* with greateſt exactneſs. So I ſay in this caſe, you are not to leave the leaſt pieces of Gods work in creation or providence, unviewed, unconſidered, unmeditated; but his great works, his *Behemoths,* you ſhould *behold,* ſtudy and admire, or behold and ſtudy with admiration. *When I conſider* (ſaith *David, Pſal.*8 3) *the Heavens, the work of thy hands, the Sun and the Moon,* &c. This implyeth, that *David* did often conſider the Heavens, thoſe great pieces of Gods work, as alſo the great Luminaries there placed and moving with admired ſwiftneſs and evenneſs continually. Though we are chiefly to behold ſpiritual things, yet we muſt not think our time loſt in beholding natural things; though we ſhould ſpecially behold Gods gracious works, the works of grace, the workmanſhip of God in framing the new creature, yet we muſt alſo behold the old creation, and view every piece of it, eſpecially the great pieces of it. Again, though we ſhould behold and *be looking to the Author and finiſher of our faith*; though we ſhould, as the Baptiſt called ſome to do in his time, and all to do in all times (*John* 1.29.) *Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the ſins of the World* (our eyes and our hearts, the eye of our faith ſhould be upon *Chriſt the Lamb of God,* more, ten thouſand times more, then upon *Leviathan* or *Behemoth*) yet 'tis our duty to behold *Behemoth* and *Leviathan.* Jeſus Chriſt ſaith (*Iſa.* 65. 1.) *Behold me, behold me*; 'Tis the word here in *Job.* Jeſus Chriſt ſpeaks there as if he would call off our eyes and hearts from all things in the world, to behold himſelf; and in compariſon, ſo we ſhould. He is the moſt amiable ſight or ſpectacle in the world, and therefore ought to be the deſire of our eyes; yet in their places, there are other worthy ſpectacles for us to behold, eſpecially as they hold forth, and as in them we may behold, the power, wiſdom and goodneſs of God. Let no man ſay we loſe our time in a due meditation upon any of the creatures which God hath made; for he hath made them, that we ſhould behold and meditate upon them.

בהם
בהמה
Pecus majus

Behold now Behemoth.] The word *Behemoth* is applicable to, or may ſignifie any greater or great beaſt of the field (*Gen.* 3.14.) *The Lord ſaid unto the ſerpent; becauſe thou haſt done this, thou art curſed above all cattle, and above every beaſt of the field.* And again, *Every beaſt of the forreſt is mine* (ſaith the Lord, *Pſal.* 50. 10.) *and the cattle upon a thouſand Hills.* Hence ſome conceive that we are here to underſtand *beaſts in general,* the word *Behemoth* being in the plural number. *Behold now the beaſts*; as if the Lord pointed at all the beaſts of the field in this *Behold.* And 'tis a truth, we are to conſider them all; but it is very improbable that in this place God calls *Job* to behold the beaſts of the field in general, and not rather ſome one in ſpecial: And I may give four reaſons for it.

Firſt, Becauſe in the former Chapter God had ſpoken of divers particular beaſts of the earth; and therefore doubtleſs here alſo he ſpeaks of ſome particular beaſt.

Secondly, That creature which is joyned with *Behemoth* in this diſcourſe, is by moſt taken for a particular kind of fiſh in the Sea; and therefore 'tis moſt congruous, that *Behemoth* ſhould denote ſome particular kind of beaſt at Land.

Thirdly and chiefly, The deſcription given here of *Behemoth* will not fit all ſorts of beaſts in the field, it will not fit a ſheep, nor a bullock. What is ſaid of *Behemoth* exceeds the proportion and conſtitution of all ſuch and many other beaſts.

Fourthly, *Behemoth* is ſaid to feed, *where all the beaſts of the field do play* (Ver.20.) and therefore we cannot underſtand all the beaſts of the field by him; no, nor (which ſome of the Jewiſh writers inſiſt much upon) all the greater beaſts of the field. And therefore we may conclude, that this word *Behemoth* (though in it ſelf a plural word) is here intended of a ſingular beaſt; and, becauſe there is no greater beaſt upon the earth then the *Elephant*; therefore moſt interpreters (both ancient and modern) determin it upon the *Elephant,* to whom (among all the beaſts of the Earth, thoſe ſix particulars (mentioned in the following deſcription of *Behemoth*) are ſuppoſed moſt fitly to agree.

And whereas 'tis objected, the word *Behemoth* is of the plural number, that is eaſily anſwered, and wiped off; for nothing is more uſual in the Hebrew language, then to expreſs great things by a plural word; and ſo the Elephant may be called *the beaſts,* either, Firſt, with reſpect to the vaſtneſs of his body, as if he did comprize, or were a comprehenſion of all other beaſts. Or, Secondly, with reſpect to ſome extraordinary qualification or eminency found in him, in which reſpect, it is ſaid at the 19. verſe, *He is the chief of the ways of God.* As the Hebrew ſets out excellent things by words of the *ſuperlative degree,* ſo likewiſe by words of the *plural number,* or it uſeth the plural number to ſignifie the ſuperlative degree. The Elephant is *the Beaſt, the Beaſt of Beaſts,* a beaſt above all beaſts. Thus (*Prov.*1.20.) Chriſt is called in the plural number *Wiſdoms,* becauſe of the excellency of his wiſdom. Again (*Prov.*9.1.) *Wiſdom* (ſo we Tranſlate, but the word is *Wiſdoms*) *hath built her houſe,* That is, Jeſus Chriſt hath. And he is expreſt by a plural word, to note that all ſorts and degrees of wiſdom meet in him; according to that of the Apoſtle (*Col.* 2. 3.) *In him are hid all the treaſures of wiſdom and knowledg.* As *David* when he would ſhew how very fooliſh and beaſtly he had been, in miſ-judging the diſpenſations of God; Firſt, in afflicting the godly; Secondly, in proſpering evil men: When (I ſay) he conſidered, how fooliſhly he had done in envying at, or in being troubled about their proſperity; he concludes (*Verſ.*22.) *So fooliſh was I and ignorant, even as a beaſt before thee.* The Hebrew uſeth the word in the Text, *Behemoth, even as beaſts before thee.* As if he had ſaid, the beaſtlineſs of all beaſts centred in me, and all their ignorance, while my ſpirit was ſo troubled in this matter concerning the providences of God, towards my ſelf who ſerve him, and thoſe who ſerve him not. Thus *David,* that he might fully acknowledg, how *very a beaſt* he was, in ſo ſpeaking and ſo thinking, calls himſelf *Behemoth, Beaſts.* This may ſuffice to ſatisfie the Reader why we expound the Text of a particular beaſt, and why moſt pitch it upon the Elephant among all beaſts in ſpecial, though the word be of the plural number. There being no proper or peculiar name in Scripture for the Elephant, it is moſt probable that he is here named by this Appellative word plural.

Behemoth *forma plurali nuncupatur Elephantus more Hebræorum, qui pluralibus nonnunquam pro ſuperlativis uti ſolent. Latini quoque hiſtorici ſæpe cum de Elephanto loquuntur, Belluam, abſolutè nominant.* Druſ.

Yet (before I ſtep further into that large deſcription which the Lord gives of *Behemoth*) I cannot forbear to take notice, that the ſame induſtrious and learned Author, who varyeth in opinion (as was there ſhewed) about the *Reem,* by us rendred the *Unicorn,* varyeth here as much in his Opinion about *Behemoth,* intimated by our tranſlators in the Margin, and affirmed (as himſelf confeſſeth) by the moſt general voice of modern interpreters, to be the *Elephant.*

Bochartus *parte poſteri lib.* 5. *c.* 15.

I ſuppoſe it will not be unacceptable to the Reader, if I here offer a brief account of thoſe reaſons which prevailed with him to turn off from the common opinion concerning this Animal, which he gives as followeth.

‘In the fortieth and forty-firſt Chapters of the Book of *Job* (ſaith he) *Behemoth* and *Leviathan* are ſo deſcribed, that 'tis apparent they are beaſts of a huge bulk; Whence it comes to paſs, that moſt of the latter Writers have thought *Behemoth* to be the *Elephant*, and *Leviathan* the *Whale*; this being without controverſie the greateſt Animal that lives in the waters, and that the greateſt that lives upon the Land. To whoſe Judgment I ſhould have willingly aſſented, but that conſidering the matter more narrowly, I ſaw many thing ſpoken of them, even in approved verſions, which no way agree with the nature of the Elephant and the Whale. I ſhall not ſay that Interpreters prepoſſeſſed with this opinion, have wreſted ſome things another way, which if they were rightly unfolded according to the Hebrew, it would appear as clear as the light, that under theſe names *Behemoth* and *Leviathan*, two animals are characteriz'd extreamly different from the Elephant and the Whale; but which they are, is not eaſie to determin. Yet it doth not a little pleaſe me, that *Beza* and *Diodate*, men of a moſt clear judgment, and of no ordinary learning, do conclude *Leviathan* to be the *Crocodile* of *Nilus*. Whence I have a ſtrong conjecture, that *Behemoth* is an animal of the ſame neighbourhood, even an Inhabitant of *Nilus*, called *Hippopotamus* (or the *River-horſe*.) I would have none troubled with the newneſs of this opinion, but firſt weigh my reaſons; whereof let this be the firſt: That, as upon the former ſtage, in the cloſe of the 38. and throughout the 39. Chapter, only terreſtrial animals were preſented; ſo it ſeems moſt congruous, that upon this only aquatical or water-animals ſhould be preſented, leſt the courſe of proceeding ſhould be diſordered. So that, Leviathan (as all agree) being a creature that lives in the water, 'tis probable *Behemoth* doth ſo too, both being deſcribed in the ſame ſeries of diſcourſe. That the ancient *Jews* were of this opinion, may be collected out of the ſecond Book of *Eſdras*, Chap. 6. *Verſ.* 47, 48, 49. where *Behemoth* is placed among the aquatical Animals, created the fifth day. Further, the *Hippopotame* and the *Crocodile*, are fitly joyned together, becauſe there is a great likeneſs of nature between theſe two for both are very big and fierce, and amphibions, and four-footed, and both have one common habitation, the River *Nilus*; which *Pliny* alſo takes notice of (*Lib.* 28. *Cap.* 8.) and therefore moſt Writers handle them together. Nor doth the name *Behemoth* unfit the *Hippopotame*, ſeeing the Hebrew word *Behema* is appliable to all four-footed beaſts, to thoſe eſpecially which are of greater bulk, as is the *Hippopotame*; of which the Ancients ſpeak variouſly, becauſe the ſtature of beaſts of the ſame kind is alſo various. None make him leſs then *Ariſtotle*, who gives him the *bigneſs of an Aſſe*. But *Herodotus* ſaith, *he is as big as the biggeſt Ox*. In *Diodorus* he is deſcribed no leſs then five cubits. *Achilles Statius* ſaith, he is in appearance and compoſure of his parts, like a horſe, but three times as big. Moreover, the ſame Author calls him, *The Egyptian Elephant*, becauſe he is judged next him in ſtrength. Hence it is that barbarous Writers (who the Author means by them, I do not well underſtand) compare the *Hippopotame* with, or preſer him before the Elephant in ſtrength and ſtature; of which the Author gives other proofs; and adds, I know *Mercer* and others define the Hebrew word *Behema*, a four-footed beaſt of the Earth, as if it were applicable to terreſtrial animals only; but the *Arabians* teach otherwiſe, that *Bahima* (which in their Idiom is the ſame with the Hebrew *Behema*) ſignifies four-footed beaſts living in the water, as well as thoſe that live upon the Land. Nevertheleſs, if it were true, that the word *Behema* is applicable to terreſtrial beaſts only, yet the *Hippopotame* may be reckoned among them, becauſe he is an Amphibion, or an Animal that lives partly on the Land, and partly in the water. Secondly, Becauſe he is in ſhape like thoſe beaſts which live only upon the Land. Surely there is no water-animal that is ſo like Land ones as he is. Whence it is, as I conceive, that among all water-animals, he alone may be called, by way of Excellency, *Behema* or *Behemoth*, which according to the *Egyptian* dialect, is a word of the ſingular, not of the plural number; of which he gives many parallel inſtances in other words of the ſame language.

The Learned Author having laid down theſe general reaſons, or grounds of his opinion, goeth on with an elaborate expoſition of the Text in *Job*, in purſuance of, and conformity thereunto. And though I ſhall not depart from the common opinion, that by *Behemoth* the *Elephant* is meant here, and afterwards the *Whale* by *Leviathan* (having indeed caſt my meditations ſo, long before this noble work of *Bochartus* came to my hand) yet I owe ſo much reverence and reſpect to the name and labours of ſo worthy a perſon, as to give hints in paſſage, concerning, at leaſt ſome of thoſe particulars in the Text, which he conceives moſt fitly agreeing to the *Hippopotame* in the Lords deſcription of *Behemoth*, and to the *Crocodile*, in his deſcription of *Leviathan*, leaving the Reader at liberty to pitch his judgment, as he finds light and Reaſon leading him.

For, though to hit the right meaning of every word in Scripture, is not only moſt deſirable and aimable, but that which we ſhould make conſcience of (in which regard we are much indebted to their labours who contribute any further help towards that attainment) yet in this matter an unwilling miſtake is not very dangerous, there being ſo great a likeneſs between ſome creatures, in their nature, ſtature, qualities and parts, that where the Spirit of God in Scripture intends one by ſuch a name, another may eaſily be taken as intended by it.

Further, take which you will of theſe Animals, whether the *Elephant* or *Hippopotame* for *Behemoth*, or the *Whale* or *Crocodile* for *Leviathan*, there are ſome things in the textual deſcription of them by God himſelf, which cannot without difficult objections be applied, either to the one or to the other. All which ariſe, not from the darkneſs of the Scriptures, but, from the darkneſs of our underſtanding both as to the Scripture themſelves, and the creatures treated of in them.

All that I ſhall ſay in this controverſie about the two creatures here, and in the next Chapter ſpoken of, is,

Firſt, That the moſt common and received opinion, among very learned men, is, that by *Behemoth* is meant the *Elephant*; not the *Egyptian Elephant*, as the *Hippopotame* hath been called, but the proper *Elephant*. As alſo, that by *Leviathan* we are to underſtand the *Whale*, or ſome mighty fiſh of the *Cetacean* breed. Now as 'tis never good to follow the practice or example of the rude and ignorant multitude, ſo we ſhould not eaſily recede from the opinion and judgment of a grave and knowing multitude.

Secondly, I ſuppoſe it will not be denyed, that the *Elephant* is an Animal much more known, and of a more honourable report then the *Hippopotame*, and that the *Whale* for greatneſs much exceeds, and is in that reſpect, at leaſt, more famous then the *Crocodile*. Therefore the Lord ſpeaking of the chief works of his hands, among viſible irrational creatures, in this latter part of his ſpeech to *Job*, may be conceived to intend the former under both titles, rather then the latter.

Thirdly, I muſt confeſs, I have a little prejudice againſt expounding *Behemoth* by the *Hippopotame*, and *Leviathan* by the *Crocodile*, even for this reaſon, becauſe they are Amphibious; for, Firſt, as all creatures of that ſort have an uncouthneſs, and a kind of monſtroſity in their naturals; ſo they have no commendable ſignification in our morals, they bearing the reſemblance of indifferent and middle men, who are (as we ſpeak proverbially) *neither fleſh nor fiſh*, who abide neither at Land nor in the water, neither in this nor that, but to ſerve their own turns and reach their own ends, can be here and there, or any where, or any thing. Now the Lord deſcribing here (as was ſaid before) ſuch animals as are the chief of his ways and works, Amphibious (to me) ſeem not ſo competent for, nor deſerving of ſuch high *Elogiums*. Secondly (with the ſavour of that learned Author) it appears to me more probable, that God intended to conclude his ſpeech to *Job* about the creatures, by ſetting thoſe two before him which are moſt eminent, the one upon the Land, the other in the Sea, rather then by ſetting two before him, either of which are challenged in part by both. Nor is it to me very probable, that God having deſcribed ſeveral perfect fowls of the Air, and beaſts of the Earth, ſhould not inſtance in any one perfect fiſh of the Sea, which he hath not done, unleſs *Leviathan* be, not an Amphibion, but, a perfect fiſh. Somewhat further may be offered towards a proof, that *Leviathan* is ſo, when I come to the 41. Chapter; I ſhall now proceed with *Behemoth*. *Behold now Behemoth, which*

I made with thee.] Here *Behemoth* is deſcribed by his Author and maker. *I made him* (ſaith the Lord) he is my workmanſhip; and I made him

With thee.] God ſpake thus, as it may be conceived,

Firſt, To humble *Job* by this conſideration, that the *Elephant* or *Behemoth* was of his making as well as himſelf; as if, when the Lord ſaid, *I made him with thee*, his meaning were, *He is thy fellow-creature.*

Secondly, *I made him with thee*; That is, though he be a great beaſt, the greateſt that lives and moves on the earth, yet I made him as well as I made thee, or the leaſt worm of the Earth.

Thirdly, Theſe words, *I made him with thee*, may be referred to the time of *Behemoths* making, *I made him the ſame day with thee*; for all the beaſts of the Earth were made upon the ſixth day, the ſame day in which man was made.

Fourthly, *Which I made with thee*, That is, I made him *to be with thee*; I did not make *Behemoth* as I made *Leviathan*, to play in the Sea, but I made him to be with thee on the Land, that thou ſhouldeſt behold him, and take notice of him, or that he ſhould be under thy hand; yea, not only ſo, but (contrary to the nature of wild beaſts) to love thy company, and to deſire converſe with thee, to be guided by thee, and in many things to act with a kind of reaſon and underſtanding like thee, or as thy ſelf and other men do.

Fifthly, *Which I made with thee*, That is, *for thee*; I made him for thy uſe, I made him to ſerve thee. Though he be thus great and vaſt, yet he will be thy humble ſervant. There will be occaſion afterwards to ſhew further, how ſerviceable and uſeful Elephants are to man.

Sixthly, I made him *with thee*, That is, I made him as nigh to thee as any of the unreaſonable creatures; yea, nigher to thee then any of the unreaſonable creatures, for I have made him excel them all as thou excelleſt him, he is above other irrational creatures, as thou art above all irrationals: *He* (next to Angels and men) *is the chief of my ways*. The word, *made*, may import this alſo, and ſo it is uſed (1 *Sam.* 12. 6.) *The Lord advanced* (the Hebrew is, *Made*) *Moſes* and *Aaron*. The Lord hath ſo made the Elephant, that he hath alſo advanced him above all the beaſts of the field. I have ſet him as near the ſeat of reaſon as might be, and not be rational.

In all theſe reſpects we may underſtand the Lord ſaying to *Job*, concerning *Behemoth*, *I made him with thee*. *He is thy fellow-creature; and how great ſoever he is, he is my creature. I made him the ſame day that I made thee, and I made him to abide in the ſame place with thee, or where thy abode is; I made him alſo for thy ſervice, and that he might be a meet ſervant for thee; I have made him almoſt a partaker of reaſon with thee, ſo far at leaſt a partaker of reaſon, that he will very obſequiouſly ſubmit to, and follow the conduct of thine; and though he be the ſtrongeſt beaſt on earth, yet thou mayeſt find him acting more according to thy reaſon then his own force or ſtrength.*

There is yet another interpretation of theſe words given by *Bochartus*, which favours his opinion, that *Behemoth* is the *Hippopotame* or River Horſe. *Whom I have made with thee*, or rather *near thee*, or *hard by thee*; That is, in thy neighbour-hood, in a Country which borders upon thine. As if (ſaith he) God had ſaid to *Job*, *I need not fetch arguments from far to prove how powerful I am, ſeeing I have them at hand: For among the beaſts which I made in* Nilus, *which is near thy Country* Arabia, *how admirable is the* Hippopotame? And that the Hebrew word [עם] ſignifies *by* or *near*, as well as *with*, he gives many examples; *Joſh.* 7. 2. *Judg.* 9. 6. *Judg.* 18. 3. *Judg.* 19. 11. 2 *Sam.* 6. 7. 2 *Sam.* 20. 8. which the Reader may peruſe and conſider.

Tecum, vel potius juxta te.

Thus the Elephant was made with man. But how lives he? how feeds he? Not like man.

He eateth graſs as an Ox.] From theſe words alſo the Author laſt mentioned collects an argument for the ſtrengthening of his interpretation. The Ox and Elephant (ſaith he) are alike labouring beaſts, and therefore no wonder if they feed alike, or live upon the ſame kind of food; but that the *Hippopotame*, which is an aquatical Animal, and abides for the moſt part in the bottom of *Nilus*, ſhould eat graſs like an Ox, this is ſtrange, and matter of wonderment. Nor is it for nothing, that he is compared to the Ox, whom he reſembles not only in his food, but in the bigneſs of his body and in the ſhape of his head and feet; whence the *Italians* call him *Bomarin*, that is, the *Sea-Ox*.

Yet theſe words may very well be applied to the Elephant, It being only true, that his food is graſs, but a merciful wonder that it is ſo; For did this vaſt creature live upon prey or the ſpoil of other beaſts, what havock, yea devaſtation, would he make to ſatisfie his hunger! So that theſe words, *He eateth graſs as an Ox*, may carry this ſenſe: As if the Lord had ſaid, *Though I have made this beaſt ſo great and ſtrong, yet he is no dangerous, no ravenous beaſt; he doth not live by preying upon other beaſts, by tearing and worrying ſheep and Lambs, as Lions, and Bears, and Wolves do; this great and mighty creature eats graſs like an Ox.* Thus God would have *Job* take notice what way he hath provided for the ſubſiſtence of the Elephant, *He eateth graſs as an Ox*; yet not altogether as the Ox. His food is as the food of an Ox for the matter, both eat graſs, but he doth not eat in the ſame manner as an Ox. Why, how doth an Ox eat? By licking up the graſs with his tongue into his mouth, as he is deſcribed (*Numb.* 22. 4.) but the Elephant gathers up the graſs with his trunk, and then puts it into his mouth. Naturaliſts give theſe two reaſons why the Elephant cannot eat like the Ox.

Firſt, Becauſe of the ſhortneſs of his Neck.

Secondly, The littleneſs of his Tongue, which lies ſo far within his Mouth, that it cannot eaſily be ſeen; and therefore he crops the graſs with his trunk, and putting it into his mouth, grinds it with his teeth.

Ne ore paſcatur adminiculo linguæ ut boves, impedit colli brevitas & linguæ quoque quæ illi animali perexigua eſt, & interius poſita, ita ut eam vix videre poſſis. Decerptam proboſcide herbam, dentibus quos utrinque quatuor habet commolit. Ariſt. l. 2. de Hiſt. Animal. c. 5. 6. Προβοσκὶς à βόσκω, Paſco.

He eateth graſs like an Ox. He is like the Ox, as to what he feeds upon, not as to the way of his feeding. So then, though the Elephant be ſo bulky and big-bodied, yet, by the Lords Ordination, he is as harmleſs as a labouring Ox, he will not hurt any beaſt of the field. This phraſe, *Eating like an Ox*, is uſed to ſet forth the peaceableneſs of his Nature. Thus thoſe bleſſed times are deſcribed, when the power of the Goſpel ſhall overcome the wrath and enmity which is in the Serpents ſeed againſt the ſeed of the Woman (*Iſa.* 11. 7.) *The Cow and the Bear ſhall feed their young ones, and the Lion ſhall eat ſtraw like the Ox.* Lions will be quiet; That is, the ſpirits of thoſe men, who have been like Lions and Bears, even they ſhall eat ſtraw like the Ox, they ſhall not hurt the Lambs and Sheep of Chriſts flock and fold. The ſame Prophet ſhadows the peaceableneſs of thoſe Goſpel times under a like Allegory (*Chap.* 65. 25.) where having ſhewed (*Verſ.* 24.) the goodneſs and tenderneſs of God in hearing the prayers of his people, *It ſhall come to paſs that before they call, I will anſwer, and while they are yet praying, I will hear*; he preſently ſhews how good and kind God (who hath the ſpirits and paſſions of all men in his hand) will make the moſt rough-ſpirited and paſſionate men, to his people. *The wolf and the Lamb ſhall feed together, and the Lion ſhall eat ſtraw like the Bullock*: That is, they who were ſometimes as fierce as evening wolves, ſhall quietly and ſweetly converſe with the Lambs of Chriſt, *&c.*

Quoties de feris beſtiis dicitur quod fænum comeſturæ ſint ſicut bos, metaphoricè innuitur eos manſuefieri & cicurari.

Thus here the Lord ſpeaks of the Elephant eating graſs like an Ox, to ſhew, that though he be exceeding ſtrong, yet he is of an exceeding quiet and harmleſs diſpoſition. And Naturaliſts tell us, he is ſo gentle and harmleſs, that he will take meat out of a mans hand, like a Dog or Spaniel.

Non aliter quam perparvili catelli ex hominis manu gaudere cibum ſumere. Ælian. cap. 9. & 30.

Thirdly, The Elephant is deſcribed by his *ſtrength*.

Verſ. 16. **Lo, Now** (or *Behold*, it is the ſame word.)

As in the former Verſe God awakened the attention of *Job*, to conſider this Beaſt in general, with a *Behold*, ſo here coming to particulars he reaſſumeth the ſame note of admiration and ſerious meditation, *Lo now*, or *Behold*,

His ſtrength is in his loins.] He hath ſtrength proportionable to his greatneſs. And as *Sampſons* ſtrength was ſymbolically in his locks, ſo the Elephants ſtrength is naturally in his loins; there's the ſeat of ſtrength in moſt creatures. *His ſtrength is in his loins*; That is, he hath very ſtrong loins, and is therefore very ſtrong: the loins being, as was ſaid, the natural ſeat of ſtrength. To gird up the loins to do a thing, is to do it ſtrongly. A weak man, a man of little ſtrength, is ſaid to have *no loins*, or to be (if I may ſo ſpeak) *a loinleſs man.* And hence the failing or ſhaking of the loins, notes the failing of ſtrength, and want of ſpirits, to atchieve any great thing. *David* ſpeaking of the woful condition of the rejected *Jews*, and the curſe of God upon them, gives it thus (*Pſal.* 69. 23.) *Let their eyes be darkened, that they ſee not, and make their loins continually to ſhake*; That is, let them always be in a weak and low condition, let them not gather ſtrength nor courage: The effect of which curſe is evident upon that people at this day, *their loins ſhake*, they gather no conſiderable ſtrength, they do no conſiderable thing, nor ſhall, till they return to the Lord. It is ſaid of the vertuous woman (*Prov.* 31. 17.) *She girdeth her loins with ſtrength*, That is, ſhe is ready and able for any work or action within her ſphere, or becoming her ſex. And when the Lord called the Prophet to lay to heart the grievous evils of thoſe times, he ſaith (*Ezek.* 21. 6.) *Sigh to the breaking of thy loins*; That is, ſigh, mourn, and lament, till thou haſt ſighed away all thy ſtrength, till thou art become feeble with mourning, lamenting, and ſighing. The Elephant is mighty and ſtrong, *His ſtrength is in his loins.*

Elumbus ſive elumbis, quaſi ſine lumbis, i. e. viribus. Druſ.

Non rectè noſtri quod de lumbis dicitur ad libidinem accommodant, cum Elephas *tradatur eſſe animal maximè pudicum.* Merc.

And his force in the Navel of his Belly.

As much as to ſay he is ſtrong every-where; he is ſtrong in back, and ſtrong in belly. The Navel is the ſtrength of the lower parts of the body, as the loins of the upper. The Navel is as the center of the body, there is a colligation or knitting of ſeveral veins and arteries, which paſs from thence into ſeveral parts of the body, as Anatomiſts obſerve. There is ſo much force in the *Navel*, that it may well be called *the ſecond ſeat of ſtrength*. When the Lord would encourage us to *fear* him, and *depart from evil*, he makes this a motive (*Prov.* 3. 8.) *It ſhall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones*; That is, thou ſhalt have much health and ſtrength, much comfort and ſweetneſs in thy life.

His force is in the Navel of his Belly.] His ſtrength is not in Horns to do hurt, as the Bulls and Unicorns; nor in his claws, to tear, as the Lions and Bears; but in his Loins and Navel. As if the Lord had ſaid, *I have placed the ſtrength of* Behemoth, *where it may be moſt uſeful or ſerviceable, and leaſt hurtful: I have endowed and furniſhed him with wonderful ſtrength; but how, and where? Not in any offenſive part, his head hath no horns, his feet no claws, to do miſchief with; but to the end he might be more ſerviceable to man in bearing burdens, I have placed it chiefly in his Loins and Belly.*

Yet ſaith the learned *Bochartus*, This latter part of the verſe doth not agree with the Elephant, ſeeing both *Pliny* and *Solinus* teach us, that the Elephant hath indeed a very hard skin upon his back, but a ſoft one under his belly; whence it is (ſaith he) that the *Rhinoceros* fighting with the Elephant, aims chiefly at his belly, which he knows is his tendereſt part. He gives many other proofs of this, as alſo that the *Hippopotame* hath a skin ſo extreamly thick and hard, that 'tis even impenetrable.

To this I may anſwer, That though it be granted that the *Hippopotame* hath a very hard skin all over his body, and not at all denied that the skin of the Elephant is ſofter by much under his belly, then upon his back; yet it cannot (in my underſtanding) be hence concluded that he hath not a great force in the Navel of his Belly. For though he hath not a hardneſs there to reſiſt the point either of a natural or artificial weapon, yet he may have a force there enabling him to do mighty things. 'Tis rather from the compactneſs, or well knitting of the Navel, that he or any other like creature hath his force, than from the hardneſs of it; nor doth the Hebrew word [און] here rendred *force*, ſignifie any force depending upon the hardneſs of any part; but that force which ariſeth from the good conſtitution of the body (*Gen.* 49. 3.) or from the plentifulneſs of a mans outward eſtate or ſubſtance (*Job* 18. 7. *Hoſ.* 12. 8.)

What the Elephants ſtrength and force is, appears yet further in that which followeth.

Verſ. 17. He moveth his tail like a Cedar.

Some take the *tail* properly. Secondly, Others ſay it cannot be ſo underſtood; for though the Elephant be a vaſt creature in other parts, yet his tail is but ſmall, and ſmaller then ſeems to anſwer the vaſt proportion of ſo great a beaſt, and therefore cannot reſemble a Cedar.

Secondly, Others expound the Original word, of his *ſnout or trunk*, which is of great force and ſtrength; and they conceive it may well be underſtood of his trunk or ſnout, both becauſe that is great and long like a Cedar; as alſo, becauſe the trunk being ſo principal a part of this beaſt, it is not probable the mention of it ſhould be wholly omitted in this deſcription, and ſo ſmall and inconſiderable a one as the tail taken notice of. Thus Mr. *Beza* renders, *He moveth his prominent part or trunk, which is as the Cedar.* And the latter part of the verſe he renders to the ſame ſenſe, *The ſinews of the terribleneſs thereof, are wrapped together*; That is, though his trunk be very great, yet he eaſily turneth it as he liſteth, or at pleaſure, it being wholly compact of ſinewes ſtrongly twiſted together; and is of ſuch force, that it may well amaze and terrifie a man of greateſt courage. The word which we tranſlate *ſtones*, properly ſignifieth *fears*, and is rendred in all other places of Scripture where it is uſed; and hence that reading of Mr. *Beza*, *The ſinewes of the terribleneſs thereof.* This opinion is altogether diſliked by *Mercer*. I leave it to the Readers judgment.

Thirdly, Many expound it of his genitals, and connect the ſenſe with that which followeth;

The ſinews of his ſtones are wrapt together.] Or (as Mr. *Broughton*) *platted in and out as branches.* As if it had been ſaid, in the heat of his luſt he erecteth or moveth his generative part like a ſtrong Cedar-tree, being corroborated from natures conduit pipes, the ſinews of his ſtones, which are complicated or wrapt together, like the roots of a great grown tree in the earth, or like its branches in the Air.

Etſi caudam habeat quæ magnitudine cedrum æquare videatur, tamen eam facile movet. Inſignis hyperbole. Merc.

Sunt qui caudam hic putant appellari promuſcidem Elephantis; planè alienè. Merc.

Rigor caudæ, i. e. Genitalium. σεμνότης.

יחפוץ *De libidine accipio; libidinatur caudam inſtar cedri, i. e. libidinando facit inſtar cedri.* Coc.

Penem κατ' ἐυφημισμὸν. Jun. *Membrum Genitale.* Piſc. Scult.

Nervi quos medici cremaſteras vocant à teſtibus ad penem deducentes ramis arborum conferuntur.

Verſ. 18. His bones are as ſtrong pieces of braſs.

Bones are the ſtrength and ſtability of the body, and they keep the body ſtrait. Bones are to the body as poſts to a houſe, the ſtays and ſupporters of it. Bones alſo are as an armour or corſelet on the body, to defend and preſerve the more noble parts, the heart, liver and lungs, from danger and annoyance; and therefore it was neceſſary the Lord ſhould ſpeak of *Behemoths* bones, when he ſpake of his ſtrength. *His bones*

Are as ſtrong pieces of braſs.] As *bars of ſteel*, ſaith Mr. *Broughton*, or as *conduit pipes of braſs*; ſo the words may be read, and then they refer to thoſe bones that are hollow. Some conceive, his bones are ſaid to be as ſtrong pieces of braſs, becauſe the Elephant cannot bow (that's an old opinion) as if he were all bone, and had no joints; which opinion is at large confuted by a learned Phyſician, in his Book of *vulgar Errors*, with proves, and experience teacheth, that the Elephant hath Joynts with his bones, as other living creatures have, though not ſo apparent. His bones being great and ſtrong, he muſt needs be very ſtrong. It is ſaid (*Gen.* 49. 14.) *Iſſachar is a ſtrong aſs:* The Hebrew is, *Iſſachar is a bony aſs*; which we well render *a ſtrong aſs*, able to bear great burthens, ſtrength lying ſo much in the bones. And to ſhew that the bones of the Elephant are more then ordinarily ſtrong, they are compared to braſs. *Job* ſaith, in his complaint at the ſixth Chap. *Is my fleſh braſs?* Am I ſtrong like braſs? The bones of the Elephant are ſo, and not only ſo, but

Dr. *Brown* of vulgar errors. *lib.* 3. *c.* 1.

Aſinus Oſſeus, i. e. *robuſtus.*

His bones are like bars of Iron.] The word here rendred bones, is not the ſame as in the former part of the verſe. Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates by a general word, *his hard parts are like ſtaves of Iron:* But we may well keep to the word *bones*, yet underſtand them of a different ſort of bones; as in the former part, *hollow bones*, ſo in this latter, ſolid bones; or in that, leſſer, in this, greater bones; or in that, upper bones, which are as rafters, in his lower bones, thoſe in the thighs and legs, which are as poſts.

His bones are like bars of Iron.] Iron is the ſtrongeſt of all metals, as we read in the viſion of the four Monarchies (*Dan.* 2. 1.) The image had *a head of Gold* (ſignifying the *Babylonian* Monarchy) *breaſts of Silver* (ſignifying the *Perſian*) *belly of braſs*, ſignifying the *Grecian*, but it had *legs of Iron*, ſignifying the *Roman* Monarchy; of which 'tis ſaid in the 40. verſe, *The fourth Kingdom ſhall be ſtrong as Iron, foraſmuch as Iron breaketh in pieces and ſubdueth all things.* So then, when the Lord ſaith, *His bones are like bars of Iron,* this importeth that the bones of *Behemoth* are exceeding ſtrong, as ſtrong as if made of Iron. We call a very ſtrong man, *Iron-ſides.* The Elephant hath Iron-ſides, *His bones are as bars of Iron. Bochartus* denieth not, that the bones of the Elephant are very hard and ſtrong, yet affirms from ſome Authorities, that the bones of the *Hippopotame* are harder. If it be ſo, yet the Elephants bones are hard and ſtrong enough to anſwer the compariſons in this part of the deſcription of *Behemoth.* Now here the *Epiphonema,* the triumphant concluſion which the Spirit makes of all this.

Verſ. 19. **He is the chief of the ways of God.**

The word is, *He is the head of the ways of God:* Or, *he is the beginning of the ways of God,* as the word is uſed (*Gen.*1.1.) *In the beginning God created the Heavens and the Earth.* There is a twofold beginning or head (as we may ſay) Firſt, there is a beginning as to time; ſo the word is taken in *Geneſis:* There *in the beginning,* is, in the firſt of time, God created the Heavens and the earth, ſo *Gen.* 10. 10. *The beginning of his Kingdom was Babel,* or, there he began his Kingdom, the beginning in time, as well as place, was there. Secondly, There is a beginning which notes priority in dignity, though not in time; beginning imports excellency, and is as much as *chief.* 'Tis uſual in ſeveral languages, to call that which is *chief,* the firſt or head of any thing (*Exod.*30.23.) *It ſhall be of pure myrrh* (the Hebrew is) *head of myrrh,* that is, chief or prime myrrh, *pureſt myrrh.* Thus ſaid *David,* (Pſal. 119. 160.) *Thy word is true from the beginning.* The Hebrew ſtrictly taken, is, *The beginning or head of thy word is true, or truth.* As if *David* had ſaid, That which is moſt eminent and chief in the word of God, is the truth of it; that which rules and reigns, and holds (as it were) the headſhip in and throughout the word of God, is the truth of it, or Gods trueneſs and faithfulneſs in making it good: and therefore the firſt thing which faith doth, is to ſet to its ſeal that God is true; true of his word, or that his word is true (*John* 3. 33.) The Greeks call *honey* the *firſt of ſweetneſſes,* becauſe it is the ſweeteſt of all natural things. Now here, when the Text ſaith, he is the *chief, or beginning of the ways of God,* we are not to take it of a beginning in time, ſeveral creatures were Seniors to *Behemoth,* being made before him, but in excellency, which we render clearly, *He is the chief of the ways of God.*

Mel dicitur ἀρχὴ γλυκασμάτων, quod dulcedine præſtat rebus omnibus.

But you will ſay, how is the Elephant *the chief of the ways of God.* Are not Angels and men (at leaſt) above him?

I anſwer, There is a twofold *chief;* Firſt, Abſolute; Secondly, in its kind. *Behemoth* is the *chief of the ways of God,* not abſolutely, not as if God had made nothing more excellent then the Elephant, but in his kind, that is, among the beaſts of the earth he is the chief, and as we ſay, *bears away the bell* from all the reſt. *Behemoth* is not only of *the firſt three,* but (like *Adino* the *Tachmonite* among *Davids* worthies) he is the firſt of the firſt three, among all the irrational creatures which move upon the face of the earth. And though in ſome one thing many excel him, yet taking him altogether, he excels them all, *He is the chief of the ways of God,* that is, of the *works of God.*

The works of God are called his ways, becauſe he appears and ſtands forth in his works, as man doth in his way. God did not appear at all till he did create, and then he appeared glorioſly in all his divine perfections of power, wiſdom and goodneſs. And as he appeared in the works of creation, ſo he daily appeareth in his works of providence as in his way, for in them alſo it is ſeen how powerful, how wiſe, how good he is. *Behemoth,* both as to creation and providence, is the chief of the ways or works of God in his kind: Angels and Men are indeed above him, but as for other creatures, *Behemoth is the chief.* Thus the Lord having ſpoken of many particular excellencies in this creature, recapitulates or ſums up all that he had ſaid (like an eloquent Orator) in theſe *crowning words, He is the chief of the ways of God.*

Hence Note; Firſt, *There is a difference as to excellency, or there are degrees of excellency in the works of God.*

God hath beſtowed more upon ſome creatures, then he hath upon others. God beſtowed moſt upon man in the firſt creation; for how excellent ſoever he made any viſible creature, yet it is ſaid of no creature, he made him *in his image, after his likeneſs,* till he came to man: and the new creature which comes in by redemption, is far more excellent then man in his firſt creation. Now, I ſay, as man is far more excellent then all earthly creatures, he is next to Angels; man is placed in the uppermoſt form of the viſible world. So among the creatures, there are ſome that very much excel others; here's one called the chief of the ways of God himſelf. This is not an Orators flattery: the Spirit of God gives *Behemoth* this Encomium, this commendation, he hath precedency by a divine right. All creatures are not alike, they cannot all be chief, and there are none like this, he is the chief of all. Among the inanimate creatures there is a gradual difference (1 *Cor.*15. 40.) *There are cœleſtial bodies, and bodies terreſtrial; but the glory of the cœleſtial is one, and the glory of the terreſtrial is another:* and all cœleſtial bodies are not alike, for, *There is one glory of the Sun, and another of the Moon, and another of the Stars, and one Star differs from another in glory.* There are alſo various excellencies, both as to kind and degree, among vegetatives or plants. What is a Nettle in the Ditch, to Hyſſop in the Garden? And what is the Thiſtle in *Lebanon,* to the Cedar in *Lebanon?* that's one of the loweſt and moſt ignoble plants, this one of the higheſt and moſt honourable. Conſider animals. What variety among the fiſh of the Sea! What is a Sprat to a Whale? What variety among the fowls of the Air! What is a Sparrow to the Eagle? What variety among the beaſts of the earth! What is a Bullock to an Elephant, or an Aſs to a Lion? Conſider rationals. Men are not all alike: ſome men do almoſt as much excel other men, as all men excel beaſts; yea, there is a difference in the ſame man, his Soul is more excellent then his body; ſome parts of the body are more excellent then others, ſome powers and faculties of the Soul are more excellent than the reſt. The Apoſtle (1 *Cor.*12.28,29.) ſpeaking of the Church, ſhews how God hath put the guides of it into ſeveral ranks: He hath ſet ſome *in the Church;* Firſt, *Apoſtles;* Secondly, *Prophets;* Thirdly, *Teachers; after that miracles, then gifts of healing, helps, governments, diverſities of tongues. Are all Apoſtles? Are all Prophets? Are all Teachers? Do all ſpeak with tongues? Are all workers of miracles?* Are all chief? Are all in the firſt rank? No, ſome are in one condition, ſome in another. And thus it is in the world, God hath ſet ſome Kings, all others Subjects; and among them, ſome are Lords, ſome Judges and Magiſtrates, *&c.* Are all Kings? Are all Lords? Are all Judges and Magiſtrates? Surely not. To have all men of one order, would put all men, and all things too, out of order. There is a chief among beaſts; *And thoſe men are worſe then beaſts, who acknowledg not a chief among men. God is not the author of confuſion, as in all the Churches of the Saints* (ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.*14.33.) ſo, I may ſay, in all the Kingdoms of the world.

And if ſo, I would only infer, then let none be troubled that they are not chief, no, nor that they are not of equal rank with other men; let us be content with our ſtation, though it be a low one. 'Tis beſt for us to be where God hath placed us, and to be thankful for what God hath given us, though in gifts and parts we are much inferior to many. God doth not beſtow a like meaſure of gifts, no, nor of grace upon all. And though it may be a favour and a mercy to have outward preheminency above others, yet to love or affect preheminency, as the Apoſtle *John* taxed *Diotrephes,* is very ſinful. The Apoſtle would have us *covet earneſtly* the beſt gifts (1 *Cor.*12.31.) and he there minds us of a better thing to be coveted then the beſt gifts, that is, grace, *Faith, Hope, Charity;* to covet theſe is a bleſſed covetouſneſs: Yet neither are theſe to be coveted meerly for ſelf-ends, but as by them we may be fitted and furniſhed to do good, to honour God, and ſerve our generation according to his will. To affect chiefdom in any thing but in grace and goodneſs is not good; and our affecting of them muſt be without affectation, though it ought to be with ſtrength of affection. And if we are chief, or have the preheminence above others in the things of this world, it will be well with us (as to that matter) if we are, where the hand of God, not any ambitious deſires or practiſes of our own, hath ſet us. It was the Lord who made and called *Behemoth, The chief of his ways.*

Bochartus conceives this high commendation well becoming the *Hippopotame*. For though (ſaith he) he be a pernicious animal, yet there are many things in him, which may move admiration; the vaſt bulk of his body, his huge ſtrength, his impenetrable hide, the ſtupendous wideneſs of his mouth, his prodigious voracity, the whiteneſs and hardneſs of his teeth, his living in common in the ſea, land, and river, and together with ſo great a hardneſs of his skin, a ſagacious ingenie, exceeding all irrational anima's, as he is reported by *Ammianus* in his 22. Book, of which he there gives two proofs, not omitted by *Pliny* and *Solinus*.

Yet if what is written of the Elephant may obtain credit, I much believe that he bears away the bell from the *Hippopotame* for natural ſagacity and ingenuity, as alſo for quantity, and largeneſs of his limbs, and ſo of his whole body. And there are many things wherein the Elephant is reported to excel all other beaſts: I ſhall give inſtance in Twelve, and leave the matter of difference between him and the *Hippopotame*, which ſhall carry the day for *chief of the ways of God* (which God himſelf affirms of *Behemoth*) to the Readers vote.

Alii ad duodecimum alii ad decimum tertium dodrantem excelſitate procedunt, alii ad decimum quartum. Ælian. l. 1. c. 2. A Dodrans is nine inches; which being reduced to our meaſure, 14 of them make 10. foot and a half. Plinius *l.* 8. *c.* 10. Cæſar. Scal. *Exercit.* 204.

Firſt, He is ſaid to excel all beaſts in the bulk of his body, or bigneſs. He hath huge limbs, huge bones, and a height commenſurable. Natural Hiſtorians give us theſe dimenſions and proportions of him. His height (I mean, if fully grown) is reckoned (according to our meaſure) *ten foot and a half*. Others report, that in *India* there are *Elephants* of *thirteen foot and a half* in height: and what the bulk of his whole body is, we may collect by his teeth. The *Elephant* hath two teeth growing upward out of his lower mandible or jaw, of a vaſt bigneſs, and eight foot in length. *Cæſar Scaliger* ſaith (from the report of ſome *Indian* Hiſtorians) that two of thoſe teeth have weighed three hundred twenty and five pounds. So big they are, that the *Indians* uſe them for poſts to their Houſes. The Scripture tells us, that *Solomons* throne was made of *Elephant* teeth or *Ivory*, as we tranſlate (1 *Kings* 10. 18,22.) And if any deſire further information concerning the greatneſs of his body, and his admirable Qualities, let him read *Pliny*, in his eighth Book, the twelve firſt Chapters.

Ædificia evertunt magnos dentes admovendo. Ariſt. *de Hiſt. Animal. l.* 9.

The ſecond thing, wherein the Elephant ſeems chief, and to excel all the beaſts of the earth, is his ſtrength; which is ſo great, that with his trunk he will overthrow a great tree or a Houſe. *Elephants* have ſuch ſtrength of body, that in war they carry upon their backs great towers made of timber. We read (1 *Mach.* 6. 37.) that *Antiochus* had thirty *Elephants* in one battle which bare towers, in every one of which were thirty and two fighting men with their weapons. What a vaſt ſtrength hath this creature, which can bear a tower with thirty and two men, and their inſtruments of War: And from this we may gather, not only the mighty ſtrength of his back or loins, but alſo of his belly or navel (mentioned *Verſ.* 16.) for thoſe huge towers upon his back, muſt of neceſſity be faſtened by huge bands under his belly.

Maximum inter animalia eſt Elephas, & proximum humanis ſenſibus. Plin. *l.* 8. *c.* 1. *Ad rationale animal proxima accedit.* Strabo.

Thirdly, The *Elephant* may be called chief of the ways of God among beaſts, as to his underſtanding. He hath a kind of natural rationality, and is therefore ſaid to be next man, or to come neareſt man of any creature. There is no beaſt more prudent then the *Elephant*, ſaid the Roman Orator.

Fourthly, The Elephant excels all beaſts in the ſtrength of his memory; and he is memoriz'd for his memory of three things eſpecially. Firſt, For his memory of commands and inſtructions given him. Secondly, Of courteſies done him. Thirdly, Of unkindneſſes and injuries offered him.

Fifthly, He is the chief of the ways of God, in that which muſt needs follow the former two, his underſtanding (ſuch as it is) and memory, that is, his teachableneſs, or aptneſs to learn what is taught him. Though he be a wild beaſt, yet he is eaſily tamed or brought to hand; and when he is tamed, he is as eaſily taught. The higheſt excellency of man, is when (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks of a Biſhop, 1 *Tim.* 3.) *he is apt to teach*; and the next excellency of man is, when he is *apt to be taught*. It is the miſery of many, that they have none to teach them; and it is the wickedneſs of not a few, that they will not be taught, nor receive inſtruction. The Elephant is in nothing more eminent, than in his aptneſs to be taught, or in his readineſs to receive the impreſſion of any thing ſpoken to him, and fitting for him to learn or do. The Elephant is an apt Scholar, he ſoon grows perfect in any piece of art or activity taught him. Some tell us, *Elephants* have learnt the art of dancing, and that they have learnt to draw the letters of the Greek Alphabet with their feet, and that they learn to make legs (as we ſay) or do obeyſance to Kings, and to preſent them with Crowns.

Juxta ſenſum humanum intellectum habet. Solinus. *Elephanto belluarum nulla prudentior.* Cic. *de Nat. Deorum.*

Regem adorant, genua ſubmittunt, coronas porrigunt. Plin. *l.* 8. *c.* 1. *Funambulos ſe vidiſſe, & qui Græcas litteras pedibus exararent, teſtatur* Plin. *l.* 8.

Sixthly, Beſides their teachableneſs, their tractableneſs and gentleneſs is wonderful. Some are apt to learn, yet will not be governed, will not be brought to good manners. Elephants are highly commended, not only becauſe they are apt to be taught, but ready to be commanded. Whatever you bid them they preſently obey. There's no creature ſo quiet, ſo meek, ſo ſubmitting as the Elephant; he hurts none, unleſs provoked, and will gently help the weak. They who write the nature of the Elephant aſſure us, that when once he is broken or tamed by man, he is ever after obedient to him, and gives him all manner of obſervance; that he even forms himſelf to the diſpoſition of his Maſter or Owner, will take meat out of his hand like a little Dog, that he will (as it were) hug and embrace his Maſter when he comes near, and will ſuffer him (without hurt) to put his Head within his Mouth.

Elephanto admorum facilitatem erudito nihil mitius, nihil ad id quod volumus obtemperatius. Ælian. *lib.* 4. Ariſt. *l.* 9. *c.* 46. *Ubi ſemel hominus imperio ſubjectus eſt, omnia ei abſequia præbet, & ab eo capit morum ſimilitudinem, gauditque non minus quam parvi canes ex manu ejus cibum capere, venientem ſua promuſcide complectitur quinetiam caput intra ſuas fauces immittere hominem patitur.* Phillo. *l.* 2. *c.* 5. Plin. *l.* 8. *c.* 7. Plin. *l.* 8. *c.* 5.

Seventhly, He exceeds others beaſts in uſefulneſs. He is not tractable only for a ſhew or for ſport, but he is for real ſervice. In times of peace he will do all manner of work, till the ground, carry burdens, and he is of great uſe and ſervice in time of war.

Eighthly, This is admirable in the Elephant, that being ſo vaſt a creature, he hath ſuch agility of body, as was touched before; he will expreſs thoſe geſtures and motions, which require greateſt activity.

Ninthly, the Elephant is highly commended for his modeſty and chaſtity.

Tenthly, For his faithfulneſs in any thing that he is charged with or ordered to do. The faithfulneſs of the Elephant exceeds belief. There are not only marvels, but miracles reported by Hiſtorians worthy of credit, concerning their fidelity to their maſters or owners, and their kindneſs and gratitude to thoſe who have ſhewed them kindneſs.

Eleventhly, The Elephant is famous for compaſſionateneſs to any that are in diſtreſs; what uſe they can be of, they will be to ſuch. *Quintus Curtius* reports, how the Elephant of *Porus*, an *Indian* King, when the King being wounded fell down, took him up tenderly with his trunk, and ſet him again upon his back.

Twelfthly and laſtly, Elephants excel in longevity or length of life. They live not only long, but very long; the God of Nature having given them an excellent conſtitution or temperament of body. Good Authors tell us, they live commonly two hundred years, ſome three hundred years; and 'tis reported ſome have lived five hundred years.

Diutiſſime vivit. Ariſt. *l.* 4. *c.* 10. *de Hiſt. Animal* Strabo. *l.* 15.

In all theſe reſpects, we may conclude *Behemoth, the chief of the ways of God.* In many things he comes near to man, and in others he much exceedeth him. From all that hath been ſaid of this mighty beaſt, take theſe inferences.

Firſt, See the goodneſs of God unto man, who hath made this vaſt ſtrong creature mans ſervant, and ſo ready to obey mans command, to bear mans burdens, and to till the earth for man, which 'tis ſaid (*Chap.* 39. 9.) the Unicorn will never do. *Will the Unicorn be willing to ſerve thee? Canſt thou bind the Unicorn in the furrows? will he harrow the valleys after thee?* But the Elephant will do theſe ſervices, he is willing to ſerve man in peace, and to aſſiſt him in his Wars. Though man be of little ſtature and ſtrength compared to an Elephant, yet God hath ſubdued the Elephant to the will, and under the power of man. Is not this a great argument of Gods great goodneſs to man? And is it not a ſtrong obligation upon man to be obedient and ſerviceable to God, who hath made ſuch a creature ſerviceable and obedient to him?

Secondly, This ſhews us, as the goodneſs of God to man, ſo the over-ruling power of God; who can make the greateſt ſtrength of his creatures, which left to themſelves might do abundance of miſchief and be hurtful, yet uſeful and helpful to us. What a world of harm might the *Elephant* do, yet (as was ſaid) he never hurts any, unleſs provoked. Let us adore the power of God, who over-rules the mighty ſtrength of this creature, cauſing him to lay it out in a way of helpfulneſs and advantage to mankind. As we ſhould take notice of the goodneſs of God, when he over-rules men who have power to hurt, from doing hurt, as he did *Laban*, who told *Jacob* (Gen. 31. 29.) *It is in the power of my hand to do you hurt, but the God of your Father ſpake to me yeſternight*, &c. Many may have power in their hands to cruſh us in a moment, yet God ſtops them from ſuch a uſe of their power: this is a great argument of the goodneſs of God. Some men would be like Lions or Bears, if God did not check them, as *David* was confident he would (*Pſal.* 76. 10.) *The wrath of man ſhall praiſe thee, the remainder of wrath thou wilt reſtrain.* Many have great power, and great wrath with it, and what would they not do in their powerful wrath, if God did not reſtrain all the over-plus and remainder of it, which ſerves not to advance his praiſe. Some have much wrath, but no power; theſe would do hurt if they could, but they cannot do much hurt. Others have much power, but no wrath; theſe will do no hurt, yet they could. A third ſort have both, they are full of power, and full of wrath; theſe both can and would do much hurt, did not God bind or bound them, ſtop them or reſtrain them. Now, I ſay, as we ſhould reverence that powerful goodneſs of God, which meekens mighty beaſts, and keeps them from doing hurt, ſo we ſhould reverence and adore that power and goodneſs, or good power of God, which bridles evil men from doing hurt with their power.

Thirdly, We may infer this by way of inſtruction from the premiſes.

> *Men, who as to the matter and original of their bodies, are but like to beaſts, are alſo exceeded by beaſts in many bodily powers and abilities.*

What is the ſtrength of a man to the ſtrength of an *Elephant?* And what is mans age, or the length of his life to an *Elephants?* And whereas men have five bodily ſenſes, there are creatures that exceed them in all. One creature hath a quicker ear, another a more curious feeling, a third hath a more piercing eye, a fourth excels in ſmelling, and a fifth in taſting. Man is excell'd in his natural powers, even by meaneſt animals: This ſhould humble us; And if it ſhould humble us, that we are exceeded by them, as to ſenſitive or bodily powers, how ſhould it ſhame us to be exceeded by them, as to inward indowments, as to underſtanding and vertue, as to our morality and good behaviour. *Be not* (ſaith *David* Pſal. 32. 9.) *as the horſe and mule which have no underſtanding.* Yet (*Pſal.* 49. 20.) *man that is in honour and underſtandeth not, is like the beaſts that periſh.* How ſad is it to ſee men who have underſtanding, yea, who are (as to worldly concerns) men of great underſtanding, like horſes and mules, who have no underſtanding! They who have not a right underſtanding, an underſtanding to know and do the will of God (*a good underſtanding have all they* (and none but they) *that do his commandments*, Pſal. 111. 10.) are (in Scripture ſenſe) men of no underſtanding. What a reproach is it to any man, what a blot in the Eſcutcheon of a man in honour, that it ſhould be ſaid of him, and he not able with truth to gain-ſay it, that he hath not ſo much underſtanding as an Elephant! That he is not ſo docile and teachable as an Elephant! That he is not ſo gentle and tractable as an Elephant! What, not ſo obedient to due commands, not ſo ſubmiſſive as an Elephant! What, not ſo ſerviceable and uſeful as an Elephant! What, not ſo modeſt and chaſt as an Elephant! What, not ſo compaſſionate, not ſo faithful as an Elephant! O how ſhould it ſhame us! The Scripture often ſhames us with our coming behind beaſts (*Iſa.* 1. 3.) *The Ox knoweth his owner, and the Aſs his maſters crib; but* Iſrael *doth not know, my people do not conſider*: They have not ſo much knowledg nor conſideration as the Ox and the Aſs. So again (*Jerem.* 8. 7.) *The Stork in the heavens knoweth her appointed times, and the Turtle, and the Crane, and the ſwallow obſerve the time of their coming; but my people know not the judgment of their God.* Nor was this a reproof to the prophane world, but to the profeſſing people of God, the *Jews*, that they were not ſo knowing, nor skilled in the judgments of God, that is, to know and do what the judgments of God called them to do, and be, as the Crane and Swallow were obſervant of, and knew what to do, and where to be, in all changes of times and ſeaſons. And thus the ſlothful man is reproved (*Prov.* 6. 6.) *Go to the Ant thou ſluggard, conſider her ways and be wiſe*; thou haſt not ſo much wit as an Ant. This were a ſhameful rebuke upon Heathens: let it not fall upon any who profeſs themſelves Chriſtians.

Nos aper auditu, nos vincit aranea tactu, Vultur odoratu, linx viſu, ſimia guſtu.

Fourthly, *If beaſts exceed man in ſome things, then how much doth God exceed man in all things?* The reaſon why God preſented this *Behemoth* to *Job*, was to let him ſee how much himſelf exceeds man, ſeeing *Behemoth* is not ſo much to him, as the leaſt fly to man. All creatures put together are but as *the duſt of the ballance, and as the drop of the bucket to God.* Thus we ſhould raiſe our ſelves, and wind up our hearts into a conſideration of the greatneſs and Almightineſs of God, when we behold great and mighty creatures. The greatneſs of the creatures ſhould be as a ladder to lift us up to God, and thereby to take meaſure (as we are able, or as well as we can, for indeed we cannot) of his immenſurable greatneſs; that's the right uſe of their greatneſs. And if by the ſight and conſideration of theſe creatures, we do not fall down and humble our ſelves, if we lie not at the foot of God, who is infinitely above theſe creatures, and our ſelves too, we neglect the ſcope of this Scripture, and of all Scriptures of like import. God is known (*via eminentiæ*) by way of eminency, in every creature, moſtly in the moſt eminent creatures, ſuch as this, whoſe deſcription hath been thus far opened.

Now having had this high encomium of *Behemoth* from the Lords own mouth, *he is the chief of the ways of God*; what follows, even this, that how great ſoever this creature is, God knows how to deal with him; and God would have *Job* underſtand that alſo, that how great ſoever he had made him, he was able to match him, yea, to overmatch him. *Behemoth* is no match for God; For as it followeth in the cloſe of this 19. verſe,

He that made him, can make his Sword to approach unto him.

He that made him.] Theſe words are a periphraſis, or a circumlocution of God. The Text doth not ſay, *God can make his Sword to approach unto him*; but *He that made him can*, &c.

> Hence Note; *God muſt and will, and he loves to be owned as a Maker.*

God hath often revealed himſelf under this Title, *The Maker of Heaven and of Earth, and of all things both in Heaven and in Earth.* God is the Maker of all in a threefold ſenſe, and he loves to be acknowledged as ſuch in them all. Firſt, he is the Maker of all things and perſons in their natural being. Secondly, he is the Maker of all perſons in their civil being: He makes the rich, and he makes the poor; he makes the high, and he makes the low, that is, he makes one man rich and another poor, one high and another low in this world. Thirdly, he is the Maker of all perſons in their ſpiritual or holy being; he makes a man good, who was bad; he makes him humble, who was proud; he makes him heavenly, that was earthly; he makes him ſpiritual, who was carnal, and not only fleſhly, but *in the fleſh* (Rom. 8. 8.) The making of the new-man, is that for which the Lord is eſpecially to be owned and honoured. We are to honour God as he is the Maker of all creatures; but we are eſpecially to honour him as he is the Maker of the New creature. To be the Maker of the creatures, great or ſmall, is the ſole priviledg of God. And let us remember, that as God himſelf hath made all things, ſo he hath made all things for himſelf, That is, *All beings ought to live unto him, and act for him, who is the firſt being*; to Him *who hath given us life and breath and all things, and in whom we live, and move, and have our being*, unto him we ſhould dedicate our life and breath and all things. And did we truly know (which every one preſumes he knoweth) God to be our Maker, or as our Maker, it would have a mighty influence upon our hearts and lives, and even make us live to God. What ſhould not we do for him that made us? And what cannot he do with us that made us? As the Text here ſpeaks of the great *Behemoth, He that made him*

Can make his Sword approach unto him.

There are two readings of theſe words.

Firſt, thus, *He that made him, made his Sword to be near him*; That is, as God made *Behemoth*, ſo God made a Sword for him, that is, (according to this reading) for his uſe, or for him to uſe. God hath made him a weapon: But what is the Sword which God hath made him? They who inſiſt upon this reading, taking alſo *Behemoth* to be the Elephant, ſay, 'tis that natural member commonly called *his Trunk*; That is to the Elephant as a Sword, both to defend himſelf, and to offend and wound thoſe that moleſt him. Thus Mr. *Beza* gloſſeth it; *God who made him, hath furniſhed him with convenient weapons, or with a weapon fit for his turn.* And the ſame ſaith another learned interpreter, following this Tranſlation, *God hath armed him with a Trunk, as with a ſtrong and a mighty Sword.* There is a truth in this Tranſlation and Interpretation, and it hath the ſuffrage of many worthy men for it, as the principal, if not the ſole meaning of theſe words. God who made *Behemoth*, hath alſo made him a Sword to defend himſelf with, that his vaſt body ſhould not be liable to every danger and affront. Take one Note from this reading.

Armavit illum Deus manu, ſeu proboſcide, quaſi gladio validiſſimo. Jun. Piſc.

As God hath given the Creatures a being, ſo means to protect and preſerve themſelves in their Being.

He that made him hath given him a Sword, he hath not left him naked or unarmed. Many creatures, I mean of the irrational creatures, have natural weapons, Horns, Hoofs, Teeth, and Claws, to defend themſelves with, and offend thoſe with, that trouble them. Others have only defenſive Arms, as it were, for ſafety againſt annoyance, ſhells, and thick skins. Many have neither offenſive, nor defenſive arms, who yet by their natural ſwiftneſs ſhift for themſelves by flight, and out-run their dangers. There is no creature, but hath ſome way or other for its defence. As man (the chief creature) God hath given him Reaſon to provide all ſorts of lawful means for his preſervation and defence. Take it alſo ſpiritually; God having made any man a New creature, gives him a Sword, and means of defence, to preſerve himſelf in his ſpiritual being. Every godly man hath ſpiritual weapons, *the whole armour of God,* for his defence againſt the Devil, his ſpiritual enemy. The Apoſtle leads us into Gods Armory, and ſhews us what weapons God hath made for the ſpiritual man, or for the preſervation of man in his ſpiritual ſtate and being (*Eph.* 6. 13, 14, *&c.*) *The Girdle of Truth, the Breaſt-plate of righteouſneſs, Feet ſhod with the preparation of the Goſpel of peace, The Shield of Faith, to quench the fiery darts of the Devil, The Helmet of Salvation, and the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.* Thus God hath armed the New Creature with a Sword; he that made him, hath made him weapons of defence and offence, to ſave his ſoul from the wounds of temptation, and to reſiſt, yea, overcome the Tempter. Thus, as the Lord who made *Behemoth*, hath made him a Sword, ſo he hath provided weapons, or means of defence for all other creatures, for man eſpecially, and moſt ſpecially for man in his ſpiritual condition, that his immortal Soul may be ſafe, whatever becomes of his frail fleſh, or mortal body. So much of and from that firſt Tranſlation, *He that made him, made his Sword to be near him.*

Yet before I come to explain our own Tranſlation, I ſhall here again mind the Reader, what learned *Bochartus* underſtands by the Hebrew word rendred *Sword*, in reference to the *Hippopotame.* He that made him (ſaith he) hath given him (*Harpen*) *a ſickle*, or *crooked Sword.* Our Dictionaries render the word *Harp*, a Wood-knife, as alſo a Sythe. This crooked Sword or Sickle, denotes, ſaith he, the long, ſharp, and ſomewhat bowed teeth of the *Hippopotame*, with which he doth as it were reap, or cut down corn and graſs, when he comes on Land to feed; as ſeveral Greek Poets, by him named, deſcribe the manner of the *Hippopotame*'s feeding; which muſt be granted, compIyeth well with the words in the next verſe, where 'tis ſaid of *Behemoth, The Mountains bring him forth food.* Yet I ſee no reaſon, but that thoſe great teeth of the Elephant (which ſurely are no hurtleſs weapons) as alſo his *Promuſcis* or Trunk (though commonly called his hand) may be compared to, and expreſſed by a Sword, if that be true which good Authors ſay he doth with them.

The Second reading of the Text, which *Bochartus* ſaith, a very learned Interpreter perceiving the inconvenience of the former, as to the Elephant, took up, is, alſo, ours,

He that made him, can make his Sword to approach unto him.

His Sword,] That is, his own Sword, Gods Sword. God hath a Sword, and he *can make his Sword approach Behemoth*; That is, As ſtrong as *Behemoth* is, God that made him, and gave him his ſtrength, can ſubdue him, can pierce his skin, though very hard, and wound him to the very heart; he can break his bones, though they are like ſtrong pieces of braſs, and bars of Iron.

So then, the meaning of the words (according to our Tranſlation) is plainly this. As if the Lord had ſaid, *Though Behemoth be very vaſt and big, ſtrong and terrible, yet I can quickly bring him down, and vanquiſh him.*

Quaſi à Solo Deo ſit occidendus. Druſ.

Some oppoſe this Tranſlation and expoſition, becauſe the Hebrew word which we render *to approach*, is not applicable (ſay they) to an hoſtile approach, but rather to an amicable and friendly approach: Now to come upon one with a Sword, is an hoſtile approach, 'tis to come as an enemy, which (ſay they) that word will not well bear.

But I conceive this to be a miſtake; for in Scripture, once, if not oftner, the word is uſed to denote an hoſtile approach, or an aſſault (1 *Sam.* 17. 40.) where *David* incountring *Goliah*, tis ſaid, *He took his ſtaff in his hand, and choſe five ſmooth ſtones out of the brook, and put them in a ſhepherds bag, which he had even in a ſcrip, and his ſling was in his hand, and he drew near* (or *approached*) *to the Philiſtim.* Now how did *David* approach the *Philiſtim?* Surely, not to ſalute him as a friend, but to deſtroy him as an enemy, as in the iſſue he did. Though the word commonly ſignifieth a friendly approach, yet the Scripture applyeth it alſo to an enemy-like or violent approach; and therefore that objection is of no force to invalidate our Tranſlation, or the Interpretation given of it: *He that made him, can make his Sword approach unto him.*

Hanc expoſitionem reſpuere videtur verbum רגש *Accedere faciet applicabit, quo nulla notatur hoſtilitas, ſed potius amica conjunctio.* Piſc.

But what is this Sword, that God makes to approach unto *Behemoth?*

I anſwer, This Sword is any thing whereby God is pleaſed to ſubdue or deſtroy *Behemoth*, or the Elephant; whatever inſtrument God will uſe, that's his Sword; or whether God will uſe any other creature to kill the Elephant, that creature is his Sword. 'Tis ſaid, that the *Rhinoceros* (his ſworn enemy, if I may ſo ſpeak) gets his ſharpned Horn, under his belly, and paunches him. 'Tis ſaid alſo, that the Dragon, loving to ſuck or drink his blood, kills him. Now whether the Elephant fall by theſe beaſts and ſerpents, or be ſlain in battle and war by men, he may be ſaid to fall by the ſword of God, or that God makes his ſword approach unto him. The ſword of God is the power of God put forth by this, or that, or any means, for the ſubduing or deſtroying of this mighty creature. *He that made him, can make his ſword approach unto him.*

From this rendring, and the interpretation given of it, which is very plain and obvious, Obſerve; *There is no creature, ſo great, ſo ſtrong, but God is able to ſubdue and conquer him.*

He that made the creature, can make his ſword approach unto him. *God can maſter whatſoever he hath made. Behemoth*, the Elephant is a creature of a vaſt bigneſs, a creature of admirable ſtrength, yet down he comes, down he falls, as ſoon as ever God draws near with his ſword. The inanimate creatures, the Sun, the Moon, the Stars, the Seas, the Earth, are ſtrong and powerful; yet God can ſhake the Earth, and calm the Sea, he can ſeal up the Stars, and ſtop both Sun and Moon in their courſe, and make them ſtand ſtill as a ſtone. God who made the fire hot and burning, can take away the burning heat of it, which is ſo connatural to it. And as he ſubdueth inanimate or liveleſs creatures, ſo (as here in the Text) the animate or living creatures. The Lord, who hath made the Elephant, the Lion, the Bear, the Tyger, can quickly put a ſtop to the power and rage of any of them. We may exemplifie it alſo in man, a rational creature. Some men, in compariſon of others, are like *Behemoths*, like Elephants, great, powerful and ſtrong, *Nimrods* of the earth, mighty hunters: The Lord can make his ſword approach to any of them. The Lord hath infinitely more ſtrength and power in himſelf, than he hath placed or planted in any creature. For, what is the ſtream to the fountain? What is the light in the air, to the light in the Sun? The ſtrength of the creature, is but a ſtream or a beam iſſuing from God. The ſtrength of the Elephant is no more to God, than the ſtrength of a ſilly Mouſe; the ſtrength of an Eagle no more to God, than the ſtrength of a Fly; the ſtrength of a Leviathan in the ſea (of whom in the next Chapter) is no more to God, then the ſtrength of a Shrimp or Sprat. God can ſoon deſtroy the roaring Lions, the raging Bears, the fierce Tigers, and ravening Wolves of this world. Nothing is ſtrong before the ſtrength of God, or before the ſtrong God.

Now, if the Lord hath a power whereby he can quickly over-power the moſt powerful creatures; then this teacheth us,

Firſt, *Not to truſt in the power of any creature.* Though you have an Elephant, a *Behemoth* for your help, do not truſt in him. The Lord that made him, can quickly make his ſword approach unto him; the Lord can make him as weak as water, and of as little uſe to you as a little child. *The ſtrong ſhall be as tow, and the maker of it as a ſpark* (that is, the work or idol which he hath made ſhall be as a ſpark to tow) *and they ſhall both burn together, and none ſhall quench them* (Iſa.1.31.) How often are we called off from truſt in any creature, from truſt in horſes, from truſt in man! There's no help in the ſtrongeſt creatures, unleſs, Firſt, God gives them ſtrength, and works with their ſtrength. Secondly, There is no help in any creature, if God ſets his ſtrength againſt him. Therefore truſt not in any creature.

Secondly, This teacheth us, *Not to fear the power of any creature while God is with us.* If an Elephant, a *Behemoth* be againſt us, we need not fear him. Thus the Apoſtle concludes, while he puts that ſuppoſition (*Rom.* 8. 28.) *If God be with us, who can be againſt us?* That is, to hurt us. His meaning is, none can. There are none in the world againſt whom ſo many are, as againſt thoſe *with whom God is*, that is, whom he owns, loves and favours. Chriſt told his Diſciples of this (*Joh.*15.19.) *I have choſen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.* But though they with whom God is, are hated of the world, or have the world againſt them, yet the world cannot be ſo againſt them, as to harm or hurt them; for he that made them can make his ſword approach to thoſe that would, that is, they are fully in and under his power. The Prophet uſeth this argument (*Iſa.*54.16,17.) *Behold, I have created the Smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an inſtrument for his work, and I have created the waſter to deſtroy:* Even the waſters of the world, they that make ſpoil of all, all they are of my creation; I have made them, and ſeeing I have made them, ſurely, I can hinder them in any of their waſting and deſtroying purpoſes; and therefore the Lord in the next words gives a full and moſt comfortable aſſurance to the Church, notwithſtanding the skill of the Smith in making inſtruments, and the ſtrength of the Waſter to deſtroy with them, *No weapon that is formed againſt thee ſhall proſper, and every thing that ſhall riſe againſt thee in judgment, thou ſhalt condemn; this is the heritage of the ſervants of the Lord, and their righteouſneſs is of me, ſaith the Lord.* The very ground upon which the Lord aſſured them, that no weapon formed againſt them ſhould proſper, was, becauſe the Smith, and the Waſter too, were both of them his creatures or of his making, as the Text ſpeaks of *Behemoth*. God can make his ſword approach beaſts in the likeneſs of men, as well as beaſts in their own likeneſs. And hence it is, that the Holy Ghoſt expreſſeth all thoſe powers of the World, which ſhould afflict the Church in ſeveral ages, by the name of beaſts, all of Gods making. *Daniel* in his 7. Chapter had a viſion of four great beaſts that came up from the Sea; whereof the firſt, was like a Lion; the ſecond, like a Bear; another, like a Leopard; and a fourth, dreadful, and terrible, and ſtrong; ſo exceedingly dreadful, terrible and ſtrong, that (as if no beaſt could be found like it) it is not expreſſed by the likeneſs of any beaſt. But what were theſe beaſts? 'Tis anſwered (*Verſ.*17.) *Theſe great beaſts which are four, are four great Kings, which ſhall ariſe out of the Earth*, that is, four ſucceſſions of Kings. The *Babylonian*, the *Perſian*, the *Grecian*, the *Roman* powers were thoſe great beaſts. Now the Lord who made them, made his ſword approach unto every one of them, as the Hiſtories, both of the Church and of the world, hold clearly out. The Lord who made that great *Behemoth* the *Babylonian* power, and that great *Behemoth* the *Perſian* power, that great *Behemoth* the *Grecian* power, as alſo that great *Behemoth* the *Roman* power, hath made his ſword, in ſeveral ages, and by ſeveral ſteps or degrees, approach unto them. So in the *Revelation* of Saint *John*, the great beaſts there mentioned, what were they, but the powers of the earth ſet againſt the Church of God? We read (*Revel.*12.3.) of a great red dragon; this red dragon was the heatheniſh *Roman* power perſecuting the Church. Again (*Revel.*13.1.) John *ſtood upon the ſand of the Sea, and ſaw a beaſt riſe up out of the Sea, having ſeven heads and ten horns.* What was this beaſt? Maſter *Mead* ſaith, that by this beaſt, and his ſeven heads, and ten horns, we are to underſtand the Pope, with the companies or aſſociations of all thoſe Princes that put themſelves under his power; all theſe were figured (ſaith he) by that beaſt riſing up out of the Sea. At the 11. verſe of the ſame Chapter, Saint *John* ſaith, *I beheld another beaſt coming out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb, and he ſpake like a dragon.* Apocalyptical Interpreters have various opinions about this ſecond beaſt, but whoever, or whatever this or the former beaſt is (to be ſure they are ſome body) the ſpirit of God repreſents them as terrible *Behemoths*; and the Church hath no help nor comfort againſt them, but that in the Text, *He that made them, can make his ſword approach unto them.* The Prophet *Iſaiah* (Chap. 27. 1.) ſpeaks of the Lords ſword, and of the uſe he will put it to; *In that day the Lord with his ſore, and great, and ſtrong ſword ſhall puniſh Leviathan, the piercing Serpent, even Leviathan the crooked Serpent, and he ſhall ſlay the Dragon that is in the Sea*; That is, overcome the Devil and all his inſtruments, who oppoſe and would deſtroy *his Vineyard of Red wine*, that is, his Church. Thus we ſee how the Lord in all ages paſt hath, and how we are aſſured concerning the Ages to come, that he will make that good concerning *myſtical Behemoths*, which here he ſpeaks concerning the *natural Behemoth*; *He that made him, can make his ſword approach unto him.*

The Lord having thus far deſcribed *Behemoth* by ſeveral parts of his body, and by his great ſtrength or power, proceeds to deſcribe him further, by the manner of his life, or by his meat, drink and lodging, in the latter part of this context, to the end of the Chapter.

Verſ. 20. **Surely the Mountains bring him forth food, where all the beaſts of the field do play.**

In theſe words we have the proviſion which God hath appointed for *Behemoth*, and where. Though he be a very great beaſt, and therefore needs much food, yet the Lord hath ſtore enough for him, and hath ſet him where he may feed his fill. *The Mountains bring him forth graſs*; That is, all ſorts of herbage and green things.

בול *pro* יבול *Quicquid terra profert, ut ſunt herbæ & arbores.*

And though this part of the deſcription of *Behemoth* may ſerve the *Hippopotame*, who as *Bochartus* ſaith, feeds upon the Hills and Mountains (ſuch as they are) which lie near the River *Nilus*, as other Amphibions do (the Morſe eſpecially) in other parts of the world; yet no man can deny, but it doth as well (that I ſay not, much better) agree to the Elephant, that *the Mountains bring him forth food.* The words are plain, and need no explication.

Note two things from them; Firſt, *God provideth food for all creatures, even for Behemoth.*

He provides them food, from the greateſt to the leaſt; they are at Gods finding. And doth God take care for *Behemoths*, for Elephants, or, as ſome determine it, *Hippopotames*, River-Horſes, and Sea-monſters? Surely then (as *David* ſpake, *Pſal.* 111.4.) *He will give meat to them that fear him, he will ever be mindful of his Covenant.* This Inference hath been made from other paſſages in the former Chapter; I only remind the Reader of it here. The Lord, who provideth mountains of graſs or graſs upon the mountains, for *Behemoth*, hath mountains of proviſion for all his faithful ſervants.

Secondly, Note; *God provides proportionable food for all his creatures.*

Behemoth is a vaſt creature; therefore God hath whole mountains for him to graze upon, he is not ſhut up in a little pytle or narrow field, he hath large mountains for his ſtore; and will not the Lord give proportionable ſupplies to his people according to all their needs? If our needs be great, his ſtore is greater, *The world is mine* (ſaith God, *Pſal.* 50. 12.) *and the fulneſs of it.* He that is the fulneſs of all things, and hath in his power, and at his diſpoſe, the fulneſs of all the world, will not let them, of whom the world is not worthy, want any thing that is good and expedient for them. The mountains and valleys too, yea, deſerts and hard rocks, ſhall bring them forth food; God will turn ſtones into bread, and rocks into water, rather then they ſhall want. As *David* ſaid (*Pſal.* 34. 10.) *The young Lions* (ſo I may ſay, the Elephants) *do lack and ſuffer hunger; but they that ſeek the Lord, ſhall not want any good thing*; That is, Lions and Elephants ſhall rather want then they. *Surely the mountains bring him forth food,*

Where all the beaſts of the field play.] This argues the mild nature and gentleneſs of *Behemoth*, the Elephant, as was ſhewed at the 15. verſe; he lives upon graſs, not upon fleſh, as Lions and Bears; he lives upon graſs, and therefore all the beaſts of the field play where the Elephant feeds, for they know he will not eat nor feed upon them, he eats only graſs. Natural Hiſtorians tell us, that the beaſts ſeem to rejoyce when they ſee the Elephant, becauſe, they know he will not hurt them; not only do they feed with him to ſatisfie hunger, but play and ſport for delight.

Hence Note; Firſt, *God can reſtrain the ſtrongeſt and moſt dangerous Creatures from hurting the weakeſt.*

The beaſts would have little heart to play where the Elephant feeds, were he as fierce and cruel as he is great and ſtrong. Thus the Lord orders the ſpirits of powerful men, or of men in great power, into ſuch meekneſs and gentleneſs, that even the meaneſt live quietly and peaceably by them without fear of hurt, as was toucht before. The Church is ſet forth playing, as it were, not only where the Elephant, a gentle beaſt feeds, but where wild and ravenous beaſts feed (*Iſa.* 11. 6, 7, 8, 9.) *The wolf ſhall dwell with the Lamb, the Leopard ſhall lie down with the Kid, the Calf and the young Lion and the Fatling ſhall lie down together, and a little Child ſhall lead them*; That is, the Wolf ſhall not hurt the Lamb, the Leopard ſhall not trouble the Kid: Yea, ſaith that illuſtrious Prophecy (*Ver.* 8.) *The ſucking Child ſhall play on the hole of the Aſp, the weaned Child ſhall put his hand on the Cockatrice den, they ſhall not hurt nor deſtroy in all my holy mountain, for the earth ſhall be full of the knowledg of the Lord, as the waters cover the Sea.* The care of God over his Church and ſervants appears two ways;

Mitiſſimus eſt Elephas, neq; illius congreſſum exhorrent cætera animalia, ſed læta in iiſdem paſcuis verſantur. Plin. *l.* 69. *c.* 9.

Firſt, In hiding them from ſuch as would do them hurt. As it is ſaid (*Jer.* 36. 26.) when *Baruch* and *Jeremiah* had done that ſervice commanded them by the Lord, *Jehoiakim* was angry, and ſent to take them; but ſaith the Text, *The Lord hid them.* So the Lord moved *Obadiah* to hide his Prophets by fifty in a cave, from the wrath of *Ahab* and *Jezebel* (1 *Kings* 18.) Now as the Lord keeps his ſervants, by hiding them from thoſe who are enraged againſt them, ſo

Secondly, By meekning their ſpirits, as he doth the Elephants towards the beaſts of the field, ſhewing them much kindneſs, and ſuffering them in a ſort *to play before them*, that is, to enjoy great tranquillity. The *Pſalmiſt* ſaith, it was the Lord who *turned the heart of the* Egyptians *to hate his people, and to deal ſubtilly with his ſervants* (Pſal. 105. 25.) And 'tis doubtleſs of the Lord, that any ſhew them favour, and deal kindly with them.

Again, from theſe words, *Where all the beaſts of the field play,*

Note; Secondly, *A playing life, is the life of a beaſt.*

All beaſts would live ſo; wild beaſts do live ſo. As it is ſaid of the Leviathan in the Sea (*Pſal.* 104. 26.) *There go the Ships, there is that Leviathan whom thou haſt made to play therein.* A life of play, is a beſtial life. It is ſaid (*Zach.* 8. 5.) in a way of promiſe, That *boys and girls ſhould play in the ſtreets*, but men and women muſt work; it were a ſhame to deſcribe them playing. The life of man is not a playing life, but a labouring life. How beaſt-like do they live, who (as it is ſaid of the people of *Iſrael*, Exod. 38.6.) *Eat, and drink, and riſe up to play*; That's juſt like a beaſt, feed on the mountains, and then play upon the mountains. Let us follow *Solomons* counſel (*Eccleſ.* 9. 10.) *Whatſoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might.* We have ſeen *Behemoth* feeding, let us now ſee him lodging and repoſing himſelf.

Verſ. 21, 22. **He lieth under the ſhady trees, in the covert of the reed and fens: the ſhady trees cover him with their ſhadow, the willows of the brook compaſs him about.**

Theſe two verſes hold forth the manner of *Behemoths* repoſe, how and where he takes his eaſe, *He lieth under the ſhady trees*, &c.

Some of the *Jewiſh* Rabbins read theſe two verſes with an interrogation Negative, thus; *Doth he lie under the ſhady trees, in the covert of the reeds? Do the ſhady trees cover him with their ſhadows? Or the willows compaſs him about?* Implying, that *Behemoth* is ſo vaſt a creature, that he can hardly find trees to ſhadow him, or willows of the brook to compaſs him about. But though *Behemoth* be a great and tall beaſt, yet I nothing doubt but there are trees in and about the places which he frequents, great and tall enough to ſhadow him from the Sun when he ſtands upright, yea, and reeds of a ſufficient height to be a covert to him when he lieth down. And therefore as it was an overboldneſs in thoſe Rabbins to put an interrogation where they found none, ſo there is no need that an interrogation ſhould either be found or put there. Indeed *Bochartus*, who judgeth reeds much too low to make a covert for the Elephant, tells us out of *Ælian*, That Elephants go by very great trees, as we by ſtanding corn, and that ſome of them are taller then trees. Which I conceive, can be underſtood no other way then by a high ſtrain of Rhetorick: But ſuppoſe it true in plain and proper ſenſe, yet this gives the learned *Bochartus* no advantage (to which end he alledgeth that of *Ælian*) for the accomodating of this part of the deſcription of *Behemoth* to the *Hippopotame* rather then the Elephant, becauſe he tells us from ſeveral Authors, firſt, that the *Hippopotame* is not only three times bigger then the horſe, but ſecondly, that he is of equal ability with the Elephant, and for the moſt part greater. Whence it is (ſaith he) that ſome Writers compare the *Hippopotame* with the Elephant, both in ſtrength and ſtature, or prefer him before the Elephant; which reports (ſaith he) although they be a little ſtretcht, yet 'tis manifeſt, that the *Hippopotame* comes behind few animals, either in bigneſs or ſtature (that is, tallneſs) of body. And if ſo, then the Reeds of the

Fen

שכב *Et cubo & dormio; ſæpius cubo, nam dormio potius* ישו *Dicitur.* Druſ.

Ælian. *l.* 7. *c.* 6.

Bochartus *part. poſt. l.* 5. *c.* 15. *p.* 755.

Fen fit him as ill for a covert as the Elephant; yet I am enough ſatisfied, that they may very well fit either of them, And though the Elephant uſually ſleepeth ſtanding, and rarely lyeth down to ſleep, yet (which is not denied) if he ſometimes or at any time lyeth down to ſleep, 'tis ſufficient to anſwer the purpoſe of this Text; which ſaith (*Verſ.* 21.). *He lyeth under the ſhady-trees, in the covert of the Reeds and Fens.* And

Verſ. 22. **The ſhady trees cover him with their ſhadow, the willows of the brook compaſs him about.**

'Tis uſual with, and even natural to cattel of all ſorts, to ſeek ſhelter under ſhady trees, when the fiery heat of the Sun offends them; and as *Behemoth* ſeeks out any ſort of ſhady trees, ſo it ſeems he hath a peculiar delight in, and poſſibly a phancy to

The willows of the brook.] Willows are ſo called, becauſe they moſtly grow near to brooks, and always proſper beſt in mariſh or mooriſh grounds. Some trees will not grow in watery places, ſuch are the Cypreſs and Cheſt-nut-trees; others will not grow well any where elſe, ſuch are the Alder and the Poplar trees, Willows eſpecially: Willows love brooks, and Elephants love both brooks and Willows, if thoſe ancient Natural Hiſtorians, mentioned in the Margen miſ-report them not. The Elephant (ſaith one of them) loveth rivers, and though he be not a river Animal, yet he may be called a river-ſide or river-bank Animal; and (ſaith the other) Elephants are greatly pleaſed with rivers, and wander much about ſtreams of water, though they cannot ſwim, by reaſon of the greatneſs of their bodies.

Sicut aquas odere cupreſſi, juglandes, caſtaneæ, ita non niſi in aquoſis proveniunt ſalices, alni, populi. Plin. *l.* 16. *c.* 18.

Elephas amat amnes & quamvis fluviatile non ſit tamen riparium dici poteſt. Ariſt. *l.* 9. *c.* 46.

Elephantes gaudent amnibus maxime & circa fluvios vagantur, cum alioquin nare propter magnitudinem corporis non poſſunt. Plin. *l.* 8. *c.* 10.

That is (I confeſs) a rare notion, and ſingularly ſubſervient to his opinion, that *Behemoth* is the *Hippopotame*, which the learned Author, ſo often already mentioned, gives us; namely, that by the word rendred *brook*, we are here to underſtand the river *Nilus* in *Egypt*. And therefore he tranſlates the Text, not as we, *The Willows of the Brook*, but *The Willows of* Nilus *compaſs him about*. And that the *Hebrew* word (*Nahal*) ſignifieth *Nilus*, he puts beyond contradiction, by quoting many expreſs places of Scripture, where it is ſo uſed (*Nu.* 34.5. *Joſh.* 15.4.47. 1 *Kings* 8.65. 2 *Kings* 24.7. *Iſa.* 27.12.) which he alſo confirms by the Authority of ſome Ancient Latin Poets, who call *Nilus* a Torrent or a Brook. Now though this hath very great weight with me, and may with any ingenious Reader, to perſwade him, that the *Hippopotame* is intended by *Behemoth* rather then the Elephant,

Yet with the favour, and good leave of this worthy Author, and with ſubmiſſion to more able judgments, I would offer theſe two things to the Readers conſideration.

Firſt, That though the word *Nilus* may draw its original (as he ſhews) from the word *Nahal*, according to its ancient pronunciation *Neel*; yet in on one of thoſe Scriptures by him quoted, and lately noted, is the word *Nahal* uſed alone (as it ſtands in this Text of *Job*) to ſignifie *Nilus*; for in all thoſe places the word *Egypt* is added. Now when the words are put together, The *River of Egypt*, no man can doubt but *Nilus* muſt be underſtood by it. But when the word *Nahal*, ſignifying a Brook, Torrent or River, is found ſingle and alone, there is no neceſſity that it ſhould ſignifie *Nilus*, the word indifferently and in common, being applicable to any brook or River in any part of the whole world, as well as to *Nilus* in *Egypt*.

Secondly, In one place of the holy Scripture, where this whole expreſſion in *Job*, *The Willows of the brook* is found, not *Nilus*, but ſome other brook or river is without all controverſie intended. The children of *Iſrael* for the celebration of the feaſt of Tabernacles were commanded (*Levit.* 23.40.) *to cut down the boughs of thick trees, and the Willows of the brook*, &c. Which ſurely could not be meant of the Willows growing about the River *Nilus* in *Egypt*; for they were come out of *Egypt*, and this was an ordinance which the children of *Iſrael* were commanded to obſerve in the Land of *Canaan*. And as in this place of *Moſes* we have *the Willows of the brook*, ſo (*Iſa.* 15.7.) we have, *the brook of the Willows*, whither the ſubſtance of the *Moabites* ſhould be carried, by themſelves (ſay ſome) for ſafety, by their enemies, ſay others, as ſpoil. I do not find any who follow this tranſlation, interpreting *the brook of the Willows* by *Nilus* in *Egypt*, but ſeveral of *Euphrates* by *Babylon* in *Chaldea*, to which that ſpeech of the Captive *Jews* there (*Pſal.* 137.1,2.) may give ſome light.

Theſe two things conſidered, the words of the Text in *Job* concerning *Behemoth* may, at leaſt, with a fair probability, be applied to the Elephant. *The ſhady trees cover him with their ſhadow, the Willows of the brook compaſs him about.*

Hence Note; Firſt, *God provides not only for the being of his Creatures, but for their comfortable being.*

As the Elephant hath food upon the mountains to keep him *alive*, ſo ſhady trees to keep him cool. And thus the Lord takes care for man; he hath not only given him bread to eat, but conveniences for his delight and comfort. God makes proviſion, even for our delight, while we are in the fleſh; let us take heed we *make not proviſion for the fleſh, to fulfil the luſts of it.* The Elephant hath not only graſs, but ſhadows.

Secondly, Note; *The inconveniencies and annoyances which come to us by one Creature are helped by ſome other.*

God hath ſo provided, that look in what one creature doth annoy us, another relieves us. The Elephants are much annoyd by the heat of the Sun, but they find relief under ſhady trees. The heat of the Sun is cured by ſhades and gentle winds, in thoſe parts of the world that are under or near the Line; the Lord hath provided cool briezes, which blowing there fan the air, and make it very pleaſant by attempering the heat. If there be poiſon in one creature to annoy, there is an antidote in ſome other to help. And in this the goodneſs of God ſhines moſt clearly, that all the inconveniences and annoyances, which come to us by men, yea, which come to us by our ſins, are all remedied by Jeſus Chriſt, or we have relief by Jeſus Chriſt againſt them all. When the heat of any affliction moleſts us, we may *ſit down* (as the Church ſpeaks, *Cant.* 2.3.) *under his ſhadow with great delight, and his fruit will be ſweet unto us.* Jeſus Chriſt is to all believers, not only as the ſhadow of a tree, but *as the ſhadow of a great rock in a weary land* (Iſa. 32.2.) The Lord hath provided us ſhady trees, and the Willows of the brook (bleſſed and precious promiſes) to compaſs us about in all our troubles.

Thus God hath given *Behemoth* help againſt immoderate heat; But he is ſubject to much thirſt alſo; for that he hath help at hand too, ſtore of water.

Verſ. 23. 24. **Behold he drinketh up a River and haſteth not, he truſteth that he can draw up Jordan into his mouth; he taketh it with his eyes, his noſe pierceth through ſnares.**

We have had *Behemoth* feeding upon the mountains, and repoſing in the ſhadows; here we have him drinking in or at the River. Theſe two verſes, as they ſtand in our tranſlation, may in a fairer ſenſe be applied to the Elephant: but before I come to that, I ſhall give a brief account of that Tranſlation given by the learned Author before named; according to which, the 23. Verſe is not only beſt, but only applicable to the *Hippopotame*. *Behold, let a River preſs (or come upon) him, he will not fear; he is ſafe, though* Jordan *iſſue forth upon his mouth.*

Ecce premat (eum) fluvius, non trepidabit, ſecurus erit quamvis Jordanes erumpat in os ejus. Bochar.

Now it's eaſily granted, that the talleſt and ſtrongeſt Elephant, would have cauſe enough to fear, if a whole River, ſuch a great and deep one as *Jordan* eſpecially, ſhould preſs upon him and over-whelm him, for as the Elephant is no ſwimmer, ſo he muſt have a liberty of breathing, nor can he hold his breath very long; and therefore (as it is ſaid) ventures to go no further into the water, than he can hold and keep his ſnout above water, to draw in air and maintain reſpiration. So that in this the *Hippopotame* hath the advantage of the Elephant, as being able to hold his breath much longer. For though (ſaith he, alleadging *Ariſtotle* for it) as the Sea-calf, the Crocodile and Sea-ſhell-fiſh, ſo alſo the *Hippopotame* will be ſuffocated in the

Lib. 8. *de Hiſtoria Animal. cap.* 2.

water at laſt, unleſs he take ſome breathing times; yet 'tis certain, he can hold his breath a long time, abiding (not being able to ſwim) whole days at the bottom of *Nilus*, cteeping or lying upon the ouze, till night approaching, he goeth out to feed.

The nature of this animal being ſuch as hath been deſcribed, the Tranſlation in hand anſwers it clearly.

Yet, ſeeing there are other Tranſlations of this 23. verſe, left us by very learned men, and ſkilful in the Hebrew tongue, which may well comply with the nature of the Elephant, it cannot ſavour of pertinacy, to give them ſo much reſpect as to lay them before the Reader, and leave him to his own choice in this matter. And,

Premit fluvium ita ut non feſtinet, confidit quod Jordanem educet in os ſuum.

Firſt, Let us conſider that in which *Bochartus* joyns thoſe four Worthies, *Pagnine*, *Arias*, *Mercer* and *Junius*, whoſe Tranſlation runs thus; *He checks a River, ſo that it haſtneth not; he is confident that he can draw out* Jordan *into his mouth*. Here indeed are great Hyperboles. 'Tis high language, to ſay, an Elephant by interpoſing his body like a bank, can ſtay the courſe of a River, or ſwallow it down at a draught; yet it would be no hard labour to ſhew that the Scripture hath many expreſſions in it of as high a ſtrain as this. We read of Cities walled and fenced up to heaven (*Deut*. 9. 1.) And the Evangeliſt *John*, ſuppoſeth *Chap*.21.25. that if all the things which Jeſus Chriſt did in the days of his fleſh, here on earth, ſhould be written, that *even the world it ſelf could not contain the Books which ſhould be written*. But I ſhall not ſtay upon this, nor doth the learned *Bochartus* inſiſt upon it: he could admit the Hyperboles in that Tranſlation, if the Tranſlation it ſelf were conſiſtent with the Hebrew Text, in reference to which he takes five exceptions againſt that Tranſlation; to every one of which I ſhall only give my apprehenſion, and ſo paſs on.

The firſt is, That the Authors of this Tranſlation, ſuppoſe the Hebrew word for *River*, and that for *Jordan*, to be of the accuſative Caſe (as Grammarians ſpeak) whereas in the Original, they have no note of the accuſative Caſe prefixed. I may ſay to that, The note of the accuſative Caſe is not always prefixt, where the word is ſo taken, eſpecially where the word can be no otherwiſe taken, as in the ſenſe of theſe Tranſlators it cannot be in this place; for they taking *Behemoth* to be the agent in both parts of the verſe, as alſo the River in the former part, and *Jordan* in the latter, to be patients, could not ſuppoſe any otherwiſe of thoſe words, then that they are of the accuſative Caſe; whereas *Bochartus* taking *Behemoth* to be the patient, and the *River* in the former part, as alſo *Jordan* in the latter part of the verſe, to ſuſtain the place of Agents, muſt needs ſuppoſe the contrary.

Secondly, ſaith he, Thoſe words (*ita ut*) *ſo that*, are not in the Hebrew. I anſwer, ſuch is the conciſeneſs of the Hebrew tongue, that all Tranſlators make uſe of ſome fitting words (which they diſtinguiſh from the pure Text, by a different character in Printing and Writing) to clear up the ſenſe of the Text in the notion of their Tranſlation.

חפז

Thirdly, he ſaith, The word rendred to *Haſten*, ſignifieth not to haſten ſimply, but to haſten for fear. That's yielded on all hands; and in that ſenſe I ſhall make uſe of it, in opening our own Tranſlation. All that I ſhall ſay to this exception, is, that the learned Authors of this Tranſlation, who well underſtood the full ſignification of that word, might conceive that the ſame word is not always uſed by the holy Ghoſt in the ſame latitude of ſignification, and therefore render this word, which ſignifies to *haſten for fear*, barely *to haſten*. Further, I may add, that this word which ſignifies to *haſten for fear*, is rendred alſo barely *to fear*; and why not then barely to haſten? The one Tranſlation leaving out the former part of the full ſenſe, as the other doth the latter part of it.

The fourth exception reſpects only the phraſe or manner of ſpeech uſed in that Tranſlation, as not yielding a commodious ſenſe. I ſhall ſay no more but this to it; that when either man or beaſt drinks, he doth both draw out and draw in, he draweth the liquor out of the veſſel, and into his mouth.

הגיח

Fifthly, 'Tis ſaid, the word uſed by *Job*, ſignifies neither to *educe or draw out*, nor to *induce or draw in*, but to *break forth*, as appears (*Job* 38. 8. *Judg*. 20. 33. *Dan*. 7. 2.) It doth ſo in thoſe three places now mentioned; yet all the Lexicographers which I have ſeen, render the Verb (*educere* as well as *erumpere*) by a word ſignifying the force of another, drawing out a thing, as well as the breaking out of a thing by its own force. And ſo a Noun ſubſtantive derived from this Verb is uſed (*Pſal*. 22. 9.) which place we render thus, *Thou art he that took* (or *dreweſt*) *me out of the womb*. And though it be true, that Infants may be ſaid to break out of the womb, yet 'tis not by any power of their own, but by the power of God; and therefore it may much rather be ſaid, that God takes or draws them out of the womb, then that they break or make their way out.

Thus far of this Tranſlation, as alſo of the grounds of that learned Authors diſſatisfaction with it. All which objections riſe up alſo againſt our Engliſh tranſlation, both being near the ſame in words, and fully the general ſcope and ſenſe. And I would add this for the honour of our Tranſlators, that I am much perſwaded they did not render the Text thus, as perſons prepoſſeſſed with an opinion, that the Elephant muſt needs be intended here under the title *Behemoth*, but becauſe they then ſaw good ground for it in the Grammatical conſtruction and meaning of the Hebrew Text. What they would do now (were they living) upon the diſcovery which this worthy perſon hath lately made I dare not ſay, but ſhall proceed to the explication of this verſe, as they have left it.

Behold he drinketh up a River.] The word which we tranſlate *to drink up*, ſignifies to rob, to oppreſs; ſo ſome render it here, *He robbeth a River*, he ſteals away all the water: that's a high ſtrain of Rhetorick to expreſs *Behemoths* great drought; he drinks, as if at a draught he meant to drink a River dry.

Verbum עשק *ſignificat ad ſe rapere per vim vel per fraudem.*

And haſteth not.] There is a twofold rendring of that: Firſt, thus; *He drinketh a River that it haſteth not*, referring this *not haſting* to the River, and then the meaning is, He drinks ſo deep, that he even ſtops the current or courſe of the River. A River whoſe waters are either drawn away, or neer dryed, cannot run with wonted ſwiftneſs. This is another hyperbolical ſtrain, as if an Elephant were able to exhauſt a River. Great Armies have ſtopped the courſe of Rivers with drinking, they have drunk Rivers dry; in alluſion to which, it may be ſaid of the Elephant, *He drinketh a River*, that it haſteth not. So Mr. *Broughton* reads it, *Lo, he robs a River that it haſteth not*. We tranſlate, *He drinketh a River*,

And haſteth not.] That is, the Elephant doth not haſt. This may have a twofold reference.

Firſt, To his patience in thirſt. Though he drinks much when he comes to it, yet he can bear thirſt very patiently a long time. An ancient Writer affirms, the Elephant will live eight days without drinking; if ſo, he haſteth not to drink: though he drinks very much when he comes to it, yet he is not haſty to drink, he can forbear for eight days together.

Ælian. l. 14. c. 44.

Secondly, This may have reference (which I conceive moſt congruous) to his courage: *He haſteth not*; That is, he doth not drink in fear, he takes his leaſure. Hiſtorians ſay of the dog drinking at *Nilus*, he doth but *take a lap and away*, he is afraid the Crocodile will come and catch him; And hence we ſpeak proverbially of thoſe who do but touch at a matter and leave it, *They do like the dog at Nilus*. This is a truth too, *He drinketh up a River, and haſteth not*. The Elephant is a ſtout, ſtrong creature, he fears no hurt, and therefore drinks as much as he will, and in as much time as he will.

חפז *Feſtinavit, pavorem connotat. Tanquam canis ad Nilum. Non feſtinat nec trepidat bibere ut canis quum aquam ſumit è Nilo metuit ſibi à Crocodilo, &c.* Druſ.

Once more, ſome ſay, he haſteth not to drink, becauſe he ſpends ſome time to trouble and mud the water with his feet before he drinks; for he cannot abide (ſaith an ancient Author) to drink clear water: yea, ſome ſay, he therefore troubleth the water before he drinketh, becauſe he cannot endure to ſee his own ſhape in the water; for which reaſon, 'tis alſo affirmed, that the *Indians* will not lead their Elephants by the waters at full Moon, but at new Moon only, when the air being darker, the water is to us leſs pellucid.

Ælian. l. 14. c. 44. *Claræ aquæ potia Elephanto inimiciſſima, turbulentam & ſordidam ſuaviſſime bibit.*

He truſteth that he can draw up Jordan into his Mouth.

This is another high expreſſion, to ſhew the Elephants vaſt drinking. *Jordan* was a great River. The Elephant doth not only think that he can drink up a ſmall Brook or Rivulet, but a great River, that he can draw up the River *Jordan* into his mouth. In the greatneſs of his thirſt, he doth ſo much ſlight any ſmall Brook or Pond, that he is confident, were he at the banks of *Jordan*, he could drink it dry. Thus, as before of his eating, he had whole mountains to feed on; ſo here of his drinking, he draws a whole River, *Jordan, into his mouth.*

Hence Note; Firſt, *That which is too much for many of ſome one kind, may be but enough for one of another kind.*

A little drink will ſerve a Dove. We ſay of a man who drinks ſparingly, *He drinks like a Sparrow*; and we may ſay of a great drinker, *he drinks not only like a Fiſh*, or *like a Horſe* (which are common ſayings) but *like an* Elephant. The Elephant drinks deep. Natural Hiſtorians report the meaſure of his drinking; he takes in the quantity of fourteen *Macedonian* Pitchers or Tankards (how much they contain of our meaſure, I cannot ſay, but queſtionleſs they contain very much) for his mornings draught, and eight for his evenings draught. Hence the Proverb, *An* Elephant *could not drink ſo much.*

Mane quatuordecim amphoras ſive metretas Macedonicas bibit, veſpere Octo. Ariſtot.

Secondly, Note; *If brute creatures eat or drink much, it is from their conſtitution, not from their luſt.*

The Elephant drinks much, yet only what his nature and neceſſity, or the neceſſity of his nature, requires; he doth not drink thus in wantonneſs, or to ſatisfie a luſt; he drinks much, but he is no drunkard. There are three things in the Elephant which clear him, that his great drinking is not from his luſt, but need; Firſt, his natural conſtitution is very hot; that requires the more drink. Secondly, the climate wherein he is bred is very hot: the Elephant cannot well endure cold, and the heat of the Country makes him drink much. Thirdly, The greatneſs of his body; he hath a vaſt body, and that muſt needs require a great quantity of drink to fill it. The Elephants great drinking will not excuſe the drunkard, who drinks to exceſs; what he drinks, is but commenſurate to the greatneſs of his body, and the neceſſities of nature; 'tis not to ſerve a luſt, or to pleaſe his appetite. That which followeth, is the proſecution of the ſame thing.

Verſ. 24. **He taketh it with his eyes, his noſe pierceth through ſnares.**

There are various Tranſlations of this verſe: I ſhall name but one beſides our own, and that preſents it interrogatively, or as an interrogation Negative; *Will any take him in his ſight? (or in his eyes?) or bore his noſe with a ſnare?* Thus ſeveral underſtand this verſe, as importing an utter impoſſibility to take the Elephant (as we ſpeak) *by fair play*. Poſſibly, by cunning and ſubtilty, coming behind him, or at unawares, you may entrap him; but, *Can men take him before his eyes, to pierce his noſe with many ſnares?* So Mr. *Broughton* renders. They cannot do it. *Solomon* ſaith (*Prov.*1.17.) *In vain is the net ſpread in the ſight of any Bird.* You cannot take a little Bird if he ſees you, much leſs *Behemoth*; no, you muſt do it by ſlight if you do it at all. Nor will the *Hippopotame* be taken (as we ſpeak) by fine force, but only by fineneſſes, or devices made by art to ſurprize him, as *Bochartus* ſhews out of ſeveral ancient Authors. So that as in many other things, ſo in this, the manner of their taking, the Elephant and he are much alike; and therefore the leſs wonder if one be taken, or miſtaken for the other.

An in oculis capiet eum quiſquam, tendiculis perforabit naſum; i. e. *aperte, & non inſidiis ſtructis.* Jun.

Non niſi ex inſidiis capi poteſt Elephas. Plin. *l.* 8. *c.* 8, 9.

Our Tranſlation ſaith, *He taketh it with his eyes.* What doth he take? What is the thing taken? Surely, according to this reading, he takes the River *Jordan* it ſelf *with his eyes*; That is, he is exceedingly taken with beholding the River: And this is a further heightning of his thirſt. As if it had been ſaid, *He is ſo thirſty, that when he ſees the River, he takes it with his eyes*, or is exceedingly pleaſed to ſee the River; the very ſight of the water makes him glad.

Yet Further, ſome of the Rabbins expound it thus; *He taketh it with his eyes*; That is, when he cometh to a River, he is ſo thirſty, that he thruſts his head in up to his very eyes, as if he were to drink with his eyes. This alſo ſignifies his greedineſs in drinking.

Naſum uſq; in profundum fluvii oculis tenus immergit, ut aquam abunde capiat. Aben Ezra.

Hence Note; *Nature is much pleaſed with the ſight of that which it much deſireth and wanteth.*

As ſoon as the Elephant can but get a ſight of the River, how doth it pleaſe him? We have a ſaying, *It is better to fill a mans belly than his eye*, and it is a truth. He that hath a great deſire to meat or drink, is much pleaſed to ſee either. And 'tis a truth in every thing, the ſight of that is very pleaſing to us, which we greatly want, and much deſire. Therefore *Solomon* gives councel (*Prov.*23.31.) *Look not upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup.* They that are given to drink, are pleaſed when they ſee the cup, they take it with their eyes, or, their eyes are taken with it. 'Tis ſo in ſpiritual things alſo; that which we greatly deſire and want in ſpirituals, O how pleaſant is the ſight of it! how glad are we when we can take it with our eyes! Thus ſpake *David* (Pſal. 63.1,2.) *O my God, thou art my God, early will I ſeek thee; my Soul thirſteth for thee, my fleſh longeth for thee, in a dry and thirſty Land where no water is, to ſee thy power and thy glory* (O that I could but ſee them, I would take them with my eyes) *as I have ſeen thee in the Sanctuary.* As if he had ſaid, there I have ſeen the flowing forth of thy goodneſs, of thy power and glory; but now I am in a dry Land, *O how I long to ſee thy power and thy glory, ſo as I have ſeen thee in thy Sanctuary!* He ſpeaks to the ſame purpoſe (*Pſal.* 27.4.) *One thing have I deſired of the Lord, that will I ſeek after, that I may dwell in the houſe of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord.* The ſpiritual ſight of God is moſt ſweet in his Ordinances. The very outward enjoyment of thoſe who miniſter ſpiritual things is pleaſant: Hence that promiſe (*Iſa.* 30.20.) *Thine eyes ſhall ſee thy Teachers*; There is ſomething in that: how much more ſweet is it to have a ſpiritual ſight of ſpiritual things! The ſenſe of ſeeing is delightful; what then is the grace of ſeeing! The Elephant *taketh it with his Eyes.*

His noſe pierceth through ſnares.] That is, he thruſteth his noſe, his trunk into the River; and if there be any ſnares there, ſet and prepared on purpoſe to entangle him, or if any thing be there accidentally, which may annoy him, he breaks through them all; he is ſo thirſty that a ſmall matter doth not hinder him in drinking, he makes way through all impediments, that he may take his fill of drink; his thirſt being urgent, drink he will whatever comes of it.

Hence Note; *That which any creature hath a great deſire to, he will make his way to it through difficulties and dangers, he will break through ſnares to attain it.*

David had a great deſire to the water of *Bethlem*, but there lay an Army between him and the Well, yet three men would venture through an Hoſt of enemies, to fetch him water. If any have a vehement thirſt after Gods Word, the water of Life, they will break through ſnares for it; though Armies lie in the way, yet there are three ſtrong men in them (an enlightned underſtanding, a rectified will, and good affection) that will venture to get the water of *Bethlem* for their inſtruction and conſolation. Natural creatures will not ſtand upon dangerous difficulties, to come at that which is much deſired by them; how much leſs they who are ſpiritual?

So much of this greateſt terreſtial animal *Behemoth*, and of the Lords power in making and ordering him. In the next Chapter the Lord proceeds to humble *Job* yet more, by ſetting before him the greateſt animal in the waters, the *mighty Leviathan.*

CHAP. XLI. Verſ. 1, 2 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.

Canſt thou draw out Leviathan with an Hook? Or his tongue with a cord which thou letteſt down?

Canſt thou put a Hook into his Noſe? Or bore his jaw through with a thorn?

Will he make many ſupplications unto thee? Will he ſpeak ſoft words unto thee?

Will he make a covenant with thee? Wilt thou take him for a ſervant for ever?

Wilt thou play with him as with a Bird? Wilt thou bind him for thy maidens?

Shall the companions make a banquet of him? Shall they part him among the Merchants?

Canſt thou fill his skin with barbed Irons? Or his head with fiſh-ſpears?

Lay thine hand upon him, remember the Battle, do no more.

Behold, the hope of him is in vain: ſhall not one be caſt down even at the ſight of him?

None is ſo fierce that dare ſtir him up: who then is able to ſtand before me?

Who hath prevented me, that I ſhould repay him? Whatſoever is under the whole Heaven, is mine.

This whole Chapter gives us a large diſcourſe, concerning the greateſt, the largeſt living creature that God made in this viſible world, *the Leviathan.* The whole may be divided into two general parts;

Firſt, A Narration.

Secondly, A Concluſion.

In the Narrative part, *Leviathan* is deſcribed four ways.

Firſt, By the bigneſs and vaſtneſs of his body, which is implyed in the firſt and ſecond verſes; he is a creature ſo big and bulky, that there is no holding him with a cord or line; he is too big, too boiſterous for an Angler to deal with. *Canſt thou draw out Leviathan with an hook? Or his tongue with a cord which thou letteſt down?* &c. (*Verſ.* 1,2.)

Secondly, This *Leviathan* is deſcribed by the ſtoutneſs and untractableneſs of his ſpirit; there is no bringing him to any ſubmiſſion, to any ſervice or compliance. *Will he make many ſupplications unto thee? Will he ſpeak ſoft words unto thee? Will he make a Covenant with thee?* &c. (*Verſ.* 3,4,5.)

Thirdly, He is deſcribed by the difficulty and danger, if not impoſſibility of taking or catching him; he will hardly be taken any way, no, not by the moſt forcible ways, to make either meat or Merchandize of him. *Shall the companions make a banquet of him? Shall they part him among the Merchants? Canſt thou fill his skin with barbed Irons? Or his head with fiſh-ſpears?* &c. (*Verſ.*6,7,8,9. and in the former part of the 10. Verſe.) Thus far *Leviathan* is deſcribed in his greatneſs, in his ſtoutneſs, in the difficulty and danger of catching him, if he can be catched at all.

Now, the Lord having proceeded thus far in the deſcription of, or doctrin about *Leviathan,* he makes Uſe and Application of all that he had ſaid, before he comes to the fourth particular; and this Application or Uſe which the Holy Ghoſt makes of his deſcription thus far given, conſiſts in two things.

Firſt, Hence the Lord infers his own irreſiſtibleneſs, and the utter inability of any creature to contend with him (in the cloſe of the 10. Verſe) *Who then is able to ſtand before me?* If none can ſtand before this creature, can any ſtand before the Creator! That's the firſt Inference.

Secondly, The Lord makes a further Inference from it concerning his own ſelf-ſufficiency, or abſolute independency upon any creature, either for counſel what to do, or for aſſiſtance in doing it. Thus much is clearly affirmed in that queſtion, at the beginning of 11. Verſe, *Who hath prevented me, that I ſhould repay him?* As if the Lord had ſaid, *Let the man come forth that hath contributed any thing to me, in any of my works, or that hath given any help in the doing them, and he ſhall be well rewarded for his pains.* Both theſe Inferences or Uſes, the Lord confirms by a *grand Aſſertion or Maxim,* in the cloſe of the 11. Verſe; *Whatſoever is under the whole Heaven, is mine. If all be mine, then who can ſtand before me? If all be mine, then who hath prevented me, that I ſhould repay him?* This is the Application, theſe the Uſes, which the Lord himſelf makes of the doctrin laid down about this creature, the *Leviathan:* Theſe Uſes cloſe the third part of the deſcription of *Leviathan.* The fourth part of his deſcription, contains many particulars concerning his parts, power, and proportion, as alſo the wonderful effects of his power, all which are ſet down in higheſt ſtrains of divine rhetorick, from the 11. Verſe to the end of the 32.

The ſecond part of the Chapter I call the concluſion, and it flows naturally from the whole foregoing diſcourſe, in the two laſt verſes of it; *Upon earth there is not his like* (the Lord ſaid concerning *Behemoth, He is the chief of the ways of God,* That is, *upon earth;* and here he ſaith of *Leviathan, Upon earth there is not his like,*(no, not *Behemoth* himſelf) *he is made without fear, he beholdeth all high things, he is a King over all the Children of Pride.* Thus far concerning ſtate and parts of the whole Chapter, in which the Lord hath this general ſcope, even to humble *Job* yet more. As if he had ſaid, *That thou, O Job, maiſt ſee and be convinced of thy preſumption in pleading with me; look upon Leviathan, conſider whether thou art able to deal with him; if not, how canſt thou deal with me who made him, and can both maſter and deſtroy him when I will?* Thus the Lord makes his triumph over creatures mightier in outward force then man, to the intent all men may know, they ſhall certainly fall, and be utterly confounded, if they lift up themſelves againſt God. All which will appear further, in opening the deſcription of this *Leviathan.*

Verſ. 1. **Canſt thou draw out Leviathan with an Hook?**

For the clearing of theſe words, and towards the clearing of all that follows, I ſhall ſhew, Firſt, the ſignification of this word *Leviathan*, or what it imports. Secondly, what kind of creature this *Leviathan* is, or is conceived to be.

לוה *Additus, adjunctus.*

The word *Leviathan* is derived from an Hebrew root, which ſignifies *added to*, or *joyned together*. When *Leah* had brought forth a third ſon to *Jacob*, ſhe called his name (from this word) *Levi*, and ſaid, *Now my Husband will be joyned to me, becauſe I have born him three ſons* (Gen.29.34.) And it is ſuppoſed, that this creature is ſo called upon a double reſpect.

Firſt, Becauſe of the faſt-joyning or cloſure of his ſcales (*Verſ.*15,16,17.)

Secondly, Becauſe he is ſo great of body, that he appears as if many bodies were joyned and knit together in his.

And becauſe the Hebrew word for a Dragon is *Thannin*, ſome have conceived, that the laſt ſyllable in *Leviathan* is a contract of that, and added to *Levijath*, as implying, that in one Leviathan many Dragons were conjoyned. But I rather adhere to that learned Author, who takes Leviathan to be a ſimple, not a compound word, and ſaith, That the laſt ſyllable *than*, belongs to the form of the Noun, as in *Nebuſhtan*, &c. And he finds the root of the word Leviathan, neither in the Hebrew, nor in the *Syriack*, but in the *Arabick* language, where it ſignifies, to wind, plight or fold together, fitly intimating the crooked winding poſtures and motions of that animal called Leviathan.

Leviathan ſinuoſum eſt animal & in plures ſpiras volubile. Bocha.

But, what is this Leviathan?

Firſt, Moſt of the Ancients, both Greek and Latin, turn this Scripture wholly into an Allegory, expounding, as *Behemoth* before, ſo here Leviathan, wholly of the old enemy of mankind, the Devil. 'Tis true, that many things here ſpoken of Leviathan, are applicable to the Devil; but to bring all to that ſenſe, is doubtleſs a forcing or ſtraining of the Text. Others, who proſecute the Allegory, apply it to bad Princes, who having great power, uſe it for the oppreſſion and vexation of thoſe that are under their dominion. Nor can it be denyed, that the King of *Babylon* was intended by the Prophet, under the word Leviathan (*Iſa.*27.1,2.) as *Pharaoh* King of *Egypt* is expreſly called (*Tannin*, or) a Sea-Dragon, *Ezek.*29.3. and Chap. 32. 2.

Hebræi grandiores omnes piſces ſc. *cetacei generis, hac voce ſignificari putant.* Merl.

Secondly, Several of the *Jewiſh* Writers expound Leviathan, not of any particular *ſpecies*, or ſort of fiſhes; but in general, of all great fiſhes.

Thirdly, The moſt general, and hitherto moſt received opinion, concludes Leviathan to be among all fiſhes, the Whale in particular.

Fourthly, *Beza* of the former age, and in this, *Bochartus*, confidently aſſert, that Leviathan is the Crocodile. The general reaſon given for it by them, is, becauſe what is here ſpoken of Leviathan, is not every way ſutable nor agreeable to the *Whale*; and they who expound Leviathan by the Whale, are as confident that ſeveral things here affirmed of Leviathan, are not agreeable to the Crocodile.

What my own apprehenſions are in this matter of difference, whether the Whale or the Crocodile be intended by Leviathan, I have already declared, at the fifteenth *Verſ.* of the fortieth *Chapter*, where the Lord begins to preſent *Behemoth*, purpoſing alſo in the ſame continued ſpeech to preſent *Leviathan* to the conſideration of *Job*, in the livelieſt colours, and higheſt expreſſions of divine eloquence, for his yet fuller conviction and humiliation. There (I ſay) the Reader may find my thoughts about this matter; yet in opening the Text, I ſhall touch at moſt of thoſe particulars which the learned *Bochartus* takes notice of, either as more clearly, or as only applicable to the Crocodile; leaving the Reader (as was there ſaid) at his liberty to determine his own thoughts, where he ſees moſt reaſon and faireſt probability. For it muſt be confeſſed, that there are no ſmall difficulties in making out the common and hitherto moſt received opinion, that Leviathan is the Whale, as will appear in our paſſage through this *Chapter*; and therefore I dare not be very poſitive, much leſs tenacious in it. For though it be an unqueſtionable truth, and to be received, and to be as the matter of an hiſtorical faith, becauſe God hath ſaid it, that there is a living creature in the compaſs of nature, exactly anſwering every particular in the following deſcription of the Leviathan, yet it is queſtionable what that creature is; and to ſay, the Crocodile is meant by Leviathan, or the Whale is meant by Leviathan, is only matter of opinion, and the judgment of man.

Verſ. 1. Canſt thou draw out Leviathan?

τὸν δράκοντα. Sept.

Our Tranſlators ſay in the Margin, a Whale, or a whirlepool. The Septuagint renders, *Canſt thou draw out the Dragon?* As if by way of eminence, Leviathan were the chiefeſt and greateſt among all that are or may be called Dragons. And ſay ſome, the word Leviathan is the ſame with *Thannin*, which in the Hebrew ſignifies a Dragon. Inſomuch that theſe two words, *Thannin* and *Leviathan*, are taken in Scripture promiſcuouſly (*Pſal.* 74. 13, 14.) *Thou breakeſt the heads* (Thanninim) *of the Dragons in the waters* (we put *Whales* in the Margin), *Arias* renders the Text ſo) then followeth in the next verſe, *Thou breakeſt the heads of Leviathan in pieces*, &c. Meaning in both verſes *Pharaoh* and his Captains, who purſued *Iſrael*, not only to, but into the *Red-Sea*, and were drowned. Thus alſo theſe two words are uſed (*Iſa.* 27. 1.) where, *Leviathan, the piercing* (or *croſſing the Sea like a bar*) *Serpent, even Leviathan the crooked Serpent, whom the Lord will puniſh with his ſore, and great, and long ſword*, as 'tis ſaid in the former part of the verſe, is the ſame with *the dragon that is in the Sea, whom he will ſlay*, as 'tis ſaid in the latter part of the verſe. Some of the *Jewiſh* Writers diſtinguiſh theſe two only in growth or greatneſs, defining *Leviathan* to be a great *Thannin* or Dragon. But as the word *Thannin* doth ſo ſignifie a Dragon, that yet it is often applied to ſignifie *Whales and Sea-beaſts*, becauſe they in ſome ſort reſemble the form and flectuation of Dragons; thus 'tis ſaid (*Gen.* 1.21.) that on the fifth day *God created great* (Thanninim) *Whales*. Now (I ſay) as in Scripture the word *Thannin* is rendred *Whale*, ſo Whales and ſuch like great fiſhes are in Scripture expreſſed by the word *Leviathan*. And in one place (poſſibly in more) nothing elſe can be underſtood by the word *Leviathan*, but the Whale or fiſhes of the Cetacean or Whale kind. The *Pſalmiſt* being wrapt into an admiration of the works of God, or rather of God in his works, ſpeaks thus (*Pſal.*104.24,25,26.) *O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wiſdom haſt thou made them all: The earth is full of thy riches. So is this great and wide Sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both ſmall and great beaſts: There go the ſhips, there is that Leviathan, whom thou haſt made to play therein.* Now though it be granted, that in ſome places of Scripture, other animals, and for inſtance, the Crocodile of *Nilus*, may be underſtood by *Leviathan*, yet in this place of the *Pſalm* the Crocodile cannot be underſtood: For the *Leviathan* there ſpoken of, abides in the *great and wide Sea, where the ſhips generally go.* Now though *Nilus* may be called a Sea, as Lakes and great Rivers ſometimes are in Scripture, yet it cannot be called *the great and wide Sea*; 'tis at moſt but a ſmall and a narrow Sea, and therefore we find the *river of Egypt*, that is, *Nilus* and the *great Sea*, diſtinctly and diſtinguiſhingly mentioned (*Joſh.*15 47.) So then it appears that the Whale is ſomewhere meant by *Leviathan*. And foraſmuch as there is an Emphaſis put upon the *Leviathan* ſpoken of in the *Pſalm*, he being there called *that Leviathan*; as if it had been ſaid, though there are other *Leviathans*, ſuch as are Dragons, Crocodiles, in other great waters, yet the chief and great *Leviathan* of all, is an inhabitant of the great and wide Sea: Now ſeeing the *Leviathan*, deſcribed in *Job*, hath ſuch characters given of him, as plainly ſhew that he is the chief *Leviathan*, it may, with fair probability, be ſuppoſed, that he is the *Leviathan* ſpoken of in the *Pſalm*; and if ſo, then the *Leviathan* in *Job* cannot be the Crocodile, for the Crocodile is not an inhabitant of the great and wide Sea. Let that be conſidered as to the negative: and what the whole Text in *Job* holds out for the affirmative, I ſhall leave it to conſideration, as I paſs through the ſeveral parts of it.

Facetæ & ironicæ ſunt interrogationes, quæ habentur quinque primis verſibus.

תמשך *pro* התמשך ה *Interrogativum rectè ſuppletur ex collatione proximè ſequentium.* Piſc.

Canſt thou draw out Leviathan with a hook?

The firſt thing conſiderable in *Leviathan*, is the greatneſs and vaſtneſs of his body, which (as was ſaid) is plainly intended in theſe words, *Canſt thou draw out Leviathan with a hook? Or his tongue with a cord which thou letteſt down?* As if the Lord had ſaid, *Thou canſt draw up ſome* *great fiſhes with a hook and line; and if it ſhould be told thee, there is a fiſh ſo big that no man with hook and line is able to draw him out of the water, thou wouldſt ſay, that muſt needs be a huge fiſh; now ſuch a one at leaſt, is Leviathan.* This the Lord would convince *Job* of, in putting this queſtion, *Canſt thou draw out Leviathan with a hook?* Thou canſt not; *Leviathan* is too heavy for thy draught. The interrogation is a negation; *Canſt thou?* Thou canſt not draw out *Leviathan* with all thy ſtrength; if thou hadſt the ſtrength of ten men, thou couldſt not draw him out? Little fiſhes, yea, very great fiſhes may be drawn out, but *Leviathan* cannot, he will break all thy tackling.

Further, *Canſt than draw out Leviathan with a hook and line?* No, nor with a cart-rope. As if we ſhould ſay to a man, canſt thou knock down an Ox with a fillip of thy finger? No, nor with the force of thy fiſt.

And as this queſtion, *Canſt thou?* &c. Implies that man cannot, ſo it ſeems to intimate, that God can as eaſily take up this huge *Leviathan*, as any man can draw up a ſmall, even the ſmalleſt fiſh with hook and line, or play with it in the water. As he that made *Behemoth*, can make his ſword approach unto him (*Chap.* 40. 19.) ſo he that made *Leviathan*, hath a hook to draw him out with. *Canſt thou draw out Leviathan with an Hook?*

Or his tongue with a cord which thou letteſt down?

If the fiſh bite, the hook takes him by the tongue or jaws. The Hebrew word is, *Canſt thou take him with a cord which thou drowneſt?* That which is let down deep or far into the water, may be ſaid to be drowned in the water. Unleſs the line or cord of the angle, ſink deep into, or be drowned in the water, the hook is uſeleſs; and therefore the Angler hath a lead faſtned upon his line to make it ſink deep, as well as a cork or quil to keep it from ſinking too deep. *Canſt thou draw out his tongue with a cord, which thou drowneſt or letteſt down?*

Unum hoc animal terreſtre linguæ uſu caret. Plin. *l.* 8. *c.* 25.

The mention of the tongue in this latter part of the verſe is made uſe of by ſome, as an argument to prove that Leviathan cannot be the Crocodile, who, as Naturaliſts write of him, hath no tongue: his mouth is wide, but tongueleſs. To this objection, *Beza* gives one, and *Bochartus* adds a ſecond anſwer. The former ſaith, it is not ſtrictly affirmed in the Text, that Leviathan hath a tongue; 'tis only denied, that he hath a tongue in which a hook or cord may be faſtned. The latter ſaith, that the Crocodile is not altogether *tongue-leſs*, but only (as we ſpeak in another ſenſe) *tongue-tied:* He hath a tongue, but 'tis an immoveable one, cleaving faſt to his lower jaw. And this *Bochartus* confirms by ſo many unqueſtionable authorities, as may eaſily remove this objection from weakning his aſſertion. *Canſt thou draw out his tongue with a cord?*

Verſ. 2. **Canſt thou put an hook into his noſe, or bore his jaw through with a thorn?**

Conſtringes nè inſerto junco, ut piſcator minutos piſces? Jun.

Some expound this verſe only as a further illuſtration of the former, in reference to the taking of this fiſh. But, rather, it is an alluſion to the cuſtom of fiſher-men, who when they have taken fiſh, put a thorn through their noſe, and hang them up to be ſeen, or for ſale. The word tranſlated *an hook*, ſignifies properly *a pond* or *ſtanding water* (*Pſal.* 114. 8.) and then *a bull-ruſh*, becauſe bull-ruſhes grow in ſtanding waters or by pond-banks. We take it metaphorically for a hook, becauſe a hook is like a bull-ruſh with its head hanging down (*Iſa.* 58. 5.) *Is this a faſt that I have choſen? A day for a man to bow down his head as a bull-ruſh?*

Further, to put a hook into the noſe, ſignifies theſe two things in Scripture. Firſt, To repreſs the rage or wrath of man. And Secondly, to divert or turn him aſide from his purpoſe (2 *Kings* 19. 28. *Ezek.* 19. 4.) And ſo in this place, the ſignificancy of the phraſe may be thus conceived, *Canſt thou, O Job, abate the fury, or ſtop the courſe of Leviathan? Canſt thou put a hook into his noſe?*

Or bore his jaw through with a thorn?

And ſo carry him away with thee. Some underſtand it as an alluſion to the ringing of a Bear or Swine. Canſt thou over-power him, and boring his noſe, put a ring into it, as into the ſnout of a Swine or Bear, and ſo lead or carry him whither thou pleaſeſt, as a beaſt which thou haſt tamed and brought to hand?

Theſe two verſes have the ſame tendency, both ſetting forth the greatneſs of Leviathan, as to the weight and bulk of his body. *Canſt thou draw out Leviathan? Canſt thou put an hook into his noſe?* &c.

Hence Note; *The Lord is to be admired and magnified in, and for the greatneſs and vaſtneſs of any Creature.*

There are two things about which the Lord is to be magnified in his creatures.

Firſt, In their qualities. There are ſome little, very little creatures, in whoſe qualities the Lord is greatly to be magnified. The Piſmire, a poor little thing, little bigger then a pins-head, hath an admirable wit and fore-caſt. The Crane, the Turtle, the Swallow, are but ſmall creatures; yet they obſerve or underſtand their times, much better then many men, and are not only to be imitated by men in that quality, but to be admired for it.

Secondly, Other creatures are to be admired for their quantity or bigneſs, and of this ſort Leviathan is chief. The reports of the Ancients concerning the bigneſs of Leviathan, are almoſt beyond belief. One reports their bodies as big as four acres of ground; that they appear like mountains or ſmall iſlands in the Sea; that ſome being meaſured, have been found ſix hundred foot in length, and three hundred and ſixty in breadth: And that, leſt they ſhould come in ſhallow waters, or be foundred by coming too near any ſhoar, they have always a little fiſh, called *Muſculus*, for their guide or leader, which is to them inſtead of eyes. Late Navigators, and they who make it their buſineſs to follow the Whale-fiſhing, have ſeen Whales of very vaſt dimenſions, and that ſometimes they endanger the overthrow of conſiderable Ships; which argues their extraordinary ſtrength and greatneſs.

Cetos 600. pedum longitudinis, & 360. latitudinis in flumen Arabiæ intraſſe tradit Plin. *l.* 32. *c.* 1.

Muſculus piſcis dux cetorum oculorum vice fungitur. Plin. *l.* 8. *c.* 2.

Heathens have ſaid, that though it cannot be denied, but there are many wonderful creatures to be ſeen upon the land, yet the ſea is the great ſtore-houſe of wonders: And we may give it in theſe three things.

Firſt, It is wonderful, that in the ſea there are ſuch various kinds of fiſhes. It is not imaginable how many ſorts of fiſh the ſea affords. I once heard a very learned Gentleman, and a great Traveller, ſay, that being abroad upon publick ſervice, and entertaining the Ambaſſador of another State at his table, the feaſt was wholly of fiſh, and the fiſh were only ſhell-fiſh variouſly cookt, every diſh having the ſhells laid about the verge of it, the fiſh being taken out; yet the Ambaſſador could not give a name to any of them, having never ſeen their like in any part of the world where he had been. Now if a wiſe knowing man, at ſo great a feaſt, could not give a name to any one ſhell-fiſh before him, what variety of kinds is there in the Sea, take all together!

Secondly, 'Tis wonderful to conſider, the huge multitude which is of every kind of fiſh in the Sea. The kinds are exceeding many, and there are innumerable of every kind.

Thirdly, That is wonderful, which I am now upon, the vaſtneſs, the greatneſs of ſome kinds. Not only is Leviathan, but ſeveral other fiſhes of the Sea, bigger then any beaſt upon the land. Let us conſider the greatneſs of the creatures, to lead us into the conſideration of the greatneſs of God. How great, how mighty is that God, who hath made ſuch great, ſuch mighty creatures!

Secondly, From theſe words, *Canſt thou draw up* Leviathan *with a Hook?*

Note; *Great things cannot be done ordinarily with ſmall means.*

A hook and a line may ſerve the turn, to draw up any ſmall and ſome great fiſhes, but they will not ſerve turn to draw up a Leviathan. There muſt be a proportion between the inſtrument and the work, elſe nothing can be done in a natural way. As we need not call for a beetle to kill a fly; we may do that with a touch of the finger: in which ſenſe *David* ſpake (1 *Sam.* 24. 14.) *Againſt whom is the King of Iſrael come forth? Againſt a dead dog or a flea?* As if he had ſaid, I wonder thou ſhould'ſt raiſe an army againſt me, who have ſo little ſtrength, and intend thee no hurt, had I ſtrength (as I have had opportunity) to do it. Now (I ſay) as we need not uſe great means to effect little things, ſo we muſt uſe great means to do great things, and we ſhould uſe means proportionable for the doing of every thing. You cannot batter down a ſtone wall, or a ſtrong tower with paper-ſhot, nor with a pot-gun, no, you muſt plant cannon for that ſervice.

Again, when this Scripture ſaith, *Canſt thou draw out Leviathan?* The emphaſis (as was ſhewed before in opening the words) lieth in the word *thou*. As if the Lord had ſaid, *thou canſt not, but I can.*

Hence, Note; *The Lord is able to do the greateſt things by ſmalleſt means.*

Leviathan to God is but as any little fiſh to us, which is taken with a hook and line. To take up Leviathan, to do the greateſt thing, is as eaſie to God, as the leaſt to man. As the power of God ſupplyeth all the weakneſs of the creature to do any thing, ſo it ſurpaſſeth all that ſtrength and greatneſs of the creature, which may ſeem to hinder him from doing any thing with it or upon it. *He* (ſaith the Apoſtle, *Phil.* 3.21.) *ſhall change our vile body, that it may be faſhioned like unto his glorious body* (how ſhall he do this?) *According to the working of his mighty power, whereby he is able to ſubdue all things to himſelf.* The Lord can, doubtleſs, ſubdue Leviathan to himſelf by the working of that mighty power, which ſubdueth all things to himſelf. And it is much more eaſie for Chriſt to ſubdue any Leviathan, then to change our vile body into the likeneſs of his own glorious body. For, as *Jeſus Chriſt was* (once) *declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the ſpirit of holineſs, by the reſurrection* (that is, his own reſurrection) *from the dead*; ſo he will again declare himſelf to be the Son of God with power, according to the ſpirit of power, by our reſurrection from the dead. He that can draw our duſt out of the Grave with a word, can ſoon draw Leviathan out of the deepeſt gulf in the Sea by his hook and cord.

This may comfort thoſe, and ſtrengthen their faith, who at any time ſee Leviathans ready to ſwallow them up, as the Whale did *Jonah*. As the Lord prepared that great fiſh to ſwallow up *Jonah* (Jonah 1.17.) ſo he commanded that great fiſh to deliver him back ſafe again; or, as that Scripture ſaith, (*Chap.* 2.10.) *He ſpake to the fiſh, and he vomited out* Jonah *upon the dry land.* Both were acts of great power, and teach us, that the Lord hath a ſoveraign commanding power over all, even the greateſt creatures.

The Lord hath a hook for Leviathan. He had hooks for *Pharaoh, The great Dragon in the midſt of his Rivers* (Ezek.29.3,4.) And of him the Lord commanded the ſame Prophet to ſpeak in a like notion (*Ezek.*32.2.) *Son of man, take up a lamentation for* Pharaoh, *and ſay to him, thou art like a young Lion of the Nations, and thou art as a Whale in the Seas, and thou cameſt forth with thy Rivers, and troubledſt the waters with thy feet, and fouledſt their Rivers; therefore I will ſpread out my net over thee, and they ſhall bring thee up in my net.* I have a net for thee, ſaith this Chapter; I have hooks for thee, ſaith that other. The Prophet *Iſaiah*, to engage the Lord to do ſome great thing for his Church, minded him of what he had formerly and anciently done for *Iſrael* (Iſa.51.9.) *Awake, awake, put on ſtrength, O arm of the Lord, awake as in the ancient days, as in the generations of old; art thou not it that hath cut* Rahab, *and wounded the Dragon?* This *Rahab* was *Egypt*, and the Dragon was *Pharaoh*, as Interpreters generally agree. The Pſalmiſt reports the dealings of God with *Pharaoh* and *Egypt*, in language nearer that of the Text (*Pſal.*74.13,14.) *Thou breakeſt the heads of the Dragons in the waters, thou breakeſt the heads of Leviathan in pieces, and gaveſt him to be meat to the people inhabiting the wilderneſs*; That is, the remembrance of that mercy, and of the mighty power of God in deſtroying *Pharaoh* and his *Egyptian* Hoſt, who purſued them after their departure from *Egypt*, to the red Sea, was to be food for their faith in all the dangers and hardſhips which they were like to meet with in their travels, through the howling wilderneſs to the Land of *promiſe*. Take one Scripture-inſtance more (2 *Kings* 19.28.) *Sennacherib* was a Leviathan, he came up againſt *Hezekiah* to deſtroy him and his people, which provoked the Lord to ſpeak thus of him, *Becauſe thy rage againſt me is come into my ears, therefore I will put my hook into thy noſe, and my bridle in thy lips, and turn thee back by the way thou cameſt.* Thus far of the firſt thing in the deſcription of Leviathan, his greatneſs.

The ſecond part of his deſcription, ſheweth the ſtoutneſs and ſtubbornneſs of his ſpirit, he will not comply, he will not yield, he will not any way ſubmit. This is laid down in the 3, 4, & 5. Verſes.

Verſ. 3. **Will he make many ſupplications to thee?**

The word in the Hebrew, properly ſignifies *deprecation*, which is prayer for the turning away of evil; when evil is near, then we deprecate it. Will he do this? Not he: He will not petition thee, he ſcorns to petition thee, or to cry for quarter.

Precamur bona, deprecamur tantum mala.

But, it may be ſaid, can fiſhes pray or make ſupplications? To do ſo, is at leaſt the work of rational creatures. I anſwer, theſe words are to be underſtood by that figure *Proſopopœia*, frequently uſed in Sripture, when acts of Reaſon are attributed to irrational, yea, to ſenſleſs and lifeleſs creatures. The very hills and valleys, the Seas and waters praiſe God by a figure; and here by a like figure, Leviathan will not make ſupplications unto man; which ſhews the ſtoutneſs of his ſpirit. As ſome priſoners taken in War, ſcorn to ask their lives; ſo if Leviathan were taken with a hook, he would make no ſupplications, nor beg your favour, ſo ſtout is he; his heart is too great, his ſtomach too big for any kind of ſubmiſſion, *Will he make many ſupplications unto thee?* No, he will make none at all. This is further expreſſed in the latter part of the Verſe.

Per Proſopopœiam tribuit ei orationem.

Will he ſpeak ſoft words to thee?] Mr. *Broughton* renders, or *Will he ſpeak to thee tenderly?* Will he flatter or humour thee, that he may get looſe or be freed from thee. When the *Gibeonites* (Joſh. 9.9.) were afraid they ſhould be taken and deſtroyed, they came and begged peace, they ſpake *ſoft words.* There are words of two ſorts.

ברבות *pro* רכות ſc. מלות *Mollibus vel blandis verbis aut ſermonibus.* Piſc.

Some are very hard words; and hard words wound like hard blows. And (though no blows are given) *The Lord will come to execute judgment upon the ungodly, for all their hard ſpeeches,* (Jude, *Verſ.*15.) Many ſpeak words as hard as ſtones, they throw hard words at the heads and about the ears of others, hard words of threatning, and hard words of reviling; for theſe the Lord will judg the ungodly, as well as for their *ungodly deeds.*

Now, as there are hard words, ſo ſoft words. What are they? Soft words are words of intreaty, words of meekneſs, words of love, words of ſubmiſſion; theſe are ſoft words. Will *Leviathan* make ſupplications? Or, *Will he ſpeak ſoft words?* Again, ſoft words are often flattering words, which are therefore compared by the Prophet (*Ezek.*13.18.) *To pillows ſowed under the arm-holes.* Will *Leviathan* flatter himſelf into thy favour? Will he lie down like a Spaniel, and fawn upon thee? No, he is too high-ſpirited to bow, too ſtiff to ſtoop, he will ſpeak no ſoft words. *A ſoft anſwer* (ſaith *Solomon*, Prov. 15. 1.) *turneth away ſtrife.* 'Tis good when a queſtion is put to us, to give a ſoft anſwer: And if when we have hard words ſpoken to us, we return hard anſwers, they will quickly ſtir up ſtrife. *Solomon* hath a ſtrange expreſſion (*Prov.* 15.15.) *A ſoft tongue breaketh the bones.* The tongue naturally, is a ſoft, fleſhy, ſpungy member of the body; yet there is nothing hath more hardneſs, I may ſay more bones in it then the tongue; but 'tis the ſoft tongue which breaketh the bones, not the bones of the body, but of the mind: and the meaning is this, If the ſpirit of a man be as ſtiff as the bones of his body againſt you, yet if you ſpeak ſoft words, you may break him, and bring him to your deſire; whereas, if you be high and ſtiff, if you give hard for hard, it turns to an exaſperation. *It were no great loſs, if they could ſpeak no more then Leviathan, who like Leviathan, know not how to ſpeak ſoft words.* And uſually, they who are freeſt to ſpeak ſoft words of flattery, are furtheſt from ſpeaking ſoft words of love or charity, of gentleneſs and true ingenuity. 'Tis good, and our wiſdom in two caſes, to ſpeak ſoft words in truth, even to thoſe who are none of the beſt.

Firſt, To avoid hard dealing, from thoſe who have us in their power: and they who are afraid of hard dealing, will ſure enough ſpeak ſoft words; whereas a man that cares not how hardly others deal with him, cares not to ſpeak ſoft words.

Secondly, 'Tis wiſdom to ſpeak ſoft words, when we are in expectation or under hope of receiving benefit or good from any, in the power of whoſe hand it is to do us good. They have reaſon to give good words, who would receive any good. Thus ſome ſpeak ſoft words to divert evil, others ſpeak ſoft words that they may obtain good. As for Leviathan, he is here repreſented in the pride of his heart, as neither fearing any hurt you can do him, nor deſiring you ſhould do him any good; and therefore, *Will he ſpeak ſoft words to thee?* No, not he.

Loqui mollia inferioris eſt.

Hence Obſerve; *The ſtrong and mighty will not make ſupplications, nor uſe intreaties.*

They who think they have enough in themſelves, will not make ſupplication to God himſelf, they will not intreat his favour, nor ſpeak ſoft words to him. There are many ſuch proud ſtout-hearted Leviathans in the likeneſs of men (*Jer.* 10.25.) *Pour out thy wrath upon the families that call not upon thy name.* There are whole families that will not make ſupplications to God. What are theſe? A company of Leviathans, that think they have enough of their own, and live in a ſelf-ſtrength, or in a ſelf-ſufficiency, as if they were not beholden to God for any thing they have, nor deſired to have any thing of him. The Lord ſpeaks of a generation of men, who *ſhame the counſel of the poor, becauſe the Lord is his refuge* (Pſal.14.6.) that is, becauſe they in all their wants, dangers and diſtreſſes, had recourſe to God by prayer, as their only refuge. Of what ſpirit thoſe men were, who ſhamed or were aſhamed of this counſel and courſe of the poor, he tells us at the 4. verſe of that *Pſalm*; *They eat up my people as they eat bread, and call not upon God.* We (thought they) have enough of our own, ſtrength enough of our own, we are Leviathans, we need not be beholden to God. It is an argument of a wicked, ſtout, high mind, not to make ſupplications (*Prov.*18.23.) *The poor uſeth intreaties*, or, *the poor ſpeaketh ſupplications.* They that are poor in outward things, will ſpeak very humbly to thoſe above them; and if we know our own ſpiritual poverty, that we are weak, empty creatures, even nothing-creatures, if we are poor in ſpirit, we will be uſing many entreaties to get in with God, and to move him to have mercy upon us. None but humble ones, and ſuch as ſee their wants and dangers, that they are hardly beſtead in this world, or are convinced that all the good and great things they have, yea, that the greateſt things they can have in this world, can ſtand them in no ſtead without God, will ſpeak ſoft words of ſupplication unto God. Leviathan never thinks himſelf in danger or in want, and therefore he ſcorns all the world; and in this he is an emblem of all carnal worldly men. And as Leviathan will make no ſupplications, nor ſpeak ſoft words, ſo,

Verſ. 4. **Will he make a Covenant with thee?**

Some who think themſelves too high to make ſupplications to others, may yet poſſibly make a covenant with them. But, *Will* Leviathan *make a covenant with thee?* He will not. The word which we tranſlate a *Covenant*, ſignifies two things. Firſt, *to chuſe*, becauſe a Covenant is to be made by choice perſons, and upon choice terms. Secondly, it ſignifies *to eat*, becauſe they were wont to feaſt when covenants were made. The Hebrew is, *Will he ſtrike or cut a covenant with thee.* The reaſon of that, was, becauſe they were wont to divide a beaſt, and paſs between the parts of it at the making of a Covenant (*Jer.*34.18.) *They did cut the calf in twain, and paſſed between the parts thereof. Will* Leviathan *cut a Covenant with thee?* As he will not ſpeak thee fair, nor endeavour to ſoften thy heart towards him, by ſpeaking ſoft words to thee, were he in thy power, ſo he will never enter covenant with thee, to become thy ſure friend, much leſs thy faithful ſervant; as it followeth in the Text.

An ſcindet vel ſecabit? Heb. *Fœdus factum erat, adhibita ſectione vituli.*

Wilt thou take him for thy ſervant for ever?

Many are Covenant-ſervants for a time, ſome for ever. Theſe four things follow in order. Firſt, Some for fear make ſupplications. Secondly, They ſpeak ſoft words. Thirdly, They make a covenant or promiſe. Fourthly, They offer their ſervice to thoſe in whoſe hand they are. But Leviathan will do none of theſe, from firſt to laſt. *Wilt thou take him for thy ſervant for ever?* If thou wilt, he will not. Suppoſe thou hadſt taken Leviathan with a hook, and hadſt him faſt in thy power with a cord, will he be thy ſervant as long as he lives? King *Benhadad* being taken in War, ſent to King *Ahab*, and ſubmitted to him as a ſervant, that he might have his life (1 *Kings* 20. 32.) *Thy ſervant* Benhadad *ſaith, I pray thee let me live.* But this *Leviathan* is ſo ſtout, that he will not ask his life of any man, nor will he ſerve any for an hour, much leſs for ever.

Qui jure belli occidi potuit, non duram ſubit conditionem, ſi paratam mortem cum longa ſervitute commutat. Sanct.

Will he make a covenant with thee? Wilt thou take him for thy ſervant for ever?

That is, will he become thy ſervant by covenant, or thy covenant-ſervant? Covenants bind ſervants to duty. There are two things in a ſervants covenant. Firſt, it obligeth him to work. Secondly, it aſſureth him of a reward. Gods covenant with us aſſures us of mercy, *I will be to you a God*, I will pardon your ſins, I will do you good; and then it requires duty, *You ſhall be to me a people*, you ſhall walk humbly and uprightly before me, you ſhall ſerve me for ever. *Wilt thou take* Leviathan *to ſerve thee* **For ever?**] But are any ſervants, or ſhall any (except God himſelf) be ſerved, for ever? Why then ſaith the Lord. *Wilt thou take him for thy ſervant for ever?* Some are taken ſervants only for a year, ſome for ſeven years, others for life. They who are ſervants for life, are and may be called our ſervants *for ever*: ſo that when the Lord ſaith, *Wilt thou take him for thy ſervant for ever?* The meaning is, will he be thy ſervant as long as he liveth? And indeed the life of a beaſt may well be called his *for ever*; foraſmuch as he hath no life after this life, nor being after death. The word rendred *for ever*, comes from a root in the Hebrew, which ſignifieth to hide, or to be hidden, becauſe Eternity, which is *for ever* in ſtrict ſenſe, is alogether hidden and without end: and if *for ever* be taken only for a long time, indefinitely, that's a hidden thing too; who knows when a long time will end, if no end be aſſigned to it? The life of man is his *for ever* in this world; for how ſhort ſoever it is, no man knows the end of it, and ſo to him it is a hidden thing. In this ſenſe alſo the life of a beaſt is a hidden thing as to the natural end of it, and ſo his *for ever. Wilt thou take him to be thy ſervant for ever?* Or, *Will he be thy everlaſting ſervant?*

Hence Note; *All the creatures were made for mans ſervice, and were once his ſervants.*

And therefore when creatures will not ſerve us, eſpecially when they riſe againſt us, we ſhould remember, as our fall in *Adam*, ſo our own failings in the ſervice of God. The unſerviceableneſs of the creature to us, is a fruit and an effect of our unſerviceableneſs and diſobedience to God. That word of God (*Gen.* 1. 28.) which I may call the charter of mans Lordſhip over the creature, reached Leviathan himſelf; *And God bleſſed them, and God ſaid, be fruitful, and multiply and repleniſh the earth, and ſubdue it, and have dominion over the fiſh of the Sea*, &c. That includes dominion over the Leviathan. The Apoſtle *James* alſo (*Chap.*3.7.) ſpeaks of mans dominion over the fiſh of the Sea, *Every kind of beaſts, and of birds, and of ſerpents, and of things in the Sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind.* Man was originally inveſted with a power, to tame, not only things on earth, but things in the Sea, even the mighty Leviathan. And when the Lord after the flood reſtored the world, and renewed mans charter, he put in this among the reſt of his grants, the ſubjection of the fiſh of the Sea (*Gen.*9.1,2.) *And God bleſſed* Noah *and his ſons, and ſaid, be fruitful and multiply, and repleniſh the earth, and the fear of you, and the dread of you ſhall be upon every beaſt of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, and upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fiſhes of the Sea; into your hand they are delivered:* The very fiſh of the Sea ſhall fear and reverence you. But as we quite forfeited the priviledg of the firſt charter by the firſt general fall, ſo our after perſonal falls have doubtleſs much abated the priviledges of this renewed charter. When we break commandments we weaken our intereſt in, and loſe the benefit of promiſes and priviledges. *Man by falling from the commands of God, loſt his command of the creatures*; or, man by ſin, loſt, Firſt, the command of himſelf, and then his command over the creatures. Sin hinders our preſent enjoyments, and will, unleſs repented of by us, and pardoned by God, cut us off from our future hopes. We ſhould behold and bewail it, as a part of that great curſe fallen upon us by the ſin of *Adam*, and our own perſonal ſins, that many creatures refuſe to ſerve us. *Will Leviathan* (ſaith God to *Job*) *make a covenant with thee? Will he be thy ſervant for ever?* That's the fourth particular mentioned in the third and fourth verſes, wherein the unſubmiſſiveneſs and ſtiffneſs of this Leviathan is ſet forth; he will not make ſupplications, he will not ſpeak ſoft words, neither will he be thy covenant-ſervant for ever. And as he is not for mans work, ſo not for his ſport.

1. *Imperium ſui.*
2. *Imperium ſuum.*

Verſ. 5. **Wilt thou play with him as with a bird? Wilt thou bind him for thy maidens?**

Or, as Mr. *Broughton* renders this latter clauſe, *Wilt thou tie him for thy young girls?* This verſe holds out a further evidence of the ſtoutneſs of *Leviathan*. Some creatures, though they will not work, yet they will play and make you ſport; but *Leviathan* is ſo ſtout, that he will neither do you any work, nor make you any ſport.

Wilt thou play with him as with a bird?

The word ſignifies any ſmall bird, eſpecially a Sparrow, with which Children uſe to play. Leviathan will not play with man; nor is he to be made a play, or to be ſported with. When the *Philiſtines* had put out *Sampſons* eyes (who was once as terrible to them as a Leviathan) they called for him *to make them ſport*; and the Text ſaith (*Judg.* 16.25.) *He made them ſport*, though they quickly found he was not a man to be ſported with. We ſay proverbially, *'Tis ill jeſting with edge-tools*; I may ſay, *'Tis ill ſporting with Leviathan.* The vulgar Latin Tranſlation ſaith, *Wilt thou cozen or enſnare him as a bird?* Canſt thou entangle him as a little bird with lime-twigs? Or entice him into thy net, and then make ſport with him? Leviathan is a great player, and very game-ſome; but he will not play at any game with us, nor can we play at any game with him, but *Hazzard*. That he is very gameſome when and where he pleaſeth, the *Pſalmiſt* tells us, ſpeaking of the great and wide Sea (*Pſal.* 104.26.) *There go the Ships, there is that Leviathan, whom thou haſt made to play therein.* He is made for play, not for work; but where doth he play? Leviathan will play in the Sea, but he will not play at Land. *Wilt thou play with him as with a bird?*

Numquid illudes ei ſicut avi. Vulg.

Wilt thou bind him for thy maidens?

Or for thy maid-ſervants? Or for thy little maiden daughters? Young maidens or girls delight in birds, and if they get one tyed by a ſtring, they play with it. Thus we ſee Leviathan will have no dealing with us, neither in earneſt nor in jeſt, neither at work nor play, he will neither ſerve us, nor ſport with us. *Wilt thou play with him?* &c. Some creatures are made for play, for ſport, others for work and ſervice; yet here is one (and there are more of that temper) ſo fierce, ſo ſtout, that he will be brought to neither; he will not ſerve you, as 'tis ſaid in the former verſe; he will not play with you, nor dare you play with him. In this latter verſe, Leviathan is ſomewhat like that untoward and froward generation, of whom Chriſt ſpake (*Matth.* 11.16.) *To whom ſhall I liken this generation? They are like to Children ſitting in the market-place, and calling unto their fellows, and ſaying, we have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented.* So we may ſay of this Leviathan, if you mourn to him, he will not lament; if you pipe to him, he will not dance. A proud untractable ſpirit will not comply nor bow either way; he will neither weep nor rejoyce with you, faſt nor feaſt with you, work nor play with you.

Thus we have had the deſcription of Leviathan; Firſt, by the greatneſs of his body (*Verſ.* 1,2.) Secondly, by the ſtoutneſs of his ſpirit (*Ver.* 3,4,5.) The five verſes following, ſhew the great difficulty or extream danger of taking, or of catching him, which is the third part of his deſcription.

Verſ. 6. **Shall the companions make a banquet of him? Shall they part him among the Merchants?** &c.

Fiſhermen uſe to go out in companies; and having ſped well in fiſhing, they firſt eat part themſelves, and make merry as at a banquet; the remainder they ſend to market, or ſell to Merchants for profit: They ſhall do neither with *Leviathan*, for they cannot take him. 'Tis a vain thing to talk of dividing the Bears skin, before we have taken the Bear.

Shall the companions make a banquet of him?

That is, either, Firſt, Shall they eat him, ſhall he be the matter of the banquet, the chief diſh at the feaſt? Or, Secondly, Shall they rejoyce and make merry, becauſe they have catcht Leviathan, and gotten ſuch a prize. Underſtanding the words in this latter ſenſe, Leviathan being caught, is the occaſion, not the matter of the banquet. As if it had been ſaid, *Fiſher-men, or their ſocieties, ſhall never have cauſe to rejoyce and triumph at the captivity of Leviathan, nor ſay, they have gotten him into their hands or cuſtody, to lade their veſſels, and fill their ware-houſes*, to vend him out again, and fill their purſes, as it followeth in this Verſe.

Shall they part him among the Merchants?

The word rendred *Merchants*, is according to the Hebrew *Canaanites*. Merchants were ſo called, becauſe there was much Merchandiſe uſed by and among the *Canaanites*, their country lying near the Sea. *Shall thy companions make a banquet of him?* &c.

Cananæorum nomen in Scriptura paſſim pro Mercatoribus uſurpatur; quod ea gens negotiationi & mercimoniis addicta fuerit, ob maris viciniam. Merc.

Hence Note; Firſt, *That which is got by hard and perilous labour, makes the labourers merry when they have got it.*

The Text ſeems to ſay; If they could but get Leviathan into their hands, what feaſting would there be, or there would be great feaſting! He that by diligent ſearch finds that bleſſed treaſure in the field, of which Chriſt ſpake in the Parable (*Mat.* 13.44.) *he* (I ſay) *for joy of it, ſells all that he hath and buyeth that field.* And as they, who have found Chriſt, that treaſure, have cauſe to rejoyce with great joy: So when any good is found, or gained by hard labour, 'tis matter of joy.

But is banqueting and feaſting all that Fiſher-men aim at, when they labour and venture ſo hard to catch Leviathan? Surely no, they aim at profit more then at pleaſure, it is to ſell off what they get to the Merchants.

Hence Note; *Profit puts men upon hard and perilous labours.*

What almoſt will not men do? whither will they not venture for profit? Gain ſweetens labour; and the hope of a market, the hardneſs of the undertaking.

Shall they part him among the Merchants?

Hence we may Note; *Merchandiſe is of very antient uſe.*

Merchants have been of old buying and ſelling, conveighing by Land, tranſporting by Sea, the commodities of one country to another; as it turns to the riches, ſo to the honour, and manifold advantages of mankind. Only let Merchants be wiſe to trade heaven-ward, as well as earthward; and be careful they make not ſhipwrack of a good conſcience, while their ſhips and goods eſcape it. Let them often remember the Apoſtles admonition (1 *Cor.* 7.29,30.) *The time is ſhort; let them that buy, be as if they poſſeſſed not; and they that uſe this world, as not abuſing it; for the faſhion of this world paſſeth away.* Be not unwiſe Merchants, ſuch as mind not the *true treaſure*, the *right pearl* of price.

The Lord having in this ſixth verſe intimated, how hard a task, and how hazardous it is to take *Leviathan*, ſpeaks it expreſly in the next.

Verſ. 7. **Canſt thou fill his skin with barbed Irons, or his head with fiſh-ſpears?**

Barbed Irons and fiſh-ſpears are inſtruments in uſe at this day for the taking of Whales, and ſuch like Sea-monſters. Now, ſaith the Lord, though thou canſt not draw up Leviathan with hook and line, yet poſſibly thou thinkeſt, he may be conquered with barbed Irons and ſpears. The word here rendred *barbed Irons* ſignifies *thorns*, becauſe ſuch Irons are ſharp like thorns. The skin of a well-grown Whale is extream tough, and not eaſily penetrated; ſo that the Lord might well ſay, *Canſt thou fill his skin with barbed Irons? Or his head with fiſh ſpears?* Yet, I conceive, theſe queſtions do not import an utter impoſſibility, but the extream difficulty of taking the *Leviathan*, what animal ſoever it is. The learned *Bochartus* takes theſe words, as much favouring his opinion for the Crocodile; *For* (ſaith he) *they who write about the manner of catching the Whale, teſtifie that he is overcome with ſhowers of barbed Irons, caſt or poured upon him by the Sea-men that compaſs him about; but as for the Crocodile, his skin is altogether impenetrable.* But I ſhall defer any further diſcourſe about this point, which is the chief proof againſt the Whale, till I come to the 15. verſe, and thoſe which follow, in a deſcription of the ſcales of Leviathan. And from the preſent words, *Canſt thou fill his skin with barbed Irons?* &c. I ſhall only,

Note; *That which is very hardly done, may be ſpoken of as if it could not be done at all.*

As becauſe it is a hard thing for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, Chriſt ſaith, *'tis eaſier for a Camel to paſs through a needles eye:* At which word, his Diſciples being amazed, cryed out, *Who then can be ſaved?* Thus the Prophet ſpake, to ſhew the extream difficulty of reclaiming an accuſtomed ſinner (*Jer.* 13.23.) *Can the Ethiopian change his skin? Then may he that is accuſtomed to do evil, learn to do good.* It is not altogether impoſſible for one that is accuſtomed to do evil to learn to do good (through the grace of God he may repent) but, becauſe it is a very difficult thing, therefore the Scripture ſpeaks of it as if it were an impoſſible thing, even as impoſſible as for an *Ethiopian* to change his hue, or the blackneſs of his skin, which no labour, nothing but a miracle can do.

The difficulty of dealing with this Leviathan, is yet more plainly expreſſed in the next words.

Verſ. 8. **Lay thine hand upon him, remember the battle: do no more.**

Demulceeum & experire utrum ea potiri poteris. Jun.

Thoſe words, *lay thy hand upon him*, may be taken three ways.

Firſt, Lay thy hand upon him gently, or to ſtroke him. As if it had been ſaid; When thou canſt not take him by force with barbed Irons and fiſh-ſpears, then lay thy hand upon him tenderly and friendly, try thy utmoſt skill (as before thy utmoſt ſtrength) whether thou canſt take him by fair means, by ſoothing or tickling him (as ſome fiſhes are taken) about the gills.

Secondly, (To which interpretation I rather adhere, than to the former) This conceſſion, *lay thine hand on him*, carrieth a ſenſe of hoſtility; as if it had been ſaid, as we often ſay in ſuch caſes, *Touch him if thou dareſt; thou hadſt as good have let him alone, thou hadſt as good eat thy nails as meddle with him*; uſe the leaſt violence to him at thy peril be it, he will quickly make thee repent thy raſhneſs, and thou wilt have little mind to fight it out with him.

Thirdly, *Lay thine hand upon him*, may be taken in this general ſenſe; improve the utmoſt of thy skill and ſtrength, of thy force and fraud, do thy beſt every way, yet thou ſhalt not be able to take him.

Remember the battle, or (as Mr. *Broughton* renders) *look for War.*

Si tam audax fueris ut ferire ipſum ſuſtinueris, cogita illum pugnaturum, & ſi potes fuge, neque iteres ictum. Coc.

Conſider what will come of it, if thou layeſt thy hand upon him; for doubtleſs, he will be upon thy back preſently. Therefore,

Do no more.] Some render it as a threat, *If thou ſhalt do more*, he will quickly diſpatch thee, or thou wilt have little mind to meddle any more with him. We read it, as an admonition, *do no more*; That is, forbear. Some put both theſe latter branches of the verſe together, thus, *Thou ſhalt no more remember the battle*; That is, there will be an end of thee, thou wilt have done fighting with him or any other, if thou beginneſt to fight with *Leviathan*. The clear ſenſe of the whole, to me, is this: *If thou put thine hand upon him, if thou meddleſt to take him either by force or craft, if thou doſt ingage any way with him, thou wilt be forc'd to remember the battle, thou wilt find thou haſt cauſe to remember it as long as thou liveſt; if thou layeſt, or ſhalt lay thy hand upon him, thou wilt think of the battle, that thou haſt made a raſh adventure, nor wilt thou venture ſo again, thy own harms will make thee wiſer, and thy ſad experience (the Miſtreſs of fools) will teach thee to take heed.*

Non erit tibi poſthac de prælio cogitandum. Actum enim erit de te ſimul ac manum immiſeris. Merc. *Ictus piſcator ſapit.* Adag.

Now according to this reading, and the ſenſe given of it, the Imperative is put for the Future, which (as the Learned tell us) is uſual in Scripture, and the conditional term *If* is underſtood and placed at the beginning of the ſentence, which is familiar in the Hebrew tongue: And ſo inſtead of, *lay thy hand on him*, &c. (as we render) the words run thus, *If thou ſhalt lay thy hand on him, thou wilt remember the battle, and do no more.* This is a clear ſenſe, and ſo likewiſe is that other, which bids him do it at his peril; *lay thine hand upon him if thou wilt, adventure to take him if thou dareſt; but remember the battle, conſider what will come of it, and do no more I adviſe thee.* Thus it ſeems to be ſuch a conceſſion as *Solomon* gives the young man (*Eccleſ.* 11.9.) *Rejoyce, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart chear thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thy own heart, and in the ſight of thine eyes; but* (what follows?) *Know, for all theſe things God will bring thee to judgment.* So here the Lord ſeems to ſay, *Go, lay thy hand on him, go, take Leviathan if thou canſt; but remember the battle, remember Leviathan is a terrible creature, and therefore I adviſe thee to do no more*, or to have no more to do with him, venture no further, he is a perillous beaſt.

Thus the Lord might ſay to *Job*; Thou haſt been very buſie to call for an account from me, and to be dealing with me; but art thou able to deal with Leviathan? Conſider then how thou canſt deal with me; therefore ſit down quietly, take heed of the leaſt thought that my ways towards thee want the leaſt grain of juſtice, or that they are wanting of mercy and loving kindneſs; contend no longer, ſtrive no more with me, who have more ſtrength then ten thouſand Leviathans; and with whom to contend, 'tis ten thouſand times more dangerous, then with Leviathan. *Remember the battle, do no more.*

Hence Note; Firſt, *It is good to remember the iſſues of actions before we act.*

Lay thy hand upon him; but conſider what will come of it, what it may coſt thee: As in that great buſineſs of our receiving Chriſt in the Goſpel, *put your hand to the Plow*, put your hand to the profeſſion of the Goſpel; but pray remember the battle: you may come to a great battle, you may have to deal with proud Leviathans, before you have made good your good profeſſion. This was Chriſts counſel (*Luke* 14. 28, 33.) to all his Diſciples, *Which of you intending to build a Tower, ſitteth not down firſt, and counteth the coſt?* &c. *Or what King going to make War with another King, ſitteth not down firſt, and conſulteth?* &c. Whether he can maintain the War, he remembers the battle; ſo, *&c.* The believing Jews (*Heb.* 10.34.) *endured a great fight of affliction after they were illuminated*, and had received the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. There are two things which we ſhould be very much in remembering. Firſt, Our duty (*Eccleſ.* 12. 1.) *Remember now thy Creature in the days of thy youth.* Secondly, Our danger; or, take both together, what danger duty may engage us in; elſe when danger comes we ſhall ſoon forſake our duty. Many take up a profeſſion of Chriſt, who never thought of the danger, of the tryals, afflictions and temptations, which might befal them for his ſake; they remembred not the battle, and ſo have either preſently been overcome and fallen in it, or have unworthily forſaken their colours, and run from it.

Secondly, Note; *It is beſt not to do, or forbear to do that which we cannot but ſee (if we have our eyes in our heads) will be dangerous to us in the doing.*

We are not always to forbear the doing of thoſe things that will be dangerous to our outward man (for ſo the beſt things may be) but thoſe things that will be dangerous to our bodies and ſouls too, we muſt always forbear to do; in all ſuch caſes it is our duty to remember the battle, and do no more. Will any wiſe man engage in danger which can produce no profit? There are ſome things which we are to do, and do again, though our danger be never ſo great, yea, though we loſe our lives in doing them: But there are many things we may not do if we fore-ſee danger. The Apoſtle *Paul* (Acts 27.9,10.) being at ſea, ſaid *I perceive that this voyage will be with hurt and much damage, not only to the lading of the ſhip, but to our lives alſo*; therefore he tells them (*Verſ.*21.) Sirs, *ye ſhould have harkened to me, and not have looſed from* Crete, *and to have gained this harm and loſs*; that had been their wiſdom, when they were warned of the danger, not to have gone on. When there is danger to our bodies only, and we ſee no benefit that may countervail the danger, 'tis folly to proceed. I may urge this point ſpecially in caſe of ſin: Take heed of doing any thing that is evil; remember the battle that ſin will bring you to. Sin will bring you to a terrible battle, to ſuch a battle as no man can ſtand in or eſcape. Sin brings to a battle infinitely more dangerous then that with Leviathan. Sin provokes God to battle; and when God is angry, we may more ſafely contend with ten thouſand *Leviathans*, then with him. When you are tempted to put your hand to ſin, O remember the battle, remember the battle. Thou (poſſibly) wilt have a ſore battle in thy own conſcience, and that's a dreadful Leviathan; but that's not all, remember the battle with God, who is greater then conſcience; you muſt come to judgment, remember the battle of that day, or that day of Battle, with impenitent and hardned ſinners, and ſin no more; give it over, as you love your lives, as you love your precious ſouls, and the everlaſting peace or welfare of them. You cannot ſin without a great deal of danger, even the danger of eternal wrath and death.

Thus I have touched at ſome things from this third part of the deſcription of Leviathan. He hath hitherto been ſet before us: Firſt, In the huge bulk and bigneſs of his body. Secondly, In the ſtoutneſs of his ſpirit; he will neither make ſupplications, nor enter covenant; he will neither ſerve you, nor ſport with you; both which, *Behemoth*, the Elephant, will do. Thirdly, In the difficulty and danger of taking him; So much danger is in it, that if you lay your hand on him, it were beſt to remember the battle, and do no more. Yet the Lord ſpeaks more concerning the danger of medling with Leviathan, in the ninth verſe throughout, and in the former part of the tenth.

Verſ. 9. **Behold, the hope of him is in vain.**

As if the Lord had ſaid, if none of theſe means can take Leviathan, then the hope of him that goes about to take him is loſt and fruſtrate; if by theſe means he cannot be taken, then there is no means to take him, for he cannot be taken by any means. *The hope*

Dicendum fuerat ſpes tua, *ſed in genere dicere voluerit,* &c. Merc.

Of him.] That is, *of him* that goes about to catch Leviathan. In order of ſpeech it ſhould have been ſaid, *thy hope will be in vain*, for God was ſpeaking before to *Job*; yet he doth not ſay *thy hope*, but *the hope of him*, that is, the hope of any man will be in vain: as if he had ſaid, *not only ſhalt thou labour in vain, to graple with this Sea-monſter Leviathan, but all men elſe, whoſoever they are, that attempt or go about to take him. The hope of him is*

כזב *Mentitur reipſa vel verbis.*

In vain.] The Hebrew is, *the hope of him lyeth*. It is uſual both in the Hebrew and Latin tongue, when our hopes and endeavours fail, or are fruſtrate, to ſay, they lie, or deceive us; and the reaſon is, becauſe ſuch a man promiſed himſelf great things, and had confident expectations, without ſucceſs. Thus 'tis ſaid. (*Hab.* 3. 17.) *Although the labour of the Olive ſhall fail*, we put in the Margin, *lie*. The Husband-man having beſtowed much labour upon the Olive, and looking for much fruit, may be deceived, and ſo all that labour beſtowed in dreſſing and looking to the Olive-tree failing and being loſt, the labour of the Olive (or the pains taken about the Olive-tree) is ſaid to lie. *The hope of him ſhall be in vain, or lie.*

Our hope is ſaid to be in vain three ways.

Firſt, When we hope for much, and get but little, according to that of the Prophet, convincing the Jews of their neglect in building the Temple (*Hag.* 1. 9.) *Ye looked for much, and behold it came to little*; ye hoped for a plentiful harveſt, ye thought to have had a great crop, but it went very cloſe together; ye looked for cart-loads, but had ſcarcely handfuls: So ſome expound, or give the meaning of that Propheſie (*Iſa.* 49.4. & 6. compared) It is a Propheſie of Chriſt; at the 4. verſe Chriſt ſaith, *I have laboured in vain, I have ſpent my ſtrength for nought, and in vain.* Why did Chriſt ſay he had laboured in vain? He tells us the reaſon at the 6. verſe; *And he ſaid,* that is, the Lord ſaid to him, *It is a light thing that thou ſhouldeſt be my ſervant to raiſe up the Tribes of* Jacob, *and to reſtore the preſerved of* Iſrael; *I will alſo give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayſt be my ſalvation unto the end of the Earth.* Chriſt looked upon his labour as labour in vain, if he had died to redeem the Jews only, and therefore, ſaith God, *I will give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayſt be my ſalvation to the end of the Earth*; and then, I hope, thou wilt not think thy labour in vain. Now when the Lord had granted Jeſus Chriſt, that he ſhould not only be ſalvation to the Jews, but alſo to the ends of the Earth, or to the Gentiles; he no longer ſaid, *I have laboured in vain*, but thought himſelf well rewarded for all his coſt and pains, for all that he did or ſuffered, to bring about and effect the ſalvation of man. Hope is in vain when we have, and get but little, expecting much.

Secondly, Hope is much more in vain, when we hope for much, and get nothing at all. As *Peter* ſaid to Chriſt (*Luke* 5. 5.) *We have toyled all night, and have taken nothing.* That's like fiſhing for Leviathan; ſuch hope is utterly in vain. Such a vain hope the Church ſpake of (*Jer.* 8. 15.) *We looked for peace* (looking is an act of hope) *and no good came*, no good at all; that hope is vain, when we look for peace, and no good, no benefit comes. And thus the Lord ſpake of his ſmiting in vain, (*Jer.* 2. 30.) *In vain have I ſmitten your Children.* Why in vain? *They have received no correction*, that is, they were never a whit the better for it, they were not amended by it. When God ſpends his rods upon us, and we neither ceaſe to do evil, nor learn to do good, then he correcteth us in vain. And when he ſends his word, and we receive no good by it, no inſtruction by it, then his word is in vain. To waſh an *Æthiopian*, is the emblem of labour in vain, becauſe, how much ſoever you waſh him, he is not at all the whiter, nor is any change wrought in his complexion.

Thirdly, Hope is yet more in vain, when we look for good, and get hurt inſtead of good. The Prophet complained (*Jer.*8.15.) not only thus, *We look for peace, and no good came*; but (as it follows) *for a time of health, and behold, trouble.* But what was the time of health which they looked for, or what was the health which they looked for at that time? There is a two-fold health, a health of the body natural, and a health of the body politick, which conſiſts in proſperity and peace; for this health they looked, *but behold trouble.* So (*Jer.*14.19.) *We looked for peace; and there was no good; and for a time of healing, and behold trouble.* Thus the Lords Vineyard, that is, the Church of the Jews diſappointed the Lords expectation (*Iſa.* 5. 5.) when, while *he looked for grapes, it brought forth wild grapes*, that is, as 'tis explained (*Verſ.*7.) *Oppreſſion inſtead of judgment, and inſtead of Righteouſneſs a cry.* This was the quite contrary; and this is the worſt way of having our hope in vain. It is ſaid (*Job* 27. 8.) *What is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God taketh away his Soul?* Suppoſe a hypocrite hath gained much in this world, yea, ſuppoſe he hath got or gained all the world, yet *what is his hope when God taketh away his ſoul?* Then he will not only find no God, but much trouble, pain, and anguiſh, and wrath, and hell for evermore upon him. When Chriſt ſaith (*Mat.*16.26.) *What is a man profited, if he ſhall gain the whole world, and loſe his own Soul?* His meaning is not only this, that he ſhall have no profit at all, but he ſhall be utterly undone and broke for ever. How vain then is the hope of that man, yea, how vain a man is that, who hopes for profit or gain, in doing that which endangers the loſs of his ſoul, much more that by which his ſoul is abſolutely and for ever loſt.

Thus hope is in vain; Firſt, when we hope for much, and get little; Secondly, when we hope for much, and get nothing; Thirdly, when we hope for good, and get hurt. Now, in theſe two latter ſenſes we are to take the meaning of God here. A man may hope by uſe of means to catch Leviathan, yet he gets nothing, yea, probably loſeth much, or gets much hurt. *Behold, the hope of him is in vain.*

Hence Note; Firſt, *It is hope of gain that uſually puts men upon action.*

The Lord ſuppoſeth that they who undertake the taking of Leviathan, hope to gain much by taking him. 'Tis hope of attaining, that encourageth to doing. No man would be ſtirring, much leſs beſtir himſelf about any buſineſs, were it not for hope of getting. And as it is hope of attaining that puts upon doing, ſo it is hope of attaining that puts us upon ſuffering. Who would ſuffer for Jeſus Chriſt, if he had not a hope of attaining ſomewhat better than he can loſe by his ſufferings? Therefore Jeſus Chriſt hath ſet that hope before us. To ſuffer rightly for Jeſus Chriſt, is ſo honourable, that we ſhould ſuffer willingly, though we get nothing by it: yet he hath ſet a reward before us, a crown, by his Croſs; he hath aſſured us all our loſſes, even our loſs of life for his ſake, ſhall turn to our gain and profit. Hope of attaining is the motive to every undertaking. No wiſe man will meddle with doing that, which is either impoſſible to be done, or altogether unprofitable when it is done. Were it not for hope, the heart would faint. Firſt, in labouring. Secondly, in ſuffering. Thirdly, in waiting. Hope is *like a Helmet* upon the head, when we are in danger of blows (2 *Theſ.*5.8.) and like *an Anchor, both ſure and ſtedfaſt*, when we are in ſtorms (*Heb.*6 19.)

Secondly, The Lord having ſaid before, *Remember the Battel, and do no more*, adds, *The hope of him is in vain.*

Hence Note; *It is a vain thing to go about that, which we ſee no ground of hope to have ſucceſs in, to do good upon, or to get any good by.*

As the Apoſtle exhorts us, *To be ſtedfaſt and unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, foraſmuch as we know* (true believers do know, and all men ſhould know) *that our labour is not in vain in the Lord*; ſo we have ground enough to dehort all men from thoſe works, which we know, or may know, will be in vain. And if ſo,

Then, Firſt, *How vain a thing is it for any man to ſin?* Is there any thing to be gotten by ſin? I may well ſay to ſinners, as the Lord ſaith to *Job*, in the latter end of the 8. Verſe, *Do no more, ſin no more*; your hope is in vain that think to gain by ſin, that hope to make your ſelves rich, great or happy, by ſin; *Do no more*, your hope is in vain. The Apoſtle puts the Queſtion (*Rom.*6.21.) *What fruit had you then in thoſe things, whereof ye are now aſhamed?* Have you got any benefit by them? Have you got any thing worth the getting? All that is gained by ſin, will turn to loſs at laſt. *Samuel* charged the *Iſraelites* upon this account (1 *Sam.*12.21.) *Turn ye not aſide* (That is, do not ſin, do not turn the Law of the Lord, do not depart from God, why?) *For then ſhould you go after vain things, which cannot profit nor deliver, for they are vain.* If you turn aſide from the ways of God, to by-ways; from the truths of God, to error; from the true worſhip of God, to idolatry; and from communion with God, to creature-comforts and contentments; you go after vain things which cannot profit. To be vain, and to be unprofitable, are the ſame thing. Take heed of ſin, for you cannot make any profit of it, you cannot raiſe any true revenue out of it, you will one time or other be aſhamed (as the Prophet ſpeaks) of all thoſe revenues; your hope that way is vain.

Secondly, *Then how vain a thing is it to oppoſe the Church of God!* Why? Becauſe there is no ground of hope for ſucceſs in that attempt. The world hath been upon it all along, but they could never effect nor accompliſh what they have imagined; they have done all, but proſper in it; they never had their end, which is the end or total deſtruction of the Church. *Pharaoh* would oppoſe and vex *Iſrael*, the Church of God, and keep them low; but he could not attain his end, for the more he oppreſſed them, the more they multiplied; therefore all ſuch are ſaid to imagin a vain thing (*Pſal.*2.1,2.) *Why do the Heathen rage, and the people imagin a vain thing? The Kings of the earth ſet themſelves, and the Rulers take counſel together, againſt the Lord and againſt his anointed*, but all in vain. Nothing leſs came of it, then what they imagined, or their imaginations came to nothing, yea, brought them to nothing. *I* (ſaith the Lord, *Zach.*12.3.) *will make* Jeruſalem *a burdenſome ſtone for all people*; *all that burden themſelves with it, ſhall be cut in pieces.* If any meddle with *Jeruſalem*, they will find they lift at a very heavy ſtone, and that they meddle not with their match; they ſhall ſurely be not only overmatcht, but overthrown at length, who do ſo. The Church is founded upon a rock, and *the gates of Hell ſhall not prevail againſt it* (Matth.16.18.) That is, neither the counſels nor confederacies, neither the power nor the policy of men or devils, ſhall be able to prevail againſt it. The Hiſtory of the Church, ſaith of *Diocleſian* a cruel perſecuter, that for very vexation he gave up the Government of the Empire, becauſe he ſaw he could not ſuppreſs Chriſtianity by all his machinations againſt the Chriſtians. And doubtleſs they in the Goſpel (*John* 12.19.) were not a little troubled, when they ſaid *among themſelves, Perceive ye how we prevail nothing? Behold, the world is gone after him.*

Thirdly, Note; *The loſs of hope, or hope loſt, is the greateſt loſs.*

When God would ſhew mans worſt condition, he ſaith, *His hope is in vain*; he doth not ſay, *his labour is in vain*, but, *his hope is in vain*; that pincheth moſt of all, and that's it which will pinch Hypocrites moſt at laſt, who were in hope of injoying God; but not only their labour, but their hope ſhall be in vain: when they come big with expectation, and ſay, *Lord, Lord, we have done thus and thus*; when, as the fooliſh Virgins, they ſhall knock boldly, and cry earneſtly, *Lord, Lord, open to us*, the anſwer given them will be only this, *I know you not*; That is, I know you not for mine, as you preſumed your ſelves to be, even while you walked (not as mine, in wiſdom, but) in your own folly. This loſs of hope will grieve more then the loſs of Heaven. As Chriſt told the Phariſees, *You ſhall weep, and gnaſh your teeth, when you ſee* Abraham, *and* Iſaac, *and* Jacob, *and all the Prophets in the Kingdom of God, and you your ſelves thruſt out.* You thought that you ſhould be ſaved above all men; but ſaith Chriſt, you ſhall be thruſt out, and loſe your hopes. This the Lord ſpeaks, to ſhew the worſt of their condition, who attempt to take Leviathan, *Their hope ſhall be in vain.*

In the latter part of the verſe, the Lord gives us a farther account, why their hope is in vain.

Shall not a man be caſt down at the ſight of him?

Is there any hope of taking him, at whoſe very ſight a man ſhall certainly *be caſt down?* There is a twofold *caſting down.*

Firſt, a caſting down by outward violence, when a man is thruſt down (as we ſpeak) *by head and ſhoulders.* Thus *David* caſt down *Goliah*, by a ſling and a ſtone.

Secondly, There is a caſting down by inward trouble; as we uſually ſay, ſuch a man is *mightily caſt down.* Trouble of ſpirit, heart-vexation, and fear, caſt down many before any hand toucheth them. Chriſt ſpeaking of *Capernaum*, ſaith (*Luke* 10.15.) *And thou* Capernaum, *which art exalted to Heaven, ſhalt be thruſt down to Hell.* As if he had ſaid, thou haſt been high in thy expectations, and highly priviledged in thy enjoyments, having had the Goſpel preached to thee; but thou ſhalt not only fall down, but thou ſhalt be thruſt down into Hell, with a kind of violence. When the Lord in the Text ſaith, *Shall not one be caſt down?* We are to underſtand it of a caſting down by the ſtrong impreſſion of aſtoniſhment and fear, of dread and trouble, ſeizing upon the mans ſpirit who comes near Leviathan, and therefore it followeth, *Shall not one be caſt down*

At the ſight of him?] A man ſhall no ſooner ſee him, but he ſhall ſink; and if ſo, then how little hope hath any one to grapple with him, and to take him? There is ſmall hope of overcoming this *Leviathan*, when a man at his ſight, or as far off as he can ſee him, is ſo afraid of him as to be caſt down with fear. The very ſight of a Whale is a terror to Mariners and Sea-men, they are afraid their Ship may be overturn'd and ſpoiled by him.

Some read the words thus; *Will he be caſt down even at the ſight of him?* And they give this meaning of it. Will the Leviathan be caſt down at the ſight of a man, when he cometh prepared to take him? Thou thinkeſt Leviathan a poor ſpirited fiſh; or that he will be afraid of thy looks, or to ſee thee, as other fiſhes are, who when they ſee or apprehend a man near, *ſcuttle away*, as we ſay; but thou wilt find Leviathan is a fiſh that will not be afraid at the ſight of thee. This is a good ſenſe, but I conceive that before given more ſutable; that the ſight of Leviathan, or a Leviathan, as ſoon as ſeen, is ſo terrible, that a man will be ſtricken with fear as ſoon as he ſeeth him. *Shall not one be caſt down at the ſight of him?*

> Hence Note; Firſt, *The ſight of the eye worketh much upon the heart.*

The Lord ſaith not, *Shall not one be caſt down by the force of him*, but, *at the very ſight of him*. The eye hath a mighty operation upon the inward man, yea, upon the whole man; the eye hath a mighty force upon the heart as to three things.

Firſt, It hath a mighty force upon the heart as to joy. If we ſee a perſon that we have a great deal of love for, how do we rejoyce preſently at the ſight of him! 'Tis true alſo of things. It is ſaid of *Jacob* (Gen. 45. 27.) *When he ſaw the wagons which* Joſeph *had ſent to carry him, his ſpirit revived*; it put a new life into him, to ſee that which gave him much aſſurance, that he ſhould ſee a perſon that was the deſire of his eyes, his beloved ſon *Joſeph*; it revived the old man, and made him even young again. And as a pleaſing ſight made old *Jacob*, as it were, begin to live again; ſo old *Simeon* rejoyced ſo much at the ſight of Chriſt, that he had done with living, or had enough of it, and therefore ſaid, *Now letteſt thou thy ſervant depart in peace, for mine eyes have ſeen thy ſalvation*; That is, he had ſeen Chriſt with the eye of his body, and he had a ſight of Chriſt by the eye of his faith; this ſight lifted him above all things ſeen. A ſenſitive ſight of good, doth very much chear, refreſh, and rejoyce the heart, much more an intellectual ſight; how much doth the ſight of faith refreſh the Soul, and cauſe us to rejoyce! It is ſaid of believers, *They rejoyce with joy unſpeakable and glorious*, at the ſight which they have of Chriſt by faith (1 *Pet.* 1. 8.) *Whom having not ſeen, ye love*; *in whom, though now you ſee him not, yet believing, ye rejoyce with joy unſpeakable and full of glory. Whom haveing not ſeen*, that is, with bodily eyes; and, *in whom, though you ſee him not*, That is, ſenſitively, *yet believing:* What is believing? It is the ſight of the Soul. Faith gives the Soul a view of Chriſt in all his excellency and glory, in his love and in his lovelineſs, in his righteouſneſs and holineſs: faith gets a view of Chriſt in all his beauty; and beholding him, we rejoyce with joy unſpeakable. If the ſight of the bodily eye cauſeth the Soul to rejoyce, how much more the ſight of the eye of faith! the eye of either fixed upon deſirable objects, affects the heart with joy.

Secondly, The ſight of the eye fixt upon ſorrowful objects, affects the heart with ſorrow (*Lam.* 3. 51.) *Mine eye affects my heart*, ſaid lamenting *Jeremiah*; That is, ſeeing the calamities that are upon my people, I cannot but weep and mourn. Chriſt ſaith of the yet blinded and hardned *Jews*, *They ſhall look on me whom they have pierced, and they ſhall mourn* (Zach. 12. 10.) They ſhall ſhed tears of true repentance, when they ſhall ſee him with an eye of ſenſe, joyned with an eye of faith, whoſe blood they ſhed. Some of them ſaw him once an eye of ſenſe, without an eye of faith, and then they ſhed his blood; but when they ſhall ſee him with both, or only with an eye of faith, they ſhall mourn for ſhedding it. When good *Nehemiah* heard in what a ruinous condition the City *Jeruſalem* was, *he ſate down, and wept, and mourned certain days* (Neh. 1. 4.) his ear affected his heart, how much more would his eye, had he been a ſpectator (as afterwards he was) of thoſe ruins!

Thirdly, The ſight of the eye affects the heart with fear. There are ſome ſights very dreadful; ſo ſaith the Text and Point, *Shall not one be caſt down at the ſight of him?* This leads to a ſecond Note, which is this:

> *The Lord hath put a terribleneſs upon ſome creatures, with reſpect to man.*

Man is a terror to ſome creatures; yet others are a terror, or very terrible to man. Let us conſider, and uſefully remember this, for it is a fruit of ſin. What is the reaſon we are caſt down at the ſight of any creature? We may thank our ſins for it; all our troubleſome paſſions came in at that door. Why is man afraid or ſeized with a kind of horror, at the ſight of a Toad or Serpent? Of a Bear or Lion looſe? How comes it to paſs, that man, whom God made Lord over all the creatures, doth fear any, eſpecially ſo many of them? Is not this a conſequent, yea, an effect of ſin? When God made the Covenant with *Noah* (Gen 9. 2.) *God bleſſed him and his ſons, and ſaid unto them, be fruitful and multiply, and repleniſh the Earth: and the fear of you, and the dread of you, ſhall be upon every beaſt of the Earth, and upon every fowl of the Air, upon all that moveth upon the Earth, and upon all the fiſhes of the Sea; the fear and dread of you ſhall be upon them.* 'Tis of the Lord that any of the creatures are afraid and ſtand in awe of us; we have deſerved, that the very Sheep and Dove ſhould be a terror to us. 'Tis of the Lord that the fear and dread of us is upon any creature, and 'tis from our ſin that any creature is a fear and dread to us: It is a mercy that ſo many creatures are afraid of us; that any of the creatures ſtand in fear of us, is a fruit of the goodneſs of God; and that we are afraid of any creature, is a fruit of our ſin. Let us make a good uſe of this word, *Shall not one be afraid at the ſight of him?*

> And hence we may infer; *If the ſight of ſome creatures aſtoniſh us, how will the ſight of God, of an angry God aſtoniſh us!*

All the dread and terribleneſs that is in a Lion, or Bear, or Dragon, what is it to what is in God? *With God is terrible Majeſty.* The terribleneſs of the moſt terrible deadly creature, yea, of death, the King of terrors, is but a ſcare-crow to the terribleneſs of God; and it is God who hath planted terror in any creature, in man eſpecially. What is the reaſon why Kings and inferiour Magiſtrates are ſo terrible to evil men? Is it not becauſe God hath planted ſuch a terribleneſs in them, or hath cloathed them (with his own garment) terrible majeſty towards evil doers? (*Rom.* 13. 3, 4.) Now I ſay, if ſome creatures are ſo terrible, that a man is caſt down at the ſight of them, then how terrible is God! The Apoſtle *John* (*Rev.* 6. 15, 16, 17.) repreſents a world of wicked ones, or all the wicked of the world, caſt down at the ſight of Jeſus Chriſt; *The Kings of the Earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief Captains, and the mighty men, and every bond-man, and every free-man, hid themſelves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains, and ſaid to the mountains and rocks, fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that ſitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of his wrath is come, and who ſhall be able to ſtand?* Some are caſt down at the ſight of *Leviathan*, but all the unbelieving world ſhall be caſt down at the ſight of Chriſt; all the unbelieving Kings, Princes, and Potentates of the world ſhall be caſt down before Chriſt; O how dreadful will he be to them! and therefore (I would conclude with that) let us be caſt down at the ſight of ſin, which hath cauſed the ſight of the creature, and of God alſo, to be ſo dreadful to us. God had never been terrible to us, had it not been for ſin; nor had the ſight of any creature been terrible to us, had we not ſinned. When *Adam* had ſinned, then God was terrible to him, then preſently he hid himſelf. O therefore be caſt down at the ſight of ſin, which hath made both God and many creatures a terror, a caſting down to us. How terrible this creature *Leviathan* is to man, appears further, by what the Lord ſaith next.

> Verſ. 10. **None is ſo fierce that dare ſtir him up: who then is able to ſtand before me?**

The former part of this verſe, carrieth on the matter of the whole former verſe, *None is ſo fierce that dare ſtir him up;*

that is, Leviathan is a creature ſo fierce, ſo cruel, that none, how fierce ſoever, dare provoke him, no, nor awaken him. The words may be taken two ways.

Firſt, *None dare ſtir him up* when he is aſleep.

אבור *Crudelis, ſævus, ferox, immiſericors.*

Secondly, No man dares challenge or provoke him when he is awake. The word rendred *fierce,* properly ſignifies *cruel,* becauſe cruelty makes men fierce, or becauſe fierce men are uſually very cruel. *None is ſo fierce as to ſtir him up.*

Hence Note; Firſt, *There is no wiſdom in provoking an enemy that is too ſtrong for us.*

Wiſe men, though bold, and poſſibly cruel too, yet when attempts are exceeding dangerous, will not venture. Phyſicians will not ſtir ſome humors in the body, for it would be like ſtiring of a fierce Lion that is aſleep; they dare not provoke them, but do all they can to attemper and allay them; to ſtir ſuch a humour were to ſtir Leviathan. He hath more raſhneſs then courage, who meddles with more then his match, or (as ſome ſay) *conjures up a ſpirit, that he cannot lay again.*

Secondly, Saith the Lord, *none is ſo fierce* or cruel *that dare ſtir him up.* He means not cruel to Leviathan, but to himſelf; none is ſo cruel to himſelf, as to go about to ſtir up Leviathan, becauſe there is ſo much danger in that attempt.

Whence, Obſerve; *They who run themſelves upon great dangers unadviſedly are cruel to themſelves.*

They are their own enemies, and the greateſt enemies to themſelves. How cruel then are ſinners to their own Souls, who are ſo fierce as daily to ſtir up Leviathan! (*Prov.* 6. 33.) *Whoſoever committeth adultery with a woman hath no underſtanding; he that doth it deſtroyeth his own Soul;* ſurely then he is cruel to his own Soul: he ſeems to be very kind to his harlot, but he is very unkind, yea, cruel to himſelf (*Pro.* 8. 36.) *He that ſinneth againſt me* (ſaith *Wiſdom*) *wrongeth his own Soul: all they that hate me, love death.* 'Tis Chriſt that ſpeaks thus, *he that ſinneth againſt me, wrongeth his own Soul,* he is cruel to himſelf. Many, when they ſin, do it to pleaſe themſelves: O what a good turn do they hope to do themſelves, when they venture upon unlawful pleaſures or profits; *But he that doth ſo, hateth me* (ſaith Chriſt) *and he that hateth me, loves death.* How cruel is that man to his own life, that is in love with death; yet ſo in truth are they who love any ſin, by ſinning. You may (as was toucht before) ſtir up and awaken a ſleepy conſcience, and conſcience may be more terrible then Leviathan; yea, by ſin, you may awaken and ſtir up the ſleeping vengeance of God, who is more then a thouſand Leviathans, and conſciences. Once more remember, that poſſibly, by not ſtirring up your ſelves to take hold of God, you may ſtir up God to be angry with you, as 'tis ſaid (*Iſa.* 64. 6, 7.) *Our iniquities like the wind have taken us away.* What follows? *And* (or *for*) *there is none that calleth upon thy name, that ſtirreth up himſelf to take hold of thee.* Which words, as I apprehend, may be taken two ways. Firſt, As ſhewing their ſluggiſhneſs, that though their iniquities, that is, the puniſhment of their iniquities, carried them away, or they were carried away as a puniſhment of their iniquities, yet they did not ſtir up themſelves to call upon the name of God, nor to take hold of him. Secondly, As ſhewing the reaſon, why their iniquities carried them away, even, becauſe they did not ſtir up themſelves to take hold of God. Their not ſtirring up themſelves to take hold of God, ſtirred up God againſt them. If we do not ſtir up our ſelves, eſpecially, when at any time we are compaſſed about with ſins and dangers, or with dangers procured and brought upon us by our ſins, as with Leviathans, we may ſtir up God againſt us as a Leviathan. And therefore let us take heed, leſt we be found fierce and cruel againſt our own Souls, by ſinning againſt God, or by not ſtirring up our ſelves to take hold of God; ſuch neglects are full of provocations.

Hitherto we have had inſtruction concerning this Leviathan, how great, how ſtout, how fierce and cruel he is: now the Lord makes application. He hath been diſcourſing about a huge tremendous Sea-monſter; but what is all this for? Surely, for very great uſe: **And the Lord maketh uſe of it two ways.**

Firſt, In this verſe, to ſhew his own *irreſiſtibleneſs.* If none can ſtand before Leviathan, *then who can ſtand before me?*

Secondly, In the 11. Verſe, to ſhew his own *independency,* that he hath no need of any creature: *Who hath prevented me that I ſhould repay him?* And all this the Lord makes good by that great aſſertion, *for whatſoever is under the whole heaven is mine;* This great Leviathan is mine to do what I will with him. This is the ſum of that two-fold Application, which the Lord makes from the hitherto deſcription of Leviathan; the firſt part whereof is expreſſed in the latter part of the 10. Verſe.

Who then is able to ſtand before me?

As if the Lord had ſaid, *no man is able to ſtand before me.* If this creature, Leviathan, be ſo terrible, that no man is able to ſtand before him? Then, who can ſtand before me? For all the ſtrength and courage that Leviathan hath, I have given him, and 'tis nothing to what I have; 'tis not ſo much to me as a drop of the bucket, or a duſt of the ballance, to the whole world. Can none ſtand before Leviathan? *Who then can ſtand before me?*

Quis reſiſter poterit vultu meo? Scult.

One Tranſlation ſaith, *Can you reſiſt before my look?* As God had ſaid before, one *ſhall be caſt down at the ſight of him,* namely, of Leviathan; ſo here, *Can any man ſtand before me, or at the ſight of me?* Is any man able to abide my look, the majeſty of my eye? Surely no. The ſenſe is much the ſame with that of our reading, *Who then is able to ſtand before me?*

Hence, Obſerve; *Our inability to ſtand before mighty creatures, ſhould mind us of our utter inability to ſtand before the Almighty God.*

This is the moſt proper uſe that ever was made of a doctrin. The Lord made a promiſe (and it was a very wonderful promiſe which the Lord made) to *Joſhua* (*Joſh.* 1. 5.) *There ſhall not any man be able to ſtand before thee all the days of thy life.* What a promiſe was here to a man! *Joſhua* was indeed one of the worthieſt warriers that ever was upon the earth, and may well be reckoned, not only one of, but the chief or moſt worthy, among the nine Worthies of the world, ſeeing no man could ſtand before him, nor ſhould, in way of oppoſition, all the days of his life. Now if the Lord promiſed ſuch a power unto *Joſhua,* and made it good, that none ſhould be able to ſtand before him all the days of his life; then who among the Children of men ſhall be able to ſtand before God? The Prophet *Malachy* ſpeaking of Chriſts coming (*Chap.* 3. 1.) ſaith, *Behold he ſhall ſuddenly come into his Temple, even the Meſſenger of the Covenant.* But what follows? (*Verſ.* 2.) *Who may abide the day of his coming?* If there was ſuch a terribleneſs in Chriſts coming in the fleſh, as to the ſpiritual power and effects of it, that the Prophet ſaith, *Who may abide the day of his coming?* O then, who ſhall be able to ſtand before Chriſt, when he ſhall come in glory to judg the earth? If they could not abide the day of his coming, when he came with *refiners fire, and fullers ſope,* how will they be able to ſtand before him, when he cometh with *conſuming fire!* No man can ſtand before God, in any of theſe four ways.

Firſt, In his own wiſdom, to plead it out with God. If we plead with God, our wiſdom will be found fooliſhneſs, and we our ſelves ſhall be confounded as fools. *The Lord* (ſaith *Job,* Chap. 12. 17.) *maketh the Judges fools.* Judges are uſually full of wiſdom, yet God maketh even them fools. God in ſtrict ſenſe maketh none, nor would he have any made Judges, but the wiſe; yet he himſelf can make the wiſeſt of them fools. And if ſo, then there is no ſtanding before God in our own wiſdom.

Secondly, There is no ſtanding before God in our own ſtrength or power. Our ſtrength is but weakneſs, yea, rottenneſs to his, as the Prophet ſpeaks (*Iſa.* 5. 24.) *Their root ſhall be rottenneſs, and their bloſſom ſhall go up as the duſt.* Thus it is with all fleſh; if they ſtand in their own ſtrength, their root (which is their ſtrength) ſhall be as rottenneſs, and their bloſſom (which is their beauty) ſhall go up as the duſt.

Thirdly, There is no ſtanding before God in our own righteouſneſs, to be acquitted, accepted, and juſtified. There are many deficiencies and flaws in our righteouſneſs, therefore we cannot ſtand before God in it; there is much unrighteouſneſs in our righteouſneſs, therefore we cannot ſtand before God in it; and how righteous (if I may ſo ſpeak) ſoever our righteouſneſs is, or may be, yet we cannot ſtand before God in it, becauſe he hath appointed another righteouſneſs, or the righteouſneſs of another, even the righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt, for us, to ſtand before him in.

So then, if we would ſtand before God, all theſe muſt be laid down; we muſt lay down our own wiſdom, we muſt become fools, that we may be wiſe; we muſt lay down our own ſtrength, we muſt become weak, that we may be ſtrong; and we muſt lay down our own righteouſneſs, and look upon our ſelves as guilty Creatures, as condemned perſons, as caſt and loſt, in our ſelves: We muſt have nothing, but the wiſdom, and ſtrength, and righteouſneſs of God to ſtand before God in, that is, we muſt ſtand before God by faith: God is not terrible to ſuch, they may ſtand before God; the pooreſt ſinner may ſtand before God in the wiſdom, and ſtrength, and righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt. Thus we may anſwer the queſtion; *Who can ſtand before me?* Saith God: I can ſtand before thee, ſaith a believer; I can ſtand before thee with boldneſs, being quit of ſelf-wiſdom, ſtrength and righteouſneſs, and looking to Chriſt Jeſus for all.

How ſweet, how gracious, and how delightful is the preſence of God to an humble believing Soul, to a broken-hearted ſinner! The Lord ſaith, *I will dwell with ſuch a one*; he ſhall not only come and ſtand before me, but I will come and ſit down with him, I will take up my aboad in an humble Soul, in an empty Soul. *Who is able to ſtand before me?* (ſaith God) None can in their own wiſdom, ſtrength or righteouſneſs, but in Chriſt we may. From hence we may more than conclude,

Fourthly, *That there is no ſtanding before God in our ſins.* God is terrible to ſinners, that is, to thoſe who continue in the love and practice of their ſins: God is of purer eyes, than to behold and approve evil. *David* having ſpoken of thoſe (*Pſal.*1.1.) *that ſtand in the way of ſinners*, ſaith (at *verſ.* 5.) there is no *ſtanding for them in the Judgment.* They that ſtand in the way of ſinners, cannot ſtand at the Judgment ſeat of God. *Job* ſaid (*Chap.*13.16.) *A Hypocrite ſhall not come before him*, that is, he ſhall not come with acceptance before God. Though Hypocrites will thruſt themſelves into the preſence of God, yet they ſhall not come before him; though now an Hypocrite may come before God in any outward performance, yet not with any acceptance: And to be ſure he ſhall not come before God in glory; and if he ſhall not come before him, how can he ſtand before him? The Lord will even blow him away. *Only they that fall down before God are able to ſtand before him.* We muſt fall down before God, in a ſenſe of our own vileneſs and wretchedneſs, and then we ſhall be able to ſtand before him, and to behold his pleaſed face by an eye of faith: A ſtout ſinner ſhall never ſtand before him. It is ſaid (*Zech.*3.1.) *Joſhua ſtood before the Angel of the Lord.* He had much ado to keep his ſtanding; why? Becauſe the Devil ſtood there to reſiſt him, and pointed to his filthy garments: But the Angel pleaded with the Lord, to take away his filthy garments; and when they were taken away, then he was able to ſtand before God. It is ſaid (*Zech.* 4. 14. which is conceived to be meant of *Joſhua* and *Zerubbabel*) *Theſe are the two anointed ones, which ſtand before the Lord of the whole Earth.* And as they in the type, ſo all that are Olive-branches, that have the pure oil of the Spirit, may and ſhall ſtand before God. We become Olive-branches in Chriſt, having the oil, or the graces of the Spirit, ſent down into our hearts, according to the promiſe. Holy and humble Souls, Olive-branches, they that are full of the grace and Spirit of our Lord Jeſus, ſhall ſtand before God; but as for man himſelf, that is, man in himſelf, in his own wiſdom, ſtrength or righteouſneſs, above all, in his ſins and unrighteouſneſs, can never ſtand before God. If he cannot ſtand before Leviathan? How can he ſtand before the Lord? This is a great Goſpel truth given in by himſelf, while he is treating of the Sea-monſter. There is no ſtanding before God in our ſelves; there is no ſtanding before God without a Mediator: and there is no Mediator but Jeſus Chriſt, who is both God and Man, or God-man, for man to ſtand before God in.

Thus much of the firſt uſe or inference, which the Lord makes from all that he had ſaid of Leviathan. The ſecond inference followeth in the next verſe.

Verſe 11. **Who hath prevented me that I ſhould repay him?**

As in the former *verſe* the Lord gave us inſtruction concerning his own all-ſufficiency and irreſiſtible power, *Who can ſtand before me?* So in this, he inſtructs us concerning his own abſolute independency, *Who hath prevented me that I ſhould repay him?* Both which parts of the Application, the Lord ſhuts up with an Aſſertion of his univerſal ſoveraignty and Lordſhip over all Creatures, in the cloſe of this eleventh verſe, *Whatſoever is under the whole Heaven is mine.*

Who hath prevented me that I ſhould repay him?

Maſter *Broughton* renders, *Who gave me any thing firſt, that I may pay him again.* Theſe words the Apoſtle *Paul* plainly alludes to (ſome conceives he quotes them) in the 35. verſe of the 11. Chapter of his Epiſtle to the *Romans, Who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been his counſeller? Or who hath firſt given to him? And it ſhall be recompenſed unto him again.* So ſaith Saint *Paul*; and here the Lord himſelf ſaith, *Who hath prevented me that I ſhould repay him?* As much as to ſay, *Who hath firſt given to me? And it ſhall be recompenſed unto him again.*

הקדימני מי
Quis præceſſit me?

Who hath prevented me?] The Lord ſeems in theſe words, to make proclamation all the World over, to enquire among Angels and Men, who it is, or whether there be any one that can come forth and ſay, he hath *prevented him.*

Quis oſtendit mihi viam in cretione totius mundi? Vatabl.

To prevent, is to be aforehand with another in courteſie or kindneſs, in help or aſſiſtance. God prevents man in all theſe, but no man hath prevented God in any one of them. We may give a three-fold interpretation of this divine challenge.

Firſt, *Who hath prevented me, or who was afore-hand with me* in the work of Creation? Who helpt me to make *Leviathan*? You ſee what a piece of work he is, how vaſt, how dreadful a Creature he is: Who helped me? Or who gave me any help in the forming, or Creating of him? Several expound this queſtion of the Lords independency in the work of Creation; none began to him, none directed him how to Create, none counſelled him what to Create. The Apoſtle uſeth that word, *Who hath been his counſeller?* No man hath been the Lords counſeller, nor did he need any counſel, in or about any of his works. And as none were his counſellers to give him advice, ſo none were his helpers to give him any aſſiſtance, to bring the work about; no hand hath been put to it, but his own; no hand was at it, nor in it, but his own. *I am he* (ſaith the Lord, *Iſa.*54.24.) *that maketh all things, that ſtretcheth forth the Heavens alone, that ſpreadeth abroad the Earth by my ſelf*; I have done all alone, all by my ſelf, the Angels did not help me. As God made the Angels without help, ſo he uſed not the help of Angels in making any thing elſe.

Secondly, Who hath *prevented me*, in governing and diſpoſing the affairs of the World? I have had no counſel hitherto for that: And ſhall any now take upon them to teach me the art of government.

Thirdly, In general, *Who hath prevented me*? That is, *who hath done me any good office*? Who contributed the leaſt benefit to me? To whom am I beholden for the leaſt mite?

That I ſhould repay him.] That is, that I ſhould be engaged to repay him. The word which we render *to repay*, ſignifies properly *to make peace*; becauſe when debts are paid, and what is due diſcharged, then all is quiet, there is no matter of difference remaining. As if the Lord had ſaid, *If any one can produce any bill, or bond, or make proof, that I ſtand indebted to him*, I am ready to ſatisfie him, and to diſcharge all my obligations. *Who hath prevented me that I ſhould repay him?*

ואשלם à *verbo* שלם

Hence Note, Firſt, *God will not be in any mans debt.*

If any can make it good, that they have prevented him, that they have given him counſel or aſſiſtance in his works of Creation and providence, or that they have done him the leaſt courteſie, they ſhall receive to the full worth and value of it. What we do in way of duty to the Lord, he is ready to reward us for it; we ſhall not loſe our labour, though God be no gainer by it: And though it be through his grace, ſtrength and aſſiſtance, that we do any good, yet we ſhall be rewarded as if we had done it alone. Surely, then God would not be in our debt, if we could do any thing alone, or that did in it ſelf oblige him.

Secondly, Note, *God is afore-hand with us, not we with him.*

The Lord prevents us, we do not prevent him: That's it which the Lord would then have *Job*, and now us to underſtand, by this queſtion, *Who hath prevented me?* Even that himſelf hath prevented us all, and in all, by his grace and goodneſs, in any good we have received or done. *David* waited for this preventing grace (*Pſal.* 59. 10.) *The God of my mercy ſhall prevent me, he ſhall let me ſee my deſire upon mine enemies*; he ſhall prevent, not only my endeavours, but even my deſires and wiſhes. Yet what in this *Pſalm* he profeſſed an aſſurance of, in another *Pſalm* (to ſhew that our aſſurance of mercy muſt not give a ſtop to duty) he puts into a prayer (*Pſal.* 79. 8.) *O remember not againſt us former iniquities, let thy tender mercies ſpeedily prevent us, for we are brought very low.* The Lord hath preventing mercies for his people, in their low eſtate. Though we do not prevent the Lord, though we are not afore-hand with him by our preparations and prayers, by our repentings and reformings in our low eſtate, yet he hath mercies ready and prepared for us; yea, though we *come forth to meet the Lord* (as we are adviſed, *Amos* 4. 12.) humbling our ſelves before him, in prayers and tears, yet this doth not prevent the Lord, but he prevents us by his grace and favour, helping us to mourn and pray. And as the Lord always prevents us by helping us to pray, ſo he ſometimes prevents us with an anſwer to our prayers, before he helps us to pray (*Iſa.* 65. 24.) *It ſhall come to paſs, that before they call I will anſwer, and while they are yet ſpeaking, I will hear*; that is, they ſhall have an anſwer to their prayers, before they have made their prayers: So that, when we have made many prayers, and have been long in prayer, much faſting and humbling our ſelves, yet mercy prevents us. Mercy comes uſually, before we are well fitted for mercy, always before we have merited or deſerved it.

But ſaith not *David* (*Pſal.* 88. 13.) *Unto thee have I cryed, O Lord, and in the morning ſhall my prayer prevent thee.* Here *David* ſeemed to be afore-hand with God. *Who hath prevented me?* Saith God; yet *David* ſaid, *My prayer ſhall prevent thee.* The meaning is only this, That *David* would pray very early and very earneſtly, or that *David* would watch unto prayer, and ſo if poſſible, even prevent God; not that his prayers did indeed prevent God, but he was reſolved to ſet ſo hard to, and ſit ſo cloſe at the duty of prayer, that if ſuch a thing could be, he would even prevent him, he would, as we may ſay, take God before he was awake, as the *Pſalmiſt* ſpake elſewhere, *Ariſe, O God, why ſleepeſt thou?* Their prayer may be ſaid to prevent God, who pray early and earneſtly, according to that of *David* (*Pſal.* 5. 3.) *My voice ſhalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord, in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up.* And again (*Pſal.* 119. 140.) *Mine eyes prevent the night watches.* He was at it very early, he ſought the Lord very diligently. That's all we are to underſtand by ſuch expreſſions; for the Lord is then afore-hand with us in mercies, when we are moſt early and moſt inſtant in our duties. The Lord, who is *the beginning and the end*, and who knows the end of all things from the beginning, often gives us our end, or what we aimed at in prayer, before we begin.

Thirdly, Note, *God is ſelf-ſufficient, he can do his whole work alone.*

Take it in the inſtance of the Text, he needs no help to create Leviathan, nor needs he the help of any Creature to deſtroy Leviathan; what he made without help, he can (as I may ſay) unmake without help. The Lord, who is all-ſufficient to do any work, or bring what he pleaſeth to paſs for us, is alſo ſelf-ſufficient, or able to do any work, or what he pleaſeth, for himſelf, that is, to pleaſe himſelf. It is a great honour to God that he can command what he will, and whom he will, to help him in any of his works; but it is a far greater honour to the great God, that he needs not any help to do or bring about any of his works. When the Apoſtle had ſaid, *Who hath given to him? And it ſhall be recompenced unto him again:* (*Rom.* 11. 35.) He preſently gives this reaſon (which is the point in hand) (*verſ.* 36.) *For of him are all things*; that is, he is the ſole efficient of all things, all things are from him, as from the firſt principle or mover; and he orders all things (as it followeth in the ſame verſe) *through him are all things.* As of *him are all things* in their conſtitution, ſo through him are all things *in their diſpenſation.* We have the work of Creation in the firſt part of the verſe, *Of him are all things*, and the work of providence in the latter, *Through him are all things*; that is, he diſpenſeth end diſpoſeth all things. And thus ſpake the ſame Apoſtle to the great Philoſophers at *Athens* (*Acts* 17. 28.) *In him we live, and move, and have our being.* As if it had been ſaid, *Of him are all things, and through him are all things*; and therefore, *to him are all things.* All Creatures turn about, as in a circle, to their Creator; all things end in him, or he is the end of all, as all things began in him, and by him.

Deus eſt omni modo omnium rerum cauſa. 1. Cauſa efficiens ἐξ αὐτοῦ 2. Cauſa adminiſtrans δι' αὐτοῦ. 3. Cauſa finalis εἰς αὐτὸν, ad quem omnia quaſi in circulum redeunt.

This truth is a ſpring of comfort and conſolation to all the faithful; or, from this general head many ſtreams flow, which may both inſtruct and comfort the City of God. From hence we may learn, or be inſtructed,

Firſt, *Creatures, one or other, men or Angels, cannot merit any thing at the hand of God.* Man gives God nothing, but what he firſt receives from him; for, *who hath prevented him?* Therefore there's no merit, preventing-mercy excludes and ſhuts it out of doors.

Secondly, Which followeth upon that, *God is debtor to no Creature*; he oweth us nothing, we owe him all. *Who hath prevented me?* ſaith God. If we have any thing, we have it from him, but he hath nothing from us; therefore we are in his books, he is not at all in ours. All that God is indebted to us, is by his promiſes, which proceed freely from himſelf; we receive no good upon the worthineſs of what we have done, but becauſe he hath aſſured us we ſhall receive good if we do good, ſo and ſo, or are ſuch and ſuch. God gives us much, but retributes us nothing; all his rewards are free gifts, or pure alms.

Deus factus eſt debitor non aliquid à nobis accipiendo, ſed quod ei placuit promittendo. Aug. *de verb. Dom. Ser.* 16. *ἀνταπόδοσις, Nihil aliud eſt quam δόσις, Deus enim proprie non retribuit ſed tribuit.*

Thirdly, *God can do no Creature any wrong.* Man hath no right to any thing he hath inherent in, or, ariſing from himſelf; nor hath man obliged God at all to give him any thing, Therefore he can do man no wrong, how little ſoever he gives him, or how much ſoever he takes from him. So that, if any man ſhall ſay, he will not contend with me by right, but by might, and ſhall complain that ſomething is taken from him which he would not, or not given him which he would; what right hath any man to plead with God upon, who hath no right to any thing, but by the gift of God?

Fourthly, *Then the grace of God to man, is altogether free.* Many expound this Scripture, as denying the foreſight of mans works, or worthineſs of his faith, or perſeverance in grace, as to the grace of Election. God did not elect us, becauſe he fore-ſaw any worthineſs in us, nor will he ſave us upon the deſert of any thing done by us. The foundation-ſtone of Election, and the top-ſtone of Salvation, are laid in free grace.

Fifthly, *We have no reaſon to be diſcouraged, what deficiency ſoever we ſee in the Creature, as to any thing we deſire God ſhould do for us, foraſmuch as none have prevented God, either with counſel or aſſiſtance in any of thoſe great things which he hath already done, either for our ſelves or others.* What cannot he do for us alone, who made Heaven and Earth alone! The Lord can begin and finiſh, how and when he pleaſeth: *He is a Rock, and his work is perfect.* As in ſpirituals, *he is the Author and finiſher of our faith*, (*Heb.* 12. 2.) ſo in temporals, he is the Author and finiſher of all our comforts, deliverances and ſalvations. When we have no help at all in our ſelves, nor in any Creature, there is enough to be had in God (*Hoſea* 14. 3.) *With thee the fatherleſs find mercy*; that is, they find mercy with thee (and if mercy, then help) who are as helpleſs as a fatherleſs Child, they eſpecially who look upon themſelves as fatherleſs, what help and ſtrength, what fathers or friends ſoever they have in this world, if God be not their help and ſtrength, their friend and father. When we are convinced that only God can help us, when we have other helps, then God alone

Nemo ut divina illum ſubſequatur gratia prius aliquid contulit Deo; ſi ergo & electi præveniente ſe gratia ſequuntur & reprobi juxta quod merentur accipiunt, & de miſericordia inveniunt electi quod laudent, & de juſtitia non habent reprobi quod accuſent. Bene igitur dicitur quis ante dedit. Greg.

alone will help us, though we have no other helpers; as he promiſed *Judah* (*Hoſea* 1. 7.) *I will have mercy upon the Houſe of* Judah, *and will ſave them by the Lord their God, and will not ſave them by Bow, nor by Sword, nor by Battel, by Horſes nor by Horſe-men.* As if the Lord had ſaid, *I will do all for* Judah *my ſelf alone, though I could have others to do it by.* It is ſeldom that God hath (as School-men ſpeak) an immediate attingence upon any effect (he commonly uſeth inſtruments) yet he ſometimes hath, and hath as often as himſelf pleaſeth. As our mercies are always of grace only, ſo ſometimes they are wrought out by the power of God only: And what power ſoever is ſeen working at them, 'tis his power that doth the work; his wheel is in every wheel.

Sixthly, *What cauſe have we to magnifie the free grace and mighty power of God.* He is able to do for us, though all oppoſe him; and he is willing to do for us, though none, nor we our ſelves prevent him. Such is the power of God, that he can over-come all oppoſition in others, againſt what he hath a mind to do for us; and ſuch is the freeneſs of his grace, that it over-paſſeth, or rather paſſeth by all thoſe indiſpoſitions in us, which might cauſe him to forbear doing, or have no mind to do, any thing for us.

Seventhly, If none have prevented the Lord, if all the good we have, and all that we ſhall have, floweth freely to us, then we ſhould be very thankful to God for every good we have received, and very full of purpoſes to praiſe him for whatever we ſhall further receive. This inference the Apoſtle makes in the laſt words of (*Rom.* 11.) *Of him, and through him, and to him, are all things, to whom be glory for ever, Amen.* Let us never be found *ſacrificing to our own net, nor burning incenſe to our own drag,* as if *by them our portion* (in ſpirituals or temporals) *were fat, and our meat plenteous.* Let us put praiſe far from our ſelves, and ſay with the *Pſalmiſt, Not unto us, not unto us,* but to thy name, O Lord, be praiſe and glory.

Laſtly, Let us be very humble. The Lord puts this queſtion to *Job* to humble him; and it was ſhewed in the beginning of the Chapter, that the deſign of God in preſenting this vaſt Creature Leviathan to the view or conſideration of *Job*, was to humble him: For ſeeing the Lord hath made all things and can do all things of himſelf, and doth them for himſelf, let us lie in the duſt before him, let us take heed of pride, high thoughts, and boaſting words, in any thing we have, and are; let us ſay (as the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 3. 27.) *Where is boaſting?* Where is pride? He anſwers, *It is excluded.* But by what Law? Why cannot boaſting come in? Is it kept out by the Law of works, by any thing that we have done? No, boaſting would never be ſhut out, if we could do any thing of our ſelves; therefore, ſaith he, this comes to paſs *by the Law of faith,* by caſting our ſelves wholly upon God, both as to our juſtification and ſalvation. That God doth all things of himſelf, ſhould render us nothing in our ſelves. *Who hath prevented me that I ſhould repay him?*

The Lord having made theſe uſes of what he had ſaid concerning Leviathan, proceeds to a general aſſertion (as was ſaid) in the cloſe of this eleventh verſe.

Whatſoever is under the whole Heaven is mine.

Poſſum illi amplam mercedem ſi velim reddere, cum omnia quæ ſub cœlo uſpiam gentium ſunt; mea ſint, meum eſt aurum.

These words are interpreted by ſeveral of the *Jewiſh* writers, in connexion with what went before, thus: *Who hath prevented me, and I will repay him?* As if the Lord had ſaid, *Do not think that I have not enough by me to repay you, for your counſel and aſſiſtance, if you dare ſay, I have had any from you*; for, *Whatſoever is under the whole Heaven is mine.* That's a good ſenſe, ſhewing the Lords ſufficiency to make good his offer. Some make great promiſes of what they will do, when they have not wherewithal to do it. Yet rather,

Secondly, We may expound this aſſertion, as carrying on the former Argument, or further to prove that no man can prevent the Lord, ſeeing all is his already. *Whatſoever is under the whole Heaven is mine* (ſaith he) The Creatures are all mine, I challenge all, I lay claim to all; whether therefore I give to one, or take from another, no man hath reaſon to queſtion me, or to ask of me a reaſon, why I did or do ſo; for, all is mine own. And when the Lord ſaith, *Whatſoever is under the whole Heaven is mine,* his meaning is, not only that all under Heaven, but that Heaven it ſelf, and all that is in Heaven, is his alſo. The Lords Eſtate or Right, is not confined to the things which are under the Heaven. So that, when he ſaith, *Whatſoever is under the whole Heaven is mine,* he ſaith in effect all is mine. Thus *Moſes* expoundeth this aſſertion (*Deut.* 10. 14.) *Behold, the Heaven, and the Heaven of Heavens is the Lords thy God, the Earth alſo, with all that therein is.* The reaſon why the Lord ſpeaks here only of this eſtate under Heaven, is becauſe he was diſcourſing with *Job* of this inferiour World, and the furniture of it; and it was enough for him to underſtand, as to the preſent debate, that all under Heaven was the Lords: But in truth, not only is the Earth, the Sea, the Air, with all their fulneſs and furniture, the Lords, but the Heaven, and the Heaven of Heavens, is the Lords, with all their beauty and glory.

Hence Note, *The Lord is the great proprietor of all things in this World.*

Whatſoever is under the whole Heaven is the Lords, or all is the Lords. Firſt, by Creation, he hath given all things their being. Secondly, all is the Lords by preſervation, he keepeth all things in their being; *Jeſus Chriſt upholds all things by the word of his power* (*Heb.* 1. 3.) that is, by his powerful word. The ſame commanding word which gave all things their being in the beginning, hath hitherto preſerved their being, and will to the end. And not only ſo, but, Thirdly, all things are his in poſſeſſion, the Lord hath all in his hand: In whoſe hand ſoever the things of the World are, they are all in the Lords hand. As *Abraham* ſaid, in his Treaty with the King of *Sodom* (*Gen.* 14. 22.) *I have lift up my hands to the moſt high God, the poſſeſſor of Heaven and of Earth* (Pſal. 24. 1.) *The Earth is the Lords, and the fulneſs thereof, the World, and they that dwell therein*; that is, they are all at his diſpoſe. And again, *The World is mine, and the fulneſs thereof,* ſaith the Lord himſelf (*Pſal.* 50. 12.) and therefore, *if I were hungry,* that is, if I needed any thing, *I would not tell thee,* that is, complain to thee, or go a begging to thee, who art but a beggar; I can help my ſelf, and take what and where I will. There is a fourth title, by which all things under Heaven are the Lords, even by *Redemption.* The Lord hath reſtored the whole World to a kind of new life, by the death of his Son; *Jeſus Chriſt is the Saviour of all men, eſpecially of them which believe* (1 *Tim.* 4. 10.) All have ſome benefit by Redemption; and ſo, whatſoever is under the whole Heaven, the whole Syſtem of Heaven and Earth, is the Lords by Redemption; though the ſpecialty of Redemption be theirs only, and intended to them only who believe; who as they have a peculiar portion (a *Benjamins* Meſs) in the grace of Redemption, ſo the Lord calleth them his peculiars (*Exod.* 19. 5.) *Ye ſhall be a peculiar treaſure unto me, above all people, for all the Earth is mine.* And they are called the Lords portion (*Deut.* 32. 9.) *The Lords portion is his people,* Jacob *is the lot of his inheritance.*

Thus, as all under the whole Heaven is the Lords, ſo all is his by a fourfold title, by the titles of Creation and Suſtentation, and Poſſeſſion and Redemption. All things viſible and inviſible have been Created, are ſuſtained and poſſeſſed by him as their great Lord; and all things viſible have been redeemed by him from preſent periſhing, and a world of them in this World, that they ſhould *never periſh, but have everlaſting life,* John 3. 16.

From this general aſſertion, *That whatſoever is under the whole Heaven is the Lords,* take theſe following Inferences.

Firſt, Then *the Devil is a lyar,* a great lyar; for (*Matth.* 4) in his laſt aſſault againſt Chriſt, he boaſted that he would give him *all the Kingdoms of the Earth, and the glory of them,* whereas the truth is, he hath not a ſhooe-latchet at his diſpoſe: While the Devil ſaith, all is mine, the truth is, nothing is his but a lye, of that he is the father. As he hath not given a being to the leaſt worm; ſo he cannot diſpoſe of the leaſt worm, he is not worth a ſtraw, for all is the Lords.

Secondly, Hence we learn, *That there is a lying Spirit in moſt of the Children of men, even in all them who look upon any thing they have as their own.* There is a ſenſe in which we have a right to and a propriety in what we have, and may call it *ours*; but that Spirit which moves in moſt of the Children of men, is a lying Spirit, when they ſay, this and that is *their own.* *David* (*Pſal.* 12. 4.) brings in the wicked, ſaying, *With our tongue will we prevail, our lips are our own, who is Lord over us?* What, have not we, who have ſo many Lordſhips, the Lordſhip of our ſelves, the Lordſhip of that little piece of our ſelves, our lips? But were not their lips their own? Not, in the ſenſe they ſpake it, as if they were accountable to none for them; for their next word was, *Who is Lord over us?* Thus moſt do, they look upon their lips, and all the members of their Body as their own; but what ſaith the Apoſtle (1*Cor*.6.20.) *Glorifie God in your Body, and in your Spirit, which are Gods.* And (*verſ*.19.) *Ye are not your own.* Your Body is not your own, but it is the Lords; then much leſs are the things that you have your own; your Land is not your own, nor your Cattel your own, the Beaſts of the Earth are not your own, nor the Fiſhes of the Sea your own; nor is a hair of your head your own, nor a pin upon your ſleeve: They are all the Lords. Is it not then a lying Spirit which poſſeſſeth every man among the Children of men, who look upon themſelves, and what they have, as their own? Their Houſes and Lands are their own, their Gold and Silver are their own; who is Lord over them or theirs? O let ſuch remember, that themſelves, their Houſes and Lands, their Gold and Silver are the Lords, and that the Lord ſaith expreſly, *The Silver is mine, and the Gold is mine* (*Hag*.2.8.)

Thirdly, If all be the Lords, then the Lord is able to ſupply the wants of all who wait upon him, and to ſupply them plentifully. The Lord ſupplieth the wants of all Creatures. The Lord keepeth a great Houſe, he feedeth all that he hath made, he provideth food for Leviathan, *he ſatisfieth every living thing* (Pſal. 145.16.) and (*Pſal*.115.16.) *The Heaven, even the Heavens are the Lords, but the Earth hath he given to the Children of men*, that is, whatſoever of the Earth the Children of men, that is, men in common, or mankind, have, the Lord hath given it to them; and ſeeing his own Children have need of it, ſurely he will not deny it them. The Lord (I ſay) hath given *the Earth to the Children of men*; and if the Lord hath beſtowed the Earth on men, as men, then much more hath he the Earth to beſtow upon his own Children. Chriſt in his Sermon upon the Mount (*Matth*.6.32.) aſſureth them of it, *Your Heavenly father knoweth that ye have need of theſe things.* Food and clothing is in your fathers hand, your father is rich, he is rich indeed, and therefore he can ſupply your wants. If Children do but remember, that their Father hath ſuch and ſuch Lands and Houſes, they think they ſhall be well provided for; how much more may a godly man ſay, my Father hath a great deal of Land, the whole Earth is his, and therefore I ſhall be provided for? The Apoſtle improves this poſition twice (1*Cor*.10.) Firſt, to make uſe of our liberty, *in eating whatſoever is ſold in the ſhambles, asking no queſtion for Conſcience ſake*; *for* (ſaith he) *the Earth is the Lords, and the fulneſs thereof* (verſ.26.) He makes uſe of it, Secondly, to perſwade us not to abuſe our liberty (*verſ*. 28.) *But if any man ſay unto you, this is offered in ſacrifice unto Idols, eat not for his ſake that ſhewed it* (do not offend him) *and for Conſcience ſake* (do not offend thy ſelf) *The Earth is the Lords and the fulneſs thereof.* As if he had ſaid, why ſhouldſt thou trouble thy ſelf or others, by eating ſuch meat? Seeing there is enough to be had without running ſuch a hazard, and thou mayſt take thy choice all the World over, *for the Earth is the Lords.*

Fourthly, This grand Aſſertion carrieth in it great encouragement, to be much in the Lords work: Why? Becauſe he is able to give us a good reward. We ſhall not need to fear any loſs of labour in doing what we do for him, he can recompence us fully, for all is his under the whole Heaven; he is able to pay us well for any ſervice we do him. *Saul* wondered why the *Benjamites* followed *David* (what's the matter? ſaid he 1*Sam*.22.7.) *Hear ye* Benjamites, *will the Son of* Jeſſe *give every one of you fields and vineyards, and make you Captains of thouſands, and Captains of hundreds?* Can the Son of *Jeſſe* do theſe things for you? It is a wonder that any ſhould ſerve him, that hath nothing to beſtow upon them; but who can wonder that the people of God ſhould ſerve him, and ſtick cloſe to his ſervice, while they do but remember that he hath Fields and Vineyards, the Silver and the God, together with all the great offices and preferments, that he hath in his hand. This was the Motive which the Apoſtle uſed to edge his exhortation (1*Cor*.15.5,8.) *Be ye ſtedfaſt and immoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as ye know, that your labour ſhall not be in vain in the Lord.* He ſaith as much (1*Tim*.4.8.) *Godlineſs is profitable unto all things, having the promiſe of the life that now is and of that which is to come.* Godlineſs hath the promiſe of a comfortable portion in this life; as well as of a full one in the life to come.

Fifthly, *Fear not to loſe for Chriſt.* Do not fear to loſe any thing under Heaven for Chriſt, for whatſoever is under the whole Heaven is Chriſts; he is able to make up all again. We need not wonder at that promiſe which is made by Chriſt, *He that ſuffers loſs of any thing for my name ſake, ſhall receive a hundred-fold, now in this time* (*Mark*.10.36.) Not only doth the Lord promiſe a hundred-fold, in ſweet inward contentments in this time, to them who loſe for him; but he is able to ſupply a hundred-fold, even in this life, of the things of this life: And as he is able, ſo he will ſurely fulfil it, according to that promiſe, when he ſees it fit to give, or us fit to receive ſuch enjoyments. O, ſaith one, I may loſe my Lands, and my Trade, ſaith another, and I my liberty ſaith a third. As many fear and fly from ſuffering, becauſe of the puniſhment of ſenſe, ſo not a few, becauſe of the puniſhment of loſs; they are in danger of loſing all, and they are not willing to loſe any thing for Chriſt. Now, I may anſwer all, who upon that account, fear of loſs, refuſe to ſuffer for Chriſt, as the Prophet did that King of *Judah* (2 *Chron*. 25.9.) who, when he had word brought him from the Lord, that he muſt let go the Army of *Iſrael*, that he had hired againſt the *Edomites*, preſently objected, *But what ſhall I do for the hundred talents of Silver, that I have given to the Army*? The man of God anſwered, *The Lord is able to give thee much more then this*: Do thou obey the Lords command, and do not trouble thy ſelf about the hundred talents, the Lord is able to give thee more than this. This hath been the queſtion of many when called to ſuffer, *What ſhall we do for the hundred talents?* What ſhall we do for our worldly ſubſtance, and ſubſiſtence? What ſhall we do for a lively-hood? I may ſay as the Prophet then did, the Lord is able to give you abundantly more than what you loſe for him.

Sixthly, As we ſhould not fear to loſe for the Lord's ſake, ſo *let us not forbear to give for the Lords ſake.* Some are afraid to give for the Lords ſake, to ſupply the neceſſities of their Brethren; but remember what you give to the poor, you lend to the Lord, and to ſuch a Lord as hath all things under the whole Heaven for his. If we give the Lord is able to repay us. The Apoſtle makes uſe of this very argument (*Phil*.4.18,19.) *I have all, and abound, I am full, having received of* Epaphroditus, *the things which were ſent from you, an odour of a ſweet ſmell, a ſacrifice acceptable, well pleaſing to God.* What follows? *But my God ſhall ſupply all your needs, according to his riches in glory by Chriſt Jeſus.* Do not think you ſhall want, becauſe of the ſupply you give to my wants; no, my God ſhall ſupply your wants or needs, according *to his riches in glory*, that is, according to his rich and glorious grace. There is no need to be ſupplied in the glory of the next life; but there is a glory in rich grace which readily and plentifully ſupplieth all our needs in this life.

Seventhly, *If all under the whole Heaven be the Lords? Then all places are the Lords.* This is comfortable to thoſe, who are at any time Gods *out-caſts*; he can ſay to any place, as he did to *Moab* (*Iſa*. 16.4.) *Let mine out-caſts dwell with thee*, &c. All Countries are the Lords, he can make room for his in any part of the World, for all the World is his. The Lord provided a place for the Church (*Rev*.12.6, 14.) when ſhe was caſt out, *The Church fled into the Wilderneſs, where ſhe had a place prepared of God.* The Wilderneſs was her troubleſom condition, but the Lord provided a place for her then and there. The Lord can command a place for his any where; if not in one Country, yet in another, becauſe all the Countries and Kingdoms under Heaven are his demean; he is Lord over all, bleſſed for evermore. Whatſoever is under the whole Heaven is his, both in his poſſeſſion, and at his diſpoſition.

Eighthly, If all that is under the whole Heaven be the Lords? Then *go to God for all* (*Phil*.4.5.) *Let your moderation be known unto all men, the Lord is at hand*; he is at hand *as a Judg* to right you, and he is at hand *as a Father* to provide for you; therefore be careful in nothing, but let your requeſt be made known unto God by prayer and ſupplication.

If you would have any thing of the Earth, you muſt go to God for it, as well as for Heaven it ſelf.

Ninthly, If all things under the whole Heaven be the Lords? Then *whatever good things you have under the whole Heaven, acknowledg the Lord as the Donor and giver of them all* (*1 Chron.24.14.*) When *David*, together with the Princes and People of *Iſrael*, had offered ſo freely towards the building of the Temple, he ſaid, *Lord, who am I, and what is my people? That we ſhould be able to offer ſo willingly after this ſort, for all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee.* He acknowledged the Lord as the giver of all, that himſelf and his people had given to the Lord.

Tenthly, Is all the Lords? Then, *uſe all as the Lords, and not as your own.* Remember you are but Stewards; God hath a title *paramount* to all you have: Do not uſe what is yours as your own, but as the Lords; you are but Stewards of the things you have in this World. The Lord rebuked *Iſrael* (*Hoſ.2 8,9.*) for uſing their riches, their corn and wine, otherwiſe than he had appointed; they did not uſe them as Stewards they uſed all as Lords, not as the Lords: They thought it was their Gold, and their Silver, and their Wine, and their Oil, their Wool, their Flax, and they beſtowed all upon an Idol, and prepared all for *Baal.* See what the Lord ſaith in the next verſe, *Therefore will I return and take away my Corn in the time thereof, and my Wine in the ſeaſon thereof, and will recover my Wool and my Flax.* All theſe are mine, and you uſe them as your own, and beſtow them upon *Baal.* Thus men beſtow their Gold and Silver upon their luſts, upon their pride and intemperance, upon their revenge and uncleanneſs, yea, to adorn their Idols; take heed of applying your poſſeſſions to wrong uſes. God is the Lord of all, and he will have an account of Lords, as they have of their Stewards, what they have done with all, for they are but Stewards.

In the Eleventh place, *Then the Lord may give and take off all that is under Heaven, when he pleaſeth, and how he pleaſeth, to whom he pleaſeth, and from whom he pleaſeth.* May not he do what he will with his own? (*Matth.20.25.*) If he gives to one, he giveth but his own; and if he takes from another, he taketh but his own; if he gives another much, and you but a little, you muſt be quiet and ſubmit, he giveth but his own. If he give much of this Worlds good to evil men? If he adorn and beautifie them with all outward bleſſings, who hath any thing to ſay againſt it? what though men, meaſuring things by their own reaſon, ſee no reaſon, yet let them know what he beſtoweth, is of his own, not of any mans poſſeſſion; and if he beſtow great things upon the unworthy, he doth no wrong to thoſe that are worthy, much leſs to thoſe who are as unworthy as they: The benefits he beſtows upon any are no wrong to others. Upon this ground the Lord commanded the Nations quietly to ſubmit to *Nebuchadnezzar* King of *Babilon* (*Jer.27.4,5,6.*) *Thus ſhall ye ſay to your Maſters* (The word is given by *Jeremiah* from the Lord to the Meſſengers of ſeveral Princes) *I have made the Earth, the man, and the Beaſt that are upon the ground, by my out-ſtretched arm, and by my great power, and have given it unto whomſoever it ſeems meet unto me. And now I have given all theſe lands into the hand of* Nebuchadnezzar, *&c. And the Beaſts of the Field have I alſo given to ſerve him: And all Nations ſhall ſerve him,* &c. Thus if the Lord gives, he giveth his own, and if he takes all away from any, it is but his own; thus *Job* quieted his Spirit at firſt, *The Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken, bleſſed be the name of the Lord.*

In the Twelfth place, If all be the Lords under the whole Heaven, then, *be ſure you pay your Land-lord your oent.* Shall we live in the Lords Houſe, and uſe the Lords Land, and not pay him his rent? Let us pay the Lord his rent, for we are all Tenants and Tenants at Will. Pay him his rent; you will ſay, what is that? It is the rent of praiſe and obedience; the Lord hath a ſervice due to him for all.

In the Thirteenth place, *Let all the godly rejoyce.* All that is under the whole Heaven is Gods, it is in the hand of their friend and father; all their enemies are in the hand of the Lord, their tongues are the Lords, and their power is the Lords, and all they have is in the hand of the Lord; and therefore no wonder if *David* concluded (*Pſal.144.15.*) *Happy are the people that are in ſuch a caſe, yea, happy is that people whoſe God is the Lord,* for they have him, who is Lord of all, of all under the whole Heaven.

Laſtly, If all be the Lords under the whole Heaven, then, *let us above all things labour to aſſure an intereſt in the Lord.* To be able to ſay the Lord is our God, is the ſureſt way to a worldly eſtate; if we have him who hath all, we have all; as one ſaid, *If God be mine, then all is mine.* 'Tis the happineſs of all the people of God, that God is theirs; *This God is our God, we have waited for him. The Lord, who is our God, is the God of ſalvation.* Believers appropriate God to themſelves; they do not ſtand talking of Gold and of Silver, of Houſes and Lands, but, ſay they, *God is our God.* Keep cloſe to God in Chriſt, and he will keep you. You cannot but have enough, when you have God, who hath all things under Heaven, yea, and all things in Heaven.

VERS. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17.

I will not conceal his parts, nor his power, nor his comely proportion.

Who can diſcover the face of his Garment? Or who can come to him with his double bridle?

Who can open the doors of his face? His teeth are terrible round about.

His ſcales are his pride, ſhut up together as with a cloſe ſeal.

One is ſo near to another, that no air can come between them.

They are joined one to another, they ſtick together that they cannot be ſundred.

THE Lord having ſpoken both of the quantity or greatneſs, and the quality or ſtoutneſs of Leviathan; having alſo, made application of both, in the former part of the Chapter, he now proceeds to a more particular deſcription of him.

Verſe 22. **I will not conceal his parts, nor his power, nor his comely proportion.**

We have here God ſpeaking, *I* (ſaith the Lord) *will not conceal his parts.* There is a two-fold opinion about the connection or dependance of this verſe.

Some join it with the former, the eleventh verſe, *Who hath prevented me, that I ſhould repay him? Whatſoever is under the whole Heaven is mine.* Now, in caſe any one ſhould ſtand forth with that boldneſs as to tell the Lord, he had prevented him, he had been afore hand with God; well, ſaith the Lord, if any will undertake this, if any man dares affirm, that he hath prevented me, *I will not conceal his parts, nor his power, nor his comely proportion,* I will do him no wrong, I will not ſhadow, nor obſcure his worth; I will ſet him forth in his faireſt colours, or paint him to the life, in all that he is, in all that he can ſay, or do, or ſhew himſelf to be in ſuch a conteſt with me, or in his undertaking me about this matter. And when that's done, I ſhall eaſily, and quickly convince him, or make him both ſee and confeſs, that he is a poor weakling, that he is nothing, or, if any thing, vile, compared with me: For if I do but oppoſe to him the parts, powers, and comlineſs of Leviathan, he will find himſelf over-matched. Thus, I ſay, ſome conceive the Lord referreth to the former words, as promiſing to do him right, that ſhould accept the challenge there made, and ſay, that he had prevented God, or had been aforehand with him.

Si quis me anteverteret, aut ſuperior me eſſe poſſet, ejus laudes utique celebrarem. Merc.

Others give it thus, if any man ſhall venture to anſwer my challenge, *I will not conceal his lies* (ſo the word, by us Tranſlated *parts*, is rendred, Chap.11.3.) nor his boaſting words, nor the rhetorical ornaments, nor the comely proportion of his ſpeech, in pleading and arguing with me; all which will be found upon trial, to be but lies, vain flouriſhes, and meer ſophiſtical fallacies.

Alii, non tacerem mendacia; ita ſumitur, ejus בד *enim cap.* 11.3. Merc.

But I rather take this verſe as a general Preface to that which the Load intended further to ſay, in the deſcription of this mighty Creature, Leviathan. As if he had ſaid; O Job, *that thou mayeſt be yet more fully convinced, how unable thou art to deal with this mighty fiſh; and mayſt therein ſee, yet more clearly, how unable thou art to ſtand before my power, who have given both being and power to this Creature, I* *ſhall go on, to give thee a more lively picture, a more particular narrative, a fuller character of him ; and, as it were, anatomize this Sea-monſter in all his parts, powers, and proportions.*

So then, in this context, and forward to the end of *verſe* 32. we have the fourth part of the deſcription of Leviathan, even, by the diſtinct parts of his Body, together with the wonderful powers, effects, and operations that appear in them ; as acted by that courage, ſtoutneſs, and greatneſs of ſpirit, with which God hath clothed him.

I will not conceal his parts.

Miosis, celebratur ejus membra. Druſ.

The Hebrew is, *I will not be ſilent about his parts.* And when the Lord ſaith, I will not conceal, nor be ſilent, his meaning us, I will fully, largely, and evidently declare *the parts, the power, and the comely proportion of Leviathan*; I will view, as it were, all that is moſt obſervable in, and about him ; I will do it exactly, not ſlightly, or perfunctorily, but like an Oratour declare all his excellencies ; I will not let ſlip, nor omit any thing that is material or conducible to his commendation. So that, when the Lord ſaith, *I will not conceal,* he intends much more than he expreſſeth ; As the Prophet alſo did (*Iſa.* 62. 1.) when he ſaid, *For* Zions *ſake will I not hold my peace* ; meaning, that he would pour out his heart, and make a loud cry, in prayers and ſupplications for *Zions* ſake. That's the import of his words, *I will not hold my peace :* As alſo, of thoſe (*verſ.* 6.) *Ye that make mention of the Lord*, or, *ye that are the Lords remembrancers* (in the concerns of *Zion*) *keep not ſilence.* The meaning is, ſpeak much for *Zion.* A man doth not keep ſilence, nor hold his peace, who ſpeaketh only a word or two. But the *Lords remembrancers* muſt ſpeak to the full, much and often ; they muſt urge him with many arguments, and plead hard, till he bring forth Salvation in *Zion*, I urge this Scripture, as parallel to the Text in hand, where the Lord ſaith, *I will not conceal*, when his purpoſe was to ſpeak copiouſly and largely.

And here the Lord ſetteth down three things concerning Leviathan, which he will not conceal ;

First, *His parts.*

Secondly, *His power.*

Thirdly, *His comely proportion.* To theſe three heads, all that can be ſaid of Leviathan is reducible.

בדי

I *will not conceal his parts* or *members.* This Creature is made up of ſeveral heterogeneal parts or members. The word rendred *parts* properly ſignifie the *bar* or *bolt* of a door, as alſo *the boughs of a Tree* : There is a great elegancy in that metaphor, becauſe the members of the Body in any Creature, are as ſo many boughs ſhot out from the ſtock of a Tree. *I will not conceal his parts.*

But, what are the parts which the Lord mentions, or would not conceal ?

I anſwer, The word *parts*, in our language and common ſpeech, ſignifieth the inward abilities, and faculties of any man. We ſay, ſuch a one is a man of excellent parts, or he hath good parts, that is, he is a wiſe man, an underſtanding man, a well-ſpoken man. But here in this place, the word *parts* notes only the limbs, members, and organs of the Body, or the ſeveral pieces of the whole compages or frame of the Body. Of theſe parts the Lord ſpeaketh in the following part of the Chapter. And he ſpeaketh,

First, Of his skin (*verſ.* 13.)
Secondly, Of his jaws and teeth (*verſ.* 14.)
Thirdly, Of his ſcales (*verſ.* 15, 16, 17.)
Fourthly, Of his noſtrils, eyes, and mouth (*verſ.* 18, 19, 20, 21.)
Fifthly, Of his neck (*verſ.* 22.)
Sixthly, Of his fleſh all over (*verſ.* 23.)
Seventhly, Of his heart (*verſ.* 24.)

All theſe, if not more particular parts, the Lord mentions in this Chapter ; and therefore he might well ſay, *I will not conceal his parts.*

Nor his power.] *Parts* are one thing, and *power* is another. There may be great bodily parts, where there is but little power. That which maketh parts excellent, is when they are full of power, or when outward parts are accompanied with inward parts, which are the accompliſhments of them. *I will not conceal his power.*

Notum ut דבר *pro re ſumatur.* Druſ.

The Hebrew is, *The word or matter of his power.* Maſter *Broughton* renders, *I will not conceal the ſpeech of ſtrength,* that is, the matter of his ſtrength. The Hebrew word ſignifies, not only a *word*, but *matter,* or *thing* ; I will not conceal the things of his power. Theſe powers are expreſſed afterwards.

First, In his noſtrils ; *By his neeſing a light doth ſhine*, in the former part of *verſ.* 18.

Secondly, In his eyes ; They are *like the eye-lids of the morning*, in the latter part of *verſ.* 18.

Thirdly, In his mouth ; *Out of his mouth go burning lamps, and ſparks of fire leap out* (verſ. 19.) Heat riſeth out of the vital power of any Creature. Leviathans heat is ſo great, that it is called *fire* ; and from thence, *ſmoke goeth out of his noſtrils, as out of a ſeething-pot, or cauldren* (verſ. 20.) yea, *his breath kindleth coals, and a flame goeth out of his mouth* (verſ. 21.) All theſe expreſſions ſhew the mighty heat within him.

Fourthly, In his neck (*verſ.* 22.) *In his neck remaineth ſtrength.* He hath not only a neck, but a ſtrong neck.

Fifthly, In his heart (*verſ.* 24.) *His heart is as firm as a ſtone, yea, as hard as a piece of the nether mill-ſtone.*

Sixthly, Such is his power, that he is terrible to others (*verſ.* 25.) *When he raiſeth up himſelf, the mighty are afraid.* Yea,

Seventhly, Such is his power, That nothing can annoy him, *the Sword of him that layeth at him cannot hold, the Spear, the Dart, nor the Habergeon* (verſ. 26.)

And Laſtly, Such is his power, That *he maketh the deep to boil like a pot, he maketh the Sea like a pot of ointment : He maketh a path to ſhine after him : One would think the deep to be hoary* (verſ. 31, 32.) Thus the Lord deſcribes, not only the parts, but the power of Leviathan. And in the Hebrew, the word is plural, *powers*, which intimates the greatneſs of his power, or that he is powerful in every part, each part being full of power.

There is a two-fold power. First, of ſtrength. Secondly, of authority. Leviathan hath no power of authority, though he be called *a King over all the Children of pride.* But he hath a mighty power of *ſtrength*; That's here intended, *I will not conceal his parts, nor his power,*

Non tacebo gratiam diſpoſitionis ejus, i. e. dicam, quam concinnè membra ejus compoſita ſunt.

Nor his comely proportion.] Or *the grace of his diſpoſition.* That's the emphaſis of the Hebrew. There is a two-fold diſpoſition ;

First, Of the mind, which we commonly call a mans *diſpoſition.*

Secondly, Of the Body, which conſiſts in the right placing of the parts, their ſymmetry, order and proportion. Hence we Tranſlate fully, *His comely proportion.* Maſter *Broughton* renders it, *The grace of his frame*, that is, the due compoſition and feature of all the members of his Body.

Ironicè *dictum ; cum enim horrifica ſit immaniſſimi monſtri diſpoſitio, & conformatio totius corporis, nihil in illo gratiæ, & venuſtatis eſſe poteſt.* Cajetan.

Some expound theſe words *Ironically* ; As if when the Lord ſaith, *I will not conceal his comely proportion*, his meaning where *his monſtrous uncomlineſs.* But by their leave, how great, or vaſt ſoever any Creature is, there may be a comlineſs, and proportion, or a due diſpoſition of the members of his Body, as well as of a leſſer, or little one. There are three things which make up the compleat natural comlineſs of a Creature. First, Diſtinction of members; there muſt be parts. Secondly, Strength for the exerciſe of the parts. Thirdly, A due proportion of the parts one towards another ; that's it which we properly call *feature.* There may be beauty, but no comelineſs, without a due diſpoſition or proportion of parts ; and where there is a due proportion of parts, there is comelineſs, how great ſoever any Creature is. All theſe concur in Leviathan ; First, parts ; Secondly, power ; Thirdly, proportion ; and therefore he is, though a Monſter for bigneſs, yet a comely Creature. *I will not conceal his parts, nor his power, nor his comely proportion.*

> Hence Obſerve, First, *God hath beſtowed excellent parts, power, and proportion, upon all his Creatures, eminently upon ſome of them.*

Whatſoever the Lord made, he made it (as 'tis ſaid) *in number, weight and meaſure*, that is, exactly. The Fowls of the Air ; the Beaſts and creeping things of the Earth, the Fiſhes of the Sea ; all of them according to their kind, have excellent parts, power, and comelineſs of proportion. *David* ſpeaking this in general, brings it down to the particular under hand. (*Pſal.* 104. 24.) *O Lord, how manifold are thy works* (that is, the works of Creation) *in wiſdom haſt thou made them all* (all of them, even to the very Fly, are wiſely made, in wiſdom haſt thou made them all) *the Earth is full of thy riches*, verſ. 15. *So is this great and wide Sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both ſmall and great Beaſts; there go the Ships, there is that Leviathan, whom thou haſt made to play therein.* Leviathan is made in wiſdom, or wiſely made; the wiſdom, as well as the power of the great God is viſible, in the making and compoſure of him.

Secondly, Obſerve, *God is pleaſed to ſet forth and in ſetting forth, the particular excellencies of natural Creatures.*

I will not (ſaith the Lord) *conceal his parts*, &c. God (who is without parts) is ſeen in the parts of every Creature, and therefore he hath not concealed their parts. *Men do not light a Candle* (ſaith Chriſt, *Matth.* 5. 15.) *and put it under a buſhel, but on a candleſtick.* God hath lighted a Candle for us to ſee himſelf by, in making the parts of every Creature, and he hath put that light on as many candleſticks, as he hath made diſcourſes or diſcoveries of them in any part of the Scriptures; and that he hath done eminently in the latter part of this Book of *Job*.

Now if God be thus pleaſed in declaring the parts of natural Creatures, *How much more is he pleaſed in declaring the parts and excellencies, or thoſe moſt excellent and amiable parts of the new Creature!* That is, the excellencies of man in his inner man. *David* ſaith (*Pſal.* 147. 10, 11.) *He delighteth not in the ſtrength of the Horſe, he taketh no pleaſure in the leggs of a man. The Lord taketh pleaſure in them that fear him, in thoſe that hope in his mercy*; and with them he is much taken: He is infinitely more pleaſed in ſpeaking of their parts, and powers, and comely proportion, than in thoſe of *Leviathan*, or of any the moſt comely and beautiful Creature in the World. Jeſus Chriſt could not conceal the parts, the power, nor the comely proportion of his Spouſe, that is, of his Church (*Cant.* 4. 1, 2, 3, 4.) *Behold, thou art fair my love, behold, thou art fair, thou haſt Doves eyes within thy locks, thy hair is as a flock of Goats that appear from mount* Gilead; *thy teeth are like a flock of Sheep, that are even ſhorn*, &c. *Thy lips are like a thread of ſcarlet; thy ſpeech is comely; thy temples are like a piece of a pomegranate within thy locks; thy neck is like the tower of* David; *thy breaſts are like two young Roes, that are twins, which feed among the Lillies.* Thus Jeſus Chriſt, you ſee, was ſo far from concealing, that he gave his divine rhetorick full ſcope to depaint all the lineaments, parts, powers, and comely proportion of his Spouſe, the Church. Jeſus Chriſt was ſo raviſht with the beauty which himſelf had put upon the Church, that like an amorous wooer, he could not (if I may ſo ſpeak) contain himſelf from crying up her comely proportion. The rareſt bodily beauty takes the heart, and affects the eye of Chriſt, no more than the gaſtly appearance of a rotting carcaſe, unleſs he ſees ſpiritual beauty there too; and where he ſees that, he is highly pleaſed, though the Body, where ſuch a Soul lodges, hath an appearance as little attractive or deſireable, as that of a rotting carcaſe.

Thirdly, Conſider the reaſon why the Lord inſiſts ſo much in declaring the parts and powers of Leviathan; the reaſon was, that God might declare his own power: It was not for Leviathans ſake that God declared his parts, *&c.* but that he might declare himſelf in Leviathan.

Hence Note, *The parts, powers, and comely proportions of the Creature, clearly evidence the excellencies of God.*

The Lord chiefly proclaimed his own name, when he proclaimed the name of Leviathan (*Rom.* 1. 20.) *The inviſible things of him from the Creation of the World are clearly ſeen, being underſtood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead.* The unſeen God hath made all things, that he may be ſeen in them. When he makes a Comment upon his own works, why is it? But that he may make a Comment upon himſelf, and expound his own glory in them. And as the excellencies of the Lord are ſeen in the works of Creation, ſo in the works of providence; and he hath therefore made ſo many declarations of them to us, that his power, wiſdom, and juſtice may ſhine through them to us (*Pſal.* 75. 1.) *That thy name is neer, thy wondrous works declare.* And he ſaid to *Pharaoh* (*Exod.* 9. 16.) *For this cauſe have I raiſed thee up, for to ſhew in thee my power, and that my name may be declared throughout all the Earth.* All that the Lord doth to, or in the Creature, is to get himſelf a name, and a glory; therefore let us give God the glory of his power, wiſdom and goodneſs in all his works. It was the ſaying of one of the Ancients, *A Pagan may deny that there is a Chriſt, but a Pagan cannot deny Almighty God.* A Pagan may deny Chriſt, for that's meerly matter of faith; but ſenſe will lead a Pagan to believe there is a God, or ſome omnipotent power that hath wrought all theſe things. If we ſee a ſtream, *that* aſſures us there is a Spring or Fountain; if we ſee a goodly Palace built, *that* aſſures us it had a builder; a maker. And if the ſtream be full, what is the fountain? If the Palace built be great and magnificent, how great, how magnificent was the builder! *Every Houſe* (as the Author to the Hebrews ſaid upon another occaſion, *Chap.* 3. 4.) *is builded by ſome man, but he that built all things is God.*

Negare Paganus Chriſtum poteſt; negare Deum omnipotentem non poteſt. Auguſt. *ſer.* 139. *de Temp.*

Fourthly, Seeing the Lord is pleaſed to read ſuch a natural Philoſophy Lecture upon this Creature, we may take this Obſervation from it.

God would have man know the parts and powers of the Creatures.

Why doth the Lord in this Book, ſpeak at large of them, and of their powers, but that we may take notice of them, and underſtand them? Or that we ſhould ſearch and ſtudy them? What the *Pſalmiſt* ſpeaks concerning the works of providence, is true of the Lords works in nature (*Pſal.* 111. 2.) *The works of the Lord are great.* And (*verſ.* 4.) *He hath made his wonderful works to be remembred*; that is, that they ſhould be ſpoken of and memoriz'd. And therefore having ſaid at the beginning of the ſecond verſe, *The works of the Lord are great*, he adds in the cloſe of it, *Sought out of all them that have pleaſure therein. His work is honourable and glorious*, &c. The works of God are to be ſearched to the bottom (though their bottom cannot be found) by all thoſe that have pleaſure, and delight either in God, or in his works; and they therefore ſearch them out alſo, becauſe they increaſe and better their knowledg of God the Creator, by increaſing and bettering their knowledg about the Creature.

From the whole verſe we may infer,

Firſt, If God will not conceal the parts, the power, and comlineſs of his Creatures, *then let not us conceal the power, the glory, and the excellency of God:* Yea, let us with heart and tongue declare the glorious perfections of God, how holy, how juſt, how wiſe, how merciful, how patient and long-ſuffering a God he is. When God makes the Creature known to us, he would much more have us know himſelf, and make him known. *David*'s heart was ſet upon this duty (*Pſal.* 9. 14.) *Thou haſt lifted me up from the gates of death, that I may ſhew forth all thy praiſe, in the gates of the daughter of* Sion. As if he had ſaid, This, O Lord, was thy deſign in *lifting me up from the gates of death*, that is, from deadly danger, or killing diſeaſes, that I might declare thy praiſe in *Sions* gates, or, that I might declare how praiſe-worthy thou art to all who come into the gates of *Sion*. And again (*Pſal.* 118. 17.) *I ſhall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord.* In the fourtieth *Pſalm*, which is a Prophecy of Chriſt, he ſpeaks in the words of the Text (*verſ.* 10.) *I have not hid thy righteouſneſs within my heart, I have declared thy faithfulneſs and thy ſalvation, I have not concealed thy loving kindneſs and thy truth from the great congregation.* As the Lord ſaith here concerning Leviathan, *I will not conceal his parts*, ſo ſaith the Prophet, *I will not conceal his loving kindneſs and truth*, &c. Which, as it is moſt true of Chriſt, whoſe work it was to do ſo, as alſo the end of all his works, ſo it ſheweth what we ought to do, and what ſhould be the end of all our works, not to conceal the righteouſneſs and goodneſs of God, but declare them in the great congregation. And as Chriſt declared the glory of the Father, ſo ſhould we the glory of Chriſt, We read the Church engaged in this. As I ſhewed before, Chriſt could not conceal the parts of the Church, ſo the Church could not conceal the parts of Chriſt (*Cant.* 5. 9.) There the queſtion is put to the Church; *What is thy beloved more than another beloved, that thou doſt thus charge us?* The Church being asked this queſtion, will not conceal the parts, nor the power, nor the comely proportion of Chriſt her Beloved, but gives a copious Narrative of his gracious excellencies (*verſ.* 10.) *My Beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefeſt among ten thouſand; his head is as moſt fine Gold, his locks are buſhy, and black as a Raven; his eyes are as the eyes of Doves by the Rivers of waters, waſhed with milk, and fitly ſet; his cheeks are as a bed of ſpices, as ſweet flowers; his lips like Lillies, dropping ſweet ſmelling myrrh; his hands are as Gold-rings, ſet with Beryle; his belly is as bright Ivory, overlaid with Saphyrs; his legs are as pillars of marble, ſet upon ſockets of fine Gold; his countenance is as* Lebanon, *excellent as the Cedar; his mouth is ſweet, yea, he is altogether lovely, This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O Daughters of* Jeruſalem. Thus, as Chriſt concealed not the parts of the Church, ſo the Church concealed not the parts, the power, and comely proportion of Chriſt. And did we more conſider who Chriſt is, and what he is, both in himſelf, and unto us, we ſhould be more, both in admiring within our ſelves, and in reporting to others, his parts, his power, and comely proportion.

Secondly, If God hath not concealed the knowledg of his Creatures from us, if he hath not concealed the parts, &c. of Leviathan from us, *Then certainly he will not conceal the knowledg of himſelf, and of his Son, from us.* We may get to Heaven, or be ſaved, though we know not the Creatures thus diſtinctly; but without the knowledg of God in Chriſt, we know no ſalvation (*Acts* 4. 12.) If therefore the Lord hath acquainted us thus particularly with the knowledg of the Creatures, which is an inferior and not ſo neceſſary a knowledg, doubtleſs he hath acquainted us with the knowledg of himſelf, which is altogether neceſſary. *This is life eternal, to know thee the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom thou haſt ſent* (*John* 17. 3.) It is an uſeful knowledg to know the Creature, to know the Leviathan; but it is of abſolute neceſſity to know God the Father, Son and Spirit. God hath not concealed himſelf from us, nor his will from us, neither what he would have us do and believe, nor what he will do for us. The Apoſtle *Paul* could ſay to the Church at *Epheſus, I have not ſhunned to declare to you the whole counſel of God* (*Acts* 20. 27.) The Lord hath not ſhunned to declare his counſel for our direction, for our inſtruction, for our caution, and for our conſolation; he will not conceal the knowledg of himſelf from us, in what is needful for us to know unto ſalvation.

Deus non deficit in neceſſariis.

The Lord having thus prefaced in his purpoſe to declare the parts, &c. of Leviathan, comes in the next words to declare his parts.

Verſe 13. **Who can diſcover** (or *uncover*, as ſome) **the face of his Garment.**

That is, his Garment. The word rendred **face** is redundant. As to flie from the face of a man, is to flie from a man; and to flie from the face of the Sword, is no more than to flie from the Sword. The face of any thing ſtrictly taken, is the ſuperficies of a thing, or that which is uppermoſt. The face of the Earth is the upper part of the Earth, not the whole Earth. But here the face of Leviathans Garment, is his whole Garment.

But then the queſtion is, what is this Garment? I may give you a fourſold anſwer.

First, Some learned Interpreters are of opinion, that the Sea it ſelf is here intended by this Garment, becauſe the Whale doth, as it were, wrap himſelf in the waters, as we do in a Garment. The Sea is his Garment, ſaith Mr. *Broughton*; who can take that from him, and bring him to Land?

Quis poteſt illam è mari in ſiccum adducere, & nudam ſiſtere coram hominibus? Jun. Piſc.

Secondly, Others conceive, that by this Garment, we are to underſtand, the skin of the Leviathan. The Natural Garment of every Creature is skin. At firſt mans, not only Natural, but only Garment, was his skin, and afterward his artificial Garment was made of skins. *Who can diſcover the skin of the Leviathan?* That is, who can flay off his skin, and ſo ſtrip him of his Garment?

Thirdly, Others who interpret this Garment, *the skin*, yet conceive it ſpoken, not of the skin of his whole Body but the skin about his face, and which hangeth over his eyes, which no man is ſo hardy (unleſs he be fool-hardy) as to open and take away.

Indumentum ceti vocat cutem, qua tanquam indumento tegitur. q. d. *quis detraxit ei cutem? quis excoriavit eum?* Druſ. Merc.

De balenæ ſcribitur quod oculi ejus gravi ſuperciliorum pondere operiuntur & prominentia illa quaſi veſtiuntur; nemoque audet corium illud, quod facies indumenti appellatur attollere, confeſtim à bellua vorandus. Paraph.

Fourthly, Some take theſe words as a proverbial ſpeech, who can take away a piece of his skin, or touch his skin? As we commonly ſay of a proud and wrathful man, who dares touch him, or pull off ſo much as a ſingle hair from his beard?

Parœmialis locutio eſſe videtur, q. d. *quis audet vel cuticulæ ejus particulam detrahere: ut de homine ſuperbo & iracundo dicimus; ne pilum quidem barbæ audes ei extrahere.* Bold.

I ſhall pitch upon the ſecond interpretation, that by the Garment of Leviathan is meant his skin, which is his Natural Garment. There are many remarkable things ſpoken afterwards in this Chapter, about the skin of Leviathan; here 'tis called the Garment.

Hence Note, *God hath given every Creature ſome kind of Garment or covering.*

The Whale hath his Garment; he could not abide the water without it. All Trees and Plants have a Garment, the rind or bark; they could not abide the Air without it. Every Beaſt and Bird hath a Garment; they could not abide either heat or could without it. 'Tis ſaid of man in the ſtate of innocency, that he was naked (*Gen.* 2. 18.) *And the man and the woman were both naked, and were not aſhamed*: Yet they were not quite naked, they had a Natural Garment, though not an artificial one, their skin; yea, they had a better Natural Garment than their skin, their innocency, and that was the reaſon, *why they were not aſhamed.* Since the Fall, mans Natural Garment is not enough to keep him from either cold or ſhame, he muſt have an artificial Garment over that; nor is any artificial Garment, how thick, or rich, or coſtly, or faſhionable ſoever, enough to keep him from ſhame, he muſt have a Spiritual one; he muſt (as the Apoſtle exhorts, *Rom.* 13. 14.) *Put on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*; he muſt *put on the new man, which after God is Created in righteouſneſs and true holineſs* (*Eph.* 4. 24.) elſe he hath reaſon to be aſhamed. All are naked, till they put on this Garment, Chriſt and his Graces. And they that have put on this Garment, ſhall be clothed with the Garment of joy and glory. Being clothed thus, we ſhall not be found naked, as the Apoſtles word is (2 *Cor.* 5. 3.) The Lord hath beſtowed a Garment upon every Creature, and upon man, Garments of beauty and glory. *Who can diſcover the face of his Garment?*

Or who can come to him with his double bridle?

There is much contending about the meaning of theſe words, or what is meant by this double bridle; but I ſhall not make any ſtay about it.

The Text may be read thus: *Who can come within his double bridle.* The *Geneva* Tranſlation is near ours; *Who can come to him with a double bridle?* But what is this double bridle?

First, Some underſtand this *double bridle* as a part of Leviathan. *Who can come to his double bridle?* Or into the doubling of his bridle? As the verdure or greenneſs of graſs is put for green graſs, ſo (ſay ſome) the duplicature or doubling of his bridle, is nothing elſe but his double bridle, that is, his jaws or mouth, which have ſome reſemblance to a bridle when they are opened, or at their end. Now according to this reading, the meaning is, who dares come within his lips or jaws, which look like a double bridle? Surely no man dares make ſuch an adventure, ſeeing his jaws are ſo vaſt, or wide, and terrible, that it may even ſtrike a man of courage with terror, or into a fit of trembling to look into them.

Intelligit os aut labia, quæ diducta fræni duplicati ſpeciem habent. Druſ.

Secondly, Others (becauſe the jaws are ſpoken of afterwards) underſtand this double bridle, of any thing which man may attempt to put into his jaws to ſubdue him with; as if it had been ſaid, who can coerce or bridle him, though he have never ſo ſtrong a bridle, though he have a *double bridle?* The word rendred *bridle*, properly ſignifies the *rein of a bridle.* There are two words by which a bridle is expreſſed, the one ſignifying *the bit*, which is put into the mouth of a Horſe, the other the *head-ſtall* and *reins*. which a Horſeman holdeth in his hands. Here we may take it for the whole bridle, and that the ſtrongeſt bridle, as we render, *a double bridle*: As if it had been ſaid, who dares come near Leviathan, as we commonly do to a Horſe, to put a bridle into his mouth? Who will undertake to halter or bridle him, with all his skill and ſtrength? Thus

Fræna nominantur eæ partes quæ utrinq; ad maxillas deſinunt. Quis cum fræno duplicato audeat accedere ad eum, ut ejus rictui inſerat, ſicut fit equo. Sed malo parabolice intelligere pro labiis. Merc.

the Relative *His* doth not reſpect Leviathan, but the man who comes to bridle him: And this is moſt probable, becauſe, if by the double bridle we underſtand the jaws of Leviathan, this would be the ſame with what is ſpoken plainly in the next words.

Verſe 14. **Who can open the doors of his face?**

The Lord compareth the gaping jaws of Leviathan to doors, to which alſo the lips are compared in Scripture (*Pſal.* 141. 3.) *Keep the door of my lips.* As by a Metaphor our lips are called doors, ſo Leviathans jaws bear the ſimilitude of a two-leav'd door; which, *who can open?* This ſeems to carry on the alluſion to a Horſe, whoſe mouth muſt be opened before he can be bridled. Who can force Leviathan to gape, that he may put a bridle into his mouth? That which is ſaid of him in the latter part of the verſe, may make any one afraid to do ſo, for

His teeth are terrible round about, or *terrour is round about his teeth.*

His teeth are not to be meddled with, they are ſo terrible. As the holy Prophet ſaid to *Paſhur*, that falſe Prophet, *Thy name ſhall be called* Magor Miſſabib, *terrour round about* (*Jer.* 20. 2.) So the teeth of the Leviathan are terrour round about. If any one come near him, he will ſee reaſon enough to be afraid. *His teeth are terrible.* Dread dwells round about his teeth; and why ſo? Why are his teeth ſo terrible? Surely, becauſe they are ſo hurtful, he being able to tear any man to pieces, or to break a mans bones with his teeth.

Per gyrum dentium ejus formido. Hieron.

Hence Note, *That is terrible to us, which we perceive hurtful to us.*

The teeth of Leviathan are terrible round about, becauſe he can ſoon cruſh thoſe that come near him with his teeth. Now, if that be terrible, which we ſee can hurt us; Let us remember how terrible the unſeen God is! His teeth as I may ſay) are terrible round about. The Apoſtle tells us (ſo, while he ſaith (2 *Cor.* 5 11.) *Knowing the terror of the Lord* (that is, knowing how terrible the Lord is) *we perſwade men.* God loves to ſave, but he can deſtroy us, ſooner than Leviathan can cruſh us, were we between his teeth. The conſideration of the terribleneſs that is in any Creature, ſhould lead us to conſider how terrible the Lord is to thoſe who provoke him. Are the teeth of a Leviathan, or teeth and paws of a Lion terrible? Is the ſting of a Serpent, or the poiſon of Aſps terrible? How terrible then is the wrath of God! As what is ſweet, and comfortable to us in the Creature, ſhould lead us to conſider how ſurpaſſing ſweet and comfortable God is; ſo that which is dreadful, and terrible in the Creature, ſhould lead us to conſider how dreadful and terrible God is. And as it is good for us, often to ſay unto our ſelves, O how good is God! So to ſay, O how terrible is God! Yea, *David* would have us ſay ſo unto God (*Pſal.* 63. 3.) *Say unto God* (that is, acknowledg with admiration) *how terrible art thou in thy works!* And (*verſ.* 5.) *Come and ſee the works of God; he is terrible in his doings towards the Children of men.* Yea, God is terrible to his own people (*Pſal.* 68. 35.) *O God! thou art terrible out of thy holy places*, that is, out of the Church and Church aſſemblies: The Lord many times declares himſelf very terribly in thoſe ſacred aſſemblies. How terrible was God in his Church, when he devoured *Nadab* and *Abihu* with fire, for offering ſtrange fire before him, which he commanded not! (*Levit.* 10. 1, 2.) How terrible was the Lord out of his Church, when he ſtruck *Ananias* and *Saphira* dead! (*Acts* 5. 5, 10.) how terrible was the Lord out of his holy place, the Church, to the *Corinthians*! concerning whom the Apoſtle ſaith (1 *Cor.* 11: 30.) *For this cauſe* (that is, their unworthy partaker of the Lords Supper) *many are weak and ſickly among you, and many ſleep.* God deals terribly with thoſe who are not regardful of him, who prepare not themſelves with due and reverential reſpect to his holineſs, for holy duties. *He is a jealous God, and he will not hold them guiltleſs* (that is, he will hold them very guilty, or deal with them as with guilty perſons) *who take his name in vain* (Exod. 20. 7.) When the Law was given, *ſo terrible was the ſight*, that *Moſes* ſaid, *I exceedingly fear and quake* (Heb. 12. 21.) The Lord appeared thus terrible at the giving of the Law, to ſhew how terrible he will be to ſinners, who tranſgreſs the Law, and repent not of, nor turn from their ſins and tranſgreſſions; yea, the Lord (for their trial) ſhews himſelf very terrible to good men; to broken-hearted and repenting ſinners. *Heman* had long and ſad experience of this (*Pſal.* 88. 15.) *I am afflicted, and ready to die from my youth up: While I ſuffer thy terrours, I am diſtracted.* And for this *Job* made that grievous complaint (*Chap.* 6. 4.) *The arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poiſon whereof drinketh up my Spirit, the terrours of God do ſet themſelves in array againſt me.* Now if the Lord make ſuch a terrible War upon Saints, if he terrifie them, even till he hath diſtracted them; how will he draw up his terrours as an army, or his army of terrours, in battle array againſt the wicked and ungodly! How often doth the Lord expreſs himſelf by terrible things againſt ſuch? As he ſometimes deſtroyeth ſinners ſecretly, or without any appearance of terrour (*Hoſea.* 5. 12.) *I will be unto* Ephraim *as a moth.* So often openly, he comes upon them as a Lion, or as a Bear, (*Lament.* 3. 10.) *He was unto me as a Bear lying in wait, and as a Lion in ſecret places.* The Lion and Bear often lie cloſe, and in ſecret places, to wait for their prey; but they no ſooner get them within their reach or danger, but they riſe up and devour them openly.

Again, If we are afraid to meddle with terrible things? How ſhould we fear to meddle with ſin! Sin hath terrible teeth, it will bite like a Serpent (*Prov.* 23. 32.) and tear like a Lion. 'Tis ſin that maketh all things terrible to us. God himſelf is not terrible, but as we are ſinners: Sin hath made all things terrible, and troubleſome to us that are ſo. The teeth of Leviathan had not been terrible to man, if man had not ſinned againſt God. *His teeth are terrible round about.*

Beza ſeems to object from this part of the deſcription of Leviathan, that the Whale cannot be meant by Leviathan, becauſe the Whale hath no teeth.

I anſwer, Firſt, Though Whales, catcht by our Seamen, have no teeth properly taken, yet they have ſomewhat which is Analogical to teeth, they have that in their mouths, which is as terrible as teeth.

And Secondly, Naturaliſts tell us, and *Beza* himſelf confeſſeth, that there are many fiſhes of the Whaley kind, which have very terrible teeth. And though *Bochartus* inſiſteth much upon the teeth of the Crocodile, which for number are threeſcore, and for their nature terrible enough; yet he doth not at all improve this part of Leviathans deſcription againſt the Whale, which, I ſuppoſe, he would have done, had he found it unapplicable to the Whale.

Phyſeterem & Orcam præcipuè dentatos dicunt.

Now as Leviathan is armed with teeth, as offenſive weapons, to hurt others, and to be a terrour to them, ſo with defenſive arms to ſecure himſelf from hurt, as it followeth,

Verſe 15. **His ſcales are his pride, ſhut up together as with a cloſe ſeal.**
16. **One is ſo near to another, that no air can come between them.**
17. **They are joined one to another, they ſtick together, that they cannot be ſundred.**

In theſe three verſes Leviathan is deſcribed. Firſt, By the confidence which he hath in his ſcales; they are *his pride*, being like bucklers of braſs. Secondly, By the natural cloſeneſs of his ſcales; ſo cloſe they are, as if ſealed, *that no air can come between them.* Thirdly, By the indiſſolubleneſs of his ſcales; they are joined ſo faſt one to another, *that they cannot be ſundred.*

His ſcales are his pride.] *The ſtrong ſhields have pride*, ſaith Maſter *Broughton*; that is, his ſcales, which are as ſo many ſhields for his defence, are his pride. The word is not elſewhere rendred *ſcales*, but *ſtrong pieces* (Chap. 40. 18.) and here it may be rendred, *ſtrong pieces of ſhields*, ſcales reſembling ſhields, both in their faſhion and uſe.

His ſcales are his pride, that is, he is proud of his ſcales. Whatſoever a man is proud of, may be called his pride. If a man be proud of his riches, then his riches are his pride; if of his parts, then his parts are his pride: if of his ſtrength and beauty, then ſtrength and beauty are his pride. Leviathan's ſcales are his pride, that is, he is proud of his ſcales.

Here again it is objected, as before about teeth, The Whale hath no ſcales, therefore Leviathan cannot be the Whale. The learned *Bochartus* inſiſts much upon this argument againſt the Whale, proving alſo by many authorities (which is clear to ſight in thoſe carkaſſes of Crocodiles which are among us) that the Crocodile hath great and ſtrong ſcales, and thoſe very cloſely laid, or joined together. The objection hath much weight in it, yet theſe two anſwers are given to it.

Balenarum *& Elephantorum cutes ſumme duræ ſunt, & propemodum inſenſibiles.* Galenus *l.* 3. *de uſu partium.*

First, Though Whales taken in theſe parts of the World have no ſcales, properly ſo called, yet they have a very thick and hard skin, reſembling ſcales. The skin of the Elephant, and of the Whale, is extream hard, and almoſt inſenſible, ſaid the Oracle among Phyſitians.

Quot ei ſquamæ tot clypei quibus adverſus omnem vim tegitur.

Arianus *memorat ex Nearcho viſum cetum in littus ejectum cubitorum quinquaginta corio ſquamoſo tam craſſo, ut cubitum æquaret.*

Secondly, It is reported, that ſome Whales, or Whales in ſome parts of the World, have huge ſcales. *There was ſeen caſt upon the Sea-ſhore* (ſaith one) *a monſtrous fiſh of fifty cubits long, which had ſcales all over of a cubit thick.* Theſe were ſtrong ſcales indeed: And though we have not known or heard of any ſuch in theſe parts of the World, yet who can ſay knowingly there are none ſuch in any part of the World, as litterally anſwer the deſcription of Leviathans ſcales. I grant, that the three exceptions, which *Bochartus* takes againſt the teſtimony of *Nearchus* are very conſiderable. Firſt, That he ſtands alone, and is but a ſingle witneſs. Secondly, That he doth not ſay he ſaw ſuch a Whale, but only heard it of certain Marriners, who ſaid they ſaw ſuch a one; which ſort of men are not always to be credited. And he adds, Thirdly, That though *Nearchus* ſhould have ſaid, that himſelf had ſeen ſuch a Whale, yet little credit were to be given him, he being an Author of no good credit. Theſe conſiderations, I confeſs, may ſomewhat weaken the teſtimony of *Nearchus*; yet I ſee no reaſon, why they ſhould utterly infringe and diſable it. For, firſt, one man may ſpeak truth in it ſelf, as well as two or three, though the teſtimony of one be not ſo authentick to others, as the teſtimony of two or three. Secondly, Though ſome Mariners over-reach in their reports, yet it doth not follow that they did ſo from whom that report came. And, Thirdly, Though *Nearchus* be juſtly charged with failing, and falſeneſs in ſome things, yet none can ſay, his whole Book is nothing elſe but a bundle of lies. And if there be any truths in his writings, as I ſuppoſe, no man will deny, but there are many; then why this report of a Whale, or mighty fiſh, of that kind, with great ſcales, may not be reckoned among the truths contained in his writings, rather than among the lies, let the Reader judg.

Now though it be queſtioned, what Animal this Leviathan is? Yet 'tis out of queſtion, that he hath ſcales upon him, or that which amounts to ſcales; for (ſaith the Lord) *his ſcales are his pride.*

Geneva Tranſlation.

גאוה *Superbia, magnificentia, verbum medium.*

Some render the word thus; *The majeſty of his ſcales is like ſtrong ſhields.* He is like a Curaſſier or an Horſe-man, armed Cap-a-Pe, or all over. But I ſhall abide in our own reading, *His ſcales are his pride,* or *his height*; his Spirit is heightned by them.

Hence Note, Firſt; *There is a kind of pride in brutes and irrational Creatures.*

Pride ſtrictly taken, is proper to man; yet there is more than a ſhadow of pride in brutes. Even as a man is proud of fine new cloths, ſo is a Horſe of his trappings; or as a man is proud of a ſtrong gliſtering ſhield, ſo is Leviathan of his ſcales. And I may ſafely ſay, that as ſome Beaſts are *proudiſh*, ſo all proud men, ſo far as they are proud, are *brutiſh.* It is not for want of grace only, but for want of a due exerciſe of reaſon, that any man is proud.

Secondly, Note, *Extraordinary attainments or injoyments, are occaſions of pride.*

Why are Leviathans ſcales his pride? 'Tis becauſe they are ſo ſtrong and cloſe, that he thinks himſelf ſafe from all injuries under their ſhelter. The word properly ſignifieth a buckler of molten braſs. They who are armed with ſuch a defenſive weapon, fear neither Sword nor Spear. Any great injoyments or attainments, are occaſions of pride. The Peacock is proud of his feathers, and the Horſe of his ſtrength; and men are proud of their riches and worldly abundance (1 *Tim.* 6. 17.) *Charge them that are rich in this World, that they be not high-minded, nor truſt in uncertain riches.* Some good men, no ſooner get a few golden ſcales, or their ſcales a little gilded, but they begin to be proud; therefore the Apoſtle gave *Timothy* that charge, to warn ſuch rich men as profeſſed the true faith of the Goſpel to take heed of high-mindedneſs. And as men are apt to be proud of their riches, ſo are women of their beauty, and the learned of their knowledg, and the wiſe of their underſtanding, and great men of their power, and godly men (if they have but gifts beyond their brethren) are apt to be proud of them: And as ſome are proud of the gifts given them by God, ſo many are proud of the gifts given by them to men, I mean, of their good deeds or works of charity. *Salvation* (ſaith the Apoſtle, *Epheſ.* 2. 9.) *is not of works, leſt any man ſhould boaſt.* If ſalvation were by working (either by works of grace, or gracious works, towards God, or works of charity towards men) men would be boaſting, which is properly the work of pride. Again, men are very apt to be proud of their priviledges. The Nation of the Jews, how proud were they of that priviledg, that they were *Abraham*'s Children, that they had the Law and Temple? Whence the Apoſtle left that ſerious admonition to the Gentiles (*Rom.* 11. 20.) *Becauſe of unbelief they were broken off, and thou ſtandeſt by faith; be not high minded, but fear.* Do not pride your ſelves in your priviledges as they did, leſt you alſo be broken off as they are. Laſtly, ſome have been proud, even of their graces; that of the Apoſtle argueth it (1 *Cor.* 4. 6, 7.) *Who hath made thee to differ?* (thou haſt grace, and another hath none; who hath made this difference between thee and him? Hath not God?) *what haſt thou, that thou haſt not received? Why then doſt thou boaſt as if thou hadſt not received it?* Even they that have received grace, are in danger of boaſting, as if they had not received it. I may ſay, as of all proud men, ſo of all men, who are but toucht with pride, as here it is ſaid of Leviathan, *Their ſcales* (ſome attainments or other) *are their pride.* And hence we may infer, *If great attainments are an occaſion of pride*; then

Let us pray for an humble heart in high injoyments and attainments. If you have ſtrong ſcales, much ſtrength about you, or in you, beg hard for humility; be not like Leviathan, let not your ſcales be your pride. *His ſcales are his pride,*

Shut up together as with a cloſe or ſtrait ſeal.

Things ſtraitly ſealed up, can hardly be parted. How cloſe the ſcales of Leviathan are, is further ſhewed,

Verſe 16. **One is ſo near to another, that no air can come between.**

Ne ſpiraculum quidem incedit per eas. Hieron.

The Lord doth not ſay, you cannot put a ſtraw, or a hair between, but *no air can come between.* The air is the moſt ſubtile thing in nature; the air paſſeth through not only little cranies, but imperceptible pores; yet the juncture of Leviathans ſcales is ſo cloſe, that the ſubtile air cannot paſs between. The next verſe is only an heightning of the ſame thing.

Verſe 17. **They are joined one to another, they ſtick together that they cannot be ſundred.**

Vir fratri adhæret.

Scales are lap't one over another, like the tiles of an Houſe they ſtick like boards glued. The Hebrew is, *they are joined a man to his Brother.* 'Tis common in that language to call two things joined together *a man and his Brother*, or *a woman and her Siſter.* Thus (*Exod.* 25. 20.) *And the Cherubims ſhall ſtretch forth their wings on high, covering the Mercy-ſeat with their wings, and their faces ſhall look one to another*; The Hebrew is, *ſhall look a man to his Brother.* Again (*Exod.* 26. 5.) *Moſes* giving direction about the loops, for the Curtains of the Tabernacle, ſaith, *Fifty loops ſhalt thou make in the one Curtain, and fifty loops ſhalt thou make in the edge of the Curtain, that is, in the coupling of the ſecond, that the loops may take hold one of another*; the Text is, *a woman of her Siſter.* Thus union is expreſſed; becauſe 'tis ſuppoſed *a man and his Brother, a woman and her Siſter*, keep near together in love. Leviathans ſcales are joined as cloſe together as a man and his

Brother, or as a woman and his Siſter, that is, they are moſt cloſely joined, or as ſome take the alluſion, they ſtick together as Priſoners, that are linked and chained one to another. This union or cloſeneſs of Leviathans ſcales, ſhews both his ſtrength and his ſafety.

Hence Note, *Unity is a great means to keep any ſtrong and ſafe.*

How cometh Leviathan to be ſo ſafe? His ſcales are cloſe together. If he had never ſo ſtrong ſcales, were they not joined together, they could be no ſafety to him; union makes every thing ſtronger and ſafer. A company of arrows, bound up together, how ſtrong are they? By which *Sylurus* invited his Sons to unity. *Ahab*, no doubt, had very ſtrong armour, *armour of proof*, but it had joints in it (*1 Kings* 22.34.) And ſo, *A certain man drew a bow at a venture, and ſmote the King of* Iſrael, *between the joints of his harneſs.* Death, the deadly arrow, made its entrance at the joints of his Armour. Weak things cloſely joined together become ſtrong, and ſtrong things wanting union prove weak. Satan is the ſtrong man Armed, and the Scriptures of truth tell us, that Satans Kingdom is not divided, there is no caſting out Devils by *Belzebub*. Satan and his agents ſtick together, as the ſcales of Leviathan, in oppoſing the Kingdom of Jeſus Chriſt (*Pſal.* 83. 5, 6, 7.) *They have conſulted together with one conſent, they are confederate againſt thee.* Gebal, *and* Ammon, *and* Amalek, *the* Philiſtines, *with the Inhabitants of* Tyre, Aſſur *alſo is joined with them.* Theſe were all cleaving together, as cloſe as the ſcales of Leviathan, in oppoſition to *Iſrael*. *Herod* and *Pilate*, once no good friends, laid down all their animoſities, and cleaved cloſe together, like the ſcales of Leviathan, to crucifie Chriſt; and ſo have evil men, in all ages, to hinder the progreſs of his Kingdom. It is ſaid (*Revel.* 17. 12, 13.) of the *ten horns* (which are there expounded to be ten Kings) *theſe have one mind.* They who ſeldom agree in their own affairs, agree all in aſſiſting the Beaſt, as 'tis there ſaid, *Theſe have one mind, and ſhall give their power and ſtrength unto the Beaſt.* The Scripture takes notice of this their union, not as a good thing, but as a ſtrange thing; that ten Kings, of different Nations, of different Intereſts and diſpoſitions, ſhould agree in giving their power and ſtrength, that is, their civil power, the power of their Kingdoms to the Beaſt; that is, to uphold his Kingdom, which is, doubtleſs, the Kingdom of Antichriſt. How may this ſhame thoſe, who profeſs a love to, and themſelves ſubjects of the Kingdom of Chriſt, for their diviſions! Godly men ſhould cleave together, as the ſcales of the Leviathan which cannot be ſundred, in that which is good. And are not their differences and diviſions, their diſtances and breaches to be lamented? Which are ſo very great and wide, that not only the thin circumambient Air, but groſs circumventing Bodies, may come between them. So far are they oftentimes from cleaving together, in duty to God and man, like the ſcales of Leviathan, that they hang together (as we ſay) like ropes of ſand. The Evangeliſt *Luke* ſpeaks of a time (*Acts* 4. 32.) When all believers were like the ſcales of Leviathan, *Then the multitude of them that believed* (that is, all they that believed) *were of one heart, and of one Soul.* Here they were not only joined, like the ſcales of the Leviathan, but they were joined, as if they were all but one ſcale. Godly men ſhould carry it towards one another, as members of the ſame Body, and acted by the ſame Spirit. They who have relation to thoſe *ſeven ones* mentioned (*Epheſ.* 4. 4, 5, 9.) ſhould labour to be one, ſhould be found endeavouring (as 'tis there ſaid, *verſ.* 3.) *To keep the unity of the Spirit, in the bond of peace.*

Further, by way of alluſion. The luſts of carnal men in general, are like the ſcales of Leviathan, ſticking ſo cloſe to them, and one to another, that the Spirit of of God, in the Miniſtery of his word finds no paſſage between, till he makes one, yea, hardneſs of heart, obſtinacy and impenitency are expreſſed by this word (*Lam.* 3. 65.) *Give them, O Lord* (ſaith he) *hardneſs of heart, thy curſe unto them. Give them ſorrow of heart*; ſo our Tranſlation renders it. The *Hebrew* is, *Give them a ſhield upon their heart.* The word is the very ſame, which is here Tranſlated *ſcales*, the ſcales of Leviathan being as ſo many ſhields, ſo ſtrong and thick, that nothing can enter. It is ſad, when we have ſcales on our eyes. It was ſaid of *Saul*, when in that viſion he was ſtricken blind, and before he received his ſight, ſcales fell from his eyes. *Ananias* being ſent to him, ſaid (*Acts* 9. 17.) *Brother* Saul, *the Lord* (*even Jeſus that appeared unto thee in the way as thou cameſt*) *hath ſent me, that thou mighteſt receive thy ſight, and be filled with the holy Ghoſt; and immediately there fell from his eyes, as it had been ſcales*, &c. All men naturally have ſcales on their eyes. It is ſad to have a ſcale on the eye, any thing that doth hinder the ſight of ſpiritual things; but how ſad is it to have ſcales on the heart alſo! To all impenitent perſons, their luſts are as ſo many ſcales and ſhields upon their hearts; and they have ſo many ſcales upon their hearts, and thoſe ſuch hard ones, that nothing but an Almighty power can make entrance or impreſſion. None are in ſo much danger, as they that are fenced and armed with theſe ſcales. It is beſt for man to open a naked breaſt, to receive every ſtroke which the Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, makes upon him.

VERS. 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25.

By his neeſings a light doth ſhine, and his eyes are like the eye-lids of the morning.

Out of his mouth go burning lamps, and ſparks of fire leap out.

Out of his noſtrils goeth ſmoak, as out of a ſeething pot, or caldron.

His breath kindleth coals, and a flame goeth out of his mouth.

In his neck remaineth ſtrength, and ſorrow is turned into joy before him.

The flakes of his fleſh are joined together, they are firm in themſelves, they cannot be moved.

His heart is as firm as a ſtone, yea as hard as a piece of the nether mill-ſtone.

When he raiſeth up himſelf, the mighty are afraid; by reaſon of breakings they purifie themſelves.

IN the former context, the Lord ſpake of the covering or skin, of the jaws and teeth, of the face and ſcales of this Leviathan. In this he proceeds yet further, to draw out the deſcription of this vaſt Creature.

First, By his ſtrong neeſings, *verſ.* 18.

Secondly, By his ſhining eyes, in the latter part of that *verſ.* 18.

Thirdly, By his flaming mouth (*verſ.* 19.)

Fourthly, By his ſmoaking noſtrils (*verſ.* 20.)

Fifthly, By his fiery breath (*verſ.* 21.)

Sixthly, By his ſtiff neck (*verſ.* 22.)

Seventhly, By the firmneſs of his fleſh (*verſ.* 23.)

Eighthly, By the firmneſs and hardneſs of his heart (*verſ.* 24.)

Ninthly, By a twofold effect of all theſe, even upon the mightieſt of the ſons of men, when he appears to them, or when they behold him in his motions.

Firſt, *He makes them afraid* (verſ. 25.)

Secondly, He cauſeth them *to purifie themſelves*, in the cloſe of that verſe. In theſe particulars we have a proſpect of the whole context. I ſhall but lightly touch at the moſt of them, and a little inſiſt upon the laſt, which we ſhall find moſt uſeful for inſtruction and admonition.

The four firſt verſes hold out, upon the matter, the ſame thing, namely, the fierce and furious ſpirit of Leviathan, diſcovered in his neeſings, eyes, mouth, noſtrils, breath, all which are expreſſed by elegant metaphors, alluding to, or by compariſons made with light and fire, with lamps and ſparks, with ſmoak and flame.

Eſt frementis iraſcentiſq; ceti deſcriptio. Bold.

Verſe 18. **By his neeſings a light doth ſhine.**

The firſt thing deſcribed in the former context, was Leviathans terrible head; the firſt in this, is the power of his brain. Naturaliſts teach us, that neeſing is cauſed by the thin and ſubtile vapours included in the ventricles of the brain, which Nature ſtriving to expel and put forth, cauſeth that which we call *neeſing*; So then, *neeſing is an effect of the expulſive faculty in the brain.* The *Jewiſh* Rabbins have two obſervations about neeſing.

First, They ſay, neeſing is a good ſign in prayer; and the reaſon of it, as I conceive, is this, becauſe it ſhews there is warmth and heat in the brain, and ſome fervency of Spirit in

Sternutatio efficitur ex ſubtili vapore incluſo in ventriculis cerebri, conante natura vehementius expellere & expurgare. Galen. l. 2. *de ſympt. cauſis.* c. 2, 3.

Inter orandum bonum eſt ſignum ſternutare. Sternutamentum bonum eſt ſignum ægroto. Dicta Rabbinorum. Merc.

in the duty. That's the reaſon (I ſuppoſe) why they ſay neeſing is a good ſign in prayer.

Secondly, Both they and others ſay, *Neeſing is a good ſign in a ſick man.* We ſay commonly, *Neeſing is a ſign of health*, it ſhews a vigour and quickneſs in the natural ſpirits, reſiding *in the brain.*

Si rochos edit ſternutanti ſimilis, emicat flamma. Bez.

Balæna ex βάλλειν ab emittendo & fundendo aquas. Iſid.

Ora Balænæ habent in frontibus, ideoque ſumma aqua natantes in ſublime nimbos efflant. Plin. *Natur. Hiſt. l. 9. c. 6.*

Sternutationes ejus faciunt ſplendorem, dum aqua albeſcens in aere diſpergitur. Piſc.

His neeſings.] But what are theſe neeſings of Leviathan? They who hold Leviathan to be the Crocodile, ſay, when he is ſunning himſelf, or lyeth open with his face to the Sun, this cauſeth him to neeſe or ſneeſe, and then his breath breaking out forcibly at his noſtrils, is like a ſhining light. 'Tis ſaid alſo, that the Whale neeſing, ſpouts out water, at thoſe pipes or holes which he hath placed or made naturally upon his head or forehead (he hath as mouth (as it were) on the top of his head, not to eat with, but to ſpout out water with) as when a man neeſeth, there comes out a vapour at his noſtrils; ſo the Whale is ſuppoſed to neeſe, when he blows out ſhowers of water through thoſe pipes, up into the Air. The word by which the Whale is expreſſed in Latine, ſignifies this action, or, his ſpouting out water; and by theſe ſpoutings or neeſings, we may ſay (as it followeth in the Text)

A light doth ſhine.] Becauſe the water which he ſpouts up into the Air, with a great and vehement force, meeting, as it were, mingling with the light there, looks like light, and hath a great brightneſs in it; ſo that this action of Leviathan, and the effect or concomitant of it, is as applicable to the Whale as to the Crocodile.

And his eyes are like the eye-lids of the morning, or, *like the dawning of the day.*

Aqua quæ per duas fiſtulas quam longiſſimè ſurſum ejaculatur, Balæna, ſplendores dicuntur, quia lucant & candidant. Sanct.

Palpebræ pro oculis, metonymice ſumuntur.

So we Tranſlate theſe words (*Job* 3.9.) *Let it not* (that is, let not the night in which I was conceived) *ſee the dawning of the day*, or (as the Margin hath it) *the eye-lids of the morning.* Leviathans eyes are ſaid to be like the *eye-lids of the morning*, becauſe of the lightſomneſs of them. Chriſt ſaith (*Matth.*6.22.) *The light of the Body is the eye.* We may call it ſo in a double reſpect. Firſt, becauſe the eye is the moſt lightſom part of the Body, or hath moſt light in it. Secondly, becauſe the eye gives or lets in light to the whole Body. They that want eyes, or their eyeſight, dwell in darkneſs. The eyes of Leviathan are not only light in themſelves, but *are like the eye-lids* (that is, eyes) *of the morning.* But wherein doth this lightneſs conſiſt? I anſwer, in two things.

Firſt, His eyes are very great, in proportion to his head and body.

Secondly, His eyes are very clear. And ſo Leviathans eyes may be ſaid to be like the eye-lids of the morning; Firſt, in their greatneſs; Secondly, in their brightneſs or clearneſs. It is uſual in Scripture to mention the morning light, when it would expreſs the cleareſt light. The Prophet (*Iſa.*58.8.) aſſuring the *Jews* of the greateſt outward proſperity, in caſe they kept a true Faſt, ſaith, *Then ſhall thy light break forth as the morning.* And when the Prophet *Amos* deſcribes God, *making the morning darkneſs* (Chap. 4.13.) As alſo, *turning the ſhadow of death into the morning* (Chap. 5.8.) his meaning is, that the Lord can eaſily, and at pleaſure, change a ſtate of greateſt proſperity, into adverſity; and a ſtate of deepeſt adverſity, into cleareſt or higheſt proſperity.

But ſome may ſay, if the Lord intended to ſet forth the exceeding clearneſs of Leviathans eyes, it might ſeem more proper to have compared them to the light at noon-day, than to the morning light.

I anſwer, Though the light at noon-day is clearer than that in the morning, conſidered in it ſelf; yet conſidering the morning light, with reſpect to its nearneſs or neighbourhood to the foregoing darkneſs, ſo we are more ſenſible of that than of the light at noon-day. Contraries placed neer together, illuſtrate each other. For, as ſoon as the morning appears, light conveys it ſelf all over the Hemiſphear, and makes a wonderful change in the Air. The morning light coming ſuddenly, and immediately after diſmal darkneſs, affects us more than the light at noon-day, though greater and clearer. Leviathans eyes ſhine bright, even like the eyelids or eyes, that is, the light of the morning. The Ancients give report, that Dragons and Serpents have flaming eyes.

Ardentes oculos ſuffectos ſanguine & igne. Virg. *l.* 2. *Æn.*

Exilit in ſiccum flammantia lumina torquet. Virg. *l.*3. Georg.

This (ſaith *Bochartus*) is very true of the Crocodile, whoſe eyes are ſo bright, that the *Egyptians* uſed to paint a Crocodiles eye, when they ſhould ſignifie the *morning light*; whereas great Authors write, that the eyes of the Whale are even covered with the weight of their eye-brows, or with fat, and are little bigger than the eyes of ſome ſort of Bullocks; whence it comes to paſs, that the Whale loſing his guide, daſheth againſt Rocks and Sea-ſhallows. Thus he. To which I ſhall only oppoſe the teſtimony of no inconſiderable Writer, who affirms of the Whales in the Seas of *Norway*, that their eyes in the night time ſhine like a huge flame, ſo that the fiſher-men, who are abroad at Sea, judg them to be great fires. And to what *Bochartus* ſaith of the Whale, that he is ſo dim-ſighted when deep in the Sea, that he cannot find his way without a guide, I may reply from his own ſhewing out of ſeveral Authors, that the Crocodile is no better at ſeeing when much under water, they teaching that the Crocodiles eyes are dull while in the water, but out of the water very quick or ſharp-ſighted, as if then at laſt he recovered his eye-ſight; and if ſo, he hath no advantage of the Whale in that particular.

Oculi noctu coruſcant, ingentium flammarum modo; Procul enim viſi à piſcatoribus, ignes eſſe grandes putantur. Olaus *lib.* 21. *c.* 6.

Verſe 19. **Out of his mouth go burning lamps, and ſparks of fire leap out.**

That is, ſomewhat goes out of his mouth like burning lamps and ſparks of fire. This is a demonſtration of the extream natural heat of Leviathan: There's a continual fire in his mouth; then what is in the Kitchin of his ſtomach, for the digeſtion and concoction of his meat? If ſparks of fire leap out of his mouth, as out of the mouth of a furnace, then we may conclude, there's a great fire kept within.

Verſe 20. **Out of his noſtrils goeth ſmoak.**

We had fire before, and now comes ſmoak. We uſually ſay, *Where there's ſmoak there is ſome fire*; and ſurely where there is ſo great a heat, there muſt be or hath been ſome ſmoak, *Out of his noſtrils goeth a ſmoak.* What is ſmoak? 'Tis *Air aduſt* (ſay Philoſophers) Much heat draws out the airy part of the fewel, and turns it into ſmoak. Leviathan having ſuch a fire in his bowels, needs muſt ſmoak go out of his noſtrils, which are as a double chimney to vent it; or to keep the metaphor in the Text, *Smoak goeth out of his noſtrils*

Fumus eſt aer aduſtus ex multitudine caloris. Aquin.

As out of a ſeething Pot or Caldron.

The Hebrew is, a *blown Pot*, becaſe blowing makes a Pot ſeeth quickly and fiercely. A *Caldron* is a great veſſel, wherein much may be ſodden or boiled at once, and boiling ſends out a great fume or ſmoak. The Hebrew word rendred *Caldron*, properly ſignifies a copper or brazen Kettle, in which dying ſtuff is boiled for the colouring of cloth. It ſignifies alſo a pond, and ſo a great veſſel like a pond; as that in the Temple was called a *Sea*, for its greatneſs.

Verſe 21. **His breath kindleth coals, and a flame goeth out of his mouth.**

אנמון *Ahenum reddidimus ex conjectura, proprie ahenum magnum inſtar ſtagni, quod* אנם *dicitur.* Druſ.

This verſe, with the former three, tend all to one purpoſe. Leviathans heat is ſo vehement, that *his breath kindleth coals.* The Hebrew is, *His ſoul or life kindleth coals.* The ſoul and life of irrational Creatures is the ſame, and both are but breath, *His breath kindleth coals*; that is, his breath is ſo hot, that it will even kindle dead or unkindled coals. Mr. *Broughton* renders, *His breath would ſet coals on fire.* The breath of the Whale is not only compared to a great wind, iſſuing out of a pair of bellows, which ſoon kindleth a ſpark into a great fire, but is it ſelf here compared to a fire by a ſtrong Hyperbole, like that which concludes this matter.

And a flame goeth out of his mouth.

That is, a heat as from a flame, or ſuch a heat as a flame giveth.

Theſe four verſes may be improved for our uſe, in two things.

Firſt, To inform us how terrible ſome Creatures are. There is nothing which is not terrible in this; *His mouth ſends out a burning lamp, and ſparks of fire; ſmoak goeth out of his noſtrils, coals are kindled by his breath, and a flame goeth out of his mouth.* What's the meaning and import of all this? not that *Leviathan* hath theſe, or doth theſe things indeed; but in his wrath (for this is the deſcription of an inraged *Leviathan*) he appears as if he were nothing but heat, and would ſet the very Element of Water on fire, and turn the very Billows of the Sea into burning flames.

Secondly, *If the Lord hath put ſuch a fierceneſs into this Creature when he is angry, what is there in the Lord himſelf when he is angry!* The Lord in his anger is deſcribed like this Leviathan (*Pſal.* 18. 7, 8.) *Then the Earth ſhook and trembled, the Foundation alſo of the Hills moved, and were ſhaken, becauſe he was wroth* (what follows?) *There went up a ſmoak out of his noſtrils, and fire out of his mouth devoured; coals were kindled by it.* The words are almoſt word for word, the ſame with thoſe in the Text. The Lord is ſet forth, as uſhered by fire (*Pſal.* 50. 2, 3.) *Out of* Zion, *the perfection of Beauty, God hath ſhined. Our God ſhall come, and ſhall not keep ſilence, a fire ſhall devour before him, and it ſhall be very tempeſtuous round about him.* Again (*Pſal.* 97. 2.) *Clouds and darkneſs are round about him* (verſ. 3.) *A fire goeth before him, and burneth up his Enemies round about*; that is, he deſtroyeth his Enemies in his anger, as if he conſumed them by fire. Once more (*Iſa.* 33. 14.) *The ſinners in* Zion *are afraid, fearfulneſs hath ſurprized the hypocrites; who among us ſhall dwell in the devouring fire? who amongſt us ſhall dwell with everlaſting burnings?* Thus the Scripture ſpeaks of the Lord in his wrath. And doubtleſs the flaming anger of *Leviathan*, when provoked, is but like a warm Sun-ſhine, compared with the provoked anger, and hot diſpleaſure of God againſt preſumptuous ſinners. Who is able to abide his wrath? who (in ſin) *can dwell with thoſe everlaſting burnings? who* (unpardoned) *can ſtand before the devouring fire, and flames of the Lords diſpleaſure?* Thus we have the diſcovery of *Leviathans* furious heat; he is all in a flame.

Now the Lord having ſhewed what work *Leviathan* makes with his mouth and noſtrils, which belong to his head, he comes next to his neck.

Verſ. 22. **In his neck remaineth ſtrength, and ſorrow is turned into joy before him.**

Leviathans head is ſtrongly joyned to the reſt of his body, by his ſtrong neck; yet ſome queſtion whether the Whale hath any neck or no, becauſe no diſtinction (which in other Creatures is viſible) appears between his head and his body. The Learned *Bochartus* makes this another Argument againſt the Whale, and a little reflects upon *Diodate*, who joyning fully with him in Opinion, that *Leviathan* is the Crocodile, yet lets go this hold, yielding that the Crocodile hath no more neck than the Whale, as the neck is taken ſtrictly for that diſcernable diſtance between head and ſhoulders; and though he himſelf grants that ſeveral other Authors, by him alledged, ſay the Crocodile hath no neck, yet he anſwers, 'tis ſafer to credit *Ariſtotle*, who ſaith the Crocodile hath a neck, and gives this reaſon for it, becauſe thoſe Animals which have no neck at all, cannot move their heads, whereas the Crocodile (by the teſtimony of *Pliny*, and others) can turn his head upwards, or hold it up backwards to bite his prey.

To this ſome anſwer, and I conceive their anſwer may ſatisfie in this point, That how little, or how undiſcernable ſoever the ſpace is between the head and the body of any Animal, the very joyning or coupling of them together, may be called his neck; and in that ſenſe the Whale hath a neck as well as the Crocodile. To this I may add, that the ſhorter the neck of any Animal is, the ſtronger it is; and that complies fully with what is here ſaid of the neck of *Leviathan*.

In his neck remaineth ſtrength.] The Hebrew is, *Lodgeth.* And ſo Mr. *Broughton* renders, *In his neck always lodgeth ſtrength*; that is, he is always ſtrong, very ſtrong-neckt; his neck is ſo ſtiff and ſtrong, that ſtrength it ſelf may ſeem to have taken up its reſidence there: That's the Elegancy of the Hebrew. So then, theſe words ſhew the great ſtrength of *Leviathan.* A ſtiff or thick neck, ſignifies both ſtrength of body, and ſtoutneſs of ſpirit. Naturaliſts ſay, thoſe Creatures are very ſtrong, that are thick neckt, as Bulls, *&c.* and they are weak that have thin ſlender necks. The Scripture intimates the ſtiffneſs and unyieldingneſs of mans will to the Commands of God, by the ſtiffneſs of his neck (*Pſalm* 75. 5.) *Liſt not up your horn on high, ſpeak not with a ſtiff neck*; that is, with a neck that will not bow to the Lords Yoak, nor obey his Commands. Humble ones bow their heads to worſhip God, and yield their necks to his will. For though to *bow down the head like a Bull-ruſh for a day*, be not the Faſt which God hath choſen (*Iſa.* 58. 5.) for that is but an outſide repentance, and they who do ſo, may ſtill remain ſtiff-ſpirited and pertinacious in their ſins; yet the bowing of the head hath in it the appearance of a bowed or humbled heart, and a ſtiff neck is the badge of a proud impenitent one. To ſpeak with a ſtiff neck, is to ſpeak arrogantly. *Hannah* in her Song (1 *Sam.* 2. 3.) uſeth this language to the ſtiff ones of the world, *Talk no more ſo exceeding proudly; let not arrogancy come out of your mouth*: we put in the Margin, *Let not hardneſs come out of your mouth*; that is, let it not appear at your mouths, that your hearts are hard, that your ſpirits are high and ſtiff; ſpeak no more as if you were *Leviathans*, as if you could not bow your necks. 'Tis good to have a neck ſtrong to bear, but there is nothing worſe than a ſtrong neck that will not bow; yet the ſtrength of *Leviathans* neck ſeems rather to imply his courage, than his pertinacy, as it followeth, *In his neck remaineth ſtrength*,

Qui collum habent groſſum fortes ſunt, imbecilles autem qui illud habent gracile. Ariſtot. *in Phyſiognomicis.*

And ſorrow is turned into joy before him.] There are three other readings of theſe words, which I ſhall name, and come to our own:

Firſt, Some thus, *In his neck remaineth ſtrength, and before him danceth fear.* Several of the Learned inſiſt much upon this Tranſlation, and their meaning is this; all that come near *Leviathan*, or within ſight of him, are afraid; all the Fiſh in the Sea, and all the Mariners upon the Sea that ſee him, dance or haſt away for fear; as if fear cauſed by him, triumphing over them, danced before him. He makes ſuch a combuſtion by ſtirring the waters, and rolling in them, that he frights every living thing he meets with, none dare ſtand him.

Ante eum exilit mæror. Jun. i. e. *mærore afficit omnes obvios; ac ſi de illis triumphans exultaret mæror effectus ab ea humanitus dictum.* Jun.

Secondly, Mr. *Broughton* renders it thus, *Before him danceth carefulneſs*, that is, (as himſelf gloſſeth) *he takes or hath no care, meeting with any Fiſh to feed upon, that his taking thought is a gladneſs.* He is ſo ſtrong, that he knows he can Maſter all the Fiſh that comes near him, and can have prey enough for the taking, to ſatisfie his vaſt Stomach, and fill his Belly; therefore he takes no care for to morrow, *before him danceth carefulneſs.* Chriſt ſaith to his Diſciples, *take no thought for the morrow*: It were well if ſuch carefulneſs danced before us, as *Leviathans* cares dance before him. We ſay of ſome men, *they ſing care away*; and all carking, heart-cutting, and dividing cares, ſhould even dance away before all men. The Apoſtles counſel is (1 *Cor.* 7. 32.) *I would have you without carefulneſs*, as much as to ſay, let carefulneſs dance before you, or put it from you; uſe the means, and be not ſolicitous about ſucceſſes or iſſues. The more we live by Faith, the leſs we live in care, or the more our cares die; and they whoſe hearts are full of Faith, cannot but have their heads emptied of cares. Some ſay, we have a great Family, many Bellies to fill, and Backs to cloath, how can we be without carefulneſs? Conſider one *Leviathan* needs more food than many Families, yet he takes no care, God provides for him though he know it not, and will he not provide for thoſe that know him? therefore let carefulneſs dance before you: That's a good reading for our uſe and comfort.

Thirdly, Others tranſlate thus, *Before him paſſeth penury.* The meaning of that reading is; whereſoever *Leviathan* comes, he leaves nothing but penury behind him, he devours all before him, and all little enough, ſcarce enough for him, all the Fiſh he meets withal in the Sea, he eats them up: the Sea hardly affords enough to fill his huge Belly, and ſatisfie his hungry appetite. As 'tis ſaid of *Behemoth*, he thinks he can draw up *Jordan*, that is, all the waters of *Jordan*; ſo *Leviathan* thinks he can draw up the Sea, that is, all the Fiſh in the Sea; ſo that how much ſoever he meets with, he looks upon it as penury, at moſt, as but enough for him. So that this Tranſlation, *Before him paſſeth penury*, may have or bear theſe two interpretations: Either, Firſt, That he makes all penury where he comes; as its ſaid of the *Turkiſh* Wars, *Where the Grand Signiors Horſe treads, the graſs will not grow*, he

Faciem ejus præcedit egeſtas. Vulg.

treads down, and ſpoils all; or, as 'tis ſaid in Scripture of thoſe Enemies, *The Land was before them like the Garden of* Eden, *and behind them as a deſolate Wilderneſs.* Or, Secondly, That he thinks all to be but penury and ſcarcity (how plentiful ſoever it is) that is before him. That which may ſuffice many, is ſcarce a morſel, or a mouthful for him; as if all the Fiſh in the Sea could not ſerve him for a Breakfaſt. As 'tis ſaid of *Alexander the Great*, when he had conquered the known World, he was as hungry and ſharp ſet as ever, he looked upon all as penury, and wiſhed there were another World for him to conquer. Thus plenty is penury to *Leviathan*, he is an unſatiable Gulf: That's a third reading; our own ſaith,

Sorrow is turned into joy before him.] The meaning, I conceive, is this, *Leviathan* is ſo ſtrong and powerful, ſuch ſtrength remaineth in his neck, that nothing can daunt him, or bring down his ſpirit; nothing can trouble him, much leſs terrifie him, he fears nothing, he fears none; and if any object of ſorrow preſent it ſelf to him, 'tis preſently *his joy.* That which hath greateſt matter of ſorrow in it, is to him matter of ſport, or he makes a ſport of it, he even rejoyceth in the midſt of thoſe things that make others ſad; he either makes nothing of them, or no ſuch thing of them as they appear to others: *Sorrow is turned into joy before him.* It is ſaid of that Land-*Leviathan*, *Alexander the Great* before-mentioned, that he even leaped for joy when he was ingaged in great dangers, and hazardous attempts; then he would ſay exultingly, *Now I ſee danger ſuitable to the greatneſs of my ſpirit.* In ſuch a ſenſe it may be ſaid here of *Leviathan*, *Sorrow is turned into joy before him.* But whence was this? ſurely from his ſtrength, and the confidence he had in it.

תדוץ *Exultavit* Mont. *vertetur in lætitiam.* Pagn. *Quicquid ſolicitudinem aliis parit excitat, & exhilarat ipſius animum.* Bez.

Jam video animo meo par periculum.

Hence note; *They who have great ſtrength, think themſelves above ſorrow and danger.*

Leviathan is ſo ſtrong, that ſorrow is turned into joy before him; how full of joy, or how joyful then is he! as Chriſt ſaith (*Mat.* 6.23.) *If the light that is in thee be darkneſs, how great is that darkneſs?* ſo if our ſorrow be turned into joy to us, how great is our ioy? Some good men have found it ſo according to their Faith, and moſt ſtrong men hope it ſhall be ſo to them, according to their preſumption. A ſtrong man rejoyceth to run a Race, whereas a weak man is afraid of it; going is grievous to him, much more running. Whatſoever we have ſtrength to do, if we have hearts alſo to do it, we rejoyce to do it; yea, we are ſo apt to rejoyce in our carnal ſtrength of any kind, that the Lord by his Prophet (*Jer.* 9.23.) forbids it in every kind of ſtrength, in ſtrength of underſtanding, *Let not the wiſe man glory in his wiſdom*; he forbids it alſo in ſtrength of eſtate, *Let not the rich man glory in his riches*; and laſtly, he forbids it in this particular ſtrength of body, *Let not the mighty man glory in his might.* And there is great reaſon we ſhould take heed of being found *Leviathans* in this, ſeeing none have been more oppreſſed and weakned with ſorrow than they, who upon confidence in Self-ſtrength have thought themſelves above it, or that it ſhould certainly be turned into joy before them.

Further, It will not be unuſeful to conſider, that as here it is ſaid, *Leviathans ſorrow is turned into joy before him*; ſo it is promiſed to, and the priviledge of all true Believers, to have their ſorrows, or that their ſorrows ſhall be turned into joy before them (*John* 16.20.) *Verily, I ſay unto you* (ſaid Chriſt himſelf) *that ye ſhall weep, and lament, and the world ſhall rejoyce* (here's the caſe of Chriſts Diſciples in this world, *they ſhall weep and lament*, that is, they ſhall have cauſe to weep, and many times ſhall actually weep and lament) *but your ſorrow ſhall be turned into joy.* As ye ſhall rejoyce in ſpirit under thoſe diſpenſations which have the greateſt occaſion and matter of ſorrow in them; or as *Eliphaz* ſaid (*Job* 5.22.) *At deſtruction and famine ye ſhall laugh*, ye ſhall laugh at deſtruction it ſelf; ſo at laſt all the very matter of your ſorrow ſhall be turned into joy. The moſt ſorrowful things ſhall not now be able to ſwallow you up with ſorrow, and at laſt you ſhall not know by any then preſent experience any ſorrowful thing. All your tears ſhall be, not only wiped off from, but out of your eyes; Chriſt will then renew that Miracle, in a Metaphorical ſenſe, which he once wrought in a Natural, of which we read (*John* 2.) *He will turn water into wine*; the waters of ſorrow and tribulation, into the wine of joy and conſolation. Which bleſſed priviledge is alſo clearly propheſied (*Iſa.* 65.13, 14.)

Laſtly, If by reaſon of *Leviathans* ſtrength, his ſorrow is turned into joy, ſurely the faithful, who have the Lord for their ſtrength, may turn their ſorrow into joy, into ſuch joys, as none ſhall take from them, or turn back, or again into ſorrows.

Thus far concerning the ſtrength of *Leviathans* neck, and the effect of it, his joyful or merry life. The next words ſhew him ſtrong all over, or in all the parts of his body.

Verſ. 23. **The flakes of his fleſh are joyned together, they are firm in themſelves, they cannot be moved.**

This compactneſs of *Leviathans* fleſh argues an univerſal ſtrength. His fleſh is ſo compact, as if it were a *molten thing*, or (as the word rendred *firm* in the latter part of the verſe ſignifies) like braſs, or Bell-metal moulten in a Furnace, and caſt into a Body. Such is the force of the Hebrew.

The flakes of his fleſh are joyned.] Though *Leviathan* be a Fiſh, an Inhabitant of the waters, yet the Scripture calls the bulk of his body *fleſh.* So (*Levit.* 11.10, 11.) *All that have not fins, nor ſcales in the Seas, and in the Rivers, of all that move in the waters, they ſhall be even an abomination unto you, ye ſhall not eat of their fleſh.* In Scripture ſenſe Fiſh is fleſh, the Apoſtle uſeth the ſame language (1 *Cor.* 15.39.) *All fleſh is not the ſame fleſh* (that is, it is not of the ſame kind) *but there is one kind of fleſh of men, and another fleſh of beaſts, another of fiſhes.* The Fiſh of the Sea have fleſh, as well as the beaſts of the Earth: And that which *Job* denied of his fleſh (*Chap.* 6.12.) we may affirm of *Leviathans* fleſh, *His ſtrength is as the ſtrength of ſtones, and his fleſh as of braſs.* As the ſcales of *Leviathan* without, ſo now his whole fleſh within, is ſpoken of, as if it were made of ſolid braſs. The very refuſe, the vileſt parts of his fleſh (as the word which we tranſlate *flakes* is rendred, *Amos* 8.6.) are firm and ſtrong, being joyned or glued faſt together, as the *Septuagint* expreſs the ſignificancy of the word, by us rendred *joyned.* And as it followeth,

They are firm in themſelves, they cannot be moved.

That is, one part of his fleſh cannot be taken from the other, or he cannot be moved; that is, *Leviathan* is ſo ſtrong, that nothing can ſtir him, or cauſe him to give ground, unleſs himſelf pleaſeth. And as his fleſh covering his bones is thus firm, ſo is his heart, covered and defended by both.

Verſ. 24. **His heart is as firm as a ſtone, yea, as hard as a piece of the nether Mill-ſtone.**

The heart is the principal internal part of any Creature; and the fleſh of the heart in every Creature, is harder than the fleſh of any other part of his body; the heart is a very compact and hard piece of fleſh. And the Lord would have us know, that the heart of *Leviathan* is ſo hard, that the heart of any other Creature, in compariſon of his, may be called ſoft and tender. *His heart*

Cor in omnibus animantibus ſpiſſum, nervoſum, & benè compactum eſt. Ariſt. *l.* 3. *de part. c.*4.

Is as firm as a ſtone.] That is, 'tis extraordinary hard; which is further intended by the laſt words of this verſe;

Yea, as hard as a piece of the nether Mill-ſtone.

Mills have two ſtones, an upper, which in Hebrew is expreſſed by a word, which ſignifies *to ride*, becauſe it ſeems to ride (moving or turning round) upon the nether ſtone, which becauſe it bears the weight of the work in grinding, is the harder of the two, though both are very hard; as if it had been ſaid, if any ſtone be harder than another, that's moſt like the heart of *Leviathan.*

Superior mola רכב *dicebatur ab inequitando.*

Now though this may have reſpect to the litteral or proper hardneſs of the fleſh of *Leviathans* heart, yet we are not to ſtay in that ſenſe; for there is a moral or metaphorical hardneſs, as well as a natural or proper hardneſs. The heart of one man is ſaid to be hard, and the heart of another ſoft and tender, not becauſe the natural fleſh of one mans heart is hard, and anothers ſoft, but becauſe of a moral hardneſs or tenderneſs in the heart of the one or other.

There is no difference between them, in the body of a good and bad man, as to tenderneſs and hardneſs; but the ſoul-heart (if I may ſo ſpeak) of the one, and of the other, differ exceedingly as to hardneſs and tenderneſs. The heart of every good man (as to the ſpiritual conſtitution of it) is ſoft and tender; but the heart of every evil man is hard and ſtony. Again, a fearful man is ſaid to have a ſoft heart, every little danger pierceth it, or makes an impreſſion upon it; but a man of courage and boldneſs is ſaid to have a hard heart, or a heart of braſs, nothing can daunt him: In this ſenſe *Leviathan* hath a hard or firm heart, a heart of braſs. The hardneſs of *Leviathans* heart, notes his courage, boldneſs, and ſtoutneſs; he is not timerous, like many other Creatures; his heart is as uncapable of fear as a ſtone, and as impenetrable by any paſſion, as the nether Mill-ſtone. So that to ſay his heart is as hard as a ſtone, is all one as to ſay, *He is fearleſs*, or *he is couragious.* So then,

Fortis & intrepida eſt. Jun. *Eſt forti & infracto corde, ſeu animo nihil timet.* Merc.

There is a threefold moral hardneſs of heart ſpoken of in Scripture.

First, Impenitency for ſin, is often called hardneſs of heart. They who go on knowingly to ſin againſt God, are bold daring men, they have hard hearts indeed: Such hearts have all men by nature; and therefore God makes that promiſe to ſinners, *I will take away the heart of ſtone, and give a heart of fleſh* (*Ezek.* 36. 26.)

Crudeles & inclementes aut è ſaxo geniti, aut cor habere ſaxeum dicuntur.

Secondly, Unmercifulneſs or cruelty towards men, is called hardneſs of heart. We commonly ſay of ſuch a man, he is a hard-hearted man; that is, he is a cruel and unmerciful man.

Thirdly, Couragiouſneſs and ſtoutneſs in appearance of danger, may be called hardneſs of heart. A man of great courage hath a heart hardned againſt all fears and dangers.

Leviathan hath a *hard heart*, in theſe two latter ſenſes; he is cruel and unmerciful, he ſpares none, he ſwallows down all without diſtinction, a *Jonah* and all, if he meet with him. The Whale hath no mercy, and therefore may be ſaid to have a hard heart.

Cor durum ſignum audaciæ & fortitudinis. Plin. *l.* 11. *c.* 37.

Again, *Leviathan* is full of courage, he fears no colours (as we ſay) therefore he may well be ſaid to have a hard heart. And thoſe Creatures which have the hardeſt hearts in a Phyſical ſenſe, are obſerved by Naturaliſts to be moſt daring and couragious.

Now, as *Leviathan* is thus fearleſs at the appearance of the greateſt dangers, ſo when he appears, all are filled with fear. As he is altogether dreadleſs, according to the interpretation given of this verſe, ſo he is altogether dreadful, according to the expreſs tenour of the next.

Verſ. 25. **When he raiſeth up himſelf, the mighty are afraid; by reaſon of breakings they purifie themſelves.**

We have had in the ſeven verſes laſt opened, the deſcription of *Leviathan* in many things, which cannot but render him an object of fear and terrour; ſurely then, when he ſhews himſelf, all will be in a fright, even *the Mighty*, who ſeem beſt fenced againſt fear, as the Text ſpeaks, *When he raiſeth up himſelf, the mighty are afraid.*

When he raiſeth up himſelf.] Whither? not out of the water, but in the water, or to the ſurface of the water; ſometimes the Whale ſwims upon the top of the water. Now, *when he raiſeth up himſelf*, or (as Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates) *at his ſtatelineſs*, or (as another, both putting the word into a Noun, which we put into a Verb) *At his Excellency*

The mighty are afraid; by reaſon of breakings they purifie themſelves.

In theſe words (as was ſhewed before) we have a double effect of *Leviathans* raiſing himſelf in ſight, or to the view of others.

The firſt effect is, *The mighty are afraid.*

The ſecond is this, *By reaſon of breakings they purifie themſelves.*

The mighty are afraid.] The Lord doth not ſay, *When he raiſeth up himſelf, the weak, and* (as we ſay) *Hen-hearted Cowards, but the mighty are afraid*, the mighty of all ſorts; not only mighty Fiſhes, but mighty men; the ſtouteſt Seamen and Marriners, yea, Captains and Warriours at Sea are afraid; and not only are they afraid *when he raiſeth up himſelf* (like a moving Mountain) but amazed with fear, and even ſtruck dead with aſtoniſhment. The Hebrew word rendred *mighty*, may be carried beyond *mighty men*, even to Angels; and ſo the vulgar Latine reads it, *When he lifts up himſelf, the Angels will be afraid.* The word is applied to the Angels all the Scripture over; it properly ſignifies *ſtrong* or mighty ones. Angels are ſtrong and mighty, they excel all other Creatures in ſtrength (*Pſa.* 103.20.) If we take that tranſlation, *The Angels will be afraid*, it is only to ſhew, that *Leviathan* is ſo terrible, that not only the Fiſh in the Sea, and men on Earth, but (if ſuch a thing could be) the Angels of Heaven would be afraid of him. As Chriſt when he would ſet forth the efficacy of Seduction, which ſhall be in the latter days, ſaith, *Falſe Prophets ſhall come, and deceive, if it were poſſible, the very Elect* (*Mat.*24.24.) So this *Leviathan* would make the Angels afraid, if it were poſſible. As Ships in a Storm at Sea, are ſaid to *mount up to the Heavens* (*Pſal.*107.26.) though they always keep upon the billows of the water; ſo by a like Hyperbole, we may ſay, when *Leviathan* raiſeth up himſelf, the Angels of Heaven are afraid. But as the word often ſignifies an Angel, ſo it is commonly applied to men of might, ſtrength, and courage. We tranſlate indefinitely, *the mighty*, without determining it upon one or other ſort of mighty ones; and ſo we may underſtand it of any among the viſible Creatures that are mighty. *When he raiſeth up himſelf, the mighty are afraid.*

אלים *Fortes, proprie pii, i.e. Angeli hoc nomine dicti quod robore polleant maxime præ cæteris creaturis; hoc nomen etiam ad homines transfertur, robore & potentia valentes. Timebunt Angeli.* Vulg.

Hence note, Firſt, *Great dangers may put the ſtouteſt into fear.*

Natural fear is a paſſion or perturbation of the mind, raiſed by the appearance, or our apprehenſion of ſome eminent or imminent evil ready to take hold of us, or fall upon us. And as ſome are of ſo fearful a nature, or are made ſo fearful by a ſecret judgment of God upon them, that they are afraid *where no fear is* (*Pſal.* 53. 5.) and (being purſued with their own guilt) *flee when no man purſueth* (*Prov.*28.1.) or (as another Scripture ſpeaks) *At the ſound of a ſhaken leaf*; ſo it is natural to all men to fear, in caſe of real and apparent danger, eſpecially if the danger be like a *Leviathan, very great*, or if a *Leviathan* raiſe himſelf againſt them. And therefore Jeſus Chriſt himſelf, being in our Nature, and cloathed with fleſh, began not only to be afraid, but *amazed* (*Mark* 14. 33.) a little before his Paſſion, when he ſaw that greateſt *Leviathan*, the Devil, together with many great *Leviathans*, raiſing themſelves to ſwallow him up.

And if when a *Leviathan* raiſeth up himſelf, the mighty are afraid, how ſhall the mighty be afraid, when God raiſeth up himſelf! that's the deſign of God in this paſſage. The holy Prophet gave this caution to all men (*Zach.*2.13.) *Be ſilent, O all fleſh, before the Lord; for he is raiſed up out of his holy habitation.* As if it had been ſaid, the Lord now ſhews himſelf: he was before as one aſleep, or laid down upon his bed, but now the Lord is raiſed up. What then? *Be ſilent, O all fleſh.* The mightieſt have reaſon then to be ſilent: How ſilent? There's a twofold ſilence; Firſt, from ſpeaking; Secondly, from boaſting. That charge in the Prophet is not to be underſtood of a ſilence from ſpeaking, but from boaſting; as if it had been ſaid, Be in fear and reverence, for the Lord is raiſed up out of his holy habitation. Another Prophet tells us, that at the Lords appearances the mighty ſhall tremble, and be afraid (*Iſa.* 2. 19.) having ſaid a little before, *The loftineſs of man ſhall be bowed down, and the haughtineſs of man ſhall be made low*, He adds, *They ſhall go into the holes of the Rocks, and into the caves of the Earth, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his Majeſty, when he ariſeth to ſhake terribly the Earth.* When the Lord ariſeth to ſhake this world by his Judgments, he will make the mighty tremble, and run into the holes of the Rocks, to hide themſelves from his dreadful preſence. If a Creature, a *Leviathan*, cauſeth the mighty to fear when he ariſeth, how much more may the mightieſt of the world fear, when God ariſeth! and therefore that prayer of *David* (*Pſal.* 68. 1.) *Let God ariſe, let his Enemies be ſcattered; let them that hate him, flee before him*, may well be reſolved into this conditional Propoſition; *If God ariſeth, his Enemies ſhall be ſcattered, and all that hate him ſhall flee before him.*

This may teach the mean and poor of the Earth to fear him, who can make the mightieſt afraid. When God is angry, the mighty cannot, then much leſs can mean underlings ſtand before him. *When* Leviathan *raiſeth himſelf, the mighty are afraid,*

And by reaſon of breakings they purifie themſelves.

Confractiones vocat, quando Leviathan elevando ſe fluctus excitat, qui propterea משברים *appellantur, quod ſe invicem frangant.*

Mr. *Broughton* ſaith, by reaſon of *ſhiverings.* But what are theſe *ſhiverings* or *breakings?* Leviathan breaks the waves and waters. The waves of the Sea are expreſſed in the Hebrew tongue by a word which ſignifieth *breakings*, becauſe they break themſelves one againſt another; as alſo, poſſibly, becauſe Ships are broken by the waves. And when 'tis here ſaid, *By reaſon of breakings they purifie themſelves*; the meaning may be this, by reaſon of the waves and troubled waters, which *Leviathan* makes when he beſtirs or raiſeth up himſelf, they purifie themſelves. Nor doth *Leviathan* break the waves and waters only, but whatever comes near him he breaks and ſhivers to pieces; if a Ship be in his way, he breaks it, as ſome have been taught, to their coſt, by ſad experience. *By reaſon of breakings*

They purifie themſelves.] The mighty are afraid when he raiſeth himſelf up; and ſeeing him make ſuch work, *they purifie themſelves.* What's that? There are various underſtandings and Expoſitions of this clauſe.

Aliqui verbum (purgant) exponunt, aberrant; *i. e. Ita percelluntur metu ut animis toti concidunt, nec ſciunt quid agant.* Merl Peccant, *i. e. errore ſe obſtringunt, ut neſciant, quid faciant. Nam* חטא *ut, Græcè* Ἁμαρτάνειν *dicitur, qui aberrat à ſcopo.* Druſ.

Firſt, The word rendred to *purifie*, properly ſignifies to *err*, or to *wander out of the way*; and it notes, as outward erring or wandring, that of the body, when we know not whither to go, ſo inward wandring, that of the mind, when we know not what to do. The mind or underſtanding wanders often, and roves up and down, we know not whither. In this ſenſe, ſeveral underſtand the words; *By reaſon of breakings they wander*, they are ſtruck with ſuch a fear and amazement, that they run about like men diſtracted, and out of their wits; or, they (ſuppoſe it of Mariners) know not how to guide the Ship, nor how to handle their Sails and Tacklings. Some chiefly inſiſt upon this interpretation, *By reaſon of breakings they wander*, or know not what to do next to help or ſave themſelves from periſhing. A man in ſtreights, uſually ſaith, *I know not what to do.* They who are in much fear of ſuffering in any kind, ſeldom know what to do in any way for their own ſafety, and often take the unſafeſt way, running themſelves further into danger, while they endeavour to eſcape it. This is a proper and profitable Expoſition; and we may note this from it.

Great fears cauſe great diſtractions.

Every worldly fear hath ſomewhat of diſtraction in it, and in proportion to the fear is the diſtraction; therefore great fear muſt needs cauſe great diſtraction. *When men in a ſtorm mount up to Heaven, and go down again to the depths,* 'tis ſaid (*Pſal.* 107. 26, 27.) *their ſoul is melted becauſe of trouble, they reel to and fro, and ſtagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits end*; their wit cannot go a ſtep further with them, nor their reaſon conduct them any longer. We ſay in the Margin, *All their wiſdom is ſwallowed up.* He that fears *Leviathan* will ſwallow him up, may ſoon find his wiſdom ſwallowed up. Wiſe and mighty men may be mightily puzled in great dangers, and utterly diſabled to make uſe, either of their wiſdom, or of their might. Good *Jehoſhaphat* (2 *Chron.* 20. 12.) when a great Enemy was invading him, cryed out, *O our God, wilt thou not judge them? for we have no might againſt them, neither do we know what to do*; we are bereft of counſel. Great dangers even unhinge our reaſon, and put it out of place. The Diſciples of Chriſt in a Storm (*Mat.* 8. 25.) were not only like men at their wits end, but almoſt at their Faiths end too, crying out, *Lord, ſave us, we periſh*; if thou help us not, we are all undone: *And he ſaid, why are ye fearful? O ye of little faith.* There is nothing but Faith can keep down the prevailings of fear, in great or prevailing dangers and breakings; and when once we are at our Faiths end in a time of extremity, we ſhall ſoon be at our wits end alſo, yea, even quite out of our wits. A faithleſs man is no match for little fears, and he that hath but a little Faith, or is a man of little Faith, may ſoon be overmatcht with great ones. As perfect love, either the actings of our perfect love to God, or the evidence and apprehenſions of the perfect love of God to us, *caſteth out fear* (1 *Joh.* 4. 18.) that is, all that fear which hath torment in it; ſo alſo doth perfect Faith in God, that is, a ſtrong, a well-foundation'd, and a well and high-built Faith. 'Tis either for want of Faith, or for ſome want in Faith, that mighty men by reaſon of breakings are not only afraid, but *wander*, as uncertain of their way. That's the firſt reading.

Secondly, We ſay, *They purifie themſelves:* What's that? there are two interpretations of this tranſlation.

Quando mare fluctibus intumeſcit, nauſea oboritur, & qui ſunt in navi fere vomunt, ſtomachum purgantes. Druſ. *Alvum ſolvit.* Bez. Rab. Levi.

Firſt, Some interpret it of a bodily diſtemper, coming upon the mighty by reaſon of their fear. In Storms at Sea Paſſengers purge their Stomachs, uſually by Vomiting, and ſometimes by Stool. Thus (I ſay) ſome expound this Text, that through extremity of fear, they are ſurprized with a ſudden looſneſs. The Prophet ſpeaking of a dreadful day, ſaith (*Ezek.* 7. 17.) *All knees ſhall be feeble*, we put in the Margin, *All knees ſhall go into the water*; the meaning is (as all Interpreters give it) they ſhall not be able to hold their water. And as ſome, upon a ſudden aſſault of fear, cannot hold their water, ſo neither can others their ordure. The reaſon of it is plain in Nature, fear making a great diſſipation of ſpirits, weakens the retentive faculty. Some look upon this as a ſenſe too low and mean for the intendment of this place, though in it ſelf a truth: And therefore 'tis enough to mention it; nor ought it to be left unmentioned, ſeeing it may humble us to conſider unto what pittiful exigents mighty ones may be brought, when ſurprized with dangers. But;

Vox יתחטאו *in Piel & Hiphtael expiationem à peccato importat. Unde vertitur expiabunt ſe, ſeu pænitentiam agent, & remiſſionem à Deo petent, præſenti mortis diſcrimine territi.* Sculſ.

Secondly, I conceive (and upon that I ſhall inſiſt) theſe words, *They purifie themſelves*, are rather to be taken Morally; that is, mighty men, when they ſee themſelves in ſuch danger, mighty *Leviathan* raiſing himſelf, breaking all before him, what do they? *they purifie themſelves*, that is, they betake themſelves to prayer and repentance; and then they will *purifie themſelves* in all haſt, by confeſſing and vowing to put away their ſins; then they will (in all haſt) make their peace with God; this is a good interpretation. And the word which we tranſlate here to *purifie*, is applied to this ſpiritual purifying, by confeſſing of ſin, and turning to God, and promiſes of amendment (*Pſal.* 51. 7.) *Purge* (or *purifie*) *me with Hyſop, and I ſhall be clean*; only there 'tis Gods act, here mans. But as God doth purge us by pardon, ſo we may be ſaid to purge our ſelves by repentance, and earneſt ſuing to God for pardon. And how uſual is it, even with bad men, when they are in great danger, when they ſee nothing but death before them, then to fall a praying and repenting, then to confeſs their ſins, and promiſe amendment, or to become new men. Thus by *reaſon of breakings*, when all is ready to be broken, loſt, and ſpoiled, *they purifie themſelves.*

Hence obſerve; *In great dangers, which threaten preſent death, or undoing at leaſt, even common men will confeſs their ſins, and make great ſhows or ſemblances of repentance.*

When the mighty are afraid, when they are in trouble and miſery, then they cry to God for mercy, and cry out upon their ſins, as the procuring cauſe of their miſeries and troubles. How good, how godly will they be for a fit (and it may work further) in a day of evil! It is ſaid of the Marriners in a Storm (*Pſal.* 107. 28.) *Then they cry unto the Lord in their diſtreſſes.* Even ſuch Marriners as ſeldom think of God, nor pray to him in a Calm, being in a Storm fall a praying, *they purifie themſelves*: Now they are for repentance, now they will caſt their ſins over-board, ſeeing themſelves almoſt ſwallowed up by the raging Sea. Thus (*Jon.* 1. 4, 5.) *When the Lord ſent out a great Wind into the Sea, and there was a mighty Tempeſt in the Sea, ſo that the Ship was like to be broken: Then the Marriners were afraid*; that was the firſt effect which the Tempeſt wrought in them: And what was the next? that was a fit of Devotion; *They cryed every man to his God.* Now they purified themſelves by repentance and prayer. *Were not theſe Marriners grown very good, when beſet with evil?* Thus many pray, repent, make lamentations over their ſins, take up reſolutions againſt their ſins in a Storm; then, or thus, even carnal, ignorant, common men will purifie themſelves in times of great danger. We ſay well, *true repentance is never too late, but late repentance is ſeldom true.* We may ſay alſo, *Repentance in a Storm is good, but repentance in a Storm is not always good; real dangers may produce but falſe, and feigned, and forced repentance.* And they who repent only when they are in, or becauſe they are in a Storm, were never good as yet, nor will they continue in that goodneſs which then they make ſhew of. As a godly man purifies himſelf when he ſees a Storm, ſo he purifies himſelf in a Calm too, or when he is in greateſt ſafety. And if we do not purifie our ſelves in a Calm, as well as in a Storm, our repentance is but the repentance of Heathen Marriners. Be in a Calm, what you are in a Storm; be when you ſee Lambs, what you were when you ſee or ſaw *Leviathans*.

Secondly, obſerve; *It is a duty to repent when we ſee great dangers, or* (as the Text ſpeaks) *great breakings.*

To be ſure we ought to repent in a time of trouble. We are to repent at all times, but then moſt. Be careful you leave not that work undone at any time, but do it very carefully at ſuch a time. It is ſaid of thoſe that *were ſcorched with great heat* (Revel. 16. 9.) *they blaſphemed the Name of God, which hath power over thoſe Plagues, and they repented not to give him glory.* And of others under the fifth Vial (verſ. 11.) *They blaſphemed the God of Heaven, becauſe of their Plagues, and of their ſores, and repented not of their deeds.* It was the character of that bad King *Ahaz*, that *in the time of his diſtreſs he ſinned yet more.* What! ſin in a Storm! ſin when God is ſcorching, plaguing, and diſtreſſing us! This is not only greateſt impenitency, but higheſt impudency, or moſt ſenſleſs ſtupidity. Such are like him, of whom *Solomon* ſpeaks (*Prov.* 23. 33, 34.) They are *as he that lieth down in the midſt of the Sea, or as he that lieth* (ſleeping 'tis meant) *upon the top of a Maſt*, whereby any ſtrong blaſt of wind, or great ſway, and yawing of the Ship, he may be tumbled into the deep.

There are two things we ſhould do, when we ſee breakings, or great dangers, ready to break us.

Firſt, We ſhould hold faſt all the good we have, if we have any. When we are like to loſe all outward good things, and that which is better than any or all of them, our lives, we have reaſon to hold faſt all our ſpiritual and inward good things, the truths of God, our faith in God, our love to God, and all his ways.

Secondly, If as yet we have not really taken hold of God, and good things, 'tis high time for us to do it when we can no longer hold, but muſt let go all our loved good things of this life, and even our beloved life.

Thirdly, We ſhould in a day of evil, *let go all that is evil*; that is, purifie our ſelves, our conſciences, our lives, our hearts, our hands, form all our ſins from all that is ſinful. Then, if ever, let us be found in the practice of that Apoſtolical counſel (*Jam.* 4. 8.) *Cleanſe your hands ye ſinners, and purifie your hearts ye double-minded.* They ſurely are minded or reſolved to be filthy ſtill, and never to purifie either heart or hand, who do not ſet their minds to purifie themſelves from evil in an evil day. When the Lord breaks us by any Judgment or Viſitation, then 'tis high time for us to *break off our ſins by righteouſneſs*, as *Daniel* adviſed *Nebuchadnezzar* (Chap. 4. 27.)

VERS. 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34.

The ſword of him that layeth at him cannot hold: the ſpear, the dart, nor the habergeon.
He eſteemeth iron as ſtraw, and braſs as rotten wood.
The arrow cannot make him flee: ſling-ſtones are turned with him into ſtubble.
Darts are counted as ſtubble: he laugheth at the ſhaking of a ſpear.
Sharp ſtones are under him: he ſpreadeth ſharp-pointed things upon the mire.
He maketh the deep to boil like a pot: he maketh the Sea like a pot of oyntment.
He maketh a path to ſhine after him; one would think the deep to be hoary.
Upon the Earth there is not his like: who is made without fear.
He beholdeth all high things: he is a King over all the children of pride.

IN the former Context, we have had an accurate delineation of the ſeveral parts of this mighty Creature *Leviathan*, together with their wonderful operations and effects, even to the terrifying of mighty men, and the putting them upon ſpeedy preparations for death, at his appearance.

In this the Lord gives proof.

Firſt, Of the impenetrableneſs, or impregnableneſs of the ſcales, skin, and fleſh of this *Leviathan.*

Secondly, Of the greatneſs of his courage, ſtomach, and ſpirit, in the midſt of greateſt dangers and oppoſitions; both which are ſhewed in the 26, 27, 28, and 29 Verſes of this Context; which are all of a ſenſe, and therefore I ſhall very briefly paſs through them.

Verſ. 26. The ſword of him that layeth at him cannot hold.

We have in the compaſs of theſe four Verſes, as it were a whole Magazine of Arms, of War-like Inſtruments and Engines. Arms are of two ſorts.

Firſt, Offenſive.

Secondly, Defenſive.

Offenſive Arms are likewiſe of two ſorts.

Firſt, Such as we ſtrike with, or make uſe of at hand; of which ſort we reckon the ſword and the ſpear.

Secondly, Such as are uſed at a diſtance; of which ſort are Arrows, and Darts, and Sling-ſtones: All theſe offenſive weapons are here expreſly mentioned. And likewiſe we have here defenſive Arms, with which we cover and ſhelter the body, in a time of battle or danger, from taking hurt; of which ſort the Helmet is a piece of Armour for the head, and the Habergeon or Breaſt-plate for the forepart of the body. So that here (I ſay) we have all ſorts of Arms. And as we have all ſorts of Arms brought together, ſo we have the unprofitableneſs or unſerviceableneſs of them all, or their utter inſufficiency to hurt *Leviathan*, or to ſave any man harmleſs, or from being hurt by him, as will appear, while I run over and touch upon theſe words.

The ſword of him that layeth at him cannot hold.

The Sword is an offenſive weapon, with which we aſſault our Adverſary at hand. Now though a man doth lay at *Leviathan* with a Sword, that is, uſeth his utmoſt skill and ſtrength to make the Sword enter, yet it *cannot hold*; or, as the Hebrew is, *will not ſtand or abide*; It will either be broken or dulled, and the edge of it turned and abated, or it will rebound without leaving any impreſſion. Maſter *Broughton* renders, *The Sword of him that layeth at him will not faſten.* As if God had ſaid, if any be ſo bold as to come near, with a Sword in his hand, to ſtrike *Leviathan*, it is to no purpoſe, for ſuch is the ſtrength of his natural armour, ſuch the hardneſs of his ſcales and skin, he is ſo protected, fenced, and fortified with theſe, that the Sword can do him no more hurt than a thruſt or ſtroak with a Bull-ruſh. *The Sword cannot enter.*

Reſilit duritie tergoris repulſus gladius. Bez.

No, nor the ſpear.] That's another offenſive hand-weapon, which we uſe at hand.

No, nor the dart.] That's another offenſive weapon, which we uſe at a diſtance. Some put theſe two, the Spear and the Dart, into one, conceiving that by theſe two we are to underſtand not a Spear and a Dart diſtinctly, but *a darting-ſpear*, or *the ſpear that goeth forth*: For there are two ſorts of Spears. There are ſome Spears which are held faſt in the hand of him that aſſaults: There are another ſort of Spears, called Javelins, which are caſt out of the hand. Thus ſome (I ſay) conceive that we are apt to put theſe two words into one; *Nor can the darting-ſpear*, or Javelin (which is caſt out of a mans hand againſt an Enemy with greateſt force) enter to wound him.

חנית מסע *Lance profectionis*, i. e. *quam homo proficiſci facit de manu ſua. Jaculum à jaciendo.* Bold. *Haſtati ſpargunt haſtas, fit ferreus imber.* Ennius.

Nor the Habergeon.] As if he had ſaid, not only cannot theſe offenſive weapons, Spear, and Dart, or the Darting-ſpear hurt *Leviathan*; but thoſe Arms which a man puts on to ſave himſelf from hurt, cannot protect him: *Leviathan* will be too hard for him, though he weareth a Coat of Male, an Habergeon, though he be cloathed all over with Iron, Back and Breaſt, *Cap-a-Pe*, yet *Leviathan* can eaſily cruſh him, he can rend his Corſlet, as if it were but a rotten rag, and tear it off as eaſily as a wiſp of ſtraw; for, as it followeth,

Verſ. 27. He eſteemeth iron as ſtraw, and braſs as rotten wood.

That is, he makes no more of iron and braſs, than we do of a ſtraw, or of a piece of rotten wood which crumbles between our fingers, and is broken with the leaſt ſtrain. You may as ſoon wound him with a ſtraw, as with a ſword, and pierce his Buckler-ſcales, by throwing a rotten ſtick at him, as well as by caſting a Dart or Javelin at him; he ſlights all your Artillery, as if he had reaſon to do it, and fully underſtood that his ſkin and ſcales were an *Armour of Proof* againſt all aſſaults.

Verſ. 28. **The Arrow cannot make him flee.**

Arrows are notable weapons uſed at a diſtance, which being ſhot from a ſtrong Bow, and drawn home by a ſtrong arm, wound deeply and deadly; yet *Leviathan* regards not whole ſhowers of Arrows poured upon him. The Hebrew Elegancy gives it thus, *The Sons of the Bow cannot make him flee.* Mr. *Broughtons* tranſlation holds the Metaphor untranſlated, *The Bows child drives him not away.* Arrows are ſometimes called *the Sons of the Bow*, and ſometimes they are called the *Sons of the Quiver* (Lament. 3. 13.) becauſe Arrows are firſt taken out of a Quiver, where they are kept, and ſo are, as it were, *Children of the Quiver*; and then Arrows are put upon the ſtring of the Bow, and being ſhot out of it, may be called alſo *Sons of the Bow.* Arrows come out of the Quiver and the Bow, as Children from Parents. And as in this Scripture, Arrows are called Children, ſo in another, Children are compared to Arrows (*Pſal.* 127. 4.) *As Arrows are in the hand of a mighty man, ſo are children of the youth; happy is the man that hath his Quiver full of them*, that is, who hath many children. Here (by the way) give me leave to mind the Reader, that 'tis uſual in Scripture to call any thing that comes out of, or proceeds from another, its Son or Child. Thus Corn is called *the Son of the Floor* (Iſa. 21. 10.) *O my threſhing, and the corn of my floor*; the Hebrew is, *O my threſhing, and the ſon of my floor.* Corn is called the ſon of the floor, becauſe it comes from the floor, where it is threſhed and delivered by the force of the Flail, out of the husk or chaff in which it was bred, and lay as a Child in his Mothers Womb. Thus alſo ſparks which come from the coal, are called *ſons of the coal* (Job 5. 7.) According to this frequent Hebraiſm, Arrows are here called the *Sons of the Bow. The Arrow cannot make him flee.* Though Arrows fly at *Leviathan*, he ſcorns to flee from Arrows, he will ſtir no more when you ſhoot a feathered Arrow at him, than if you ſhot only a feather at him. And as he contemns Arrows, ſo

Sling-ſtones are turned with him into ſtubble.

Bows and Slings were of great uſe in War, before the invention of Guns. Thoſe *Benjamites* were famous, who as the Holy Hiſtory reports them, could *ſling ſtones at a hairs breadth, and not miſs* (Judg. 20. 16.) *David* went out againſt *Goliah* the Gyant, weaponed only with a Sling, and five ſtones. Slings are no contemptible weapons, ſeeing with a Sling-ſtone *David* overthrew *Goliah* the *Philiſtine*, who made the whole Hoſt of *Iſrael* tremble. Yet Sling-ſtones, with this Sea-goliah *Leviathan*, are turned into *ſtubble*, that is, he even blows them away like ſtubble, nor cares he at all for their blows. When the *Pſalmiſt* would ſhew how eaſily the Lord could ſubdue the Enemies of *Iſrael*, he prayeth againſt them in this manner (*Pſal.* 83. 13.) *Make them, O my God, as a wheel, and as the ſtubble before the wind*, that is, render them weak, and altogether unable to do miſchief. The Prophet deſcribes the eaſie overthrow of the wicked Enemy, by this Metaphor (*Iſa.* 40. 24.) *The whirlwind ſhall take them away as ſtubble.* And when the Prophet would ſhew how mighty the Lord aſſiſted *Abraham* againſt his Enemies, he ſaith (*Iſa.* 42. 2.) *He gave them as the duſt to his ſword, and as driven ſtubble to his bow.* Now as in all theſe Scriptures it appears from this ſimilitude, how unable the ſtrongeſt are to ſtand before the Lord, ſo when the Lord would ſhew how impregnable this *Leviathan* is, he ſaith, *Sling-ſtones are no more to him than ſtubble*; yea, and he doubles it.

Verſ. 29. **Darts are counted as ſtubble.**

We had darts in the 26th verſe, yet the original words differ; and 'tis very probable, that as the words differ, ſo the weapons intended by them differed alſo, though now unknown to us, and ſo we want names for them, or know not how to name them with a difference. Some interpret the word in diſtinction from the former, not for darts caſt out of a mans hand, but for ſtones darted out of Engines. The Ancients uſed Engines, which caſt ponderous ſtones, with mighty violence, againſt Walls and Towers, to batter them down, as we do now with Ordnance or great Guns. Some have queried, whether great Guns were not uſed in that time. The word may bear it: But plainly it may ſignifie an Engine out of which ſtones were ſlung. Theſe *Leviathan* counts as ſtubble, yea,

Tanquam ſtipula habentur ab ipſo machinæ bellicæ. Bez.

He laugheth at the ſhaking of the Spear.

Cetus non timet comminationem. Aquin.

To ſhake a Spear, is as it were, to threaten one with a Spear; and ſo to brandiſh a Sword againſt an Enemy, is to defie him, or to bid him do his worſt, or it tells him that you will do your beſt to overcome and conquer him. *Leviathan* ſcorns when any threaten him with their weapons in hand. If you ſhake your Spear at him, he *laughs at it*; that is, he ſlights it, he regards it not: 'Tis the ſame word which is uſed (*Job* 39. 22.) concerning the Horſe, *at fear he mocketh or laugheth*; that is, he laughs at thoſe things which give occaſion, yea juſt cauſe of fear, and are indeed ſuch as are moſt afraid of. So doth Leviathan, *He laughs at the ſhaking of the ſpear. Eliphaz* ſaith of a godly man (*Job* 5. 22.) *at deſtruction and famine he ſhall laugh.* The godly man is ſo fortified with a promiſe and aſſurance of protection and proviſion by God, that neither Sword nor Famine can daunt his ſpirit; yea, he, as it were, laughs at them, as *Leviathan* at the ſhaking of a Spear.

Thus I have paſſed, or poſted rather, through theſe four Verſes, the general ſenſe of them all being the ſame, and that to ſhew that *Leviathan* is ſo armed by Nature, that no artificial arms can hurt him.

This part alſo of *Leviathans* deſcription, is taken by *Bochartus* as a further proof, that the *Leviathan* here ſpoken of, is the Crocodile, whoſe ſcales are not penetrable by the force of any weapon; whereas (ſaith he) the ſkin of the Whale gives paſſage to the forcible ſtroak or thruſt of any ſharp-edged or ſharp-pointed Inſtrument.

For anſwer to this, I have no more to ſay than what hath been ſaid at the 15th, 16th, and 17th verſes of this Chapter, concerning the ſcales of *Leviathan*, to which I refer the Reader; and ſhall paſs on, when I have given three or four hints, by way of improvement from the whole.

Firſt, *If the Lord hath made a Creature that no weapon can hurt, then ſurely the Lord himſelf is exalted above all hurt from the Creature*; as it is ſaid in another place of this Book (*Chap.* 35. 6.) *If thou ſinneſt, what doſt thou againſt him? or if thy tranſgreſſions be multiplied, what doſt thou unto him?* that is, thou canſt not hurt God with thy ſin. Though men by ſin lay at him, as with Sword and Spear, though they throw their Sling-ſtones of Blaſphemy at him, they cannot hurt him. *Gamaliel* (*Acts* 5. 39.) gives warning againſt this; take heed what ye do, *refrain from theſe men, leſt haply ye be found even to fight againſt God.* They fight againſt God, who ſet themſelves to do miſchief; but what miſchief ſoever they do to men, or among men, they can do none to God, their weapons reach him not. As *Solomon* tells us (*Prov.* 21. 30.) *There is no wiſdom nor counſel againſt the Lord*; ſo there is no weapon againſt the Lord: *Sword, and Spear, and Dart*, whether material or metaphorical, *are but ſtubble before him.* And as the Lord himſelf is beyond the reach of weapons, and the rage of man, ſo are they who are under the Lords protection; therefore it is ſaid of the Church (*Iſa.* 54. 17.) *No weapon formed againſt thee ſhall proſper*; that is, it ſhall not have the intended effect of the Smith that made it (as that Scripture ſpeaks) nor of the hand that wields it. *The ſword of him that layeth at the Church of God ſhall not hold; the Spear, the Dart, nor the Habergeon.* As none are ſo much aſſaulted as the Church, ſo none are ſo well armed and defended.

Secondly, As no offenſive weapon can hurt the Lord, ſo no defenſive weapon can ſhelter us from hurt, if under the wrath of the Lord. Though we have got an *Habergeon*, though we have Scales or Bucklers like *Leviathan*, yet the Lord hath a Sword, a Spear, a Dart, that can ſtrike through them; that is, through all the defences of the moſt hardned ſinners in the world. There is no ſhelter to be found, nor defence to be made againſt the weapons of Divine Wrath, but only in and by Jeſus Chriſt. God is a Shield and Buckler, a Helmet and an Habergeon for Believers, againſt all offenſive weapons of men or devils; but where ſhall Unbelievers find a Shield or a Buckler to ſecure themſelves againſt the offenſive weapons of God.

Again, Some in allegorizing this Scripture ſay, that *Leviathan* is an Emblem of the Devil. Now, though it be a truth, that no outward weapon, no Sword nor Dart can terrifie or hurt the Devil, yet the Lord hath furniſhed us with weapons that can pierce the Devil, that *Leviathan*, and defend us from his power (*Eph.* 6. 14, 15, 16.) The Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, will wound that old *Leviathan*; the Breaſt-plate of Righteouſneſs, the Helmet of Salvation, the Shield of Faith, will preſerve us from woundings in the midſt of all his fiery darts. How ſoon would the Devil, that cunning, and curſed, and cruel Darter and Archer, wound our ſouls to death with his fiery Darts and poyſonous Arrows, if the Lord had not given us a Shield, a Breaſt-plate, and an Helmet, more impenetrable than the ſcales of *Leviathan*!

Laſtly, This deſcription of *Leviathan*, carrieth in it a fit reſemblance of a hardned ſinner, of a ſinner reſolved upon his evil ways. Some ſinners come at laſt to ſuch a hardneſs, that they are like *Leviathan*, nothing will pierce them; the Sword of the Spirit doth not enter them. Though you lay at them with all your might in the Miniſtry of the Word, though you caſt darts, and ſhoot arrows of terrible threatnings againſt them, they eſteem them but ſtraw and ſtubble; ſin hath ſo hardned them, that they (as we may expreſs it) are *Sermon-proof*, *Threatning-proof*, yea, *Judgment-proof too*, as to amendment by them, though they are broken and periſh under them. Let God ſay what he will in his Word, or do what he will in his works, they regard it not; they laugh at the ſhaking of theſe Spears. As a man that hath armour of proof cares not for ſword or ſpears, fears not an arrow nor a bullet; ſo 'tis in a ſpiritual ſenſe with reſolved ſinners; God having as a juſt Judgment for former ſins, given them a Shield upon their hearts (as the word ſignifieth, *Lam.* 3.65.) which we render *ſorrow of heart*, and put in the Margin *obſtinacy*, that is, hardneſs of heart, they then account reproofs, threats, admonitions, the moſt terrible words in all the Armoury of God, no more than a ſtraw or rotten wood. Woe to theſe *Leviathans*, to thoſe who harden their hearts againſt the Word of God, *Who hath hardned himſelf againſt the Word of the Lord, and proſpered?* And let all ſuch know, that (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, 2 *Cor.* 10.4.) *The weapons of our warfare are not carnal* (that is, weak, dull, edgleſs, pointleſs tools) *but mighty through God*, &c. And that though now they prevail not to Converſion, yet they will prevail to Condemnation; and that while they go on to ſin, they are but going (as *Solomon* ſpeaks of the young Wanton, *Prov.* 7.22.) *As an Oxe goeth to the ſlaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the ſtocks, till a dart ſtrike through his liver.* God will have a dart at laſt which ſhall enter, a dart which thoſe *Leviathans* ſhall not count ſtubble, nor find to be ſo.

The Lord proceeds to deſcribe *Leviathan*, and, as we may conceive, to give a further demonſtration of the hardneſs of his ſcales and skin.

Verſ. 30. **Sharp ſtones are under him, he ſpreadeth ſharp-pointed things upon the mire.**

Mr. *Broughton* reads it, *His underneath-places be as ſharp-ſheards.* The word rendred *Sharp ſtones*, properly ſignifies the ſharp pieces of a Pot-ſheard; that is, ſtones, or other hard things, as ſharp and pricking as the pieces of a broken Pot-ſheard. We may expound this verſe two ways.

Firſt, As being a proof of the hardneſs and firmneſs of *Leviathans* skin and fleſh; ſo hard they are, that he can lye down and reſt himſelf upon hard and ſharp ſtones, even upon the ſharp tops of Rocks in the Sea, as we lye down upon our beds. *Sharp ſtones are under him*, but he feels them not; which may be the meaning alſo of the next words.

He ſpreadeth ſharp-pointed things upon the mire.

That is, *Leviathan* like ſome hardy man, or *iron-ſides*, ſcorns to lye ſoft on the ouze or mire, but laying, as it were, ſharp ſtones upon it, ſhews what he can endure without hurt. And ſo I conceive theſe words, *He ſpreadeth ſharp-pointed things upon the mire*, may be thus underſtood and read, *He ſpreadeth himſelf upon ſharp-pointed things, as if it were upon the mire.*

Secondly, We may expound this verſe as to the falling off of darts caſt, and ſtones flung at him, or as to the breaking of ſwords and ſpears upon his ſcales, when aſſaulted with them. As if it had been ſaid, If you caſt darts, or fling ſtones at him, they do not enter, but drop down under him; or, if you will aſſail him with a ſword and ſpear, the ſword breaks, the ſpears point is ſnapt off, and falls under his body. Thus he ſpreadeth ſharp-pointed things upon the mire, or ſpreadeth the mire all over with ſharp-pointed things. As after a well-fought battle at Land, we may ſee the field ſpread over with pieces of ſwords and ſpears, and other broken weapons; ſo is the bottom of the Sea (could you ſee to the bottom of it) after a skirmiſh, or day of battle with *Leviathan*. This is a probable ſenſe, but I rather take the former, as ſhewing the hardneſs of his skin and ſcales, by his inſenſibleneſs of any ſharp or hard thing that he reſts himſelf upon.

All that I ſhall add is this: It were well for us, if in this caſe we could be like *Leviathan*, if we could harden our ſelves, or inure our ſelves to hardſhips, to lye with ſharp ſtones under us. Surely our fleſh is much too tender and ſoft, and our skin too delicate for the endurance of a lodging upon hard ſtones, and ſharp-pointed things. The Apoſtle gives a ſuitable word of advice to *Timothy* (2 *Tim.* 2.6.) *Do thou endure hardſhip, as a good Souldier of Jeſus Chriſt.* We ſhould labour to endure hardſhip, and to fare hard, and to lye hard. *Edmond*, a *Saxon* King in this Land, was called *Iron-ſides*. I fear there are few *Iron-ſides* among us; ſuch, I mean, as are fit and ready to endure hardſhip, to ſuffer hard things at Chriſts call, and for his Name ſake: We ſhould be content, as the Church once was (*Pſal.* 68. 30.) to *lye among the Pots*, yea, as Leviathan, *upon the Potſheards*, in that behalf. The old Martyrs were patient, while they lodged in a Coal-houſe, and ruſſeled among the ſtraw. Though the Lord doth not exerciſe us with ſuch hardſhips, yet 'tis the duty of every Chriſtian to get his heart into readineſs and willingneſs to endure them. Though all the Followers of Chriſt are not honoured with ſufferings for him, yet they who have not, at leaſt who pray not that they may have a ſpirit of ſuffering, are not worthy to follow him, nor to be called his Diſciples (*Mat.* 10. 38. *Mat.* 16. 24. *Luke* 14. 26.)

Verſ. 31. **He maketh the deep to boil like a pot, he maketh the Sea like a pot of oyntment.**

As *Leviathan* troubles Seamen, ſo he troubles the Sea; he macerates and vexeth the waters, he diſtutbs *the whole Ocean where he is, or whereſoever he comes.* This is illuſtrated by a double ſimilitude; Firſt, of a boiling pot, *He maketh the deep like a boiling pot.* Secondly, *He maketh the Sea like a pot of oyntment*; or, as Mr. *Broughton* renders it, *He ſets the Sea as a Spicers Kettle*; that is, all in a fume and foam. Spices mingled in a Kettle to make oyntment, boil vehemently upon the fire; any liquor boiling is moved, and the more it boils, the more it moves. Thus *Leviathan* bluſtring in the deep, canſeth it to look like a boiling pot, or like a pot of oyntment. This ſhews the force of *Leviathan*; he makes ſuch a buſſel, that he, as it were, raiſeth a Storm in the Sea; a fiercely boiling pot over the fire, much reſembles the Sea when the waves foam, and the waters are inraged by the winds. The mighty power of God is ſet forth in Scripture, calming the Sea when 'tis ſtormy, and raiſing ſtorms when it is calm, as might be ſhewed in many Scriptures. *Leviathan* can trouble the Sea, when God hath made it quiet; but he cannot quiet nor calm it, when God hath made it ſtormy. *Leviathan* is of a turbulent nature, and he deals only in ſtorms; his reſtleſs ſpirit will not let the Sea reſt, he makes *it boil like a Pot*, &c.

Totum Oceanum turbat: Jun.

That which is ſaid of Leviathan in his turmoiling the Sea, may well repreſent the ſpirit of wicked men, who in this are like Leviathan; they (as the Prophet ſpeaks, *Iſa.* 57. 20.) *are like the troubled Sea, when it cannot reſt*; and as themſelves are like the troubled Sea, having continual tumultuations in their own breaſts, ſo they often make others like a troubled Sea.

I ſhall not here omit what the Learned *Bochartus* takes notice of in this verſe, both for and againſt his Aſſertion, That Leviathan is the Crocodile.

Firſt, Though it cannot be denied, that the Whale makes a greater ſtir in the Sea, and troubles the waters more than the Crocodile (the Whale being much the greater of the two) yet he conceives the latter part of the verſe (where 'tis ſaid, *He makes the Sea like a pot of oyntment*) very peculiar to the Crocodile. For (ſaith he) many Writers commend the fragrancy or ſweet ſmell which the Crocodile ſends forth, much like that of Musk, or the *Arabian* Spices, inſomuch that ſome think *Ambergreeſe* is taken from that Animal. And hence he concludes, it may well be ſaid, that he (where he comes) makes the Sea like a pot of oyntment, which gives a fragrant ſmell, then eſpecially when ſtirred, as *Leviathan* is here ſaid to ſtir. This is indeed a rare Obſervation, and ſuch as *Bochartus* might well ſay, he could not enough admire, that the Ancients ſhould give him no hint at all of his teſtimonies for it, being from Authors of ſomewhat a late date, which the Reader may peruſe for his fuller information, if he pleaſe. I would not raiſe any ſuſpition about the truth of the thing, which *Bochartus* ſaith cannot but be true, it being aſſerted by the unanimous Vote of people of all Nations, *Indians*, *Arabians*, *Egyptians*, *Aſſyrians*, and *Americans*.

All that I ſhall ſay to it is only this, That the Text in *Job* having this ſcope to deſcribe the turbulency of *Leviathan* in the Sea, ſeems not to reſpect the ſavour or ſmell of the pot of oyntment, but only the troubled motion or ebullition of it, when 'tis boiling over the fire. And in that reſpect, the Whale maketh the Sea like a pot of boiling oyntment, as much as, yea more than the Crocodile.

The ſecond thing which *Bochartus* takes notice of in this verſe, is an objection which may be raiſed from it againſt his opinion. The Lord ſpeaks of *Leviathan*, as being in the Sea, and (which is a word of the ſame ſignificancy) in the deep. Now the Crocodile is not a Sea-animal, but a River-animal; therefore *Leviathan* is not a Crocodile. To this he anſwers:

Firſt, That the River *Nilus* is called the *Egyptian Sea* (*Iſa.* 11. 15.) and quotes a *Jewiſh* Doctor, who expounds it ſo. To this I may reply, that other learned men (and among them the late Annotators upon our *Engliſh Bible*) deny that Expoſition, and are very confident, that by the *Egyptian Sea*, is meant (not *Nilus*, but) the *Red Sea*, which out of the main Ocean ſhoots into the Land, in form and faſhion of a Tongue.

Secondly, He anſwers, that not only the River *Nilus*, and the Lakes adjoyning to it, which abound with Crocodiles, but ſeveral other great Lakes, both in holy Writ, and by many Writers, are called Seas; and therefore he concludes, the argument will not hold, that by the name *Leviathan* the Crocodile cannot be ſignified, becauſe the Sea is here aſſigned as the ſeat or habitation of *Leviathan*.

I grant this is not a concluding argument againſt the Crocodile, yet from theſe words we may gather a probable argument for the Whale; for as the word *Sea* is taken ſometimes in a large ſenſe, for great Rivers and Lakes where Crocodiles are, ſo in ſtrict and proper ſenſe, it always ſignifies the Ocean, where Crocodiles are not. And the Scripture tells us, that the proper place appointed by God for the moſt proper *Leviathans* ſeat, is not the Sea, in a large and improper ſenſe, but in that which is moſt ſtrict and proper, even that which is called *the great and wide Sea* (*Pſal.* 104. 24, 25.) as was ſhewed before. And that we have reaſon to believe, that God ſpake to *Job* of and about the moſt proper and eminent of all thoſe Animals, which by Scripture allowance may be called *Leviathan*, was there alſo ſhewed. And if ſo, then we muſt neceſſarily underſtand the great and wide Sea, by that *Deep* in the Text, which Leviathan *maketh to boil like a pot*, and by that *Sea* alſo, which *he* (by his boyſterous motion) *makes like a pot of oyntment*.

Thus the Lord in this verſe, hath told us what work *Leviathan* makes when he is below in the deep, and raiſing himſelf towards the ſurface of the Sea; in the next he tells us, what he doth when he ſwims aloft.

Verſ. 32. **He maketh a path to ſhine after him, &c.**

That is, he ſwims with ſuch force and violence near the ſurface of the water, that you may ſee a plain path behind him; he makes a great foam or froth upon the waters, which ſhines like a beaten way. 'Tis good in one ſenſe, to make a path ſhine after us; that is, by the holineſs and righteouſneſs of our lives. The path of the righteous ſhines as the *morning light* (*Prov.* 4. 18.) A righteous man walketh not in dark, black, defiled, filthy paths; his are paths of light, and ſuch as lead to that bleſſed Inheritance among the Saints in light. But the path of an unrighteous man ſhines only like *Leviathans* path, with an ugly foam or froth, or at beſt, 'tis but like the ſhining of a pinching froſt, or of an aged head, which is not whiteneſs, but hoarineſs, and ſo 'tis ſtill like *Leviathans* path; as it followeth in the latter part of the verſe.

One would think the deep to be hoary.] The word ſignifies the *hoarineſs* of the head of an old man. When we grow old our hair changeth colour, and the head is hoary. *Leviathan* makes ſuch a foamy path, that one would think the Sea grey-headed, or that a hoary froſt covered the Sea. That Metaphor was often uſed by the old Poets.

Æſtimabit abyſſum quaſi ſeneſcentem. Vulg. *Uſitatum eſt ut canum & incaneſcere mare dicatur. Hæc inter tumidi late maris ibat imago. Aurea, ſed fluctu ſpumabant cærula cano.* Virg. *l.* 8. *Æneid. deſcribens navale bellum* Auguſti *atq;* Antonii. *Totaq; remigio ſumis incanuit unda.* Catul.

All I ſhall ſay from this verſe is, to take notice of the good Providence of God, that this hurtful and dangerous Creature *Leviathan* gives ſuch warning where he is. While he lies below in the Sea he can do no hurt, and as often as he raiſeth himſelf up, he makes a path to ſhine, he ſhakes the Sea hoary, by which we may the more eaſily diſcover and avoid him; whereas otherwiſe, he might do miſchief unawares, or eaſily ſurprize the unwary Paſſenger. 'Tis mercy, when they who, like *Leviathan*, are able to do much hurt, make ſuch a path ſhine after them, as gives any an opportunity to eſcape them, and keep out of danger. Thus we have, as it were, the Picture of *Leviathan* drawn by the hand of God himſelf: And from all it appears, that he is a very *Non-ſuch*, or that his fellow is not to be found, he hath no Equal in the viſible world, ſuch another is no where to be had.

Thus the Lord concludes.

Verſ. 33, 34. **Upon the Earth is not his like, who is made without fear: he beholdeth all high things; he is a King over all the children of pride.**

Theſe two verſes contain the cloſe of all; they are, as it were, the *Epilogue*, the *Epiphonema*, or cloſing words, with which the Lord ſhuts up his whole diſcourſe about this Creature. As if he had ſaid, *Why ſhould I wade further in a deſcription of him by particulars? I will ſay all, I will wind up all in a word; he is ſuch a one, as in the Earth there is not his like.* Or as if the Lord had ſaid to *Job*, *I told thee before of* Behemoth, *that he is the chief of my ways; yet he comes far ſhort of* Leviathan, *for upon Earth there is not his like. Leviathan* is not only the chief in his own dominion, among the Fiſhes of the Sea, but alſo among the Beaſts of the Earth, the ſtrongeſt and ſtouteſt of which are not to be compared with him.

Before I proceed with the opening of theſe two Verſes, according to our Tranſlation, which generally holds out *Leviathan* to be the Whale; and before I touch ſome other Tranſlations which bear the ſame interpretation, I ſhall propoſe the Tranſlation and interpretation given by the Learned *Bochartus*, which accommodates theſe two concluding Verſes fully to the Crocodile. His Tranſlation runs thus, and ſo doth his Interpretation, as followeth,

There is not his like upon the duſt, ſo made, that he ſhould not be bruiſed (or *broken*) He tranſlates the Hebrew (עפר על) not as we, *upon the Earth*, but, *upon the duſt*; thereby implying that *a creeping thing* is here intended by *Leviathan*: For (ſaith he) the feet of the Crocodile are ſo ſhort, that he rather creepeth than goeth; and therefore he may well be reckoned among creeping things: And hence Serpents (being creeping things) are called *Serpents of the duſt* (*Deut.* 32. 24.) Now though the Crocodile be a creeping thing, yet he differs from ordinary creeping things and Serpents; for they may eaſily be trodden upon and bruiſed, as the Lord ſaid to *Adam* concerning the Serpent (the Devil) *it* (that is, Chriſt the Seed of the Woman) *ſhall bruiſe thy head* (Gen. 3. 15.) But the Crocodile *is made that he ſhould not be bruiſed*; that is, he is ſo made, by reaſon of his implanted ſtrength, and the hardneſs of his ſcales, that he cannot be bruiſed nor cruſht. Others (ſaith he) render the latter part of the Verſe, *Made that he ſhould not fear, or to be without fear.* But I had rather keep the primary and proper ſignification of the word or Verb (חתת) becauſe it is not altogether true of the Crocodile,

Non eſt ei ſimile ſuper pulverem, ita factum, ut non atteratur.

לבלתי חת *ut non timeret, velut eſſet ſine timore.*

Crocodile, that he is without fear ; ſome Authors writing of him, that he flies from thoſe that aſſault him boldly, and is very bold upon thoſe that are afraid of him, and fly from him. But even the ſame thing (ſaith he) may be ſaid of Whales, who ('tis known) haſten away upon the hearing of any noiſe, or craſhing ſound. Thus upon the 24th verſe.

Etiam quicquid altum eſt deſpicit: Rex eſt ſupra omnes filios Elationis.

His tranſlation of the 25th is near ours in the words of it. *Moreover he deſpiſeth whatſoever is high, he is a King over all the Sons of Elation or Height.* Beſides(ſaith he)that the Crocodile hath many things, upon the account of which he is to be preferred before other creeping Creatures ; he alſo deſpiſeth whatſoever is high, even the Sons of Highneſs ; that is, thoſe Animals who have higher, or taller bodies, and longer legs than he, by the help of which they are raiſed up on high, even over theſe he Kings it, being confident he hath greater ſtrength than they : For how high ſoever they lift up themſelves, yet he can eaſily bring down the greateſt of them flat to the ground, with one ſtroak of his Tail, and then kill them, and tear them to pieces. And that the Crocodile doth thus conquer, and King it over the ſtouteſt and proudeſt beaſts, the Learned Author gives many proofs, from the Authority both of Ancient and late Writers. So then (as he concludes) thoſe Animals which are higher and taller in ſtature than the Crocodile, are thoſe Sons of *Elation* or pride (as *Job* 28. 8.) and ſo ſtand oppoſed to Reptiles or Animals creeping on the duſt, ſpoken of in the former verſe. Thus far the Learned *Bochartus* gives us his tranſlation and underſtanding of theſe two verſes, compleating the deſcription of *Leviathan.*

בני שחת *Filii Elationis.*

I ſhall now conſider our own tranſlation.

Upon the Earth is not his like.] But in what is it that *Leviathan* exceeds all Creatures on Earth? ſo that *he hath not his like*, or *there is no compariſon to him*, as ſome render the words.

I anſwer, In theſe two things, both which appear by what hath been ſaid before, and one of them is expreſt in that which follows.

First, There is none like him for greatneſs.

Secondly, There is none like him for his fearleſneſs or ſtoutneſs ; and therefore it is ſaid, *He is made without fear* : As if the Lord had ſaid, *There is no Creature upon Earth ſo ſtout, but may be made afraid, the very Lyon may be ſcared.* Naturaliſts ſpeak of ſome ways whereby the Lyon is made afraid, but nothing can make *Leviathan* afraid, he is made (as one tranſlation hath it) *that he ſhould fear nothing*, or no man, neither one nor other. And as he feareth none, ſo all are or have reaſon to fear him ; but when the moſt dreadful things appear, there is not the leaſt appearance of dread in him. Is not *Leviathan* full of courage, ſeeing he is altogether fearleſs? Where there is no fear, there is nothing but courage, or courage at the height. It hath been noted in Hiſtory, concerning ſeveral great men of the world, that notwithſtanding all their greatneſs, they have been very full of fear ; they eſpecially who have been either unrighteous or cruel in the exerciſe of their power : But *Leviathan*, though he be great and cruel too, yet he hath no fear. Fear (as was ſaid before) is that trouble of mind which ſeizeth upon us at the apprehenſion of ſome impending, or near-hand danger. *Leviathan* is not ſaid to be without fear, as they who are not apprehenſive of danger, but as they, who though they ſee and apprehend great danger near them, yet fear it not. *Upon the Earth is not his like, who is made without fear.* From the former part of the verſe,

Melius ſuprema inter animantia vis ac fortitudo deſcribi non potuit, quam tot aliis prius dictis, addendo impavidum cor. Bold. *Qui factus eſt, ut nullum timeret.* Hieron.

> Obſerve, First ; *It is of God that the Creatures are diſpoſed into ſeveral ranks and degrees, that one exceeds and excels another.*

In ſome things there is a likeneſs among all Creatures, and there may be ſomething wherein one exceeds them all, and hath none like him ; that it is ſo, is of God. Some men are ſo bad, that they have not their like ; it was ſaid of Ahab, *there was none like him.* There are alſo men ſo good, that there are none like them, as the Lord ſaid to Satan of *Job* (Chap. 1. 8.) *Haſt thou not conſidered my ſervant* Job, *that there is none like him in the Earth.* There God ſpake of *Job* with reſpect to his holineſs and righteouſneſs, as here of *Leviathan*, with reſpect to his greatneſs and fearleſneſs ; *Upon the Earth there is not his like.* Now as it is of the Devil, that any are beyond all others in wickedneſs ; ſo it is of the Lord, that any exceed others in goodneſs, in holineſs, in patience, in righteouſneſs, in faith, in faithfulneſs, in fruitfulneſs ; this is by ſpecial diſpenſation from the Lord. It is alſo of the Lord, that any among the Irrational Creatures exceed their fellows, as was further ſhewed concerning *Behemoth*, from thoſe words in the fortieth Chapter ; *He is the chief of the ways of God* ; and as here it is ſaid of Leviathan, *There is none like him, who is made without fear.*

> Hence note, Secondly ; *It is of God that one Creature is leſs fearful than another.*

As the outward compoſure of the Creature is of God ; ſo alſo is the inward diſpoſition. Some Creatures are (as I may ſay) nothing but fear ; ſuch is the Hare ; whence we ſpeak proverbially, *As fearful as a Hare.* The Hart is a goodly Creature, yet a little Dog will make a hundred of them run. But there are other Creatures that may be ſaid to have no fear at all ; *Solomon* gives that character of a Lyon (*Prov.* 30. 30.) *There are three things which go well, yea four, that are comely in going, a Lyon which is ſtrongeſt among beaſts, and turneth not away from any*, that is, fears not any. And as among irrational Creatures, one is more fearleſs than another ; ſo it is among men, one is of a fearful ſpirit, and another of a couragious ſpirit. This alſo is of God ; yet there are ſpecial and particular reaſons, why ſome men are fuller of fear than others.

Again, when the Lord would expreſs the perfection of this Creature, he ſaith, *He is made without fear.*

> Hence note, Thirdly ; *The leſs fear, the more perfection, unleſs it be of that fear which is our perfection, the fear of God ; then indeed the more fear, the more perfection.*

We may diſtinguiſh of fear : There is godly fear, and natural fear. The leſs natural fear, the more perfection ; but the more godly fear, the more perfection ; the more we fear God, the more perfect we are ; but the leſs of natural fear, or fear of the Creature we have, the more perfect we are. The perfection of the godly is often expreſt by being above, or by being delivered from fear (*Pſal.* 91. 5.) *Thou ſhalt not be afraid for the terrour by night, nor for the arrow that flieth by day.* The Lord ſaith to many, fear not, but there are but few of whom he ſaith, and for whom he undertakes, that they ſhall not fear, eſpecially in a time of ſuch great fear, as is ſpoken of in that ninety firſt *Pſalm*, a time of Plague, and that in the heat, when the ſlain of the Lord are many, and men fall by thouſands on the one hand, and on the other. Truſt in God is the ſpecial qualification of the perſon, who ſtands under the protection of that promiſe in the *Pſalm* laſt mentioned. And the ſame promiſe is made to a man fearing God (*Pſal.* 112. 7.) *No evil tidings ſhall make him afraid. David* profeſſed this gracious fearleſneſs (*Pſal.* 46. 2.) *Although the Earth be removed, and the Hills be carried into the midſt of the Sea, yet will not I fear.* And again (*Pſal.* 23. 4.) *Though I walk through the valley of the ſhadow of death, I will fear no evil.* 'Tis the perfection of a man not to fear outward dangers ; therefore Chriſt rebuked his Diſciples (*Mat.* 8. 28.) *Wherefore did ye fear, O ye of little faith?* Their faith was very little, elſe their fear would not have been ſo great. Now as it is thus in man ; the leſs of natural fear, the greater is his perfection : ſo alſo among other Creatures, it is a note of their perfection, to be made without fear ; for it ſhews the greatneſs of their courage, as alſo of their ſtrength. And this is abſolutely the perfection of God, whoſe infinite inſuperable power and ſtrength, is anſwered with a moſt conſtant ſerenity and immutability of mind, who as he wants nothing, ſo he fears nothing. Thus our Tranſlation carrieth the verſe : I ſhall touch upon a ſecond, before I part with it.

His dominion is not over the duſt ; he is made without fear.] The reaſon of this variety of Tranſlation is, becauſe the word which we render [*like*] ſignifies *power* or *dominion* ; and the reaſon why the ſame word ſignifies to have power, as alſo to *compare*, or *be like*, is, becauſe thoſe things which are great above others, uſe to be the matter of compariſon : And hence it is, that as we and others render, *upon Earth none is like him, or to be compared to him* ; ſo others, taking the word ſtrictly and properly, ſay, *his Dominion or Magiſtracy is not upon the Earth.*

Non eſt in pulvere poteſtas ejus. Verbum השל *ſignificat dominatum & poteſtatem, & quia quæ dominatum habent ſuper reliqua ſolent eſſe materia comparationum & ſimilitudinum, ideo ſignificat comparare, vel aſſimilare.*

The Text thus read, ſhews the Lords great goodneſs to men upon the Earth; that having made ſuch a huge, vaſt, dreadful Creature, he hath not given him any power or dominion upon the Land, but by his Providence hath ſhut him up in the Sea, where he can do leſs hurt: for if *Leviathan*, or a Creature of his bigneſs and power, ſhould live upon the Land, there were no living by him, either for man or beaſt. As it is an argument of Gods care of, and benignity to mankind, that thoſe Land-creatures, Lyons, Tygers, *&c.* which deſtroy and prey upon others, are ſo ordered, that in the day-time they retire to their Dens, (*Pſal.* 104.22.) and when the night comes, then they go abroad: God ſhuts them up in the day-time, when they might do moſt hurt, or hinder man from doing good, that is, the duties of his Calling abroad in the open fields. (*ver.* 23.) 'Tis alſo a great part of the Wiſdom and good Providence of God, to ſhut up the *Leviathan* within the bounds of the Sea; his power, his dominion *is not over the duſt, or upon the land.* The Author of this Tranſlation gloſſeth it thus: *How ſmall a matter were it,* ſaith he, *to ſay*, Leviathan *hath not his like upon Earth*; for another thing is here intended or handled. Here Divine Providence is hinted to us, which gives Laws and limits to Earth and Sea, and to all things contained in them: He hath not formed, nor fitted the body of *Leviathan* with members of uſe upon the Earth; therefore the Sea is his dominion, not the Land. This is a truth, and a uſeful conſideration.

Yet, I conceive, the Lord doth here rather heighten the power of *Leviathan*, by ſaying, He hath not his like on Earth. For it being taken for granted that he hath not his like in the Sea, nothing could be ſaid more to ſet forth his greatneſs than this, that he hath not his like at Land. And ſome of the Hebrew Doctors ſay, the Lord ſpake thus, becauſe beaſts on the Land are ſtronger than Fiſh in the Sea; and they give a reaſon for it, upon a Philoſophical ground, becauſe much moiſture weakens: Therefore the wonderful, even preternatural ſtrength of *Leviathan* appears in this; that he being a Water Animal, ſhould yet be both bigger and ſtronger than any beaſt of the Earth. *Upon the Earth there is not his like, who is made without fear.* Which, as it is here aſſerted, ſo it is demonſtrated in the following words.

Verſ. 34. **He beholdeth all high things: he is King over all the Children of pride.**

There is a threefold interpretation of thoſe words, in the former part of this verſe, *He beholdeth all high things.* Underſtanding by the Relative [*He*] *Leviathan* for there is another reading which I ſhall touch upon in the cloſe.

Firſt, Theſe words may be expounded as an argument of the mighty courage of Leviathan. *He* (as it was ſaid before) *is made without fear*, for *he beholdeth all high things*; that is, let things or perſons be never ſo high, never ſo great, never ſo formidable, he beholdeth them boldly; he doth not *wink and look*, but with open face beholds the moſt high and terrible things, for (as it is ſaid before) *he is made without fear.*

Omne ſublime videt; eſt velut declaratio præcedentium. Factus eſt ut nullum timeret. Bold.

Secondly, *He beholdeth all high things*; that is, he beholdeth them with diſdain, as if this were a ſignification of the matchleſs pride of *Leviathan*: He looks upon high things, how high ſoever they are, are his underlings, or as if they were not good enough for him, to beſtow a look, or a caſt of his eye upon. He is (as one gives his character) pride throughout, or nothing elſe but a piece of pride, extreamly proud. Thus to behold is to contemn, and in that ſenſe we find it uſed in many Scriptures; ſo ſome expound that (*Cant.* 1.6.) *Look not upon me, becauſe I am black, becauſe the Sun hath looked upon me*, that is, do not contemn me (ſaith the Church) becauſe of my blackneſs by perſecution. So (*Job* 37.24.) *He* (that is, God) *reſpecteth not any that are wiſe of heart*: The Lord looks upon the wiſeſt men of the world, as unworthy of a look; he looks upon them as infinitely below him; and if any are proud of their wiſdom, he looks upon them with diſdain, he beholds them, and deſpiſeth them and their wiſdom. It is ſaid of *Goliah* (1 *Sam.* 18.42.) when *David* came to him, *he beheld him, and diſdained him*, that is, he beheld him with diſdain: When the Gyant looked about, and ſaw *David* a Youth, he diſdained him as no match for him. *Leviathan* is ſuch a Goliah, *He beholdeth all high things*, be they never ſo high, with a kind of diſdain.

Videre pro contemnere. Totus ſuperbia eſt. Nicetas.

Hence note; *They who are great in any kind, are very apt to deſpiſe others, or to look upon them with diſdain, as if they were nothing to them.*

Looks of diſdain, deſpiſing looks, are very common in the world. With what a diſdainful eye did the *Phariſee* behold the *Publican* (*Luk.* 18.9, 11.) *I am not as other men are, Extortioners, Unjuſt, Adulterers, or even as this Publican*, this pittiful fellow. Pride it ſelf is always accompanied with contempt of others, and cauſeth it. The Title of that Parable in the 16th of *Luke* is, *He ſpake this Parable to certain that truſted in themſelves, that they were righteous, and deſpiſed others.* 'Tis the ſpirit of a *Leviathan*, he beholds all high things, how much more low things, with diſdain. Yet,

Thirdly, Some expound theſe words as an argument, not of the pride, but of *Leviathans* ſpirit, who as he is the higheſt of Elementary Animals, ſo he beholds all high things, he will not meddle with inferiour matters, he will not look at mean things, they are below him. Great men are for great matters. The Heathens ſaid of their *Jupiter*, *He had no leiſure to attend upon, or have to do with ſmall affairs.* Small matters will not go down with *Leviathan*, he is always looking at great. Such is the ſpirit of worldly men; they, like *Leviathan*, behold all high things, not the high things of Heaven, but the high things of Earth; they are not Heavenly-minded, but high-minded. A godly man is Heavenly-minded, a carnal man is high-minded. *David* profeſſed (*Pſal.* 131.1.) *Lord, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty, neither do I exerciſe my ſelf in great matters, in things too high for me.* What was too high for a King? for a *David*? yet King *David* ſaid, his heart was not haughty, nor his eyes lofty, looking at high things; he looked at thoſe things which concerned his duty, to ſerve God, and *his generation, by the will of God*, or as God would have him (*Acts* 13.36.) he was Heavenly-minded, and not high-minded. *Solomon* ſpeaks of a Generation (*Prov.* 30.13.) *O how lofty are their eyes, and their eye-lids are lifted up.* What Generation was this? It was the Generation of proud, vain men: O how lofty are their eyes! who can tell how lofty they are! no mean thing will content them. They have ſuch a hunger after high things, that nothing low is food for them. A godly man is not ſatisfied with matters which are truly low and ſmall (to him the greateſt things in the world are ſo) yet the lower, the leſſer, the leaſt things of this world will ſerve his turn, as to contentation with them. Leviathan *beholdeth all high things*, and therefore as it followeth,

Nihil meditatur, non magnum eſt periphraſis animi res magnas conſectantis, ſc. reſpicere ad id quod ſublime eſt, & nunquam in re humili ſenſum, aut intentionem defigere. Sanct.

Non vacat exiguis rebus adeſſe Jovi.

Habet hoc magnanimus, ut mediocribus contentus, maxima negligat. Sen.

Superbus vero puſillum animum habet, ergo nunquam mediocribus contentus eſt ſed inhiat ad majora.

He is a King over all the children of pride.] That is, he is *the chief of all proud ones.*

Mr. *Broughton* renders it thus, *He is a King over all wild Kind.* And a Modern Interpreter abroad, rendring the Hebrew word by a Latine Feminine, ſaith, *She is a Queen over all the wild Kind*, or over all ſavage beaſts. Thus ſeveral render it, according to the ſtrict words of the Hebrew, *He is a King over all wild beaſts.* The Septuagint tranſlate, *He is a King over all that are in, or that inhabit the waters*; others, that move upon the Earth, as the learned Reader may ſee in the Margin. Now, becauſe thoſe wild ones, of one kind or another, are proud, and prouder than tame beaſts; therefore we render, *He is a King over all the children of pride*: That's an Hebraiſm, *children of pride*, for proud children, or for thoſe that are extreamly proud. They who excel in any thing, are elegantly called the children of it, as if they were begotten by it, or born of it; they bear the likeneſs of it, as children do of a Parent. Some perſons (as *Leviathan* here) are ſo like pride, that they may well be called children of pride, as if pride it ſelf had begotten them, and were their Father, or the Mother that brought them them forth, and nurſed them, or brought them up.

Eſtq; regina ſuper omnes feras. Jun.

Ipſeq; regem agit in feroces univerſos. Tygur.

Inter omnia ſuperba primas tenet & eſt facile princeps. Merc.

Filios ſuperbiæ; i.e. ſuperbos, juxta idioma Hebræorum.

Filius rei alicujus nuncupatur phraſi Hebraico, qui re aliqua inſigniter excellit.

But why is *Leviathan* called *a King over all the children of pride?*

I conceive the chief reaſon to be that which I ſhall give in this Obſervation, becauſe

Leviathan *hath more to be proud of, than the proudeſt of the world.*

They that have moſt to be proud of in nature, have not ſo much to be proud of as *Leviathan.* What had any natural man (as to the body) to be proud of in compariſon of him? Is he proud of his ſtrength? 'tis weakneſs to the ſtrength of *Leviathan*. Is he proud of his comelineſs, or the exact compoſure of his body? *Leviathan* excels him in that. In many particulars *Leviathan* hath that in him, which may occaſion pride, or him to be proud beyond thouſands. And we may conceive, that the reaſon why the Lord brings this in the cloſe, is to humble *Job*, who had carried it too proudly, and ſtoutly towards God. And therefore *Job* was ſpecially to beware of this, leſt the Devil, who deſired to tempt him, ſhould prevail upon him, by ſuggeſting proud and high thoughts of himſelf, and ſo make him a ſubject of his own Kingdom; for he is that myſtical *Leviathan*, who Kings it to purpoſe over the Children of pride. As if the Lord had ſaid to *Job*, *Lay down all thoughts and words which have any ſavour or tincture of pride. Wilt thou be proud of this, or that, or any thing? know that in his kind, I have given more to* Leviathan *to be proud of, than to thee: And conſider under whom thou art to reckon thy ſelf, if thou art lifted up in pride, even under* Leviathan, *for he is a King over all the children of pride. And though* Leviathan *be exceeding proud and haughty, yet I can quickly bring him down; ſurely, then I can bring thee down, yet more than hitherto I have done. Therefore, O* Job, *do not contend any more with me, be not unquiet under my hand, who am indeed thy King.*

In ſuperbis narrationem terminat, ut oſtendat hoc præcipue Job *fuiſſe timendum, ne Diabolus qui eum expetierat adtentandum præcipue eum ad ſuperbiam inducere conaretur.* Aquin.

This leads me to another reading of the Verſe, which makes the Antecedent to *He*, not *Leviathan*, nor the *Devil*; but *God himſelf*.

He that beholdeth all high things, is a King over all the Children of pride; that is, God who beholdeth all high things, and is *higher than the higheſt* (*Eccleſ.* 5. 8.) he is above the proudeſt men. So then theſe words, *He beholdeth all high things*, having the Relative *That* ſupplied, are a circumlocution of God. God indeed beholds all high things, and high perſons: Let men be never ſo high, God beholds them. And as he beholdeth all things, ſo he is higher than the higheſt things, *he is a King over all the children of pride*, who are the higheſt among men, or high above all men in their own conceit. The Lord, as a King, can rule and over-rule the proud, he can bring down their high looks; the Lord ſaid to *Job* (which may give ſome light to this interpretation) when he would ſtir him up, to conſider himſelf what he was able to do, and to do his beſt (*Chap.* 40. 12.) *Look on every one that is proud, and bring him low.* Canſt thou do it? Canſt thou look on every one that is proud, and bring him low? Thou canſt not, but I can. God beholdeth all high things, he hath them all before him, and is a King over them; he can make the proudeſt, and ſtouteſt, and greateſt that are in the world ſtoop to him. That great Monarch *Nebuchadnezzar*, who lorded it over the greateſt in the world in his days, was at laſt brought to confeſs, that the Lord was a King over all the Children of Pride (*Dan.* 4. 37.) *Now I* Nebuchadnezzar *praiſe, and extol, and honour the King of Heaven, all whoſe works are truth, and his ways are judgment, and thoſe that walk in pride he is able to abaſe.* In this ſenſe God is a King over all the Children of Pride.

Lapſi videntur qui hoc de Leviathan, vel etiam de Satana interpretati ſunt. Coc. *Tenebras offudit interpretibus, omiſſio relativi,* &c. Coc.

Now though the words, according to the ſenſe given of this laſt reading, may ſafely be applied to God; yet as moſt among late Interpreters underſtand them litterally of *Leviathan*, ſo many of the Ancients, who have written upon this Book, turn this whole deſcription of *Leviathan* into an Allegory of the Devil (as was toucht before) and to make it out, they have run into many needleſs ſpeculations. But I conceive, though it be true, that many things ſpoken of *Leviathan* are applicable to the Devil, as alſo to Tyrants, to Antichriſt, and all wicked men; and ſome, who are very ſparing in urging the Allegory, yet grant we may, when we read what is ſaid of *Leviathan*, reflect upon the Devil, and conſider what a mighty power he hath to do miſchief, if the goodneſs and power of God did not reſtrain him: Yet 'tis ſafeſt to keep to the plain ſenſe, and not to buſie our ſelves much in transforming the holy Scriptures into Allegories, in which ſome have been over-bold; nor ſhould any venture to draw Allegories, but out of a natural meaning, as the Apoſtle *Paul* did in the fourth Chapter of his Epiſtle to the *Galathians*.

I ſhall only add, that as from the nature of this *Leviathan* (ſuppoſed to be the Whale) we may receive many inſtructions; ſo the Lord doth ſometimes Preach or Propheſie to whole Nations by him, that is, he gives warning by him to Nations, of ſome great things which ſhall come to paſs among them. 'Tis the obſervation of an Interpreter upon this place. *God* (ſaith he) *propheſies to People and Nations by the Whale, or Leviathan.* And as other places (he was a *German*) ſo we have had warnings by him; *For* (ſaith he) *in the year* 1620. *there was a Whale caſt up, upon the ſhore of a great river far within the Land, twenty and five Ells long and a half, immediately before the great wars, changes, and troubles which befel* Germany. Hence he infers, when theſe mighty Fiſhes come into places which are out of their way and road, or when God caſts them upon unwonted ſhores. it foreſhews ſome unwonted thing, or that God will bring gueſts among them, that they never thought of.

Deus cetos quaſi pænitentiæ præcones facit, dum inſolitis locis apparentes bella, & alias clades nuncient; ut homines pænitentiam agant. Scult:

Thus I have done with this long and large deſcription which the Lord makes of *Leviathan*; there remains only one Chapter more, which gives us the full effect and iſſue of all the dealings of God with *Job*, and of his ſpeakings to *Job*, about *Behemoth* and *Leviathan*. All was to humble him, and we ſhall ſee him deeply humbled, and eminently reſtored, in the next Chapter.

CHAP. XLII. Verſ. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.

Then Job *anſwered the Lord and ſaid;*
I know that thou canſt do every thing, and that no thought can be with-holden from thee.
Who is he that hideth counſel without knowledg? therefore have I uttered that I underſtood not, things too wonderful for me, which I knew not.
Hear, I beſeech thee, and I will ſpeak; I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.
I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye ſeeth thee:
Wherefore I abhor my ſelf, and repent in duſt and aſhes.

THis Chapter is the concluſion of the whole Hiſtory and Book of *Job*; it conſiſteth of three general parts.

Firſt, Of *Jobs* deep and ſincere humiliation before the Lord, in theſe ſix verſes.

Secondly, Of the reconciliation of *Jobs* three Friends to the Lord, or of their attonement and peace made with the Lord (*verſ.* 7, 8, 9.)

Thirdly, Of *Jobs* reſtitution, by the wonderful goodneſs, and powerful hand of the Lord, to as good, yea, to a better eſtate than he had before; from the tenth verſe incluſively, to the end of the Chapter.

The words under hand, contain the firſt part of the

Chapter, and I call them *Jobs* humiliation before the Lord; and in that we may conſider theſe two general parts.

Firſt, *Jobs* Teſtimony concerning God.

Secondly, His Charge brought againſt himſelf.

His Teſtimony concerning God we have in the ſecond verſe, and that is twofold, or he commends and exalts God in two of his moſt glorious Attributes.

Firſt, About his Omnipotency, *I know that thou canſt do every thing.*

Secondly, About his Omniſciency (as moſt expound the words) *And that no thought can be with-holden from thee.*

Jobs Charge or Accuſation which he brought againſt himſelf, hath theſe four things in it:

Firſt, The confeſſion of his own ignorance and raſhneſs in the third verſe, *Who is he that hideth counſel without knowledge? I have ſpoken* (ſaith he) *things which I underſtood not, things too wonderful for me, which I knew not.* Thus he chargeth himſelf with raſhneſs and ignorance.

Secondly, The ſubmiſſion of himſelf to the better inſtruction and teaching of God, or to what God ſhould be pleaſed yet further to reveal unto him at the fourth verſe, *Hear, I beſeech thee, and I will ſpeak, I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.* He begs yet a word more with God, and he begs a word more from God, or that God would ſpeak a word more to him.

Thirdly, A thankful acknowledgment, that he had already received much more light from God, than formerly he had attained to, at the fifth verſe, *I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear* (I had a knowledge of thee, O God, before) *but now* (ſaith he) *mine eye ſeeth thee*; now I have more knowledge, and clearer light concerning thee, than ever I had before.

Fourthly, The iſſue or effect of all this, and that is his repentance, *Wherefore I abhor my ſelf, and repent in duſt and aſhes.* Thus we have both the general parts of the whole Chapter, and the more particular reſolution of this firſt part, which I call *Jobs* humiliation. And in this manner he humbled himſelf before the Lord (as followeth.)

Verſ. 1. **Then Job anſwered the Lord, and ſaid.**

Theſe are the words of the Divine Hiſtorian, connecting this Chapter with the former. And all that I ſhall ſay upon this firſt verſe, ſhall be but to anſwer this queſtion.

How came it to paſs that Job *anſwered the Lord again, ſeeing he had profeſſed before* (Chap. 40. 5.) *that he would anſwer no more? Once have I ſpoken, but I will not anſwer; yea twice, but I will proceed no further.* There *Job* ſeemed to take up a reſolution to anſwer no more; how is it then, that here this Chapter beginneth with, *Then* Job *anſwered the Lord, and ſaid?*

I ſhall give a threefold anſwer to this doubt.

Firſt, Thus; we may conceive, *Job* in the former promiſe, that he would anſwer no more, meant it of ſuch a kind of anſwer as he had given the Lord, and his Friends before; he would anſwer no more in that way, or after that ſort; and ſo it was not an abſolute reſolve not to anſwer, but not to anſwer as he had done: As if he had ſaid, I will anſwer no more juſtifying my ſelf, no, nor ſo much as excuſing my ſelf, or taking off the weight of any charge the Lord hath brought againſt me: There being ſuch a change in his anſwer, he may very well be ſaid to anſwer no more; for he anſwered no more, as once he did. The beſt and ſafeſt way of juſtifying and excuſing our ſelves, is to lay our ſelves at the foot of God: A confeſſion of, or a charging our ſelves with our ſins, is the beſt way of acquitting our ſelves before God from our ſins; I mean, 'tis the beſt that we can do to juſtifie or acquit our ſelves.

Secondly, We may anſwer thus: 'Tis true, *Job* ſaid he would anſwer no more; but it is as true, that the Lord commanded him to anſwer again (*Chap.* 40. 1.) For when *Job* had ſaid there at the fifth verſe, *Once have I ſpoken, but I will not anſwer, yea twice, but I will proceed no further*: The Lord ſaith at the ſeventh verſe, *Gird up thy loyns like a man: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.* God called him forth, and bad him ſpeak, I have ſomewhat to ſay to thee, and do thou anſwer me; ſo that the Lord took off *Job*, or releaſed him from that bond, that he had put upon himſelf: Thou haſt ſaid, thou wilt anſwer no more, but I will have thee anſwer yet more. Now though we take up a reſolve to do, or not to do ſuch a thing, yet a word from God muſt over-rule us. As a word from God muſt over-rule us, not to do what we have reſolved to do; ſo a word from God muſt over-rule us, to do that which we have reſolved not to do.

Thirdly, The Lord had not only given *Job* a Command to anſwer, but inclined, and moved his heart to anſwer. The reaſon why *Job* reſolved not to anſwer, was the lowneſs of his own ſpirit, and the terrour of the Lord that was upon him. The Majeſty and dread of the Lord put him upon a reſolve for ſilence; but now ſome favour appearing, and the Lord giving him hopes of a gracious acceptance, he was incouraged to ſpeak, and had a freedom of ſpeech reſtored to him, and accordingly he *anſwered the Lord.* Thus we may ſalve *Jobs* Credit from lightneſs, much more from a lye; though after he had ſaid, he would anſwer no more, we find him anſwering again, *Then* Job *anſwered the Lord, and ſaid.*

The Lord having ſet forth his own Infinite Power and Wiſdom, in that long and accurate ſpeech which he made out of the whirlwind, concerning his works of Creation and Providence; eſpecially by his diſcourſe about that *unparallell'd pair, Behemoth and Leviathan,* the greateſt of living Creatures upon the Land, and in the Sea: I ſay, the Lord having by this diſcourſe humbled *Job*, he ſaw, and was convinced there was no diſputing with God, nor inquiring into, much leſs complaining of, or murmuring at his ſecret counſels and judgments; he now ſaw, it was not for him to call God to an account about any of his dealings and proceedings, as ſometimes he had done, but rather to adore them: and therefore he ſubmits, and anſwers only with exalting God, and abaſing himſelf. He begins with the exaltation of God, *Then* Job *anſwered the Lord, and ſaid.*

Verſ. 2. **I know that thou canſt do every thing.**

That's his firſt word; and it teacheth us, That, *when we begin to have high and great thoughts of God, we cannot but have low and mean thoughts of our ſelves.* Our own humiliation begins at the exaltation of God; and our ſelf-emptineſs and weakneſs, at the ſight of his Fulneſs and Almightineſs. Thus *Job* began his humiliation, *I know that thou canſt do every thing.*

This verſe exalts God both in his *Omnipotency*, and in his *Omniſciency.* 'Tis a ſhort, yet a full confeſſion of his Faith in this matter; and though it were ſhort, yet it pleaſed God much and fully, becauſe *Job* uttered it in much Faith. *A few words pleaſe God, where he ſeeth much Faith.*

Non exiget à nobis Deus multa verba, ſed multam fidem.

Firſt, He confeſſeth Gods *Omnipotency*, *I know that thou canſt do every thing.*

I know.] The word notes a certain knowledge, ſuch a knowledge as leaveth no place for doubting, nor for an uncertain opinionating. *I know*, is as much as, *I am aſſured*: As *Jacob* ſaid to *Joſeph*, when he told him *Manaſſeh* was his firſt-born (*Gen.*48.19.) *I know it, my Son, I know it,* &c. As if he had ſaid, I do not lay my right hand upon the Younger by miſtake, but choice; I know very well which is the firſt-born, and I know what I do, in laying my right hand upon the Younger. Thus ſaith *Job* here, *I know that thou canſt do every thing.* This great truth is fixed and fully ſetled upon my heart; and I urge my ſelf with all my might now, to give thee the glory of it, though ſometimes under my grievous pains and undue paſſions, I have obſcured it, and ſpoken as if I doubted, or were not well aſſured of it. *I know,*

That thou canſt do every thing.] The word rendred *canſt do*, notes two things; Firſt, Might; Secondly, Right, to do all things. For indeed, we can do no more than we have a right to do.

יכל *Potuit, poteſtatem habuit, potentior fuit, ſuperavit, prævaluit. Id tantum poſſumus, quod jure poſſumus.*

Again, It ſignifies not only a power of doing, but a prevailing power of doing, or a conquering power, a power that overcomes all difficulties, and removes all obſtacles or obſtructions; ſuch a power is intended in this word. We have it in a proper name (*Prov.*30 1.) *The words of* Agur, *the ſon of* Jakeh, *even the Propheſie. The man ſpake unto* Ithiel, *even unto* Ithiel *and* Ucal: Under both theſe names, *Ithiel* and *Ucal*, ſome conceive Chriſt is to be underſtood: he is *Ithiel*, which ſignifies (as *Emanuel*) *God with us*; and he is *Ucal*, that is, powerful and Almighty. When the Prophet *Jeremiah* would ſhew how ſtrongly that people were bent to ſin, he ſpeaks to them all as one man (*Jer.* 3. 5.) *Behold, thou haſt ſpoken, and done evil, as thou couldſt*; that is, thou haſt put forth thy *utmoſt Can*, thou haſt done as much evil as thou canſt. As here, *Job* ſaith of the Lord, *Thou canſt do all things.* So ſaid the Prophet of the people, *Thou haſt ſpoken, and done evil, as thou couldſt.* A godly man ſins, but he doth not ſin as he can, he doth not lay his utmoſt ſtrength, nor ſet his ſhoulders to it; but an evil man doth evil as he can, he ſerves his luſt as he ſhould ſerve God, with all his might. I urge that place only to note the force of the word, *I know that thou canſt do*

Every thing.] That is, every thing which is fit for, and becoming thy Majeſty to do, every thing which is good, every thing which is juſt, every thing which doth not reflect diſhonour upon thy name, every thing that is not a contradiction to thy ſelf. Thus, take things of what kind you will, God can do them; and take things in what degree you will, God can do them: he can do, not only little things, but great things, yea, the greateſt things. Great and little make no matter of difference with God. As if *Job* had ſaid, *O Lord, I know and acknowledge there is nothing too hard for thee, yea, nothing is hard to thee; and that as thy counſels and decrees are altogether wiſe and juſt, ſo thou haſt power enough to execute and bring them about. Thou canſt do*

Every thing.] There is no bound to the power of God, except his own will. God will not do every thing that he can, but he can do every thing that he willeth: nothing can ſtop the power of God in doing, where his will is to do. *Thou canſt do every thing.*

Or we may take it thus, *God can do every thing*; that is, every thing that he hath ſaid he will do, every thing that he hath engaged himſelf to do by promiſe, or by propheſie; he hath power to do what he hath ſaid or fore-ſhewed ſhall be done. Thus *Job* gives glory to God, and begins as *David* (*Pſal.* 59. 16, 17.) *to ſing of the power of the Lord, as well as of his mercy. I will ſing of thy power; unto thee, O my ſtrength, will I ſing.* Here *Job* ſings of the power of God, *I know that thou canſt do every thing.* The words have no difficulty in them; only when *Job* ſaith here, *I know that thou canſt do every thing*, it may be queſtioned.

Did not Job *know this before?* yea, *had not* Job *ſaid as much as this before?* that God could do every thing. In ſeveral paſſages of the ninth and twelfth Chapters, he ſaid as much as this, and more cannot be ſaid of God. We have ſaid every thing of God, when once we have ſaid, he can do every thing. There *Job* cries up the power of God, together with his wiſdom (*verſ.* 4. &c.) *He is wiſe in heart, and mighty in ſtrength; who hath hardned himſelf againſt him and proſpered?* If any ask, what can God do? *Job* anſwers, *He can move the mountains, and overturn them in his anger, he ſhaketh the earth out of its place, he commandeth the Sun, and it riſeth not, and ſealeth up the Stars, he alone ſpreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the waves of the Sea.* All theſe are ſpeakings forth of the Almightineſs of God; and he that can do theſe things, ſurely can do all things. Now ſeeing *Job* was there ſo much upon this point before, how is it that here he ſaith, *I know that thou canſt do every thing?* as if this were ſome new matter which he was not acquainted with before, or had never uttered.

I anſwer, it is true, *Job* knew this before, but he did not know it before as he knew it now: Though he knew the Lords power before, and ſpake of it, yet the trouble of his ſpirit, and the anguiſh of his ſoul under his ſufferings, did very much darken him as to this knowledge; and therefore when *Job* ſaith, *I know that thou canſt do every thing*, this knowing is not to be underſtood as oppoſed to ignorance only, as if *Job* knew this now, and did not know it at all before; but knowing here is oppoſed to a leſſer degree of knowledge, or knowing here imports a higher and greater degree of knowledge than ever he had before concerning the power of God. *Job* ſpake ſometimes before, as if he knew little of this great truth, and he much detracted from the abſolute power of God over all creatures by his complainings, eſpecially that he and other innocent ones were afflicted; as alſo, by his earneſt deſire of knowing why he was afflicted, being innocent, thereby intimating, that he was not ſo well ſatisfied in the dealing of God with him, nor had wholly reſigned up himſelf to the ſoveraign power and will of God, to be diſpoſed of at his pleaſure; ſo that in this ſhort confeſſion *Job* ſeems to ſpeak more largely, thus; *Now at length, O Lord, I know more fully than ever, that thou haſt a moſt juſt right and power to command and diſpoſe of all things, and that thou both doſt and mayſt effect whatſoever pleaſeth thee; nor ought any to murmur at, much leſs reſiſt thy counſels or dealings, ſeeing every thing is, and cannot but be juſt and righteous which thou doſt.* We conclude then, *Job* knew this truth before, but not as he knew it now.

Hence Note, Firſt; *Knowledge is a growing thing.*

And it were well if we were all found growing in knowledge. That's the Apoſtle *Peters* charge (2 *Epiſt.* 3. 18.) *Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.* He puts both together. There is a growth in knowledge as well as in grace; and in proportion to our ſpiritual growth in knowledge, is our growth in grace: for, though many grow much in notional and ſpeculative knowledge, who grow little in grace; yet they cannot but grow much in grace, who grow much in ſpiritual and experimental knowledge. As a godly man groweth in knowledge, ſo in grace too. Knowledge is a growing thing. The riſing and increaſing waters of the Sanctuary were a type of the increaſings of knowledge; thoſe waters were firſt to the ancles, and then to the knees, and then to the loyns, and then to the neck. And as knowledge increaſeth, with reſpect to the ſeveral times and ſtates of the Church (for ſo that place (*Ezek.* 47. 3, 4, 5.) is to be underſtood) ſo it is a truth, that there is an increaſe of knowledge, with reſpect to the ſtate of every particular believer; his knowledge is firſt to the ancles, and then to the knees, and then to the loyns, and then to the neck. As ſome points to be known are ſo eaſie or ſhallow, that (according to that clear and common ſimilitude) a Lamb may wade through them; others ſo difficult and deep, that an Elephant may ſwim in them: ſo the degree of knowledge in the ſame perſon, which at one time was very ſmall and ſhallow, at another may be ſwelled into a great deep, and he called a man of deep knowledge. We have a general promiſe of ſuch an increaſe (*Iſa.* 11. 9.) *The earth ſhall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the Sea*; that is, there ſhall be a wonderful increaſe of knowledge. That's alſo the import of *Daniels* Propheſie (Chap. 12. 4.) *Many ſhall run to and fro, and knowledge ſhall be increaſed.* Particular perſons ſhall improve in knowledge, and ſo ſhall the whole Church. So then, this increaſe of knowledge is of two ſorts, Firſt, it is a knowledge of more things; and, Secondly, of every thing more.

We ſhould labour to know more truths; we muſt thus add to our knowledge. For, though it be true, that every believer hath received the anointing, whereby he knoweth all things that are of abſolute neceſſity (1 *John* 2. 20.) yet he may come to the knowledge of more things which are exceeding uſeful and helpful to him.

Secondly, We ſhould labour to know every thing more, as in the Text. *Job* knew before that God was omnipotent, and could do all things; but now he knew it more, and ſo much more, that the knowledge which he had before might be called ignorance, compared with the knowledge which he had now received. Then we increaſe our knowledge fully, when we get the knowledge of more things, and of every thing more.

Again, we ſhould labour to increaſe, as in ſpeculative, ſo in experimental knowledge. Speculative knowledge alone, goes no further than the notion of what we know; experimental knowledge finds and feels the power of what we know, it ſubjects us, or makes us ſubject to what we know; the motions of the Will follow the light and dictate of the Underſtanding. This is the beſt knowledge: Knowledge which is felt and acted, is better than that which is heard and declared. What the Apoſtle *John* ſaid of himſelf, and his fellow Apoſtles, who were perſonally preſent with Chriſt while here on earth, with reſpect to their ſenſitive knowledge of him, is moſt true of the ſpiritual and experimental knowledge which believers have of Chriſt now in heaven, and they abſent from him (1 *John* 1. 1.) *That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have ſeen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the word of life, that* *declare we unto you*; we declare that unto you which we have ſeen and felt. 'Tis a bleſſed thing, when we can ſay, that the things which we declare to others, we have felt them, and even handled them our ſelves. Many (as our uſual expreſſion is) handle Texts, and handle truths learnedly and excellently in a diſcourſe, who never handled, no nor ſo much as toucht them by any experience of their ſweetneſs or efficacy, either in their hearts or lives.

Further, conſider in what way *Job* came to this proficiency in knowledge; he had been a great while in the School of affliction, before he ſaid, *I know*, and *I know* to purpoſe, *that thou canſt do every thing.*

Hence Note; *Afflictions and ſufferings are a ſpecial means to increaſe our knowledge, and wiſe us in the things of God.*

The godly never increaſe more in knowledge, than under the Croſs, under afflictions of one kind or another. *David* ſaith (*Pſal.* 119. 71.) *It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy ſtatutes.* Did not *David* know the Statutes of God before? doubtleſs he did, he was all-along trained up in the ſtatutes of God; but when God took him into the School of affliction, then he learnt the Statutes of God much better. Let us conſider what profiting we find at any time under affliction, as to the knowledge of God, and of our ſelves; if we do not better our knowledge by one croſs, we may expect to meet with another, and another, till matters mend with us. *Solomon* ſaith, (*Prov.* 27. 22.) *Thou thou ſhould bray a fool in a morter, among wheat, with a peſtle, yet will not his fooliſhneſs depart from him*; that is, an obſtinate ſinner (he is the fool there ſpoken of) though extreamly afflicted, is not bettered: but a godly man profits by his affliction, both as to the departure and riddance of his folly, as alſo to his growth in ſpiritual experimental knowledge.

Once more (which will give us a third note) *Job* was not only in affliction, but God taught him in his affliction; *Job* had not only a rod upon his back, but a tutor by his ſide. His three friends had been long with him, and ſpoken much to him, but he learnt little by them. When *Elihu* had been ſpeaking to him, he yielded ſomewhat to him, though not fully; but when once God undertook to tutor and inſtruct him, *Job* learned amain, and profited greatly in knowledge.

Hence Note; *Then we profit indeed under affliction, when God teacheth us in our afflictions.*

If we have nothing but the rod, we profit not by the rod; yea, if we have nothing but the Word, we ſhall never profit by the Word. It is the Spirit given with the Word, and the Spirit given with the rod, by which we profit under both, or either. (*Pſal.* 94. 12.) *Bleſſed is the man* (ſaith *David*) *whom thou chaſtneſt, and teacheſt out of thy Law.* Chaſtning and divine teaching muſt go together, elſe there will be no profiting by chaſtning. God was *Jobs* teacher as well as his chaſtner; *Job* received many leſſons from God, he taught him quite through the 38. and 39. Chapters, and he taught him quite through two Chapters more, before he ſaid, *I know that thou canſt do every thing.* Thus far of *Jobs* knowledge. Let us a little conſider the firſt object of it here expreſſed, the omnipotence of God, *I know that thou canſt do every thing.*

Hence obſerve; Firſt, *God is good at any work.*

That is, at any work that is good; he can do every ſuch thing, nothing comes amiſs to him. Among men, one man can do this thing, and another can ~~do that thing~~, and a third can do more than either; but where you will find a man that can do every thing? One man is for counſel, another for action; one man can build a houſe, and another can till the ground; ſeveral men have their ſeveral arts and myſteries, and it is well if one man can do any one thing well: But God is for all. We have a ſaying (and tis a great truth) *He that will be doing of every thing, is no great doer in any thing*; that is, he never excels in any. But as the Lord can do every thing, ſo he is exact and perfect in every thing that he doth. The beſt creature is only a particular good, but God is an univerſal good; there is every good in God: all the good that is ſcattered in the creature, is eminently in him. Now as God is an univerſal good, ſo he is an univerſal Agent; he is in working, as he is in Being; *He can do every thing for us*, as well as be every thing to us. We need not fear if we bring this or that thing to God, that he hath no skill in it, as it is with men; if you bring this thing to a man, he is excellent at it; but bring another thing, and he knoweth not how to turn his hand to it: but whatſoever we have to do, if it be according to the will of God, he hath power and wiſdom enough to do it. The Lord had power enough to give a being to all creatures; and hath he not power enough to do all things in and about the creature? cannot he preſerve in all dangers, and provide in all wants? cannot he furniſh with all gifts, and give ſucceſs? cannot he overthrow the high, and exalt the low? cannot he reſtrain the wrathful, and ſubdue the obſtinate? cannot he weaken the ſtrong, and ſtrengthen the weak? cannot he make fools wiſe, and wiſe men fooliſh? ſurely he can do all theſe things, for he can do every thing.

Aliquis in omnibus, nullus in ſingulis.

Secondly, from theſe words take that grand aſſertion.

God is omnipotent, his power is infinite.

This is a principle, one of the great principles of Religion, an Article of Faith; yet I ſhall not enlarge upon it, having met with it in other places of this book. Only conſider here, how *Job* infers this principle; he infers it from the diſcourſe which the Lord was pleaſed to have with him, in the four former Chapters, wherein the Lord told him of many things that he had done; I have done this and that in the heavens above, and in the earth below, I have made *Behemoth* and *Leviathan*: God had told him of his doings; whence *Job* inferred, *I know thou canſt do every thing.* He doth not make this concluſion by way of induction (there is ſuch a way of argumentation in Logick) but by deduction. God hath done this and that, and the other, therefore he can do all things; if he can do this, what cannot he do? if he can make and ſubdue *Behemoth*, what cannot he do? and if he can make and maſter *Leviathan*, what cannot he do? Chriſt (*Luke* 5. 20.) argueth his omnipotency or Godhead in the ſame manner; for having healed a poor man, and ſaid unto him, *Man, thy ſins are forgiven thee*, the Phariſees were very much offended with that word, ſaying, *Who is this that ſpeaketh blaſphemy? who can forgive ſins but God alone?* Chriſt knowing their thoughts, ſaid, *What reaſon ye in your hearts? whether is it eaſier to ſay, thy ſins are forgiven thee, or to ſay, riſe up and walk?* I have healed the man; doth not that argue a divine power? why may not I then ſay, *Thy ſins are forgiven thee?* He that can by his own might do one mighty or miraculous thing, can do all things. Such is the power of God, that, as I ſaid before, he hath no limit to it, but his own will.

Ex mirabilibus recenſitis ſcivit Job *atque collegit Deum omnia poſſe; non quaſi per inductionem, ſed per deductionem plurium ex uno principio.* Janſon.

And ſeeing the will of God is the limit of his power, let us take heed of deſiring him who can do every thing, to do any thing for us, which is not according to his will. Let us bound our deſires; let us take heed of ſaying, this is our deſire, and God can do every thing, therefore this which we deſire. Conſider, is your deſire according to the will of God. We cannot urge God with his Omnipotency, to do any thing that is our deſire, if we are not firſt clear in it, that our deſire is agreeable to his will: Unleſs we have a rule for our deſire, or we deſire by rule, we can have no well-grounded confidence, that God will do that for us, which we deſire. God is almighty, not to do what we will or forge in our brain, but to do what himſelf willeth. Papiſts ſay, the bread is turned into the very body of Chriſt; but ſay we, we ſee, and feel, and taſt but bread: They preſently fly to this, *God is able to do all things, or he can do every thing*; this is, to abuſe the omnipotence of God: Hath the Scripture declared any ſuch thing? yea, hath not the Scripture declared the quite contrary, that Sacraments are but ſigns of things, not the things themſelves. *This is my body*, ſaid Chriſt; but he ſaid not, *my body is this.* Chriſt willed that his body ſhould be repreſented by bread; he willed not that bread ſhould be changed into his body. The power of God muſt not be urged beyond his will. We have no revelation of the will of God, that he will tranſubſtantiate the bread at the holy ſupper into the body of Chriſt; but he hath given it as a ſacred ſymbole of Chriſts crucified and broken body, upon which we are to feed by faith.

That God can do whatſoever he willeth, hath a two-fold uſe.

First,

Noſtra difficultates Deo perfaciles ſunt.

Firſt, Of comfort, to all true believers who ſtand in the grace of the Covenant. That nothing is to hard for God, is a marvelous Conſolation to us in all our hardſhips. When God promiſed *Abraham* a Son in his old age (*Gen.* 18.) what a hard task was here for God? *Sarah* could could not believe it, ſhe laughed; but what ſaith the Lord? *Is any thing too hard for me?* he preſently urgeth his own power, where he had declared his will. Whatſoever God hath declared to be his will, either as to particular perſons, or the whole Church; it matters not how hard it is, if we have but his will for it. As Chriſt will at laſt *Change our vile body, that it may be faſhioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working, whereby he is able even to ſubdue all things unto himſelf* (Phil. 3.21.) ſo according to that working, he is able to change and ſubdue all things to and according to his own will. When the *Jews* were to be carried into captivity to *Babylon*, the Lord commanded *Jeremy* to make purchaſe of a field in *Anathoth* (Jer. 32.7, 8, 9.) Now *Jeremy* might object; behold, the *Chaldæans* are come to the City to take it; and ſhall I go and buy land? Is this a time to make purchaſes? is this a time to buy land, when the City is ready to be taken, and the whole land like to be loſt? yes, ſaith God, *Buy the field for money, ſeal the evidences, and take witneſſes; for thus ſaith the God of Iſrael* (verſ. 15.) *houſes, and fields, and vineyards ſhall be poſſeſſed again in this land.* Am not I able to bring you back again? And therefore after *Jeremy* had confeſſed in prayer to the Lord (*verſ.* 17.) *Nothing is too hard for thee* (The Hebrew is, *hidden from thee, or wonderful to thee*; becauſe hard things are hidden from us, ſtrange and wonderful to us. The Prophet, I ſay, having ſaid this to the Lord in prayer) the Lord ſaid to him (*verſ.* 27.) *Is any thing too hard for me?* And to the ſame point, the Lord ſpake again (*Zech.* 8.6.) *Thus ſaith the Lord of hoſts, if it be marvellous in the eyes of the remnant of this people* (namely, that *Jeruſalem* ſhould be reſtored) *ſhould it alſo be marvellous in mine eyes, ſaith the Lord of hoſts*, to perform what was ſaid (*verſ.* 4.) *There ſhall yet old men, and old women dwell in the ſtreets of* Jeruſalem, *and every man with his ſtaff in his hand for very age, and the ſtreets of the City ſhall be full of boys and girls, playing in the ſtreets thereof.* Who could believe this? but it was the will of God it ſhould be ſo: And therefore he ſaid, *If it be marvellous in your eyes* ſhould it be ſo in mine eyes? You think this can never be brought about. But muſt it needs be marvellous in my eyes, becauſe it is ſo in yours? or (as the margin hath it) muſt it needs be hard or difficult to me, becauſe 'tis ſo to you? The ſame word which ſignifies *marvellous*, ſignifies *difficult*, becauſe that which is difficult and hard we marvel at: But ſaith the Lord, becauſe this thing is marvellous in your eyes, muſt it be ſo in mine, who can do every thing? And we may conceive, that when *Job* ſpake thus, he began to have ſome hope of his reſtauration. He had loſt all, children, and health, and ſtrength, and eſtate, all was gone, and he many times gave up all for gone, and ſpake deſpairingly, as to a reſtitution; but now God having ſpoken of what he had done, *Jobs* faith and hope revived in theſe words, *I know that thou canſt do every thing*; and among other things thou canſt reſtore all to me again, thou canſt give me as much health and ſtrength of body, as many children, as full an eſtate, as ever I had.

Secondly, This truth is matter of great terrour to the wicked. As God can ſtrengthen the weak, ſo he can weaken the ſtrong; and as, he can raiſe up the godly, ſo he can eaſily pull down the ungodly; as he can fill up the vallies, ſo he can level the mountains. Thus the Lord ſpake (*Ezek.* 17. 24.) *All the trees of the field ſhall know, that I the Lord have brought down the high tree, have exalted the low tree, have dryed up the green tree, and have made the dry tree to flouriſh; I the Lord have ſpoken, and have done it.* It muſt needs be terrible to the wicked, that God can do what he will, ſeeing his will is to deſtroy them, except they repent and turn to him; he hath power enough to do it, and his will is to do it; what then can hinder his doing it, but their repentance for what they have done. *There are no ſons of* Zerviah *too hard for him, who can do every thing.*

Again, from the ſecond notion of theſe words, *Thou canſt do every thing*, that is, thou haſt right as well as might to do every thing,

> Obſerve, *The Lord may do, he hath an unqueſtionable right to do whatſoever he is pleaſed to do.*

God gives a law to all others for their actions, but he is the law to himſelf. He can do every thing of right he willeth, as well as he hath might to do what he will.

Then let none complain, that God hath done them wrong, for every thing is right which God doth. *Job* had failed in this, by ſpeeches reflecting upon the juſtice of God in his dealings with him; and therefore we may conceive, that in this confeſſion, *I know thou canſt do every thing*, he chiefly aimed at this, to give God the glory of his juſtice: As if he had ſaid, *Though thou, O Lord, layeſt thy hand heavy upon an innocent perſon, and ſtrippeſt him of all that he hath; though thou, O Lord, makeſt a wicked man to flouriſh in this world, and filleſt him with outward felicity; yet all ought to reſt in thy will, for this thou canſt do of right, being abſolute Lord over all. I* (ſaid *Job*) *know that thou canſt do every thing.*

And that no thought can be with-holden from thee.

Mr. *Broughton* renders, *that no wiſdom was with-holden from thee*; which he thus gloſſeth: Thou haſt made all things in perfect wiſdom, to ſhew thy eternal power and God-head. The ſame word ſignifies both *wiſdom and thoughts*, and well it may; for unleſs we have wiſe thoughts in our ſelves, we can never ſhew wiſdom, either in our words or actions towards others. There is a difference amongſt Interpreters, whoſe thoughts we are here to underſtand, when *Job* ſaith, *No thought can be with-holden from thee.*

בצר *breviavit, abrupit, decerpſit, propriè uvas & fructus vindemiavit. Hinc* Bozra *metropolis* Idumeæ, *cum vinetis, & vini proventu fuit celebris nomen ſortita eſt*, Iſa. 63.1. *Nihil cogitas, quod non poſſis ſi velis efficere, quid enim te prohibebit, aut impediet?* Druſ. *Nec avertere poſſe à cogitatione, ſc. perficienda.* Jun. *Et quod non vindemiabitur à te cogitatæ atq; propoſitæ effectionem.* Piſc.

Firſt, Many very worthy and learned men, are of opinion, that by thought, we are to underſtand the thought of God, Gods own thought; & ſo theſe words are but the carrying on of the ſame thing, or a further explication of what was ſaid before, *I know that thou canſt do every thing*; that is, whatſoever is in thy thought or in thy heart to do, no power in the world can with-hold thee from doing it; *no thought*, that is, not any one of thy thoughts, *can be with-holden from thee*, that is, from thy fulfilling it, or bringing it to paſs: what thou haſt in thy mind, thou wilt perform with thy hand: If thou haſt but a thought to do ſuch a thing, thou canſt not be hindred of thy thought, it ſhall be done.

The words hold out a very glorious truth concerning God, if we take *thought* in this ſenſe; and as it is a great truth in it ſelf, ſo it is a very uſeful one to us.

> The Obſervation is this; *Whatſoever God hath a thought to do, he will do it, he cannot be hindred in the effect of a thought.*

As none of Gods thoughts are vain, ſo none of them are in vain or ineffectual, they all reach their end (*Iſa.* 43:13.) *I will work, and who ſhall lett it?* God will work if he hath but a thought to work; and if all the Powers in the world ſet themſelves againſt him, they ſhall not be able to diſappoint any one of his thoughts (*Prov.* 19. 21.) *There are many devices in a mans heart, yet the counſel of the Lord ſhall ſtand*; that is, there are many thoughts in mans heart oppoſite to the counſel and thought of God. Men think this and that, they make up many things in their thoughts, yet can make nothing of them, becauſe againſt the thoughts of God; for all the devices that are in mans heart, cannot hinder the effect of Gods counſel, his counſel ſhall ſtand faſt and firm, without any bowing, without any bending, while their devices fall and are utterly broken. The concluſion of wiſe *Solomon* is (*Prov.* 21. 30.) *There is no wiſdom, nor underſtanding, nor counſel againſt the Lord.* Let men take or give counſel as long as they will againſt the Lord, they cannot avoid the effect of his counſels. We have both theſe, the ſtanding of the Lords counſel, and the overthrowing of all counſels that are againſt him, in that one Scripture (*Pſa.* 33. 10, 11.) *The Lord bringeth the counſel of the heathen to nought, he maketh the devices of the people of none effect: The counſel of the Lord ſtandeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations.* God never loſt a thought: all come to paſs. This ſheweth the mighty efficacy of the counſel of God; this is more than can be ſaid of any man or men in the world; the wiſeſt and greateſt, have had many thoughts with-holden from them. They have thought to do this and that, but could not effect it, nor bring it about (*Pſal.* 146. 4.) *Their thoughts periſh*; they have a great many plots in their heads, but they prove not; they often live to ſee their own thoughts die. Their thoughts periſh, not only when they die, but they live to ſee them periſh and die. The Prophet (*Iſa.* 44. 25.) ſheweth how the Lord fruſtrates the counſels of men, and turneth them backward; he ſhews alſo, that without him they cannot go forward (*Lamen.* 3. 37.) *Who is he that ſaith and it cometh to paſs, when the Lord commanded it not?*

But ſome may object, the Lord ſpeaketh of the builders of *Babel*, as *Job* here ſpeaketh of him (*Gen.* 11. 6.) *Behold the people is one, and they have all one language, and this they begin to do, and now nothing will be reſtrained from them which they have imagined to do*; as if he had ſaid, there will be no with-holding of them from their thoughts.

'Tis very true, amongſt men there was nothing to ſtop them; they being all as one man, and of one mind, would have accompliſhed any thing that they did imagine: but though there was nothing upon earth, nothing among men, that could reſtrain them, yet God could do it, and he did it, he confounded their language, and one brought morter, when he ſhould have brought brick; and another brought ſtones, when he ſhould have brought timber; they thought to build a tower that ſhould reach as high as heaven, they would be drowned no more; but they and their thoughts were ſoon ſcattered and blown away.

This point hath in it alſo abundance of comfort (as the former) for take thought for the thought of God, and it runs parallel with what I ſpake before, of the work of God; he can do every thing, every thing that is in his thought to do; we may take freſh comfort from it. Can no thought be with holden from God? what a comfort is this to all that he hath good thoughts of, or thoughts for good. The heart of God is full of good thoughts to his people, though he many times ſpeaks hard words to them, and doth hard things againſt them, yet he hath good thoughts concerning them (*Pſa.* 40 5.) *Many, O Lord, my God, are thy wonderful works which thou haſt done, and thy thoughts which thou haſt to us-ward:* Thoughts to us-ward are thoughts for us, that is, thoughts of good intended us. Now hath the Lord many good thoughts for us, and none of theſe ſhall be with-holden; is not this comfort? When the Church of the Jews was in *Babylon*, the Lord dealt very hardly with them, though not ſo hardly as they deſerved. But what were his thoughts (*Jer.* 29. 11.) *I know the thoughts that I think towards you* (you do not know the thoughts that I have towards you, but I do: what are they?) *thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end*, that is, the end which you expect and wait for. What a mercy is this, that no thought of God can be with-holden, when as he hath ſo many thoughts of mercy and good things to his people!

Again, I might ſhew how dreadful this is to wicked men, for the Lord hath nothing but thoughts of revenge and evil towards them: But 'tis enough to hint it.

Before I paſs from this interpretation, ſome may object. If all the thoughts of God ſhall be brought to paſs, and none can with-hold them, if God will do what he hath a purpoſe to do; then what need we trouble our ſelves ſo much in prayer? For if God hath any thoughts of good to us, it ſhall be done; but if not, we cannot bring it to paſs by prayer: And ſo ſome urge, what need we repent and humble our ſelves, the thoughts of God ſhall be fulfilled. To this, I ſay, in general, take heed of ſuch reaſonings; for as they are very abſurd and reaſonleſs, ſo they are very dangerous, and leave us remedileſs. More particularly,

I anſwer, thus; Though God hath thoughts and purpoſes of good to his people, yet whatſoever good he will do for his people, he will be ſought unto to do it for them; and therefore prayer, repentance, and humiliation, are needful to bring forth thoughts of good from God to us. And though no man can hinder the bringing to paſs of any of his thoughts, yet we may help their birth and bringing forth. So much of the firſt interpretation of theſe words.

And that no thought can be with-holden from thee.

Nulla te latet cogitatio. Vulg.

Secondly, no thought, that is, no thought of man can be with-holden from thee; thou knoweſt the thoughts of every one, what they are, of what kind they are. The Latine tranſlation is expreſs, *There is no thought ſecret to thee.*

Some read the whole verſe thus. *Thou knoweſt that thou canſt do every thing, and no thought is hidden to thee.* As if *Job* had ſaid, *O Lord, as none know what thy power is better than thy ſelf, or as none know like thy ſelf what thou canſt do, even that thou canſt do all things: ſo none know better than thy ſelf, not I my ſelf, what my thought, or opinion, or faith rather is, concerning thy power and ſelf-ſufficiency to do all things.* Which manner of ſpeech importeth the deep ſubmiſſion of himſelf unto God, or a kind of demiſſion, or letting of himſelf down into God, while he ſaith nothing expreſly of himſelf, or what his thoughts were of Gods power; but refers all to God, as knowing him and his mind fully, and ſubjects himſelf wholly to his teſtimony. So that he ſeems to call God to witneſs, or appeals to God as a witneſs of the ſincerity of his heart, in the acknowledgement which he made of his All-ſufficiency, as the Apoſtle *Peter*, of his love to Chriſt, when ſo often preſſed him, even a third time, with that ſearching queſtion, *Simon, ſon of* Jonas, *loveſt thou me? Lord, thou knoweſt all things, thou knoweſt that I love thee* (John 21. 17.) *Peter* would not be confident, that he loved Chriſt more than thoſe; but referred himſelf, in that matter, to the judgment of Chriſt, who knew all things, and himſelf, both as to the truth and degree of his affections to him perfectly. Thus ſaid *Job*, thou knoweſt (and I acknowledge) that no thought can be with-holden from thee; therefore not mine.

Hence Note, *Our very thoughts are plain to God; neither is there any way of concealing our thoughts from him.*

We cannot put our thoughts into a ſecret place where God cannot ſee them; we cannot with-hold them from God, as we eaſily may from man, if we can but hold our tongues, and not let our thoughts drop out of our mouths in words. (*Pſal.* 139. 2.) The Lord knoweth *our thoughts afar off*. He knew what thoughts there were in the hearts of the *Jews* (*Jer.* 4. 14.) O Jeruſalem, *waſh thine heart from wickedneſs, that thou mayeſt be ſaved: how long ſhall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee!* Theſe vain thoughts, were thoughts about their continuance in that peaceable condition, that the enemy ſhould never come to moleſt them, or they ſhould never come into the hand of the enemy; as others afterwards had vain thoughts, that they ſhould be ſpeedily delivered out of their hands. Firſt, They had vain thoughts, that they ſhould never go into captivity. And Secondly, They had as vain thoughts, that they ſhould be preſently delivered out of captivity: Theſe are your vain thoughts, and theſe I know, ſaith God. Our thoughts are as open to God, as our works; all our thoughts, good and bad, are alike known to God: He knoweth our good thoughts, and the thoughts which we have to do good. If we have a thought of good to any man, the Lord knoweth it; and if we have a thought for evil to any man, the Lord knoweth it. The Lord knoweth not only what thoughts are evil in their own nature, but what are detrimentally evil unto others. Thus ſpake diſtreſſed *Jeremy* in the perſon of the whole *Jewiſh* Church (*Lament.* 3. 60, 61, 62.) *Thou haſt ſeen all their vengeance, and all their imaginations againſt me. Thou haſt heard their reproach, O Lord, and all their imaginations againſt me, and their devices againſt me all the day long.* The Lord knoweth all the good thoughts that others have for us, and all the evil thoughts which they have againſt us: Now,

If no thought of ours can be with-holden from God, then keep guard, and watch over your thoughts; hold your thoughts in good order, for you cannot with-hold your diſorderly thoughts from God; bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Chriſt (2 *Cor.* 10. 5.)

Secondly, If the Lord knoweth all our thoughts? then certainly all good thoughts ſhall be rewarded, as well as good words, yea, even as well as good deeds. As the Lord will not loſe a good thought (which was ſhewed in the former point) ſo we ſhall not loſe a good thought; God will reward them fully, for he knoweth them fully. There was a good thought in *Davids* heart, to build the Lord a Temple, and the Lord ſaid (as *Solomon* his Son reports it, 1 *Kings* 8. 18.) *Whereas it was in thy heart to build a houſe to my name, thou didſt well that it was in thine heart*, I take it as well, as if thou hadſt done it. God takes notice of our thoughts. And therefore this is comfort when we can do but little, yet God knows what we would do, what work our thoughts are at; and our thoughts are our beſt and choiceſt works, they are the *firſt-born of the ſoul.* Wicked men may do works, and ſpeak words, good for the matter, but they cannot properly think good thoughts.

Thirdly, if the Lord knoweth our thoughts, then evil thoughts ſhall not go unpuniſhed. When the Lord brought the deluge upon the old world, we find him ſpeaking thus (*Gen.* 6. 5.) *God ſaw that the wickedneſs of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.* God ſpake not of their works, but of the imagination of their hearts, their thoughts. The Apoſtle counſelled *Simon Magus* to repent of his wickedneſs, and pray God, *if perhaps the thought of his heart might be forgiven him* (*Acts* 8. 22.) There lieth the danger; take heed of evil thoughts: we are in as much danger by them, as by the worſt evil actions. Take heed, Firſt, of proud thoughts; though *pride bloſſom not*, that is, though it appear not openly, nor hang out its flag in words and works, yet take heed of it. Secondly, take heed of wanton and adulterous thoughts, though you act not wantonly, nor commit adultery. Thirdly, take heed of covetous thoughts, though you proceed not to covetous practices. Fourthly, of envious thoughts, or of being troubled at the good of your neighbours, though you hinder not his good. Fifthly, take heed of revengeful thoughts, or of deviſing evil againſt your neighbour, though you hurt him not, nor bring evil upon him. Sixthly, take heed of hard thoughts of God, whatſoever his dealings be with you. Though you murmur not, though you ſpeak not hard words of his dealing with you, yet if you think hardly of him, and queſtion his juſtice or goodneſs in your hearts, he takes notice of it. Seventhly, take heed of diſcontentful thoughts with your own condition, though ſad and bitter. This was *Jobs* ſin, and it is conceived that he ſpake thus, as acknowledging that he lay open before God, as knowing all his thoughts of diſcontent. Eighthly, above all, take heed of blaſphemous thoughts of God, which the devil hoped to bring *Job* to. Take heed of theſe and of every evil thought, though not acted, knowing alſo, that every evil act hath its evil thought belonging to it, and that no thought can be with-holden from God.

Recognoſcit ſe interius fuiſſe aliqua cogitatione ſuperba pulſatum, quod Deum non latuiſſe cognoſcit. Aquin. *Latini exiſtimant loqui* Jobum *de ſuis tumultuantibus cogitationibus, ſive ſuperbiæ de ſua ſanctitate, ſive iniquæ expoſtulationis cum divina providentia. Accuſat cogitationes ſuas.* Philip.

Thus much for the firſt part of *Jobs* humiliation, his exalting of God in his omnipotency, and in his omniſciency; he is omnipotent, he can do every thing, nor can any of his thoughts be with-holden from him, by any power of man; he is omniſcient, no man can with-hold or hide his own thoughts from God.

Job having made that great acknowledgment of the power and knowledge of God, *I know thou canſt do every thing, neither can any thought be with-holden from thee*, comes to the confeſſion of his own weakneſs and ignorance.

Verſe 3. **Who is he that hideth counſel without knowledge? therefore have I uttered that I underſtood not.**

Who is he?] That is, what manner of man is he? or what is he for a man? what man hath he been?

That hideth counſel.] We had theſe words at the ſecond verſe of the 38. Chapter, where the Lord ſaid chidingly to *Job, who is this that darkneth counſel by words without knowledge?* Here *Job* ſaith humbly to God, *Who is this that hideth counſel?* There is ſome change in the words; little, if any, in the ſenſe. There the Lord ſaid, *Who is he that darkeneth?* Here *Job* ſaith, *Who is he that hideth?* &c. both may be taken as intending the ſame thing, darkning and hiding being of a like ſignification, and things in the dark can no more be ſeen, than things hidden. Yet ſome *Jewiſh* Writers conceive, that *Job* here doth ſomewhat abate what the Lord ſpake, or did extenuate the matter, as to his own faultineſs and miſcarriage; As if he indeed granted, that he had hid or concealed the counſel of God, but would be excuſed in this, that he had darkned it. This is a nice difference, and I doubt not but the ſpirit of *Job* was ſo low and graciouſly humbled, that he ſpake with the moſt and higheſt, to humble himſelf, when he ſaid, *Who is he that hideth counſel?* But how had *Job* hid the counſel of God?

I anſwer, Firſt; He had hid the counſel of God by not declaring it ſo much or ſo fully as he ought. *David* propheſying of Chriſt, ſaith (*Pſal.* 40. 10.) *I have not hid thy righteouſneſs within my heart, I have declared thy faithfulneſs and thy ſalvation.* What is meant by *not hiding*, in the former part of the verſe, is expreſſed by *declaring*, in the latter part of it; and when he ſaith, *I have declared*, his meaning is, I have amply and clearly made known thy faithfulneſs. So that, becauſe *Job* had not ſo clearly as he ſhould declared the righteouſneſs, or the righteous counſels of God concerning him, and his dealings with him, he may be ſaid to have hid the counſel of God. While we do not magnifie God, we leſſen him; while we do not declare, to the utmoſt, his power, we hide it; and therefore *Job* thus chargeth himſelf, *Who is he that hideth?*

Or we may take it thus, more diſtinctly; *Job* hid the counſel of God,

Firſt, by being ſo much in ſetting forth his own innocency. How much he inſiſted upon that argument, hath been ſhewed before from other places of this book. While we ſet forth our ſelves, we obſcure God. *Job* ſhould have been leſs in his own commendation, and more in the praiſes of God.

Secondly, *Job* may be ſaid to have hid the counſel of God, becauſe he was ſo much in amplifying and aggravating his own ſufferings, not well conſidering the counſel of God in laying thoſe ſufferings upon him: Had he duly weighed the counſel of God in afflicting him, he would have proceeded as he began (*Chap.* 1. 21.) to bleſs God, both in and for his affliction.

Thirdly, He may be ſaid to have hid the counſel of God, becauſe he expoſtulated with God, as ſevere towards him in his afflictions; as if Gods counſel had been only to put him to pain. Such complainings of the living man, *Jeremiah* checkt, while he ſaid of God (*Lam.* 3. 33.) *He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men.* As it is not in the heart or counſel of God to afflict men with his heart (as the words there import) ſo not to break their hearts (unleſs with godly ſorrow for their ſin) by affliction. Therefore *Job* ſpeaking ſo much of Gods ſeverity, hid the counſel of God, which was only to try his graces and his goodneſs, and graciouſly to do him good in the latter end. *Who is this that hideth counſel.*

Without knowledge? Or *for want of knowledge.*

But, was *Job* an ignorant man? was he without knowledge? No, but he had not a right knowledge of the counſel of God concerning himſelf; which though it was ſome excuſe to him, yet it did not altogether excuſe, nor acquit him from the fault. *Who is he that hideth counſel without knowledge?* I ſhall not ſtay upon obſervations from this verſe, becauſe I did it at the ſecond verſe of the 38. Chapter. I ſhall only conſider that difference among Interpreters about this word *counſel*, to whom it doth refer.

Firſt, Some refer it to *Job*, and conceive that he chargeth himſelf with this error, that he had hid his own counſel from God, or that he thought his counſel was hidden from him. The Septuagint render it plainly to this ſenſe, *Who is he that hideth counſel from thee?* No man can hide the counſels, nor the moſt ſecret intendments of his ſoul from God; all things, even the thoughts of the heart, are naked and manifeſt before his eyes, with whom we have to do. 'Tis beſt for us to reveal our ſelves to him, from whom we cannot with all our skill and cunning conceal our ſelves, as was further ſhewed from the latter interpretation of thoſe words in the former verſe, *No thought can be with-holden from thee.*

Quis eſt enim qui celat à te conſilium? Sept.

But we may fully diſcharge *Job* of this, for he often profeſſed that his moſt ſecret ways were known to God, yea, that the way of his and every mans heart, was known to God (*Chap.* 10. 19.) *If I ſin, then thou markeſt me.* Read alſo *Chap.* 16. 19. *Chap.* 31. *verſ.* 1. And if we look back to the fifth verſe of the firſt Chapter, there 'tis reported of *Job*, that he offered ſacrifice for his children after their feaſtings; for (ſaith he) *it may be that my ſons have ſinned, and curſed God in their hearts.* He knew, if it were but a ſin in their hearts, God took notice of it; and therefore doubtleſs he had the ſame apprehenſion of his own heart-ſins.

Secondly, others who take it for *Jobs own counſel*, give this ſenſe; *Who is he that hideth counſel without knowledge?* As if he had ſaid, *I am the man that have hid my counſel, or my own meaning for want of due knowledge how to expreſs it.*

Many hide the truth of their own apprehenſions and opinions, in the darkneſs or confuſedneſs of their expreſſions. Some have a clear notion of things in their head, yet cannot bring it out, and ſo hide counſel for want of knowledge to make it known. This interpretation carrieth a fair ſenſe for *Jobs* excuſe, acquitting him of any wilful or purpoſed ſpeaking amiſs: he had better things in his mind than he ſometimes uttered, or he wanted skill rightly to utter his own mind, and ſo darkned counſel without, or for want of knowledge.

But I rather adhere to thoſe, who take counſel here, for the counſel or purpoſe of God in afflicting *Job* ſo grievouſly, and leaving him entangled in the bryars of thoſe troubleſom and intricate diſputes with his friends, who came to comfort him.

Thus *Job* ſpeaking in the third perſon, intends himſelf which manner of ſpeaking is frequent in Scripture, *Who is he?* &c. that is, *I am he that have hid counſel without knowledge.* For doubtleſs *Job* did well attend thoſe words of God in the 38. Chap. (*ver.* 2.) *Who is this that darkneth counſel by words without knowledge?* And being ſtruck with them, confeſſeth here, that God had met with him in thoſe words. And hence ſome read theſe words of *Job* with an additional preface, as if they were a repetition of Gods words, *Thou haſt ſaid, who is he that hideth counſel without knowledge?* That is, thou haſt ſaid, that ſome body hideth counſel without knowledge, and I acknowledge 'tis I, *I am he*; and ſo he falls down convinced before the Lord, as *David* before *Nathan*, telling him in the name of the Lord, *Thou art the man.* I confeſs it, ſaid *David*, I am the man, I have ſinned; ſo ſaith *Job*, *I am the man, I have hid counſel by words without knowledge.*

Ego ſum, qui celavi, i. e. *tacui, non decantavi, non celebravi conſilium tuum.* Joan. *Paraph. Qui de Deo ejuſque providentia imperitè loquitur, is ejus conſilium abſcondere dicitur abſq; ſcientia; quippe inde gloria Dei apud homines obſcuratur.* Druſ.

Some underſtand this his hiding, to be only his forbearing to utter and celebrate the praiſe of God in his counſel, or the purpoſe of Gods providence towards him. But I conceive the fault which he confeſſeth here, is not a bare reticency, or his not ſpeaking of the counſel of God, but his not ſpeaking rightly, or becomingly of his counſel; which agrees fully with what followeth, where *Job* ſpeaks in the firſt perſon, or in his own perſon, and takes the charge home to, and upon himſelf.

Therefore have I uttered that I underſtood not, &c.

Mr. *Broughton* renders, *Therefore have I talked that I have not underſtood.*

The Hebrew word rendred *underſtood*, imports a diſtinct knowledge of things (*Prov.* 14. 8.) *The wiſdom of the prudent, is to underſtand his way*; that is, to know what to do, and how or in what manner to do every duty in all the changes of his life. Thus the Angel *Gabriel* was commanded concerning *Daniel* (*Dan.* 8. 16.) *Make this man to underſtand the viſion*; that is, whom it concerns, when and in what manner it ſhall take effect, and be fulfilled. Such an underſtanding as this *Job* had not of the things which he had uttered; and therefore confeſſeth, *I have uttered that I underſtood not*, I have ſpoken (as we ſay) I knew not what; which may refer to ſuch like paſſages as are in the former part of this Book (*Job* 19. 7, 8.) *Behold, I cry out of wrong, but I am not heard; I cry aloud, but there is no judgment: He hath fenced up my way, that I cannot paſs, and he hath ſet darkneſs in my paths. Job* did not well underſtand himſelf when he ſpake thus; and there are ſeveral other ſuch extravagant ſpeeches of his, up and down this Book. And doubtleſs he did not barely confeſs that he had erred in ſpeaking, nor did he only acknowledge that he had not uſed ſuch reverence as became him, in ſpeaking to God, but that he had ſpoken ſuch things as were ſcandalous, and gave juſt matter of offence, and at which ſeveral of his friends did actually take offence. At beſt he might well acknowledge he had raſhly *uttered things that he did not fully underſtand.*

Non intelligebam quæ dixi quum de tuis judiciis quererer & te dicerem ex æquo bonos & malos affligere. Merc.

Thus *Job*, who thought he had ſpoken wiſely enough, while man ſpake to him, and he ſpake to men, now hearing God ſpeak, and he ſpeaking to God, doth more wiſely confeſs that himſelf was not wiſe, and that his light was but darkneſs concerning the works of God, much more concerning his counſel in thoſe works. As if he had ſaid, *I have ſpoken many things of God, and of his excellencies in this diſpute with my friends; yet I have hidden, or not hid, but ſlipt that which I ſhould have moſt inſiſted upon and ſtudied to make manifeſt, even the ſoveraignty of God over me, and all that I am or have; as alſo, the counſel, aim and intention of God in laying his hand ſo ſorely upon me: but now being better informed about the reaſon of Gods dealings with me, I confeſs I have uttered that I underſtood not,*

Things too wonderful for me, which I knew not.

Job was a man of great underſtanding; yet there were things too wonderful for him. What were they? The counſel of God, the nature of God: theſe are paſt finding out. There are wonders in God which man cannot apprehend, much leſs comprehend. *Job* ſpake of things far above his reach, even of *wonderful things*; and therefore no wonder if he ſpake unduly of them. *I* (ſaith he) *have uttered things too wonderful for me, which I knew not. Job* here confeſſeth, that he wanted knowledge; and we know (though he were a mirror of patience) that many impatient ſpeeches paſſed from him. Now, here we have the root of all that impatience which this good man ſhewed in his afflictions; he had not a clear knowledge about the counſel or meaning of God in afflicting him.

Hence Note; *Impatience flows from ignorance.*

Did we underſtand theſe two things; Firſt, our own ſinfulneſs; Secondly, the ſoveraignty of God; we ſhould never be impatient. Did we underſtand our own ſinfulneſs, that we have deſerved greater evils than any the Lord hath laid upon us; and did we underſtand the Lords ſoveraignty, that he may lay upon us what ſufferings he pleaſeth, though we had not ſinned (for we are wholly his, and he may do with his own what he will) did we (I ſay) underſtand and meditate upon theſe two things, it would quiet our minds in the greateſt ſtorms of adverſity, and be a preſervative againſt all impatience. But if with theſe two, we conſider a third thing; that the end which the Lord hath in bringing ſufferings upon his people, is to do them good, how unreaſonable a thing will impatience appear? ſhall we be impatient at our profit! If we are well inſtructed in this great truth, that *all things work together for good to them that love God, and are the called according to his purpoſe* (*Rom.* 8. 28.) Where is there any room for impatience, in thoſe who are effectually called, and truly love God! *Impatience floweth from ignorance.*

Again, in that *Job* confeſſeth himſelf to be the man that hid the counſels of God, when he had only been ſpeaking unadviſedly of them,

Note, *He that ſpeaketh improperly and unskilfully of the counſel or things of God, hideth them.*

When in diſcourſes about divine truths, we do not advance the honour of God, we, as it were, caſt a vail upon it. *Not to do what we ought, is to do what we ought not; our omiſſions of good, may be cenſured as commiſſions of evil.* We ſhould diſplay and magnifie the wiſdom of God in all his dealings with us, and diſpenſations towards us, elſe we do unwiſely.

Thirdly, *Job* chargeth it upon himſelf as a fault, that he uttered what he knew not.

Hence Note; *Our words and our underſtandings ſhould go both together.*

Let us take heed of venting with our tongues, what we have not in ſome good degree reached with our underſtandings. The underſtanding ſhould give light to the tongue; nor need we any other light to ſpeak by, but that of the underſtanding. True light cannot ſhine out of our mouths, if there be much darkneſs in our minds. How ſhall we utter knowledge, if we have it not? (*Pſal.* 147. 7.) *God is the King in all the earth: ſing ye praiſes with underſtanding.* In ſinging praiſes, as there is an exerciſe of our affections, ſo there ſhould be of our underſtanding alſo. The Apoſtle puts it twice in thoſe duties of prayer and praiſe (1 *Cor.* 14. 15.) *I will pray with the Spirit, and will pray with underſtanding alſo; I will ſing with the Spirit, and I will ſing with the underſtanding alſo.* A word ſhould not go out of our mouths, but ſuch as the underſtanding dictates and directs: better not to ſpeak, than ſpeak what we know not. If we underſtand not what we ſpeak, we ſeldom edifie others, never our ſelves. As the tongues of ſome utter things above their experiences and affections, ſo do the tongues of others utter words beyond their judgments.

Fourthly, When *Job* ſpake, he thought he had ſpoken very well, yet now he is convinced of his weakneſs and miſtakes in what he ſpake.

> Hence Note, *Good meaning men may ſometimes arrogate, and pretend to more knowledge, than cometh to their ſhare.*

They may think they know the truth in a better manner and meaſure than indeed they do: Our opinion of our ſelves is often greater than our knowledge of other matters; and we may ſoon imagine we know that, which indeed we know not. The Apoſtle ſaith (1 *Cor.* 8. 2.) *If any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know.* He that really knoweth any thing, as he ought, cannot but have thoughts that he knoweth it; but he that thinketh, that is, is much, or proudly thinking that he knoweth any thing doth only think ſo, for he knoweth *nothing as he ought*, that is, really, groundedly, and effectually.

> Fifthly, Obſerve; *God will bring his ſervants at laſt to ſee how ſhort they are of that knowledge, which they ſometimes preſume to have.*

Job thought he had more knowledge than he indeed had, and God made him ſee it. 'Tis a work of great goodneſs in God, to ſhew us how defective we are both in knowledge and goodneſs. We are full of ſelf, till God convinceth us of our ſelf-emptineſs; we are full of ſelf-wiſdom, and ſelf-ſtrength, and ſelf-righteouſneſs, till the Lord convinceth us, that our wiſdom is folly, our ſtrength weakneſs, our righteouſneſs an unclean thing, and ſheweth us, yea cauſeth us to receive and take Chriſt for our righteouſneſs, ſtrength, and wiſdom. God did not leave *Job* till he had brought him out of, and off from himſelf, as to whatſoever he had too high an opinion of, or any confidence in himſelf.

Again, *Job* was upon his humiliation before God; he had not any groſs ſin to charge himſelf with (for he ſtood ſtill upon his integrity, as he had done before; nor was *Job* miſtaken in that point, he had not lived in any groſs ſin) That which he charged himſelf with, was want of knowledge, and his error, in managing his cauſe towards God ariſing from it.

> Hence Note, Sixthly, *Our ignorance and errors, are to be confeſſed and bewailed before the Lord, and we to be deeply humbled for them.*

What though we have not any open wickedneſs to charge our ſelves with? what though the world cannot charge us, nor we our ſelves, with any foul and black-faced enormities; yet have we not errors, have we not ignorances, have we not weakneſſes to confeſs? *Jobs* eye had none of thoſe beams in it; but he began to ſee the moats in his eye, and repented of his ſhortneſs in knowledge, and of his raſhneſs in language. Though great ſins call loudeſt for repentance, yet the leaſt ſin, even a ſin of ignorance, calleth us to repentance alſo; and wo to thoſe who knowingly neglect, or ſtop their ears againſt that call. When *David* was only ſtagger'd at the providence of God giving proſperity to the wicked, and ſo ſpake unadviſedly with his lips (as *Job* in a parallel caſe did) *Pſal.* 73. 13, 14. *Verily, I have cleanſed my heart in vain, and waſhed my hands in innocency: For all the day long have I been plagued and chaſtned every morning.* Yet as ſoon as he recovered out of this temptation, how deeply did he charge himſelf (*ver.* 22.) *So fooliſh was I, and ignorant; I was a beaſt before thee.* Why did he then call himſelf a fool, a beaſt? was it for adultery and murder, which were once his ſins? no, but for ignorance and raſhneſs. *David* called himſelf a beaſt, in judging of the dealings of God by ſenſe, not for living in any beaſtly ſenſuality. Let us remember, and not lightly paſs it over, that though we have not (which rarely we have not) groſs ſins to confeſs, yet we have ignorances and errors too too many. The ſame *David* ſaid and prayed (*Pſal.* 19. 12.) *Who can underſtand his errors? cleanſe thou me from ſecret faults*, that is, from thoſe faults and errors which I do not underſtand; yea, cleanſe me from this fault, that I have not a better underſtanding. As he there prayed to be kept from the dominion (and ſo from the guilt) of preſumptuous ſins, that is, of ſins committed againſt the light of knowledge, ſo to be cleanſed from the guilt of his ſecret ſins, that is, of ſins committed without his knowledge. Thus a godly man acknowledgeth his weakneſſes, and lies low before God, in ſenſe of them, when he hath not great and groſs ſins to be humbled for.

Seventhly, As *Job* was now diſcovering his former ignorance; ſo, upon an increaſe of knowledge, he was growing up into a clearer light about the things of God, than he had manifeſted in his former diſcourſes.

> Hence Note, *It is a good degree of knowledge and underſtanding, to be convinced that we know and underſtand little.*

As to be conſcious of our weakneſs, is a great part of our ſtrength; ſo, to be ſenſible of our ignorance is a good degree of knowledge. *Agur* ſaid of himſelf (*Prov.* 30. 2.) *Surely I am more brutiſh than any man, and have not the underſtanding of a man; I neither learned wiſdom, nor have the knowledge of the holy.* This good man was none of the ignorant ones, he had knowledge in a large meaſure, and was growing into a further light, while he thus bewailed his own darkneſs. *Davids* knowledge was then cleareſt, when he made that confeſſion, *So ignorant was I.*

Eighthly, When was it that *Job* ſaw he knew little? It was when God was come nearer to him, when God had been dealing with him, and ſpeaking to him.

> Hence Note, *No man knoweth what a nothing he is in knowledge, and grace, and goodneſs, till the Lord is pleaſed to reveal himſelf to him.*

It is upon ſome eminent diſcovery of God to us, that we ſee we have little grace, righteouſneſs, or knowledge. While we compare our ſelves with our ſelves, or compare our ſelves with others below our ſelves, we have high thoughts of our ſelves; but when we compare our ſelves with God, who is infinitely above us, we are little, we are nothing, we are little or nothing in our own eyes; when God appears in his fulneſs to us, we appear empty to our ſelves.

Laſtly, From thoſe words, *Things too wonderful for me which I knew not.* Theſe wonderful things being the dealings of God with him, according to the counſel of God concerning him,

> Note, Ninthly, *The dealings of God with men are wonderful.*

Not only the decrees of God from eternity, but the works of God in time, are full of wonder; nor can his works in time be otherwiſe, ſeeing they bear the expreſs image, and are the iſſue of thoſe eternal decrees. *Jeſus Chriſt* is called *wonderful counſeller* (Iſa. 9. 6.) and he is wonderful in his counſels: As the works of God in us, ſo his works towards us are called wonderful. (*Pſal.* 40. 5.) *Many, O Lord, my God, are thy wonderful works which thou haſt done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward.* The works of God (as of man too) are the birth of his thoughts and the thoughts of God about the birth of man, have many wonders in them. *David* ſaid (*Pſal.* 139. 6.) *Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, it is high, I cannot attain unto it.* What knowledge was it that he could not attain unto? The context tells us, it was the knowledge of Gods knowledge, concerning the formation of his body, before he was born (*verſ.* 14, 15, 16.) *I will praiſe thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made*, &c. Again, the Prophet having deſcribed the various courſes and methods which God uſeth in humbling ſinners, by afflictions and tribulations, which are ſhadowed under thoſe Metaphors and Allegorical expreſſions of Plowing and Harrowing, and the different ways of Threſhing out the Corn, by the ſtaff, or the rod, or the wheel. The Spirit of God doth not there intend the husband-mans work alone, in which yet there is much of God, and his teachings: The Prophet (I ſay) having done this, concludes (*Iſa.* 28. 29.) *This alſo cometh forth from the Lord of Hoſts, who is wonderful in counſel, and excellent in working.* And as there are wonders in the works of God, which are the fulfilling of his ſecret and hidden counſel; ſo there are wonders in the Word of God, which is his revealed and open counſel (*Pſal.* 119. 18.)

Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy Law. The Law is wonderful; but the Goſpel is, as it were, a continued wonder, and we ſhall be for ever wondring at, and admiring the grace and goodneſs of God diſcovered therein, when we come to heaven; and now, as we ſee further into the myſtery of Chriſt, we do it too (*1 Cor.* 2. 7.) *We ſpeak the wiſdom of God in a myſtery, even the hidden wiſdom which God ordained before the world. Eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard, neither have entred into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.* They are wonderful things, which man, by all his natural wiſdom, cannot attain unto. Philoſophers who pry into all the ſecrets of nature, cannot underſtand theſe ſupernatural ſecrets, how long ſoever they ſtand prying upon them: And though *Job* had been long conſidering of, and ſpeaking about thoſe things of God, which the eye often ſees, and the ear hath often heard, yea, which he himſelf (to his grief) had felt; yet he ſaw reaſon enough at laſt to ſay, that even thoſe things in the whole compaſs of them, exceeded his reaſon; *I* (ſaid he) *have uttered that I underſtood not, things too wonderful for me which I knew not.*

Job having thus acknowledged his want of knowledge, and the weakneſs of his underſtanding in the myſteries of providence, applieth himſelf to God for inſtruction in the next verſe.

Verſe 4. Hear, I beſeech thee, and I will ſpeak: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.

This is *Jobs* humble petition; and it conſiſteth of two parts.

Firſt, That God would not reject, but give ear to a poor creature, burdened with the ſenſe of his infirmities, in his addreſſes to him; *Hear, I beſeech thee, and I will ſpeak*, or as Mr. *Broughton* renders, *Oh, hear me, when I do ſpeak.*

Secondly, That God would admit him under his tuition, and inſtruct him, while he waited for advice and counſel: *I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me*; Lord, teach thou me. *Job* ſpeaketh ſubmiſſively as became a learner; he is not now what he was, he comes to God in another manner, than he had done before;

Hear, I beſeech thee, and I will ſpeak.] As if he had ſaid; I have formerly deſired to plead my cauſe with thee (*Chap.* 13. 22.) and thou haſt juſtly checkt, and chid me for it (*Chap.* 38. 3. *Chap.* 40. 2.) as if I preſumed I could teach thee; but now I ſee my error, I ſubmit, and earneſtly deſire to be taught by thee. I have ſpoken heretofore otherwiſe than I ought, and otherwiſe than I purpoſe to ſpeak hereafter: I ſpake before in a challenging ſtrain (*Chap.* 13. 22.) *Then call thou, and I will anſwer: or let me ſpeak, and anſwer thou me.* There *Job* ſeemed to challenge God, to be either opponent or reſpondent, and he would argue, or diſpute it out with him. But here, though his words are near the ſame in ſound, yet his ſence is far different; *Hear, I beſeech thee, and I will ſpeak:*

Me interrogantem doce benigne, qui me tuæ diſciplinæ plane ſubmitto. Merc.

I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.] There is a two-fold demanding; Firſt, as a Diſputant; Secondly, as a Supplicant. *Job* would now demand as a Supplicant unto God, not as a Diſputant with God. We may be ſaid to demand or require of God, when we conſult his word, not humane reaſon. If an innocent perſon (as *Job*) be afflicted; where ſhall he enquire the reaſon of it? if he only reſpect his affliction, and compare that with his own innocency, he will quickly murmure at, and complain of the dealings of God with him: But if he look to the Word of God, which tells him that God is a Soveraign Lord, and that God hath promiſed, not only to be with his in trouble, but that their troubles ſhall work their comforts; he will not only be patient under, but glory in his tribulations.

שאלך *interrogabo te. ſc. petendo, orando, pulſando.* Aquin.

The Hebrew word which we tranſlate, *demand*, may well be rendred *petition* or *crave*: The common ſenſe of the word *demand* ſeems too high for *Jobs* ſpirit and condition. Mr. *Broughton* renders, *I will make petition unto thee*, or an humble ſuit unto thee; as if he had ſaid, I will pray for, and beg this favour of thee, that thou wouldſt teach and inform me better.

Qui rogat, neſcit.

It is not an authoritative demand, which is a kind of command, but a ſubmiſſive demand; this demanding is the asking of a queſtion, not the requiring of a right. He that asks a queſtion, implyeth that he ſtands in need of information, and that he is deſirous to learn; *And to put queſtions to a wiſe man is half wiſdom. I will demand, or put queſtions unto thee:*

Interrogare ſapientem dimidia ſapientia eſt. Apotheg. Arab.

Declare thou unto me.] The Hebrew is, *make me to know*, make me a knowing man. As if *Job* had ſaid; *Lord, if thou wilt teach me, I ſhall ſoon get knowledge and underſtanding; and therefore I reſign my ſelf wholly to thy teachings.* The true ſubmiſſion of mans will to Gods will, is to hearken to the counſel or wiſdom of God, and not to ſit down in our own.

But as it was queſtioned at the firſt verſe, how *Job* could anſwer, ſeeing he had ſaid I will anſwer no more; ſo here it may be queſtioned, why the Lord ſpake no more to *Job*, ſeeing here he deſired to receive further inſtruction from him?

I anſwer, Firſt, *Job* made this ſuit to God, upon this condition, that God would pleaſe to inform him, if he ſaw need, or ſhould think fit to do it. Secondly, *Job* ſpake this doctrinally to ſhew what he and others ought to deſire and ſubmit to, even the teachings of God. Thirdly, I anſwer, that the Lord ſeeing his ſubmiſſion, ſaw there was no need of ſpeaking any further to him, but broke up the whole diſputation, determining for *Job*, and giving him the day againſt his three friends, as will appear further in the ſequel of the Chapter.

From this verſe, Obſerve; Firſt, *The ſenſe of our wants puts us upon prayer.*

When *Job* was ſenſible that he wanted underſtanding and knowledge, he came to God for it. *Give me to underſtand, cauſe me to know.* True and fervent prayer floweth from a ſenſe of our wants. If we ſee not our ſelves in need, why ſhould we pray? And when really we ſhall have no need as in heaven there will be no need of prayer; all will be praiſe, and all ſhall be in everlaſting praiſes.

Secondly, The perſon to whom *Job* maketh his application for teaching, being God himſelf,

Note, *We know nothing of God, nor of our ſelves aright, till God teacheth us, till he declareth and maketh it known to us.*

Every good gift, and every perfect gift, is from above, and cometh down from the father of lights, &c. (*Jam.* 1. 17.) As no man can either make or redeem himſelf, ſo no man can teach or inſtruct himſelf. What we know of God, we know of God, we know, from God? 'Tis in his light that we ſee light. The light may ſhine round about us, and we ſee it not; unleſs God enlighten us, as well as ſend us the light, we are never the better. As in Converſion, the Lord firſt *opens the eyes, and then turns from darkneſs to light* (Acts 26. 18.) So under every diſpenſation, we are in the dark, till God open our eyes, and give us (by his own immediate or mediate teachings) light about it.

Thirdly, Note; *If we deſire God ſhould each us, or if we would be taught of God, we muſt ask it of him.*

We find the godly often putting up this requeſt to God. *David* was much in this petition (*Pſal.* 119. 33, 34.) *Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy ſtatutes, and I ſhall keep it unto the end: Give me underſtanding, and I ſhall keep thy law.* He did not only deſire God that he would teach him, but give him a faculty, to receive his teachings (*verſ.* 35.) *Make me to go in the path of thy commandment.* See how the *Pſalmiſt* joyneth theſe petitions together. Firſt, *Teach me the way of thy ſtatutes.* Secondly, *Give me underſtanding*; as if he had ſaid, *elſe thy teachings will do no good.* Thirdly, *Make me to go in the path of thy commandment*; as if he had ſaid, though I underſtand thy ſtatutes, yet, unleſs thou help me, I ſhall not be able to walk in them, no, nor to take one right ſtep in them; therefore, *Make me to go in the path of thy commandment.* Again (*Pſal.* 143. 10.) *Teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God; thy ſpirit is good, lead me into the land of uprightneſs.* As the Lord teacheth us our way, and hath promiſed to teach us always, in all things needful for us to know and do; ſo he hath taught us by the written practice of many, as well as by his written precept, that we muſt pray for his teaching.

Fourthly, *Job* was humbling himſelf, and now he begs of God, that he would teach him.

Hence Note, *Humble ſouls deſire and give up themſelves wholly to be taught by God.*

They hang upon his mouth for inſtruction, and renounce their own wiſdom. *Eliphaz* gave *Job* that advice. (*Chap.* 22. 22.) *Acquaint thy ſelf now with him, and be at peace, and good ſhall come unto thee: Receive, I pray thee, that law from his mouth, and lay up his words in thy heart.*

Fifthly, In that *Job* prays for teaching in this form, according to the Hebrew, *make me to know,*

Obſerve, *The teachings of God are effectual, they make us know.*

Men may teach others knowledge, but they cannot make them know. God can make a very dullard quick of underſtanding. Men may inſtruct the underſtanding, but they cannot give underſtanding; God doth both. The teachings of God are effectual to all purpoſes. Firſt, to enlighten the ignorant. Secondly, to convince gain-ſayers. Thirdly, to convert ſinners. Fourthly, to comfort thoſe that are ſorrowful. Fifthly, to reſolve ſuch as are doubtful. Sixthly, to encourage the fearful. And, Seventhly, to raiſe up and recover thoſe that are fallen. Thus *Job* is become a petitioner to the Lord for inſtruction, having confeſſed his own ignorance and weakneſs. And that he had formerly profited under the teachings of God, and was now in a further way of profiting, is evident by that which followeth.

Verſ. 5. **I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye ſeeth thee.**

Job had no ſooner asked for teaching, but God taught him, though not formally and explicitely as he deſired, yet really and effectually, as he needed. For, this verſe ſeems to be a real anſwer to the petition he made in the former verſe; and in it *Job* aſſerts two things.

Firſt, *That he had heard of God by the hearing of the ear.*

Secondly, *That now his eye did ſee him.*

There are two opinions about the general ſenſe of this verſe, and I ſhall conclude in a third.

Firſt, Some conceive theſe diſcoveries of God to *Job*, were only, inward to his ſoul; ſo that when he ſaith, *I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye ſeeth thee*, we are not to underſtand him, as if he had had any viſible appearance of God, but that theſe words may be taken,

Firſt, as a compariſon between a ſlight hearing, when the mind is not intent upon what the ear heareth; and a ſerious hearing, which brings the mindful into the ear. As if *Job* had formerly been a careleſs hearer, but now an attentive one; and ſo the knowledge which *Job* had of God formerly, was little compared with his preſent knowledge. He had a knowledge of God by hearing only before, but his mind was not intent upon it; he heard only with the hearing of his ear, but *his eye did not ſee*; that is, he had not a clear ſight or knowledge, which is an intellectual ſight of the things which he heard. But doubtleſs, *Job* was no ſlight hearer of the word in former times; he did not hear the word in the days of his proſperity, as if he had only (as we ſay) given it the hearing: for, had he not ſeriouſly hearkened to the voice of God in thoſe days, he had never obtained ſuch a teſtimony as God gave of him, towards the end of thoſe days; yea, this very phraſe, *I have heard of thee, by the hearing of the ear*, implieth ſerious and attentive hearing.

Secondly, Others who deny any viſible manifeſtation of God to *Job*, grant that the firſt part of the verſe, notes ſerious hearing and receiving of the word, the latter more; ſo that here, ſay they, is a compariſon between the leſſer light or knowledge which *Job* had of the will of God before, and that fuller light which he got upon this diſcourſe which the Lord had with him; the former being but as of a matter heard, this as of things ſeen. The Scripture ſometimes calls clear knowledge ſight: So that, look how much that which we ſee with our bodily eyes, is clearer to us than that whereof we have only hear the report; by ſo much the knowledge which *Job* had now of the things of God, eſpecially about the whole myſtery of Gods dealing with him, was clearerand fuller than what he had before, even as if he now ſaw what before he only heard. As we ſay, *One eye-witneſs, is better than ten ear-witneſſes*; ſo *one eyeing* of the word of God (the eye of the mind fully and diſtinctly taking in what is heard) is better than *ten hearings* of it; that is, when little or nothing is taken in at the ear, but a ſound of words: For then only we may be ſaid to know divine things, by the ſeeing of the eye, when we know them not only from without by the report of others, but from experience within our ſelves. The Apoſtle ſaith of thoſe, who took joyfully the ſpoiling of their goods for the truths ſake, *They knew in themſelves, that they had in heaven a better and a more enduring ſubſtance* (*Heb.* 10. 34.) that is, they had even got a ſight of that heavenly enduring ſubſtance. Hence in Scripture, viſion is applied to ſpiritual things heard; and we are ſaid to ſee *the Word of God* (Jer. 2. 31.) *O generation, ſee ye the Word of the Lord; have I been a wilderneſs?* &c. As if the Lord had ſaid, *Ye have heard it before, but now ſee it.* Seeing notes the higheſt knowledge; then we ſee what we hear, when we fully underſtand what we have heard. Thus they expound this Text, who judge there was no outward viſion at all, but that *Jobs* ſeeing was only ſpiritual and intellectual.

Secondly, Others affirm, that *Job* had an outward apparition, and that the eye of his ſenſe was affected. And concerning this,

Firſt, Some are ſo much of this opinion, that they ſay Chriſt appeared in humane ſhape to *Job*, as he did to many of the holy Patriarks and Prophets of old; which apparitions are, by the Ancients called *preludes to his incarnation*, And ſome *Jewiſh* Writers tell us, that *Job* upon this ſight of God, had a ſpirit of propheſie given him; but they need not inſiſt upon that, for ſeveral have had apparitions, who were no Prophets,

Secondly, others ſay, the appearance of God to *Job* was only in or by a cloud, with the whirlwind. But that he had a viſion or ſight of God one way or other, is aſſerted, as by many of the *Jewiſh* Writers, ſo by moſt of the Chriſtian Ancients.

And doubtleſs, when the Lord ſpake to him out of the whirlwind, he had a viſion, or an extraordinary manifeſtation of God, even to his eye: Not that God in himſelf can be ſeen, *No man hath ſeen God at any time* (1 *John* 4. 12.) It is reported by the *Jewiſh* Writers, that the Prophet *Iſaiah* was ſawn aſunder by his own Nation, for ſaying, that he had ſeen the Lord (*Iſa.* 6. 1.) *I ſaw the Lord ſitting upon a throne, high and lifted up.* This they counted blaſphemy, and put him to death for it, ſay ſome: yet others ſay, he was put to death for his plainneſs in reproving the Princes and people of *Iſrael*, in thoſe words (*Iſa.* 1. 10.) *Hear the word of the Lord ye Rulers of* Sodom, *give ear to the Law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah.* But of that by the way, I ſay, God in himſelf cannot be ſeen; he is ſeen only by thoſe viſible demonſtrations of his preſence, which he is pleaſed to make of himſelf, as here he ſpake to *Job* out of the whirlwind.

I conceive we may take in both; ſo that when *Job* ſpeaketh of *his hearing by the ear*, he intends that teaching which he had in former times by the Miniſtry of his Anceſtors: And that when he ſaith, *But now mine eye ſeeth thee*, he intends that teaching which he had from the preſent appearance of God to him for his inſtruction and humiliation; *I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye ſeeth thee.* As if he had ſaid, *Lord, heretofore I heard of thee, for I was religiouſly brought up; I had Parents and Anceſtors, who declared to me who the Lord was; and I heard many things of thee, which took impreſſion upon my heart heretofore: but I never had ſuch an impreſſion as in this tempeſt, I never heard God ſpeaking thus immediately to me; nor did he ever give me any ſuch viſible demonſtration of his preſence, as he hath vouchſafed me at this time, ſpeaking out of the whirlwind.* And from all we may conclude, that as *Job* had a powerful illumination of the Spirit, ſo an outward apparition of the Glory and Majeſty of God, or of Gods glorious Majeſty to convince and humble him. So that, though *Job* had a ſaving knowledge of God formerly, yet this diſcourſe of God with him, and diſcovery of God to him, had made him a better Scholar than all his earthly teachers. *I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear,*

But now mine eye ſeeth thee.] That is, now I have as clear a ſight or knowledge of thy mind and will, of thy juſtice and goodneſs, of thy power and ſoveraignty, as if I had ſeen thee with mine eyes, and had ſeen or looked into thy heart. Or thus: Not only haſt thou graciouſly inſtructed me, by ſpeaking of ſo much to me, but thou haſt manifeſted thy ſelf preſent with me, by an aſpectable ſign, *Mine eye hath ſeen thee*; that is, thou haſt given me to ſee that which aſſures me thou art neer unto me, namely, the Cloud, out of which thou haſt been pleaſed to ſpeak and make known thy mind to me, who am but duſt and aſhes.

The Lord may be ſeen theſe four ways:

Firſt, In his Word. Secondly, In his works. Thirdly, In outward apparitions. Fourthly, And above all, God is ſeen in his Son, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, whom the Apoſtle calls (*Heb.* 1. 3.) *The brightneſs of his glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon*; and in whoſe face the light of the knowledge of God ſhineth (2 *Cor.* 4. 6.) And hence Chriſt ſaith (*John* 14. 9.) *He that hath ſeen me, hath ſeen the father.* The inviſible father is ſeen in his Son, who was made viſible in our fleſh, *John* 1. 18. Thus God may be ſeen. But in his nature God is altogether inviſible, he cannot be ſeen. *Moſes ſaw him that is inviſible* (*Heb.* 11. 27.) that is, he ſaw him by an eye of faith, who is inviſible to the eye of ſenſe. *I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye ſeeth thee.*

Hence Note; Firſt, *It is a great mercy, and much to be acknowledged, that we have the word of God ſounding in our ears.*

Faith cometh by hearing (*Rom.* 10. 17.) The Prophet ſaith (*Iſa.* 55. 3.) *Hear, and your ſoul ſhall live.* Now if faith and life come by hearing; to have the word of God, ſounding in our ears, muſt needs be a great mercy. Though to have the word only ſounding in our ear, will do no man good, yet 'tis good to hear that joyful ſound. Though that ſad Propheſie mentioned by Chriſt (*Mat.* 13. 14.) be fulfilled in many, *By hearing ye ſhall hear, and ſhall not underſtand, and ſeeing ye ſhall ſee, and ſhall not perceive*; Yet he ſaid to his faithful followers (*verſ.* 16.) *Bleſſed are your eyes, for they ſee, and your ears, for they hear.* They receive a bleſſing by hearing, whoſe ears are bleſſed when they hear. O how many ſouls are bleſſing God, that ever they heard of himſelf and his Son, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, by the hearing of the ear. To have an ear to hear, is a common bleſſing; but to have an hearing ear, or to hear by the hearing of the ear, is a ſpecial bleſſing.

Obſerve; Secondly, *We ſhould hear the Word very diligently.*

That phraſe, *I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear* (as the Hebrew Writers note) ſignifieth a very attentive hearing. Every hearing is not an hearing with the ear, nor every ſeeing like that we intend, when a man ſaith, *I ſaw it with my eyes.* One may ſee and not ſee, hear and not hear. The Word of God is to be *heard with a hearing.* Such doublings in Scripture have a great emphaſis in them. As when the Lord ſaith, *They are curſed with a curſe*, it notes a great and a certain curſe is coming; ſo to hear *by the hearing of the ear*, implyeth fruitful hearing, and a laying up of that in the mind which hath been heard (*Pſal.* 44. 1.) *We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us, what work thou didſt in their days, in the times of old.* They who thus hear with their ears, treaſure up in their hearts, and do with their hands what they have heard. The Lord charged *Ezekiel* (Chap. 44. 5.) *Son of man, mark well and behold with thine eyes, and hear with thine ears, all that I ſay unto thee*; that is, mind diligently what I ſhew and ſay unto thee. The Lord called for the exerciſe of both ſenſes, in attending to what he ſpake to the Prophet: He did not only ſay, *Hear with thine ears*, but *ſee with thine eyes*; that is, hear as if thou didſt even ſee that which thou heareſt. For though poſſibly the Lord preſented ſomewhat to the eye of the Prophet, as well as he ſpake to his ear, yet the former notion may well be taken in, yea, and intended in that command. Many hear as if they had no ears, and ſee as if they had no eyes. One of the Ancients taking notice of that, ſaith, Such kind of hearers are like *Malchus* in the Goſpel, who had his ear cut off. From thoſe words, *But now mine eye ſeeth thee*, taken diſtinctly,

Obſerve; Thirdly, *God revealeth himſelf more clearly and fully at one time, than at another.*

Seeing is ſomewhat more than hearing, though it be attentive hearing. As the full and clear manifeſtation which we ſhall have of God in the next life, is expreſſed by ſeeing, and called viſion; ſo the fulleſt and cleareſt apprehenſion which we have of God, and the things of God in this life, is a degree of ſeeing both of him and them, 'tis the ſight of ſaith, and may alſo be called viſion. A true and ſtrong believer taſts, and feels, and ſees the truths of the Goſpel which he hath heard; his faith (which is the eye of his ſoul) is the evidence of thoſe things to him which are not ſeen, nor can be ſeen by an eye of ſenſe: He by the help of the Holy Ghoſt looks ſtedfaſtly into heaven, and (with this eye) *ſeeth the glory of God, and Jeſus ſtanding at the right hand of God* (in his meaſute) as bleſſed *Stephen* did (*Acts* 7. 55.) This ſight of God and ſpirituals, hath three things in it beyond that ordinary, though real knowledge, which comes in by the hearing of the ear. Firſt, a ſurpaſſing clearneſs. Secondly, and undoubted certainty. Thirdly, a raviſhing ſweetneſs, and the overflowings of conſolation.

Fourthly, Note; *According to the meaſure of Gods revealing himſelf to us, ſuch is the meaſure of our profiting in the knowledge of God.*

The word is ſpoken to all, in the publick Miniſtry of it, it is ſcattered upon all; but they only learn to know God and themſelves truly, to whom God doth inwardly reveal it, and whoſe hearts he toucheth and openeth by his Spirit. *Every man* (ſaith Chriſt, *John* 6. 45.) *That hath heard and learned of the father, cometh unto me*; that is, *All that are taught of God*, believe on me. And the more any learn of the father, the more they come to, and abide the more cloſely with the Son. *Job* underſtood more of God, and the mind of God more, in all thoſe queſtions he put to him, concerning the heavens, the earth, the Sea, concerning the beaſts of the earth, and the fowls of the Air, concerning *Behemoth* and *Leviathan*, than ever he did before. The more immediate and extraordinary revelations of God, are always accompanied with notable effects: And though few profit in knowledge, according to the meaſure of the mediate and ordinary Revelation, yet probably the more revelation we have of that kind, the more we profit.

Fifthly, *Job* had theſe great diſcoveries after God had kept him long in affliction.

Hence Note, *God doth uſually reveal himſelf moſt to his people after great ſufferings.*

Hence ſome are of opinion, that in theſe words *Job* pointed at his two ſtates. Firſt, that of his proſperity; then he heard of God only by the hearing of the ear. Secondly, Of his adverſity; then his eye ſaw him, that is, he greatly profited in the knowledge of him. There are two things which God uſually beſtows upon his people in the day of, or ſoon after their affliction; Firſt, more cordials and conſolations: He gives *that ſtrong drink to thoſe that are ready to periſh, that wine unto thoſe that be of heavy hearts*, He bids them *drink and forget their poverty, and remember their miſery no more*; as *Solomons* metaphors may well import (*Prov.* 31. 6, 7.) Secondly, as the Lord gives more conſolation in ſuch a day, ſo more illumination; the head is bettered by it as well as the heart. Many have got much inward light or knowledge, both of God and of themſelves, of their mercies and of their duties, by being, or after they have been brought into much outward darkneſs. *Davids* experience taught him this, elſe he had never ſaid (*Pſa.* 119. 71.) *It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy ſtatutes.* He had never learned, either to know the Statutes of God better, or to keep them better by his affliction, if God had not been with him, and revealed himſelf further to him in the day of his affliction.

Laſtly, Note; *When God manifeſts himſelf much to any man, great impreſſions are left upon him.*

As will appear further in opening the next verſe.

Verſ. 6. **Wherefore I abhor my ſelf, and repent in duſt and aſhes.**

This Verſe concludes that part of the Chapter, which I call *Jobs* humiliation. He made confeſſion before of his own ignorance, uttering things that he underſtood not, things too wonderful for him, which he knew not; he confeſſed alſo the great goodneſs of God to him, in that he had both heard of him by the hearing of the ear, and alſo that his eye had ſeen him: from all which he inferr'd this reſolve of deepeſt ſelf-abaſement before God.

Wherefore I abhor my ſelf, and repent in duſt and aſhes.

This word (*wherefore*) is diligently to be attended, for 'tis the hinge upon which the whole matter turneth. This *wherefore,* may have a double reference.

Firſt, To the ſight which he had gained of his own folly, weakneſs and vileneſs, of which having made confeſſion in the former words, he adds *wherefore*; that is, for as much as I am thus convinced of mine own ſinfulneſs, *I abhor my ſelf, and repent in duſt and aſhes.*

Secondly, This *wherefore,* may have reference to thoſe higher, clearer and fuller manifeſtations of God to him. He had heard of God by the hearing of the ear, there was much in that; but now his eye had ſeen him, he had a light or a diſcovery of the excellency and Majeſty of God, as much ſurpaſſing and exceeding what formerly he had, as eye-ſight doth the hearing of the ear: *Wherefore,* the light being come thus fully in upon him, concerning the glory, ſoveraignty, goodneſs, faithfulneſs, and all ſufficiency of God, he crieth out,

I abhor my ſelf, &c.] The Hebrew word ſignifieth the greateſt diſguſt againſt himſelf, a kind of reprobating himſelf, or (as we ſpeak) a turning of his ſtomach, at the thought and remembrance of what he had ſaid and was. Some render, wherefore, *I reprehend or reprove my ſelf:* but to abhor our ſelves is more than to reprehend or reprove our ſelves. Others, *I reject, I deſpiſe, I ſlight my ſelf, I turn away from my ſelf.* All theſe renderings ſhew to how little or low an account *Job* was now come in his own ſight: Our reading, *I abhor,* takes in all the reſt and more. The Lord uſeth this word negatively concerning his people (*Levit.* 26. 11.) *I will ſet my tabernacle amongſt you, and my ſoul ſhall not abhor you*; the meaning is, my ſoul ſhall greatly delight in you: And at the 15. Verſe of the ſame chapter, affirmatively of them, *If you ſhall deſpiſe my ſtatutes, or if your ſoul abhor my judgments, then,* &c. deſpiſing is leſs than abhorring. To abhor the judgements of God, is to caſt them not only out of our affections, but out of our judgment too, and to judge them unworthy or unfit to be owned and obeyed. Again, at the 30. Verſe of the ſame Chapter, *I will deſtroy your high places, and cut down your images, and caſt your carcaſſes upon the carcaſſes of your idols, and my ſoul ſhall abhor you*; that is, I will manifeſt the utmoſt and higheſt of my diſpleaſure againſt you. Once more in the ſame Chapter, *When they be in the land of their enemies, I will not caſt them away, neither will I abhor them.* To abhor is to caſt away, and to look upon a perſon or a people as *caſt-aways.* Read alſo (*Deut.* 7. 26. *Deut.* 23. 7. *Pſal.* 5. 6. *Pſal.* 129. 163. *Prov.* 24. 24. *Jer.* 14. 21. *Amos* 5. 10. *chap.* 6. 8. *Zech.* 11. 8.) from all which texts we may collect the weight and great ſignificancy of this word. To *abhor* things or perſons, imports the deepeſt diſplicency or diſlike towards either. *I* (ſaith *Job*) *abhor*

מאס *ſignificat nauſeare, vel reprobare cum faſtidio abjicere, abominari.*

My ſelf.] The word (*my ſelf*) is here ſupplyed by our Tranſlators. The Hebrew is only this, *wherefore I abhor,* leaving us to ſuppoſe what he did abhor: Our Tranſlators make the ſupplement thus, *I abhor my ſelf,* that is, whatſoever may be called *my ſelf,* ſelf-wiſdom, ſelf-righteouſneſs, ſelf-ſtrength, ſelf-ends, and I would ſee the end of ſinful-ſelf. Another tranſlation ſaith, *I abhor thoſe former things,* that is, whatſoever I formerly thought or ſpake amiſs. I do not only diſlike them, I do not only retract and recant them, but I abhor them. And if you would know what thoſe former things were, which here he renounceth and abhorreth, you may take it in theſe ſeven words.

Illa priora. q. d. non tantum illa prius à me cogitata & dicta retracto, ſed etiam deteſtor. Bez.

First, I abhor, that ever I curſed the day of my birth.

Secondly, I abhor, that I wiſhed ſo often for death, that I wooed the grave, and ſo haſtily called for my return to the duſt in the day of my affliction.

Thirdly, I abhor, that ever I deſpaired of my reſtauration, or that I gave up my ſelf as a man utterly loſt for this world.

Fourthly, I abhor, that I uſed ſo many complaints of the ſeverity of the Lords dealings with me.

Fifthly, I abhor, that I was ſo bold, as to deſire to plead with God.

Sixthly, I abhor, that I was ſo much in ſetting out my own righteouſneſs and innocency.

Seventhly, I abhor, that ever I ſpake any word, which ſhould in the leaſt darken or reflect upon the goodneſs, mercy, faithfulneſs, righteouſneſs, and ſoveraignty of God in his diſpenſations towards me. Theſe are the things which had unwarily paſſed him in the heat of diſputation with his friends, and theſe he now abhorreth. Take it either way, *I abhor my ſelf,* or *theſe things,* it comes all to one; for the truth is, he did abhor himſelf for thoſe things, which he had ſpoken with ſo much imprudence and impatience, while he was under the hand of God. *I abhor my ſelf* (neither is that all)

And repent.] *Job* was not only affected to abhorrence, but to repentance. The word tranſlated *repent,* ſignifies two contrary things in Scripture.

נחם *in Niphal. ſignificat conſolari, in Piel. pœnitere.* Druſ.

Firſt, To grieve, which is proper to repentance, ſorrow and repentance ought to go together.

Secondly, To comfort or to take comfort; thus it is rendred (*Gen* 24. 67) *Iſaac was comforted concerning the death of his mother* (2 Sam. 13. 39.) *David was comforted concerning Amnon.* (Pſal. 77. 2.) *In the day of my trouble I ſought the Lord, my ſore ran in the night and ceaſed not; my ſoul refuſed to be comforted.* It may ſeem ſtrange, that the ſame word which ſignifies ſorrow and repentance, ſhould ſignifie alſo comfort and to be comforted: but ſorrow and comfort meet in true repentance; godly ſorrow doth not hinder, much leſs quite exclude, and ſhut out joy in God. Repentance is uſhered in by godly ſorrow, and grief of heart for ſin, and it concludes with comfort and joy of heart in God who pardoneth ſinners; and therefore the ſame word which ſignifies *to repent,* may well ſignifie both to grieve and to take comfort. Repentance is a change from a bad ſtate to a good, and a turning from the worſt of evils, *ſin,* to the chiefeſt good, *God himſelf*; and therefore muſt needs be followed, if not accompanied with much ſweetneſs and comfort. A Greek tranſlator renders it expreſly ſo in this place, *Wherefore I abhor my ſelf, and take comfort in duſt and aſhes*; and doubtleſs, while *Job* was repenting in floods of ſorrow, his comforts came flowing in. There is a laughter, in the midſt of which the heart is ſorrowful, and the end of that mirth is heavineſs (ſaith *Solomon,* Prov. 14. 13.) and there is a ſorrow (that's a bleſſed ſorrow) in the midſt of which the heart laughs, and the end of which heavineſs is mirth.

ϗ παρεκλήθην ἐπὶ χοὶ ϗ σποδῷ. *Et conſolationem accepi in pulvere & cinere.*

To repent (in the general nature of it) *is to change both the mind and way,* and ſo take up new principles and new practices. A man that truly repenteth, is not the ſame man he was before he repented; he can ſay, *I am not I.* And as in true repentance there is a change from a bad to a good mind, and from a perverſe, to a right and righteous way; ſo in repentance, there is a change from a troubled to a quiet mind, and from a painful to a pleaſant and delightful way. So then, there is a two-fold change in repentance; Firſt, A change of the mind from ſin. Secondly, A change in the mind from ſorrow. Many are the griefs and gripes, the troubles and perplexities, with which the conſcience of an awakened ſinner is followed, till he hath unburdened himſelf by confeſſion and repentance; when once he hath truly done ſo, how great is his peace! and how ſweet are his conſolations! And therefore, when the Apoſtle ſaith (2 *Cor.* 7. 10.) *Godly ſorrow worketh repentance to ſalvation, not to be repented of*; his meaning is, the repentance which it works is matter of great rejoycing, or fills the ſoul of an humbled believing ſinner with great joy.

I abhor my ſelf (ſaith *Job*) *and repent.* But how did *Job* repent? his was no ordinary repentance, therefore, he adds, *I repent,*

In duſt and aſhes.] That is, either:

Firſt, Throwing my ſelf upon the ground, (*Jer.* 6. 26. *Jer.* 25. 34. 2 *Sam.* 12. 16.) or,

Secondly, Sitting upon the ground in the duſt, as (*Job* 2. 8. *Iſa.* 58. 5. *Jonah* 3. 6.) or,

Thirdly, Caſting duſt upon my head (*Job* 2. 12.) Duſt caſt upon the head was the emblem of an afflicted heart. And to ſit in the duſt, or to caſt duſt upon the head was anciently the ceremonial part of repentance. *Job* doth not leave that out, *I repent* (ſaith he) *in duſt and aſhes*; and ſo ſome expreſs it, I repent with outward wonted ceremonies. But, I conceive, we need not take it ſtrictly; *to repent in duſt and aſhes,* being only a proverbial ſpeech, implying very great, ſolemn, and ſerious repentance.

Solitis ceremoniis pœnitentiam ago.

There is another rendring of this latter part of the verſe, thus, *I repent, as looking upon, or accounting my ſelf duſt and aſhes*; 'tis an argument of much humility and humiliation to do ſo. *Abraham* gave himſelf no higher a title before the Lord (*Gen.* 18. 27.) *I have begun to ſpeak, who am but duſt and aſhes.* If we take it thus, *I abhor my ſelf, and repent, looking upon my ſelf but as duſt and aſhes,* it is a good ſence alſo, and reacheth the purpoſe which *Job* was upon, or which was upon *Jobs* ſpirit in that day and duty of repentance. There is no difficulty in the words, they yield many uſeful obſervations: *Wherefore I abhor my ſelf.*

Firſt, As the word *wherefore* refers to that ſignal diſcovery which *Job* had of God, who did not only manifeſt himſelf to him by the hearing of the ear, but by the ſeeing of the eye, that is more fully than before;

> Obſerve, *The clearer manifeſtations we have of God, the greater and deeper are our humiliations.*

Job ſaw more of the power, more of the ſoveraignty, more of the holineſs of God in himſelf, and more of his goodneſs to him, than he had done before; and therefore he abhorr'd himſelf. That place is parallel to this (*Iſa.* 6.) where, as ſoon as the Lord had declared himſelf in his holineſs and glory, the Prophet cryed out (*verſ.* 5.) *Wo is me, for I am undone, becauſe I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midſt of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have ſeen the King, the Lord of hoſts;* that is, my bodily eyes have ſeen the ſigns of his preſence, and the eye of my ſoul is ſo over-preſt, with the preſent weight of his glory, that I cannot (in this frail condition) bear it, but muſt ſink under it; *Wo is me, I am undone.* As the wicked ſhall at laſt cry, wo and alaſs, at the angry preſence of God, and ſhall indeed be undone for ever: So a godly man may now cry, *Wo is me,* at any unuſual appearance of the holineſs and glory of God, and cry out, *I am undone.* I know not how how to bear it. *Iſaiah* was not only a Prophet, and a true Prophet, but a very holy Prophet, an Evangelical Prophet, one that ſpake glorious things of Chriſt to come, yet he had never ſeen ſo much of God before, nor was he ever ſo deeply humbled before, he never cried out before, *I am undone;* which word implieth the greateſt ſence of his own nothingneſs, vileneſs, and wretchedneſs. The true reaſon why men carry it ſo high at any time with God, is, becauſe their notions and apprehenſions of God, fall ſo infinitely below him. Did we know God more, how ſhould we fear before, and ſtand as men aſtoniſhed at the preſence of his majeſty! It is our darkneſs about God which emboldens us beyond our bounds, or the line of creatures. The Prophet *Habakkuk* ſaith of himſelf (*chap.* 3. 16.) *When I heard, my belly trembled, my lips quivered at the voice, rottenneſs entred into my bones, and I trembled in my ſelf, that I might reſt in the day of trouble. When I heard,* that is, when God revealed himſelf to me by that ſpeech at the ſecond verſe of the Chapter, *O Lord, I have heard thy ſpeech, and was afraid;* then ſaid he (at the 16. verſe) *When I heard, my belly trembled.* The reaſon why carnal men and hypocrites carry it ſo ſtoutly before God, is, becauſe they know not God aright; they may boaſt of their knowledge; but as the Apoſtle ſaith (1 *Cor.* 8. 2.) *He that thinketh he knoweth any thing knoweth nothing as he ought.* The Scripture tells us, what that knowledge is which a carnal man hath of God: He knows God in his own light, not in the light of God; or he judgeth what God is, by what himſelf is (*Pſal.* 50. 21.) *Thou thoughteſt that I was altogether ſuch a one as thy ſelf.* Not that he thought God was a man; he had not ſuch groſs thoughts of God: but he thought God, as to his holineſs, was ſuch a one as himſelf, who was indeed, notwithſtanding his pretenſions to holineſs, a very unholy, a meer carnal man. When the Lord ſaid to him, *Thou thoughteſt that I was altogether ſuch a one as thy ſelf;* it is, as if he had ſaid, Thou meaſuredſt me by thy ſelf, and becauſe ſuch things pleaſed thee, thou wouldſt needs conclude that they pleaſed me too. Had men a clear knowledge of God, as he hath revealed himſelf, they would ſoon be convinced, that God is not only not altogether, but not at all ſuch a one as themſelves. We never ſee how imperfect we are, till we ſee our ſelves in the light of Gods perfection: and when we duely ſee our ſelves in that glaſs, we great abhor our ſelves; for we cannot but ſee much deformity in our ſelves, when we behold the beauty and glory of God. And, as when we behold that beauty we ſhall abhor our ſelves for our deformity and defilements; ſo we ſhall be daily mending and cleanſing our ſelves from them, according to that matchleſs beauty which we behold in him. As we have departed from God by our unlikeneſs, ſo we ſhall get nearer to him by getting more of his image and likeneſs.

Qui Deum vidit fieri non poteſt quin ſeſe accuſet contemnat & deſpiciat; non enim certius noveris tuam impuritatem quam ſi divina puritas oppoſita fuerit. Brent.

Secondly, This *wherefore* in the Text refers to the ſight that *Job* had of himſelf, as well as of God. When *Job* ſaw more of himſelf, or himſelf more, then he ſaid, *I abhor my ſelf.*

Nuſquam ſe melius deprendit modus humanæ imperfectionis, quam in lumine vultus Dei; in ſpeculo divinæ viſionis, ubi in die qui eſt plus & plus videns, quid ſibi deeſt, emendat in dies ſimilitudine quicquid deliquit diſſimilitudine. Similitudine appropinquans ei, à quo longe factus eſt diſſimilitudine. Aug. l. 11. *Confeſs.* c. 9.

> Hence, Obſerve; *The more we ſee and know our ſelves, the more we ſhall be abaſed, and lie low in our ſelves, and abhor our ſelves.*

The reaſon why we are ſo proud of our ſelves, is, becauſe we are ſo ignorant of our ſelves. Did we know our own ignorance and miſ-underſtandings, as *Job* now at laſt did, we ſhould ſtrike ſail and come lower; much more, did we know all thoſe abominations that are in our hearts, did we know what pride, and covetouſneſs, and earthly-mindedneſs lie there, what inordinate creature-love, what paſſions lie there, what envy lieth there; did we underſtand how deceitful and falſe our hearts are, both towards God, our ſelves, and towards one another, we ſhould abhor our ſelves exceedingly. There are two things which we ſhould ſtudy, that we may walk humbly. Firſt, To know God: Secondly, To know our ſelves. A Heathen ſaid that word (*know thy ſelf*) *came down from heaven;* and did we once know our ſelves aright, what frail, and blind, and ſinful creatures we are, how humble and heavenly ſhould we be! rightly to know that we are creatures would cauſe us to live more like new creatures. *David* ſeeing ſome men do things ſo unlike men (*Pſal.* 9. 20.) prayed thus, *Put them in fear, O Lord, that the Nations may know themſelves to be but men.* There are ſuch in the world as know not themſelves to be but men; they behave themſelves as if they were gods, and not men, as if they were all-ſufficient, or as if all their ſufficiency proceeded of themſelves, and they the founders of their own greatneſs and power. The *Aſſyrian* ſaid in plain terms, *I will be like unto the moſt high,* (Iſa. 14. 14.) I do not reckon my ſelf amongſt mortals. There are many, who never attained that *Aſſyrian* Princes height, who yet have much of his ſpirit, and ſpeak as if they knew themſelves to be more then men, at leaſt, as if they knew not themſelves to be but men, nor conſidered themſelves as frail, dying, and accountable creatures. Did we remember that we are but creatures, that we are the work of Gods hand, this would keep us low and humble; but did we know what ſinful polluted creatures we are, we ſhould ſoon come, not only to a lower eſtimate, but an utter abhorrence of our ſelves. *We overthink our ſelves, becauſe we do not know our ſelves;* we overrate our ſelves, becauſe we do not underſtand our ſelves. Even *Job* was too high in his own thoughts, in his own books, till he came to know and underſtand, that he had uttered things that he knew not, that he underſtood not. *Wherefore,*

I abhor my ſelf, and repent in duſt and aſhes,

> Obſerve, Thirdly; *True repentance is joyned with ſelf-abhorrence, and with an abhorrence of all that we do, of all that we are.*

True repentance is joyned with an abhorrence,

Firſt, Of ſinful ſelf, or of our ſelves for ſin. The Prophet ſpeaking of their repentance, who had gone a whoring from God, ſaith (*Ezek.* 6. 9.) *They ſhall loath themſelves for the evils which they have committed in all their abominations.* And when the Lord had promiſed to bring the children of *Iſrael* to their own land, he tells them what work they ſhall be at there (*Ezek.* 20. 43.) *There ſhall you remember your ways and doings, wherein you have been defiled, and ye ſhall loath your ſelves in your own ſight, for all the evils that ye have committed.* Once more in that Prophet, (*chap.* 36. 31.) *Then ſhall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and ſhall loath your ſelves in your own ſight for your iniquities, and for your abominations.* In all theſe Scriptures we have loathing of ſelf for ſin and evil done. And as there is a loathing of ſinful ſelf in true repentance, ſo

Secondly, Of righteous ſelf, or a loathing of our ſelves in the good, in the beſt, that we have done. We may ſoon ſee that in the beſt of our duties, which will ſtir up this ſelf-this ſelf-abhorrence, or which gives us cauſe enough to abhor our ſelves. So *Job* did as to all the glitter of his moral vertues, of which he ſpake ſo much before in ſeveral places, eſpecially in the 31. chapter. He that truly repents doth not only abhor his ſin, ſo as never to commit it again; but he abhorreth his righteouſneſs, ſo as never to truſt in at all. Thus the Apoſtle ſpake (*Phil.* 3.7, 8.) *I count all things but loſs for the excellency of the knowledge of Chriſt.* What did he account loſs? not only the evil that he had done, but all the good he had done; he accounted that but dung, that he might be found in Chriſt, not having his own righteouſneſs, which is of the law. Self-righteouſneſs is gold, and to be embraced in converſation; but 'tis dung, and to be abhorred in juſtification. *Job* abhorred his own righteouſneſs from the beginning of this diſpute in that point, though he ſpake ſo much of it (*chap.* 9. 31.) *If I waſh my ſelf with ſnow water, and make my hands never ſo clean, yet ſhalt thou plung me in the ditch, and mine own cloaths ſhall abhor me,* or (as in the Margin) *my own cloaths ſhall make me to be abhorred.* What means he by his cloaths? Surely, not the cloaths that were upon his body, but his moral cloathing, his own works of righteouſneſs, according to the law. Theſe cloaths (ſaith he) will make me to be abhorred; I ſee, I cannot be accepted in them, nor juſtified by them. *Job* was clear in that before; but now he doth not only abhor his own righteouſneſs, as to truſting in it, but to talking ſo much of it, or ſo much as to talk of it. Chriſt ſaith, *Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doth*; that is, take not much notice of thy own good deeds. As a repenting perſon will not touch at all with his former evil deeds, ſo he will not talk, nor take much notice of his own good deeds. The beſt of ſelf is little to himſelf.

Before I paſs this point, it may be enquired, Firſt, what this ſelf-abhorrence, which accompanies true repentance, works in thoſe that have it, with reſpect to ſin, or ſinful ſelf.

I anſwer, It works theſe five things.

Firſt, A diſlike of ſinful ſelf; he grows into a diſtaſt with ſin, it reliſheth not his renewed palate, and ſo will not (like unſavoury meat) go down with him.

Secondly, A hatred of ſinful ſelf. 'Tis but an eaſie ſtep from diſtaſt and diſlike to hatred. That ſoon falls under our diſpleaſure which pleaſeth us not. No ſooner did *Amnon* diſlike his ſiſter *Tamar*, whom he inordinately liked a little before, but the Text ſaith (2 *Sam.* 13. 15.) *He hated her exceedingly, ſo that the hatred wherewith he hated her, was greater than the love wherewith he had loved her.*

Thirdly, An indignation againſt ſinful ſelf. The ſpirit of a true penitent riſeth againſt ſin, as againſt an open enemy, or a falſe friend (2 *Cor.* 7. 11.)

Fourthly, An utter averſation, or alienation from ſinful ſelf. As they who live in ſin are averſe and alienated from the life of God, that is, from holineſs; ſo they who repent of ſin, are alienated and turned away from the ſins of their former life.

Fifthly and laſtly, An oppoſition againſt ſin. There is not barely a turning away from it, but a war againſt it, a deſire to deſtroy and mortifie it, to do it (as I may ſay) the greateſt miſchief we can. Thus diſlike is followed with hatred, and hatred with indignation, and indignation with averſation, and averſation with oppoſition, wrought and riſing up in a penitent ſoul againſt ſin.

But, Secondly, it may be asked, why doth a repenting ſoul abhor ſinful ſelf?

I anſwer, He doth it upon theſe four conſiderations.

Firſt, Becauſe it appears to him as a filthy thing (*Ezek.* 16. 5. *Pſal.* 38. 7. *Prov.* 12. 22.) All which Scriptures ſhew, that as ſin is a filthy thing in it ſelf, ſo it appeareth ſuch to a repenting ſoul. They that love their ſins, look upon them as fine things, or as their beauty: but to a repenting ſoul, nothing appeareth more dirty and filthy; and who abhors not that which is ſo to him?

Secondly, A repenting ſoul looketh upon ſin as a hurtful thing to him. We naturally turn from, and abhor that which is ſo. We abhor the poyſon of a Toad, and the ſting of a Serpent: To taſte the one, or to be bitten by the other, is no more deadly to the body, than ſin is to the ſoul.

Thirdly, A repenting ſoul is ſick, very ſick of his ſins; they have burdened his conſcience, as unwholſom food doth the ſtomach. Now, if a man abhors that which hath made him ſtomack ſick, much more will he abhor that which hath indeed, and not ſo much from the quantity as from the quality and nature of it, made him conſcience-ſick.

Fourthly, A repenting perſon hath vomited or caſt up his ſins by an humble confeſſion of them always to God, and in ſome caſes to men (Repentance is the ſouls vomit.) Now, as any man loaths his own vomit; ſo a man truly repenting, loaths the ſin which he hath thus vomited. Upon all theſe accounts a repenting ſoul loaths *ſinful ſelf, or ſin in himſelf.*

Thirdly, But why doth a repenting ſoul abhor righteous ſelf? I anſwer,

Firſt, Becauſe he is convinced, that ſelf-righteouſneſs is a weak imperfect thing, even in ſanctification; and therefore he is ſo far from boaſting of it, or truſting in it, that he hath a kind of abhorrence of it.

Secondly, He ſeeth, that as to juſtification it is a filthy abominable thing (*Iſa.* 64. 6.) *All our righteouſneſs are as filthy rags.* And as he abhors it, becauſe 'tis unfit and incompetent in it ſelf for that uſe, ſo becauſe 'tis utterly inconſiſtent with the tenour of the Goſpel, wherein God hath removed all mans righteouſneſs, how pure ſoever it may be, from that uſe, and directed us to look only to the righteouſneſs of Chriſt for that uſe, which the Apoſtle calls the *righteouſneſs of God* (*Rom.* 10. 3.) and that in a twofold reſpect. Firſt, becauſe 'tis that which the wiſdom of God the Father hath provided for us, and, Secondly, which the worthineſs of God the Son hath wrought out and procured for us.

Take two or three Inferences from the general Obſervation thus far proſecuted,

That true repentance is joyned with ſelf abhorrence.

Firſt, Then ſelf-admirers are no repenters. They are at the furtheſt remove from abhorring themſelves, who admire themſelves.

Secondly, Self juſtifiers, are no true repenters. Chriſt told the Phariſees (*Luke* 16. 15.) *Ye are they which juſtifie your ſelves.* They are far from abhorring themſelves, who juſtifie themſelves; ſuch ſurely are highly pleaſed with themſelves, and have much confidence in themſelves, therefore very far from ſelf-abhorrence.

Thirdly, What ſhall I ſay of their repentance, who inſtead of abhorring themſelves, abhor others? (*Luke* 18. 9.) *Chriſt ſpake a Parable unto certain which truſted in themſelves that they were righteous, and deſpiſed others,* and preſently inſtanced in the Phariſee, who deſpiſed the poor Publican, and called him in contempt, *This Publican*; he would (as we ſay) hardly touch him with a pair of tongs. They that deſpiſe others, are uſually, if not always, much pleaſed with themſelves.

Fourthly, If theſe ſelf-boaſters, and ſelf-admirers, *&c.* are not repenters, then do they repent who are ſo far from abhorring ſinful ſelf, and righteous ſelf, that they take pleaſure in ſin and unrighteouſneſs, whether their own or others? The Apoſtle ſpeaks of ſuch (*Rom.* 1. 32.) *Who knowing the judgement of God, that they which commit ſuch thngs, are worthy of death, not only do the ſame, but have pleaſure in them that do them.* That's a dreadful word (2 *Theſ.* 2. 12.) *That they all might be damned, who believe not the truth, but had pleaſure in unrighteouſneſs.* O how far are they from abhorring their own righteouſneſs, who take pleaſure in unrighteouſneſs! How are they puffed up with that which hath but a ſhew of righteouſneſs, who pleaſe themſelves with that which is really unrighteous!

Fifthly, If true repentance be accompanied with ſelf-abhorrence, then do they repent, who return to thoſe ſins which they ſay they have repented of? do you think the dog loaths his vomit, when you ſee him go back and lick it up again? (2 *Pet.* 2. 22.) When once the *Jews* loathed or abhorred *Manna*, they had no mind to eat of it, though it was Angels food. When *Job* loathed his life, he ſaid, he would live no longer (Chap. 7. 16.) *I loath it, I would not live always*; that is, not at all, not an hour longer in this world. He that is weary of his life, thinks, to live but a day, or a little longer, is to live always, or that his life will never end. Thus, if a man doth truly loath and abhor his ſin, he will not return to it again, though it hath been as ſweet to him as *Manna,* yea, as *life* it ſelf. I do not ſay, that he who loaths and abhors his ſin, can never relapſe into the ſame ſin, or be overtaken with it again; but this I ſay, he that truly repents, never delights in ſin again, he never goeth back to it, and licketh it up as a dog his vomit. *A good man may fall into the ſame ſin, but he never returneth to the ſame ſin; he may be overtaken with the ſame ſin, but he never taketh up the ſame ſin again.* That's the Apoſtles word (*Gal.* 6. 1.) *If any of you be overtaken with a fault,* &c. A good man may be overtaken with the ſame fault, but he never taketh up that fault, nor runs a courſe in that ſin again.

I ſhall only add theſe two words, for the working of our ſouls to his ſelf-abhorrence.

Firſt, The more we abhor our ſelves, the more God delighteth in us; the more we are diſpleaſed with our ſins, the more is he pleaſed with our perſons, the worſe, the viler we are in our own eyes, the better we are, and the more beautiful in the eye of God.

Secondly, Unleſs we abhor our ſelves, God will abhor us. I may ſay, unleſs we ſo repent as to abhor our ſelves, God will abhor our very repentance. There is no true repentance, without ſome degree of ſelf-abhorrence; yea, of ſelf-condemnation. Let us not take up this word *repentance* too eaſily, that is, when we know not what this word *ſelf-abhorrence* meaneth. We defile this holy, this precious thing called *repentance,* when our hearts are not fully taken off from that or thoſe ſins, of which we ſay we repent. All ſuch would have that go for repentance towards God, which indeed is but a mocking of God, and can never be joyned (from which true repentance cannot be ſeparated) with faith toward our Lord Jeſus Chriſt (*Acts* 20. 21.) *I abhor my ſelf,* (ſaid *Job*)

And repent in duſt and aſhes.] I ſhall here give ſomewhat about the nature of repentance in general, and then gather up thoſe particular Obſervations which ariſe from theſe words about it.

> *Repentance is a grace of the Goſpel wrought in the heart of a ſinner by the Word and Spirit, turning the whole man from all ſin, to God, in the ſincere and univerſal obedience of his holy will.*

In this deſcription of repentance, we have four things conſiderable.

Firſt, The nature of it, or what it is, *A grace of the Goſpel.*

Secondly, The ſeat of it, or where it is wrought, *The heart of a ſinner.*

Thirdly, The means by which it is wrought, and that twofold. Firſt, Inſtrumental, *The word.* Secondly, Principal, *The ſpirit.*

Fourthly, The iſſue or effect of it, *Converſion* or *turning*; wherein two things are to be taken notice of. Firſt, the term from which the turn is made, *Sin, and all ſin.* Secondly, the term to which the turn is made, *God*; thus explained, In the ſincere or univerſal obedience of his holy will, or in the practice of every known duty.

Firſt (I ſay) *Repentance is a grace of the Goſpel.* Some poſſibly may ſay, *Job* was before the Goſpel. I anſwer, no; The Goſpel was publiſhed long before *Job* was born, even as ſoon as God promiſed *the ſeed of the woman* (Chriſt Jeſus) *ſhould bruiſe the Serpents head* (*Gen.* 3. 15.)

The whole body of Goſpel duty moves upon theſe two feet, *Faith* and *Repentance.* Some have queſtioned, which of theſe two graces hath the precedency, or takes the firſt ſtep in the motion of the ſoul heaven-ward? All that I ſhall ſay in anſwer to it, is, Firſt, that where theſe two graces are mentioned together in Scripture, uſually repentance is named firſt, becauſe it appears firſt, and is moſt viſible to us in its actings; yet Faith is to be underſtood firſt, becauſe without that no man can come to Chriſt as a true penitent, for pardon of ſin and reconciliation unto God. Secondly, in thoſe Scriptures, where true ſaving repentance is ſpoken of alone, it ſuppoſeth faith alſo; and where true ſaving faith only is ſpoken of, it neceſſarily implyeth true repentance.

This repentance is ſo much a grace of the Goſpel, that the firſt Sermon that ever was preacht at the approach of Chriſt, or at the opening of the Goſpel in the new Teſtament, was, *Repent, ye, for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand* (*Mat.* 3. 2.) And the end or deſign of the firſt Sacrament or ſeal of the Goſpel-covenant, is expreſſed to be repentance (*Mat.* 3. 11.) *I baptize you with water unto repentance*; yea, the firſt word of the firſt Sermon (upon record) which Chriſt himſelf preached in perſon, was, *Repent* (Mat. 4. 17.) *From that time Jeſus began to preach, and to ſay, repent.* This alſo was the ſubſtance of the Apoſtles Sermons, when firſt ſent forth by Chriſt to preach the Goſpel (*Mark* 6. 12.) *They went out and preached, that men ſhould repent.* The firſt word of counſel which the Apoſtle *Peter* gave to the *Jews,* crying out, *men and brethren, what ſhall we do,* was, *Repent* (*Acts* 2. 38.) And the Apoſtle *Paul* ſaith, that the whole of his work in preaching the Goſpel, was his *teſtifying both to* Jews *and* Gentiles, *repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jeſus Chriſt* (*Acts* 20. 21.) 'Tis through the Goſpel only, that repentance is poſſible. And this appears two ways.

Firſt, Becauſe we have not a liberty to repent, or we are not admitted to repent, but by the Goſpel. We find no place for repentance in the Law ſtrictly taken, or as oppoſed to the Goſpel. The Law ſpeaks thus (*Gal.* 3. 10.) *Curſed is every one that continueth not in all things, that are written in the book of the Law, to do them.* Where we ſee, Firſt, The Law requires perſonal obedience; *every one* muſt do for himſelf. Secondly, The Law requires perpetual obedience, *every one that continueth not doing.* Thirdly, The Law requires univerſal obedience, *every one that continueth not in all things.* If any one continue not at all times in all things (ſaith the Law) or if he had failed but once in any one thing, he is gone for ever, he is curſed. The Law doth not ſay, if a man continue not to do all, let him repent; that admits no ſecond thought, but claps the curſe preſently upon the offender. If *Adam* as ſoon as he had eaten of the forbidden tree, had bewailed his ſin, and ſaid, I repent, no favour could have been ſhewed him, while under the Law.

Secondly, Under the Law there is no ability given for repentance. All the promiſes of a broken heart, and of godly ſorrow, are appendants of the Goſpel. The ſpiritual curſe which falls upon the ſoul ſinning under the Law, is impenitency for ſin. Death in ſin, is the puniſhment of ſin; and therefore when *Adam* had ſinned, he never gave the leaſt intimation of, nor ſhewed the leaſt inclination to repentance; all he did, was to hide himſelf from God among the trees of the garden, and to hide his ſin from God (as well as he could) by vain excuſes; he had not a heart to mourn for his ſin, nor a tongue to confeſs it, till the Promiſe came, and the Goſpel was publiſhed, and then (though his repentance be not mentioned, yet) doubtleſs he repented. And hence the Apoſtle concludes Apoſtates from the profeſſion which they once made of Chriſt, under an utter impoſſibility of repentance (*Heb.* 6. 4, 5, 6.) And the reaſon why the fallen Angels never repented, was becauſe they had no Mediator, nor did Jeſus Chriſt take their nature on him (*Heb.* 2. 16.) Thus far of the firſt thing in the deſcription of repentance, the general nature of it; 'tis a grace of the Goſpel.

Secondly, Conſider the ſeat or ſubject of it, where 'tis wrought, the heart of a ſinner. Repentance is *heart-work,* or it is a work upon the heart: There repentance began in thoſe converts (*Act.* 2. 37.) whom the Apoſtle *Peter* adviſed to a thorough-work of repentance (*verſ.* 38.) The Promiſe of repentance runs in this tenour, *I will take away* (ſaith the Lord, *Ezek.* 36. 26.) *the heart of ſtone out of your fleſh, and give you an heart of fleſh.* When *David* ſaid (*Pſal.* 51. 17.) *A broken and contrite heart* (he meant only a repenting heart) *O God thou wilt not deſpiſe.* As faith is wrought in the heart, *and with the heart man believeth* (*Rom.* 10. 10.) ſo repentance is wrought in the heart, and with the heart man repenteth. Neither a weeping eye, nor a confeſſing tongue, nor (in caſe of wrong done to man) a reſtoring hand, will be taken for repentance, without a broken heart.

Thirdly, Conſider the means by which ſaving repentance, or repentance to ſalvation, is wrought. Firſt, the Word: Secondly, The Spirit. The Word of God is the uſual, the ordinary inſtrument in the hand, that is, in the power of the Spirit of God, working repentance in the heart of man. The word of a Philoſopher, with all his reaſonings; the word of an Orator, with all his flouriſhings, cannot do it: only the word of God ſpoken in plainneſs and ſimplicity, hath ſtrength and efficacy to do it. The Word is compared *to a fire,* which melts the hardeſt heart; 'tis alſo in the ſame place (*Jer.* 23.29.) compared to *a hammer, which breaketh the rock in pieces.* The Word paſſing through the ear, pierceth the heart (*Acts* 2. 27.) *Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart.* And when, even the devils Devotioniſts, they *that uſed curious arts, burnt their books* (Acts 19. 19.) it is ſaid (*verſ.* 20.) *ſo mightily grew the Word of God and prevailed.* The word of God cloathed with the Spirit, hath (as to this matter) a fourfold operation. Firſt, to awaken a drowſie ſoul (*Eph.* 5. 14.) Secondly, to enlighten a dark ſoul (*Acts* 26. 18.) Thirdly, to convince a gain-ſaying ſoul. Fourthly, to convert a wandring ſoul (*Acts* 26. 18. 1 *Theſ.* 1.9.) Till the ſoul is awakened, it cannot be enlightned; till it is enlightned, it cannot be convinced; till it is convinced, it cannot be converted; and until it is all this, it hath not truly repented. For,

Fourthly, (as was ſaid in the deſcription firſt laid down) the effect of true repentance, is the turning of the whole man from all ſin to God. All the members of the body, the hand, the foot, the eyes, the ears, the tongue, are turned; all the faculties of the ſoul, the underſtanding, will, affections are turned from all ſin: Firſt, of what kind ſoever, whether of omiſſion or commiſſion againſt God, neighbour, ſelf. Secondly, of what degree ſoever; little, as well as great; appearances of evil, as well as apparent evils.

Further, as in repentance there is a turning from ſin, ſo unto God, in the ſincere obedience of his whole will. We read in Scripture, Firſt, of Gods returning to us; Secondly, of our returning to God: both are acts of repentance. When God returns to us, he repents of the evil of trouble brought, or threatoed to be brought upon us; and when we return to God, that's a fruit of our repentance, for the evil of ſin committed againſt him. Unleſs our repentance bring us nearer to God, we (as we ſay) are never the near for our repentance; that is, our repentance is not good, nor ſhall we have any good by it. The Prophet found *Iſraels* repentance defective in this (*Hoſ.* 7. 16.) *They return but not to the moſt high.* Some in repenting, return only to ſelf; that is, their own peace, intereſt and advantage, is all that moves them to it, or is deſigned and aimed at by them in it; they mind not the glory of God, nor his reparation in honour, which hath been by their ſin greatly impaired. The Lord was down-right with *Iſrael* in this (*Jer.* 4. 1.) *If thou wilt return,* O Iſrael, *ſaith the Lord, return unto me;* intimating, that *Iſrael* uſed to make ſome kind of repenting turns, but ſhort of God; they minded not God ſincerely in them, but the removal of ſome rod or trouble that was come, or which they feared was coming upon them. They return to God in repenting, who repent with a holy reſolve upon their hearts to obey God, and with a longing deſire to enjoy God all the days of their life.

Thus upon the occaſion of *Jobs* ſaying, *I repent,* I have briefly opened the duty of repentance, of ſuch a repentance as without all peradventure *Job* was then exerciſed in: His was the grace of repentance, his repentance was wrought in his heart, chiefly by the immediate word and ſpeakings of God to him; He turned fully in it from all his paſſions and expoſtulations with God (which were at that time his ſpecial ſin) to a meek, quiet ſubmiſſion to the will of God, and a reſting in his diſpenſations. All this was wrapped up in this ſhort word, *I repent.*

Further, conſider, when *Job* ſaid, *I repent in duſt and aſhes;* he was not then to begin his repentance, he had repented long before; yet then he began a new work of repentance, or then he renewed his repentance.

Hence Note; Firſt, *New ſinnings call for new repentings.*

As the new leakings of a ſhip calls for new pumpings and repairs; ſo I ſay, new ſins call for new repentings. There is a firſt repentance, and there is a ſecond repentance: Firſt Repentance is our coming out of a ſtate of ſin, of which Chriſt ſpake (*Mat.* 11. 20, 21.) *Then began he to upbraid the Cities, wherein moſt of his mighty works were done, becauſe they repented not: Wo unto you* Chorazin, *and wo unto you* Bethſaida; *for if the mighty works which were done in you, had been done in* Tyre *and* Sidon, *they would have repented long ago in ſackcloth and aſhes;* that is, they had come out of their ſins. Thoſe converts in the *Acts of the Apoſtles* (chap. 2. 38.) repented, that is, *they came out of a ſinful ſtate.* Now, as there is a repentance, which I call our coming out of a ſtate of ſin; ſo there is a repentance, which is a coming off from this and that act of ſin; and this is the repentance which *Job* was upon.

Again, this repentance as to acts of ſin, is two-fold. Firſt, Our ordinary and every days repentance. Secondly, Our extraordinary repentance. When we have fallen greatly, when we have ſinned extraordinarily, or when the Lord brings any extraordinary judgment upon us, then the Lord expects extraordinary repentance: ſuch was *Davids* repentance in the 51. *Pſalm,* and ſuch was *Jobs* repentance here; as it was in general for ſin, ſo for ſome extraordinary ſinful failings.

Secondly, Conſider what was *Jobs* ſin? *Job* was no vile perſon, he had committed no groſs acts of wickedneſs. If you would know what *Jobs* ſin was, it was impatience under Gods dealings with him, and his diſtruſtfulneſs as to Gods delivering of him; yet even his were great ſins.

Hence Note; *Not only groſs ſins, murder, adultery, and the oppreſſion of our neighbours are great ſins; but impatiency under the hand of God, and unwary ſpeeches concerning the dealings of God with us, are great ſins.*

Every great ſin is not a groſs ſin. Drunkenneſs, and ſwearing, and adultery, and murder, are groſs ſins; but impatience under affliction and unbelief, not reſting upon God in an evil day, theſe are great ſins, though not groſs ſins. Remember, not only are groſs ſins great ſins; but many ſins, which appear not to the eye, nor to the ear, may yet be great ſins, eſpecially, as to the perſon that committeth them.

Thirdly, Note; *Not groſs ſins only, but ſlips of the tongue, and impatiency under Gods hand are to be repented of.*

Job not only acknowledged theſe to be ſins, but repented of theſe; nor had he any other matter to repent of. When we are under ſome great ſickneſs, or any other affliction, as we are to repent of former ſins, ſo let us repent of our ſickneſs and affliction-ſins, that is, of impatience, or any unwary ſpeeches in our affliction. Theſe *Job* repented of.

Again; how did *Job* repent? It was *in duſt and aſhes.*

Hence Obſerve, Fourthly; *Open ſins muſt have open repentance.*

That's intended by repenting in duſt and aſhes. We are not bound to repent openly of all our ſins; but in theſe two caſes we are. Firſt, When we have done any thing that hath openly diſhonoured God. Secondly, When we have ſcandalized or offended others. In theſe caſes we muſt repent openly, ſo far, that they who are concerned may have a teſtimony of our repentance. When *Job* repented in duſt and aſhes, he (like thoſe ſervants of *Benhadad,* who came with ropes about their necks) teſtified that he had deſerved to be thrown into the duſt, or to be burnt to aſhes. We can neither edifie nor ſatisfie ſuch as are grieved by our ſins, unleſs our repentance be viſible, and we appear repenting. As the light (of our zeal) muſt ſo ſhine before men, that they may ſee our good works; ſo the light of our repentance muſt ſo ſhine before men, that they may ſee us humbled for, and turning from our evil works, and glorifie our father which is in heaven.

Fiſthly, Note; *We may teſtifie our repentance by outward ſigns.*

Here was not only the reallity of repentance, but the ceremony of it. There are many outward ſigns of repentance ſpoken of in Scripture: Such are, Firſt, *Smiting upon the thigh;* thus *Ephraim* is deſcribed repenting (*Jerem.* 31. 19.) Secondly, *Smiting upon the breaſt;* ſo the Publican is deſcribed repenting (*Luke* 18. 13.) *He ſmote upon his breaſt, and ſaid, God be merciful to me a ſinner.* Thirdly, Laying aſide our ornaments; thus the Lord commanded the *Iſraelites* (Exod. 33. 5.) *Put off thy ornaments from* *thee, that I may know to do unto thee*; as if God had ſaid humble thy ſelf openly and repent. Fourthly, The putting on of ſack-cloth; this the *Jews* were called to do (*Iſa.* 22. 12.) Fifthly, Holding down the head. The *Jews* (Iſa. 58. 5.) were not reproved for doing that, but becauſe they did it like a bull-ruſh, only when a ſtorm was upon them: Sixthly, Renting the garment, and walking ſoftly. So did *Ahab* (1 *Kings* 21. 27.) Seventhly, as in the Text *Job* ſaith he did, ſitting in duſt and aſhes. I do not ſay theſe, or the like, are abſolutely neceſſary to repentance, but they are lawful, and have their uſe. When the Prophet (*Joel* 2. 13.) ſaid, *Rent your hearts, not your garments*; that is, rent your hearts, rather than your garments; it was not a prohibition, but a direction: or if rent your garments, be ſure you rent your hearts alſo, elſe all your outward modes of repentance are in vain and inſignificant. Some popiſh Writers make the eſſence of repentance to conſiſt in theſe or ſuch like outward ſigns; but though we deny that, yet we grant that theſe may be ſigns of true repentance: For as to bow the knee is not to pray, although he that prayeth uſually boweth the knees, as a ſign of an humble heart in prayer; ſo to ſit in the duſt and weep, is not to repent, although the truly penitent uſually do ſo. The eſſence of repentance conſiſts in a broken heart for ſin, and in breaking off the courſe and cuſtom of ſin, turning to God fully.

Bellarminus l. 1. *de pœnitentia.* c.7. SS. *percurramus.*

Further, this outward ceremony of ſitting in duſt and aſhes, intimates the greatneſs of *Jobs* repentance, or that he repented greatly under a deep ſenſe of, and with bitter mournings for his former miſcarriages in the time of his affliction.

Hence Note, Sixthly; *A ſoul truly humbled maketh a very ſerious work of repentance.*

It is a common thing to ſay, *I repent*; but few know what it is to repent in duſt and aſhes. They who repent indeed, judge, arraign and condemn themſelves as at Gods tribunal, they put their mouths in the very duſt. Repentance is heart work, and deep work: they who are brought in a ſpiritual ſenſe to duſt and aſhes, find it ſo. Though ſome ſinners corrupt themſelves and their ways, more deeply than others, yet all ſin is of a deep die, and corrupts deeply, and therefore calls for deep, for heart-deep mournings and repentings in duſt and aſhes.

Pœnitent me ex animo, & ſtudioſiſſimè, quod illis externis ſymbolis ſignificabatur. Jun.

Note, Seventhly; *God will not give over dealing with his ſinning ſervants, till he hath brought them to true contrition for their ſins.*

How long was *Job* dealt with by his friends, and by *Elihu*, and by God himſelf, before his heart was wrought into this frame and temper, to repent in duſt and aſhes? It was long before he underſtood that God might break an innocent perſon to pieces, and give no account why. God did give over afflicting *Job*, till he came to that acknowledgment. *Job* ſaid (*Chap.* 40. 4.) *I am vile*; and it might be thought, that had been repentance ſufficient: But though *Job* was then brought low, yet he was not brought low enough; he cryed, *I am vile*, but till God ſpake to him of *Behemoth* and *Leviathan* he repented not in duſt and aſhes. *Ephraim* ſaid (*Jer.* 31. 18, 19.) *Thou haſt chaſtiſed me, and I was chaſtiſed, as a bullock unaccuſtomed to the yoke: turn thou me, and I ſhall be turned; thou art the Lord my God. Surely, after that I was turned, I repented; and after that I was inſtructed, I ſmote upon my thigh, I was aſhamed, yea, even confounded, becauſe I did bear the reproach of my youth.* The Lord never left ſmiting *Ephraim*, till he made him ſmite upon his thigh. If we do not come home in the work of repentance, by words, God will fetch us home with his rods.

In the eighth place; If we conſider this repentance of *Job*, with what followeth preſently upon it, his reſtauration.

Obſerve; *We are deeply humbled and brought low, we are near our exaltation.*

When *Job* lay in duſt and aſhes, God was about to ſet him upon a mountain, a mountain of proſperity, and that a higher one than ever he was upon before (*Pſal.* 126. 5, 6.) They that *ſow in tears, ſhall reap in joy; they that go forth weeping, bearing precious ſeed, ſhall doubtleſs come again with rejoycing, bringing their ſheaves with them.* Therefore take the Apoſtle counſel (1 *Pet.* 5. 6.) *Humble your ſelves under the mighty hand of God* (and what then?) *he will exalt you in due time.* The due time of our lifting up is at hand, when we are laid low and ſincerely humbled under the hand of God. *Jobs* humiliation and reſtauration did almoſt ſynchronize, or come near in time together.

Ninthly, Note; *True repentance endeth in true joy.*

The word which ſignifies to be grieved, ſignifieth alſo to rejoyce; and *Job* found it ſo, he was comforted as ſoon as fully humbled. Repentance iſſueth in joy three ways,

Firſt, There is joy in heaven when a ſinner repenteth (*Luke* 15. 7.) As he that found his loſt ſheep brought it home, and rejoyced in it more than over the ninety and nine that did not go aſtray: So (ſaith Chriſt) *there is joy in heaven over one ſinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine juſt perſons that need no repentance.* True ſorrow on earth maketh joy in heaven.

Secondly, There is joy in the Church; The godly on earth rejoyce at the known repentance of a ſinner. When the prodigal ſon came home, his father ſaid to his diſcontented brother, *It was meet that we ſhould make merry and be glad; for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again, he was loſt, and is found.* The Apoſtle greatly rejoyced at the repentance of the *Corinthians* (2 *Cor.* 7. 9.) *Now I rejoyce, not that ye were made ſorry, but that you ſorrowed to repentance.* Their ſorrow occaſion'd his joy, yet not that, but their repentance was the cauſe of it. There is no better joy on earth, than that which ariſeth out of the duſt of repenting ſorrows. As the Apoſtle *John had no greater joy than to hear that his* (ſpiritual) *children walked in the truth* (Epheſ. 3. 4.) So, what greater joy can we have, than to ſee any who had gone aſtray from, returning to the truth?

Thirdly, Repentance iſſueth in joy chiefly to the ſoul repenting. If other mens repentance cauſeth our joy, our own will cauſe it much more (2 *Cor.* 7. 10.) *Godly ſorrow worketh repentance to ſalvation, not to be repented of.* The Apoſtles meaning is more than he ſpeaks; repentance not to be repented of, is repentance to be rejoyced and gloried in. We cannot take comfort in our ſins, but we may take much comfort in repenting for our ſins, as that repentance is joyned with faith in Chriſt, who hath given us power to repent, and who is for himſelf to be rejoyced in.

Laſtly, Take this general note from the whole matter;

The ſpeakings of God to man, whether mediate or immediate, are mighty and effectual.

The ſpeaking of man to man barely can do nothing, but the ſpeaking of man to man in the power of God will do much; how much more if God himſelf ſpeak! God ſpake to *Job*, and theſe mighty effects followed.

Firſt, Self-abhorrence.

Secondly, Deep repentance.

Thirdly, Full ſubmiſſion to the will of God.

Fourthly, A readineſs to teſtifie, by all due means, how vile, how miſerable he was; yet cleaving faſt to, and depending fully upon God, by faith in the promiſe, for mercy, peace, and pardon.

Fifthly, A change both of mind and manners, both in thought, word and way. *Job* thought no more as he had done, he ſpake no more as he had done, he acted no more as he had done in that condition, he was another manner of man than before; a good man he was before, but now a better; he came out of the fire of that affliction, and off from the heat of that long diſputation, as gold well refined.

So much of this verſe, which concludes the firſt part of the chapter, *Jobs* humiliation: the ſecond followeth, his friends reconciliation both to God and himſelf.

The Reader may here pleaſe to take notice, that from the beginning of the third chapter to this place, the writing is in verſe; the latter part of the chapter and book is proſe.

VERS. 7, 8, 9.

And it was ſo, that after the Lord had ſpoken theſe words unto Job, the Lord ſaid to Eliphaz the Temanite, my wrath is kindled againſt thee, and againſt thy two friends; for ye have not ſpoken of me the thing that is right, as my ſervant Job hath.

Therefore take unto you now ſeven bullocks, and ſeven rams, and go to my ſervant Job, and offer up for your ſelves a burnt-offering, and my ſervant Job ſhall pray for you, for him will I accept; leſt I deal with you after your folly, in that ye have not ſpoken of me the thing which is right, like my ſervant Job.

So Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite went, and did according as the Lord commanded them: the Lord alſo accepted Job.

THeſe three verſes contain the ſecond part of the Chapter, in which the Lord,

Firſt, Reproves *Jobs* three friends (ver. 7.)

Secondly, Directs them what to do for the making up of the breach, or for their reconciliation (ver. 8.)

Thirdly, Accepts them, that is, *Job*, praying for them, the breach was healed, and they reconciled (ver. 9.)

So then, here God appeareth as a Judge of the cauſe, and as a moderator of the controverſie between *Job* and his friends; and he appeared as a gracious judge, ready to be reconciled to thoſe whom he had blamed, and reproved for their folly and miſapprehenſions of him, in his afflicting providences towards *Job*.

Verſ. 7. And it was ſo, that after the Lord had ſpoken theſe words unto Job, the Lord ſaid to Eliphaz the Temanite, my wrath is kindled againſt thee, and againſt thy two friends; for ye have not ſpoken of me the thing that is right, as my ſervant Job hath.

In this verſe we have the divine Judgment given in *Jobs* caſe, and in it there are four things conſiderable.

Firſt, The time or ſeaſon of it, thus expreſt; *And it was ſo, that after the Lord had ſpoken theſe words unto Job.*

Secondly, The manner of it; *The Lord ſaid*, he declared his mind.

Thirdly, The ſpecial perſon with whom the Lord dealt, and whom he choſe out to declare his mind reſpectively to the other two; *Eliphaz* the *Temanite.*

Fourthly, The decree or judgment it ſelf, in which we may conſider two things.

Firſt, The matter of it; *My wrath* (ſaith the Lord) *is kindled againſt thee, and thy two friends*; I am not pleaſed with any of you, yea, I am highly diſpleaſed, *My wrath is kindled.*

Secondly, The ground of it, plainly expreſt in theſe words; *For ye have not ſpoken of me the thing that is right, as my ſervant* Job *hath.* As if the Lord had ſaid, if you would know the reaſon why I am ſo angry, 'tis this; *Ye have not ſpoken of me the thing that is right, as my ſervant* Job *hath.*

Thus we have the ſtate of theſe three verſes, and the parts of this ſeventh, wherein God appeareth as a determiner of this long diſputed controverſie, between *Job* and his three friends.

And it was ſo, that after the Lord had ſpoken theſe words unto Job.

Here is the time when the Lord gave this judgment, that's the firſt thing to be conſidered in this verſe; and it may be queſtioned, whether the Lord gave this Judgment immediately after he had concluded his ſpeech with *Job*, and *Job* had made his confeſſion to the Lord? or whether there were ſome ſpace of time between? The word *after* may be either *preſently after*, or a good while after; here is no expreſs limitation of the time, it being only ſaid, *After the Lord had ſpoken theſe words unto Job.*

Some conceive it was a good while after God had done with *Job*, that he took his friends to task, and they ground it upon thoſe words, in the 8. verſe, *Take unto you ſeven Bullocks, and ſeven Rams, and go to my ſervant* Job: And it is ſaid in the 9. verſe, *That they went and did according to what the Lord had commanded.* Hence they collect, that *Jobs* friends were either returned quite home, or far upon their way, when the Lord ſpake this.

But this reaſon hath no force in it, to prove that *Jobs* friends were abſent; and therefore I rather conclude, that God ſpake to, and gave this judgment of *Jobs* friends (as it were) upon the place, as ſoon as he had done with *Job*; for 'tis more than probable, that *Jobs* friends ſtayed to hear both *Elihu*'s ſpeech, and the diſcourſe which the Lord made to *Job* out of the whirlwind; and that as ſoon as he had done, and *Job* ſubmitted, he preſently paſſed this ſentence for the comfort of *Job*, and for the conviction of his friends.

So then as ſoon as the Lord had ſpoken theſe words, and finiſhed his buſineſs with *Job*, when he had humbled *Job*, when *Job* had repented and confeſſed his fault, in uttering things that he underſtood not, God proceeded preſently to deal with *Jobs* three friends. There are three things which give evidence to this.

Firſt, The Lord would not let them continue long in their hard opinion of *Job*.

Secondly, If they had continued any long time unreproved, they might poſſiby have gloried as if they had got the victory, and had the better of *Job*.

Thirdly, They might have raiſed ſome undue report of *Job*, and have blamed him among others where they came, as they had done to his face; therefore, the Lord to prevent their continuing in any hard opinion of *Job*, or that they had got the better of *Job*, or to ſtop their mouths from giving forth any hard words of *Job*, preſently called them to an account, gave them to underſtand, that they had ſpoken amiſs, and he, as it were, with the ſame breath comforted *Job*, and convicted his three friends.

Hence Note, Firſt; *God doth every thing in its proper ſeaſon.*

That which is ſeaſonably done, is doubly done. *Words in ſeaſon, are like apples of gold, in pictures of ſilver*; and therefore the Lord, who knows all ſeaſons, will do and ſpeak in ſeaſon, and take the fitteſt ſeaſon for every work and word; for every thing he either doth or ſaith. This ſhould teach us to mind the due timing, both of our actions and ſpeeches, eſpecially of our reproofs; we ſhould not let thoſe who have committed a fault, go too long unreproved, leſt they think themſelves faultleſs, and that we approve them, or at leaſt that their fault is ſmall, and almoſt faultleſs. We muſt not *ſuffer ſin upon our brother* (*Lev.* 19. 17.) But it may be ſaid, how ſhall we hinder it? That Text tells us how, *Thou ſhalt in any wiſe rebuke him.* Though a man that is rebuked may keep his ſin upon him, and continue in it, notwithſtanding our ſevereſt and diſcreeteſt rebukes; yet he that rebukes a ſinning brother, doth not ſuffer ſin upon him, but hath done his duty, and uſed the means appointed by God for the removing of it. And as we ſhould not *let the Sun go down upon our wrath* againſt other men, *nor give place to the devil* in our ſelves (*Eph.* 4. 26, 27.) ſo we ſhould not ſuffer the Sun to go down upon the ſin of other men, nor give place to the devil in them, by our forbearance to rebuke them for their ſin. Thus the Lord dealt with *Jobs* three friends; he ſpeedily reproved them for their error, in not ſpeaking of him the thing that was right.

Further conſider, The Lord begins with *Job*, and then proceeds to deal with his friends; *Job* had the firſt reproof; his friends the ſecond.

Hence Note *The Lord reproves them firſt, whom he reſpects moſt who are deareſt to him.*

We cannot ſhew our ſelves more friendly to any man, than by an early reproof of his error, or as the word is (*Lev.* 19. 17.) *by not ſuffering ſin upon him.* 'Tis a mercy (when we reprove not our ſelves) to meet with a reproof (though late) from others; but to be ſoon reproved, is much mercy. Every good, the ſooner it comes to us, the better it is. To be helpt out of ſin-evil, is a great good; and therefore, when we are in a fault with others, 'tis a priviledge to be reproved before others, and with all poſſible ſpeed to be brought unto repentance. The Apoſtle *Peter* ſaith (1 *Pet.* 4. 17.) *Judgment begins at the houſe of God.* The Lord judgeth his own houſe, before he judgeth the world: and it is in mercy to his own houſe, that he doth ſo; for when God judgeth thoſe of his houſe, *he chaſtneth them, that they ſhould not be condemned with the world* (1 *Cor.* 10. 32.) And as God uſually begins to judge his own houſe before he judgeth the world, ſo the nearer and dearer any of his houſe are to him, the ſooner he begins with them; as here, *Jobs* three friends, *Eliphaz, Bildad* and *Zophar*, were of Gods houſe, but *Job* was more eminent than any of them, and therefore God reproved him, before he reproved them. *It was ſo, that after the Lord had ſpoken theſe words unto* Job,

The Lord ſaid to Eliphaz the Temanite, my wrath is kindled againſt thee, &c.

The Lord ſaid.] Theſe words contain the ſecond thing to be conſidered in this verſe, to wit, the manner of proceeding, *He ſaid*; that is, he openly declared it, he did not whiſper it in the ear of *Eliphaz*, he did not ſpeak it to him inwardly by his Spirit (there are inward reproofs, conſcience-checks) he did not ſpeak to him in his ſleep; or in a dream (that opinion of one upon this place, that God reproved *Eliphaz* in a dream, is but a dream) but openly, that all might hear, and ſo the innocency of *Job*, and the fault of his friends, might be manifeſt to all. Some are of opinion, that the Lord ſaid this to *Eliphaz* out of the whirlwind, as he ſpake to *Job*. And though I do not aſſert that, yet it cannot be denyed, but that as ſuch a manner of ſpeaking did beſt ſuit the Majeſty of God, ſo the matter ſpoken, which was a ſore reproof, in which the Lord manifeſted much diſpleaſure. *The Lord ſaid*, openly and angerly

To Eliphaz the Temanite,] He ſpake not to *Bildad*, nor to *Zophar*, but to *Eliphaz* the *Temanite*. But why did the Lord direct his ſpeech to him perſonally, and by name, while the buſineſs concerned them all? I might anſwer as ſome do, becauſe what any one of them ſaid to *Job*, was as if ſaid by them all: And though their opinions differed, yet their perſons did not, all three agreeing in this (though upon ſeveral grounds) to oppoſe *Job*. And therefore the Lord in ſpeaking to one, ſpake to them all.

But I ſhall give three other Reaſons for it, and from each a Note.

Firſt, *Eliphaz* was the elder man, the graver perſon, as all agree, and therefore God reproved him perſonally.

> Note this from it; *The elder and greater any are, the greater is their offence, when they offend, though others offend with them.*

When many are in a fau't, the chief or heads of them are moſt faulty, and deſerve chiefly to hear of it. When *Iſrael* had committed that great ſin in *Baal-peor* (*Numb.* 25. 4.) The Lord ſaid, *Hang up the heads of the people before me*, that is, the chiefeſt of the people. So, in proportion, when the Lord came to deal with theſe three, he fell upon *Eliphaz* firſt, as the more eminent or firſt of the three.

Secondly, As *Eliphaz* was the elder or firſt of the three, ſo he began firſt with *Job*; he was not only the firſt and chief in perſon, but he was the firſt and chief ſpeaker.

> Hence Note; *They who are firſt in a fault, ſhall be firſt in reproof.*

It is dangerous to follow, or be a ſecond in a bad matter, but more, to begin and be leader.

Thirdly, *Eliphaz* was more ſharp with, and violent againſt *Job*, than the other two, and therefore the Lord began with him.

> Hence Note; *The deeper any are in a fault, of any kind, and the more of the heart appeareth in it, the worſe it is, the more blame-worthy are they, and they ſhall be more blamed for it.*

All the three friends of *Job* did much miſtake him, but the ſpirit of *Eliphaz* was hotteſt, therefore the Lord culled him out firſt. *The Lord ſaid to* Eliphaz *the Temanite.*

What ſaid the Lord?

My wrath is kindled againſt thee, and againſt thy two friends.

My wrath is kindled.] Theſe words are uſed by *Elihu* (Chap. 32. 2, 3.) *Then was kindled the wrath of* Elihu, *the ſon of* Barachel *the* Buzite; *againſt* Job *was his wrath kindled, and againſt his three friends was his wrath kindled.* Here the Lord taketh up the ſame words concerning *Eliphaz*, *My wrath is kindled againſt thee and thy two friends. Elihu's* wrath was kindled, not only againſt *Jobs* friends, but againſt *Job* himſelf; but the Lords wrath was kindled only againſt *Jobs* three friends, not againſt *Job*. He indeed diſpleaſed God, and was ſharply reproved by him; but the wrath of God was not kindled againſt him. 'Tis uſeful to conſider the difference between Gods judgment and mans, both as to things and perſons. *Elihu* thought *Job* was as faulty as his friends, and therefore his wrath was kindled, as againſt his three friends, ſo againſt him too; but the Lord thought otherwiſe, and therefore ſaid to *Eliphaz*, *My wrath is kindled againſt thee and thy two friends*; he ſaid not ſo to *Job*.

Again, conſider the Lord ſpake much with *Job*, but he ſpake little with his friends, he did not vouchſafe them any long diſcourſe; and the words he ſpake to them, were very hot words; he in few words (as angry men uſe to do) told them their own.

Once more conſider, the difference of the Lords dealing with him and them. The Lord fetcht a great compaſs to reprove *Job*, as *Nathan* the Prophet did to reprove King *David*; but he told his friends at firſt word, *My wrath is kindled againſt you*. Though they were good men, yet not ſo dear to God as *Job*, and therefore he dealt in a more fatherly and favourable way with *Job*, than with them; they had only hot words, *My wrath is kindled againſt you*, &c. I am more than angry. As the coals of ſpiritual love (ſpoken of, *Cant.* 8. 6.) ſo the coals of divine wrath are coals of fire, which hath a moſt *vehement flame*. There are ſeven words in the Hebrew language which ſignifie anger, and this notes the moſt vehement of them all.

חרה *Exarſit incenſus, inflammatus eſt. Inter ſeptem voculas Hebræorum, quæ iram ſignificant, hæc omnium eſt graviſſima.* Scult.

My wrath is kindled.] The Latine words *Ira* and *Iraſco*, ſeem to be derived from it. The word is ſometimes applied to grief (there is a kind of fire in grief.) Thus 'tis ſaid (1 *Sam.* 15. 11.) *It grieved* Samuel, *and he cryed unto the Lord all night. Samuel* was vehemently grieved, becauſe of the ill performance of *Saul* in his expedition againſt the *Amalekites*. 'Tis alſo tranſlated *to fret* (*Pſal.* 37. 8, 9.) *Fret not thy ſelf in any wiſe to do evil*; fretting hath its burning.

My wrath (ſaith the Lord) **is kindled.**] There is a wrath of God, which is not kindled, as I may ſay, it is not blown up, 'tis covered in the aſhes of his patience and forbearance; but here, ſaith God, *My wrath is kindled.* This is ſpoken by God after the manner of men. God feels no change by wrath or anger, no impreſſion is made on him by any paſſion: Wrath in God, notes only his change of diſpenſations towards man, not any in himſelf. When he acts like a man whoſe wrath is greatly kindled, then 'tis ſaid, his wrath is kindled; as when he acteth like a man that ſheweth much love, it may be ſaid, his love is kindled.

Further, when God ſaith, *My wrath is kindled*, it implieth there is ſome great provocation given by him man, as in the preſent caſe *Eliphaz* and his two friends had done. The Lord threatned a ſinful Land with *brimſtone, and ſalt, and burning, like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah*; *and*, this being executed, *all Nations ſhall ſay, wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto this Land? what meaneth the heat of this great anger? Then men ſhall ſay, becauſe they have forſaken the Covenant of the Lord God of their Fathers*, &c. (*Deut.* 29. 23, 24, 25.) The wrath of God is never kindled till blown, and that which bloweth it up is mans ſin; nor doth the ordinary ſins of man kindle the wrath of God, for then it muſt be always kindled, even againſt the beſt of men. Doubtleſs, when the Lord ſaid in the Text to *Eliphaz*, *My wrath is kindled againſt thee and thy two friends*, there was ſomewhat extraordinary in their ſin, which kindled it; and therefore the Lord directed them an extraordinary way (as to circumſtances) for the quenching of it, and the making of their peace.

But here it may be queſtioned, why did the Lord ſay his wrath was kindled only againſt *Eliphaz* and his two friends? had he nothing to ſay againſt *Elihu*? he had ſpoken as harſhly to *Job* as any of them, yet *Elihu* at was not all reproved, much leſs was the wrath of God kindled againſt him.

I anſwer, 'Tis true, *Elihu* ſpake very hard words of *Job*; yet we may ſay four things of *Elihu*, which might exempt him from this blame which fell upon thoſe three.

Firſt, He did not ſpeak with, nor diſcover a bitter ſpirit, as they did.

Secondly, *Elihu* objected not againſt *Job* his former life, nor charged him as having done wickedly towards man, or hypocritically towards God; he only condemned him for preſent miſcarriages under his trouble, for impatience and unquietneſs of ſpirit under the croſs.

Thirdly, That which *Elihu* chiefly objected againſt *Job* was, *the juſtifying of himſelf rather than God* (as he ſpeaks at the beginning of the 32. Chapter) not the maintaining of his own innocency, nor the juſtifying of himſelf before men. Indeed *Job* failed while he inſiſted ſo much upon that point, that he ſeemed more careful to clear himſelf, than to juſtifie God.

Fourthly, When Elihu ſpake hardly, it was more out of a true zeal to defend the juſtice of God in afflicting him, than to tax him with injuſtice. Now becauſe *Elihu* did not carry it with a bitter ſpirit, and hit the mark much better than his friends (though in ſome things he alſo ſhot wide and miſunderſtood *Job*) therefore the blame fell only upon *Jobs* three friends, and not upon *Elihu*; *The Lord ſaid to* Eliphaz, *my wrath is kindled againſt thee, and againſt thy two friends*; but his wrath went no further.

Hence Note; Firſt, *The Lord knows how to declare wrath as well as love, diſpleaſure as well as favour.*

He hath a ſtore of wrath as well as of love, and that is kindled when he is highly diſpleaſed.

Secondly, Note; *Sin cauſeth kindlings or diſcoveries of divine wrath.*

Had it not been for ſin, the Lord had never declared any wrath in the world, nothing had gone out from him but kindneſs and love, favours and mercies. *Wrath is revealed from heaven againſt all unrighteouſneſs, and againſt unrighteouſneſs only* (*Rom.* 1. 18.) Unrighteouſneſs kindleth wrath, *ſin is the kindle-coal.* When we ſee wrath or diſpleaſure going out, we may conclude ſin is gone out. *Moſes* ſaid to *Aaron* (*Numb.* 16. 46.) *Take a Cenſer, and put fire therein from off the altar, and put on incenſe, and go quickly unto the congregation, and make an atonement for them, for there is wrath gone out from the Lord, the plague is begun.* Now as in this latter part of the chapter, *Moſes* ſhews that wrath was gone out againſt that people from the Lord; ſo in the former part of it he ſhews, that ſin, and that a great ſin, was gone out from that people againſt the Lord.

Thirdly, Note; *The Lord ſometimes declareth wrath, even againſt thoſe whom he loveth.*

Wrath may fall upon good men; ſuch were theſe friends of *Job*. All the Elect, whilſt they remain unconverted or uncalled, are called *Children of wrath* (Epheſ. 2. 3.) Though they are in the everlaſting love of God, yet they are children of wrath, as to their preſent condition, whilſt in a ſtate of nature and unreconciled to God. Now, as the children of God, are children of wrath, before their converſion; ſo, when any great ſin is committed after converſion, they are in ſome ſenſe under wrath; and the Lord declareth wrath againſt them, till the breach be healed, and their peace ſued out. It is dangerous continuing for a moment in any ſin unrepented of, or we not going unto God by Jeſus Chriſt for pardon. When once the wrath of God is kindled, how far it may burn, who knoweth? There is no ſafety under guilt; *Therefore kiſs the ſon leſt he be angry, and ye periſh from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little: bleſſed are they that put their truſt in him* (Pſal. 2. 12.) *My wrath is kindled againſt thee, and thy two friends.* Why?

Becauſe ye have not ſpoken that which is right of me.

Hence Note, Fourthly; *When the Lord is angry he will ſhew cauſe of his anger.*

God is not angry (as men often are) without cauſe. When *Jonah* was angry, the Lord ſaid unto him, *Doſt thou well to be angry?* Yea, ſaith he, that I do, I have reaſon enough (thought he) to be angry, though there was no true reaſon at all for it. But when the Lord is angry, he always hath reaſon enough, and he ſometimes giveth his reaſon. That the Lord doth us good, is from free grace: there is no reaſon in us, why he doth us good; as he told the people of *Iſrael*, I did this, and that for you, not becauſe ye were more than others (either in weight or number) but becauſe I loved you: but when the Lord afflicts his people, he tells them the reaſon, 'tis for your ſins, or to purge you from your ſins; and ſometimes pointeth them to the ſpecial ſins, for which he puniſheth them, and from which he would have them purged. As here he did *Eliphaz* and his two friends.

Ye have not ſpoken of me the thing that is right, as my ſervant Job hath.

The Lord doth not charge them with any evil actings, but with undue ſpeakings; *Ye have not ſpoken of me the thing that is right.*

Hence Note; *Failings in ſpeech, or in what we ſay, may kindle wrath, as well as failings in what we do.*

Further, The Lord doth not charge them with ſpeaking foul and filthy things, they had not only ſpoken *the thing that was not right. A little failing in ſpeech, or in what we ſay concerning God and his ways, may kindle wrath.*

Ye have not ſpoken of me, that is, concerning me, or concerning my proceedings with *Job*, *the thing that is right.*

אֵלַי *ad me, coram me* Pagn.

The Hebrew is, *To me, ye have not ſpoken to me the thing that is right.* God was not only the ſubject of whom they ſpake, but the object to whom they ſpake; this whole diſputation being tranſacted as in the preſence of God, and both *Job* and his friends appealing to him, as the Judge and Moderator of it. Hence the Septuagint render, *ye have not ſpoken before me the thing that is right:* As if God had ſaid, all that ye have ſpoken hath been in my preſence, I being witneſs, yea, I being Judge; yet ye ſpake not right. Did we remember that whatſoever we ſpeak, as well as whatſoever we do, is before God, and muſt come under his judgment, we would be more careful both to do and to ſpeak (which theſe men did not) *the thing that is right. Ye have not ſpoken of me*

The thing that is right.] The Hebrew is but one word, and it may be taken two ways. Firſt, For rightneſs in matter. Secondly, In manner. Our tranſlation refers to the matter; *ye have not ſpoken of me the thing that is right.* Yet they failed (as the word implyeth) in their manner of ſpeaking alſo; they handled Gods cauſe unhandſomely, they ſpake not as they ought, as well as what they ought not, to a poor afflicted creature; they ſpake not with that tenderneſs, pity, and compaſſionateneſs as became them, to a man in that pitiful caſe.

נְכוֹנָה *complectitur & veritatem & convenientiam cum officio & decoro. Significat igitur & falſa dixiſſe de Dei judicio & Jobo, & non eo animo dixiſſe ſive vera, ſive falſa eſſent, quo decebat.* Coc. *Cauſam meam iniquè egiſtis.* Jun

But though the Lord might ſay in both theſe ſenſes, *Ye have not ſpoken of me the thing that is right*, yet he ſaid not (as the Septuagint over-raſhly render) *Ye have not ſpoken of me any thing that is right*; nor doth the Lord charge them abſolutely, as not ſpeaking right of him, but with a modification, or comparatively, *Ye have not ſpoken of me the thing that is right,*

As my ſervant Job hath.] As if he had ſaid, *Job* hath been condemned by you, and yet *Job* hath ſpoken better than you, righter than you; though he hath had his failings in ſpeaking, yet ye have failed more than he.

But it may be queſtioned, what was it that they did not ſpeak right, and what was it that *Job* ſpake righter than they?

I anſwer, They had not ſpoken ſo right as he,

Firſt, About the doctrine of Gods providence, by which he governs all things, and diſtributes good and evil, that is, proſperity and adverſity, to the ſons of men.

Secondly, They had not ſpoken ſo right as he, taking up the ſigns or tokens of the love and hatred of God from his outward diſpenſations.

Thirdly, They cenſured *Job* as a ſinful-doer in former times, and that now his ſin had found him out, becauſe at that time he was ſo great a ſufferer. Theſe things were not right.

Or thus, *Jobs* friends did not ſpeak right.

Firſt, In judging that God was angry with him, becauſe he afflicted him.

Secondly, Nor did they ſpeak right in judging *Job* wicked, becauſe afflicted; they ſpake many right things about the juſtice and power of God, but they did not hit *Jobs* caſe right: They thought and concluded, that if *Job* had not been a great ſinner, God would not have afflicted him at all, at leaſt, not ſo greatly: They ſuppoſed God could not juſtly afflict *Job* as he had done, had *Job* been a juſt man. This was not right; they did not well conſider, Firſt, That God may afflict a juſt man out of Soveraignty. Secondly, They did not well conſider, that God hath other ends and reaſons in afflicting than for iniquity; and therefore they knew not how to juſtifie the proceedings of God, but by condemning *Job*, which there was no neceſſity to do. So then, their great errour and miſtake was in reſolving this queſtion affirmatively, *Whether he that is greatly afflicted, be a great ſinner? or whether the ſevere judgments of God light only upon ungodly men?* Their affirmation of this, was enough to make *Job* deſpair, and did provoke him to utter ſeveral very paſſionate and unfitting ſpeeches.

For though *Job* ſpake many things right, yet not all right. God judged him according to the tendency and ſcope of his ſpirit and ſpeech, not according to the accidents and ſudden extravagancies of either. *Job* ſpake right,

Firſt, In affirming conſtantly, that God did not afflict him for his ſin.

Secondly, That his afflictions were no ſigns of Gods diſpleaſure againſt him, nor of his wickedneſs againſt God. Yet *Job* did not ſpeak all nor always right: He failed,

Firſt, When he ſpake impatiently of his own ſufferings.

Secondly, When he ſpake ſo boldly to God, asking (as it were) an account of his doings and dealings with him.

Thirdly, He ſpake not right (though that was right which he ſpake) when he ſpake ſo much of his own righteouſneſs, thereby (though not purpoſely, yet) according to the apprehenſion of others, reflecting upon the righteouſneſs of God. In theſe things and more (which have been noted in opening this book) *Job* ſpake not right of God, yet righter than *Eliphaz* and his two friends and therefore the Lord told them, *Ye have not ſpoken of me the thing that is right, as my ſervant* Job *hath.*

Further to anſwer the queſtion, and to clear the whole matter, we muſt take notice.

Firſt, In what *Job* and his three friends agreed.

Secondly, In what they diſagreed.

They all agreed, firſt, in This, that all the afflictions which befal man in this life, fall within the ſight and certain knowledge of God.

Secondly, they all agree, That God is the author and efficient cauſe, the orderer and diſpoſer of all the afflictions that befal man.

Thirdly, they all agree, That God neither doth nor can do wrong to any man, whatſoever affliction he layeth upon him, or how long ſoever he continueth it upon him. Thus far they all ſpake right things, and agreed in what they ſpake.

But *Jobs* friends held other opinions, wherein he totally diſſented from them.

Firſt, That *whoſoever is good, and doth good, ſhall receive a preſent good reward.*

Secondly, That *whoſoever is evil, and doth evil, ſhall receive preſent puniſhment.* So that, if any wicked man proſper, it is but for a while, ſudden miſchief will overtake him: And if any godly man be afflicted, it is but for a while, his affliction will ſoon end, and he return to a flouriſhing condition in this life. From theſe premiſes they concluded, that whoſoever is afflicted, and continueth long under affliction, certainly that man is wicked, and thereupon they judged *Job* to be ſuch a one.

But *Job* held this right poſition againſt them all, *That the providence of God diſpenſeth outward good and evil ſo indifferently* to good and bad men, that no unerring judgment can poſſibly be made of any mans ſpiritual ſtate, by his outſide or temporal ſtate: This *Job* ſtuck cloſe to, as was ſhewed more fully in the Preface to the Second Part.

I conclude then, That neither did *Eliphaz* and his two friends, fail ſo much in ſpeaking, as to ſpeak nothing right of God (yea, there was ſomewhat right in every thing they ſpake of God) neither did *Job* ſpeak ſo right, as to ſpeak nothing amiſs of God. Now God, who knew exactly who ſpake righteſt, determined the matter for *Job*: *Ye have not ſpoken of me the thing that is right, as my ſervant* Job *hath.*

Yet before I paſs from theſe words, it may be queſtioned, and ſome make it a great queſtion, *Whether we are to underſtand this ſentence and determination of God (preferring what* Job *had ſpoken of him, before what* Eliphaz *and his two friends had ſpoken of him) in reference to all that* Job *had ſpoken of him, in way of aſſertion throughout the whole diſpute, when his ſoul was heated and grieved; or, of what he ſpake towards the latter end, in a cooler temper, when his ſoul was humbled?*

The Jewiſh Doctors (who for the moſt part are very ſevere againſt, and cenſorious of *Job*) expound this ſentence of God, as if it reſpected only what *Job* ſpake at the beginning of the 40. chapter (*ver.* 3, 4, 5.) *Then* Job *anſwered the Lord, and ſaid, behold, I am vile, what ſhall I anſwer thee? Once have I ſpoken, but I will not anſwer; yea, twice, but I will proceed no further.* And what we ſpake at the 42. chapter (*ver.* 1, 2.) *Then* Job *anſwered the Lord, and ſaid, I know that thou canſt do every thing, and that no thought can be with-holden from thee,* &c. Concluding (*ver.* 6.) *Wherefore I abhor my ſelf, and repent in duſt and aſhes.* In theſe places, ſay they, *Job* ſpake righter than his friends, but not ſo in the whole body of his diſcourſe. Some others poſſibly have concurred (though I have ſeen but one, and him only in Manuſcript) with the *Rabbins*, in this cenſure; affirming, that *Jobs* opinion was the worſt of all the four, yea, that it was little leſs than blaſphemy, taking men off from, at leaſt, diſcouraging them in ways of godlineſs, while he affirmed peremptorily (*chap.* 9. 22, 23.) *He* (that is, God) *deſtroyeth the perfect, and the wicked: if the ſcourge ſlay ſuddenly, he laugheth at the tryal of the innocent.* This aſſertion of his concerning God (and of this, his whole diſcourſe with his three friends ſavoured) was not (ſay they) ſo right as theirs: and therefore they reſtrain theſe words of God, *Ye have not ſpoken of me the thing that is right, as my ſervant* Job, to what *Job* ſpake in the chapters mentioned, when he was upon his repentance; but will not allow them to reach to, or be meant of what he ſpake of God in the courſe of his former diſpute with his friends.

But I ſhall cloſe and joyn with thoſe, who refer the words of this final judgment which God gave upon this matter, to what *Job* ſpake of God from firſt to laſt; and that they are not to be limited to what *Job* ſpake after God had humbled him, by ſpeaking to him out of the whirlwind.

I grant (as hath been ſaid) *Job* ſpake unduely more than once, in the days of his anguiſh and ſore affliction; for which *Elihu* reproved him ſharply (*chap.* 34. *ver.* 35, 36, 37. *chap.* 35, 16.) And ſo did God himſelf (*chap.* 38. 2. *chap.* 40. 1, 2, 8.) Nor did *Job* in the iſſue ſpare, much leſs flatter himſelf, as if he had ſpoken nothing amiſs, but humbly confeſſed his error and ignorance in ſpeaking (*chap.* 40. 4, 5. *chap.* 42. 3, and 6.) *Wherefore I abhor my ſelf, and repent,* &c. even, becauſe in the extremity of my pains, I ſpake ſo unadviſedly with my lips.

I grant alſo, that *Job* ſpake much more rightly, or righteſt of God, after God had humbled him and brought down his ſpirit by that dreadful diſpenſation out of the whirlwind.

Yet, I ſay, *Job* ſpake more rightly of God during his affliction, than *Eliphaz* and his two friends had done; which, as it may appear by that brief account or ſurvey of their opinions a little before given, ſo I ſhall add ſomewhat more towards the making of it yet more apparent.

For, Firſt, That aſſertion laid down (*chap.* 9. 22, 23.) *He deſtroyeth the perfect and the wicked,* &c. which hath raiſed ſo much duſt, and is judged by ſome as a quench-coal to all piety and religion; and which occaſion'd the Jewiſh Writers to ſay, that *Job* ſought to turn the charger the bottom upward; that his mouth was full of gravel, that he began his ſpeech with curſing, and continued it with blaſpheming: That aſſertion, I ſay, is no more than *Solomon* hath given us (*Eccleſ.* 9. 1, 2.) *All things come alike to all; and there is one event to the righteous and the wicked.* Now *Job* ſpake this in his firſt anſwer to *Bildad*, which was almoſt at the beginning of the diſpute.

Secondly, *Job* ſpake altogether right of God, and of his providence towards himſelf and others all along, while he conſtantly maintained, Firſt, That he was not afflicted for any wickedneſs committed by him, in the former paſſages of his life. Secondly, That outward good is not always the portion of the good, nor outward evil the portion of evil men always in this life. Thirdly, That God is not unrighteous, though he exerciſe the righteous with grievous troubles all their days, and heap worldly bleſſings upon the wicked all the days of this life. Fourthly, That we are not to take meaſure of, nor eſtimate the goodneſs or badneſs of any mans perſon, by the good or bad days which paſs over his head in this life. Fifthly, That no mans happineſs or unhappineſs, is to be judged by what befals him in this life. *Job* ſpake right, and righter of God than *Eliphaz* and his two friends, in all theſe particulars. And whereas he ſometimes acted impatiently, and ſpake uncomely, blotting a good cauſe with paſſionate and haſty words, ſuch as ignorant and evil men might make an ill uſe of, and draw to the patronage of their prophanity; theſe proceeded not out of the abundance of his heart, but from the abundance of his pains under the heavy hand of God. And when he ſeemed to tax the judgment of God, it was not any affirmation that God was unjuſt or unequal in it; but an expoſtulation with him about it, or, as ſome expreſs it, a confeſſion of his own ignorance, and an earneſt deſire of clearer light and better information concerning the way of it.

But if we conſider the ſum of what *Eliphaz* and his two friends ſpake of God; we ſhall find *Eliphaz* in this great miſtake, affirming, that all the ſufferings and afflictions which befal man in this world, are laid upon him by God as a puniſhment for ſin. And all three joyned in two other miſtakes. Firſt, That all wicked men, ſooner or latter, are viſibly puniſhed for their ſin in this life. Secondly, That though a good man may poſſibly ſuffer grievous afflictions in this life, yet God always delivers him out of them, before he departs this life. Hence it muſt needs follow, that if a man for long continuance of time, eſpecially, if all his life long he continue in great calamity, that man muſt be judged wicked, though no apparent wickedneſs can be charged upon him, nor proved againſt him. Upon theſe unſound principles, they were all confident to infer againſt *Job*, that he was an hypocrite, and that all thoſe troubles which befel him, were inflicted by the righteous hand of God as a puniſhment for his ſin.

Now if this be the ſum of what they ſpake, we have reaſon enough to anſwer the queſtion propoſed, That the Lords deciſive ſentence between *Job* and his friends, reſpecteth what *Job* ſpake of or to God, throughout the book, and is not to be underſtood only of what he ſpake towards the cloſe of it; *Ye have not ſpoken of me the thing that is right,*

As my ſervant Job hath.] There are two parts of a Judges office. Firſt, To condemn the guilty. Secondly, To acquit the innocent. God the great Judge doth both here; the firſt, in the former words; the ſecond, in theſe; Yea, the Lord doth not only acquit, but own *Job* in the cloſe of all, *as his ſervant*. The Lord ſaid to Satan in the firſt chapter, *Haſt thou conſidered my ſervant* Job; and here he concludes (after Satan had done his worſt to make *Job* quit the ſervice of God) in the ſame ſtile, *my ſervant* Job; as if the Lord had ſaid, Job *ſhall wear my livery ſtill, he is my ſervant ſtill.*

Several uſeful obſervations iſſue from this latter part of the verſe, which I ſhall briefly hint.

Firſt, Who were theſe that had not ſpoken aright? they were wiſe, grave, and learned men, yea, they were godly men too.

Hence Note, *Wiſe, learned, and good men may err.*

They may err in judgment, and in ſpeech. *Jobs* friends ſpake many truths, but did not apply them truly to *Jobs* caſe. The beſt men may not only miſs, but miſtake their mark. They who are in the light, yea, who are light in the Lord, have yet ſome darkneſs in them, and may both do and ſpeak from that darkneſs (ſuch was the caſe of theſe men in the Text.) *David* may be underſtood of good men, in a degree, as well as of bad men, when he ſaid (*Pſal.* 62. 9.) *Men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie*: they are ſo, both actively and paſſively; they may be deceived, and they may deceive. As when the Lord of old *hearkned and heard, they* (that is, all wicked men) *ſpake not aright, no man repented of his wickedneſs, ſaying, what have I done?* (*Jer.* 8. 6.) So when the Lord hearkens and hears at this day, they, that is, all good men, ſpeak not aright in all things, neither of him, nor of what he hath done.

Secondly, Conſider who it was that God vindicated in this matter? It was his ſervant *Job*.

Hence Note; *God will ſooner or later, one time or other, vindicate the credit of his faithful ſervants.*

He will (as we ſpeak proverbially) *ſet the ſaddle upon the right horſe*; and make it appear before men and angels, who have done and ſpoken right, yea, who righteſt. Let patience under ſufferance have its perfect work, for God will give a perfect judgment of every mans word and work (*Pſal.* 37. 6.)

Thirdly, Note; *The Lords knowledge is infinite and unerring.*

He knoweth who hath the better, who is in the right. He could tell *Eliphaz* and his two friends, that though they had ſpoken ſome things right, yet not all, not ſo right as *Job*. The Lord (as we ſay) can cleave a hair in any controverſie, and tell every one where he is out, whether in opinion or practice. *God is light, and in him is no darkneſs at all* (1 *John* 1. 5.) Our light is but little, and 'tis mingled with much darkneſs; our light is dark, and will be ſo, till we come to that inheritance among the Saints in light. But Gods light is all light, altogether light, both concerning things and perſons.

Fourthly, What *Eliphaz* and his two friends ſpake, that was not right, concerned *Job* immediately; they ſpake very glorious things of God out of his caſe: yet the Lord ſaith not, *Ye have not ſpoken of* Job *the thing that is right*, but, *Ye have not ſpoken of me the thing that is right.*

Hence Note; *God takes himſelf concerned in what is ſpoken amiſs, of or concerning his ſervants.*

Jobs friends looked upon themſelves as ſtrong witneſſes, yea, as great Advocates for God; and doubtleſs, they intended no leſs than a plea for God, in what they ſpake to and againſt *Job*: yet becauſe they in many things grieved, and in ſome things wronged his ſervant *Job*, therefore ſaith God, *ye have not ſpoken of me the thing that his right.* The Lord will ſay, in the great day, to the wicked, about their neglects of duty to his faithful ones, *In as-much as ye did it not to one of the leaſt of theſe, ye did it not to me.* (*Mat.* 25. 45.) In as-much as ye have not fed and cloathed theſe, ye have not fed nor cloathed me. Now, as the Lord taketh all the neglects of good to his people, to himſelf; ſo the Lord taketh all that evil which any ſpeak of his people, to himſelf: *He* (ſaith God) *that ſpeaketh amiſs of mine, ſpeaketh amiſs of me.* The Lord accounteth himſelf intereſted in all that good or evil, which is done and ſpoken to his people; and he is very angry when any thing is miſ-ſpoken of, or miſapplied to them, though with reſpect to himſelf, or as a ſervice unto himſelf.

Fifthly, Conſider, *Jobs* friends ſpake many excellent truths; yet ſaith the Lord, *ye have not ſpoken of me the thing that is right, as my ſervant* Job *hath.*

Hence Note; *The Lord is greatly diſpleaſed, when truth, or that which is right in it ſelf, is wrong applied.*

Jobs friends were moſtly right in their Doctrine, but often out in their Uſes; all their open aſſertions had ſome truth in them, but ſo had not all their ſecret Inferences. God will not bear it, to have truths put to any ill uſe, eſpecially this, to grieve and diſcourage any of his ſuffering ſervants. To ſpeak of the holineſs, juſtice and righteouſneſs of God, ſo as to terrifie an afflicted ſoul, is to make a bad improvement of the beſt things: 'Tis a fly in the box of ointment. *Dead flies* (ſaith *Solomon*, Eccleſ. 10. 1.) *cauſe the ointment of the Apothecary to ſend forth a ſtinking ſavour; ſo doth a little folly him that is in reputation for wiſdom and honour.* *Jobs* friends were in reputation for wiſdom and honour; yet this little folly ſent forth an ill ſavour in the Lords noſtrils, and cauſed him to ſay, *Ye have not ſpoken of me the thing that right.*

Sixthly, *Jobs* friends certainly meant well, and had a zeal for God; yet God was angry, and ſaid, they had not ſpoken right.

Hence Note; *Our good intentions, yea, zeal for God, will not bear us out when we do or ſpeak amiſs.*

Theſe men had a zeal for God, elſe *Job* had not ſaid as once he did, *Will ye lye for God?* Though they did not knowingly ſpeak a lye, yet a lye was in what they ſpake; and therefore their ſpeaking for God would not bear them out.

Seventhly, The Lord ſaid to *Jobs* friends, *Ye have not ſpoken of me the thing that is right, as my ſervant* Job *hath.* Though *Job* ſpake ſome things amiſs, yet the Lord did not charge him with them, as he did his friends.

Hence Note; *The Lord over-looketh many failings, and will not upbraid his ſervants with them.*

Job had his failings; but the Lord took no notice of them, but made a determination in his caſe, as if he had ſpoken right in all things. The Lord will not flatter his ſervants when they fail, yet he is very favourable to them, even when they fail; he told *Job* plainly enough, that he had darkned counſel by words without knowledge, while he asked him, who did it? (Chap. 38. 2.) He intimated alſo, that *Job* contended with him, and reproved him, that he had (conſequentially) attempted to diſanul his Judgment, and condemn him when he asked him whether he would do it? (Chap. 30. 3, 8.) yet here when the Lord came to make up the matter between *Job* and his friends, he ſpake as if he had forgot both his own cenſures of him, and the occaſion of them. Holy *David* acknowledged (*Pſal.* 130. 3.) *If thou Lord ſhouldſt mark iniquities, O Lord, who ſhall ſtand!* The Lord doth not mark iniquity where he ſeeth much integrity; the Lord doth not mark every arrow that flies beſide the mark, when he ſeeth the mark was honeſtly aimed at. We ſay, he may be a good Archer that doth not hit the white, if he come but ſomewhat near it; he indeed is a bungler that miſſeth the Butt. *Job* aimed at, and came near the mark, though he did not always hit it. The Lord will give a good teſtimony of us, if we aim right at, though we ſometimes miſs the mark. It is ſaid of *Zachariah* and *Elizabeth* (*Luke* 1. 6.) *They were both righteous.* There's not a word ſpoken of their failings, though doubtleſs they had their failings, both as to the Ordinances and Commandments of God.

Eightly, The Lords wrath being kindled againſt *Jobs* friends, we might expect he would thunder upon them; yet he only ſaith, *Ye have not ſpoken of me the thing that is right.*

Hence Obſerve, *The Lord dealeth mildly with ſinners.*

He did not give wrathful words, though his wrath was kindled; he did not call *Eliphaz* and his friends Hereticks, nor tell them they had belyed him, and ſlandered his proceedings; he did not aggravate their fault by grievous words, he did not upbraid them *particularly*: but without bitterneſs or hard reflections, comprehended all their faults in one *general* ſoft word, *Ye have not ſpoken of me the thing that is right.* This ſhould be our pattern in dealing with an offending brother: whereas many, if a brother do but differ from them a little, if he do not ſay as they ſay, and concur with them fully in opinion, are ready to cenſure him hardly, and give him reproachful language. The Apoſtles rule is (*Gal.* 6. 1.) *Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye that are ſpiritual reſtore ſuch a one in the ſpirit of meekneſs, conſidering thy ſelf, leſt thou alſo be tempted.* God who is above all temptation, meekly reſtored theſe faulty men; yea, though his wrath was kindled againſt them, yet his ſpeech was mild and cool, only ſaying (and what leſs could he ſay, if he ſaid any thing) *Ye have not ſpoken of me the thing that is right.*

As my ſervant Job.] Why doth the Lord call *Job* his ſervant? Surely at once to put an honour upon him, and to comfort him. *Eliphaz* and his two friends were Gods ſervants; yet becauſe of their miſcarriage in that ſervice, God did not own them at that time as ſuch. God was wont to call *David* his ſervant at every turn; yet when he had numbred the people, *Nathan* was ſent to him with a hard meſſage, and is bid, *Go, and ſay unto David,* not, my ſervant *David* (2 *Sam.* 24. 12.)

Hence Note, Ninthly; *God honours man much, by owning him as his ſervant.*

To ſerve the Lord, is as much our priviledge as our duty; and when the Lord calleth us to his ſervice, he rather puts a favour upon us, than a burden. The Lord is the higheſt maſter, and they are highly honoured who are his ſervants. It is an honour to ſerve Kings and Princes: what is it then to ſerve the King of Kings, the Prince of the Kings of the earth! as Jeſus Chriſt is called (*Rev.* 1. 5.) 'Tis alſo profitable as well as honourable, to ſerve the Lord; for he is the beſt maſter, his work is the beſt work, and his wages is the beſt wages. And not only ſo, but 'tis eaſie to be the Lords ſervant; for as he expects we ſhould do his work, ſo we may expect help and ſtrength, hearts and hands from him to do it. If the Lord doth but own us for his ſervants, we ſhall not faint at his work, whether it be doing or ſuffering work. God upheld his ſervant *Job* in, and carryed him through all thoſe tryals and troubles, which would have ſunk him a thouſand times, had not he ſtood by him and aſſiſted him. The Lord is a maſter in Covenant with his ſervants, and that a Covenant of grace, in which every command hath a promiſe annexed to it; and that not only a promiſe of reward, when we have done it, but of ſtrength to do it: and if ſo, then we may conclude it eaſie as well as honourable and profitable, to ſerve the Lord. Therefore

Let us labour to approve our ſelves the Lords ſervants. And if any ask, who is the Lords ſervant? I anſwer,

Firſt, He is the Lords ſervant that doth the Lords work; *His ſervants we are, whom we obey*; he is our maſter whoſe work we do. It is good for us to conſider whoſe work we are about. Jeſus Chriſt was the fathers ſervant in that great undertaking, the redemption of loſt man. Now, all his work on earth was his fathers work (*John* 9. 4.) *I* (ſaid he) *muſt work the work of him that ſent me.* Unleſs we are in the Lords work, and doing the Lords will, we cannot be reckoned among his ſervants.

Secondly, If you are the Lords ſervants, then as you do the Lords work, ſo you are ready to do all his work. He is not a ſervant that doth what he pleaſeth. Some ſay, they will do the Lords work, but they pick and chuſe, they do this, and leave the other undone: He is the Lords ſervant, that goeth through all the Lords work. If we do eaſie work, and refuſe hard work; if we refuſe that work which diſpleaſeth the world, and chuſe only that which is pleaſing to the world, we ſerve not the Lord, but the world and our ſelves. Here is the tryal, when we do what God willeth, whether the world will it, and like it, yea, or no. The Lord ſaid of *David, He is my ſervant* (and what will he do?) *he will do all my will*; that is, he will not ſtick at any of my work.

Thirdly, If ye are the Lords ſervants, as ye will do all his work, ſo no work but his; you will not do the work of the fleſh, you will not do any work for man, in oppoſition to the work of God. In ſubordination to the will of God, we ſhould readily do the work of man. In ſerving men thus, we are alſo the ſervants of God. But he that is the Lords ſervant, will not do any work for man which contradicteth or croſſeth the ſervice of God. Chriſt ſaith expreſly, *No man ſerveth two Maſters; ye cannot ſerve God Mammon* (*Mat.* 6. 24.) We may ſerve many Maſters, if they command the ſame thing, or things ſubordinate; but we cannot ſerve two Maſters if their commands interfere and claſh one with the other, as the work of God and Mammon doth. And thus the Apoſtles caution is to be underſtood (1 *Cor.* 7. 23.) *Ye are bought with a price: be not ye the ſervants of men.*

Fourthly, If ye are the Lords ſervants, as ye do the Lords work, and all his work, and only his work, ſo ye will do his work willingly. All the Lords ſervants are free men, his ſervants are ſons; they do not ſerve as ſlaves, but as children; and God dealeth with them as a Father, more than as a Maſter. Conſider, have ye a free ſpirit for the ſervice of God? His ſervants find themſelves indeed conſtrained to ſerve him, but they do not ſerve him by conſtraint; they are conſtrained by love, not by baſe fear to ſerve him.

Fifthly, If ye are the Lords ſervants, ye do his work for his ſake; the will of the Lord is as much the reaſon why ye do his work, as the rule by which ye do it. Should we do never ſo much of that which is materially the Lords work, unleſs we do it becauſe it is his work, we are not his ſervants in doing it. He that doth the Lords work for ſelf-ends only or chiefly, is not the Lords ſervant, but his own.

Sixthly, If ye are the Lords ſervants, ye have reſolved to be his ſervants for ever; your ears are bored at his poſt, and ye have ſaid (as the ſervant under the Law that loved his Maſter, *Exod.* 21. 5, 6.) *Ye will not go out free.* It was ſo with *Job*; he was the Lords ſervant before his trouble, and he was ſo at the end of his troubles. The Lord doth not take ſervants for months and for years; we muſt be his everlaſting ſervants, always his ſervants, if his ſervants at all. And this ſhould rejoyce our ſouls, that we are and ſhall be for ever in the Lords work. To ſerve the Lord, is better than to rule the world. God is ſo good a Maſter, that we ſhall never have any, the leaſt, occaſion to deſire a change; and he is ſo ſure a Maſter, that we need not fear it.

Laſtly, Though the Lord ſaid, his wrath was kindled againſt *Eliphaz* and his two friends, yet in the very next words he is directing them how to make their peace, and return, or be received again into his favour.

Hence Note; *God often manifeſts more diſpleaſure, than ever he intends to act.*

Yea, when ever he manifeſts diſpleaſure againſt his children, it is that he might not act it. Even Heatheniſh *Nineveh* was threatned with deſtruction, that repenting it might not be deſtroyed. Sinners of all ſorts are threatned with death and damnation, that believing, they may be ſaved and live. What could *Eliphaz* and his two friends expect, when the Lord ſaid, *My wrath is kindled*, but that his wrath ſhould have ſwallowed them up, and conſumed them in a moment? *Solomon* ſaith (*Prov.* 16. 14.) *The wrath of a King is as meſſengers of death, and like the roaring of a Lion* (*Prov.* 19. 12.) much more is the wrath of God like the roaring of a Lion, and as the meſſengers of death. But, though the Lord told *Jobs* friends of wrath, and of kindled wrath, yet he only, Firſt, reproved them mildly; and, Secondly, inſtead of blowing up that fire, ſhewed or directed them how to quench it, and get into the Sun-ſhine of his favour; as will appear further in the next verſe.

Verſ. 8. Therefore take unto you now ſeven Bullocks, and ſeven Rams, and go to my ſervant Job, and offer up for your ſelves a burnt-offering, and my ſervant Job ſhall pray for you, for him will I accept, leſt I deal with you after your folly, in that ye have not ſpoken of me the thing that is right, like my ſervant Job.

This verſe holds out the counſel or direction which the Lord gave *Eliphaz* and his two friends for the making of their peace, and the reconciling of themſelves to his Majeſty, whoſe wrath was kindled againſt them. And here the Lord directs them to a twofold means of their reconciliation.

Firſt, The offering up of a ſacrifice, in which we may conſider two things.

Firſt, The matter of the ſacrifice, or what was to be ſacrificed, *Bullocks and Rams.*

Secondly, The quantity or number of the ſacrifice, *ſeven and ſeven, ſeven Bullocks and ſeven Rams*; ſuch was the matter, ſuch the quantity of the ſacrifice which they were commanded to offer.

Secondly, The Lord directs *Eliphaz* and his two friends to apply themſelves unto *Job*, and deſire his interceſſion for them; *Go to my ſervant* Job, *and my ſervant* Job *ſhall pray for you.* To this direction the Lord ſubjoyns two things.

Firſt, An incouragement by a gracious promiſe in theſe words; *For him will I accept.*

Secondly, A threat, in caſe they ſhould neglect or refuſe to go and perform this duty, laid down in the cloſe of the verſe; *Leſt I deal with you according to your folly, in that ye have not ſpoken of me the thing which is right, like my ſervant* Job.

Theſe are the particulars conſiderable in this 8. verſe

Therefore take unto you ſeven Bullocks and ſeven Rams.

The Lord ſpake this to *Eliphaz* and his two friends. The word of illation, *Therefore*, at the beginning of the verſe, refers to the word *For*, at the latter end of the former verſe. As if the Lord had ſaid unto them, *Becauſe ye have ſinned againſt me, and provoked me to anger, ſo that my wrath is kindled by your not ſpeaking of me the thing that is right; therefore I adviſe you (and be ye ſure at your peril, to follow my advice; I adviſe you) for the making up of this breach, and the recovery of my favour, to take unto you ſeven Bullocks and ſeven Rams.*

Take unto you.] Some conceive that theſe words, *Unto you*, are redundant, yet doubtleſs they carry a clear ſenſe, as they ſtand in the Text, *Take unto you*; that is, *for your uſe* and behoof in this great ſervice, *Take unto you*

Seven Bullocks and ſeven Rams.] This was a great ſacrifice, and it was ſo under a twofold conſideration.

Firſt, As to the matter of the ſacrifice, *bullocks and rams* were great cattle, there were ſacrifices of leſſer matters. We read in the law of *Moſes*, of a pair of turtle doves, and two young pigeons for a ſacrifice; theſe, the poorer ſort under the law, did offer with acceptation, whereas rich and great men (and ſuch were theſe *Eliphaz* and his two friends in their time) were commanded to bring great and richer ſacrifices. The rich (as *Solomon* exhorts, *Prov.* 3. 9.) were *to honour the Lord with their ſubſtance, and with the firſt fruits of their increaſe.* Theſe rich men were to bring bullocks and rams, a great ſacrifice in the matter of it.

Secondly, It was a great ſacrifice, if we conſider the number, *ſeven bullocks, and ſeven rams.* One bullock was a ſacrifice, and one ram was a ſacrifice, but here God commanded ſeven of each. Seven is a number of perfection, and of plenitude, ſeven is a great number, and ſeven is a perfect number; it is often uſed myſtically or *enigmatically*, to note perfection. The Lord made all things in ſix days, and reſted the ſeventh; ſeven days made up a compleat week, and ſeven years are a week of years. We read of *A candleſtick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his ſeven lamps therein, and ſeven pipes to the ſeven lamps which were on the top thereof* (Zech. 4. 2.) We read alſo of the *ſeven ſpirits* (Rev. 1. 4.) and of *ſeven golden candleſticks* (Rev. 1. 12.) Theſe were myſterious *ſevens*, and there are many more mentioned in Scripture, which to inſiſt upon, would make too great a digreſſion from the purpoſe of the Text under hand, where we have ſeven bullocks and ſeven rams, which make up and imply a great and perfect ſacrifice; as the law of *Moſes* alſo directed in ſome caſes (*Levit.* 23. 18.) *And ye ſhall offer with the bread ſeven lambs without blemiſh.* So (1 *Chron.* 15. 26.) *When the Lord helped the Levites that bare the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord, they offered ſeven bullocks, and ſeven rams.* Again (2 *Chron.* 29. 21.) *They brought ſeven bullocks, and ſeven rams, and ſeven lambs, and ſeven he-goats for a ſin-offering, for the kingdom and for the ſanctuary, and for* Judah. *Balaam* incited and hired to curſe *Iſrael* ſaid unto *Balak* (Num. 21. 1.) *Build me here ſeven altars, and prepare me here ſeven oxen, and ſeven rams.* He would needs imitate them whom he deſired to ruin, and offer a full ſacrifice that he might curſe them fully. The greateſt ſacrifice for number that we read of, was at the dedication of the Temple, where the offering of the King was *two and twenty thouſand oxen, and an hundred and twenty thouſand ſheep* (1 *Kings* 8. 63.) We read alſo of great ſacrifices (1 *Chron.* 29. 21. 2 *Chron.* 17. 11. & *Chap.* 30. 24.) There were greater ſacrifices than ſeven, yet ſeven was a great ſacrifice. Some Interpreters conceive, that every one of the three was to offer ſeven bullocks, and ſeven rams; that had been a very great ſacrifice, but in that the Text is ſilent. The law of *Moſes* appointed (*Levit.* 4. 3.) that if a Prieſt committed a ſin of ignorance, he ſhould *bring a young bullock without blemiſh unto the Lord for a ſin-offering.* The law required no more for a ſin of ignorance in a Prieſt; and if the whole congregation were guilty of a ſin of ignorance, their offering was no more (*ver.* 13, 14.) and if a Ruler had committed a ſin of ignorance, the law required only *a kid of the goats, a male without blemiſh* (ver. 23.) and if any one of the common people committed a ſin of ignorance they were to bring *a kid of the goats, a female* (ver. 28.) So that whereas the law required but one bullock for the ſin of ignorance in a Prieſt, and but *one bullock* for the whole congregation; and for a Ruler, *but a kid of the goats, a male*; and for any common perſon, *but a kid of the goats, a female*: Here *Jobs* friends were commanded by the Lord to offer up ſeven bullocks, and ſeven rams for the expiation of their ſin, which doubtleſs was only a ſin of ignorance. This plainly ſignified, that the Lord was highly diſpleaſed with them for heir harſh judgment, and uncharitable cenſures of his ſervant *Job*; and to let them know, that their doing ſo, could not be excuſed by their good intentions, and zeal for God.

Jubentur ſeptem tauros, &c. immolare, quia perfectiſſimum eſt ſacrificium Chriſti, and expiatione omnia peccata delens. Perfectus enim numerus ſeptenarius eſt. Brent. *Septem eſt numerus plenitudinis & perfectionis, id quod abſolutam expiationem & remiſſionem culpæ eorum deſignabat. Etſi interim in omnibus ſacrificiis veteribus, ad unicum Chriſti ſacrificium cujus illa erant imago & umbra, reſpiciebatur.* Merc.

Thus we ſee, what the ſacrifice was, both for kind and number.

The next words tell us, what they muſt do with their ſacrifice.

Go to my ſervant Job (ſaith God)

Why to *Job*? ſeveral reaſons may be given, why they ſhould go to *Job*; I ſhall name five or ſix.

Firſt, Becauſe they had wronged *Job*, and therefore they muſt be reconciled to him.

Secondly, Becauſe God would have them underſtand, that himſelf, notwithſtanding their ill opinion of *Job*, approved him as a good man, yea, as a man far exceeding them in godlineſs, though they had judged him an hypocrite,

crite, or an ungodly man. Thus the Lord ſent them to *Job*, that they might eat their words, and receive a full conviction of their error.

Thirdly, God would have them go to his ſervant *Job*, to make them ſenſible, that the favour he intended them, was very much for *Jobs* ſake, and that they muſt, in part, be beholden to *Job* for it.

Fourthly, The Lord ſent them to *Job*, that he might give a high evidence of his grace, eſpecially, of his charity in forgetting injuries, and requiting good for evil. His friends had reproached him ten times, and grieved his ſpirit very much, yet he muſt ſhew how ready he was to forgive them, and pray that they might be forgiven.

Fifthly, God would have them to go to *Job*, that they might know that *Job* was reconciled to them as well as himſelf.

Sixthly, God would have them go to *Job* that this might humble them, or that they might ſhew their humility and ſubmiſſion. It was a great piece of ſelf-denial, for them to go to *Job*, after ſuch a conteſt; and intreat him to ſpeak for them, of whom they had ſpoken ſo hardly, and with whom they had long contended ſo bitterly. Thus the Lord tried both *Job* and them; the Lord tried *Jobs* charity, and their humility. We are hardly brought to confeſs that we have wronged others, or have been out and miſtaken our ſelves. 'Tis no eaſie matter for a man to acknowledge himſelf overcome; 'tis extream hard to become a ſuppliant to one, whom we lately deſpiſed and trampled upon. All this is hard meat, and not eaſily digeſted; yet *Eliphaz* and his two friends muſt digeſt all this, before they could acceptably obey the Lords command, in going to his ſervant *Job*.

Nor was it an eaſie matter, for *Job* to forget ſo many affronts and unkindneſſes, as he had received from his friends. 'Tis hard for a man that hath been wronged and reproached, yea, condemned to paſs all by, and not only embrace his oppoſers and reproachers, but pray and ſolicite for them. Thus the Lord, in ſending them to *Job*, took tryal both of *Job* and them. The Lord commanding them to ſupplicate him, whom they had offended, and expecting that he ſhould make ſuit and ſupplication for them who had offended him; put both their graces to it, and in a moſt ſweet and gracious way, at once healed the breach, which had been between *Job* and them, as alſo that between them and himſelf. Who ever took up a difference more ſweetly, or reunited diſſenting brethren thus wiſely? *Go to my ſervant* Job,

And offer up for your ſelves a burnt-offering.

That is, thoſe ſeven bullocks, and ſeven rams.

Here (as was ſaid before) was the ſacrifice; but who was the Prieſt? The Text ſaith, *Offer up for your ſelves*, which may intimate that, that as they were to offer a ſacrifice for themſelves, ſo that they themſelves offered it. But as Interpreters generally, ſo I conceive *Job* was the Prieſt, who offered it in their behalf. We read (*chap.* 1. 5.) that *Job* offered ſacrifices for his children, and there it was ſhewed that he was the Prieſt. Every ſacrifice muſt be offered by a Prieſt; the people brought the ſacrifice unto him to offer for them. No ſacrifice is acceptable without a Prieſt: Therefore Jeſus Chriſt, who was our ſacrifice, was a Prieſt alſo, none could offer him but himſelf, he was both ſacrifice, and Prieſt, and Altar. So then, whereas the Text ſaith, they were to *offer a burnt-offering for themſelves*, the meaning is, they were to bring it unto *Job*, and he to offer it for them. *The Prieſt offered, and* Iſrael *offered*; that is, *Iſrael* offered by the Prieſt; they brought the matter of the ſacrifice to the Prieſt, and the Prieſt ſlew and preſented the ſacrifice to the Lord. It is one thing to offer, another thing to ſlay the ſacrifice. They offered a ſacrifice who brought it, or at their coſt cauſed it to be brought to the holy place; and this any of the people might do. They offer it upon the Altar to the Lord, who were eſpecially appointed thereunto: Theſe were the Prieſts only. Before the Ceremonial law, as given by God to *Moſes*, the Prieſt-hood lay in the eldeſt or father of the family, upon which account *Job* was a Prieſt; whereas afterwards, the Prieſt-hood was ſettled in the family of *Aaron*, and it was forbidden to any, but one of his line, to offer ſacrifice.

So that, when the Lord ſaid to *Eliphaz* and his two friends, *Go to my ſervant* Job, *and offer up for your ſelves a burnt-offering*, he directed them to *Job*, as having the honour of Prieſt hood in him, and ſo the power of doing it for them, or in their behalf.

Offer up for your ſelves a burnt-offering.

That is, *a ſacrifice wholly conſumed by fire*. The Hebrew is very elegant, *make an aſcenſion to aſcend*. The *whole burnt-offering* was the moſt perfect offering; and therefore the Hebrews expreſs it by a word that ſignifieth the perfect conſumption of it in the fire, and ſo the aſcenſion of it to heaven in ſmoke and vapour, as a ſweet odour in the noſtrils of the Lord, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks (*Epheſ.* 5. 1.) and as *David* (*Pſal.* 141. 2.) A part of many ſacrifices was ſaved to feaſt upon afterwards, as the harlot ſpake (*Prov.* 7. 14.) *I have peace-offerings with me; this day have I payed my vows*: but the burnt-offering was wholly conſumed, and ſent up unto the Lord. *Go to my ſervant* Job, *and offer up for your ſelves a burnt-offering*.

Non eſt hic curioſe captanda diſtinctio holocauſti ab aliis victimis cum hæc ante legem contigerint. Quaſi latinè diceres, holocauſtabitis holcauſtum, i.e. in ſolidum offeretis, & ut in auras totum abeat efficietis. Merc.

Hence Note; Firſt, *The Lord is very ready to forgive, and to be at peace with thoſe that have offended him.*

Though the fire of his wrath be kindled (as it is ſaid in the former verſe) yet he is willing to have it quenched. The Prophet *Micah* (chap. 7. 18.) makes this report of God, *He retaineth not his anger for ever*, that is, he retaineth it but a little while, he is ſpeedily pacified, and forgives; and ſometimes (as here) he forgives, without any higher ſignification of his anger than a bare rebuke. The Lord did not lay the leaſt mulct, the leaſt chaſtning or affliction upon *Eliphaz* and his two friends, though his wrath was kindled againſt them. I grant, it is not ſo always; ſome ſmart ſorely, and pay dearly for their errors. When *the anger of the Lord was kindled againſt* Aaron *and* Miriam (*Num.* 12. 9.) for ſpeaking againſt *Moſes* (as thoſe three had againſt *Job*) he was then not ſo eaſily pacified; for, firſt, it is ſaid in the cloſe of the 9. verſe, *he departed*, and (*ver.* 10.) *the cloud departed from off the tabernacle*; here was much diſpleaſure, yet not all, for it followeth, *and behold* Miriam *became leprous, white as ſnow*. In this caſe God was angry with two that had ſpoken againſt a ſervant of his; and they felt more than a bare rebuke, here was a blow given, and that a ſore one. The Lord deals gently with ſome ſinners, that none may deſpair; and ſeverely with others, though his ſervants, that none may preſume.

Only let us remember, that when the Lord at any time doth chaſten and rebuke his ſervants for ſin with great ſeverity, he doth not drive them away, nor diſcourage them, but would have them look to him for pardon and healing. When *he judgeth them* (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, (1 *Cor.* 11. 32.) he doth not condemn them; or if we call it a condemnation, yet he doth not condemn them with the world, nor as he condemns the world. God condemns the unbelieving world to deſtruction, but he condemns his ſervants only for their humiliation. The goodneſs of God appears much in theſe two things.

Firſt, In his ſlowneſs to anger, his mercy doth even clog his juſtice, and gives it leaden feet, it comes ſlowly.

Secondly, In his readineſs to ſhew mercy. The Scripture ſaith he is *ſlow to wrath, and ready to forgive*; his goodneſs doth even add wings to his mercy, cauſing it to fly ſwiftly, to the relief of ſenſible and humbled ſinners; or (as one of the Ancients expreſſeth) he ſharpneth the ſword of his juſtice with the oyl of his mercy; and ſo it becomes a healing, as well as a wounding, ſword.

Secondly, In that the Lord himſelf gave this direction, *Take unto you ſeven bullocks, and ſeven rams*, &c.

Obſerve: *God, againſt whom we ſin, ſheweth us the way to get peace, and the pardon of our ſins.*

When man ſinned at firſt, or when the firſt man fell into ſin, there he had lain for ever, if the Lord had not ſhewed him a way out: Had it been left to man to deviſe a way to recover himſelf when he was fallen, his fall had been irrecoverable, he had never found how to get at once his ſin pardoned, and the juſtice of God ſatisfied. This was the *Lords own invention* (and it was the moſt noble and excellent one, that ever was in the world) he ſhewed fallen man at firſt how to get up; and here he gave direction to theſe fallen men, what to do that they might: The Lord who was their Judg, was alſo their Counſellor.

Thirdly, Conſider the particular way of their peace-making, it was by ſacrifice, *Take unto you ſeven Bullocks, and ſeven Rams*, &c.

Hence Note, *Sacrifices for ſin were appointed and commanded by God, not deviſed by man.*

Sacrifices have been from the beginning. *Cain* and *Abel* brought their offerings unto the Lord (*Gen.*4.3,4.) *Noah* alſo, *builded an altar unto the Lord, and offered burnt-offerings in the altar* (Gen.8.20.) *Abraham* offered the Ram for a burnt-offering (*Gen.*22,13.) Now though the Law for Sacrifices was not formally given in thoſe times, yet it was really given. All thoſe elder Sacrifices were of the Lords appointment, and by his direction, as well as thoſe in and after the days of *Moſes*. *There is no expiating of ſin againſt God, by the inventions of man.* Heathens offered Sacrifices to their Idol-gods, imitating the worſhip of the true God (The Devil is Gods ape.) Typical Sacrifices were of God, for the taking away of the ſin of man: And ſo was the true Sacrifice, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; when *he* (that is, Chriſt) *ſaid, ſacrifice and offering, and burnt-offering, and offering for ſin, thou wouldſt not* (that is, thou wouldſt not have thoſe legal Sacrifices, nor didſt ever intend to have them, as ſatisfactions to thy offended juſtice, ultimately to reſt in them) *then ſaid he* (that is, Chriſt) *Lo, I come to do thy will, O God* (Heb.10.8,9.) It was the will of God, that Jeſus Chriſt ſhould be the expiatory Sacrifice for the Sin of man; by the which will (*verſ.*10.) *We are ſanctified through the offering of the body of Jeſus Chriſt once for all.* The Sacrifice of Chriſt himſelf had not ſaved us, if it had not been of Gods appointment; nor could any Sacrifice have ſo much as ſhadowed the way or means of our ſalvation, if God had not appointed it.

Fourthly, Conſider the purpoſe for which the Lord commanded *Eliphaz*, &c. to offer their Sacrifice, it was to make an atonement for their ſin.

Hence Obſerve, *Sin muſt have a Sacrifice.*

There was never any way in the World, from firſt to laſt, to help a ſinner but by a Sacrifice; and who was the Sacrifice? Surely Jeſus Chriſt was the Sacrifice; it was not the blood of Bulls and Goats, of Bullocks and Rams, that could take away ſin, as the Apoſtle argueth at large in the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, theſe could never take away ſin, theſe only pointed at Jeſus Chriſt, who alone did it, by bearing our ſins, and by being made a Sacrifice for them. To typifie or ſhew this, we read in the Law of *Moſes*, that the ſin of the offender was laid upon the Sacrifice; and a Sacrifice for ſin, was called ſin by the Prophet, long before Chriſt came (*Dan.*9.24.) *He ſhall make an end of ſin*, that is, when Chriſt ſhall come in the fleſh, he ſhall make an end of all Sacrifices for ſin; and ſo the Apoſtle called it after Chriſt was come, and had ſuffered in the fleſh (2*Cor.*5.21.) *He made him to be ſin*, (that is, a Sacrifice for ſin) *for us, who knew no ſin, that we might be made the righteouſneſs of God in him.* The Sacrifice was called *ſin*, becauſe the ſin of the perſon who brought it, and in whoſe behalf it was offered, was laid upon the Sacrifice; there was as it were a tranſlation of the ſin, from the perſon to the Sacrifice. In which ſence *Luther* is to be underſtood, when he ſaid, *Jeſus Chriſt was the greateſt ſinner in the World*; not that he had any ſin in his nature, or any ſin in his life, but becauſe he had the ſins of all that are or ſhall be ſaved, laid upon him; as the Prophet ſpake (*Iſa.* 53.6.) *The Lord hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all*; or (as our Margin hath it) *He hath made the iniquity of us all to meet on him.* And as there is no atonement for ſin, but by a Sacrifice. So the Lord ordained the offering up of a whole burnt-offering for the taking away of ſin, that ſinners might ſee what they had deſerved, even to die; and not only ſo, but to be wholly burnt and conſumed in the fire of his wrath. Impenitent ſinners ſhall be conſumed in fire, that ſhall never be extinguiſhed, nor ever entinguiſh them; they ſhall abide in an ever-living death, or in an ever-dying life. They who reſt not upon the Sacrifice of Chriſt, once offered, muſt be a Sacrifice themſelves, always offered to the Juſtice and Wrath of God.

Here it may be queſtioned, why the Lord commanded them to offer ſeven Bullocks and ſeven Rams? What could the blood of ſeven do more than the blood of one?

I anſwer, Firſt; This being a great Sacrifice, poſſibly the Lord commanded it, thereby to intimate the greatneſs of their ſin. Two things chiefly ſhew the greatneſs of a ſin. Firſt, the greatneſs of the puniſhment laid upon the ſinner. Secondly, the greatneſs of the means uſed for the healing of that breach which ſin hath made.

I anſwer, Secondly, The number ſeven being a Symbol of perfection (as was ſaid before) figured the perfect Sacrifice of Jeſus Chriſt, *who by one offering, hath for ever perfected them that are ſanctified* (Heb.10.14.) A perfect number of Sacrifices was fitteſt to ſhadow the infinite perfection of that one Sacrifice, which makes, and which only makes all the comers thereunto perfect. For though a perſon under the Law having offered his Sacrifice, was no more reckoned guilty of that ſin by men; yet his Conſcience did ſtill accuſe him of, and charge him with ſin, and therefore Sacrifices were renewed (*Heb.*10.1,2.) nor could the accuſings of Conſcience be quieted, but by looking to Chriſt by faith, whom the Sacrifice ſhadowed, and the Sacrificer was to point at.

Fifthly, In that the Lord ſent *Eliphaz* and his two friends unto *Job* with their Sacrifice,

Obſerve, *We muſt reconcile our ſelves to thoſe we have wronged, before we can look to be reconciled unto God, againſt whom we have ſinned, or to be accepted of him in any ſervice.*

The counſel of Chriſt directs to this (*Matth.*5.23,24.) *If thou bringeſt thy gift unto the Altar, and there remembreſt that thy brother hath ought againſt thee, leave there thy gift before the Altar, and go thy way; firſt be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.* This general command of Chriſt, is the ſame in effect, with what the Lord here long before gave particularly and perſonally to *Eliphaz* and his two friends; they muſt firſt go and be reconciled to *Job*, and then offer their Sacrifice. This the Apoſtle alſo gave in charge (1*Tim.*2.8.) *I will therefore, that men pray every where, holding up holy hands*; but how? *without wrath and doubting.* There are two things required, if we look to be accepted of God in any ſervice. Firſt, Faith. Secondly, Love or charity. There muſt be faith, elſe we cannot *lift up holy hands without doubting*: There muſt be love, elſe we cannot *lift up holy hands without wrath.* They who are ſuing for, and expecting favour and mercy from God, have need to diſcharge themſelves of all wrath and revenge towards man. With what face can any expect favour from God, who will not acknowledg wherein they have wronged man?

Sixthly, Obſerve, *God is very tender of the credit of his faithful ſervants; he will not be reconciled, unleſs they are righted.*

Job had been wronged, no man more, by the cenſures of his friends; and God was ſo tender of his honour and reputation, that his friends muſt make him reparation, before God will accept their Sacrifice. One reaſon why God is ſo tender of the credit of his ſervants, is, becauſe they are tender of his, and will undergo any wrong, rather than his Name ſhall be blaſphemed or wronged. As God will himſelf honour them, who honour him (1*Sam.*2.30.) ſo he will one time or other, ſome way or other, retrench and caſt back upon men, all that diſhonor which they have received from men, or cauſe them to take it off, and wipe them clean whom they have undeſervedly aſperſed.

Seventhly. Obſerve, *God will humble proud and high ſpirits, and make them ſubmit to thoſe whom they have wronged.*

There is a twofold ſubmiſſion, which is the duty of a Chriſtian. Firſt, to God (*James* 4.7.) Secondly, to man; and this is twofold.

Firſt, To thoſe that are over us, and above us, in power (*Rom.*13.1. *Tit.*3.1.) And thus not only are Subjects to ſubmit to Magiſtrates; but all of a lower degree, are to ſubmit to their ſuperiours, Servants to their Maſters, Wives to their Husbands, Children to their Parents.

Secondly, There is a ſubmiſſion to thoſe that are wronged by us; and though they be our inferiours, yet (in this ſenſe) we are to ſubmit to them, that is, acknowledg that we have wronged them. The Apoſtle *James* intimates ſuch a ſubmiſſion (*Chap.*5.16.) and the Apoſtle *Paul* ſpeaks it plainly (*Eph.*5. 21.) *Submitting your ſelves to one another in the fear of God.* Here is a mutual ſubmiſſion, a ſubmiſſion in caſe of wrong (and doubtleſs that rule of Scripture is extendible to other caſes) not only of equals one to another, but of ſuperiours to inferiours. Our ſpirits like not this, we hardly ſubmit to thoſe that we have wronged; but there's no remedy, we muſt. Some ſay they will ſubmit to God, but they cannot ſubmit to man, they cannot ſtoop to that. Let ſuch remember, that without this ſubmiſſion, even to an inferiour whom we have knowingly wronged, or are made to know (which was the caſe here) that we have wronged, we cannot hopefully apply to God for peace and reconciliation.

Eighthly, Obſerve, *They that are wronged by others, muſt forgive them their wrongs,*

God ſent *Eliphaz* and his two friends to *Job*, not only that they ſhould acknowledg they had wronged him, but that *Job* might freely and fully teſtifie (ſo far as concerned him) his forgiveneſs of that wrong. As it is the duty of them that have wronged others to ſubmit to them in the acknowledgment of it, ſo they that are wronged, ought to forgive and receive them in that ſubmiſſion. We muſt forgive, as we look to be forgiven (*Mat.*6.12.) We cannot pray believingly, that God would forgive us the guilt of our iniquity committed againſt himſelf or others, unleſs we forgive others the injury which they have done us.

Ninthly, Obſerve, *Good men are ready to give and take ſatisfaction in point of wrong.*

Job's friends had done him wrong; and as they (good men) were ready to give ſatisfaction, ſo *Job* (good man) was as ready to take it. Many wrong others, but will give no ſatisfaction; many are wronged by others, and will take no ſatisfaction; nothing will quiet or appeaſe them. *Job*'s friends and himſelf were highly to be commended, that they were willing to give, and he to take ſatisfaction. The Apoſtle urgeth this (*Eph.*4.26,27.) *Be angry and ſin not, let not the Sun go down upon your wrath, neither give place to the Devil.* They give up their hearts as lodging-chambers to the Devil, who let the Sun go down upon their wrath; therefore it followeth (*verſ.*31.32.) *Let all bitterneſs, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil ſpeaking, be put away from you, with all malice, and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Chriſt ſake hath forgiven you.* They that know what it is to be forgiven by God, they that know what need they have continually of Gods forgiving grace and mercy, will be as ready to accept ſatisfaction, as any can be to give it. This was eminent in *Job*, as will appear further in opening the next words in this verſe, *Go to my ſervant* Job, *and offer up for your ſelves a burnt-offering,*

And my ſervant Job ſhall pray for you.

How eminent *Job* was in prayer, and how available his prayers or interceſſions were for others, may be collected from that in the Prophet (*Ezek.*14. 14.) where he is joined with *Noah* and *Daniel.* *Job* being here called to pray for his friends, was put upon another piece of the Prieſtly Office. There were two parts of the Prieſtly Office, and *Job* is adorned with them both. Firſt, the Prieſt was to offer Sacrifice. Secondly, to pray for the people. Jeſus Chriſt filled up both theſe parts of the Prieſtly Office for us. Firſt, he offered himſelf a Sacrifice for us. Secondly, he interceded, yea, he ever liveth to make interceſſion for us (*Heb.*7.25.) *Job*, as in offering up a Sacrifice, ſo in praying for his faulty friends, was a type of Chriſt; *My ſervant* Job *ſhall pray for you.* But for what ſhould he pray in their behalf? Surely, that their ſin might be forgiven, and they find favour with God.

Verbum pertinet ad rem forenſem & judicialem; ſignificat orare vel deprecari more ejus qui ad judicem appellat, & illum ſupplex adit & precabundus. Coc.

The word here rendred to *Pray for*, is elegant and ſignificant, implying a forinſecal act, when an advocate in Court moves the Judg in behalf of an offender; ſo that when the Lord ſaith, *My ſervant* Job *ſhall pray for you*, his meaning is, he ſhall deprecate the wrath and vengeance that your ſin hath deſerved, and intreat my favour for you, and ſeek your peace with me. *My ſervant* Job *ſhall pray for you.*

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *It is a duty to pray for thoſe that have wronged us.*

Not only is it a duty to forgive them, and be reconciled to them; but to pray for them, and heartily wiſh their good. The Apoſtle *James* having ſaid (*Chap.*5.16.) *Confeſs your faults one to another*; preſently adds, *Pray for one another*: Yea, Chriſt commands us to pray for the good, not only of thoſe that confeſs they have wronged us, and deſire reconciliation to us, but to pray for our enemies, that is, ſuch as ſtill hate us, and continue to contrive all the miſchief they can againſt us. It is a duty, not only to pray for them that acknowledg their fault, but for them alſo who go on in their fault againſt us; enemies do ſo. *Bleſs them that curſe you, do good to them that hate you, pray for them that deſpitefully uſe you and perſecute you.* Theſe are Chriſts, not only counſels, but commands (*Matth.*5. 44.) Even for them we ſhould pray, that God would pardon their ſin, turn their hearts, and give them repentance, which is the beſt we can pray for them.

Again, the Lord ſaith, *My ſervant* Job *ſhall pray for you.*

Hence Obſerve, Secondly, *God undertakes and gives his word for a good man, that he will do his duty.*

God having ſpoken to *Job* about this matter, undertook for his performance; *My ſervant* Job *ſhall pray for you*, I will put it into his heart to do it. The Lord may very well be bound for a good man, that he ſhall do his duty, becauſe, as he hath promiſed, ſo he will help him to do his duty. Thus the Lord engaged for *Abraham* (*Gen.*18.19.) *Shall I hide from* Abraham *the thing that I am doing? I know* Abraham (I am well enough acquainted with *Abraham*) *that he will command his Children and his Houſhold after him, and they ſhall keep the way of the Lord.* I know him, I will be ſurety for him. The Lord ſpeaks with confidence concerning his people, that they will do this and that, they will humble themſelves before him, and that they will forgive and pray for their enemies; he knows they will do all theſe things, becauſe he knows he hath given them power and a heart to do them. The Apoſtle was confident of the obedience of the Church of *Galatia* (*Gal.* 5.10.) *I have* (ſaith he) *confidence in you, through the Lord, that you will be none otherwiſe minded.* When the Apoſtle undertook that they ſhould do their duty, he did it reſpectively to a divine aſſiſtance and preſence with them; *I have confidence in you* (not in your ſelves, but) *through the Lord*, &c. but God undertakes abſolutely, *My ſervant* Job *ſhall pray for you.*

Thirdly, Note, *The prayers and interceſſions of the righteous, prevail much with God.*

The Lord having aſſured them that his ſervant *Job* ſhould pray for them, tells them in the next words, *Him will I accept*; which intimates, that his prayers ſhould have a great power with God for them (*James* 5.16.) *The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much*; and it doth ſo in a twofold reſpect.

Firſt, For himſelf. A godly man gets much good of God in his own caſe, by prayer.

Secondly, It prevails very much with God, in reſpect of others. 'Tis a great honour with which the Lord crowns the prayers of his faithful ſervants, that they prevail, not only for themſelves, but for others. Thus the Lord ſpoke to *Abimelech* (*Gen.*20.7.) *Now therefore reſtore this man* (meaning *Abraham*) *his wife, for he is a Prophet, and he ſhall pray for thee.* And his prayer was anſwered. When the Lord had ſmitten *Miriam* with the Leproſie, *Moſes cryed unto the Lord, ſaying, heal her now, O God, I beſeech thee; and ſhe was healed* (Numb. 12. 13.) Thus *Samuels* prayer prevailed (1*Sam.*7.9.) *And* Samuel *took a ſucking Lamb, and offered it up for a burnt-offering, and* Samuel *cryed unto the Lord for* Iſrael (not for himſelf, but for *Iſrael*) *and the Lord heard him.* And in the twelfth Chapter of the ſame Book (*verſ.* 19.) the people begged prayers of *Samuel*; *And all the people ſaid unto* Samuel, *pray for thy ſervants unto the Lord thy God, that we die not.* And at *verſ.* 23. *Samuel* ſaid, *As for me, God forbid that I ſhould ſin againſt the Lord, in ceaſing to pray for you, but I will teach you the good and the right way; and he prayed for them, and the Lord ſpared the people at that time.* Not to pray for others, proceeds from uncharitableneſs: Not to deſire the prayers of others, proceeds either from ignorance, not knowing of what value the prayers of others, who are godly, are; or from pride, that we will not be beholden to others for their prayers. It is a great mercy to have the prayers of good men going for us.

Fourthly, Note, *The prayers of others may prevail with God, when our own cannot.*

Eliphaz and his two friends were good men, yet the Lord did not give anſwer to them, but to the prayers of *Job*. The prayers of others may be anſwered, when ours are not, in a double reſpect.

Firſt, Others may be in a better praying frame than our ſelves. Every one that is in a praying ſtate, is not always in a praying frame, eſpecially not in ſuch a praying frame as another may be in; another may be in a better praying frame, and ſo may prevail more for us, than we for our ſelves.

Secondly, Some other perſons may be more accepted with God, than we; ſome are, as it were, *favourites* with God. God ſhews favour to all his ſervants, but all his ſervants are not his favourites: *Moſes* was a favourite, *Abraham* was a favourite, God called him his friend; and *Job* was a favourite. The Lord ſhews favour to many, who yet are not his favourites. Kings and Princes ſhew favour to all their faithful ſubjects, yet but one (poſſibly) is a *favourite*. The Lords chief favourite, is his Son Jeſus Chriſt, he hath his ear continually: *I knew*, ſaid Chriſt (*John* 11.42.) *that thou heareſt me always*. Now, as Chriſt is a favourite above all men; ſo among good men, ſome have favour with God above others. A King will hear a favourite, when he will not a common perſon. Our Annotators upon this very place, tell us out of Mr. *Fox*, that when Sir *John Goſtwich* had falſely accuſed Arch-Biſhop *Cranmer* to King *Henry* the VIII, he would not hear him, nor be reconciled to him, till *Cranmer* himſelf, whom he had wronged, came and ſpake for him. Thus the Lord will not be reconciled to ſome, till the wronged party intercedes for them. Yet we muſt remember, that the power or effect of all our prayers, depends upon Jeſus Chriſt alone; by him it is, that any have acceſs to the father, and he is the way to the holieſt, the beloved, in whom God is well pleaſed, whom he heareth always, and through whom God heareth his beſt beloved favourites on Earth.

Fifthly, Obſerve, *It is a great mercy to have the prayers of a good man going for us.*

The Lord told not *Eliphaz* and his two friends, of any thing elſe that *Job* ſhould do for them, he only ſaith, Job *my ſervant ſhall pray for you*. If the Lord doth but ſtir up the heart of a *Job*, of a *Moſes*, of a *Jacob*, a Wreſtler in prayer, to pray for us, who knows what mercy we may receive by it! And therefore, when the Lord forbids his favourites to pray for a people, as ſometimes he doth, it is a ſign that ſuch are in a very ſad condition, yea, that their caſe is deſperate. *Jeremiah* was a mighty man with the Lord in prayer, and the Lord ſaid to him (*Jer.* 14.11.) *Pray not to me for this people for good*. *Jeremiah* was forward to pray for them, but the Lord ſtopt him, *Pray no more*; not that the Lord diſliked his prayer; but, becauſe he was reſolved not to forgive them, though he prayed for them, therefore he ſaid, *pray not*. The Lord would not let ſuch precious waters run waſt, as the prayers of *Jeremiah* were. They are in a remedileſs, ill condition, of whom the Lord ſaith, pray not for them. Of ſuch the Apoſtle ſpake (1 *John* 5.16.) *If any man ſee his brother ſin a ſin not unto death, he ſhall ask and God ſhall give him life. There is a ſin unto death, I ſay not that he ſhall pray for it. The pardon of a ſin unto death is not to be prayed for.* Every ſin deſerves death, but every ſin is not unto death: They who ſin ſo, are paſt prayer; and in how woful a plight are they, whoſe ſins are paſt prayers! They who have been much in prayer themſelves, and afterwards fall off from, or walk contrary unto their prayers, come at laſt to this miſerable iſſue, that either they give over praying for themſelves, or others are ſtopt from praying for them. And though an outward bar be not laid upon their friends prayer, as in *Iſraels* caſe, yet there may be a bar upon the ſpirit of ſuch as uſed to pray for them. It is a bad ſign, when the Lord ſhuts up the heart from praying for any one; and it is a ſign of mercy, when the Lord inlargeth the heart of any that are godly to pray for others.

Sixthly, Obſerve, *Prayer for another doth not profit him, unleſs he be faithful himſelf.*

I ground it upon the Text, Job *ſhall pray for you*; but you muſt carry a ſacrifice, which implied their faith; and they muſt carry a ſacrifice to *Job*, and that implied their repentance; and both implied that they prayed for themſelves alſo. It is in vain to offer a ſacrifice without faith and repentance (being in this frame) *My ſervant* Job *ſhall pray for you*. The paayer of faith prevails not for thoſe that go on in their unbelief and impenitency. *Job* prayed for his friends; and they repenting and believing, he prevailed for them. The reaſon why the Prophet *Jeremiah*, in the place before mentioned, as alſo (*Chap.* 7.16.) was commanded not to pray for that people, was, becauſe they were a hardned people in their ſins, and therefore his prayers could do them no good. Yea, the Lord told him (*Chap.* 15. 2.) that though not only he, but other great favourites joined in prayer for them, it ſhould do them no good. *Though* Moſes *and* Samuel *ſtood before me, my mind could not be towards this people.* The reaſon why thoſe eminent favourites, and mighty men in prayer, could do no good, was (as was ſaid before) becauſe they were unbelieving, and hardned in their ſins, as appears upon the place. The Prophet *Ezekiel* ſpeaks the ſame thing (*Chap.* 14.14.) *Though theſe three men*, Noah, Daniel, *and* Job (this *Job* that we have put in the Text) *were in it, they ſhould deliver but their own Souls by their righteouſneſs, ſaith the Lord.* *Job*'s prayers obtained good for his friends, but the Children of *Iſrael* were in ſuch a condition, that though *Noah*, *Daniel*, and *Job* were praying for them, they ſhould get no good by it; their ſins were ſo high, and their hearts ſo hard, that the prayers of the holieſt men in the World could not prevail with God for mercy.

Conjunctis precibus nihil impetratu impoſſibile eſt. Conjunctæ autem preces eſſe non poſſunt ubi eſt offenſio. Coc. vid.

It cannot be denied, but the prayers of a godly man may profit a wicked man, an unbeliever, an impenitent perſon, for his converſion to the faith, and the bringing of him to repentance; but they profit not any man, who as he hath not faith, ſo continues in his unbelief.

Yet, I grant, that the prayers of a believer may profit ſuch an unbeliever, as to the avoiding of ſome temporal evil, or as to the obtaining of ſome temporal good; as is clear in *Abraham*'s prayer for *Abimelech* (Gen. 20.7.) But how much ſoever a godly man prayeth for the pardon of a wicked mans ſin, or the ſalvation of his Soul, he ſhall never be pardoned or ſaved, unleſs himſelf repent and believe. They who never pray in faith for themſelves, ſhall not get favour with God, by any prayer of faith made by others for them.

Now as from this, and ſuch like Scriptures, it appears, that the prayers of godly men, for good men here on Earth, are very pleaſing unto the Lord, and receive great anſwers: So they do abſurdly, who, from this Scripture infer, that the Saints departed pray for us, as if they knew or underſtood our condition; and they do more abſurdly, who live here on Earth, pray to the Saints in Heaven to pray for them. The Scripture ſpeaks nothing of prayers to departed Saints, nor of departed Saints praying for us; the Scripture ſpeaks only of the living on Earth, praying for thoſe that live on Earth. *Job* was alive in the Body, and ſo were thoſe three men, to whom the Lord ſaid, *My ſervant* Job *ſhall pray for you.*

The Lord having aſſured *Eliphaz* and his two friends, that *Job* would pray for them, giveth them incouragement to go and deſire his prayers, by a gracious promiſe.

For (ſaith he) *him will I accept*; and threatneth them in caſe they ſhould forbear, in the next words, *Leſt I deal with you according to your folly, in that ye have not ſpoken of me the thing that is right, like my ſervant* Job.

Firſt, Of the gracious promiſe, *him will I accept*. The Hebrew ſaith, *his face will I lift up*. Acceptation with God is the lifting up of the face of man; then man lifteth up his face with boldneſs when he is accepted with God. When God refuſed to accept *Cain* and his offering, *his countenance fell*, or was caſt down (*Gen.* 4.5.) Unleſs *the Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon us*, as *David* prayed (*Pſal.* 4.6.) we cannot with any comfort, much leſs with true confidence, lift up our face or countenance unto God. That's the ſignificancy of the word.

Him will I accept.] God is no accepter of perſons, as the word is often uſed in Scripture (*Deut.*10.17.) *The Lord is a great God, mighty and terrible, which regardeth not perſons.* It is the ſame phraſe in the Hebrew, with this in the Text, *he lifteth not up faces*, that is, the Lord doth not accept perſons upon any outward reſpect.

Firſt, The Lord doth not *accept perſons for their perſonableneſs*, as I may ſay; the Lord doth not *delight in any mans legs, his delight is in them that fear him* (Pſal.147.10,11.) he doth not accept men for their goodly ſtature, as he told *Samuel*, when he would needs have poured the oil upon the firſt-born of the Sons of *Jeſſe* (1*Sam.*16.7.) Look not on his countenance, or *on the height of his ſtature, becauſe I have refuſed him: For the Lord ſeeth not as man ſeeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.* 'Tis the beauty of holineſs and integrity in the heart, not the beauty of fairneſs upon the face, with which God is taken; 'tis a lowly mind, not a high ſtature, which God accepts.

Secondly, The Lord is no accepter of perſons, as to the Nation or Country where they were born or live. Thus the Apoſtle *Peter* ſpake (*Acts* 10.35.) *I perceive, that God is no reſpecter of perſons; but in every Nation, he that feareth him and worketh righteouſneſs, is accepted with him.* God doth not prefer *Jews* before *Gentiles*, *Barbarians* or *Scythians*: That a man had his birth in this or that Nation, neither helps nor hinders acceptation with God.

Thirdly, The Lord accepteth no mans [illegible] for his riches (*Prov.* 11. 4.) *Riches profit not in the [illegible]ay of wrath.* No mans perſon is acceptable to God for his purſe, or his penny, no not at all,

Fourthly, The Lord accepteth no mans perſon for his worldly greatneſs, honour and dignity; *He poureth contempt upon Princes* (Pſal.107.40.) *The day of the Lord is againſt the Hills and Mountains* (Iſa.2.14.) The great God regardeth not any man meerly for greatneſs; the Lord accepts no mans perſon upon theſe or any ſuch like accounts: He only accepts the perſons of thoſe that fear him, and do his will.

Suſcipit faciem Deus quando precantem exaudit.

The Lords acceptance of any perſon, in the ſenſe of this promiſe concerning *Job*, is, Firſt, To ſhew favour and maniſeſt affection to him. Secondly, To honour and highly eſteem him. Thirdly, (Which is here ſpecially intended) to anſwer his prayers, and grant his requeſts, not only for himſelf, but for others. When a perſon is once accepted, his prayers ſhall not be denied, nor ſuffer a repulſe. The Lord accepteth perſons, as a King the perſons of thoſe loyal Subiects, who come to intreat his favour and pardon for thoſe that have offended him, and rebelled againſt him; he grants their ſuit, and treats them fairly. In this ſenſe the Lord maketh promiſe to *Eliphaz* and his two friends, that he will *accept* Job.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *It is a very high favour and priviledg to be accepted of God.*

Him will I accept, ſaith the Lord, of *Job*. This was a favour beyond all the favours, that follow after in the cloſe of the book, about the doubling of his eſtate. If *Jacob* (Gen.32.20.) was ſo taken with a hope of acceptance by his brother *Eſau*; *Peradventure he will accept me*; If when he was accepted by *Eſau*, he ſaid (*Chap.*33.10.) *I have ſeen thy face, as though I had ſeen the face of God, and thou waſt pleaſed with me*: Then, how much more ſhould we rejoyce in this aſſurance, that God hath accepted of us, and that he is pleaſed with us! If the Apoſtle (*Rom.* 15. 3.) prayed ſo earneſtly, and deſired others to ſtrive with him in prayer to God, that his ſervice, which he had for *Jeruſalem*, might be accepted of the Saints; then how much more ſhould we pray, that our ſervices may be accepted of God, and rejoyce when they are accepted! The Apoſtle made it his chief work, to get acceptation with God (2*Cor.*5.9.) *Wherefore we labour, that whether preſent or abſent* (that is, whether living or dying) *we may be accepted with him*; we are ambitious of divine acceptation. The word which we tranſlate *labour*, noteth a labouring after honour, which ambitious men labour much after, implying that to be accepted with the Lord is a very high honour, indeed the higheſt honour.

There is a two-fold acceptation. Firſt, Of our perſons. Secondly, Of our ſervices. The former is the ground of the latter, and Jeſus Chriſt is the foundation of both (*Eph.*1. 6.) *He through glorious grace hath made us accepted in the beloved.* Jeſus Chriſt is ſo dearly beloved of the father, that he is called, *The Beloved*, as if only beloved. The acceptation of our ſervices is often promiſed in Scripture, as a high favour (*Exod.* 28. 38. *Ezek.* 20. 40, 41. *Iſa.*56. 7.) This *Moſes* prayed for in the behalf of the Tribe of *Levi*, which Tribe was appointed to offer ſacrifice, and to pray for the people, (*Deut.*33.11.) *Bleſs Lord his ſubſtance, and accept the work of his hands.* What was the work of *Levies* hands? It was to offer ſacrifice, to which prayer and interceſſion was joined. That *Levi*, who had the Prieſthood fixed in the family of *Aaron*, ſhould be accepted in the work of his hands, was a bleſſing not only to himſelf, but to many more. This *David* prayed earneſtly for (*Pſal.*19. 14.) *Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy ſight, O Lord, my ſtrength, and my redeemer.* He put up a like prayer (*Pſal.* 119. 108.) *Accept, I beſeech thee, the free-will-offerings of my mouth, O Lord.* This was the prayer of *Araunah* for *David* (2*Sam.* 24.23.) *The Lord thy God accept thee.* So great a priviledg it is, for our perſons and ſervices, to be accepted with the Lord; that when once we have it, we may reioyce all our days (*Eccleſ.* 9. 7.) *Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart, for God now accepteth thy works.* *Solomon* doth not mean it of a ſenſitive joy only, much leſs of any ſenſual joy, but of a gracious and ſpiritual joy. In this joy we may eat and drink, when our work is accepted; and our work is never accepted, till our perſons are.

Now, if it be ſo great a priviledge to be accepted with the Lord, how great a miſery is it not to be accepted? This inference floweth naturally from that great truth. And how great a miſery it is, not to be accepted of God, ſeveral Scriptures hold out. The Prophet (*Amos* 5.22.) declareth no other judgment upon that people but this, *The Lord accepteth them not.* And the ſame declaration is made by ſeveral other Prophets (*Jerem.* 14. 10, 12. *Hoſ.* 8. 13. *Mal.* 1. 8, 10.) Acceptance is our greateſt mercy, and non-acceptance our greateſt miſery; and that's the reaſon why the underſtanding and faithful ſervants of God are ſo ſtrict, or (as the World accounts it) preciſe and ſcrupulous, that they will not turn aſide, no not in thoſe things which are called ſmall matters, and of which many think God will take no notice. They deſire to be accepted of God in every thing, and becauſe they know (in ſome meaſure) what is acceptable to him, therefore they would do nothing, no, not the leaſt thing, which is unacceptable to him (*Prov.* 10. 32.) *The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable.* The lips are organs or inſtruments of ſpeech, not of knowledg; the underſtanding knoweth, the lips only ſpeak: Yet here *Solomon* aſcribes the work of the underſtanding to the lips; and this he doth, becauſe there is or ſhould be a great cognation, between the underſtanding and the lips; we ſhould ſpeak nothing but what we underſtand, we ſhould ſpeak only what we know, and according to our knowledg. The lips of the righteous have ſuch an intercourſe with their underſtanding, that their very lips may be ſaid to know what is acceptable, and therefore they ſpeak what is acceptable. It is ſaid of *David*, that he *guided the people with the skilfulneſs* (ſaith our) with the *diſcretion* (ſaith another tranſlation) with the *underſtanding of his hands*, ſaith the Original (*Pſal.*78.72.) The hand hath no more underſtanding, skill, or diſcretion ſeated in it, than the lips; yet becauſe *David* conſulted with his underſtanding, in what he did with his hand, it is ſaid, *He guided them by the* skilfulneſs, or diſcretion, or *underſtanding of his hand.* Thus the *lips of the righteous* underſtand and *know what is acceptable*; and they know that unleſs they have an aim to honour God in ſmall matters, yea, in all matters, they greatly diſhonour him, and ſo cannot be accepted with him at all. The excellency of a gracious heart, appears greatly when he maketh conſcience of doing the leaſt thing which he knows, yea, only fears will be unacceptable to God, or wherein he may run the hazard of this priviledg, his acceptation with him.

There are three things, which ſhew why it is ſo great a priviledg to be accepted with God, and why his ſervants are ſo careful not to do any thing that is unacceptable unto him.

Firſt, Becauſe, *Once accepted with God and always accepted.*

accepted. For though poſſibly a perſon accepted may have ſome frowns from God upon his uneven walkings, or ſinful actings; yet his ſtate of acceptation, continues firm in the main. The Lord doth not utterly caſt off his favourites, no, nor any whom he taketh into his favour, or a nearneſs with himſelf.

Secondly, *If we are once accepted with God, he can make us accepted with men*; and that, not only with good men (*Rom.* 14.18.) but, even with bad men. God can give us favour in the eyes of thoſe men, who have not an eye to ſee, that we are in his favour. *Daniel*, who was ſo careful to keep up his acceptation with God, *That he purpoſed in his heart, not to defile himſelf with the portion of the Kings meat* (Dan. 1.8,9.) Of him it is ſaid (*verſ.*6.) *God had brought* Daniel *into favour and tender love, with the Prince of the* Eunuchs. He, a conſcientious *Jew*, had great acceptation with him, who was an Idolatrous Heathen.

Thirdly, If once accepted of the Lord, we need not be much troubled, though we are reprobate to the World, though the World reject and caſt us off, yea, caſt us out. The Lords acceptation of us, will bear or may bear up our ſpirits, in the midſt of the Worlds reproaches, repulſes, and rejections.

Again, When the Lord ſaith, *Him will I accept.*

Obſerve, *The Lord accepts ſome godly men more than others.*

Job's three friends were godly men, queſtionleſs they were, yet they had not that acceptation with God which *Job* had. All that are godly have acceptation with God, but they have not all a like acceptation (*Acts* 10.35.) *In every Nation, they that fear him and work righteouſneſs, are accepted with him:* Which we muſt not take meerly for a moral or legal righteouſneſs, but as in conjunction with an Evangelical righteouſneſs. Now let them be who they will, *that fear God and work righteouſneſs, they are accepted*: But all are not equally accepted; *him will I accept*, ſaith the Lord concerning *Job*, with *an Emphaſis*; why was it ſo? Becauſe *Job* was one of the moſt eminent perſons for godlineſs, yea, the moſt eminent, at that time, upon the face of the whole Earth, as was ſhewed at the ſecond verſe of the firſt Chapter. *Noah* was a man highly accepted of the Lord above others, and he was righteous above others (*Gen.*7.1.) *Thee* (ſaith God) *have I ſeen righteous before me in this Generation.* Poſſibly there might be others righteous, but there was no man ſo righteous as *Noah*, and none ſo accepted as he.

And if it be enquired, who amongſt good men are moſt accepted, or accepted beyond other good men? I anſwer,

Firſt, They among good men are moſt accepted, who *live moſt by faith.* As *without faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe God*, in any degree (*Heb.*11.6.) ſo they that live moſt by faith, pleaſe God moſt, or in the higheſt degree, and are moſt accepted by him. *Abraham*, who lived ſo much by faith, that he was called *the father of the faithful*, was ſo much accepted of God, that he is called *The friend of God* (Jam. 2.23.)

Secondly, Among godly men, they who are moſt upright in their walkings, who walk with a ſingle eye, and with a right foot, are moſt acceptable; ſuch a man was *Job.* The character given him (*Chap.* 1.1.) was, A man *perfect and upright.*

Thirdly, *They that walk moſt humbly, are moſt acceptable unto God.* For, as *God reſiſteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble* (Jam.4.6.) ſo he ſheweth *grace*, that is, *favour*, or graceth and adorneth them with his favours. When one ſaid (*Mich.*6.6.) *Wherewith ſhall I come before the Lord?* &c. The Prophet anſwered (*verſ.*8.) *He hath ſhewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do juſtly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?* That is, as he requireth of thee to exerciſe juſtice toward all men, and mercy to the poor, or any in miſery, ſo to walk humbly with himſelf; that is, to acknowledg thou haſt need of the righteouſneſs of a Saviour, and of the mercy of a God, how much righteouſneſs and mercy ſoever thou haſt exerciſed towards others. When we are low in our own eyes, then we are higheſt in Gods eye; when we, as it were, reject our ſelves, and all that we have done, as unworthy of any acceptation, then are we moſt accepted of the Lord.

Fourthly, Among believers, they are moſt accepted with God, who are moſt fruitful in their lives, and do moſt good in their places, and according to their opportunities. The Lord loveth a fruitful Chriſtian. Many are barren trees, unfruitful ground, little can be ſeen of good which they do; theſe are a burden to God. But, when a Chriſtian (as it is ſaid of Chriſt, *Acts* 10.38.) *goeth about doing good*; when a Chriſtian, as Chriſt giveth the account of his own life (*John* 17.4.) *Glorifieth God on Earth, and finiſheth the work which God gives him to do*, O how acceptable is ſuch a one to God! And therefore,

Let us labour to know, and do what is acceptable to the Lord. The Apoſtle would have us *prove what is acceptable to the Lord* (Eph.5.10.) that is, Firſt, ſtudy the Word, to find out what is acceptable to the Lord. Secondly, approve and embrace with our whole hearts, what we find to be ſo, Thirdly, practice and do what we have ſo approved or embraced. And becauſe the Scripture ſpeaks of ſome duties which are ſpecially acceptable to the Lord, I ſhall inſtance the Point in a few particulars.

Firſt, Doing right to every one (*Prov.*21.3.) *To do Juſtice and Judgment, is more acceptable to the Lord than Sacrifice.* This is true, or may be affirmed of Juſtice, both commutative and diſtributive. To do Juſtice in our dealings with men, called *commutative Juſtice*, is more acceptable than Sacrifice, that is, than any outward worſhip given to God without this. 'Tis true alſo, of diſtributive Juſtice, which is done by Magiſtrates in rewarding good men, and in puniſhing them that do evil; theſe works of Juſtice alſo, are more acceptable to the Lord than Sacrifice.

Secondly, The true worſhip and ſervice of God, which the Apoſtle calls *Sacrifice*, is highly acceptable to God (*Rom.* 12.1.) *I beſeech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye preſent your bodies a living ſacrifice, holy, acceptable to God; which is your reaſonable ſervice.* Theſe firſt Table-duties, which in conſort with thoſe former ſecond Table-duties, are highly honourable, and therefore cannot but be highly acceptable to the Lord. Sacrifice to God, without Juſtice to man, is meer hypocriſie; Juſtice to man, without Sacrifice to God, is no better than Heatheniſh morality: Both united, are the beauty of Chriſtianity.

Thirdly, To ſerve Chriſt, that is, to aim at the honouring, as well as the enjoying of Chriſt, with our Goſpel-priviledges and liberties, is exceeding acceptable. The Apoſtle having ſaid (*Rom.*14.17.) *The Kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteouſneſs, and peace, and join in the holy Ghoſt*, preſently adds (*verſ.*18.) *He that in theſe things* (that is, in righteouſneſs, and peace, and joy in the holy Ghoſt) *ſerveth Chriſt, is acceptable unto God*; that is, this ſhews he is a perſon accepted with God. The doing of things purely acceptable to God, is a clear and ſtrong argument of our acceptation with him.

Fourthly, To do any good we do, be it little or much, with a willing mind, is very acceptable to God (2*Cor.*8.12.) *If there be firſt a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath.* Though it be little that we have, yet if the mind be free, if there be much of the will in it, though but little of the purſe (if we have no more to give, or give according to what we have) if there be much of the heart in it, though but little of the hand (if we do according to the power that is in our hand) the Lord hath a very great reſpect to it.

Fifthly, To be much in prayer for others, eſpecially for thoſe that are in power over us, is very acceptable to the Lord (1 *Tim.* 2.2, 3.) *I exhort that ſupplications,* &c. *be made for all men, for Kings, and all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godlineſs and honeſty; for this is good and acceptable in the ſight of God our Saviour.* As it is good and acceptable in the ſight of God, that we ſhould lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godlineſs and honeſty, under Kings and all in authority; ſo that we ſhould pray for Kings, and thoſe that are in authority.

Sixthly, *When Children do well requite their Parents*; that (ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 *Tim.*5.4.) *is acceptable unto God.*

Seventhly, To ſuffer patiently for well-doing, is greatly pleaſing unto God (1 *Pet.* 2.20.) In a word, they among good men are moſt acceptable of God, who are moſt zealous in doing any thing in a right manner, which for the matter is acceptable unto God.

Obſerve, Thirdly, *As the Lord accepteth ſome godly godly men more than others, ſo he accepteth ſome godly men for others.*

The Lord doth not ſpeak here of accepting *Job* ſtrictly for himſelf, but of his acceptation in the behalf of his friends, *Him will I accept*, that is, *for you*; I will be intreated by him, I will not give you the honour to be intreated by you, but to him I give it, I will be intreated by him. The Prophet *Eliſha* ſaid to the King of *Iſrael* (2 *Kings* 3. 14.) *Were it not that I regard the preſence of* Jehoſhaphat *the King of* Judah, *I would not look toward thee, nor ſee thee*; he would not vouchſafe that bad King a look, but for the reſpect he bare to good *Jehoſhaphat*. And it is a truth, that God would not have ſo much reſpect to ſome good men, were it not for the ſake of ſome others, who are better. Yet, that the Lord accepts one mans perſon more than others, or one mans perſon for another, is primarily and principally, in and for the ſake of Jeſus Chriſt. *Job* had acceptation with God more than his friends, and for his friends; he had the former by his being in Chriſt, and the latter as he was a figure of Chriſt. No mans perſon, no mans work is accepted of, otherwiſe than in relation to Chriſt. The Apoſtle affirms this fully (*Eph.* 1. 6.) *He hath made us accepted in the Beloved.* Chriſtians are *beloved*, but Chriſt only is *the beloved*: We are accepted in him, *the beloved*, as to our ſelves; and 'tis in *the beloved* that any are accepted more than others, or for others.

Take this Inference from the whole.

The Lord accepted Job *praying for others; then he will accept a good man praying upon right grounds, and for right ends, againſt another.*

It is dangerous to ſtand in the way of their prayers, who are accepted of God. *That man is more ſafe, againſt whom a thouſand are acting, than he againſt whom any one godly man upon a juſt ground is praying.* The Lord hath done great things againſt evil men, upon the prayers of the faithful, as well as he hath done great things for good men at their prayer. *David* by one ejaculatory petition, ſpoiled the plot of *Achitophel*; the Lord, according to that ſhort prayer, turned his counſel into fooliſhneſs, and ſo overturned the whole deſign laid againſt his ſervant *David*. Thus far of the promiſe which the Lord gave *Eliphaz* and his two friends for their encouragement, to go unto *Job* and intreat him to offer up a burnt-offering, and to pray for them, *for him will I accept*.

Now followeth a threat, in caſe they did not:

Leſt I deal with you according to your folly.

As if the Lord had ſaid, *Do not ſlight this advice that I give you, no, nor forſlow it, make haſt to make your addreſs to* Job; *I will accept him, and I tell you, I will not accept you alone; therefore make haſt, and do as I have commanded, elſe*

I ſhall deal with you according to your folly.

There is ſome difference in the reading of theſe words.

Firſt, Some read, *Leſt I do or act folly to you.* But how can the Lord do or act folly towards any? We may expound this Tranſlation, by that (*Pſal.* 18. 26.) where *David* ſaith of the Lord, *With the pure thou wilt ſhew thy ſelf pure, and with the froward or perverſe, thou wilt ſhew thy ſelf froward or perverſe.* But how doth the Lord ſhew himſelf froward with thoſe that are froward? There is no frowardneſs in the Lord, he is always in a compoſed and ſedate frame, infinitely beyond any paſſion or perturbation: The meaning is only this, The Lord will deal with men according to what they are; the actings and effects of his providence ſhall be towards a froward man, as if he were froward. If a man will deal perverſely with God, he will deal with him as if he were perverſe; *and with the pure, God will ſhew himſelf pure*, that is, he will carry it purely towards them; they ſhall receive good, who are and do good. Thus here, go, ſaith the Lord, and do as I bid you, *Leſt I deal folly to you.* In the Hebrew Language, to do kindneſs with one, is the ſame as to exerciſe or ſhew kindneſs to him. That form of ſpeech is uſed, *Gen.* 20. 13. & 24. 49. & 40. 14. And ſo to do folly with one, is to ſhew or exerciſe folly to him. The Lord doth folly to them that do folly; that is, he makes them ſee by his wiſe doing, how fooliſhly they have done.

Others expreſs it thus, *Leſt I deal fooliſhly with you*, or, *folly to you*; that is, leſt I do that which may be accounted fooliſhneſs in me. You having appeared Advocates in my cauſe, and pleaded for me ('tis folly to pay any man with unkindneſs for the ſervice he hath done us.) Well (ſaith the Lord) look to it, I will not accept you, but deal folly to you, or fooliſhly with you, in the ſenſe of ſome men (poſſibly) but wiſely in my own. The Lord is always to be admired, in his wiſdom, holineſs, and in the ſerenity of his Spirit; yet in the opinion of the wiſe men of this World, he may ſeem to deal fooliſhly, or do folly.

Secondly, The words may be rendred, *Leſt I do that which may be diſgraceful to you.* Thus the *Chaldee* paraphraſe readeth, *Leſt I put a diſgrace, or an affront upon you*, and make it appear, *to your ſhame*, that you have not carried it aright in this matter, but have been ſhamefully out. The word here uſed, is ſeveral times uſed in Scripture, to note the defiling or diſgrace of a thing (*Nahum.* 3. 6.) *I will caſt abominable filth upon thee, and I will make thee vile*, that is, I will diſgrace thee, and (as it followeth) *I will ſet thee for a gazing ſtock.* So (*Micah.* 7. 6.) when the Lord would ſhew the exceeding ſinfulneſs of thoſe times, he ſaith, *Truſt ye not in a friend, put ye not confidence in a guide, keep the door of thy mouth from her that lyeth in thy boſom; for the Son diſhonoureth the Father*; it is this word, the Son diſgraceth the Father, he dealeth with his Father as if he were a *Nabal*, a very fool. When a Son knoweth not his diſtance, nor performeth his duty, he diſhonoureth his Father. The Prophet (*Jer.* 14. 21.) ſpeaks in a way of deprecation. *Do not abhor us, for thy name ſake, do not diſgrace the throne of thy glory.* The Lord is ſometimes ſo angry with his people, that he even caſteth dirt upon the throne of his glory, that is, upon his Church, in and by which he ſhould be glorified, as upon his Throne. The Lord diſgraceth his Church, the throne of his glory, when his Church diſgraceth him, and diſhonours his glorious name (*Deut.* 32. 15.) *Jeſurun waxed fat, and kicked* (that is, *Iſrael*, the Church was waxen fat; the Lord fed *Jeſurun* his Church to the full, they had not a lean ſervice of it: But what did *Jeſurun*?) *he forſook God which made him, and lightly eſteemed the Rock of his ſalvation.* The word which we Tranſlate, *he lightly eſteemed*, is the word of the Text: Now when *Jeſurun* did lightly eſteem or diſgrace the Lord, he ſoon after diſgraced *Jeſurun*, his Church, *The throne of his glory.* This is a good ſenſe of the words, do as I direct, *leſt I put a diſgrace upon you.* Thus folly is put for the puniſhment of folly, as ſin often, for the penal effects and fruits of ſin; as 'tis ſaid (1 *Kings* 13. 34.) *This thing became ſin to the Houſe of* Jeroboam, *even to cut it off.*

Our reading ſaith, *Leſt I deal with you according to your folly*; that is, according to your ſin, and the hard cenſures which you have given of my ſervant *Job*, and, as it followeth, *In that you have not ſpoken of me the thing that is right.* Theſe things have been your folly; and if you do not ſpeedily repair with your ſacrifice to *Job*, and get him to pray for you, what you can do your ſelves, will not make amends for your folly, nor mend this breach, but, *I will deal with you according to your folly*, you ſhall taſte of the fruit of your doings; the reward of your hands, or of your tongues, ſhall be given to you. That's the general ſence of our Tranſlation; as if the Lord had ſaid, Leſt I make you underſtand by your ſad experiences, by the puniſhments and chaſtiſements laid upon you, that you have done very fooliſhly, and were greatly miſtaken in your apprehenſions of me, and of my providences concerning *Job*. Or thus, ye have declared much folly in the management of this matter with my ſervant *Job*, ye have offended againſt the common Laws of friendſhip and humanity, inſulting over a man in miſery; and your folly hath been greater, while, againſt the Laws of piety, ye have judged of a mans holineſs, by his outward unhappineſs, and have cenſured him as a bad man, becauſe he hath in this World endured ſo much evil. This hath been your ſin, ye have in this dealt fooliſhly with my ſervant *Job*; therefore haſten to him, and do as I have ſaid, *Leſt I deal with you according to your folly.*

Hence Note, Firſt, *Sin is folly.*

And not only is it ſimple folly, which a man committeth for want of wit, or becauſe he hath little underſtanding (what a man doth for want of wit and underſtanding, is *ſimple folly*) but ſin is *wicked folly*, which is the abuſe of wit, and parts, and gifts, yea, the overflowing of luſt. And though we cannot charge theſe men, that they did intentionally uſe their wit and parts to grieve *Job*, yet it proved ſo; though it was not the end or deſign of them that ſpake, yet it was the iſſue of their ſpeech; they did him a great deal of wrong, and doubtleſs, Satan ſtirred much, or provoked them to uſe their parts and gifts to imbitter the ſpirit of the poor man, and God left them to do it. This was their folly; and all ſuch actings or ſpeakings are no better, nor do they deſerve better or ſofter language. This word *folly*, is often applied in Scripture, to ſin, eſpecially to great ſins. Another word is uſed in the *Proverbs* of *Solomon*; but in ſeveral other places, ſin is expreſſed by this (*Gen.* 34. 7.) When that great affliction fell upon *Jacob*, the raviſhing of *Dinah*, her brethren came home very wroth, ſaying, *He hath committed folly in* Iſrael. So (*Judges* 19. 23. & 20. 6.) the abuſing of the *Levites* Concubine is called the *committing of folly.* Whoredom is expreſſed by folly (*Deut.* 22. 21.) And this word, with reference (I conceive) to the ſin of whoredom, which is ſpoken of in that place, is Tranſlated *villany* (*Jer.* 29. 23.) All ſin is folly, eſpecially any great ſin is ſo. For,

Firſt, It is a folly to hurt our ſelves. No man can hurt us, if we do not hurt our ſelves by ſin. The Apoſtle *Peter* ſaith (1 *Epiſt.* 3. 13.) *Who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?* 'Tis ſtrange, that any ſhould. Though it be true enough that many have had, not only a will to harm them that follow good, but have actually done them many and great outward harms; yet this is a great truth, none can indeed harm them that follow good, becauſe all harms turn to their good. Nothing can hurt us but our ſin.

Secondly, Sin is folly, for in ſinning we ſtrive with one that is too hard for us. *Do we* (ſaith St. *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* 10. 23.) *provoke the Lord to jealouſie?* (are we ſo ſimple?) *are we ſtronger than he?*

Thirdly, It is folly to do that by which we can get no good, that's the part of a fool (*Rom.* 6. 21.) *What fruit have ye of thoſe things whereof ye are now aſhamed?* What have ye got by them? Have ye made any gains or earnings to boaſt of? *The end of thoſe things is death*; and is it not folly to begin that which ends in death, and that a never-ending, an eternal death.

Fourthly, It is folly to ſin, for by that, at beſt, we run a hazard of our beſt portion, for fading pleaſures, and periſhing profits. If we have any pleaſure by ſin, it is but pleaſure for a ſeaſon, and that a very ſhort one too. What a fooliſh thing is it to venture things that are incorruptible, for periſhing things? It were a great folly for a man to venture Gold againſt graſs: They do infinitely more fooliſhly who ſin againſt the Lord; for all that they can get by it, is not ſo much, to what they hazard, as graſs to Gold (*Matth.* 16. 26.) *What is a man profited, if he ſhall gain the whole World, and loſe his own Soul? Or what ſhall a man give in exchange for his Soul?* As all fleſh is graſs, ſo all that fleſh luſteth after is no better. What kind of Merchants, what kind of Exchange-men are they, that will traffick or truck away their Souls, for the profits or pleaſures of ſin? And 'tis for one of theſe that moſt, if not all men, traffick away their Souls.

Secondly, Obſerve, *When God dealeth moſt ſeverely with ſinners, he dealeth juſtly with them.*

What rod ſoever he layeth upon their backs, what ſhame, what poverty, what ſickneſs he afflicts them with, *It is but according to their folly*, they have but their own, they have no reaſon to complain. The Prophet told the people of *Iſrael*, as one man, when under grievous afflictions (*Jerem.* 4. 18.) *Thy ways and thy doings, have procured theſe things unto thee*: Thou haſt no reaſon to complain, for thy puniſhment is of thy own procurement, that is, thy ſin is viſible in thy puniſhment, thou eateſt but the fruit of thy own doings, how bitter ſoever it is. Another Scripture ſaith (*Numb.* 32. 23.) *Your ſin ſhall find you out*, that is, you ſhall ſuffer according to what you have done, and reap what ye have ſowed. And is it not folly to *ſow to the* (corrupt) *fleſh, when of the fleſh we ſhall reap corruption* (Gal. 6. 8.) The fleſh is a corrupt thing, and can yield us no better a thing than it is (the effect is like the cauſe) *corruption*, that is, a miſerable condition both here and hereafter, now and for ever.

Thirdly, Note, *The Lord will not paſs by, nor ſpare, no not a godly man, when he ſinneth and repenteth not.*

All this is included in the going of theſe men to *Job*. As if the Lord had ſaid, *I will puniſh you* Eliphaz, *and* Bildad, *and* Zophar *for your folly, unleſs ye repent.* They that are in a ſtate of grace, cannot expect favour from the Lord, unleſs they turn from their ſin, and give him glory by repenting and believing. Good men doing evil may ſuffer for it, as well as the worſt of men. The Lord will ſee a work of repentance and ſelf-humbling, a work of faith, looking to Chriſt the ſacrifice, elſe he will deal with them, even with them (as he threatned theſe good men) *according to their folly.*

But what was the folly of *Eliphaz* and his two friends, for which the Lord threatned to deal ſo ſeverely with them? The latter part of the verſe tells us, what God accounted and called *their folly.*

In that ye have not ſpoken of me the thing that is right.

The Lord had told them as much at the ſeventh verſe, *My wrath is kindled againſt you, becauſe ye have not ſpoken of me the thing that is right.* Here the Lord pointeth them to their ſin again, and layeth his finger afreſh upon the ſore.

But why doth he ſo?

Take theſe three reaſons why. Probably the Lord repeated theſe words,

Firſt, To ſhew that he was very ſenſible of their ſin, in ſpeaking amiſs of him, and very angry with them for it. They provoked the Lord much, when they meaſured him, as it were by themſelves, or by their own mete-wand, in his ways of Judgment, and procedure with *Job*; and therefore they muſt hear of it a ſecond time, or (as we ſay) at both ears.

Secondly, The Lord telleth them again of it, that he might faſten the ſenſe of their ſin more upon them. We very hardly take the impreſſion of our follies and failings, we are ready to let the thoughts of them wear off and ſlip from us; they abide not, but glide away as water from a ſtone, or from the ſwans-back, unleſs fixed by renewed mindings: And for this reaſon the Lord repeateth the mention of ſin ſo often, in the ears of his people, by the miniſtry of his word, that the evil of it may more fully appear to them, or that they may the more clearly ſee, and the better know how bad, how baſe, how fooliſh a thing it is to ſin againſt him.

Thirdly, I conceive, the Lord repeated theſe words, to confirm the Judgment which he had given before concerning them in thoſe words, *Ye have not ſpoken of me the thing that is right.* As if the Lord had ſaid, that which I ſaid before, I ſay again, I do not change my opinion, either concerning you or my ſervant *Job*; and therefore, I ſay it once more (the repeating of a matter is for the confirmation of it, as *Joſeph* told *Pharaoh* about the doubling of his dream) *Ye have not ſpoken of me the thing that is right,*

Quicquid in divino colloquio repetitur, robuſtius confirmatur. Greg. *lib.* 35. *moral. c.* 8.

Like my ſervant Job.] Theſe words alſo are a repetition, yea, a triplication, and more than ſo, this is the fourth time, that the Lord hath called *Job* his *ſervant*, in the compaſs of two verſes, three times in this eight verſe, and once in the ſeventh.

But what ſhould be the meaning of this? Why did the Lord call *Job* his ſervant ſo often, even four times, as it were in one breath?

I anſwer, Firſt, It intimates that *Job* was the Lords ſteady ſervant, that what he was at firſt he was then at laſt, and what he had been long ago he was ſtill. Some have been called the ſervants of God, who have given it over in the plain field; but here the Lord calleth *Job* his ſervant, *over and over*, four times over, as being his ſure ſervant.

Secondly, It was to ſhew that as *Job* retained the ſame duty and reſpect to the ſervice of God, ſo God retained the ſame opinion of *Job*, and of his ſervice then as at firſt.

Thirdly, The Lord in repeating this relational title, *ſervant*, ſo often, would aſſure us that he knew not how (if I may ſpeak ſo) to ſpeak more honourably of him. The Lord gave no other title to *Moſes* (Numb. 12. 7.) nor to *Caleb* (Numb. 14. 24.) nor to *David* (2 Sam. 7. 5, 8.) The Lord did not ſpeak this ſo often, becauſe he wanted other titles to give him, or becauſe he had not variety of phraſes to expreſs himſelf by, but as if he knew not where to find a more honourable title. I grant that title of relation, *Son*, is more noble, and more endearing; but that is not at all ſpoken of in the Old Teſtament, nor is it given to any particular perſon in the New. Believers, as to their ſtate, or all the Sons of God; but no one believer is ſpoken, either to, or of, under this title, *Son*. The Apoſtle *Paul* ſtill called him ſelf only a ſervant of God. He that is the Lords ſervant, is the beſt of free-men. We have enough to glory in, when we are his ſervants. The Hiſtory reports of the *French* King, That the Ambaſſador of the King of *Spain* repeating many great titles of his Maſter; the King of *France* commanded this only to be mentioned of him, *King of France, King of France*; implying, that this ſingle title *King of France*, was as honourable as that large roll of titles given the King of *Spain*. Thus the Lord calleth *Job his ſervant*, *his ſervant*, *his ſervant*, to ſhew that all honour is wrapt up in this word, *A ſervant of God*.

Fourthly, This repetition may ſignifie, That *Job* had been a very great, good, and faithful ſervant to the Lord; not only a ſervant, but a laborious and profitable ſervant to the Lord; ſo the Scripture calls thoſe who are laborious in his ſervice, though at beſt, as to the Lord, we are unprofitable ſervants, nor can any be profitable unto him.

Fifthly, The Lord multiplieth this title upon him, becauſe whatſoever a godly man doth, is ſervice to the Lord. This word *ſervice* is comprehenſive of all duties; to *hear the word* is, to ſerve the Lord; to pray, to faſt, to give alms, is to ſerve the Lord, all is ſervice to the Lord.

Job was every way a ſervant of the Lord.

Firſt, As *he was a Ruler*. To rule well in a family is to ſerve the Lord; to rule Nations is to ſerve the Lord much more. *Job* was a Ruler, and he ruled well in both capacities, as was ſhewed in opening the Twenty-ninth, Thirtieth, and Thirty-firſt Chapters.

Secondly, *Job* was a great ſervant of the Lord, as he was a *worſhipper*.

Thirdly, *Job* was a great ſervant of the Lord, as he was a *Sacrificer*; he had the honour of the prieſt-hood.

Fourthly, *Job* was great ſervant of the Lord, as *a teacher* of the truth; he had *inſtructed many*, as *Eliphaz* acknowledged (*Chap.* 4. 3.) And as he was a great ſervant of the Lord in teaching the truth, ſo in oppoſing error; he ſtood firm to his own opinion (the truth) againſt the tenent of his friends.

Fifthly, *Job* ſerved the Lord as he was a *ſufferer*. To ſuffer is very great ſervice, eſpecially (as he did) to ſuffer greatly. We ſerve the Lord as much with his croſs upon our backs, as with his yoke upon our necks, or his burden upon our ſhoulders. *Job* was a great ſervant of the Lords, as in holding forth the doctrine of the croſs, or maintaining that God afflicts his choiceſt ſervants; ſo in bearing the croſs himſelf.

Sixthly, *Job* was a great ſervant of the Lord in praying for his friends, and in being ſo willing to be reconciled to them: and therefore, the Lord having had ſo many ſervices of him, and ſo many ways, repeateth, *my ſervant* Job, *my ſervant* Job, as if he could not ſay this word often enough, *My ſervant* Job.

Thus we have the Lords command or charge given to *Eliphaz* and his two friends, what they muſt do for the quenching of that fire which was kindled in his breaſt againſt them, for their folly in dealing with his ſervant *Job*. How they anſwered that command, will appear in the next words.

Verſe 9. **So Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite, went, and did according as the Lord commanded them: The Lord alſo accepted Job.**

This verſe holds out the obedience of *Eliphaz* and his two friends, to the charge and command which the Lord gave them in the eighth verſe; where the Lord ſaid to theſe three men, *Take to you ſeven Bullocks and ſeven Rams, and go to my ſervant* Job, *and offer up for your ſelves a burnt offering*, &c. This Text anſwereth that command, they *went, and did according as the Lord commanded them*. Their obedience to the Lords commanded is deſcribed three ways.

Firſt, By the ſpeedineſs of it; *They went*.

Secondly, By the exactneſs of it; *They went; and did according as the Lord commanded.*

Thirdly, By the good iſſue and fruit of it; *The Lord alſo accepted* Job.

So Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite, went.

Theſe were the three perſons who had to do with *Job* in that long conteſt opened in the body of this Book; theſe are the perſons againſt whom the Lords *wrath was kindled, becauſe they had not ſpoken of him the thing that was right, as his ſervont* Job; theſe were the perſons to whom the Lord gave command to bring their ſacrifice to *Job*, and *offer it for themſelves*, that reconciliation might be made; theſe perſons *went*, all three went: As all three were wrapt up in one fault, as all three were in the ſame ſin, ſo they all three joined together and agreed in their obedience to the command of God, and in repentance for their ſin and faultineſs.

They went.] Having received a command to go, they did not tarry and ſtay to conſider whether they ſhould go or ſtay, they did not put in any demur to the matter, but *went*; which implyeth, firſt (as was ſaid) the ſpeedineſs of their obedience, they went preſently; ſecondly, the willingneſs of their obedience, their minds were in the work; as well as their bodies; thirdly, the cheerfulneſs of their obedience, they went as if they had been to take a pleaſing or pleaſant Journey. *They went*; and what did they? *They went*

And did according as the Lord commanded them.

Their obedience was not only ſpeedy, and willing, and cheerful, but exact. Theſe words, *They did according as the Lord commanded them*, yield us a great example of full, of compleat obedience; they not only did what was commanded, but they did it as it was commanded, yea, and they did it becauſe it was commanded, for that muſt come in to make up the fulneſs of our obedience. Here is then a great example of humility, of modeſty, of meekneſs, and of ſubmiſſion to the will of God, *They went and did according as the Lord commanded them*. What was that? They brought their ſacrifice, firſt, for kind, and ſecondly, for number, as the Lord had commanded them: The Lord commanded them to bring *Bullocks* and *Rams*; they brought them: The Lord commanded them to bring ſeven Bullocks and ſeven Rams; they brought them as the Lord commanded, both for kind and for number.

Singulare exemplum docilitatis & modeſtiæ, ut qui etiam nec improbitate nec malevolentia ſed per imprudentiam peccarunt. Bez.

Secondly, They brought them *to Job*. The Lord ſaid, *Go to my ſervant* Job; they went to *Job* according as the Lord commanded them.

Thirdly, We muſt ſuppoſe they intreated *Job* to undertake the Office of a Reconciler, of a Mediator, of a Prieſt, between God and them, according as the Lord commanded. Though this piece of their ſubmiſſion and obedience be not expreſſed, yet it is intimated and implyed; nor could it be omitted, it being not only a part, but the principal part, of that duty which the Lord laid upon them. Thus in all things they ſubmitted and were obedient according to the command of the Lord.

Firſt, In that we have all three named here in this matter of obedience; Eliphaz *the* Temanite, *and* Bildad *the* Shuhite, *and* Zophar *the* Naamathite, *went*,

> Obſerve, *It is very good in it ſelf, and very pleaſing to God, when they who have joined in any ſin or miſcarriage towards himſelf or others, join readily together in ſhewing their ſorrow and repentance for it.*

It was a bleſſed ſight to ſee thoſe three men coming as one man about this duty, not one of them drawing back, not one of them putting in any plea againſt the command of

God. There are three things wherein it is very pleaſant to behold the people of God joining in one.

Firſt, When they join or are one in Opinion and Judgment, when they all think the ſame thing, and are of one mind in the truth.

Secondly, When they join together and are one in affection, when they are all of one heart, though poſſibly they are not all of one mind, or, when they meet in affection, though not in opinion, (*Pſal.* 133.1.) *Behold how good and how pleaſant it is, for brethren to dwell together in unity!* And when *David* had ſpoken admiringly of this goodly ſight, he ſpake declaratively concerning the goodneſs of it (*verſ.* 2.) *It is like the precious ointment upon the head:* 'Tis ſo, firſt, for the ſweetneſs of it; 'tis ſo, ſecondly, for the diffuſiveneſs of it (as followeth) *that ran down upon the beard, even* Aarons *beard, that went down to the skirts of his Garments.*

Thirdly, (which is the matter in the Text) is a bleſſed thing to ſee them joining together in duty, either as duty is conſidered,

Firſt, In doing that which is good; or, when, as the Apoſtles word is (2 *Cor.* 6. 1.) they are (among themſelves) *workers together* in any good work, we ſay (to fill up the Text) *workers together with God.* That's a bleſſed ſight indeed, when we join with God, and God joineth with us in his work: It is alſo a bleſſed ſight, when all the Miniſters of Jeſus Chriſt, and any as members of Jeſus Chriſt, join in any good work, in this eſpecially, to beſeech all we have to do with, *that they receive not the grace of God in vain.*

Secondly, In turning from evil, and putting iniquity far from them; in praying for the pardon of ſin, and making their peace with God. In this work the three in the Text joined together. 'Tis a good work to turn away from evil, eſpecially when all who are concerned in it join in it. *A great mourning* is propheſied (*Zech.* 12. 11, 12, 13.) *And the Land ſhall mourn every Family apart; the Family of the Houſe of* David *apart, and their Wives apart; the Family of the Houſe of* Nathan *apart, and their Wives apart; the Family of the Houſe of* Levi *apart, and their Wives apart,* &c. Here's a great mourning with a turning from ſin propheſied of, as alſo the manner of it; *Every Family ſhall mourn apart:* But though they ſhall mourn apart, yet they ſhall all join in mourning; a whole Family ſhall mourn apart, not a part of a Family; and as the whole of a Family ſhall mourn, ſo all the Families ſhall mourn and repent, and ſeek reconciliation to God, as if they were but one Family, yea, but one perſon. As to join in ſin, and to be brethren in iniquity, is the worſt of unions, indeed a combination againſt God; ſo to join as brethren in mourning for ſin, and repenting of our iniquities, is a bleſſed union, and highly pleaſing unto God.

Secondly, In that it is ſaid, *They went and did as the Lord commanded,*

> Obſerve, *When the Lord commandeth we muſt ſpeedily obey.*

We muſt make no excuſe, no delay, we may not diſpute the commands of God, nor may we at all excuſe our ſelves from doing the commands of God: Theſe men did not ſo much as deſire to be excuſed; they ſaid not, it is true, we have failed, but it was through ignorance, or we had a good meaning in what we ſaid, we intended *Job* no hurt; may we not then be ſpared this coſt and trouble? We hear of none of this, but preſently they did as the Lord commanded. Though the command of the Lord be hard and very unpleaſing to fleſh and blood, yet we muſt ſpeedily obey it. The command which theſe men received was to fleſh and blood a hard command. Is it not hard to fleſh and blood,

Firſt, To confeſs that we have erred, and are out?

Secondly, Is it not hard to fleſh and blood? Goeth it not againſt the grain, to ſubmit to one whom we have wronged?

Thirdly, Is it not hard to fleſh and blood, to honour whom we have reproached and thought light of? All theſe are hard meat to fleſh and blood, and we can hardly digeſt them (as was toucht before) yet theſe men without diſputes and delays went about the work. *Abraham* received a hard command from God, a far harder command to fleſh and blood than theſe men received: For, Firſt, They received a command to go and offer Bullocks and Rams in Sacrifice; but *Abraham* was commanded to offer his Son in Sacrifice. Secondly, He was to offer his *only Son*; that was harder. Thirdly, He was to offer *his only Son* Iſaac, *whom he loved.* A man may have an only Son, who is a vexation and a trouble to him: But as he was a Son, and an only Son, ſo a Son whom *Abraham* greatly loved; yet God layed this hard and grievous command upon him, *Go and offer up thy Son, thine only Son* Iſaac, *whom thou loveſt, upon one of the Mountains that I ſhall ſhew thee* (Gen. 22. 2.) When *Abraham* had received this command from God, to offer up his Son for a Sacrifice, as theſe had received a command to offer up Beaſts in Sacrifice; what did *Abraham*? *He roſe up early in the morning* (ſaith the Text) *and ſadled his Aſs, and took two of the young men with him, and* Iſaac *his Son, and went unto the place which God had told him.* As here theſe men went, ſo *Abraham* went, he did not linger, nor lie long in bed, but roſe up early in the morning. This was an amazing work of obedience to the command of God, a very hard and grievous command of God. *Abraham* had ſhewed an eminent act of obedience to the Lord, before this offering up of his Son; when God called him out of *Ur* of the *Chaldees*, he went. The Apoſtle ſaith (*Heb.* 11. 8.) *By faith* Abraham *when he was called, to go out into a place which he ſhould after receive for an inheritance, obeyed, and he went out not knowing whither he went*; he followed God as it were blind-fold. So the Apoſtle yielded preſent obedience, he made no diverſions, no ſtop; *When it pleaſed God* (ſaid he) *who ſeparated me from my mothers womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him amongſt the Heathen; immediately I conferred not with fleſh and blood, neither went I up to* Jeruſalem, *to them which were Apoſtles before me, but I went into* Arabia, *&c.* (Gal. 1. 15, 16, 17.) *He conferred not with fleſh and blood*, that is, neither with his own heart, or with his own intereſt, what would be ſafeſt and beſt for him, nor did he go to conſult with other men who were fleſh and blood, but followed his call. Whatever God commands we have nothing to do but to obey. As the Centurion ſaid (*Math.* 8. 9.) *I am a man under authority, and I have Souldiers under me; and I ſay to one, go, and he goeth; and to another, come, and he cometh; and to a third, do this, and he doth it*: Such an obedience are we to yield to the commands of God. The Apoſtle giveth a like charge concerning Servants, with reſpect to all their Maſters lawful commands (*Tit.* 2. 9.) Exhort Servants to be obedient unto their own Maſters, *and to pleaſe them well in all things, not anſwering again*, that is, *not gain-ſaying*, or not contradicting, as the word may be Tranſlated. When a Servant receiveth a juſt command from his Maſter, he muſt not contradict, he muſt not put in his advice, thus or thus, but follow the orders given him. Now, if Maſters on Earth ought to receive, in all lawful commands, ſuch obedience from their Servants, how much more is this due to our Lord and Maſter in Heaven? Eſpecially, if we conſider what the commands of the Lord are, under theſe three titles or attributes of them.

Firſt, They are all juſt and good. It is impoſſible for God to command that which is not right to be done, for his command maketh that right which is done, whatſoever it is; his will is righteouſneſs it ſelf, and the rule of it.

Secondly, His commands are not only juſt and good in themſelves, but they are good to us, they are given for our profit and benefit, it is our intereſt as well as our duty to obey them. *In keeping them there is a great reward* (Pſ. 19. 11.) yea, the keeping of them is a great reward. *Do not my words* (ſaith the Lord, *Mic.* 2. 7.) *do good to him that walketh uprightly?*

Thirdly, The commands of the Lord are eaſie: That's the Apoſtles meaning, when he ſaith (1 *John* 5. 3.) *His Commandments are not grievous.* The Lord doth not put grievous things, nor heavy burdens upon his people. *My yoke* (ſaith Chriſt, *Math.* 11. 30.) *is eaſie, and my burden light.* Eaſie and light to a ſpiritual mind; to the new Creature, though grievous to corruption, and burdenſome to the fleſh. Hard things are eaſie, and heavy things light to a ſutable mind, whereas eaſie things are hard, and light things heavy to a mind that is not ſo. Seeing then the commands of the Lord are juſt in themſelves, good to us, and not grievous, he being our Soveraign, we ought ſpeedily to obey whatſoever he commands; and leaving off, or laying aſide all diſputes and excuſes, preſently fall upon the work which he at any time calleth us unto. This was commendable in *Eliphaz* and his two friends, *They went and did as the Lord commanded them.*

Thirdly, Obſerve, *The Lords commands muſt be done as he commandeth them.*

We may do what the Lord commandeth, yet not as he commandeth. The Lords commands muſt be done, as we ſay to a hair, to a tittle, they muſt be done exactly: It is not enough to do what God commandeth, but according as he commandeth. The *As* is remarkable. Not only muſt we do good, but we muſt do it in a good way, that is, in Gods way. Firſt, The matter muſt be according to his command. Secondly, The manner muſt be according to his command; and this a two-fold manner. Firſt, the external manner muſt be as the Lord hath commanded. *David* bringing home the Ark (2 *Sam.* 6. 3.) they carried it on a new Cart, when it ſhould have been carried upon the Levites ſhoulders; that was a failing in the outward manner of that work. Hence that confeſſion of *David*, when he undertook that work a ſecond time (1 *Chron.* 15. 13.) *The Lord made a breach upon us at firſt, for that we ſought him not after the due order.* We muſt worſhip God aright, for the outward manner of his commands and inſtitutions, elſe we diſhonour him, while we intend to worſhip him. Secondly, The inward manner muſt be according to the command of God. 'Tis poſſibly we may hit the outward form of worſhip, yet miſs in the inward manner of it. The Lord ſearcheth the heart, he knoweth what is within, and muſt be *worſhipped in ſpirit and in truth* (John 4. 24.) that is, according to the truth of the rule made known in the word, and in truth of heart. The inward manner of worſhip is,

Firſt, That we worſhip in faith; *Without faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe God* (Heb. 11. 6.) If we have not a juſtifying faith, yea, if we have not a perſwading faith (*Rom.* 14. 5, 23.) that what we do is according to the will of God, our worſhip is not according to what the Lord hath commanded, and ſo becomes ſin to us.

Secondly, That we worſhip in love. Though we do never ſo many holy ſervices to the Lord, if we do them not in love to him, we fail in the inward manner of our worſhip. The ſum of all the Lords commands, is, *Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy Soul, and with all thy might.* It is not hearing and praying, but theſe in love, which is the fulfilling of the Commandment. Every duty muſt be mixt alſo with love to man. We may do many things commanded to men, yet, if we do them not in love to men, we do nothing as the Lord commandeth. Thus the holy Apoſtle concluded peremptorily (1 *Cor.* 13. 1.) *Though I ſpeak with the tongue of men and Angels,* &c. *and have not charity, I am become as ſounding braſs, or a tinkling cymbal; and though I beſtow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burnt, and have not charity, it profiteth nothing.*

Thirdly, To do all that the Lord commands according to the inward manner, is to do all in humility; that is, Firſt, Acknowledging that we have no power of our own to do any thing; Secondly, That we have deſerved nothing, how much ſoever we have done, or how well ſoever we have done it.

Thus in doing the Lords commands we ſhould labour to anſwer the mind of the Lord fully, and to hit every circumſtance, to omit nothing, no not the leaſt thing. *Moſes* (Exod. 10. 16.) being to carry the people of *Iſrael* out of *Egypt*, would not compound the matter with *Pharaoh*: Ye may go ſaid *Pharaoh* (after he had been broken by ſeveral plagues) *Only let your little ones ſtay*; no, ſaith *Moſes*, that is not as the Lord hath commanded me. And at another time, he ſaid, *Go, only let your Cattel ſtay*; no, ſaith *Moſes*, this is not as the Lord commanded, I will not leave ſo much as a hoof behind me. And ſo ſaid *Moſes* concerning the obſervances of the Law, For, *thus I am commanded*, or this is as the Lord commanded, as we read all along the Books of *Exodus* and *Leviticus*. We are not full in our obedience, till we obey fully. It is ſaid of *Caleb* (Numb. 14. 24.) *He had another Spirit, he followed the Lord fully,* that is, as to matter and manner, as to out-ſide and in-ſide. Let us labour to be full followers of God; not out-ſide followers of God only, but in-ſide followers. Let us not reſt in the in-ſide, when we are not right in the out-ſide, nor pleaſe our ſelves with an out-ſide ſervice, when we are careleſs of the inward. Thus of their obedience, as conſidered in general, *They did according as the Lord commanded.*

Further, Conſider their doing *as the Lord commanded* them in that ſpecial matter, their reconciliation, firſt to himſelf, and then to *Job*.

Hence Obſerve, Fourthly, *What the Lord appointeth for our reconciliation, we muſt do, and we muſt do it as he hath appointed.*

Though the means which God appointeth ſeem to us improbable and weak, though it be troubleſom and chargeable, as here the offering up of ſo many Bullocks and Rams, yet we muſt do it; Yea, though it put us to ſhame before men, by the acknowledgment of our errors and miſtakes, as here *Eliphaz* and his two friends alſo did, yet we muſt do it. They who are aſhamed of ſin, will not be aſhamed to acknowledg their ſin. But what muſt we do to be reconciled to God or man?

Cur te pudeat peccatum tuum dicere cum non pudet facere? Bernard *in Sentent.* *Erubeſcere mala ſapientia eſt, bonum verò erubeſcere fatuitatis.* Greg. *l.* 1. *in* Ezek. *hom.* 10.

They who deſire reconciliation with God, muſt go out of themſelves, and go to Jeſus Chriſt; they muſt (as *Eliphaz*, &c. did) bring a ſacrifice to God, not (as they did) of Bullocks and Rams, but which was ſhadowed by thoſe legal ſacrifices) the ſacrifice of Jeſus Chriſt himſelf, *Who by one offering hath perfected for ever them that are ſanctified* (Heb. 10. 14.)

They who deſire reconciliation with man, muſt do that which God here appointed theſe men, go to him whom they have wronged, and acknowledg their error, or that they have wronged him; they muſt alſo deſire his pardon and prayers. Thus did theſe men, and they did as the Lord commanded for their reconciliation, firſt, to himſelf, and then to *Job*.

Fifthly, We may conſider this their obedience, as to the ſpring of it. What made them ſo ready, when the Lord commanded them, to go and do as he had commanded them? Doubtleſs this was one thing, the men were now humbled, God had brought them to a ſight of their ſin; *Ye have not ſpoken of me the thing that is right*, this they were made ſenſible of, and confeſſed, and ſo obeyed,

Hence Obſerve, *They who are truly humbled and touched, with a clear ſight and deep ſenſe of their ſins, will do whatſoever the Lord commandeth, and as he commandeth.*

They who are made ſenſible of the wrath of God, deſerved by and kindled againſt them for their ſins, will do any thing which he commands for the obtaining of his favour. God may have any thing of an humble Soul; had the Lord commanded theſe men to go to *Job*, and offer ſacrifice, before he had convinced them of their ſin, they might have flung away over the field, and not have kept the path of his Commandments; but having humbled them they ſubmitted. When *Peter* had preached that notable Sermon, which prickt his hearers at the very heart (*Acts* 2. 37.) *Then they ſaid unto* Peter, *and to the reſt of the Apoſtles, men and brethren, what ſhall we do?* They were not only ready to do what they were commanded, but did even ask for commands; *What ſhall we do?* They, as it were, threw down a blank, and deſired the Apoſtles to write what commands they would that tended to ſalvation; as if they had ſaid, we are ready to do what the Lord commandeth, and according as the Lord commandeth: Thus being made ſenſible of their ſins, and of the wrath of God, which they had provoked againſt themſelves, by crucifying the Lord of life, *They cried out, what ſhall we do?* We will ſubmit to any thing that is fit to be done. *Saul*, afterward *Paul*, came out with fury to perſecute the Diſciples of Chriſt; but the Lord having beaten him from his Horſe to the ground, *he trembling and aſtoniſhed, ſaid, Lord what wilt thou have me to do?* (Acts 9. 6.) He was fit to take any impreſſion, and to be moulded into any form, by the hand of God. They who have been made to know what it is to break commands, are willing to obey and keep them. This was the firſt ſpring of their obedience; God had humbled them.

There was a ſecond ſpring of their obedience, which will yield a ſixth Obſervation; For, as the Lord had convinced them of their ſin, ſo he had given them hopes of mercy in the pardon of it, and of reconciliation to himſelf. So much was intimated in that gracious counſel given them; *Take unto you ſeven Bullocks and ſeven Rams, and go and offer up a burnt-offering for your ſelves*, &c. This was a comfortable word, and doubtleſs they underſtood it ſo, and ſaid in their own hearts, God might have made us a Sacrifice, but he commands us to offer a Sacrifice: And what doth this ſignifie? Surely, that he will be gracious to us, and is ready to pardon us. Having theſe hopes of pardon, they went and willingly did what the Lord commanded, they went to *Job*, they ſubmitted to him whom they had contemned, they honoured him whom they had deſpiſed before.

Hence Note, *The intimations of mercy, and hopes of pardon, prevail mightily upon the Soul of a ſinner.*

The Lord did not only ſhew them their ſin, and terrifie them with kindled wrath, but ſhewed them a Sacrifice, and this preſently won upon them. The love of God is more conſtraining than his wrath; and hopes of pardon and ſalvation, than the fear of puniſhment and damnation: Both have their effects, and are ſtrong motives, wrath and love, but the ſtrongeſt is love. As when the Apoſtle beſeeched the *Romans* (Rom. 12. 1.) to preſent themſelves a living Sacrifice, he beſought them by *the mercies of God*: So when the Lord commanded theſe men to offer up ſlain Beaſts in Sacrifice, hope of mercy was the motive. 'Tis mercy which moves moſt effectually, to offer both our ſervices and our ſelves a Sacrifice unto God; that's the ſame Apoſtles argument again (2 *Cor.* 7. 1.) *Wherefore having theſe promiſes, let us cleanſe our ſelves* (that is, uſe all means of cleanſing our ſelves, let us go to Chriſt for the cleanſing of our ſelves) *from all filthineſs both of fleſh and ſpirit, perfecting holineſs in the fear of the Lord. The end of the Commandment is charity* (1 *Tim.* 1. 5.) that is, 'tis charity or love which gives the Commandment its end. What is the end of the Commandment? It is that we ſhould obey and fulfil it. To what end doth the Lord give us Commandments? It is that we ſhould keep them. Love is the end of the Commandment, and it gives the Commandment a compleating end. Now, whence comes our love, either to God or man? Surely from the manifeſtation of Gods love to us. So that, when the Lord manifeſteth his love to us, raiſing and confirming our hopes by promiſes, then our love appeareth in doing and keeping Commandments; and therefore, love is therefore joined with faith unfeigned, a faith without hypocriſie or deceit. Now, the work of faith in God for pardon and reconciliation, is grounded upon a Sacrifice. Thus, an Evangelical obedience is better than legal, ſo mercy revealed in the Goſpel, quickens to obedience, more than wrath revealed in the Law. The ſight of mercy, and the ſenſe of the love of God, in ſending his own Son to be a Sacrifice for us, works more upon us, than if the Lord ſhould threaten to make us a Sacrifice, or to conſume us in the fire of his wrath for ever. It was the Sacrifice which made theſe men go to *Job* and humble themſelves, they perceived there was hope now, and that though they had failed, yet the Lord was ready to receive them, and would not deal with them according to their folly, as he told them he would, if they did not (according to his command) go to *Job* with their ſeven Bullocks, *&c. and offer up a burnt-offering. They went and did as the Lord commanded them.*

But what came of it? How did they ſpeed? What was the iſſue of all? The Text ſaith,

The Lord alſo accepted Job.] This may ſeem a ſtrange connection; they going and doing as the Lord commanded them, one would have thought, it ſhould be ſaid, *And the Lord accepted them*, whereas the Text ſaith only thus, *The Lord alſo accepted* Job.

But were not *Job's* friends accepted? Shall we think that they loſt their labour? Not ſo neither; without all queſtion theſe three bringing their Sacrifice according to the command of God, both for matter and manner, were accepted too: Yet, becauſe it was at the requeſt and prayer of *Job* for them, therefore the Text ſaith not, *The Lord accepted them*, but, *The Lord alſo accepted* Job; that is, he offering Sacrifice, and praying for them, they were accepted. This ſheweth us the great myſtery, or the ſum of the Goſpel; the Lord did not accept them in themſelves, but he accepted *Job* in ſacrificing for them, and all in Chriſt. And conſider, it is not ſaid, the Lord accepted the Sacrifice, or the prayer of *Job*, but, *The Lord accepted* Job; his perſon was accepted in and through the Sacrifice or interceſſion of Chriſt, and his Sacrifice and interceſſion for *Eliphaz* and his two friends were accepted alſo in him.

Accepit Jehovah perſonam Jobi *ſacerdotio jungentis nomine Chriſti ſacerdotis, & victimæ ſempiternæ noſtræ quam iſta figurabant.* Jun.

How the Lord teſtified his acceptance of *Job*, whether by conſuming his Sacrifice with fire from Heaven, or by any other outward token of his favour, is not here expreſſed, and therefore to us uncertain; only this is certain, and that is enough for us to know, that God accepted him.

What it is to *accept*, was ſhewed in opening the former verſe.

In brief, to be accepted, is to have favour with God, our petitions anſwered, and the things done which we move or petition for. *The Lord alſo accepted* Job.

And when 'tis ſaid, *The Lord alſo accepted* Job, this implyeth, that *Job* did willingly undertake the ſervice and duty for his three friends. Thought it be not ſaid, that *Job* offered Sacrifice and prayed for them, yet both are wrapt up and underſtood in this concluſion, *The Lord alſo accepted* Job. This gives evidence or witneſs to the goodneſs of *Job*, and his eminence in grace; how full of love, how ready to forgive was he! He did not inſult over *Eliphaz*, &c. nor ſay, now I have got the day, God hath determined the matter for me; he did not tell them, ye have wronged and abuſed me, ye have unjuſtly cenſured and reproached me; but putting their unkindneſſes into oblivion, and laying aſide the thought of them, he laid out his Soul to the utmoſt for the healing or making up of the difference (ariſing from their folly) between God and them.

Rogavit Job *& Dominus ignovit; profuit illis amicitia, quibus obfuit inſolentia.* Ambroſ. 3. Offic. c. ult.

Amicè ut amicos illos amplexus eſt.

For the better improvement of theſe words,

Firſt, Let us compare them with thoſe in the eighth verſe. Here it is ſaid, *The Lord alſo accepted* Job; and there the Lord ſaid, *Him will I accept*; there it is a promiſe, here a performance.

Hence Note, *Whatſoever the Lord promiſeth to do, he will certainly perform and do.*

A word from God is as ſure as his deed: our hope upon promiſe, as good as poſſeſſion; *In hope of eternal life, which God who cannot lye, promiſed before the world began* (Tit. 1. 2.) Chriſt will be *Amen*, that is, performance (2 *Cor.* 1. 20.) to all the promiſes (2 *Cor.* 1. 20.) As they are all made in him, ſo they ſhall every one of them, and in every thing, be made good by him, *unto the glory of God by us*; that is, we ſhall at laſt have abundant cauſe of glorifying of God in performing and making good of all the promiſes, upon the undertaking of Jeſus Chriſt for us. No man ſhall fail of acceptance, that is under (as *Job* was) a promiſe of acceptation; get under promiſes, and you ſhall partake the good promiſed.

Secondly, Whereas upon their doing according as the Lord commanded, preſently it followeth, *The Lord alſo accepted* Job.

Note, *Though the Lord will ſurely perform what he hath promiſed, yet if we would have the good promiſed, we muſt do the duty commanded, otherwiſe our faith is but preſumption.*

If *Eliphaz* and his two friends had not done as the Lord commanded them, they could not rightly have expected God ſhould do what he promiſed, *accept* Job, *and ſo themſelves.* There are promiſes of two ſorts. Firſt, of preventing grace; theſe are made to the wicked and unconverted. Secondly, there are promiſes of rewarding grace; theſe are made to the godly, who muſt perform the duty commanded, if they would receive the mercy promiſed. *As many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy* (Gal. 6. 16.) If you will have peace, you muſt walk according to rule; the Lord is not bound to fulfil promiſes, if we take liberty to break Commandments, or neglect to do them. And they who have true faith in the truth, and faithfulneſs of God to fulfil the one, can never take liberty to break the other. None are ſo ſure to the Command, as they who have fulleſt aſſurance in the Promiſe.

The Lord alſo accepted Job.] Here are but few words, yet much matter; and who knoweth how much mercy? Here is much, yea, all in a little, *The Lord accepted* Job.

Hence Note, Thirdly, *To be accepted of God, is the anſwer of all our prayers and deſires, a full reward for all our ſervices.*

Acceptation with God is the happineſs of man, and ſhould be his ſatisfaction. If we are accepted in our ſervices, we are bountifully rewarded for them; and if our perſons are accepted, we ſhall be everlaſtingly ſaved. When the Lord accepted *Job*, he heard his prayer for his friends, they were reconciled. This good news, *The Lord alſo accepted* Job, was enough to make their hearts leap for joy. *Acceptation* is a reviving word, the ſum of all that we can wiſh or pray for; 'tis enough and enough to confirm our faith, and to wind up our aſſurance to the very higheſt expectation of a ſupply to all our wants and of pardon of all our ſins. All the kindneſſes of God are comprehended in this one word, *Acceptation.*

Fourthly, *The Lord accepted* Job. Here is no mention at all of accepting his Sacrifice, yet that was accepted too.

Hence Note, *The Lord having reſpect to our perſons, cannot but have reſpect to our ſervices.*

If our perſons are accepted, our ſervices are; and if the ſervices of any are not reſpected, it is becauſe their perſons are not. 'Tis ſaid (*Gen.*4.45.) *The Lord had reſpect unto* Abel, *and to his offering; but unto* Cain *and his offering, he had no reſpect.* Reſpect or no reſpect to what is done, always begins with the perſon of the doer.

Yet further, *Job was accepted*; but upon what account? Or how was *Job* accepted? Not in himſelf, nor for himſelf, but in Chriſt the promiſed *Meſſias.*

Hence Note, Fifthly, *That any mans perſon is accepted, is from free grace, through Jeſus Chriſt.*

When we have done all, we deſerve nothing, we are only accepted. The Lord accepted *Job*, not for his own ſake, not for the worth of his ſervice, not for the worthineſs of his perſon, but for him whom he in that action repreſented, and in whom he believed, Jeſus Chriſt. *Job* himſelf needed Chriſt for his acceptation; 'tis in and through him that any are accepted. The word *Acceptance* plainly implieth, that there is nothing of merit in us; acceptation notes grace and favour. This reſpect to us, is not for any deſert in us.

From the whole, we may infer,

First, *If the Lord accepted* Job *when he offered Sacrifice, and prayed for his friends; how much more doth he accept Jeſus Chriſt, who offered himſelf a Sacrifice for ſinners, and ever liveth to make interceſſion for them, whoſe Sacrifice he is.*

Did the Lord preſently accept *Job* and his friends, or *Job* for his friends? Then what confidence may we have, that Jeſus Chriſt, who is our everlaſting Sacrifice and Advocate, who is entred into the holieſt, the Sanctuary of Heaven, and there pleads for us with his own blood, is accepted for us, and we through him. Chriſts ſuit ſhall never be refuſed, nor ſhall we, while we come to God through him. This act of divine grace, was, as I may ſay, but a ſhadow or figure of that great work of Jeſus Chriſt, in reconciling ſinners, and making them accepted with the Lord; and therefore, as often as we pray, Chriſts everlaſting Sacrifice ſhould come to our remembrance, for the confirmation of our faith, and our encouragement againſt fears. We may argue down all our doubts about acceptation by Chriſt, upon this account, that *Job*'s friends were accepted at his ſuit, and their acceptation not bottom'd on him, nor in his Sacrifice, but as both ſhadowed Chriſt. Where the Reconciler is accepted, they that are in him, and for whom he makes requeſt, are accepted too. What the Lord ſpake from Heaven (*Matth.*3.17.) *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed*, reacheth all believers to the end of the World; whoſe head and repreſenter Chriſt is. Let us adore, and ever be thankful, that we have received ſuch grace in Chriſt; for, though Jeſus Chriſt in his perſon is of infinite worth, and his Sacrifice of ſo great a value, that it became a price ſufficient for the ranſom and redemption of all ſinners: Yet, it was of free grace that Chriſt was made a ranſom for ſinners, and we accepted through him.

Secondly, Take this Inference:

If the Lord be ready to hear a Job *for his friends, then the Lord will much more hear a* Job *for himſelf.*

That the prayers and ſupplications which Believers put up to the Lord, obtain mercy and good things for others, may ſtrengthen faith, that they ſhall obtain for themſelves.

Thirdly, We may infer,

Job was become a great favourite with God, after his humiliation and ſelf-abhorrence.

He no ſooner fell out with himſelf for his former miſcarriages, but the Lord, as it were, fell in love with him afreſh. What a favourite was he grown, who could thus readily get an anſwer, and obtain favour for thoſe, againſt whom the Lord ſaid, *My wrath is kindled?*

Thus much concerning the judgment and determination of God in this matter, which put a period to the long continued controverſie between *Job* and his three friends, and reconciled both parties both unto God and between themſelves. O how bleſſed is the iſſue of the Lords Judgment and undertaking towards his Servants and Children! When once he was pleaſed to appear in the caſe, he ſoon ſilenced both ſides, and made them in the concluſion both of one heart, and of one mind.

And no ſooner was this humbling and reconciling work done and over, but reſtoring and reſtitution work followed, as will appear in opening the third and laſt part of this Chapter, which is alſo the laſt part of the whole Book.

VERS. 10.

And the Lord turned the Captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: Alſo the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before.

THis verſe begins the third part of the Chapter. We have ſeen *Job* humbled before God in the firſt part; we have ſeen *Job*'s friends reconciled to God, and his anger turned away from them in the ſecond: In this third, we have *Job* himſelf reſtored, or the reſtitution of *Job* to as good, yea, to a better eſtate than he had before, and this was done *when he prayed for his friends: The Crown is ſet upon the head of prayer.*

The reſtitution of *Job* is ſet down two ways.

Firſt, More generally, in this verſe, where it is deſcribed three ways.

Firſt, By the Author of it, *The Lord; it was he that turned the Captivity of* Job.

Secondly, By the ſeaſon of it; *When he prayed for his friends.*

Thirdly, By the degree and meaſure of it: *Alſo the Lord gave* Job *twice as much as he had before.* His was not a bare return or reſtitution, but with advantage, and that to a duplication.

And the Lord turned the Captivity of Job.

Before I open the words as Tranſlated by us, I ſhall briefly mind the Reader of another Tranſlation. The word which we render *Captivity*, is by ſome rendred *Repentance*; and there is a twofold interpretation of that rendring.

Firſt, Some refer it to God, and read the word thus, *The Lord was turned to repentance concerning* Job: And then the meaning is, the Lord repented or changed his diſpenſation with reſpect to the affliction of *Job*, when he prayed for his friends. The Scripture ſpeaks of the Lords repentance two ways.

Firſt, That he repenteth of the good which he hath done for, or beſtowed upon man (*Gen.*6.6.) *It repented the Lord that he had made man*; he ſeemed as one troubled in his mind, that ever he had ſet up man in ſuch a condition. And as there the Lord repented of his making mankind in general in that good natural ſtate, ſo elſewhere he is ſaid to repent of his doing good to ſome men in particular, as to their civil ſtate (1*Sam.*15.11.) *The Lord repented that he had made* Saul *King*, that he had ſet him upon a Throne to rule men on Earth, who had no better obeyed the Rule given from his own Throne in Heaven.

Secondly, The Lord is ſaid to repent of the evil which he hath either actually brought upon man, or threatned to bring upon him. In the former ſenſe *Moſes* ſaith (*Deut.* 32. 36.) *The Lord ſhall judge his people, and repent himſelf for his ſervants, when he ſeeth that their power is gone, and there is none ſhut up, or left*; that is, when they are in an afflicted low condition, the Lord taketh the opportunity or ſeaſon to reſtore them, and then he is ſaid to repent concerning any afflictive evil brought upon his people. In the latter ſenſe (as he is ſaid to repent of the evil threatned) it is ſaid of repenting *Nineveh* (*Jonah* 3. 10.) *The Lord repented of the evil that he had ſaid that he would do unto them, and he did it not.* Thus the Lord is turned to repentance with reſpect to evil, either brought or threatned to be brought upon a people; for which we have that remarkable promiſe (*Jer.* 18. 7, 8.) *At what inſtant I ſhall ſpeak concerning a Nation, and concerning a Kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to deſtroy it; if that Nation againſt whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil I thought to do unto them.* If they turn, I will turn. Another word is uſed in the Hebrew there, but it imports the ſame thing. Repentance in God is not any change of his Will, Counſel, or Purpoſe; it only notes a change in his Providences and Diſpenſations. *The Lord is of one mind, who can turn him?* (Job 23. 13.) But he is not always of one way; he repenteth, that is, he changeth his way ſometimes, and ſo he did towards *Job*: He once caſt him down, and left him as a Captive, bound hand and foot under the power of Satan, as to his outward man, and worldly enjoyments; but the Lord turned and repented; that is, *turned his Captivity.* This ſenſe and reading is much inſiſted on by ſeveral Interpreters, and it is a comfortable truth; yet I am not ſatisfied that it is the truth intended in this place.

Secondly, Others who follow that Tranſlation, refer this *repentance* to *Job*; and ſo the ſenſe is this, *The Lord turned at the repentance, or upon the repentance of* Job, *when he prayed for his friends*; of which repentance we read in the former part of the Chapter. The Obſervation which naturally ariſeth from this interpretation, is clear from many other Texts of Scripture.

When perſons or Nations pray and depart from iniquity, when they joyn true repentance with prayer, the Lord turneth to them in mercy, and turneth evil away from them.

The Lord turned in mercy to repenting *Job* when he prayed for his friends. And this was promiſed to Gods peculiar people, the Jewiſh Nation (2 *Chron.* 7. 14.) *If my people which are called by my Name ſhall humble themſelves, and pray, and ſeek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear in Heaven, and will forgive their ſin, and will heal their Land.* This was performed to the *Ninevites*, a Heathen Nation, when they repented of the evil which they had done, God repented of the evil which he threatned to do unto them, or bring upon them, and did it not, brought it not. But I ſhall not ſtay upon this uſeful point here, becauſe it is grounded upon a Tranſlation which is not (as I conceive) ſo clearly grounded upon the Original as our own.

The Lord turned the Captivity of Job.

In Hebræo eſt pulchra paranomaſis, nam שׁוּב *eſt vertere aut convertere, &* שְׁבוּת *captivitas.* שׁבוּת שָׁב את

Jehova reſtituit, quod captum fuerit Jobo. Jun. *Captivitas ponitur pro ipſis captivis.* Druſ.

The Hebrew is very Elegant, *He turned the turning or captivity of* Job. Why his *Captivity?* *Job* was never led Captive in perſon, he was not carried away Priſoner by the *Chaldeans* and *Sabeans*, who captivated his Cattle. How then is it here ſaid, *The Lord turned the Captivity of Job?*

I anſwer, Theſe words, *The Lord turned the Captivity of* Job, may be taken two ways.

Firſt, thus, *He turned that to* Job (whatſoever it was) *which was led into Captivity.* So ſome tranſlate, *The Lord reſtored that which was taken from* Job. His Cattle, which were taken away by violent men, and his Children, which were taken away by a vehement wind, were returned or reſtored to him again. The word *Captivity* is elſewhere in Scripture taken tropically for things or perſons captivated; that which is *captivated* is called *captivity*. *The Lord turned the Captivity of* Job, that is, he returned that which was captivated, or taken away. Take a Scripture or two for that ſenſe of the word *Captivity* (Judg. 5. 12.) *Awake, awake* Deborah, *awake, awake, utter a Song; Ariſe* Barak, *and lead thy captivity captive, thou Son of* Abinoam. That is, bring them back who were taken Captives; or thus, lead thoſe captive who have taken thy people captives. So (*Pſal.* 68. 18.) which is quoted by the Apoſtle (*Epheſ.* 4. 8.) *When he aſcended up on high, he led captivity captive.* The *Pſalmiſt* gives us a Propheſie, and the Apoſtle reports the Hiſtory of the glorious Aſcenſion of Chriſt. *When he aſcended up on high, he led captivity captive.* Which Text, as the former, may be taken two ways.

Firſt, Chriſt aſcending, led thoſe captive, who had led poor ſouls captive, that is, the Devils; which the Apoſtle expreſſeth thus (*Col.* 2. 15.) *And having ſpoiled Principalities and Powers, he made a ſhew of them openly, triumphing over them in it*, that is, in his Croſs or ſufferings; or (as our Margin hath it) *in himſelf*: And as Chriſt ſpoiled thoſe Principalities and triumphed over them, not only really, but openly in his Paſſion; ſo he led them captive, and triumphed over them more openly in his Aſcenſion.

Secondly, He led thoſe that were captives, ſinful men, captive; he brought them out of a miſerable captivity into a bleſſed captivity, that is, from the captivity of Sin, Satan, and the World, into a captivity to himſelf. The Apoſtle ſpeaks ſo of the mighty power of the Word in the Miniſtery of the Goſpel: *The weapons of our warfare* (that is, the weapons with which we, the Miniſters of the Goſpel, make war upon ſinners to convert them) *are not carnal* (that is, weak) *but mighty through God, to the pulling down of ſtrong holds, caſting down imaginations,* &c. *and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Chriſt* (2 *Cor.* 10. 4, 5.) Not only are our perſons, but our thoughts captivated to Chriſt, by the power of the Spirit miniſtred in the Goſpel. Thus the Scripture ſpeaks of *captivity* in both theſe notions: the *captivaters* and the *captivated* are called *captivity*. Here in this place, we may take it in the latter ſenſe, *the Lord turned the captivity of* Job; that is, what was captivated, or taken away, the Lord, as it were, fetcht back again, and reſtored it to him. In this ſenſe *Abraham*, when he heard that his Nephew *Lot* was taken captive, *led captivity captive* (*Gen.* 14. 16.) He purſued them that had taken him captive, he brought back *Lot*, and the reſt of the Priſoners, together with the ſpoils. Thus the Lord did not only deliver *Job* from all thoſe evils which he was under, but reſtored the good things to him which he had loſt, or were carried away.

Secondly, We may take it thus, *The Lord turned the captivity of* Job; that is, he took away, or called in Satans Commiſſion, which he had given him over *Jobs* Eſtate and Body, and by which Satan held *Job* in captivity, or as his captive; for as we read (*Chap.* 2. 6.) Satan could not touch him till he had leave, or a Letter of Licence from God; till God ſaid, *Behold, all that he hath is in thy power, only upon himſelf put not forth thy hand* (*Chap.* 1. 12.) Nor could he touch his perſon, till his Commiſſion was inlarged; and the Lord ſaid again, *Behold, he is in thine hand, but* (or only) *ſave his life* (*Chap.* 2. 6.) So as ſoon as his Commiſſion was taken away, or called in by God, he could trouble him no longer. The Lord forbidding the Devil to meddle any more with him, *Turned the captivity of* Job.

Hence obſerve; Firſt, *To be in any affliction, is to be in bonds or captivity.*

The afflicted condition of *Job* was a captivity. Troubles in our Eſtate, troubles in our Relations, troubles in our Bodies, troubles in our Souls, are like Bonds and Priſons. It is a very uneaſie and an uncomfortable condition to be in priſon, and ſo it is to be in any afflicted condition conſidered in it ſelf. *Job* ſpake as much of himſelf, while his affliction continued upon him ſtrongly (*Chap.* 13. 27.) *Thou putteſt my feet in the Stocks, and thou lookeſt narrowly unto all my paths.* *Job* was not only as a man in captivity, but as a man in the Stocks, which is a great hardſhip in captivity. *David* calleth ſuch an Eſtate an impriſonment (*Pſal.* 69. 33.) *The Lord heareth the poor, and deſpiſeth not his priſoners.* Some are priſoners ſtrictly, being under reſtraint; all are priſoners largely,

of

or (as we ſay) Priſoners at large, who are in any diſtreſs. The Lord maketh many Priſoners by ſickneſs and weakneſs of body, as alſo by poverty, and the want of bodily comforts and conveniences. The afflicted condition of the Church in any kind is expreſſed by captivity, as captivity, in kind, is ſometimes the affliction of the Church. The ten Tribes were led into captivity by *Salmanazar*, *Judah* by *Nebuchadnezzar.* Hence that promiſe (*Jerem.* 30. 18.) *Behold, I will bring again the captivity of* Jacobs *Tents:* And that prayer (*Pſal.* 14. 7.) *O that the ſalvation of* Iſrael *were come out of* Sion. *When the Lord bringeth back the captivity of his people,* Jacob *ſhall rejoyce, and* Iſrael *ſhall be glad.* This Scripture may be taken both ſtrictly, as a prayer for their return out of proper captivity, and largely, for their deliverance out of any adverſity: So (*Pſal.* 126. 1.) *When the Lord turned the captivity of* Sion, *we were like them that dream.* Read alſo (*Zeph.* 2. 7.)

Secondly, From the Author of this turn, *The Lord turned the captivity*, &c.

Obſerve; *Deliverance out of an afflicted ſtate is of the Lord.*

He is the Author of theſe comfortable turns, and he is to be acknowledged as the Author of them. The *Pſalmiſt* prayed thrice, *Turn us again* (*Pſal.* 80. 3, 7, 19.) The waters of affliction would continually riſe and ſwell higher and higher, did not the Lord ſtop and turn them, did not he command them back, and cauſe an ebb. Satan would never have done bringing the floods of affliction upon *Job*, if the Lord had not forbidden him, and turned them. It was the Lord who took all from *Job*, as he acknowledged (*Chap.* 1. 21.) and it was the Lord who reſtored all to him again; as we ſee here the ſame hand did both in his caſe, and doth both in all ſuch caſes (*Hoſ.* 6. 1.) *Let us return to the Lord, for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath ſmitten, and he will bind us up. David* aſcribed both to God (*Pſal.* 66. 11, 12.) *Thou broughteſt us into the Net; thou layedſt affliction upon our loyns; thou haſt cauſed men to ride over our heads, we went through fire and through water.* The hand of God led them in that fire and water of affliction, through which they went; but who led them out? The *Pſalmiſt* tells us in the next words, *Thou broughteſt us into a wealthy place*; the Margin ſaith, *into a moiſt place.* They were in fire and water before. *Fire* is the extremity of heat and drineſs; water is the extremity of moiſtneſs and coldneſs. A *moiſt place* notes a due temperament of heat and cold, of drineſs and moiſtneſs; and therefore elegantly ſhadows that comfortable and contentful condition, into which the good hand of God had brought them, which is ſignificantly expreſſed in our tranſlation, *by a wealthy place*; thoſe places flouriſhing moſt in fruitfulneſs, and ſo in wealth, which are neither over-hot, nor over-cold; neither over-dry, nor over-moiſt. And as in that *Pſalm David* acknowledged the hand of God in this, ſo in another, he celebrated the Lords power and goodneſs for this (*Pſal.* 68. 20.) *He that is our God is the God of ſalvation; and unto God the Lord belong the iſſues from death*; that is, the out-lets or out-gates from death, are from the Lord; he delivereth from the grave, and from every grief. *The Lord turned the captivity of* Job, not only preſerving him from death, but filling him with the good things and comforts of this life.

Thirdly, note; *The Lord can ſuddenly make a change or turn.*

As he can quickly make a great change from proſperity to adverſity, and in a moment bring darkneſs upon thoſe who injoy the ſweeteſt light; ſo he can quickly make a change from adverſity to proſperity, from captivity to liberty, and turn the darkeſt night into a morning light. For ſuch a turn the Church prayed (*Pſal.* 126. 4.) *Turn again our captivity, O Lord, as the ſtreams in the South*, that is, do it ſpeedily. The South is a dry place, thither ſtreams come, not by a ſlow, conſtant current, but as mighty ſtreams, or land-floods, by a ſudden unexpected rain; like that (1 *Kings* 18. 41, 45.) *Get thee up* (ſaid *Eliah* to *Ahab*) *for there is a ſound of abundance of rain, and preſently the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain.* When great rains come after long drought, they make ſudden floods and ſtreams. Such a ſudden income of mercy, or deliverance from captivity, the Church then prayed for, and was in the faith and hope of; nor was that hope in vain; nor ſhall any, who in that condition wait patiently upon God, be aſhamed of their hope. The holy Evangeliſt makes report (*Luke* 13. 16.) that Satan had bound a poor woman *eighteen years*, all that time he had her his priſoner; but Jeſus Chriſt in a moment made her free. *Ought not this woman, being a Daughter of* Abraham, *whom Satan hath bound, loe, theſe eighteen years, be looſed from this bond on the Sabbath day?* The Devil, who had her in his power eighteen years, could not hold her a moment, when Jeſus Chriſt would turn her captivity, and looſe her from that bond. If the Son undertake to make any free, whether from corporal or ſpiritual bondage, they ſhall not only *be free indeed* (as he ſpake, *John* 8. 36.) at the time when he is pleaſed to do it, but he can do it at any time, in the ſhorteſt time, when he pleaſeth. We find a like turn of captivity is deſcribed (*Pſal.* 107. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14.) ſuch as ſit in darkneſs, *and in the ſhadow of death, being bound in affliction and iron, becauſe they rebelled againſt the Word of the Lord*, &c. Theſe (*verſ.* 13.) *cryed unto the Lord in their trouble, and he ſaved them out of their diſtreſſes: He brought them out of darkneſs, and the ſhadow of death, and brake their bands in ſunder.* Thus far of the firſt particular conſiderable in *Jobs* reſtitution, the Author of it, *The Lord turned the captivity of* Job.

The ſecond thing to be conſidered, is the ſeaſon which the Lord took for the turning of *Jobs* captivity; the Lord did it, ſaith the Text,

When he prayed for his friends.

Some conceive the turn of his captivity was juſt in his prayer-time, and that even then his body was healed. I ſhall have occaſion to ſpeak further to that afterwards upon another verſe. Thus much is clear, that

When he prayed,] That is, either in the very praying time, or preſently upon it, the Lord turned his captivity. Poſſibly the Lord did not ſtay till he had done, according to that (*Iſa.* 65. 24.) *It ſhall come to paſs that before they call, I will anſwer; and while they are yet ſpeaking, I will hear.* Or according to that (*Dan.* 9. 20.) *While I was ſpeaking, and praying, and confeſſing my ſin, and the ſin of my people* Iſrael, *and preſenting my ſupplications before the Lord my God, for the holy Mountain of my God: Yea, while I was ſpeaking in prayer, even the man* Gabriel, *whom I had ſeen in the Viſion at the beginning, being cauſed to fly ſwiftly, touched me, about the time of the Evening Oblation, and he informed me, and talked with me, and ſaid,* O Daniel, *I am come forth to give thee skill and underſtanding; at the beginning of thy ſupplications the Commandment came forth, and I am come to ſhew thee*, &c. What Commandment came forth? even a Command for the turning of their captivity. Thus here (I ſay) poſſibly the Lord gave out that word of Command, for the turning of *Jobs* captivity, at that very time when he was praying for his friends.

But without queſtion, theſe words, *when he prayed for his friends*, note a very ſpeedy return of his prayers; that is, ſoon after he had done that gracious office for them, he found matters mending with himſelf, and the anſwers of prayer in the mercies of God coming tumbling in thick and threefold. His captivity fled far away when he had thus drawn near to God; he had, as a very full and ſatiſfactory, ſo a very ſpeedy anſwer,

When he prayed.] Prayer is the making known our wants and deſires to God. It is a ſpiritual work, not a meer bodily exerciſe; it is the labour of the heart, not lip-labour. *Jobs* prayer was a fervent working, or effectual prayer (as the Apoſtle *James* ſpeaks, *Chap.* 5. 16.) not a cold, ſlothful, ſleepy prayer; when he prayed, he made work of prayer. Many ſpeak words of prayer, that make no work of prayer, nor are they at work in prayer. *Job* prayed in the ſame ſenſe that *Saul* (afterwards *Paul*) did (*Acts* 9. 11.) when the Lord Jeſus bid *Ananias* go to him, for, *Behold he prayeth*, implying, that he was at it indeed. He had been brought up after the ſtricteſt rule of the Phariſees, who prayed much, or made many prayers; but he prayed to ſo little purpoſe before, that we may well call that his firſt prayer, and ſay he had never prayed before. *Job* prayed for his friends, as *Paul* for himſelf; he was very earneſt with God for them, and prevailed. Extraordinary caſes call for extraordinary layings out in duty. It was an extraordinary caſe, *When he prayed*

Singulare partitivum pro plurali. Merc.

For his friends.] The Hebrew is, *When he prayed for his friend.* It is uſual in the Grammar of the holy Text, to put the ſingular for the plural: 'Tis ſo here; either, Firſt, becauſe he prayed for every one of them diſtinctly, and by name; or, Secondly, becauſe he looked upon them all as one, and bound them up in the ſame requeſts, *When he prayed*

O, raram & ſingularem virtutem, quæ in pauciſſimis vel Chriſtianis reperiatur. Merc.

For his friends.] They are called his friends, to ſhew the eſteem that he had of them, notwithſtanding all their unkindneſs and unfriendlineſs towards him. He prayed for them in much love, though they had ſhewed little love to him; and his heart was ſo much towards them, that the Text ſpeaks as if he had forgot himſelf, or left himſelf at that time quite out of his prayers. Doubtleſs *Job* prayed for himſelf, but his great buſineſs at that time with God, was, *for his friends.*

Now, in that *Jobs* prayer is ſaid expreſly to be for his friends, not for himſelf, though we cannot doubt but that he prayed, and prayed much for himſelf;

> Obſerve; *A godly man is free to pray for others, as well as for himſelf, and in ſome caſes, or at ſome times, more for others than for himſelf.*

He ſeldom drives this bleſſed Trade with Heaven for ſelf only, and he ſometimes doth it upon the alone account of others. 'Tis a great piece of ſpiritualneſs, to walk exactly, and keep in with God to the utmoſt, that ſo our own perſonal ſoul-concerns may not take up our whole time in prayer, but that we may have a freedom of ſpirit to inlarge for the benefit of others. Many by their uneven walkings, exceedingly hinder themſelves in this duty of prayer for friends, and of praying for the whole Church. Uneven walkings hinder that duty in a twofold reſpect.

Firſt, Becauſe they indiſpoſe the heart to prayer in general; which is one ſpecial reaſon why the Apoſtle *Peter* gives that counſel to Husband and Wife (1 *Pet.* 3. 7.) *to walk according to knowledge, and as being Heirs together of the ſame grace of life, that* (ſaith he) *your prayers be not hindred*; that is, leſt your hearts be indiſpoſed to prayer.

Secondly, Becauſe uneven walkings will find us ſo much work for our ſelves in prayer, that we ſhall ſcarce have time or leiſure to intend or ſue out the benefit of others in prayer. He that watcheth over his own heart and ways, will be and do moſt in prayer for others. And that,

Firſt, For the removing or preventing of the ſorrows and ſufferings of others.

Secondly, For the removing of the ſins of others; yea, though their ſins have been againſt himſelf, which was *Jobs* caſe. He prayed for thoſe who had dealt very hardly with him, and ſinned againſt God in doing ſo; he prayed for the pardon of their ſin, God being very angry with them, and having told them he would deal with them according to their folly, unleſs they made *Job* their friend to him. This was the occaſion of *Jobs* travelling in prayer for his friends; and in this he ſhewed a ſpirit becoming the Goſpel, though he lived not in the clear light of it. And how uncomely is it, that any ſhould live leſs in the power of the Goſpel, while they live more in the light of it? To pray much for others, eſpecially for thoſe who have wronged and grieved us, hath much of the power of the Goſpel, and of the Spirit of Chriſt in it. For, thus Jeſus Chriſt, while he was nailed to the Croſs, prayed for the pardon of their ſins and outrages, who had crucified him, *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do* (*Luke* 23. 34.) Even while his Crucifiers were reviling him, he was begging for them, and beſeeching his Father that he would ſhew them mercy, who had ſhewed him no mercy, no, nor done him common Juſtice. And thus (in his meaſure) *Jobs* heart was carried out in his prayer for his friends, that thoſe ſins of theirs might be forgiven them, by which they had much wronged him, yea, and derided him (in a ſort) upon his Croſs, as the Jews did Chriſt upon his. This alſo was the frame of *Davids* heart, towards thoſe that had injured him (*Pſal.* 109. 4.) *For my love they are my adverſaries* (that's an ill requital; but how did he requite them? we may take his own word for it, he tells us how) *but I give my ſelf unto prayer*; yea, he ſeemed a man wholly given unto prayer. The Elegant conciſeneſs of the Hebrew is, *But I prayer*; we ſupply it thus, *But I give my ſelf unto prayer*: They are ſinning againſt me, requiting my love with hatred, *but I give my ſelf unto prayer.* But for whom did he pray? doubtleſs he prayed, and prayed much for himſelf; he prayed alſo for them. We may underſtand thoſe words, *I give my ſelf unto prayer*, two ways. Firſt, I pray againſt their plots and evil dealings with me (prayer was *Davids* beſt ſtrength always againſt his Enemies) yet that was not all. But, Secondly, *I give my ſelf to prayer*, that the Lord would pardon their ſin, and turn their hearts, when they are doing me miſchief; or, though they have done me miſchief, I am wiſhing them the beſt good. *David* (in another place) ſhewed what a ſpirit of charity he was cloathed with, when no reproof could hinder him from praying for others (in ſome good men, reproofs ſtir up paſſion, not prayer) (*Pſal.* 141. 5.) *Let the righteous ſmite me, it ſhall be a kindneſs* (ſmite me, how? with reproof; ſo it followeth) *Let him reprove me, it ſhall be an excellent oyl, which ſhall not break my head, for yet my prayer ſhall be in their calamities*; that is, if ever they who are my reprovers fall into calamity, though they may think they have provoked me ſo by reproving me, that they have loſt my love, and that I have caſt them out of my prayers, or that I will never ſpeak well of them, or for them again, yet I will pray for them with all my heart, as their matters ſhall require; I will pray for them when they have moſt need of prayer, even in their calamity. Some heighten the ſenſe thus; The more they ſharpen their reproof, the more I think my ſelf bound to pray for them. It ſhews an excellent ſpirit, not to be hindred from doing good to others, by any thing they do or ſpeak againſt us, nor by their ſharpeſt (though perhaps miſtaken) reproofs of us. Thus it was with this good man, *Job prayed for his friends*, who had ſpoken much againſt him, and not only reproved him without cauſe, but reproached him without charity; and God turned his captivity when he *prayed for them.*

> Hence obſerve, Secondly; *Prayer for friends, eſpecially for unkind friends, is very pleaſing to God, and profitable to us.*

We never reap more fruit or benefit by prayer our ſelves, than when we lay out our ſelves in prayer for others; and then moſt, when we pray for thoſe who have deſerved leaſt at our hands. Prayer for unkind friends, is the greateſt kindneſs we can do them, and the nobleſt way of recompencing their unkindneſs. Holy *David* was much in this way of duty, and found the benefit of it (*Pſal.* 35. 12, 13.) *They rewarded me evil for good, to the ſpoiling of my ſoul; but as for me, when they were ſick, my cloathing was ſackcloth, I humbled my ſoul with faſting* (that is, I was greatly affected with, and afflicted for them in their affliction; and ſee what followed) *My prayer returned into my own boſom.* There is ſome difference about the Expoſition of thoſe words; but I conceive that is clear in it ſelf, as well as to my purpoſe, that *David* received fruit and a good reward for thoſe prayers. As if he had ſaid, *If my prayer did them no good, it did me good; if it did not profit them, it profited me; my prayer returned into my own boſom, I found comfortable effects of it.* We never gain more by prayer, than when we pray for thoſe by whom we have been loſers; we never find more comfort by prayer, than when we pray heartily for thoſe by whom we have found much ſorrow: whatever good we pray for in the behalf of others, falls upon our own heads; and the more we pray for good upon the heads of thoſe that have done evil to us, the more good is like to fall upon our own heads and hearts. Chriſt ſaith (*Mat.* 10. 13.) *When ye come into an houſe, ſalute it* (Chriſt means not a Courtly complemental ſalute, but a Chriſtian ſpiritual ſalute, wiſhing them mercy and peace, as is plain by that which followeth) *and if the houſe be worthy, let your peace come upon it; but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you.* As if he had ſaid, *When ye come into an houſe, good or bad, ſalute it; if the houſe be good, they ſhall receive the benefit of your prayer; if not, you ſhall* *have the benefit of it your ſelves*; though they get no good by your good wiſhes to them, or prayers for them, yet you ſhall. This is more expreſly aſſured us again by our bleſſed Saviour (*Luke* 10. 6.) *Into whatſoever houſe ye enter, firſt ſay, peace be to this houſe* (beſtow a prayer upon them) *and if the Son of peace be there, your peace ſhall reſt upon it*; *if not, it ſhall turn to you again*; your prayers ſhall not be loſt, nor ſhall ye be loſers by your prayers.

> Hence take theſe two Inferences: Firſt, *If when we pray for friends, for unkind friends, God be ready to do us good, then he will be much more ready to do us good, when we (as he hath commanded us) pray for profeſſed or real Enemies.*

The worſe they are (if not ſo bad as to be paſt prayer, by the Apoſtles rule, 1 *John* 5. 16.) for whom we pray, the better are our prayers, and an argument, as of our greater faith in God, ſo of our greater love to man.

Yet this is not to be underſtood, as if we ſhould pray for the proſperity of Enemies, or evil men, in their evil purpoſes or practices (this were to pray at once for the miſery of *Sion*, for the downfal of *Jeruſalem*, and the diſhonour of God.) Our prayer for Enemies ſhould only be, that God would change their hearts, and pardon their ſins, as was touched before. I grant we may (in ſome caſes) pray, *Lord, overturn, overturn them*; or (as *David* againſt *Achitophel*) *Lord, turn their counſels into fooliſhneſs*; yet even then we ſhould alſo pray (with reſpect to their perſons) *Lord, turn them, turn them.* The Goſpel teacheth us to do ſo (*Luke* 6. 28.) *Bleſs them that curſe you, pray for them that deſpitefully uſe you:* Not that we ſhould pray for a bleſſing on them as they are Curſers and Deſpiſers, but that they may repent, and give over their curſed curſings and deſpiteful uſages. The Apoſtle is full for this (*Rom.* 12. 14.) *Bleſs them that perſecute you, bleſs and curſe not* (verſ. 19.) *Avenge not your ſelves.* And as we ſhould not avenge our ſelves, ſo we ſhould be ſparing in prayer, that God would take vengeance; and if ever we put up ſuch prayers, beware they flow not from a ſpirit of revenge. We, indeed, are ſometimes afraid to be over-gentle and kind-hearted towards them that offend us; and this bad Proverb is too much remembred, *If we play the Sheep, the Wolf will eat us up*; as if to do our duty, were to run further into danger, and that it muſt needs turn to our wrong, not to avenge our wrongs. But know, if we carry it meekly like ſheep, we have a great Shepherd who will take care of us, and is able to preſerve us from the Wolf. Conſider theſe two things in praying for Enemies, or for thoſe that have any way wronged us.

Firſt, If by prayer we gain them ('tis poſſible by prayer to turn a Wolf into a Sheep) then it will be well with us, they will be our friends.

Secondly, If they continue Wolves and Enemies ſtill, God will be more our friend, and turn the evil which they either intend, or do us, to our good.

> A ſecond Inference is this: *If God be ready to deliver us from evil, and do us good when we pray for others, then he will be ready to do us good, and deliver us from evil, when we pray for our ſelves.*

This Inference appears every where in Scripture. And as the Lord himſelf hath often invited or incouraged us to the duty of prayer for our ſelves by this promiſe; (*Pſal.* 50. 15.) *Call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee, and thou ſhalt glorifie me*; that is, thou ſhalt have both occaſion and a heart to glorifie me. So the Lords ſervants have often had experience of his power and goodneſs in delivering them; or, as 'tis here expreſſed concerning *Job*, of turning their captivity; take one inſtance for all (*Pſal.* 34. 4, 6.) *I* (ſaid *David*) *ſought the Lord, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears. This poor man cryed, and the Lord heard him, and ſaved him out of all his troubles.* The Lord, who doth us good when we pray for others, cannot but do it when we pray for our ſelves. *The Lord turned the captivity of* Job, *when he prayed for his friends.*

But ſome may ask, will the Lord turn any mans captivity, when he prayeth for his friends? whoſe prayer, and what prayer is it that obtains ſo high a favour?

I anſwer in general; It is the prayer of a *Job*. That is,

Firſt, The prayer of a faithful man, or of one who is perfect and upright with God. It is not the prayer of every man that prevails with God (*Jam.* 5. 16.) *The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man* (only) *availeth much.* Nor is it the prayer of a meer morally righteous man that availeth; he muſt be an Evangelically righteous man, that is, a man eſtated by faith in the Righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt.

Secondly, As 'tis the prayer of the faithful, ſo the prayer of faith; as it is the prayer of one in a ſtate of grace, ſo of one acting his graces, eſpecially that grace of faith. It is poſſible for a man that hath faith, not to pray in faith; and ſuch a prayer obtaineth not (*Jam.* 1. 5, 6, 7.) *If any man* (ſaith that Apoſtle) *lack wiſdom*; we may ſay, whatſoever any man lacketh, *let him ask of God*; *but let him ask in faith, nothing wavering: for let not that man* (the man that wavereth) *think that he ſhall receive any thing* (that is, any good thing asked) *of the Lord.* To ask without faith, may bear the name, but is not the thing called prayer; and therefore ſuch receive nothing when they ask.

Thirdly, It is the prayer of a perſon repenting, as well as believing. *Job* was a Penitent, he repented in duſt and aſhes for the evil he had done, before he obtained that good for his friends, and for himſelf by prayer. *If my people* (ſaith the Lord, 2 *Chron.* 7. 14.) *which are called by my name, ſhall humble themſelves, and turn from their wicked ways* (there's compleat repentance) *then will I hear from Heaven, and forgive their ſin, and heal their Land* (there is compleat mercy.) Some pretend, at leaſt, to be much in believing, yet are little, if at all, in repenting and humbling themſelves under the mighty hand of God. How can their prayers prevail for the turning away of their captivity, who turn not from iniquity? *If I* (ſaid *David*, *Pſal.* 66. 18.) *regard iniquity in my heart* (his meaning is, if I put it not both out of my heart and hand, by ſound repentance) *God will not hear me*; that is, he will not regard, much leſs favourably anſwer my prayer. It is a piece of impudence, I am ſure, ſuch a piece of confidence, as God will reject, and wherein no man ſhall proſper, to expect good from God by prayers, while our evils are retained, or abide in our boſoms unrepented of. God hath joyned faith and repentance together; woe to thoſe who put them aſunder. They who either repent without believing, or believe without repenting, indeed do neither; they neither repent, nor believe, nor can they obtain any thing of God by prayer. But the prayer of a faithful man, made in faith, and mixed with ſound repentance, will make great turns; ſuch a one may turn the whole world about by the Engine of prayer.

But, what is there in ſuch a prayer, that ſhould make ſuch turns, and move the Lord to change his Diſpenſations, or our conditions? I anſwer;

Firſt, Such prayer is the Lords own Ordinance or appointment, and he will anſwer that. When we meet God in his own way, he cannot refuſe us; he ſeals to his own Inſtitutions, by gracious anſwers.

Secondly, As prayer is the Ordinance of God, ſo he hath made promiſe to hear and turn the captivity of thoſe that pray, as was ſhewed before. Promiſes are ingagements to performance. God will not be behind hand with man, as to any ingagement; for, as he is powerful, and can, ſo he is faithful, and will do whatever he hath ingaged himſelf to do by promiſe. A word from the God of Heaven, is enough to ſettle our ſouls upon for ever, ſeeing his *word is ſettled for ever in Heaven* (*Pſal.* 119. 89.) Half a promiſe, or an half promiſe, an *it may be* (*Zeph.* 2. 3.) from God, is better ſecurity than an abſolute promiſe, than an *it ſhall be*, yea, than an oath from any of the Sons of men.

Thirdly, Prayer honours God. Our ſeeking to him in our wants and weakneſſes, in our fears and dangers, is an argument that we ſuppoſe him able to help us, and that all our ruines may be under his hand: Such a ſeeking to God, is the honouring of God; and therefore, God is a rewarder of them that diligently ſeek him, and call upon him. Our coming to God in all our wants, ſhews, that he is an inexhauſtible fountain; ſo *thick a cloud*, that we cannot weary him, nor he ſpend all his waters, how much ſoever he ſhowers down, or ſpends upon us. He can diſtil mercies, and drop down bleſſings everlaſtingly. We often want Veſſels to receive, but he never wants Oyl to give. It is the glory of Kings and Princes, that ſo many come with Petitions to them; that they have many Suiters at their Gates, may poſſibly burden them, but undoubtedly it honours them; doth it not ſignifie, that they have a Purſe to relieve their neceſſities? or Power to redreſs their wrongs and injuries? *O thou that heareſt prayer*, is a title of honour given to God (*Pſal.* 65.2.) *To thee ſhall all fleſh come.* As God hath ſaid (*Pſal.* 50. 15.) they that call upon him, ſhall glorifie him for help received; ſo they do glorifie him, by calling upon him for help: No marvel then, if he turn a *Jobs* captivity, when he prayeth.

Fourthly, Prayer is the voice of the new Creature. The Lord loveth that voice; 'tis Muſick, the beſt Muſick, next to praiſe, in his Ear. *Let me hear thy voice* (*Cant.* 2. 14.) that is, let me hear thee praying, or thy prayer-voice; *let me ſee thy countenance: for ſweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely.* The Lord delighteth in prayer; therefore the Lord will turn the captivity of a *Job* when he prayeth.

Fifthly, Prayer is not only the voice of the New Creature, but it is the voice of the Spirit with the New Creature. *The Spirit himſelf maketh interceſſion for us* (*Rom.* 8. 26.) 'Tis the holy Spirits work to form requeſts in our hearts to God. As *the Spirit it ſelf witneſſeth with our ſpirits, that we are the children of God* (Rom. 8. 16.) ſo he prayeth in the Spirits of Gods Children. The prayer of a believer hath the power of the holy Spirit in it, and therefore it muſt needs make great turns. God turned the captivity of *Job* when he prayed.

Sixthly, Jeſus Chriſt preſents ſuch prayers, the prayers of Faith, the prayers of Repentance unto God his Father. Chriſts interceſſion gives effect, or gets anſwer to our ſupplications. The Father hears the Son always (*Joh.* 11.42.) and ſo he doth all them whoſe prayers are offered to him by the Son (Rev. 8.3.) *The Angel came and ſtood at the Altar, having a Golden Cenſer, and there was given unto him much Incenſe, that he ſhould offer it with the prayers of all Saints, upon the Golden Altar which was before the Throne.* The Angel there ſpoken of, is the *Angel or Meſſenger of the Covenant*, propheſied of (*Mal.* 3. 1.) that is, Jeſus Chriſt, 'tis he, he alone, who offers the Incenſe of his own prayers, with the prayers of all Saints, upon the Golden Altar which is before the Throne; and being there repreſented doing ſo, preſently (as it followeth, *ver.* 5.) *There were Voices, and Thunders, and Lightenings*, ſignifying the wonderful effects of prayer, till it ſhould come (after many turnings in the world, or, as I may ſay, after a world of turnings) to the Lords turning of *Sions* captivity, as here of *Job's*.

Seventhly, Jeſus Chriſt doth not only preſent the prayers of believers to God, but alſo prayeth in them; when Saints pray, he prayeth in them, for he and they are myſtically one: And as Chriſt *is in believers the hope of glory* (*Col.* 1. 27.) ſo he is in them the help of duty; and ſo much their help, that *without him they can do nothing* (John 15. 5.) Now a believers prayer being, in this ſenſe, Chriſts prayer, it cannot but do great things.

Laſtly, As Jeſus Chriſt preſents the prayers of believers to the Father, and prayeth in them, or helps them to pray by the bleſſed and holy Spirit ſent down, according to his gracious promiſe, into their hearts; ſo he himſelf prayeth for them, when they are not actually praying for themſelves. For (ſaith the Apoſtle, *Heb.* 7. 25.) *He ever liveth to make interceſſion for them.* The beſt believers do not always make ſupplications for themſelves; but Chriſt is always making, as well as he ever lives to make interceſſion for them. The Apoſtle (ſpeaking of Chriſts interceſſion) uſeth the word in the preſent tenſe or time, which denoteth a continued act (*Rom.* 8. 34.) *Who is even at the right hand of God, who alſo maketh interceſſion for us.* The Sacrifice of Chriſt (though but once offered) is an Everlaſting Sacrifice; and this other part of his Prieſtly office, his interceſſion, is Everlaſting, as being often, yea always, or everlaſtingly offered. The way or manner of Chriſts making everlaſting interceſſion for us, is a great ſecret; it may ſuffice us to know and believe that he doth it. Now it is chiefly from this everlaſting interceſſion of Chriſt, that both the perſons of the Elect partake of the benefits of his Sacrifice, and that their prayers are anſwered for the obtaining of any good, as alſo for the removal of any evil, as here *Jobs* was for the turning of his captivity.

Thus I have given a brief accompt of this inference, that if prayer prevails to turn the captivity of others, then much more our own. Prayer hath had a great hand in all the good turns that ever the Lord made for his Church: And when the Lord ſhall fully turn the captivity of *Sion*, his Church, he will pour out a mighty ſpirit of prayer upon all the Sons of *Sion*. The Prophet foreſhewed the return of the captivity of the *Jews* out of *Babylon* (*Jerem.* 29. 10.) *After ſeventy years be accompliſhed, at* Babylon *I will viſit you, and perform my good word towards you, in cauſing you to return to this place; for I know the thoughts that I think towards you, ſaith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.* But what ſhould the frame of their hearts be at that day? the 12th verſe tells us, *And ye ſhall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken.* Theſe words may bear a twofold ſenſe. Firſt, The ſenſe of a command; *Then ſhall ye call upon me, and then ſhall ye go and pray*, that is your duty in that day. Secondly, I conceive they may alſo bear the ſenſe of a promiſe; then ſhall your hearts be inlarged, then I will pour out a ſpirit of prayer upon you, *And ye ſhall go and pray unto me; and I will hearken.* We may conclude the approach of mercy, when we diſcern the ſpirits of men up in and warm at this duty. Many inquire about the time when the captivity of *Sion* ſhall fully end? we may find an anſwer to that queſtion beſt, by the inlargement of our own hearts in prayer. *David* ſpeaking of that, ſaid (*Pſal.* 102. 17.) *He will regard the prayer of the deſtitute* (the meaneſt and loweſt ſhrubs in grace, as the word there uſed imports) *and not deſpiſe* (that is, he will highly eſteem, and therefore anſwer) *their prayer*: How much more the prayers of the tall Cedars in grace, or of the ſtrong Wreſtlers, when they call upon him, and cry unto him with all their might, day and night? *The Lord turned the captivity of* Job *when he prayed for his friends.*

Nor was it a bare turn. As *Job* did not offer a lean Sacrifice to God in prayer, but the ſtrength of his Soul went out in it; ſo the Lord, in giving him an anſwer, did not give him a lean or ſlight return, but, as it followeth;

Alſo the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before.

The Hebrew is, *The Lord added to* Job *to the double.* Some tranſlate too barely, *The Lord made an acceſſion*, or *an addition*; but that doth not reach the ſenſe intended: For, a little more than he had before, had been an addition to what he had before; but double is more than a little, or the common notion of an addition; the Lord gave him twice as much, or double, to that great Eſtate which he had before. This doubling of his Eſtate may be taken two ways.

Firſt, Strictly, as four is twice two, and eight twice four. In that ſtrict ſenſe it may be taken here, as to his Perſonal Eſtate; but as to perſons it will not hold, the number of his children was the ſame as before. If we compare this Chapter with the firſt Chapter (*verſ.* 3.) we find his Eſtate doubled in ſtrict ſenſe: Whereas *Job* had then ſeven thouſand ſheep, now ſaith this Chapter (*verſ.* 12.) *he had fourteen thouſand ſheep*; and whereas before he had three thouſand Camels, now he had *ſix thouſand Camels*; and whereas before he had five hundred yoak of Oxen, now he had *a thouſand yoak of Oxen*: And laſtly, whereas before he had five hundred She-aſſes, now he had *a thouſand She-aſſes.* Here was double in the letter; the Lord added all his Cattle double in number: Yet we need not tye up the word *double*, or *twice as much*, ſtrictly to that ſenſe. Therefore,

See the wild conceits of the *Jewiſh Rabbins*, about the doubling of *Jobs* Eſtate, in *Mercer* upon the place.

Secondly, Double may be taken largely, and ſo *double, or twice as much*, is very much. He added to him double, that is, he made a very great addition, poſſibly in ſome things treble, yea, fourfold to what he had before. And thus the Lord made good what *Bildad* had ſpoken to *Job*, cloſely hinting, that ſurely *Job* lay in ſome ſecret ſin, and was not right with God, becauſe God let him lye in that forlorn condition, and did not ſo much as reſtore him to the ſame, much leſs raiſe him to a better Eſtate than he had before (*Chap.* 8. 6, 7) *If thou wert pure and upright, ſurely, now*

In duplum, i. e. *in plurimum. Quam plurimum? numerus finitus pro infinito.* Jun.

now he would awake for thee, and make the habitation of thy righteouſneſs proſperous: Though thy beginning was ſmall, yet thy latter end ſhould greatly increaſe. It is uſual in the Hebrew, to ſay thoſe things are double, which excel and are great. Thus ſpake *Zophar* (Chap. 11. 6.) *O that God would ſpeak and open his lips againſt thee; and that he would ſhew thee the ſecrets of wiſdom, that they are double to that which is. Know therefore*, &c. The ſecrets of Divine Wiſdom are double to what is, namely, to what they appear, or are apprehended to be: The Wiſdom of God is double, yea, an hundred-fold more than what man is able to conceive it to be: The ſecrets of Gods Wiſdom are unſearchable, and paſt any Creatures finding out. Thus in other Scriptures *donble* is put for very much (*Iſa.* 40. 2.) *Speak ye comfortably to* Jeruſalem, *and cry unto her, that her warfare is accompliſhed, that her iniquity is pardoned, for ſhe hath received of the Lords hand double for all her ſins.* We muſt not think that *Jeruſalem* made ſatisfaction to the Lord for her ſins, much leſs may we imagine that *Jeruſalems* ſufferings did exceed her ſins, or the deſert of her ſins: For 'tis ſaid (*Ezra* 9. 13.) *Thou haſt puniſhed us leſs than our iniquities deſerve.* And (*Lam.* 3. 22.) *It is of the Lords mercies that we are not conſumed.* But the meaning of *double* there, is plainly this, ſhe hath received a very great puniſhment, the Lord hath made her feel the ſorrowful effects of her ſin fully: For ſaid *Daniel* (Chap. 9. 12.) *Under the whole Heaven hath not been done, as hath been done unto* Jeruſalem. This is called a double recompence by another Prophet (*Jerem.* 16. 18.) *I will recompence their iniquity, and their ſin double, becauſe they have defiled my Land.* And thus *Jeremy* prayed againſt the Oppoſers and Deſpiſers of his Propheſie (*Chap.* 17. 18.) *Deſtroy them with double deſtruction.* So then, when it is ſaid, *the Lord added double, or twice as much to* Job *as he had before*, it noteth, at leaſt, a very great addition to the proſperous Eſtate which *Job* had before, even in outward things.

Hence obſerve, Firſt; *When we are abont Spirituals, the Lord takes occaſion to miniſter to us in Temporals. The Lord not only turned the captivity of* Job, *when he prayed for his friends, but gave him twice as much.*

Job did not pray for the doubling of his Eſtate, or for great things in the world; we find him many times giving up his hopes as to Temporals, when he would not give up his hopes as to Spirituals and Eternals: *Though he kill me, yet will I truſt in him; he alſo ſhall be my Salvation.* He ſubmitted his life to God, in hope of a better life, but he had little or no expectation about the things of this life; yet the Lord gave him abundance with his life, as alſo an abundant, or long life, as we read at the end of this Book. There are two ſpecial reaſons why the Lord gave *Job* a great increaſe in Temporals.

Firſt, Becauſe in thoſe Old-Teſtament times, the Promiſes went much in Temporals.

Secondly, Becauſe *Job* having loſt his credit in the world, when he loſt his Eſtate, ſpiritual ſupplies would never have ſet him right in the eye of the world, he had ſuffered, as to his Reputation in ſpirituals, by his loſs in temporals; and therefore the Lord doubled his Eſtate, to vindicate his Reputation in the eye of the world. And the Lord did this unſought, and unthought of by *Job*; thereſore (as the point ſaith) it is a truth, that while we are careful about ſpirituals, the Lord takes care of our temporals (*Mat.*6.33.) *Seek ye firſt the Kingdom of God, and his Righteouſneſs, and all theſe things ſhall be added unto you.*

Secondly, Note; *The Lord is a bountiful Rewarder of his ſervants, and a liberal repairer of their loſſes.*

The Lord is a bountiful Rewarder two ways.

Firſt, For what we do, we ſhall not loſe our labour in ſerving him. God gives good and great wages (1 *Cor.* 15. 58.) *Be ye ſtedfaſt and unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; foraſmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord*; that is, labour abundantly, for your labour ſhall have an abundant reward: Not only ſhall it not be in vain, but richly rewarded. *The Lord is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love* (Heb. 6. 10.) The Lord ſhould be unrighteous to forget our labour of love; not becauſe any labour of ours can indebt him to reward us, but becauſe he hath freely promiſed to reward us.

Secondly, The Lord is a bountiful Rewarder of us for what we ſuffer: And that, Firſt, When we ſuffer under his own hand. Secondly, When for his ſake we ſuffer peaceably and patiently under the hand of men. *Job* was a great ſufferer both ways; he ſuffered greatly under the afflicting hand of God, and he ſuffered greatly under the violent hands and reproachful tongues of men, and the Lord was to him a bountiful Rewarder, with reſpect to both: For he did not only heal his wounded ſtate, and make him up as well as he was before, according to that in (*Jerem.* 30. 17.) *I will reſtore health unto thee, and I will heal thy wounds*; but he did it double, inſomuch, that he, who in the days of his former proſperity, was only the greateſt of all the men of the Eaſt, became in the days of his latter proſperity, greater than he had been himſelf. The Lord hath plentiful rewards for the godly, and ſo he hath (though of another kind) for the wicked. *He* (ſaith *David*) *plentifully rewardeth the prond doer* (Pſal. 31. 23.) There is a reward of wrath, as well as a reward of favour. Wrath is the reward of proud men. Thus the Lord will plentifully reward proud *Babylon*, at one time or other, by ſome hand or other (*Revel.* 18. 6.) *Reward her, even as ſhe rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: In the Cup which ſhe hath filled, fill to her double. Babylon* ſhall at laſt loſe double blood, for the blood that ſhe hath drawn; yea (as the Text ſaith) *double, double*, that is four times as much; and who knows how much that *double unto her donble* means? For 'tis ſaid (*ver.* 7.) *How much ſhe hath glorified her ſelf, and lived deliciouſly, ſo much torment and ſorrow give her.* Now as no man can tell nor imagine, how much ſhe hath glorified her ſelf, nor how deliciouſly ſhe hath lived; ſo no man can tell how much torment and ſorrow ſhe ſhall have! Yea, we read not only of a double, and quadruple, but of a ſeven-fold reward of wrath for evil men (*Pſal.* 79. 12.) *Render unto our Neighbours ſeven-fold in their boſom.* And ſurely that Scripture means bad Neighbours. Now as the Lord doth plentifully reward the proud and evil doers in a way of wrath, ſo he will plentifully reward well-doers and well-ſufferers, whether under his own hand, or the hand of man, in ways of mercy. And if ſo, then,

Firſt, Fear not to loſe by God, and that in a twofold reſpect. Firſt, When he cometh to borrow of you for the poor. *He that hath pity on the poor, lendeth to the Lord* (Prov. 19. 17.) Every time we are asked to give to the poor, upon due occaſion, God ſends to borrow of us, and he will ſurely repay what he hath borrowed; therefore fear not to loſe by God, when he borrows of you for the poor. Secondly, Fear not to loſe by God, when he takes all from you, and makes you poor. Sometimes God doth not come a borrowing, but he cometh a taking; he will have all, whether you will or no: He will ſometimes take all away by fire, by loſſes at Sea or Land; in theſe, and ſuch like caſes, fear not to be loſers by God: But, Firſt, Truſt him as *Job* did. Secondly, Be patient, as *Job* was. They that have an intereſt in God and a portion in the Promiſe, need not fear they ſhall loſe a thread or a ſhoe-latchet by God, though his Providence takes all away, and ſtrips them (as it did *Job*) naked. What God takes from his ſervants, he keeps for them, and will reſtore to them, either in the ſame kind with much more, as he did to *Job* at laſt, or in ſome other kind, which is much better, as he did to *Job* at firſt. While *Job* was deprived of all his worldly good things, God gave him much patience at firſt, ſo that when all was loſt and gone, he could not ſay, *Naked came I out of my Mothers Womb, and naked ſhall I return thither: The Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken, bleſſed be the Name of the Lord.* While this frame of heart laſted, it was better than all that he had loſt; and though through the extremity of his pains and temptations it was ſomewhat abated, and his patience ſomewhat ruffled, yet it was never wholly loſt; and when it was worſt with him, his Faith failed not, which was beſt of all.

Now what the Apoſtle ſpake concerning thoſe troubles which befel the *Iſraelites* in the Wilderneſs, *They happened for examples* (1 *Cor.* 10. 11.) So all theſe troubles and takings away, happened to *Job* as our example, or (which the Greek word ſignifieth) as a type, that we ſhould be patient under the Lords hand in taking; and remember for the incouragement of our Faith, the Lords bounty in reſtoring. For this end the Apoſtle *James* calleth us to conſider this dealing of God with *Job* (Jam. 5. 11.) *Ye have heard of the patience of* Job, *and have ſeen the end of the* Lord. What is that to us (may ſome ſay) that *Job* was patient? Yes, all the matter is to us, it was written for our example and admonition; and ſaith the Apoſtle, ye have not only heard of the patience of *Job*, but *have ſeen the end of the* Lord. Here is an exerciſe of thoſe two Noble Senſes, Hearing and Seeing, mentioned, and doubtleſs for great purpoſes both. But why doth he add, *Ye have ſeen the end of the* Lord? Some interpret theſe words as a ſecond inſtance; the Apoſtle mentioning *Job* in the former words, and Chriſt in theſe, *Ye have ſeen the end of the Lord*; that is, how it was with Chriſt in his ſufferings. The Lord Jeſus Chriſt was well rewarded for all that he ſuffered, *God highly exalted him* (Phil. 2. 7.) *becauſe he humbled himſelf, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Croſs.* 'Tis a truth, if we take thoſe latter words of the verſe, *Ye have ſeen the end of the Lord*, for the iſſue of Chriſts ſufferings. But I rather conceive, that the whole verſe relateth unto *Job*; and ſo *the end of the Lord*, in the latter part, is the end which the Lord made with *Job*. As if the Apoſtle *James* had ſaid, *Hath it not been ſet before your eyes, what end the Lord made with him? or how he gave him double in the end?* Be not afraid to loſe by God, either borrowing or taking, for he is a bountiful Rewarder.

Secondly, As we ſhould not be afraid to loſe by God (when he comes either to borrow a part, or (as the caſe was with *Job*) to take all from us) ſo, *let us not be afraid to loſe for God* (which was toucht before, together with the former Inference, upon the 11. verſe of the 41. Chapter.) We have no ground in the world of fear, when all that we have in the world is taken from us for Gods ſake, that is, for Righteouſneſs ſake, ſeeing God who here reſtored to *Job* double, all that himſelf had taken from him, hath alſo promiſed to give his faithful ſervants double for all that is taken from them (upon his account) by men, or which they loſe for him. That's the meaning of the Prophet (*Iſa.* 61. 7.) *For your ſhame ye ſhall have double*, that is, ye having ſuffered ſhame, or been put to ſhame for Gods ſake, or for doing that which is honourable and commendable in it ſelf, *ſhall receive double.* What double? As by *ſhame* we are to underſtand any evil ſuffered, ſo by *double* any good promiſed as a reward for ſuffering that evil, eſpecially ſuch good as ſtands in direct oppoſition to that evil. As if it had been ſaid, ye ſhall have double honour for ſhame, and double riches for poverty, and double health for ſickneſs, and double liberty for impriſonment and captivity. 'Tis much to have double reparation of any loſs; yet this doubling is a poor matter to what is promiſed in another place, to thoſe who loſe for God. We have Chriſts word, with an aſſeveration for it (*Mat.* 19. 28, 29.) *Verily, I ſay unto you, that ye which have followed me in the Regeneration, when the Son of man ſhall ſit in the Throne of his glory, ye alſo ſhall ſit upon twelve Thrones, judging the twelve Tribes of* Iſrael: *And every one that hath forſaken houſes, or brethren, or ſiſters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my Name ſake*, (here are great ſufferings, but behold a greater reward followeth; not like *Jobs*, twofold, but an hundred-fold; ſo ſaith that Text) *ſhall receive an hundred-fold, and* (which is ten-thouſand-fold more than that) *ſhall inherit everlaſting life.* Be not afraid to loſe for God. *Job* had double, who loſt by God, and ſo may you; but if ye loſe for God, here is an hundred-fold for you. But ſome may ſay, this hundred-fold is a great way off, in the next life. I anſwer, If it be ſo, yet do not think ye ſhall be loſers; for if ye ſhould never ſee good day more in this world, yet if ye are aſſured of everlaſting life in the world to come, is not that enough? What pittiful ſpirits have they, that are not willing to take their hundred-fold in the life to come! Yet mark it, Jeſus Chriſt doth not put us off ſo neither; therefore another Goſpel expreſſeth the Promiſe fully, to meet with this objection (*Mark* 10. 29, 30.) when ſome told Chriſt, they had left all to follow him, *Jeſus anſwered and ſaid, Verily I ſay unto you, there is no man that hath left houſe, or brethren, or ſiſters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my ſake, and the Goſpels, but he ſhall receive an hundred-fold; now in this time, houſes, and brethren, and ſiſters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with perſecutions; and in the world to come, eternal life.* Jeſus Chriſt gives preſent recompences, as well as future; in *this time*, as well as in the time, or rather Eternity to come. And that there is a kind of *Synchroniſm*, or near joyning, in time of payment and loſs, of ſuffering and rewarding, ſome have found in the letter; they have had great worldly exaltations, ſoon after their depreſſions in this world. And Jeſus Chriſt, who made this promiſe, hath made it good in ſpirituals, to the experiences of many thouſands, who have loſt all for him; they have had that at preſent given into their ſouls, which hath been to them, or in their eſtimation, an hundred fold better than what they loſt. They that have indeed ſuffered loſs for Chriſt, never complained of their ſufferings or loſſes; they have often triumphed in them, and rejoyced (as the Apoſtle *Peter* ſpeaks, 1 *Epiſt.* 1. 8.) *with joy unſpeakable, and full of glory.* If any think they do fooliſhly, who ſuffer worldly loſſes for Chriſts ſake, let them remember this return of a hundred-fold, and be aſhamed of their own folly in thinking ſo. It is not fooliſhneſs, but true wiſdom, to loſe much for the gain of more. Are not they wiſe, who loſe one, upon good aſſurance to get an hundred? have we not Chriſts word for it? and is not that good aſſurance that it ſhall be ſo? Sure, no Merchant can put off his goods at a better Market, than he that putteth them all off for God. How rich would men be, if they could get an hundred for one? Such a rich Trade hath Chriſt opened, and they are the wiſeſt Merchants now, who venture in it, and will be ſo accounted in the end, even by thoſe who now call them Fools and Mad-men. That which is loſt for Chriſt, is ſown; and though the ſeed that is caſt into the ground may ſeem caſt away, yet it will ſpring up again. *Light is ſown for the righteous, and gladneſs for the upright in heart* (*Pſal.* 97. 11.) And what Chriſt ſaith of the good ground, is moſt true in this caſe, that ſeed of light is ſown in ſuch ground as will bring forth, to ſome thirty, to ſome ſixty, to ſome an hundred-fold. Therefore to conclude this Inference, *Be not afraid to loſe for God*; he will not only ſee you indempnified, but (at leaſt) doubly rewarded. *Job*, who once loſt by God, or by the hand of God upon him, was repayed by the ſame hand with him, double in kind; and if we have double in a better kind, double faith in God, and double love to God, and double zeal for God, and double peace in our own Conſciences, this is an hundred-fold better than all we can loſe for him, in or of this world.

VERS. 11.

Then came there unto him all his Brethren, and all his Siſters, and all they that had been of his acquaintance before, and did eat bread with him in his houſe; and they bemoaned him, and comforted him, over all the evil that the Lord had brought upon him; every man alſo gave him a piece of Money, and every one an Ear-ring of Gold.

IN the former verſe we have the bleſſed turn of *Jobs* ſtate in general; *The Lord gave him twice as much as he had before*: In this verſe begins the particular account of *Jobs* reſtorings. There were four things wherein *Job* ſuffered loſs.

First, He ſuffered the loſs of his Eſtate.
Secondly, The loſs of his Children.
Thirdly, The loſs of his Health.
Fourthly, The loſs of his Friends.

Jobs repair begins with his laſt loſs; his Friends were the laſt that he loſt in the day of his affliction, but the firſt that he recovered in the day of his reſtoration. The firſt budding or ſpring of *Jobs* felicity, after ſo long and ſharp a Winter of ſorrow as he had gone thorough, was the putting forth of freſh and fragrant acts of love from his Ancient Friends, that of late had forſaken him, and left him in the hour of his temptation.

Inter adverſitates Jobi *quaſi præcipua erat quod fuerat ab amicis ſuis deſertus, & ideo hujus adverſitatis primò remedium ponitur.* Aquin.

This verſe, wherein the account is given about this firſt mercy, I may call, or entitle, *The Addreſs of* Jobs *Friends*; and in it we may conſider,

Firſt, How they are deſcribed, or what they are called.

Firſt, as to their Relation, *His Brethren, his Siſters, and acquaintance came.* Secondly, in their quantity and number, they came *all*: Here is all, all, all; *All his Brethren, and all his Siſters, and all that had been of his acquaintance before*; there was not one miſſing, not one that forbore to make this friendly addreſs unto him.

Secondly, As we have an account who they were that came to him, ſo what they did when they came; and that is ſet forth four ways in this one verſe. Firſt, *They did eat bread with him.* Secondly, *They bemoaned him.* Thirdly, *They comforted him.* Fourthly, *They were very bountiful, and very reſpectful to him*; *They gave him every one a piece of money, and every one an Ear-ring of gold.* Thus you have the ſtate and parts of this verſe, which I call, *The addreſs of* Jobs *friends unto him.*

Then came there unto him all his Brethren, and all his Siſters.

Then.] The word in the Hebrew, is the ordinary Copulative *And*, which hath various rendrings in Scripture, according to the ſtate of the place. Here we tranſlate it *Then*, which may have a double reference. Firſt, to the turn of his captivity, *Then they came.* Secondly, to his prayer for his friends, and the Lords acceptance of him, when God had ſo eminently declared his favour to him, and his friends, upon his interceſſion, *Then there came unto him.*

All his Brethren, and all his Siſters.] Brethren and Siſters are taken two ways in Scripture.

Firſt, Strictly; and ſo they that are of, or have the ſame Parents, at leaſt one of them, are Brethren and Siſters.

Secondly, Brethren and Siſters are taken largely, for all of the Kindred. The Kindred of Chriſt are called his Brethren (*Mark* 3. 31.) *Then came his Brethren, and his Mother, ſtanding without*, that is, his Kindred; for whether Chriſt had any Brother, in a ſtrict ſenſe, as born of the ſame Mother, we have nothing from Scripture to affirm; it is generally agreed that he had not, his Brethren were his Kindred at large. *Abraham* ſpake truly, though not the whole truth (*Gen.* 20. 12.) when he called *Sarah* his Siſter, that is, his Kinſwoman. *Moſes* called *Iſrael* Brother to the *Edomites*, who were diſtant from that people many degrees; they deſcending from *Eſau*, theſe from *Jacob* (*Numb.* 20. 14.) *Thus ſaith thy Brother Iſrael*; that is, *Iſrael* that is of thy blood, though a great way off, *Iſaac* being their common Father. Thus here, all *Jobs* Brethren and Siſters are all his Kindred; and not only theſe, but,

All that were of his acquaintance before.] The Hebrew is, *All that knew him before*, that is, had familiarity and converſe with him before. Chriſt (*Mat.* 7. 22.) ſaid of thoſe that did ſo hotly preſs acquaintance upon him, *I know you not*, ye are not of thoſe that I know, or have had fellowſhip with, you are none of my acquaintance. So that there was a collection of all *Jobs* Relations and Friends at that time, they all flockt to him, and thronged about him, as to and about ſome ſtrange ſight; the fame of his reſtoration was ſoon blown all the Country over. Hence the Septuagint render the words paraphraſtically; *All his Brethren heard all that had befallen him; and ſo they came.*

Audierunt omnes fratres, quæcunque acciderant ei, & venerunt. Sept.

But, where was his Wife? There is no mention here of her return; ſhe had ſpoken as *a fooliſh woman* (*Chap.* 2. 10.) and did not anſwer the duty of her relation after that, as he complained (*Chap.* 19. 17.) *My breath is ſtrange to my Wife, though I intreated for the Childrens ſake of mine own body*; yet doubtleſs ſhe returned to her duty, and honoured him as her Head and Husband, now at laſt, elſe the mercy had not been compleat, but defective in a very conſiderable part of it.

Now, in that *Jobs* reſtoring, or the repair of his loſſes, began with the return of his friends:

> Obſerve; *The loſs of friends is a great and grievous loſs.*

He that loſeth the affection of friends, loſeth a great poſſeſſion, a great intereſt. Friends indeed are great helps, great helpers; to be in a friendleſs condition, is to be in a helpleſs condition; to have friends, is a very valuable mercy. Let us bleſs God that we have men to friend us, above all, that God is our friend.

Secondly, Theſe words, *Then came all his Brethren*, imply, that when he was in an afflicted condition, none of his friends came at him, neither thoſe that are here called his Brethren and Siſters, nor thoſe that are called his acquaintance.

> Hence obſerve; *In times of affliction worldly friends will leave us, and godly friends may prove ſtrange to us.*

Doubtleſs, among thoſe Brethren, Siſters and acquaintance of *Job*, *ſome*, that I ſay not, *many*, were godly, yet even they left him in the day of his diſtreſs. Men are but men, and they oftentimes ſhew themſelves unconſtant to man. As Chriſt had thoſe that followed him for the loaves, ſo have we too. *Friendſhip followeth the purſe, the bag*; and when all is gone, ſuch friends are gone. When Chriſt himſelf was in affliction, thoſe that were in near relation to him, *his very Diſciples*, left him; they all left him, and *Peter* denied him. When the Apoſtle *Paul* was in a great affliction, and ſtood as a priſoner, to anſwer for his life before *Nero*, his friends durſt not appear; *At my firſt anſwer* (ſaith he, 2 *Tim.* 4. 16.) *no man ſtood with me, all men forſook me.* He had not a friend that would own him, nor appear for him, in the time of his affliction and perſecution; and he prayed that God would not lay it to their charge, that they had been thus unfriendly to him.

Then, Firſt, Let us not truſt in friends, no, not in a Brother; and not only, not in a Brother at large, but not in a Brother in the ſtricteſt ſenſe, not in a Brother of the ſame blood and bowels with us, no, not in a Brother of the ſame faith with us (*Mich.* 7. 5.) *Truſt ye not in a friend, put ye not confidence in a guide; keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy boſom.* Truſt not in neareſt friends, no, not in godly friends; they may fail: Though we are to truſt them ſo, as not to ſuſpect them, yet we are not to truſt to them ſo, as to relye upon them, or to make them our ſtrength; for then they prove Egyptian Reeds, which will not only not ſupport, but wound us. That's good counſel (*Iſa.* 2. 21.) *Ceaſe ye from man* (let him be who he will, though a Brother, though of moſt intrinſick and neareſt acquaintance, though never ſo great and potent, yet ceaſe from him; the reaſon there given is) *his breath is in his Noſtrils*; the man is frail, his life is ſhort and uncertain, he may not laſt long. And we may take another reaſon from the point in hand; his love is uncertain, as well as his life, and his affections ſeldom laſt long; let us therefore have weaned affections from thoſe that affect us, and are friendly to us.

Then, Secondly, *'Tis our wiſdom to get Chriſt for a friend*; he is a friend for ever: He that would have a friend to ſtick to him in adverſity, as well as proſperity, let him get Chriſt to be his friend, who is unchangeable, whoſe love fails not; that's our greateſt and ſureſt intereſt. Chriſt *having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end* (*John* 13. 1.) That's the ſpirit of unfeigned friendſhip (*Prov.* 17. 17.) *A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adverſity.* That's true of a real friend, who lives up to the rule of friendſhip, *He loveth at all times*; and therefore to the end. When the Prophet *Malachy* ſaith (Chap. 1. 6.) *A Son honoureth his Father*, his meaning is, a Son ſhould or ought to honour his Father; or, a Son who knoweth his duty, will honour his Father; ſo a friend ought to love at all times, and a true friend will: yet that Scripture in the *Proverbs* is chiefly true of Chriſt, and abſolutely true of him only; he alone is ſuch a friend as loves at all times. Hence that Divine Challenge (*Rom.* 8. 35.) *Who ſhall ſeparate us from the love of Chriſt?* And then the Apoſtle proceeds from *who*, to *what*. As no perſon, ſo no thing, can ſeparate us from the love of Chriſt. *Shall tribulation, or anguiſh, or peril, or ſword?* ſhall theſe ſeparate us from the love of God? no, theſe ſhall not, theſe cannot; theſe cannot make Chriſt ſtrange to us, nor love us the leſs; he loves in tribulation, as well as out of tribulation; in ſtreights, as well as in our greateſt inlargements; in ſickneſs, as well as in health; in diſgrace with men, as well as when moſt honoured and cryed up by them; when naked, as well as when cloathed; as well in rags, as in the richeſt array. Hence that confident concluſion (*verſ.* 38.) *I am perſwaded, that neither death, nor life,* &c. *ſhall be able to ſeparate us from the love of God, which is in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord.* And if ſo, then we ſee where our true intereſt lieth: Let us make ſure of Chriſt; he will never leave us, all Earthly friends may. Friends are a great mercy, but they are not a ſure mercy.

Again, Conſider *Jobs* friends, who came not at him when in that afflicted condition; yet as ſoon as ever God turned his captivity, and made him proſper in the world, then they would own him, then they came.

Hence note, Thirdly; *Such as are no friends in adverſity, will readily ſhew themſelves friendly in proſperity.*

That they came *then*, is an intimation, if not a proof, that they came not before; but then they came. What Chriſt ſpake in another caſe, I may apply by way of alluſion to this; *Where the carkaſs is, thither will the Eagles be gathered together.* When *Job* was up, his friends appear'd. *All are ready to worſhip the riſing Sun.* When the face of things and times change with us, then the faces of friends change towards us, then they have other reſpects and countenances for us; this ſpirit of the world hath been anciently obſerved, even by Heathens; *If you be happy, or reſtored to happineſs, you ſhall number many friends, though you had none before.* Such friends, are like thoſe birds that viſit our Coaſts in Summer, when 'tis warm weather, when every thing flouriſheth, and is green, then ſome birds viſit us, who all the Winter, when 'tis cold, Froſt and Snow, leave us.

Si fueris fœlix multos numerabis amicos. Tempora ſi fuerint nubila ſolus eris.

Farther, it may be conceived, that ſeveral of *Jobs* friends left him, not only upon the occaſion of his poverty and want, but upon the ſuppoſition of his hypocriſie and wickedneſs; many of them might have the ſame opinion of him, which thoſe three had, who particularly dealt with him, that ſurely he was a bad man, becauſe the Lord brought ſo much evil upon him. Now when the Lord reſtored *Job*, they had another, a better opinion of him, the Lord alſo giving a viſible teſtimony of his accepting *Job*.

Hence note, Fourthly; *God will one time or other vindicate the integrity of his faithful ſervants, and ſet them right in the opinion of others.*

God ſuffered *Jobs* integrity to lie under a Cloud of ſuppoſed hypocriſie, but at laſt the Lord reſtored him to his Credit, as well as to his Eſtate, and made his unkind, and not only ſuſpitious, but cenſorious friends, acknowledge that he was upright and faithful. The Lord promiſeth (*Pſalm* 37. 6.) *To bring forth the righteouſneſs of his ſervants as the light, and their judgment as the noon-day*; that is, a right judgment in others concerning them, as well as the rightneſs of their judgment in what they have done and been, or his own moſt righteous judgment in favour of them. They who had a wrong judgment, and took a falſe meaſure of *Job* (meaſuring him by the outward Diſpenſations of God, and judging of his heart by his ſtate and of his ſpirit by the face of his affairs) theſe were at laſt otherwiſe perſwaded of him. 'Tis, as the way, ſo the ſin and folly of many, to judge upon appearance, upon the appearance of Gods outward dealings; they conclude men good or bad, as their outward condition is good or bad; and therefore the Lord to redeem the credit of his faithful ſervants that lie under ſuch miſapprehenſions, ſends proſperity, and manifeſts his gracious acceptance of them, that men of that perverſe opinion may be convinced, and delivered out of their errour.

Note, Fifthly; *The Lords favouring us, or turning the light of his countenance towards us, can ſoon cauſe men to favour us, and ſhine upon us.*

See what a change the Lord made at that time, both in the ſtate of things, and in the hearts of men, when the Lord outwardly forſook *Job*; friends forſook him, children mockt him, acquaintance deſpiſed him, his very ſervants ſlighted him; yet no ſooner did the Lord return in the manifeſtations of his favour, but they all return, deſiring to ingratiate themſelves with him, and ſtrive who ſhall ingage him moſt. God can quickly give us new friends, or reſtore the old. The hearts of all men are in the hand of the Lord, who turns them from us, or to us, as he pleaſeth. When God manifeſts his favour, he can command our favour with men. Though that which is a real motive of the Lords favour to his people, their holineſs, and holy walkings, gets them many Enemies, and they are hated for it by many; yet the Lord diſcovering or owning the graces of his ſervants, by ſignal favours, often gets them credit, and ſets them right in the opinion of men. Thus it was with *Job*; all his friends returned to him, upon the Lords high reſpect to him in turning his captivity.

Explent contumelias honoribus, detrimenta muneribus, execrationes precibus.

Again, in that *Jobs* friends came to him;

Obſerve, Sixthly; *It is the duty of friends to be friendly, to come to and viſit one another.*

Cui dominus favet; ei omnia favent.

It is a duty to do ſo in both the ſeaſons, or in all the changes of our life: It is a duty to do ſo in times of proſperity, when God ſhines upon our Tabernacle. When any receive extraordinary mercies, it is the duty of friends to ſhew them extraordinary courteſies, and to bleſs God for them, and with them. When Elizabeths *Neighbours and Couſins heard how the Lord had ſhewed great mercy upon her, they rejoyced with her* (*Luke* 1. 58.) It is a duty to rejoyce with thoſe that rejoyce, and to come to them that we may rejoyce with them. It is a duty alſo to viſit thoſe that mourn, and to mourn with them. Friendly viſits are a duty in all the ſeaſons of our lives.

Once more. *Then came all his Brethren, &c.* It was late e're they came, but they came.

Hence note; *It is better to perform a duty late, than not at all.*

They had a long time, even all the time of his long affliction neglected, or at leaſt ſlackned this duty of viſiting *Job*; yet they did not reaſon thus with themſelves; It is in vain to viſit him now, or our viſiting him now may be thought but a flattering with him, or a fawning upon him: No, though they had neglected him before, they would not add new to their old incivilities. We ſay of repentance (which is a coming to God) *Late repentance is ſeldom true, yet true repentance is never too late.* None ſhould think it too late to come to God, though they have long neglected him; nor ſhould ſinners, who have long neglected God, be diſcouraged: Though it be beſt for us, and our duty, to repent betimes; yet God will not refuſe a ſinner at any time, who indeed repents. Now as late repentance, ſo any late duty, is better than none, or than a total neglect of it. *Jobs* friends came to him, though late, and were friendly received. But what came they for? or what did they when they came? That's ſet forth in four things, as was ſhewed in opening the Text.

Firſt, The Text tells us, *They did eat bread with him in his houſe.*

I ſhall not ſtay upon that nicety which ſome take notice of, that when bread and water are named together, they always ſignifie poor fare (1 *Kings* 18. 4.) *Obadiah* fed the Prophets whom he ſecured from the fury of *Jezabel* in Caves, *with bread and water*: He could not feaſt them there, but gave them what might keep them alive. So that threatning (*Iſa.* 3. 1.) imports they ſhould not have neceſſaries. But when bread is put alone, that ſignifieth (ſay they) a full, or at leaſt a very competent and comfortable proviſion (2 *Sam.* 9. 7.) And ſo to eat bread together, is to feed liberally together. Yet I find theſe two, bread and water, put together, and ſignifying a full Table in one place of Scripture. When that *Syrian* Army, ſmitten with blindneſs, was led by *Eliſha* into *Samaria*, the Prophet ſaid (2 Kings 6. 22.) *Set bread and water before them, that they may eat and drink*; then it followeth, *He* (that is, the King of *Iſrael*) *prepared great proviſions for them.* The greatneſs of the proviſion which the King prepared for them, is not ſpoken of only with reſpect to their number, (an Army being many, cannot be fed with a little) but with reſpect to the Nobleneſs of their Entertainment; which yet I conceive was but anſwerable to what the Prophet deſired, when he ſaid, *Set bread and water before them.* As if the meaning were, *Make them good chear*: So that bread and water may imply plenty, as well as bread alone. *Jobs* friends

Did eat bread with him.] Not the bread of Mourners (as ſome expound) of which we read (*Deut.* 26. 14. *Hoſ.* 9. 4.) but the bread of rejoycers. I ſhall not omit to mind the Reader of what one of the Ancients meditated upon this paſſage. *Job* (ſaith he) *doth here preſigure Chriſt after his Reſurrection, reſtored to his honours, and honoured,*

not

Præfigurat hic Jobus Chriſtum poſt reſurrectionem, honoribus reſtitutum, honoratum non tantum ab Apoſtolis, ſed etiam patribus Judæis & Gentilibus fidelibus, & in domo ejus Eccleſiæ convivantibus, Paſſionem ipſius cum dolore recolentibus, & in cœleſti aula cum ipſo panem vitæ comeſturis. Greg. l. 35. *Moral. c.* 9, 10, 11.

not only by his Apoſtles, but alſo by the Fathers, both Jews *and* Gentiles, *the faithful flocking to him, and feaſting with him in his houſe the Church, there with ſorrow remembring his ſufferings, and in that Heavenly Court eating with him the Bread of Life.* Chriſt after his Reſurrection called his Apoſtles to *eat bread with him*; as here, after *Jobs* reſtitution, which may be called his Reſurrection, 'tis ſaid, All his friends *came and did eat bread with him in his houſe.*

Hence note; *For friends to eat, yea, to feaſt ſoberly together, is not only lawful, but ſometimes a duty.*

The Creatures are given to us, not only for our neceſſity, but for our comfort, and to maintain ſociety. *Solomon* ſaith (*Eccl.* 8. 15.) *Then I commended mirth, becauſe a man hath no better a thing under the Sun, than to eat, and drink, and to be merry.* He ſpeaks not of a ſenſual mirth and eating, like voluptuous Epicures, but of eating with gladneſs and ſingleneſs of heart, as 'tis noted of the Primitive Saints (Acts 2. 46.) There is no worldly thing better than to eat and drink *with ſobriety* in the uſe of the Creature, and with *ſingleneſs* of heart one towards another. *To uſe what we have, is better than the having of it.* To eat together is good, with theſe limitations or cautions. Firſt, If we eat to the glory of God (1 *Cor.*10.31.) Secondly, If we eat with joy in God (*Eccl.*9.7.) Thirdly, If we eat taſting and remembring the goodneſs of God (*Deut.*6.11,12.) Fourthly, If we eat fearing to offend God, and wrong our ſelves with exceſs (*Prov.*23.1,2. *Luk.*21.34.) Fifthly, If we have a ſenſe of the afflictions of others (*Amos* 6.6.) eſpecially of thoſe who have nothing to eat. Sixthly, If we eat with thankfulneſs, or giving thanks to God who ſatisfies our hunger (*Mark* 8.6. *John* 6.11.) Seventhly, If we eat with charitableneſs, giving a portion of what we have in plenty, to thoſe that are in want, and hungry (*Jam.*2.15,16.)

Again, They came to eat bread *with* Job *in his houſe.* See the nobleneſs of *Jobs* ſpirit. Doubtleſs when they came, they made their Apologies, pleaded their Excuſe, and confeſſed that they had failed in friendſhip, and had not lived up to the Law of Love. Courteous and noble-ſpirited *Job* took all well, paſt by all diſcourteſies, welcomed and imbraced them: He did not only not upbraid them with former unkindneſſes, why came ye not to me in the day of my trouble and affliction, in the day of my diſtreſs and ſorrow? where were ye then? Thus ſome would have rounded them; ye come to me when all is well with me; but where were ye when I wanted comfort and company? *Job*, I ſay, did not only not upbraid them with their former unkindneſſes, when they came to him, but took their coming kindly. When the Elders of *Gilead* came to *Jepthah*, to deſire him to be their Captain againſt the Children of *Ammon*, he ſaid (*Judg.*11.7.) *Did not ye hate me, and expel me out of my fathers houſe? and why are ye come unto me now when ye are in diſtreſs? Jepthah* caſt their ill carriage towards him in their teeth, and only not rejected them and their requeſt. Thus *Job* might have ſaid, why did you leave me in the time of my diſtreſs? *&c.* but we have no ſuch language from this good man, not a word of that.

Hence note; *It becomes us to accept the love of formerly unkind friends, and not to twit them in the teeth with their unkindneſſes.*

Job well underſtood that it was a part of his tryal and burden from God, that his friends forſook him, and were once uncivil to him; therefore he would not burden them with it. A godly man conſiders, it is of the Lord if friends prove unfriendly to him, and that it is for tryal whether he can truſt upon and cleave unto God alone when friends leave him. Thus to receive unfriendly friends, is to be perfect (in our meaſure) as God is perfect. How unkindly have we dealt with God! and yet when we come to him he accepts of us. They that are ſenſible how they have refuſed the Lord ſometimes, and that he hath yet graciouſly accepted of them, they (I ſay) will be ready to accept of friends that have been froward and unkind to them: It is much the will of God that we ſhould do ſo, and 'tis a great part of our conformity unto God when we do ſo. It was very well that *Job* gave fair reſpect to his friends, and treated them lovingly when they came to him; and it was well, and but their duty that they came to him.

Yet this was not all they did; *Jobs* friends did not only come and eat bread with him (that had been but according to the cuſtom of common friends) they went further,

They bemoaned him.] That's the ſecond friendly office which they did him. The word ſignifies, *to ſhake the head*; ſo the Latine Tranſlation renders it, *His friends came to him, and moved their heads over him,* ſo expreſſing their compaſſion. That geſture of moving the head was uſed ſometimes in deriſion, ſometimes in admiration, in which latter ſenſe the Septuagint take it here, *They comforted him, and wondered at all the evils that God had brought upon him.* It might well move wonder, that ſo good a man ſhould ſuffer ſo much evil; yet this geſture of ſhaking the head, is rarely, if at all uſed in way of admiration; whereas, in way of compaſſion, nothing is more uſual, and it complieth fully with our tranſlation, *they bemoaned him.* As they feaſted with him, ſo they *bemoaned* him, and condoled his former ſad ſtate; and to do ſo, is a proper act of ſincere love and friendſhip.

Moverunt ſuper eum caput. Conſolati ſunt eum & mirati ſunt ſuper omnibus, &c. נוד *eſt propriè migrare, unde pro condolere ſumitur; quod qui aliquem ſolari volunt & ejus vicem dolere, è loco ſuo ut id faciant ſoleant migrare.*

Hence note; *It is our duty to pity and bemoan the afflicted.*

We read of Ephraim *bemoaning himſelf* (*Jer.*31.18.) and there is a twofold bemoaning of our ſelves. Firſt, With reſpect to the ſins that we have committed. Secondly, There is a bemoaning of our ſelves, as to our afflictions; and poſſibly both are to be underſtood in that place concerning *Ephraim.* 'Tis a duty alſo with reſpect to others; we ought to bemoan thoſe that are in ſufferings, and thoſe that have ſinned, as well as our own ſins or ſufferings. And though that which gives us the greateſt occaſion of bemoaning others is their ſin, yet 'tis a great duty alſo to bemoan thoſe that are under ſufferings, and to have bowels of compaſſion, or a fellow-feeling of their afflictions.

But it may be objected, what need had *Jobs* Brethren to bemoan him now that he was delivered out of his afflictions, and his captivity turned? were not theſe bemoanings improper and unſeaſonable?

I anſwer, Firſt, Though *Job* was come out of his afflictions, yet he was but very lately come out of them; he was yet, as it were, upon the borders of ſorrow, and was come only a ſtep out of his troubles; ſo that his tears were then ſcarce wiped away, or dried up, and the ſorrow of his late adverſity was even forced to intermingle with the joy of his newly begun proſperity: The remembrance of his affliction was, doubtleſs, yet very ſtrong upon him, and the pain of it ſcarce off him; he had, as yet, a taſt of the wormwood and gall of that moſt bitter Cup, of which he had, a little before, drunk ſo deeply; his wound was but in healing, not quite healed; and therefore they might well bemoan him, as to his former afflictions, in that morning or day-break of his mercies. Joy and ſorrow uſe to conflict together, and ſtrive for maſteries, whether the one ſhall keep, or the other get the ground, at the beginning of all great changes.

Secondly, This act of *Jobs* friends in bemoaning of him, might reſpect not only the abiding ſenſe of his former affliction, but the ſharpneſs and ſoreneſs of it, while it was upon him; ſo that, as his own remembrance of his former ſufferings might ſtill hang upon him, ſo while his Brethren, and other Viſitants, remembred how grievous and tedious his ſufferings had been, it might well ſtir their compaſſions, and cauſe them to bemoan him.

Thirdly, *Job* had none to bemoan him, while the affliction was actually upon him; *Have pity upon me, have pity upon me,* ſaid he in the 16th Chapter, yet found little or no pity from any. Now that being a great part of his ſuffering, that he had none to pity him while he ſuffered, the Lord ſent his Brethren to him, when he was new come out of his ſufferings, to perform that duty to him, which ſhould have been done him while he ſuffered.

Further, Becauſe we ought not only to pity and bemoan our friends in adverſity, but to help them out, and make a perfect cure; therefore *Jobs* friends proceed to that duty alſo: For, having bemoaned him, the Text ſaith,

They comforted him.] That is, they uſed all the means they could to comfort him, they gave him comfortable words, cordial conſolations. *Job* himſelf had been a great comforter of others (as *Eliphaz* acknowledged in the 4th Chapter) and now he hath his comforters; even they comforted him concerning his former miſeries, who formerly had been miſerable comforters.

From the method of their proceeding: Firſt, They bemoaned him; and, Secondly, They comforted him;

Note; *We can never truly comfort others, till we have pittied others.*

Comforting begins at pitying. It is poſſible to pity one, and not to comfort him: Some will give bemoaning words, yet are not able to miniſter real comforts; ſo then, there may be-pitying without comforting, but there cannot be comforting without pitying. God himſelf is thus expreſt (*2 Cor.* 1. 3, 4.) Firſt, He is called, *The Father of Mercies*; that is, he is full of pity, full of compaſſionate bowels. And then, Secondly, He is called, *The God of all Conſolation.* He is a comforting God, becauſe a pitying God. If God were not pitiful and compaſſionate, we ſhould have no comfort from him: ſo it is with men, if we pity not others, we cannot comfort them. *Job* called his friends *miſerable Comforters* (*Chap.* 16. 2.) They came to mourn *with him, and to comfort him* (*Chap.* 2. 11.) but had they more affectionately mourned with him, they would have more effectually comforted him. They did not pity him enough in his miſery, and ſo they proved but miſerable comforters to him.

Secondly, From the work it ſelf,

Obſerve; *To comfort thoſe that are in affliction is our duty, and a work of charity.*

To miniſter comfort to the ſorrowful, is a greater point of charity, than to miniſter bread to the hungry, or cloathing to the naked. As the ſoul is better than the body, ſo thoſe acts of charity, which offer relief to the ſoul in any kind, are better than thoſe by which the body is relieved. Though to give bread be more coſtly to us than good words (we uſe to ſay good words are cheap) yet good and comfortable words are worth much more than bread, they are better than gold, yea, than fine gold, ſweeter alſo than the honey, and the honey-comb. The Apoſtle gave this duty in charge to believers (1 *Theſ.* 5. 11.) *Comfort your ſelves together, and edifie one another.* And at the 14th verſ. *Now we exhort you, Brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, ſupport the weak.* The *weak*, in the latter words, are the ſame with the *feeble* in the former; and the *ſupport* ſpoken of in the one, is nothing elſe but the comfort ſpoken of in the other. Comfort to a feeble mind, is like a Prop or a Pillar to a feeble building, the ſupporter of it.

And becauſe it is ſo important a work to comfort feeble minds, I ſhall briefly name ſome ſpecial caſes, wherein the mind of man is feeble, and then hint what word of comfort is moſt proper for its ſupport, in each caſe.

Firſt, If the mind be infeebled by outward wants, apply that comfortable Scripture (*Mat.* 6. 32, 33.) *Your Father knoweth that ye have need of thoſe things*; which if received by faith, will give the mind great ſupport in that caſe.

Secondly, In caſe of the loſs or death of friends, the Apoſtle hath put words into our mouths for the comforting of ſuch (1 *Theſ.* 4. 13.) chiefly theſe two ways. Firſt, By remembring that their friends are only *aſleep in Jeſus*, or gone to ſleep in the boſom of Jeſus. Secondly, That they ſhall be raiſed again at the coming of Jeſus.

Thirdly, In caſe of ſuffering and perſecution, read comfort and ſupport, *Mat.* 5. 11, 12, 13. 1 *Pet.* 4. 12, 13, 14.

Fourthly, In caſe of bodily ſickneſs, or any chaſtenings from the hand of God, we have a ſtore or treaſure of comforting words, *Heb.* 12. from the 5th to the 14th verſe.

Fifthly, In caſe of deſertion, or Gods hiding his face, take comfort from *Iſa.* 50. 10. *Iſa.* 54, 7, 8.

Sixthly, When any are under the ſenſe of Divine Wrath for ſin, they may take comfort by meditating all thoſe Scriptures which hold out the free grace of God to ſinners, and the full ſatisfaction which Chriſt hath made for ſin to the Juſtice of God, and ſo for deliverance from the wrath which is to come (1 *Theſ.* 1. 10.) Theſe are the principal caſes wherein we need a comforter; and moſt of theſe, if not all, met in *Jobs* caſe. He was poor, and had loſt all, that was the firſt caſe; his children were dead, that was the ſecond; he was perſecuted, vexed, and reproached, that was a third; he was ſick and weak in body, that was a fourth; he was under grievous deſertions, that was a fifth; he was alſo under the ſenſe of wrath, the Arrows of the Almighty drunk up his ſpirits. All theſe evils God brought upon him, and ſome of them in the higheſt degree; and though he were then got out of them all, yet (as was ſaid before) being got but a little way out of them, he needed comfort, and therefore his new-come old friends and acquaintance, bemoaned and comforted him, as a man newly come out of great affliction.

And we ſhould be much in this duty of comforting others, upon theſe conſiderations.

Firſt, Comfort upholds the Soul, when burdened or weakned, from ſinking.

Secondly, Comfort quiets the Soul, when toſt up and down as with a Tempeſt; comforts wiſely and ſeaſonably miniſtred, will make a great calm. Comfort is the repoſe and reſt of the Soul.

Thirdly, Comfort quickens and revives the Soul when dying away with ſorrow; comforts are cordials: *For which cauſe we faint not* (*2 Cor.* 4. 16.) And what the cauſe was which kept them from fainting, we may find both in the verſe going before, in thoſe words, *All things are for your ſakes* (verſ. 15.) and in the verſe following, *Our light affliction, &c.* (verſ. 17.) Comforts either prevent and keep us from qualms and ſwoonings, or bring us out of them again. *Give wine to him that is of a heavy heart; let him drink and forget his ſorrow* (Prov. 30. 6, 7.) Give him this wine of comfort, and it will renew his ſpirit more than wine.

Fourthly, Comfort confirms and eſtabliſheth the Soul, when we are ready to let go our hold. The Apoſtle ſent *Timotheus, to eſtabliſh and comfort the Theſſalonians* concerning their faith (1 *Epiſt.* 3. 2.) that is, to eſtabliſh them in the faith (both in the doctrine and grace of faith) by comforting them.

Jobs friends might ſee cauſe of comforting him upon many conſiderations, poſſibly upon moſt of theſe: The Text ſaith only, *They comforted him*

Over all the evil which the Lord had brought upon him.

The Plaiſter was as broad as the ſore, or they adminiſtred as many Plaiſters as there were ſores; *They comforted him over all the evil, &c.* This directs us to a great point of holy prudence in comforting the ſorrowful, even to comfort them in or about every thing, which hath been an occaſion of their ſorrow. When we are to ſtop the holes of a leaking Veſſel, if we ſtop three or four, and leave but one, we indanger all the liquor in the Veſſel; you were as good ſtop none at all, as not ſtop all: ſo it is in this caſe; therefore ſee how wiſely *Jobs* friends carried it, *They comforted him over all the evil*

Which the Lord had brought upon him.] And all that was the evil of ſuffering. The Lord is the bringer of ſuch evils upon all that ſuffer them, even upon his deareſt and moſt faithful ſervants; thoſe evils come from him who is only good, and altogether good: The Lord takes theſe evils to himſelf, *I create evil* (Iſa. 45. 7.) and ſaith the Prophet (*Amos* 3. 6.) *Shall there be evil in a City, and the Lord hath not done it?* As the Lord owns theſe kind of evils, ſo we honour God in acknowledging him the Author of them. Our croſſes are of God, as well as our comforts; our poverty, as well as our riches; our ſickneſs, as well as our health. This point hath occurred more than once from other paſſages in this Book, and therefore I ſhall add no more now.

This was the third labour of love which the Brethren of *Job* beſtowed upon him, *They comforted him over all the evil which the Lord had brought upon him.*

Yet this was not all, they did not only beſtow a *mouthful* of good words upon him (I ſpeak not lightly of good words, they are a weighty piece of charity) Good words are much better (as was toucht before) than Gold and Silver, and may be much more beneficial and uſeful to the Receiver, than thouſands of Gold and Silver: Yet, I ſay, *Jobs* friends did not only beſtow a mouthful of good words upon him, for the removal of his inward grief, but they brought their *handsful* of good things to beſtow upon him, for the making up of his outward loſſes; and this was the fourth act or office of love which they did him, as it followeth;

Every man alſo gave him a piece of money, and every one an Ear-ring of gold.

Here was real kindneſs, as well as verbal. Though good words (as was ſaid) be a great charity, yet 'tis no charity to give nothing but good words where more is needed, unleſs this be our caſe, that indeed we have nothing more to give. The charity of ſome is only in words, to thoſe who are in extream need of more; and it is only ſo, not becauſe they have no more in their hands to give, but becauſe they have no hearts to give more. To ſay to a naked or hungry one, be cloathed and fed, or to give a large parcel of condoling & bemoaning words, and then do nothing, no not give a doit, for the ſupply of his wants, is this love or charity? *Jobs* friends loved him now, not in word, and in tongue only, but indeed, and in truth; their deeds ſhewed the truth of their love.

They gave him every one of them a piece of money.

There are two readings of this clauſe. The word which we here render *a piece of money*, ſignifies alſo *a ſheep*; according to which Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates, and ſo do others, *They gave him each one a Lamb*, we ſay, *a piece of money*; the ſame word ſignifying both, as is plain from other Scriptures (*Gen.* 37. 19.) *And he* (that is, *Jacob*) *bought a parcel of a field, where he had ſpread his Tent, at the hand of the children of* Hamor, Shechems *Father, for an hundred pieces of money*, or *lambs*, as we put in the Margin. The ſame thing is reported again, in the ſame words (*Joſh.* 24. 32.) Now the reaſon why that word is rendred both a lamb, and a piece of money, is, ſay ſome, becauſe money in thoſe times bare the ſtamp or figure of a Lamb upon it; as in ſome times and places money or Coyn was ſtamped with the figure of an Oxe; from whence came that Proverb, *The Oxe is upon his tongue*, that is, he ſpeaks *as he is bribed*. A ſecond reaſon given of it is, becauſe the riches of the Ancients was moſt in Cattle; and that kind of riches being as money, by which all things are valued, and by which they made their payments, therefore the ſame word was uſed for Cattle, and for Coyn or money. The Latine word for *Money*, is alſo derived from another, which ſignifies *Cattle*. And it is reported by *Pliny*, that *Severus* firſt ſtampt money with the Effigies or Image of Sheep and Oxen.

Dederunt ei quiſque pecudem unam. Bez.

Pecunia à pecore dicta eſt. Plin. *l.*18. *c.*3. Severus *rex ovium boumque effigie primus as aſſignavit.* Plin.

They gave him every one a piece of money, or a lamb.

Some are moſt for that reading, *they gave him a Lamb*, becauſe that ſeems moſt anſwerable to the loſs of *Job*; he loſt all his Cattle, and now every one brought him a Lamb: But it is not much to the matter, whether we take their reading or ours. If it were a Lamb, it was worth a piece of money; and if it were a piece of money, it would buy a Lamb.

But why did they bring *Job* either a *piece of money*, or *a Lamb?* I anſwer.

Firſt, To teſtifie their renewed friendſhip, or as a ſignification of their love, and ſo to ingratiate themſelves with him.

Secondly, It might be towards the repair of his loſſes; every one brought him ſomewhat; yet I conceive they beſtowed thoſe gifts upon him, rather as an honour than a relief, yet poſſibly they might intend both in giving them. Upon the one account or the other, or upon both, the Lord brought over *Jobs* friends to congratulate him with theſe preſents. It hath been an ancient uſage to preſent Princes with gifts, in way of honour and homage, as appears plainly from what is ſaid of the refuſal of ſome called *Sons of Belial* (a Title of diſgrace beſtowed by the Spirit of God upon none but the worſt of men) to bring preſents unto *Saul*, the firſt King of *Iſrael* (1 *Sam.* 10. 27.) And many Superiours in any kind think themſelves ſlighted, if they have not gifts from their Inferiours. *Job* was a Prince, the greateſt man of the Eaſt, and for that reaſon it was but a duty in his friends to bring him preſents. *Every one gave him a piece of money (or a lamb.)*

And every one an Ear-ring of gold.] There is ſome diſpute what this Ear-ring of gold was. The word is tranſlated (*Iſa.* 3. 21.) *A Noſe-jewel*; which was not a Jewel to hang upon the Noſe, but a Jewel that was faſtned upon the Forehead, and hung down towards the Noſe. In other places it is called an *Ear-ring* (*Gen.* 24. 47. *Gen.* 35. 4. *Exod.* 35. 22.) Such Jewels were doubtleſs uſed, and worn by great perſons in the Land of *Uz*, where *Job* dwelt, and was chief among them. *Jobs* friends brought him not only Preſents of Money or Cattle, which are uſeful to all, but Jewels, which are Ornamentals, and uſed only by perſons of Noble Quality, or of great Eſtate. An Ear-ring, in ſome mens Ears, would be no more becoming, nor better placed, than a Jewel in a *Swines Snout*; to which *Solomon* compares beauty in a woman without wit, diſcretion, and underſtanding. A Jewel, or an Ear-ring, is not for every mans wearing. The preſents brought *Job*, ſhewed him a perſon of honour. *Every one alſo gave him a piece of money, and every one an Ear-ring of gold.*

Gemmas à fronte pendentes. Vulg. *Monile demiſſum.* Sept.

Honoraria obtulerunt. Jun. *Munera hæc erant, tum amicitiæ, tum obſequii ſymbola. Sic enim viri principes muneue ſalutabantur.*

Hence note, Firſt; *To ſend or bring gifts in many caſes, is not only lawful, but neceſſary, and a duty.*

Though both the giving and taking of gifts, heareth ill in Scripture and common language, yet there are ſix ſorts of gifts which may lawfully be given and taken; and there is a ſeventh ſort, which none ought either to give or take.

Firſt, Gifts of pure charity, or *Eleemoſynary gifts*, ſuch as are beſtowed upon, and diſtributed among the poor, are a duty. We ſhould be much in gifts of charity for this very reaſon, becauſe to give them is not ſo much a bounty, as a duty: A part of all we have, is due to thoſe that have nothing.

Secondly, There are gifts of reſpect to thoſe who are not in want, yea, to thoſe who abound; theſe are *honorary gifts*. 'Tis lawful, and a duty alſo to bring gifts to Kings and Princes, as was ſhewed in opening the words. When Chriſt is ſpoken of as a King, the Scripture ſaith, *The King of* Tarſhiſh, *and of the Iſles, ſhall bring Preſents; the Kings of* Sheba *and* Seba *ſhall offer gifts* (*Pſal.* 72. 10.) And as that holy Propheſie ſaith it ſhould be ſo, ſo the holy Hiſtory ſaith it was ſo; the wiſe men of the Eaſt came with gifts to Chriſt, as ſoon as he was born (*Mat.*2.)

Thirdly, There are gifts of courteſie from equals. One friend ſends a gift to another, in teſtimony of love and kindneſs, or as rejoycing in the goodneſs and kindneſs of God to them, in delivering them from any evil (as *Jobs* caſe alſo was) Theſe are *congratulatory gifts*.

Fourthly, There are gifts of bounty, ſuch are from Superiours to Inferiours, to teſtifie their greatneſs and magnificence.

Fifthly, There are gratulatory gifts, in token of thankfulneſs for benefits and favours received.

Sixthly, There are gifts of incouragement to thoſe that are induſtrious, and deſerve well, which we may call *Remunerative gifts*: Theſe are as Oyl to the wheel of ingenuous ſpirits in a good work; it is lawful at any time, and ſometimes neceſſary, to beſtow ſuch gifts.

Seventhly, There are gifts of bribery, which pervert Juſtice, and put out the eyes of Judges: They are not the rewards of induſtry, but the wages of unrighteouſneſs; ſuch as *Balak* would have given *Balaam*, he offered him great gifts, *I will promote thee to honour*. But what was it for? even to hire him to curſe the people of God. Let all take heed of giving or taking gifts to pervert Juſtice, or to incourage any in the doing of any wickedneſs or unworthineſs; theſe are *corruptive gifts*.

Further, Whereas they gave not only *a piece of money, or a lamb*, but every one an *Ear-ring of gold*, which we may conſider not only as to the matter, as it was gold, but as to the form, as it was an *Ear-ring*, or an artificial piece of gold, and that an ornamental piece of gold; they might have given gold (and probably they did) in the pieces of money which they gave him, but they gave him Ear-rings alſo, in which the faſhion or uſe is moſt conſiderable, and the workmanſhip more worth than the metal.

Hence note; *It is lawful to wear Ornaments.*

Not only may we wear that which ſerves for a covering to the body, but that which is for the adorning of it. An Ear-ring is an Ornament. As all are to wear cloaths to hide their ſhame and nakedneſs, ſo ſome may wear robes, to ſhew their ſtate and greatneſs. *Job* received Ear-rings; he did not caſt them by as vain things. When *Abraham* ſent his ſervant to take a wife for his Son *Iſaac*, he ſtored him with Cabinets of precious Jewels to beſtow upon her (*Gen.* 24.) and when he found *Rebekah* at the Well, and found who ſhe was, he *took a golden Ear-ring of half a ſhekel weight, and two bracelets for her hands of ten ſhekels weight of gold, and* *gave them to* Rebeccah. And afterwards, when her Parents had given conſent to the Marriage, then (*verſ.* 53.) *The ſervant brought forth Jewels of Silver, and Jewels of Gold, and Raiment, and gave them to* Rebeccah, *&c. Abraham* would not ſend ſuch things to a Wife for his Son, had they been vain in their own nature, or ſinful in their uſe. Yet take the point with theſe cautions. We may wear ornaments, but,

Firſt, We muſt not be proud of them.

Secondly, We muſt not ſet our affections upon them.

Thirdly, We muſt beware of an affectation in wearing them.

Fourthly, We muſt take heed of waſtfulneſs; we may not laviſh out an eſtate upon ornaments, nor make our ſelves poor, to make our ſelves fine.

I grant ſome Scriptures ſpeak negatively in appearance, as to the uſe and wearing of jewels and Ornaments (1*Tim.* 2. 9.) *In like manner alſo let women adorn themſelves in modeſt apparel, in ſhamefaſtneſs and ſobriety, not with broidered hair or gold, or apparel, or coſtly array.* The Scripture ſeems to croſs the point directly, and ſo doth that other (1 *Pet.* 3. 3.) *Whoſe adorning* (ſpeaking of women) *let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, and of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart.* How then can good women wear theſe ornaments?

I anſwer, Theſe Scriptures do not abſolutely forbid the wearing of ornaments, but only as to thoſe exceptions before given, to wear them in pride, or to ſet our affections upon them, or to affect them, or to wear them waſtfully, beyond our purſe and place; ſuch wearing of ornaments is indeed unlawful. Again, it is not ſinful to have or uſe ornaments, but to make them our ornaments, that is ſinful; our adorning muſt be the hidden man of the heart, that muſt be grace: That this is the Apoſtles mind is clear, becauſe he ſaith their *adorning muſt not be the putting on of apparel*, as well as not the plaiting of the hair, and wearing of gold. Therefore the negation is not abſolute, but comparative; let not them count theſe their ornaments, but grace or the hidden man of the heart. As the Lord ſaith, *I will have mercy and not Sacrifice*, that is, mercy rather than Sacrifice; ſo, I will have the hidden man of the heart, not coſtly jewels and apparel, your ornament; that is, I eſteem the one much rather than the other, and ſo ought you to eſteem both your ſelves and others accordingly.

Take this caution further. Times of affliction and ſuffering, are very unſeaſonable to wear ear-rings of gold and ornaments. When there is any great appearance of the diſpleaſure of God againſt a people, then how unſutable are all our pleaſant things! The Lord ſaid to the people of *Iſrael*, *Put off your ornaments, that I may know what to do with you* (Exod. 32.) When we live in ſuch a time, in humbling days, or are called to humbling duties, we ſhould be very watchful about theſe things, and rather appear in rags than robes, with duſt upon our heads, rather than with ornaments upon our backs.

Thus far of the firſt part of *Job*'s reſtauration, the return of his friends, and the ſignifications of their friendlineſs towards him, eating bread with him, bemoaning him, comforting him, and preſenting him with gifts of honour, if not of enrichment, pieces of money, and ear-rings of gold: Yet all their civilities and bounties reached but a little way, if at all towards that reſtauration which the Lord intended him, the doubling of his whole eſtate, which he ſoon received in full meaſure, heaped up, preſſed down, and running over, as will appear in opening the two next verſes, and thoſe which follow to the end of the Chapter.

VERS. 12, 13.

So the Lord bleſſed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: For he had fourteen thouſand Sheep, ſix thouſand Camels, and a thouſand yoak of Oxen, and a thouſand She-Aſſes.

He had alſo ſeven Sons and three Daughters.

IN theſe two verſes we have the ſecond and the third part *Job*'s reſtauration: His friends were reſtored to him in the former verſe; his further reſtauration is ſet down in theſe two verſes.

Firſt, Generally at the beginning of the twelfth verſe: *So the Lord bleſſed the latter end of* Job *more than his beginning.*

Secondly, Particularly; and

Firſt, With reſpect to his Cattel or outward eſtate; for *he had* (ſaith the Text) *Fourteen thouſand Sheep, and ſix thouſand Camels*, &c.

Secondly, With reſpect to his iſſue or Children (*verſ.* 13.) *He had alſo ſeven Sons and three Daughters.*

Verſe 12. **So the Lord bleſſed the latter end of Job more than his beginning.**

In theſe words we may take notice of four things.

Firſt, The means, or as I may call it, the procuring cauſe of *Job*'s increaſe, or of his growing and flowing proſperity; it was a *bleſſing*.

Secondly, We have here the Author or Fountain of this bleſſing; it was *the Lord*.

Thirdly, We have the Subject of this bleſſing, as here expreſt; and that was *the latter end of* Job, or Job *in his latter end*.

Fourthly, We have the quantity or greatneſs of this bleſſing, which is expreſt comparatively, it was *more than his beginning*. The Lord bleſſed his beginning, but his latter end was more bleſſed.

I ſhall conſider the two firſt together, the cauſe of his flowing proſperity, *a bleſſing*; and the Author, or Fountain of it, *the Lord, the Lord bleſſed*. There is a twofold way of bleſſing.

Firſt, A wiſhing or deſiring of a bleſſing: We are not thus to underſtand it here, as if the Lord did only wiſh a bleſſing upon *Job*.

Secondly, There is a commanding of a bleſſing, and ſo we are to underſtand it here. *The Lord bleſſed*, that is, the Lord commanded a bleſſing, or effectually poured out a bleſſing upon *Job*. The word *bleſſed* (*The Lord bleſſed*) hath two things in it.

First, It implyeth plenty and abundance, a copious and a large proviſion of good things. For as the word [*abundare*] in Latine, and *to abound* in Engliſh, comes (ſay Grammarians *ab unda*) from *water*, becauſe waters abound and flow; ſo this Hebrew word [*Beracah*] which ſignifieth a bleſſing, comes from, or at leaſt, is near in ſound to the word *Berecah*, which ſignifieth a Fiſh-pond, where there is a great confluence of waters, and a great multiplication of Fiſhes, or, a Fountain, from whence waters flow continually. So that to bleſs, notes the bringing in of abundance, or of a great increaſe, like the waters of a Fiſh-pond, or Fiſh in the waters. To increaſe as Fiſh, is to increaſe abundantly. It is ſaid of the Children of *Iſrael*, *They multiplied like Fiſh* (that's the ſignificancy of the word uſed, *Exod.* 1. 12.) while they were under the oppreſſion of the *Egyptians*.

Sicut abundare ab undis Latini dicunt; ita videri poſſunt Hebræi ברכה *quaſi affluentiam denominare à fonte aut piſcina, quam appellant* Berecah.

Secondly, This expreſſion, *The Lord bleſſed*, imports a powerful effect following it. *The Lord bleſſed the latter end of* Job; that is, he made his latter end very bleſſed. As the Lords ſaying is doing, as his word is operative, and will work; ſo the Lords bleſſing or well-ſaying, is well-doing; his ſaying is doing, whether for good or hurt. Man bleſſeth man by wiſhing or praying for a bleſſing upon him, or that God would do him good: Man bleſſeth God, when he praiſeth him for his goodneſs, and for the good which he hath done, either to himſelf or others: But when God bleſſeth man, he doth more than wiſh, he makes him bleſſed. Man bleſſeth man miniſterially; God bleſſeth man effectually, as he alſo did the ſeventh day (*Gen.* 2. 3.) And therefore the Lord is ſaid to *command the bleſſing* (Levit. 25. 21.) eſpecially in *Sion*, *even life for evermore* (*Pſal.* 133. 5.) Nor was it leſs than a command, by which *The Lord bleſſed the latter end of* Job *more than his beginning.*

Dei benedicere idem eſt quod benefacere. Beatum non facit hominem niſi qui fecit hominem. Auguſt. *Epiſt.* 52. *ad* Macedon.

Hence Note, *The good word or bleſſing of God, is enough to procure the good of man.*

Every word of God hath its effect; he ſpeaks no vain words: His Word going out of the mouths of his Miniſters, *returns not to him void, but accompliſheth that which he pleaſeth, and proſpers in the thing whereunto he ſends it* (Iſa. 55. 11.) that is, either for the conviction or converſion of thoſe that hear it. Surely then, the word of bleſſing going out of his own mouth, ſhall not return to him void, or without effect. *David* ſpake thus of, or to God (*Pſ.* 145.16.) *Thou openeſt thine hand, and ſatisfieſt the deſire of every living thing.* When the Lord opens his hand, he alſo opens his heart: And when his heart and hand open, his mouth opens too; that is, he gives forth a word of bleſſing, and he gives it forth to ſatisfaction, *Thou ſatisfieſt every living thing.* And again (*Pſal.* 104. 28.) *Thou openeſt thine hand, they are filled with good. They,* that is, whatſoever lives upon the Earth or in the Sea; *wait upon thee* (as it is ſaid, *verſ.*27.) *that thou maiſt give them their meat in due ſeaſon; that thou giveſt them, they gather; thou openeſt thy hand, they are filled with good.* The hand of of God is full of good, and his bleſſing fills all with good, out of his hand.

This may comfort the godly in their loweſt condition. What was it that raiſed *Job* from poverty to riches, from weakneſs to ſtrength, from the dunghil to the throne? Only this, *The Lord bleſſed him.* Though all be loſt, his word of bleſſing will reſtore all again. If eſtate be loſt, his bleſſing will make us rich; if health be loſt, his bleſſing will make us well; if ſtrength be loſt, his bleſſing will renew it; if credit be loſt, his bleſſing will repair it, and get us honour for diſgrace or reproach. The bleſſing of the Lord is every good thing to us, and doth every good thing for us. As it is dreadful to ſtand under the droppings of a curſe; to be curſed is very evil; ſo happy are they who ſtand under the ſweet influences of a promiſe; to be bleſſed is every good. And if God bleſſeth us, the matter is not much, who curſeth or wiſheth ill to us. The curſe cauſeleſs ſhall not come, nor can any curſe come where God hath bleſſed.

But ſome may enquire, who are they that the Lord will bleſs? To be bleſſed, is not every mans portion. A man may be rich, yet not bleſſed; great, yet not bleſſed; healthful, yet not bleſſed: A man may have many bleſſings, for the matter, yet not be bleſſed. This then is a material queſtion, *Who are they that may expect a bleſſing from God upon their Souls, upon their Bodies, upon their eſtates, upon their families, upon their all?*

I anſwer, Firſt, In general; They that are in a ſtate of grace, they that are in the Covenant, or as the Apoſtle calls them (*Heb.* 6. 17.) *Heirs of promiſe*: Theſe are the bleſſed of the Lord; and theſe, both great and ſmall, the Lord will bleſs (*Eph.* 1. 3.) *Bleſſed be God, who hath bleſſed us with all ſpiritual bleſſings in heavenly things in Chriſt.* Being in Chriſt, we are in Covenant; and being there, we cannot miſs being bleſſed with all ſpiritual bleſſings, and with whatever is a needful bleſſing, in outward things too: He that bleſſeth in the greater, will not with-hold his bleſſing in the leſs, according to our need.

Secondly, As they are the general ſubjects of the bleſſing, who are in the Covenant of grace, or in Chriſt, ſo are they more ſpecially, who act graciouſly, and walk as they have received Chriſt; for a perſon that is in a ſtate of grace, may hinder the bleſſing from flowing down upon his Soul, upon his Body, upon his Eſtate, upon any thing, upon every thing he hath and doth, by acting ſinfully, and walking unevenly. *David* put the queſtion (*Pſal.*24.3.) *Who ſhall aſcend into the hill of the Lord?* &c. and anſwered it (*verſ.* 4, 5.) *He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart, who hath not lift up his Soul to vanity, nor ſworn deceitfully; he ſhall receive the bleſſing from the Lord, and righteouſneſs* (that is, a righteous reward, or a reward according to righteouſneſs) *from the God of his ſalvation. Solomon* aſſerts the preſent performance of what is only promiſed in this *Pſalm*; he ſaith not, The juſt ſhall receive the bleſſing, but they have actually received it (*Prov.* 10.6.) *Bleſſings are upon the head of the juſt.* By the juſt man we may underſtand; Firſt, him that is in a juſtified ſtate, or him that is juſt by faith; Secondly, him that walks in a juſt way, or that doth juſtly: And they who are indeed juſtified, are not only engaged by that high act of grace to do juſtly, but are either conſtantly kept in doing ſo, or are ſoon brought to ſee they have not done ſo, and to repentance for it. Juſt and upright men, in theſe two notions, are ſo much bleſſed, that they are a bleſſing (*Prov.* 11. 11.) *By the bleſſing of the upright, is the City exalted.* As an upright man wiſheth and prayeth for a bleſſing upon the City where he liveth, ſo he is a bleſſing to it, and that no ſmall one, but to the greatning, enriching, and exaltation of it. He that is good in his perſon, becomes a common good to Cities, yea, to whole Nations; ſuch are a bleſſing, becauſe they receive ſo many bleſſings (*Prov.* 28. 20.) *A faithful man ſhall abound with bleſſings.* This faithful man is one that acts and doth all things faithfully, as appears by his oppoſition (in the ſame verſe) to him *that maketh haſt to be rich,* of whom the Text ſaith, *he ſhall not be innocent*; that is, he muſt needs deal unfaithfully or unrighteouſly; for in making ſuch poſt-haſt to riches, he uſually rides (as we ſay) over hedg and ditch, and cannot keep the plain way of honeſty.

Thirdly, As they who are in a ſtate of grace, and they who act graciouſly in that ſtate, ſo they who worſhip holily, or holy worſhippers, have a ſpecial promiſe of the bleſſing. As *Sion* is the ſeat of holy worſhip, ſo there the Lord commandeth the bleſſing upon holy worſhippers (*Pſ.* 133. 3.) And again (*Pſal.* 115. 12, 13.) *He will bleſs the houſe of* Iſrael, *he will bleſs the houſe of* Aaron, *he will bleſs them that fear the Lord, both ſmall and great*; that is, the generality of holy worſhippers ſhall be bleſſed. The fear of the Lord is often put in Scripture, for the worſhip of the Lord; and ſo they that fear him, are the ſame with them that worſhip him.

Fourthly, They are the bleſſed of the Lord, who truſt the Lord for all, and ſo make him the all of their truſt (*Pſal.* 34. 8.) *O taſt and ſee that the Lord is gracious; bleſſed is the man that truſteth in him*; that is, in him only or alone, being convinced of the utter inſufficiency of the Creature. That man is *curſed, who truſteth in man, and maketh fleſh his arm* (*Jer.* 17. 5.) therefore, pure truſt in God hath the bleſſing.

Fifthly, They that are a bleſſing unto others, ſhall have *the bleſſing* from the Lord. What it is to be a bleſſing to others, read at large in the Twenty-ninth Chapter of this Book (*verſ.*11.) and in the Thirty-firſt Chapter (*verſ.*20.) They that do good to others, they eſpecially who do good to the Souls of others, are a bleſſing to others. Now, they who do good, they ſhall receive good themſelves (*Prov.* 11. 25.) *The liberal ſhall be made fat, and he that watereth, ſhall be watered alſo himſelf.* He that *watereth* is a common good, a bleſſing to the place where he lives, a bleſſing to the rich, a bleſſing to the poor, a bleſſing to relations, a bleſſing to ſtrangers; upon ſuch, the Scripture aſſures the bleſſing of the Lord.

Sixthly, They who promote the worſhip and ſervice of God, they that are friends to the Ark of God, ſhall be bleſſed (2*Sam.*6.11.) *The Lord bleſſed the houſe of* Obed-Edom, *becauſe he entertained the Ark,* ſhewed kindneſs to the Ark, and was ready to do any ſervice for the Ark of God; he will be a friend to the true friends of his Church.

Seventhly, They ſhall receive a bleſſing of God, who ſtrive in prayer for his bleſſing. *Jacob* was bleſſed; but he wreſtled for it. They that would have it, muſt ask it with a gracious importunity; they that ſeek it diligently, ſhall find it.

Theſe are the chief characters of the perſons whom the Lord will bleſs. And ſeeing his bleſſing is ſo effectual for the procurement of our good, we ſhould above all things labour to procure his bleſſing. When *Jacob* wreſtled with the Angel, he asked nothing of him but a bleſſing (*Gen.* 32. 26.) He did not ſay, *I will not let thee go,* except thou deliver me from my brother *Eſau*; he did not ſay, *I will not let thee go,* unleſs thou make me rich, or great; he only ſaid, *I will not let thee go, except thou bleſs me*; let me be bleſſed, and let me be what thou wilt, or I can be. What ſhould we deſire in compariſon of the bleſſing of God, ſeeing his bleſſing (ſtrictly taken) is the fruit of his fatherly love! A man may be rich, and great, and honoured among men, yet not beloved; but he that is indeed bleſſed, is certainly beloved of God. *Eſau* could not obtain the bleſſing: Now what ſaith the Lord by the Prophet of him, as the Apoſtle quotes the Prophet? (*Rom.*9.13.) *Eſau have I hated. Eſau* got much riches, but he could not get the bleſſing, for he was hated of the Lord; and therefore it is ſaid (*Heb.*12.17.) *He found no place for repentance, though he ſought it carefully with tears*; that is, he could not make *Iſaac* repent of bleſſing *Jacob* (though through a miſtake, yet) according to Gods appointment; he could not prevail with him, no, not by tears, to take off the bleſſing from his brother *Jacob*, and place it upon himſelf: And the reaſon why the bleſſing remained with *Jacob*, was, becauſe he was loved of God. *The bleſſing muſt go, where the love goes.* The loved of the Lord, are and ſhall be bleſſed; and they who are bleſſed, have all good with a bleſſing. (Read, *Gen.* 24. 35. & 26. 13. & 28. 3. 2 *Sam.* 6. 11. *Pſal.* 107. 38.) Yea, as God giveth all good with a bleſſing, ſo he giveth himſelf, who is the chief good, beſt of all, and bleſſed for evermore, to thoſe whom he bleſſeth.

Then how ſhould we deſire the bleſſing of God, or to be bleſſed by God? It is wonderful, how paſſionately, and even impatiently, the Votaries of *Rome* deſire the Popes bleſſing; they think themſelves made men, if they can but have his bleſſing. I have read of a Cardinal, who ſeeing the people ſo ſtrangely deſirous of his bleſſing, ſaid, *Seeing this people will be deceived, let them be deceived.* But we cannot be too deſirous of a bleſſing from the Lord; if we have a bleſſing from him, and he bleſs us, we cannot be deceived; we can never miſs of comfort, if he bleſs us.

Quandoquidem populus hic vult decipi, decipiatur.

But whence is it then, that ſome look ſo much after Creature-helps, not minding the bleſſing of God? Doubtleſs it flows or ſprings from one of theſe three bad fountains or bitter roots.

Firſt, From ignorance; they know not what the bleſſing of God means; for, as Chriſt told the woman of *Samaria* (Acts 4. 10.) *If thou kneweſt the gift of God, thou wouldſt have asked*, &c. So, did they know what it is to be bleſſed of God, they would ask it above all things. It proceeds,

Secondly, From a ſpirit of profaneneſs in many; they deſpiſe God in their hearts, and think it below them to call for his help or bleſſing. Of ſuch *David* ſpeaks (*Pſal.* 14. 6.) *Ye have ſhamed the counſel of the poor, becauſe the Lord is his refuge*; or, becauſe ('tis all one in effect) he lives upon the bleſſing of God, you are aſhamed of this; this is poor counſel, think you, as it is the counſel of the poor; this truſting in God, this making God our refuge, this living upon the bleſſing of God, is a pitiful life, ſay you. *The wicked through the pride of his countenance, will not ſeek after God, God is not in all his thoughts*, or not at all in his thoughts, to ſeek unto him, and depend wholly upon him (*Pſal.* 10. 4.) As *Ezra was aſhamed to require of the King a band of Soldiers and Horſemen, to help them againſt the enemy in the way, becauſe he had ſpoken unto the King, ſaying, the hand of our God is upon all them for good, that ſeek him*, &c. (*Ezra* 8. 22.) So, profane perſons are aſhamed to ask help of God, and his bleſſing at any time, but then eſpecially, when they have bands of Souldiers and Horſemen to help them, as will appear further in the next thing. For,

Thirdly, This mindleſneſs and regardleſneſs of the bleſſing of God proceeds in ſome, from confidence in an arm of fleſh, even their own or others. The Prophet reproved the *Jews* for this in the day of their trouble (*Iſa.* 22. 8, 9, 10, 11.) *And he* (that is, God) *diſcovered the covering of* Judah (that is, what *Judah* covered himſelf with, or thought himſelf ſafely ſheltered by from all danger; what was that? The next word tells us) *thou didſt look in that day to the armour of the houſe of the Forreſt; ye have ſeen alſo the breaches of the City of* David, *that they are many, ye have fortified the wall*, &c. *but ye have not looked to the maker thereof, neither had reſpect unto him that faſhioned it long ago.* The meaning of all is this; ye relied upon, and put confidence in your own ſtrength, but looked not after, nor ſought unto me for my bleſſing; ye thought ye ſhould do well enough, if your magazines were well ſtored, and your City well fortified, and therefore neglected me. The ſame Prophet (*Chap.* 31. 1.) ſhews the ſame reaſon why they neglected God, *why they looked not to the holy One of* Iſrael, *nor ſought the Lord*; it was, becauſe *they went down to* Egypt *for help, and ſtayed on Horſes, and truſted in Chariots, becauſe they were many, and in Horſemen, becauſe they were very ſtrong.* We cannot truſt in God, and Creatures too. If God alone be not truſted to, he is not at all truſted; and they who put their truſt in any Creature, withdraw it from God, and make that Creature their God. They cannot ſo much as mind, much leſs ſeek a bleſſing from the true God, who chuſe to themſelves another God.

Again, ſeeing the Lords bleſſing is effectual, then whatever our ſucceſſes and increaſes are, let us aſcribe all to his bleſſing. Do not ſacrifice to your own nets, nor burn incenſe to your own drags, but ſay, this hath God wrought, the bleſſing of the Lord hath brought it to paſs. As the Apoſtle ſpake about ſpirituals (1 *Cor.* 3. 6.) *I have planted*, Apollo *watered, but God gave the increaſe*; ſo 'tis in temporals, all our increaſes are of God: Therefore let us ſay with the *Pſalmiſt*, *Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to thy Name be the praiſe.* Do not thank your wit for riches, nor your induſtry for increaſe, nor your ſtrength for victory, nor any humane help for any of your attainments: *The race is not to the ſwift, nor the battel to the ſtrong, neither yet bread to the wiſe, nor yet riches to men of underſtanding*, &c. (*Eccleſ.* 9. 11.) All is of God, it is his bleſſing upon the means, which makes the means ſucceſsful.

But ſome may ſay, are all men to aſcribe all their ſucceſſes and increaſes to the bleſſing of God?

I anſwer, Negatively, All increaſes and outward ſucceſſes are not to be aſcribed unto, nor fathered upon God. A man may increaſe in riches, and double his eſtate, as *Job's* was, yet not by the bleſſing of God: Only that comes by a bleſſing from God, which is got in Gods way, or by good means, according to the characters before hinted of the perſons whom the Lord will bleſs; for they who either make a profeſſion of diſhoneſty, or are diſhoneſt in their profeſſion, let them take heed of pinning their ſucceſſes upon God, and of thanking him for them. Many ſay in their hearts, and ſome are not aſhamed to ſay it with their mouths, *Honeſt dealers muſt die beggars. They never came by riches in the way of a bleſſing, who ſay honeſty is the way to poverty*; much leſs, they whoſe conſciences know and tell them (though others know it not, and ſo cannot tell them) that they have enriched themſelves by the wrong, or raiſed themſelves by the ruine of others.

Job was enriched and raiſed high, and the Text aſſures us what enriched him, what raiſed him; *The Lord bleſſed*

The latter end of Job, more than his beginning.

We have ſeen the Author of this bleſſing: Theſe words ſhew the ſubject of this bleſſing, *The latter end of* Job, or *Job* in his latter end, together with the quantity and abundance of this bleſſing, *More than his beginning. The Lord bleſſed*

מראשתו *Præ initio ejus.*

The latter end of Job.] That is, *Job* in the latter part of his life; and he bleſſed it *more than his beginning*, that is, than the former part of his life. God bleſſed, and greatly bleſſed in the former part of *Job's* life, for *he was the greateſt man of all men in the Eaſt*; but now *Job* ſhall be greater than *Job*, he ſhall be greater than himſelf. His affliction razed down his houſe, and all he had, to the very foundation; but when God would hold the plummet in his hand, and rebuild him, to what an amazing height did his houſe ariſe! *The Lord bleſſed his latter end, more than his beginning.* The words are plain, and need no comment. From them we may Obſerve,

> Firſt, *The latter part of a good mans life, is the beſt part of his life.*

It is often ſo, I do not ſay, it is always ſo, in outward things, God deals not with all alike; but it is often ſo, God gives them their beſt at laſt, even in the things of this life. As the Governour of the Feaſt ſaid to the Bridegroom (*John* 2.) *Thou haſt kept the beſt wine till now.* So the Lord often keeps the beſt wine of outward comforts, to the very laſt of our lives. *Bildad* put it only as a ſuppoſition to *Job* (*Chap.* 8. 7.) *If thou wert pure and upright, ſurely then he would awake for thee, and make the habitation of thy righteouſneſs proſperous; though thy beginning was ſmall, yet thy latter end ſhould greatly increaſe.* But we may reſolve it as a Poſition concerning *Job*; ſurely he was pure and upright, for God did awake for him, and made the habitation of his righteouſneſs proſperous; his beginning was (comparatively) ſmall, but his latter end did greatly increaſe, or he had a great increaſe at his latter end. And though this be not always true, as to outward things, that the Lord bleſſeth the latter end of a good man more than his beginning; yet it is always true, as to ſpiritual things, it is always true, as to the beſt things. The Lord gives his people their beſt Soul-bleſſings at laſt; though they have great good before, yet greater good, or their good in a greater meaſure then; he gives them more grace, more of his Spirit, more of his comforts, and their latter end is moſt bleſſed, as it is the beginning of endleſs bleſſedneſs. *Abraham* ſaid to the rich man in the Parable, *Son, remember thou haſt had thy good things, and* Lazarus *evil things; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.* The Lord deals beſt with all his people at laſt, one way or other; to be ſure, all ſhall be well with them in the latter end. *Solomon* ſaith (*Eccl.* 7.8.) *Better is the end of a thing, than the beginning.* And he ſaid ſo, not becauſe all things end better than they begin; but becauſe when things or perſons end well, it is then ſurely well with them, whatever their beginning was. *That is well, which ends well.*

Hence, let us be minded not to judg the work of God before the latter end. The works of God ſeem croſs many times to his people; but he will ſet all right, and make them amends for all at the latter end. The Apoſtle *James* calls us to conſider *Job*'s latter end (*Chap.* 5. 11.) *Ye have heard of the patience of* Job (that is, you have heard of his ſufferings in the fleſh, and of his ſuffering ſpirit) *and ye have ſeen the end of the Lord*; that is, what end the Lord made for him. Some give another interpretation of theſe latter words (as was ſhewed formerly) but this I conceive moſt clear to the context, *Ye have ſeen the end of the Lord*, that is, what end the Lord made for *Job*: Though the middle part of his life was very grievous, yet God changed the Scene of things, and his end was very glorious. *David* (*Pſal.* 37. 37.) would have the end of upright men marked and well conſidered; *Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, the end of that man is peace.* Poſſibly he hath had a great deal of trouble in his way, but his end is peace. Let not us be offended at the croſſes which we meet with in the courſe of our lives, but look to the promiſed Crown at the concluſion of our lives. Let us not ſtay in the death of Chriſt, nor in the grave of Chriſt, but look to the Reſurrection and the Aſcenſion of Chriſt. You may ſee thoſe who are Chriſts on the Croſs, and in the Grave, but mark and you ſhall ſee their Reſurrection and Aſcenſion. The two witneſſes are repreſented ſlain, yet raiſed, and then aſcending up to Heaven in a Cloud, their enemies beholding them (*Rev.* 11. 11, 12.) *Deſpiſe not the day of ſmall things* (*Zech.* 4. 10.) the latter end may have a great increaſe; deſpond not in the day of ſorrowful things, for the latter end may be full of joy. There are three things which ſhould much comfort us in our afflictions.

Firſt, That they cannot laſt always, they will have an end.

Secondly, That while they laſt, or before they have an end, they are medicinal and healthful, they are for our good while they continue upon us, or we in them.

Thirdly, (which we have in the Text) we may expect, that as they ſhall ſurely have an end, ſo that they will end comfortably. *No chaſtning for the preſent* (ſaith the Apoſtle, *Heb.* 12. 11.) *ſeemeth joyous, but grievous; nevertheleſs, afterwards it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteouſneſs, unto them which are exerciſed thereby.* God will not only bring our troubles to an end, but he will give us ſweet fruit at the end of them, as a recompence for all our troubles. God will not only bring our ſufferings to an end, but to ſuch an end as will make us gainers by them. Thoſe are even deſirable and lovely loſſes, which iſſue in ſuch advantages.

Secondly, In that the Lord gave *Job* ſo great an advance in worldly things,

> Obſerve, *The Lord ſometimes gives his people much more of this World, than they deſire, or ever looked after.*

Job was far from praying for ſuch an increaſe, he never deſired that his Earthly ſubſtance ſhould be doubled in his latter end: Indeed, we find him once wiſhing that it were with him as in his beginning, but he wiſhed not for more (*Chap.* 29. 2.) *O that it were with me as in the months paſt, as in the day when the Lord preſerved me, when his candle ſhined upon my head, and by his light I walked through darkneſs.* *Job* wiſhed that he were in as good a condition as he once had, but he never wiſhed that all might be doubled, or that his latter end ſhould be more than his beginning; yet the Lord gave him more, gave him double to his beginning, God exceeded his prayers and his wiſhes. As the Lord *is able to do exceeding abundantly for us, above all that we ask or think* (*Eph.* 3.20) ſo he often doth; and uſually, therefore, moderates the deſires and askings of his people, as to the things of this World, that he may out-give their askings, and out-do their deſires.

Thirdly, The Lord made *Job* the greateſt man in the Eaſt in his beginning, but he bleſſed his latter end more than his beginning,

> Hence Note, *How much ſoever the Lord gives at one time, he can give more at another.*

God gave *Job* good meaſure before, but now according to that expreſſion (*Luke* 6.38.) he gavo *him good meaſure, heaped up, preſſed down, and running over.* Let us not ſay, when God hath given us much, or done much for us, he can give or do no more for us: He hath more in his treaſure of temporal good things, and he hath more in his treaſure of ſpiritual good things, than he hath yet given out to any; he can give more faith, how much faith ſoever he hath given; he can give more patience, how much patience ſoever he hath given, and ſo of every grace and good thing. The Lords ſtock and treaſures can never be drawn dry; he is an ever over-flowing fountain. If you had much at the beginning, you may have much more at the latter end. So much of theſe words, as they hold out the reſtoring of *Job*'s eſtate in general; the particulars are ſumm'd up in the cloſe of the verſe:

> **For he had fourteen thouſand Sheep, and ſix thouſand Camels, and a thouſand yoke of Oxen, and a thouſand She-Aſſes.**

The increaſe of his eſtate is here ſet forth in Cattel only, as his firſt eſtate was (Cattel were the riches of thoſe times and Countries) yet doubtleſs his eſtate increaſed in every thing or kind. Firſt, his family and Servants increaſed, to look to ſo many Cattel. Secondly, his Lands and Paſtures increaſed to feed them. Thirdly, his Houſe and Buildings increaſed, to receive and lodg ſo numerous a Family. Fourthly, his Honour and Dignity increaſed. Some affirm, that whereas before, he had only ſome ſmall principality under his government, now he was declared King over all the Land of *Uz*. Thus all ſorts of good things were given him double; but whether at once, or by degrees, is not expreſt.

Some of the Rabbins have a fancy, and it is a wild one, that *Job*'s Cattel which were taken from him, were not carried quite away, but only driven into ſome other Country, and there kept; ſo that when he was reſtored, they were brought home to him again, with this double increaſe. This may well go for a fancy; for, not his own Cattel, but Cattel of the ſame kind, were reſtored to him double. There is no difficulty in theſe words. The Lord bleſſed the latter end of *Job* more than his beginning, giving double or twice as many Sheep, Oxen, Camels, Aſſes, as he had befor.

> Hence Note, *Outward good things, Sheep and Oxen, Houſes and Lands, Gold and Silver, are a bleſſing, as they come from God unto his Servants.*

Here is nothing ſaid of the beſt things; all was but Sheep and Oxen, yet in this *Job* received a bleſſing. The Lord (*Deut.* 28. 4.) made large promiſes of bleſſings to his obeying people, or to his people in caſe of obedience, and all in outward comforts; *Bleſſed ſhalt thou be in the City, and bleſſed ſhalt thou be in the Field; bleſſed ſhall be the fruit of thy Body, and the fruit of thy Ground, and the fruit of thy Cattel, the increaſe of thy kine, and the flocks of thy Sheep; bleſſed ſhall be thy basket, and thy ſtore.* Spiritual things are the beſt bleſſings; ſpiritual things are not only the nobleſt, but the moſt neceſſary bleſſings. The favour of God, the light of his countenance, pardon of ſin, grace in our hearts; theſe are excellent bleſſings, and theſe make us exceedingly bleſſed; and no doubt but *Job* did chiefly look after theſe bleſſings; this good man deſired the light of Gods countenance, the ſhinings of his face upon him, the workings of his grace and ſpirit in him, the evidences of his love to him, infinitely above Cattel, Corn and Wine. A godly man accounts himſelf but in a poor condition, if he were to reckon all his eſtate in Houſes and Lands, in Sheep and Oxen; yet theſe are a bleſſing from the Lord upon him, and ſo he accounts them. And ſtill it muſt be remembred, which hath already been touched, that before the coming of Chriſt, before there was a full diſcovery, and a clear manifeſtation of the grace of God in Chriſt to his people, they in thoſe times were much led and fed with promiſes of temporal bleſſings. The faithful were allured to Heaven by Earthly things. Jeſus Chriſt (who came down from Heaven to lift us up thither, who took our Nature, that we might partake of the divine Nature, who was clothed with our fleſh, to ſhew that God dwelleth in us, and hath joined us to his glory and immortality; Jeſus Chriſt, I ſay) was known only in ſhadows and remote propheſies, in thoſe times, and therefore it was neceſſary the Lord ſhould deal with them accordingly, and allure them by promiſes of Cattel, and Corn and Children, eſpecially by the promiſe of long life (which hath the greateſt reſemblance to, and bears the faireſt image of eternal life) and all becauſe the heavenly life was not then ſo perfectly diſcovered, as it is now in theſe Goſpel-times. For though it be a truth, that all the good things of the World are not ſufficient to make a love-token, yet God gives thoſe good things to his people as tokens of his love, and they ſee love in them; and theſe leſſer good things are then beſt to us, when we can look on them as bleſſings coming from the love of God, which we may do,

Firſt, When we can ſay we have got and kept them with a good conſcience.

Secondly, When we uſe and order them with prudence.

Thirdly, When we diſpenſe them charitably and freely, according to the needs and neceſſities of others. When we truly and intentionally honour God with our ſubſtance, in doing acts of love, it ſhews that he hath given it us in love.

Fourthly, When the Lord with increaſe of riches, gives us an increaſe of grace, when our Souls thrive as well as our eſtates, then we may look upon riches as coming to us in love. Sheep and Oxen, Gold and Silver, without a juſt, and wiſe, and gracious poſſeſſing and uſing of them, prove curſes at laſt, not bleſſings, ſnares not favours. There are none ſo unhappy as fooliſh rich men, none ſo baſe as covetous rich men, none ſo intolerable as proud rich men, none ſo vile and deſpicable as ſluggiſh voluptuous rich men, none more ungodly and irreligious, than they who having riches, truſt in them, and dote upon them; only when the Lord gives ſpiritual things with temporal, grace with goods, they are mercies to us. When *Luther* received a favour from a great Prince, he began to be afraid that God would put him off with ſuch things. A godly man receives a portion in Earthly good things, but he will not take all the good things of the Earth for his portion.

Now, as all ſpiritual things are better than temporal, ſo among temporals, ſome are better than others. *Job* received good things when his Cattel were doubled, but he had better bleſſings of this life reſtored to him than thoſe; his eſtate reſtored double in Cattel was nothing to his Children reſtored ſingle, as it follows in the next words.

Verſe 13. He had alſo ſeven Sons, and three Daughters.

This is the third part of *Job's* reſtauration, *Sons and Daughters*. We may conſider this bleſſing, Firſt, In the number, Secondly, In the Sex. In number, his Children were ſeven and three. As to Sex, they were both Sons and Daughters; he had ſeven Sons and three Daughters, in all ten, juſt the number he had before, as we read at the ſecond verſe of the firſt Chapter.

Some of the Jewiſh Rabbies (before ſpoken of) ſay, his former Children were not indeed ſlain, but removed during the time of his affliction, and that, being ended, were reſtored the ſame both in number and perſon. This is as groundleſs a dream as the other about his Cattel, and ſo I leave it. For,

That his Children were really ſlain with the fall of the Houſe where they were feaſting, the Hiſtory makes evident in the firſt Chapter; and that he had the ſame number of Children (not the ſame Children) reſtored, is all that is evident in this.

Only here a queſtion ariſeth, and ſome trouble themſelves much about it, to little purpoſe, how to make good that of *verſ.* 8. where 'tis ſaid, *The Lord gave* Job *twice as much as he had before*, when as he had but juſt ſo many Sons and Daughters as he had before. Here is no doubling of them, and it may be thought, that the Lord, being now bleſſing his latter end more than his beginning, ſhould have given him more Children, double Children, becauſe the more Children the greater is the bleſſing.

I anſwer, Firſt, Negatively. The reaſon why his Children were not double, though his Cattel were, was not, Firſt, Out of any want of power in God, he could have doubled his Children as well as his Cattel. Nor was it, Secondly, For want of love or good will to *Job*. Nor was it, Thirdly, (As, one of the Ancients, *Tertullian*, gives the reaſon) that *Job* might never want ſomething to exerciſe his patience with while he lived, foraſmuch as he ſaw himſelf ſhortned in that mercy. Nor was it, Fourthly, (As *Aquinas* conceived) becauſe, if his Children had been doubled as well as his eſtate, then his Children would not have had a double eſtate, nor more than they ſhould have had before. Forty proportionably divided among twenty, yields each of them no greater a portion, than twenty will do to ten. Nor was it, Fifthly, Becauſe the Lord would not have him over-burdened with cares about their education; none of theſe were any reaſon, why *Job's* Children were not doubled to him in number, as well as his Cattel. And therefore,

Tertul. *lib. de patientia, c.* 1.

I anſwer affirmatively,

Firſt, For the word *double, or twice as much*, in the Text, which this ſeems not to come up unto, we may eaſily ſalve that difficulty, for the Text ſpeaks not of perſons, but of things, or of his ſubſtance, with reſpect to *doubling* or a *twice as much*. As for his Children they come in with an *alſo*, as an additional bleſſing to all the reſt; *He had alſo ſeven Sons, and three Daughters.*

Secondly, Thoſe words *twice as much*, need not be taken ſtrictly, as was ſhewed before; *Job* might, and doubtleſs did receive a double mercy in his Children, though their perſons were not doubled nor multiplied, as will appear further afterwards.

Thirdly, I anſwer, it was the pleaſure of the Lord, to give him no more than the ſame number of Children, and that may ſuffice us.

Fourthly, Some of the Ancients are much pleaſed with this other anſwer, ſaying, *Job*, in a ſence, had his Children doubled; for his ſlain Children were not loſt, but gone before, and lived ſtill in a bleſſed ſtate: They having immortal Souls, and being the ſeed of the righteous, their Father had reaſon to believe them ſafe in *Abraham's* boſome. *Thoſe Children are not loſt to their Parents when they die, who are not loſt to God, or are not themſelves loſt Children.*

Fifthly, Though *Job's* Children were not doubled in number as his Cattel were, yet we may judg them doubled to him in goodneſs and vertuous qualities. The beauty of his Daughters is expreſly noted in the following words: And ſhall we think that God, who had a bleſſing for *Job*, bleſſed his Children only with fading bodily beauty? Doubtleſs their minds were more richly indowed, and their Souls more beautiful than their Bodies. And if *Job's* Daughters were ſuch, we may well conceive his Sons were not inferiour to them in gracious qualifications, and that they much exceeded the Sons he had before his affliction. Some have ſpoken doubtfully, at leaſt, of *Job's* former Children, as if (though good, yet) not very good; and they give two reaſons for it out of this Book. Firſt, Becauſe, when they went to feaſt at each other Houſes *Job* uſed to offer Sacrifice, fearing his Children had curſed God in their hearts. Secondly, *Bildad* (Chap. 8. 4.) ſeems to lay a blot upon his former Children, *If thy Children* (ſaith he) *have ſinned againſt him, and he have caſt them away for their tranſgreſſion*, &c. which may intimate the ſinful miſcarriages of his former Children in the courſe of their lives, as well as that dreadful accident by which they died. Yet, I conceive, we need not caſt any ſuch blot upon them; they might be good, though theſe were better, and ſo a double mercy to their Father. *He had alſo ſeven Sons, and three Daughters.*

Tibi non perit qui Deo non perit. Non numero ſed valore, quod occultè inſinuatur in filiabus, quæ pulcherrimæ fuiſſe leguntur. Aquin.

Hence Note, *Children are great bleſſings.*

When the Lord told *Abraham* (Gen. 15.2.) *I am thy ſhield, and exceeding great reward,* Abraham ſaid, *Lord what wilt thou give me, ſeeing I go childleſs?* As if he had ſaid, what is an inheritance without an heir? Children are a bleſſing which God many times denieth his own Children: God denied *Abraham* that bleſſing long, yet gave it him at laſt. *Abraham*'s ſervant reported the bleſſings of God beſtowed upon his Maſter, put this as chief (*Gen.* 24.35.) *The Lord hath bleſſed my Maſter greatly, he is become great, he hath given him flocks and herds, Silver and Gold, men-ſervants and maid ſervants* (what follows?) *and* Sarah *my Maſters Wife, bare a Son to my Maſter, when ſhe was old.* *Abraham*'s ſervant counted this the complement of all his Maſters outward bleſſings, that as the Lord had given him a great eſtate, ſo a Son to inherit and poſſeſs it after him. And if Children be a bleſſing? Let all who have them take heed of looking upon them as a burthen.

And ſeeing they are a bleſſing of the Lord, ſeeing they come from him, let all who have them be admoniſhed to bring them up for him, or, as the Apoſtle directs, *In the nurture and admonition of the Lord.* Whatever we receive from God we ſhould uſe for him, and return to him; our eſtates ſhould be ſerviceable to the Lord, and above all we ſhould labour to make our Children ſerviceable to him.

Thus we have ſeen the three parts of *Job*'s reſtauration. Firſt, His friends; Secondly, His wealth; Thirdly, His Children, were reſtored to him. But *Job* had four loſſes, and we hear nothing about the reſtoring of the fourth. Firſt, He loſt his ſubſtance; Secondly, His Children; Thirdly, His health; Fourthly, His friends: Here's a reſtoring of three of them, but noting is ſpoken of the fourth, which I place third, the *reſtoring of his health.* Now health being the chief of outward bleſſings, better than Sheep and Oxen, and whatever we can have in this World, why was not the reſtoring of that mercy mentioned?

I anſwer, Though the reſtoring of his health and ſtrength be not expreſt verbally, yet it is expreſt equivalently or vertually; for when it is ſaid he offered Sacrifice, when it is ſaid he did eat bread with his friends in his Houſe, theſe are proofs of his health; and what was laſt ſpoken, that he had ſo many Children, proves it much more. So then, though this fourth part of his mercy, be not mentioned, yet it is implied in all that went before.

But, that being granted, 'tis further queried, when his health was reſtored? Whether before he prayed for his friends, or in the time of his prayer for his friends? Or whether after all was done? Some make hot diſputes about this matter, which ſurely is not much material, if we knew the certainty of it; nor do I know how any ſhould attain the certain knowledg of it; ſeeing the Scripture is utterly ſilent, as to any determination of it.

There is one queſtion more. The Text ſaith, God gave *Job twice as much* in Cattel, *&c.* but here is nothing ſaid of his twice as much in grace, here is no mention of any amendment in his ſpiritual ſtate; his goods were doubled, but was not his goodneſs? Did *Job* recover only in temporals?

I anſwer, Firſt, The graces of *Job* were never loſt, as his Cattle and Children were; and therefore there needed no mention of the reſtoring of his graces. Satan, by the Lords permiſſion, put him to it, and tried all his graces, but could not rob him of one.

Secondly, *Job*'s graces were not only not loſt, but doubled in that exerciſe or combate. True grace increaſeth by the ordinary uſe of it, much more by the extraordinary trials of it. And doubtleſs *Job*, who was ſo eminently gracious, increaſed in every grace, while he continued in this fiery trial. He ſaid of himſelf (*Chap.*23.10.) *When he hath tried me I ſhall come forth as Gold.* I ſhall come out better than I came in. He loſt droſs and corruption in the trial, but no grace, nor any degree of grace; his graces were doubled or increaſed. A believer thrives (as to the inner man) in affliction, how much ſoever he loſeth and goeth backward as a man. As the time of affliction is a ſpecial time for the uſing of grace, ſo for the increaſing of it: Grace never grows more in a gracious heart than in a day of trouble. And though poſſibly a godly man doth not ſenſibly, or to appearance grow in grace preſently, yet he truly doth ſo, and in due time it will appear that he hath done ſo: We may take this Chapter for a proof of it. God himſelf found *Job* much bettered in his graces, elſe he had not uſed him as a mediator for his friends, which was as high a ſpiritual honour as could be put upon him, acceptance being promiſed and given him in that work. Nor would the Lord have uſed that endearing word, *My ſervant, my ſervant* Job, four times in one verſe, had not *Job* improved in his ſervice, which could not be but by the improvement of his graces. God called *Job* ſervant once in the firſt Chapter; ſurely he was become a better ſervant now that the Lord ſeemed ſo much delighted to call him *ſervant* in this laſt Chapter of the Book, when he had taken full trial of him by ſuffering, as formerly by doing. We may well conclude, *Job* was become a more humble ſervant, a more profitable ſervant, a more holy ſervant, a more ſpiritual ſervant, than ever he had been, when we find the Lord inſiſting ſo much upon, and ſo often repeating that relation to him, *My ſervant* Job. His ſufferings had mended his ſervice, and his paſſive obedience had fitted him more for active. God was ſo much pleaſed with his ſervice, that he took pleaſure to call him *ſervant.* So then, we may anſwer the query propoſed; *Job*'s increaſe was not only in Cattel (that had been but a poor increaſe) his increaſe was alſo in grace and goodneſs; and he who was a ſervant of the Lord before, was then a more approved ſervant.

The Lord having told us, in the cloſe of this verſe, how many Sons and Daughters *Job* had, he is pleaſed to give us a character or deſcription of his Daughters in the two verſes following.

VERS. 14, 15.

And he called the name of the firſt Jemima, **and the name of the ſecond** Kezia, **and the name of the third** Keren-happuch.

And in all the Land were no women found ſo fair as the Daughters of Job; **and their Father gave them inheritance among their Brethren.**

THE former verſe gave us the account of *Job*'s Children; He had alſo ſeven Sons and three Daughters: Nor is any thing more ſaid of his Sons, but that they were ſeven; but much more is ſaid of his Daughters in theſe two verſes, than that they were three; and more is ſpoken of his Daughters in three particulars.

Firſt, They are ſet forth by their names.
Secondly, By the comlineſs of their perſons.
Thirdly, By the greatneſs of their dowry.

Their names are expreſt at *verſ.* 14.

He called the name of the firſt Jemima, **and the name of the ſecond** Kezia, **and the name of the third** Keren-happuch.

The comlineſs of their perſons is ſhewed at the beginning of *verſ.* 15.

And in all the Land were no women found ſo fair as the Daughters of Job.

The greatneſs of their dowry is ſet down at the cloſe of *verſ.* 15.

And their Father gave them inheritance among their Brethren.

Some have queried, why no more is ſaid of the Sons of *Job*, than how many they were? To ſuch, this anſwer may ſuffice, it was the Lords pleaſure to have no more ſpoken of them; and where no more is ſaid, why ſhould we expect more?

If any ſhall further enquire; but were not his Sons worthy perſons, that they are put off thus ſlightly, and mention made only of their number, not of their weight? Were they not worthy to have ſo much as their names recorded? Which honour, and much more, is done their Siſters, the Daughters of *Job*.

I anſwer, We may upon good ground believe, that *Job*'s ſeven Sons were worthy perſons, becauſe they were a great part, yea, the chief part of his reſtored happineſs; for as

Children are better than riches, ſo among Children, Sons are better than Daughters, as being the more worthy Sex. Yet Sons, if not well qualified, are not only leſs worthy than Daughters, but a great croſs to their Father: And therefore it would have been a diminiſhing of *Job*'s felicity, to have had Sons equal in number with the former, yet inferior in vertue and man-like qualities; we may, for this reaſon, ſafely conclude, that (though nothing be ſaid of their worth) that *Job*'s Sons were worthy perſons, or perſons of praiſe-worthy qualities. But ſeeing we have nothing from divine authority, but only from well-grounded reaſon, to aſſert concerning *Job*'s Sons, I ſhall not ſtay the reader in any further diſcourſe about them; but proceed as the Text doth with the Daughters, concerning whom we have many things to ſay from divine authority. And, Firſt, Their names muſt not be paſt with ſilence.

And he called the name of the firſt Jemima.

He, That is, *Job*, I ſay, it was *he*. Though ſome make a queſtion whether it was he or no? Or whether *Job* gave the name, or the people? I ſhall determine it upon *Job*; *he*

Called the name of the firſt.] The Hebrew is *he called the name of one*. Every *firſt is one, but every one is not firſt*; and therefore to diſtinguiſh who this *one* was, we render the word *Firſt*. 'Tis uſual in Scripture to call that *one* which is *Firſt*. Thus ſpake *Moſes*, deſcribing the works of Creation (*Gen.* 1. 5.) *So the evening and the morning were the firſt day:* The Hebrew ſtrictly is, *The evening was, and the morning was, day one.* Any day is one day, the fifth day was one day, and the ſixth day was one day, as well as the firſt; but the fifth or ſixth were not the firſt day; therefore we Tranſlate for *one day*, the *firſt day*. Thus here *he called the name of one*, that is, *of the firſt* Jemima.

There is a twofold firſtneſs. Firſt, In order of time. Secondly, In order of honour. Firſt here is firſt in time. The other two might equal, yea, exceed the firſt in worth and dignity; but this was *Job*'s firſt-born Daughter, his firſt in time. *He called the name of the firſt* Jemima.

Hence Note, Firſt, *It is a duty to give names to our Children.*

'Tis not meerly matter of prudence, 'tis not an humane invention to give names. God himſelf gave the name to the firſt man; God called him by the name, which, doubtleſs himſelf had given him, when he called him *Adam*. The proper name of the firſt man, is a name common to all men; *Adam* ſignifying *Red-earth*, ſheweth us of what matter all men are made. And as God called the firſt man by that name *Adam*, ſo *Adam* gave a name to the firſt woman, his wife (*Gen.* 3. 20.) *He called his wiſes name* Eve, *becauſe ſhe was the mother of all living*, And as God gave the firſt man a name, and he named the firſt woman, ſo God appointed the firſt man to give names to all living Creatures (*Gen.* 2. 19.) *The Lord brought all the Beaſts of the Field to* Adam *to ſee what he would call them*; *and whatſoever* Adam *called every living Creature, that was the name thereof.* The Lord would have nothing nameleſs, or without a name; ſurely then, he would have men and women known by their names. *Abraham* was once called *Abram*, *a high father*; but God changed his name, and would have him called *Abraham*, *the Father of a multitude*. Were it not for names we ſhould be in a great confuſion, both about perſons and things; we could not diſtinguiſh men had we not names to call them by; and therefore the Latines ſay the word (*nomen*) ſignifying a name, comes from (*notamen*) a word which ſignifieth a mark of diſtinction. Whatſoever God is made known by, is called his name in Scripture, becauſe men, and all things elſe, are known by their names. Though ſome in a ſpecial manner are called *men of name* in Scripture (*Gen.* 6. 4.) which we therefore Tranſlate *men of renown*; and men of no account or reputation among men, are called *men of no name:* Yet the pooreſt, the obſcureſt man hath a name, by which he is known and diſtinguiſht from other men.. And as by names we diſtinguiſh perſons at preſent, ſo we preſerve the memory of perſons, and of their actions, and of their ſayings, whether good or bad for hereafter. How can it be told who did, or who ſaid, this or that, unleſs we had their names who ſaid or did it.

Nomen quaſi notamen. Shem, quaſi Sham, poſitum.

Secondly, *He called*, that is, *Job called the name of*, &c.

Hence Note, *It is the Fathers priviledg to give the name to his Children.*

To give a name is an act of power; and therefore the Lord, as I ſhewed before, brought all the Creatures to *Adam* as their Lord: Having ſaid (*Gen.* 1. 28.) *Have thou dominion over the Beaſts of the Earth, and the Fowls of the Air, and the Fiſh of the Sea*, He brought them to *Adam*, as their Lord, to receive their names (*Gen.* 2. 19.) It is an act of great power either to give or to change names. When *Saul* (Acts 9.) was converted or changed, the Lord changed his name, he was no more called *Saul*, but *Paul*; being now become the Lords ſervant, and (as it were) one of his menial or houſhold ſervants, he gave him a new name. The Prince of the *Eunuchs* changed the names of *Daniel*, and his three companions; *He gave unto* Daniel *the name of* Belteſhazzar, and to *Hananiah* of *Shadrach*, &c. (*Dan.* 1. 7.) Yet we read in Scripture that women very often gave names to their Children. 'Tis conceived that *Eve* gave the name to *Cain*, *I have gotten a man from the Lord* (*Gen.* 4. 1.) yea, as ſome expound her meaning in thoſe words, ſhe thought ſhe had gotten, *That man the Lord*, even the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, *the promiſed ſeed* (Gen. 3. 15.) and then ſhe had gotten ſomewhat indeed, *a poſſeſſion* to purpoſe, as the name *Cain* ſignifieth. In the Hiſtory of *Jacob*, we find the Mothers, *Leah* and *Rachel*, ſtill giving the name (*Gen.* 29. 32, 33, 34, 35. & 30. 6, 8. &c. 1 *Sam.* 1. 20.) But as it is well diſtinguiſhed, though the nomination was often from the Mother, yet the impoſition or confirmation of the name, was always from the Father: The Mother deſired the name, the Father ratified it; as is plain in the caſe of *John* the Baptiſt (*Luke* 1. 59, 60, 61, 62, 63.) Friends preſent at his circumciſion *called him* Zacharias, *after the name of his Father*; *his Mother anſwered, not ſo, but his name ſhall be called* John. How was this matter determined? *They made ſigns to his Father, how he would have him called*, he muſt end the matter; *and he called for a writing Table, and wrote, ſaying, his name is* John. There have been many nominations from the Mother, but the impoſition ever was from the Father; and uſually, the Father only is mentioned in giving the name (*Gen.* 5. 3. 29.) as alſo here in the Text, 'tis ſaid of *Job* alone, *He called the name of the firſt*

In ſignum herilis poteſtatis.

Nominatiò à matre, impoſitio nominis à patre.

Jemima, and the name of the ſecond Kezia, and the name of the third Keren-happuch. I ſhall,

Firſt, Conſider the ſignification of theſe names in the original Language.

Secondly, Give ſome account why *Job* gave them theſe names; for we muſt not think they were given (as we ſay) *at a venture, nor in a fancy.*

He called the name of the firſt Jemima.

The root of this name in the Hebrew, ſignifieth *Day*, or, *the light of the day*, and ſo both the Septuagint and the Vulgar Latine Tranſlate: As if we ſhould render it in Engliſh, *He called the name of the firſt, Day.*

Ἡμέραν Sept. *Diem.* Vulg. *A Radice* יום

He called the name of the ſecond Kezia.

That in the Hebrew, ſignifieth a *Spice* or *Perfume*, a very fragrant and pleaſant ſpice, of which Naturaliſts ſpeak much, and is commonly known by the name *Caſſia*, and ſo rendred (*Pſal.* 45. 8.) *All thy garments ſmell of Myrrh, Aloes and Caſſia:* As if in Engliſh *Job* had called his ſecond Daughters name, *Sweet ſpice or perfume.*

And the name of the third Keren-happuch.

That's a compound word, from *Keren*, which ſignifieth *a Horn*; and *Happuch*, which among the Learned hath a double ſignification.

Firſt, It ſignifieth a *pouder*, of which they made a kind of ointment, wherewith proud ones painted themſelves, called in Latine *Stibium*. Some ſay it was a mineral; others ſay it was a plant growing in the Sea, which being ground to pouder, was of an excellent redneſs in colour. Here the word *Keren* ſignifying *a Horn*, is prefixed to it, becauſe they uſed to preſerve ſuch painting-pouder in a horn. We find this word *Happuch* made uſe of in the Verb (2 *Kings* 9. 30.) where it is ſaid, that *Jezebel* hearing *Jehu* was come to *Jezreel, Painted her face, and tired her head,* &c. The Prophet alſo maketh uſe of it (*Jer.*4.30.) when he would ſhew how unable any thing ſhould be to do them good, the Lord being provoked by their evil deeds. True bodily beauty cannot, much leſs can a painted face procure them favour with men, with whom the Lord is angry for their wickedneſs and Soul-pollutions; and therefore, ſaith the Prophet there, *Though thou cloatheſt thy ſelf with crimſon and deckeſt thy ſelf with ornaments of Gold, though thou renteſt thy face with painting, in vain ſhalt thou make thy ſelf fair, thy lovers will deſpiſe thee, they will ſeek thy life.* When he ſaith, *Though thou renteſt thy ſelf with painting*, it is only to ſhew, that though they did their beſt, and uſed their utmoſt skill to make themſelves look fair, though they ſhould rub their faces with this vermillion, till they crack'd their very skin, yet it would do them no good, the enemy would not be enamoured with them, nor pity, nor ſpare them for their fine cloths and fair faces.

Secondly, Others derive this word *Happuch* from a root, which ſignifieth *to turn*, and then the ſence of the Text is, *He called the name of the third* Keren-happuch; that is, *the horn of converſion, or of turning.* I ſhall give the reaſon of that Tranſlation by and by. The Septuagint render it by a word which ſignifieth *Plenty, the horn of plenty.* But I conceive our rendring moſt proper: He called her name *Keren-happuch*, that is, *The horn of beauty*, alluding to the cuſtom of proud women, who to make themſelves look fair, and ſo to enſnare others with their beauty, anointed or painted themſelves with that tincturing ſtuff. Thus we have the ſignification of theſe names.

But why did *Job* give his Daughters ſuch names as theſe?

Firſt, I ſuppoſe this may be given as a reaſon of it, That he might in theſe names remember, or be minded of, his wonderful reſtoration. God having brought him out of a low and miſerable eſtate, to a very high and comfortable one; He therefore called the name of the firſt *Jemima*, that is, *Day*, to ſignifie that he who before was in a night, a dark night of ſadneſs and ſorrow, of trouble and adverſity, was now come to a comfortable day of proſperity. The Scripture ſaith, *Light is ſown for the righteous.* They may be in the dark, in a dark day, in a day as dark as night, and where the very light (as *Job* ſpake, Chap. 10.) is as darkneſs; but there is a Day coming, *Light is ſown for the righteous.* *Job* might ſay, I have been in the dark night of affliction, but now 'tis break of day with me; and therefore that I may remember this goodneſs of God, my firſt Daughter ſhall be named *Day*, that her name may help me to remember the goodneſs of God all my days.

Again, When he called his ſecond Daughter *Kezia*, that alſo might refer to his new *ſtate*. As if he had ſaid, My former condition of ſtink and filth is paſſed away; I once ſate (as it were) upon a dunghil, being little better than dung my ſelf, full of ulcerous ſores; my breath ſavour'd ſo ill, that my Wife could not endure me, and I was an offence to all neer me: But now the Lord hath renewed my fleſh, as the fleſh of a Child, now I am ſweet and clean, my ſavour is like a perfume; and therefore my ſecond Daughters name ſhall be *Kezia, Spice or perfume.*

Job might alſo ſay, My late affliction was a ſtate of deformity, I was black and uncomely, my face was all as a ſcab, and my Body as a ſore, my countenance was ſlurr'd with tears and weeping (as he complained, *Chap.*16.16.) there was no beauty in me; *Job* might ſay of himſelf in that ſtate, as it is ſaid of Chriſt in the Propheſie, *When we beheld him there was no beauty, no comelineſs in him*: But now my ſores are healed, now I have recovered my former ſtrength, freſhneſs and comlineſs; and therefore, the name of this Daughter ſhall be, *The horn of beauty*, to mind me how the Lord hath *given me beauty for aſhes, and garments of joy for a ſpirit of heavineſs.* Thus he might very well, and very piouſly, give his Children theſe names, to mind him of the bleſſed change which the Lord had made in his outward condition. And this is the reaſon of that Tranſlation before mentioned, of the name of the third Daughter, called *Keren-happuch, The horn of Converſion*, intimating how great a change the Lord had made in his horn; his horn was in the duſt before, it was empty and had nothing in it but filth, whereas now it is become or turned to be a *Horn of plenty*. *Job*'s eſtate was changed from poverty to plenty, and his horn raiſed from the duſt to honout and dignity; and therefore he called the name of his third Daughter *Keren-happuch, the horn of Converſion*, or, *The change of the horn.* Thus *Job* might have great reaſon to call his Daughters by theſe names, with reſpect to the change of his condition.

Hence Obſerve, *Godly Parents do well, when they give ſuch names to their Children, as may be memorials of the providences of God towards them.*

Joſeph had a mighty turn in his eſtate, as the *Pſalmiſt* epitomizeth the Hiſtory of *Moſes* in *Geneſis* concerning him (*Pſal.* 105. 17, 18, 19, 20, &c) *He was ſold for a ſervant, his feet were hurt with fetters, he was laid in Irons, until the time that his word came; the word of the Lord tryed him: The King ſent and looſed him, he made him Lord of his houſe, and Ruler of all his ſubſtance*, &c. This *Joſeph* had two Sons in the Land of *Egypt*, after this turn of his eſtate; but what were their names? The Text anſwers (*Gen.* 41. 51, 52.) *And he called the name of his firſt-born Manaſſeh*, which ſignifieth *forgetfulneſs*; and he giveth this reaſon of it; for (ſaid he) *God hath made me forget all my toil, and all my fathers houſe. And the name of the ſecond called he* Ephraim, which ſignifieth *fruitful*; for (ſaid he) *God hath cauſed me to be fruitful in the Land of my affliction.* He was once very much afflicted, and now he was very fruitful; therefore, he called the name of his younger Son, *Ephraim*, that he might remember the kindneſs of God to him, as often as he beheld or ſpake to, or of, that Son. So *Moſes* called his Son *Gerſhom* (ſtranger) *for he ſaid, I have been a ſtranger in a ſtrange Land* (*Exod.* 2.22.) We find alſo names given to things, as well as to perſons, by way of remembrance. Thus (1 *Sam.*7.12.) after a great victory obtained againſt the *Philiſtines*, *Samuel* ſet up a ſtone, and gave it a name, *He called it Eben-Ezer*, or the *Stone of help:* The reaſon was, *for* (ſaid he) *hitherto the Lord hath helped us.* The name of the ſtone, was, to mind them of the Lords conſtant readineſs to help them, even unto that day. So *Moſes* (Exod.17.) after that great deliverance from the *Amalekites*, built an Altar, and *called it* Jehovah niſſi, which ſignifieth, *the Lord is my Banner*, to put them in remembrance how the Lord went forth as a man of War, and mightily confounded their enemies. There is a prudence to be uſed in the names, both of things and perſons. We read (*Gen.* 10. 25.) *Unto* Eber *were born two Sons, and the name of the one he called* Peleg; and why *Peleg? for in his days* (ſaith that Text) *was the Earth divided.* *Peleg* ſignifieth diviſion. The whole World, which lay before as one common field in his days, was divided and cantoniz'd into ſeveral Countries, therefore his name was called *Peleg*. And, as many names have been given from paſt or preſent providences, ſo ſome names have been given, as it were, by Propheſie, with reſpect to after providences (*Gen.* 5. 29.) *Lamech lived an hundred eighty and two years, and begat a Son, and called his name* Noah, which ſignifieth reſt. Why ſo? Not from a providence that was paſt or preſent, but from what he believed ſhould be; *For this ſame* (ſaid he) *ſhall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, becauſe of the ground which the Lord hath curſed.* Thus much of the names of *Job*'s Daughters, as they ſignified the providences of God towards him, and the turn of his ſtate.

Secondly, We may conſider theſe names with reference to the perſonal qualifications or endowments of his Daughters, and thoſe twofold; Firſt, their corporal and external qualifications. Secondly, their ſpiritual and internal qualifications, which we may well conceive *Job* had a chief reſpect unto, in giving them theſe names.

Firſt, *He called the name of the firſt Jemima*, or, *Day*, thereby ſignifying, Firſt, the clear natural beauty of that Daughter, or the brightneſs of her complexion like the brightneſs of the day, or as if ſhe ſhined in beauty like the day, when beautified by the beams of the Sun. Thus Chriſt ſpake of the Church (*Cant.* 6. 10.) *Who is ſhe that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the Moin, clear as the Sun?* *Job*'s eldeſt Daughter looked forth as the day, ſhe was of a reſplendent comelineſs: And we may well ſuppoſe, *Job*, who gave her this name, had prayed ſhe might have, and hoped ſhe would have, and doubtleſs in her time ſhe had not only a beautiful face, and a comely feature of Body; but (which is far better) a beautiful Soul, a well-featured diſpoſition of mind, much grace and goodneſs; in which ſenſe, the Church (in the place laſt mentioned) is ſaid *to look forth as the morning, to be fair as the Moon, and clear as the Sun.* The name *Day,* doth very well ſhadow, both the virgin beauty of the Body, and the divine unſpotted beauty of the Soul. Secondly, he might call her ſo, thereby ſignifying, that as the day is ſweet and pleaſant, ſo was ſhe, both as to her bodily aſpect in comelineſs, and the aſpect of her Soul in holineſs. Thirdly, (ſay ſome) he called her name *Day*; becauſe beauty (bodily beauty they mean) is of no long continuance, it is but, as it were, for a day; like a flower, which a day opens and withers.

Una dies aperit, ſuſtulit una dies.

He called the ſecond *Kezia,* or as one of the Ancients renders, *Caſha,* ſignifying *ſpice and perfume,* to note that ſhe was of a fragrant temper, of a winning diſpoſition and converſation, grace and vertue yield the ſweeteſt ſmell in the noſtrils of God, and of all good men. The Church (*Cant.* 1. 3.) ſaith of Chriſt, *Becauſe of the ſavour of thy good ointments, thy name is an ointment poured forth; therefore do the virgins love thee.* Theſe ointments were the precious graces of Chriſt. 'Tis ſo in ſome proportion, with all the godly; their ointments (the unction of the Spirit poured upon them) caſt a delightful ſavour. *Solomon* ſaith (*Eccl.* 7. 1.) *A good name is better than precious ointment.* A good name, ariſing from good qualities, from grace received and acted, is the moſt precious ointment, more precious than all the ointments which affect the ſenſe. To be *Jemima,* beautiful in Body as the day, and not to be *Kezia,* not to have a ſpirit ſweet as *Caſſia,* what is it, but a piece of pageantry, or gilding upon a common poſt?

Job called the name of the third *Keren-happuch,* or, *Horn of beauty*; Firſt, with reſpect to her out-ſide, intimating, that ſhe was a great beauty. Some ſay, ſhe was called *Keren-happuch* by an *Antiphraſis,* becauſe *ſhe needed not, much leſs uſed, the horn of beauty to make her ſelf beautiful*; ſhe was even beauty it ſelf: Her natural beauty exceeded all that artificial beauty which proud women make ſhew of, by painting their faces. She was alſo *a horn of beatty,* as to her graces and ſpiritual endowments. Thus *Job* might give his Daughters theſe names, not only with reſpect to the change of his condition, but conſidering the conditions of his Daughters, both with reſpect to their bodily beauty, and the divine excellency of grace beſtowed upon their Souls.

Hence Note, *It is good to give names, exciting to vertue and to duty.*

Nomina bona calcar ad virtutem habent.

The names of *Job*'s three Daughters, *Day, Perfume, Horn of beauty,* might ſtir them up to approve themſelves ſuch as their names imported. Vertuous names, or names of vertue, ſhould mind us to do vertuouſly. 'Tis alſo a piece of ſpiritual prudence and policy, to put, as the names of excellent things, of graces and vertues, ſo of excellent perſons, ſuch as have excelled in grace and vertue, upon our Children, that they may be provoked to imitate and follow their examples, whoſe names they bear. The good wiſhes and deſires of Parents concerning Children, may be ſilently (if I may ſo ſpeak) expreſſed in their names. They who would have their Children excel in ſuch a grace or good way, may do well to fix it in their names, as prophecying or hoping, at leaſt, they will really be what they are in name, or what their names promiſe. One of the Ancients reports this practice of the Ancients; *We give names* (ſaith he) *wherein we hold forth our wiſhes and deſires, and pray to God that our Children may anſwer the ſignification of their names.* Many Scripture-names have myſterious meaning in them. *Haſea,* ſignifieth a *Saviour,* his Parents therein prophecying (as it were) and ſhewing their faith, that he would be a Prophet, and prove inſtrumental for the ſalvation of others. *Obadiah,* ſignifieth *the ſervant of God*; his Parents gave him that name (we may ſuppoſe) hoping he would, and wiſhing he might be a faithful ſervant of God. *Zachariah,* ſignifieth *the memory or remembrance of God*; his Parents earneſtly deſiring, *that God would both rememember him* (which is all mercy to man) or that he might *always remember God* (which is all duty to God) *Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth*; that is, perform all duty to God.

Apud nos votiva & quaſi ob virtutis auſpicium ponuntur vocabula, ſc. Victoris, Caſti, Pii, Probi; ſic apud Hebræos, Micheas, & Habdias & Zacharias cæteraque his ſimilia ex virtutum vocabulo liberis à parentibus imponuntur. Hieron. *in Proœm. Comment in lib.* Mich.

We ſee then, it hath been uſual among godly Parents, to give ſignificant names to their Children, either that they might be minded of the mercies of God to them, or of the duties which they were to perform to God.

Nomina erant quaſi omina vel monita vel vota rei futuræ.

I ſhall only add for the cloſe of the point, this ſhort admonition to all, to women eſpecially (becauſe the Text ſpeaks of them) that, *As it is uſeful and uſual for Parents to give good names to their Children, ſo Children ſhould have a gracious ambition to make good the ſignification of their names.* What will it advantage a man to be called *John,* which ſignifieth grace, if himſelf be graceleſs? Or to be called *Obadiah,* which ſignifieth a ſervant of God, if he neglect to ſerve God? Or to be called *Zechariah,* which ſignifieth the remembrance of God, if he forget God? Again, what will it benefit a woman to be called *Suſanna,* which ſignifieth *a Lilly* (a beautiful flower) if ſhe be not like *that Lilly among Thorns,* the Church (*Cant.* 2. 2.) but only a Lilly in the Wilderneſs of this World? What will it benefit a woman to be called *Tamar,* which ſignifieth a Palm-tree, tall and ſtrait, if her ſelf be of a low, baſe, and crooked diſpoſition. 'Tis better to be a crooked ſhrub in bodily ſtature, than a tall ſtrait Palm-tree with a crooked mind, and a low ſpirit. To be named *Jemima,* as fair as Day; to be named *Kezia,* as ſweet as ſpice or perfume; to be called *Keren-happuch,* as beautiful as the very horn of beauty; what will it advantage any women, unleſs they have real vertues, and gracious qualities anſwering theſe names? Yea, theſe names will be real witneſſes againſt them at laſt, and fill their faces with ſhame. To profeſs our ſelves to be, or to have a name to be, what we are not, is to be deeply hypocritical; and to bear that in our names which we are not, nor take any care to be, is highly diſgraceful. But when names are fulfilled in perſons; when men and women, who wear good names, are or do the good ſignified by their names, how precious are their names! And their memories, how honourable! And when the good or vertues of the three feminine names in the Text meet and center in the perſon of any one woman; when *Jemima,* the day-light of true knowledg and underſtanding is joined with *Kezia,* the perfume of reputation, aſcending from *Keren-happuch,* ſtore of beautiful graces, put forth in the gracious actions of a ſpotleſs and unblameable converſation; what Pencil is able to draw to the life the raviſhing features of ſuch a perſon? Such, I believe, were theſe noble Ladies, *Job*'s Daughters, named in the Text, which was the joy of their fathers heart, and the ſtaff of his old age.

Thus much of the names of *Job*'s Daughters, and of the ſignification of them; both in reference to the then preſent change of *Job*'s eſtate, and the hope he had of their future good eſtate; with reſpect to the beauty and gracefulneſs of their bodies, but eſpecially to the beauty and graciouſneſs of their Souls or minds.

Now as the beauty and vertues too of *Job*'s three Daughters were implied, and wrapt up in their names, ſo their beauty is plainly expreſſed in the next words.

Verſe 15. **And in all the Land were no women found ſo fair as the Daughters of Job, and their Father gave them inheritance among their Brethren.**

In this verſe we have two things concerning *Job*'s Daughters. Firſt, The ſupereminency of their beauty. Secondly, The greatneſs of their dowry or portions, beſtowed on them by the bounty of their Father. The former we have at the beginning of the verſe.

And in all the Land were no women found ſo fair as the Daughters of Job.

When 'tis ſaid, *in all the Land*; we are to underſtand it of all the Land of *Uz*: Yet the Septuagint extend it to all Land all the World over, rendring *all under Heaven*; but the word in the Original will not reach ſo far, though the truth might. But in all that Land *were no women* (or women kind, as Maſter *Broughton* reads) *found ſo fair,* that is, none were ſo fair as they. The word *found* is to be taken as in that of *Moſes* (Exod. 35. 23.) *Every man with whom was found* (that is, with whom there was, or

Ἐν τῇ ὑπ' οὐρανόν. *In ea qua ſub cœlo.* Sept. *Tota terra eſt ſub cœlo; hic autem reſtringitur ad certam Regionem.* Druſ.

or who had) *blue and purple, &c. brought them :* And as in that which is ſpoken of Chriſt (*Phil.* 2. 8.) *He was found* (that is, he was or appeared) *in the form of a man.* So (*Mal.* 2. 6. 2 *Chron.* 19. 3.) For we are not to conceive that there was an iniquity or ſearch made amongſt all the women of the Land of *Uz* who was faireſt, and that upon the return, none were found ſo fair and beautiful as *Job*'s daughters: The meaning is only this, none were known ſo fair as they, or they had no known Peers in fairneſs ; and this is a ſufficient proof, that thoſe notable names were not given *Job*'s Daughters without a cauſe, either ſeen or foreſeen, at leaſt deſired, the iſſue anſwering the deſire ; *In all the Land there were none ſo fair as they.*

There is a bodily fairneſs, and a Soul fairneſs, The word into which we render the Hebrew ſignifieth properly the fairneſs of the face or body : But the Septuagint Tranſlate it by a word ſignifying *the Souls fairneſs* ; They ſay, *No women were found better than the Daughters of* Job. Their goodneſs without queſtion, as it was far more excellent in it ſelf, ſo more contentful and delightful to him than their fairneſs. But we may very well take in both, as was hinted before, namely, that his Daughters were excellent, both for the one beauty and for the other. Yet, I conceive, the fairneſs here ſpoken of, was that of the body ; and we muſt reckon it as a part of *Job*'s renewed felicity, not only that he had three Daughters as he had before, but that his Daughter were fairer than any in the Land.

Non ſunt inventæ juxta filias Job *meliores eis.* Sept. *Pulcritudo terrena fœlicitatis eximia portio eſt, ad diſpenſationem veteris teſtamenti pertinens.*

Hence Note, *The bodily beauty of our Children is a gift of God, and no ſmall one.*

Beauty is not only one of the excellencies of nature, but ſome part of Gods image in man, and much reſpected in women. The beauty of the body, bears the image of a beautiful mind, and is a figure of holineſs ; hence that Scripture phraſe, *The beauty of holineſs.* It is ſaid of *Moſes*, *He was a goodly Child* ; and of *Sarah*, that ſhe was a very beautiful woman ; ſo beautiful, that *Abraham* was afraid her beauty might endanger him among ſtrangers. *Rebecca* alſo was beautiful, and very fair ; and though beauty is no grace, yet it is a grace to grace. *Beauty is, and duly may be, a great attractive of love and affection* : Though we know it is often an incentive to luſt, yet it is an attractive of true love. What is ſaid of the Church (*Pſal.* 45. 11.) *So ſhall the King greatly deſire thy beauty,* thy ſpiritual or inward beauty, is true alſo of outward or corporal beauty. Beauty to ſome is a portion among men ; to others, a favour from God. Beauty is a ſilent eloquence, a tacit perſwaſion, it works much. But conſider, I ſpeak of that beauty which is natural, not artificial ; I ſpeak not of *beauty out of a box*, but of that which is laid on by the hand of God, that's a bleſſing and a mercy, then eſpecially, when it is joined with better beauty. Only remember, though bodily beauty be a bleſſing, it is but an inferior bleſſing ; it is a gift of God, yet an inferior gift ; And there are many conſiderations which may keep them humble in their own thoughts, who are moſt beautiful in the eyes of others.

Species corporis ſimulacrum eſt mentis & figura probitatis. Amb. l. 2. *de virgin. Gratior eſt pulchro veniens è corpore virtus.*

For, Firſt, As beauty is a bleſſing, ſo it is a ſnare oftentimes ; and that in two reſpects.

Firſt, It proveth a ſnare to them that have it, If they have not grace, it maketh them proud and vain ; ſuch are often given up to new-fangled inventions ; their natural beauty will not ſerve them, they muſt have artificial ſet-offs. Again, much beauty maketh many diſdainful of others ; and they who are ſo, are under the diſdain of God ; and it had been much better for ſuch, if they had been the verieſt *Doudes* (as ſome call unhandſome ones) or the moſt deformed Creatures in the World. Therefore (I ſay) remember there is a ſnare in beauty to thoſe that have it ; yet by how much beauty hath the more temptation in it, by ſo much are they the more to be commended, who being beautiful, overcome thoſe temptations, and continue humble, modeſt, chaſt, diſcreet, and diligent, avoiding evil, with all the occaſions of it, turning from every vanity, and doing good.

Faſtus ineſt pulchris, ſequiturque ſuperbia formam.

Secondly, Beauty is often a ſnare to others. When the Perſian Captive Ladies were preſented to *Alexander the Great*, he called them, *The ſores or pain of the eyes* ; He was afraid they might wholly conquer him, who had conquered ſo great a part of the World. What reaſon have any to be proud of that, which may inſnare, and ſo undo, both themſelves and others ?

Secondly, Conſider there is nothing more frail, nor ſooner loſt than bodily beauty. A little ſorrow, a few tears, ſpoil and ſully a fair face ; a fit of ſickneſs withereth beauty, and, inevitably, old age will do it ; at beſt, 'tis quickly gone, and every day, when once at beſt, abates it ; the longer you have it, the leſs you have of it. Some conceive (as I toucht before) that *Job* called his eldeſt Daughter *Jemima*, *Day*, becauſe beauty laſteth but as it were a day ; one day bloweth it, and another day blaſteth it.

Eſt exigui donum breve temporis. Sen. *in Hippol.*

Thirdly, Beauty endangers the weaker Sex to become a prey to the luſts of adulterous men, who often lie inwait for ſuch a booty. So then, though beauty be a bleſſing, yet we have little reaſon to be proud of it, if theſe three things be true (as who can deny the truth of any one of them) which have been ſaid of it ; and three times three things more might be ſaid of it, with as much truth, to take all off from over-much valuing it, or to abate our valuation of it.

Formæ omnes inſidiantur.

Therefore, above all, let us look to the beauty of the mind, that's a beauty worth the ſtriving after ; and that is the trueſt bodily beauty, which is adorned with Soul-beauty, or when the beauty of comelineſs is aſſociated with the beauty of holineſs. It had been no great matter of commendation to *Job*'s Daughters, that they were the faireſt women in all the Land, if they had not been the holieſt. The beauty of the mind is ten thouſand times more commendable than that of the body ; the King of Heaven deſires ſuch beauty. It is not a naturally fair face that will make the Lord Jeſus deſire you ; and as for an artificially fair, that will cauſe the Lord Jeſus to abhor you. *The Kings Daughter is all glorious within* (Pſal. 45. 13.) her glory is a ſpiritual glory. *Solomon* hath told us what natural beauty is without ſpiritual (*Prov.* 11. 22.) *As a jewel in a ſwines ſnout, ſo is a fair woman which is without diſcretion* ; eſpecially, that fair woman is ſo, *who* (as the Margin hath it) *departeth from diſcretion.* They are truly beautiful and lovely, who have beautiful diſpoſitions, and follow beautiful and lovely actions. The Lord ſaid of the Jewiſh Church (*Ezek.* 16. 14.) *Thy renown went forth among the Heathen for beauty* ; *for it was perfect through my comelineſs which I had put upon thee.* But what was the comelineſs which God had put upon her ? It was the comelineſs of divine gifts and graces planted in her, and exerciſed or held out by her. That's the ornament with which the Apoſtle *Peter* ſaith, the good women in the old time adorned themſelves, even *the hidden man of the heart, a meek and quiet Spirit* (1 Epiſt. 3. 4, 5.) And let men as well as women ſtrive for theſe ornaments. They that are deformed in perſon, may more than make it up, by being conformed to Chriſt in their ways and works. Better be deformed in body, and conformed to Chriſt, than to have a well proportion'd comely body, and no conformity unto Chriſt. It hath been ſaid of ſome wiſe and worthy men, that *their Souls were ill-houſed*, that is, they had ill ſhap'd or unhandſome bodies. But though the houſe of the body be mean and deſpicable, yet if the inhabitant, or the Soul, be wiſe and good, that makes amends for all outward deficiencies, yea, for deformities and monſtroſities ; whereas if the houſe of the body be never ſo well framed and built, yet if it be inhabited by a proud, unclean, ignorant, impious Soul, how doth that ſpoil, defile and diſhonour that body, and make it no better than a darkſome Dungeon.

So far concerning the names of *Job*'s Daughters, who being qualified in body and mind according to the import of their names, were themſelves portion enough to any Husband ; yet *Job* did not put them off ſo, but gave an honourable ſhare of his plentiful eſtate to them, as it followeth,

And their Father gave them inheritance among their Brethren.

And well they deſerved it. *Their Father gave them.* He made the diſtribution to prevent contention, which often falls out among Children (and poſſibly might among *Job*'s) about their Fathers eſtate. This was a high favour, and ſomewhat unuſual, to give Daughters inheritance among their Brethren ; they uſe only to inherit, when they have no Brethren. For among the *Jews*, and probably among the *Idumeans*, it was a cuſtom, and it paſt into a Law among

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the *Jews*, that Sons ſhould have the whole Inheritance; the reaſon was, becauſe their Families and Inheritances were preſerved diſtinct by the Male, not ſo by the Females. The Hebrew word for a Male ſignifies *Remembrance*, but that for a Female *Forgetfulneſs*; becauſe Daughters loſe the name of their Family in Marriage, and therefore Daughters did not inherit, but when there was no Male iſſue. Thus it was in the caſe of the Daughters of *Zelophehad*, their Father left no Son, and ſo they inherited (*Num.* 27.7.) An immoveable inheritance came not to Daughters; they had only a moveable inheritance. But *Job* giving his Daughters inheritance among their Brethren, implieth (as ſome Interpreters conceive) that they had an equal inheritance in Lands with their Brethren, which is alſo the opinion of our Annotators; as if out of love to them, and in reward of their vertues, he gave to every one of them, as to his Sons, a portion of Land to inherit, ſo that they ſhared proportionally with their Brethren, by their Fathers Will and Teſtament, and were Coheirs with them in his Eſtate equally.

Illud Inter. *vel ut in Hebræo eſt in medio fratrum æqualitatem quandam & communem rationem denotat.* Pined.

Yet thoſe words, *among or in the midſt of their Brethren*, note, ſaith another Expoſitor, only an equality in their good qualities and vertues. I ſuppoſe, if you take *equally* in a ſtrict ſenſe, that is, juſt as much, foot for foot, peny for peny, they did not inherit equally; but if we take it in a *common or large ſenſe*, ſo they had as great an inheritance as their Brethren, they had as much for Daughters, as their Brethren for Sons. *Their Fathers gave them inheritance among their Brethren.*

Inter fratres ſc. ad deſignandum convenientiam virtutis in utriſque. Aquin.

Hence note, Firſt; *It is the Fathers duty to provide for his Children.*

(1 Tim. 5.8.) *If any provide not for his own, and ſpecially for thoſe of his own houſe, he hath denied the faith, and is worſe than an Infidel.* The Apoſtles meaning is, in that point, he hath denied the Faith, and doth not carry it like a believer; no, nor ſo well as unbelievers or Infidels commonly do.

Secondly, Their Father gave them inheritance.

Hence note; *It is the Fathers priviledge to diſpoſe of his Eſtate to his Children.*

Children muſt not take their portions; their Father muſt give it them. Children muſt not carve to themſelves: It is the priviledge of the Father to diſpoſe of what he hath, according to right and reaſon, and the Law of the place.

Thirdly, Who were they that had this gift, they were his Daughters, *Their Father gave them inheritance.*

Hence note; *Daughters are to be provided for, as well as Sons.*

Some Fathers are all for their Sons, and neglect their Daughters altogether. Sons ſhould not be denied their priviledge, and Daughters ſhould not be unprovided for. Sons bear up the name of the Family, and Daughters may bring both ſtrength and honour to the Family, by matching into worthy Families.

Note, Fourthly; *The better Daughters are, the better ſhould Parents, Father or Mother, do and provide for them.*

The reaſon why *Job* went ſo high, to give his Daughters inheritance among their Brethren was, becauſe his Daughters were not only beautiful, but dutiful, and though Women by Sex, yet of a maſculine ſpirit. The very Grammar of the Text (as ſome take notice) leads us to this ground of their Fathers bounty and nobleneſs to them; he dealt with them as with Sons, becauſe they had the vertues of Sons; for in three places the Holy Ghoſt uſeth the Maſculine affix (ם *mem*) where (according to ordinary rule) he ſhould uſe the Feminine (ן *nun*) to ſhew (ſay they) that *Job* was not moved by fond affection to his Daughters, but ſound judgment; he ſeeing them exceed their Sex in vertue, equall'd them in his Fatherly proviſion, with thoſe who were of a more excellent Sex, and dealt with them as with Sons in their degree.

Laſtly, Obſerve; *Children ought to be ſatisfied with their Fathers pleaſure, in diſpoſing his Eſtate among them.*

We do not hear that there was any diſcontent in the Sons, becauſe the Daughters had ſo much; nor in the Daughters, becauſe they had no more: both reſted in what their Father was pleaſed to do for them. How much more ſhould we reſt content with that portion and inheritance which our Father in heaven provides for us? and indeed he will give all his Daughters at laſt inheritance among his Sons: For as the Apoſtle ſpeaketh with reſpect to grace, ſo 'tis true in reſpect to glory, *There is neither male nor female, but Chriſt is all, and in all.* The grace of God is not more to the Male than to the Female; and, as it is in the giving of grace here, ſo it will be in the diſtribution of glory hereafter: Brethren and Siſters, Husbands and Wives, who are Heirs of the ſame grace of life, ſhall be all Heirs together in the life of glory, or in the glorious life; and therefore let us be content with what portion or inheritance our heavenly Father is pleaſed to give us, to allot, or allow us in this life.

VERS. 16, 17.

After this lived Job an hundred and forty years, and ſaw his Sons, and his Sons Sons, even four Generations. So Job died, being old, and full of days.

These two Verſes conclude the Hiſtory and whole Book of *Job*, and in them we may conſider theſe ſix things.

Firſt, The length of *Jobs* life, or how long he lived, *even an hundred and forty years.*

Secondly, From whence we are to date this account of his life; *After this*, ſaith the Text, *lived* Job *an hundred and forty years.*

Thirdly, We have here the great increaſe of his Family; he had not only Sons of his own, but *ſaw his Sons, and his Sons Sons, even four Generations.*

Fourthly, We may conſider the comfort and content in which he ſpent this long life, and run out thoſe many years, which is implied in thoſe words, *He ſaw his Sons, and his Sons Sons, even four Generations.*

Fifthly, We have the cloſe of his life, *So* Job *died.*

Sixthly, The ſtate of life in which he died, ſet forth two ways; Firſt, *Being old (or an old man).* Secondly, *Full of days: So* Job *died, being old (or an old man) and full of days.*

Verſ. 16. **After this, Job lived an hundred and forty years.**

He ſurvived all his ſorrows, and ſaw a very bleſſed Reſurrection of his comforts and injoyments. *After this,* that is, after this unparallell'd affliction was over-paſt, after the Winter of his ſorrows and troubles was over-blown, after the dark night of his calamity was full ſpent, *After this lived* Job *an hundred and forty years.* The Septuagint make this Expoſition their tranſlation, rendring the Text thus out of the Original, *After this Plague or blow lived Job, &c.* So that here we have not the account of the whole Race of his life, but of his new life, as we may call it, or, of his life, in the third edition of it: For, as there are (if I may ſo ſpeak) three Editions of mans life in general, whereof the firſt was a happy one in *Adam*, as created; the ſecond, miſerable, by *Adam*, as fallen; the third, more happy than the firſt, as we are reſtored by Chriſt, the ſecond *Adam*: So there were three Editions or Volumes (at leaſt) of this one mans life, whereof the firſt was very proſperous, the ſecond very troubleſome, the third more proſperous than the firſt. This proſperous Edition or ſtate of *Jobs* life, continued *an hundred and forty years.*

But have we no gheſs about the computation of his whole life, or how long he lived in all?

I anſwer, We have none from the holy Scriptures; and therefore, where the Scripture hath not a tongue to ſpeak, I would ſay but little: Yet give me leave to report the opinion, both of the *Jewiſh* Writers, and of ſeveral others, both Greek and Latine, concerning that point.

Firſt, It is generally agreed by the *Jewiſh* Writers, and by moſt of the Latines, that *Job* was threeſcore and ten years old at the concluſion of his trouble; and if he were ſeventy when his trouble ended, adding an hundred and forty more after the end of his trouble, it makes up juſt two hundred and ten years, as the general account of his whole life. Thus the *Jewiſh* Doctors conclude the Race of *Jobs* life, as long as the abode of the Children of *Iſrael* in *Egypt*, after their coming thither, till their going out.

Secondly, The ſeventy Interpreters give another reckoning, both of the time he lived after his affliction, and of the time before, and ſo conſequentially of his whole life; for thus they tranſlate, *After this trouble*, Job *lived an hundred and ſeventy years; and all the days which* Job *lived, were two hundred and forty years.* Thus they render Text, but by what Warrant I do not underſtand. The ground of this addition, by which ſome endeavour to preſerve the credit of that tranſlation, is this; The Septuagint (ſay they) by *after this*, do not underſtand only the time when *Job* was juſt come out of his troubles, but, by *after this*, they mean the whole time that *Job* was recovering out of his trouble, and growing up into that greatneſs. As if the meaning of thoſe words, *after this*, were to be taken thus: After *Jobs* Cattle were doubled, and his Family was compleated, after he had ſeven Sons and three Daughters born unto him, and after his Daughters appeared to be according to their names, and the report made of them in the former Context, the faireſt women in all the Land of *Uz*; and after he had diſpoſed of them in Marriage, to his comfort and content, after all this was in doing and done, he lived an hundred and forty years. Now, for the doing of all this, they allow thirty years, which being added to the hundred and forty years in the Text, make up the full ſum of an hundred and ſeventy years, as they tranſlate; to which, if we add ſeventy years, which is ſuppoſed to have been the time of his life, when his troubles ended, then the total amounts to two hundred and forty years, which the Septuagint in their tranſlation ſay he lived.

But it may ſuffice to mention this, it being only the opinion, and poſſibly the miſtake of thoſe Ancient Tranſlaters. We have no more in Scripture, but that he lived an hundred and forty years after his troubles were ended; and taking it ſtrictly ſo, he muſt needs be a very old man, for he was a perfect man, and had ten Children before his troubles began.

After this lived Job an hundred and forty years.

But why doth the Spirit of God reckon up his years? Surely to ſet forth a further bleſſing beſtowed upon *Job*, than as yet had been named, even the bleſſing of long life. All that is ſpoken of him, is in a way of mercy; and to make the meaſure of his mercies full, this is added or caſt in, that *he lived*, after the days of his trouble were ended, *an hundred and forty years.*

Hence note; *Long life is to be reckoned among divine bleſſings; and 'tis a right-hand bleſſing* (Prov.3.16.)

Job had many bleſſings of this life, but his long life on Earth was the chiefeſt of meer Earthly bleſſings. The firſt Ages of the world had very long livers: *Adam*, the firſt man, lived well towards a thouſand years, compleat nine hundred and thirty years, after he was Created (*Gen.* 5.5.) which being in a perfect mans eſtate, we may well reckon him as a man of near a thouſand years old, and nearer to a thouſand than *Methuſalah*, when he died. That whole Chapter is a clear proof, that all before the Flood lived to a great age.

Four reaſons may be aſſigned, why the thread of mans life was drawn out to ſo great a length, in thoſe early Ages of the world.

Firſt, That they might learn the works of Creation, and be skilled in the courſe of nature, which, having no Books, nor antecedent ſtudies of men, they muſt collect by obſervation.

Secondly, They lived long, that they might inſtruct others in what themſelves had obſerved.

Thirdly, They lived long, that mankind might be multiplied; for of thoſe long livers (*Gen.* 5.) when the firſtborn is mentioned, it is ſtill added, they lived ſo many hundred years after, and begat Sons and Daughters.

Fourthly, They lived very long, that they might both invent and perfect thoſe Arts and Sciences with which the world afterward abounded, when drawn into writing, and ſet forth by rule. And though after the Flood, the years of the longeſt livers were much ſhort of theirs, yet the holy Patriarchs received a great ſhare of this bleſſing. *Abraham* lived an hundred ſeventy and five years (*Gen.* 25. 7.) *Iſaac* lived ſomething longer, an hundred and fourſcore years (*Gen.* 35. 20.) *Jacob* lived an hundred forty and ſeven (*Gen.* 47. 28.) *Joſeph* lived an hundred and ten years (*Gen.* 50. *ult.*) *Job*, if we take in that common account of the antecedent part of his life, lived longer than any of theſe, even two hundred and ten years. The fifth Commandment hath this promiſe (*Exod.* 20. 12.) *Honour thy Father and thy Mother, that thy days may be long in the Land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.* And the Apoſtle calls that the firſt Commandment with promiſe (*Eph.* 6. 2.) that is, the firſt Commandment with an explicite promiſe (all the Commandments have promiſes implied to thoſe that obey them) *Eliphaz* aſſured *Job* of this bleſſing, in caſe of his repentance (*Chap.* 5. 26.) *Thou ſhalt come to thy grave in a full age, like as a ſhock of Corn cometh in his ſeaſon*: And in this he was a true Prophet.

Now, that long life is a bleſſing, I would ſhew briefly, under theſe ſix conſiderations.

Firſt, It is a bleſſing to have a long opportunity of doing good, of being uſeful and ſerviceable to our Generation; long life gives an advantage for that.

Secondly, It is a bleſſing to have opportunity to gain experiences: Firſt, of the various Providences of God towards men, whether in ways of judgment or of mercy. Secondly, to get experiences of the manners of men, of the vanity, unfaithfulneſs, and inconſtancy of ſome men, and of the goodneſs, faithfulneſs, and conſtancy of others. Though we ſometimes ſmart in getting our experiences, yet it may be a great bleſſing to have them.

Thirdly, It is a bleſſing to have an opportunity to hold forth the Grace of God to us, and the Graces of God in us, by a holy example. The longer we live in a natural life, the more we may manifeſt the power of a ſpiritual life, to thoſe among whom we live.

Fourthly, It is a bleſſing to have opportunity for improvement and growth in Grace, to attain the higheſt ſtature in, and pitch of holineſs. This benefit we may make of long life, even increaſe in Grace, as our years increaſe, and grow better as we grow older.

Fifthly, It is a bleſſing to have opportunity to bring up our children in the nurture and fear of God; long life gives liberty for this.

Laſtly, It is a bleſſing to behold the bleſſing of God upon our Poſterity; long life gives us opportunity for this bleſſing, and this was *Jobs* bleſſing eminently. In all theſe reſpects, and many more might be added, long life is a bleſſing.

Yet let me give this corrective, *Long life is but a common bleſſing*; it is no diſtinguiſhing bleſſing, it is not a certain love-token from God to man. Bad men have lived long, as appears both in ſacred and common Hiſtories. Old age is then a bleſſing, and good indeed, when we are old in goodneſs, or grow old doing good. *Solomons* concluſion reacheth this fully (*Prov.* 16. 31.) *The hoary head is a Crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteouſneſs.* And *Solomon* tells us in *Eccleſiaſtes*, *Better is a Child that will be ruled, than an old and fooliſh King that will receive no counſel.* When we may ſay of any, as the Lord ſaid of ſome (*Ezek.* 23. 43.) *O ye that are old in Adulteries*; when any are old in ſin, woe to ſuch an old age. Better to die young, than live to old age, and then die in ſin. To live to be old men, the old man not dying in us, O how ſad! To ſee ſin young, when the man is old, how odious a ſight is that! Then only old age is good, when we are good in old age. They only die in a good old age (as it is ſaid of *Abraham*, *Gen.* 25. 8.) who are good dying old. *The ſinner of a hundred years old ſhall die accurſed* (*Iſa.* 65. 20.) So then, it is knowing, not ignorant old age; it is prudent, not fooliſh old age; it is gracious, not vicious old age, which is indeed the bleſſing; and therefore, though it be a bleſſing, look upon it as a common bleſſing. As riches are good to us, our ſelves being good, ſo is old age, ſuch is a life of many years in this world, good only to thoſe who are good, and do good.

Secondly, When it is ſaid, *Job* lived an hundred and forty years, we are not to take *his living* for a bare continuance or indurance in life, for ſo many years; but we are to underſtand his life or living ſo long, with the cloathing of it, with the good of it; *he lived*, that is, he lived comfortably, honorably, peaceably, this hundred and forty years. We commonly ſay, *To live, is to be well; to live, is to flouriſh.* Some live, whoſe life is a kind of death. As they who live in (ſinful) pleaſure, are dead while they live, ſo alſo are they who live in great worldly ſorrow. *Job* lived comfortably and contentedly all that long time of his latter life, even an hundred and forty years.

Hence note, Secondly; *Long life, in health, peace and proſperity, is a bleſſing indeed.*

To live long in the injoyment of good, is very good. *What man is he* (ſaith *David, Pſal.* 34. 12.) *that deſireth life, and loveth many days, that he may ſee good? Keep thy tongue from evil,* &c. To live long, and *ſee good*, that is, injoy good, is the utmoſt that can be deſired in this life. That's the bleſſing, or the good promiſed in the renewed ſtate of *Jeruſalem* (*Iſa.* 65.) where, after the Lord had ſpoken of new Heavens, and new Earth, he adds, at the two and twentieth ver. *They ſhall not build, and another inhabit; they ſhall not plant, and another eat; for as the days of a tree, are the days of my people, and mine Elect ſhall long injoy the work of their hands.* He doth not ſay, they ſhall live long, but they ſhall injoy long; that which they have built and planted, none ſhall invade nor take away from them. Some conceive, this hath reference to the thouſand years propheſied of (*Rev.* 20.) wherein the Church ſhall injoy perfect felicity in this world. To live long in the ſweet injoyments of health, honour, peace and plenty, for ſoul and body, is a full bleſſing. I grant, ſome good men live long, who yet do not always injoy good; their old age eſpecially is accompanied and incumbered with many bodily diſtempers, and grievous pains. Though grace ſets us above the decays of nature, and the troubles of this life, yet grace doth not exempt nor give us priviledge from either; ſo that greedineſs after many years, is commonly a greedineſs only after many infirmities. *Iſaac* was a good old man, yet 'tis ſaid of him, that *when he was old, his eyes waxed dim, ſo that he could not ſee* (*Gen.* 27. 1.) Old age, and dim eyes, and deaf ears, ſhaking hands, and pallied trembling joynts, with manifold diſeaſes, are ſeldom found aſunder: Therefore *Job* had an extraordinary bleſſing, to live long and free from all theſe evils, and ſo have any who do ſo. *Barzillai* was a good old man, yet (2 *Sam.* 19. 25.) he was ſo benummed, and his natural ſenſes ſo infeebled, that he did not injoy his life; *Can I* (ſaid he to *David*, who invited him to a Court-life, *Can I*) *any more taſt what I eat or drink?* &c. That's a bleſſed old age, when we live long, and injoy comfort with our lives, chiefly when we injoy the comforts, and act the duties of a ſpiritual life.

Thirdly, Conſider, *Job* was afflicted but a few months we are ſure, not many years, but God gave him an hundred and forty years of proſperity in this world, after his affliction.

Hence note; *God ſometimes doth, and always can recompence our ſhort ſufferings with long comfortable injoyments, even in this life.*

Joſeph, for his thirteen or fourteen years ſlavery and impriſonment in *Egypt*, had fourſcore years liberty and high advancement there. And though the Lord doth not always, nor often make ſuch compenſations in this world; yet he will compenſate all the ſufferings of his faithful ſervants, with longer, not only comfortable, but glorious injoyments; yea, with an eternal injoyment of glory in the world to come (2 *Cor.* 4. 17.)

Fourthly, Note; *The Lord can make our old age, our extream old age, even a youth to us, or as comfortable to us as our youth.*

He can give health and ſtrength to the very laſt, he can give a Spring in the Winter of our age. Thus it was with *Job*; he did not only live long, but flouriſhed in the health of his body, as much as in the plenty of his Eſtate. The Lord can forbid diſeaſes, he can forbid the Gout, the Stone, or any other pain, to touch the perſon of an old man, if he pleaſeth. Some are even afraid to be old, becauſe of the infirmities of old age; but God, who continues life, can prevent or preſerve us from the natural, as well as the providential evils of it. *Solomon* (*Eccl.* 12. 1.) calleth old age, *the evil day, and the years wherein there is no pleaſure*; and he uſeth it as an argument to move thoſe who are young, to remember their Creator: yet God is able to make old age a good day to us; and to lengthen out our pleaſures (thoſe pleaſures that are ſutable to old age) as long as he is pleaſed to lengthen out our lives; ſo that the comforts and contentments of our lives, ſhall run parallel with the length of our lives, to the end of our lives. Thus *Job* lived, he lived comfortably, he lived healthfully, the Lord preventing the decays or uſual dilapidations of his houſe of Clay, as will appear further in the next words. *After this* Job *lived an hundred and forty years,*

And ſaw his Sons, and his Sons Sons, even four Generations.

That is, *Job* lived to be a Great Great Grandfather; he ſaw his Sons, and his Grand-children, and his Great Grand-children, and his Great Great Grand-children, four Generations. *Joſeph* (*Gen.* 50. 23.) lived to ſee but the third Generation; he was only a Great Grand-father. Many among us live to be Great Grand-fathers, and Great Grand-mothers; but to be a Great Great Grand-father, that is, to ſee the fourth Generation, is very rare. This is recorded of *Job*, not only to ſet forth the greatneſs of his age, but alſo to ſhew the greatneſs of his bleſſing, and the exceeding greatneſs of the mercy and goodneſs of God to him, in multiplying his Family; he ſaw a numerous Iſſue, to take comfort in all that latter part of his life. *He ſaw* (ſaith the Text) *his Sons, and his Sons Sons, even four Generations.* The Learned in that Language take notice, that the Hebrew word rendred *ſaw*, implieth delight; and doubtleſs, *Job* had a moſt delightful ſight of *his Sons, and his Sons Sons.* It is no where ſaid, that *Job* ſaw his Sheep, or his Oxen, or any of his Riches, to take delight in them; but Job *ſaw his Sons, and his Sons Sons*; this ſight was a thouſand times more pleaſing to him, than the ſight of his fourteen thouſand Sheep, or of his thouſand yoak of Oxen.

Quartam generationem intelligo incluſive, ita ut intelligatur vidiſſe etiam abnepotes, hi enim ſunt in quarto gradu à progenitore ſcil. Abavo. Piſc.

Verbo videndi *jucundiſſimus filiorum ac nepotum conſpectus ſignificatur.*

Hence note; *To have and injoy a numerous family, is greatly contentful to man, and a great bleſſing of God.*

Job received a great bleſſing, when he had Sons and Daughters of his own, as many as before; but when he *ſaw his Sons, and his Sons Sons, even to the fourth Generation*, that was the Crown of all his outward bleſſings. *Eliphaz* fore-ſpake this of him, upon ſuppoſition of his repentance, and profiting under the correcting hand of God (Chap. 5. 25.) *Thou ſhalt know alſo that thy ſeed ſhall be great, and thy off-ſpring as the graſs of the Earth.* The children of all men, or all the children of men, are as graſs for fadingneſs (*Iſa.* 40. 6.) But when *Eliphaz* ſaid, *Thy off-ſpring ſhall be as the graſs of the earth*; his meaning was, they ſhall flouriſh as the graſs, and they ſhall be many, very many, as the graſs of the earth. *David* (*Pſal.* 127. 3, 4, 5.) ſpeaks of this great bleſſing, the multiplying of the ſeed of the righteous, as their great contentment; *Loe, children are the Heritage of the Lord, and the fruit of the Womb is his reward. As Arrows in the hand of a mighty man, ſo are children of the youth: happy is the man that hath his Quiver full of them*; that is, he hath a great outward happineſs. Many children may contribute to our happineſs many ways, though ſome have had many unhappineſſes in one. The next *Pſalm* inſiſts upon the ſame mercy, under other metaphors; *Thy Wife ſhall be as the fruitful Vine by the ſides of thy houſe, thy Children like Olive-plants round about thy Table; Loe, thus ſhall the man be bleſſed that feareth the Lord.* And (*verſ.* 6.) *Yea, thou ſhalt ſee thy Childrens Children, and peace upon Iſrael.* It is a great affliction, a grief of eyes, yea, a breaking of the heart, to behold bad children; but how ſweet a ſight is it, to behold good and obedient children, and them many! There are two conditions very grievous to ſee our children in. Firſt, To ſee them in miſery. *Rachel* (Jer. 31. 15. Mat. 2.) *mourned for her Children, and would not be comforted, becauſe they were not*; ſhe ſaw them murdered before her eyes. Such a ſight had *Zedekiah* (*Jer.* 50. 10.) the King of *Babylon* brought his children, and ſlew them before his eyes; he made him ſee that horrid ſpectacle, and then put out his eyes (*verſ.* 11.) Secondly, To ſee children ſin, and going on in a courſe of ſin, that is a greater, a far greater affliction than the former. It is ſaid (*Gen.* 26. 34.) *When* Eſau *was forty years old, he took to Wife* Judith, *the*

Daughter of Berith *the* Hittite, *which was a grief of mind to* Iſaac *and* Rebecca. To ſee their Son match among the prophane and uncircumciſed, both in heart and fleſh, was a cut, a wound, a deep wound in their ſpirits. Again (Chap. 27. *ult.*) Rebecca *ſaid to* Iſaac, *I am weary of my life, becauſe of the Danghters of* Heth. *If* Jacob *take a Wiſe of the Daughters of* Heth, *ſuch as theſe which are of the Daughters of the Land, what good ſhall my life do me?* Better be out of the world, than ſee my Sons miſcarry. Theſe two ſights, to ſee children ſuffering, or to ſee them ſinning, are a pain, not only to the eyes, but to the hearts of Parents. But to ſee them, Firſt, Proſperous in their way; Secondly, Pious, keeping the way of the Lord; to have and ſee ſuch children, and childrens children, to the third and fourth Generation, how delightful is this! The Apoſtle *John* profeſſed (3 *Epiſt. ver.* 4.) *I have no greater joy, than to hear that my children walk in the truth.* He means his ſpiritual children, thoſe whom he had converted to the Faith, and begotten to Chriſt in the Miniſtery of the Word. O what a joy was it to that holy Apoſtles heart, to ſee them walk anſwerably to the Profeſſion of the Goſpel, and his expectation! Now as that was ſo great a joy to him, that he had no greater; ſo 'tis an unſpeakable joy, when gedly Parents ſee their natural children ſpiritual, and walking in the truth. To ſee children new born to ſee them gracious, and to ſee them proſperous alſo, what a bleſſed ſight is this! And this was the ſight doubtleſs which *Job* had, he ſaw his children, *His Sons, and his Sons Sons*, to the fourth Generation. His bleſſedneſs, as to all without him in this life, was at the higheſt, when he ſaw the proſperity of his children, both in ſoul and body. Thus *Job* was bleſſed every way, he was bleſſed with riches, bleſſed with long life, bleſſed in the multiplication of his family; he was bleſſed alſo in his death, as appeareth in the next and laſt words of this Chapter and Book.

Verſ. 17. **So Job died, being old, and full of days.**

As *Solomon* ſaid (*Eccleſ.* 12. 13.) *Hear the concluſion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his Commandments.* So I may ſay now, Hear the concluſion of all men. To fear God, and keep his Commandments, is the conſummating end of our lives, but to die, is the conſuming end of all our lives, and to a good man 'tis an entrance into eternal life; Such, and *ſo* Job *died.* The Lord having ſpoken of his life, is not ſilent about his death; The ſtory, the holy ſtory brings *Job* to his grave: and that could not but be a bleſſed death, which was the cloſe of a gracious life. *So* Job *died.* Death is the ſeparation of the ſoul from the body; 'tis the ſleep of the body in the grave, and the reſt of their Souls in heaven who die in the Lord. There is no difficulty in theſe words; take a note or two from them.

Firſt, *Death takes all ſooner or latter.*

Mors ultima clauſula vitæ. Mors ultima linea rerum.

Job lived a long time, but he did not out-live death; he injoyed an hundred and forty years proſperity in this world, yet he left the world; He lived long, yet a day came when he could not live a day longer. 'Tis ſaid of all the long livers (*Gen.* 5.) *They died.* Adam *lived nine hundred and thirty years, and he died.* Seth *lived nine hundred and twelve years, and he died. Methuſelah* (the longeſt liver in this world) *lived nine hundred ſixty and nine years, and he died.* Here Job *lived an hundred and forty, and ſo he died. David* put the queſtion of all men (*Pſal.* 89. 48.) *What man is he that liveth, and ſhall not ſee death?* How great, or how good, how rich, or how wiſe, how ſtrong, or how valiant ſoever any man living is, he muſt die. How long ſoever any man hath lived in this world, he muſt die, for the world muſt die; there muſt be a diſſolution of *all things*, and therefore a diſſolution of *all men* (Pſal. 82. 6, 7.) *I ſaid, ye are Gods, but ye ſhall die like men.* Kings and Princes, who have the priviledge to be *called Gods*, have not the priviledge *of God*, not to die like men. This is a common Theam, I intend not to ſtay upon it; only, let me tell you, death will overtake us all ſooner or latter, upon a double account.

Firſt, *Becauſe it is appointed.*

Secondly, *Becauſe it is deſerved. It is appointed unto men once to die* (*Heb.* 9. 27.) and all men have deſerved to die, to die eternally; and therefore much more to die naturally (*Rom.* 5. 12.) *As by one man ſin entred into the world, and death by ſin, and ſo death paſt upon all men, for that all have ſinned.* Now ſeeing the condition of all men is a dying condition, receive theſe four Cautions.

Firſt, *Prepare for death.* There is no avoiding it at the long run, therefore be ready to entertain it at laſt; and, becauſe we may die at any time, be preparing for death at all times. How miſerable are they who are ſo old that they cannot live, and yet ſo unprepared, that they are afraid to die? *Job* died, and we muſt: If ſo, Is it not our wiſdom to prepare for death?

Secondly, Submit quietly to the arreſt of death. There is no ſtriving with the Decrees of God. Our death is under a Divine appointment (*Eccleſ.* 8. 8.) *There is no diſcharge in that war*, no priviledge to be pleaded, no exemption, no preſcription. Your ſtrength cannot ſtand againſt the aſſaults of death, your prudence and policy cannot find any way of eſcape from it, nor can your piety or godlineſs deliver you out of the hands of natural death. *As there is no work, nor knowledge in the grave whither we are going* (*Eccleſ.* 9. 10.) ſo there is no knowledge, no device, no wiſdom, can keep us from going into the grave, no, not our Graces. Grace is as ſalt to the Soul, preſerving it from moral corruption for ever: But it cannot keep the body from natural corruption in this world, becauſe our Graces in this world are mingled with corruption. Death is domeſtical to us, that is, we have the ſeed of it within our ſelves, we carry it daily in our bowels, and in our boſoms; therefore ſubmit quietly to it, for there is no avoiding it.

Mors eſt nobis nimis domeſtica, utpote quam in viſceribus noſtris circumferimus. Plutarch. *in Conſol. ad Apoll.*

Thirdly, Seeing all muſt die, get that removed which is the trouble of a Death-bed, and the ſting of Death; get that removed which makes Death bitter, get that removed which makes Death, *The King of Terrours*, ſo terrible, that is, ſin. This ſhould be our ſtudy all the days of our life, to get rid of ſin, to be dying to ſin daily; becauſe we muſt die at laſt, and may die, for all that we know, or can aſſure our ſelves, any day we live (1 *Cor.* 13. 56.) *The ſting of death is ſin.* Whenſoever, or in what way ſoever we die, it will be well with us, if the ſting of death be firſt pulled out; aud whenſoever we die, after never ſo long a life, it will be miſerable, if we die in our ſins; as Chriſt told the Jews in the higheſt threat, *I go away, and ye ſhall die in your ſins* (*John* 8. 21.) They that die in their ſins, die a double death at once, a temporal and an eternal death together. And to thoſe who have got the ſting of death pulled out, that is, the guilt of ſin removed and waſhed off by the Blood of Chriſt, I would,

Fourthly, Take this caution. If you would have death eaſie to you, die more and more to ſin daily. Some, who are dead to ſin, may find much life of ſin remaining in them; and they who have much of the life of ſin in them will never die eaſily, they will find ſtrong bands in their death, which, in another ſenſe, ſome wicked men find not (*Pſal.* 73. 4.) While either ſin, or ſelf, or the world are lively in us, death will be grievous to us: Therefore let them who are dead to ſin, never think themſelves dead enough to it while they live; they who are moſt dead to ſin and the world, have the ſweeteſt and moſt comfortable paſſage out of the world. *So* Job *died,*

Being old.] It muſt needs be that *Job* was an old man, when he had lived an hundred and forty years after all his changes before this change came: Why then is it added, he died, *being old, or being an old man?* Surely, to teach us this Leſſon.

Old age and death cannot be far aſunder.

'Tis a truth, young men and death are not very far aſunder, youth and death are at no great diſtance; but when we ſee an old man, we may conclude, *that death and he are very near Neighbours.* While we ſee an old man with his ſtaff in his hand, we may ſay, he carrieth a Rapper in his hand, by which at every ſtep he knocks at the door of the grave. There is no man, not the youngeſt man, that can reckon certainly upon one day beyond what he hath; and therefore *Solomon* admoniſheth us. (*Prov.* 27. 1.) *Boaſt not of to morrow, for thou knoweſt not what a day may bring forth.* And the Apoſtle *James* checks thoſe who would reckon upon a day; he tells them upon the matter, *That they reckon without their Hoſt* (James 4. 13.) *Go to now, ye that ſay to day, or to morrow we will go into ſuch a City, and* *continue there a year, and buy, and ſell, and get gain:* And then at the 14th verſe, *Whereas ye know not what ſhall be on the morrow*; for (ſaith he) *What is your life? it is even a vapour that appeareth for a little while, and then vaniſheth away.* They that are youngeſt have not a day, nor an hour in their power to reckon upon; what then have they that are old? We may ſay of them, *They are even paſt their reckoning.* A Woman near her time will ſometimes ſay, *She hath but a day to reckon*; and ſome will ſay, *they have never a day to reckon*: old men may ſay ſo, *they have not a day to reckon. Young men may die*; *old men muſt die*: Then let old men be much in the meditation of death, let them be often looking into their graves; their grey hairs that do ſo, are found in the way of wiſdom. Job *died, being old:* There was no longer ſtaying for him in this world. Once more,

Job *died, being old,*

And full of days.

There is a twofold fulneſs.

Firſt, A fulneſs of ſatiety.

Secondly, A fulneſs of ſatisfaction.

They are full in a way of ſatiety, who loath that which they are filled with, 'tis burthenſom to them. They are full in a way of ſatisfaction, who having enough, are pleaſed, and deſire no more. Some expound this Text of *Job*, in the former ſenſe, he was *full of days*, that is, he had a fulneſs of ſatiety upon him, he had lived ſo long, that his life was a burden to him, he had lived till he was weary of living, his life was tedious and grievous to him. It is ſaid (*Revel.* 9. 6.) *In thoſe days ſhall men ſeek death, and ſhall not find it*; *and ſhall deſire to die, and death ſhall flee from them.* That which moſt flee from, ſome purſue, and it fleeth from them. None are ſo unfit to die, as they who upon the account ſpoken of in that Text, ſeek death, and deſire to die. I do not conceive, that *Job* was full of days in the former notion, as the ſtomach may be full of meat and loath it, or be burthened with it, but as having had enough of it, though well liked to the laſt morſel. And I am ſure he was not full of days when he died in the latter notion, as one wearied with the troubles of his life; for all his latter days were a bleſſing to him, and he bleſſed in them all: His laſt days in this world being his beſt days of worldly injoyment, he could have no reaſon, upon any worldly account, to deſire a departure out of the world.

I grant, a good man though he hath not lived many days may be full of days, even to wearineſs, by reaſon of his temptations, corruptions, and ſins; of which kind of wearineſs the Apoſtle ſpeaks (2 *Cor.* 5. 2.) *In this* (earthly houſe of the body) *we groan earneſtly, deſiring to be cloathed upon with our houſe, which is from heaven.* And upon this account poſſibly, *Job* himſelf might be weary of his life, and deſire the death of his body, that he might be delivered from the body of that death. But *Jobs* worldly life was as ſweet as it was long, he was as full of bleſſings as he was of days; and therefore, doubtleſs, he was only ſatisfied with living, not tired with it: He did not loath his natural life, nor did he hunger after a longer life in this world; he hungred after Eternity, not time: He did not hunger after a longer life, as they do who have their portion in this life, how long ſoever they have lived. A worldly man is never ſatisfied with living in the world; he never hath his belly full of living here, while he ſees he may (as *Job* might) fill his belly with the good things of this life. But as *Job* had lived very long, and very well on Earth, ſo he knew there was a better life to be had in Heaven; and therefore was full of days, both as having had many, and as having no deſire after more on Earth. As he was not (which *David* deprecated, *Pſal.* 102. 24.) *taken away in the midſt of his days*; ſo he was willing to come to the end of his days; and for that reaſon might well be ſaid to die, *being old, and full of days.*

Secondly, Theſe words, *ſo* Job *died, being old, and full of days*, may note as his willingneſs to die, ſo the eaſineſs of his death; he was come to a full ripeneſs for death. Fruit that is fully ripe is ſoon gathered, and ſometimes drops off alone from the Tree. *Job* was every way ripe for death; his body was ripe, *he was full of days*; his ſoul was ripe, he was full of grace: ſurely then his was a ſpontaneous death; a very ſweet way of dying. His natural ſtrength was not much (being old) to make reſiſtance againſt death; and his ſpiritual ſtrength was ſo much, that it cauſed him to make no reſiſtance againſt it, or rather at once joyfully to imbrace and overcome it.

Thirdly, Theſe words, *ſo* Job *died, being full of days*, may have this ſpiritual meaning; *His days were full.* He did not live empty days, or void, blank days; but as he was full of days, ſo his days were full, full of good works and holy duties. That mans days are empty, though he be full of days, or how many days ſoever he hath lived, who hath lived in vanity, and done little good with his life. But we have reaſon to ſay, *Job died full of days*, becauſe his days were full of good done, as well as of good received; he had not a long being only, but a long life in the world, living to good, yea, his beſt in duty both to God and man. Thus *Job died, being old, and full of days.* From this latter part of the verſe,

Obſerve; Firſt, *When a godly man dieth, he is ſatisfied with the time he hath lived, he hath his fill of days, he craves no more.*

Though no length of this life can ſatisfie him, yet he is ſatisfied with the length of his life. A godly man in ſome caſes may crave a little more time; He may ſay, as (*Pſal.* 102. 24.) *O take me not away in the midſt of my days*; and (as elſewhere) *O ſpare me a little, that I may recover my ſtrength, before I go hence, and be no more* (Pſal. 39. 13.) Yet this is a truth ſpecially as to good old men (living as *Job* had done) when they die, they have had their fill of living. A Heathen ſaid, and he ſpake it after a Heatheniſh manner, *If any God would give me the priviledge to be young again, and to cry in a Cradle, I would not thank him for it, I have had living enough.* If a vertuous Heathen hath ſaid ſo by the light of Reaſon and Morality; then, doubtleſs, a godly Chriſtian may much more ſay ſo through the power of Faith and Grace. It cannot be ſaid of all men who die (as *Job* did) being old, that they in this notion *died* (as *Job* did) *full of days*: For as ſome godly young men have been fully ſatisfied with a few days, and have ſaid they have lived as long as they deſired, and could ſay with *Paul*, *We deſire to be diſſolved, and to be with Chriſt*, which is far better (*Phil.* 1. 23.) Yet ſome old men are very much unſatisfied with their many days; ſome old men would be young again: This argues they have made but little improvement of their days, or that they have got little, if any thing, of that all their days, which ſhould be the ſtudy of every day, an intereſt in the death of Chriſt, and ſo a readineſs for a better life. For an old man to wiſh himſelf young again, is like one who with great labour hath clamber'd up a ſteep hill, and wiſheth he were at the foot or bottom of it again; 'tis as if a man, who (having been long toſt in a Storm, between Rocks and Sands) is got near a ſafe Harbour, ſhould wiſh himſelf out at Sea again. They have not a true taſt, much leſs a lively hope of that life which is to come, who would return to this upon ſuch hazardous and uneaſie terms?

Si mihi quis Deus largiatur ut ex hac ætate repueraſcam, & in cunis vagiam valde recuſem. Cato.

Secondly, As theſe words note a readineſs or a willingneſs to die;

Obſerve; *A good man is willing to leave this world.*

He is not thruſt nor forced out of it, but departs; he is not pluckt off, but falls off like ripe fruit from the tree; *His ſoul is not required of him* (as 'tis ſaid of the rich man, *Luke* 12. 20.) but given up, and reſigned by him; he is not taken, but goes out of the world. It is ſaid indeed (*Pſal.* 57. 1.) *Merciful men are taken away* (by Gods Commiſſion given to death) *from the evil to come*; but they are not taken away from (as being unwilling to part with, and leave) any preſent good. A gracious man hath uſually a readineſs to die, in a twofold notion. Firſt, As readineſs ſignifies preparedneſs: Secondly, As readineſs ſignifies a willingneſs to die: And always the firſt readineſs promotes the ſecond. The more prepared any one is to die, the more willing he is to die. That man can ſay, *Lord, now let thy ſervant depart in peace*, whoſe eye of faith hath ſeen his ſalvation. *We* (ſaith the Apoſtle, ſpeaking of believers, 2 *Cor.* 5. 8.) *are willing to be abſent from the body*, that is, to die. And the word there uſed ſignifies not only the freeſt choice, but (if I may ſo ſpeak) the *good will* or *good pleaſure* of mans will, as it often ſignifies Gods. As a godly man hath a peculiar way of living, ſo of dying; and the reaſon of both is, becauſe he ſees bleſſed

Εὐδοκοῦμεν.

Eternity beyond time, and himſelf, by a well-grounded (that is, a Scriptural) hope, a partaker of the bleſſedneſs of it.

Thirdly, Note; *They die full of days, who fill their days, or whoſe days are full.*

That is, who fill their days with, or whoſe days are full of the fruits of righteouſneſs, of faith and repentance, of love and charitableneſs. *Stephen* (Acts 6. 8.) *was full of faith and power.* They die full of days in old age, who, as it is ſaid (*Pſal.* 92. 14.) *Bring forth* (ſuch) *fruit in their old age*; who die as *Dorcas* (Acts 9. 36.) *full of good works, and Alms-deeds which they have done.* It was ſaid of a famous Painter, *No day paſt him without drawing a line.* A *Roman* Emperour ſaid, *I have loſt a day*, when he did no good that day. We may well reckon thoſe days loſt in which we do no good, in which we draw not ſome white line, ſome golden line of grace and holineſs. Then what account will their days come to, who paſs not a day, but they draw black lines, filthy lines of ſin and wickedneſs, or whoſe days are all blotted with the worſt abominations of the day they live in? If thoſe days are empty and loſt, wherein we do no good, and are not made better; what then becomes of their days, and where will they be found, but in the Devils Almanack, who do nothing but evil, and daily become worſe and worſe? So then, they only die full of days, who live doing the will of God, and denying their own; who live mortifying corruptions, and reſiſting temptations; who live exerciſing their graces, and anſwering their duties to God and man: This, this is to live our days, and to die full of days.

Nulla dies ſine linea. Apelles. *Diem perdidi.* Veſpaſian.

Again, as their days are full, who are full of grace in themſelves, and of good works towards men; ſo are theirs who are full of the mercies and bleſſings of God, eſpecially theirs, whoſe days are full of ſoul-mercies and bleſſings, whoſe hearts are full of peace with God, full of joy in God, full of aſſurance of the glory of God. They whoſe days are filled with theſe divine injoyments, die full of days, how few days ſoever they have lived in this world. They who live thus, live many days in one day; they who live thus, have the taſt and firſt-fruits of Eternity every day; and therefore cannot but be ſatisfied with their days, be they many, or be they few.

He that dwelleth in the ſecret place of the moſt High (*Pſal.* 91. 1.) that is, who truſteth fully in God for ſafety by Chriſt in this world, and for ſalvation in the next, ſtands under the ſhadow and ſweet influences of many promiſes, mentioned in that *Pſalm* for the preſervation and prolongation of his life, in the midſt of a thouſand deaths and dangers; all which are ſummed up in that promiſe given at the 16th or laſt verſe of the Pſalm, *With long life will I ſatisfie him, and ſhew him my ſalvation.* The Hebrew is, *with length of days* will I ſatisfie him: Which as it is true, and firſtly intended in that *Pſalm*, of a long life here, and hath in that ſenſe been often fulfilled to thoſe who truſt in God fully; God gives to ſuch not only a preſent eſcape from death in a time of Peſtilence, but gives them long life, or their fill of living afterwards even in this world; yet that which doth chiefly ſatisfie them is, that long life, of which the longeſt life in this world is but a ſhadow, and to which it is a very nothing. What is this long life? Surely, not a life of an hundred and forty years long, as *Jobs* was. *Job* was ſo ſatisfied with the length of his life, that he was willing to die (as hath been ſhewed) but *Job* was not ſo ſatisfied with it, as to take that for his long life. Every man would be ſatisfied; but what doth ſatisfie a godly man? what doth he hunger after for ſatisfaction? Is it after honours? No; Is it after many riches? No; Is it after pleaſures? No; Is it after many days here? No; What is it then? Nothing can ſatisfie the hunger of a gracious Soul, but life after this life, the long and bleſſed life of Eternity; and that is chiefly intended him in that promiſe, *With long life will I ſatisfie him, and ſhew him my ſalvation.* No length of life can ſatisfie us, but as in it we have the fore-ſights and fore-taſts of everlaſting life, or of that long life, which is Eternal Salvation: With this *Job* was ſatisfied, with this the old Patriarchs were ſatisfied. It is ſaid of *Abraham* (*Gen.* 25. 8.) *He died in a good old age, an old man, and full* (of years.) Of *Iſaac* alſo it is ſaid (*Gen.* 35. 28, 29.) *He died, being old, and full of days*: both had their fill of time; but that which filled them both, and that which only can fill any, whoſe lives are yet meaſured by time, is the hope of a bleſſed Eternity.

I ſhall cloſe the Point with an anſwer to this queſtion; why no more is ſaid of *Job*, but, That *he died, being old, and full of days*; whereas in both thoſe places laſt named, concerning *Abraham* and *Iſaac*, it is not only ſaid, that they *died being old, and full of days*, but this is added, *And were gathered to their people.* Abraham *died, and was gathered to his people:* Iſaac *died, and was gathered to his people:* Why is it not alſo ſaid of *Job*, ſo good a man, dying full of days, and fuller of graces, *that he was gathered to his people?*

I anſwer, *Abraham* and *Iſaac* lived and died among a people, who were (as themſelves were) in Covenant with God; whereas *Job* lived among the *Idumeans*, ſome affirming him to be of the Poſterity of *Eſau*, others of *Abraham*, by his ſecond Wife *Keturah:* Now all the Sons which *Abraham* had by her, he *ſent away from* Iſaac *his Son* (*while he yet lived*) *Eaſtward into the Eaſt Country* (*Gen.* 25. 6.) So that it being doubtful (at leaſt) whether the people among whom *Job* lived were a godly people or no, and that they were not, being more probable (as was ſhewed, if not concluded, in opening the firſt verſe of the firſt Chapter; for this reaſon I ſay) we may ſuppoſe (for the Scripture determines nothing in this matter) that when the death of *Job* was ſpoken of, nothing was ſpoken of his being gathered to his people. *So* Job *died, being old, and full of days.*

This is that Job, who was,

Firſt, A ſorrowful man, yea, even a man of ſorrows (for a time among men) as ſome expound his name.

Secondly, *A man hated* (by Satan at all times) as others expound his name.

Thirdly, A man highly approved and loved of God, as appears by the teſtimony which he gave of him, both firſt and laſt.

This is that Job, who was,

Firſt, Famous for the afflictions with which God exerciſed and tryed him to the utmoſt.

Secondly, More famous for his patience and conſtancy under thoſe afflictions and tryals.

Thirdly, Moſt famous for his wonderful deliverance out of thoſe afflictions and troubles.

This is that Job, who was,

Firſt, Famous for his riches and proſperity.

Secondly, More famous for his vertues and integrity.

Thirdly, Moſt famous for his victory over Satan in his deepeſt adverſity.

This is that Job, who was,

Firſt, Reviled by his Wife.

Secondly, Reproached by his Friends.

Thirdly, Deſerted by his neareſt Relations, in the day of his greateſt need.

This is that Job, who was,

Firſt, Unjuſtly accuſed of, charged with, cenſured for the worſt of iniquities.

Secondly, Who ſtoutly maintained his own Innocency againſt all thoſe Cenſures and Charges.

Thirdly, Who was clearly acquitted from them all, by the teſtimony of his own Conſcience always, and by the teſtimony of God himſelf in the end.

This is that Job, who was,

Firſt, Greatly diſtreſſed by the malice of the Devil, through the permiſſion of God.

Secondly, Mightily ſupported againſt the malice of the Devil, by the power of God, in all his diſtreſſes.

Thirdly, Fully reſolved to truſt in God with all his heart, though he died under his hand, in never ſo great diſtreſs.

This is that Job, who,

Firſt, In the greatneſs of his pain, expoſtulated ſometimes with God over-boldly; yet,

Secondly, At the laſt ſubmitted and humbled himſelf at the foot of God meekly.

Thirdly, Was honoured as a Mediator for his miſtaken friends, and accepted in it by God graciouſly.

Once more, *This is that Job*, who,

Firſt, After his reſtoring, was filled with the bleſſings of this life.

Secondly, Lived long, even to fulneſs of days, in the full injoyment of thoſe bleſſings.

Thirdly, Died peaceably, and paſſed ſweetly into the injoyment of a better, of a longer, even an Eternal life.

Thus I am come to the end of *Job*, and to the end of the Book of *Job*; yet before I end, let me leave theſe five words, as ſo many Uſes of the whole Book of *Job*.

Firſt, While you live in this world, live in the expectation of, and preparation for changes: *Job* met with them, and who may not?

Secondly, Be patient under all the troubleſom changes which you meet with in this world: *Job* is your pattern.

Thirdly, Never meaſure the heart of God towards you, by his hand upon you; judge not of your ſpiritual Eſtate, by what appears in your temporal. That was the grand miſtake of *Jobs* friends, and it was his honour to withſtand them in it, and to ſtand faſt to his integrity in the loweſt fall of his Eſtate in this world.

Fourthly, Whatever God doth to you, or with you, ſubmit freely to him: So did *Job* at firſt.

Fifthly, and laſtly, How low ſoever you are brought, yet hope for a good iſſue, poſſibly in this life, aſſuredly in that life which is to come. *Job* found both at laſt.

To cloſe all, There are examples of two ſorts recorded in the holy Scriptures. Firſt, for caution, *To the intent we ſhould not luſt after evil things, as they alſo luſted.* Secondly, for imitation, *To the intent we ſhould do good things, which they alſo did; and ſuffer evil things, with the ſame mind, and in the ſame manner, as they likewiſe ſuffered.* Holy *Job* may be to us an example of caution in ſome things, for even he had (and who hath not) his failings: He alſo may be an example in many things, how both to do good, and ſuffer evil. And among all imitable examples (except that of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, of whom in ſome reſpects *Job* may be called a Type, and the things which hap'ned to him in his ſufferings, may be called (as the Apoſtle uſeth the word in another caſe, 1 *Cor.* 10. 11.) Types of what hap'ned to Chriſt in his; I ſay, among all imitable examples, except his) this of *Job* is one of the moſt eminent in doing, and the moſt eminent of all in ſuffering. Let him therefore be our Pattern to do and ſuffer by, our Copy in both to write by, our Mirrour or Looking-glaſs to obſerve the diſcompoſures, and compoſe the features and motions, both of our outward and inward man by; let us admire and follow his unſpotted integrity in Morals, his fervent zeal about Spirituals, his unſhaken faith, and hope for Eternals; let us admire and follow his moderation in a high Eſtate, his contentation in a low Eſtate, his ſtedfaſtneſs with, and for God, in every Eſtate.

He that ſtayeth in the bare ſpeculation of what is written by inſpiration from God in the Text, or of what is written through the help of God, by the ſtudy of man in the Expoſition of this Book, *is like unto a man, beholding his natural face in a glaſs* ('tis the Apoſtle *James* his compariſon, in the firſt Chapter of his Epiſtle to the ſcattered Tribes) *for he beholdeth himſelf, and goeth his way, and ſtraightway forgetteth what manner of man he was*; that is, he forgets his own ſpots and defects, and ſuffers them to increaſe to more ungodlineſs: But he that reduceth or brings down his ſpeculation to action at all times, and to a preparation for ſuffering, and free ſubmiſſion to the Will of God, without any hard thoughts of God, in hard times, and ſo conforming himſelf to what he ſeeth in this glaſs, continueth in it; this man ſhall be bleſſed (as *Job* was, though not in the ſame manner as *Job* was) both in doing and ſuffering; and after he hath ſuffered a while, ſhall be perfected and lifted up far above the reach of ſuffering, and (which is far better) above the fear of ſinning any more for ever.

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21 6 2191
22 6 1545
14 89
14 262
14 908
18 48
24 13 509
21,22, 374
23 374
28 2 1919
29 20 1613
21 1136
30 21 2158
33 17 464
32 680
34 2,3,4 228
36 20 1531
37 1264
44 5 2299
47 3,4,5 2282

DANIEL.

1 4 2098
27 1105
2 32,33 414
34 1396
44 372
3 29 1658
4 17 1414
19 331
27 1490
30 925
34,35 25
35 1348
5 2 1803
23 309
25 823
6 4,5 1167
22 874
7 2 266
2 1772
7 587
9,10 49
15 336
8 5 165
8 306
13 478
16 2291
9 3 962
24 1764
24 2329
11 6 1544
45 569
12 4 1402

HOSEA.

1 5 391
7 1399
7 2236
2 6 1175
8 1580
14 536
21,22 1977
3 5 497
4 104
4 1061
4 1 98
1 142
11 808
14 848
17 536
17 1414
18 1535
5 1 1464
10 104
13 1333
14 1446
14 1654
15 1446
6 4 719
7 9 533
9 1447
9 1277
9 1581
11 1497
11 1345
14 344
14 1548
14 1560
16 2309
8 5 2039
9 9 852
11 194
13,14 369
10 7 163
11 2059
13 1306
12 7,8 377
8 1544
14 306
13 1 1081
1 1744
2 940
3 719
6 974
7,8 1446
9 815
14 1274
15 390

JOEL.

1 6 587
2 6 620
13 2311
26 58
3 18 1716

AMOS.

2 4 1302
6 110
6 1120
7 110
7 111
14 654
3 3 1338
10 106
4 12 75
12 807
12 1967
13 1967

5	10	545
	13	557
	13	1136
	24	387
	24	581
6	7,10	15
7	2	197
	2	1181
	2	1758
	14	663
8	9,11	1730
	9,11	2120

OBADI.

	3,4	592
	10,11,	955
	12	955
	12	805

JONAH.

1	5	343
	7	301
2	2	736
3	4,10	70
4	1,8	1066
	8	1970
	9	991

MICAH.

2	1,2	117
	1,2	120
	3	58
	3	191
	10	1481
3	6,7	1734
4	2	1440
	2	1487
	6	580
5	7	1984
	8	2014
6	6	905
	6	2337
	9	80
	9	1196
	11	322
7	3	654
	6	2340
	8	955
	17	1080
	18	602
	18	1478
	18	2328

NAHUM.

1	3	26
	3	279
	3	1610
	3	1771
	3	1876
	4	1609
	7	159
	9	805
	9	951
	15	1381
2	10	620

HABAK.

1	7	25
	8	1907
	10	1676
	11	2182
	12,13	190
	14	1400
	16	925
2	3	1076
	3	1713
	3,4	101
	4	1260
	6	377
	9	591
	11	893
	20	608
3	8	1609
	16	2303
	17	1339
	17	1449
	17	2235
	19	2630

ZEPH.

1	12	948
2	1,2	1754
	3	68
3	3	1907
	5	1925
	9	898
	9	1140
	9	1912
	10	1278
	12	260
	12	1617
	14,15	303
	19	580

HAGGAI.

1	5	1430
	6,9	535
	9	1808
	9	603
	9	2226
2	13	720
	17	1967

ZECHA.

1	5	69
	6	102
	6	586
	8	1041
	15	700
2	13	608
	13	1192
	13	2262
3	1	695
	1	2233
	3	731
	9	1623
4	6	906
	7	47
	7	423
	7	1689
	7	1708
	10	293
	10	1899
	12	1412
	12	1831
	14	2233
8	6	2285
	16	545
	19	1595
9	8	189
	11	1274
	14	1769
10	1	614
	1	2002
	3	2110
	11	269
11	8	808
	9	978
	17	2153
12	3	2228
	10	306
	10	2228
	11,12	2228
13	9	49
	9	1501

MALAC.

1	3	1627
	6	1851
	14	1181
	14	1651
2	1,2	368
	2	168
	14	853
	15	1116
	17	331
	17	1842
3	1	1252
	2,3	49
	2,3	1768
	5	69
	10	115
	15	332

MATTH.

2	17,18	760
3	17	1753
	19	1219
5	3	1062
	15	213
	18	1394
	28	795
	34	299
	39	548
	43	952
	44	1911
	45	1927
6	6	937
	22	2255
	24	2324
	27	1189
7	1	319
	1	1323
	3	1460
	6	650
	27	337
	29	1692
8	23,24	268
	26	463
	26	490
9	38	1113
10	13	2358
	14,15	1253
	17	1112
	29,30	476
	29,30	478
	42	1541
11	5	582
	10	1848
	12	706
	16,17	619
	19	1311
	19	1517
	23	733
	25	409
	25	1451
	30	29
	30	2346
12	18,19	228
	31	1145
	32	370
	37	315
	37	967
	43,44	273
13	14	1484
	44,45	445
	44,45	450
15	19	839
	19	938
	26	650
	26	882
16	1,2,3	1736
	17	1241
	18	2228
	22,23,	977
	26	1296
	26	2226
18	15	1098
	19	1498
19	24	446
20	6,7	1930
	28	1673
21	16	1090
	31	1462
	44	394
22	31,32	715
23	2	546
	8	1874
	14	1455
	23	1789
	23	1840
	23	2185
	37	1767
	38	661
24	2	95
	2,3,36	449
	12	1774
	15	318
	20	388
	28	2122
	29	259
	31	1749
	43	389
	51	1462
25	4	1455
	24	122
	29	1269
	34	479
26	50	781
	53	211

MARK.

9	50	133
	50	209
10	24	916
13	32	451
14	33,34	489

LUKE.

1	6	1534
	34	215
	68	1576
	68,78	865
	68,78	866
5	8	497
6	25	315
	25	773
	25	923
	38	773
7	2	864
	29,30	1067
	29,30	1311
	37	174
	47	1480
9	54	234
	54,55	977
10	15	2228
	20	923
12	15	377
	19	1640
	20	198
	20	339
	20	446
	20	1111
	25	1396
14	12,13	881
	18	993
	23	2045
	26	141
	26	1376
15	32	235
16	9	446
	15	243
17	7	149
	10	1222
	22	522
	26,27	777
	37	2122
18	2	1604
	7	737
	14	1062
	14	1517
19	7	174
	15	324
	38,39, 40	1031 1908
21	25,26	1851
	34	1641
	42	890
22	32	30
	32	356
	53	706
23	29	369
24	41	619

JOHN.

1	11	2081
	13	1241
	18	987
2	25	1400
3	8	462
	8	1830
	8	1970
	8	1971
	20,21	137
	21	161
	31	426
4	21	17
	24	2347
5	25	239
	25	1210
	40	1203
6	27	665
	27	1368
	44	182
	44	1214
	44,45	1690
	66	59
7	38	1115
	48,49	1091
8	3,4,9	855
	9	1099
	36	1673
	44	118
	44	174
9	4	1930
	31	345
	31	1561
	39	139
	39	889
	40	1526
	41	1480
12	28,29	1753
	31	1841
13	23	987
14	6	1425
	8	1451
	27	85
	27	1448
15	2	1302
	15	433
	19	2081
16	7	1099
	12	1373
	13	1144
	13	1396
	33	1450
17	12	901
18	6	207
20	15	12
	23	1268
21	17	2288
	21	451

ACTS.

1	6,7	94
	7	1796
	25	1657
2	37	2348
	44	103
	4,5	877
3	19	235
4	19	1516
	19,20	997
	32	2253
5	3	964
	3	1003
	4	103
	36	1220
6	15	621
	15	785
	15	1909
8	9	1220
	22	798
	24	345
9	1	1576
	11	1265
	11	2356
	31	497
	39	889
10	35	2355
12	22,23	1128
	22,23	1397
	23	46
	26	2041

13	48	1067
14	16	964
	17	468
15	18	458
17	8	559
	25	1562
	26	16
	27,28	1424
	28	1892
	28	1981
	30	1575
18	28	1099
20	22	1992
	24	321
	20,27	360
	35	559
23	5	1383
24	26	571
26	11	112
	29	330

ROMANS.

1	18	1669
	19,20	1528
	20	1913
	22	493
	22	496
	23	932
	23	2164
	26	1687
	26,28	409
	26,28	849
	26,28	964
	28	1427
	28	1517
	32	702
2	14,15	1517
	14	136
	15	44
	17,22	1220
	19	548
	24	1531
3	4	1591
	4	2128
	5,6	1346
	8	704
	8	1684
	14	971
	19	1301
	25,26	27
4	1	1241
	5	319
	5	1069
	5	1345
	17,18, 19	248 248
5	7 8	1672
	20	993
6	12,13	963
	19	2040
	21	[illegible]
	21	815
	21	2227
	23	569
7	1	1796
	8,11	1168
	13	507
	21	793
	22	317
8	7	140
	7	204
	7	1494
	13	30
	15	491
	22	2034
	26	1563
	28	1304
	31	693
	33	34
	33,34	1449
	34	2362
	38,39	2087
9	3	178
	14	1347
	15,19	1191
	18	26
	20	1881
	22	100
	22	1610
10	3	2306
	16	454
	17,18	438
	21	757
11	17	1664
	32,33	435
	35	2236
12	1	906
	1	940
	1	1704
	3	1221
	10	1124
	14	971
	15	767
	19	548
13	1	689
	1	1246
	3	327
	3	710
	3	1156
	5	690
	7	1124
	14	888
	14	1243
14	12	1226
	13	1168
	18	2338
	23	505
15	3	2046
	18	1147
16	20	2174
	27	1607

I. COR.

1	26	247
	26	409
	26	1090
	27	1089
2	10,11	1144
	12	1284
	14	409
	14	436
	14	1726
	16	1255
3	2	338
	5	1105
	13	49
	13	96
	18	436
	18	1088
	19	1608
4	5,6,	44
	6,7	2252
	7	1088
	7	2071
	9	1419
	14	1312
5	4,5	1502
6	7	548
	13,14, &c.	1452
	19	1142
	20	871
	20	899
7	20	1001
	21,22, 24	2040 2040
	29	789
	30	649
	31	646
8	1	452
	1	1103
	2	2293
	5	905
9	2,3	1212
	9	2017
	19,20, 21,22	233 233
	25	468
10	5,6,11	398
	11	1415
	13	29
	13	1409
	14,15	1516
	22	908
	22	1601
	26,28	2239
11	31,32	1566
	32	1729
12	26	767
	26	899
13	6	1312
	7	1167
	8	1951
	9	1485
	9,10	280
	12	1568
14	19	1118
	33	209
15	8	1996
	31	301
	32	117
	32	589
	44	1370
	54	591

II. COR.

1	9,10	752
	9,10	760
	12	338
	20	2350
	23,24	1157
	24	200
2	5	1824
	16	235
	17	360
	17	1594
3	6	1487
	12	1882
	14	1211
	17	1286
	18	1425
	18	2164
4	4	410
	6	18
	6	602
	6	477
	6	1568
	16	714
	17	903
	18	193
	18	648
	18	832
5	1	1397
	4	339
	4	755
	4	762
	4	1825
	6	716
	7	1285
	9	1282
	9	2335
	10	1835
	10,11	1875
	11	1569
	13	1068
	14	936
	14	1115
	16	1122
	17	1692
	20	1132
	21	2329
6	1	1912
	1	2345
	2	17
	4,8	171
	11	614
	14	1340
	14,15	1381
7	1	495
	1	2349
	6	694
	9	1524
	11	317
	11	779
8	5	2061
	9	768
	12	2338
9	8	1601
10	4	1676
	4,5	2160
	8,13	1899
	12	1227
	12	2162
11	13,14	1139
	24	1410
	29	776
	29	885
12	2,3	1595
	7	152
	10	28
	10	268
	14	1244
13	8	1594

GALAT.

1	10	1124
	15,16	2346
	16	2005
3	9	488
	10	821
	10	2308
4	26	2040
	27	180
6	1	1110
	1	1132
	3	1221
	7	835
	10	890
	12	1243

EPHES.

2	2	1338
	3	1650
	9	2252
	10	1126
	14	1903
	16	224
	16	669
3	8	1838
	15	1500
	19	1485
	19	1580
	20	1600
4	4,5,6	1148
	8	2354
	20	41
5	10	2338
	12	138
	15	814
	27	1276
	29	2081
6	6	813
	9	863
	10,11	30

PHILIP.

1	9,10	424
	9,10	446
	16,17, 18	1139 1139
	19	28
	23	716
	23	1662
2	3	653
	3	1124
	12	494
	12	901
	13	2083
	15	1931
	20	1455
3	2	651
	3	1241
	7,8	2305
	6,7,8, 9	323 323
	12,13	59
	19	1102
	21	677
	21	1369
	21	2135
4	7	507
	11	1643
	12	543
	13	29

COLOS.

1	6	616
	16	1625
	21	1648
2	3	1354
	5	1812
	11	1397
	12	488
	18	931
3	3	447
	3	1406
	11	869
	18	451
	22	996
	6	968

I. THES.

2	13	615
3	3	80
4	9	703
	15,16	95
5	2	149
	2	388
	18	10
	18	58
	20	862
	22	504

II. THES.

1	9	18
	9	87
	9	394
2	3	901
	6,7	1735
	11	510
3	1	1704
	2	162

I. TIM.

1	5	2349
	9	117
	9	1381
2	8	834
	8	1564
	8	2330
	9	2377
	11,12, 13	840 840
3	2	881
	6	1103
4	2	1139
	12	1077
5	5	661
	8	2081
	13	181
	24,25	1407
6	5	338
	6	1643
	7	384
	9	819
	9	911
	10	727
	10	779
	10	1039
	11	126
	15,16	1607
	16	40
	16	252
	16	715
	16	1146
	17	913

II. TIM.

1	6	1203
	6	1885
2	3	2080
	3,4,5	2176
	6	2270
	15	232
	22	1080
	26	1005
	26	1110
3	1,2,	804
	2	1221
	8,9	256
	9	1113
4	15	2015
	17	29

TITUS.

1	5	881
	16	654
2	9	2346
	14	334
3	1	548
	8	1541

HEBR.

1	1	1196
	5	1910
2	3	141
	7	192
	14	1248
	14	1450
3	2	448
	7,13	1198
	12	1424
	13	678
4	13	240
5	11	131
	11,12	1084
	13	1254
6	6	511
	6	1673
	10	1247
	16	300
	17,18	1197
	19	337
	19	912
7	7	563
9	14	302
	27	1197
	27	1198
	27	1366
10	2	1027
	10,26	1198
	23	53
	24	976
	26	1673
	34	1649
11	1	1098
	3	247
	3	1893
	7	777
	7	1744
	8	2004
	10	1891
	25	1641
	25	1686
	25,26	1322
12	1	54
	1	521
	2	649
	2	962
	4	1195
	5	1099
	9	714
	9,10	1106
	10	1367
	14	667
	14	1285
	16	804
	17	2380
	19	282
	24	1032
	26	1893
	29	897
13	1,2,3	767
	4	859
	5	520
	5	683
	14	1891

JAMES.

1	5	1087
	6,7	2360
	9,10	195
	13	1000
	14	164
	14	938
	14	963
	14,15	509
	17	1086
	17	2007
	18	1982
	20,21	1110
	26	314
	26	965
2	1,2,3,	1121
	4,5	1121
	9	1099
	10	1428
	12	1134
	15,16	768
	16	886
3	2	557
	2	967
	6	968
	8	966
	17	325
4	3,4	921
	9	788
	9	923
	12	908
	12	1481
	12	2179
5	1	1616
	1,2	889
	9	546
	11	2365
	12	299
	13	679
	13	788
	15	760
	15	1266
	16	737
	16	2360
	19,20	985

I. PETER.

1	6	1773
	8	616
	12	448
	12	1271
	13	1885
	15	52
	17	982
	18	1369
2	17	652
	18,19,	996
	20	996
	21	52
3	3	2377
	7	2200
	13	2341
	13,14	419
	19,20	240
	20	1443
4	8	985
	9	881
	11	1140
	11	1882
	17	1107
	17	2146
5	7	1869
	8	2020

II. PET.

1	5,6,7	616
	9	1289
	14	598
	18,19	1197
	21	358
2	9	1614
	14	153
3	16	1063
	16	1883
	18	2282

I. JOHN.

1	1,3	481
	5	137
	9	1347
2	3,4,5,6	98
	16	426
	16	794
	16	839
	19	1138
	20	437
	27	1486
3	6	1569
	7	1060
	8	508
	9	816
	9	2142
	11,12	954
	20,21	44
4	12	2298
	18	491
	18	1835
	18	2263
5	3	2346
	14,15	738
	16	1483
	16	2333
	19	2176

III. JOHN.

	2	970
	2	2403

JUDE.

	1	1615
	6	1224
	6	1913
	6	1963
	10	1557
	14,15	1875
	15	[illegible]
	15	1160

REVEL.

1	17	1713
	18	1947
2	2	47
	2	54
	9	652
	9	1138
	13	1023
3	3	1563
	9	1138
	12	263
	18	1821
4	1	1763
	3	1801
	6	1987
5	5	599
6	8	373
8	3,5	2361
9	6	340
	6	1679
10	1	1701
	8	1255
11	2,3	2033
	3	1199
	8	1884
12	13,14	2043
	15	419
	15	2125
	15,16	256
	16	1614
	16	1703
	16	1801
14	2	1747
	13	1349
15	3	1698
	3	1851
	4	496
	4	1420
	1,15	1803
17	12,13	2253
	13	466
	6,7	2364
18	7	466
	21	733
	21,22,	789
	23	789
20	12	869
21	17	1153
22	15	651
	15	809

FINIS.